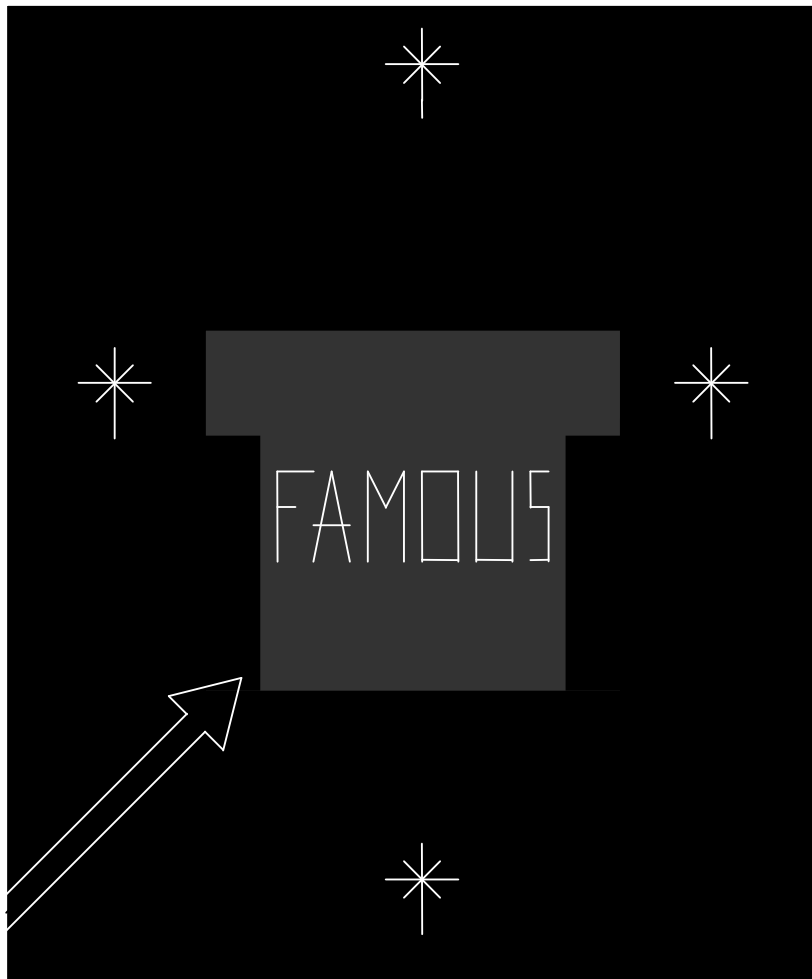


FUTURE



SOCIETY ?

<u>PART</u>	<u>CHAPTER</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
WHY?		3
	MONEY	11
	GOD	828
	TREE	1214
HOW?		1735
	RULE	1855
	LEARN	1867
	WORK	1926
	HOME	1954
	EAT	2025
	SICK	2091
	MAKE	2164
	ENERGY	2208
	MOVE	2295
	TALK	2349
	PLAY	2393
	FENCE	2526
	SCIENCE	2647
APPENDIX		2711

W H Y ?

War! What is it good for? - Copyright to who cares?

Did war on Earth begin when the first cell of life divided itself into two new, but supposedly equal, parts?

Amoebae form a group of the single-celled organisms called Protozoa or Protista. Protozoa means 'first animals' ...the term Protista – 'first creatures' – is preferred nowadays... They include... the half-dozen species that live in the human mouth and digestive system, one of which is the cause of amoebic dysentery... The amoeba reproduces itself by dividing into two equal parts.

...when two tribes go to war...

If war on Earth did begin when the first cell of life divided *into two equal parts*, does this mean that humans are genetically conditioned to continue this battle to exist on the same planet until one cell manages to prove it is the best; the more superior; the winner?

Winning isn't everything – it's the only thing!

Or are humans destined to *continue this battle* forever?

...scientists accept the theory that plants and animals descended from a common ancestor... All living cells of today have come from ancestor cells which existed billions of years ago... Cells produce by dividing. Since new cells can arise only from existing cells, all life is continuous.

...for man no rest and no ending. He must go on, conquest beyond conquest...

...we're humans. I don't think we're ever going to be nice to each other.

Can you imagine a man not wanting to fight? It isn't normal.

I say that war is necessary and beneficial since it is one of the conditions of existence for humanity. War confronts us everywhere, not only between different peoples but also in family and private life. It appears as one of the principle elements of progress and every step forward that humanity has yet made has been attended by bloodshed. People have talked, and still talk, about disarmament, but disarmament is impossible, and even if it were possible we ought to reject it. Only an armed nation is powerful and great. I am convinced that a general disarmament throughout the world would involve something like a moral decadence which would show itself in general debility and would hinder the progress of humanity. The warlike nations have always been strong and flourishing. The art of war has led to the development of all the other arts. History bears witness to it. So in Athens and in Rome, commerce, industry, and literature never attained such a development as when those cities were masters of the then known world by force of arms. - Quote 9

Whatever may be said at the various Peace Congresses against war and against duelling will be in vain. Above all arbitrations, all arrangements, and all legislations, there will always be man's honour, which has always demanded the duel, and the interests of nations which will always demand war.

...most... princes have more delight in warlike matters and feats of chivalry... than in the good feats of peace, and employ much more study how by right or by wrong to enlarge their dominions, than how well and peaceable to rule and govern that they have already.

...empire builders can relate to others only in terms of a power struggle... The rise to power... [enables] empire builders to fulfill an unconscious desire to isolate themselves from a... hostile and competitive... world...

...intimidation is necessary if one is to survive... - THEATRE of HATE

Hey everybody! Let's be a superpower... I'm so bored so we'll start a war! ...So give me a gun... I want to kill someone! - LET'S GET NAKED

Peace on Earth (if we fight for it)... Those who rabbit on about world peace ignore the fact (and it is a fact) that war is part of the human condition – always has been and always will be. It started back at the dawn of mankind when Cain killed his brother Abel out of jealousy; it has continued one way or another, to a greater or lesser degree, ever since; and it will continue to do so until the Lord Jesus Christ returns. - 1997

Is it right to assume today, because of the continued existence of war, that the majority of humans agree with the statements above? Certainly it is easier to agree with Quote 9, for example, when the writer has conveniently left out the fact that many people suffered, be they conquered societies, slaves or citizens of ancient Athens and Rome, and that both civilisations eventually collapsed.

To me it is a symbol of the first importance that... the Roman people with its proud inscriptions, the people before whom Gauls, Greeks, Parthians, Syrians afar trembled, lived in appalling misery in the many-storied lodging-houses of dark suburbs, accepting with indifference or even with a sort of sporting interest the consequences of the military expansion: that many famous old-noble families, descendants of the men who defeated the Celts and the Samnites, lost their ancestral homes through standing apart from the wild rush of speculation and were reduced to renting wretched apartments...

A point raised by Quote 9 is that the word WAR can mean more than just a battle between two armies. Indeed, it can be defined in three ways:

1. strife (especially between countries) involving military, naval, or air attacks; the period of this. 2. open hostility between persons. 3. strong efforts to combat crime, disease, poverty, etc.

If these types of wars were rearranged in their order of relevance to individuals, the one most people experience today would be #2.

Competition begins in the home. Rivalry between siblings is originally for the favor and affection of parents, to become first in the parents' eyes. Competition continues in school grades, for popularity among one's peers, for athletic superiority... Evidence indicates... that even in nudist colonies "pecking orders" emerge. Even without the protection or intimidation of clothing, some people manage to get one-up on others.

At this fork in the road, old Adam keeps his grip firm on the wheel. Self-interest, as always, makes the worst-case analysis: there will never be enough to go around. All must continue, therefore, the war against all.

...the story of life on Earth. The tale begins... in the wild, where a single law prevails – the law of survival... When night falls in Africa... bitter rivalry is aroused.

For all animals life is a battle – and man is no exception... Long ago, deep in prehistory, early man discovered that rocks, spears, bows and arrows were just as handy for eliminating rivals and inconvenient neighbours as for bringing in the next meal. It was the invention of war – a pastime to which man applied himself with a gusto still with us today... His earliest combat briefing can be found in Genesis: 'Replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.' Well, man has done his best to obey to the letter when it comes to making war – but it would be interesting to have the animals' viewpoint...

War, in a sense, is an essential part of nature, evident in the wild as predator and prey battle for the survival of their species – but some species seem to take this essential battle more seriously than others.

This is most dramatically seen in the phenomenon of 'killer' and 'sensitive' strains of *P. aurelia*. Certain strains, known as killers, contain kappa particles in their cytoplasm which release toxins into the water which cause members of other 'sensitive' strains to die in a few hours... Sensitives can, however, be mated to killers without harm, provided certain precautions are taken. If the pair remain together for a few minutes only, the two continue as before, killer and sensitive, but as a result of mating they acquire the same genetic make-up as far as the nuclei are concerned. If, however, the pair remain together for longer, for example half an hour, some cytoplasm is exchanged in addition to the nuclei and then both become killers... It is the kappa particles which... are responsible for the effect... They contain DNA and if destroyed by high temperatures or X-rays, killers are turned into sensitives.

...When the winged males and females swarm out of the nests every insectivorous creature is their enemy. Birds, small mammals, lizards, toads and even some sensible opportunists among humans have a feast... The termites' arch-enemies are, however, ants; a permanent state of war exists between the two insects. Termite soldiers are really specialised ant fighters. Some have powerful jaws which can snap an ant in two. Others have no jaws but instead the head is drawn into a spout-like snout from which an intensely sticky liquid can be squirted that effectively gums up any ant it touches. In spite of their seemingly effective armament, however, no termites are a match for ants in open battle, and they rely on the massive defences of their nests for their continued existence.

...The sight of a colony of army ants on the march is surely one of the great wonders of nature, and the resemblance of such a column to a human army is striking. In addition to the main body of small workers, larger, huge-jawed workers flank the main columns and continually scout ahead, laying scent trails to mark the way for the main body. Quite often, the press of the column is so great that new columns may split off, so that any slow-moving prey is often surrounded and engulfed... Even man will not always escape unscathed if he is foolish enough to let his curiosity or bravado mislead him into thinking the ants would not dare attack him. There are many stories of the intrepid white hunter's adventures with army ants, although these often grossly exaggerate the ants' intelligence and ferocity. Sometimes, in fleeing from the advance of the ants, it has been impossible to rescue horses or other live stock, and these if unable to flee themselves rarely survive. A tethered horse will simply be eaten alive and left a skeleton... Army ants feed by simply cutting up and rending the victim on the spot, carrying the pieces back to the temporary nest... Very large amounts of food are needed by an army ant colony.

...Asps... Males indulge in a ritual battle, while the females watch. First, the males attempt to intimidate each other by rearing up in an S-shape, then, if neither retreats, they chase each other and try to coil round each other's bodies. They never attempt to bite and neither is ever harmed.

...Gibbons probably mate for life and they are very aggressive to other gibbons. Each morning some, usually the females, begin calling, uttering the 'great-call' which is used as an advertisement. This attracts the groups towards each other and they often meet at the boundaries of their territories. The males leap about uttering the 'conflict-call', a series of hoots, and eventually one male may chase another, forcing him back into his own territory, then rapidly retreating. Very occasionally there is a fight and the two males scratch and bite each other. After an hour or so the conflicts die down and the groups wander back into their territories to feed.

...The macaques are the most numerous and widespread of the Old World monkeys... When two macaque troops meet, there is always some kind of conflict. Normally, if two troops' home ranges overlap, the time-tables of daily movement are geared so they do not meet, but if the smaller troop is unwary and fails to see the bigger troop coming, they will probably be attacked. Subordinate males generally begin the fight, which can last up to twenty minutes and result in scratches and bruises, rarely anything more serious.

...The asses live in troops... In autumn and winter, troops may band together into herds two or three hundred strong. Such a concentration is possible in the winter as it is then that the desert plants flourish. In summer, the population spreads out and waterholes become very important in determining the distribution of troops... Very wary animals, wild asses cannot be approached easily, and they keep well away from human habitation even when suffering from thirst... Man has been the wild ass's main enemy, as its flesh and hide are much sought after by the inhabitants of desert areas. The introduction of firearms must have been a major factor in the decline of the ass, as wariness would no longer ensure its safety. Apart from man, wolves are their principal enemy. A troop of asses has little to fear, but a solitary animal falls an easy prey.

...Jousting rams... Full-grown and healthy big-horn will have little to fear from anything except man... Rams begin breeding when 4 years old. Their necks become thicker and during the mating season they lose much of their fear of man. During November and December, jousting takes place, not only between rams but between ewes. If an encounter comes to blows the two may fight with their forelegs, kicking and pawing at each other, before indulging in the spectacular, bone-jarring tournaments. The two contestants turn away from each other and, having retreated some distance, turn back and charge. The last few yards may be covered on hind-legs alone, then just before the collision, heads are lowered and the full force of two 8/900lb bodies is taken on the foreheads. The impact is terrific and the contestants may be dazed, standing nose to nose, eyes glazed for half a minute. Then they carefully back away and repeat the course. The combats may go on for hours with no decisive result; the contestants merely wandering away from each other. Sometimes there are 'battles-royal', free-for-all fights with a dozen or so rams taking part. These may go on all day, with individuals retiring for a time while they recuperate. These conflicts seem pointless, especially the 'battles-royal', and if fighting is an expression of competition between males, as is usually assumed, it is strange that ewes should also batter each other. The fights between male bighorns cannot be related directly to breeding because they do not form harems. There is no competition for females, who are promiscuous, mating with any male. It seems likely that the fighting is mainly a manifestation of aggressive behaviour and a general excitement and emotional stress that builds up during the breeding season... These fights seldom lead to serious injuries and afterwards the winner makes no further attacks.

Instead the two graze together and every now and then the winner starts what is called an appeasement ceremony by presenting his neck for the other to lick, sometimes going down on his knees for this. Probably a better explanation is that it is a sign of friendliness.

...The power of an elephant in defence can be gauged by the several stories told of a bull elephant meeting a train on a railway and charging the engine head on... the elephant charged the engine repeatedly, doing itself great injury yet persisting in the attack. Another feature of elephant defence is the close co-operation between members of a herd. Hunters have reported seeing a shot elephant being helped away by two others ranged either side of it, keeping it upright on its feet. On one occasion the herd combined to drag the carcass of one of their fellows throughout the night, in an abortive attempt at rescue... Such large and powerful animals have few enemies.

...The natural enemy of... many... whales, is the killer whale, a 30ft dolphin with the reputation of being the world's most ferocious animal... Belugas and other whales have been reported as becoming petrified with fear on seeing killer whales. Although killer whales wreak havoc amongst the schools of slow-moving belugas, the damage they have done is small compared with the efforts of whalers.

...In the scientific field chickens have been responsible for one of the biggest advances in our knowledge of animal behaviour. In 1922 the idea of a peck order was first published. It was discovered by observation of the common or farmyard domestic hen. Briefly, it amounts to this: if a dozen hens new to each other are put into an enclosure, they will separate into couples and start to fight. One of each couple will triumph over the other, either because she is stronger than her opponent or because her opponent refuses to fight. She will be dominant, the other will be subordinate. Then the dominants will face each other in couples, from which half will emerge once more as dominants, the other half as subordinates. In the end a hierarchy will have been established which can be expressed as follows. If we identify the hens by the letters A to L there will be the boss hen (A) which can peck all the others and they will not peck back. The next in succession (B) will be able to peck all except A... and so it will go down the line, until the lowest in the hierarchy (L)... which gets pecked by all the others. Any hen can change her position in the hierarchy by winning a fight with a superior hen, but without such a challenge the positions in the hierarchy are accepted by all. This is a simplified version but the principle is there, and subsequent research in a large number of animal species has confirmed it.

He was an astute observer and his experiments... led him to the idea of a 'balance in nature' where there is a continual 'war of all against all'.

The *balance in nature* helps to keep the population of plant and animal species in check. If, however, the population of one species explodes or becomes extinct, this can have an adverse effect on every other member of the food-chain which includes that species.

THE END OF THE DINOSAURS... The climate became colder and old tropical plants were replaced by new plants. The plant-eating dinosaurs could not eat the new plants and gradually died. As the plant-eaters disappeared, the flesh-eating dinosaurs found it more and more difficult to find food and they, too, began to disappear.

The probable reason for their extinction is that they were unable to adapt themselves to the changing environmental conditions... But they must never be considered as failures; they ruled the earth for over 100 million years, which is 100 times longer than man has been in existence! ...Until the advent of man, nature was in balance.

In this century, an exploding human population has become the single greatest threat to life on Earth... The wild has become a battleground, where conservationists wage a war against time and indifference... No alarm bell sounds when a species is lost – an estimated six every hour – but with each extinction the foundation of life grows weaker... Not since the demise of the dinosaurs... has the world witnessed such a dying off. The world of our making is hostile to wild things, yet we expect the wilderness to welcome us.

Sometimes humans at war have used other animals to assist them. Horses, camels and elephants have carried or pulled humans and their equipment, as have dogs, which have also been used as soldiers.

Mastiffs are the one breed used in war, other than for rescue work, as sentinels or for light transport work. The Romans used them for attacking the ranks of their enemies, and in the Middle Ages they were used against mounted knights. The mastiff, itself wearing a small coat of armour, was equipped with a cauldron of flaming sulphur and resin fastened to its back. From this a vicious iron spike projected forward over the dog's head. Added to these were the dog's great weight and fearsome jaws. It was a formidable combination to let loose among heavily encumbered cavalry...

Some people say that humans are the only animal which 'kills for fun' – as if this is a form of behaviour that also separates us from, or places us above, other animal species – but such people obviously haven't had much to do with domestic cats or members of the mustelidae family.

...the weasel and mink, often hunt just for the joy of killing.

Hunting dogs hunt systematically as a pack... [D]ogs are long distance runners. Their speed is not impressive, but they are persevering... and... have great staying power... Gazelles... take flight when they see a hunting pack half a mile away, although the dogs can easily run them down despite this start... The quarry is worn down more quickly by the dogs snapping chunks of flesh out of its flanks, so it soon becomes weak from loss of blood, and the pack descends on it and eats it alive. First to be eaten are the entrails, which are rich in vitamins and other essentials, but eventually there is little left except the skull. Wildebeeste do not run from the hunting dog packs. The bulls move forward and try to repel the dogs by charging them, but the dogs avoid these attacks and dodge round the bulls to where the calves and cows are huddled... Not only do such large animals as wildebeeste fall prey to hunting dogs, even lions have been attacked and killed... While in a pack, the hunting dogs need fear nothing except man... They will kill more than they need, merely, it seems, for the sake of killing... Cape hunting dogs co-operate in hunting and rearing their young, and it is tempting to compare the social life of these dogs with our own. It might be possible that the hunting dogs are leading the same sort of life as our ancestors did when they lived as hunters in small family units. It may have been the organisation of baby-sitters while the main party went out hunting that allowed our pre-human ancestors to break from the baboon-like scavenging way of life, and become hunters. It would have been possible to take the children out to collect berries or birds' eggs, but they would have hampered a hunting expedition. A division of labour like this, with individuals carrying out different duties, is the hallmark of a society whether it be of men, hunting dogs or honeybees... In one way the hunting dog society, for all its ferocity in the hunt, is one stage nearer to perfection than ours. All hunting dogs are equal. There is no rank, as is found amongst wolves, each adult is qualified to perform every job whether it be hunting, feeding the pups or guarding them, and at the kill every dog gets its fair share. [In comparison, 'lion cubs get no special treatment. They must fight for every scrap. Adults seize the best of the spoils.' ('Mongoose adults let their offspring eat first when drought threatens their lives', but desert mice 'abandon their young to predators in order to save themselves.')

...‘Sometimes it takes the great Dustbuster of fate to clear the room of bullies and bad habits. Freak cyclones helped destroy Kublai Khan’s brutal Mongolian empire, for example, while the Black Death of the 14th century capsized the medieval theocracy and gave the Renaissance a chance to shine. Among a troop of savanna baboons in Kenya, a terrible outbreak of tuberculosis 20 years ago selectively killed off the biggest, nastiest and most despotic males, setting the stage for a social and behavioural transformation. In a study appearing in the journal *PloS Biology*, researchers describe the extensive temperamental and tonal shift that occurred in a troop of 62 baboons when its most belligerent members vanished from the scene. The victims were all dominant adult males that had been strong and snarly enough to fight with a neighbouring troop over a tourist lodge garbage dump, and were exposed there to meat tainted with bovine tuberculosis, which soon killed them. Left behind in the troop, designated the Forest Troop, were the 50 per cent of males that had been too subordinate to try dump brawling, as well as all the females and their young. With the change in demographics came a cultural swing toward pacifism, a relaxing of the usually parlous baboon hierarchy, and a willingness to use affection and mutual grooming rather than threats, swipes and bites to foster a patriotic spirit. Remarkably, the Forest Troop has maintained its genial style over two decades, even though the male survivors of the epidemic have since died or disappeared and been replaced by males from the outside. The persistence of communal comity suggests that the resident baboons must somehow be instructing the immigrants in the unusual customs of the tribe. “We don’t yet understand the mechanism of transmittal,” said a professor of biology and neurology at Stanford, “but the jerky new guys are obviously learning, ‘We don’t do things like that around here.’” The professor, who is renowned for his study of the physiology of stress, said that the Forest Troop baboons probably felt as good as they acted. Hormone samples from the monkeys showed far less evidence of stress in even the lowest-ranking individuals, when contrasted with baboons living in more rancorous societies. The researchers were able to compare the behaviour and physiology of the contemporary Forest Troop primates with two control groups: a similar-sized baboon congregation living nearby, called the Talek Troop, and the Forest Troop itself through the era that might be called Before Alpha Die-off, or BAD. The new work demonstrates that humans hold no patent on multiculturalism. As research indicates, many social animals learn from one another and cultivate regional variants in skills, conventions and fashions. Some chimpanzees crack open their nuts with a stone hammer on a stone anvil; others prefer wood hammers on wood anvils. The chimpanzees of the Tai forest rain-dance; those of the Gombe tickle themselves. But in the baboon study, the culture being conveyed is less a specific behaviour than a global code of conduct. “You can more accurately describe it as the social ethos of the group,” said a professor of evolutionary and developmental psychology at the University of St Andrews in Scotland. “It’s an attitude that’s being transmitted.” The report also offers real-world proof of a principle first demonstrated in captive populations of monkeys that with the right upbringing, diplomacy is infectious. A Doctor from Emory University in Atlanta has shown that if normally pugilistic rhesus monkeys are reared with the more conciliatory stumptailed monkeys, the rhesus monkeys learn the value of tolerance, peacemaking and mutual hip-hugging. The Doctor, who wrote an essay to accompany the new baboon study, said: “The good news for humans is that it looks like peaceful conditions, once established, can be maintained. And if baboons can do it, why not us? The bad news is that you might have to first knock out all the most aggressive males to get there.”]

...The killer whale... has a very bad reputation for ferocity which is probably unjustified... The killer whale probably has no real enemies. A few are killed by man, usually irate whalers. They are not a very valuable catch... Divers who have met killer whales have not been molested and several killer whales have been kept in oceanaria. All have been unaggressive or even hand-tame. One story goes of a fisherman of Long Island, New York, who threw a harpoon at a killer whale. The whale pulled free and followed the boat and its terrified occupants to shallow water, but it made no attempt to harm them despite such severe provocation. - THE INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE ENCYCLOPEDIA

On guard – the surprising watchdog of the oceans Do dolphins really save other mammals from shark attacks? This week’s report on a pod of dolphins that surrounded a group of swimmers near Whangarei and shielded them from a great white prompted a visit to the internet search engine to find out if it is common behaviour. Yes, says... internet free encyclopedia Wikipedia... “Occasionally, dolphins have rescued an injured diver by raising them to the surface, a behaviour they also show towards injured members of their own species.” The website of Port Stephens, in New South Wales... claims... [t]here are few sharks in the Port... mainly because of a shark fishing operation but also because local dolphins are good protectors. “Most people agree that dolphins know how to see off sharks, mainly by ganging up on them.” There is certainly evidence that dolphins can be brutal attackers... [P]orpoises washing up on Scottish shores... looked unscathed but examinations revealed their internal organs had been minced. “The cause of their internal injuries was a mystery for several years,”... An amateur dolphin watcher, armed with a video recorder, solved the mystery when he saw bottlenose dolphins... attacking porpoises. They attacked with rapid blows of their beak and tail.

In a tradition that dates back to[our] founding Father... every May 10th local residents gather to drive snakes into the centre of town and whack them to snake heaven... “Woo hoo! The greatest day of the year!” ...“Whacking Day oh Whacking Day our hallowed snake skull cracking day We’ll break their backs gouge out their eyes Their evil hearts we’ll pulverize...” ...“...but I hate it! Is there something wrong with me?” “Yes honey... it’s part of our... nature. Inside every man is a struggle... that cannot be resolved...” ...“Dad, please... I beg you, don’t lower yourself to the level of the mob.” “Well... maybe if I’m part of that mob I can help steer it in wise directions?...”

It has been common for most humans to assume that they are a superior species of animal. The fact that they have proven themselves to be the best at war could be given as a confirmation of human superiority. However, because KILLING appears to be a primitive and animalistic character trait, it seems that this behaviour only makes us equal to other animal species.

“Okay, [dad], I made a terrible mistake... and now I’ve got to weasel out of it.” ...“...boy, weaselling out of things is important to learn. It’s what separates us from the animals – except the weasel.”

Some people believe that humans will only prove they are a superior species of animal once they have ceased to be war-like (or violent) – i.e., once they have overcome their ancestral urges. Such people regard violence to be an abnormal character trait for humans to possess.

AS A SPECIES, THE HUMAN RACE HAS GIVEN ITSELF A BAD PRESS. We have called ourselves killer apes, with natures forged in the searing heat of a violent Pleistocene past, and depicted ourselves as moral and ecological terrorists loosed upon a kinder, gentler natural world. Anything nice about us we are wont to dismiss as a recent invention called civilization. Anything nasty we attribute to evolved “human nature.” Yet modern biology no longer supports this jaundiced view. It is tentatively concluding that human[s]... have instincts – yes, instincts – to be kind.

I want to get away from these people who think it’s normal to kill.

...what is most astonishing is that the people do not rise against their governments, either in the monarchies or the republics. The most astonishing thing is that society as a whole is not revolted by the very word “war”.

Tomorrow a war may begin, and men, driven like cattle to the slaughter, will go where they are sent and perish unprotestingly, and destroy other men without even asking themselves why they do it. And not only will they feel no remorse about it, they will even swagger and be proud of the

gewgaws they are allowed to wear for their skill in killing people, and they will exalt those unhappy or wicked men who placed them in such a position, and erect monuments to them. The people of liberal Europe rejoice that they are allowed to write all sorts of nonsense in booklets and to say what comes into their heads at dinners, meetings, and in parliaments; and it seems to them that they are quite free – as oxen feeding in the market-garden of a slaughterhouse imagine they are quite free.

If you think it, say it.

...just cause I'm talking doesn't mean I know what I'm talking about...

Crikey... I'm talking a lot of shit today!

You're thinking about something, my dear, and that makes you forget to talk.

Unfortunately, many humans seem convinced that they possess the ability to talk and think at the same time. This would be less of a problem if they had the knowledge to back up their ideas, or took the time afterwards to think about what they had said and heard – which might cause them to correct their opinion in future – but most merely repeat commonly used statements, as if their being common means such statements are true, and never try to think deeply about these statements or anything else that should be considered important.

War has nothing to do with common sense...

Throughout human history there have been certain individuals who were known to have thought deeply about important issues. Such people are called philosophers ('war isn't about who's right, it's about who's left'), and the ones considered most authoritative tried to overcome the prevalent illusion – that violent conflict is necessary – by teaching that a different, better, more peaceful way of life is possible.

Consider the enormous influence of authority on the human mind... Authority is the evidence on which the mass of mankind believe everything which they are said to know except facts of which their own senses have taken cognizance. It is the evidence on which even the wisest receive all those truths of science, or facts in history or in life, of which they have not personally examined the proofs...

His great desire to work, his wise intuition... and his serene authority reveal... a person of exceptional quality... His theoretical work, his practical work as an inventor... designer and author... place him at a much higher level than those who preceded him.

2500 years ago one of the philosophers is supposed to have said: 'If the world were in order there would be no need of me to change it.'

The reasonable man adapts himself to the conditions that surround him. The unreasonable man adapts the surrounding conditions to himself... All progress depends on the unreasonable man.

Human society has progressed in many ways during the past 2500 years. It is no longer necessary to burn wood to cook, keep warm or see at night; hot and cold water comes straight from taps inside houses, and sewage is taken away by underground pipes to be treated before any part of it is returned to the environment; humans can talk to and see people on the other side of the world in an instant, have stood on the moon, etc. But many of the problems that inspired the 2500-year-old comment are still around, humans have created new problems and many people alive today haven't benefited from the progress.

I would like to live to regret my words but twenty years from now, I am positive, the less developed world will be as hungry, as relatively undeveloped, and as desperately poor, as today. And this, despite the fact that we know the world has enough resources – technical, scientific and material – to eliminate poverty, disease and early death, for the whole human race. - 1964

Today, in spite of and in part because of a vast outpouring of scientific knowledge, we find ourselves and our world confronted by a depressing array of problems most of which are of man's own making... such... as the following: poverty – malnutrition – overpopulation – unemployment and underemployment – physical and mental illness – educational and cultural deprivation – denial of civil liberties – soul-destroying work and leisure – separation and divorce – delinquency and crime – alcohol and drug addiction – urban blight and sprawl – rural squalor – pollution and environmental deterioration – guerilla activity and insurrection – nuclear confrontation.

The record of human history does not suggest that mathematical or artistic genius has produced more successful... populations.

Since the end of... 1945, there have been more than 150 military conflicts... Despite the emergence of... "the global village", life has not been made safer by the increased speed of travel, the spread of communications, or the extension of trading relations and economic activity. Indeed, quite the reverse is true. Today it may take less time to fly from London to Sydney than it took to travel from London to Aberdeen 150 years ago, but the world is also a more dangerous place for the many people who live in it.

When ancient philosophers talked, wrote and tried to improve society they weren't interested in technology. It was the behaviour and beliefs of the people that concerned them. But if people have been talking and writing about these things for more than 2500 years, WHY is it necessary to contribute more?

More words count less. - TAO TE CHING

The previous question is easy to answer: it's *necessary* because all the talking and writing has so far failed to do what the words were intended to. One reason for that failure is because ideals become practice if the majority believe them but, as was inferred previously (refer to page 7, line 65), the common ideal isn't necessarily the correct or best one. An example of this is the widely held belief that there is no certainty when it comes to ideals (or opinions).

In a dialogue with Socrates, Protagoras said, "Truth is relative. It is only a matter of opinion." Socrates then asked, "Do you mean that truth is mere subjective opinion?" Protagoras replied, "Exactly. What is true for you is true for you, and what is true for me is true for me. Thus truth is subjective." Socrates then asked, "Do you really mean that my opinion is true by virtue of its being my opinion?" Protagoras said, "Indeed I do."

Socrates then said, “My opinion is that truth is absolute, not subjective, and that you, Protagoras, are absolutely in error. Since this is my opinion, you must grant that it is true according to your philosophy.” Protagoras then admitted, “You are quite correct, Socrates.”

Many years ago a wise old codger told me, among other things: “...as you trudge the pathway of life you will find that six out of 10 people are as thick as two short planks; three out of 10 know how many beans make six and one out of 10 knows the Truth and what life is really all about.” (For those who at this point mouth Pilate’s age-old question: “What is truth?” all I can say is that for those who don’t know, no amount of explanation will bring any enlightenment. On the other hand, for those who do, no explanation is needed at all.)

Sadly, many people – and most governments – still use Protagoras’ argument to convince themselves that their ideals or beliefs can be right when authoritative reasoning says they are wrong.

A man with a conviction is a hard man to change. Tell him you disagree and he turns away. Show him facts and figures and he questions your sources. Appeal to logic and he fails to see your point.

Progress depends... on a willingness on the part of the mass of mankind – and we all, in nine-tenths of our nature, belong to the mass – to recognize genuine superiority, and to submit themselves to its influence. But the condition of recognizing genuine superiority is a contempt for unfounded pretensions to it.

Over the past 200 or so years English speaking people have, collectively, dictated the direction of *our world* (i.e., human society) more than any other culture or language group. It is entirely appropriate to use the word DICTATED because DICTATOR means ‘a domineering person with supreme authority in any sphere’ (*world*: ‘all that concerns or all people who belong to a sphere of activity’) and, in most instances, an English person (or a group of English people) has physically forced other cultures to accept its lead. One motivation for English people to do this was clearly a belief in their *genuine superiority*. This *unfounded pretension* must be considered partly to blame for their over-all failure to create a better society, not only for themselves but everyone they have influenced, as must their language – because the English word AUTHORITY can mean, strange as it may seem, two contrasting things.

authority... 1. the power or right to enforce obedience... (esp. in *pl.*) a body having authority... 2. personal influence arising from knowledge... a testimony based on this... an expert.

From the above dictionary reference we learn *authority* can come via violence (through threats and force) or peacefully (through knowledge and example).

...why have the times stayed the same...

If *human society* has predominantly *stayed the same*, this may be because authoritative reasoning has somehow been kept from the masses or the authors were unable to reach the masses with their message; or, alternatively, all reasoning has so far failed to be authoritative enough to convince the masses that they are wrong. Perhaps the greatest philosophers were aware of this?

Of all man’s miseries, the bitterest is this, to know so much and to be impotent to act.

That quote also came from 2500 years ago, but it could have been written during the so-called 20th century in reference to Albert Einstein.

E = MC² made Albert Einstein the most famous scientist in history... Knowing that it wouldn’t be long before Hitler’s physicists worked out the same equation... Einstein... wr[o]te to the American President... When the bomb was used, not on the Nazis, but on the Japanese... Einstein... w[as] horrified. Einstein, who spent his final years campaigning for peace between nations, described the letter to... Roosevelt as his life’s only mistake.

I recently discussed with an intelligent and well-disposed man the threat of another war, which in my opinion would seriously endanger the existence of mankind... Thereupon my visitor, very calmly and coolly, said to me: “Why are you so deeply opposed to the disappearance of the human race?” I am sure that as little as a century ago no one would have so lightly made a statement of this kind. It is the statement of a... painful solitude and isolation from which so many people are suffering in these days... Innumerable voices have been asserting for some time now that human society is passing through a crisis, that its stability has been gravely shattered... Is there a way out? ...Modern anthropology has taught us, through comparative investigation of so-called primitive cultures, that the social behaviour of human beings may differ greatly, depending upon prevailing cultural patterns and the types of organization which predominate in society. It is on this that those who are striving to improve the lot of man ground their hopes: human beings are *not* condemned, because of their biological constitution, to annihilate each other or to be at the mercy of a cruel, self-inflicted fate... The importance of securing international peace was recognised by the really great men of former generations. But the technical advances of our times have turned this ethical postulate into a matter of life and death for civilised mankind today, and made the taking of an active part in the solution of the problem of peace a moral duty which no conscientious man can shirk... A permanent peace can not be prepared by threats but only by the honest attempt to create mutual trust. One should think that the wish to create a decent form of life on this planet and to avert the danger of unspeakable destruction would tame the passions of responsible men... But today the rude passions of man reign in our world, more unrestrained than ever before. - Einstein

If there’s one thing that I can’t explain... with all the ways of communicating... it’s why the world has to have so much pain... I hear it everyday on the radio somebody shoots some guy he don’t even know...

Why must... people keep on killing and fighting... we don’t want... wars we don’t need... violence we just want what’s right... peace... - Bad Brains

Perhaps *all the talking and writing has so far failed* to improve the behaviour or beliefs of the majority and make the world a better place for all members of our species because the words were ahead of their time once but are not completely relevant now due to the technological changes of recent years?

“She was right, peace is the way[.]” said Spock. Captain Kirk replied,] “She was right, but at the wrong time.”

When Einstein was writing over 40 years ago nuclear destruction was becoming the primary fear, but even Einstein could not have imagined the state of human society at the end of the 20th century. Today nuclear explosions, be they bombs or power plants, are of less concern. The primary fear now is a non-

nuclear destruction of our entire eco-system. The need to improve the *behaviour and beliefs* of the majority is as important today as it ever was, if not moreso – since the *rude passions of man* seem to be even more unrestrained now than when Einstein lived.

All of us need to learn to live at peace in this world, to work out a new mode of thinking, for conditions today are quite different from what they were even three or four decades ago.

...these are the days when anything goes...

If in nature animals and plants do battle with each other *for the survival of their species*, which species has humanity fought most? During the last few thousand years the battle for the continued existence of humans has been fought against other humans. Lately it appears that the side fighting for humanity's extinction has become bored or dissatisfied with fighting other humans and is now trying to fight nature.

Nature started the fight for survival... now she wants to quit... because she's losing? ...Well maybe she should have thought of that when she was besetting us with droughts and floods...

The most unbelievable fact is that no serious effort is made to avert what looks like a final decree of fate. While in our private life nobody except a mad person would remain passive in view of a threat to our total existence, those who are in charge of public affairs do practically nothing, and those who have entrusted their fate to them let them continue to do nothing. How is it possible that the strongest of all instincts, that for survival, seems to have ceased to motivate us?

The aim of the first part of this thesis (FUTURE SOCIETY?) is to show why humans are still at war, be it with other humans or nature, in order to identify what needs to be done to permanently bring their wars to an end – thereby completing the mission of those people who have tried to do so previously.

Anyone who examines culture today, who looks on it long and unblinkingly, can hardly stave off a feeling of hopelessness, a fear that all may be utterly lost; the blight, blank misery, the poverty of joy bear in on such a person like a dreaded tomorrow. Even if we do not harp on the prospect of nuclear holocaust, which serves as an infernal cup into which we pour our deadliest terrors, we cannot dispel the overwhelming sense that nothing but power – the desire to grab, consolidate and exercise it – now motivates our leaders and our cultural elite, so that when they govern, write, create or speak they do so untouched by... the “old verities”: compassion, ancestral wisdom, love and reverence for the earth... Though... power has become so cagey, so uncommonly adept at absorbing anything that challenges it, we can nonetheless preserve the memory of a fabled past, storing it away against the time when humanity sickens with its long affair with power and casts about for something nobler, grander, and infinitely more lovely. On such a day this book, together with hundreds like it, may prove its worth, may justify the time, expense and efforts of its authors.

We care a lot about the army navy air force and marines... about your guns about the wars you're fighting gee that looks like fun We care a lot about... Transformers cause there's more than meets the eye... We care... cause we're out to save the world... Well, it's a dirty job but someone's gotta do it... - INTRODUCE YOURSELF

The endeavour *of those people* has made this thesis easier to write. Quotes from such people and many others will be used throughout the thesis, but in many instances no attempt has been made to refer to a quote's origin. This is a deliberate act and there are a number of reasons for doing so – one being an aim to not directly name or give credit to any living person, including the thesis' editor. If time and resources had allowed it, the entire thesis could have been created by using a collage of quotes from books, newspapers, songs, television programmes, etc.

The pool of informed opinion about this... is infinite; so what to include in a book of this nature and what to leave out are balanced on a fulcrum of subjective editorial policy.

References will be given where they are relevant (i.e., letting the reader know that a quote comes from Albert Einstein is important – but which of his books, and which page, the quote is sourced from is unimportant). Although many quotes have no reference some come from sources whose title has been provided elsewhere in the thesis. Thorough references are generally only needed so copyrights can be observed (which is something that will be discussed elsewhere in the thesis) and by the conservative academic world – which often appears to be more interested in what has been said in the past than the present.

University departments are still lagging behind in field after field, caught in older mechanistic paradigms drawn from an earlier era, mainly the... dawn of modern industrial life...

Acceptance by the *academic world* may help this thesis to be successful but the editor believes such can be achieved without thorough references. Most readers don't bother checking references and, if someone doubts the truth of a quote, seeing that quote in its original setting isn't going to convince them otherwise. Another reason for providing thorough references is so people can check a quote's context (i.e., when quotes are removed from their original text they can be used to imply support for a meaning not originally intended). For this reason readers should not assume that the editor agrees with what is said in any quote – anything printed in dark lettering; or printed in light lettering but is enclosed by a pair of single inverted commas (i.e., 'x to y'), which indicates the enclosed phrase has been inserted within a quote, or between quotes, that it doesn't share the same reference with (e.g., page 6, lines 68-70 + page 7, lines 1-27), or the reference details were unknown/uncertain.

A final and most bitter satire involving future war is *Tomorrow's Yesterday*... It is a savage attack on business methods (advertising in particular)... and mankind's stupidity. The main substance of the book concerns a film made in 1932 but showing various (mainly futuristic) eras of mankind being visited by a future race of telepathic beings evolved over three million years from cats. They view an advertising campaign of about 1930, then the hypocrisy of the 1960s where an unfaithful husband berates his son who is participating in the current vogue of companionate (i.e., temporary) marriages, then the outbreak of war in 1997.

At the end of the 20th century (circa 1997) humans were engaged in so many wars that it wouldn't be possible – and would be overly repetitive – to discuss all of them. However, in order to achieve its aim this thesis will attempt to cover each of the major wars and most of the minor wars – which have all been grouped into the 3 most contentious topics.

MONEY

World War I, international conflict, 1914-8, involving most important nations of the world, and precipitated by the assassination of the Austrian heir-presumptive... by... a Serbian nationalist, at Sarajevo, June 28, 1914. International distrust accumulated in the 19th cent. had led to numerous earlier crises and to formation of the... *Triple Alliance*... of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy against... the... *Triple Entente*... [of] France, Russia, and Great Britain... Belated unification of Germany under Prussian military leadership during the Franco-Prussian War, 1870-1, her annexation of Alsace-Lorraine from France, and her sudden emergence as a major military, naval, commercial, and colonial power had shaken the balance of power in Europe. France wanted revenge, Great Britain feared for her commercial survival and colonial empire, and Russia was worried that her expansion toward Turkey's Black Sea straits, begun in the long Russo-Turkish Wars, might be cut off by Germany's "urge toward the east"; hence these countries increasingly opposed German ambitions. Meanwhile, within Austria-Hungary the existence of large minorities, notably Magyars and Czechs, who craved national independence, created strong internal tensions; and... the continued existence of large Italian minorities under Austro-Hungarian rule after the unification of Italy, 1870, had caused friction between the two countries in spite of their participation in the Triple Alliance. Also, the emergence in the Balkans of Slavic states, whose independence from Turkey had been achieved largely through Russian assistance, made for irritation between Russia and Austria-Hungary, and large Slavic minorities in the Dual Monarchy looked to... Russia for eventual liberation... Amid these tensions grew up an exalted nationalism, militarism, international rivalry for markets following the economic depression of 1872-96, and consequent rival imperialisms. It was against this background that, following the assassination of the archduke, Austria issued her ultimatum to Serbia, July 23, demanding among other things suppression of all anti-Austrian activities. Russia then assured Serbia of support in case of war with Austria. Serbia's reply, July 25, unsatisfactory to Austria, prompted Austria's declaration of war on Serbia, July 28, and Russia's mobilization, July 30. Germany, committed to support of Austria, declared war on Russia, Aug. 1, and convinced that France, now mobilizing, would assist Russia, Germany declared war on France as well, Aug. 3. The German invasion of Belgium, Aug. 3, following Belgium's refusal to allow German troops to cross her territory to France prompted Great Britain to declare war on Germany, Aug. 4. Japan, allied with Great Britain since 1902, also declared war on Germany, Aug. 23. Russia declared war against Turkey, Nov. 2; and Italy, remaining initially neutral, finally denounced the Triple Alliance and declared war on Austria-Hungary, May 23, 1915... [R]esponding to Russian appeals... the British and French... opened the Gallipoli Campaign against Turkey in the Dardanelles... hoping thus to capture Constantinople, open supply routes to Russia, and bring Greece and Bulgaria into the war on the Allied [(Triple Entente)]side... With no end of the war in sight, casualties tremendous, and discontent and mutiny spreading through the armies, demands for a negotiated peace as urged by[the] U.S... increased. However, failure of the Central Powers ...t[o] make any specific proposals, and the reorganization of the British and French governments... along with the reorganizations of the... French... and... German military [commands]... prolonged the struggle... Although it took a heavy toll of Allied shipping, the[German] practice of sinking neutral ships (including the unarmed passenger ship *Lusitania*... on which numerous Americans lost their lives)... [had] prompted a temporary restriction of submarine activity... [because of the danger it might lead] to... war with the U.S... [Eventually, however,] Germany started unlimited submarine warfare (Feb. 1, 1917) to force[the] surrender of Britain before the expected American participation in the war could count... resulting, as expected, in the American declaration of war on Germany (Apr. 6, 1917)... and it was evident by the end of 1917, when U.S. men and arms were pouring into Europe, that the German gamble had failed... Tremendous in destruction, W[W]I left casualties of almost 10 million killed and 20 million wounded, with direct financial costs of around \$180 billion. The war and the peace settlements... revolutionized the map of Europe. Although the... League of Nations... [was] established... to secure peace for the future, problems created by the war multiplied, and only 21 years after the armistice of Nov. 1918 the Continent was aflame with... *World War II*... 1939-45, involving most major nations of the world. In some respects a continuation of W[W]I, but resulting also from problems created by... the international economic crisis of 1927-37... Notable... were the failure of the Allies after W[W]I either to conciliate or to completely crush Germany; the discontents of Italian, Japanese, Hungarian, and other national groups; the rapid disintegration of Allied unity, begun by the Russian Revolution and establishment of Communism in Russia, and continued by the withdrawal of the U.S. into isolationism... The war casualties... [included t]ens of millions of civilians... Allied forces lost 7 or 8 million men... Germany alone lost c.3,250,000 men. - THE NEW UNIVERSITY ONE-VOLUME ENCYCLOPEDIA

WWII is described as *a continuation of WWI*. Yet, both were merely a series of campaigns fought within the longer-running war over money (or wealth).

...people all over the world are dying in the war... [over] economics... - BALL OF CONFUSION

The *war over money* (or economics) has involved armed and unarmed conflicts between or within countries. Money hasn't been the only cause of wars but it is doubtful if there has been one for centuries in which money didn't play a role.

It is possible to understand the Greeks without mentioning their economic relations; the Romans, on the other hand, can *only* be understood through these. Chaeronea and Leipzig were the last battles fought about an idea. In the First Punic War and in [modern wars] economic motives are no longer to be overlooked.

The city of world power. The remarkable though largely unplanned territorial expansion of Rome between 375 and 275 brought lasting economic gain. With control of all of peninsular Italy, Rome established colonies on some of the conquered territories and elsewhere assigned lands to individual Roman citizens. The nearly 60,000 holdings distributed before the middle of the 3rd century helped to solve the pressure of Rome's land-hungry population; nevertheless, by c. 250 the city's population had grown to almost 100,000. The booty from conquests also helped to defray the costs of such public works as the building of temples and roads and the improvement of the city's water supply. By the early 3rd century, two aqueducts carried fresh water into the city. In 264 Rome was drawn into a war with Carthage, the great Phoenician emporium in North Africa. After more than a century of conflict, Rome emerged as the strongest power in the Mediterranean; but the acquisition of an empire, which, for the most part, had not been the conscious desire of the Roman people, brought new social and economic problems to the city itself. During the Second Punic War (218-201) large areas of the peninsula were devastated by invading troops from Carthage, led by the famous general Hannibal; much land was abandoned and many peasants sought refuge in Rome. The growing requirements of a standing army depopulated the countryside and

concentrated veterans in the city. The Roman nobility, prohibited by law and by custom from investing in commerce or industry, profited from the economic distress of the peasantry by buying up large tracts of land in central and southern Italy. Slaves, whom Rome's wars in the Mediterranean made available in large numbers, were introduced into Italy as farm labourers and herdsmen, causing further dislocation among the free peasantry. In general, the Roman economy lagged well behind the political development of both city and empire.

The quote on page 11, line 51, implies that Greek wars weren't influenced by money. However, in Plato's *Republic*, Socrates has the following conversation:

"Then I dare say even the land which was sufficient to support the first population will be now insufficient and too small?" "Yes," he said. "Then if we are to have enough for pasture and ploughland, we must take a slice from our neighbours' territory. And they will want to do the same to ours, if they also overpass the bounds of necessity and plunge into reckless pursuit of wealth?" "Yes, that must happen, Socrates," he said. "Then shall we go to war at that point, Glaucon, or what will happen?" "We shall go to war," he said.

Sophocles, in 441 B.C., wrote, "It is money that sacks cities and drives men forth from hearth and home; warps and seduces native innocence, and breeds a habit of dishonesty."

The type of conflict Socrates referred to has been repeated in every century since his lifetime – although the instigators of aggression have often disguised their true motives by proclaiming good intentions (e.g., to civilise an apparently uncivilised people).

One of the grievances that the Red Indians had against the white men was that they had driven away or exterminated the bison... To the Indians, wanton killing of bison was the equivalent of cattle-rustling for the white man, and also punishable by death. Wars broke out as the Indians saw both their territory and their livelihood disappearing. Some enlightened men sought to safeguard both, but many others claimed the extermination of bison was the only way of 'civilising' the Indians (always a good excuse for land-grabbing). Without the bison, the Indian culture died. For centuries their economy had been based on the bison but as has often happened, technological advance has failed to bring happiness.

What will happen when the buffalo are all slaughtered? ...It will be the end of living, and the beginning of survival. - Brother Eagle, Sister Sky

Money is a necessary commodity for survival in the modern world.

Money is seen as the key to survival. It turns helpless, infantile rage into usable strength and power.

In primitive societies and in the subhuman animal kingdom, survival belongs to the strongest and... swiftest. In modern civilized society, the means of survival – food, clothing, and shelter – are purchased with money. Over a period of several thousand years, money has become a substitute for strength and speed. People no longer compete directly with each other for the game to feed their families, but indirectly for the money to buy food.

Furthermore, the people selling the food usually do so to make a profit.

When it comes to making a *profit*, the best time to do so is supposedly during a war, and it is often said that 'the way to end a depression is to start a war.'

...the arms manufacturers tell me... war is money... the more people we kill in this war the more the economy will prosper...

"Alright, here's your last question. What was the cause of the [US]Civil War?" "Actually, there were numerous causes. Aside from the obvious schism between abolitionists and anti-abolitionists, economic factors, both domestic and international, played a significant..." "Just say slavery."

The Federal government has been the biggest customer of U.S. industry since 1941. The Cold War made it possible to substitute government purchase of armaments for the investment not forthcoming from the private sector. When the Kennedy administration took office in 1961, investment and the demand for capital goods were not sustaining growth in the U.S. economy. The Kennedy tax cut did not produce the desired surge of investment... Arms procurement, it turned out, could also serve to stimulate economic growth, or at least to keep the economy going. Both capital goods and armaments create employment without putting products into the market to absorb the wages they pay. Those wages generate additional demand and, therefore, additional jobs in consumer-goods industries and, by this "multiplier" effect, keep the system growing... Military procurement has kept the system running by taking a sufficient percentage of its output off the market and – in plain language – burying it in the ground.

Today, the industry with the greatest worldwide financial turnover is officially said to be 'armaments (second place goes to drugs; third to oil' – although other sources say 'oil is the biggest industry in the world' and 'coffee is second to oil').

One has to realise that the powerful industrial groups concerned in the manufacture of arms are doing their best in all countries to prevent the peaceful settlement of international disputes... - Einstein

...take the profit out of war we don't need it any more...

Historically, the money war has been depicted by struggles between rich and poor people – or, in 20th century-speak, between the right and the left.

We are assured again and again that politics comes in two basic styles – "right-wing" or "left-wing" – with something in between dubbed, with vivid originality, the "centre." Yet commentators who employ these words seem often to have quite woolly ideas about what they mean by them. - 1997

The so-called *right* is associated with the rich, West or capitalism; the so-called *left* with the poor, the East or communism. Such references give the impression that the capitalist and communist systems are on opposing sides. Propaganda from within both systems has been responsible for that impression.

East/West rivalry In the propaganda war between the superpowers... a permanent climate of mistrust and misunderstanding... [has been] created... Television and the written word have helped to bring home such violations of human rights as the crushing of the independent trade union movement, Solidarity, in Poland (1981). For their part, the citizens of the Soviet Union have been shown pictures of the unemployed in the West, images of an apparently uncaring society which has reduced many of its citizens to a poverty-stricken, marginal group. It is not altogether surprising that both East and West feel they have a moral duty, as well as a strategic interest, to extend their interest in the world. They want to export their values, if necessary by force...

On the air the ministry broadcasts... we're living wonderful lives... we know... it's only propaganda... - DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE WESTWORLD

There is, however, some theoretical truth in the belief that capitalism and communism *are on opposing sides*.

capitalism, an economic system in which profit on invested capital is the primary incentive for production and distribution. It is based on the private ownership of property. In theory, it supports free enterprise, or the right of any individual lawfully to establish and operate an enterprise, and to take for himself what rewards he can reap in competition with others... Opposition to capitalism is found in one form or other among socialists, communists, syndicalists, and certain fascists, all of whom advocate state regulation of capital... *communism*, the body of doctrines and practices associated with the belief that in a social group all property should be owned in common[('everything would be state owned')]... Modern communist-socialist thought generally stems from the 18th- and 19th-cent. thinkers who believed in the natural equality and perfectibility of man...

Marx believed that the Communist revolution would be the final revolution because it is the perfect answer to all social contradictions.

Communism embraces a revolutionary ideology based on the overthrow of the capitalist system, and, in theory at least, on the notion of constant progress towards the perfect stateless society.

In theory communism works.

In practice it hasn't worked. The main reason for this is because, while most of the citizens in communist countries wanted something that was the opposite of capitalism, they got 'what we call state capitalist operations.'

The basis for this claim is that... the similarities between communism and capitalism are greater than their differences... It makes no appreciable difference who owns the means of production if the production process itself is based on the assumption that its development need not be hindered by thoughts of limits to growth... Ecologists argue that discussion about the respective merits of communism and capitalism is rather like rearranging the deckchairs on the Titanic: they point out that industrialism suffers from the contradiction of undermining the very context in which it is possible, by unsustainably consuming a finite stock of resources in a world that does not have a limitless capacity to absorb the waste produced by the industrial process.

The development of modern society in both the Soviet Union and the United States is now following the same course... giving rise in both countries to managerial groups that are similar in social character. We must therefore acknowledge that there is no qualitative difference in the structure of the two societies.

During 1989 and 1990 the world saw the collapse of a raft of... regimes in Eastern Europe. In Peking, demonstrations in Tien An Men Square were suppressed by force, while in the Soviet Union nationalist uprisings, anti-communist demonstrations and mass strikes against economic deprivation became the norm – and are continuing. Albania has been no exception. Western politicians and the big business media howled with glee. They shouted: This is the end of communism! Hurrah! It shows that capitalism is best! Actually it showed nothing of the sort! Because *all* the regimes that were claimed to be 'communist' or socialist *had already a long time back restored capitalism!* This assertion may astonish some who are kept in ignorance of the history of [commun]ism and the working class. *But it is a fact nevertheless...* Actually, communism as a system did not exist in any of the countries concerned. For a ruling party to be a Communist Party, even a genuine one, does not at all mean that the country is 'communist'. Communism as a socio-economic system is simply the abolition of classes. That is what the theory of Marx and Lenin teaches. - What Went Wrong in Russia & China

...Marxist theory holds that socialism is simply a later stage of capitalist development and would grow out of the process of capitalist production and accumulation. In fact, the new vulnerabilities of industrialism itself now have produced an even greater irony: that the fierce and supposedly fundamental debate between Marxism and capitalism of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries has turned out to be a surface argument. Both systems are systems of industrialism, dedicated to maximizing material production and narrowly conceived technological 'progress'; both short-change the considerations of ecological tolerances and the fundamental needs of human beings that go beyond material sufficiency to needs for philosophical meaning and concerns of the spirit.

Marx saw the capitalists as parasites living at the cost of the workers.

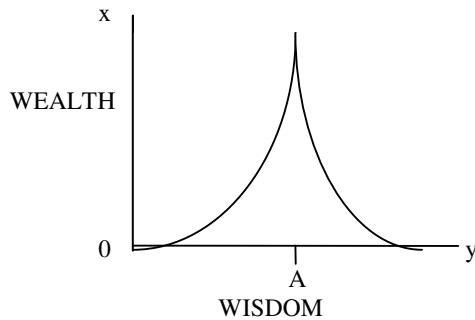
Unfortunately, 20th century communism – which in Russia was actually a form of socialism (or, alternatively, Leninism, Stalinism, etc.), and in China can more accurately be termed Maoism – has proven to be capitalism's equal when it comes to *living at the cost of the workers*.

The division of the industrial world by the Cold War has concealed the progress of the centrally planned economy... In isolation from world trade, the Communist regime went on with the building of... heavy infrastructure protected from competition by longer-established industries outside. The people – under severe political discipline, assured of shelter and sustenance, and waiting in long queues for access to goods widely available in other industrial countries – continued patiently to render their involuntary contribution to capital formation... [in anticipation of] the fruits that were owing to three generations of sacrifice.

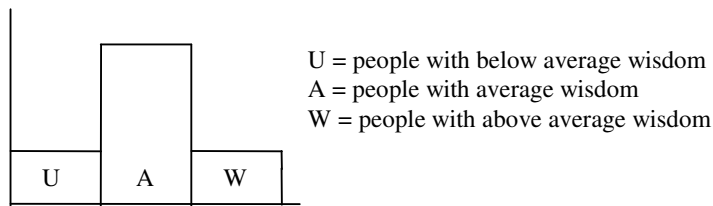
Both the "left" and the "right" are plundering the freedom of the individual... The terms derive... from the seating arrangements of post-revolutionary French parliaments, one of the more venal and violent ruling bodies anywhere, anytime.

I ask myself should I put my finger to the left? ...I ask myself should I put my finger to the right? ...doesn't really matter where I put my finger... it's always been the same it's just a complicated game...

The managing of economic systems may be *complicated*, but showing the division of money within a society is easy – and can even be depicted graphically:



It would be honest to admit that the above graph was not derived from the input of factual data. However, if researchers were to waste time and resources obtaining the relevant statistics, upon plotting them they would end up with a similar result. Such data could also be presented in the following way:



According to the graphs, people with zero wisdom aren't wealthy. The justification for this suggestion is that, although there may be the occasional exception, most examples either don't understand the meaning of wealth, quickly lose what wealth they acquire or must have someone manage it for them (which only makes them wealthy in an abstract manner – and the financial manager could steal their wealth). Furthermore, the graphs imply that wise people aren't wealthy either – though not necessarily for the same reasons as people with zero wisdom – while people who have average wisdom (point or box A) can be poor, the wealthiest people in the world or anywhere between. What is average wisdom? It is hard to define and might not even exist – which may be why people are only labelled as being either wise or unwise (or more often one than the other). In that case, the majority – when considering all living humans – are unwise and poor (although this is merely a reflection of the way things have been historically).

In the capitalist system competition drives the way...

In general, and constitutionally in any democracy, the desires of the majority are what gives society its direction. Thus it may be poor people's desires that currently drive the world.

They denounce, and rightly, the injustices of capitalism; but they do not always realise that capitalism is maintained, not only by capitalists, but by those who, like some of themselves, would be capitalists if they could, and that the injustices survive, not merely because the rich exploit the poor, but because, in their hearts, too many of the poor admire the rich. They know and complain that they are tyrannized over by the power of money. But they do not yet see that what makes money the tyrant of society is largely their own reverence for it.

In the market economies, especially, whole new categories of experience were entering the measure of well-being... People in these societies who did not share fully in the rising abundance remained bound to them by the expectation that they might soon have their share also. Economic growth offset disparity in income because it brought new participants into the celebration.

I don't know if I'd like being rich... but I'd sure like to try.

The dream of rising from rags to riches is as much a part of the American heritage [(and 'no society has ever encouraged its people to dream so extravagantly and with such expectation as America has over the last 50 years')]as is baseball and apple pie.

...factory town... youth... All we ever wanted was everything all we ever got was... darkness... oh to be the cream...

If one is poor, for example, one is likely to place a higher value on money than if one is rich... The lure of money is the motivation for a large part of human behaviour... Millions of people apparently worship money. Even more dream about having millions of dollars and fantasize about the things they would do with it. It is probably safe to say that money is as much a preoccupation with most people as sex... A number of studies have even stressed the similarity of the very rich... and the very poor. Both groups tend to live off unearned income, have a disdain for hard work... Another similarity between the very rich and the very poor is their immunity to the necessity of making choices and assuming the responsibility that goes with such choices.

It seems like the majority of poor people support the type of society we currently have as long as there is a chance for them to become rich also.

...every man is for himself Wealth is for the one that wants it Paradise if you can earn it...

Pragmatic values predominate, with the individual free to seek his own self-interest, as he defines it, in the marketplace. Hence the future is not determined by tradition nor achieved through organized plan, but rather as a consequence of relatively autonomous units in the system pursuing their own practical ends.

An alternative view to lines 37-8 on the previous page is that the wealthiest people are the ones who currently dictate which direction human society takes.

Lifestyles of rich measure our economy - 1996

The destinies even of this world-economy are now decided in a few places, the ‘money-markets’ of the world.

The wealth and power of British-run Hong Kong is breathtaking.

The Hong Kong city-state is dominated by the centralized power of a small financial oligarchy.

In Hong Kong money is the world and the world is money.

Money makes the world go round.

...if there was no money then gravity would cease to exist and everything would float off into the atmosphere, so money is definitely the most important thing in the world!

***Love once made the world go round; now it's money...* [T]oday money is the overwhelming driving force for world leaders and political wannabes as romance, revolution, high-minded strategy and the rest fade into the background. Economic self-interest has always been central to the organisation of societies and the advancement of individuals. But the defining characteristic of the post-modern political era is the absolute domination of money as the organising principle of human and international relations. - 1997**

Regardless of who is responsible for the current preoccupation with wealth – be it financial or material – the situation has been compounded by the fact that, whereas wealth was traditionally gained only by killing, stealing or exploiting, or by inheriting wealth from somebody who had profited through any of those activities in the past, today people can also become wealthy by luck.

You don't have to work – just be damn lucky!

The main problem with thinking of wealth in terms of *luck* is that it presents rich people with an excuse to believe nothing can be done to help the poor – because for some to be lucky it necessarily follows that others must be unlucky.

“...Luck comes in cycles,” he explains... [He] has won Lotto, not once but twice... [His] good luck could be put down to karma... “No, I don't think that's it,” he says. “After all, criminals have won it, too. I mean the odds against winning are enormous. With things like Lotto it's just chance... Personally, I think the luckiest thing I've ever had was being born to my parents...”

Somehow... there always seems to be... this situation in which people are segregated into... class[es]... and it's all a matter of luck which one you happen to be born into, isn't it...

...there is one other essential ingredient involved in becoming rich. That is luck. No matter how intelligent, hardworking, unscrupulous, or ingenious a person is, an element of luck is almost always involved in making a fortune. The person is at the right place with the right product or the right technology at the right time to capitalize on the right opportunity... In these instances, it often appears to the recipient as if the money has appeared almost by magic, making the person feel as if he or she has a favored position in the eyes of fate or some higher authority. To test this illusion, the individual often seems driven to find out whether the money can be disposed of faster... Humans seem to adjust to almost anything if given enough time, but rapid change creates chaos for many. People who suddenly acquire a lot of money often make drastic changes in their life-style... Obviously, those who are poor and stay poor have no luck at all, or if they do, it is bad luck.

However, via suing, people can even become wealthy through having *bad luck* or by being careless! Not surprisingly, there is much more written about how to become rich than about how to become or remain poor.

THIS BOOK COULD BE WORTH A MILLION DOLLARS TO YOU... READ YOURSELF INTO A FORTUNE

***Making Money Made Simple*, released in Australia early in 1987, jumped to the bestseller list and stayed put for 19 months... He wants the book to become “the [definitive] book of finance. I want it to be in every home.”**

The secret to becoming a millionaire is simply using the right words! You are 17 words or less away from a fortune! I'll reveal all the ‘magic’ words you'll ever need in my new book.

...open up the rich world of books for our children...

[A s]even-year-old... learned some cold hard facts about cash... [during] a programme to promote economics education... The Colwill Primary School pupil was making “lots of money” running a bookstore at a school market yesterday but couldn't bank it because she had left her bank book at home.

...Transforming the primary source of wealth from the business of making things to the business of thinking up things has meant a drastic reduction in how long it takes to get rich. If you woke up one morning with an idea of how to build a better steel mill, you couldn't become a zillionaire overnight... But if you had an idea of how to sell books over the Internet, all you'd need is start-up money... It took Andrew Carnegie three decades to become a centimillionaire by making steel. It took [someone else] three years by starting Amazon.com. - 1997

It is often said that ‘the rich are getting richer while the poor are getting poorer.’ Though the last part of that saying may be debatable – some people might argue that the generalisation does not hold true for a large enough percentage of *the poor* to be valid – there should be no need to dispute the first part.

The gap between... the have-nots... the haves... and the have-lots has widened.

...[Money is the seed of money, and the first guinea is sometimes more difficult to acquire than the second million.]

...[THERE IS AN OLD SAYING TO THE EFFECT THAT IF A PERSON HAS a hundred dollars and makes a million, that is incredible; but if a person has a hundred million dollars and makes a million, that is inevitable. And, despite increasing taxes, controls, and other barriers imposed by government agencies, the number of millionaires continues to grow to the point where one wit recently remarked, "Soon millionaires will be a dime a dozen." Still, the odds against someone who is poor or middle class becoming rich are much greater than those against the rich getting richer. Rather than putting themselves to work, the rich put their money to work for them. Naturally, the more money they have working for them, the more they are likely to get back in return. If one has enough capital to start with, it is possible to make a lot of money with no effort, no intelligence, no business know-how, and virtually no risk. Since money generates money, it is theoretically possible for a person to develop a never-ending supply of dollars. A Howard Hughes or a J. Paul Getty, for example, could invest \$100 million in eight percent tax-exempt bonds. The interest on this investment would produce \$8 million a year spendable income, without ever touching the principal. Conceivably, this income could go on forever. Those who are already rich have capital at their disposal, and it does not lower their standard of living or restrict their self-indulgence to invest part of it in some money-making venture. For the poor it is harder. People who are hungry have difficulty transcending their present discomfort. It is unrealistic for them to think in terms of doing with even less than they have and investing the difference in the hope of making a profit several years hence. In the ghetto, survival is a day-to-day reality. Tomorrow may never come. Five years from now is forever. Individuals who have become rich after starting with nothing but a dream are unusual']...

Many New Zealanders are worth... nothing... or less than nothing. Financially that is. That is one of the findings of a comprehensive survey... [O]nly 51 per cent had a positive net worth (assets less liabilities), 35[%] just broke even and 14[%] owed more than they owned... A POOR man's rich list would be one way of describing it. A poor man's poverty list might be even better. Unlike the other, much-heralded rich list, there are no names with this one. There are too many of us, for one thing... While the numbers may not be happy reading for 49% of all Kiwis... things were not as bad as they seemed. While only 16% of N[Z]ers may own three-quarters of all the money, the situation was more extreme in the United States and Britain. Up to 80% of Britain's net worth is held by between 5% and 10% of the population. [Incidentally, last year it was 'reported that the gap between rich and poor is growing faster in Britain than in any country except NZ'.]

...A... report shows that Australia and Britain [(the United Kingdom)] have the biggest gap between rich and poor in the western world, the gap being twice as bad as that in Ethiopia... "The United Kingdom, unfortunately, has an exceptionally high degree of inequality," said the United Nations Development Programme, which published the report.

...The number of millionaires in Britain has doubled in the past five years, taking membership of the £1 million... club past the 100,000 mark. Almost 200 people became millionaires every week on average over that period... It means that one in 500 people can now claim to be a millionaire.

...[Previous to the 1970s 'wealth in Britain was measured in £100,000s', while in the US – where the rate of millionaires 'per 100,000 persons was 205 in 1982' – it was recently said that: 'a million dollars isn't what it used to be; you need \$5 million to feel comfortable today'.]

...For the second year in a row, two Americans... have topped *Forbes* magazine's ranking of the world's billionaires. The... founder of software giant Microsoft Corp [is on top]... *Forbes* also said that there are at least 447 families or individuals in the world with a net worth of at least \$1 billion, up from 388 last year... The U[S] is home to one-third of the world's billionaires with 149. There are now 41 Japanese billionaire fortunes and 82 non-Japanese Asian billionaire fortunes, including 20 from Hong Kong. Other countries with billionaires include Germany with 52, Mexico with 15, France with 14, Switzerland with 12, Malaysia with 11, Indonesia with 10, Thailand with 10, Philippines with nine and Canada with seven.

...*Forbes* said the net worth of the 40-year-old... Microsoft Corp co-founder... has jumped to a staggering \$US18.5 billion... up almost \$4 billion in just one year. The sharemarket's bull run had much to do with the big gain in the fortunes of those who made the *Forbes* list... [M]ore than half of those who made the list were not born wealthy – 217 were self-made millionaires... The magazine found that 30 of its 400 richest Americans never attended college. And the 63 people on the list who did not have a college degree had a much higher average net worth than the college graduates on the list. - 1996

Welcome to the United States, the land of milk and money...

The company's share price has increased more than 50-fold in a decade, making hundreds of Microsoft staff millionaires.

...*Making a fortune in America has never been easier...* The biggest trend in the U[S] economy for the past 20 years has been the decline of manufacturing and a corresponding shift to high technology, retailing, finance and entertainment... It took a mere \$100 million to make the first *Forbes* 400 list of richest Americans by 1982. By last year, the price of admission had risen to \$415 million... Before we succumb completely to irrational exuberance... we should look at a difficult issue: the fact that the New Economy is leaving lots of Americans [(USers)] behind. Despite heartwarming success stories like the millionaire secretaries created at Home Depot, the top 1[%] of the population continues to own about a third of the nation's wealth, the next 9[%] own a third and the remaining 90[%] have to make do with a third... This isn't bleeding heart stuff – it's just a fact.

...THE Pacific Rim now accounts for about a quarter of the world's billionaires... Of the top 100, only six are from Japan... [and of] the 10 richest Asians, only two are Japanese... although that may reflect the fact that Japan's wealth is created by huge corporations rather than by entrepreneurs... The family of [the] President... of Indonesia jumped to ninth on the annual ranking... published yesterday – up from 93rd last year – with a combined wealth estimated at \$US6.3 billion... The... world's richest man... the Sultan of Brunei... worth an estimated \$US30 billion and whose tiny Borneo sultanate sits on vast oil reserves, again topped the list of Asia's 100 wealthiest families...

The sultan is regarded as the richest man in the world with an estimated fortune of \$US40 billion...

For those a tad out of touch... the richest businessman in the history of the universe... flogs computer software... [and fifth place goes to his] Microsoft co-founder... *Forbes* magazine puts the computer whiz top of its annual list of the 200 wealthiest billionaires... for the third year in a row... The 41-year-old bespectacled tycoon's net worth has doubled to \$US36.4 billion... [His] fortune is second to that of the Sultan of Brunei, but the magazine excludes monarchs and dictators from its annual lists because their wealth derives more from political heritage than economic effort. Those who inherit money rather than actively make or manage it are also excluded. For the record, however, *Forbes* estimates the sultan is worth \$US38 billion, more than [the King of] Saudi Arabia's... \$US20 billion... and the Queen [of Britain], whom it says is worth \$US16 billion when the Royal Collection and crown jewels are counted and \$US350 million without. - 1997

Two months after the above article was published another one stated that the '*Forbes* list of "Technology's Richest 100" for 1997 estimated the Microsoft executive's wealth at \$US38.66 billion', then, a week later, '*Forbes* magazine's list of the 400 richest Americans said his net worth was \$39.8 billion, an increase of \$400 million a week compared to 1996'. While the Microsoft co-founder's wealth – which is 'worth over 10 times NZ's top 200 richest people put together' – appears to be changing rapidly, the official order of the world's richest of the rich has remained relatively unchanged since the beginning of the final decade of the 20th century.

The Queen is the fourth richest person in the world... Her personal wealth has been estimated at \$[NZ]18.9 billion. Only the Sultan of Brunei \$43.8 billion[or approximately \$US26 billion at the time), the] King... of Saudi Arabia \$31.5 billion and... [a US] chocolate family \$21.9 billion are said to be better off. The Queen's vast fortune had increased by \$3.84 billion in the past 12 months. - 1989

THE KING REALIZES PAYING TAXES IS DIFFICULT, AND HE WANTS YOU TO KNOW HE FEELS YOUR PAIN... HE KNOWS TIMES ARE HARD AND MONEY IS VERY SHORT... SO THIS YEAR HE WON'T BE TAKING YOUR MONEY... WHAT *WILL* HE BE TAKING?
...YOUR HOME - HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

Kings, after all, are simply anointed robbers.

"It's so nice to be rich and cultured and better than other people." "How true." ... "A toast... here's to all the wealth, fame and fanfare that goes with royalty."

The Firm, as the royal family is known to many, is thinking of privatising... The financial restructuring of the crown is one of a series of "modernising" changes which, it emerged this week, is being considered by a hitherto unknown body calling itself the Way Forward Group. The group is really the unofficial royal board of directors: the Queen, her immediate family and her senior advisers... The total cost of maintaining the royal family is about £55 million... a year. This comes from various sources: the Queen's private assets, various Government departments... and the Civil List, an annual parliamentary vote of taxpayers' money, this year totalling £8.9 million... The idea... is that the family would give up all taxpayers' money, but instead take back the revenue from the Crown Estate... The Crown Estate is huge, ranging from Scottish moorland to some of London's most prime real estate, such as Regent Street. Since 1710, revenue from the estate has gone to Treasury. This year... the assets are worth more than £2.2 billion and earned £94.6 million. Even taxed at the top rate, the exchange looks a good deal for the family. So good, some observers say, that there's no way the Treasury would agree... There's a difference of opinion over abolishing the Civil List. Some don't like losing Parliament's only real opportunity to scrutinise royal finances. - 1996

The Queen is to open her account books for the first time for members of Parliament to see how she spends the £20.4 million... she receives from public funds... By opening her books, the monarch wanted to show that the royal family is not making a profit on taxpayers' money, and is not exempt from payment of local taxes and home repair costs... the *Times* reported yesterday.

...After picking up between \$[NZ]36 million to \$48 million in her divorce settlement and benefiting from her father's estate when he died... PRINCESS Diana... now... shares the 916th richest spot... according to a new survey of Britain's 1000 richest people... which describes itself as "the definitive guide to Britain's wealth." [Her former husband, the] Prince of Wales does not make the list because most of his wealth is counted under his mother. "He will pick up quite a considerable amount of wealth from the Queen... [but] will not really control much until he becomes king," said a spokesman... His personal wealth amounted to \$11.7 million last year... Top of the list is [a] financier... on \$7.22 billion... The list features 16 other billionaires... - 1997

The Queen is set to join Britain's growing band of dot.com millionaires only four months after investing £100,000... in an internet company. The *Sunday Telegraph* says her shares in getmapping.com may be worth £1.2 million when the company, which is producing an aerial map of Britain, floats next month... Meanwhile, Britain's super-rich are getting richer, according to a list... published by the *Sunday Times*. The collective wealth of the top 1000 has reached almost £146 billion, up 27[%]...

At 27, he's worth £600m, he's single and on every girl's shopping list - TOP TEN BACHELORS

He's got fame and fortune. She'll do almost anything for money. Together they're the perfect couple. - Pretty Woman

...for the love of money a woman will sell her precious body...

What is that song now? ...money can't buy me love... trouble is it can. Money can buy you anything, anything you like... love, respect, loyalty...

It is said that for money you can have everything, but you cannot. You can buy food, but not appetite; medicine, but not health; knowledge, but not wisdom; glitter, but not beauty; fun, but not joy; acquaintances, but not friends; leisure, but not peace.

A man who feels unattractive and unlovable may feel that beautiful women would find him desirable if he were rich. But if he becomes rich and women do flock to him, he is likely to feel they are really attracted to his money and not to him.

HAVE you seen today's *National Enquirer*?" [asks the New York billionaire]... "Well, I just happen to have one here. Wanna take a look?" He bounces round his vast desk and slaps the magazine down in front of me... [then] jabs his finger at a double-page feature, [The New York Billionaire] And His Women... He is proud of his conquests and the[property] tycoon does not tire of telling how the world's most beautiful women are falling at his feet... There are lots of photographs of him with various beauties... Beneath the pictures is the "amazing story of how even if... [he] was not a billionaire thousands of women would *still* fancy him!" ..."Gosh," I say to him. "Have you read this?" ...[I show him the article about how t]he Bank of England has agreed to help the Sultan of Brunei to locate... [an estimated \$NZ]43 billion... of state funds that are thought to have disappeared when his brother... was finance minister.

...For sale: trove of 10,000 items ranging from priceless jewels to unused... hardwood toilet seats. Current owner forced to sell due to family dispute over £500,000-a-day... spending habit... They are the assets of the Prince's company Amedeo Development, which [has]collapsed... with debts of £4 billion. The world's most exclusive garage sale, worth an estimated £2 billion... was forced by a falling-out between [the]Prince... and his brother, the Sultan of Brunei, until recently the richest man in the world. An international lawsuit was launched... by the Sultan against his brother for allegedly embezzling up to £2 billion from the oil-rich state's coffers and squandering around £28 billion.

...Four or five N[Z]ers have been barred from leaving Brunei after being caught up in a billion-dollar feud involving alleged embezzlement from the Sultan of Brunei. They are part of a group of 13 foreigners, including British and Australian citizens, who have been told not to leave while "visa irregularities" are investigated. The group all work for a company called Global Evergreen that was set up by the Brunei Government to investigate the alleged disappearance of \$31.2 billion from the Sultan, one of the world's richest men. The [NZ]Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade... told the *Herald* that... [a]ll of the N[Z]ers were employed by the company, which had been engaged to investigate problems caused by the collapse of the Amedeo Group, which belonged to... a brother of the Sultan.

...The youngest brother of the Sultan of Brunei allegedly paid £21m for £5m worth of flats over the old Playboy club. The Prince allegedly laid out the money so he could keep his hoard of prostitutes secreted away from the public eye. Other revelations... include... stories of huge sex parties where [the Prince] would fly 50 high-class prostitutes to Brunei from Europe. He was also alleged to have given the girls lavish gifts like jewel-encrusted watches and erotic pens fashioned from white gold.

Lawyers for the Sultan of Brunei and his brothers argued yesterday that they were protected by sovereign immunity from a lawsuit filed by six women accusing them of sexual coercion... [A] 26-year-old... University graduate, claims she and six other women were tricked into going to Brunei last year for what they were told were modelling jobs. When they arrived their passports and airline tickets were confiscated and they were tested for sexually transmitted diseases. They were expected to engage in sex acts and act like prostitutes for a group of wealthy, influential men. [The 26-year-old] said she was held captive for 32 days.

...The latest adventures of N[Z]'s warrior princess include catching the eye of one of the world's richest men. It seems [a New York]billionaire... wants to add [the]actress... to his many acquisitions. The 51-year-old property investor, worth a cool \$2.5 billion, propositioned the star... But the twice-married [billionaire] was rebuffed and took his brush-off like a gentleman... said... [the] 29-year-old Aucklander, acclaimed as a feminist icon by *Ms* magazine... She... [is already engaged to the] American... executive producer of... [her] hit show... - 1997

[An American s]upermodel... says she was once offered \$8 million to sleep with an Arab sheik... [The American supermole says] she turned it down.

When she was a heart-stopping beauty of 19, billionaire Howard Hughes offered [her] one million dollars to marry him and the deal was she wouldn't have to sleep with him... [S]he refused... Love was more important she told a friend... When her third husband... was killed in a plane crash... [the widowed actress – who 'is to voice an animated character in the new series, *God, The Devil And Bob*, playing God's girlfriend' –] went after... the husband of her best friend... Less than three years later, while filming *Cleopatra in Rome*, [she started an affair]... with her Mark Antony, a little-known actor... It was an affair that would end her [4th] marriage... and begin... [a 5th. Eventually, however, Mark Antony's] two-fisted drinking caught up with him – he died broke at 58... [He] told... he'd spent about thirty million dollars on her...

It seems you're never too old to learn from your mistakes. The eight-times-married [former Cleopatra – who is 'estimated to be worth \$575m' –]is now adamant you'll never see her walking down the aisle again... "Marriage can be a very selfish institution..." - 1997

If marriage is potentially *a very selfish institution*, surely the institution which permits the existence of billionaires is that way permanently?

I have so much money that I don't have to think about it.

...more more more more money more more more more everything more things than you have time for... than you can use...

The desire to accumulate extreme wealth is irrational. Beyond a certain point, added wealth cannot increase the opulence of one's style of living or increase one's happiness... Howard Hughes made more than a billion dollars in his life-time and J. Paul Getty made several billion... If one spent a thousand dollars an hour, twenty-four hours a day, three hundred and sixty-five days a year, it would take over a hundred years to get rid of a billion dollars. What is the drive that made them continue to pursue money when they already had more than they could ever count, let alone spend? Surely not happiness, since both of them apparently became more and more unhappy as their wealth increased... Hughes... became more aloof and suspicious, and it would seem that his wealth created an ever-increasing barrier between himself and other people... [A]s one accumulates more and more money, the money controls the person rather than vice versa. The wealthy person may easily become chained by money and possessions and thus lose the freedom to function independently... [A]ffluence is perceived as limitless and such a superabundance of money eliminates any need for control or conservation... The fallacy of trying to achieve happiness through money has been expressed as well by Benjamin Franklin as by anyone. "Money," he observed, "never made a man happy yet nor will it. There is nothing in its nature to produce happiness. The more a man has, the more he wants. Instead of its filling a vacuum, it makes one." ...The relationship between money and happiness has been debated for centuries. Phrases like, "The best things in life are free," "Money can't buy happiness,"... have been bantered about for so long and so often that they have all but been accepted as true. Recent evidence, however, indicates they may contain more myth than reality. For example... the Global Survey on Human Needs and Satisfaction "...hoped that somewhere in the world a nation would be found whose people are poor but happy. We didn't find such a place." ...The studies... do not show that money actually *buys* happiness, although they suggest that the lack of money may in many cases contribute to unhappiness. People whose needs are unfulfilled, whether due to lack of money or anything else, are going to be dissatisfied. Within certain limits, it is also likely that most people are happier with money than without it... Most people express a desire for both money and happiness... Of the two, money is probably easier to come by... since there are no truly happy neurotics, but there are rich ones! ...There is no evidence, however, which indicates that, beyond a certain level, happiness increases proportionately to an increase in wealth... [One millionaire] claimed the happiest day of his life was when he turned his back on his Rolls-Royce and his Bel Air mansion and drove off into the sunset in a Volkswagen.

Despite the apparent unhappiness of the world's richest, most young people still seem to associate happiness with money.

In a study by... San Francisco State College... students were asked to ascribe personality characteristics to a hypothetical man. Half of the subjects were told the man was poor, the other half that he was rich. In every other respect the man was described identically to the two groups. "The average ratings attributed to the rich man were vastly superior to those projected on the poor man... the hypothetical rich man was seen as relatively healthy, happy, and well-adjusted, while the hypothetical poor man was seen as maladjusted and unhappy."

In fairy tales like *Cinderella* and *Sleeping Beauty*, the ending, "And they lived happily ever after," implies not only that the happy couple are deeply in love but also very wealthy... Like the king, the person with money is endowed with great power. By waving a handful of money in the air, an otherwise insignificant man can command others to wait on him and to satisfy his every need and whim – shine his shoes, clean his clothes, pour his wine. In short, to treat him like a king.

It isn't hard to understand why most people would associate being treated *like a king* with happiness. However, it should be hard to understand why anyone would associate wealth with being wise!

If I were a rich man... I... Wouldn't have to work hard... The most important men in town will come to fawn on me. They will ask me to advise them, like a Solomon, the wise... And it won't make one bit of difference if I answer right or wrong. When you're rich they think you really know.

The "How to turn a dollar into two" seminar... (or one million into two million.) - wealthy & wise

If you ever wanted to be rich, successful or influential, then we suggest you pay attention... They didn't get where they are today by sleeping in...early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.

Make money; if you can, make money honestly; if not, by whatever means you can...

Is it wrong to cheat in order to win a million dollar[s]...?

To have money is to be virtuous, honest, beautiful, and witty. And to be without money is to be ugly and boring and stupid and useless.

I found that money was like a sixth sense without which you could not make the most of the other five.

Money is power. Every good man and woman ought to strive for power... I say, get rich, get rich!

When travelling on life's rich journey, it's not always possible to anticipate the troubles that lie ahead. Best then that you travel in a Range Rover. The four wheel drive that is synonymous with luxury and refinement. A vehicle with which power and respectability are standard features.

Is there an instinctual drive to amass wealth? There appears to be no possible doubt about this... [I]ndeed, a person in whom it is completely lacking will in our society be considered abnormal.

In 1802, looking in satisfaction on the ascendance of Britain, then in the vanguard of the industrial revolution, Sir Humphry Davy astutely observed: "The unequal division of property and labour, the difference of rank and condition amongst Mankind, are the sources of power in civilized life, its moving causes and even its very soul."

The development of money is, therefore, a part of the evolution of human society comparable in importance with the domestication of animals, the cultivation of land, and the harnessing of power. - A History of Money

Money, wrote the socialist playwright Bernard Shaw, is "the most important thing in the world; and all sound and successful personal and national morality should have this fact for a basis."

"The universal regard for money is the one hopeful fact in our civilization... [T]he two things (money and life) are inseparable: money is the counter that enables life to be distributed socially: it is life..." What is here described as civilization, then, is the stage of a Culture at which tradition and personality have lost their immediate effectiveness, and every idea, to be actualized, has to be put into terms of money... For it will become manifest that, from this moment on, all great conflicts of world-outlook, of politics, of art, of science, of feeling, will be under the influence of the same contrary factor. What is the hallmark of a politic of Civilization today, in contrast to a politic of Culture yesterday? It is, for the Classical rhetoric, and for the Western journalism, both serving that abstract which represents the power of Civilization – *money*. - The Decline of the West

It is the nature of privilege and tyranny to be unconscious of themselves, and to protest, when challenged, that their horns and hooves are not dangerous, as in the past, but useful and handsome decorations, which no self-respecting society would dream of dispensing with. But they are the enemies, nevertheless, both of individual culture and of social amenity. They create a spirit of domination and servility, which produces callousness in those who profit by them, and resentment in those who do not, and suspicion and contention in both... A nation is not civilized because a handful of its members are successful in acquiring large sums of money and in persuading their fellows that a catastrophe will occur if they do not acquire it, any more than Dahomey was civilized because its king had a golden stool and an army of slaves, or Judea because Solomon possessed a thousand wives and imported apes and peacocks, and surrounded the worship of Moloch and Ashtaroah with an impressive ritual. What matters to a society is less what it owns than what it is and how it uses its possessions. It is civilized in so far as its conduct is guided by a just appreciation of spiritual ends, in so far as it uses its material resources to promote the dignity and refinement of the individual human beings who compose it. Violent contrasts of wealth and power, and an indiscriminating devotion to institutions by which such contrasts are maintained and heightened, do not promote the attainment of such ends, but thwart it. They are therefore, a mark, not of civilization, but of barbarism, like the gold rings in the noses of savage monarchs, or the diamonds on their wives and the chains on their slaves. Since it is obviously such contrasts which determine the grounds upon which social struggles take place, and marshal the combatants who engage in them, they are a malady to be cured and a problem which demands solution.

There is much that kindles our anger. How could it be otherwise: the brutalization of nature, the destruction of human community, the squalor of public life, the often excruciating loneliness of personal life. And most of all, the lost opportunities that could turn life on our planet from its present stark prospect of destruction into one of beauty, joy, truth, and love. We have been told by the powers-that-be and by their paid scribes that these things are not for people, surely not ordinary people... We have to "prove" that we are good enough by enduring pain and privation and fear – which they generously make available to us – so that we can achieve the good life, the good life being riches and power (their kind) and fame. But even then, not for all, for only a few can get that far. That is their vision of life. It is a rotten vision.

Thus far the argument here has been that the character traits engendered by our socioeconomic system, i.e., by our way of living, are pathogenic and eventually produce a sick person and, thus, a sick society. - TO HAVE OR TO BE?

...obsession with money, as witness the long and unhappy life of Howard Hughes, reduces a man to the gibbering sycophancy of a frightened ape.

Within the span of a few centuries the focus of interest shifted from the inner world to the outer world... All but one of the (seven deadly) sins, sloth, was transformed into a positive virtue. Greed, avarice, envy, gluttony, luxury, and pride were the driving forces of the new economy... Unbounded power was harnessed to equally unbounded appetites.

Money, perhaps more than any other cultural reality, typifies our distressed condition, in that money *is* power, the power to convert fantasy into fact, wish into fulfilment, and money has become nothing but power; we have expunged every other meaning, extinguishing their bright radiance with pudgy fingers that prefer the dark. We stand in desperate need of a memorial to money, a testament that treasures its marvellous past, a past dismissed by modern economics because... we cannot deliver the earth's wealth as a legacy to our children, having consumed and squandered it within the space of a few short generations... - Money and the Soul of the World

In Hong Kong... your life or death depends on the size of your wedge... Show us your money, you've got a life... If life was as simple as that I would have died years ago.

Money's not the only thing that makes the world go round.

IF "IT'S A MAD WORLD. MAD AS BEDLAM," AS CHARLES DICKENS wrote, at least part of that madness has to do with money... [Y]et to many it is the most prized possession in the world... To most people... the lure of money seems to be a natural phenomenon... They have become so indoctrinated with the idea that having money is important, that they no longer question why... Despite evidence everywhere to the contrary, millions of people seem to think that money is the panacea that will solve most of their problems. And if a little bit of money doesn't do the trick, they consider that more money will... While they may not be aware of what it is they truly want from life, they feel sure that money will provide it for them... [as] lack of money is perceived to be the basis of all their troubles... "[Psychiatric patients] show far less resistance in relating hatred for their parents or in disclosing sexual perversities than in discussing their money status or transactions. It is as if they equated money with their inmost being." *...the same liberated couple that casually goes to bed on the first date might feel extremely uncomfortable talking about dividing expenses for dinner or the movie they attend...* Secrecy about money matters leads to many kinds of confused and neurotic interactions between people... Hypocrisy about money is therefore inevitable... You may wonder why you spend money freely on luxuries and resist buying tomatoes because they are three cents a pound higher than they were the day before... "Crazy" money habits and money neuroses rarely disappear with age... ['HERE'S a simple question: would you mow your own lawn to save the \$25 you might pay someone else to do it? Now, a second question: would you mow your neighbour's lawn for \$25? If you answered yes to the first question (and most people do) and no to the second question (again, most people do), then you have violated a simple premise of prevailing economic theory, which assumes human beings are self-interested and will do what is economically rational. But, as everyone knows – everyone except economists, that is – human behaviour does not conform to immutable laws.'] The magic of money is such that few people react to it with logic or reason... The magical power of money has multiplied over the last twenty-five hundred to three thousand years. As more and more people have come under its spell, the quality and quantity of its magic have increased. The myths and rituals have become more complex, and the money priesthood has expanded to include bankers, legislators, accountants, lawyers, stockbrokers, economists, and financiers... Many of the meanings associated with money are symbolic and closely intertwined with other needs and values. If having money makes a person feel important or superior, it has more impact on the person's life than if its only value is in the goods it will buy. For many persons, money is a status symbol. One of the benefits of having money in our society is that it raises one's value in the eyes of many people... The bank manager is likely to fawn over the large depositor and ignore the person with a small savings account... Conspicuous consumption – whether it be of clothes, jewelry, automobiles, furnishings for the home, or food and drink – is an attempt to flaunt one's wealth in the face of others as a means of trying to prove one's superiority. Oddly enough, it is sometimes successful... It matters little whether money is obtained through hard work, inheritance, fraud or corruption, or a lucky ticket on the Irish Sweepstakes. When it comes to status, the question is not how, but how much... To some people, money means power. It is... used to buy importance, domination, control. The need for power is a compelling drive. It is usually associated with aggressiveness and a determination to win at all costs. It is often the key ingredient in "greatness." Politicians, generals, labor leaders, and business executives are usually driven by a need for power... Being able to control other people like puppets makes [them] feel powerful by comparison and assuages the fear of being helpless and frustrated themselves... The equation of money with power can be traced back to ancient times... *Power-oriented people never get enough power and they never get enough money. Like many who have never had enough to eat, they become greedy...* Studies of self-made wealthy men... show an extremely high incidence of parental death and parental divorce, which resulted in a high degree of insecurity early in life. Many of these men, as young boys, apparently set out to amass so much money that they would never be left stranded again... Compulsive savers [believe]... that "Time is money." And time not spent in making money is time wasted... They engage in a chronic, continuous struggle against circumstances, against others, and against themselves. They don't know how to relax and enjoy life... The more money they acquire, the more they worry about losing it. And the more they worry about it, the less they are able to enjoy it... Focusing their attention almost exclusively on finances makes these people dull and boring. They... are not much fun to be around. They are rarely at ease with other people, partly because they are suspicious that others are trying to do them out of their money... Some skimp on nourishment and neglect their personal health because of the cost... For the compulsive saver, good health is less important than money... They are so busy *getting the things worth having* that they don't have time to *become the things worth being*... While some people become rich because of their greed, more are destined to remain poor... because of it. The lure of instant riches is an opiate that dulls reasoning and common sense... Billions of dollars change hands every year because dishonest salesmen appeal to the greed and gullibility of millions of people who eagerly hand over their money in the hope of "turning an easy buck." - Money Madness

...I have shown the dumb dumbs the perils of greed.

I think only a dumb person would think money makes them smart.

It is unfair to use the word DUMB in the above context because doing so includes people who are simply 'unable to speak' as targets of criticism. The word UNINTELLIGENT is much more appropriate.

A successful assault on the strongholds of capitalism demands a prolonged effort of intelligence and resolution.

Making money is an intellectual pursuit... One does not have to be superintelligent to make money, but... it is necessary to be knowledgeable. Ignorance is not bliss when it comes to making money.

Ignorance is not bliss when it comes to identifying INTELLIGENCE either. For this reason, people try to measure intelligence – with intelligence quotients (IQs) being the most common method.

PRETTY women and handsome men have more in common than mere beauty. They are more likely to have higher IQs, according to scientists who have linked intelligence with beauty.

The majority of *pretty women and handsome men* probably received a lot more attention as children (e.g., from peers and teachers) and, therefore, developed a greater amount of self-confidence, which caused them to perform better in IQ tests! If the scientists are correct, wealthy people would also be expected to have higher IQs because, generally, having more money increases self-confidence (although some wealthy people don't exercise their own brain, which could tend to cause a degree of mental retardation).

If the notion that pretty women are intelligent is combined with a previous suggestion that pretty women like wealth (refer to page 17, line 42), it follows that people with high IQs should either be wealthy or aspire to become so – although one 'American who is said to have an IQ that is too high to measure, works in a low-paid, unskilled position'. However, even if a link between intelligence and wealth can be proven, it won't disprove the notion that wealth and wisdom don't mix (r:p14, lns29-30; p18, lns68-9) – because having a high IQ isn't the same thing as being wise!

A... GORGEOUS supermodel [(r:p18, lns16)]... whom American teenage girls want to run for president... adores the attention that comes with being beautiful, smart and famous... She has... bought... a charming, four-bedroom, Spanish-style house... for \$1.8 million in Brentwood, one of Hollywood's smartest areas... The budding actress, with a genius level IQ of 165... has built upon her natural talent to manage her \$7-million-a-year... conglomerate... [and] regards herself as more of a spokeswoman now... "A woman's face is her armour... If you wear the right amount of make-up you can survive anything..." says the woman who once remarked she "doesn't think make-up is rocket science or a cure for cancer"... However[, just]... when we were about to give [her] the heady title of thinking man's supermodel, she reveals the reason she has not married... her baby's dad... yet is because her numerologist told her not to walk down the aisle until November, which is her lucky month... "Nothing in my life has come by chance,"... says the woman who... [at] 16... had been a straight-A pupil... until a local photographer foresaw her potential.

I NEVER had to study too hard to pass most exams at school or university. I had a good memory for facts which generally counterbalanced the long nights of drinking and gossiping that university life entails. Which is not to say I am a genius. While I can pick out a tune or phrase of language fairly easily, I cannot read a road map... fill out a tax form with any success and find it almost impossible to figure out the time in another country when making an international call, despite having all the information at hand. Armed with the knowledge of my smarts and my idiocies, I was eager to see how I might fare in an intelligence test administered by Mensa N[Z], a regional branch of the... international society aimed at "identifying and fostering human intelligence for the benefit of humanity..." – all in a determinedly non-political, religious or racial way. The organisation has only one qualification for membership: a score in the top 2[%] of the population on a standardised intelligence test... My score was 93[%] – an IQ of 135 – meaning I missed out by 5[%] on joining Mensa... Intelligence testing is controversial, as is the exact nature of intelligence, but to test for it, you can't swot and you can't memorise answers. There are more than 100 different intelligence tests in the world and all experts have a different definition of genius, or even intelligence. Generally they agree that high intelligence means a better capacity to reason, process information and solve problems, or to combine seemingly unrelated facts to form new ideas...

There's high IQ and there's common sense... I would not want to suggest that a member of the international high-IQ society Mensa might be less than intelligent. So let me tell you a story instead... We had received, earlier in the week, a press release soliciting publicity about this weekend's annual gathering of the group whose sole membership requirement is a score in the top 2[%] of a recognised intelligence test. I'd left a message at the number included and a woman rang back yesterday... I told her I was interested in the group's conference and wondered if any of the members might have an interesting yarn to tell – might offer, in short, what we journalists call an "angle." ... "I'm not sure that we want our organisation to be written about from an angle," she said... enunciating the last word as though it were the name of a contagious disease. I tried to explain that a story beginning "Mensa N[Z] is holding its 1997 national gathering..." would be less likely to make the paper than one about a member with an unusual background. "Say," I stammered, casting about for an illustrative example, "you had a member who had failed School Certificate." "Oh, there wouldn't be anyone like that," she said. I grasped the edge of my desk to steady myself and wondered whether any of these recognised intelligence tests included questions calling for lateral thinking. "I am sure there wouldn't be... But if there were, *that* would be an angle." She said she'd think it over and call me back. As yet there has been no word. But a colleague who took one look at the press release went to the heart of the matter. "It says here they're having a car rally on the Saturday," he said. "Maybe we could follow them and see how many get lost." ... [Another] story came to mind... The... mechanic... [of] the Russian-born American biochemist and science fiction writer... who was... by any reckoning one of the century's most brilliant minds... put to him one of those posers which, to our chagrin, we all occasionally fall for... "I've tried that one on everybody who's come in today," said the mechanic, "But I knew for sure that I'd get you – because you're so damn smart."

"Quit butting in, please. Your IQ is a mere 155 while mine is a muscular 170! I am... much smarter than you..." "You should all do as I say. My IQ is 199..." "Big deal. My IQ is 280." "[That must make you t]he world's smartest man."

The size of the brain is not necessarily related to intelligence... Intelligence... tests are intended to assess the level of intellectual functioning of the respondent, in order to locate mental defectives, to assign students to appropriate levels in school, and to aid in selection of persons for certain jobs. The Army Alpha (developed in W[W]I), the... Wechsler-Bellevue... and the... Stanford-Binet... are widely used intelligence tests.

Believing that bright or dull schoolchildren were simply advanced or retarded in their mental growth, Binet devised a 'mental-age' scale which described a student's performance in relation to the average performance of students of the same physical age.

...a test was considered to measure mental ability at a specific age if two thirds to three quarters of children that age could pass it.

Intelligence tests have provoked a great deal of controversy about what kinds of mental abilities constitute intelligence and whether the IQ adequately represents these abilities, with debate centring on cultural bias in test construction and standardization procedures... On the theoretical assumption of a normal distribution for intelligence, tests designed for its measurement have been constructed in such a way that IQ scores will approximate the normal distribution. Thus, with the mean IQ arbitrarily set at 100 and the standard deviation at 15, about 50 percent of the world's population should have IQ scores between 90 and 110. About 68 percent of all people are expected to have scores between 85 and 115 (one standard deviation above and below the mean). Another 14 percent should score between 70 and 84, with an equal number scoring between 116 and 130. Only 2 percent are expected to obtain scores below 70, with another 2 percent earning higher scores than 130. In practice, however, the

distributions derived from large samples of individuals do not conform to these expectations. The theoretical distribution rests partially on the assumption that the level of general intelligence attained by any individual is genetically determined (has a hereditary basis). There is a growing body of evidence that this is not wholly the case; e.g., one's experiences after birth (indeed, into adult life) appear to play a large part in determining one's eventual intellectual status, especially when intelligence is represented by a single global score such as IQ.

It has been common to associate certain levels of IQ with labels. For example, at the upper end, the label "gifted" is sometimes assigned to people with IQs over a certain point, such as 130... Labeling schemes like these, however, have pitfalls and are in some ways dangerous. First, the labels assume that conventional intelligence tests provide sufficient information to classify someone as either gifted, on the one hand, or mentally retarded, on the other. But most authorities would agree that this assumption is almost certainly false. Conventional intelligence tests are useful in providing information about some people some of the time, but the information they provide is about a fairly narrow range of abilities... Most psychologists and other authorities recognize that social as well as strictly intellectual skills are important in classifying a person... Second, giftedness is generally recognized as more than just a degree of intelligence, even broadly defined... To measure giftedness merely in terms of a single test score would be... a trivialization of the concept... Third, a given test score can mean different things to different people. An IQ score for a person who has grown up in a ghetto home and gone to an inadequate school does not have the same meaning as the same IQ score for someone who has grown up in an upper-middle-class suburban environment and gone to a well-endowed school. An IQ score also does not mean the same thing for a person whose first language is not English but who takes a test in English, as it does for a native English-speaker. Another factor is that some people are "test-anxious" and may do poorly on almost any standardized test. Based on these and similar drawbacks, it has come to be believed generally that scores have to be interpreted carefully on an individual basis. Psychologists now believe that IQ represents only a part of intelligence, and intelligence is only one factor in both retardation and giftedness. Earlier rigid concepts in the field of intelligence measurement, which led to labeling, have had undesirable effects. The growth of a more recent concept, the malleability of intelligence, has also served to discredit labeling.

DO HEREDITY and environment have an influence on intellectual development? French researchers... have analysed the IQs of 38 adopted children, and the social level of the adoptive and natural parents. Their first observation is no surprise: ...the... average IQ was 111.60 for children with adoptive parents from upwardly mobile social groups, and 99.95 for those with parents having no professional qualifications. But whatever the child's environment, biological origin will affect intellectual performance. Children born to students or executives had an average IQ of 113.55, whereas those with socially disadvantaged parents had an average of 98.

Although biologists can point to the twenty-first chromosome as the basis of mental retardation in Down syndrome, they can't tell us why one normally developing child has an IQ of 90 and his sibling has an IQ of 150... Many will confess their own IQ at the slightest provocation, and many who do not know their IQ often wish they did. IQ is a term that is widely used and often misconstrued by a great many people. It is frequently regarded as some kind of innate, fixed endowment, like a baritone voice, big ears, or "your father's family's nose." It sometimes comes as a shock to find that IQs vary over age, can be modified by experience, and depend to some extent on which test is being administered and under what circumstances. - CHILD PSYCHOLOGY A CONTEMPORARY VIEWPOINT Third Edition

ON THE face of it, members of the younger generation, given over to video parlours, junk food, meaningless Internet chat groups, and listening to banal trance music, might be... considered to be intellectually inferior to their forbears... One might think so, and one might be right. But much of the talk of today's dumbing down of popular culture has overlooked one crucial sign: Each new generation is getting better at IQ tests. In every one of 20 countries for which there are data, today's young test-takers are outshining – often by stunning margins – their predecessors. The implications of these findings, which scholars are only now waking up to... [– 13] years after... a maverick seeker of IQ data from Otago University... first published... his findings... in *Psychological Bulletin* [–] ...have left intelligence experts perplexed. Yet few doubt their importance.

...For researchers trying to understand how much of someone's... IQ is the result of genes – and how much is the result of parental influence and everything else from the outside world – identical twins separated at birth are more valuable than an unrestricted grant. Identical twins have 100[%] of their genes in common. Separated at infancy, usually through adoption, they are assumed to have 0[%] of their environment in common. But American researchers... [at] the University of Pittsburgh... have... reported on an experiment that suggests that the "no shared environment" assumption is flawed. Twins who have never been in the same place since they popped into the delivery room did share the womb, argue the scientists... Now the Pittsburgh team has re-analysed 212 studies of IQ and genetic inheritance spanning 70 years. The... effect of the uterine environment accounts for 20[%] of the IQ similarities between twins and 5[%] of the similarities between other siblings. - 1997

Intelligence tests are also carried out on other animals but these have sometimes proven to give false results.

Gibbons are often said to be the least intelligent of apes, but recent tests have shown that they may be as intelligent as chimpanzees. The reason for the gibbons' supposed lack of intelligence was that they were not so adept at problem-solving tests as other apes... Gibbons were apparently unable to solve these problems, but it seems that they were unfairly set... [During the tests, f]ood such as a banana is placed out of reach beyond the bars of the apes' cage. A piece of string is tied to the banana and led to the bars... The strings ran along the ground and gibbons had difficulty grasping them. If, however, the strings are raised, the gibbons, being adapted for hanging on to branches or vines, could take hold of them. This is a point of great importance in designing tests of an animal's intelligence. It has to be able to carry out the necessary movements. For example, it would be no good expecting a dog to pull a suspended string with its paws. Using the improved tests it was found that gibbons could solve the problems as well as other apes... Gorillas are at least as intelligent as chimpanzees, less volatile in temperament and more patient and methodical. This stands them in good stead in the performance of intelligence tests, but they tend not to do well in tests involving manipulation. This makes sense, as they do not make use of natural objects as 'tools' in the wild as chimpanzees do.

Tool using always used to be considered a hall-mark of the human species... [N]ow we have to redefine man, redefine tool or include chimpanzees with human.

Intelligence is exhibited in the way a creature presents itself behaviourally, mentally and – when possible – orally. A plant can grow but can't think, so doesn't know it exists. An insect has a brain but is driven by instinct. Most animals, including young humans, have a limited ability to plan specific actions, which derive from instinct, and can be taught to perform various tasks by punishing or rewarding them – but few, if any, would understand the significance of those tasks (i.e., why they were taught; why they were punished).

Animal intelligence Most, if not all, animals can learn. Even an earthworm can be taught to avoid electric shocks... [I]ntelligence, or learned behaviour, in addition to instinct, is present in lower animals as well as man... All of the physical characteristics of man show that he is an animal. He has gone through many stages of development as other animals have done. The animals most like man are the *anthropoid* (meaning “like man”) apes. But even these apes do not have what man does – the abilities to think, reason, believe, and choose a course of action at will. These abilities... separate *human beings* from all other forms of life.

The chief food of earthworms is decaying plant matter although they sometimes eat small dead animals, such as other worms, and droppings. Some food is taken in with soil swallowed in burrowing, but vegetation lying on the ground near the mouth of the burrow is also important... Charles Darwin... showed that leaves, pine needles and even paper would be drawn in and used to line the upper parts of the burrows. In spite of the fact that worms are blind, the leaves and paper triangles with which he experimented were usually drawn in by their pointed ends. Clearly it is easier to draw in a leaf by the tip than by the edge, and Darwin reasoned that this behaviour showed rudimentary intelligence. Several biologists have since looked into this and it seems clear now that leaves are pulled down in the way which is mechanically most efficient, that is, by the tips. The worms reach from their burrows, grasp leaves at random, and pull. If the leaves meet with resistance they let go and try again. Success comes when they happen to grasp the tip of the leaf, and so they do this largely by simple trial-and-error and not by intelligent action. There is, however, more to it than this, for worms respond to some of the chemicals in the vegetable matter, showing a preference for the chemicals of the leaf tips rather than those of the bases and stalks.

...At one time the flea circus was a familiar item of entertainment in country fairs... It was customary for the proprietor of one of these circuses to keep human fleas and feed them on his own arm. A large part of his skill lay in constructing tiny devices such as tricycles and ‘chariots’ which could be propelled by fleas attached to them in such a way that the crawling of the insect caused them to move. Another very delicate operation was the tethering or harnessing of the fleas with very fine gold or silver wire. There was never any question of the fleas being taught or trained in any way, though of course this was always claimed as part of his expertise by their owner. Advantage was simply taken of the natural movements of the insect when restrained in various ways.

...Reports of army ants on the march, the regular columns, the division into ‘rank and file’ with ‘officer’ types flanking the main body have frequently led the more romantic writers into crediting ants with far greater intelligence than they really deserve. In fact, the apparent regulated orderliness and ‘intelligence’ displayed by army ants are the result of pure instinct – the fixed behaviour patterns they have evolved. The vast majority of the column are blind and are governed by an instinct merely to follow the ant in front, the column being guided by the soldier ants who precede the main column laying down scent trails. Yet even they are hardly seeking a path. Although best fitted to act as scouts and skirmishers, by reason of their size and armour, they take up their flanking positions merely because, being giants compared with the smaller workers, they are unable to find a footing amid the close-knit ranks of their brethren. So it is a case of the blind leading the blind. Food is found by smell, and if there are any obstacles to the line of march, the ants have to search blindly for a way round. If a circular obstacle is placed in the centre of a colony of army ants, they will troop endlessly around it... In Panama a column once became separated from the main army, described a circle by accidentally latching onto the end of its own column, and kept on marching round until the ants became weaker and weaker and eventually died.

...A 16th century antidote to poisoning was to drink the broth from donkey’s bones bruised and steeped in water. Doubtless this would produce the necessary vomiting. It was also held to be an antidote to scorpion poison. There was even the belief that anyone stung by a scorpion had only to look into a donkey’s ear to be cured – and we say a donkey is stupid!

...Whether called ass, donkey or mule, the animal is usually linked in our minds with stupidity. Many stories could be told to counter this... ‘One of our donkeys which had been severely beaten for misconduct by a member of our party, never forgot the circumstances, but, while ready to sniff and caress any of the others, would stand demurely whenever his old enemy was near, as if unconscious of his presence, until he was within reach of his heels, when a sharp sudden kick, with a look of more than ordinary asinine stolidity, was the certain result.’

...Other attributes of the mule are their intelligence and their proverbial stubbornness. Mules were extensively used by the armies in WWI for driving transport wagons and light artillery. British soldiers who had to handle them spoke of them sardonically as their long-faced friends because, they said, nothing could equal the obstinacy of a mule. If a mule decided not to do something you had almost to wait for the animal to change its mind, because it would not be driven. However, a mule’s obstinacy was not always blind, and there was one occasion when a transport column was moving along a road... when the British army was advancing rapidly on the western front. Suddenly the leading mules stopped... and all the rest followed suit. Their drivers were unable to make them take another step. Then, a hundred yards or so ahead of the transport column, a battery of field guns opened fire. The mules went forward of their own volition as soon as the firing ceased. It transpired that the battery had pulled into position during the night, and was so well camouflaged that the drivers of the mules had no idea of its presence. Yet the mules must have heard the guns being loaded, and had no intention of being under the muzzles of the guns as they went off.

...Before they were hunted bottle-nosed whales were fearless, and very inquisitive. Schools would swim up to boats to investigate them, and could not be driven away, even by firing guns. Now they have become very wary, their acute hearing warns them of approaching danger.

...At sea it has been noticed that bottlenose dolphins will avoid a boat that has been used for hunting them but will not be disturbed by other boats. The assumption is that they can recognize individual boats by the sounds they make.

...There are two basic types of animal behaviour: instinctive and trial and error learning. In addition the higher animals especially show to a varying degree a mental quality which almost defies definition. We call it intelligence... Almost all animal behaviour is instinctive but a few species also show a fair degree of intelligent behaviour... Mammals show more intelligence than any other class of animals, though many of them do not show very much of it. The most intelligent mammals are in the primates, the group which contains... man, the most intelligent animal which has ever lived on earth... The behaviour of the other primates teaches us a lot about our own behaviour. Although we are extremely intelligent we still have plenty of instincts, and the two kinds of behaviour are mixed up in almost everything that we do... We are more intelligent than our closest non-human relations, but the difference is much smaller than we often like to think.

Instincts are what a creature relies on when it doesn’t have time to consider its options – hesitation can mean death in the wilderness! Hesitation can also mean death in a society – but then so can the consequences of rash decision-making or *trial and error learning*.

Most of the species on Earth can be divided into two sets – animals that are SOCIAL or ANTI-SOCIAL. Another term that might be applicable for animals which are anti-social is PREDATORY (‘preying naturally upon others’). Social animals live as a group because instinct tells them this will increase their chances of survival – but, because societies also serve as time-saving systems, social creatures can afford to take time over their decisions (e.g., a hive will ‘consider messages from a number of scouts before deciding where the best flowers are’). Unfortunately, there is always the potential for differences of opinion to arise when two or more animals get together. For this reason, humans have placed a lot of emphasis on being able to recognise intelligence. However, intelligence isn’t something that can clearly be seen (i.e., it isn’t a material object; you can’t cut open a brain, point at something and say, “Look, there’s intelligence!”). Therefore, the first step has been to try defining it with words.

Intelligence is “innate, general cognitive ability”... “the aggregate or global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally and to deal effectively with his environment”... “Manifest intelligence is nothing more than an accumulation of learned facts and skills... [I]nnate intellectual potential consists of tendencies to engage in activities conducive to learning, rather than inherited capacities as such”...

intelligence... 1. mental ability, the power of learning; quickness of understanding. 2. information, news; the collection of this, especially for military purposes; persons engaged in such collection[– e.g., the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)].

A major problem with trying to define intelligence is that humans are limited in their perception of it – intelligence could be as infinite as the universe! Furthermore, because wisdom seems more elusive than intelligence, it should also be safe to assume that wisdom is harder to define than intelligence.

wisdom... quality of being wise: ability to make right use of knowledge... - CHAMBERS EVERYDAY PAPERBACK DICTIONARY

...experience and knowledge together with the power of applying them... - THE OXFORD REFERENCE DICTIONARY

Those two definitions don't show that having a high IQ isn't the same thing as being wise – indeed, both are similar in meaning to the first dictionary definition for INTELLIGENCE (r:ln5). However, the second definition of INTELLIGENCE has little or nothing in common with the meaning of WISDOM!

[There's 2] kinds of habits: habits which are skills or arts, and moral habits – habits of conduct... [U]nlike most of the habits that are skills or arts... it is more difficult to explain how good habits are to be distinguished from bad... [w]ith respect to moral habits... When these are good habits of mind, we call them intellectual virtues. The three that I wish... to consider are habits of insight or understanding, habits of knowing, and habits of sound judgment about ultimate matters, usually called wisdom. The Greek words for the... intellectual virtues are “*nous*,” “*episteme*,”... “*sophia*.”

The need to properly define things was acknowledged by the Ancient Greeks. One thing that they were keen to define was VIRTUE.

It seems to me then... that virtue is, in the words of the poet, ‘to rejoice in the fine and have power’, and I define it as desiring fine things and being able to acquire them. - The Meno, 77B

A *virtue* is ‘a good quality’ (e.g., patience). Therefore, at least by that definition, intelligence (or having a high IQ) is a virtue. Although the same logic can be applied to wisdom, it could also be argued that it takes many virtues to become wise – and, therefore, the more virtues a person has the wiser it must be.

I wanted one virtue and I find that you have a whole swarm of virtues to offer. - The Meno, 72A

If INTELLIGENCE is *one virtue* and WISDOM is *a whole swarm of virtues*, we can say that people are WISE if they know a lot about more than one subject; merely INTELLIGENT if they only know a lot about one subject.

An expert is a person who chooses to be ignorant about many things so that he may know all about one.

Unfortunately, people who only learn about one thing risk becoming detached from what is going on in other spheres of knowledge, which may render their knowledge obsolete or irrelevant – especially to other people. However, while an expert might be able to get away with choosing *to be ignorant about many things*, such a person is unlikely to achieve a high score on an IQ test. For this reason, simply knowing a lot about many subjects doesn't make a person wise – it is the choice of subjects that sets a wise person apart from people who are merely intelligent or unintelligent. Because it is impossible to know everything (the human brain doesn't have the capacity to store every piece of information available to it), wise people concentrate on learning about things that are important to humanity – whereas merely intelligent people tend to learn about things that are trivial or only important to themselves – and means that a wise person can have less information stored inside its head but still be more useful to society than an intelligent person. Ironically, wise people don't aim to set themselves apart from other members of their society, even though they actively seek knowledge that will do so!

Clever men, it has been remarked, are impressed by their difference from their fellows; wise men are conscious of their resemblance to them.

Wise people are better at identifying elementary or essential information than people who are merely intelligent – which means they are also more adept at deleting irrelevant or wrong information (especially when, like a computer, their brains become overloaded) – and are faster at adapting to new ideas.

I believe the research on which I base my conclusions is accurate, true and sound. As I broaden my knowledge, and as new research is unveiled, I will modify those opinions if necessary... Life and growth is change... I don't mind finding out if I'm wrong on something. I hate, however, to be wrong, because I live every principle I espouse.

Wise people aren't too concerned about being wrong when it comes to something trivial but, if unsure about something, they tend to avoid giving an opinion ('it is better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to open one's mouth and remove all doubt') – whereas merely intelligent people usually have an opinion about everything, don't mind sharing them and assume they are always right. Furthermore, merely intelligent people tend to dislike being wrong and take criticism badly – whereas wise people listen to criticism in an attempt to avoid making the same mistakes again; merely intelligent people tend to keep quiet about their mistakes in the hope that no one will find out – whereas wise people are more concerned about ensuring no one else repeats their mistakes; a wise person isn't likely to dwell on the mistakes or stupid statements of others – whereas merely intelligent people may make ‘mountains out of molehills.’

Another difference could be that if there is both a simple and a complicated way to do something, an intelligent person would be expected to choose the latter method in order to challenge itself and impress others – whereas a wise person would choose the simplest method in order to complete the task efficiently and with a minimum of fuss. (Incidentally, a previous quote – r:p9, lns4-7 – split people into three types, which could be labelled UNWISE, INTELLIGENT and WISE, thereby making INTELLIGENCE the equivalent of *average wisdom* – r:p14, lns21-31).

Unfortunately, while it is easy to suggest such differences, they would all have to be called unsubstantiated. A more accurate means of showing how INTELLIGENCE and WISDOM differ is to compare examples of humans who are acknowledged as being one or the other. Perhaps the best example of a highly regarded person who was merely intelligent is Aristotle.

Of the Greeks, Aristotle... had the most sustained influence upon western thought.

...in astronomy, his rejection of the idea of the plurality of planets... more than one in number... was a serious handicap to later thinking.

Many a sincere person will answer me: "Our attitude towards Negroes is the result of unfavourable experiences which we have had by living side by side with Negroes in this country. They are not our equals in intelligence, sense of responsibility, reliability." I am firmly convinced that whoever believes this suffers from a fatal misconception. Your ancestors dragged these black people from their homes by force; and in the white man's quest for wealth and an easy life they have been ruthlessly suppressed and exploited, degraded into slavery. The modern prejudice against Negroes is the result of the desire to maintain this unworthy condition. The ancient Greeks also had slaves. They were not Negroes but white men who had been taken captive in war. There could be no talk of racial differences. And yet Aristotle, one of the great Greek philosophers, declared slaves inferior beings who were justly subdued and deprived of their liberty. It is clear that he was enmeshed in a traditional prejudice from which, despite his extraordinary intellect, he could not free himself. - Einstein

The superior man is concerned with justice, the inferior man with profit. - The Great Philosophers

The features of Aristotle, familiar from busts and engravings, are handsome, indicating refinement and acuteness. An ancient tradition, possibly from an unfriendly source, says, however, that Aristotle had spindleshanks and small eyes and spoke with a lisp. In compensation for these physical defects, he was notably well dressed. His cloak and sandals were of the best quality, and he sported rings. Presumably, he was rich, with large family holdings at Stagirus.

...Aristotle was the son of the court physician to the king of Macedonia... He was the first person to study BIOLOGY... Alexander the Great gave Aristotle money to hire a thousand men to observe and collect specimens of animal life in Asia and Greece. Aristotle studied their observations and wrote... many books about biology. - YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCIENCE ENCYCLOPEDIA

The works credited to Aristotle are probably lecture notes, not intended for publication, but collected and edited and arranged in some order by other people, and first made generally available in about 60 BC, more than 250 years after he died.

It could be said, at least in regard to biology, that Aristotle got famous on other people's brains. The same thing can be said of America's richest person.

The real made-in-America product is not Microsoft but [its primary co-founder and chairman]. The brilliance and ingenuity of this man can be developed to that extent only in America. How many kids in the world are as smart as he?

...HE MAY BE THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS businessman or the smartest guy alive, but I have no respect for him.

Nerd who got rich on others' brains... At the age of 41 he is the world's richest man, with a personal fortune... bigger than the gross domestic product of around 100 countries... And yet there is... a reluctance to applaud his achievements. For the place which gave birth to the original enterprise culture, America has been surprisingly snuffy about his success... Americans expect something of their successful businessmen. They should be sharp-suited, immaculately groomed and, if not blessed with movie-star looks, at least trained in media techniques. [He], in contrast, dresses like one who only wears suits for special occasions, has a floppy, sub-1960s hairstyle – and dandruff to go with it – and speaks in a nasal whine... His image is of America's most famous nerd... More than this, for Americans struggling to make their first million – or their next dollar – he appears to be uninterested in his vast wealth. True, there is the vast, newly built, 45-room house on the shores of Lake Washington, with a garage to accommodate 26 cars – he has about 20 Ferraris. This is not, however, a man who worships wealth. Most of it he will not even leave to his children. Worst of all, perhaps, he is an intellectual. "American society to this day is reluctant to renounce anti-intellectualism because of its underlying promise that anyone, with the right dollops of luck and pluck... can succeed in business... The credo of unlimited opportunities for the ambitious assumes that self-styled intellectuals are not really intellectually superior – not where it counts. American anti-intellectualism will never again be the same because... [he] embodies what was supposed to be impossible – the practical intellectual." ...Maybe. But good luck seems to have played a bigger role... Alternatively, he is the deceptively mild-mannered but actually ruthless businessman... who has got rich on the brain-power of others... Edison and Ford employed manual workers in their hundreds of thousands; Microsoft employs 20,000 or so "smarts" – the merely bright or the ferociously brilliant... What about Microsoft's strategy of buying up smaller software companies to acquire their top brains? ...surely the only strategy in a business [is one] which relies on "smarts" – the very best brainpower. - 1997

Because Aristotle has been used as an ancient example of a *merely intelligent* person, it makes sense to compare him with a *wise* contemporary – of which the best example is Socrates.

Socrates... Regarded as one of the wisest men of history, he ...left no writings... Socrates taught that self-knowledge is more important than speculation about the universe; that truth (or knowledge) and virtue are inextricably connected; and that vice arises from ignorance.

Socrates brought the search for meaning down from heaven to earth. The influence of Socrates was not in a school of philosophy but in his person, in his life and the circumstances of his death. Unlike Jesus, Socrates had the misfortune to have his life reported by literary persons – Aristophanes, Xenophon, Plato, Aristotle – each with his own philosophical axe to grind. Still the dominant spirit of Socrates' ... is revealed... in the... dialogues.

Socrates was apparently ugly, snub-nosed, with a paunch and a shrewish wife, Xanthippe[– his last (he 'married 3 times')]. He took part as a good citizen in three military campaigns... and distinguished himself by his bravery, remarkable physical endurance and indifference to fatigue, climate and alcohol. He otherwise held aloof from politics, guided by his 'voice' which impelled him to philosophy and to the examination of conventional moral attitudes and assumptions with his fellow citizens and with the notable politicians, poets and gurus of the day. He represented himself as just the midwife for the opinions of others, and gave that as a reason for the Delphic Oracle's pronouncement that he was the wisest man alive.

It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, are of a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides.

The Socratic method tended to expose people's ignorance. It showed that many things they assumed to be true were false. - THE WORLD BOOK ENCYCLOPEDIA

This endeavour to show people that they knew nothing goes far to explain why Socrates shared the odium with which conservative Athenian opinion regarded the Sophists[(who 'were in business offering the equivalent of university education: for a hefty fee they would teach, in particular, rhetoric – how to argue a case in a law court or an assembly')], but we can see the essential difference between them. They believed the kind of knowledge he sought to be impossible, because absolute and universal moral qualities did not exist to be known. When they claimed to teach virtue they had nothing of that sort in mind, but only a purely practical and empirical training. His procedure on the other hand was based on a passionate conviction that the knowledge could be attained, and moreover that the only way to reform conduct was to lead men to an understanding of certain permanent and unvarying principles on which to base it; but his conversations had shown him that most men suffered from an illusion of knowledge which must be dispelled before the positive side of the inquiry could begin.

Socrates was thus a rebel against authority as such; and he shrank from no consequences. He did not hesitate to show his companions that an old man has no title to respect because he is old, unless he is also wise; or that an ignorant parent has no claim to obedience on the mere account of the parental relation. Knowledge and veracity, the absolute sovereignty of the understanding, regardless of consequences, regardless of all prejudices connected with family or city – this was the ideal of Socrates, consistently and uncompromisingly followed. But men using their intellects often come to different conclusions. The command issued by an authority which Socrates may reject has been, directly or ultimately, the result of some mental process. It is manifest that we require a standard of truth and an explanation of the causes of error. The solution of Socrates is, briefly, this. When we make a judgment, we compare two ideas; and in order to do so correctly it is obvious that these ideas must be clear and distinct; error arises from comparing ideas that are undefined and vague. Definition was thus the essential point – and it was an essential novelty – in the Socratic method for arriving at truth. - History of Greece

Socrates... His interests lay not in the natural-philosophical speculation of earlier thinkers but in the question of how men should conduct their lives, an inquiry pursued through the method of cross-questioning those he met. Self-denying in his own life, he was the centre of a circle of devoted friends who included the great and the rich.

Because Socrates' devoted friends included the rich it would have been easy for him to become like them.

Sons and daughters of the rich have rich models to emulate. They learn what it is like to be rich, to think in terms of large sums of money, and to become knowledgeable about business and finance. While some children reject these models and rebel against the values of their families, most do not. They not only inherit the family money, they identify with the family's attitudes toward money and imitate its money-making behaviour... By attending the right schools, meeting the right people, making the right friends, joining the right clubs, and moving in the right social circle, one increases the opportunity for making money. Associating with people who have money and who are involved in making more money may not only stimulate one's own money-making desires, but may also present opportunities for investments and business transactions that would otherwise be impossible... A great deal of learning takes place by imitation... Poor people associate primarily with other poor people... The models available to the poor... are not wealthy, successful individuals. More likely, they are examples of failure, at least financially.

Socrates should've had more *influence upon western thought* than Aristotle. One reason why Socrates hasn't been more influential could be that he is something few people aspire to become – an example *of failure, at least financially*.

Socrates was an Athenian, born in 470 or 469 B.C. His father, named Sophroniscus, worked as a stone-mason. He probably did a certain amount of everyday sculpture of statues in the many temples dedicated to different gods. He and his wife, Phaenarete, who was a midwife, lived in a district on the road between the city of Athens and the famous marble quarries of Mount Pentelicus, about ten miles away to the north-east. Sophroniscus seems to have been liked and respected by his fellow Athenians, and was probably reasonably well off. Their son may have practiced his father's craft for a time and made quite a good living, but he chose to abandon it, willingly giving up all hope of making money and collecting personal possessions, and turning his attention instead to less material things. Such a decision could only bring poverty to himself and his family. - Socrates, the wisest and most just?

Living frugally, he was materially independent, thanks to a small inheritance and the state subsidies that were paid out to all Athenians (theatre fees and the like).

...his indifference to such externals as money – in later years he was extremely poor – fine food, and clothing, made him a challenging figure. He was famous for his robustness and capacity for self-denial, and he commanded respect by the simplicity and rectitude of his private life. He seems to have ventured outside Attica only once, to attend the Isthmian games, besides taking part in three military expeditions during the Peloponnesian War... Philosophers before Socrates speculated – naively, though interestingly – about the composition and workings of the natural universe, but Socrates made others conscious of the absence of any agreed standard of truth in such matters. He introduced a concern for method in philosophy, stimulated an interest in the logic of argument, and turned his attention to human affairs, where he thought that careful and properly self-conscious philosophy might produce worthy results. The reorientation he accomplished is reflected in the standard practice of referring collectively to his predecessors as “pre-Socratics,” and in the view, common for later antiquity, that, except for Epicurus and his followers, all subsequent Greek philosophical schools were his more or less direct intellectual heirs. - Encyclopedia Americana

“Universal History... the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here.” ...what is called the spirit of an age is the spirit of the man in whom the age is mirrored. Socrates was one of those historical personalities who reflect and summarise an epoch. He gathered into his own experience the profoundest movements of the mind of Greece in his time, a time when authority in religion, morality, and society had broken down or was breaking down, and thought wandered between two worlds, the dying world of tradition and convention and the world that now travailed to be born, the world of reason and freedom. It was a transition period in the history of Greek civilisation and therefore of world-civilisation, and Socrates looms out of it the figure of one who in the midst of the flux of nationalism in thought, sentiment, and outlook stood steady and secure, building a bridge between the old and the new, between that which had been and that which was to be... Not what a man has but what he constitutes his only title to rank and admiration... And he is rich indeed before whom the universe stoops to offer the gold and frankincense and myrrh of its own secrets, purposes, and works. Socrates did his high thinking on pretty plain living and dressing. He had all the unconcern of a St Francis about his own personal wants. There is a fragment from one of the plays of Eupolis, a comic poet of the time who had a considerable vogue... in which a character delivers himself on this wise: “I hate this Socrates, this babbling beggar, who has meditated more than anybody else, but has never asked where he was going to get his dinner.” ...In all respects he was a model of

the simple life. He only ate and drank as a rule when hunger and thirst intimated the legitimate and necessary claims of Nature, and at such times a good appetite provided all the sauce or spice that was necessary... "Others live to eat," Socrates once said. "I eat to live." ...His abstinence in these matters was a notorious characteristic, in allusion to which Aristophanes makes the Clouds promise old Strepsiades that if he also will join their cult he will be able to endure hardship, stand or walk without fatigue, never suffer from cold, nor be concerned about breakfast, and he will keep aloof from wine and gymnastics and other follies... As for clothing... Alcibiades relates that he had Socrates to supper, and then he was wearing a "threadbare cloak"; he was struck alike by the man's wisdom and powers of endurance... In the manner of dress he dispensed with sandals altogether, following what was the indoor fashion even outside. The latter practice would not have been such a matter for remark unless it had been very rare. There is a fragment of Ameipsias where it is said of Socrates in regard to this economy that "he was born to be the curse of shoemakers." ...The same moderation and self-control characterised all his actions and passions; if his face gave evidence of sensuality subdued, his face was a true witness, for Socrates held the reins tight on the lusts of the flesh and its bewildering pleasures. No historical figure gives a stronger impression of possessing an absolute power over the rage and tumult of the heart's unquiet seas. Odysseus stopped the sailor's ears with wax, and tied himself to the mast, as his bark sailed past the treacherous rocks where the fateful Sirens sang with baleful charm; but Socrates moved free and unfettered, with all his senses open, amid the siren music of pleasure, moved with a sense of absolute self-possession. He had made the "great renunciation," the decision for the higher as against the lower, for spiritual attainment as against self-indulgence. He had counted the cost, and he knew Hesiod's lines: "Wickedness may a man take wholesale with ease, smooth is the way and her dwelling-place is very nigh; but in front of virtue the immortal gods have placed toil and sweat, long is the path and steep that leads to her, and rugged at the first, but when the summit of the path is reached, then for all its roughness the path grows easy." And with the substance of the teaching of Prodicus' famous allegory, "The Choice of Hercules," he had the greatest sympathy, bringing out, as it does, that decided and final choice between virtue and vice, labour and ease, self-discipline and self-indulgence, which every youth must make whose life is to rise above mediocrity of achievement and be an enrichment to the world. - Socrates, the man and his mission

Socrates recommended good association because if one is to develop good qualities, he must associate with those who are virtuous and similarly interested... Socrates believed that through meditation, a person can attain knowledge, and through knowledge he can become virtuous. When he is virtuous, he acts in the right way, and by doing so, becomes happy. Therefore the enlightened man is meditative, knowledgeable, and virtuous. He is also happy because he acts properly.

Socrates believed that human nature leads people to act correctly and in agreement with knowledge. He felt that evil and wrong arise from ignorance and the failure to investigate why people act as they do... Socrates devoted himself completely to seeking truth and goodness... Inevitably, Socrates made enemies among influential Athenians. He was brought to trial, charged with corrupting the young and showing disrespect for religious traditions... The jury found Socrates guilty and sentenced him to death. The jury may have given Socrates the severe sentence because it resented the unbending pride with which he conducted his defence. He refused several opportunities to escape from prison, and carried out the sentence by calmly drinking a cup of hemlock poison.

At his trial, if Plato's account is reliable, Socrates steadfastly refused to admit any wrong-doing and defiantly insisted on continuing his past practices unless forced not to. He was unwilling to take any steps that might have won him acquittal or a light sentence because he regarded them as compromising. After being convicted, he could have, under the law, proposed a substitute for the death penalty demanded by the prosecutor... Instead he insisted on having a reward for the services he had rendered the Athenians in arguing with them and examining their opinions. He yielded in the end and accepted his friends' offer to pay a fine of 30 minas, about \$1,000.

...my dearest Socrates, do finally listen to me now, and save yourself. For my part, if you die, it will not be just one misfortune; not merely shall I be deprived of such a friendship as I never again shall find the like of; but, more than that, to many who do not know you and me too well, I shall seem like one who could have saved you had he been willing to spend the money, and did not care to do it. Now, tell me, is there any reputation worse than that of seeming to put money above friends? ...The sum of money is, in fact, not large which certain persons are willing to accept in order to save you and get you out of here. Then, for the informers do n't you see how cheaply one can buy them off, and it does n't take much money to deal with them? My own fortune is at your service, and I believe it is enough. Further, if you care for me, and think you ought not to spend my money, there are our friends from elsewhere who are ready to spend theirs. - CRITO

Perhaps Socrates' reason for not saving himself was that he had visions of being a martyr?

It is as if he insisted on confronting the Athenians as sharply as possible with the consequences of their unjust attack on him, hoping thereby to give them one final lesson in self-knowledge.

...Socrates, in his last words begged his judges: "When my sons are grown up, I would ask you, O my friends, to punish them; I would have you trouble them, as I have troubled you, if they seem to care about riches, or anything, more than about virtue; or if they pretend to be something when they are nothing... The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways – I to die, and you to live. Which is better God only knows."

At the conclusion of *The Republic*, Socrates gives the analogy of humanity living within a dark cave. The self-realized teacher has seen the light outside the cave. When he returns to the cave to inform the people that they are in darkness, many consider him crazy for speaking of such a thing as the light outside. Thus the teacher often puts himself in a very dangerous position.

There is little to link Socrates with Aristotle other than the fact that the former was the tutor of Plato, who was the tutor of the latter. However, although Socrates died in 399BC and Aristotle wasn't born until 384BC, they can be regarded as belonging to the same time (r:p25, ln51). If the Microsoft chairman is a modern version of Aristotle, the modern version of Socrates could be Albert Einstein.

Einstein was not only the ablest man of science of his generation, he was also a wise man, which is something different. If statesmen had listened to him, the course of human events would have been less disastrous than it has been.

What an extraordinary situation is that of us mortals! Each of us is here for a brief sojourn; for what purpose he knows not, though he sometimes thinks he feels it. But from the point of view of daily life, without going deeper, we exist for our fellow-men – in the first place for those on whose smiles and welfare all our happiness depends, and next for all those unknown to us personally with whose destinies we are bound up by the tie of sympathy. A hundred times every day I remind myself that my inner and outer life depend on the labours of other men, living and dead, and that I

must exert myself in order to give in the same measure as I have received and am still receiving. I am strongly drawn to the simple life and am often oppressed by the feeling that I am engrossing an unnecessary amount of the labour of my fellow-men. I regard class differences as contrary to justice and, in the last resort, based on force. I also consider that plain living is good for everybody, physically and mentally... The ordinary objects of human endeavour – property, outward success, luxury – have always seemed to me contemptible... I am absolutely convinced that no wealth in the world can help humanity forward, even in the hands of the most devoted worker in this cause. The example of great and pure characters is the only thing that can produce fine ideas and noble deeds. Money only appeals to selfishness and always tempts its owners irresistibly to abuse it. Can anyone imagine Moses, Jesus or Gandhi armed with the money-bags of Carnegie? - Einstein

Carnegie... U.S. steel manufacturer... son of a poor Scottish weaver... In 1899 he consolidated his vast steel and iron interests in the Carnegie Steel Co., which in 1901 he sold to the new U.S. Steel Corp. for \$447 million... He endowed several foundations... with \$125 million – to build public libraries... and advance public education... Violently opposed to labor unions, his Homestead Steel Works was the scene of the Homestead strike... one of the bloodiest in U.S. history... It lasted almost 5 months... and discouraged future steel-industry unionism. Disagreement over renewal of an employment contract... led to the strike, during which 300 Pinkerton detectives were hired to protect nonunion workers and company property. A battle between detectives and strikers ended in deaths on both sides... and the strike was broken when the National Guard was called in...

One of his most notable achievements was the creation of the Carnegie Peace Fund to promote international peace.

Ford Henry, 1863-1947, U.S. inventor and manufacturer... His chief contributions to the... automobile... industry were thorough standardization of parts and a labor policy long considered enlightened, although he was the last of the major auto manufacturers to accept unionization[and, 'during the Depression, Ford sped up production, cut hours and rates of pay – leading to demonstrations in which 4 people were shot dead by the police; the deaths helped draw public attention to the plight of the car workers' 'turning out petrol-driven machines at the rate of one every 10s')]. Ford gained national attention in W[O]I when he sponsored a Peace Ship which carried him and others on an unsuccessful mission to end the war... At his death the bulk of his fortune was left to... a nonprofit fund bestowing grants and appropriations (c.\$[US]83 million in 1957) for research and developments in the U.S. and abroad, primarily in the area of man's social relations... *Nobel, Alfred Bernhard*, 1833-96, Swedish chemist, inventor of dynamite... [whose] father had manufactured nitro-glycerin... On his death, [Alfred] left a fortune of some \$10 million, most of which he ordered to be used to found the five *Nobel Prizes*, awarded annually for the most important discoveries and works for the benefit of humanity in physics, chemistry, physiology, medicine and literature, and the furtherance of peace in the world. A Nobel Prize amounts to c.\$40,000. It was first awarded in 1901.

Nobel Prize[s are]... adjudged by... the Norwegian parliament... A Nobel Prize for economic sciences was added in 1969, financed by the Swedish National Bank.

...created in 1786[the]... Swedish Academy, which this week chooses the winner of the... \$US1.12 million (\$[NZ]1.6 million)... Nobel prize for literature, is suffering from a crisis out of character with its prestigious reputation... [M]any in Stockholm's literary circles... fear that bickering among the members will tarnish the respect... of the Academy... Over the past seven years, four of the Academy's 18 life members have asked to be relieved of their duties following disagreements with the permanent secretary... [Two had disagreed with the secretary's] refusal to condemn the death sentence issued by the Iranian regime on[a] British author... According to its statutes, at least 12 votes are needed in order to ensure the selection of a Nobel prize laureate. Any new departures or serious illnesses could prevent the academy from awarding the prize. The life members... can only be replaced after death. - 1996

The Nobel Committee hopes its annual award, worth 7.6 million kroner (\$[NZ]1.86 million), can spur progress among recipients.

“...who needs millions? Health, family, friends, that's all you need.” “Right... the simple life is the best life.”

...learn how good the simple life can be. Once you learn that you're set for life.

...man, by subordinating his spirit to natural necessity, finds perfect peace.

Dr. Einstein was a simple man. He could not be bothered about such matters as dress and grooming. He often appeared in public without socks... He was not an avid reader, preferring to think rather than read... He never owned an automobile, preferring to walk wherever he went... His remarkable mind was so engrossed in his work that he had to simplify his rigid routine whenever possible to save every minute for thinking. No matter how busy he was, he always had time for children, and often would help them with their homework... A modest man, Einstein refused the presidency of Israel... Money meant little to him.

Money motives are considered among the lowest of all motivations... Some... rare... individuals, of course, have transcended the use of money as a measure of their worth... They find great satisfaction... in what they are doing... [especially if they are] helping others, and the amount of financial reward, as long as it provides a living, becomes secondary... If they do have any extra income, they find some excuse to spend it on others rather than themselves since they firmly believe it is better to give than to receive... They have no need of monetary riches because their lives are so rich in other respects... When Albert Einstein was offered a position at the Institute of Advanced Study at Princeton just prior to W[O]II, he was asked to name his own salary... Einstein asked for \$3,000 a year. Even in those days, that was a meager salary. The Institute said nothing, and paid him \$16,000... [Other examples of such] people drop out of the money rat race... Albert Schweitzer, the brilliant philosopher, musician... and physician, gave up a comfortable, intellectually stimulating and potentially lucrative life in Europe to become a medical missionary in the jungles of Africa.

The greatest humanitarian of our time, Schweitzer was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1952.

...Jean-Paul [Sartre]... French philosopher, novelist... a nephew of Albert Schweitzer... In his philosophy and literature... he set out to show that the human situation is characterized by lack of a permanent nature, essence, or divinely bestowed destiny, and as a result possesses a terrifying freedom of choice. His later philosophy, cast in a Marxist mould, explores the social setting in human relationships conditioned by material scarcity... In 1964 he was offered but refused the Nobel Prize...

OUR AGE IS PROUD of the progress it has made in man's intellectual development. The search... for truth and knowledge is one of the highest of man's qualities – though often the pride is most loudly voiced by those who strive the least. And certainly we should take care not to make the intellect our god; it has, of course, powerful muscles, but no personality. It cannot lead, it can only serve; and... is not fastidious in its choice of a

leader. This characteristic is reflected in the qualities of its priests, the intellectuals. The intellect has a sharp eye for methods and tools, but is blind to ends and values. So it is no wonder that this fatal blindness is handed on from old to young and today involves a whole generation. - Einstein

It is possible that Aristotle, the Microsoft chairperson, Socrates and Einstein all had similar intellects (or IQs). However, according to the quotes used so far in this thesis, it isn't possible to match the behaviour and beliefs of the first two with those of the last two. Because Socrates and Einstein were identical in many respects it should be safe to assume that there has been little change in the essence of wisdom during the past 2400 years. Furthermore, the fact that both men had to speak out against their respective societies suggests that there has also been little change in the behaviour and beliefs of the average human during the same period. Therefore, whatever progress has been made must only have come in the areas of general knowledge and technology – most of which originated in recent centuries. As if to offset this recent progressive activity, some facets of human society seem to have regressed!

...in intellect and culture and especially in moral qualities, the rich men and those who now stand at the head of governments no longer constitute the flower of society as in olden times, but on the contrary are below the average... In the same way the majority of rich people of today no longer constitute the most refined and educated portion of society, but are either coarse money-grubbers only concerned with enriching themselves (frequently by shady methods) or else the degenerate heirs of such money-grubbers, who far from playing any prominent part in society are for the most part held in general contempt.

A trail of bizarre fashion sense suggests that Europe's heads of government and rich have all been *degenerate* for centuries!

...the industrial revolution started in Europe. Why it started in Europe, then a backward peninsula of the Eurasian continent, is a question awaiting sustained investigation. The (by then) ancient civilizations of India and China and the younger Muslim empire, embracing Asia Minor and Africa north of the Sahara, were richer and technically more advanced. Akbar, the great Mogul emperor of India, was in possession of 10 times the wealth of Louis XIV and 40 times that of Elizabeth I... Perhaps it is that European societies, from the times of the Graeco-Roman Mediterranean civilization, were more egalitarian... Disparities of wealth and income were great, but not as extreme as in the empires of the East... With more equal participation in the wealth and income of society, Europeans had longer life expectancy. The persistence of the individual beyond the age of 25 compelled respect... It had become possible, as a practical matter, for society to cherish the individual... The sanctity of life displaced the divinity that hedged a king. In history, the industrial and the democratic revolution have come forward together.

Perhaps *the industrial revolution started in Europe* because of capitalism?

Capitalism has been a fantastic success, in its own terms, since it was invented in Tudor England in the sixteenth century.

Capitalism has, however, been modified somewhat *since it was invented*.

mercantilism, a politico-economic movement dominant in the 16th- and 17th-cent. W Europe. Its principal concern was to raise exports and diminish imports, thus fostering the influx of precious metals and the accumulation of bullion... Mercantilist nations tend to neglect agriculture and develop industry and foreign trade. Their discriminatory trade practices and harsh tariff policies... led to wars, often undertaken to conquer new markets and to destroy competitors. Colonies were not permitted to develop industries or to trade freely. In the 18th cent. mercantilism fell into disrepute, mainly through the efforts of... English economists... such... as Adam Smith, who pleaded for free trade.

Capitalism may have been invented in the 16th c. but the roots of the economic system go back beyond the earliest days of European civilisation.

neolithic... of the later part of the Stone Age... [T]he 'Neolithic Revolution', [turned] man from being dependent on nature to controlling it at least partially and indirectly. The change led to the establishment of settled communities, accumulation of food and wealth... and had spread to northern Europe by the 4th millennium BC.

Celt... a member of one of a group of western European peoples (including the ancient Gauls and Britons...)... Their unity is recognizable by common speech... but they did not constitute one race or group of tribes ethnologically. The origins of their culture can be traced back to the Bronze Age... Celtic political sense was weak, and the numerous tribes, continuously warring against each other, were crushed by the migratory Germans and the power of Rome...

There were settlements in England from at least palaeolithic times... followed by the arrival of the Celtic peoples whose civilization spread over the whole country. The Romans under Julius Caesar raided the south of Britain in 55 and 54 BC, but full-scale invasion did not take place until a century later; the country was then administered as a Roman province until the Teutonic conquest of Gaul... In the 3rd-7th c. Germanic-speaking tribes... known as Angles, Saxons and Jutes, raided and then settled, establishing independent kingdoms, and when that of Wessex became dominant in the 9th c. England emerged as a distinct political entity before being conquered by [the] Duke of Normandy, in 1066. The neighbouring principality of Wales was gradually conquered during the Middle Ages and politically incorporated in the 16th c... English... authority... [over Ireland] was never secure and by the 16th c. was confined to an area round Dublin (the English Pale) until the Tudors succeeded in establishing it over the whole of the island... During the period of Tudor rule (1485-1603) England emerged as a Protestant State with a strong monarchy and as a naval power. Scotland and England have been ruled by one monarch from 1603, and the two crowns were formally united in 1707... After an unsuccessful rebellion in 1798, union... [with] Ireland followed in 1801... [to form] Great Britain... The spread of the... English... language has its origins in colonization... and the consolidation of the British Empire particularly in the 19th c... [The existing British *politico-economic* system evolved from] a medieval European... system... [in which t]he nobility held lands from the Crown in exchange for a specified amount of military service; the peasantry lived on their lord's land and had to provide him with labour or a share of his produce in exchange for protection. The feudal system began to break down in England in the 13th and 14th c., although feudal tenures were not actually abolished by statute until 1666.

Although feudal tenures were abolished in 1666, the division of English society into peasants and nobility (or aristocrats) has remained largely unchanged. Ironically, the term ARISTOCRACY has little to do with Aristotle (although aristocrats probably admired him) – it comes instead from the Greek phrase 'best power' or 'a State governed by the best representatives.' This is similar to selecting the head of a class to be leader. Indeed, English people were eventually slotted into 3 CLASSES – upper, middle and lower. The aristocrats gained the top rating: a 'social class' of professionals and businesspeople (or merchants), plus managers and small landed proprietors, created the middle; and unskilled or unemployed labourers (i.e., the poor) were at the bottom.

From the earliest of times of which we have record... down to the beginning of the eighteenth century, there was no very great change in the standard of living of the average man living in the civilized centres of the earth.

The average man (i.e., the majority) has tolerated a low *standard of living* for a long time. What little education the majority received tended to emphasise the opinion that there was little that could be done to alter their situation. Tudor England had a Parliament but its members weren't elected by the public. Indeed, when a civil war started in 1642 it was between the forces of the monarchy and the Parliament – instead of between the rulers and ruled. However, even if the public could've elected different rulers or chosen a different system, it is possible that pre-20th century Britons would've decided to keep the status quo – because Britain was long regarded as the most powerful country in the world (i.e., “We might not be perfect but at least we're better than anyone else!”).

...in the 18th c. Britain was the leading... power in the world, while the Industrial Revolution which was then beginning made it the first industrialized country...

The industrial revolution must be recognized... as an abrupt and very recent change in the human condition... The living beneficiaries of the first industrial revolutions... have dim memory of the event in their histories and small record of its human cost. In the dismay and distaste they feel for the regimes under which the revolution has more recently proceeded, however, they might find some measure of the price paid (or exacted) by their ancestors. The agony of the revolution was surely more prolonged in its earlier events. History shows that the economic discipline required to induce capital formation by sufficiently adequate resources was imposed by the political invention of the nation-state. In the dense cultural diversity of the European peninsula, this invention involved four centuries of nation-building wars... The reckless commitment of resources to... those wars induced some of the principal advances in technology and in the building of the infrastructure of the Western industrial nations.

While Britain remained the most powerful political and military force in the world, plus the leader of industry, it would have been easy for its leaders to convince the lower class (or working class) that they stood to benefit from it – because *the trickle down* effect, which allegedly improves the standard of living of every person in a society, would gain momentum – and, for some people, it did.

...the English middle class is larger and more vigorous than its ever been before...

Comparitively working-class standards have risen sharply. Even the worst paid in such industries as agriculture, retail trade and the health services are much better off than their predecessors. - MAN AND MONEY

[A] FASHION designer... says she must be working class because, “I work for a living.” Her ex-Beatle father... is worth \$1 billion. - 1997

Although the British public has never risen en masse against its ruling class, and the class boundaries are less obvious today than in the past (they aren't, however, as blurred as is suggested by the quote above), debate over the merits of such classifications has continued throughout the 20th century.

When I first had the opportunity[in 1992] of standing on the steps of Downing St [as the newly elected Prime Minister (PM)] I said that I believed in a nation at ease with itself, the development of a truly classless society with opportunities for all, from wherever they came, to do whatever they can with their own life, by their own efforts, and with encouragement to achieve everything that they can. That is the sort of society that my colleagues and I will be working hard to build in the next few years.” ...“...what a stupid thing to say... It never will be classless...” ...“[The PM's] absolutely right... Of course we want a classless society. We also want a society without sin... avarice... greed... envy. We want all those things to go away... they won't.” ...“I think the class structure's there, in a sense, to help us all move onwards and upwards... in a benign ideal world, which we don't have, of course.” ...“You know, human nature is human nature, and when [the PM] said that one should do away with class he was as likely to succeed as somebody who said we should do away with sex. What is human nature will be with us forever.”

A lot of dead French aristocrats might disagree with that last quote – if they could!

French Revolution [T]he overthrow of the Bourbon monarchy... was the first of a series of European political upheavals, in which various groups of French society found common cause in opposing the feudal structure of the State, with its privileged Establishment and discredited monarchy.

Prompted by the example of the American Revolution, it set in motion or gave new impetus to forces of nationalism, democracy, and socialism that are still changing the world. Its numerous underlying causes included misery of the peasantry under the feudal system, increase of the restless industrial working class, heavy taxation and economic handicaps of the middle class, and corruption, luxurious habits, and indifference in much of the nobility and clergy... The active period of the revolution was precipitated by the financial collapse of the French government, bled by wars and extravagance, in the latter 1780s. The first phase began, 1787... [when, c]ompelled by the financial emergency, Louis XVI summoned the States General... which had not met since 1614. Meeting in Versailles... it soon came under control of its middle-class members, and after declaring itself a Constituent Assembly... began to reorganize the French constitutional, administrative, judicial, religious, and fiscal structures. This was the second phase of the revolution. Opposed by the king, the Assembly found support in Paris, whose populace formed a national guard to defend it, attacking the Bastille... to provide themselves with weapons... Royalists and other anti-revolutionaries were rounded up and imprisoned, and in September massacres, in Paris, Lyons, and other cities, many were dragged from their cells and murdered by mobs... With the assassination of Marat... began the Reign of Terror... [The guillotine was] a device for capital punishment by decapitation first introduced into France during the Revolution... With the meeting of the National Convention... the third phase of the revolution began. Declaring France a republic... and offering assistance to all peoples who wished to overthrow their governments, the convention executed Louis XVI... and declared war on Great Britain...

France had been England's foremost rival since at least 1066.

...rivalry between the two ending in British victory during the Seven Years War.

...a war (1756 – 63) which ranged Britain, Prussia, and Hanover against Austria, France, Russia, Saxony, Sweden, and Spain. Its main issues were the struggle between Britain and France for supremacy overseas, and that between Prussia and Austria for the domination of Germany. After some early setbacks, the British made substantial gains over France abroad, [including] capturing... French Canada... [When t]he war... ended...

Britain... was... the supreme European naval and colonial power... The[French] revolution failed to produce a stable form of republican government, and after several different forms of administration had been tried, the last, the Directory, was overthrown by Napoleon in 1799... Having risen to power... Napoleon became successively First Consul and Emperor, and after a series of dramatic military... campaigns... against... other European powers... established a French empire stretching from Spain to Poland.

However, France's empire never matched Britain's – which, 'covering nearly a quarter of the globe at its peak, was the greatest the world had ever seen' – and Britain remained the 'foremost world power until the turn of the 20th century.'

To the accumulation of capital, the new worlds overseas made their own large contribution... The Treaty of Nanking, ending the Opium War in 1842, exacted the cession of Hong Kong to Britain and opened the ports of... China... to each of the nations that followed Britain into industrial revolution. At Berlin in 1885, the colonial powers parceled out to each other what was left of Africa and conceded portions of the continent to the newly united German nation, giving it, too, the status of empire.

Britain lost its place as industrial leader to both Germany and the US, with the latter becoming the *undisputed world champion* after WWII. The rise of the US brought a new enthusiasm to capitalism, which had been seriously shaken by the Bolshevik overthrow of the Russian Tsar in 1917. Although this event led to an increase of revolutionary activity in their own country, most Britons were more concerned with the Industrial Revolution.

A century ago London was the first city in... history to top two million. Britain was the first country in the world where over half the population lived in cities. The U[S] is the biggest industrialised country, but Britain was the first into the industrial revolution, and first out the other side.

...alongside that old-fashioned subjective permeable British class system we are developing a class system based on money... I would hate to think what England [will] be like in a hundred years time.

Social conditions in Britain have returned to those of the previous century, according to a report out today. The Health Visitors' Association survey painted a bleak picture of widespread malnutrition, unsuitable and overcrowded housing, debt and lack of money for heating. As a result, diseases once thought banished from Britain have returned... It found... 29[%] of health visitors came across TB every year[, 4%]... encountered rickets and 93[% gastroenteritis, 62%]... visited families which had fuel bills deducted direct from their earnings or state benefits... 71[%] cared for families living in "overcrowded" conditions and half for families in "unfit" buildings. Nearly two-thirds visited house-holds which had been disconnected by phone, gas or electricity companies... And [5%] visited people who lived in homes where the water had been cut off. Most of the families disconnected had children... The many improvements in health and welfare were being undermined by the effects of desperate poverty on a national scale. "Health visitors are uniquely positioned to tackle many of these problems and the service needs to be strengthened and expanded, not watered down and dismissed in this cold climate of Scrooge-style economics." - 1996

Although Britain was no longer the most powerful country after the 19th century it still had its empire, which remained a contributor of capital. Gradually, however, the colonies became independent, and the empire eventually transformed itself into the BRITISH COMMONWEALTH – a title that was both patronising towards many of the member nations and most of their citizens. If the original intention was to create a group of countries where everyone has wealth in common, or a common amount of wealth, it would have gone a long way towards justifying the decision to hold a leaders' summit every other year.

Edinburgh is attracting the biggest array of leaders ever seen at a... Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting... 50... CHOGM will also produce the strongest-ever presence of non-governmental organisations (NGOs). For the first time, they will have their own special centre, set up in Edinburgh's Assembly Rooms... With 1.7 billion consumers and a 20[%] share of total world trade, the Commonwealth is a veritable source of riches... Scottish police face the biggest security operation in their history. More than 18,000 officers will keep a 24-hour watch, aided by an airship with powerful cameras. Another first will be an opening speech by the Queen, the Head of the Commonwealth. Although she has almost always been present wherever the biennial summit is held, she has never before actually appeared at the meeting. Her practice has been to be on hand, to meet heads of government individually, to hold a banquet for them, and to leave soon after the talks begin... Her role as head of the Commonwealth is purely symbolic. She took the title from her father... for whom it was devised in 1949 as a means of keeping India in the Commonwealth as a republic. The duties that go with this position have never been laid down... Today, the Commonwealth is taking on a new lease of life, attracting increasing international attention. Its membership... has grown from 36 to 54 member countries... and more countries are knocking on the door to come in. It has long ceased to be a British Commonwealth. Indeed, in recent years Britain has often seemed to turn its back on the association, pursuing narrower, more Europe-oriented policies... Although the Commonwealth is enjoying a renaissance, the summit duration has again been shortened. It is now down to three days. The last CHOGM to be held in Britain – in 1977 – lasted eight days. Cutting back on time began in the mid-'80s when major players, such as Britain, India and Australia [(AUS)] began to say that their leaders could not be away for so long. Smaller countries were not pleased. Their heads do not get the same opportunities to meet other leaders. The highlight of CHOGMs is the weekend retreat – a Commonwealth invention which enables leaders to get away from the summit venue to a resort and talk at some leisure about tricky issues. Normally the leaders are away for 36 hours. This time they are going to St Andrews for only one day... All the signs are that this year's CHOGM will be too short. The agenda is crowded. For the first time there is a main theme aimed at developing more trade and investment within the association. The British want CHOGM to issue an economic declaration and the meeting may decide to convene a Commonwealth trade ministers' conference... By... [the year] 2000... the Commonwealth aims to have firm decisions on the amounts and terms of... relief for at least two-thirds of eligible poor countries... High on the Commonwealth list these days, too, are the battles against money laundering and drug trafficking. Environmental matters are sure to be pressed... Other pressing issues include the thorny questions of membership applications, human rights violations... and how to get [the President] back into power in Sierra Leone... He was elected in... February 1996 and elbowed out by an army major in May this year... Never before has an ousted leader been present... although many coup leaders have...

Two years ago Nigeria's military rulers were given until this weekend to become a "good government" or the country would face severe sanctions. But in a few days Commonwealth leaders will give Nigeria a stay of execution and stop short of throwing the West African state out of the... organisation... Nigeria's suspension from the Commonwealth was announced... in 1995, after that country defied world opinion by hanging nine Ogoni activists while the leaders' summit, hosted by N[Z], was going on.

...Support staff at this weekend's Commonwealth conference have had a crash course in avoiding social gaffes and understanding the cultures of the world... With 800 delegates flying into Edinburgh... no detail of their cultural differences has been left unturned for the 75 conference staff... Passing food with your left hand may cause offence to Singaporeans, Indians and Malaysians because it is the one used to clean oneself after going

to the toilet. The so-called Anglo nations – British, Australians[(AUSns)], Canadians and N[Z]ers – are said not to like having the personal space around them to be too crowded... [Do] not... wink at A[US]ns, show the soles of... feet to Indians or ever pat a Malaysian on the head. - 1997

After the summit it was announced that the leaders had ‘talked a lot but achieved little.’ But even if CHOGM was capable of achieving something, it would never be to become commonly wealthy – the wealthiest member states are incapable of, or unwilling to, create common-wealth amongst their own citizens!

Australia and New Zealand – once the most affluent countries in the world per head...

The promised land for the Poms... TO austerity-battered Britons[(Poms)], it seemed like a ticket to paradise – just £10 for a new life in A[US]. That was the proposition advertised in our newspapers by a country beset by post-war paranoia and desperate to boost its sparse population with whites in a bid to keep what was seen as the “Yellow Peril” at bay. More than a million fell for the bait between 1947 and 1972, when the scheme ended. You had to stay at least two years – or else repay the A[US]n government for paying for your passage out. But life Down Under proved a far cry from what ration-beleaguered Brits – lured by promotional films featuring exotic fruit, cheap meat and happy families living in suburban dream homes – were promised in the early years... [One couple] were well-to-do when they left Newcastle in 1947 with three small children. They bought land but were cheated out of their life savings... swapped... for a bleak tin shack in the bush... More than 150,000 disillusioned Poms returned home, many before their two years were up.

Children in Britain are more likely to be born into poverty than anywhere else in the European Union, according to a study just published. The report, by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), shows that nearly one-third of all children in the U[K] are living below the breadline, compared with 13[%] in Germany, 12[%] in France and 24[%] in Italy. The EU average is 20[%]. “The UK’s record on child well-being is not entirely black... but the overall picture provides much cause for concern, with the UK emerging as a serious contender for the title of worst place in Europe to be a child,” the report says... [The] research director of the institute, said that... the Government... would have to do much more to fulfil its pledge of eradicating the problem... [of] child poverty... in 20 years. “Twenty years ago there were 1.4 million children living in poverty and that has now increased to more than 3 million. The figures are all the more shocking because Britain is one of the more affluent countries in the EU...”

Report shows one in three A[US]ns live in poverty... As unemployment begins to climb again in A[US] a new study... estimates that almost one-third of the nation’s 800,000 jobless are supporting young children, and that as many as 12,000 homeless people a night are taken in by federally funded crisis accommodation... The... study... rejected official income-based assessments of poverty as too narrow... “Money alone, however, cannot eradicate the full effects of poverty... It does not give immunity from breakdown in physical or mental health, bereavement, loneliness, job loss... family breakdown, domestic violence, injustice, misdiagnosis or thoughts of suicide. Poverty, therefore, is not just an income level – it is a lifestyle.”

...The distinction between “cosmic” and “procedural” justice dates back at least to Aristotle... In N[Z], why should we prefer a model of... justice which tolerates a level of poverty in the order of 20[%] of our population... It is an error... to think of the 20[%]... at the bottom of the income distribution as a class. To do so is to ignore the fact that the members of the group change; hardly anyone is in the group for longer than a decade... the numbers of permanently poor are... closer to 3[%] of the range. But... [a person] does not need to forget that the members of the set change to object to the fact there is, permanently, a set whose members at a time make up 20[%] of the population... Old ideas on what is poverty are no longer valid...

A... High Court judge... was under fire yesterday from the P[M]... and the Minister of Justice... for attacking key Government policies affecting poverty... [while] speaking as N[Z]’s representative on a U[N] committee on the elimination of discrimination against women... The judge also criticised politicians who said there was no poverty in N[Z] and called on political leaders to recognise its existence. In April, [the PM], and the... Acting Minister of Social Welfare, dismissed a study which concluded that 18.5[% of NZ]ers lived in poverty. [The PM] said no child in N[Z] needed to go hungry because there was a social welfare system. - 1996

The [NZ] Government denies that 20[%] of the population lives below the poverty line but... said the latest figures... showed that 4.9[%] of households with two or more people were earning less than \$96 a week.

...Poverty: what is it and how is it measured? Last year, a survey using a threshold of \$[NZ]16,891 a year for a family of two adults and one child recorded 18.5[% of N[Z]... households, 20.5[%] of all people, and 32.6[%] of all children below the poverty line. The Acting Minister of Social Welfare suggested that if internationally accepted measures had been used the number of people defined as living in poverty would have been below 5[%]... But relativity means little when hunger pains set in. Lunchless children in N[Z] are unlikely to find much comfort, or any sustenance, in being told they do not know what poverty is – try an African refugee camp. Nasty thing about leaving relativity-based poverty to take care of itself: the condition is like a disease; untreated it tends to grow worse. Europe, which hardly dominates any poverty discussion, is a case in point... Remember that European countries have prided themselves on a relatively... equitable distribution of national wealth. So the statistics translated into real-people terms do not fit comfortably with the self-perception... The poverty growth has reached into state consciousness. In France the state telephone company has placed homelessness on a level with emergency services, providing a three-digit number that people living on the street can ring for assistance. And try this comment with echoes from N[Z]: a Dutch Catholic bishop insisted that, if necessary, a poor man could steal bread. One final comment encompasses poverty no matter what its relative state. A... Marseille... social worker... said the essential change in the past few years was “the hopelessness”...

Thank goodness for the British economy. The “figures” have never looked better... The economy is booming... Far away from the celebrations by business leaders... and economists I found a short article on the United Nations Human Development Report. The story it told was somewhat different... Britain is the most unequal country in the Western world... Britain’s poor are now poorer than in any other Western country for which figures have been collected, and a higher proportion of old people live in poverty than anywhere else in the West. The child poverty rate is second only to the U[S]. The report measures wealth and poverty in a new way, comparing purchasing power rather than purely income. On this scale... Britain is the only major Western country where poverty has “increased substantially” since the beginning of the 1980s. The changes coincide exactly with... [the] Tories... coming to power... 18 years [ago]... The more right wing the political climate the more of the wealth that finds its way into the coffers of the wealthy. The trickle-down theory is a very handy one for those at the top of the tree, but it doesn’t really work. Britain provides a model of what happens if the market is left to its own devices and government is not active in wealth redistribution. - 1997

In a world where everyone is poor, there is nothing very remarkable about poverty. It becomes remarkable, and also less forgivable, in a community where the great majority of people are well-to-do. And the explanation for poverty in the well-to-do society must be sought in the general and not the particular aspects of the case – not in the nature of the society of the poor but in the nature of the society of the rich which allows or requires some to stay poor.

...the continuous supply of steerage immigrants (35 million from 1865 to 1915) permitted the installation of the U.S. welfare state to be postponed until 1936... Only the older generation recalls Franklin D. Roosevelt exclaiming, in his second inaugural address in 1937, "I see one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clad and ill-nourished!" In fact, the investigation by the Bureau of Home Economics of the U.S. Department of Agriculture that grounded this statement had found two-thirds of the nation in such deprivation. (According to... his Secretary of the Interior, Roosevelt thought two-thirds too depressing for the occasion and rounded it down...) ...Poverty... is... a social arrangement not attributable to lack of resources... [P]lainly... the U.S. public tolerates... poverty... in its midst.

In '1979, the percentage of the US population below the poverty line was: persons – 12.4%; families – 9.6%; related children under 18 years – 16.0%.'

As of July, 1982, the official poverty rate in the United States rose to 14 percent – its highest level in almost two decades.

In '1960, 22.2% of all Americans were Below Poverty Level', but the figure remained relatively constant from 1982 to 1994 – when the '14.5% figure equalled 38.1 million' citizens.

During... [the period from 1960 to] 1990... the percentage of Whites below the poverty level declined from 18.1% to 10.7%, and the percentage of Blacks from 55.1% to 31.9%. The percentage of children below the poverty level grew from 14.9% to 19.9%. In 1990, 15.1% of White children and 44.1% of Black children lived below the poverty level... Between 1970 and 1990, the median family income rose from \$10,326 to \$36,915 for Whites, and from \$6,279 to \$21,423 for Blacks. [The income of]Hispanic families... rose from \$8,715 in 1973 to \$23,431 in 1990... The percentage of households earning below \$10,000 declined for Whites from 14.3% in 1970 to 12.8% in 1990, while it increased for Blacks from 28.0% to 30.8%, and for Hispanics from 20.3% to 21.1% over the same period. The percentage of households earning over \$75,000 grew for all races: for Whites from 6.1% to 10.4%, for Blacks from 1.5% to 3.8% and for Hispanics from 2.0% to 4.3%... The mean family net worth in 1989 was \$203,800 for Whites and \$45,900 for Blacks, non-Whites, and Hispanics... Between 1979 and 1987, the cities with the highest percentage changes in per capita income were Boston (98.1%)[and] Atlanta (78.8%)... The cities with the lowest percentage changes were Houston (36%)[and] Oklahoma City (44.4%)... The Poverty Index was devised by the Social Security Administration in 1964 and revised by the Federal Inter-agency Committee in 1969 and 1980. It is based solely on money income... The Poverty Threshold is updated every year to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index... In 1990, the threshold was \$6,800 for one person under 65... rising incrementally to \$26,848 for a unit of 9 persons.

Considerable concern has been focused on differences between the life situations of low socioeconomic class families and middle-class families in the American culture... The critical importance of children having the opportunity of learning to control and shape their environment has been discussed repeatedly. Without this growing sense of power based on the responsiveness of others, the child's feelings of helplessness, incompetence, and low self-esteem are reflected in disruptions in cognitive, emotional, and adaptive processes. In an analogous manner, powerlessness is a basic problem of the poor. They have less influence over the society in which they live and are likely to be less adequately treated by social organisations than are members of the middle class... In addition, the low educational level, restricted experience, and lack of information of the poor make it difficult for them to understand and avail themselves of the limited resources that are open to them. The poor get involved in cycles of disadvantage. There is a higher probability of encountering sequences of events which make childrearing difficult and which lead to adverse outcomes occurring in poor families. - Powerlessness and Poverty

The US Department of Health and Human Services gave two Chicago universities a \$7.5 million federal grant to study poverty. - 1996

People could be forgiven for wondering why a US government department would spend millions on studying something that has been part of human society forever instead of using the money to help poor people directly. However, helping poor people directly is a task that has traditionally been handled by charities rather than governments.

New... [c]haritable trusts... are being formed at the rate of two a day, but the laws governing charitable trusts are vague... If you thought choosing between donating your hard-earned dollar to the Red Cross, IHC or crippled children was tough enough, be grateful you don't get appeals from all 17,000 entities that call themselves charities. N[Z] has one registered charitable trust for every 314 people – [and the number of charities is]... growing at a rate of 70 a month. On top of that are incorporated societies and charitable companies. Yet the rules that govern charities – or even define what constitutes a charity – are loose by comparison with other countries and the sector itself is largely left to monitor itself. The... deputy secretary of business and registries... [at] the Ministry of Economic Development... says that while there is no legal requirement for charities to register, the great many do. No one appears to keep records of the number of unregistered charitable trusts... [– which] do not have to make their trust deeds or any other information public... [–] because there is apparently no way of tracking them, but [the deputy] estimates there would be between 100 and 200. Inland Revenue formerly required all charitable trusts to apply for tax-exempt status – and says it is aware of 7500 with that status – but it now allows trusts to make their own judgment about whether they qualify or not, although it has the final say. The department says 5348 incorporated societies and 437 charitable companies are tax-exempt. [The]Revenue Minister... has promised a review of the law covering charitable trusts, to be carried out this year or next. The Trustees Association says that cannot come soon enough...

Charities deal with a wide range of social problems but most focus on addressing immediate issues (e.g., lack of shelter or food).

With an estimated 365 foodbanks operating throughout N[Z] in May 1995, the provision of food parcels to those in need has become an established part of the voluntary welfare landscape... While foodbanks emerged as a distinct phenomenon during the 1980s and underwent a rapid growth phase during the early 1990s, feeding programmes in themselves are not new to N[Z]. Soup kitchens, for example, have long provided food, in the form of prepared meals, for the needy and frequently homeless. Foodbanks... in providing parcels of groceries... are based on the assumption that recipients are able to prepare meals for themselves.

FOOD banks will shut their doors to the needy... to protest against poverty. The striking food banks will leave desperate families hungry and government officials to fund or find emergency supplies. Food bank operators claim the action will affect more than 20,000 people... [The] Wellington region convener of food banks, said the strikes were a last-ditch effort to raise the issue. "...Nowadays, government departments are quite openly referring people to food banks... It has got to the point where food banks are seen by government departments as part of the infrastructure..." ...Auckland food banks have decided not to take part in the strike... during September 30 to October 6, which has been called National Action on Poverty Week... October 3 has been declared the New Zealand Day for Eradication of Poverty.

...yesterday... Auckland church workers... [marked] the beginning of a national poverty awareness week... [by piling] 800 food parcels... in Aotea Square... About 3200 Aucklanders a week are fed by the 80 foodbanks in Auckland with about \$42,500 worth of food given away... The food is donated by church parishes, supermarkets and manufacturers... Auckland foodbanks rejected a call... to close during the Act on Poverty Week... The Auckland City Missioner... said he would not turn away hungry people to make a political point.

...the principal of Finlayson Park School... in Manukau... told politicians in the audience... at... a meeting on poverty... about having to provide food, transport and clothing for... pupils and said some parents were forced to send ill youngsters to school because they could not afford to be away from their jobs... A Public Health Commission report last year estimated that 22,605 children regularly went hungry in N[Z]... 60,018... went without breakfast and 21,152 had no lunch... The meeting voted to put pressure on the... government to work to immediately alleviate hunger and other symptoms of poverty. Health, education and housing policies were singled out as the most influential on the well-being of children.

...A primary school child collapsed with malnutrition and spent two days in hospital, according to a report by the Christchurch Methodist Mission... and a large increase in the number of food parcels handed out by the mission... showed poverty was entrenched in N[Z]... "In the year to September 1996, the foodbank handed out a total of 2243 food parcels valued at \$74,527. In the previous year 1885 food parcels were distributed at a cost of \$52,985. Despite the economic recovery, poverty is increasing." ...the only way foodbanks could become a relic of the past would be if N[Z] had a government which recognised that poverty existed and addressed the problem... [T]he case of the child who collapsed was very disturbing and followed reports of a Southland family who lived on a diet of swedes for several weeks... The mission's report said access to affordable accommodation remained one of the key issues confronting people it helped... The mission was struggling to meet daily demands for help and was expecting its resources to be spread even thinner with Christmas approaching. - 1996

We need your donation to give children from... thousands of... low income families a Christmas they wouldn't otherwise have. New, unwrapped presents can be dropped off at any New Zealand Post Shop. - AUCKLAND CITY MISSION

There are hundreds of Aucklanders who struggle to cope with our winter weather. The Auckland City Mission needs your help to make their lives a little easier. You can help with blankets and warm clothing... or... make a donation...

A[US] is sliding down the same bleak path of poverty that N[Z] travelled several years ago, says the new head of one of the biggest aid agencies across the Tasman... Mission Australia, a \$50 million sister organisation to the Auckland City Mission.

...Pressure on charity's ability to help needy... An Auckland charity will today high-light the growing pressure on the region's social services as more people seek help. The Catholic Caring Foundation yesterday released a research report which showed welfare organisations in Auckland are struggling to cope as more people go to them with more severe and complex problems. The report's author, [a]Massey University senior lecturer... will this morning outline the study which was done between November last year and February... [R]esearchers asked 130 voluntary agencies in Auckland about six social needs – social security and poverty; employment and unemployment; housing; domestic violence; mental health; and family and child services. The... [responses] revealed that more Aucklanders are going to them for help from more diverse backgrounds and with multiple needs. Many are asking for help when they reach crisis point. Because of growing demand and shrinking funding, many services are having to replace preventative work with crisis work, especially when working with children and families. The report highlights a widening gap within Auckland's four cities in the six areas, with significant overall gaps noted in mental health services, pre-crisis work in domestic violence, and funding unemployment. The[foundation's] executive director... said last night that he was concerned at the level of need in Auckland but hoped the report would get organisations working together to improve the situation "instead of fighting."

...Churches are crossing religious boundaries to beat hunger. Leaders of the Jewish, Catholic and Anglican communities in Auckland are asking their congregations to fast and donate food to the city's needy.

...The Methodist Central City Missioner... said more homeless people were using the mission's Queen St shelter than in any other time in its 146-year history. In the past year the numbers of people staying overnight had doubled... In the first fortnight of May, the mission served... nearly triple the figure for the same period last year... He believed people from greater Auckland, Northland and Waikato were drifting into the central city to find work following shrinking employment opportunities in rural areas and the end of seasonal employment. "But of course there's not a lot of hope here either."

...fundraising is entering a new era of professionalism [because of] greater competition for the charity dollar... With about 300 active charities, N[Z]ers are constantly being asked to put their hands in their pockets... There are more than 30,000 incorporated societies and charitable trusts registered in N[Z], up from 5000 40 years ago, and about 20... are added each week, as society relies more and more heavily on voluntary sector organisations to provide services.

...N[Z]ers are traditionally generous people. The... Band-aid concert provided a rare opportunity to measure that generosity. We gave ['over \$4m' –]the second highest amount per head in the world. Sadly, however, there are growing concerns over fundraising practice. Two facts can help understand good and bad fundraising. The first is that there are two main types of fundraising and they are very different. One is philanthropy[. which]... constitutes by far the more important type... the act of giving purely for the sake of helping those less fortunate or for the advantage of our community. Statistics New Zealand believes we gave some \$199 million that way last year... It returns far more income than the other fundraising – special events such as Poppy Day, Red Nose Day, Daffodil Day, telethons and so on... They are different in motivation, in execution and in purpose. The biggest problems that arise in fundraising occur when people confuse the two – you think or are led to believe that you're giving a donation... – when in fact you are participating in an activity. You might wonder whether special event fundraising is valid. The answer is "yes." Not everyone wants to become a serious, committed donor to every organisation. But every organisation wants the public to be aware of what it stands for and what it is trying to change or achieve. If the organisation can raise its profile, heighten awareness, cover the costs of its education or promotional activities and maintain a means of recruiting additional philanthropic donors and supporters in a way that raises money at the same time, then ultimately everybody wins. And that brings us to the second misunderstanding about fundraising – the cost. I know of no organisation that actively chooses to spend more than the absolute minimum necessary on a fundraising effort. The very reason organisations fundraise is that they are short of funds to do the real work of the organisation. Organisations tend to be relatively frugal in their fundraising expenditure. Special events do cost more to run. Valid costs can include promotions, stock, distribution, volunteer training and management, accounting and others. Various articles have suggested that fundraising activities are irresponsible if they cost more than 25[%] of the money they raise.

...Householders have been warned against collectors soliciting donations for the Auckland City Mission. The mission cautioned that it... does not use door-to-door collections and suggested anyone approached contact the police.

...It is cold in Queen St at 7.30 pm. But [a boy], aged 14, wears a \$200-a-week smile as he sells you a 125g bag of lollies for \$3 and tells you the money will keep kids off the streets. Working a few hours three nights a week... for Kandy Kids... the Selwyn College student pockets a dollar for every bag he sells... His... [boss's] brother... runs a similar operation selling \$2 bags for 50 cent commissions... but most of the money was being pocketed by the organisers of the schemes... Yesterday the... national president of the... Fundraising Institute... said the problem of bogus collectors for charity had been around for years. "Until more donors start asking questions about who benefits from the schemes, people will continue to misrepresent themselves to collect money – profit is their primary motive." She said it was unlikely that the lolly-selling operators were taking

money that would otherwise go to genuine charities: “Most people who give money to street vendors do so because they want the product being offered.” ...[however, she also] said some donors were misled into believing they were giving to good causes because the sellers used vague terms such as child cancer or school projects as the reason they were seeking money... “We don’t have any control over these people because they are not members of the institute.” ...Organisers of such schemes could [only] face fraud charges if they falsely claimed to be working for bona fide charities... She[then] said genuine charity organisations were wary of using small children to collect donations unsupervised because of the risks involved... A senior Labour Department inspector... said child workers were covered by the Employment Contracts Act even if they had not signed a formal contract, by virtue of their having accepted a job offer. He said there was no minimum wage for workers under the age of 16. A Manurewa resident... said a boy aged about 11 arrived at his home selling lollies at 8.30 pm in the rain... on his own... “He was cold and wet and miserable... he said he was collecting for the Horizon Trust for employing young kids.” - 1997

Competition and bogus collectors are not the only problems charities face. Amongst the others is the fact that they are entirely dependent on the generosity of wealthier people. Furthermore, although charities serve the purpose of helping the poor, they are also used by wealthy people to feel better about themselves.

...They put their hands in their pockets It relieves their conscience There’s something wrong with human nature...

Ill-gotten money is referred to as “dirty...” Many people who “sell their souls” for money suffer later. Guilt about their transgressions can take many shapes, but it is obvious that many persons who have achieved fortunes by unscrupulous means feel compelled to cleanse themselves by giving their money away. A number of the world’s great charitable and humanitarian foundations owe their origin to the guilt feelings of their founders.

...in the words of Andrew Carnegie... “to die rich is to die disgraced.”

...the world’s most famous computer industry figure, has given \$US20 million... to Cambridge University. The present... for a new building for the university’s computer science laboratory... comes just three months after... Microsoft... announced a \$US50 million investment in Cambridge to create a research centre. - 1997

Microsoft[’s] chairman... and his wife... have made \$US3.34 billion... in new donations for health and education projects worldwide. *Fortune* magazine said the gift from the world’s richest private citizens is believed to be the largest-ever charitable donation.

The couple’s recent gifts to... their foundation dedicated to improving global health and learning, rais[ed] its total assets to \$US17.1 billion.

...No longer content with just giving money to charities run by other people, the world’s richest men are starting their own... THEY are the new philanthropists: billionaires who make giving personal. American moguls including... Microsoft[’s] co-founder and chairman... are part of an increasing trend among the rich to give away money the way they made it – on their own, bypassing traditional charities that are feeling the pinch. “It’s the control factor,” says... a University of Southwestern Louisiana expert on charity. “They think, ‘By establishing a foundation, it gives me the longevity on influencing how the money is spent’... I would also suspect there is a factor of ‘no one is doing it right, the way I would do it.’” The *Chronicle of Philanthropy* has detailed the rise of billionaire-initiated foundations through the 1990s on its Philanthropy 400 list. “There have been criticisms,” says... the... chronicle[’s] editor... “A lot of recent giving has not been focused on the very poor; the arts have [also] suffered.”

...Getty during his lifetime was considered the world’s richest man. He was also known as one of the stingiest... On the other hand, he would freely spend hundreds of thousands of dollars for a piece of art...

Americans overall gave what financial planners describe as a “stingy” 1.9[%] of their income to charity last year... That level – which includes the value of donated goods or gifts in kind – has remained relatively unchanged over the past 20 years and has never exceeded 2[%] going back to at least 1975. Only one out of 10 Americans donated more than 5[%] of their income last year... There is no shortage of outstretched hands. According to the National Charities Information Bureau in New York, there are about 500,000 charitable organisations in the U[S] and their numbers are growing at a rate of 30,000 a year. Last year gifts by corporations, organisations and individuals spiked upward to \$US143.9 billion... - 1996

The reason there are all these charities is because there is a huge amount of worthwhile causes out there and there is no funding for them, so people have to somehow try to raise money to help them, otherwise they don’t get helped...

“I’ve got a weekend job helping the poor...” “That’s not a job, it’s a waste of time. What can poor people pay ya? Nothing! What satisfaction do ya get from helping them? None! Who wants to help poor people anyway? Nobody!”

There must be a lot of nobodies in Beverly Hills because ‘each year the 5 sq. mile urban oasis raises over one billion dollars’ through charity events!

Our willingness to donate large sums to causes espoused by celebrities is laudable – but is it the causes or the celebrities we are giving to? Why do we even need celebrities to excite our altruism? ...We profess such admiration and regard for those who do good... We exalt them almost to sainthood. But only, of course, if they do the work for nothing... [C]aring and compassion don’t have a high market value. If they did, the workers in... community houses and workshops[for the intellectually handicapped] would be among the highest earners in our society... Are we perhaps reluctant to pay for caring because caring is its own reward, and brings such pleasure to those who do it, that they don’t need to be paid much? Well, if that were our criterion, we wouldn’t pay... stars at all, would we? And we would have millions clamouring to be allowed to do full-time caring... It actually seems to me that the more caring people do, the less they are valued. The further they get from the day-to-day work of wiping bottoms, cooking and cleaning, the more likely they are to become rich and famous... Is it because caring isn’t a skilled and demanding occupation? ...We certainly complain loudly about the lack of skills and competence many voluntary carers show...

Americans urged to adopt summit’s volunteer spirit... The specific goals of the... three-day “summit” ...were to... encourage... all Americans to adopt... volunteerism to help... an estimated 15 million disadvantaged youth by providing health care, mentoring, education, a safe place for after-school activities and an opportunity to serve their community... A challenge... will be to relay from the summit a sense of urgency... “We have to get people to believe that there is a significant problem...” - 1997

The 42nd US President apparently believed it. However, while the President could be called a catalyst in the creation of a volunteerism summit, he has also been a contributing factor to the *significant problem!*

[The 42nd US President] has signed a law which will cut billions of dollars from the federal budget by shifting responsibility for welfare to the states, limiting eligibility and ending direct federal aid for poor children. "Today we are ending welfare as we know it," he said, echoing his 1992 presidential campaign promise as he signed the bill delivered by the Republican-controlled Congress. "But I hope this day will be remembered not for what it ended but for what it began, a new day that offers hope, honours responsibility, rewards work and changes the terms of the debate." Under the new law... federal welfare spending will be cut by about \$US55 billion over six years. The bill upset many Democrats and their traditional allies. "This isn't welfare reform, it's welfare denial," said [the]Senator... of Illinois... At the same time... a spokeswoman for[the] Republican presidential challenger... said that "by selling out his own party, [the President] has proven he is ideologically adrift." [The President] twice before vetoed welfare legislation crafted by the Republican Congress, but with election-year politics heating up, several of his political strategists recommended that he sign this version and try to amend it later. He said the law was far from perfect but the object was to help the people who were trapped in the old welfare system. - 1996

The bill included making it 'compulsory to work after two years' with a 'lifetime limit of five years on welfare' – as is already practiced in at least one US state. It is difficult to see how forcing people to take whatever source of income they can get once they are no longer allowed to obtain welfare is going to help them. It is also unlikely that the 42nd US President would consider performing some of the jobs that might be available (especially the low-paid ones)! What will the future hold for a city like Philadelphia, which 'is losing jobs' and where, already, 'one out of every six adults and three-quarters of all children currently needs welfare'? The President either knows nothing about the history of welfare systems, or he is determined to return his country to the days when charity was all that the poor could rely on.

In England in 1601, a national law was passed requiring the parishes to administer locally certain kinds of relief, including work relief, and to raise funds locally for this purpose. During the 17th cent., poorhouses were developed to accommodate the ill, aged, and insane, as well as the unemployed. A later development was the workhouse, employing those unable or unwilling to find work elsewhere. During the 19th cent., the laws were revised, with greater emphasis on poor relief as a national responsibility requiring improved institutions and administration. With the rise of industrialism... the old laws gave way to modern relief systems...

social welfare... any of a variety of governmental programs designed to protect citizens from the economic risks and insecurities of life... Methods of financing and administration and the scope of coverage and benefits vary widely among countries... In many societies charity has been the traditional way in which provision was made for the poor... Obligations on communities... to provide for the poor can be traced back for hundreds of years in a number of different societies. For example, part of the function of the Christian tithe or the Islamic zakat was to provide for the poor... From the 16th century it became recognized... that there were people who could not find work... Town poor laws were passed in Germany from 1520 onwards, and a law of 1530 clearly placed on towns and communities the obligation of sustaining the poor. In 1794 the Prussian states assumed the responsibility of providing food and lodgings for those citizens unable to support and fend for themselves... The earliest modern social welfare laws were enacted in Germany in the 1880s... A floor of minimum protection has come to be viewed as one of government's general responsibilities with respect to specific risks, and in many countries the consensus holds that public responsibility extends to all those unable to care for themselves for whatever reason. In this view social welfare is extended and received as a matter of right rather than need... While industrialization has undoubtedly added to the need for social security by breaking up the extended family and leading to urban poverty, it is by no means the sole reason why the system evolved. Two of the first three countries to make provision for old-age pensions were primarily agricultural societies – Denmark in 1891 and N[Z] in 1898. The Danish scheme was clearly an attempt to alleviate rural rather than urban poverty.

In 1883, Germany passed the first sickness insurance law. In 1884, it passed the first worker's injury act. By 1889, Germany had established the first compulsory old-age and disability insurance programme. Most European countries soon passed laws similar to those... The U[K] did so in 1908... The U[S] was slow in following the European countries. By the time of the Great Depression of the 1930's, U.S. political and business leaders came to realize that economic misfortune could result from events beyond workers' control. The U.S. passed its first comprehensive social security legislation in 1935. Canada began its social security system in 1940. All industrialized countries and many developing countries now have social security systems... There are... problems in the administration of welfare... for example... [if] recipients cannot earn much more from a job than they can get from benefits... some may be discouraged from looking for work... [But this problem involves a small percentage of the population and could be offset by the people who] consider it a disgrace to receive welfare and... even refuse to accept it, even though they are extremely poor.

For instance, an *International Herald Tribune* survey has reported... German charities estimating that for every 100 welfare recipients there are 167 "hidden poor" who do not claim assistance...

Unlike most... social security systems, the N[Z] scheme is non-contributory. Benefits are financed from general taxation... An advantage of this is that people who are unable to pay... regular contributions to a social security fund... are covered to the same extent as wage and salary earners.

The number of... N[Zers]... claiming the maximum state grant for food has doubled from... last year[. 'Labour's social welfare spokesperson said it was alarming that there were nearly 13,000 instances of people who had already reached their limit for this year. The number of special needs grants for food handed out by Income Support rose from 268,045 in December 1995 to 275,875. It was no surprise the figures had risen because grants were easier to get, the Minister of Social Welfare said. The grants are given out by Income Support after essential expenses have caused a family or individual's budget to be blown leaving no money for food. They could be anything from a visit to the dentist or repairs to the fridge. The grant can be given to beneficiaries or low-paid workers. A cash limit over a year exists, ranging from \$200 for single people to \$550 for a couple or sole parent with three or more children'...

N[Z] has nearly twice the proportion of single parents dependant on Government benefits as A[US]. This is a disturbing trend and shows no sign of declining... and the life-style may be transmitted to children.

...The Income Support Service says pregnancy is the biggest single reason people are being granted the sickness benefit... [accounting for about 19%], or... nearly twice the number for depression or arthritis... of the 34,200 people on the benefit... In the year to June 30, the benefit cost taxpayers \$378.8 million. The benefit is granted to people 16 years and over who cannot work because of an illness, accident or pregnancy. For the woman to be granted all or part of the... benefit, she has to be living alone, or – if with a partner – their combined income must be under \$466 before tax each week... Overall, sickness benefit numbers have risen sharply in recent years... Alarmed at the trend, the Government introduced a tougher vetting system a year ago...

Fewer people are signing up for the sickness benefit since conditions have tightened, but more are opting for the invalids benefit... and... the... Income Support transitional benefits manager... said the higher rates have enticed some people to try switching... A single 25-year-old gets \$142.50 weekly on the unemployment benefit, compared to \$148.43 on the sickness benefit and \$178.11 as an invalid. [Incidentally, 'the average time spent on a domestic purposes benefit (DPB) is now three years nine months – up from three years in 1982.']

...Before April 1, 1991, a... DPB... beneficiary with one child received \$213.14. That amount became \$185.93. Today the sum is \$204.10... [and] \$222 for two or more children... While it can be seen as a gift to those who receive it, it's hardly a fortune... But it is topped up by the parent's automatic eligibility for family support which gives low-income families an extra \$42 for one child, and \$27 for each subsequent child. This becomes \$35 for children over 12. [By the way, 'a man who doxxed in his neighbour to Income Support has had to pay \$5000 to the person he informed on. An MP said yesterday that Income Support approached the man for information on his neighbour. The man agreed provided his name was not to be revealed. It was only late last year, when he was sued for defamation by the neighbour, that he found his name had been released.' • 'Figures released in Parliament showed a recent Income Support campaign detected 1871 cases of benefit fraud, totalling \$17 million. Only 160 had been referred for prosecution.'

...Nearly 101,000 NZ beneficiaries] were investigated in the 1995-96 financial year and 53,256 were found to have defrauded Income Support... to a total of \$65.6 million. That is \$8.3m up on the year before... As a result 38,207 benefits were altered or cancelled and \$28.8m of overpayments established... [P]rosecutions figures were low because many of the overpayments were small amounts... The actual... figure is likely to be much higher because the \$65m represents only the identified fraudsters... [B]enefit crime was a "huge problem" fuelled, in part, by a public attitude that considered Government money fair game... The operations manager... says the benefit crime unit is now investigating 2000 cases a month, mainly randomly, hence the rise in... detection... More than a third of the... fraud was detected through data matching with Inland Revenue, Education, Justice and Customs departments... [In related news from overseas, a] Jordanian millionaire who has been claiming \$US32... a month in social benefits designed for needy families has agreed to pay back all the money he claimed as an investigation begins into how he qualified for a benefit.

...The scale of benefit abuse among immigrants granted permanent residency is horrifying... [-] some immigration consultants "pick people up off planes and take them straight to the DSW [Department of Social Welfare] office." ...Permanent residents could apply for the emergency dole after two weeks in the country if they declared they had no funds... [but] the department "had no way of checking if someone had assets overseas if they don't tell us."

...[She] suffered 18 years of abuse at the hands of the man who fathered her child. She was convicted of benefit fraud for not revealing to Social Welfare that she was living in a relationship "in the nature of marriage" and ordered to repay \$45,000 at \$10 a week – which would have taken her into her 80s. But a majority decision from the Court of Appeal this week overturned the conviction... It said her relationship could not be equated to marriage and there was no financial interdependency... Current [DSW] rules say if a man stays in a woman's house for more than three nights he is considered to be in a relationship with her... [O]ne of the barristers representing the Auckland Women Lawyers' Association, who were involved in the case... says that leads to "the bizarre situation of men living in caravans and visiting women." She said it was annoying that many of the people who had been labelled benefit fraudsters were women who had no other means of support... The Women's Refuge movement is relieved that the issue of financial abuse has been legally acknowledged... [but an] Auckland University associate law professor... said the decision threw open implications of a different form of benefit abuse, where the male partner decided not to contribute financially so his female partner could stay on a benefit... [T]he implications of the decision are huge. Benefit application forms will have to be changed, guidelines rewritten and resources allocated to enable more investigation into the lives of people applying for benefits.

...A \$1500-a-head conference on benefit dependency has raised the hackles of social welfare watchdogs. The three-day international conference, organised by the D[SW], will be held at the up-market Sheraton Hotel in Auckland next March. Registration fees before January 31 are \$1475 but anyone registering after then will be charged \$1675. [The] Unemployed Workers Rights Centre co-ordinator... said that it was ludicrous to hold a conference about poverty which the poor could not afford to attend. - 1996

Bringing together some of the world's finest minds in the field of welfare, the conference is unusual in its focus on solutions and practical approaches. It is an opportunity for N[Z] to learn what other countries and agencies are doing to give welfare recipients opportunities to move towards independence. In other words the prime reasons for the conference are for N[Z] to pick the brains of the top workers in the field and for us to share our considerable experience with them. While it is highly unlikely that any of the overseas programmes covered at the conference can be picked off the shelf and dropped into the N[Z] setting, just learning how to avoid reinventing the wheel will make the conference a worthwhile investment. - Director-General of Social Welfare

The convener of the conference is the Director-General of the D[SW]... whose remarkable, for a civil servant, recent outburst about five-year-olds dreaming of growing up to be beneficiaries leaves little to the imagination as to the dryness of her views on social policy.

...Front-line social agencies are angered by claims that beneficiaries have lost their living skills and raised a generation which aspires to be on the dole. The Director-General... said N[Z]... had produced thousands of children "whose only fantasy, whose only dream, is life on a benefit." ...Her comments were supported by the... Minister of Social Welfare... who described the situation as a sad reality... The Unemployed Workers Rights activist... said... the... Government needed to address the problem of generations of beneficiaries stacking up, but blaming them was not the answer... An Alliance [Party] co-deputy leader... laid the blame for the welfare dependency trap on Government policy. "It is hardly surprising that children make pessimistic assessments of their chances when they witness how their parents' jobs have been taken away, their family incomes eroded and their social services dismantled."

...The Minister of Social Welfare... was grilled in Parliament yesterday over the [probable] cost of the [benefit dependency] conference. He said of the 463 registered to attend, 142 were from Government departments. Sixty-four were from Social Welfare and the cost for those came to \$90,000... Accommodation costs were not yet known[, nor were the associated travel costs. However]... Social Welfare spent more than \$3 million on air travel and nearly \$200,000 on entertainment over the past year... more... than many other Government agencies... despite funding pressures elsewhere in the department... But the Minister... said the... spending was only 0.69[%] of the overall budget... He said Social Welfare employed more than 6500 staff spread over about 200 sites... "...Social Welfare staff are... being flown around to go to work."

...Delegates[for the conference] have come from 17 countries with key speakers from the U[S, NZ, AUS, the UK], Sweden and Canada. The most controversial... is... an administrator... responsible for developing and implementing... Wisconsin Works... a "welfare replacement" programme.

...WISCONSIN, the most inflammatory word in welfare politics, gets a big airing in N[Z] this week. The dairying state in the American mid-west makes its beneficiaries work for their money, and promotes itself as an international model for welfare reform... The Right likes Wisconsin's "tough love" policy: Beneficiaries, it says, gain dignity and real jobs, and the taxpayers save heaps of money. The Left calls it punishment for the poor... The... latest plan in... [the now] decade-long programme... requires virtually all beneficiaries to work. If they cannot find a job in the market-place, they can take either a state-subsidised job, do community service work or join the "transition" programme – special work for people with particular problems such as a drug habit. But if they fail without "good cause" to do their full complement of work, or to attend the related training and education courses, their pay is cut. Nobody can stay on any one of the programmes for more than two years; and there is an overall

limit on welfare of five years. This, says anti-poverty critics, shows how punitive the... scheme is. "The reason people are not working... is that there aren't enough jobs." So when someone has fulfilled their two years' work requirement and genuinely cannot find a job, what happened? Are they simply thrown on the scrapheap? No, says... the[programme's] architect... It was "highly unlikely" that at the end of either two or five years the person would be unable to find a job. A former two-year programme... called Work Not Welfare, expired last December, but none of the families needed to go beyond then. However... "we have a clause which allows for the time limit to be extended on a case by case basis." The greatest benefit of Workfare, she says, is removing the stigma from the beneficiary. Far from punishing them, it helps them up the ladder to self-sufficiency. This was in line with the original intent of the social security brought in by President Roosevelt in 1935. "Those programmes were intended only to be temporary – they were never meant to be a way of life." But now some families spend generations on the dole – and [the architect] blames this mainly on the fact that benefits are entitlements. Under the Wisconsin scheme, there is no entitlement... "When my daughter started getting an allowance on Saturday morning, she felt she was entitled to it because it was always there... Then, when she found there were some requirements attached to it, she viewed the money differently... The value of it seemed to change – she didn't race out and spend it on candy. I'm using a very simplistic example, but we tend to value more something that we have a personal investment in – and typically it's because we worked for it." In law, entitlement conferred a property right and allowed legal mechanisms "for arguing for [welfare] going on forever." It made it, in other words, harder to cut off the benefit. There are carrots as well as sticks in the Wisconsin programme. In return for work, the beneficiary gains a grant of \$555 a month (community service) or \$518 (transition) along with subsidised child care and health care. The critics say these carrots are rotten. "In many cases, families working every available hour under programme rules will be poorer than they are under current law," says... the Centre for Law and Social Policy in Washington DC. Under the federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) programme, larger families get more money. But Wisconsin Works, which replaces AFDC, gives families only a flat grant, regardless of the number of children... [However, according to Workfare's architect,] "The vast majority of our caseload – over 80% – is actually... receiving more money than they received under the old benefit structure." The reason for the flat grant "is to make sure that our programme is run as much like the real world as possible," she says. "I've had nine jobs in my life, and I've never had one where the employer said... 'Oh, you've had another baby, I want to increase your salary.'..." Programmes which give more money to large families "risk sending a signal that says, 'Have more children, get some money.'..." Employers had told the Wisconsin government that it was harder to hire people "if there was an alternative form of income out there..." The work programme ensured that the welfare system was no longer in competition with employers. Under the scheme, a parent who is under 18 is not entitled to any cash benefits at all. Under the former scheme, they could receive such a grant. "We have felt for some time that that is the wrong message to send." Children who had children should be living at home so that they could receive the kind of help and nurturing that they needed, she said. Giving them living expenses was offering the wrong sort of help. If the family could not provide care, the parent should be in a supervised setting. Beneficiaries with a child under 12 weeks are one of the very few exempt from work. Previously, those with children up to a year old were exempt... Wisconsin would increase its spending on childcare from \$60 million last year to \$180 million for the new programme. "These are enormous dollar amounts for a state the size of Wisconsin (about five million)." Workfare helps stop welfare fraud... When beneficiaries were contacted for work, some simply "dropped out, and it turned out that many of them had jobs – they simply weren't reporting them." And Wisconsin has cut its caseload... In 1987 the number of families with dependent children receiving aid was 98,000. In September last year the figure had dropped to nearly 50,000... It is saving \$30 million a month in welfare payments... None of this will quieten Wisconsin's critics... It will cost an estimated \$2.1 billion in the [next] two years – \$110 million more than projected costs of the previous welfare system... Thousands of residents in Wisconsin have had their benefits cut for not participating[. • 'From April 1, NZ's Employment Service was given responsibility for the Community Taskforce – a compulsory community-related work scheme set up in 1991 – and had cut the benefits of 19 out of 3711 beneficiaries on projects by September 30'...

Technology, says an] Auckland University economist... is replacing labour-intensive jobs in the private sector. Unless the state steps in and creates work... "I don't see there's any way in which you're going to get adequate work opportunities..." The state can "force people into very low-paid jobs by making benefits so low that people simply have to take any kind of work they can get." ...the result would be worse poverty and social trouble... Forcing parents out to work leads to increased child abuse and neglect and risking the safety of the child in unsafe childcare conditions... There is much American material available now showing the damaging effects of... Workfare[-like]... programmes. For example, in New York City 35,000 dole recipients are now used for local body jobs in place of regular waged, unionised workers... Recent research in the U[S] shows that in the... years 1992-1995, 0.5[%] of families (around 500,000) increased their assets by \$1.6 trillion while the "other" 99 million households together earned far less... Another study shows that the new Welfare Reform Act will allow massive tax cuts for the rich of \$135 billion to 2002, while cutting welfare for the poor... Some worry that the conference... [is] an attempt by the establishment to smuggle Wisconsin-type reforms into N[Z]. The NZ] Employment Minister... who is designing a work-for-welfare scheme for introduction next year, denies this. The proposed community wage scheme "is very much a N[Z] solution to a N[Z] problem," said the minister's] spokeswoman... "He's not seeking to replicate any overseas model."

...[THE NZ] EMPLOYMENT Minister... says he will be offering up to half of the unemployed part-time community work or training. But... his aim was to put all... people on the unemployment register into community work or training... The bulk of the work-for-dole scheme would not be announced... this year... but regional commissioners of employment would be hired at the end of the year and the entire programme would come into force next year, he said.

...Over the past 13 years governments and the Business Roundtable have time and again tried to use this sneaky, back-door way of getting an agenda through. They call a meeting, import overseas "experts," select likely supporters to attend, often through the high price mechanism, and then bombard the public with publicity about the conference, claiming consensus for new reforms has resulted. The whole new right agenda inflicted on us since 1984 has been developed and implemented by this very technique... The... Government needs to learn from the failures of the past rather than repeat them. Workfare programmes failed in 1932 and 1933 and will not achieve their goals 65 years later... The creation of decent jobs with decent wages is the basis of solving the unemployment crisis that successive Government policies... have caused.

...Recently, I attended a dinner hosted by the New Zealand Business Roundtable, part of its programme on welfare and related social policy issues... The Business Roundtable advocates a free market across all sectors. Its simple ideology is that the "market is good" and the "state is bad." Being "dependent" on an employer for a job, no matter what the personal or family cost, is "good," being "dependent" on a benefit, with the possible exception of severe disability, is "bad." And that's why they invited us to dinner – to reinforce the message... Basically the Roundtable is telling us that the problem lies in the state refusing to distinguish between the deserving and the undeserving poor... And they, in their corporate offices, with their ever so ethical business practices, are so much better placed to label who is "deserving" and who is "undeserving"... Unfortunately, the corporate sector does not have a very good record in N[Z] of sponsoring welfare organisations, because companies prefer to be associated with the glamorous end of the... market... And of course the community groups who are "dependent" on corporate sponsorship can hardly bite the hand that feeds them. That is what already holds so many back from criticising Government policy – they jeopardise their funding.

...the... social scientist brought here by the Business Roundtable for its last annual lecture[. a]... senior fellow at the Hoover Institute, Stanford University, observed that social scientists seem much more comfortable dealing in statistical abstractions than in flesh-and-blood human beings... Not so long ago the... D[SW] said it had "360,000 working-age customers." That is a fearful figure, the equivalent of... [10% of NZ's population],

and it does not include pensioners, by far the largest category of state dependants [(‘57% of the total number of beneficiaries, or 469,239 people, in 1995’). Of those 360,000... how many are “locked into dependency,” let alone “an inter-generational cycle of dependency,” as distinct from tumbling temporarily into the welfare net? Social Welfare has no idea. It has only just begun an attempt to get to know every one of its “clients.” If it does we might begin to get some interesting social policy. If academics could adopt a less static view of people they could contribute too.

...Labour’s social welfare spokeswoman... is questioning why an Auckland film company is getting \$300,000 of taxpayers’ money for a “highly political” documentary on welfare dependency... Communicado had produced National’s election broadcasts last year, and it shared the party’s view on welfare, she said. - 1997

The Labour Party represents the Left in NZ politics and the National Party the Right. Labour was responsible for expanding NZ’s welfare system after the ‘Great Depression of 1929-34’, and all subsequent expansions.

IS THIS WHAT MAKES OUR SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM TICK? ...We spend 5 million dollars every working hour... providing benefits... Twenty five percent of our population receives a benefit of some description... 134,000 N[Z]ers are on the dole. Twenty two percent of these people have never, ever had a job... 28% of children live in one parent families. 1 in 4 children in N[Z] have the State as the sole provider for the family... 76% of liable parents pay less than ten dollars a week in child support. 219 million dollars is owed to the Child Support Agency. Somewhere out there in all of this, is a solo mum... [who] is sick because she has been fasting on alternate days to save money. She needs to; she has 3 kids and 7 dollars to get her through two days until payday. Welcome to our nightmare. - “Timebomb”: The Tuesday Documentary

An Income Support form containing a clause that clients should not ask for help for food is being used as evidence that... the Government is becoming dependent on food banks... and... the social welfare system is failing... The form indicates that the applicant will get assistance to move into a new property only if he or she signs [the] clause...

The number of families getting Social Welfare assistance to meet their housing costs has almost doubled in the past three years... from 66,290 in 1994 to 128,674 this year.

...At the end of March 1962, for example, there were just 232 unemployment beneficiaries. Now there are about 140,000. There were 4346 sickness beneficiaries – today, around 75,000. There were no domestic purposes beneficiaries (today more than one hundred thousand), because it hadn’t been invented then... In 1962... [95%] of children were living in households with two parents... [while] both sickness and unemployment benefits for a married man with children were 55[%] of the average wage – today that ratio has been squeezed to around 42[%]. Zero unemployment was not simply the result of high Government spending. Per capital state expenditure was only half, in real terms, what it is today, and the ratio of Government spending to GDP was actually significantly lower than it is now. [Since ‘1991, the number of NZers receiving the Sickness Benefit has risen by 68%; the number receiving the Invalids Benefit has risen by 44%; and the number receiving the DPB has increased by 11%.’ However, between ‘1991 and 1995 the net DSW fiscal impact as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product decreased from 13.4% to 11.5%.’]

...The relentless upward trend of working-age beneficiary numbers is certainly of concern to beneficiaries who face growing competition to get on the ladder to independence and self-reliance. It is also of concern for taxpayers who must continue to meet the ballooning costs of social welfare. There is little room to feel complacent when we reflect that even during the past few years of substantial economic growth, welfare has continued to account for \$1 in every \$3 of Government expenditure... Since 1985 welfare dependency has grown from 8[%] of the working-age population to around 20[%]. The percentage of the nation’s children in welfare dependent families is growing even faster. [The figure was 12% i]n 1985... Currently, 25[%] of our children have no parents in paid work. The figure for Maori is 48[%] and for Pacific Island children 45[%]. Children who have no experience of a working parent are likely to encounter much greater difficulty entering the workforce themselves.

...Sickness, invalids and domestic purpose benefits could be restricted under benefit reforms the [NZ] Government is considering... Yesterday, the Social Welfare Minister... refused to divulge any information... [Later in the day the PM] said... that there would be no across-the-board cutting of benefits as happened in 1991, but the Government would look at benefit alignment issues to determine why people were trying to migrate from one benefit to another.

...The P[M] signalled yesterday that N[Z] may well follow A[US]’s example and tighten the dole entitlement for new immigrants... And... the A[USn] P[M]... made it plain that A[US] would not consider making an exemption for N[Z]ers, saying that when the law was passed it would be “applied in a non-discriminatory fashion.” The bill will make migrants wait for two years, instead of six months, before being eligible... The proposed change means the social security agreement between the two countries will have to be renegotiated... Income Support says only about 800 A[USns] in N[Z]... are getting the dole... [A]bout 20,000 Kiwis are on the dole or its equivalent... in A[US]... - 1997

N[Z] currently has six overseas social security agreements: with the U[K] (1990) – which recently introduced ‘new regulations to prevent people under the age of 18 from claiming a benefit’]; the Netherlands (1990); Greece (1994); Ireland (1993); A[US] (1994) and the States of Jersey and Guernsey (1995). Discussions are at an advanced stage with Denmark, Italy and Canada. The main purpose... is to encourage free movement of labour and to ensure that when a person has lived or worked in more than one country, each of those countries takes a fair share of responsibility for meeting the costs of that person’s social security coverage. These agreements are becoming part of the basic infrastructure for the global village, enabling people to move about the world, for short or long periods, either to work or to be with family... By entering into agreements, N[Z] is better able to attract skills, specialist knowledge and technical know-how from overseas when they are not available here. An ever-widening network of agreements will enhance N[Z]’s edge in the international market place, and also provide greater choice for N[Z]ers who wish to live overseas...

Government moves to overturn a landmark court victory for women beneficiaries will put lives at risk, women lawyers say. Legislation introduced to Parliament this week, and touted by the Government as helping battered women, would abandon gains expected from the... Court of Appeal... case... last year... [over a woman who] was described... as a “slave or chattel” who suffered broken teeth and limbs, rape and death threats from her partner of 18 years [(r:p37, ln25)]... Lawyers said the appeal decision meant Income Support had to take into account whether there was “financial interdependence” in relationships when deciding about granting benefits. The bill removes that necessity and... would allow women to get an emergency benefit for up to six months so as to leave a violent relationship. The Minister of Social Welfare... said it gave women an escape route. However, that measure is under attack... [The] president of the Auckland Women Lawyers Association... said [the minister’s] comment underlined appalling ignorance about battered women. “I don’t see how a knowledgeable Government could introduce legislation like this when the statistical evidence makes it quite clear than women are most at risk of being murdered by their violent partners at the time of or shortly after separation... and frankly I’m forced to make the fairly strong suggestion that it is a misogynist piece of legislation.”

...The Ministry of Women’s Affairs has criticised welfare benefit rules which mean most couples on the unemployment benefit receive \$118 each a week, whereas single people receive \$142... [However, the] Minister of Social Welfare... said reasons for the policy were “very, very sound.” The amount of benefit was not based on how household incomes were distributed but on what was fair. Unlike people living alone, couples could share some costs.

...Many people are missing out on their full benefit entitlements because staff at Income Support are overworked, says [a] beneficiaries advocate... of the Auckland People's Centre. He was speaking after a Wellington woman... was put on two years' supervision for beating her 17-month-old son... to death in January. Her defence lawyer said [the woman] had been under added pressure because she had not received all the Income Support payments she was entitled to.

...Superannuitants may soon be paid their pensions by a non-Government organisation such as a bank rather than by Social Welfare. The Government is questioning whether super payments should stay with Social Welfare when the department's "payments" arm, the Income Support Service, merges next year with the... Employment Service within the Labour Department... The new agency [is] yet to be named... The departments involved employ 4594 staff, 14[%] of the public service. It is not yet known if there will be redundancies.

...The Government is facing a multi-million-dollar redundancy bill for former... staff, many of whom are still on the state's payroll[, after an]... Employment Court decision... overturned a ruling by the Employment Tribunal... [concerning the Housing Corporation restructuring in 1992. In related news from Britain, Tarmac has] announced 1996 pre-tax profits of £10 million, down from £20 million the previous year but better than the £6 million loss forecast by analysts. The downturn was due to a one-off charge of £65 million to cover the restructuring of last year's asset swap with Wimpy. Under the £600 million deal, Tarmac handed over its housebuilding division in return for Wimpy's quarrying and contracting business... [T]he swap, which has led to 1,500 redundancies, should give annual savings of £38 million – double estimates.

...Generation X is developing its own career creed, an A[US]n researcher... has found... That creed had its own particular me-first commandments... Thou shalt change jobs often... If you want loyalty, get a dog.

...FIFTY years ago... embarking on a career was like getting on a train. "You were an accountant or a plumber and you'd be in this profession for 40 years. It was all very predictable and the tracks were fixed. In the 1970s, it was like you were in a bus. During your working life you might have to transfer from bus to bus but there were established routes and roads. Today, having a career is like being in an all-terrain vehicle and there are no roads." ...On the eve of the 21st century, the concept of a job is undergoing a radical redefinition... The ensuing loss of job security isn't a problem if you're confident and enjoy your independence... [-] chances are you'll also enjoy moving around and being in control of your destiny... [However,] most people don't like uncertainty and change. - 1997

...the middle class is taking a shaking at the moment... [because] it... has to take on board the sort of insecurities that working class people have had to live with for centuries. [At] the beginning of the '60s it was generally taken for granted that you had a few years training in [an] apprenticeship and you sort of had a job for life. That's gone... "I worked for Dunlop. I joined them when I was twenty... I had been working for them just over twenty years and I was called in to see the Marketing Manager thinking in my mind... perhaps there's something good coming out of this. The conversation was very short and said 'I'm sorry... your job is being... stopped' ...inside me said... what's going on? I came home and eventually I told [my wife] and... brought a bottle of wine with me... to try and ease the pain... I expected that to be a job for life. Unfortunately I was made redundant and since then I've worked for six other companies, in various positions, and I'm now looking for another position to continue my employment until... genuine retirement age. I suppose one has had to cut back. I used to play a lot of tennis and squash... [Now] I play croquet because it doesn't cost very much. I'm 58 and most of my friends are actually retired and therefore have a very... solid pension... I'm still looking for a job... which is the difficult thing to accept." [His wife says:] "I don't like being the one that's going out and leaving him at home and then coming back and he's still at home... I think it must be very demoralising for him... not the role that he wanted at all."

About 820 million people worldwide, 30[%] of the world's labour force, are either jobless or lack sufficient work for minimum living standards, according to a United Nations study released yesterday. The study by the... UN['s]... International Labour Organisation said the figures from early 1994 represent the worst global employment crisis since the 1930s. About 120 million people are officially unemployed around the world, and the untalented jobless would raise that figure... About 35 million people are unemployed in Western Europe, half of them for more than a year... In 1993, the average per capita income fell globally for the fourth year in a row... an indication of the general stagnation in the world economy... One of the reasons for the crisis is the... increasingly competitive global economy, which has forced companies to cut back. "No single country has the capacity to deal with the problems on its own,"... said the ILO director-general... "We believe that the world needs an international strategy and an international framework." The report comes a week ahead of an international conference called by the U[S] President... which will bring together Government, business and labour leaders from the Group of Seven countries...

Hopes big, jobs few in G7 view of world... The world's... most powerful economies see huge economic opportunities ahead from new technology and freer world trade, but remain hesitant on how best to harness them to thin out their jobless armies. Economy and Labour Ministers from the Group of Seven industrial nations, at a two-day forum in unemployed-scarred Lille in... France, cast an envious eye on the U[S]'s record but fought shy of its meaner welfare cover... Fr[ance's] President... called for "a third way" between U[S]-style flexible labour markets and mainland Europe's cushioned, but unemployment plagued, workforces. Europeans have an average 11[%] jobless rate against the U[Ss' 5.5%]. But concrete proposals from the ministers of the U[S], Canada, Japan, Britain, France, Germany and Italy were thin on the ground. European officials, however, sought to talk up confidence, saying that trade liberalisation and new technology promised a long period of growth if countries knew how to adapt.

...*Job news has little promise...* The latest job statistics show the [NZ] labour market is faltering... [The] part-time workforce... rose by 25,000 people, while the number of fulltime workers dropped by 10,000... in the September quarter... [Overall, unemployment went] up from 6.1[% to 6.3%]. As a result N[Z] has slipped to sixth place in the OECD table; behind Japan on 3.4[%], Switzerland... Norway... the U[S] and the Netherlands...

Jobless total increases by 3.4pc in a month... taking the... registered unemployed... total to 159,144 at the end of November. That is an increase of... 4.7[%] since November last year. The Minister of Employment... was disappointed with the rise, but... said... the figure traditionally rose during November and December, partly because of students finishing courses.

...Summers of surf, sand and sun on the dole may be over for hundreds of Western Bay of Plenty holidaymakers. Employment Service centres at Tauranga and Mt Maunganui are taking a harder line and introducing "job logs." The registered unemployed... will have to report to the Employment Service weekly, showing who they have approached for work and what efforts they have made.

...*Hunting for a job?* Over 2000 positions are advertised each week in the *New Zealand Herald*...

The number of jobs advertised in Auckland increased to 17,812 [in October, up 1.1%] on September, while positions in Wellington and Christchurch continued to decline. The increase in Auckland job advertisements followed a 0.3[%] rise in September... Nationally, the number of job advertisements in October was up 0.5[%], recovering from a 0.2[%] fall in September, but still down 5.4[%] from October 1995. - 1996

The official number of jobless in N[Z] in the household labour force survey of December was 186,000, or one in ten people of working age. The Maori rate of unemployment at this time was 15.1[%]... and the Pacific Island rate was 14.8[%]... compared with... a Pakeha [(European)] rate of just 4.7[%]... In January 1997 there were 164,147 people registered as unemployed. This meant that for every job notified to the Labour

Department's employment service there were 22 registered unemployed people. On top of that there is a lot of hidden unemployment among people on other benefits such as superannuation, the DPB and the sickness and the invalids benefits. It will be clear to many on such benefits, and to the D[SW], that the unemployment figures are kept artificially low because of the disproportionate take-up of these benefits in the period that we have had mass unemployment. What this tells us is simply that there are not enough jobs in this country now...

The number of job advertisements continues to fall... Compared with... last year, the number... has fallen on a trend basis by 7.5[%]... Auckland had 1[%] fewer advertisements over the month, with the number down 8.7[%] on an annual basis.

...*Bleak job news for young*... A second survey of the Auckland economy has forecast a rise in regional unemployment over the medium term... [due to] large numbers of young people entering the workforce... The regional council study also notes that while unemployment is well below levels reached in the early 1990s, "its tendency to affect the young and Maori and Pacific Island populations is a concern."

...The Minister of Maori Affairs... is demanding that talks stop and action starts on the issue of Maori unemployment. Responding to figures that show Maori have the highest jobless rate (18.2[%]), he said it was time to get rid of the bureaucrats and to go straight to the problem. "We have to cut out the middleman and go to the coal face. Let those who are in the middle of the problem fix it." ...A glaring statistic to emerge from the latest figures was that the highest number of unemployed were in the 15-to-24-year-old age bracket, and the longer they were unemployed, the less inclined they were to seek work. [The minister] said there was no quick-fix solution, but if things were not turned around quickly it could be too late.

...EXPECTATION of a reliable job is being erased as nimble organisations strive to keep pace with rapid change... ENJOYING a life-long career with one organisation [also] is no longer a realistic expectation... Redundancy is now an ongoing fact of life, as much for senior executives as for the lowliest employee, according to... a career management guru from the U[S]... The idea of a job for life [has] been "beaten out of us,"... "People no longer expect job security," says... [a] human resources consulting... and outplacement specialist... Around 70% of [its] clients have lost jobs before. Even the younger age group – 25-30 years – are unemployment veterans. "Most people are now pragmatic... There is a new level of acceptance. Only a small percentage have difficulty coping with job loss." This was not the case 10 years ago when... cutbacks... "re-imaging"... change of ownership, efficiency drives, shift to centralisation from regional focus, and relocation all signalled probable job casualties... It was a time of great stress for senior managers who suddenly lost their jobs... "We were seeing top people from large organisations. Many would come to me in tears. There was... a stigma about job loss... and... no support network... Sacked staff were stripped of their dignity – the ritual handing back of company car keys, clearing out the desk, and being escorted off the premises. That was brutal..." ...A client in the senior (around 50 years) rung would typically have had little experience in the job market and have a lot of catching up to do. "These people need to be trained in how to apply and find a position,"... The middle age group of jobseekers (around 40 years), saddled with a hefty mortgage and family commitments, did not have as much discretion as the older category... "...Today it's not such a sudden departure. The process is more civilised." ...Most of the major staff cuts had been made by the early 1990s... [However,] job loss could be a positive experience. "You get to have time with your friends, meet new people. Some managers have no idea what goes on in the world outside their office."

...A rise in the number of older people claiming discrimination in the job market shows bigotry against the elderly, says the president of Auckland Grey Power. Thousands of people aged in their 50s were "put on the scrapheap" by employers who wanted to employ younger people at cheaper rates... when many... older people... would accept... junior wages... One man, aged in his 60s, said employers were often asking job applicants for qualifications that had only recently been offered... The rejection led to intense stress and depression... [By the way, unemployment in N[Z]... has fallen to one of the lowest rates in the developed world... [according to] figures... based on standardised seasonally adjusted unemployment rates prepared by the U[S] Bureau of Labour Statistics. This places N[Z] fourth among 16 developed nations... [during] December... And N[Z] was one of five developed countries to have a drop in unemployment since 1991, tumbling from 11[%]. NZ's... rate was well below the 8.6[%] recorded in A[US], almost half those of France, Italy and Sweden, and a third of Spain's 21.7[%] – although NZ is still a long way behind Japan's 3.3%. However, it pays to]... ignore the rigged numbers in Japan.

...The unemployment rate for the December quarter fell from 6.3[% to 5.9%] – the lowest rate recorded by the household labour force survey since January 1988. But Statistics N[Z] says the fall is largely the result of women leaving the workforce... [to] look... after children... during... the Christmas quarter... Because they are not available for work, they are not counted in the figures. The jobless figures are also linked to new rules that allow beneficiaries to earn more before their benefit is reduced. The new rules took effect from July 1 last year and allowed beneficiaries to earn \$4160 a year or \$80 a week, instead of \$50. That attracted people back into the workforce soon afterwards, with the September quarter's figures showing an increase in women working... The Government Statistician... said one could only speculate over the reason for the reverse in the December quarter. It could be that childcare is more available during school time than over [the holiday period]. It might also be that a beneficiary earned the \$4160 in the first three months after the new rules took effect.

...Registered unemployment fell 3.5[%] to 152,711 last month... The Employment Service figures also show a slight increase in the number of people in temporary work or subsidised employment – 15,588 compared with 14,073 last year.

...The number of people on the jobless register rose 5130... during April, the Minister of Employment said yesterday. Slower economic growth contributed to the increase.

...Oops! When the Employment Service said unemployment rose last month, it really meant it had fallen. The embarrassing error was caught when checks were being made about why the registered unemployed had risen so much... In fact it fell 974... the Minister of Employment... said yesterday[– c]learly angry with having to needlessly deflect criticism about rising unemployment... [T]he... error happened when a link that feeds mainframe computer information to a separate database system was misprogrammed...

A botch-up between Government departments has resulted in the number of registered unemployed being understated by more than 10,000. Social Welfare has found 10,700 recipients of the unemployment benefit are not registered with the Labour Department as job seekers. The Minister of Employment... has asked for a report on what went wrong. "Essentially it's about two computers not talking to each other as well as they could," a spokeswoman for him said... [I]t remained to be seen how many of the 10,700 now re-registered with the Labour Department.

...The number of registered unemployed rose by more than 7000 last month... to 170,624... but the Government lays most of the blame on the discovery of previously unregistered people claiming benefits.

...About 12,000 job seekers have been added to the Employment Service's list of the long-term unemployed. Previously job seekers who left the register for short periods were recorded as new job seekers if they returned to the register after eight weeks. The new limit is 13 weeks.

...Unemployment is at its highest level since December, 1994, after rising to 6.7[%] in the June quarter... [A]lmost 12,000 people had not worked in over four years[; '1080 have been on the dole for more than 10 years']...

Govt to declare war on unemployment... N[Z]'s... Employment Service... [plans] to slash unemployment in just over three years to ensure no one is registered out of work for more than six months... About half of... [the] registered unemployed have been out of work for more than six months. That... will drop to zero by the end of 2001 if the service meets its target... [In related news, t]he Minister of Employment... yesterday rejected suggestions that the community taskforce employment scheme was slave labour... [The minister] said the programme had been going about six years and nearly 46,000 jobseekers had gone through it, most of them voluntarily.

...An influential Asian business journal has urged [AUS's P]M... to be more radical and learn from N[Z] in his efforts to tackle unemployment in what it describes as possibly the Southern Hemisphere's most inflexible labour market... The message for... [the PM came a week after he had] said his plan to make young people work for their unemployment benefits in a bid to tackle the country's high jobless rate would not create slave labour... An editorial in... the... latest issue[of] the *Far Eastern Economic Review*... agreed with [AUS's]Opposition leader... in dismissing the P[M]'s controversial work-for-the-dole proposal as "a Mickey Mouse stunt."

...The A[US]n federal Government would introduce legislation next Tuesday to amend the Social Security Act to allow the work-for-the-dole scheme to be compulsory, the P[M]... said yesterday. He said... that the scheme would apply to 10,000 18 to 24-year-olds in 50 to 70 pilot schemes operating in areas of high youth unemployment... [P]articipants would receive award wages up to the value of their dole payments, and be expected to work an average of two days per week and six hours a day, for a minimum of six months. He warned the Senate minor parties not to obstruct the scheme. The A[US]n Democrats, although welcoming the concept... have expressed reservations about compelling people to join... [Meanwhile, AUS]'s unemployment rate was a seasonally adjusted 8.6[% last month]... Total employment rose 74,700 to 8.4506 million...

SERIOUS job losses are predicted in one of the many reports released last week on the state of the [NZ] economy and prospects for growth... [U]nemployment... would reach 8.3% in June next year, and stay at 9% for the following two years... [Incidentally, t]ens of thousands of... people... turned Brussels into a sea of colour and noise yesterday as they vented their anger at rising job losses, inhumane firms and uncaring governments.

...If you look at the bare figures, Britain's unemployment record is the envy of Europe. A jobless rate of 5.2[%] – the lowest in 17 years – is a distant dream for Europe's[other] major powers... About 1.5 million people have dropped off the dole queue in Britain since the economy began climbing out of recession five years ago... Not satisfied with rapidly falling unemployment... the... Government... put a "welfare-to-work" programme at the heart of its... [latest] manifesto... Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer (finance minister)... has not been slow to extol the virtues of British policies to his European counterparts. He says Europe must copy Britain and free up its labour markets... Not only... are... British... benefit levels... lower... but... the power of trade unions... has... been severely curtailed over the past 15 years... [Consequently,] the number of working days lost through strikes has been cut by 94% from the levels of the 1970s... [However, the] director of the London Business School's Centre for Economic Forecasting, said the 1980s union-bashing in Britain was not the key to a more vibrant jobs market... [Furthermore,] businessmen in Britain are complaining that they cannot find the skilled workers they need... "It is undeniably true that we are enjoying much lower jobless levels, but where Europe shapes up much better is in skills levels," said [the]development director at Britain's Employment Policy Institute... And many of the jobs that have been created in recent years have been temporary or part-time, without the benefits most workers take for granted... such as... sick pay or holidays.

...The U[S] unemployment rate slid to a 24-year low of 4.6[%], as payrolls rose sharply in November, showing a strong economy at the beginning of the crucial holiday-spending season... - 1997

The quest for economic security has been with man from his beginning, but until the Industrial Revolution, it lacked sufficient impetus to culminate in extensive group action. As more and more people became dependent on exchange of their labour for wages, the adverse consequences of unemployment became ever more painfully apparent to greater and greater segments of the population. Inability to work was often entirely beyond control of the individual. Injury and sickness might strike despite every precaution. Moreover, despite a person's best efforts, he was often helpless in the face of wide swings in business activity... For most people unemployment meant destitution, and workers in industrial nations sought solutions to the problem.

Many people were attracted to the alternatives to capitalist democracy which emerged in the 1930s... [B]oth Fascism and Communism claimed there was no need for mass unemployment[. In] comparison, the efforts of democratic governments like America's and Britain's seemed puny... Despite the clamour from [both the] Right and Left for action, the British government wasn't diverted from its orthodox economic line[– still inspired, perhaps, by the Irish potato famine in the 1840s, when 'Thomas Malthus was brought, by the logic of his economics, to testify to a royal commission that the country would be better off without one million redundant Irishmen.'] Elsewhere countries continued to turn to political extremes, but there was one country where the demand for intervention came from the Centre. In Sweden the growing Social Democratic movement campaigned against the Swedish government's inaction... Sweden's plight was not inevitable, said the Social Democrats, if the government spent more public money to create jobs... Swedes were paid real wages to rebuild their country. There was government money to help fishermen and factory workers. The Social Democrats didn't try to balance the nation's books. "There was no question of cutting back on anything, [but]rather of finding more things to be done. Pushing forwards instead of going backwards..." ...Foreign visitors came to study... a government that was neither Fascist nor Communist but whose stated purpose was to put people back to work. With nowhere was the contrast greater than the U[S]. In 1932 Washington was under siege. The Capitol building was surrounded by unemployed [WWI] veterans from all over the country. Their only assets were the bonus certificates they'd been given on leaving the army which promised a cash sum years later. "...a whole lot of people speak of ...u[s] as tramps. By God, they didn't speak of ...u[s] as tramps in 1917 and 18..." President Hoover had to decide what to do about the veterans when the Senate rejected their demands. The marchers had stayed on, camped out in central Washington. "It's war! The greatest concentration of fighting troops in Washington since 1865." "I knew... that they might be attacked... I saw the soldiers advancing into the[veterans'] camp... I'd never seen anything like it. They systematically went down the lines, burnt up all the tents and all the possessions of all the people there... I thought this would be the finish of Hoover." ...That summer, Americans were rallied by a new message. "This is more than a political campaign, it is a call to arms. Give me your help, not to win votes alone, but to win in this crusade to restore America to its own people." [Franklin]Roosevelt ran for the presidency saying the Depression could be beaten... The American people gave Roosevelt a land-slide victory... He offered a new style and a new confidence... "I shall ask the Congress for the one remaining instrument to meet the crisis... [– the] executive power to wage war against the emergency as great as the power that would be given to me if we were in fact invaded by a foreign foe." When he took office in 1933... 4 out of 10 industrial workers were unemployed. But however grim the situation, the new mood was irrepressible. Roosevelt described his program as bold, persistent experimentation... In a matter of weeks Washington was transformed by the rhythms of the 'New Deal'... [– in which t]he Administration tried to kick-start recovery and tackle unemployment. 16 major measures were put before Congress and passed in the first 100 days. There was immediate help for American farmers, who were facing ruin... "President Roosevelt came on the scene and what he done was that he would pay the farmers... 30 or 35 dollars... for a cow because there was so many cattle and not enough hay or water... then they would take it to the caning factory and they would can this meat, then they would give it to us... When you don't have food and somebody gives you food, well, what could you think but that he cared for you?" ...People were put back to work on schemes that would benefit the country at large. The Works Progress Administration was one of many new government agencies. There were jobs on roads and public buildings. Men were sent to remote areas to do conservation work... Roosevelt was the president to use the new power of radio on a regular basis. "I stand... by my refusal to accept as a necessary condition of our future a permanent army of unemployed..." Assistance from the New Deal was desperately needed in the southern states. 8 million livelihoods depended on one crop – cotton – and prices had fallen 70% since the [stockmarket]crash... But the tenants and farm labourers were confused by a government scheme to try to raise prices by destroying crops... Nearly half the cotton fields were ploughed up or left fallow, but the government compensation for this didn't reach the tenants and the labourers... They found that it was the land owners who benefited... Many who

protested were evicted. Nor could the New Deal help the struggling midwestern farmers whose poverty was made worse by years of drought and dust storms... Up to a million made the trek west... “...people would beg, borrow, steal or[do] anything just to get enough gas to get a few more miles.” At the end of their long journey the migrants didn’t discover the promised land of their dreams. California was still in the grip of the Depression itself[so t]he influx wasn’t welcomed... For Britain’s unemployed there was no great schemes of public works and no New Deal. Instead of government action they got royal sympathy... Britain’s mass unemployment was still seen as an act of God... “...the government turned a deaf ear to all our pleas[,” says a shipyard worker]... But the shipyards weren’t idle for much longer. The government... had to respond to what was happening in Europe. Hitler was building up a new navy and[had] started to seize territory. The German... [aggression was] good news for [Britain’s] northeast... “Thirteen years ago Britain launched her last battleship... [– at least] we thought she might be the last we should ever need to launch. Today those dreams lie shattered...” The shadow of war was growing over millions of lives but it was rearmament that brought back pay-packets... The late 1930s turned into a period of revived production and trade... The last countries to rearm were the last to come out of depression. Once the war started America[’s recovery was also] assured... For the duration of the war everyone was needed. But when they looked forward to a better post-war world, people hoped politicians had learnt a lesson. In future they’d expect their governments to provide jobs for all... Mass unemployment would no longer be tolerated. The memories were too bitter.

Unemployment as a major national and world-wide problem refers more to persons able and willing to work but unable to find work. It is a particular problem of an industrial society, in which mass production, changes in fashion, introduction of new machinery, seasonal fluctuations in business, and similar factors share responsibility for varying amounts of unemployment. It becomes most acute in times of business depression. Some unemployment, perhaps 5% of employable persons, is considered normal in a free enterprise system... Since a perfect equilibrium between production and consumption can never be reached, unemployment is not likely to disappear unless the overflow is absorbed by public works and compulsory labor services. The latter, with their low level of wages, are contrary to democratic principles but account largely for the U.S.S.R.’s claim that it has banished unemployment.

The Authoritarian state systems... seem to solve the problem of unemployment at the expense of efficiency and of freedom.

For decades the CCP maintained that, in contrast to the pre-1949 era, unemployment had been eliminated in urban China... [However], the party achieved its goal through tightly controlling rural-to-urban migration, particularly after 1955, and by periodically forcing millions of urban residents to resettle in rural areas. Despite these stringent controls, in the late 1970’s the number of unemployed workers in cities and towns was conceded to be as high as 10 million, or about 10% of the urban work force... After 1978 urban unemployment was substantially reduced, though not eliminated, through accelerated hiring by state units and relaxation of barriers to self-employment and private hiring... in service industries such as tailoring and restaurant operation.

Soviet experts say serious economic problems are a prime factor behind [recent] unrest, particularly in the central Asian republics where officials say about one million people are in effect out of work. - 1989

Before 1989 ended, the Soviet Union (USSR) had begun to disintegrate, and a few years later former member-nations such as Russia became part of the so-called free market world – ‘leaping out of the pan and into the fire’, so to speak!

The outstanding faults of the economic system in which we live are its failure to provide full employment and its arbitrary and inequitable distribution of wealth and incomes... Moreover, the evidence indicates that full, or even approximately full, employment is of rare and short-lived occurrence. - The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money

The lowest unemployment rate (that is, the closest the United States ever came to the concept of full employment) was achieved in 1944 during wartime (1.2%); the highest rates were in 1894 (18.3%) and 1939 (17.2%).

Full employment is also more likely to occur for a generation following a war because those killed while fighting are eliminated from the future work-force.

In 1959 a British election was fought on the slogan ‘you’ve never had it so good’. “The country has never been so prosperous, as the P[M] has said, ‘The standard of living has gone up, we’re better fed, better clothed, we’re using more electricity, more people have motor cars, bicycles, televisions, and a host of other things which only a few years ago were the luxuries of the few’.” ...After the war... all politicians had agreed it was the government’s duty to see there were jobs for all. Full employment had become a reality... In 1960 unemployment in Britain was just 1%, and real wages went on rising... [C]heap credit made spending even easier. Televisions, carpets, cars, were bought on the never never, with plenty of time to pay, and people found new ways of spending their money in new places... In Germany, for five years, unemployment never rose above 1%...

New Zealand is a prosperous country. It’s people are happy and fully employed. - 1954

However, by 1978 there were ‘25,000 NZers registered as unemployed’, and by 1980 the number of registered unemployed (which doesn’t take into account the number of people who don’t work because they can afford not to) had risen ‘above 40,000; then above 100,000 during 1988, before reaching a post-war record of 279,834 in 1993’ (when there were ‘1,510,100 employed persons’). Clearly, NZ’s politicians have long ceased to agree that *it was the government’s duty to see there were jobs for all!*

From guaranteed jobs for all to doleful days... Young N[Z]ers are often surprised when told this nation once stood head and shoulders above all others in providing jobs for virtually everyone who wanted work. Certainly nobody now under 30 has been lucky enough to live in such a blessed country. Perhaps those for whom 1967 is not such a distant memory should keep quiet about N[Z]’s former state of grace, for shame at not having bequeathed it to their young. From 1938 to when a crash in wool prices prompted a devaluation and loosening of import controls, N[Z]... was untainted by the blight of unemployment which subsequently turned the land of the long white cloud into one of gloom for hundreds of thousands of its people. As for that tall-sounding tale about being able to count unemployment beneficiaries on the fingers of one hand[a]... search through musty yearbooks confirms that on March 31, 1956, just five souls were drawing the dole. The unemployment register was never a very reliable measure of joblessness, though, and the census conducted the same month found 7936 people wanting paid work. Even so, the... Government’s Minister of Labour... still felt entitled to boast some years later that there were fewer than “a hundred genuinely unemployed people – and I know

the file on every one of them.” Now unemployment remains stubbornly above 6[%], and despite]... the Government’s avowed intent to help businesses to create more jobs, it is shy of announcing specific targets.

Present governments dishonestly use unemployment for their own ends as a means of controlling inflation... and of social engineering.

The market economies tolerate the presence of unused capacity and unmet need – of unemployment and poverty – in their populations.

Helplessness is assured by the industrial reserve army – by the rising and falling but enduring margin of unemployment which is part of the system. Any worker at any time can be flushed into this reserve, which ensures that he[']ll be co-operative and... accept the wage... offered [to] him.

Hello... Work today? But today’s Saturday and I’m planning to play golf... Those are the latest unemployment figures... Okay, I’ll be right down.

When there are less jobs than workers, employers gain the power to keep wages low – which increases their profits!

labor, in economics, one of the main factors in the production of wealth, the others being land and capital... The share of the joint product which should fall to labor in the shape of wages has been the subject of much discussion and conflict, and, since the Industrial Revolution, has loomed large in political and economic debates. One idea is that labor is a commodity to be bought in the market at the lowest possible price...

[But p]overty from low wages denied choice and created its own dependence.

Whereas the Soviets tried to use authoritarian methods to gain equality for the workers, in capitalist countries this task was performed by UNIONS. Unfortunately, when unions don’t get what they want, they tend to STRIKE – which, basically, means the same thing as being unemployed!

on strike... employees’ concerted refusal to work unless a grievance is remedied... The first strike on record took place in Egypt in the mid-12th c. BC... when tomb workers at Thebes downed tools because their rations had not arrived; it caused considerable alarm.

You can’t treat the working man this way. One day we’ll form a union and get the fair and equitable treatment we deserve. Then we’ll go too far and get corrupt and shiftless... [a]nd make life-long connections to the world of organized crime.

As dawn breaks over the crossroads of America’s industrial east, thousands of trucks are grinding their way on to the Pennsylvania turnpike... Suddenly a man with the second most famous name in America (after Kennedy) alights from his campaign van... “Good to see ya! ...Let’s take care of business...,” he says sunnily... Late this week, [the man] thought he had finally cleared his way to becoming the next president of the biggest, most muscular trade union in the American West – the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, made infamous by his father... [who] ran the Teamsters from 1957 until 1963, when [he] was... jailed for fraud and jury intimidation. Corruption was the union’s calling card; guns and knuckledusters were the tools of industrial relations. [The father] invested union funds in the... construction of Las Vegas, and one biographer... claims he used a union local as a front for a narcotics operation. The hugely popular [father] disappeared in 1975. Some say he was buried on a turnpike or beneath the end line at the New York Giant’s football stadium. Others think he was crunched in a car-wrecking yard... [His son] has another theory: an abattoir meat-shredder in the Midwest. The Government, he said, will never let him find out what happened. The... [father] made a Faustian pact with organised crime to protect his men. Now the Teamsters organise all kinds of people – from airline staff to the guys who dress as Mickey Mouse at Disney World. The union has 1.5 million members, with an annual budget of \$560 million a year... On Monday, [the son’s] rival, the Teamsters’ supposed Mr Clean – was disqualified by a court from the forthcoming election because of improper fundraising. [Mr Clean’s] disqualification horrified the... establishment... His slogan was: No Corruption, No Excuses, No Exceptions... Whereas the old Teamsters’ corruption came from the union itself, this alleged... sleaze sprang from a process designed by the Government, and the party of the American President. And not only that: it seems to have been protected by that Government... But meanwhile [a]Judge... of the U[S] District Court in Manhattan has ordered... investigators... to look into accusations that [the son], too, received improper campaign contributions... The scandal threatens to decapitate the labour movement. - 1997

A N[Z] Labour Party was formed in 1910, but it was renamed the United Labour Party in 1912. It represented the ‘moderates’ of the trades councils. The militants were represented by the ‘Red Federation’ and its political subsidiary, the N[Z] Socialist Party. The militants fell into disarray following the defeat of the 1913 watersiders’ and miners’ strike. This and the war – which many people on the left felt presaged the collapse of capitalism – brought the disparate groups of the Labour movement together within the N[Z] Labour Party in 1916... The Labour Party gained eight Parliamentary seats in the 1919 election...

The major domestic achievement of... N[Z]... was a system of export marketing agencies in which authority was shared by producer and state. These laid the foundations of a collectivist marketing structure... When overseas prices began to recover in 1934, the country was financially strong, but little had been done for the unemployed. Conditions in towns and relief camps led to rioting, violence, and widespread discontent, all of which were favourable to the Labour Party... During the 1920s it was predominant only in working-class electorates. In its quest for votes, however, Labour increasingly abandoned its socialist theories and adopted welfare and credit-reform proposals, which had wider appeal. In the election of 1935 Labour won a considerable victory... The National Party... was rendered temporarily ineffective... The farmer enjoyed increased earnings; the worker, increased wages and shorter hours. Jobs were multiplied by a public works and housing program. The education system was revitalized. In 1938 the Social Security Act provided a state medical service, extended the pension system, and increased benefits. The extension of secondary industry was accelerated after the outbreak of W[W]II... The alacrity with which N[Z] went to war in 1939 showed that dominion autonomy had not weakened the country’s ties with Great Britain. At first the... troops... saw action in Greece, Crete, North Africa, and Italy... At home the total economy was mobilized in the war effort. Controls were extended over the whole economy. Conscription... directed allocation of the labour force to strategic industries... heavy taxation, war loans, bulk purchase, and controlled marketing kept the economy in a firm grip... After 1941... N[Z] forces were also engaged in the Pacific. Well before the end of the war, the strain upon the country’s manpower, together with the demands of home production, forced a reduction of commitments... The Pacific theatre was dominated by the U[S], the forces of which provided N[Z]’s sole defence. The fact that disaster was averted by American and not by British forces required a change in N[Z]’s attitudes; security was conferred by a foreign, though friendly, power. External relations in the postwar period reflected this new situation... Discontent with [Labour’s] controls and the rising cost of living helped... the revival of the National Party, which culminated in victory in 1949... The National government

benefited... in 1951... through the ANZUS pact... [-] a defensive alliance between A[US, N]Z... and the U[S - and]... from its vigorous handling of a serious waterfront dispute...

February 15, 1951, marked the start of the longest and costliest sustained industrial upheaval in our nation's history. Draconian emergency regulations were imposed, virtually unheard of in a democratic state. By the time the 8000 wharfies and their allies finally acknowledged defeat, 151 grim days later on July 15, the country is estimated to have lost anything from £42 million to £150 million from a dispute that began over a 3d (6c) an hour wage-bargaining gap... [L]ost wool sales alone accounted for £31 million in the midst of the Korean-war inspired export boom, and more than 20,000 workers were off the job at the height of the "big blue." ...But the British shipowners who allegedly set up the dispute ended 1951 with record profits, having unilaterally imposed a surcharge on the country's freight rates while leaving [NZ]'s National Government... to clean up.

On 30 January 1951 the Arbitration Court issued a general order raising wages by an unprecedented 15[%], but... the... Waterfront Authority... employers'... [offered] a mere... 9[%]... This, described as a final offer, was clearly provocative, designed to goad wharfies into action. And it had the desired effect... A special national executive meeting[of the Waterside Workers' Union] on 13 February decided to request branches to operate immediately a 40-hour overtime ban. The employers... retaliated... by placing men on penalty... [and] refusing to offer work unless a man was prepared to do overtime as required. Wharfies rightly regarded themselves as locked out by shipowners... The Auckland Chamber of Commerce wired... [the P]M... demanding "urgent action"... but cabinet needed no prodding... The government, dropping all pretence of impartiality, took the shipowners' side: it gave the union an ultimatum to resume overtime... declared a state of emergency... [and created the] Waterfront Strike Emergency Regulations... which gave the authorities powers which normally exist only in authoritarian states. It became an offence to take part in a declared strike... or to encourage, procure, incite such a strike or to print or publish anything likely to encourage, procure, incite, aid or abet a declared strike. The... Minister of Labour... could appoint a receiver to seize union funds... Picketing, processions, meetings and a display of posters were banned and police officers above the rank of sergeant gained the right to enter any land, premises or place to enforce these regulations... The *Auckland Star* even wanted the police armed, with orders to shoot... The armed forces were authorised to do... strikers' work... Auckland newspapers had gone overboard praising the work of the armed forces with headlines such as "Servicemen Show How Wharf Work Can Be Done"... On April 9 however the *N[Z] Herald* had to admit that the port of Auckland was choked with 42... ships, 15 of them riding at anchor in a long queue stretching beyond the harbour limits. Some of these vessels had arrived well before the start of the lockout and were still waiting to be unloaded. Ironically, the union's earlier campaign against peacetime conscription had some belated success when the government suspended compulsory military training and sent some 4000 18-year-olds home, in order to free their instructors and other regular force personnel for wharf work... In the long run the armed forces could not keep the ports working... On April 27 the Auckland Labour Department sent telegrams to 500 men who had registered for work, asking them... to form a new port union. The locked out men quickly learned of these plans... Several hundred wharfies watched in Queen Street as 115 scabs filed past under police protection and under a barrage of abuse... On May 18 some 500 wharfies assembled opposite the wharf gates at lunch time. They stood quietly for some 20 minutes, until police linked arms and pushed them up Hobson St towards the Trades Hall. There was no violence, but the men were back a 5pm, when the scabs were due to stop work. This time the police, who had been forewarned, were there in force, together with "suitably equipped" army, navy and air force platoons... "The police absolutely lost control of themselves," reported the *Bulletin*, which accused the authorities of provoking trouble by attacking a peaceful gathering... [T]wo days later [a union leader] quoted the number of a constable whom he accused of vicious behaviour in this incident. One immediate result was that Auckland policemen removed their collar numbers to avoid identification... Rather than tackle the wharf area again, the union decided to hold a march through town on Friday, 1 June... A strong police contingent stood ready to intercept the procession in Queen Street... [After] the marchers... refused a request... to disperse... [the] Inspector... ordered his men to move in... which they observed with zest... Not until early July did the National Strike Committee approve a return to work; by then Auckland wharfies found that their jobs had long been filled. - WHARFIE

...the 1951 waterfront dispute was, in the words of one observer, "[a] full-scale industrial battle..." [that 'nearly brought the country to civil war']... Many of the... 20,000 workers... involved saw it as part of an international struggle by working men to introduce a new and more just system of bargaining between capital and labour... Conservatives came to see the dispute as "the most outrageous challenge ever issued to the authority of the State." ...The dispute still arouses emotions and prejudices in most N[Z]ers' hearts, and its reverberations can still be felt by all those concerned with industrial relations in N[Z]. In 1950 the N[Z] Waterside Workers' Union was one of the most powerful and successful... in the country... The union's challenge to the National Government of the day over pay claims and the principle of direct negotiations with employees resulted in... a determined union and an even more determined Government... [adopting] attitudes from which it became increasingly difficult to withdraw... The *impasse* was not helped by emotional accusations of subversion on the Government's part, or by the one-sided attitude of the press. The waterfront workers, isolated and disparaged by most other members of the community, established among themselves an *esprit de corps* which saw them through 151 days of increasing hardship before finally the sheer weight of numbers and political power of their opponents forced them to capitulate... N[Z]'s system of industrial conciliation and arbitration was established in 1894, fifty-seven years before... the onslaught of... 1951. The unique act... was designed on the one hand to strengthen labour, on the other to save it from itself, by limiting the likelihood of strikes. The... IC & A Act... promised the protection of the law to any group of fifteen workers who registered themselves as a union under the Act. As a consequence of registration, a union had to accept that a strike was illegal while any industrial dispute was being considered by a Board of Conciliation or by the Court of Arbitration. In the first few years of the new system workers improved their position within the economy, while employers... viewed the system with disfavour. However, in time attitudes reversed... Not only did the Arbitration Court appear to be keeping wage rises to a minimum; the provisions... restricting the use of the strike weapon... had also ensured a measure of stability in industry... [Therefore] employers were anxious that industrial activity be confined rigidly to the system of compulsory arbitration. And governments... were prepared to assist them to that end... The... Labour Disputes Investigation Act 1913... the... Public Safety Conservation Act 1932... [and the] Strike and Lockout Emergency Regulations 1939... [meant NZ] Governments possessed virtually limitless powers to deal with any strikes. Yet, although it became increasingly dangerous, industrial unrest continued. After W[W]II the number of working days lost through strikes rose; in 1949 more were lost through strikes than ever before in N[Z]. Two years later... the National Party[, which was also frustrated]... at having to administer the welfare state inherited from Labour... embarked on a crusade in the name of eliminating strike action... The number of days lost through strikes declined only temporarily. - confrontation '51

The most disruptive year in recent decades was 1986 – the year of a major dispute at the Tasman pulp and paper mill – when 1.33 million working days were lost in disputes. The 1986 figure topped even 1951's, when 1.16 million days were lost... The number of stoppages increased significantly after 1969[– 'in 1970 NZ lost 277,000 working days in industrial disputes, but unemployment was responsible for 503,000 working days lost' –] reaching a peak of 538 in 1977. In the 1980s, there was an average of 326 a year...

As measured by the number of work stoppages, strikes, lockouts, etc. [in the US], the 1980s were marked by relative industrial peace... From 1980 through 1989, there were 831 work stoppages, involving 5.066 million workers, and 119.542 million lost workdays compared to 2,888 work stoppages, involving 14.878 million workers and 260.098 million lost workdays from 1970 through 1979... In 1991, there were only 40 work stoppages involving 392,000 workers and 4,584,000 lost days.

[In comparison to the US,]labor unions play a modest role in China since they do not have any power to bargain on behalf of their members... Although the... All-China Federation of Trade Unions, organized in the early days of the People's Republic... was abolished during the Cultural Revolution, ostensibly for resisting the extension of the revolution into the factories and for supporting a conservative line, it was resurrected in the late 1970's. Like other "mass organizations" it is under the control of the CCP and serves in large measure to mobilize support for party policy.

South Korea has been plunged into a crippling general strike... Hospital workers walked out yesterday, leaving only emergency care, as industrial action spread from factories and shipyards to key services... The Korea Federation of Trade Unions had planned a 24-hour stoppage from... yesterday... but its chairman said the walkout would now last at least until the end of the year... He said that bus services in six cities, including Seoul, would be halted... The federation, generally seen as moderate, is the only union umbrella organisation recognised by the Government. Its new militancy is an ominous development... The outlawed Korea Confederation of Trade Unions called out its... members on an indefinite strike on Thursday... The... strikes... are... in protest at a new labour law... The law gives employers the right to replace striking workers. But... the Korean Employers Federation pledged... that member companies would not seek to use this provision to break the current strikes... The Government declared the strikes illegal, but although it has threatened "stern counter-measures" there was no sign yet of any crackdown... Opposition members of Parliament staged an overnight sit-down protest against the Government's tactics in ramming through the labour law...

CRIPPLING strikes have gripped key A[US]n industries, erupting into violence at one picket line, as trade unions flex their muscle ahead of major changes planned for the nation's labour market... [Meanwhile, t]he general strike in South Korea [also]turned violent at the weekend as thousands of workers took to the streets demanding the abolition of a law they feared would jeopardise... decades of near-total job security... Fighting erupted when police fired tear gas to break up a rally of about 7000 workers and students... Many South Korean workers assumed that once they entered a company they had a job for life... The new law... was supposed to bring South Korea's labour conditions up to par with those of other economically advanced nations... Businesses said they needed the flexibility to restructure and lay off workers to compete in world markets... South Korea was expected to register a record \$US20 billion... trade deficit this year... A promise to revise its labour law was part of South Korea's campaign this year for admission to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Paris-based think tank of rich countries. But an OECD labour advisory group condemned the new South Korean law, calling it a "slap in the face to both its own workers and international public opinion." ...South Korean unionists accused the Government of trying to turn workers into slaves... - 1996

South Korea's outlawed union said yesterday it was abandoning its one-day-a-week strikes, partly due to economic turmoil caused by the collapse of the country's second largest steelmaker, the Hanbo Steel Co. But the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions still plans full stoppages starting on February 18 unless the Government scraps a controversial new labour law... However, [South Korea's]President... has rejected union demands...

Behind the surge of strikes in South Korea lies a political and cultural shift. The country is in the midst of moving from a system founded on paternalism and authoritarianism to one based on more liberal values. The new labour law, which has provoked the strikes, was meant to be more liberal in two respects. It would make it easier for employers to sack workers. But it would also make it easier for unions to organise. Many of the workers marching on South Korea's streets are angry because they believe the Government has forgotten the second half of its promise... [In related news, a]bout 700,000 Israeli workers went on strike yesterday, closing down Ben-Gurion International Airport... the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange... the country's seaports, railways, Government offices, banks and state-owned industries. The strike was called over demands from[the] Finance Minister... that a pension agreement signed by the previous Labour Government be cancelled or drastically modified.

...A strike by 700,000 workers paralysed Israel for a second day yesterday... [Incidentally, t]ime lost to strikes and other industrial disputes in A[US] fell 27% in April, even though the number of disputes rose... to 39... compared with 35 in March... There were 34,300 working days lost... the A[US]n Bureau of Statistics said... The number of employees involved in industrial disputes fell to 28,800 in April from 34,800 in March... For the year, though, the amount of time lost to disputes rose 32[%] to 829,300 working days...

The number of working days lost[in NZ] to industrial strife shrank in the May year to its lowest point in almost four decades. Seventy stoppages caused the loss of 20,587 working days in the year at an estimated cost to workers of \$2.7 million in wages and salaries. By comparison, employees lost an estimated \$6.5 million due to stoppages in the previous year and \$4.4 million in the May 1994 year. The last year in which the number of days lost dropped below 21,000 was 1958, when the figure was 18,788... The 38 work stoppages in the private sector cost the affected workers an average \$293 each and the 32 in the public sector an average of \$144.

...Strikes are escalating as employers and employees continue to discover how much industrial action is possible under the Employment Contracts Act... "The [ECA] dampened down the industrial relations scene for five years. But the calm has not lasted. N[Z] has already experienced more than 70 strikes this year, and many have been particularly intense,"... an employment lawyer said yesterday... [T]his year's dramatic rise in strikes and lockouts was due to a combination of factors. They included... dissatisfaction with little or no real wage rate increases for many years, and the expiry of collective employment contracts... Strike action this year has also proved that industrial action could still be used to achieve broader social and political aims. - 1997

The NZ Government reformed its labour laws with the introduction of the ECA in 1991. As a result of this legislation, the annual number of working days lost to industrial disputes rapidly dropped – but at what cost?

It is said that... reforms on the N[Z] model inevitably create more inequality. Inequality is a difficult trend to measure, but high levels of unemployment in the 1980s probably increased inequality; and the resurgence of employment in N[Z] is the most important single force in alleviating long-term inequality. Many economists argue that the unskilled in Western countries can only expect to maintain high wages if they are more productive than the unskilled in less developed countries. Otherwise, owners of capital will move production to poorer, lower-wage countries. The less skilled also compete with new technology, which is often cheaper and more productive than lower-skilled workers. N[Z]'s reforms in industrial relations have lowered wages at the bottom end of the wages ladder, and created many new jobs for those who previously would have remained on social benefits. But N[Z]'s reforms are attacked by some... for focusing on lowering wages rather than improving productivity. Only improving productivity creates the opportunities for higher wages for all, without tax increases that may reduce incentives and damage international competitiveness.

The main purpose of the ECA was to allow employers and employees to negotiate contracts directly, thereby removing the need for unions. In '1986 there were 259 unions in NZ with a total membership of 683,000. In 1996 there were only 82 unions with an estimated 362,200 members.' This follows the trend in the US where, 'in 1996, union membership fell to 16.4 million, or 14.9%', 'from 20.1% in 1983'.

Unionisation has never been high... [in the NZ] retail sector... and... [at] the time of the introduction of the E[CA 10 awards covered]... some 48,500 employees... [out of] 275,000 fulltime equivalent staff... The repeal of the Shop Trading Hours Act allowed shops to open all hours, mergers of major companies in the retail sector, and a general anti-union attitude by retail employers. These conditions combined to form a potent cocktail exerting considerable pressure on retail pay and conditions, particularly penal rates... service pay and many allowances such as laundry, meal, education payments... As one general manager of... [a] supermarket chain... said... "There's no... penal rates for Saturday and Sunday work... we have no clock hours – people can be employed on any day of the week... or at any time of the day on ordinary rates. Penal rates apply only when an employee has worked eight hours a day or forty hours a week. The [ECA] made this possible." But in fact what also made it possible was the conduct of such employers... There was no negotiation. Workers seeking a job had no representation. They simply agreed to the conditions as they got the job... [If] a new supermarket opened [it] offered a contract to workers which was significantly inferior to what applied at... [the chain's other] stores... This was to be repeated by many employers. With 3500 or more applicants for 300 jobs it wasn't hard... There were some absurd contracts. One required 12 hours' notice of absence due to illness. It also said that the worker agreed to be dismissed "if I am even suspected of stealing." In another contract workers could have their hours reduced to one per day from eight hours... [However, even if there was negotiation, it doesn't necessarily follow that workers who are honest, conscientious and hard-working are better negotiators than those who are greedy, lazy or unscrupulous. Furthermore, many managers now receive *bulk funding*, which means they have a limit to negotiate with (i.e., if they pay one person more, there is less left for the rest – or for themselves). In many areas of unskilled employment the rates of staff turnover have increased, due in large part to people searching elsewhere for better contracts, but also due to increased unrest and jealousy because people working together can have different rates and conditions for performing the same tasks. Although an increase in worker turnover decreases efficiency – because it takes time for new employees to become familiar with their tasks, the environment, other staff and customers – few employers seem to care. Perhaps this is due to the fact that every time they need to employ a new worker they get the chance to offer a contract that has less pay and worse conditions! Applicants are faced with signing such a contract or staying unemployed. Incidentally,] 17 workers at an Onehunga timber pallet repair yard will begin their second month of a strike today in protest at being asked to work for 48 hours a week at flat hourly rates ranging from \$8.25c to \$9... A Wood Industries Union organiser... said 27 workers... had signed a "diabolical" two-year contract but the rest would not accept an increase of 15c an hour for cuts to conditions.

...The Employers Federation will spend about \$1 million promoting N[Z]'s economic direction in the run-up to the election... [The ECA], the Reserve Bank Act and the Fiscal Responsibility Act were the key laws employers wanted retained. "The changes over the last decade haven't been easy for anyone, including employers... To go backwards at this stage would be counter-productive."

...A major advertising campaign planned by the Employers' Federation was described yesterday by the New Zealand First [Party] leader... as a "Trojan Horse" for National... He cited this as evidence that National intended to use its "political mates" to do its work in the face of legislative limits on how much political parties can spend on advertising in the three months before polling... [-] \$20,000 for each electorate... [or, for each party, up] to \$1 million...

[The] television advertisement featured a construction worker who said he was better off under the E[CA. However, the]... secretary of the Northern Amalgamated Workers Union... said he doubted the man who fronted the advertisement criticising industrial action in the industry in the 1980s was really a construction worker... Workers in that industry were paid up to 40[%] less now than before the act was passed. The loss of job security had been substantial. Many were working "on call" without a guarantee of 40 hours a week... The Labour [Party] spokesman... said the campaign demonstrated employers' attitudes that workers were lucky to have jobs regardless of their pay and conditions.

... "the right to sell their own labour at the best price they can get,"... [invites] us to believe that all employers will graciously work out what a worker needs to live on and pay that amount. At an Otahuhu fruit shop... the National Distribution Union... had to lead a picket to win a minimum wage for a worker who was being paid \$3 an hour. There have been many cases of extremely low wages... The N[Z] workforce is spread very widely with 75[%] of employees on sites with fewer than 100 workers... In a country where industrial legislation encourages employers (and even compels them in some cases) to compete against one another by paying lower wages, we need good minimums in wage rates and other conditions... [E]mployers who claim they cannot make a profit if minimum wages are increased... are pretty pathetic... They should step aside and let someone... who can use our labour force more productively... have a go...

With overtime, on a good week, he takes home around \$280. Without overtime, the... minimum wage... factory worker and Auckland father of three young children gets... \$255... for a 40 hour week... about \$208... [once] tax is taken out... [A] clutch of supplements from the state... [add \$158.50 a week. His] partner... believes... there are no excuses for employers to pay their workers such a low amount[– unless their motive is for the state to subsidise their profits ('but a brief survey of NZ history shows that the employers have always been the major beneficiaries of the welfare state')]... She said she and her partner made the decision to go off the dole three years ago. But when she got work they ended up \$6 worse off. "...It makes me feel pretty angry really, to think that if he didn't work at all we'd basically be in the same boat. The harder you try the more you lose." Saving for a house is so remote they do not think about it... [However, she] and her partner are lucky. Their[weekly] rental for a small three-bedroom private house is[only] \$240.

...We need look no further for an explanation of the great scandal of 1990s N[Z]. It is the unprecedented sight of real wages declining in the midst of a general economic recovery... Not long [ago two NZ]... parliamentarians were in A[US] addressing a conference on economic reforms. One MP, an architect of the 1991 [ECA], spoke glowingly of the success of that radical piece of labour market legislation. "There have been enormous productivity gains," he claimed. "No there haven't," said the other MP. He was right, and had the figures to prove it... [P]roponents of the act... cannot in the end escape the cold truth: it has been a washout in terms of labour productivity – less than 1[%] growth a year in this decade, well below the growth achieved in previous decades... Now this is very interesting to a professional economist as well as very important to everybody else. Of all the 100-plus major "reforms" that have been imposed on us since 1984, the [ECA] is perhaps the biggest and the purest in a scientific sense. It really does offer a fairly clean test of a specific economic theory. And the theory fails this test (as it has failed in N[Z] before – our great postwar miracle of zero unemployment is impossible, according to the economic model behind the act)... The act is above all an instrument for destroying social cohesiveness. It does this by fostering one-on-one negotiations between employer and employee... Each worker is supposed to haggle individually with the boss – a time-consuming business for both sides and one that can be distressing, even demeaning, for the person on the weaker side of the bargaining table... The theory is that productivity is the result of individual effort and enterprise, so workers should be rewarded individually to maximise their incentives to perform. Well, what if productivity performance is not solely an individual effort? What if *co-operation* is the key to getting things done in the workplace? Such co-operation can take many forms... [and are,] basically, all the things we call "team work," or social cohesiveness... Now – and this is the big insight – if productivity depends on the effort of a team, then the efficient thing is to reward the team collectively, not individually... [ECA]-type single-worker contracts discourage this because if you do something to help other workers they reap the rewards, not you... [O]ld-style collective bargaining agreements... do[n't] mean that individual ability and effort go

unrewarded. The most energetic and able members of teams are recognised as such, first by their team-mates and then by their supervisors and managers whose ranks they will eventually be invited to join at a higher salary.

...Mass redundancies are now certain at BHP N[Z] Steel's Glenbrook mill. About 300 staff will be out of work by the end of the year and the future of the plant near Waiuku hangs in the balance. A further 700 jobs could go next year. All of the 1630 staff, apart from the managing-director... have been invited to apply for voluntary redundancy... [The managing-director] said yesterday that he... had to show annual savings of about \$50 million to the parent company, BHP in Melbourne, which is reviewing all of its operations. The task was to convince the owners to spend \$27 million next year refitting one of the two melters and a further \$27 million in 1998 or 1999 refitting the second... If BHP made those investments the plant was likely to operate for a further 10 years at least. If not, it faced radical cutbacks when the first melter expired and closure when the second failed... The Minister of Finance[, who is] a... local MP... said last night that he... understood the company needed to cut costs to improve profitability. He acknowledged there would be a loss of wage packets worth more than \$250,000 a week to the local economy[. • 'A continuing decline in the international steel market had not deterred NZ Steel in its \$820 million expansion of the Glenbrook steel mill during 1982. The company's marketing manager said back then: "There is always a risk but the best time to invest is before the market recovery"']...

Plans by BHP... to slash hundreds of jobs at its Glenbrook mill sent shockwaves through surrounding communities yesterday. Suppliers of coal, gas, electricity and transport to BHP are also worried as the threat of closure hangs over the plant. The nearest towns, Waiuku and Pukekohe, are likely to be hit first and hardest... - 1996

New production targets 'insulting,' says union... Miners have vowed to fight "drastic" changes proposed by Huntly East Mine management in response to the financial squeeze on its main customer, the Glenbrook steel mill. The employer of the 92 miners, Solid Energy North, yesterday presented them with a new draft collective contract, saying they needed to make significant efficiencies to reduce the price of the coal sold to the Glenbrook mill... Changes included requiring miners to work on the weekends for no extra pay if they did not meet weekly production targets[, although they would receive more pay for]... an increase in weekly work hours from 36 to 42.5... The Glenbrook mill faced closure late last year... The coal the mill received solely from Solid Energy was its second highest cost. The general manager of Solid Energy... said the mine had to raise its production from 300,000 tonnes to 450,000 tonnes annually in order to reduce costs per tonne. [He] said the proposed contract was the best way to handle the situation, as it protected jobs. There would be no forced redundancies, but resignation payouts were available to unhappy workers... [The] union delegate... said he... did not believe the production target was achievable within a five-day week... [and] the target needed before workers would receive a bonus would also be "exceptionally difficult" to achieve. The new contract scrapped the provision of a bus for workers to and from the mine. [The delegate] said the union had twice offered to change work practices in an attempt to lower costs but management had not been interested.

...The last large-scale underground coalmine in Huntly is closing in a shock decision by owners Solid Energy. The decision comes despite the Huntly East mine's 92 workers agreeing to accept new employment conditions designed to increase productivity... in order to keep their jobs... The Huntly West mine, also owned by Solid Energy, was closed after an explosion in 1992 trapped expensive equipment underground. The company also runs an opencast coal mine... south-east of Huntly.

...As their town braces for yet another wave of redundancies, workers at Huntly East coalmine hope last-ditch talks... will save their jobs... The Engineers Union regional secretary... said the company's refusal to back down over the closure was a knee-jerk reaction because it had not anticipated workers meeting its demands.

...In 1987... a state-owned enterprise, Coal Corporation, was born out of the ashes of State Coal Mines. The new, lean SOE slashed almost 500 jobs and took about \$12 million of wages and salaries from the town... Coal Corporation, re-christened with the more environmentally friendly name Solid Energy, has been looking for further ways to streamline its operation. It looks as if Huntly East will be the next victim of that efficiency... The... [company's] trump card is a \$14 million coal-blending plant at its huge... 5km-long... opencast site... The plant... is designed to produce coal of a quality[acceptable to] Solid Energy's major customer... BHP... This means the company can meet customer demand without old-fashioned Huntly East... The company, which also mines on the South Island West Coast, is managing to return a healthy profit. In the six months to the end of last year it made a \$7.67 million profit on sales of just over \$100 million. This was down from a \$9.93 million profit for the first half of last year... Last week BHP signed a 10-year coal-supply contract with Solid Energy.

...The Huntly East coal mine will stay open after all. That's the good news for the 92 workers who last week were facing life on the dole. The bad news is that they have to increase production by 50[%]... The Engineers Union regional secretary... said last night that he was thrilled the mine was to stay open, but he would not discuss settlement details until workers were told at a meeting today... Miners... [also] refused to talk... saying they feared company reprisals if they spoke out.

...CEOs and managers have warmed to scare-mongering... FEAR works. Putting the frighteners on staff gets quick results and weeds out complacency. And the American author of the controversial findings said she could even predict stock performance based on how a company scared its employees... [The] professor of Entrepreneurship and Personal Enterprise at Cornell University, New York... argued it was necessary to communicate fear to rapidly transform an organisation and create lasting results. "But I prefer the word 'anxiety'," she said... [Incidentally, t]he Service Workers' Union and police believe that up to 1000... Chinese and Thai... immigrant workers, both legally and illegally in the country, are being exploited in Wellington restaurants... Police intervened only when crime was involved. The union's national secretary... said the problem did not appear to be widespread in Auckland, "although we do hear the odd story."

...['24 hours after police raided a West Auckland sweatshop and freed a group of Thai women who were allegedly paid only \$570 a month for gruelling 13-hour days, the Labour Department launched an investigation. But the Thai workers' employer denied running a sweatshop or taking the women's passports. She said she held the passports in case immigration officials wanted to inspect them and would have returned them if asked. She refused to comment further. Hundreds of Asians are believed to be sewing in Auckland sweatshops after being lured by unscrupulous clothing companies, a spokesperson for the Thai Embassy in Wellington said last night. "Economic difficulties in Thailand mean many women are coming here because they are told they can earn good money. Often they find they are trapped into working for a pittance." A National Distribution Union spokesman agreed that Thursday's police raid "merely scratched the surface. I came across one company where Chinese women were working around the clock and living down in the basement. As one was leaving the bunk, another took her place to get some sleep." The Auckland City police manager said officers were devising a national strategy to help foreign women forced by organised crime to hand over their passports then work for nothing to pay back their airfares.']

...*Big city offers the small pay packet...* Politicians make the point that Auckland is where the work is... Auckland is by far the biggest urban area in the country – so why are some wage rates lower and house prices higher than in the other main cities... Only when academic qualifications count do Auckland rates climb.

...What do you say to a bachelor of arts graduate? A cheeseburger, fries and a coke to take away please. Well not quite – but an Auckland University survey... showed 52.2[%] of its latest batch of... 5000... graduates have jobs [they didn't study for]... A master of philosophy graduate is using skills to teach people to drive... Two psychology students are... door-to-door... travelling sales people. Engineers and mathematicians are also selling wares. A graduate with a masters degree in political studies is sorting mail, while two other former students are delivering it... Science was a popular degree for checkout operators with four graduates taking jobs in that field... Decorators, telephonists, gardeners, cleaners and couriers

feature [too]... While the report says just 11.9[% were still] looking for work... officials admit the figure may be higher... [Also looking for work are t]wenty-five women at a Christchurch clothing factory [who] were given just 10 minutes to leave after being laid off. A National Distribution Union official said the[ir] treatment... was “absolutely... disgusting.” ...[the company’s managing director said it] was broke and could not pay redundancy.

...[a prominent politician recently] said that one of N[Z]’s big problems is that it costs companies too much to get rid of workers. [The NZ First Party leader] claims that “petty complaints” from employees who then take personal grievance cases become significant costs to business. He worries that the legal costs of getting rid of unsatisfactory workers discourages employers from taking on new staff. Most workers will be surprised to hear that this is one of our nation’s big problems... [but t]he Government is now weighing up changes to the E[CA] to ease the NZ First leader’s] concerns... At the moment the E[CA] contains mandatory personal grievance rights which cover every worker. It is not possible for a boss and a worker to agree quietly on a contract which has no protection against unjustifiable dismissal. According to the Labour Department, every year about 4000 employees make a personal grievance claim. Many more owe their jobs to the fact that they have those rights. Employers know they cannot sack anybody on a whim but must have good reasons and go through a proper procedure. This procedure irks [the NZ First leader]. Proper verbal and written warnings place too great a burden on employers, he believes. But the law in this area is well settled and has been consistent for nearly 20 years. The E[CA] simply continued the provisions of the law before it. And of 63 appeals to the Court of Appeal since the act was passed, just two concerned whether a performance dismissal was justified – hardly a sign of huge discontent in employer ranks.

...According to [the]Auckland City Council human resources manager... recent decisions by the Employment Court... damaged the employer/employee relationship. “Employers don’t want to take a risk with [hiring] staff members in an environment where it’s becoming increasingly difficult to sack and easier to end up being sued,”... While many employers were using the... ECA... to inject flexibility into the contract, they must justify why a contract terminates. “Many employers are using the ECA to opt for transient contracts which simply provide convenient exit options... At the management level there’s a tendency towards term-based contracts, but it’s questionable whether many term-based contracts are legal...”

...*At the start of this year I was working part time after school and in the weekend twice a week. I did not sign a contract, but agreed to one, after being told of the content. I was asked to work an extra day, which was a public holiday and one for which I wasn’t rostered on. I wasn’t able to work this day for family reasons and I was given the sack. I am wondering what my legal rights as a 15 year old would have been in this situation. Was I unfairly dismissed?* ...part of the problem here is that neither you nor your boss have the arrangements made in writing, so there’s no record of what was said earlier on. You may have a personal grievance action available to you in which case you should get further advice quickly. You only have 90 days from the date of the dismissal to begin action... Oh, and by the way, being 15 doesn’t mean you should be treated any differently than any other worker under the law – except when it comes to pay rates.

...Lovers be warned – sleeping with the enemy can cost you your job... [A] study of cases that had reached the Employment Court showed that a lesser standard of procedural fairness was required of employers who sacked staff because of an inter-corporate affair... No pillow talk needs to have been shared, just the possibility of damaging leaks is enough for dismissal... In the eyes of some employers, the relationship is the corporate equivalent of unsafe sex, a dangerous liaison with the potential for sensitive commercial information to be divulged... While relatively few people had been sacked for those reasons, potentially there were many people whose jobs were at risk.

...a cabinet paper written by... the office of the Minister of Labour... reveals that the Government plans to wind back the protections... for workers against unjustifiable dismissal... According to the paper, the rules are complex, employers are uncertain about their legal obligations and the procedural fairness requirements are too onerous.

...The number of unfair dismissal claims in A[US] has collapsed following this year’s introduction of the new Workplace Relations Act... The average fall across both federal and state laws is 27[%]... Under the old laws employers had to prove that they had a valid reason for dismissing an employee. Now the obligation is reversed... And unlike in N[Z, AUS]n employers no longer have to follow a drawn-out procedure of verbal and written warnings before firing unsatisfactory staff. Procedural fairness is no longer compulsory and... a dismissal cannot be ruled unfair, as it can be in N[Z], merely because of a technical failure to issue the requisite number of warnings... Frivolous or vexatious claims can make employees liable for extra costs and applicants must pay a \$NZ55 application fee before they can argue their case. The fee... is only waived if an employee is in serious financial straits... And in a move intended to inhibit the tendency toward the massive damages awards of the past which have all but wiped out small companies and needlessly eliminated jobs, the commissioners may now take the financial position of the employer into their assessment of damages if an employee has indeed been unfairly dismissed. [● Awards for damages in NZ could never be considered massive. The ‘average award to employees for personal-grievance cases in the Employment Court since 1991 was \$14,149’, and the less important Employment Tribunal ‘had an average payout over the same period of \$5465’.

...Workers in NZ’s] provinces will find it harder to take cases to the Employment Tribunal, which is ending hearings in 18 smaller centres.

...British ministers were under pressure last night to curb a huge rise in industrial tribunal hearings, which last year cost business a staggering £250 million... Demands for swift action came after new figures showed the total number of hearings – ranging from unfair dismissal complaints to claims of sex[ua]l harassment and management bullying – has soared from 12,325 in 1991-92 to 19,503 during 1995-96. The cost of actually running the 11 regional tribunals and paying staff salaries has spiralled from £22 [million] in 1993 to £36 [million]... Taxpayers are also picking up the bills for claims backed by the Equal Opportunities Commission for Racial Equality. The deluge of cases is likely to be boosted still further if Labour wins the general election. The party has plans to extend legal aid to claimants at tribunals, who have to pay their own bills if they lose. That could encourage many more people to bring cases. Even without legal aid, the tribunal tally is set to climb still higher this year as a result of the Disability Discrimination Act, which came into force last month. It means firms cannot refuse jobs or promotion on the ground of physical handicaps and must design their premises to fit the needs of disabled workers. But legal experts believe the wording is so imprecise that it will open the way for a flood of test cases... Unions have also seized on tribunals as a means of regaining some of the power they lost through Tory strike-curb laws. They are increasingly funding claims brought by their members... [In local news, w]orkers at an Auckland carpet factory downed tools yesterday in a dispute over tea breaks... A company director... said the company was offering staff \$12.50 a week to have 10-minute tea breaks at their work stations instead of taking 25 minutes to walk to the factory canteen and back[– an offer]... the National Distribution Union [described as] a “return to slavery.” ...The 60 workers meet on Monday to review their strike.

...A plan by Auckland bathroom manufacturer Athena Products for a 44-hour working week did not impress staff, who walked off the job at Athena’s two Avondale factories for 24 hours... An organiser from the TradeSec Union... said the company offered a 1[%] pay rise in exchange for staff working 44 hours of ordinary time, instead of 40, and would pay only time-and-a-quarter for the first five hours after that. Staff wanted a 2.75[%] pay rise. The company has now withdrawn its pay offer and more strikes are planned... [Incidentally, E]mployment Court decisions are often held up as creating barriers to job creation... [and yesterday the] Minister of Finance... sa[id] changes to the [ECA] are necessary to help business. He says... the Employment Court... needs... more flexibility... Take away the pillars of fairness in employment and history tells us workers will be left to seek their own justice. And history tells us that is not good for business.

...Employers have tended to criticise the Employment Court, and now the... Council of Trade Unions... has lashed the outcomes of decisions by the higher authority, the Appeal Court... [that mean] workers’ entitlements to paid holidays are being eroded... The... council... says the court has confirmed that... [an] employer can insist an employee works a statutory holiday, then choose which day off in lieu the employee takes... [and it] is

legitimate for an employer to contract out of substituting Monday for Christmas and New Year holidays when they fall on a weekend... Labour Department staff are now awaiting instructions on how and when to implement the... Government's policy of bringing all employment-related laws, such as the Holidays Act, under the umbrella of the E[CA], which itself is to be reviewed... Trade unions promise a huge battle to protect holidays and to try to prevent an expected hardening of the [ECA]... At present workers get a minimum leave of three weeks, and 11 statutory holidays... An employee does not have to work on a public holiday which falls within their working week (unless a contract states otherwise)... Courts have ruled anyone who works on a statutory holiday must get another paid day off in addition to any payment for working the holiday... [except for] Anzac Day and Waitangi Day... More than 1000 breaches of labour law relating to holidays were recorded by the Labour Department in 1996...

The Labour Party wants to give workers more holidays... to bring N[Z] into line with A[US]... by increasing the minimum annual leave entitlement to four weeks... but the Employers Federation opposes the move, saying it will cost about \$850 million a year.

...The year 1999 could seem a long one at the office, if employers have their way. The Employers' Federation is bidding to stop the "Mondayising" of public holidays, whereby those that fall on a weekend are marked with a day off on the following Monday. In 1999, such a move would leave workers enjoying just six public holidays [instead of 11 (workers in 'some AUSn states get 13 statutory public holidays – as do Germans and Austrians'). By the way, through the influence of 'Samuel Parnell, a British immigrant carpenter living in Wellington, NZ became the first country in the world to introduce the 8-hour working day in 1840 (it was decreed that anyone who worked more than 8 hours per day was to be thrown into Wellington Harbour')].

I wonder what the *New Zealand Encyclopedia* will say about Labour Day in its next edition? Perhaps "A public holiday introduced in 1899 to celebrate the introduction of the eight-hour working day; no longer observed since an employment contracts act in the late 1990s effectively removed the eight-hour day and all statutory holidays."

...Labour Day was once described as "the grand old lady" of public holidays. The title was apt because... [it] was the first "modern" holiday in N[Z]. Before its introduction... most workers were entitled to only four public holidays – Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day and Good Friday. The origins of Labour Day have been given new relevance by [the Minister of Labour's]... announcement last week of a radical rewrite of the Holidays Act. And the call by the 1996 National Party conference for Labour Day to be scrapped suggests that t[hi]s holiday may not be with us for much longer.

...Workers could trade away their rights to statutory holidays in return for receiving at least double-time pay, a leaked official paper on the Government review of the Holidays Act suggests.

...The Minister of Labour... said the review of the Holidays Act was not about taking away workers' entitlement to holidays but to let people enjoy holidays the way they wanted. The discussion document, released by the Government yesterday, includes four options, ranging from the status quo through[to] a mix of trading annual leave and public holidays for cash... [with] a guaranteed minimum payment... enshrined in legislation... At present N[Z]ers can only sell any leave entitlement they get above the statutory minimum of three weeks. So if their employment contract provides for four weeks annual leave they can cash in one week's leave provided the employer agrees... [NZ employees usually receive 'four weeks annual leave' after they have] stayed in the same jobs for periods ranging from two to seven years.

...As the Government considers making some or all of our annual entitlement tradeable for cash, many might wonder whether we have enough to sell... N[Z] workers lag behind their A[US]n and European counterparts when it comes to annual leave... From 1999 all countries in the E[U] will have to provide minimum paid annual leave of four weeks, compared with our three... Britain, despite being the home of trade unionism, never legislated for paid annual leave, just eight statutory public holidays. About 12[% of the British] workforce got no paid annual leave until the first stage of a 1993 EU working time directive took effect in November last year... The... directive also introduced a ceiling of 48 hours on the average working week, a requirement for one day's rest a week, rest breaks if the working day is longer than six hours, 11 consecutive hours' rest in each 24-hour period, and a restriction on night workers' shifts to eight hours... The U[S], by contrast, has no legislative requirement for employers to give any days off. A U[S] Embassy spokesman said yesterday that while most employers offered days off on national holidays such as July 4 and Christmas Day, they were not compelled to do so. Similarly, annual leave was a matter for negotiation. Government employees were likely to get as little as two weeks off a year, which could increase to three or four as they gained experience... An economist with the Council of Trade Unions... believes the [NZ] Government, by even considering making the existing entitlements tradeable for cash, is signalling an intention or willingness to breach an International Labour Organisation convention that N[Z] ratified in 1950. "We... sign these treaties and they don't mean a damn thing." [He] says that with the bargaining environment tilted in favour of employers, it will be hard for many workers to defend existing entitlements if bosses want to take them away to cut costs... With the increasing move to put workers on salaries rather than wages, many people are working longer hours to meet contractual obligations or performance targets[(when, previously, they worked *longer hours* to get more pay) – and employers are spending less time calculating pay]... "...you work frantically then you blot out in Bali. Now they are saying work frantically and cash up your week and work some more." ...For most people it would mean a loss of social cohesion – less time to spend with children... "You end up with the Japanese situation where people are staying at work as a matter of face, not doing anything. You stay until the boss goes and the boss has got to stay to show that he is dedicated... [N]obody can go home in case it indicates that you are not dedicated."

...“Let me hear another sound from you,” said Scrooge, “and you’ll keep your Christmas by losing your situation!” wrote Charles Dickens in *A Christmas Carol*. Annual holidays form part of minimum standards of employment... [and many of NZ's factory] workers will receive little extra Christmas cheer this year. A... University of Auckland poll shows that nearly 68[%] of manufacturers will not give their staff any time off over the Christmas-New Year period apart from the statutory holidays. A lucky 32[%] will score at least an extra day over that time.

...Our ancestors fought to require all employers to provide paid holidays and personal grievance procedures because they knew that “contracts” between employers and workers are not equal. If we let employers “buy” back holidays by paying higher wages, this unequal relationship means that eventually the extra pay would be eroded by inflation, or by new workers being hired on lower wages, so that in the end the holidays would have been lost for no real gain.

...All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, and it may leave Jill unemployed – or so many European politicians and trade unionists seem to believe. The governments of France and Italy have lately proposed cutting their legal working week to 35 hours as a way to trim unemployment. To a lot of people this seems to make excellent sense. Why should so many workers complain about being overworked, when one in nine Europeans is idle? Better, surely, to share out the work more evenly... It is depressing that supposedly responsible governments continue to pretend to be unaware of the... illusion that the out-put of an economy and hence the total amount of work available is fixed. In fact the demand for labour depends upon productivity and wage costs. Fewer hours will create more jobs only if weekly pay is also cut – which workers tend to resist. Moreover, recruitment, training and other fixed costs can make it more expensive for a firm to employ a large workforce for shorter hours. Instead of limiting hours of work, governments should do the exact opposite and allow firms and workers greater flexibility.

...SEVEN-day shopping and two weeks in Bali are the prizes of nineties consumerism, but they come at a price... As workers contemplate swapping holidays for pay... the... 1996 [NZ census reveals] that more than a million people worked at least 40 hours a week, 567,807 put in between 45 and 59 hours a week and for 180,483 the working week was 60 hours or more... Evidence suggests that long hours could be a multifaceted health hazard... [For example,] working more than 48 hours a week doubles the risk of coronary heart disease.

...We used to talk about the idle rich and the toiling masses. Well, you have now got the frenzied rich and the idle poor – the concept of work-rich households with lots of work and work-poor households where nobody has got any work.

...Unions have renewed their calls for the scrapping of the E[CA]... ON MAY DAY, 1991, unions were flung on to the free market and... [t]he union-held monopoly on representing workers at the Employment Court became a thing of the past as did compulsory union membership... When the Federation of Labour and Combined State Unions merged in 1987, the new Council of Trade Unions (CTU) covered 530,000 workers of the roughly 700,000 covered by awards. The full-time workforce at that time was about a million. In 10 years, the number covered by the CTU has halved and those covered by collective contracts hovers around 400,000 out of a workforce of 1.1 million. [A u]nion veteran... believes the movement could have galvanised against the Act by holding national stoppages, something the CTU did not advocate. [The]Public Service Association president... [– who heads 'NZ's largest union at 50,000 members' (although 'lawyers for another member claim their client is the rightful PSA president') –] believes this is a source of bitterness among many of his members. [However, the veteran] claims some major unions were broke at the time and powerless to resist.

...The E[CA], six years old tomorrow, is up for review. The act's designers love to trumpet its "success" abroad. And indeed it has held wage costs down, which has helped our exporters at a time when our exchange rate would otherwise have made them utterly uncompetitive. It is also true that the number of people in paid work has risen since the act was passed, by an impressive 230,000... [– although NZ's population rose by a similar amount during the same period!] Yet if... asked... for my view of the act, I would say it's time it went. That's because I think a country's economic success should be measured in higher wages for everyone, especially the worst off. In real terms, after allowing for price increases, the average hourly wage (including overtime) has hardly moved at all – down 0.3[%] from May 1991 to November 1996. Top executive salaries have gone through the roof[, with some]... earning over \$1 million a year. At the other end of the scale, 10[%] of workers took actual cuts in hourly rates in the first two years after the act was passed. [NZ workers aren't alone in this respect. Many people in the US are 'working longer hours for less money than they were 30 years ago' – 'according to the US Census Bureau the medium income of white males aged 25 to 34 fell from \$23,839 in 1979 to \$20,962 in 1987, using constant 1987 dollars, while the medium income of black males of the same age group fell from \$16,653 to \$13,650; and, the standard of living of the poorest quintile of the population dropped by 9% while the standard of living of the wealthiest quintile rose by 19% in the same period, according to a House Ways and Means Committee report; meantime, the richest quintile of families paid 5.5% less of their income in federal taxes at the end of the 1980s than they had at the beginning, while the poorest quintile paid 16.1% more of their income in taxes.' In Britain, 'hourly wages for the lowest-paid were lower by 1992 than in 1975 – but middle-income earnings grew in the same period by 35% and upper-income earnings by 50%.']]Workers have lost what little power they had at work. Union membership has almost halved, from 41.5[%] of the workforce... to 21.7[%] by the end of 1995. The number of workers covered by collective bargaining has halved, too. The act ties workers' hands. They are not allowed to negotiate contracts which give preference to union members; they can't strike until their contract has expired; and they can't strike in pursuit of a contract covering more than one employer. They are at the employer's mercy, because the act lays down no minimum period of notice of dismissal, and no requirement for redundancy pay. In international terms, these measures are extreme. And they're reinforced by the Reserve Bank Act, which requires the central bank to raise interest and exchange rates every time any general wage increases threatens to push prices up by more than 3[%]. The result, as we're seeing now, is a stalling of job growth and a rise in joblessness. The formula is simple: just tilt the law in favour of employers, then let the market rip. But it's unfair.

...A couple of weeks ago... Labour's social welfare spokesman... wrote: "In the closed economy we used to have, it was possible for a Government to guarantee work and reasonable pay. In the open economy... we have today, no such guarantee is possible." ...Judging by opinion polls, [he] speaks for a majority of the population. Most N[Z]ers appear to have lost confidence in our ability to ensure collectively that everyone who wants a job at a reasonable rate of pay can get one. Yet there is no doubt that... full employment at reasonable rates is by far the best social welfare policy...

FEELING underpaid? You're not alone. Some 40% of N[Z]ers reckon their pay packets are too small. But that's not too bad by international standards... [–] workers in other countries are even less likely to feel happy with their pay... N[Z] rated highly on the issue of employment security, with 73% of employees feeling their job was secure, so long as their performance was up to scratch. This was six percentage points higher than Australia, and compared with the United States' 52% and Britain's 47%.

...In March 1987 [NZ's] average hourly wage before tax was \$11.06. In March 1997 the average hourly wage before tax was \$16.53. So the average wage has increased by almost 50[%]. Yet in the same period prices have increased by only 37[%], which means that on average ordinary workers are better off... The difference becomes more pronounced when... the fortunes... of those who... were in the top 5[%] of income earners... [and] were aged between 25 and 34 years in 1987... [are traced. T]his age group earned \$38,500 a decade ago and \$83,000 in 1997. This means that a typical yuppie... can now expect an income that has risen... more than twice the increase of the average N[Z] worker.

...70[%] of women and 46[%] of men earn less than \$20,000 a year... a new study by Statistics N[Z] shows... The average gross weekly income for people over the age of 15 was \$411... [but the] average male income was \$516, while the average female income was \$311. The top 20[%] of earners received \$650 a week or more... (including 6897 over \$1[923 a week])... Those earning the minimum wage, roughly \$15,600 a year, number around 400,000. [● 'A commission has been set up to advise Britain's Government on setting up its first-ever national minimum wage (some workers earn 37p/h').]

...Views on minimum wages are at odds with how world labour markets work. The supply and demand model of markets applies to dead fish and labour alike. There may be no market for people per se, but there clearly are markets for the variety of services that people perform – accounting... teaching... janitorial services, and so on... Labour that is more valuable in an alternative employment than in its current employment is a profit opportunity for anyone who notices the discrepancy and bids the labour away from the lower value employment into the higher value one. Both employers and employees have automatic incentives to be alert to such opportunities... Employers who do not know how to use labour productively are forced, by competition, to step aside... Furthermore... a paper published by the National Bureau of Economic Research in 1995... showed that legally imposed increases in the cost of hiring labour decrease the amount of labour employers want to hire. But you don't need economists to explain this phenomenon. Why would an employer wait until he was forced to pay higher wages to hire additional employees? If higher wages are good for business, wouldn't he raise them voluntarily? ...Under some circumstances an employer can increase productivity by paying workers higher wages. If the increased productivity is more than enough to pay for the increased wage, the employer will want to hire more employees. But profit-seeking employers have an automatic incentive to notice and grasp such opportunities. They don't need government to force them to do so. It is individual employers, with their unique knowledge of local circumstances, who are best able to determine whether wage increases will pay for themselves. No central regulator setting legal minimum wages could possibly know as much. Even an economics professor cannot know enough to identify a one-size-fits-all minimum that is "efficient" in each case it affects... [An] Auckland economics professor... writes, "the real bottom line here is social – even moral – not economic. Wages are what people use to live on. Very low wages mean people living on not very much." ...[the professor also] writes that raising the legal minimum to \$7.50 an hour "won't eliminate the poverty of the working people, but it will help." ...But would you rather be employed at \$6 an hour or unemployed at \$7.50 an hour? ...What it will actually do is convert many working poor into non-working very poor... Who are those workers? The least able, least educated... least experienced... and [least likely to be alert to opportunities]...

Consider the market for economics lecturers... [W]age control need not deliver, indeed has very little chance of delivering, the wage rate at which the market clears – where the supply of lecturers equals the demand... If the wage is set too high then we get a proliferation of economics lecturers.

Supposedly the university will opt for the very best and the surplus will opt for the dole or even retrain for some other career. Set too low, the wage will deliver a shortage of economics lecturers and in order to meet the market universities may have to lower the standard of lecturer they employ or restrict entry to the courses... Now consider the reality. On the supply side Government intervention determines that lecturers' wage rates are set in a lockstep system, driven only by seniority... But the intervention in the market for economics lecturers is even heavier-handed than this. On the demand side, the client pays only a fraction of the cost of supplying the services of economics lecturers. The client's agent, the tax-payer-funded University Grants Committee, pays the bulk. Importantly, what economics lecturers are paid bears virtually no relation to the demand for their services except insofar as that demand bears a relatively to the demand for other... courses which compete for the overall funding budget.

...Like rust, some things never sleep. Fifty-five years after establishing the right to a minimum wage, the economic and moral debate over its continued existence rages on... According to Statistics NZ, there were 126,300 workers earning less than \$7.50 an hour in the year ended March 1996. Taking account of their hours worked and the distribution of wages beneath \$7.50 an hour, the Alliance has estimated that the cost of raising the minimum hourly rate to \$7.50 would be \$416 million a year, out of a GDP of \$93 billion, that is, 0.4[%] of GDP. This is surely a reasonable price to pay for improved fairness at the bottom end of our income distribution... Insofar as an increased minimum wage is passed on in prices, then the rest of us who are not on the minimum wage accept a very slightly lower real wage in order that the lowest paid in our community can have a minimum decent level of earning. This is a perfectly valid decision to make and an appropriate subject for Government policy.

...The Government... yesterday... [raised NZ's] minimum wage to \$7 an hour... The rise from \$6.37 represents an increase of nearly 10[%]. Youth rates paid to workers aged 16 to 19 are set at 60[%] of the adult rate and have been raised from \$3.82 to \$4.20 to maintain the relativity... [The] rise to \$7 was pretty significant and... the... Government... would want to assess its impact before proceeding to... \$7.50 an hour... on March 1 next year.

...*Rise in minimum wage could hit young people*... [R]esearch suggests that increases in the minimum wage in N[Z] reduce the employment of the age group most likely to be directly affected by the legislation. [Researchers have also] conducted a number of "natural experiments" involving both state and federal increases in the minimum wage in New Jersey, Texas and California, of which the New Jersey study is the most famous. The real value of the federal minimum wage fell steadily with inflation during the 1980s. In November 1989 Congress and [the 41st] President... agreed to raise the minimum wage from \$US3.35 (\$[NZ]4.72) to \$3.80 an hour on April 1, 1990, and again to \$4.25 on April 1, 1991. The state of New Jersey increased its minimum to \$5.05 on April 1, 1992. But the minimum wage in the neighbouring state of Pennsylvania remained at \$4.25... [T]his offered an excellent opportunity to study the effects of the minimum wage... Telephone surveys were conducted of 331 fast-food restaurants in New Jersey and 79 similar establishments in Pennsylvania... The authors found that, contrary to the predictions of standard economics, full-time equivalent employment in the New Jersey restaurants increased relative to their Pennsylvania counterparts. Critics of the experiment have attacked the quality of the data... Pennsylvania was not an adequate control... N[Z]'s minimum wage qualifies much better as a kind of "natural experiment." Until March 1994 the minimum wage covered only adults of age 20 or more... Using quarterly data from 1985-93 I found that a 10[%] increase in the adult minimum wage... increased the... unemployment rate... of young adults... by 3.5 percentage points. Even larger effects were found among young adults without school or post-school qualifications. The same increase... caused... their unemployment rate to increase by 6.5 percentage points.

...The courts might wish that the community could more readily see the "extraordinarily high" percentage of unemployed people who were committing offences, said a judge in the High Court at Auckland... yesterday... ['Statistics from a recent prison muster show that 3882 of 4203 male inmates were on the dole or other benefit before they were jailed and, for women inmates, the figure was 227 out of 245.' The judge also] said... that while courts would not be slow to impose substantial prison terms, it was perhaps too simplistic to believe that lengthening sentences "will necessarily deal with every problem." ...In sending two 18-year-old youths to jail for four and a half years on two charges of aggravated robbery, he said the courts could not close their eyes... A number of... unemployed people who were committing offences... had learning difficulties, such as one of the two before him... [T]heir victims had been outraged that aggravated robberies were "becoming like a joke to teenagers." [One] victim had spoken about the need for severe penalties... [However, the judge] said that at the end of the day, prisoners had to come back into the community and crushing sentences would not assist in rehabilitation. [The two youths] were entitled to receive "substantial discounts" because of their guilty pleas.

...Key findings... of... a Ministry of Justice report... show that [NZ's] number of burglary, theft and fraud offences fall when business confidence is high, and the number of violence and property damage offences increase when the economy is expanding... [Incidentally,] 50,000 demonstrators lay on the boulevard in front of Taiwan's presidential office at the weekend in a mass protest against the Government's failure to check a spate of violent crimes... Taiwan's social order had deteriorated to a "shocking" level, with the crime rate souring by 80[%] between 1990 to 1996. - 1997

Between 1980 and 1990, the number of criminal offences... in the U[S]... grew by 8% but the crime rate per 100,000 declined by 2.2% [during '1989, the US had an average rate of 5,741 offences per 100,000 population, with the highest rate of 10,293 being recorded in the District of Columbia and the lowest rate of 2363 in West Virginia']. This decline in the rate resulted from a 4.9% drop in property crime rate, whereas the violent crime rate during the same period rose by 22.6%... [Between] 1985 and 1990... violent crime grew by 36.9%... In 1990, one in 13 Americans was a victim of a violent crime, according to the National Crime Survey; 23.7% of all households were touched by at least one criminal incident... Most crimes, including 41.2% of robberies and 20% of assaults, took place on the street... Of all criminal incidents... [in] 1990... 31.7% involved firearms... In 1987, there were 15,118 law enforcement agencies... with 757,508 employees and \$28.071 billion in expenditures.

Others will take to the one profession for which absolutely no formal qualification is ever likely to be required – namely crime. In any increasingly competitive society I think we must expect rising figures of crime. - 1984 and after

The Enclosure Acts enacted by parliaments of landlords and merchants in eighteenth-century England provided not only pasture to grow wool for the new textile mills but also a work force of displaced, impoverished yeomen willing to accept work in the mills at sufficiently low wages... By the end of the century, the number of offences against property that earned capital punishment in England increased to more than 200. The world forecast in the deliberations of the Lunar Society had to wait out the world described by Charles Dickens... The presence of a permanent underclass, made apparent by beggary, homelessness, and a rising crime rate, reflects inadequacy in the welfare measures authorised to offset the inequality in the distribution of income...

A violent crime is committed every 18 seconds... in the U[S], an FBI report said. The good news? – violent crime is falling.

...Violent crime and burglaries in Auckland continued to rise in the past June year – against the national trend. Assaults and muggings in the city went up by 12[%] and burglaries jumped by almost 10[%], while in the whole country violent offending dropped by 1.3[%] and burglaries by 4.1[%]. Papakura showed the biggest jump in reported violence, 16.23[%], and... also topped the crime statistics for Auckland by having the largest rise in reported crime overall... The other big jump in violent crime was on the North Shore, where reported cases went up by 13.3[%]... The North Shore recorded the biggest jump in burglaries, up 14.9[%]... The acting northern regional commander... said the increase in burglaries was a concern, particularly when police were trying to cut the rate of property crimes.

...there is a link between poverty and crime. According to... a reformed master burglar... that is. And he should know... [The master] was the seedy star of last night's hour-long *Inside New Zealand* documentary on house breakers (*The Business of Burglary*, TV3, 8.30pm). Here was a professional at work. Returning to his trade – for our benefit this time – [the master] seemed to enjoy himself exposing the average householder's security shortcomings... And how about the loser who reckoned he was only a criminal during the act, and the (use your own expletive) who thought he was Robin Hood... The statistics were startling: Burglars earning up to \$100,000 a year... 50,000 homes broken into each year, \$50,000 of unclaimed recovered goods auctioned by the police every six weeks... It was gratifying to see the police potting the ratbags, particularly in the surveillance video which netted an extensive burglary and receiving ring. Unfortunately the losses outweighed the wins, and will continue to do so until there are no ready buyers for the booty. Market forces rule here too, for the business of breaking and entering seems to be booming.

...WHEN... [c]rime becomes a career... [B]efore... 13-year-old Shiza... began beating people for their money, breaking into houses and doing drugs – she dreamed of being a police officer. But now the South Auckland[er]... has a different career in mind... Shiza isn't her real name... But hers is the face of South Auckland street crime. Young people like her are causing police and community leaders enormous concern, and are fast becoming political footballs as politicians look at ways of curbing youth offending in the run-up to the election. Latest police statistics on juvenile offending... make grim reading. In the year to June 30, police cleared 45,857 offences committed by people aged 16 and under – an increase of 21[%] over three years. Of particular concern is that violent offending by juveniles has skyrocketed by 63[% during] the same period... Shiza talks matter-of-factly about getting into trouble with police when she “smashed a girl through a window for her money” in central Auckland... She doesn't go to school. She is waiting for a Children and Young Person's Service family group conference to decide her future and is living with her 23-year-old sister in Pukekohe in the meantime. When the *Herald* caught up with her, she was waiting in a car outside a pub in Otahuhu for her sister. [It] was... 9 pm and she was still waiting there at midnight. A YOUTH aid officer with Otahuhu police... says youth crime in South Auckland is disturbingly high and something has to be done about it. She says the police and the C[YPS] are only dealing with the “tip of the iceberg” and are taking punitive rather than corrective measures. No initiatives are under way to... get the young people back on track. “I believe the situation is getting worse... The offenders are getting younger and the crimes are getting more serious.”

...TWO children... held up a superette at gunpoint in broad daylight yesterday. [The superette's c]o-owner... handed over about \$350 after she and her 12-year-old daughter were confronted with the single-barrelled shotgun. The boy brandishing the weapon was aged between 10 and 12 and his accomplice about 14, she said. The two young robbers rushed from the store in Green Bay, west Auckland, with the till and two packets of cigarettes and got into a waiting car driven by a youth in his mid to late teens. The armed holdup has shocked police already alarmed at the rising level of violent offending by youngsters nationwide... 45% of robberies [are] now committed by people aged under 17. Children under 14 can be arrested for a criminal offence, not charged. They can be dealt with in the Family Court and if a serious offence is proven, the child can be placed in the care of the Director General of Social Welfare. Secure care can be used. The mayors of N[Z]'s nine biggest cities met last week to ask political leaders to commit themselves to... the introduction of a five-point... anti-crime and anti-violence programme... including early intervention for children and young people to stop them getting into crime. Waitakere City[']s deputy Mayor... said yesterday[it] was “very disturbing that young people felt so isolated from the patterns of support that they become involved in quite violent actions. Society is not what it was 20, 30 or 50 years ago – we have to look at ways to support people so they do not go down the downhill path.”

...We think of ourselves as an ageing population, but in fact about a quarter of N[Z]ers are children or adolescents and they've grown up in a society that experienced profound change. “N[Z] society is actually a very harsh place now and it's got to be recognised that pitting people against each other in the way that has occurred, particularly over the past 10 years, has its consequences – there's a social cost.” ...that social cost is seen on the streets of our cities where some young N[Z]ers have chosen to live, and it's seen in the juvenile crime statistics... “We have got a generation of juveniles at the moment that are completely out of control and short of the parents actually chaining them to their bedrooms, they can't stop them.” Even the agencies that are charged with restraining our wayward youngsters... are finding it a challenging task – Social Welfare because of lack of resources, the police because of perceived shortcomings in the law. “If something is not done to not only address the problems we have now but to do something about the problems in the future, then the whole system is going to be out of control.” So... what are the ramifications for the future if this situation is allowed to go on unchecked?

...A 14-year-old boy, believed to be the youngest person ever convicted of murder in the [AUSn] state of Victoria, was sentenced to 13 years' jail yesterday for cutting a taxi-driver's throat... The judge said the sentence was greatly reduced because of the boy's youth... The boy showed no emotion as... the Supreme Court... passed sentence. The boy was aged 13 when he killed... Mr Peter Coe, aged 41... In December last year, the boy's 14-year-old accomplice, now 15, was sentenced to be held in a youth residential centre for three years after pleading guilty to manslaughter and armed robbery. Each boy blamed the other for the death of Mr Coe. Mr Coe's mother... criticised the Victorian Department of Human Services under whose care the 14-year-old boy had been at the time, saying it had “let everyone down, the children as well.” ...[the judge had] said the standard of care by the department was “lamentably inadequate.” The trial was told the boy had absconded 26 times between 1994 and the time of the murder. - 1996

A [British schoolboy has been] found guilty of... rap[ing] a woman tourist... The Filipino boy – just 4ft 11in tall and aged just 14 at the time – [had] yawned and rubbed his eyes as [the victim] relived her 45-minute nightmare... The... petite... 33-year-old Austrian victim was raped by a total of eight youths. The others have admitted the attack. As a judge warned that they all face prison sentences, it was revealed that the woman's marriage collapsed in the traumatic aftermath of her ordeal. The bravery of the woman, a mother of two on a shopping trip to London, was praised after she helped convict her 15-year-old attacker by taking the stand. [The p]rosecutor... told the Old Bailey she had more courage in her little finger than any of the eight youths who laughed off her ordeal... The gang was caught after closed-circuit TV cameras recorded them with the woman... just outside [King's Cross railway] station... None of the gang – [consisting of] two Filipino brothers, four Afro-Caribbeans, a Colombian and a Greek Cypriot... all aged between 14 and 17... – can be named for legal reasons... The youth showed no emotion at the verdict... [The prosecutor] said there was a complete absence of parental care for the boy, who came to Britain with his mother and four brothers and sisters in 1992... The baby-faced convict claimed in court that he watched the attack and took no part in it... But the tourist... told detectives that “the small one was particularly aggressive... They were all involved. If I had noticed one standing aside I would have had the hope that someone might help me.” ...The woman encountered the group when she went out on a lone late-night walk... after dinner with friends, said [the]prosecutor... “She was unaware of the risks that the King's Cross area may have held for her. She was approached by a group of what she regarded as children,”... The gang, led by a 14-year-old schoolboy... who is over 6ft tall, asked her if she wanted to go to a party. “She was not alarmed because they were so young. But then the ringleader shouted, ‘Now the party is going to begin’,”... The woman was frogmarched to the Regent's Canal towpath. “She was... stripped... hit and kicked in the face and thrown to the ground and pinioned by her arms and legs. She was repeatedly raped and compelled to have oral sex.” ...the woman was raped so many times she lost count. The gang then asked if she could swim. She lied and said she couldn't and they threw her in the canal. “She swam to the other side and... attracted the attention of a security guard... She was intended by some of her attackers to drown... [but a]ll eight were as bad as each other. This is a particularly unpleasant case where these youths acted as a pack. Their actions simply defy rational understanding.” ...their victim was returning to Vienna to rebuild her life.

...The young victim of a horrific gang rape in Auckland has returned to family and friends in her home town to start rebuilding her shattered life. The 19-year-old woman was dragged from a car on the summit of One Tree Hill on Saturday and while her male flatmate was held in the car, the men took turns raping her. Police say the rapists had earlier attacked a couple in their car at Bastion Pt... The couple was... robbed and the woman indecently assaulted. In both cases, the offenders were travelling in a red Japanese model van... The offenders were all described as Polynesians in their late teens... Auckland police said the rape victim was a relatively naive young woman from a small town in the lower North Island... [whose] dreams of life in the big city had “gone up in smoke” because of the “horrific, animalistic and degrading” attack... A spokeswoman for Rape Crisis... said life would never be the same again for the rape victim... – ...a devout Christian who had chosen to remain a virgin until her wedding night... – ...but with the right support and counselling she would be able to get through the trauma. Gang rape in N[Z] was relatively rare, making up under 3[%] of the 1200 or so cases Rape Crisis dealt with last year.

...*The gang of four savage Auckland teenagers who pack-raped a woman had been expected to explode into violence...* [says] *their local policeman...* In the High Court at Auckland yesterday the teenagers each admitted raping and sodomising a 21-year-old woman at the summit of One Tree Hill on March 22 after pulling her from a car and beating her male companion with a wheel brace... The four “casually indifferent” teenagers... were... sentenced to a total of 54 years’ imprisonment for that and other crimes... [Three of the group], all 17, received 14 years[each. The other member]... sobbed and looked for his mother in the public gallery when guards led him away to begin what is believed to be the longest single sentence handed down to a 15-year-old... [in NZ –] 12 years’ imprisonment... Last week in the same court, as their families sat behind them, they admitted each taking turns to force the woman to perform oral sex. In a final act of degradation before... the foursome, then aged 15 and 16... walked away, they stole the couple’s wallets... At Bastion Pt another couple were attacked... Six days earlier, again at One Tree Hill, two others fell victim to another vicious assault. What turns four teenagers into brutal pack-rapists? Mt Roskill[’s] police projects manager... has a quick answer: violent videos and too much time. That combination kicked off a debut in petty crime at the age of 12 or 13, and led to a spiral into horrific offending, he said. “It is the American videos. The violence these kids see with their eyes goes straight into their minds... Ask them where they get their ideas from and they will tell you the same thing.” ...The four are the king-pins of a teenage Mt Roskill street gang which excels in petty crime and street brawls... The gang call themselves the Central Soldiers. Local police prefer to call them a “bunch of kids who are too big for their boots. They are unemployed guys aged between 14 and 18 who want to play little gangsters... They watch videos, drink beer, smoke dope and rumble other gangs because they are bored and want to kill time.” ...the youths – who are all Tongan or part-Tongan – were born in N[Z] so feel divorced from their Pacific Island roots. However, they do not fit into our society: “They band together to form an identity and mimic the Los Angeles black street gangs they watch in videos.” ...a youth worker... [also] described the group as a time bomb waiting to blow. “They were out of control. They were going around doing stupid things and it was only a matter of time before they got put away.” ...[one of the foursome] has attended eight family group conferences this year for burglary and theft from cars. He laughed at the last one when a police officer warned him that his days of freedom were numbered. “You can’t touch me. I’m only 16,” he said.

...Organised criminals in South Auckland are avoiding prosecution by using children to do their dirty work. A growing number of youths under 17 are committing burglaries and other serious offences for older ringleaders, say police... “But by the time you get to the main guy, he’s so far removed.” ...[‘Just like the classic tale of Oliver Twist, adult Fagins are training kids as young as 6 for a life of crime.’] Some as young as 14 are often “hardened... criminals,” and should face tougher charges... Young criminals... committing adult crimes... [are currently] treated as juveniles... Papakura police officers estimate three-quarters of burglaries in their region are committed by children who can only be dealt with by the youth courts and are usually given supervision... “It is well known in the criminal fraternity that if... people under 17 commit a crime they’ll get off lightly,”... Manurewa police charged a... 32-year-old beneficiary... with shoplifting after she forced her 10-year-old son to steal disposable nappies and chocolate from an Otara dairy... [T]he mother told police she often made her children steal because she knew they would escape prosecution if caught... A former police chief turned politician... said the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act was not adequately dealing with juvenile criminals... [and] has called for an overhaul of... the... law...

[Young o]ffenders not immune to the long arm of the law... Members of the public, and sometimes police, perceive nothing can be done to a child... [– t]he Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act defines a child as being under 14 years... [–] who commits offences other than murder or manslaughter. This is incorrect. There are ways of dealing with the offending. Recently I was involved in a case where a 13-year-old boy had committed an indecent assault on a young girl. Extensive inquiries were made and it was clear the boy posed a serious risk to young children. Immediate intervention was required in the public interest. Youth Aid officers prepared the appropriate documents, went to his school, arrested the boy and brought him before the Family Court. Within two hours he had been placed in the Weymouth Residential Centre... The point is... [that t]here is a process for dealing with child offenders... Some of the comments made relating to the Children and Young Persons Act have come from those who are unfamiliar with the processes. There have been minor shortcomings, but we have to be very careful that these are not the result of ignorance rather than the inability of the act to deal with child offenders.

...“We are pulling 11 to 13-year-old... shoplifters... in on a regular basis where we were not a year ago,”... says... [the] national security manager for the 12-store K-Mart N[Z] chain... “Either they are getting more blatant or more greedy. I believe the younger people are getting more schooled in the techniques of how to get things out. These are not kids who do it as a dare. They’ve seen how the system works and use good thought on how to beat the system.” K Mart staff have [also] noticed the young shoplifters seem more aware of their rights, forcing shop security officers and police to take more care dealing with them... “We will get a recitation of the Bill of Rights and the trespass law. They will tell you what you can and cannot do. Some kids are quite definite. They say: ‘I will just ring my case worker and he will handle it.’” [The security manager] is critical about the lack of response from... the... young offenders’ parents, who say things like “Clip him over the ear,” “How dare you catch my child?” or “My child would never do that.”

...When a Manukau youth aid police officer spotted videos in a local store featuring American-style carjacking he predicted drama would soon become reality. And within weeks... similar crimes hit N[Z] streets for the first time – in his patch. Carjacking is now reported regularly. Some of Manukau City’s youngsters are regarded by police as the trend-setters for N[Z] youth crime. They even blame the district’s youngsters for starting the debilitating glue-sniffing craze some years ago. Now it seems the habit is on the wane in Manukau but glue-sniffing continues to afflict young people elsewhere... It’s not even as if the young people here are particularly inventive. The police do not think they devise the latest robbery tactics but there are, readily available, videos which show American crime and gang cultures and which translate easily into the street scene in parts of South Auckland. The tendency... for younger criminals to commit offences more serious than those of their predecessors is worrying local law enforcement agencies... [A] youth justice manager for the C[YPS] in South Auckland[says:] “I could not put my finger on a reason. It has grown over the last 12 months...” ...But if you need to study the face of juvenile crime in a concentrated form, Manukau – the under-19 population of which is proportionately higher than in any other area in the country – is a place to start... “The thing about South Auckland is its size and sheer volume of young people. Then you consider the socio-economic factors...” ...with a higher rate of unemployment among South Auckland residents and limited access to benefits, it was understandable why parents could not afford to give their children pocket money. “A young person cannot claim money in their own right unless they can get employment. They [in South Auckland] are likely to be less skilled than other young people. They have to get money and they commit crime. The majority would not do it for a buzz.”

...TEEN CRIME... CONGRESS MADE AN AGREEABLE DISCOVERY THREE years ago. Early in 1994, in an abrupt statistical spike, voters in large numbers started saying that crime was their No. 1 concern. So when the House and Senate passed the omnibus crime bill later that year, people actually noticed. Which is one reason why, in a sluggish political summer... Congress is going after crime again. In May the House passed a bill that would give \$[US]1.6 billion to states that agree to toughen their handling of kids who commit serious felonies, in part making it easier to try them as adults. Last week the Senate Judiciary Committee was pushing forward on a similar bill, in the hope of bringing it to a vote this month. "People are expecting us to do something about these violent teenagers," [the] committee chairman... complained as he tried to speed through more than 100 proposed amendments... From 1985 to 1995, juvenile arrests for violent crimes rose 67%. [In 1989, 77,000 juveniles were convicted of violent offences (while a further 1.112 million juveniles were convicted for property and delinquency offences; and, during that year, 96,148 juveniles were in custody).] Perhaps a fifth of all violent crimes is the work of teens. "In America today, no population poses a greater threat to public safety than juvenile criminals," says... the Florida Republican who wrote the House version of the bill. Some criminologists are also warning that a new wave of "superpredators" will soon hit the streets. In fatherless households and fractured neighborhoods, millions of four- to seven-year-olds, the baby boomers' own mini-boom, are heading for their teens. So Congress wants to make it easier to... incarcerate them in adult prisons[- even though, as the]... head of the Washington-based Youth Law Center... [points out:] "Children commit suicide eight times as often in jails as they do in juvenile-detention facilities[.]..." Under both the Senate bill and the House bill, states that want the federal dollars would have to make prosecutors and not judges the ones who decide whether a teenager charged with a serious violent felony or drug offence should be tried as an adult. To demonstrate that crimes really do carry punishments, states would also have to impose a rising scale of "graduated sanctions" for all juvenile offences, beginning with the first, and keep adult-style criminal records on juvenile offenders. Under the present system, most such records are often closed, meaning prosecutors can't learn whether an accused youth is a repeat offender... Over the past five years, however, every state except Hawaii has decided to allow some kids to be tried in adult criminal courts. Altogether, some 12,300 youths are prosecuted as adults each year in state courts. That is about 9% of all juveniles arrested for violent crimes and a 70% increase over the number who were tried as adults a decade ago. But if the bills become law, those numbers would climb further. Child-welfare advocates say that would effectively dissolve the separate system of justice for kids that dates back to 1899, when Chicago established the nation's first juvenile court. Supporters of the bills say they correct a problem created in 1974, when new legislation channeled nearly all young offenders to the juvenile system. What isn't clear is whether moving young criminals back to adult courts has much impact on crime. According to a recent study by the liberal National Center for Initiatives and Alternatives, Connecticut has the highest juvenile-to-adult transfer rate and Colorado the lowest, yet their youth crime-rates are the same. Since the 1970s, New York has been automatically trying as adults kids 16 and older charged with serious crimes. In the same period, its juvenile crime rates doubled... The White House has proposed its own bill that puts more emphasis on money for crime-prevention measures, such as keeping schools open in the afternoon from 3 to 6, when almost half of juvenile crime takes place. While the Senate would allow states to use as much as 40% of the federal money they get for prevention programs, the House would require them to spend it all on law enforcement... While reportedly 8,000 teens are already... imprison[ed]... with adults, federal rules require "sight and sound" separation, meaning juveniles cannot be within reach of adults. Some corrections officials say that requires a pointless division of facilities used by both populations - for instance, two exercise areas when one could be shared. The Senate bill would override the complexities of the sight-and-sound rule by imposing a "no physical contact" provision, which means... the same facilities could be used. But juvenile advocates say... breaking down the barriers would make kids prey to rape and other forms of abuse.

...An 11-year-old boy, whose face was painted for Hallowe'en when he was arrested last week on a murder charge, will be tried as an adult and faces a possible life sentence, prosecutors said... [The boy] is accused of firing his rifle from a hill last Wednesday, killing a stranger walking out of a shop. "I've never seen someone this young be this cold, this violent," said [the] Oakland County Assistant Prosecutor... [But the boy's lawyer] said... "We're talking about a... little boy, physically and emotionally... He did not know the ramifications of his actions. He didn't intend to commit [a] crime." ...Police said [the boy] admitted shooting a rifle but denied trying to hit anyone. "I learned... my lesson," they quoted the boy as saying. [However, p]rosecutors say... his violent behaviour... includes pulling a gun on fellow elementary school pupils, beating an older boy with a pipe, arson and burglary. This year his mother told authorities she needed help managing him... [A] trial judge could opt to sentence him as a juvenile, in which case he could not be held beyond the age of 21.

...A 13-year-old Ohio boy said he and a friend smashed windows and lights and set off fire extinguishers in... 32... school buses because less destructive methods of vandalism weren't exciting any more... The two[, who]... admitted causing \$US41,000... in damage... were placed under house arrest for six months and ordered to write 500-word essays about what they have learned.

...In an innovative approach to justice, a West A[US]n outback magistrate has dipped into his own pocket to reward a 13-year-old repeat offender with a bicycle for staying out of trouble. [The] magistrate... had dealt with the boy... [who suffers] from fetal alcohol syndrome... on numerous occasions since they met in April 1995... [W]hen the boy appeared in court for yet another minor offence, [the magistrate] called the child to the bench... and asked him what he dreamed of... "The boy thought, then his face lit up and he said 'I dream I have a bike'... The magistrate said 'I'm going to make a deal with you... if you don't come back before me in th[e] next[]... 90 days... I'll buy you any bike you like,'"... said a children's court spokeswoman... Three months later... the court proceedings were interrupted when the clerk placed a note before [the magistrate] stating the boy was outside the courthouse anxiously awaiting his reward. [The magistrate] adjourned the court immediately and took the child shopping. "When they arrived at the row of bikes, [the magistrate] told the boy to pick one, and the boy made his way straight to the end of the line and said 'this one,' which turned out to be the most expensive in the store,"... [In local news, four] teenage girls turned to crime... yesterday to satisfy a craving for lollies. Police said the quartet, armed with hammers, stole "a quantity of confectionery"... Nothing else was taken... [and the store] attendant was not hurt... Three 17-year-olds and a 16-year-old have been arrested and will face charges in Rotorua courts.

...He's a... small puny... 14-year-old... with... rosy cheeks. He looks disarmingly innocent, but he is charged with rioting... on the North Shore late on a Saturday night... and admits it with a curt nod of his head. Under the Crimes Act that is an offence punishable by two years' jail. It is not the normal misdemeanour charge that most kids face when they appear in [Auckland's] Youth Court.

...Youths accused of burgling homes and committing other serious offences are not being punished for weeks because of a backlog of family group conferences in Auckland. The delays are frustrating police, who say some young criminals are reoffending in the meantime... Conferences are held to either decide the fate and punishment of young offenders or, in more serious cases, make recommendations to the youth court... [T]he head of youth justice in Auckland... said the backlog had occurred because 100 new referrals were coming through each month and group conferences had to be set up within three weeks. He said 161 youth offenders were waiting to be assigned to family group conferences - about 100 overdue... [However,] four social workers had been seconded to work as youth justice coordinators to try to reduce the back log[.] • 'Research by Victoria University's Institute of Criminology found that youths are less likely to be convicted again after successful family group conferences. The institute researcher says just holding a family conference is not enough and there are a number of critical elements necessary if they are to make a difference to the probability of re-offending - such as if they are not made to feel like a bad person, if they feel remorse, are involved in the decision-making and agree with the conference outcome and then complete tasks given to them and feel they have made amends to victims']...

Youth crime was booming in the Waikato township of Huntly until... two local policemen decided to do something about it... The roadside hoarding on the highway north of town tells travellers that they're in "the warm heart of the Waikato." Welcome to Huntly, a riverside town of 7300 about

halfway between the urban sprawls of Hamilton and Auckland. The hoarding evokes a place where the butcher and grocer soon know you by name. But it doesn't tell the full story of a community fractured by 12 years of economic reform: high rates of unemployment, substance abuse, domestic violence, crime. Huntly has long had the outlaw image of a frontier town. A quarter century of rural downturn has only made things worse. Then, [a few weeks ago], a curious report in the *N[Z Herald]* said that the town's Youth Court had been idle for the entire preceding month[, and there had been only]... one youth court appearance... [during the month before that. Huntly's c]ommunity constable... says that when he arrived in the town two years ago... as many as 40 kids a month were being arrested for property crimes – ...though he hastens to add that the crime was much like other small towns... With his colleague, [a]youth-aid officer[, the constable]... called two public meetings and hammered out a strategy to deal with youth offending. Relying mainly on a section of the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act which allows police to pick up youngsters out alone after dark and take them home, they started cleaning up... They were generally pleased by the response of parents whom they had half expected to be aggressive about the invasion of their family life. But they didn't stop there. "If we saw kids out late at night we regarded that as circumstance enough to refer the families on to other agencies that were less threatening than the police in their uniforms,"... The change in policy was accompanied by a conscientious campaign by the local police to solve burglaries, and in particular to target the adult receivers who were providing young thieves with a market – and, in many cases, commissioning the novice criminals. "We've gone back to basic policing. We've gone away from the touchy-feely community policing and back to hard targeting of criminals,"...

Yesterday, a[n]... Auckland District Court... judge... reminded "hardened" teenage criminals that they could not escape hard punishment because of their ages... [as she] jailed four teenage boys... and... [gave] a suspended jail sentence... to... a 16-year-old girl... She said that on her past four working days she had jailed[another] four 16-year-old offenders for separate aggravated burglaries, some involving serious injuries to victims... [In international news,] Tel Aviv police officials conferred yesterday about the possibility of issuing a certificate of appreciation to a local thief who stole a bag... on Friday. When the thief... opened the bag in the stairwell of a nearby building, he discovered a 4lb bomb and ticking time device. Surrounding the bomb were nails intended to increase the casualty toll. [The thief] hastened to a nearby phone and... [then] posted himself at the entrance to the building to keep people away until the police arrived. Known to the police as a petty thief and drug addict, [the 30-year-old] at first said he had seen the bag in the stairwell and looked into it out of curiosity. He later admitted that he had taken it from the nearby beach crowded with youths. Police officials said [the thief] had prevented a potentially serious loss of life... [and] no charges would be pressed against him for the theft, since whoever had left the bag was unlikely to complain.

...More than \$4 million of property belonging to criminals has been seized and sold by the Crown. Money from the seizures has been put into the country's coffers and used for general spending... Court cases for the seizure of a further \$6 million in assets are pending.

...*Crime pays for Government...* Legislation which is set to net the Government more than \$13 million has been criticised by lawyers as draconian and mere revenue collecting. Criminal defence lawyers say the Proceeds of Crime Act needs to be amended to allow courts discretion when dealing with police applications for forfeiture of property... The president of the Criminal Bar Association... agreed, describing the legislation as sometimes "very harsh," in some instances unfair and saying the standard of proof required under the law was too low. Police did not have to prove beyond reasonable doubt that property was used or gained in the commission of a crime, but on the basis of balance of probabilities... If it is proved that a person profited from a crime, cash can be seized or an equal amount in assets confiscated and sold... [A]n Auckland barrister specialising in criminal work, said... police were targeting cannabis growers, as forfeiture applications involving drugs were easier to prove... "Farms that have been in the family for generations can disappear because of a not particularly serious drug operation." Spouses and children could suffer as they had to prove they were an innocent party unaware of criminal activity to keep their share of the property... Even property owned in A[US] can be sold for crimes committed in N[Z] under a transtasman agreement... In five years, the Government has reaped... \$4 million from convicted criminals under the act... [which] covers any indictable offence which has a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment or more.

...Burglars are creating an underground economy based on a combination of stolen goods... second-hand dealers... and "honest citizens" who ask no questions... [when] paying low prices... [for] stolen televisions... stereos... microwaves and pieces of jewellery... [A]nyone on a benefit or low income knows how to get a television for \$50 and has little concern about why it is so cheap... Proceeds are passed off to myriad shadowy go-betweens who have taken up the market position once occupied by a handful of receivers... For the year to June... only 746 people in the Auckland metropolitan area were charged with receiving, compared to 4200 charged with burglary... Record numbers of break-ins plague the North Island, including central Auckland where police statistics... indicate one home was hit every 40 minutes... According to British statistics, a house that has been burgled once is eight times more likely to be burgled again[('in Britain, where half of all burglary offences are committed by young people aged between 16 and 24 years, a billion pounds worth of property is stolen from homes every year – returning the goods to their rightful owners is no easy task for the police; Christmas time in the UK is a time of rich pickings – there are more break-ins during the season of goodwill than at any other time of the year')]. Burglars and receivers are not the only ones who profit from burglary... [I]nsurance claims in Auckland [are] pushing premiums up... Electronics retailers who replace the stolen property for insurance companies do nicely out of the trade... So do people selling burglar alarms.

...Insurers want urgent changes to the laws covering pawnbrokers and second-hand dealers to shut off one channel for the growing trade in stolen property... [which is estimated at] \$60 million in goods each year... The... [NZ] Insurance Council... has told a police-security industry liaison group that the 34-year-old Secondhand Dealers Act and the Pawnbrokers Act 1908 are outdated in today's criminal climate... A council executive... says N[Z] law fails in two major ways: records of pawnbrokers and second-hand dealers were not required to be audited, and the standard of identification needed from people selling second-hand goods was low... [Meanwhile, p]olice have set up a special squad to combat a burglary epidemic in West Auckland which they say is out of hand... A spokesman for State Insurance said the company... had paid out \$12 million on claims in West Auckland in the past year... The cost of claims in Auckland as a whole was about 45[%] higher than the national figure.

...Crime in Auckland is rising nearly three times faster than in the rest of the country. Close to 170,000 offences were reported in the Auckland metropolitan area, a 5.5[%] increase on last year's figure, compared with a 2[%] increase nationally... from 506,359 offences in 1995 to 516,369 last year... The Police Association president... said people should be careful to say the crime rate had gone up only 2[%]. "...that is 10,000 more victims of crime out there." [Statistically, 1 out of every 7 NZers were *victims of crime* in 1996 (but there were '525,622 offences in 1991')]. In the year to June 30, Auckland's murder rate doubled... and the number of attempted murders and manslaughters soared.

...Three young Auckland men... aged 17... 19, and... 22, all unemployed... kicked a 55-year-old to death for little more than 50c each... They took his wallet containing \$1.60... - 1997

Approximately ninety percent of all crime is committed for money. Robbery, forgery, embezzlement, and kidnapping are money motivated. Even murder is sometimes done for a price.

...I'd asked her for two dollars just to kill the King... - MASTERS OF REALITY

A... man offered to pay \$25,000 to have his wife and three children shot, but the "hitman" was an undercover police officer. The man, who has had his name suppressed, pleaded guilty... in the Auckland District Court yesterday... In May he visited a woman and paid her a deposit of \$5000 to find someone to murder his family. The next day the woman telephoned the police... The man... transferred \$1000 into... [an] undercover...

policeman's bank account. He later couriered a further cheque for \$24,000, made out for cash, to the officer. The policeman then told the defendant that he could not kill children. In a later telephone call, the police officer was asked if he would accept \$40,000 just to murder the wife. At that stage the... man was arrested... The maximum penalty he can receive is 10 years in prison.

...A... man who tried to take out a murder contract on his wife and three children has been revealed as a former Catholic priest. In the High Court at Auckland yesterday... an order suppressing... [his] name and details... [was] lifted... He was jailed for five years.

...sometime, early in 1990, the friendship soured over arguments about housework... Late one night... [the NZ]er... went to the bedroom of his... lodger... clubbed the sleeping man on the head with a hammer until he was dead... dragged the body to the basement... and buried... [it] under more than 1m of soil... and later concreted a new floor. Months later he left London and spent the next seven years travelling, knowing all the time that no one would miss [the lodger], who had long before lost contact with his family. The perfect murder – until one day this year, when [the NZer] found God and confessed to a crime that London Metropolitan Police admit would probably never have been discovered... [Incidentally, l]egislation is needed to clarify whether convicted killers should be allowed to profit from their victims' deaths, says the [NZ]Law Commission. Common law at present holds that wills are invalid if a person stands to gain from the estate of someone they have killed. But the president of the Law Commission... said there were cases when the law was not clear enough. "For example, should a driver who by inattention kills a loved spouse be barred from taking property from the spouse's estate?" ...other cases where killers might be allowed to profit included women who suffered from the battered women's syndrome, infanticide, and those who commit mercy killings.

...[the NZer], who with her friend... bashed her mother to death in Christchurch at the age of 16, ...plans to cash in on her dark past after being exposed as a religious recluse living in England... [The n]ow... 58-year-old[, who]... has changed her name... is courting cheque-book-wielding British media executives prepared to pay for the story of how [the pair of teenagers] lured Honora Parker to a secluded spot and killed her with a brick in 1954. Like [her friend], who changed her name... and became a crime novelist, [the daughter] moved to Britain in 1965 after serving less than four years of a five-year prison sentence... Her past remained secret until this week when the N[Z] *Woman's Weekly* tracked her down. - 1997

Payment... for stories, pictures or information should not be made... to convicted or confessed criminals or their associates... except where the material concerned ought to be published in the public interest and payment is necessary for this to be done. - EDITOR'S CODE OF CONDUCT (UK Press Complaints Commission rules)

...another villain on the cover of a... magazine the victim somewhere in between...

There are rich pickings to be had from being an ex-gangster in Britain. Villains have become media stars, publishing memoirs and appearing on chat shows and in soap operas in response to seemingly endless public fascination with the criminal underworld... This appears to be borne out by the success of British gangster films, such as *The Krays* and more recently *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*, which depict the East End gang scene in gruesome detail. Throngs of admirers, including many celebrities, lined the streets for Ronnie Kray's funeral in 1995, all eager to catch a glimpse of Ronnie's infamous friends. And the gangsters parading in suits and shades did not disappoint. "You play the part because people want to see you that way," said... [the author of] *Inside the Firm*, which became a bestseller... "It's not my choice but you might as well go along with it."

...ANOTHER day, another First Amendment war for... the *Hustler* magazine publisher... While... [the publisher] has made headlines lately for exposing the sexual peccadilloes of prominent Republicans, he also is testing the limits of taste – and the law – with a new business venture. [The publisher]'s new line of adult videos features women who have been incarcerated for various crimes from bank robbery to narcotics possession. The first video in the *Jail Babes* series was released last month. But [the publisher], who did time for contempt of court, may face a legal obstacle with his latest project: California's Son of Sam law, which blocks felons from profiting from their crimes. Named after the New York serial killer who sold the story of his 1977 murder spree, the law allows either the attorney general or a crime victim to file a civil action to recover income made by criminals who peddle their tales. While Californian lawmakers may not have envisioned adult videos as a vehicle for criminals to reap profits when the statute was enacted in 1983, the [*Jail Babes*] production underscores the potential breadth of a law that already casts a shadow in a Hollywood fascinated with true crime stories... Preventing [the publisher] from paying former bank robbers and drug dealers could prove difficult. Lawmakers revised California's Son of Sam law after the US Supreme Court struck down New York's version in 1991, and the new one has yet to be tested on appeal. The only three cases undertaken by California authorities have led nowhere... The latest case filed under the law remains unresolved. Frank Sinatra's family invoked the statute last year when it sued Sony Pictures to block its efforts to buy the story of [the person] who masterminded the kidnapping and \$240,000 ransom of Frank Sinatra['s son] in 1993... "In the big picture, we've got a problem as a society if we can't enforce this law," said[the family's] attorney...

AN INVITATION to coffee with the poisoner... is a luxury that few can afford to accept. In the past, many of those who did paid with their lives. These days the price is lower: A mere \$11,600... He is... sure that attempts... to stop him profiting from book and film deals will fail. Unthinkable or not, the selling of [the poisoner] – a handsome man whose charm is particularly effective on young women – is already a small industry... His soon-to-be-published memoirs, written in prison, have already netted him \$350,000 and he has negotiated a film deal worth a rumoured \$20 million... If he does have any regrets they seem to concern missed opportunities to market himself, rather than the fate of his victims... [In related news,] Britain has called on Iran to denounce an increased bounty offered for the killing of the writer [of the book *The Satanic Verses*]. But a leading Iranian politician has distanced his Government from the new offer of a \$US2.5 million... reward.

...[the] Indian-born British novelist... does not need as many bodyguards these days. But his life is still under threat eight years after [an]Iranian revolutionary leader... issued a fatwa... The threat of death at the hands of Islamic fundamentalist hit squads, who believe his 1988 novel *The Satanic Verses* is an insult to Islam, continues to hold him hostage and has turned his life into a nightmare... This month [the novelist] celebrated his 50th birthday. He is rich and famous but continues to... constantly[move] from one hideout to another. He is homeless... [T]he book has made global head-lines like few others before it... Many devout Muslims consider his... book blasphemous. In it [he] describes a scene in which the Prophet Mohammed meets Satan, who tries to seduce him to evil. And [he] also names prostitutes in the story after the prophet's wives, who are honoured in Islam as mothers of the faithful. The book sparked rioting in some cities, particularly after the edict... His apologies and declared belief in Islam were to no avail. A Japanese translator was stabbed to death. An Italian translator was attacked and a Norwegian publisher only narrowly escaped death... On June 12 the... London-based International... Defence Committee... called on EU member states to condemn Iran's actions as "terrorism."

...Iran reiterated yesterday that it would not seek to carry out a death order against [a]British author... but insisted it would not give written guarantees on the subject... [Incidentally,] Mexico is offering a \$US1 million... reward for information leading to the capture of three brothers who head a drugs cartel and allegedly ordered the recent shooting of a Mexican journalist.

...The U[S] has offered a \$US2 million... reward for information leading to those responsible for four letter bombs sent to the Washington offices of the *al-Hayat* Arabic newspaper in January. [● 'In the US, the FBI offers public rewards ranging from \$50,000 to \$5 million for crucial information.']

...Police posted a \$10,000 reward yesterday for information leading to the identity of the driver of the car that hit and killed [a Huntly teenager five months ago]... It is the first time a reward has been offered for a hit-and-run accident in... [NZ. R]ewards were uncommon and usually offered for murders... [T]he first reward... was... £50... promised for the capture of an Invercargill prison escaper in 1868... Police national headquarters has records of only about 50 rewards since the mid-1950s. The most recent was the \$20,000 offered for information about the murder of... [a] Christchurch... scrapmetal dealer... last year... A headquarters spokesman said rewards were usually unclaimed.

...The last known reward paid out was in 1992 when one claimant got \$10,000 from the \$20,000 offered in relation to... a... murder... in New Plymouth... \$20,000 is the norm in a murder case... but it is a modest sum compared with the \$100,000 offered by the police for information leading to the arrest of the South Auckland serial rapist three years ago... Police are considering posting a \$50,000 reward for information leading to the capture of the killers of [an]Auckland businessman... A[US]n police also offered rewards, as do the British. However, according to Interpol, they're "more constrained" than the U[S] where – despite concerns that 'in the past people have deliberately blamed innocent suspects for crimes in an attempt to collect' –] ...rewards are commonplace, [and]there are even so-called bounty hunters, in reality private detective agencies, who scan the wanted posters on public buildings. Most reward cases arise because of the multiplicity of law enforcement agencies and criminals crossing state and county lines into other jurisdictions.

...U[S] bounty hunters... kicked in the front door of a home, held children at gunpoint and shot a couple to death in a case of mistaken identity, police and a witness said. As many as seven bounty hunters – all dressed in black and wearing ski masks and body armour – broke into the home in Phoenix... in the early hours looking for an out-of-state bail jumper who apparently owed a bond company \$US25,000... Police said they didn't believe the bail jumper ...ever... lived in the house... No charges were filed, but police said [the bounty hunters] might be charged with murder...

It's not quite a "Dead or Alive" poster fluttering on a tree trunk, but when the police offered a reward for the capture of the country's most wanted fugitive... it conjured up images of saddling up a posse... In the 1990s... the... spectre of bounty hunters might be faintly discernible on the horizon... In 1910... a butcher of Moravian descent, was something of a folk hero in the Manawatu. He attracted a reward of £50 when he showed as much aptitude for breaking out of cells as he did for breaking into homes... But when he was accosted on the run by two police officers, one of whom was shot in a scuffle in the dark, the reward... jumped to £100. The wounded man took several days to die, but said on his death-bed that he couldn't be sure it wasn't his colleague who shot him, which rather damaged the police case. So, failing to nail him for murder, the police – after four more trials – got him on breaking and entering, theft and arson. To great public outcry he was sentenced to a hefty 21 years' hard labour. Within months, he escaped from the condemned cell at Wellington's Terrace Jail and was last seen fleeing through Kelburn in his white prison clothes. As late as 1963 he was still officially wanted, though the police – doubtless embarrassed by his case – offered no reward for his recapture. Decades later his family and friends confirmed he fled by sea to Canada. Is it worth the authorities' while putting in a call to the Mounties?

...Gang members will be "falling over each other" to get their hands on a \$20,000 reward for the capture of N[Z]'s most wanted fugitive, his employer fears... "Every gang associate in the country will be out looking for him – there will be gang wars over who found him first. This is inciting all sorts of civil unrest." ...The \$20,000 will be given to anyone providing information leading to the capture of [the fugitive] wanted in connection with the murder of a Nomad gang associate... in May. Wanted posters will be sent to every police station in the country... Police claim [the fugitive] is armed and dangerous – which his family denies – and that he has been kept in hiding by Highway 61 gang associates. [The fugitive's] employer, who... hired him about five years ago as a heavy-machinery operator, said he was willing to help set up a meeting between [his employee] and police, but he would not accept reward money "even if it was \$200,000." He said he knew how to contact [his employee] and could probably produce him for police within 24 hours... Police said yesterday they were aware that the employer had contacted [the fugitive] and would be happy to arrange a meeting... [which] would hopefully speed up [the fugitive's] capture and ultimately save money by freeing up police resources again... [P]olice did not have a warrant for [the fugitive's] arrest on a murder charge but would probably charge him with murder unless he had a "compelling explanation." ...One person is already in custody charged with [the Nomad gang associate's] murder.

...Armed police raided a house in Murupara on Thursday night after being told that [NZ's most wanted fugitive] was being hidden there. But he was not there... The Rotorua chapter of the Highway 61 gang said it had not seen [the fugitive] but would not do him in for a reward of any size... [Furthermore,] the chapter's sergeant of arms, disputed a suggestion that the \$20,000 reward... would incite violence between gangs competing to turn... [him in. However, a] Detective Sergeant... of Otahuhu, said... he... had "grave fears" for [the fugitive] and those harbouring him now that gang warfare had erupted in Auckland between the Highway 61 and Nomad/Black Power gangs. "We know the Nomad hierarchy have ordered 2:1 killing in retaliation to the murder. There have already been two arsons and a stabbing," he said...

One of two remaining hostages held by Taiwan's most-wanted fugitive walked free after 20 hours of captivity yesterday... [The girl], aged 12, smiled and wept as she was embraced by friends... There was no immediate sign of her mother... or the hostage taker... [who is also] sought... for... the kidnap-murder in April of an actress' teenage daughter... Police... found the[daughter's] body... floating in a river in Taipei county... two weeks after the 16-year-old was kidnapped... on her way to school... in a \$US5 million... ransom case.

...[a tired but apparently unharmed Japanese electronics executive was freed by kidnappers on Monday after they received \$US2 million in unmarked \$US100 bills, Government officials said. He was the first high-ranking foreign executive kidnapped in Mexico in recent years and his abduction fuelled fears that criminals may target some of the thousands of foreign executives who work in factories along the Mexico-US border.] ■ 'A NZer kidnapped while working as a bar hostess in Japan was repeatedly raped by gang members. Lisa (not her real name) said she was one of three NZ women kidnapped in Tokyo this year. News of the incident prompted the NZ Embassy in Tokyo this week to warn women against travelling to Japan to work as hostesses in clubs.'

...the 8-month-old daughter of a Maori lawyer and her High Court judge husband was yesterday found alive and well in a house near Turangi, 200 hours after she was snatched from her pram at gunpoint. At a press conference late last night, police confirmed that a \$3 million ransom demand – believed to be the largest in NZ history – was made "some days ago". In 1987, a woman was abducted at gunpoint from her Hamilton home. The kidnappers demanded \$500,000 in used banknotes and \$500,000 in uncut diamonds. They threatened to kill her if police were called. She was held in bush for two nights before police rescued her. Four years earlier in Oamaru, an Asian schoolgirl was dragged at gunpoint from her family's home at the beginning of a 38-hour ordeal. The kidnappers demanded \$120,000 and threatened to kill her if police were called. The officer in charge of the Asian crime squad in Auckland said that in Asian countries crimes such as kidnapping were commonplace. Because people were afraid of threats to their families they often paid up without reporting the incidents to the police, the Detective Sergeant added. A Hong Kong businessman had recently paid HK\$1 million to get his son back without going to the police. Between one and three cases of kidnapping involving Asians are reported in Auckland each month. Those taken are often students. Only two weeks ago, \$500,000 was demanded when a 6-year-old boy was snatched from his West Auckland home at knifepoint and held for nearly two days until the ransom was left beside an Auckland motorway. His frantic Taiwanese parents found him unharmed after the ransom was dropped off in an apparent police sting.'

... '93% of kidnappers screw up when they try to get the money.' Incidentally, a] judge in Switzerland has issued international arrest warrants for seven Israelis in connection with an alleged plot to kidnap... possibly the richest 12-year-old in the world... [The] sole surviving heir [of a]Greek shipping tycoon... has \$US3 billion... to her name.

...The... Foundation... set up in Switzerland to look after [her] interests and oversee the management of her wealth... says two Swiss judges probing an alleged attempt to abduct the 12-year-old heiress... conspired... to wrest control of her inheritance from the foundation and assign it to...

[her father, who] has accused the foundation of mismanaging the money... [Her father] fears for his family's security and for the well-being of his daughter... "My wife and I and our family have been living a nightmare since February,"... [F]ormer British SAS troops, guard the girl... [H]er security and other expenses... [cost] about \$6 million a year...

Allegations of a kidnap plot against the heiress to the Onassis billions were "ridiculous stories" invented by the girl's father, according to... trustees of the estate... [The father] said former Israeli agents were behind the plot but the claims have been dismissed by the Israeli Government... The trustees' two-page statement backed the Israeli version of events... [In related news, a]n armed hijacker demanding \$16.8 million seized a plane carrying at least 140 people en route to Moscow yesterday, but was seized by security commandos... who rushed on board... soon after landing. All passengers were released unharmed... Security officials said the man appeared confused and was... demanding to be flown to Switzerland.

...Four armed men hijacked a small plane yesterday, forced it to land in a vacant field in northern Peru and escaped with the \$1.7 million in cash it was carrying... [Meanwhile, a]uthorities in Switzerland and Italy have detained 13 people they believe carried out one of the largest heists in history – a \$US37 m... holdup at a Zurich post office... Over the weekend authorities recovered more than \$US14 m... of the stolen money.

...A MAD scramble for money by people in a poor, black district of Miami after a security truck spilled its assets has prompted some soulsearching in a city notorious for crime and corruption. Dozens of people in Overtown, a rundown central city neighbourhood, scooped up cash and coins when a... armoured security truck, believed to be carrying \$5.28 million, flipped on a highway overpass... [A] popular radio talkshow host, called their actions dishonest and undignified. Many callers agreed. But a black Overtown resident... said people were so deprived their actions were justified. "You don't understand. You just white, rich... Try coming to live in Overtown for a week – you wouldn't last one hour." ...Miami police gave people a 48-hour amnesty to return the hundreds of thousands of missing dollars but by Friday no money had been turned in.

...[Miami] police have announced a second amnesty... [People] have until tomorrow to return the money without fear of prosecution. The first amnesty netted just \$US20.38 of the \$US550,000... missing... [Incidentally, a] fleet footed robber bashed a security guard with a rifle and sprinted off with... cash at Auckland University yesterday... The Armourguard employee had just finished servicing automatic teller machines... It is at least the sixth strike on Armourguard staff this year... [T]he average haul... was \$68,000.

...SHOPLIFTERS may be less likely to cop a long jail sentence if the target store's holding sales in America. [A woman] has been charged with stealing goods – including videotapes, cigarettes and doughnuts – from a supermarket in... Vermont. Total value of her haul, according to the police, is \$US101.49. Vermont has a \$US100 threshold for a felony retail theft which can earn up to 10 years behind bars. Her lawyer is arguing, however, that slashed prices on the doughnuts helped reduce the total value to \$US97.37. And theft at that level is a mere "misdemeanour" – with a maximum punishment of six months. [● 'Shoplifters (most of whom are women) cost NZ stores \$500m a year.']

...Retailers be warned: the enemy lurks within. Staff are much more likely to steal from their bosses than customers – but employers appear reluctant to face up to the fact that employees are ripping them off. A study of retail crime in N[Z], believed to be the first of its kind... found that retailers consider customers twice as likely to steal from them than staff. But the University of Otago... [study of] known cases of theft... indicates... 59[% were] committed by employees, and customers were responsible for 39[%]. Theft]... by suppliers accounted for the remainder. - 1997

Stealing On The Job [TV3, 8.30pm] is a d]ocumentary investigating why N[Z]ers steal up to \$900 million annually from their employers. It meets the thieves to find out why they do it and how they get away with a crime that is not just a financial loss for the boss but a personal betrayal as well.

...Eleven nightshift workers allegedly locked into a Johannesburg chemical factory... have burned to death... [T]he 10 women and their male supervisor appeared to have tried to break open a padlocked door... Firemen had to cut locks on the outer security fence and enter the factory through a hole apparently blown in the wall... [after] gas bottles used for heating chemicals... exploded, but it was not immediately clear whether they caused the fire or exploded in the flames... Officials said some of the bodies had become stuck in melted plastic from large tanks holding chemicals... Police were investigating charging the owner with murder or culpable homicide... The owner was remaining silent on the advice of his lawyers... [but an employee, who had] stayed home on Friday night (local time) because of pain from an old burn on her leg... confirmed claims... that the owner of the factory had routinely locked nightshift workers in because he was afraid they would steal from his stores.

Honesty, of course, is relevant. Some people are scrupulously honest in all relationships. Others are honest most of the time. Some cheat anyone they feel they can, while others may cheat only on their income tax... Many of the world's greatest fortunes have resulted from business practices which were questionable, to say the least. John D. Rockefeller, Cornelius Vanderbilt, J.P. Morgan, Jay Gould, and Jim Fisk have been included in history books because of their wealth, not because of their ethics. It was not because of their honest business dealings that some of these nineteenth-century multimillionaires acquired the dubious title, the "robber barons." ...[as someone once said when] referring to financial manipulations by the heads of large corporations, "Crime, carefully planned and executed, is demonstrably the royal highroad to pecuniary success in the U[S]." ...Case histories show that people who start out with little or nothing in life and claw their way to the top of the money heap are obsessed with the acquisition of money and what it stands for. People for whom money is the most important thing in life have a very good chance of accumulating lots of it. Usually, they make lots of money, or land in jail, or both... Most people are unwilling to make money by means in opposition to their beliefs and values. On the other hand, the newspapers, as well as TV and movie scripts, are filled with stories of people who steal, embezzle, murder, and sell hard drugs for money... While it is possible for an honest person to become rich, the odds are lowered significantly the more dishonest one becomes... Crime, vice, and dishonesty generally produce considerably more money than does honest toil. In most cases, the person who desires a large sum of money in a hurry is forced to choose between wealth and virtue. And not infrequently money wins... Those who lack money but desire a great deal of it, yet who are unwilling to work long and hard to get it, have few options open to them. Unless they have unusual talent, they are generally limited to luck or crime to make their desire come true... There is probably nothing that someone won't do for money... A few years ago, the Boy Scouts of America, an organization which has practically become synonymous with honesty, found that some of its staff were padding their membership rolls with nonexistent boys in order to receive more federal funds... Americans are probably as moral as anyone, yet few would dispute the adage that "Everyone has his price." Morality is frequently bought off with money... People with money can often intimidate those who want it, and those who do not have money may allow themselves to be manipulated in humiliating ways in order to get it... Organized crime... owes its existence to the fact that some people are willing to accept money for performing illegal services... Organized crime is one of the largest industries in the U[S], netting billions of dollars a year. Free-lance crime adds billions more.

Hardly anyone likes to admit that the highest achievements of the Western mind spring from the same soils that nourish the lush flowerings of corruption and greed. On the one hand the capitalist system implies the exploitation of any available weakness, but on the other hand it encourages the freedom of thought and experiment. The two genies emerge from the same bottle, simultaneously and without benefit of ideology. In November of last year, in the same week that the usual number of public officials were rounded up on the usual suspicion of fraud, seven Americans received the Nobel Prize. - The editor of *Harper's*, 1977

Right this minute somehow, somewhere a fraudster is at work... Some are novices in the ugly, but seemingly popular, trade. Others are hardened cons who have become professionals through years of ripping people and organisations off. Criminologists say that once a person successfully completes one small fraudulent take it will encourage a further attempt at, perhaps, a slightly more productive assignment. It continues until he or she is eventually caught when greed engulfs that person's soul forcing a mistake after earnings have been built up to the hundreds of thousands and even millions of dollars. - 1996

Tycoon arrested in a £25 million timeshare fraud... Since his first headline more than 40 years ago, it seems nothing has changed about [his] criminality, except its scale... His sentence on the \$A1.2 billion [fraud] will be the final price the fallen tycoon will be called on to pay for his crimes during the 1980s... It also fulfilled a prediction [his] late father... made 40 years ago... "There's only two ways he can go... either he will end up in Fremantle jail or he will become the richest man in A[US.]"

...the former high-flyer who stunned the world a decade ago by spending a record \$A79 million... on a painting, can look forward to earning up to \$A40 a week in Western A[US]'s Casuarina prison... [after being] sentenced on Monday to three years in prison on corporate fraud charges... [In related news, a]n Egyptian court has convicted a Sudanese man who swindled people out of hundreds of thousands of dollars by persuading them he had a genie which could multiply their money. In one case the swindler deprived a teacher of his entire \$US800,000... savings.

...London police report that [a 52-year-old] became a millionaire by swindling banks and financial institutions. Her crimes might never have been discovered if she hadn't attempted the biggest fraud in history – a sting involving her having "power of attorney" over gold worth more than \$37.5 trillion. Financiers became suspicious... The gold was three times the total amount mined worldwide in the past 150 year[s]. She's now in jail.

...THE [NZ]public can have confidence in the credibility and thoroughness of the Serious Fraud Office... says [its]newly appointed director[, who]... is responsible for a staff of 40 people and a budget of \$4.6 million... He says that as long as there are people, money and business there will be some who will try and take advantage of others...

A South Pacific police chiefs conference has been told islanders are increasingly being taken for a ride by white-collar criminals. [Chief]s from 16 police forces – including those of N[Z, AUS] and the U[S –] ...asked for greater cooperation between regional law enforcement agencies. - 1997

Some people could be forgiven for thinking that the phrase *white-collar criminals* refers to ministers from certain Christian churches! That might be correct in some instances, but it usually means economic crimes committed by management or businesspeople and *the Mob*.

Mafia... a secret organization, opposed to legal authority and engaged in crime, that originated in Sicily in the 13th c. and later spread to... America, at first among Italian immigrants... it became an integral part of the sophisticated and ruthless organized crime that developed... the[re]...

...secret society or brotherhood, originating in 18th-cent. Sicily. At first a resistance movement opposing foreign control, it evolved into a group featured by "omerta," or "conspiracy of silence." ...When foreign intervention ceased after 1860, the Mafia, reluctant to relinquish power, turned to criminal activities, such as robbery, extortion, and kidnapping. Sicilian immigrants brought the Mafia to the U.S. in the late 19th cent., and exerted extensive control over non-Mafia Italians. During Prohibition the Mafia extended activities to lucrative bootlegging. Organization into national "syndicates" occurred, with notorious leaders, such as "Lucky" Luciano and Al Capone... After [the Prohibition laws were repealed], the Mafia focused on international narcotics traffic... and even control of legitimate businesses. After W[W]II, Luciano's deportation to Italy... inadvertently furthered Mafia internationalization.

Global crime is very big business.

...with crime now a global industry whose annual turnover is of roughly a trillion dollars... and with more than a million convicts in US prisons, should we take seriously the old warning that a civilization plagued by just 1[%] criminality would return to Stone Age conditions? ...Imagine a poor peasant boy. Let us suppose he is offered the opportunity to become a member of the Mafia... If he refuses, he will live a life of almost unimaginable poverty... If he accepts, he will do evil things... but he will also live comfortably, have friends and women, and, perhaps, even enjoy a kind of respect and admiration.

Italy has granted witness-protection status – and a \$US250... monthly stipend – to a notorious Mafia boss who... claimed responsibility in a prison memoir last year for more than 100 killings. He admitted pushing the button on a bomb that killed revered anti-Mafia prosecutor Giovanni Falcone and four others in May 1992. The killings outraged Italy and fuelled a 1990s crackdown on the Mafia. "It's like they've killed Giovanni all over again," his sister... said yesterday... "The truth is his death was for nothing." The head of Italy's anti-Mafia commission... called a special meeting for tomorrow to hear the witness-protection committee's explanation for its decision... In the mid-1990s, [the]... Sicilian nicknamed The Slaughterer... ordered the son of a turncoat rival to be kidnapped when the man began cooperating with prosecutors against him. [When he] saw on the television news that he had been convicted in absentia, [the Sicilian] ordered the 11-year-old strangled and dissolved in acid... [He] is serving a 21-year sentence for murder... The committee's ruling means he will receive the stipend in exchange for testifying against former colleagues.

A court in southern Italy has handed down 89 life sentences and a total of 731 years' imprisonment on 98 members of the Calabrian Mafia. One defendant was given 18 life sentences for 18 killings.

...THE Milanese used to boast their prosperous, cultured city was free of organised crime while the poor backward south of Italy was infested by the Mafia. But these stereotypes no longer hold true... "Milan is perhaps the only Italian city where all the major criminal organisations from the south – Sicily's Cosa Nostra, Naples' Camorra, the Sacra Corona Unita from Puglia and the 'Ndrangheta from Calabria – have put down roots,"... Over the past five years, there have been about 2800 Mafia-related arrests in Milan and surrounding Lombardy – more than in Palermo, Sicily. Police and prosecutors have carried out 37 major anti-Mafia operations since 1990... But the crime families continue to invest in local business and the financial sector... The gradual drift northwards by southern mafiosi was unwittingly encouraged by the Italian state. For decades, it sent gangsters into internal exile in Mafia-free areas, typically to the north, hoping that, by separating them from their power bases, they would turn their backs on their criminal past. Instead, they took their families and associates and set up shop in "safe havens". There are optimists... who believe that investigators have dealt a blow to organised crime in the north... [because] financial crime is on the wane. But others are not so sure... [A]n Italian MP and former city police chief, says investigators' efforts are hampered by inadequate laws to fight money laundering and by little co-operation between police. ['□ Just about everyone in Boston these days has a theory about why a celebrated FBI agent sold his soul to a murderous Irish mob boss. Back in 1968, the aggressively ambitious G-man helped smash the New England branch of the Italian Mafia. With the local cops in their pockets and the politicians on their payroll, the Italians had been conducting business with an open, defiant arrogance that galled the feds to distraction.']

...The greying Mafia lacks heirs apparent after a 10-year US Government assault on the Mob's top echelon... And New York City's five Mafia families, traditionally the largest and most powerful in the U[S], approach the 21st century with shaky futures... [T]he new generation is unskilled, undisciplined, lacking loyalty, and in love with violence...

[US] STREET gangs are following in the footsteps of other organised crime groups in targeting businesses for everything from simple theft to drug sales and money laundering. There are no hard numbers on how many gang members are in the work force. Many... don't break the law... But a hungry economy desperate for workers is making it easier for gang members to infiltrate businesses... When gang members do commit crimes in the workplace, their employers often are reluctant to disclose embarrassing lapses of expensive security systems. But law enforcement officials say incidents of workplace theft and violence involving gangs are on the rise... BankAmerica Corp... has prosecuted several fraud cases involving part-time branch tellers tied to Los Angeles gangs.

...Japanese police raided giant electronics companies Mitsubishi Electric and Toshiba as the "sokaiya" scandal over paying hush money to gangsters widened. The raids followed the arrest of the heads of general affairs at both companies on Monday.

...Mitsubishi Motors is the seventh firm this year to see staff accused of making... illegal payoffs... and newspaper reports said electronics giant Hitachi made payments to the same racketeer involved with Mitsubishi, although it was not clear whether those payments were illegal.

...[THE] TOP executives of... Japan's third largest bank admitted it had been unable to cut off its ties to racketeers in a widening saga of dubious deals and illegal payoffs. The fresh revelations, including hints more were to come, put... [the bank] in the dock with the country's biggest brokerage, Nomura Securities. The... [bank's] president... said the bank had made \$[NZ]320 million in loans to... the younger brother of... the racketeer at the heart of the Nomura scandal.

...These days much of Japan appears enmeshed in... deceptions and frauds. The president and 15 directors of Nomura Securities... resigned on Wednesday to take responsibility for bribing an alleged gangster-extortionist... The act of contrition impressed few Japanese: They had seen it all before. Just six years ago Nomura was accused of lending money to a gangland boss and helping him ramp shares to make stock-market killings. At that time [the] Nomura chairman... and president... resigned and the company solemnly declared it would never again deal with the yakuza (gangsters). But clearly Nomura has not changed its ways... Nomura is not alone in being implicated with the Japanese mafia. Last month police arrested two executives at Ajinomoto, Japan's leading processed foods maker, for paying \$68,180 to six sokaiya (gangsters who threaten to disrupt shareholder meetings). Top beer producer Kirin Brewery and Ito Yokado, a leading supermarket chain, have also been charged with bribing gangsters. The reason more than 90% of all Japan's public companies hold their annual meetings on the same day (June 27 last year) is to try to elude extortionists. But companies are not always successful at escaping them. More than a score of attacks, some fatal, have been made in recent years on bank managers who tried to collect debts from the yakuza. The involvement of the yakuza in Japan's long-standing bank debt crisis has also been blamed for slowing attempts by banks and the government to resolve the problem. But the main blame lies with the tradition of secrecy [and] a refusal to admit problems exist.

...CHINESE triads have been around for centuries. They were started with good intent by warriors swearing in secret to uphold codes of honour and patriotism. Gradually they became organisations to protect such members who dabbled in political intrigue and corruption; finally, they devolved into today's ruthless crime syndicates with international operations... ['The underworld Chinese triads wield enormous influence in Hong Kong and expect to profit from virtually any sort of activity there.'] In 1994 the head of the Independent Commission Against Corruption in Hong Kong... identified 57 active triads in the territory with cells throughout the world, including Britain, A[US] and the U[S]. One of the largest is the 14K Triad, which is said to have established linkups in N[Z].

...The police have revealed that the powerful 14K triad has used standover tactics to recruit up to 700 Auckland teenage associates. The police Asian crime squad... – made up of police, customs, immigration, the Security Intelligence Service and the Serious Fraud Office – ...said the... gang was gaining ground on male and female students... in school yards, karaoke bars and noodle houses... [T]he gang targeted recruits for their wealth and vulnerability – often new immigrants who spoke little English, had no friends and might have arrived in N[Z] without parents... Thousands of secondary and tertiary students came to N[Z] each year to study without their parents. And parents who had emigrated and then returned to their home countries on business left hundreds of youths behind... To many... the gang offered friendship, protection and excitement. A membership fee of several thousand dollars was handed over or broken into payments using the sacred triad numbers of three and six... [A] refusal to join was followed by beatings and threats of violence until the student relented. [One detective] knew of Auckland parents who paid \$3600 to get the gang off their 13-year-old son's back... The police believed that all the growth was linked to one man, whom they would not name... [T]he man was believed to be the only person in N[Z] officially initiated into the 14K in Hong Kong, in an ancient ceremony which included drinking chicken blood and swearing a lifetime allegiance to 36 secret oaths. That person[is] known in 14K circles as the "dragon head,"... One Auckland Asian leader... a spokesman for the United Asian Association... said he could not believe 700 youngsters were associated with the gang... In the[Asian crime] squad's first restaurant extortion case, five youths – allegedly linked to the 14K – were on trial... each charged with demanding with menace...

Most Chinese restaurants and takeaway bars in east Auckland are paying protection money to triad gangsters, a crown prosecutor says... His... claim of extortion has been backed up by one of the restaurateurs... [who] said he would rather pay them than report their threats to the authorities because the police were "weak." ...[he] says the police seem to try hard to avoid brutality and civil rights abuses. "They are not as tough as their counterparts in China and Taiwan... so I prefer paying some money to buy peace." ...much offending often goes undetected because many Chinese are reluctant to talk to the police... [T]he gangs were smart and would soon find out who reported them, "then you'll have a real big problem." ...the 15 Howick restaurant and bar owners spoken to by the N[Z] Herald declined to say whether they paid protection money.

...A shortage of police officers in Auckland is pushing Asian students into the arms of a private protection agency, says the Labour Party...

Asian students in N[Z] are paying fees to former Hong Kong and N[Z] police officers for round-the-clock protection from triads... For \$58 a week, the service provides regular visits and 24-hour contact throughout the country. [In related news, 'a war between two bikie gangs which has cost hundreds of lives overseas could reach NZ. Napier's Outlaws motorcycle club has joined the American Outlaws association – enemies of Hell's Angels. The bikie gangs have been at war since 1974, after an Outlaw allegedly raped the wife of an Angel in New York. The blood feud became a fight for control of the North American drugs market. Napier's Outlaws affiliation with the American Outlaws association places them in direct confrontation with the Hell's Angels, who have a prospect chapter in the neighbouring town of Hastings. The Outlaws – whose motto is "God forgives, Outlaws don't" – were formed in 1959. The gang has 34 chapters in America and Canada, with about 900 members, and 11 chapters in AUS. The NZ chapter was formed in the 1970s and has about 12 patched members. The Hell's Angels was born in California in 1948. They have around 1500 members worldwide, in more than 120 chapters in 22 countries. There are about 30 patched members in Auckland and Wanganui, and 10 prospects in the Hastings chapter – formerly the Loners MC. The Hell's Angels and the Outlaws are part of the Big Four motorcycle clubs – with the Pagans and the Banditos. The Hell's Angels recently began steps to register insignias of their rivals – the Outlaws' skull and crossed pistols, and the Banditos' fat Mexican – as its own.']

...It was a cunning plot which could have taken gang turf battles into the 90s, but the Hell's Angels Motorcycle Club has abandoned plans to register the insignia of rival gangs as trademarks in its own name. Bikers caught wearing Outlaws or Banditos gang patches could have faced legal action unless they had permission to do so from the Hell's Angels Motorcycle Corporation of Oakland... [Incidentally, Local Government N[Z]... has produced *Local Government – Getting To Grips With Gangs* – the first report produced on gang-related problems. Sixty-six of the 74 territorial

authorities responded to the survey, 24 of which experienced gang-related problems, although some pointed out these were not necessarily worse than the problems created by other members of the public. Key issues included councils' ability to deal with intimidation generally, noise compliance problems, dog problems – including registration and the use of dogs for intimidation – fortification problems and crime... Community fear in Invercargill was widespread and because few threats were witnessed and many people were too afraid to complain, the council felt the present law was unenforceable and totally inadequate... [P]olice powers to remove... fortifications... should be introduced, the council believed... LGNZ's president... said... it was time for government action on the issue. "Local government cannot continue to pick up activities that are meant to be taxpayer-funded, using local resources and initiatives to solve problems they have no mandate to address."

...Police are concerned... [about the lack of] progress on legislation giving them new powers to deal with gangs. The Harassment and Criminal Associations Bill, including a package of measures extending police powers to prevent intimidation, search cars and order the removal of fortifications, was introduced... last August. It was referred to the justice and law reform select committee but... nothing further has happened...

Extra police powers aimed at controlling gangs could be turned on innocent citizens... The Auckland Council for Civil Liberties vice president... said proposed changes to the Harassment and Criminal Associations Bill were "clearly another attack by Government on basic civil liberties."

...Gang members are holding two central North Island townships to ransom... Many residents are so concerned for their safety they are reluctant to speak to the law when they are attacked or witness an assault... The police knew who was responsible for... violent offences and beatings in Kaingaroa and to a lesser extent Murupara... but they could not make an[y arrests] because those who were attacked would not make a complaint... Some residents had been intimidated to the point where they were forced to leave the area.

...Civic leaders are jubilant over the successful prosecution of a gang, in the Environmental Court, to close a fortified headquarters... Highway 61 members cannot use the house... without applying to the... Kapiti Coast District Council... for consent. The perimeter fence must also be lowered in height... Mayors across the North Island say use of resource management legislation... in Otaki is a landmark case. Although the decision may be subject to appeal to the High Court, some leaders are predicting a landslide of amendments to city and district annual plans to designate gang headquarters as places of assembly requiring resource consent... It was not just local authorities celebrating the Environment Court decision, the police and politicians were also hailing Kapiti's victory... However, the Mayor of Manukau... said the removal of gang fortifications was not a solution to... [gang] activities.

...Everyday we are confronted by images of violence and escalating criminal activity... The level of crime in N[Z] is among the highest in the Western world... Our violent crime rate... of 785 for every 100,000 people... exceeds A[US]'s rate of 723... and the U[S]' rate of 709... [Furthermore, NZ]'s crime rate... has increased at a faster rate than any other Western nation... Our high crime rate is attributable to many factors. However one reason stands out. We have the worst gang problem in the Western world. The N[Z] Police Association estimates that there are 5000 gang members and as many as 15,000 gang associates in N[Z]. This is far higher than any comparable country. In N[SW], with a population almost double N[Z]'s, gang members and associates are estimated at 1500. Gangs have a culture of violence and intimidation. Many of them are simply outlaws, having abandoned the slightest pretext of abiding by the laws of society. We are now seeing people who have killed more than once and yet their families remain supportive. What chance of a normal future do children raised in a gang environment possibly have? The harassment and criminal association bill now before Parliament's Justice and Law Reform Select Committee will provide a more effective way of dealing with gangs but is not a complete answer. We must break the cycle of violence perpetuated by the gangs.

...Seven bills passed by Parliament yesterday created a new range of offences aimed at curbing gang power and protecting the public from harassment and intimidation. The... Minister of Justice... said: "The time has come to send a loud message that society has had enough of gangs and their activities. It is simply unacceptable for small groups in society to harm or intimidate ordinary law-abiding citizens to such an extent that they feel unable to go about their day-to-day life."

...Gangs are here to stay... Gangs cannot be beaten, an Auckland police gang expert has warned. With their sophisticated set-ups gangs are likely to stay one step ahead of the police... "They view the police as another gang – a gang that's getting weaker all the time."

...Most N[Z] gangs are disorganised and guileless and much of their activity is incompetent, says a university lecturer. The high number of gang members in prison for rapes, serious assaults, robberies and murders was testimony to their bungling efforts to make a life out of crime... [T]he University of Canterbury senior sociology lecturer... who has just written a chapter on organised crime in N[Z] for an American book on international crime... said the Hell's Angels were one of the few exceptions of organised, sophisticated gangs. Asian gangs were becoming more visible but were unlikely to gain a foothold in N[Z], partly because corruption was unknown in the police force. "The fact that police will break the law to enforce the law, but will not take bribes, is often lamented within the country's criminal fraternity,"... The chances of syndicated criminal groups taking root in N[Z] were slim, but [the lecturer] said police estimated last year there were about 45 gangs, with roughly 5500 members. However, the Police Association... president... said... "[The lecturer] is making the same mistake as the police administration in saying the gangs are not well organised... [S]ome lower members of the gangs might be incompetent but gangs were turning over millions of dollars a year..."

...a[n ex-PM]... says his figures indicate gang turnover is... worth... more than the \$1.23 billion... annual budget for all law enforcement agencies.

...The Minister of Police and the police union are sharply divided about whether crime is ebbing or flowing... Yesterday both the minister... and the Police Association president... used crime statistics to back their cases... In the five years since 1992 reported crime had risen only 3.5[%], compared with 20[%] in the five years before 1992, [the minister said. He also] criticised the media, opposition politicians and some police for a message of doom about crime... [However, the Police Association president said r]eported crime has risen since 1994... [He also] said gangs and their associates outnumbered police, creating unchecked growth in organised crime... [N]ational figures showed one gang member, associate or prospect for every 250 N[Z]ers... In contrast we have one police officer for approximately every 552 people[(up from '1:1000 in 1960 and 1:700 in 1990')]. - 1997

This financial year 620 recruits are scheduled to go through the police college in Porirua – double the number that went through in each of the previous two years[– but the]... police would like to see more people applying to join the force... The... officer in charge of recruitment at Police National Headquarters in Wellington, said applicants wanting to work in Auckland were likely to be accepted almost straight away while people wanting to work in Wellington could expect to wait a couple of months.

...Fifty-nine jobs have been axed at police national headquarters... as part of a review aimed at saving up to \$10 million. [The]Deputy Commissioner... has confirmed the cuts but admitted the review saved about \$3 million less than police had hoped. The job cuts affect the highest level. The vacancy for second deputy commissioner is unlikely to be filled. After suffering a 6[%] budget cut this financial year, the department must now find ways of saving the extra \$3 million and a further \$15 million for staff pay rises negotiated recently. The Government is refusing to give extra money for the pay rise until it is satisfied there is no more fat in the system. Treasury officials have been called in to check police spending and identify further savings... [One of the] ways... police were still looking at... to cut costs further[involves] selling the police car fleet and leasing it back.

...Britain's Police Federation is unhappy at an expanding list of activities that police officers are now being made available for on hire... The work includes providing uniformed officers for private parties, or sending officers to guard property for a fee... beginning at around £35... an hour... But the... union for police officers, said the trend is moving into "dangerous territory." [The union's]Vice-chairman... said: "An officer joins the police

to serve the community, not someone who can afford to hire him.” ...the Police Federation could understand the move because of a lack of funding within police, but... [a]ll people had a right to policing... and already paid for it with their taxes. Police call the subcontracting “special service agreements,” and although the Treasury forbids the police from making a profit, senior officers admitted they often charged “over the odds” for commercial requests... Police are following the lead of their colleagues in the fire service, who are already competing with commercial companies for a range of activities. Firefighters in Lincolnshire are available to fill – or drain – swimming pools at an hourly rate of £108... [In local news, a 26%] rise in complaints about police in the past five months could partly stem from restructuring of the force, the Police Complaints Authority said yesterday... [T]he increased tendency for people to complain and the higher public profile of the authority were other reasons for the rise in complaints recently. The Police Association president... said the increased complaints were another sign of a force under strain from lack of numbers, the loss of experienced officers and a growing workload. More assaults on officers were another sign of the problem.

...The number of assaults on police is up by nearly 40[%] over the past five years. Police headquarters said yesterday that in the past year there had been 2067 assaults... The figure had risen by 802 since 1991... The figures proved people lacked respect for police...

A police officer who was found to have punched his girlfriend twice in the face then lied on oath in court in an unsuccessful attempt to avoid being found guilty of assault was yesterday fined \$750 in the Christchurch District Court... The jury was told that the couple had reconciled and... [the girlfriend], a police typist... wrote asking for the charges to be withdrawn[, but the]... Judge... said that even though it was “inevitable” that [the c]onstable... aged 36, would now lose his job, the seriousness of the assault... required an additional penalty... [In related news, detectives] investigating the alleged torture of a Palmerston North policeman by a masked intruder last night arrested the officer... [The officer] appeared in the city’s district court an hour after his arrest... on four counts of forgery, one of arson and one of false pretences... The false pretences charge alleges he falsely represented the attack to AMI Insurance and obtained a \$41,000 home contents payout... He was remanded on bail without plea... Further charges are expected to be laid this week. A major inquiry was launched after the 32-year-old detective was found outside his burnt house... in the early hours of October 18, covered in petrol, bound and with criss cross wounds on his back... Up to 50 police worked on the case and inquiries were made as far afield as Israel, but the investigation team had been scaled down to 12 in the last week. Police[had] considered the possibility of a contract killing, relating to [the offic]er’s duties with the fraud squad... [The officer] has been suspended from duty.

...Insurance investigators examining the burned out house of [a]Palmerston North detective... played a key role in events leading to his arrest for allegedly faking his brutal attack... [and setting his] house on fire. His wife... and their two daughters aged two and seven months, had left the house six weeks before after the first of three Satanically inspired letters threatening the detective with “fire and pain[” was]... sent to... the editor of the *Manawatu Evening Standard*... Friends said she was shocked and distressed after learning of her husband’s arrest from police. She and her family had been under police watch in another northern city since the attack... Friends said she now wanted to return... \$4100 in cash and about \$8000 in goods... donated directly to her in the wake of the fire which destroyed all their belongings... A further \$7000 raised by police in a separate appeal is [also]likely to be returned to donors... [The husband] faces several years in jail for the long trail of deception... He also faces reparation claims of... \$41,000 from AMI Insurance... and... \$350,000 from the police for their 37-day investigation... The end of the... investigation came at 5 pm on Saturday... [after the husband] had gone voluntarily to the Palmerston North station. A special sitting of the Palmerston North District Court was held at 6 pm when... [the husband] was given bail, which police did not oppose... The crown prosecutor... told the court that “the defendant decided to... separate from his wife... liquidate his assets... to give his family a good start after the separation... and effect a change of direction in his life.” ...[the husband’s] whereabouts were unknown yesterday... [An] insurance expert... is understood to have reconstructed the fire sequence and come up with conclusions at odds with [the husband]’s version of events... [The] Christchurch-based investigator... a former N[SW] police officer, declined to comment yesterday.

...A former N[SW] police officer yesterday told the... Royal Commission he repeatedly stole money recovered from armed robberies and drug searches so he could “fit in” with police culture. The witness, codenamed GUD12, was a detective with the Central Coast Special Operations Group before his resignation in February and is the 12th Gosford police officer to “roll over” to the commission[, which is looking into]... corrupt activity... in the N[SW] police service.

...*Cops and scandals go back a long way*... OUTBACK police who took bribes from... bookmakers were said to have contributed to Queensland Labor premier Vince Gair’s election slush fund in the 1950s and, in 1963, a Labor MP... accused [Queensland’s]Police Commissioner... of barnstorming country areas in support of... [the then] Country-Liberal government. [The Country-Liberal Premier kept the commissioner] on despite being provided with conclusive proof of his corruption... [F]earful of another scandal[, Queensland’s]... police minister from 1969... appointed [someone else] as commissioner and gave him a brief to clean up the force.

...*Cleaning up the bad cops*... When... [a deputy inspector]’s rear indicator was cracked one night at a traffic light, his reaction was to fire four shots into the windscreen of the car behind, whose seven occupants included a four-day-old baby and a toddler. Once, such behaviour would have gone unpunished in the Argentine police... [Indeed, the] family escaped unhurt but did not want to press charges for fear of reprisals from a force whose reputation for rough justice and corruption has improved little since the “dirty war” of the late 1970s. [However, the deputy i]nspector... is now facing criminal charges and the Interior Minister... has promised “severe punishment” for him and “a steady hand to eradicate from the police all elements that bring it into disrepute.” It has taken the deaths of at least six unarmed people this year, many more injuries, rapes and beatings in police stations – as well as the sight of policemen shooting demonstrators at point-blank range with rubber bullets in La Plats – for Argentina to address the issue of why, 13 years after democracy returned, the police are lagging behind even the military in adapting to change. Most cases happened in Buenos Aires and involved teenagers out drinking late. But Mr Roberto Roldan was shot dead by police while rushing his baby to hospital... and... a... heavily pregnant[citizen] could lose her child after a beating in a police station... Lately, the National Security Council has unveiled measures to try to curb police behaviour. These include a requirement that future officers have completed high school, take psychological tests every year and receive better training and pay. Pay now starts at \$NZ640 a month, obliging many officers to moonlight as security guards – making them even more itchy on the trigger. Privately, officials acknowledge that officers who learned their trade under the six-year military regime that began 20 years ago and under which up to 30,000 people “disappeared” have not all been rooted out and their methods still prevail. The independent Centre for Legal and Social Studies says cases of police killing unarmed civilians rose 57[%] in the capital last year, to 195... Most cases involve off-duty officers – such as the one who shot... his neighbour because her music was too loud... [T]he state prosecutor in the trials of the military junta leaders in the mid-1980s, says the police must learn that “security depends on a climate of not using weapons, since policemen who kill cannot integrate into society.” The Buenos Aires police chief... says the “excesses” happen because “society’s garbagemen sometimes get dirty with the garbage.” He worries, instead, about “the risk of tiring or worrying officers with precautions that could cost them their lives.” ...The number of police killed rose[last year] to 29, from 19 the previous year.

...*New 111 system giving good vibes* An elderly Hamilton woman is woken by screams coming from her neighbour’s house. She reaches for the phone and dials 111. A \$10 million computer system means her call, and follow-up police action, will all be co-ordinated hundreds of kilometres away in Wellington... A three-week trial of... [t]he new system, named Card (Communication and Resource Deployment)... began at the end of last month in the Hamilton and Te Awamutu districts... By next year the network will... provide a nationwide link for police emergency calls. Control rooms in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch will replace the manual system many police systems use, as well as the present computer systems in the main three centres... [A] Superintendent... said the beauty of Card is its speed and wealth of information.

...former policewomen say sexual harassment by male colleagues was a reason for their leaving the police force... said the Wanganui police district commander[, who]... has completed a research paper on the experiences of N[Z] policewomen. He]... surveyed all policewomen who left from 1987 to 1992. About 20[%] mentioned sexual harassment as a reason for their quitting... Although some successfully complained, policewomen were generally unwilling to do so... There was a deep distrust whether the system at the time would help them with their complaint or punish the offender... Training began last month for N[Z]'s first police sexual harassment mediators.

...The police are worried about a sharp jump in the number of suicides in the force – and say more needs to be done to identify and help officers at risk. Five officers killed themselves in the 18 months to April, says an internal police report released yesterday. There were eight police suicides in the previous nine years... Although the police suicide rate matched the general population, it was higher than in police forces in such places as Canada and Britain, and this was a concern... The release of the report follows research by the Police Association which says there is a major stress problem among officers caused by attending murders, fires, vehicle crashes and suicides... [However,] a police psychologist... dismissed suggestions that police work was directly to blame for the deaths – but [the psychologist] recommends changes at recruitment level to recognise potentially suicidal staff. - 1996

The Police Association wants stress management to become a compulsory part of police training so fewer officers end up quitting or committing suicide... Police officers were leaving the force at a greater rate than ever, with an average of 38 resignations a month last year, the Police Association advocate... said yesterday... [I]n 1995, 404 resigned... A STAGGERING 2100 years of policing experience has been lost to the force already this year... Only half of N[Z]'s 6492 sworn police officers have 10 or more years' experience... Police chiefs say stemming the flow of experienced officers from the force will be difficult... "At the end of the day they would like to stay but they feel they can't continue. Staff are just not happy about the future. They don't like what is happening to the job or how they are being treated..." The association briefed the Minister of Police... on the problem last week and urged him to take immediate action... "This is not planned attrition and is a graphic reflection of the stress on individual officers and the inability of the police to address the causes," the brief said. "As well as the human toll, the cost of disengagement and training replacement staff is a significant drain on the organisation."

...Last October, a recruit training wing of 60 was cancelled because of a lack of applicants. "We desperately need... new staff to replace those who are leaving," says the Police Association president, "but how]... will we get [more police] if we can't attract recruits?" ...[Incidentally, t]he number of [Auckland police]officers had dropped since 1994 from 700 to about 650, despite Auckland City's population increasing [by]40,000...

New police recruits are being bound to Auckland posts for two years and English bobbies are being urgently sought as the region's police battle against a chronic staffing shortage... [F]igures released from police headquarters showed the Auckland region would be 266 officers short in about 14 months... Auckland currently needed 60 officers and was losing one staff member a day.

...BRITISH police are clamouring to bolster the Auckland force... The Auckland recruitment section is sifting through more than 60 applications... despite... [police] chiefs... being luke-warm on the idea. [The]Assistant Commissioner... said immigration criteria and training equivalency made it difficult to recruit overseas... Overseas applicants also had to pass an entrance test, physical examinations and psychological assessments[, and]... a stumbling block with English officers... could be... [their] requiring permanent residency status before working here... The priority was to hire from within N[Z], a view shared by the Police Association... N[Z] constables are paid... \$1500 less than a British bobby and \$41,000 less than their American counterparts.

...A buoyant job market in Auckland is one of the reasons the police have difficulties attracting recruits... The police say they are not about to lower standards... although physical requirements have been relaxed to meet gender and racial differences... It's now as much a matter of strength and fitness as centimetres... The selection process takes about five weeks... After that there's a five-month training course. A trainee is paid \$27,180 a year and on graduating receives \$37,800 a year['including penal rates']. A sergeant's pay ranges from \$49,588 to \$56,300; senior sergeants get \$53,300 to \$61,286, and inspectors' pay starts at \$65,000, rising to \$80,200...

Frontline police could be in for a significant pay rise under proposals to pay them for the job they do rather than the rank they hold... so their wages better reflected their work and kept up with other comparable professions... [Meanwhile, NZ p]olice chiefs are alarmed at Queensland moves to lure N[Z] police officers to shore up its forces. The Queensland Police Service wants to... boost its establishment from 6544 to 9100 within eight years to become the "best police force in A[US]." Several NZ]... police have already been employed after approaching Queensland police directly... Although unaware that N[Z] police had its own recruitment drive, that would not stop Queensland police from advertising here... [the] Queensland Police Service recruitment officer... said. A N[Z] police officer with five years' experience would start in A[US] on about \$A40,000 (\$[NZ]46,200).

...Police paid out to retire early because they are too ill or psychologically unfit to work have applied to fight crime across the Tasman. Queensland police confirmed yesterday that several former police who had "perfed" were among those keen to work in the Sunshine State. Their desire to re-enter the police, after being paid thousands of dollars to leave, comes as the controversial superannuation scheme is being reviewed... The... head of the Queensland police recruitment office, said Queensland wanted only the best officers and would not exclude those who perfed more than two years ago.

...A police officer who left the force [two months ago] with up to \$250,000 under a police rehabilitation scheme is the new... chief executive... of the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs... The... scheme... allows officers... a payout of roughly \$10,000 for every year of service. The Government contributes \$2 for every \$1 paid into the fund by officers, who must contribute 7.5[%] of their pay. The scheme has been under review because of concerns about the record number of police officers leaving on medical and psychological grounds... [In related news,] Queensland police say they have ruled out recruiting N[Z] officers who have left the force for medical or mental health reasons.

...Up to 4000 police may be able to "perf" without actually having to leave the force as a way of stemming the tide of officers retiring early... The new deal would allow... officers who still belong to the old superannuation scheme... to transfer to a newer fund... and access their "perf" money straight away... [Incidentally, t]he Police Association confirmed yesterday that at least two police recruits with criminal convictions – and possibly up to five – got into the Royal [NZ] Police College recently and should not have on present policy. Earlier this year, police relaxed their recruitment standards to accept people with drink-driving convictions more than five years previously. Anyone with criminal convictions punishable by imprisonment is officially banned. The police head of human resources... said the force still preferred conviction-free recruits. He would not comment on the recent recruitment slip-up... However, applicants with less serious convictions were considered on a case-by-case basis. "We can risk losing some very good talent otherwise,"... The... Police Association... president... said: "The issue is bigger than the individual. We are talking about the reputation and integrity of the police here... There are plenty of people out there without convictions who would join if the pay was better." ...Police rules on accepting recruits with criminal convictions were vague and needed clarification, the police chief in charge of recruitment said last night.

...There was a time when having a criminal conviction, no matter how minor, was an absolute "no-no" for anyone wanting to join the N[Z] police. One man... says his dreams of becoming a police officer in the early 1970s were dashed because of a joyride in a bus with a group of mates when he was 15. Now there are claims that standards have slipped, and the force, desperate to make up staffing numbers, is sometimes willing to turn a blind eye to an applicant's previous dealings with the long arm of the law.

...An Auckland police constable convicted earlier this year of assaulting a woman had been prosecuted for assaulting a police officer before entering the force. Front-line police officers and the Police Association have expressed amazement that the man was ever allowed in... Red-faced police chiefs ordered an urgent investigation... The Auckland district police commander... said it was disappointing when a police officer appeared before the courts. "Unfortunately we have one or two every year that get prosecuted..."

...A Bay of Islands police officer has been arrested and charged with assaulting his partner... [A] Whangarei... Senior Sergeant... confirmed yesterday that the officer had been suspended on full pay pending the outcome of the court appearance and possible trial on the charge... The man is the second police officer known to have been suspended in Northland in the past six months. A Whangarei officer... [who] allegedly went to the house of a woman driver whom he had pulled over during a routine stop... is facing a hearing on three disciplinary charges... That officer is also on full pay pending the outcome of the disciplinary hearing.

...N[Z]'s deputy police chief is staggered by the actions of some of his staff and has given warning that the strong arm of the law will come down heavily on officers who stray. [The]Deputy Commissioner... said yesterday that he and other police executives were beginning to feel besieged by the number of unsavoury incidents involving police officers. "It's unbelievable the lack of judgment shown by staff at times,"... [The Deputy Commissioner] made the comments after revelations that an officer ran up a huge bill ringing sex lines from a police station... The matter came to light late last year when telephone accounts came in. The officer paid for the calls but police have launched an investigation into the matter... [The Deputy Commissioner] would not reveal the rank of the officer who made the sex calls, but said he had been in the police long enough to know better... The president of the Police Association... said he was "extremely concerned" by a surge in the number of criminal cases involving police officers. In 1996, 35 officers appeared in court, compared with 13 in 1992.

...Wanganui's head detective is the officer under investigation for allegedly making nearly \$1000 of toll calls on police phones, the police have confirmed... The police have [also]confirmed that... the phone calls in question were not made to A[US]n sex lines but to a dating agency in N[Z]. The Detective Senior Sergeant... was on leave yesterday and could not be contacted... The incident follows the arrest on 20 fraud charges of the Wanganui district commander... [In international news, v]ideo evidence is... bringing police under scrutiny in Brazil... [A]mateur footage led to the arrest of 4 policemen. It shows them repeatedly beating motorists stopped at a road-block... [The p]olice also fired shots at cars and motorists. One man was killed, another was injured.

...By the time the shooting stopped, three robbers lay dead, an innocent bystander was wounded and the reputation of the Los Angeles Police Department had suffered another black eye. The wild shootout on Tuesday night local time sent bullets whizzing through nearby homes... Still reeling from [the 'awarding of \$US23 million to a group of 35 mainly Samoan American people for suffering police brutality (on February 11, 1989, dozens of deputies armed with flashlights and batons stormed a house in the Los Angeles suburb of Cerritos, where a bridal party was being held - video footage shot by a neighbour showed police repeatedly striking guests, some as they lay on the ground; the most seriously hurt suffered brain damage from baton blows to the head'),] bad publicity over the videotaped beating of a black motorist in 1991, its handling of the 1992 riots and alleged misconduct in [a well-publicised] murder investigation, the LAPD now is being investigated by the FBI. The target of the probe is the Special Investigations Section, a 32-year-old unit which specialises in shadowing career criminals but is accused of shooting first and asking questions later... The day after the [latest]shooting, the man shot in error sued the city, alleging he was shot from behind. His lawyer... who has in the past filed federal lawsuits against the police, characterised the S[ection] as "a death squad. They run around chasing people... They wait for them to commit crimes, then they say 'they went for a gun' - something like that. And they shoot them and kill them,"... It was only a matter of time before they shot an innocent person. "And that's what they did here. They shoot at everyone in sight. They don't care who they hit." A former police chief... defended the S[ection]... He acknowledged the group allowed crimes to happen before making arrests, but said officers were powerless to do anything before a crime was committed... In October 1992, a commission... concluded that the city was woefully prepared for riots... and singled out [the then police chief for blame. The police chief] retired under pressure... But [his replacement has also] come under fire for a lack of control. [The replacement] is now threatening to sue the city if he does not receive a second term and his lawyers propose a deal worth \$US3 million to withdraw their threat of a long legal battle. [Incidentally, 'police corruption in New Orleans was so bad during the early 1990s that tourists were staying away.'

...AUS]'s last surviving police special branch was disbanded yesterday following allegations of improper activity at a police corruption inquiry.

...[NZ] police chiefs want to encourage rank-and-file officers to dob in their colleagues to keep the force corruption-free... For this reason... [a] Wellington sergeant who reported a constable for punching a prisoner has been backed by police leaders determined to uphold the force's reputation... [C]hiefs acknowledge it can be difficult for police to blow the whistle on a member of their team as this can bring the whole force into disrepute... In an earlier whistle-blowing case, Christchurch police launched an undercover drug operation after they suspected a colleague was a drug dealer... [He] was caught three times... [before being] convicted of drug supply and theft...

Police chiefs have bowed to pressure and tightened the recruitment rules to stop people with drink-driving convictions from joining the force... The changes, backed by the Police Association, come less than a year after the police hierarchy relaxed the rules... [regarding] people convicted of drink-driving more than five years before... At the time, police chiefs said talented officers should not be banned for a "lesser offence." But anti drink-driving campaigners said it suggested that police did not view drink-driving as a serious threat to road safety... After a four-month police review, applicants with convictions for assault, dishonesty, drugs, sexual offences and other serious traffic offences will also no longer be accepted... [In related news, the] Police Commissioner... admitted last night that he was concerned urgent work was not being done because of staff shortages. Prompted by... claims that shortages meant criminals were walking free, [he] said he was talking to the Government to increase staff numbers.

...If you were the victim of a swindler or a thief last year, chances are he's still on the run with your loot... [A]lthough nearly all of the homicide cases had resulted in arrests, police resources had been stretched and diverted away from other crimes, such as dishonesty... Crimebusters caught less than one in four people carrying out dishonesty offences in the year to December 31... Burglars did best in the battle with the boys and girls in blue, with police solving only 15[%] of the... break-ins reported... [c]learance rates... on the North Shore... are... about 7[%], which one sergeant called)... an "embarrassingly low clearance rate. If we were a private enterprise we would have been out of business years ago." ...But police chiefs believe the thin blue line is holding its own, and blame the mushrooming population and staff shortages for the trend... While bank robberies were on the decline, there had been a resurgence in robberies of corner dairies, superettes and service stations. Sex offences had risen 7.9[%], but the police believed much of this was a result of increased public awareness and reporting... The rate of clearance for violent crimes was... 77.7[%]... The overall clearance rate was 38.3[% in Auckland], compared with the national rate of 42[% (a rate which has remained fairly constant since 1985 - 'the rate was mostly between 50% to 60% during the period from 1965 to 1980; between 1880 and 1940 the clearance rate was mostly over 90%')].... Alarmingly, this police record of less successful prosecutions is coming at an increasing cost... In inflation-adjusted terms the cost of police has risen 31[%] over the past 10 years, while the number of successful prosecutions by only 5[%].

...The Opposition police spokesman... said... yesterday... that the Government needed to pour more money into the force. "The lack of resourcing is an open invitation to the crims." ...[his comments came after the] Police Commissioner... had... revealed that there were 250 fewer police on the beat than three years ago because of restricted Government funding.

...The Auckland region has been promised 260 new police officers over the next 18 months - almost a third more than it hoped for - to help to fight crime... The region's top police chief pleaded for extra front-line police to help tackle a staffing shortage when he met the commissioner... in

Auckland yesterday. They also agreed on ways to cut the region's budget by \$3 million in the next three months... However, the Police Association says the Auckland region needs 200 officers immediately.

...TREASURY has suggested the police training college... [- which is] used for recruit and management training, is worth more than \$40 million and costs \$18 million a year to run, with 38% of the operating costs going to depreciation and capital charge expenses... [-] could be closed as part of sweeping cuts to the force's budget. The *Sunday Star-Times* has obtained a copy of a draft report which was prepared by Treasury, the State Services Commission and police officials at the request of Cabinet after police said they could not meet the \$15 million cost of the 1996 wage settlement from the existing budget. The proposals, which have not yet gone back to Cabinet, [and]would shave \$15 million from police costs in each of the next two years, rising to \$47 million a year by the year 2000... include: • Cutting salaries, overtime, sick pay, annual leave and allowances. • Reviewing police superannuation, life insurance and the... PERF... scheme... • Renting property instead of owning it... • Selling police vehicles and houses.

...A... proposal to sell 270 police vehicles could see some officers catching taxis in the line of duty. A recent... survey found that the department could save more than \$3.1 million a year by reducing its 2700-vehicle fleet 10[%]. The Treasury report said the merger of the police and Traffic Safety in 1992 had not achieved the "economies of scale" expected in the vehicle fleet. According to police figures, the total annual cost of each motor vehicle was \$11,777 including depreciation, running expenses, accident repairs and maintenance. The Police Association Auckland regional director... said yesterday that the association was comfortable about the shedding of vehicles "if they are not being sufficiently used." ...staff who worked in areas such as prosecutions could use taxis on the job rather than departmental cars. "It's not much use having police cars parked outside court for eight hours a day."

...The Treasury's heavily criticised report on the police contains a suggestion that they own too many weapons. Police officers say the suggestion is one example of how the report's authors are out of touch with the operational realities of the force... Police officers yesterday pored over the leaked Treasury document, which... also doubted the viability of the force's radio network, saying cellphones covered as much of the population as radios... One police officer said: "What is supposed to happen when your partner goes to the back door and you're at the front door of a house you're waiting to go into? Do you give them a ring on the phone if something comes up?" ...the Police Association president... said that, if anything, the communications network needed updating, not scrapping... Another sore point was the recommendation to cut... 13 allowances paid to officers who performed special duties, such as armed offenders squad members.

...Police throughout N[Z] have reacted to proposed cuts to the police force with an anger not seen before, and have flooded their national computer system with hard-hitting messages to their bosses... Te Awamutu police district staff got the ball rolling by sending out a "switch message" on the computer addressed to [the]Commissioner... and all other staff[that] said police officers' loyalty had been undermined "as decision after decision is made against our favour, affecting every aspect of our ability to do our chosen job. Never has our morale been so low and our distrust of the administration been so high. We are sick and tired of hearing that there is no money and commissioned officers telling us and the public... there is no problem. The problem is real and the public are becoming dissatisfied with us and most of us are dissatisfied with the job."

...Treasury officials face a show-down with the Commissioner of Police over proposals to slash up to \$47 million a year from the... police delivery of services budget... [which, in] 1996-1997... is \$771.4 million, compared with \$777.5 million for 1995-1996... The Commissioner... said he was putting a strong case to the Government to ensure his staff had sufficient resources despite the Treasury report... He stressed that no decisions had been made on the paper and that the police were negotiating with the Government and Treasury over future funding levels.

...A police department already under siege has been ordered to slash costs by up to \$3 million within three months, sparking fears that some police stations will be closed and important crime-fighting tools will be axed by bean-counters. [The]Deputy Commissioner... confirmed last night that police regions had been told to cut "discretionary spending" to meet their budgets by June. He said the Government had agreed to only part-fund the \$15 million wage bill and the rest had to come from police coffers.

...a Treasury proposal to slash police costs by at least \$47 million... [that was] leaked to the media... four weeks ago... [has revealed] a police force... on the edge of anarchy... Hamilton police summed up the mood in saying that staff had "had a gutsful. We have had enough of being on the end of public dissatisfaction and trying to explain the lack of police response... of trying to explain to our families why we are being shagged around to cover lack of staff... of trying to explain to our kids why we come home unhappy,"... The background to their anger stretches back seven years, to March 30, 1990. For the first time, police took to the streets in a public protest, more than a thousand marching on Parliament in anger at planned changes by the Labour Government to the police superannuation fund. Morale was said to be at an all-time low... Then, as now, there were promises of more police... [I]n 1990, police got... [a] new minister - and [he] was determined to deliver. Police numbers were boosted by 900, and another 1100 odd staff joined the force following the police-Ministry of Transport merger. They were halcyon days - reported crime fell for the first time in 30 years and police appeared to be happy. But the euphoria was short lived. Police were asked to absorb costs such as rising... inflation and staff pay rises while simultaneously being asked to take a budget cut along with other Government departments... Staff numbers fell as police who left weren't always replaced and training courses were either deferred or axed, crime programmes allowed to lapse and education and prevention programmes put on hold. It was a vicious cycle: as people left, others were left to take the brunt and there was growing pressure on the front line. Senior, experienced staff decided they had had enough and left for other jobs. Reported crime again registered an increase... As the numbers leaving soared, a massive recruiting campaign was embarked on, and 600 extra police were trained over 12 months. The numbers leaving the force were so high, however, that the 600 extra recruits would... barely bring police up to required strength... Police administrators, meanwhile, were grappling with the future. Survival depended on them cutting costs and making savings because it was clear budget constraint would continue. Yet that would be a difficult task in an industry still hugely labour intensive. A massive investment in [computer]technology was seen as the answer and police bosses did a deal with the Government - in return for around \$100 million to spend on new technology, police numbers would drop by 540 over four years. Administrators were confident the drop in numbers would have no effect on front-line service. The new technology would free staff from paperwork, which accounted for a huge part of their working day, they maintained. The figure of 540 jobs was based on calculations showing productivity would be boosted by the equivalent amount as a result of introducing the new computers. Bosses also maintained that the jobs scheduled to disappear were from "administration"[, and] that the aim of the new technology was to free up more staff for the front line. But that's easier said than done when relying on attrition to make the promised job cuts. Staff leaving were those feeling the greatest pressure - many of them from the front line. Staff in administrative jobs were, in many cases, ill prepared for a return to the front line to replace those who had left... There's no doubt the decision to leave was made easier for many by the provisions of the Police Employment and Rehabilitation Fund... which allows lump sum payouts to those forced to leave for medical or psychological reasons. The[perfering] scheme pays out up to \$250,000 for someone with 20 years' service... The force was rocked by five suicides within 18 months - nearly all rookie constables... It is a fact... that many crimes go uninvestigated because of staff shortages but lack of staff is not the only problem facing the force. There is a desperate shortage of money for day-to-day police work and replacement equipment... Police had been told by the Government to come up with at least \$3 million to help cover staff pay rises by June - the rest would be provided by the Government - and there was a clampdown ordered on spending... There was controversy... [when] police cut... back on aerial spotting of cannabis plantations, while in Wellington there were reports police officers had been told money was so tight a restriction had been placed on the number of uniform shirts allocated to officers... Talk of industrial action concerned the Police Association so much that it felt compelled to issue a warning to staff of the consequences of strike action, which is illegal for

police. It has also advised against other threatened action, including calls for police to stop issuing fines. But [the advocate] says feelings are running high and it won't take long for the anger to boil over... Morale was plummeting[again], the Police Association said.

...police are talking about industrial action after their bosses failed to deliver on a promise of a pay offer... [and] postponed negotiations until mid-January [next year]... Officers have become increasingly frustrated as talks between the Police Association and the administration have dragged on for seven months. Their contract expired [four months ago]. The Hamilton representative for the association... said the delay was the final straw for officers already demoralised by insufficient resources... [H]e had formulated some protest actions that would not affect the public. The association head... said the union would not rule out industrial action if members called for it. Unprecedented demands and pressures had been placed on police staff this year, he said.

...The Police Commissioner... admitted last night that morale among his staff had tumbled in the past 18 months, but scotched suggestions that staff were ready to strike. "I've touched base with a lot of my district commanders in the last few days... [T]hey don't have any concern about strike action." ...[the commissioner] said "one or two people" had suggested that police use sick-day provisions to get around their being barred from striking, "but I've taken a firm view against this." ...[Incidentally,] Hawkes Bay frontline police are owed a total of 10,260 days in accrued leave – an average of 44 days each...

A [Labour] MP wants a ministerial investigation into "crisis" police staffing levels... after being refused police assistance when he spotted a carload of drunk teenagers driving recklessly... [along] State highway 10 about 8km south of Kaeo... The MP rang the Kaeo police station and was diverted to Whangarei. He was told there were no officers on duty at Kaeo or Kerikeri, and no other available police. The nearest were in Whangarei. [The MP] said he was "totally disgusted" at the response of the police, who also had admitted they might not have the numbers to respond to an accident at Kaeo. "That's not good enough – what if there had been a major fatality? ...God help the rural areas." The *N[Z] Herald* understands that one police officer based at Kaikohe was also covering Kaeo and Kerikeri... [When contacted by the paper, t]he Northland rural area police controller... said: "I'm not going to debate issues with a politician in the media. [The politician] should have had the courtesy to raise the matter with the district commander."

...The Auckland regional police chief... will plead urgently for extra frontline staff as police brace themselves to work harder on slashed budgets. His boss in Wellington... confirmed yesterday that police needed to cut costs by \$3 million by the end of June. Auckland was asked to trim about \$500,000 from its budget... [Meanwhile, t]he organiser of a nationwide petition to put pressure on the Government to increase police numbers... nationally... by 500 to a minimum of 7260 officers by October 1999... says the response has been "brilliant."

...The Government has said it cannot guarantee *N[Z]* will get 500 new frontline police... [but the Police] Commissioner... said between 30 and 40 staff would be added to the Auckland ranks by the end of the year. The figure is well short of the 200 officers the Police Association believes the region needs.

...ASHBURTON has a growing crime problem. It also has a growing police problem. There is only one patrol car on duty early each morning in the small mid-Canterbury town [which, at the time of the '1996 census, had a population of 25177']. If a person is arrested and has to be held in custody overnight, police can't hold the prisoner at the Ashburton police cells because they may be called to another job, leaving the station unstaffed. So a 30-minute drive north is required to rendezvous and transfer the prisoner to a Christchurch patrol so the prisoner can be held in custody in that city, 85km away. But if all the Christchurch patrols are busy, the Ashburton car has to make the journey itself, leaving the town without a police presence for up to 90 minutes. This is just one example of staffing problems throughout *N[Z]*... In Christchurch, one of the effects of the police staffing... crisis means that while most crimes are still investigated, vandalism, thefts from cars, some fraud and other minor offences are not pursued if there are no leads... In recent times, staff shortages have meant only one police officer has been on patrol in some areas... In Dunedin, police are no longer investigating large numbers of fraud cases unless there is an obvious line of inquiry. Officers say criminals are aware of that and are having a "field day" with forged cheques in the city. The fraud squad there was disbanded last November... In Greymouth, which is the only West Coast station open 24 hours, the vast region stretches resources to the limit. But [the] Senior Sergeant... refused to say how many police were on duty. "The thin blue line is thin enough now without telling criminals what we've got," he said... In the North Island, police are [also] having to prioritise... Property crimes – including burglary, car thefts and fraud – are taking a back seat... The problem was particularly serious in Auckland... Staff on Saturday shifts in[the southern suburbs of] Papakura and Manurewa have recently been halved in number... despite earlier requirements for all patrol cars to be staffed by two people... A Manurewa officer working alone was recently assaulted while on traffic patrol – probably as a result of the change.

...Anyone who came home bruised from work two days in a row might be forgiven for deciding to look for another job. But... [a] detective with the Takapuna police... reckons he would be a fool to expect anything else... [The d]etective... was moving a little gingerly at work yesterday. He came in for only three hours, in fact, to attend to a few things. Nobody would have blamed him if he hadn't made it in at all. He had some cuts to his righthand fingers and a knee that was only just starting to move freely after a nasty knock on Friday night... [from tumbling down a] 5m bank into the... waters of the harbour... He plays down the... incident[, which occurred when]... a young man he had caught with some dope at Birkenhead wharf... decided that consigning the evidence to the... water... might assist his defence... Then there was Saturday: a black eye, a sore jaw and a cut forehead after what he casually calls a "tete a tete" behind the Browns Bay shops ended up with [the d]etective... on the ground, warding off kicks from a pair of late-night assailants... But the detective doesn't seem too upset about it, describing the trouble as "an unusual run of events... But you'd have to be pretty ignorant to think you're never going to get assaulted in the police."

...Reported assaults on frontline police dropped 7[%] in the past year. Statistics show 1911 officers were attacked in the year... Ninety-seven assaults involved weapons... [Incidentally, t]he South Waikato Victim Support group has dissolved in crisis. The district has been without victim support services for 10 weeks[because i]ts executive committee decided the service could not fulfil its obligations. Former volunteers estimate that more than 500 people have missed out on professional help since they were told to stop providing support. It is expected to be at least three months before the service begins again.

...It is not every day that the entire police force finds out what it feels like to be the victim of a crime – and it hurts, especially when the crime is discovered by a mere civilian. When the police national headquarters in Wellington was burgled at the weekend, a worker in an adjoining office made the discovery and phoned the police. Headquarters staff knew nothing until they arrived at work on Monday to find cupboards had been flung open. The offenders stole a few dollars in petty cash and worked over six police floors. The Opposition police spokesman... yesterday called the security "clearly inadequate" but [the] Assistant Commissioner... said the police were not embarrassed – just annoyed... All confidential material was under lock and key and was not touched... However, police had been reviewing the building security and that would continue... But there were obviously more important things on the minds of the city's detectives than the headquarters break-in. When the *N[Z] Herald* called, no one knew whether any arrests had been made.

...A four-week blitz on burglaries in Auckland suburbs has led to 81 arrests and the recovery of stolen property valued at \$90,000... The operation had been so successful that... police... had doubled the number of staff on burglary squads to keep the pressure on burglars. Before the blitz about 400 burglaries a month were reported, but that had dropped to 200... [In related news, a] Massey University Statistics Research and Consulting Centre... [survey found that 90%] of vehicle-taking offences... 75[%] of burglaries, 25[%] of damage offences and 33[% of assaults are]...

reported to police[, or 40% of all]... offences... Survey respondents said they did not report offences because the offence was too trivial, police could have done nothing, or they had dealt with it themselves.

...New York-style police tactics are to be used on the streets of Auckland. Swamped by house burglaries and disorderly youths, officers on the North Shore are ready to begin the tough new strategy... [which] involves tackling “minor” crimes hard and using police intelligence specialists to identify repeat offenders... The American city – once labelled murder capital of the world – has seen crime rates plunge since the “Broken Windows” regime began three years ago... The North Shore police area controller... studied the New York model during a recent conference of top police in A[US]. The relevant points had been picked out because of the obvious differences between New York and the North Shore.[The] Detective Senior Sergeant... who was put in charge of coming up with the local version, said the public would see a more pro-active force... Frontline staff... would be encouraged to... take tougher action against taggers, thieves and unruly groups in the streets... Last year... more than 13... burglaries... were reported on the North Shore... [each] day... New York has one officer to every 250 citizens compared with one to every 1050 people on the North Shore...

Figures... show N[Z] has one police officer for every 564 people compared with 523 for Canada, 453 for A[US], 438 for Britain and 394 for the U[S] (although, according to the ‘Number of Full-Time Sworn Police Officers in State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies: 1992, West Virginia had one officer for every 714 people while the District of Columbia had one for every 112 people’).

...N[Z] could be “short-changed” over police numbers, a former New York police leader said yesterday... N[Z] had a comparable population to his native Ireland, where he had recently been acting as a consultant on crime fighting. Ireland had 10,500 police, and 1500 more were promised. At the end of June there were 6492 police staff in N[Z] with a target of 6692 by next June... [(The NZ police force also has ‘2000 non-sworn staff.’) He] said the decision by New York citizens in the early 1990s to accept a dedicated tax for the recruitment of 6000 more police[– raising the USs’ ‘largest police force to 38,000 officers’ –] had... played a part... in a crime drop of 12[%] in 1994, with reductions of 17[%] in 1995, 13[%] last year and a projected 10[%] fall this year... N[Z] police like what has been done in New York but they are also looking at a similar style of community policing in Strathclyde, Scotland... In 1995... the... region... surveyed the public and found 92[%] of the population wanted minor crimes to be given greater priority to make them feel safer... As opposed to New York, the... Scottish... police have not taken such a hard line...

[‘The person most credited with bringing Broken Windows to the whole of New York City was, in 1990, appointed commissioner of the New York Transit Police. Turnstile-jumping was rife in the subway system. Not only did it reduce revenue but the activity created disorder and, by extension, some fear and trepidation among honest subway passengers. Now the commissioner knew that not all turnstile jumpers were robbers and muggers, but you could bet that all robbers and muggers were turnstile-jumpers. So arresting turnstile jumpers became rather the order of the day and, lo and behold, the incidence of armed and aggravated robberies, muggings and the like reduced. Many robbers were, of course, armed. But what they discovered, to their dismay, was that in an attempt to save themselves 25c while on the way to commit a robbery they were, in fact, laying themselves open to being charged with far more serious offences, such as possession of a concealed weapon. Solve (or prevent) a “little” crime and you can stop a “big” one’]...

Frustrated rank-and-file police are challenging their bosses to shift to a New York-style of policing out of concern they are failing to tackle rising crime rates... On the North Shore, “broken windows” has led to a drop in burglaries by up to a third in some suburbs... [However, police] chiefs said policing initiatives like “broken windows” had been operating in N[Z] since the 1980s... [and the] Deputy Commissioner... said: “What needs to be remembered is that what is minor crime in New York is serious crime here.”

...The deputy commissioner... says hard-line police tactics may suit a city with urban slums... high vagrancy and illiteracy. They don’t suit N[Z]... It is true that N[Z] does not share such a startling murder rate. In New York, 984 people were murdered last year, compared with 119 in N[Z]. But turn to property crimes and the picture is different. In New York, a city of eight million, 61,901 burglaries were reported to the police last year. In N[Z], with a population of just over three million, 81,545 burglaries were reported... Since 1993 the New York Police Department has... hired... [more] police... cleared... corrupt officers... out of the force... decentralised police districts, and[made] local police chiefs... accountable for reducing crime in their areas... [NZ’s deputy commissioner] argues that is also happening here. Police managers get a bonus if they manage to cut crime and have to provide a good explanation if they have not. But... the N[Z] Police Association president... says this is not their focus.

...The New York architect of “zero tolerance” police tactics is being brought to N[Z]... The Police Association said yesterday that it had invited the former New York Police Department deputy chief... to address its annual conference in Wellington this month... New York, the Big Apple, once suffered from the reputation that it was rotten to the core. [However, the former] second in command... in charge of the department’s \$US2.7 billion... annual budget... [plus] 38,000 uniform and 9000 civilian staff... has watched New York crime rates fall more than a third since police began tackling crime with... “broken windows”... The association president... said [the] visit showed that [NZ] police were serious about taking a harder line on crime... “Latest statistics show there is a reported crime in N[Z] every minute and we seem to have built up an acceptance of crime...”... He [also] said police managers should be accountable for cutting crime rather than meeting budget targets... But... [one] Inspector... said... police... should not become too forceful and too visible as they would lose public support. “We need to reach a balance between where we are and where they are. People certainly don’t want to be stood over by police.”

...Criminals are not just offenders who must be caught – police are now urged to think of them as... “clients” or “customers” in an attempt to change attitudes and promote efficiency. The Police Association has declared that “trendy name changes” will not stop police doing their job of catching criminals and helping victims. However, it is concerned about a growing business orientation in the force... [In international news, the US public may start to agree with the notion that police officers normally only catch criminals who are less intelligent than themselves after newspapers reported a 46-year-old] took an exam to join the police in New London, Connecticut, but failed to get to the interview stage because he scored too high[(‘if I’d just been a little dumber I could have joined the force myself’)]. A police spokesman said high-scoring candidates could get bored with police work and leave not long after training, which costs about \$NZ36,950. “We are looking for bright people but we’re not looking for people who are so bright to an extent that they’re not going to be challenged by the job.” The police may yet be out of pocket because [the 46-year-old] has filed a lawsuit alleging discrimination based on intelligence. “I know I would be a good cop, but I had the misfortune of selecting too many correct answers...”

...The first victim of the teenagers who ran riot at lovers’ lane spots in Auckland in March believes police bungled a chance to catch the youths before they viscerally pack-raped another woman. The 17-year-old Mangere woman and her family are critical of the way police handled her complaint when she and a friend were attacked by the marauding youths on One Tree Hill in a prelude to several other heinous attacks. She told police the offenders were Polynesians travelling in a red van, but there was apparently no attempt to search for it. The officers involved, who also did not submit a report on the incident before going off duty, have been disciplined... The Auckland police commander... would not comment on whether the police officers’ mistakes had inhibited the inquiry.

...A second inquest for Agnes Ali’iva’a has ruled her death was suspicious and outlined shortcomings in the police investigation. The Whangarei coroner... concluded yesterday that the 12-year-old, found part-naked and bruised in a Mt Roskill drain, died on February 14, 1992, as a result of drowning in suspicious circumstances. In an unusual move, [the Whangarei coroner] commented on the failings of the first police inquiry and its effect on the subsequent inquest. The 1992 investigative team, headed by [a] Detective Inspector... found that Agnes drowned accidentally, and the Auckland deputy coroner... agreed. The case was reopened last year and an apology offered to the family after a second police team noted suspicious circumstances... The 1992 police investigation was being “looked at” by the Police Complaints Authority. [Yesterday Whangarei’s

coroner] said... "It seems unlikely that Agnes, a strongly built and athletic 12-year-old, would drown in a few inches of water unless she was incapacitated." Intoxication through drugs, alcohol and solvents had been ruled out. There had been no evidence of a medical condition, such as blackouts. "...the stream bank is not easy to see at night and is a hazard for someone not familiar with the area... One possible scenario is that Agnes was running from an assailant and fell, suffering a blow to the head, which led to her drowning." ● ['Usually, 1-in-200,000 deaths is unexplained.']

...A reward is again being offered for information about the death of Agnes Alli'va'a (12) after the Police Complaints Authority finding that the case was bungled. [The PCA] report... said the police inquiry was "surprisingly substandard". Agnes drowned in a ditch in Keith Park, Auckland, on February 14, 1992, in circumstances that suggested fowl play, but detectives failed to take proper account of her numerous injuries and that she was partially dressed... [In related news, the p]olice paid informants \$307,897 in the past financial year, with the average payment \$467 and the highest \$16,000. Figures given to Parliament show police budgeted to spend \$248,084 on informants...

Police in the top of the South Island are switching to a computer system... which diverts all emergency calls to Christchurch.[A Nelson] Inspector... said he was confident that the new system would work well and the public would barely notice the change.

...An Auckland woman waited... hours on Monday for the police to respond to a 111 call about an intruder on her property... It took the police five minutes to answer the call and another nine and a half hours to send a police car to her home.

...Police delays in picking up 111 calls are giving criminals a head start, says a Hamilton man who waited more than three minutes for his emergency call to be answered. When [the]... wheelchair-bound... businessman... dialled 111 about 1.45 pm on Monday after seeing his neighbour chasing a burglar, he said the Telecom operator warned him he would have to wait a while. After waiting at least three minutes, he gave up and rang the Hamilton Central police station, where a receptionist took his details and transferred him to the control room. He was then greeted by a recorded message, and gave up. The police finally rang back about 15 minutes after... Emergency calls from the Auckland and Waikato regions are transferred to a new communications and resource deployment centre in Grey Lynn. Any calls that are not picked up after 25 rings – about 90 seconds – are automatically transferred to a Wellington centre, which is in radio contact with the Auckland centre. A senior officer at the Auckland centre said staff recently had to deal with 300 calls in 15 minutes "and that's not counting 111 calls." ...One police telephone operator, who did not want to be named, said there were not enough staff to deal with the calls to the centre and too few frontline police to act on them.

...Police fear lives will be lost if the centralised emergency 111 system continues to fail. Hamilton police are outraged at a system breakdown... that left a 60-year-old woman without police assistance for nearly an hour after she was bashed by intruders. The Police Commissioner... conceded it could take to the end of the year to iron out faults in the system... [while t]he Police Association says the system may be fundamentally flawed.

...[a] young caller to Wellington central police station about 10.55am yesterday wasn't being attacked, or burgled. His need for the police? He was peeved with his sister, who had... "stolen" his yellow rubber ducky. But it takes more than that to get the boys in blue to come calling these days...

[An 'Auckland student was attacked by people he knew. But despite telling cops the name of one man and the nickname of the other assailant, he was told there would be no action. Stretched police resources, priorities and the bureaucratic jargon of "operational requirements" were offered as an excuse for the inexcusable lack of action. The police's apparent refusal to investigate the brutal bashing was depressingly familiar. It also happened to me. I was drunk but cheerfully drunk, walking home with friends after a night out on the town. There was another man we didn't know, who evinced a more belligerent than beatific attitude but we paid him no mind. Then it happened. As the man went to join his friends sitting in a car, my friend muttered "good riddance." An uncharitable comment perhaps but hardly deserving of the flurry of blows that knocked me unconscious or the big boot planted squarely in my right eye while lying on the cold pavement. I was taken to hospital for treatment, as was my friend who suffered similar injuries. Our female friend had sensibly noted the registration of the getaway car. Almost two months elapsed before police interviewed the owner. She told police that she met a strange man in a club about 2 am and offered him a lift home. She stopped to pick up a friend of the strange man when the pair attacked some other people. She was so upset she drove the pair only 5km more before leaving them on the side of the road to hitchhike home. She did not know where they lived. Officers accepted her explanation and that was the end of the matter. This isn't about stretched resources, this is about officers doing their job properly.'

... 'The Police Commissioner will apologise today to a woman whose rape complaint was ignored 18 years ago. The commissioner will make a special trip to Gisborne to meet the 35-year-old woman, who was savagely raped when she was 16. Susan, not her real name, was working in a Murupara shop when her employer handcuffed her to a bed, raping and impregnating her. The police, however, failed to properly investigate her complaint until 1995. By then, there was not enough evidence to convict the attacker. Her attacker was eventually jailed for nine years after police investigated rape complaints concerning his three stepdaughters.' Police have also] apologised to a Hamilton woman after it took them nearly an hour to respond to her emergency call. [The elderly woman] was attacked in her home 2 nights ago... Hamilton's Police District Commander is trying to find out what caused the delay.

...[a Hamilton assault] victim... says she has been let down by the centralised police phone system for the second time in a week... Police[had] apologised to the 60-year-old for botching the [first]111 call... reporting her beating by three teenage intruders. The central Auckland police communications centre that handles emergency and after-hours calls from Waikato failed to notify Hamilton police of [her] plight until an hour after the... call. That incident is one of several problems with emergency calls since the 111 service became centralised to Auckland. Police chiefs from Waikato are meeting board members of the Auckland communication centre today to discuss the controversial new system. But [the 60-year-old victim] said an apology would not be good enough after the latest incident, in which she reported a prowler at 6am on Monday. She did not call 111 to report the prowler, saying she no longer has faith in the system. Instead, she telephoned the Hamilton police station, but because it was after-hours, her call was diverted to Auckland. The Auckland call-taker... told her to go back to bed... [and] decided not to send police to her house... [She] is furious at that decision... She was still terrified after the call that the footsteps belonged to the offender involved in her bashing, who is still on the run. The central customer services manager... said the contents of the call did not warrant sending out a patrol. [He] said the call-taker did not realise who [the caller] was and therefore what she had been through. A Hamilton call-taker was more likely to have recognised [the victim], he said. The Hamilton District Commander... also said it was more probable [the victim] and her background would have been known by a Hamilton call-taker. Hamilton would have sent a patrol car if one had been available to reassure [the victim], given what she had been through. [The commander] is an angry critic of the system, as are rural police stations in the Waikato. Thames police are bypassing the system, while other rural centres are threatening to do the same.

...The public needs to be educated on how to use the emergency 111 system, in addition to the police ironing out glitches in the service, says an Auckland senior sergeant... Callers needed to be clearer and, for example, learn to identify their c[oun]try – some try to dial 911 (US) or 999 (UK) – plus c[ity], as Auckland and Hamilton had streets of the same name... Meanwhile, [a]... Mangere garage owner is angry that a safe containing \$30,000 was stolen... when police failed to respond to a 111 call. The incident was the third reported this week where calls to 111 were unable to bring police quickly to crime scenes. Despite that, the Fire Service still plans to join the same emergency communications system early next year.

...[a storeowner] rang 111 after two transvestites came into her store on Wednesday and began stealing garments. Her call was received by a Telecom operator at 1.06 pm but the call was not answered in the police communications room until 1.15 pm. Police were not sent to the scene until 1.26 pm and did not arrive until 1.34 pm. One of the offenders was arrested but the other, plus an accomplice who had been waiting outside, fled. [The storeowner] said she felt intimidated by the transvestites and they had the virtual run of the shop while she waited on the line to speak with

police. "I was pretty hopping mad about it – I was furious." ...Police have admitted they are to blame for the long delays on some 111 emergency calls. And the acting police chief has put a halt on the nationwide expansion of the controversial centralised 111 phone service until technical glitches and staffing problems are sorted out. Police national headquarters has agreed to throw more resources at the Auckland-based C[ARD]... centre, which handles 111 calls from the top half of the North Island... "A lot of the problems experienced have been the result of the human element and are being addressed through familiarisation and further training,"... said... the Auckland regional police chief... The system would not be expanded... until it was working better. "It is in our interests to make it work to protect police and the public," said... [the] Deputy Commissioner... "But I can't guarantee that all people in the communications centre will not make a mistake. They are not machines." An overwhelming number of emergency calls were coming in and there were insufficient staff to handle them, he said. The same computer system handles emergency calls in Victoria, A[US], where it is plagued with problems. In January, it crashed after failing to handle the flood of emergency calls generated by the Dandenong bushfires. However, [the Deputy Commissioner] said the system was the best in the world. Although he was aware of problems in A[US], police – rather than the company – were running it here... The number of complaints was small compared with the high volume of calls. More than 55,500 callers rang the Auckland-based centre for emergency help in the first six weeks.

...Police and Telecom are at odds over explaining the 36-minute difference between the time a Raglan resident dialled 111 to report eight lives in danger and the time police received the information... [A] Senior Sergeant... said last night that police received the call at 2.03 pm and answered it in just over a minute. A Telecom spokesman... said the operator received the call at 1.27 pm. [The]Senior Sergeant... could not explain the time difference, but said the police had so many lines it was impossible that Telecom would not have been able to get through... The operator taking [the] call told... she could not get through to police, despite trying for several minutes. [The caller] decided to drive to the Raglan Fire Station to raise the alarm, leaving the operator to continue trying to contact the police.

...A Christchurch family, first on the scene of a head-on car crash near the north-east Canterbury thermal resort... [of] Hanmer Springs... on Thursday, were unhappy to find the... Auckland-based... operator they spoke to seemed unfamiliar with the South Island... [The] Senior Constable... of Hanmer said the [father], who dialled 111 on his cellphone, later told him he planned to complain to Telecom. A Telecom spokesman... defended the operator, saying rescue services were correctly directed to the scene.

...police could not work out where... [an] emergency 111 call... came from... on Monday night... A person had been injured... in an incident in Lichfield St, Blenheim... Normally the telephone number and address of the caller flash up on a police screen. However... [the] call came from an address with a confidential number... [The] lack of details meant police were initially sent to Lichfield St, in Stoke. The manager of the... southern communications centre... said police had to go through Telecom to find the address of the caller, a delay which put people in danger... Fortunately... Blenheim police overheard what was happening in Stoke and realised the call had been made from Blenheim. Eighteen minutes had elapsed before police arrived at the address. A Telecom communications manager... said the company wanted to help the police as much as possible, and would next year ask its 120,000 confidential number customers if they wanted their numbers made available to emergency services.

...Police officers are angry that they are being paid less than some dispatchers operating the ...Card... system. Operators who have completed a five-week training course start on a basic salary of \$27,000 to \$34,000. But when a 31[%] penal rate is added, annual payment increases to \$35,000 to \$45,000... Civilian Card wages rise to about \$50,000 if operators complete seven units of a probationary constable's training... A Police Association advocate... said the union was considering the wage concerns. He said the pay issue further highlighted a funding crisis within the police force... "There is no suggestion the civilians are overpaid. It highlights the slippage in [police] salaries." ...One Wellington officer, who would not be named, said frontline police... felt the pay disparity was a sign that their work was going unappreciated. "This latest move by management reflects administration's attitude towards us, that we're expendable and can be replaced," he said. "The bosses have tried to fob us off but we are not stupid and know how much the civilians are being paid. How can we respect and support our bosses when they bring in civilians and pay them more than us? ...Some [civilian call-takers] don't give enough details or the right details. Walking into a domestic, you need to know the situation. If the details aren't 100[%] right, that's someone's life on the line. For this type of thing you need someone with police experience. A few months ago some of these people were filing clerks – now they're working in dispatch and are being paid more than a lot of the officers." ...The officer said frontline police were concerned civilians were delegating patrols to go to incidents.

...In Auckland, the chief of the Northern C[ARD] Centre... is on sick leave and has handed in his resignation. Fewer than half of the inspectors employed to run the new control room... are available for work. Sick leave, resignations and long-term leave have pushed out the rest in less than three months... Only one of the eight top officers initially in charge of running the controversial Auckland 111 emergency centre will still be there next month. The rest will have left... [The] Deputy Commissioner... acknowledged yesterday that stress was prompting top officers to leave. "It is always stressful running a communications centre. The problems the centre has been experiencing are articulated in the media and that just adds to the strain," he said. The vacant posts would be advertised. In the meantime, inspectors were being taken from other stations to relieve the centre. The Police Association regional manager for Auckland... said the centre was seriously understaffed and unable to handle the volume of calls from Auckland, Hamilton and Northland – about 75,000 a week. He said the top posts would be difficult to fill. The job was stressful and the centre had been plagued with problems. "Middle management has got completely frustrated dealing with top management, and so they are walking out," he said... As officers quit the troubled Auckland emergency callout centre, a Victoria MP wants an investigation of how the same company won police communication contracts on both sides of the Tasman.

...The head of a massive project to computerise the N[Z] police has resigned with the end of the project still months away... [He] is to take up a new job in A[US] as managing director of Victoria's controversial emergency services dispatch system... [Meanwhile, the NZ] Serious Fraud Office says there are no grounds for an investigation into the tendering process for the police 111 emergency computer system.

...A POLICE employee working in the Auckland 111 emergency centre faces fraud charges after allegedly attempting to wipe speeding ticket records from a computer system.

...The arrival of a new crime-busting computer has been delayed again – putting further pressure on an already overstretched police force which has already... shed 180 officers to fund the new system... However, [because]the system was still not up and running... the losses had hit frontline staff the hardest. "They haven't produced the machinery, let alone evidence of the productivity gains... Staff are desperate because the numbers are going down and the workload is going up and they don't see any light at the end of the tunnel," says... [the] Police Association representative for the Auckland region... The next 180 positions will go in June... The association was also concerned that other staff were being taken off normal duties to work on the system... When first approved by the Government three years ago, the Incis computer – which would allow North Island police stations to tap crime files from as far away as Invercargill at the push of a button – was due to be finished last month. The "final" date was then rolled over to October, but this week [the]Deputy Commissioner... said Incis would not be fully operational until at least the middle of next year. He also confirmed that the project would overrun the \$200 million budget... Once it was introduced, Incis would free up 1.9 million hours of police time normally spent on administration work each year. And it would help police fight crime: "It means police won't be bogged down in paperwork and will be out on the streets." [The current]Police Minister... has already raised concerns about the project, and last week said Incis might not produce the "promised efficiencies."

...Police hope to reap \$50 million from their troubled crime-fighting computer by selling the "world first" system to other countries. Police said yesterday they assured the Government in 1994 that they would sell... Incis... to police departments in... Britain and the U[S]. The revelation that

police are planning to recoup some of the \$200 million cost through developing a prototype of the IBM system computer to sell overseas comes as it is being attacked...

The new police computer will mean fewer police officers, but the experts say it will bring a new style of crime-fighting... [and] more time out on the beat. Many... officers... [would] be armed with laptops so they do not have to return to stations to fill in lengthy crime reports... By the middle of next year – if there is not yet another delay – police will be issued with 2000 personal computers and 1000 laptops... In the longer term, officers should be able to arrest alleged criminals and e-mail their details straight to courts. Technical whizzes... estimate the new computer will save about 11[%] of each officer's working day when it is fully introduced. As an example, the average cop takes about an hour to record a victim's complaint, filling in various forms and duplicating many details, such as names and addresses. When police get their new computer... this tedious job should take only 15 minutes... If Incis works, police should be able to call up crime files of individual offenders, complete with fingerprints and photographs, and follow the trail of serial offenders at the click of the mouse... The present paper-based filing system makes it difficult to track people who keep offending. "We can do it, but it's a bit hit and miss." ...But there may be drawbacks. Police fear they will burn out being on the frontline more often, especially when the troops shrink. "We're already having to rush from pillar to post," said... the industrial officer at the Police Association... "We don't pretend it will be the answer to all evils... we still must remember that policing is about policing people... there's nothing magic about a computer system. The human part of policing will catch [criminals] in the end."

...An Auckland lawyer is red-faced about being duped into giving the password of his stolen computer to the man who stole it from his car... He reported the theft to the police, then received a call at home from a man saying he was... [a constable from] the Ponsonby station. The legal buff agreed to give out his password to confirm the laptop was his. Later, he went to the station to pick up his property... It was then he realised he had been conned as well as ripped off because the laptop does not operate without the password... Police traced the phone call from the lawyer's home to a Grey Lynn house. They executed a search warrant, found the laptop, and arrested a man.

...Police have to... detail their time on the beat [next] year as part of a Government push to make the force more businesslike... [and] accountable... For example, they will have to respond to 220,000 to 226,000 disasters and emergencies and issue 770,000 to 895,000 traffic offence notices. But the Police Association fears that this approach fails to recognise the "fire brigade element" of policing – reacting to crime as it happens... The... Association president... said running the police force like a business might sound all right in theory but would not work in practice... Trying to measure everything police did in minute detail was a mistake... [and] it was "absurd" to try to make a profit out of policing... "No matter how busy we get, we don't get any of the money back from catching criminals." [The police are also meant to 'quit giving free crime prevention advice' and, instead, charge citizens for the service.]

...A new threat has emerged on the national crime scene and is putting the public at "unacceptable fiscal risk." The offender, identified by a Treasury report, is a fully manned and well-equipped police force. The Treasury believes this combination may end up catching too many criminals – and increasing the costs of courts and prisons. In a just-released report to the Minister of Finance in 1994, Treasury staff emphasise that the benefits of the... INCIS computer... need to be balanced by police staff cuts. Otherwise a full-strength constabulary with a whizz-bang computer system might be all too successful at crime-fighting for our financial good, the Treasury reasoned. The Opposition justice spokesman... said yesterday: "This bizarre piece of reasoning... defies belief. Taking the argument to its logical extension, we should sack the entire police force."

...A Government pledge to boost the police force by 500 appeared to be a distant memory last night amid revelations that overworked police are [looking at] hiring security guards to help fight crime.

...Talks about contracting out police work to security guards and private investigators are going on behind closed doors. A member of a top-level police and security industry group yesterday revealed that security firms hoped to be able to bid for police business through a formal tendering process. Two committees were set up this week to investigate how the police could work with private eyes and security guards on a formal basis.

...Moves to create a new breed of "private police" and strengthen crime-fighting on the streets begin today when a batch of security guards undergo training by police... Police training could possibly be privatised with officers training alongside security guards and their qualifications being transferable... But the Police Association has attacked the move... as "obscene."

...Auckland police will today advise private security guards on how to... behave at crime scenes and how to make a citizen's arrest... after a training session was blocked by rank-and-file officers last week... [when] the Police Association protested, saying the force was not in the business of training "private police." ...[recently released documents... spoke of private police being recruited to issue traffic tickets, attend emergencies when police were overworked, manage control rooms, and protect wealthy communities on a user-pays basis... [The association's] industrial officer, said the next step would be to give police powers to security guards. "The public is getting ripped off... for a service that should be their right," ...

Imagine that you and your next-door neighbour were ripped off by the same lawyer. While you had lost all your savings, your neighbour had some money left to afford a private investigating-prosecuting firm. That firm took a prosecution against the crooked lawyer and won back the lost money plus compensation for your neighbour. Meanwhile, you're still waiting for the over-worked and stressed-out police to return your call. An unlikely scenario? It is not as remote a state of affairs as many might think... A free-market policing model, which originated from the Treasury... and... is driven by National... is gaining a foothold. Under this strategy, police would retain certain key functions but private enterprise should be allowed to compete for the provision of many traditional – but supposedly non-core – police services. This, so the theorists suggest, will lead to greater efficiencies and free scarce police resources for the remaining core tasks. A paper prepared last year by a senior police strategist outlines how the free-market approach would work... The Government's official line is that privatisation and "civilianisation" measures enacted so far are temporary. But... the... fact that many of the paper's proposals have happened already means we can justifiably expect the rest to happen as well... Most importantly, the paper describes the "development of a more sophisticated security industry... offering... policing options and sector-wide investigations capabilities." In other words, the Government and senior police officers want and are encouraging private police forces... Wealthy N[Z]ers would be able to afford to pay for policing through the private sector while the poor would have to rely on an increasingly cash-strapped public police force. Wealthy suburbs will pay for round-the-clock surveillance of their homes. But low-income areas... would become police-free zones... In a democracy, justice and policing should be open to all, regardless of means or status, race, gender or age. When it comes to fundamental rights, society must not be divided into haves and have-nots – but it will be if private enterprise policing comes to pass. Justice would be like any consumer product...

The Minister of Police... said yesterday that he saw nothing wrong with the concept of people paying to get a prosecution in cases police did not have time to investigate... [and the] Auckland-based Private Prosecutions Company said it aimed to be the first company to specialise in helping the corporate sector to pursue criminal actions that the police or crown solicitors were unwilling or unable to take... The... Insurance Council, which says police delays are a major problem[, is backing]... Private Prosecutions... The prosecution company could earn \$155 an hour... Court cases in most countries apart from N[Z] are handled independently of the police.

...Business is overwhelmingly in favour of using private investigators and prosecutors instead of the police... [A] University of Auckland survey shows less than one corporate in 10 would continue to rely on the arms of the state to deal with criminal activity as it affects their own business... Two-thirds give the police a low rating for effectiveness, with less than 5[%] rating them as above average in investigating criminal activities... But as yet only a third of those responding have used private investigators and only a few have made use of the private prosecution services established this year.

...[NZ's] private investigation industry is booming with licensed PIs now numbering around 400. Many are former policemen. ['Having found that fighting crime does pay they've set up a private consulting service.']

...Private investigators are brokering deals with criminals on behalf of burglary victims and insurance companies who are by-passing the police to recover their stolen property. The no-questions-asked deals have concerned police, who have labelled the concept "a very nasty precedent." The actions come amid a rapid rise in the number of people hiring investigators to solve crimes which police no longer have the resources to handle... [The] head of Auckland-based N[Z] Investigative Consultants Ltd, said it was not uncommon for insurance companies to pay criminals cash in exchange for stolen goods and thereby avoid hefty payouts... "It's not a matter of ignoring the offender. If we can get the burglar by all means we will. But in most cases it's just totally uneconomic to do so and if we can get the property – that's our priority." ...An Insurance Council spokeswoman... said it was not official policy for insurance companies to front up with cash. "But if it meant for a company that they could make a small investment to get a large return that's got to be good for the insurance company and for its policy holders." A police legal adviser... said it was unlikely that the parties were committing an offence but added: "I find the concept somewhat repugnant because it tends to legitimise the burglaries. It appears that there is no legal sanction and in turn they get paid..."

...As of yesterday, the Auckland police region was 70 officers short... The Auckland central police district is... worst affected... 42 officers down. The Auckland central district commander... said one way of freeing staff for the front line was to employ temporary constables for duties which did not require the skills of fully trained officers. Temporary officers were already employed to act as jailers at the district court and the Auckland police station when Mt Eden prison is full, but he said they could be used in other areas such as fingerprinting... [O]n a busy night staff might have to fingerprint up to 60 prisoners and that tied up officers for too long... Retired police officers who had been out of the force a short time would be ideal... but civilians with no previous experience might be considered too... The... workings of the criminal investigation branch would... be reviewed, including the way burglaries were dealt with. Instead of sending up to three staff to a burglary which might have happened hours ago, one "scene of crime officer" might be appointed to attend and gather fingerprints... Auckland city police chiefs... are also considering making more use of security guards to mind crime scenes.

...Police are backing a plan for private security guards to patrol Auckland's central business district on mountain bikes. The security firm Group 4 has asked the Auckland City Council to fund a \$64,000 four-month trial... Decked out in reflector-uniforms and equipped with hands-free radios, the team will slowly sweep the streets searching out troublemakers... Bicycle and horse patrols were used successfully in Canada, and guards on skates patrolled areas of Amsterdam...

Cycling security guards might not make it to inner-city streets this summer, after an Auckland City Council committee declined funding and referred the issue to another committee... The patrols proposal will now be considered by the works and services committee on December 10.

...The works and services committee has decided not to fund... cycling security guards... saying the project involved a significant amount of unbudgeted expenditure which would mean other council projects would suffer.

...Auckland City ratepayers may have to pay another \$54,300 for the police camera surveillance network... In June last year, the council approved a \$100,000 contribution towards two new cameras, bringing the number in the central business district to 13... The... \$54,300... would go towards three new camera sites... It is also possible that council workers could be involved in staffing the... cameras for the police, who are unable to monitor the live lines 24 hours a day... The... council [already] ran a surveillance room with 15 cameras monitoring traffic flows at key central city intersections. [In related news, 'a South African inventor has designed a device which spews flames from the side of cars at the push of a button to protect motorists against car-jackings, one of the country's commonest crimes. The so-called Blaster can inflict severe burns on robbers who try to force motorists out of their vehicles. "We have had calls from all over the country. About a thousand cars will be equipped by the end of the year." South African police said over 7000 motorists fell prey to car-jackers in the first half of this year.']

...Although reliable crime statistics in Brazil are hard to get because many crimes go unreported to police, analysts say violent crimes like kidnapping, robbery and murder are on the rise... Sao Paulo, Brazil's largest city, has a homicide rate of about 50 per 100,000... Brazilians' need to feel safe has translated into a burgeoning \$150 million market for security equipment... according to a US Department of Commerce report. With theft on the rise, the market should grow about 14[%] a year by the year 2000... Fuelled by the fear of the many people, including children, who call the streets of Brazil their home, one of the first lessons learned when driving a car in Rio or Sao Paulo... is to avoid stopping at traffic lights. Depending on traffic during the day, motorists often slow or pause before moving on. However, once night falls often the only warning drivers give is a honk or two before bolting through a red light... The... armoured car market is... profiting... growing to \$US40 million... from about \$18 million last year... as wealthy motorists seek to shield themselves from the threat of kidnappings, carjackings and armed muggings at intersections... "There are about 250,000 people in Brazil with disposable income of \$US200,000 to \$US1 million and that is the market we want to reach... Armoured cars have become an important status symbol, aside from the obvious concern of being shot for no reason while stopped on the street," said [the director of a] Sao Paulo-based unit of... [an Ohio-based company that] can equip a car with armour for about [\$US36,000]. That price-tag is for protection against handgun fire. Protecting a car from heavier ammunition or hand grenades can cost far more.

...The general manager of Armourguard Security... said there ha[s] been a huge growth in all types of residential security... Thousands of Auckland residents already pay a security company to patrol their properties... Matrix Security, set up 18 months ago, was the first company to target non-commercial customers. It has 1000 clients in Remuera and 500 waiting for the second programme to be launched in Auckland's eastern bays.

...Security firms are struggling to keep up with demand as more people turn to user-pays policing for the safety of their home and family... The chief executive of the Security Industry Association... said yesterday that demand was so high security guards would outnumber sworn police before the year 2000... "Security companies traditionally just worked in the commercial field... But more and more residential customers are paying for it because the Government is not providing the police force." ...His revelation was accepted by top police last night, who admitted that the security industry had become a crucial part of policing as public resources shrank. "With progress, the police priorities have changed," said the assistant commissioner of crime and operations... "People who still want those services from more resourceful times are now paying for them." ...[the number of security firms has risen 'from 528 in 1988 to 951 this year,' and there are now] 6688 police officers to 5194 registered security guards... [- although there are also 'about 5000 unregistered security guards.' • 'In Palestine, the ratio of police to security guards is 1:50'. In comparison, in NSW (AUS),] there were three guards for one police officer and in parts of the U[S] the ratio was five to one. - 1997

Around the clock, seven days a week, police officers somewhere in A[US] will arrive at the scene of yet another crime. Their chance of solving it will run at less than 50 in 1000. And as A[US] retreats behind rising fortresses of barred windows and electronic walls, a largely hidden army of private crime-fighters... ranging from club bouncers and payroll guards to private eyes, bodyguards and corporate security advisers... is filling the gap... Their numbers have mushroomed in the past three decades in response to a rising fear of crime in a society whose changing lifestyles have in themselves increased the chances of becoming a victim... [-] families spending more time away from homes which are stocked with a growing number of easily stolen and fenced possessions... And as the security industry has flourished new concerns have emerged over the implications of the massive swing to private policing... Will A[US] become a society in which the wealthy are protected and the poor abandoned to crime? Will it become a nation of suburban and business castles? And how can private cops be prevented from turning feral? According to a study published by

the A[US]n Institute of Criminology, these issues... [and o]ther serious problems including the prosecution of leading[security] companies for misrepresenting patrol and alarm monitoring services, a pattern of serious assaults, the failure of some bouncers to protect patrons in licensed premises, corrupt trading in confidential information between police and security officers, and the huge waste of police time responding to false alarms, and shoot-outs between robbers and guards involving injury and serious threats to public safety... need to be tackled through a national approach to laws, licensing and regulation... [In local news, a]lmost three-quarters of the population are worried about... being burgled or attacked... in the place they should feel safest – home... Of the 70.3[%] who were worried, 28.5[%] said they were very concerned and 41.8[%] said they were quite concerned. The survey was taken during the high-profile spate of violent home invasions that included the murder on November 30 of dairy farmer Beverly Bouma – shot as four men ransacked her Reporoa home. Three days later, an Ohakune family were tied up in their home by three armed men. On Monday, a Kumeu woman in her late 70s was gagged, tied up and had a knife pressed to her stomach as two men ransacked her house. Early yesterday a Tauranga family were terrorised by intruders.

...the private security industry is rubbing its hands...

A burglary every 6 minutes, one vehicle stolen every 10, an assault every 15. Every day, every week, that's the pattern of crime in N[Z] today. The figures for more serious crime are not much better – there's a sexual assault every 3 hours and a murder every third day. With a cash-strapped police force, its ranks thinned by redundancy, early retirement and resignation, you could well argue that things are just about out of control. Politicians and senior police officers assure us that this is not the case, but try telling that to the citizens sick and tired of being ripped off. Now... some of them think they have an answer – private policing... There are two things rising in Auckland, the skyline and the crime rate. But some residents in Remuera, the home of Auckland's 'old money', have found new security... The wealthy here have a lot to lose. They want protection and they're prepared to pay for it. It's the kind of protection that can only be provided by their very own private police force. The kind of protection the N[Z] police force is unable to give. For \$15 a week they get Matrix, a monitored burglar alarm and 24-hour, 7 days a week patrolling... And... it's working... [- w]hile there's still crime in Remuera, none of [the] clients with alarms have been burgled during the past 18 months... and that, it seems, is keeping the customers satisfied. "[Matrix] concentrate on this area, they're not spread thin..." This semi-retired accountant... says the last time he was burgled, in another suburb, he had to call the police twice, and then it took them 3 1/2 hours to attend. Matrix took just 2 minutes... [One woman] already had a dog protecting her home but now she says she feels free to go on holiday leaving Matrix on guard. "...I just think it's where it's heading at the moment... private policing." No doubt about that. In a few years there will almost certainly be more security people in N[Z] than sworn police... Today staff open... [a] jewellery shop in Remuera... watched by two Matrix guards. That's because a month ago this store was robbed. In what's believed to be N[Z]'s largest jewellery armed robbery two men escaped on bicycles with gold, diamond rings and necklaces worth more than half a million dollars. "How many police officers, to your knowledge, are working on this [case]?" "I think one." ...[the owner] says he was cleaned out even though he had an alarm and a security camera... and[also] says the insurance assessors appear to have done most of the robbery investigation... "...you can at least get through to them?" "Police are giving tacit approval, at least, to their staff relying upon leg-work, just the donkey work, done by the private sector," [says an insurance investigator]. "You see the police only have a limited resource. We can not investigate everything to the nth degree," [said the assistant police commissioner]... The police have, for years, presented an image of working with communities to solve crime, but there have been recent signs that property crime is overwhelming them, and at times what starts out as property crime escalates into violence... and there are now hundreds of crime reports that are simply being filed without further investigation, even when suspects have been identified... "Across the board the police are simply unable to cope with property crime... which [is] just rampant, almost out of control." ...several North Shore retailers who've been the victims of multiple ram-raids [- the practice of smashing stolen vehicles through shop front doors or windows – are] now forced, because of massive insurance excesses, to sleep in their shops as a deterrent to burglars... "We are not happy with that," [said the assistant commissioner]. "...I'm optimistic that come the budget round the police will hopefully gain a fair share of the resources and we can provide a better service to the public." The Matrix people don't have to wait for budget handouts... The company has just signed a deal with Armourguard to expand into more suburbs in East Auckland, where paying customers are ready and waiting. There's nothing new about private policing and N[Z] certainly doesn't lead the world. In... South Africa the ratio... [of] security guards for every police officer... is ten to one. What happens is that private enterprise moves into the vacuum when state-funded policing can't keep up with the crime rate. Which is all very well for people who can afford private security but what about those who can't? Well, the message for them appears to be 'tough luck!' "I guess, in N[Z], we're used to the police providing a free service all of the time, to everybody[but in]... today's world it's a simple matter of economics. If you pay more you get greater protection... I guess... if you want greater protection for yourself, whether it's health insurance or life insurance or protection of your property, the more money you pay the greater service you get,"... [says the assistant commissioner. In response, one citizen asks:] "Are we looking at a situation where those who can afford it will get policing and those who can't won't?" ...[another citizen asks:] "How is it we can spend... money on things that perhaps are nowhere near as important as the people who can't afford the basics?" - 60 Minutes

Link Monitoring and alarms... peace of mind for under \$1 a day[, 'plus an up-front payment of \$640.']

A West Auckland security firm has had its master keys stolen, forcing a mass mobilisation of locksmiths to change its clients' locks... Neither police nor Henderson Security would comment on the theft or how many clients had been affected. The executive director of the Security Industry Association... said such thefts were rare... "The key question is how it happened..."

Intruders plague Paritai Drive homes despite security... Residents in Auckland's blue ribbon street are living in fear as intruders target their exclusive homes. In the latest incident... an elderly woman living alone was left with black eyes after fighting off an intruder... It was the second time in three months that burglars had got past the woman's security system... [Three months ago] thieves escaped with thousands of dollars worth of jewellery from her big brick home overlooking Waitemata Harbour. Police say... a lot of people in Paritai Drive had high-tech alarm systems but burglars were keeping up with the changes and getting past them. - 1997

There are a number of options for people who can't afford to pay for security guards or alarm systems, or are concerned about using them. One is to form vigilante groups.

Vigilante groups may take to the streets in the South Auckland suburb of Manurewa in a bid to curb what they describe as a crime explosion... The chairman of Manurewa Neighbourhood Support... said police... statistics showed that burglaries jumped from 107 in February to 196 last month... A more telling figure, however, was that there were 156 burglaries in only the first two weeks of this month. Car thefts showed a similar trend. In February 39 vehicles were reported stolen followed by 69 a month later. In the first two weeks of this month 42 were taken. Other crimes on the increase included sexual abuse and domestic violence... If all unreported crime was recorded the picture would be much worse... "There has never

been a more urgent need for crime prevention with the co-operation of groups like Neighbourhood Support... The community must be aware of crime in their area and be prepared to help the police whenever possible to try and put the lid back on crime. The epidemic we are now experiencing in Manurewa must be reversed," [the chairman] said. "I believe we are now experiencing a breakdown in society and decent folk are wondering where we are all heading." ...Residents... are considering daytime patrols of neighbourhoods by car and on foot... [A] Senior Sergeant... of the Manurewa police... supported the crime patrol concept, adding that they would operate only between 9 am and 3 pm when most of the burglaries and thefts were taking place. If it went ahead, Manurewa would follow similar steps already taken by other communities such as Howick and Papatoetoe.

...The Mayor of Manukau... the Mayor of Papakura... and the Mayor of Franklin... are urging the community to take an active role in crime prevention. They supported the use of community crime patrol groups taking to the streets.

...Residents of the... Waikato town of Matamata are about to stand up and be counted in the war against crime... [by] re-establishing a civilian patrol to watch over the streets at night... Other people are considering more controversial solutions – like taking the law into their own hands.

...Guatemalans yesterday called for Government action against lynch mobs after vigilantes in two villages burned and beat to death seven people this week... On Tuesday in the town of Comitancillo, 200 townsfolk lynched five men suspected of stealing two mules... [T]he five men were dragged out of the local jail, where they were being held by police, and stoned and beaten with clubs. They were still alive when they were set on fire on the town soccer field... The killings... brought the year's total to about 50, newspapers said. About 30 people were lynched during 1996... Police have made few arrests of suspected lynchers... "People were encouraged because the state didn't do its job at investigating or even prosecuting and punishing the [vigilantes," said the]... head of the Catholic Church human rights office... The lynchings are a public spectacle and entire towns, including women and children, participate. - 1997

Enraged Guatemalans yesterday torched the bodies of three... robbers shot by police, and then threw a captured robber on the pyre to be burned alive... Soaring crime has led to a vigilante backlash in Guatemala, where the death penalty has won wide popularity.

...More ears and eyes are out in Te Atatu sniffing out crime. The Citizens Operated Patrol Intelligence Team, COP IT, went out on its first official patrol last week. More than 25 residents are donning reflective jackets and communicating via two way radios while on peninsula patrol... [T]hey won't be getting involved in incidents, they will just be calling the police.

...Six jobless people have been handed cellphones and asked to patrol the inner city of Hamilton and report suspicious activity to the police... The scheme has run in Lower Hutt for just over a year... The Lower Hutt administrator of the scheme... said it was being evaluated. But an apparent reduction in shoplifting and car tampering indicated it had been a success. It was likely the project could be extended to Wellington and... other cities, including Auckland... Community groups and volunteers [are] increasingly being used to make up for shortfalls in the police budget [– as are television programmes that seek to solve crimes by appealing for witnesses and information from the audience]... Although no police officers would publicly criticise the scheme, many are understood to be unhappy about civilians doing a job they no longer have time for.

Criminals have changed since the days when [he] served time, he explains a little mournfully. "When I was breaking and entering a place, if the owner had caught me I would have given up." These days burglars are more likely to blow away an inconvenient witness. "They don't care about human life any more,"... That is why he decided to launch a crime prevention scheme based on the use of lethal force... "You've got two choices, man... You can stand up or... just[be] a victim." ...For \$15 a year, members of his Dead Serious organisation receive bumper and home stickers and a newsletter with tips on protecting themselves from crime. They also get a promise: any member who legally shoots dead a criminal who is committing a crime will earn \$7500... [He] says the money is not a reward or bounty. "It's a crime deterrent... [C]ash... is the only thing criminals pay attention to... they realise that someone is going to benefit from preventing a crime." He and his wife started the group two years ago after a Texas airline stewardess was followed to her home and beaten almost to death. Now he claims more than 6000 members spread across the U[S] as well as a handful in Britain, A[US and N]Z... Many have been victims of violent crime themselves... No members have been the victim of a robbery since they joined. Nor has any member claimed the \$7500 bounty, held in an escrow account... [The founder] himself is a quietly-spoken, sweet-faced 36-year-old who was brought up by his great-aunt in [the] over-grown cow town... [of] Fort Worth... His family were so poor they could not afford electricity... and he got into trouble almost as soon as he left school, aged 12. "I knew right from wrong at all times... I just didn't give a damn." He admits that the burglary for which he was convicted was not the only one he carried out, but insists that he did turn his back on crime after serving a nine-month sentence. He takes a dim view of the American criminal justice system, which he says fails to impose sufficiently severe sentences and too readily entertains excuses for violent behaviour. He does not support recent controversial moves to castrate sex offenders. "Castrating just stops them getting erections. I'm in favour of executing them." Since [he] started his group, Texas has legalised the carrying of firearms, a move many critics say encourages people to take the law into their own hands... He says the law change was long overdue but suggests it would have had a greater deterrent effect if guns could be worn openly... [A]s a convicted felon, [he] is not allowed to own or carry a gun himself. - 1996

Guns and other weapons are another option *for people who can't afford to pay for security guards or alarm systems*, etc.

Weapons are devices used in offensive or defensive fighting to destroy, defeat, or injure an enemy... Defensive weapons, such as a shield, a bullet-proof vest, or a bomb shelter, are used for protection... [M]ost discussions of weapons[deal] only with offensive weapons – those which reach out and strike the enemy, such as a spear, a gun or a bomb... Offensive weapons are also used for hunting game to provide food for man.

"Today you're going to be a man..." "You guys are gonna teach me to drive?" ... "No... you can't drive, you're only 10. You're going hunting!"

Shrinking police resources have prompted a call from a gun lobby leader for the police to train householders to arm themselves in self-defence... "Giving citizens guns and training is all about enhancing the ability of citizens to defend themselves," he said... [This followed an earlier statement] on radio that self-defence could almost be termed the most important human right... His call... was dismissed by [an]Auckland gun policy researcher... [who] said self-defence as a reason for owning a gun was specifically prohibited. He urged police to quash [the] proposal immediately... as "dangerous nonsense – a mad American notion we can do without." - 1997

The Declaration of Independence provides every American the inalienable right to the pursuit of happiness. And most Americans have been pursuing it madly ever since.

...happiness is a warm gun...

...celebrate the bullet Put your finger on the trigger... pull it...

...with a gun for a lover...

[The] film-maker... uses the western genre as... an allegory about guns and American obsession with them.

That big gun in your hand makes you look grown-up, you think! I bet you spend hours posing in front of a mirror holding it, trying to look tough.

The weakest person can feel tough and the smallest person big if they have a gun in their hand!

...I'm gonna get me a gun and all those people who put me down... better get ready to run...

"People just don't understand how cheap a gun and the bullets are..." ...We were amazed to learn that a gun... which shoots 100 rounds, can be bought for a couple of hundred dollars. No background checks, no paperwork. "It's cash and carry. I've been to some gun shows that look like Persian bazaars for weapons." ... "with all the ammunition and all the damage he did, [the gunman] probably didn't spend more than \$300 to kill all those people and to injure all the others, those that did survive... Black Talon bullets were used with the gun." ... "I don't know what a Black Talon bullet is..." "Black Talon... is a hollow-point bullet. When it contacts it has claws and it explodes." ...BLACK TALONS THE R-I-P-P-I-N-G BULLETS... designed to cut its way through flesh! ... "Why do we need a bullet manufactured to do that, isn't that the question you must ask over and over?" "Why? A hunter wouldn't use them, a sportsman wouldn't use them... As far as I'm concerned... they advertise that particular bullet... for people like... criminals... Who was going to buy a bullet like that except somebody who wants to do some damage to human beings?" ... "Every 20 seconds in the U[S] a handgun is manufactured." ... "several companies... produce assault weapons. Assault weapons are designed specifically to kill a lot of people in a short amount of time... [Manufacturers] make money in selling these things and then, when their product is used exactly as it's designed, they wash their hands and say they didn't pull the trigger... I find that lack of responsibility and lack of accountability to be an issue... My wife was shot five times in the back... [Her killer] had 600 to 700 rounds of ammunition. His goal was to kill a tremendous amount of people. He had two assault weapons... he had hell-fire triggers, he had 50 round clips, he could fire 8 bullets per second. This was a machine out to kill people... this guy was shooting fish in a barrel. No gun, no bazooka, no grenade would have saved any of them. They were hunted... [T]he tragedy that's missed here... is the impact on all the lives... mothers, fathers, grandparents, my daughter... [She was] 10 months old. She's three... [now.] just started pre-school and she wants to know where her mother is? All the other mothers are taking their kids to school. How [do] you answer that?" ... "How easy is it to get those guns..." "As... easy as making a phone call. A transaction in an alley... behind someone's garage... in someone's house or right on the street. The guns are readily available. All you have to do is know someone who knows someone... and you can get a gun within minutes... for a little [or] no amount of money..." ...Guns purchased from private... owners are completely unregulated... Regulations certainly didn't concern many of the gun sellers we encountered. In fact [we] got all kinds of tips on how to get around the law, like where to go to buy a gun if you're underage... "When you get a gun in your house, chances are very slim that it's going to be used against a stranger... you're setting the scene for a tragedy." ... "a woman is twice as likely to be murdered by her boyfriend, her husband or a family member with a gun than she is to be killed by a stranger using a gun, a knife or any other kind of weapon." ... "There's very clear medical evidence that a gun in the house will endanger you, it won't protect you. A gun in the home means that there is three times as likely to be a homicide in that home, that there's five times as likely to be a suicide... so people shouldn't think that they're getting a gun for protection... Having a gun does not make you safer... They pose risks to you and... very serious risks to your children." Today over... 50% of[US] households have guns... That means... there is a one in two chance that when your child goes to a friend's house there is a gun in that home... 1.2 million latchkey kids go home to a house... that has no parent, but does have a gun... EVERY DAY IN AMERICA... 30 CHILDREN ARE INJURED BY GUNS... So far in Chicago this year 132 children have died. 101 of those children died as a result of gun violence... "The lethal violence against children is dramatically affected by a single instrument – the gun. We know that kids fight, we know that male children fight, but what has happened is the deadliness of that fight has become epidemic and a real crisis for... all adults who care..." ... "the leading cause of death... in America, in terms of teenage boys, both Black and White, is gunshot wounds..." ... "There's no evidence that kids are more violent today than they were before but the violence that they do, the instruments that they use, are lethal. A fight with a fist... with a bottle, even with a knife, is much less lethal than it is with a gun and... it's easier for a child to get a gun than it is for them to get a book or a vaccination or a job. And that is not the children's responsibility, that's adult responsibility." ... "In the early '80s the typical victim was shot once with a low calibre revolver... By the 1990s 25% of my patients are now shot more than once, and the types of weapons have changed... We are literally fighting a war on the streets of our city and, unfortunately, it's a war that we're actually losing... I've become convinced that you shouldn't really have people like [accident and emergency staff], and trauma centres that deal with this mayhem... The word accident implies there's really nothing [that] could be done... that's not true. It was no accident that the gun was there... that it was a very sophisticated weapon... [that] the person knew how to use it, and, more importantly, it was no accident that the person resorted to violence... [W]hat we're really dealing with here is an epidemic of violence in our society. We need to understand the roots of that and try to stamp it out." ... "there are people that... are scared to death at night. Sometimes the only valuable thing they have, aside from their children, is a television set... [T]hey are in their homes, absolutely a prisoner, because of the breakdown of society, and the breakdown of the laws and... of the way the criminal justice system operates." ... "if current trends persist, by the year 2001 one million[US] babies will be born every year [into] poverty; 44 thousand teenage mothers will have children every month and 37 thousand children will be arrested every week... [I]f that isn't some reason why we ought to be devoting our attention to this very critical issue then I don't know what other statistics will turn Americans and American politics around. To me gun possession, the use of guns, is indeed a symptom of... the disease of poverty... the disease of living in a culture that perpetrates violence, that shows violence as part of our cultural heritage."

"...I know you're too young for that machine-gun you wanted, but I'm going to give you something that'll make sure when you're old enough you can still buy one – a membership in the National Rifle Association." "Wow, the NRA! Can I get armour-piercing, cyanide-tipped bullets too?" "It's in the Constitution son."

Those of us who manage to get through life without shooting anything would probably not object to the widespread ownership of the flintlock muskets that abounded when... the American constitution's second amendment guarantee to protect "the right... to bear arms"... was written. But we're living in the age of the semi-automatic and the pump-action shotgun... It is doubtful that the Oklahoma federal buildings bombers are the sort of individuals the N[RA] has in mind when it uses the constitution... [to defend] personal freedom.

...everywhere I went in America I was realising that the constitutional right to bear arms was costing thousands of citizens the right to draw another breath! I decided to find out just how easy it was to get a gun in Kansas... "...I'm looking for a... handgun... something hefty that'll do a bus queue in four seconds." "Are you a little crazy?" "No... I'm not crazy at all... [I want to know w]hat happens if somebody just walks in off the

street and says they want to buy a gun?" "If you're over 21 years old and have a Kansas drivers licence you can do it... [Just] fill out a little form... called a 4473... [with] your name, address, date of birth[... then answer]... seven or eight questions that are asking you if you're on marijuana, cocaine, if you've ever been in a mental institution, if you're a citizen of the US... if you've ever been discharged from the Army, sign it and date it, and you can walk out of here with a handgun..." "...ever check these [answers]? Is there any way of checking..." "We don't check." "You don't check anything?" "No... if they [are] a little loony we don't sell them a gun." "...you could walk in here and buy one of those semi-automatics just like that?" "Yes..." "...if [somebody]... wanted one of these would you not think they might be a bit nutty?" "...I would ask them if they were just going to target shoot or... [do] they want a toy... want to shoot somebody or protect... [themselves]. If that's what they wanted I'd sell it to them..." "You don't find that [a] worrying prospect?" "[I'd] find it frightening if I didn't have... [a gun,] but I'm 21 and I can..." "Yeah, but in an ideal world would you agree it would be better if there weren't any guns at all?" "No... [Anyway,] now you can't take them away from the criminals... If they outlaw guns only outlaws will have guns." "It... amazes me how cheerfully you accept it when... there were twenty-seven thousand people killed with handguns last year... I'm not being smug about it but there was only seven people killed with handguns in Britain last year... and that's because the handgun laws are very, very strict." "It's a dog eat dog world... and it's your right to protect yourself and your property and your family." "...There are twelve children killed with guns every day in the U[S, which is]... quite unbelievable. What happens is that... a lot of those wee 38s and 22 handguns look exactly like toys... they find them in mummy's draw, pull 'em out and go bang bang... [I]t's just too frightening to contemplate. It just seems crazy... But then... half the aristocracy in Britain dress like tramps and spend their days off shooting hundreds of wee birdies. It's a funny and confusing world really.

Princess Diana loves the Caribbean island of Barbuda and the privacy of its \$4000-a-night K-club – last week was her fifth holiday there... Apparently "bored rigid" with the breaks, [her eldest son – who is the 2nd-in-line to the British throne –] longs instead to be shooting at Sandringham or Balmoral. "He hates... the sun," says a royal servant, "...He'd rather be... on the moors with a gun in his hand – shooting is his passion."

The Princess of Wales, already at war with her former husband... is now fighting with her... 14-year-old... son... over his lust for blood sports[... T]he *Sunday Mirror*... said... Diana feared her eldest son would turn into "a remorseless hunter... The animal-loving princess is deeply concerned about the psychological effects that hunting – so favoured by the royals – will have on... [her sons." The eldest son] is believed to have stalked and shot his first stag last month on the Queen's Balmoral estate in the Scottish highlands. "In a stern warning from the palace, the princess has been told that their pastime is none of her business and she must not speak out,"...

The Princess of Wales says she will not question her son's interest in hunting. Diana spoke out yesterday in response to reports that she is deeply concerned over... [her eldest son]'s love of shooting... [In related news, n]early three-quarters of Britons want the Government to ban private ownership of handguns, according to a *Sunday Times* newspaper poll.

...A... House of Commons... committee... set up after the Dunblane massacre is preparing to reject a ban on handguns in favour of stricter licensing laws, a move expected to anger parents of the victims, according to the *Sunday Times*... [But AUS] will get its tough new uniform national gun laws – outlawing most rapid-fire and military-style firearms – following the capitulation yesterday of three rebel governments. Queensland, Western A[US] and the Northern Territory gave in to the P[M, who]... last week... warned that he would put the issue to a national referendum if the rebels did not fall into line... Newly illegal firearms will be surrendered under an amnesty costing at least \$A500 million in buy-back compensation... [funded by] a one-off increase in the Medicare health levy. However, no one knows how many of the weapons are held throughout A[US], with estimates from 3.5 million to 10 million, and extremists have threatened widespread concealment of guns.

...A[US]ns this week will begin noticing one of the first tangible effects of the Port Arthur-inspired gun crackdown – their pay packets will be a little lighter. Medicare-style deductions mark the start of a financial year in which taxpayers will fork out an extra \$A500 million... to compensate gun owners who turn in their newly banned firearms. The cost to individuals is not huge – less than \$A1.50 a week for the average earner. But neither is the amount of surrendered weaponry. Police figures indicate several thousand weapons at most have been handed in since the April 28 Port Arthur massacre, a tiny fraction of the... guns in the community... • Britons handed in 15,360 guns in a one-month amnesty declared after a weapons enthusiast massacred 17 people at a school...

Pressure is mounting on the [British] Government to ban private ownership of handguns as the press and public vent their fury at members of Parliament who rejected radical moves in the aftermath of the Dunblane tragedy. It has been increased by a court case in which a man who obtained by mail order the firearm with which he shot a young mother of two was found guilty of her murder... Meanwhile, parliamentarians in Tasmania, where 35 people were massacred at Port Arthur... have failed to agree on gun control legislation inspired by the tragedy. If the bill lapses, Tasmania could become the last place in the nation which had failed to implement the uniform national gun laws agreed by federal, state and territory police ministers... [In local news,] police... shot dead a man after an armed confrontation at a service station... in the busy Greenlane area... last night... The incident lasted for about half an hour and... three shots were heard... A representative of the Police Complaints Authority will travel to Auckland this morning to oversee an inquiry into the shooting. This is the latest in a series of shootings by police officers. Two weeks ago, a woman was shot in the arm after allegedly holding a knife to the throat of a dairy owner in Avondale...

The Police Association says lives could be saved if a fulltime rapid response unit, along the lines of the U[S] Swat teams, was set up in Auckland. The call comes in the wake of two police shootings in Auckland in less than a month – the fatality in Greenlane on Saturday and an incident in Avondale... In both cases the shootings were carried out by frontline sergeants not connected with the armed offenders squad, a situation the Police Association said was far from ideal. The association's Auckland director... said... "If an offender sees one cop with a gun he is more inclined to think he has a 50-50 chance than if he sees a squad of 10 guys all dressed in black pointing guns at him. It[']d be far safer for the public and staff." At present armed offenders squad officers work a normal eight-hour day and have to be called out from home if an incident occurs after hours.

...Startled diners on Ponsonby Rd in Auckland this week experienced an unforgettable taste of downtown Los Angeles when an innocent woman was shot during a bungled street robbery. The Monday night attack, which follow[s]... a string of headline-grabbing firearms incidents this year, has left many people fearing they are living in the wrong megalopolis. However, according to Police National Headquarters' statistics the total number of offences involving firearms has decreased from 4701 during the 1990/1991 year to 4361 during the 1995/1996 year. Homicides involving firearms reached 51 during 1990/1991, then dropped to 26 and 24 for the following two years, falling to 18 for 1995/1996... According to the statistics there were 198 incidents of intimidation/threats involving guns in 1990/1991 and the figures continued rising, peaking at 303 in 1994/1995. Armed robberies also showed a marked increase from 197 incidents in 1990/1991, 319 the following year and 240 in 1995/1996... [A]bout 100 weapons a month were stolen from legal arms owners around the country. About a quarter of these were recovered after being used in violent crime. Over half of the guns were not stored securely when they were stolen... said... [the] commander of the Auckland Armed Offenders Squad, who points out that although crimes... involving firearms had fallen... our streets ha[ve] become more violent... "The most trendy crime committed in N[Z] is aggravated robbery. A firearm is predominantly carried to be used as a threat, not as a weapon to cause serious bodily injury or harm. Yet on Monday night we had the same scenario but the weapon was used. I hope that's not a trend of the future." [The commander] cautions that the statistics do not include other weapons, including knives, crossbows, bombs, even chainsaws, which he said had contributed to increased violence on the streets. "Crimes with a weapon are increasing. In the days when I was a young policeman, if somebody... [was]

accidentally bumped in a hotel there would be an apology. Then it got to the stage when... you got a punch in the jaw... now it's out with the knife and an injury is inflicted. The degree of violence has certainly increased." Despite the escalation... he was "completely opposed" to the introduction of a full-time tactical unit. "There isn't sufficient work in Auckland to warrant that." His... Squad could go for up to a month without being called out on a live incident. About 60 staff would be needed for a tactical unit to operate around the clock... A squad of that size and type would lead to an over-reaction by its members in a bid to justify its existence and in the long-term contribute to a rise in violence, he said. [● NZ police, like UK bobbies, don't normally carry guns on their person, and a recent public survey found that '7 out of 10 NZers are against police carrying guns' at all times]

...*Police stand in the line of fire...* The Police Association believes that frontline police facing the daily prospect of an armed confrontation and having to shoot to defend the public and themselves need more training. At present most police officers get just two days' instruction a year, including live practice with pistol and rifle. This is to be increased to three days from the middle of next year. Only specialists in the armed offenders and diplomatic protection squads and those trained to deal with hijackings get more practice. Yet it is the men and women in blue who are usually the first on the scene. Three times in the past 12 months officers in this situation have had to make the decision to open fire – in Whangarei, where an armed man was shot dead in the street in broad daylight last November; in Avondale, Auckland, in August, where a woman holding a knife at a superette owner was shot and wounded; and two weeks ago when an offender sprayed shots from a semi-automatic weapon at a... service station in Green Lane, refused to surrender, and was killed with a single shot. Each time, the uniformed police on the spot felt they could not wait for the specialists to arrive because of the danger posed by the offender. [The] president of the Police Association, says every time officers go on patrol these days there's a risk of an armed confrontation... [He] is not suggesting that the police be armed as a matter of routine, but believes officers need to be more familiar with the weapons they do have... "When you get into an armed situation you don't want to be also thinking about the weapon you've got, only the job that you have to do..." At any one time in Auckland's five police districts there may be up to 27 uniformed police including a duty inspector and three sergeants [– driving 'supervisory patrol cars' – carrying firearms (in addition, 'our international airport police are required permanently to be armed in the precincts of the airport')]. The standard issue is a Smith and Wesson .38 six-shot revolver although that is now being replaced by a Glock, 17-shot semi-automatic firing a 5.56mm round. South Island police have been trained and issued with the new handgun and the switch is now being done in Wellington and nearby districts. In Auckland, where most violence and armed incidents occur, police won't start getting the Glock before next July – because of budget restraints. - 1996

The trusty .38 calibre... Smith and Wesson... revolvers, which were introduced in the mid 1960s, are being phased out of police stations around the country as the department upgrades its armoury with Austrian-made... Glock pistols. [The s]uperintendent... in charge of the operations support section in Wellington, said police armourers would check the... 1356... revolvers as they were handed in and those deemed unsuitable for sale would be cut up. The remainder... would be put up for tender to reputable overseas companies. None would be sold in N[Z]. However, a[n] Auckland arms dealer, said the international firearms market was flooded with second-hand police issue revolvers. "Most overseas police forces have already dumped their Smith and Wessons." He said the successful tender was unlikely to pay more than \$20 for each revolver, although they would be worth about \$350 to firearms collectors in N[Z]. The dealer also said that in recent years the Army[has] sold off its remaining Bren guns, boxed with spare barrels, to overseas buyers for just \$23. Holders of C class firearms collectors' licences in this country paid up to \$1600 each for them. He said the army was still seeking foreign buyers for 10,000 superseded M16 rifles. [The superintendent] said the transition to Glock pistols was due to be completed by the end of the year... The head of the police armed offenders squad in Auckland... said the Smith and Wessons had given good service during their deployment.

...N[SW] police would be re-armed with a lightweight, powerful automatic pistol to replace the 19th century Smith and Wesson six-shot revolver... which is considered difficult to load, heavy and inaccurate... the Minister of Police... said yesterday. The long-awaited \$A11 million... contract for the police sidearm brings the state into line with the FBI and the New York Police Department, he said... "I am advised that [the Austrian] Glock outperformed all other tendered weapons in safety features, accuracy, reliability, design and construction." ...A coroner's report into the deaths of [two] Senior Constables... at Crescent Head, near Kempsey, in July 1995, questioned the suitability of the present .38 calibre weapons and said frontline officers needed the protection of vests... Yesterday's announcement follows the state government budgeting for \$2 million to purchase 2,000 bullet-resistant vests over the next few years... The standard Glock 22 carried 15 hollow-point bullets in a pre-loaded magazine which would enable police to carry 30 rounds instead of the 12 most carried now... In the four years from July, 13,000 of the .40 calibre handguns would be issued... Every police officer in the state would be put through an extensive retraining programme. The introduction of the new police sidearm comes after years of police complaints about being out-gunned by criminals... Various versions... [of] Glock sidearms... also have been adopted by police in the Northern Territory, Tasmania, Queensland... and... the Australian Federal Police... [Incidentally, m]ore than 10,000 people in A[US] died by gunshot during the 16 years from 1980 to 1995, according to... the A[US]n Bureau of Statistics.

...[AN] ANTI-GUN lobbyist... said yesterday N[Z] has on average one firearm per household, 11 times as many guns per capita as Britain and 60% more than A[US]. He said the figures were staggering and needed to be addressed by the Government.

...HANDGUNS... are entering N[Z] and ending up in the possession of gangs, according to new research.[A] Canterbury University sociology lecturer... said the sources of the handguns were from sailors from eastern Europe who were able to buy guns cheaply in their home countries and sell them... in N[Z]... for... around \$1500... Police say while they have no evidence of handguns arriving from eastern Europe, illegal handguns were sometimes found in raids of gang houses. The Customs Department said around 18 months ago there were numerous reports of handguns coming into N[Z] from eastern Europe, but no seizures were made. Over the last year or so these reports had tailed off, a... spokesman said. [● Last week Customs expressed concern about the existence of a '35 keyring-sized gun that has a 20m kill range and is undetectable by customs x-ray machines.'

...A Customs Department review of the Arms Act has identified a loophole which has the potential to allow shipments of illegal arms into N[Z]. The anomaly arises from the wording of the 1986 Arms Act which excludes harbours and territorial waters from its legal definition of N[Z]. This]... means that guns entering N[Z] on foreign-flagged vessels have not technically been imported while they remain on board. In this situation, neither Customs nor police officers have any power to take action regardless of the type or number of weapons carried on board. This, the department said, could lead to N[Z] being used as a transit point for the illegal shipment of firearms to foreign destinations. It also raises the possibility of weapons carried on visiting yachts being landed, sold or stolen after the vessels had been cleared... by the Customs Department... [I]t was a poorly kept secret that mega-yachts sailing to N[Z] from the U[S] and Caribbean often carried mini-arsenals... to ward off pirates, though very few cases of piracy are reported, and certainly none in the South Pacific... Foreign yacht skippers are required to declare all weapons when entering N[Z] and to surrender these to customs officers. The weapons are then passed to the police and held until the yachts leave.

...N[Z] will be seen as "a nation awash with guns" when a U[N] study on firearm regulation is released early today... The... study, due to be made public in Vienna, compares the regulation of firearms in 49 countries... [S]tatistics... showed this country had... [the] third-highest rate of firearms ownership, with 309 guns per 1000 people. Only the U[S] and Finland had more firearms per capita... [NZ also has the] fifth-highest gun suicide rate, after the U[S], Finland, Estonia and Canada[; the]... fifth-highest rate of unintentional gun death[; and the]... 11th-highest overall rate of gun death... The report covered industrial and non-industrial countries, containing 68[%] of the world population... N[Z] and the U[S] were almost alone in the developed world in that most firearms were not required to be registered.

...While applicants for a gun licence in other countries must belong to a registered target shooting club, produce written evidence of permission to shoot on a named rural property or be primary producers with a proven problem with feral animals, N[Z]ers need only write the word "sport" for a licence application to be granted... [I]t is difficult to get a good "guesstimate" of the numbers of... those involved in sports shooting[, but it is somewhere between]... 150,000 to 250,000... The 12-gauge is the most common shotgun in this country... used primarily for the hunting of game birds, for rabbit and possum shooting, and also by a large number of those involved in the wide-spread sport of clay target shooting... The 12-gauge shotgun is a fearsome weapon at close range. At 30 to 40 metres it can cause horrific wounds... [●] The minimum age for owning a firearm in N[Z] is 16. In Canada and A[US] it is 18.

...GUN collectors are nice people. Really. Just ask [a]75-year-old... She loves Auckland's annual gun fair and the people who go there... "These are the real N[Z]ers, salt of the earth," she says... Every year for the past four years, she has set up her stall to sell Victorian china... bearing prints of gun dogs, ducks and the like... Organisers invite... [the 75-year-old] to display her porcelain because "the wives needed something to look at other than guns." ...the good keen men who come to the ASB Stadium in Kohimarama each year to look at pistols, rifles, shotguns and machine guns... [may be nice people, but m]assacres in Aramoana, Dunblane... and... Tasmania... have helped engender an environment where collecting guns is perceived as an unhealthy pastime. The collectors blame the media for their bad reputation and are noticeably gun-shy when journalists ask them about their attraction to the lethal devices. Do the collectors deserve the scorn? Are they any different from train spotters, stamp collectors and people who play fantasy role-playing games? No they say... "Just because they're lethal weapons doesn't make it any different to collecting stamps." Indeed, but stamp collectors don't refer to their prize Black Penny as a woman, as one gun club did about the presumably rare Sharps Long Range Express rifle. "Playmate of the Month... with her clothes off!" ...was the headline of the club's newsletter... Collecting guns is one thing, but imbuing weapons which kill with sexual characteristics is just plain weird.

...[a New Yorker] went shopping with a rather odd deadly weapon... And it ended up costing him a big slice of his life. [The man], aged 29, was convicted of robbing [someone] of \$US20... and a watch by pretending a zucchini hidden under his jacket was a gun. His defence had argued he was innocently shopping for vegetables. But [the judge]... declared: "You added to the climate of fear we have to live in." The judge pronounced... a minimum of 15 years in prison.

...A federal marshal in the U[S] shot dead a teenager after mistaking the silver wrapping of a chocolate bar... for a handgun... [The boy], aged 17, was walking past the car of undercover law enforcement officers... when he reached into his pocket for... [the chocolate bar. In further news from the US, a New Mexico farmer] who connected guns to his burglar alarm blasted himself to death... John Osbourne (51)[, of]... Holtsville... rigged up the booby trap for outlaws. But, home from a night of drinking, he forgot about the alarm trip wires.

...Momentum is gathering for worldwide action on gun control to stem the increasing number of deaths from firearms among civilians... The U[N] Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice is expected to approve a resolution this week to urge countries to impose tighter restrictions on gun ownership and export... The controversial issue of gun control came under the spotlight in A[US] and Britain last year following... massacre[s. A]... UN report showed that 41[% of U]S... households owned at least one gun, compared with 16[% in AUS and 4%] in Britain. A US Justice Department survey put the figure slightly lower at 35[%], but... showed that about 14 people per 100,000 die annually in the U[S] from firearms-related deaths... That amounts to 37,000 people... Burkina Faso had the highest figure at 26 people per 100,000, followed by Jamaica with 18 per 100,000... 44 million Americans in 1994 owned 192 million firearms, including 65 million handguns... 74[%] of the gun owners possessed at least two firearms... [O]n a typical day in the U[S] one million adults carry a gun with them and a further two million carry a firearm in their vehicle... 20[%] of all gun-owning households had an unlocked or loaded gun. Middle-aged, college-educated people in small rural towns were most likely to own guns... Also, 42[%] of men, but only 9[%] of the women, surveyed owned firearms. About 80[%] of the gun owners reported that their parents kept a gun in the house while they were growing up... The... Justice Department survey... cited the accidental shooting deaths of 185 children in 1994... [and] 1500 injuries to children... that [required] trips to the emergency room.

...MOST U[S] hand-gun manufacturers have agreed to provide child safety locks with their firearms as part of a pact with the [President's] administration, but the deal does not yet include three southern California companies that are among the largest producers of cheap hand-guns known as Saturday night specials... [In related news, a]fter his landslide election to the National Rifle Association board this week... [a] 72-year-old actor... is now... running for first vice-president... The potential power struggle comes amid concerns over the NRA's declining finances and drop in membership from 3.5 million in 1995 to 2.8 million this year. It is still one of Washington's most powerful lobbying groups.

...Washington is one of eight American states where more people are killed by guns than die in road crashes.

...JUST hours after a Louisiana law that allows drivers to shoot would-be carjackers took effect, one teenager was killed and another wounded by two men who stole their car... "These latest shootings are really ironic," a New Orleans police department spokeswoman said: "I mean, that's what the law was supposed to prevent. Now you can't help but worry that the next person's going to overreact when somebody walks up to his car for directions,"... The law, which took effect at 12:01am on Friday, permits intended carjack victims to shoot to kill when they believed themselves threatened by an assailant, armed or not. The law, approved by the state legislature earlier this year, is a companion to the 1993 "shoot the burglar" law... Louisiana law already permitted handguns to be carried in vehicles without permits.

...[his] chosen profession is saving lives... with a successful general practice in Auckland[, which is why]... some may see it as strange that the 49-year-old is also an outspoken voice for the country's pro-gun lobby. But, as vice-president of the N[Z] Shooters Association, he believes the public has been misinformed and led astray by anti-gun enthusiasts... "The promise... of gun-control lobbyists... that gun laws will save or reduce crime is a nonsense. The lives they save are the criminals because they actually disarm the law-abiding... It has been long known that the pattern of legal gun ownership and the pattern of crime has been opposite – they are mirror images of each other. For instance... [in] America the states with the toughest gun laws have the highest crime rate and the crime rate goes up after each extra restriction... [I]n the 1920s when there were plenty of firearms, violent crime was, in reality, very low... [and, today,] most of the guns are in the country but most of the crime is in the town[s]... So anyone who thinks there is... a link is basically not thinking straight."

...A firearms report by a retired High Court judge recommends that the Government buys back... up to 30,000 military-style semi-automatic weapons... from N[Z]ers... at market prices over six months... The review also recommended that semi-automatic weapons be limited to a magazine capacity of seven cartridges, and that... pump-action shotguns be altered to take no more than two cartridges. The Government should pay for the alterations... [M]ilitary-style semi-automatic weapons cost \$500-\$600 on average, so the buy-back exercise would cost... \$18 million[– 'and is rising every day' – but 'it will cost \$59.8 million to implement the recommendations (although a study showed that new gun laws would have to prevent only one to three gun deaths a year for NZ to break even – each violent death cost the country a minimum of \$1 million in direct costs alone, not counting court costs and indirect losses'), including the one]... that guns be registered... A gun policy researcher... said licensing gun owners but not their weapons, as is the case now, was like licensing drivers but not their cars... He admits registration is not going to stop shooting deaths any more than car registration stops road deaths. But car registration is one of many "commonsense provisions to make us personally and individually accountable for our cars. Gun registration will make us personally and individually accountable for our guns."

...4500 prohibited firearms... have been handed over in Sydney in the past month under the A[US]n Government's buy-back scheme... [The] guns... were picked up by a giant magnet and put through a shredder and destroyed... A total of 470,000 guns have been collected nationally, with owners receiving \$A243 million... in compensation... [Incidentally, m]ore than 500 million military-style, hand-held weapons provide massive

firepower for criminals, vigilantes... private Armies and other civilians... Worldwatch said in a report published yesterday... Add to that new small-arms production of several million a year... "It may not be much of an exaggeration to say that we are witnessing an era in which, in a sense, Armies are disarming while civilians are re-arming,"... said... the report... [S]ome weapons are sold by soldiers, some sent en masse to other countries and some stolen.

...Police on the streets of America's second-largest city have been given Army surplus M-16 assault rifles to match the increasing firepower of criminals. The Governor of California... said that 600 of the powerful weapons had been supplied to Los Angeles police officers in the wake of a shootout with bank robbers earlier this year that was shown live on television. Officers responding to the Bank of America robbery... were confronted by two men wearing body armour and firing assault weapons. Finding their 9mm service revolvers inadequate, the police were forced to run to a local gun shop for help. "Never, ever again do I want to see officers from the Los Angeles Police Department outgunned," [he] said.

...Used anti-tank rocket launchers, once sold in Army surplus stores but now deemed illegal weapons, are being sought by... [NZ police because they] were... being used by criminals to intimidate victims... If a criminal carried a launcher during a bank robbery, it would be difficult to tell if it had been used or not. Police were also concerned that the launcher could be reloaded by a qualified armourer... War veterans had also brought them back from overseas and gun collectors had imported them... Arms officers were checking gun collectors throughout the country to establish whether those possessing the used launchers were licensed. The Army has also warned soldiers that the weapons must be returned to an ammunition depot for disposal after use. Soldiers who did not do so faced a \$4000 fine or three years' imprisonment, or both... [By the way, i]t is 50 years since the first AK-47 assault rifle... – ...one of the world's most determined killing machines... – ...was made... [It was] the one mass-produced item the Soviet Union made that actually worked and had staying power. And it changed the course of history... There was a time when an outsider could tell which side of the world a soldier fought for, by looking at the silhouette of the weapon... A few years ago, [its inventor] said he wanted to set up a fund to help the victims of gunshot wounds... He is said to have viewed his weapon only as a defensive tool to protect the motherland from invaders, an ironic mission for a gun that has spread around the world and linked itself to bold, ideological aggression everywhere... The estimate... is that some... 40 million AK-47s... and its licensed imitators... have been pieced together... It uses a steel-jacketed, lead-headed ammunition that puts it just this side of the technical parts of the Geneva Convention. This gives it a deadly, crippling effectiveness on the battlefield because the round tumbles when it hits bone and can damage far beyond the entrance wound... It is so dependable... [and] so simple that a 10-year-old can use it... The AK-47 fires 600 rounds a minute and can be retrieved from mud and cleaned to firing status in much less time than it takes to crack open its more sophisticated modern competitors... It needs no tender, loving care at all, thriving on a little bit of oil... It can be bought for a few hundred dollars, and traded for almost anything of an equivalent value anywhere in the world. N[Z] police have estimated that there are more than 60,000 AK-47 lookalikes in this country alone.

...Two youngsters playing with a toy gun sparked a full-scale police alert in Auckland yesterday, bringing an angry response from the head of the armed offenders squad... "It is ludicrous that... replica firearms... are available and people are selling them... Innocent parties all the way along the chain are being placed in jeopardy because some idiot has supplied a person with a weapon that looks so real." ...Because the play-guns on sale were so authentic it would not be long before someone was shot by police who mistook the toys for the real thing... [It] was the third incident involving toy weapons and the squad during the past six months and each operation was a drain on already strapped police resources... The[latest] operation is estimated to have cost several thousand dollars... Armed frontline police staff, the police Eagle helicopter and the armed offenders squad – dozens of officers in all – were called out after reports someone was seen with a gun... in... Mt Roskill... A cordon was set up in the area... two hours... before... police swooped on a house... The imitation weapons should be banned, [the head said. ● 'Kenya banned the sale of toy guns during the early 1980s.']

...The Vietnamese Government says it will ban toy weapons to protect the minds of the nation's children. A Trade Ministry official said the ban, which covered bamboo and plastic swords, bows, rifles and grenade-shaped cigarette lighters, applied to both imported and locally produced toys.

...It's official – most [NZ] police wouldn't know a real gun from a fake. A competition [asked] police officers around the country to spot the real police issue Glock pistol from... 11 replicas... Only three... [were correct out of] 50 entries...

The Minister of Police will raise the matter of replica firearms when he meets the Commissioner of Police today, following a series of incidents at the weekend... Legal issues of importing replica weapons into N[Z] would be considered... The Minister... said Parliament was... reviewing firearms legislation... [but] section 46 of the Firearms Act 1983... already... prohibited the carrying of imitation firearms... Offenders faced up to two years' jail. The weekend's firearm alerts... involved... [a] 50-year-old... wielding a fake gun in a Waihi shop[; a]... 16-year-old... taking pot-shots at students camping at Dickey's Flat[;] ...two youths playing with paint guns on a Wellington reserve[;] ...a 12-year-old boy [using] an imitation gun to challenge an Invercargill officer[;] ...three 16-year-olds carrying plastic laser guns; a 17-year-old who faces firearms charges after allegedly carrying a gun; and two 14-year-olds referred to youth aid after armed police found them with an imitation Colt 45 outside a takeaway shop. - 1997

WAITAKERE[S] police chief Superintendent... is calling for tighter controls on sales of imitation guns... follow[ing]... the fatal shooting of Edwin "Eddie" Leo near Helensville... Leo was shot three times after pointing an imitation Glock pistol at two police officers after a crash at the end of a car chase. The... Police Complaints Authority... report says the shooting could have been avoided had Leo complied with police demands to put down the gun... The... [superintendent] says any person pointing a firearm – toy, imitation or real – at an armed officer can expect to be shot... At least four west Auckland schools had confiscated air rifles, BB and replica guns from students in the months leading up to the Leo shooting... [In related news, the] father of a... teenager shot in a hunting accident says the killer must pay. Beau Fathers, a 15-year-old Rotorua boys' high student, was shot in bush near his parents' Hamurana farm on Friday... Beau and his cousin... were setting up camp when they heard what they thought was a stag roaring. The noise was a roar from another pair of hunters. The two young men began stalking it but one of the other hunters shot Beau... [A] Senior Sergeant... of the Rotorua police, said it had still to be decided if charges would be laid against the hunter. It is the second time this month that a person has been accidentally killed by another hunter. Ngaroma farm manager Russell Welch, 31, was shot in Pureora Forest on April 2. [A 39-year-old], of Hahei, was sentenced to two years' supervision and fined \$2000.

...An American... was shot dead on his sixth birthday when a 4-year-old fired a hand gun the two found in a purse... Neighbours said it appeared the children had been playing outside when their usual game of pretend gunplay took a deadly turn... Police may charge the gun's owner under a law that prohibits leaving guns accessible to minors. Meanwhile, in Pennsylvania, a 14-year-old boy was charged yesterday with killing a teacher at an eighth-grade graduation dance which had the theme "I've Had the Time of My Life." ...He... fired several shots... [while] his schoolmates were dancing to the last song, *My Heart Will Go On* from the movie *Titanic*... Two 14-year-old boys... [and another] teacher... were wounded.

...Nearly a million U[S] students took guns to school in the past academic year, according to a private study... [T]here was some good news. The survey's author's noted the percentage of students who say they carried guns to school has dropped in the past five years, from six... to 3.8... The latest academic year has seen deadly shootings at schools [in Pennsylvania], Mississippi... Arkansas and... Oregon. [Some schools have employed security guards, installed metal detectors, and a few 'hold practise drills so the children have an idea of what to do if the school becomes a target for bullets.'] ● 'Over 6000 US high school students were expelled in the 1995-96 school year for carrying weapons, according to a Department of Education report.'

...Stung by the first school shooting in a nation with strict gun control, Dutch authorities want to know how a student was able to get a handgun and wound five people... In the aftermath of the shooting at a vocational school in Veghel, a quiet working-class town south of Amsterdam, [the] Justice Minister... said he would not rule out the use of metal detectors at schools to prevent another incident. Dutch people struggled to understand how a school shooting, so dreaded in the U[S], could happen in Holland.

...A kid in a white shirt heaved something up on to the high school roof, and it exploded in billowing smoke. Student[s initially]... thought it was just a lunchtime prank, a firecracker maybe. Then bodies started falling... They were the first victims in yesterday's bloody late-morning shooting spree at Columbine High School in [the] affluent Denver suburb of Littleton... By early today 15 bodies had been recovered – nine boys, three girls and one adult. Twenty people lay critically ill in hospital, but police fear more victims may lie inside the booby-trapped school. Hours after the shooting – by two teen killers clad in balaclavas and trench coats who giggled as they sprayed bullets at their fellow students – Columbine High was rocked by two explosions. Bomb disposal experts were combing the classrooms last night, and had recovered more than a dozen handmade devices, including pipe bombs. A pipe bomb was also found at the home of one of two 18-year-olds whose bodies lay in the library after what police say was a “suicide mission,” possibly timed to coincide with Adolf Hitler's birthday.

...What drove two teenagers to walk into a Colorado high school and kill at least 15 people may never be known, but behavioural experts say giving troubled teens easy access to guns can spell disaster... [T]eenage years are a tumultuous, impetuous time when issues such as popularity can become all-important. “It's a time when people feel they don't fit in... They're highly sensitive to whether they're included or excluded... Adolescents are also impulsive. They make sudden decisions without thinking them out. There is a tendency to be self-absorbed, that how they're feeling now is how things are going to be forever.” Fellow students identified the Denver killers as two seniors... who belonged to an anti-social “gothic” clique that calls itself the Trench Coat Mafia and was ridiculed by other students... The killings at Columbine High... were the latest in a series of shootings at schools across the U[S] in the past 18 months that have killed another 14 people and wounded more than 40... [The US] President... said... “We do know that we must do more to reach out to our children and teach them to express their anger and to resolve their conflicts with words, not weapons.”

...A defiant... head of the biggest US gun group, told cheering supporters yesterday that the N[RA] would not... take the blame for the Columbine High massacre. As thousands of anti-gun demonstrators marched to protest against the NRA's holding its annual meeting so close to the scene of the worst school shooting in US history, the former Hollywood star declared... anti-gun advocates were wrongly blaming gun owners who... had a constitutional right to bear arms. “They want us to play the heavy in their drama of packaged grief, [but we're]... not the rustic, reckless radicals they wish for. No, the NRA spans the broadest range of American demography imaginable. We defy stereotype except for love of country,”... The [actor who once portrayed Moses]... was scathing when he spoke of demands – including one from Denver's mayor – that the 2.8 million-member NRA cancel its meeting because of the deaths, although the group did scale back its convention and held a minute of silence for the Columbine victims... Police have said that the shooters Eric Harris... and Dylan Klebold... got three of the four weapons they used from Klebold's[18-year-old] girlfriend... She allegedly bought them at a gun show where neither a waiting period, identification or a background check was required.

...[US h]andgun manufacturers were found liable of negligence in a landmark decision yesterday in which they were blamed for seven shootings with illegal guns, resulting in the deaths of six people... The... case... drew national attention because it was the first time lawyers for shooting victims had argued that manufacturers' distribution and marketing practices made it easier for criminals to obtain guns. In addition to the negligence and liability findings, the jury awarded \$US4 million... in damages... to the only surviving victim in the case... The gun companies... American Arms, Beretta USA Corp and Taurus International Manufacturing... said they were being wrongly blamed for the criminal actions of individuals... [■ L]ast week's amnesty... [– during which] District of Columbia residents would be paid \$US100... for each gun they turned in during a five-day period, no questions asked... [–] was so successful that on the third day some of those lined up to exchange their firearms had to be turned away because the programme temporarily ran out of money. Across the U[S], police and community groups running similar programmes have... overwhelmed[ed]... cash-strapped cities... In places, officials are making payments with gift certificates, sneakers or even sewing machines, to make sure people giving up their guns won't turn around and buy new ones... While many cities destroy or melt down the collected weapons, New Orleans found a more ingenious use. Local sculptors assembled the gun parts into works for an exhibition called Guns in the Hands of Artists.

...[the Aucklander] is an intelligent man with a wife and two children, a good job and a passion for the guns of choice of mass murderers. In a cabinet made of 6mm-thick steel, the Auckland computer expert keeps a military-style semi-automatic (MSSA) that he brings out regularly to shoot at paper targets, and occasionally goats. His Chinese-made SKS Norinco rifle is the kind of weapon that many people – from High Court judges to families of massacre victims – want to see turned into scrap metal and banned forever. But the Government this week rejected a recommendation... to follow the A[US]n example of banning and buying back MSSAs. The Minister of Police... when asked why anyone should need to own a MSSA, said some people “get enjoyment out of their use.”

...*Kiwis need more guns says doctor* A MODERN day Doc Holliday advocates American-style gun laws for N[Z]. The Mt Eden GP... thinks people should have the right to carry guns claiming they are a “big deterrent” to violent crime. He... told *The Daily News* the recent Columbine High School massacre... illustrated his stance... [T]he 50-year-old... blasted Auckland City councillors... over their support for tougher gun laws[, claiming that]... the council's position was “naïve and undemocratic”... [Meanwhile, t]he committee... hearing the Arms Amendment (No 2) Bill, which aims to have all firearms registered[, was told by the]... Police Association president... [that] at least 90[%] compliance was needed for the law to work but no figures were available on how much that would cost... Figures suggested ranged between \$50 million and \$100 million... [I]ntroducing similar laws in Canada had cost \$C350 million... in three years, instead of the projected \$C87 million. As well, there was only 26[%] compliance. The bill has drawn 6500 submissions...

About 222,000 N[Z]ers hold an A-class firearms licence, the general firearms licence that allows holders to have or use sporting shotguns and rifles... [There are] also... rarer B, C and E endorsements... The B endorsement (there are around 2400 B endorsement-holders in N[Z]) allows members of incorporated pistol clubs to own pistols. The C endorsement (around 3200 holders) allows bona fide collectors to have restricted weapons. The E endorsement allows holders to keep [MSSA]s and shotguns... To get a general firearms licence in N[Z], applicants begin by filling in a two-page form that asks for basic details. Candidates must offer the names of two referees, say whether they have incurred non-molestation orders or have had any criminal convictions, and if they have had psychiatric treatment. Then, if all is in order, they pay a \$123.75 application fee. Next there's a 30-minute police interview, which... finds out what your interests are, what you intend to do with a firearm, where you intend to keep it and what your beliefs are in areas like the use of a firearm in self-defence. After that, your background is checked, your referees contacted, and your home inspected to ensure gun-storage facilities are satisfactory. The last step is th[e] Mountain Safety Arms Code lecture. They run candidates through what are known as the Seven Commandments of Shooting, seven fairly obvious standards, including: treat every firearm as loaded, always point firearms in a safe direction, and avoid alcohol and drugs when shooting. You are given a copy of the Arms Code, the gun world's version of the Road Code, to study before the lecture. At the end of the lecture candidates sit the Arms Code theory test. They must score at least 28 out of 30 to pass. Food for thought here: the theory test is so easy that I passed it first time, even though I'd never opened – let alone studied – a copy of the Arms Code in my life.

...An internal review is under way at a Bay of Plenty police station after a Glock pistol, two magazines and 32 rounds of ammunition were discovered to be missing... The latest mishap follows revelations that weapons had disappeared from another North Island police station... [An]

MP... on the select committee looking at the registration of firearms and owners... fears criminals are using the police weapons in armed raids... “I think the theft of the firearms was very embarrassing for the police... But what I found more amazing was that police used to treat the theft of firearms the same as a normal burglary.” He [also] said criminals had targeted legitimate gun owners after they got hold of a list of expired gun licenses that police had given out to a collection agency... [In related news, t]he traditional police wooden baton will soon be replaced by a high-tech handy extendable version... The move follows a trial in Auckland and Wellington, where motorcycle officers found the... ASP21, which extends from 19cm to 53cm at the flick of a wrist... to be handy, practical and unobtrusive. They will be phased in over the next 15 months, leaving only special police task groups possessing the... side-handled PR24 riot variety... Police will receive their new batons after two days of training, and will carry them in scabbards on their belts. A survey of police earlier found many did not carry their wooden batons because they were uncomfortable to wear. Police have carried long riot batons since the 1913 general strike. The strike escalated rapidly and police numbers were reinforced by regular and mounted volunteers. [But the p]olice did not have enough batons to issue to these temporary police, so they were instead given hickory buggy wheel spokes. After the strike, police introduced 71cm-long, machined hardwood batons, which were kept... until 1960. The PR24 was introduced after a riot in the Northland town of Moerewa in 1979... [A veteran protester] said yesterday that he was “not lamenting” the loss of the PR24... “I bear the scars of a PR24, courtesy of a sergeant in the Blue Squad,”...

CRIMINALS could become marked men thanks to a defensive dye that stains skin... dark green... for up to seven days... The... foaming green vegetable spray... Dyewitness... has received guarded backing from [the] police minister... The dye is being carried by taxi drivers, security staff and service stations in Auckland and Wellington... Dyewitness is sold on the internet for about \$50... [but an] Auckland businessman... is negotiating to sell Dyewitness here. “You don’t have to register the spray and with the rate of home invasions it gives people some security,”... [He] hoped the spray would be available[locally] within a fortnight... [A] police legal adviser... said Dyewitness was legal but warned prosecution could follow if it was used offensively, rather than in self-defence.

...Rape Crisis wants the Government to throw out a bill that would allow people to carry passive resistance sprays, saying the sprays could be used to attack women.

The Government Accountability League plans to defy the law and offer disabling pepper spray for sale to women... by mail order for \$19.95. “Women have a right to protect themselves and if the law can’t do it we will help them,”... [the league’s] founder... said... He did not... care what anyone thought of the idea. “They can’t stop us,” he said... The spray temporarily blinds its victim and can cause coughing, nausea and ringing ears... A spokeswoman for Police National Headquarters in Wellington... said disabling sprays were restricted weapons. “We [police] are entitled to use it but no one else is.”

...The Police Association wants all frontline police to be issued with pepper spray immediately... [T]he police executive committee last year... estimated set-up costs for national use to be \$2.2 million, mainly for training... The spray is similar to mace – widely used in the U[S]... It comes in a small disposable aerosol can which can be clipped to an officer’s belt... The association’s Auckland regional director... said last night that too many officers had been injured recently in the line of duty for action not to be taken. There was a small risk that criminals would grab the cans and use them against officers, he said. But he added: “They can grab our batons, too, and I would rather be capsicum-sprayed than batoned.” Unlike batons and firearms, the spray did not have any long-lasting effects.

...All frontline police officers will now be armed with pepper spray, despite fears about its side effects and possible misuse... Police will pay about \$200,000 for 5000 cans... The decision follows a two-month trial in Christchurch involving 54 officers. They used the spray only four times – twice against people and twice against dogs. The spray[– which was originally developed ‘in the US to help posties ward off dog attacks’ –] has been shown to have a serious effect on people with severe asthma... [P]olice would now carry “bronchiodilator” inhalers to give to asthmatics who showed severe reactions. People sprayed would be handcuffed, then left sitting... The effects... can last for up to 45 minutes.

...Admission of a crime from a suspect incapacitated by pepper spray may not be allowed in court, police have been told. People arrested after having been incapacitated by pepper spray must be read their rights twice, once immediately after arrest and again when they have recovered. The guidelines are published in the latest issue of the police magazine... Police will be issued with the spray next month.

...Police in Tokoroa cannot wait for pepper sprays after five officers were set on at the weekend outside a fast-food shop. The police would prefer stun guns, but believe pepper spray would have stopped the attackers. Batons were used to subdue the offenders. Eight men face charges ranging from breaching the peace to assault... [Incidentally, ‘the Government is hastening to patch up a controversial home-invasion law after crucial constitutional anomalies emerged yesterday. They came to light in the case of the person who was sentenced to a minimum 13 years in jail for killing Beverly Bouma during a vicious home invasion. In the High Court at Auckland, a judge found he had to sentence the 25-year-old under the law change, even though the murder occurred seven months before the law was passed. The judge expressed concern that the retrospective operation of parts of the new law appeared inconsistent with the Bill of Rights Act. The Justice Minister said that while he had no sympathy for the 25-year-old, the law was “hugely anomalous,” rushed and contained inconsistencies. The Government would move quickly to repair it. It would be a tragedy if problems in the act meant that the 25-year-old’s sentence was reduced on appeal, he said. Ironically, it was the Bouma case and a host of high-profile home invasions that led the Government to introduce the tougher legislation.’

...‘a hired hitman has been jailed for 13 years for his role in a vicious home invasion that put three people in hospital and allegedly earned him \$500. The 32-year-old, of Otara, had admitted taking part in a raid on the home of a Manurewa man last Labour Weekend to carry out a “kneecapping” contract paid for by the man’s ex-wife. The victim, aged 54, his new partner, 56, and her son, 34, were subjected to a night of terrifying violence as intruders inflicted injuries so severe that veteran plastic surgeons were left reeling. Sentencing the 32-year-old in the High Court at Auckland yesterday, the judge told him the crime was of a type seldom seen in NZ courts. The 32-year-old, a Ngatonga gang member, had been raised as a ward of the state and involved with gangs since age 14. A habitual burglar with 103 convictions for offences including wounding with intent, he was on High Court bail at the time of the home invasion.’]

...The Judiciary has rejected police criticisms that a High Court judge acted inappropriately when he granted bail to an Auckland man accused of kidnapping and raping a woman... in a Ponsonby churchyard... on New Year’s Day... The police officer in charge of the case... said bail should not have been granted, no matter how stringent the conditions. [But the Judiciary] said police did not indicate to[the High Court] Justice... that there were any risks associated with... [the 37-year-old] fitter and welder[’s]... release... Because of the “court processes” [hi]s trial would not be held until February next year. “The accused, too, has rights. He has pleaded not guilty to the charge and must be regarded at least at this stage as innocent.”

...A 24-year-old man charged with the multiple rape of a 15-year-old Auckland schoolgirl is free on bail... despite opposition from the police... Despite the stringent bail conditions imposed by... the Papakura District Court... Judge, police are furious at the decision, but would not be quoted. The Chief District Court Judge... said police could appeal against the granting of bail if they were unhappy with the decision. “It should also be remembered that none of the charges have been proven... It is not helpful to debate the issue of bail on the basis of a case which has yet to be heard by a court.” The schoolgirl... and a 16-year-old friend were waiting on an Otara street to be picked up by relatives when a man approached them and asked them if they wanted a lift. The friend, who was in the back seat, escaped after the man drove to a rural area in Papakura... [In related news, t]he Department for Courts is investigating how a convicted murderer was left sitting for an hour with the public outside a courtroom... [The

21-year-old] is serving a life sentence for the murder of pregnant West Auckland teenager Nicola Rankin in July last year. He was transferred from Mt Eden Prison yesterday for a scheduled sentencing on other matters at 9.15 am before Judge [L]. However, Judge L... was on annual leave, so the matter was moved to courtroom six, which has no cells for inmates in custody... Normally, defendants in custody are escorted to and from the courtroom through a side door attached to the cells and have no contact with the public... The department apologised for “any distress [the 21-year-old]’s presence may have caused[’], although h]e was handcuffed to guards at all times and posed no direct threat... [The 21-year-old] was to be sentenced yesterday for kidnapping and raping [an]Auckland prostitute... in April last year. He was on bail for that crime when he murdered... Nicola Rankin and buried her in a shallow grave in Riverhead Forest.

...**OUT ON BAIL AND FREE TO KILL** Despite bitter protest from the prosecution, police and his first rape victim, [a 21-year-old] was set free... to fulfill his fantasy to kidnap and murder Nicola Rankin – at the same time taking the life of her unborn child – two weeks before his court hearing. Tonight 20/20 investigates how our Justice System could have made such a fatal error in judgement.

...[The] Labour... party’s spokesman on justice... explains why he is putting a member’s bill to Parliament to reform the bail law... In 1996... [someone] tracked down the family of a boy he was charged with sexually molesting and murdered the father. In the same year [a then 20-year-old] murdered teenager Nicola Rankin. Both murderers had been released on bail and were awaiting trial for serious charges. The concept of bail is based on the accepted premise that a person is innocent until proved guilty and it is central to our justice system. However, the bail system is also supposed to protect the public. For... [Nicola] and for earlier victims like schoolgirl Kylie Smith who was murdered by a man on remand, the bail system failed with tragic consequences. [When the child molester] committed murder he had been granted bail twice by the High Court, on both occasions overturning the District Court’s decision to remand him in custody. This was despite police evidence that [the molester] was planning to track down the family. [A similar thing occurred with the person who] murdered Miss Rankin... Once again the original District Court decision to decline bail was overturned by the High Court. While on bail he breached his bail conditions, was arrested for the breach, and was then bailed again by the High Court... These cases are not isolated incidents of violence while on remand. [14%] of bailed offenders reoffend while on bail and 7[%] commit violent offences on bail... Bail laws were tightened in 1991 for people facing charges of serious crimes who also have similar prior convictions... The onus is reversed and the accused must demonstrate that bail should be granted. If an accused with a prior conviction has pleaded guilty to such a charge bail will not be granted under any circumstances. Neither [the molester nor Nicola’s murderer] had previous convictions for serious crime. Indeed, the vast majority of alleged offenders charged with serious crimes do not come under the special provisions enacted in 1991. Most people charged with serious crimes have their initial hearing in the District Court. If bail is denied, the defence may lodge an application in the High Court. The police have no warning of this and may have as little as a few hours to prepare a case to oppose the application. My bill would amend bail laws by ensuring that police have fair warning... [Then there’s the issue of whether it’s fair to have a justice system which can favour the rich – currently highlighted by the case of the] man accused of kidnapping and raping a woman in an Auckland churchyard[who] is still in custody in Mt Eden Prison, despite being granted bail by a High Court judge seven weeks ago... [A] \$25,000 cash bond has not been paid... [The accused had already] spent eight months in custody waiting for a hearing.

...Six repeat offenders have notched up almost 100 crimes between them while on bail, a record the Opposition blames on a soft touch from judges. Yesterday the Labour justice spokesman... made public the case histories of [the] six repeat offenders, including one who breached his bail conditions three times in a month but each time was given bail again. And a woman with a long list of convictions was freed on bail, only to commit a string of frauds the next day. The information was leaked to [the Labour MP] by disgruntled senior police officers – he will not say who they are...

Criticism of judges... and bail laws is ill-informed, says the acting Chief Justice... [He] said... figures from a partly completed study released in Parliament this week show[ing] that 1300 people committed violent crimes while on bail in 1994... omitted crucial material such as the offences with which the persons concerned were charged... Without such critical information and no proper analysis, no useful conclusions could be drawn from the figures, he said... [The] president of the Criminal Bar Association, agreed, saying the public was “pretty well served.”

...A Ministry of Justice study of about 50,000 successful bail applications in 1994 shows that nearly a fifth... reoffended. Nearly 3[%], or 1266, of the reoffenders used violence. A study in 1986 showed that 1[%] of people given bail committed violent crimes. The Labour justice spokesman... [has] said the figures indicated an urgent need for changes in bail laws... But the Minister of Justice... said... High Court rules changing the procedures for bail applications, introduced last month, would stop the wrong people being freed... The Assistant Commissioner... of police national headquarters, agreed, saying the new rules gave officers time to prepare a proper opposition to applications. There had been occasions where police had not had sufficient time... he said. But the Police Association president... [said officers] or crown solicitors were often ambushed by defence applications for bail...

POLICE took into account not wanting to waste court time when releasing... [two men] on bail four days before... [they murdered a] Christchurch bottle store worker... [However,] an investigation had found police acted reasonably. No action would be taken against them... But inquiries... show the day they would have appeared was one of the quietest court sittings in Christchurch this year... [Furthermore, legal experts said the man who shot the store worker] should have been held in police custody pending a court hearing... because he was already on bail for stealing a video game in Nelson earlier in the month – seven days after being released from jail. He also had an extensive criminal record, including convictions for failing to answer bail. [In international news, ‘a Canadian mugging victim got less than he bargained for in court when the judge called him “stupid” for failing to be careful in a rough neighbourhood, and then let his attacker go. “If you walk around jingling money in your hand it’s like walking in the wolf enclosure at the city zoo with a pound of ground beef in your hand,” the judge was quoted as saying by the *Winnipeg Free Press*. The theft of \$C12 took place earlier this year after the man, aged 46, left a store late at night and was approached by two men, one of whom grabbed the money he was holding in his hand. The judge said he was not satisfied there was evidence of a robbery. The prosecutor’s office is considering an appeal.’

...‘Prosecution and defence lawyers are preparing for two murder trials set to make NZ legal history – they involve multiple accused, of whom none speaks English as a first language. In one case, six members of a Vietnamese family are charged with murdering a Vietnamese refugee, Thong Van Duong, in Otahuhu in February last year. In the other, five young Asian men, all refugees, are accused of murdering Auckland businessman Graham Kirkwood. Both cases will make extensive use of interpreters and translators. In an added twist to the Duong trial, set to start later this month, a deaf and dumb Vietnamese man will give evidence for the prosecution in sign language, requiring a sign interpreter. The trial will run for five weeks and the prosecution will call 65 witnesses, 18 of them Vietnamese. The five accused in the Kirkwood case speak Cantonese, Mandarin and Vietnamese, and all have different lawyers. Police have disclosed 11,000 pages of documents to the defence, and more are to come. A lawyer who is involved in both cases said police had so far disclosed only a fraction of the documents they were required to make available. His job has been made more difficult because these were not in order. The lawyer said no defence counsel enjoyed cases that relied heavily on translators. There was always the fear that questions might not be translated literally or that some comments made by a witness or defendant might be missed. The officer in charge of the police inquiry into the Kirkwood killing said police would call about 130 witnesses at the trial, about one-fifth of whom needed translators. He said the Kirkwood case had been the most expensive he had worked on – petty expenses alone were more than \$100,000. Three detectives had gone to AUS to arrest one of the defendants and two officers travelled to the US to find a witness. There had also been several trips around NZ. The Detective Sergeant said three weeks had been set aside for a depositions hearing and the trial could take up to six weeks.’]

...An upsurge in the number and seriousness of criminal cases has led to increased pressure on N[Z]’s courts and Judiciary. Jury trial waiting-lists clog the... courts as they struggle to process longer and more complex cases... [T]he Report of the N[Z] Judiciary 1996... says pressures on the

system and its professionals are enormous compared to 20 years ago. N[Z]'s international record for fast-tracking court cases has slipped because of an increase in offending, reporting child abuse, and legislation such as the Bill of Rights and new Domestic Violence Act. We live in a culture that emphasises rights... says... [the] Chief Justice... The result is... a generally high level of demand on public money to fund the process of justice. Courts have a bigger hand in the administration of the mental health system, and statistics indicate that the work of the Youth Court has increased 50[%] in the past five years. But the hardest-hit by the mounting pressure is the District Court. The balance of work has been affected by the High Court policy of keeping mostly civil and criminal cases which are high-profile, complex or serious, and passing the rest to its counterpart... Last year, [despite 'a rare legal move in which the Human Rights Commission took High Court action over lengthy delays in delivering decisions on sexual harassment and sexual discrimination cases' ('after the Commission started court action to get speed on their resolution, the backlog of sexual harassment and discrimination cases has been cleared'),] the upper jurisdiction of the District Court and the power of judges was lifted, further increasing the load. In response, the maximum number of District Court judges was increased to 120... Last December there were 1000 jury trials waiting to be heard in the District Court. It was estimated that at the present rate it would take five months to clear outstanding cases. But evidence suggests that the backlog will be difficult to shake. The average length of a District Court criminal trial has increased by 31[%] since 1986. The landmark Domestic Violence Act 1996 implemented on July 1 last year – which defines domestic violence as physical, sexual or psychological – is expected to be time-consuming for the courts. Between July and December there were 3329 applications for protection orders, which replace the former non-molestation and non-violence orders. The... number of applications over a full 12 months is expected to exceed 7000 – 30[%] ahead of original estimates... According to 1996 figures, 19[%] of criminal jury trials took longer than a year to be processed in the High Court. At District Court level 27[%] were still being processed a year after the charge was laid... Of the 22 cases in 1995 and 10 cases last year dismissed under the Bill of Rights provision against undue delay for those facing criminal charges... 11 had been solely due to "systematic delays." ...However, the Department for Courts... announced... that a \$73 million package including new computer equipment... would help speed the flow of cases and reduce the backlog... About 170 of the department's 1150 jobs are expected to disappear... [but new] courts will be built in Manukau and on the North Shore within two years to serve growing populations. The Government has announced that more than \$20 million will be spent on the Manukau Court... The department... and the Judiciary were [also] examining other ways of tackling the problem without appointing more judges.

...[Nothing, it seems, moves very fast in legal circles, witness recurring reports of criminal cases at risk of dismissal on the grounds of undue delay in coming to trial. It is also six years since the Law Commission recommended restricting the role and use of preliminary hearings or depositions hearings. The purpose of depositions is to determine whether the prosecution has established a case to answer, in which event the matter goes to trial. The benefits are held to include the filtering out of weak cases, giving the defence fair disclosure of the prosecution case and an early opportunity to concede guilt. It is to be hoped a new Department for Courts draft paper on the subject makes better progress; its research suggests change is essential, for the system consumes huge amounts of time and money for little benefit. Last year there were 2941 preliminary hearings, involving judges in some 1400 hours of court proceedings and 4000 hours involving justices of the peace. The rate of discharge is astonishingly low (between 1 and 3% of heard cases). Can the standard of prosecutions cases be so high as to achieve what, statistically, amounts to near perfection? Or could it be that the legally untrained minds of JPs are not well equipped to identify flaws and shortcomings, so virtually all cases get passed straight on for trial anyway? Either way, the percentage of discharges suggests that the present procedure is virtually pointless, as long as a defendant continues to have access before a trial to details of the case and the evidence to be faced. The department argues for abolition']...

Abandoning depositions hearings, dumping justices of the peace and opening night sittings are part of sweeping changes planned for the country's courts. But the moves have angered the Criminal Bar Association which has labelled them unrealistic and impractical. Unveiling the proposals, the Minister of Justice... last night said JPs would be replaced by community magistrates in a bid to speed up hearings and clear the backlog of cases clogging the district courts. The magistrates' powers will be extended to cover undefended cases, including sentencing via a fine or community-based service. The magistrates will also be responsible for fines enforcement. [● Fines can be used as an alternative to sending people to jail (although, while the number of 'convicted defendants sent to prison in the US rose from 46% in 1980 to 68% in 1995', the number who received a 'fine or other – excluding probation – decreased from 15% to 7%'). Unfortunately, fines aren't just another way that the justice system *can favour the rich* – there is the problem of making people pay up!]

...DATA matching through the Social Welfare Department is likely to begin before the end of the year to help trace fines defaulters. The Courts Department is working out protocols and procedures to govern data matching, which will be used as a last resort. In another development, the Courts Department collections business unit had begun reviewing its files and re-issuing unpaid fines dating back 10 years or more. [The] unit communications adviser... conceded many people getting a notice to pay a 10-year-old parking ticket may not even remember what it was for. The Courts Department made collecting old fines a priority when it was established in 1995... Most outstanding fines were less than two years old, but about \$40 million worth were more than five years old... In 1990, the court collected 90% of fines imposed in that year, but 26,000 fines worth \$6 million – involving 10,000 to 12,000 people – remain unpaid. As at June 30, \$158m was owed.

...The long arm of the law plans to reach out through television to round up fines defaulters but some experts are sceptical of the plan. The Department of Courts has confirmed it will from this month run publicly funded television advertisements encouraging payment of fines. Research shows many people do not understand the consequences of not paying fines, the department said yesterday... The campaign's cost would be "well below" a million dollars and modest compared to some other Government department promotions. A lecturer in criminology at Victoria University in Wellington... said last night that he thought the campaign was a waste of money. "I think they are trying to bluff their way to getting a few people to come forward and pay because they are unable to contact them." An advertising expert from Auckland University... said the campaign would probably fail to motivate people who had not responded to letters to pay their fines. It might, however, motivate those fined in future to pay up promptly... Up to 200,000 people [a]re estimated to owe... fines.

...People fined in court had 28 days to pay in full or to make other arrangements... "The Judiciary are becoming very supportive of the new ways we are using to collect fines. People are less likely now to be walking out of that courtroom and over the horizon,"... said a collections unit spokeswoman... "We try to sit down with a person before they leave the court and work out what their situation is. Ideally we get up-front payment of the full amount... But we call the shots. Paying \$10 a week forever is no longer acceptable. We are learning to drive a pretty hard bargain. After all, sentencing was designed to bring discomfort. It's supposed to be a punishment."

...Fine dodgers face airport customs net... Court bailiffs may soon widen their net to airports in relentless pursuit of unpaid fines. The Department of Courts confirmed yesterday that it wanted to set its sights on fines owed by travellers leaving or entering the country... A memorandum penned by... [t]he department's Tauranga collections manager... said... that... [t]his would cause distress and disruption for some people... so he proposed as a "useful customer service" that travel agents suggest to clients that any fines be cleared beforehand. However... travel agents made it clear they want no part of rounding up clients... [T]he department's... collection unit's communications adviser... would not say whether bailiffs would try to stop people leaving until they paid fines, but noted that defaulters with warrants out against them already risked being arrested at any time.

...Fine dodgers caught by court bailiffs have coughed up \$15 million in the past two months... [A] Department for Courts collections spokeswoman, said July and August was the first time staff had exceeded fine collection targets... The cost of collecting fines had also dropped from 41c to 35c for every dollar collected, she said.

...Fined \$40 for parking in a disabled persons' car park, [an] 85-year-old Wellington woman sent the city council a cheque for \$40.25. It is her custom "out of courtesy" to add 25c to cheques for bank fees. Soon after, the cheque was sent back, with a letter saying payment could not be accepted because the cheque was for the wrong amount. [The spinster] was also told to pay up smartly... A council spokesperson[has since] apologised. "Unfortunately our computer system only accepts cheques for the exact amount. We can assure... people that we have now changed this." ...[the spinster] said that when she used the car park she could "hardly walk" after breaking her hip 12 months ago. She now has a disability sticker... [Incidentally, drives] to collect unpaid fines in N[Z], which recently generated heated controversy, seem mild compared with the experience of [a]London mother... Her \$30,000 car has been seized and auctioned to cover a \$70 parking fine.

...Fine dodgers face bank raids... [NZ courts could] get... new powers to deduct money from people's bank accounts in a fresh get-tough effort to clear the vast backlog of unpaid fines. And persistent fine dodgers owing more than \$10,000 w[ould] risk court orders being attached to house or land titles in their names.

...A TEENAGER has been forbidden from owning any property until he pays his court fines... If... [the 16-year-old], of Timaru, acquires any property in the next few years, such as a vehicle or stereo, it can be seized under a police warrant. The rule applies regardless of whether or not he owns the chattels – just possessing them is enough to have the items confiscated... The scheme has been introduced by the Department for Courts, the police and the local... District Court... judge, tired of young offenders accumulating huge fines that eventually have to be written off... [O]ne 17-year-old had amassed fines worth \$11,000 that he had no hope of paying... [In another development, b]eneficiaries with overdue court fines can now be traced through D[SW] records. The Department for Courts... agreement affects all people receiving money from Income Support.

...Courts are in line for new legislative powers to dock welfare benefits for unpaid fines as arrears threaten to soar to \$210 million this year. The Government has decided to allow fines to be deducted from this source without the consent of beneficiaries, the Minister of Justice... said last night. Opposition support seems assured with Labour's justice spokesman... saying he has been pushing... for such legislation for some time to put law-breaking beneficiaries on the same footing as wage earners[, whose fines]... can now be deducted automatically from pay packets by court order... He said beneficiaries... were [currently] able to "just thumb their nose at the law" and avoid making reparations even on modest time-payments... But an Auckland People's Centre spokesperson... feared children would go hungry under such legislation as benefits were too low for any level of fines to be deducted. He believed that beneficiaries should receive community service or periodic detention sentences, rather than fines of any description... The Department for Courts... told the parliamentary justice law reform select committee last week that it had difficulties coping with increasing numbers of fines imposed by judges, from 328,287 in the 1993-94 financial year to 503,966 last year. - 1997

Court fine collectors are embarrassed at having sent "red card" warnings to innocent people. Alarm bells began ringing along with the phones yesterday as falsely accused people contacted the Department for Courts after being told they had 48 hours to pay outstanding fines. A dud batch of up to 4000 cards had been dispatched. A department spokeswoman... said the "red card" system had worked well until now, but a different form of data matching had been used in the latest lot. As a result, people with the same names as long-time debtors had received their fine demands... Despite the... glitch... the department would still use the system, but employ a more reliable means of tracing people... Other methods being used to chase defaulters include an advertising campaign, publishing their names, and the setting up of a "call centre" where debtors can ring in to make payment arrangements.

...fines are [going] unpaid as criminals ignore court sentences and infringement notices. Nearly \$311 million in fines... was outstanding for the year to June, the Department for Courts annual report shows. This was nearly \$65 million up on the same period for [last year], and means only one third of fines imposed were paid last year. The figures show that... [t]he average fine was \$306... the average time payment was overdue[by] 3 1/2 years... and... [the total includes] \$36 million owed to victims of crime... Victim Support... said the report showed that victims were receiving a double blow from offenders – firstly when the crime was committed and again when criminals failed to pay reparations. The organisation had appealed to the... Government for victims to be paid reparations by the court, which would then have to get its money back from offenders.

Victim Support is to receive a 50[%] boost in resources... [P]resent Government funding of about \$1.15 million would increase by close to \$600,000 a year... The service supported 170,000 N[Z]ers last year, compared with 85,000 three years ago. The number of Victim Support groups climbed from 52 to 77... The chief executive... estimated it cost about \$3 million a year to run Victim Support. Seventy staff managed 2000 volunteers. The new policy also means victims will be informed as of right when an offender's parole hearing is coming up and will be able to make submissions... [In international news, a] six-day courtroom interrogation of a rape victim by her attacker provoked calls yesterday for changes to the law that allowed the man to conduct his own defence. "I have been raped twice; once in his filthy den and once in front of judge and jury in a British court of law," said [the victim], aged 34, after the trial... "The law must be changed. I do not want other women to go through what I have been through." ...[the attacker], 42, was found guilty of raping [the victim] on two occasions while he held her imprisoned at his home in London for 18 hours. [The victim], who took the unusual step of waiving her anonymity so she could tell her story to the media, said she believed [her attacker] had got further gratification from being allowed to humiliate her in court. "He lapped up the exhibitionism and gained perverted pleasure by asking me about my private parts and his. It was sickening," she said. She had to be prescribed tranquillisers and at one stage ran from the court complaining she was feeling physically sick... [The attacker], who made a living selling condoms to prostitutes [– and]... had a history of offences against women, which under British law could not be revealed to the court during the trial[–] ...dismissed his lawyer on the first day... A spokesman for the Home Office said everyone had the right to defend him or herself.

...Making victims of crime more confident in the court room is the key element of the Court Services for victims programme, which will be operating throughout [NZ] by the end of the month. The new court-based programme aims to give clients information and develop a stronger "victim's voice." "Going to court for the first time, even as an observer, can be very scary," says... [the] manager of the programme at the Otahuhu District Court, one of four pilots for the scheme. "So the first thing we can do is take a victim on a familiarisation tour around the courthouse beforehand, showing them where everybody will sit, and explaining the process." In understanding how that process works, victims are also more realistically prepared for the possible outcome. Overseas research shows that some victims, when a case is dismissed through lack of evidence or a light sentence is handed down, may take matters into their own hands and exact their revenge... The new programme is different from but complementary to the existing Victim Support organisations; they are primarily a crisis intervention service, offering immediate emotional and physical support to victims of crime and accident... [In related news, the Labour Party] will today announce a victims' justice policy that would make reparations orders practically automatic for most offences... Just one in a 100 victims of crime now receive reparation payments from the offender under the current system. Only a fifth of the payments ordered by the courts are actually made. - 1996

A man repeatedly molested as a child in the 1950s and 1960s has won \$70,000 from his abuser's estate in an unusual deal spurred by civil court action. In the out-of-court settlement, the victim will not receive the money until [the now]78-year-old... [abuser] dies. The victim's name has been secured against [the abuser's] home and the \$70,000 will be paid on his death. [Meanwhile, 'the first house in NZ to be forcibly sold to pay court-ordered reparations raised just \$13,500 at a Taumarunui auction. The owner of the house, who has served one year of a 9-year prison sentence, was ordered to pay \$25,000 reparation to his victim. The court would try to recover the remaining debt, which would remain outstanding unless the offender was found

to own other assets. All details of the case are suppressed. Under the Summary Proceedings Amendment Act, recently passed by Parliament, courts can seize homes from people owing \$10,000 or more in fines.’]

...A first-time burglar received a... nine-month... suspended prison sentence, six months’ periodic detention and was ordered to pay \$6000... [at] \$75 a week... in reparation... to the occupants of the [Auckland] house he broke into... after failing to return items he stole... The judge considered seizing [the burglar’s] car until he was told that it was worth only \$1000 and was shared with the accused’s sister, who had two young children.

...[a] British motorist... decided to mete out his own brand of justice when he caught two vandals aged 10 and 11 jumping on the roof of his car. They had already smashed every light and mirror on the car so he gave each one of them a slap across the face. But it was the two boys who ended up with compensation when [the motorist, aged] 28, was hauled before a court and ordered to pay them £25... each. He was also told to pay £54 prosecution costs and given a 12-month conditional discharge. On top of that he has a £400 damage bill... [Incidentally, a] 15-year-old disabled A[US]n girl, who sued her father over injuries she suffered in a car accident when she was a baby, was on Friday awarded \$A2.2 million...

Tasmanian officials are starting to assess 310 compensation claims arising from the Port Arthur massacre. But they are almost entirely limited to the \$A1.18 million... from the assets of... [the gunman. In local news,] the Court of Appeal... said... yesterday... [that i]t would be almost impossible to put a price on the loss a man might have suffered in his life after bad parents adopted him... “How on earth can you access damages... Who can say how he might have turned out even with ideal parents?” The judge’s comments came on the second day of argument on an application by the Solicitor-General... to stop... [the adoptee] and his natural mother... suing the D[SW] for \$1.2 million. [The adoptee], now in jail for murder, has claimed departmental workers failed in their duty to him when they recommended an alcoholic criminal and his wife of poor reputation as suitable adoptive parents when he was a baby. He has claimed they failed him again at age 14 when Social Welfare did not investigate a claim that he was not being looked after properly. [The natural mother] has sought \$300,000 general and exemplary damages, claiming social workers who had a duty to advise her honestly, assured her that her son was going to a good home when they had not made a proper investigation. [The Solicitor-General] has argued that the case should not go ahead on public policy grounds: allowing social workers to be sued would mean they would spend more time ensuring they avoided legal action than they would doing their jobs... “It... may have been a slip-up or it may be that[back then] the DSW was in chaos because of inadequate management,”... He said the Adoption Act was designed to make adoptions final. “For better or worse people should be getting on with their new relationships and experiencing whatever life brings.” ...There was preliminary argument about the admission of a sworn statement from the chief Children, Young Persons and their Families Service social worker... about the effect on the department of allowing the case to go ahead. Part of his statement referred to in court said precautions to avoid the threat to social workers facing breach of duty claims would cost \$79.1 million. [The Solicitor-General] said the statement should be admitted because it would help the court to decide the public policy implications of their decision. But... [the] lawyer for the plaintiffs... said the statement should be produced only during a full hearing of the case...

Former at-risk children are preparing to take Social Welfare to court after a Court of Appeal ruling that a convicted murderer can sue the department for negligence. Child lawyers yesterday hailed the ruling... [By the way, a] former... Auckland police commander... turned private investigator says people are being falsely charged with crimes because overworked police have not got time for full investigations... Frequently he uncovered evidence that proved the accused could not have committed the crime – evidence that was available to the police. “I don’t blame the officers themselves,” he said. But [his] claims were challenged by Auckland’s... Assistant Commissioner[, who]... had never heard of people being wrongly charged because of limited police resources and wanted to know what cases [the P.I.] was referring to... “I am aware that sometimes we hear allegations that police haven’t been able to get to a case and so no one is prosecuted for an offence, but not of people being wrongly charged.”

...People wrongly convicted of crimes are not entitled to compensation in N[Z, and]... according to the Ministry of Justice, there is no precedent for granting compensation in this country... [However, in] 1980 the Government granted... \$950,000 compensation... [to a man] convicted of the murders of Jeanette and Harvey Crewe and later pardoned.

...In June, 1970, Jeanette and Harvey Crewe were killed at their Pukekawa, south Auckland farm. [Someone who] lived nine miles... away... was convicted of their double murder. [The suspect] was pardoned in 1979 after[one] journalist... waged a seven-year campaign that proved [the suspect’s] innocence and revealed how police had planted a cartridge case to strengthen their case against him. In an exclusive... [the journalist] explains how he believes the Crewes died... THOSE who ask the question are getting older year by year, but they still keep on asking: ‘Well, if he didn’t then who did kill the Crewes?’ They ask the question as if it’s unanswerable. It isn’t. The answer, I believe, is at the very beginning of the mystery. Then, police searching the Crewe farm and beyond told the media unofficially that they believed they were looking for two bodies – one in the river, the other up a tree. The bloodstained house was, they believed then, the scene of a murder and suicide. Shortly after, having settled instead on it being a double murder, they focused exclusively on... Jeanette’s father[, who was also]... the Crewes’ next-door neighbour. Then, in the infamous double switch, they changed both the method and the suspect... In the process, the murder-suicide theory was well-buried. Whatever happened in the Crewe house on the evening of June 17... coincided with the eve of their fourth wedding anniversary. In a bleak house with no pictures on the walls, few ornaments, nothing on the walls of their baby daughter’s cluttered and curtainless room, there was also no sign of planned celebration. They had both been to town that day, but neither had bought a gift or a card. Not surprising, in Harvey’s case. He had only \$34 in his personal bank account. Jeanette had \$4640 in hers, another \$1667 in a joint account with her husband. The farm had been left to her... when her uncle... died in a tractor accident in 1950... They had driven... to a stock sale at Bombay, then to Tuakau and returned home late in the dusk that wet and miserable day. While Harvey moved stock, Jeanette cooked them a meal of flounder and peas and a fire was lit in the lounge hearth. Over the meal, they opened the mail... The envelopes and contents are clearly visible in police exhibit pictures of the table... One item was a panelbeater’s bill. I believe a major domestic row erupted at the table. Harvey Crewe was said to have a fierce temper. People very close to him have told me that, at his worst, he had all the symptoms of a manic depressive, a condition not unknown in his family. When her body came up in the flooded Waikato two months [after her disappearance], Jeanette’s nose was broken, her eye bruised and some of her teeth were missing. A dentist suggested that could have been the result of a blow. Quick to exploit any evidence, [the] Crown prosecutor... suggested... that [the suspect] had hit her with the butt of [a] rifle after killing Harvey, then raped her before shooting her as well. There was no evidence to back the theory. Quite the reverse. Her body was fully clad, including pantyhose, when recovered. I believe that Harvey hit her, very hard, then settled into his favourite chair in front of the fire. Bloodstains show that’s where he died. Jeanette left the room after that blow and got a .22 rifle from the spare room, perhaps the rifle listed in the estate she inherited. A rifle never found by police. A single shot killed him... It seemed plain that the stained chair had been swung around to move his dead weight clear... The police theory had always been that both the Crewes’ bodies were dumped in the Waikato River [that] night. It is more likely that Harvey was not disposed of until sometime later, between that Wednesday and the following weekend. That would explain a series of proven events around that house between Thursday and Saturday... On the Friday night... a schoolboy neighbour of the Crewes, was with his father driving past the farm. He pointed out a big shower of sparks from the lounge chimney. The sparks were so thick he wondered at first if the Crewes were having a winter barbecue... [But the] police... were not prepared to link the Friday night fire in the chimney with the remains of a mat and a cushion found in the fireplace... for their own good reasons. Both [the suspect and his wife] could prove they were at his sister’s 21st birthday party miles away in Pukekohe that[Friday] night – and not in the Crewe house. The police took decisive... action: They rejected the boy’s evidence and did not disclose it to the defence as they were required to. Earlier that Friday, [a] farm labourer... oblivious to the undetected tragedy, was working in a paddock opposite the Crewe farm. He saw... a woman in the garden around the house. He assumed it was Jeanette Crewe, whom he had never seen. At the first trial, the Crown sought to suggest that the woman was... [the suspect’s wife – w]ithout

success, since [the labourer knew the suspect's wife] and had specifically denied it was her. Unable to show, as they hoped, that [the suspect's wife] was the woman in the garden and had probably fed the baby, the police typically simplified their prosecution process – they dropped [the labourer] as a witness at the second trial. They said he had confused the day of the sighting, despite the fact that was the only day of the week he worked for the farmer involved... [Therefore] the second jury did not hear evidence that was regarded as significant at the first trial. The police also abandoned the theory that the child had been fed at all and offered evidence from two doctors with opposing views... A neighbour noticed... the... Crewes' stock... moving noisily and hungrily up and down the fenceline on Friday. He thought "Harvey didn't feed out yesterday." ...They never bellowed again. Someone had fed them... There was one more strange unexplained incident... [the] police... did not bother to tell anyone about – defence, judge or juries, and would not have told the commission either but for the need to answer an innocent question. Under pressure... a police witness at the inquiry admitted for the first time that what looked like part of a piece of waterproof material seen lying beside the wheelbarrow on the lawn in... police photographs had been destroyed by a mysterious fire where it lay. Forensic evidence showed the wheelbarrow had clearly been used to dispose of the bodies. [The commission] chairman... was affronted that the detail of the destruction of this exhibit had been withheld. "This coat could have been worn by the murderer." The police explanation was that a cigarette butt flicked out of the house by a detective must have set the material alight. The commission rejected that entirely... Someone came back in broad daylight to a farm they knew was occupied by police to destroy evidence. Someone whose presence on the farm would not have aroused suspicion... It is inconceivable, as the police maintained, that a murderer would have done all those things, returning to the farm three or four times to feed dogs and stock, for instance, in daylight and risking detection each time... Physically in pain from Harvey's blows, and overwhelmed by what had happened, Jeanette shot herself at some stage on that weekend. Her father, having disposed of her body and the rifle, staged the apparent discovery of the house on the Monday. As an indication of his state of mind at that stage... [his first phone call was] not to the police but to cancel a stock truck booked to pick up sheep from the Crewe farm. This was not the action of a man stunned by shock at the discovery of the bloodstained house, a distressed child and all the dreadful conjecture that went with that scene. [Jeanette Crewe's father] underestimated the Crown and police. When, to his surprise, [the suspect] was convicted some months later, he could not tap [the police] on the shoulder and say: "There is something I should have told you..." If my scenario is correct, I do not excuse [the father's] actions. I simply see how a sequence of events could have led him to the totally unjust decision he made.

...[lawyers] acting for... the man... acquitted... this week... of the 1992 abduction and rape of an 11-year-old-girl, are considering seeking compensation from the Minister of Justice. [The lawyers' client] spent three years in prison before being released last year after the Court of Appeal quashed his conviction... [when DNA] confirmed seminal stains on the... victim's clothing could not have come from... [the client. The police] had always maintained [the client] was the real offender and the "stray" seminal stains on the girl's underpants and pyjamas were the result of contamination unconnected with the rape. This was despite scientific evidence that the semen was fresh and the girl's testimony that her underwear... was clean on the day of the rape, only one person attacked her and she had not had sex with anyone else... The Court of Appeal refused [the client's] first bid for freedom in 1994 and the case was reopened through a petition to the Governor-General last year... A new trial was held this week and [the client] was found not guilty... Any errors by police... can be blamed on stretched resources, not incompetence... because the DNA results which should have freed [the client] after his first trial were incorrectly interpreted by the... Institute of Environmental Science and Research... claims a former detective who worked on the case... [The client's lawyers believe that a precedent for compensation was set by the payment of almost \$1m to the person wrongly convicted for murdering the Crewes. However, a] Ministry of Justice spokeswoman... said that the difference between the cases was that [the first man] was pardoned after a royal commission of inquiry into his conviction. [The second man] had been found not guilty in a second trial and, under the law, his situation was no different from that of anyone else who was charged and not found guilty of a crime. [An] Auckland barrister... yesterday called for a process for compensation to be built into the justice system. People wrongly convicted were victims of crime and should be compensated. Their only chance of redress rested on the whim of the Minister of Justice. The most sensible approach would be to appoint an eminent person with legal experience to do the job of setting compensation. The Minister of Justice... would not comment on the issue yesterday... [A] new hunt for the real offender has begun.

...The mother of a young rape victim, who was tied and blindfolded before she was abused five years ago, now fears the rapist will never be caught. The woman, who cannot be named because it would identify her daughter, said yesterday that she believed the police might not have the resources needed to solve her daughter's case... The girl's mother [also] said the police had told her they had to interview her daughter again if they were to continue with the investigation[, even though]... her daughter had already given evidence at two High Court trials... She had to balance the risk of putting her daughter through further trauma against the chances of bringing the rapist to justice... [Meanwhile, a] veil of secrecy has been drawn over compensation negotiations for [the] West Auckland man who was acquitted... for rap[ing her daughter. The man, who is]... now living in Warkworth with his de facto wife and children, said yesterday that he had heard "nothing at all" about his claim... However, the freed man's lawyer... said he had signed a "deed of confidentiality" with the Government agreeing not to discuss the matter until a decision was reached... [The lawyer] said he was not troubled by the delay and believed the Government was taking the compensation issue seriously. "They are being their usual thorough selves..." The Minister of Justice... said he was not aware of any secrecy about the matter. "There is nothing to hide. It is a complicated issue and we are taking it quietly..." The case required careful consideration because there was no precedent under N[Z] law for compensating people... [O]fficials were studying similar cases in Canada and England.

...The release of three men who served 15 years' jail for a murder they did not commit has left a bad smell about British justice and the methods of senior police. The men, known as the Bridgewater Three, were set free on Friday amid emotional and chaotic scenes at the Royal Courts of Justice in London. They would still be in jail were it not for new forensic evidence which found a confession central to the murder case had been doctored by police. [A now 35-year-old], his cousin... 42, and [an associate], 63, were convicted in 1979 for the murder the previous year of 13-year-old Carl Bridgewater. The newspaper delivery boy had been shot dead while apparently stumbling across a burglary at a farmhouse near Stourbridge in the Midlands. The elder [cousin and their associate], plus a fourth man involved in the case... had been petty criminals. They were connected to the Bridgewater killing after [the elder cousin] was arrested following a bungled robbery at a nearby farmhouse. Investigating police secured convictions for the Bridgewater killing through a confession made by [the fourth man –] despite him later retracting it[– and because]... at the... trial the prosecution had failed to disclose vital evidence... This crucial evidence concerned unidentified fingerprints found on [Carl's bike. Someone involved in the murder had hurled the] bike into the pig sty. Two prints were found on the bike's down bar, which would have been a natural place to grab it. Before the case came to court the police had high hopes that the bike prints would identify at least one culprit. But, despite comparing them with prints held by 27 different police forces, they drew a blank. And one of the blanks they drew was the Bridgewater [Three and the fourth man. The elder cousin and the associate]... were given life sentences, [while the younger cousin], a juvenile at the time, was detained at Her Majesty's Pleasure. [The fourth man], given a 12-year sentence for manslaughter, died in jail in 1981, of heart disease. The convicted men steadfastly maintained their innocence and in 1983 [the younger cousin] staged an 89-day protest on a prison rooftop. Family and friends repeatedly sought appeals only to be denied by the courts or the Home Secretary of the day. A hunch from their lawyer... proved to be a way of undoing almost two decades of injustice. After the matter had finally been referred to the Court of Appeal last year, [the lawyer] sought forensic tests which showed [the fourth man] had been provoked into making his confession by another confession supposedly made by [the elder cousin. But the elder cousin's] statement had been written on paper resting immediately on top of [the fourth man]'s, at a time when [the elder cousin] was being dealt with at a different police station... This new evidence was enough to convince appeal judges to grant the Bridgewater Three unconditional bail and

the likelihood... of the murder convictions being quashed... [The Bridgewater Three] should receive compensation of about £200,000... each. But [the elder cousin] said: "Nothing compensates for 18 years locked up." The biggest losers of all remain Carl Bridgewater's parents, whose son's killer remains at large... Some Bridgewater Three campaigners believe the real killer... was... later convicted of murdering a man at the farmhouse where Carl died. [However, that person] denies killing Carl... As the freed men readjust to life on the outside after 18 years in top security prisons, questions were being asked about widespread police corruption... One of the detectives alleged to have forged the [elder cousin's] statement... died in 1993 – four years after being fined for fabricating the confessions of four men accused of robbery... The case was the latest of several in recent years that have been mishandled or manipulated, leaving many Britons disillusioned with their justice system. It is, some have said, a miscarriage of justice that was made possible by a system that does not question police... Other acquittals following years of appeals about phoney evidence involved an Irish family in London convicted of bomb-making, and a black man convicted of murdering a white policeman in a race riot. In 1991, authorities acquitted six Irish Republican Army suspects who had spent 16 years in jail for a pub bombing in Birmingham. Two years earlier, four men were acquitted after 14 years in jail for an IRA bombing in Guildford... [In local news, the] Minister of Justice... has asked the Law Commission to consider the issue of compensation for people subsequently acquitted of crimes for which they have been imprisoned. [He] said yesterday that there had never been rules on when or whether to pay compensation. Some rules were made by the cabinet last week when the Government announced it would not pay compensation to [the] Aucklander... who was acquitted at a retrial... for the rape of an 11-year-old neighbour. The president of the Law Commission... would not comment on whether its investigation would have any bearing on [that] case... The commission had looked at the issue of crown liability for several months...

The Government has adopted a new test to work out how much compensation should be paid to people wrongly convicted of criminal offences. The cabinet approved the criteria last month when it considered [an Aucklander's] wrongful rape conviction... The criteria include whether the prosecution acted in good faith in bringing and continuing proceedings against the accused; whether the prosecution had sufficient evidence at the start of the case to support a conviction; whether it took proper steps to investigate matters suggesting the accused might not be guilty, and whether it conducted its investigation in a reasonable and proper manner.

...[lawyers acting for the Aucklander who was cleared of raping an 11-year-old due to DNA evidence] are considering a civil claim for damages after the Government turned down his bid for compensation[, despite]... police advice that... [they] made "a genuine but honest mistake" in identifying... [the client as the assailant. Incidentally, about] one in four criminal suspects given DNA tests by the FBI are found not to have committed the crimes for which they are suspected... Since it started in 1988, the FBI crime lab's DNA analysis unit has exonerated about 3000 suspects... Most were rape suspects whose genetic characteristics were found not to match those of the rapist when samples of body fluid were compared... FBI officials say the high exoneration rate is evidence of the impartiality of the FBI's crime lab and the value of DNA testing as an investigative tool... DNA tests... [have been used] in American courts since 1987... But until recently, [they] could not be said to positively "match" a suspect to an incriminating sample... But a leading criminal defence lawyer has called the exoneration rate "shockingly" high and says it[, and the fact that 'every year 8,000 to 10,000 defendants – or between 15 to 20% of citizens facing criminal charges in US District Courts between 1980 to 1995 – were not convicted'] shows how often police and prosecutors focus on the wrong suspect. "A gigantic percentage of those (exonerated) had already been charged... This is not a few cases we're talking about. As a citizen... this is something that clearly frightens you," says... [the] president of the 9500-member National Association of Criminal Defence Lawyers. Last April, a Justice Department investigation reported a pattern of sloppy work and erroneous testimony in three... of the FBI's... 24... lab... units... - 1997

A man who spent 23 years in prison for a murder he did not commit has been awarded \$C10 million... in damages, tax-free. [The man], aged 46, was not available for comment. His mother, [who]... had door-stepped [the current Canadian P]M... and his two predecessors... said he[r son] had gone camping... She refused to say how the money would be spent – apart from saying that she expected an aircraft that her son had promised her "a lifetime ago" once the compensation deal was completed... [Her son] was a 17-year-old drifter when he was convicted... for the brutal sex slaying of nurse-aide Gail Miller. He was eventually released in 1992 after the Supreme Court ordered a review. But he was not cleared until July 1997, when DNA tests proved that the semen found at the crime scene was not his. Another man... has since been charged with Miller's rape and murder... The... case is one of several proven or alleged cases of wrongful conviction that have come to light in Canada recently[, respectively resulting in awards of]... \$2.1 million... \$479,000 plus an annuity... and... \$2.8 million... [In local news,] Labour wants an inquiry into forensic DNA testing procedures, after revelations that an innocent man was implicated in two murder investigations on the strength of DNA tests. The party's justice spokesman... said yesterday that a full inquiry was necessary because "the blunder in dealing with DNA samples has huge implications in relation to the potential for miscarriages of justice." On Tuesday, a detective told the High Court in Wellington that DNA results linked a Christchurch man to two unrelated killings in Wellington last year. But... police later accepted that the man was not at either scene and was not involved in the deaths... In Parliament yesterday, [the Labour justice spokesman] asked the Minister of Police... what assurances he could give that DNA testing, analysis and use as court evidence were being carried out in a competent way. [The minister] said he had been advised not to comment because the question related to a matter before the courts. Both the Police Commissioner's Office and the Environmental Science and Research Institute, which carried out the tests, have also refused to comment.

...New DNA tests are being sought in the... case [of the Aucklander who]... was wrongly jailed... [for raping an 11-year-old. The Aucklander] says he does not know why new tests are necessary. The Justice Ministry – which would foot the bill if compensation was recommended... – has asked[a] Queen's Counsel... to seek the further testing. [The QC is investigating the Aucklander's] request for compensation... He had been due to report within weeks. But now the ministry wants more sophisticated testing of samples, and suggests technological advances may give more information in the case... [A local s]cientist... who questioned the Institute of Environmental Science and Research's (ESR) initial findings after [the Aucklander's] unsuccessful first Court of Appeal hearing, said he could not understand what basis there could be for further tests. He was outraged but not surprised by the development... [The AUSn scientist who]s... results – showing the clear profile of another man in semen stains on the 11-year-old rape complainant's underpants, pyjamas and rectal swab – ...helped to clear... [the Aucklander, said t]he tests available today are in fact less sensitive to minute traces of DNA... The... Justice Minister... said it would be wrong for him to comment...

[THE] JUSTICE Minister... has made his strongest concession yet in the [Aucklander's] compensation case, admitting: "I may be wrong"... [The minister] also released the Ministry of Justice reports in which he was advised to decline compensation... [to the Aucklander, and said] those papers reveal his officials had dismissed an earlier police report that concluded more than a year ago [that the Aucklander] was innocent... But he protested that it was his concerns about a possible miscarriage of justice that had allowed [the Aucklander] to be retried and then become eligible for consideration for compensation... • [The] Detective Inspector... who conducted an independent review of police handling of the case, concluded last June the 11-year-old complainant was genuinely but honestly mistaken in identifying [her neighbour as her rapist. • The]... Detective Senior Sergeant... who conducted the reopened inquiry into the rape allegation, found the complainant... may have created the complaint to cover for a "sexual experiment" with someone she knew. [The Detective Senior Sergeant also] said it was possible the girl was under some sort of pressure to take part. Police jobsheets note the girl's mother complained to them in 1992 – the same year as the rape allegation – about the involvement of a member of the family in pornography and shoplifting.

...An independent investigation into whether [an Aucklander] should be compensated for his time in jail is being hindered by the mother of his alleged victim, who refuses to sign a secrecy agreement. A... barrister... was asked to look into the issue... after [the]Justice Minister... admitted that he might have been wrong to rule out compensation... [The minister] had earlier criticised a police inquiry which found the 11-year-old complainant did not “provide a truthful account of events” in claiming that [her then neighbour] raped her... New methods of examining DNA found that semen stains on the girl’s underwear belonged to another man... [However, the girl’s mother] gave... a “lengthy submission” in December, stating that she still believed [the former neighbour] raped her daughter and should not get an ex gratia payment from the Government.

...A parliamentary select committee wants a re-examination of the threshold for compensating the wrongly convicted. It has also urged the Government to deal swiftly with compensation claims. Parliament’s justice and law reform select committee... said a person who had served all or part of a jail sentence who was subsequently acquitted on appeal, had his or her conviction quashed without an order for retrial, or was pardoned should have the right to be assessed for compensation. It said an independent compensation tribunal should hear cases, and would need to be satisfied beyond reasonable doubt of the person’s innocence before assessing the level of compensation. In February, the Government... decided the Ministry of Justice would consider applications... for compensation and making ex-gratia payments to those wrongly convicted and jailed...

HOW innocent is a person who is found not guilty? That is the difficult question on which compensation for [an Aucklander] rests. Unless he can prove “on the balance of probabilities” he is innocent, and also that his imprisonment was the result of a miscarriage of justice, he will receive nothing. And under a tougher, new compensation scheme proposed by the Law Commission last month, people in [the Aucklander]’s situation in the future are likely to face an even higher hurdle of being required to prove “beyond reasonable doubt” they are innocent. While that may prevent those who are guilty but “got off”... [- m]any probably guilty people walk free every year, acquitted either because of a technicality or because they lied to the court and got away with it... [-] from mounting compensation claims, critics note the proposed scheme... [doesn’t in any way benefit the] innocent... Ironically, it is only because of... [the Justice Minister]’s concerns over the possible miscarriage of justice in [the Aucklander]’s case that any policy on compensation exists at all. However, gaining compensation requires a further quantum leap. There are only three previous examples of compensation for wrongful conviction in N[Z] legal history, the most recent being [the Crewe murder case].

...the man pardoned over the 1970 Crewe murders... blames jealousy as the reason he and his family have fallen out. “Money is the root of all evil,” [he]... declared last night as he reluctantly commented on a long-standing split between him and the supporters who fought to have his conviction overturned... The *Sunday Star-Times* yesterday quoted [his] father as saying: “He never thought about sharing his compensation. And he never really thanked the [supporters].”

...The family of... the man twice convicted and later pardoned for the 1970 Crewe murders, say the real murderer is still free because police refuse to investigate new evidence... [One of his] three brothers... said they had affidavits linking a man to the axle tied to the body of Harvey Crewe, which was found in the Waikato River... [The brothers, who] made their allegations last night on TV One’s *60 Minutes*, ...also had sworn statements linking the alleged suspect to a .22-calibre rifle similar to the one used to kill Harvey and Jeanette Crewe. A set of fingerprints in the Crewe house which were unidentified at the time of the trial were crucial to their claims. But police had told the brothers that records relating to the fingerprints had disappeared. “Any time we want to check our evidence with the police files, they either go missing or get destroyed...” ...the killer[, who]... had worked with the Crewes... and... still lived in Pukekawa... cannot be named for legal reasons. Police refused to be interviewed for the show, and... rejected the brothers’ claims... [Meanwhile, their sister-in-law] has blasted the... family for talking about the family feud in public... “They’re just bitter and I hope the public sees through that... They’re a vindictive family and they... can all go to hell...” Last week, the family talked for the first time about how bitter they felt towards the man they helped free from jail. Family and friends claimed [the man] never thanked them for their years of campaigning to overturn his conviction. Some were upset he never shared his... \$1 million compensation... [The sister-in-law] said her husband... was now a happy man and nothing could hurt him, including a family fall-out, more than the jail term he served for a crime he did not commit... [A] key figure in gaining the [man]’s release... was saddened by the reports... “It is a tragedy that what had been a magnificent fight for a very worthy case has resulted in a breach in the family like that.”

...It is one of the enduring images of the 20th century. [A man], with his sisters... clinging joyfully to him, emerges from the Old Bailey, handsome, smiling and punching the air as he is freed after 15 years of wrongful imprisonment. For [the brother] and the rest of the men who had been convicted of two pub bombings in Guildford in 1974, the past had been defined by corrupt police officers, complicit forensic scientists and gullible courts. They had endured beatings, isolation and despair. But on that day in October 1989, the future finally looked bright. Fast forward [to the present. The brother] is alone in a small flat on the south coast of England. His voice on the phone is desperate. “I can see them, the men I saw die in prison... There was one who got some glue and cut up his mattress and glued the bits to his body and then set himself alight. I can still smell the burning flesh. I can’t get it out of my mind.” Plenty of other things haunt [the brother]. There is the sight of his father, [who was] also wrongly branded a terrorist, wasting away in prison before his eyes. He has nightmares about being stripped, spat and urinated upon. And the sound of boots echoing on metal, coming closer to his cell. [The brother] was 35 when he was freed on appeal. Now, after years of alcohol and drug abuse he is in trouble. For, like all his fellow victims of miscarriages of justice – the Birmingham Six, the Bridgewater Three and others less well-known – [the brother] was thrust into a vacuum; a place where people like him were forgotten by the state. “We got no help whatsoever, no support, no counselling, but we were so terribly, terribly damaged. I still am. I never had a single thought about killing myself in prison, but now I think about nothing else...” A lot of people are concerned about [the brother] and are trying to help. But they are not officials, professionals or representatives of the state. Instead they are fellow victims of miscarriages of justice, men and women whose campaigning has switched from releasing innocent people to keeping them in one piece now that they are free. At the heart of this network are two members of the Birmingham Six[, who]... both served 16 years... [until t]hey were released on appeal in 1991. Today, despite never having received full compensation, they open their homes to other victims... This week, the British Government announced that it would plug the gap in provision for miscarriage victims. It agreed to make up absent National Insurance contributions after the Birmingham Six, some of whom are coming up to pensionable age, found that they were not entitled to a state pension because they had not paid into it for 16 years – while they were in jail. “People sometimes argue, ‘Well, they get lots of compensation,’ but they don’t,” says... the solicitor who represented both the Guildford and Birmingham defendants... “Once you deduct lost and projected earnings, the compensation element of being wrongly locked up, beaten and abused for years, averages out at about £13,000 a year.”

...[nearly two] decades of investigation by countless professional and amateur detectives, journalists, psychics and others has still not solved the mystery of what happened to 9-week-old Azaria on August 17, 1980. Was she taken by a dingo, by persons unknown, or killed by [her mother]? Although the convictions against... [Azaria’s mother and father] were quashed and the [parents] declared innocent by the Supreme Court in Darwin in 1988, and further absolution given by a third inquest in 1995, many [AUSns] refuse to believe. On the A[US]n website Public Debate, Azaria’s death has, since April, leaped from 48th to 11th most debated subject, with opinion split 44[% to 40%] in favour of [the mother]’s innocence. Recently, scientists proposed testing Azaria’s matinee jacket, the evidence that finally cleared the [parents], for dingo DNA to determine once and for all if a native dog did kill the infant. The case is used regularly by international opponents of the death penalty to warn of the risks of executing the innocent... The... film *Evil Angels*... remains a jab to the stature of A[US]n journalism, so badly tainted in the early hysteria that followed Azaria’s disappearance. And the social and legal importance of the [parents]’ trial prompted the Canberra-based National Library to acquire [the mother]’s personal papers for its archives as a collection of national significance. The extraordinary 70 boxes of papers includes more than 20,000 letters and cards from an extremely broad cross-section of A[US]n society... They include many who changed their view from guilty to innocent,

and wanted to say sorry. As the... anniversary of Azaria's disappearance near[s], the mystery has regained its currency: new analyses, retrospectives, interviews and specials demonstrate that A[US]'s fascination has not faded. There is an almost mystic quality: Uluru, the giant, brooding rock from which Azaria vanished, is among the most ancient of the continent's sacred places, with its own secrets locked in... the time when Anangu people believed their ancestral beings created the land. The closest translation of Uluru, according to *The Cambridge Dictionary of A[US]n Names*, probably is howling... The young couple, N[Z]ers who had joined the great transtasman exodus of the late 1970s, had... camped at Uluru – then still known only as Ayers Rock... According to the [couple] and their camping companions, who maintained their belief in the [couples]' innocence, a faint cry was heard about 8.15 pm, and [the mother] went to check Azaria in her tent. As she approached [the mother] yelled: "That dog's got my baby!" ...Azaria... was never found, despite intensive searches of the area... The nature of the case guaranteed sensational coverage, much of it discreditable and including, for example, suggestions that the Seventh Day Adventist [parents] were members of a dark cult. Initially, they were cleared by [the]Alice Springs coroner... who found that a dingo did take Azaria but added the enigmatic observation that an unknown person helped dispose of the body, possibly to prevent widespread slaughtering of Uluru's dingoes. But disbelief was already mounting, recorded in [the coroner]'s observation that the [parents] had been subjected to probably the most malicious gossip ever witnessed in A[US]. Far worse was to come. In February 1982, after a second inquest, [the mother] was committed to trial for first-degree murder, with [her husband] charged as an accessory after the fact. Eight months later [the husband and the mother], then pregnant... were found guilty. [The mother] was sentenced to life imprisonment, [the husband] to an 18-month suspended sentence. [Their new daughter] was taken from... [them at birth]. Their trial was a process flawed both by emotion – [the mother]'s iron self-control and lack of public tears turned many against her – and by legal... failings. There was no motive, the opportunity for [the mother] to slip away and kill her child was narrowed to the almost impossible and, according to recent revelations by [the]former Detective Sergeant... who first investigated the disappearance, key evidence – including photographs of dingo paw prints – was ignored, lost or disposed of. Prosecutors dismissed evidence of aggressive dingo behaviour from park rangers, disbelieved the evidence of witnesses who were with the [parents], and claimed the [parents] lied about Azaria's missing matinee jacket. Five days after the jacket was found in February 1986, [the mother] was released from jail. But the worst failings were those of the forensic scientists who convinced the jury of [the mother]'s guilt. The experts said there was no way a dingo could have been responsible for the cuts found on Azaria's discarded clothing, that only a knife could have made them: later evidence proved them wrong. They said a handprint on the clothing had been made by [the mother]'s bloodstained hand: the blood was red sand. They said dark marks found in the [parents]' car were foetal haemoglobin, sprayed when [the mother] killed Azaria: it was bituminous sound deadener... [Today, the mother is] remarried to an American book publisher, [and] is... developing a tourist business in N[SW; the father], also remarried with a 3-year-old daughter, works for a... newspaper in N[SW]... But the scars remain, for both the [parents] and the nation.

...Ten years after [a NZer] was sentenced on a drug importing charge, the NSW Criminal Appeal Court has overturned the conviction because of a... detective's admission to the Commission of Inquiry into Police Corruption that evidence used to convict her was fabricated and that he and other officers lied under oath. [The NZer], aged 48, who now lives in Kerikeri, was wrenched from her... children [then aged 16, 19 and 21]... and served 3 1/2 years of a six-year term. After the ignominy of jail, she was deported to N[Z] – away from her three children and the country in which she had lived for 14 years and grown up to accept as home... The quashing of the conviction means she is entitled to go back to A[US], but somehow it doesn't seem very inviting. Instead, she has briefed a lawyer and is planning to sue the NSW Government.

Activists suing the police as a result of an April 1992 raid on the Auckland Unemployed Workers' Rights Centre... have won a settlement, but neither side in the dispute would divulge details... It is understood a sum of money was paid... Proceedings filed in the High Court in 1993 saw more than 30 plaintiffs seeking more than \$1.8 million from the police. They claimed the raid was contrary to... the Bill of Rights and that the police had been trespassing... [At the time, Auckland was hosting] an international investment conference... The police were said to have batoned and assaulted members... [Yet it was 5 of the members who] were charged with assault and obstruction. The charges were [later]dismissed... in the Auckland District Court... by [a]Judge... who talked of having "an uneasy feeling" about the motives for the prosecution... [In international news,]the British Court of Appeal ruled yesterday that... [a] jailed rapist has... the right to sue... for libel a woman he harassed, because she wrote to police to complain about his behaviour... [The woman], aged 38, a married bank worker who was not the rape victim, wrote... [that] she feared she could be the next victim... [The woman, who] said she had been subjected to his unwanted attentions for more than 15 years... [and now he was bombarding] her with letters from his Liverpool jail... was "devastated and bewildered" by the court ruling. She will now face legal bills of up to £50,000... to defend herself... [The rapist], aged 43, sentenced to life imprisonment in 1983 for rape and three attempted rapes, claimed his chances of gaining parole were shattered after [the woman] denied they had a romantic attachment. The Appeal Court's decision could have far-reaching implications in Britain for the legal status of written complaints from the public to police.

...McDonald's Corp has prevailed in its record-setting libel case against two environmental activists... although the judge said some of the criticisms of the hamburger giant were correct... McDonald's spent millions and received much criticism... [during] the longest trial ever in an English court... which... began almost three years ago... [after an unemployed] ex-postman... and [a]part-time bar worker... called McDonald's a multinational corporate menace – abusing animals, workers and the environment, as well as promoting an unhealthy diet... in an anti-McDonald's pamphlet they handed out... McDonald's called the attacks false and defamatory... The judge found that the defendants libelled McDonald's... when... [they] accused it of destroying rain forests and moving small farmers off their land... to make way for massive cattle farming... by calling its food unhealthy and saying that the company lied about how much recycled packaging it used. But the judge found that McDonald's was "culpable" in cruel treatment of some animals, including cases of hens being kept in small cages their entire lives... He also agreed that McDonald's runs advertisements that encourage children to pester their parents into going to the fast-food outlets, and with the contention that McDonald's restaurants in Britain pay low wages and sometimes treat young, impressionable workers unfairly by sending them home early when business is slow, which lowers their pay... "In 1993 most McDonald's senior management had salaries the equivalent of £36 an hour, while the starting rate for crew members outside London was £2.65 for 16- and 17-year-olds." ...one... court... witness told of preparing burgers at a branch in Colchester, Essex, while 5cm of sewage covered the floor... The judge awarded damages of £57,500... but McDonald's British president... did not immediately say whether the company will try to collect... McDonald's... legal costs [were estimated to be £6.3 million]...

The verdict in the McDonald's marathon libel trial has gone against two British environmental activists. But the burger giant cannot win... [One activist] is on income support, and [the other] earns £64 a week... [Furthermore, they] are to continue their campaign to discredit the fast-food chain... [because] the case had only hardened their resolve. "No force on earth is going to prevent campaigners from disseminating alternative opinions and facts about McDonald's to the public."

...[The defamation must be public, i.e. made known to a person other than the defamed, to constitute either libel or slander. A libel suit does not require proof of damages, but such proof is requisite in an action for slander except where the slander consists of accusing a person of a crime, a woman of unchastity, or imputing to someone a loathsome disease or professional incapacity.]

...\$1m to PM for being called a liar... A Singapore court awarded [the P]M... and senior colleagues in his ruling party a record Singapore \$8.08... million in damages yesterday in their libel cases against a political foe. The court ordered [the foe], who fled the country after losing in January

general elections, to pay the damages... to [the PM] and 10 members of the ruling People's Action Party (PAP)... [The PM], involved in three of the suits... was awarded \$S1.4 million. [A former P]M... involved in five of the cases, won the biggest amount – \$S2.3 million. The PAP leaders had demanded aggravated damages totalling \$S12.9 million. “This court must show its indignation at the injury inflicted on the plaintiffs,” [the judge] said in the written judgment. “It cannot be disputed that in terms of aggravation, these 13 cases have no equal,” he said. [The foe], who lost the cases in March when he did not return to defend himself, said last week he would appeal against the damages award. He was sued by the PAP leaders for calling them liars for branding him an “anti-Christian Chinese chauvinist” who endangered Singapore’s ethnic harmony.

...Record \$8m libel payout sends chill through Asia... The ruling drew criticism of Singapore’s legal system by several analysts in Asia who pointed to sharp contrasts between Singapore’s legal climate and courts in some of its neighbours such as Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, Taiwan and the Philippines... legal experts [also] said the ruling exposed a gap between the city-state’s economic and political development... “I feel sorry for Singapore because all of their economic progress is not matched by progress in political maturity and liberties,” said... a well-known Philippine political analyst and columnist. “In the Philippines talk is cheap, there is virtually no libel in this country. We believe repression will inflict damage on other parts of the body politic.” A member of Hong Kong’s Bar Council said the award seemed “very large” compared to cases in Hong Kong or Britain – which share a Common Law-based legal system with Singapore... “The English courts have said that when you get to such record amounts of damages you’re beginning to put curbs on freedom of expression because it will have a chilling effect.” But Indian lawyers cheered the ruling, saying it was a bold decision which could provide a model. “It is a very good judgment, particularly when a lot of irresponsible criticism or defamation takes place of people in power or position, or those who have acquired some fame,” said... a senior Delhi lawyer. Analysts in Taiwan said Singapore’s ruling came a month after a Taiwan court acquitted four journalists in a libel suit brought by the powerful business chief of Taiwan’s ruling party. Singapore’s Justice... [system ruled that the] “malicious” attacks on... [the incumbent PM, the former PM] and the others... could have affected “their moral authority to govern.”

...[a former] Aucklander... has won a seven-year fight to clear his name in a multi-million-dollar legal battle dubbed the most bizarre in Hong Kong this decade. Authorities in the colony had alleged the controversial immigration consultant swindled would-be migrants to N[Z]. But last night the 37-year-old... was celebrating after a district court judge in Hong Kong sensationally ended his fraud trial. [The]Judge... said he had heard enough evidence to set [the consultant] free and would throw out all 10 fraud charges... [The consultant] initially reacted to the news by vomiting and was taken to hospital... The trial... was... his second after the first... which saw the resignation of a judge, prosecution and defence lawyers and accusations that N[Z] authorities tried to influence the Judiciary in Hong Kong to convict... [the consultant was aborted. The] saga... started with [the consultant’s] arrest in 1990. Police later released him but the colony’s graft busters charged him again in 1992. They said he had conspired to defraud the N[Z] Immigration Service, conspired to obtain services by deception and forged documents with intent to defraud. The case went to trial in May 1995... amid warnings from [the consultant’s] doctors that the accused could drop dead any day due to heart problems... But 16 months into the trial, [the]Judge... discharged himself citing an “abnormality” of the brain... The second trial, with a new judge and legal counsel, started in February and the whole court moved to N[Z] to hear evidence... The... decision to end the trial came after several days’ testimony by [the consultant] and before 12 more defence witnesses were due to take the stand.

...A “bush lawyer” who plans to sue a former [NZ]judge declined an offer of \$10,000 compensation... in return for dropping his... claim... [of] \$400,000 in compensation, \$200,000 in punitive damages and \$5000 in court costs... [The bush (unqualified) lawyer alleges a] retired district court judge... acted maliciously in issuing a non-molestation order against him in 1992... [He] said his crusade... to clear his name... had cost him his life savings of \$60,000... In October last year, after the High Court granted [the bush lawyer] limited authority to proceed to trial, the Chief District Court Judge... wrote to him offering the... compensation... [T]he letter... says: “I accept... that errors occurred and that the handling of your case [in 1992] was not ideal. Also that you have suffered in consequence.” A second letter, sent by the Crown Law Office in March this year, repeated the offer... [T]he Chief District Court Judge... [is known to be] concerned that this... Court of Appeal decision would encourage disgruntled litigants to reopen failed cases... A constitutional law expert... said that while there was nothing unusual in the Crown Law Office trying to settle a case out of court to avoid costly litigation, he was surprised the matter had been dealt with by the Chief District Court Judge personally... Neither the Solicitor-General... nor [the]Chief Judge... was prepared to discuss the settlement offer... yesterday...

Pending law changes will trigger a boom in the number of bush lawyers seeking affordable justice. Amendments to the Disputes Tribunal Act will allow more people to head for the tribunal and bypass costly district court proceedings... The Government administration committee next month is expected to approve raising the limit on taking financial disputes to the tribunal from \$3000 to \$7500. With the approval of both parties, the tribunal could hear cases involving disputes of up to \$12,000... [T]he limits had not changed since the law was introduced in 1988... But the changes could worsen already lengthy queues... In the main cities, people wait between six and 12 weeks for a case to be heard. The number of applications for hearings has risen about 40[%] since 1990, and is expected to top 33,000 by the end of this financial year. Ideally, people should wait three weeks... said... the Consumers’ Institute[, which believes that the]... Department for Courts need[s] to employ more referees... Demand showed the tribunal was working “as a cheap, quick, efficient forum in which to provide people with access to justice.” Anecdotal evidence suggested that people with disputes involving sums of less than \$10,000 could not afford to take the matter to the district court... But... the chief executive of the Insurance Council, criticised the standard of tribunal judgments as biased against corporates and said the act allowed referees to ignore the law. “Referees are only required to take account of the law,” he said. “There are times that referees decide that there is a deep pocket called an insurance company and they can pay out.” ...[Incidentally, a] former aide of [a US singer-star claims] to have photos of the star in sexual acts with young boys and is trying to sell them to the media, according to the *Express on Sunday* newspaper in London. The paper said... [the] former manager of [the singer-star]’s Neverland ranch, was asking £15 million... for the rights to his diary, which... is illustrated with more than 50 such photographs... [Meanwhile, the boy – now aged 17 –] who received \$US20 million... from [the]singer-star... for dropping sexual-abuse allegations has turned into a shrewd investor, according to *Penthouse* magazine... [He] bought the private school that he attends after realising how expensive tuition was. Then he bought shares in three oil companies after realising how expensive gasoline was for his [new]sport-utility vehicle. [Ironically, one of the singer-star’s best-known songs includes the line: ‘be careful what you do before the lie becomes the truth’!]

...‘one of the most often repeated lies is that the singer-star paid 25 million dollars to settle his molestation lawsuit. The fact is it cost 40 million. Isn’t that more than any sane innocent man would pay to remove an aggravation?’

...a NZ rugby player faces legal costs of up to \$100,000 defending a charge that he raped a South African woman... in the Durban hotel where the Wellington Hurricanes were staying... [The player] could not afford to sue [her] for laying a false complaint...

A study of the Queensland legal system has found what many have long believed – going to court is the most expensive way to get justice. The study found that if family law litigation went to a judge, the average amount spent in Brisbane in legal costs is \$A16,832... If the parties settle their differences by negotiation, the average cost was less than \$A1800. - 1997

Over here... in... New York ...or... LA... when you start a lawsuit, it doesn’t matter who wins – at the end of the day it still costs.

Justice is... an expensive luxury which, except in minor cases, a man with small means can with difficulty afford.

Economic changes since... 1984 had made big law firms wealthy but many N[Z]ers still had trouble gaining access to justice, the Chief Justice... said at the weekend... "The art collections in the foyers of major firms hang uneasily alongside the problems of access to justice,"... [He] also criticised rich N[Z]ers who wanted their own way within the legal system. "The increasingly strident cries of the well-heeled sector of the community pressuring Government and the Judiciary as to the particular brand of justice they seek are not a pretty sound."

...an Auckland barrister... claims... [t]he legal aid system gives district court staff "unfettered power" to practise favouritism and does not serve its clients well... [B]ecause it was up to court staff to assign legal aid cases to lawyers... [they] can make or break a career... [The barrister] said that as a criminal lawyer he did well out of legal aid, but was often approached by others complaining they were not given work. "What is undesirable is that it doesn't encourage a robust and independent bar. It encourages the sort of individual who is prepared to be obsequious... with the courts. And often pleasing court officials is not the same thing as pleasing your client." [The barrister] said the system would improve if accused were allowed to make their own choice from the list of available counsel... The Department of Courts northern deputy general manager, case processing... said there was no foundation for the allegations. Court staff assigned lawyers from a list approved by each district's Law Society and this was done as fairly as possible... [However, t]he president of the Criminal Bar Association... said there had long been a concern about how legal aid cases were distributed. "I've never known how it worked. Some get a lot of work others don't." ...Earlier this week inmates on remand at Mt Eden complained to the Criminal Bar Association they were getting a raw deal from legal aid. In a letter to [the president] the prisoners expressed concerns about the integrity of the system and complained that some lawyers were not giving their clients adequate time to prepare for court hearings. The group also said some legal aid lawyers failed to turn up to court. "The people here have lost faith that many legal aid representatives have the spirit or the legal intention of adequately defending their clients, and that they, the lawyers, have now become a subliminal part of the prosecution," the letter said. - 1996

N[Z] is said to be the only country which uses lawyers so extensively to process legal aid applications... [Now] government administrators... say... [massive] reform of legal aid is needed because the system is under strain to the point of collapse... Legal services staff – many unpaid volunteers – faced an increased workload... [while] some lawyers were being paid more than they should be... Lawyers are [also] getting maths computations wrong, causing their colleagues to be paid the wrong amount. Rules are being bent... and there is general ignorance of fee levels and other requirements. For example, a refugee status appeal attracts a maximum fee of \$1500. But some staff have allowed an hourly rate, resulting in a bill three or four times above the maximum amount payable... Applications for civil aid last year were up by more than 20[%] compared to 1995... In Auckland[, where]... about 90 people volunteer their time to do a task which needs about 300 staff... there can be an eight-week wait for aid applications to be processed... And in the meantime you could be cooling your heels in a Mt Eden remand cell waiting for the approval allowing proper legal representation to get bail. In a report published yesterday, the Legal Services Board[(LSB)] recommended removing the power of court registrars to grant criminal legal aid and assign counsel, and allowing board-approved lawyers to assign themselves in simple cases. Accused people should have a "reasonable say" about who represented them. Judges would have the right to reassign cases. Legal aid would be granted only once, and would apply throughout all proceedings.

...More disputes could be solved out of court if lawyers dropped their perception that mediation was a second-class solution, says the executive director of the L[SB]... "There is always a perception that if you hand someone over to mediation you lose a client," he said... The board began funding legal aid for some mediation services on February 1, but... it would be about 12 months before the benefits of the scheme could be seen because lawyers first needed to be educated to use it... [A] national pilot scheme run last year resulted in 50 mediations in the Auckland area, nearly all of which were successful... [In international news, a] drunken punter left paralysed in a wheelchair after falling off a pub bar stool in Ireland is suing the landlord for £100,000... [He] has been given legal aid to take action against... [the publican, claiming the publican] was negligent for letting him sit on the one-metre bar stool. [He] fell asleep and minutes later fell off, breaking a bone in his spine leaving him paralysed from the waist down. His lawyers said [the publican] was at fault for not seating him at a safe height... The 36-year-old had reportedly admitted drinking several pints of Guinness and shots before he went to the pub. But he believed he was still entitled to compensation.

...Funds crisis could let criminals walk... [A suspect] has become an instant celebrity – not for the \$A5 million... worth of heroin he is alleged to have been holding, but because he nearly became the first man to walk free simply because the State of N[SW] does not have the money to provide him with a lawyer. If the case itself is startling, it is but a minnow compared to the much greater debate raging between the states and the Federal Government over a funding row that may mean [the suspect] is merely the first in a long line of A[US]ns facing serious charges who could be freed by Commonwealth parsimony... Arrested allegedly in possession of 3.8kg of heroin, he was granted legal aid to fight a case that ended... in a hung jury. He was almost set free because the N[SW] Legal Aid Commission, smarting from recent cuts to its budget, resisted powerful pressure and stuck to a policy decision that it would not allocate funds for second trials after a hung jury. "Just one retrial would cost us, we think, at least \$40,000," said [the] commission chairman... "We could get another half a dozen of these in the next week. There are at least 70 coming through each year and we would fund the bulk of these trials. We just can't afford to commit ourselves." Because of the implications of the no-second-trial policy highlighted by [the suspect's] case, the commission at a late-night crisis meeting delayed a show-down by deferring for a month a final decision on his funding... Behind this is the row between Canberra and the states over Commonwealth funding of the legal aid system. Until last year Canberra had given the states about \$A160 million a year to use for the defence of people appearing in cases under both state and Commonwealth law. But the rules have changed. The new Federal Attorney-General... told the states Canberra would no longer fund cases under state law, and would impose funding cuts of about \$A110 million over three years. The impact is enormous, and the implications... ominous. In N[SW] alone, two-thirds of the courts' caseload are criminal cases brought under state law, and federal funding accounted for more than half of the state's legal aid budget. N[SW] has already, in addition to the no-second-trial policy, made deep cuts. Fees for legal aid lawyers have been reduced, and there will be no funding for inquests, claims involving tenants of retirement villages, or unfair dismissal cases. National Legal Aid, the umbrella organisation for the nation's legal aid commissions, warns this is the tip of an ugly iceberg. It estimates the cutbacks will hit up to 130,000 A[US]ns this year, with Canberra "deserting" victims of domestic violence, the protection of children, housing and consumer law, compensation claims, criminal law and civil liberties. To add to this, Canberra has also announced huge increases in court and tribunal fees, designed to raise more than \$A100 million over the next four years. According to Opposition calculations, fees for a typical small business claim will rise from \$A1000 to more than \$A12,000, a family law dispute from \$A368 to more than \$A2000, and for an unfair dismissal claim to \$A2753. At a recent conference in Wellington, [the AUS]n High Court Chief Justice... said: "It is not an over-statement to say that the system of administering justice is in crisis. Ordinary people cannot afford to enforce their rights or to litigate to protect their immunities."

...N[Z] spends about \$16 per capita on legal aid. In comparison, Britain spends \$70 per capita... Last year more than 51,000 N[Z]ers received legal aid assistance, 19,294 in civil cases and 31,810 in criminal cases... For the year ended June 1996, the legal aid bill was... \$55.64 million[– of which the]... gross allocation from the Government... [was \$12m – but \$3m of the \$23.7m spent on] criminal legal aid... [was recovered. Now the] system is being reviewed... The L[SB], an independent Crown entity that oversees legal aid, has commissioned an \$80,000 research project... to see if experienced lawyers are avoiding legal aid work... The [LSB] executive director... said anecdotal evidence suggested a number of law firms "would not touch legal aid with a barge pole". Other commonly held perceptions were: That legal aid was used to train young lawyers; many senior lawyers with more than six years experience did not do legal aid work; and some thought payment rates were too low... [T]he survey may

find junior legal counsel doing a lot of legal aid work for \$100 an hour that senior counsel, paid more than the current \$150... an hour, may be able to do in less than half the time... [S]ome criminal trials chewed through a lot of legal aid – [one case that involved] three trials and [a]Court of Appeal hearing cost \$508,000 – [while]the average remuneration a lawyer received for criminal legal aid was \$700 for five hours work. [However, in] major trials much of the legal aid bill went on expert witnesses not on lawyers... - 1997

Our system of legal aid is under review, propelled in to the spotlight by... cases such as a Tongan-based millionaire who received \$46,000[, and]... burgeoning costs. Aid for civil cases is outstripping provision for criminal charges and the combined total is heading toward \$100 million a year. No one denies the need for legal aid. It stems from the belief, enshrined in both the Magna Carta and our Bill of Rights Act, that justice should be available to everyone... [The] review will try to balance the need for accessible justice with some form of fiscal constraint. It is not an easy task. The British have been grappling with the same problem and have arrived at radical solutions that mean an end to civil legal aid as we know it and changes to criminal legal aid. A series of alternative systems embodied in an Access to Justice Bill now before the British Parliament are designed to both speed the justice system and reduce legal aid costs... The British system (outside Scotland, which has its own justice system) was based on a time-plus charging system for legal aid lawyers... Both criminal and civil aid systems... [are] demand-driven and there have been few incentives for lawyers to expedite matters. They have continued to be paid “for services rendered.” The Lord Chancellor... in a speech in February described criminal legal aid as a greedy Leviathan. It is an understandable position to take when one considers that in Britain virtually all criminal cases are on legal aid. Indeed, of the 100,860 applications for legal aid to cover representation in the Crown Court in 1997, only 18 were turned down... Costs rose from £507 million... in 1992... to £733 million... in 1997... an increase of 40[%], while the number of cases... rose only 10[%]. Civil legal aid statistics are even worse. Between 1992... and 1997... costs rose by 35[%] to £793 million... while the number of cases fell 31[%] to just under 320,000. This year... the Lord Chancellor... produced a startling statistic: 1[%] of the... criminal... cases – high-profile, protracted... trials – accounted for 40[%] of the budget. “These are very high-cost cases and that part of the budget just has to be brought under control... You see, the problem is that the longer the trial goes on the more money the lawyers earn. Therefore, there are perverse incentives to spin the case out because for every day that the case lasts, the cash register merrily peals away... Of course... when the state brings a prosecution against a defendant which is likely to result in his imprisonment if he loses, then it is... right that if he cannot afford to defend himself, that the state... must make the means of his defending himself through professional lawyers available. But it is a fact that... legal aid is not nearly as popular a social service as its devotees would like to think it should be – ...because of the public perception that legal aid is primarily a means of funding lawyers’ bank balances.” Can he win against a profession notorious for stonewalling changes they do not perceive to be in their own interests? His predecessor... battled throughout his term and achieved limited reform. “What we have at our disposal,” [the incumbent Lord Chancellor says], “is one tool only. And it is a very old-fashioned tool and it is called contracting. What we have to do, so far as we possibly can, is contract at fixed prices.” ...The contract system will be employed by a new Criminal Defence Service that will replace the criminal legal aid service. It will be administered by a new body, the Legal Services Commission, that will also administer civil assistance. The commission will develop contracts for different types of criminal service. They will be tested in pilot schemes before being fully implemented. The aim will be to fix prices in advance of cases going to court. The rationale is that a lawyer on a fixed fee will want to move quickly... A planning service will set priorities for [civil case] funds. Cases involving domestic violence, care of children and adoption will have the highest priority. The present “merit testing” will be replaced by funding assessments to promote different approaches. For example, conditional fees will be encouraged: no win, no fee – an incentive for a lawyer to give his or her all. In the civil courts new procedural rules will minimise delay and plain English will replace arcane legal terminology. Automatic appeal rights will be replaced by a requirement that parties seek leave to appeal, removing weak cases that would only clog the system. Britain’s plans to wrestle the legal aid demon are, as yet, largely untested. However, if there is any lesson to be learned for N[Z], it is that the legal aid bill will... come down only if the legal system is made more efficient.

...A four-fold increase in the cost of legal aid over 12 years has prompted the Government to question the role that lawyers play in allocating the funding. But lawyers have hit back, saying the legal aid bill would spiral even higher without their cooperation. The Minister of Justice... yesterday... blamed... the blowout on increased lawyers’ rates... But a spokesman for the Auckland District Law Society... said lawyers were making less out of legal aid now than they ever had. He said recent L[SB] instructions, for example, had knocked back the fees lawyers were paid for work relating to the Domestic Violence Act... [The minister also] said the present system – where local subcommittees of lawyers could grant or decline applications – did not guarantee consistency. “Where you may qualify for legal aid in one part of the country you may not qualify in another. We need to look at how we can standardise that.” [The Act Party]’s justice spokeswoman... released figures over the weekend showing legal aid costs had skyrocketed from \$2 million in 1978 to more than \$90 million this year. Legislation introduced in 1991 had failed to curb the burgeoning bill, she said... In March, [she had] highlighted the case of a millionaire Tongan businessman who received \$46,000 to unsuccessfully defend himself against charges of cheating... It is understood the Tongan man qualified after he declared his past year’s income as \$4000... [The Auckland Law Society spokesman] said about 90[%] of those granted legal aid had incomes below \$13,000 and many were beneficiaries.

...ONE Auckland barrister earned more than \$400,000 from legal aid work last year, the L[SB] has revealed. Four others – from Auckland, Nelson, Invercargill and Dunedin – earned between \$302,000 and \$376,000... Twenty-one lawyers received more than \$150,000... [The LSB’s] executive director... issued the figures for a request under the Official Information Act. The figures refer only to barristers who are sole practitioners. Some lawyers working for firms would probably be earning even greater sums, [he] said, but he was not able to retrieve the figures quickly. [The]Justice Minister... said while the figures seemed high, he could not comment on individual cases. He said lawyers could have been working on a number of cases, which could make the big payments understandable... The figures suggested the top earners were spending most of their time on legal aid work... If the top earner had been paid the maximum legal aid rate of \$180 an hour, he or she would have had to work 2277 hours to earn \$410,000. [The LSB executive] said it reminded him of the joke about the lawyer who arrived in heaven to applause and acclamation. “We’ve never had a 332-year-old man here before,” the angels explained. The lawyer replied: “But I’m only 46...” The angels said: “Oh, we were working from your timesheet.” ...[the] President of the N[Z] Bar Association... said while some lawyers could be cheating the system, many suffered financially by doing legal aid work. “They do not claim all the hours they spend on a case and they do legal aid work because there is an element of public service. And the vast majority working in the legal aid area are doing so honestly and ethically. But, like in all professions, there are a few who will be ripping the system off and they should be weeded out. They are inflating the number of hours they work and sometimes taking cases to court which ought not to be defended. But I don’t agree with the general public perception that lawyers as a group are ripping off the system.” ...[In related news, a] North Shore lawyer is suing the police for \$40,000 for what he says was a demeaning search at Mt Eden Prison. [The lawyer] says he was appalled at the way visitors were subjected to a “pat-down” search and made to turn out their purses and pockets in full public view. Being a lawyer did not save... [him] from the indignity of being searched, despite his protests.

...The immunity which for more than two centuries has protected British barristers from being sued for negligence was swept away by the House of Lords yesterday. Seven law lords held that it was no longer in the public interest for members of the Bar to enjoy an immunity not available to other professionals such as doctors and accountants. The lawyers had been concerned that, if dissatisfied clients were allowed to sue, the floodgates would be opened to a mass of reiteration of cases already decided. But [one law]lord... said... the withdrawal of... immunity... would bring to an end “an anomalous exception” to the basic premise there should be a remedy for a wrong.

The remedying of wrongs via compensation or reparation payments effectively allows victims to profit from the existence of crime. Furthermore, criminals, informants, law enforcers, judges, jailers, security personnel and people who 'clean up after crime scenes', can also be said to profit from the existence of crime – if for no other reason than that crime provides them all with employment. But it appears that the people who profit most out of crime are lawyers – and if they aren't profiting from the existence of crime, it's from the existence of misfortune!

"...let me make one thing clear to you. I want your legal advice, I even pay for it, but to me you're all vipers. You live on personal injury... divorces... pain and misery..."

"...You let me down, man. Now I don't believe in nothing no more. I'm going to law school!" ..."Good for you... If there's one thing America needs it's more lawyers. Can you imagine a world without lawyers...?"

The number of students in American law schools has increased rapidly. In 1960, slightly more than 40,000 students were enrolled in schools approved by the American Bar Association. In 1970 that number had more than doubled to 82,000 students... By the 1970's there were about 350,000 lawyers, or one for about every 600 Americans.

The NZ Law Society estimated that during 1997 'between 40,000 and 50,000 people living in NZ were qualified to practice law.' However, it believed the number of people 'registered to practice law in NZ was between 7000 to 7500' – or about one for every 500 NZers. Incidentally, in '1995, US District Courts commenced 239,000 civil cases and 44,200 criminal cases (in 1985, the respective figures were 273,700 and 38,500').

The number of lawyers in the U[S] rose from 285,933 in 1960 to 723,189 in 1988, a 252% growth... Of personal consumption expenditures, the fastest growing[category] between 1970 and 1990... [was legal services, with] a 1,004% increase... from \$4.9 billion to \$49.2 billion...

What do you call 5000 dead lawyers at the bottom of the ocean? *Answer:* A good start! Lawyers[are] America's most reviled professionals...

He was critical of the lack of professionalism shown by some lawyers and quoted the movie *The Godfather*. "A lawyer with his briefcase can steal more than 100 men with guns."

"Today[, new entrants,] we're going to share what our parents do for work." "My mummy is a doctor." "My daddy's a truck driver." "My mummy's a teacher." "And your dad?" "Umm, my dad, he is a liar." "A liar! Oh, I'm sure you don't mean a liar?" "Well, he wears a suit and goes to court and talks to the judge." "Oh, I see. You mean he's a lawyer."

"Mrs Stevens, it's the innocent who need an attorney – the guilty can lie for themselves."

From now on I'm going to tell the truth because I don't have enough money to pay for a good lawyer.

Lawyers under the present system are paid antagonists hired to fight with one another on behalf of others... We lawyers should be training people to understand the law and apply it to represent themselves.

If the inexplicable occurs in Russia, the mafia is probably behind it. If the bizarre happens in Japan, a bureaucrat ordered it. In America, suspect lawyers... Lawyers in the U[S], always on the hunt for business, are looking to the school system... On October 8, a 14-year-old Ohio girl arrived at her school in a stretch limousine, accompanied by her lawyer. The lawyer was there to ensure her admittance, which had been earlier denied on the ground of "drug dealing." The drug in question was midol, a mild remedy for menstrual pain; the girl had given one tablet of this stuff to a friend. For this the school suspended her and required that she undergo drug counselling. Sensitive to illegal drugs, schools are paranoid about sex. In North Carolina a six-year-old was recently suspended from school: he had kissed a classmate on the cheek, and the school's authorities declared that this was sexual harassment[– even though]... the girl asked him to kiss her... In New York this month, a seven-year-old who kissed a girl on the cheek... "because I liked her" and had... pulled a button off her skirt... because his favourite book is... about a bear with a missing button... was sent home for sexual harassment also. What drives schools to such bizarre extremes? The answer is that both illegal drugs and sexual harassment of older girls are real problems; and that schools that fail to deal with them may face lawsuits. This month a Californian 14-year-old who had suffered months of sexual taunts was awarded \$500,000 in damages, some of which will be paid by her former school principal. To prevent more such cases, the federal Government sent out a set of guidelines on sexual harassment in August. The fear of lawsuits has driven some schools to forbid pupils to hold hands. From this it is a short jump to suspending a six-year-old for kissing... In the end, maybe better a country of lawyers than one of bureaucrats or mobsters.

...WHINGEING N[Z]... We used to shrug our shoulders when things went wrong. Now we call in the lawyers. - 1996

N[Z] lawyers are operating outside the law by using an American-style system of charging clients a percentage of money won in court settlements. But lawyers who use contingency fee arrangements, which are common in the U[S,] ...say the practice is the only way many people who do not qualify for legal aid can afford litigation.

...A controversial American-style system of charging lawyers fees will inevitably be adopted, says the Attorney-General... It is legal for lawyers to waive fees if a court case is unsuccessful and load the bill on a successful outcome. [The Attorney-General] said charging on a percentage basis was only a small step from that practice... The Auckland District Law Society... [is against allowing a lawyer to have] a financial interest in the outcome of a case. But... [a] Wellington lawyer... who is acting for 1600 women battling for compensation from American breast-implant manufacturers, said banning the practice would favour rich corporates and discriminate against poor litigants.

...*Guiltily as charged – or not guilty, not charged?* ...Cynics say that win, lose or draw, lawyers get paid. That's largely true under [NZ's] existing system where fees are a matter of negotiation between counsel and client... [T]he American system of being paid only if the case is won... may bring leaner pickings for some lawyers and even more bountiful rewards for others. When it comes to earnings, lawyers consistently top the list. There's anecdotal evidence to suggest that a partner in a leading firm with a good spread of corporate clients can expect to earn at least \$500,000 a year. The best surgeons lag behind by about \$100,000... An experienced barrister specialising in criminal cases earns upwards of \$250,000 a year; a few are reputed to have topped \$700,000. In a busy practice, a family doctor can expect about \$156,000. The average lawyer handling humdrum family matters gets between \$60,000 and \$80,000. Small-town lawyers may earn as little as \$35,000. This is less than some of the bright law school graduates recruited into major companies on between \$45,000 and \$50,000 after having some of their fees paid – but they may last no more than a year if they don't perform. Junior house surgeons in public hospitals get about \$50,000 for a 12-hour day. At the bottom of the rung some lawyers survive on as little as \$30,000, largely from legal aid work.

...Lawyers and the legal system are not cheap. The only way most people can get low cost, instant access to the justice system is to rob a bank. I therefore believe the Government should legislate to formally recognise as lawful contingency or "no win no fee" arrangements for lawyers. As a court lawyer I know many people cannot afford to bring cases. For example matrimonial property cases now cost about \$20,000 to bring to hearing... People seeking legal help are often in financial difficulty. Someone who has been unjustifiably dismissed from employment will often have no funds to bring an Employment Tribunal claim because he or she is unemployed. Such people are unlikely to qualify for legal aid under recent legislative amendments which base their entitlement on their income over the preceding 12 months. The paradox also is that although middle income N[Z]ers pay proportionately the most tax (as the rich have accountants and there is no tax on low incomes) those same people cannot use the justice system they have paid for. The contingency fee system would allow such people to get justice... Such an agreement with a solicitor clearly amounts to a consumer choice... Many other professionals are rewarded on a conditional basis. Licensed real estate agents and merchant bankers spring to mind... The fee could be a percentage of the result obtained, perhaps 30[%]... Unreasonable fees are prevented by Law Society rules. I do not believe that contingency fees would result in an American style drop in standards or excessive awards... Lawyers in N[Z] – unlike doctors – can be sued and excessive awards can be legislated against... I believe... contingency fees... are lawful as the cases banning them relate to medieval landlords financing other landlord's legal attempts to evict tenants and are outdated. It is time for Parliament to make the law clear.

...The Court of Appeal has affirmed a citizen's right to a "day in court." In a judgment released this week, the court held an almost three-year delay in progressing legal proceedings was not fatal to a Canterbury mother and son's claim against their former lawyers... [and, therefore, their] claim could go ahead. They alleged about \$343,000 was lost with the failure of a company in which their money was wrongly invested. A High Court judge... said they had waited too long in progressing the case, but [they] appealed. The Court of Appeal has allowed their appeal and awarded them \$3500 costs. A condition of the judgment was that within 10 days [they] must take the next step in the case... [T]he Appeal Court's judgment... said the case related to a land deal in 1986. [The mother and son] started legal action against their former lawyers... in 1991. Nothing was done about the case after March 1993. When [their] new lawyer wanted to progress the file he had to get the court's permission, which a High Court judge refused... [However, the Appeal Court judge said the High Court] judge had applied the wrong test. A citizen's right to his or her "day in court" was not to be treated so lightly. Fairness had to prevail over demands of efficiency.

...A PENNILESS couple has won more than \$1 million from an insurance company and a lawyer... They battled for years to get legal aid and finally... the High Court at Auckland... ordered AMP Finance NZ Ltd to pay \$850,000 for its part in the couple's financial destruction... The [couple] have settled with their former lawyer... out of court for \$250,000. After costs are taken out of the settlement, the [couple] estimate they will have \$600,000 to rebuild their lives.

...AMP has appealed a High Court ruling that it pay a penniless couple \$850,000 for its part in a property collapse that left them destitute... Included in the settlement is \$301,415 for loss suffered, with interest at 11% since September 1987; \$25,000 for loss of chattels, plus interest; and payment of... [\$80,000] for "distress, grief, anxiety and humiliation" and \$85,000 toward costs... [In related news, the NZ] Law Practitioners' Disciplinary Tribunal says some of... [a Wellington lawyer's] dealings on behalf of the... Druids Friendly Society... were so negligent they reflected on his fitness to practice law and brought the profession into disrepute... Some of his advice to the society was "extraordinary." [The lawyer] has been found guilty of professional negligence or incompetence, and professional misconduct. A decision on penalties was reserved.

...[a] Wellington lawyer... has been struck off the legal roll... The Law Practitioners' Disciplinary Tribunal ordered him to pay \$234,448 in costs... [Incidentally, NZ lawyers] have paid more than \$28 million to meet the losses sustained by clients of... collapsed law... firms. This year the Law Society repaid bank loans it used to settle claims on the fidelity fund... of which \$25 million was from the... biggest single claim on the fund in the society's history... [following a firm's collapse in 1992 which resulted in one lawyer being] sentenced to seven years' jail for theft and fraud involving \$6.4 million[, and his partner being]... jailed for six years for theft charges involving \$3.5 million... Lawyers in partnership or solo business were levied \$10,000 each in 1993, and most paid by annual instalments of \$2000... More than \$130,000 is still owed by lawyers, but the society has written off \$64,000 as unrecoverable because of bankruptcy or insolvency. [However, the] fund shows a healthy balance, and... it was sufficient to meet further valid claims "unless something unexpected or untoward arises."

...When... an authority on the management of professional firms, asked a group of lawyers in a prestige office how much they liked their clients, they fell about laughing. Not only had the question never occurred to them, they didn't think it even mattered. What really mattered was how much they billed their clients.

...in the February issue of *Playboy* magazine... John F. Kennedy jun... [-] who publishes the magazine *George*[- reveals he] didn't much like his former career as a prosecutor, having said: "I felt sorry for the defendants. Sure, they were all guilty, but they were all poor and stupid."

...All law students completing their degrees after July 31, 2000, will have to pass a course in ethics and professional responsibility to practice law, the [NZ] Council of Legal Education has decided.

...A Scottish law student is suing his solicitor mother for his living costs. [The solicitor], 53, is set to contest[her] 20-year-old... [son]'s claim to £400... a month maintenance when the case begins today at Edinburgh Sheriff Court. [The son], who studies at Aberdeen University, is bringing the claim under the Family Law (Scotland) Act of 1985. [The solicitor] is believed to be estranged from her son, who is living with her former husband... [In other law news from Britain, a t]op Belfast lawyer... was called to a police custody room after two men being questioned about an attempt to steal a car requested that he represent them. He agreed to defend them even though he found out that it was his car they had tried to steal.

...How can lawyers defend the apparently indefensible? ...the first rule of justice is the accused is innocent until proven guilty... "I defend clients on the basis they are probably innocent... If... clients tell me they are guilty I cannot defend them; they must plead guilty or secure other counsel..."

...The Court of Appeal is to rehear a rape case after revelations that the accused's lawyer failed to tell the jury her client was impotent... A new lawyer took up the case of [the] 58-year-old... who has now been in jail for 17 months. [His original lawyer] has since said that she has regrets about the way she handled the defence. She declined to comment on the case yesterday.

...An Auckland lawyer is expected in the witness box in the Court of Appeal tomorrow to face the question of why evidence about her former client's impotence was not called at his rape trial... [The accused man's] wife might also be called... [According to the accused man's current] lawyer... the impotence evidence was not a complete defence, but it was surely an expected part of the defence case because it raised reasonable doubt... A doctor who examined [the accused] before the trial could not rule out partial erection...

A man whose lawyer failed to tell a jury... that an accident... rendered[him] impotent... has had his rape conviction quashed. [In international news, 'the US government has agreed to settle a sex discrimination case dating back 23 years by paying out the equivalent of a billion NZ dollars. 1100 women sued the now disbanded Government Information Agency which once ran the Voice of America radio service. It's the biggest civil rights settlement in US history. In 1984 a judge ruled in favour of the women, quoting agency officials who said "they did not want that many girls around"; that "technical jobs were mainly for men"; that "a woman's place was at the stove, not on the air." The government fought that ruling – all the way to the Supreme Court – and lost. Today, the battle ended. The Justice Department agreed to pay \$US450,000 for each plaintiff.']

...A first-grader who was... separated from his class... for a day and banned from an ice-cream party after kissing a classmate... can put his mind at ease. The Education Department declared yesterday that a peck on the cheek by a six-year-old falls short of sexual harassment.

...A Florida student who was prevented from displaying a huge sculpture of a nude man at school has agreed to settle the suit she filed for \$US45,000... [She] sued the Broward County School Board last year for violating her right to free speech. Her oversized statue of a man wearing eye makeup and lipstick was removed from the school lobby by [the]principal... who said it was too risqué.

...A student who wore a skirt on a mufti day at a private school in Auckland last week was suspended after he refused to go home and change his clothes. The seventh former was one of several male students who went to Kristin School in Albany last Thursday wearing women's clothes... Teachers at the co-educational Christian school ordered them to go home and get changed, but one student refused, saying it was a breach of his rights. The pupil eventually went home, telephoned a lawyer for advice and returned in the skirt. He was suspended for a day and returned to classes yesterday... [T]he school chief executive, said the boys were sent home because they were "liable to cause offence to other students." [He also] said, however, that the student was suspended for "defying the teacher's authority," not because he wore women's clothing to school... [A] lawyer for the Youth Law Project, said Kristin "blatantly" broke the law when it sent home students who had not been suspended. "You can't legally be punished for disobeying an illegal instruction." [He] said the boys did it for "a bit of fun" and their action did not warrant punishment which could jeopardise their schooling... A spokesman for the Human Rights Commission... said students complained "fairly regularly" about dress codes at their schools. However, the commission usually refused to investigate such complaints because it believed the Human Rights Act was not intended for that purpose.

...PROVOCATIVE behaviour and clothing helped[a] secretary... lure her boss... into an affair that wrecked his marriage. That's the verdict of a North Carolina jury. Now she's been ordered to pay more than \$1.5 million "husband-theft" compensation to [the] former wife. Many other intriguing laws, mostly more than a century old, can still be enforced in the U.S. Some, if enforced, could trap the unwary. In McLouth, Kansas, for instance, it's illegal to rinse dentures in a public drinking fountain. In Minnesota, there could be trouble for anyone rash enough to hang male and female underwear on the same line. And, in case you ever visit Lexington, Kentucky, I should mention it's an offence there to stick an icecream cone in your back pocket. Don't ask me why...

Americans fight back against loony lawsuits... IN THE land where the litigant is king, a backlash is under way. Fed up with the embarrassment and huge costs of hundreds of bizarre civil lawsuits, Americans are turning their fire on the court system that allows "spurious" claims for damages. They have found an unlikely new group to champion their cause: Citizens Against Lawsuit Abuse, which has been heaping shame on litigants by announcing titles for "Loony Lawsuit of the Month"... People are now waiting for an award-winning litigant to file the first lawsuit against the group... [US] consumer advocates... believe... lawyers... take on virtually any case... [under] the current... "no-win, no fee"... system...

America's out-of-control legal system allows any crackpot to initiate costly litigation without serious fear of legal or financial retribution... The sound of trial-lawyer contributions pouring in to the President's re-election fund has clearly deafened [him] to appeals from the masses for tort reform. - 1997

A test was conducted in the US whereby 'a public transport bus gently crashed into the back of a parked car in order to see how many passengers would lay complaints' (e.g., of having received whiplash) – and, although it was obvious from the force of impact that such an injury could not have been sustained, a number of passengers did! Because many USers are eager to take a ride on the lawsuit bandwagon, everyone in the US who can afford to, or who can't afford not to (note that in the US 'people are legally responsible for any snow or ice on the footpath outside their own houses'), has liability insurance.

Additional liability insurance is recommended[when visiting the US] because of the high cost of lawsuits in the event of an accident. Extended protection to \$US1 million costs about \$US12 a day.

The highest mean malpractice insurance premium in[the US during] 1989 was carried by obstetricians and gynecologists who paid \$37,000 annually... In 1989, health insurance premiums totaled \$108 billion... Property and casualty insurance premiums in 1990 totaled \$217.8 billion, of which auto insurance accounted for \$95.4 billion... In 1990, there were 2,200 life insurance companies in the U[S]... 389 million life insurance policies were in force with a value of \$9.393 trillion. The... first life insurance company was the Corporation for the Relief of Poor and Distressed Presbyterian Ministers and of the Poor and Distressed Widows and Children of Presbyterian Ministers, incorporated in 1759 in Philadelphia. The first health insurance company was the Massachusetts Health Insurance Company of Boston, founded in 1847. The first accident insurance company was Travelers Insurance Company of Hartford, chartered in 1863. It issued the first automobile insurance policy in 1898... – the one-year premium was \$11.25. The first fire insurance company to receive a charter was the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire in 1868... In 1990, 34 million Americans carried no health insurance. Of these, 38.3% were unemployed.

One in six Kiwis over the age of 15 (464,000 people)... have no insurance of any kind and fewer are taking out health insurance... A... survey found the most popular form... was car insurance, held by 71% of people over the age of 15, followed by house insurance (61%). The least popular was income protection, held by 11%... The... number of people holding health insurance had fallen in the past two years from 39% to 36%... In 1991, about 50% of the population had private health cover... [While on the subject of health cover, f]oreign doctors are billing U[S] insurance companies by submitting fake bills or by inflating bills, according to the FBI. A San Diego-based task force is looking into rings of Mexican clinics who falsely bill for procedures such as \$US17,000... emergency appendectomies on Americans. In Pakistan and Bangladesh, huge bills have been submitted for emergency surgery allegedly performed on Americans... In one case, Med-Cal – California's insurance programme for the poor and disabled – was billed \$US10,230... for five days of hospital treatment given a 10-year-old girl with... a runny nose... The girl had actually been examined for 20 minutes and given antibiotics.

...Genetic break-throughs are spurring fears of discrimination among people in[US] families at risk of hereditary disorders... Genetics tests are available for disorders including cystic fibrosis, sickle cell disease, and certain breast, colon and kidney cancers. One in four survey participants believed they were refused life insurance and more than one in five believe they were denied health insurance because of a genetic disorder in the family. [In related news, US insurance companies are 'declining to insure people who have taken AIDS tests, even if the result was negative' (the US also has 'a law that bans HIV positive people from entering the country').

...[a] Professor... said insurance disputes were one of the fastest-growing segments of Aids litigation. Major issues arose from the desire of dying patients to obtain innovative, last-hope treatments under health insurance plans that excluded such experimental therapy. Other areas of mounting litigation involved the right of health insurance companies to place ceilings on coverage for Aids treatment, and accusations that some... companies exploited Aids patients by persuading them to accept payments of their policies before they died – but at a lower rate... [C]ourts generally had sided with insurance companies. Health insurance companies had no obligation to reimburse patients for experimental treatments and had a right to cap their coverage, according to recent rulings. [Incidentally, the up-coming film 'The Man Who Sued God' is a romantic comedy about a man who sues The Almighty after his fishing boat is destroyed by lightning and his insurance company refuses to pay, declaring the incident an act of God.]

...[An insurance] company has paid out \$2.4 million to a man after he claimed he was abducted by aliens. Joseph Carpenter (23), self-styled "hardcore UFOlogist" from London, paid \$238 a year to unusual risks insurer... GRIP... for a policy against being "abducted, impregnated or eaten by aliens". [GRIP's] managing director... announced the payment... after [the 23-year-old] provided a transparent, webbed claw as proof of

the claim... The claw was examined by an unnamed Cambridge biologist as part of the verification procedure... The testimony of four witnesses and the video and photographs of the abduction were also required as proof. A[n A]ssociation of British Insurers spokesman... said: "There are only two people in the world who can verify whether this payment has been made and they are [the managing director] and the policyholder." ...GRIP... made its name offering bizarre policies including one for virgins concerned about immaculate conception [(the policy-holder was required to pay £2/week; any payment of £1m would be accessed by a panel of experts that excluded church officials')... - 1996

THE TRUTH is out there. But for a man supposedly paid \$2.3 million by an insurance company for being abducted by aliens, the truth is an embarrassing down-to-earth scam. Joseph Carpenter... an electrician from... North London, says he was taken aboard an alien craft while UFO-spotting... He and his insurer insist he was paid \$2.3 million from a policy covering him against abduction. The story of the payout was widely reported. If anything is out of this world in the tale it is Carpenter who, like the spaceship, does not exist. For Joe Carpenter read... an unemployed... courier, who dreamt up the idea of selling American-style alien abduction insurance in Britain. The man "paying" the... cheque is, in fact, [Carpenter's] business partner... an insurance broker with a talent for promoting bizarre policies to get publicity... It is insurance, but not as we know it... [The partner] boasts he has already sold 1100 policies against alien abduction with "many hundreds of inquiries" a day since the payout. Each policy costs \$233 plus \$5.80 tax. "I keep \$117 of that," he said. [Carpenter] first conceived the idea of selling UFO insurance last summer. He advertised in the *Fortean Times* and the US tabloid *National Enquirer*, offering policies for US\$17.99. In return, buyers were to receive a certificate offering to pay up to \$93,023 per alien encounter... [The partner] read about the offer in an insurance journal and contacted [Carpenter]. He struck a deal to become sole agent – with the cost of the policies rising to \$233. What was missing was a suitable case study to publicise the scheme. The story of green men abducting people aboard a spaceship was dreamt up in the green room of the Central Television studios... before both men appeared on a chat show in November. As the story took on a life of its own, [the partner] handed over a giant-sized Barclays Bank cheque... Barclays knows nothing about the cheque.

...AN ENTERPRISING conman pushed his luck a touch too far and is now behind bars at Charlotte, North Carolina. He insured a case of fabulously expensive cigars against fire. The insurance company refused to pay when he then claimed all 24 cigars had been destroyed in "a series of small fires." Understandably. He'd smoked the lot. The... [insurance company] lost a subsequent court case, and paid hefty compensation, because the judge ruled they'd accepted the cigars as insurable against fire – without defining what they considered an "unacceptable fire". After cashing the cheque, however, the smoker was arrested on 24 counts of arson. His insurance claim proved his guilt. Now he'll almost certainly be appealing against getting consecutive sentences of one year – on each of the 24 charges.

...Insurance companies in A[US] had caught out a fraudster who declared he made no claims but had submitted 20 in just a few months. To detect that crime in N[Z] was difficult... and many cases do not end up in court because police are not given the resources to investigate them properly... [But now the p]olice are considering charging insurance companies to access crime files through their controversial new crime-busting computer... due to go on-line sometime next year... The parties are discussing sending crime details to insurers via e-mail... The... Assistant Commissioner... said police already shared information on burglaries and insurance fraud with the industry.

...[the] assessor... shuffles a sheaf of household burglary claims and remarks wryly on the high cost of sunglasses in Auckland. "Just about everybody seems to wear \$125 shades in this town. I must be a bit of a cheapskate. Mine never cost more than \$19.95 from The Warehouse." It's an example of how some policyholders inflate their claims, how the leather handbag bought at the local crafts market becomes a designer label worth \$475, how the \$50 in cash in the matching designer wallet becomes \$500, how the 14in television grows to 20in even though the dust mark on the empty shelf indicates otherwise, how the twin-head video player becomes a four-head state-of-the-art model. "I suppose it's human nature for some people to try it on a bit but it makes you a bit of a cynic when you read through some of the claims... I ask for receipts, for a look at their last bank statement, perhaps for photographs of them wearing that expensive leather jacket... [S]ometimes it becomes a matter of tactful negotiation, or we can call in an investigator to pursue the matter further... We are entitled to refuse to pay out if there's proof of a deliberate attempt to deceive... A lot of people don't know that." [The assessor] works for National Insurance. The company's claim form starts with a bold-type warning that signing the claim is a declaration under the Oaths and Declaration Act, meaning any false statements can result in legal action and serious penalties... The Insurance Council estimates that false and inflated claims... amount to 10[%] of all claims. Inevitably this is reflected in rising home content insurance premiums, says [a] council spokesman...

Insurers to wage war on cheats... The average N[Z] family would save about \$40 in insurance premiums every year if every insurance cheat was caught. Some N[Z]ers are making a living out of false insurance claims, say insurers, who are about to launch a campaign to find them. And they want to use a controversial weapon to wage war against... insurance fraud... a national claims database... Four years ago [one man] was taken on as the... NZI Insurance... company's first investigator. Now he is heading a unit of 18 former detectives... Last year, they investigated 3500 claims and found \$6.5 million worth of insurance fraud – about a third of the total... Inflating values or claiming for the same items from more than one company are two common ways of cheating... [Another] headache for insurers... is... the problem of travel insurance fraud, which surveys last year showed to be significant. "It's so easy for box Brownie cameras to become hi-tech Pentax machines when claims are made,"...

EVEN the nicest of people commit insurance fraud. And they do it for apparently the noblest of reasons. Like the Wellington woman who flattered with four friends, was burgled, and made a \$5000 claim. The size of the claim raised suspicions with the insurer who found out that most of the stolen goods belonged to her uninsured flatmates. Why did she falsely claim? Because she felt sorry for her friends, she said. Have you ever exaggerated the value of goods when making a claim? Have you insured your son or daughter's car in your name? Then join the club. It's you that the insurance industry is targeting in its new campaign against fraud, as well as the out-and-out cheats who do the rounds of the companies claiming on the same "lost" or "stolen" item. Insurance fraud is estimated to cost the industry \$50 million a year; one in five of all claims are thought to involve an element of fraud. And companies say it's not just their profits that are at risk. [The]Insurance Council chief executive... said the average family would save more than \$50 a year in insurance premiums if fraud could be wiped out... It's not that we don't understand what insurance fraud is. Pretty well everyone questioned in [an] insurance council survey agreed that exaggerating a claim was wrong... "The problem is that insurance is such an easy target for fraud," said [the executive]. A genuine loss can be so easily exaggerated, and the insurance company is so dependent on your honesty and accuracy when taking out a policy or making a claim. "There's also a view that there is no 'victim' when the insurance company is ripped off, and that in making a slightly shonky claim you are doing no more than getting back what you are owed,"...

[An Aucklander] was diagnosed as HIV-positive two and a half years ago. The news came as a shock to the Aucklander who didn't know his partner of seven years had the human immuno-deficiency virus... which leads to Aids. Before [the Aucklander] learned he had contracted HIV, he and his partner bought a house and took out mortgage-protection insurance in case something prevented them paying off the mortgage. Yet when his partner died [the Aucklander] was forced to take over full repayments. The insurance company refused to pay out because they said [the Aucklander's] partner knew he was HIV-positive when the policy was taken out – even though [the Aucklander] knew nothing about it... The issue of discrimination against people with HIV was raised this week when the Aids Foundation said it will complain to the Human Rights Commission about Sovereign Assurance's income-protection policy. The policy excludes people who contracted the virus through sexual contact or intravenous drug use. It does, however, cover people who contracted the disease as the result of a blood transfusion, in-vitro fertilisation or artificial

insemination. [The]Aids Foundation executive director... says the policy appears to make a moral judgment about how people contract the disease. Sovereign Assurance's director of operations... denies this, saying the company relies on statistics to back up its decision.

...[NZ's] 1993 Human Rights Act aims to prevent discrimination against people carrying an organism in their body capable of causing illness, including HIV and Aids... [T]he act became law in February, 1994... In the past two years the [Human Rights Commission] has upheld at least three complaints linked with HIV and insurance companies... One person was refused mortgage protection insurance because he was considered at risk of contracting the disease. The complaint was upheld, the complainant received a policy and premiums were waived for a certain time. He also received a five-figure settlement in compensation. A case last May involved an application for life insurance. After answering questions about sexuality the complainant was quoted a premium double the usual amount. The commission upheld the grievance and the complainant received a four-figure settlement. Another person complained about a life insurance application form, saying the questions discriminated against gay and lesbian people. He received a small settlement and the company was ordered to adhere more strictly to the Aids code of Practice for Life Insurers drawn up by the Life Office Association, now known as the Investment Savings and Insurance (ISI) Association.

...An insurance company has decided not to exclude cover for people who contract HIV through sex or drug use... This week Sovereign Assurance's director of operations... said the company had removed the HIV exclusion clause two days after the... article appeared. Sovereign still reserved the right to exclude individuals if they were a high risk, but would not apply a blanket exclusion to people with the virus... [In related news, i]nsurance companies are refusing to provide new flood cover to flood-prone houses in the Thames suburb of Moanataiari, saying the risk is too great. State Insurance and NZI, which hold 80[%] of the cover for Moanataiari, are writing flood exclusion clauses into new policies, with NZI requiring houses to be lived in, not just used as holiday homes. The decision has angered a Thames man... who fears he will be unable to get tenants... [T]he flood-damaged units were ready to be let again, but NZI had denied contents insurance against floods to a prospective tenant.

...An insurance company's refusal to fully insure a house in the flood-prone Thames suburb of Moanataiari is threatening the occupants' mortgage and increasing the already high level of stress the owners feel... [T]heir bank was no longer obliged to honour the mortgage because it required them to have full insurance... [The owners] say they have been on tenderhooks since AMP pulled its cover against flooding after [a c]yclone... The company paid out \$65,000 to replace damaged furnishings after 45cm of seawater surged through the home... Thirty-three other homes were left uninhabitable... National Insurance... [has also] withdrawn flood cover and State Insurance and NZI refuse to cover new clients in the suburb, despite the Thames Coromandel District Council pledging to improve flood protection... A council working party has recommended raising and widening the existing sea wall, improving the drainage system and supporting it with water-removing pumps. Costings are expected to be put to the council for debate within three weeks...

Under the Earthquake Commission Act 1993, all residential property insured against fire in N[Z] with a private insurance company is, by law, also automatically covered by the Earthquake and Hydrothermal Commission against natural disaster. Natural disaster means earthquake, natural landslip, volcanic eruption, hydrothermal activity, tsunami... fire, or (in the case of residential land) storm or flooding. From January 1, war damage is no longer included, as a result of a change in the law... Non-residential property is [also] no longer covered against natural disaster under the new law... Another change in the law is that the cover for natural disaster is now on a replacement basis, rather than the previous indemnity basis. Replacement cover means residential property is now insured on the basis that any damage will be repaired and the property replaced, no matter what the cost may be. However, there is an upper limit on this cover... Under the law as amended, the amount of cover for replacement value is limited to \$100,000 including GST. Owners of homes with a replacement value of more than \$100,000 can seek top-up insurance from the insurance company upon payment of the extra premium required. The automatic cover does not extend to any consequential loss, including loss by theft or vandalism.

...['She was a single white female looking for a trustworthy flatmate. But her efforts to find someone to fill an empty bedroom left her with an empty house after her choice turned out to be a con man. She had given him a set of keys before leaving for her job as an accountant. When she arrived home she found her new flatmate had stripped her home almost bare, leaving the 33-year-old with a bitter taste of flatmate-hunting. The accountant feels stupid, and wishes she had vetted the man properly. She is now in dispute with her insurance company as her policy does not cover theft by someone living in her home.']

...Last summer, homeowners lazing by the beach on Boxing Day were rightly alarmed by news of a reserved High Court decision that an insurance company did not have to pay out \$300,000 claimed by a... couple whose house was burned down while it was unoccupied. The judge ruled the couple failed to inform the insurance company they planned to leave their house unoccupied for almost a year. The insurance company's lawyer said the decision highlighted a potentially disastrous situation for holidaymakers... [S]ome... companies required notice from clients who planned to leave their homes empty for as little as 30 days. "But... most companies require notification only if a homeowner was away for 60 days or more..."

...BEING under the legal alcohol limit while driving is no guarantee your insurance company will pay up if you have an accident... Most insurance companies have traditionally made being over the legal limit the test on whether they will pay up. But... [the NZ] Insurance Council has warned drivers that... [they] should check their policies to find out whether or not that was the case... The warning is contained in a document on "10 ways to blow your insurance cover." ...The council has [also warned against not]... paying your premium by the due date[; driving]... while disqualified or allowing a disqualified driver to drive your car[; driving]... an unsafe vehicle where obvious defects such as faulty steering or poor headlights may contribute to your crash...

Couple told to sue their son... A HASTINGS couple is being taken to court by an insurance company for refusing to sue their son for crashing the family car. In October 1995, State Insurance paid out... almost \$19,000 for their written-off [car]. The couple's lawyer... said [the son] was covered by the... policy. State nevertheless proceeded to sue him for the money in the couple's name on the basis that he'd taken the car unlawfully. The company's statement of claim said that on March 27 1995 "without the plaintiffs' express permission, the defendant wrongfully drove the plaintiffs' vehicle, therefore depriving the plaintiffs' of their vehicle and converting it to his own use". Last February the [couple] cancelled the action against their son... [Mr Couple] said his son had often driven the family car, but knew he could only do so with permission. In this case, the car had been parked in front of the [son's car], and because it was early in the morning and his parents were still asleep after a late night working at their fish and chip shop, he decided to take [their] car rather than wake them... [Mr Couple] said the car hadn't been replaced and the money had already been used to pay... associated[car] hire purchase costs. A small amount had also been put into the... shop the couple were working seven days a week in to keep afloat... Two months ago the company started proceedings against the couple in the Hastings District Court to get the money back... [Mr Couple] said he and his wife, who had been insured with State since 1965, were devastated and would probably lose everything if they had to pay the money back... The family is now counter-suing the company.

...Parents who insure their children's cars... could be refused payouts... This follows a warning yesterday by the [NZ]Insurance Ombudsman... that where false information was supplied, insurance companies did not have to pay claims. He said some parents considered it reasonable to insure their children's car because... people... under the age of 25... were more likely to have an accident... [and therefore] had to pay... much [higher] premiums... Insurance companies plan to clamp down on the dishonest practice, which is believed to be widespread... [A] spokeswoman for the Insurance Council... said claims could also be jeopardised by half truths, such as a parent claiming to be the main driver and naming one child, the car's real main driver, as nominated driver... "The bottom line is we are trying to get the costs where they lie, and if parents get away with it, then

their children are not paying their fair share into the premium pool.” ...The difference in premiums for different ages and risk ratings was substantial. For example, a 20-year-old insuring a \$3000 car... [in] Auckland would pay... \$829 and... a 50-year-old... \$420. [Most Aucklanders who own a \$3000 car would get a ‘third-party’ insurance policy, which is much cheaper but only insures them against any damage they do to other people’s cars or property. Unfortunately, it isn’t always possible for insurance companies to get the costs where they lie (‘accidents caused by uninsured drivers cost up to \$85 million a year’). Some NZ insurance companies have complained that a growing craze amongst teenagers to set stolen cars on fire (‘in Auckland alone, 650 vehicles a year are stolen and torched’) – which usually means the car has to be written-off – now ‘costs them \$25 million per year.’]

...Alarm at soaring car thefts in Auckland has prompted the police to set up a dedicated hit squad to investigate organised car rings... In Auckland as many as 2000 cars stolen each year are never recovered. Police believe the vehicles are modified, re-registered and sold... “Car thieves manage to take a wrecked car and then use its identification...” ...The Insurance Council chief executive... said car theft was a “national disgrace,” costing policy holders about \$40 million a year... More than 32,000 cars were stolen in N[Z] last year – at a rate of almost two out of every 100 vehicles on the road... The risk of getting your car stolen was almost twice as high... as in A[US] and... six times greater than in Germany.

...POLICE in Coesfeld, Germany, thought they had heard everything until a 12-year-old boy reported his car had been sideswiped by another. The boy said he had parked at the kerb and returned to find his car smashed. Tyre marks indicated... a hit-and-run driver... “Do you think the other driver’s car insurance will cover the damages?” ...[the boy] then produced a bag holding a mangled remote-controlled toy racing car.

...[‘An entrepreneur schoolboy selling flowers to save up for a skateboard has fallen foul of local laws by failing to take out a public liability insurance policy. The boy had been selling chrysanthemums for 50 cents a bunch at a table outside his family home in Wonthaggi, in Victoria, until council officials stepped in. “He hadn’t been set up for long when the bylaws officer stopped him because he didn’t have a A\$20 council permit,” the boy’s mother said on television. The A\$20 wasn’t a problem, but he needed A\$5 million in public liability insurance to get the permit and it would cost A\$500. The ban highlights the frustration facing event organisers in AUS who must meet the mounting cost of liability insurance when holding fairs and social events.’]

...‘The social and cultural life of AUS is under threat from its citizens’ enthusiasm to run to their lawyers EVERY September the tiny village of Herberton, on the Wild River southwest of the north Queensland city of Cairns, celebrated the reason for its birth with a festival of tin. The festival was a major social and commercial event for Herberton’s 1000 residents, whose life revolves around tourism, maize and potatoes now that the rich veins of the Great Northern Mine are history. Last year the tin festival also became history. The town simply could not afford the rocketing cost of public liability insurance. In a country that has embraced litigation with glee and zest, Herberton would not risk celebrating without the safety of millions of dollars of insurance cover. During the past two years, claims on public liability insurance in AUS have soared by 60%, with the average payout on the preceding seven years tripling to A\$18,000, and the once-profitable business of insuring against accidents diving permanently into the red – losing an industry-wide A\$229 million on total payouts of A\$1.2 billion in the last 12 months (last year, the huge AUSn insurer HIH failed in a A\$4 billion collapse that shook AUS and gave force to the warnings already emerging around AUS). Insurers have responded, predictably, by either increasing liability premiums or simply refusing cover. Across AUS, orthopaedic surgeons and other medical specialists are abandoning country towns, sports clubs are shutting down, council swimming pools are closing and local fetes are being cancelled, gymnast clubs have folded, pony club events have been cancelled, art workshops for pensioners and the disabled have been closed, senior citizens clubs have vanished, Scout groups are under pressure, and daycare centres have been forced to put up fees, forcing out many children. The Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce found that one-third of the companies it surveyed had trouble paying higher premiums – despite never having made claims – following average cost increases of 40%, rising to 174% for finance, property and business service businesses. Small businesses are being pushed to the brink. At the heart of all this, according to their host of critics, are lawyers, feeding off the greed of litigants fed on tales of huge damages claims and what the insurance industry calls the lotto jackpot mentality.’

...‘Police are seeking arrest warrants for 2 men, in the latest grisly attempt to defraud insurers in South Korea. A debt-ridden grocer paid an acquaintance about \$79,000 to cut off his feet at the ankles in a bid to collect \$3.2 million insurance, police said yesterday. Detectives were called in after a customer found the man lying on the floor of his shop earlier this month with both feet missing. The 51-year-old shop-owner from Seoul told police that someone must have sliced off his lower limbs after he had passed out during a heavy drinking binge. But detectives became suspicious after neighbours revealed that the grocer had for months been asking them to slice off his feet. A local pharmacist told police that the grocer had bought an anaesthetic a day before the amputation. Officers then discovered that the grocer had taken out about two billion won in insurance policies in the months before the horrific mutilation.’

...‘a year-long investigation in the US into parents who insure their children and then try to murder them for the money, uncovered 50 cases.’ In local news, ‘a Hastings man convicted of trying to kill his wife in a house fire and endangering his children was yesterday sentenced to 10 years jail. During the trial in the High Court at Napier a crown prosecutor said the 44-year-old orchardist wanted to kill his wife of almost 14 years for her \$500,000 life insurance policy. The defence lawyer has appealed against the verdicts, saying enough new material emerged during the trial to support the suggestion that the fire was lit by someone in the house other than his client. However, the judge did not accept the orchardist’s suggestion that his eldest son was responsible. The judge said he believed the orchardist’s debts and personal problems drove him to crime, but pointed out that countless other NZers had suffered financial stress in the last 20 years without resorting to crime.’

...‘A money manager has vanished with as much as \$US3 billion in clients’ money, leaving behind a things-to-do list (item No. 1: Launder money). Insurance company regulators said the 44-year-old’s unlicensed brokerage had siphoned off money from a dozen small insurance companies in five states. The companies, based in Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Missouri and Arkansas, were placed in receivership when they could not account for assets invested with the 44-year-old’s Liberty National Securities Inc.’

...NZ’s] Securities Commission has called for a review of the Life Insurance Act 1908 after a discussion paper found an industry with a hodge-podge of practices, investment policies and only limited regulatory supervision. Financial reporting by life offices is already under detailed review with a draft reporting standard already issued, but there are not prescribed standards for solvency of capital adequacy. A commission discussion paper found there were often only limited constraints on life offices on what they did with investment assets which, including superannuation savings, currently exceed \$20 billion. In one case, four-fifths of a life company’s total assets had been advanced to a related party while the life insurer had also guaranteed a bank overdraft obligation to its parent. Others had excess investment concentrations while N[Z]’s one life company failure, ACL Insurances, which collapsed in 1989, had investments concentrated in a retirement home which was a related party and a commercial development which was... subject to a bank mortgage... The commission said policyholders also had little say in changes in ownership of their policy contracts and how the risks and rewards of portfolios of life insurance business were affected through reinsurance. Processes for determining the division of profits between different classes of policyholder and between policyholders and shareholders were generally unclear to the outside observer. With the recent move to demutualisation, the splitting of profits between policyholders and shareholders was going to assume greater importance in the future... In contrast to N[Z, AUS] had direct controls over external borrowing by life companies and separated life company business from the rest of the operations through statutory funds... [Incidentally,] National Mutual’s 69[%]-owned Hong Kong-based subsidiary [has] increased profits before tax by 13[%] to A\$215 million... The... [i]nsurance company... is now waiting to see if it has won the “A[US]n” licence to do business in China promised in September by the Chinese Government.

...National Mutual[s] boss... might be wishing he were an American import. If [a] rival AMP chief executive[s]... \$17 million three-year package... is to be used as a benchmark, then [the NatMut chief executive] would have to figure he would be worth at least half that. Based on the results produced by [NatMut] over the past few years, the group’s half a million shareholders, including the 130,000 in N[Z, might agree. The chief executive] is a home grown boy who has been at NatMut since 1970, but as it is he is not doing too badly in the salary stakes. Last year, he was

promoted to be one of the 40 or so A[US]n chief executives that are pocketing more than \$1 million a year. [He] received \$1.16 million in 1996, his performance bonus should take him above that in 1997 and so far the 750,000 options that he was awarded at the annual general meeting earlier this year are nicely in the money. So what's he do[ne to deserve it]? Quite simply, in October 1992 he took control of a moribund organisation that was near collapse and turned it into a powerhouse... group that has added \$2 billion to [its] funds in the past two years. Last week, he delivered a 42[%] increase in annual net profits to a record \$300 million... Nat[Mut] Asia's net contribution during the year of \$139.2 million was up 40[%]... The group... will report its N[Z] performance next week...

Tower Corporation is congratulating itself on what it says has been its best year in its recent history, if not since its inception in 1869. The group, which now has half its activities in A[US], reported a 73[%] jump in revenue to \$3.7 billion in the September year, with assets of more than \$10 billion up 27[%] on 1996... The general insurance operation, National Insurance, reversed a small loss in 1996 to return a profit "in eight figures." ...The details come as the group fights off a hostile bid by Guinness Peat Group to demutualise Tower through a marriage to its A[US]n life subsidiary Tyndall. - 1997

The insurance industry, no stranger to fire, storm, and the predations of the nation's less savoury inhabitants, is weathering another risk, that of unprecedented competition as overcapacity bites into profits and forces a round of takeovers and exits... Even some of the majors have struggled: State Insurance and National Insurance both wracked up huge underwriting losses in 1996... \$11.5 million... and... \$13.2 million [respectively]... They were only saved from torrents of red ink by healthy profits returned by their investment funds... In 1996, the industry... in N[Z]... took in a total of \$1.8 billion in premiums. From that, it made a collective underwriting profit of just \$34.4 million, a mere 2c in every dollar... Still, not everybody is in a bad way. Royal and SunAlliance, 10 years ago a nipper with only \$40 million in turnover, has flourished in size and profitability. In 1996, SunAlliance took in \$237 million in premiums, making it N[Z]'s third largest general insurer, while chalking up an \$18.4 million underwriting profit... even though it wrote off \$9 million... [The] \$163 million sale of NZI Life to Prudential worked to the advantage of buyer and seller... NZI, which shares the top ranking in terms of size with State Insurance, reported a \$15.6 million underwriting profit in 1996.

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO YOUR LOVED ONES IF ANYTHING HAPPENED TO YOU? ...THEIR FUTURE - YOUR RESPONSIBILITY... Nobody likes to think about death, but if you have a family dependent on you, you owe it to them to ensure that if you die they are looked after. While life insurance cannot remove the emotional trauma of losing a loved one, it can help minimise any financial suffering... It's simple to protect their future... Protect their future now. - NZI Life

"Give us regular payments and we will protect your family. However, unlike the Mob, when you die we will give the money back to your family plus interest - unless it can be proven that they murdered you, or you committed suicide. In the meantime, we will use your money to finance big expensive cars to fill parking spaces while we sit at big desks in big offices in big glass towers, and to pay ourselves exorbitant incomes for a superficial form of employment."

50 Plus Life Insurance means my family aren't going to be landed with funeral expenses and bills when I die... [The policy provides] guaranteed acceptance if you're between 50 and 79... [There is also n]o medical or health questions... with premiums from \$9.95 a month.

...A television advertisement for 50 Plus Life Insurance was misleading, says the Advertising Standards Complaints Board. It upheld a complaint that the advert omitted to say there was no payment on policies in the first two years.

...[the new 50+ pays the benefit as soon as anyone's diagnosed with a terminal illness. That gives you the comfort of knowing you can settle your affairs before you die. Triple benefit death-by-accident cover starts immediately; full life insurance cover starts after 24 months.]

...WHO needs life insurance these days? Probably far fewer people than have it... There are only two reasons to buy life insurance: Debt and family responsibility. "Unless you have either one or both... you do not have a need for life insurance,"... [But] if you do need life insurance, steer clear of "whole of life" or "endowment" policies... These "dinosaurs" were difficult to understand and expensive to feed. Policy owners spent the first few years paying commission to the agents who sold them the policy, so it took six to seven years to achieve a value equal to the contributions... And... the average life of such a policy was seven years. Insurance companies knew this, so you paid a lot of the fees up front.

...Insurance industry observers say that a case before the High Court in Wellington this week shows how life insurance companies make money out of the lapses of its clients... The... hearing involves a type of... policy named Lifewise... Colonial Mutual Life Assurance Society Limited may be liable for between \$190 million and \$380 million when it may normally have expected to be liable for only about \$76 million. That is because life insurance policies are sold on the assumption that, in N[Z], 60[%] will lapse during the life of the policy because the clients lose interest or change plans. The worldwide average for lapses is 70[%; in AUS it's 75%]... Lifewise, originally, was an attractive policy which covered the lives of the policyholder and one other named beneficiary for \$50,000 each. It also offered substantial cash benefits by CML from investment of the premiums... To encourage wide marketing of the policy, CML offered its agents high commissions. The court was told that commissions averaged 129.5[%] of the high first-year premium. The industry standard is... commission of between 40 and 50[%] of the first year's premium. Two of CML's commission agents calculated that, because of a combination of the high commissions, diminishing premiums and the bonus benefits, they could in fact offer the life assurance free to clients. The total premium would be covered by the high sales commission plus the long-term investment benefits... The business opportunity was apparently sound enough to attract a finance company, Policy Management Limited... It seems that the agents were able to bulk-sell the policies as, for instance, free employee benefits to large companies. CML saw sales of the policies skyrocket. In 1992, policies with a commission value of \$2 million were sold. The following year the commission value was \$4.4 million, in 1994 \$10.6 million and in 1995 \$12 million. Some close to the case say that eventually CML would have realised that, because the policies were free, there would be no lapses. CML would be liable not only for the usual 40[%] of policies issued, but for the full 100[%]... The matter has come to court because CML alleges that the payment of premiums by the finance company, PML, has been discontinued, and CML is suing the sales agents for return of commissions totalling about \$25 million. In submissions... this week... [PML] claimed that policyholders - in 2314 cases the policyholder is effectively PML - were entitled to stop payment because of conduct by CML. They allege that the company changed the wording of the policies without advising the sales agents or PML... One alleged change... involved the clause: "The maximum amount payable under the special death benefit will be the value of your investment account plus \$50,000." ...this was changed to: "The special death benefit payable under this policy shall not exceed \$50,000 inclusive..." As a result, the defendants say... CML[- which believes that it i]s within the rights of an insurance company to change conditions of its policies from time to time... [-] is in breach of... the code of practice which allows insurance companies to be exempt from the Securities Act; the Life Insurance Act 1908; [and]the Fair Trading Act. - 1997

...set up by the Accident Compensation Act 1972[the]... **ACCIDENT COMPENSATION CORPORATION** controls a comprehensive, compulsory accident insurance for all N[Z]ers... with the threefold aim of promoting safety from accident among all citizens, providing for the rehabilitation of the injured, and ensuring prompt, fair and reasonable compensation to every accident victim. The philosophy behind the scheme is that the community as a whole accepts responsibility for the accidents which inevitably afflict a proportion of its members. Therefore the scheme is funded

by the following means: (1) levies on employers (including the Crown) and self-employed, paid through the Inland Revenue Department as a agent for the corporation; (2) levies on motor-vehicle owners, paid at the time of registration through the Post Office, acting as agent; and (3) general taxation. The benefits include earnings-related compensation at the rate of 80% of normal average earnings, subject to a maximum, with adjustments in special circumstances for partial incapacity or for loss of potential earnings; lump sums for permanent physical impairment; and funeral expenses and lump sum payments to dependants in the event of fatal accidents... The scheme was a world first and is regarded as an innovative piece of Social Welfare. It supersedes legal rights previously held by citizens to sue through the courts for damages in cases where negligence contributed to the cause of an accident[, and replaces the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act (1900)].

[A] LAWYER... took it hard when a bank knocked back his loan application for \$1.5 million to buy a West Auckland marina. Two years later, maintaining the rejection was an "accident" that had caused him severe psychological trauma, he lodged a claim with the Accident Compensation Corporation, now called the Accident Rehabilitation and Compensation Insurance Corporation (ACC)... When the ACC turned him down, [the lawyer], a former mayor of Waitemata, appealed. This time, a sympathetic adjudicator disagreed with the ACC lawyer's argument that [the claimant] was the architect of his own misfortune as he had not signed up finance before agreeing to buy the marina. He ruled that [the claimant] was eligible for compensation. The High Court subsequently reversed the decision but not before countless hours of court time had been occupied... Not surprisingly, the ACC has become a financial nightmare for N[Z]ers. It now costs the nation seven-and-a-half times more than it did 20 years ago and carries \$7 billion in unfunded liabilities... Litigation against the ACC is often paid for by legal aid... "It's another black hole down which we pour money," observes... [the] editor of the *N[Z] Law Journal*... After one plaintiff received five legal-aid grants to finance a drawnout minor case, [a]... High Court... Justice... fumed... that legal aid should not be used to "take steps which would be regarded as unjustified luxuries for those funding their own litigation." ...While the government obviously wants to cut back on the payouts[– in 1992, due to inflated costs, lump sum payments were replaced by a weekly allowance ('under the current law the claimant answers 136 questions which are sent to Wellington where someone converts them into a disability score, which in turn is converted into a percentage of the minimum and maximum allowance (\$4.38/week to \$43.82/week – although the allowance is actually paid quarterly); if a claimant is unhappy with the allowance the case will be reassessed, and if no change is forthcoming the claimant can appeal to the courts') –] more and more lawyers are succeeding in winning compensation for bizarre cases never envisaged in the corporation's original concept. "It's appeal gone mad," [the P]M... was reported as saying after the [West Auckland marina] ruling. "A pup that has turned into a pitbull," fulminates... [the] executive director of the Business Roundtable, [who is also] a member of the anti-ACC lobby group Campaign for Choice in Accident Compensation... In a recent case, a 51-year-old Whangarei truck-driver had already collected \$14,250 for injuries he suffered when, while drunk at the wheel, he caused a crash that killed four people. When the ACC stopped his additional earnings-related compensation, the truck driver appealed and won. The appeal authority ruled he be paid 75[%] of his earnings-related compensation, partly because, the judge said, he had paid his dues to society with his term of imprisonment. (The ACC is appealing this decision.) The judgment outraged many N[Z]ers. An angry Whangarei MP... insisted the truck driver deserved no compensation. "This man drank far too much booze... He was no victim... and was responsible for killing someone." ...When a pig damaged the right knee of... a kaumatua [(Maori elder)] from Moerewa in Northland, he won \$6000 in compensation. He rejected this sum as "insulting" and sought \$10,000 for pain, loss of prestige and suffering because he could no longer stand up on the marae[('open space reserved for Maori assembly and the focal point of Maori social life, both formal and informal')] to greet visitors. The Accident Compensation Appeal Authority awarded the elder a further \$2000... Scores of cases like these are crowding our courts and industrial tribunals as N[Z] develops a taste for victim culture and litigation, with the motto: *If anything goes wrong, get compo*... Nowadays, almost any dismissal, injury or mishap – even stress – leads people to seek compensation, sometimes years after the event. Thirteen years after battling with demonstrators... [a] retired Hamilton police officer... was found eligible to claim up to \$10,000 compensation for job-related stress... "Does this mean that every member of the police force will have the right to compensation after attending a disturbance?" asks [the Business Roundtable executive director]... Incredibly, similar claims are encouraged by fine print in N[Z]'s unique compensation law that guarantees anyone judged to be a victim of accidental injury comprehensive 24-hour no-fault cover... A landmark 1994 ruling of the Court of Appeal held that the law's principles meant that even people injured while committing a crime should be refused compensation only for some exceptional reason, one of these being that the award was "repugnant to justice." [Someone who was] jailed in 1990 for the manslaughter of a man he knifed in the back during a brawl, laid a claim with the ACC for an injury received shortly after the stabbing. The appeal authority heard that a departing car had run over [his] left foot at the scene of the fracas... and permanently damaged his ankle. It ruled [he] was eligible for compensation even while he was in prison.[The corporation itself was criticised 'for being too literal in awarding compensation after an inmate who injured himself while jumping off a prison wall during an escape attempt received a five-figure payout.'] "Compo" is even handed out for self-sanctioned injury. A prisoner at Paparua Prison... had permitted his cellmate to inject him in the wrist with Palfium (analgesic) tablets crushed in saliva. Gangrene developed in [the prisoner]'s arm, which had to be amputated four days after the injection. The High Court sitting in Wellington rejected the ACC's argument that [the prisoner] was responsible for the loss of the arm. [The prisoner, said the] Justice... had not intended to harm himself, but to get pleasure. Nor, the judge added, was it enough to say [the prisoner] was reckless or careless. He judged that [the prisoner] was eligible for compo... Sexual harassment claims have mushroomed in the last five years with bigger and bigger sums being awarded. Payouts sometimes reach \$40,000. This year, potentially the highest ever award for sexual harassment was made possible for a woman claiming that she had been sexually abused by her psychologist – 17 times. The ACC deemed her personal injury was the cumulative result of the sexual relationship and awarded her \$10,000. But the appeal authority thought differently. It ruled that each incident should be counted as a separate "injury" – clearing the way for her to claim up to \$170,000... As the victim culture throws up case after case of baffling decisions, many defendants cave in and settle out of court to avoid crippling legal costs. "It's a real dilemma for insurance companies," says... [the] public affairs manager for the Insurance Council... who believes that fraudulent claims are widespread. "It's often been easier and cheaper for insurance companies to cut their losses rather than pursue offenders."

...A 50-year-old... man appeared in the Auckland District Court yesterday charged with defrauding the [ACC] of \$74,000. The corporation alleges the man claimed earnings-related compensation between May 1992 and October 1995 while he was working.

...Bigger fines are urgently needed to sting employers ignoring safe work practices, says the Labour Department... Most employers were aware of safe work practices, especially after a landmark... occupational overuse syndrome (OOS)... ruling against FAI Metropolitan Life Assurance last year... [and the] ANZ Bank was fined \$30,000 on Thursday for... OOS... suffered by three staff... [However, the] deputy chief executive of the Employers Association... said the threat of tougher fines was a concern when some OOS cases were not solely confined to work habits. The 5817 OOS claims put to the... [ACC] last year cost \$6.9 million... up from the[previous year's] \$4.2 million paid on... 3234 claims...

DOMESTIC injuries are rising at such a rate that accident compensation officials are going back to the drawing board to tackle the problem. Accidents at home and in sport and recreation jumped dramatically last year, costing the country an estimated \$12 million more than 1995... In the latest figures, home accidents accounted for about 46% of earners' claims while recreation was just 23%. Injury claims from earners to June jumped by more than 20,000... compared with the previous year. There were 377,767[earners'] claims in 1995, which rose to 400,094 in 1996. ACC estimated the earners' claims cost \$208.5 million in 1995... Employers' claims, for injuries to employees during work hours, dropped from 292,328

to 292,206. Non-earners, by far the largest group of claimants for injuries, went from more than 718,000[down] to 711,928. Medical misadventure claims dropped by 16 to 2051.

...A 76-year-old man who says his sex life “died” after a prostate operation left him unable to ejaculate is collecting \$10,000 in accident compensation. The Accident Compensation Appeal authority has ruled that ACC officials wrongly refused to award him the maximum payout for pain, suffering and loss of enjoyment of life. It found that... [the 76-year-old] was not told by doctors of the likelihood of ejaculation problems after the surgery and ordered the authority to pay him an extra \$2500. The pensioner said yesterday that the payout could not make up for his... inability to have children, and he would fight for more. He underwent surgery at Auckland Hospital for an enlarged prostate... when he was 66 years old... The father of seven said he later separated from his wife and wanted to have more children if a suitable partner came along. He lodged a claim for... [ACC] in 1986 and was awarded \$6000 in 1993. A review in 1994 increased this to \$7500... However... he was now fighting for compensation under section 78 of the 1982 act for permanent loss or impairment of bodily function, which has a maximum payout of \$17,000. [Incidentally, ‘it pays to be an Aussie bloke if fate strikes and your testicles get the chop. An Aussie without his manliness is entitled to lump-sum compensation of up to \$NZ450,000, while his Kiwi cousin receives about \$15,000 for the same misfortune. Based on American Medical Association guidelines, NZ men are rated about 30% impaired for loss of both testicles – or one if that is all they were born with. The discrepancy gets worse if the Aussie sues whoever was responsible for losing part of his genitals. It is not unknown for payments to top \$1 million.’]

...A GROUNDBREAKING payment to a man crippled by an exploding tyre has paved the way for people injured in accidents to sue where negligence is involved. The High Court in Dunedin on Tuesday upheld a \$15,000 exemplary damages award to [the 52-year-old man] severely injured when an over-inflated tyre at a public garage burst, hitting him with two-tonne force. Until now, N[Z]’s no-blame accident compensation scheme was thought to rule out people suing for damages... [In related news,] ACC has put the skids under a \$40 million computer project – after spending millions of dollars developing the system... As many as 100 corporation staff and consultants have been involved... Staff were informed of the decision... on August 21... The corporation yesterday refused to say how much had been spent on the project to date, but internal sources said costs had been running at \$1.3 million a month since January... The ACCtion Project was designed to transform the corporation from a paper-based system to a computer-based one, greatly reducing claims processing times and costs. - 1996

ACC’S crackdown on fraud... will... [shift] into high gear... when a multi-million dollar computer system... [is eventually] unveiled. The \$45 million network, Pathway, will improve efficiency, says the ACC – but will also alert staff to cheats.

...The ACC will start swapping information with the Internal Revenue Department next month in its campaign against ACC fraud... [By the way, ACC’s] fraud unit investigated 1300 cases in the past financial year, referring 315 for prosecution, of which 246 resulted in convictions. Of the \$20 million in estimated savings from the prosecutions, more than \$235,000 was recovered from health-care professionals.

...Have you heard the one about the doctor who made over \$1250 in one day while watching his son play rugby? The minister for accident compensation... has – and she is determined to end such scams. The minister yesterday promised to get tough with doctors who abused the [ACC] system... ACC is being ripped off to the tune of \$100 million a year... based on insurance statistics that 7%-15% of claims are false[, and]... officials estimate that 20[%] of fraudulent claims involve health practitioners, who get \$25 for each consultation with a patient injured in an accident... The doctor... [given as an] example... ended up checking children as they came off the field with injuries. Just five of the children were unable to play on, but the doctor claimed for all 52 he checked during the tournament... [In another case a doctor] claimed ACC reimbursement when patients cancelled bookings or had not even made an appointment, for services provided by nurses or for treatment unrelated to accidents. After fining [the doctor] \$900 and ordering him to pay \$58,265 costs, the Medical Council reduced the costs on appeal to \$31,068.

...The Minister for Accident Compensation... said yesterday that she would bring legislation to Parliament soon... to stop drunk drivers getting accident compensation benefits... “The original law has been interpreted by the courts in the way Parliament wrote it,” she said on National Radio... [after the] High Court at Wellington... rejected a bid by the [ACC] to stop paying compensation to a convicted drunk driver who killed four people. The corporation had appealed to the High Court for the weekly compensation to be stopped on the ground of repugnance to justice, but the court decided the appeal authority had acted correctly when it ordered that the payments continue... [However,] a lobby group... [called the] Coalition on Accident Compensation... said: “It is a pity that some of the people who are ready to piously condemn drunk drivers to penury are silent when it comes to the widespread hardship and under-compensation suffered by thousands of people as a result of the National Government’s changes to ACC.”

...the Government is committed to rebuilding public confidence in our accident compensation system and to restore 24-hour comprehensive but affordable cover... There have been 11 major reviews of the scheme since its inception... All have failed to halt spiralling costs or address some fundamental deficiencies and inequalities in its operation. Between 1985-95 spending on [ACC] increased... from \$339 million to \$1592 million... The cost of reform could be nil. There is scope for the Government to save money.

...Workers’ accident pay will be slashed... [from 80%] of their weekly pre-accident earnings... to 65[%]... if the Government accepts a recommendation that officials are considering as part of a revamp of the... [ACC system. However, a] spokesman for the Coalition on Accident Compensation... said it was difficult enough for people to live on 80[%] of earnings. “...the Government [should] restore the scheme to what [it] was intended, which was 100[%] compensation...” The Employers’ Federation said a cut to compensation could mean more pressure on employers to pay larger top-ups. Some already made up the difference between the 80[%] ACC paid and full pay. A senior policy analyst with the federation... said that in Victoria, A[US], compensation was based on 95[%] of earnings for the first 26 weeks. For partial incapacity it then dropped to 60[%] and then nothing after two years. [Incidentally, ‘almost a 1/4 of NZ’s ACC payments in 1996 were for back pain – and the total is rising 18% annually.’]

...MOST of the more] than 41,700 N[Z]ers... on compo with a crook back should return to work. There’s nothing wrong with them... [according to the] senior lecturer in rehabilitation at the Wellington School of Medicine... Only 2% had a serious, identifiable, problem such as a fracture, cancer or infection... “Back pain occurs in almost every adult at some time and usually only lasts for 48 hours. It is not possible to say where back pain is coming from... Yet everyone, including the medical profession, talks about injury. This is the language of compensation.” ...People should stay active. Even if the back hurt for a while, it would soon settle... Back pain, by far the biggest claims category, is a major headache for the ACC... ACC spends \$350m a year on back injury cases... In the year to June, there were 7584 new claims for work-related back pain or injury that cost an additional \$20.6m... Around 26,700 have been compensated for more than one year... A study by the Injury Prevention Research Centre noted builders, labourers and other construction workers had the greatest number of back injury claimants (18.6%), followed by metal, engine and car workers (9.9%)... But cooks, chefs, bakers and shop assistants were the greatest risk for compensation [to continue] after 12 weeks. [● ‘ACC has declined to pay a woman who hurt her back while avoiding a kick from a cow because there was no contact – a decision which creates a grey area for people who receive strains while exercising.’]

...ACC plans to introduce tough new tactics in October aimed at dumping claimants who have been deemed fit for work. At the moment, many... claimants had been able to stay on... compo at 80[%] of their former wages... even though they had been rehabilitated because there were no guidelines for assessing their capacity for work... Under the proposed new work-testing criteria, long-term ACC claimants... will have no excuses. Those capable of... working 30 or more hours a week... even in a position outside their field, will have three months to find a job... Claimants will also have to take jobs that pay less and have less status than the positions they held when they were injured. If there is no work in their area, they

will be expected to move town to find employment. Those who refuse face a switch to the unemployment benefit and a substantial income drop... The... Department of Labour, said there were about 29,500 long-term ACC claimants, compared with about 26,000 three years ago.

...The... work-testing regime... which is due to take effect shortly... is expected to reduce ACC costs by nearly \$1 billion over five years but increase Social Welfare benefit costs by \$270 million over four years... But the scope of the claw-back on individuals is only now becoming apparent... Paraplegics and amputees could be among those forced into menial jobs or on to the dole...

ACC claimants deemed fit for work but unable to find jobs will have to wait for up to 10 weeks without income, says the Department of Social Welfare... [T]he standard stand-down was one week but it ranged up to 10 weeks, depending on how many dependents there were and how much the beneficiary was paid in the previous six months... [Incidentally, a]n Auckland pensioner who wrongly received \$18,000 in [ACC] payments will not have to repay the money... [after] the ACC decision... was dismissed by [a j]udge... this week... because it had wrongly advised [the pensioner] about claiming the money... [The pensioner] was forced to stop work in 1993 because of his injuries... [from] a 1990 motor accident... But... in February last year... the corporation told... [him] that he could continue to receive weekly compensation... until June this year or change over to the pension... However... in November the corporation wrote to the 63-year-old telling him it had made a mistake and wanted its money back...

A young man is missing out on... [an operation for] hernia that ACC had accepted was due to an accident... because of a delay in the signing of a contract for surgery... [between his local hospital and the ACC. T]hat contract was due to be signed last month but proceedings had stalled. Meanwhile, the... Health Authority [responsible for funding hospitals has] said it would not reimburse... [local hospital's] for any routine surgery on patients with ACC-related conditions...

ACC is considering doing away with coverage for minor claims. The move, part of plans to chop \$400 million from its burgeoning budget, would force victims to pay for their own medical expenses or face higher insurance premiums... ACC regards... serious injuries and rehabilitation... as its core business... [while] minor claims – those involving medical bills... for no more than \$150... [-] make up 90[%] of claims but account for only 12[%] of ACC's \$1.6 billion spending... Compensation for sports accidents, falls and lesser car injuries not requiring long-term treatment could also end. At present, claimants in... the “up-to-four-week-entitlement” category... are entitled to a range of subsidised treatments including general practitioner and physiotherapist visits... An ACC spokesman confirmed that... claims for minor injuries, which now fall into... that category... could include many occupational overuse syndrome claims, which have skyrocketed in recent years.

...[the number of cases in NZ increased] to 8196 last year... OOS is an umbrella term for a number of disorders, including epicondylitis (tennis elbow), tenosynovitis (inflammation of the tendon sheath) and myofascial syndrome (trigger points in muscle tissue), carpal tunnel syndrome (compression of the median nerve at the wrist), and complex regional pain syndrome. It ranges in severity from intermittent pain of varying intensity, experienced when specific activities are carried out such as key board work, writing, and ironing, to constant debilitating pain that affects all daily activities... Emotional and psychological changes invariably appear with prolonged and severe cases and an individually designed rehabilitation programme is necessary.

...Just when you thought it was safe to talk to your computer, a new occupational hazard has emerged in the office. American voice experts are warning that dictating to a computer all day – which requires an unnatural pause between each word and a constant pitch and tone – can lead to O[OS] of the larynx. The U[S] magazine *Occupational Hazards* has reported more than 100 cases of people suffering “cumulative speech trauma” from using speech recognition software. A N[Z] ergonomics consultant... said there were no reports of the trauma here but ergonomists were aware of the American cases. Lawyers, who often dictated on to computers, were one of the professions most likely to be at risk, he said. The director of the Toronto Voice Laboratory and Treatment Centre... [confirmed that] dictating to a computer abused the voice, producing muscle fatigue similar to the overuse syndrome found in Repetitive Strain Injury, now renamed OOS. “The only difference is it’s the larynx, not the wrist, that is affected.” OOS sufferers who switched to speech-recognition software risked losing two ways to communicate, she said.

...*Scepticism still reigns about OOS. For patients it’s all getting a bit repetitive.* The one thing I’ll really miss when I leave work is my computer,”... a secretary, told me recently. After 20 years as a manager’s personal assistant, she was leaving because of company restructuring. [She] was lucky. She had never experienced the anxiety that many office workers feel when they sit down in front of the keyboard each morning. The computer, until recently regarded as a user-friendly wonder-machine, is now viewed with a good deal of apprehension in many offices. And with good reason. Computer use is mainly responsible for the epidemic incidence of occupational overuse syndrome... OOS, or RSI as it is still known in the rest of the world, is now the most claimed-for condition in N[Z] and the leading compensatable cause of absence from work. Last year, ACC dealt with 8277 OOS cases costing \$9.75 million. Unions say that figure is only the tip of the iceberg because many cases go unreported by workers who fear for their jobs. ([The]ACC Minister... is now proposing that “minor injuries” such as OOS will no longer be covered.) In the US, RSI has cost business an estimated \$US20 billion a year... Despite the widespread incidence of OOS and the fact that the most conscientious workers are the ones who tend to suffer most, there is often an unspoken scepticism about it. Aren’t they making too much of a few aches and pains? And how come typists 20 years ago never got OOS? The answer is that manual typewriters stopped people from going too fast, the tiered arrangement of the keys prevented bad hand posture and the carriage return allowed tiny rests between lines... Those who suffer from OOS, though, are in no doubt – the pain is too real. In some cases the injury not only prevents them from working but can permanently disable, stopping them from doing such mundane tasks as driving or dressing... One of the best books on the subject is *Repetitive Strain Injury: A Computer User’s Guide*, co-authored by... a journalist who became afflicted with RSI, and... a doctor... who specialises in treating RSI sufferers. [The journalist] warns that you are in the danger zone for injury if you use a computer for as little as two hours a day. Prevention, the authors argue, is the best medicine. Plenty of exercise, frequent breaks, good posture, proper technique (never resting your wrists on anything when you are typing or using the mouse) and “avoid using the mouse or trackball wherever possible. Use keystrokes instead.”

...[‘an obedient officer worker, injured while exercising to prevent computer strain, has been denied accident compensation because no external force or resistance was involved in the injury’, which is kind of ironic, especially when the fact that s]taff of the **Accident Rehabilitation and Compensation Insurance Corporation** have cost taxpayers... \$1,126,717... in claims for occupational overuse syndrome in two years – the highest reported cost of any Government department[– is taken into consideration]. Papers... show that 252 ACC workers have registered claims for OOS-related injuries since September 30, 1994.

...The Government will take a \$260 million hit in its financial accounts for the 1996/97 year due to an [ACC] provision relating to its liability for long-term care for the disabled... ACC agreed to cover 24-hour-a-day care for a group of about 300 seriously disabled people from April 1995 but a court case[had] sought to get the cover backdated... In some cases it went back 11 years.

...The P[M] has signalled the most radical shake-up of accident compensation in its 23 year history, saying the Government may expose it to private sector competition.

...Attempts by the accident compensation scheme to shake off its “social welfare” image have a long way to go, says the Insurance Council. The council – which is pushing for private sector involvement[in ACC] – has acknowledged that the... [ACC] is trying to run the scheme along insurance company principles. But big changes were needed before the scheme would be viable to the private sector... The present scheme could not be opened to competition while the \$7 billion debt from the “tail” (claimants on ACC for more than a year) was included... Once the debt was removed... [the council’s] chief executive... favoured an interim step towards full privatisation, with the private sector managing claims on behalf of a Government authority.

...Set up under “Pay As You Go” funding... [arrangements, NZ’s ACC system once] guaranteed compensation to all... [Unfortunately, the system had to work with] the historically low premiums – particularly under periods of National Party Government where the employers’ account was allowed to run into deficit. This ultimately led to snowballing contingent liabilities [– now] totalling some \$8 billion.

...The 360 businesses who responded... [to a] recent survey of Auckland Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry members... indicated that in 1996 they paid \$7.1 million in premiums, and just 70 of those firms... lodged claims totalling \$734,000 against ACC. The average premium was \$20,000 and the average claim just \$2000, leaving a whopping 90[%] margin in the hands of ACC for reallocation.

...Proposed changes to the [ACC] system could see small businesses forced to fork out thousands of extra dollars to cover the cost of claims for employees injured at work. Small companies – those paying less than \$10,000 a year in premiums – would be heavily penalised by the plan which aims to spread the ACC scheme cost more fairly among employers. An ACC discussion document... says the changes would even out anomalies which have developed since 1992, when ACC began charging higher premiums to employers in “high-risk” industries... Businesses with a low-claim incidence are rewarded with bonuses, while those with high claims costs pay a penalty... [However,] companies paying more than \$1 million a year in premiums are less likely to make claims.

...[NZ’s ACC] premiums could drop substantially because of a big drop in the future cost of present injury claims, predict officials.

...[ACC] levies for wage-earners are set to increase over the next few years, dragging an extra \$100 a year from the pocket of the average worker by 2001... From next April... the earner premium for people on wages and salaries... will... increase... from 70c per \$100 of taxable income to 80c... and “in a smooth series of small annual rises,” to about \$1... But... employer premiums are likely to fall 36[%] on average, to \$1.67 per \$100 of liable payroll, and stay at that rate for five years... The Government [also] announced... it would stop paying the hospital costs for accidents outside work from July 1 to save itself \$40 million a year.

...The International Labour... organisation’s application of standards committee[has] ruled in Geneva that N[Z]’s ACC system should comply with the convention’s requirement that accident victims’ medical treatment should be free. The breaches have been admitted by the Government[, which yesterday increased workers’ ACC levies 70%]... to \$1.20 for every \$100 of gross income... The increase... will boost the earners’ account, which covers non-work and non-vehicle-related injuries, from \$346 million to \$512 million. The account already holds reserves of \$313 million, equivalent to nine months’ expenditure, but [the PM] said it was still “immature”[, meaning]... further... increases for income earners are on the cards... [The increases are designed] to move the earners’ account onto a fully funded system and set the stage to introduce competition in accident compensation... Instead of dropping employer premiums from \$2.61 for every \$100 of payroll to \$1.70... the Government settled for a \$2.35 premium[, which]... will see that account fall from \$1.23 billion to \$1.15 billion. [● Self-employed workers pay higher ACC rates into the earners’ account than wage and salary workers (e.g., during ‘1996-97, self-employed plumbers were levied at a rate of \$5.30 for every \$100 of gross income’).]

...Opening accident compensation up to competition is good news for [a] self-employed plumber... The Auckland tradesman said he had paid \$5000 a year in [ACC] levies for the past five years, yet had never made a claim. He was confident he would get a better deal in the private sector. This now seems very likely...

The chief executive of the Insurance Council... predicted premiums would be cut and claims would be handled more efficiently if private insurers were given part of the market. But... a lecturer in social policy at Massey University, said it was doubtful that insurance companies would be able to provide a cheaper service than the state-owned monopoly... “It depends what you call efficiency... The quality of service would be good on one level, but if they can find some way of denying you cover they will be very efficient at doing that.” ...The ACC monopoly gave it administrative efficiencies that multiple providers would have to replicate... [Private] companies would push up premiums for accident cover because of the need to return a profit to shareholders and greater marketing overheads... Labour’s ACC spokeswoman... also said there was no economic sense in making ACC compete with private insurers, with an American study showing that public schemes provided cheaper premiums than private insurers.

...People in dangerous jobs stand to lose as the Government opens [ACC] to market forces, say insurance companies... [who] would inevitably “pick and choose” clients... Top-dressing pilots and coalminers are among those likely to be considered almost uninsurable by the private companies. [However,] low-risk customers are being promised lower premiums and no-claims bonuses.

...Those who have long been campaigning for the unwieldy Accident Compensation system – and the corporation which administers it – to be given a well-deserved kick in the proverbial, are crowing that a failure to factor into Treasury’s financial calculations a proposed drop in employers’ ACC levies has left the Government facing an estimated \$1.5 billion-plus black hole in its financial forecasts for the next three years. A crisis of such dimensions... could quickly be eradicated by leaving levies where they are – or even increasing them as part of a transition to a fully-funded ACC scheme... [A] levy is essentially just another tax... But instead of allowing... extra ‘tax’ to wash through the Government accounts like some fiscal slush fund, employers want [the money] back where it belongs – in their own companies’ bank accounts. Some 91.8[%] of employers surveyed by the corporation favour this option. The... Government has given itself the ability to delay the projected decrease in employers levies... by putting ACC under the microscope through [a] joint Labour Department/Treasury study...

[‘Workers will be hit with a 14% jump in ACC levies from April next year. Employees on the average annual wage of \$35,000 will get \$70 less in take-home pay a year. However, employers’ premiums will fall 9% on average, as the Government rejigs the ACC in preparation for partial competition’...]

‘Big increases in ACC premiums under the renationalised workplace insurance scheme have confirmed the worst fears of some employers – though ACC says most are better off. Six weeks after law changes restored the ACC monopoly and forced employers to cancel accident insurance policies with private companies, groups as diverse as childcare centres, electrical contractors and farmers have been hit by bills up to 56% higher than they had been paying.’]

...FARMING is the country’s most deadly industry and its high fatality rates – which appear to be increasing – has prompted the Occupational Safety and Health Service to set up a task force to attack the problem... 323 farm-related deaths had occurred since 1975 – 57 of those children... ACC has also been concerned about farming-related deaths... It has been running an injury prevention programme for farmers for several years... “It is a sad and tragic fact that if you are a farmer, you are three times more likely to die[at work] than the average N[Z]er. It is even worse for farm workers who die at seven times the national fatal accident rate,”... Fatality rates among N[Z] farmers was believed to be worse than their overseas counterparts – although hilly terrain here was partly responsible... [F]arming was by nature a more dangerous occupation than many. Farmers... had to work with a wide range of often potentially dangerous machines. They were geographically isolated, often worked alone and had to carry out a wide variety of... unpredictable tasks... Task forces have also been set up to investigate two other industries with high fatality rates – forestry and construction... Since July last year OSH had investigated five deaths in the construction industry – which had more workers – and two in forestry. [‘An OSH survey found that 1-in-5 construction sites were unsafe’, and in recent years ‘accidents on construction sites have risen 70%.’]

...‘OSH investigated 182 work-related fatalities between July 1992 and June 1996.’ When the difference in population size is taken into account, NZ’s death rate resembles Britain’s (where ‘a thousand people are killed at work, a million suffer injuries and 23 million working days are lost because of industrial injury or disease every year’). ● ‘The death rate in industrial accidents in the US declined from 21 per 100,000 workers in 1960 to 9 in 1990. The rate was lower in manufacturing than nonmanufacturing industries. The industry with the highest occupational illness and injury rate was shipbuilding, and the lowest, nonferrous diecasting.’

...In NZ] death certificates don’t necessarily detail a person’s occupation. For example, a retired spray painter may have died from lung cancer. The death certificate will record the cause and the Ministry of Health will add another cross in the cancer columns. However, it won’t show that the worker was... [in an] industry with a high rate of lung problems before the introduction of masks and fan extraction systems. The result is that

those industries which pose the biggest risk to health are not clearly identified... Researchers estimated that 4[%] of lung cancer deaths in N[Z] are work related. That means about 270 cancer deaths last year were the result of job conditions. To this can be added work-related respiratory diseases like asthma, chemical-related diseases caused by solvents and chromium compounds, infectious diseases like hepatitis, HIV and legionellosis, and stress-related cardiovascular disease and depression... Probably the best-known industrial danger is from asbestos, previously widely used in insulation materials and some cladding products. While it has largely been replaced, and when found in renovations is carefully removed by workers wearing protective clothing, it was only attributed by the [ACC] as the cause of 30 deaths in the eight-year period between 1987 and 1994... How many people die yearly from complaints arising from their employment is unknown but the “guess rate” exceeds 400. That’s not including those killed on the job, which last year numbered 41 – 31 of them in the farming, forestry and construction industries. Loggers felling trees are most at risk... “If you’re... a logger, your chances of death are 70 times greater... But whereas a logging accident kills outright, occupational diseases may take 25 years to kill you. We just don’t know the full extent [of occupational disease death] although this should not cause undue alarm...”

...The Government is being asked by the Building Trades Union to provide \$50 million for lump-sum compensation for asbestosis sufferers.

...[“Greenpeace activists in Auckland disrupted last night’s sailing of a P&O container ship due to be scrapped in Asia, saying the vessel was contaminated with asbestos and toxic heavy metals. Police cut free five activists who had chained themselves to the Encounter Bay’s mooring lines. The protesters will appear in court today. One of them said the company had been asked to remove the contamination before the ship was broken up. Otherwise it would harm the environment and the health of Asian workers. He said that if the NZ Government ignored the passage of the Encounter Bay it was supporting the dumping of toxic waste in Asia. The ship was also boarded by protesters in Barcelona, Spain, last month, and in Sydney last week.”

...AUS’s National Occupational Health and Safety Commission estimates the annual work-related death toll across the Tasman to be 2900, compared to the 1997 A[US]n Yearbook’s figures of 2367 suicides, 2029 deaths in vehicle accidents, 333 homicides, 298 fatal poisonings, and 259 people drowned. The Aussies have conservatively estimated the cost of work-related injuries and disease to be \$A27 billion each year. Compare that figure with their current account deficit of around \$A20 billion, or their total public health expenditure of around \$A26 billion. That’s pretty serious company for something as traditionally little-regarded as workplace health and safety. Happily, N[Z]’s figures may be a little lower, for we lack the A[US]ns’ notoriously dangerous mining and mineral processing industries. Even so, the proportions are likely to be distressingly comparable. Until now, little has been done to raise public awareness of this issue. [The NZ]OSH’s budget for the 1997/98 year is \$21.6 million, of which only a tiny portion has been allocated to raising public awareness. Contrast that with our friends in A[US], where a series of blunt television advertising campaigns, supported by prominent use of billboards, has succeeded in lifting workplace health and safety into the public consciousness... In world terms, our workplace health and safety performance is adequate. But we can’t afford to slip down the world rankings... Internationally, achieving excellence in workplace health and safety is becoming recognised as a source of competitive advantage, both at the company level and between nations.

...Three shearers in southern N[SW] were awarded a total of more than \$A600,000... yesterday by a judge who found a pastoral company negligently exposed them to chemical contamination... The judge said... the... managing partner... who mixed the chemical compound used to tar the sheep, was well aware of the risks of exposure to diazonin contained in warnings issued by the manufacturers... on labels and information sheets... [T]he shearers’ clothes were saturated with tar containing the chemical as they manhandled the sheep. [They] suffered headaches, diarrhoea, vomiting... itchiness... and sores... on the skin... Thousands of N[Z]ers are exposed daily to killer chemicals, says [OSH]... Many workers would not know what harm the chemicals were doing them...

It seemed like a godsend, a chemical that could sterilise hospital instruments without boiling. But to some of the staff using it... it became a nightmare... Three years ago illness forced... a charge nurse in a theatre at Whangarei Hospital for 30 years... to stop... [working. N]ow, at 52, she potters delicately around her garden... or does a little patchwork. More energetic activities give her severe headaches, dizziness, joint pains, and prolonged tiredness. Sometimes her nose bleeds. In April last year... [ACC] agreed that her illness was the result of exposure to... glutaraldehyde, and paid 80[%] of her wage. Two weeks ago, as a result of a new screening system, ACC revised its decision and stopped the payment. [She] is seeking a review... According to information obtained by the N[Z] Herald more than 70 people may have been accepted by ACC as suffering from glutaraldehyde sensitivity[, including]... five nurses at Whangarei Hospital... but the corporation’s system of record-keeping makes it impossible for it to confirm this... Glutaraldehyde was first used overseas in the mid-1960s and promoted as safe... Whangarei Hospital introduced it in 1978. Before that heat-sensitive instruments were sterilised by soaking them in... formalin tablets... [The smell] made... eyes water. “So we backed away from it. But the glutaraldehyde had no smell. We thought it was wonderful stuff. We dipped our hands in it and used it like soap and water. I got dermatitis. The hospital said something about putting gloves on, but we had no masks until 1994 when I asked for them.” Chemicals enter the body through inhalation of the fumes, by absorption through contact with the skin, or by ingestion of fine particles. Opportunities for absorption have been multiple in N[Z] hospitals because of poor ventilation and the use of uncovered containers... In many cases these conditions still pertain... A subsequent 1995 environmental audit has shown no unsafe levels of chemicals in Whangarei Hospital but the management refuses to discuss the issue of its air conditioning because of the impending court case with one of its former employees. Glutaraldehyde has been replaced as a sterilant by the use of another chemical called steris. This, and another alternative called sterant, aren’t suitable for use with all instruments. Neither are their possible effects necessarily understood... [Glutaraldehyde is also] one of the ingredients in the developing solution of x-ray film... Darkrooms for processing x-rays have often been small, confined spaces... Workplace Exposure Standards have been set in N[Z] for glutaraldehyde only since 1994 and are at present 0.2 parts per million. [This is] likely to be lowered to 0.1 to conform with A[US]n standards... Glutaraldehyde is considered less toxic than its associate formaldehyde, another disinfectant and also a preserver, which is classed as a probable carcinogen and which occurs in an enormous range of consumer products and in scientific and industrial processes... The toxicity of formaldehyde has been recognised since the 1940s and our standards, set at 1.0 ppm, are about to be reviewed. It is unlikely, however, that they will be set as low as in the U[S.] where the threshold is 0.3. In Britain the level is 2.0 ppm.

...Radiation exposure five times higher than internationally accepted standards is allowed under... [NZ law. I]nternational guidelines suggested people working with radioactive equipment or substances should not be exposed to more than 20 millisieverts of radiation a year. In N[Z], regulations allowed for 50 mSv. The limits set for the rest of the population were 5 mSv a year while the internationally accepted limit was 1 mSv... A parliamentary select committee was also told yesterday that the... Radiation Act and its accompanying regulations were written more than 30 years ago and did not cover some modern developments. No limits were set for the amount of radiation people can be exposed to from ultraviolet rays, lasers, infrared and high-intensity lights... Controversy has arisen over the amount of radiation people are exposed to and possible side-effects. In February, it was revealed radiation from the Navy’s communications station at Devonport exceeded safety standards inside a neighbouring childcare centre, but test results were kept secret for two years... High-frequency power lines and cellphone transmitter sites in residential areas have also caused concern... [However, the] director of the National Radiation Laboratory... said that although N[Z] regulations allowed exposure higher than accepted overseas standards, such high-level exposure was unlikely ever to occur... [Incidentally, a] boat-building company, an employee of which... suffered burns to 40[%] of his body... [after he] was “engulfed in a fireball” when a faulty halogen light ignited spray paint, was fined more than \$18,000 by a Christchurch District Court judge yesterday... [for failing] to ensure the safety of employees... \$15,000 of the fine [is to] be paid to [the injured worker (‘the maximum fine is \$100,000; the maximum fine levied was \$40,000 against Tranz Rail’)].

...An Auckland health supplements manufacturer was fined more than \$10,000... for failing to ensure the safety of its employees by not fitting a guard to the mincing machine... after an employee lost the tip of a finger while mincing shark cartilage... [The] Auckland District Court... ordered that \$6000 of it be paid to the injured worker... The company... [also failed] to notify the Labour Department of the accident as soon as possible and... to notify the department on the prescribed form. It was convicted and fined \$1500 on the first count and convicted and discharged on the second. The... [company's] research director... said he did not know how the guard was removed...

An Auckland bed maker... has been fined \$13,500 after a factory worker's hand became trapped in a machine that did not have proper safety guards... (\$2000 will go to the injured worker)... Instead of notifying the... Labour Department... the company continued using the machine... [for] more than a fortnight after the accident... [still] without a safety guard... [until the department's OSH] inspector received an anonymous tip-off... The... Auckland District Court... heard last week that... [the] crushed and lacerated... process worker... spent 72 hours in hospital [but a] Sleepyhead production manager told the inspector that he had not realised the accident was serious... Sleepyhead's general manager... said the firm was very safety-conscious. "But in any factory that employs a lot of people and uses a lot of machines, there is always the potential, due to human errors, of accidents occurring."

...The Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union... [is] spending tens of thousands of dollars preparing... [a] High Court... challenge, including hiring a private investigator to interview witnesses... after the Labour Department decided not to prosecute an Auckland chicken factory over a horrific death in the workplace... The law allows charges to be laid only by the department and only within six months of the accident[, but the union is]... seeking an urgent judicial review. The union believed the true cause of the accident... [in which] a 33-year-old father of two, was crushed under a conveyor inside a blast freezer... had not been identified either by the Department or by... [the factory owners. The man] died in hospital two days later. The accident so shocked some staff that they required counselling... The union's health and safety officer... said interviews with [the dead man's] co-workers revealed five of the six emergency stop buttons for the conveyor belt were believed to have electrical faults... [Furthermore, the] company's training officer told the union he was asked after the accident to sign records showing that he had fully trained the staff, including [the dead man], although he had never kept training records and did not consider himself fully trained.

...Poor workmanship by a car mechanic led to an accident that killed three people, a prosecutor said in the High Court at Auckland yesterday. [The] Crown counsel... told the jury... a tie rod end – vital to the steering – came loose, causing the car to go out of control... as [it] entered a left-hand bend on State Highway 5... [The] car veered into the path of an oncoming ambulance that spun into the wrong lane, causing the vehicle in which the [three people] were travelling to crash into it. A patient was injured when thrown out of the ambulance. On inspection of the [first] car, it was discovered that the right-hand tie rod had come out. The nut on the left-hand tie rod was only finger-tight and no split pin was securing it... [The Crown's counsel said the mechanic] was obliged to check that such a vital piece of equipment was properly connected before the vehicle was handed back to a member of the public relying on his skill and expertise... [The] jury is being given a beginner's course in mechanics with the aid of a full-scale mock-up of a car wheel, suspension and steering rod assembly... The charge of manslaughter for faulty mechanical workmanship... is the first of its kind in N[Z], says a criminal law expert... "It is a reminder for all people in occupations that could place people at risk in terms of their lives and health that they should take care in the way they do their job."

...The trial of [a mechanic], who was yesterday acquitted... of charges of manslaughter on the grounds of faulty mechanical workmanship, throws up some interesting challenges to the motor-repair business, tradespeople in general – and anyone who fails to take care when carrying out his or her duties. Cause a death or an injury and you could be up on criminal charges... From the police point of view, the decision to bring a criminal charge rests on their ability to prove the case. The law has been in place for years... The second avenue for legal action against faulty workmanship is through a civil claim – usually under the Health Safety and Employment Act of 1992. Although civil and criminal cases may not be brought for the same offence and claims for general damages are ruled out by ACC legislation, claims for exemplary damages (taken to provide an example or disincentive to others) are increasingly common... Different trade associations have differing guidelines for their members... The... 1400 members... [of the] Electrical Contractors' Association of N[Z]... are bound by... the... Electricity Regulations of 1997... which runs to 85 pages. All electricians must attend courses in safety before beginning work and refresher courses once every two years. Consequently... electrical contractors "have the best safety record among the more common trades," meaning ACC premiums for electricians have dropped considerably in the past few years. "The suggested reduction in premiums for the 1997-98 year is 43%." The Motor Trade Association points to 1995 Transport Safety Authority figures which show that of 20,000 accidents only 450 were caused by mechanical faults. Of these, only 22 were steering-related. "However, the statistics don't indicate how many of these 450 faults were related to faulty workmanship in garages,"... [Incidentally, t]he Crimes Amendment Bill (No 5), which has reached the select committee stage... requires a higher standard of proof of negligence before a person can be held criminally responsible... [T]he impetus for the bill came from the medical profession, where doctors had been charged with manslaughter after the death of patients in their care... The new legislation would bring N[Z] in line with... Canada[, AUS] and... Britain...

IN THE fast-paced world of the '90s, workplace stress has become an accepted, almost expected, part of the job – but that could be about to change... Putting the blame for excessive stress on your boss is difficult – but overseas the worm is turning and it could be only a matter of time before the trend catches on here. Some employers found guilty of negligently placing employees in situations of serious stress or mental trauma are being sued for big amounts. In Britain, 14 police constables have successfully sued the chief constable of the Yorkshire police for \$2.8 million. The officers attended 1989's Hillsborough stadium disaster, in which 96 people were killed. Their case stated they had suffered mental trauma because of having to deal with an accident that they weren't staffed to handle. In another British case, [a] social worker... won \$400,000 from the Northumberland County Council on the grounds that his workload had been so intolerable that he retired early... N[Z]ers... have had the right to sue employers for damages... since... mental trauma... was exempted from... ACC... claims... in 1992...

A MAN is suing his former boss for compensation for a stress-related illness in a landmark case that may open the floodgates for other employees... [The] former probation officer, claims he suffered burnout and multiple health problems caused by the pressures of... dealing with violent and serious offenders. He left his job at the Corrections Department in March last year, after being told by his doctor he would die if he stayed. "At one point I had around 20 sex offenders, 20 parolees, several psychiatric cases and... five murderers," he said. This was "over the top" compared to other professionals with similar roles, such as social workers. Now his lawyer has filed proceedings in the High Court in Auckland and the Employment Court for compensation for the loss of his career, and exemplary damages, totalling around \$900,000. [The former probation officer] is also suing for breach of contract... Other professionals, such as prison officers and nurses dealing with violent and serious offenders, said similar legal action was likely. [● 'A former police video producer was yesterday awarded \$242,000 in damages in a court ruling that said senior officers should have recognised signs he was suffering from post-traumatic stress. The award totalled \$373,000, but the judge deducted 35% for "contributory negligence."']

... 'Looking for a low-stress job? Best not run for President. A recent US survey rated the job as the most stressful possible, with firefighters and senior corporate executives a close second and third. Stress is no longer regarded as just a flimsy excuse for not getting your work done or for not liking your job. Recently, a police video operator received \$242,000 and a probation officer was awarded \$1 million after suffering significant stress at work. Both had complained to their employers repeatedly of intolerable stress levels, but nothing ever changed. As a last resort, they sued their employers. And yesterday, two former constables won almost \$500,000 damages against police for lost income through early retirement and the physical and mental consequences of their work.'

...The Accident Compensation Appeal Authority... [has ruled that a] woman and her two daughters... were entitled to... [the maximum ACC payouts of] \$10,000 each after suffering more than the ordinary grief process following the death of their... husband and father... six years ago... by medical misadventure. The authority overturned a corporation ruling which rejected the claim on the basis that it would entitle "every person who has experienced shock upon hearing about a loved one's unexpected death." ...The payout to the family for mental trauma comes four years after a precedent-setting case in which a Hamilton woman was paid \$27,000 in compensation for mental suffering... [after being] at the bedside of her 23-year-old son... for the last 20 hours of his life after he was beaten and tortured by gang members in November 1987.

...A sexually abused woman suffering post-traumatic stress disorder has won her battle to have the severity of her injuries recognised by compensation authorities. The woman, who was sexually abused many times in the 1970s, appealed against an [ACC] ruling that her injuries represented "20[%] functional impairment." It paid her \$1400 compensation on that basis, despite its own doctor saying the woman was one of the three most "damaged" cases he had seen... [Her] post-traumatic stress disorder... was also linked to her diabetes, substance abuse and suicidal tendencies... Another doctor said... "Her degree of continuing permanent impairment will be considerable. In my opinion [she] is 70[%] disabled." The Appeal Authority agreed, saying... 70[%] was a more credible figure.

...[a man awarded \$290,000 in back-dated interest from the ACC may have opened up a new front for claims. The man had an accident in 1986 but the corporation did not accept his claim for earnings-related compensation until 1995. When it did, it declined to pay interest on the amount that accrued during the dispute. A judge has now ordered the corporation to pay the interest. And it faces having to pay interest in other cases where it delayed a decision for a month or longer but eventually accepted a claim. The lawyer who represented the man at his appeal hearing said she had another four clients who were owed \$700,000 between them. A corporation representative said it was not known how many people could be affected by the decision or what amount ACC might end up paying out under the ruling. However, a claim would have to have been lodged before July 1 last year, when a law was passed to close the loophole.] Meanwhile, it was revealed yesterday that the... ACC... corporation had paid one of its senior staff a performance bonus of nearly \$55,000. The action has been condemned by Labour as totally inappropriate for a state service agency plagued with funding problems... [A] Labour MP... said... "No person should be paid that sort of bonus out of money collected from workers, employers and vehicle users... It brings the whole ACC system into disrepute." ...Since April last year, almost \$1 million has been paid out on employee bonuses at ACC... But the Government's duty manager... defended the practice of bonus payments... He agreed with "paying reasonably low levels of base pay and attaching bonuses for performance to them. "It encourages better management and... better performance."

...A parliamentary committee yesterday strongly criticised the [ACC] board for weak controls, and expressed alarm about its troubled management... The... committee... had "deep disquiet" at not being able to present a full picture of the corporation's performance because of ongoing investigations. The Serious Fraud Office was called in to look at irregularities last month after the [chief executive's] forced resignation...

An internal audit ordered by a concerned ACC board has led to... 22 charges of fraud, theft and money laundering... against the [former chief executive, including one of]... misusing \$1.4 million of public funds to buy three aircraft... [He] was forced to resign from the \$242,000 post in May...

The brother of [the former ACC] chief... has appeared in court charged with conspiracy to defraud the ACC of \$886,297.

...Coming on the heels of... the indulgences... at Aotearoa Television and the celebrated case of [the] Sports Foundation chief... there has to be at least a suspicion... that there's something seriously wrong at the top of some public sector organisations... [Now that the former ACC chief's predecessor is also] being charged with a swindle... the taxpayer can be forgiven for suffering fraud fatigue.

...In the High Court at Wellington yesterday... a... chief executive of the ACC from 1985 to 1992... [- plus] president of the Society of Accountants from 1989... and Auditor-General from 1992 to 1994... [-] pleaded not guilty to 21 charges, 18 of using a document with intent to defraud... two of theft, and one alternative charge of obtaining by false pretences... His trial... will hear charges relating to offences between 1989 and 1994 involving nearly \$140,000... Despite having a salary of more than \$150,000, he had also incurred about \$100,000 in debt on 14 credit cards.

...The former Auditor-General... faces a possible jail term and being struck off as a chartered accountant following his conviction on 10 fraud charges yesterday... [He] was released on bail... after a 12-day trial. He... is believed to be the most senior N[Z] public servant to be convicted on dishonesty charges... The frauds he was found guilty of amounted to a total of around \$60,000... Because the counts are property offences, [the judge] will have to be satisfied that special circumstances exist to impose a jail term... On the ACC-related charge that [he] dishonestly obtained \$20,000 in advance travel expenses for a 1991 trip to Indonesia, the judge found that the money was used to pay... pressing mortgage arrears... [At one time his] liabilities were around \$400,000... Friends and colleagues... remain puzzled at how [he] got into such a financial mess, but several suggested he was seduced by the high-living associated with his high-powered posts... His defence was that he never had any intent to defraud but rather was careless and made mistakes.

...the former head of ACC and the Audit Office... treated [them] like a bank, using their money to cover his debts... [The judge described his] offending as, "...a serious abuse of a position of authority and trust... Auditor-Generals are supposed to control financial offending, not commit it... The message must be that high positions carry high standards..."

...Police have laid 13 fraud charges against the former Attorney-General of Western Samoa... The charges, involving \$89,000 of clients' money, related to the Auckland legal practice... [the now-]disbarred lawyer... ran from 1982... until late 1990. He left to take over as Attorney-General in Apia in 1991, when his Auckland activities were under investigation. He resigned as Attorney-General after he was struck off... the N[Z] law register in May 1993 after being found guilty at a disciplinary tribunal hearing of four charges of professional misconduct... In 1994, he was appointed acting chief executive of Polynesian Airlines to oversee the carrier's bid to climb out of its financial troubles... [He] told the N[Z] Herald yesterday that he knew nothing of the charges... [In related news, t]he disgraced former Auditor-General... [of NZ was] released from jail... on December 10 after serving half of his 18-month sentence... Last night the Audit Office confirmed that crown lawyers are [still] trying to recover the public money frittered away... [on] stretch limousines, Concorde flights and stays in lavish hotels... The conviction of [the] former Auditor-General... on 10 fraud charges... exposed... [an] incredible paradox... - 1997

The free market claimed to be clean of corruption... Changes to our economy since 1984 have been a powerful force for more ethical conduct in both business and government. By reducing the scope of government over economic life, liberalisation has reduced the scope for bribery and corruption. [However, according to an Auckland] Professor... that is "precisely wrong" and "the opposite is true." Academics should usually be prepared to produce supporting evidence for their views. He offers us none. In fact the available evidence suggests overwhelmingly that freer economies are associated with less corruption... As the least corrupt country in... a survey by Transparency International... N[Z], with a high degree of economic freedom... takes pride of place... while economically unfree countries like India... and Brazil have a high level... of corruption... No one should be surprised. Corruption is much more likely to thrive in countries where the Government has extensive powers to help or hinder individual firms because it plays a dominant role in the economy. Where business has few favours to ask of government, and is largely left to pursue profits through satisfying customers, the incentives for corruption can only be reduced. Because it requires co-operation, a market economy by its very nature encourages many of the social virtues important to a healthy society. Since reputation and successful long-term relationships are crucial to most businesses, markets strongly encourage the cultivation of those personal qualities that assist in maintaining relationships – honesty, friendliness, courtesy and good faith... A freer system has the moral advantage of putting a greater premium on merit and fostering social mobility... A Nobel laureate in economics... has summed the issues up in the following way: "The great economists of the past believed that a market economy was not

simply more efficient and produced more output than other economies. In addition, a market economy makes people more self-reliant, more independent and more moral in the fundamental sense of being able to take care of themselves instead of being dependent on governments and others for support. Moreover, a good businessman engages in moral behaviour for very practical reasons – he will get more customers in the future if he acquires a reputation for honesty and reliability. So good business practice, not always but very frequently, produces moral behaviour.” A Nobel prize awaits [the]Professor... if he can demonstrate the opposite conclusion... Of course opportunistic and underhand behaviour can occur in business just as it can in the professions, politics, the sporting arena and every other walk of life... [M]arkets need to be supported by broader codes of personal responsibility and moral conduct... [The professor also] says he... objects to the large sums earned by some of our company chief executives... [O]ur chief executives operate in competitive environments in which the need to satisfy the customer is paramount. No one is forced to buy the products of any private company – and in this way contribute to its chief executive’s salary – in the same way that, say, all taxpayers are forced to contribute to the salary of a tenured university professor. The economic “value” of a chief executive meets a much stiffer test than the “value” of many other occupations. Moreover, under our pre-1984 command and control economy, some people earned fortunes, not through being good at satisfying customers but simply through having the skills and connections to secure Government licences. Consumers were gouged with high-cost and low-quality products. That was genuine privilege; the rest of us were effectively coerced into subsidising the unearned standard of living of a fortunate few. We were lucky to avoid the worst forms of corruption that such a system usually breeds, but the whole business environment of the times – in which firms and industries were constantly lobbying governments for special favours – was itself only one step away from the real thing. So too was the political environment, where taxpayers’ money was spent and economic policy decisions often made not because politicians believed them justified, but purely in order to win votes. It is arguable that the morality of political actions for electoral purposes is no less questionable than the morality of bribes. - 1996

The above article – written by the executive director of the Business Roundtable – was accompanied by a line-graph depicting levels of Economic Freedom and Corruption for each of the 54 countries in Transparency International’s survey. NZ’s level of corruption was given as ‘approximately 5%, followed by Denmark with approximately 7.5%, then Sweden, Finland, Canada and Norway (all approximately 10%)’. Interestingly, the US, which was next below NZ for economic freedom, and Hong Kong, which was the only survey country with higher economic freedom, both had higher levels of corruption than NZ – placing 14th and 18th respectively (although their levels of corruption – approximately 20% and 30% respectively – were significantly lower than the 50% plus of most ‘controlled markets’). Two of the survey countries – Nigeria and Pakistan – were estimated to be ‘over 90% corrupt’.

In 1990, 1,176 [US] public officials were indicted and 1,084 convicted for corruption, compared to 255 indicted and 179 convicted in 1975. Of the total in 1990, more than half were Federal officials...

State corruption[is] rare in NZ but[there’s] a need for care... There is no reason to believe that Transparency International’s ranking of N[Z] as one of the least corrupt countries in which to do business, and more generally, is anything but accurate... [However,] it is probably time that provisions were put in place for auditing... regulations... Corruption is an ever-present threat, globally on the increase, and a threat better tackled prudentially rather than after the event... It is also commonplace that the public, as well as some more scholarly observers, fail to distinguish between corruption, incompetence, apathy and several other ailments of the body politic and administration... N[Z] is ripe for the establishment of formal counter-corruption measures and it is certainly not beyond the wit of our legislators to do so... They would, however, be advised to think through this extremely complex issue and to take expert advice... [T]he real danger... is that the control of corruption will become so central to every government activity that at worst the real objectives will be forgotten and at best initiative will give way to inflexibility... Every A[US]n state has a history of corruption on a scale unknown in N[Z]. But AUS] not only has relevant, mainstream ideas on corruption control, but others which have never been put into practice and yet are particularly relevant to our “clean” condition... It is sadly the case that it is exceptionally difficult to get parliamentarians to see such issues in [anything] other than party terms. Optimistically, however, it must be added that N[SW]s’ Independent Commission against Corruption has been generally deemed a success... [while powerful interests had] good reason to work energetically for its failure. The experience of most such bodies has been of a large number of complaints, most of which cannot be upheld. This is no reflection on commission competence. Rather it reflects the extreme difficulty of proving corruption, on almost any definition; the vagueness of popular ideas as to what constitutes corruption; and the existence of a substantial group more interested in self-publicity than the real problem.

...Getting companies to care about corruption is hard enough; getting them to do something about it is even harder. Imagine you are trying to win a big public contract in a developing country. The minister in charge makes unmistakable references to the disgracefully low pay of local civil officials and the benefits his own children would enjoy if they could study abroad. The cost of providing this (concealed as a scholarship paid for by your company) is minute compared with the value of the contract. Your competitors, given the chance, would assuredly find the money. Do you pull out, or pay up? Most businessmen in such situations find that their scruples are soon swallowed. So do most governments. Germany is one of several European countries where bribes paid abroad are tax-deductible. The U[S] is harsher... executives can face jail for paying bribes... under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act... But it is hard to prove and many American... business people think that bribery in the third world is a fairly innocuous affair. The only victims are the bribers (ie themselves)... This... is just the sort of argument that sends... the founder of Transparency International, an anti-corruption pressure group based in Berlin, into paroxysms of high-minded rage. Corruption is not a victimless crime, he says. Poor people in poor countries are the losers when officials are on the take: corruption means that good projects are squeezed out by bad ones. Over time, argues [this man] who has the touch of the Old Testament prophet about him, corruption threatens to reduce a country’s entire administration to a... state of decay. Honest officials give up. Bribes grow ever bigger and more ubiquitous. The trough becomes less well-stocked; the snouts plunge deeper. Like most saints or zealots, [he] sees the world a touch too simply... On the other hand, all... countries would surely be better places if there were fewer backhanders. One recent study, by an American academic... calculated that an increase in the level of corruption from that of Singapore[– which placed 8th on the line-graph (r:ln20 above) –] to that of, say, Mexico[(38th)] would be the equivalent of increasing the tax burden on foreign investors by over 20[%]... But, even assuming that [he] is on the side of the angels... the question... still... [remains:] what on earth can he do about it? His first problem is getting people to admit that corruption is a problem. In this respect, [he] can claim... success. He set up Transparency International four years ago mainly because his employer for the previous 25 years, the World Bank, was reluctant to raise the issue... Now the bank has a much clearer anti-corruption mandate as does the O[ECD]... In developing countries, Transparency International’s new idea is to set up bribe-free zones, grandly termed islands of integrity, where all participants in, for example, a public tender, would publicly pledge to pay no bribes... But so far, only one place has fully accepted this idea – the province of Mendoza in Argentina, where the governor recently won election on an anti-corruption platform. Mendoza now has televised hearings on all big public procurement deals. Some apparent breakthroughs have gone awry (an ally in Ecuador turned out to have bribed members of parliament to pass the anti-corruption law backed by Transparency International). And in some places, such as the former Soviet Union and parts of the Arab world, the forces of corruption are gaining rather than giving ground. It is hard to imagine a Russian mafioso quaking in his shoes at Transparency International’s attention.

...However, crime and government corruption featured large in executive minds[in an international survey]. “If pundits often dismiss corruption as an unavoidable cost of doing business, the executives in our survey clearly take the matter more seriously,” the... World Economic Forum, an

international grouping of government, business and academic leaders... which has its headquarters in Switzerland... said. "They report that tax evasion is extensive in 33 countries, bribery is endemic in 20 countries, police are dangerously ineffective in 13 countries, and organised crime carries a high cost in nine countries.

...*Time may be up for second-oldest profession...* Graft, of one form or another, is probably the world's second-oldest business. And despite a raft of high-profile arrests in recent years, including one or two former heads of state, it is still much safer to engage in than the world's oldest. Many governments, however, are growing increasingly determined to stamp out what has been referred to as the "corruption eruption." On May 26, members of the OECD – the Paris-based club of rich countries – agreed to forge a treaty that would make it illegal for firms from member countries to bribe foreign officials. At the moment, the proposal is just that. The treaty, which the OECD hopes to have drafted by the end of this year, would need to be backed by new laws in each member's country, criminalising bribery abroad. Such laws have long been urged on others by the U[S], which already has its own. As a result, American businessmen argue, they face unfair competition from their less scrupulous foreign rivals. One Government study estimated that U[S] firms lost some 100 deals worth \$45 billion over the past two years to less principled rivals... The rapid growth of cross-border investment, and the growing competition to supply it, have increased the pressure on rich-country governments to support their exporters. Indeed, all of them, including the U[S], occasionally lobby foreign governments on their own firms' behalf. The most politically palatable way to curb bribery, therefore, is for all rich countries to take the leap together. For this reason, even a watered-down treaty would be better than the current arrangement, under which overseas bribes are tax-deductible in many places. Still, efforts to reduce corruption by stemming the supply of dirty cash can only go so far. For starters, even strict laws making bribery illegal are often easy to by-pass. Many American firms simply hire third parties with local ties to "make introductions" for them. In countries where there is little difference between shaking hands and greasing palms, this allows foreign business to do deals without ruffling their consciences. If the battle against bribes is to succeed, therefore, it will have to involve a change of heart on the part of those who take as well as those who give. Rooting out corruption is almost always in a country's best interests, but not always in those of its politicians. Some progress, however, is being made. Foreign-aid donors are becoming less willing to bank-roll economies which allow corruption... Most recently, the World Bank, a major player in the developing world, has placed anti-graft efforts near the top of its agenda. It now stands ready to cancel contracts and to black-list companies suspected of corruption... Since the bank finances 40,000 contracts a year, worth a total of some \$25 billion, such efforts may make a difference. For those developing countries that are determined to reduce graft, the best bet may be to do so indirectly, by enacting the kinds of liberal economic reforms that reduce the opportunity for it. Abolishing export licences, for instance, is the best way to ensure that businessmen do not bribe bureaucrats to get them... If handled improperly, however, some liberalisation efforts can backfire. Privatisations, for example, tend to reduce the scope for graft in the long run, by transferring assets into the private sector. But the privatisation process itself tends to invite corruption. For this reason, graft-busters must also concentrate on making civil servants honest by improving accounting systems and increasing bureaucrats' official (that is, legally obtained) salaries. Serious strides to curb corruption are still a long way off.

...Theories that paying civil servants well to curb corruption are very difficult to prove. Indeed, the costs may outweigh the benefits... Corruption in government is an age-old problem, but a new subject of study for economists concerned with economic growth. Within the past year, organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have begun to argue that corruption can deter investment and retard growth. Last week, the IMF suspended a \$220 million loan programme for Kenya, to punish the government for its failure to root out graft... How, though, are governments to curb poor performance? One common recommendation for poor countries is to increase the pay of civil servants... The fly in this ointment is the assumption that officials are driven to corruption by necessity. They might simply be driven by greed. And the balance between these motives will affect the amount by which their pay needs to be raised in order to make them less corruptible. In a recent paper, two IMF economists... tried to work through these complexities. One surprising implication of their findings is that while higher pay for public servants might indeed reduce corruption, the benefits could be smaller than the... costs. Quantifying costs and benefits in this murky domain is difficult... Establishing a statistical link between low wages and corruption does not show which way causation flows... A telling finding from the research is that when its authors looked at trends in individual countries over a 12-year period, changes in public sector wages had no significant effect on the reported extent of corruption. Still, there is another reason to question the efficacy of paying officials more. Arguably, the type of corruption that most damages economic growth is not petty bribery but rather the massive theft of state funds by venal politicians and their senior henchmen.

...An audit by the state comptroller's office in May found that \$NZ506.44 million – nearly half the 1997 budget – had been lost because of corruption or mismanagement by Palestinian officials. The... deputy planning minister... said the situation was chaotic with nearly 500 directors in 18 ministries. Positions and entire departments had been created to appease well-connected individuals... The... Palestinian leader... has already received a letter of resignation from his justice minister, who riled the U[S] by supporting the killing of Arabs who sold land to Jews...

The Israeli P[M] has rejected calls to resign over a corruption scandal... The State Prosecutor and the Attorney-General... are deciding whether to charge [him] with fraud and breach of trust... Many Israeli's are comparing what... he's done to the Watergate affair which toppled [a US President] more than twenty years ago.

...A... former chairman of the Washington-funded agency that handles US interests in the absence of diplomatic relations... said... he has evidence to support the charges... that staff of Washington's de facto embassy in Taipei... took bribes, that... \$NZ7.7 million... in visa fees was missing and that a visa investigator forced at least one applicant to trade sex for a visa approval... [The former chairman also] said he was forced from his job when he tried to shed light on what he called widespread corruption at the institute.

...The trial of [a]former Italian prime minister... and 33 other people accused of embezzling \$US1 billion... collapsed yesterday with the judge calling for a new investigation into the case.

...Italy's former [PM, who is]... one of the country's richest businessmen, faces a second trial for corruption and fraud after an investigation by Milan public prosecutors. The latest charges... stem from alleged payments to a Rome judge in exchange for favours[and follows]... a series of corruption cases pursued by public prosecutors against the country's largest companies and most prominent figures...

[I]n accordance with Church law... [the] Pope... has accepted the resignation of a Sicilian archbishop who is on trial on charges of corruption and defrauding the European Union... The Vatican says... [the archbishop] is one of the highest-ranking Catholic churchmen to face Italian justice. [Meanwhile, 'the crisis over allegations of fraud and nepotism in the European Commission is about to reach fever pitch with the publication of a report expected to trigger the downfall of one or more members of the powerful EU executive. A controversial former French PM is seen as the most likely casualty of what is expected to be a damning report on the commission's financial management and its handling of the allocation of lucrative jobs and contracts.']

...The shadow of magistrates probing political corruption looms over France's parliamentary election campaign – a threat to both right and left... Charges of illicit funding of most major parties through rake-offs on public contracts have plagued France for years. The scandals hit the Socialists first, playing a major role in their 1993 election rout. The... Socialists are also embarrassed by a scandal over illegal wiretapping of private citizens ordered by the late president Francois Mitterrand in the 1980s. A special court is still investigating whether [a]Socialist ex-premier... and two of this ex-ministers will face charges of poisoning over the 1980s distribution of Aids-tainted blood products which killed hundreds of haemophiliacs. The... far-right National Front, the only major party that has so far escaped charges of illicit financing, has... indicated corruption would be a major... campaign[issue].

...Anger over top-level corruption lies behind election violence... Shops and businesses in Jakarta closed in anticipation of violence on Friday morning and in the afternoon their worst fears were realised when sporadic rioting broke out... Analysts point to the wider issues of discontent among Indonesia's urban poor at corruption and collusion among Government officials and the [President's] family as reasons for the violence... More than 150 people have[so far] died from violence and accidents during street rallies[, including at]... least 130 people... killed when a shopping complex burned down during an election riot in Banjarmasin, capital of the Indonesian province of Kalimantan... [S]ix government buildings, nine banks, two hotels, six restaurants and a number of... houses were [also]destroyed... 181 people... [were] arrested... The riot erupted following clashes between supporters of the ruling Golkar party campaigning in the city and angry crowds emerging from mosques after Friday prayers.

...South Korean state prosecutors yesterday summoned the Home Affairs Minister... for questioning over a loan scandal. They also summoned another leading MP from the ruling party... [who is] a former ambassador to China and now the head of the Finance and Economic Committee at the National Assembly... Both men are close associates of [the]President... who last month ordered a thorough probe into huge loans to the failed Hanbo Steel Co... The... Hanbo Group founder... has already been arrested on charges of fraud and other violations in connection with \$8.53 billion in loans its steelmaking flagship piled up before it was declared insolvent on January 23. Two bankers have also been arrested on bribery charges. The... President... has described the scandal as a typical example of corruption which is still widespread in the nation despite his anti-graft campaign launched shortly after he took office in 1993.

...Charismatic leader on corruption charges... [T]he former chief minister of [India's] eastern state of Bihar... [was sent] to jail this week for allegedly siphoning off \$435 million of state funds meant to buy cattle fodder...

Former state premier falls from grace... The political career of... the Western A[US]n high-flier once tipped to become A[US]'s first female P[M], this week nose-dived into the nation's growing pool of scandal. The announcement... further undermines the stature of a federal Parliament already embarrassed by charges against two Government members and the allegations of fraud against [an]independent Senator... Both major parties are suffering. On Monday, a Newpoll in the *Australian* reported that voter perceptions of the P[M]... and the Opposition leader... had plummeted to their lowest levels... [In local news, two] Wellington company directors have appeared in the Wellington District Court on 60... charges of fraud, conspiracy to defraud and money-laundering worth \$1.12 million... Three other men involved in the case faced fraud charges involving almost \$3 million when they appeared in the Christchurch District Court yesterday. Their names and the name of the limited liability company involved were suppressed... They were allowed bail but also had to surrender their passports.

...[Wellington signs up for war on corruption] NZ will outlaw bribery of foreign officials by companies trying to prise open new markets as part of a global bid to stamp out corruption. Despite strong reservations, the agreement was reached in Paris binding NZ to act at home against any companies or executives found to have paid public officials to buy favours abroad. With US estimates of bribery worth \$US80 billion in the past three years alone, and 80% of companies paying bribes to foreign officials winning the deal, the OECD considers its new convention on combating corruption essential for economic development and international commerce and trade.' Incidentally, 'NZers are among the most honest people in the world, according to *Reader's Digest*, which carried out an international "honesty test." The test involved leaving wallets, with \$50 inside, in a number of cities and seeing how many were returned. NZers returned 83% of the wallets, compared with a 70% rate in AUS. The honesty rate in the US averaged 67%, in Europe 58% and Asia 57%. Two cities recorded a perfect honesty score – Oslo and Odense, Denmark. At the other end of the scale, Manila and Milan scored 40%. Wellington was the most honest city in Australasia, with nine out of 10 wallets returned. Auckland and Christchurch were close behind. The test found that women were more honest than men, and under-25s were slightly more honest than those older.'

...[Corruption is alive and well in "honest" NZ] A young Inland Revenue clerk with two small children to support found herself desperately short of money. With access to the department's database, the Manukau woman began selling taxpayers' names, addresses and phone numbers to debt collectors who were trying to track people down. A dept collector, aged 41, yesterday received a nine-month suspended sentence for bribing the clerk. After giving birth to her third child in June, the clerk was jailed for nine months. The judge had told her that her actions struck at the heart of the public service and eroded its integrity – but unfortunately, her case is not an isolated incident. Transparency International's sixth annual Corruption Perceptions Index, made public on Thursday, ranks NZ third equal with Sweden, behind Finland and Denmark, in the least corrupt nation stakes. NZ has remained in the top four places since the survey began and held first place in 1995 and 1996. But despite the country's reputation, cases involving bribery and corruption continue to come before the courts. Officials from the Department of Internal Affairs, Housing NZ, Department of Corrections and the Immigration Service, and even an Auditor-General, have all been found guilty of corruption in recent years. For a nation that has always prided itself on having an honest and dedicated public service, such cases suggest standards are slipping. A Victoria University criminologist, who specialises in white-collar and corporate crime, agrees that corruption, particularly in the public sector, seems to have risen in the past 20 years. But, he said, any increase could not be confirmed as the authorities may simply be detecting more cases. However, changes within the public sector since the 1980s made corruption more likely. Public servants no longer had a job for life. Increased mobility and the perceived level of pay and working conditions also helped influence the incidence of corruption.'

*...[It used to be said that Japan had a first-rate economic system and a third-rate political one. But with the economy no longer a source of pride, public tolerance for the blatant palm-greasing, pork-barrelling and horse-trading in the world of Japanese politics is at breaking point. Corruption is seen as being so widespread that influential voices are invoking the bygone age of samurai knights to inspire a return to honourable public service and an end to "money politics." But not everyone agrees that the samurai are the best models of morality. "Behind the myth, the code of the samurai was actually to squeeze the peasants as much as you could without actually killing them" says the Professor of Economics at Shimonoseki University. "People were pretty samurai-minded in the pre-war years, but the corruption was at least as bad. Anyone who pines for the good old days is either naive or deliberately shifting attention from the need for strong laws, fiercely independent prosecutors, and hefty penalties for corruption." In the latest of an endless stream of political scandals, the Opposition's lawmaker was arrested this month on suspicion of embezzling 23 million yen of Government money by claiming it as the salary of a fictitious policy research secretary. In fact, the money went on kimonos for his mistress and superior-quality hairpieces for himself. Apart from his being a member of the Democratic Party – supposedly the standard-bearers of clean government in contrast to the ruling Liberal Democratic Party – the lawmaker's case was not considered unusual. The political editor of the *Yomiuri Shimbun* explains "Everyone in Nagatcho (Tokyo's political hub) reacted sympathetically, saying everyone was doing the same thing and that the Opposition's lawmaker should simply have done it more wisely."']*

...Eighty years ago... Halifax, Nova Scotia... was the hub of the Dominion of Canada. W[W]I had brought activity and prosperity to the port... The population was swollen with troops... and people who had come to benefit from the plentiful employment... Convoys of ships loaded with war supplies of food... and... munitions... gathered in the Bedford Basin ready for the voyage to Europe with heavily armed warships as escorts... At 7.30am on December 6, the French ship Mont Blanc left her anchorage... She was loaded with 2335 tonnes of wet and dry picric acid, 205 tonnes of TNT, 10 tonnes of gun cotton and 35 tonnes of benzol – a highly explosive mixture. At the same time the Norwegian vessel Imo, in ballast, set off from the basin bound for New York... At the Narrows, after a series of ill-judged manoeuvres, the Imo struck the Mont Blanc on the bow. Although the collision was not severe, fire immediately broke out on board the Mont Blanc. The captain, pilot and crew, expecting the ship to blow up immediately, launched the life-boats and ran into the refuge of a nearby wood on the Dartmouth shore. Their ship burned for 20 minutes, drifting until it rested against Pier 6 in the Richmond district, the busy, industrial north end of Halifax. The spectacle was thrilling, and drew crowds... unaware of the danger. Just before 9.05am, the Mont Blanc exploded. Not one piece of her remained beside the dock... Fragments rained on the surrounding area, crashing through buildings with enough force to embed them where they landed. Churches, houses, schools, factories,

docks and ships were destroyed in the swath of the blast. Children who had stopped on their way to school, workmen lining the windows, families in their homes, sailors in their ships, died instantly. Injuries were frightful, blindness from the splintering glass added to the shock and bewilderment. The harbour was sucked dry by the force of the explosion. Freight cars went flying three kilometres through the air. Debris killed people 7km away. More than 1630 homes were destroyed, many by fires which quickly spread, and 12,000 were damaged. 6000 people were left homeless and hardly a pane of glass in Halifax and nearby Dartmouth was left intact... The sound of the explosion was heard 500km away, three square kilometres were laid waste and to add to the disaster, that night a blizzard hit... More than 150 bodies were never identified, many victims never found. Limbs had to be amputated from 25 survivors, more than 250 people had an eye removed and 37 were left completely blind... The captain, pilot and five Imo crew members were killed. All from the Mont Blanc survived, but for one man who later died from his wounds... The death toll rose to more than 1700 – eight times the number of people who perished in the Chicago fire of 1871 and four times the number of people who died in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire... The Canadian Government appointed a Halifax Relief Commission to handle pensions and various claims. Its work was not finished until 1976, although pensions are still being paid to survivors. The official inquiry opened less than a week after the disaster. The captain and pilot of the Mont Blanc faced charges of manslaughter, but they were later dropped. Canada's Supreme Court found both ships were equally at fault, the Privy Council in London concurred. It was the largest man-made explosion until the atomic age, and its effects were studied by Robert Oppenheimer in calculating the strength of the bombs destined to wipe out Hiroshima and Nagasaki. - 1997

...who the hell makes those missiles when they know what they can do...

...you Masters Of War... that never done nothing but build to destroy you play with my world like it's your little toy... you fasten all the triggers for the others to fire then you sit back and watch while the death count gets higher... while the young people's blood flows out of their bodies and... [into] the mud... I hope that you die... soon I'll follow your casket... and... watch while you're lowered into your death-bed and... stand over your grave till I'm sure that you're dead.

In the autumn of 1806 everybody had begun talking of the war with Napoleon with even greater warmth than the year before. Orders were given to raise recruits, ten men in every thousand for the regular army, and besides this, nine men in every thousand for the militia. Everywhere Bonaparte was anathematized and in Moscow nothing but the coming war was talked of... On the 12th of June the forces of Western Europe crossed the frontier, and the war began, that is, an event took place opposed to human reason and all human nature. Millions of men perpetrated against one another so great a mass of crime – fraud, swindling, robbery, forgery, issue of counterfeit money, plunder, incendiarism, and murder – that the annals of all the criminal courts of the world could not muster such a sum of wickedness in whole centuries, though the men who committed those deeds did not at that time look on them as crimes... This is how the battle began... The thick fog still hung over the low ground... nothing could be seen of what was going on in front. Whether all the enemy's forces were, as we had assumed, ten versts away from us, or whether they were close by in that stretch of fog, no one knew till nine o'clock... Not the French troops only, but Napoleon himself with his staff were not on the further side of the streams, and the villages of Sokolnitz and Schlapanitz, beyond which we had intended to take up our position and begin the attack, but were on the nearer side... The fog lay stretched in an unbroken sea over the plain, but at the village of Schlapanitz, on the high ground where Napoleon... [sat] on a little grey horse... surrounded by his marshals, it was now perfectly clear. There was bright blue sky over his head, and the vast orb of the sun... quivered on the surface of the milky sea of fog... He was looking... silently at the hills, which stood up out of the sea of mist, and the Russian troops moving across them in the distance... His face – still thin in those days – did not stir a single muscle; his gleaming eyes were fixed intently on one spot. His forecasts were turning out correct. Part of the Russian forces were going down into the valley towards the ponds and lakes, while part were evacuating the heights of Pratzen, which he regarded as the key of the position, and had intended to take. He saw through the fog, in the dip between two hills near the village of Pratzen, Russian columns with glistening bayonets moving always in one direction towards the valleys, and vanishing one after another into the mist. From information he had received over night, from the loose order of the march of the Russian columns, from all the evidence, he saw clearly that the allies believed him to be a long way in front of them, that the columns moving close to Pratzen constituted the centre of the Russian army, and that the centre was by this time too weakened to be able to attack him successfully... That day was for him a day of triumph – the anniversary of his coronation. He had slept for a few hours in the early morning, and feeling fresh, and in good health and spirits, in that happy frame of mind in which everything seems possible and everything succeeds, he got on his horse and rode out. He stood without stirring, looking at the heights that rose out of the fog, and his cold face wore that peculiar shade of confident, self-complacent happiness, seen on the face of a... boy in love... When the sun had completely emerged from the fog... he took his glove off his handsome white hand, made a signal with it to his marshals, and gave orders for the battle to begin... On reaching the village of Pratzen... the Russian... commander-in-chief... halted... Kutuzov seemed exhausted and irritable that morning... He greeted the men of the foremost regiment, and gave them the command to march, showing thereby that he meant to lead that column himself... Prince Andrey was behind among the immense number of persons who made up the commander-in-chief's suite. Prince Andrey was in a state of excitement, of irritation, and at the same time of repressed calm, as a man often is on attaining a long-desired moment. He was firmly convinced that to-day would be the day of his Toulon or his bridge of Arcola... An Austrian officer... galloped up to Kutuzov and asked him... [had] the fourth column started? Kutuzov turned away without answering, and his eye fell... on Prince Andrey... 'Go and see... the Emperor [(Tsar)]... and... ask what they are doing!' ...Prince Andrey galloped off to do his bidding... After passing Austrian troops of some sort, Rostov[(Prince Andrey)] noticed that the next part of the forces... had already advanced into action. 'So much the better! I shall see it close,' he thought. He was riding almost along the front line. A body of horsemen came galloping towards him. They were a troop of our Uhlans returning in disorder from the attack. Rostov, as he passed them, could not help noticing one of them covered with blood, but he galloped on. 'That's no affair of mine!' he thought. He had not ridden on many hundred paces further when there came into sight, on his left, across the whole extent of the field, an immense mass of cavalry on black horses, in dazzling white uniforms... These were our horse-guards, charging to attack the French cavalry, who were advancing to meet them... The horse-guard had hardly passed Rostov when he heard their shout, 'Hurrah!' and looking round saw their foremost ranks mixed up with... [the] French. He could see nothing more, for immediately after cannons were firing from somewhere, and everything was lost in the smoke. At the moment when the horse-guards passing him vanished into the smoke, Rostov hesitated whether to gallop after them... 'I have no need to envy them, my share won't be taken from me, and maybe I shall see the Emperor in a minute!' thought Rostov, and he galloped on... Rostov was appalled to hear afterwards that of all that mass of huge, fine men, of all those brilliant, rich young officers and ensigns who had galloped by him on horses worth thousands of roubles, only eighteen were left after the charge... Rostov rode along the line of the reserves for fear of getting in the way of the front line, as he had done in the charge of the horse-guards, and made a wide circuit round the place where he had heard the hottest musket-fire and cannonade... 'Where's the Emperor? Where...?' Rostov kept asking every one he could stop, and from no one could he get an answer. At last... Rostov stopped the horse of a groom or postillion of some personage of consequence, and began to cross-question him. The groom informed Rostov that an hour before the Tsar had been driven at full speed in a carriage along this road, and that the Tsar was dangerously wounded. 'It can't be,' said Rostov... 'I saw him myself,' said the groom with a self-satisfied smirk... Rostov rode on at a walking pace, not knowing to whom and with what object he was going now. The Tsar was wounded, the battle was lost... What had he to hasten for now? What was he to say now to the Tsar... even if... [it wasn't] wounded? 'Go along

this road, your honour, that way you will be killed in a trice!’ a soldier shouted to him... Rostov pondered, and rode off precisely in the direction in which he had been told he would be killed. ‘Now, nothing matters; if the Emperor is wounded, can I try and save myself?’ he thought. He rode into the region where more men had been killed than anywhere... All over the field, like ridges of dung on well-kept plough-land, lay the heaps of dead and wounded... The... shrieks and groans... [of the] wounded... had a painful... sound... Rostov put his horse to a trot to avoid the sight of all those suffering people... He was afraid of losing... his pluck... which he knew would not stand the sight of those luckless wretches. The French had ceased firing at this field that was dotted over with dead and wounded, because there seemed no one living upon it, but seeing an adjutant trotting across it, they turned a cannon upon him and shot off several cannon-balls. The sense of these whizzing, fearful sounds, and the dead bodies all round him melted into a single impression of horror and pity for himself... He thought of his mother’s last letter. ‘What would she be feeling now?’ he thought, ‘if she could see me here... on this field with cannons aimed at me?’ In the village of Gostieradeck there were Russian troops, in some confusion indeed, but... they were out of range of the French cannons, and the sounds of firing seemed far away. Here every one saw clearly that the battle was lost, and all were talking of it. No one to whom Rostov applied could tell him where was the Tsar... Some said that the rumour of the Tsar’s wound was correct, others said not, and explained... the fact that the Ober-Hofmarschal Tolstoy, who had come out with others of the Emperor’s suite to the field of battle, had been seen pale and terrified driving back at full gallop in the Tsar’s carriage. One officer told Rostov that, behind the village to the left, he had seen some one from headquarters, and Rostov rode off in that direction... simply to satisfy his conscience. After going about two miles and passing the last of the Russian troops, Rostov saw... [a horseman] with a white plume in his hat... Rostov instantly recognised his lamented... idolised sovereign. ‘But it can’t be he... in the middle of this empty field,’ thought Rostov. At that moment Alexander turned his head and Rostov saw the beloved features so vividly imprinted on his memory. The Tsar was pale, his cheeks looked sunken, and his eyes hollow, but the charm, the mildness of his face was only the more striking. Rostov felt happy in the certainty that the report of the Emperor’s wound was false. He... knew that he might, that he ought, indeed, to go straight to him and to give him the message he had been commanded to give... But, as a youth in love trembles and turns faint and dares not utter what he has spent nights dreaming of, and looks about in terror, seeking aid or a chance of delay or flight, when the moment he has longed for comes and he stands alone at her side, so Rostov, now when he was attaining what he had longed for beyond everything in the world, did not know how to approach the... Emperor Alexander Pavlovitch, who was spoken of at that time in Moscow by the designation of the ‘angel incarnate.’ ...thousands of reasons why it was unsuitable, unseemly, and impossible came into his mind. ‘What! it’s as though I were glad to take advantage of his being... despondent. It may be disagreeable and painful to him, perhaps, to see an unknown face at such a moment of sadness; besides, what can I say to him now, when at the mere sight of him my heart is throbbing and leaping into my mouth?’ Not one of the innumerable speeches he had addressed to the Tsar in his imagination recurred to his mind now. These speeches for the most part were appropriate to quite other circumstances; they had been uttered for the most part at moments of victory and triumph, and principally on his deathbed when, as he lay dying of his wounds, the Emperor thanked him for his heroic exploits, and he gave expression as he died to the love he had proved in deeds. ‘And then, how am I to ask the Emperor for his instructions to the right flank when it’s four o’clock in the afternoon and the battle is lost? No, certainly I ought not to ride up to him, I ought not to break in on his sorrow. Better die a thousand deaths than that he should give me a glance, a thought of disapproval,’ Rostov decided, and with grief and despair in his heart he rode away, continually looking back at the Tsar... While Rostov was making these reflections and riding mournfully away... Captain Von Toll happened to ride up... and seeing the Emperor, went straight up to him, offered his services, and assisted him... The Tsar, feeling unwell and in need of rest, sat down under an apple-tree, and Von Toll remained standing by his side. Rostov from a distance saw with envy and remorse how Von Toll talked a long while warmly to the Emperor, how the Emperor, apparently weeping... pressed Von Toll’s hand. ‘And it might have been I in his place!’ Rostov thought, and hardly restraining his tears of sympathy for the Tsar, he rode away in utter despair... from feeling that it was his own weakness that was the cause of his regret. He... ought to have gone up to the Emperor... it was a unique chance of showing his devotion... And he had not made use of it... At that period the Russians were so used to victories, that on receiving news of a defeat... all Moscow had at first been thrown into bewilderment... [S]ome people were simply incredulous, while others sought an explanation of so strange an event in exceptional circumstances of some kind. At the English Club, where every one of note, every one who had authentic information and weight gathered together, not a word was said about the war... it was as though all were in a conspiracy of silence... But a little later, like jurymen coming out of their consultation room, the leaders reappeared to give their opinion in the club, and a clear and definite formula was found. Causes had been discovered to account for the fact... that the Russians had been beaten... These causes were: the treachery of the Austrians; the defective commissariat... the incapacity of Kutuzov; and (this was murmured in subdued tones) the youth and inexperience of the Emperor, who had put faith in men of no character and ability... But what should happen at that... moment but the rising against us of a third enemy, which is the “holy armament” fiercely crying out for bread, meat, biscuits, hay, and I don’t know what else! ...The inhabitants are totally ruined, the hospitals are overflowing with sick, and famine is everywhere... The storehouses are empty, the roads impassable... The Emperor proposes to give authority to all the commanders of divisions to shoot marauders, but I greatly fear this will oblige one half of the army to shoot the other... [R]egiments have turned themselves into free companies, and are overrunning the country with fire and sword... [With] what object... was the battle of Borodino fought? There was not the slightest sense in it, either for the French or for the Russians. The immediate result of it was, and was bound to be, for the Russians, that we were brought nearer to the destruction of Moscow (the very thing we dreaded above everything in the world); and for the French, that they were brought nearer to the destruction of their army (which they, too, dreaded above everything in the world). That result was at the time perfectly obvious, and yet Napoleon offered battle, and Kutuzov accepted it... The battle of Borodino was not fought on a carefully picked and fortified position... The fact remains that there were stronger positions on the road the Russian army had passed along, and... the plain of Borodino... is in no respect a more suitable position than any other spot in the Russian empire to which one might point at hazard on the map... [T]he Russians fought... in conditions in which it was... senseless to fight for ten hours and gain a drawn battle... [A]pparently Kutuzov despised both knowledge and intellect, and knew of something else that would settle things – something different, quite apart from intellect and knowledge... This change of position... made Pierre more than ever doubtful of his capacity to comprehend military matters. As he heard Bennigsen and the other generals criticising the position of the troops... Pierre fully grasped and shared their views. But that was why he could not imagine how the man who had placed them there could have made so gross and obvious a blunder. Pierre did not know that the troops had not been placed there to defend their position, as Bennigson supposed, but had been stationed in that concealed spot to ambush, in order unobserved to deal a sudden blow at the enemy unawares. Bennigson, ignorant of this project, moved the troops into a prominent position without saying anything about this change to the commander-in-chief... And so the battle of Borodino was fought... in order to cover the blunders of our commanders... not... as... it is described by our historians, whose accounts, consequently, diminish the credit due to the Russian army and the Russian people... In warfare the force of armies is the product of the mass multiplied by something else, an unknown x ... To define and express the significance of this unknown factor... is the problem... Military science, seeing in history an immense number of examples in which the mass of an army does not correspond with its force, and in which small numbers conquer larger ones, vaguely recognise the existence of this unknown factor, and try to find it sometimes in some geometrical disposition of the troops, sometimes in the superiority of weapons, and most often in the genius of the leaders. But none of those factors yield results that agree with the historical facts... X is the spirit of the army, the greater or less desire to fight and to face dangers on the part of all the men composing the army, which is quite apart from the question whether they are fighting under leaders of genius or not, with cudgels or with guns that fire thirty times a minute. The men who have the greater desire to fight always put themselves, too, in the more advantageous position for fighting... The French, on

their retreat in 1812, though they should, by the laws of tactics, have defended themselves in detached groups, huddled together in a crowd, because the spirit of the men had sunk so low that it was only their number that kept them up. The Russians should, on the contrary, by the laws of tactics, have attacked them in a mass, but in fact attacked in scattered companies, because the spirit of the men ran so high that individual men killed the French without orders, and needed no compulsion to face hardships and dangers... From the time of the burning of Smolensk a war began which did not follow the old traditions of warfare. The burning of... Moscow... the retreat after every battle... the capture of marauders, the seizing of transports... was a departure from ...regular warfare... Napoleon was aware of it, and... he never ceased complaining to Kutuzov and to the Emperor Alexander that the war was being conducted contrary to all the rules of war. (As though any rules existed for the slaughter of men!) - War & Peace

First you'll need a declaration of war... that way everything you do will be nice and legal.

war, a legal condition which equally permits two or more hostile groups to carry on a conflict by armed force. It is that condition which exists when the social and political equilibrium known as "peace" is upset and the resolution of outstanding issues is accomplished by force and violence, as contrasted to negotiation.

However, although warfare is somehow deemed legal while in progress, afterwards – at least since WWII – leaders (normally those of the losing side) have sometimes found themselves charged for *war crimes* or *crimes against humanity*!

One night in Bosnia, 7000 people disappeared off the face of the Earth from a 'safe haven.'

...In the makeshift morgue at Kalesija, about 23km east of Tuzla, they have examined the remains of 154 bodies unearthed six weeks ago from one grave alone, near Cerska in Serb-held eastern Bosnia. That grave, and others still to be dug up, likely hold the bodies of many of the up to 7000 Muslim men who disappeared after Bosnian Serbs overran Srebrenica in July 1995. Although all sides in the war are accused of mass killings, the sheer numbers of the alleged Srebrenica massacres dwarf similar atrocities in comparison. Bosnian Serbs deny the testimony of survivors and physical evidence of massacres, saying most victims died in battle. [The doctor] whose team has just finished the autopsies for the U[N] war crimes tribunal, disagrees. "There is no doubt that these people were executed," he said of the Cerska victims. [The doctor] is on loan from the Boston-based Physicians for Human Rights, where he heads the international forensic programme. The computer-generated autopsy reports reveal what he calls a "monotonous pattern" to the deaths: "multiple high-velocity GSW [Gunshot wounds] of torso and extremities," one reads... Bone fractures, bullet casings and other evidence show an average of 10 shots per person, fired at relatively close range... "That indicates these people were standing there lined up and someone was spraying them with machine gun fire," [the doctor] said. The tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands[– an ironic place to hold the tribunal considering how 'Dutch UN soldiers had looked on as people were taken away from the safe haven' (and one of their own 'vehicles is accused of having driven over 13 Muslims') –] is expected to use the evidence against suspected war criminals, including the Bosnian Serb's political leader...

[The man] has been vilified by the West as a criminal and warmonger, but to his people in the nationalist stronghold of Pale outside Sarajevo he is a saviour and brilliant politician akin to a God. "The people love him more than God,"... [one supporter] said when asked to sum up his feelings for [the man]... who in July was forced by heavy U[S] pressure to step down as "president" of the Bosnian Serb entity and head of the Serb Democratic Party because of war crimes charges pending against him. "There is no one in the world, including... the Nato-led peace Implementation Force [(IFOR)] who can arrest him... They would have to kill all of us before they can arrest him[," the supporter added]... When asked to explain their esteem for a man said to be responsible for some of the worst atrocities in post-war Europe, supporters dismiss the charges as a pure fabrication by the West – or more specifically the U[S]... "What about the crimes the Americans committed in Vietnam?"... said... a former adviser to the [former Bosnian Serb President]... "...He is a brilliant man and... has an extremely high IQ." [However, that wasn't enough to prevent him from being 'cheated out of \$US6 million by the Russian mafia when a 1995 bid to buy a nuclear bomb left him empty-handed']

...the new] Bosnian Serb President... was to lead a swearing-in ceremony for her new military commander and his deputy yesterday, completing a manoeuvre to oust [an] indicted war criminal... as Army chief. The Bosnian Serb news agency SRNA... statement appeared to confirm weeks of speculation in the Belgrade media that a purge of the Serb military's top brass had taken place. One independent weekly newspaper said as many as 80... top officers and advisers would be pensioned off, including... heads of the military intelligence services. International mediators in Sarajevo were cautiously pleased. One U[S] embassy official said the move was "a good first step that should have been taken a long time ago."

...The Bosnian Serb Army has been thrown into crisis after [an] indicted war crimes suspect... refused orders to quit as Army commander, sparking a showdown with his political masters... 80 other officers were sacked by the newly elected Bosnian Serb President... at the weekend, and a new military leadership has been sworn in, although it remained unclear who is actually commanding the Serb forces. In a statement [aired] by the Yugoslav news agency Beta, about 100 officers pledged their "entire loyalty" to [the General. The new President's move against the] General... heralded a long-anticipated clean-out of chiefs-of-staff designed to placate the international community just a few days before a major summit in Paris to review the Dayton peace process. Her predecessor... the indicted Serb leader forced to step down earlier this year, had himself tried to remove [the] General... in 1995, only to be forced to reinstall the general held most responsible for the atrocities in the war.

...the... General... fashioned the Bosnia Serb Army (BSA) in his own image. In the years when the fighting in Bosnia ran in the BSA's favour, it was a model of ruthlessness, daring and brutality in the Serb warrior tradition. Even in decline, it was capable of acts of breathtaking audacity such as the blitz on Srebrenica or the use of hostage U[N] peacekeepers as human shields against Nato air attack. Everything the BSA did in battle bore the imprint of its 52-year-old creator, commander and arch-strategist. It earned him a sobriquet as the "Butcher of Bosnia" and two U[N] indictments for war crimes in the process. The son of a... W[II] partisan fighter killed in 1945, [the] General... was a star officer in the old communist Yugoslav Federal Army... when ex-Yugoslavia's disintegration began in 1991. He won his first media fame in Knin in southern Croatia where his intervention ensured the success of a local Serb rebellion against Croatian rule. When the Bosnian Serbs rose in 1992 against Bosnia's Muslim-led secession, [the] General... was picked to command the new Bosnian Serb Army which swiftly overran 70[%] of the country. The strategy [the] General... employed formed the basis of the indictments laid against him... The key element was ethnic cleansing to drive Bosnian Muslims and Croats from their homes in territory claimed for the embryonic Bosnian Serb Republic. The BSA used its tank and artillery superiority to lay sieges against Muslim towns in east and central Bosnia and the capital Sarajevo that became a byword for civilian slaughter not seen in Europe for half a century. The 22,000 troops of the U[N] Protection Force (Unprofor), crippled by political and diplomatic constraints, stood by more or less helplessly as [the General]'s army carved up Bosnia. The strategy culminated in the horror of Srebrenica, a U[N] safe area for Muslims in east Bosnia which the BSA captured... under [the General]'s personal command. Some 8000 Muslim men disappeared in BSA custody after surrendering, many believed to have been executed in a four-day bloodbath by firing squads and bulldozed into mass graves. It was almost [the General]'s last fling in a war with which his political backers in Serbia as well as the international community had lost patience. The BSA was crumbling, suffering defeats from Muslim and Croat forces elsewhere in Bosnia and its ability to fight hit by the withdrawal of equipment and fuel supplies from Serbia. [The] General... a political player in his own right and notoriously impatient of civilian authority, became an albatross for the

Bosnian Serb leadership which tried unsuccessfully to sack him in 1995. He remains a hero for ordinary Bosnian Serbs... As a military commander, he fought on the ground alongside his men... in contrast with the staff college bureaucrats who commanded U[N] and Nato forces.

...The commander of the Nato-led ground forces in Bosnia yesterday inspected a key Bosnian Serb military site, effectively averting a potential military conflict. In a highly public demonstration of Nato's determination to carry out its military rights under the Dayton peace accord, [the] Lieutenant-General... flew by helicopter to the site at Han Pijesak for the inspection. "We are here to robustly enforce the military annexe of Dayton... and if there is a requirement to use force to do that, we will do so," said... [the commander. In related news, US] arms shipped to the former Yugoslavia will be handed over to Bosnia's Muslim-Croat Federation only after a Bosnian official seen as close to Iran has resigned... The weaponry that arrived in Ploce on board a chartered ship comprised the bulk of a \$US100 million shipment for the Federation under a U[S]... programme designed to make the Muslims and Croats a match for the Bosnian Serbs... The equipment includes 45 M-60 battle tanks, 80 M-11 armoured personnel carriers, 15 UH-1H helicopters, 840 light antitank weapons, 45,000 M-16 rifles and ammunition. The programme also includes instruction for Federation Army troops. - 1996

...commandos are training to capture Bosnian war criminals, possibly as early as a few months from now, according to news reports citing military sources in Washington... Meanwhile Nato troops have begun a crackdown on Bosnia's paramilitary special police forces, inspecting arsenals and ordering containment of weapons larger than sidearms.

...*Allies crack whip over war criminals' round-up...* A sudden swoop on Bosnian war crimes suspects by... British special forces... the first Nato operation against indicted war criminals since a peace treaty was signed in 1995... has shocked nationalist Serb leaders and signalled a tougher policy by Nato... [A] notorious Bosnian Serb police chief, was killed when he opened fire on soldiers trying to arrest him, and a]... hospital director, was captured at work and flown to The Hague to face trial before the U[N] war crimes tribunal. Both... were wanted in connection with a genocidal campaign to deport Muslims and Croats and were charged under sealed indictments, a new tool employed by the tribunal... The Nato action backed up tough rhetoric from the U[S] and European allies who are increasingly frustrated with the slow-moving peace process in Bosnia... [Previous] policy had ruled out "manhunts" and required soldiers to arrest a suspect only if they encountered them during their regular duties... ['Serb leaders are alleged to have ordered their troops to rape and pillage.' There are] 67 suspects on the tribunal's published list of indictees... The... ex-President... and [the] retired Army commander might be next... [to be targeted. However, while the ex-President] keeps a low profile... in the Yugoslav capital, Belgrade, where his family lives in an affluent suburb, [the ex-commander]... is guarded by heavily armed police and continues to wield power behind the scenes... The British operation came amid a tense power struggle among Serb leaders...

Sending troops to watch over a society naturally gives us proprietary interest in that community's development. So it is that N[Z]'s contribution to countering the Balkan upheaval encourages a close watch on how Bosnian Serbs sort out their leadership tensions. After all, we might have to go back... [W]e see a power struggle between [the ex-President and the current one], upon whom the western states appear to be depending to isolate the indicted war criminal. [However, assuming] any enemy of [the ex-President] is automatically a western ally has all the ingredients of a flawed strategy. Nato thinking in other areas can also attract a wry shake of the head. For instance, [extra]... American F-16 aircraft were sent from Germany to Italy for flights over Bosnia... to ensure a peaceful campaign before municipal elections during the coming weekend... Just what the aircraft were supposed to do if for any reason voters' passage was blocked is hard to imagine. However... American defence officials suggested that "sonic booms" from fast jets could intimidate hardliners attempting to disturb voting. There are many who would suggest that if the fast jets and their intimidating "sonic booms" had been let loose over Croatia and Bosnia in 1991, it is highly likely that U[N] officials would not now be digging bodies out of a pit near Bihac, a pit that locals call "Bezdan" (the abyss).

...[around 100 bodies of Muslim civilians killed early in the 1992-1995 Bosnian war have so far been exhumed from a mass grave near the eastern town of Zvornik, which is part of Bosnia's Serb Republic. Bosnian television said yesterday that it was one of the biggest mass graves found in the country following the 43-month war that killed more than 200,000 people.' Meanwhile, t]he... Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina[which is]... separated by a demilitarised line... [from] the Serbian Republic... hinted yesterday that [it] expects the Nato-controlled peacekeeping forces to stop further arrests of indicted war criminals in the wake of a series of protests by Bosnian Serbs and attacks on the multilateral force... Several members of... [the] 60,000-strong IFOR, headed by three powers – the U[S], Britain and France – ...were slightly injured and a number of vehicles damaged in a series of Serb attacks following the July 10 arrest of a Serb war crimes suspect... "I think that was a great lesson for them... Those who do not draw the proper conclusions will be making a catastrophic mistake,"... the Serb representative of Bosnia's three-member presidency, told Kyodo News.

...Bosnian Serbs wanted for war crimes live openly in the same town where the alleged crimes occurred while Nato soldiers appear unwilling to arrest them, CBS News said yesterday... On the show... *Public Eye*... a Serbian soldier... who is wanted for rape... told a hidden camera: "...for 5000 deutsche marks (\$4470) I will tell everything. How I slit throats, killed them and dug their eyes out... and you can tape me." ...Asked on tape if he was afraid of Nato soldiers... shown at a restaurant next door... [he] replied: "No, I have this," and displayed two hand grenades on his right hip and a pistol on his left... He pointed to men milling around the cafe. "All these people are completely armed. I have 20 bodyguards to protect me. We have a lot of weapons,"... The CBS journalists never offered the money... and he did not describe his alleged crimes... [A] member of International Crisis Group, a human rights organisation in Bosnia, told CBS if Nato troops went after war criminals, there would be casualties but added: "War would resume in this country if these war criminals continue in freedom." ...Meanwhile the first visit to Bosnia's war-battered capital of Sarajevo by the U[S] President... is proving to be an unprecedented security headache for foreign troops and local police who must try to secure a country without effective borders... The discovery of a powerful bomb near a Sarajevo church and the roundup of suspected terrorists just days before the 12-hour visit illustrate the dangers facing the President and his guards.

...More than 800,000 letters and packages have piled up in Sarajevo in the last 18 months because Serbs, fearing letter bombs, refuse to take them. The Bosnian Serb post office doesn't have the necessary equipment to examine letters and packages... [In related news, t]he Nato-led force in Bosnia has snatched two Bosnian Croat war crimes suspects and warned that more arrests will follow if suspects do not surrender... A... source said the... Dutch... navy commandos used had been trained and brought in specifically for the task, and had left once it was over.

...NINE Bosnian Croats... [indicted] on war crimes charges will surrender voluntarily... if the UN war crimes tribunal can guarantee them a fair and quick trial.

...The group includes [the] Bosnian Croat political leader... [who is] one of the tribunal's most wanted men... The tribunal prosecutors' indictment against... [him] said the crimes committed under [his] direction were so widespread and systematic that almost the entire Muslim population of the Lasva Valley was killed or driven away... Six of the suspects... are accused of participating in a gruesome massacre at the village of Ahmici. The indictment said... unarmed Muslim civilians, including women and children, were systematically shot. More than 100 people died. Some accounts at the time spoke of families... being burned alive in their homes... The surrender of the... Bosnian Croats has doubled the number of indicted war crimes suspects in the tribunal's custody to 20...

Three Bosnian Croats released by a... war crimes tribunal... said they were looking into ways of suing the U[N] for damages... "They told us we were free. They didn't even apologise, they just said the prosecutor was dropping charges against us for lack of evidence," [one of the men] said... The UN war crimes tribunal... set up in 1993... for former Yugoslavia... raised indictments against the three men in 1995... Croatian officials said the release would contribute to the tribunal's credibility as it showed it was prepared to give up prosecution when it had no real arguments...

Charges have been publicly pressed against 18 Bosnian Croats, 57 Serbs and three Muslims... Over 50... are still at large, among them the two most wanted... Two indictees have been convicted and sentenced [to date]...

A] US envoy... won a promise yesterday that... the former Bosnian Serb leader... [and] indicted war criminal... would finally disappear from Bosnian politics... Sources close to the negotiations said Washington accepted the deal “in order to avoid the bloodshed” many fear would result if Nato-led troops moved to arrest [the former leader], who is guarded by hundreds of men. One senior source... gave no deadline... period to remove him... but noted it “would not be forever.” ...the US remained firm in its position that [the former leader] should present himself to the tribunal in the Hague for trial... [T]he Yugoslav... economy cannot continue without a life-saving infusion of fresh capital for much longer in order to feed... 11 million people, of whom already one third are poor and another 600,000 starving. - 1997

[The UN] Secretary-General... has strongly condemned atrocities committed by Serbian forces in Kosovo... [He] is deeply disturbed by the latest reports of an intensifying campaign against the unarmed, civilian population... The province has a 90% ethnic Albanian majority... [He] says Serbian military and paramilitary forces must not be allowed to repeat the campaign of ethnic cleansing and indiscriminate attacks on civilians that characterised the war in Bosnia.

...Scores of ethnic Albanian villagers slept in the open in the Kosovo hills for a third night as Serbian police continued their onslaught against alleged... terrorists... of the separatist Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)... A leader of the local branch of the ethnic Albanian LDK party said: “We have... never had any guns and now the Serbs have come to kill us.” A pro-Government Belgrade daily said dozens of Albanian guerrillas had been killed in the whole operation, which began last weekend. It had earlier put the death toll at 70. According to the police the dead included... the... KLA leader... The KLA has emerged during the past two years... against a background of growing impatience with the lack of progress made by peaceful activism to demand independence for Kosovo province, which had its autonomous status removed by Belgrade in 1989... Without a lasting solution to the long-running Kosovo issue, the outlook looks as bleak as ever... [M]any locals believe... the latest government crackdown... can only help the separatist movement. “These children will grow up and it’s up to them to avenge their fathers and brothers,” said one refugee from the fighting. “So who is to say who is KLA and who is not? It is the bitterness that matters.” ...[Incidentally, a] military appeals court yesterday upheld the conviction of an ex-SS captain for war crimes in Italy and sentenced him to life imprisonment. But prosecutors said [the ex-SS captain, now] aged 84, would not have to go to jail. Instead, the [man who has been] convicted of helping to carry out the massacre of 335 civilians in German-occupied Rome in 1944, will stay under house arrest because of frail health... [He] admitted to shooting two victims... and... said he helped round up the victims because refusing orders – which the defence said came from... Adolf Hitler – would have meant death for [himself. He] has served time in detention since his 1994 extradition from Argentina, where he had lived for decades in an Andean resort town.

...A former KGB head has told how Hitler’s bones were secretly burnt in a night-time operation a quarter of a century after the Nazi dictator died... “Then the ashes were dumped in the city sewerage system through a manhole.” The remains had lain until then beneath concrete on the grounds of a Soviet military camp... 110km west of Berlin, their location known only to a small circle of Soviet leaders. They had been transported there in 1946, less than a year after their discovery by a Soviet military advance party in the yard of Hitler’s bunker, buried in a shallow grave in a large bomb crater... A report was sent immediately to Stalin, who gave orders to determine beyond doubt that Hitler’s corpse was among those recovered... But in 1970, when the Russians thought they would have to hand over the military camp to the East Germans... Yuri Andropov, then chairman of the KGB, later general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party... gave the order to dig up the remains and destroy them for fear that they would one day be discovered and the site turned into a shrine to Hitler. The... revelation... ends half a century of speculation and conspiracy theories that Hitler took advantage of the chaos at the end of... W[W]II to escape to Argentina... The skull is still in the hands of the FSB, the KGB’s successor organisation, and is believed to be held in an archive on the outskirts of Moscow. According to the latest reports, it is stored in a small cardboard box originally used for ballpoint pen refills... [In related news, a] top secret Death Squad was set up after W[W]II to locate and execute Nazi war criminals... according to a member of the special unit who claims he personally executed 16 Germans... The mission was intended to punish those war criminals who were not prominent enough to face justice at Nuremberg and other set-piece trials conducted by the allies at the end of the war. In the euphoria after VE Day, the British government was reluctant to publicly rake over some of the goriest episodes of the war. Disclosure of the hunter-killer units would have undermined the public display of legitimacy ensured by the war trials. The capture of German military records in Strasbourg, however, made it possible to wreak secret revenge on men who might otherwise have vanished... The... [squad member], who wishes to keep secret his address in North America, maintains that he has no regret about his role as an assassin. “I am proud of what I did,”... [Now aged 73, he] described how he was recruited in May, 1945, to avenge the deaths of Special Operations Executive... spies in concentration camps and SAS troops illegally shot by the SS as saboteurs... He said the unit’s preferred method was to collect the Nazis from allied prison camps, on the pretext that they were required to give evidence at Nuremberg[(‘the first time military leaders were tried for crimes against humanity’)]. He and his fellow soldiers would check their identities and confront them with a file listing their atrocities before executing them. “All the SS were tattooed with their numbers. Some used battery acid to try to burn it off and conceal themselves. If you saw a big scar, you knew who they were,” he said... [The squad] killed their targets using German guns... to make it appear as if... the Nazis had committed suicide. Alternatively[, the squad]... would claim they had been shot while trying to escape... The most notorious victim of the SAS unit was... a Hitler Youth leader who was suspected of... [castrating] two British secret agents... [and leaving] them to bleed to death hanging from telegraph poles.

...a 78-year-old... who [moved] to Britain from Belarus in 1946 and worked as a railway ticket collector[, has received]... a double life sentence... [for] murdering Jews... during [WWII]... in Britain’s first war crimes trial... The murder charges arose from his participation... as a policeman in... a “search and kill” operation to round up survivors of a 1942 massacre of 3000 Jews in his home town, Domachevo... During the year-long trial, the... defence argued that its [client] had been forced to volunteer for the Domachevo police force, organised by Nazi Germany, to avoid forced labour... It took the jury two days to reach their verdict... [A Jewish organisation] praised the conviction but criticised the slow pace of justice against Nazi war criminals living in Britain.

Nearly three-quarters of... French people believe the forthcoming trial of [an] ex-cabinet minister... for wartime crimes against humanity is justified, although the events took place more than half a century ago... [The defendant], who served as the secretary-general of the Bordeaux region between 1942 and 1944... and... after the war [was decorated] as a hero of the French Resistance... [then] became Paris police chief under President Charles de Gaulle and later served as budget minister... is accused of sending 1560 French Jews to their deaths... [The 87-year-old] is the first Vichy official to face such charges and will almost certainly be the last... It wasn’t until 1981 – at the peak of his career – that his Vichy past was revealed... Why have the facts remained obscured for so long? And why didn’t the French go through the same kind of painful self-examination that Germany underwent after the war? The answer lies partly in the fact that at the time anti-Semitism was rife throughout Europe... [A] journalist whose documentary on the Vichy regime, *The Right To Know*, recently aired in France... was shocked by what [was learnt] during the team’s investigation. “What is unbelievable is that after the war, in France anti-Semitism simply wasn’t judged as a crime,”... France’s most revered hero, Charles de Gaulle, is mostly to blame for the amnesia over what the French call *les années noires* (the black years). Faced with a demoralised people and the threat of a national crisis, de Gaulle propagated the myth that France was a nation of heroic Resistance fighters...

The trial over crimes against humanity of [a] former French... official, whose... career culminated when he was budget minister from 1978-81... was to [begin] overnight – more than half a century after... [WWII.] and 16 years after proceedings were first opened against him. [He] is accused of ordering the arrests of more than 1500 Jews by Bordeaux police between 1942 and 1944 to be handed over to the occupying Germans. Nearly all were gassed at Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland including more than 200 children... Now aged 87... he says he was obeying orders and seeking to limit damages during his tenure as secretary-general of the local prefecture during the war... [He] has denounced the trial as a farce... [His] political career was brought to an abrupt halt... after a newspaper published documents unveiling his hitherto-unknown role in deporting Jews... [The trial] has fed new soul-searching about the role of French officialdom during... [WWII. A] number of other officials in the Vichy regime... pursued... successful [careers] after the war thanks to contacts... made among post-war leaders ignorant of [their] exact wartime activities... 76,000 [French] Jews were handed over to the Nazis. About 2000 survived...

[The accused] pro-Nazi... his defence shaken by his own testimony, faces a crucial phase of his... three-month trial... this week when the court examines the fate of child Holocaust victims... [He] has tried to convince the court he used his post as a senior bureaucrat... from 1942 to 1944 to save Jews from being deported to Auschwitz. But the prosecution says the local Service for Jewish Questions under his control rounded up children for deportation without orders from the Germans, who at first excluded children under 16 from arrests... [Last week he] admitted he knew about the concentration camps in June 1942 and saw his claim to have saved one Jewish girl disproven... The trial, originally due to end this week, has been extended until March [1998 because the suspect's] frequent illnesses have held up the proceedings. - 1997

Ironically, while Nazis and their collaborators were convicted – or hunted and exterminated – for the gassing of Jews and other war crimes, nobody faced charges over, for example, the bombing of Dresden!

...the difficulty... is... of persuading people that various acts are evil... In... W[WWII], great Allied statesmen saw little wrong with the firestorm in Dresden, a city of not the slightest military value and crammed with women and children. The scientists developing the atomic bomb contemplated poisoning half a million Germans with strontium... if the bomb itself couldn't be produced. ('There is no better evidence anywhere in the record of the increasing bloody-mindedness of... W[WWII] than that... Robert Oppenheimer, a man who professed at various times in his life to be dedicated to *Ahimsa* ("the Sanscrit word that means doing no harm or hurt"...), could write with enthusiasm of preparations for the mass poisoning of as many as five hundred thousand human beings'...)... I don't want to suggest that deliberate acts of producing firestorms in German cities, or even the atomic bombings of Japan, were very obviously and very purely wicked. The argument that the war was thereby shortened, and millions of lives saved, cannot be rejected out of hand.

In 1936 a British feature film, *Things To Come*, imagines what the next war will be like. It shows what millions fear – a war different from any before, with fleets of bombers attacking civilians from the air. Only one year later the prediction was coming true. In the war in China, Japanese planes bombed Shanghai, and in Europe thousands of civilians are bombed in the Spanish Civil War. Across the world the nature of war has changed... From now on civilians will be targets... In Northern Europe the first civilians to experience the nightmare of fast-moving modern war were in the towns that stood in the way of the German blitzkrieg. In Poland... then in the Low Countries and France, hundreds of thousands of refugees took to the roads... What the refugees came to fear most were attacks from the air even as they fled... Germans on the home front believed they were safe and were confident of ultimate victory... The Germans had started preparing much earlier than their enemy. British war production had to catch up fast. Factories were converted to turn out arms... A whole new workforce was mobilised... Soon all unmarried women between 20 and 30 were called up, many of them to do technical jobs... In conscripting women Britain went further than ever before to meet the demands of war... People working in factories found that they themselves became targets... Before America itself joined the war, President Roosevelt had taken the moral high ground and appealed to both sides not to bomb civilians, but a steady escalation began. When German planes attacked London in September, 1940, they tried to hit the docks and stations, but mostly they hit the streets and homes surrounding them... "We will mete out to the Germans the measure and more than the measure they have meted out to us," declared a defiant Winston Churchill... Because military targets were hard to hit, the British switched to area bombing. The RAF would try to stop German industry by de-housing its workers. In July, 1943, they mounted their heaviest raids so far. "...More bombs have dropped on Hamburg in the space of a few hours than on the whole of Greater London during the blitz." The British bombing created a firestorm with winds of a 120 miles an hour... Temperatures reached a 1000 degrees centigrade. 8 sq miles were ablaze... The number of civilians killed in Hamburg that week was 42,000 – more than all the British deaths in the whole of the blitz... 2/3rds of [Hamburg's remaining] residents left the city... "We walked for 10km through rubble, debris and a sea of flames... We looked back at Hamburg and everything was black. The sky was totally black. The sun couldn't shine through, and even 25km away soot was raining down." ...[back in February, Germany's propaganda chief had challenged:] "Do you want total war? Do you want war more total and more radical than you could ever have imagined?" "What total war really meant then Goebbels didn't tell us, but we felt really clearly what he meant in... Hamburg. That was total war – ...it just didn't happen as Goebbels had imagined." ...Total war was waged most harshly in the Soviet Union. In 1941 the Soviet people were invaded by German forces who had orders to kill or enslave them and take over the land. Soviet prisoners were treated as sub-humans. Everywhere the Germans advanced, they rounded up civilians and split up families. Women and children were sent away to fend for themselves. The [Germans] picked out some [civilians] to be deported as slave labourers back in Germany. Many would never return... The Soviet people who were left behind were engulfed in a war that took more civilian lives than in any other country. They were often caught between the German occupation forces and the resistance waged by Soviet partisans[, and were]... in fear of both sides... The Germans took ruthless reprisals after partisan activity. Soldiers were told the normal rules of war were not to be followed... "...they would take people to a shed and burn them there." ...Chinese civilians received much the same treatment from the Japanese[, who]... wanted living space and territory, and also treated their enemy as inferiors whose lives were cheap... Japan's troops were given orders to make the land uninhabitable. The Imperial Army's slogan was the '3 alls.' "Burn all, steal all, kill all... I rounded up the women and children in the villages, shut them into buildings, piled up firewood and burned them. I did many terrible things like that." ...When the Japanese attacked the U[S] at Pearl Harbor in 1941, the war had been widened... President Roosevelt threw the weight of American industry into war production... America saw itself as the arsenal of democracy, supplying both itself and its allies too... The pressure of war forced new and quicker methods. Ships were built in record time... [O]ne... San Francisco yard... broke all records by showing it could launch a ship in only 4 1/2 days after laying the keel... The end of the war was in sight in Europe and the final blows were to be delivered against Japan from a new long-range bomber – the B29 being mass produced by American workers. "We the people built it, we conceived it, financed it and gave it wings. Here the bomb bays will hold the greatest weight of death ever lifted into the skies..." The Japanese in turn were being asked to do more by their own government. Children were taken out of school and sent to the arms factories to work full-time, so desperate was the labour shortage... "Our teachers told us that in Japan we have an emperor who is descended from the gods – so, whatever happens, in the end a divine wind will blow and win the war for us..." ...By 1945 the Americans had island bases close enough for the B29s to take off for Japan. They attacked all major cities... Earlier concerns in the West about the morality of bombing civilians were long forgotten. After five years all the constraints had gone. In one night the Americans dropped 1/2 million incendiary bombs to set Tokyo alight... There was no way of stopping the fires... The B29s... had achieved their purpose. 334 planes killed 120,000 people in a few hours, more than any other single action of

the war. Though they knew they could never win, the Japanese leaders told their people to fight on... Five months later the technology of total war reached its zenith. It took only one plane and one bomb to devastate [‘67% of’] Hiroshima, and later [‘40% of’] Nagasaki, in just a few seconds. Japan’s leaders surrendered... Altogether the war had cost 55 million lives – 6 times as many as... W[WI]. What was new was not just the numbers but who they were... For the first time far more civilians had lost their lives than soldiers in uniform[, including]... up to 13 million civilians in China[, and] up to 14 million Soviet civilians. There were... victims of starvation, atrocities and bombing.

atomic bomb a bomb whose destructive power comes from the rapid release of nuclear energy by fission of heavy atomic nuclei, with damaging effects caused by heat, blast, and radioactivity... The first atomic bomb to be used in war was exploded by the USA 300m above Hiroshima...

The people who ordered the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were predominantly regarded as heroes – though they could’ve arranged for a display of their new weapon’s power that didn’t involve inhabited cities! Nagasaki – ‘the first Japanese city to have commercial intercourse with the West, and the site of the largest Christian church in the Orient (26 Christian martyrs had been crucified in the city during 1597) which was completed in 1941 but was destroyed during the war’ – had an ‘enormous torpedo factory’, but if the US had exploded an atomic bomb on Mt Fuji or 300m above a Japanese naval fleet, ‘military base or installation’ (e.g., a small occupied island), surely the effect would have been just as dramatic while eliminating the murder and suffering of thousands of innocent children? However, USers weren’t the only group of people to escape punishment for war atrocities.

A prominent Jewish group has accused the U[S] of giving amnesty to Japanese doctors and scientists who carried out atrocities during... [WWII]. “The U[S]... now admits in writing that they shielded these people who had carried out horrific atrocities from prosecution by the Soviets and handed them tickets to re-enter Japanese society at a very high level.” ...a letter written to... [the] associate dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre... by... [the] director of the Justice Department’s office of special investigations... confirmed that... Lieutenant General Shiro Iishi, commander of the infamous Unit 731 of the Japanese Imperial Army, and his men had received total amnesty following the fall of Japan in 1945... [Unit 731 carried out] “field tests” in which hundreds of thousands of civilians in China and eastern Russia were exposed to and died from deadly germs... In addition, [the associate dean] said, prisoners of war from N[Z, AUS], Europe and possibly the U[S] were subjects of... “diabolical and horrendous medical experiments” which sometimes ended in their undergoing vivisection. Shortly before Japan surrendered... the order went out to kill all prisoners in the “death camps” run by Iishi, who died of cancer in 1959. [The associate dean] called on the US Government to rescind the amnesty order protecting the remaining members of Unit 731 and other Japanese who had engaged in medical experiments or chemical or biological warfare. [The associate dean] also urged the US Government to add the names of suspected Japanese war criminals to the Immigration Department’s “watchlist,” which denies entry into the U[S] for war crimes suspects.

JAPAN’S germ warfare Unit 731 conducted some of the most horrifying “live” experiments of W[W]II... Headquartered in the northeastern China puppet state of Manchuria, the unit conducted experiments on about 3000 Chinese, Korean, Russian and Mongolian prisoners. None survived... After the war, unit commander General Shiro Ishida won immunity from war crimes trials from US authorities in exchange for the file on experiments. These show how prisoners were injected with various germs, such as anthrax, and graphically records the spread of the disease through the body, often by dismembering the prisoners while they were still alive. Other prisoners were exposed to sub-zero temperatures for days, and then their bodies were dismembered to see how the various organs had been affected. Others were injected with cholera and observed by attendants, who provided no help, for four days until they died. The unit was most successful in spreading bubonic plague by dropping bombs containing it from planes, killing thousands of Chinese civilians... The Japanese government has never formally apologised for Unit 731’s atrocities or, until yesterday, formally admitted its existence... [Incidentally, the] Germans... paid a total of almost \$US60 billion... in compensation, restitution and other forms of war damages... while “the Japanese have paid almost nothing.”

...The Japanese P[M]... marked the 52nd anniversary of the ending of... W[W]II yesterday by saying he felt “deep remorse” for Asian victims of Japanese militarism. “The war caused pain and suffering to the people in Japan and many Asian countries,” [he] said in the main Government memorial ceremony for Japan’s war dead... [His] remarks were almost identical to the comments he made at last year’s memorial ceremony... [when he] became the first P[M] from the conservative, long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party... to express remorse to Asian war victims. In 1993, [a P]M... leading an anti-LDP coalition Government, became the first premier to offer a clear apology in the annual ceremony... [The current PM] did not pay his respects at the controversial Shinto religious site known as the Yasukuni Shrine. When he did go to the shrine on July 29 last year, the visit triggered bitter criticism from China and other Asian nations...

Air raid sirens wailed across China’s eastern city of Nanjing at the weekend to mark the 60th anniversary of a Japanese massacre of more than 300,000 soldiers and civilians.

...Sixty years ago... troops of the Imperial Japanese Army captured the Chinese capital of Nanking. Japan’s regional power had been growing since the turn of the century, and Taiwan and Korea had already come within its grasp. In the early 1930s, alleged sabotage gave Tokyo’s militaristic and nationalistic government an excuse to turn Manchuria into a puppet state. Another trumped-up incident, in July 1937, signalled the start of a full invasion by Japan. But Shanghai... held out for months. A people Japanese disdained as crude, poor, ignorant and divided was humiliating the instrument of a living god. So when Shanghai finally fell in November and the Japanese Army began pushing up the Yangtze to Chiang Kai-shek’s capital – known to the West then as Nanking, now more familiar as Nanjing – its mercilessness showed it wanted revenge... [W]hat happened next[is] in a new book, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of W[W]II*. Admittedly... there is conflicting evidence on how many hundreds of thousands of people died, with disparity between the Japanese Army’s estimate and the Chinese body count... [M]any think the toll was more than 300,000 dead – maybe even more than 400,000. It was the manner of these deaths as well as their number that made Nanking notorious. “Chinese men were used for bayonet practice and in beheading contests... An estimated... 80,000 Chinese women were raped. Many soldiers went beyond rape to disembowel women, slice of their breasts, nail them alive to walls. Fathers were forced to rape their daughters and sons their mothers [in front of] other family members... Not only did live burials, castration, the carving of organs and the roasting of people become routine, but more diabolical tortures were practiced... Because of the presence of Westerners, including reporters, the savagery made worldwide news. Ironically, it was foreign criticism of the mass rapes that led the Japanese military to set up its notorious system of brothels and “comfort women.” ...The unexpected hero of this hell was a middle-aged German... [who] was an electrical-equipment company executive and a dedicated Nazi... [He became] head of the International Committee for the Nanking Safety Zone... established... [by] Western clergymen, doctors, professors and businessmen... As it turned out, 200,000 to 300,000 people jammed the safe area for the six weeks the slaughter lasted. The Westerners laboured to feed and shelter their guests and provide medical care... [The German] was especially bold in standing up to Japanese officers. He was much helped by his swastika armband and top Nazi decorations, symbols of a friendly European power... He returned to Germany in February 1938... After the war, he was arrested by both the Soviets and the British before undergoing a long and expensive denazification. Eventually he and his family were reduced to living on weed soup and dry bread. But in 1948 word got back to China, and a monetary subscription and regular food packages were sent to the man the Chinese called “the living Buddha of Nanking.”

...A Chinese woman who says she was raped, stabbed 37 times and left for dead during the Japanese Imperial Army's 1937 Rape of Nanjing wept as she told a Tokyo court yesterday of her ordeal and demanded compensation... [The now 79-year-old] is one of 10 survivors of the massacres in Nanjing who are demanding 100 million yen each... in compensation from the Japanese Government... She said Japanese troops tried to drag her from a basement hiding place she shared with 70 other people. "They took the men outside but the 30 women resisted, crying and shouting and holding on to doors... I was 19 years old and pregnant. I was terrified of the shame of being raped so I bit one soldier and then many others attacked me..." The 19-year-old... survived but lost her child the next day. She was then taken by her father to American Protestant Pastor John Magee, who hid her in a church. The court was shown a 20-minute videotape of footage taken by Mr Magee in which... [the 19-year-old] appears above the caption "Young girl attacked and raped by Japanese soldiers." ...The case comes amid a debate in Japan over the exclusion of Japanese wartime atrocities in school textbooks. In 1994, [Japan's then]... justice minister... was forced to resign... after telling reporters the Rape of Nanjing had never occurred.

...[Here's a new spin on a familiar story: a Japanese nurse wants to remember – not forget – the war that ended 13 years before she was born. The nurse in the acute ward at North Shore Hospital often finds herself caring for veterans of the war in the Pacific or their families. And each time she is confronted by the pain of a conflict she was never told about. It is not the animosity of those who suffered at Japanese hands that she must deal with, but her own guilt and sadness as history catches up with her. "I never knew anything about what happened before I came to NZ. I was so surprised. Nothing was written in the textbooks. If we had been told the truth, our attitude would be different." The nurse's story gives an instructive insight into the reaction of Japanese tourists who are cold-shouldered by those with long memories. Their apparent indifference is bemusement, not pig-headedness, and they would regard their hosts' hostility as saying more about us than them. She comes from a generation which has been raised to forget. A Japanese specialist in the history department at the University of Auckland says the Japanese as a people are very open to different interpretations of history – but they are not given any. "History is just not presented to them as something that is debatable." He recalls that General Douglas MacArthur, who accepted the Japanese surrender, once said the right to write history was one of the spoils of victory in war, but the Japanese seem to have retained that right in defeat. Incredibly, the standardised school curriculum controlled by a powerful and centralised Ministry of Education managed to keep all mention of the war as a world conflict out of textbooks until 1990. The war in the Pacific was alluded to, but its world context and the reasons for its outbreak were never part of the national discourse. The Japanese, in short, have spent the best part of two generations being told that they were victims of war – and particularly of the world's only nuclear attacks.'

...WWII prisoners of the Japanese were forced to build a 413km railway from Bangkok to Rangoon in occupied Burma. The death toll grew daily as the men toiled in monsoon rains with little food, their emaciated bodies shaken by recurring bouts of malaria. Only a handful of NZ prisoners of war were among the mainly AUSn, British, Dutch, US and Asian labourers, but each year either NZ or AUS hosts Anzac Day memorial services at the huge war cemetery at Kanchanaburi. More than 12,000 Allied prisoners died building the "Railway of Death" in an area perhaps better remembered for the film *Bridge on the River Kwai* than for the massive human suffering that unfolded there – and 80,000 to 100,000 Asian labourers are believed to have also perished.' In related news, 'former POWs and civilian internees took their claims for Japanese Government compensation to the Tokyo High Court yesterday. A former civilian internee from NZ told the court he felt sorrow as well as anger over Japan's inability to address the issue. Last November the Tokyo District Court rejected the POWs' 1995 suit demanding an apology and \$US22,000 compensation from the Japanese Government for each detainee.'

...During the war, the number of AUSn POWs on Ambon Island in Indonesia dropped from 1100 to less than 300 due to abuse by their Japanese captors.'

...the British Government has bowed to years of pressure by former prisoners of war and agreed to compensate those held in brutal conditions by Japan during WWII. Some 16,700 survivors and surviving spouses will get £10,000 each. Under the 1951 San Francisco peace treaty, the Japanese Government had paid former POWs £76.'

...the NZ Government can't find the will or the money to compensate old people still suffering from the barbarisms of Japan's ruthless jailers in POW camps – payments which Japan should be making but refuses to. What's our problem? The British Government had no qualms about its decision to pay something like \$NZ30,000 to each survivor of such horrors. Earlier, Canada decided on payments too. Germany gives pensions to Holocaust survivors. Even the Vatican has decided on compensation to slave labourers involved in church projects during the European war years. Others have not forgotten the Pacific POWs or what they went through – lashings, torture, untreated disease, starvation – while thousands of their comrades died or were executed. In Singapore, a new chapel dedicated to those men and women in notorious Changi jail and a museum of remembrance opened in February. Singapore's High Commissioner in NZ says his country will not forget the memories of those prisoners and their loved ones. But, NZ has no problem forgetting, accepting the official Japanese Government line that the San Francisco Treaty in 1951 officially ended the Pacific war. This treaty, Tokyo says, annulled Japan's responsibility for what happened to countries and individuals run down by its war machine. That's why Japan has consistently refused to even apologise to its victims – much less compensate them for their wrecked lives and health. Worse still, that 1951 phoney cutoff date is linked with one of the most immoral conspiracies of modern times. The Allied governments, including NZ, colluded in ordering a halt to the hunt for and the trials of thousands of Japanese war criminals. This wiped the slate clean for Japan and allowed it to rebuild politically, socially and economically. The impetus came from the Korean war and the rise of an anti-colonialist communism through Asia. The West needed a resurgent Japan as both an exhibit and a buffer. NZ prisoner groups have petitioned Japanese courts and written to the NZ PM, putting a case for justice. Of course, if the authorities can hold out long enough the need for action will have gone. Men and women, enfeebled by their dreadful imprisonment, will have died – with only long-forgotten files to worry the consciences of those who failed to act on their behalf. The Tokyo court submission and the letter to NZ's PM, both of which I helped draft, expressed sorrow more than anger. Sorrow that the Japanese, who are renowned for individual acceptance of responsibility, are failing to meet their own creed – and sorrow that our Government is not doing its duty either.' However, perhaps our Government is scared to pressure Japan in case it receives some counter-claims?

...On February 23, 1943, guards rained gunfire on Japanese prisoners of war held in a military camp near Featherston, NZ. It took less than a minute for the rifles and submachine-guns to stop. But it was enough time to kill 48 unarmed Japanese prisoners of war and wound 61 others. Added to that toll was a NZ soldier shot dead and five others injured by friendly fire. The official version of the event from a Military Court of Inquiry is that after the POWs refused to work a warning shot was fired. The POWs then rushed their armed guards, forcing them to defend themselves. The court found that the POWs "appear culpable" though no charges were laid against either side. It seems certain that the official version was a cover-up of what in another time could conceivably be called a war crime.' 'News of the event was kept secret till after the war, in case of retaliation on NZers in Japanese POW camps.'

...In a book just released in NZ, a Japanese naval officer who was captured off the coast of Guadalcanal during the war and interned in the Featherston Prisoner-of-War camp, expressed a "deep apology to those ill-treated soldiers and their families" for atrocities committed by his countrymen. In the epilogue to his revised book, *Beyond Death and Dishonour*, the former naval officer said that despite what he calls "the incident" in February, 1943, the Japanese were well treated by their captors. But he said after the war it became clear that Japanese forces had not been hospitable to the prisoners which they held.'

...WITH a quavering voice, [an 83-year-old man] told a Tokyo courtroom of the atrocities he committed as a Japanese military police officer in Manchuria during... [WWII. D]espite doubts about their guilt, he handed two Chinese prisoners over to the notorious Unit 731 in 1941, where they died as human guinea pigs in Japan's biological warfare programme... He called on the Japanese government to apologise and pay \$826,000 to the

bereaved families. Dozens of geriatric Japanese veterans are at last beginning to unburden themselves of their war guilt, delivering confessional lectures and publishing books. But [the 83-year-old] is the first to describe his atrocities in court. This was made possible by an extraordinary collaboration between Chinese who claim they were victims of Japanese aggression and a group of Japanese lawyers and activists who believe Japan has yet to shoulder full responsibility for its war crimes and so are helping their aggrieved neighbours sue the Japanese government. Seven lawsuits by Chinese victims or their families, all filed in the last two years, are the most ambitious of a clutch of cases, because they seek to hold postwar Japan liable for the Imperial Army's most heinous deeds. But the trials could drag on for years, if not decades... [In related news, o]n December 7, 56 years ago... Japanese bombs rained down on Pearl Harbo[r]. The]... commander-in-chief of the US Naval Fleet... was later accused of being ill-prepared for the raid that killed more than 2400 people – the scapegoat... [for a] humiliated... nation. Forced to retire after being demoted from a four-star to a two-star admiral, [the commander-in-chief] also blamed himself – until he learned, in 1944, that senior naval and government officials may have known of the impending attack, but never warned him... or his army counterpart... who was also demoted... [The] admiral... spent the next 24 years fighting to be exonerated and restored to the rank of four-star... but he died without success... But even if... true... to... absolve... [the commander-in-chief] would require the US government to acknowledge President Roosevelt let Pearl Harbo[r] happen. A]... retired three-star admiral and former Nato intelligence officer, also thinks President Roosevelt knew about Pearl Harbo[r]. But it was unlikely history would be revised at the expense of one of America's most loved presidents, he said... "Governments do not ever admit to mistakes... It isn't the truth that matters, it's perception." ...Even though the government recently softened its stance and now maintained that blame for Pearl Harbo[r] must be "broadly shared," [the last three] Presidents... have all denied... requests to posthumously restore [the commander-in-chief's] rank and exonerate him. Late last month, [his family] got another cold-water splash of bad news: [the]Defence Secretary... denied the most recent... [request], saying he "remain(s) accountable" for his actions 56 years ago... Germany intercepted a November 26, 1941, radio-telephone message from British P[M] Winston Churchill to President Roosevelt, warning of the Japanese attack. - 1997

Pearl Harbor wasn't the only military disaster that involved Winston Churchill (who had 'believed the US could be drawn into WWI if neutral ships could be caught up in U-boat torpedoing; U-boats used to give merchant ships a warning but Churchill ordered merchant ships to ram U-boats, so the U-boats began to remain submerged – giving no warning; however, two telegraphs to the luxurious Lusitania – one to the richest man on board and one to a Hollywood producer – warned it would be targeted, and the Germans knew she was loaded with ammunition for the British war effort, but although the British knew a U-boat was in the same region, because at least three ships had been sunk, the Admiralty gave no orders for the Lusitania to change course and provided no naval escort; amongst the 1195 dead, which included 94 of 134 children, were over 100 US citizens, prompting America's entry into the war')!

GALLIPOLI was the disastrous W[WI] campaign, instigated mainly by Winston Churchill, in which N[Z and AUS]n troops were first forged into Anzacs[(the AUSn and NZ Army Corps)]. Churchill was First Lord of the Admiralty and he resolved to force [his way past] the Dardanelles with the Royal Navy, capture Constantinople, the Turkish capital, and thus put Turkey out of the war. When the Royal Navy failed to get through the narrow seaway, he and other British military leaders decided to mount an amphibious expedition... On... 25 April 1915 – still celebrated as Anzac Day – 30,000 N[Z, AUS]n and British troops were poured on to the narrow beaches at Gaba Tepe and Cape Helles. The Anzacs were landed on the wrong beach and found in front of them broken terrain with high ridges and sheer cliffs, nothing like the markings on their maps. The first Anzacs ashore took their initial objectives quite quickly and then waited for reinforcements that did not come fast enough... By the next morning, the Anzacs had been subjected to merciless shelling and machine-gunning by the defending Turks. They were pinned down and just managing to hold an area of about 2000 metres by 1000. The first 24 hours had cost them approximately 8500 casualties. The Turks, who were present on the high ground in larger numbers than usual because of exercises, counter-attacked two days after the arrival and although the Anzacs fought on with unparalleled bravery and tenacity they never managed to dislodge the Turks from command of the heights. Briefly, on 8 August, the Wellington battalion... reached the summit and could see the campaign's goal, the Narrows, below. They were withdrawn after continual shelling, bombing and machine-gunning and after running out of water... The troops who took their place were soon dislodged by the Turks and the campaign was from then on hopeless. The war on Gallipoli was a saga of errors and horrors – the planners making the errors and the men enduring the horrors. The troops were badly let down... The infantry... were inadequately supplied with artillery shells, had no grenades; ...[went] without engineers or materials for the construction of piers... and... were not trained properly in landing from the sea... The N[Z] Expeditionary Force... had... spent weeks training hard in the desert... at Alexandria in Egypt... marching miles in the flat or undulating terrain which bore no resemblance to the rugged land of the peninsula at Gallipoli. Ironically, the terrain was 'similar to that surrounding Wellington'... In December 1915 the Anzacs were pulled off the peninsula... and... returned to Egypt for training before they went to the Western Front... 8427 [NZ]men had left home in October 1914... and when the N[Z]ers slipped away [from Gallipoli]in retreat... they left behind 2721 dead. Some of the 4752 wounded later died.

Barely 265 of those... 2721... men lie in marked graves. The rest lay where they fell, their bones bleached by the fierce Turkish sun. They went out of the trenches and simply disappeared... It was our coming of age and it was our loss of innocence. It was the moment when the world's newest dominion, not yet a decade old, staked its claim to nationhood... Gallipoli was by no means the bloodiest action N[Z] soldiers saw in... W[WI]: in 21 days 7900 of our men died at the Somme... But by that time we were numb as a nation to the idea that our best and brightest were dying on the other side of the world.

Such is the respect with which the term Anzac is held [in NZ]that an Order in Council was promulgated on 31 August 1916 forbidding the use of the word in connection with any trade or business... The Anzac Day Act of 1920 stated that 25 April was to be observed throughout N[Z] as a public holiday. All licensed premises were to be closed and no race meetings held. This was amended by a 1921-22 Act which stated that 25 April was to be observed in all respects as if Anzac Day were a Sunday... Between the two world wars Anzac Day was most solemnly observed. Even today it is commemorated in a more sacred manner than Good Friday on which certain organised sporting events take place. Recently, there have been unsuccessful attempts to introduce recreational and sporting activities in the afternoon following the morning's memorial parades and services.

When I was a young man I carried my pack and I lived the free life of a rover... Then in 1915 my country said son it's time to stop rambling cause there's work to be done So they gave me a tin hat and they gave me a gun and they sent me away to the war... the band played Waltzing Matilda as we sailed away from the Quay... for Gallipoli And well I remember that terrible day when the blood stained the sand and the water and how in that hell... we were butchered like lambs at the slaughterer... we stopped to bury our slain and... the Turks buried theirs and it started all over again... for seven long weeks I kept myself alive while the corpses around me piled higher Then a big Turkish shell knocked me arse over tit and when I awoke in my hospital bed Christ I wished I was dead Never knew there were worse things than dying... no more I'll go Waltzing Matilda... they collected the cripples the... armless the blind and insane... and they shipped us back to Australia... And as our ship pulled in to Circular Quay I looked at the place where my legs used to be and thanked Christ there was nobody waiting for me to grieve and to mourn and to pity... the band

played Waltzing Matilda as they carried us down the gang-way But no-one cheered they just stood and stared... now every April I sit on my porch and I watch the parade pass before me I see my old comrades how proudly they march reliving their dreams of past glory... the young people ask me what are they marching for and I ask myself the same question... the band plays Waltzing Matilda and the old men still answer the call But year after year their numbers get fewer Some day no-one will march there at all...

N[Z] is to build a \$1 million monument... [to] be placed at the head of Anzac Parade... in Canberra to mark the relationship between this country and A[US]. By the way]... 16,000 young A[US]n soldiers... landed at Gallipoli on April 25, 1915... The Department of Veterans' Affairs in Canberra conducted a national check and said while there are 12 A[US]ns still alive of the 68,000 Anzacs who eventually landed at Gallipoli, [a]Mr Matthews is the only surviving A[US]n Anzac who had landed on April 25... Today, this living link with a date in history that turned A[US] into a nation celebrates his 100th birthday. The irony is that... he says he should have been one of the first casualties... His mother had given him a thick pocketbook and it was hit by a piece of Turkish shrapnel that smacked into his chest within hours of landing... Mr Matthews, now living in a veterans' home in Sydney, did not think his place as the last... was so important. "Somebody has to be the last one," he said. "It just happened to be me." Mr Matthews calls the British politicians who planned the campaign "bloody fools." ...As a flotilla of Allied ships carrying 78,000 troops gathered near Gallipoli, the commander... found that guns and ammunition had been placed on separate ships. The transports returned to Egypt to be properly loaded. The Turks, alerted to the Allied plan, used the resulting month's delay to improve their defences with deadly effect. - 1996

A state funeral will be held for Mr Matthews, who died peacefully... this week... He was the quintessential Aussie of his generation, destined to live through two world wars and a great depression... He bore no grudge against his Turkish enemies... He was a signaller... firing a rifle at a Turk just once. "And I hope I missed the poor bugger,"... He believed strongly in Anzac Day... "Some people say it glorifies war – that is wrong... People like me can remember it every day. But the young... don't know the horrors of war. They need to be reminded. That's what their forefathers died for..."

...An old soldier collapsed and died and several others were taken to hospital yesterday during emotion-filled ceremonies across A[US] marking Anzac Day. Organisers said the annual day of remembrance was the biggest in years as hundreds of thousands of war veterans and spectators participated in marches and dawn ceremonies... Up to 3000 people... attended services at Anzac Cove[– the 'previously unnamed strip of land' which was] the site of the 1915 Gallipoli landing... The local tourist office at Canakkale said interest in Gallipoli was growing each year with crowds almost double last year's level... Only 11 Australasian Gallipoli veterans survive, 10 in A[US] and one in N[Z]. One British Gallipoli veteran survives.

...Percy Goring was the last-known British veteran of the ill-fated Gallipoli campaign (around 34,000 Allied soldiers were killed during the unsuccessful assault against Turkish positions). After the war, Mr Goring migrated to AUS. His survival had remained unknown to the authorities until last year when an amateur military historian uncovered his story. The 106-year-old Mr Goring, who was known fondly as a "Digger", albeit a British one, and proudly took part in Anzac Day commemorations, was described as "a local icon" by the deputy mayor of his adopted home town of Bunbury, Western Australia'...

GALLIPOLI veteran Doug Dibley answered quietly when asked with whom he could share his war memories these days. "No one really," he said... The last surviving Gallipoli veteran in N[Z] never meant to go to war. Doug Dibley, now aged 100, was just 17 when... offered a trip overseas. It was too much to resist for a group of young men from Wellington. "We were very enthusiastic because none of us had ever been[overseas]," he recalls with a grin... Mr Dibley... [– who] has 50 grandchildren, 180 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild[–]...was a celebrity soldier among old soldiers[on Anzac Day]... More than 1000 people attended the ceremony at the Rotorua Civic Centre, overflowing the main auditorium and a second room... Mr Dibley, who turns 101 in June... did not dare dream... that he would see out a full century... [but believes his longevity] had much to do with good plain living and not being afraid of hard work... Another N[Z] Gallipoli veteran, Les Leach, aged 99, lives in Sydney.

...Les Leach, one of N[Z]'s last two Gallipoli veterans, reckoned he probably enlisted for the glamour. "You just signed up and they gave you a shilling. I think I might have bought a glass of beer with mine." He died on Tuesday, at the age of 99, and his funeral will be held in Sydney today. Interviewed in April, he said he was... only 16 when he enlisted, having lied about his age... He was wounded and sent back to N[Z]. After recovering, he served in France where his skull was fractured by a shell burst.

...N[Z]'s last living link to the Gallipoli campaign... had one of the worst jobs at Gallipoli: picking up his broken and bloodied comrades... "He had to pick up all the bits and pieces,"... said... [one of his] 11 children... "He didn't like it at all..." ...But the 101-year-old... met his Maker yesterday in far more serene surroundings... He was working for an oil company in Wellington in 1915 when he and a friend spotted a newspaper advertisement seeking helpers at Trentham Military Camp hospital. He volunteered but never got to the hospital. "They put us in uniforms and told us we were going to Gallipoli..."... Mr Dibley was evacuated from the Gallipoli Peninsula on the last day of the big retreat and ended up in Palestine with mounted Anzac troops... He always hated war. "No one wins in the end," he said last year. "The Great War took the best of our young men, and look how many came back maimed and broken. Many suffered dreadfully for the rest of their lives. Anzac Day is important – those men should never be forgotten." ...The RSA in Wellington estimates about 50... W[W1] (WWI) veterans are still alive...

The heroism of a N[Z] Army battalion virtually wiped out on a barren Gallipoli hill 82 years ago must be given national recognition, says the Anglican Dean of Wellington... The assault on the Turkish-held hill was led by Lieutenant-Colonel William Malone, who defied the orders of his British superiors to attack it during the day, saying it would be suicide. Instead he led 770 members of his battalion up the hill at night and threw the Turks off. The N[Z]ers regrouped about 300m from the hilltop... But British reinforcements could not stem the Turkish counter-attack two days later and Chunuk Bair reverted to the enemy. Only 70 members of the Wellington Battalion survived. One of the casualties was Malone, apparently killed by a British shell and then vilified by the British for failing to hold the hill.

...TWELVE Kiwi soldiers accidentally killed by British artillery... after they were caught in "friendly" shelling during the liberation of the French village Beaudignies... just weeks before the end of W[W1] were remembered at a special ceremony in Christchurch yesterday... As a mark of respect, the people of Beaudignies sent the village medallion to be presented... to the descendants of seven of the dead men. Descendants for the other five could not be found. - 1997

France yesterday bestowed its highest honour on all 160 surviving British... W[W1] veterans who fought on French soil, and thanked them "from the very bottom of her heart." Thirteen frail old men, several in wheelchairs and many over 100 years old, went to the Imperial War Museum in London to receive the Legion d'Honneur personally from [the]French Ambassador... He told them... "This is more than a belated gesture of recognition to [you]... It is a symbol designed to inform young people of what happened on French soil during those days." A minute's silence followed the presentation. "This is the proudest moment for me since I left the Army," said [one veteran], who will be 103 this week... Meanwhile, [France's PM]... said it was time to rehabilitate French soldiers executed for mutiny during the disastrous First World War offensive. But[France's] President... rebuked him by saying the appeal was untimely when France was recalling the 1.35 million of its men who died in the 1914-18 war... A similar debate is under way in [Britain].

...The families of 300 British soldiers... [– including] 23 Canadians, four Africans and a Jamaican[–] ...shot for cowardice or desertion during... W[W1.] held a service for the first time at London's official war memorial at the weekend and called for the men... [– some of whom] were as young

as 17[-] ...to be pardoned... [A] lone bugler played the *Last Post*... for those deemed cowards at the time, but who are now regarded as having been traumatised by the horror of life in the trenches and constant bombardment... Harry Farr was shot for cowardice in 1916 despite having spent five months in a hospital suffering from shell shock... William Nelson was bound to a tree in a mock crucifixion as a warning to other soldiers before being executed... “This is recognition... of the existence of these men and we want pardons for them. They were terribly mistreated by the British Army and it’s no good for people to say it is too late,” said... [someone] whose great uncle was executed for casting aside his weapon. The wreath-laying ceremony at the Cenotaph in Whitehall was the first time the relatives had been given permission to hold a service at the place where Britain’s war dead are remembered as heroes every November... The Ministry of Defence has expressed regret at the way the men were treated but has ruled out offering pardons. [● ‘31 NZers were sentenced to death by British court martial during WW1. 5 were executed.’]

...A bill granting posthumous pardons to five N[Z] soldiers executed during the First World War... will proceed, [the P]M... announced yesterday. The Pardon for Soldiers of the Great War Bill... seeks to pardon Privates Victor Spencer, Frank Hughes, John Sweeney and John King, shot for desertion, and Private Jack Braithwaite, executed for mutiny... The decision to push ahead with the bill follows an inquiry commissioned by the... Government and conducted by [a] retired High Court judge... [The judge]’s report concluded that shell shock or other stress-related disorders were the likely cause of the men’s actions... Three of the men were veterans of Gallipoli before serving in the trenches in France... Private Braithwaite was one of five sons from a prominent Otago family who went to fight in... W[W1]. Three did not return. [A nephew] said his uncle had written a letter asking for clemency, which gave an idea of how he felt. It said: “I am not a born soldier. Just a Bohemian journalist. Unfortunately I have made a serious mess of things and where I came to win honour and glory I have shame, dishonour and everlasting disgrace. There is no more patriotic country than N[Z] and to think that a native of that country is standing trial for mutiny is a soul-tormenting thought and bitter indeed.”

...[NZ’s] Returned Services Association has dissension in its ranks over Government moves to pardon five... W[W1] soldiers... Ministry of Defence files show th[at]... Private Braithwaite was executed at age 34 for joining a mutiny in a military prison where he had been jailed for escaping custody and other offences. He claimed he was innocent. Privates King, aged 39, Hughes, 28, and Spencer, 23, were shot for repeatedly being absent without leave... Sweeney, 37, went missing from the trenches of Armentieres when he was due on duty. He claimed he had lost his unit... [The n]ational president... said the association did not support singling out the men for exoneration when about 300 others had been disciplined, some of whom were sent back to the front line and were killed... “You can’t forget about the rest. If you’re going to do it for one, then you must do it for all.” ...But many veterans are outraged at his stance, which has offended relatives of the executed men. “He’s got no authority to speak along these lines on behalf of returned service people,” said... an alliance of 32 RSA clubs in Greater Auckland. “What happened was abhorrent and we feel greatly for the living families of these people.” ...Titirangi RSA[’s] president... was angry at [the national president]’s comments and had received many complaints about them. “We support the pardons. To come out and make this statement a week before Poppy Day is inappropriate.”

...The blood-red Flanders poppy by the graves of our dead in France[is] an international symbol of sacrifice... For the past 75 years the RSA has been... [using poppies to raise] money for those who survived... W[W1]... Last year the RSA raised around \$700,000. Nearly half of the 800,000 poppies given out were made by disabled workers. “They enjoy making them... and they get great satisfaction out of seeing people wear them.”

...RSA at war over poppies from foreign field... Branches of the R[SA] are at loggerheads over a new... poppy from China. The Auckland branch angered some others, especially in the South Island, by importing and promoting the Chinese poppy over the official Christchurch-made one during this year’s annual Poppy Day fundraising drive. The Auckland branch is accused of breaking the RSA constitution and, at worst, could be expelled from the national organisation. Auckland claims the new poppy... cost[s] about 5c to land in the country... allowing it to raise more dollars for members’ welfare... [than from the NZ-made poppy, which] was more than three times as expensive... The Auckland president... [also] said... people given the new poppies all responded positively... “They felt it looked... more like a poppy than the Christchurch one...” ...But the Christchurch branch believes the foreign poppy will meet resistance from donors and threaten work for the intellectually disabled helpers and veterans’ widows who assemble the official version... Tenders for the supply of poppies will be debated at the RSA national council conference... where up to 500 delegates will decide where future poppies come from and how much they should cost the organisation.

...Every nation is shaped by the battles it has fought but none more so than a young nation still seeking its unique identity... My grandfather was old enough to fight in the... War of 1914-18... He explained to me the sheer horror and one image remained with me: a mental picture of a fine pair of boots he found... with the feet still in them. He wasn’t at Gallipoli, where the Anzac legend was born and N[Z]’s nationhood confirmed. However, I... learnt about N[Z]’s navel contribution... His brother, Lieutenant Commander William Edward Sanders, had won the Victoria Cross for sinking a German submarine while commanding a Q-ship, an apparently inoffensive vessel that was, in fact, heavily armed. He was a N[Z] hero who died later when his ship, the topsail schooner *Prize*, was torpedoed. We were taken to see Sanders’ VC in the Auckland War Memorial Museum which also had a model of his ship. It was a minnow, however, alongside the model of the battle cruiser HMS *New Zealand* that our people had gifted to the Royal Navy. She fought in the biggest naval engagement of the war, the Battle of Jutland, and cost our taxpayers £1.7 million. We knew that N[Z]ers – 1000 of them – served with the Royal Flying Corps and that one of the nation’s... W[W2] (WWII) heroes, Keith Parks, had been one of our... W[W1] aces with 20 “kills”. We were unaware that N[Z]’s top ace was Captain Keith “Grid” Caldwell, who downed 25 German craft. We did know, however, the huge cost of that war. The final tally of N[Z] casualties was 18,166 dead and 41,317 wounded – more than half the total that went overseas and almost a quarter of the population of military age. N[Z] had, almost literally, lost its youth... The declaration of war on August 5 led to “enthusiastic demonstrations” and patriotic singing outside the *Herald*’s office in Queen St... Years later, there was no flag-waving fervour in my grandfather’s recounting of experiences on the Western Front where the N[Z] division fought from 1916 to 1918, where at Passchendaele in four hours on October 12, 1917... 640 Kiwi soldiers died and 2100 were wounded... – the worst day of war in N[Z] history.

...In that place, on one day... [a] total of 1190 N[Z]ers had been killed to gain as little as 180 metres of ground... Some of the division’s units had lost 85[%] of their men to death or injury. And the ratio of the dead to the wounded had been greater than was usual even for the killing fields of... W[W1]. Most who would be listed as missing after the abortive action had, in fact, been killed. But their bodies would never be found in the mud and debris of war. Ernest Langford, a private with the 2 Otago battalion... survived to record the horror in his diary. “Attack a failure on account of wire encountered... Hun machine guns and snipers play havoc. Absolute hell...” ...This absolute hell, this most disastrous of days for N[Z], was fought and lost near a place few of us associate with N[Z]ers at war, a small Belgian town called Passchendaele. We should not be surprised by our ignorance. Passchendaele appears only sporadically in this nation’s many war memorials. Those who survived it rarely uttered its name and, until now, it has never appeared on the spine of a N[Z] book. It’s almost as if the nation erased the horrific carnage from memory – and... the author of the first N[Z] book to put the name on its cover, has a theory on why that might be. Passchendaele, he contends... was a different sort of disaster from Gallipoli. “Gallipoli... [was] a... heroic failure where we nearly did it, we almost succeeded, it didn’t quite come off and it wasn’t our fault it didn’t. The blame for failure could be quite conveniently passed on to somebody else... But Passchendaele is not like that. It’s not an heroic failure, it’s just a dreadful failure. It is a massacre.” Certainly the N[Z] government of the time thought so. According to [his] book, at a meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet in London in June 1918, an angry N[Z] PM, William Massey, berated his British counterpart, Lloyd George, about the tragedy. “They were sent to Passchendaele,” Massey said, “to a swampy locality where it was almost impossible to walk and where they found themselves up against particularly strong wire entanglements, which it was impossible for them to cut. They were... simply shot down like rabbits. These are the sort of things that are going to lead to serious trouble.” Trouble was, says [the author], that the British weren’t necessarily to blame.

"If you delve beneath the surface on an historical investigation, there are some curly questions that have to be asked and answered. You can't really shoot the blame totally to those stupid British generals who are committing N[Z] boys on these types of campaigns. You've got to ask why did [N[Z]-born commander of the division] Major General Andrew Russell allow this to happen? Why wasn't he vocal in his protests? Why didn't he conduct a reconnaissance before the attack, and why did he use a brigade that was totally exhausted even before the attack began?... " ...The background of the battles near Passchendaele, just outside the British-held Ypres Salient (a salient being an outward bulge in a military line), was this: After the slaughter of the Somme in 1916 (the first day of the battle set the bloody 20th century's record for the most men killed or wounded on a single day – 60,000), the British high command sought to break the deadlock of trench warfare with a big push through Flanders in 1917. Britain's top soldier, Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, fancied that breaking the German defences in the region would be the springboard needed to take the ports of the Belgian coast, to outflank the enemy and to perhaps even push through to Germany's industrial hub, the Ruhr. The Ypres Salient, which was 22km long and 5km deep at its widest point, was an obvious choice to begin this imagined march to victory. The British positions in the Salient were tactically bad, being overlooked from three directions, with the enemy holding the high ground around Passchendaele village. If the British could take that high ground, Haig calculated, then everything else could follow. The first of eight battles in the area began on July 31. But it was not until October 4 that units from the N[Z] Division engaged the enemy in the Salient. This first battle, a carefully planned, textbook success, extended the division's reputation as an outfit which delivered what was asked of it. But crucial to that success were the dry conditions. In the days leading up to October 12, the weather broke and winter arrived... turning the fields of Flanders into a hellish quagmire. If the weather had gone to pot for the N[Z]ers' second attack, then so had the planning. The disaster was set in train by a series of blunders including poor artillery support, over-ambitious objectives and a failure to recognise the strength of the German defences... The Germans, having been warned of the assault by a deserter (not N[Z]'s one and only), and having observed the difficulties with artillery, placed a much stronger concentration than usual of machine-guns to cover the ground... The result on October 12, as Colonel H. Stewart noted in his 1921 history of the N[Z] Division, was our boys had "poured out their blood like water." It was, however, a disaster born of systematic failure rather than the fault of one or more commanders, [the author] concludes. "This was an imperial system of command that we were operating under, which is so rigid and an order is passed down and it's not to be questioned and if you've got any doubts about it you don't openly voice it. It did not encourage flexibility or adaptability. It was the fault of an antiquated command system." ...a fault with extreme and wide-ranging consequences. [The author] believes that not one N[Z] family was untouched by this single day. Even if a family had not lost a son, then their neighbours or friends had... Yet if October 12, 1917, generated suffering at the front and at home, the day had other legacies. [The author] contends... that N[Z]ers' suspicion of the military, which was particularly strong between the wars, can be traced to that day. Although most of us now do not remember the Passchendaele battle like we remember the baptism of fire at Gallipoli, we do – rather curiously, concedes [the author] – recall the substance of what happened on October 12, 1917. "People actually perceive the Great War through the experience of Passchendaele, that is the... occasion where these brave soldiers were sent to die without any chance of securing their objectives or winning. That is the way by which the war is remembered and I think people feel quite bitter and resentful about it." Which is quite certainly the reason [the author] was challenged when he gave a paper on Passchendaele at a conference in A[US]. "Someone said, 'Why are you researching something like this which is obviously going to cause people grief and pain. Isn't it something that we should just forget about?' I didn't actually have a good answer at the time, because it caught me somewhat by surprise. But after thinking on it, I would now answer that question by saying two things. First, we really owe it to those soldiers to remember what they went through and to actually try to account for the reasons why they did it. The second thing is that we learn by past mistakes. As philosopher George Santayana said, those who do not remember the past are condemned to relive it. The last thing we want for N[Z] is another Passchendaele." N[Z] political and military leaders clearly thought the same in the aftermath of the first war. When N[Z]ers again went into battle 22 years after Passchendaele, they were not... under direct British control. And from the time General Bernard Freyberg took command of the stand-alone N[Z] Division during... W[WII], he had special powers, granted by a government charter, which allowed him to refuse an operation request from the allies high command if he thought it too risky. Both these fundamental changes to the way the N[Z] armed forces operated have their beginnings at places like Passchendaele... That is perhaps the only victory of October 12, 1917... [■ Germany] planned to attack N[Z] coastal towns during W[WII], according to recently discovered German military documents... The pre-war planning documents showed that German cruisers planned to attack towns such as Westport to seize coal for fuel... The documents disprove the myth that [the w]ar... was a distant conflict with no relevance to this country... Spies from the German consulate found out a huge amount about N[Z]'s military strengths... "Both A[US] and N[Z] were seen as legitimate targets and seen as soft targets too," says... a[n]... army historian... visiting... Massey University's Department of Defence and Strategic Studies.

...A[US]'s last Anzac... celebrated his 103rd birthday yesterday, just six days after finally leaving his Hobart home to move into a nursing home. A[US]'s last living link to Gallipoli is still in good physical health, though very deaf and his short-term memory is unreliable, say family members. N[Z]'s last Anzac... is 105... [Incidentally, t]oday... the Devonport Community Board is expected to approve a formal recognition of Cyril Bassett.

...The quiet, unnamed lookout on Stanley Pt is set to be named after Cyril Bassett VC... Cyril... liked the view from the Stanley Pt lookout over the Waitemata. Before he died in 1983, aged 91, the nuggety Gallipoli veteran would walk the few hundred yards from his North Shore home to watch the yachts on the harbour. Few who saw him knew his past. To those who asked, he probably wouldn't tell. But the old retired bank manager scanning the Waitemata was among the bravest of the brave. As a 23-year-old corporal in the N[Z] Signals Corp he w[as]... the only N[Z] soldier to win the Victoria Cross [– 'the most prized of all Commonwealth decorations (founded by Queen Victoria in 1856 and struck from the metal of guns captured at Sebastopol during the Crimean War') –] at Gallipoli. Moreover, he won it in the hell of Chunuk Bair... Mr Bassett was unfailingly reticent about his award. He was always irked that he was the only N[Z] soldier to receive a VC in Gallipoli. "There should have been hundreds," he said. Or he would make light of it. Standing just 5 foot 4, he claimed he was so short all the bullets passed over him. But his award was not for one show of bravery but for many. As two British battalions were virtually scourged off the hill and the Wellingtons were holding on desperately on the crest, Mr Bassett and companions worked for a day and a night repairing the copper wires that gave the men on the hill their only link to headquarters. The wires were repeatedly cut and fixing them drew constant Turkish fire from the heights. They were, said one account, like "moving ducks in a shooting gallery." Later, invalided to an English hospital, Mr Bassett learned of his VC from a newspaper. By the end of the war, he had fought in France, been wounded twice and had risen to the rank of lieutenant... [His] funeral eulogy... spoke of a "picture of heroism beyond the understanding of most of us" but also of a private person who hated all the fuss – the ideal hero for a quiet memorial on Stanley Pt.

...A N[Z] expert on the Gallipoli landings has rubbished a British study largely blaming the poor quality of maps for the... disaster... [The] former Army officer and now a senior history lecturer in A[US], said last night that the Greenwich University study was another example of the myths that had grown up around the Gallipoli campaign. British geographers... used satellite and other technology to plot the Gallipoli battlefields, on which 42,000 Allied troops died... Their comparison with the maps issued to officers in the campaign found them to be inaccurate in almost every respect. A report in the *Sunday Times* said the research found that the maps came from tourist guidebooks bought in Egypt that were at least 10 years out of date. One general had obtained accurate maps for the second stage of the campaign in August 1915 but left them on a train. The report said in one case... A[nzac] troops were told to use a sandy beach for an easy landing but no one had charted the area for currents. The soldiers were swept onto rocks beneath steep cliffs, becoming easy prey for enemy gunners. In another incident troops took a strategically important hill, only to find a second one behind it, unmarked on the map, with heavy Turkish fortifications. But [the lecturer]... at the University of New England in

Armida, N[SW], said the maps issued were as good as could be expected at the time... “Unquestionably mistakes were made in the Gallipoli campaign but the Anzac errors and the British errors were not map errors. They were simply human errors.” He said the Royal Navy’s navigation errors in delivering the soldiers to the wrong beaches triggered a chain of mistakes.

Plans for such an adventure were considered by the British authorities between 1904 and 1911, but both military and naval opinion was against it. When war between the Allies and Turkey began in early November 1914 the matter was reexamined and classed as a hazardous, but possible, operation... On January 28 the Dardanelles committee decided on an attempt to force the straits by naval action alone, using mostly obsolete warships too old for fleet action... The naval bombardment began on February 16 but was halted by bad weather... On March 18 the bombardment was continued; but, after three battleships had been sunk and three others damaged, the navy abandoned its attack, concluding that the fleet could not succeed without military help... Small beachheads were secured with difficulty, the troops... at “Anzac” beaches... being held up by Turkish reinforcements under the redoubtable Mustafa Kemal, later to become famous as Atatürk... Altogether, the equivalent of some 16 British, A[USn, N]Z... Indian and French divisions took part in the campaign. British Commonwealth casualties, apart from heavy losses among old warships, were 213,980[, while ‘Turkish casualties have been estimated at between 250,000 and 300,000 out of 500,000.’] The campaign was a success only in so far as it attracted large Turkish forces away from the Russians... The campaign had serious political repercussions. It gave the impression throughout the world that the Allies were militarily inept... Winston Churchill, the chief protagonist of the venture, resigned from the government and went to command an infantry battalion in France... [F]ormerly HELLESPONT... *Dardanelles*... holds a significant place in history... The strait has always been of great strategic and economic importance as the gateway to Istanbul and the Black Sea from the Mediterranean... The Hellespont is the scene of the Greek legend of the two lovers Hero and Leander. The ancient city of Troy defended the Dardanelles from its strategic position at the southwest end... In 480 BC the Persian army of Xerxes I crossed the strait by a bridge of boats; and Alexander the Great... did the same in 334 BC on his expedition against Persia.

Alexander the Great, 356-323 B.C., [was the]successor at 20 to his murdered father Philip II of Macedon... who had mastered by conquest the Greek city-states. Philip’s ambition had been consolidation of the Greek world under a liberal despotism, and containment of the threatening power of Persia. His son inherited his vision and made it fact... [A]fter initial opposition (notably the ruthlessly suppressed Theban revolt) he rallied lethargic Greece to a Persian expedition undertaken in the spirit of a crusade. His army of 30,000 foot and 5000 horse, vastly inferior numerically but superior in morale and tactical potential, had its first victory at Granicus near the Dardanelles (334 B.C.). Here Alexander probably... embraced a concept of world domination... which... [depended] upon attacking the centre of the Persian Empire...

The... *Persian empire*[had been] the greatest enduring empire preceding that of Rome... Cavalry was used by the Persians... and Romans... The first great age of cavalry warfare, however, was in medieval times. Knights, with their heavy armor, could move only on horseback. In a compact mass they could crush hostile infantry, and as they could be checked only by other horsemen, the battles of the age of chivalry were between bodies of knights, with infantry secondary. The supremacy of cavalry was challenged by the English archers, notably at Crecy (1346), and a further blow was given by the invention of firearms. But cavalry still had a part to play. Freed from heavy armor, horsemen became a mobile force whose speed and shock action could be used with great effect...

Charge of the Light Brigade... A misunderstanding between the commander of the Light Brigade... and his superiors... led to the British cavalry being committed to an attack up a valley heavily held on three sides by the Russians. Immortalized in verse by Tennyson, the charge in fact decimated some of the finest light cavalry in the world to very little military purpose.

Errors led to carnage in military history’s most suicidal charge... DURING the Battle of Balaklava on October 25, 1854, a brigade of British light cavalry galloped into an obvious death trap – a valley which was a virtual shooting gallery of enemy... artillery... Exposed to withering fire on all sides, they over-ran the Russian position at the end of the valley, but without infantry support were unable to hold so were forced to run the horrendous gauntlet in retreat... The charge lasted only 20 minutes but in that time 247 men of the original 673 were killed... It was an immensely courageous but utterly futile gesture which came to epitomise the dunderheaded quality of leadership and planning that bedevilled the Crimean campaign... The official line that the British army was “the best appointed in Europe” was exposed as a lie and the Aberdeen Government was forced to resign. For the allies (Britain, France and Turkey) the purpose of the war was the destruction of Russian military power in the Black Sea by capturing their great naval base at Sebastopol. Up until Balaklava the war had gone largely in the allies’ favour – they had comprehensively defeated the Russians a month before at the battle of Alma and, completely surrounding Sebastopol, they were proceeding to bombard it into submission. But the Russians suddenly seized the initiative – they broke out of their fortifications and captured the hills that overlooked the British base at Balaklava. This caught the British entirely unprepared and it was only the famous “thin red line” (93rd Highlanders...) that prevented the Russians pushing them into the sea. Hugely outnumbered, the Highlanders held the line until the British re-grouped. Eventually the Heavy Brigade... was able to drive the Russian cavalry back and win the day for the allies. As the Russians fell back they carried off some of the allies’ cannon they had captured that morning. This could be interpreted as a moral victory for the Russians and in a desperate attempt to avert this the British commander, Lord Raglan, sent this written message to his cavalry commanders: “Lord Raglan wishes the cavalry to advance rapidly to the front, follow the enemy, and try to prevent the enemy carrying away the guns; troops of Horse Artillery may accompany. French cavalry is on your left. Immediate.” A certain over-zealous Captain Nolan conveyed these vague orders and when the cavalry commanders questioned which guns he apparently pointed to the valley stating, “There [is] the enemy, and there are the guns”. They weren’t the guns that Raglan had in mind but the order’s urgency allowed no hesitation so Light Brigade Commander Lord Cardigan gave the order to charge... While the impetuous cavalry commanders have taken much of the blame for this debacle some responsibility must fall on Raglan’s imprecise orders. A veteran of Waterloo 40 years earlier, he was so out of touch that he continually referred to the enemy as “the French”. He was brave and dutiful but according to... *The Times* correspondent William H Russell... “he was a man of strong prejudices and weak resolution and too apt to depend upon those around him when he should have used his own eyes”. Sebastopol did eventually fall but not until September 8 the following year, necessitating exposure to a vicious Crimean winter and a host of almost unimaginable hardships. The allies lost about 252,600 men – 70,000 in battle while disease (mainly cholera) and deprivation accounted for the rest.

Although the official line that the British army was “the best appointed in Europe” was exposed as a lie during the Crimean War, the ‘Royal Navy retained the position of most powerful in the world until WW2’ – a position it had held since the 16th century.

ARMADA... [is] the name applied to the great Spanish fleet that was defeated by the English... Few naval battles have had such far-reaching effects. The victory saved England from invasion. But it also marked a turning point in naval tactics, and it opened the way for the colonial expansion of England, Holland, and France by breaking the Spanish-Portuguese monopoly of overseas empire... The Spaniards were still strong enough to keep their established colonies in Latin America and elsewhere, but they no longer tried to monopolize America north of Florida or to

defend the Asian empire... The English, Dutch, and French moved into these two areas at once... [and] new overseas empires grew very rapidly... Ever since Queen Elizabeth had come to the throne in 1558, Protestant England had managed to steer a neutral course during the bitter religious wars on the Continent. The Catholics, with the powerful support of Philip II of Spain, were trying to stamp out Protestantism, especially in France and the Netherlands. Hoping to pave the way for maritime expansion, a group of bold and colourful English “Sea Dogs,”... engaged in successful but unneutral raiding of Spanish ships and ports in the Caribbean and more distant waters. Philip II put up with this for a quarter century but finally decided to invade England with his crack Spanish infantry, carried by an “armada.” Until this time most actions had been fought at close range, with ships lying alongside each other. In 1571 the Spaniards, with other Christian forces, had smashed Turkish naval power in the Mediterranean at Lepanto, using galleys, propelled by oars, of the type used since Greek and Roman times. But for Atlantic action the English Sea Dogs were planning a very different sort of tactics, developing fast, low-lying, maneuverable vessels that could get to wind-ward and pound the enemy at long range with [cannons], safe from hand-to-hand contact with the redoubtable Spanish infantry on the ships. In July 1588 the great Spanish-Portuguese force sailed for England, with 124 vessels of various sizes, carrying 1,100 guns and 27,000 men. [However, only ‘about 40 of these ships were line-of-battle ships, the rest being mostly transports and light craft.’] The English had 197 ships with 2000 guns and 16,000 men. The Englishmen were all seamen, while half the Spanish were soldiers. The English guns had the longer range. The Spaniards met the new tactics along the south coast of England when the Sea Dogs pounded their huge, clumsy vessels from beyond the range of the Spanish guns. The Armada sought refuge in the French port of Calais, but [were] dislodged... with fireships – vessels filled with combustibles and set fire to drift into the enemy fleet. The... Spaniards... [were] mauled... badly until the English ran out of ammunition (having fired some 100,000 rounds), but by that time heavy gales had begun to push the Armada northward around the tip of Scotland and then southward around Ireland. Many Spanish ships floundered while others were wrecked on the coasts... Barely half the force that had set out in July limped home in September. The new long-range tactics developed by the English were taken up by other naval powers. They continued in general use until the advent of steam and [steel] armor after 1850, which changed the methods of naval warfare [yet again].

Preparations, under the command of the marques de Santa Cruz, began in 1586 but were seriously delayed by a surprise attack on Cadiz by Sir Francis DRAKE in 1587. By the time the expedition was ready Santa Cruz had died, and command was given to the duque de MEDINA SIDONIA. The Armada... was to go to Flanders and from there convoy the army of... [the] duke of Parma, to invade England. It set out from Lisbon in May, 1588, but was forced into Coruna by storms and did not set sail again until July. Medina Sidonia’s orders were to proceed straight up the English Channel and refuse battle until he made junction with Parma. This gave the initiative to the English, whose main fleet... sailed out from Plymouth to achieve the windward side of the Spanish... [T]he Armada was severely battered, but a sudden change in the wind enabled most of the ships to escape northward. In attempting to sail home by Scotland and the west coast of Ireland... their provisions gave out; and many of those who landed in Ireland were killed by English troops. - The Columbia Encyclopedia

Tactically the Armada action was enduring to historical significance as the first major naval gun battle under sail... Only 60 ships are known to have reached Spain, many of them too badly damaged to be repaired, and perhaps 15,000 men perished. The English lost several hundred, perhaps several thousand, men to disease but sustained negligible damage and casualties in action.

As myth and naval lore the defeat of the Armada has inspired English pride and heroism ever since.

...Such a strange creature as the armadillo could barely escape folklore... In prehistoric times huge armadillo-like animals... were as big as oxen. Some were armed with a formidable spiked club at the end of the tail which could be used as a weapon against such predators as the sabre-toothed tiger. Today, there are many different kinds of armadillos... The name armadillo, [which came from the word ‘*armado* (armed man)’ and means] “little armored thing,” was given to the animal by the Spanish when they invaded the New World... The armor is a protection against flesh-eaters... Although they resemble the parents at birth, the... shells... of the... young... do not completely harden until they are full grown. There are up to four young in a litter. All are of the same sex, being derived from one egg, a phenomenon called polyembryony... Armadillos are of benefit to mankind since they devour large quantities of termites and other injurious insects as well as scorpions. They also eat snakes, poultry, fruit, and eggs.

The Spanish fleet had been called the *Invincible Armada* because the Spaniards thought it could not be defeated... The failure of the Armada was a great blow to the prestige of Spain, the world’s most powerful country at that time.

By the time the US had become *the world’s most powerful country*, the belief that such a country couldn’t be defeated was back in vogue.

Largely because of its historical background of opportunity, its industry, its rich natural resources, and its rapid rise to a position of world power, America values success. It is a win-oriented culture.

U.S. Finds War Much Tougher Struggle To Win - 1967

In Vietnam, ‘the US military commanders made the mistake of thinking that superior technology was capable of winning any war. Unfortunately, the Vietnamese refused to fight as the systems engineers expected them to.’ In a futile attempt to win the Vietnam War, the US increasingly resorted to activities that reduced to dust any moral highground it claimed to hold.

First reports emerge that U[S] troops shot Vietnamese civilians in My Lai village... - 1969

Bewilderment reigned and tears flowed at the weekend as people from both sides of the 1968 My Lai massacre revisited the site, stirring memories of one of the Vietnam War’s most shocking incidents... an event widely viewed as one of the most shameful in American military history. On the morning of March 16... some 500... villagers were... slaughtered... [by marauding GIs. At least one] US helicopter... crew tried to halt the carnage on that day... [by] loading people on to the chopper and [flying] them to safety... “I knew about war, but on that day everything suddenly rushed into chaos. It was all out of control...” said... one of those... rescued from the bloodbath... who at the time was just 14 years old... “...those people who rescued me I consider them kind,” she said. “But all the others were cruel. I don’t know why thousands of Americans killed Vietnamese. We were just ordinary people.” ...Western historians point out that a much larger slaughter, involving actions against civilians by Communist forces in the nearby central city of Hue, took place about the same time. But what happened at My Lai came to symbolise, at least in the U[S], all that was wrong with the Vietnam conflict. “It was a few misled men acting because of very poor leadership,” said... [a helicopter crew member who was] brought back by a US television network... to commemorate the... anniversary... “In a nutshell, war’s insanity. I pray that one day we’ll be able to evolve out of the war mentality.” ...[● Uncu]t news footage changed the course of the Vietnam War... Your regular American wasn’t terribly sure where Vietnam was until graphic footage of atrocities his or her countrymen suffered and perpetrated there began to turn up on the evening news.

...What was Vietnam all about? The fall of South Vietnam was not inevitable. After all, South Korea is still there. And if South Vietnam were still there too, it would probably be doing just fine. It's been only 2[decades], but the fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975, like the whole Vietnam War that preceded it, feels as if it happened in a galaxy long, long ago and far away. Perhaps that is because, though it was a big war that killed lots of people, it wasn't really about anything important. The strategic context... that fuelled the American intervention in Vietnam – [that] if Vietnam falls, so must Thailand, then Malaysia, then Indonesia and the Philippines – was manifest nonsense. None of them fell or even tottered. The political context seems even more antique. The Americans and their Vietnamese opponents were driven by the same ideological delusion: that communism (as the leaders in Hanoi devoutly believed and the decision-makers in Washington secretly-feared) was the wave of the future. But, in fact, it was the wave of the past, spending the last of its force on the beaches of Vietnam. The 1970s was the last decade in which communism, already viewed as a stupid but dangerous dinosaur in Europe, could still be seen as a successful and attractive ideology even in the further reaches of Asia... [T]oday... Vietnam has become an Asian version of Cuba – economically hopeless and politically backward, though still the beneficiary of much romantic goodwill in the more prosperous and freer parts of the world. It is a stunningly petty outcome for a war that at the time aroused such passion around the world. An entire generation in Asia, Europe and North America cut its political teeth on the Vietnam War... You could say that Vietnam gave the 60s, which actually ran from about 1965 to 1973, their unifying cultural theme. More than three million Vietnamese were killed, plus 55,000 Americans [– ‘the US had a total of 8,744,000 personnel serving in Vietnam, with 153,000 receiving non-mortal wounds’ (the corresponding figures for US forces during ‘WW2 were 16,113,000 personnel, 292,000 killed and 671,000 wounded’) –]and smaller numbers of A[US]ns, South Koreans and other foreigners. An entire country was devastated, and phrases like free-fire zone, defoliation and pain threshold entered the language. Neighbouring countries, Cambodia and Laos, were dragged into the fighting... All that misery, all that sacrifice, all that horror, and in the end all it produced was...? People hate it when history makes no sense, so they strive valiantly to give the Vietnam war a meaning commensurate with its cost. For the Vietnamese and especially for their neighbours, this often involves treating the present Vietnamese regime with a reverence that is unjustified in terms of its accomplishments. For Americans, it generally revolves around the lessons about sensitivity to casualties and the limitations of American power that were allegedly learned from Vietnam. But those lessons had already been learned once in Korea in the early 1950s, and would have been learned again in any large-scale American military intervention anywhere else in the 1960s... Korea and Vietnam were both originally divided by wars that arose out of rivalries between the victors in... W[W2]. By 1953 in Korea, and by 1956 in Vietnam, the countries were formally partitioned by the ceasefires that ended those wars. In Korea's case, that is where matters have remained to this day. In Vietnam, by contrast, the fighting started up again in a small way in the late 1950s. That happened mainly because the South Vietnamese military regime was less competent both politically and militarily than the South Korean military regime (perhaps because of its basic ethos derived from a lazy and corrupt French colonial regime, not an austere and efficient Japanese one)... The huge US military intervention of the late 1960s both increased the scale of the war and devalued the nationalist credentials of the Saigon regime. But the Americans were gone again by 1973, and at that point the North Vietnamese were very far from victory. The South Vietnamese Army was still in control of all urban and almost all farming areas. It was not even totally demoralised. It was, however, totally Americanised, which meant that it was addicted to using huge amounts of firepower – and was, therefore, dependent on massive amounts of munitions that only the US could provide. When the [US] Congress, in its haste to put all recollection of the lost war behind it, refused to keep the administration's promises to maintain the lavish flow of military aid to [South] Vietnam, morale there went down the toilet very fast. The end... was a rout that saw remarkably little fighting.

...The remains of... six... more American servicemen listed missing in action since the Vietnam War are back in the U[S]. First stop is the Army's central identification laboratory at Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii, where forensic experts and other scientists will try to positively identify the men... Since 1973, 523 sets of remains have been recovered, identified and returned to their families. More than 2000 servicemen remain unaccounted for... [In related news, w]hen Jack Enwright returned in the early 1990s to visit the hospital in Qui Nhon where he had spent much of what they call the American War, the Vietnamese surgeon in charge greeted him as an old friend. “I never met you, but I feel as if I know you,” he said. It turned out the local surgeon had spent much of Mr Enwright's ...tour of duty there working in a Vietcong bush hospital nearby. He always sent his worst cases down to the N[Z] Surgical Team – and made sure they arrived on Tuesdays and Thursdays when Jack... was the admitting surgeon. “Jack never knew,” recalls one who worked with him, “that he was getting referrals from the communist surgeon over the hill.” It's no mean feat to command the respect of the enemy, but Jack... commanded the respect of all who met him. He spent... six of the... nine years in Qui Nhon... as the team's leader. He mastered the difficult, tonal language and pioneered numerous techniques for the emergency treatment of serious, especially intestinal, injury, which were well ahead of their time... [A] graduate of Otago Medical School who carried out post-graduate study in tropical medicine in Edinburgh, [Jack] worked for three years in Zululand in South Africa in the early 1960s. But Vietnam was his special love. He left Qui Nhon, grudgingly, the day before the North Vietnamese Army arrived, but “hung around Saigon” itching to return and was among the last to leave, plucked from the roof of the American Embassy at the end of April, 1975. When he came back to N[Z] he maintained his connection, sponsoring several families to immigrate to N[Z] and, latterly, arranging the collection and shipment of medical supplies to Vietnamese hospitals. He was named an Officer of the Order of the British Empire in 1976... [Jack, who was b]orn in Auckland in 1922[, d]ied in Auckland June 21.

N[Z and AUS]n policies of forward defence were based on the assumption of the U[S] holding the line against communist aggression in Indochina, and Britain's 90,000-strong presence in Malaysia and Singapore protecting the rest of the region with its aircraft carriers, warships, fighters and bombers... Anzac troops were sent to Vietnam as an expression of political support for Washington and as a message to both the U[S] and Britain that N[Z and AUS] would go to whatever lengths they could to keep the great powers in Asia... N[Z and AUS] faced serious economic and military problems in sending forces to both Vietnam and Malaysia – more so N[Z] because of its parlous economy and public veto of conscripts...

In May 1967, [a] 21-year-old Sydney journalist... was arrested for refusing to register for national service during the Vietnam War. He spent the next 30 days in Long Bay jail... On his release from jail, [he] battled to establish his status as a conscientious objector. When this was denied, he was forcibly drafted and taken by armed guard to Holsworthy Army Barracks... [He] politely... refused to obey military commands or dress in military uniform... was court-martialled and sentenced to 28 days' detention. In prison... he was thrown into solitary confinement, fed only bread and water, and woken every half-hour, day and night. How a young conscript could end up with such harsh treatment was hotly debated in federal parliament. The result was a military inquiry and... the abolition of such punishment... In December 1969, the phased withdrawal of A[US]n troops from Vietnam began. The country's combat role there came to an end in November 1970 and the National Services Act was repealed in 1972.

Children of Vietnam fighting a new war... [She] was five when her father returned from Vietnam, but she is fighting her own war for official acknowledgment of what he and other... [N]Z... soldiers suffered[(officially, of the ‘nearly 4000 NZers who served in Vietnam, 37 died and 187 were wounded’)]... She said she was not too young to recall her family's relief at having her father... home safely in 1966 “without a scratch on him.” But it soon became clear that [her father,] who also served with the Royal N[Z] Engineers in Korea and Malaya, did not emerge unscathed. First there were mood swings, nightmares and states of high anxiety, which spread to the rest of the household. Then his physical health deteriorated until he died six years ago, riddled with cancers. Two of the cancers, of the lung and larynx, are among 10 medical conditions accepted by the A[US]n Government as linked to exposure to the chemical cocktail Agent Orange. [The US Government also ‘accepts compensation claims for Vietnam vets

with certain conditions' (e.g., prostate cancer). No such luck for the 'at least 2 million Vietnamese thought to still be affected.' The N[Z]... **Government does not acknowledge such a broad link, treating war pension applications on a stricter case-by-case basis, although it allocated \$1.7 million last year to 634 people... Another... [woman,] whose father was 43 when he died of stomach cancer in 1975, three years after returning from Vietnam[, has become a member]... of a group... formed to push the Government for proper medical research... She spoke of how [her father] instructed South Vietnamese soldiers while being drenched constantly by Agent Orange sprayed over the jungle by U[S] aircraft. The group is disappointed at Wellington's lukewarm response to A[U]S Government research findings... A Government spokeswoman has said there are no plans to commission wider research here but further results from Canberra would be watched.** [Amongst other 'symptoms accredited to the defoliant Agent Orange are birth defects (e.g., blindness) in the descendants of Vietnam veterans.'

... 'a new book detailing the "disgraceful" treatment of AUSn Vietnam War veterans should be compulsory reading for all politicians and senior students, a former federal Government minister said yesterday. *The Battle After the War* book was the first account of veterans struggling to get official recognition of the harm caused by the defoliant Agent Orange. The book also says that since their return, up to 1000 veterans have committed suicide – far more than the 500 or so who died on active duty. In comparison to the triumphant welcomes to ex-servicemen after earlier victorious wars, Vietnam veterans were largely shunned by their fellow AUSns, who had been bitterly divided over the morality of the war that was ultimately lost to North Vietnamese Communist forces. Vietnam veterans around AUS mark Vietnam Veterans' Day today, coinciding with the anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, the fiercest combat the AUSn troops were involved in during the Vietnam War. The author, himself a conscripted veteran, documents the Government's refusal to admit that cancer and birth defects were linked to Agent Orange, with grudging concessions made only after US authorities admitted the link. Launching the book on the eve of Vietnam Veterans' Day, the author said he became deeply angered at the Government in 1980 when the then Defence Minister joked in Parliament that for all he knew "Agents Orange, Blue, White and Purple could be four horses running at Rosehill on Saturday." The comment was followed by a roar of laughter from the Government benches. A Royal Commission held in 1983 concluded there was no link between Agent Orange and the veterans' medical complaints.' Incidentally, 'unwanted Vietnam War-era napalm which was shunted back and forth across the US earlier this year will soon be heading to Texas for recycling. A Houston company has won a contract to turn 12.92 million litres of 'the jelly-like substance developed during WW2 which clings to anything it comes into contact with, and which burns with intense heat when ignited,' into fuel for industrial furnaces.]

... **Canadians have opened their hearts and wallets to... the terrified girl immortalised in a famous photograph of a napalm attack in Vietnam, who is battling poverty... Hundreds of supportive letters and more than \$30,000... in cash have poured in... since the *Toronto Star*, Canada's largest newspaper, printed a story six weeks ago about her fight to build a life in Canada. [N]ow 33 and pregnant with her second child, [she] lives with her husband... and their four-year-old son in a cramped one-bedroom apartment in Toronto... [She] met her husband while studying in Cuba and they spent their honeymoon in Moscow in 1992. When their plane stopped in Canada for refuelling, the newlyweds disembarked and defected... The Pulitzer prize-winning photo of [the then]nine-year-old... fleeing burning and naked – arms outstretched in pain and terror – from her napalmed village, galvanised anti-war sentiment in the US and changed her life. She is still racked with pain from her injuries from the 1972 attack and she refuses to wear short sleeves, which would expose some of the burns that scar most of her body... [The girl] and her family were hiding in a South Vietnamese temple when napalm bombs were dropped on her village. The jellied gasoline vaporised her clothes, left her with third-degree burns over half her body and killed two of her younger brothers... [She] had 17 operations and was used after the war by the communist North Vietnamese for anti-American propaganda... Her greatest wish is to see her family again. So far she has been blocked by political and financial obstacles from visiting her parents in Vietnam.**

... **In a ceremony at the U[N] Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation's Paris headquarters... [the immortalised napalm victim], whose name means Golden Happiness[, was]... handed... the blue passport of a Goodwill Ambassador... Last year, while helping make a documentary film about her life, [she] travelled to America for the first time and visited the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in Washington. There, in an unexpected meeting, she came face to face with... the U[S] commander who ordered the attack on Trang Bang. She took him in her arms and they both wept.**

... **The most senior figure in the Vietnamese Communist Party has admitted that corruption is rife in the state bureaucracy... [By the way, seven] children died and 34 people were injured when a fragmentation bomb left over from the Vietnam War exploded in school grounds. "The hospital looks like a battlefield," said... [the] Vice Chairman of the People's Committee in Ky Son, a mountainous district of central Vietnam near the border with Laos... [F]ive children, aged between nine and 15, died immediately in the blast and two died later in hospital. It was not clear what triggered its detonation, but officials in the area said rain may have eroded away surrounding soil and exposed the top of the bomb. At least one wartime bomb explodes every year in the... district, which was bombed heavily by U[S] planes during raids on North Vietnam and Laos.**

... '[the explosion of a WWII mine at the weekend at the site of the Battle of Stalingrad killed 5 boys, 3 of them brothers, who tried to dismantle it. More than five decades after the battle, the area is still littered with rusty weapons and ammunition, attracting curious children and professional trophy seekers.'

... 'An unstable WW2 mine that may contain 230kg of explosives has been found by a tourist snorkelling on Sudbury Reef, part of the Great Barrier Reef. A wide exclusion zone has been declared. AUSn defence officials said the British anti-shiping mine cannot be moved, and the only option seems to be to explode at the site.' In related news, 'thousands of litres of heavy fuel oil is leaking from a sunken US ship into one of the world's largest lagoons at a near-pristine Pacific Ocean atoll. Divers contracted by the US Navy were heading to the Ulithi atoll, in Yap state in the Federated States of Micronesia, to try to plug the leak, which threatened the food supply of 700 people living on the atoll. The oil is leaking from the wreckage of the only US Navy ship sunk during the war by a "kaiten" – a one-man Japanese suicide submarine. For a brief period before the US invasion of Okinawa in Japan, Ulithi was the largest Navy facility in the world. Up to 600 vessels were moored in the Lagoon. The *Pacific Daily News* in Guam reported that the Coastguard believed between 1000 and 2000 litres of oil was leaking every hour from the American tanker, the USS Mississinewa. The US Navy has denied responsibility for the new spill.'

... 'The US is downplaying the significance of an oil leak from the wreck of USS Mississinewa – a WW2 tanker believed to hold 1.6 million litres of oil – in one of the world's largest lagoons despite pictures seeming to show a heavy slick. The *Pacific Daily News* in Guam said yesterday that a US Coastguard preliminary assessment of the oil spill in Ulithi Atoll in the Federated States of Micronesia indicated the impact on the environment was minimal.'

... **The Solomon Islands, facing an environmental disaster from debris and relics remaining more than 50 years after... W[W2], is to pressure Japan and the Western Allies to pay for a clean-up of the country. The... country could not handle "such an emergency" on its own, [the Solomon Is P]M... said... At least 50 battleships and carriers lie on the seabed of Iron Bottom Sound, a narrow body of water between the main island of Guadalcanal and the volcanic island of Savo, and nearly all are oozing oil. Among the smaller boats... is the US vessel PT 109, captained when it was sunk by John F. Kennedy... Guadalcanal marked the southernmost advance of the Japanese during the war and was the scene of a protracted and bitter battle... of epic proportions... On land, there are war relics everywhere and much of the munitions is still live.**

... **Enchanting notions of sudden wealth have a long history, ranging from El Dorado and other mythical sources to present-day gambling. But the subject came up in another context this week, when I was reminded of the pipe-dream about supposed supplies of American wartime equipment still perfectly preserved and awaiting discovery in Pacific jungles. Persistent fantasies about abandoned aircraft, vehicles and weapons surface even today, the classic one being that there could well be a brand new Jeep sitting there, greased and oiled against rust and still in its original packing case. Veterans of the war in the Pacific tend to dismiss these tales... A former major in the US Marines... says his battle-tested outfit kept a tight inventory of all equipment, and... after the war he even got a letter from the Quartermaster-General's Office in Washington, billing him for a gas**

mask and six wooden tent pegs – “and boy, did I boil!” Whatever was left behind by the island-hopping US forces was a minuscule part of the \$US530 billion material cost of the entire war to America. But by [NZ] standards the pickings were worthwhile, for we did recover war surplus equipment from the islands... A [NZer who] worked for one of the big oil companies... [during the postwar years was] sent... to sort out problems with refuelling from drums at Pacific island airports. He returned with the news that there was abandoned American refuelling equipment, vehicles included, in excellent condition that would be useful in N[Z] “which was not importing much in that line.” He was given the job of dismantling it for shipment here in the trading schooner Tiare Taporo. I saw hardware left in the wake of the war on a 1971 visit to Guadalcanal. There were aircraft wrecks, rusting field guns. There was talk of a Japanese ack-ack battery here and US amphibian craft elsewhere. But the big preoccupation was bombs and shells. People were blown up trying to hammer the noses off them. Grass fires set off explosions. In a dry spell “the heat cooks them off,” said a British Army doctor who had dumped 450,000 at sea in 21 months, working with 30 islanders. An expanse of bush was wired off with the notice: “Unexploded bombs: Tabu”. Definitely no El Dorado.

...Two French air force officers got more than they bargained for when they went searching for... W[W1] relics on the battlefield of Verdun[– where]... 543,000 French and 434,000 German troops were killed... They trod on one of the estimated 60 million shells that were fired during[the] 10 months of fighting... in 1916. Unfortunately for them it was live and they were killed when it exploded... [Incidentally, m]illions of palmyrah trees have been destroyed during Sri Lanka’s protracted civil war in the north of the country. Government officials said that... the trees have been felled by the army and the Liberation Tigers... mainly to build bunkers and checkpoints. The trees help prevent soil erosion during the monsoon season, and their hardwood is a valuable export crop. - 1997

In all, some 14[%] of the standing crop of timber of South Vietnam was destroyed[by defoliants during the war] and the rare kouprey (*Bos sauveli*) further endangered. Animals that increased in number were the malarial mosquitoes which were presented with immense new breeding grounds in water-filled craters... Other technology employed in Vietnam included cloud-seeding (to try and flood the Ho Chi Minh trail) but the success or otherwise of the measure is disputed. Vietnam remains the outstanding example of the deployment of a full arsenal of non-nuclear weapons. The boundary with nuclear warfare, it may be observed, is now getting more blurred in the sense that it is possible for a single aircraft carrying appropriate high explosive devices to deliver as much immediate devastation as a tactical nuclear weapon with a 1 kt warhead.

Preparation for war involves, environmentally, the devotion of areas of land and sea to training and weapons testing.

War and preparations for war have contributed to pollution mightily. During the Vietnam War, US forces employed some hundred thousand tons of defoliants and other chemical warfare agents, Agent Orange being heavily contaminated with dioxin. Disregarding the Koran’s prohibition of such acts, [Iraq’s leader] took revenge for his defeat in the 1991 Gulf War by setting fire to Kuwait’s oilwells: the cloud of sooty smoke was 900km long and 600km wide. With the fires extinguished, thousands of square kilometers became covered by oil lakes which released... toxic fumes.

During the 1991 Persian Gulf War[‘Iraq 150,000 casualties – US 79’], the Iraqis deliberately dumped over a million barrels of crude oil into the Persian Gulf. This terrorist act threatened to cause unprecedented damage to the ecology of the region for some time. In the wake of their retreat from Kuwait, the Iraqis set fire to over 500 Kuwaiti oil wells... The smoke emissions, the worst ever recorded, caused severe and deadly pollution in Kuwait. It was the worst environmental catastrophe in modern history.

The Gulf War began after Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait and, in addition to the above-mentioned oil-well fires, was remarkable for the intensity of media coverage and the effectiveness of US weapons.

The intense air attacks on targets in Iraq and occupied Kuwait are costing the U[S] upwards of \$US500 million... a day, according to Government and private analysts... [Analysts also] say... German technicians and firms gave Iraq a vital boost in turning its Scud-B missiles into longer-range weapons able to strike deep into Israel and Saudi Arabia...

More than 45,000kg of mail is landed daily... in Saudi Arabia for the American forces... [In related news,] Germany and France have sent emissaries to Israel to soothe relations, ruffled by resentment that Europe helped build Iraq’s powerful war machine.

...To keep the American machine running, congressional staffers said, the Administration would seek a supplemental defence appropriation of at least \$499 billion... U[S] Allies had so far promised about \$US45 billion... to finance the war... [the] Budget Director... said.

...The White House repeated yesterday that Allied forces are not targeting Iraq’s President... [It also confirmed that a]t least 50... military vehicles have disappeared from a[US] Army compound near Allied front lines...

Two months after Yemen voted against the U[S] in a crucial U[N] Security Council debate on the Gulf crisis, the State Department slashed its aid from a planned \$37.1 million to less than \$5 million... [Incidentally, m]ore than twice as many Americans have died accidentally in the Gulf War as in combat so far. Military statistics show 28 men have died in accidents away from battle in the first four weeks of the war, compared with 12 killed in action... Accidental deaths haunt all wars. According to the *Defence Department Almanac*, of the... Americans killed in Vietnam, 10,000 died of causes not connected with combat. In... W[W2], the ratio was 291,557 battlefield deaths to 113,842. In... W[W1], it was the other way round – 53,402 battle deaths and 63,114 others.

...Nine British soldiers were killed by “friendly fire” from an American aircraft during fighting in southern Iraq... The British military have [also] admitted that a bomb dropped from a Tornado jet during an attack on an Iraqi bridge veered off course and hit a populated area.

...The commander of U[S] forces in the Gulf... said yesterday that it would not make sense to attack Iraqi troops if they began a large-scale withdrawal from Kuwait... Asked about the possibility of the U[S] pledging not to attack Iraqi troops during a withdrawal, he called this a “logical assumption,” saying “we can’t expect them to withdraw if we are going to pound them the entire time they are withdrawing.” ...The start of such a pull-out would constitute “an entirely different set of circumstances,” in which the U[N] resolutions on the Gulf crisis were being implemented...

The U[S] and its Allies tricked [Iraq’s] President... into losing the cream of his Army... and made sure he could no longer threaten his neighbours... The U[S] Marines... cut off the Iraqi retreat by closing off all avenues of escape... The Marines left a trail of devastation... - 1991

The US commanders wanted to ‘destroy the Iraqi Army’, but soldiers are just workers carrying out orders. Like members of the Desert Storm forces, Iraqi soldiers had partners and children to go home to. Apparently, US commanders had forgotten the old western code that ‘only the bad guys shoot people in the back.’ Ironically, the US and its Arab allies had helped to create the Iraqi Army!

The violent and savage rhetoric the Ayatollah used, not only against the U[S] but also against rich Islamic countries like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait for their religious and moral transgressions, made them willing accomplices of Iraq in its war against Iran. In effect, the Saudis and Kuwaitis hired [the Iraqi leader] to do their military work, to stave off the political disaster they feared from possible insurrection at home. Both pretended that

Iraq, in invading Iran, was simply making a contribution to peace in the Gulf. Each, fearing the Ayatollah, made considerable sums of money and substantial amounts of war materiel available to the Iraqis, believing that Iran's defeat was in the interest of all Arab peoples.

During... the Iraq-Iran war, when Iraq was the aggressor, the [US] administration secretly and cynically shipped arms to both belligerents... [I]t also shared intelligence information, which the Iranians found substantially less useful than the Iraqis... [Then came] the Gulf War... The American audience for the President's speech on January 16[, 1991,] had been the largest in history; CNN had come of age, rivaling all the other networks because it provided what the public craved – war news [24] hours a day. By Saturday, the beginning of the weekend, America's restaurants and movie houses were deserted – men and women much preferred to stay at home to watch the war... Within a day of the initial bombings... oil prices dropped more than \$10 a barrel – the largest single-day drop in history – and the Dow Jones average rose a healthy 114 points. Though historians could say, correctly, that war often encouraged new investment and created bull markets, rarely did stock markets register such very large gains.

...the dictator of Iraq extended his oil claims by occupying Kuwait... Operation Desert Storm rescued the supply of oil to the industrial countries and secured it at prices that permit the continued wasteful consumption of this diminishing resource and discourage development of alternative sources of primary energy. Incidental to this ugly episode, perhaps a tenth of the rescued oil pool went to foul the sea and sky. That cost is unregretted by most Arabs; it is not their oil. They and other peoples of the preindustrial world remain duly unimpressed, however, by the overnight dismantling of the electric power, communication, transportation, and municipal service systems in Iraq, that represented a relatively superior level of development among Arab countries... The U[S] celebrated its military triumph alone.

The US congratulated itself for being able to guide a missile to an exact target, and for dismantling Iraq's infrastructure, but it had failed to remove the person on whom the whole Gulf crisis could largely be blamed – thereby allowing him to continue tormenting everyone!

Iraq[']s political leader... was born... to a poor Arab Sunni family... [in] 1937. Following his attempt in 1959 to assassinate the premier of Iraq... [he] studied law in Egypt. He returned to Baghdad in 1963 when the Baath party seized power but was imprisoned in 1964 after the government was overthrown. In 1966 he escaped. In... 1968 the Baath returned to power, and he was named deputy chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council. Through military purges, intimidation of enemies, and careful control of his party, he became the most powerful person in Iraq, acceding finally to its presidency in 1979[– thereby fulfilling a 'Time' prediction. The Havana cigar-smoking despot marked his accession by executing 21 party officials'. After attempting] to increase industrial production, reorganize government policy in agriculture, improve education, and change the status of women[, he] put his economic and social advances at risk by going to war with Iran (1980-1988) in a vain effort to gain control of Arab-inhabited areas of oil resources... Although... Iraq... was... defeated by a U.S.-led military coalition early in 1991, the Iraqi leader retained power.

According to the *Washington Post*, the CIA... has... spent... \$100 million to implement a classified 1991 presidential order to oust [the President of Iraq]. The paper quoted Administration, congressional and dissident Iraqi sources as saying that despite the money there was very little to show for the effort... The operation fell apart last month when... a Kurdish rebel leader, requested [the President of Iraq's] military assistance to oust a rival Kurdish group from the region. Many of the 2500 Kurds who worked for the U[S] in northern Iraq were evacuated to Turkey last night in the first step in a long journey to America as refugees... Most worked as employees of U[S] aid programmes in northern Iraq but some are believed to have been engaged in intelligence activities for the Americans as well. All are considered to be at risk... About 250 members of the Iraqi National Congress, a U[S]-funded group dedicated to the overthrow of [the Iraqi President], are also set to cross the border in the next few days. - 1996

IN newspapers and on TV talk shows, Washington pundits and politicians... [have been] saying out loud what many have long thought: The best approach to [the] Iraqi leader... is to get rid of him once and for all... But assassinating the Iraqi president would be neither legal nor easy[– 'given that twenty attempts on his life have so far failed, he never spends more than one night in the same place and has a "volunteer" taste all his food' – and his] successor could prove no better... Reacting to past CIA assassination plots, Congress in 1976 barred US agents from killing foreign leaders or "asking anybody to do something you can't do yourself", said... a former CIA deputy director. "You can encourage others to put pressure, but you cannot explicitly or implicitly say: 'We'd like to see this guy gone'." That said, administrators have repeatedly pushed the envelope but often to little effect... "We chased [him] with bombers all through the Gulf War,"... Since the war ended, the CIA has [undertaken covert efforts...]

The 41st US President] declined to use military might to remove... [the Iraqi leader, but he] put up \$US40 million as a down payment... when he secretly ordered the CIA to create the conditions for [the Iraqi leader's] downfall in 1991. Much of that money went to buy and move a clandestine radio transmitter from Croatia and to finance a London-based propaganda operation that turned out fake Baghdad newspapers, television films and radio broadcasts. Within the agency, the Iraqi operation was instantly seen by some... as a can of worms. These officers knew they would never get enough money or political support from the White House... That feeling was reinforced when annual funding was cut to \$US20 million in late 1992, and then to \$US15 million in 1994, after [the 42nd US President] came to the White House and adopted [the] programme... The agency could not stop throwing money at the [Iraqi] problem if it wanted to. Refusing to admit defeat, the White House orders this international embarrassment prolonged to avoid being accused of doing nothing... This year covert operations against Iraq will cost about \$US5 million, the price tag for ineffective propaganda broadcasts by... radio stations in Jordan and Kuwait... The [CIA] has spent six years and \$110 million... trying to overthrow [the Iraqi leader] in the most expensive sustained failure in agency history... with fresh humiliation looming around the corner... Interviews in Washington and Europe with CIA personnel, Iraqi dissidents and foreign intelligence sources provide new insights into this colossal exercise in self-deception... Ambitious junior officers targeted the money on flashy projects that led nowhere but allowed the White House to pretend something was happening... Some Americans who worked in Iraq covertly now wonder whether the agency was a victim of an elaborate sting perpetrated by [the Iraqi leader], who watched with a benign eye as the CIA funnelled money and Iraqi military defectors into a Jordan-based exile group for two years before effortlessly rolling up that organisation and exposing its American roots last summer... Senators who normally line up to rail at expensive agencies for wasting taxpayer money have kept quiet on the CIA debacle... Congress should step in swiftly with its own investigation of a national humiliation.

...Along with the Bay of Pigs in 1961, Iraq stands as the agency's most expensive and embarrassing flop since it was founded... In Washington's labyrinth of bureaucracy and secrecy, a policy failure operates like a shaky bank loan: if big enough, it intimidates everybody connected with it into silence and inaction. Only foot soldiers... risk being sacrificed, and only if they pipe up. Those who draw up the grand schemes and give orders always seem to fall effortlessly upwards or sideways... [T]he CIA director who oversaw the Iraq debacle, is now comfortably back at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and defending the flawed strategy he chose. His deputy was confirmed by the Senate earlier this month as... [his successor. The new director started] his tenure by attempting an old bureaucratic dodge: shooting the messenger who brings unwelcome news. The messenger in [the director's] sights is... a former CIA officer who disclosed his role in the agency's failed effort to overthrow Iraq's [President]... It should have triggered investigations by the agency, the White House and Congress of this particular operation and the future of covert action... Instead, [the new director] has asked the Justice Department to determine if [the CIA officer] violated his confidentiality agreement with the spy agency by

disclosing classified information. Imagine... the owner of the Titanic... [greeting] news of the luxury liner's sinking by ordering an investigation of the radio operator who sent out distress signals, and you get the picture... [As the CIA marks] its 50th birthday... [it] is time for Congress... to... sharply pare down the \$3-billion-a-year agency... But Congress is as mute as the White House...

[The Iraqi President] is the corpse who won't die... America thought he had been buried forever. But [he] claws his way up periodically to snarl anew at the world. The... White House... spinners... portray the Iraqi dictator as an incompetent, erratic Mafia chieftain... But that neglects the moral and strategic costs that these continuing confrontations... impose on U[S] leadership in the world. Each new confrontation saps respect for America. Each... time [the Iraqi President] claws his way up, it also exposes the international community's complicity in his survival... they still treat [him] as a member of their club by... [sending] diplomats... to Baghdad... And Russia, France and the Arab League have gone on record as opposing any military action against Iraq... providing Baghdad with a significant diplomatic and psychological marker to cite in future disputes... [The 41st US President compared his Iraqi counterpart] to Hitler, reminding the world of his genocide against the Kurds, his use of poison gas and the rape of Kuwait. But after all that, [Iraqi] officials are still seated on U[N] human rights commissions as well as other important international institutions... Throughout the Arab world, rulers and citizens alike believe that the world's only superpower could remove [the Iraqi] regime if it really wanted to. Because [the Iraqi President's] continued rule serves a useful purpose for them – be it controlling oil prices or keeping Iraq's Shiites and Kurds subjugated and brutalised – the Arabs assume that his continued rule serves some unacknowledged U[S] purpose as well. This suspicion is increasingly voiced in Europe and Asia...

100 Kurdish refugees from Iraq, including 53... children, have been found in wretched condition on a beach on the Greek island of Rhodes. - 1997

FOR MORE than a decade, the Kurds in Iraq have endured a hellish reign of terror at the hands of [Iraq's President. When the] US President... called on Iraqis to overthrow the dictator at the end of the Gulf War, Iraqi Kurds responded instantly. Taking up arms, they drove [the dictator's] troops from several key points in northern Iraq. It appeared as if they would at long last win their freedom. But the American-led coalition inexplicably allowed [the dictator] to counter-attack. Nearly two million Kurds fled from their lowland villages into the mountains and into neighbouring Turkey and Iran. Thousands died before pressure from the coalition compelled [the dictator's] troops to retreat. The Allies promised safety to those survivors who would return to their devastated villages... [But] Allied air patrols – all that remain to protect the Kurds from [the dictator's] menacing armies – are scheduled to end in June. Here is the tragic story of a noble people whose survival hangs in the balance. THE DAY began mild and clear in the city of Halabja. Then, without warning, [the dictator's] troops sent MiGs shrieking in from the south. Detonations shook houses like pieces of cloth in the wind. The family of [a 20-year-old... fled to their basement, where they were packed shoulder to shoulder. [The 20-year-old] ran to a less crowded house nearby. Just before sunset on March 16, 1988, [the 20-year-old] climbed up on to the roof. Amid flames and cones of black smoke, he saw yellow clouds seeping through the ancient lanes of the city. "Gas!" people shouted. "God save us!" Corpses lay everywhere along the street. Once the clouds had drifted away, [the 20-year-old] raced home... and opened the basement door. Inside lay his family – dead... At least 5000 of Halabja's 70,000 inhabitants were killed that day. The wounded who went to Iraqi hospitals never returned. Later, Iraqi troops dynamited the remains of Halabja. After the Gulf War, when [the dictator's] security forces fled, [the 20-year-old] and other Kurdish refugees returned to their villages. Though Iraqi Kurds are enjoying the first taste of freedom they have known in half a century, they continue to uncover mass graves of [the dictator's] victims. In Halabja, on the floor of the home he has rebuilt with his own hands, [the 20-year-old] slowly turns the pages of treasured family albums... The photos are all that remain of his family. Finally [the 20-year-old] turns with a questioning look in his eyes. "Why did the Allies let that monster... live...?" IN 1920, the victorious Allies of W[W]I promised the Kurds a homeland, but three years later reneged. In the 1970s, the U[S] promised continuing support to the Kurds against Iraq. Then, at the request of the Shah of Iran, [the US Secretary of State... directed an abrupt halt to the arms shipments. The cost was tens of thousands of Kurdish lives. During the next decade, vast areas of Iraqi Kurdistan were completely depopulated. [The dictator's] armies herded hundreds of thousands into government compounds... Some 70 communities were attacked by poison gas. An estimated 4000 villages were wiped out... Systematically sweeping through once-fertile valleys, Iraqi forces... laid waste... 90[%] of the land... "It was like hell...", one refugee said. "Even the bees fled." ...While we speak, two American A-10A "Tankbusters" swoop low overhead with an ear-shattering roar. Like virtually every Kurd I met, [the refugee] is convinced that only this symbolic Allied military presence deters [the dictator] from renewing his war against the Iraqi Kurds. The overflights could end in June unless Western nations extend their commitment and persuade Turkey to allow continued flights from its air bases. "What will happen then?" I ask... "[The dictator] will come. And we will fight him to the last drop of blood... We want to live like men, not animals." SOME 20 million Kurds live scattered throughout Iraq, Turkey and Iran, with small numbers in Syria and the former Soviet Union. Some 4.5 million of them dwell in northern Iraq, where their ancestors have lived for thousands of years. But as I travelled across Iraqi Kurdistan, it seemed as if the very land had been murdered. Schools, hospitals and mosques had been blown to bits. I saw pitiful, frozen refugees struggling to cook meals amid the twisted heaps of metal and concrete that were once their homes. This was not the result of war. It was the result of [the dictator's] premeditated campaign to wipe Iraq's Kurds off the face of the earth, for the Kurds have steadfastly refused to bow willingly to his dictatorship. The majority of Kurds are Muslims, but they are not Arabs. For years, Iraqi Kurds have fought against Arab discrimination. Yet they have never resorted to international terrorism to attract attention to their cause... I journeyed ...to... [the sprawling], modern city of Sulaymaniyah[, which] lies in the shadow of snowcapped peaks near Iraq's border with Iran. Until last year, though, Sulaymaniyah's real centre was not the bustling marketplace in the middle of the city, but an ugly concrete compound known as the Security Centre. "This is where I lived for five months," [my guide] says as we enter a windowless, concrete cell about a metre wide by two metres long. "I was sure I would never come out." [My guide], 61, had been a freedom fighter for 30 years before he was captured by Iraqi police in 1990. He leads me through a labyrinth of filthy corridors to a small dark room. A large iron hook hangs from a bar attached to the ceiling. Blood has soaked so deeply into the floor that it is still visible months after the prison was liberated. "This is where they tortured me,"... Three times every night he was handcuffed and forced to climb onto a table. His wrists were hung over the ceiling hook, and the table was kicked away. The Iraqis beat him with thick cables as he dangled from the hook. Sometimes they squeezed off chunks of flesh with pliers. They pushed live wires into his ears, his tongue, his genitals. The torture sessions lasted up to two hours each. When he was returned to his cell, sleep was impossible, for the screams of other prisoners echoed throughout the prison. One night, [he] heard gunfire outside the Security Centre. Kurdish freedom fighters had begun an attack. [My guide] heard the guards stop at the cell next to his, then watched as they pulled a shackled prisoner into the corridor and poured acid onto his naked body. He thrashed helplessly on the concrete floor until the guards shot him dead. *My turn will be next,* [my guide] thought. But the firing grew louder, and the guards left. Several hours later, Kurdish freedom fighters battered down his cell door. Today [my guide] remains blind in one eye, and has trouble hearing. "Tell the nations what happened here," he pleads. "Tell them to put a border between us and the Iraqis. If the Allies give [the dictator] any breathing space, he will kill us all. Please protect us!" ...The plain truth is that without Western help, the Kurds will die. Continued Allied air patrols are vital. The U[N] must ensure an autonomous haven in northern Iraq where the Kurds can live in freedom. Most important is the public guarantee of protection against the vengeance of [Iraq's President]. The message to [the dictator] has to be clear: if he dares to attack the Kurds again, the Allies will retaliate. The... fate of millions of... Kurds lies in our hands. - 1992

Washington may offer the... Kurds full military protection against [the Iraqi dictator] if they allow the Iraqi opposition to base itself in areas under their control... [A] leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party... told the *Independent* newspaper that the U[S] was seriously considering a proposal to give a military guarantee to the whole of Iraqi Kurdistan... The proposal is to extend the no-fly zone – which at present does not cover the large Kurdish city of Sulaimaniyah – and turn it into a no-drive zone. This would mean the U[S] building up a capability to stop an Iraqi tank offensive.

Iraqi Kurds have asked the U[N] to help them rid their ruined homes of snakes and scorpions[, which]... have... attacked small children... The U[N] has not responded to the Kurdish plea.

...Iraqi children suffer most from the West's war on [their President]... Since the end of the Gulf War, [over]... half a million Iraqi children under five ha[ve] died from starvation and disease. That's more than the total number of civilians and combatants who... died in the ethnic cleansing of the former Yugoslavia... It's a humanitarian nightmare, an unprecedented violation of the rights of children [– and i]t's a crime for which [Iraq's President] can't be blamed. Those responsible sit around the Security Council table of the U[N], aided and abetted by N[Z]. This country's navy patrols the Persian Gulf, part of the international blockade to enforce the sanctions imposed in... August 1990 when Iraq invaded Kuwait... During our term on the Security Council, N[Z] chaired the committee which every two months rolled over the sanctions. [I'm] not against sanctions as a tool to end conflict. But they can be a blunt instrument. They should be clearly aimed at the parties to the conflict, rather than inflicted on the poor and powerless. International attention is back on the region since the... Iraqi Government's intervention in northern Iraq on behalf of one of the two main Kurdish factions. What isn't seen is the way the Iraqi people are paying for the West's frustration at its failure to bring the dictator to heel... Even if... plans to extend the oil for food deal, which would... allow[the dictator] to sell US\$1 billion of oil every 90 days to buy essential food and medical supplies, after paying compensation to Kuwait... go... ahead, it will be too little too late to stop the deaths of hundreds of thousands of civilians... Iraq used its vast oil wealth to build up a comprehensive and generous welfare state. When the [Gulf] war started, Iraqis had the highest calorie intake a head of any Middle East country. Its children faced the problems of too much food rather than too little. To get back to even basic needs, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation estimates Iraq must import almost \$3 billion of food a year. Its domestic food production has slumped, because of lack of quality seeds, pesticides, and spare parts for irrigation. The only reason there hasn't been widespread famine is the highly effective rationing system put in a month after sanctions were imposed... [But b]asic food prices have risen phenomenally. By August 1995 a kilo of wheat flour cost a staggering 11667 times its pre-war price. Even more crucial is the collapse in health services. Six years ago 90[%] of Iraqis had access to primary health care, including immunisation for childhood diseases such as polio and diphtheria. There was a network of large modern hospitals available at nominal cost, and a well trained medical work force. Under sanctions, many trained staff have left. Medicines, antibiotics, surgical instruments, gloves, syringes and bandages are in short supply. Water and power is erratic, and sanitation and waste disposal have become major problems. Across the country water and sewerage systems are collapsing because of lack of spare parts and chlorine and power failures... The deterioration of the system has seriously affected health. Raw sewerage floods the streets of the cities, creating breeding grounds for disease. Untreated sewage flows into the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, alongside whose banks two thirds of the population live... A World Health Organisation report released in March this year found the infant mortality rate has doubled, and the under-five mortality rate had jumped six-fold. Nutritional diseases of severe malnourishment such as marasmus and kwashiorkor, which had all but disappeared, have become common. The report warns this enforced starvation of the population has implications for... the quality of life of this and future generations: "The world community should seriously consider the implications of an entire generation of children growing up with such traumatised mental handicaps, if they survive at all." It is clear the sanctions are in violation of the fundamental principles of... humanitarian law. Iraqi children cannot be forced to bear the costs of [their President]'s intransigence nor punished for his deeds. The [NZ] Government should bring our frigate back from the Gulf and ask the Security Council to face up to its human rights obligations... The UN must... find a way of containing a dictator without killing his people. [After all, 'UN Resolution 688 – which states that Iraq's leader may not attack his own people' – is meaningless if the UN itself is doing so indirectly!]

...As tensions mount in the Gulf the frigate HMNZS Canterbury is on her way to join the multinational interception force imposing sanctions on Iraq... sanctions already responsible for the death of more than 560,000 children under the age of five, [according to] an American professor who headed a U[N] fact finding mission to Iraq late last year... [The] professor of nutrition at the University of Massachusetts, says another 100,000 children will almost certainly die if the Security Council sanctions are maintained for another 12 months. The [NZ Foreign Affairs] Minister... does not dispute the figures, but says there is no evidence that lifting the sanctions... would benefit ordinary Iraqis. "If [the Iraqi President] can watch his people starve and build an enormous new palace for himself and continue to manufacture weapons for his army, people don't mean a lot to him,"... A former N[Z] ambassador to the U[N], and chair of the Security Council sanctions committee... now director of the Centre For Strategic Studies at Victoria University, says he realised the sanctions were unduly harsh... in 1993. At that stage there were already reports of large-scale death and malnutrition... "I found it extraordinarily difficult to accept. There is nothing in the sanctions that say they are supposed to affect the livelihood of every-day Iraqis." Since [he] returned to N[Z], the sanctions committee has blocked the import of spare parts such as tyres for ambulances on the grounds that they are "not essential." Of the 50 ambulances in Baghdad, only two are operational... [His] comments come amidst growing international controversy over the consequences of the sanctions, which have been described by [a former US] Attorney-General... as "one of the greatest crimes against humanity this epoch."

...The U[S] launched a second cruise missile strike yesterday to blast Iraqi air defences and clear a path for American warplanes enforcing an expanded "no-fly zone" in southern Iraq... 17... cruise missiles... [– 'each costing \$US1 million' – were sent] from bombers and ships... [to] mop-up... targets not destroyed in the first attack... [of] 27... missiles... fired... at "about" 15 southern Iraqi targets [two days ago]... The expansion of the area in which Iraqi combat pilots are forbidden to fly went into effect... last night... The U[S] is calling the policing of the extended zone "Operation Southern Watch." [However, the Iraqi President] has ordered his pilots to shoot down any American airmen trying to enforce it... [He called the] imaginary lines north of the 36th parallel and south of the 32nd parallel non-existent... The zone is also a "no-drive" one for Iraqi troops... After the first strike, the Iraqi leader accused the Americans of cowardice in hiding behind the technology of their sophisticated weaponry. He said five people had been killed and 19 injured, some of whom were civilians, but... the [US] Defence Secretary... disputed that account, saying it was "exceedingly unlikely" that there would have been any civilian casualties... [The Iraqi President] still commands one of the region's largest war machines with a 400,000-man force, 2200 tanks after losing 2600 in the Gulf War, and a variety of fixed-wing aircraft – 150 to 350 of which are operational... The U[S] has about 20,000 troops deployed in and around the Gulf backed by more than 300 warplanes and military hardware stored in Gulf Arab states. The latest confrontation with Iraq was triggered by [its President] sending troops into Iraq's Kurdish north... in support of one Kurdish faction against a rival group.

...sensing that his popular support was waning, [the Iraqi President] ordered his troops to attack the Kurds, thereby leaving [the US President], as leader of [Iraq's] arch-enemy nation, with no choice but to order missile attacks again... which of course caused [the Iraq President's] popularity to skyrocket and also, as a bonus, made [his opponent] look presidential during his re-election campaign. So it was really a "win-win" situation, unless of course you happened to be a Kurd.

...It could only happen to the Kurds. They are attacked in northern Iraq by a despot who has launched at least three genocidal campaigns against them, and their superpower protector bombs targets hundreds of kilometres away... The missiles had the range and ability to hit Iraqi tank concentrations in Kurdistan, but were not used that way... The... weak and hesitant initial military response... [from the US Administration to the

Iraqi President's] renewal of his war on the Iraqi Kurds and his domestic rivals repeats a fundamental error that has plagued U[S] policy in the Gulf for a decade. [The Iraqi President] repays caution and deference in an adversary with bold defiance and risk-taking. Having survived a six-week air assault in 1991, he will see the latest cruise missile strikes on extraneous military targets... as a slap on the wrist. Indeed, he said just that in his televised speech after the first raid... Mountain tribesmen who inhabit northern Iraq and adjacent areas of Turkey, Iran and Syria, the Kurds have been betrayed throughout their grim history by putative friends and allies...

Like any patriotic American, I'm all for protecting "our interests," but like most Americans, I can't figure out what our interests are in this latest skirmish... As far as I can tell, Kurds don't do much besides try to survive, which isn't easy, since they don't have a nation of their own and are spread out over several countries, none of which treat them well. As to what they have – no, it isn't oil, gold, diamonds or even titanium, the hot precious metal of the 1990s since it is used in manufacturing overpriced golf clubs. The leading manufacturing product of the Kurds is rugs. Rug dealers in Chicago say the Kurds make fine rugs but they're almost impossible to find because they used to be exported out of Iran, but we've had an embargo on Iranian products for almost 10 years... "Kurdish rugs... are very durable and will last you forever... The price is determined by the age and quality of the rug... A rug that is six feet by nine feet would run from \$1100 to \$3000... a six-to-nine from China would run from \$600 to \$2000. A six-by-nine Persian would run from \$1000 to... \$15,000, depending on the quality." ...The Kurds also raise lots of sheep for wool and to make cheese. But since we have more than enough sheep of our own... I doubt that the Kurdish sheep are a factor in our shooting missiles... At least I hope not... So it has to be the sturdy Kurdish rugs, although I haven't heard of any of the talking heads from the Pentagon or State Department say so... Personally, I prefer Scandinavian-style rugs. They are colourful... less expensive, and we don't have to blow up any Swedes to get them.

...The united front formed against Iraq during the Gulf War... has cracked... Russia, China and France all oppose... the U[S]...

The US] Defence Secretary... arrived in Turkey... [last] night... hoping to secure support for continued... economic pressure against Baghdad. He... has so far met a lukewarm response in his attempts to win Arab support for a possible military showdown with Iraq... Turkey hosts Operation Provide Comfort, the U[S]-led air force patrolling northern Iraq, but has grown increasingly impatient with a mission critics say fosters Kurdish separatism and impinges on Turkish sovereignty. And Ankara is keen to normalise ties with Iraq, its third biggest trading partner until sanctions were slapped on Baghdad... The Saudi Arabia Defence Minister... said he did not expect a new U[S] strike against Iraq after Baghdad's decision to suspend air defence attacks on U[S] warplanes... A senior Iraqi official said that Iraq would keep its promise not to fire at U[S] warplanes, but he warned that a continued U[S] military build-up in the Middle East region could cause "problems." ...Kuwait [is] the only Arab state to support openly the American show of force...

[US President's] Gulf policy comes under attack... [F]ailure to rally international support for his stand against Iraq has become a central issue in the American presidential campaign. The Republicans were initially wary of attacking the President during a national security crisis, but they have now taken the gloves off. The Republican candidate... criticised... the... President... for inflicting only pinpricks on Iraq instead of real punishment. One of the main points of criticism is the confusion that surrounded the decision to send extra troops to Kuwait. The Pentagon announced on Friday that 5000 troops would be sent... but Kuwait had apparently not been consulted and took two days before it formally endorsed the proposal... [T]he Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives... said... "We can't even get the ally we're defending to agree to be defended before we issue the press release saying we're going to be defending them. It tells you there's a certain lack of co-ordination... The President owes the country a clear explanation of what he is doing, why he is doing it and what does he hope to accomplish." [No such explanation was offered, but the President did accept that there was a]... diplomatic blunder.

...Some of America's Gulf Arab allies say privately that they are irritated by what they see as a go-it-alone U[S] policy over Iraq that has ignored their concern about Washington's high-stakes confrontation with Baghdad. "We read about it in the news... What kind of a partnership is this?" asked a senior Gulf Arab military official... Saudi silence over the U[S] actions is widely seen as disapproval of American insensitivity towards the political impact of... [further] strikes on Gulf Arab opinion. Washington's attacks on Iraq have exposed Gulf states to the accusation that they are lackeys of a superpower that is inimical to the conservative values and traditions of the region.

...As the [US President's] Administration ponders what military actions to take against Iraq, a second battle front has opened within the Pentagon between the Navy and Air Force over which should get to bomb [Iraq next]. The rivalry between the two services has been played out during several conflicts since... W[W2]. But it has intensified as shrinking defence budgets and an upcoming review of all military programmes force each service to justify every man, woman and weapons system under its control... In the latest conflict, the Navy and Air Force have so far played to a draw, though Navy boosters complain that that is only because Pentagon planners have gone to extraordinary lengths to help the Air Force. When the U[S] struck out at [Iraq] on September 3, an aircraft carrier battle group was anchored in the Gulf with more than enough cruise missiles to do the job. The Air Force was essentially grounded in the region when Turkey and Saudi Arabia, where scores of Air Force jets are based, would not allow the jets to use their airspace for a strike... a problem carrier-borne aircraft do not have, the Navy is quick to note. Still, Pentagon planners dispatched two Air Force B-52 bombers from Guam to the Gulf – 17 hours and 11,000km away – to take part in the mission. The bombers fired 13 missiles; a Navy destroyer and cruiser... fired 14 more. "I find that very peculiar," said... [a retired admiral who is now the] director of the Centre for Defence Information, a Washington think-tank. "To me, that was a terrible waste of money and wear and tear on those B-52s." For its part, the Air Force issued a press release saying "B-52s lead attack on Iraq." The Navy regained the advantage quickly, taking sole responsibility for the follow-up bombing... But the Air Force has made a comeback with its bombers and stealth fighters being moved to strike positions in the Indian Ocean and Kuwait... [Meanwhile, a] successful military drive by a Kurdish militia allied to Baghdad has raised the spectre of a repeat of [the] 1991 refugee exodus when more than a million Kurds poured through the mountains to Iran and Turkey for safety. Iran[, which 'already has 1/2 million Kurdish refugees',] fears the arrival on its borders of another wave of civilians...

Some 2000 Iranian troops have launched an incursion into northern Iraq to attack Iranian Kurdish guerrilla bases... Iran did not confirm the intervention, but said it had shelled rebel positions inside... Iraq in a bid to halt cross-border attacks. An Iranian Army commander said... that the attacks would "continue until the areas where the aggressors are concentrated are evacuated." ...More than 450 families fled their homes and arrived in front of the U[N] High Commission for Refugees base in Arbil, seeking shelter from the shelling. - 1996

The U[S] has warned Iran its aircraft are in danger of being shot down if they violate an allied-imposed ban on flights over southern Iraq... Iraq said eight Iranian aircraft crossed its border on Monday. The Iraqi-based Mujahideen Khalq, the main Iranian opposition group, said two of its camps were bombed... Iranian aircraft... identified as MiG 21s and 23s, got into and out of Iraqi air space without any trouble.

...With the U[S] aircraft carrier Nimitz speeding towards the Gulf, diplomats and analysts say another military stand-off with Iraq may be in the offing. But they doubt that either side wants a serious confrontation, or that Iran, which bombed two Mujahideen rebel bases in Iraq last week, would be drawn into a clash with U[S] forces... The U[S] could be accused of a double standard by issuing warnings when Iranian and Iraqi planes violated the no-fly zone while remaining silent on Turkish Air Force and Army incursions into northern Iraq to hit Kurdish guerrillas... said... the head of Middle East studies at Britain's Royal Institute of International Affairs...

['Despite demands from Baghdad that the action be stopped immediately' s]ome 15,000 Turkish soldiers backed by more than 100 tanks and armoured vehicles have entered northern Iraq, after reports of fighting between Turkish troops and separatist Kurdish rebels... In May, 10,000 Turkish troops poured into northern Iraq in pursuit of... Kurdistan Workers Party [(PKK)]... guerrillas, who use the region as a base to launch

raids into south-east Turkey. [‘Kurds have long called for more investment in Turkey’s impoverished southwest, parts of which have been left devastated by years of fighting. They are also demanding a relaxation of the bans on broadcasting and teaching in Kurdish.’]

...‘Kurds lashed out in all directions after the leader of the PKK was captured and taken back to Turkey where he’s regarded as public enemy number one. In Europe, America and AUS they besieged and occupied the diplomatic posts of countries they blamed for their leader’s capture. One man in Athens made his point by setting fire to himself.’

...‘Turkey’s PM urged Kurdish rebels yesterday to surrender under a planned partial amnesty, but protests triggered by the arrest of the PKK’s leader continued across Turkey and Europe. Turkey’s old rival, Greece, tried to generate diplomatic pressure to ensure the rebel received a fair trial but Ankara said it wanted to know why Greece had harboured for 12 days in its embassy in Kenya the rebel whom Turkey labels a terrorist monster for leading a violent rebellion in which 29,000 people have died. Ankara also began to scale down a military onslaught on the rebels in Iraqi territory, but the PM’s call for an end to 14 years of bloody rebellion contained no concessions to Kurdish nationalists seeking to negotiate a solution. Nevertheless, it was Ankara’s first official gesture to the rebels since their leader was captured early last week. But the PM failed to impress tens of thousands of Kurds who demonstrated in at least 10 cities across western Europe, including London, Paris, Stockholm, Geneva and Vienna. The biggest rally was in Bonn, where riot police prevented 7000 Kurds from marching to the Israeli embassy to mourn three militant colleagues killed by security guards as they tried to storm the Israeli consulate in Berlin last Wednesday. In contrast to Wednesday’s protests, which included the occupation of more than 20 Greek and Kenyan diplomatic missions across Europe, yesterday’s demonstrations were largely limited to chanting and the burning of Turkish flags. But in Rome 50 Kurdish militants broke away from the main rally to throw petrol bombs at a Turkish Airlines office and clashed with police in riot gear. In Turkey itself, the state-run Anatolian news agency said unknown assailants had exploded bombs in Istanbul, thrown petrol bombs at vehicles and smashed shop windows.’

...‘a lawyer for the Kurdish rebel leader resigned yesterday, saying he feared for his life, and police detained a second member of the legal team for suspected ties to the guerrilla group. The moves are likely to stoke Western worries about the fairness of the rebel’s upcoming treason trial, where he could get the death penalty. The rebel’s capture has set off patriotic fervour through Turkey and the lawyer who resigned has received death threats against himself and members of his family. Turkish ultra-nationalists also stoned a bus carrying the lawyer and other lawyers to the island prison where the rebel is held.’

...‘Turkey’s PM accused Greece yesterday of sponsored terrorism over its decision to fly three of the PKK leader’s aides to Athens after they were stranded at its embassy in Nairobi following the rebel chief’s capture last week. But in Athens the three women aides accused Greece of betraying their leader and handing him over to Turkey. The PM also rejected a lawyer’s claims that he was unable to carry out a defence of the rebel, and again called on the rebel’s followers to surrender. Security officials in the southeast said troops backed by Cobra helicopters had killed 17 PKK rebels over the past two days. In related news, the bodies of three PKK sympathisers, shot trying to storm the Israeli consulate in Berlin, were buried in Turkey at the weekend.’

...‘Kurdish rebels will escalate the war for autonomy in south-eastern Turkey despite the loss of their leader, a spokeswoman for the rebels’ political wing said yesterday. Turkey hoped that last month’s capture of the founder of the PKK would deal a final blow to his rebels. But fighting has continued in the south-east and the Germany-based Kurdish agency DEM said the rebels had killed 29 soldiers in clashes over the past 10 days. The Turkish military refused to confirm the report that 29 soldiers had been killed. Earlier yesterday, prosecutors sought the death sentence for the PKK’s second-in-command, who was captured last year and has added to the list of atrocities attributed to his leader, by accusing him of ordering the killing of 33 unarmed soldiers in 1993.’

...‘During six days of hearings before a Turkish court, the Kurdish guerrilla leader tried to portray himself as a man who could bring peace to south-eastern Turkey. His lawyers are expected to take the same approach today when they make their final statements. The PKK leader is widely expected to be convicted and sentenced to death on charges of treason and separatism. Turks almost universally blame him for the deaths of 37,000 people, the vast majority of whom have been Kurdish civilians and guerrillas. If he is convicted, the sentence will be automatically appealed and must be endorsed by the Turkish Parliament and approved by Turkey’s president. Turkey has not executed anyone in 15 years.’

...‘Turks are hailing a death sentence for the Kurdish guerrilla leader, but the country is braced for possible rebel violence amid vociferous criticism from abroad. Foreign governments and international organisations urged Turkey not to execute the PKK leader. EU president Germany, fearing communal strife between its two million Turks and Kurds, said it regretted the judge’s ruling but called for calm. The Turkish Government was expected to rebuff all calls for clemency.’

...‘Turkish commentators yesterday welcomed the decision by the Government coalition to delay the execution of the Kurdish rebel leader while the European Court of Human Rights considers his appeal, which is expected to take about 18 months. The decision, pushed through by the leftist PM, would preserve the unity of the coalition Government, the commentators said. But there were critics of the decision, particularly among the conservative press that favours a rapid execution. However, the PM, who is seeking the abolition of capital punishment in line with EU requirements, feels that executing the PKK leader would run counter to Turkey’s national interests. The decision implied that any violence in the meantime from PKK guerrillas could trigger the resumption of proceedings against him. A columnist of the *Hurriyet* newspaper said the Government had skillfully transferred responsibility for keeping the leader alive to the PKK rebels in the mountains of eastern Turkey and Iraq.’ Speaking of which, ‘39 people “in the pay of foreigners” have been arrested following the failed assassination attempts against the Iraqi President’s deputy last week,’ and last month’s announcement that ‘key US lawmakers intend to offer military aid to foes of the Iraqi President with the goal of bringing him down. As the House International Relations Committee chairman introduced the bill to provide \$US97 million in military aid to democratic opponents of the President, he said it would “finally and irrevocably” commit the US to the President’s overthrow.’

...‘It would be “wonderful” if Iraq’s dictator were ousted, the British PM said yesterday. “It is without any doubt at all our desire to see the end of him. And if that could be assisted in any way by the campaign we have fought over these past few days then we would welcome that.” But he insisted that was not the goal of the air strikes, as he and the US President jointly announced the end of the four-day Operation Desert Fox campaign, in which British and US forces fired hundreds of missiles at 100 Iraqi targets. Substantial damage had been done to Iraq’s air defence, command and control, and arms production. The US President said he was satisfied with the air strikes but economic sanctions against Iraq would stay.’]

...Shoppers in Baghdad cursed [the US]President... yesterday and said Washington was... [trying] to scupper Iraq’s oil-for-food deal with the U[N]. Their concern, they said, was sparked by the use of some of the toughest remarks against the Baghdad Government since [the 42nd US President] took office... Officials at the State Department this week branded the Iraqi leader a “demon” and said there were signs of a power struggle in Baghdad. But the people in the streets of Baghdad see it differently. “He [[the US President]] is the greatest demon. We heard the news from foreign radios. They should be ashamed of themselves to say these things,” said... a Baghdadi shopper born in the Kurdish city of Sulaimaniya. “It is clear their aim is to kill the oil deal. The U[S] delayed it when our troops liberated Arbil. Now it is using this [alleged power struggle] as an excuse,” said [another shopper while] packing some onions and tomatoes in her basket. When Iraqi troops sided with one Kurdish faction to drive another from the Kurdish administrative capital of Arbil last year, Washington responded [with] two waves of missile attacks on Iraq and a decision to delay the implementation of the oil-for-food deal signed by Iraq and the U[N] in May. The deal, finally implemented in December, allows Iraq oil sales of \$US2 billion... in six months to buy food and medicine for its more than 20 million people... Iraqis have not benefited directly from the deal yet, but the flow of Iraqi crude to international markets for the first time since 1990 has lowered prices of essential goods and increased the value of the local currency against the dollar. In Washington on Wednesday, [a] White House spokesman[had] offered a terse but carefully worded assessment of the political situation in Baghdad. “There are a great deal of complicated internal struggles for power”

going on, he said in response to questions on reports suggesting instability in Iraq based on comments by a senior U[S] military official. The unnamed official [also said Iraq's] President... was changing locations more often out of apparent fear for his safety... [However, a]n Iraqi Government spokesman ridiculed the U[S] statements alleging a power struggle in Baghdad, saying they were a "distortion and propaganda ploy against Iraq. It seems the operating crew of information lies in Washington has resumed its task of misleading the public opinion in the U[S] and renewing fear among Kuwaiti rulers,"...

KUWAIT is "deeply concerned" about reports of Iraqi troop movements about 50km from their joint border. [The]Information Minister... said "between 150,000 and 180,000 troops" were estimated to be in the border area. "If these troops were given the order to advance, it would only take them a few hours to reach us. We... also have reports that... [the]Iraqi President... is boosting his regular army in the south with units of the Republican Guard," he said, referring to the country's elite fighting force. A senior U[S] official has warned that Iraq might once again invade Kuwait... But last week, the White House said it did not believe this was possible right now. [However, 'Iraq's President claims his country is capable of attacking bases in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia used in US-British air strikes, and a British newspaper citing Foreign Office sources yesterday said Russia had signed a deal worth some \$US160 million to upgrade Iraq's ageing air defences and bring them back to pre-Gulf War levels in a blatant breach of the UN arms embargo against Iraq. Russia bitterly opposed launching air strikes on Baghdad, an old Moscow ally, and the paper said Russia's PM approved the deal after the US and Britain carried out the four-day Operation Desert Fox air campaign. Since then there have been almost daily clashes between Iraqi air defences and US and British warplanes patrolling the no-fly zones that cover more than half the country. Six civilians have been killed and several others wounded in a new escalation of air strikes since Friday, according to Iraqi authorities. Iraqi diplomats said the "war of attrition in the air" was likely to continue until the UN resolved the matter.'

...Allied aircraft have not attacked Iraqi targets outside the no-fly zone and they do not intend "at this point" to do so, says the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff. The general reinforced denials by Pentagon officials of Iraq's claim that US aircraft attacked civilian targets near Baghdad yesterday, killing one person and wounding others. "Anything coming out of Baghdad should be questioned in terms of its veracity since we have seen very little of the truth coming out of Iraq in recent years." The general said actions by allied aircraft were taken in self-defence and in response to the Iraqi President's provocation. Iraq said its confrontation with the US and Britain over no-fly zones imposed after the Gulf War had escalated as a result of the alleged attack.'

...Moments before Iraqi soldiers captured... [a U]S... Marine... during the Gulf War, [he]... buried his wallet in the Kuwaiti desert so his family would not be targeted by terrorists. Six years later, the wallet appeared in... [hi]s mailbox with all its contents – three credit cards, his military identification, three family photos and 47 dollars in cash. A labourer had found it and sent it to the Marines, who forwarded it... The package contained a letter in broken English from... [the] labourer from Sri Lanka who works in Kuwait... [The wallet's owner], now 52 and retired... was shot down by an Iraqi surface-to-air missile in January, 1991... "...We were captured within five minutes. There was nowhere to run." During their 48 days in captivity, the prisoners suffered severe beatings and were paraded on international television by Iraq... Meanwhile, the [US]State Department said that Washington planned to press for the "strongest possible action" by the U[N] to make Iraq comply with a UN commission charged with scrapping Iraq's weapons of mass destruction... U[S] forces... launched cruise missiles... in 1993 against a Baghdad plant used to make components for nuclear enrichment material...

Iraq faced warnings of grave consequences yesterday, including the possibility of military action, after it ordered U[S] weapons inspectors from its soil. The ten inspectors are part of... the U[N] Special Commission... Iraq was "ready to continue the cooperation" with Unscm, "provided that no individuals of American nationality shall participate in any activity of the special commission inside Iraq." ...However... the... chairman of... Unscm... stressed that Iraq had signed an agreement obliging it to accept any staff hired by Unscm on the basis of their professional competence... The... toughest words came from Britain... "The rest of the world cannot sit by idly while Iraq develops its weapons..." [the]junior Foreign Office Minister... told BBC television... In response to the Iraqi ban, the U[N] team... temporarily suspended all field operations in Iraq.

...By kicking out American members of a [U]N... weapons team, [the]Iraqi President... is gambling he can exploit newly widened divisions in the front that once drove his forces from Kuwait... Since 1991, council members – including Russia and China – have issued repeated statements declaring their support for the inspectors and their insistence that Iraq comply fully with U[N] orders. But determining compliance is a subjective judgment. It is clear that the U[S] and Britain hold Iraq to a tougher standard than Russia, China, France and Egypt. Those countries have been negotiating lucrative oil exploration contracts with Iraq that would take effect as soon as sanctions are lifted... The wide-ranging sanctions... cannot be eased until [Unscm] certified all dangerous arms have been eliminated.

...Iraq says it will not back down on a decision to bar U[S] arms inspectors and it did not fear the use of force against it... [after refusing] to allow two U[S] members of the U[nscom]... team into the country... Iraq said the U[S] members... had turned... the team... into an instrument of Washington's policy and had prevented the commission from certifying that Baghdad no longer had any forbidden weapons.

...U[N] inspectors... say they were on the verge of finding Baghdad's stockpile of the lethal liquid nerve agent VX last week when [Iraq]... ordered the U[S] members of the team to leave... "I think we were getting hot, and maybe that's part of the reason why they took this decision in the last couple of days," the... chief weapons inspector... was quoted as saying... The Iraqis have told the U[N] that their programme was experimental and only capable of producing a few kilograms of VX... [T]he *Observer*... said a few grams of VX could kill millions of people... [It] is 10 times as lethal as... [and] persisted longer than... the nerve gas sarin, causes death by paralysis... and could be absorbed through the skin or inhaled as vapour.

...The Iraq crisis escalated last night when Baghdad blocked American arms inspectors from entering a missile site and the U[N] responded by halting the... weapons inspection programme for the second time in a week.

...[the] President... of Iraq raised the stakes in the Gulf crisis yesterday when he demanded an immediate end to the United Nations embargo against his country... Until yesterday Iraq had been demanding only the withdrawal of the American members of the... weapons inspection team... Iraq also threatened to shoot down a U-2 high-altitude spy plane which the arms inspectors have been using over Iraq... Iraq's deputy P[M]... repeated that Iraqi air space was "off-limits" to U[-2] flights and other foreign aircraft... Although the U-2 flies at over 21,000m, defence experts say Iraqi could threaten it with high-flying surface-to-air missiles... However, the leader of the arms inspection team... said the U-2 flights would go ahead as planned...

U[N] inspectors called off visits to Iraqi weapons sites for the third time yesterday after U[S] experts were barred access. They also called off the U-2 spy plane... However[, the US President said the Iraqi President]... had no valid reason to oppose the presence of Americans. "If he has nothing to hide... then he shouldn't care whether Americans or anyone else are on the inspections team. This may be just another dodge."

...The U[N] has accused Iraq of tampering with its weapons monitoring system, moving arms-related equipment away from... surveillance cameras and covering up the lenses of the cameras themselves... "...Some of the pictures... coming... to our office in Baghdad... are black... They have been turning the lights off in buildings that we are supposed to be seeing all the time..." ...They may also have moved fermenters that could produce seed stocks for biological warfare agents... Unscm has a monitoring system spread around some two dozen sites to observe so-called dual use equipment which may be used in weapons as well as for civilian purposes.

...VITAL medical supplies shipped to Iraq to prevent its civilians suffering unnecessary hardship are being smuggled out of the country and sold on the black market in neighbouring Arab countries to finance [the Iraqi President's] brutal dictatorship. The operation, worth millions of dollars... is being masterminded by... the dictator's son. Some of the profits have been spent on expensive medical equipment to assist [the son's] recovery for

the severe injuries he suffered during an assassination attempt... last December... He is partially paralysed in one leg... [and] has also been rendered impotent since the shooting, a grave blow for someone whose penchant for womanising is legendary in Baghdad, and may even have been the motive for the assassination attempt... Iraq was forbidden from buying medical supplies under... sanctions imposed in 1991... but the sanctions were relaxed to allow Baghdad to sell limited quantities of oil to buy medicines and other vital humanitarian supplies. The UN Security Council set strict controls designed to ensure the supplies reached civilians and were not used by the regime.

...INFANT mortality in Iraq is 10 times up on the rate before the U[N] imposed a trade embargo on the country... Iraq's health minister says... "The sufferings of Iraqis are even greater now than they were before," [he said while] attending the annual Assembly of the UN's World Health Organisation in Geneva... [The minister] told a news conference that despite the oil-for-food deal with the world body that went into effect last December "not a single tablet" had reached the country despite some 550 contracts signed with foreign firms... Approval of most of the contracts had been held up by the UN Sanctions Committee "largely on the insistence of the U[S]." ...before the sanctions, the mortality rate for children under five was an average of 540 a month. "It has now reached 5600 and is still growing." Among those over five years old and adults, the rate of death from illness had climbed from 1800 a month to more than 8000... [The] rise was caused by the collapse of the health and sanitation system...

[The Health Ministry says over 9000 Iraqis – including 6438 children – died last month, bringing the number of victims of UN sanctions to 1,292,446 since 1990. The UN's humanitarian coordinator in Iraq and the representative of the World Food Programme both resigned in February in protest at the continuing embargo and the worsening humanitarian situation in Iraq. The UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1284 in December allowing for a renewable 120-day suspension of the embargo if Iraq cooperates with the monitoring of its disarmament. Iraq has called for the unconditional lifting of the sanctions.]

...Today is the anniversary of UN Resolution 661 which imposed sanctions on Iraq. They remain in force as Iraq is adjudged to have not fully complied with the removal of its weapons of mass destruction. A report commissioned in April by the UN Security Council, drawing on the expertise of organisations including the Red Cross, Red Crescent, World Health Organisation, Unicef, Unesco and the World Food Programme, referred to "the gravity of the humanitarian situation of the Iraqi people." It documents a staggering decline in Iraq's GDP since the Gulf War – down by two-thirds – and dramatic rises in maternal mortality and morbidity. The Red Cross estimates 70% of Iraqi women suffer from anaemia. The WFP estimates access to potable water is 50% of 1990 levels (less in rural areas). Water-borne infectious diseases have increased as a result. A former NZ Director-General of Health has described the situation as a "public health disaster." However, our Government does not accept the figures on Iraqi health supplied to it by UN humanitarian agencies. The position of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and his ministry was stated in a letter which explained that as UN humanitarian data is partly or wholly based on Iraqi Ministry of Health data, "we have no reason to think that these figures are accurate or have not been manipulated to paint a negative picture." In March I wrote asking for proof that the Iraqis were massaging health data. None has been forthcoming. The US Embassy in Wellington eventually declassified a report which alleged some epidemiological fraud, but the report had no footnotes, no references, no detailed statistical breakdowns of even the most elementary nature, and is undated. It would have failed a stage 1 epidemiology paper. We – the Iraq Sanctions Medical Alert Group – asked for more evidence in May and are still waiting. We have sought a table, a figure – any concrete example of unreliable data. We have been told this request is a "preoccupation with statistical details." It is difficult to see the benefit for Iraq's President of exaggerating the adverse health effects of the sanctions – all he stands to gain is sympathy for Iraqis and a lifting of some sanctions. That would help the masses but probably not him. And the danger is too high. All it would take is one doctor or Iraqi Ministry of Health official to defect or leave Iraq and say that they inflated figures, or for one journalist or aid agency to notice deliberate manipulation of data. After 7 years this has not occurred, so perhaps it is the propaganda achievement of the century. There is evidence the Iraqi regime is using the food distribution network to increase its social control, and to pressure citizens, but that does not mean the figures of sick and dying are necessarily wrong. It is just possible Unicef, WHO and all the journalists and doctors who have been to Iraq have got it right about the impact of sanctions. Let us not compound the failure of policy by refusing to admit that sanctions are cowardly and ineffective. Incidentally, Iraq once again banned Americans from taking part in arms inspections yesterday despite a UN Security Council resolution imposing travel sanctions on Iraqi officials...

The U[S] has demanded that U[N] monitors... be given unimpeded access to suspect sites, including... palaces. Arguing for keeping all... sanctions in place in the meantime, [the US] Defence Secretary... said [Iraq's President] has ruled 63 sites off-limits to UNSCOM... "Those cannot be off-limits," he said on the NBC programme, "Meet the Press." ...Iraqi officials, meanwhile, had said they restricted access to just three sites... The truly palatial main presidential palace in Baghdad... [the] Qadissiya Hawk Palace: Built... near Baghdad airport during Iraq's 1980-88 war with Iran... [and the] complex at al-Oja, [the President's] hometown in Tikrit province, 190km north of Baghdad. The entire village is sealed off... The latest standoff came as... [diplomats] at UN headquarters in New York said [the] Secretary-General... was considering increasing to \$US3 billion... from \$US2 billion the amount of oil Iraq was allowed to sell over six months for food, medicine and other goods.

...Iraq's halt on oil exports proves [the] Iraqi President... "is responsible for the suffering of his own people", [the] US President... said yesterday. Iraq has stopped pumping oil through its main pipeline to Turkey and warned exports would resume only when the UN approved a new plan for the distribution of goods under the oil-for-food deal... About \$US1.32 billion of every \$US2 billion from the sale of Iraqi oil goes towards buying humanitarian supplies. The rest is earmarked for Gulf War reparations and other costs.

...All diplomatic channels in the Iraqi crisis appeared to have been exhausted last night after [Iraq's] Government expelled six U[S] weapons inspectors in defiance of the U[N] Security Council... The six American inspectors... crossed the border into Jordan yesterday afternoon accompanied by an A[US]n and a Briton. The other 68 inspectors were due to fly out overnight to Bahrain – with 13 N[Z] Defence Force staff who have been working in a support role. But staying behind in Baghdad were three N[Z] UN employees. Also staying is... [the NZ]-born... CNN correspondent... who... reported the 1991 conflict and... [is] one of the few Western reporters allowed to stay in Iraq... [after winning] kudos – and criticism – for his interviews with [the Iraqi President]... The increased tension in Iraq meant... [the correspondent] was forced to cancel a visit to his old school. ● A 32-year-old NZ humanitarian aid worker, Nicolas Geoffrey Speight, has been shot and killed while walking on a disused airstrip in the remote southern Kurdistan area in northern Iraq with a companion, also an international air worker, who was wounded. There is no indication of who killed Mr Speight or why. He was working for a British company, Greenfield Consultants, which is contracted to the UN to coordinate land-mine clearing'...

DECLARING the U[N] must not shirk from a showdown with Iraq, [the US] President... ordered a second aircraft carrier to the Persian Gulf yesterday in a high-profile military build-up... The George Washington will be accompanied by three ships carrying cruise missiles as well as a support ship... With some allies reluctant to use force, the White House asserted the US could act on its own if necessary... The... [US] Defence Secretary... said the administration was "reviewing all sorts of options" for military moves... [and the] US Secretary of State said: "Do not doubt we have the authority to do this." "This is not just a replay of the Gulf War," said [the US President]. "This is about the security of the 21st Century and the problems everybody is going to have to face dealing with chemical weapons." Britain will also move its aircraft carrier Invincible to the Mediterranean from the Caribbean, and announced it was putting a squadron of Harrier GR-7 planes on 48-hour notice to back up its forces deployed around the Gulf... [The Iraqi] Foreign Minister... said Iraq would not be surprised if the crisis escalated into a military confrontation, accusing the US and Britain of seeking such a clash. He said Iraq was not seeking conflict. "We are requesting our grievances be heard, be discussed and a serious dialogue be opened in order to get rid of the current situation of sanctions..." The sanctions have cost Iraq about \$162 billion in oil revenue.

...[US] policy-makers assume that [the Iraqi President] can be reasoned with or intimidated into backing down because he is frightened of U[S] forces. The assumption is flawed twice over: [he] cannot afford to be reasonable or intimidated. And it is not the U[S] that frightens him... While he savours the thought of using biological and chemical weapons on Israel and the U[S] for revenge, he] does not see [the US President's] Administration as a mortal threat... "[He] understands that Washington is not committed to ousting him," says a senior Arab diplomat with long experience in Iraq. "Others are." ...Iran frightens the Iraqi dictator. The ayatollahs have spent a decade rebuilding an army that today could defeat Iraq and finish the Persians' savage, interrupted war with their Arab neighbour. The weapons of terror that [Iraq's leader] hides from U[N] inspection are to him his ultimate means of survival... This explains why the Iraqi dictator has... [forsaken] oil revenue... rather than give U[N] inspection teams a free hand in Iraq. The laboratories that will enable [him] to manufacture chemical and biological weapons instantly if Iran charges across the border count for more than money or logic to [the Iraqi leader]... Does... the... U[S]... really expect him to ask what is best for his country and then do it? [He] does not survive through building consensus or winning elections, as [the US President does. The Iraqi leader] found poison gas invaluable in putting down his own rebellious citizens. He then incorporated terror into foreign policy by using chemical weapons against Iran in 1988, and issuing chemical warheads to Iraqi brigades for possible use against American troops in 1991. Those warheads apparently were not used because the war unfolded so rapidly and [the Iraqi leader] was worried about U[S] nuclear retaliation. But since Desert Storm... [his] cat-and-mouse game has systematically sacrificed "low quality capability to protect high quality capability," in the view of... the... Swedish diplomat who headed the U[N] inspection team for five years before becoming ambassador to Washington in September... Fear and vindictiveness make [the Iraqi leader] a far more dangerous and desperate adversary than [the US President assumes. Waiting the Iraqi leader] out, while letting him keep the means to make weapons of mass destruction during the wait, is the world's riskiest gamble... The Iraqis also hope to buy plutonium and eventually produce a nuclear bomb... Military force should not be used this time merely to punish... or to intimidate him into a solution for the phoney issue of Americans being on the inspection team... it should be directed at destroying his special weapons capability once and for all.

...[the] UN Secretary-General... said yesterday he was shocked by Iraq's use of "human shields" in allowing women and children to stream into... [the Iraqi President's] 80 palaces... in case of attack... "Even if they had volunteered – and indeed the government felt there was going to be an attack – you don't put women and children in those situations..."... Iraqi citizens, cursing the U[S] and chanting slogans praising [their leader, also] occupied a textile factory and a power plant... "This is our factory. We have come to die here. We'll stay and sleep here and fear no... missiles,"... The secretary-general still hoped a diplomatic solution could be found to resolve the crisis.

...A quarter of a century ago, [the US] with brilliant duplicity shut the Russians out of the Middle East. This week... the Russian foreign minister brought Moscow back into the region in a big way... Russia has persuaded [the Iraqi President] to allow American arms inspectors back into Iraq in return for a promise of help in having U[N] sanctions lifted soon... Russia and France have consistently argued that Iraq should be shown "light at the end of the tunnel" in its quest to have sanctions lifted... However, the Americans rejected any suggestion of a deal... "We are not ready to lift sanctions until all Security Council resolutions are complied with by Iraq, and if necessary we will use our veto to achieve that objective." ...The zero-sum game of diplomatic competition for influence in the Middle East that supposedly died with the Cold War is on again...

The U[S] has yielded to French and Russian demands at the U[N] by offering to delay for six months the imposition of new sanctions against Iraq.

...[the] 'Iraqi President has backed down, but the UN programme to find and dismantle Iraq's deadliest arms may now be so badly handicapped that inspectors are unlikely to ever complete their mission. The ability of the UN to ensure the destruction of all of Iraq's nuclear, biological and chemical weapons is under threat from efforts by Russia and other countries to dilute the power of weapons inspectors']

...it is a story that never ends. The inspection regime was set up just weeks after Iraq was defeated in the Gulf War... It was intended to punish and neuter Iraq... The story involves truck and helicopter chases across the deserts, searches in riverbeds and in tunnels for warheads... in ministries and universities for missing files or even stray documents that could give clues to the production of deadly weapons. There are trawls through the archives of companies around the world that sold goods to Iraq when it was legal to do so... It involves UN helicopters being shot at, Iraqi officials trying to manhandle inspectors, UN officials being stabbed, threats... The Iraqis threw Unscm a few bones. They declared that they had about 50 Scud missiles, 11 mobile launchers and 11,000 chemical munitions. They also admitted a chemical factory had been bombed in the war. But the munitions they produced were mostly at the end of their shelf life and the rocket launchers surrendered were too dangerous to be fired. More importantly, they promised that they had no biological weapons programme nor any nuclear weapons programme. Since then Unscm has discovered that both these assertions were untrue...

In the past six years, UN inspectors have overseen the discovery and dismantling of seven major nuclear weapons facilities, 28,000 chemical weapons, 480,000 litres of chemicals used in making the weapons and 1.8 million litres of 45 different chemicals that can be combined to make weapons. The UN also has accounted for 817 of 819 Scud missiles and blown up Iraq's major biological plant... [B]ut always it seems, there are more... Because Iraq has a large capacity for storing weapons in deeply buried bunkers, US intelligence has extremely limited knowledge of how many weapons of mass destruction are still available to Iraq's army... - 1997

[GERMANY'S] FOREIGN MINISTER... visited Israel during the Persian Gulf War... and was informed about German components of the Scud missiles that had fallen on Tel Aviv and Haifa. Without German assistance, he was told, the Iraqi Scuds may not have reached Israel. [The minist]er apologised and promised stern action. A week later he addressed his own legislature: "Historical and moral responsibility links Germany to the Jewish people... At this time when Israel's very existence is threatened, we stand at her side without reservation. For 30 years Germany has not authorized arms exports to Iraq. However, Germans, who broke our laws and misled the authorities, participated in [the Iraqi President's] poison-gas production. All of society must ostracize them." [The minist]er's speech was a monument to hypocrisy. For over a decade, German businessmen and scientists had played key roles in Iraq's \$90-billion programme to produce weapons of mass destruction – all the while claiming they didn't know Iraq was using their exports for military purposes. The best [US] estimates suggest that a majority of Iraq's nuclear, biological and chemical capacity was provided by Germans. What's more, the German government knew about all this in detail. German involvement with Iraq's chemical-weapons programme began in 1977, and four years later construction started on a "pesticide plant" at Samarra, a town 60 kilometres northwest of Baghdad. This heavily guarded complex clearly was no normal project. As a German technician later said, "You wouldn't need such high security if you were producing fly spray, would you?" German press reports even spoke of gas chambers "for large animals" specially built for the project by a German firm... This was hardly classified information. *The New York Times* reported extensively about German poison-gas plants in Iraq in 1984 – the year Samarra became operational – as did the German press following Iraq's full-scale use of chemical weapons against Iran that year. But... [Germany's] then economics minister, dismissed all this as professional jealousy on the part of the Americans.

Starting a biological warfare programme is easy. Iraqi institutes bought germ cultures from a commercial organisation called the American Type Culture Collection, based outside Washington in Rockville, Maryland. This company collects and sells hundreds of different cultures, some benign and some the most lethal bacterial known to man... Customers had only to have headed paper, pay about \$78, and show in a telephone conversation that they were scientifically literate. Baghdad University started by ordering some relatively innocuous samples and then in 1986 bought samples of anthrax... At the end of the 1980s, about 40 tons of growth media were quietly, and legally, shipped to the country... According to documents later

found by Unscm, the bills were paid by the Iraqi military... Iraqi scientists tested their bacteria on dogs, monkeys, sheep and other animals. These creatures were placed inside sealed plastic boxes and filmed as they died in agony. *The Sunday Times* disclosed their experiments were then conducted on human beings. From behind a glass screen scientists watched as Iranian prisoners of war and Kurdish dissidents were sprayed with anthrax bacteria and toxins suitable for use in chemical weapons... The Iraqi dictator... [instructed his sons to murder] their sisters' husbands for revealing details of Iraq's chemical weapons project... Since the 1991 war, Iraq's national debt has more than doubled, to an estimated \$3.4 trillion... Only one in three Iraqi children ever make it to secondary school... Military service is compulsory for Iraqi men aged 18, for a period of between 18 months and two years... The... last time US forces went to war against Iraq, they showed up in the desert ill-equipped and poorly trained to deal with a chemical or biological attack. Military officials acknowledged afterwards that had Iraq launched the nerve gases or germ agents it had stockpiled, American troops could have suffered significant casualties.

The U[S] has urgently begun vaccinating all its 36,000 troops in the Gulf against anthrax. British officials have said they will vaccinate the 3500 British military personnel deployed in the Gulf region... Anthrax, a scourge so ancient that it is described in the *Bible*, remains hard to treat and vaccinate against. Although antibiotics can kill the bacteria, they must be used quickly or they are useless. And the vaccine is no straightforward jab: it must be given in a series of shots over 18 months and be followed by regular boosters... [The] US Army Surgeon-General... says... "There is probably going to be a better vaccine in a few years but you have got to go with the best you have now." ...But... a molecular biologist at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, said the particular vaccine now used might not be effective against engineered strains of the bacteria. Last month he and colleagues published a report for the National Academy of Sciences describing anthrax found in tissue samples taken from victims of a 1979 outbreak of the disease in the then-Soviet Union. Western governments said they thought the deaths resulted from an accidental release of anthrax from a research facility... [However,] there was evidence that at least four different strains of anthrax had been mixed to produce a more potent version. "They were probably trying to come up with a biological weapon." ...The... book *Biohazard* had revealed the hitherto unimagined scale of the Soviet bioweapons programme... The enterprise had employed more than 60,000 people... [L]ast month even the most jaded of Americans was jolted to attention after... [a former member] of the white supremacist group Aryan Nations, was arrested on suspicion of manufacturing the deadly... anthrax... virus... [The supremacist] was turned in after boasting to an associate that he had enough of the virus stockpiled to wipe out Las Vegas. It was his second run-in with the law, after [last year's] conviction for illegally obtaining bubonic plague. While the [latest] case turned out to be a hoax – the stockpile was non-lethal anthrax vaccine – authorities are well aware the threat is real.

With an increased possibility of germ warfare, [the US] Defence Secretary... has decided [all of] America's 1.5 million men and women in uniform will be inoculated against anthrax. The biological agent can be fatal even in microscopic amounts. The inoculations (six shots over 18 months) will cost about \$US120 million... Pentagon officials said yesterday... Iraq, Russia and as many as 10 other countries are believed to have the capacity to use anthrax in weapons. ['Iraq was also determined in early 1990 by a professor of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology to have been capable of manufacturing prussic acid, used to destroy filters in gas masks.']

...Visits to civil defence centres by Israeli civilians seeking to have their gas masks checked have tripled in the past week as the possibility of a military confrontation between Iraq and Western nations mounts. Although Israel is not directly involved... there is fear that [the Iraqi President] may unleash missiles at Israel should war break out, as he did during the Gulf War... Israel did not respond to the firing of some 30 Scud missiles at its cities, a restraint urged on it by the US in order not to endanger the allied coalition, which included a number of Arab states who did not want to be allied with Israel in the conflict. The missiles, all with conventional warheads, caused widespread damage, particularly in Tel Aviv, but only one fatality... Israeli officials declined to say if the Air Force had been alerted in the present crisis. [However, the] Tel Aviv newspaper *Ha'aretz* reported that Jordan had promised to cooperate with Israel "in security matters" should Iraq attack Israel... This is generally taken to mean that Jordan would permit Israeli warplanes to overfly its territory in order to reach Iraq... Israel would... explode a... neutron bomb, which suppresses the nuclear blast but increases radiation levels to cause far greater loss of life... in an Iraqi city in the event of a chemical or bacteriological attack... said a report published in London on Friday.

...The world has belatedly begun to wake up to the dangers of biological weapons, weapons that kill by spreading deadly diseases. Ironically, it was the arch proponent of realpolitik who sent us to sleep on the issue. [The 37th US] President... pushed for and won the Biological Weapons Convention outlawing such weapons, convinced they were no longer in America's interest, since they were unstable and unusable. Today, because of scientific advances that were not even guessed at 25 years ago, biological weapons have become both more usable and more effective. Recombinant DNA technology has revolutionised their potential. Now they pose a serious threat on the battlefield and, in the not too distant future, could be delivered by missiles to an opponent's city thousands of miles away. In its latest "Strategic Survey," the International Institute for Strategic Studies observes, "preventing determined proliferators acquiring biological and toxin agents appears to be virtually impossible..." ...After all, the Biological Weapons Treaty is nothing more than a moral norm. There is no world-wide enforcement mechanism, not even a monitoring system. It can only work if the political climate is right. Bringing [the Iraqi President] into line is one, overdue, thing. Keeping up the momentum on banning all weapons of mass destruction all over the world is another. But the two are intimately related. - 1997

biological warfare, the employment of (or defence against the employment of) living organisms, toxic biological products and chemical plant-growth regulators to produce death or casualties in man, animals, or plants. It includes the military use not only of bacteria, but also of other micro-organisms and higher forms of life such as insects or other pests. The primary object of BW attack is man. It can be either direct or indirect through limitation of his crops or animal food sources. Although BW agents have never been used as a significant military weapon, they have been employed in various forms since early times. In the Middle Ages, war parties dropped plague-ridden corpses into the wells of their enemies. During the French and Indian War, the British infected the Indians with small-pox by giving them blankets and handkerchiefs taken from infected patients (c. 95% of those exposed died)... The principal research in the U.S. on BW is done under the auspices of the Army Chemical Corps... The U.S. is not a party to any treaty now in force that prohibits or restricts the use of biological weapons. The Geneva Protocol, which forbids the use of bacteriological weapons of war, was signed on behalf of the U.S. on June 17, 1925. Although this protocol has been ratified by a number of states, the U.S. Senate has refrained from doing so... However, the major powers have accumulated ample stocks of poisonous substances, among them chlorine, phosgene, mustard gas, lewisite, chloropicrin, and tear gas. Their effects range from the deadly to the merely irritating. - 1967

In... W[W1], above a million soldiers were casualties of chlorine, phosgene [(which caused people to take 'up to 48 hours to die from drowning as their lungs filled up with liquid')] and mustard gas, over ninety thousand dying. The nerve gases tabun, sarin and soman, discovered but not used during... W[W2], were deadly in far smaller quantities, while the yet more effective VX – the U[S] had four thousand tons of it in 1967 – killed when just a few milligrams reached one's skin. Still, an amount sufficient to destroy all the people in China... could in practice 'neutralize' only a square kilometre of battlefield. (A cynic might say that this is why many nations recently proved willing to sign a Convention banning manufacture of chemical weapons – adding, though, that sixty-five nations must ratify it before it comes into force.) Natural toxins, now manufacturable inexpensively through gene cloning, are far more lethal: three hundred tons might replace the eighty thousand tons to which the chemical warfare

arsenal of the superpowers had at one stage grown. Shiga toxin manages to be over a million times deadlier than tabun. The gene for it was cloned by the US Army, officially 'to create a vaccine' and thus 'for peaceful purposes', while the same army had earlier cloned the gene for diphtheria toxin 'to create a new therapy to treat melanoma, a type of skin cancer'. Properly protected troops... would... be slowed down by the bulky clothing and respirators needed to counter such agents... [However,] while civilians could suffer heavy casualties, the extermination of the human race would... require agents of a self-reproducing kind: the bacteria, rickettsiae, viruses and fungi of biowarfare. A single inhaled organism can lead to death from Q-fever. Just one genetically novel virus started the influenza pandemic of 1918-19. Its offspring infected at least two-thirds of a billion people, killing more than the world war had done. In 1346 besieging Mongols hurled plague-infected corpses into the city of Caffa, its fleeing inhabitants then helping to spread the Black Death. Twenty-five million people perished, about 30[%] of Europe's population... There were several allegations of germ warfare during... W[WI]. During WW2] the British developed anthrax bombs. They then ordered half a million from the U[S] 'for use', Prime Minister Churchill wrote, 'should this mode of warfare be employed against us'. Britain's Joint Planning Staff received instructions, all the same, to study whether the Allies could reach victory more quickly by first use of such warfare... [T]he Japanese... developed bombs for anthrax and gas gangrene. During their invasion of China they attacked at least eleven cities experimentally, their aircraft dropping plague-infected paper, cotton, wheat and rice. In addition they distributed one hundred and thirty kilograms of anthrax and paratyphoid bacteria. Several thousand prisoners of war became their experimental subjects... but the U[S] overlooked the deaths in return for the experimental data, then continued to deny Russian reports of the whole affair for the next quarter-century... In the U[S] a force which grew to four thousand persons worked on anthrax, yellow fever, plague, botulism and dozens of other diseases, including those of crops and animals... [C]rop disease bombs were produced for the US Air Force six years after the war... Post-war US activities included producing designs for a plant able to breed one hundred and thirty million mosquitoes a month, for spreading yellow fever... The Russians may have regarded all this as an invitation to pursue their own research, for in 1979 a US Congressional Committee reported that an anthrax outbreak in Sverdlovsk had been caused by an explosion at a biological weapons factory... In 1952, during the Korean War, an international scientific commission made the firm statement – the U[S] was equally firm in its denial – that 'the people of Korea and China did actually serve as targets for bacteriological weapons... mostly it was experimental work, as far as we could see', work which 'didn't seem to be very successful'. However, secret pseudo-attacks by the US military on San Francisco, New York and Winnipeg had been depressingly effective. In one of them, in 1950, wind blowing over two minesweepers sent... harmless bacteria into the lungs of virtually every San Franciscan. Secret British experiments from 1948 to 1959 were similarly alarming. Caged on rafts off the Bahamas and the west coast of Scotland, thousands of animals were exposed to wind-driven bacteria, while harmless zinc cadmium sulphide was poured from aircraft flying around the British coast. The results are said to have shown that Britain would be virtually defenceless against germs in aerosol form. All this activity had occurred despite first one and then another treaty... In 1985 half the developing countries had accepted neither of them... [T]reaty violations would be nearly impossible to detect... The difficulties of verification have been worsened by advances in production methods... Production times have been reduced several thousandfold... The arrival of genetic engineering was at first judged to make little difference. As recently as 1983 a spokesman for the US military said the world was already full of fine biological weapon agents... Such a reaction sounds foolish today. Techniques of gene manipulation have advanced so rapidly that lethal, highly infectious viruses are no longer regarded as too dangerous to handle... In 1985 [the British P]M... stated that biological weapons had become as potentially dangerous as nuclear ones. Normal germs 'don't want to kill'; there is an evolutionary penalty to be paid for murdering one's host... but toxin-producing genes can be deliberately added to remedy this... Natural resistance and vaccines can be thwarted by changing the surface structures of virulent organisms, making them 'unrecognizable'... [A]tttempted defences would be futile unless one knew exactly which organisms the attacker was going to use – whereas in fact one would probably first learn of an attack only several days after it had taken place... Germs are fast becoming the poor man's atom bomb, available to small terrorist organizations or to criminals wishing to hold the world to ransom... with utterly lethal organisms which mutate so rapidly that no vaccines could fight them... One's own privacy is worth a great deal. Still, it may not be worth a major risk of dying, in company with everybody else, because some people have been using their privacy for perfecting a new disease.

[Before] the American bioweapons programme... was cancelled... [they] had tested deadly agents on sheep, and... also... on humans... "Those of us who worked in the biological warfare laboratories felt that we were patriots – that we were doing something that was very important to the U[S]."

...With Iraq on the scene it would clearly be foolish to discount the possibility of germ warfare on an international scale. But at least you'd have an idea of where the threat was coming from and who was responsible... [W]hat really scares those in the know about this deadly business is the possibility of just one person with a grudge getting their hands on anthrax or smallpox, then spreading it – who knows where or when... [The] chief of the FBI's domestic terrorism and counter-terrorism planning section... says the public doesn't hear about everything. "I would say at any given time there is about 50 to 60 investigations ongoing. If... someone wanted to do it badly enough I think they could do it." "...it is not a matter[of] if this will occur, it's a matter[of] when... where... and how much panic and how much death we are willing to accept at the time it occurs."

... "You're going to be hearing more and more people who are what you might call the seasoned... members of the public health community coming forward and saying, 'I would never talk about this issue before because I didn't want to give people the idea, but now we as a group recognise that there are people who have the means to do it... and have the will to do it.' ...germ attacks are not only possible... they've happened before... September 1984... at first four or five people... [in] a small town in northwest Oregon... complain of fever [and] violent nausea, then in a week the number has risen to 30; after two weeks, nearly 200. It's salmonella, and when it's over 751 people are sick... nearly a tenth of the town. It was a mystery. No one knew that the cult on the edge of town... also had an underground tunnel leading to a secret lab where they cultivated salmonella in liquid, and then took vials of it into local restaurants, secretly pouring them over the salad bars... the salad dressing and coffee creamers. The mystery was solved only because an informant came forward who said the [cult was] trying to make people too sick to vote against cult interests in a local election. More than 10 years later... members of the Japanese doomsday cult... Supreme Truth... placed plastic bags full of nerve gas in Tokyo subway cars at rush-hour. 5000 people writhed in agony... 12 of them died. But the even greater terror was the discovery the 10,000-member cult also had its own lab and microbiologists – funded by \$300 million in assets. As the half-blind leader of the cult called for Armageddon one of his top scientists tried unsuccessfully to spray deadly bacteria from the top of a Tokyo building. There were special briefcases with fans which could blow germs through the air. The group set up offices in New York and went shopping in Africa for the lethal ebola virus... Six years ago a woman walked into the local sheriff's office in Minnesota with a small... coffee can. It belonged to her husband, and inside was a strange powder and a bottle of green gel. The powder was... a deadly biotoxin made from castor beans. It destroys your circulatory system. The gel was a liquid which makes it seep into the skin. Her husband and three other men were arrested. The men were reportedly members of a local militia and said they were planning to kill IRS agents, US marshals and the local sheriff. They... made the [biotoxin] from a \$12 kit ordered in a catalogue. The four were sentenced for up to four years in prison – the first people convicted under the Bioweapons Anti-terrorism Act... And it seems that if catalogues don't have what you want, research warehouses will... A terrorist can easily take aim with... that Saturday-night special of biological gunslingers – anthrax. "...It's the most stable biological organism." Stable because anthrax produces spores – the dormant version of the bacteria. Neither sunlight nor temperature has any effect on them. A lot of animals carry anthrax, and the spores have survived in horse hair for 100 years. And, unlike a virus, which needs live cells to grow... anthrax... thrives in a liquid nutrient and heat. In a couple of days one millilitre of anthrax culture can produce one billion spores. "We think the human lethal dose is... 10,000 spores... [I]f there's an aerosol cloud of this coming by that's

not hard to do.” ...So much antibiotic is needed that one million infected civilians would take only two weeks to use up the entire [US] supply... Iraq... has admitted making enough anthrax to kill everyone on Earth several times and... has warheads which can carry liquid anthrax 400 miles... The same place, it turns out, [that] sold... Iraq its first strain of anthrax lethal to humans... [also supplied the man who] was arrested twice in 1995 for possession of bubonic plague, and again... for what turned out to be inactive anthrax... So what is going on at American Type Culture Collection? ...The company refused our request for an interview but wrote to us, saying that they comply fully with all Federal regulations... [W]e know how deadly [anthrax] can be because of what happened... in the Ural Mountains of Russia. In 1979, in [a] military compound – where no one knew they were doing biological research – apparently one night someone forgot to turn on the filtration system and a small amount of anthrax... went up in a gust and floated out on the wind. It blew over a neighbourhood just south of the military plant in a plume that stretched 10 miles. American scientists say the number of dead [was] 62 but the director of a military hospital there told us she documented 259 victims... [T]he KGB confiscated all her records. The infected were treated with everything available... The victims’ relatives remember their agony... “Something was coming out of her mouth and later they told me these were parts of her liver covered in blood.” ...“You cough, you get a tightness of the chest... and then you begin to feel better... This is known as the anthrax eclipse.” ...that’s the cruel deception inside anthrax. You don’t think you need treatment – when, in fact, only massive antibiotics in the first 24 hours will keep the accumulation of toxins from killing you... For more than a decade the Russians refused to admit that their military had released the anthrax... Back in 1969 the U[S] took the lead in ending the development of biological warfare. A treaty was drawn up and... in 1972, along with 140 other nations... the Soviets signed it, saying that they would finish too. But that was a lie. In fact, they were about to launch the most terrifying and sophisticated programme the world had ever seen. The West didn’t believe the Russians could deploy germ warfare weapons. They could. The West didn’t believe they were passing information on to other countries, like Iraq. It seems they did. And the big question – is the Russian military still at it today? ...In 1989 the CIA learned that [a] vast complex of buildings... [spotted in a satellite photo from above] the depths of Siberia was the heart of what is called Black Biology... where nature’s viruses were being harnessed as weapons... It is a gigantic labyrinth of corridors sealed off by airlocks... [holding a] bank of 10,000 viruses – one of the biggest collections in the world, including 140 strains of smallpox [and] three types of ebola... The scientists... [claim] that the research is only peaceful... [but] some American officials... [who were prevented from entering] building number 6... worry that biological weapons research continues... [Smallpox vaccinations were] stopped back in 1971, and the disease was declared eradicated worldwide by 1979... [S]ince these shots only last 10 years, today nobody is immune... “If you freeze-dry smallpox virus it will last for quite some time... In dried form it’s inactive but the minute it hits a moist membrane, such as your lung, it comes alive.” ...100 cases of smallpox could lead to... 30,000 new ones in a few days – and a third of them will die. “There would be a need, essentially, to vaccinate all 250 million people in the U[S] in the event of a terrorist release of smallpox anywhere in the population... Currently there are about 7 million doses of smallpox vaccine on hand. If there was a major smallpox outbreak, the smallpox vaccine would become more valuable than diamonds.” ...What if someone who was vaccinated carried smallpox onto a 747 and released it? 400... passengers could walk around for two days not knowing that they had become human biological weapons. Or what about a mall with a central ventilation system? “I think it would be the closest thing to a living hell that I can imagine. This is really a doomsday scenario...” ...Supposedly, there are only two supplies of smallpox left in the world – one... [at the Ural complex] and one at the Centres for Disease Control in Atlanta – but... in 1990 the Russians devised a way to produce additional smallpox virus in a matter of days, and... by the tonne... not ounces... Building 6 is where they work on smallpox... [A former Russian officer says] there are... “Fifty-two biological agents [that] would be used in biological weapons.” “So... you’d have to vaccinate people... against 52 different agents to make them safe from biological weapons?” “...that’s impossible... because nobody will survive after fifty-two vaccinations.” “...“Did you ever say to yourself, ‘What are we doing?’” “...I’m sorry, but for a long period of time... we thought that the U[S] was doing it too.” So the Russians simply lied. And when the Americans wanted to come for an inspection... it took two years to hide the equipment... A Russian military scientist recently published a report in [a] British journal... announcing the creation of a vaccine-proof anthrax. The US asked to see it. The Russians refused... [I]f you read the recent Russian scientific publications it’s clear they can now genetically marry smallpox with [a] brain virus called VEE. And [some people believe] they have another deadly genetic merger – smallpox and ebola... [that has no] treatment techniques... As part of... [their training, US firemen, policemen and emergency medical] crews – what are called first responders [– are]... told to seal the area, don protective gear, [then] call for... back up... [from] army or FBI units trained to handle hazardous material... But in Washington DC last April the city’s emergency response was put to the test. Rescue workers rushed to the scene after receiving a call about a strange package... When they opened it, it was marked *anthrax*. Streets were cordoned off [and] EMS workers were literally hosed down after examining the contents. It turned out to be a hoax, but an instructive one for the workers – they made big mistakes. For one thing, if it had been anthrax, all those workers would have been sick or dead. They forgot the first rule of biological events – keep a safe distance... But critics say the US training programme has problems that go far beyond that... “It won’t be... firemen... [or] policemen who will be responding – it’ll be emergency room physicians and nurses... [and other] public health agencies.” ...[an] expert... from the Minnesota Public Health Department... says if health workers aren’t prepared they won’t recognise the symptoms of unusual diseases brought on by a bio-attack. They can become casualties themselves... yet these workers are going virtually untrained. “There hasn’t been a single alert put out to the public health system in this country...” New York turns out to be the exception. After the World Trade Centre bombing the city spent millions [o]n training and equipment... [E]mergency rooms in New York have been trained to recognise... deadly viruses and bacteria... American soldiers are getting vaccinated against anthrax but what about the rest of us? Virtually everyone we talked to said mass vaccinations are not the best defence against what we fear... “Terrorists like to target civilians.” “Certainly, but who are you going to immunize? ...I believe we should focus on being able to identify the attack very quickly and get people on antibiotics, and work out the logistics of doing that.” In a [similar] statement submitted to Congress, [the 42nd US] President... said that antidotes, antibiotics [and] new treatments should be stored in emergency warehouses around the country[– which, no doubt, pleased the manufacturers of those products (who could be accused of having an unhealthy economic interest in the level of terror that can be generated within the minds of US taxpayers!)]... But so far, according to the National Security Council, there are only enough supplies to treat casualties in one major American city... “...[H]owever, y]ou have to realise... unlike... a chemical attack, you have a little bit of time with a biological attack.” Which is one of the reasons the [US] military has only two hospital isolation rooms for handling a bio-level 4 – the most contagious or deadly attack.

It is the best part of a month since the first dead crows began turning up in New York’s parks and golf courses. Gleaming black bundles of feathers, the birds seem to have been struck from the sky by an unseen hand. Frozen in death with eyes open and beaks wide, it is as if they saw something terrible and were killed before they could tell of it. And in a sense, perhaps they have glimpsed the future – a tiny, terrifying preview of what might happen if a biological attack is ever unleashed on one of America’s major cities. It is a scenario that has stalked the Pentagon’s darker fantasies for more than 30 years. But now, because of the deaths of five senior citizens and some 950 crows... that fear is almost palpable. As America’s military commanders have admitted in testimony before a series of congressional committees, not only can the world’s premier power do almost nothing to stop a biological attack, it has no realistic hope of treating the sick, stopping the massive panic that must surely follow, or even burying the dead. Vaccines against the most likely biological agents are either non-existent or in such short supply that only a privileged handful could expect to receive them. As for those few treatments that do exist... the cure could be almost worse than the disease. Despite a story in the current *New Yorker* magazine that raises a possible link between New York’s viral outbreak and [the Iraqi President]’s biological weapons labs, officials at the Centres for Disease Control are adamant that the bug – dubbed West Nile-like virus – is nothing more sinister than another example

of Mother Nature's dispassionate mischief. Genes mutate all the time, this city has been told, and whatever is causing the trouble is but the latest random twist in a coiled strand of viral DNA... Despite the soothing words spilling out from City Hall and Washington, the fact remains that this virus is something entirely new. True, it bears a strong genetic similarity to the West Nile variant of the infectious agent responsible for causing a strain of encephalitis. But it is now clear it is not the same thing, which only deepens the riddle of how it took root. And the mystery adds considerably to the fear. While it would be wrong to say that the Big Apple has been thrown into a panic, there is certainly a low but persistent level of anxiety... A month of media reports, not to mention the nightly chatter of helicopters drenching the five boroughs with insecticide, can sharpen even the dullest imagination to a paranoid edge. And fear, almost as much as the disease itself, is what officials... [who've] mooted the possibility of a massive civilian inoculation programme... are most anxious to combat since they have seen the havoc it is wreaking in the armed forces... In Army units, Marine bases and Air Force stations from coast to coast, a near mutiny is brewing as servicemen refuse to roll up their sleeves and be inoculated with a controversial anti-anthrax vaccine. In Tennessee last week, officials admitted almost half the part-time pilots in an Air National Guard air-transport squadron had resigned their commissions rather than be vaccinated. In California, 20 out of 65 career fighter pilots at the Travis Air Force base quit when confronted with the same choice, while more than half the pilots and crew attached to the base's air transport unit also bailed out. Across in Connecticut, resignations from a squadron of A-10 ground-attack planes have so reduced the unit's strength that its commander conceded he would not be able to go to war if a sudden emergency erupted. Veterans groups are blaming the vaccine for Gulf War Syndrome and a slather of Internet sites now carry personal narratives from scores of servicemen who see their shots as the cause of a sudden and bafflingly diverse variety of debilitating symptoms. As everything from heart ailments to joint degeneration, rashes, impotence and liver failure is attributed to the vaccine, worried generals have begun making examples of those who refuse. The first vaccination refusenik to pay the price... has been dishonourably discharged after six months of hard labour in a military prison. The "get tough" attitude has done not the slightest good... 600 service personnel have so far refused their injections... [T]he US military has a dreadful record of putting its troops in harm's way and then covering up the consequences. Even civilians have not been immune to the military's curiosity about germ warfare. In the 60s, for example, agents dropped two laboratory flasks packed with harmless bacteria on to the tracks at a Manhattan subway station. Within 24 hours, the bugs had turned up at almost every stop in the sprawling underground transit system... The anthrax vaccine at the centre of the storm is a relatively new variant on a treatment that has been in use since 1970, when workers in slaughterhouses and tanneries began receiving it as a mandatory condition of employment... [W]hen the Gulf War erupted, the brand new vaccine was hastily administered to 300,000 troops likely to be deployed in the Middle East. Within days, the first confused reports of possible side effects were trickling in. By the time [Iraq's forces] had been booted from Kuwait, those complaints were a deluge. Critics... blame an organic chemical compound called squalene, which they insist was added to the vaccine's secret formula as a sort of biological catalyst to speed its assimilation into the bodies of recipients. The Pentagon insisted not a trace of squalene was used in the manufacturing process. Yet when... a... university test[ed] blood samples from servicemen inoculated during the Gulf War, every single sample was found to contain squalene antibodies – including the samples drawn from those troops who received the shots but were never sent overseas... The Pentagon's official response verged on the schizophrenic. On the one hand it continued to assert that, no, squalene was not used – and anyway, even if it was, the compound does no harm because it is a naturally occurring precursor to cholesterol. And at the same time it reluctantly conceded that a leaked... memo signed by [the]Secretary of the Army... was the genuine article. The anthrax vaccine "involves unusually hazardous risks associated with the potential for adverse reactions in some recipients," [the memo stated]... In the meantime those dead crows continue to pose an age-old question – the one that may someday demand a choice between the lesser of two evils.

At the Hague conference of 1899, proposals for banning certain chemical weapons were offered, but they were successfully opposed by... the American Secretary of State. A resolution forbidding asphyxiating gasses in artillery shells was adopted, but the US did not sign. When... W[W1] came... 120,000 tons of poison gas were used, mainly by Germany, France and, to a lesser extent, the U[S], producing one-and-a-quarter million casualties. More than a quarter of all American casualties... were due to poison gas.

Since... W[W1], when mustard gas and other foul concoctions inflicted terrible injuries on soldiers in Europe, chemical weapons have mostly been shunned... Yet international law does not forbid the possession of such weapons, merely their use; and even then retaliation in kind is allowed. That is about to change. The Chemical Weapons Convention, which bans all production, stockpiling and use of chemical arms and requires Governments to destroy any old stocks they still hold, is just two short of the 65 ratifications needed for it to come into force. This is perhaps the most ambitious arms control treaty yet... Teams of inspectors will fan out to check that chemicals companies in signatory countries are not secretly supplying their armies, and that old stocks of chemical weapons are properly disposed of. But the convention is in trouble. The [US] Administration, which was planning to submit it to a Senate vote, drew back last week, for fear it might not get through. Though the convention is backed by some leading Republicans, and was negotiated under Republican Administrations, that party's presidential candidate... has questioned whether it is enforceable... Russia, too, which faces an estimated bill of \$3.6 billion for the destruction of its huge weapons stocks – the Americans began destroying their own unilaterally in 1990 – is dragging its feet. Without these two, which have the world's biggest supplies of weapons and vast chemicals industries, the convention will look cock-eyed. Can it work? No arms-control regime is watertight. The trick is to make life as hard as possible for would-be cheats. Many chemicals used in everyday products can also be used in weapons. Routine inspections can check that information given by companies on their stocks and industrial processes is correct. The convention will require new national laws, banning the possession of chemicals for nefarious uses. These could help the fight against terrorism. (At the time of the sarin attack in the Tokyo metro, possession of such chemicals was not illegal in Japan; now it is.) ...What of those who will not sign? North Korea, Syria, Libya, Egypt and Serbia are among absentees known to possess chemical weapons. Iraq, another non-signer, is... subject to a separate monitoring regime... Countries that join must apply strict controls to trade in certain classes of chemicals. Non-signers will find it increasingly hard to buy some chemicals, even for civilian use. That prospect may encourage wider support. Indeed, worries that trade worth billions of dollars might be disrupted helped win support for the convention from America's chemical industry...

A landmark convention banning the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons will take effect next year now that 65 countries have ratified it. Hungary's was the last signature the U[N] needed for the Chemical Weapons convention, which... is of unlimited duration... It has so far been signed by 160 countries including all five permanent members of the Security Council... But among them only Britain and France have so far ratified the accord[, which]... was the result of a decade of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, the international community's main disarmament negotiating body. - 1996

The U[S] Senate has scheduled a debate next week on a global treaty outlawing chemical weapons... [The US] President... has been conducting an intensive lobbying campaign for the Chemical Weapons Convention, seeking Senate approval in time for formal U[S] ratification by April 29, when the treaty goes into force with or without the U[S]. A vote next Friday would meet this deadline. The treaty has already been ratified by more than 70 countries. Immediately after the agreement was announced... the Senate opened a brief debate on a separate bill opposed by the Administration under which the U[S] would act unilaterally to meet the threat of chemical and biological weapons. The bill... was approved 53-44 on a near party line vote. The White House called the measure a "deficient and unworkable" alternative to the Chemical Weapons Convention... a unilateral

approach to a global problem that requires an international solution... It was unclear what effect approval of the bill would have on the prospects for the treaty. Treaty opponents said it could give senators a way to vote against poison gas while also voting against the treaty. The bill would ban chemical and biological weapons within the U[S] and require... sanctions against other countries using them... [By the way, d]id you know there was a serious leakage of nerve gas last year from an army operation in Utah?

...As the U[S]... gets ready to end its nearly 100-year military presence in Panama, concern is growing that contamination will be left behind to sour investment opportunities Panamanians are eager to sell... [The] Panamanian Government... expects more than \$US800 million... to be pumped into reverted areas... and hopes to turn Panama's \$US256 million tourism industry into a \$US1 billion money-maker by the turn of the century... It aims to turn Fort Amador, a former US... W[W2] nerve centre, into a \$US450 million hotel, cruise ship terminal and recreation complex. Construction has already begun... [Unfortunately, environmentalists] fear that when the small Central American nation takes control of the 80km... [Panama Canal Zone, which has been] in US hands in perpetuity for annual rent... [since] 1903... and picks up more than 93,000 ha of land and 7000 buildings... it will also inherit unexploded munitions and chemical waste, the result of military exercises since... W[W1]. Panama's Interoceanic Region Authority... the state body in charge of the handover, voiced its concerns recently at a conference... "The contamination... in the canal zone areas worries us... We are also interested in knowing the true use of all the military areas that were used this century by the US,"... [T]he Pentagon spent \$US3 million on cleaning up last year and will spend another \$US5 million this year. "We believe we have done an excellent job in the environmental stewardship in this country,"... [one US colonel, who is a] co-chairman of the joint US-Panama sub-committee on the environment, said. "We are removing, containing or controlling known imminent hazards that are on the installations." ...[However, in] one document at the Panama City meeting, the US military Southern Command (Southcom), which moves its headquarters from Panama to Miami today, argued that "the technology does not exist to entirely clear the impact areas of unexploded ordnance and other safety threats without completely destroying the ecology, the rain forest, and the environment in the... process." ...Both Governments have said three firing ranges bordering the canal and used by US forces for practice are deemed hazardous and are unlikely to be used for redevelopment... [A] Southcom spokesman... admitted the US military's Tropical Test Centre at Fort Clayton had been used for chemical weapons testing. In the mid-1960s tests were held on low-grade Virex nerve gas shells and in 1993 exposure tests on depleted uranium shells were carried out to observe their reaction to tropical conditions. [In related news, the drums in which 'tens of thousands of tonnes of German chemical weapons (including nerve gas, sarin, cyanide and arsenic) were sent to the bottom of the ocean around Europe and the Baltic Sea by the Allies between 1946-48 are now rusting.']

...The worldwide treaty banning chemical weapons took effect yesterday afternoon, 180 days after the 65th country... ratified it... As of yesterday, 87 countries had ratified the treaty, including the U[S] which did so last week. Cuba was expected to become the 88th late last night or today... The Russian Parliament on Friday postponed adopting the ban, saying the country could not afford to destroy its stockpiles – a task it says would cost \$US5 billion... Russia's lower house, the State Duma, promised to ratify it by spring, the ITAR-Tass news agency said. Iraq and North Korea... also have not ratified the treaty... The U[S] and Russia are the only two countries that acknowledge they have chemical weapons... [but a]ccording to American estimates 11 nations are developing... biological [weapons]...

US fumes over mustard gas factory... LIBYA is stepping up construction work on the largest chemical weapons plant in the world in defiance of American threats to bomb the facility to prevent its completion. The vast 2.5ha production plant hollowed out of a mountain at Tarhunah... has been under construction for six years... Intelligence experts say an extra layer of concrete has been put over the network of tunnels deep inside the mountain to make a conventional air attack virtually impossible. In anticipation of such protective measures the Pentagon has given top priority to the development of a new range of "bunker-busting" bombs equipped with special rocket motors to "punch" the weapons through more than 30m of sandstone and concrete. The US has been examining satellite pictures and other intelligence to see if existing weapons would be capable of destroying the facility. But Tarhunah, which... the Libyan dictator, claims has nothing to do with chemical weapons and is part of Libya's irrigation system, can be reached only by two 140m tunnels. A conventional ground attack on the plant would involve hundreds of soldiers and dozens of helicopters. It would carry the risk of colossal failure[(and an attack on the facility could also inadvertently cause the release of any poisonous chemicals being stored – or already produced – there)]. Military analysts fear the \$770 million plant will be capable of producing at least 2500 tonnes of mustard gas and other deadly nerve agents every year. The Libyans have already received the technology to North Korea's Nodong-1 advanced ballistic missiles, which will eventually enable chemical warheads to be carried 1300km – enough to endanger some parts of Europe. [● 'The CIA estimates that by the year 2000 over 20 countries will have long-range ballistic missile capabilities.']

...Technology in recent years has been moving towards highly accurate small warheads such as the Trident D5, a submarine-launched missile deployed by both the U[S] and Britain... Scenarios have been posed by both... where small accurate[nuclear] warheads would be used tactically... Nuclear weapons are indisputably horrific weapons of mass destruction and it would be ideal if they could be abolished... "Abolition 2000" is a project to secure the abolition of all nuclear weapons by 2000. It has attracted a great deal of support and over 700 academic, professional and other non-governmental groups and organisations are now involved in the international network... Don't expect, however, nuclear weapons to be gone by 2000. They will certainly be around for many years to come... For both the U[S] and Russia – which has just... deployed its first regiment armed with new-generation intercontinental ballistic missiles called Topol-M... [-] nuclear weapons will always have a place in foreign policy. They will be valued as a deterrent against conventional attack, a weapon of last resort, a response to a chemical or biological attack from a rogue terrorist state, or as simply a symbol of international status... To give up the weapons completely would mean that the U[S] and Russia would have reduced options to deal with any new international crisis, or with real or perceived threats to their security and interests. This is not a position that any government wants to be in... Giving up nuclear weapons would also be staunchly opposed by military interests, especially in the U[S] where nuclear weapons have long been part of the national deterrent and where the nuclear industry has been a major source of income for military/industrial conglomerates. The U[S] Congress has always been sceptical of arms control, especially where "national security" has been at stake. What the U[S] will probably do is de-emphasise the role of nuclear weapons in its military doctrines, but the weapons will not go away. Neither will the drive to improve those weapons that are retained; in 1995 the Department of Energy was proposing that the Government build a new multimillion-dollar tritium producing plant to "boost" existing nuclear weapons... [The presidents of Russia and the US] in their summit at Helsinki agreed to establish guidelines for a new agreement in reducing nuclear arms. If Start III is negotiated the U[S] and Russia will reduce their strategic arsenals down to some 2000 warheads. That would be significantly down from the 30,000-plus maintained during the Cold War. Tactical nuclear weapons have been withdrawn by both sides, including those from surface ships, so it is only strategic weapons such as bombers and intercontinental ballistic missiles that can be launched from land silos or submarines that remain. Some studies in the U[S] suggest that the U[S] could go as low as 200 warheads and still retain a healthy deterrent. America is unlikely to go this low – nor is Russia – and neither is likely to abolish its weapons... If the U[S] and Russia don't give up their weapons, Britain, France and China are unlikely to do so either. All will want their weapons for the same reasons as the U[S] and Russia, though their forces are much smaller... As for states such as Israel with its suspected nuclear arsenal of up to 200 devices... – [and its penchant for handing out] 18-year sentence[s] in solitary confinement... [to people] found guilty of treason for disclosing secrets about Israel's nuclear weapons programme... – ...or India and Pakistan which both have the technology to rapidly deploy basic bombs, it will be the regional political situation that determines their disarmament plans above any other factor.

...The report of the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear weapons... underpins its call for a global ban on nuclear weapons with a detailed rebuttal of the value of deterrence... The commission's report says: "It has been argued that nuclear weapons have reinforced caution in

the conduct of relationships between the major powers. But their existence carries the inherent risk of their use, which would inevitably have catastrophic results. The only complete defence against such catastrophe is the elimination of nuclear weapons and the assurance that they will never be produced again.” The report suggests that the Soviet Union never had the ability or the desire to invade Western Europe, and says new information emerging from Russia conflicts with the belief that only the prospect of multiple Hiroshimas kept them at bay. “The record... instead suggests that... W[W2] had reaffirmed for the Soviet Union, as for other powers, that major war between them was not a rational instrument of policy and should be avoided at any cost.” It quotes a series of key Cold War figures whose doubts on the value of nuclear forces included not only the validity of deterrence but their military worth and the U[S] commitment to their use... Significantly, two members of the commission... played central roles in American nuclear policy. One is... a former Secretary of Defence who in the Kennedy years helped to shape the policy of massive nuclear retaliation and faced down the Soviet Union during the Cuban crisis of 1962. The other... was commander-in-chief of the U[S] Strategic Command. A third, the 37th President’s... first Defence Secretary... described nuclear weapons as “useless for military purposes.” ...the commissioners said... “It is also plain that any attempt to unshackle nuclear weapons through contemplating a role for them in conventional regional conflicts would be short-sighted in the extreme. This would inevitably and significantly intensify proliferation pressures.”

...Why it’s not a wise idea to ban all nuclear weapons... Many of the ideas recently put forward by the Canberra Commission (an international body set up by the A[US]n Government), and by a group of about 40 mostly American and Russian ex-military men, make sense... Though they recognise it would not be easy, both the Canberra group and the old soldiers want nuclear weapons abolished completely. But could it be done? And would a nuclear-free world be a safer place? ...Unfortunately, the answer to neither question is as straightforward as the disarmers would like... As the new abolitionists see it, the risk that a nuclear weapon might go bang unexpectedly or fall into the wrong hands now outweighs whatever deterrent value these weapons may still possess... As North Korea and Iraq have shown, catching nuclear cheats is an uncertain business. Lining up enough international support to punish them is harder, even when the would-be chastiser – usually America, for want of much help from China or Russia – is dealing from over-whelming nuclear strength... Moreover, as long as some countries have nuclear arms, others will want to acquire them. The solution is for the haves to join the have-nots: dump the bomb... Attention is at last turning to getting rid of the old weapons rather than building new ones, but the big powers still have enough bombs and missiles to make the post-Armageddon rubble bounce. America, Russia, Britain, France and China are frank about their nuclear arsenals. Israel, India and Pakistan are more coy. Plenty of other countries could go nuclear if they wanted to, and some would if they could... Someday, possibly quite soon, the world will wake up to face a rogue regime or a bunch of terrorists with a nuclear bomb and [they] will use it. Urgently needed are missile defences – ones that avoid setting off still greater nuclear rivalries – to protect troops sent in to do the necessary dirty work... In a nuclear-knowing world, eternal vigilance, not disarming gesture, is the best hope for keeping the peace... In an imperfect world nuclear weapons do still deter.

...[the] President... has issued new targeting guidelines for US nuclear arms, dropping the dictum the military must be prepared to win a... protracted nuclear war, even if it meant the end of the world as we know it... The... new orders required the military to aim its nuclear forces to deter the use of nuclear weapons by threatening a devastating response... The new guidelines retain the U[S] “first strike” policy of allowing it to use nuclear weapons first in a conflict, and allowing nuclear attacks against countries without nuclear arms in certain circumstances... [However, a]cceptance of the nuclear deterrent is a threat to the world, not a defence. [‘If nuclear weapons become an instrument of terrorism there is no way nuclear weapons can counter that.’]

...Last week we heard that t]wo Lithuanians ha[d] been arrested in Miami on charges of plotting to sell nuclear and other weapons to US undercover agents posing as Colombian drug dealers... [Now a former] Russian National Security Adviser... says the Russian military has lost track of more than 100 suitcase-sized nuclear bombs... Last May he said at a private briefing to a delegation of U[S] congressmen that he believed 84 of the one-kiloton bombs... which could kill up to 100,000 people... were unaccounted for...

Two drunken employees at a nuclear facility in Russia stole two atomic warheads that were found later in a parking garage when security officials brought their prank to an end. The November 1993 theft of the warheads was believed to be the first-ever case in which nuclear weapons were stolen, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* newspaper said yesterday... Even more worrying... [is the story about a] day in 1995... [when Russian military officers] were tracking a rocket about the size of a U.S. submarine-launched Trident that seemed to be streaking in from the Norwegian Sea... on course to hit Moscow in 15 minutes... On military bases across Russia, red lights flashed and klaxons blared, alerting troops in charge of the country’s strategic nuclear weapons to get ready to use them... It turned out to be a Norwegian scientific rocket sent aloft to observe the aurora borealis. The Norwegians had dutifully notified the Russian embassy in Oslo, but the word was never relayed to the military. “For a while,” says... a member of the Russian parliament’s Defence Committee, “the world was on the brink of nuclear war.” It may still be near the brink despite the end of the cold war... because Russia’s nuclear arsenal is... on hair-trigger alert... and... the elite Strategic Nuclear Forces... are paid very little – \$180 a month for a submarine commander – when they are paid at all... [A] retired colonel of the SRF... says... “If those who guard Russia’s nuclear weapons go hungry, we might face some terrifying consequences.”

...Plenty of enemies still knocking at the gate... Despite the thawing of the Cold War, world security is still threatened by any number of potential explosions... The Cold War could almost become the good old days. In those days there was a single ogre who kept his minions at bay: now, according to the U[S]’ latest defence assessment, there is an entire pack baying at the gates... The list runs from the emergence of a new superpower to challenge the U[S] – ...a re-arming China... – to the spread of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear or environmental blackmail or sabotage, computer warfare, a new wave of super-sophisticated terrorists and a host of other potential dangers. And the assessment reveals a far less secure and more nervous America... “The world remains a dangerous and highly uncertain place, and the US likely will face a number of significant challenges to its security between now and 2015,” America’s new quadrennial defence review gloomily reports. Oil, and US access to it, remains a potential flashpoint... “Between now and 2015 it is reasonable to assume that more than one aspiring regional power will have both the desire and the means to challenge US interests militarily,” the review says. “In addition, failed or failing states may create instability, internal conflict and humanitarian crises... creating the conditions for unrest, famine, massive flows of migrants across international borders, aggressive actions by neighbouring states, or even mass killings.” Governments are also struggling to control the flow of sensitive information and regulate the spread of advanced technologies with potential military uses... An American physicist [recently] pleaded guilty to passing classified information on nuclear weapons to China... The review says the proliferation of advanced weapons and technologies will continue, possibly destabilising some regions and boosting the power and number of potential adversaries... The worst potential lies in the wreckage of the former Soviet Union, where control of large stocks of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons is in some states dangerously weak. In east Asia... proliferation threatens to upset delicate military balances in a region “rife with long-festering territorial disputes.” ...a crumbling North Korea is a constant and highly unpredictable threat... And while the US is almost certain to remain the only superpower... through to 2015, American superiority is unlikely to remain unchallenged beyond this... [Furthermore,] the review says... forms of attack, such as terrorism, are no longer threats just to US diplomats, military forces and citizens abroad, but will also threaten Americans at home... [T]he US will be targeted by “increasingly capable and violent” terrorists, the illegal drug trade and organised crime will continue to flow across its borders... “It is important to note that this projection of the security environment rests on two fundamental assumptions – that the US will remain politically and militarily engaged in the world over the next 15 to 20 years, and that it will maintain military superiority over current and potential rivals... If the US were to withdraw from its international

commitment, relinquish its diplomatic leadership, or relinquish its military superiority, the world would become an even more dangerous place, and the threats to the US, our allies, friends and interests would become even more severe.” - 1997

Mutual assured destruction of the superpowers has indeed secured the longest period of peace among industrial states since the end of the Napoleonic wars. The breakup of the Soviet Union, with the possible parcelling out of its weapons to independent republics, and the proliferation of nuclear weapons into the arsenals of smaller states (and prospectively into the hands of tyrants or terrorists), sets a finite term, however, on security imputed to the possession of a nuclear arsenal... A significant portion of the U.S. nuclear arsenal is deployed outside the country's borders, where it is exposed to the frailty of political alliance... The daughter product that awaits recovery from tons of radioactive garbage around the world for use as fuel... can be made into bombs as well. The spread of nuclear-power technology must inevitably permit and promote the silent proliferation of bomb-making capability.

Every nation that has tried to make an atom bomb since 1945 has succeeded, so far as is known. More than 1,700 bombs have been tested[('1030 by the US, 715 by Russia, 210 by France, 45 each to Britain and China') since 'Julius Robert Oppenheimer led the team which designed, built and tested the first atomic bomb in New Mexico'].

“...in some sort of crude sense which no vulgarity, no humour, no over-statement can quite extinguish, the physicists have known sin; and this is a knowledge which they cannot lose.” - J. Robert Oppenheimer

Knowledge of how to build nuclear bombs cannot be eradicated. Small nations, terrorists and rich criminals wanting to become still richer by holding the world to ransom can already afford very destructive bombs. Production costs are falling and the world has many multi-billionaires... The bomb which destroyed Hiroshima was of roughly ten kilo-tons: that is, with a energy like that of ten thousand tons of the chemical high explosive TNT. Modern 'strategic' bombs are typically between a hundred and a thousand times more powerful. By 1961... the Soviet Union had tested a bomb of 58 megatons (58 million tons of TNT)[, which had to be dropped by parachute in order to give the plane enough time to get clear of the blast zone and whose 'cloud rose 40 miles above Earth and shock waves broke windows 1000 miles away in Norway'], and much larger ones are possible: with a fission device to trigger it, a fusion bomb can be virtually any size[('the Soviets scrapped plans to build a Doomsday Bomb, which consisted of a ship that was designed to automatically detonate a nuclear explosion capable of destroying all life on Earth should it sense enough radiation in the atmosphere to suggest that Russia had been destroyed). If the Soviet premier hadn't backed down over the missiles in Cuba – a situation which escalated when, apparently unbeknown to the premier, a U2 was shot down over Cuba – the US was, apparently, ready to launch an attack that would, inevitably, have led to a nuclear war. The affair was, effectively, the last time the two superpowers faced off with missiles']. During the Cold War, the U[S] and the Soviet Union each accumulated tens of thousands of warheads, the world's nuclear arsenals becoming the equivalent of a million Hiroshima bombs... Since then, the collapse of the Soviet Union has led to reductions in the arsenals, yet the world's supply of the essential ingredient, plutonium, has climbed steadily to about two thousand tons, some ten times as much as remains tied up in warheads. And recent improvements in bomb design apparently allow plutonium which has been recovered from the spent fuel rods of commercial nuclear reactors – a complex process, but within the technological capacity of many nations – to be used in bombs which are more than just highly polluting 'fizzles'... Although the details are secret, the US military seems to have exploded a test bomb made from it, and one comparable to that dropped on Nagasaki could, it is said, be built with just seven kilograms of it. But there will in any case be two or three hundred tons of best-quality plutonium, as now used in warheads, in civilian hands by the year 2000... Although over twenty million have died in warfare since... W[W2], the nuclear peace has in fact been kept throughout – but largely only through (1) fears of 'mutually assured destruction'... and (2) 'games of chicken', efforts to persuade the opposing side that one would prefer a major risk of destruction to abandoning one's aims... (3) Developing highly accurate missiles, which could destroy enemy rockets in their silos instead of civilians in their cities... Yet it... could lead to a war by encouraging a first strike – perhaps by a fearful enemy as the missiles were being readied for installation. The US Army's prolonged pursuit of ever greater missile accuracies was therefore dangerous. The fact that the US Navy later joined it in developing within-one-hundred meters accuracies was still worse, signalling as it did the rise to power of hawkish strategists who claimed that only between two and fifteen million Americans would die in an enfeebled Soviet reaction to a US first strike, this making a nuclear war 'winnable'... [A] committee of the US National Academy of Sciences judged in 1975 that the effect of a 10,000-megaton war on most ecosystems would be small at first, and negligible after thirty years. Today such assurances can seem misplaced... Perhaps a hundred million tons of dust would be thrown into the air, soon to be joined by maybe three hundred million tons of sooty smoke generated by forest fires, grassland fires, and firestorms in cities. Weight for weight, the smoke would be about a hundred times as effective as the dust at blocking sunlight. The outcome could be world-wide darkness for days or weeks, and twilight for months or for over a year. Temperatures might fall by 15° C or more. There is much disagreement among scientists here, some suggesting that heating could occur instead of cooling... It could be rather hard to say who or what – computers or commanders or politicians – could best be entrusted with launch decisions. It isn't only computer chips which can fail. In 1989... 'of the roughly 75,000 members of the US military with access to nuclear weapons and related components, nearly 2,400 had to be removed from duty. Seven hundred and thirty abused alcohol or drugs, and the rest had psychological or emotional problems, were insubordinate or engaged in criminal behaviour.' ...'Authority for transfer rests with the unit commanding officer who sometimes takes the view that the "good soldier", or airman, is one who can conceal his use of drugs, just as he can hold his liquor. Demonstrably unstable men have been kept on nuclear weapons duties against their wills', the problem being compounded by the fact that many apparently normal people 'delight in destruction', being expert 'at concealing their feelings and plans'. Bear in mind, however, that politicians aren't always models of rationality. Alcohol or drugs, prescribed by doctors or self-administered, have clouded the minds of world leaders, including those most generally respected.

HUMAN RACE or NUCLEAR RACE...

disarmament, the restriction or reduction of national armaments by international agreement. The Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907 failed to stop the armaments race that led to W[W]I... Disarmament conferences in Washington, 1921 [to] 2, in Geneva, 1928, in London, 1930, and in Geneva again, 1932 [to] 7, failed to provide sufficient guarantees against potential aggression to satisfy the participating nations that they could safely decrease their own land and sea armaments, in spite of the economic desirability of doing so... After W[W]II the U.S. took the initiative with the "Baruch Plan" (1946) for the establishment of an International Atomic Development Authority to control all atomic energy activities potentially dangerous to world security, thereby ending the manufacture of atomic weapons. Although approved by the UN General Assembly (1948) it was rejected by the Soviet Union. Subsequent attempts (1952 [to] 4) to secure agreement in the reduction of conventional armaments and armed forces were also unsuccessful... Talks centering on banning... nuclear testing were held between 1958 [and] 1962 but were generally fruitless. On Aug. 5, 1963 the U.S., Britain, and U.S.S.R. signed a treaty in Moscow banning nuclear tests above ground.

The U[S] yesterday detonated a nuclear device of less than 20 kilotonnes, 300m below the desert at Yucca Flats, Nevada. - 1990

France's most powerful, in a series of underground nuclear tests in the South Pacific, received mixed reactions from environmental groups and nations which oppose testing. The bomb beneath Fangataufa Atoll had a force of less than 120 kilotonnes, according to French Defence Ministry officials, and registered a magnitude of 5.9 on N[Z] seismographs. France says it now plans to sign a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests.

...China [has] exploded at least one nuclear bomb beneath the Lop Nor Desert, sparking a fresh round of international criticism at the continued testing of nuclear devices. Japan's *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* newspaper reported the U[S] Government had advised Tokyo that more than one bomb may have been detonated simultaneously because of... the... growing criticism... Global seismological monitoring could not determine how many explosions occurred, but indicated the test had an effective magnitude of 5.7.

...In a breakthrough deal with U[S] negotiators, China has agreed to support a historic global ban on nuclear test explosions, said western diplomats. That left India as the lone hold-out on the compromise treaty developed by the 61-nation Conference on Disarmament.

...Almost three years of talks on outlawing all nuclear explosions have ended in failure. Disarmament negotiators conceded defeat early yesterday after India continued to block a comprehensive test ban... Pakistan[']s... ambassador... immediately took the floor... and... said: "Today, the mask of the 'Smiling Buddha' had been torn off, revealing the face of the Goddess of War." He was referring to India's only nuclear test blast in 1974, which was followed by the coded message "the Buddha has smiled." ...the 61-nation Conference on Disarmament, meeting in Geneva, could not even agree to report its failure to the U[N] General Assembly. The major powers are now saying they will work quickly to revive the draft and have it approved and opened for signature in New York next month despite India's opposition.

...Indian political parties... support... the Government's firm repudiation of a draft nuclear test ban treaty. The parties put up a united front to denounce the accord from being adopted by disarmament negotiators in Geneva... During the two-and-a-half years of negotiations, India has demanded that the treaty commit the five declared nuclear powers – Britain, China, France, Russia and the U[S] – to a disarmament timetable. The nuclear powers have resisted... India has said since the mid-1960s that it would not give up its nuclear option until the nuclear powers adopted a timetable for eliminating their existing arsenals... In Geneva, [however, the US] disarmament ambassador... said the real reason India had blocked the treaty was because "New Delhi wants to maintain the Indian nuclear weapon option." Like the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which was indefinitely extended last year, the CTBT is widely viewed in India as a discriminatory agreement that would divide the world into nuclear "haves" and "have nots."

...in a televised address marking the 49th anniversary of India's independence... [India's P]M... said yesterday that his nation's people supported the Government's decision to block a global nuclear test ban treaty... "We will make no compromises on national security," he said from the ramparts of the historic Red Fort in Delhi... "We hoped in this connection the CTBT... would remove nuclear weapons from the world within a definite time-frame, but [other] nuclear weapons states are not ready to accept this... They want to maintain their right to hold nuclear arsenals. We cannot agree to this. That is why we... made it clear that we... oppose any such test ban treaty." [He] said his Government would press ahead with the development of two missiles. The short- and immediate-range missile programmes have been criticised by the U[S]...

The 'US Congress failed to ratify the anti-testing treaty' while the 'first of 80 stations to be built worldwide to test the atmosphere for radiation as part of the treaty was being opened in NZ.' In related news, 'a lost US nuclear bomb may still lie on the seabed off the coast of Greenland. The claim, made by a leading Danish newspaper yesterday, will boost opponents of America's planned new missile defence system. The US wants to use a base at Thule in Greenland, but it was the presence of that base which led to nuclear weapons being deployed in the area. The crash of a nuclear-armed B52 on January 21, 1968, caused a crisis in relations between Copenhagen and Washington, as Denmark officially prohibited nuclear weapons on its soil. Denmark looks after the external relations of Greenland, its former colony. The bomber landed on the ice in Baffin Bay. Three of its four B28 thermonuclear bombs – with a yield of between 70 and 350 kilotonnes – broke, and tonnes of radioactive ice and debris was recovered. But the US State Department said at the time only that the bombs had been accounted for, not that they had been recovered. Denmark's Ritzau news agency reported that film from a US submarine searching for the bomber's wreckage showed a bomb-like object.'

...'Secret documents about a 3 1/2-tonne nuclear bomb lying off the coast of the American city of Savannah have sparked new safety fears and residents are angry the bomb will not be removed. The 3454kg bomb was dumped off the Georgia coast in 1958 by a B-47 bomber after it collided with a fighter jet on a training flight. The crippled bomber was forced to jettison the bomb. Officials estimate the bomb was dropped at least 8km off the coast and now lies beneath 3m to 12m of water and is buried under 1m to 1.5m of sand and silt. A military search never found the bomb and for four decades it lay forgotten'.

...'the US Air Force developed a top-secret plan to detonate a nuclear bomb on the moon as a display of military might at the height of the Cold War. The now-73-year-old physicist who fronted the project in the late 1950s at the US military-backed Armour Research Foundation revealed America's extraordinary lunar plan. "It was clear the main aim of the proposed detonation was a PR exercise and a show of one-upmanship. The Air Force wanted a mushroom cloud so large it would be visible on earth. I made it clear at the time there would be a huge cost to science of destroying a pristine lunar environment, but the US Air Force were mainly concerned about the US lagging behind in the space race." A Pentagon spokesman would not confirm or deny the plans. Many Cold War documents are still classified in the US, but some details of Project A119 emerged after a biography of celebrated US scientist and astronomer Carl Sagan was published last year. Sagan was hired to undertake mathematical modelling on the expansion of an exploding dust cloud in the space around the moon. The physicist produced eight reports between May 1958 and January 1959 on the feasibility of the nuclear plan, all of which were destroyed in 1987 by the foundation.'

...'party leaders in the State Duma lower house agreed yesterday to hold a long-awaited debate and vote on ratifying the Start-2 nuclear arms reduction treaty, which the Kremlin has long tried to secure'. 'But Russia's economic decline has devastated its conventional, or non-nuclear forces. It hasn't got the kind of high-precision weapons possessed by Nato, so its military leadership has concluded it must rely, at least for the foreseeable future, on the nuclear shield – no matter how tattered and ageing. This includes not only continent-spanning, nuclear-armed missiles, but also thousands of short-range tactical nuclear weapons. Although details remain secret, there appears to be a drive among some weapons designers to persuade Russia's political leadership to build a new generation of low-yield tactical nuclear weapons for use on a battlefield. However, last year a plan was adopted to slash the number of defence workers in the 10 closed cities in the atomic-weapons archipelago from 75,000 to 40,000 by the year 2005. On the anniversary of the first Soviet atomic test, on August 29, 1949, Russian scientists are coming to terms with a country which can no longer support such a vast nuclear-weapons complex.'

...Britain can regain world prestige by becoming the first power to scrap its nuclear weaponry. The message is from [a] [former Fleet Air Arm officer... who flew Buccaneer carrier-borne nuclear strike aircraft and anti-submarine helicopters equipped with nuclear depth bombs for 11 years. Now in the anti-nuclear camp he believes one nation has to be the first to break ranks and give up its nuclear capability. It would make moral, political and economic sense for the British to be that power. "Britain has the smallest nuclear arsenal. Britain could... outflank the French, save money, and again achieve a world role which they thought they'd get with nuclear weapons..." It was while manning sub-chasing helicopters that [he] first began to question the nuclear deterrent policy and the folly of firing such weapons. "We had these nuclear depth bombs, twice the power of a Hiroshima bomb, to use against Soviet nuclear subs because they could outrun any torpedo we had at the time. But as our helo's could do only about 100 knots we went up with the bomb. We couldn't clear the area in time... It was an own goal. I began to realise my leaders were not thinking straight, in fact they were incompetent. I began to quietly question what was going on." He eventually took voluntary redundancy after 20 years with the Royal Navy and, with the rank of commander, was released after the Falklands War... However, it was another decade before he

was sufficiently alarmed to publicly join the campaign against nuclear weapons. The Gulf War was the catalyst: he feared... Scud rocket attacks on Israel would result in nuclear retaliation by the Israelis. Today [he] chairs the World Court Project UK, which is working to enforce this year's International Court of Justice (World Court) decision that it could find "no lawful circumstances for the threat, let alone the use, of nuclear weapons." ...In N[Z] as part of the international project, and backed by the Canberra Commission which... reported on the feasibility of eliminating nuclear weapons, [he] says he's not a pacifist in the sense that he believes all weapons should be scrapped. That would be impractical in a world of [Iraqi presidents] and terrorists. But he believes those situations cannot be met by nuclear weapons capable of obliterating the planet. Tyrants and terrorists have to be dealt with by negotiation and, if all else fails, excised by conventional forces, he says... He is very much opposed to Britain's Trident submarines which are replacing Polaris. The Trident class, of which three are already built with a fourth under way, are 16,000-tonne vessels carrying 16 missiles, each with several 100-kilotonne warheads. They constantly circle the globe, submerged, monitoring pre-determined targets. "Now that the Cold War is over, I'd like to know who the targets are... Trident patrols should be stood down and the warheads put in storage. All they are doing is risking accidental nuclear war..."

...The Canberra Commission... believes that the nuclear trigger is becoming less – rather than more – stable, and that the world could be plunged into a catastrophe whose true consequences were beyond theoretical calculation. It said the greatest danger lay in accidental detonation, miscalculation in a crisis, or launches by maniacs with access to firing codes... Further potential for disaster lay in the continued state of high alert maintained by the nuclear powers which, despite elaborate precautions, had come close to failure in the past. Between 1945 and 1980 about 100 accidents which could have sparked nuclear explosions were reported in the U[S] and, after a number of serious in-flight accidents, American bombers were taken off high alert... [Incidentally, t]he environmental group Greenpeace has denounced the presence in the Panama Canal of a British-registered freighter... [t]he Pacific Teal, owned by... Pacific Nuclear Transport Ltd... that it said was... carrying... 18 tonnes of... irradiated nuclear fuel from Japanese nuclear reactors... to plants in France and Britain which extract the plutonium. [However, o]fficials from the Panama Canal Commission and the British Embassy in Panama said the transit was approved and proper safety regulations were followed. "The company has been going through the canal for 25 years and they've never had an accident," said a British Embassy spokesman... [Since l]ocal protests prevented the company from using the canal two years ago... up to 10 clandestine nuclear waste transits [have been going] through the Panama Canal each year... [a]ccording to Greenpeace... "Perhaps the Japanese, French and British Governments think it is appropriate to commemorate today the [51st] anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, by secretly bringing this nuclear transport through the Panama Canal and into the Caribbean Sea," a Greenpeace spokesman... said...

[‘The midsummer skies were clear, not a cloud, on the morning of August 6, 1945. Stopped clocks record the fact that the first atom bomb to be dropped in an act of war exploded at 8.15 am, that day. Later estimates put the number of people directly exposed to the blast at up to 320,000. By December, 1945, 140,000 of them had died. Those that lived paid another price, important in Japan where membership of a group is a vital cog in society. There was great fear towards those who had been exposed to atomic radiation. While the hibakusha – atom-bomb survivors – received medical treatment and some help to renew their lives after the war, it has been a battle in the decades since. No special case was made for their need for ongoing treatment and care until January 1953, when the Hiroshima Medical Association organised the Hiroshima Council for Treatment of A-bomb Diseases. The official explanation for the tardiness is that the US military prevented medical research from reaching the public domain because of the Cold War. It was not until 1957 that laws were drafted giving the hibakusha medical benefits that include regular twice-yearly medical examinations. A Hibakusha Special Welfare law was mooted in 1968 but has never been enacted. Lobby groups in Hiroshima and Nagasaki have sought to promote legislation that would provide state help to “stabilise the livelihood and welfare” of the hibakusha.‘]

...Bells tolled in churches and temples throughout th[e] hilly Japanese port city[of Nagasaki] yesterday to mark the 51st anniversary of its atomic bombing in the closing days of... W[W2]. About 25,000 people thronged leafy Peace Park for a memorial ceremony beginning at 11.02 am, the moment when the bomb was dropped on August 9, 1945... The blast... that... kill[ed] more than 70,000 people in a rain of fire... came three days after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, and debate about whether it was really needed to force Japan's capitulation has persisted since. During yesterday's memorial ceremony, survivors and families of victims made offerings of water before an altar – a poignant reminder of hideously burned victims who died crying out for water. Few traces of the bombing can be seen in the city today. Unlike Hiroshima, where the half-destroyed Atomic Dome was left as a monument to the bomb, Nagasaki rebuilt everything, including a cathedral destroyed in the blast.

...[NZ'S] WAR Pensions Minister... has received a request for recognition from navy men exposed to nuclear testing in the 1950s. The men of Operation Grapple, many suffering from unexplained ailments and having witnessed birth defects among their children and grandchildren, have united for the first time in seeking government accountability. [A spokesman]... said the servicemen and their families had been ignored for almost 40 years. "At least when a military man is killed on active service there is pride through sacrifice... In our case there is nothing." The work of the men aboard the frigates HMNZS Pukaki and Rotoiti in 1957 and 1958 has always been classified a "no-risk" operation. [Hence] full provisions of the war pensions schemes have not been available to Grapple veterans. [But the minister] has begun a review... [He] said a report by [the] associate professor... at the Wellington School of Medicine concluded that there was an increased risk of leukemia and some other blood related cancers among nuclear test veterans. "...Anyone who considered that they are suffering from a disability as a result of their service around Christmas Island and Malden Island... should apply for a pension from the War Pension section of the[ir] local... Income Support Service office." - 1996

Britain's Christmas Present... Few have heard of Kirabati and even fewer know how to pronounce it... Kih-rih-bahss... "Discovered" by Captain Cook... who thought it unfit for human habitation... on Christmas Eve, 1777... it became the remotest outpost of the Empire... [until being] granted independence... in 1979... Britain brought Christianity to Kiribati and a century later delivered another present: a series of H-bomb tests with awful consequences for a local people who have never been to war and, to this day, never had an army... 12,000 [British troops], mostly conscripts, were exposed to radioactive fall-out in the tests. Up to 60[%] of those troops suffered illness as a consequence. Many have died, some in the most horrible circumstances. Their sons and daughters are prone to genetic disorders... [The troops] were made to parade on the beach as the bombs went off... dressed in standard Army gear for the tropics – shirt and shorts, without goggles or protective clothing. They did not have radiation checks afterwards. It was no accident that the troops were there... Classified documents unearthed at the Public Records Office in London make it clear that one purpose of the tests was to ascertain the effects of radiation on soldiers... [A Scot decided to go] on a pilgrimage, to retrace the steps of her husband, who two years ago died of leukaemia... One of the reasons [she] went was to see if the islanders suffered in the same way the troops did. As she... travelled round, it became apparent there are very few old people on the island. The... only doctor, [who] ministers to all 3000 islanders[said,] "Radioactive fallout is carcinogenic. People living here have reason to be scared." At this point, the doctor changed the subject to the tonnes of equipment the British left behind. Suppose they left it here because it was radioactive? ...The island is a carcinogenic dump... That night A[US]n aid workers, working on a badly needed sewage system, explained the extent of the problem... "The British have left... hundreds of rusting drums and jerry cans that produce thin layers of bitumen from seepage... Because of drought, wells have had to be sunk and sticky black material has been found on top of the water table. Derelict and dangerous water tanks stand abandoned... [as well as] liquid gas cylinders, one still charged with gas. This borders on criminal negligence. Asbestos-lagged boilers, old buses, building rubble and two large transformers... The British should remove [all of] it." ...Kiribati will be the first place on Earth to see in January 1, 2000. The potential for tourism is obvious and the

Government is eager to make the most of it. But... [the] island has few visitors and boasts just one “tourist attraction” – a seven-headed palm, the only one in the world. Palms are supposed to have one head. “Do you know the scientific term for that?” asks an A[US]n aid worker. “Mutation.”

...“We didn’t know there were going to be H-bomb tests,”... said... a seaman[who was] on the frigate Pukaki in 1957 when, after supporting... [an] expedition to the South Pole, the ship sailed at short notice to Christmas Island just above the Equator... The crew realised something was amiss when large washing machinery was installed to scrub the decks from any fallout “and we had to wear little meters on our shirts.” ...Crew members were told to turn their backs to the explosions but he recalls seeing the bones in his hands, which were clasped to his eyes, being lit up... A survey of... [members of the NZ] Nuclear Test Veterans’ Association... has found that half of 235 respondents lost children through miscarriages or early deaths. One in 10 veterans was sterile.

...Almost 40 years ago Phil Wernham stood on the deck of HMNZS Pukaki watching a giant black and orange fireball explode over Christmas Island. Now he is fighting leukaemia in an intensive care ward at Auckland Hospital – apparently the latest N[Z] victim of radiation from the 1950s British nuclear bomb tests. The 56-year-old Aucklander knows of at least five of his shipmates who have died of leukaemia and other cancers at relatively early ages. He says he cannot prove that radiation from the tests caused his life-threatening illness but he and his ex-Navy friends suspect the worst... Mr Wernham, who works as a purchasing officer, had few warning signs about his leukaemia apart from feeling constantly tired and generally unwell. Then a week before Christmas, he suddenly found he could not walk. After blood tests at North Shore Hospital he was rushed to Auckland Hospital... He hopes to be able to go home... this weekend but has not yet asked his doctors about his longer term chances. The chairman of the N[Z] Nuclear Test Veterans Association... said... “I suppose one day we will have a Minister of Defence who will proudly stand up and say ‘Yes, we will compensate the two men still living’.”

...Two more crewmen of a N[Z] frigate which monitored British nuclear tests in the South Pacific have died of cancer... Phil Wernham, who was 16 when he sailed to Christmas Island... in 1957, died of leuk[a]emia this week in Auckland Hospital... The N[Z] Nuclear Test Veterans’ Association also disclosed yesterday that a shipmate, Graham Mattingly, died of another form of cancer just seven days earlier in Dunedin... Of the 528 N[Z]ers who watched the tests, 97 had died by 1992... The leukaemia death rate among those exposed to the tests was found to be almost six times that of unexposed Navy personnel... The latest deaths... are likely to fuel legal action by nuclear test veterans against the British Government. Veterans... have been promised \$200,000 by the N[Z] Government to investigate joining a class action by former British crews before the European Court of Human Rights. Mr Wernham, [speaking]... from his hospital bed a month ago... recalled standing round the edge of the deck with other crew in goggles and white hooded suits during the explosion 50km away of the first of seven hydrogen bombs he was to witness... Veterans say the fifth test went badly wrong when the bomb exploded too low, sucking up water from the sea and debris from Christmas Island. The Pukaki then passed through ground zero – directly under where the bomb exploded – only 23 hours later... His brother... watched tests from the Rotoiti and recalled yesterday how the two teenagers viewed their mission at the time as “a big adventure... We had no idea of the long-term effects of radiation,”... [B]oth had suffered an ultraviolet skin allergy since their Pacific service. Meanwhile, the veterans’ group has welcomed a pledge of support by the Returned Services Association for its plea to the Government for war pensions to be extended to those suffering ill-effects from the tests.

...The [NZ] Nuclear Test Veterans’ Association has... welcomed payments of pensions to the widows of... former servicemen who died of lung and brain diseases... [However, the] veterans have abandoned a Government offer of help in their battle for compensation over claims of radiation-linked illnesses. Instead they are looking directly to a European court for a payout for former Navy crewmen... The [association’s] chairman... said the Government had promised to pay \$200,000... But a recent letter from the Minister of Defence... “did not show any urgency” so the association had decided to go it alone. “Time is running out for our members. We do not have time for reviews, fine-tuning and fiddling.” ...the association would ask the court to include N[Z] servicemen when it considered the British case in December. The court is being asked to order the British Government to pay compensation to its servicemen who were exposed to radiation from nuclear tests. It follows a decision by the European Commission of Human Rights that the British Government violated veterans’ rights to a fair hearing of their claims for war pensions and compensation. The commission also found the veterans had established a reasonable basis for their concern that they might have been the subject of human experimentation.

...N[Z] veterans of British nuclear testing in the 1950s are to have their health monitored in a British study running for the next two years... [Meanwhile, ‘the British Government has rejected compensation claims by Fijian veterans of the nuclear tests on Christmas Island, saying it will contest any case that comes to court. Veterans from the former colony – which gained independence in 1970 – say they were not informed of the nature of Operation Grapple and were horrified to discover the island littered with poisoned fish and dead animals when they arrived. They were given no protective clothing and in the first five years after the testing, many veterans lost their teeth and hair and a high proportion developed cataracts before the age of 40. Campaigners for the Fijian veterans have demanded that the British Government acknowledges that it committed a crime. A case for compensation has now been filed at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. NZ veterans have been unable to submit a claim in the European Court because NZ is not a member of the EU and was an independent nation at the time of the tests.’

...a mother ‘is reeling under a double dose of anguish from an official inquiry into the health of service veterans’ children. She has no doubt her family has been ravaged both by chemical defoliants used in the Vietnam War and by British atmospheric nuclear tests in the Pacific. But a report published this week found no convincing evidence of a link between the ill-health of veterans’ children and their fathers’ exposure to chemical or nuclear contaminants in the two operations. Its recommendation of free medical care only for children showing sufficient evidence of such an association gives little comfort to the Wellsford woman and her intellectually handicapped 21-year-old son. She blames the defoliant Agent Orange for part of his plight, and that of an older daughter born with Down’s syndrome, and nuclear radiation for the death of her brother Phil Wernham and their brother’s aching joints and ultraviolet skin allergy, which is shared by all three of his children. This week’s Government report found nine cases of club feet among Vietnam veterans’ children, more than double the rate for the general population, and six of Down’s syndrome. That was more than four times the general rate, as was the incidence of Down’s syndrome among children of the nuclear blast veterans. But only nine children from both categories found to be suffering from spina bifida are likely to be guaranteed free medical care if the Government accepts the recommendations of its inquiry team. A nuclear veterans’ widow said the inquiry report appeared to have ignored her research which found only 209 children “alive and well” among 475 born to NZ witnesses of the British blasts.’

...‘Massey University is preparing to step into the nuclear test veterans controversy. It was revealed last week that a study involving 110 veterans and 2000 blood relatives showed that, apart from a variety of cancers, the veterans suffered a range of symptoms consistent with a syndrome called synovitis acne pustulosis hyperostosis andosteitis (Sapho). This was reflected in the skin, skeletal, arthritic, respiratory, cardiovascular and blood disorders of their offspring. Massey’s Institute of Molecular Bio-Sciences, with the NZ Nuclear Test Veterans’ Association, is sending a researcher to Scotland to study new technology in genetic damage identification. Scotland’s University of Dundee and University of St Andrews have been involved in research on and for Commonwealth veterans of the British nuclear bomb testing. British Governments have shied from accepting responsibility for the health of the 22,000 men involved in Britain’s 31 bomb tests of the 1950s.’

...John Oughton, meteorologist on board the... Pukaki... has died of leukemia... British Government rules barred [his] family from claiming a disability pension, something the... British Nuclear Test Veterans Association... wants rectified. Britain placed a 25-year time limit on claims relating to its nuclear tests in the Pacific, although doctors agree that radiation-exposure symptoms become worse with time. The British association has three test cases going before the European Court of Human Rights...

THE DEATH of an English meteorologist who monitored experimental nuclear tests aboard the... Pukaki has renewed sad memories and increased anger for a Kiwi widow... [who] has also been campaigning for compensation. A colleague of Mr Oughton[, her husband] Charles Johnston, died... four years ago from cancer of the oesophagus... "When the doctors discovered he had cancer in 1992, they gave him three months to live. Six weeks later he was dead." ...Mr Johnston was seconded by the Royal Navy to the Pukaki at the age of 27 to monitor weather patterns during the experiments... He was put ashore after the tests and also released weather balloons for several days after the nuclear devices had been detonated. Mr Johnston was de-mobilised in Wellington after the operation and settled in N[Z. His widow]... said she had come to grips with the loss of her husband, but she was worried about her daughter, who was conceived five years after Mr Johnston returned from Christmas Island. She had recently discovered two keloids, tumours linked by Japanese scientists to the offspring of those radiated by atomic blasts. "...If... the British... and... N[Z governments]... would just accept what they did was wrong, that would make all the difference... The Americans accepted it years ago... they... have a list of cancers that they will compensate veterans of testing for..."

...Islanders from Enewetak Atoll, the site of 43 American nuclear tests from 1948 to 1958, are asking for... compensation for the lost use of their land. In testimony to the Nuclear Claims Tribunal this month, two U[S]-based appraisers... agreed the value of the land since the Enewetakese were relocated in 1947 had risen to approximately \$US309 million... The "Mike" test at Enewetak in November 1952 was the first hydrogen device exploded... in the Marshall Islands. It vaporised one island and parts of others... The value was calculated on the basis of loss of use of the atoll from 1947 to 1980, the year people were allowed to return, and for the northern islands (which are still off limits) from 1980 to the present time... But [their] lawyer... emphasised it was only a claim for "loss of use" and did not include compensation for damage to the land, the hardships people suffered and the cost of cleaning up the island... The claim was the first of three... that Enewetak is making... The next two "will include expert... testimony on the cost to restore the islands to a condition of full use, and a description of the suffering and hardship the people endured..." While Enewetak is claiming \$US300 million compensation, the Majuro-based tribunal has only \$US45 million from the U[S], all of which has already been awarded for the more than 1200 personal injury claims that have been brought by Marshall Islanders who are suffering from, or had family who died from, a variety of cancers. Islanders from Bikini, the site of 23 nuclear tests, and Rongelap, an atoll 160km downwind of Bikini that was engulfed in a snowstorm of radioactive fallout in 1954, have also filed claims with the tribunal. No monetary figure has yet been attached to these claims, although tribunal officials indicated that they expect these two islands to put forward claims similar to Enewetak's... Residents on the two atolls experienced a high rate of health problems from exposure to nuclear fallout in the 1950s... Since 1954, Brookhaven National Laboratory, a major Department of Energy contractor, has operated the medical research programme for the two affected northern atolls. Brookhaven has been the focus of increased criticism from islanders for what they say is the laboratory's focus on researching the health effects of radiation at the expense of health concerns of the islanders... The U[S] and the Marshall Islands have agreed to a major overhaul of the 40-year-old medical research programme... The change would shift the emphasis to medical treatment instead of nuclear research... Decades of efforts by the American Government to decontaminate [Bikini] atoll have led to the recent announcement that radioactivity there is well within internationally accepted levels. The island has been saturated with potassium fertiliser to prevent coconuts and other plants from sucking up radioactive caesium 137 from the ground. It is believed that locally grown food would now be safe for consumption.

...Former residents of the Bikini Islands are calling on [the US]President... to guarantee that the former nuclear test site is clear of radiation before they begin preparations to move back to it... An International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) panel of scientists recently said Bikini Island could be safely resettled if the 88 Bikini islanders... launched a cleansing programme on the atoll. But Bikinians, still wary after one false start... want Washington to endorse the IAEA findings... [F]ollowing an announcement by then-President Lyndon Johnson that the island was safe, more than 100 moved back to the atoll in 1968 only to be moved again in 1978 when officials decided it was still unsafe after all. The islanders ingested high levels of radioactivity from eating food from the still-contaminated islands, and many of them became ill. Nearly 20 years of study later, scientists believe that they have the answer to Bikini's contamination. Potassium fertiliser has been shown to prevent as much as 95[%] of radioactive caesium from getting into the root crops... [In related news, a]n American company has been hired to make a detailed study into creating a nuclear waste disposal facility in the Marshall Islands, a cabinet minister... said yesterday... The feasibility study was expected to take two years to complete and could start at any time.

...Radiation exposure from US nuclear tests in the 1950s is a factor in high cancer rates in the Marshall Islands, an American doctor said yesterday... "The legacy of the Marshall Islands, where nuclear weapons testing and military base needs contributed to uncontrolled urbanisation, has negatively impacted on the health of the Marshallese people,"... Other possible causes of the high levels of cancer in this island nation of 60,000 include high consumption of processed foods, smoking and possibly vitamin A deficiency... Cervical cancer in Marshall Islands women is 60 times the rate in the U[S]. Breast and stomach cancer rates are five times higher, while lung cancer is three times the US rate. "For all types of cancer listed [by the US Centres for Disease Control], the cancer mortality rates of the Marshallese are magnitudes higher than the U[S]," he said in a Symposium on Cancer in Minorities and the Medically Underserved in Washington. He said despite data tying cancer in the Marshall Islands to radiation fallout from the US nuclear tests, health care funding from the US Government would not be renewed when a current treaty expires... [H]is calls for more US-funded healthcare services could fall on deaf ears... [If money isn't forthcoming, the] Marshall Islands President... [might resort to a] 1994... proposal to store nuclear waste... from the Taiwan nuclear power industry... The US Energy Department has already rejected a proposal to add several atoll populations in the Marshalls to a US-funded medical programme currently servicing two atolls that received high doses of fallout from the 1954 "Bravo" hydrogen bomb test at Bikini, saying that extensive analyses of radiation fallout in the Marshall Islands indicated minimal exposures.

...*Animals exposed to nuclear explosions*... SCIENTISTS from the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment killed hundreds of dogs, donkeys and sheep after exposing them to fallout from plutonium bombs... The tests were carried out at the height of the nuclear arms race in 1963 and cost an estimated \$4.9 million... Nearly 100 scientists and officials from Britain's most sensitive nuclear defence facility and the Ministry of Defence took part in a... American programme codenamed Operation Rollercoaster. They carried out experiments on 300 animals on a bombing range in the Nevada desert to learn more about the effects on humans of an accidental nuclear explosion... Just before detonation, the donkeys, together with 84 dogs and 132 sheep, were placed in wagons. They were tied tightly, facing the blasts to ensure they breathed in as much plutonium as possible... More than 1000 plutonium-contaminated samples were shipped back to Britain and analysed at Aldermaston... The Aldermaston team concluded that the plutonium particles had contaminated the guts and lungs, but not their bones... Western defence experts had been keen to study the effects of a simulated nuclear accident involving plutonium on living organisms. Their concerns were justified three years later when an American B52 bomber crashed near the Costa del Sol in Spain, detonating two bombs which caused non-nuclear explosions close to the village of Palomares... The Defence Ministry confirmed the experiments had taken place but could not comment on their value: "At the time it was considered appropriate. Obviously the climate of opinion has changed a lot since then. We certainly don't carry out animal experiments... any more."

...The U[S] has] proceeded with plans to conduct an underground nuclear test beneath the Nevada Desert despite criticism from anti-nuclear activists and some members of Congress. The experiment is termed "subcritical" because it does not trigger a nuclear chain reaction, and is designed to check the reliability of... America]'s nuclear arsenal. Incidentally, the 'UN estimates that approximately 2 million people are currently dying each year due to cancer caused by past atomic tests.' A large proportion of the deaths occur in]... former Soviet Union [states such as Kazakhstan,

where]... at least 500,000... village[r]s... were contaminated by... the more than 473... nuclear tests carried out... on their territory between 1949 and 1989.

...[8 'years after nuclear testing by the Soviet Union was halted at Semipalatinsk in northern Kazakhstan, scientists are still not able to determine which areas of the site are safe for habitation. A total of 445 tests were carried out at Semipalatinsk – over 100 were above ground. According to Government estimates, about 500,000 people lived in and around the area during the 40 years of testing, and were exposed to radiation. Environmentalists say the number is closer to 1.5 million.']

...A TELEPHONE operator in Kazakhstan recalls a kind of Cold War delirium that encouraged Kazakhs to accept wide-scale nuclear testing on their soil when the country was part of the Soviet Union. "We were proud. The Soviet Union was No. 1... Yet we knew it was dangerous. Everyone had someone in the family with problems. Young men killed themselves because they were impotent. Babies were born in our village with tails." ...One in every three children born in the eastern region of Semey has mental or physical defects... [A] senator... put on a photo exhibit at the Senate building to show health and ecological damage wrought by nuclear testing. The pictures are horrifying: Children with misshapen heads... a cow with six legs... At the Republic Children's Hospital in Almaty, 50 to 100 children are treated monthly for a variety of illnesses apparently caused by exposure of themselves or their parents to radiation. Mothers bring in pale children with tumours of the digestive tract... Anemia is rampant, cancer deaths increased seven-fold in the 1980s, and half the population suffers from immune system deficiencies... "We are seeing some illnesses appearing for the first time. It is worrisome," said... a hospital official. She held up images from... scans that showed parts of a child's brain, petrified since birth... The realisation that... testing took place, largely in disregard of harm to civilians, has prompted Kazakhs to reflect on their own responsibility... "People are asking themselves, 'Where was I when this was happening'? ...This is not a comfortable question to answer." ...At a recent UN conference on nuclear pollution, [the]Kazakh representative... said the... oil-rich country, which is nearly four times the size of Texas... lacked resources to rehabilitate or compensate victims. She argued that because the Cold War nuclear powers were responsible for the arms race and, by extension, nuclear testing, they should pay for health care and environmental cleanup. - 1997

In the Altai district of southern Siberia in 1949, thousands received radiation doses like the ones suffered by those inhabitants of Hiroshima and Nagasaki who outlived 1945's nuclear attacks... Stalin had ordered the testing of his first atomic bomb, nobody worrying that the wind direction was such that radioactive dust from the near-ground explosion would be blown across more than a million people living nearby – people who were warned neither beforehand nor afterwards, so that they happily consumed the products of contaminated fields... [H]undreds of square kilometers had to be permanently evacuated when stored waste from Soviet military reactors exploded at Kyshtym in the winter of 1957... [In the Pacific, the President of France's] fun-loving refusal to delay watching a nuclear test until the wind had changed... [resulted in] fairly high radiation levels for people living as far distant as three thousand kilometers – don't forget that there were 461 such above-ground nuclear tests between 1945 and 1961. Residual radiation could render many Pacific islands dangerous to habitat for millennia.

France has never allowed comprehensive, independent, environmental impact assessment of Mururoa and Fangautafa Atolls. Such a study would need to include not only a radiological survey but also geological and hydrological surveys, and a full assessment of the ability of the atoll to contain radioactivity within what is effectively an underwater nuclear-waste dump... [C]oncerns about radioactive leakage at Mururoa [aren't] confined to Greenpeace. This was a key argument used by the N[Z] Government in the case it took to the World Court in 1995. In his dissenting judgment, [the]Judge... identified various risk factors of concern such as the structure of Mururoa Atoll, the need to apply internationally accepted safety standards for the storage of radioactive wastes, the dangers to marine life; and the possibility of accidental release. Unfortunately his concerns have proved to be well founded... In 1996 research at Amchitka, a high island in the Aleutian chain off Alaska which was the site of U[S] underground nuclear tests in the early 1970s, found plutonium and other radioactive wastes leaking into the marine environment... Greenpeace will continue to press for an ongoing, comprehensive study to be conducted... at Mururoa... under the auspices of an independent body such as Criirad, and for France to accept liability for cleaning up Mururoa and Fangataufa.

France conducted 193 underground and atmospheric nuclear weapons tests in Polynesia between 1966 and January 27, 1996... Enough plutonium to make a small nuclear bomb has been left in the Polynesian atolls used by France... according to an International Atomic Energy Agency report... The agency said the amount was "relatively big" but insisted it posed no danger to the population... It also said there was no apparent link between the tests and cancer levels in the region... A bomb the size of the US device dropped on Hiroshima... would need around 17kg of plutonium.

"Here it is, General... plutonium." "That's the first I've ever seen, but after this, if you don't mind, I wish you would hold something under it because, after all, there's... over \$50 million in that tube." [Plutonium, which was discovered in 1940, is ACTINIDE ELEMENT 94 in MENDELEEV'S PERIODIC TABLE. It is man-made, and fissionable. When a *fission* bomb is detonated in a hollow sphere, the shaped charges blast inward and bring together quantities of plutonium (or uranium) in a specific manner to create a "critical mass." A critical mass requires that a certain weight of fissionable material must be assembled to sustain a chain reaction. When the critical mass is attained, the nucleus of the plutonium atom is bombarded with tremendous amounts of slow-moving neutrons. Some neutrons are successfully absorbed and split the nucleus. The result is the formation of lighter elements, the emission of more neutrons, and a violent release of energy. As more neutrons are multiplied, more nuclei are split, thus accounting for the term "chain reaction." This entire reaction takes place in a fraction of a second. The size of the explosion depends upon the efficiency of the CHAIN REACTION. The first atomic bomb explosion was performed near Alamogordo, New Mexico, on July 16, 1945, atop a steel tower. The blast was so powerful that the tower disintegrated as a result of vaporization and the sand in an 800-yard radius fused to glass.']21 days after the New Mexico experiment a B-29 was over Hiroshima... The destruction was unlike anything before. In an instant 71,000 people had died[(none American – but the 'US ship that delivered the bomb sank after being torpedoed and, due of the mission's secrecy, the survivors spent 4 days in the water before being rescued; many perished to sharks')]. The survivors had no idea of the new science and energy behind the weapon that had been used... Three days later... another 40,000 were killed in a moment... [at] Nagasaki... The heat and light gave horrific burns to all within 2 1/2 miles... The victims were filmed, though the pictures were kept secret for years... In the weeks and months that followed, many who had no visible injuries sickened... Thousands... died. Others remained ill and would continue to suffer for years to come. The Japanese surrender, five days after Nagasaki, was a moment of intense relief for the Allies... It was a triumph and at that moment in 1945 few foresaw how the bomb would bring a new arms race and unprecedented fear around the world. Others now wanted the bomb too... Joseph Stalin put his secret police chief in charge of a Soviet drive to acquire a bomb at any cost. Starting in 1946, the Soviet Union built 10 secret cities, known as atomgrads. Thousands of scientists and engineers were sent to work in them... The Soviet scientists were under intense pressure to deliver results... By 1949 the Soviets had what they wanted. The Atomic Race was now on in earnest. The Americans worked to stay ahead... In [their] tests the generals practised the military tactics that would be needed for the new wars of the future. They planned to send ground troops onto the battlefield after a nuclear strike and they wanted to know more about the physical effects on the soldiers. The Army and Marines Corp competed with each other, seeing how near they could get their men to a test blast. [The men were told:]"You are here to participate in an atomic manoeuvre... Watched from a safe distance this explosion is one of the most beautiful sights ever seen by man. You're probably saying '...what makes it so dangerous?' ...Truthfully, it's the... radiation level... but if you

follow orders you'll be moved out in time to avoid sickness. Finally, if you receive enough gamma radiation to cause sterility or severe sickness, you'll be killed by... flying debris or heat anyway." Sixty thousand troops took part in standard uniforms without any special protection. Civilian scientists warned[that] the soldiers were too close, but the generals went ahead anyway. "When we were brought here a voice from an unseen loud-speaker said, 'Good morning gentlemen... you're going to be closer to... an atomic bomb than anyone since Hiroshima.' ...They were being used as guinea-pigs, establishing what was possible... Though the tests were secret, there were small communities near enough to see what was going on. St George, Utah, was... 150 miles across the desert. Residents watched the flashes on the horizon and worried when clouds of dust followed one bomb, later called Dirty Harry. The Atomic Energy Commission assured them[via radio that] the fallout was quite safe... A year after the Americans had built the more powerful H-bomb, the Soviets caught up... As both sides ordered more warheads they realised that each now had the ability to destroy the other and could, in turn, be expected to be destroyed. Retaliation was guaranteed. This strategy was known as Mutually Assured Destruction (M.A.D). "In the olden days – pre-nuclear weapons – the politicians could start a war, send out young people to kill each other, and nothing would happen to them... With the nuclear weapon, everybody was at risk." ...In the Soviet Union, Europe and America, citizens now lived in a heightened state of nuclear terror... In Britain the Government made complicated preparations for Doomsday... Because American bombers were based in Britain, the United Kingdom was expected to be the first target in Western Europe... A dramatised version of an attack came in a film made for showing on BBC television in 1965... *The War Game* was banned and not shown for 20 years. The authorities called it alarmist and bad for morale. In the Government's own information films, underground control rooms handled attacks calmly... They showed officials tracking radioactive fallout and evacuating whole cities in an orderly fashion... American H-bombs were fired on remote atolls in the Pacific... [Survey aircraft had] carefully searched the area and reported no shipping... when the Americans let off their largest H-bomb ever in 1954... but... [t]he wind shifted... [and a] Japanese trawler... *The Lucky Dragon* was... well within the danger area... The 23 fishermen all developed radiation sickness. One died. Their experience provoked an outcry in Japan, where the extent of the long-term injuries to the Hiroshima and Nagasaki victims was only now emerging. Those stories had been suppressed immediately after the war... The Japanese had the greatest first-hand experience of what both an atomic explosion and radiation could do to people... "...but... we don't know how it's going to affect future generations." ...In the U[S], many of the soldiers exposed to the desert tests developed radiation diseases. The assurances given to St George that the fallout was harmless also proved wrong... "The first time it really hit me really strongly was when in 1954 we had a Down's Syndrome son born to us and we were very young parents. We found lots of others with the same situation... [F]or a small town we have an enormous number of children with... various genetic defects that were born around 1954..." ...After the first British H-bomb test in 1957 an entirely new type of popular protest emerged and it showed the real... gap between political leaders and grass-roots feeling... Demonstrators called on the Western powers to stop the Pacific tests... While politicians had tried to do something about the fear of nuclear war, people had growing concerns about the nuclear peace. Fears that the powerstations could leak radiation grew... [However, e]xperts said there was no other way to provide for the peoples' needs and the people... could trust them... [when they say that the nuclear "r]eactors have proven to be safe, reliable, economical." ...Almost all Western governments stopped ordering nuclear power-stations after Chernobyl but, despite passionate opposition, the Japanese Government continued its nuclear programme [by opening] a new fast-breeder reactor.

Japan is... refusing to answer... questions about how close a ship with nuclear waste cargo will get to N[Z] waters on its way to Tokyo. The British-registered ship Pacific Teal left the French port of Cherbourg last night with its radioactive consignment... Greenpeace, which mounted a protest at the French port, yesterday called for the Japanese and French ambassadors to be summoned by the [NZ] Government. That was ruled out, at least in the immediate future, by a spokesman for the Minister of Foreign Affairs... [The minister] made it clear to Japan late last month that N[Z] did not want it to come into the country's 200-mile exclusive economic zone... [His] spokesman... confirmed yesterday that N[Z]'s ambassador in Japan had continued to press for answers since then but had been refused details of the route. Relevant French and British authorities had also declined to give details. A Greenpeace activist... said Japan, France and Britain "have decided to act in flagrant disregard for the sovereign will and legal right of other countries to protect their people and resources. Despite the tremendous risks involved in transporting such material, Japan and France have been unwilling to consult with en route nations over basic issues as route and emergency planning and liability coverage." A Wellington peace activist... said yesterday that the secret Government Communications Security Bureau had monitored the waste ship that passed by N[Z] in 1993 and he expected the same would happen this time... Japan... faced a hostile diplomatic reception from South American countries when it took the last shipment via Cape Horn... So far Japan has only said that it will pass round the Cape of Good Hope.

...A cabinet meeting next week is likely to discuss N[Z]'s response to the nuclear waste shipment passing through the South Pacific... Greenpeace yesterday called for the Government to commit the Air Force and Navy vessels to ensure that the Pacific Teal, which is carrying reprocessed waste, keeps out of N[Z]'s... exclusive economic zone... The Greenpeace campaign director... said... "These shipments are a slap in the face of N[Z]ers, who have made clear their desire to be nuclear-free,"... Greenpeace officials in France had earlier released French foreign ministry documents showing the ship would traverse the Tasman Sea... Meanwhile, A[US] has refused to join N[Z] protests. A Foreign Affairs and Trade Department spokesman said the federal Government was satisfied with arrangements and noted that a similar shipment in 1995 passed without incident. He [didn't] point out that, because it also generates radioactive waste, AUS is unlikely to protest, but [added] that the high-level radioactive waste did not contain plutonium or uranium and the... return of the waste to Japan after reprocessing was... consistent with international standards which made countries using nuclear energy responsible for waste storage... Indeed, N[Z], as a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency, is a party to this international approval... But the [NZ] Labour Party's spokesman on conservation... said that unless N[Z] could co-ordinate effective protest within the Pacific and A[US], the Tasman would become the preferred route for decades... An Alliance co-deputy leader... said the shipments showed up inadequacies in N[Z]'s anti-nuclear legislation, which covered only the 12 nautical miles over which it had absolute control.

...About six or seven shipments a year of spent nuclear fuel or reprocessed waste will be made from or to Japan in the next few years, representatives of three organisations said yesterday... The shipments are a result of an agreement between Japan and France for France to reprocess and return fuel which it had earlier supplied to Japan... Because Japan has to import almost all of its energy requirements, the recycled plutonium is of considerable value. Within a few years all reactor fuel used in Japan will be recycled in that country... [The organisations have] teams in N[Z] on a public relations exercise to try to counter negative reaction to the voyage of the Pacific Teal, which left France last week... [The representative from] British Nuclear Fuels... said the Pacific Teal would try to avoid territorial waters but could not avoid exclusive economic zones. "The captain is in charge of the ship and if he needs to avoid some things then he needs to have the ability to take his ship where he needs to go for the safety of his ship, the cargo and the crew." [The representative] also defended the safety record of the business. While the Pacific Teal was only the second shipment of reprocessed nuclear waste, there had been more than 155 others of nuclear material since 1969. The ships were purpose-built and there had never been an accident.

...The risk to N[Z] and NZers from the passage of a ship carrying radioactive waste or plutonium through the Tasman Sea is negligible. It is as close to zero as any reasonably informed person could demand. The total physical volume of the waste in the... shipment is small and is incorporated in solid glass cylinders. These in turn are inside extremely strong and thick metallic shipping containers... In any conceivable accident involving the Pacific Teal, the most likely scenario would be that the shipping containers would not be breached and no radioactive material would escape... If the ship were to be wrecked on the N[Z] coast they would... effectively shield any curious member of the public... Much hyperbole and

many tendentious arguments surround the Pacific Teal shipment as with similar shipments in the past. A recent editorial in a N[Z] metropolitan newspaper multiplied the amount of plutonium in a shipment through the Tasman Sea in 1992 by one million... An environment spokesman for one of the major political parties in 1992 implied that if the ship sank in the Tasman Sea N[Z] would be uninhabitable for 25,000 years. In fact, there would be no effect on N[Z]'s environment whatsoever... Greenpeace argues... one radioactive isotope [i]s "the most dangerous substance known to man." They refer to plutonium which, in fact, is rather weakly radioactive because of its long lifetime. Its radiation is also weak and easily shielded. Furthermore, it is very hard to disperse in the environment. In essence, the only feasible way in which a person could become exposed to it is by getting a small fragment of the plutonium in a wound. That happened to a small number of workers in the Manhattan Project 50 years ago who were actually handling it. Their health has been at least as good as that of their contemporaries and most are still alive... If eaten, this same small fragment would be excreted along with the other unused substances in the food. Plutonium is not taken up by the body to any significant extent through the digestive process... I marvel at the plethora of disinformation... and... hysteria... which is appearing in the media. This is all the more surprising given that N[Z] has an excellent radiations protection agency in our National Radiation Laboratory. What is more, its most senior scientist... is a man with a well-deserved international reputation whose advice is widely sought outside his own country. I have not seen one article here which has even suggested that the National Radiation Laboratory was ever approached for advice. In this matter N[Z] is rapidly losing international credibility... Informed, factual criticism can sometimes influence the behaviour of other nations. Ill-informed, inaccurate and meretricious arguments can only cause these other countries to undervalue, or at worst ignore, any international protests made by N[Z] on this, or any other, subject.

...The N[Z] Government is trying to politicise nuclear waste shipments and is not willing to understand scientific arguments, says the Japanese Embassy... "Even A[US] shows an understanding and is not trying to politicise this matter,"... [said a]n embassy minister... who attended a meeting with senior foreign affairs staff in Wellington on Wednesday... While a lot of information was given to foreign affairs staff, the deputy-secretary... had not taken notes of what was being said, [the minister added. However, the deputy-secretary] responded yesterday: "Maybe they don't like being told the facts of life. Obviously it shows the representations we've been making to them are hitting home." At the meeting [the deputy-secretary] said the shipment represented a new risk in this part of the world. N[Z] had strongly advocated a new liability convention as existing treaties covering disasters did not go far enough. A spokesman for the French Embassy... who also attended the meeting, was not prepared to comment publicly on the N[Z] approach. However, French diplomats are clearly worried that a row over the Pacific Teal will again sour the atmosphere just as it is planning visits designed to build up French-N[Z] goodwill. The First Secretary at the British High Commission... said he felt the meeting went well. "I think they listened and there were strong political messages delivered by both sides. They [N[Z]] asked some strong relevant questions,"... The Minister of Foreign Affairs... said he still hoped information about the ship's route would be made available nearer the time the ship sails through the Pacific. "We would rather it didn't come, but there it is and we know it can legally traverse the Tasman."

...The French phrase for reprocessing plutonium is "recyclage,"... For public relations purposes it is a wonderful way of sanitising... the... process... to make it sound as safe and desirable as [householders'] weekly recycling efforts. In fact, the reprocessing of plutonium is an inherently risky and dirty activity. Not only does it require shipments of spent fuel across the globe, it also results in the creation of yet more radioactive waste. It is estimated that by the end of reprocessing as much as 189 times more waste has been generated than that produced by the original irradiated fuel, including discharges to the air, earth and sea... Independent scientists have also raised questions about the integrity of the stainless steel casks and their elastomer seals... [used by] the... plutonium... reprocessing... trade... While Pacific Nuclear Transport Ltd claims absolute safety for the shipments, the International Atomic Energy Agency standards which the shipments must meet are seen as inadequate by many nations... For example, they recommend casks withstand 800 deg C fires for 30 minutes, when an average maritime fire burns for an average of 20 hours in excess of 1100 deg C. The idea of reprocessing plutonium from nuclear reactor waste to fuel fast-breeder reactors is a nuclear fantasy from the 1970s when it was thought uranium would dwindle in supply and skyrocket in cost. In fact, the uranium market is now characterised by very low prices and over-supply. At the same time, fast-breeder reactor programmes have proved extremely costly... [-] OECD countries are estimated to have spent more than \$NZ\$7 billion on fast-breeder development... [-] hazardous to the environment and have produced only very small quantities of energy... Japan's Rakkosho-mura reprocessing facility is to begin operations soon after 2000. However, Japan will not be using the plutonium shipped over the next decade until at least 2030 for commercial energy production. It already has a stockpile of some six tonnes of plutonium. By 2000 its plutonium stockpile is projected to be some 50 tonnes. In the meantime, while it is clear current Japanese policy does not countenance military use of plutonium, the International Atomic Energy Agency has observed that Japan has the ability to "weaponise" its plutonium within two weeks. The problem is not solely Japan's: by 2010 France, Britain, Russia and Germany will have commercial plutonium stocks of some 500 tonnes – more than twice as much as military stocks are projected to be, and adequate to construct some 71,000 nuclear weapons. Plutonium is highly radio-toxic and has a half-life of more than 24,000 years. It is difficult to predict any government's policy for the next 2.4 years, yet alone across millennia. Whether or not it comes into N[Z]'s exclusive economic zone, the Pacific Teal shipment is part of a global plutonium trade that poses a large and long-term risk as well as immediate threat. This has been recognised around the world, and is reflected in the efforts of Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay to ban the ships from the [ir] 200-mile zone[s]... To attempt to stop both the shipment and the plutonium trade, therefore, is an eminently rational response from N[Z]ers.

...Greenpeace presented a petition yesterday signed by 24,000 [NZers] opposing the nuclear waste shipment on the British-flagged Pacific Teal. Greenpeace estimates the ship... may pass through the Tasman Sea this weekend... [In this instance the estimate is correct, but w]hy is it that most statements by Greenpeace spokespeople on the subject... are generally wrong? ...[the] campaign director for Greenpeace N[Z], asserts that reprocessing of nuclear fuel produces 189 times more waste than has been generated by the original irradiated fuel. However, there must be less radioactivity in the waste after processing than before... But perhaps she has discovered a new way of creating energy? ...A standard Greenpeace technique is to make extreme and unrealistic claims. There are several examples of this in [the director's] articles. The one I liked was this scenario: Suppose one engine of the Pacific Teal broke down. Now suppose that the second one did as well. Now suppose that it experienced a Pacific cyclone and further suppose that there was a high-temperature fire as well. Clearly we should ban such risky ventures. This is akin to demanding that airliner flights over Auckland should be banned... on the grounds that... two aircraft could just possibly... collide... There are a number of errors when she discusses light water reactor fuel... The spot price of uranium oxide ore has risen from \$US9.60... a pound at the beginning of 1995 to around \$US16.50 in August of last year and is expected to go to \$US20 by 2000. World uranium production is about half of world consumption at present. This is hardly a market "characterised by very low prices and over-supply." ...Finally, I must comment yet again on "plutonium is highly radio-toxic and has a half life of more than 24,000 years." Because of its long half life it is not highly radio-toxic at all. Despite the oft-repeated mantra which implies that exposure to one milligram will give you cancer, the effect of eating 1000 times as much will not increase your chances of cancer in any significant way whatsoever.

...Advocates for the nuclear industry appear to be as blind to its hazards as the tobacco industry hacks who denied the link between smoking and cancer for decades... [A] professor of physics at the University of Auckland... accuses Greenpeace of being wrong about the risk of nuclear power and nuclear waste shipments. His article is a good example of what happens when facts take a back seat to rhetoric. For example, he repeats the nuclear industry's favourite line that until increases in childhood leukemia around nuclear plants are fully understood, the nuclear plants are innocent of any responsibility... You don't have to be a rocket scientist to understand that absence of evidence of what precise mechanism leads to

the cancer does not equal evidence of absence of such a case. [The professor's stance isn't helped by the fact that 'after decades of denying there was any risk to the workers who made its nuclear missiles, the US Government has finally admitted above normal rates of cancer had been found at 14 sites.' The p]rofessor... contests Greenpeace's statement that reprocessing plutonium creates more waste than the original spent fuel by arguing that the waste contains less radioactivity. The point is that the chemical separation of plutonium from spent fuel creates large amounts of waste that would not otherwise be created. The figure cited by Greenpeace is from a study of the THORP reprocessing facility at Sellafield in the UK, conducted by an independent industry consultant... and takes into account radioactive waste produced through all states of reprocessing, including the decommissioning of the reprocessing plant. [The p]rofessor... argues that the risk of any accident involving the Pacific Teal is "extremely tiny["] and makes a nonsensical comparison with the possibility of an aircraft collision over [Auckland]... Needless to say, aircraft accidents do not result in long-term exposure to radiation of the marine environment or the public. The Titanic was unsinkable – the accident involved factors which [sh]ould never have occurred at the same time – and the space shuttle Challenger was certainly built to fly rather than to explode and fall to Earth. Accidents do happen and the transporters of nuclear waste do not have the right to decide what risks nations along the route will accept.

...N[Z] is unlikely to send an Orion aircraft to monitor the... Pacific Teal, now steaming through the Tasman Sea, unless the ship alters course... Yesterday afternoon the ship... was 350 nautical miles due east of Sydney – well clear of N[Z]'s economic zone... It is thought there is little point monitoring the ship's movements by air, given its distance from N[Z] and the fact that intelligence agencies are tracking it by satellite... [Meanwhile, a] train carrying a[nother] controversial shipment of nuclear waste arrived at its destination in northern Germany yesterday after being delayed for several hours by anti-nuclear activists. The train, loaded with six containers of nuclear waste from Walheim, southern Germany, arrived in the town of Dannenberg after a 20-hour journey. About 5000 demonstrators near the station greeted the train's arrival with boos... Its cargo was to be loaded on to trucks and transported, probably today, to the Gorleben storage depot some 20km away. Anti-nuclear activists had staged several protests along the train's route. Two demonstrators who dug holes under a railway track near Dannenberg and secured their arms inside with quick-drying cement caused the longest delay... Some activists set up burning barricades to block a road the truck convoy was expected to use. Others tunnelled under other parts of the likely route to weaken the road structure. Police said it was possible one road would have to be closed.

...A controversial nuclear waste shipment completed the last leg of its journey to a dump in northern Germany, [where it was] greeted by boos... from a crowd of anti-nuclear activists. A convoy of six flat-bed trucks carrying containers of spent fuel rods arrived at Gorleben storage depot under heavy police escort after protesters tried to disrupt its 20km journey from a loading station in Dannenberg. What should have been a relatively short journey took three hours as about 5000 protesters posted along roads leading to the dump did their best to block the way. It took Germany's biggest post-war security operation, involving 30,000 police nationwide – and costing 66 million marks... – to ensure that the radioactive shipment completed its journey... Explosive experts were called to a spot where an anonymous caller said a bomb had been planted. It was not[yet] clear whether the object was an explosive device or a dummy... [In related news,] Vanuatu non-government organisations have called on their Government to ensure the island nation's 200-mile exclusive economic zone would be protected if the Pacific Teal... came near on her way to Japan.

...Jeered by anti-nuclear protesters, a British ship carrying nuclear waste from France docked safely in northern Japan yesterday. Escorted by two tug boats and six police helicopters flying overhead, the Pacific Teal ended an eight-week trip... that took it past about 20 nations... About 150 activists from environmental groups such as Greenpeace lined a road outside the harbour complex within sight of the ship to protest against its cargo... But the protests were minor compared with demonstrations over the first waste shipment which arrived in April 1995 at... the port of Mutsu-Ogawara... about 580km north-east of Tokyo, which was custom-built to handle nuclear waste shipments... After tests for any leakage of radiation, the... 40 stainless steel canisters... will be stored for 30 to 50 years at a special cooling facility at nearby Rokkasho village, Japan's only such storage place, and later buried at an unspecified location. The Government has not selected the ultimate destination and residents fear they may be stuck with the toxic material. Tokyo plans eventually to ship 7100 tonnes of spent fuel to France and Britain for reprocessing into 30 tonnes of fuel-grade plutonium, yielding 3000 tonnes of waste.

...Two more cargoes of highly radioactive nuclear waste will pass by N[Z] this year, a nuclear expert has warned... [The] president of the Washington-based Nuclear Control Institute... said the Pacific Teal was a test run for bigger loads. He predicted a shipment in July would carry 150 canisters, and another would follow in December. He said the N[Z] Government should condemn the shipping of radioactive nuclear waste before the Pacific became the path of least resistance for more shipments. "Eventually traffic from Britain will begin... That is why it's such a critical time right now for the opposition to be vocal."

...Britain said yesterday that it would ratify an international treaty to create a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific... The Treaty of Rarotonga bans the acquisition, stationing or testing of nuclear explosive devices and the dumping of radioactive waste...

Legislation to extend N[Z]'s nuclear-free zone has been drafted by the Alliance co-deputy leader... Her private bill would ban nuclear-powered ships and those carrying radioactive cargo from coming within 200 nautical miles of the coastline. "It puts protection of our environment above the rights of foreign nuclear powers to devastate our waters and coastline," said [the MP] yesterday. - 1997

NZ officially declared itself a *nuclear-free zone* in the mid-1980s, and has been trying to have the zone extended over the entire Pacific region ever since. The reaction of a certain nuclear superpower to the anti-nuclear stance partially explains NZ's failure to convince the entire region to quickly follow suit.

Although complicated by politics and personalities of the day – including a deeply felt American sense of betrayal – the essential Anzus objection to N[Z]'s ban on nuclear weaponry was that it eroded the atomic shield which was supposed to keep communism and global war at bay. The position held in both Washington and Canberra was that all Western nations should bear a burden of responsibility for the continued security afforded by U[S] might – in essence, unquestioning acceptance of the doctrine of nuclear deterrence and of the weapons that made it work.

The U[S] has again given N[Z] the fingers about our anti-nuclear ship stance. The most powerful US delegation to visit A[US] since... the mid-1960s [– when 'AUS was the third largest market for US arms sales' –]will arrive in Canberra early next month... The bilateral talks with the A[US]ns centre on issues vital to N[Z]... The Government has passed the snub off... [A] Victoria University foreign affairs and politics expert... says N[Z] cannot deny the Americans ignoring N[Z] on the visit is a further snub but the A[US]ns will want to be seen to be letting N[Z] know what went on. They are well aware there is a feeling A[US] heaved N[Z]... over the Anzac frigate deal, he says. - 1989

As one military official said, the Americans are the worst for telling their allies what to do, with Australia a close second.

The letters AUS can, after all, mean *next-to* the US. Alternatively, AUS is just USA with its arse at the front!

Not a chink of light between A[US], US The communique at the conclusion of A[US-US] ministerial consultations in Washington this month illustrates rather well just how far the Anzus alliance has been transformed since it was first signed and its provisions were suspended in 1986 over

N[Z]'s non-nuclear policy. The transformation received impetus... last year... when [a new] Government took office in A[US] (during a meeting with the US President, the AUSn PM 'chronicled the influence US federalism had exercised in the shaping of the AUSn Commonwealth: "Our association goes beyond the formal elements of a treaty or an alliance – it's an association of like-minded people committed to common values with many shared historical experiences, many common cultural attitudes and, above all, a very deep commitment to democratic institutions, values and freedoms of the individual"; AUS's wartime PM Mr John Curtin started it after the fall of Singapore, when he declared: "Without inhibitions of any kind I make it quite clear that AUS looks to America"'). In its origins Anzus was... essentially a defensive treaty. The Anzus of 1997, on the other hand, is now... aiming... to deliver security to Pacific East Asia, and indeed to the world... A recent white paper on A[US]n foreign policy, places the U[S] relationship at the very centre of A[US]'s external policies, and at the core of that relationship is the security alliance... It is notable... that in a document replete with shared world view, the ministerial communique by the U[S] and AUS] nowhere acknowledges the security role of the U[N], nor peacekeeping and related activity, and the need for member countries to strengthen U[N] capabilities for ready response, conciliation or good offices. [■ A nuclear bomb may have been detonated in the air over a northern Queensland rainforest at the height of the Cold War. Declassified documents show that Britain, the US and AUS set off a 50-tonne bomb in the rainforest at Iron Range in 1963. It was part of a secret military experiment codenamed Operation Blowdown.]

... 'AUS's Government flirted with a nuclear weapons programme, even while it supported international moves against nuclear weapons proliferation. Cabinet papers for 1968 reveal a programme capable of producing up to 30 nuclear bombs a year would have cost what now seems a bargain price of \$A150 million. But after consultations with the US Secretary of State, AUS was left in no doubt that Washington regarded the non-proliferation treaty as vitally important.'

... 'NZ would need to change its anti-nuclear stance before it could be readmitted to the Anzus alliance, a senior US official said last night. The briefing, given ahead of the arrival this weekend of the Secretary of State, puts a tougher twist on a visit the Government claims as a coup. While the Secretary will be the highest-ranking official to visit in the wake of NZ's adoption of anti-nuclear legislation in 1985, the message is clear that the relationship has warmed, but the nuclear freeze remains.' ● NZ would abandon its anti-nuclear laws in a flash if it really needed US help, says departing US Ambassador']

...Glowing praise for N[Z] naval patrols in the Gulf has not cracked American opposition to resuming military exercises with this country... [The US] Embassy cites N[Z]'s ban on nuclear ship visits as a lingering obstacle... Military chiefs[in NZ] can... only cast a wistful eye across the Tasman to the huge Tandem Trust exercise between the U[S] and AUS], to which they have not been invited. That exercise, involving 27,000 armed forces [personnel], began this week under a joint security declaration by the two countries in July[1996] to update the 45-year-old Anzus Treaty.

...Representatives of [NZ's 3] armed services have just returned from a demonstration of a proposed American-designed command and control system... [that] would give strategic and battlefield decision-makers a comprehensive, global picture of the deployment and state of readiness of military forces around the world. [But the US] is unlikely to give N[Z] full access to the system while the port ban remains on nuclear warships.

...The [NZ] Minister of Defence... showed signs in Auckland last night of preparing to revive public debate over nuclear ship visits... "As a politician I must accept there is strong opposition to anything nuclear in N[Z]," he told... a select audience, the shadowy Secret Air Services at a regimental dinner... on the eve of the arrival... of a British conventionally powered warship... "However, if such opinions were formed on the basis of clear scientific facts, then it may be that N[Z]ers would come to a different view." [He] said it was not well known that N[Z]'s relationship with the U[S] following the ban over nuclear ship visits was costing this country dearly in terms of trying to maintain the highest military standards. But he believed the younger generation reaching maturity had a greater appreciation of N[Z]'s place in the world than those who grew up "in the cocoon of the welfare state. It may be that the younger generation of N[Z]ers who have an international outlook will start to generate renewed debate on such issues." ...While acknowledging he had no firm data to confirm that feeling, he indicated he was seeking information over the next few weeks to do so... Both Britain and the U[S] have removed nuclear weapons from their surface ships but Washington refuses to send conventionally powered craft here... [The 41st] President ordered all bombers off alert in September 1991... Although the bombers could be rearmed within 72 hours...

THE former... Commander-in-Chief of the United States Strategic Command... [who] was in charge of all US air force and navy strategic nuclear forces... arrived in Auckland early today... [and said] he was outraged at the time by N[Z]'s no-nukes policy... [The] General... retired after 33 years of military service in 1994... [and] was now an anti-nuclear activist... "...Now that I have made this difficult intellectual journey, I have... changed my mind, but at the same time I don't apologise... Here was the U[S] carrying the burden of deterrence for the free world and this country wanted no bar of it... The real concern was what if that attitude spread to other nations around the world – if the world became New Zealandised, what would that mean? ...Now I have concluded that nations, like people, must ultimately speak from their consciences and that's what N[Z] did – and I respect that..." He said it was much easier for countries on the sideline to take a dispassionate view... [However, his] first doubts about the American nuclear build-up came in 1969 when he realised antiballistic missiles were not a guarantee against nuclear attack. The military response was to create a formidable nuclear arsenal to act as the ultimate deterrent. "But what would happen if the deterrence failed? Complete annihilation... We fabricated 70,000 nuclear warheads at a cost of \$US4 trillion. What is it that prompted people to do this? Why is it that people like myself didn't hear any objections, didn't ask why?" ...When N[Z] officially declared itself nuclear free in 1987... [the] then vice-director of Strategic Plans and Policy, considered the act "outrageous." ...Nevertheless, by the time he was promoted to... Commander in Chief... in 1991... he had "grave reservations. I looked at the 12,500 targets and knew beyond a shadow of doubt that we had created an absurd circumstance. I felt I was caught up in a process which no one was in charge of." On his desk were orders for \$US40 billion of strategic nuclear warheads. "How could this be when the Cold War was ending? My answer was 'no,' we don't need to do this anymore."

...A former Labour P[M], David Lange, invited the U[S] in 1984 to bring the nuclear ships issue to a head to "see how things develop." This has emerged in Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade notes of a meeting in New York between [the newly elected PM] and the U[S] Secretary of State of the day... The notes, released to the Centre for Peace Studies at Auckland University, quote Mr Lange as inviting the U[S] to submit its normal annual request for ship visits to give the Labour Party "something to talk about." Conventional wisdom seemed to be that he should put off facing the issue in the hope it would go away, he was quoted as saying at the meeting... [The Secretary of State] is reported to have welcomed the proposal and suggested the sides keep in touch to try to work a way through the impasse resulting from the [NZ] Government's ban on visits by nuclear-armed or powered vessels... [However, when it came to the U[S]... policy of neither confirming nor denying the presence of nuclear warheads on ships, he said it would be "suicidal" in military terms to disclose such information. Mr Lange said he understood the policy but appeared to rule out any chance of a solution acceptable both to "vociferous" opponents of warship visits and himself unless it could be softened... [F]our months later... the Government... denied a U[S] request to send the nuclear-capable destroyer USS Buchanan to N[Z]. This refusal sparked swift retribution which has effectively frozen N[Z] out of Anzus ever since.

...Hostility stoked anti-nuclear fires... Foreign antagonism united a nation, recalls... the man behind an anti-nuclear policy which became law 10 years ago yesterday... N[Z]'s controversial... anti-nuclear policy might never have become law if the U[S] and France had not reacted to it with such hostility says the former P[M] David Lange... The two nuclear powers' aggressive response to N[Z]'s anti-nuclear stance created a groundswell of support for it... "People were saying... if you give in now to those Americans we'll never dream of voting for you again," he said... P[M] from 1984 to 1989, [he] championed the anti-nuclear debate by declaring N[Z] a nuclear-free zone and banning all nuclear-armed and

nuclear-powered ships from its shores as soon as he took office. The U[S] reacted by suspending N[Z] from the Anzus defence alliance with it and A[US]. France sent secret agents to N[Z] in 1985 to blow up the Greenpeace flagship, Rainbow Warrior. [The former PM] said the actions of both countries exposed the “hypocrisy” of the Western Alliance towards nuclear disarmament and he slammed the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, saying it wasn’t worth the paper it was written on. “The super powers have never done anything on the nuclear issue that inconvenienced them in the slightest way. They’ve never fixed a date for disarmament but we have always pledged to do it.” ...N[Z]’s stand earned it respect... “It was a matter which enhanced N[Z]’s standing, not in the nuclear power countries but in the rest of the world. Certainly in India, in the Asian subcontinent and in Africa there was enormous support for it. And what has happened since then of course is that there has been an enormous enthusiasm for people to say that they are nuclear-free and anti-nuclear.” ...he was proud of N[Z]’s nuclear-free law, despite the costs... The policy was enshrined in the N[Z] Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament and Arms Control Act of 1987. - 1997

Traces of radioactivity... have been detected in an Auckland estuary... The caesium-137, produced by nuclear reactions, may date back to 1964. The levels found are too small to be harmful... [T]he National Radiation Laboratory of N[Z] says 1964 and 1965 were peak times for caesium deposits in N[Z] – ...most came from the Soviet Union and U[S] atmospheric nuclear tests in 1961 and 1962 and were deposited through rainfall.

...A senior scientist in France’s nuclear monitoring agency has admitted that the rock of Mururoa Atoll is deteriorating because of sustained nuclear testing. Entire sections of rock in the atoll’s northeast are threatened with collapse, the daily *France Soir* newspaper reported... [The NZ] Disarmament Minister... said last night that the French admission brought it into line with the concerns first expressed by Norman Kirk’s Government in 1973. But N[Z] had known about damage to the atoll since a... report[issued three years ago]. The International Geomechanical Commission added strength to that assessment [a year later] when it reported on plutonium “hotspots” and the risk of part of the atoll collapsing, possibly causing tidal waves. Following those reports, France set up continual monitoring. The admission is the frankest by French authorities on the long-term effects on the atoll... The French Embassy in Wellington did not respond to a *Herald* request for comment. [□ ‘Relations between NZ and France were seriously impaired by the sinking of the Greenpeace vessel, the NZ PM accusing the French of “a sordid act of State-backed international terrorism.” The official French reaction was at first to disclaim responsibility, but in face of NZ’s demands for the truth, and a campaign by the French Press, the French PM announced on Sept 12, 1985, that *Rainbow Warrior* had been sunk by French agents. This followed the resignation of the French Defence Minister and dismissal of the head of the secret service. It was reported that French documents concerning the sinking had been destroyed.’]

...AT ten minutes to midnight on July 10, 1985, a bomb rips through a boat moored at Marsden Wharf in downtown Auckland. That boat, of course, was the Greenpeace flagship, the Rainbow Warrior – and N[Z]ers awoke to the news of the country’s first international terrorist act... [Today, as] France’s first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, the *Charles de Gaulle*... which took 10 years to build and cost almost 20 billion francs... left port... for sea trials... the Rainbow Warrior lies at rest where she was sunk for the second time, in 1987, off Mātāuri Bay in Northland. There was a final protest: a Greenpeace supporter attempted to chain himself to the ship’s railings in a last-ditch attempt to stop the scuttling. But scuttled she was... Little remains of the Warrior’s superstructure. What is left of the ship’s rails is completely covered with common and jewel anemones. Hydroids grow like white bonsai trees. Her deck has been colonised by a forest of ecklonia kelp. Divers encounter scorpion-fish which, when lit by torch, display their brilliant red colour, and the glaring eyes and erect venomous dorsal spines that indicate a response to threat... The Warrior has become a living ecosystem; part of Northland’s coastal reefs. And a rainbow-hued underwater memorial to a black day in history.

...A book by one of the French agents who sank the Rainbow Warrior claims they planned only to blow off the propeller but were ordered by their political masters to sink the Greenpeace ship. [The s]aboteur... also reveals in his biography, *The Secret Dairies of a Combat Diver*, that before their mission – code-named Operation Satanique – France had tested a “bacteriological weapon” to cripple the ship’s engines. [He also] claims that indirect French actions against Greenpeace dated back to the 1970s, when agents routinely sabotaged protest missions to France’s South Pacific nuclear test atoll, Mururoa... One of two agents captured and jailed in N[Z] after the 1985 explosion in Auckland, [the saboteur] claims to have been horrified by the death of photographer Fernando Pereira, who was killed in the bombing. The agents heard the news hours after the attack and were shocked at the catastrophe. [The two captured agents] were eventually sentenced by a N[Z] court to 10 years’ jail on manslaughter charges. They spent only eight months in a N[Z] jail before being flown to the French atoll of Hao, where they stayed for just 17 months before heading home. In his book, just published in Paris, [the saboteur] paints an operation that was cursed from the outset, thanks to interference by the French Defence Minister... and chiefs in charge of... the French foreign intelligence service, the... DGSE. [The minister], he says, demanded that... the agency carry out the attack quickly. There was, therefore, no time for the DGSE to carry out reconnaissance. There was dismal ignorance of N[Z] within the DGSE and French political circles... “We did not know that in this country you cannot make a move without being observed, that informing the police is a national duty.” In Auckland last night, [the saboteur]’s version of events was condemned by... the Rainbow Warrior’s second engineer, who cheated death by going for a walk minutes before the bombing. The Dane said she felt insulted by claims that the French never intended to kill anyone. “When you plant two bombs on a manned ship in the middle of the night and don’t give any warnings, you expect to kill people... They were terrorists and murderers – nothing more.” [She said the saboteur] had been decorated and treated as a hero for what he did. [‘The Rainbow Warrior bombing isn’t listed as an act of terrorism – it’s listed as a mistake.’] “The only thing that was a mistake in their eyes was that they got caught.” ...One of our “nation of police informants” who helped nail [the saboteur] is proud that do-it-yourself crime fighting still rankles with the French terrorist. In the weeks leading up to the bombing, [the informant], a vice-commandore of the Auckland-based Outboard Boating Club, helped to organise a night vigil to protect boats that were being targeted by thieves. Eagle-eyed volunteers saw one of the French agents come ashore, tie his dinghy up and hop into a waiting van... The witnesses reported the frogman and the van’s registration number to the police. They arrived too late to catch the man, but found an outboard motor and a French military diver’s rebreather tank that the bombers had discarded. “It was a pretty good feeling that our members helped nail those responsible for one of N[Z]’s most notorious crimes... The only annoying thing is that criminals never seem to get properly punished for what they have done.” The boating club incident was one of at least three where vigilant N[Z]ers saw the French agents and later provided police with vital evidence. A rental van receptionist kept [2 agents] talking while she called police, and in Northland a forestry worker suspicious about a car driven by agents from the saboteurs’ yacht, *Ouvea*, also told investigators of their movements.

...A gruff individual, [the]... French Defence Minister... was pushing for France to react swiftly and punitively against terrorists or groups that threatened its interests. Political demands for quick results... had already caused the DGSE... to foul up an operation in 1983, when French agents tried to blow up the Iranian Embassy in Beirut in reprisal for a terrorist attack in Lebanon. The truck bomb did not go off and an attempt to ignite it with a rocket-propelled grenade also failed, leaving behind equipment with the DGSE’s insignia. No one in the agency heeded the warning signs, and it was against this backdrop of meddling and incompetence that Operation Satanique... was conceived... [T]here was no satanic or cult significance... all operations at that time were codenamed to start with the letters S and A after the agency’s Service Action, which carries out undercover operations abroad... There were no meetings to coordinate work between the various units... [The author of the] book, *The Secret Dairies of a Combat Diver*... [who was] full of misgivings, was in charge of planning the attack itself, using a three-man team that arrived in Auckland on board the yacht *Ouvea*. Neither [he nor the] agent... who was in charge of logistics and getting the team out after the bombing, had any first-hand knowledge of the situation on the ground before their arrival... [in “]an insular country, distant, withdrawn, which does not think for a second that it will get caught up in the turbulence of the world,”... the “little Switzerland of the Pacific.” ...The saboteurs left plenty of clues for the locals to discover... For reasons that [the author] says he cannot fathom, even today, the... heads of the DGSE... insisted that the [bombs]

carry a four-hour timing delay, instead of the usual 24 to 48-hour delay that enables agents to make their getaway. Service Action... took every precaution to prevent loss of life. It acquired copies of the builder's drawings of the Rainbow Warrior and made special charges for parts of the hull where there were no cabins. It also timed the attack to occur late at night, when there was less likelihood of many people being on board. But... [a]fter the first blast, Fernando Pereira went back to recover his photographic gear, just as the second charge went off... At that point, according to [the author]'s version, the DGSE cruelly abandoned... the two key operatives... to their fate... No help or guidance is offered... [when, h]oled up in a Hamilton motel, they make a distress phone call to the DGSE... and their case officer is, inexplicably, unavailable... Paris' disavowal of the officers was... the work of [the Defence Minister], who brushed aside an appeal by the DGSE chief... for France to make a clean breast of things with Wellington. Back in N[Z], the two agents... discuss whether to take shelter in the French Embassy in Wellington or disappear into the N[Z] countryside and live rough. They decide in the end that their best hope is to use their fake Swiss passports, which they used to enter N[Z], in the hope that the authorities will not check them. It proves a vain hope... The entire responsibility for the operation fell to them. Charged with murder, they were facing life imprisonment. Only when the scandal became public in France did the [French] Government accept responsibility. [The Defence Minister] quit on September 20, 1985, followed by [the DGSE chief] six days later. The charges [against the captured agents] were scaled down to manslaughter... [The author] gives an insight into the supposedly top-secret negotiations between Wellington and Paris over the transfer of the pair to Hao... The deal was announced to great fanfare on July 7, 1986 – but... he had known of it as early as June 24, when he was asked to sign a document agreeing to his expulsion from N[Z]... The motive for his book is clearly anger at his former bosses and at what he sees as a whispering campaign among erstwhile colleagues that he botched the operation... He retired in 1995 with the rank of colonel and now, at age 48, lives on a pension, making adventure trips to exotic locations such as Arctic Canada and Madagascar. He says the Rainbow Warrior affair deeply marked him, especially the loss of his secret identity. Because of his brief encounter with fame, he is suspicious of people who seek to befriend him. The former secret agent says he was treated fairly and decently by N[Z] at every stage. His book shows no remorse for the attack, though he openly admitted to... [t]he French daily *Liberation*... that Pereira's death was a matter for his conscience. "If that hadn't happened, the business would have ended quite differently. We could have had a good laugh about it as time went by. But now, we never will."

After serving part of their sentences in a NZ jail, the two agents were handed over to French authorities in return for a meaningless promise not to oppose NZ requests for increased exports to the EEC (NZ's request was 'blocked by Ireland' instead) and some fines.

The *Peace and Disarmament Education Trust (PADET)* was established in 1988 with a fund of \$1.5 million, part of the money paid by the French Government in compensation for the sinking of the *Rainbow Warrior*... The *New Zealand-France friendship fund*, also established with *Rainbow Warrior* compensation money, is largely used for exchanges of young people between France and N[Z].

New, happier chapter in relations with France... Rows over nuclear testing and the Rainbow Warrior bombing were put to the side yesterday as France and N[Z] embarked on a new diplomatic and political relationship... N[Z] was an ally long before French nuclear tests started at Mururoa... This long friendship was remembered during talks between [NZ's PM] and the French P[M, who]... said France had as a souvenir the N[Z]ers who... lost their lives saving French liberty 80 years ago... He told reporters the "misunderstanding" between the countries was a thing of the past. [However, 'military links between France and NZ have still not been fully restored' – although a French frigate is due to visit NZ.]

...A French Navy frigate, La Nivose, broke N[Z] maritime law yesterday by sailing from Wellington without a pilot, who was five minutes later than expected... [The] Harbourmaster... issued an urgent warning to other ships on the harbour... The Maritime Safety Authority director... was appalled. Sailing without a pilot could endanger other ships, including ferries, he said. "Pilotage is not there for fun. It's there for assisting mariners who are unfamiliar with restricted and potentially dangerous waters..."

...A British warship will plough N[Z] waters over the next fortnight as part of a demonstration to Asian and Pacific nations that Britain is not bowing out of the region... [following] its withdrawal from Hong Kong next month... The guided-missile destroyer HMS Gloucester will leave a Royal Navy task force exercising in Asia and arrive in Auckland on Monday... The Gloucester will be the first British warship in N[Z] since 1995, when the frigate HMS Monmouth and a naval tanker broke a decade-long freeze associated with this country's ban on nuclear ships. Nuclear weapons are no longer normally carried on any British surface vessels, as opposed to submarines, nor are any of them nuclear-powered... The British High Commission defence adviser... said Britain hoped to send large fleets on exercises to the region every four years and make ship visits to N[Z] and AUS every second year... N[Z] is still barred from military exercises with the U[S], which remains miffed that its nuclear-powered ships are banned from... [NZ waters. Incidentally, t]he family of a New Jersey woman killed in the 1983 downing of a Korean Air Lines jet by the Soviet Union, has been awarded \$US2.1 million... the largest jury award yet against KAL in the crash. - 1997

The recent bombing of the Rainbow Warrior and the resulting death of a crewman has clearly illustrated the lengths to which France will go to protect its nuclear test programme. Shocking as the bombing was, the incident involving the Korean airliner, KAL 007 (surely that number is the sickest of the CIA's 'jokes'), and subsequent deaths of 269 mainly innocent people, surely dwarfs the Rainbow affair. But the public, it is said, have short memories and as further evidence comes to light of the full horrific details no doubt many will have forgotten what the initial point of the exercise was. At present a civil suit for damages on behalf of the victims is proceeding in the US District Court in Washington. The latest evidence of an official air traffic control tape from Anchorage... suggests radar operators knew a full four hours before the jet was shot down that the jet was off course and failed, for whatever reason, to warn it. Possibly more evidence will come from this court case, but as the following article... [b]y... a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford... points out, the immediate objectives of the Pentagon have already been achieved *An airliner is sacrificed to get [US] missiles into Europe*... The tragic fate of its 269 passengers and crew brought anti-Soviet feeling to a new pitch throughout the West. Once KAL 007 went down there was little doubt that the emplacement of Cruise and Pershing would go ahead, come what may... Early in 1983, as the fateful date of the Cruise-Pershing deployment nears... an unexpected threat to the... deployment surfaces in the shape of the growing peace movement in Western Europe. [Many Europeans were unhappy that US nuclear missile bases meant their neighbourhoods were targeted by Soviet nuclear missiles.]A number of governments – those in Norway, Denmark and Holland – already seem very wobbly under the pressure and there could be a domino effect if even one refuses Cruise... It is touch and go. What would be really convenient would be one of the periodic displays of ruthless brutality the Russians are so well capable of – something which... would horrify even Left-wing Western opinion... By this stage KAL virtually suggests itself. South Korea is a pliant client State, a dictatorship where secrets are kept. It also has a plentiful supply of anti-Communist fanatics willing, as was evident from the Flying Tiger days on, to fly virtual kamikaze missions for the cause. Its airline not only flies the right routes but is closely linked with the Korean CIA (which was set up by the CIA in 1962). So KAL 007 makes its fateful flight, equipped with surveillance equipment. As it diverges from its proper flight path into the airspace prohibited areas clearly marked on all aviation maps, it radios repeatedly back to base that it is on a different, legitimate course. An RC 135 shadows closely, partly to survey Soviet reaction, partly to confuse it and, perhaps, to receive in-flight transmissions from KAL's surveillance net so that the precious fruits of the flight will not be lost in any event. As it crosses the Kamchatka Peninsula it runs across the Soviet net of radio beacons at Kabaru, Kikutan, Lopatka and elsewhere (all of which would allow it to correct its course even if its flight computer were out of action). An added bonus is that the Russians are apparently planning to launch

their new PL5 missile into the Kamchatku test-ground that very night (report on 'Panorama,' BBC television, November 7, 1983). Soviet MiG 23s and Sukhoi 15s scramble. Their pilots face the death sentence if they fail to shoot down an intruder (and executions have apparently taken place). If the intruder is a military plane it will be destroyed in minutes. But to their horror the pilots find a 747 Jumbo. It makes no response to their repeated radio signals so they go into the standard international routine of visual signals, making close passes with undercarriage down... The Russian dilemma is acute. It is not made easier by the way RC 135s keep blipping on and off their radar screens. Apart from possible confusion as to which plane is which, something is up and it's not clear what. Finally, the decision is reached: The USSR simply cannot afford to jeopardise the security complex below, on which the country's whole strategic future depends. KAL 007 must be shot down... KAL 007 is crippled but flies on, losing height fast. The pilot at last breaks radio silence to report that he is hit and going down – thus confirming the worst Soviet suspicions: His radio is working... The U[S] publicity machine goes into top gear... Tape-recordings of the Soviet radio traffic are produced with great éclat proving that the... pilots made no attempt to make radio contact with KAL 007... It is this version of events which receives saturation publicity world-wide... No mention is made of the RC 135... The way that the [US version of] the story comes apart at the seams receives less notice. It is several weeks before it emerges that the tape transcripts so proudly produced by [the US President]... were in fact heavily doctored to support their version... A few days later news of the RC 135's presence leaks out. Then an editor of 'Defense Science' admits to reporters that KAL airliners 'regularly overfly Russian airspace to gather military intelligence' (San Francisco 'Examiner', September 4 1983). The U[S] version's credibility is, however, enormously aided by the fact that the USSR maintains a complete silence for six days, refusing to admit it shot down anything... The most telling fact of all is that the USSR makes no apology. Had the massacre been an accident it would have been the only sensible thing to do; indeed, it would have been even more sensible if it was not an accident. The real reason for the failure to apologise is that the Russians feel it was the U[S] that put KAL 007 in jeopardy and then threw the blame on the USSR. *Pravda* shows what it thinks by surfacing a story that ex-President Nixon had been warned off by the CIA from booking a flight on KAL 007. The one indubitable fact is that a lot of innocent people are dead. For many this is enough and a great gale of anti-Soviet fury sweeps through the West. The President is quick to exploit the mood and immediately pushes the MX missile proposals through Congress and even manages to get the Senate to agree to his plans for the development of chemical warfare and nerve gas. In Europe the peace movement is dealt a crushing blow. At every stage in the debate over Cruise and Pershing, the KAL tragedy is endlessly cited by the Right-wing politicians, and the Left has no answer... It is impossible to say the scenario is true. It is only possible to say that it fits all the known facts and that the official U[S] version of events fits almost none of them. The fact that we have been lied to seems indisputable.

U-2 incident, the popular name given to the affair stemming from the shooting down on May 1, 1960, near Sverdlosk, U.S.S.R., of a U.S. aircraft... The shooting down of the plane was announced by [the]Soviet Premier... on May 5, who claimed that the plane was engaged in photographic reconnaissance of Soviet rocket bases. The U.S. promptly denied the charge, saying the plane was engaged in weather research and had strayed off course. On May 7, the Soviets announced that [the pilot] had been captured and had admitted that he was in the employ of the Central Intelligence Agency and had made previous intelligence-gathering flights over the U.S.S.R. in the U-2 plane flying at extremely high altitudes... Thereafter, the U.S. government admitted to the substance of the Soviet charges, saying that they were necessary measures designed to prevent the possibility of a Soviet surprise attack on the U[S]. The pilot]... was released by the Soviet Union, Feb. 10, 1962, and permitted to return to the U.S.

Francis Gary Powers, [who]... was captured in the Soviet Union... after his high-altitude spy plane was shot down... on May 1, 1960... will be posthumously awarded military honours on Monday... Officials said Powers' family would be taken to an Air Force base north of Sacramento and presented with the Prisoner-of-War Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross and the National Defence Service Medal in recognition of his service to the country... Powers was held in prison for two years until... he was exchanged for [a] Soviet Colonel in the most dramatic East-West spy swap ever to occur in Cold War Berlin. Criticised when he returned home to the US for not ensuring the revolutionary plane was destroyed or killing himself with poison, Powers was cold-shouldered by his former employers at the C[IA]. He died in 1977 at the age of 47 when a television news helicopter he was piloting crashed in Los Angeles. [His son] said a belated recognition of his father's contributions to US Cold War security occurred... when officials finally stated that his mission had been a joint operation between the CIA and the Air Force. "Before that my father was seen as a civilian pilot... and the Cold War was not a recognised conflict,"... "We are working to preserve Cold War history, which his is a part of, and this will help gain honour and acknowledgment for all Cold War Veterans[.]" an Air Force official said. '45 pilots died flying U2s during the 50s and 60s', and 'what happened to most of the US pilots shot down over the Soviet Union before the U2 flights began still hasn't been divulged by either side', but] Powers'... downing over the Soviet Union in 1960 became a pivotal event in the Cold War...

The incident is historically important for a number of reasons, including its scuttling of the scheduled summit conference between [the respective leaders]... It also threatened the integrity of the spanking new National Aeronautics and Space Administration, which at... the American [President's] explicit request was to have been dedicated to peaceful research in science and technology. The U-2... it turned out, had no equipment for analysing the atmosphere, but... the Soviet Premier... displayed some of the equipment that [the pilot] acknowledged bringing with him – including a pistol with silencer, a poison capsule to swallow if captured, 7,500 roubles in Soviet currency, French, West German, and Italian money, three watches, and 'seven gold rings for ladies.' [The Premier] asked: Why was all this necessary in the upper layers of the atmosphere? Or maybe the pilot was to have flown still higher to Mars, and was going to lead the Martian ladies astray.

Greenham Common was a catch-word throughout the 1980s of women's stance against nuclear weapons... [I]nitially 10, then at times thousands of women... demonstrated against a U[S] air base with its nuclear missiles on what had been an English common. For five years [they] lived in makeshift camps... set up around the seven gates. Their tents were knocked down... [so] they built what they called "benders," which were frames made from hazel saplings spread with plastic and lined with blankets. Eventually police evictions prevented any structure at all and the women slept on [open] ground. "I always re-made the decision each autumn about whether to stay on,"... [said one of the original 10, who is in N]Z... as an official guest of the Public Advisory Committee on Disarmament and Arms Control... She was one of the famous three who got into the base's air traffic control tower. It was about 6 pm and dark, on December 27, 1983. Unnoticed, the three women cut through layers of fence wire, reached the tower that was covered in scaffolding for repairs, and climbed to the top. "It was pretty scary," she remembers. "I looked down and saw a bunch of American soldiers below us but they didn't hear us." The tower was empty so they broke in and hung a huge banner outside saying "Peace on Earth." (It was Christmas, after all.) Hours later, when they were tired and hungry... they finally attracted attention by flicking the tower's lights on and off – and two soldiers burst in, guns out. [She] spent 30 days in jail that time... [She] did dozens of stints of two weeks to 30 days... "Deep down I believed we would succeed, and we did." Success came with the 1987 Reykjavik Treaty to remove Cruise, Pershing and SS20 missiles from Europe. It is not hard to see that the actions of the Greenham women contributed. In December 1982, 35,000 turned up from all over the world to form a human chain encircling the base's perimeter fence.

...The job of US President comes with the burden of 200 years of America's twin aspirations – to be invulnerable and to be able to realise its imperial ambitions... By the turn of the century America had the wealth, the power and the means to chart its own foreign waters, irrespective of Britain. And now, at the end of the century, the world is America's oyster... With a military whose fire-power has no peer, supported by a budget

more than the military budgets of all the other industrial nations combined, the temptation to work outside U[N] authority... is doubtless difficult to resist... The danger of such power is... [in flying] too close to the sun. To believe that what is good for America is good for the world is to set America up, in the due course of time, for an equal and opposite reaction... The arrogance of power, long in the making, has to find the route to humility.

...*Uncle Sam seeks a hand to defend its global interests*... The old continent is being made an offer by the US which it may find hard to refuse – a grandiose vision of a far more ambitious Nato alliance and a wider partnership designed to assert and defend Western interests around the globe... “Prosperity and security, political freedom and economic freedom – all on a global scale” are the goals of the proposed Grand Alliance... It would mean Europe developing its own version of US military capabilities including air-mobile units and aircraft carriers and being ready to share responsibility for securing strategic regions such as the Gulf. European nations were warned last week that the American alliance and US military engagement were likely to wither unless they agreed to sign up. “...As an alliance, we are living on borrowed time... Why would the Europeans go for this when the current situation is so favourable for them? After all, we bear the bulk of the risks and the burden for defending our common interests,” said... [a] former senior director for European and Eurasian affairs...

When weapons get larger and larger... I got only a quick look at... the... [year] 2140... but it is certainly impressive... The United Civilised States battles the Eurasian Dynasty for control of a climate-ravaged Earth... The UCS has... armoured units... [that] stomp along on hydraulic legs. They range from quick but lightweight Raptors, to awesome but slow Hellmakers... [A]ir and sea battles include the devastating plasma bomber, which is... fun to use. The ED may be more ruthless politically but it cannot match the advanced technology of the UCS, and relies on the tried-and-tested tank... and... ground units... made up of androids implanted with the human brains of “volunteers,” and these can be very effective, even against armoured units... [By the way, s]ecurity... comes in many guises. But it only takes the presence of a couple of diverse communities to recall that... [if you] strip away all the theory... it’s really about “us and them.”

...“Since the Soviet collapse it seems some people around here need a new enemy,” says [a U]S... congressman... When the U[S] surveys the globe these days China is the only potential rival on the horizon. If its recent growth rates persist the world’s most populous country will overtake Japan to be the second largest economy by 2010 and could be the largest, displacing the U[S], by 2020.

...As the century ends the U[S] faces no adversary, nor the imminent prospect of one, which can threaten the physical existence of the U[S] itself. Thus, it] is not surprising that there are contradictions evident now in America’s stance. On the one hand there is manifest desire to remain the premier global power but on the other an evident aversion to bearing the costs of the role. Priority emphasis is placed on American trade and economic interests and there are disclaimers about pursuit of an American peace for the world... The importance of the international rule of law is proclaimed. Yet the primacy of American law is asserted in trade and other areas. The cause of human rights is robustly declaimed; but the U[S] declines itself to sign up to key international human rights conventions. There is a profound ambivalence about the U[N], and the International Court of Justice; and a preference to meet actual challenges by means of American led coalitions of like-minded states... In the past ten years American diplomacy everywhere has been significantly affected by resource cuts. In the current year the budget is 50[%] lower, in real terms, than ten years ago. At the same time... the U[S] defence budget has escaped significant reduction from Cold War levels.

...Success in the Cold War and its robust economic performance in the 1990s have made the U[S] the only unchallenged world power in modern history... an American mandarin... told an audience at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies... “Our triumph in the Cold War has undermined our judgment.” It has led to “an arrogance of power” in America’s dealings with the rest of the world... Except for rogue states such as Iran and Iraq, foreign nations will not declare that they are out to limit American leadership. They may be uncomfortable with that leadership, but there is no clear alternative at this point.

...The US-led North Atlantic Treaty Organisation won the Cold War and has begun transforming old enemies into fast friends... Over two months and on two continents, the institutions of world order are changing. The Denver [G7] summit ended at the weekend... [by] adding Russia to its ranks... after... [the current US] President... lobbied to give Moscow a permanent seat... [amongst] the world’s richest nations. Russia also has a permanent voice at the centre of Nato... In July, Nato, like a giant amoeba, will absorb another chunk of the old communist empire... [–] Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic... [–] into the centre of western security... In the shadows of the eight-nation Denver summit, officials will privately say that America sits clearly atop the global economic pile, holding forth its successes for all to examine, admire and emulate... Rarely has a single nation so dominated world affairs as the U[S] today... and would-be rivals are in no position to argue... “The major goal of all countries now is to have good relations with the U[S].” ...The \$US7 trillion... US economy accounts for 22[%] of world output, almost double the European members of the Group of Seven. By comparison, annual Russian economic output is one-tenth the size of US output. “There is one country... which decides everything,” a high-ranking Frenchman said of the US. Sighed another European diplomat: “Thankfully that dominant country is a friend.” ...“The world is a global village, and the band leader is the U[S],” said a European official, scrambling his metaphors... The 15-nation European Union could be a friendly counter-balancing force, and surely hopes to become one. But the organisation had a disastrous summit in Amsterdam last week where member countries failed miserably in their effort to reform the organisation’s basic charter... Whether or not this US dominance is a good thing has yet to be judged. While American leadership is appreciated... it can also be overbearing, sometimes seen as bullying... Nonetheless, some leaders are reluctant to swallow American solutions.

...The head of the Russian Communist Party warned the West yesterday that expanding Nato to include former Soviet allies would be the worst mistake since... W[W2. He]... said Russia was “in a difficult phase right now” and threatened no one, making expansion of Nato totally unnecessary... [An alternative i]s to give certain unspecified “conditions and promises” to Eastern European countries. Eastern Europe would then serve as a “bridge between the West and the Russian Federation, which would enhance co-operation and secure stability in the region.” ...A US official said even... the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, had raised Russia’s opposition... In Vienna yesterday, Nato officials presented a proposal for big conventional arms cuts to a body dealing with the 1990 Conventional Forces in Europe treaty... The arms cuts are intended to address Russian fears that Nato could pile up weapons on its borders.

...Never one to stand on protocol, [the Russian President] – who had just signed a Russian-Nato partnership accord – returned to the podium for a second, unscheduled speech to announce an unexpected arms proposal. Puzzled U[S] officials sought an explanation [while] the stunned Russian delegation flew into a panic. Only later did a spokesman clarify [the President’s] comments. Although the Kremlin chief had said Moscow would remove the warheads from all missiles targeted at Nato states, what he meant was that the missiles would be targeted away from those countries.

...NATO’S military chiefs finally agreed to enlarge the alliance last week, but their new central European allies will be unable to contribute to their own defence, let alone fight... As a senior Nato official put it, the Polish, Czech and Hungarian forces were respectively, “a mess, a bigger mess and a total mess.” Ageing Russian equipment, public mistrust, professional incompetence and a dire shortage of experienced non-commissioned officers have left the central European military floundering and Nato wondering how to cope. Its problems extend to almost every aspect of military life. In Hungary, the ancient radar system is so ineffective an intruder could cross the country before aircraft were scrambled to intercept it. The Czech Air Force is so run down pilots complain they rarely fly their old MiG-23s. The few hours allowed are taken by senior officers too old for combat duties. Budget cuts by impoverished governments have also taken toll on the three armies. Some Polish officers have been buying ammunition with their own money, while troops in Hungary exercise with tin cans rather than practice grenades. Czech conscripts have complained they fired a rifle only once during their 12-month service. Western officers and military attaches in the region are generally

sympathetic. They stress the progress made by all three armed forces by reorganising into Nato-style brigades, by contributing to the alliance-led force in Bosnia and by attempting to improve foreign language training. But when it comes to serious soldiering, it is a different story. Although... central European... armies exercise with... Nato... under the Partnership for Peace programme, they are excluded from advanced training. Asked why the Poles were excluded from large-scale British Army manoeuvres in Poland, a Nato official said: "Because the Brits are scared of friendly fire. I don't think they're willing to risk the casualties."

...A [BRITISH] SOLDIER who was shot after being mistaken for a target has won more than £250,000 damages... [A] colleague's tragic split-second mistake... [during war] games... put paid to his career... The Ministry of Defence has agreed [to pay] the huge compensation because [the] ex-Corporal... suffered Post Traumatic Stress... and spent six months in a psychiatric hospital before a medical discharge... [In related news,] a dozen warships, their broken hulls jutting awkwardly out of the sea, lie rusting in a watery grave [at Petropavlovsk, the] military outpost on Russia's Far Eastern frontier. This is home to Russia's nuclear submarine fleet and a base for the Pacific fleet. But the graveyard provides a poignant symbol of Russia's decaying armed forces as the Defence Minister... embarks on reforms to create a crack fighting force... In the name of efficiency, the number of troops will be slashed from 1.7 million to 1.2 million by the end of 1998, and 30,000 sailors will lose... jobs. Old ships will be scrapped and replaced by modern equipment... Just over 300 years after it was founded by Tsar Peter the Great, Russia's navy is starved of state funds for maintenance, fuel and spare parts. Only 10 years ago, a total of 480,000 navy personnel manned a force that comprised 370 submarines (50 of them nuclear), 290 main warships and 700 minor attack boats. Personnel is now down to 270,000, submarine numbers have been slashed and the main fleet of warships is estimated at 150... Disillusioned servicemen, who face poor housing, intolerable conditions and delays of several months in receiving pay, are waiting to see how the [new] cuts will affect them. Many servicemen and their families live in ugly, squat apartment blocks in a military village above the town. Locals recall how young officers used to parade proudly through the city in their naval uniforms. Now they see only sadness and resignation in their eyes. One officer said things were so bad that he had been given the job of identifying anyone under his command with suicidal tendencies... [Russia's] President... has promised to pay all overdue wages to servicemen by September 1, with the Far East a priority area. But military morale has also been hit by unprecedented levels of theft, fraud and corruption. Facing criminal charges are... [the] former commander of the Pacific Fleet; ...[the] former commander of the submarine division; and... [an] ex-commander of the Kamchatka flotilla.

...With the end of the Cold War, American analysts and politicians have increasingly shifted their attention from... the Soviet Union... and the military balance of power to economic issues... To a certain degree the very success of American economic policy creates new dangers in the international system and, unless the U[S] and the world finds ways to cope... the history of the 21st century may be more tumultuous and bloody than we hope... [L]iberal capitalism, the American goal, is a profoundly destabilising achievement. It accelerates change and increases stress in the international system... [C]ommon... is the political backlash against capitalism that occurs when industries, regions and economic sectors are devastated by rapid change. - 1997

cold war, hostilities short of armed conflict, consisting in threats, violent propaganda, subversive political activities or the like...

The expression "cold war," which has been used to describe the period of international tension following W[W]II, has encompassed the entire spectrum of human conflict short of all-out nuclear war, including the Korean conflict, 1950-53... [which] was classified... as an "international police action" primarily on the grounds that there was no formal declaration of war by either side.

Only once has the U[N] attempted to make peace, rather than keep it, and that was in June 1950 at the time of the Korean War. In response to the communist invasion of the South, the U[N] followed up its order to the North Koreans to withdraw with a decision to dispatch a UN force led and funded by the U[S]. The Soviets were not present when the vote was taken as they had walked out in protest against the [US] refusal to recognise the Chinese People's Republic. Fifteen governments eventually contributed to the force; many others made contributions of non-military equipment. When UN forces reached the frontier between the two countries, the 38th parallel, the U[S] and the UN Secretary-General took the view that unless UN forces crossed into North Korea, the fighting might break out at any time; that it might be better to deal with the problem once and for all by overthrowing the [North Korean] government... rather than acquiesce in the permanent division of Korea. To this end the Americans introduced a resolution which was subsequently adopted by the [UN] General Assembly, recommending that all necessary steps should be taken to ensure peace was enforced throughout Korea, a measure which enabled them to prosecute the war more vigorously. In the event, of course, the decision to cross the 38th parallel merely precipitated Chinese intervention and prolonged the conflict for another three years. Never again was the U[N] to pay the price of making the peace, in part because it had proved so dauntingly high. In the three months during which the U[N] found itself in occupation of the larger part of North Korea, 100,000 citizens were "executed" or killed. More bombs were dropped on the North than had been dropped on Germany in five years of war. UN-prisoner-of-war camps were so badly run that the inmates and guards often found themselves engaged in pitched battles. The cost of making the peace seemed higher than the cost of keeping it. The U[N] was seen as backing a brutal and relentless conflict on the part of a government that in retrospect seemed almost as bad, in the opinion of many, as the government of the aggressor... *One of the most worrying developments of the modern age has been the willingness of a country's political opponents to resort to the tactics of terror. Exploiting the advantages which arise from the growth of international travel and communications, they often attack innocent victims, particularly in the liberal democracies of the West, in an effort to force political change...* The use of terror as a political instrument – as a way of "persuading" people to support a particular point of view – is not new. Throughout history, if governments or individuals found they could not gain support by reasoned argument, violence was always an alternative option, inducing fear in the minds of its victims and forcing them to accept new ideas. Nor should this be surprising: the use of terror is often very easy, and the results are usually immediate, particularly if fear spreads rapidly through an affected society... During the last 20 years the threat of terrorism has grown dramatically. There are a number of reasons why this should be. First, the period since the late 1960s has seen a vast proliferation of terrorist groups, embracing a wide variety of political and ideological beliefs. In very general terms, terrorist groups have emerged from three distinct sources – the nationalist demands of ethnic minorities or dispossessed peoples, the revolutionary activities of predominantly Marxist groups and the so-called "New Left" – although some terrorist activities, 'like the Armenian attacks on Turkish targets in Western Europe, are historical reprisals for the killing of millions of Armenian people in 1915, an event which had been forgotten by the rest of the world'. The nationalists, covering groups such as the Palestine Liberation Army (PLO), Irish Republican Army (IRA)... Quebequois separatists... Kurds fighting against Iranian and Iraqi rule alike... Sikh zealots wishing to secede (break away) from the republic of India... and *Euskadi Ta Askatasun* (ETA Basques), have used terror... as part of their campaigns to achieve political recognition and the right of self-government... By comparison, the revolutionaries were often forced to adopt terror when their preferred tactics of rural-based guerrilla warfare failed in the mid-1960s. They saw the use of fear as a means of undermining government authority... This happened in Latin America... Finally, as a separate phenomenon, "New Left" groups such as the West German Baader-Meinhof Gang, the British Angry Brigade, the French *Action Directe* and the Italian Red Brigades, evolved out of the student protests of the late 1960s determined to destroy existing political structures, creating a wasteland out of which new ideas would emerge. The latter were different in that they did not seek political power for themselves (instead, they saw themselves as the "sacrifices" essential for creating the mood for change within society), but they still fitted the general pattern of using terror to force "revolution"... The second reason for the spread of terrorism lies in the nature of our interdependent world, for one of the

most worrying factors in recent years has been the way that different groups have co-operated, pooling their resources and using the advantages of modern society to extend their attacks worldwide. A few commentators see such co-operation as part of a Marxist plot to weaken the "Free World" prior to general revolution or invasion, but the reality is probably less dramatic. Many of the groups, particularly of the "New Left", are small and short of the essentials of a terror campaign – appropriate training, money, arms and explosives – while others, particularly the long-established nationalist organisations, are large, experienced and rich. Among the latter may be included the PLO, organised as a "government-in-exile", with ready access to money from Arab states, training facilities in refugee camps and equipment easily purchased on the world markets... The rising level of terrorist activity since the late 1960s is graphically illustrated by a single statistic: of the 25,181 terrorist attacks recorded since 1968, nearly 70[%] have occurred in the six years since 1980. This increase has been due to the fact that terrorists now help each other, but more significantly to the effects of international publicity. Television and newspaper coverage has enabled terrorist ideas to travel from country to country as easily as the terrorists are able to do themselves... Television no longer merely reports events, it can be used to further them as well... During the hijack of a TWA Jumbo jet in 1985, hijackers at Beirut airport were able to broadcast their demands on the evening news. Television cameras followed the hijacking story even when the[plane's] captain... was being threatened[with a pistol]... The modern terrorist is largely a creation of the mass media... Not only have the groups helped and inspired each other, they have also copied the methods of other organisations. The hijacking of aircraft was a regular occurrence within the Soviet Bloc until the late 1950s. In the early 1960s it began in the West, reaching a peak of 82 incidents in 1969 alone. The kidnapping of the US ambassador in Brazil... in September 1969 was copied by many groups around the world when it succeeded in effecting the release of convicted terrorists from Brazilian jails. Between then and 1975 there was an attempted kidnapping of an American diplomat once every three months and a successful kidnapping once every five... Several characteristics distinguish present-day terrorists from that of the past. To begin with, terrorists have tried to exploit the technological vulnerability of the modern world. It is now very easy for a group or even a single individual to inflict great damage on society at relatively little cost to themselves. Reservoirs can be poisoned, electricity power grids put out of action, trains carrying nuclear waste derailed. Offshore oil rigs, natural gas pipelines, computers storing government or company records are all examples of targets which are particularly vulnerable to attack. In 1985, terrorists assaulted electrical power generation installations and transmission lines, petroleum and water pipelines and telephone switching/transmission systems 364 times worldwide... So far, none of the world's major terrorist movements has tried to bring social life to a complete standstill, but it could actually happen. One group which tried... was the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), operating in the U[S] in the early 1970s. At the height of its activity, RAM carried out a series of attacks, from bombing public buildings to scattering nails at the intersections of motorways during rush hour traffic. Like many other militant black groups, including the Black Panthers, RAM believed American society to be so vulnerable that it would fall apart under stress... [T]he Weathermen in the U[S] tried to bring down the entire capitalist system by directing 4,300 incendiary bombs against banks and private property in the 15 months before April 1970... [A]s the IRA bombing of the Grand Hotel in Brighton, England, in October 1984 showed, governments themselves may well be the target. In that particular case[Britain's PM, who was staying in the] hotel during a Conservative Party conference, was lucky to escape: as it was, four people were killed and 32 injured in an attack, which, if successful, could have paralysed (albeit momentarily) the British government... Those who joined the... ["New Left" organisations] were for the most part intelligent, student radicals from middle-income families. The Baader-Meinhof Gang was a classic example of a group of disenchanted young people from a privileged background... Very few such terrorists, in fact, have truly working-class origins despite their claims and aspirations; none of them succeeded in forming a lasting relationship with any mass movement, not even Western Europe's communist parties, which tended to denounce their activities. As their own political isolation increased, they became increasingly more desperate and violent... [R]ecently the main perpetrators of hijackings have been militant Sikhs, who were responsible for the worst single incident of air piracy in June 1985, when over 347 people lost their lives in a mid-air explosion... The two most devastating truck-bomb attacks were carried out on 23 October 1983 against the command posts of the US and French peace-keeping forces in the Lebanon. Some 241 US servicemen and 58 French soldiers were killed. Often these [suicide-]attacks have been carried out by 15-year-old children, whose video-taped messages relayed on television or broadcast on the radio networks reveal a depth of religious fanaticism, which many secular Arab governments, not to mention the non-Muslim world, find almost impossible to understand. The willing sacrifice of such terrorists does have one thing in common with older forms of political violence – a feeling that their deaths are justified by circumstances of repression and exploitation. This was summed up 20 years ago by... [the person who] wrote... "At the level of individuals... violence is a cleansing force. It frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect." ...What... has been the success of terrorism in the past 15 years? Although it has claimed perhaps less than 7,000 victims, it seems to have had a much wider impact than those numbers would suggest. In the absence of reliable data, of course, it is impossible to offer an estimate of the economic costs of such violence. What we can say is that the material losses involved in the hijacking and destruction of civil aircraft run into millions of dollars every year. The cost of deterrence is also mounting. Screening against bombs at airports in the U[S] alone cost the airport authorities in the late 1970s nearly £130 million over a period of three years. Although these costs are high, they are not excessive. It costs the state less every year to deal with the victims of terrorism than it does in compensation for industrial accidents or the prevention of deaths on the roads. Terrorism is still newsworthy because it is not an everyday occurrence... Its psychological costs are more difficult to assess... Despite all the costs, terrorism still affects relatively few people, far fewer than the 20,000 people murdered every year in the U[S], a country which has learned to live with a level of violence which would have been regarded as unacceptable 50 years ago. However there are signs that terrorism is on the increase and that people are losing confidence in their own government's ability to deal with it. At present, there are over 40 counter-terrorist companies in the U[S] and many others around the world, offering a variety of special services. Another disturbing development could be that the more extreme terrorists might turn to new technologies involving the use of chemical, biological or even nuclear weapons. Several incidents have already occurred, although none with significant consequences... Most states using nuclear weapons would be vulnerable to a counter-attack and would also be answerable for the consequences of their own actions; terrorists usually are not, as the police seldom identify or locate them. This fundamental imbalance in the use of force between state and non-state means that it is impossible for the state to restrain a determined terrorist. Ultimately, a terrorist group intent on using nuclear weapons may not necessarily be deterred... To this extent, modern terrorists differ from the bomb-throwing anarchists of old in wielding power far in excess of anything their predecessors could have imagined... New technologies... place within the terrorists' reach... the ability to create even greater uncontrollable and irreversible events. Even so, there is cause for optimism. So far, few terrorists have displayed such suicidal tendencies. The modern political terrorist does not feel that he or she is fighting a totally hopeless cause; by and large, their aim is to win political legitimacy... By mounting attacks using the ultimate weapon, they would completely forfeit public support. The death of too many innocents would end in complete alienation rather than intimidation, a constraint that could prevent an uncontrollable spread of the terrorist threat... But this is not the only constraint, for since the emergence of "international terrorism" in the early 1970s... the countries under threat have not been idle. In response to the danger, such countries have adopted policies designed to protect vulnerable targets or, in situations of extreme threat, to counterattack the terrorists or their base. Although the results have not been universally successful, enough has been achieved to make the task of the terrorist more difficult and much more dangerous. In a society which allows freedom of movement... the terrorist can travel... with relative ease... Presented with such a situation, the liberal democracy faces a dilemma, for if it takes the obvious steps to curtail these freedoms, it could end up becoming repressive and forfeiting the right to be called either liberal or truly democratic. Indeed, this may well be part of the aim of the terrorists, forcing a democratic society to change by driving a wedge between the

government and the ordinary people. If freedom of movement were to be controlled, for example, it would inevitably affect everyone in the society... As ordinary people were forced to accept a greater degree of government control through identity checks or vehicle searches, they might well feel alienated and refuse to give their support to the anti-terrorist campaign. Eventually, a "climate of collapse" would emerge, out of which the terrorists could gain their political demands. To a certain extent, this seemed to happen in West Germany in the early 1970s, as the government responded to the threat posed by perhaps no more than a dozen active Baader-Meinhof terrorists; it certainly happened in Uruguay in 1971, where government actions against the Tupamaros led to public alienation that was only curtailed by a military takeover of the state and the introduction of an extremely repressive system under which public opinion no longer mattered... The government has therefore to be extremely careful in its reaction to terrorism... So long as its actions have the backing of the majority of the people, as expressed through their representatives in Parliament, laws can be passed to cope with the problem. In Britain, for example, the public revulsion at the Birmingham pub-bombs in November 1974, planted by the IRA, allowed the government of the day to rush through Parliament the Prevention of Terrorism Act. This act gave police wider powers to deal with terrorists and all but suspended *Habeas Corpus* (the right of individuals to be released from police custody in 24 hours unless charged with a specific crime)... In such an atmosphere of public support, governments can go further, using selective violence in direct response to terrorist acts. Most Western states now have specialised military or paramilitary units, trained specifically for counter-terrorist operations, which they are prepared to use to rescue hostages even outside their national boundaries. The Israelis began the process in early July 1976, when elements of their parachute forces flew all the way to Entebbe in Uganda to rescue Jewish hostages seized in a plane hijack by members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine... and Baader-Meinhof Gang. Landing by surprise in long-range C-130 Hercules transport aircraft, the paras not only freed the hostages but also killed the terrorists guarding them and fought a gun-battle with Ugandan soldiers protecting the airfield. It was a dramatic and successful operation... A similar mission was carried out by members of West Germany's *Grenzschutzgruppe Neun*... at Mogadishu in Somalia in October 1977, during which 87 passengers and crew were rescued and three terrorists killed. In this particular case, the commandos were helped by men from Britain's 22nd Special Air Service Regiment (22 SAS), and it was they who, three years later, carried out the most public anti-terrorist operation to date. On May 5, 1980, in the full glare of television cameras, SAS men in black balaclavas stormed the Iranian Embassy in Princes Gate, London, to free hostages being held by Arab extremists intent on gaining the political recognition for the Iranian province of Khuzestan. In the aftermath of this operation, it began to seem as if ruthless yet selective counter-violence was the answer to the terrorist threat... But this was a false presumption. As early as March 1978, elements of Egypt's Sa'Aqa ("Lightning") commando group had failed to rescue hostages being held on board a hijacked aircraft on the airfield at Larnaca in Cyprus (they had failed to co-ordinate their actions with the local authorities and were, quite understandably, fired upon by the Cypriot National Guard as they approached the plane). Indeed, the record of Sa'Aqa is a salutary one, for their attempt to storm another hijacked plane, this time at Luqa in Malta, in December 1985, left 59 hostages dead as the terrorists opened fire. Nor should it be presumed that the Western democracies are universally successful: in April 1980, only weeks before the SAS operation at Princes Gate, the American rescue mission to Tehran (Operation Eagle Claw) ended in disaster in the Iranian desert as helicopters proved unable to cope with the extremes of climate and terrain involved... The precarious nature of such a use of counter-force, coupled with the obvious effects that failure will have on the credibility of the government in the eyes of the people, means that countries must look to other approaches if they are to minimise the impact of terrorism. One possibility is... the negotiation of bilateral agreements to counter the worst of the problem, and here the record is comparatively good. If this can be used as a basis for more general agreements, leading eventually to international responses, terrorism may yet be defeated. - TERRORISM AND CIVIL STRIFE

IRAN'S GLOBAL HAND OF TERROR... A GENTLE, soft-spoken man, Mohammed Hussein Nagdi worked tirelessly to persuade the West that Iran was a terrorist state. From his experience as a former charge d'affaires in the Iranian embassy in Rome, he knew that it was. He headed the Italian chapter of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, an organization dedicated to overthrowing the Teheran dictatorship. In July 1992 he got more than 400 members of the Italian Parliament to propose an oil and arms embargo on Iran. Nagdi knew he was high on the Iranian Government's hit list. "But I can't let up," he'd say. In March 1993, Nagdi was on his way to the office with his driver when two men pulled alongside his car and shot him in the head and stomach. He died on his way to hospital. Nagdi's story is the latest in the series that has been repeated over and over again. Nearly three years earlier, his colleague Kazem Rajavi had been assassinated in Geneva after his successful campaign to convince the Swiss government to isolate the Iranian regime. Indeed, across Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Africa and now North America, assassinations and bombings are being carried out by radical fundamentalists directed, financed or inspired by Iran... In January 1993, 250,000 Turks poured into the streets of Ankara to grieve for Ugur Mumcu, a crusading journalist who was killed when his car was blown up. His crime: opposing the religious fiats imposed by Islamic fundamentalists in Turkey. Hours after his death, the Iranian-funded and trained Islamic Liberation Organization claimed credit for the attack. Mumcu's murder was one of more than 150 assassinations and bombings carried out in Turkey in the past three years by Iranian-sponsored groups. "Iran operates a veritable 'Murder Inc.,'" says a former Iranian diplomat who now lives in Europe... Says... [an] author and leading French authority on terrorism, "the assassination of Iranian dissidents throughout Europe has become a top priority." ...an Iranian journalist active in the Iran Nation Party, outlawed by the mullahs following the 1979 revolution... was imprisoned and tortured... [f]or his "illegal" activities... According to various estimates, 50,000 to 150,000 political prisoners have been executed[, but the journalist was released. In 1988 he] fled Iran to serve the cause in exile. In August 1992 [the journalist] was attacked in his apartment in Offenbach, Germany, by a pair of knife-wielding Iranian hit men. It was only because a German neighbour was alerted by the noise... that... the terrorists fled before they could slit his throat. Six months later [he] was alerted by German media that his name was No. 2 on an Iranian government death list. Such attacks have demonstrated the ability of the Islamic fundamentalists not only to gather extraordinary intelligence on their opponents but to enlist local Muslims to do the killing. For, while Iran also uses its own agents, the majority of its terrorist operations have been carried out through local Islamic religious figures, traditionally immune from Western surveillance or suspicion, or through other local volunteers. Most European intelligence experts agree with... [a] former head of FBI investigative and intelligence operations: "The... Iranian-inspired terrorist threat is much less structured than similar frameworks we faced in the 1970s and 1980s. It is very difficult to get a handle on." ...A top-secret CIA estimate concludes that Iranian-style fundamentalism now poses the greatest threat to Western institutions and Arab regimes for the foreseeable future... Iran's ability to recruit terror cells in faraway places was confirmed in March 1992, when a car bomb detonated in Buenos Aires across the street from the Israeli embassy. The three-storey structure and surrounding buildings were virtually levelled; 32 people were killed and more than 250 wounded, including scores of schoolchildren. According to US and Israeli officials, the Islamic Jihad, a terrorist group closely linked to Iran, was behind the bombing. American experts concluded that the design of the bomb was a carbon copy of the one that blew up the American Marine compound in Beirut in October 1983... Teheran's area of greatest expansion in recent years has been Africa. Sudan, with over 1000 Iranian Revolutionary Guards permanently stationed there, has been turned into the world's largest terrorist base. In recent years, American... intelligence officials have uncovered more than 30 Iranian-run training camps, from which thousands of terrorist operatives have been dispatched... As the leader of the Arab world, Egypt, Sudan's northern neighbour, is a prime target. Iranian- and Sudanese-backed groups have worked with local fundamentalists in murdering scores of Egyptian officials. The assassin who killed Egypt's speaker of parliament, Rifaat al-Mahgoub, in 1990 most likely received his training in Sudan... The West's misguided belief that "moderates" in Teheran will listen to reason has blunted its reaction to Iranian terror. Says... [the] chairman of the Department of International Relations at Britain's University of St Andrews and

director of the London-based Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism: "The very weakness of Western response to Iran's acts of terror has led it to conclude that it can continue its terrorist game without paying any political cost." ...In April 1993... a senior official of the People's Mujaheddin Organization of Iran... told US congressional representatives: "The terrorist operations carried out in Paris, Rome, Geneva and New York are intended to scare off the West from reacting to the regime's atrocities at home and expansionism abroad. We ask the U[N] Security Council to impose an arms and oil embargo against Iran." Such action is long overdue. Here is what must also be done: • Stop the flow of high technology to Iran. In 1992, for example, Germany approved 80[%] of export-licence applications for Germans seeking to sell sophisticated equipment to Teheran. Japan has reinstated a multi-hundred-million-dollar aid program for a hydroelectric project. And... France agreed to guarantee a \$658-million loan to finance Iranian purchase of French goods. Last year the World Bank approved 17-year loans worth about \$840 million, which... an expert on Iran and senior fellow at the US National Defence University in Washington... notes, lets Iran divert its own money to weapons production... • Cut off the huge flow of weapons to Iran from North Korea, China and the ex-communist states. The U[S] and its European partners should force these countries to stop selling to Teheran under penalty of an economic embargo. Getting the West to act in concert towards Iran will not be easy... Nevertheless, the multi-nation consensus achieved against Iraq in 1991 demonstrated that a united front is possible. The security of the West and the lives of thousands of... Iranian exiles are at stake. - 1994

Leaders of the world's top industrialised nations have ended a summit meeting that was short on drama but long on serious attempts to impose some order on the complex forces buffeting their own countries. They weighed the challenges of the international aspects of terrorism, the risks of a meltdown from frantic round-the-clock financial trading and the insecurity stemming from rapid economic change. The leaders of... the G7... came up with no instant relief for their 23 million unemployed... But, with bomb attacks on American soldiers in Saudi Arabia and a British army base in Germany adding urgency to the talks, the three-day conference did produce a 40-point international action plan to combat crime and terrorism. "It's not the Cold War, it's not... W[W2], but it's an important part of our struggle to make this a civilised and sane world, and we have to continue to do so," [the US]President... said at a closing news conference. [He intends to 'ask Congress for \$US1 billion to help combat terrorism.']Foreign and interior ministers will meet in Paris next month to flesh out how to combat what the British P[M]... called the "international virus" of terrorism... The leaders also gave weight to the environment and the spread of Aids. Joined by Russia for the political leg of the summit, the... leaders dwelt on... Mexico's financial crisis, the collapse of Barings [Bank and the] \$US1.8 billion in copper trading losses by Sumitomo Corp of Japan...

World powers gathering in Paris for a summit on terrorism are expected to come up with a tough plan of action to highlight their determination to fight indiscriminate violence. The meeting comes... less than two weeks after a suspicious explosion downed TWA Flight 800 off the Long Island coast. On the agenda of the meeting, originally scheduled after a bombing last month in Dhahran... that left 19 U[S] servicemen dead, is a 40-point package of measures... set out... in... Lyon... Many of the G7 nations have pressing reasons to bolster anti-terrorist action. Britain is experiencing a new upsurge of sectarian violence in Northern Ireland, Japan has been thrown off balance by last year's subway nerve-gas attacks, France is still seeking the Islamic fundamentalist suspected of perpetrating a string of bombings last year, and Germany has been the scene of political violence by Turkish extremists. Meanwhile, in Washington, [the US President]... was to meet congressional leaders to press them to strengthen an anti-terrorism law he signed in late April... [He] wants expanded wire-tap authority for the FBI and other law enforcement agencies, and chemical markers – "taggants" – placed in all explosives to make terrorist bombs easier to trace. Congress has previously rejected both ideas... In New Orleans yesterday, the [US] President... urged the international community to slap "strong sanctions" on countries which he said were engaging in or supporting terrorism – naming... Iran, Libya and Sudan.

...The U[S] House of Representatives, ignoring European objections, is set to approve a bill to punish firms that invest in Libyan or Iranian oil and gas fields. Aides said yesterday that House Republican and Democratic leaders had cleared the way for a vote on a Senate measure to expand provisions passed by the House last month, obliging [the US]President... to slap two sanctions out of a list of six on any company that invested \$US40 million... or more in one year in oil and gas projects in Libya or Iran... The sanctions bill is an attempt to draw European countries, Japan and others to join U[S] efforts to isolate Iran and Libya, considered by Washington to be supporters of terrorism.

...The Pentagon yesterday lifted a veil on its military research priorities, revealing an emphasis on... computerising the battlefield of the future... and... defences against terrorism... [Although] obviously inspired by recent events, like the June 25 truck bombing at a U[S] military housing complex in Saudi Arabia[, t]he Pentagon is increasingly worried about chemical and biological weapons in the hands of terrorists, so it has devised a programme to find a way to automatically detect and identify biological threats to air bases and port facilities by 1998.

...TERRORIST activity has risen sharply this year and the Centre for the Study of Terrorism based in Scotland says terrorist groups are becoming far more effective at killing people... The latest figures show that more than 27[%] of terrorist acts now result in fatalities, compared with just 13[%] in 1991... And the present trends are deeply disturbing... The last year for which the centre has completed a full analysis is 1994. In that year there were 350 terrorist acts... That compares with 1980 – the first year in which analysis was completed – when there were 277 terrorist acts... While the early 1990s showed a slight decrease in the number of terrorist acts, 1996 represents a serious and worrying turnaround... In 1968 there were only 11 identifiable terrorist groups. Latest indications suggest there are more than 49 with an additional 34 other sub-national entities... AND not only is the world of terrorism becoming more deadly but it is changing its targets in line with modern day political sensitivities. Random terrorist acts are on the decrease and terrorist acts which target key economic centres are increasing... [Examples] are the... destruction of the central business district of Colombo by Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka[, which]... killed... 86 people... and... injured... 1400... and the... attempt... to destroy the World Trade Centre in New York... In the U[S] in particular, there is a growing sense that terrorist groups are out of control... Experts in the U[S] are pointing to... a further new development in the world of terrorism. THIS is the rise of what the experts call "nihilistic terrorism" or terrorism that hasn't got specific political or economic objectives. It refers to acts of violence committed by groups with grievances who are just intent on creating harm and generating publicity. Examples of this sort of terrorism include the... activities of the recently-charged Unabomber... and the... 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, which killed 168 people... [Incidentally], the *New York Times* reported yesterday... [that] chemists at the FBI lab in Washington had found traces of PETN, a chemical in plastic explosives, on wreckage retrieved from the cabin between rows 17 and 27... of TWA Flight 800... But PETN was found in many bombs and surface-to-air missiles, making it impossible to know which type of device was involved in the July 17 crash that killed 230 people.

...WASHINGTON is drawing up plans for military strikes against Iran to punish the Islamic regime for backing terrorist attacks against American targets. [The]US Secretary of Defence... has already briefed the British and French governments in general terms about the plan of attack – expected to be a missile and bombing strike on carefully selected targets. But hawks in Washington, eager to seize the opportunity for a crippling blow to Iran's growing military power, are pushing to annihilate the entire Iranian navy and... nuclear weapons programme. The severity of the attack could depend on the outcome of the investigation into TWA Flight 800... Pentagon officials are already convinced that Iran was involved in the bombing of a US barracks in Saudi Arabia in June... The U[S] last December allocated \$27 million to the C[IA] to overthrow Iran's government. The effort has yet to begin but Iran has committed \$30 million to counter it. Washington dissuaded Israel from mounting air raids on Iranian targets earlier this year in response to a series of suicide bombings in which Iran was implicated. Now, with the American election only three months away, Iran provides a tempting target... FBI agents say they are actively looking to see if there is a link between the Dhahran

bombing and the mid-air destruction of the TWA aircraft. Any shred of evidence that indicated an Iranian role in the disaster would provoke a ferocious response...

TERRORISM'S HIGH FLYERS THE charred and twisted remains of TWA flight 800 dredged from the Atlantic seabed have so far failed to... [confirm] the cause of the crash. Hopes of an early conclusion to the July 17 mid-air explosion now look increasingly remote. Theories abound as to the cause of the blast which ripped through the fuselage of the ageing 747... 45 minutes into the seven-hour flight to Paris. Even as jet fuel smouldered on the coastal waters off Long Island, experts were speculating that flight 800 had been brought down by international terrorists. Worse still was a suggestion the aircraft might have been hit by a surface-to-air missile launched from American soil. While mechanical failure could not be discounted, experts "gut feelings" dictated that technical failure was the least likely of the three possibilities... The discovery of traces of... PETN on two pieces of wreckage further raised the spectre of terrorism. Investigators quickly established, however, that the aircraft had been used as a troop carrier during the Gulf War. The possibility that explosive traces were left behind by servicemen could not be discounted. If it is established that flight 800 was brought down by foul means, it will be the third murderous act of terrorism in the U[S] in as many years, following the World Trade Centre and Oklahoma City bombings in 1993 and 1995. And if that proves to be the case, it could indicate the return of terrorist attacks on civilian aircraft on a scale similar to that of the late 1980s. These included the Libyan bombings of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie in 1988 and of a French DC-10 over the Sahara Desert a year later; and the 1985 bombing of an Air India 747 by Sikh extremists off the Irish coast. In all, 770 people were killed... Before Lockerbie, airport security was primarily aimed at defeating hijackers. Counter-measures consisted mainly of x-ray screening devices and metal detectors. The finding that Pan Am flight 103 was blown up by plastic explosive raised the ante: nothing in use then was capable of detecting the explosive. As a direct result of Lockerbie the U[S] Congress ordered the Federal Aviation Authority to develop machines capable of detecting plastic explosives and install them in American airports. So far only three U[S] airports have scanners which are capable of detecting small amounts of plastic explosives. The problem is cost. Airport companies are reluctant to buy them at \$1 million each... Given that TWA 800 set out from Athens on July 17, flying to New York, and then departing for Paris, investigators say it is possible a bomb was left on the aircraft by a departing passenger at New York. While America waits and watches for more clues from the deep, the public may well wonder just how effective airport counter-terrorism methods really are. For geographical reasons, aviation authorities in N[Z] are somewhat luckier than their U[S] counterparts, says Aviation Security Service[']s manager. N[Z]... six international airports are literally at the ends of the earth in terms of world aviation. And that, he says, is a major plus-factor in safety terms, given that N[Z] is neither a terminating nor an originating destination for U[S] carriers. In most cases American flights departing N[Z] are in transit, and are on N[Z] soil for no more than... four hours. But that is not to suggest that N[Z] is immune from or complacent about the threat of international terrorism. "Quite the opposite... N[Z] boasts one of the most effective aviation security services in the world. It has a lot to do with our psyche – if a job's worth doing it's worth doing right." N[Z] is one of 190 contracting states to ICAO, the International Civil Aviation Organisation – the controlling world-body on aviation standards and procedures. As a contracting state, the Government – not the airlines – undertakes to meet minimum requirements... N[Z]s aviation security service] was the first of its type in the world to be accredited with the ISO 90002 for quality management systems and, as a holder, is audited every three months. "After the Lockerbie bombing we decided to concentrate on human factors. The debate will live on as to whether the airport screener could have detected the bomb or let it slip on through carelessness. Because of that we... introduced an intensive training programme. Staff can be audited at a moment's notice." [The manager says N[Z]... has a proud record and has detected many items missed by their overseas counterparts. Items include a fake bomb containing three sticks of mock gelignite, a clock, detonator and a nine-volt battery bought by an A[US]n passenger in the U[S] and carried on to a flight leaving Los Angeles without detection. Similarly, a loaded fully automatic pistol left on a chartered 747 winged its way around the world for three weeks until discovered by N[Z] authorities, who]... have some of the most modern detection equipment in the world – the most recent bought as part of security measures for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Auckland last year.

...French leaders threw a security blanket over potential targets yesterday after a bomb... ripped through a regional express train in Paris and killed two people. Seventy-nine people were hurt, seven of them critically... Police chiefs drafted in 400 riot police and troops to put a security plan codenamed Vigipirate back into force immediately... No one[] has claimed responsibility, but the target, the timing and the type of bomb echoed attacks last year by Muslim fundamentalists fighting against Algeria's French-backed military rulers... The blast at the junction of Boulevard Montparnasse and Boulevard Saint-Michel occurred just two stops away from the St Michel station, where eight people were killed and 86 wounded in an attack blamed on Algerian extremists in July 1995... [France's President called the latest] attack "a barbaric and terrorist act" and vowed that France would do everything in its power to fight terrorism... [In related news,] Americans who sue European companies doing business in Cuba face counter suits in European courts, now that the EU has vowed to retaliate against a U[S] law it deems unfair... The U[S] law was passed after Cuban MiG fighters shot down two civilian planes piloted by Miami-based exiles in February. The shooting stirred up American sentiment against Cuba and put pressure on the U[S] Government to isolate the [Cuban]regime further... The... European... legislation... is intended to discourage European companies from settling out of court in the U[S]. The... new law also strikes back at U[S] legislation allowing Washington to slap trade sanctions on foreign companies investing in the oil sectors in Libya and Iran. - 1996

[The US President, who was] seeking to pre-empt congressional action, imposed sweeping new sanctions on Sudan yesterday for alleged sponsorship of terrorism... [Meanwhile, Pakistan has] put police on high alert... and tightened security at foreign missions after warnings of further possible attacks in the wake of a daylight ambush that killed four U[S] oilmen... The US State Department warned Americans travelling abroad about the potential for retaliation after... [someone] who was arrested in Islamabad in 1995, was convicted yesterday of the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York that killed six people and injured 1000... [Mr Someone], whose nationality is a mystery, was said by the prosecution to be the mastermind behind the... bombing and to have boasted that he planned to kill a quarter of a million Americans to avenge US support for Israel... [However,] Pakistani police said the attack... [on] four staff of the US oil giant Union Texas and their Pakistani driver... [during the] morning rush-hour... on Wednesday... the first [attack]on expatriate employees of a US multinational in the country... could be a revenge strike for the conviction of [a]Pakistani... for the 1993 killing of two C[IA] employees... at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia...

[Yesterday, at the USs'] biggest ever mass murder trial[, the]... prosecution accused... the... Oklahoma City bombing defendant... of being a right-wing extremist who thought the deadly blast would trigger a second American Revolution... In an opening statement laying out the case against the 29-year-old Gulf War veteran, [the prosecution declared: "The defendant]... liked to consider himself a patriot... [but o]ur forefathers did not fight innocent women and children... They didn't plant bombs and run away wearing earplugs." ...But [the defendant]'s attorney... sought to counter the Government claim by saying he would prove it had accused the wrong man of blowing up the Alfred P. Murrah federal building... on April 19, 1995... He described the bombing as "the largest domestic terrorist act in the history of this country." But he also quickly added "did they get the right man? Millions of innocent people fear and distrust the Government[.] The defendant's]... one-time Army buddy [has told the media that his] hatred of the [G]overnment may have led him to sacrifice 168 people... [The defendant,] who has pleaded innocent and who could face the death penalty if convicted, took copious notes during the opening statements[, which included the suggestion that he was]... out to avenge the 1993 Government assault on the compound of the Branch Davidian religious cult in Waco, Texas, which ended in the deaths of 80 people... [The prosecution alleged the defendant's] co-conspirator singled out the Oklahoma City federal building for attack because [the defendant] believed,

wrongly, that was where the order for the Waco raid originated. [The co-conspirator] is to be tried separately... [The] former Army buddy[, who is to be the trial's]... star witness... has pleaded guilty to four felony counts in return for testifying that he knew about plans for the bombing but did nothing to stop it. He is in federal prison awaiting sentencing and faces up to 23 years in prison... Security was heavy around the federal complex that houses the courthouse in downtown Denver... In Oklahoma City, about 125 bomb survivors and relatives of those killed attended a special telecast of the opening arguments... on an 8m wide screen.

...Relatives of those who died in the Oklahoma City bombing greeted the guilty verdict against [the defendant] yesterday with cheers, jeers and calls for the death penalty. "There was only one verdict..." said [one person] whose 23-year-old stepdaughter died in the blast. "There is only one penalty..." His sentiment was echoed across the nation... [After sitting through 11 weeks of court proceedings t]he jury deliberated for 23 hours over four days before finding [the defendant] guilty on 11 charges... including the murder of eight federal agents. Oklahoma authorities now plan to file state murder charges on behalf of the 160 other murder victims... Outside the courthouse in Denver, where the judge had moved the trial because he believed that [the defendant] could not get a fair trial in Oklahoma, some [people] hugged and clung together for support and others gave v-for-victory signs... [The] trial's sentencing phase... starts tomorrow... But many... of the victims' relatives... concede that even... the death penalty... would not be enough to ease their pain.

...the conviction of [the defendant] may become another symbolic date that extremists will want to mark with violence... Anniversaries are symbolically important within the militia movement. It was, after all, the anniversary of the federal agents' April 19, 1993, raid on the Branch Davidians... that prompted the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City two years later. Yesterday's guilty verdict... will be seen by a small group of hard-core, violent extremists within the movement as a further Government crackdown against them, according to several organisations that monitor militias... "It's a small percentage of people, but they are committed to using violence. This is where they could possibly turn [the defendant] into a hero."

...Thin, tall and clean-cut, he looks like an all-American boy and he grew up playing Little League baseball and joining the Army, just like millions of others. But a Denver jury found that... [he is] the "All-American Monster." After promising in pre-trial interviews that he would testify, [he had] remained silent in his defence with his thoughts and actions described by reluctant witnesses for the prosecution. Even they had nice things to say about him. "If you don't consider what happened in Oklahoma, [he] was a good person," said [the] star prosecution witness... who testified against [his former Army buddy] in hopes of avoiding a lengthy jail term for himself and any jail time for his wife. The monster's sister... told the court of his obsession with *The Turner Diaries*, a racist... novel in which extremists blow up FBI headquarters to start a second American Revolution. [Her brother] was once a promising young soldier who won a Bronze Star in the Gulf War... He excelled in the Army, where his obsession with neatness and fitness impressed commanders. But his life seemed to fall apart when he left the Army soon after he failed to get into the elite Special Forces. He also grew increasingly obsessed with the Government... He found work as a security guard in Buffalo. He showed his frustration with the Government in a 1992 letter to a local newspaper that said: "Do we have to shed blood to reform the current system? I hope it doesn't come to that! But it might."

...THE FAMILIES of [the Oklahoma bomber's] victims applauded the death sentence handed down against him yesterday and said they hoped the anti-government paranoia that inspired the attack would die with him... "You don't want to celebrate someone else's death," said [one relative]... "But my dad didn't have a choice to live or die and I don't think [his murderer] should either..." ...Behind him, a small group of victims sang *God Bless America* as they unfurled an American flag and draped it over the fence that surrounds the field where the Alfred P Murrah federal building stood before it was blown apart... [Someone] who was injured in the blast and lost a friend, said any other sentence would have allowed [the defendant] to promote his cause from inside prison... But there were some voices of dissent. [A person] whose daughter... died in the bombing, has been a staunch critic of the death penalty... "How can you receive peace from yet another death?..." Moments before [the] US District Court Judge... sentenced him to death... [the defendant had broken] the silence he kept, except for a few words, throughout his 11-week trial. In a low tone that had a packed court straining to hear, [he] read a one-sentence quote from the late liberal US Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis: "Our Government is the potent and omnipresent teacher. For good or for ill, it teaches the whole people by its example. That's all I have to say," he added, standing ramrod straight and dressed in prison garb... His lawyers said they had filed a notice of appeal. Under federal rules, when all appeals have been exhausted, [the] US Attorney-General... would turn [him] over to the federal marshals and an execution date would be picked by the director of the Bureau of Prisons.

...[The Oklahoma City bomber has told television viewers he has no regrets about his actions. Asked whether it was right to use violence against the Government, he told the CBS programme *60 Minutes*: "If the Government is the teacher, violence would be an acceptable option. The US Government uses violence all the time." In related news, t]he guru of the Japanese doomsday cult accused of masterminding the nerve gas attack in the Tokyo subway... said yesterday he was not guilty, and... [i]n his first clear statement in a year-long trial... accused his followers of carrying out the... March 20, 1995, attack... "I ordered [my] top disciple... to stop on the night of the 18th and I ordered [my] senior follower... to stop on the 19th but it turned out I lost against them." ...[However, m]any other top followers have said... [that the] leader of the Aum Shinri Kyo (Supreme Truth) sect... ordered the subway attack and other murders. After his statement in Japanese [the leader had] switched to incoherent English... [He] has been repeatedly removed from court for interrupting the proceedings with incomprehensible statements.

...Never one to mince words or acts, the world's once most wanted terrorist "Carlos the Jackal" coolly described himself on his 1994 arrest as a "professional revolutionary." He faces life behind bars if convicted by a Paris Assize Court in a trial which begins today. The trial for the 1975 killing of two French policemen and a third man will be the first of six court cases for the Venezuelan-born guerrilla leader who terrorised the world in the 1970s and 1980s. [He was n]abbed in hiding and flown out of Sudan by French agents in a swift and surprise operation three years ago... Carlos, whose years on the run from police began in 1970 as a radical pro-Palestinian fighter, hit the public spotlight with the most audacious coup in his two-decade covert career – an attack on a meeting of Opec ministers in Munich in 1975... [His] six-man commando – Arm of the Arab Revolution – took 70 people hostage, including 11 government ministers... Three people were killed and the terrorists were given a ransom of \$US50 million... [Also i]n 1975, two French officers and a third man were shot dead in Paris as they tried to arrest him – the case he is about to stand trial for... In a long interview from somewhere behind the Iron Curtain 18 years ago, he confessed to these and other attacks to the Arab-language weekly *Al Watan al Arabi*. He has since denied he told the truth. His next appearance in the Western world took place in 1982, when French police arrested one of his lieutenants along with [a] German Red Army Faction member... whom he later married. Carlos sent a handwritten letter to the French interior minister... demanding their release within 30 days. A bomb exploded on a French train the day the ultimatum ran out and another killed one person and injured 63 the day [the lieutenant and Carlos' mistress] went on trial. [His] mistress was released in 1985 and joined Carlos in Damascus, where the couple the next year had a daughter. Carlos left Syria in 1991 and set up home in Sudan in 1993, living under one of his many aliases... and marrying a young Jordanian woman. But the... French interior minister[, who was] gearing up for presidential elections in 1995, had agents on his heels, and the Sudanese authorities, keen to restore the nation's international image, agreed to help with his capture... [Incidentally,] ETA separatist rebels struck with deadly force for the fourth time in a week in Spain yesterday, killing a policeman with a car bomb... in the northern Spanish city of Bilbao. The explosion was just metres from a high school of 2000 students, none of whom was hurt... [In other attacks this week, a] Supreme Court judge was gunned down outside his Madrid home, a car bomb killed a civilian airbase worker in Granada, and a Basque businessman was shot and killed. The Spanish Government had feared a surge in separatist

violence this year as ETA tried to reassert itself after a string of setbacks in 1996... ETA... has killed 800 people in its 29-year drive for... an independent Basque state encompassing parts of northern Spain and southern France.

...Fierce clashes between supporters and opponents of the... ETA erupted in Pamplona yesterday, hours after a young politician kidnapped and shot by the rebels died of his wounds. Witnesses said hundreds of angry Spanish youths attacked a small group of ETA supporters and tried to burn the headquarters of the separatist group's political wing, Herri Batasuna. Police in riot gear with their faces masked tried to break up... the... clashes... When the... anti-ETA demonstrators... tried to storm Herri Batasuna's headquarters, police opened fire with rubber bullets. They also kicked protesters and used batons to beat them back... When the clashes erupted in Pamplona, the city was packed with tens of thousands of visitors participating in the world-famous running of the bulls festival that began one week ago. The annual festival was suspended yesterday for the first time in 19 years and had not yet resumed... ETA abducted Mr Blanco on Friday and said he would be killed... unless the Government changed its policy on prisoners. But Government officials said they would never give in to blackmail.

...The public backlash against... ETA led to sporadic violence overnight in the Basque country, where 29-year-old Miguel Angel Blanco was laid to rest in his hometown of Ermua. In San Sebastian, more than 1000 anti-ETA protesters hurled eggs and rocks at offices and a bar used by the rebels' political wing... The people inside retaliated with Molotov cocktails, police said. At least two youths were injured. In Bilbao, police reportedly had to intervene to prevent the "lynching" of two ETA sympathisers... More than two million people took to the streets yesterday in Madrid, Barcelona and other regional capitals in one of the largest nationwide demonstrations in Spanish history... Millions stopped work at noon to observe 10 minutes' silence. Traffic came to a halt. Flights out of Madrid's international airport stopped... [I]n a rare television address to the nation, [Spain's King] praised the Spanish people for their "condemnation of terrorism" and urged them to "continue fighting in this endless struggle for democracy, liberty and human rights." ...The killing... [of] Mr Blanco... has marked a turning point. Basques who once whispered their opposition to ETA in private are now screaming it in public. In one telling moment, some members of the elite anti-ETA units of the Basque police defiantly stripped off the masks they normally wear to protect their identities and avoid retaliation.

...Facing unprecedented condemnation and the threat of a Government crackdown... ETA is likely to respond the way it has in the past – with more violence, experts say. The kidnap and slaying of a... popular... young Basque town councillor produced the strongest backlash against the separatist rebels in memory... Basques, once intimidated by ETA, have set fire to several of its political offices... In official circles, the latest killing was seen as a sign of ETA's weakness and desperation. A wave of bombings and killings this year had failed to win any Government concessions... The Government has not budged on one of the group's key demands – to transfer about 500 inmates scattered around the country to prisons in the Basque country... ETA's choice of a low-level, unpaid official from the ruling party showed it was not capable of penetrating the security shield surrounding more prominent figures or of staging a high-profile attack in Madrid during last week's Nato summit, analysts said... The Government in Madrid refuses to talk to ETA unless it first renounces violence. Though Basque's nationalists share ETA's goal of an independent state, they reject violence. ETA's support has waned since... dictator Francisco Franco repressed any expression of Basque nationalism... and Herri Batasuna now has about 12[%] of popular support in the Basque region... Officials estimate the hard core of ETA, those who actually participate in bombings or kidnappings, is only 50 to 100 people organised into six to eight commando cells... ETA is primarily financed by the collection of a "revolutionary tax" from Basque businessmen under threat of reprisal. It also demands ransoms in some kidnapping cases.

...It has been several years since... [one of the people who] helped to found Eta... in 1953... picked up a rifle and pulled on a balaclava in the name of Basque nationalism. In those days, he would hold up Guardia Civil convoys "with the aim of eliminating a maximum number of men," or would "go into a bank to raise funds"... Defined by the struggle to "free the Basque Country from the Spanish and French empires," his political conscience was never clouded by concerns about human life, nor by the prospect that the three million people of the Basque Country might achieve independence through a negotiated settlement. Now aged 65, he works in a respectable lawyer's office in Bilbao, but his opinions have changed little... He is scornful of the prevailing view that the recent anti-Eta demonstrations mark the end of... Eta... [The 65-year-old], who spent five years in prison, said the killing of Mr Blanco was a "major mistake," and showed that the Eta leadership was out of touch. But he believed Eta would renew its ideological fervour: "One day, the French and Spanish Governments will have to negotiate over the Basque Country, and it will be Eta that does the talking."

...Spanish security forces [a]re on alert for retaliation by Basque guerrillas after 23 leaders of the rebels' political wing were jailed for seven years... [yesterday. Incidentally, NZ's] police special tactics group[was f]ormed in 1977 as the anti-terrorist squad[. T]he group's name was changed 15 years later in recognition of its increasing deployment in other roles, including robberies and surveillance on commercial cannabis growers... "I don't think we've ever been called out to deal with a terrorist," says [one group-member]... It is a demanding job which offers the low-profile, high-firepower squads little recognition outside police circles... Police are reluctant to give much away about the elite group, which selects members from armed offenders squads around the country and consists of three sections based at Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch... [The] officer in charge of the operation support group responsible for the squads, is... tightlipped: "We don't deny their existence, but for security reasons we do not give staff numbers or details about firearms." He says the members of the group are highly trained in counter-terrorist techniques, attending five week-long courses a year and sectional training sessions once a month. The police have prime responsibility for dealing with terrorism in N[Z] but can call on the armed forces for help. Military training with the group is generally limited to exercises with the Iroquois helicopters it uses for logistical support.

...Crack police and defence squads took on a bomb-happy... doomsday cult in Wellington yesterday... Police, soldiers and other agencies descended on a remote Cook Strait farm... as part of Exercise Guardian, a three-day operation to test the country's preparedness for terrorist attacks... So far the cult's evil minions have taken over the former Wanganui computer centre at gunpoint, exploded a bomb in the carpark of a Wellington computer firm, planted another in a city high-rise and sparked a bomb search in the Porirua police college. As the forces of good closed in the cult leaders took a hostage and holed up at the Oteranga Bay substation. They threatened to cut a Cook Strait cable, plunging part of the country into darkness – not to mention killing the hostage – unless their anti-computer demands were met.

...MISSION FOR MISSION, international terrorism has become the most efficient instrument of modern warfare. It fulfils every military commander's definition of effectiveness: it damages enemies in their own countries or wherever they are found; it is low cost, using minimal armed forces; it causes almost no casualties in the field and none at all to its bases, supply lines, economy or leadership. How has terrorism become such a powerful and pervasive tool of war? The answer is plain and shameful: the passiveness, in-decision and suicidal moral attitudes of its main target – Western Democracies. In Libya are two men... accused by the U[S] of bombing Pan Am Flight 103 over Scotland on December 21, 1988 – an act of mass murder that killed 270 men, women and children... Libya's... dictator... refuses the demands from America and some of its allies to turn the two men over for trial. The U[S] takes no steps to punish the Libyan security detachments that guard these men or the armed forces that help the dictator defy the world... The idea that he is not as guilty as the other two Libyans is evil comedy... All the while Libya gets supplies from America's allies – openly as well as surreptitiously. Companies in Germany, France, Italy and Japan have supplied Libya with goods that can be used in warfare or for manufacturing weapons. They have even delivered components that could make it possible for Libya to build the world's largest underground chemical weapons facility... International terrorism is not a matter of lone bombers or isolated killer squads. It is a new form of organised guerrilla warfare with world reach. Terrorists realise that sudden deadly strikes at civilians in faraway places serve to magnify the importance and power of the guerrilla. It could happen to anybody, any place. And they no longer routinely announce the responsibility for

terrorist strikes. They have learned the un-named mass murderer's fear value... Almost all the terrorism [is] directed against the U[S]... Last year... the... director of Harvard's Centre for Science and International Affairs, wrote to me claiming it is only a matter of time "before a terrorist detonates a nuclear device in America." ...[But] America... has failed to develop a military, political or economic response to terrorism. Every time a new terrorist outrage takes place against America, the country's government looks around as if it had never taken place before. For a while bureaucrats rush about building more fences. Then, sure as the morning, they set out on pilgrimages to terrorist nations, and... sidle up to make [business] deals. Terrorists know trade is becoming the highest moral value of the West, and they count on that to protect them from retaliation. TO DEFEAT terrorism, two things are essential: "National will and the moral courage to exert it." So stated a 1988 presidential commission on terrorism that concluded: "While a law enforcement approach must always be a part of our responses to terrorism, this commission finds unacceptable the idea of holding ourselves in all cases to a criminal standard of proof before we act... The commission recommends planning, training and equipping for direct preemptive or retaliatory action against known terrorist hideouts in countries that sanction them." ...[By the way, n]ewly disclosed evidence "points to a missile" as the cause of the explosion that killed all 230 people aboard... TWA Flight 800... last year, a Californian newspaper reported yesterday... The *Press-Enterprise* said... information from FBI and National Transportation Safety Board documents and investigative sources indicated the plane might have been a victim of... "friendly fire" – a US navy weapon gone astray. The FBI repeated that it had no proof of a missile... In Washington, navy officials reiterated their denials that any missile test was conducted off eastern New York at the time of the crash.

...The FBI has announced it had found no evidence that a bomb or missile caused the 1996 crash of a TWA flight that killed 230 people... The Paris-bound jet exploded without warning... 11 minutes after take-off... 244 eyewitnesses... thought [they saw] a projectile striking the jumbo jet... "All the witnesses saw events that happened after the centre tank blew up," said [the] FBI assistant director... [He] painstakingly sketched out the course of the investigation, addressing such theories as "friendly fire" by noting no military training activities could have been responsible... The FBI announcement, which accompanied the formal closing of its criminal investigation, leaves mechanical failure as the most likely cause... But investigators have not determined precisely what mechanical catastrophe occurred... Investigators recovered [from the Atlantic Ocean 96%] of the aircraft, amounting to nearly one million pieces of debris. - 1997

U[S] investigators are joining an inquiry in Pakistan after a man was reported to have confessed to planning the twin U[S] Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania... [10 days ago], which killed 257 people... Meanwhile, U[S] officials have information "tentatively linking" [a] fundamentalist millionaire... to the bombings, the *New York Times* reported. [The millionaire], a Saudi Arabian exile living in Afghanistan, has been on the top of the list of suspects since the August 7 blasts... Witness accounts in Nairobi have identified... "....an associate" of [the millionaire]... who was inside the truck carrying the bomb that wrecked the embassy in Kenya. The U[S] officials described the suspect as "a relatively low-level member of [the millionaire's circle]." The millionaire, aged 41, comes from a family of wealthy Saudi construction tycoons. He is an outspoken anti-American... and has allegedly bankrolled many anti-US attacks. In Nairobi, the head of the intensive FBI-led effort... expressed confidence it was on the right track towards learning the terrorists' identities... Five people remained in custody in Nairobi... according to police. In Tanzania, two foreigners were still being questioned for assistance but were not among "the perpetrators of the offence," said [the local] director of criminal investigations. For the first time since the bombing, a television cameraman was allowed into the devastated embassy, recording hints of the terror those inside experienced immediately after the blast. Bloody handprints were smeared on a hallway wall, presumably those of a survivor trying to stagger to safety... Funerals were held at the weekend for victims of the Kenyan bombing. In keeping with tradition, most of the dead were buried in their villages... At one funeral, beneath a eucalyptus tree in a Nairobi cemetery, mourners sobbed at the grave of a 36-year-old woman who was working in an office tower overlooking the embassy when the explosion occurred... The U[S] Secretary of State... was due to leave yesterday for the two bomb-hit capitals... [after] shelving... holiday plans...

F[B]I agents and Kenyan police[have] raided a hotel that housed four people suspected of bombing the U.S. embassy... The FBI confirmed that... agents gathered evidence from two rooms in the... Hilltop Hotel, where[the] four... stayed between Aug. 3 and Aug. 7. One of the suspects... was detained in Pakistan and is under arrest in Nairobi. One FBI official said... the FBI remains confident [the suspect] was involved in the Nairobi bombing but added the suspect has yielded little information to investigators... "They're still picking up a lot of people," [he then] said... A Nairobi newspaper, the *Daily Nation*, reported the bomb was made in the hotel from 800 kilos of TNT. The newspaper also reported... [that the suspect] worked with five accomplices – three of whom were killed in the blast and two who remained at large... The explosion killed 247 Kenyans and 12 Americans. Meanwhile, the World Islamic Front for Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders, a group formed by [a Saudi millionaire], issued a warning to the U.S. in Al Hayat, a respected Arab-language newspaper based in London. "The coming days will guarantee... that America will face a black fate... Strikes... [against] American interests... will continue from everywhere..." Separately, the... government in Afghanistan, where [the millionaire] is based, reiterated that it wouldn't hand over the Saudi dissident even if he is proved to have been behind the bombing.

...*American Forces Hit Alleged Terrorist Bases*... [The US] President... ordered missile strikes against terrorist training camps in Afghanistan and a suspected chemical-weapons factory in Sudan, both linked to [a Saudi millionaire]... "Today, we have struck back," the president declared in announcing the attacks. In an address to the nation later yesterday, the president cited "convincing information" that [the Saudi millionaire]'s operatives were involved in the bombings two weeks ago of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania... [The] President... also said there was "compelling evidence" that [the Saudi millionaire]'s network was planning further attacks against American embassies and other facilities overseas. U.S. officials said intelligence indicated that those attacks might involve chemical weapons. From the first day of the embassy bombings, [the] President... vowed that those responsible would be tracked down and punished. But the speed with which he acted was surprising – especially before the U.S. had presented public evidence of [the Saudi millionaire]'s culpability... U.S. Navy ships fired about 50 cruise missiles against the camp... near the Pakistan border... and an additional 25 against the chemical plant... in the industrial suburbs of Sudan's capital, Khartoum. Sudanese officials said the factory produced... ['60% of Sudan's] medicines. H]igh-explosive munitions were used in the Khartoum raid, while a mixture of explosives and anti-personnel cluster-bomb warheads were fired against the terrorist base. Other U.S. attacks may be planned... U.S. officials insisted that [the Saudi millionaire] wasn't personally targeted, and a[n]... official in Afghanistan said yesterday that [the Saudi millionaire] was safe. By using cruise missiles, the U.S. eliminated the danger that any planes or pilots might be lost. Still, the decision is fraught with risks for both [the president] and the country. U.S. officials are already bracing for what could be even more furious terrorist retaliation... [from the millionaire]. Saudi Arabia, which stripped him of citizenship in 1994, has linked him to a 1995 bombing of a U.S. military training site in Riyadh. The Egyptians accuse a group linked to [the millionaire], as well as the Sudanese government, of trying to assassinate [Egypt's] President... during a 1995 visit to Ethiopia... Yesterday's strike was similar to the 1986 bombing of Libya by the [40th US Administration after]... terrorists bombed a nightclub in Berlin frequented by U.S. soldiers... At that time, the U.S. had extensive intelligence information – its own and from French and Turkish sources – that Libya had declared a kind of unconventional terrorist war on the U.S... The response seemed to work; after a period of continued tension, Libya's sponsorship of terrorism has appeared to decline. By contrast, the U.S. didn't respond when terrorists blew up the U.S. Marine barracks in Lebanon in October 1983... [The person] who then was U.S. coordinator for counterterrorism... says the U.S. didn't act because it was never sure who masterminded the attack. But that inaction was followed by a decade of hostage-taking by terrorist groups, who viewed attacks on U.S. targets as risk-free. How this latest response will play [out around the] world is unclear.

...Americans around the world are braced for possible retaliatory attacks after U[S] missile strikes on bases in Afghanistan... kill[ing] at least 15 people... and Sudan... Sudanese officials said several people were killed and 300 were missing after the Khartoum attack... And the head of state in Sudan... said his country would take the simultaneous strike on Khartoum to the U[N. An Afghan]... official said... the... attack... [was] “callous”...

A U[S] cruise missile fired at guerrilla camps in Afghanistan has been found unexploded in southwest Pakistan and a bomb-disposal team has been sent to the site... A district official said the Tomahawk cruise missile, clearly marked “Made in USA,” made a crater around 4m deep.

...The 75-odd cruise missiles fired... from U.S. Navy ships at terrorist-related targets in Afghanistan and Sudan illustrate the weapon’s importance in the U.S.’s gunboat diplomacy in the 1990s. U.S. officials were unusually tight-lipped about the raids, partly because, officials indicated, they may have to hit related targets in coming days... Officials later indicated that the missiles were launched from two Navy ships in the Red Sea and four surface ships and an attack submarine near the mouth of the Persian Gulf. The missiles... must have flown over Pakistan, but U.S. and Pakistani officials declined to discuss whether permission had been sought or granted for that overflight... Comparing yesterday’s attacks to the Gulf War... the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff... said that with this campaign against terrorists, “We’re in a different ballgame...”

...Behind[the] attacks on terrorist installations in Sudan and Afghanistan is a more ominous threat, one that has its roots in the closing years of the Cold War and which the U.S. played a role in creating. After Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan in 1979, tens of thousands of young Arab volunteers flooded into the country from all over the Middle East to fight alongside the Afghani resistance, the mujahedeen. Volunteers and draftees were armed by the CIA, paid by Saudi Arabia and trained by Pakistani intelligence services. The support given the mujahedeen and its Arab partners has long been considered a signal foreign-policy achievement, one that may have accelerated the demise of the Soviet Union after its troops were routed from Afghanistan. But in recent years, the mujahedeen’s “Arab Afghan” allies have become a source of increasing concern to U.S. and other intelligence agencies as they turned up as guns-for-hire in conflicts raging from the Middle East to the Balkans to central Asia and Africa. Intelligence analysts say the fighters[’ objective is]... to extinguish American influence in Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf and to make prohibitively high the cost of American support for Israel... And they have made clear that those Arab and Muslim governments that cooperate with Washington will pay a price... Virtually every major airport has stepped up security measures... and many worried [US] companies told executives to curtail trips abroad, as they also increased security at foreign sites and at home.

...The apparent owner of a Sudanese factory destroyed... last week... by U.S. missiles is a westernized Saudi Arabian banker with no known ties to Islamic extremists. [The owner], believed to have bought the Ashifa factory in March, has some connections with the Islamist regime in Sudan, but also with a group of Sudanese exiles opposing the regime, according to Sudanese dissidents... U.S. officials said they have hard evidence that the factory... was making a key ingredient for the VX nerve agent, but they haven’t specified the ingredient or the evidence. A U.S. official said on Friday the U.S. believes the Ashifa factory is owned by the Sudanese government or military. But Sudan said... [the] 46-year-old Sudan native... owns the pharmaceuticals factory outright. Sudan’s version is backed by the original Saudi owners, by a British former employee, and by a dissident lawyer in Khartoum... That lawyer... told the Associated Press that [the factory’s owner had] never met... the... Saudi-born dissident... targeted in the U.S. attacks, and that [his client] may seek \$50 million in compensation for the plant’s destruction. The [US] Administration’s choice of targets is at least likely to raise concern among the U.S.’ Arab allies... [The owner] is a financial adviser to Saudi Arabia’s largest bank, National Commercial Bank, which has strong ties to the royal family... The Ashifa plant, opened in 1996, was originally a 50-50 venture between a Sudanese businessman... and a Red Sea shipping company in Jidda... In an interview yesterday, [the]... owner of the Jidda company... said the plant was supplying malaria tablets for children and veterinary medicine for cows and cattle, using equipment from India, Switzerland and the U.S.

...The American designer and Italian supplier of a pharmaceuticals factory in Sudan cast further doubt on U.S. allegations that the plant, destroyed... by U.S. cruise missiles, was a well-guarded nerve-gas plant. [The Italian], whose Milan company supplies powders that generic-drug makers form into pills, said in an interview he was given the run of the plant in long visits in February and June... “I didn’t see any equipment – and there wasn’t even the space – for any production of chemicals... The availability of tools in the factory was close to zero... To imagine [it as] a plant that makes chemical weapons is absolutely incredible.” ...Sudan wants a public apology from Washington for its missile strike... New details also emerged about last Thursday’s raids[in Afghanistan. The]... vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the [US] military’s second-highest ranking officer, was sent to Pakistan to ensure that the launch of missiles from U.S. Navy ships in the Arabian Sea didn’t inadvertently start a war in the subcontinent. U.S. military planners feared that Pakistan might have misinterpreted the cruise missiles heading to Afghanistan as a surprise attack from India... Meanwhile, huge questions remain about whether the [US] administration will be able to sustain its offensive against terrorism. Among other things, the administration’s attention and energy could be distracted by... looming foreign crises with Iraq, North Korea and... tensions... mounting in the Serb province of Kosovo. [The]Serb leader... has a history of making aggressive moves when the U.S. and its allies are focused on other crises. Indeed, Serb artillery yesterday fired on ethnic Albanian villages a few miles south of the province capital of Pristina. There were reports of another attack on Albanian separatists about 20 miles west of the city.

...Senior U.S. intelligence officials said they secretly acquired in recent months a soil sample from the Sudanese factory the U.S. bombed last week that buttressed longstanding suspicions that Sudan is trying to acquire chemical weapons. The officials said that the soil sample contained O-ethylphosphonophioic acid, or EMPTA, a chemical precursor of deadly VX nerve gas. The intelligence officials added that the chemical isn’t used in any commercial chemical process, doesn’t occur naturally in the soil and isn’t a byproduct of other chemical processes... Sudanese officials say [a Saudi millionaire] had no connection with the facility... But yesterday, the intelligence officials asserted that when [the millionaire] was working in Sudan in the mid-1990s, he was working with officials at the facility on research and production of chemical weapons and dispersal of gases. They added that he funded a number of research efforts and still owns a farm in Sudan. They also... acknowledged that the plant made medicines... Separately, the chairman of a Sudanese company that produces gum arabic, one of Sudan’s biggest exports, said in a letter... forwarded to U.S. importers of gum arabic... that the company doesn’t have any ties to [the Saudi millionaire]... News reports over the weekend suggested that [the Saudi millionaire] may have a connection with companies in Sudan’s gum-arabic industry. Sudan produces 70 % to 90 % of the world’s supply of the ingredient, which is used in such products as soft drinks, candy and pharmaceuticals. Coca-Cola Co. and PepsiCo Inc., which use gum arabic mostly in citrus sodas... for emulsion purposes, said they buy the ingredient from third-party brokers. When the U.S. imposed economic sanctions on Sudan last year for supporting international terrorism, U.S. companies received one-year temporary licenses to continue importing gum arabic to meet contractual obligations.

...Doubts about the U.S. government’s rationale for its cruise-missile strike against a factory in Sudan are provoking a debate within the [US] administration about whether to release more evidence to support its claims. German magazines and a newspaper reported yesterday that Germany’s ambassador to Sudan had told his Foreign Ministry that the El Shifa Pharmaceuticals Industries Co. facility didn’t make chemical weapons... The Organization of African Unity over the weekend also backed a call by the government of Sudan... for the U[N] Security Council to launch an inquiry into a U.S. claim that... the plant made or stored chemical weapons... In addition, some foreign officials have quietly hinted that the U.S. should have hit a different Khartoum factory for which there is far better evidence of involvement in the manufacture of chemical weapons. A U.S. official dismissed that argument yesterday, saying that the other facility is located in a residential neighborhood. If nerve gas were stored there, a U.S. official said, the missile attack could have killed thousands of people.

...A bombing in South Africa killed one and injured 24 at the Planet Hollywood restaurant in Cape Town. A little-known Muslim group said the attack was prompted by U.S. missile attacks on Sudan and Afghanistan... [In related news, two] suspects in the Nairobi embassy bombing... have

been extradited to the U.S. to face trial for their roles in the deadly attack... [The] Director... of the F[B]I... said... U.S. investigations into the almost simultaneous bombings in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam... was the largest in history, measured by the 500 agents deployed overseas.

...A suspected bomber of the U[S] Embassy in Nairobi was... charged yesterday with murdering 12 US nationals among 253 people killed in the attack 20 days ago. The defendant... threw a grenade at embassy guards when the vehicle carrying the bomb drove into the Nairobi mission's parking lot seconds before the blast... according to the prosecution... The US is... [still searching for someone who] is described as an explosives expert and a "key player" in the Kenya bombing. He is wanted on 13 murder and murder conspiracy charges and one count of using weapons of mass destruction.

...The US State Department offered a record \$US5 million reward yesterday for information leading to the arrest and conviction for the US embassy bombings in Africa that killed 263 people and other attacks on Americans... Meanwhile, the U.S. as expected, proposed holding a trial for two suspected Libyan terrorists before Scottish judges in the Hague, a move [the US] Secretary of State... called "another effort to bring terrorists to justice." The administration previously had insisted that the two men, who are Libyan intelligence agents charged with planting a bomb on flight Pan Am 103, should be tried in the U.S. or Britain.

...THE U[S] and Britain have warned Libya it has 30 days to hand over two suspects in the 1988 Pan Am jet bombing... but neither country says what will happen if Tripoli refuses... Libya's UN envoy... noted the full Security Council had not issued an ultimatum. He said his country still wanted UN sanctions lifted rather than suspended in exchange for any surrender of the suspects... [Incidentally, h]undreds of people have fallen ill following a plane crash in Amsterdam... on Oct. 4, 1992, [when an]... El Al cargo jet... plowed into [a] 10-storey... apartment building... killing 43 people and igniting an inferno that covered the... district with a cloud of black smoke. Since then... residents and rescue workers... have come down with unexplained illnesses that they believe were caused by the burning plane and its cargo. In what has become a Dutch version of Gulf War syndrome, many sick people are seeking answers from a government they claim has been stonewalling them... [B]ut until there is a comprehensive examination of these sick people and a full accounting of what was aboard the plane, the link is impossible to verify... The basic facts surrounding the accident are not in dispute. The Boeing 747-200F, carrying three crew, one non-commercial passenger and 114 tons of freight, took off from Amsterdam's Schiphol airport at 6.21 p.m. en route to Tel Aviv. Seven minutes later, both starboard engines ripped loose from the wing. The pilot circled back toward the airport to attempt an emergency landing, but the crippled craft came down in the predominantly immigrant neighborhood of Bijlmer. In an October 1994 report, the Netherlands Aviation Safety Board blamed the crash on mechanical failure due to faulty engine mountings. But if the cause now seems clear, troubling questions remain. The case has all the elements of classic conspiracy theory: a missing cockpit voice recorder, incomplete cargo records, depleted uranium used as ballast, unconfirmed accounts of mysterious figures in white protective clothing combing through the wreckage and persistent rumors that all the sniffer dogs used by emergency workers were dead within six months... Last month, parliamentary investigators heard a phone conversation taped half an hour after the crash in which an El Al official told a Dutch air traffic controller that the flight had contained explosives, flammable materials and toxic gases. At the Israeli's urging, the controller promised not to make the information public. [The incumbent Dutch PM], who says he "nearly fell out of [his] chair" when he learned of the exchange, immediately moved to suspend the three controllers on duty that night... Despite their close ties to the Jewish state... [-] El Al... has long enjoyed a "special relationship" with Schiphol, its European hub, whose officials have been tolerant of cargo shipments that do not always follow standard procedures... [-] Dutch officials have sharply criticized the Israelis for withholding information. "As a friend of Israel, I am deeply disappointed," [an ex-Dutch PM]... told the investigators last week. "It is incomprehensible that they did not inform us" about the complete contents of the plane.

...An Israeli... plane which crashed in Amsterdam in 1992 was carrying chemicals that could be used to make the nerve gas Sarin. A spokesman for El Al, Israel's state airline, confirmed that the plane was carrying a shipment of... 190 litres of... dimethyl methylphosphonate... and the cargo originated at a U[S] factory... El Al told Dutch authorities about the chemical cargo at the start of the investigation into the crash, he said.

...AS THE DUTCH PARLIAMENT WAS PROBING THE 1992 El Al crash... last week[, international]... attention focused... on two terrorist bombings that left a total of 440 people dead in Scotland and Niger. In Paris, a special court found six Libyan agents, including the brother-in-law of... [Libya's ruler], guilty of murder for their role in the crash of a UTA DC-10 over the Tenere Desert on Sept. 19, 1989. In Cairo, where [Libya's ruler met the] Egyptian President... the Libyan ruler seemed to be inching toward a deal that could lead to the trial of two Libyans suspected in the explosion of Pan Am flight 103... on Dec. 21, 1988. The Paris trial was open-and-shut: the defendants were convicted in their absence after a three-day recital of the charges against them. The... [charges followed a lengthy] investigation, which established a trail from twisted shards in the sand to the highest echelons of Libya's intelligence services... The seven-judge panel took only three hours to return a guilty verdict and sentence all six to life imprisonment. Though the convictions have no immediate practical effect, diplomatic sources say Libya might be prepared to pay damages to the victims' families. In the Lockerbie case, negotiations have been underway since last summer that would send two Libyan suspects to trial in the Netherlands (under Scottish law), in exchange for a suspension of the U.N. economic sanctions imposed on Libya in 1992 for refusing to cooperate with the investigation... [The Libyan ruler] has been given an informal deadline [that ends later this week] to hand over the suspects or face a possible tightening of the costly sanctions.

...The two Libyans accused of the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jet over... Scotland are expected to be handed over this weekend amid great secrecy. [A UN] legal counsel... is due in Libya, which has pledged to surrender the two men by Tuesday but no public statements are expected until the two have arrived in the Netherlands... Barring any last-minute change of heart by Libyan leaders, [the counsel] is expected to ask a Security Council sanctions committee for authorisation to waive a UN flight ban over Libya at the last possible moment.

...Scottish police have formally charged two Libyans with the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am airliner... the first move in a complicated legal process which may take at least six months to bring the men to trial in open court... The suspects have been committed for further judicial examination, probably next week, and will be held on remand. After that, lawyers on both sides have 110 days to prepare their case, but this is expected to be extended to allow the defence more time... Both men deny the charges... Yesterday's brief appearance before the judge signalled the men's transfer from police custody to a makeshift prison... The detention facility on [a] former US military airbase... has been renamed Her Majesty's Prison, Zeist, complete with royal coat of arms. Scottish officials joked it was the smallest prison in the world. The men will be held there until the permanent facility, to be housed in the bomb-proof underground section of the base's former medical centre, has been completed... UN sanctions imposed on Libya over the past seven years were suspended hours after the men arrived in the Netherlands, but Washington said it planned to maintain its own sanctions.

...The trial of the two Libyans... began at Camp Zeist in the Netherlands this week... But those who expect that the trial... will get to the bottom of the matter are in a minority... Perhaps the only indisputable truth about Flight 103 is that at 7.02 pm on December 21, 1988, the Boeing 747 exploded 9500m above Lockerbie. All 259 passengers and crew, and 11 people in the town, were killed. Countless theories have been produced about what happened and why. Some say the explosion was the work of the Libyans, in revenge for... [the 40th US President]'s 1986 attack on Tripoli. Others say it was Iran avenging the accidental shooting down of one of its airliners by the USS Vincennes in July 19[8]8. Still others blame Palestinians trying to eliminate a CIA team preparing to rescue Western hostages from Beirut. Lawyers for the defendants say the bomb was planted by [a] convicted terrorist... who is now serving life for an attack on a Copenhagen synagogue... [The] Palestinian... member of a Syrian-based group with links to Iran, was the original suspect. But in November 1991, American and British authorities said they were indicting the two Libyans... What is certain is that if the two Libyans... were responsible for the bombing, they did not act alone. But built into the trial are factors

that may stand in the way of such inquiries. The deal under which [the]Libyan leader... agreed to hand over the suspects... included an assurance from [the UN]Secretary-General... that witnesses would not be asked about “any other operations or situations” involving Libya. Also in doubt is how open the intelligence services of various countries will be when their operatives listed as witnesses are called to give evidence. Of particular interest is whether the US had warning of a possible attack on Flight 103. Officials spent £12 million converting the 40.5ha Camp Zeist into a prison, court and a barracks for the armed Scottish police officers who guard it... It is the first time a Scottish court has convened on foreign soil, and it is the first Scottish murder case to be heard without a jury – three judges, with one reserve, are taking their place for the year the trial is expected to last... For Lockerbie, the tiny town whose name has become synonymous with the disaster, the physical scars are few but the horror remains seared in people’s memories... It is hard to find anyone in Lockerbie who was not involved in that night and its gruesome aftermath... [A s]earch and rescue dog-handler... found two teenage girls... on [a] sheep-covered hillside... just outside the town... where many of the bodies of the passengers were strewn after their 9km plunge from the sky... Still strapped into their airline seats, the[teenagers] clutched each other, fingers crossed, as they fell for 150 seconds to their deaths... The bomb that blew the jumbo jet apart sent the fuel tanks ploughing into... Sherwood Crescent... turning it into a furnace and obliterating whole families... Some bodies were never found. They were vaporised in the explosion... Looking out from the picture window of his bungalow[, a]... community councillor... watches a stoat chasing a rabbit through fields in front of his home and wonders if the trial can offer what the people of Lockerbie want – a return to normality. “We recognise that if a crime is committed, justice has to be seen. Many of the relatives will probably never get peace until there is the trial. But the tendency of the people of Lockerbie is that we’re not terribly interested in the trial. We’re always trying to put it behind us...”

...CBS television said yesterday that a senior Iranian intelligence service defector had claimed the [Lockerbie]bombing... was masterminded by Iran and not Libya. The defector, now in protective custody in Turkey, told a producer of the *60 Minutes* programme that he had documents to prove Tehran was behind the... bombing... [The defector], who coordinated all of Iran’s overseas acts of terrorism for the past decade... [then] told the CBS producer he was responsible for the Lockerbie attack... “He... said... that he proceeded by bringing in a group of Libyans into Iran and training them at a special site... for 90 days and he was very proud to also mention that the bomb was so very sophisticated that it required that kind of intensive training... If his story can be confirmed it would not only disrupt the trial of the two Libyans charged with that bombing, it could interfere with the [US] Administration’s efforts at relaxing and improving relations with Iran,” the programme[’s producer said. A]... former CIA terrorism expert... who worked on the CIA’s Lockerbie inquiry, told CBS: “He’s the only person that has tied Libya and Iran into Pan Am 103... This is the first authoritative source that I’ve ever heard... There were pieces of solid evidence that Iran was planning to shoot down an American airliner, but none of it was absolutely conclusive. And then once the forensic evidence was found on the ground which pointed at Libya the prosecutors and investigators were forced to drop the Iranian angle and look at Libya instead.” ...Iran vowed the skies would “rain blood” after the USS Vincennes shot down an Iranian Air flight... killing 290.

...Canadian police have arrested two men believed connected with the Sikh extremist movement for the 1985 bombing of an Air India airliner over the Atlantic Ocean that killed 329 people in the deadliest act of aviation sabotage. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police said... [the Sikhs] are also accused of a related 1985 bombing that killed two men at Tokyo Narita airport but was intended to destroy another Air India flight with 177 people on board... The 1985 bombings were thought to be intended, in part, to avenge the Indian Army’s 1984 storming of the Golden Temple at Amritsar – Sikhism’s holiest shrine. Authorities have said they believe both bombs were built in British Columbia and placed in luggage originally put on planes in Vancouver. The western Canadian province has a large Sikh community... Canadian police said the investigation[, which is estimated to have]... cost the Canadian Government \$US20 million... was complicated by the number of countries and witnesses that had to be interviewed... More arrests are expected, police said.

...the campaign to ban landmines... greatest champion[is] Diana, Princess of Wales. Now another royal has stepped into the breach –[the] Queen... of Jordan has vowed to do everything she can to stamp out the scourge of landmines. Her approach is said to be more intellectual than Diana’s... But if her approach is different, her style is similar to Diana’s judging by a visit she made to a mine-strewn site in the Jordan Valley this week after announcing that her country would sign the Ottawa Convention, which bans landmines... The Queen witnessed de-mining work by Jordanian military experts, who for the last five years have been clearing the area north of the Dead Sea that forms Jordan’s border with the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Officials say about 10 Jordanians are maimed by mines every year... More recently... serious research... found that there were 8000 mine victims the Government did not know about... Jordan hopes to finish mine-clearing before tourists arrive to mark the 2000th anniversary of Jesus’ birth. “If, in recent years, Jesus were to have spent his 40 days in the wilderness, or Elijah to have crossed the River Jordan, or John the Baptist to have proclaimed his message of repentance, they would have had to survive not only the ancient tests of hunger and thirst but modern threats of minefields,” said [the Queen. By the way, a]... combat boot with 13 layers of shock-absorbent aluminium and steel, designed to protect soldiers from landmine blasts, goes into mass production in Singapore next month. The Blast and Fragment Resistant (BfR) boot... is being tested by the US military. The boots cost \$US168... and a dollar will be donated to charities for landmine victims for each pair sold.

...[veterinary workers have attached] a splint to the left front leg of... a four-tonne, 38-year-old cow elephant, which mangled a foot after stepping on a landmine in the jungle in Burma... [A] vet at Lampang hospital in northern Thailand, plans an Internet appeal to help to save the elephant. [The vet] said it would cost more than a million bhat... to amputate the elephant’s... leg and replace it with an artificial one.

...Elephants weep when one of their young is killed, if they lose a friend or they are in pain. [A 38]-year-old Asian elephant... is no exception. Tears coursed down her leathery face when, her front left foot blown off by a landmine, her mahout (the traditional term for a logging elephant’s owner, handler and keeper) led her from the jungles of war-torn Burma into Thailand. The agonising 10km trek took three days. She arrived barely able to walk and still losing blood, and was trucked to Thailand’s elephant hospital... Unique in Thailand, The Elephant Hospital offers help to the ill and injured of the country’s 4700 elephant population. [However, u]ntil Motala hobbled in... the hospital had not dealt with the shattered bones and mangled horror of a landmine injury... Two-thirds of the flesh on Motala’s foreleg had been shredded and 10 bones completely destroyed... [A] team of... veterinarians... anaesthetists and nurses cleaned the horrific wound then amputated the mangled flesh where the elephant’s foot had once been. Although Motala had been given enough anaesthetic to floor 70 humans, she started to come around before the three-and-a-half-hour operation was completed. For three days it was touch and go whether she would survive. Motala bled profusely each time she tried to stand. Eventually the wound began to heal and... a leg cast of stainless steel and plastic was fitted, enabling her to distribute her weight more evenly and relieving pressure on her swollen right foreleg. Once the stump is fully healed, Motala will be fitted with an artificial foot that will allow her to move freely without pain. But she won’t be moving far. The Elephant Hospital has offered her a permanent home in the bush and forest nearby.

The Princess of Wales... [was d]ubbed the “princess of peace” this week after she met crippled casualties of Angola’s 20-year war[. S]he condemned the “horrific injuries” and urged countries to adopt an international ban on the “hideous weapons.” But... her comments... upset some British ministers who feared it could interfere with Government policy... “Britain is one of the goodies on landmines and we are helping to draw up a sensible worldwide compromise package. We do not need a loose cannon like her,” an un-named minister told *The Times* newspaper. Diana’s visit on behalf of the Red Cross to highlight the problems of the landmines in Angola, which still has nine million mines and the world’s highest rate of

amputees, had been sanctioned by the Government... Though Diana is little known in Angola... her importance was obvious to all who saw the hordes of journalists following her.

...The Princess of Wales said yesterday she was only trying to help when she called for a worldwide ban on landmines during her visit to Angola, a plea which unleashed a political storm back home... The Princess, on a four-day visit to one of the world's most heavily mined countries in support of a British Red Cross campaign to ban anti-personnel mines, later visited deminers at work in a minefield and detonated a live mine. In Britain, a prominent member of... [the PM]'s Conservative Party rounded on the... Prince[ss]... for being "very uninformed." "The parallel of nuclear weapons comes to mind... This is an important, sophisticated argument. It doesn't help simply to point at the amputees and say how terrible it is," said [the MP], who is on Parliament's defence committee. Her call for an international ban on the "hideous weapons" has caused a stir because Conservatives believe it could be read as endorsement of the policy of the opposition Labour Party, clear favourite to win Britain's forth-coming election. The Government backs a ban on most anti-personnel landmines but says it must be international to be effective. In contrast... Labour [wants] the Government to declare a unilateral ban and to destroy all its existing stocks.

...Having the Princess of Wales' name attached to a cause may be of debatable value: it rather conjures up images of friction, doesn't it? But campaigners against land-mines would wish that supporters of the weapons production, sale and use followed in her recent footsteps. The Red Cross has dabbled more in politics than is its wont in taking the Princess to Angola to publicise the land-mine issue. Tory reaction shows politics is what it's all about... American defence and political communities are resisting Canadian efforts to fast-track moves to ban land-mine production, export, use and stockpiling. Ottawa wants an agreement that, signed by sufficient countries, would, as one advocate put it, establish a moral authority. Washington's preference is a slow-track trip through the U[N] Conference on Disarmament, with an eventual deal acceptable to all states. Well, we have already seen where that idea leads. Last May, Governments meeting in Geneva agreed to a revision of the international protocol that managed somehow to differentiate between good and bad land-mines. The protocol provides examples of the language Governments use to defend the indefensible. Article 3, number 3: "It is prohibited in all circumstances to use any mine, booby-trap or other device which is designed or of a nature to cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering." So the mine must know only to take off a little toe, not a whole leg? ...Try this one. Same article, number 8: "The indiscriminate use of weapons to which this Article applies is prohibited." This is a mine, for goodness sake. It sits waiting to be triggered. It does not discriminate. As in so many recent international policy shifts, the U[S] holds the key. Where will it deploy its weight? Some Pentagon minds subscribe to the military strategy that mines are crucial in "channelling" enemy troops and are an irreplaceable early warning against enemy approaches. They seem to be living in a different world from that American troops have served in recently. The Pentagon argument becomes even thinner when the orchestrator of the Gulf War land operation... joins other combat commanders in assessing that mines were not essential in Iraq and that American forces can be protected by other weapons and tactics. In fact, the Desert Storm was an aberration... The modern shift towards civil conflict means intervening forces are deployed among civilians, automatically rendering mines strategically ineffective. Ironically, American troops serving overseas are more likely to be at risk from mines exported by American manufacturers than they are to be protected by deploying their own.

...[to protect its own personnel from its own land mines, the US spent a billion dollars developing the Smart mine – a self-arming land mine that can be dropped from an exploded missile'. Incidentally, c]iting statistics compiled from a variety of sources, [a researcher has estimated there are]... 120 million land mines scattered across 71 countries... [The researcher also said 70%] of war casualties since... W[W2] have been civilian. In the 1990s, the figure has increased to 90[%]. In 1995, Unicef released a report that said 'in WW1, civilians accounted for only 14% of those killed. They made up 67% in WW2. Between 1945 and 1992, the world saw 149 major conflicts in which some 23 million people lost their lives and more than a million children were orphaned, while 10 million children have been left with psychological scars which take years to heal. "It is the singular characteristic of warfare in our time that children suffer most." War has also claimed the lives of two million children in the past 10 years and left four to five million others crippled for life. Furthermore, there has been a "frightening escalation" in the use of children as soldiers. Boys and girls aged less than 16 had taken part in conflicts in 25 countries, notably Cambodia and Liberia. "In 1988 alone, they numbered as many as 200,000," the report estimated. It pointed out that child soldiers were "easier to intimidate" and "in long-drawn-out conflicts, children became a valued resource" due to the fact that as they grew up they continued fighting because they had known no other life.' Then there are the millions of]... mines, waiting for the innocent footfall of a child collecting firewood.

...a 6-year-old Afghan boy... [walking] with the aid of a leg support at the Red Cross Orthopaedic Centre in... northern Afghanistan... is an exception... as his leg is affected by disease rather than a mine explosion... [M]ore than 5000 war victims have been treated and fitted with artificial limbs... at the centre... since 1991... Over 10 million landmines lie waiting in the... countryside and about 20 to 25 Afghans are maimed every day.

...[the boy says he] was 14 years old when a mine tore his right leg off. "I was working in our fields and I went to get some water from the stream that was used by the whole village..." His story is not rare... Some 400,000 Afghans have been killed or maimed by mines... Afghans are paying the price for living in one of the world's most heavily mined countries... [R]ecent estimates are that 80[%] of Afghanistan's population are dependent on the land for their income... "Afghanistan has been totally destroyed economically due to land-mines and unexploded ordnance. The land cannot be utilised in the economy, and land is very important in Afghanistan." ...But it will take years and millions of dollars to clear Afghanistan of the mines that have already been laid, not to mention the problems posed by the continuing... civil war... "According to our survey, about 500 sq km are affected... We can clear 25-28 square kilometres a year," said... the U[N]. "There are over 150 square kilometres... that directly affect the lives of people, stopping them cultivating their fields or moving back into their homes." Each mine has to be detected, uncovered and destroyed manually. A two-man team – one with a metal detector and one with a mine probe – can clear about 10 sq m a day. Each piece of metal that sets off the detector has to be treated as if it were a mine and carefully excavated with the probe... On the once-fiercely contested frontlines a team may have to remove hundreds of pieces of shrapnel for every mine found. The intense concentration required means that the teams can only work part of the day... There is on average one accident a week among the 4000 mine clearers in Afghanistan. Two have been killed this year. For an impoverished and war-scarred country such as Afghanistan the costs of clearing mines are prohibitive... [The UN] programme in Afghanistan was budgeted to cost some \$NZ33.41 million in 1997, but is running desperately short of money... [and] the programme would have to be cut back unless more funds were found... Globally, the problem is huge. "It is estimated that... [to clear the] 100 million land-mines in the world... will cost \$33 billion. If you spent this sort of money on the poor you could provide most of their requirements in terms of hospitals, schools, etc," said... [the] regional manager of U[N] mine-clearing operations... The International Committee of the Red Cross says that mines violate human rights. "Mines can be described as fighters that never miss, strike blindly, do not carry weapons openly, and go on killing long after hostilities are ended... In short, mines are the greatest violators of international humanitarian law, and laying them is a monstrous form of terrorism."

...campaigners for a worldwide ban on landmines said tens of thousands of landmines had been planted in Zaire, mostly by mercenaries... [The] head of... London-based Human Rights Watch, said: "The minefields are killing people... there are injuries as we talk. They were not marked. There were no warnings to local people. Basically the pattern of minefields around Kisangani is completely against all international norms and conventions..." Although it was too early to discuss clearing of landmines in Zaire, [he] said: "International aid will have to be used... There will need to be rapid deployment patrols when there are reports of landmines to clear." It costs on average \$US2.50... to make a landmine and around \$1000 to clear one... Zaire had been until 1995 one of the few countries in Africa free of landmines... Southern Africa is the world's most heavily-mined region with an estimated 20 million mines, of which just 400,000 have been removed since serious mine clearing began in 1991... Mines are the subject of a conference in Johannesburg... this week... Anti-landmine campaigners from 20 countries are... attending... Only South Africa and

Mozambique have officially banned anti-personnel mines, although many governments in the region have called for a total ban... [In related news, a NZ] inventor who built a mine detector out of a microwave in a university laboratory hopes his creation will help to clear the world of lethal plastic landmines... [The] engineering lecturer at Auckland University, was yesterday given a \$14,000 cheque from World Vision International... to continue with his invention. He is the first N[Z]er to be awarded such a grant... [The] marketing manager for World Vision in N[Z], said he had just returned from Cambodia where [‘it is estimated that 25% of the world’s landmine victim cases currently occur’ and] squads of people took about three months to clear an acre of mines with sticks. “This device is a real example of Kiwi ingenuity... It’s great to be supporting a home-made project like this which could help millions of people.” ...[the] device... heats water molecules in the ground. The landmine stays cool – like a plastic bowl in a microwave – and the cold spot is found using an infra-red detector... It could be a couple of years before his invention is tested in a minefield.

...As... an Auckland[er] continues the development of his invention to detect plastic landmines that are already in place, the battle to ban the production and use of the weapon has won some unlikely supporters... 50 members of the [US] Senate, a majority, have signalled that they are prepared to support legislation to ban the use of anti-personnel mines by American troops. That is strong stuff given the Senate majority’s being held by a party more given to supporting the military... However... there may be some self-interest... The *New York Times* in an editorial suggests mines are a low-cost way for less-sophisticated armies to endanger and kill American troops... It would be nice if American politicians showed more concern for the effect of the weapon on innocents the world over rather than on their own fighting forces... [After] delegates settled on a mines protocol to the Convention on Inhumane Weapons last year... the... call [went] out to all nations to meet in Ottawa in December[this year] to sign a comprehensive international treaty... The message to Washington is clear: you may be the big boy on the block but put all the little boys together and we outnumber you. And on this moral high ground, we embarrass you... Well, the message is not getting through to... the American President[– even though, ironically, he became ‘the first leader to call for a landmine ban back in 1994’]. Early this year, in the face of pressure... to... support [the] Canadian initiative to fast-track a comprehensive landmine ban, [the US President] stayed with the slow-train route through the U[N] Conference on Disarmament... And, on this one, the President is storing up points with the military... Despite scepticism from those who have been there (such as [the USs’ military leader during the] Gulf War...) about the effectiveness of mines for American strategy, the Pentagon is continuing its support for the so-called smart mine option... [The] Canadian initiative... is not about to convince such holdouts as Russia and China[either,] but... a... global ban by a majority of the world’s states is a start... Zaire has provided a reminder that mines continue to be deployed. [Unfortunately, estimates] that worldwide mines kill 800 people and maim 1200 every month... from wars long past, might suggest that the horse has bolted.

...The P[M] of Finland yesterday spelled out his country’s clear reservations to a unilateral ban on land-mines, which play a significant role in defence for Russia’s... neighbour. “Why aren’t they proposing a ban on Kalashnikovs? They are killing more people – have killed more people,”...

More than 100 countries are meeting[in Oslo] today to begin drafting a treaty for a total and immediate ban on anti-personnel mines, which is due to be signed in Ottawa in December... It is estimated that more than 110 million anti-personnel mines[– ‘designed to protect anti-tank mines’ –] are at present deployed in 62 countries. A similar number are stocked by producing countries. The main producers are China, Italy, Russia and the U[S]. Britain, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland also manufacture the weapons, as do Chile, India, Pakistan and South Africa. Anti-personnel mines kill or maim some 26,000 people a year – in other words, one person every 20 minutes... [– about 80%] of them civilians... The U[S] wants self-destroying “smart mines,” which destroy themselves after a pre-set period, to be excluded from the negotiations. Washington[also] said last month it would support the Canadian initiative... provided the Korean peninsula was excluded.

...the American public want the U[S] to be seen to be against mines... [and, when] the Vietnamese Veterans of America [published] a report based on information from U[S] Army archives that Americans in the Korean War were in more danger from their own mines than they were from the enemy’s, they [blew] another hole in the mine defence... So the [President’s] Administration has done an about face... [by announcing] that the U[S] would take part in the Ottawa talks... Of course, nothing is ever simple. There are conditions... So, in a world of contrariness, many who have been trying to press the President into joining the Ottawa initiative now suggest that... its presence [means] the White House wants to be on the inside to weaken the final treaty. They might have a point. As the State Department spokesman who announced the conditions the U[S] would insist on explained: “The problem isn’t American land-mines. The problem is land-mines in other countries.” Sounds like the private who, in self-righteous indignation, insisted that he wasn’t out of step, all the others in the squad were.

...The U[S] fails... to get enough support at an international conference in Oslo for a compromise solution it put forward on outlawing land-mines.

...Japan and Russia have joined the U[S] in criticising the draft of a treaty to ban land-mines... However, Japan has indicated that it will sign the treaty anyway... Several other major countries, including... China, India, Pakistan and Israel, have had no formal part in the so-called Ottawa process... Russia, which attended the[Oslo] conference as an observer, said the convention could not be considered universal because it had been worked out without the participation of states holding nearly two-thirds of the world’s population. But... [the] president of the Oslo conference, said... “Who are these two thirds? We are talking China, Russia and the United States... that population owns nuclear weapons, can we then say we must all own nuclear weapons? I am sure no child tramples on a mine in New York, but I am sure that hundreds of women in Mozambique, Angola and in the Congo, trample on these mines. Those are the lives we need to protect, not the lives that are already protected.”

...As much as 30[%] of land cleared of mines by international organisations in Cambodia has been seized by military strongmen, according to Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) sources. Donors provide between \$US20[million] and \$US30 million... each year for de-mining in Cambodia on condition that land cleared of mines be handed over for the resettlement of tens of thousands of people forced from their property by years of civil war... “[On one occasion] land was seized by a senior military officer who then sold it to the highest bidder,” Britain’s ambassador... said... “We can spend anything up to \$3 a square metre to clear land of mines and it is certainly not the intention of donors to spend money so that generals can become richer,” another foreign de-miner said...

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines and its coordinator... were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize yesterday... After six years of quietly working towards a ban on anti-personnel mines, the U[S]-based campaign[burst into the public’s consciousness with... Diana, Princess of Wales, the cause’s most visible supporter... The... Princess... drew attention to the... effect... of land-mines... on a visit to Angola... [and] criticism in London for the implied endorsement of a policy contrary to that pursued by the... British Government... The prize, worth 7.5 million Swedish kronor (\$[NZ]1.57 million), is to be divided equally between [the coordinator] and the campaign... The Norwegian Nobel Committee... said in its citation that it hoped the prize would push the treaty process forward.

...A[US] said yesterday it would sign a... treaty outlawing anti-personnel landmines and would destroy its own stockpile of 60,000 mines... Russia is[also] ready to join[the] ban... after finding a substitute for anti-personnel mines it uses to guard nuclear and other military installations, the Foreign Ministry said last night.

...about 120 nations yesterday began signing an ambitious treaty intended to rid the world of anti-personnel landmines... Canada was to be the first nation to sign, a tribute to its role in rallying other nations to team up with non-governmental agencies in support of a ban. Many leading activists were on hand for the ceremony, including several who lost legs in landmine blasts. The treaty will come into effect six months after 40 of the signatory nations ratify it... The treaty commits countries not to make, use, stockpile or transfer mines, and also commits those with mines in the ground to remove them within 10 years if possible, with international assistance if needed... Canada’s Foreign Minister... told the conference that in 36 hours there were[aid] pledges of \$US500 million... But... [at current clearance rates it] will take 1100 years [to complete the job...]

The US] President... yesterday refused to sign a treaty banning landmines, but he ordered the Pentagon to develop alternatives that would make the devices obsolete by 2006... [Incidentally, South Africa's] President... has branded the U[S] Government dull and arrogant for criticising his planned visit to Libya.

...South Africa's] President... has defended his visits to Libya and lashed out at whites who criticised his foreign policy... "Why should anyone question my relationship with [Libya's leader]? He is our friend because he helped us when many people who are now trying to lecture to us not to go there were helping the apartheid government of this country," he said... in a broadcast by the CNN television network... Asked whether he thought... the leader of... Libya... was "an honourable man," [the President] praised his record during 27 years in power in raising the living standards of the Libyan people... [The President] was criticised mainly by the U[S]... Earlier in the day, a spokesman for... South Africa's Foreign Affairs department denied... that a planned sale of \$US640 million... in arms to Syria had been approved. A tender for the controversial proposed deal... would only likely be issued between 1999 and 2000, if at all, the [spokesperson said, before adding]... that in any case, before such a sale could take place, South Africa's cabinet and the National Conventional Arms Control Committee... must approve it... The South African arms firm had been given only provisional approval to market its products in Syria... [but] South Africa was "a sovereign country and would go ahead with the sale if it benefited South Africa." ...[a US] State Department spokesman... described the proposed sale as "a very bad idea," hinting that the U[S] could suspend its aid programme to South Africa if it went ahead.

...The U[S] has threatened to cut aid to South Africa if Pretoria follows through with reported plans to sell arms to Syria... South Africa, a major U[S] aid recipient, is due to receive \$US120 million in 1996-97... "We are deeply concerned about these reports. It would be extremely serious if these sales actually occurred," said [a] State Department spokesman... "both the foreign operations and foreign assistance acts... prohibit certain forms of U[S] assistance to governments which supply lethal equipment to Syria or any other countries listed by the U[S] as state sponsors of terrorism. We would certainly analyse any potential sales in the context of our laws..." Officials in Johannesburg said on Sunday that South Africa was considering selling weapons systems, including tank firing systems, worth three billion rand... [or] \$US641 million... to Syria... [The South African President], angrily rejecting U[S] warnings... said yesterday that South Africa would deal with anyone it wanted to, regardless of outside pressure. "We will conclude agreements with any country whether they are popular in the West or not... The enemies of countries in the West are not our enemies... We will never allow any support or assistance from any country, no matter how powerful it is, to dictate our foreign policy, nor allow any country to violate our sovereignty and undermine our national pride;"... It would be immoral to abandon countries that supported him in the anti-apartheid fight "on the advice of countries that were friends of the apartheid regime." South Africa, like others, would sell weapons to countries even if they did not share the same values. "The only provision we make is that our arms should not be used to disturb the peace in any part of the world," he added... He said South Africa's smaller friends used discreet diplomatic channels to sort out differences: "They don't rush to the mountain tops and start dictating to other countries." ...The [officials] had said any deal for what [is] termed "software" was not likely to be concluded before 1999, and that South Africa was not alone – three European countries were also bidding for the business... Military analysts said any major Nato power had the technology to produce the aiming equipment, which reportedly would make tank firing many times more accurate – something that has raised the fears in Syria's arch-foe and neighbour, Israel.

...*The deal: we sell you the guns, then you shoot us...* In the Middle East arms bazaar, billion-dollar deals are commonplace – and so is treachery. The weapons of war you sell to friends today may be aimed at you by your enemies tomorrow. Take a recent incident in Lebanon. On October 18, an Iranian-backed Hizbollah guerrilla crept up to a Merkava battle tank in Israeli-occupied southern Lebanon. Billed as virtually indestructible, the Merkava is the pride of Israel's arms industry. But as his partner videotaped, the guerrilla steadied a lightweight anti-tank missile on his shoulder and blew off the turret, killing the driver. The tape is being broadcast across the region – an embarrassment to the Israelis, who are trying to sell 2000 tanks to Turkey as part of a \$NZ50 billion military upgrade. A Lebanese intelligence source says... the missile... was among the weaponry that the U[S] and Israel supplied to Tehran in the early 1980s. Arms merchants call this the "boomerang effect." The U[S] and Israel are just starting to grapple with its implication: there is so much high-powered military hardware out there these days that it is impossible to keep track of it all. With the end of the Cold War, the sense of urgency in controlling arms sales has diminished, and the logic of the free market has overtaken the arms trade along with everything else... The U[S], responsible for about 64[%] of the global weapons trade, has led the way... [and the] Middle East is just too lucrative a market to pass up. According to London's International Institute for Strategic Studies, sales to the region accounted for \$25 billion of the \$66 billion global arms trade last year. Middle East sales could top \$100 billion by the end of the century... Now South Africa's arms manufacturers appear to be biting the hands that once fed them. During the apartheid era, although the U[N] prohibited arms sales to Pretoria, Israel helped the South Africans develop everything from bullets to jet fighters... Now Pretoria intends to become a major arms exporter, especially in the Middle East. [South Africa's] President... personally pushed a \$2.6 billion arms-for-oil deal in Saudi Arabia last month. Another \$1500 million deal with Kuwait is in the pipeline. It was only after American and Israeli pressure that Pretoria gave up plans to upgrade Syria's tanks... As long as there are buyers, the trade will grow ever more deadly. According to the Israeli magazine *the Jerusalem Report*, Iran is trying to buy Pretoria's atomic expertise... [In related news, a] long-sought deal providing Russia with American help to convert... Russia's three remaining... nuclear weapons fuel plants to... production of uranium for civilian power plants... has been concluded. Besides putting an end to plutonium-producing reactors in Russia, the agreement places a cap on U[S] and Russian stockpiles of nuclear weapons-grade plutonium... It also would prohibit Russia from using recently produced plutonium in nuclear weapons... Clinching the conversion deal has been a Washington priority since June 1994, when the two sides signed an agreement to shut down the reactors... The Russians never allowed that accord to take effect because there was no alternative for providing heat and electricity to[the Siberian regions of] Seversk and... Zheleznogorsk... After feasibility studies and more talks, the sides agreed on a joint plan... with... [an estimated cost to] Washington... of... \$US150 million...

THE PENTAGON, IT TURNS OUT, IS A building so well defended that even urgent messages that the cold war is over have failed to breach its barricades. At a time when budget zealots are attacking everything from Medicare to corporate wealth to whole Cabinet departments, the U.S. military has presented Congress with a plan to spend as much on new warplanes over the next decade as it did during the huge defence buildup of the 1980s. If Congress decides, as a growing number of experts have, that the proposal to spend a grand total of \$415 billion over the next 35 years is unjustified, the task of balancing the federal budget could suddenly become a lot easier. The shopping list is right out of the cold war. The Air Force wants 438 F-22 fighters at \$160 million apiece. The Navy plans to buy 1,000 advanced F-18Es. The Army is counting on 1,292 Comanche helicopters. And the services together want 2,978 more Joint Strike Fighters. That's 5,708 planes; this mere slice of Pentagon spending will cost as much as all federal environmental programs for the next 17 years. To make their case, the generals and admirals needed to do some creative salesmanship while avoiding some basic questions, like Will they work? Are they worth it? Do we need them? And so it was that... [the] Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has been presenting lawmakers with charts showing the deployment of warplanes around the world and the threat they present to American security. What [the Vice Chairman] doesn't point out is that this ominous global collection of nearly 6,000 advanced warplanes includes those of Britain, France, [and] Canada... Nor does he mention that many of the warplanes on his chart rolled off U.S. assembly lines... Critics... point to the luxuriously indiscriminate quality of the shopping list. The... exception to these profligate rules is the Marines. In most cases, they're modifying existing aircraft with new engines and electronics, saving taxpayers gobs of money. Congress may also want to take a lesson from U.S. allies who are stretching their defence dollars. In Europe four nations recently began cracking open 300 F-16 jet fighters like eggs and stuffing them with new electronic components that turn them into the hottest fighters in the sky. At the same time, the U.S. Air Force has sent

nearly 400 of those very same \$20 million planes to its Arizona junkyard, never to fly again... Many defence experts contend the Pentagon is suffering from a cold war hangover. The General Accounting Office, the Congressional Budget Office and the private Centre for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments have suggested dramatically paring back – and in some cases, killing – the programs. They point out that the Pentagon conceived the F-22, its superstealthy fighter, more than a decade ago to counter two 21st century Soviet warplanes then on the drawing boards. But U.S. officials concede that the Russians have scrapped one of the planes, and that only a few of the second are likely to be built.

...The U[S] has bought 21 advanced Russian-made MiG-29C warplanes from the Republic of Moldova and brought them back to America to keep them away from “rogue states, including Iran.” The U[S] Defence Secretary... said... that Washington had agreed not to reveal the price tag of the high-performance jets, among the world’s most advanced... fighters – capable of launching nuclear arms... He called the agreement “another successful milestone” in the U[S]’s Cooperative Threat Reduction Programme with a number of former Soviet states... He referred specifically to the de-nuclearisation of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine, all of which earlier shipped their nuclear warheads back to Russia. He also noted that Kazakhstan had previously agreed to the removal of some 600kg of highly enriched uranium to the U[S] for safe storage away from terrorists or would-be nuclear states[. Incidentally, ‘a US Marine pilot was acquitted yesterday of the deaths of 20 people killed when his jet sheared ski-lift cables during a low-altitude training mission through the Italian Alps. An 8-man jury found the pilot not guilty of involuntary manslaughter, destruction of property and dereliction of duty. The jury rejected allegations he was “flat-hatting” – flying recklessly low and fast – when his jet caused a gondola to plummet about 109m to the ground. Everyone aboard was killed. Based in Aviano to fly Nato support missions over Bosnia, Marine Prowler pilots were under standing orders to maintain a safe speed and a 610m altitude on low-level flights over ski villages in the alps. However, defence lawyers said the 6.4km cable system didn’t appear on military maps, and the defendant wouldn’t have risked a pending transfer to fighter-pilot school by flying recklessly. The pilot, who could’ve been sentenced to up to 200 years in prison if convicted, faces a separate trial on conspiracy and obstruction of justice charges for allegedly hiding a videotape shot during the early legs of the flight (manslaughter charges were dismissed against his navigator for destroying the videotape – but the navigator was dismissed from the military). The verdict has sparked outrage in Italy and renewed calls to end foreign military flights over the country’]...

RAF pilots have been flying a dog-leg round Switzerland en route to Bosnia for more than a year – because someone forgot to tell the Ministry of Defence that the Swiss had lifted its ban on military planes... and ammunition over its airspace. Swiss neutrality meant that even one soldier wearing one bullet in his belt was banned from over-flying the country... Hercules C-130 transport aircraft have been adding about 30 minutes extra flying time to their route at a cool fuel-cost of \$250 per minute because of the oversight. And the Labour MP who uncovered the error believes the extra costs incurred could have amounted to \$3.6 million in fuel alone. Now... the hunt [i]s on to find out whether it was a British official who failed to pass on the critical information... A Ministry of Defence spokesman said: “You will probably find the number of flights is minute.” An RAF source said it was impossible to estimate the number of flights since December 1995... [By the way, w]e should use the momentary lull in Bosnia... to resolve what it is that seems to have caught a grip on the post-Cold War world and delivered it a degree of ethnic strife and population displacement not seen since the nazis turned Europe on its head... As wars have... become more blood-curdling, more no-holds-barred, particularly when it comes to women and children, [they] have produced proportionately more refugees than previous eras of conflict... – almost double what it was in the 1960s – [and the trend] shows no immediate signs of diminishing... One reason, not to be welcomed, but often overlooked, why Europe, ex-Yugoslavia exempted, is now so relatively stable is that the redrawing of Europe’s borders after 1945 and the subsequent movement of millions of people (far greater numbers than today’s grand total of refugees) created more homogeneous countries than had ever existed in Central and Eastern Europe. This should remind us not only how few years have passed since the West made refugee mayhem but also that nation state creation has never been straightforward... But... why are there so many more refugees in the last 20 years? The only argument that bears scrutiny is the one that fingers the proliferation of modern arms... [A]utomatic rifles, nail bombs and anti-personnel mines so easily available these days do ratchet up the scale of conflicts. The rising and all too rarely checked power of arms merchants with their close ties to members of the Western, Russian and Third World political class added to the existence of post-Cold War surpluses from the great powers, in my opinion, are the single most identifiable culprits... [F]or those who seek a simple answer to the rise of refuge flows... [the m]ost sensible... one... is... to restrict arms trafficking... - 1997

After millions of soldiers had been cut down by killing machines during... W[W1], perhaps the most hated people in the world were the arms dealers. Merchants of death, they were called... For the first time in history, armies of common men died in a four-year maelstrom of madness. No one has fully understood why but afterwards common people knew that those who made the killing machines were the only ones to profit. And they despised them as a result... [The arms dealers] became shadowy figures beyond the pale of decent society. How things have changed. The other day I read that the largest single category of goods exported by Russia, the one that sustains its ailing economy, is armaments. The U[S], Britain and France among others export arms worth billions every year. In the days of the Cold War, the rationale was that you armed those countries that would confront communism, no matter how otherwise amoral their Government might be. It was a sad, threadbare argument then but even that has gone. Manufacturing corporations within these developed nations – with the complicity, even the encouragement, of their Governments – sustain [t]he ragged, nihilistic armies rampaging through Africa; and enable dictators and fanatics to maintain their bands of righteous killers; enable casually evil men like [the Serbian President] to arm their psychopaths with the latest of technology. The British have made the oppression of the East Timorese especially lethal with their guns... Extraordinary, isn’t it, that people tut-tut at the lack of gun control in the U[S] when some kids pick up on the violence of our culture and use guns for the job they were designed for... But no one is horrified that their fathers and mothers – suits around the boardroom table – make and market sophisticated weapons of mass destruction for anyone who wants them. The business is so huge that curtailing the activities of these latter-day corporate merchants of death would affect the standard of living in developed countries. The stock exchange would be depressed and export receipts would fall. Family men would have their incomes reduced if arms exports were stopped to bring peace... Princess Diana – a simple woman with insufficient political acumen to know it was impossible to attack the power of the multinational armaments corporations – caught them momentarily off guard over land-mines. She had somehow gathered a constituency of millions of ordinary people who supported her. The British Government was aghast at what it would do to export earnings... When the last shot is fired in the Balkans, the Serbs... the Kosovans... the Macedonians, the Albanians[and] the Montenegrins will have lost... Only the armaments corporations will have won. Billions of dollars worth of bombs, shells and bullets will have been expended and tested, and will be developed and replaced. The corporations will make record profits... Whacko for the free market, for completely free trade. In the aftermath of... W[W1], the indignation of millions of simple people seemed enough. Nowadays, cynicism and a sense of political impotence are so pervasive, decent people have lost even the ability to identify moral causes.

...Canadian sailors have dramatically seized control of the U[S]-owned ship GTS Katie, ending a standoff in which hundreds of millions of dollars of Canadian military equipment had effectively been held hostage. The armed sailors were dropped from a helicopter by cable on to the deck to take over the vessel in the North Atlantic, the commander of the naval operation reported. There were no injuries to the sailors or the crew of the cargo ship, which had been embroiled in a dispute between its owner and the Canadian firm that chartered the vessel... [In related news, the US] is the world’s largest supplier of weapons, providing \$US7.1 billion... worth... – up from \$US5.7b the year before... [-] even though demand has been

slumping worldwide, according to a US congressional study... Germany ranked second, with \$US5.5b in new sales, and France third, with \$US3b. The value of all new arms sales worldwide was \$US23b...

The international arms trade... makes strange bedfellows... No one is an outcast at the global weapons bazaar. Countries with little in common, or even on opposing sides of alliances, come together in the arms trade, whether they do so openly, under the table, or – as in the case of an intercepted missile shipment from North Korea to Yemen – hidden amid a cargo of cement. With all but the most advanced weapons, if you have the cash, you can get what you want, say arms experts. And their only surprise when the transaction between North Korea and Yemen was uncovered was that the U[S –] ...the largest arms merchant by far, delivering almost half the weapons bought on the world market... [–] did something to stop it.

Broke, so sell some fighters... Did [the US President's] need for quick cash influence his decision to sell nine F-16 jets to Indonesia's dictatorial regime? The honest answer is "yes,"... The driving force in this sale is the need of [the]President... to unload those warplanes to Jakarta for about \$200 million to replenish U[S] Government coffers... The Indonesian deal would have sailed through uncontested had the Lippo scandal not surfaced and the Nobel prize committee not decided to award its 1996 peace prize to human rights activists in East Timor. The Republicans are demanding an investigation... A public inquiry after the election might break the conspiracy of silence that both parties observe about the weakening of government and of American leadership abroad because of their misdirected budget priorities and fiscal timidity... In a speech he gave last Tuesday on expanding Nato into Central Europe, the President barely touched on what it will cost the U[S], an issue that will dominate Senate hearings and headlines next year. [The President] avoided any estimates of the costs, which a recent... study says could run between \$US14 billion... and \$US110 billion for the alliance over 10 years. The costs of cost-cutting are already apparent in Iraq, where the Administration's failure to come up with \$US2 million for ceasefire monitors contributed significantly to the eruption of civil war between the Kurds. Embarrassed by that fighting, the State Department is now belatedly trying to get the Kurds to agree to a new offer of ceasefire monitors. If the Kurds agree, the price is going to be much higher. In any event, the Administration has already spent 20 times the \$2 million the peacekeeping proposal would have cost on ineffectual missile attacks on Iraq... America cannot conduct an effective foreign policy on a misshaped shoe-string. The Administration and the Congress that take office in January must honestly examine the budget priorities and change those that make it impossible for the U[S] to exercise leadership except by bombing before breakfast... or by selling warplanes to one unsavory regime instead of another... The F-16s that the Administration plans to deliver to Indonesia beginning in 1997 were originally ordered and paid for by Pakistan in 1989. Delivery of the high-performance warplanes was halted when Pakistan's nuclear-weapon development programme became unmistakable.

...The Ukraine's sale of more than 300 tanks to Pakistan shows it can exploit the huge military complex inherited from the Soviet era to outscore rivals on international arms markets. "This is a victory... The fact that Ukraine won this difficult tender... shows our technical and intellectual capacity." ...The \$US550 million deal to supply the... tanks was signed on Tuesday. It circumvented sanctions imposed by the U[S], which accuses Pakistan of wanting to become a nuclear state. Ukraine is seeking out customers for its armour to haul its economy out of crisis. A deal was announced last month to supply a new 6.5-tonne military truck to India – Pakistan's arch rival with which it has fought three border wars since becoming a nation in 1947. Last year Ukraine supplied 300 10-tonne trucks to India, long a traditional purchaser of Soviet equipment. - 1996

Today more than 64[% of India's] public revenue is spent on military defence. The hostile relations... [with] Pakistan are held responsible. - 1951

[One beetle species] sprays formic acid, which is a potent irritant[also 'utilised by ants'], and it sprays it at 85% concentration. That's about as strong a concentration of acid as is produced by an animal in nature. 10% of its body is actually formic acid. [The species] has an incredibly high defence budget. I love Bombardier beetles... here's an animal that produces a fluid at boiling hot temperature. It never uses it aggressively, it uses it purely for defence. Shouldn't we learn something from that?

The demand of the war machine for 'food' in the form of a large and growing proportion of the available resources of the world (the 'world product') is reminiscent of nothing so much as a cuckoo, pushing its foster siblings out of the nest and exhausting its foster parents with its demands. Just before... W[W1], with rearmament proceeding apace, about 3 1/2[%] of the total world output was going to military uses; by 1968, the proportion had more than doubled, rising above 7[%]. In... the late 1970s, the spending on 'defence' around the world amounts to the equivalent of: The combined production (Gross National Product) of all sixty-five countries that make up Latin America and Africa; or the total worldwide expenditure by governments on education; or twice the total worldwide expenditure by governments on health; or about fifteen times the value of all government aid to the underdeveloped countries combined. Hardly surprisingly, the rich nations dominate this picture of a militaristic world. In 1975, expenditure by the US and USSR made up nearly two thirds of the total world military 'budget', with the allied members of the NATO and Warsaw Treaty groups contributing a further fifth. But, in contrast, the rate at which military expenditure is growing has been greatest lately in the poorer countries – a highly significant burden on nations already struggling to 'catch up' with the rich... The logic is simple. In the case of the rich countries, at least, a highly militarised future world must be a low-growth world. The counter-argument, that military spending stimulates demand and boosts the economy, really doesn't stand up to close inspection, and it would be a pretty weird system – thoroughly deserving of discontinuity! – which could only gear itself up for action by wasting a large fraction of its resources.

By 1980, world military expenditure amounted to £500 billion a year. That was fifty thousand times as much as WHO expended annually in its successful ten-year campaign to eradicate smallpox from the world. In global arms trade, about three-quarters of all transfers of major weapons are to the Third World – guns instead of bread. - THE FUTURE OF A TROUBLED WORLD

Today the World Bank estimates that there are 570 million people who are undernourished, 800 million who are illiterate, 1,500 million who have little or no access to medical services and 250 million children who do not go to school. Every year 15 million children die of starvation. Amidst the terrifying statistics, official development aid amounts to \$[US]20 billion – world military spending to more than \$450 billion. - 1984

Global arms spending of \$1 million every thirty-five seconds needs to be seen for the madness it really is.

...While worldwide military spending is more than one billion dollars a day, more than... thirty-two... people die of starvation... every minute, most of them children. Developing countries spend more than three times as much on armaments as on healthcare. Thirty-five percent of humanity lacks safe drinking water, while nearly half of its scientists and engineers are engaged in the technology of making weapons. - 1990

In 1989, the worldwide military budget was \$[US]1.035 trillion, of which the U.S. share was 29.4%... In 1990, the U[S] was the world's second largest arms exporter, next to the Soviet Union. Of the world total in arms trade of \$45.43 billion, the Soviet[s] accounted for \$19.1 billion the U[S] for \$11.2 billion... Despite the end of the Cold War, [US] defense outlays are still climbing, reaching an all-time high of \$341.1 billion in 1992 after modest declines in 1991... and 1990... However, as a percentage of GNP, defense accounts for less of the GNP today (5.2%) than it did in 1968

(9.6%)[, and is estimated to get down to '3.9% in 1995']. Its share of the total Federal outlays (20.8%) is also less than at the height of the Cold War in 1960 (52.2%).

'1995 defence budgets in \$US billions for the southeast Asian region were: China (7.48), Indonesia (2.57), Malaysia (2.41), Philippines (1.00), Singapore (4.02), South Korea (14.36), Taiwan (9.93) Thailand (4.00) and Japan (53.8') – thus Japan managed to spend more than the other eight nations put together!

"The real value of Japan's military budget is about... seven times larger than China's. In terms of population and size Japan is much smaller, and people... ask 'why does Japan have such a large military budget?'"

...How much does Japan spend on defence? The official defence budget has long been estimated at around 1[%] of GDP. Since Japan is a rich country, that small-sounding burden buys some business-like Self-Defence Forces... According to figures published by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Japan's official defence budget in 1995 came to \$[US]50.2 billion... The amount... says the *Economist*... is probably much more than that... [M]ost Nato Governments use a common standard that includes not only research and development but also pensions and much else, in a way that makes their spending figures comparable with each other. Japan's, however, have always been added up differently... [M]easure Japan's total defence spending in the same way as, say, Britain's or France's – and last year's spending comes to a rather larger 1.6[%] of GDP... Making Japan's defence spending more comparable has a value... Japanese officials have long pointed to the modest share of their GDP that goes to military spending to reassure neighbours that Japan poses no threat... Japan's defence spending is exceeded only by America's, Russia's and possibly China's... [The Chinese] seem to spend amazingly little on defence. But that is because they deliberately hide some costs, including military research and development, under other headings in the national budget, or else do not include them at all.

China's defence budget for 1997, up 12.7[%] on last year, represented only [part] of the true amount spent on the world's largest Army, Western experts said yesterday. In past years the budget for the three-million strong People's Liberation Army has risen 13 to 14[%] annually and spending for 1997 has been officially set at 80.57 billion yuan (\$[NZ]14.14 billion)... "But it is only the tip of the iceberg; the rest is extremely difficult to piece together."

...Japan plans to slash spending for major weapon systems by 6 to 7[%] next year as part of the Government's austerity budget measures... the *Yomiuri Shimbun* newspaper said, quoting Defence Agency sources. The plan is... [to curtail] total expenditures of 25.15 trillion yen (\$[NZ]333.25 billion) for the 1996-2000 defence plan by 920 billion yen... The agency also planned to cut financial support for U[S] forces in the nation... [Earlier this year,] Japanese military analysts... [had declared that] China's defence outlays, despite a sharp increase this year, pose[d] no major threat to its neighbours, except for Taiwan...

Rivalry between China and Japan has flared... over some tiny islands. It is a rivalry with serious implications for the whole region... Behind issues of sovereignty and national pride lie major oil and fish resources. Earlier this year Japan angrily protested at the operations of a Chinese oil-exploration ship within waters claimed by Tokyo. In turn, Taiwan disputes Japanese sovereignty and takes about 40,000 tonnes of fish a year from the islands' waters... The Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands encapsulate the difficulties facing this new great power triangle.

...Japanese patrol ships yesterday expelled five boats of Taiwan and Hong Kong activists trying to land on a chain of disputed East China Sea islands... Tokyo's claim dates to 1895, when Japan defeated China and seized Taiwan and other Territories. Beijing and Taipei say Chinese claims go back centuries but... Taiwan and China have been bitter rivals since a civil war split them in 1949 and the Republic of China Government, defeated by the communists, took refuge on Taiwan.

...South Africa has abandoned its attempts to have diplomatic relations with two Chinas and announced it will ditch ties with Taiwan in favour of Beijing... [When] asked what had happened to his goal of ties with both Chinas, [South Africa's President] said: "Beijing made it clear they would not tolerate that." ...[● A] Hong Kong lawmaker said yesterday that China should go to war with Japan over a group of disputed islands in the East China Sea if the row cannot be settled through diplomatic negotiation... Japan has... refused to acknowledge that the dispute is open for discussion.

...China's economic relationship with Japan has forced it to tread warily in the East China Sea islands dispute... Japan is a major aid donor, trading partner and investor, say analysts... Tokyo has agreed to grant \$US5.27 billion... in low-interest loans to Beijing over a three-year period from April [1997], making it difficult for China to bite the hand that helps feed it. While China does not want to be perceived as weak or unpatriotic, it faces the challenge of avoiding too many squabbles with too many diplomatic partners at the same time... Many Chinese have been slow to forgive and forget Japan's 1931-45 invasion of China. By Beijing's count, 35 million Chinese died under Japanese occupation. Attempts by Japanese politicians to whitewash Japan's atrocities... [has] only added insult to injury... Beijing and Washington have squabbled in recent years over Taiwan... "If we go to war against Japan, we will fall into the trap of the U[S]," a retired Chinese diplomat said of calls for China to send warships to the islands.

...More than 5000 people demonstrated in Taipei yesterday against recent moves by Japan to assert sovereignty over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands... The demonstration was the latest in a series of protests in Taiwan, China and Hong Kong over the islands where a group of Japanese nationalists has built a makeshift lighthouse and a war memorial. In Taiwan, the Provincial Council has called for a boycott of Japanese goods.

...The Taiwan provincial assembly voted yesterday to exclude Japanese firms from local contracts to protest against Japan's assertion of sovereignty over a chain of uninhabited East China Sea islands... Calls for boycotting Japanese goods and other anti-Japanese protests have mushroomed in recent weeks after Japanese coast guard ships repelled private Taiwan vessels nearing the Diaoyu islands... Taiwan's central Government has appealed for calm and has vowed to resolve the dispute with Japan through negotiations on fishing rights... [Meanwhile, f]ierce gun battles raged around some disused coalmines in South Korea yesterday as troops hunted down the remnants of a group of infiltrators from the North who came ashore on a submarine this week... So far, 18 are confirmed to have been shot dead and one captured alive... Three were cut down by automatic fire as they crouched by a stream to drink water... On Wednesday the bodies of 11 North Koreans were found huddled together on top of a mountain close to a beach where they landed. All had been shot through the head in an apparent mass suicide... South Korean authorities have described the most serious infiltration since the 1960s as a military provocation... North Korea yesterday accused South Korea of taking "provocative action" earlier this week but made no reference to the infiltrators... In South Korea, the public has reacted with anger and anxiety... Some blame the Navy for failing to detect the 34m submarine and worry the country is vulnerable to attack from its arch-enemy... South Korea and the U[S] are trying to entice Pyongyang to talks, along with China, to work out a peace pact to replace the armistice that sealed the division of the Korean peninsula in 1953. - 1996

Twelve armed North Korean soldiers crossed into the southern half of the... demilitarised zone separating the two Koreas... just before midday... yesterday... seized a man and a woman in a rice field and took them back to the northern side, the UN said. But North Korea's official Pyongyang Radio said its border guards on routine patrol duty seized the farmers found in the northern half of the buffer zone. The farmers were "under

investigation”... The North Koreans initially promised to return the farmers within 20 minutes... But they later refused to commit themselves... The abducted farmers... had been working in a field with three companions, but broke away and climbed a hill apparently to pick chestnuts... In a similar incident in 1975, North Korean guards crossed into the southern side... and abducted a South Korean farmer, according to UN officials. But North Korea has never released him, saying the man defected of his own will.

...the daily newspaper *Tokyo Shimbun* said [a]defector... told Japanese officials... [that] North Korea wants \$US10 billion... in reparations from Tokyo... as compensation for the 1910-45 colonial rule... atrocities... and... in exchange for normalising ties... Japan normalised relations with... South Korea in 1965 but has yet to establish diplomatic ties with... North Korea. [The defector] was quoted as saying that North Korea wanted to use the cash to buy food.

...North Korea was gripped by a mood of war and was preparing to attack South Korea... to unify the divided Korean peninsula under communism... the North’s most prominent defector said yesterday... “North Korea talks about peaceful unification only in words... What they trust is only the military and arms... North Korea’s war preparations are beyond imagination...,” he said... The defection... dealt a humiliating blow to Pyongyang and gave an intelligence coup to its capitalist rival, Seoul... The... former member of North Korea’s highest decision-making body, the Central Committee of the Workers Party... and an aide... arrived in Seoul... [after] a 67-day ordeal that began with their escape to South Korea’s consulate in Beijing. Their defection created a diplomatic dilemma for China, which found itself caught between long-time ideological ally North Korea and newly found economic partner, South Korea.

...South Korea’s Defence Ministry wants every resident of the capital, Seoul, to buy gas masks as protection against any North Korean chemical warfare attack...

North Korea launched artillery shells at a Southern border post yesterday... No Southern casualties were reported in the bombardment that... ended after about 50 minutes when the Southern side broadcast a ceasefire proposal... [T]he incident began when a group of North Korean soldiers crossed the Military Demarcation Line... After... South Korean troops fired warning shots into the air [the]North Korean forces responded by aiming 70-80 rounds of rifle fire at two guard posts, which responded with a similar burst of fire. [● ‘The remains of two US soldiers killed in the Korean War have been exhumed from a national cemetery in Hawaii and taken to an Army laboratory for possible identification using DNA taken from relatives of missing servicemen. The Department of Defense authorised the forensic analysis, clearing the way for tests on 50 to 70 of the 866 unidentified soldiers buried at the cemetery’. The war cost ‘2 million lives, including 400,000 civilians’ – some of whom were ‘refugees fleeing the communists that were allegedly massacred by US forces in case communists were among them’ – and ‘cost the US \$22 billion, not including rebuilding programme contributions.’

...‘No Gun Ri, the story the US Army didn’t want to hear, is now the story the Army itself is telling – in an 80,000-word report on a year-long investigation into the Korean War refugee killings. But through the haze of 5 decades, of traumatised memories and missing records, the story of what American troops did to South Korean farm families outside that hamlet in mid-1950 leaves many questions unanswered. Survivors estimate 300 people, mostly women and children, died in the tunnels under a railroad trestle and another 100 in a preceding air attack. Korean officials have compiled a list of 248 names of reported dead, wounded and missing. US Army investigators said they believe the number was lower. US commanders and their troops, retreating before the North Koreans, feared enemy infiltrators among South Korean refugee groups such as the one the 7th Cavalry stopped at No Gun Ri. Various orders had been issued across the war front to “shoot” or “fire on” refugees. The survivors’ allegations were repeatedly dismissed by the Army with little investigation’. ‘A declassified report reveals US officers observed their ally secretly execute thousands of leftist prisoners without trial in 1950.’

...‘For 40 years after 1950, the world lived in the shadow of the Korean War. The shock of Korea crystallised the Cold War standoff between the great powers. Said Winston Churchill in 1953: “Korea does not really matter now. I’d never heard of the bloody place until I was 74.” Its importance lies in the fact that it has led to the rearming of America. The war came at a nervous time for the West. In 1948, there was a communist coup in Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union blockaded West Berlin. In 1949, Russia exploded an atomic bomb. China went communist. The conflict stemmed from the division of Korea along the 38th parallel after the Japanese surrender in 1945. Russian troops occupied the north until 1948, and Americans ran the south until 1949. North Korea tried to reunite the country by invading the south on June 25, 1950. They took the southern capital of Seoul on June 28 and pushed quickly south. At America’s urging, the UN Security Council condemned the invasion and urged all countries to help South Korea. NZ sent two frigates and decided to recruit 1000 volunteers. Over 6000 Kiwis fought in the war’ – ‘of whom 33 died in active service, 79 were wounded and one taken prisoner.’ ‘The Korean War led to a substantial increase in demand for, and price of, wool. The result was a major upswing in the terms of trade in favour of NZ until 1951’...]

The Koreans: where the Cold War won’t thaw... The U[S] Army bus trundles on, bringing another party of reporters to see the 45-year-old stalemate that Washington regards as the most dangerous flashpoint for the security of East Asia and the Pacific... Certainly there is all the tension of unfinished war... Elsewhere the Cold War has been consigned to history. Here they are digging in... Drive for less than an hour north of Seoul, South Korea’s prosperous modern capital, and you enter a time warp. Barbed wire barricades appear on the banks of the Han River; every few hundred metres a gun post looks over the water... Inside and outside the South Korean soldiers strike strange frozen crouches as they eyeball the enemy just 100m away... A little further and minefield warnings appear on one and sometimes both sides of the road... Double electrified [fences and]... tank barrages abound... where the two sides occasionally meet... usually to discuss a firefight, as they call the skirmishes that occur within the patrolled “demilitarised zone.” ...As far as anyone can tell North Korea is collapsing... Yet... [we] hear that North Korea could still mobilise quickly and effectively. More than half its old but rugged artillery is concentrated within 65km of its southern border and official minds in Seoul and Washington are haunted right now by the possibility that a desperate regime might go for broke. That is not to say it could overrun the south. The prevailing view in American or South Korean circles is that... air superiority would enable the south’s forces to defeat the north on their own. But the north could inflict death and damage on Seoul and the South Korean economy on a huge scale before its firepower could be stifled... In addition, North Korea has Scud ballistic missiles capable of reaching Japan and is believed to have chemical warheads. Ominously its forces can be seen training for action “in a chemical environment.” The fear is of some sort of strike designed to secure a ceasefire on terms that would alleviate North Korea’s internal crisis... Its economy has been shrinking since 1990. Its industry is thought to be running at just 20[%] of capacity. About 80[%] of daily necessities are obtained from black marketing, much of [it] across the border with China.

...A Sino-Russian declaration signed yesterday by [the]Chinese President... and [the]Russian head of state... ended a dispute over border demarcation that has soured ties dating back to the days of the tsars... Tracking winding rivers that freeze in winter, mountain ranges and thick forests, the... 4300km frontier... between Siberia and the Chinese province of Heilongjiang, formerly Manchuria, has proved almost impossible to map... [thereby serving] as a fault line between the two giant empires... just one of many border spats China has had with neighbours... China’s land border with Vietnam has been a source of frequent friction. A brief but bloody border war in 1979 killed 20,000. Intermittent skirmishes lasted until the early 1990s... Beijing and Tokyo both claim a cluster of islets in the East China Sea. Japan was handed control of the group – called the Senkakus in Japanese and Diaoyus in Chinese – after... W[W2]... While the dispute has not led to military confrontation, nationalist passions flared in Chinese communities around the world... when Japanese right-wingers built a makeshift lighthouse on one of the uninhabited islets... Beijing and New Delhi contest part of China’s Tibet region. China and India fought a brief border war over the patch in 1962. The conflict is unresolved, but the two nations signed a pact in 1993 to ensure peace along their 4000km border.

...Fifty-four Indian and Pakistani soldiers died... as the two Armies locked yesterday in one of the heaviest battles on their... 1200km... Kashmir border [in recent years]... Each side blamed the other for starting the battle... India and Pakistan dispute the ownership of Kashmir, a picturesque Himalayan region, and each holds parts of the state... Relations between the two countries have never been easy since at least half a million people were killed in bloody riots accompanying partition. Six million Hindus and Sikhs fled to India and as many Muslims went to Pakistan... A Muslim separatist campaign raging since 1989 in the Indian [portion] of Kashmir has claimed more than 20,000 lives. India accuses Pakistan of arming and training the militants. Pakistan denies the charge.

...The P[M] of Pakistan... offered yesterday to open talks on a non-aggression pact with... India in what he said was a bid to end a bitter dispute over the territory of Kashmir.

...Kashmiris linked hands in a 56km "human chain" to protest against Indian rule as two people were killed in a bomb blast in the troubled Himalayan region... [where m]ore than a dozen guerrilla groups are fighting... [for] either merger with neighbouring Pakistan or independence.

...Thousands of Indians gathered at the border between India and Pakistan early yesterday to seek friendship with Pakistanis and found silence, emptiness and barbed wire on the other side... Not a single person waved back at the sea of faces on the Indian side... [The] Indians, who had braved a mild cane charge by harassed policemen and kilometres of traffic jams to light candles and torches for an intended spiritual reunion... were disappointed. "Pakistan has badly snubbed us. I think it was very stupid on our part to think that they will come with the same enthusiasm to stand in amity with us," said... a civil engineer from the nearby town of Amritsar... [Meanwhile, in] New Delhi, the Indian P[M]... declared that there would be no negotiations with Pakistan over the disputed Kashmir region... [He also reiterated] that India would not back down over its refusal last year to sign a nuclear test ban treaty unless the superpowers first agreed to dismantle their nuclear arsenals... [In related news, t]he first Russian warship to visit Japan in more than 100 years berthed at a Tokyo pier yesterday... The... visit comes just a day after Moscow formally informed Tokyo that its nuclear missiles no longer targeted Japanese cities, but also one day after Japan... lodged a protest with Russia after a Russian patrol boat opened fire at a Japanese trawler in waters near disputed islands, called the Northern Territories by Japan and the Southern Kuriles by Russia. Two Japanese fishermen were wounded... the Japanese coastguard said. The row over the islands, seized by the Soviet Army at the end of... W[W2], has prevented Tokyo from signing a peace treaty with Moscow... Japan has fought Russia four times this century and during the Cold War regarded the Soviet Union as its greatest military threat, with the attention of its armed forces focused on Vladivostok, home of the Soviet, now Russian, Pacific Fleet... Last July, [a]Japanese destroyer... visited Vladivostok to honour the 300th anniversary of the Russian Navy. It was the first Japanese warship to visit a Russian port since 1925.

...Russian border guards opened fire on four Japanese boats that entered Russia's territorial waters near disputed islands off northern Japan... the Interfax news agency said yesterday.

...The Japanese P[M]... says he and [Russia's]President... have agreed to make efforts to sign a... W[W2] peace treaty by the year 2000... [Meanwhile, h]igh-level arm twisting... has forced the mayor of a small Okinawa city to allow construction of a controversial U[S] offshore heliport... The [Japanese PM has]... dangled the prospect of 150 million yen... in sorely needed economic assistance to Okinawa, the poorest of Japan's 32 prefectures, in return for support for the heliport... The Nago mayor made it clear he was giving his approval under protest and told reporters that he planned to resign because his position had become untenable... The heat from Tokyo came on after Nago residents last weekend voted overwhelmingly against building the floating heliport in a non-binding referendum. "We don't want any more U[S] bases – of any kind – on Okinawa," said [a]local protester... More than 20[%] of Japan's southernmost main island chain, strategically placed just north of Taiwan, is occupied by U[S] bases. The archipelago was only returned to Japan in 1972... Opposition to the [heliport] runs smack into the vested interests of Japanese construction companies, which... are clamouring for a project carrying a price tag of over \$US1 billion... Agendas began to clash mightily in Okinawa after a 12-year-old local girl was raped by three U[S] servicemen in 1995. Residents called for the withdrawal of the bases, citing a growing incidence of crimes involving the U[S] military. Ironically... Tokyo and Washington decided last April to build the offshore heliport... [after planning] to shut down the Futenma Air Station in Okinawa as part of a blueprint to reduce the huge US military concentration there.

...A new security pact with the U[S] sets the stage for Japan to challenge its pacifist constitution and play a bigger military role overseas... Article 9 of the U[S]-drafted constitution bars Japan from using military force to settle any international dispute. The constitution also stops it entering into collective security arrangements... Under the new programme, Japan will take part in naval blockades and minesweeping. Japan also agreed in principle to give key military support to U[S] forces in an Asia crisis, but maintained its ban on offensive military might... In an apparent move to avoid fierce responses from China and other Asia countries, the new guidelines did not say which geographical areas would be covered.

...The smiles and exchanges of goodwill when [the]Chinese Premier... visited Tokyo this month could not mask the anger Beijing feels at Taiwan's inclusion in the recently-extended security alliance between the U[S] and Japan... While the rewritten alliance does not specifically name Taiwan, the implied inclusion of the island in an extended area of national interest – reinforced by remarks by senior Japanese military figures – confronts one of China's most fundamental policies. Reunification is an objective that goes beyond simple territorial arguments, with its roots deep in a national psyche still scarred by more than a century of humiliation by Russia, Japan and the West. "China will bear any cost to prevent [Taiwan's independence]," said [a spokesperson for] the China Institute of Contemporary International Affairs. "...We will use military force. There is no doubt." ...China's position has not changed since last year's crisis, when it staged a massive military exercise close to Taiwanese territory to warn the island against voting for independence candidates in the upcoming election. Washington responded by sending two aircraft carrier battle groups through the strait to demonstrate its readiness to fight China in defence of Taiwan.

...*Taiwan aims war games at China*... Commandos made clear... that the drills had everything to do with China and that nation's intensifying drive to... bring... Taiwan... under mainland rule... Bolstering Taipei's message of defiance, [the President of Taiwan's] inspection tour of his nation's newly-strengthened arsenal was aired live on Taiwanese television... ensuring that the message would project across the Taiwan strait to the mainland... [The inspection revealed] a host of high-tech imported arms, including American F-16 and French Mirage 2000-5 jet fighters, AH-1W attack helicopters and OH-58D surveillance helicopters... [The President, flanked by the] Vice-president... and military brass, nodded in satisfaction as he passed the drab green... American-made Patriot antimissile missiles... which at \$US1 million... each were not scheduled to be fired in today's live-fire war games. Also on display were some of the 300 ageing M60A3 tanks that Taiwan bought on the cheap from the U[S] – only to upgrade them with the latest electronic anti-aircraft systems... Beijing, which views Nationalist-ruled Taiwan as a renegade province, has warned other countries against arming the island...

[Taiwan, 'known internationally for little else other than being the place where everything is made' – with the exception of weapons – 'will make the procurement of US-made Aegis warships its top priority, to counter the missiles of arch-rival China. Experts said the highly computerised destroyers, which were designed to defend US carrier battle groups against saturation missile attacks, could have some capability to shoot down ballistic missiles. The reports, which were published in the *China Times* and *Liberty Times*, came shortly after a Pentagon report that China was building a major force of ballistic and cruise missiles near its seacoasts. The assessment, sent to Congress last week and released at the weekend, did not suggest that Beijing was planning to launch an attack against Taiwan. But it stressed that China had refused to renounce force against Taipei and could overwhelm Taiwan's missile defences and superior air force with sheer numbers of weapons in 2005 if a conflict erupted. US law permits sales of defensive arms to Taiwan despite Washington's shift of diplomatic ties to Beijing in 1979 and China's opposition to any arms sales to the island. Washington has already sold F-16 warplanes, Patriot missiles and other advanced weapons to Taipei, inciting Beijing's anger.'

... 'Don't think that Beijing's international bullying is limited to parking chartered buses in front of Christchurch Tibet supporters. That was the entree before China's President decided whether his dinner date with NZ's PM was on or off. Auckland has seen a mini glimpse of the effect of Beijing's paranoia, too. It happened when the Governor-General was guest of honour at Howick's annual Asian day in the park. As Auckland firemen, who had flown to help in the Taiwanese earthquake aftermath, were invited on to the dais to receive certificates of appreciation, the GG and his wife went down another set of steps. It was literally a diplomatic move. The reason: The GG apparently could not be seen anywhere near an event involving Taiwan for fear of nasty repercussions from Beijing. The word from Wellington is that the process of monitoring our doings didn't stop there. Apparently, people like the Foreign Affairs Minister more recently got a rocket from the President's minions because he and NZ had the cheek to congratulate the new president of Taiwan on his election. The election process is, of course, something that China's President and his lot are not over-familiar with. To them it's probably a quaint bourgeoisie, capitalist custom – like freedom of speech, and fair public trial.' By the way, 'China has built 2 fortress-like "fishermen's shelters" on the Spratly Islands, where the Philippines has a military presence.'

...*Asian war games preview flashpoint...* FOR TWO weeks at the end of April, the sea and air around the Malay Peninsula throbbed with the kind of activity that only 36 surface warships, a pair of submarines and 138 aircraft in war-simulation mode can provide. The occasion, an exercise called Flying Fish, was the most ambitious staged under the aegis of the Five Power Defence Arrangement, a collection of countries concerned about the defence of the peninsula. N[Z] is part of this arrangement, as are A[US], Britain, Singapore and Malaysia... It might be argued that something like Flying Fish offers no more than the chance for some spectacular sabre rattling. Yet one of the scenarios for Flying Fish involved a hypothetical power using force to annexe a hypothetical island. Thinking of Hong Kong? Try again. To the north of where Flying Fish was taking place lies another contentious group of islands named the Spratlys. The Spratlys would be an undesirable piece of geography – most of them are just above the water-line – were it not for the fact that explorations have revealed the area to be rich in hydrocarbons. Hydrocarbons mean oil, which explains why six countries – China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and the Philippines – have territorial claims over some or all of the Spratlys. Following the FPDA Defence Minister conference before Flying Fish, N[Z]'s Defence Minister rated the chances of an Asian war over the Spratlys within the next 20 years as "moderate to low"... Just how volatile is the area? Two schools of thought exist. One says that ASEAN countries are too interested in enriching themselves to fight over anything. The other suggests that economic expansion will provoke the kind of jostling for new markets and resources that may result in war. Adding to the mix is that ASEAN is in love with being well-armed. Though much of their equipment is obsolete, it is being upgraded at a pace, with defence items being replaced by offensive ones, such as ballistic missiles, long range strike aircraft and missile-carrying submarines. N[Z]'s defence attache to Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand... estimates that within eight years arms sales to Asia will exceed those to any other region in the world... [NZ needn't be concerned about a direct military threat. To date, NZ]'s lack of arrogance has ensured popularity in the area... N[Z]ers are not... prescriptive, perhaps because militarily we are not in a position to do so... [However,] South East Asia is economically important to N[Z]; it takes about 8% of our exports; it invests heavily here; it sends fee-paying students; much of our trade travels through it.

...The N[Z] public has never had more than about three months' warning for going to war. If eight wars and about 15 peace-keeping missions are a reasonable trend... from our 100 years or so of warfare... then we could be involved in another war by late July this year... N[Z] has maintained a fairly constant theme for sending the troops off to wars in foreign lands – to protect our interests... In the 1920s and 30s we knew we had won the Great War but had very little idea of why it had really started and why we had lost a generation of men fighting in yet another European civil war. No one had yet told us that our lads at Gallipoli landed just before lunch, not at dawn, on the wrong beach and... [there] were 40,000 men... crammed into... 40 acres, about the size of a golf course. Let us not forget that the myths and falsehoods about Gallipoli have been corrected only in the past 20 years, in part because we quickly lost interest in what had really happened and never sought to question the authorities. I wonder what our reaction would have been in 1939 if we had asked more about why we had done it in 1914.

...*Minister sounds alarm at level of defence budget...* [The AUS]n Defence Minister... has begun in earnest a campaign to reverse the declines in his nation's defence spending. With the military budget in proportional terms nearing the... levels of 1938 [he]... is worried that within two years defence outlays will fall to 1.8[% of GDP]... In the coming budget, defence spending will remain at the \$A10 billion level proposed in forward estimates 18 months ago, but [he] believes this is rock-bottom and should be pushed back up above 2[%] of GDP at least... He is, however, expecting the same kind of fight his N[Z] counter-part... will face with his intention to hold defence spending this year and follow up with a series of "modest" increases. "My guess is that the N[Z] population might be a little less eager to up the defence budget than the A[US]n population," he said.

...A[US] has set in place a programme of intense political pressure to persuade N[Z] to increase defence spending, says a secret document revealed in a... leak yesterday... It also implies that a backdown on defence would pose serious implications for the transtasman relationship, particularly if any cost was added to A[US] through bearing a "disproportionate share of the bilateral defence burden."

...The Government did not need a "deluge" of leaked documents to know there was international concern about N[Z]'s defence capacity, the Deputy Secretary of Foreign Affairs... said yesterday. He was getting the same message, albeit in "much more muted" form, from around the South Pacific and East Asia... [In 1990 'a UN defence review required NZ to start "building back" its defensive capabilities' – the country 'only has four tanks, all Scorpions, which are fast but lightly armoured']. However, NZ still spent only half what A[US] did on defence as a proportion of [GDP]. The NZ defence budget is \$1.6 billion – or 'a net \$1.034 billion this financial year after paying back GST and capital charges to the Government'] - 1997

It's foolish to believe we have no enemy to fight... For a visitor to N[Z], the extent of the defence debate in the country is striking, especially given the propensity of successive A[US]n governments to urge N[Z] to do more in its own defence. For all that, the debate has echoes of that in A[US] in the early 1980s, almost as though the nuclear issue simply diverted attention away from a more fundamental question of how to defend... [NZ. AUS] has taken more than a decade to develop a reasonably sophisticated approach to security... From the perspective of an organisation which has struggled for two decades to define defence, the N[Z] discussion seems to begin from the wrong premises. It is simply wrong to regard national defence from the standpoint of how much money can be spared. Similarly the notion, beloved by many participants, that nothing needs to be done until a threat has been identified misses the key point of national security, especially for a small country. By the time a threat is or can be identified, it is simply too late to do anything about it. Defence is just one element of a national security policy. This ought to seek to prevent threats by building political, economic and military relationships which deter potential aggressors so that the first time a shot is fired in anger, the first battle has been lost. Of course, the challenge then is to ensure that the last battle is won and that the nation's military forces in conjunction with allies have the resources to do so... As the very first paragraph of A[US]'s 1976 defence white paper stated: "The first responsibility of Government is to provide the nation with security from armed attack..." ...Defining a national security policy and the role of the military in supporting such a policy is a fundamental task... Traditionally, protection from armed attack is seen to be protection against invasion. Perhaps because of their history of involvement in distant wars throughout this century, both N[Z and AUS] have understood that their security depends upon a broader definition than mere territorial defence. With some 40[%] of its economy directly dependent on overseas trade, N[Z] has an overwhelming interest in its protection. That protection certainly cannot be achieved by N[Z]'s own efforts but it ought to be able to demonstrate an ability and willingness to do so in conjunction with allies and trading partners. Similarly, both A[US and NZ], as relatively small peace-loving communities, have a traditional and overpowering interest in developing an effective system of international law enforcement. Whether that be called peacekeeping, peace enforcement or preventive diplomacy, an essential element is the availability of competent military power working under realistic rules of

engagement first to impose order and then to build or rebuild peace... [B]oth countries have skills and traditions which are superior to most and ought to be devoted to the cause because it serves our interests to do so. The so-called globalisation of many aspects of politics, economics and social behaviour is simply a product of a communications revolution which has shrunk the world to a degree incomprehensible to the first Anzacs. That means we are involved in the world whether we like it or not. As just one example, the Korean peninsula, arguably the world's most critical trouble spot, is incomparably more important to A[USn and NZ] interests today than it was in 1950 when both countries committed forces to oppose North Korean aggression against the South. In consultation with their electorates, Governments need to define the range of their security interests before their military advisers can propose the sorts of defence forces needed to support those interests. Then, and only then, can a society decide whether it is able or willing to put up the money to pay for what is needed... [The Labour PM responsible for NZ's nuclear-ships ban] once told an ABC journalist during his prime ministership that as long as A[US] was secure, N[Z] is secure. Are NZers]... content with that complacent view... - Executive director of the AUSn Defence Association

The Defence Ministers of N[Z and AUS] last night agreed on a joint deal for the Anzac frigates to be recommended to their cabinets next week... [NZ's Defence Minister] was asked whether N[Z] would be paying more up front, or as the ships are delivered. "We have got an agreement that is based on the earlier understanding," he said. "The amounts of money that were being talked about to bring the project forward were too large for N[Z] to consider in the light of its other defence commitments." Pressed on the cost each year, he said: "Much as we planned before – on average, around \$100 million a year for the term of the project but it will be less at the start and more later on." - 1989

Frigate prices rise \$336m in 7 years... The cost of the two new frigates being built for the N[Z] Navy has gone up... since they were ordered in 1989. The frigates have had a big impact on an already strained budget and are the reason the... Government has foreshadowed a boost in Defence spending from 1998. The Defence Ministry deputy secretary... said the latest assessment to the end of June had put the cost of the frigates and shore equipment at \$1263 million. In 1989, they were estimated to cost \$927 million... Escalations in the cost of materials and labour had raised the price \$215 million and foreign exchange movements had cost an extra \$120 million... N[Z] had foregone the option next year to order two more Anzac frigates on similar terms. - 1996

The Minister of Defence... has hinted at the Government deferring a decision on buying extra Anzac frigates. He said yesterday that the oft-quoted November deadline for a decision on buying one or two more frigates was not absolute. The "November option" was simply to buy two frigates at a fixed price within the... Anzac ship-building programme. The unit cost for an extra frigate is about \$470 million in December 1996 dollars. N[Z] is contracted to buy two Anzac frigates, one of which will be ready for delivery in May. The other is under construction. The Government can expect to come under pressure from A[US] to stay within the fixed-price timetable for a decision on extra ships... [The minister] personally favours buying more Anzac ships...

The Minister of Defence... could see clear benefits from continuing with the frigates programme... [while] the Minister of Foreign Affairs... said a decision should be made in November, when the option to buy the ships for a fixed \$585 million... [each expires. The AUSn P]M... is expected to apply renewed pressure on his N[Z] counterpart... while he is here for a three-day visit, beginning on Saturday.

...The [NZ P]M... last night gave strong support to the Anzac frigate project, and indicated that the Government would not reduce the size of the planned fleet of four... "My Government believes... that a blue-water nation needs a blue-water Navy," he told a Tradenz dinner in Melbourne, in a speech that also emphasised the value of the project to N[Z] industry... with ship contracts worth \$500 million already placed with local companies.

...N[Z] companies are reaping substantially more than the \$503 million in direct contracting work promised by the Anzac frigate programme... The Minister of Defence... has estimated this will climb to \$800 million by the time the programme is completed... [while defence] exports... that were worth less than \$10 million before the project are now estimated to be worth more than \$90 million... 420 N[Z] companies are involved... either directly or indirectly... [As] a result of the defence work... [the] companies... are now able to compete for high-quality manufacturing and technology contracts in a wide range of business sectors... A[USn] shipbuilder Transfield won the contract to build the frigates, which stated 80.8[%] of the work... must go to A[USn and NZ] companies, with N[Z] firms getting 20[%] of that amount.

...Two A[USn] sister companies at loggerheads over contracts for the Anzac frigates are turning the yards of a Whangarei subcontracting firm into a battleground. Transfield Defence Systems staff raided the Whangarei company this week. They used bolt-cutters to open and remove a gate and a fork-hoist to take away a frigate superstructure module. Non-union employees of Transfield Whangarei retaliated by welding a 20-metre beam across a second module to prevent it being taken. It is believed that the second A[USn] company involved in the row, Transfield Construction, ordered Transfield Whangarei not to let the modules out of its yard, and that it was considering legal action to prevent trespass. The modules... are destined to be towed to Melbourne by the Sea-Tow 4 barge, which is in Port Whangarei... The marine fabricators at Transfield Whangarei are as confused as anyone about the situation... and feared redundancy... Transfield Defence Systems, Transfield Construction and a third company, Transfield Technologies, are said to be nearing the end of a "de-merger" which began 18 months ago... [Incidentally, a] long-delayed... military spending decision, expected today, is seen by diplomats and defence officials as the litmus test of the [NZ] government's commitment to defence issues... [C]abinet will... decide on the purchase of... new helicopters [that] are needed urgently if the Navy's new frigates are to be fully equipped.

...The cabinet yesterday decided to follow A[US] and buy Sea Sprite helicopters for the Anzac frigates... Two helicopters were in contention – the American-made Kaman Super Sea Sprite and British GKN Westland's Super Lynx. But A[US]'s decision to go with the Sea Sprite tipped the balance as compatibility of equipment is considered important... It is understood N[Z] will buy four Sea Sprites compared with A[US]'s 11. Figures released last year put the price of each machine at around \$41 million.

...N[Z] will pay up to \$274 million to replace the Navy's obsolete helicopters, but the deal includes four second-hand machines as well as four new versions... The Government confirmed... that it had chosen the... Seasprite helicopters... for its new Anzac frigates and HMNZS Canterbury and HMNZS Wellington... Four new G-class Seasprites will not start arriving until 2000 so Kaman will supply four second-hand machines of its earlier F-class to tide the Navy over as it scraps its 1960s-era Wasp helicopters. The F-class helicopters will be bought for a total of \$2.26 million... The... package includes spare parts... and... 12 Maverick missiles... [The Government also] disclosed... it is considering buying a fifth[G-class]. This will depend on... commitment to a [third Anzac frigate], but officials expect a fifth airframe to cost less than \$50 million... A senior Ministry of Defence official said that there could be no comparison with the \$US150 million [(NZ\$240m)] which Egypt is believed to be paying for 10 G-class Kamans, heavily subsidised by the U[S]. Meanwhile... Defence Force... briefing papers made public yesterday... [said that a]rmed services already beset by low morale and rapid rates of staff attrition... [- a]ttrition averaged 15 to 20[%] in recent months, with higher losses in some crucial trades... [because] armed forces' salaries and conditions have not significantly improved since December 1990 and are not competitive when compared with both private sector and other state sector employment... [-] are facing a \$68 million funding deficit in the 1997-98 financial year...

[A NZ] cabinet minister... says the Government should consider scrapping the military's fighter planes, the Skyhawks[– which 'have never seen real action' –] if that was the price that had to be paid to buy one or two more frigates. [He] said bringing the two squadrons of 30-year-old Skyhawks up to date would be too costly. Instead of maintaining a fighter aircraft capability, it was more important for the defence forces to

concentrate on a well-equipped navy, a modern army and an air force that contributed to maritime surveillance and air transport... Government sources say the future of the Skyhawks is in question as part of a far-reaching defence assessment, which goes to [the] Defence Minister... at the end of the month. [‘14 Skyhawks were bought for \$24 million in 1970.’ Today t]he air force has 19 Skyhawks in two squadrons, with one of the squadrons based permanently in A[US]. An air force spokesman was not able to give a total figure for the cost of staffing and operating all the Skyhawks, but said the A[US]n-based squadron was costing N[Z] \$46.9 million a year. The fighter planes themselves have a current value of \$114m. With the defence forces projected to go into deficit next financial year and a decision due later this year on whether more Anzac frigates should be bought from A[US], the expensive Skyhawk operation is in the firing line. [The] Defence Minister... is lining up to defend the Skyhawks, saying they make an important contribution to joint defence arrangements with A[US]. The NSW-based Skyhawk squadron allocates two-thirds of its flying hours to supporting the A[US]n navy. “I don’t think there’s clear evidence the change should be made... [P]eople... often overlook the need for a close relationship with A[US]... If you just look at N[Z] by itself, the squadron of Skyhawks might not be a particularly high priority, but if you look at working in with the A[US]ns it can give a completely different picture,” he said. [● ‘The pilot of an Air Force Skyhawk taking part in a low-level navigation exercise cheated death yesterday when his jet severed a 110,000-volt power line. The unhurt flyer was forced to make an emergency landing about 1 pm after hitting the line 68km southeast of Nelson, damaging the jet’s tail. The national grid line crashed down in the Buller Gorge, causing a fire’...

‘An Air Force Skyhawk ditched into the ocean off Western AUS last night, the second NZ fighter jet to crash across the Tasman in a month. The 25-year-old pilot ejected from the aircraft at 1524m moments before it plunged into the Indian Ocean. The accident brings the number of crashes to seven in the years the RNZAF has operated the fighter jets, and comes just one day after a Skyhawk severed a high-voltage power line west of Murchison, in the South Island.’

...N[Z] defence chiefs face a huge spending hump from a need soon to replace the Skyhawks and Hercules transport fleet. It is understood defence planners would prefer to buy new-generation Hercules, for between \$460 million and \$735 million, leaving the Government with an agonising choice between frigates and combat aircraft... [T]he pressure is piling on N[Z] to buy two more warships and satisfy what allies consider to be its international obligation to defence... The bill for a squadron of F16 fighters would come in at \$400 million-plus... Auckland’s Air Force base... could be doomed to close if N[Z] sacrifices its air strike force and instead opts for more frigates... The tally for armoured personnel carriers – a priority for the Army – would be about \$150 million. The complete shopping list totals around \$3 billion.

...Kiwi ingenuity and determination have resolved an expensive dilemma for the Air Force... [F]orward thinking... means its Orions will be “re-winged” for \$100 million... The six aircraft, mostly bought by the N[Z] Government in the mid-60s, are worked hard by the Air Force. All are fatigued and corrosion damaged... The U[S] Navy is the major user of the Orion and, while there are dozens being flown in other countries, N[Z]’s fleet has been in use the longest. Corrosion in the wings means large pieces have to be removed and replaced occasionally, taking up thousands of man-hours of delicate and exacting work. The heavy maintenance programme also takes its toll on the availability of the aircraft which are often grounded for lengthy periods... Their primary role is anti-submarine warfare, maritime strike direction (providing targeting information for Air Force Skyhawks) and joint naval operations, although it is their search-and-rescue role that they are known for best... The ageing aircraft scour the oceans every time there is a maritime search and rescue operation in the Pacific... Also used for fisheries protection, they patrol N[Z]’s Exclusive Economic Zone, checking on the legality of vessels in our area... Wing fatigue... is like bending a paper-clip backwards and forwards several times. “It will break eventually, and that is what can happen to an aircraft’s wings.” ...under certain circumstances wings can and do drop off – it happened to a Hercules aircraft in the U[S] in the late 1980s. There were no survivors... The re-winging of the 30-year-old Orions is an international first... [A] team... put the idea to Lockheed, the American-based manufacturer of Orion aircraft, that the re-winging was technically feasible. It took some doing to get the cautious company onside, but after studying the RNZAF plans Lockheed agreed it could be done... “Just because something hasn’t been done before, doesn’t mean it can’t...” [W]e will eventually have six airworthy aircraft, capable of a further 20 years of service, for the price of buying two... new Orions...” ...The project is expected to take four years, with the first of the re-winged Orions back in service by mid-1998.

...Senior cabinet ministers are embarking on a quiet campaign to coax N[Z]ers into accepting that more money will have to be spent on defence despite tight constraints on new Government spending over the next three years. It is understood that both the Minister of Defence... and the Minister of Foreign Affairs... want to build a wider constituency among voters for defence and turn around what one Government source describes as a “hostile climate” to more spending. They want to make N[Z]ers realise they cannot expect to separate foreign policy and trade from defence because the country’s credibility and influence is measured by what other nations think about its willingness to commit money to defence spending... It is understood ministers have been heartened by the absence of any public backlash against this week’s decision to spend \$274 million on... helicopters for the Navy’s frigates... [In related news, ‘the Royal AUSn Navy will have to limp along with its sole remaining submarine – a 30-year-old boat due for the breakers’ yard – while it tries to get its new, \$A5 billion, fleet working. Serious faults with the four Collins-class submarines in the water were confirmed yesterday in a damning report ordered by the Defence Minister. The report found that the Swedish-designed, AUSn-built submarines have combat systems that do not work, their engines are defective, their periscopes vibrate and provide poor vision, the communications systems are faulty and there are “numerous” other problems. The report recommends that the combat system be dumped and replaced with an “off-the-shelf” system.’

...‘AUSn authorities are investigating how a 130kg dummy missile fell from an FA-18 Hornet aircraft, landing in a Darwin panelbeater’s yard and destroying a ute. A Defence Department spokesman said there was no way the devices could be released by the pilot. “We are mystified. This has never happened since these devices went into service in the late 1980s.” The owner of the yard, who was cooking his dinner in the nearby workshop, said he felt lucky to be alive.’ Incidentally, Indonesia’s Government has scrapped its planned purchase of F-16s (r:p170, ln10) because of] **growing irritation over US criticism of its human rights record.** [The planes have now been offered to NZ...

‘The complete bill for leasing and then buying 28 F-16 jet fighters from the US could be more than \$700 million, according to cabinet papers. When the Government first indicated it would like to sign up for the planes, the Government stated the 10-year lease would cost \$125m. It also confirmed a start-up package, including spares, training and refurbishing the aircraft now in storage, added a further \$238m. But the documents released yesterday under the Official Information Act reveal that buying extra equipment to allow the aircraft to be deployed into “hostile environments” like Kosovo, plus a “structural integrity maintenance system,” would cost an extra \$42m. Outright purchase of the aircraft after 10 years – an option under the lease deal – would add a further \$287m. On top of that is additional operating costs of \$2.8m a year compared with the ageing A4 Skyhawks. But the Minister of Defence said the lease agreement would save \$350m compared with buying new aircraft next century when the Skyhawks end their useful life’...

‘Feathers are flying over the government’s indication that it may bale out of leasing F-16 jet fighters from America. Critics say such a decision will leave our air force a turkey, without a modern strike force. On Monday the government said it might not lease the 28 F-16s – which have notched up just 5 to 9 flying hours each – because it will cost \$1 billion over 10 years. But a journalist who visited the top-secret Arizona desert base where the decade-old jet fighters were to be regenerated, says you can buy used F-16s there for as little as \$6000 each. The journalist – who asked not to be named for security reasons – joined Pentagon officials for a tour of the Davis-Monthan air force base last September. This is the vast air base where America keeps its old planes. Everything needed to create your own Top Gun academy is here and for sale at \$1 a kg. The journalist suggested the NZ air force go on a shopping expedition there. He said a B52 could be bought for about \$180,000 and Huey choppers just \$2000. There are about 5000 military and commercial planes at the base. They sit silently in long lines covered in a special paint coating that protects the planes’ bodies and engines. The Pentagon says most planes are

sold either to private buyers, scrap dealers or foreign governments. There are 384 of the 6350kg F-16s at the base. The F-16 is the workhorse of the US air force, navy and coastguard. And despite being up to 25 years old, they still sell like hot cakes – except, perhaps, in NZ. They sell new for \$60m.’

...a former PM, who’s now the Opposition] foreign affairs spokesman... wants a “modest” boost in defence spending, arguing that deficiencies in N[Z]’s military capacity are handicapping its leverage in the Asia-Pacific region... He also said the defence portfolio should be kept in the hands of a senior-ranked cabinet minister, not given to a junior minister as had often been the case in recent years... While he strongly supported [the] anti-nuclear policy, “there is a difference between being anti-nuclear and anti-military. There is a difference between an independent foreign policy and unilateral pacifism.” ...the defence debate needed to go beyond simplistic arguments [like] how many frigates to buy, focusing instead on our wider regional interests and what other countries expected of N[Z]... While overall spending limits mean this year’s budget may not increase funding much in real terms, the budget may signal more in coming years to appease A[US] and other allies worried that N[Z] is not pulling its weight.

...The [NZ P]M... has joined other members of his Government in beating the defence drum... His office has denied a report that defence chiefs are being asked to find \$100 million in savings next year, after a cut in net funding of up to 37[%] since 1988... weighing into the debate in a speech to the Institute of International Affairs, [the PM] said only an “irresponsible” Government would accept that no defence capability was needed... “In a political or economic debate, hospitals win over guns every time. The easy way would be to subscribe to the view that with no immediate territorial threat facing N[Z] we need no military capability. I, and the Government I lead, do not share that view.” ...[he] said public opinion polls carried out for the Ministry of Defence showed 70[%] of NZ’ers believed it was either fairly important or very important for the country to have strong defence forces. The polls also found 78[%] supported NZ’s UN]-sponsored international peacekeeping roles and more than 80[%] thought the security of the Pacific region and in particular A[US] was fairly or very important to N[Z]... He said that... the growing economy meant it was possible to meet N[Z]’s defence responsibilities without sacrificing investment in health, education and social outcomes.

...[the P]M... told an audience that included A[US]’s P]M... and Defence Minister... that some of the core assets of N[Z]’s defence forces were nearing the end of their operating life... “Later this year, following our deliberations, will start to flow the decisions on a significant programme of investment,” he said. Defence spending would have to be carefully weighed against social spending, and major purchases could be spread over time... [His] comments were designed to both reassure A[US] that NZ] was prepared to increase its defence spending and to prepare the ground at home for the expensive programme of capital spending defence wants... [NZ’s] Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister... openly joined the push for a bigger defence budget, saying... “Our defence spending is right on the margins of where it can be taken seriously.”

...N[Z]’s Army is run-down and in crisis[, causing]... an assistant chief of general staff at Army Headquarters in Wellington... [to] question... whether the depleted armed forces had the ability to defend N[Z]. “...The regular Army has been run down to the point where it is barely capable of carrying out the day-to-day activities required of it... We have forgotten that twice this century war came with no more than four months’ notice and that all of a sudden young N[Z]ers in their tens of thousands were being sent overseas badly trained, poorly equipped and, in many cases, poorly led. The price was paid in blood for the complacency of those pre-war years... It happened for the same reasons it is happening again now.” Cuts in Government spending and unattractive wages and working conditions had turned young people away from Army careers... He urged the Government to put aside political point-scoring and provide the necessary resources to ensure “the protection of all N[Z]ers.”

...Defence is in the news again. Equipment is falling apart, staff are poorly paid, recruiting is tough work and some... costly decisions have to be made fairly soon. Senior officers of all services have presided over a lengthy period of reduced funding, trying to do more with less in every area of their activities... The latest cries for relief have been greeted with a public yawn. Why spend money on our forces? Where is the enemy? ...Well... there is... a ruthless, unforgiving and remorseless enemy... that will strike at the least expected hour, the most inconvenient moment and tear our comfortable world apart. The enemy is well-known throughout the world but seems always to retain the huge advantage of surprise. There is nothing... we can do to prevent the next hammer blow... overseas and we should know that our turn is inevitable... The enemy beneath cannot be contained or defeated. We can only seek to recover from the inevitable attack and resulting chaos with the minimum of confusion and casualties. Speedy, dependable reaction is essential. The defence forces... can[’]t... be allowed to crumble... away in the... mistaken belief... we have no enemy...

The Defence Minister... is shaping up to be a strong advocate for a well-equipped Defence Force and is ready to take on the peace brigade... Having a well-equipped force was “an insurance force.” ...[the minister also] said the white paper’s commitment to... \$663 million of extra spending over the next five years – \$300 million of which is in capital expenditure... [-] would go a long way to removing the negative view A[US]ns had of N[Z]’s commitment to defence... “...it is not locked into the psyche of N[Z]ers that that is a necessary part of peace. I think the average A[US]n thinks NZ] tends to be a bit of a free-loader on these issues in spite of the fact that for our size, we have more people around the world contributing to peace-keeping initiatives than any other country...”

...Increased defence spending on hold... The Minister of Defence... has sought to dampen any remaining expectations of extra defence spending in [this year]’s budget, telling N[Z]’s allies to wait for next year... [His announcement comes as ‘speculation is mounting that NZ’s closest neighbour and military partner is preparing to ask Washington for Tomahawk cruise missiles for its new fleet of super-silent, long-range submarines. Stand-off weapons – read Tomahawks – have been official policy for the ruling Coalition Government since 1993. But there is considerable resistance to the idea of AUS – already the most powerful and capable nation in the immediate region – gaining a strategic strike capability leaps ahead of anything else in neighbouring armories. According to some analysts, the appearance in the AUSn arsenal of a weapon allowing sudden attack from a Collins-class submarine 500km from its target risks starting a full-scale arms race in a region already spending huge sums on warships, state-of-the-art strike aircraft, and other weaponry. AUS’s determination to tighten the Anzus knot with Washington in the wake of NZ’s exile has not passed unnoticed in Asia. Proposals to pull the knot even tighter with Tomahawk missiles disturbs analysts such as the director of the NZ Centre for Strategic Studies, who notes with disquiet the revitalisation of a number of military alliances, including Nato and the US’s alliance with Japan. “This is quite unique in recent history,” he said. “There is no country – or countries – identified as the adversary or potential adversary. And yet military alliances are continuing to be polished up. It’s against that background that weapons acquisitions programmes need to be looked at. If there are no identified adversaries and this process goes on, sooner or later paranoia is going to set in in some quarters. People will begin to think: ‘My God. This must be aimed at us.’” Similar concerns exist in AUS, where a number of senior and respected analysts have publicly opposed the proposal. However, the proposal is part of a debate over the shape and role of the nation’s military forces as the region shakes off the dust of the Cold War and enters an era of new uncertainties. The ambitious re-equipment programme launched in the late 1980s has run against economic realities. The Army faces reshaping, the Navy is debating the future of its surface fleet, the Air Force is buying new transport aircraft, there is an urgent need for airborne early-warning aircraft and more helicopters, the F-111 force ordered when war with Indonesia seemed imminent in the 1960s will be retired from service early in the new century, and a lot of other equipment is on the shopping list. The cruise missile lobby argues that at \$A1.5 million apiece the Tomahawk is a highly accurate, far cheaper and less vulnerable option. The Government says it has no plans to acquire the missile’.

...AUS] would be “completely outside the N[Z] defence planet” if it bought cruise missiles, says the [NZ Opposition] leader... “It makes no sense to us and I don’t think it makes any sense to A[US] either, but it is indicative of the different way their thinking has developed.” ...Canberra... [announced] this week that it was considering buying the missiles... which can hit targets 1500km away...

A[US] yesterday announced that it would slash... desk jobs from its defence force as part of sweeping reforms to boost front-line operations. “We’re going to shift expenditure from the bureaucracy of defence into the front line of defence,” said the P]M]... “There’ll be more money to spend on equipment and on the sharp end, the front end. So it’s fewer bureaucrats and more soldiers.” [The]Defence Minister... said about 8000

support jobs would go as part of the defence review aimed at shifting 10[%] of the defence budget... into weapons and training. The A[US]n Defence Force has about 57,000 active personnel and some 49,000 reserves. About \$A6 billion... of the \$A10 billion defence budget goes to the Navy, Army and Air Force, the remainder is spent on administration. [The minister said the AUS]n defence force had to become more efficient as defence spending... [as a % of GDP] was falling... in the post Cold War world... The author of the defence review... said A[US] also needed to strengthen its defence front line as economically booming Asian nations boosted their military strength. "Not that long ago, we were a mini-superpower in our own region... Our economy was substantially larger and the amount we bought for our defence dollar was substantially larger than anyone else around our region... That's changing and changing very quickly... the economies around the region are growing rapidly and all of those countries are now in a position to acquire the sort of things that only we could afford a few years ago."

...[NZ's] Army chiefs are considering pulling the headquarters for their 2800 or so operational troops out of Auckland in a "teeth-to-nail" savings drive... to cut administrative costs and so free up scarce money for new military equipment, allowing the Army to catch up with technological upgrades in allies' forces... At the moment, two chains of command reach throughout the Army, with each camp divided along these lines... The Army says decisions on where to locate a single command will be made later, once the overall structure is sorted out.

...At least 110 soldiers and civilian staff must vacate the Army's Mt Wellington barracks[in south Auckland] by the end of June, but their future home remains uncertain. Many of them are likely to be posted south to the Trentham military camp[in Wellington], after the Army's entire 100-strong Land Force Command is transferred there from Takapuna[, on Auckland's North Shore]... A further 180 soldiers based at Hobsonville[, west Auckland's Air Force base,] will also move south, to the Linton camp near Palmerston North, leaving only the Special Air Service close to Air Force operations. The Army expects to move about 20 fulltime soldiers – employed at Mt Wellington in support of territorial units – to the headquarters of its 3rd Auckland-Northland territorial battalion at... Grey Lynn[(Auckland central)]. These headquarters will have to be refurbished to accommodate them and their equipment, including a field ambulance and about 30 other military vehicles now stored at Mt Wellington... The need for most existing support services from Mt Wellington, including workshops and accounts administration, will disappear south but the unsold Papakura military camp still needs to be maintained. That camp has cost the Government about \$5 million since it was closed in 1992. Land tenure problems are still holding up its sale and leases to private tenants have raised only \$670,000. Renting the Mt Wellington barracks, one of a number of sites housing the diaspora of soldiers displaced from Papakura, had cost the Army a further \$1 million a year. Soldiers have no trade union but the Public Service Association, representing civilian staff, is upset at not being consulted about what it says has been an order issued from Wellington to disestablish the barracks. An Army spokeswoman... was unable to confirm last night whether there had been such an order but said there was no way the Army would have intentionally neglected to notify the union and its members.

...[Big money in the private sector is attracting highly trained Air Force personnel and threatening Defence Force budgets. A spokesman for the Air Force said skilled personnel were being wooed by pay packets as much as \$40,000 more than they are currently earning. "It's very hard to argue with that." Telecommunications and flying staff were particularly sought after, he said. "The classic example is Air New Zealand. I think we train half the pilots for Air New Zealand. We give them a very expensive, very good training. Perhaps initially they don't offer any more – but very soon, when they become a captain on a 747 or something like that, they earn more than the Chief of Air Staff." The Air Force was losing about 21% of its trained staff a year. "If we're spending on training, we can't spend it on front-line operations." The RNZAF base in Auckland was short of around 54 air crew, about 30 of them pilots. "We just stay about 30 pilots short. We can only train 21 a year and they are wasting out at easily that sort of rate at the moment so we don't get any better. And that's similar in many trades." Firefighters at the RNZAF base in Auckland started out at \$10,000 less than their civilian counterparts.')

...Staffing problems have forced the Air Force in Auckland to rely largely on civilian firefighters... The Whenuapai air base has just 13 firefighters left from an establishment level of 28, meaning there are only enough hands to offer crash protection for aircraft. Housefires and other general blazes have to be left to civilians from the Waitakere fire station. The shortage is seen as a symptom of the high staff turnover in the Air Force... And the base has barely managed to attract enough technical staff to restore 24-hour coverage in its communications centre, which was forced last year to run day by day... [Mean]while a Navy recruitment drive has made little headway... The Navy, with an annual turnover of 18[%], resorted this week to an hour-long paid broadcast on Radio Pacific's 26-station network to coax qualified technicians to sea... It was tough competing with outside industry in times of relatively low unemployment, but the Navy was able to offer job security through contracts of two to four years for those wanting to try something different. The Navy is particularly short of weaponry engineers, especially with the looming arrival of its two new frigates. It hopes to fill the gaps with sailors from ships soon to be retired – the... survey vessel Monowai... and... frigate Waikato...

It's on its way. Te Kaha... is Auckland bound after leaving its Melbourne birthplace yesterday... for a four-day passage across the Tasman... 150 wellwishers gathered ashore during a sombre farewell in which the ship's 30-strong cultural group invoked blessings from the Maori god of the sea, Tangaroa... [The wellwishers included] one or two A[US]n fiances of sailors among several to become engaged during their long months of training... Below decks, [the] Petty Officer... and Warrant Officer... were revving up the ship's engines from banks of spotless electronic consoles merely by pointing a computer mouse... They and many other crew have followed Te Kaha's captain... from service with HMNZS Waikato – now languishing at Devonport at the end of its life. [The] Commander... admitted some nostalgia in forsaking the oldest frigate of the fleet for the newest. Te Kaha... with its highly automated systems [requires] 80 fewer crew than the older ship's company of 239.

...After N[Z] signed in 1989 for its first two Anzac frigates, a politician quipped that the gestation period of an elephant had produced a pair of grey mice... [The then Labour PM] was anxious to defuse rebellion in his party by emphasising how lightly armed they would be. Highlighting their long range for routine patrols through the Pacific – ...using half the fuel... [and] doubling the range of the existing Leander frigates to more than 11,000km – he said they would come with "a peacetime configuration and price tag." ...Even the peace movement acknowledged that the frigate Te Kaha – Maori for strength or prowess – is very lightly armed. And the Navy's new chief admits he would like to see "lots more" offensive weaponry on board... "As a professional, of course I would like to see lots more offensive weaponry, like surface-to-surface missiles and the newest generation of information technology, but we have to be realistic." ...His... candour comes as the A[US]ns prepare to beef up their eight Anzac frigates with long-range missiles and leading-edge radars. They have dumped the Anzac concept of fitting frigates "for but not with" offensive weapons, believing it would be too dangerous to wait until a military threat emerged before fitting armaments and training sailors to fire them... [The incumbent Rear-Admiral's] predecessor... called for N[Z] – as a maritime trading nation dependent on clear sea lanes – to act as a responsible member of a regional "neighbourhood watch group" by maintaining the ability to project naval power. [However, the] Campaign Against Militarism says moves towards global free trade mean nations have more to lose now by going to war with one another, and argues that the Anzacs are obsolete even before they are commissioned. The group claims that... they are inadequate for high-tech warfare, and accuses the Navy of dishonestly trying to soften their image with publicity handouts emphasising fisheries patrol and rescue roles. [The group's s]pokesman... said frigates were almost never used for fisheries protection, and had little room to carry people from danger zones. "In effect they fall between two stools." His group cites taunts made by senior National MPs against the former Labour Government when it decided to buy the first two frigates. The world's most expensive fisheries patrol craft was what [the current PM] called them from the Opposition benches... The admiral said a lack of firepower should "not necessarily" make his new 3600-tonne frigate and its half-built sister ship Te Mana more vulnerable in confrontations. They would "within limitations" be adequately protected with 15km-range Sea Sparrow missiles, fast-firing Phalanx guns on their top decks... a big-punching 127mm [cannon which 'can fire \$15,000 shells at the rate of 20 per minute']... on its bow to provide fire support primarily for ground troops; torpedoes; ...Kaman helicopters, able to fly over the horizon from the frigates to fire missiles or torpedoes at long-range targets... a

powerful hull-mounted sonar to listen for submarines; ...air radar to 450km... and... radar-jamming systems... [Indeed,] sensor and communications equipment account... for 37[% of each frigate's]... cost... The... infrared camera... in trials... was able to catch an Air Force Orion... from about 20km... [T]his is probably only a modest indication of the camera's full potential, because of moist conditions and the fact that the propeller-driven Orions do not emit as much heat as jet aircraft. - 1997

Engine exhaust is the main contributor to an aircraft's infrared signature.

To escape detection in the infrared spectrum, stealth aircraft were not equipped with large, heat-producing afterburner engines. This rendered them incapable of supersonic flight... Ever since radar-directed defences began taking a toll of bomber formations in W[W]II, aircraft designers and military aviators had sought ways to avoid radar detection. Many materials of the early jet age were known to absorb radar energy rather than reflect it... The existence of a Stealth program... was announced by the U.S. government in 1980. The first aircraft employing this technology, the single-seat... F-117A ground-attack fighter, became operational in 1983. The second was the... B-2 strategic bomber, which first flew in 1989.

Blending and faceting give the F-117A a hump-backed, reptilian appearance... The aircraft has been described as "flying better than it looks," but this could be a case of damning with faint praise... According to a report in *Time* magazine, the F-117A is nicknamed the Wobbly Goblin by its pilots... Its acceleration is not sparkling, and because of its wing loading and configuration it becomes unstable... at high speed and low level... A total of fifty-nine F-117s have been ordered, of which seven remained to be delivered in November 1988... The total production may be less than the original plan, for a number of reasons. The aircraft is believed to be expensive... The entire program is said to have cost \$[US]7 billion, including research and development... It is also highly specialised, with a small weapons load... In terms of range, however, the F-117A may yield to few aircraft of its size. In 1987, *The New York Times* reported... a plan to use the F-117A in a strike against Libya's [President]. (It was vetoed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the grounds that the F-117A should not be risked on such a mission.) [The plan] apparently proposed that the F-117A be ferried to Rota, near Cadiz, for the attack. It is approximately 1,200 nautical miles over water from Rota to Tripoli... This impressive range is made credible by the F-117A's large internal fuel capacity... Three of the aircraft have been lost in accidents... By the nineties, some of its missions could be undertaken by the B-2 or the US Navy's A-12, which represented a newer range of... technology. - STEALTH BOMBER

The B-2... has been a costly and controversial program[that is 'becoming quite an embarrassment for the US'].

The B-2's first flight... had been delayed... by a fuel system malfunction... Block 2 testing began in October 1990, investigating the... characteristics of the 'real thing'. These flights provided the first signs that all was not as advertised with the stealthy B-2... Problems with the B-2's performance [- 'the aircraft aren't as invisible as claimed because the reflective paint wears each time they're used and is also affected by the weather' -]have not aided it in the battle for funding on Capitol Hill. The original target was for a fleet of 133 airframes, including prototype, but by 1991 this had been cut back to 76... After the original six aircraft, ordered in 1982, three more were funded while the B-2 was still a 'black' project. In 1989 money was allocated for a further three, followed by two in 1990 and two in 1991. Congress then froze acquisition at 16 (15 for the USAF). The USAF claims it cannot provide effective operational capability with less than 20 aircraft, and five more were subsequently approved by 1993. This approval came with the caveat that the type's... problems must be rectified before any production occurs. Unit costs per aircraft (flyaway) have risen to \$2,220 million. Original 1987 estimates for a 75-aircraft programme stood at \$64,700 million (in total), although it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that some of the huge budget dedicated to the B-2 has been spent on other 'black' projects[- which 'have an \$US11 billion budget for 1997']. The FY1995 budget included \$793 million for support equipment and provision for the closure of the production line. - Encyclopedia of World MILITARY AIRCRAFT

Stealth aircraft were originally considered 'cheaper to produce than the ground equipment necessary to defend against them.' However, radar and infrared systems have become more sophisticated and, relatively cheaper, since the 1980s. Furthermore, *heat-seeking missile* technology also continues to improve. It might not be long before the decreased heat emissions of stealth aircraft are no longer able to compensate for their lack of speed. And heat-seeking missile systems are much cheaper than stealth aircraft - even NZ can afford to have them!

The... Army will get its new missile defence system off the ground with a live firing exercise next year but is still investigating safe sites... The three areas being considered were in Northland, the Wairarapa and the Mackenzie Basin... Training for the \$23 million heat-seeking missile system has begun at the Linton Army camp... with the arrival of a computer simulator and two launchers. Ten launchers will arrive next year... The Army has not had an air-defence capability since a... W[W2] gun and searchlight battery disappeared in the 1950s. The new "fire and forget" missile system is produced by a French-British joint venture... A detachment of four soldiers can carry the system - and assemble and fire it in two minutes. The missiles have a 5.5km range and a 93[%] hit rate is claimed. The missiles lock onto the heat signatures of targets and are said to be almost immune to countermeasures... Live firing exercises would be restricted to one a year because of the cost of the missiles... [In related news, NZ's defence] manufacturers fear their fledgling industry could be torpedoed by secondhand U[S] warships... Cash-strapped defence officials are heading for the U[S] in a last-minute search for cheaper warship alternatives to more Anzac frigates... The U[S] has 50... surplus guided-missile frigates... in the... class to which the N[Z] officials are turning their gaze in a bid to retain a four-frigate fleet... It is not known what price the Americans might seek... but observers were quick to point to heavier running costs from larger crews. Costs would also be duplicated in running two classes of warship, since each would require separate spare parts and training programmes. Although the two classes have the same type of gas turbine engine, they have vastly different weapons systems, with the American ships designed for long-range and costly anti-surface Harpoon missiles... [However, the NZ] Navy could probably buy two American ships at a fraction of the... cost of each new Anzac vessel... Defence accountants have valued the... Te Kaha, at \$563.4 million for GST purposes since it arrived in N[Z] last month.

...Without firing a shot the new frigate... has sunk N[Z]'s trade surplus for July. The... warship turned what would have been an \$81 million surplus for the month into a \$483 million deficit. The merchandise trade statistics recognise an import when it crosses the frontier...

It's that "F" word again. I know everyone's sick of it but it's got to be said - "frigates." I recently arrived in Auckland... and the pathetic appearance of our new frigate... hit me like a slap with a wet flounder... I was raised with a love of warships, a pride in the Achilles action and an unshakeable belief that Britannia ruled the waves. I was enthralled with the stories of Nelson's brilliant victories. Lately I have come to realise that since Trafalgar the British Navy has never won another victory[- excluding, perhaps, the defaulted 'Battle of the River Plate' in which the NZ ship *Achilles* fought. (During 'October 1939, two German pocket battleships - huge vessels with powerful armament - were operating in the Atlantic inflicting heavy damage on Allied shipping. One, the *Graf Spee*, was tracked south to the mouth of the River Plate, a wide stretch of water between Uruguay and Brazil. Though outgunned, the cruiser HMS *Achilles* and the RN cruisers *Ajax* and *Exeter* attacked, and in a running sea fight inflicted severe damage on the pocket battleship. The *Graf Spee* took shelter in Montevideo harbour, but Uruguay, a neutral country, gave the ship only 72 hours to make emergency repairs. At the end of that time she had to leave or be interned. When the time expired, the *Graf Spee* put to sea where the *Achilles* and the other ships were

waiting. Rather than risk battle, the Germans abandoned the ship immediately outside the harbour and blew her up.' 'Captain Langsdorff believed the propaganda of Winston Churchill that a substantial British force had assembled outside the port to wait for its escape bid.' 'In fact no nations have had much luck with their navies. In... W[W1] the German Navy (submarines) successfully blockaded Britain and the Royal Navy was powerless to stop them... It was a case of the Allied armies just managing to win the war before the Navy lost it for them. Germany started... W[W2] with a small Navy, built submarines and again successfully blockaded Britain. The Royal Navy had not learned its lesson from the first war. [It did, however, learn how to use submarines to sink unmarked cargo ships – including at least two holding 'Commonwealth prisoners of war. The 162 NZers killed on the two ships (117 on the *Nino Bixio* and 45 on the *Sebastiano Venier*) accounted for a third of all NZ POW deaths in WW2.] When the Japanese entered... W[W2,] Churchill sent Britain's two prize battleships and an aircraft carrier to stem the advance. The carrier never got there and the two battleships were sunk by Japanese aircraft without effectively having fired a shot. Most of the American Pacific Fleet anchored in the "safe haven" of Pearl Harbo[r] was sunk, solely by aircraft. In the one-sided Falklands conflict the Royal Navy learned that... [the] weapon that took out its latest prized vessels was a relatively small French missile rumoured to have been fired from the back of a land-based truck. What is a frigate? Nelson regarded his frigates as the eyes and ears of the fleet. They were small, fast vessels compared to ships of the line (battleships). They relied on their speed to make up for their lack of firepower and to keep them out of trouble. Is our frigate fast? No. In today's world it's a snail ([with]... a top speed of over 28 knots... [it's] about five knot's slower than the old Achilles... [- although t]he... 30,000hp... LM2500 gas turbine... derived from an aircraft jet engine... has a number of advantages over the steam turbines used by older ships, including quick starting and ease of repair[; and the]... frigate also has two diesel engines with cruising speeds of up to 18kts... [D]oes it have the latest and greatest weaponry and systems? No, it doesn't. I'd like to see any ranking naval officer state that it does without blushing. If it is such a lemon why have we spent billions on two of them and why are our politicians surreptitiously looking to buy more? ...The decision on whether to buy the frigates was given to... [the then Labour PM]. He said he would listen to the wishes of N[Z]. A poll showed 70[%] of the people didn't want the frigates... [The then AU\$N P]M... and the N[Z] Navy wanted them. They won; we lost... The most prosperous nations are those that don't overspend on defence and don't build up outmoded navies. The most stable and prosperous period in English history was the reign of Elizabeth I. She kept taxes very low and refused all sorts of pressure to build any sizeable Navy or Army. In fact, she could be said to have invented privatisation, especially as regards the Navy. The King of Spain did the reverse. He spent the nation's wealth building the largest Navy ever. The Armada bankrupted the world's wealthiest country and achieved nothing.

...Painted big, bold and black on the grey sides of the... frigate Te Kaha is F77. The F (for frigate) is easy enough but why 77? Why not 1...? ...numbers stemmed from the British Admiralty's numbering system for Royal Navy and some Commonwealth fleets... A[US] withdrew from the Admiralty-Commonwealth numbering system several years ago and set up its own... Ship or pennant numbers necessary for visual identification at sea are determined largely by what numbers are available when a ship is commissioned. Numbers become available if a ship is lost or broken up on completion of duty. So, HMNZS Otago became F111 in 1960; HMNZS Taranaki F148 the following year; HMNZS Waikato F55 in 1965; and HMNZS Canterbury F421 in 1970. Because of delays in ordering the Canterbury, the Royal Navy frigate Blackpool was hired by N[Z] for a couple of years. Coincidentally it was F77, the number Te Kaha bears today... Te Mana... will carry F111.

...TWO WEEKS from now, the top guns of the N[Z] and AUS[n] military establishments will huddle on a chilly Melbourne dockside. Looming over them will be the grey hulk of Te Mana, the second of the \$585 million Anzac frigates, straining at the hawsers before it slides into the water. As the brass band plays and streamers fly, the question hanging in the crisp... air will be whether Te Mana will be the last of the Anzac frigates for N[Z]... In question is whether N[Z] can afford a third or even fourth frigate... [The] Defence Minister... has been joined by [the] Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister... in a military-style pincer movement... to push up defence funding. "The first thing we have to acknowledge is the defence vote has undergone substantial reductions in 1996 dollar terms since 1989," says [the Defence Minister]. "It's the view of the government that there should be no further reductions in the defence force and we can see in the future at least modest increases." ...Just how much more money [the minister] will be seeking will become clearer after he receives the long-awaited defence assessment, a major head-scratching exercise looking at what type of defence role N[Z] can afford... Since lobbying for increased defence spending began late last year, some commentators have talked of a real cut in defence spending of a third... [The minister's] own figures show that since the financial year ended 1988, defence spending has fallen a total of 7.5% in real terms, over a period when many government departments have experienced funding cuts and restructuring. There is also debate over whether defence spending has, or should, keep pace with the growing economy... So has defence spending been slashed relentlessly as its advocates claim? In short, no... Depending on the measure used, estimates of current defence spending are anywhere between 1.1% and 2% of GDP. One reputable international comparison released recently... showed N[Z]'s spending had dipped from 1.9% in 1990 to 1.7% in 1995. It showed N[Z] spends less as a proportion of GDP than countries such as A[US], the US, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand... a similar amount... as Italy, Belgium... and Denmark... but more than Japan, Indonesia, Canada... Ireland... Austria... and China. Defence's slice of the total Government cake has actually increased, from 4.8% in 1988 to 5.8% in the current year. The defence forces still represent the fourth largest departmental vote after social welfare, health and education. However, the area in which the armed forces are undoubtedly suffering is from the costs of maintaining or replacing aging weapons, aircraft, ships and vehicles. If there is a case to be made for increased defence spending, it is not so much to turn around previous cuts as to embark on a major programme of capital spending of which the frigates are a part.

...It took the Maori Queen... two attempts to crack the bottle of champagne... [when launching NZ]'s second new Anzac-class frigate... on Saturday... "I name this ship Te Mana. May God bless her and all who sail in her"... [By the way, Te Mana and Te Kaha have] been equipped with eight Seasparrows, but these will be replaced by 32 faster and longer-range missiles under a major weapons upgrade... The newer Seasparrows will fly at twice the speed of sound, giving the Anzacs more survival chances against multiple attacks – at about \$500,000 a shot... Navy chiefs did not let their disappointment over [the prospect of reduced] ship numbers spoil the pleasure of successfully test-firing a new missile yesterday.

...the question that has hung over the Navy since the two [frigates] were ordered in 1989... remains: will there be any more? ...Although [the Defence Minister] supports a fleet of four Anzac frigates, the Government may opt for an alternative, ranging from a politically-comfortable indefinite deferral of a decision to smaller corvette-sized patrol vessels, or more second-hand frigates... Beyond this is the larger question of what place defence will occupy in N[Z]'s national persona, and how this in turn will be viewed by the people we most want to impress into the new millennium... Further afield is the nation's credibility in Asia, where new links are being forged with Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines and China... The immediate concern is A[US], which has consistently criticised the steady decline of defence spending in N[Z]... With its own severe cost pressures, Canberra wants N[Z] as a solid defence partner able to keep up with A[US]n forces... But this depends on how much N[Z] is willing to spend... [A NZ] defence efficiency review... aims to brutally prune costs and inefficiencies from the soft rump of the military, and pump them into the sharp end. The first real benefits of this, however, are not expected to flow until 1998-99... [T]here is a good case to argue that since the Anzacs split N[Z]'s forces have become far more versatile and effective. Rapid deployment capabilities have increased, and their reach and endurance have been increased by the addition of the fleet tanker Endeavour and the Charles Upham. ● 'The Government has been forced to spend an extra \$41 million on a deal for new light-armoured vehicles for the Army. When the Government said last year it would buy 105 new personnel carriers, the cost was put at \$611m. But it was revealed yesterday that the price had been pushed up to \$652m by the fall in the NZ dollar and changes to the contract'.

...A further \$8 million will be spent sorting out the botched purchase of a \$23m missile system, currently useless for combat as it cannot tell friend from foe. The Defence Minister said the government would buy the targeting equipment needed – but not purchased with the missile system – to make the

French-made ground-to-air missile system ready to use with allies in combat. Papers released to the press under the Official Information Act show the project has been a debacle since 1994 and joins the list of botched defence acquisitions including the light armoured vehicles tender and the Charles Upham ship¹.

...Defence chiefs are faced with a \$30 million bill to turn their only cargo ship into an effective military vessel... Necessary modifications to the HMNZS Charles Upham, which was ordered out of routine service in August[1996] because it was so unstable, will cost more than twice its \$14.15 million purchase price... The ship made two naval voyages before being temporarily withdrawn from service after breaking down in heavy seas in the South Pacific, rolling dramatically and laying many of its crew low with seasickness... earning it the nickname of "Charles Chuckam." ...its captain during the Pacific voyage had concerns for its safety... Although the project is seen as crucial for the mobility of N[Z]'s armed forces, it is being held up by a major Government rethink of defensive policy. The conversion project should have begun by now but all new capital decisions are on hold...

While the Army wonders whether it will have a proper troop ship, politicians are considering splashing out on new jetliners for VIP and other transport roles... [T]he Government... is understood to have in mind Boeing 737-700s, which sell for a basic price of about \$56 million, or up to \$64 million with fittings for VIP configurations. Boeing has just produced its first business jet based on this model, saying it can build in "bedrooms, boardrooms or whatever" within the upper price limit... They will be [replacing the]... four remaining Andover transport planes... all that are left of a once-proud fleet of 10... Andovers... [bought] secondhand for \$1 million each... from the Royal Air Force in 1976... It is the only military Andover fleet left in the world... [T]he 30-year-old Andovers have... seen service in Africa and the Middle East as well as the Pacific. They have carried royalty and heads of state, supported U[N] peace-keeping efforts, and used their short-landing capabilities to run countless hurricane relief and search and rescue missions... [In related news, t]urbine blade cracks have struck the Air Force fleet of Aeromacchi jets again, shrinking the number available for pilot training. The Air Force confirmed yesterday that only six or seven of the 17-strong fleet which the Government bought in 1991 for \$266 million would be available until the engine manufacturer, Rolls-Royce, fixed the latest problem... The cracks follow a major redesign project by Rolls-Royce to make the Macchis' jet turbine blades more tolerant of foreign objects, which were believed to have caused two crashes. One Macchi was painstakingly rebuilt after a crash at Ohakea in 1994 but another was written off after ditching in Northland a year earlier. Just under three years ago the fleet's flying hours were reduced after cracks appeared in... blades facing the engine air intakes, but the restriction was lifted after the redesign project... [T]he latest cracks were restricted to the second series of blades.

...Privatisation is gaining ground in the armed forces with word that contractors will take over major aircraft repairs and a Waikato firm will provide training planes.

...A military contract is spurring a Waikato aircraft manufacturer to hire up to 50 more staff. Pacific Aerospace is expanding its factory at Hamilton Airport... to build the Air Force a fleet of 13 CT4E aerobatic airtrainers for about \$500,000 each. The planes will be leased rather than sold to the Air Force, for beginner pilots and the Red Checkers aerobatics team. Pacific was rescued from financial strife two years ago when it was bought by Aeromotive Ltd... [Meanwhile, 14] more workers will be laid off from the Devonport naval dockyard in the face of dwindling defence and commercial business... This will cut the workforce to about 345 from the 650 employed there when the British-owned... private sector operator... took over the dockyard in 1994, under a 10-year management contract to the Ministry of Defence. [The operator] is contractually bound to retain 316 workers to meet naval strategic needs but... [that] was before the Government... deferred... refurbishing the troop ship Charles Upham...

Three years after joining the Navy, the would-be troopship HMNZS Charles Upham is to be leased back to civvy street... if a taker can be found... After spending \$22 million buying and making initial modifications... the Government is stalling for at least another two years a decision on a \$34 million long-term upgrade... [including] a helicopter flight deck, accommodation for 150 troops and storage for equipment such as armoured vehicles and disaster relief supplies.

...From the acquisition of HMS Philomel in 1913, successive N[Z] Governments have often resorted to equipping the Navy "on the cheap." And all too often the Navy has suffered in the eyes of the taxpayer by being expected to get maximum performance from the inferior hardware provided. The Philomel was already 22 years old when the Admiralty agreed to lend her as a seagoing training ship to form the nucleus of the N[Z] Division of the Royal Navy. While the Admiralty still owned the ship, N[Z] paid for her day-to-day running and upkeep... Government penny-pinching ruled again when her successor, the light cruiser Chatham... a coal-burner... [at] a time when oil was the latest thing in naval propulsion... was made available by the Admiralty... The two ships which followed... in the mid-1920s were much more modern. Launched in 1918 and 1919 respectively, the Dunedin and the Diomed were oil-burners, a change which saw the tanker Nucula transferred from the Imperial to the N[Z] Government. Twelve years passed before the Admiralty replaced these cruisers with first the Achilles and then the Leander and by then the threat of war in Europe muted complaints about unnecessary expenditure on the Navy... W[W2] brought the creation of the Royal N[Z] Navy and with it the nation's responsibility for its own maritime defence... But when peace returned it came hand in hand with parsimony. The cruisers Bellone and Black Prince came from Britain on loan, and then, in 1949, the Government bought six Loch-class frigates from Britain for £1.5 million. Their 16 years' service proved them to have been a good buy. N[Z]'s next four warships, the minesweepers Inverell, Kiama, Echuca and Stawell, were a gift from A[US]. With the exception of the Echuca, all served... in training and fishery protection roles. The last cruiser, HMNZS Royalist, was a further example of miserly thinking. Originally to be one of three ships of her class to be modernised by the Royal Navy, she became an orphan when plans for the other two were scrapped. The change of plan did not stop the Government from buying her for £4 million against the advice of the N[Z] naval liaison staff in London. The buoyant economy of the early 1960s and the purchase of two new Rothesay-class frigates, Otago and Taranaki, and a Leander-class, the Waikato, gave the Navy new heart, but a slump in 1967 meant the order and delivery of another Leander, the Canterbury, was deferred and she was not commissioned for service until 1971... Possibly N[Z]'s worst buy was that of fast patrol craft for fishery protection duties in the 12-mile limit of the day. The Navy wanted six, the Government said four, and the British... supplied the smaller batch at a cost of \$7 million in 1975. From the outset the craft suffered from serious engine vibration problems and from sea-keeping qualities described... as ranging from "unsatisfactory" to "vile." Quite unsuited to patrolling the 200-mile exclusive economic zone, declared in 1977, these patrol craft became a liability... In 1974, the survey ship Lachlan, borrowed from A[US] 25 years earlier and bought outright in 1963 for £16,000, was finally retired. Her replacement was another "off-course substitute," the former Government-owned Pacific Islands trader, Moana Roa. Converted for survey duties... [in] Scotland, she began working for the Navy in 1978. She is to be replaced next year by a seven-year-old ship bought from the U[S] Navy for \$31 million and named Resolution. The cost of frigate replacements loomed in the early 1980s, when first the Taranaki and then the Otago reached the end of their useful lives. Rather than order new ships, the Government went to the Royal Navy's second-hand lot and bought two ships that were already older than the Canterbury – the Bacchante, completed in 1969, and the Dido, completed in 1963. They were renamed Wellington and Southland. The Southland has since been taken out of service... the Wellington [was] expected to serve into the next century after a... \$10 million... reconstruction and modernisation that took three and a half years. But... [now she] is to be sold in 2000... [However,] surely the biggest "lemon" of all was the Government's purchase of the Danish container ship, Mercandian Queen II, with the stated intention of making her a sealift vessel for soldiers. The... [ship that is now] named after N[Z]'s most famous soldier... became a nightmare... - 1997

...born in Christchurch, [Charles Upham] was widely regarded as the outstanding[NZ] soldier of W[W2], earning the... Victoria Cross and Bar... the highest British decoration awarded to members of the NZ armed forces... for outstanding gallantry and leadership in Crete in May 1941, and at Ruweisat Ridge, Egypt, in July 1942. He is the only combat soldier ever to win the VC bar, although two medical officers achieved the honour during W[W1]. Upham became famous among his comrades not only for his daring but for his tightly controlled skill at out-thinking the enemy at close quarters, and for his implacable determination to kill as many German soldiers as he could. After being severely wounded at Ruweisat Ridge, Upham was captured by the Germans and recuperated in an Italian hospital. He began a private war with his captors and ended the war in Colditz Castle with other 'dangerous' allied prisoners... Upham volunteered for service at the outbreak of war at the age of 30, quietly proclaiming as his reason a desire to fight for justice.

...Because of its small population and the high cost of the military equipment which it must import, NZ has tended to rely on small professional military units backed by a citizens' army in times of crisis. Mutual defence treaties have forced governments to keep the armed forces' numerical strength and technological performance up at a basic level even in times of relative economic hardship. NZ armed forces have fought no military actions at home since the land wars of last century but historically have responded immediately to British Commonwealth problems... The Commander-in-Chief of the N[Z] Armed Forces is the Governor-General, the Queen's representative, and this effectively places the services under the control of cabinet... The N[Z] Army has evolved from the Volunteers set up by the Militia Act of 1858 which, as a citizens' force, supported both the Regular Force set up by the Colonial Defence Act of 1862 and the Armed Constabulary Act which superseded it in 1867. The Volunteers were re-organised during the 1880s in response to what came to be known as 'the Russian scares', and which led to the fortifying of NZ's main ports. Ten contingents of mounted rifles (from the Volunteers) went to the South African War in 1899. The Defence Act 1909 replaced the Volunteer force with the Territorial Force recruited by compulsory military training. During W[W1] the... Territorial Force continued to function but only volunteers were accepted for overseas service until the Military Service Act of 1916 made service compulsory for all males, between the ages of 20 and 46, who were called up. Throughout W[W1], a total of 124211 were mobilised for active service with the Expeditionary Force, representing 11.5% of the total population and more than 50% of the male population of military age... Of these, 100444 embarked for overseas service. About another 1500 N[Z]ers served overseas with British units or the nursing service... The official death toll on active service was 16554. ['In financial terms, the war had cost NZ more than £81.5 million to 1921.' During WW2], NZ Army units – briefly on a volunteer basis and then compulsorily – served in the Middle East, Italy and the Pacific in substantial numbers, and with some as individuals in every theatre of war. Surprisingly, service figures are much less reliable than during W[W1]. One official estimate is that 194000 men entered the armed services during the war (about 67% of the male population between 18 and 45)... The official figure for killed on active service was 11625 with 46 declared 'missing'. After the war, the Territorial Force, based on compulsory service for ten years from 1949, was integrated with the regular army. Since [1945], NZ soldiers have served in Japan as an occupation force... as part of a UN force in the Korean War... as part of a British force against Communist insurgency, in Malaysia, and in South Vietnam... Units... have been based in Singapore, since the termination of active service in Malaysia in 1966.

Singapore, with just over 3 million people[– or about half-a-million people less than NZ –] has 54,000 under arms compared to N[Z]'s 9500. - 1997

The first professional soldiers to officially serve in NZ were those sent by Britain after 1840 to quell Maori resistance to the theft of their land (*the land wars*). 'By the time the British Army arrived in NZ it had already conquered a quarter of the world.' However, many British soldiers (including commanders) were unprepared for what awaited them at the other side of the world.

The N[Z] wars between 1845 and 1870 were remarkable for the rapidity with which the Maoris adapted to European warfare and the difficulties the British experienced in subduing them... WARFARE in N[Z] was a widespread seasonal activity in pre-European times. It had become endemic by the time the Europeans arrived. Feuds and fighting were built up round an elaborate potential for insult or injury requiring *utu*, which in one form demanded vengeance in the form of physical retribution. This penchant for warfare developed with the more settled horticultural life of the later period of Maori settlement as a result of increasing population and pressure on the availability of good quality land. The earlier moa-hunters had been a relatively peaceful culture. This change is consistent generally with developments in other parts of the world – hunting societies are more peaceful because men can show their manhood on the hunt and because the quality of the land on which settlement takes place is not critical... Maoris formed war parties (*taua*) for raids on other hapu and their conduct was rigidly controlled by rituals and superstitions. Fighting was hand-to-hand with no use of bows and arrows or slings and limited use of throwing spears. The most common weapons were clubs... The use of clubs was carefully taught to boys and young men and required as much drill and skill as swordplay... Behaviour in battle was a source of much mana ['respect', 'integrity, charisma, prestige'] – or shame... Maoris seemed to have little fear of death, firm in the conviction that they would return to Hawaiki, their spiritual homeland. As a result they fought with ruthlessness and little compassion for the defeated including women and children... Deceit and deception were also employed by warriors as part of battle strategy and tactics.

Pre-European warfare was small in scale, involving extended families or sub-tribes rather than major tribal groupings. To help ward off attack, groups began building defence works such as simple palisades that in time developed into complex fortified pa utilising high fences of wooden stakes, raised fighting stages and double rows of ditches. The majority of NZ's pa were built in the period from about 1500 to the first half of the 19th century, and were concentrated in the northern half of the North Island. Here, it has been estimated, there were between 4,000 and 6,000 pa, with 500 in Taranaki alone. Only about 100 pa are known to have been built in the entire South Island. Some pa were used only once, but many were occupied many times over several centuries. Each building or re-building of a pa was a major event in the lives of the people involved. Often pa were built in expectation of an attack that never eventuated, but many were attacked and some were sacked... [During October 1769, Captain] James Cook and the crew of the Endeavour first made contact with Maoris on the banks of the Turanganui River, the present-day site of Gisborne in Poverty Bay. Cook responded to Maori curiosity, challenges and growing hostility by ordering the firing of muskets in three incidents. At least five Maoris were killed and a number wounded... Attempts by Cook's crew to trade with Maoris in the Hawke's Bay area[south of Poverty Bay] were not greatly successful... On his second visit to NZ, Cook found the Maoris in Queen Charlotte Sound eager to trade for iron. For trade goods, they also offered their female relatives to be exploited by seamen. Venereal disease was observed... ['Sex was the biggest industry in NZ during the early 1800s. Indeed, the US consul of the time was moved to say that "New Zealand is a brothel."' The Far North] Maoris were quick to see that possession of European firearms would give superiority in war, and muskets, powder and shot became major items of trade. Even missionaries, dependent on the Maoris for food, were forced to barter with firearms.[The Far North tribes mostly 'obtained their guns from US whaling ships calling into the Bay of Islands port settlement of Kororareka (now called *Russell*), which in those days was better known as "the hellhole of the South Pacific" – the town had its own vigilante law enforcement group but the worst crime they could come up with was debt collecting. The captains of US whaling ships would trade guns for supplies while their crews would trade guns for sex. One gun was worth three weeks with a Maori woman' (alternatively, 'one gun could be traded for a *mokomokai*' – preserved Maori head).] The success of two major *taua* (fighting expeditions) from the Bay of Islands in 1818 was attributed to European weapons... Maunainia village and Mokoia pa at the present site of Panmure, Auckland, were taken

in 1821... by... [a huge... Northland... taua... An estimated 2,000 slaves were captured... The pa Te Totara near the present site of Thames was taken in 1822; the Waikato pa Matakaitaki was also taken, where 1,500 were estimated to have died... The[se taua]... escalated the trade in muskets and intensified tribal warfare which did not diminish until the early 1830s when a balance of firearms among hapu was reached in the North Island... [T]he first attempt by British forces to discipline Maoris... [occurred on October 1, 1834, when, a]fter a bombardment, the crew of HMS *Alligator* attacked the pa... [of] chief Hongi Hika... at Waimate... [In March 1845 t]he sloop HMS *Hazard* was sent to the Bay of Islands[, after]... Hone Heke... attacked Russell.

[Hone Heke] was a... Ngapuhi chief whose defiance, in four times cutting down the British flagpole above Kororareka, has earned him an honoured place in the history of NZ. He and his tribesmen, although greatly outnumbered, outfought the British sent to stop them, and their rebellion was, in the end, only crushed by subterfuge. Heke's birthdate is unknown but is believed to have been around 1810. He was educated by missionaries and is said to have acquired a deep knowledge of the Scriptures, which he used in argument against the expansion of British interest in later years. He was a nephew of HONGI HIKA, another great Ngapuhi warrior, and married Hariata, a daughter of Hongi, which gave him the added mana that he needed because he was not himself of the highest rank... Heke and his fellow Ngapuhi resented the withdrawal of the seat of colonial government from Kororareka to Auckland which had resulted in an economic decline in the north. Heke focused his annoyance on the symbol of the British presence in NZ – the Union Jack. On 8 July 1844, after praying to both the Christian and Maori gods, he led a war party to... cut down the flagpole. Heke claimed that the flagstaff was his property because it had been cut from the forest of his people. Troops were sent to the Bay of Islands but for several months there was no further trouble. Twice in January 1845 Heke led a party to cut down the new flagpole. It was re-erected, a blockhouse built and garrisoned with soldiers and sailors from the *Hazard* and £100 was offered as a reward for Heke's capture. Two months later he attacked the blockhouse, ejected the garrison and the whole town of Kororareka was emptied in a panic. The European settlers went to Auckland and claimed that Heke, reinforced by another chief, Kawiti, planned to attack the new capital. The exact details of what followed are somewhat confused, but it seems that Heke and Kawiti built a pa at Okaihau, expecting a retaliatory strike by British soldiers and the settlers. In May about 800 fighting men, half of them troops and sailors and half friendly Maoris, arrived and attacked the pa. They failed. Then Heke charged out of the pa and attacked the friendlies. He was wounded and retired to establish himself at Ohaeawai. By the middle of June, 630 professional British soldiers and marines with artillery were assembled at Waimate, together with a strong force of friendly Maoris. They attacked Heke's pa with its 250 men, all armed with guns, on 24 June. By 3 July Heke was still holding out and had, in fact, made one rapid sortie against the Maoris fighting with the British, had captured a Union Jack, and several British staff officers narrowly escaped death. On 3 July, Heke announced a truce to enable the British to carry off their dead (44) and wounded (66). On 10 July, it was found Heke had evacuated the pa. George GREY arrived for his first term as Governor at the end of 1845 and immediately went north to control the Heke rebellion which had abated. The Maori leader had gone back to his pa to plant crops to ensure he would be well supplied during the following winter. He was held in his pa by a feint attack, while the British forces with nine big guns were marshalled before Kawiti's pa at Ruapekapeka. The British force consisted of 1173 soldiers and sailors and 450 Maori allies. On 2 January 1846 Kawiti attacked from the pa but was driven back and on 10 January the artillery made two small breaches in the palisade. It was, ironically, Christianity, which the pakehas had brought to the Maoris, that was the Maori downfall. The 11th January was a Sunday; Kawiti retired to the back of the pa to rest and Heke's reinforcements were in the bush close at hand holding a religious service; British scouts discovered what was happening and quietly took possession of the pa with minimal resistance... and forced Kawiti to flee... This ruse which brought about Heke's defeat consequently diminished his mana, and although he remained an intractable dissident, he made no further attempt at revolt... [T]hese disturbances... were followed by other outbreaks of violence in the Hutt Valley and at Wanganui. But in 1860-61 there was a more serious confrontation between Maoris and British troops in Taranaki, where government attempts to force a purchase of land at Waitara provoked Maori anger... [Sir Duncan Alexander Cameron] was a British professional soldier[who had] served in the Crimean War and came to NZ in 1861 as a Major-General to command the Imperial forces against the Maoris in the Land Wars... He fought in the Waikato and in Taranaki but later came to disapprove of the war which he believed was being deliberately waged for the benefit of land-hungry settlers. Consequently, in 1865, he resigned and returned to England... [Cameron is best-remembered for 'bypassing Paterangi Pa where the Kingites were offering battle, instead taking the town of Rangiaowhia by surprise (women and children – who had been sent there for safety on Cameron's suggestion – were among the dead'), and his attack on] GATE PA...

When the Government sent troops to the Tauranga district in January 1864, the Ngai-te-Rangi built a series of fortifications to withstand the expected attack. As soon as Waoku, the strongest of these, had been completed, [the Ngai-te-Rangi chief] Rawiri Tuaia sent General Cameron... a letter announcing the fact and adding that his people had built a road up to it from the harbour – a distance of 10 miles – “so that the soldiers would not be too weary to fight” when they arrived. When it became apparent that this challenge would not be accepted, the Ngai-te-Rangi decided to move to a position nearer Tauranga. In April 1864 they occupied a strong position on the Pukehinahina ridge about 2 miles from Tauranga. The site chosen was at a gate in the boundary fence between European and native land and, from this circumstance, it has come to be called “Gate Pa”... [Today the road which passes beside the site of the pa is named after Cameron. His] force comprised a Naval Brigade from the *Esk*, *Miranda*, and *Falcon*; elements of the royal Artillery 43rd and 68th Regiments; and a movable column... drawn from the 12th, 14th, 40th and 65th Regiments, making 1695 officers and men in all. [This force ‘outnumbered the Maori defenders by eight-to-one.’] On the evening of 28 April, in order to cut off the Maoris' possible line of retreat, Cameron dispatched the 68th Regiment, under Colonel Greer, to occupy the narrow neck of land between two swamps, in the rear of the pa. At daybreak on 29 April Cameron began shelling the pa and, by 4 p.m., had opened a breach in the defence works. He mounted a strong assault through this breach, but his men were repulsed with heavy losses. As it was too late in the day to consider a further assault, Cameron decided to renew the engagement the following morning. During the night, however, small parties of Maoris, taking their wounded [and ‘about 100 guns from the killed and wounded British soldiers’] with them, slipped through Colonel Greer's lines to safety. British casualties in the engagement were 111 killed and wounded while the Maoris lost 25 killed and an unknown number wounded. The significance of the Gate Pa engagement was that it was the scene of the strongest artillery barrage mounted during the Maori Wars.

The British had ‘17 cannons, including one of the largest used anywhere in the world during the 19th century, and each fired about 100 rounds’ – a barrage which is said to have been ‘greater per square metre than any piece of ground at the Western Front during WWI.’ Another *significance of the Gate Pa engagement* was that ‘Cameron became convinced of the futility in attacking such fortifications’ – many of which were based on the model of a Kawiti-designed pa that was ‘circulated among other Maori tribes (a second model was taken on a tour of Britain’).

The Far North Maori tribes had ‘expected to run their own affairs with the colonial government looking after European affairs – but the English thought differently.’ Hone Heke had on numerous occasions informed the British that ‘God gave this land to the Maori’ and warned them against taking more land than had been allocated. However, other Maoris were opposed to Heke because they feared that ‘the British (and their trade) would be scared away.’ The first time the British (and their Maori allies – kupapa) marched against Heke and Kawiti they were forced to ‘retreat after the two Maori leaders split their warriors and used guerrilla tactics to attack the front and rear of the column.’ A primary concern for all Maoris was that the British had artillery and other modern weapons (e.g., ‘rocket guns’). A standard pa and open field was no match for such weaponry. This led Kawiti (a ‘veteran of the gun wars’) to

design and build a new type of pa – Ohaeawai. This pa is described as being the site where ‘modern trench warfare was invented’, due to its having ‘the world’s first anti-artillery bunkers.’ The British were able to hold positions on hills overlooking the pa and ‘pounded it for days’, but when their leader Lt Col Despard decided (‘against the advice of his officers and the local kupapa chief Waka Nene’) it was safe to launch an attack on the pa – after assuming that few defenders would have survived the bombardment – his force suffered a large number of casualties. Not only had the pa’s trenches and bunkers protected the inhabitants, but it had two defensive walls. The flimsy and undefended outer palisade was designed to ‘slow down and entangle the British advance long enough for the defenders to shoot and reload before the attackers reached the second wall – made of rocks and through which the British could see nothing but gun barrels.’ The pa was also designed to enable the defenders to slip in and out unnoticed – which is how they *evacuated the pa*. In order to attack the pa at Ruapekapeka with artillery, the British had to ‘cut their way through the bush at a rate of 1km per day.’ Kawiti is believed to have ‘known that the British wouldn’t honour the Sabbath, because they hadn’t in the past’. The Maoris had, apparently, ‘planned to allow the British to enter the pa then chase the defenders into the bush, where Heke’s warriors were waiting, but, after leaving the pa, some of the defending warriors became worried that Kawiti was still inside and attempted to rescue him – thus spoiling the ambush and resulting in both sides gaining a similar number of casualties.’ ‘Kawiti requested peace in a letter. Both chiefs were eventually granted a free pardon.’

KIWI BATTLEFIELDS IF you’ve been blaming the education system for your ignorance of the wars which raged in N[Z] in the middle of last century, you’re about to run out of excuses. Lots of us know more about America’s civil war, for example, than the warfare which erupted between Maori and Pakeha, between a small tribal people and the world’s greatest empire, but here comes your chance to right that embarrassing imbalance. TV One’s *The New Zealand Wars*, a five-part series written and presented by [an Auckland University] historian... details that 30-year struggle for British sovereignty over mana Maori... While there are no re-enactments of battles in the \$1.3 million series, paintings, photographs, animations and – most importantly – [the historian]’s words should deliver us a proper understanding of the bitter and bloody battles fought between our Maori and Pakeha forebears... [The series]’ director... says the... wars – which loom larger for many Maori than for most Pakeha – were a particularly sensitive subject to tackle. “For every tribe, they view these histories in particular as being tapu and very special and certainly not something one trifles with... particularly with respects to going to certain areas where there may have been events of import or... perhaps massacre.” ...There remains within Maoridom special sensitivity over kupapa... But there are little ways – probably more noticeable to Maori than others – that allow the story of kupapa to be told without demeaning the mana of a particular tribe... • The[first of the] five episodes... is...: The War that Britain Lost...

HERE’S [the Auckland University historian] again, waving his arms in a paddock. It was on this spot, he tells the camera, that the British were alleged to have won a great military victory over the Maori. Actually, it was a great Maori victory/a pyrrhic British victory/a draw/a British fraud. [The]Professor cleaves the air with his hand, happily butchering another national myth. A bloody business, this, and all done on national television: no wonder it has caused trouble. *The New Zealand Wars* provokes questions in living rooms everywhere. How dare he say Maori women sold sex in exchange for muskets? How dare he talk about our British ancestors like this? Were Maori really that clever? Were the British really that dumb? Above all: can [the professor] open his mouth without biffing his arms about? The Auckland University historian, though jet-lagged after speaking at an academic conference in Britain, is not short of answers. Letters to the editor complain that he portrays the Maori as noble non-savages and military geniuses, the British as bigots, cowards, and nincompoops. His reply is dry. “If you’re looking for something to make pakeha look good... the N[Z] Wars aren’t a great pick. The fact is, as a Maori leader said, it wasn’t the Maori who went over there... It’s a hard fact of history that it tended to be the pakeha who did the invading. But... I don’t think it overstates the pakeha crimes, and it certainly mentions Maori ones as well.” [The professor]’s description of Te Kooti’s attack on Matawhero, for instance, describes the appalling slaughter of defenceless settlers, including women and children. It was butchery, he says: “That’s how I saw it and that’s how I called it. Sometimes that suits pakeha, sometimes it suits Maori.” Maori heroism and British cowardice? In some ways, he says, you find more raw courage on the British side. It was the British soldiers, typically, who had to cross the deadly no-man’s land in front of the Maori fighting pa. They were “assaulting into massed volleys” of musket-fire. The modern pa, with its carefully concealed trenches and bunkers, proved a formidable weapon against the British. The trenches launched deadly fire upon the attackers; the bunkers inside the pa sheltered Maori from the rain of artillery fire; and hidden escape routes enabled tactical retreat. “The whole characteristic of the Maori warfare that I’ve tried to portray is not so much that it was heroic – although sometimes it was – but that it was clever and determined... In a sense, you know, the Maori took the less heroic option of seeking to win battles.” But it is true, he says, that “we’ve got a David and Goliath story here. The British Empire was a lot bigger than the Maori people. That’s a hard fact of history.” British stupidity? “It’s not me who said the British commanders were fools... It’s... the people who write letters to the editor [complaining about the series].” Pakeha settlers scorned the top brass. In the early 1860s, [a prominent settler] said: “There does not seem to be an ounce of brains among the officers. The utter incapacity and monstrous stupidity of almost all at the head of affairs becomes daily clearer.” ...In fact, says [the] Professor... the British commanders were “good – but not quite as good as the Maori”. It is this that provides one of the paradoxes of the series. The viewer is shown a series of battles and typically told that the claimed British victories were no such thing. So how come, splutters the pakeha viewer, we won the war? Or is [the] Professor... telling us we didn’t? His reply, given in the series, is: of course the pakeha won, “but it was not a knockout. It was a narrow victory on points... the remarkable thing about the... wars was not the eventual Maori defeat, but the degree of their success along the way.” The pakeha victory was not because of superior military brain-power or greater weaponry: “In the final analysis the pakeha won because of their overwhelming numbers.” If this upsets pakeha preconceptions of our history, [the] Professor... has also upset some Maori versions of the past. He hopes to rehabilitate, at least to some degree, the kupapa – ...who are still reviled by some Maori today. “I’ve become aware that the role of the kupapa is within some tribes a major obstacle standing between Maori and their history. Actually, these people in their own terms were anything but traitors,”... The Te Arawa kupapa, who proved devastatingly effective against Te Kooti’s troops, did not see themselves as fighting for the Government. “As far as they were concerned... the Government was fighting for them.” For kupapa, in a sense, the pakeha were just useful troops in their struggle against old tribal foes. Academic historians, unlike the ordinary viewers, have said little in public about... [the] show... A hard lesson for academics [is that] books reach only a minority; for many, it’s real only if it is on TV. N[Z]ers, says the] Professor... know little about their history, and what they do know tends to be shut away from their real lives, as in a glass case. On television, [the] Professor... tried to break the glass and put history on the street... The surprisingly high ratings for a show “with a professor throwing his arms around in a paddock,”... suggests that he has got the point across. N[Z] history, in turn, can throw a light on world history. [The]Professor... has claimed, controversially, that the Maori invented modern trench warfare. Critics, who point to the trenches dug around Roman camps and other soldiers’ holes in the ground, miss the point, he says. Modern trench warfare means being “based on interactive trenches, firing trenches and anti-artillery bunkers, as exemplified in the Western Front of 1915 to 1918”. British generals, says [the] Professor... forgot the lessons in trench warfare they should have learned in N[Z]. General Cameron... was later governor of Sandhurst, where British army officers were trained. He trained the generals who fought W[W1. NZ]... showed him that “it’s basically no use launching assaults against fully completed modern trench systems... [I]f you’d looked at the history of the assault on the Gate Pa... for example, you wouldn’t have attacked in the Somme.”

...Why do we take such little notice of history? Remember “Kaore e mau te rongu ake ake!” (“We will never surrender, never!”) the legendary cry of Rewi Maniapoto? Where and when was that? Bet you don’t know. Same day, same place, the British soldiers asked that the Maori women and children be allowed to leave the pa and a woman stood up and shouted back: “Ki te mate nga tane, me mate ano nga wahine me nga tamariki” (“If

the men die the women and children die also”). Have you heard of Ruapekapeka? ...Where is Gabriel’s Gully, and who was Gabriel Read...? These are names and events that have left their mark on our map as well as our history and which could enrich our sense of identity and, more materially, our tourism industry if only they were exploited. The U[S] as a national entity is less than 70 years older than we are if you match their War of Independence and Constitutional Convention with our Treaty of Waitangi, but their sense of historical identity is light years ahead of ours. Each summer, millions of Americans and foreign tourists visit their heritage sites... and the many museums and battlefields (Yorktown, Gettysburg, and others) around the country... This is an industry – and I mean industry – that not only heightens the sense of America’s national roots and feeds its modern identity but employs thousands of people and contributes enormously to the domestic economy... Many of the most precious heritage sites that milestone our history and our emerging identity are only vaguely acknowledged or totally ignored... The demand is there. Books on local history sell, per capita, better than anywhere else in the world, and [the recent] television series on the New Zealand Wars scored high ratings... So let’s imagine a reconstruction of Orakau Pa near Te Awamutu... from where Rewi Maniapoto defied General Cameron’s troops back in April 1864. And Ruapekapeka – close to other major tourist attractions in the Bay of Islands – a battlefield that interests historians around the world, reflecting as it did the genius for military engineering of the great fighting chief, Kawiti. Military experts have visited the remains of the pa, examined drawings of the fortifications and noted the extraordinary use of dugouts and trenches, the first in the world known to be used in warfare and grimly prophetic of what was to come in... W[W]I. Was Ruapekapeka taken by the British because the newly Christian Maori left it to attend Sunday service...? Or is that unsupportable myth? A great story, anyway. These and many other heritage sites lie mouldering in the countryside, trampled under the dilatory feet of apathy and ignorance... We are making the same mistake nationally we make individually when we omit to note the stories of grandparents, great aunts and uncles and even parents – and regret it so deeply after they’re gone... [Incidentally, *The New Zealand Wars*] series was first conceived... back in 1993, soon after [its] producer saw a documentary on – you guessed it – the American civil war.

In the American Civil War, field fortifications emerged as an essential of warfare, with both sides employing entrenchments to an extent never seen before... Field mines and booby traps were used... and trench mortars were developed to lob shells into opposing trenches... Two notable sieges, that of Vicksburg, Miss., in the west, and Petersburg, Va., in the east, were characterized by the construction of... continuous trench lines that foreshadowed those of W[W]I. In the Cold Harbor, Va., campaign, when General Ulysses S. Grant sent his troops against Confederate earthworks, he lost 14,000 men in 13 days... Petersburg, an important rail centre 23 miles... south of Richmond, was a strategic point for the defence of the Confederate capital. In June 1864 the Union army began a siege of the two cities, with both sides rapidly constructing fortifications 35 miles... long... By year’s end... General Robert E. Lee still held Richmond and Petersburg. But mostly due to mismanagement and inefficiency, Southern railroads had broken down or been destroyed. Thus the Confederates were ill-fed to the point of physical exhaustion, and the lack of draft animals and cavalry mounts nearly immobilized the troops. Hunger, exposure, and the apparent hopelessness of further resistance led to increasing desertion, especially among recent conscripts... After Lee’s plan to join with General Joseph E. Johnston was thwarted, he surrendered to General Grant on April 9... 1865... The lesson taught by accurate, long-range fire from entrenched positions in the American Civil War was lost on European commanders. Even the bitter experiences of appalling losses in the Crimean, Franco-German, and Boer wars failed to lessen an ardour for the theory of the offensive that was so fervent... in the field. Few took notice of the immense casualties the Turks inflicted[at Gallipoli]...

Trench warfare is resorted to when... superior firepower... compels the... defence... to “dig in” so extensively as to sacrifice... mobility in order to gain protection. A trench system may begin simply as a collection of foxholes hastily dug by troops using their entrenching tools. These holes may subsequently be deepened so that a soldier can safely stand up in one of them, and the individual foxholes may be connected by shallow crawl trenches. From this beginning a system of more permanent trenches may be constructed. In making a trench, soil from the excavation is used to create raised parapets running both in front of and behind the trench. Within the trench are firing positions along a raised forward step called a fire step, and duckboards are placed on the often muddy bottom of the trench to provide secure footing. The tactical ancestor of modern trench warfare was the system of progressively extended trenches developed by the French military engineer Sebastien Le Prestre de Vauban for the attack of fortresses in the 17th century. Trenches remained merely a part of siegecraft until the increasing firepower of small arms and cannon compelled both sides to make use of trenches in the American Civil War (1861-65). The trench lines of the Petersburg-Richmond theatre of operations in the final months of that war were the foremost example of trench warfare in the 19th century. Trench warfare reached its highest development on the Western Front during W[W]I... when armies of millions of men faced each other in a line of trenches extending from the Belgian coast through north-eastern France to Switzerland. These trenches arose within the first few months of the war’s outbreak, after the great offensives launched by Germany and France had shattered against the deadly, withering fire of the machine gun and the rapid-firing artillery piece. The sheer quantity of bullets and shells flying through the air in the battle conditions of that war compelled soldiers to burrow into the soil to obtain shelter and survive. The typical trench system in W[W]I consisted of a series of two... or more trench lines... Each trench was dug in a type of zig-zag so that no enemy, standing at one end, could fire for more than a few yards down its length. Each of the main lines of trenches was connected to each other and to the rear by a series of communications trenches that were dug roughly perpendicular to them. Food, ammunition, fresh troops, mail, and orders were delivered through these trenches. The intricate network... contained command posts, forward supply dumps, first-aid stations, kitchens and latrines. Most importantly, it had machine-gun emplacements to defend against assault, and it had dugouts deep enough to shelter large numbers of defending troops during an enemy bombardment... The defenders’ artillery was posted to the rear of the main line of trenches. Each main line of trenches was fronted by fields of barbed wire intended to slow down and entangle attacking infantry. As W[W]I progressed, both sides, but particularly the Germans, developed trench systems... [with] greater depth and strength in order to ensure that the enemy could not achieve a breakthrough at any particular point... By 1918 the Germans had constructed some trench systems that had a depth of 14 miles... Throughout most of W[W]I, the opposing armies... tried to break through the enemy’s trench system by mounting infantry assaults preceded by intense artillery bombardments of the defending trenches. These attacks usually failed, partly because the preliminary bombardment alerted the defenders to the imminence of an attack, thus allowing them time to bring up reserves for a counterattack, and because the bombardments themselves turned the “no-man’s-land” between the opposing sides into rough, shell-pocked terrain that slowed down the attacking infantry. The crucial elements in attacking a trench system, surprise and overwhelming numbers of infantry, were thus almost impossible to attain. The Allies’ increased use of the tank in 1918 marked the beginning of the end of trench warfare... since the tank was invulnerable to the machine gun and rifle fire that were the trenches’ ultimate defence. Relatively little use was made of trenches in the mobile warfare of W[W]II... Classic trench warfare did, however, reappear in the Iran-Iraq War... in which such mobile weapons as tanks and aircraft were in short supply.

US and other non-NZ historians may be correct in stating that *the trench lines of the Petersburg-Richmond theatre of operations in the final months of that war were the foremost example of trench warfare in the 19th century*; or that entrenchments were used during America’s Civil War *to an extent never seen before*. At 35 miles long they certainly were more EXTENSIVE than Maori trench systems! However, one system of three connected pas constructed in 1863 south of Rangiriri in the Waikato has been described as ‘more sophisticated than anything developed during the American Civil War’ – and, because of an indiscrete act by its architect, another Maori military engineering ‘masterpiece’ was never tested.

TITOKOWARU... was a famous Maori guerilla warfare leader... a member of the Ngati Ruahine tribe... reputed to have lost his right eye fighting in a HAUHAU war party in 1864. The victories which made him famous were at his pa, Te Ngutu o te Manu, deep in the forest near Hawera; and at Moturoa. On both occasions, in 1868, he inflicted heavy defeats on government forces. The Prussian mercenary... VON TEMPSKY, was killed during the attack on [his pa]. Titokowaru's mana declined as he grew older, according to one claim, because of an illicit relationship with another chief's wife... In his later years he was associated with the pacifist, TE WHITI, often leading demonstrations of passive resistance.

Another Titokowaru pa was 'abandoned the night before battle because his followers believed his loss of mana might bring him bad luck.' After inspecting the pa, the 'veteran British officer who led a Colonial Army against it decided that an attack was unlikely to have been successful.'

One reason for the general lack of recognition afforded to Maori military engineering might be due to the world's greater interest in what was occurring in America during the early 1860s than on the other side of the Pacific. Another reason could be the British habit of exaggerating their feats after taking pas (even abandoned ones) – although this behaviour is understandable if the possible reaction around the world to news that the might of Britain's military was struggling to defeat a *small tribal people* is taken into consideration! Whenever the British succeeded at defeating Maoris it was usually due to superior numbers or the assistance of *kupapa*. To add to their embarrassment, British forces were made up of professional or 'full-time soldiers whereas the Maoris were part-timers' – who still had to look after crops and other 'economic activities necessary for the survival of their families.' This was a problem for individual villages but when tribes united under the Maori King Movement used a series of pas to effectively lay siege to the European settlement of New Plymouth, 'groups of about 150 warriors would spend a while at the front then, as each group returned from action in order to plant crops and gather other supplies, they would be replaced by another group.' In his attempts to dislodge the pas, the commander of British forces in New Plymouth used de Vauban's method of trench warfare known as 'slow sapping (digging deep trenches up to the palisades of a fort which were then breached with explosives)'. However, his methods were largely ineffective because 'the British would return to their trenches each morning to find the Maoris had filled them back in, and as each sap trench neared a pa the Maoris would simply abandon it for another.'

The final engagement of the New Zealand Wars took place at Mangaone, south of Waikaremoana on the East Coast of the North Island[during February 1872]. Arawa troops loyal to the government fired on the retreating forces of Te Kooti whose rebellion against the government had started when he was wrongfully arrested and deported to the Chatham Islands in 1865.

Although *the final engagement of the New Zealand Wars took place* in 1872, the final 'shooting in the NZ Wars occurred during 1916 when the last Maori stronghold was attacked by armed police – an act that united the Maori tribes and split the settlers off from England.'

Police and descendants of one of the[20th] century's most controversial Maori leaders, Rua Kenana, are secretly negotiating an "acknowledgment" that the Crown was wrong when it jailed him in 1916. Kenana, a Tuhoe prophet born in the Ureweras, was sentenced to 12 months' hard labour and 18 months' reformative treatment after he was convicted of treason, sly-grogging and resisting arrest. Now, [over 80] years later, a representative of Kenana's family... has confirmed that the gunpoint arrest – in which Kenana's son was killed and his daughter raped – is being scrutinised... The N[Z] Herald understands that the Kenana affair is one of several Maori grievances standing in the way of a bid by police nationwide to put bad relations behind them... But the issue does not have unanimous support among all Tuhoe people. A prominent member of the tribe... said an acknowledgment would be lip-service only and would come too late. As a result of visions, Kenana preached a Maori millennium – everlasting life for Maori who would follow him – and eventual removal of Europeans from N[Z]. As a prophet, Kenana believed he was the brother of Jesus Christ and the leader who another Maori rebel, Te Kooti, had prophesied would arise to succeed him as the head of the Ringatu Church. From 1905, Kenana began to carve a "new Jerusalem" out of the rugged bush of Maungapohatu. Within three years, he had attracted more than 1000 Tuhoe, Ngati Awa and Whakatohea followers. His community and preachings were regarded with distaste and suspicion by European and Maori leaders... He identified the Maori people with the Israelites [– 'declaring himself a messiah and his people a lost tribe of Israel' –]and interpreted Scripture accordingly. Pressure was brought to bear on officials when it was discovered that Kenana was supplying alcohol to his followers... – he claimed alcohol enhanced his spiritual visions. When he refused to appear in court, police were sent to arrest him. Kenana, believing he was being persecuted, refused to accompany the officers. He made provocative remarks about the Germans winning the war in which N[Z] was engaged, and a charge of treason was added. It all came to a head in April 1916 when a force of 70 armed men converged on Maungapohatu to arrest the prophet. In the confusion, shots were fired from both sides. When the shooting ended... two of Kenana's followers... were dead and three wounded. Four policemen were injured. Kenana's descendants saw the death of his son and rape of his daughter as far more serious than the charges against the prophet. The trial at the time was the longest in N[Z]'s history. Kenana never recovered from the loss of mana after his arrest and his community disintegrated. [But] Kenana continued to lead a smaller group of "Iharaia" (Israelites) until his death... in 1937.

During W[WI, Maori] tribal and religious leaders, such as... Rua Kenana... urged neutrality on their followers. [But]Pakeha-educated leaders... were eager for Maoris to go to war to show they were as capable as Europeans. Contingents of Maori Pioneers left for Egypt in Feb and Sept, 1915 and Feb, 1916. Then the Pakeha-oriented leaders were successful in arguing that Maoris should not be restricted to garrison duties and on June 26, 1917, Maoris became liable for conscription[– which Kenana 'told his people to defy']. A fighting unit was formed, known from Oct, 1917, as the Maori Battalion... [On Oct 9, 1939, r]ecruiting began for 28 (Maori) Battalion. Enlistment for Maoris was voluntary throughout W[WI]II.

The story of the Maori Pioneer battalion is seldom told. No oral recorded history exists and written material is also scarce. It wasn't until the early 1990s that a piece of the battalion's history was recalled, following the discovery of an old flag in storage... Unfortunately, none of the original battalion's 2227 members were alive to see the flag restored and presented to veterans of its military successor, the 28th Maori Battalion, in 1993... The battalion was formed midway through W[WI] to provide for the large number of Maori wanting to serve overseas. Support for the idea was initially low among N[Z]ers of European ancestry and the Government also dismissed the idea, saying Maori had no role to play in a war between two white races. It revoked the ruling after learning that Indian and Algerian troops were fighting the Germans in France. Officially, the battalion was regarded as a labour force... – digging trenches, laying railway lines, repairing roads and dragging heavy equipment... through waist deep mud and battlefield carnage[–]...and was not issued with firearms. Unofficially, its members picked up weapons dropped in the heat of battle... [– a]rchival evidence suggests some carried concealed Mausers or Luger pistols taken from German corpses... [–] and joined their European counterparts during assaults on enemy lines... "Few people probably realised the bravery... the battalion showed when they were sent to the front line armed only with shovels... That same bravery was passed down to a second generation of Maori fighting with the 28th Battalion in W[WI]II."

...Family and... veterans of the 28 Maori Battalion are experiencing mixed emotions as they visit the Italian sites where many comrades were killed during... W[WI]II. The 150-strong group, on a 19-day tour to lay to rest the spirits of relatives and friends, spent Sunday in Cassino, with the hardest stop being the railway station. There, B Company suffered the greatest losses when wounded soldiers, waiting to be evacuated, died... "The

officers and men who died... were the lost generation of future leaders....” said[a] 73-year-old veteran... [who believes that] the Cassino cemetery, where many Maori Battalion members were buried, was an appropriate resting place.

...For God, King and country... Maoridom is still paying the ultimate price for N[Z] citizenship after an entire generation of young leaders perished on foreign soil more than five decades ago. *He Rau Aroha*... traced the spiritual pilgrimage to Italy of veterans from the legendary 28th Maori Battalion... Alongside the epic stories of bravery and heroism was the appalling casualty rate in Africa and Italy with 70[% of the]... 3600-strong battalion... either killed or seriously wounded. C Company (or the Cowboys as they were known) contributed the largest number of soldiers from six major East Coast tribes – and suffered the greatest losses... Highlights... [of t]he hour-long documentary... included an audience with[the] Pope... mayoral welcomes and tributes from Italian war veterans and citizens who were freed from Fascism and Nazism. Lest we forget, this documentary reminded us that these ageing warriors had never been treated so well in their own homeland.

An oral and pictorial history of... the Maori Battalion will feature at a national conference in A[US] this week... The... project was for the Maori ancestors who paid the ultimate price of citizenship in N[Z]... Within the collection is a letter written by a young German... *“Mother, I am still alive, which I do not hope to stay another day. We are having a real hard time and are feeling the strain... They are always throwing something at us and... mortar is going all day. We are told how safe we are, but there is always ‘but’... We are once again confronted by the masters of close quarter combat, the dreaded Maori of the N[Z] division. Warriors all and feared fighters... [W]hy do they fight? How were they ever led to oppose us? Millions more questions, but duty calls. A longer letter next time maybe, I am sleeping with my Bible.”* No one knows what happened to the German soldier.

...For Kiwis in the N[Z] Second Division slogging up Italy during W[W]II, Christmas, 1943, was a time to forget... [413] lay dead and over 1000 wounded from the recent Orsogna and Sangro battle, and progress had been blunted by the Germans’ 88 anti-tank gun... and... tanks... The pressure became so intense that for what appears the only time in action in this war, Kiwi soldiers refused to go into battle... They had been at the forefront of the Eighth Army which had smashed Rommel’s Afrika Korps. Now Italy had surrendered, Rome beckoned and Italian wine was so plentiful that some had filled a water truck with it... [T]he Kiwis had a brigade of spanking new Sherman tanks, fighter bombers in support and high expectations... But the Germans, fighting near the fatherland, got increasingly tenacious. Under Field Marshal Albert Kesselring[– ‘convicted as a war criminal in 1946 and sentenced to life imprisonment until being paroled in 1952’ –] they had the dubious distinction of pioneering antipersonnel land mines and booby-trapped buildings. They also shot civilians after forcing them to build defences. Orsogna was a small, well defended ridgetop town. The Kiwis, under Lieutenant General Freyberg, began attacking it on December 3. At first they pushed the Germans back. One Kiwi intelligence officer... recalled... [having] to follow a heart-wrenching order to get Kiwi artillery to fire on its own men – the few minutes delay gave them time to hastily withdraw. The Germans were “literally obliterated,”... But such short victories were not to last. Kesselring had brought in fresh but battle hardened reinforcements, 334 Division from the Russian front and elite paratroopers who had beaten the Kiwis on Crete. The fighter bombers did not live up to Brigadier Howard Kippenberger’s expectations and many Kiwi tanks were destroyed by hidden 88s or bazookas, especially when advancing single file... 5 Brigade had another go on December 15, and yet another on December 24. This day was long... and particularly sad in 5 Brigade’s history. All but four men in one platoon in 21 Battalion had refused to fight... [A]t their court martial, some of the men claimed to have merely overslept, others were “more candid”. They were convicted, receiving sentences of two years jail. Later these were suspended and the men transferred to other regiments to fight again... The battalion’s commander... was heart-broken and probably blamed himself too much... There was one bright note. “On Christmas morning we were startled to hear church bells ringing in that smitten little town,”... A surprise perhaps, to realise that the other side also apparently believed in the same God, or at least lived among the symbols of Christianity. [■ ‘In the history of Christmases, few events have been as remarkable as the Christmas Truce of 1914 – when thousands of British, French and German troops in the trenches of the Western Front spontaneously stopped fighting and met in no man’s land to engage in acts of celebration and friendship.’]

...So good was the late Major-General Sir Howard Kippenberger’s 1949 memoir, *Infantry Brigadier*, now translated into seven languages, that its seeming to tell all may be assumed to have discouraged any would-be biographer. [But n]early 40 years on... the N[Z] Army’s Military Studies Institute[director] has written... a biography which demonstrates benefits deriving from waiting... for documents to be freed and for death to eliminate legal risks. Published for the first time is an A[US]n corps allegation that, at Pinios Gorge in Greece, in 1941, 21 (Auckland) Battalion “tended to panic” and the... commander was in a “blue funk.” (Of 19 Battalion, Kipp... wrote in a private document of “the dreadful sight of N[Z] troops running in panic at Galatos.”) ...In the disastrous battle at Ruweisat Ridge, acting divisional commander “Whisky Bill” Inglis disappeared for the whole of July 15, 1942. Where Freyberg would have been leading his troops from the front the movements of his stand-in “remain a mystery.” Inglis had “a serious drinking problem,” the book states. In the official histories, controlled by Kipp... such episodes are white-washed.

...HOLDING, as I do, the curious theory that for most N[Z]ers, the world began on January 1, 1946, I am loathe to lift the screen and penetrate into the Dark Ages which were W[W]II. Yet a challenging biography on one of N[Z]’s greatest soldiers, Major-General Sir Howard Kippenberger, cannot be ignored. It is possible to recall that in 1946, most N[Z]ers were persuaded that the 2nd NZ Division which had fought in Greece, Crete, the Western Desert and Italy had unquestionably been the finest of the Allied forces to face Hitler’s armies; and it is therefore challenging to our national esteem to learn... that the Kiwis were not flawless and that, in fact, both “Kipp” and the legendary commander of the division, Bernard Freyberg, VC, between them committed many errors of judgement. The assertion of the biographer... – a Kiwi who served for seven years in the A[US]n Army before becoming the director of the N[Z] Army’s Military Studies Institute at Waiouru – that Kippenberger was at fault in not firing the commander of the 23rd Battalion, Lt-Col Carl Watson, for running away from his troops during the Battle of El Mreir in 1942, ignores the fact that Watson had been awarded a Military Cross during W[W]I. Charitably, one might assume that as a middle-aged man, he had momentarily suffered that disease of war known as “having had it” – body and mind can no longer cope with the strains and demands of battle. Kipp[also] cops it for errors of judgement during the battle of Sidi Rezegh in November 1941. At one stage, he... [made the] mistake of... headed north instead of west... Kippenberger’s war came to an end when he lost both feet to a German schu-mine, a box about three inches square and one inch deep, while climbing Trocchio, a steep peak which commanded the approach to Cassino[(‘NZ’s forces had been sent to the region to assist US forces; after a USAF bombing raid proved tactically unsuccessful – it assisted the Germans – the 6th NZ Brigade and the Maori Battalion were put at the front, suffering 1600 casualties before being moved to the rear during the final advance, but the NZ flag wasn’t among those raised by the Allies after they triumphantly entered Cassino’). Kipp, who ‘was wounded and captured in November 1941, but quickly organised an escape for himself and 20 companions’, should be]... well remembered as a brilliant soldier – having told Field-Marshal Montgomery his eight points of defence, Monty immediately adopted these as his own. Somehow I feel that [the biographer], for all his diligent research, has appraised Kippenberger with the smell of peace in his nostrils. There is nothing, believe me, to compare with the smell of war... If nothing else, [the] book, which methinks carps too much, will renew the well-founded claim that a Maori Lance-Sergeant... should have been awarded the Victoria Cross for his extraordinary leadership in capturing the fortress of Takrouna, near the end of the war in Africa. It was a stupendous feat-of-arms and the reward... of a Distinguished Conduct Medal was an insult.

...Fresh research has found that a committee at the War Office in London downgraded a... Victoria Cross recommendation for... Lance-Sergeant Haane Manahi, to a Distinguished Conduct Medal. Records which may explain the reason the Victoria Cross Committee altered the recommendation have been destroyed. However, research carried out in London confirmed there was a medal-allocating system at the time. Papers

earlier revealed the recommendation... came only three weeks after Lieutenant Moananui-a-kiwa Ngarimu post-humously received the same award, which may have influenced the decision. "No other N[Z]-soldier in W[W]II to be properly and originally recommended for a VC ever had their recommendation downgraded,"... said... [a] research officer for the Manahi VC committee... The recommendation for... Manahi was signed by all senior officers in the chain of command... as well as being supported by Lieutenant-General Sir Bernard Freyberg... and Field-Marshal Bernard Montgomery. It came after... Manahi led a small band of Maori Battalion soldiers up a 300m rock outcrop in Tunisia in 1943, capturing an enemy stronghold... Manahi used his submachine gun to shoot 12 truck-loads of Italian troops, a feat which helped to secure the hilltop town. [The act was described by British Lt-General Sir Brian Horrocks as "the most gallant feat of arms I witnessed in the course of the war".] The Manahi VC committee is headed by a former commander of the Maori Battalion... and has been supported by the Associate Treasurer... who is of the same Te Arawa tribe as... Manahi. In March [the MP] provided the 1943 Army form showing the letters VC crossed out and replaced with DCM. [The MP], who once scolded his Te Arawa elders for being too polite in pressing the Government to recognise... Manahi with the award, said the new evidence justified a fresh approach by the Government and he intended seeing the P[M] to have the case considered... Manahi died in a car crash in 1986.

...[the 'PM has rejected a plea for the posthumous recognition of WW2 hero Sergeant Haane Manahi with NZ's highest medal, following a revamp of the awards system. The PM yesterday unveiled new gallantry and bravery awards replacing the British awards system but retaining the Victoria Cross as the highest award for gallantry in war and war-like situations. The civilian award of the George Cross, which can also be given to military personnel under some circumstances, will be replaced by the New Zealand Cross. The awards must still be signed off by the Queen as head of state. In a letter to the Associate Treasurer, the PM said the Queen had decided it would not be right to review the award after so many years. The MP was disappointed at the decision. "Why did we bother to go to all the trouble of setting up a NZ-based honours system, only then to find we still have to crawl back to Britain when we want to award a medal?"] Incidentally, 'this weekend the battle for Crete is commemorated. Tomorrow NZ's PM, veterans of Crete and a military honour party will gather at Maleme to remember the battle, fought at a time when the British Empire stood alone against Hitler's Germany. Early on the morning of May 20, 1941, Lieutenant-General (later Lord) Freyberg watched in awe as the sky above Crete filled with German transport aircraft. Eight days later, after ferocious fighting, the remains of Freyberg's force of NZers, AUSns and Britons began the evacuation of Crete, leaving behind more than 1700 dead and 11,379 captured, and with 2225 wounded' (NZ 'lost 634 men, had 967 wounded, and more than 2000 were taken prisoner'). '4700 Germans are also buried at Maleme cemetery' following 'the biggest parachute operation in history (and Germany's last because of the heavy losses)'. ● 'The PM will launch the book – A Unique Sort of Battle: New Zealanders Remember Crete – in Wellington on Wednesday.'

... 'Almost every year brings another book about Crete because the wound won't quite heal. Of all the battles Kiwis fought in two world wars it was the only one they perhaps could have won, and didn't. And – insofar as you could bring yourself to blame under-equipped, exhausted men – it was probably because of the NZ command's lack of focus on Maleme airfield. Gallipoli, and the slog back and forth across the face of France in WW1, were unwinnable, and so were the first encounters with the Germans in the African desert and the campaign in Greece. Some say Crete was, too, given the complete air ascendancy of the Luftwaffe, but the niggle of doubt remains. The Battle for Crete was a portentous event: the Germans lost so many men and aircraft they never again attempted an airborne invasion; and General Freyberg remained a field commander for the rest of the war, although that was to the NZ Division's advantage. The general's son spent years researching his father's life and career with the main aim of justifying his tactics in defence on the island. The question always asked was: how much did Freyberg know about the impending German invasion from the detailed intelligence available to the British Government through the Ultra code-cracking machine? And if he knew enough, was he allowed to alter the position of his troops? Wrote the general's son in his biography, published in 1991: "Lord Wavell, the British Commander-in-Chief in Egypt, told Freyberg that there was no question of allowing any redeployment at Maleme to deal with the assault that was to be launched solely from the air." And it was at Maleme that the battle for Crete was lost – at least partly because of bad communications and the flawed deployment of men. Did Lieutenant-Colonel Andrews pull back from Maleme too soon, and did Brigadier Hargest not counter-attack soon enough after the Maori Battalion and others had shown that the German defence was vulnerable? During the 1980s, Freyberg's son would allow nothing to distract him or anyone else from his obsession with righting what he saw as the unfair blame attached to his father for losing a battle that couldn't have been won anyway. Many would agree with him. From El Alamein on, the battle-hardened Kiwis were never again put at such a disastrous disadvantage in terms of air cover and artillery support as they had been early in the desert war and in Greece and Crete. The latest book sums up with: "The fact that Freyberg's strategy successfully defeated the Germans at all landing areas except Maleme is a testament both to his outstanding capabilities as a military tactician, and to the quality and determination of the troops he led." The wound won't stop suppurating for those who fought there and lost hundreds of mates. This book will prove a heart-stabbing reminder of the agonies of a great soldier and his incomparably brave men, and of how they lost so narrowly a battle that would have shown for the first time in the war that the superbly equipped Germans were vulnerable on the ground – just as the Battle of Britain pilots were proving they were beatable in the air', 'thereby frustrating Hitler's preliminary to a planned invasion of Britain.'

... 'The first shots by Allied troops in WW2 were fired not in Europe but in Wellington, says an old Army gunner. Two shells were fired towards "the enemy," an Indian ship sailing into the harbour, more than a day before Britain's declaration of war on Germany at 11 am on September 3, 1939. There were no casualties. No human casualties, that is – one of the shells made a direct hit on an outside latrine on a hill across the harbour. The gunner in the Royal NZ Artillery was part of a harbour defence crew stationed near Fort Dorset with orders to challenge any foreign ship coming into the harbour. "We were on duty at six o'clock in the morning when the siren went off and we ran to our gun. We could see there was a ship, City of Delhi, with a crew of English officers." According to the gunner, that was when things started to go wrong. The signal station radioed the ship, telling it to stop, but the captain either did not understand or ignored the instruction, and the duty artillery officer decided to "put one up the spout because nobody had said to put a blank in." When a second message was ignored, the gun crew fired – straight across the harbour. "The captain still didn't stop so we put a second one up. This time he did stop." The local court fined the ship's captain £56 for "wasting ammunition."

... 'War came to NZ waters on June 19, 1940, when the luxury liner *Niagara*, carrying gold bullion, struck a mine off Whangarei (salvage operations recovered 555 of the 590 gold ingots). On Aug 20, the *Turakina* was sunk in a fierce encounter with the German raider *Orion* 290 miles from Cape Egmont. While returning to Lyttelton from the Chatham Islands on Nov 25, the coastal trader *Holmwood* was sunk by the raider *Komet* which, together with the *Orion*, destroyed the liner *Rangitane* two days later 300 miles east of East Cape. NZ's merchant navy suffered another loss on Nov 11, 1942, when the *Awatea*, serving as a troopship, sank after being bombed off Algeria.' In related news, a 'widow says it's time her husband and the other NZers on HMS Neptune were remembered. "Every Anzac Day I put my own little wreath on the cenotaph but no one else does. It seems like the Neptune never happened." The sinking of the Neptune was NZ's worst naval disaster, with the loss of 150 NZers in the Mediterranean on December 19, 1941. One NZer cannot forget. After being torpedoed while serving on the cruiser HMS Phoebe, he and eight other NZers were drafted to the Neptune because she was supposed to be sailing for NZ. "We thought that was wonderful. Then two of us received a draft to a naval base in Alexandria. We got in a terrible panic attack because we thought we'd miss Neptune and the trip back to NZ." When they turned up at Alexandria they discovered their draft had been cancelled. They raced back to the Neptune. "There was a Royal Marine standing on guard at the jetty and the Neptune was sailing out through the entrance to the harbour. He said: 'Sorry, boys, the last tank for Malta has just left.'" Days later she hit three mines while leading a force to intercept an enemy convoy north of Libya. Three hours later she sank after hitting a fourth mine. Of 765 officers and crew, 16 escaped but only one rating survived six days of thirst and exhaustion after the sinking. Neptune was a light cruiser which, unlike her sister ships Achilles and Leander, remained in the British Royal Navy fleet' – hence her crew was mostly British.

... 'The last of 150,000 Austrian combatants captured by the Soviet Union during WWII has returned home. Weak and ill, but his eyes sparkling with joy, the 80-year-old arrived at Vienna Airport for an emotional reunion with his family, who had believed they would never see him again. A teacher from a working-class family, he joined Hitler's Army in 1940. He was posted to France and later to the Russian front. Taken prisoner by Soviet forces in 1943, he was held in a detention camp in the Russian province of Smolensk until 1950. It was there he met his second wife, a Belarussian whom he married in the forced labour camp where they were both being held. In 1950, Soviet authorities freed him from the prison camp, but refused to allow him to return to Austria, his dearest wish. Instead they gave him Soviet citizenship. ■ This time of year 'holds special significance for a 75-year-old Auschwitz survivor. The Blockhouse Bay man, who is Jewish, witnessed cannibalism, underwent medical experiments and attempted suicide as a prisoner of the Nazis. When aged 14 he was on his way home to his parents and sister when he was arrested by two men outside his Hebrew school in 1942. He never saw his parents again. He was taken from Germany to Auschwitz in Poland by train in February, 1943, and was one of a group chosen from about 10,000 prisoners by the "Angel of Death", Dr Joseph Mengele, for medical experiments in September, 1944. The prisoners were marched back to Germany to the city of Nordhausen in January, 1945. In April, 1945, the USAF mistakenly bombed their camp, Dora, which was next to a German airfield. About 2500 prisoners died.'

...a] Warrant Officer... was prepared to die on foreign soil for N[Z]; in return he expected the Army to look after him... [Having spent] most of his 19 years in the Army as an infantry training officer, [he] won a position in 1994 which was to be the peak of his career – regimental sergeant-major with the multinational force in the Sinai. However, after a medical examination he was told he was not fit for duty overseas. "I was stunned. I was running marathons and started to do triathlons..."... An investigation found that both his kidneys were working at only 40[%] of capacity and were likely to fail within two years. Instead of the usual offer of a further three, six or even 13 years in the Army[he]... was told to leave at the end of his 20-year service period. On the day he left he was offered a further six months, which he declined. But now the Government has decided that if the offer had been made in more favourable circumstances [the Warrant Officer] might have accepted the extra time. It has ordered that he be paid six months' salary as compensation, plus reasonable expenses incurred in putting his case. [The Warrant Officer] yesterday welcomed the Government's moves, but said the compensation was not enough... [By the way, NZ's territorial soldiers] are being paid... \$311.24 a week or \$47.33 a day[which is]... less than the minimum wage... The part-time soldiers are not paid overtime but can receive allowances for dependent family members and gratuities for efficient service. Members of the armed services are not covered by the employment laws that apply to other workers... [This has been] described... as an intolerable abuse of employer power... An average 4.9[%] wage rise for defence force personnel came into force on Tuesday... a long-overdue move against staff losses... It will cost \$23 million a year.

...[the Defence Force's management has] come... in for a salvo of criticism in a string of reviews carried out by the Ministry of Defence... No effective corporate management of Defence Force live-in accommodation was found. The 6837 beds in barracks on eight military bases were valued at \$142 million and cost the force \$32 million a year. It was paid \$1.4 million in rents. Staff paid as little as \$10 a week.

...Armed services staff fear rent rises may wipe out their first general pay rise in six years. The Chief of [NZ's]Defence Force... has served notice of a "modest increase" in accommodation charges throughout the three services... as a step towards market-related rents... A Defence Force spokesman... said last night that he very much doubted whether anyone's pay rise would be eaten up entirely by extra rent. While unable to rule this out absolutely before figures had been determined, he... [estimated] that most staff would still end up paying well under 50[%] of open market rents... He said the increases were not just a way of generating more revenue for the cash-strapped Defence Force, but would allow it to spend more money on accommodation subsidies for a wider range of staff. These include subsidies of about \$50 a week for private lodgings if Defence Force accommodation to which they are entitled is unavailable, although staff on their first postings[– and]... on salaries of little more than \$20,000... [–] are not yet eligible. Only about 5500 of the 9500 or so regular forces lived in military-owned quarters...

Exodus of staff deeply wounds Defence Force... For the year ending in June, 2585 regular and territorial personnel left the [NZ]forces, leaving them with 13,621 – 436 less than at the same time last year[(when 'Defence chiefs singled out up to 280 key personnel to be offered incentives of about \$7000 each to remain at their posts – at the time, an army veteran who served in Malaysia and Vietnam, said throwing \$2.1m at about 280 people in a total force of almost 10,000 was not the solution')]. It meant the recruitment process wasn't keeping pace with losses, placing an extra workload on remaining staff. Of more concern, however, was that a significant number of staff leaving were in the middle management or skill level bracket, a loss that couldn't be immediately replaced by new recruits... The Air Force is short of aircrew, technical, fire and communication staff. It is finding it difficult to recruit, retain and train sufficient personnel. Better pay and conditions are drawing aircrew to commercial aviation... The Army is 895 staff short... [and] had insufficient staff and information systems to adequately manage its operational equipment, which was likely to... become more significant as the Army bought more technologically advanced equipment... The Navy is short of 295 staff... It is increasing the use of civilians on short-term contracts... [However, the combined] losses aren't as high as in previous years. For example, in 1989-90, nearly 4000 staff left.

...We face a dilemma about defence. We are locked into some patterns – like the frigate purchases, the strike aircraft syndrome, and the U[N] peace-keeping infantry demands – which are incompatible with each other and ultimately unaffordable. As someone in the Defence Ministry told me recently, we could no doubt increase the defence budget from \$1.2 billion a year to \$2.4 b... and we still wouldn't be able to afford to buy all the things that our present forces' structure make necessary... And the structure of our forces is perversely designed to make it difficult for us to even think about these issues... At the Ministry of Defence in Wellington we have four different and highly expensive bureaucracies. You have senior service officers and senior bureaucrats, and their assorted levels of juniors, in each of these four organisations. They wear different uniforms, though many of them turn up for work in civilian clothes; they vie for assignments and promotions within their own services; they carry on with their own career plotting while they also engage in inter-service rivalries and even covert political-bureaucratic warfare. It is all unnecessary, as well as expensive... The three services should be amalgamated into a single defence force. Their ranks should be eliminated and simplified and matched with missions and responsibilities. For example, we don't need eight brigadiers when we have no brigades, or 14 colonels when we have no regiments... The tight budgets of recent years have eroded the attractiveness of defence careers. When comparatively low salaries for people in their 20s and 30s are put alongside the high salaries and perks of senior officers, and when the scheming for position of senior officers puts at risk the positive work of more junior officers, it is only to be expected that we will have a fall-out of junior and middle-ranking leadership in our forces.

...A military academy... for a programme focused on training for careers in the armed services... may open in Christchurch next year... Only seventh-form students would be allowed to enter... as students had to realise the importance of general education first... [In related news, t]he Defence Force has now moved to abandon its traditional arrangement of making all ranks retire at a particular age. While all staff may be offered the new retirement age, the shake-out is aimed at longer-serving people in the higher ranks[– which]... were "bloated with too many senior officers." Latest staff figures showed 14[%] more senior ranking officers across the three forces than in 1989... ['From 1992-5 the ratio of officers to other ranks went from 1:4.61 to 1:4.44 in the Navy, and from 1:5.08 to 1:4.32 in the Air Force, but the Army remained steady at about 1:6.'] More than 2000 people fall within the ranks targeted... Redundancy payouts of up to one year's salary will be paid to those asked to leave... The maximum annual salaries of the top band of officers range from \$78,402 to \$103,104. Annual salaries of the second tier of non-commissioned ranks range from \$41,349 to \$52,626... The forces are moving towards hiring staff on shorter, fixed-term contracts, with more performance-related promotion... "Some people may not have a position open to them for the skills they have. A more junior person with prospects for advancement may be better."

...[NZ's] defence is top-heavy – there is now more than one officer and nearly two senior NCOs for every four persons of lower rank... Regular force army battalions are commanded by lieutenant-colonels. The army has two such battalions, but has 65 lieutenant-colonels and 26 more senior

officers... The most outstanding example was in the air force, where there were seven squadrons of aircraft and a total of 176 squadron leaders and 48 wing commanders... Swollen ranks of senior officers and non-commissioned officers, some paid at a rate much higher than public servants in similar positions of responsibility, were the result of "self-serving policies"... Mid-point salaries of colonel-equivalent officers have risen 54.9% over the last eight years – compared with 22.1% for MPs... and... top brass were getting up to \$2500 in club subscriptions paid to them on top of their salaries... An A[US]n efficiency review earlier this year had called for 20% cuts in senior ranks in Canberra and similar measures were required here... [Incidentally, a]llegations of widespread criminal activities by A[US]n Navy personnel would be investigated by the Defence Department's independent Inspector-General, the Defence Personnel Minister... said yesterday. The move follows claims in last week's *Bulletin* magazine that a secret internal inquiry had found naval personnel were illegally importing drugs and weapons, and allowing the theft of millions of dollars in stores from Sydney's Garden Island dockyard. [The minister] expressed outrage that she had not been informed of the secret inquiry...

The Fiji Military Force is under police scrutiny following the discovery of... an M-16 military assault rifle... and bullets outside a Suva supermarket on Monday after four masked men had stolen \$F206,000... of weekend takings... [In local news,] Labour's police spokesman... has called for beefed-up security following revelations the defence forces have lost 24 guns... [– including] two submachine guns... and... three machine guns... [–] in the past five years... [The spokesman] said: "Every employer loses equipment... but when you are talking about a Defence Force and lethal weapons, then one expects that their security measures should be water-tight."

...A boy had all the fingers on one hand and a thumb blown off... last night... The boy, aged 9, is one of three children in Rotorua Hospital after one of several detonators they were playing with exploded. A 14-year-old girl has a metal fragment in her eye and a boy, also aged 9, has shrapnel embedded in his face, but he is not believed to be seriously injured... It is believed the children found the detonators in a shed at the rear of a suburban house... Police... said it appeared the children did not realise how lethal the detonators were and threw them around the neighbourhood.

...For a long time, at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri, when night fell and the sergeant was away, the soldier boys and... girls did play... Co-ed training at all levels has been the rule in the [US] Army for the last three years, in the Navy since 1992 and in the Air Force since 1977. Nearly 14% of the nation's 1.4 million soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines are female... Last week... an independent panel... issued a report recommending that the military end mixed gender barracks.

...In Maryland... yesterday... a former drill instructor... [confessed that he had] sex with 11 trainees in violation of U[S] Army rules, but he denied charges he raped eight women under his command... In most cases, he said, the sex was initiated by the women or by both... in his office, his home and at a hotel on another military base... [The] Staff Sergeant is one of 11 instructors charged with sexual misconduct at Aberdeen Proving Ground, about 50km north-east of Baltimore.

...Five female soldiers from the... Aberdeen Proving Ground said yesterday investigators had coerced them to make statements that they had been raped by higher-ranking soldiers... [They held] hands before a press conference where they recanted [their previous] statements... "They tried to make me say 'rape' and I would not do it," [one of the five] told a... representative of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People. [The association's] president... said... "There are possible civil rights violations... that ought to be looked at... We think that it [the investigation] borders on illegality." ...Seven instructors at the base have been charged with rape or other sexual misconduct in a scandal that erupted last year and prompted an... investigation into sexual harassment... at American military bases worldwide... Two of the seven took early discharge in lieu of court martials, while the other five await trial.

...The U[S] Army said yesterday it will court-martial... the service's top enlisted man, on sexual harassment charges brought against him by six female servicewomen. No date was immediately set for the trial at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, on 20 counts against... [the] Sergeant-Major... including adultery and indecent assault. The order followed an Army hearing of more than eight weeks during... which [the accused] vehemently denied the charges... All six accusers are white; [the accused] is black... As the Army's top enlisted soldier, [he] is a kind of ombudsman to the military Joint Chiefs of Staff on behalf of soldiers on issues including sexual harassment. He has been suspended pending the outcome of the case... Last month... the first woman to fly a nuclear bomber, was forced to resign after two affairs came to light.

...The [NZ] Navy – already facing the possibility of multiple courts martial over sexual harassment – is now dealing with a new sex scandal... The latest inquiry follows an incident involving a male sailor and two female ratings ashore from the frigate Canterbury in the Solomon Islands late last month... [O]ne of the women is understood to have been flown home in a distressed state while the Canterbury continued a tour of South Pacific states. According to the Solomon Islands police, the woman made a complaint of rape against a private security guard... The view of the... police is that the allegation involving the security guard was false... The trio had wandered from a social function before ending up in the Parliament grounds about 3 am... [T]he guard claimed he had watched the male having sex with both women and that the guard was then given the equivalent of \$NZ20 to \$25 to keep quiet about what he had seen... The Navy's head of personnel and training in Auckland... said the investigation prevented him from discussing the incident, but confirmed that [the] Canterbury... is still on patrol in the South Pacific, having in the past fortnight rescued two shipwrecked fishermen from a reef and been involved in a vice-regal tour of the Tokelaus. [He also] confirmed that he had completed a five-month investigation into allegations of sexual harassment aboard the frigate Wellington during its 1995 voyage to the Gulf [– 'the first major mission for women on an operational NZ warship']. Navy lawyers are now weighing up his findings to decide whether to charge any of the 12 sailors and officers... named by a former gunner... in complaints to the Human Rights Commission[], which has 'deemed the Chief of Defence Force liable under the Human Rights Act for the men's behaviour by not taking reasonably practicable steps to prevent the sexual harassment'... The... female gunner... complained she was regularly... grabbed by her buttocks and breasts and subjected to indecent suggestions... [C]onstant references to parts of her anatomy and what at least one sailor wanted her to do to a part of his anatomy are among the harassment claims... [When she] became a gunner she expected a battle or two – but never thought it would be against the crew of the ship she served on. She dreamed of joining the navy, in which both her father and sister have served, and made her first visit to a recruitment office at 14... She [is now] too depressed to continue her studies and was unemployed at present... She said her ordeal was not over yet because she still had to face the accused men in conciliatory talks... The Navy... is understood to have begun trying to reach conciliated settlements over some of [the gunner's] complaints but will not discuss these... [A]bout four of the defendants had left the Navy, but under the Armed Forces Discipline Act they could be recalled to face charges. The possible penalties ranged from fines to dismissal. Sexual harassment complaints by three other female sailors on the Gulf voyage were resolved after informal inquiries. The Minister of Defence... said earlier this year those complaints were dealt with "by way of apology and admonishment."

...Seven Navy staff, including commissioned officers, have been charged over complaints by a rating about sexual harassment. A further four naval staff have charges pending... Courts martial would be held at the Devonport Naval Base and... be open to the public. Each of the accused would be tried separately. ['Their lawyers expect them to all be acquitted.']

...As the [NZ] Navy charges 11 sailors with sexually harassing a female colleague, a gang rape has left the British army with a stain on its character. It stands accused of picking officers who cannot tell the difference between duty and debauchery... What has gone wrong? Are officers no longer gentlemen – if they ever were? Or does this case indicate, as a spate of sex scandals in the American military suggests, that the old codes of self-discipline have proved ineffectual as the barriers between civilian and military life – and the sexes – have been torn apart? ...The [British] incident is altogether more unpleasant. Its sub-theme has been a twist on the true story behind the American film *The Accused*: A loose-living, hard-drinking waitress, raped in a bar while customers cheered, brought her attackers to justice and established that women who seem to be inviting sexual attention have the right to say "no". A young female student, "Miss X", who worked as a barmaid, had been out with an army

officer cadet at a bank holiday fete at Shrivenham military college. Her girlfriend had come along and afterwards, with a couple of other young men, they went to the officers' mess. Drink was taken in no small amounts. Adventurously, perhaps incautiously, the women agreed to join the men in a sauna. In the steamy atmosphere, one woman and one of the men paired off and disappeared. Then the numbers game got out of control. In the young woman's account, as related in the witness box, she was left alone with six men, one of whom, to her horror, urinated on her. When she ran out in disgust to get dressed in the cadet's room, all six burst in, stripped her, raped her in turn and left her, in the words of the defence counsel, "like a piece of meat". Carnal appetite satisfied, it was time to deal with another: They went off for a kebab. Distraught and sobbing, the woman ran to a friend and later saw a doctor to get the morning-after pill. But it was six months after the alleged attack in May 1996 that she reported to the police that she had been raped. In *The Accused* the woman won. In Shrivenham she did not because the judge... doubted her reliability as a witness... [and the] scandal... ended in the acquittal of [all] six... The question of morals had been unavoidable, as the judge made abundantly clear, if only by his repeated insistence he was not taking it into account... In her own words, her sex life was "crowded". She was living with a boyfriend though their relationship was "rocky". So rocky that 10 days before the alleged rape the student also had sexual relations with one of the accused and a friend in his bed at the same time. Initially, when she made her complaint... she failed to tell police that she had slept with these two men. Nor did she initially admit she had consented to have sex with another of the accused only hours before the alleged rape. She feared, she said, that had she revealed the full background, her accusation that she was raped later by six men would not be believed... Before the six... walked free, the judge commented: "If six men think it is a good idea to have sex with one woman, then they run the risk of being accused of rape. I think that they have brought this prosecution upon themselves." The words of... one of the accused, were perhaps more telling. When he was initially questioned by police, he admitted to having urinated on Miss X in the sauna and said he had then joined the others in having sex with her. He admitted no conflict, however, between these actions and his code of honour. "I am an officer, for God's sake – integrity and all that... I would not have done anything to her if she had said anything." ...[another of the accused,] the buffoon of the gang... had had too much to drink to commit the act, but had been charged with rape because he was present and the incident had occurred in his room... Legally the men are innocent, have not a smirch on their names, nor a hole in their pockets since the judge ruled their legal costs be paid. But all have spent weeks in custody, their reputations[are now] in tatters and their army careers in grave doubt. The army is reviewing what disciplinary action it will take; the men face a military tribunal to decide whether they have brought the service into disrepute... But according to... a local... [who] worked as a waitress in the restaurant at the military college... the men at Shrivenham were not entirely to blame. They were in such a majority that some girls took advantage: "A lot of the time it is the girls' fault. There are definitely some there that go out to flaunt it and try to get as many men as possible." ...SHRIVENHAM is a little Wessex town that was until now much-loved by the Ministry of Defence. It lies... in the Vale of White Horse. This is legendary heart-of England territory where visitors hunt traces of King Alfred... - 1997

There was no regular army in Britain for many centuries. In Anglo-Saxon times every man was obliged to train to defend his country, and the name 'fyrd' (Anglo-Saxon for army) was given to the men who could be called. King Alfred (871-901) was the first monarch to mould the fyrd into an effective national force. To fight the Danes, Alfred conscripted every male from 16 to 60. The fyrd were poorly armed, their weapons varying with their social position and wealth... They fought valiantly at Hastings in 1066... but William of Normandy's use of arrows overcame them... A law made by Henry II in 1181 established that each man must have arms suited to his rank, to be decided by a jury. Reviews of arms and armour, provided by the men themselves, were held twice a year. Soldiers raised under national levies frequently served abroad, although legally they were not supposed to be liable for such duty... In 1327 Edward III limited the military duties of... the 'levies'... to their counties, except in the case of invasion... The levies left most of the fighting in the War of the Roses to the personal armies of the nobles involved, while they occupied themselves with keeping rebel Scots and Welsh in check. They could only be used by the King... In the Civil War... the levies, now called militia from the Latin word 'miles',[meaning] a soldier... clashed over whether to support Parliament or King. Bands from large cities chiefly sided with Parliament, but... [the] militia played a big part in the restoration of the monarchy in 1660... William III (1689-1702) had little faith in the half-trained militia and insisted upon a... professional army... In fact the militia, organised on a county basis by... county military officers called Lords Lieutenant... were now very efficient... After 1757 the militia was a compulsory force, chosen by ballot from men aged 18 to 45... But with the French invasion threat of 1794, two voluntary forces appeared – the yeomanry, who were really mounted farmers; and volunteer bands of riflemen... whose task it was to protect towns.

British troops were stationed in N[Z] in varying numbers from 1840 to 1870... The presence of these troops... became a problem for the British and N[Z] Governments. On the one hand, the Imperial Government was extremely critical of various aspects of the N[Z] Government's attitude towards the Maoris, especially over the matter of confiscation of land. On the other hand, differences of opinion developed over the tardy conduct of operations, for the colonists – in theory – were paying £40 per annum for an infantryman and £70 per annum for a gunner. These circumstances led to the adoption by the N[Z] Government, late in 1864, of its "self reliant" policy, the substance of which was to dispense with the services of Imperial troops and to trust... local forces and Maori auxiliaries to carry on the war... For its part, the Imperial Government welcomed the proposal, for it considered the colony with its growing population should be able to fend for itself. [The Imperial Government had also been unsuccessful in its attempt to quell Maori resistance after almost three decades, spending 'millions of £s and losing thousands of men.']From 1866 onwards the gradual withdrawal of Imperial troops commenced...

Compulsory military service has been adopted in N[Z] on a number of occasions... [since] the 1845 Ordinance... that European males should be trained to form an effective military force for the defence of lives and property within the colony. All between the ages of 18 and 60 were liable for service... though on no account could they serve beyond a certain distance from their local police station. The 1858... Ordinance... divided militiamen into three classes – the first class comprised unmarried men and widowers; the second class were married men with dependants; and the third, reserve men, were all men between 16 and 40 years of age. Whenever only a portion of the militia was required, volunteers were first called for and the balance was obtained by a ballot of the first class. Training was set at 168 hours a year, instead of 28 days as prescribed in the 1845 Ordinance... From the Maori Wars... until 1910 the volunteer system provided N[Z]'s principal means of defence... [NZ had been 'the first colony to offer troops to Britain when the South African War was imminent – although each volunteer was expected to provide his own horse, and equipment costing about £25 (the NZ public also donated about £113,000 to the war effort). Of the 6,495 NZers who served in the war, 228 died – 59 in action, 11 of wounds, 25 accidentally and 133 of disease. After the Boers surrendered on May 31, 1902, the *Times History* said of the NZers that "they were by general consent, regarded as the best mounted troops in South Africa."] After the South African War... and particularly after the granting of Dominion status in 1907, colonists began to see international affairs from an Imperial viewpoint. They realised that any dispute involving Britain also concerned her Empire and that this might necessitate N[Z] troops serving overseas. As the volunteer system appeared to have outlasted its usefulness, the Council of Defence – formed in 1907 – advised a return to compulsory enlistment "whereby the burden of service in the defence force will be more evenly distributed". For some years prior to 1908 compulsory military training had been argued in the country and public opinion had been gradually won over. This was due, principally, to vigorous propaganda campaigns undertaken by the National Defence League... The Defence Act of 1909 created... a universal obligation to be trained in: (1) Junior cadets from 12 to 14 years of age. (Abolished 1912). (2) Senior cadets from 14 to 18. (3) Territorials from 18 to 21, later extended to 25 years, when men were posted to the Reserve until they were 30. (4)

Territorials were liable to serve in N[Z] only, but could volunteer for service overseas. For administrative purposes N[Z] was divided into four military districts, each with its headquarters staff. Each district was in turn sub-divided into four areas, each staffed by Regular officers and instructors. Rigorous courses were prescribed and training was... arranged at convenient times. [‘Compulsory military training was abolished in NZ during 1972.’]

...psychology students hoping to establish a pattern of blind obedience among N[Z] soldiers admit to being foiled by Army training. Infantry soldiers used by the four Victoria University postgraduates as guinea pigs in a social psychology experiment showed an obstinate refusal to be influenced by misleading information fed to them by superior officers. The 15 junior rank soldiers from the Manawatu-based 1st Battalion, Royal N[Z] Regiment, proved harder to fool than civilians put through similar hoops. They were subjected to a strong optical illusion in which a light appeared to move in the dark... But the students admitted in the *Army News* that they had not counted on the effectiveness of night training, which taught soldiers to look to the side of a point of light to establish actual movement... An Army spokesman... said initiative and the ability to “perhaps think a bit outside normal lines” were qualities which were encouraged in the service. He hesitated to be drawn on how far this might lead down the path of insubordination... [By the way, ten] years ago, 11 servicemen and two instructors set out on a training trek. Six... would not survive the Army Adventurous Training Centre’s winter basic course. The disaster, one of this country’s worst alpine tragedies, would forever haunt the N[Z] Army Command... A military court of inquiry found that the two course instructors lacked the experience and skills to cope with... extreme conditions. It found the expedition was adequately equipped but criticised the lack of radio equipment... The... young servicemen and t[heir] instructors had left Whakapapa under sunny skies, heading for the summit... [of] Mt Ruapehu... on a four-day... trek. They were to learn basic mountaineering and build snow caves before descending to Turoa on the southern side... [However,] freezing cold and wind gusts of up to 70 knots came without warning and lasted five days... Late on Sunday, with two trainees showing signs of hypothermia, an instructor... and a trainee... set out on an 11-hour trek to find help. When rescuers found the party on Monday, six... frozen corpses were huddled in a trench on the most exposed part of the mountain, just 200m from an emergency hut... The fate of the six, and five other soldiers rescued in varying states of hypothermia, contrasted with that of [a] Japanese climber... who survived by remaining in his snow cave until the weather cleared up... Tomorrow, parents, brothers and sisters of the six who died will mark the 10th anniversary of the disaster with a commemorative service at Whakapapa. The Army will be represented. There will be no recriminations, just lingering, unanswered questions.

...Wearing traditional funeral clothes and holding portraits of their dead sons, South Korean women [sought] answers in front of the Ministry of National Defence in Seoul [yesterday]. More than 100 women gathered to demand an explanation of how their sons died during compulsory military service over the past few years. The women allege hundreds of soldiers die each year while in the military. [Incidentally, ‘the War Cabinet approved the establishment of the Women’s Royal NZ Naval Service in Apr, 1942. 500 women enlisted during the war, performing a wide range of duties as plotters, coders, cooks, stewards, transport drivers, telegraphers, dental assistants. Some were engaged in technical and secret work. The Service was disbanded in 1977 and members were integrated with the Royal NZ Navy.’]

...*Invasion of the gentler sex*... Women are to train for combat roles in the British Army alongside male soldiers in a controversial move that breaks with centuries of military tradition... A panel of experts will submit a report – entitled “A Study of Combat Effectiveness and Gender” – to ministers... [after a series of] tests later this year... The... trials... are expected to test the viability of mixed-gender tank crews, all-women crews, mixed infantry units and all-women infantry units... The[y]ll also examine how... men react to the pressure on the battlefield [if women are around] and compare how each sex copes with the mental and physical demands of combat... The trials are a major step towards having women going into frontline battle... There are 17,000 women in the Army, and only 24[%] of its jobs are reserved for men... It has traditionally been thought that women could not cope with the heavy physical demands of frontline fighting and... mixed-gender armoured units were impractical... Recent trials of women sailors on submarines resulted in the ban on female submariners remaining. However, the Army finds it increasingly hard to recruit, creating pressure for change... Giving women combat roles would bring Britain into line with... Israel... Canada, Holland, Norway and... the U[S]...

The US] President... yesterday signed a \$US288.8 billion... US military budget that... gives troops their biggest pay raise in 18 years [‘in 1993 the basic monthly pay rates for military personnel in the US were \$US769 for recruits; \$1,409 for sergeants; \$2,933 for sgt. majors; \$3,588 for majors; \$7,330 for a major general and \$9,017 for a general’]. The fiscal year... national defence authorisation bill provides military personnel with a 4.8[%] salary rise and increases pensions from next year... It also provides extra pay for high-tech personnel, especially in the Air Force.

...*Uncle Sam wants you: food stamps supplied*... Thousands of American soldiers serving in the world’s most powerful armed forces are so poorly paid that they are having to depend on charity to provide their families with basic household necessities. The spectacle of America’s defenders standing in line at social service offices, or raking through discarded furniture to find beds for themselves and toys for their children, has horrified the nation and is emerging as a presidential election issue. Although military authorities insist that the problem is small, and only affecting young men with unusually large families, soldiers’ wives and welfare organisations say that many more service personnel are struggling to make ends meet – but are too proud to seek the help which they need. “It’s very hard to realise and admit it,” said... a 19-year-old lance-corporal at Quantico, a... Marine base near Washington, who has been receiving food stamps – vouchers that can be exchanged for goods at shops – for the past two months... Food stamps worth \$US142 a month have helped eke out the \$US1000 monthly pay cheque on which [the] Lance-Corporal... his wife... and their two children must live in a small, tin house in the middle of the base... A family of three – with one child and the wife not working – would qualify for food stamps if their pre-tax income is less than \$US873... per month. A two-child family would qualify on income less than \$US1176... rising to \$US2086 for a family with five children... The problem for young recruits to the American forces is that many in the junior enlisted ranks earn only just over \$US1000 a month before tax. Even after allowing for free housing and other benefits, a package that may be adequate for single soldiers puts those with even small families well below the official American poverty line. Military pay has fallen behind the rest of the American economy as a result of budget squeezes over the past decade, and a recent vote by Congress to grant a 4.8[%] increase from January still leaves a wide gap... [In related news,] Britain has lifted its ban on homosexuals serving in the military, accepting a landmark European court ruling, but has laid down a code of conduct to try to ensure the effectiveness of the armed forces is not affected... The European Court of Human Rights ruled last September that four homosexuals were wrongly dismissed from the United Kingdom armed forces after they admitted their sexual orientation to investigators. The code of conduct will complement existing policies in cracking down on harassment, discrimination and bullying.

When I was young I had a twist for punching... and so I thought I would enlist... they taught me how to shoot... it’s just like pulling legs off frogs... so if you’re young and in your prime and fond of every kind of crime... come join the British Army... I promise you a jolly good time... if you’re strong and stupid too a life in the Army [i]s just for you...

...just miles from your doorstep hundreds of men are given weapons and trained to kill. The government calls it the Army but a more alarmist name would be *The KILL-BOT Factory*.

The Army provides expert tuition in firearm use... [- as was indicated yesterday when an 'Iranian serviceman, who had fled his barracks several days ago with a gun and ammunition, shot dead 14 people in the capital, Tehran, before he was gunned down by police' – and killing] in a variety of [other ways. Yet]... Army training seems the favourite solution to escalating crime involving young offenders.

...N[Z] presents a sad spectacle, with all our aimless fussing, complaining, tearing out of hair and general distraction over the rising crime rate. Murders are almost a daily occurrence and property theft is a major growth industry... We pat ourselves on the back on having cut unemployment back to 6% or so of the work force... But 6%... is still far too high, especially as most of the crime is being committed by the jobless. If we give them something to do, they will be too busy to commit crime. If we go further, and give them something worthwhile to do, something that will produce marketable skills, make them feel proud of themselves and self-reliant, most will despise criminals as losers and no-hopers... So why has no person of significance or influence taken the logical step of promoting compulsory military training as a solution? To me it seems the most obvious way of changing the motivation of a growing underclass of young people who feel (a) the world owes them a living but (b) they are unlikely ever to get a job to provide them with it... The right way is to introduce compulsory military training across the board at, say, 17. And none of that silly business the army went on with years ago – a few months playing about doing rifle drill and firing a machinegun occasionally, then back home to mum and dad. What's needed is a full 12 months at least in the services. In the army... of course, because the navy and air force employ highly trained staff to use sophisticated equipment... Having a successful period of military training on your record is an ideal way to convince an employer that you're the sort of person he's looking for. A soldier is likely to have a... readiness to follow... My scheme would have widespread public support, make no mistake. People are thoroughly sick of the huge increase in crime for a start. And a recent (1995) public opinion survey, analysed by the Foundation for Peace Studies as reported by Auckland University's Department of Political Science, showed a surprisingly high majority of respondents – 63% – support the re-introduction of compulsory military training for young adults. Only 24% say "No" outright, with 13% undecided. There are widely varying views on the usefulness of a well-trained army once you've got one, and there are no wars on the horizon, but there's no doubt that N[Z] would be able to speak with a confident voice in world councils if we had a proper defence force. How is this training to be paid for? A soldier is more costly for the taxpayer to keep than a 17-year-old on the dole, but substantial savings elsewhere will offset the cost... Adding the reduced cost of detention and punishment resulting from the lowered crime rate, to what is saved by cutting the dole payout, would go a fair way to financing each year's intake of military trainees... Criminals are enormously expensive for the taxpayer, in terms of damaged property, lost production, victim compensation, police investigation and prosecution expenses, followed by keeping the eventually convicted miscreant in jail at \$1000 a week and upward. - 1997

THE Foreign Legion is a creation only the French could have crafted. They recruit the world's misfits, train them to kill and die, then turn their story into a romance... The... volunteer signs up for a minimum of five years, joining 8500 serving soldiers and 36,000 fallen comrades. Their legend, embodied in... *Beau Geste*, is carefully protected. The Legion employs writers, photographers and artists full-time, and retired legionnaires make statues and memorabilia celebrating the Legion's glory. One French officer, rich in Legion romance... sees the legionnaires as similar to the monks of the middle ages, keeping a spirit of brotherhood and courage alive in a shallow, materialistic world. "We are a bit out of time and space. You realise that we are in a sort of monastery," he explains. Except that these soldier monks kill rather than pray for a living... The Legion seems an anachronism [as we near] the 21st century, but still 100 young men a week arrive in Marseilles from all over the world to join France's army of foreigners. As one soldier says, they are "a bunch of weirdos. If you get a guy who's got his head together, he don't need us." Or as another says, "You give your body to the Legion and they will protect you from yourself." ...These soldiers of an adopted flag sign up to a simple but death-inviting code of conduct: complete the mission at all costs, never abandon your wounded or dead, and never surrender your arms. In return they receive the promise that they will never be alone... They leave their past behind. They take a new name. The Legion will deny any knowledge of them should anyone come looking and will rebuild them as new men... The Legion is their last chance... They come because they want adventure... because of "romantic failure", because... they have money problems... or... they are minor criminals wanting to avoid prison...

...for war's sake you must cherish thieves; for surely... these two crafts agree together... Yet France... is troubled and infected with a much sorer plague. The whole realm is filled and besieged with hired soldiers in peace time (if that be peace)... under the same... pretence that hath persuaded you to keep these idle serving-men. For these wise fools and very archdoltos thought the wealth of the whole country herein to consist, if there were ever in a readiness a strong and sure garrison, specially of old practised soldiers, for they put no trust at all in men unexercised. And therefore they must be forced to seek for war, to the end they may ever have practised soldiers and cunning manslaughterers, lest... their hands and their minds, through idleness or lack of exercise, should wax dull. But how pernicious and pestilent a thing it is to maintain such beasts the Frenchmen by their own harms have learned, and the examples of the Romans, Carthaginians, Syrians, and of many other countries do manifestly declare. For not only the empire but also the fields and cities of all these by divers occasions have been overrunned and destroyed of their own armies...

The Biblical tradition tells us that the absence of work – idleness – was a condition of the first man's blessedness before the Fall. The love of idleness has remained the same in fallen man; but the curse still lies heavy upon man, and not only because in the sweat of our brow we must eat bread, but because from our moral qualities we are unable to be idle and at peace. A secret voice tells us that we must be to blame for being idle. If a man could find a state in which while being idle he could feel himself to be of use and to be doing his duty, he would have attained to one side of primitive blessedness. And such a state of obligatory and irreproachable idleness is enjoyed by a whole class – the military class. It is in that obligatory and irreproachable idleness that the chief attraction of military service has always consisted, and will always consist.

However, not all military personnel are attracted by the prospect of being idle. Those that aren't include the ones called *mercenaries*, or *dogs of war*.

THE dogs of war now have a pedigree. Today's mercenaries... have upgraded... their name, swapping the *nom de guerre* and label "soldier of fortune" for a business card bearing the title "security consultant." Pinstripes replace fatigues, and the camouflage jungle command tent of the past is now more likely to be a suburban corporate headquarters. But when there's work to be done, you can bet that those aluminium briefcases will pop open to reveal not only legal pads but automatic weapons. With the end of superpower involvement in local conflicts and the world community increasingly reluctant to step in, there is a growing fear... that mineral-rich African rulers may spurn diplomacy in favour of a new kind of private army. More than half a dozen companies specialising in guns-for-hire have sprung up to offer such services around the globe... AS reports circulate that... Executive Outcomes, a Pretoria-based company run by former South African soldiers trained in defence of apartheid... is poised to enter the rebel war in Zaire – reports denied by [the company's] chairman... – a debate has intensified over the role of such firms in post-Cold War conflicts. The outfit [which]... has a computer database of 2000 ready soldiers, many looking for work since being furlonged by South Africa's new democratically elected government... is sometimes condemned as glorified guns-for-hire who profit from conflict and prolong it; others credit the firm with aiding stability in Angola and Sierra Leone in recent years... Either way, a major concern is that Executive Outcomes may represent the future of conflict resolution in Africa... Executive Outcomes officials eschew the shady, underworld image of Africa's traditional soldiers of fortune. They deny any tie to the legendary "dogs of war" (the name is taken from Shakespeare) who popped up fighting for the highest

bidder in independence struggles and coups d'état for decades, reputedly having recruited their bands of killer ruffians in seedy portside taverns. That allegedly is the scene unfolding now in eastern Zaire, where a band of 200 to 300 mercenaries is reportedly assembling to help President Mobutu Sese Seko battle rebels occupying border towns and goldmining areas. Allegedly, Executive Outcomes is helping with the recruiting... "Call us whatever you want to bloody call us. We do something entirely different than others who fall under the flag of mercenary,"... [someone who] helped to found Executive Outcomes in 1989... [and now its] senior consultant... says. "We don't just go into any country. We don't work for the highest bidder." [He] says his firm will only work for democratically elected governments, or governments recognised by the U[N]. And, after losing some men in Angola, he says his firm makes it clear its men will fight "in self defence." ...Executive Outcomes' first involvement in Angola was defending an oil installation. When the country's civil war erupted anew in 1992, the company signed an initial \$NZ29 million one-year contract to retrain the Government's army, a contract that was extended twice. The firm sent in 500 men, and soon after they directed a decisive victory to retake the Cafunfo diamond fields in 1994, [the] UNITA rebel leader... agreed to peace talks. This week the Government and UNITA are scheduled to formally join in a government of national unity, though lingering disputes over how to share power and diamonds may scuttle plans. Ironically, many of Executive Outcomes' soldiers have, until recently, been special forces operatives fighting alongside [UNITA's leader] against the formerly Marxist government. With the firm, they were fighting against him on behalf of that government. After Angola, the firm signed a contract with Sierra Leone's Government and helped it to secure the capital, Freetown, and other areas from rebel incursions. When the Government at one point didn't pay the firm and it threatened to pull out, some Sierra Leonans begged them to stay and a group of merchants came up with the money. While still tense and violence-prone, Sierra Leone held elections last year. Even with Executive Outcomes' successes, concerns are raised about how the firm profits and throws its weight around. In Africa, many wars are often directly about spoils, and the firm has been accused of taking its share through a sister company that was awarded mineral concessions in Sierra Leone... Citing a U[N] intelligence report, two European newspapers reported recently that the firm's military activity has branched into a network of shady, spin-off businesses throughout Africa, including Uganda and Kenya. The report alleges secret ties to Government officials and suspected arms smugglers... Analysts also worry that to pay the firm's steep bills, troubled nations might sell off key national assets at bargain prices. Some observers note that multinational corporations also are hiring their own private security forces before working in insecure African hot spots...

Since the cold war's demise, there's been no end to conflict. From Azerbaijan to Zaire, disorganised military forces need help... [W]ith demand for military muscle stronger than ever around the world the market for private military assistance is ballooning... [H]ired guns are going corporate... THE COMPANY LOGO, A METALLIC-blue chessboard knight, rears across the screen and un-seats an opposing king. As the corporate promo continues, scenes of military derring-do flit by and a voice-over extols Executive Outcomes Ltd.'s product line: low-intensity conflict, sniper and special forces training, rapid deployment, tank warfare... A slim, fair-haired 40-year-old... one-time intelligence agent for a South African military unit that carried out assassinations is... [the] chief executive of Executive Outcomes... Holstered on one hip is a cell phone, on the other a Czech-made revolver... He puts a cheery corporate face on one of the world's oldest professions: mercenaries, or "military consultants," as most prefer to be known... [He] calls his employees "privatised peacekeepers." ...From the suburbs of Washington and Tel Aviv to London and Pretoria, a growing number of competitors are scrambling for contracts that run into millions of dollars, hawking their wares using everything from Websites to slick brochures. For instance, contracts worth more than \$170 million for training Saudi Arabia's national guard and air force have gone to Vinnell Corp. and a sister company, both partly owned by [a] Washington... merchant-banking group, whose chairman is [a] former Secretary of Defence... Military Professional Resources Inc., another capital-area firm, won the business to improve the fighting skills of troops in Bosnia and Croatia. "We offer expertise from the greatest fighting force on earth, the U.S. military," says... [a former US Army general who is now] a vice president at M.P.R.I... Topflight mercenaries and military consultants, many recruited from elite military units like the U.S. Special Forces, Britain's S.A.S. and Scots Guards and South Africa's 32 Battalion, can command anywhere from about \$3,500 a month for enlisted men to \$13,000 a month for officers or fighter pilots. That is far more than most of those involved could make wearing a regular-army uniform, and the package is usually topped off with free death-and-disability insurance. But that's cheap compared with the expensive merchandise the firms encourage satisfied customers to buy. Take Levdan, one of a variety of low-profile Israeli firms that have long peddled military assistance. Not long ago, the company completed a three-year mission in the Congo, during which more than 200 Israelis trained the armed forces and the elite guard protecting [the Congolese] President... The Congolese government then agreed to buy more than \$10 million worth of Israeli weapons and military equipment. Not to be outdone, Executive Outcomes has brokered the sale of, or leased on behalf of clients, tens of millions of dollars' worth of military equipment, including the Soviet MiG-23 and MiG-27 fighter aircraft and Mi-17 and Mi-24 transport-and-attack helicopters... Not all military consultants are playing by the new rules. In Zaire, a force of several hundred Serb, Croat and Ukrainian thugs hired by the... dictatorship committed widely publicized atrocities and were then overrun by rebels. Not exactly a performance to attract future employers. But then the new corporate mercenaries would probably not... work... for [Zaire's dictator] in the first place. Their business strategy is to seek out politically correct governments, natural-resource providers or even nonprofit organizations. The Red Cross, which suffered nine dead in conflict zones last year, hires guards to protect some of its installations. Other relief organizations like Doctors Without Borders, which lost three people in Rwanda, could be forced to move in a similar direction... Yet business is not always so good. Sandline International, which is headed by a former British military officer turned businessman, saw its \$36 million contract with the government of Papua New Guinea blow up last month like a mishandled grenade.

Death arrived before dawn at Simbo village, on the troubled island of Bougainville. A patrol of Papua New Guinean soldiers, supported by irregular militia of the locally recruited "resistance" forces, attacked without warning, killing twelve villagers and seriously wounding two others. The massacre... was one among many tragedies in an almost forgotten war that has entered its eighth year with little prospect of peace... This is more than a local insurrection. The secessionist campaign on the island is dragging PNG deeper into a political and economic mire, sorely straining its relations with A[US], and pushing PNG dangerously close to conflict with the neighbouring Solomon Islands, whose territory has been crossed to pursue and attack the... Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA)... its supporters, and humanitarian blockade-runners. Last week... the A[US]n Foreign Minister... had... repeated Canberra's long-standing contention that the war had no military solution, and again offered to help in any peace initiative. The offer met an official silence... Earlier attempts to broker peace through talks secured by a multinational Pacific military contingent – supported by A[US] and NZ – had failed miserably. A major drive by PNG troops to flush out and capture BRA leaders earlier this year also met with bloody defeat... The conduct of the conflict has already earned the condemnation of the U[N], and the cost of continuing military operations, the economic blockade of the island, the support of villages moved into "care centres," and the loss of vast revenue from the A[US]n-owned Panguna copper mine are festering problems. This week Port Moresby will also be trying to convince the World Bank to proceed with the frozen second installation of a vital structural adjustment package, the International Monetary Fund is becoming chary of putting more funds into a troubled financial stabilisation package, and the Asian Development Bank is viewing carefully its economic involvement. Beyond this is the human toll, now almost certain to continue unabated... Officially, the toll stands at least 300 killed and more than 2000 civilians dead through disease and medical failures. Two detailed lists... show the suffering is far higher than these bald figures. The lists trace by incident – frequently also by name and village – more than 100,000 Bougainvilleans affected by detention, ambush, destruction of villages and plantations, [or] killed, wounded and tortured by PNG forces... Massacres, assassinations and summary executions have become standard weapons of war, confirmed by

the discovery of mass graves. Confiscation of property, beatings, rape and violent suppression of dissent are commonplace. Roads, ports, airports, schools, and businesses have been destroyed. Supported by medical evidence, [the]lists also detail the pain of the innocent: the soaring incidence of preventable diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, leprosy and gastroenteritis, and the lack of treatment for others such as cardiac disease. Death rates have climbed alarmingly with the collapse of immunisation programmes for... TB, whooping cough, polio, measles and hepatitis B. - 1996

Fighting for their island... ["GOD protect us from enemy bullets." The chanting prayer grew in intensity as the three boats rocked together under the night sky. Next to me knelt a young... BRA... soldier, his M16 rifle propped against the side of the small fibreglass dingy. It was 3am and we were about to embark on the two-hour ocean crossing from the Solomon Islands to Bougainville Island. On board were civilians and soldiers returning to their homes after seeking medical advice in the Solomons – the only place many Bougainvilleans say they can be treated by doctors without the fear of summary execution by the PNG defence forces occupying many Bougainvillean towns... The Bougainville Interim Government and its armed wing, the BRA... have not been able to push PNG forces from the island and achieve their aim of independence. Their war with PNG defence soldiers has led to atrocities on both sides and an estimated 10,000 people killed since the conflict began... The battle has been complicated by Bougainvilleans turning against one another. The PNG-backed Bougainville Transitional Government controls the island's three main towns which contain about 40,000 of the island's 180,000 inhabitants and are the landing points for all foreign aid and imports to the island... During my three-week visit to the island I had free movement through the villages and jungle in the central area of Bougainville Island. Escorted by BRA soldiers, I saw first-hand the harsh conditions nine years of war had inflicted on a population that once regarded itself as having the highest standard of living in PNG. Economically, the war had clearly devastated the rural areas of the island where paper money is virtually non-existent. In the absence of foreign imports and any real link with the towns, many of Bougainville's 140,000 rurally based people have been forced to rely on their ingenuity to survive. Trucks, generators and motorbikes that once ran on diesel or petrol are now powered by coconut oil. Juice from the white coconut pith is left overnight and oil skimmed from the top with about 20 coconuts needed to provide one litre of oil. The development is not foolproof – cold temperature's in the island's highlands are enough to congeal the oil, forcing drivers to jack up their vehicle and light a fire beneath the engine to melt the oil again. Another impressive development is the adaptation of old washing machines into hydro-electric generators which provide enough power to run a single electric bulb in each of three or four houses. Soap, impossible to find since the war began, has been replaced by the sap of a tree. Despite their inventiveness, villagers in the interim government-held areas said they were desperate for help from the outside world... [However, regardless of whether or not that help is forthcoming,] BRA soldiers and civilians in BRA territory were adamant they would not give up their struggle against PNG until they were independent. They said too many people had been killed and too many hardships endured for the cause to be abandoned... Perhaps most chilling of all were the words of a village chief... repeated again and again by other people in the BRA territories: "We can keep fighting. All the young boys you see around you will be our future soldiers," he said.

...Atrocities on Bougainville have been increasing in recent months, according[to] Amnesty International... Amnesty says the atrocities have been largely ignored by the international community partly because it was assumed the worst of the violence was over and partly because Bougainville was remote with little strategic importance. However, in a report published yesterday, Amnesty said the people of Bougainville had been subjected to illegal executions, torture, rape and arbitrary detention. "At the same time there has been little external pressure on the PNG Government to bring the atrocities to an end," said the report... Between 1991 and November 1993 at least 60 people were illegally killed by Government security forces. Since then at least 62 people had been killed at the hands of the PNGDF or Resistance Force and a further 13 people had disappeared after being taken into custody. Last year 44 people disappeared or were killed. According to the report, the BRA has killed at least 36 people since the beginning of 1993. However, Amnesty argues that the real figures for political killings on Bougainville are undoubtedly much higher. Amnesty blames the Government for much of the trouble. "An appalling degree of inaction by the Government has resulted in only one alleged killing by the PNG Defence Force being investigated since the conflict began while the perpetrators of the violations continue to act with impunity."

...[the AUSn PM] told a meeting of Government parliamentarians... yesterday... that he became aware last week of a plan to use... up to 150 African-based mercenaries... in a "surgical strike" against... secessionist rebels on Bougainville. The P[M]'s comments flew in the face of a declaration by PNG on Monday that it had no plans to use soldiers of fortune to resolve the nine-year conflict... [However, the NZ] *Herald*... on Monday... [reported the PNG] Government had approved a \$A36 million... covert operation to end the rebellion... [The PNG PM then] said his Government had hired Sandlines International, a private military training and logistical group, not to fight themselves but to help train Government soldiers on Bougainville. Sandlines International is a subsidiary of... Executive Outcomes... A report from Port Moresby yesterday said the PNG Government used \$A30 million... from the partial float of Orogen Minerals Ltd last year to fund its "Bougainville Initiative." The... Premier of the Bougainville Transitional Government... has condemned any plan to use mercenaries on the island. "I fear the repercussions such a military operation would have on Bougainville, P[NG] and the international community," he said... Amid fears of renewed violence, hospitals in northern A[US near PNG] were put on alert for casualties from... Bougainville island.

...The Papua New Guinean Government... secretly siphoned more than \$A31 million... in proceeds from the sale of the Government's mineral and oil interests to finance its planned covert mercenary operations on the rebel province of Bougainville. The movement of funds, made on January 23 this year, was publicly denied the same day by the PNG P[M]... However, a letter signed by the PNG Minister of Finance... on January 23 indicates the Government wished to avoid detection by the World Bank and the I[MF], which are both involved in running economic recovery programmes in PNG... In his letter [the minister] spells out... that the procedure was necessary "in order for the Government to implement its plans relating to Bougainville." ...yesterday [the minister] said the letter... he had signed was an internal document with no standing and he rejected claims that the proceeds from the [mineral and oil interests]... were used to finance any new operations in Bougainville. In an interview with ABC Television in Port Moresby, [the PNG PM] said the role of the foreigners was to teach PNG troops to "get" the Bougainville rebel leadership whom he described as "criminals." ...The Government[said it] had tried everything humanly possible to try to get the Bougainville rebel leaders to negotiate.

...When A[US]'s Foreign Minister... stepped out into the sultry air of Port Moresby's Jackson Airport in the early hours of last Wednesday morning he had a smile on his face. Tensions between A[US] and its former colony over the Bougainville crisis were easing, freeing up a bagful of aid money the minister has been dragging round since coming into office... [Last] year... he was forced to deliver as his very first message to PNG A[US]'s absolute opposition to their decision to abandon the defence agreement on Bougainville... This was going to be a good-news trip. But what [he] couldn't see in the sub-tropical gloom were two large Russian-built aircraft squatting on Jackson's ageing tarmac. Like [the AUSn Foreign Minister], the planes, flying under the Bulgarian Air Sofia flag, had arrived in Port Moresby under the cover of darkness. Unlike the A[US]n Foreign Minister, any bags of money they might be carrying would be heading out of PNG's national coffers, not in... By dawn, as [the AUSn Foreign Minister] was being briefed by anxious A[US]n diplomats on the presence of the planes in PNG and what this might represent, the larger of the two aircraft, the AN124, had already crept out of the country. On charter... for \$100,000 a day... to a shadowy foreign entity known cryptically as Sandline International... whose presence in the country has been kept a secret, the aircraft are the most tangible evidence of plans by the PNG Government to use foreign mercenaries to launch a series of covert strikes against hardline rebels on Bougainville. For more than a week, the smaller of the two planes had spent the day-light hours sitting innocently on the tarmac, its Russian crew safely ensconced in the nearby Gateway Hotel. But at night this plane had been carrying military equipment and supplies to the provincial PNG town of Wewak. There, under the cover of the Sepik jungle, between 135 to 150 men have been preparing for what they promise will be a surgical strike against the villages in central

Bougainville... Earlier this year the PNG Government, less than six months before national elections were due, decided to draw off millions of dollars from the nation's revenue earnings to pay Sandline... to solve the Bougainville crisis once and for all. That such a measure could even be contemplated in a country that prides itself on its robust democracy has its genesis in just how much of his own reputation [the PNG PM]... placed at stake when he pledged on coming to office in 1994 to find a lasting solution to the Bougainville crisis. The decision flies in the face of all experience on the ground in Bougainville where PNG troops have managed to inflame secessionist sentiments without ever getting on top of the guerrilla fighters of the B[RA] every time they have gone in hard in the conflict. It also confronts A[US] with the biggest foreign policy dilemma in the bilateral relationship since the days when the merits of early independence for PNG were being debated 25 years ago... The issue is further complicated by the history of A[US]'s complete reluctance to provide substantial logistical support to the PNG Defence Force efforts on Bougainville... Canberra[had] opted to continue to accept PNG's public statements of support for the peace process on Bougainville until the PNG Government told them otherwise... The developments so far have already prompted an urgent policy [review] at the highest levels of the[AUSn] Government... The continuation at existing levels of A[US]'s \$320 million in aid to PNG will be one of the cards on the table, not the least because development aid seems something of an arrogance to a country prepared to devote millions of dollars to employ a foreign hit squad against its own people[– although the PNG Government does 'need to take a harder line on the escalating crime rates that are scaring away tourists'.

...The PM of PNG] and his family reportedly are major shareholders in a security company run by two A[US]ns accused of hiring and arming A[US]n police and former anti-terrorist soldiers to work in PNG... The operations were reportedly against PNG criminals who had threatened to kill businessmen at a gold mine at Ferguson Island, south of Port Moresby, in 1996... and at an oil-palm plantation... in the north in 1995... The *Age* newspaper... says PNG Government records show the A[US]ns were... flown to Port Moresby on tourist visas.

...Looting continued in Port Moresby yesterday as local criminal gangs appeared to take advantage of a... political crisis pitting the country's Government against the Army. Police reportedly opened fire with automatic weapons and tear gas... to repel a group of looters who attacked a supermarket near... the Army's Murray Barracks... A guard inside the supermarket used a machete to cut off a looter's hand... P[NG]'s new caretaker P[M]... yesterday pleaded for unity among his people... [PNG's elected PM] stepped aside last Wednesday, pending the outcome of [an] inquiry, in a bid to defuse the volatile situation... The Melbourne-based *Herald Sun*, quoting sources... yesterday reported that the mercenary leader... will accuse senior Government officials of skimming millions of dollars from the... deal when he gives evidence before the inquiry, due to begin tomorrow... The mercenary leader is being held in P[NG] for trial next month on two illegal firearms charges... [The PNG] Army chief... said... the[other] mercenaries... have been thrown out of the country... Most were put on a charter flight home to South Africa... [The Army chief] said the money paid to Sandline was for a three-month contract but because the mercenaries were likely to [have remained] in PNG for up to 12 months the real cost... would have blown out to \$NZ140 million... Sandline had received half the[initial] \$US36 million contract price in advance.

...A P[NG] military court handed down heavy jail sentences yesterday on five officers convicted of mutiny... [after] holding a senior officer under house arrest... [during] the Army's revolt against the Government's hiring of foreign mercenaries... [The] then Army commander[– who]... was the figurehead for the revolt... [– plus] the major who... rallied the troops behind... [the] General... and drove the revolt[, also]... face possible mutiny charges for their role... [But their trials won't] take place until a second public inquiry has been completed... [Meanwhile, t]he former P[NG]n military leader... yesterday defended his receipt of a \$A70,000... secret payment from... one of Sandline's rivals... saying there was no conflict of interest... "My saving grace about receiving funds from [a British arms dealer] is that, during my term as commander, the defence force did not buy or order any goods from [his] firm," he said.

...The worst crisis in P[NG]'s 22 years of independence started on March 17 when [PNG's] Army leader... turned on [his PM], demanding he quit and expel some 70 African mercenaries flown in by... Sandline International. [The] General... was promptly sacked but [the PM] was unable to control a groundswell of popular and military opposition. Violent street protests saw dozens of people injured... News of [the PM's] departure was greeted with a huge roar of approval by thousands of protesters besieging the Parliament building... [The departing PM] said he had to accept responsibility for the crisis. He had not quit earlier because he wanted to safeguard the constitution and did not want to appear to give in to pressure from the military.

...As the dust settled over Port Moresby, and people embraced the Easter break with some relief, many P[NG]ns were understandably keen to put the best possible complexion on the 10 days of turmoil that shook their young nation to its very roots. Police and[some] senior defence force officers have earned enormous kudos for having conducted themselves and their men calmly and in a highly disciplined manner... That it was the Army's stand which finally forced [the PM's] hand was clear by the P[M]'s apparent lack of concern about public reaction after details of the mercenaries' contract were revealed... in February... [The PM], his Deputy... and the Defence Minister... calculated that they could tough it out, counting on most people's ignorance of the term mercenary and the nation's shared frustration and weariness with the Bougainville crisis. In his first public comments [the PNG PM] also played on P[NG]ns' nascent nationalism, articulating their affront at A[US]'s strident reaction to the plan to use mercenaries... [He] has never acknowledged that A[US]'s reaction was unanticipated... because of PNG's failure to inform the[AUSn] Government of its plans, despite a supposedly close relationship, particularly between the two countries' defence forces... The future for the A[US]n Defence Co-operation Programme is uncertain, although ironically the relationship with the PNGDF, never great, may actually improve with a more confident force on the PNG side. At the political level there is far greater distrust. The A[US]n Foreign Minister... has pointed out that he sat face-to-face with [PNG's Deputy PM plus its Defence Minister] last September at the annual ministerial forum... Nothing was said of the Sandline deal. A[US] had to rely on intelligence sources for information on the deal even after both [the AUSn Foreign Minister] and the A[USn P]M... had directly asked [the PNG PM] about the nature of the contract... P[NG]'s constitution may have survived the past 10 days, but the problem that has undermined the nation's sovereignty for the past decade remains... Under PNG's independence constitution it is the new MPs, not the people, who elect a P[M], so the PM] cannot be ruled out for a third term, although he has moved down the ranks in terms of being considered the most appropriate. Whoever th[e next PM] is, he will still have to face Bougainville – a problem that remains unsolved, despite the fracas surrounding it. [The BRA] leader... is still demanding complete withdrawal of the PNGDF, despite their stand against the mercenaries. But he said yesterday that he was willing to accept a referendum and release five PNGDF hostages if a neutral third party or force replaced the Army... [Ironically, recent rumours suggest] that the Sandline mercenaries were relieved their deal with the PNG [G]overnment fell through, because their mission – killing interim government leaders – would have proved too difficult and would have cost many civilian lives... [Incidentally, AUS has] left open the option of sending troops to P[NG] since AUS's mining giant BHP announced the shutdown of its Port Moresby steel operations and the evacuation of A[US]n staff.

...A[US] should seize millions of dollars of deadly military hardware diverted en route to P[NG], the federal Opposition said... "Under no circumstances should such equipment go into PNG where it could be used in the Bougainville conflict." A spokesman for [the AUSn] Defence Minister... confirmed that a giant Russian-built Antonov transport plane had dropped off its cargo at[an] RAAF... airbase in the Northern Territory. While he refused to give details of its contents for security reasons, sources said it was understood to include two helicopter gunships and two transports, ground vehicles, rockets and heat-seeking missiles, assault rifles and ammunition... part of the former [PNG] Government's ill-fated mercenary contract... [The] PNG Defence Force Commander... said he believed [the equipment] was... obtained in Eastern Europe at prices far below that... charged by Sandline to the PNG Government... Meanwhile, [the departed PNG PM confirmed] yesterday he would contest the June

election and expected to win with an increased majority. He was prepared, he said, to be judged at the ballot box over his controversial decision to hire mercenaries to solve the Bougainville secessionist crisis.

...[PNG's] first Prime Minister after independence in 1975 and a person regarded as the father of the nation, said the mercenary plan was "stupid." ...[However, the departed PNG PM] denied that the original secrecy surrounding the deal with Sandline was aimed at circumventing proper procedures. "We would never want to break the constitution. I mean, that is the last thing I would want to do," he told the *National* newspaper in PNG. "My job is to uphold the constitution. My job is also to ensure that the security of this nation is built up to a stage that it is able to withstand any attempt to break away and any terrorist activity."

...[PNG's incumbent PM declared that he hadn't resigned a few weeks ago after all – he'd merely been 'having a temporary break, but now he was back']]

...*Leadership chaos in PNG as two PMs scrap*... P[NG] sank into political confusion yesterday after two politicians declared themselves to be the country's [PM. The incumbent PM]... who stood down at the height of a political crisis in March, said he had resumed office after the completion of an inquiry into the Government's abortive plan to use mercenaries to quell [the Bougainville I]sland rebellion. "I have at noon today... resumed the full duties and responsibilities of P[M of PNG," he]... said. His announcement... less than two weeks before national elections on June 14, came only one hour after [the caretaker P]M... declared he would stay on in office. "My appointment is legally binding and the prerogative is mine to vacate the office," [the caretaker] said... Speaking at a news conference yesterday, [the incumbent PM], releasing the 125-page final report into the... \$[NZ]53 million... Sandline contract, said the inquiry had cleared him of any wrongdoing. However, [the caretaker]... called for an inquiry into how the Sandline report was released to "unauthorised persons." ...Meanwhile, a member of Parliament campaigning on Bougainville for the... elections had been kidnapped... The former Catholic priest... who represents the island in Parliament... [and] is a strong supporter of the P[NG] Government on the issue of Bougainville... was abducted by members of the B[RA], the Government said.

...P[NG]ns were riveted to their radios on Monday night as they followed ballot-box by ballot-box, the midnight demise of [the incumbent P]M... who lost the New Ireland seat he had held for 29 years... by just 110 votes... [He became] the first incumbent P[M since]... independence to lose his seat... By early the next morning a hastily-made banner... The Monster is Dead... strung outside the... Defence Force headquarters provided a brutal epitaph for the... 30-year fixture on PNG's political scene... It has been an ignoble end to the public career of the A[US]n-educated, mixed-race boy who rose from his Chinese father's humble coastal trading business to become one of the country's first millionaires and smoothest political operators... Rich, arrogant, and, ultimately, isolated from the very people he sought to lead, he had come to personify all that P[NG]ns felt was wrong with their leaders. When secret plans to use foreign mercenaries against secessionist rebels on Bougainville were exposed in February, it seemed... [the incumbent PM] had not really meant it at all when... two years earlier... he had said: "The first thing we have got to do is to bring back trust; trust between the governing and the governed." ...The country's first finance minister, he persisted with a hard kina policy after independence in 1975 which brought a stability to the PNG economy that has been lost only in recent years. He was badly burned politically in 1986 after taking a 7[%] stake in the Pacer Pacific float that financed development of the massive Porgera gold mine in the PNG Highlands. The deal made him more than... \$1 million but nearly cost him his political career... Despite being forced to stand aside for most of the last three months of his prime ministership... he... was convinced that... he would lead the nation again... He remained unapologetic over the Sandline contract to the end, refusing to publicly rule out the possibility that he would revive the contract if re-elected. In an interview at the outset of the election campaign he said: "To tell you the truth, I would have succeeded. Even if 10,000 angels were swearing I was wrong, it would make no difference. I was right, I was always right all the time."

...Time is running out for Bougainville. The hired guns... may have gone[- 'reportedly with more than \$US30 million in compensation from the PNG Government following an award by an international tribunal of three former judges, chaired by a NZer (the tribunal, which ruled that the contract was valid under international law – the new PNG Government had argued that the contract was unconstitutional and illegal – awarded Sandline \$US18 million, the outstanding portion of the company's fee, with costs and interest bringing the settlement to \$US30 million') –] but the time-bomb left... [behind] is ticking away, waiting to explode. More than half the population live in squalter camps, known ironically as care centres, where hundreds of inhabitants each year die from preventable diseases and medical mishap... The care centres are just a new name for refugee camps... These refugees are outsiders, driven from their villages on the mainland by the B[RA]... At least five refugees a month, throughout the camps, are killed by the [BRA]... Food is scarce and human dignity at an all-time low... Before the war, Bougainville had the highest literacy rate in the South Pacific. Now... children sit around all day, there are no books and no teachers... This is not war-torn, famine-ridden, far off Africa, but a country... that was a territory of A[US]. A country that A[US] sends millions in aid to annually. Yet these camps in Bougainville see only \$NZ500,000 each year... That's 2 cents a day for each person, or 70c a week for the average family... It's not even the price of a loaf of bread, in a country where petrol is \$2 a litre and rice \$1.40 a kilo... These people are victims of a political agenda, one they have no control over. Nobody asked them if they wanted the mine, or wanted their lives torn apart. Most of the locals were never consulted or their rights even considered when... mining... came... "We lived peacefully for many years, now our country's torn apart, abandoned by A[US] and abused by big business. CRA came here, started mining, took our copper but left us nothing." ...A[US]'s CRA owned 53.6[%] of the... mine at Panguna... [and] the PNG Government 19.1[%] with the other 27[% being] sold off in a public share, mainly to PNG and A[US]n interests. The PNG Government then took 95[%] of the profit, with 5[%] going to the Solomons. Less than 1[%] of the... millions[made] from the site... went back into Bougainville. Finally, in 1988, the indigenous people formed into a separatist group, closing down the mine by force.

...Warring Bougainville factions will board a N[Z] Air Force plane under official escort at Cairns and together head to N[Z] for peace talks at the Burnham Army Camp in Christchurch... Four groups... [and] up to 60 participants... have been invited by the N[Z] Government in the first peace initiative since... 1995. But the [NZ] Government has no idea whether key leaders... or junior representatives are coming. Nor can it predict the level of animosity among them, but security at Burnham has been stepped up... The N[Z] Government was... paying for the talks but otherwise playing no part.

...Bougainville leaders yesterday signed a historic accord calling for a ceasefire and an end to the bitter war... The Burnham Declaration stopped short of specifying when the shooting would stop... But it called for a U[N] peacekeeping force to follow a... withdrawal of PNG defence forces from the island... [and] oversee the peace process of a period of not more than three years... Its signatories hope to meet the PNG Government in [two months] to develop the peace process.

...as a gesture of goodwill... Bougainvillean rebel leaders have promised to hand over five P[NG]n hostages to a N[Z] Government representative aboard the frigate Canterbury [which, together with]... the Navy tanker ship Endeavour[has] been diverted to the... Solomon Islands... The [NZ] cabinet agreed on Monday to make them available to help to protect about 60 leaders of Bougainvillean factions when they return home from peace talks at Burnham... Although PNG sanctioned the talks, it has a price on the heads of some delegates and its soldiers ambushed rebels as they returned to Bougainville via the Solomons from peace talks in A[US] two years ago.

...[more than 1500 stolen automatic weapons stand between an Anzac-monitored peace solution and the Solomon Islands' warring factions. A reconnaissance team of five NZ police, military and Foreign Affairs officials will join AUSn counterparts in Honiara tomorrow to trigger the process which will see the return of the firearms and the rebuilding of the nation. They will keep their heads low because, despite the signing of the peace deal by the two militia forces in AUS last week, law and order in the Pacific country remains unpredictable. But officials who witnessed the signing of the agreement

remain confident that this is the Solomons' best chance for reconciliation since deadly ethnic tensions flared into violence two years ago. More than 70 people have been killed in fighting that began when Guadalcanal rebels drove about 20,000 Malaitan Island immigrants from Guadalcanal. The reconnaissance team will lay the groundwork for the deployment of international peace monitors, with NZ's contribution likely to be about 15 people. It is understood the unarmed contingent is likely to include police constables and Army sergeants, armourers, warrant officers and soldiers. Their first task will be to ensure the two militia groups, the Malaita Eagle Force and the Isatabu Freedom Movements, stick to the deal by disbanding their forces. But the Act Party leader, who travelled to the Solomons with his wife – a Solomon Islander – said: "The NZ Government has not explained how unarmed NZ police will be more successful than unarmed local police who have been powerless. The force will need to have a ship offshore and a Hercules on standby at the airport." In related news, a) **Bougainville politician involved in... the Burnham peace talks... has been shot dead in what looks like an attempt by a faction of rebel fighters to undermine peace negotiations... Despite the groups agreeing to a peace declaration... there [have] been a number of confrontations... since the rebels... returned home... last month... The PNG Government was not represented at those talks. However... the... [newly elected PNG P]M... supported the Burnham declaration in principle.**

...N[Z] seems certain to host a second round of Bougainville peace talks, possibly early next month. The timing will be one of several issues discussed when the [NZ] Minister of Foreign Affairs... meets the new P[NG] P[M]... tomorrow.

...A[US] is to provide \$A100 million... in aid over the next five years for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of... Bougainville... said the A[US]n Foreign Minister... after meeting the PNG P[M]... yesterday... The new A[US]n aid would be in addition to \$A32.4 million worth of annual aid A[US] already provides to Bougainville... A[US] would also transport PNG and Bougainvillean delegates to the next round of peace talks...

The second round of peace talks aimed at brokering a peace deal in Bougainville will start in Christchurch next week... They are expected to last about eight days... It is not known whether the leader of the B[RA]... will attend. He would not take part in the first round... and has so far refused to support the peace process... saying the P[NG] Government's refusal to discuss independence made a mockery of it.

...Soldiers fresh from jungle training in Malaysia... are spoiling for a return to the tropics... Army chiefs are not saying what contribution N[Z] might make to a U[N]'s peace-keeping force, but the soldiers believe their... training should put them in the front line... "The guys are dead keen to go to Bougainville – they will have been acclimatised and maybe they wouldn't have to unpack their mossie nets," said one non-commissioned officer. Their contingent commander... said... "Soldiers are always keen to go overseas – that's one of the reasons they become soldiers." ...The 108 soldiers from the 2nd/1st Battalion... [also] have first-hand knowledge of [the peace talks being] held under their security gaze at... Burnham...

Emergency purchases of... radios... and... four-wheel-drive vehicles... are seen as essential for any serious N[Z] contribution to peacekeeping on Bougainville. There is unlikely to be any call for the Army's Vietnam War-vintage armoured personnel carriers, which were found woefully lacking for Bosnian peacekeeping... The [NZ Army also] had great trouble keeping its 1960s-era radios going in Bosnia, where it sent two rotations of 250 troops each... Soldiers who might go to Bougainville in a U[N] force, subject to [the] talks in Christchurch... would be unlikely to need armoured vehicles, although .50-calibre machine-guns are in rebel hands. They would have enough flak jackets... [but] the rough Bougainville terrain would call for much more reliable and robust light transport vehicles than [the NZ Army's] dying fleet of 15-year-old Land-Rovers... N[Z] sent 13 soldiers to Bougainville in 1994 to assist a 400-member peacekeeping force from Fiji, Vanuatu and Tonga during a peace conference which led to an 18-month ceasefire...

Hidden by blockade and deep jungle for longer than... W[W2] and almost as long as America's involvement in Vietnam, Bougainville is no petty tribal conflict. Nor will the truce announced last Friday at Burnham... be a small matter for N[Z, AUS] and the rest of the region... After Burnham there is hope. But... [similar] hopes collapsed after talks brokered in 1990 by N[Z] aboard HMNZS Endeavour[, after]... the 1991 Honiara Declaration, and again in 1994...

A[US] is to host a third round of talks to end the conflict on... Bougainville... [O]fficials said the talks would be held in the north A[US]n resort of Cairns next week...

Any decision to send armed forces to Bougainville would be made only after an approach from the P[NG] Government, a spokesman for the [NZ] Minister of Foreign Affairs... said last night... It is believed troops from Linton Army Camp... are preparing to go to the island for peacekeeping duties... [However, the] Defence Force headquarters press officer... declined yesterday to comment on the likelihood... "It's a matter of contingency planning. We do not discuss contingency planning." ...Meanwhile, the Navy is understood to be readying a frigate to take a truce monitoring force to Bougainville... N[Z] officials returned just days ago from a preparatory trip to Bougainville with officials from A[US] and PNG.

...N[Z] has scored a diplomatic coup over A[US] after being asked by the P[NG] Government to lead a 150-strong Truce Monitoring Group to Bougainville... The A[US]n Minister of Foreign Affairs... sought to downplay the issue in Canberra yesterday, telling journalists there was nothing... [in NZ] being asked to command the group. He said that at the end of the Sandline crisis it had been agreed between the two countries that N[Z] would be able to play a bigger role than it had in the past... "I think it really is time we started putting these little games about A[US] and NZ behind us. I mean we've got to learn to work with each other in a mature way." N[Z] is sending between 80 and 100 unarmed military and civilian personnel[, including engineers]... and medical staff... A "small reconnaissance group" will leave... today or tomorrow with the remaining personnel due on the island by the start of December... The Defence Force is also sending the frigate Canterbury, the supply ship Endeavour, the dive support ship Manawanui, Hercules aircraft and three Iroquois helicopters... The [NZ] Minister of Foreign Affairs... said the group would stay until February 28[, although] the truce-keeping exercise would be reviewed in January. He put the cost of the exercise to N[Z] at "several million dollars." [NZ has already 'spent \$5 million on the talks at Burnham.'

...N[Z]'s mission to Bougainville has an operational name the military's top brass want all its troops to live up to – belisi – pidgin for peace. It also meant calm or relaxed... A shocking-orange colour scheme being applied at [the] Hobsonville... paint shop... to helicopters bound for the troubled territory is designed to rub out any connotations of a warrior past... Although white is traditionally associated with peace, that is... out because it is the official colour of U[N] missions and Operation Belisi is strictly a regional initiative... Traditional camouflage colours are... also... out for truce-monitoring aircraft, especially since Iroquois helicopters given as A[US]n aid to P[NG] some years ago were turned into gunships and used against Bougainville rebels. The N[Z] helicopters will be unarmed, as will the... soldiers they support... A crash course in pidgin, or tok pisin, is part of the training for the... soldiers... Although there are about 19 dialects of pidgin on Bougainville alone, a broad Melanesian version of the language is generally understood. Phrase books will be essential for the unarmed soldiers... [Meanwhile, the] travel-weary crew of the frigate Canterbury left for Bougainville yesterday on a promise that the Navy will try to get them back for Christmas. The ship has already spent almost 200 days away from its Devonport base this year, including 140 days at sea... Sailors... are... using brushes and rollers to turn their shipboard Wasp helicopter orange... on their way north. They had no time to do the job before sailing... [T]he main party of A[US]n truce monitors is [also] on its way to Bougainville. The 82 A[US]n Defence Force Personnel left at the weekend aboard the supply ship HMAS Tobruk and are expected in Bougainville in a week. They will combine with [NZ's] troops...

The N[Z] military's largest overseas mission since the Vietnam War faces enormous challenges as monsoon rains finally hit... [the] troubled territory of Bougainville... Unarmed N[Z] troops... will have less self-protection than P[NG]n police... Both the PNG Government and Bougainvillean groups have asked the N[Z]ers to leave their guns at home... A former senior Army officer with service in Vietnam and Malaysia noted last night that P[NG]n police would not venture out in many parts... without side-arms. "I think it is crazy to ask soldiers to go in there

without any protection at all – if I was their commanding officer I would be losing sleep.” But a serving officer with extensive peacekeeping experience said the lack of firearms would help the N[Z]ers build trust... However, [a] ...ready reaction force will be stationed off Bougainville on the frigate Canterbury in case the unarmed Truce Monitoring Group become targets on the war-ravaged island... [The mission’s] commander... said malaria posed the biggest risk... 9800 Japanese soldiers died from disease during their occupation of... Bougainville in... W[W2]... compared with 8500 killed.

...Government officials insist the security of unarmed soldiers on Bougainville remains paramount, even though the frigate Canterbury is due to head home today... [Still] giving support to the truce monitors are two tankers from [the NZ and AUS]n navies... As with any naval ships, they would be carrying limited numbers of small arms, under lock and key... The full truce monitoring force is now on Bougainville with the arrival from Whenuapai yesterday of 21 more soldiers, taking the number of N[Z]ers involved to 226, excluding naval crews. There are also 147 A[US]ns, including 20 civilians, and 17 truce monitors from Fiji and Vanuatu.

...An unarmed N[Z] soldier stands... among the ruins of Bougainville’s main airport and turns to see a waving child. He waves back... It was not like that when the troops first arrived a little over two weeks ago, he says. “You couldn’t get a smile out of some of them at one stage. Now, they’re so friendly it’s almost getting to my head. Kids suddenly jump out of the bush to say hello. They are hungry for peace now.” ...To kick-start Operation Bel Isi... military intelligence picked up on an important aspect of Bougainville protocol – the payback system. “The way it works here is ‘You kill my pig, I kill one or two of your pigs,’” said the operation commander... “You kill my brother and I kill your brother. And so on...” The operation planning centred on the positive side of that system, along the lines of “you be good to me and I’ll be good to you.” When truce monitors... arrived, guns on the island were still very visible in the community... The soldiers went unarmed. After a while the locals, too, put their guns away... The truce monitoring force always maintained that no arms was the only way, although risky... Their most potent weapons, however, were distinctive patches worn on the shoulders of their uniform. One was... a skilful sketch based on a passage from the *Bible* – a white dove with an olive tree branch in its beak, the signal from the Heavens to Noah that the storm was now calm and that a new, peaceful beginning was on the horizon. The locals, predominantly devout Christians, relate well to that... [One revolutionary guerrilla said he] did not believe he would ever walk unarmed and remain alive along the... main streets of Arawa. Over the past nine years, it has been mandatory for a fighter to carry at least one firearm and perhaps a grenade or two... [After a] memorable walk along Simba St, where the... Arawa... town council building stood before it was destroyed by a homemade bomb... [he] said... “Not long ago, I would have been shot. I thought I was dreaming... No one had a gun, not one shot was fired... just people busy working...” ...Before everything else, the soldiers had to labour in the... 40-degree heat... and high humidity to help clear the debris and repair the essentials such as roads, wharves, electricity and water supplies... The locals gave the soldiers every assistance they could... The dangers of war are no longer evident on Bougainville, though an air of uncertainty remains... The Panguna copper mine, one of the largest open-cut mines in the world... is likely to remain closed. Observers say it may cause more problems if it opens too soon. In 1972, landowners... demanded higher compensation for the use of their land by the A[US]n mining company CRA. Sabotage and disruption of the mine erupted into violence in the late 1980s and people took sides. The Government soldiers, the Bougainville Transitional Government, police and resistance groups took one side, and the B[RA] and its political arm, the Bougainville Interim Government, took the other. Although fighting for the same cause, the BRA split internally. One group... led by... [the man who led the landowners in 1972, still hasn’t] come to the party.

...The head of the Bougainville rebels... says he is opposed to N[Z] and AUS]n troops being in the truce-monitoring group... [He argues AUS]’s role in setting up the P[NG]n defence forces... means A[US] is not neutral. He cited the role of N[Z] pilots who flew A[US]n-supplied Iroquois helicopters as gunships as evidence that N[Z] is not neutral either... [Incidentally, PNG’s new P]M... moved yesterday to rid his Government of the stench of corruption, although it is largely constituted of members of the old guard who entered into an improbable alliance to keep power.

...Newspaper biographers describe P[NG]’s new P]M... as a former Raskol, one of the thugs who terrorise the streets of Port Moresby and contribute heavily to the perception of a society close to anarchy... [The PM’s] knowledge of life on the edge will be crucial to the future of his country... Increasingly, the issue of law and order is of pivotal importance to PNG in its efforts to attract foreign capital and kick-start its moribund economy... At present, PNG is anything but attractive to foreigners... Violent robberies, payback murders and rape are far more frequent than in neighbouring countries. The annual crime rate is 10 times that of A[US] and six times that of Fiji – a nation with a number of socio-economic similarities... So prevalent is crime that [it] accounts for an estimated 15[%] of urban employment. It is also the business with the highest profits and least risks, with the probability of arrest for theft of 3[%], the probability of a subsequent conviction 55[%], and a 50[%] chance of escaping jail.

...The P[NG]n P]M... allegedly authorised the payment of \$A1900... in bribes through a senior minister, according to video tapes... secretly filmed by a former Government adviser... and... obtained by the ABC... after [the adviser had] a falling out with senior members of [the PM’s] party over prime ministerial influence... In a revelation that will rock the already shaky Government coalition, [the PM] is shown talking to his former adviser... about a payment to[the] Internal Affairs Minister... last month. [The adviser] is later shown telling [the Internal Affairs Minister] that the P[M] told him to give the minister 2000 kina... so he could look after the local media... [The former adviser also alleged that the PM authorised other payments] to ministers and backbenchers... totalling \$A25,650... [However, the PM said, “The former adviser is] a bloody crook. Good luck to him and his video tape. He wanted to be my chief of staff but... I need brains, not a blackmailer. If I had to choose between my wife and my country I would choose my country,”...

AMID fresh allegations [that the new PNG] leader... was involved in murder, [a]former PNG P[M] yesterday said the new PM]... should step aside pending the results of a full inquiry. On Friday night, it was revealed another secretly recorded video tape apparently identified [the PM] as the country’s chief crime lord. The footage allegedly features the embattled leader admitting he is the “godfather” of the notorious Rascal gangs[, although]... the video has poor visual and audio quality. However, a man identified by the ABC as [the PNG PM] can be heard admitting involvement in violence. The man says: “If I tell my gang members to kill, they kill... I’m the godfather... there’s no other...” ...Although no crowds are yet massing on the streets of Port Moresby, there is widespread disgust among many ordinary people that [the PM] remains in office... [He] was staying in Brisbane but could not be contacted for comment.

...[the beleaguered PNG PM] claims two of his own cabinet ministers were... behind the two recordings. “They made me drunk; they made me talk bullshit... It is our way, we get drunk to say all kinds of things,”... He also claimed the tapes were edited to incriminate him.

...Organisers of a planned rival anti-corruption rally scaled down their protest yesterday after claiming there had been threats of violence from [the PM’s] supporters... Melanesian Solidarity... had... decided that a small group would hand [the PM] a petition at [a local stadium]. However, when they arrived they found that about 500 people – mainly youths from Port Moresby squatter settlements – had gathered and were chanting support for the PM.

...PNG’s P]M... held on to office yesterday, maintaining... his... delicate... four-party coalition... in the face of... corruption allegations... [after mustering] enough numbers in the 109-seat Parliament... The... [PM] has dismissed the... [allegations], using what local politicians called the “Johnnie Walker” defence – claiming he was drunk... On Monday night, [the PM] apologised for his drinking. “I let PNG down... but I have learned a lesson. I am a sinner, but I was saved by the grace of God [from] people who plotted to work against me.” - 1997

The populations of NZ and PNG (pop. 'estimated at 3,752,000 in 1991') are approximately the same, as are the number of seats in their parliaments (in comparison, Fiji – where the population is about five times less, 'est. 748,000 in 1992' – has a '71-seat Parliament'). Up until 1996, NZ was divided into 99 electorates of approximately equal population. Every adult NZer who didn't have a criminal record could put their name on the election ballot-paper of their local electorate. During an election, citizens got one vote with which to select a candidate (who may have stood for a particular party or been independent) to represent their electorate in Parliament. Whichever party won the most electorates – or was *first-past-the-post* (FPP) – became the ruling party and its leader the PM. Because NZ politics was traditionally split between the National and Labour parties, electorates normally went to one or the other – thus ensuring that either major party gained a majority of seats while smaller parties usually gained none despite having significant support nationwide ('in 1984 the New Zealand Party polled an impressive 12.2% but won no seats – although Social Credit, which received only 8% of the national vote and whose leader lost his seat, won two electorates'). Dissatisfaction with this system – particularly amongst the smaller parties – led to a 1993 referendum which resulted in the country adopting a Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) system. The system chosen (from the four put forward – with the other three being a 'Supplementary Member Voting system; a Single Transferable Vote system; or Preferential Voting') gave NZers two votes – one for a candidate to represent their electorate and another for a party to represent the nation. Furthermore, the public was informed that MMP meant there needed to be '60 General Electorates, 5 Maori Electorates and 55 *list MPs*.' Each party created a list of its candidates by ranking them in order of authority (starting with the party's leader). Theoretically, if a party obtained 50% of the *party vote* it would be allocated half of the seats in Parliament. Therefore, if a party is allocated 50 seats but only wins 40 through the *electorate vote*, it gets to add 10 members off its list (starting with the highest-ranked candidate who wasn't elected and proceeding downwards).

But remember: ...a party must win at least 5[% of all] party votes OR at least one electorate to get a proportional allocation of seats. [However, to be registered for the election, political parties only need 'to give evidence of having at least 500 members.']

...Drumming up 500 members obviously has not proved too difficult. Winning the party votes of those 500 plus a further 99,500 people will prove a more testing challenge. On the 1.9 million voter turnout of 1993, about 96,000 votes would be enough to pass the threshold, but given expectations of a higher MMP turnout about 100,000 is seen as a realistic target. The other way of beating the threshold is to win an electorate seat, something more of the little parties are beginning to pin their hopes on. That is something small parties have struggled to achieve in the past and while some voters may feel they now have greater discretion with their electoral vote, it will remain a huge hurdle in the 60 enlarged MMP electorates... Meanwhile... the latest business opinion report from the Manufacturers Federation... says... the upcoming election [i]s generating uncertainty, especially among larger manufacturers. New spending was being put on hold and the country was gripped by a "wait and see" attitude.

...Twenty-two political parties are seeking Electoral Commission approval for time and money to run election advertisements on radio and television. By law, parties are not allowed to spend their own funds... only what they are allocated from a \$2 million pool held by the commission. ['26 parties were registered for the 1993 elections' but a number of smaller parties have merged since then. Amongst the more unusual new-comers is the]... **Natural Law Party**[, which promises to] maintain a group of 1,000 Yogic Flyers to create an indomitable influence of harmony and positivity throughout the country by enlivening the Unified Field of Natural Law in national consciousness[(although the party doesn't explain why it is necessary for them to win the election BEFORE such a group is established!)]. As harmony and positivity rise in national consciousness, all problems of the nation will disappear, as darkness disappears with the onset of light... Yogic Flying demonstrates perfect mind-body coordination and is correlated with maximum coherence and integration of brain functioning. The practice of Yogic Flying produces bubbling bliss for the individual and generates coherence, positivity, and harmony throughout the environment... This will prevent negative trends within society and protect the nation against destructive influences from beyond our borders... The Natural Law Party will eliminate crime by removing the root cause of crime – the inability to think and act in accord with Natural Law... Extensive scientific research has confirmed that a group of Yogic Flyers dissolves collective stress, as indicated by decreased crime, violence, and sickness and improved economic indicators. Studies have shown that the larger the group, the greater the influence... Over a 7-year period, violent deaths were less in Canada & USA during weeks when groups of Yogic Flyers exceeded a threshold of... 1% of the population... A group of Yogic Flyers was set up in the Liverpool metropolitan area, Merseyside. Over three years crime in the area came down by 15%, while in the rest of Britain it went up by 45%... Election is the time to create a better government. The... *Natural Law Party can create not only a perfect government, but also a perfect individual and a perfect society...* The Natural Law Party will step outside of parliament and its own membership to invite N[Z]'s most expert, renowned, and respected national figures to serve the nation as the cabinet... *Being freed from the poison of party rivalry, they will be able to act according to their consciences and serve the nation as a whole rather than just the party in power... Don't waste your vote on failures...*

Your vote probably counted for little at the last election. Unless you lived in a marginal seat, all you probably did was add one more vote to the already-sufficient majority of an MP from one of the two old parties. Or you ticked in favour of the inevitable loser. Or you may have cast a defiant, but wasted protest vote for a third party. Under first-past-the-post, "tactical" voting was usually confined to byelections. Now, with two votes and a myriad of parties scrambling to reach the 5[%] threshold, voters may be tempted by the allure of a range of "pick-and-mix" combos. You will be told in seats like Auckland Central that a "tactical" vote cast in the right combination will give you two MPs... You might think that casting your party vote for Act N[Z] and your electorate vote for National will ensure National stays in power. Act has been trying very hard to make you think that. But watch out: what looks like attractive or sensible combos could leave you feeling queasy when results roll in on election night. A recent *National Business Review-Consultus* poll suggested four out of ten voters were "very likely" or "fairly likely" to split their votes. The trouble is that less than half of these vote-splitters understood the primacy of the party vote in determining how many seats each party gets in Parliament. This is of major worry to National and Labour. They look like winning the bulk of electorate votes – but fear voters will take their party votes elsewhere or try to vote in a coalition they want... Some politicians predict personal voting will help high-profile incumbents considered to be doing a good job, giving them even bigger majorities. Likewise, poorly performing MPs will be punished because voters can still be loyal to their party with their other vote. The risk for Labour and National is that MPs will not be loyal. Politicians know they are going to run into voters in the coming weeks who say they like them, but not their party. Do candidates try to talk those voters around to their party, or just quietly nod (and wink), knowing that 1200 or so personal votes like that may be the difference between personal victory or extinction? In Germany, MPs are sometimes more brazen. They publicly suggest that voters from other parties give them their electorate votes, but not their party votes. This annoys party bosses who argue they are being selfish and it is their party that needs every vote... "Stimmensplitting" is the German term for vote splitting. But the phenomenon is largely confined to smaller parties. Traditionally, more than 80[%] of those backing the two largest parties... have cast both votes the same way... [Incidentally, a retired] judge investigating electoral bribery in Queensland has quit, again focusing attention on the commitment the state has to fighting corruption. The affair raises the spectre of practices that brought the conservative government of [its NZ]-born premier... to its knees in 1988.

...[the] Pakistani President... sacked [Pakistan's P]M... yesterday, accusing her Government of widespread corruption and nepotism... [She] had been in power since general elections in October 1993, her second spell as P[M after a previous] President... sacked her for similar reasons... in 1990.

...[the 'President of Turkmenistan won the right yesterday to rule his gas-rich country for life. Only on Monday, the 59-year-old former Communist leader, who has ruled the country since 1991, had urged officials to stop praising him and not to ask him to be President for life. He changed his tune when

Parliament passed a law altering the constitution to allow him to rule indefinitely.' In other international news, the US President] is in Denver today, kicking off a three-day campaign trip to the West Coast... The trip has two purposes: raising funds for the November 5 election and lavishing time on California, the nation's most populous state... A... campaign official said the President was expected to raise... a total... of... \$US4.5[million] to \$US5 million during the three-day trip, which includes no less than eight fundraiser drives.

...*Corporate jet comfort for National elite*... The National Party is feeling sensitive about the P[M] being pictured using a corporate jet on the campaign trail. While the N[Z] First and Alliance leaders travel by bus, and the Labour leader... takes scheduled flights, National has chartered a... jet... which costs... \$3500 an hour. The P[M]'s office yesterday pointed out that the charters were at no cost to taxpayers, unlike [Labour]'s...

Silence was the clue yesterday to working out who has done best out of the carve-up of \$2 million of taxpayers' money reserved for election campaign advertising... [T]he loudest complaints... came from N[Z] First and the Alliance. Their grump? They got around \$250,000 each. The figure is well short of what National got... \$534,000... And Labour's \$432,000. But not a lot more than the \$93,000 set aside for the likes of the less than popular United N[Z], The Act Party (whose 'president is a former Labour Party minister' who introduced the unpopular *Rogernomics* economic reforms during the 1980s)... and the Christian Coalition – parties... likely to be National's coalition partners if they crack the 5[%] threshold... In 1993, only seven parties were scrapping over the same \$2 million... N[Z] First missed out completely in 1993, even though it fought that election. But National and Labour got just over \$700,000 each... Working out who gets how much is done according to weightings given to the following: number of votes at the last election, byelection votes, number of MPs, party membership and opinion poll results between February and August this year. The \$93,000 is deemed sufficient to buy one 30-second and two 60-second prime-time television spots a week for four weeks. All parties will also get "free time" in varying quantities for their opening and closing addresses on Television N[Z] and Radio N[Z]. Of the remaining parties, 'six were allocated \$35,000, six more received \$22,800, one got \$15,000 and another \$5000.'

...We] spent \$108,333 on electing each of the 120 MPs required under last night's first MMP general election... With 2,385,598 people registered on the country's 65 electoral rolls up to last week, each vote would have cost \$5.44, assuming that everyone voted – and not everyone ever has.

...*MMP passes first big test*... N[Z]'s first MMP election had several outstanding features. The [most obvious feature] is that no single political party won a majority in the House. On election night figures the biggest party – National – had only 44 seats out of 120... [The remainder were shared by five other parties – 37 for Labour; 17 for NZ First; 13 for the Alliance; 8 for Act; 1 for United.] (The Natural Law Party polled less than 3000 party votes.)] As the three largest parties in Parliament begin negotiations to try to form [NZ]'s 'first true coalition since the 1930s', anyone who asks, "Is this what we voted for when we chose MMP?" can only be answered with a resounding "Yes." ...No one should have been surprised. In 1992 the Electoral Referendum Panel... stressed that under MMP "minor parties are likely to be represented in Parliament" and that, as a result, "coalitions or agreements between parties may be needed to form governments." ...[Furthermore,] the Royal Commission which recommended the proportional representation system for the country almost exactly 10 years ago... noted that "no voting system can fully meet the ideal standards set by the criteria." It also pointed out that "some of them... are mutually incompatible." Nevertheless... the... number of Pacific Islanders elected to the House of Representatives trebled (from one to three), and Pacific Island Polynesians are now in Parliament in rough proportion to their population. Is there anyone in N[Z] who does not feel especially pleased about... the country's first Asian MP? And the proportion of women in the House... shot up... from 21.2[%] to 29.2... There has been a dramatic increase in the number of Maori MPs. There are now 15... one in eight MPs... and they are represented in every party in Parliament with the sole exception of United (which is also the only party without a female MP)... This year only 7.3[%] of NZ's electors voted for a party that didn't qualify for seats in Parliament. In contrast, 48[%] of the votes cast in 1990 were wasted... On election-night figures, National got 34.1[%] of the party votes and won 36.7[%] of the seats... Compare those figures to the last two elections. National won 47.8[%] of the votes and 69[%] of the seats in 1990. Three years later it won 35[%] of the votes and 50.5[%] of the seats. Clearly – and utterly unsurprisingly – MMP has led to greater fairness between the parties... While ensuring that different views are represented in Parliament, an electoral system ought to encourage all groups to respect other points of view. [However, we] cannot say for sure that this has already occurred or that it will definitely occur under MMP... so we can't say whether or not future governments will, in the words of the Royal Commission, "have the ability to act decisively" as well as have "reasonable continuity and stability."

...[negotiations between the three largest parties] could take anything from two weeks to two months... The negotiations will be behind closed doors, but the agreements will have to be made public to give the public and the Governor-General[(who has just]... received an 8[%] pay rise, taking his tax-free salary from \$106,000 to \$114,500)]... confidence in them [– especially since 45 of the 120 MPs are new.

...#7 on Act's list] gives us his early impressions as[a] new MP... The overwhelming first impression of Parliament is its sheer size... Four buildings now make it up... Adding to the sense of size are the subterranean tunnels and overhead walkways that connect the buildings. The walkways and tunnels mean you can move around Parliament without getting your feet wet – and without meeting any real people... And it's not just big but busy... Parliament now has 120 MPs... a fifth more than before. The hope is that the extra MPs will mean a Much More Positive Parliament. It's early days yet. Only time will tell if it's a hope well placed. But the real size of Parliament is not the number of MPs. The great bulk of the place is taken up with the support crews: the caterers, security guards, messengers, cleaners, secretaries, advisers and press officers. Parliament has nearly 1000 staff. The staff all take up space. Parliament has 668 offices. And 1333 telephones... New MPs are disoriented not just in finding their way around Parliament but in who is on their team and who isn't... First-time MPs wander around Parliament wondering out loud where their leaders are and what they are up to. They still don't know whether to carry on criticising the members of the other team as before the election or whether now to embrace them as their new-found coalition buddies... But then the new MPs aren't the only ones confused as to whose team they are now on. Some of the old hands are looking decidedly bewildered... No one knows where the coalition talks are taking place. The talks are too secret even for the insiders who normally know the buzz... Right now... [everything awaits the NZ First leader] making up his mind on whom he will support[(i.e., 'a small party is holding the balance of power')]... It's going to take time... It is to be hoped that voters are patient. Parliament costs over \$2 million a week to run... even... in the absence of elected government... The fuel consumption is the same whether the engine is on idle or full steam ahead.

...Act's[#7 and] finance spokesman... rarely sees a problem without also seeing a solution and is as yet unaccustomed to... political life... [T]hese qualities inform his... proposal... entitled "Let's Bulk Fund MPs \$500,000 Each – And Save Money." "I know \$500,000 sounds a lot... But it's much less than what gets spent now...," he said... The change to MMP will mean the largest increase in state funding of political parties in [NZ]'s [history.

...The cost of running Parliament under MMP is still up in the air. But already... an extra \$13 million is being budgeted... The total cost of MP's salaries and expenses, including travel, research and secretarial support, will jump to \$50,185,000. Added to that is \$22,155,000 for the running of Parliament buildings and keeping the politicians warm, fed and feted... While the sums are described as "somewhat simplistic,"[the] Parliamentary Service general manager... says they work out at \$602,833 for each MP in the post-MMP Parliament... But, as[the] Higher Salaries Commission... chairman asks, who really knows what the end cost will be? The budgeting is "a mere punt"... For example, for the time being we've reduced the personal expenses paid to list MPs... compared to electorate MPs... This differentiation will result in the member representing a constituency receiving a basic expenses allowance of \$7000 a year while the list member will get \$4000... [The chairman] concedes that cutting the basic expenses for list MPs was a guess... Apart from the lower expenses allowance, the list MPs will also not have access to scaled constituency allowances. This means they won't be able to capitalise the first year's allowance, less 10[%], to buy a car... Urban[constituency] MPs will get \$8000 ranging to \$20,000 for those representing the largest districts... The official Leader of the Opposition, based on the single largest party opposed to the

Government, will be paid the same[salary] as a cabinet minister, \$126,000. This represents no change. However, the leaders of smaller parties will be paid on a scale tied to numbers in the House of Representatives, ranging from \$90,000 down to \$82,500. To get the top dollar a party leader must head not less than 25 MPs. They will also qualify for additional expenses scaled to numbers – \$10,000... to \$9000. However, unlike the official Leader of the Opposition, they will not get a house and grounds allowance of \$3500. If a party has fewer than six members there's no additional recompense for leadership above that of an ordinary backbencher. All MPs in the new Parliament get a \$2000 basic pay rise on the present rate, taking them to \$74,500... Old parliamentary warhorses like... one of the Rogernomes of Labour in the 80s now living in retirement in Tauranga, snort at the Higher Salaries Commission line of the "need to recruit and retain competent people" when setting parliamentary salaries and allowances. He'd halve the number of MPs, not increase them, and double the pay to try to attract the right talent. On quitting the House, he growled: "If you pay peanuts you get monkeys." He doesn't think anything has changed... "At \$74,500 the salary isn't much for the most important job in the country – running the country." But it's a bit more than \$74,500. Apart from the salary and direct allowances there is unlimited free travel within the country, which also extends to a wife[husband] or nominated partner, and three return flights to Wellington a year for any children. There's a daily allowance of \$52 for attending the House sittings, committees, travelling on parliamentary business or other official occasions. An allowance of up to \$125 a night is paid for overnight accommodation for out-of-town members while attending the House and other parliamentary duties to a maximum of \$6875 for six months. THERE'S provision to waive this if the member owns or rents accommodation in Wellington and settles for "actual and reasonable costs" negotiated with the Parliamentary Service. When it comes to doing the job, the electorate MP will in future get two secretaries (previously one) paid for by the Parliamentary Service, plus another in Parliament Buildings... They get research support equivalent to \$20,000 provided on a pool basis, free mailing and their Telecom bills paid. One of the real benefits of being an MP is superannuation... It's a great pension scheme[– unlike]... the pension scheme that traps voters... On the basic salary the best rate of contribution is 8[%] of salary which then attracts a 16[%] subsidy. If... MPs put in \$100 each week into their own fund... the taxpayers put in another \$200 tax-free... So long as they last the distance, the young ones will retire with over \$1 million in the bank... Although they are subsidised by the taxpayer, these contributions are not open to public scrutiny... MPs... have an added perk of subsidised non-official travel. The... subsidy ranges [from 'a 25% rebate'] up to 90[%] for MPs who have completed four terms or more... and includes spouses... In the case of former members the rebates begin at 60[%]... through to 90[%]... Spouses of former members have the same entitlements for life. There is a monetary limit on the amount that can be claimed by former members and spouses in any one year. This is fixed on the cost of a return trip flying business-class to London[– currently '\$11,292']. The Parliamentary Services office says rebates for former members and spouses cost \$921,588 for the past financial year... The former members and spouses can also make 12 economy-class flights a year within N[Z] and have free intercity road and rail travel, including the interisland ferry, for life... [Prior to the election the] MP for Nelson... mistakenly circulated a memo he sent to parliamentary officials seeking details about his entitlements if unseated on October 12. Apart from his super, [he would] get three months' salary as "redundancy." He tried covering up the embarrassing memo leak by saying, "It won't be the slightest bit relevant on October 13." [● MPs are also allowed to maintain 'outside business interests' and can gain additional income by giving speeches at private functions. 'The fees for most NZ speakers are about \$1000 to \$3500' per function.]

...Welcome to the democratic new world of MMP... It has long been plain that N[Z]ers had not the faintest idea what they were voting for when casting their ballots for MMP. Most voters still do not understand the new system. Many never will. A cynic might say that this is just par for the course: when have most voters ever been very well-informed? True enough. But it does underscore the fact that to justify bringing in a significantly more complicated electoral system, compelling reasons are needed. And there are few signs, as yet, of compelling reasons for MMP. MMP was billed as a fairer system than [FPP]. It is certainly fairer to political parties... But fairness to political parties is not our ultimate concern. We want an electoral system that is fair to voters as a whole; that is the only kind of fairness that makes sense. And it is far from obvious that the messy business of coalition-forming under MMP... [is] any fairer to voters, or any more democratic... And because responsibilities will be harder to pin down under coalition politics, the whole process of holding governments to account [has] become more difficult. Whatever the merits of MMP, one thing is clear: given the crucial role played by post-election manoeuvring among parties... a voter can have little confidence that a vote for a given party will represent a step in their desired policy direction... Thus even the most informed voters can have little confidence about where a vote for their given party will ultimately lead. Such is our "fairer" system.

...Slowly but surely, the outside world is starting to knock on the door of Parliament's private coalition talks. We are not just talking here about the impatient calls coming from some quarters for the politicians involved in these Byzantine negotiations to hurry up and get on with things. Ignoring the polite preliminaries of the first meetings National and Labour held with N[Z] First, substantial coalition pow-wows have been under way for only two weeks... The day-to-day business of Government, however, is starting to intrude on the coalition talks, simply because decisions require multi-party consultation... A Cabinet Office memorandum released this week declared it "appropriate" for the "routine" business of Government to resume... but sources in N[Z] First and elsewhere suggest that the party might not be in a position to declare a preference for Labour or National – or coalition or minority government – for at least another three weeks. N[Z] First wants to extract all the information it can from the exhaustive tandem talks before taking the options back to its caucus for a decision... One frustration has been [the NZ First leader's] insistence on nailing down everything in advance and getting a detailed, watertight agreement. This is considered unrealistic by some on the other side of the negotiating table who argue governments cannot anticipate everything they will be forced to confront over three years. But the growing feeling is that [the NZ First leader] is far less interested in policy than maintaining his party's leverage beyond the talks. That is inevitable. He must retain flexibility in a coalition or minority government arrangement which keeps his party independent of its bigger partner – and thus its electoral identity... How close we will be to forming a new Government by the time Parliament opens in the week of December 9 is a moot point. But not an essential one. It is understood that constitutional requirements would be satisfied by Parliament sitting for just one day next month to swear-in MPs and elect a Speaker. Neither procedure requires a new Government to be in place. Parliament could then safely adjourn until February. That would leave plenty of time for the new Government to get itself properly sorted out.

...If you believe the stars it's [Labour's leader for P]M... In a spooky N[Z] *Herald* horoscope for coalition-day the Labour leader gets a big celestial nod. For her Pisces star sign, [a]British astrologer... predicts "the most dramatic day of the year for you, one when all you have achieved to date will start to fall into place." ...The heavens are not so good to [National's leader]. The Gemini P[M] is cautioned: "It would not be fair to blame other people for plans which go awry today..." As for [NZ First's leader], his Aries horoscope is as enigmatic as the man himself: "Today's dramatic planetary picture demands that you make a completely fresh start in a business venture. Please be aware, though, that your attitude to money is heavily influenced by a sense of priorities that by now may be outdated and supremely irrelevant." But the truth, as they say, is still out there, at least for another few hours.

...[NZ First has chosen National as its coalition partner – giving the coalition 61 of the 120 seats. National had to make a number of concessions in order to remain in power, with one of the biggest being that the NZ First leader (a former National MP) became the Deputy PM and Treasurer. Prior to the election the leaders of both parties had been "sworn enemies" and the NZ First leader proclaimed that "he would never consider forming a coalition with National." He later told the first National MPs to speak out against their coalition partner that they should "be grateful they're in Government – they could be in Opposition."'] The coalition agreement shows N[Z] First pushed National hard in the negotiations but that National dug its heels in on economic policy. The budget tables attached to the document are those of a Government at the "right" end of centre-right. This is most evident in the aggressive debt reduction programme, which would reduce debt to 18.7[% of GDP] by the year 2000. - 1996

Opposition parties have condemned N[Z] First's latest \$59,000 claim on the... \$563,000... taxpayer-sourced expenses fund for the coalition talks... The Alliance leader... said... it is time the party came clean... it was an outrage that MPs were not being told what the money was spent on. "Public money should not be spent on anything without detailed parliamentary scrutiny." ...If approved, [the sum] would take N[Z] First's total claims to just over \$170,000. Initially a maximum of \$100,000 plus GST a party was approved, but National and Labour have so far indicated they will make only small claims on the fund... National has claimed \$839... Labour would claim just over \$1200 for legal advice on the proposed coalition agreement... The Labour leader... described the N[Z] First claims as "huge" and went as far as suggesting that it might be used to pay off some of the party's campaign debts.

...N[Z] First was the third biggest spender in the election campaign. The latest figures from the Electoral Commission show the party spent \$858,255 – slightly more than Labour's \$848,480. Act splashed out the most at \$1,653,169 followed closely by National on \$1,426,067. The Alliance spent least of the four major parties at just \$558,059.

...The police are [conducting] inquiries into nine candidates and two political parties for possible breaches of the law at the October elections. The most serious breaches relate to possible fraud by two candidates who allegedly failed to disclose significant expenses or donations, one of whom is also under suspicion for not disclosing broadcasting expenses. An assistant commissioner at police headquarters in Wellington... yesterday refused to name any of the individuals or parties under investigation or whether any of the candidates were MPs. But last night, the... president of the National Party... said the party had committed a "very minor" breach of the Broadcasting Act...

This... Government is... [proposing] to spend \$94 million on a new office building for... ministers... To make way for the new building, they have forced Radio N[Z] out of Broadcasting House, a purpose-built facility that... stands for an essential part of democracy – communications. Its two large musical recording studios are unique in N[Z] and have not been rebuilt in Standards House, the office block... into which R[NZ] has moved. The last equipment [was] moved out of Broadcasting House a week ago. Tenders for demolishing the building were called in March. Unless we speak out it will be gone in a few weeks.

...Senior cabinet ministers... are jittery about committing... taxpayer money to a lavish... ministerial building... However, it seems the Government will proceed with the... building simply because it is too late to pull back. The... previous National Government was not satisfied with an earlier \$64 million design and decided, without consulting the public, to dip into the taxpayer purse to spend a further \$30 million on a larger, more grandiose plan.

...A new \$94 million home for cabinet ministers is set to proceed despite a row resurfacing about its cost and whether it is needed... The Beehive [(a nickname for NZ's Government that is derived from the title of a building 'opened in 1977 for the housing of Ministerial offices and the Cabinet room at a cost of \$18.8 million')] plans to release costings to justify cabinet approval today... The proposal, which has already cost more than \$11 million... including \$3 million paid to R[NZ] in compensation for its being forced to move... was reopened last week under growing criticism about how much MPs spend on themselves... It... comes on top of the \$168 million refurbishment of the old Parliament Buildings and a scheduled \$30 million upgrade of the Beehive... Officials were asked to report on alternatives. They include deferring the decision for a year, regarded as the most likely compromise, and extending the lease on the high-rise Bowen House off the parliamentary complex which houses some ministers and other MPs... The decision to proceed with the present design was made in November 1994, just four weeks after approval had been given for a \$30 million building on the same site... A November 1994 Treasury report, released yesterday under the Official Information Act, said the then Deputy P[M]... sought a bigger ministerial accommodation project to that originally approved by the multi-party Parliamentary Services Commission. The original plan was for a new floor on an existing parliamentary wing, and a smaller new block behind Broadcasting House, which will now be demolished to make way for the new, larger ministerial block. The Treasury also recommended independent confirmation of Parliament's accommodation requirements and cost estimates before final decisions – advice the Government rejected... Some taxpayer costs would be recovered by the sale of Bowen House when the new MP accommodation was sorted out... Meanwhile, the National MP for Bay of Plenty... said yesterday that Parliament would not need the ministerial building if the number of MPs was cut by 20, to 100. "Without the burden of office space and other perquisites for 20 extra MPs, we wouldn't need to spend \$94 million on a new ministerial building. Quite frankly, having watched Parliament these past [few] months, many of us – including senior list MPs – are questioning the 120-member sized Parliament." ...Leading the charge is the Act party leader... who said yesterday the four-storey, marble and copper-clad building for 26 ministers was over the top... Until last month the project was humming along with barely a murmur of opposition. The only resistance focused on the design and a low-key campaign to save Broadcasting House from the bulldozer. It was not until [the] Act leader... dubbed the new building a ministerial "palace" on the back of [the #7 Act MP's] "perk-busting" campaign that momentum picked up against the project... Thereabouts... plans for the ministerial building went on public view... and... a Treasury report was released which showed the plan was rail-roaded through the parliamentary process without proper cost analysis... [The Act leader] said a refurbished Beehive – new air conditioning and carpet would be enough – and a smaller number of ministers would solve accommodation problems... [H]e understood some ministers were having second thoughts about such a "scandalous waste of money," [and] [he] would raise the issue with the Treasurer[, who]... was opposed to the building before last year's election, saying it was not needed. [However, the Treasurer's] office said yesterday that he remained opposed on principle but was locked into the decision to proceed which was made in 1995... In a feisty last-ditch attempt to go on the offensive, [the Treasurer dragged up the Act Party leader's] past, blaming him for being part of a Labour cabinet which took the "appalling" decision to build Bowen House instead of going for a purpose-built building for MPs at a cost of \$43 million... Bowen House, commissioned by the Government for \$85 million less than 10 years ago, had a market value last year of \$38 million, a select committee was told yesterday... The building houses 37 MPs and 400 staff and is connected to the Beehive by an underground walkway. It is owned by Government Property Services... The existing net rental was about \$3.2 million... But no matter how loud [the Treasurer] blows, he is the big loser... [after] being part of a cabinet decision reconfirming the building two weeks earlier... just days after his party's U-turn on postal deregulation... Public reaction to the \$94 million plan for a posh parliamentary building has certainly kept MPs on their toes... What's more, public hostility has taken to the streets with an Auckland couple... mounting a petition to stop the building.

...a... 200,000 signature... petition... protesting against the building yesterday swayed the Government administration select committee into opening the matter for submissions – but only for two weeks... The committee... chairman... acknowledged... it was a break with usual parliamentary practice for considering petitions and apologised for the limited time for submissions, but said work had already begun on the site... A[n] A[ct] MP... who sits on the committee, said... "It's clear to me that if the palace was put to a free vote in the House, it would be voted down. Time is short, but I am confident that armed with the facts, and a proper regard to the views of the taxpaying public, the palace will be stopped in its tracks."

...Parliament's accommodation problems may be resolved by completing the original Parliament buildings, the administration select committee chairman... indicated yesterday... Some MPs are contemplating doing what no Wellington earthquake has done – knocking the Beehive off its foundations and moving it... first 100m... [on a runway with] large teflon-and-stainless steel bearings[, rotating it]... 90 degrees, so its main entrance would end up facing the back of Parliament House... then[another] 50m along a second runway to its final resting place... Such a shift would not be a first for Wellington. In 1993, a four-storey hotel weighing 3500 tonnes was moved about 100m on rail tracks at a cost of \$2.4 million... But the... Beehive would be one of the top three buildings to be shifted anywhere, in terms of its 20,000-tonne weight, 12-storeys and the distance moved. A

25,000-tonne office building was shifted on rail bogies in 1955, but it was only 20m high and was moved only 60m. A German single-deck bridge weighing 20,000 tonnes was moved 1.1km in 1982.

...In what some insiders describe as the “bizarre” option, the select committee entrusted with... considering public outrage on a planned... \$94 million ministerial “palace” is keen to test the idea of relocating the seat of power. The Beehive would sit on land set aside for the “palace” and allow the Edwardian neo-classical Parliament Buildings to be completed, 75 years after work halted when money ran out on the project... in 1922... Only the facade would have to mimic the original 1911 plans... If the Beehive was moved it would probably continue to house cabinet ministers – a prospect which might not appeal as many loathe the working environment.

...SUPPORT is growing for a bizarre plan to move the Beehive and complete the old Parliament Building, with [the PM]... saying it “could be the grand millennium project”. [He] said his office had been surprised by the strong public support it was receiving for the so-far uncostered plan... “We have had virtually no criticism coming into the office on this much more expensive plan. People seem to see it as exciting.”... Meanwhile, [the PM] has told one of his junior backbenchers to back off a bill which, if passed, could have delayed the new ministerial building. The National MP for North Shore... said yesterday that he spoke with senior National MPs last week about plans for a private member’s bill to reduce the number of MPs from 120 to 100... [H]e... said that despite what a Royal Commission said about the need for 120 MPs to make MMP work, he had compared the 1996 election results and found that there could be 60 general seats, five Maori seats and 35 list seats without any party being disadvantaged proportionately... A retired Wellington woman, appalled at the “childish” behaviour of the new MMP Parliament, is planning a citizens initiated referendum to reduce the number of MPs from 120 to 99... She said... there were too many list MPs, they were a waste of taxpayers’ money... [S]he was not a member of any political party, nor was the petition aimed against MMP, which she had voted for and still supported... [She wants to] cut the number of list MPs from 55 to 34. She has submitted a proposal with a \$500 fee to the Clerk of the House... If [the Clerk] approves the proposal [she] will have 12 months to collect about 240,000 signatures before a referendum can be held... Anyone wanting to comment must send three written copies to... the [Clerk] at Parliament by August 1.

...yesterday... Labour withdrew its support for the \$165 million scheme to move the Beehive and complete Parliament’s 86-year-old design...

A PLAN to move the Beehive... is expected to cost \$203 million, according to a report due to go to Cabinet tomorrow... It is understood the costings... are within the range [the PM] considers acceptable, but only just... The scheme comes as Government departments have been told to come up with \$400 million more in savings...

The Government will not go ahead with the so-called parliamentary palace but will demolish the vacated Broadcasting House regardless... At a public meeting called to save Broadcasting House, which has Historic Places Trust Category 1 classification, the Act leader said he had information that the Government planned a “secret, rapid” demolition of the building this week... despite being undecided about what to do with the site... “...That means Broadcasting House will be knocked over for a car park.” ...Cash-strapped R[NZ has, meanwhile,] paid \$20,000 to rename its new premises... from Standards House to Radio New Zealand House.

...Workers started demolishing Broadcasting House last night under the cover of darkness by ripping the back off the building with a mechanical digger. No one from Quality Demolition and Contracting Ltd would comment on the... estimated \$1 million demolition contract...

The demolition... has been halted by the Department of Labour because of concerns over asbestos. The Attorney-General... said yesterday that he had been advised there might have been some pipes with asbestos lagging that needed to be removed before demolition continued... [I]t had been originally suggested that the area... did not contain asbestos... [The Attorney-General] was replying in Parliament to the Act leader... who claimed the demolition was illegal... [Incidentally, some] MPs are looking at tightening the rules for claiming expenses after the Audit Office found [they] could collect the maximum \$125 overnight allowance and \$52 day allowance without having to produce a receipt. The office is also unhappy that MPs check each other’s expenses, saying that meant the Parliamentary Service, which is responsible for MPs’ expenditure, was unable to do its job properly... There is no suggestion by the Audit Office that... MPs are fiddling their expenses.

...Act’s “perk-busting” MP... is now pressing for every parliamentarian’s spending... on phones, faxes, meals, accommodation and travel... to be open to public inspection after he revealed that one MP spent more than \$29,000 on taxis last year... [Another] MP spent only \$5 during the whole year. Neither MP was named... [F]igures showed MPs’ spending on taxis has risen from \$454,990 in 1992-93 to \$613,000 last year. That works out at a rough average of \$150 a week per MP, ignoring ministers who can use VIP transport or their taxpayer-funded “self-drive” cars... [The] first-term MP... [said,] “...I have never been in a job where you have unlimited use of taxis. These MPs can’t even practise restraint... It is a culture of spending.” Accountability expected in the private sector had never impacted on Parliament... Parliamentary rules allow MPs to use taxi chits for approved parliamentary business travel between their electorate homes and the local airport, and for travel in Wellington to and from Parliament, the airport and their homes. MP’s spouses may also use the chits for travel to the airport and Parliament, but the rules make no provision for other family members. The owner of a Wellington taxi company... said an MP could only spend \$29,000 in a year if other people such as staff used his or her chits – though he did not know of any doing that.

...Act MPs are to test a controlled credit card system aimed at improving accountability for MPs’... annual taxi [bills]... The new measures have been welcomed by Act’s perk-busting MP... However, the taxi trial may mean he has to stop using a limousine taxi service to get from his home to Auckland Airport – which he said cost the same as a normal taxi – because the driver does not have an electronic card service.

...According to figures from Ministerial Services, \$4,627,290 was spent on limousine travel for the... ministers in the 1995-96 year, up from the \$4,250,003 spent in the previous year... The limo travel is the latest revelation in... [an Act MP]’s perk busting campaign... “It’s an outrageous extravagance. That sort of travel should be limited to the likes of the P[M], his deputy and the finance minister, because there are security issues... The average amount each minister has spent on limo travel is more than their... salary and makes [a Labour MP]’s \$29,000 taxi bill look frugal. Ministerial Services told me there were 50 cars and that a fleet had to be maintained to be ready to go anywhere around N[Z – so they]... are sitting around empty most of the time. And let’s not forget that when these ministers tire of their limos, they can drive themselves around in cars bought for and fuelled up by taxpayers. In fact, ministers spent \$94,709 on petrol last year.”

...Politicians’ penchant for cut flowers instead of pot plants is costing the taxpayer more than \$50,000 a year. The Labour MP for Dunedin North... said... the amount was “over the top.” ...But a spokesman for... the Minister for Ministerial Services, said that when Labour was in power it had a flower bill considerably higher than this Government’s... [Meanwhile, Act’s] perk-buster... has made another bust – this time revealing MPs can use their \$85-a-month stamp allowance to pay their bills at NZ Post shops... [A] NZ First MP... was last month criticised for using her \$85 warrant to register her car, and [the perk-buster asked the] Speaker... to clarify the situation. [The Speaker (who ‘doesn’t have to explain his decisions to the public’ – such as why it spent more than \$29,000 on taxis last year)] replied that because the rules governing the use of the warrants allowed them to be utilised for all services available at NZ Post, MPs could pay their bills with them... “MP’s already get photocopying and postage allowances. [The Speaker] has effectively declared open season on the taxpayers by saying MPs are entitled to use their warrants to pay their bills.” ...But given NZ Post’s expansion of services, the rules were now under revision... [T]he warrants cost taxpayers \$122,400 a year.

...Perk-busting MP on receiving end of lavish spending claims... [Yesterday t]he Act MP... went to a select committee hearing to grill officials about MPs’ perks, only to find himself in the firing line for his own travel expenses. The irritation felt by MPs towards... [his] lone campaign snapped when the Minister of Conservation... revealed [the Act MP]’s fondness for the comforts of business class. He later said that if the Act list MP “practised what he preached” and flew economy class between his Auckland home and Wellington, the taxpayer would save about \$9000 a year...

[The minister] also said that if [the perk-buster] wanted to go the whole hog, he could choose as a list MP to live in Wellington and save the taxpayer \$30,000... [The MP] responded... by saying Act constituents expected him to fly business class. "I'm from Act. I've got to be upfront."

...Do as we say, not as we do message from politicians... Phrases like "self-reliance," "helping people to help themselves" and "reducing dependency" drip regularly from the lips of senior ministers... The blunt fact is... [they] seem reluctant to impose on themselves the one thing they are piously expecting from other N[Z]ers – self-discipline and self-sacrifice.

...Hypocrisy, wrote La Rouchefoucauld, is the homage vice pays to virtue. To illustrate what that means let me explain that A[US]n politicians are hypocrites but N[Z] MPs are not. When the A[US]ns... challenge... each other over abuse of travel perks, they at least pretend... they kn[o]w right from wrong as they slander... each other across their House of Representatives. They acknowledge... standards of behaviour. The question [i]s whether these standards ha[ve] been breached and by whom. Whereas N[Z] politicians... make no pretence at all of setting standards of honest behaviour. They simply say everyone is on the make, everyone gets their head in the trough if they are able, so why shouldn't they... Years ago I was reporting court in a provincial city and got talking to a young man who had systematically stolen small sums from his employer. Any shame he may have had was blanketed by his conviction that everyone was on the take. I told him the old joke: If you steal \$5 you're a thief, if you steal \$5000 you're a businessman, if you steal \$50,000 you're a corporation and if you steal \$5 million you're a government. "Yeah, Yeah," he said, brightening up. "That's what I mean." I tried with no effect to tell him that most of us try to be honest and have... standards. Twenty years ago I was consultant to a firm in which sales reps fiddled their expenses in a way that appalled me. Only one or two held out and they were regarded as nerds. Such was the culture of the company. A recent book on politics... makes the same implication – that decent people in politics are nerds. Such, apparently, is the culture of Parliament. People, it is said, get the government they deserve.

...[an MP] has been lobbying his National colleagues to support him taking a taxpayer-funded visit to see his daughter in London under the guise of a parliamentary tour. And another National first-term... has lobbied colleagues to get on a taxpayer-funded trip to Europe to visit the camp in Poland where his father was a prisoner-of-war... [A third] National MP... and... former cabinet minister... [cited] family ties as a reason to go on an overseas parliamentary trip... to Namibia... [However, the] chief National whip... [who] spends about \$50,000 a year on air travel and \$30,000 on toll calls... said there was a "holier than thou" element to the criticism of the three MPs. It was widely known that many businessmen went on overseas holidays or sports trips using a superficial job-related reason, and then claimed a third back in tax. Such trips were indirectly taxpayer-subsidised... He then went on to imply that because businessmen wangled tax perks for overseas trips it made it okay for our MPs to wangle for perks... He was saying that the Government makes absolutely no claim to moral leadership... [and politicians] have no sense of service to the community that would elevate them beyond the behaviour of businessmen. He was saying they are cynical of such things and have no responsibility to set standards of behaviour because no one else has any either... A confidential report on travel has been prepared for party whips and it is understood that Alliance MPs, on average, spend most on travel followed closely by Act, the party which has campaigned vociferously against travel perks. N[Z] First comes third, followed by National and Labour... There were 12 trips available to those outside the cabinet in the past financial year with 37 MPs taking part... MPs other than ministers usually get only one of the major overseas trips in a three-year term of office... As for [the former Speaker's]... delegation to Kuwait, Turkey and Finland last year, it is difficult to tell whether the \$102,401 spent was worth it. The report has yet to go to the printer and will not be tabled now until next year.

...A week-long, round-the-world trip to Paris and London by a N[Z] First cabinet minister... has cost the taxpayer \$27,261 in air fares. The Minister of Consumer Affairs flew first-class to Europe to attend an international forum on electronic commerce, followed by two days in London for meetings as Minister of Senior Citizens... [She] said the trip had brought real, tangible benefits. "My attendance at the conference will ensure the policy advice and operational programmes that the Government purchases from my ministry are focused on matters that maximise the overall wellbeing of N[Z] consumers as they take advantage of the opportunities of the global market." ...yesterday [she] found her expenses while away part of the probe by Act N[Z] into the perks of sitting and retired MPs... She... sought to respond to the Act question by referring to a 1987 report on a visit to the Chatham Islands by the then Minister of Transport and now Act leader... In the report... [an] opposition MP... questioned whether the taxpayer had a right to know whether public money was being "frivolously spent" after police found [the then Minister of Transport] and another cabinet minister... "in various states of intoxication" during a simulated raid on an Air Force Andover.

...The... trip to Europe... was unwise, says... [the Minister of Consumer Affairs's predecessor, who added that] the OECD meeting... is held every year in Paris and that, in her own six years as minister, she never went. "I wondered at times whether even our officials should go." ...[By the way, air] travel perks for former MPs and their spouses cost... taxpayers almost \$1 million a year – ...and... rail travel... [another] \$10,298... – ...but could rise to \$2 million if all of the 229 people eligible for the subsidised travel used their entitlements... The level of their subsidy depends on how many parliamentary terms they have served – three terms attracts a 60% subsidy, four terms a 75% subsidy, and five or more terms a 90% subsidy.

...No bar on overseas trips for top MPs... [Cabinet members] are entitled to unlimited overseas holidays with taxpayers picking up 90% of costs. Another 16 sitting MPs are eligible to have their overseas holidays subsidised by taxpayers to the tune of 75%, while a further 35 enjoy international air travel perks of 25% or 50%. Taxpayers have shelled out... \$1000 a day... for personal overseas trips for 74 sitting MPs and 68 spouses in the past four years... [However,] Parliament's ruling body has abolished subsidised overseas and domestic travel for new partners of former MPs... [O]ne former MP had passed on the entitlement to five partners and some MPs had even passed it on to non-partners. The commission has closed this potential loophole by defining "spouse" as a partner of an MP who has formed a relationship in the nature of marriage... When [the travel allowance] was introduced in the mid-1970s, MPs had no electorate offices, their spouses and partners usually acted as electorate secretary and the home phone was the office phone.

...MINISTERIAL support staff are the latest... perk-busting... targets... 20 Cabinet ministers have 206 secretarial staff... [and] 21 staff in the P[M]'s department earned more than \$73,000 a year – the same figure earned on average by the ministers' 29 press secretaries... "There are the same number of journalists in the press gallery as there are press secretaries in Parliament – 41... This is an incredible waste. [And w]hy do people like [the Minister of Consumer Affairs] – who have done nothing yet except undertake expensive overseas travel – need a senior private secretary, two private secretaries, a press secretary and a ministerial secretary? God knows how much that costs. I'm not against people having good staff, but... [i]t's time ministers started talking to ministers again, instead of their secretaries arranging everything."

...Attending an international conference in Paris... cost [the] Consumer Affairs Minister... \$27,000... – but Ministry of Agriculture staff will spend just \$110 hosting a 30-day conference with more than 130 participants from 25 countries. Organisers have kept costs down by running the forum over the Internet. Ironically the conference [the minister] attended was on developments in the global electronic marketplace. The MAF conference on setting international guidelines on surveillance of types of animal disease... starts today and has cost \$90 to set up, with \$20 "electronic rent" for the month. A[US]ns, Canadians and [USer]s were quick to sign up for the conference, but Europeans were hesitant, unsure of the... technology...

The Minister of Consumer Affairs... yesterday publicly apologised for her... trip to Paris... She did not know if the apology would help ...he[r] party "but I think it will be good for me. I will feel happier and more at ease. Although I can't bring the money back for the taxpayer [without paying for it out of my own pocket], what I can do is assure them that that sort of cost structure will certainly not go past my desk again." She made the decision with almost no experience as an MP or minister, she said. Her ministry advised her to go. "That was my responsibility as a minister and with 20/20 hindsight I should not have done so. It has continued to weigh on my shoulders even when the media let it go." ...Her statement of public contrition... contrasted with the silence of the N[Z] First Leader... who kept everyone guessing about whether he would apologise over a

finding against him of “unbecoming conduct.” [She consulted him] before apologising for the March trip to a forum on doing business via the internet. But she sees no lessons in her actions either for him or... [another colleague who is being] lambasted for not apologising – at least – for spending associated with Aotearoa Television... She acknowledged her trip had hurt N[Z] First because it was included in the litany of its MPs’ “misdemeanours.” ...It is by no means the first apology by a N[Z] First MP this year.

...a N[Z] First MP’s... survival... may now hinge on his willingness to show contrition and deliver a full apology to colleagues at the party’s weekly caucus meeting tomorrow. After a weekend of consultation within the party, [his] political future was still under question last night following his botched attempt to sell an exclusive interview to television... about his involvement in Aotearoa Television... for \$20,000-plus and his subsequent misleading of his leader... The odds remain on him clinging on, but the party hierarchy is applying the heat and is letting him sweat until the caucus meeting to make him realise how much damage he has done to N[Z] First... Support for NZ First has dropped two points to 5[%] in the latest... poll. Labour and National were both on 36[%] with Labour up two points and National down one.

...HALF A YEAR ago, MPs from the betrothed National and NZ First crowded into Parliament’s quiet, wood-panelled Legislative Council Chamber. Joking, jostling, and in some cases taking photos of each other, they assembled to watch their leaders sign a pact to govern together for three years. Glee was heightened by disbelief. NZ First MPs were amazed they had trapezed into the inner sanctum of government. National couldn’t believe it had made it back... Half a year on, the Government’s policy direction has inched further to the right than it was on coalition signing day. Due to a number of initiatives that were not in the coalition agreement, the Government’s policy stance now sits within National’s home turf... Looking back, one thing that is certain about the country’s first MMP government is that it has been consistent. It has kept screwing up. From boxer shorts to superannuation squabbling, from swaggerers to leadership rumblings, from corridor scraps to apologies never made, the circus has come to town... The leader of NZ First... has failed to impose discipline on his party, setting an example of personal unruliness and arrogance... His erratic behaviour in the personal sphere means no one can be sure the NZ First spills we have already seen will not be repeated... Despite the ruckus, the refrain from the Beehive is never mind the sideshows, it is business as usual on centre stage... The parade of embarrassments that has dominated the public face of this... [Government] has humbled NZ First in the opinion polls and propelled Labour to the top of the polls for the first time in four years... One recent poll saw disapproval of the coalition running at an amazing 75%.

...Support for the old [FPP] voting system is nearly twice that for the MMP system, according to latest polling... [O]pinion poll surveys conducted at the start of June also found overwhelming support for another referendum on the electoral system in 2002. At the moment all that is guaranteed is that a select committee will look at the issue. The polling shows that 54[%] now favour the [previous] system, and 30[%] like MMP. The remainder are unsure. In the 1993 referendum that led to the change... 54[%] voted for MMP and 46[%] for FPP... A week after the election, 42[%] favoured MMP and 31[%] favoured FPP... MMP has been losing support since... the drawn-out coalition talks... The key swing voters... who have moved from supporting MMP... are Labour voters... There was also a significant number of Alliance supporters wanting a return to the [old] system... National voters favour [FPP] by a large margin [– as they always have – with 74%] in favour and only 18[%] supporting MMP. But supporters of National’s coalition partner, N[Z] First, are... the strongest supporters of MMP – favouring it by a margin of 67[%] to 19%. The poll shows that 83[%] of those surveyed believe there should be a referendum in 2002 on whether to keep MMP. There is strong support for another referendum even among supporters of MMP, with 71[%] of them supporting the idea. The poll also shows that 45[%] of those surveyed mistakenly believed there would be another referendum automatically on the electoral system after the 2002 election. Only 38[%] correctly knew that there did not have to be a referendum... [In related news, an] Alliance list MP... went missing without leave last week... She... admitted yesterday that she had been having a tough time as a novice MP. The former community worker and street-kid house mother... was on the unemployment benefit for years before entering Parliament... [Since 1990, she] and her husband and two grandchildren lived on about \$150 a week after bills... [She is] reported to have had a series of family tragedies to cope with as well as the challenges of the new environment... “I haven’t been deliberately staying away from there. I have had leave.” ...She told the N[Z] *Herald* she would be back at Parliament on Monday... [S]he calls... Parliament... a “den of lions” with little “positive korero” for Maoridom... In her maiden speech to Parliament, [she] said MMP had given the “forgotten people” of N[Z] a voice in the House, “a voice which will never again be silent.” ...On the question of whether she should leave the Alliance, she was “on the road now, going out to my people and asking them.” ...her cousin[... who is a NZ] First MP... says... “It’s no good saying she’s out there with the people and the country. The people sent her to Wellington to do a job and that’s frankly where the job is.” He said his attitude was not a reflection on her but about honouring the MMP election result... “She is the senior Maori woman we look up to. We attach a great deal of importance to her. I would hate to see her lost to Parliament... But at the end of the day, the population of N[Z] voted the Alliance to have 13 MPs. She is a list member. She isn’t there in her own right. She is there to represent the Alliance party. And as much as I don’t like the Alliance, they are entitled to have their 13 members.” He said he might not feel the same if... she... had been elected as a constituency member... She... did not[even] have the endorsement of people in her own region, the Eastern Bay of Plenty. She received 1210 votes as the Alliance... candidate. More people voted for the Alliance in the party vote at 1381. [Her cousin] won the seat with 10,647 votes. “In fact more voters... wanted[one] veteran Maori radical... as their MP...” He got 1372 votes... [The] Alliance leader... continued his disciplinarian approach yesterday, saying that if she quit, his party would take her to court for breaking a signed election pledge all candidates took to resign from Parliament if they leave the party... [Her cousin] said yesterday... “Even if I don’t believe that pledge the Alliance MPs signed is worth the paper it is written on legally, morally I’m afraid I have to agree with [the Alliance leader]. If the boot was on the other foot and one of our MPs was looking to go [independent or to another party], I would be calling for that person to resign from Parliament.” A senior law lecturer at Auckland University... said the pledge “looks to be a promise binding in honour only with political consequences for failure to respect it – no more.” [Previous to last year’s MMP election,] Labour’s deputy leader... drafted a member’s bill that would prohibit jumping ship mid-term. Every few weeks it goes into a ballot with other MP’s bills competing for its introduction. He said yesterday that it was wrong that [the Alliance list MP] could “quite unilaterally” lower the vote the Alliance received last election.

...[her] first appointment after resigning from the Alliance last night was to attend a celebration hosted for her by the N[Z] First deputy leader... in Parliament’s Grand Hall. Despite that, [she] has assured the Alliance she will not give her vote to the coalition Government. But a bitter Alliance leader... questioned the value of her assurance. “On the evidence we have at the moment, you would not be able to rely on what [she] told you today to be what actually happens tomorrow.” Last Saturday [she signed a second] agreement stating that she would “uphold her solemn commitment to serve the Alliance and its supporters in good faith” and that she would resign from Parliament if she left the Alliance. “If [her] signature on a document on Saturday turns into a resignation by Wednesday, one has to wonder at the integrity of the people you are dealing with,” said [the Alliance leader]. He was speaking after a 2 1/2 hour meeting in the Alliance caucus room with [her]... The Alliance... had gone into the talks with the impression that [she] would reaffirm her loyalty to the [party]. But that was never her intention as she had written to the Speaker... in advance advising him of her decision to become an independent MP. [She even informed the Speaker that she would ‘give her vote to NZ First’!] [She] had also prepared a press statement which a supporter distributed to the media minutes after the talks ended. It said that she did not intend to join any other party... It also said that she had advised the Speaker that she wished to speak only Maori in Parliament – a condition... the Alliance had agreed to... Previously she has cited a lack of communication and consultation over Maori issues... as a major disillusionment... [She] said her frustrations with the Alliance intensified over two issues: the urban Maori issue and “Maori MP bashing.” The Alliance wants urban Maori authorities to benefit from the Maori fisheries settlement, not the proposed iwi-based settlement [she] supported... And the Mana Motuhake leader

and Alliance co-deputy [leader]... was the most vociferous Maori MP in condemning [a Maori NZ] First MP... over Aotearoa TV spending. Public statements by [the Mana Motuhake leader] on those issues, “put fat on the fire,” she said... Clearly angered by [the defection, the Mana Motuhake leader] said last night: “I didn’t think there was much left in politics that could shock me but I’m genuinely shocked.” She described it a “tragedy” for Maori political representation... “It took a long time to get another Maori woman here with me...” [she] said... before the tears started to well and she had to stop... [In reply, the now independent Mana Motuhake member] said she felt sorry for [the Mana Motuhake leader, but]... she does not believe Maori MPs should criticise other Maori MPs... “[The Mana Motuhake leader] doesn’t know what being a real Maori is all about because she was brought up in the city... She thinks like a Pakeha. I know I have 100[% support of rural] Maoridom... I am their kuia and they respect me for that...” ...Since it joined the Alliance in 1991... Mana Motuhake... has dropped from second placing... in the Maori seats to third placing... [The now independent MP] won the second-highest of Mana Motuhake’s slots [on the Alliance list], a decision which enraged the rest of the Alliance [at the time] because they considered [her] ill-equipped to be an MP... [Her] decision to leave the five-party Alliance to become an independent MP, for reasons that she has apparently found difficult to articulate in English, has been described as a blow to MMP. Party list MPs, MMP opponents claimed, would be unaccountable creatures of their party whom voters had little claim on. [She] has outdone those sceptics, demonstrating she is not even under the control of her party. But her departure has been more wounding for the Alliance than it has for the electoral system... Her resignation from the Alliance has caused \$88,500 to be trimmed from the party’s funding [– including ‘\$4,500 from its leader’s salary’]... While... the debate continues over whether [she] should have resigned from Parliament... the Electoral Commission has sought advice on whether any party would be compensated if she does resign as an independent MP. Its view, backed by a Justice Department opinion, is that under the Electoral Act, the Alliance would be entitled to another MP from its list... [The department] does not have a position on whether party-deserters under MMP should be forced by law to resign... The P[M]... said no distinctions should be made between list and constituency MPs. “It hasn’t upset the balance of Parliament. In other words, the Opposition is still in Opposition and the Government still has a majority. There is no urgency in making any... decision.”

...With the Government limping from one disaster to the next, the search for helpmates in times of crisis has widened... National has been holding secret talks with [an] Act MP... as it looks for backstops for the increasingly wobbly Coalition Government. The talks explored ways for the [Act MP] to join the Government as a backbencher... The... Act list MP... is not ruling out leaving the party he helped form... “I’m in Parliament to implement policies that I think are in the best interests of N[Z]ers... you can’t do anything in opposition... [I]f you really want to achieve things you need to be [a] part of government.” The Act leader... believed... the talks were nothing more than “informal lobby discussions” and it was “just not credible” the MP would quit... [However, National believes a second] Act MP... and possibly a third... could also be recruited... Act has said it is unwilling to join any coalition involving NZ First, and the departure of any of its MPs would seriously damage the party.

...A bill designed to stop MPs defecting from their parties cleared its first serious hurdle in Parliament last night shortly after the independent [former Alliance] list MP... announced the formation of her new party, Mana Wahine.

...The independent MP... yesterday lived up to her promise of addressing Parliament only in Maori, aided by the first interpreter seen in the debating chamber in 60 years. But the translation caused confusion. [One NZ] First MP... a native speaker, and [a] Labour MP... also fluent, argued over the correctness of the translation... [The independent MP] later defended the translation as “beautiful... quite soft.” ...Parliament’s Speaker yesterday gave life to an Alliance move challenging... her... right to be an MP, and the P[M] and Deputy P[M]... could barely disguise their fury. The ruling means the future of the MP who shocked her Alliance colleagues last week when she quit will be in limbo for some time, probably months. [They] persistently questioned the reasoning of the Speaker... in referring the challenge... to Parliament’s privileges committee. [The Deputy PM] was forced to withdraw and apologise – three times because he apologised so quietly – for describing [the Speaker’s] reasoning as “legal gibberish – with respect.”

...[the independent MP] says she should be treated better because several of her relatives died at El Alamein, the... W[W2] battle after which she was named... “That’s something this country ought to think about – my ancestors who went away and fought the country’s war and yet here’s the mokopuna [descendant] being treated like shit.”

...Parliamentary behaviour is often totally unacceptable... We shouldn’t let all the fuss about [a list MP’s] defection from the Alliance deafen us to some of the legitimate criticisms she makes of our parliamentary system. First, the behaviour of politicians in the House must be challenged. Sleeping, rustling papers and yawning loudly while people are speaking is discourteous. Interjecting, name-calling, jeering and racist or sexist abuse are down-right rude and totally unacceptable. No competent teacher would tolerate any of those behaviours in a classroom. How dare adults who are supposed to be our leaders of society behave like this, at our expense, in public? ...One problem is that... rudeness, abuse and aggression are structured into the accepted systems and customs of the House... The second problem is that because the House – the public face of politics – has been for so long a forum for party confrontation... the public see politicians as aggressive talkers more concerned with party point-scoring than with listening, reflection and careful decision-making. Many of the people who enter politics are attracted by the adrenalin-charged atmosphere of a national debating forum. The selection procedures put emphasis on party allegiance and the ability to debate. Thus behaviour is perpetuated from election to election regardless of the type of parliamentary system we have. There are many politicians who do enter the House with a genuine commitment to sensible processes and behaviour. They are often swamped by noisier companions and sneered at as ineffectual debaters. Low-key and thoughtful contributions are usually ignored by the media... Some eventually succumb to the pressures of the environment and join the game, or just give up trying to change things. Now, of course, we all know – in theory – that the House, the great debating chamber, is not where the real work gets done. [(‘The member for Hamilton East sits and knits during question times in Parliament’s debating chamber. “One of my hobbies is actually restoring an Austin A35 and I’ve got a carburettor that needs working on. Is it OK if I bring it in here and work on it?” a NZ First MP asked the Speaker, who replied: “I’m not an engineer. I don’t know what he was meaning. But if he’s reasonable and fair, then of course we’ll allow his request.”’)]But the behaviour of some politicians in caucuses, in corridors and in committees is hardly admirable either. Personally I would rather the country was governed by people who treated their colleagues, partners and families with respect and spent less time in Wellington or in aeroplanes and hotels around the world. If we really want a parliamentary system which is respected by citizens the system itself has to protect respected behaviour. The processes of Parliament were established by rich men from one culture and they are essentially racist and sexist... The whole structure of our political system is little more than an Englishmen’s team sport – and an unfairly bruising one at that... The rules must be changed so that our leaders offer consistent role models of courtesy and cooperative problem-solving instead of daft party-based hostilities.

...The Minister of Women’s Affairs... yesterday called for male politicians, including some of her ministerial colleagues, to drop their “macho” behaviour. Her target appeared to be some N[Z] First members. In a speech to the Remuera Principals’ Association, [the minister] said too often she had heard the system of MMP and coalition Government blamed for poor parliamentary conduct. But the problems she saw had more to do with workplace culture and plain bad behaviour... “...I believe that we need some kind of... urgent remedial action... [like] you take... in your school when it appears that girls’ learning is being disrupted by rude and unruly little boys...” [She] said women MPs were leading the way in working together across political parties, providing an example of MMP at its best... [Incidentally, a former] National Party MP whose anti-nuclear stance was used by Sir Robert Muldoon as the excuse for calling 1984’s infamous snap election... ‘had too much integrity’ to get far in N[Z] politics. Today, the]... university lecturer... who was lionized during a three-month visit to Canada... [i]s virtually invisible in N[Z]... The Canadian-produced film *Who’s Counting*, based on her book *Counting for Nothing*, was voted best film at the 50th Edinburgh Festival. It’s been shown at all the overseas

film festivals that matter: Berlin, Sundance, Paris. N[Z]'s film festivals didn't want it. *Three Masquerades*, her latest book, is a best-seller in A[US] and Canada. You can't find it in bookshops here. Part of the reason for... [her] anonymity in N[Z] is that after she left Parliament, nobody here wanted to employ her. "I was told directly by one corporate recruitment agency that I was too hot to handle... 'People would be worried that if it came to a choice between the company and your principles, you'd choose your principles,' I was told... I don't have any qualms about being politically incorrect when I've got a job to do... [but] I had no choice; I had to go overseas." So off she went, to Rutgers University in New Jersey where she researched *Counting for Nothing*, considered a definitive test on how to put a price on women's unpaid work and why that's important. Since then she's trained Pacific Island women community leaders in how to campaign for – and hold – national political office, and she's led a series of U[N] missions to Asia. Her first UN assignment... [in] Bangladesh in 1989, could easily have been her last, thanks to the uncompromising language in her final report... "[There was]... this young woman who was a teacher. She had this huge old black bicycle[– a]nd, of course, there's enormous resistance[in Bangladesh] to women having ANY mobility... at all, any independence of movement. They were building dikes around the village where she was teaching, and every morning and every night she had to ride along the road on top of the dikes where the guys were building... I watched and as she rode along... they'd pick up hunks of mud and clay and stone and heave them at her. She'd be pelted, all the way, [but]... she just kept going. There wasn't going to be anything that put her off her bike, or stopped her teaching, or stopped her freedom of movement." In a different part of Bangladesh, she saw women protecting themselves against domestic violence. "They were carrying whistles, and if anybody was ever getting beaten they had to whistle, and... everybody came and surrounded the house, because the policemen wouldn't do anything." The U[N] development project tried to censor... [her] final report. "You can't say that," she was told. She said it anyway. Her report to Bangladesh's Minister of National Development, began: "Male violence towards women is the single largest factor hindering women's access to development in Bangladesh." And the [m]inister... said, 'This is very harsh[but also] very true. It is so refreshing to have a consultant who speaks the truth.' The look on the face of the development project chief with her had to be seen to be believed, she says... [After that, s]he led other missions to Thailand, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nepal and Malaysia... [T]here's a village in Pakistan where the women love... [her, but s]he says she's not angry about th[e] lack of recognition at home, and it's not a matter of ego. "It's curiosity, I suppose. Bemusement. Sometimes I think it would be nice to feel that there were more opportunities... [back] here. But I've got to balance that with the fact that I don't enjoy being eaten alive. I'm not public property, and if I'd wanted or needed that I wouldn't have left the other place, would I?" She is, however, getting satisfaction from applying the experience gained in that 'other place' – Parliament – and helping other women learn how to survive in politics.

...Another awful-looking, voter-alienating dimension was exposed on N[Z] First's already tattered facade this week – caucus infighting. The party's 17 MPs have made a point up to now of presenting a united front outside their caucus room even if it has meant suffering collective damage from the silly mistakes of one of their colleagues. But this week N[Z] First exposed its factional and petty personal jealousies in raw form as... [two MPs] engaged in separate and heated stand-offs with the party hierarchy[, which finally said]... "enough is enough" and [moved] to punish indiscipline in the caucus... What this showed is that N[Z] First is a collection of individuals... [who] as new MPs... were unwise and naive... This week's effort was a recognition of the problem, but a bad omen for the future of coalition unity... [I]nstability within this government is likely to get worse before it gets better.

...JUST when National was getting comfy with the idea that coalition disarray could be blamed on wet-behind-the-ears N[Z] First, along came the member for Epsom[, who]... has struggled to master the byzantine processes and strategies ministers outside cabinet have to employ to advance their policies[– although 'it always takes time for ministers to get used to their portfolios']... She would probably say she understood very well the way power worked, but chose not to sip from that tainted cup... [Her] spectacular exit on Thursday from the portfolios of Women's Affairs, Local Government and Cultural Affairs showed that breaking the spirit of new ministers is not a problem confined to N[Z] First. Her scathing critique of the Government's arrogance, lack of vision and poor internal processes will do more damage than a dozen such attacks by the Opposition. She will be listened to and believed by the public... Her staggering 20,642 vote majority... by far the biggest majority in the country... is testimony to her personal appeal. More than 10,000 of her votes were for her personally – they came from people who did not vote for National on the party vote.

...The Epsom MP... appears to have further isolated herself from National caucus thinking after last night saying the P[M] should quit within three months[, because]... it was time for a leadership change... Opinion polls are[also] giving National backbenchers, both from the list and from marginal electorates, nightmares... The disapproval rating for the coalition Government's performance was up seven points to 84[%]... National support is... 36[% and NZ] First down... to 2[%]... Labour rated 45[%]...

The PM] has strongly hinted that N[Z] First will not get three extra cabinet ministers next year if the party remains so unpopular... But NZ First's president... warned that clauses in the coalition agreement were not contingent on opinion poll findings... [Indeed, the coalition agreement isn't even 'a legal document'.] Under the terms of the coalition agreement, National has 15 cabinet ministers. NZ First has five. That is scheduled to change by next October, National's share reducing to 12... That aspect of the agreement has always rankled with National backbenchers...

The ruling coalition's wafer-thin majority is again in question after the Whangarei MP... yesterday said he might quit National to lead the Christian Democrats... filling the centre-right void created by what he described as the "arrogant and ignorant" coalition... The present National leadership, he said, was taking the party "on a one-way trip to political oblivion. I said to the P[M] just the other day that if you lie down with dogs you inevitably come up covered in fleas..." ...These comments add to the doubts about the P[M]'s leadership, although most National MPs do not want a messy coup and hope [the PM] can be talked into stepping down next year... [The PM] said that he had the confidence of his caucus and would not be stepping down... Since divorcing themselves from the Bible-driven Christian Heritage Party, the Christian Democrats have been on the look-out for a new leader... [to] give the party an appeal beyond churchgoers... [The Whangarei MP] said that... he would have to consider his options, which included a burning desire to continue in radio and to work in television... Any action by [the Whangarei MP] to jump ship would wipe out the... coalition's one-vote majority and leave the Government hostage to a number of scenarios in order to survive in Parliament. These include other parties joining the coalition, permitted under a clause in the coalition agreement.

...Put to one side the day-to-day bedlam that has left this Government gasping for credibility... [and consider] one simple question: how should the minor partner behave? Too silent and it is overwhelmed by its bigger partner. Too troublesome and it is accused of destabilising the whole Administration. N[Z] First has committed two cardinal sins in trying to find a balance. It has generated a constant diet of conflict and blunders which the media love; it has displayed an arrogance and disunity which voters distrust. But the party's problem is essentially the same as United's was when that party propped up National last year. The same tension will apply between the Alliance... and Labour, presuming they are[one day] in a position to enter some kind of coalition arrangement. Labour and the Alliance are now thinking about how to make it work, drawing lessons from the present turmoil beyond the obvious: that a tired National Administration made the mistake of lumping itself with a bunch of novices... Yet, all the evidence from overseas was that coalitions were "untidy and difficult" creatures... [The P[M]... had to overcome deep disquiet within his own party – even though he delivered power. Many rank and file never conceived the possibility of a National-N[Z] First Government... Another difficulty in getting acceptance of the coalition was that N[Z] First campaigned on a quite different policy agenda from National. That had to be "narrowed down" in long coalition talks... National and N[Z] First nailed down everything they could during hard negotiation. But coalition ministers have been frustrated that they have not been able to present a perception of direction and momentum... The P[M] is... blunt about N[Z] First's election promises: "The problem of promising a huge dividend in Government is that it is never met." But he also reveals one reason why

N[Z] First chose National. Opting for Labour would have raised voter expectations even higher. [By the way, 'the commission on MMP recommended that a party win at least 4% of all party votes to get a proportional allocation of seats, but National and Labour decided to set the level at 5%.']

...Eggheads were wrong: Majority lost with MMP... WHAT a year that was! Who would have predicted, twelve months ago, that we would have [the National and NZ First leaders] in cosy tandem running the country? Or that it would be so hard now to find anyone who voted for MMP? Those learned members of the Royal Commission that persuasively argued in favour of the [MMP] system subtitled their report, ominously it now seems, "Towards a better democracy". Yet, as we discovered, the first MMP election achieved a result where a party with 13% of the vote could dictate who governed. And, if that were not sufficient source for disillusion, Mr 13% chose not to throw out the people who, only weeks previously, he was saying "were not fit to govern". So N[Z] did not get its first woman P[M]. Nor did it get a grand coalition that might have represented the majority. It's easy then to conclude that the Royal Commission was a bunch of eggheads who didn't know what they were talking about when they argued that MMP would deliver the "fairness" and "equality" missing from [FPP]; and equally they were wrong-headed when they said MMP would ensure the power to make, and unmake, governments is in the hands of the people at an election. Members of the community, said the commission, should be able to endorse the voting system and its procedures as fair and reasonable, and to accept its decisions, "even when they themselves prefer other alternatives" [such as preventing MPs who've been voted out by an electorate – because they are intensely disliked by local voters – remaining in Parliament via their party list!]. A senior lecturer in law at Otago University, writing in *The Press* last week, labelled MMP "a very protestant" electoral system – because faith alone sustains it. "Any actual difficulties can be put down to old-style politicians, to the unfamiliarity of the new system, to carping critics, to the need for more time to make it work, to anything at all. In this way form wins out over substance, and the evil that men do lives after them." Is there any hope, then, that something positive may develop out of this disaster? ...And so who do we nominate as our Politician of the Year? The leader who came back from the dead to be N[Z]'s power broker, the bronze medallist who decided who should have the gold and the silver? Or the Great Survivor, the P[M] who has been written off as National's leader more times than he can remember?

...Labour would be governing on its own without minor party help if a general election had been held last week, according to the latest poll... Labour... has surged from 45.6[%] to 50.2... since... five weeks ago. National... [went to 33.2%. But NZ] First recorded just 1.7[%] support among committed voters... And there is more bad news for the P[M – he has dropped to 14%]... in the preferred P[M] stakes... Meanwhile, the Labour leader... registered 27.7[%]. The NZ First... leader... drifted under the 2[%] mark in line with his party's slide... The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.9[%]. Unfortunately for National, it... is finding that N[Z] First, despite the glaring naivety of its MPs, will not take advice on damage-control... considering it patronising.

...Former MPs worried about the behaviour of parliamentarians are offering their help, says their association president... To help restore the relevance of Parliament and the democratic process in public opinion, a committee of former Speakers will receive suggestions and frame proposals for consideration by MPs.

...Government ethics are being rethought around the world. Spectacular defeats for governing parties in... Canada and France in 1995 were partly attributable to concerns over Government ethics. People the world over are questioning the actions and motivation of their elected representatives as never before... The integrity and authority of government depends not only on the quality of those who govern but also on the degree of public confidence in those people and this institution. Members of Parliament must not only be of high integrity, they must be seen to be so by the public. Recently, in reply to a question from [the Opposition leader, the P[M]... indicated his support for a code of conduct for MPs. He said the standing orders committee should be invited to consider the move. I support this[but w]e should go further. This is now the time for our Parliament to address conflict of interest issues comprehensively with a register of all members' interests. As things stand, ministers declare their interests annually in a report, the most recent of which has just been tabled. Such disclosure should also be expected of all other members... The A[US]n federal House and those of N[SW], Queensland, South A[US], Victoria and the Northern Territory require declarations... on... private activity... from all their members. So does the House of Commons and the legislatures of all but two Canadian provinces... As a British legislator said in favour of general disclosure: "After all, we have always lived in a goldfish bowl so is it not better that the bowl should be clear rather than clouded by myth and rumour?" ...[as the] chairman of Parliament's finance and expenditure committee... I have written to the chairman of the standing orders committee seeking his urgent attention to these matters.

...The public backlash against politicians' behaviour has prompted a parliamentary committee to suggest MPs be seen to be cleaning up their act by writing a code of conduct. Parliament's government administration committee has also raised the possibility of the register of personal financial interests applying to all 120 MPs... Ministers are already required to disclose directorships, shareholdings, gifts and payment for outside activities. But the committee's report argues that [MMP] has given backbenchers more influence and there should be... complementary checks in the system against abuse of power and position... At present, MPs are already subject to laws covering bribery and corruption. They also have to declare a direct financial interest when voting or speaking in parliamentary debates... The... committee is also worried that the increased turnover of MPs under MMP will deplete the backbenches of the senior MPs who impart norms of acceptable behaviour to new backbenchers.

...[Labour's] justice spokesman... has called for a binding referendum to be held after the 1999 election on whether to ditch MMP... A referendum held after the next election would allow two MMP elections to have taken place, giving the public time to judge the... system... The results could be implemented for the 2002 election, he said... The only scheduled review of the electoral system is a select committee inquiry in 2000. There were no plans for a referendum... An independent body such as a Royal Commission would be needed to conduct the review because politicians sitting on a select committee would have a vested interest... [Meanwhile, support] for a petition calling for a citizens initiated referendum on cutting the number of MPs from 120 to 100 is gathering steam... [If it gains over 250,000 signatures, the Government has to hold a referendum.] However, on the law of averages its chances of success are slim. The 1993 firefighters' referendum is the only time a citizens initiated referendum has come to fruition.

...[a 'batling granny has won her fight to change the face of parliament. The 70-year-old from Wellington has gathered enough signatures to force a citizens initiated referendum on slashing the number of MPs. A total of 21 are now likely to be looking for new jobs. The Chief Electoral Officer said the petition needs verification before it can be presented to the House. The Governor General would then set a date for the referendum to be held within 12 months. Insecure MPs can still defer the referendum if 75% of them vote to put it off.]

...[a] well-known writer, spent several years in Germany on fellowships in the 1980s and became an enthusiast for the MMP electoral system. This month... he discussed MMP one year on... On the issue of current numbers of MPs, much criticised by the public[he]... points out that with population growth, the old system would have had 113 MPs and counting by the year 2011, while MMP is fixed at 120[(although, due to 'MMP throwback', NZ may occasionally end up with 121 MPs)]... By comparison... Ireland, with a similar population, has 166 MPs plus an Upper House[– '226 MPs in' total –] and an elected President. Norway, with slightly more than four million people, elects 165 representatives and Denmark, with 5.5 million has a Parliament of 179... He defends the list MPs[who 'don't have to contest an electorate']... As far as he has discovered, Zambia is the only country requiring MPs to leave the house if they resign from a party! ...[He] believed the time taken for negotiation was "only marginally acceptable" as it was the first time the process had taken place here. "We should... make it mandatory that parliament sit, with government in place, not later than 30 days after election results are known." Even with a population of 82 million and a house of 672 members, German results are complete within three to four hours of the poll closing... But... the idea of going back to FPP... "would be like Air N[Z] deciding to dump its Boeing 747s in favour of Short Solent flying boats for international travel."

...A TIMARU couple has decided their political love match is for keeps – they have become engaged... When... [they] met last year, they were working for opposing MPs in the South Canterbury town. Parliamentary Services had asked [him, as the Labour MP's]... electorate agent, to mentor [her] in her new job as... [the NZ First MP's] electorate secretary. The pair ended up falling in love, but their relationship cost... [her the job. The NZ First MP] said the \$10,000 awarded to [the former electorate secretary] by Parliamentary Services was an “appalling” use of taxpayers money for someone who worked 20 hours a week.

...MENTION the words politicians and public money in the same sentence and you're guaranteed to send the nation's blood pressure sky high... And MPs' salaries generate the same degree of passion. Kiwis from Kaitia to Bluff have an opinion of whether MPs... deserve their \$74,500 annual pay packet (more than double the average wage) or whether [the P]M... is adequately paid – at the rate of \$185,500 a year – to run the country. The Higher Salaries Commission determines how much our elected representatives are paid and those salaries are under review, with a decision on any increase due next month. So are our 120 MPs worthy of the money they earn, or should they be rewarded on the basis of performance? Labour's Manukau East MP... an industrial efficiency expert before becoming a politician 10 years ago... believes MPs should be subjected to pay differentials, based on factors such as demonstrated election voter support. “The problem is quantifying an MP's work. No-one seems able to specify exactly what a politician has to do. There's no certain number of bricks to be laid, or washing machines to assemble...” But according to [the chairman of a] human resources company... the answer to paying for performance should be a resounding no. “It wouldn't work. There are far too many imponderables. Who would judge them, and on what... And then there's the question of who is actually doing the work – is it the MP, or is it being done by others on their behalf...?” In the private sector, he said, a chief executive's salary was determined by responsibility, staff numbers, company value and budget. “But... [take] the Health Minister's job. If we applied private sector factors to determine his salary, he'd have one of the biggest jobs in the country and should therefore have one of the biggest remuneration packages. His budget is billions of dollars, thousands of people are employed in the sector and it affects a huge amount of people. So how do you measure that? And he is in the terrible position of having almost no chance of satisfying anybody – so it's likely he'd never be paid under performance-based salaries.” ...He could be right. As one MP said, if he and his colleagues were paid on the basis of public perception of their performance, “we'd have another 120 people on welfare.” [A former P]M... understands how it could appeal to the public... “Some MPs should be paid to say nothing and write nothing because their efforts are an embarrassment.”

...The wage bill for N[Z]'s 39 Government department chief executives may rise... [by] about a third, under a package announced yesterday by the Government. The average salary for department heads is now \$138,000, but the range is from \$90,000 to \$200,000 and cost the Taxpayer around \$6.5 million last year. The Minister for State Services... said the new policy was expected to raise this by around \$500,000 over the coming financial year and by up to \$2 million a year when fully implemented. But departments will have to fund the increase out of existing budgets – a requirement that concerns the general-secretary of the Public Service Association... He said it would mean that any pay increases at the top would squeeze the funds available for remaining staff, and would compound an already serious wage-drag problem.

...The country's MPs may be in for a healthier than normal pay rise this year. The Higher Salaries Commission... said in its annual report it would have to be mindful of the widening gap between top-level public and private pay in future determinations. The widening gap was the reason given on Thursday for a 30[%] pay rise over three years to the 39 Government department heads. The commission chairman... yesterday said he had asked what the P[M] – “the chief executive of N[Z]” – should be paid when [one private NZ company]'s chief executive... was earning \$1.4 million. “I'm not suggesting \$1.4 million for a month of Sundays, [and]... we are not suggesting we will ever close the gap, but it is a factor.”

...MPs go for pay rise despite cash crisis... The Cook Islands cabinet is determined that MPs should have a pay rise even though details of the ...98 budget remains unresolved. Cabinet ministers are reported to be upset that some heads of ministries are on the same salary scales as MPs. “No MP should be getting less than a [head of ministry],” [said the]Legislative Services Minister... In the meantime the Government and its advisers are wrangling over the amount of spending in the budget. The cabinet wants \$39.9 million but economic advisers have said this is far too much. A slashed-back budget presented by the National Development Council recommended \$26.7 million... A number of ministry heads approached their ministers last week for permission to begin effecting job cuts almost immediately.

...[‘some Government ministers in Rarotonga are being forced to reduce working hours from 40 to 30 a week in an effort to meet the 10% cut the Government has enforced to keep within its budget.’ In local news, t]he Higher Salaries Commission yesterday handed MPs a 4.7[%] top-up from the taxpayer, boosting their basic salary... to \$78,000... Cabinet ministers have been treated to a hefty 7[%] pay rise... to \$135,000 – the same increase and salary for the Labour leader... and the Speaker... [M]inisters have not had a pay rise for two years, although MPs received a 2.7[%] increase last year... The pay pump-up leaves the Minister of Health... red-faced for saying health workers should not even get a 1[%] rise... He... did not return calls... last night to say whether he would accept his pay rise... So far the only MP to publicly turn down a pay rise is Act's perk-buster... w[ho will] donate his \$3500 pay rise to... [a school] in Otara. Other MPs were extremely hesitant and nervous about discussing the pay increase, including [the PM and Deputy PM], who together only a day earlier... pledged to “aim to reduce Parliament's running costs.” ...The salary of the Deputy [P]M... rose 7.1[%]... to \$151,000. The... P[M]... will pocket \$199,000... a 7.3[%] increase... All the rises are back-dated to July 1... The [commission also raised the Governor-General's] tax-free salary from \$114,500 to \$120,000 a year... The[commission's] chairman... justified the pay rises... by saying it was the commission's role to look at where the marketplace was, what the job was worth and the “effect on the country these people have.” ...Ordinary workers have seen their wage packets swell an average 3.5[%] in the past year, while top executives have averaged 5.9[%].

...MPs may have received a... pay rise, but their secretarial staff are struggling to get any proper increase at all... [F]our months of industrial talks with parliamentary officials were deadlocked, with... some 380 support staff who earned about \$35,000 each... being offered a nil pay increase for the next three years. Instead, a \$1000 cash payment had been offered to settle the three-year contract. - 1997

“What idiot authorised that?” “You did Minister.” ...“Backbenchers always hate Civil Service pay rises.” “How interesting you should say that. I was just about to make a suggestion... [I]f MPs' salaries were to be linked to a grade in the Civil Service they wouldn't have to keep voting themselves pay rises all the time. Every time the Civil Service got one they get one as well, automatically. And if MPs' pensions were to be index linked as well, it would make them much less hostile to Civil Service pay claims.” “It certainly would... what grade do you think backbenchers ought to be?” “I thought Senior Principles.” ...“What grade should cabinet ministers be?” ...“Well, at the moment you earn even less than I do. Why don't you grade yourself as a Permanent Secretary... after all, this is a partnership.” ...“...you don't want to make a profit out of serving your country, do you?” ...“Yes... Minister.”

N[Z] politicians spend less time in Parliament than those in almost all English-speaking countries – except A[US. The]... office of Clerk of the House said last year Parliament sat for 87 days... The A[US]ns... had just 68 sitting days... The United Kingdom sat for the highest number... with its House of Commons sitting on 153 days. The Canadian House of Commons sat for 145 days and the U[S] House of Representatives 125... The results could give some credence to [a National MP's] claim that he can host a daily morning radio breakfast show without any impact on his work as Whangarei MP... [He also stated that he thinks of himself as being ‘an entertainer.’ (Editor's note: Because ACTS can be ‘scenes from a play,’ Parliament might seem like an appropriate place for entertainers – who can encompass clowns and actors. Indeed, politicians have been likened to

psychopaths as 'both believe they are starring in the film of their own lives.' NZ has many 'Acting Ministers', but it can't match the US for using the theatre as a training-ground for future politicians. Indeed, one former 'B-grade actor' even managed to become the US President. What are actors? People who 'like the idea of taking on a character and portraying the guise of another, dressing up and hiding behind something' – i.e., people who are good at pretending to be something that they aren't!)] **Not that N[Z] MPs actually bother attending Parliament most of the time it is sitting. MP's speeches are usually directed at rows of empty seats during parliamentary "debate" – most of their colleagues have departed by the end of question time... However, when it came to actually getting things done, N[Z] politicians didn't do quite so badly. N[Z]'s Parliament passed 110 acts... compared to the U[K]'s 41, Canada's 48 and A[US]'s 165, but coming nowhere near the huge 473 acts passed by the U[S (where 'the number of measures enacted has declined since 1972')]. - 1996**

The office responsible for drafting laws says it is already stretched and will be under intense pressure this year because of the amount of legislation expected to be passed. Briefing papers for the Parliamentary Counsel Office show... it usually has to draft about 90 bills and at least 300 statutory regulations each year. But the number of new regulations now exceeds 400 a year... And it says any loss of drafting staff may mean the legislative programme cannot be completed. The office[, which]... received \$5.621 million for the... year... has 18 counsel, compared with more than 60 staff drafting central Government laws in A[US. NSW] has 20 lawyers to draft state laws.

NZ's political system was developed after those of AUS, the US and Britain. This presented NZ with a chance to learn from the mistakes of the other three – or to repeat their mistakes! However, despite being one of the youngest countries politically, NZ is one of the oldest geographically.

Although NZ is relatively small in land mass, its geographical history is as complex as that of a continent. Land has existed in the vicinity of NZ for most of the last 500,000,000 years. The earliest known rocks [are] older than 570,000,000 years...

Between 750-925AD the fabled Polynesian navigator Kupe is said to have discovered the islands now comprising NZ. Recent archaeological evidence suggests that regular visits and small-scale settlement began about this time... 1350 According to legend, seven canoes bearing settlers from the legendary 'Hawaiki' somewhere in Polynesia reached NZ about this time. The migrants and their descendants peopled the land, named its features, and founded the Maori civilization... ['1494 The Treaty of Tordesillas sought to control the rivalry between Spain and Portugal by dividing the undiscovered world along an imaginary line. Spain was to have possession of all discovered and undiscovered lands to the west of this line. According to the treaty, the Pacific would belong to Spain.'] 1642 Abel Tasman, the first European to discover NZ, calls it Staten Landt and annexes it for Holland. ['The first recorded contact between Maori and European took place when Tasman's ships, the *Heemskerck* and the *Zeehaen*, anchored in Golden Bay near the tip of the South Island. Two canoes approached the ships and the Maoris called out and blew a war trumpet. Tasman ordered two of his own trumpeters to play in reply. The next day, several more canoes came out, seemingly friendly, but when the *Zeehaen*'s cockboat was crossing to the *Heemskerck*, it was attacked by Maoris in a large canoe and four of the Europeans were killed. The Dutch fired on the canoes, but without apparent effect. Tasman called the area Murderers Bay.'] 1769 Captain Cook lands at Gisborne... and possession is taken on behalf of King George III. Two months later, the Frenchman, De Surville, lands at Doubtless Bay. 1770 Captain Cook... lands in the South Island... and... British... possession of NZ [is] taken again. 1772 Marion du Fresne lands at the Bay of Islands, and annexes NZ as France Australe in the name of King Louis XV of France... 1839 Governor of New South Wales given jurisdiction over British subjects in NZ... 1840... British sovereignty proclaimed... 1841 NZ proclaimed independent of N[SW], and declared a Crown Colony... In 1846 the first authority to establish representative institutions locally was contained in the Constitution Act but it was never fully implemented, and a Constitution Act of 1852 created a two-chamber legislature with power circumscribed by the British Colonial Office and the Governor in [NZ]... 1854 Opening of the first General Assembly, in Auckland... 1855 First members elected to the House of Representatives... 1856... Appointment of first ministry under system of responsible government [and first PM]... 1865 Wellington becomes seat of government... 1867... Act passed by which four Maori members admitted to the House of Representatives, and NZ becomes the first country in the world to allow its native people to vote. [However, the first four Maori members were 'picked from chiefs who supported the Colonial Government in its war against Maori resistance.' Therefore, the first Maori MPs didn't represent the majority of Maori people! (The US allowed 'voting rights to coloured citizens in 1870' 'but it was not until 1948 that the franchise was effectively extended to Indians.')]... 1877 Education Act provides free compulsory and secular education... 1879 Adult male suffrage introduced... 1890 First election under one-man one-vote system... 1893... NZ women become first in the world to vote in a national election [– although the US state of 'Wyoming extended the vote to women in 1869' (the '19th amendment of the US Constitution extended the vote to women from other states in 1920')... 1894 Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act passed, making NZ the first country to introduce compulsory arbitration... 1895... Family Homes Protection Act passed[('AN ACT to make Provision for securing Homes for the People')] ...1898 Old-age Pensions Act passed, the first of its kind in the world[('certain states in the US had long provided old-age pensions, but the Federal government only entered the field with the Social Security Act of 1935')]... 1900... Public Health Act passed... 1905 Workers Dwelling Act passed[('AN ACT to make Better Provision for the Erection of Workers' Dwellings')] ...1910 National Provident Fund Act passed[('AN ACT to encourage the Making of Provision against Destitution')] ...1911... Widows' Pensions Act passed... 1919... Women eligible for parliamentary election [– though it was 1934 before the first woman MP was elected]... 1924... Pensions for blind persons introduced... 1926 Family Allowances Act passed[('AN ACT to make Provision for the Grant of Allowances towards the Maintenance of Children by Parents with Limited Resources')]... 1930 Legislation provides for relief of unemployment... 1936... Introduction of 40-hour week... 1938... Import selection and control introduced... 1939... Introduction of social security for hospital patients... 1941... Introduction of pharmaceutical and general medical benefits... 1944 Introduction of A[US]-NZ Agreement providing for collaboration on matters of mutual interest... 1960 Government Service Equal Pay Act passed.

The issue of equal pay for women came to a head in 1956 after... a [female] public servant with five years experience, won an appeal against the appointment of a newly recruited male cadet. Under regulations at the time, all men in the clerical division were automatically senior to all women in status and eligibility for promotion and [the woman]'s salary was reduced to the level of the cadet. A public outcry followed, and [the then P]M... called a meeting of women's organisations to discuss the... case and the general issue of women's salaries and wages. As a result the Government formed the Council for Equal Pay and Opportunity the following year to study the issue and educate the public.

Applying the same pay rate to everyone employed by the State wasn't an intention of the Equal Pay Act – it was only designed 'to make provision for the application (to the Government Service) of the principle that women should receive the same pay as men where they do equal work under equal conditions' ('legislation designed to remove and prevent sex discrimination in pay rates in the private sector was passed in 1972'). If NZ's Government had intended to pay the same rate to every worker in every industry, it would, effectively, have taken politics full-circle – GOVERNMENT in its earliest form was simply a method of organising the equal division of labour and produce amongst members of a community. This initially involved the production of food, construction of buildings and other amenities. The duty of such a government was, therefore, to achieve the combined well-being of its citizens. However, some leaders started to provide only for themselves and, in extreme cases, organised their citizens into armed forces which were used to attack others

communities (or other governments) – to steal crops, loot manufactured products, gain slaves and so on. The other communities responded by organising defence forces, at which point warfare established itself amongst the duties of government. Since then, many governments have focused on the duty of defending citizens against exterior enemies (r:p174, lns63-4) while completely ignoring the duty of defending citizens against lack of food, shelter, etc!

...I've been[trying to] think... of a reason why I should be working for a living... the government takes away part of what you earn and shares it out... some is used for killing and some salvation...

In recent centuries, as the economic system has become more sophisticated, the duty of achieving *the combined well-being of citizens* has gradually been resurrected via the provision of state welfare. NZ's political system was born into this era ("The welfare of the people is our first and constant consideration" – Michael Joseph Savage, 1938'). The youthfulness and size of NZ's system also enabled it to be the first country to adopt some of the latest political theories from around the world. Furthermore, because NZ has never tried to attack another country on its own, and hasn't been invaded by anyone for over a century, Defence hasn't been more of a priority than Welfare for its governments (excluding the brief periods of WW1 and WW2). However, since the 1960s, NZ governments have increasingly adopted the philosophy that the primary duty of a modern government is to DEFEND THE ECONOMY.

In 1960 the National Party... was returned to power, which it retained until 1972. In that year Labour won a huge victory under Norman Kirk; his death in office in 1974 was the prelude to as great a National victory in 1975... The 1970s and '80s were difficult economically for N[Z]. The combination in the early 1970s of high energy prices and Great Britain's entry into the EEC brought about a severe economic recession. Inflation skyrocketed, unemployment soared, and thousands emigrated to A[US]. The response of [the]National government was interventionism on an unparalleled scale: the government borrowed funds from overseas and ran up huge budgetary deficits, in part to finance large industrial developments [that evolved from a policy known as 'Think Big (under which NZ's overseas debt rose from 4% of GDP to over 30%')]; and it attempted to regulate interest rates. Dissatisfaction with this program led in 1984 to the election of a Labour government... The Labour government initiated one of the most sweeping policy reversals in the country's history as, one after another, restrictions on free enterprise that had been imposed progressively over some 50 years were lifted. Among the reforms were the elimination of agricultural subsidies, the reduction of income tax rates, and the lifting of controls on wages, prices, interest rates, and foreign exchange.

Previous to 1984, the year was synonymous with a British science fiction novel.

Orwell, George, pseudonym of... [the] English... essayist, and critic famous for his novels *Animal Farm* (1945) and *Nineteen Eighty-four* (1949), the latter a profound anti-Utopian novel that examines the dangers of totalitarian rule... He was born in Bengal, into the class of sahibs. His father was a minor British official in the Indian civil service; his mother, of French extraction, was the daughter of an unsuccessful teak merchant in Burma. Their attitudes were those of the "landless gentry," as Orwell later called lower-middle-class people whose pretensions to social status had little relation to their income. Orwell was thus brought up in an atmosphere of impoverished snobbery. After returning with his parents to England, he was sent in 1911 to a preparatory boarding school on the Sussex coast, where he was distinguished among the other boys by his poverty and his intellectual brilliance. He grew up a morose, withdrawn, eccentric... Orwell won scholarships to two of England's leading schools, Winchester and Eton, and chose the latter. He stayed from 1917 to 1921... Instead of accepting a scholarship to a university, Orwell decided to follow family tradition and, in 1922, went to Burma as assistant district superintendent in the Indian Imperial Police... Yet from boyhood he had wanted to become a writer, and when he realized how much against their will the Burmese were ruled by the British, he felt increasingly ashamed of his role... In 1927 Orwell, on leave to England, decided not to return to Burma... Having felt... that the barriers of race and caste had prevented his mingling with the Burmese, he thought he could expiate some of his guilt by immersing himself in the life of the poor and outcast people of Europe. Donning ragged clothes, he went into the East End of London to live in cheap lodging houses among labourers and beggars; he spent a period in the French hotels and restaurants; he tramped the roads of England with professional vagrants and joined the people of the London slums in their annual exodus to work in the Kentish hopfields... In 1944 Orwell finished *Animal Farm*, a political fable based on the story of the Russian Revolution and its betrayal by Joseph Stalin. In his book a group of barnyard animals overthrow and chase off their exploitative human masters and set up an egalitarian society of their own. Eventually the animals' intelligent and power-loving leaders, the pigs, subvert the revolution and form a dictatorship whose bondage is even more oppressive and heartless than that of their former human masters. ("All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others.") At first Orwell had difficulty finding a publisher for his small masterpiece, but when it appeared... *Animal Farm* made him famous and, for the first time, prosperous. *Animal Farm*... has, however, been overshadowed by his last book... a novel he wrote as a warning after years of brooding on the twin menaces of Nazism and Stalinism. The novel is set in an imaginary future in which the world is dominated by three perpetually warring totalitarian police states. The book's hero... is a minor party functionary in one of these states. His longing for truth and decency leads him to secretly rebel against the government, which perpetuates its rule by systematically distorting the truth and continuously rewriting history to suit its own purposes... Orwell's warning of the potential dangers of totalitarianism made a deep impression on his contemporaries and upon subsequent readers, and the book's title and many of its coined words and phrases ("Big Brother is watching you," "newspeak," "doublethink") became bywords for modern political abuses.

The real 1984 was significant for being the year when Britain promised to eventually hand Hong Kong back to China (Hong Kong could be called the definitive example of a government which is LEAST like the ones described by Orwell, whereas China is a definitive example of a government MOST like them). NZers, however, remember the year for a different reason. Whereas Orwell's fictitious governments wanted to INCREASE their control over the communities they were supposed to serve, NZ's Labour Government of 1984 effectively decided to DECREASE its control over the community it was supposed to serve!

During the early 1980s a group of... new-right... economists slowly came to dominate policy development in the N[Z] Treasury. With the election of the Labour Party in 1984 and the appointment of [a gnome (r:p201, ln11)] as Minister of Finance, their plans... to turn our country into their version of the model free market state... were realised with the introduction of some of the most drastic economic reforms ever seen in a western democracy. - SOMEONE ELSE'S COUNTRY

The... film... *Someone Else's Country*... regarded economic reform as a conspiracy of international capital which, having cut its teeth in Chile, insinuated itself into a N[Z] Labour Government and destroyed the welfare state we knew and loved... "The world's first welfare state became the world's first post-market state."

Having turned NZ into a *post-market state*, the PM declared – prior to winning the 1987 election – that his party intended to return to its welfare roots.

“...and this Government has made its pledge. We addressed the economy in ’84 to 7 and we addressed it big, and in ’87 on we are going right into that whole area of social policy, the duty of the state, in the areas of health and education, to be the dominant funders, the dominant providers.”

Labour’s promises were short on detail but the direction was clear... Meanwhile, Treasury officials were writing a brief for the Minister of Finance, but the brief didn’t suggest ways for Labour to put its promises into effect. It did the opposite, proposing a new right prescription to cut [the Government’s] role in health, welfare and education. Labour’s election campaign was well supported by big business and the multinationals. Of the \$3.5 million dollars Labour spent on its election campaign, thousands came from unions, hundreds from party members and millions from the corporate elite. A new investment company, Equiticorp, contributed \$250,000.

Popular support for the Labour program was reflected in the party’s 1987 general election victory. In the late 1980s, inflation had finally been brought under control, but unemployment continued to rise. [The P]M... began to face substantial opposition within his own party, especially as a result of the privatization of state-owned enterprises, which was initiated in 1987, and over his conflict with... [the Finance Minister, who] was pushing for economic measures, such as a flat-scale tax system and the deregulation of the labour unions, that the [PM considered extreme. The PM dismissed the minister] in December 1988, but in August 1989, with the aim of shoring up Labour’s poor standing in the polls, Labour MPs voted to return [the sacked minister] to the Cabinet. [The PM] resigned a few days later and was replaced by his nominee, [the]Justice minister... In just 13 months, however, [the nominee] was... replaced by... a former minister of foreign affairs, who held on to the position of [PM] for only eight weeks before the National Party’s landslide victory in the... 1990 general election... The National Party had campaigned for reduced government spending on social programs and the elimination of such labour practices as compulsory unionism but pledged to maintain N[Z]’s antinuclear stand.

Academic economists: we were right about reforms... As an observer one has to admire the manner with which quite a small number of individuals effectively changed history although the population at large was not in favour of the change... Economists would agree that much of the change has in fact been for the better. By and large, economists believe that the market mechanism works tolerably well... But one has also to say that the New Right tactics were unacceptable and, for academics accustomed to a more civilised environment, it was difficult to handle... [A] number of academic economists did seek to reverse the policies of the time... In mid-1991, just as the economy “turned the corner,” a group of Auckland University economists warned that [the Government’s economic] policy would not work... Since then it has regularly been alleged that they had it wrong... *June 6, 1991:* ...the open letter of the Auckland University economists... predicts that proposed deficit cutting strategy will make the budget deficit worse and recommends instead that the Government aim to reinforce competitiveness with an adjustment to exchange rate policy. *July 30, 1991:* The “mother of all budgets” forecast a deficit of \$1.7 billion. The actual deficit, revealed a year later, amounts to \$2.5 billion due to depression in the economy and a collapse of revenue receipts – as predicted by the economists... As I write this, there is an eerie similarity to the situation which existed in late 1990 – an over-valued exchange rate doing major damage to the export economy and setting the stage for the recession of 1991-93. There is a difference, however, in that the public accounts are in surplus... to the point that tax cuts are now necessary. That is to say, the budgetary measures taken in 1990-92 which the economists warned against are now having to be unwound.

...The good news machine is being cranked into overdrive. We are told that our economy is a model for the world to follow. Taxes are returned to the more affluent; the Employment Contracts Act is the best thing for employers since sliced bread; the dollar is buoyant; the stock market is up. It was suggested recently that you can see Jesus as a supporter of free markets, and that, so long as you are all right spiritually, a bit of poverty doesn’t matter. That is a credo often heard from those with full bellies... I dare to believe that it’s not God’s gift to us, and that if everyone tries to grab as much as they can for themselves we won’t all be better off as a result. I’ve lived in Manukau for 25 years, much of it in places not particularly socially respectable. I used to be a vicar of part of it, and know and love it well. It is by far the most stimulating place to be in N[Z], with real encounters and sharing among its cultures. In the bad old days, when Governments dared to intervene in the economy, everyone here had a job, and some had two or three. The Pacific Islanders had come to do the dirty work that no one else wanted, and how they worked. As industrial chaplain in an East Tamaki factory I used to worry at the load many of them carried. Otara got bad press, but it was a community of promise. It was an honest place. We lived in its heart and rarely locked doors. Its new town centre supported three substantial supermarkets. A new generation of young community leaders was starting to emerge. The free market closed that factory and many like it. It left whole families jobless, sometimes three generations. It forced them into a survival mode where beneficiary status is the norm. Then the New Right could blame the victims as dole-bludgers and layabouts. None of this is new. Victorian Britain, then the richest country in the world, ran on free-market principles. Its poor lived in unimaginable squalor. My great-grandparents came here to build a better life than that. Now some of the new generation want to repeat the misery here.

...*Strong economy can iron out inequality...* N[Z] has transformed its economy over the past decade. The economy had been in decline since 1960, but is now heading upwards... Some critics claim that economic change has been accompanied by unacceptable social costs. We cannot say with certainty what N[Z] would have been like in 1996 if it had not reformed its economy. It is likely, however, that its standards would have continued to decline... All Western countries are concerned with inequality. Inequality cannot be dealt with by returning to the past. The first step is to ensure that the economy is growing as fast as possible... - 1996

All revolutions need a vizier: In N[Z] it was the man who spent 10 years as]... head of the public service – a decade as chief executioner of traditional bureaucracy... This was revolution from above... [His] job as State Services Commissioner was to order his officials into the cauldron of Rogernomics... [and, thereby, preside] over the destruction of a system which his father, [a]former Defence Secretary... helped build... Brought up in the system himself, the... [son] admired and respected some of its qualities... He joined the public service in 1952, aged just 18, and has worked in it ever since... But he put it to the sword, and is now retiring “with mixed feelings”. He is sure some sort of revolution was necessary. But whether [the result] was exactly right – well, he is unsure. As a historian, he knows it is still too early to reach a verdict. One part of the old system which had to go, he says, was overstaffing... The size of the transformation wrought in the public service during the last decade is best communicated in a single, brutal fact – the reduction in the workforce from 85,000 in the early 1980s to fewer than 35,000 today. And... the number will be reduced further... a product of an international trend towards decentralisation and the idea that small is beautiful. But, while other countries experienced a tide of change, N[Z] was engulfed in a tsunami. An American academic... was commissioned by the State Services Commission and the Treasury in 1995 to evaluate the restructuring programme. He titled his report *The Spirit of Reform*. He might just as accurately have called it *Death of a Culture*... [The American’s report said,] “Government departments in N[Z] are no longer the organisational cocoons many once were... They are not sheltered by special rules, stable career patterns, incremental budgets and ambiguous performance standards. They increasingly resemble business organisations.” He found that the reforms had been generally successful and had lived up to most of the “lofty expectations held for them” but wondered if the “hard-edged contractualism” of the new regime might have diminished the “public regarding values” traditionally expected of the public service... [The retiring] State Services Commissioner... earlier this year... described the public service as “a group of men and women who have, in many cases, made a deliberate decision to work for organisations which are not driven by the bottom line but are, in some direct or

indirect way, contributing to improving the lot of individual N[Z]ers and the nation.” ...he challenged the concept that the “differences between the public sectors are not that great, that they perform similar functions and can be operated in similar ways.” But... this [was]... the presumption behind the reforms... [and they were supported by] his immediate predecessor in the commissioner’s job[(1986-87), who was the ‘Chief Executive of ECNZ (1987-92), Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of NZ (1982-6) and’ is] now the chief executive of Telecom... If [his predecessor’s] mission was to throw away what was bad in the old system, [his mission] was to try to salvage what was good. He seems to believe that he had some success in this. But impressions matter, and he was not helped by the scandal of having [a colleague] convicted of embezzlement as Auditor-General... “The enormity of that is only just sinking in,” he says. “World-wide it is an absolute embarrassment. N[Z] on the international league table of corruption has always been either at the top or in the first three [for integrity]... We worked together closely and I liked him. But what he has done is unforgivable.” ...as a result background checks on senior officials now include rigorous scanning of creditworthiness... But... [the retiring commissioner] says any system has its crooks... [T]he Public Trust Office... where both [he] and his father started their careers... was born in the 1870s “when the rip-off merchants – whether accountants, lawyers or confidence tricksters – were out pinching people’s money.” There were scandals and skulduggery and tales of widows left destitute... He... has hard questions about user-pays[, and offers]... the old Department of Survey and Land Information as an object lesson about the perils of making departments raise revenue. DOSLI “went to Kuwait and surveyed the border and helped lift mines between Iraq and Kuwait as a means of raising money to run the department in N[Z],” he says in amazement. “That is absurd. Either you need the department in N[Z], in which case you should pay for it out of taxpayer money, or you shouldn’t have it. Some people say: ‘Why not make a few bob on the side?’ Well, I think making a few bob on the side actually distracts you from the central job. That has happened in a few instances.” Social services are now “very hard to run from within a government department... I feel very strongly for the poor buggers in... the Children and Young Persons Service... I think sometimes they’re virtually being asked to make bricks without straw. The social problems are immense and we’re still expecting them to deliver almost as if it was the stable society of the ’50s and ’60s.” ...The mainstay of the... revolution was the State Services Act of 1988. It took power from the SSC, the central body, and gave it to departmental chief executives. “We changed the act to say; ‘You will now manage your department and by God you will be accountable for it.’” The critics... say there is no such accountability... [Furthermore, for] years now, the public service has been under financial pressure as Governments have refused to compensate departments for the ravages of inflation or for wage increases – and still the search for “fat” goes on. But [the retiring commissioner] says it cannot continue indefinitely and that in some places we have already cut into the muscle. Asked to provide an example, he quotes the under-resourcing of the Statistics Department. This had implications for the economy as the Reserve Bank relies on the information supplied by the department in managing monetary policy... [His] misgivings about some of what has occurred in the state sector emerge obliquely when he is asked if he considers the Treasury is too powerful. “Yes, I think it is,” he says. “Treasury must always be the predominant department but there is a point at which that predominance becomes dysfunctional. You have to strike a balance between strong management and over-weaning authority.” [He] sums up his philosophy in what he calls the “old adage” that a society will be judged by how it protects its poor, its underprivileged and its elderly. It is a statement of support for a welfare state that he acknowledges himself is under threat if not gone entirely. And it is a sobering reminder that with his retirement we have lost yet another important link with what was a kinder, gentler, more humane N[Z]... His father told him when he was a young official the public service “wasn’t just one of the principal constitutional props of the country. It was also a major welfare institution.” As the country’s largest employer it had to employ those “who were in a sense unemployable”. This was an honourable notion, natural to his father’s generation of the Depression. But in the end it was to prove ruinously expensive. When Labour took power in 1984 “the economy was disintegrating... The spectre we had was Argentina. Before W[W]II it was one of the leading countries in the world. By the time their governments had destroyed their economy they were a developing country again... I was the instrument of overturning a great many of the things I felt were good about the country... I guess the only thing that reconciled me to it was that it was inevitable. The alternatives would have been much worse.”

...friends and family are mourning... [a] former head of Treasury... who... died this morning... When [he] took over Treasury in 1968 it was just an accounting department. He turned it into a body renowned for giving independent advice. N[Z] was highly regulated. [He] favoured change... He could see that as we came into the late ’60s and ’70s N[Z] couldn’t go on running itself in the way we had before. National scrapped Labour’s compulsory superannuation scheme in 1975 against his advice. Tired of battling [with the National PM, Robert Muldoon,] he retired in 1976... He was a reformer but [he] didn’t agree with the free marketeers of the ’80s who said there was no other way. “That’s nonsense... There are always alternative policies, lots of them.”

...*Games that politicians love to play – with your money*... You’ve seen those computer games where you build a city complete with all the needs of modern civilisation. It’s an interesting challenge. This one is different. The object is to destroy the economic and moral fabric of a lower-class neighbourhood. See if it works. You have all the resources of the modern state. The budget has no limit... In the final destructive stages of the game the policy arms of Government will be occupied by politically correct socialists, their budgets fuelled by hand-wringing politicians pouting the appropriate platitudes of concern and claiming that the only remedies that will work are those stemming from their power and intelligence and spending a few billion more from the productive sector of the economy. You will know that your game plan is successful when: the state coffers are bursting... tax is punitive and large surpluses are accumulating; welfare spending is astronomical but poverty increases; crime is rampant; you have achieved high levels of fatherlessness; children are almost feral; and unemployment is high but lowly paid jobs are unfilled.

...*Balance sheet ideals make sorry reading*... Under the influence of the market, all other forms of truth have been dissolved in favour of the techniques of the cost accountant and economist. Human activity is measured only in its countable form. If you can’t count it, it doesn’t exist. Welfare “dependent” solo mothers must be forced out to work because raising children, being unquantifiable is not productive. A mother is valued more behind a shop counter than caring for a child... It’s a conveyor belt view of life: Counting the products as they are shipped out from the factory but not the process by which they are produced... People in the workforce are after all only human resources, a living form of raw material... The exploitation of workers, illness caused by occupational hazards, disruption to family life, and the destruction of the environment are irrelevant since they do not appear on the balance sheet... Age and immobility, like economic disadvantage, do not come into the... bean counting. To stand up and be counted was once considered a virtue. In the market, it has been transformed into an inhuman vice.

...N[Z] once glowed in the international praise lavished on our “social laboratory” tag after [the] Plunket Society set standards for the world to follow in the care of children, and the first Labour government enacted social reform legislation in an effort to ensure we did not again face the deprivations of the Depression. Those were the heady days when N[Z] walked tall among the nations concerned with social improvement. No longer. Our record of leadership has long been usurped in child health and as a social reformer. In the past decade or so, it is the economic reformers who have dominated and earned kudos from international economists who see competitive endeavour as the basis for business... Now, it seems, we are discovering what some tried to point out at the time: That economic revolution carried a social cost... The U[N] Committee on Rights of the Child reports those 1980s economic reforms have affected resources available to support children and their families. The report does not see N[Z] as a commendably fair or caring society... N[Z] is developing a social underclass – just as the economic reforms... created our elite of vast wealth. The latter are people with enormous political clout; the former have no real power at all. The Coalition Government is certainly not without information on the seriousness of social issues. What it needs are solutions.

...the coalition Government... exposes the flaw in mixing two policy approaches and thinking the resulting compromise is progress... [P]re-election marketing was targeted specifically at groups which missed out on targeted benefits: those superannuitants who had sufficient income to be

deemed not in need of full support from the state; those students whose parents were deemed able to help to fund their living expenses; those parents who were deemed able to fund their young children's health needs; and – surprise, surprise – significant numbers in these groups prefer to have those expenses shared by other taxpayers rather than borne by themselves... [T]he coalition's policy... would spend \$760 million extra on the top 60[%] of households (by income) in order to get \$178 million additional transfers to the lowest 40[%]. This gives a fair idea on who really benefits from the policy soup the coalition is dishing up... The coalition's populist, middle-class welfare will do little to help the poor, will exacerbate differences between haves and have-nots, and represents the kind of short-term cycle in welfare policy-making which we last experienced during the [1975 to 1984 political] era. On-again, off-again cycles of instability in welfare intervention do nothing to encourage households to improve for self-reliance.

...The [coalition] Government continued yesterday to hint at a tougher welfare regime, while promising A[US] that it will increase defence spending... [The Treasurer] and the P[M]... have been consistently dropping hints of sweeping welfare reforms in speeches over the past few weeks, which Labour calls a New Right code for more cuts... Details of the welfare changes are expected to remain under wraps until this year's budget, which [the Treasurer – who bragged that 'for 17 consecutive quarters we've had economic growth' –] said yesterday would be delivered... [mid-]June... In Canberra... the... Minister of Defence... said... "I think we've done all we can in terms of cutting our cloth to bring about a sensible budget surplus in N[Z]... Now I want to see – and I am sure my colleagues want to join me in this – that N[Z] is able to maintain a credible Defence Force."

...It's a cruel hoax to tell us our 'market' economy is healthy... A real social audit of the lot of the people today would reveal that an increasing majority are suffering more and a decreasing minority are gaining more... [T]he free market policies followed since 1984 have seriously damaged the lives of many N[Z]ers and their families. Chronic unemployment is a social volcano causing much of the crime, domestic violence and lower health and housing standards which are closely interlinked. Senior police officers, judges, social workers and court solicitors know this to be the case and many say so if permitted to speak frankly. Thousands of secondary school children are on low-paid, part-time work while their parents remain at home unemployed. Supermarket and other employers exploit youth and part-time workers in order to cut labour costs so as to market a cheaper product and win more market share. Young and old (if they can get to work) are working all sorts of odd hours to try to get more income and make ends meet. There are many cases of wife and husband working different shifts to keep the home going, which must cause very harsh family problems. Superimposed on these growing problems is the impact of much dearer health costs as the public health system is intentionally run down making the burden of private health costs fall much more heavily on low-income earners. The public education system is being methodically run down. More than 10,000 "exempted" schoolchildren are a dangerous breeding ground for youth crime and may yet be proved to be a factor in our high youth suicide rate. Significant right-wing forces say the state cannot guarantee the future for national superannuation for the elderly. Our water supply, sewerage systems and public transport are being neglected in a number of cities. These services are being prepared for total privatisation. Environmental problems go on largely unserved. Even the police force has a growing crisis but they seem to find time to take action against union pickets when contacted by the employers... Having abdicated much of their economic managerial responsibility to the Reserve Bank, those politicians who believe in the open economy now spend much of their time attacking each other instead of addressing the real economic and social problems of the people... Day by day the great majority of economists pontificate about interest rates, inflation rates and exchange rates... Changes in interest, inflation and other statistics are important but do not really deal with the real core social problems... The well-paid economists and politicians who attempt to prettify the key economic indices avoid any real social audit. They are not the victims of the negative economic and social processes. If they do have any real knowledge of the injustices being suffered, they opt for a cowardly evasion of the realities. Recently a news item reported that the household employment survey indicated that unemployment had gone up by some 10,000 yet, "the markets were buoyant." As long as the markets were reasonably happy it was not so important that some 10,000 more Kiwis were without a job. This is the sort of cruel ideological illogic that drives the majority of our politicians who respond to the market's (Big Business') needs. The basic reason for these most antisocial changes is the alarming growth and power of global capital and the abject surrender to those forces by most politicians and economists. Terms such as the "open economy" and "freeing up competition" are simply code terms for subservience to foreign capital with all its power and ruthlessness... The use of our resources is increasingly being decided in the boardrooms of the transnationals in Sydney, London, Tokyo or New York... Today's... policy is simply an abject surrender of our national interests to the plunder and greed of the global corporations and their local agencies... The question to be addressed by economists and politicians concerned is: why is it that the economy is (allegedly) doing so well yet the low-income people of this country are doing so badly? Should the people serve the economy or should the economy serve the people? ...Every child with unattended glue ear, insufficient dental care and undernourishment is a victim of the misdirection of our resources. Every unemployed person seeking work, everybody looking for... care when elderly and everybody on a hospital waiting list is a casualty of the open economy and the so-called free market... We have had the free-market policies since 1984. We have had the Employment Contracts Act since 1991 and deregulation and privatisation has abounded. How many more years do we need before these so-called "achievements" bring home the bacon in economic and social terms? ...The national wealth created by our workforce and enterprises should be retained in N[Z] and used for the people's welfare, health and education... The cardinal question facing us is whether we are going to own our own country with an economy working for our benefit or whether we are going to be someone else's country with an economy working for their benefit. As the transnationals buy up more and more N[Z] industry and control nearly all of our banking, stevedoring, forestry, communications, rail and other key sectors, we lose more industry, jobs and national wealth. With every container-load of cheap imports goes... N[Z]er's jobs and another container of N[Z]'s wealth to an overseas company and another lift to that importer's bank account... N[Z]ers are faced with the two-headed monster of global capital and national corporate power which is both savaging and despoiling the very social structures our parents and their parents helped to build for our benefit and the benefit of our children and their children.

...Since the deregulation of the financial markets, the economic policy options available to... [the] Government... have become more limited – because any action which alarms foreign investors will be punished immediately with a flight of capital. So perceptions are more important than ever – and right now the mood in N[Z] is decidedly sour. Business sentiment is at its most pessimistic in six years and consumer confidence is fading fast. Basically this situation goes back to mid-1995 when the [N[Z] dollar shot above 60 on the Trade Weighted Index, damaging the competitiveness of our exports and choking off what had been an export-led recovery... The resulting slow-down of the economy began to show in company balance sheets... And the Government felt the effect as the corporate tax take came in 14.2[%] or \$566 million below expectations... Treasury was picking a growth rate of 3.6[%] for 1997-1998 and is expected to cut this back to around 2[%]. But... although the landing is proving bumpier than the Treasury and most other commentators were hoping, the economy's shock absorbers are equal to the bumps – as the Treasurer... and the Minister of Finance... never tire of telling us.

...Evidence that the economy has had a hard landing was confirmed yesterday with the announcement that [N[Z]'s GDP shrank 0.5%] in the March quarter. It was the first quarterly contraction since September 1992, when the winter electricity crisis hit an economy struggling out of recession... Manufacturing activity fell 1.1[%] in the quarter... Activity in the service industries, including retailing and transport, fell for the first time in five years, but housing construction was up. "It is possible some of the effect of last July's tax cuts has gone into improvements to housing rather than general consumer spending," Statistics N[Z] said. Overall, internal demand was flat in the March quarter, up only 0.2[%]. Household spending, after recovering slightly in the December quarter, fell by 0.4[%]... The sluggish internal demand was compounded by a 3[%] fall in exports.

...*Economy tipped to improve soon...* The economy is close to a turning point, the Institute of Economic Research says in its June Quarterly predictions. The indicators have been mixed, it says, which usually means things are starting to change. On the one hand, March quarter inflation – or deflation as it turned out – was well below expectations. Retail sales have been poor and employment has fallen for two quarters in a row... The institute expects employment growth to continue to ease... Unemployment should peak at 7[%] in March next year... The sharp decline in business confidence recorded in the institute's March survey... had come as a bit of a shock.

...a fresh set of statistics show... a worsening in our external trade balance. They also point... to something wrong with the structure of our economy. Since October[1996], imports have shown a trend increase of 10% a year while exports have decreased 7.5% a year. But the economy has been slowing... In the year to December 1996, the economy grew by 2.7%... When the economy slows, imports relative to exports should shrink. This has not happened. More ominously, the latest trade figures show imports of investment goods are lower, but consumer goods are pouring in... If – as the Government hopes – something happens to get the economy growing at more than 3% again, the demand for imports will quicken and further widen the trade gap... The stimulus to build up the momentum is expected to come from government spending... But... precious little spending will be capital spending to lift the country's productive capacity.

...Government spending, it's on track for a healthy surplus with 3/4 of the financial year gone. It took in \$3 billion dollars more than it spent in the 9 months to March. That's... [more than forecast. L]ower Government spending and higher dividends from State companies boosted the surplus.

...The Government is warning that its budget surplus projections will not be met... What a surprise – slumps in economic growth disturb not just business and household plans but ensnare governments as well. That the economy has been in a steadily slouching sag since late last year has been apparent since that time – to all bar[the] Treasurer... So here we are six months later with at last official recognition of the deterioration – only a few weeks since the Treasurer asserted the situation was a figment of private sector imaginations, that the economy was in fine fettle and on course and the grumps should “snap out of it.” ...From... forecasting a surplus of \$6 billion 18 months ago, it was now down to... between \$1.5 and \$1.6 billion... [I]t is a joke that the Treasurer could announce a big drop in the surplus without warning so close to the budget. That showed he was not on top of his job and did not inspire business confidence... Clearly he has much to learn about the nature of expectations and how quickly they can be influenced by changes in policy, political, or overseas conditions... The Treasury is forecasting stronger economic growth over the next three years than all the most optimistic of private sector economists... It's very hard to see how Treasury is picking such a strong pick-up in the economy... The Inland Revenue Department was forecasting slower growth in tax revenue than Treasury, meaning the budget surplus was likely to be lower than the... forecast...

The urgency of the challenge confronting the Treasurer... in today's budget has become more pressing with the release of further evidence of a dramatic slump in business confidence... Companies uncertain about the future do not invest, expand or take on more staff. So [the Treasurer] is anxious to turn the mood around by using his first budget to convince the decision-makers in the economy that his pinstripe suits are not a disguise but an outward expression of his fiscal and economic conservatism. He will not be helped by the fact that the Treasury has had to slash its forecasts for the coming year – halving its projected surplus of \$3.3 billion... and cutting its growth figure back by a third... to 2.4[%].

...We are a government of conservative and prudent fiscal management... the Treasurer... [said] to Parliament yesterday afternoon... The budget forecasts show a surplus of \$1.5 billion in 1997-98, rising to \$2.6 billion in 1999-2000 and take into account amounts for new initiatives in later budgets and tax cuts in 1998-99. Though the surplus is reduced it is still healthy and this confirms the wisdom of aiming for substantial surpluses to ensure continued debt reductions throughout the economic cycle... [For his part, the 'PM said, “This budget maintains direction and adds to it.”’ However, the] credibility of the coalition Government's first budget hangs on a single hook – the expectation that the economy will grow 4.2[%] in the 1998-99 year. ● The Coalition Agreement had promised “\$5 billion in extra spending over three years, with a maximum of \$1.2b coming in the first budget.” The actual figure of \$950m was an increase of between 3-4% over the 1996-97 budget but \$550m less than the projected surplus. Most of the extra spending – part of which will be cancelled out by inflation – went to Health (6.8% more than the previous year) and Education (5.4%).]

...The budget has failed to bring the promised spending boosts to health trumpeted in last year's coalition agreement... Hospital waiting lists and mental health services, both sources of ongoing political embarrassment, are listed as “key health areas.” But yesterday's announcement clearly had fewer health goodies than expected. A spokesman for the Treasurer said the \$1.7 billion extra for health... over the next three years – substantially less than the... new money hailed by the coalition in December... [-] was preliminary. “There were some numbers put together during the nine weeks of coalition talks and we now had the benefit of six months of intensive budget work,” he said. Despite the shortfall, the Minister of Health... was in a positive mood, saying health was a confirmed top priority. “For the first time the health sector will have the opportunity to plan ahead based on realistic expectations of future funding.” ...A spokeswoman for the Minister of Health said the signalled cash was certain, but officially it is not confirmed. How it will be spent is a mystery... Health authority chiefs were almost gloomy last night, predicting the coming 12 months would be the most difficult for the health sector trying to sustain access to publicly funded services. They welcomed the money, but warned that it would be quickly used up meeting growing medical needs... Children have been thrown a few lifelines in the budget but in the eyes of critics the whole package adds up to a cut-price deal... [T]he Commissioner for Children, said... his office needed \$300,000 immediately but instead had been allocated that amount over three years... [He] said the money was not enough to drag the ailing service back on its feet... To cope he would have to restructure his office and review the services he could deliver... “The 95,000 seriously at-risk children identified by the service... are going to continue to be seriously at risk.” ...Absent from the budget is a key coalition document initiative – the establishment of a family service within Social Welfare to co-ordinate health, education, welfare, police and justice agencies... The Minister of Social Welfare... said those aims were being covered in other initiatives. The budget did allocate \$2.225 million for one-stop centres for services targeted to families with children under six... The coalition Government's commitment to education got off to a slow start... with just a third of its promised spending delivered in the budget... More classrooms and schools are planned, truancy programmes will be expanded, and there will be more books in homes... [T]he Children's Agenda lobby group, welcomed those moves but said generally the Government had lost a huge chance to help children... The big loser was the tertiary sector with no mention made of the return to universal student allowances that was signalled in the coalition agreement... Maori weren't expecting much from the budget, and that's exactly what they got... Military volunteer programmes and community projects will be expanded under the budget in a bid to reduce long-term unemployment. The Minister of Employment... predicted that expanding the military[volunteer] programme would provide “personal development and job skills for at least 1250 young, disadvantaged job seekers over the year.” ...But the Auckland Unemployed Workers Rights Centre spokeswoman... said the budget only further abused the unemployed. “Unemployed people... want real jobs, not make-believe, unpaid work.” ...The Government has signalled its intention to beef up the Army's armoured vehicle fleet without providing any money for such a project in[the] defence budget... The elite arm of the military, the Special Air Service, has been allocated \$33 million for counter-terrorist training and operations... N[Z]'s cloak and dagger brigade, the Security Intelligence Service, will have an extra \$70,000 to spend this year. The service vote is \$10.584 million. As always, no details are given of where the money will be spent. All we know is that the service will provide advice to other departments on security and intelligence... The similarly secretive Government Communications Security Bureau has had its budget bumped up \$551,000 to \$19.092 million. It advises and assists other departments on how to deal with classified or sensitive material... Police have been dealt a \$14 million funding blow and are now frantically trying to... win the money back. In the budget books yesterday, the fund for front-line policing was cut from \$782 million last year to \$767 million for 1997/98. Another \$15 million was cut from capital expenditure, giving police less money to spend on land, buildings, vehicles and equipment. Announcing the police share, [the] Police Minister... said

an extra 200 officers would be recruited by the end of next year – the first batch of the 500 promised in the coalition agreement. But it was not clear yesterday how the extra police would be funded... [T]he Police Association was “disturbed” about the apparent funding blow. [Its] President... said police had been dealt a hefty cut at a time when resources had been “cut to the bone.” ...The Opposition [police] spokesman... said the Government had misled N[Z]ers. “The only winners in this budget are the criminals,”... [P]olice would spend less money investigating violence, sexual offences and burglaries and searching for drugs, he said... The war on drugs in prisons was given a \$1.5 million shot in the arm in the budget. The annual allowance is to be spent on testing prisoners for drug and alcohol use once legislation is passed by Parliament next month. The Department of Corrections will test prisoners randomly. The drug-free will be rewarded with extra privileges which will be taken away if a later test is positive... An extra \$3 million would be spent on drug education for schools – including money for schools to “identify and help” existing drug users... The... budget... boost[s] funding for crime-prevention programmes for at-risk youths by \$7.15 million over... three years... More than \$5 million... of the \$8.7 million... will be spent... in the Auckland region...

The board that funds legal aid for court cases is set to go cap in hand to the Government asking for \$6.75 million which the Treasury took away from its annual budget. The money was sitting in the board’s reserves, and the Treasury said it was surplus cash from previous overfunding... But... the board financial manager, said the Treasury had failed to take into account outstanding legal aid claims yet to be settled. [Ironically, government departments in NZ have operated under an annual budget system for much of the 20th century. When a department failed to spend its budget within the allocated period it was assumed that the department was ‘overfunded’. At some stage a civil servant decided that the best way to avoid a budget cut was to ensure every cent was spent, even if that meant a lot of money was wasted unnecessarily (e.g., through construction projects that basically involved getting workers to dig holes so they could refill them; by over-purchasing – creating warehouses full of unused junk), and where that civil servant went many followed. This was one reason why NZ’s Government decided in the 1980s that the country’s economic management system had to be reformed!]

...The Government has bowed to pressure and boosted the police budget by more than \$18 million... after trying to slash it... by \$14 million... However... the... president of the Police Association... said the money gave police little more than they had to spend last year... “We’re grateful but it won’t be enough...” ...The deputy commissioner... said... police had big capital projects – such as a new \$8 million-plus building in Otahuhu to house the Northern regional headquarters... Police... will be forced to work in cramped premises now their new building has again been delayed... [Incidentally, t]he current account deficit for the year ended June was well above market expectations and the largest on record at \$6.03b, said *Statistics New Zealand*... Treasury now sees deficits of \$7.2 billion in the year to March 1998 and \$7.7 billion the year after... SOME forecasters are... foreseeing the... deficit soar as high as \$8.3 billion before it improves...

The Government expects to run a surplus of \$1.5 billion this year... That headline number, the operating balance, is the product of a calculation designed to mimic a company’s profit and loss statement... N[Z] earns plaudits for the transparency and modernity of its fiscal accounts, which are based on generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). But as with a company, a complete picture requires looking not only at the profit and loss statement but also cash flows and the balance sheet. Not all the money the Government spends in any given year is reflected in the operating balance... Some spending, for example on frigates, roads and school buildings, is capitalised, shown in the Crown’s balance sheet as assets and then depreciated over their useful lives. In the current year \$1.4 billion falls into that category, while the depreciation charge reflected in the operating balance is a more modest \$800 million... But debt has to be paid with cash and according to the budget the amount available to repay debt (net cash flow from operations and investing activities) will be \$498 million this year... The Treasury’s cash flow projections for 1998/99 and 1999/2000 put the amount available for the repayment of debt at \$483 million and \$1.3 billion respectively. Those numbers... are... contingent, of course, on their projections for economic growth. Net Crown debt at June 30 was \$25.6 billion.

...The Government hopes to get better value for money through a review of spending in its departments. “Re-prioritising spending will give us greater headroom for new initiatives and to further work on priorities set down in the coalition agreement,” said the Minister of Finance... “With total Government spending of about \$35 billion [a year], saving just 0.3[%] across the board would facilitate \$100 million of new initiatives without increasing overall spending. This makes the review very worthwhile,” he said... [Meanwhile, s]pending on Government computer systems is ballooning out of control... [F]igures... released... yesterday... showed Government departments expected to spend \$275 million on computer equipment, software and training this financial year.

...The Treasury forecast of a \$1.5 billion surplus is looking more secure after a better-than-expected outcome for the first quarter of the fiscal year. The operating surplus for the three months to September 30 was \$600 million higher than forecast at \$980 million. But the Treasury warned it would be premature to conclude the full-year fiscal position would be stronger than anticipated... [However, t]he Government will not say whether it will have made up its mind about buying more Anzac frigates before the terms of a purchase contract expire on Tuesday.

...N[Z] First will not support buying a third frigate from A[US], the Treasurer and Deputy P[M]... told cabinet yesterday in a showdown over Government spending... Torpedoing the purchase... may not be quite as easy as [he] makes it look. But the National Party is not as united about the need for another ship as it wants to appear... Government sources said the N[Z] First leader also withdrew his party’s support at the meeting for the extension of Parliament House and the shifting of the Beehive – a... project to which cabinet gave its backing last month. The... stance... indicates NZ First... has a renewed determination to stake out its territory in the centre field of politics, as the party with a compassionate edge.

...THE Government is set to exempt itself from the Human Rights Act... [The] Acting Justice Minister said... government departments might be subject to the Act only “where policies and practices, such as employment and access to buildings, are essentially the same as those in the private sector. There would be a permanent exemption for the Government in respect of legislation and the development and implementation of government policy.” [He] said there would be advantages in this approach but gave no indication what those advantages were... When the... government passed the... Act in 1993, it included a clause exempting all legislation, regulations and government practices from the... Act until the year 2000... From then on, according to section 151 of the Act all... government departments would be covered. But the Government has told the Human Rights Commission not to spread its review of legislation any further... The likely backdown has come about because of a mix of ideological opposition, concern over the cost of the exercise and the risk of expensive claims after the year 2000. Cabinet Ministers... believe making the Government subject to the Act would establish a de facto limit on the sovereignty of the Government.

...The Government is under attack on all fronts for appearing to want to pull out of obligations under the Human Rights Act. It was revealed yesterday that a temporary Government exemption to the act has already meant 271 complaints to the Human Rights Commission have gone uninvestigated... Labour’s human rights spokesman... condemned the Government as wanting to stamp out the democratic process.

...The present moves ignore the broader picture – the position of the Crown under the Bill of Rights Act 1990 and under international human rights covenants... It follows that, to exclude Government policies and actions from scrutiny for unlawful discrimination, a Government exception from the Human Rights Act alone will not suffice. The Government would remain subject to essentially the same principles under the Bill of Rights Act. The only difference would be that challenges would have to be heard in courts rather than before the Human Rights Commission and the Complaints Review Tribunal. Thus the proposed exemption seems somewhat futile – unless cabinet is also proposing to exempt the Government from the operation of the Bill of Rights Act, a major constitutional step indeed. Either way, these moves have the potential seriously to undermine and erode human rights in N[Z]. If the Government itself refuses to comply with basic human rights standards... what moral justification can it have for imposing them on private individuals? The private sector will then argue, with some justification, that it should not be bound by standards

which Government itself considers unacceptable as a yardstick for its own activities. To date there has been very little public reaction to these proposals... [But few] if any... N[Z]ers... would find it acceptable that the state was largely exempted from its own human rights laws while businesses and individuals were subject to them... It is now time to shrug off our complacency... A letter of opposition to the Minister of Justice would be a useful first step in letting politicians know what ordinary N[Z]ers think.

...Planning a constitutional challenge over the Government's right to make you save your money? Forget it... [In N[Z]... any such challenge [is] guaranteed to fail because the role of the courts [is] to uphold laws made by Parliament... In fact, the British parliamentary system under which we operate gives Parliament unfettered powers to do whatever it wants – including taking your house and anything else you own... [T]he source of the unbridled power was the 17th century victory of the British Parliament over the monarchy, destroying the royal prerogative and vesting absolute power in the hands of Parliament. "They were fighting tyranny in the person of the royal prerogative. It didn't occur to them that Parliament might become the source of the tyranny,"... [a] constitutional law expert... of Auckland University... said.

...You must do exactly as we say or become impoverished as a nation, say the members of the free trade-global investment school of economists who hold the majority of positions of power in the business world and in the Treasury, though most N[Z]ers do not share their opinions. What they say is that the Government should get on with the "reform," as they call it, which means a whole range of activities that just happen to coincide with the interests of the large financial and trading houses. Among them: crank down as far as possible the cost of doing business, and sell publicly owned assets, as a matter of philosophy, even when these firms face little or no competition and are trading profitably anyway... And the veiled but very real threat is there that if nations, especially those as small as ours, try to inhibit the activities of these corporations then retribution will follow... Central to the belief of these zealots is the notion that the Government has no role in the regulation of society apart from a basic police force to protect the individual's person and property and a court system to regulate contracts between individuals... What is disturbing about all this is not that the reformists don't have a case but that they have become angrily impatient at debating it, have become utterly intolerant of opinions that run contrary to theirs... They never question themselves, nor are they sensitive to other people's wishes so certain are they of their righteousness... They, the righteous, feel they are impeded in their pursuit of the truth by the ignorance of the "mob." This is why they alternate between patronising us and reprimanding us. It's funny watching new right economists, the apostles of rationality, fulminating in their frustration... but it would be nice if they'd swallow their arrogance, dispense with the clichés and platitudes and try debating social concerns, holistically, up here on our level... In 1984, [the Finance Minister] – as he has confirmed many times since – adopted the strategy of moving swiftly ahead of public opinion to ensure that the self-interest groups of which he speaks so contemptuously had no time to regroup and oppose his drive towards a laissez faire economy.

...I am often asked why I seem so positive against a backdrop of headlines about the problems in the economy – the huge compliance costs faced by business, the uncertain political environment, the large pool of unskilled workers unable to compete for the many skilled jobs going begging and so on. I respond this way: Economists focusing on the bad news may be doing their job, and I respect them for it. But the plain truth is that they are "confidence killers." My mission is a different one – I'm solution-based... I, for the most part, seek to point out information and circumstances that highlight trends leading to opportunities... within business that compel me to the view that 1998 will be a golden time for many business[es] and people in business... If 1997 revealed big problems in our economy, it was that we are not managing our opportunities as well as we could. Government still has a huge grip on the economy. It controls about 35[% of our GDP, which]... is... preventing the nation from achieving its potential... The Government's reform strategy launched in the early 1980s had an internationally competitive target of reducing government expenditure to around 25[%]. We have come below 40[%] but have some distance to go to get close to being able to say that we are truly a private sector-driven economy... Successful business[es] looking to secure a long-term future have never depended on someone else's growth strategy.

...The Minister of State Services... is calling for further change in the public sector, saying massive reforms over the past decade have not achieved all the desired results. The number of Government departments was still excessive, despite 55,000 jobs being cut over the past decade... and they always seemed rife with "tinkering"... he told a public service management conference in Wellington yesterday. He said the public service was running out of fresh ideas and becoming fixated on contracts and outputs. The sector had a high reputation internationally, and deservedly so, but... the trend in N[Z] Government... was increasingly fascinated... with methods originally intended to produce high performance but which were now beginning to do the opposite, he said... [D]epartments and central agencies – the Treasury, the State Services Commission and the Department of the P[M] and Cabinet – should show distinct approaches to business planning and budgeting. He also thought the public service needed to hammer out "rational, practical, consistent and straightforward organisational principles."

...Be sceptical, be very sceptical... [-] the Government is making promises. Not just any old... promises, mind. We're talking big, biblical, carved-in-stone pledges. The Government is calling this immutable undertaking The Charter of New Zealand. It's a kind of Government performance contract guaranteeing certain standards of service provided by the state... Initial estimates include set-up costs of nearly \$2 million over three years and annual administrative costs of about \$700,000. It will be a long wait before the ink is dry on N[Z]'s charter, but there is significant political will for the document. N[Z] First's "democracy policy" commits the party and the coalition to introducing the charter, which could be implemented within a year, once approved... If implemented, it could affect the entire public sector, including state owned enterprises and the health and education sectors. It is based on the British citizens' charter, which costs \$18 million to administer and was introduced to widespread scorn. Mind you, the P[M] at the time... had included a pledge to make the trains run on time. As the *Economist* noted, perhaps prophetically, the last man to make the trains run on time was Mussolini. N[Z]'s version may not be so bold. Under the coalition's charter, there may be only six principles the public's employees should adhere to, including setting, monitoring and publishing standards, providing choice wherever practicable and the efficient, economic delivery of service. As the Government has sold New Zealand Rail, there is no mention of making the trains run on time.

...At the Pearly Gates, St Peter tells Alex that Heaven is run by "an all-knowing government." Even in the highly unlikely event of being allowed in, Alex can't stand the thought of such regulation. He determines to return to Earth to await Heaven's deregulation.

...During the road show of a Government taskforce... a woman... asked the members... from a small provincial community organisation... to write down the three most important things to them in their lives. When the last of them had put their pens down, she matter-of-factly said, "now, just quickly put a dollar value next to each of the items you have put down." Of course they couldn't. The most important things in their lives were not things that have a dollar value – it might be family, partner, children or grandchildren, love, hope, faith, happiness, health, community, fairness, tolerance, or a "fair go." What really matters in life is not just what we can buy and sell – in fact those things would be lucky to appear in the top ten. Unfortunately our public policy of late has not reflected that. There are it seems, some who believe "if you can't measure it you can't manage it," and "if you can't buy it, it's not worth having." We have recently been treated to the spectacle of leaked Treasury policy papers advising the Government... [that no] matter what the question, there are only three answers: if the state has it "sell it off," if it doesn't have it to sell, "deregulate" it; and if no-one will buy it, pretend it behaves like a market... We value things that can never have a market value. Some of us would even assert that we are more than just dust and DNA, but that we are made in the image of God. Isn't it time we brought back the balance, so that those things that we truly value are at the centre again? - 1997

NZ's first Labour Government believed that NZers should be provided with State services (e.g., social security, health and education) and infrastructure (e.g., energy, transport and communication systems). It paid for them via foreign exchange earnings, taxation and direct charges (i.e., export profits and

taxation paid to produce electricity plus the power-grid that takes it to homes or businesses, then citizens and companies pay extra to actually use it). Unfortunately, government departments increasingly proved themselves to be inefficient. This suggests that the people responsible for managing government departments (and the people responsible for selecting the managers) were incompetent! The solution was obvious – make the managers both more professional and accountable. However, the last Labour Government decided that the best way to do this was to turn what NZers owned into profit-making corporations and swap free services for user-pays (wherever it wasn't already practiced).

Under new management the State Owned Enterprises' profits rose rapidly, tens of thousands of people were made redundant...

Not satisfied with what it had already done, the Labour Government DEREGULATED industries so its SOE's might get some competition, then started to sell them off (usually to the highest bidder).

"It is more important that we pay off the debt than that we keep the assets." - A former Labour Party PM

When the National Party regained power from the Labour Party in 1990 it continued the State asset sell-off.

The asset sales would proceed regardless of public opinion... [A] most notable effect of the selling of state assets was that they were sold to powerful overseas competitors, thereby minimising competition in the market, rather than increasing competition, thereby creating something that was the opposite of a free market... The national airline would be sold to a consortium including its competitors, Japan [Airlines] and Qantas... Also, on the block were the Maui platform and natural gas reserves and distribution network, the petrochemical fertilizer and methanol plants, the public share of the oil refinery and oil reserves, and the Motonui natural gas to synthetic petrol plant which meets 30% of our petrol needs, all... sold to the N[Z]-based multinational... Challenge. Over half of NZ's banking and insurance sector was publicly owned. All these companies would be sold to their A[US]n and British competitors and... Challenge. The N[Z] shipping line, established by the third Labour Government, would be sold to its European competitor... NZ Steel and the country's iron sand resources eventually ended up in the hands of its giant A[US]n competitor BHP...

The selling of state assets – from airlines to jute mills – is captivating politicians... Almost everywhere... governments are either selling assets or talking of doing so... Brazil may eventually privatise more than 100 state-owned enterprises; Mexico has around 250 up for sale... At its best, "privatisation" creates competition, efficiency and wealth. At its worst, it substitutes insensitive privately-owned monopolies for insensitive publicly-owned ones and feeds corruption... Consider... the money involved. When receipts from house and land sales are included, Britain's privatisation programme has so far raised more than £19 billion and the government expects it to raise another £14.25 billion over the coming three years. Japan's government stands to get almost \$40 billion from the partial sale of Nippon Telegraph and Telephone... What is happening around the world is the greatest exchange ever of money and property between private citizens and their governments. Not everyone thinks the transaction worthwhile. Misgivings are elegantly summed up by the [now] 91-year-old... who was... Britain's Conservative [PM] from 1957 to 1963. "First of all the Georgian silver goes, and then all that nice furniture that used to be in the saloon. Then the Canaletto go." In other words, governments are selling to provide for current spending – in business a sure way to go bankrupt. What do governments do when they have nothing left to sell? That is not how some of the brightest theorists see it... [A]n economist well paid by Britain's private sector, says that... the... lesson is simple... the public sector will always tend towards inefficiency, since it cannot go bankrupt and therefore has no compulsion to compete or to excel... The proffered solution is equally simple: let the private sector, where only the fit survive, push back the frontiers of the state. Taxpayers will benefit because a shrinking public sector means lower subsidies. So will the customers, because competition will lead to better quality at lower prices. It is this hypothesis which is now being tested... The theoretical arguments for privatisation are not as clear-cut or convincing as the propagandists would wish... How do you satisfy yourself that consumers benefit? ...Also, the management of a private-sector company has a basic responsibility to maximise profits for the shareholders; the managers in a state organisation may have a responsibility to deliver services regardless of price; or to employ labour which is surplus; or to sell a product or service below cost. How then can you sensibly compare the two managements? Academics nonetheless try. - Privatisation everybody's doing it

The Forestry Corporation has announced a record \$168 million profit a week after the [NZ] Government sold the company... Tax was \$43 million... The annual report shows the value of the corporation's forests was revised down by \$300 million to \$1.8 billion. Sales were worth \$501 million. The corporation... paid its chief executive... between \$410,000 and \$419,000. Two other staff earned \$300,000 or more, six were paid \$200,000 or more and 19 were paid \$100,000 or more... The corporation is now owned by... [a consortium made up of] China International Trust... Challenge... [and another local company, BIL].

...Having disposed of the Forestry Corporation for a net \$1.6 billion last week, the cabinet has been considering... another... state asset sale with speculation sweeping through trade union circles that a buyer has been found for Works and Development Services Corporation... the state company formed out of the old Ministry of Works. Works Corp, which has assets valued at \$157 million, employs more than 2600 staff. Potential redundancies have been an issue.

...THE drawer where the Government keeps the family silver opened for the 32nd time last week, just long enough for what was Works Corp to be sold. That brought to an end a chapter in state asset sales stretching to the ill-fated 1988 sale of NZ Steel. But if any future government wants to continue the sell-off, then plenty of opportunity remains. Even after eight years and income from state asset sales of \$13.5 billion, [SOE]s worth \$11 billion remain. The [1987 Labour] Government was keen to eliminate the \$12.8 billion-and-rising foreign debt mountain.

...The Government may be forced to disclose whether it declined a chance to bail out of its legal difficulties over the N[Z] Steel sale to Equiticorp for a fraction of the... cost it now faces. The Alliance is demanding that the Government tell Parliament whether it was offered a chance to settle the legal case for \$20 million, but refused on Crown Law advice. Given mounting speculation that Crown Law advice that the Government would win the case was widely disputed, the Alliance has lodged a series of parliamentary questions to discover what advice it sought and received, and which Cabinet ministers have been involved in the sale and subsequent legal decisions... The Government has heavily restricted its comments on the case... over the legal fall-out from the sale/share swap deal between the Crown and Equiticorp for the state steel company in 1987-88... pending the appeal of last week's High Court judgment of \$189.7 million against the Crown... The legal and likely appeal costs could ultimately mean the Crown has to pay out \$500 million in total to clean up the legal mess. Two Treasury officials instrumental in the deal have stood down from their jobs, after [the High Court] Justice... reserved particularly harsh criticism for their stewardship.

...No one has been held accountable for... the bungled sale of N[Z] Steel to Equiticorp, the Alliance leader... said yesterday. [He] was commenting on the news that Treasury officials named in a High Court judgment... were resuming their normal duties... "Those who are responsible for the N[Z] Steel calamity must bear the consequences of their staggering incompetence," [he] said... The Crown this month announced that it would appeal against the judgment, the final cost of which rose... after Justice... ordered it to pay \$133 million in interest and \$4 million in costs. The Secretary to the Treasury... said yesterday that the Crown Law Office had engaged [a] QC, who... was not involved in the earlier trial... [but] had

advised there were good grounds to appeal against the findings... It was a follow-on from the collapse of Equiticorp, the largest commercial failure ever seen in the country...

The Government's bill from the marathon Equiticorp case yesterday reached \$328.4 million – \$91 for every man, woman, and child in N[Z] – and it is still rising. Interest costs add \$100,000 every day until the full amount is paid... The Attorney-General... said the Government would announce by the end of the month whether it would take the judgment to the Court of Appeal. The case could go as far as the Privy Council. - 1996

...two Auckland lawyers... were the instructing solicitors who successfully sued the Government in the record-breaking Equiticorp case. It is they who won \$189.7 million from the Government on behalf of Equiticorp's statutory managers, and ultimately the long-suffering creditors of the former sharemarket high flyer once headed by [a man who has since been] disgraced... By the time the Government's appeal against the judgment is argued before the Court of Appeal... in February 1998 – it is estimated the High Court's award of \$189.7 million, plus accrued interest, will have grown to \$387m... [The case over 'the sale of NZ Steel by the Labour Government a day before the 1987 stockmarket crash, was the longest-running civil suit in NZ's history. Most of Equiticorp's creditors are overseas banks.' The Government wrote] off \$1.5 billion before selling the operation to... Equiticorp for \$327 million... [In related news, t]he Treasury spent... about \$4 million... on consultants for the Forestry Corporation sale... Advice on the Works Corporation sale... cost Treasury about \$1.4 million... However, Treasury's[total annual] payments to consultants were significantly down at \$13.1 million, from \$24.1 million in the [previous year. The NZ Government and its departments spent in total 'nearly \$113 million on private consultants in the past financial year']

...The Treasury has paid more than \$4.5 million in staff bonuses over the past three financial years. The... information has been supplied to[a] Labour MP... who sent questions to various ministers on bonuses paid to departmental employees other than chief executives. The responses have ranged from a refusal to supply any information – [by]the Minister for Courts... – to actual amounts of bonuses paid. In the case of ACC, one employee received more than \$54,000 in a bonus this year... [The Labour MP] said taxpayers did not expect their hard-earned cash to be used for bonuses for public servants, “especially those in departments like Treasury that have a reputation for narrow ideological thinking and poor forecasting... [This year 38] staff who already earn over \$80,000... share[d] nearly half a million dollars in... [bonuses. A further \$600,000 wa]s... divided among 94 staff earning between \$50,000 and \$80,000... Treasury has a role to help ensure fiscal prudence. They should not be involved in inappropriate or questionable spending of taxpayer funds. [The Treasurer] should intervene and give a written direction to the Secretary for Treasury that the bonuses should cease.” ...[a] finance and expenditure select committee review of the Treasury points to staff retention problems – the turnover in the[past] year... was 25[% – although t]he committee's report said the problem [c]ould be addressed with moderate salary increases to staff whose skills were in highest demand. These would be met from savings within the Treasury. [However, t]he duty minister... said the Government wanted departments to be autonomous, and bonuses produced better performance. [The Labour] party had introduced autonomy for government departments through the State Sector Act in the late 1980s.

...Ten years on, SOE model still has flaws... [The former Labour PM who was the SOE] architect... says the model he created vastly improved the N[Z] economy – but wasn't able to prevent the political intervention it set out to eradicate. Ten years ago last Thursday, amid considerable controversy and fears of privatisation, the first SOEs were created in N[Z]. They numbered 14. Over the years more have been created and 12 have been sold into private ownership... [Its architect] said while it had been a highly effective transitional tool, the inability of the system to prevent increasing political involvement made it clear that privatisation of more bodies was the only answer to creating what should be purely commercial operations. The current Government had nevertheless promised to retain key SOEs, he said... However, [the]... Minister of SOEs... said the first 10 years of SOEs had proved their value to the taxpayer. “The public has gained so much from the sale of SOEs in the past. There is no logical reason for the Government [not]to continue... I know it has been personally painful for many N[Z]ers who found themselves, through no fault of their own, at the cutting edge of change. But I would suggest that as we look back now, there would be few who would argue for a return to the old days.”

...Ten years after the first wave of [SOE]s were established, a study by three Auckland academics has rated the corporatisation experiment extremely successful. But they warn that unless the further step of privatisation is taken the gains are at risk of erosion and the SOEs will remain vulnerable to the “slow infiltration of politics and wider social considerations... Although privatisation does not appear to have been part of the original reform agenda of the... Government... pressure[for further privatisation] has come from boards and management of SOEs, Government... officials and politicians, including shareholding ministers, who see the real productivity and efficiency gains achieved by SOEs being eroded over time.” ...They conclude that corporatisation turned what were bureaucratic and often inefficient and wasteful organisations, with mixed and confusing objectives, into well-focused, commercially orientated and profitable companies. International interest in the N[Z] experience remains high... It brings Japanese MPs here on fact-finding missions and has created a demand for N[Z] consultants as far away as Mongolia. First, a reminder of the problem: In 1985/86, the Electricity Division of the Ministry of Energy, State Coal, the Post Office, Lands and Survey, the Forest Service and the Airways system managed assets valued at more than \$20 billion. But collectively, they brought no net after-tax return to taxpayers. The reform process involved imposing a corporate structure on the organisations, deregulating the industries they dominated and separating off the non-commercial functions they were expected to fulfil... The resulting dilemma about whether commercial or social objectives should be paramount, led to disputes... about profit targets, dividend levels and diversification. Eventually, the primacy of commercial objectives was established... SOEs were... to operate as successful businesses and be as profitable and efficient as comparable businesses not owned by the Crown... The authors of the study have compared the financial performance of the... SOEs between 1988 and 1992 with 82 public listed companies that survived through the same period. From 1990, all... SOEs made a return on equity better than the medium for the listed companies... Such measures crucially depend on the valuation of the assets transferred to the SOEs. Especially for the earliest SOEs... arguments over valuation were protracted and, sometimes, acrimonious... The Government is[currently] adverse to pouring any new money into SOEs to support large-scale investments they might want to make... [By the way, a survey o]f... senior business executives... this week... [found 84%] saw the need for more structural reform leading to more efficient use of resources, while 87[%] regarded the sale of more state-owned assets as highly desirable.

...The sell-off of more state corporations has been mooted by the Minister for S[OE]s, but she] is not saying which companies are possible candidates for privatisation. She and the Minister of Finance... were “looking closely” at [SOE]s and airports which were not listed as strategic assets in the coalition agreement to see whether they should remain in public ownership... [She] said the previous Government had moved on the sale of airport shareholdings and the coalition was working on the sale of Tauranga airport[, which is in the NZ First leader's electorate]. “...We are looking at them all on a case-by-case basis... It will be an option for the coalition to consider whether they wish to advance any such divestment.” She refused to speculate on specific state companies, but said National certainly believed some, over time, would be better off in private hands... N[Z] First has acknowledged that the coalition agreement allows cabinet ministers to look at privatising some state corporations on a case-by-case basis... Having promised in its election policy to stop all asset sales, N[Z] First succeeded during the coalition talks in negotiating the list of major “strategic” assets which would not be... sold – the Electricity Corporation, Contact Energy, Trans Power, New Zealand Post, Television One, National Radio and Concert FM... Other SOEs not protected from sale are Airways Corporation, Coal Corporation, Land Corporation, TV2, Timberlands West Coast, MetService and Terra Link.

...NZ First[']s leader... has indicated support for the sale of selected S[OE]s, but with the hope N[Z] owners can be found... “We believe the ownership of N[Z] assets in N[Z] hands is something to aspire to. You’ve got to look at it issue by issue. You would do it within the philosophical framework of N[Z] ownership where that is the best thing to do... Our objective is to get the best possible management structures in place in the interests of the N[Z] taxpayer...” ...In particular, he favours the sale of Government Property Services... valued at around \$160 million... and says some airports would be better out of the hands of government and into the hands of local people... “In the case of airports, there is probably a very strong argument that they would be better owned by local authorities and or local ratepayers where you’d have much better potential for localised management in the commercial sense, rather than centralised control...” ...Also being looked at for sale is the Vehicle Testing Services (\$12m)... His comments give the green light to National’s plans to revive the State asset sales programme. His views are in stark contrast to NZ First’s absolute opposition before the election to any further [S]tate asset sales...

The... [NZ First leader,] who berated previous Labour and National Governments for selling state assets and described privatisation as just another word for private greed... has dropped his crusade against privatisation by signposting the sale of two state-owned enterprises – Government Property Services and Vehicle Testing New Zealand... The only difference about these sales is that the coalition Government is considering a public float... [He] uttered the “f” word yesterday in his maiden speech as Treasurer. “Float” is a term no N[Z] politician in power had deigned to use in a decade of disposals of public assets... But... the... chances of the public buying shares in either business would appear to be slim, given the size of Vehicle Testing N[Z] and the risks and uncertainty of the property market... Furthermore, the coalition Government has given approval for “non-core” parts of strategic assets to be sold...

...a raft of [SOE]s will be expected to divest non-core businesses as the Government moves to boost its flagging coffers... [Meanwhile, t]he Government has moved swiftly to... sell Government Property Services... In last week’s budget statement, the Government estimated a net worth of \$177 million for Property Services. Assuming 35[%] gearing, as is the common level for similar property companies, this would place a value of about \$270 million on the business... Small bikkies compared with the \$US1000 billion... raised by the cumulative sales of... assets since the global privatisation wave began sweeping the world in the early 1980s. But [the price] is a useful fillip to the[NZ] Government’s coffers nevertheless... Property Services has had a history of troubles. In 1990, the Government injected \$240 million to stop it from going into bankruptcy. It now has a portfolio of 38 properties, 81.5[%] of which are Wellington-based. Its major tenant is the Government.

...Four investment banks will line up at a beauty parade in Wellington next week to compete for a... mandate to float Government Property Services[, which]... has reported a net profit of \$7.55 million for the[past] six months... compared with \$8.38 million for the same period last year.

...Government-owned Standards New Zealand has sold its systems and product certification services division to international certification company Bureau Veritas Quality International for an undisclosed sum. The deal gives BVQI the exclusive right to certify products with the familiar S mark and the Quality Assured Supplier mark... [In related news, the] sale of Valuation New Zealand appears almost certain, as the organisation gears up for competition for the \$30 million local authority ratings valuation business. [A] review of VNZ by[its] chief executive and Valuer-General... has already brought an about-face by the Government over whether the organisation should remain a government department or become a[n] SOE. Meanwhile, the SOE Electricity Corporation (ECNZ) and VNZ... are heading back to court for the next round in a protracted battle over the value of the power company’s assets. The High Court ruled earlier this year that valuations for ECNZ power stations should drop by an average of 22[%]. The decision followed the company’s objection, after its formation in 1987, to the method used by the then Valuation Department to access its properties. Both sides have lodged appeals against the decision.

...A National cabinet minister... yesterday talked of putting... Trans Power assets on the block... In his first speech as Minister of Energy, [he] told power company chief executives that their desire to buy part of Trans Power was being worked on by Government officials... Power companies, many of them foreign owned, want to buy the “spur lines” ...power lines which feed off the main national electricity grid to substations up and down the country. Both sets of power lines are natural monopolies. Industry sources told... that Trans Power’s spur lines are worth about... a quarter of the company’s \$2.8 billion book value... [A] spokesman for the minister said any possible sales did not mean Trans Power would be privatised. “The core group would be maintained.” The spokesman also played down the work being done by officials, saying they were just looking at the “possibility” for sales. “It is really a matter of getting officials to have a look at all the issues involved to see if it makes sense to maintain them by Trans Power or sell them off.” ...[the Minister of Energy], one of the driest ministers in cabinet... made no mention in his speech of a... promise in the coalition agreement to “overhaul energy pricing.” Instead, he gave every indication that he would follow in the footsteps of previous National energy ministers and leave pricing to the industry. “The strong direction of the reforms has been away from Government involvement.” But [he] did have a firm message to the industry to deliver benefits from the electricity reforms to domestic customers or face consumer pressure on the Government for a fairer deal through more interventionist mechanisms... The... N[Z] First leader... could not be reached for comment...

N[Z] First is understood to have agreed to National’s plan to sell eight power stations, despite its strong election policy... The leader of NZ First... last night had a hazy recollection of the[coalition] discussions and said he would have to consult the party’s negotiators who had handled the issue... [H]e recalled some discussion about the completed sale of one power station and how the other stations did not appear to be linked to any national strategy. Beyond that... he could not be “more effusive.” ...Opposition to the sale of state assets has been a philosophical pillar for NZ First... Asked if NZ First still upheld its strong commitment to retain publicly owned assets in public hands, [he] said: “That has always been the view of NZ First, it still is the view and will go on being the view.” ...The Minister for S[OE]s... however, was adamant that NZ First had agreed to the sale of eight small hydro stations – put on the block when National split the Electricity Corporation into two [SOE]s in 1995... [She] said the coalition Government’s junior partner had signed up to the proposal. A spokeswoman for the [minister] said National reached a “clear understanding” from NZ First during the coalition negotiations to proceed with the sales. The coalition agreement explicitly rules out privatisation of the... [c]orporation... The stations on the block[only] generate a total of 325 megawatts – ...[which means they] represent just 6.3[%] of NZ’s generating capacity and 8.6[%] of its hydro capacity... [– but] could... have a combined value of... between \$650 million and \$1.1 billion. The... largest, Matahina in the Bay of Plenty, generates 72MW, but is being strengthened at a cost of \$200 million after it was found to be outside international earthquake safety standards.

...Maori considerations are behind N[Z] First’s abandoning its pre-election rhetoric and agreeing to the privatisation of eight power companies... A statement about the sales, issued yesterday by the leader of NZ First... the Minister of Finance... and the Minister for S[OE]s... stressed that the stations were for sale only to local energy companies or Maori interests... Iwi and power companies have formed consortiums to buy the hydro stations... but there appears to be nothing to stop power companies with foreign ownership from bidding... If any are not sold 18 months after the privatisation process starts, they will be transferred to the state-owned generating company Contact Energy... When the Minister of Energy... suggested last month that Trans Power spur lines could be sold, he was forced into accepting that... [such a move would break] the... coalition agreement... Asked how “no privatisation of Trans Power” meant no sale of spur lines, but “no privatisation of ECNZ” meant eight power stations could be sold, [the Minister for SOEs] said that was because the sale of spur lines was never firmed up by National before the election, whereas the sale of power stations was.

...E[CNZ] has sold the 31MW Mangahao hydro power station in the Horowhenua for \$53.5 million to... [a consortium that includes a corporation which is 20% owned by] Utilicorp NZ... and owns 50[%] of Kiwi Dairy’s 70MW co-generation plant at Hawera... [plus] the Taumarunui-based

King Country Energy... [which already owns the] 7.2MW Kuratau and Piriaka hydro schemes... Mangahao was commissioned in 1924 when it was the largest power station in the North Island and was expected to be able to supply all the electricity requirements of the lower North Island for the next 50 years. A \$17 million upgrade in 1993 increased its peak capacity from 20MW... The Minister for S[OE]s... and the Minister of Finance... welcomed the sale, saying it would encourage competition in generation and help to keep power prices down... Consultation with Maori has delayed other sales, although... ECNZ... tipped yesterday that talks over the 35MW Coleridge, in Canterbury, were nearly complete... [Incidentally,] Lenin once said that communism would result from Soviet power plus the electrification of the country. Bosses of energy companies these days seem to believe that western management skills plus the electrification of the whole world will result in huge profits for their firms. Like Lenin's, this theory may well prove a pretty awful mess.

...Contact Energy said one-time charges contributed to a net loss of \$32.6 million for the eight months to September 30[, 1996]... In 1995, the Government rejected official advice for a three-way split of the... government-owned E[CNZ]... and opted to establish Contact Energy with about 28[%] of the country's generating capacity. The exercise was designed to encourage private sector involvement in generation, kick-start the wholesale electricity market, and put downward pressure on prices. - 1997

A power game where suppliers are setting all the rules... The chief executive of the Electricity Supply Association paints a rosy picture of the coming wholesale market for electricity. As a consumer, I[– the spokesperson for the consumer group Power for Our Future –] beg to differ. First, the name wholesale market is misleading. A wholesaler bundles the demand for retailers, carries a range of different products, and pre-selects products according to quality and price. Electricity is a uniform product; the retailers deal directly with producers. No wholesaling there. At best the new wholesale market, so called, is merely a clearing house for contracts, and a place to trade the over – and under – supply of a single product. At worst it is a place where the dominant participants “game” the market to their own advantage... because the value of hydro storage is not determined by production cost but scarcity; the price is then set not by the lowest cost of supply but the highest. The most destructive aspect of the market, however, is that there is nothing to deal with a problem unique to N[Z]. Proportionately, our hydro storage is the smallest in the world. This is a topographic feature and cannot be remedied. Without inflow, and at full generating capacity, our lakes go from maximum to minimum level in 57 days. In contrast Canada and Brazil have storage levels which can maintain generation for more than a year. For this reason, in combination with its insular position, N[Z] needs back-up stations which may run only once in 40 years – and someone must pay for them. Admittedly the former Electricity Department built more power stations than were needed in the end. That happened to most industrial nations at the time. More than that, the department realised that the cost of idle power stations was preferable to running out of electricity in a water shortage; they played it safe... A market is well capable of finding the balance between security of supply and the cost to get it, provided that the market is set up that way. [NZ's electricity] wholesale market is not... The hydro crisis of 1992 set the pattern: The *benefits* of running the system without sufficient reserves fell to ECNZ. [Prior to the 1992 crisis, to] save money, it decommissioned[the ‘210 MW coal-burning thermal power station’ at] Meremere, sold vital back-up fuel for Marsden A and introduced other changes to the system which saved money but also reduced reserve capacity. The financial *risk* of such action fell on the manufacturing and commercial sectors (ECNZ merely had to forgo some profits from electricity it did not have). At the time ECNZ was still responsible for maintaining an adequate reserve. It did not, and was rapped over the knuckles – with a wet bus ticket. Things now are even worse. Neither the generators nor the power companies have to guarantee reserve capacity... [The chief executive of the ESA] admits as much by saying that at times the price of electricity will rise to a point that manufacturers will stop manufacturing. That is outrageous. Electricity... is a vital but rather small ingredient to most businesses. Manufacturers have to consider factors such as loss of markets from delayed deliveries, on-going fixed costs, and obligations to suppliers. The manufacturer's response[during a future crisis] to a temporary higher electricity price will be nil[– with the exception of the Comalco aluminium smelter (where ‘a cost-cutting review is costing \$4.5 million’)]... because an extremely high proportion of its production cost, about 30[%], is electricity. NZers will have the privilege of buying back electricity, at the high spot market price, which Comalco had secured at throw-away prices. Since security of supply has a cost, in a true market the company would have to pay a premium rather than getting a discount on its electricity. The burden of savings and, worse, cuts in supply will again fall on both the small business and domestic consumers because they do not have the market power to insist on penalty clauses for non-supply[(although Mercury Energy, for example, now pays its customers \$50 ‘if it fails to meet stated performance standards’)]. During the previous hydro crisis the consumers responded willingly. Judging by recent letters to editors, however, there appears to be some hostility from consumers towards their investor-dominated power companies. Co-operation may not be forthcoming in the future, and financial incentives are nowhere in sight – simply because the technology is not there to reward customers for short-term savings... [Therefore] the new electricity market is designed to have the benefits accrue to the electricity industry, with the risk pushed, literally, down the line to the consumers. This is not really surprising because the electricity industry virtually designed the market to its own ends. The Government was an interested but befuddled bystander at best; and the consumers were studiously heard – and then ignored.

...The Government... g[a]ve... approval to the wholesale electricity market without input from those who will pay for it – the consumers. Had it asked, the answer would almost certainly have been “no.” The market is due to take effect on October 1...

N[Z] has spent five years and \$100 million developing a market, due to start in less than three months. According to the Electricity Market Company, Emco, which has been preparing N[Z] market rules, Norway's hydro-dominated system is the most similar to N[Z]'s. Its market structure is also the one most closely resembled by N[Z]'s proposed market, an Emco spokeswoman said last week. She was not aware... [that i]n its four years of operation, the Nordic Exchange has been characterised by concerns about gaming, the practice of generators and energy traders manipulating prices by controlling water storage... [Furthermore, while] Norway has the advantage of much larger water storage capacity – a year's worth of generation – and can buy electricity from other countries if it runs out[, NZ] can store only a few weeks' worth of water and has no cable to A[US] or anywhere else... In Norway and Sweden, lack of rain and snow has led to low hydro reservoir levels but questions are also being asked about the market's performance. Prices for electricity on the Nordic Exchange have risen 20[%] since May, while six-month forward contracts have gone up 150[%]. Trading has been suspended on three separate days since May 31.

...Power New Zealand has increased household electricity prices by 11[%], and says more increases may be in store as it struggles to cope with new transmission charges introduced with the wholesale power market... Before this month, householders in the Auckland north and west paid 8.77c a unit. The new price, showing up on the latest bills, is 9.66c, with the... fixed daily charge of 56c... and GST on top... In a note to customers, Power N[Z] said the change meant an increase of about \$1.50 a week to the average domestic user[, who]... used 650 units a month. A more pressing issue for the company was the charges Trans Power introduced on October 1. Power N[Z] was refusing to pay it while it argued their validity. If accepted, they would mean higher prices for all customers but particularly for householders... Power N[Z] last raised household power prices in January by about 5[%]. Later the same month Mercury Energy said it was increasing residential power prices by an average of \$1.50 a week. In fact the price rises for its smallest domestic customers were up to 29[%]... Mercury charges householders 60c a day regardless of consumption and 9.8c a unit (but then offers a 10[%] discount for prompt payment); Tauranga electricity charges 11.09c a unit but no additional daily charge...

HOUSEHOLDERS in the King Country around... [the PM]'s home town of Te Kuiti paid less on average last year for their electricity than anywhere else in N[Z] – while those in central Hawke's Bay paid the most, according to figures prepared... by the Ministry of Commerce... At \$115

for 30 days supply to a domestic customer, Central Hawke's Bay Power is 54% more expensive than King Country Energy... The figures also show the profits each company makes from its line... networks, which in most cases provide a natural monopoly... Topping the list is Auckland's Mercury with a return of 10.85%. K[CE] was the only company to operate its line network business at a loss – with a return of -0.14% - 1996

N[Z]... has too many electricity companies and some need to merge to force power costs down, according to a report by [an international] accounting firm... Since deregulation... in 1993... [the] number of companies selling electricity has dropped... from... 46... to 38... but that is considered too many for a relatively small country... Figures... show that power companies here, on average, supply 43,000 customers, compared with utilities in A[US], Britain and the U[S], which supply... millions of clients.

...In two years, N[Z]'s domestic power prices have risen more than 12[%] in real terms, says a British survey of power supply companies in 25 countries. The average household in the U[S], Canada or South Africa now receives smaller power bills. Two years ago N[Z] was the cheapest. The survey shows we paid 17.9[%] more in 1996 than in 1994, while inflation was 5.6[%]. In Canada, the domestic price dropped 13.6[%], in the U[S] 11.7[%], and in South Africa 10.1[%]. The Consumer Coalition on Energy... said yesterday that [NZ's] supply companies were pocketing the savings made from more efficient operation of the power system. The coalition pointed out that... ECNZ power stations are now generating electricity 15% more efficiently than 10 years ago... and... the average wholesale price of electricity has fallen by 17% since 1987... [However, the ESA has] hit back, saying [the coalition] was telling only part of the story. South Africa had a huge state monopoly and very cheap labour while Canada had similar monopolies... Power prices for non-domestic consumers, who previously paid up to four times as much as households, had been reduced substantially... said [the association's] executive director...

Domestic consumers are getting a shoddy deal from electricity retailers and may not even be getting the power they pay for, a hard-hitting Ministry of Consumer Affairs report has found. The report says householders have missed out on the advantages commercial consumers have gained since the market was opened to competition in 1993. It... also... says more than 10[%] of domestic electricity meters have been in place unchanged, and in many cases not maintained, since 1956. Only Dunedin Electricity operates an internationally accepted system for testing meters... [- the rest] often simply wait... for customers to report problems... The report ranks the 36 electricity retailers in order of performance. The lower East Coast's Wairoa Power... - [which] has only 10,000 customers... [-] comes out top, and Waitaki Power in Oamaru is [at] the bottom... The Auckland region power companies Mercury Energy and Power N[Z] placed 10th and 16th respectively... The report identifies a range of other concerns including: • Companies requiring customers to pay for power they have not used. • Failing to consult customers on changes to the contract. • Disconnecting power without pursuing all other options. • Requiring customers to pay for problems caused by the power company. • Requiring customers to pay for meter faults. • No clear, free and efficient disputes procedures... The report... suggested the industry consider having an ombudsman... The Minister of Consumer Affairs... said yesterday that she would monitor the response of power companies to the report. The [ESA] president... said power companies regarded the report as a constructive document which would be a valuable resource for the industry.

...The aim of deregulating the electricity market in 1993 was to promote competition to benefit consumers by improving efficiency and service. While this has happened for large commercial users, domestic consumers are worse off because, along with regulations governing how electricity was distributed went regulations that protected the rights and benefits of consumers. The Ministry of Consumers' Affairs report... has found that... domestic... consumers are at the mercy of often outrageously unbalanced contracts foisted upon them by their local monopoly supplier. In the year to September 1996, Trans Power estimated that... the... competitive market accounted for only 4.4[%] of total electricity sales. This is mainly because the cost of supplying small, geographically dispersed users with electricity makes it uneconomic for competition to occur at the level of individual households. Customers therefore have no choice over the electricity supplier...

Electricity consumers are victims of one of the biggest con jobs of all time, the chief executive of the Consumers' Institute... says. At a conference in Wellington reviewing the electricity market, [he]... said deregulation and promises made when it began a decade ago had failed the small consumer... Surprisingly, many others at the conference appeared to back [him]... They had heard a stern message the previous evening by the Minister for S[OE]s... that it was time people paying the household power bill had a choice of supplier. "If you don't deliver that, I would seriously question whether the market direction we have set is sustainable over time,"... But her message was not the first in a similar vein. The Minister of Energy... has twice called for a better deal for households and his predecessor... did the same thing several times during... 1993-1996...

The Minister of Energy... yesterday painted himself as champion of the small electricity user, saying the issue of getting lower household prices was a personal challenge for him. At the opening of the Southdown power station in Auckland, [the minister] reminded power companies that the Government had the power to impose price controls if it thought competition was limited. But... [the minister] was unwilling to put a deadline on when he would take action if competition did not emerge... [Such competition may come from a] power meter made by a Porirua electronics firm... [that will, for example,] enable Wellington and Auckland home owners to buy cheaper electricity from a Dunedin power company. The sophisticated electronic meter... provide[s] the vital technological link to opening up deregulation of the power market for domestic users... The smart meter... not only does away with the need for meter readers, it will offer individual home consumers greater choice in the way they pay for power... [T]he metering system allow[s] power companies to measure rates every half hour. This makes possible a competitive retail market where buyers can take advantage of cheaper rates at different times of the day... The meter[- which]... will enable companies to market on price, give greater flexibility in balancing their power loads, and capture customer in other parts of the country... [-] has the ability to monitor power use of individual appliances and turn them on and off... [Furthermore, f]ire alarms, burglar alarms, medic alerts and even gas meters can be monitored in the home through the meter and power line and connected immediately to the appropriate fire brigade, security company, ambulance or gas company... [The minister suggested the] new meters could be in homes within three years. [However, i]t was not clear who should pay - the consumer, the incumbent supplier or a rival supplier. Southdown, which is owned by Mercury Energy... (47.5[%]), Canadian company TransAlta (47.5[%]) and gas retailer Enerco (S[%]), has a 116MW capacity and began generating in December. The chairman of Mercury... said it met a quarter of the company's needs and provided security of supply. "We don't want Auckland to ever have the lights go out," he said... Southdown is a combined cycle plant which means it produces electricity not only from the twin gas turbines but also with steam generated by the hot exhaust gases. The turbines are rated at 40% thermal efficiency and the steam cycle generation adds a further 10%[, which means]... Southdown compares more than favourably with other thermal power plants in N[Z] which average about 35% efficiency.

...Christchurch-based Southpower and Dunedin-based United Electricity will compete for up to 1000 of each other's residential customers... [during a trial of] a technique called profiling... When a customer switches power supplier the physical flows will not change. The same electrons flow from the same power station to the same dishwasher, say, as they would have if the consumer had not changed supplier. What changes is that a different electricity retailer buys the energy from the generator and sells it on to the consumer. As the wholesale price varies from one half-hour to another, the company needs to know - or have a pretty good guess - how much the consumer uses in any half-hour period. Time-of-use meters would capture that information, but they are still too expensive for domestic use. So "deemed profiling" has been developed as a proxy. The approach is actuarial, like life insurance. The power company knows already what proportion of a typical domestic consumer's consumption occurs in any half-hour period. It uses that profile in making its energy buying decisions. Under the Southpower-United plan, the companies agree to use those profiles to square accounts with one another. The new supplier will be responsible for billing and handling faults complaints. The

original supplier will continue to read the meters, for a fee. Line charges continue to be paid to the incumbent network... In addition to being Christchurch's incumbent electricity company, Southpower is the majority shareholder of Enerco which supplies gas in the Auckland and Wellington markets. United is the energy retailing joint venture of Dunedin Electricity, Invercargill Electricity, Timaru-based Alpine Electricity and the rural Southland supplier, the Power Company.

...Bantam-weight energy company Powerco of Taranaki is muscling in on the Auckland electricity market and has begun supplying one of the city's biggest energy users – Auckland Healthcare... Powerco... owns five hydro-electric plants with total capacity of 170 gigawatt hours a year. The Healthcare contract is for around 20 gigawatt hours, enough power to keep a one-bar heater going continuously for more than 2000 years... Auckland Healthcare officials were unwilling to specify the exact amount they will save from the new deal, but[the] contract and supply manager... said the difference was “sufficiently large for us to take it seriously.” The group's recent power bills have been more than \$2 million a year... [A]round half a dozen suppliers tendered for the Healthcare contract... The exclusive three-year deal to supply Healthcare comes hard on the heels of Powerco winning a contract to sell electricity to another big Auckland user, the Tip Top frozen foods factory in Mt Wellington. In both cases, Powerco won the business from... Mercury Energy. While in dollar terms the contracts are not critical to Mercury... [–] the Healthcare contract represented less than half a per cent of its total annual power sales... [–] they typify how development of a wholesale electricity market is putting pressure on traditional suppliers and reducing costs for commercial electricity users... Powerco will supply electricity to more than 60 Auckland [Healthcare] buildings... Powerco will not generate the electricity it must deliver... Instead, it will supply the power from the wholesale electricity market. That market is a hypothetical reservoir for all power generated in N[Z]. In theory, the energy Powerco is selling in Auckland could be produced by generation plants owned by Mercury... Powerco will pay Mercury for use of its network of transformers, switches and electricity lines... through an interconnection agreement...

Powerco yesterday announced a slightly increased after-tax profit of \$10.5 million for the six months... The company said... the latest half year was affected by a depreciation policy change, a one-off restructuring and interest costs associated with its acquisition of Egmont Electricity.

...Hawke's Bay Power has announced a half-year after-tax profit of \$2.47 million... [T]he result... meant the consumer trust-owned company would not increase electricity tariffs in the foreseeable future.

...Electricity retailer TransAlta N[Z] has beaten its profit forecasts by more than two-thirds, announcing earnings of \$7.2 million in its fiscal first half... Revenue for the six months was \$125.5 million... while the company's tax bill was \$5.7 million... [However,] Contact Energy has produced another disastrous financial result, raising questions about the cost to taxpayers of the Government's decision to split the Electricity Corporation into two competing companies. For the six months to March 31, Contact made a \$19.9 million profit... a 51[%] return on the Government's equity. By comparison, ECNZ is returning 14[%] and has never returned less than 11[%], even after the 1992 drought. Last year, Contact laid off more than a third of its 450 staff to cut costs, but after its first eight months of operation wrote \$200 million off its asset value (a 12.5[%] reduction) and recorded a net loss of \$32.6 million. For the current financial year it had predicted a 9.3[%] return on equity... It now believes it will struggle to achieve that. In its report tabled in Parliament yesterday, Contact's chairman... and chief executive... blamed the weather. They said “large hydro inflows” over the half-year depressed spot prices in the electricity market and reduced demand for gas, which Contact sells.

...Top Energy has cut its fixed charges by 10[%] to offset increases in its electricity prices... [Its] chief executive... said the result of the pricing adjustment would be no increase in power bills for Far North customers this year. This was despite a 10[%] increase – \$1 million a year – in what the Kaikohe-based company had to pay the state generators and Trans Power. [The chief executive] said... its prices are as low as or lower than Auckland's, despite its having to pay more than any other company to get the power.

...Mercury Energy has confessed that its boast of having N[Z]'s lowest power prices was untrue. It made the claim in its January customer newsletter, then withdrew it, blaming a typographical error. “We are, in fact, in the middle of the range.” ...[meanwhile, Power NZ has] issued its interim results... showing... half-year earnings after tax... down 7[%] at \$25.8 million, despite a 26[%] rise in sales to \$225.8 million...

All Mercury Energy residential customers will receive a \$60 credit in their next electricity bill. The credits are their share of the company's \$45.9 million after-tax profit over the past six months... [By the way,] Mercury Energy, Southpower and Powerco are involved in consumer trials of push-button technology providing household access to a range of products and services, including competitive energy supply. Known as Orca, the technology has been installed in 500 homes in Auckland, New Plymouth and Christchurch. Through an easy-to-use keypad it can be used to set household appliances to take advantage of cheaper off-peak electricity prices, to monitor electricity use, to turn lights on and off, to run home security systems and to pay bills and order fast food. Bay of Plenty company TrustPower is also trying out meters that will lead to customers having a choice about their electricity supply arrangements – such as the power company they buy from, prices available for each half-hour period and payment arrangements. The trials, which have been running for six months, involve homes in new subdivisions in Tauranga and also in Auckland – outside TrustPower's traditional catchment area. Evidence from other sectors of the economy shows that marketplace competition within a self-regulating environment is the best way of bringing the benefits of reform to customers... Aggressive competition in N[SW] and Victoria has pushed spot wholesale electricity prices down to less than 1.5Ac... a unit from about 4.5Ac[, but the trend may reverse now that]... Victoria's high voltage electricity transmission network, PowerNet Victoria... [–] which transports electricity to electricity retailers and customers... [–] has been sold to United States Energy Company (GPU) for \$A2.716 billion... [In related news, NZ's] Contact Energy... will join... the listed investment company Infratil Australia and the A[US] superannuation company UniSuper... to... pay \$A391 million... for Southern Hydro... which runs five hydro-electric power stations... The group... will pay less than half in cash, and will borrow the rest... Contact Energy is [also] launching a \$200 million commercial paper programme... Contact Energy has a Standard & Poor's long term credit rating of A and a short term rating of A-1... Because Contact is state-owned, banks consider it to be Government-backed. That means its debts are a taxpayer liability... The price being paid... [for Southern Hydro] is widely regarded as too high. The Victorian Government itself had expected only \$300 million for the assets... The [NZ Government has] been fully advised of the investment, which [represents] only a speck of Contact's total assets... After listening to many of the self-proclaimed public commentators, [NZ's] domestic consumers could be forgiven for believing that the electricity reforms have failed... [here. However, NZ] retail electricity prices are still among the cheapest in the world. The standard domestic retail price was the sixth lowest of 30 international prices surveyed by[the] British Electricity Association in January this year... Statistics N[Z] figures show that fuel (excluding transport fuel) and power charges amounted to less than 2.5[%] of average household consumption spending in 1996 as against almost 2.7[%] for telephone and postage.

...N[Z]'s low electricity prices are certainly not a result of the electricity reforms. Real electricity prices were falling long before the reforms were introduced. The Ministry of Commerce published a graph in 1989 which showed that real domestic electricity prices had fallen from 1960 to 1987 by 40[%] despite costly new power stations being built during the 1970s. There are... reasons for our low electricity prices when compared internationally: old hydro stations produce electricity at ever-falling real cost because their main cost is capital service which is not subject to inflation. Furthermore, thermal stations run on gas, which the Government has sold at a throwaway price, and there are no costly emission controls for thermal stations... It is no surprise that members of the electricity industry are rapt with the reforms: they have become monopoly players in a deregulated economy. However, for the small consumers, both domestic and business, the picture looks grim. The former Minister of Energy... and his advisers have consistently ignored watchdog groups such as Power for Our Future, and have ridden roughshod over many consumers' wish to retain their power company in trust ownership. Many electricity consumers now find themselves at the mercy of commercial

investors who can milk the natural monopoly of the power companies. Also, the investors were allowed to buy into the companies before their real value was established. This has deprived the original owners, the consumers, of a few hundred million dollars. Unfortunately, the power companies' financial success is not a measure of business acumen but merely an indication of how much they are bleeding their captive consumers. They can, with impunity, build new power stations for which the captive consumers carry the risk, acquire overvalued shares in other companies, launch costly advertising battles, employ legions of lawyers and pay their executives exorbitant salaries – all on the backs of the long-suffering consumers... Competition does not apply to the power lines anyway; and even if competition for supply should arrive, it would only resemble that of the oil companies – which, according to the Minister of Energy, persistently enjoy inflated profit margins. From the small consumer's point of view, the electricity reforms are bungled... It has been suggested that the Government play a more heavy-handed role in regulating power companies... Capping the revenue does not work, and capping prices may give rise to lawsuits... [Incidentally, t]he... \$10.9 million... South Island price differential – which subsidises the cost of electricity to South Island customers – is to go from the end of September... The removal of the subsidy could raise the average South Island power bill by 30c a week, or \$16 a year... But the Mayor of Christchurch... said... that... the Government... was trying to divert attention from the fact that South Islanders were paying to transmit electricity to the North Island and[were] thus contributing to the \$83 million dividend the Government expected from Transpower... About 75[% of NZ]'s electricity comes from hydro stations and the biggest stations with the largest storage lakes are in the South Island.

...Wholesale electricity prices are shooting up as South Island hydro lake levels drop and possible power shortages loom. The El Nino weather pattern present during the 1992 power crisis is back... Price information released by... Emco... yesterday showed wholesale prices, normally 4c to 5c a unit, have hit 9c in the North Island and 8.7c in the South. A water shortage would be a stern test for Emco, which began operating the wholesale market last October. In theory, higher prices should curb demand but the reality is that virtually all consumers are insulated from the fluctuations of the market by their local supplier, which sets a flat retail price of around 10c to 12c a unit. Most power companies have pushed up prices as fast and as far as customers can stand. All they can do now is cut heating to hot water cylinders to reduce demand during peaks – lessening their exposure to high “spot” prices... The Government's delay... over the South Island price[differential] was the second acknowledgment this week that the wholesale market was failing customers. On Thursday it said officials had been ordered to review the market to see why supposed competition between generators and distributors was resulting in higher prices for households. But the review will take a year and the officials charged with conducting it are likely to be the same ones who came up with the market plan.

...Wholesale electricity market prices shot up 1400[%] to more than 60c a kilowatt-hour for two half-hours last week when one of Trans Power's Cook Strait cables failed and high-priced emergency thermal generation was fired up at Whirinaki and Stratford.

...The risk of electricity shortages this winter has eased but higher prices are still likely... The biggest generator, [ECNZ]... has been burning more gas at thermal power stations in recent weeks to conserve water in its lakes... If power companies lose money this winter, consumers will face the consequences when tariffs are next adjusted.

...Dry weather is costing the country about \$2.5 million a week in thermal generation. North Island lakes – at 15[%] of generating capacity – are close to the level when electricity was rationed in 1973.

...Mercury Energy has... a costly fight to fire up its \$80 million central North Island geothermal power station... which [has] been idle for six months... [due to] local Maori... opposition to air discharge permits... The... delay to opening the... country's first private power station... ha[s] cost the company between \$6 million and \$7 million... [Meanwhile, ECNZ] has announced plans for a massive lift in the output of its largest thermal power station, Huntly. It looks likely to be able to extract a further 200MW from the 1000MW station at the relatively cheap cost of \$50 million. The announcement comes just a day after... Contact Energy won resource consents for a new power station (up to 400MW) in Auckland at a cost of about \$350 million... [ECNZ] has... plans to upgrade the Waitaki power scheme as well. ECNZ expects to complete its consideration of whether to re-power Huntly... [– by] burning the gas produced by underground coal in one of the four... turbines instead of natural gas... [–] at the end of this month. When the Government split the corporation into two to create a wholesale market for electricity it attempted to reduce its dominance by restricting it to building no more than half of any new capacity. However, that restriction does not apply to upgrades on existing power stations.

...Power stations at New Plymouth and Stratford are to be closed or partly closed late next year as part of a[proposed] deal to clear environmental opposition to a big new... \$350 million[natural] gas power station... in Auckland... Contact[Energy], the financially struggling, state-owned offshoot of [ECNZ], received resource consents from the Auckland Regional Council in March to build a station of up to 400mW on the site of its existing 135mW gas and diesel-fired station at Bairds Rd. Greenpeace lodged an appeal over the air discharge consent. It opposes more thermal power stations on the grounds that they increase carbon dioxide emissions. Instead it favours renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power. Contact argued that the modern station would reduce N[Z]'s total emissions, because it is more efficient than the older thermal stations, such as ECNZ's Huntly (1000mW) and its own New Plymouth (590mW), Stratford (198mW) and Otara stations... Both parties have been in mediation since the appeal was lodged and refuse to talk publicly... It is understood that the agreement... will remain commercially confidential... However, it has been known in the electricity industry that Contact is pressing ahead with its plans and spending millions of dollars in anticipation of the appeal not proceeding. Construction of the station... also carries significant risks for the taxpayer. Contact has yet to confirm a contract to sell the output... Gas supplies will also be an issue. Contact is likely to sell some of its Maui gas supply to itself, but Maui is due to run out around 2005.

...Propelled by higher gas sales, Natural Gas Corporation's net earnings rose 14.6[%] to \$32.1 million in the year... Wholesale gas sales jumped 21[%] to 51.9 petajoules, but more than half of the increase was a one-off of 5pj to [ECNZ]. The start of full deliveries to the Southdown power station also boosted sales... NGC's capital expenditure programme in the current year – at \$60 million nearly twice last year's – includes spending \$19 million on new turbines to increase the capacity to push gas from Huntly to Auckland, partly in anticipation of Contact Energy's upgrading the Otahuhu power station... [By the way, NGC] will complete its proposed \$6.5 million buy-out of the 30[%] of Natural Gas Waikato it does not already own from Hamilton City Council within the next week... [The] group chairman... told the annual meeting in Wellington yesterday... [that AUS]n Gas Light Co, which owns one-third of N[GC], reported an 18.7[%] increase in second-half profit to... \$NZ84.35 million...

N[GC]'s monopoly on the wholesale gas supply business has been broken, heralding increased competition and a possible drop in delivered gas prices. NGC and Wellington-regional power company TransAlta N[Z] yesterday negotiated a new gas supply contract. It essentially separates the sale of gas from the cost of moving it. The agreement settles an 18-month legal dispute and means TransAlta will be able to buy gas from sources other than NGC. NGC is negotiating a similar settlement with Auckland-regional gas company Enerco... NGC owns and operates the high-pressure transmission system which would allow competing suppliers to feed gas to the North Island retail companies. It has wholesale gas supply contracts dating back to 1980 and had refused to remove so-called exclusivity provisions... Early last year NGC sued Enerco and TransAlta for more than \$10 million, saying the utilities had not reimbursed it for gas they had to pay for, even if they did not use it. These “take-or-pay” contracts were condemned by the Commerce Commission and the utilities refused to pay on the grounds they would not be enforceable under the Commerce Act. NGC and TransAlta declined to comment on the settlement in detail yesterday, but it is understood no money changed hands.

...Auckland-based gas retailer Enerco N[Z] yesterday reported a 5[%] rise in after-tax profit to \$13.49 million for the[past] six months... Revenue from gas sales rose 6[%] to \$90.7 million and revenue from appliance sales, servicing and the company's LPG business rose 27[%] to \$22.7 million... Enerco said it had connected 5300 new residential customers in the latest period, increasing total customer numbers to 108,000.

...Enerco Gas has hit commercial customers in Auckland, Wellington, Palmerston North and Hawkes Bay with hefty price rises without telling them why. In a letter to its “valued” customers, Enerco implied that the “price change” was the Government’s fault because of the need to comply with new regulations. But... the Ministry of Commerce said yesterday that it was not intended that the new rules usher in price rises. Customers who use 40,000 units (kilowatt-hours) of gas a year will pay 17.25[%] more, another \$384 a year; those who use 20,000 units will have to find an extra \$484, a 40[%] price rise. Enerco did not publicly announce the price increase, which businesses began to notice in their bills over the past month. Earlier this year it increased household gas bills by between 10 and 15[%], also without a public statement... The chief executive of Enerco... said some customers got increases, others decreases and some stayed the same... Gas companies are required to itemise what portion of each bill is for the gas itself and what portion is for pipelines. Enerco has substantially increased the unavoidable “fixed charge” for pipelines from 40c a day to \$2.

...A fine slapped on gas giant Enerco... should be seen by other companies as a wake-up call not to mislead consumers, the Commerce Commission said yesterday. In the Auckland District Court, Enerco was ordered to pay fines and costs totalling \$14,535 after admitting its “Buy Smart” and “Home Smart” gas promotions were misleading... About 10,000 customers had signed up for the deals. The commission said the company had promoted the schemes as cheap ways of having gas connected and appliances installed, but it failed to disclose extra costs of up to \$2520... [Incidentally, t]he Government has yet to decide on the future of state-owned coal mining company Solid Energy... [The P]M... last week suggested it was an asset that could easily be sold... Solid Energy was now looking at projects worth twice its \$195 million in assets and equity... [M]ore than \$380 million of capital spending would be needed by the company in the next five years to expand the West Coast operations and maintain existing North Island capacity... The... shareholding minister... conceded: “It is hard to avoid concluding that private owners are much better placed than Government for business tasks where hundreds of millions are set at risk on high-tech mining and entrepreneurial global marketing projects.” ...The chief executive of Solid Energy, formerly known as Coal Corporation... says it should be sold as a single enterprise rather than broken up... Earlier, [he]... said the company was reluctant to invest heavily in a proposed West Coast coal terminal, but would do so if that was required to get the project going... [to handle] a multi-million dollar coal find... at Mt Davy... The... twelve million tonnes of high-grade... coal... is more than a kilometre from the surface making it the country’s deepest underground coal mine... It’s destined for export markets like India, China and Japan... [Solid Energy has already] received resource consents for... the 2.2km jetty and handling facility at... Granity, 32km north-east of Westport...

Solid Energy... is considering building a \$130 million steel jetty on the West Coast to export coal. It also faces a \$40 million bill to develop its Mt Davy mine on the West Coast and \$30 million to build a system to move coal from its Stockton mine to the coast... In its latest financial year it made a net profit after tax of \$18.9 million on sales of \$208 million and shareholders’ funds of \$104 million... [(In comparison,) State Coal posted losses in 20 of the 21 years before it was made into an SOE.] ...Solid Energy produces nearly three million tonnes of coal a year and exports about half of that, mostly to Japan, India and China... The southern mines supply mainly export markets while the northern operation primarily mine coal to fire the Huntly power station and to make steel... at Glenbrook... The export business could expand significantly if the jetty went ahead. It would cut the transport costs of rail freighting coal across the South Island for shipment from Lyttelton... However... the... company had not closed the door on talks with TransRail or the Lyttelton Port... [T]he International Energy Agency has identified coal as “the least attractive” energy investment over the next three years because... [coal] produces more carbon dioxide than any other fuel and there is a real prospect of new punitive measures such as a carbon tax... ECNZ[’s] chief executive... says... that the Government’s decision to create competing generator Contact Energy from ECNZ last year... meant more fossil fuel being burned and more carbon dioxide... emissions because coordination between the hydro systems was lost... [T]hat was ironic when the Government had spent the past three years negotiating with industries to voluntarily reduce their emissions.

...this week... [as NZ] Government representatives were in Germany... for talks on the international climate convention and plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions... Contact [Energy announced that it has] been given a licence to pump 21 million tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere during the 20-year consent period... [of its] power station at Otara... A spokesman... said about 200 workers would be needed to build the station and 30 to run it.

...The Huntly power station will lose more than a third of its 270 staff as... [ECNZ] moves to save \$9 million a year and compete with new power stations. Staff were told yesterday that... virtually all positions would be up for grabs over the next two months. About 40 engineering staff would be re-employed by separate companies on one-year contracts to tender for service contracts at the station... [In related news, s]ome of the companies helping to build Contact Energy’s \$350 million Otahuhu power station want an assurance they will be paid now the South Korean owner of one of the main subcontractors has been put into receivership... The primary contract... was awarded this year to[a] German-based technology group... which in turn requisitioned work from companies including Halla... The Halla Group was declared bankrupt this week after failing to meet a \$US215 million... debt payment... Halla N[Z], a division of [the] collapsed Korean industrial conglomerate... has a contract to build several parts for the... gas-fired station. Halla has in turn hired local companies to work with it on the project... The level of Halla’s involvement is unclear, but it includes work on critical boilers... The chief executive of Steel & Tube... said his company’s contract with Halla was worth around \$10 million. “At this point we are unconcerned because we have only just started the work... Had it happened in [3] months it might have been more of a problem.”

...[BIL and ECNZ] officials were breathing a sigh of relief yesterday after the Indonesian Government gave the go-ahead for a... geothermal project in West Java. The \$US1.2 billion... project was under threat after the Indonesian Government last week announced it was reviewing a number of infrastructure projects in order to peg back its current account deficit... Because construction of the project has begun, the Indonesian Government decided it should continue... Asia Power, a company three-quarters owned by [BIL], is a majority partner in the first stage of the 330 megawatt Wayang Windu power station... Design Power, a subsidiary of ECNZ, is contracted as engineer on the project... The project is N[Z]’s single biggest investment in Indonesia. It will be the first geothermal project in the world to use 110MW generators – up to now the standard has been generators ranging from 55MW to 75MW... [By the way, y]our final chance to invest in what is potentially one of the most lucrative investments on offer anywhere in the world... closes... [soon. Inquiries have already been] received... from around the world for Vortec wind generators to the value of \$US3.2 billion...

Wind-turbine developer Vortec Energy Ltd has failed in a bid to raise \$10 million through a public share issue... The issue is not due to close until Tuesday but the company said yesterday that it was not expected to be fully subscribed. A Vortec representative said the size of the shortfall would not be known until the issue closed, but it would be substantial... The issue was not underwritten... [However, the] managing director of Vortec... said yesterday that the directors were happy with the level of new shareholding, which was sufficient to meet the company’s immediate needs. The prospectus said proceeds from the share issue would be used in part to build two Vortec 20 wind turbines which would stand 52m tall. A smaller prototype turbine, called the Vortec 7, has been installed at Waikaretu, west of Huntly. [The managing director] said test results on the prototype were very encouraging and the company was on schedule to report power performance and cost-to-energy results at the end of October. Commissioning required before Vortec 7 was connected to the Counties Power grid was well advanced. He said Vortec had received inquiries that could amount to sales of 1400 full-scale turbines, worth \$5 billion... [Incidentally, ECNZ] has signed an agreement to sell Meremere power station to Nga Pua Waitanga, which plans to turn it from coal-fired to rubbish fired. Under the agreement Nga Pua has two years to get resource consents and make a final decision.

...Greenpeace has had to tone down wording in an “information pack” that planned to trash Olivine N[Z]’s proposal to incinerate rubbish on the site of the mothballed Meremere electricity plant... [T]he report was completed... before Greenpeace had even seen the Olivine prospectus... The

Greenpeace information pack... being mailed to institutional investors who have been offered shares in a \$6.5 million public issue by Olivine... still contends there are economic and environmental concerns about the Olivine proposal... A central point debated by Greenpeace is a figure of \$30 a tonne that Olivine quotes as the likely incineration cost at the Meremere plant. Greenpeace said the... price was "ridiculously low" compared with costs for other incineration plants worldwide of \$150 to \$300 a tonne. But Greenpeace now concedes the [Olivine] price does not include waste handling and collection costs and is also based on costs being offset by production of by-products, such as cement using fly-ash from the plant... Olivine... has an option to buy the Meremere plant for \$17.2 million... [A] director of Olivine, told a meeting of people interested in the project that a garbage supplier has signed an "irrevocable" understanding to provide 70,000 tonnes of rubbish a year to the plant... [thus guaranteeing] that it could set up one rubbish-fuelled furnace... [The] proposal to redevelop the Meremere power plant and use the site to burn waste will involve technology that is so far commercially unproven. Olivine is the name given to a type of ore mined by Olivine Corporation of the U[S]. The ore is used to make panels that line a range of incinerators made by the corporation. The existing incinerators primarily burn forestry timber waste, but... Olivine N[Z]... has further developed the incinerators to burn municipal waste from which energy and other material such as glass can be recovered. The new incinerators will even be able to burn sludge with up to 70[%] water content... Meremere is planned as a flagship for similar projects elsewhere in the world... [Speaking of rubbish, NZ]'s second largest waste services company, Waste Care Ltd, has been sold to French conglomerate Suez Lyonnaise des Eaux... [as] part of the purchase by Suez Lyonnaise subsidiary SITA of the non-North American operations of Waste Care's owner, Houston-based waste company... BFI[, which] will receive \$US1 billion in cash and a 20[%] stake in SITA.

...Talks between Auckland-based Mercury Energy and U[S] company Utilicorp could result in a deal that reshapes the northern North Island electricity supply industry. A giant regional power company made up of Waikato, Bay of Plenty and possibly King Country electricity suppliers is on the cards if Mercury can wrest control of the Auckland section of Power N[Z]. Utilicorp, which owns a third of both Power N[Z] and Hamilton's WEL Energy, is believed to be seriously considering a deal that would see it abandon the north and west of metropolitan Auckland and instead try to fuse the Thames Valley and Waikato component of Power N[Z] into a Hamilton-based company. Whakatane's Bay Of Plenty Electricity, already 52[%] owned by Power N[Z], could also join... Utilicorp had originally planned to merge Power N[Z] with WEL and Wellington's Energy Direct and have a controlling shareholding. Those plans went awry when Canada's TransAlta took over Energy Direct, merged it with neighbouring Capital Power, and Mercury launched a takeover bid for Power N[Z]... to unite metropolitan Auckland into one supply company... Since then there has been an impasse, with Mercury holding about 34[%] of Power N[Z] and Utilicorp 31[%]. Currently, 'Mercury has 244,000 customers, 580 staff and sales of \$500m, while Power NZ has 214,000 customers, 580 staff and \$300m in sales'.

...Mercury... and Utilicorp... [- which has just] filed to sell up to \$US250 million... of senior notes, raising funds to repay the multinational gas and electricity provider's debt... [-] have confirmed plans to reduce duplication in the Auckland electricity market. The two companies... are seeking... Commerce Commission... clearance to form a joint venture known as Holdco. The holding company[- which]... was formed primarily to break an impasse between Utilicorp and Mercury, who for two and a half years have been battling to take over Power NZ... [-] will have a controlling stake in Mercury's main rival in the Auckland power market... and will also control... Bay of Plenty Electricity... and WEL Energy... Mercury and Utilicorp have offered \$6 a share for the 36[%] of Power NZ they don't already own.

...The Overseas Investment Commission has approved a take-over of Power N[Z] by Mercury... and Utilicorp.

...Power N[Z] has formed a subsidiary, Power N[Z] Generation, that is considering investing in electricity plants developed by the... company's main rival... Power N[Z]'s corporate development manager... said the new unit would develop generation capabilities even if Power NZ was taken over by a joint venture between Mercury and Utilicorp... [P]otential investments... included [the] 395-megawatt power station at Otahuhu being built by state-owned Contact Energy and the recently completed 114-megawatt Southdown cogeneration plant built by Mercury. Southdown was designed to include a third generation unit and Power NZ could be involved in that... In the longer term, Power NZ wanted to build generation capacity north of the Auckland Harbour Bridge... Power NZ is well placed financially to develop a generation business. Its total liabilities of \$157.5 million are covered four times by shareholders funds of \$644 million.

...The formal offer for a \$900 million takeover of Power N[Z] by a joint venture between Mercury... and Utilicorp... has been delayed slightly by legal technicalities. The paperwork is expected to be completed in the next couple of days and the offer of \$6 for each Power N[Z] share should be lodged with the stock exchange by early next week.

...[the] battle for control of... Power N[Z] is heading back into the courtroom with... WEL Energy Group and the WEL Energy Trust seeking an injunction to have a proposed takeover of the company stopped.

...The... WEL Energy Trust... deputy chairman... said he was devastated that successful court action by... Utilicorp had spelled the end of the trust's efforts to keep ownership of WEL Energy in the Waikato... [He] said negotiations should have stayed in the boardroom but a "predatory" Utilicorp had taken the matter to the courts. Although the trust had been "out-smarted by the Yanks" for now he vowed to continue the battle.

...The billion dollar battle for control of Power N[Z] is over. A single electricity company is set to emerge for Auckland that is more than twice the size of any competitor. Under a deal announced yesterday... Mercury Energy, and its rival for control, the American firm Utilicorp, which had been the cornerstone shareholder in Power N[Z], will aim to acquire 100[%] ownership jointly. They will then delist the company from the stock exchange... Consumers of Mercury... and Power N[Z]... have seen... [millions of dollars] from their power bills spent on the 30-month fight, which has involved top advertising agencies, high-priced lawyers and financial advisers. They will now hope to see the benefits... Savings of up to \$24 million are... expected to be achieved from the annual operating costs of the two big Auckland companies, which will be run by Mercury. A full merger should save \$30 million a year. By ending the unwinnable war, Mercury and Utilicorp have set the scene for a company large enough to rival the state-owned generators, ECNZ and Contact. Redundancies loom for Power N[Z] management and a question mark hangs over the Pacific Energy buying group it half owns. The North Shore, Waitakere, and Rodney councils are expected to be given the go-ahead to sell their combined 10.7[%] stake in Power N[Z]... North Shore is entitled to 47[%] of the council shares, Waitakere 36 and Rodney 17. The money could be spent on debt repayment or capital works, in either event easing the burden on ratepayers... If they cash up, the 16.2 million shares presently locked in a 10-year trust arrangement will convert to \$97.2 million at the \$6 price being offered... But the price may well rise. Shareholders not tempted to sell at \$8 on Monday will not stampede to sell at \$6 or yesterday's market close of \$6.50... Local authorities in the Thames Valley and Waikato parts of Power N[Z] will be able to sell their shares, too, but at a much lower price than the \$10 which Mercury earlier offered but which agreements with Utilicorp prevented them taking. When Waitemata Electricity privatised in conjunction with Thames Power as Power N[Z] in 1994, Waitemata customers were given 400 shares each and people on the electoral roll in the Valley Power area 500 shares. The shares quickly gained value. Utilicorp was able to buy shares at \$3 but Mercury lodged a hostile takeover bid, offering \$3.40. A bitter struggle and a huge war of words broke out. Within a month Power N[Z] was calling for a halt, saying it had spent \$1.5 million on advertising its opposition to Mercury's bid. By March 1995, Power N[Z] said it had spent just under \$4 million on the battle. Only about 8[%] of Power N[Z] shares remain in private hands... While the objective of drawing together the two Auckland supply companies - the former Auckland and Waitemata power boards - had merit, it [had been] pursued at "ridiculous cost,"... according to a former Auckland Electric Power Board chairman... Mercury had spent about \$300 million on shares and \$30 million on other costs... "The savings of co-operation, in management, billing and purchasing, would have been better gained through a negotiated settlement than a hostile takeover. The funds spent on the corporate struggle would have been better spent by Auckland consumers

themselves. The costs of servicing those funds will be borne by both Auckland and Waitemata electricity consumers.” [He] also questioned whether it was in the interests of Auckland power consumers for Mercury and Power N[Z] to buy shares in W[EL] “when they are not wanted.”

...A Waikato community group is stumping up nearly \$40 million to protect its local power company from takeover... The WEL Energy Trust... that holds a major stake in Hamilton electricity supplier WEL Energy, is offering \$21.15 a share for the 10[%] stake in the company owned by Power N[Z]... The directors of Power N[Z] plan to consult with their company’s main shareholders before deciding whether they will accept... The offer compares with the \$13.75 each shares in WEL Energy were changing hands for this week... The trust already holds a 43[%] stake in WEL Energy. The offer is primarily aimed at thwarting a joint venture involving Utilicorp and Mercury taking control of WEL Energy. Utilicorp already holds 33[%] of WEL... The group’s action is yet another twist in the bitter battle between Mercury... Power N[Z], and Utilicorp... to control electricity supply in the upper North Island... Meanwhile... a lawyer acting for... small shareholders, said the... Power N[Z] Shareholders Society has asked the Stock Exchange... to rule on the main shareholders’ eligibility to vote.

...A new board of directors was elected to control... Power N[Z] yesterday, but only after an explosive meeting of shareholders. More than 500 investors – most of them also Power NZ consumers – failed to thwart representatives of Utilicorp... and Mercury Energy... taking all six seats on their company’s board table. Mercury and Utilicorp together own 64[%] of Power NZ and used their block vote to topple the incumbent directors... While the outcome was always obvious, the potency of the venom some shareholders spat at the major owners was unexpected. “Judas,” “prostitutes,”... and “snakes” were just some of the insults. The main gripe of small shareholders was that[when] Mercury and Utilicorp... swallow the remainder of Power NZ... its service to customers... might... [be compromised. O]ne of the outgoing Power NZ directors... noted that Utilicorp had been invited to become a shareholder and signed a so-called cornerstone agreement with Power NZ to protect it from hostile takeover... “Business can’t prosper in an environment where large numbers of people think it is morally acceptable to break their agreements,” he said in a bitter address... Representatives of Mercury and Utilicorp were at the meeting, but declined to address it. Their silence fuelled the hostility.

...The business world can be cruel and [the] former chairman of Power N[Z] is now an expert on the subject. On Thursday night he walked dejectedly into Power N[Z]’s annual meeting with all the appearance of a man with a knife in his back. He started the meeting as chairman and finished as an ordinary shareholder with just 553 shares. It made little difference that 99[%] of the 600 plus shareholders at the meeting supported him. He had been checkmated by high-powered corporate manoeuvrings... Two years ago the situation was completely reversed. At Power N[Z]’s 1995 annual general meeting [he] had absolute control... The reason for the turnaround is simple. One of the major players... switched its support... UtiliCorp would not win any prizes for popularity on the North Shore... [However, the problem] is rooted in the traditional rivalry between the old Auckland Power Board and the Waitemata Power Board. The smaller utility north of the bridge has always feared domination by... [its southern neighbour. Eventually,] Mercury and UtiliCorp... [will have 100%] control of Power N[Z]... This is not good news for retail electricity customers. Inevitably the major shareholders will want to recover the massive costs incurred during the three-year conflict. Mercury and UtiliCorp have paid a high price for their shareholdings and the protracted takeover has been a gravy train for a bevy of lawyers, financial advisers and spin doctors... [Neither company will] be keen on Power NZ distributing some profits to customers... In theory customers can shop around for other utilities but, with a large proportion of Power N[Z]’s customers bordered by Mercury and WEL Energy, the opportunity to find another supplier maybe somewhat limited... There is one glimmer on the horizon. The Auckland Electricity Consumer Trust is considering privatising some of Mercury next year. A bold trust would push for privatisation of the lot... It could even effect a merger by giving a stake in Mercury to Utilicorp, in return for the Americans’ Power NZ stake. That would kick off the ultimate local power battle – for control of the enlarged Mercury...

Aucklanders hoping to get free shares in Mercury Energy are out of luck, according to the trust that owns the power company. The trust secretary... yesterday issued a statement shooting down promises of free shares that he said were made by two candidates in the trust election now under way... [In related news, t]he 330,000 shareholders in Tauranga-based electricity company TrustPower are to get... a one-third increase in their interim dividend payment. The news came yesterday as the company reported an 18[%] increase in pre-tax profit, to \$16.9 million...

More than 40,000 Bay of Plenty and Taupo residents and businesses have pledged loyalty to their power company, TrustPower, in exchange for a reprieve from price rises... of about 4.5[%] for households and 3.5[%] for businesses. Under... a scheme called Friends, customers who promise to stick with the company for the next three years will save 30[%] on the price rise and are guaranteed no further price rises until March 2001.

...Dunedin-based electricity retailer United Electricity has reported a \$2.6 million profit for the year... reversing a \$2 million-plus loss the year before... [T]he result... represented only a 1.3[%] pre-tax return on sales...

Mercury Energy’s after-tax profit of \$82.1 million gave its shareholders a 22[%] return on their equity in 1996/97, the company’s annual report shows... Mercury’s pre-tax profit [was] \$121.7 million... The... Mercury chief executive... is likely to have been the[company’s] top-paid... employee... He received a salary of \$460,000-\$470,000, compared with the next highest-paid executive’s \$270,000-\$280,000... [(and) the chief executive of... [ECNZ], who is on about \$455,000[)]... Mercury is owned by the Auckland Energy Consumer Trust. The trust was paid a \$50.5 million dividend on its investment [for] the latest year... The dividend was passed on to Mercury’s customers, who each received \$120. That represented around six weeks free power for a typical residential customer... The remainder... of [the profit] was retained for future investments. Mercury’s general manager of finance... noted in the annual report that Mercury has increased reserves to fund expansion. “We need to give the company room to acquire, room to grow,” he said. Mercury will spend around \$120 million next year acquiring a one-third stake in a new power plant being built at Stratford. At the end of the... financial year Mercury had total assets of \$895 million... The assets included \$258 million in investments, of which \$220.3 million were shares listed on the stock exchange. Those were mainly [its 34%] stake in Power N[Z]. Mercury... borrowed to buy the Power N[Z] shareholding and paid \$17.8 million interest on those borrowings in the latest year. It received \$24.6 million in dividends from Power NZ so is more than breaking-even on the funding costs.

...Tariff information compiled by the Ministry of Commerce shows that for every category of consumer... Mercury’s... power prices are higher than the weighted national average... The profit it makes on its lines business, at 9.52[%], is above... the national average of 7.3[%], and... the energy content of Auckland power bills... for Mercury’s domestic consumers... is above the norm [at] 1.1c a kilowatt/hour... [F]or a small consumer using 6000kWh a year, the difference is \$60 a year.

...Power companies earn the lion’s share of their profits not from selling electricity, but from the charging for the lines it comes down. In 1996 the average net profit after tax per customer (of all sizes) from line charges was \$100, plus another \$27 from energy.

...[a] report, commissioned by the E[SA, says]... there was no evidence line businesses [a]re extracting monopoly profits.

...Evidence of excessive charging by some power companies has hardened the Government’s determination to expose them to further reform... Ministry of Commerce figures [showed] line charges have risen significantly higher than inflation over the past three years. They have increased 33[%] on average for households and 14[%] on average for the medium commercial user. Seven of the... power companies have been taking profits of more than 11[%] off their line businesses... Southpower [was taking 30.60%].

...Southpower is expected to announce next week the sale of its retail outlets... [thereby bringing to an] end what some retailers regard as unfair competition by the firm from whom they buy their electricity. The sale will also re-ignite demands from free-enterprise council factions for local-body-owned Southpower to be privatised... Under[a] former... manager... Southpower aggressively bought into Enerco, building up a stake of

68.8[%] for about \$180 million. The stake is now worth about \$374 million... [Incidentally, a]nnual savings of more than \$100 per customer could be possible if small power companies merged their energy trading operations... sa[ys] a... report.

...Manawatu power company CentralPower has doubled its... after-tax profit to \$2.1 million... “The increased profit reflected the larger scale of the company following the merger with Electro Power and the subsequent cost savings that had been achieved,” [its chairman] said. Palmerston North City power supplier Electro Power agreed to merge with its... neighbour in December. CentralPower said at the time that it expected the deal would save about \$3 million a year.

...National grid operator Trans Power exceeded its profit and all key operational targets for the year... A net surplus of \$92.8 million was achieved... and... [a] total dividend of \$64.9 million was paid to the Crown[, even though]... last year the company said its full-year profit of \$96 million had been insufficient to properly meet the capital cost of maintaining its long-life assets... [Meanwhile,] savings of up to \$20 million a year were anticipated as a result of a restructuring involving the loss of up to 85 staff.

...Householders are expected to be the main winners from Government moves to adjust the way supply companies pay for having electricity transmitted. A reduction in power cost of 5 to 6[%] is considered possible... The Government plans to bring down costs mainly by... [letting] electricity users choose the level of extra capacity they want. That means a power company could choose to take on more risk in return for lower electricity costs... The Government has[also] indicated it is prepared to take on the nose a drop in the value of national power grid operator Trans Power in order to force electricity prices down. The Ministers of Finance, S[OE]s and Energy have agreed that getting the best rate of return on the Government’s \$1.4 billion investment in Trans Power is no longer a priority. Instead, Trans Power’s main goal will be to make sure it improves the efficiency of its transmission services... As part of its management of the grid, Trans Power must ensure sufficient capacity in the network to cover any breakdowns or unusual demands... The aim is to impose on Trans Power the same sort of pressures it would face if there was a rival network for transmitting electricity... However, power industry players said the changes had been forced on the Government by industry. “Maybe reducing costs is a policy objective but the fact is that some companies have stopped signing transmission contracts with Trans Power,” said... Power N[Z]’s chief executive... Some power companies, like Power NZ, believed Trans Power was charging too much for its monopolistic services... “The risk for the Government was that there was a large litigation battle coming,”... Competition in the electricity industry would force suppliers to pass on cost savings to consumers, but there was no guarantee of savings... The Government... will... also... accept lower returns on generation assets owned through ECNZ and Contact Energy. This duopoly produces 95[%] of our electricity but only competes for 20[%] of the market.

...[Trans Power’s] chairman... has been axed and four other directors dumped in a Government backlash against the error-prone national electricity grid company... Late last year the two state power generators – ECNZ and Contact Energy – refused point-blank to pay increased costs which Trans Power imposed on them for transmitting electricity through its high-voltage direct-current link from Benmore in the South Island across Cook Strait to... Wellington. The generators were joined in the industry standoff by distribution giants Mercury Energy and Power N[Z]. The industry heavies were upset at what they saw as a preferential deal which Trans Power had earlier made with Transalta at their expense... The board cleanout comes on top of major changes to Trans Power’s statement of corporate intent... which are designed to increase the overall competitiveness of the electricity industry... [Meanwhile,] ECNZ... has cut the dividend it will pay the Crown this year. It will pay a final dividend of \$67 million, on top of an interim dividend of \$81 million and a special dividend of \$158 million (following a revaluation of its assets...). This year’s ordinary dividends represent 56[%] of ECNZ’s net profit of \$264 million... [I]ts payout ratio... [has averaged 77%] over the past four years...

Later this year... the... Energy Minister... is expected to force... ECNZ to form a third division to invest in efficient new power plants, and also push ahead with a controversial proposal to make electricity companies separate the monopolistic side of their businesses from contestable operations. Private electricity companies say they will fight the latter proposal because it would have limited pricing impact on what they claim is already a highly competitive industry.

...The prospects of a further breakup of... E[CNZ and its] eventual privatisation... were raised yesterday by the Minister of Energy... unless... power companies... stop fiddling their costs at the expense of helpless consumers. The stern message coincides with new figures showing that since electricity deregulation five years ago, domestic power bills have risen 19.3[%] faster than inflation while wholesale prices have dropped 4.4[%]. Power companies also have]... until the end of next year to stop discouraging potential competitors by inflating charges for the use of power lines... [The Minister of Energy] favours power companies being split into separate line and energy companies... On Sunday, the Minister for the Environment... told the party’s central North Island divisional conference that National must be prepared to debate the role of government and examine whether sacred cows should be culled... [He] said energy companies had not been privatised because... the public had never been convinced of the merits. Selling E[CNZ] and Contact Energy would generate \$5 billion to \$6 billion.

...[the] Energy Minister... has turned up the heat under the power companies, by making the carve-up of... [ECNZ] and separating the line and energy businesses of the local power companies a package deal. “I could not support the further split of ECNZ without simultaneous moves to enhance competition at the retail end of the industry,” he told a conference of energy trusts yesterday. [The minister] contends that so long as the same companies which own the natural monopoly of the lines network are also in the... business of selling electricity it will be both possible and tempting for them to indulge in anti-competitive cross-subsidising... The... Mercury chief executive... said that if separation resulted in more than 30 small monopolies – miniature Trans Powers – it would be a retrograde step... He also questioned the point of splitting ECNZ except as a prelude to privatisation, which [the minister] says is not on the agenda... [The minister has, in turn, been] critical of the Commerce Act’s inability to prevent the aggregation of Mercury and Power N[Z]. ECNZ’s chairman is urging]... the Government to consider a partial float of the electricity generator rather than a split into several operating units.

...The Government would stand to lose up to \$3.2 billion in the value of its electricity generation businesses if... E[CNZ] was split into separate generation units. The prediction was made yesterday by[the] ECNZ chief executive... The least dramatic option for splitting ECNZ, a carve-up between the North and South Islands, would result in a \$1.2 billion loss in value to the Crown’s investment... [Incidentally, c]redit rating agency Standard and Poor’s is looking at... ECNZ with a view to a possible downgrade of its credit status should it be split into separate companies... ECNZ’s long-term rating is A+, while the short-term is A-1.

...An \$879 million price tag for splitting... ECNZ... in three is believed to have proved too rich for the Government, which will now back off and take further advice... The \$879 million was ECNZ’s estimate, based on consultants’ advice, of how much would have to be pumped into the three companies to make them viable in what would be an intensely competitive environment. One of the three proposed state-owned enterprises, based on... the ageing... Huntly power station, was expected to be made so vulnerable by plummeting wholesale prices that it would not be able to carry any debt... The 16-year-old... power station will close at Christmas for the first time in its life, reflecting the pressures on it from the new power market and the threat of new, more efficient generators coming on stream next year.

...[the sale by the Government of a 60% slice of Contact Energy to the public starts next week with a slick advertising campaign. In a first for NZ, the Government has decided to use a pre-registration process to give nearly 100,000 NZers priority treatment in the sale. Once the level of interest is gauged, the Treasury will decide how much of the 60% stake to put aside for public investors. The remainder will be bought by so-called institutional investors, such as insurance companies, banks and fund managers. Marketing surveys show that most people do not know much about what Contact owns, largely because its executives have deliberately kept a low profile as they have built up the company’s assets. Some of the assets that Contact was given when it was split off from the Electricity Corporation in 1995 were regarded as second rate – compared with assets that ECNZ kept. In particular, Contact was

saddled with some old and inefficient gas-fired power stations. On the plus side, Contact was given the Roxburgh hydro-power station and the giant Clyde Dam plant. The Clyde Dam – which was a financial thorn in the Government's side for many years because of unbudgeted costs associated with earthquake protection measures – is now one of the biggest attractions in the Contact asset portfolio that includes eight power stations. The dam was a Think Big project that ultimately cost taxpayers \$1.7 billion. Another of Contact's valuable assets is its rights to nearly half the production from NZ's largest gas field, Maui. It also has rights to all the output from smaller gas fields. Owning the gas rights means Contact can run its power plants at least as cheaply as competing power station owners. It also recently bought the supply business of the country's largest natural gas retailer, Enerco. In addition, Contact has been busily buying up retail electricity operations that have been sold by other energy companies. Contact now has more than 420,000 people buying either gas or electricity from one or other of its subsidiaries, making it the second-largest energy retailer in the land, behind TransAlta. A cornerstone investor will buy the 40% of Contact not being sold through the public share float. The Government has shortlisted six companies, including TransAlta, and will decide on the main shareholder next month. Because many of its assets have been built or acquired recently, it is difficult to put a value on Contact. But most estimates are that Contact will sell for more than \$1.5 billion, and the new owners can expect a pretax return of about 9% of that initial investment.'

... 'the former chief executive of Contact Energy was paid \$6.5 million for two years work, the company's annual report shows. This included a \$2.9 million salary package – more than six times the pay of a chief executive of a comparable NZ business.' In international news, 'California's Governor invoked emergency powers yesterday as hospitals, schools and even high-tech firms like Apple and Hewlett Packard were plunged into temporary darkness by electricity shortages. The lights went out in nearly 2 million California homes and businesses in a second straight day of blackouts as state lawmakers struggled to find a way out of the deepening crisis. The emergency powers will allow the Governor to use \$US400 million of taxpayers' money to buy urgently needed megawatts from out-of-state suppliers. He was forced to take the extra-ordinary measure – a deeply embarrassing one for the overwhelmingly Democratic political leadership of America's most populous and economically dynamic state – because the two biggest private electricity distribution companies, Southern Californian Edison and Pacific Gas and Electric, are teetering on the brink of bankruptcy. The shortages are the result of a botched deregulation of the electricity industry, which has left California woefully undersupplied. Its utility companies are largely at the mercy of out-of-state energy providers, which have taken advantage of the crunch to charge sky-high rates. Since prices charged to consumers have remained largely fixed, that means companies like Edison and PG&E have had to eat up billions of dollars in cash reserves to keep going. This week, Edison defaulted on almost \$US600 million in unpaid bills, and the following day PG&E followed suit, reneging on about \$US33 million of its debts. Several Republican politicians have blamed the crisis on Californian not-in-my-backyard thinking and the state's supposed refusal to countenance new electricity plants. Their voices were echoed by generating companies, which feared California was about to re-regulate its electricity industry and stifle the free market.'

...NZ 'power companies admit that the open-market competition for householders' wallets has been chaos. But the industry is promising the delays and bad service when customers switch supplier are being sorted out. Even the former Energy Minister who steered the restructuring has admitted things did not go according to plan and consumers were the losers. "I accept that in the end the responsibility is mine, but I was acting on the best advice at the time and everybody said, 'Look, we'll be okay'," he declared without offering to resign from Parliament. Figures show that since competition began, 261,590 of the 1.7 million electricity customers have switched retailers – one of the higher rates in the world for what the industry calls "consumer churn." But many customers have been beset with poor service, lengthy delays, disconnections and bills that are either wrong or non-existent.' In an extreme example, 'late last year Mercury sent a customer a bill for \$80,000 – less \$8000 if she paid promptly. That's the equivalent of about 55 years worth of electricity for an average family paying \$120 a month. The customer had already received two bills of almost \$500 each, ridiculously high considering she was living alone in a bedsit. In frustration, she called for a meter reader to visit. The result was the \$80,028 account. Mercury immediately accepted that the bill was a mistake and wiped it, but the customer had lost confidence in the company and decided to switch to First Electric. Then her problems really started. First Electric told her to expect a letter within days confirming the switch from Mercury, and a monthly bill. After five months of hearing nothing from either First Electric or Mercury, and just about to move out of her flat, the customer demanded a final bill from First Electric and received one for \$200. She accepted the amount but told the company that she would take five months to pay it considering they had taken five months to bill her. First Electric was happy with the arrangement, so the customer set up an automatic payment from her account to the company of \$40 a month starting on August 17. Although bank statements prove her payments were going through, First Electric sent her a second letter on August 18 claiming she had not paid her bill. Another letter warned her the firm had called in debt collectors. The company's records did not show the customer had paid, but a company spokesman said "if this is an error we would be keen to sort it out to her satisfaction." A Mercury spokesman said a computer glitch was responsible for the \$80,000 bill and a new billing system now blocked such inconsistencies.' ■ British 'company Yorkshire Electricity has apologised to a customer after sending her a bill for more than £2 billion.'

... 'with the Vector fiasco becoming sillier by the minute, Auckland Energy Consumer Trust members who meet today surely have no choice but to disown the controversial LineCare insurance scheme. As the 100% owner of Vector, Auckland's main power line utility, the trust has to accept responsibility for the scheme – particularly as it was briefed about it before the launch and raised no eyebrows. You will recall how Vector recently wrote to its 238,000 residential customers trying to lock them into a \$20.50 a year insurance scheme covering the wiring connecting their homes with the street. To avoid automatic payments being added to power bills, customers have to write back opting out of the deal. This inertia-selling tactic is illegal when dealing with goods. Somehow it is deemed acceptable for services such as insurance. But five power retailers have judged it so tacky that they have refused to include the LineCare insurance on their bills. Joining the criticism is the Housing Ministry, which has advised all residential tenants to reject the offer because landlords are responsible for damage to power lines. A property manager for 35 years unearthed more confusion when he rang Vector's advice service. He asked what would happen if all but one occupant in a block of flats serviced by one connecting line was insured. He was told that if there was a callout, the uninsured person would have to pay. When I put the same question to a Vector spokesman, his answer was different, but still zany. He said it would be a matter of which resident called for help. The ministry ruling that landlords are responsible only complicated the issue further. Power contracts are between the end-user and the provider. Now, it seems, a third party – the landlord – is liable for sagging wires and blown fuses. Given the traditional landlord's reluctance to part with money, and there being no contract to fall back on, I suspect collecting on these bills will take more money than it's worth. Underlying all this nonsense is the issue of how householders became guardians of the power cables running through their properties anyway. Traditionally cables were the property of the old power boards, but in 1984 the electricity supply regulations were altered to let the boards hand over responsibility to the homeowner.' In related news,] **North Shore residents whose household appliances were wrecked by a power surge are demanding compensation... The surge occurred after a newly installed transformer was energised... However, Power N[Z] has agreed only to repair or replace appliances ruined by the surge last Wednesday, which affected 35 homes... The amount of damage in dollar terms was unknown... [Power NZ's] chief executive... said it was going a bit far to expect the company to pay compensation when it had already agreed to fix damaged appliances. Under the terms and conditions of the standard power supply contract, the company had no obligation to fix damage if the surge was caused by something outside its control – such as lightning strikes or a car hitting a power pole... [But] a father-of-two, said... [other] companies, like Telecom, paid compensation when they failed to deliver services, so why not Power N[Z]?**

... 'Mercury Energy has teamed up with a US telecommunications firm to offer cheap phone deals to its 250,000 power customers in Auckland. Mercury customers who want the cheap phone deal will actually have to sign with the US company, which admits that competition in the long-distance market is threatened following a price-slashing special offered to residential customers by Telecom.' By the way,] **according to the Minister of Consumer Affairs... Telecom's efficiency in answering directory assistance calls and installing new phones has slipped... "While Telecom have improved their performance in fixing faults, I am concerned about other performance... indicators[which] show that the average time to answer a directory**

assistance call has increased by 90[%]. Telecom attribute this to a 28[%] increase in demand this year.” ...[the minister] knew Telecom considered the solution was to reduce demand by charging for directory assistance, but she disagreed. “Service, not demand, is the issue here. My challenge to Telecom is if you provide a service, it should be of a high standard irrespective of demand.” The performance indicator, which is a statutory obligation, [also] shows that the percentage of installation requests which met the requested time decreased from 93.3[%] in the previous period to 90.8... - 1997

[NZ’s] automatic telephone exchange building... will probably come into use in March next year to coincide with the release of the new telephone directory. Free dialling... is expected in 1970. - 1967

Before 1 April 1987, all domestic and international telecommunications services were provided by the New Zealand Post Office, as the NZ Post Office Act gave it a statutory monopoly... [(The Act also gave ‘NZ Post the sole right to carry standard letters up to 200 grams, unless more than 80 cents per item is charged’, but the coalition Government has introduced legislation to deregulate this market sometime in 1998.)] By 1986 the Post Office was the largest organisation in N[Z], employing 39,000 people and with assets of \$5.5 billion... In 1986, the Government... formed... [a] number of new corporate state trading companies... Telecom Corporation of N[Z] Limited, as one of those companies, began operating on 1 April 1987... When Telecom was corporatised, the first priority was to restructure the company in preparation for deregulation and eventual competition... Vigorous cost-cutting programmes were put in place... A substantial staff down-sizing exercise was undertaken [– to ‘23,900 during 1988 and then down to 18,144 during 1989’]... Outdated, inefficient systems were thrown out and replaced with modern computerised alternatives as the whole telecommunications network underwent substantial upgrading... The deregulation of the telecommunications market followed and in 1990 Telecom Corporation was sold to a consortium headed by two of America’s largest telecommunications companies, Ameritech and Bell Atlantic. The other founding members of the consortium were N[Z] companies... An agreement with the N[Z] Government specified that the owners reduce their holding in the company by offering a sale of shares to the N[Z] public and institutions. The first public offering of shares on N[Z] and world markets took place during June and July 1991... Telecom N[Z] Ltd... has one of the world’s most modern telecommunications systems with over 97% digital computer exchanges... supplies over 95% of telecommunications services used by businesses... more than 93% of N[Z] households with telecommunications services... [and] provides a wide range of other telecommunication services...

The NZ Post Office made over ‘\$208 million in profit after tax during the financial year ended 31 March 1985, and the Telecommunications Business section of the Post Office accounted for more than \$201m’ of it. In 1997 the PO made ‘a net profit of \$47.69m, down from the \$75.19m reported for 1996 (although the Government’s dividend harvest in 1997 was \$113.62m, up from \$85.31m). Revenue in 1997 was \$678m and total assets came to \$467.86m.’ This means that in 1986 the Telecommunications Business section accounted for a substantial portion of the PO’s *assets of \$5.5 billion*. After splitting the PO into NZ Post and Telecom, the NZ Government invested a further ‘\$1.843 billion’ in Telecom then sold it in 1990 for ‘\$4.25 billion’! For that price the new owners got a communications system which was almost fully modernised (fibre optic cable was already ‘in place along all the main trunk routes,’ ‘fibre rings surrounded the central business districts of the main cities by 1989’ and the ‘last manual exchange was replaced in 1991’).

Telecom’s goal is to be one of the best performing telecommunications companies in the world. The creation of *Value for Shareholders* is our ultimate measure of progress towards that goal. To add value for shareholders we must grow operating revenues and earnings while managing Telecom’s assets with increased efficiency.

To become an efficient competitor, Telecom had to provide an adequate basic service to N[Z] customers. The first step was to mount an extensive capital expenditure programme... Since 1988, Telecom has invested \$4.2 billion in developing a modern, sophisticated telecommunications service in N[Z]... The international exchange, Gateway 6, completed [the] final stage in upgrading of Telecom’s... circuits [during 1993. ‘Telecom’s annual capital expenditure had risen to \$770m by 1990’, but gradually decreased after its sale – down to ‘\$749m in 1991, \$666m in 1992, \$521m in 1993 and \$416m in 1994.’ That downward trend of reinvestment has, however, been reversed – back up to ‘\$600m during 1994-95’ and ‘approximately \$700m during 1995-96.’] Telecom is N[Z]’s leading telecommunications supplier in a highly competitive marketplace. Over 150 telecommunications companies compete in every facet of the industry. The only exception is in providing residential service (or local access), where Telecom’s inherited monopoly position still remains.

Telecom’s new owners had virtually every NZ home and business as an existing customer (‘the Post Office had 1,254,896 subscribers by 1985 – Telecom had 1,719,000 by 1996’) while, initially, having no competition. It was, therefore, able to concentrate on investing in additional services (i.e., additional sources of profit). Telecom also owned the country’s public telephone booths. One investment was to replace old public phones with newer models that could, for example, accept credit cards or prepaid phonecards. Coin-operated booths were redesigned to accept 10c, 20c, 50c, \$1 and \$2 coins but not to give change. At about the same time the charge for public phones went from a flat rate of 20c per local call to 50c. However, Telecom does have to ‘spend about \$1.5m a year on vandalised public phone booths’!

Net earnings for 1988 were \$63.9 million. Telecom achieved record net earnings for the year ending 31 March 1994 of \$528.1 million, an increase of 15.4% from \$457.7 million for the year ending 31 March 1993, excluding the effect of abnormal redundancy and restructuring costs.

The *effect* reduced that year’s net earnings to ‘\$108 million’. During the 1989-90 financial year the state-owned Telecom had achieved ‘net earnings of \$257m, and \$235m’ the year before that. At the end of the 1990-91 financial year the new owners achieved ‘net earnings of \$332m, followed by \$402m. In 1994-95 net earnings rose to \$620.2m and then a record \$717m in the 1995-96 financial year – for a return on average total assets of 15.7%’. While these profits were being gained the number of employees continued to decrease (from ‘16,263 in 1990 to 9,257 in 1994’). At the same time, ‘Net Earnings per Share went from 11c in 1990 to 22.7c in 1994 (which was paid out to over 30,679 shareholders’). By 1995 this had risen to ‘32.8c (or a 30c dividend per share), followed by 37.9c in 1996 (35c dividend per share)’.

Telecom’s profit results might bring quarterly howls of protest from those upset at its sale to an American-led consortium... [but] the buyers were prepared to pay about a billion dollars more than even the Government’s experienced international advisers were expecting. That extra billion came in handy against the [national] overdraft.

...Telecom is cutting prices of digital computer communication and dedicated voice links... but raising those of... analogue circuits to swing business users away from the older technology. Rapid growth in the volume of data traffic has reduced the marginal cost of providing these services, Telecom officials said yesterday, and technology advances had lowered equipment costs. But intensifying competition from Clear – and, in future, [AUS’s] Telstra... is not a factor Telecom is likely to have ignored... Telstra, not bound by the same regulations or service obligations, could enter the high profit ends of the market developed by Telecom with aggressive pricing at any time... Within the Auckland, Wellington,

Christchurch and Dunedin business districts, the monthly “service delivery point” fees fall from \$500 a month to \$300 for the first 2Mbit/s circuit and access fees per end drop from \$350 to \$250. Together with the elimination of transmission charges for high speed DDS circuits... this means a monthly cost of \$1840, instead of \$5650 a month for a customer with two sites connected by a 25-channels circuit.

...REMEMBER party lines? The good old days when two or more telephone subscribers with different numbers shared the same line? Thanks to a development called distinctive ringing, those days are back, but this time it is good news for home office workers, especially if you’ve got a fax machine or computer modem... Distinctive ringing allows you to have two phone numbers – one for personal calls and one for your fax... modem or for work-related telephone calls – without having to pay the hefty charges for an extra line. When your phones ring they will sound different, depending on which of your two numbers the caller dialled... At the moment there are two distinctive rings available – the normal... ring that we are all used to, and another which Telecom calls the “FaxAbility” ring. Fax machines that are FaxAbility-compatible can recognise this second ring and answer the call, while leaving other calls... If you already have a fax machine or modem that isn’t FaxAbility-compatible all is not lost – you can buy a gadget called a “ring decoder”... *The SmartRing Decoder*... is priced at \$99 (plus gst). *The Stealth Ring Decoder* is... priced at \$159.95 (including gst). • A faxability number costs \$3.95 a month. • The alternative to a ring decoder or fax switch is a second residential telephone line that costs \$175.13 installation, plus \$35.87 a month.

...Consumers winners in phone war... [T]he... battle between Telecom and Clear... has led both telecommunications companies to introduce \$5 week-night toll calls for residential customers. The price war started at the weekend with Telecom announcing \$6 week-night calls until the end of the year, but the offer was undercut by Clear introducing \$5 calls from Monday night. Telecom responded yesterday by matching the \$5 calls, starting last night... Neither company would say whether further price cuts were likely... The chief executive of the Consumers Institute... said the price cuts were welcome rewards from competition, but neither company would be losing from the deal. The specials would generate business during the off-peak evening hours.

...An embarrassed Telecom has agreed to apologise to staff after one of its managers offered a pay rise to anyone who left the union. The company, locked in an industrial battle with employees over individual contracts, was threatened with court action yesterday by the Engineering and Printing Union... after... Telecom[’s] manager... of the design, construction and maintenance division... recorded the offer on “voice mail” then told staff to ring and listen to the message[– which]... said staff would get an immediate 2[%] increase if they left the union and another increase later to match whatever the union negotiated. The increase would be backdated, which union members would not get... Telecom staff are running an industrial campaign of short-term strikes and limited work bans against the company’s push for individual contracts... About 5000 telephones are awaiting repair, 2000 of them in Auckland, with delays of up to four days.

...Telecom faces more snap strikes next week as it continues to struggle with huge backlogs of household telephone faults. Workers already on a national overtime ban walked off the job again on Thursday, during the company’s annual meeting, and their union warned yesterday of more disruption in coming days. The company was busy yesterday drafting in extra contractors to work through the weekend in the absence of most regular staff in Auckland, where the faults backlog is worst. It said last night that there were still 2200 Auckland households waiting for repairs to telephone lines, and acknowledged that the number could rise even higher if the weekend brought much more rain. An Auckland spokesman for the Engineering and Printing Union... said repair workers were telling him that the figure had reached 2400 and there were 444 cable faults awaiting attention... [M]ore and more customers would be disconnected as water was left to seep further into these. The company now acknowledges that Auckland residential customers are having to wait up to six days for repairs, but the union believes some delays are running to nine days. Business faults are being fixed much faster, however, in little more than a day. A Telecom spokesman... confirmed statements attributed to [his chief executive] that Telecom stood ready to negotiate collective contracts where that was the wish of union members. But he reiterated the company’s desire for separate contracts for technic[ians] and telephone services staff.

...Auckland telephone exchange workers have been threatened with disciplinary action if they take “micropauses” as prescribed by occupational health experts to prevent strain injuries... [The] Engineering and Printing Union... is urging workers to... pause for 10 seconds every three minutes while using computer keyboards... regardless, citing... that... [e]mployers had a statutory duty to provide healthy and safe workplaces, under pain of criminal penalties if they failed to do so... The union has for some time been considering whether to sue Telecom on behalf of up to 60 Auckland telephone exchange workers who... have reported strain injuries since 1991... [Meanwhile,] Telecom’s faults crisis has set new records for the length of time customers have been left without service. Some... customers in Auckland have been waiting for more than two weeks... – twice as long as the company claimed. An irate customer... said... “we are living in N[Z]’s biggest city and we are being delivered Third World standards.”

...Telecom is expected to hand out thousands of \$50 phone cards or free one-month line rentals to Auckland customers caught in the faults crisis. Customers who have to wait more than 24 hours to have phones fixed are entitled to either... under Telecom’s service agreement. However, customers who qualify have to call Telecom on 120 and order... [their choice] – they are not automatically handed out. A spokesman for Telecom... was reluctant to divulge the exact number of cards and line rentals already given away... But... [he] said staff had made good progress yesterday, bringing the number of faults down to under 2100. “Considering we were over 3000 on Friday, that’s good going.” ...As well as 78 contractors brought in from outside Auckland, technicians in administrative positions had shed their suits and gone back, temporarily, to repairing faults... [The spokesman] said that in extremely rare cases Telecom provided cellular phones to customers.

...If consumers had to give Telecom an end of year report card many would probably give... a D for service... Unusually wet weather and industrial action were the reasons offered by Telecom’s public relations team... for the excessive... time it took to fix faults... But the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, which keeps an eye on Telecom’s post-privatisation performance, reckons these are pretty poor excuses for slipping from bad to worse... A former supervisor in Telecom’s faults department... who took voluntary redundancy three years ago, said... the main problems... were that Telecom lacked experienced staff to cope with heavy faults workloads, and had failed to invest in replacing cables... - 1996

Telecom customers can expect widespread disruption to services... Staff began a nationwide go-slow yesterday over their employment contract... After nine months the staff had had enough of trying to reach agreement with a company which appeared to be driven by greed. The union was seeking a 5[%] pay rise, given the company’s record profits over the past few years. However, it had offered only 2[%]... A union spokeswoman... said... “Telecom’s desire to rip off its staff so that it can make more profit is just outrageous, and simply does not sit well with normal N[Z] business practice.” Last night a Telecom spokesman... accused the union of seeking publicity and said that fresh negotiations were under way... but Telecom management believes the effects on customers will be minimal... The union did not have enough members to have a major effect on services... Telecom employed 8500 workers, 2000 of whom were at management level. Around 3500 of the operational staff were union members.

...Telecom is calling on its American owners to help in a cost-cutting drive, triggering fears that workers will be hit in the pocket... Unions say... the proposed contract would knock \$4 million from the pay packets of 1600 workers by removing double-time payments and changing work arrangements so that overtime was reduced.

...One Telecom... employee, who would not give his name, said... a backlog of faults had built up in Auckland during the past four to six weeks because of an overtime ban introduced by the telecommunications giant... The... overtime ban included after-hours emergency callouts. Until about a month ago, customers with medical conditions – the sick, elderly and pregnant women – could have faulty phones repaired immediately. The lineman said the delays could have tragic consequences: “We are scared there could be a death caused by this. We don’t feel it’s safe and we are

not happy working in this environment.” Telecom seemed more interested in saving money on overtime than giving customers good service, he said... But Telecom denied customers were facing long periods without service. A spokesman said there was no overtime ban and faults were being repaired in one day on average. At most, customers were waiting three days, he said. But the *N[Z] Herald* has spoken to at least two Telecom residential customers who were left with faulty phones for five days.

...Telecom’s backlog of Auckland telephone faults has surged even higher, with about 2600 householders now facing repair delays of up to a week.

...Telecom plans to shed more than 10[%] of the staff in its design, build and maintenance division before totally throwing their work open to competition. Nationwide, 199 jobs out of 1600 have been tagged for cutting before the division, whose staff maintain the telecommunications network, loses its near monopoly...

[Yesterday, t]wo teams of staff in the... design, build and maintenance business unit walked out in the morning when two colleagues were given suspension notices. Then another two teams went on strike about lunchtime and two more workers were suspended...

Telecom [has sacked] two repairmen for falsifying time sheets... [Other] staff are being told to check their rear-view mirrors after revelations that the company used private investigators to spy on [the two repairmen]... An industrial officer... said the union was appalled at the practice, which was underhand and destroyed trust. Telecom should have said it was concerned about their work and given them a chance to improve. It was a difficult case to argue, however, when the sacked employees had clearly not been where they claimed to have been at the times they wrote on their time sheets... Private eyes followed one repairman around Auckland for two days last month, taking photographs and recording his location every five minutes... A Telecom communications manager... would not reveal the cost of the operation... [In related news,] Telecom customers wanting peace of mind over wiring faults will soon be paying nearly double for it... [Telecom’s] optional wire maintenance fee... [will rise] from 98c to \$1.95 (including GST)... Telecom[’s] spokesperson... said the company was increasing the charge to improve the return it received from providing the service... The latest price rise has the potential to... [give] it an extra \$20 million in revenue each year... Commercial customers will pay the increased cost for each phone line... Before last year’s rise... by 92%... the fee had remained at 51c-a-month since it was introduced in 1988... The... fee... [means] faults with the wiring or sockets, which are owned by the homeowner, would be fixed by Telecom at no extra charge... If customers chose to take the risk and cancel it “the odds are... that most people will be ahead.” ...More than 90[%] of Telecom’s 1.8 million customers nationwide opt to pay the... fee... Most problems with wiring within the house were caused by dampness or rodents or both... Telecom’s general manager... said the minimum callout charge was \$30, and with materials and labour added, the cost of a repair “can easily come to \$100 a call.” However, independent telephone repairers... said the typical charge for replacing a junction box, the most common task they were called to do for residential customers, was about \$65. Another option was for people to save the \$23.40 a year Telecom would charge, and fix any problems themselves. For example, last week The Warehouse was selling master wall sockets for \$11.99, 10m of telephone cable for \$9.99 and packets of 25 clips to secure the cable for \$3.99. Similarly, people may find buying a new telephone cheaper than renting one from Telecom. Telecom charges \$4.01-a-month to rent a standard phone, or \$4.95-a-month for one with pre-set calls memory. Similar phones were available from The Warehouse for \$29.99, which meant a customer would be saving money after six to eight months if they returned their Telecom phone and bought a new one [– unless they pay \$139 for a cordless phone with]... 25 channels, 10 speed dials... [and scramble technology to keep] calls private... With most telephone equipment now being reliable, the possibility of problems... over the next couple of years... was... remote for most customers...

Despite earlier indications from Telecom... [the company] wants residential customers to pay... every time they call directory assistance... [E]very household would get a cut in the \$35 monthly line charge and then pay when calling the 018 service... The company has produced figures to back its push to charge for... directory assistance. They show... [that i]n the past three years residential calls to directory have risen from 22 million to 33 million. Threequarters of those are for local numbers and most of the time (73[%]) the number required is listed in the phone book... “Basically it’s idleness,” [a]... spokeswoman for Telecom... said. “It’s a real socio-economic divide. People in higher income groups... use directory assistance a lot more than low-income people. These days people have about four phones in their house, but they don’t necessarily have four phone books.” The company is having talks with interested groups, such as those representing the blind... Representatives of the blind and partially blind are concerned they will be penalised because they are unable to read telephone directories. People with arthritis and other disabilities or who are unable to read also face financial disadvantage. There will be no distinction made in the charges between those who call for local numbers that are listed in their telephone book and those who call for new listings, incorrect listings, out-of-town or unlisted numbers. Telecom would not say yesterday how much less customers would pay in line rental or how much directory calls would cost. It was still deciding... Certain residential consumer protections were contained in the Kiwi Share agreement, written when the Labour Government sold Telecom... These say Government approval is required for Telecom to increase standard line rentals faster than inflation, introduce compulsory charging for local calls or reduce the telephone service. So far no variations have been sought and... Telecom did not believe the... proposal would require approval... If Telecom has its way, it could extract an extra \$16.5 million a year from residential customers at 50c a call... Business customers have also been calling directory more, up from 6.7 million inquiries in 1994-1995 to 9 million last year, but they already pay 50c a call. Cellphone calls have jumped from 1.3 million to 2.5 million, but again users pay 50c, plus talking time.

...Tracking down that long-lost friend overseas could soon be a costly exercise. Telecom announced yesterday that from December 1 it would no longer run a free directory service. Customers will pay \$1.50 every time they call directory for an international number and 50c for a *N[Z]* number. To offset the new charges, Telecom will cut the residential line rental fee by \$1.25 a month... Calls to the service had more than doubled since 1994 and grew 28[%] last year alone when 44.5 million were fielded... A spokeswoman for Telecom... said... “We just can’t keep on going like that each year. We are having problems coping with the number of calls.” ...over 80[%] of calls were made by just 20[%] of customers, most in the high-income bracket... Provisions have been made for blind people and others unable to read and for physically disabled customers unable to use phone books... [T]hose customers could apply for an exemption from the directory charges but would forfeit the reduced line rental if they did.

...Those long-lasting, long-distance phone calls to friends and family will cost more when Telecom reshuffles its toll prices next month. The new regime will offer cheaper day-time international rates for residential customers and cheaper night-time rates for some subscribers... But... [toll] calls over 30 minutes long[that] currently attract a 45[%] discount... from July 1 will warrant only 30[%] off. The rest of the more-you-talk-the-more-you-save discounts will also be shaved... [A] Telecom spokeswoman... said... [duration-based] discounts were not “that popular... People prefer something straightforward, you know, this costs x per minute. It’s a move to make the process easier to understand.” [Telecom offers a range of ways for customers to be charged for calls (e.g., households can opt to have a low monthly rental but be charged 20c per local call, or pay a higher rental – an extra \$14 – and have free local calls). The free-call area for Auckland ends to the north at the Hibiscus Coast.]

...Calls to and from... Hibiscus Coast... [and] Auckland in the 10 pm to 8 am time slot will rise 450[%] from 2c a minute to 11c. Daytime calls between 8 am and midday will rise 234[%] from 6c a minute to 20c, while calls between noon and 6 pm will rise 300[%] from 5c a minute to 20c... The revamped charges also include a maximum charge of 20c a minute off-peak to anywhere in *N[Z]* and the \$5 maximum charge for weekends and week nights... The new international toll regime will see economy rates fall by 35 to 37[%], while standard rates drop between 14 and 16[%] from the beginning of next year. But peak local call charges to commercial customers will go up 1c a minute to 4.55c, while local off-peak calls will rise 0.55c to 0.99c... [L]ocal business line charges will drop \$2 a month to \$58.42... Clear charges... \$48 a month plus GST... [for] its analogue business line rental... [plus] 3.5c a minute at peak times and 1c a minute off-peak.

...Insufficient competition is costing the economy \$250 million a year in excessive telephone charges... This needs to be addressed rapidly because monopoly profit costs are reflected in unnecessarily high telecommunications service prices that put the competitiveness of businesses at risk. The issue of telecommunications industry deadweight losses has come to light recently in documents obtained under the Official Information Act by the Telecommunications Users Association of N[Z]... A deadweight loss in economics is normally associated with a tax. It is money lost to the consumer through Government actions. In the telecommunications industry the deadweight loss referred to by Government officials is the benefit lost by the telecommunications user through the premium profit gained by the monopolist. In effect it is a Telecom tax... [W]hile interconnection agreements have been signed over the past few years, significant sectors of the telecommunications market – including residential and commercial local networks and the provision of high-speed data services – have remained devoid of open competition. This is hearsay, some will say, and point to the big price reductions that have taken place. Just recently Telecom celebrated its 10th birthday by claiming that a one-minute toll call to Wellington from Auckland that cost \$2.58 in 1987 now costs just 29c. While that statement is true it masks the whole story. On average national toll call prices have fallen by 82[%] since 1987. Three-quarters of that drop happened before 1990 while Telecom was in public ownership. Just one-quarter of that drop has occurred in the seven years since Telecom was privatised. Yet during those years costs have continued to fall sharply as Telecom completed the digitisation of its network and dramatically reduced staff. International toll call prices have been tracked in an independent survey conducted over the past 10 years by [a Sydney-based organisation]. This records that while a toll call from Wellington to New York has fallen in price by 58[%] since 1992 N[Z] is now ranked the most expensive country of 12 OECD countries to make that call, compared to fourth most expensive five years ago... [W]e are getting relatively more expensive compared to other countries for international and national toll calls. Another major part of the price story is the line charge and the cost of local business calls. This is where there is almost no competition and nor is there likely to be because of the enormous cost of duplicating the entire Telecom local network. Since 1987 the residential line charge has nearly doubled from \$18.23 a month to \$35.97 a month. It is worse for business because local phone calls cost nothing in 1987 but now cost 4c a minute... And it isn't just plain old phone services that are pricey. A 1996 Ministry of Commerce survey into the popular integrated service digital network concluded that N[Z] rates for local, low-use ISDN applications were 69[%] higher than the average of the other countries surveyed (A[US], Britain, the U[S], Sweden and Finland). And national and international high-use ISDN applications were 97[%] higher than the average...

U[S] efforts to force other countries to slash the rates they charge for incoming phone calls could prove toothless in the face of the complexities of the international calls market, the general manager of Telecom's network marketing... says. The US regulator, the Federal Communications Commission, has set benchmarks ranging from 15USc to 23c a minute, or as much as a tenth below the current levels some state monopoly companies charge to complete international calls. The FCC argues the move could save US consumers \$US17 billion over five years and bring down prices globally... International call charging is established in so-called accounting rate agreements which set reciprocal prices at which carriers terminate incoming calls. Telecom, for instance, has agreements with five carriers in the US... N[Z] was regarded as being in the "good guy" camp by the U[S]. But many other countries, typically developing economies with state-owned telephone companies, relied on high settlement rates to boost national coffers... [T]hey could afford to negotiate high accounting rates because they usually originated a proportionately low number of calls... and most of the countries concerned had no operations of their own in the US.

...Entrepreneurs answer call of open market... If you get fed up with telephone bills and the standard of service, start your own telecommunications company. That is what a couple of San Diegan businessmen did, and now their company, WorldXChange, is in N[Z], the third in a recent flush of competitors for Telecom and Clear. With aggressive use of high technology to cut overheads, the new companies are offering up to 55[%] off the price of calls to the U[S] and Europe, 40[%] lower charges to A[US] and savings on national calls. It is all a result of the N[Z] Government creating "the most open telecommunications market in the world, and the fastest expanding," says [one of the San Diegans]. Clear, largely an offshoot of the U[S] operator, MCI, with some local shareholding, was the first to compete with Telecom when the market was deregulated... It has been followed by another huge operator, Global One, an offshoot of the American operator, U.S. Sprint, in consortium with Deutsch Telecom and France Telecom. Then there is the A[US]n Government-owned Telstra, and now WorldXChange. All have interconnection agreements for national toll services with the Telecom network, and own or lease international connections. They have all spent millions of dollars setting up computer systems for switching calls, compiling bills and providing customer service. Some of the facilities are mindblowing. Telstra has switching equipment in Auckland and Wellington capable of handling 700,000 calls an hour. Telecom does not feel intimidated by the competition... said [a company] spokesman...

The recently-arrived national and international toll carrier WorldxChange plans to offer local telephone services by Christmas... The company, which officially completes the rollout of its domestic and international long-distance services on Monday, has picked up 2000 customers in the 10 weeks it has been operational, even though its first advertising campaign has yet to begin... The rollout gives customers... international calls priced between 30 and 50[%] less than Telecom's standard rates... WorldxChange is targeting small and medium-sized businesses... doing more than 20,000 minutes a month... The... WorldxChange... group operates in Austria, Canada, France, Germany, Denmark, Guam and Britain and forecasts 1997/98 revenues of more than \$US500 million... [Incidentally, when callers use an operator to make toll calls from a public booth in the US and charge it to their credit card, they are 'asked which long-distance company they wish to use. Common replies are "whichever," "any one will do," "I don't care," "it doesn't matter." An entrepreneur has registered those plus other replies as company names and charges twice as much']

...this weekend Telecom is holding a *Talk-a-thon* – you can 'call anywhere in NZ as many times as you wish, and talk for as long as you like, but pay no more than \$14' in total. In response, a competitor is offering 'weekend rates for anywhere in NZ of 15c per minute or no more than \$3 per call.'

...Telephone callers may soon find their conversations interrupted by advertisements – in exchange for free toll calls. An A[US]n company plans to introduce a service in N[Z] next year which will give subscribers free national calls, interrupted with 10-second ads every few minutes. Whitfield Investments will test the free phone service in N[SW] later this year... The system, which was first introduced in Sweden in February, had attracted 100,000 subscribers in Stockholm in its first seven months... Telecom and Clear... have no immediate plans to introduce a similar service, but both companies say they will study the A[US]n pilot scheme.

...Telecom gave [an Aucklander] the fright of her life yesterday. The Auckland legal secretary mistook the telecommunication giant's promotional mail-out for a letter bomb. Telecom's card – advertising its new Calltrack service – malfunctioned and emitted a whirring electrical noise, which resulted in the evacuation of the Southern Cross building in the inner city. Bomb disposal experts, police and firefighters were called during the morning bomb scare which [also] closed down parts of High, Lorne and Victoria Streets for about 90 minutes and caused a university capping parade to be diverted. The card came in a red envelope bearing the warning "beware" in bold type. When opened the card emitted a roaring noise and featured an origami-type monster. The advertisement – promising to take the "horror" out of totalling up the phone bill – was mailed out to about 3000 Auckland and Northland businesses and was due to be sent to other businesses nationwide, but has now been withdrawn... [A] lawyer who works in the building, described the promotion as extremely irresponsible... [He] and other lawyers were planning on billing Telecom for lost work hours... A Telecom spokesman... said he was "deeply sorry" for the incident... [By the way, a]bout 3000 people have asked to be put on a register so that they are not called by telemarketers. The Direct Marketing Association, which set up the register about six months ago, said the most common complaint about telemarketers was "they always ring at tea time." The association membership services director... said sales-shy people had to register their wish to be left alone as the association needed permission to store that information under the Privacy Act.

...Clear... has slashed its tariffs and launched an aggressive telemarketing campaign to win customers from Telecom... [The man who was] appointed yesterday as its chief executive... declined to give details... but a call to Clear's customer service department revealed minimum savings for a small business switching from Telecom were: 250 free minutes of toll calls or \$100 credit, plus discounts from Clear's standard tariffs[– including 26%] for calls between N[Z] cities or A[US]... Bigger businesses would get larger discounts... Telstra... said it was disappointing to see Clear as the key protagonist in the latest round of price cuts. "People who buy business are doing nobody any favours." Telecom said Clear was countering some of its own recent initiatives. If Clear offered a Telecom customer a new pricing package, Telecom would "ensure we'd provide comparable value for money taking into account quality of service [and] efficiency." ...[Clear's new head] has been acting chief executive... since July and a board member for 18 months representing British Telecom, Clear's 25[%] shareholder.

...The surprise \$US30 billion... bid by fourth-ranked U[S] long distance carrier WorldCom to take over... MCI Communications... casts further doubt on the already uncertain state of Clear's ownership... British Telecom has been expected to cement control of the company when it takes over MCI in a deal which is still to be approved by MCI shareholders... But all that is now in doubt. WorldCom, which has been doubling in size each year, would now like to add MCI to its list of 50 acquisitions. To do so it is offering \$US10 a share more than BT, whose offer was recently revised (sizeably) downward because of MCI's flagging performance in the US... Domestic market losses for this year could reach \$US800 million... Should WorldCom succeed, it will not only thwart BT's long-standing global aspirations, but also change the shareholding outlook for Clear. Clear is offering an official "no comment" when asked about the impact of the development. But there is no doubt that it comes at a time when the telecommunications market is particularly unsettled... [I]t is no secret that TVNZ would like to sell [its shares in Clear]... The negotiations between B[T] and Telstra, expected to result in BT taking a stake in Telstra after the A[US]n Government's partial float[of Telstra] later this year, collapsed. In addition, they were thought to have included an arrangement in which BT's interest in Clear was to be passed on to Telstra in return for Telstra's British operations. Given the nature of the industry, the chief executive of any telco cannot expect an easy time.

...British Telecommunications is in preliminary merger talks with GTE Corporation of the US as it seeks to recoup from its unsuccessful bid for MCI... A merger with GTE would give the British telephone company a stake in the annual \$US200 billion... US telecommunications market... [BT] made a second-quarter loss of £32 million... The company... said the... loss compared with a profit of £461 million a year earlier. The main reason for the loss was the £510 million windfall tax – imposed on BT and other previously state-owned utilities... in recognition of what the [British] Government called their excess profits.

...Clear... [has reported an 11%] slump in bottom-line earnings... from \$23.4 million in 1996 to \$20.8 million... The result took full account of interconnection payments... worth about \$500,000 a month... due to Telecom which Clear, since August last year, has partially withheld... Clear's shareholders... [which include] MCI... and TVNZ, received dividends at the same rate as 1996 – a total of \$12 million in each year. While Clear's shareholders' funds rose modestly from \$133 million to \$141 million... long-term debt... jumped from \$40 million... to nearly \$74 million, while total assets were up from \$226 million to \$271 million.

...N[Z]'s largest company, Telecom, is at a turning point after years of meteoric growth. The company yesterday reported a 19[%] drop in bottomline profit for the [1996-97] year to \$581.4 million, in part due to restructuring costs... In the full year, Telecom's dividend payout of 39c a share is greater than its net earnings per share of 30.8c... The chairman... said it was pleasing that a 6.2[%] revenue rise to \$3.12 billion... had outstripped economic growth... [because] Telecom has been fighting competition from Clear Communications in the national and international calling markets, and BellSouth in the once highly profitable cellphone market... Performance was also hampered by start-up costs associated with Internet provider Xtra and the cable video and information services company First Media... [Telecom's] shareholder Ameritech reported a fourth-quarter profit of \$784 million, up 10%...

Telecom's much-trumpeted Xtra internet service... [– which] is offering dedicated Internet data networks at up to 40[%] less than Telecom subsidiary Netway... [–] is red-faced today after two computer-savvy 14-year-olds found an easy way to read confidential online files. As a result... Telecom Xtra has temporarily shut down customer access to its online billing information, which gives details of clients' internet usage and charges, and is working on improved security. The service development manager... said Xtra was sorry this had occurred and was concerned enough to take immediate action. "We're also in touch with our software supplier..."... One of the boys... said he and his friend... found the security hole by looking at their own Xtra bills online. They noticed that the Web page location (URL) code at the top of the screen contained a string of information, including a user name and some numbers. When they substituted another user's name in the string, that person's billing details were displayed. "I... suppose it's not particularly confidential information, but when you access your account it looks like there is high security – you have to type in your user name and password – but it's not." The boys had e-mailed Xtra about the problem, but did not get a reply until a week later. Xtra claimed the information could not be accessed without a user name and password. The company responded very differently when the N[Z] *Herald* followed up the boys' concerns. [The service development manager] said it appeared Xtra billing staff had misunderstood the e-mail... [T]he Privacy Act requires an agency that holds personal information to take reasonable steps to "prevent unauthorised use or unauthorised disclosure" of the information it holds... [In related news, t]elephone companies could lose \$US8 billion... in revenue worldwide over the next four years as more customers turn to the Internet for voice and fax phone calls, says a new report. Lower prices on the Internet will prompt phone companies worldwide to lower their prices... International long distance companies will feel the biggest impact from the Internet... said the study by Action Information Services... International phone calling by voice and fax will generate more than \$62 billion in revenue this year. Based on the International Trade Union's revenue figures, that will likely grow to about \$77 billion over the next four years...

[British p]arents have been warned that their children could be running up higher bills than they realise using British Telecom... phone... cards [which] allow youngsters to make computerised calls without cash. [A] maths teacher... was shocked to find that the cost can be three times the standard rate. "It's a rip-off," she claimed after telling how her 12-year-old daughter ran up a £121 bill over 11 days' holiday with family friends in Hong Kong. BT admitted chargecard calls were more expensive, particularly from abroad. But they said using a pin number involved expensive processing by computers needed to cut out the operator.

...London callgirls... [a]re asking the Office of Fair Trading to force the country's recently privatised phone giant... to reopen the lines they use to contact customers. BT is blocking the phone lines because the prostitutes' business cards clutter the walls of hundreds of West End... phone booths. "I'm a very bad girl, spank me," reads one... "It's messy and it gives a bad impression of central London," said... a member of the Westminster Borough council. "The advertising is too explicit and that's bad when the boxes can be used by children and tourists... Some kids collect the cards and they even ring up the numbers..." [A] BT spokesman... said: "There's no question these cards are deterring people from using the phones. We're getting regular complaints." He wouldn't say how many... The callgirls say they need the phone booth displays because [respectable] newspapers, magazines and billboards refuse to run their advertisements. It's illegal to solicit sex for money in Britain, but it is legal to post cards that don't specifically offer sexual services for money. Thousands of the naughty notes are posted in phone boxes daily. BT cleanup crews remove more than 150,000 a week. Westminster Council asked the government to outlaw the phone booth trade. So far, parliament has refused to oblige. Politicians and BT officials say the only way to eliminate the problem is to shut down the 400-odd phone numbers... The campaign to denude the booths of the business cards began last October... It sends two warnings to the callgirls' billing addresses. If they ignore the warnings, the phones are shut off... By mid-February, BT had blocked 75 lines... So the callgirls... complained to the Office of Fair Trading... The Office... ordered the lines reconnected. BT restored service to [the] 75 customers in February. BT then... began disconnecting the same phones... [and currently] is

blocking about two phone lines a week... [In local news, an AUS]n publisher of business directories has pulled out of [the country] after its attempts to compete with Telecom failed spectacularly. Colour Pages Ltd set up a N[Z] subsidiary at the end of 1995, but was placed in receivership this week, owing about \$1.3 million to unsecured creditors... The managing director of Colour Pages... yesterday estimated the company's losses at more than \$2 million... More than 1000 businesses in Auckland and Wellington are believed to have signed up for advertisements in two directories which will not now be published... Plans by the company to produce an Auckland business directory on yellow paper were thwarted last year when Telecom threatened to take legal action. Telecom has since lodged a trademark application for the sole right to use the colour yellow. Colour Pages reprinted the directory on blue paper, but delays in getting the directory out upset advertisers and some withheld payment of their bills... In early July, Telecom failed to get an injunction stopping Colour Pages from producing a Wellington directory. However, the High Court ruled the case should go to a substantive hearing to hear copyright issues and Colour Pages was required to lodge \$300,000 with the court to prove it could afford to defend the case... Twenty company staff in Auckland will lose their jobs.

...Telecom has pared back its capital expenditure plans for this financial year... from the \$800 million foreshadowed when the annual results were announced two months ago to no more than \$750 million. "And possibly significantly less than that."

...Telecom yesterday reported a \$188 million net profit for the... quarter... up 6.2[%] from \$177.1 million in the same period last year... Revenue grew 9.6[%] to \$800.6 million... Telecom[also reported that it] is to chop capital spending by \$500 million over the next three years in a cost-control programme... In the current year, capital expenditure will fall by \$100 million to \$700 million... [Incidentally,] Telecom has walked out of the Telecommunications Users Association (Tuanz), criticising the group for shifting its focus to political objectives aimed at getting Government intervention in the telecommunications marketplace... Telecom has been a significant sponsor and financial contributor since Tuanz was formed in 1986.

...Collective action is better, say the founders of the newly-formed N[Z] Telecommunications Industry Organisation... With Telecom refusing to join their organisation, the chief executives of Clear... Telstra, BellSouth, Saturn and Global One will talk a lot to themselves. Telecom is the company they need to bring to the table... Issues ranging from technical standards... to... pornography on the Internet... will benefit from a common voice. Telecom's response once again displays its fortress mentality... So far, dealing with Telecom has been a sorry saga of lengthy and sometimes fruitless negotiations, litigation and grandstanding... But far more effective than talk is the real weapon the five could wield – global power. Their parents are some of the largest telecom companies in the world who could make life just as tough for Telecom abroad as Telecom makes for the five here... [By the way, 'the final report of the Ministerial Inquiry into Telecommunications makes recommendations aimed at clarifying the ground rules for competition in this most dynamic of industries. The inquiry has also recommended a stronger form of regulation for a small but crucial set of services. Opponents of this proposal have argued that regulation is not justified and say that the industry is already competitive. This argument probably seems compelling to many people, but it is quite wrong. The fact that we have alternative suppliers of toll calls, for example, tells us nothing about whether the price of toll calls is unnecessarily high. To understand this point, consider one of the most famous errors ever made by a court. Back in 1956, the US Supreme Court was considering a case involving DuPont. The court effectively ruled that DuPont did not have market power in the supply of cellophane because alternatives to cellophane were widely available. In fact, DuPont had a monopoly on the supply of cellophane and, like any sensible firm in that position, had kept the price high for many years. Because the price of cellophane was so high, entrepreneurs were able to begin selling inferior alternatives, such as waxed paper, pricing these just below the monopoly price of cellophane. The Supreme Court error, now known as the cellophane fallacy, was to infer that DuPont lacked the market power in the supply of cellophane because it had competitors. A similar error is now being made in comments on the telecommunications inquiry report. Telecom clearly does have market power in the supply of access through the copper network. Naturally, it uses this power in setting the prices that its rivals must pay to route calls through the network. This "access" price is an unavoidable cost to Telecom's rivals and must, therefore, be recovered through retail sales. So all retail prices are higher than they would be if Telecom's access prices were regulated.'

... 'Telecom charged the police \$40,000 to sift through telephone records in a murder inquiry. The case is cited by the Police Association as an extreme example of Telecom's charging regime, which began about four years ago. Concern about charging law enforcers for evidence needed to bring criminals to justice has been compounded by a decision by one of Telecom's competitors to follow suit five months ago. That company has reported a dramatic drop in police requests for phone records since then, although a spokesman said the number still exceeded a hundred a month.' Incidentally,] **Inland Revenue has named Telecom as its preferred supplier for telecommunications services under a five-year outsourcing contract. The deal... comes on the heels of one to manage and operate ANZ[Bank]'s communications infrastructure... While the ANZ contract was more in the nature of a consolidation of existing contracts (around 300 in all), the Inland Revenue pact involved a change in supplier...**

Clear and Telecom working together in harmony? Nah, it couldn't happen. But that's what did happen in the delivery of the Department of Social Welfare's new \$8 million-plus telephone system. The project involved the implementation by Telecom Business Systems of a national integrated PBX network linking 150 sites, with Clear... as the carrier. "Initially, there was a bit of jostling and finger pointing by both suppliers... But that soon settled down and they worked together in[a] very professional manner." ...Of the one million calls[made] each month by Social Welfare's 6000 employees... 40[%] were being carried over the tie lines, representing significant savings... A further measure of the cooperation between Clear and Telecom is seen in the centralised billing. In the past, community offices using Telecom's network would have received separate bills for calls. Now all Telecom-based services are billed to Clear, which provides Social Welfare with a single consolidated bill each month.

...Yesterday, Telecom, under industry pressure, expressly stated what everybody thought was its position anyway: that it owns [NZ's] telephone numbering system. There was one important proviso: that it had no control over numbers developed by carriers with access codes such as BellSouth's 021 series. In those cases, the numbers belonged to the carrier. One catch is that the access code is still allocated by Telecom, and presumably, without it, BellSouth would not be in the market. The other is that Telecom's dominant retail position means that its numbers are far more important than any plan developed by a competitor. The question is, how could Telecom be so arrogant as to believe it owns the numbers? The answer lies in the manner in which its assets were bought from the Post Office when the SOE was created... a deal which stipulated that anything not expressly excluded was part of the sale. The then SOE minister... says Telecom could well be right that it owns the numbering plan because it occurred to nobody in 1987, including Telecom staff advising, that there was even an issue... "If Telecom does own it, then the Commerce Act puts a very clear obligation on them to trade – and trade in a fair way," [he] says... A BellSouth spokesman said N[Z] was the only country where the numbering plan was effectively controlled by the dominant player in the market. The numbering plan should be placed in the hands of an independent administrator... Telecom had... said... [that other] carriers were free to develop whatever numbers they liked in their own networks, so long as the numbers were not sourced from Telecom.

...Telecom's commitment to helping customers keep the same numbers if they move to a new telephone company is again being called into question... Along with interconnection, number portability has become a major battleground in the industry... Portability is important because disenchanted customers who think they can get a better deal from another carrier may think twice about moving if they have to get a new phone number. For residential customers, a new number may be of little consequence. But for a business, a change of number could be fatal. Customers may lose touch and go elsewhere, and there could also be crippling costs associated with upgrading stationary, signage and promotional material... In addition to the disincentive to portability implicit in Telecom's natural desire to hang on to its customer base, the implementation of number portability is also technically complicated. Because a call to the customer moving to a new carrier must first land at the old network it, therefore,

requires facilities at the old carrier that recognise the call no longer belongs to it and reroutes it to the new carrier. For that to happen requires technical solutions and agreement on who bears the cost of their implementation.

...Telstra N[Z] is content with the number portability agreement it has struck with Telecom, despite its being significantly more expensive than one just imposed by the Government in A[US, which]... ruled that A[US]'s second largest carrier, Optus, should pay the largest carrier, Telstra, \$A8 for the initial set-up charge and 0.5c per call when a Telstra customer wanted to keep the same number... [The terms of Telstra NZ]'s portability agreement... have not been made public. However, its managing director... said the initial charge per line had been set at slightly less than \$20 with ongoing fees of 0.5c a minute. Telecom had originally demanded \$30 per line to set up portability. At 0.5c per minute, the ongoing charge is said to average out around 2c a call... [In] Britain... OfTel has established a set-up of £4.70 and 0.5p a minute... The A[US]n Government has decided Telstra Corp... must allow competitors to use Telstra phone numbers for local calls for a fee of one cent per call...

Optus Communications... reported annual profit [was] \$123 million for the year... which was more than double the previous year's \$60 million. Sales in the year... rose 28[%] to \$2.48 billion... [In comparison, Telstra Corp's] profit for the year [was] \$1.62 billion, down 29.9[%] on last year... The result included a one-time loss of \$1.73 billion. The profit [was] Telstra's last as a wholly government-owned organisation. One-third of the company will be sold to the public by the end of November.

...Brazil, with 160 million people, foreign reserves of \$US62 million and now the largest emerging market after China, is preparing to privatise its... telecommunications carrier[, which] has revenues of nearly \$30 billion, and the world's big players are gathering for the sell-off next year.

...[the] French Government said it will sell up to 38[%] of France Telecom SA... Europe's second-biggest phone company... for about 76 billion francs (\$NZ20 billion) in one of the world's biggest-ever initial public offerings... [Meanwhile, the AUS]n Government has demanded an explanation of alleged corruption by the Japanese stock broker responsible for the float of... Telstra in Asia... Japan's... second-biggest broker... was one of seven A[US]n and international brokers named in March to handle the \$A10 billion... float... The... [broker's] Melbourne-based A[US]n arm declined to comment yesterday.

...A[US]'s biggest sharemarket offering gets under way today... N[Z]ers wanting a piece of the \$A14 billion... float... will have to line up alongside institutions around the world... Some 30[%] of the public offer has been allocated to non-A[US]n investors. N[Z]ers will have to pay the full 200Ac a share against the 195c a share offered to A[US]n residents... The huge retail demand indicated for Telstra has raised the concern of institutional investors who, despite their billions of dollars under management, are concerned their allocation will be cut short... Indeed, offers to buy shares are flooding in... Demand from individuals... [for] France Telecom's... initial public offering... outstripped the allocation by 2.9 times, with institutional investors oversubscribed by close to 20 times.

...N[Z]ers who had been able to buy a share in... Telstra made a quick killing yesterday. Shares... opened at a 30[%] premium, giving those who had applied for 2000 shares an immediate \$1300 gain... Telecom shares[also] gained 11c yesterday to close at a record high... as the company announced the second sale of capital notes to retail investors to fund its \$1 billion share repurchase plan... from major holders Bell Atlantic and Ameritech... Telecom has [so far bought back] more than 68 million shares... at an average price of 708c, a total cost of just over \$481 million... Telecom[recently] proclaimed a "return to strong growth" with a \$210 million net profit – its best ever – in the September quarter.

...There should have been a few red faces in Wellington this week. The strong share price performance of Telecom... and overwhelming demand for Telstra Corp... shares have reconfirmed that the Crown sold the N[Z] company for the proverbial song seven years ago. In September 1990, Telecom was sold for \$4.25 billion. Midweek the company had a value of \$16.7 billion, including the 1994 capital repayment and the recent share buyback. The original buyers of Telecom, who were mainly offshore interests, are now receiving an annual... tax free dividend yield in excess of 21[%] on the 1990 purchase price of 181c per share... In 1988-89 Telecom's personnel costs represented 21.3[%] of revenue. This ration had fallen to 11.2[%] in 1996-97 because of improved productivity and reduced staff numbers. The reduction in the personnel cost ration has accounted for nearly 40[%] of Telecom's profit increase since 1988-89... Telecom's prospective price earnings ration is approximately 10[%] higher than the average of similar international telephone companies.

...Telecom's share price continues its upward climb to new heights... It touched \$9 before settling... at \$8.95.

...The Americans have made their dough and are leaving N[Z]. That was the message from Ameritech and Bell Atlantic... when they told the stock exchange they were quitting their Telecom shareholdings.

...Shares in Telecom... plunged... to \$7.70 on news that Ameritech would quit its... 24.9[%]... stake in the first half of next year and Bell Atlantic would put in place a capital structure that would enable it to sell out... [of its] holding of the same size... in future if it wished[, resolving]... longstanding doubts about the two investors' long-term commitment... Both American companies... are switching their efforts and capital away from N[Z] to communications markets offering faster growth and more opportunities... For Ameritech and BellAtlantic the[Telecom] investment has been extremely lucrative. Their combined 90[%] shareholding cost \$3.8 billion yet they have received an estimated \$5 billion from dividends, a capital repayment, share buyback and the sale of shares in the 1991 float and in 1992 and 1993... [-] yet they still have a combined holding of 874.4 million shares... Thus the two American telecommunication giants will exit N[Z] with an estimated total realisation... of \$11.5 billion... This is a total gain of \$7.7 billion and gives credibility to the rumours that both companies will dedicate a special Telecom New Zealand room where directors can go for the obligatory glass of Dom Perignon after board meetings. It is difficult to understand what either Ameritech or Bell Atlantic did to earn this huge return.

...[a trio of broking firms have scored] the deal to realign the \$7 billion shareholdings of Telecom's two major... investors... Ameritech is[also] embarking on a \$US2 billion... two-year buyback of its own shares, the largest yet by a U[S] telecoms group. Bell Atlantic is heavy on short-term debt... But it too has shareholder approval for a \$1 billion buyback... Thanks to its \$30 billion merger with Nylex this year, it already offers local service in 13 states from Maine to Virginia over 40 million lines... Ameritech, based in Chicago, is focusing its expansion on North America and Europe. It has already invested \$5 billion in companies in 15 countries on the continent.

...Telecom has bought out one of the two remaining resellers of its cellular service... for an undisclosed sum... Ericsson Cellular... will pay redundancy to the 110 staff affected, of whom between 60 and 80 are expected to be rehired by Telecom[, which bought a third company's]... cellular reselling business in June... and is renegotiating its contract with the... only remaining reseller... Telecom has[also] signed a deal giving it access to Equant, a voice and data communications network operating in 225 countries... Equant owns the network, the world's largest in geographical spread, in partnership with Sita... [Incidentally,] Telecom is suing Clear for disputed amounts arising from their local service interconnection... [Clear's] claim on Wednesday for damages was just a rejigged version of a counterclaim to Telecom's own claim for non-payment of bills... The action is... being watched closely by cellular operator BellSouth, which, along with Clear, has frequently complained of unsatisfactory operation of the light-handed telecommunications regime... Asked if BellSouth would issue proceedings of its own... [a] spokesman... said "we are continuing our investigations..."

...BellSouth N[Z] says it is close to signing a new and less expensive interconnection agreement with Telecom and is already paying the lower charges that have been negotiated. The... BellSouth chief executive... said charges under the new agreement were still too high but he was grateful for anything he could get from Telecom... BellSouth... has invested \$550 million in its cellular network and a further \$110 million [is] earmarked for... 199[8]... The company has yet to report a profit although [the chief executive] said it was likely to break even this financial year... The cellphone operator is claiming 90,000 customers, 15[%] of the cellular market... Th[at total doesn't include th]e country's 120 MPs[, who] each

received a gift-wrapped cellphone at Parliament yesterday, as part of a BellSouth promotion... MPs are mulling over whether to keep [the] free cellphone and call package worth a total of \$36,000... The taxpayer already pays each MP to have a cellphone... The corporate communications manager for BellSouth... said the \$299 package... was not a lobbying exercise, but “an introduction to a revolutionary new product.” ...Members of the parliamentary press gallery received the same package. The *N[Z] Herald* gallery team decided to return the cellphones.

...Labour and Act MPs are returning cellphone packs... to BellSouth, which yesterday conceded the gifts were part of a lobbying exercise.

...BellSouth's digital cellular network is much like Telecom's in most respects, but it's voice quality is superior, according to research conducted by BellSouth... The research aimed to dispel a perception reinforced by Telecom advertising that BellSouth's voice quality was inferior... According to BellSouth, cumulative results from its testing so far show its GSM network as roughly equal to Telecom's – 94[%] to 96... in the number of successful calling attempts. However, Telecom's recent digital AMPS network scored only 78[%] on call quality, compared with BellSouth's 85[%]... In the first quarter of this year, the BellSouth researchers tested most comprehensively in the Auckland region, where arterial routes and suburbs have been checked in a 40km radius.

...Forget the coverage wars, the new battle in mobile phone communications between Telecom and BellSouth is over features. BellSouth's latest weapon, to be launched this week, is Internet Preview – the ability to send and receive e-mail messages from a mobile phone – giving it an advantage over Telecom, which does not yet offer the facility. The option adds to BellSouth's impressive arsenal, including caller ID, the ability to receive faxes, and BellText – its short messaging service. Many of these are unavailable to most of Telecom's mobile users... although Telecom is catching up... [However, BellSouth has also] launched an all-out assault on the consumer end of the cellular market with a pre-paid phone whose charges are based solely on airtime... But... [are NZ] mobile phone users ready for such high-tech innovation?

...Telstra N[Z] is to enter the mobile telecommunications market using the BellSouth network under an agreement unveiled yesterday. Telstra, which does not offer cellular at the moment, will sell its GSM mobile spectrum licence to BellSouth and gain rights to use BellSouth's network for 12 years... BellSouth... said the extra spectrum would increase usable network capacity in metropolitan areas, resulting in fewer cell sites...

Anti-cellsite protesters have spent the week disrupting Telecom's attempts to build a transmitter at Waitakere Village... which stands within 10m of homes... Groups of between four and 20 locals have kept a 24-hour vigil at the... site, resulting in more than 10 police callouts and one arrest... [on charges of] breaching the peace... after [a protester] lay down in front of a concrete mixer. She said residents were determined to stop the building of the 21m tower because of its visual impact and health concerns... Telecom... said the lack of consensus was disappointing... [However, the company] would continue... The foundations for the... transmitter... were almost complete... But a spokesman for the Waitakere Resident's Association... said 200 locals could be at the site to protest within moments of contractors turning up [again].

...The Mayor of Waitakere City... yesterday called Telecom “N[Z]'s worst corporate citizen” after... [two] men were arrested during a spirited morning clash between Waitakere Village residents and contractors... After the protest [the mayor] lashed out at Telecom, saying it was devoid of integrity and soul and cared only about increasing its profits. “Telecom just doesn't give a damn about the people in this community. We have little old ladies crying and lying down in front of the crane but Telecom refuses to stop work...,”... But a spokesman for the company... hit back at the mayor, saying Telecom had responded to residents' concerns last year by investigating and consulting over other options. They were denied consent by the council to build on the most suitable alternative site... “To have the mayor now making such intemperate statements after all our efforts is particularly disappointing.”

...The Waikato District Council has approved a Tamahere cellphone tower, despite the concerns of nearby livestock breeders for the fertility of their top animals... Telecom had commissioned a report from an environmental physician which concluded that the transmitter was too weak to affect animals. The council's hearing committee said the structure met district plan requirements.

...The Environment Court this week overturned a Telecom resource consent for a cellphone tower on Mt Te Aroha largely on the grounds that the mountain was sacred and had already been degraded by a water tower and television transmitter. Residents who appealed against the Matamata-Piako District Council's granting of the consent joined forces with the Te Aroha tangata whenua, Ngati Rahiri Tumu Tumu. They jointly told the court the... tower would have a negative visual impact.

...Residents of a popular Bay of Plenty holiday spot are bristling at Telecom's decision to cater for cellphone-toting holidaymakers ahead of improving their telephone exchange. Telecom has installed a 12m-high cellphone tower at Waihi Beach... It is one of about a dozen temporary transmitters put up throughout the country to widen coverage over the summer... A Telecom spokesman... said the cell tower, which doubles capacity in the area, cost \$5000 to \$10,000 to erect. This compared with up to \$2 million to improve the local exchange... The chairwoman of the Waihi Beach community board said... locals... have been told they have to wait up to two years for a digital exchange allowing such services as call-minder and diversion... Waihi's population swells from 3200 to near 20,000 over the Christmas-New Year period and Telecom would make thousands of dollars from cellphone calls logged over that time, she said. The tower will be dismantled after February...

It seems no place is sacrosanct to Telecom in its quest for cellphone mast sites. An Auckland church congregation has agreed to let the company erect a 10m tower outside its front door, and will top off the edifice with a Christian cross. Unfazed by outcries about masts... Telecom says it has [also] been welcomed with open arms by several Wellington churches willing to embrace modern technology in return for healthy contributions to their collection boxes... The Wellington City Council... [is considering] Telecom's request to put low-powered antennas for cellphones on street lights and traffic signal poles.

...A WELLINGTON couple is facing legal action after refusing to pay their daughter's school fees... which... are \$60 a term... because they say a cellphone transmitter on neighbouring land is endangering her health... The Catholic Education Management Board said the [couple] owed \$370. It wants Wellington's Disputes Tribunal to order payment... [The girl's father] said research showed cellphone sites emitted radiation... “And there are concerns that just one cellphone causes headaches and possibly tumours, so who knows what the cellsite is capable of?” He said while the issue was not about money for him, he believed that was the reason the [board] allowed the cellsite to be installed... on the spire of the neighbouring church two years ago... “They've got an 18-year contract with Telecom and are being paid \$5000 a year.”

...BellSouth has erected a cellphone transmitter on the roof of the Wellington Town Hall. The mayor... whose office is below the site area, had no comment on the development yesterday, saying: “It's a management issue.” The development has annoyed a[n a]partment-dweller... who lives across the road... “What is this doing on a... city-owned building? Public property shouldn't be used for those sorts of purposes.” A Wellington City Council spokesman... said the council had approved a resource consent application from BellSouth for the transmitter site without public notification. The council only had to notify such applications if it considered the items being installed had a significant... visual... impact...

TELEVISION advertisements claim even babies can use cellphones, but when it comes to spotting a BellSouth cell site now, even their parents might find it a challenge. In the depths of South Auckland, amid a busy intersection thousands of motorists pass through each day, lurks a palm tree of a different kind. It's fibreglass. Sporting a cellphone antennae, the tree is the latest in telecommunications fashion... BellSouth would not comment on the cost of the palm, although... BellSouth's communications manager... said it was more than a standard cell site, which cost between \$500,000 and \$750,000... “We've put it up just to see how the country responds,” [he] said... And as for our four-legged friends... even if a dog mistook the cell site for a real tree, it would not cause any damage.

...Schools from all over the country have chipped in to help Shirley Primary School in Christchurch in its fight to stop a cellphone tower being erected next door... [Meanwhile, p]arents have pulled 12 children from a West Auckland school staging a picket over a... planned... cellphone mast.

...Vandals have attacked a West Auckland car repair business at the centre of a cellphone mast feud and threatened to firebomb the property. The owner of Koala Auto Services in Green Bay... said he had received numerous abusive phone calls but declined to elaborate... "This is the Wild West come to Auckland with self-appointed vigilantes literally terrifying members of their own community,"... said... Telecom[']s national media relations manager... The company believed the threats... were directly linked to "misinformation" being fed to residents about health risks. Independent tests showed radio frequencies from the mast would not even register over much of the school grounds, which are opposite the cellphone site... [However,] Green Bay Primary School yesterday closed its classrooms indefinitely... [T]he 470 pupils... cleaned out their belongings on the last day of the school term... Green Bay High School has offered classrooms and the Waitakere City Council has offered buses to take children to its community centres when classes resume...

MORE than 500 protesters converged on a proposed Telecom cell site yesterday demanding an end to[the tower's] construction... 90m from... a primary school. The protest went ahead in heavy rain despite a Telecom announcement it was delaying construction... because of threats and abuse to owners of the[Godley Rd] site. Umbrellas shielded banners with slogans such as... "Education not radiation"... Two security guards stood inside the proposed site... as angry protesters hurled abuse at Telecom and[the] vehicle repair shop[']s owner... who had stayed away. One water-filled balloon was thrown at the building but the crowd was otherwise well controlled. Telecom was to have started work at the location... this weekend... A man was arrested on Friday after the phone line to Koala Auto Services was cut.

...Telecom has bowed to public pressure and is looking at alternative sites in West Auckland for its controversial cellphone mast. The company announced the move last night following a meeting with its key opponent – Green Bay Primary School[, which has also]... backed down and will let all of its pupils back... [when classes resume. The s]chool had planned to open only seven classrooms... Telecom's general manager of mobility services... said the company was considering seven options and would decide within a month. However, it had not ruled out the existing site...

Remuera residents have received a jolt in the wake of Green Bay Primary School's battle with Telecom over cellphone transmitters. Residents living near the Rawhiti Bowling Club were dismayed to learn that the Auckland City Council had granted Telecom a resource consent to replace two existing flagpoles on the club property with... new ones bearing cellphone... antennas. Telecom's application was not publicly notified. Neither the club nor Telecom took any steps to inform residents of the application, despite the public interest highlighted by the Green Bay dispute...

Telecom was challenged... yesterday to pledge "in blood" that cellphone towers are harmless to children [when an] Alliance list MP... crossed swords with the company during a public rally organised by Green Bay Primary School which attracted around 150 people. The school's ongoing feud with Telecom sparked a member's bill by [the MP] seeking to ban the building of cellphone masts near schools... Yesterday, she challenged Telecom to live up to the warm, fuzzy, family-oriented image of its television commercials... The company has stalled its plans in the West Auckland suburb after what it has described as public hysteria whipped up by vigilantes. Though reviewing alternative sites, Telecom has still not ruled out putting the tower up at the controversial site near the school. An occupational health specialist advising Telecom... told the rally that... [cellphone] transmitters were simply efficient, low-powered versions of those conventionally used to broadcast radio... Meanwhile, parents have threatened to withdraw their children from schools near a Hamilton East cell site where cellphone towers are being built. The site in Grey St is less than 10m from a handful of houses and 200m from Marian Primary School and Sacred Heart Girls' College... Parents and students... are[also] organising a boycott of Telecom products and services and a businessman... says he will switch his \$6000 annual landline account to another company... The Telecom general manager... said... alternatives to the site... were investigated, but none was acceptable.

...BellSouth... has rejected a formal request to withdraw its application for a cell site near the... Devonport Primary School... The request was made on the strength of BellSouth's measured support for legislation... that call[s] for a moratorium... on new cellphone towers within 300m of schools... BellSouth had indicated that the... bill would be a useful vehicle for the scientific establishment and public "buy-in" of concrete national guidelines... [But the] school's board of trustees... chairwoman... said there was no "buy-in" from Devonport and 263 submissions to the North Shore City Council all opposed the two proposed cellphone antennas... [Furthermore,] BellSouth's stance now appeared to be "thinly disguised commercial rhetoric." However, the BellSouth corporate communications manager... said the school was being "somewhat mischievous" in the way that it described the company's position.

...A bill aimed at banning cellphone transmitters near schools will again be debated in Parliament next week... The bill, sponsored by[an] Alliance list MP... would put the brakes on about 70 applications from telecommunications firms for Auckland school sites until safety questions were settled. Labour... supported the bill going to a select committee but... [it] looks likely to fail after the coalition Government last night signalled its opposition...

Parliament is expected to toss out a bill tonight that would stop cellphone transmitters being installed within 300m of schools... The bill has the support of only the Alliance and Labour. It would place a moratorium on resource consents for cellphone transmitters near schools until the Ministry for the Environment, with input from the Ministry of Health, prepared a national statement. The principal of Green Bay School... said the bill... [was meant to] "buy... us time while the scientists look into it." The next step would be a petition to... try to get support for a citizens-initiated referendum on the issue.

...there is no scientific evidence to support fears that the ever-increasing use of cellphones may threaten human health, say scientists from 10 countries who met in Vienna recently... But... [the] group did agree to intensify research into radio frequency electromagnetic fields... which emanate from mobile phones. "This is something that we hold as a high priority. We want to find out if these electromagnetic fields do produce cancer," said... an A[US]n who heads the international EMF project of the W[HO]. The... project, launched last year, is a five-year, \$5.35 million programme to study possible health hazards stemming from exposure to... EMF sources. "To date, health research in this area has been largely ad hoc and totally uncoordinated at the international level." ...[a professor from] the school of psychology at the University of St Andrews, Scotland, said: "The level of risk that is perceived by the public is sometimes higher... than is justified by the current scientific knowledge..." A Finnish study partly funded by the telecommunications industry examined the effect of radio frequencies used by mobile phones on the brains of 19 people and on mice. It showed[that] human brains convert mobile phone radio waves into heat, but the levels are far from hazardous. Mobile phones also interfere with pacemakers, hearing aids and electrical devices in hospitals. Last April, an A[US]n study led by [the] chief scientist at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, showed that cancer rates almost doubled in mice after prolonged exposure to radio frequency EMFs of the type used in mobile phones. The A[US]n Government tried to allay public fears, insisting that the risk of mobile phones causing cancer in humans was minimal.

...Why do some people fear cellphone towers yet use cellphones? ..."The general public smokes billions of cigarettes a year while banning an artificial sweetener because of a one-in-a-million chance it might cause cancer. The same public eats meals full of fat, flocks to cities prone to earthquakes, and goes hang gliding while it frets about pesticides in food, avoids the ocean because of sharks and breaks into a cold sweat on airline flights." This quote... captures the flavour of the fascinating area of how individuals decide on health risk. Recent events at Green Bay Primary School have highlighted the discrepancy between environmental risk as determined by industry and as seen by the public... If the hazard is seen as being natural it is typically seen as being more acceptable than hazards that are artificial. Risks under individual control are more acceptable than those over which the individual has no control... Similarly, risks that are evenly distributed across a city are more acceptable than ones that affect only a proportion of the community. Risks that are familiar rather than new... are also perceived as less risky... Considering the way individuals assign risk, it is easy to see why cellphone towers cause so much public anxiety. The risk is not spread evenly but is seen as affecting those closest to the tower; in this recent case it is the children at Green Bay Primary... Perhaps most importantly, the risk is seen as involuntary in that children

have little choice about whether to attend their local school and so expose themselves to possible radiation. It is not surprising, then, that scientists and communities may come to different conclusions about the risks posed by environmental threats.

...“We are here because we want to protect... children throughout N[Z today] and the children of future generations. There is big money at stake. We are talking about billions of dollars, and like the tobacco industry Telecom, and others, will stop at nothing to defend their profits.” Such is the tone of the cell site debate as it was delivered in Aotea Square, Auckland, on a recent Sunday... Similar opposition has arisen in every country that has cellphones. The telecommunications companies insist there is no health risk from the transmitters and they have the scientific evidence to prove it. Opponents say the transmitters do pose a health risk, and they have the scientific evidence to prove it. In fact, neither side can prove anything. The best the opponents can do is quote from studies that “strongly suggest a statistically significant increase in risk of cancer and miscarriage” at the level of radiation found around cell sites. They have to rely on evidence from radio and television transmitters because cell sites are too new and cancer takes too long to develop to provide any results. The best the telecommunications industry can do is argue that these epidemiological studies have not been replicated often enough to be considered conclusive. These studies may show one community with a marked increase in cancer also happens to be near a radio transmitter, but that does not prove the radio transmitter caused the cancer.

...A LEADING brain researcher says new American research points to a strong link between... microwaves at frequencies similar to those from cellphone towers and cellphones... and major damage to brain tissue... The research, from the Biomagnetics Laboratory at the University of Washington, adds ammunition to protesters at schools... The... studies had been replicated both at Washington and, within the past two months, at California’s Loma Linda Electronics Laboratory... Telecom’s external relations manager... was not aware the Washington research had been reproduced, but said N[Z] standards were tighter than those in the US and were based on W[HO] recommendations. He said Telecom had looked at a Titirangi golf course as an alternative to the Koala Motors site near Green Bay Primary – but the golf club rejected it because it meant cutting down trees for the tower to work properly... [In related news, a] Telecom scheme designed to raise money for schools through spending on toll calls has been so successful that donations to schools are being capped. Thousands of people have over the years signed up for the School Connection Programme, under which a percentage of their toll spending goes to a school of their choice. Telecom says more than \$33 million has been given to schools and pre-schools so far... but from February... [next] year... the amount available to be donated will be fixed at \$750,000 a month. A Telecom spokeswoman... said that did not represent a cut in funding. The company was simply identifying how much money would go into the scheme so it could finance another programme that would target disadvantaged schools. - 1997

The scheme, which had *disadvantaged* many schools, was eventually ‘replaced’ with a points system redeemable for Telecom products.’

YOU’VE TALKED US INTO GIVING \$20 MILLION TO NZ SCHOOLS Thanks to the efforts of over 470,000 residential customers who’ve joined Telecom School Connection, Telecom has given \$20 million to schools... throughout N[Z] over the last three years. You can support this incredible fundraising effort by joining... Telecom will then donate 5% of the value of your residential toll bill to the school of your choice (and it doesn’t cost you a thing). [Of the ‘2818 schools sponsored, 78% have received payments totalling between \$1 and \$9999; 18% received \$10,000 to \$19,999; 3% received \$20,000 to \$29,999; 0.7% received \$30,000 to \$49,999; 7 schools received \$50,000 to \$99,999; 2 schools received over \$100,000 (one getting just over \$100,000 and the other – Auckland Grammar – getting over \$150,000) – both were in the North Island, as were all the schools that received more than \$50,000. Only two of the 801 schools in the South Island received more than \$30,000 – both in Queenstown (a small tourist township) – and 15 of the 27 North Island schools that received more than \$30,000 were in Auckland (where 93% of schools received less than \$20,000’.)]

...It’ll be a great day when our schools get all the money they need and the Air Force has to hold a cake stall...

Money man takes over education job... THE MINISTRY of Education’s new chief executive... has more of a background in economics and financial strategy than in education... [- i]n the eight months before his new appointment, he was the chief executive of the Ministry of Commerce... [-] but that doesn’t mean he will be a financial hatchet man... [He] says it will be his role and the... Ministry’s responsibility to ensure both that the Government is well advised on what resources are needed and that the money is well spent... to ensure that educating students is effective and that people are emerging from the system with the skills to make their way in, and contribute to, society... His financial background will be of considerable benefit as the world moves to an economy where a nation’s competitive advantage and economic success is based on the ideas and skills of people rather than on primary resources... He was not going to predict what he would do in the ministry, or what changes would be made. He first wants to take time to get to know his new job on a practical level.

...The country’s new education boss... will not be short of feedback from the teaching chalkface... [He] has a sister and brother-in-law who are Christchurch secondary school-teachers, and a sister-in-law who is a primary school teacher, also in Christchurch... [His] father, now retired, was principal of Papanui High School for 15 years and his two daughters are in Wellington schools... The affable 46-year-old has spent 24 years in the public service... He began in the Treasury, had a stint in Foreign Affairs and joined the P[M]’s Department in 1995... With such a background, [his]... arrival at a ministry described by the State Services Commissioner... as having “lost its way” has raised questions about his intentions.

...A *plot to privatise our state school system*... Once there was no state education in N[Z]. Education was available only through church schools or in other private institutions. Education for the majority was a hit-and-miss affair – not free, not freely available and not compulsory. Since the middle of last century education for every child has come to be seen as not only a fundamental right but essential for full participation in a democratic society. “We must educate our masters” was the cry in England’s political circles as universal (male) suffrage was established. But in N[Z] after 12 years of dramatic economic and social upheaval, this fundamental right is on the road to becoming just a wishful memory. Schools now face the onslaught of the privatisation drive of the past 12 years. “Tomorrow’s schools,” initiated by the Labour Government in 1987, set the scene. A businessman... was put in charge and a business model was developed using the concept of the “self-governing school.” From that basis the privatisation agenda has been pushed hard. But it has been more difficult with schools compared to other sectors. Ironically, one of the main reasons for this difficulty has been the general perception that the state school system is fundamentally doing a good job and demand for private schooling has been slow. In fact private schools have had a troubled recent history. State bailouts have been frequent and hugely expensive. The National Government has extended direct state support for private schools while state schools have been strapped for cash. The operations grant which is used to pay the day-to-day running expenses has been frozen for several years (in real terms a decrease in Government funding as inflation has eaten it away). Schools in poor areas have been least able to make up the deficit from local sources and have suffered the most. The powers that be hope that both these trends will increase the demand for private schooling. The state can then begin to withdraw from the provision of schooling... Dividing state schools is an important precursor to privatisation. Schools have been encouraged to compete for students (needless to say the only competition has been for the academically able students). Winner and loser schools are being identified with many winner schools having turned manipulation of their external exam pass rates into an art form to attract brighter students and improve their pass rates further. The larger winner schools were further assisted last year by the ministerial reference group report on school staffing – since implemented by the Government – which resulted in a further shift of resources from smaller schools (most always the poorer schools) to the larger winner schools. The P[M] and... a... new agency... the Education Review Office are very fond of saying that poorer schools get a higher per-student amount from the Government but by the time the money reaches the classroom the figures are reversed dramatically... Equality of opportunity in education is going from the reasonable bet it was in the past to a certain loss. The suppression of teacher salaries for so long has also had an impact on winner

and loser schools. The drift of qualified, experienced teachers from poorer schools to wealthier schools is gathering momentum. Salaries are being topped up by wealthier schools either to poach from other schools or retain teachers in subjects where teachers are in short supply. This will be the destiny of much of the Government's so-called performance pay units recently negotiated in the Post Primary Teachers Association collective contract... [which ended] the protracted dispute... [that closed secondary] schools around the country... as part of industrial action by teachers... Rather than rewarding performance it will reward teachers in shortest supply as schools strive to recruit or retain them. Poorer schools will be stripped of their most experienced, trained and qualified teachers... Adding to their difficulties the poorest secondary schools are about to receive the first big wave of students who have grown up in the unemployment of the 1980s and 1990s... [The ERO] tells us its job is to be a public watchdog, providing accountability and improving education standards. But... [rather] than providing help and assistance to schools in our poorest communities it repeatedly blames the school management and teachers for student failure. Improvements can and must be made but the review office gives no recognition to the fact that most of these students come from homes where no one has ever had a full-time job in the student's lifetime. Rather than calling for more support and more resources, the office encourages middle N[Z] to abandon poorer schools and the concept of equality of opportunity and to side with the more wealthy. This separation and movement by middle-class parents and their children is essential for privatisation of schools to succeed... Eventually... the "winner" state schools can be sold off to private enterprise... N[Z] education is on a fast track to the "two-thirds-one third" model... Two thirds of schools will be worthy institutions, providing a good education and can be privatised as a good investment. The other one third will be ghetto schools, minimally funded by the state (welfare "basket cases") and left to exist merely as a dumping ground for the poor. The cultural change forced on N[Z] over the past 10 years still has enough momentum to wound our national education system mortally. The horror story told here is well under way and will be fully played out in the coming years unless a strong Kiwi fightback takes place. Is this N[Z] schooling the way we want it? [● 'In 1939, NZ's first Labour Government enunciated the goal of education: That every person, whatever his academic ability, rich or poor, has a right as a citizen to a free education of the kind for which he is best fitted, and to the fullest extent of his powers.'

... 'If you wanted the one defining attribute of the Middle Classes it is a reverence for education. I think the Middle Class preoccupation is a desire to maintain class position like a sort of person losing puff treading water in the deep end of a swimming pool. Education, or lack of it, has definitely played a huge role in keeping people down, but it's terribly hard for anybody in the Middle Class to admit that their children are thick. You can pour money into your children and they can still come out as thick as bricks, can't they, and people always blame the school. You never hear Middle Class parents saying: "Actually, my child is braindead." However, if you can afford to send your kid to a school with smaller classes and with better facilities then he's obviously going to have a better chance. If you go for a job interview and there's two of you and you say you're from a top private school you've automatically got an advantage. Yet, to be quite honest with you, most people I've met who went to a private school didn't seem particularly educated to me, or they did a very bad job. Unfortunately, if you bring the education of public schools up to the level of the top private schools, then the private schools become superfluous.']

... Trustees at Hillary and Tangaroa colleges in Otara have been overwhelmed by the burden of running their own schools, says the deputy chairman of both boards... He says the boards had no idea how to respond to scathing attacks on both schools from the E[RO]... "When we first had the ERO problems, we didn't know what to do. There we were, told we might be closed down, and we didn't have a clue." They took advice from the School Trustees Association and the Ministry of Education to help the boards to tackle their deep-seated problems, many of which stem from poverty... The lack of money is reflected at board level... other boards pay themselves \$70 a meeting but at Tangaroa and Hillary the going rate is about \$35... The South Auckland lawyer – who stood as United candidate for Manukau East in the last election – says... that Tomorrow's Schools has enabled the Government to get very cheap volunteer labour to run the most difficult schools in the country. Some board members had done more than 500 hours of extra work, mostly without pay, after the critical ERO reports... [(trustees around the country generally)] spend anywhere between eight and 40 hours a month on the job, apart from the time in meetings[]... He acknowledges the boards have been at fault too. Hillary was split for some time between Maori, Cook Island and Niuean groups all demanding a seat on the board. "Time that should be spent on board issues has been wasted on conflicts between board members... and the job wasn't getting done." ...Both boards had problems in getting information from their former principals... "The board doesn't really know what's going on. At Hillary... we discovered in the middle of a meeting that there were a number of teachers with serious teaching disabilities." He suggests other staff members, such as the deputy principal, could be included on the board to get a wider range of information... [However, he] says the school's biggest problem is not self-management but the National Government's abolition of zoning in 1991, which meant pupils began leaving Otara for better-off schools elsewhere.

... CONFLICT and job dissatisfaction is causing school principals to quit their jobs... A total of 466 principals' jobs have been advertised in the Education Gazette this year and, according to... [the] Principals' Federation president... more than a third of those who leave their jobs leave principalship altogether... [One f]ormer principal... quit his job at Remuera Primary in east Auckland this time last year. There was nothing wrong with the school – he had just had enough of the frustration of being in the profession. "The workload compared to the remuneration was outrageous... I was[also] tired of the whole teaching profession trying to undermine things. It's enormously protective of ineffective practices." He described the attitude of many people in education as "hey, I'm not paid very much, why should I do very much?" ...[he] is now working in real estate, [and has] no plans to return to education full-time. "Not unless the salary was doubled and the whole ethos changed," he said.

... The Government will need to inject tens of millions of dollars into primary school teachers' pay packets... [– which] have risen just 22.5%... between March 1986 and March 1995... while there has been total inflation of 60.8%... over the same period... – ...to keep them in the classrooms. Otherwise, many will "jump ship" into secondary teaching ranks, or take their skills elsewhere. That was the blunt message given yesterday by the incoming president of the N[Z] Education Institute...

Pay rises of 3.1... to 5.7[%] were announced yesterday for special education workers and Maori language assistants in primary and secondary schools. But a new national collective contract covering the 250 workers will leave special education assistants on a top salary no higher than \$21,362... The Education Institute acknowledged that the pay scale for... assistants to teachers of severely disabled students would range from about \$23,200 to \$33,461 after a \$1000 rise. Salaries for assistants working in classrooms with children with lesser disabilities would, however, start at only about \$18,500 under the contract.

... A new... contract gives... area school teachers... with management roles a pay increase of 10 to 20[%], while graduate teachers will receive 10 to 15[%]. Most area school teachers without degrees will receive 5 to 10[%] more. Meanwhile... Auckland kindergarten teachers are being offered an average pay increase of about 9[%] if they agree to... close for only one afternoon a week, instead of two. But the teachers' union... says teachers should not have to work extra hours for a pay rise they already deserve... The Auckland Kindergarten Association... general manager... said the association could afford the pay rise only by increasing opening hours from 320 to 360 sessions a year to get more Government funding. This meant teachers would spend 25 instead of 22.5 hours a week teaching children. Mid-graded teachers would be better-paid than primary school teachers at up to \$28,000... Teachers at the top of the scale and head teachers were not being offered comparable rates to their primary school colleagues. The association was offering head teachers \$34,700 to \$41,600... The association was also offering free health insurance.

... Labour's education spokesman... says a funding package for kindergartens set to be announced this week is a "gross miscalculation" by the Government of how unpopular its previous proposals were. The... [spokesman] has learned that only 43[%] of childcare facilities opted for the higher funding levels the Government offered last year. The Ministry of Education had expected that 75[%] would accept the offer. None of the 591 kindergartens opted for it (22[%] were expected to)[, and only 1%] of playcentres (none was expected to)... [H]ome-based services... [provided the

greatest level of support at 61%] (none was expected to)... [In related news, t]he kindergartens of about 8000 Auckland pre-schoolers will be closed tomorrow as teachers strike over pay. The 280 teachers from 102 kindergartens... are angry that the Government's offer of pay parity with primary school teachers is conditional on their working more hours... Last week, kindergarten teachers from the rest of N[Z] walked off the job. The Auckland teachers were forced last year on to a separate collective contract from their counterparts...

Nearly 100 years ago Mrs Leo Myres established the Auckland Kindergarten Association to provide education for children of the working women of Karangahape Rd. Today as the largest association in N[Z] with 102 kindergartens from Wellsford to South Auckland, the association faces a crossroads. Should it close because of lack of Government support, or should it completely alter its aim of providing free early childhood education? The same issues are being faced by all public kindergarten associations. There are over 585 kindergartens looking after over 46,000 children of all socio-economic groups and more than 30 different ethnic groups... A few years ago with the advent of bulk funding the Auckland association faced receivership. Hard financial decisions were made and today it is in a much healthier state. However, it still cannot afford to build the 50-odd kindergartens needed for all the children over the age of three in Auckland. Funding is the critical issue. The Government pays kindergartens \$2.90 an hour... [per child (but, 'to further complicate the equation, kindergartens only get their \$2.90 if the child attends regularly')]. Kindergartens are run for only three hours a session, two sessions a day. A private kindergarten run for profit gets \$2.50. They not only charge fees but parents can receive a subsidy from Income Support to send their child to them. They can be open from 8 am or earlier until 6 pm. Free kindergartens are penalised in a more subtle way, too. They are funded only for 24 hours a week, 42 weeks of the year. However, teachers are paid for 40 hour weeks, 52 weeks of the year... [By the way,] Kindergarten teachers called off a strike planned for today after settlement on a pay dispute was reached... Teachers will get cash payments ranging from \$1500 to \$1750 and in January a pay rise of 5.5[%]. - 1996

Free kindergartens say they are in crisis, with thousands of children on waiting lists and dozens of new kindergartens needed to solve the shortage. Auckland is hardest hit. More than 10,000 preschoolers in the city are on waiting lists for kindergartens, 6000 of whom are over three – the age at which kindergartens try to admit children... In Orewa, for example, 260 children are queuing to get into a kindergarten with a capacity of 90... [On average, f]or every two pre-schoolers enrolled in Auckland, one cannot get a place. Some are not being accepted until they are four-and-a-half[, when]... it was "too late." With too few free kindergartens parents were forced to pay up to \$700 a term to private preschool education or send children straight to school... The Auckland Kindergarten Association estimates it would need 72 new kindergartens to blitz waiting lists... To build a new kindergarten, a community could spend "eight years holding cake stalls" if local or central Government did not pitch in... An Associate Minister of Education... said yesterday that the... Government would not provide more money for kindergartens, [which]... made up just 30[%] of the sector... The... Government had never said it would fully fund early childhood education. Waiting lists were not necessarily an indication that children were missing out on preschool education because they might be enrolled elsewhere, he said.

...The Minister of State Services... announced yesterday that individual kindergarten associations would negotiate pay with their staff [as she] introduced a bill to remove kindergartens from the State Sector Act... That brought howls of protest from teacher unions and some of the 594 kindergartens who labelled it "shocking and underhand." ...The Free Kindergarten Association said the move would commercialise kindergartens and was the first step towards privatisation. That would mean parents could be charged several hundred dollars a term to send their children to "free" kindergartens. They also claimed that children at small kindergartens and those in rural areas who could not afford to pay their teachers as much would be worse off... The Auckland Kindergarten Association opted to negotiate directly with staff at its 102 kindergartens two-and-a-half years ago... While the Auckland association did not regret its move... [its] president... said the Government was throwing kindergartens into a "negotiating minefield"... [at a time when 'kindergarten teachers are asking to be paid the same rate as schoolteachers.' O]rganisations with less experienced board members would struggle. "I just question the wisdom of throwing to volunteer parents the job of negotiating with such a powerful union as the NZEI,"... [However, the minister] said... the new law would bring kindergartens into line with other early childhood organisations who handled their own pay negotiations... [S]he expected larger associations to support smaller associations in negotiations, so some would not be left "floundering." ...In Parliament, some of the 40 kindergarten teachers in the public gallery were asked to leave after chanting "Free kindergartens, stop privatisation." ...teachers were already disillusioned about underfunding. "What they are saying is they want to bring kindergartens down to the level of the more poorly resourced child-care centres,"... said... one of the [chanters]... The Labour leader... said the Government was washing its hands of kindergartens... Funding, support and monitoring for kindergartens... would not change.

...Infants and preschoolers with special needs are the target of a Government funding boost but the extra money... [-] \$19.5 million... over three years... [-] will not help older children who have dipped out under new special education criteria... The money is intended to fund direct work with children to support them at early childhood centres and provide specialist support for families and educators. Details of the special education package were announced in November [but] parents say they are still unsure of exactly where their children stand. The... Ministry of Education... has confirmed that it received 13,500 applications for teacher support under the revised system and about 8500 children had been turned down... The ministry's senior policy analyst... said the ministry was reviewing the cases of more than 1000 children who had appealed... [Meanwhile, k]indergarten leaders are worried they will have trouble attracting teachers now that the Government is removing them from the provision of the State Sector Act. They predict dire long-term implications for the quality of early childhood education and are angry at the haste with which the act is being amended. Until now kindergarten teachers, who have to be registered via a three-year tertiary course, have been covered by the act. This meant the State Services Commission negotiated their contracts with the teachers' union – the New Zealand Education Institute. Now the... 37... financially stretched associations in the national movement... will have to deal with NZEI themselves... At present... Free Kindergarten Association... teachers... start on just over \$22,000 and can rise to a maximum of just under \$33,000.

...Parents will be hit with compulsory fees at some kindergartens as money woes hang over many centres. The Central North Island Free Kindergarten Association plans to charge \$2 per session next year at its 48... kindergartens, saying it needs the fees to survive... During the past two months, kindergartens in Kawerau and Wairoa have shut... [Another] kindergarten in Wairoa closed at the start of the year... One in five kindergartens is at risk because of financial pressures... [caused by] an inappropriate funding system... [They] usually face having to raise between \$12,000 and \$20,000 each year, the difference between Government funding and running costs. Traditionally they ask for a donation but do not penalise parents if they are unable to pay... The fate of one of Kaikohe's two kindergartens will be discussed[tomorrow] at a public meeting...

Bundles of joy are expensive to look after... The cost of childcare is the new bone of contention for... double-income... families... with... pre-schoolers... The only recent survey of fees... in 1994... found that the average cost was between \$100-\$140 a week. Childcare providers agreed that was probably too low now... [because t]he cost of... daycare five days a week is... up to \$220... for one child in some inner-city centres... Home-based family daycare is also provided by organisations such as Barnardo's which provides basic training for caregivers who look after children... The cost with Barnardo's is \$2.80 an hour for the first six hours, and \$3.60 an hour after that... [In comparison,] the cost of having a nanny look after children in your own home... can... [be] up to \$15 an hour... One area of childcare where little seems to be happening, despite a big need, is after-school care... For people who don't have a lot of money to spend... the most popular option is for a neighbour or relative to look after the children at home [for free]...

The cost to parents of putting their children through the "free" state education system is skyrocketing. In six years, annual charges for primary school pupils have risen 163[% from]... \$187... to an average \$491... The rise in costs to parents has run in tandem with a fall in real Government

funding since 1990... [Total Government funding to schools was '\$722 per student in 1990, but is \$713 today.'] A survey by the Council of Education Research... in 1990 showed 20[%] of... primary school principals... thought... Government money... was inadequate but that figure has risen to 76[%]... Schools in poorer areas are dipping into their savings to help parents who cannot afford the fees.

...[her] report cards show better grades this year but her success comes with a sacrifice – she travels more than 350km to school. The 15-year-old... is part of a Government-funded scheme that puts children from low-income families into private schools. She attends Diocesan School for Girls in Auckland and returns to the family's leased farm during the holidays. Funded by the Ministry of Education, the Targeted Individual Entitlement scheme began last year when 160 students from families earning less than \$25,000 annually were placed into 43 private schools around the country. A decision on the future of the scheme will be made before next year's budget... The Diocesan principal... said the scheme benefited the pupils and the school... [T]he Government allocates... \$5995... each year for [the 15-year-old's education, but her parents] have to meet travel and boarding costs. [Boarding assistance is, however, normally 'available to school pupils who need to live away from home in order to receive their education. The value of the school boarding bursary was \$1990 in 1995.'

...The PM indicated yesterday] that the Government was considering giving more money to private education – although he did not say how much more the 130 or so independent schools might get. Private schools already have some Government funding. The grant is paid in two categories. About \$700 is paid for each student up to form four, and about \$1000 for students from form five to seven. The grants totalled about \$29 million in the last financial year.

...Why is our kids' education becoming a private matter? As N[Z]ers, we've always believed in fairness in education: in a system that allows anyone with ability – regardless of their background or the money their parents earn – to take their study as far as they wish. As taxpayer-funded investments go, enabling our kids to learn has always seemed a pretty sound one. We've never felt the need to question the public provision of the education system. Just as we've never asked for it to... be run along privatised lines. So why do we now have a government that is constantly looking at ways of doing just that? ...It all has a familiar ring to it. The same philosophy inflicted lasting damage to the health system. Also familiar are the circumstances... no mandate, no discussion, no openness... [Proposals are] drawn up behind closed doors and kept under wraps as if it were a state secret. The public education system belongs to us all. Bit by bit, through this kind of stealth, it's being taken away.

...“We had a good system in the past. They took away something that worked very well, and now for eight months there has been chaos reigning[,]” said the... principal of Nawton School in Hamilton... [when asked to comment on the recent announcement that s]chools are dipping into operating funds to pay teachers' salaries because of a problem-plagued payroll system. Now, complaints about mistakes in teachers' pay have reached a new high as payroll servers struggle to load the details of 17,000 new pay packets... [to the computer file of] 67,000 teachers and support staff... The ongoing problems prompted the Ministry of Education in October to review its decision to hand over school payrolls to Datacom. The review[, which was]... reported back in December, found that the ministry had rushed the contracting process and inadequately managed it... Some teachers had not been paid at all, and others had not got what they should have... Subcontractor Multi Serve, which deals with primary schools north of Turangi, has sent principals a letter asking them to bear with it during a “difficult start to the year.” The Multi Serve chief executive... said the... increased mobility of teachers meant the agency was struggling to meet needs.

...the teachers' union... is taking the Ministry of Education and its contractors to the Employment Tribunal... in a... legal bid to recover \$1000 in backpay owed to an Auckland teacher... The[NZEI] president... said the woman had been owed money for months and, despite repeated requests, the contractor had not paid up... The mix-up is one of many that plagued [the woman] for several months after the Ministry... contracted out the school payroll last year. Mistakes included odd amounts of money going in and out of her bank account, pay being missed altogether and money banked into a Westpac account when [she] had never banked... [with that company. In December last year] she asked Multiserve, the sub-contractor for the Auckland area, for her time and wage records. She has yet to receive them... The Multiserve chief executive... said he was not aware of [the woman's] case. He said the company owed just a “handful” of teachers money... [The NZEI president] said further legal action would be mounted on behalf of other teachers in similar situations if they were not paid promptly... Unpaid teachers were being forced to pay interest on overdrafts and loans and were being penalised for late payments of mortgages and other bills. The Labour Party claimed in Parliament last month that a teacher aide was forced into bankruptcy after not being... paid, and tabled in Parliament another 900 complaints from school staff... The Labour education spokesperson... [suggested that] schools were wasting precious administration hours on payroll problems... [At the time a] ministry spokesman... said no one should be short-changed because teachers who were not paid properly could draw on an emergency fund set up by the ministry.

...The Ministry of Education has paid about 1600 teachers from its own funds in the past three days after being deluged with complaints about its payroll system... The ministry's chief internal auditor... said he was “far from satisfied” with Multi Serve's performance and had docked its pay as part of its contract obligations. He would not say by how much, but said the company was now responding pretty well to the problems... The company had taken on about four or five new staff and put on more hardware... [Incidentally, Labour's] Education Minister when Tomorrow's Schools was introduced... to increase the power of the community in education... has accused the Government of penny-pinching... and compromising the aims... “I saw Tomorrow's Schools not in terms of cutting back but as laying the foundation for a growing investment in education... A few boards have run into trouble. That is only to be expected... Teachers and parents are asked to do a lot, but they should not be held accountable if they fail to do the impossible... [Furthermore,] the bureaucrats have seized the opportunity to create a paper war which is the very antithesis of what Tomorrow's Schools anticipated... Tomorrow's Schools did not abolish zoning... National... abolished zoning. Tomorrow's Schools did not do away with compulsory teacher registration. That was[also] the choice of... National... We hear continuing complaints about the number of suspensions. Tomorrow's Schools originally had a Parents Advocacy Council which was going to deal with problems like suspension. It got the axe.” ...[the former Education Minister] said Tomorrow's Schools also set up mechanisms to cope with truancy, but they were removed.

...Schools in poorer areas should be given more money to chase truants, according to Huntly College. Its truancy funding from the Ministry of Education fell from about \$20,000 last year to just under \$6000 this year. The Huntly truancy officer... quit his job this month after the college reduced his hours from 40 a week to 25... Huntly College rated bottom of the ministry's 10-point scale devised to measure the socio-economic status of the community and school services.

...The... Ministry of Education's rejig of socio-economic ratings given to the country's 2608 state schools, [will] take into account the latest... census data from households with school-aged children within [each] school's catchment area... Schools will find out by post next week whether they are one of the 1700 schools to change ratings and therefore funding levels... half have gone up and half down... The 18 rating levels, known as deciles, are used by the Government to allocate target funding, and to determine the schools' special education and careers information grants... The decile scale goes from one for the poorest area to 10 for the most affluent, with deciles one to three also divided into three. Each decile covers 10[%] of the country's schools... Those schools which lose funding will have that offset by a budget boost to the targeted funding for schools, from \$62.6 million this year to \$81 million in 1998. With this extra money, only 421 will receive less funding than in 1997. From next year schools in the lowest socio-economic areas could receive up to \$397.50 for each student, while the wealthiest schools will get \$33.50 at the most.

...Schools in upmarket areas will be tempted to flog off surplus... land and buildings... and keep half the spoils under a Government policy announced today... The Minister of Education... said that, until now all sale proceeds had gone to the Crown. “This land tended to become frozen. It seemed to just sit there because there was no incentive for an individual school to dispose of the land.” The new policy found favour with school principals, boards of trustees and even the Labour education spokesman. However, the Alliance spoke out against “back door” state asset sales and

cautioned schools against selling off valuable educational resources that they would never get back... Parents on school boards might approve a property sale so their children could benefit, instead of considering what was best for the long-term future of the school... But the... [ministry]'s property manager... said schools had to prove that the property they wanted to sell would not be required within the next 10 years. Schools without surplus property also stood to benefit because the ministry's share of proceeds would be ploughed back into new property projects... The principal of one Auckland school was last night sizing up the opportunity to make money on the real estate market... Rangitoto College... might one day sell off a chunk of land that was unsuitable for educational purposes. The steep gully – about the size of a rugby field – would fit up to 12 houses, some of which would possibly have views of Rangitoto, he said. The new policy caught one Auckland school with prime cliff-top harbour views by surprise, although the board chairman... said Takapuna Grammar had no spare land.

...*Spare land sell-off will be golden windfall to schools...* Real estate signs could soon crop up on school land... Some schools stand to make more than \$1 million from the move... [T]he principal of Murrays Bay Primary School on the North Shore in Auckland, said his school's options were "endless." The school shares a site with Murrays Bay Intermediate and the hill between the two commands sweeping views of the Hauraki Gulf and Rangitoto Island... Selwyn College... sitting on 16.4ha... in Kohimarama, Auckland... is surrounded by a ring of... enough excess land to build a mini-subdivision, but may have to offer it back to its original owners, the Anglican Church. The land was taken under public works legislation when the school was built... Meanwhile, rural schools are eyeing their empty school-houses and former horse paddocks... with a view to bringing in extra cash... [The paddocks, originally] used to keep horses that children had ridden to school... are often now let to neighbouring farmers for peppercorn rentals... Ohaupo School, near Hamilton, had already decided to get rid of a surplus school-house and resigned itself to the proceeds going to Wellington. Now it could collect about \$20,000... The principal... said several country schools around Hamilton had sold houses in recent years. Most staff owned their own houses in the city and school houses had become surplus burdens requiring maintenance... [● Yesterday,] more than 1200 property projects... [a]cross the country... were approved for funding next year. Halls account for \$13 million of the total funding, general upgrades \$17 million and projects including swimming pools, work on school grounds and Maori culture \$12 million.

...Rangitoto College, one of Auckland's biggest secondary schools, is to sell... \$5 million... of land... as part of a \$13 million roll-growth programme. The Mairangi Bay school has around 1950 students, but the Minister of Education said yesterday that it would expand by a further 550 within the next 10 years... The funding covers enlarging the administration block, building a new gymnasium, library and music suite, upgrading the technology block and extending the hall. New sports fields will be built, including an all-weather surface... [T]he money assigned to expanding Rangitoto College was significantly less than the cost of building a new school... Earlier this month the Ministry of Education announced 35 new schools for the wider Auckland area during the next 13 years.

...A cash-strapped primary school in Ngaurawahia wants to erect... a 6m by 3m... advertising billboard on its grounds in a fundraising initiative that has been condemned by education groups... The billboard... which... would... border busy State Highway 1[, will] earn the school up to \$15,000 a year. The principal said the school board... has... approved the billboard because the school needed the money. The president of the [NZEI]... said the school's stance showed the Government was pushing schools towards privatisation. The president of the School Trustees Association... said it would be a "sorry day" when school grounds became littered with billboards.

...Bairds Primary School in Otara has changed its name to Bairds Mainfreight Primary School to secure long-term funding from... its corporate sponsor in a groundbreaking move that has cleared the way for others to do the same. The Ministry of Education approved the move last month... The... school... offered to adopt the name as a way of repaying the company for everything it had done... Mainfreight had donated more than \$130,000 since it became involved with the school about three years ago. It also paid for a \$60,000 computer room and had funded the Books In Homes programme to the tune of several thousand dollars a year... The move would cost the school "a few hundred dollars" for new road signs and a new school stamp but uniforms already bore the company logo... Under the two-way agreement, the school could drop the name if the company withdrew its sponsorship; made inappropriate or unreasonable demands on the board or principal; or acted in such a way as to bring disrepute on itself and the school.

...[‘Forget J1 or Standard Four – or Year One or Year Six for that matter. Today’s primary school children could soon be known as Ronald McDonald class or Year Reebok. Several NZ schools have formed sponsorship deals with businesses since the moving company Mainfreight began the trend in 1993, but Bayswater School, on the North Shore, plans to take education sponsorship to a new level with a scheme to sell its way out of its money woes. The primary school hopes to attract a “family” of sponsors by offering them painting, signage, and naming rights to the school’s buildings for \$3000 a year. For \$15,000 an investor can have the rights to the school’s name. All sponsors will be guaranteed “product exclusivity” and advertising rights at all school events and in all school publications.’ In related news, a] South Auckland school praised for its success by the E[RO] has spent \$10,000 so far this year on advertising in a desperate bid to recruit more pupils... Before 1990... Bader Intermediate’s... roll registered up to 800 names. Now, it has a mere 210. Two years ago, the school was on the brink of being closed by the Ministry of Education. Officials in Wellington wanted Bader to merge with other schools in the area... The principal... blames the declining role on negative publicity about troubled kids in the 1980s, lack of ministry support and neighbouring primary schools which hold on to their pupils until they are secondary school age... He said morale among staff and pupils remained high. “We are one of the very few schools in South Auckland that can boast to being free of truancy.” ...Since [he] was appointed principal... in 1995... the[ERO] report said, the school had achieved commendable progress. Teachers worked extremely hard and programmes were outstanding. Those included technology programmes, homework centres... and... ethnic language classes... Among the new initiatives is the free consultation to doctors who visit the school weekly, where medicine is also supplied. Through a council scheme, Bader organised a free-lunch strategy for those that needed it. Sensing the school was in crisis... parents[have] formed a support group to raise funds for various projects to boost... [it]s appearance, such as... cultural projects and... sports gear... In sports, Bader has been Auckland champion in netball and rugby league.

...Rich city schools poaching sports talent from smaller provincial schools have prompted... [one principal] to call on the Government to initiate a sports ethics committee where applications and complaints could be lodged. The practice of professionalism in school sport was “pretty widespread” under Tomorrow’s Schools... said... [the] head of Trident High School in Whakatane... Success on the football fields was a powerful marketing tool and it was not just elite Auckland schools that were luring players with scholarships and bursaries.

...A nationwide competition for schools is launched today. Schools will receive brochures on how to enter the School of the Year Awards this week, with a prize pool of about \$150,000 put up by [a corporate sponsor]... Judges will look at academic progress, community relations, cultural or sporting progress and social and environmental programmes.

...*Schools in battle for teachers...* Primary schools are struggling to replace teachers who resign, says the [NZEI. In just over four weeks]... 193 schools had reported the resignations of 156 teachers... Of the resigning teachers, 100 said they were “unlikely” to return to primary teaching... “Fed up, hours too long, salary too low, rewards too few” was typical of the explanations principals supplied. One principal, who described a resigning teacher as having “an uncanny knack of getting difficult/slow children moving,” simply wrote “had enough.” The national secretary of the institute... said the wages of primary teachers were scandalously low. “Primary teaching is a very tough, highly skilled job. How can schools hope to retain good people when they are being paid a pittance? Pay parity [with secondary teachers] is essential if we are to keep quality teachers on the job.” ...Forty-one principals said they would have difficulty filling their vacancies permanently... The union said it... [is also concerned about] short-term reliever shortages. “Some schools have to phone as many as 36 relievers before one can be found to do the job. Most schools give up after 20 calls and either double up classes or use the principal as a reliever,”...

The secondary school teachers' union has withdrawn from Government talks on a unified pay system and warns of unprecedented levels of industrial action if such a system is imposed... [T]he Post Primary Teachers' Association president... rejected a statement by the Associate Minister of Education... that no difference existed between primary and secondary teaching. As long as the minister held that view, the PPTA would refuse to be part of the talks... The Minister of Education... last night accused the PPTA of reneging on its commitment to play a constructive part...

The Government is pressing ahead with plans for pay parity between primary and secondary school teachers, despite threatened strikes. The Minister of Education... told 700 primary school principals in Auckland yesterday that the Government was committed to coming up with a unified pay system by February when teacher contracts expired.

...Education unions said a \$46 million pay package from the Government... designed to keep principals from leaving schools, would not be enough to stem the flow... School heads were last night turning their noses up at average pay increases of 9.4[%] for secondary principals and 13.4[%] for primary[principals, who were also shocked that pay]... parity... was to be phased in over three years... They had not had a pay rise since 1990, and had been promised pay parity from next February... The unions also condemned a move to introduce five-year contracts for principals. "This means no principals in N[Z] would have permanent job status,"... But the Minister of Education... said it was only fair that the generous remuneration offered to principals... was underpinned by measures for performance and accountability... which applied throughout the public sector... The "old-time job security" was gone, he said... [while touting the] pay package... as one which gives principals a chance to earn more than \$100,000 a year.

...Principals on salaries of more than \$100,000 will be few and far between despite ministerial rhetoric to the contrary, says the Principals' Federation... To earn \$103,000 they would need to be in charge of a school with more than 1600 students and qualify for a \$11,000 performance bonus, plus the \$5000 grant paid to schools in lower-socio-economic areas... [By the way, t]he income gap between[a] primary school teacher... and her secondary school teacher husband is about to close. And while the Aucklanders may never earn the same as her more senior teaching husband, her pay slip should look \$8000 healthier next year... The final report of the Unified Pay System Working Group recommends that teachers should be paid on the basis of skills, qualifications, performance and responsibilities rather than whether they work at primary or secondary school level... The... [NZEI] was thrilled with the report... But not all education bodies were pleased. The P[PTA's]... associate president... said the report indicated the Government planned to bring down secondary teachers' salaries and to fill the secondary teacher shortage with primary teachers... The primary teachers' package does not cover principals[, who]... were offered a separate package with secondary principals, but this included a longer phase-in period for pay parity than they were prepared to accept.

...Teachers will not compete against each other for performance pay, says the Minister of Education... In a speech to an Auckland Deputy Principals and Associate Principals meeting yesterday, [the minister] said any system to reward teachers would have "fair and transparent" benchmarks for teachers to meet. At present a rigid system prevents teachers moving up more than one step on the pay scale in a year. This means an excellent teacher and a poor teacher who start on the same day will be promoted up the pay scale at the same rate. [The minister] said... the present system worked against schools because it did not allow them to hold on to talented young teachers by moving them up the pay scale faster. A performance pay system would also allow schools to pay experienced teachers more to stay in the classroom rather than move on to school management after reaching a certain pay level.

...South Auckland school principals are angry that next year they will no longer be able to attract better teachers by paying bonus allowances. The Ministry of Education has decided to cut the staffing incentive allowance – about \$1000 a teacher – at 26 schools in Manukau East, Mangere and Manurewa... The cuts made a mockery of the Government's plans to improve education in the area... said... Labour's spokesman on education... But those claims were rejected by the Minister of Education... who said the Government was committed to improving education in South Auckland. [The minister] said it was spending \$30 million on supporting problem schools throughout the country.

...a \$30 million lifeline for schools struggling to cope... with the Tomorrow's Schools reforms, which centred on greater self-management... may be the key to a brighter future for pupils in the country's poorest schools. Seven schools have been earmarked by [a] Ministry of Education... report [which] said many students might arrive at these schools late (if at all), hungry, unwell, unable to see or hear properly, tired, stressed, abused, or influenced by alcohol or drugs... The principals said the funds would go towards better... facilities and programmes to get more parents involved with school initiatives.

...Situations Vacant: Multi-talented people sought for highly challenging positions with responsibility for million-dollar budgets. Remuneration: \$2.57 an hour. No, it is not a misprint, as thousands of school trustees across the country will realise. The campaign to encourage parents to stand for election at their local school next April was launched yesterday... The Auckland School Trustees' Association president... said it was fair to say trustees were not in it for the money. A recent report by the Council for Educational Research showed trustees spent an average of 3.4 hours each week on school business, for an average monthly meeting allowance of around \$35. Some trustees waived the allowance altogether. However... there were many other rewards. For many trustees it gave the chance for greater involvement in the education of their children. For others it was the experience gained from running a business... Many people made "huge leaps" personally and professionally through their work on boards... [O]ver the years boards had begun to work more smartly and many were co-opting parents with particular skills... Parent trustees expect the elections to be a time of change. After nine years of Tomorrow's Schools, boards would be losing many long-serving trustees who had been involved since the start, because their children had finished school or moved on to other schools... [However, the] national School Trustees' Association president... said more than half the existing trustees nationally intended to stand again... [The ASTA president] saw trustees being invited to temporarily join boards at other schools to fill gaps in experience or help members get up to speed on their responsibilities.

...The School Trustees Association fears industrial unrest among teachers will deter people standing for positions on school boards [(which are already)... alarmed at their inability to cover additional costs stemming from a wage increase for support... staff, such as teacher aides and clerical workers, settled last September]. A PPTA)... call for two days of strike action in the first term next year if employment contracts aren't settled... will be discussed at union meetings being held around the country... Secondary teachers are claiming a basic scale of \$33,000 to \$53,000, an increase on the present \$29,000 to \$47,100. The union also wants 1200 more teachers, 200 of them Maori... The union will re-enter contract negotiations on Tuesday, but has already said it expected the Government to be "difficult."

...Secondary teachers are forecasting strike action during pay talks if the Government does not halt the bulk funding of teacher salaries.

...The P[M]... last night torpedoed secondary teachers' hopes of a compromise... in the bitter eight-year ideological war... over the controversial alternative pay system... direct resourcing (bulk funding) for all schools... [He] told Auckland University business students that power and influence were rapidly moving from central Government to individuals and communities. "...We want to give schools more autonomy through direct resourcing... [G]ood teachers must be supported and poor teachers should go. Monopolistic teacher unions following old-fashioned union tactics have no place in the provision of modern education." ...The president of the P[PTA]... described the comments as incredibly unhelpful and said they would be seen by association members as provocative... [but] hoped some neutral ground could be found in the lead-up to renegotiation of the collective contracts covering... primary and secondary schools... The wage round, complicated by differing views on how to achieve parity between primary and secondary teachers' pay is shaping up as potentially the most disruptive yet... Bulk funding, adopted by about 12[%] of schools – around 45 of the 350 secondary schools – allows schools to pay teachers directly from their Government grants rather than salaries coming from a central agency. Most schools that moved to the system gained more funding... [F]urther "bribes" of between \$85 million and \$100

million would be offered this year to entice school boards into bulk funding... [However, most] boards are not interested... [A] School Trustees Association survey shows... [65%] said they wanted to remain centrally resourced... The survey was responded to by 1130 boards, or 48[%] of those in the country.

...Teachers have started striking in protest at boards of trustees pushing through decisions on how they are paid. And staff at many schools are opting not to become involved in extra-curricular activities out of anger at their boards' decisions to accept bulk funding.

...Howick College yesterday joined Long Bay College in opting for bulk funding of teachers' salaries, provoking a strong reaction. About 90 of Howick's 105 teachers immediately went on a wildcat strike and last night picketed the senior prizegiving. The principal... who promoted the board of trustees' decision and voted in the 5-4 secret ballot, said it would mean an extra \$200,000 for the school, enough for six more teachers. But furious teachers said the college would need a lot more staff than that for the extra work they would now refuse to do... The teachers... vowed to boycott all school activities outside normal hours, including parent-teacher interviews, lunchtime tutoring, school camps, sports and educational trips, and all sports coaching and cultural activities. [The president of the PPTA warned last night that the consequences could be severe. In Britain, when teachers pulled out of extracurricular activity as part of industrial action in the 1980s, they never went back. "Sport there has suffered ever since."]

...Britain's most prestigious school, Eton College, is so wealthy it ranks among Britain's 20 most valuable private companies. New public disclosure rules have forced Eton to disclose it is worth \$US131 million.

...Three years into his stint as... the first non-British headmaster of Eton in 553 years... the N[Zer]... says the future for private or independent schools is "a very strong one. Seven per cent of children in the British Isles go to independent schools and in the south-east it is about 10[%]..."

...The future of funding for independent schools is uncertain in the present volatile political climate, says the leader of an Auckland private school. The chairman of the King's School board... said the Labour caucus had signalled that if it became the government, it would not support independent schooling and would reduce funding immediately. "They... fail to see[that] many independent schools are under so much pressure, any reduction would seriously affect them and could result in them being forced to integrate."

...[it's there in black and white, in that distinctly sober and unambiguous legislative prose: "Every person who is not a foreign student is entitled to free enrolment and free education at any state school during the period beginning on the person's 5th birthday and ending on the first day of January after the person's 19th birthday." The people who wrote the Education Act thought it important enough to put it right up the front, in section 3 – preceded only by that long list of definitions where they tell you what they mean by "student" and "overcrowding", for example. They probably believed it when they drew up the 1964 act and its predecessor, which dates back to the days of WW1 – when education was a luxury for toffs, and youngsters ached to leave and find a job within the first few minutes of asking around. But the people who wrote the 1989 act – the one that launched the educational "reforms" – must have been laughing up their sleeves as they cut and pasted that old clause into the new bill. Paying tax-deductible fees for "free" education is nothing new. But when Pentium computers are essential tools and schools compete for the students who bring with them funding entitlements, fees are a school's lifeblood.]

...The NZJ School Trustees Association is pushing for a big increase in operations grant funding for schools... School boards claim they can not balance the books.

...The Ministry of Education has released figures showing that... [73% o]f the 90[%] of schools which had filed financial statements for 1996 showed... an operating... surplus. That was up from 71[%] in 1995... Schools may be balancing their books better, but the buying of textbooks and computer equipment is suffering as a result, say school organisations... The head of the School Trustees' Association... said the ministry's figures did not reflect the income from foreign fee-paying students or local fundraising activity... The president of the P[PTA]... said the improvement was only because schools were cutting resources.

...Personal grievance claims... against the board and principal... have financially strained a Far North intermediate school, forcing it to cut back on resources... An [ERO] report released this week said serious disharmony between the previous board and the principal, the principal and the previous deputy principal, and between staff and senior management resulted in tensions that had "hindered the effective governance and management of the school." The board resigned after clashes with the principal... [In related news, a teacher] has finally admitted destroying school bank statements and a cheque book nearly 18 months after a board of trustees was forced to pay him \$14,000 for [saying he'd destroyed them].

...Northcote College is considering suing its former finance manager... who admits embezzling more than \$1.2 million from the school[although]... \$516,658 had been repaid... [The manager], aged 37, was described in court yesterday as a man who stole so he could live the high life. He also admitted having sex with a 16-year-old girl in his care and firearms, kidnapping, and assault charges, laid after he confronted the girl with a loaded shotgun at the Northcote College swimming pool.

...When the... scandal hit Northcote College teachers joked [that the former finance manager's] next trick would be to pull a gun. Weeks later, on August 26, with the former school manager already facing embezzlement and sex charges, the jibes proved prophetic. The tubby Rothesay Bay father turned up with a loaded and cocked shotgun, walked into the girls' changing room and announced: "Guess what." [As h]e grabbed hold of his victim, [the]... shotgun was fired into the changing room walls. What followed was a dramatic sequence of events which ended with the fugitive... being arrested at Auckland Airport after a live radio chat with[a current affairs] presenter... He later told police he had wanted to kill himself in front of the girl, ending a once apparently normal life which had rapidly spiralled downwards when his crimes were exposed... [H]e held his head in one hand as details of the... 129 charges, including... fraudulently obtaining more than \$1.2 m... were read out in the... District Court.

...A Christchurch principal accused of obtaining more than \$438,000 fraudulently by overstating the number of students at his school has been committed to trial... Cashmere High School[']s principal] pleaded not guilty at a brief dispositions hearing yesterday[and expects to be cleared]... - 1997

In 1976 our roll reached a maximum of 1413; this year it is 1353 and unless the employment situation results in an unusually large number of returners, the estimated roll for 1978 is about 1300... Like most other schools, we find that the annual General Purposes Grant from the Government of approximately \$27,600.00 is insufficient to meet rising costs and to maintain and improve existing facilities. As in the past, we have to obtain about \$21,000.00 per annum from school subscriptions, stationary... a series of fund raising activities... and canteen profits to subsidise the... Grant because it has failed to keep pace with inflation... During the past five years, and arising from ideas and suggestions from a large number of our teachers, many changes... have been introduced at Cashmere in an attempt to provide an education better suited to the needs of our students... I am confident that we will continue to accomplish much of value to this community... Schools never have been perfect... and we acknowledge that however hard we try we will never attain perfection – but we are resolved to do our best, within the resources that are available to us... - PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

We... The Right Honourable... Minister of Education... The Honourable... Minister of Finance... The Honourable... Minister of State Services... [and] The Honourable... Associate Minister of Education... are pleased to present... our Review on Education Administration. During the last six months we have had the opportunity to consider more than 700 submissions and to meet and talk with many people and organisations... Our investigations convinced us that the... education... portfolio... requires specialist management of the highest order... We observed few incentives for excellence, and few opportunities to improve skills in administration and resource management. We did, however, observe the presence of disincentives. We

were told of district authorities which overspend allocations and are “rescued” by being given extra funds. The effects of that process on efficient managers are entirely predictable. At the very least such an outcome builds resentment. - ADMINISTRATING FOR EXCELLENCE

N[Z]... participates in the education activities of the U[N] Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation (UNESCO), the Commonwealth Secretariat... the Education Committee of the OECD, and a large number of other international organisations... The Ministry of Education has responsibility for the government’s policies relating to the internationalisation of education[, which]... helps build links between N[Z]’s curriculum and qualifications systems with those of other countries... Each year, teacher exchanges are arranged between N[Z], the United Kingdom, A[US], Canada and Germany... There are also opportunities for study visits by N[Z] teachers to Japan...

N[Z] and Japanese leaders compare notes... Perhaps the [NZ P]M... could be forgiven if he exhibits that familiar look of self-satisfaction about him right now. After all he has two world leaders calling on him, two weeks in succession: today the Japanese P[M]... and next week Germany’s Chancellor... Japan is N[Z]’s second largest export destination. Trade issues will be discussed but officials say there are no problems big enough to warrant a place on the prime ministerial agenda. It is the fourth time in 18 months that the pair have met... The No1 domestic issue in Japan is economic and social reform; and in many of the areas... N[Z] has “been there, done that.” ...Given the size and complexity of the Japanese economy (the combined annual sales of its four largest supermarket chains exceed N[Z]’s GDP) it is arguable whether N[Z]’s experience in economic reform and deregulation offer valuable lessons... In a keynote translated speech to the opening session of the Diet [(Japanese Parliament) this year, Japan’s PM] acknowledged that reforms would cause pain for some – that once-protected industries “will be exposed to the maelstrom of competition. However, slackening or postponing the pace of reform out of a fear of pain will not be forgiven,” he said.

...JAPAN’S coddled consumers and businesses – long insulated from the pain as well as the benefits of wide open financial markets – are getting a wakeup call to the potential of fallout from Tokyo’s “Big Bang” reforms. When [the PM first]... announced the reform plans... [and said] he wanted to restore Japan’s status as the world financial centre, the details were hazy. Now the plan has been fleshed out with a detailed timetable of reform broadly modelled on the deregulation moves pioneered by N[Z] in the mid-’80s followed by the US and Britain. The blueprint is designed to break down the walls among banks, brokers and insurers by 2001 and boost competition in the nation’s stodgy financial sector. The reforms, which are sure to cause a huge shakeout with corporate failures along the way, have two broad aims: To remove restrictions on the products institutions may offer; and to create more competition between different types of institutions by removing or lowering barriers between them. Although the name “Big Bang” is the same as UK reforms, the motives in Japan are quite different, according to [a] Tokyo analyst... The goal of financial deregulation in western countries was to increase efficiency, competition and give customers a better deal... “In Japan that is obviously a desired end, but the main function is the opportunity to get rid of some of the system’s crippling excess capacity,” she says.

...a Japanese minister convicted... in 1986... [for accepting] a two million yen... bribe in 1972 from All Nippon Airways, one of the key players in a corruption scandal involving the purchase of U[S] Lockheed aircraft –] ...Japan’s biggest political scandal since W[W2 –] ...resigned yesterday amid intense pressure from ruling and opposition parties... The... Social Democratic Party and the small centrist party Sakigake, which champion clean politics, vowed to withdraw their support in Parliament to the Liberal Democrats... following his controversial appointment 11 days ago... as state minister for management and coordination with a special task to spearhead... the P[M]’s... touted drive for administrative reforms... The Liberal Democrats hold a razor-thin majority in the House of Representatives and still need outside help in the House of Councillors... [R]eversing earlier resistance, [the minister] tendered his resignation when he met the P[M]... after a weekend of soul searching when voter support for the Government and the ruling Liberal Democratic Party plunged... [The minister] has never been far from controversy since entering politics in 1963, three years after he was found guilty of election fraud. Japanese newspapers allege he once punched a reporter in the face for asking a question about the election fraud and that he now has the worst attendance record for committee meetings in the Japanese Parliament.

...[the Japanese PM’s] disastrous decision to name a bribe-taker as minister of reforms is threatening the reforms themselves... [S]ome of the ruling party’s so-called parliamentary “tribes” – zokugin – have... started submitting proposals to derail some reforms. The tribes are the groups of politicians whose close affiliation with key industries and the bureaucrats who control those sectors has been at the heart of Japan’s repeated bribery scandals and bid-fixing scams in recent years. These lawmaker-lobbyists thrive in the construction, agriculture and transport industries – not coincidentally, areas traditionally most protected from foreign competition... Japan’s traditional pump-priming measures, modelled after Roosevelt’s New Deal of the 1930s, are designed to put cash into the economy through public works, which are gobbled up by construction firms... By far, the biggest target of the tribes is [the PM’s] plan to form 12 ministries out of the current 22 – a plan that would throw the whole tribal system into disarray.

...Last month, [the Japanese PM] was having trouble with his Health and Welfare Minister... However, it was not his own portfolio that set the minister off. Long an advocate of privatising the country’s postal services, he could see his boss in retreat and was threatening to resign if the cabinet did not endorse privatisation. Postal services in Japan cover savings and insurance as well as mail delivery. A [PM]-led reform council suggested privatising the insurance and savings sections but retaining state control of mail delivery. There are Liberal Democrat and Social Democrat factions committed to keeping all three services in state hands. That battle continues. A health note in passing. For the third consecutive year, the Government intends to cut by about 10[%] the official drug prices paid under the national health-care system. The drug bill, equivalent to about \$[NZ]100 million, takes up a third of Japanese health costs. Strong opposition is expected from pharmaceutical companies. They could check [NZ] for an ad campaign.

...The A[US]n Government gave a clear signal in last night’s federal budget that it intends continuing down a N[Z]-style road of economic reform. This will include using cash raised from privatisation... to rid the nation of debt. Documents outlining the strategy of the budget brought down by the Treasurer... said N[Z], after a decade of structural reforms – including labour market reforms – had rapidly reduced unemployment from a peak of almost 11[%] in 1991 to less than [6%], although growth in domestic product had lagged A[US]’s. A two-year study by the OECD of the impact of reform programmes in its member countries had also provided important policy lessons. “Countries pursuing comprehensive reforms – such as the United Kingdom and N[Z] – had achieved the best results,” the papers said. “This includes sound macroeconomic policies, as well as microeconomic reforms. The challenge for policy and for A[US]n businesses and workers will be to continue moving forward at a faster pace than other countries, laying foundations for more jobs and higher living standards.” - 1997

The major public sector union has sent the federal Government a warning of strong opposition to expected funding cuts in the... budget with its decision to strike today. The Community and Public Sector Union... representing 65,000 public servants, received the go-ahead to organise the action at stopwork meetings around the country on Tuesday... The [union] believes the proposed funding cuts w[ill] result in 15,000 job losses... The employees voted to extend their industrial action and ban Government initiatives such as the dole diary. Last week the Social Security Minister... announced that jobseekers would be forced to keep a detailed diary of their efforts to find work or lose the dole... The Federal Industrial Relations Minister... urged public servants to ignore the strike... w[hich w]ould disrupt all Government services, including airport Customs, social services, the tax office, Department of Employment, Education and Training and the Commonwealth Employment Service. All states except

Victoria – which... strike[s next week] – are striking for 24 hours today. [The minister] said it remained to be seen whether the strike action would be effective.

...A[US] tonight faces what is likely to be one of the harshest budgets in years, sobered by the aftermath of a pitched battle at the doors of Parliament House in Canberra... At the height of [the] battle lasting almost three hours, rows of police using riot shields and pushed from behind by about 300 other officers and security staff rushed in as reinforcements held... at bay... thousands of demonstrators... protesting against a broad range of Government policies... Rioting protesters have already severed for now the fragile links remaining between the conservative... Government and the union movement... Inside Parliament House, cleanup operations will continue this morning, centred on the shattered entrance to the Marble Hall... [The P]M... says the budget will be strong and fair, rather than tough. His Treasurer... seeks a massive \$9 billion in spending cuts... The [G]overnment... intends to reduce the Commonwealth Public Service by up to 30,000. New entrants will receive less favourable superannuation benefits... A new tax regime is expected for superannuation – a complex system already beyond the understanding of most A[US]ns. The Government is also... expected to increase the national medicare levy (1.5% of income) for those without private health insurance earning more than \$56,800 annually... It has been revealed reductions in overseas aid[will] contribute to \$454m of savings in the Foreign Affairs and Trade Department... But the defence budget is exempt from cuts.

...Unbowed by violent demonstrations at Parliament House on Monday and citing “strong” employment growth in N[Z, the AUSn] Government reaffirmed its determination to forge ahead with labour market reform. It also continued... with a renewed programme of asset sales and departmental frugality... The Treasurer... has based his 1996-97 budget on expectations of a weaker economy in which growth will ease slightly... private consumption will dip, wage pressures will continue, and unemployment will ease only marginally... [He] intends... to reduce the underlying deficit by about \$A4 billion this year, and \$A7.2 billion over two years, to return the budget to balance... The loudest squeals come from the higher education sector. It is suffering severe indigestion – in administration, finance and quality – having increased student numbers by 73%... in the past 12 years. Now it faces \$945m in cuts to operating funds over four years and has been refused funding for a current academic pay claim. Most controversial are rises in some fees paid by students...

The A[US]n Government faces a hard battle to push its budget through a Senate controlled by opponents who have criticised the measures... as “deceitful” and designed to inflict pain with little compensating gain. Political outrage has been joined by a broad coalition of unions, Aborigines, doctors, students, community, welfare and youth organisations angered at deep cuts to education and job programmes, increased health costs, imposts on the aged, and broken election promises... The Council on the Ageing said... the elderly... would be hit by... means testing for nursing homes... and... the end of free dental care... But the... Chamber of Commerce and Industry said... business generally applauded the budget... - 1996

The A[US]n Government, while slashing spending almost everywhere else, wants to spend \$A500,000... to move a chair 800m. The P[M]... wants to move the historic House of Representatives Speaker’s chair from former Parliament House to the chamber of the new building, up Capital Hill. The elaborate Gothic-style chair, a gift from Britain, includes 200-year-old timber from the flagship of British hero Admiral Horatio Nelson. It was left behind when Parliament moved in 1988. If moved, the chair would get 80 days use a year. A former Labour minister... told Parliament the old chair would look frightful in the new Parliament House, which he described as “this art deco modern monstrosity. Some idiot has spent \$A12,000 of hard-earned taxpayers’ money having a consultant look at the possibility of doing it at a cost of 500,000 bucks.”

...The besieged Government of [the AUSn P]M... was rocked yesterday by the resignation of two cabinet ministers caught in [the] scandal over false travel claims. The Transport Minister... [-] one of the bright lights of the National Party... [-] had... claimed \$A29,205 for 144 nights away from his Goulburn home, about one hour’s drive from Canberra. He repaid the money but, unlike Labour MPs in a similar boat, no notation of the correction was made when the amended claims were presented to parliament. The latest blow to hit the Government, reeling under attacks at home and abroad over its greenhouse policy, economic direction and unemployment levels, reduces even further the credibility of [the PM’s] much-vaunted determination to lift the ethical profile of the nation’s politicians... [The Transport Minister,] denying any impropriety, said he had resigned to save the Government from any embarrassment... However, the Auditor-General has now been instructed to investigate.

...The travel rorts scandal which this week claimed two A[US]n ministers last night reached the office of the P[M]... and threatened the... Science and Technology Minister... The latest revelations have struck hard at a Government which already has reshuffled its ministry three times in the past year and suffered the loss of two senior ministers to a breach of ethical standards, in addition to this week’s resignations...

The Sword of Damocles hangs over A[US]’s political elite this weekend as the Labour Opposition wields leaked documents that may claim the heads of more of... [the PM’s] shredded cabinet. That the Opposition has such papers was proved beyond doubt when the Shadow Industry Minister... used detailed air charter records to force yesterday’s resignation of the Science and Technology Minister... a millionaire landowner who saw his career wrecked over a \$NZ1700 bill for beds he never slept in and a plane he never took... Parliamentary insiders say the most likely source of those documents is within the Department of Administrative Services, responsible for keeping detailed records... of Government travel. It may be no coincidence that the department has been decimated by [the PM’s] small-government policies, and many in it have long loathed the P[M] and his colleagues... But for the Government, the source is now a second issue. Vast damage has already been done... The... police are now investigating.

...A[US]’s travel rorts scandal claimed another victim yesterday as the... resignation of a middle level policy adviser in the Department of P[M] and Cabinet... was accepted after her belated recollection last week that she had failed to pass on suspicions of misdeeds to [the PM’s] office.

...The... A[USn P]M... announced... major changes to his ministerial team yesterday... [as a result of the] scandal that forced three ministers from office... The... Attorney-General... was promoted into cabinet... “The new ministry is a strong team which reflects the depth of talent available to the [Liberal-National coalition,” the PM said. However, the... Labour opposition leader... disagreed, telling reporters in Sydney: “[The PM] has shown that the paucity of talent on his backbench means that he can’t have the fresh start that he needs...”

...[an AUSn politician... was rushed to hospital yesterday after attempting suicide in a shocking twist to a travel claims abuse scandal that has rocked both sides of A[US]n politics. The opposition finance spokesman[-] target of a bitter Government attack this week... over[his] claiming \$A46,000... in travel expenses while staying with his mother... [-] was in a stable condition in a Canberra hospital, said the shaken and distressed Labour leader... Asked why the Senator had chosen such action, [the Labour leader] said: “I think that is an impossible thing to speculate on.” Aside from the controversy over travel claims, [the Senator], like many of his colleagues, had suffered a marriage break-up.

...In a suicide note to the domestic A[US]n Associate Press news agency, [the Senator] said he was too ashamed to return to his... home state of Tasmania after Parliament finished... [His] suicide attempt could end... the... bitter travel allowance abuse scandal which has rocked both sides of [AUSn] politics, politicians and analysts said.

...The turmoil embroiling the A[US]n Government continued yesterday as the Senate agreed to subject the Attorney-General... to an inquiry that could lead to criminal charges... [Meanwhile,] the... MP accused of driving away from his home and sleeping in his car so he could claim a... travel allowance, has been ordered to stand trial for fraud.

...The... [P]M... yesterday blamed internal party brawling rather than the travel rorts affair for... [his p]arty’s disappointing performance at the South A[USn state legislature] election on Saturday... The Liberals were left hanging on to government by a thread in S[A], with their total number of Lower House seats reduced to... 23 from 36. Labour now has 21 Lower House seats and the National Party one. There are two independents.

...A[US]'s conservative Government was dealt another blow yesterday with... an... opinion poll showing a surge in support for the Labour opposition, putting it well ahead of the Government. The *Australian* newspaper's Newpoll showed primary vote support for Labour at 45[%], a leap of six percentage points since the last Newpoll survey... In comparison, support for [the] Government dropped four points to 39[%]... It was Labour's highest result since the P[M]... became Liberal party leader in January 1995. It was also the first time that Labour was ahead of the Liberal-National coalition in almost three years... The latest poll compares with the Government's primary vote of 47.3[%] and Labour's 38.8[%] at the March 1996 election which swept the conservative coalition into office after 13 years of Labour rule.

...There is something to be said for standards – having them and proudly maintaining them even when circumstances may dictate differently... [The former AUSn PM] all but vanished off the face of the earth after he and his Labour Government were ousted in last year's March 2 election. Since then, he has pursued a private life, shunning publicity like a man possessed in his pursuits as company director and investment guru specialising in Asian projects. In a statement to a Sydney newspaper a couple of months ago... [he] protested against continued scrutiny of his life. "I was P[M] once, I'm not now. I'm a private person. I'm entitled to privacy. If I want to subject myself to that public scrutiny, then I'll nominate for Parliament." [However, despite] his dislike for public life, the good old masses continue to help pay costs to keep him in the manner to which he has been accustomed. To be fair, A[US]n taxpayers foot the bill for "entitlements" for all five of the country's living former P[M]s, in recognition of their years of service... Former PMs are entitled to unlimited first-class free air travel in A[US], the use of Government cars and hire cars, free phones and – in the first year out of office – a couple of extra staff to assist them with the transition to a mere mortal... But last year these expenses totalled more than \$A1.54 million... almost half a million more than ever before. Who made up more than 40[%] of that? The new boy on the block... [His] bill of \$A624,314 last year eclipsed the previous record of \$A391,459 set... in 1993-1994... while his wife... took the dubious honour of being the most expensive spouse-of-a-former-P[M], charging \$A11,857 for her air travel. Yet, in his defence, [the new boy] is a busy man. He took an average of more than three flights a week between Canberra, where he lives, and Sydney where his main office is (and remember, flying first class is essential when you're in the air for all of a gruelling 30 minutes). Still, there is a reason for everything: ...the millionaire businessman notorious for his arrogance and abusive tirades at the Opposition while in power... said renovations to his \$3 million Queen Anne-style property in Sydney's well-heeled suburb of Wollahra require his "almost daily supervision." Imagine the exhaustion. So once you arrive at your destination, why mimic the masses with a taxi? Why not book a Government car, save precious seconds in a cab queue and maintain some sense of importance at the same time. [His] *modus operandi* saw him book a Government car on average almost twice a day every day for the entire year, spending more than \$A1000 a day on them on at least 10 occasions... [The total cost was] \$A156,000... The Sydney *Daily Telegraph* tabloid newspaper... [has dubbed] him "Limo Man"... A spokesman [for the new boy] (presumably one of the fairly well taxpayer-paid staffers) defended the high costs, saying they would ease once his children finished school in Canberra... What the heck. What really seems to rile the many who love to hate him (not least the media) is his sheer determination to remain firmly outside the spotlight. Picture it from [his] viewpoint: they loathed him when he was in it and now he annoys them for being out of it... [Some people have begun suggesting that the new boy] might consider quitting his penchant for dipping in the public purse and try the waters at Portsea instead... This coming week is the 30th anniversary of the actual disappearance of a former P[M], Harold Holt. Holt went for a swim in heavy surf at Portsea, south of Melbourne... and was never seen again... That he was not considered a strong swimmer and most likely became yet another drowning statistic was simply too insignificant... [T]he gravity of the situation meant that accepting the obvious explanation was insufficiently momentous and a raft of conspiracy theories blossomed, one that it had all been prearranged and he was picked up by a Chinese submarine, going on to direct an espionage programme against A[US].

... 'one minute before noon Harold Holt, 59, plunged into rough seas during a visit to Cheviot Beach with his clandestine lover (his wife had stayed behind in Canberra), her daughter, the daughter's boyfriend and a young Englishman – and vanished, apparently swept out by the vicious undertow. A massive search was undertaken, which lasted three weeks but found no body. Did the country's leader drown accidentally, or was he so stressed by the worries of office he committed suicide? For years after his death even more bizarre theories circulated – that he had somehow been killed by the CIA, who feared he was about to withdraw AUSn support for America's role in the Vietnam War; that he was murdered by drug bosses; that he was alive and living in Brazil. The most plausible explanation is believed to be that, anxious to impress his younger companions as well as his lover, he misjudged the surf and – hampered by a nagging shoulder injury – did not have the strength to struggle to safety. Marine experts now believe he was eaten by sharks, or perhaps voracious hordes of sea lice destroyed the body within days. Harold was AUS's third PM to die in office, but the only one whose death is shrouded in mystery.' Returning to the present, AUS] recorded a second straight[monthly] surplus on international trade in goods and services with the Government reporting an \$A873... million surplus... Economists had forecast a surplus of \$A200 million... [As a result, AUS]'s current account deficit narrowed to \$A2.446 billion... in the June quarter from \$A3.972 billion in the March quarter, the A[US]n Bureau of Statistics said.

...The... A[US]n P[M]... yesterday unveiled a sweeping new industry policy designed to accelerate long-term economic growth past 4[%] a year, boost corporate health and promote the nation as a regional financial centre... Under the... "Investing For Growth" package... the Government will commit \$A1 billion... to business innovation over the next four years... More than \$150 million will be provided to... expand commercial access to state-of-the-art technology and to Government science agencies.

...N[Z] suffered the pain of economic reform but so far has missed some of the gains. In contrast, A[US] ducked radical reform but has still markedly improved its economy. That's the view of... one of A[US]'s most respected industrialists [– the] chairman of Amcor, the paper and packaging company, chairman of the Wallis Inquiry, which proposed sweeping financial sector reforms this year, and president of the Business Council of A[US], the equivalent of [NZ's] Business Roundtable. "Most of us would accept that N[Z] has been more aggressive and radical in the reform process than A[US];"... But... N[Z] had to take the radical route, [he] argues, because its problems were large but its economy small and short of competition... A[US], however, was able to make headway without radical change because its economy was much larger, had a big natural resource base and was open to domestic and foreign competition. "The red-hot poker of competition has been driving our progress."

...The new age of competition in... services... [foreshadowed by the] dawning of a fully deregulated telecommunications market in A[US] has left AUSns feeling... deeply cynical that they will see any real benefit. Many believe they will simply be stuck for more money for services of dubious value. And who can blame them? ...Telstra remains a giant in the industry and, like all such beasts, is a lumbering organisation which likes to tread on those who get in its way. It has a legacy of poor service, high charges and dinosaur-age technology. Just like Telecom N[Z] or British Telecom, it is difficult to see how real competition can occur when governments are content simply to privatise the businesses of such... monoliths.

...The days of trust have ended for A[US]n MPs... Fresh revelations... in the biggest perks investigation in A[US]n political history – nicknamed 'Travelgate' –] ...show another 140 national members of Parliament, including more ministers, have been ordered to explain discrepancies in their travel claims... A[US]ns have for years quietly tolerated a bit of fiddling by their elected representatives as a kind of unofficial compensation for their low salaries and long hours. But the travel allowance scandal... has focused the spotlight on the extent of MP's privileges and the lack of accountability... A[US]'s national MPs get a base salary of almost \$A82,000... about the same as a middle-ranking business executive. But that salary is topped up with "no questions asked" travel allowances of up to \$A320... a night, the best pension scheme in the country, free domestic air travel, electorate allowances up to \$A38,000... a year, some free travel for spouses, and a first-class, round-the-world airfare every three years... The travel allowances – free of the 48.7[%] income tax MPs pay on their salaries – can significantly boost annual earnings. Some members claim more than \$A50,000... a year... [Furthermore, in] Canberra, the 224 members of the national Parliament are ensconced in a billion-dollar building, pampered with a private gymnasium, spa and sauna, subsidised bars and restaurants and room service provided by chefs from the nearby Hyatt

hotel... One politician used to stay in a Canberra caravan park for a few dollars a night while claiming the \$A145... a night for stays in the capital. Others buy houses or apartments with their allowances... All of this is legal, but a review is under way... [A] former independent MP who campaigned against special privileges for politicians, says the whole system is rotten. "What we have seen so far is only the tip of the iceberg..." For the ordinary voter, some struggling to bring up families on the minimum wage of \$A340... a week before tax, apathy is turning to anger. "When are the politicians of this country going to stop stealing money and behave like decent citizens?" asked one... letter to the editor of a daily newspaper... [A] poll in *The Australian* [reported that the PM's popularity] had plunged to its lowest level since his election... However... the Opposition [leader's popularity has also] been diminished... On Thursday the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* headlined its front page: "A pox on both your houses." In the nine days A[US]'s leaders had bickered, the newspaper said, foreign debt rose \$A765 million, 540 small businesses went bankrupt, 1500 fulltime jobs disappeared, 60 women died of breast cancer, 58 people committed suicide, and 50 people died on the roads... Cartoonists echoed the sentiment. [One] in the *Sydney Morning Herald* depicted... [both leaders] as rival Neros duelling with fiddlesticks while A[US] burned...

Three separate investigations have been launched into the disastrous demolition of an old Canberra hospital that... turned a picture-postcard Sunday afternoon into a war zone... and... left a 12-year-old girl dead, at least 13 others injured, dozens seeking counselling and the possibility of massive compensation claims... The implosion of the eight-story hospital, being demolished to make way for the controversial new National Museum of A[US] on prime lakefront acreage, had been heavily promoted in advance as a family spectacle. Most radio stations urged people to watch the building go down. Thousands picnicked on the grass verge of the lake opposite the hospital, more than 400m distant and twice as far away as the 200m exclusion zone determined by the contractors and explosives experts... But the job went tragically wrong. Delayed by 30 minutes by trouble with the circuits, the explosions ripped the hospital apart, toppling a huge incinerator tower outwards instead of into the rubble, and shooting a deadly broadside of debris more than 600m... No one had any warning. Boats were rocked as huge spouts of water erupted around them as bricks and other rubble plunged into the lake... [S]pectators on the shore froze at first in disbelief, then fled in terror... [A] construction union official... [accused the AUS]n Capital Territory Chief Minister... of rejecting safer means of demolition in the hopes of using the spectacle to boost her chances of re-election... The demolition had been contracted by an ACT government agency, Totalcare Industries...

Israeli authorities suspended for one day the Olympic-style... games for Jewish athletes yesterday after a bridge collapsed, killing two A[US]n competitors and injuring 43 others... Leaders of the closeknit A[US]n Jewish community of 100,000 were questioning how such a thing could happen. Many were also angry that the opening ceremony for the 15th Maccabiah games went ahead, even as the rescue operation continued. Organisers later said they were unaware of the severity of the disaster. [The] head of the A[US]n delegation, told a news conference that the team was demanding an official investigation... But the... 370-strong... A[US]n team last night decided it would stay on and compete... The specially built bridge across the Yarkon River leading to the stadium at Ramat Gan near Tel Aviv gave way as the A[US]n squad was crossing it. The... Army had offered to build the bridge at a cost of 300,000 shekels (\$[NZ]129,329), but the contract was finally given to a private company for 75,000 shekels.

...The bridge collapse that took the lives of two A[US]ns... this week has evoked an unusual measure of self-criticism in Israel, sometimes amounting to self-flagellation, about the very nature of its society. What appears to have been shocking sloppiness in the bridge's construction has been taken by many commentators and members of the public as an analogy for something fundamentally amiss in the Israeli national character... Many linked the bridge collapse to other fatal accidents like the crushing of three youths to death two years ago at a music festival because a gate had been shut... and the deadly accidents that periodically afflict the Army... "We're a clever people," wrote... the daily newspaper *Ma'ariv*... "but to tell the truth we've got some national characteristics that are pretty miserable: exaggerated self-confidence mixed with no small measure of braggadocio suitable to people who know everything; irresponsibility and an almost religious faith that everything will work out in the end, somehow." ...A... former Speaker... said the apparent lack of safety precautions reminded him of the night P[M] Yitzhak Rabin was murdered... "Negligence and insensitivity have become the credo of Israeli society."

...A bridge that collapsed during the Maccabiah Games, killing four... A[US]n... athletes, was built without design plans or a foundation, a committee of engineers investigating the accident said in Tel Aviv yesterday... "certain individuals" will be charged over the collapse...

[Another AUS]n has died as a result of the bridge collapse... earlier this month... [The 47-year-old victim] had swallowed polluted water after falling into the Yarkon River. The team plans to increase its \$US500,000... compensation claim from the Israeli Government.

...The Israeli Government used emergency laws yesterday to order thousands of public sector employees back to work... [because the] nationwide strike... has paralysed the country. Strikers who refuse to heed the order face up to two years in prison and nearly \$US3000... in fines. [Incidentally, 'politicians are taking advantage of a weakened Israeli PM to make extortionate budget demands – including demanding that he put his promise in writing. For some, even that was not good enough. Never have Israeli political leaders shown such blatant distrust of a PM. It is an astonishing fact that most politicians in Israel, including his political allies, believe the PM cannot be taken at his word. His survival test this week is the budget and he seems likely to pass through it safely. The next crisis is doubtless not far off.'

...the Israeli P[M]... has ordered a \$US850,000... refit of a plane so his family will not be deprived of creature comforts when travelling abroad. A... double bed... is to be installed for [him] and his wife... on an Israeli airforce Boeing... [In related news,] the Chancellor of Germany... [–] arguably Europe's most influential politician... [– is coming] to observe aspects of N[Z] that have captured German attention... [H]e is already the most durable Chancellor since... W[W2], steering Germany on a steady path towards a leading role in Europe and post-unification stability... Under his leadership, Germany has emerged from a period of Cold War tension to dominate debate on Europe. But in recent months there have been signs that the wheels may be falling off the economic wagon. Despite a healthy \$US65.1 billion... trade surplus, Germany's growth rate has slowed to 1.9[%], and there has been a blowout in the budget deficit to 3.9[%]. And though inflation remains low at 1.5[%], a post-war unemployment high of 12[%] in February, 4.6 million people, is a major worry... Germany is looking for answers to mounting economic problems, and... N[Z] has been prominent in the German consciousness. N[Z]'s move from a centrally controlled, heavily regulated economy to full deregulation has caught the eye of officials in Germany, and also private sector industries who are still subject to a raft of restrictive legislation... The media has also taken notice, with mass-circulation magazines *Stern* and *Spiegel* both featuring articles on N[Z]'s economic reforms. N[Z] diplomatic sources in Bonn say that Germany is now looking at N[Z] as a model on which to base its own reforms, while at the same time wanting to consolidate relationships in the Asia-Pacific region... [The Chancellor] will... be accompanied by the Minister of Science... and a group of leading business figures all keen to take a close view of N[Z]. They will also be interested in the way Germany is viewed in N[Z], an important consideration with N[Z] increasingly being seen in Europe as a gateway to lucrative Asian markets... and N[Z] recently topped a survey of Germans' preferred tourist destinations.

...So much for the perks of high office... Even after a decade and a half comfortably ensconced in Germany's top job, [the Chancellor] still has the common touch. He likes to get around by bus. The no-fuss German Chancellor... has caused some surprise during his N[Z] visit by forsaking the politician's preferred conveyance, the limousine[, and]... taking a more humble seat on the bus which is normally reserved for the overflow of underlings who accompany heads of government on such visits. On Wednesday this choice prompted the strange sight of a... bus heading the official motorcade from Wellington airport to Parliament Buildings, instead of trailing respectfully behind. Yesterday [the Chancellor] again took the bus... for the nausea-inducing trip over the Rimutakas to... where he toured... [a] vineyard. Earlier the 67-year-old leader... used the bus for the short hop from his Wellington hotel to the National War Museum for a wreath-laying ceremony. Officials said the Chancellor frequently preferred to take the bus on such occasions... [during] his swing through A[US], Brunei and Hong Kong. "He needs a lot of space," said one journalist,

making an unkind reference to the Chancellor's obvious bulk. But the reporters also said that back in Bonn, the German capital, [the Chancellor] got himself to the office in a very large Mercedes. "I suppose you could call that a bus," joked one.

...[the German Chancellor's Christian Democratic Union faces financial ruin with debts of 100 million marks, says a party chief, although he denied the CDU was likely to go bankrupt. Parliament's speaker last month fined the CDU 41.3 million marks for running illicit slush funds. Meanwhile, the prosecutor's office in Bonn has denied a *Der Spiegel* newspaper report that the prosecution has proof the Chancellor was siphoning off money from his party. The Chancellor has refused to reveal names of donors to illegal funds run from 1993, and for which he is under parliamentary and criminal investigations. He insists he gave his word not to betray these donors' anonymity and cannot go back on it.]

...German budget plans have been thrown into question by major shortfalls in estimated tax revenue... Revised official estimates predicted nearly 18 billion marks (\$NZ15.3 billion) less income for the federal, regional and local authorities this year than they were counting on...

TAXES are up, wages are down, unemployment is high and optimism is fading. Western Germans blame their brethren from the former communist east for a falling standard of living and eastern Germans feel betrayed by the free market economy imported from the west that has left every fifth worker without a job... [O]pinion polls... show a remarkably high degree of dislike between easterners, derogatorily called "Ossies" by westerners, whom easterners disparagingly call "Wessies"... Divisions in Germany are sharper than at any time since the country's euphoric unification on October 3, 1990, and many marking the anniversary said the marriage was suffering from a severe "seven-year itch". Even [the] Chancellor... normally an incurable optimist on the subject, admitted uniting the communist east with the capitalist west had been harder than he expected. "The four decades of division have left their marks on the spiritual and cultural life of our country... East and West Germans had completely different experiences – you couldn't find greater extremes. That can't be fixed overnight." ... "I genuinely doubt unification will ever work out," said... a retired rail worker from Nuremberg who came to Stuttgart to celebrate Unity Day with 500,000 others... [A] 46-year-old Stuttgart housewife, said... "All the costs of unification are being paid for by ordinary workers." Westerners have been increasingly annoyed at the solidarity tax taken from wages to rebuild eastern roads, railways, schools and buildings.

...A GLASS dome now crowns the Reichstag building, soon to reclaim its place as the seat of Germany's parliament... The \$10 billion move that will transfer Germany's government over the next two years from Bonn to Berlin is gathering momentum. Nearly 50,000 politicians, civil servants, lobbyists, diplomats and journalists are preparing to depart the tranquil town on the Rhine... near the Belgian border... for the sprawling Prussian metropolis... 80km from Poland... New embassies for... Britain... the U[S] and France... are sprouting up next to the Brandenburg Gate, where the Wall that fell in 1989 divided the one-time heart of Berlin... Not surprisingly, France is fortifying ties with Spain, Italy and other southern partners known as the "Club Med" to build a counterweight to a potential Teutonic bloc.

...A TIDE of scandal is moving closer to [the French] President... and the inner cabinet of his ruling Gaullist RPR party. The ties of scores of public officials and elected politicians to an alleged web of institutionalised corruption in the French capital are being exposed. Many date back to the tenure of the Hotel de Ville – the seat of municipal power and patronage – by [the President, who was Paris'] mayor for almost 20 years. As a small team of investigators dig deeper into the mess, the scandals are becoming increasingly baroque. Take the case of... [the] director of a municipally financed housing authority... [A]ccountants concluded that the housing authority's \$2.2 million deficit was attributable to the sumptuous lifestyle of the... low-level civil servant earning less than \$35,000 a year... They noted his penchant for luxury hotels and rented limousines and his occasional dips into the petty cash... [The President and his] long-serving No2 in the Hotel de Ville and his automatic choice for [PM]... have made themselves even more unpopular with the voters with some profoundly misjudged public relations initiatives. In [a recently] televised... address... the... [President] seemed ill-at-ease as he tried to convince the French that the economy was not in such bad shape after all – although unemployment has just touched a post-war peak – and called, without a whisper of the scandals besetting the RPR, for a new "culture of responsibility"... In the left-leaning *Liberation* newspaper, [a] journalist... argued that [the President] and co were approaching a "moral crunch" as the public turned away in disgust. Much the same thing happened to the Socialists during [their former President's] second term, he noted... [Incidentally, Quebec's Premier is on the move] – and his mood and message seem to change as swiftly as the scenery. On a January trip to Asia with a delegation of Canadian premiers, Quebec's leader played the moderate. He ducked confrontations with fellow premiers on the explosive issue of Canadian unity and vigorously promoted his province's industry and expertise... [in order to help] eliminate a [US]\$2.4 billion deficit by the year 2000... He even shared a slice of cake to celebrate the birthday of his chief political rival, [Canada's PM]... Less than a week later, back in the bedroom suburb of Laval, outside Montreal, he had reverted to nationalist mode, pounding the lectern for separatism... [– even though s]upport for sovereignty (with some kind of association with the rest of Canada, as suggested in the 1995 referendum) [has] dipped to 45%... "I feel that you are ready for the victories to come," he vowed in a speech that brought Parti Quebecois hard-liners to their feet. "We are ready for the decisive step. We are ready for sovereignty." Since then, [the Premier] has picked up the pace... To those familiar with [the Premier's] canny ways, the high-voltage peripatetics can mean one thing: an election in the offing.

...[Parti Quebecois has been returned to power in Quebec's provincial election. The result was a humbling defeat for the 40-year-old leader of the Quebec Liberals, who just a month ago was touted as the "saviour of Canada" and the best hope of those who want to halt the secessionist drive. The win dashed the hopes of English-speaking Canadians and heightened the chances of another referendum on independence for the French-speaking province (which is four times the size of France).] Speaking of France, NZ's PM visits Paris for a two-day official visit... [following] his visit to Britain this week... He will meet [the French] President... the new French PM... – for the... first... meetings between top N[Z] and French leaders... in 35 years... [–] and the Ministers for Overseas Territories and Veterans.

...[our PM]... will underline N[Z]'s desire to keep its close ties with Britain when he meets the... British PM. He will also... meet... the... Foreign Secretary... be [a] guest at a luncheon hosted by the Deputy PM... – a regular visitor to N[Z] – and... will meet the Queen at Buckingham Palace... N[Z]'s experience with proportional representation is expected to be a major area for discussion, with the [proposed] Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly both to have MPs elected under proportional representation... [Our PM] will use his 45-minute meeting with [his British counterpart] tomorrow to get a feel for the British PM's aspirations... in relation to his domestic political agenda... [T]he two are expected to use the visit to focus on the similarities between the two countries and their populations.

...an article in... a leading English newspaper... tells Britain that N[Z] is not a good example to follow... The... *Independent*... said Rogernomics... [–] as the N[Z]ers christened their [economic reforms –] ...worked politically, but not socially and has left a people who believe their Government betrayed them... N[Z] is now an unhappy, edgy country, with a less equal, less safe society... "It does not much feel like a model. A lot has been made of the way N[Z] contracted out services and introduced competition into its public sector... But there is no hard evidence that services are delivered any more efficiently there than elsewhere. On the contrary: if the central measure of effectiveness of a state is public trust in and appreciation of its Government, N[Z] is a case study in failure – levels of mistrust of and outright disdain for government are at an all-time high." ...some of... the economic reforms begun by the 1984 Labour Government... were necessary... [the newspaper] said... But... N[Z] is a lesson in a Government being taken over by theorists and hard-liners from the neo-liberal right-wing. "N[Z] shows how, eventually, radical right-wing Government is self-defeating..." ...[however, the article pointed out that] there was no denying the success of the revolution, led by... the architect of the reforms... and... a group of Treasury civil servants, the Business Roundtable and other lobbyists. Within a decade the radical right had smashed the welfare state, despite public support for its principles. "...the revolutionaries did not... care to foresee that the reforms would create a new class of high-rolling consultants and business executives for whom greed was good and some of the most attractive features of a pastoral, egalitarian

society would be lost forever.” ...in the early 90s there was an economic boom that reflected what was happening elsewhere in the world but it was now over. N[Z] had little to teach the world in matching low inflation with jobs and growth. - 1997

...the British Parliament... consists of the House of Lords and the House of Commons... Until 1911 the House of Lords had legislative powers comparable to those of Commons; since then Commons has been supreme, though the House of Lords still wields much influence... [It] comprises the archbishops of Canterbury and York, bishops of the Church of England, and peers (dukes, marquesses, earls, barons, and “life peers”). Peers have their status by hereditary right, or are created by the sovereign on recommendation of the prime minister.

[NZ’S] PARLIAMENT and the NZ Constitution are deeply rooted in the British Westminster system... From the passage of the 1852 Constitution Act until 1950, Parliament in NZ had consisted of the House of Representatives and the Legislative Council (an Upper House to which members were appointed, at one time for life). But the first National Party administration, which won office in 1949, decided to eliminate the Legislative Council because of the practice of packing it with party supporters when new administrations were elected to achieve the ready passage of administration. It helped vote itself out of existence as from the beginning of 1951. It was to be replaced by an elective upper chamber but nothing has been done and there is little likelihood of such action now. A result is that, although important constitutional legislation is protected by conventions that have developed, the authority to make or change law in NZ is now entirely in the hands of any governing group which can move legislation through the House of Representatives with a majority of votes, no matter how slender that majority.

Apart from the lack of an Upper House, another modern difference between the British and NZ political systems is that the latter usually holds parliamentary elections every three years instead of every five. A notable similarity is the way both countries have seen political policies go round in circles as each of the two major parties, upon becoming the ruling party, reversed the legislation of the previous Government (a consequence of the citizens’ tendency to vote out, rather than vote in, their ruling parties – i.e., ‘Government’s lose elections – the Opposition don’t win’). The ‘first British Labour Government was elected to power in 1924 but it didn’t survive out the year. The next Labour Government wasn’t elected until 1945 but the Conservatives regained power in 1951. Labour got another chance to rule between 1964 and 1970, then from 1974 until 1979.’

From 1979... the Conservative Party... oversaw a social revolution in Britain that left no one indifferent and no one unaffected. Britain sent its Army to the Falklands and won. But when the Government sent police to battle rioters in Trafalgar Square it was forced to back down and abandon its new method of local government funding – the reviled poll tax. Market forces were introduced into all areas of British life. Telecommunications, gas, water and electricity were among the utilities privatised, raising more than £70 billion... for the Government and turning millions of ordinary people into shareholders. But economic dogma was taken to unpopular ends. The coal-mining and steel industries were decimated. Attempts to privatise the railway system and introduce the market to the much-loved National Health Service caused uproar. The unemployed, at one time more than three million of them, were told to “get on their bikes” and look for work, while yuppies working in financial markets earned breathtaking salaries and widespread scorn as they flaunted their fast cars and champagne lifestyles... [T]he middle classes stepped over the homeless living in shop doorways on their way to dinner parties where gloating conversation turned on the apparently never-ending upward spiral in the value of their homes. But house prices did come down, rather rapidly, as the 1980s became the 1990s. Voters who had switched to [the Conservative Party when it] promised them a foothold on the capitalist ladder turned against the Conservatives when their houses became worth less than their debt. The Conservatives bundled [their leader] out of office in 1990, fearing she would lose them the 1992 election, but [the replacement] was a grey image of the Iron Lady...

[The Iron Lady] has publicly backed... her successor as P[M], calling on the Conservatives to pull together before the general election due by May next year... [S]he believed that if the Conservatives could pull off a fifth consecutive election victory “we will have killed socialism for good.” ...However, the applause from delegates... at a reception during the party’s conference... lasted a modest 40 seconds or so, considerably less than she has been accustomed to... - 1996

“...where there is despair may we bring hope.” The words [of St Francis of Assisi were commandeered by the Iron Lady when she was first elected in 1979, but they] were hardly appropriate for what became Britain’s most radical political reforms since... W[W2. Her ideology] was all about free markets and private enterprise. The Government took on the unions and won, and it sold much of the industry Labour had nationalised... Unemployment soared... and, in 1981, [she] was rated the most unpopular P[M] since opinion polls began. But victory in the Falkland’s War sparked a surge of national pride, sweeping her back to power in 1983. However, she wasn’t around to celebrate the Gulf War victory eight years later. She was pushed out by party leaders who sensed the country was tiring of her strident leadership. The man chosen to replace her was widely seen as a political lightweight, virtually unknown outside Britain. In 1992 [he] won a fourth term for the Conservatives... But today the Tory Party [have] reached the end of the road...

A SPEEDING van was driven straight at police as rioting swept through Central London... Riot police fought to contain increasingly violent clashes as scores of yobs bombarded them with rocks and bottles. Paving stones were torn up and shop windows smashed by youths chanting hate slogans. Horrified restaurant owners locked their doors, barricading diners inside as the riot approached... The clashes started outside Downing Street...

DARKNESS and evil spread with astonishing speed. How many of us would have believed, 10 years ago, that a woman could be gang-raped and almost drowned by a gaggle of near-children on the streets of London? In a... radio discussion – about whether the [50]s really were a golden age – I was asked what we would be nostalgic about 25 years from now. I replied: “Having glass in the windows of our houses, instead of corrugated iron.”

...[the Iron Lady’s] model local council leader and her deputy were ordered to pay \$78 million after being found guilty of electoral corruption yesterday... The sum to be paid was reduced from the \$88.5m ordered by [an] auditor... The ruling brought to an end a corruption scandal that hit at the heart of [the Conservative Government] when allegations appeared 10 years ago.

...[yesterday the Iron Lady] put herself at the front line of the Tory election campaign with a determined battle cry. “I’m here to fight for Britain,” she declared – more than once. Her first port of call was Christchurch, Dorset, a Tory stronghold from 1910 until voters defected to the Liberal-Democrats in a 1993 by-election. But the Tory faithful turned up in their dozens to welcome her at a local garden centre. [The Iron]Lady... drew fanatical applause and obviously relished being centre stage again. “I campaigned in 11 elections,” she told the crowd, adding: “[My success]or’s had a good five years and we want to make sure he’s got another five.” ...One of the Conservatives’ weakest points in this election has been the so-called ‘sleaze factor.’ Top Tories have been involved in a series of sexual and financial scandals, and that’s prompted [a]long-time BBC journalist... to stand as an anti-sleaze candidate... “...he’s handled war zones and they’ve very much prepared him for this, and this is going to be a particularly nasty war zone indeed...”

...A row over sleaze hijacked the British [PM's] election campaign when[a] former minister... confronted an anti-corruption candidate trying to force him to stand down as a candidate for the ruling Conservatives... The two, standing inches apart and surrounded by a forest of cameras and microphones, traded verbal thrust and counter-thrust in a surreal stand-off.

...[the beleaguered PM's] election campaign has again been overshadowed by sex and sleaze allegations that have persistently be-devilled the ruling Conservative Party... The Conservatives, buoyed by low inflation, falling unemployment and a strong economy, had hoped to concentrate their fire on the opposition Labour Party's links with the trade unions.

...The London Underground will be privatised if the Tories are returned to power, according to sources close to the British Transport Secretary... A host of international bidders would be expected to enter the contest to take over the troubled Tube. The sale of the 134-year-old network, which includes 260 stations used by 2.5 million passengers a day, would raise up to £13 billion... for the Treasury. Options include selling the entire network as a single company or disposing of it service by service, with tracks and stations forming separate businesses, as happened with Railtrack in the British Rail break-up. The Labour Party says it will oppose the sell-off "every step of the way."

...The British Labour Party is tipped to embrace a policy of privatising remaining state assets in a break from its traditional stance... The Conservatives said the reports showed Labour was now "in full retreat." ...However, the Labour Party is still 20 points ahead of the Conservatives, according to an opinion poll...

In the last days of the campaign scare tactics have emerged in force. Tories say that people should be afraid of Labour because there will be a re-emergence of trade union domination, a return to the past policies of high public expenditure and a destruction of the economic gains made in recent times. Labour says that the Conservative Party will increase value-added tax on heating and apply it to food and children's clothing. The rejections of these accusations come rapidly, accompanied by the predictable doses of wounded righteousness and anger. [The]Labour leader... insists that he is the architect of the "modern Labour Party" – its name of New Labour ringing ironically in... N[Z] ears... But the N[Z] Labour Party had gone through the British experience much earlier and in a more profound way... Certainly it did not have a Clause 4 about the socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange in its constitution... This is the challenge to the British Labour Party. It was fortunate to be able to attempt to work it out while in opposition... It remains to be seen whether the modernisation is substantial enough to endure in government... The question, which is still not fully answered in either country, is what does a social democratic party offer the electorate which is distinctively different once the constraints of a global economy and international competitiveness have been accepted? Do those policies simply look like a kinder, gentler version of the Conservative line, blending privatisation with more effective safety nets?... "The Tories and Labour seem to be coming much closer together..." ...Labour's... line to reassure the public that there is nothing to fear in voting Labour rests entirely on the notion that "New Labour" is very different from "old Labour." ...this means that generally acceptable values, similar to motherhood and apple pie, are now fundamental principles of modern socialism. These values, shared equally by many Conservatives, are the conclusion of... Labour's... modernisation process. This is meant to rehabilitate socialism and show it to be appropriate to contest modern ideas, especially the neo-liberalism which is so prevalent internationally... [Labour's leader] has gone in search of an electorate, trying to find out what it is they want and then promoting it rather than taking to them something new and vibrant which inspires them with new confidence in Labour. The accusation of being the same as the Tories is often repeated because in the process of gaining electoral support the search for common ground with "middle Britain" has resulted in a reduction to the lowest common denominator, to which no one can take exception. That has made the election campaign tedious for most Britons and may well be reflected in low turnout at the polls...

[A] former editor of Marxism today, wrote... [about] the Labour leader... in this week's Microsoft News: "In the face of attack, his instinct in each case has been to retreat. The impression has been of a weak leader who refuses to stand his ground and fight." [Another commentator writes that 'Labour's leader is "able to say things that don't tell you much but sound good. He's into free enterprise, he's into entrepreneurialism. He's changed Labour to make it comfortable for former Tories. Consequently, it's very difficult to pick between the two policies.'"]

...the Labour leader] likes to call his new, flexible approach to politics, "The Third Way". He'd better be careful. Other political forces that have used that strange designation include the authoritarian syndicalist movement of Argentinian strong-man Juan Peron, the Russian Army's tough "shoot first, ask questions later" politician... a neo-fascist party in Bulgaria and the dreadful PUMM party in Moldova.

...I AM afraid of some of those who surround [the Labour leader]. They have grown so used to ordering people about in their own party, and being obeyed, that it would not be wise to let them near real power. Our unwritten constitution's one fault is that it assumes Britain will be governed by gentlemen, who believe, above all, in fairness. And these people do not believe in fairness. I am sure they could not have gained control of the Labour Party without their regime of fear and intolerance, and their crude policy of reward and punishment. But now this coarse attitude has spread from the backrooms, where ambitious courtiers plot, to infect solid democrats who ought to know better.

...IN THREE weeks' time, either [the Labour leader or Tory leader] will be supping at the sweet fountain of victory. The loser will, with traditional stiff upper-lip, graciously admit defeat, while doubtless wishing he could use the brief concession speech of an American senator who declared: "The people have spoken – the bastards!"

...The flush of victory is warm on [the Labour leader's] cheeks... For Labour this victory is like the birth of a child after many disappointments. Joy is unconfined but in a few hours those responsible for the happy event will be aware the hard work does not end with a successful delivery... [The new PM], aged 43, made few specific promises during the election campaign, beyond vowing not to raise income taxes for five years and to keep a tight grip on public spending. Many of his policies seemed to be carbon copies of the Conservative's... [F]or the economy... [the change in Government] would be almost seamless... Both [parties promised] not to raise taxes and not to interfere with the free market, and both wish to meet the Government's inflation target – 2.5%... But millions of Britons voted Labour because they were fed up with [the Conservatives]. They may not be life-long Labour voters but they voted for change. Britain's youngest P[M] this century will face popular pressure to change the government of the country as much as he has changed his party since becoming leader in 1994. Only four members of his cabinet will have held a Government post, all at junior level in the Labour Government ousted in 1979... It will be the most inexperienced cabinet of the 20th century. [The PM], a member of parliament for 14 years, has never held a ministerial position. Unlike most of his Labour predecessors he has not held an executive post in union or local government politics, being a lawyer before entering politics. The new cabinet's ignorance of the levers and pulleys of Government have been alleviated by backroom meetings with senior civil servants over recent months, but ministers are bound to run into problems with the basic mechanics of decision-making. [The PM's] biggest problems over the early months may well come from the expectations of both party and people, some of whom want a seamless transition and others radical change... He wants two terms in government to impose New Labour policies on the nation. But a softly-softly approach will not endear him to members of the left wing of the party. They have largely kept quiet since July 1994 as [he] squeezed socialism out of Labour and repositioned the party in the centre ground. The left will now expect a payback for their tameness during the election campaign... "Our problem will be to prevent a rootless Labour Government moving further to the right to gain impetus... Stopping that will be the responsibility of old Labour," said [a Labour] member of parliament... late last year. Few tears were shed in Europe over [the Conservative's] thumping defeat... Europe hopes[the] victorious Labour leader... will usher in an era of cooperation in European affairs, but is not deluded that all will suddenly be well in cross-Channel relations. "On key sovereignty issues – money, borders and armies – no one expects a change in the short-term," said one diplomat... [Both parties had made a] promise not to let Britain join the E[U]'s proposed single currency without a referendum... Nothing Labour has said it will do seems likely to... crimp corporate profits – with one group excepted... UK utilities, once state-

owned and sold to private investors by successive Conservative governments. Labour is not threatening to nationalise them again, but is threatening to impose a so-called windfall-profits tax on them. Labour officials have said the tax would bring in... from £3 billion to £10 billion.

...In a whirlwind start to government, [Labour's] ministers have instituted a number of significant changes, including allowing the Bank of England to decide interest rates... [Labour] has unveiled an "ambitious but practical" legislative programme... The package tackled Labour's five main election manifesto pledges – to cut primary school class sizes, shorten hospital waiting lists, mete out swifter justice for persistent juvenile offenders, get 250,000 young people off welfare into work and create conditions for "lasting prosperity." But there was also a number of eye-catching constitutional reforms to decentralise power, make Government more transparent and clean up politics after a string of sex and money scandals during the Conservatives' last years in power. Referendums will be held to approve plans for a tax-raising parliament in Scotland [– a poll last year 'found that 51% of Scots felt such a parliament should have tax-raising powers' –] and a less powerful assembly in Wales. But the Government did not put forward a bill to remove the voting powers of hereditary peers in the Upper House, one of its aims... The legislative programme, was formerly announced by the Queen in a glittering, ages-old ceremony in the upper House of Lords... Britain's new P[M]... claimed... "Our mandate is clear: to modernise what is outdated, to make fair what is unjust; and to do both by the best means available, irrespective of dogma or doctrine, without fear or favour." ...Saying the defeated Conservative Government had lost touch with the "instincts and aspirations of the British people," [he] said the new Government would reunite the country... He told a packed House of Commons he would run a "people's government, rebuilding trust between government and governed."

...The... [new British PM's] popularity rating has soared to 93[%]... says a private party poll. The figure, reported by the *Independent on Sunday* newspaper, was thought to be a record for any democratic politician but aides were quick to quash any triumphalism or complacency... [The PM] has a thumping 178-seat majority in the 659-strong Parliament[, which now contains less than 170 Tory MPs]...

Tory leadership contest a battle of mediocracy... The Conservatives will begin electing their new leader today, but the candidates appear to offer little inspiring for voters in the next century... [N]one of the five leadership candidates... seems to be much more than second-rate. That may be a bit harsh, but it's true... [By the way,] the *Times* newspaper ran a front-page cartoon this week that showed a pollster asking "Do you think [the PM] is a) terrific; b) wonderful; c) sensational?" ...As [the]... popularity of Britain's leader hits record levels, [some wonder how long it]... can last... "Rarely in recent history has a political leader amassed such goodwill so quickly," [a former US] Secretary of Labour... wrote in Sunday's *Observer*... "[He] is capable of being one of Britain's great [PM]s... but the real test has yet to come." ...The art of politics, like journalism, consists of judging what you can get away with...

Britain's Labour Government, which opposed the use of endocrine-disrupting chemicals during the election campaign, has changed its stance... [and now] will oppose an international attempt to ban "gender-bending" chemicals blamed for falling sperm counts and growing rates of testicular and breast cancer... Britain will join France and Spain as the only nations resisting the listing of some 50 endocrine disrupters... [The] environment Minister in the new Labour administration, said Britain would "stick with" the Tory Government's line... In March, [he] told the House of Commons that a Labour Government would support an international treaty to "reduce and eliminate" hormone-disrupting chemicals. "The banning of these highly toxic chemicals... must not be subject to haggles over trade. They are environmental absolutes." ...The stance has dismayed environmentalists and scientists who claim the "sex chemicals" pose as big a threat to our future as global warming... Friends of the Earth said: "How can we trust a Government that, weeks before a general election, calls for tough action on these chemicals and then at its first opportunity to take action just follows the Tories and perpetuates the United Kingdom's reputation as the dirty man of Europe?"

...A suicide note penned by a despairing British Labour parliamentarian less than three months after his party's landslide election victory may lead to an electoral setback for [the PM] this week... Voters will go to the polls on Thursday in a byelection to choose a successor... [to the] MP for Paisley Park[–] part of... the central Scottish county of Renfrewshire... [– who] left a note alleging[that a] fellow Labour legislator... had spread false rumours that he was a homosexual before gassing himself in his garage. Although an internal Labour inquiry has cleared [the fellow legislator], he is suspended from the parliamentary party pending the outcome of an investigation into sleaze in Labour's ranks in... Renfrewshire. Pundits do not expect Labour to lose the seat... [but publicity surrounding the] death and the sleaze probe could result in an embarrassingly large cut in its... handsome majority of almost 13,000.

...Britain's ruling Labour Party has ordered a police investigation into allegations that one of its new members of Parliament bribed rivals in the May 1 general election... The bribery allegations... [have cast a shadow over Labour's] Government, which was helped to its election victory by charges of financial and sexual impropriety involving Conservative politicians... The *News of the World* alleged that... Britain's first Muslim MP[– who]... won the Glasgow constituency of Govan... [–] paid £5000... to [an] independent Labour candidate... also a Muslim, to get him to ease off campaigning so as not to split both the Labour and Asian vote... The... [MP strongly denied the] claims... "The allegations about me... are totally false... I will be consulting my lawyers tomorrow about taking out a writ for defamation," he said... A second Govan candidate... who stood as an unofficial Labour candidate... later told *Sky News* that he, too, had been offered money before the election.

...BRITAIN'S Labour Government sank further into embarrassment on Friday as... the... row over political donations... refused to die down... [The] Public Health Minister... who has taken most of the heat over... a... policy switch on... Formula One motor racing and... tobacco advertising, stayed away from an anti-smoking group award ceremony. Labour embarrassment deepened with publication of research which said boys who were big motor racing fans were twice as likely to become regular smokers... A party renowned for its skill in handling the media[, Labour] repeatedly turned down requests for interviews; one BBC programme, *Newsnight*, on Thursday showed an empty chair in the studio to make the point... Political commentators said it was... [the PM's] worst week in office... Most accused him of naivety rather than corruption... [Earlier in the week, Labour's Muslim MP for the Scottish constituency of Govan had] admitted he gave money to a rival candidate but insisted it was a loan... [Incidentally, t]he "hidden problem" of Scottish racism against the English is to be investigated by Britain's Commission for Racial Equality after a sharp increase in attacks on the so-called "white settlers." The commission, which has backed legal actions brought by English people in Scotland, has asked a lobby group called English Rights Scotland to compile a discrimination dossier detailing evidence. English Rights was set up this year by [a Newcastle-born settler] who sued his Fife employer for failing to stamp out anti-English racism. "We are getting calls all the time from English people who are being discriminated against in the workplace and in other more subtle ways," he says... A commission spokesman said officials were taking [English Rights'] evidence "very seriously." ...English people are protected under the 1976 Race Relations Act... "and the number of claims of anti-English discrimination is rising." ...[such] cases now account for 10[%] of the... commission's workload in Scotland... Anti-English sentiment has been growing as more and more southerners have abandoned London and other English cities in search of the good life in the glens and hills, provoking resentment among locals... Shadowy ultra-nationalist organisations such as Scottish Watch and Settler Watch have been blamed for attacks on English homes and businesses. Some English families have abandoned their homes after suffering verbal and physical assaults.

...Centuries of struggle against English domination form the emotionally charged background to referendums on "home rule" this month in Scotland and Wales. The names of heroes... are being invoked by the pro-devolutionists who want their countries to take the best opportunity for generations to grab a measure of power back from London... The new Edinburgh parliament would be a far cry from the sovereignty once enjoyed by the Scots, whose Kings and chieftains were ever-ready to defend their domains against the English invader... Wales has only fitfully existed as an independent nation... the last time... [was] in the early 15th century... at the height of which the Celtic nation held the only Parliament in its history... Edward 1 was the first English King to claim sovereignty over the whole of what is now Britain when he declared himself feudal overlord

of Scotland in 1290, installing John Balliol as his vassal King. By that time, Welsh-speaking princelings had been fighting for more than a century to resist repeated incursions by the Normans, who had long conquered England, into their territories... Revolts... [in] Scotland... by William Wallace... and Robert the Bruce were eventually crushed by the weight of English arms. They were followed a century later by the great Welsh uprising... [When] the Tudors, a Welsh family, ascended the English throne... their countrymen [were given] brief hope that the tables were to be turned on the English. But the Tudors showed scant respect for their roots, and in 1536 passed an Act of Union declaring Wales to be “forever and henceforth incorporated and annexed” into England. On the death of the last Tudor monarch, Elizabeth I, in 1603, the English throne passed to James VI of Scotland. For more than a century after this, Scotland had its own Parliament, which was united with that of England in 1707. The Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745, the latter led by Bonnie Prince Charlie, marked the last military efforts by the Scots to overthrow this arrangement, and were bloodily put down... Schoolchildren in Wales were forbidden to speak Welsh in class while their Scottish counterparts learned the names of the English Kings starting with William the Conqueror in 1066 rather than those of the Scottish monarchs Macbeth, Malcolm III or Donald Bane... Scotland is... now... in the unusual position of being part of a larger nation state, but having its own legal system. Certain parliamentary bills are framed to apply either to England and Wales, or to Scotland... The demand for some transfer of power from England was hammered home in the May 1 British general election, when not a single member of Parliament was elected in either country for the Conservative Party, the only major political force resisting constitutional change.

...Seven hundred years ago on Thursday, the Scottish Army led by Sir William Wallace defeated the much larger English Army at the Battle of Stirling Bridge. This... September 11... will herald the start of... the devolution referendum, and all suggestions indicate a majority will... vote “yes”... But there is still debate as to whether [a] new Parliament will have real powers, or whether it will simply be a large, regional bureaucracy able to make no major decisions... Apart from the establishment of a Parliament, [a] second question asks voters to decide whether it should have the ability to vary taxes. Recent polls have shown public support for that idea has fallen below 50[%], a worry for the politicians. It seems the people of Scotland have realised they can have their Parliament, but rather than pay for devolution themselves through higher taxes, all of Britain can help fund it. Business leaders have campaigned against different levels of tax in Scotland and England, warning of a move south of industry and commerce if taxes are raised. The other major issue is that of the Constitution. The Scottish Nationalist Party has used the devolution debate to highlight its hopes that a new Parliament is only the beginning, and will lead to an independent Scotland. Labour does not want that... But just to make sure, they have retained constitutional powers in Britain, so even if Scottish MPs vote to form an independent Scotland, constitutionally they cannot break away from the United Kingdom without the support of England’s politicians.

...The Labour Government’s white paper published last month proposes a parliament in Edinburgh of 129 members – 73 elected for constituencies and 56 on a proportional basis. It would have an executive and a chief minister. Eligibility would be based on residency. The number of Scottish seats in Westminster, 71 at present, would “be reviewed.” Scotland already has block votes of money from Westminster for health, education and other expenditure categories. This is administered by the Scottish Office, based in Edinburgh... So, apart from a separate assembly in Edinburgh, what would change? Well, the range of block votes would expand and the parliament would have the power to raise or lower the rate of income tax imposed by Westminster by up to 3[%]. This would amount to a tax variation of \$NZ1125 million either way and would be “indexed to maintain its real value.” The Scottish Office already has a large public service staff which would mostly be transferred to a new parliament. Additional running costs are estimated at between \$50 million and \$75 million and would be met by the assigned budget of the Scottish Office.

...Scots voted in a three-to-one landslide in favour of a... plan to give their country its own parliament... A slightly smaller percentage, 63.5[%] said “Yes” to the second referendum question asking whether the parliament should have tax-varying powers... Turnout among the nearly four million electors was 60.4[%], which is... relatively low for Britain... 71[% voted] at the general election... The... government bill setting up the new assembly would be ready for the end of this year and would be passed by the British Parliament next year, with the first elections in the middle of 1999... Another referendum on devolution of power from London will take place in Wales next week.

...The people of Wales began voting yesterday... Opinion polls in the run-in to the referendum pointed to a vote for greater autonomy but many... voters were undecided right up to the last minute... The... proposed... assembly... would contain 60 members [and] control an annual budget of £7 billion... From schools to sport, housing to hospitals, the assembly would run daily life... for some three million people... but would hold no sway over finance, foreign affairs, defence or law and order. The last time Wales was offered its own assembly, in 1979, people voted “no” by a stunning four to one margin. But the mood in Britain has changed after 18 years of centralised Conservative rule...

Six hours after the polls closed, officials declared victory for home rule after an exhausting and exhilarating night that pitted 559,419 “yes” votes against 552,698 saying “no.” ...Yet opponents of the assembly said the tightness of the vote ensured the long-simmering issue... was far from resolved, with large patches of Wales opposed, undecided or too apathetic to vote... [T]urnout... was... at 50[%]. In related news, conscientious... peers have narrowly failed in their bid to have daily attendance allowances of nearly \$[NZ]80 forfeited by colleagues caught snoozing during debates in the House of Lords. This dozing-off... is a well-established tradition – possibly because of the mind-numbing tedium of the speeches. And that reminds me of the apocryphal story of the elderly earl who dreamt he was making a speech in the Lords. Then he awoke and found he was.

...Britain’s Labour Party last night kicked off its first conference in power since 1978 with a vow to get tough with jobless youngsters and single mothers as part of its goal of restoring full employment... “We will end the Tory paradox of an army of unemployed youngsters living in a nation full of un-met needs,” [the] Foreign Secretary... told the opening session of the conference... [He also] nudged Labour closer to a commitment to stripping hereditary peers of the right to vote in the House of Lords... “Before Britain enters the 21st century I want us to be free of the medieval lumber of hereditary peers...”... Labour has just 15 hereditary peers, compared with 326 for the Conservative Party. Another 23 are Liberal Democrats and 274 do not follow any party line. Together they make up almost half of the upper chamber’s membership of 1280. Few hereditary peers vote regularly but the Conservatives occasionally called theirs in from their country estates to great effect during their 18 years in power to ensure the passage of bills or to block Labour-backed measures... His comments provoked the Duke of Buccleuch to remark that hereditary peers were appointed by God... “Somebody ought to tell the Duke that the divine right to rule went out 300 years ago...,” said the Foreign Secretary.

...[‘any NZ politician who suggested his son should have the automatic right to succeed him in Parliament would be laughed out of the Beehive. It is a concept so out of step with democratic principles that a modern politician would have to have spent hours propping up the parliamentary bar to even suggest it. Yet what we see as laughable is an entrenched cornerstone of Britain’s parliamentary system: the right of hereditary peers to sit in the House of Lords. The New Labour juggernaut is determined to bring that right to an abrupt end. A “short but momentous” bill is before the British Parliament to do just that – and, in the arcane language of the upper chamber, is “now in the middle of its passage through another place.” Translation: the House of Commons passed its second reading by a massive 246 votes, 69 above Labour’s nominal majority. It is difficult to argue, even in Britain, for the retention of hereditary rights in this day and age. The *Daily Telegraph*’s political editor sums it up: “Whatever their useful expertises, a genetically transmitted right to legislate is intellectually indefensible.” The Speaker of the House of Lords is the Lord Chancellor. A Labour life peer, he told me: “We don’t have hereditary rocket scientists; we don’t have hereditary football coaches and we don’t have hereditary Lord Chancellors either. And so, I think, whatever is right, the hereditaries are wrong. So I am completely unapologetic about removing them as a first self-contained act. As for phase two, well, that will be considered by a royal commission.” So what model for an upper chamber will be recommended by the 12-strong royal commission, drawn from across the political spectrum? The White Paper “Modernising Parliament: Reform of the House of Lords” suggests four possible models: a nominated chamber, a

chamber directly elected by voters, a chamber indirectly elected by an electoral college, or a mixed chamber. One wonders why Britain is intent on unravelling one intellectually unsustainable part of the institution before it has a worthy substitute to put in its place.'

...The Upper House of the British Parliament, which is to be purged of hereditary nobles under sweeping reforms by the Government, yesterday approved an amendment to the main legislative bill, sparing the seats of 92 aristocrats from abolition until a new chamber is established. The bill ending the 700-year-old right of Dukes, Marquesses, Earls, Viscounts and Barons to sit and vote in Parliament has already been approved by the House of Commons. The amendment, proposed by a former Speaker of the House of Commons, was backed by 352 votes to 32 – one of the biggest majorities this century. It means 75 hereditary aristocrats, or one-tenth of the total of 759, will stay on. Fifteen places will be reserved for deputy speakers and committee chairmen and a further two for the Earl Marshal and the Lord Great Chamberlain. Meanwhile some Lords – who 'must each justify their position in 75 words or less (the law making them do so is 82 words long') – 'have vowed to bow out of Parliament by defeating as much of the PM's legislation as possible.'

...The British P]M... has bluntly told his Labour Party critics they cannot duck the tough spending decisions needed to prepare Britain for the new millennium. Five months to the day since he swept to power on a tide of euphoria that has yet to recede, [the PM] was facing the first real test of the willingness of rank and file Labour members to back his intention to blast away some of their most cherished ideals[– such as]... free university tuition and... the renationalisation of Britain's railways. Both issues are dear to the hearts of left-wing activists. An unpaid ministerial aide... begged [the PM]... to reconsider his plan to make university students pay part of their fees. [However, ministers] are confident of winning the vote on tuition fees. The outcome of a debate urging the Government to spend up to £4 billion... to buy back the railways... is likely to be much closer. But [the PM] said he would ignore any demand to renationalise the railways. "It ain't going to happen," he said... [during an] hour-long address, in which he promised to turn Britain into a beacon for the world and a model 21st century country... [He also] dropped further hints, saying that people in future would have to look to a combination of the basic state pension and a private second-tier pension for their needs in old age... The centre piece of the speech was... the need to overhaul Britain's welfare state and its £90 billion... a year budget... He made no apologies for serving notice that the days of blank welfare cheques were numbered. "...the way back to a decent standard of living... [for] the vast majority of... people that are poor or unemployed or disadvantaged in our society... is work. It's just work they need." ..."The people's premier gives us all heart and hope," said the *Sun*... [while] the left-leaning *Guardian* said talk of hard choices was a barely concealed code for a wholesale attack on the welfare state... Proof that [the] post-election honeymoon is still going strong came on Thursday with an opinion poll giving Labour 59[%] backing, more than the 44[%] it polled on May 1 and one of the highest ratings ever for a governing party... The Tories... go to their conference in the northern English seaside resort of Blackpool next week with a young, untried new leader... and a popularity rating of just 25[%].

...Britain's opposition Conservative Party set sail on a new course yesterday, reaching out to single parents and gays as part of an effort to cast off the uncaring image that it admits cost it the May 1 election. Setting the tone for his keynote speech to the party's annual conference, [the] new party leader[, who] is just 36... enthusiastically endorsed frank criticism by[a] former defence secretary... "Tories were linked to harshness, thought to be uncaring about unemployment, poverty, poor housing, disability and single parenthood, and considered indifferent to the moral arguments over landmines and arms sales. We were thought to favour greed and the unqualified pursuit of the free market with a 'devil take the hindmost' attitude,"... said... [the] right-winger who lost his seat at the election... [Meanwhile, the PM] has appointed... an MP with a record of drafting novel solutions to welfare problems, as a Junior Social Security minister with a brief to "think the unthinkable." The *Times* quoted a Government source as saying [the minister] was about to come up with a plan to force all workers to pay into a national fund to finance nursing care for Britain's growing army of old people.

...Rebellious Labour Party members of Parliament dealt... [the PM] a huge blow yesterday when a junior minister resigned in protest at cuts in lone-parent benefits... of up to £11... a week... and then 48 of his 419 MPs voted against him... In addition... two MPs who acted as unpaid aides to senior ministers quit... [However, the rebels] lost by 457 votes to 107. The opposition Conservatives voted with the Government... The rebels could in theory face expulsion from the... Labour Party, but political sources said in view of their numbers, such drastic action was unthinkable.

...Only days after [the British PM] urged voters to trust Labour his deputy was reported as saying it was sometimes acceptable to mislead the public... [The deputy's] embarrassing admission was the latest blow to a... [party that is] already rocking from a string of policy U-turns... and... infighting over strategy...

The British Government has scooped six out of the nine Golden Bull awards presented each year for incomprehensibility. The Department of Trade and Industry was given special mention for its definition of a pram as "a wheeled vehicle designed for the transport in a seated or semi-recumbent position of one or two babies or infants or any carry-cot or transporter thereof." The awards are presented by the Plain English Campaign... [Incidentally, the PM and the US] President... cemented their warm personal relations yesterday by declaring themselves political twins from a new generation with no use for "yesterday's ideology." ...visibly relaxed in... [the PM's company as he] became the first US President for almost 30 years to address the British cabinet[, the President]... said there was an "unbreakable alliance" between the two countries. - 1997

An important difference between British parliamentary government and the U.S. government is that whereas in Britain the prime minister, or chief executive, holds office only by virtue of his [or her] leadership of the majority party in Parliament, and is retired when that party loses its majority, in the U.S. the President is elected separately and has a tenure independent of Congress.

Congress, the legislative body of the U.S. It consists of two houses sitting in Washington, the House of Representatives, which normally consists of 435... members elected by the states according to population, and the Senate of 100 members, two from each state. The houses sit separately, but the consent of both is necessary to [introduce new legislation (in addition, the US has got separate state and federal legislatures – like AUS).] Senators are elected for six years and representatives for two... Its legislation may be pronounced unconstitutional, and therefore invalid, by the Supreme Court. The President can veto its legislation, but Congress can overcome this by passing the vetoed measure again by a two-thirds majority... Members of the President's cabinet are not members of Congress.

A President must be at least 35 years old, have lived within the U.S. for 14 years and be a "natural-born citizen" – [although] the last phrase [hasn't been] legally defined as a presidential qualification... The candidate must win more popular votes than any other nominee in enough states and the District of Columbia to give him a majority of the electoral votes. If he does... he has won the right to the office of President of the United States...

In September 1788, Congress called on the states to choose electors who would cast votes for the newly established office of president. They unanimously elected George Washington on February 4, 1789, and the American political institution of holding presidential elections every four years – as established by the U.S. Constitution – was begun. Who, in 1988, will become the 41st president of the U[S]? That answer will finally be known after a long, arduous campaign that, for some candidates, began a year or more earlier... The presidential election has four phases. The first is the selection of delegates – where the Republican and Democratic parties select delegates and commit them to a specific candidate... The second is the campaign for the "nomination" – the official endorsement by each party of the favored candidate. To win the nomination, a candidate must get the majority of votes at his or her party's national convention. Conventions are held in the middle of each election year. The third phase is the

campaign to win the final election. The final phase is the vote of the Electoral College, when “electors” in each state go to their state capital and fill out official ballots. The electors vote for the same candidate who won the popular election in their state. The ballots are mailed to Washington, opened and counted in the U.S. Congress, and the winner is announced... The 1988 presidential campaign will end on November 8, Election Day, when Americans enter voting booths across the country and select the individual they believe can best govern the U[S]... Each state has the same number of electors as it has U.S. senators and representatives. In addition to two senators each, states are divided into congressional districts of about 520,000 people, and each congressional district sends one person to the House of Representatives. Therefore, even the smallest states in population, such as Utah or Alaska, have three electoral votes (two senators and one representative). Since California has the largest number of congressional districts – 45 – adding two senators gives it 47 electoral votes... Prior to the election, the Republican and Democratic parties in each state... choose a slate of electors. If, for example, the Republican presidential candidate wins in a state, the Republican slate becomes the electors for that state. As loyal party members, the whole slate casts its votes for the Republican presidential candidate. The result is a winner-take-all system. Under the Constitution, if no candidate gets the required 270-vote majority in the Electoral College, the election is thrown into the House of Representatives. An election can end up in the House of Representatives, however, only if a candidate from a third political party wins one or more states, thus robbing the leading major-party candidate of a majority. Because of the strength of the two parties, third-party candidates seldom win a significant number of electoral votes in any national election... A direct popular election always works to the advantage of the majority; the Electoral College usually does. Most often it has enlarged the margin of the popular vote leader... The Electoral College contains a number of built-in biases. The most significant of these stems from its winner-take-all voting method. This benefits the largest states not only because of the number of electoral votes they cast but because the votes are cast in a block. By giving an edge to the larger states, the Electoral College also benefits groups that are geographically concentrated within those states and have cohesive voting patterns. Thus, those who live in the central cities and suburbs have a particular advantage... In general, states in the Far West and East are aided by the Electoral College, but those in the South, Midwest and Rocky Mountain areas are hurt by it. Additionally, the system works to the benefit of the two major parties and to the detriment of the minor parties, which find it difficult to accumulate enough votes to win an election. To have any effect, third-party support must be geographically concentrated... Naturally any system that aids some and hurts others will have its supporters and detractors... Over the years... [the] Electoral College... has been the subject of a continuing debate. Those who favor the system see four principal merits... It provides for geographic balance. No one can win an Electoral College majority without support from a number of areas of the country... It is consistent with the federal character of the U[S]’s political system. It gives the states direct representation in the national vote for president... It isolates voting problems. A dispute over the vote in a particular state does not spill over to other states nor is it likely to affect the outcome of the election unless the electoral vote is very close... It is a system that has met the test of time... The last disputed election occurred in 1876 and the last undemocratic result took place 100 years ago in 1888. Not only has it usually been decisive and democratic, but by enlarging the president’s margin of victory, it legitimizes the results and enhances his mandate for governing. Those who oppose the system, however, point to some real and potential problems... It is undemocratic in conception and practice. All votes are not equal; those living in the large states are advantaged. Candidates concentrate their resources in those states... It has been undemocratic in result. In two elections the popular vote winner has lost in the Electoral College. In several others, the popular vote winner has almost lost. The potential is always present for the candidate favored by the majority to lose... Voters do not understand the system of indirect election. They believe they are voting directly for president. At least theoretically, the electors can always undermine a popular mandate by exercising their own judgement. (Sixteen states and the District of Columbia have laws that require electors to vote for the candidate who wins the popular vote, but it is questionable whether these laws conform to the Constitution.) ...The system is an anachronism. It does not work as intended, nor does it accord with the growing nationalization of American politics: the national media, finance laws, campaigns and policymaking... Several plans to alter the structure of the Electoral College, change its electoral biases or preclude an undemocratic result, have been proposed. The simplest one would eliminate the electors but retain the College system of voting. This would remove the danger of electors substituting their own judgment for the people’s... The system that has received the greatest support in recent years is direct election. In 1969 the House of Representatives actually voted for a constitutional amendment to directly elect the president, but the Senate failed to muster the two-thirds vote needed to propose such an amendment to the states. A direct popular vote would, of course, remedy a major problem of the present system – the possibility of electing a president who did not receive a plurality of the vote. It would better equalize voting power both among and within the states. The large states would lose some of their electoral clout by the elimination of winner-take-all voting. Party competition within the states and perhaps even nationwide, would be increased. Turn-out should also improve. Every vote would count in a direct election. However, a direct election might also encourage minor parties, which would weaken the two-party system. A very close popular vote could also cause problems in a direct election. The winner might not be evident for days or even months. Voter fraud could have national consequences. Moreover, it is also possible that the plurality winner might not be geographically representative of the entire country. Organized groups that are geographically concentrated in the large states would have their votes diluted by direct election.

No other election in the world lasts as long... marshals such legions of workers... or... costs as much... as a U.S. presidential election.

Do you realize how much it costs to run for office? More than any honest man can afford.

Don’t laugh. Two... very rich men tried... [to] buy the presidency of the U[S]... in recent elections with self-financed campaigns, on which there is no legal spending limit... [One spent nearly] \$100 million in 1992 as an independent presidential candidate and [the other] forked out \$58m... trying for the... 1996... Republican nomination. For the 1996 general election, both [of the major party candidates will spend their] \$95m cap in federal funds. Additionally, [they are expected to spend \$65m and \$58m respectively]... in the primaries... It probably would cost in the \$750m range for a self-financed independent to have a real chance at the presidency[(the US has only had ‘one independent president’ – the second: John Adams, 1797-1801).

...the US] President... and his wife... earned over \$US1 million... last year, according to documents released yesterday, with the \$US742,852 royalties from her book *It Takes A Village* dwarfing his \$US200,000 salary... [However, the President and First Lady’s] Whitewater-related legal bills... debt has grown substantially in the past six months, say administrators of their legal defence fund. In January [the President] said he was technically broke from legal bills... [At the time the President] and his wife... owed \$US1.2 million... to lawyers. Now the debt is \$US1.7 million despite payments of \$US350,000 in the past six months... [The President] would owe lawyers even more were it not for the fact that his liability insurance covers costs of the... case, defence fund officials said.

[The First Lady] is being sued for \$US90 million... for allegedly using confidential FBI files in an attempt to obtain damaging information about former White House staffers under the [previous two] Administrations. She is one of a number of people named in a class action lawsuit.

...Fifty-two per cent of Americans believe [the] President... did something illegal in the Whitewater scandal and 56[%] think he probably tried to cover up wrongs that were committed, according to a new poll released yesterday. Both are the highest numbers recorded... since these questions

were first asked in February 1994. But the poll added that only 22[%] of all adults said they felt worse about [the President] because of Whitewater... [Last month 3 of the President's] former associates were convicted on fraud charges related to the failed Whitewater real estate deal...

Where are most of the tough political decisions made? On the golf course if you are President of the U[S], it seems... The World's Most Powerful Man... is a self-confessed golf fanatic and he now plans to play 100 rounds of golf in his last year in office if he gets re-elected... [He] is after the record set by the late *Dwight D Eisenhower* who played 800 rounds during his eight-year term... The golf bug goes even further in the White House... Former president *Warren G Harding* had to be taken off the golf course to sign the resolution ending W[W1]. Naturally, he then returned to the course to complete his round... Only in America.

...[America's] President... yesterday claimed election-year credit for new figures showing a further decline in the U[S] budget deficit, saying it was evidence that his economic policies were working. At campaign rallies in Missouri, Minnesota and Illinois, [he] trumpeted the news that in his four years in office America's red ink spending has dropped 63[%], more than meeting his 1992 campaign promise to cut the deficit in half... The decline in the deficit to \$US107 billion... this year also gave [the President] the opportunity for a rare direct response to [the Republican candidate's] appeal to Americans to "wake up" and reject [the President] in the November 5 election because of a raft of ethical problems. "My friends, America has heard a lot of calls in the last several days," he told a rally earlier in St Louis. "I would say that these results prove America is awake and moving in the right direction." [A]White House spokesman... took a harder shot at [the Republican candidate], saying his drumbeat of attacks showed he was "flailing." "It's increasingly becoming less necessary to respond as the shrillness and the absurdity of the remarks accelerates," he said. Republicans contended [that the President] deserved no credit on the deficit because they had to drag him into making reductions in Government spending after they took control of Congress two years ago... Analysts said both Democrats and Republicans had helped to reduce the deficit with various actions in raising taxes and cutting spending over the past six years. [Editor's note: 'The Republican Party is one of the two chief political parties in the USA (the other being the Democratic Party). It was formed in 1854 to resist the extension of slave territory; Abraham Lincoln was the first of its leaders to become President. It is now chiefly identified with business interests and favours restrictions on central power.']

...Lacking campaign battles over big issues, America will get again and again precisely the kind of campaign it has endured – one dominated by greed, character assault and slick stratagems designed to obscure the lack of true political differences among the candidates. The defining innovation of this campaign has been the targeting... of Asian magnates and corporations as the source of campaign funds. Like banks, [members of the existing administration] have simply gone where the money is.

...[the Republican candidate] announced yesterday that he would campaign day and night for the last 96 hours of the... presidential race in a herculean effort to prevent the re-election of [the]President... "The last time I fought round the clock for my country was in 1945," [he]said... "I will once again fight round-the-clock for America's future..." ...He had decided to roll the dice in California, figuring he could upset the President nationwide by stealing the state's 54 electoral votes, which are one-fifth of the 270 needed to win in the indirect U[S] system. He poured \$US1.5... million a week into television spots and spent seven days in the state. In doing so, [he] pulled television advertising money out of other crucial states, virtually conceding them to [the President. Nationally, he narrowed the President's] lead to 7.7 percentage points in the latest... poll... [S]upport... for... the... Reform Party candidate... [(whose \$100m outlay in 1992 gave him '19% of the vote')] has been creeping towards the 10[% mark.

...the President's] re-election endows him with historic stature, the first Democrat to win a second term since Franklin D. Roosevelt 60 years ago. His recovery, deemed almost impossible for most of the first three years of his often chaotic presidency, has been the ultimate revenge of the Comeback Kid on those who always write him off too soon. [He] came to the White House by a series of accidents and strokes of luck, and at least four years before he was ready. He decided to run in 1992, knowing the traditional rule that the voters liked to take a first look at a candidate before entrusting him with the highest office... Moreover, [his opponent was]... basking in Gulf War approval ratings of almost 90[%]... Then everything fell into place when the favoured candidates all decided to duck the 1991 race. [He] became the unexpected front runner in a singularly undistinguished field. Had there been a halfway decent Democratic alternative in February 1992, when... [his] campaign crumbled under the twin embarrassments of [an alleged illicit affair] and his record of avoiding the Vietnam draft, his ambition would have stopped dead. Then came the second stroke of luck, the intervention of [a]Texan billionaire... with his pathological loathing of [the 41st President] and his bottomless moneybags, spending lavishly to attack the President's unimpressive economic stewardship. [The 41st President] himself provided the final unexpected boost to [the Democratic candidate's] quixotic campaign. He was tired and sometimes disoriented by his Halcyon sleeping pills, jetlagged to the point of public nausea in Japan, and simply not prepared to believe that the voters could ditch him for a draft-dodging womaniser. [Furthermore, 'the power of incumbency is illustrated by the fact 96.1% of incumbent representatives and 96.9% of incumbent senators were re-elected in 1990.' The 41st President's] campaign was dispirited to the point of feebleness. Catapulted into the most powerful job in the world with a mandate of just 43[%] of the vote, [the 42nd President] was an innocent in Washington with a thin talent pool among Democrats who had been excluded from Government experience for 20 of the previous 24 years... [However, he] built on his luck... in the timing of the economic cycle... that was only just emerging from a tough recession[– thereby]... benefiting from the steady and sustained economic growth that produced 10.8 million jobs during his presidency... As he learned his business [the 42nd President] scored some serious achievements, from securing the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltic states and persuading Ukraine and Kazakhstan to give up their nuclear arsenals... But... he... brought naivety to the politics of Washington, assuming that the Democrats in Congress would be loyal and the Republicans open to persuasion that his main promises of health and welfare reform were "neither liberal nor conservative, neither Democratic nor Republican." Ironically, the Republicans were to be the saving of [the 42nd President]. They over-reached, lured by their own rhetoric. They twice refused to vote essential funds... which saw the federal Government twice closed down... The Republicans tried to blackmail the President into signing their draconian budget. Instead, they liberated him. [He] stood forth as the only man who could stop them savaging the budget for education and the environment. The Democrats had nowhere else to turn but to their President, even when he began distancing himself from them to show that he could work and pass legislation with the chastened Republican Congress. In the end, [he] could claim to have governed as he had promised on the 1992 campaign trail. He had been a centrist and a moderniser. He had pushed his country into an enthusiastic embrace of the global economy. The rich and the upper middle class had done well from the [42nd President]... But they had not voted for him.

...While[the 42nd] President... won a sweeping re-election victory... his Democrats' failure to take the... Congress from the Republicans has guaranteed a divided government. That may signal a return to the bitter battles of the past... Republicans easily retained control of the Senate and narrowly kept the House of Representatives... By returning a closely divided Congress, the American people were "sending us a message. Work together, meet our challenges... When we join our hands... America always wins[," the President said. He also said: "I have been more blessed than any American in my lifetime," and "Thank God I'm an American."] - 1996

NOT SO GREAT EXPECTATIONS THE STREETS of Washington DC were an odd mix of shivering restraint and half-hearted festivity last week as the U[S] capital prepared to celebrate... [t]he second inauguration of... [their President]. More than 250 private jets flew into Washington's National Airport, ferrying in [the President's] supporters for a \$100 million feast of parties, highlighted by the 14 official inauguration balls – the [First Couple] visited them all – and dozens of other functions, such as the Gay and Lesbian Inauguration Ball. The past few days have provided

plenty of reasons for [the President] to feel smug about his prospects as he enters the fifth year of his presidency, traditionally the year that offers any president his best opportunity for bold action... Opinion polls give [the President] a 57% approval rating, a level he has reached only once before – soon after his first inauguration. Ten days ago, he revelled in his election victory by awarding his... Republican... [presidential] challenger... the nation's highest civilian honour, the Medal of Freedom. Twenty years ago [he had described the challenger] in a letter to a friend as “the biggest prick in Congress”, and just last week his former adviser... revealed that during the campaign, the President privately described [the challenger] as “an evil, evil man”. But as he prepared to renew his lease on the White House and resume his combat with a Republican-run Congress, [the President] was shrewd enough to reach out to [the challenger] and his supporters, now calling him the embodiment of main-stream American social values. A few hours after the medal ceremony [the President] had the pleasure of watching a Congressional committee slash his most aggressive opponent, [the House Speaker... down to size for cheating on electoral funding rules and then lying to Congressional investigators about his sins... The... first Republican re-elected as speaker in 68 years... had already agreed to accept a reprimand, a technical solution that would allow him to remain Speaker, but the committee threw in a \$[NZ]430,000 fine.

...In a historic and humbling rebuke to its leader, the U[S] House of Representatives voted over-whelmingly... to reprimand [the Speaker... and order him to pay \$US300,000... for violating House rules... He was not in the chamber for the 395-28 vote, the climax to two years of bitter partisan charges and counter-charges that undermined his authority... The pugnacious 53-year-old... Republican, who appeared an unstoppable force when he took over his post two years ago, became the first House Speaker in U[S] history to be punished for misconduct by formal vote of his colleagues... “This penalty is tough and unprecedented. It is also appropriate... No one is above the rules of the House of Representatives.” ...Republicans still back him but the vote raised questions as to whether he would last the two years of his Speakership. A reprimand does not require him to step down... his offences were of a category between a reprimand and the censure that would have almost surely forced him out... [By the way,] Washington politicians are not as rude as they used to be according to a “vulgarity index”... Members of the House of Representatives used 1076 expletives in 1991 but only 943 last year.

...*Old White House tapes reveal more dirty tricks*... Two weeks after the 1972 Watergate break-in, President Nixon directed his aides to vandalise his own party's headquarters and pin blame on Democrats, the *San Francisco Examiner* said at the weekend. The plot, which was not carried out, was described in White House recordings among more than 200 hours of tapes released by the National Archive... The late Republican President, who resigned over the Watergate scandal, was heard on previously analysed tapes ordering audits of wealthy Jewish Democratic contributors, break-ins of various institutions, and surveillance of leading Democrats... Much of the talk is hypothetical... In a July 1, 1972 Oval Office conversation... [with his] chief political aide... Nixon envisions... damage done to his own party's offices: “...it may be that what they want is to get in and sort of get at files in retaliation against us... You know, the young people. I was thinking, if they made that error – and I would consider it an error – if they get in one night... and tear it to shambles, what would you think if that happened?” ...“Nixon often said exalted things that people didn't think would have to be done,” [the] Secretary of State under Nixon, told the *Examiner* last year. After Nixon resigned... [his chief political aide] pleaded guilty to obstruction of justice. [The aide] now heads the Christian Prison Fellowship in Virginia [but] refuses to comment about his tenure as Nixon's assistant. [Nixon, who ‘spent more than \$40,000 for balloons at his nominating convention’, has been described as ‘a driven man full of self-pity and fuelled by paranoia.’ ■ Among *TIME*]... readers who registered their reaction to the \$300,000 fine levied against [the Speaker] [Jan. 27] for violating House ethics, the nays far outnumbered the yeas. Most of those who wrote[to] us thought the Speaker got off too easily... “Not only should [he] be forced to resign as Speaker of the House,” wrote [one reader], “he should be made to pay the... fine in community service. Maybe he could start in one of the areas that suffered cuts from the famous Contract with America.” ...[another reader] thought it odd that [the Speaker] didn't lose his job... “Most of us would have been fired or at least suspended if we had done something bad enough to be fined \$300,000. There's something wrong with America when pro basketball has higher moral standards than Congress.” But even after the controversy, [the Speaker] still has his supporters – including... [a Californian] who likened him to American heroes of Revolutionary times. “[The Speaker] will emerge as a patriot... The nation, yes, even civilization, would have been ill served if, like other zealots, [he]... had been removed from office.”

...*the baby-boomer twins leading American politics are... on [a] seesaw sleaze ride*... American politics have always operated on the two-year cycle of the congressional elections, when all 435 representatives and one-third of the senators face the voters. This two-year cycle has been intensified by the phenomenon of those identical baby-boom twins of our day... whose fortunes rise and fall every 24 months. [The President] has timed his well, at his peak in the presidential election years of 1992 and 1996, and at his trough in the mid-term congressional elections of 1994, when [his political twin] soared on the wings of [a] Republican revolution to take control of both House and Senate for the first time in 40 years. [The President] is now descending from triumphant re-election into what will become a new slough of scandals emerging from his unprecedented money-raising operations. They will be made worse by the unfinished business of Whitewater, according to lawyers involved in the inquiry who predict his wife... will be named an unindicted co-conspirator by the special prosecutor. It would be much worse for the [First Couple] were it not for the President's political twin being in the depths of his own cycle. Just before Christmas, [the Speaker]r... admitted to the House of Ethics Committee that he had misled it (he blamed his lawyer) about a college course he taught and financed through a tax-exempt foundation. Being tax-exempt, it should have been an apolitical course. It was not. He also claimed his political organisation Gopac was not involved. It was. Indeed, [the Speaker]r... once boasted that, through wider distribution on cable television, the course should produce “200,000 committed activists nationwide before we are through.” The Republicans are closing ranks... be[hind the Speaker – whose re-election was]... exactly what the Democrats and the White House want[ed]: to be confronted by an ethically bruised and somewhat chastened Speaker, whose presence stands as a constant reproach to Republican attempts to pursue [the President] for his own embarrassments. [The Speaker's fine and] public apology may not end the matter. The evidence accumulated by the ethics committee inquiries has unveiled offences which may lead the Internal Revenue Service to bring its own charges. And [the Speaker]'s operations have involved what looks like looting charities. His Earning by Learning scheme, which pays \$2 to inner-city children for each book they read, has delivered less than a third of the money raised to children. More than half of it went to... a biographer and adviser to [the Speaker]r... Then there was the Abraham Lincoln Opportunity Foundation, another tax-exempt charity supposed to help inner-city children. Between 1990 and 1993, it raised \$259,000, almost all of which went to fund television workshops to recruit and train conservative activists. This sticks in the throat when you recall the pious speeches [the Speaker]r... makes about “the bloated bureaucracy of the welfare state.” ...[the author of *The Decline of the West* wrote that: ‘He who is out for purely economic advantages – as the Carthaginians were in Roman times and, in a far greater degree still, the Americans in ours – is incapable of purely political thinking. In the decisions of high politics he is ever deceived and made a tool of, as the case of Wilson shows – especially when the absence of statesmanlike instinct leaves a chair vacant for moral sentiments.’] The only credible defence to the charge that the American political system is thoroughly corrupted is that there is nothing hole-and-corner about the endemic peddling of financial influence. There are no secret price lists in this mercenary political culture, and the voters have no excuse if they decline to display concern. A night in the Lincoln bedroom at the White House can be yours for a mere \$250,000 to Democratic Party funds. It is not clear whether the price automatically includes breakfast with the First Family, but on the record so far another \$100,000 should ensure it. Unless you would rather spend the \$100,000 on ensuring an invitation to one of the dozens of quiet dinners with the President which were arranged at the Jefferson Hotel. The [40th] Administration... was credited with turning the daily work of presidency into a permanent political campaign. [The 42nd President] has taken this to the logical conclusion of mounting the permanent presidential fund-raising operation, and must now know that he has brought the White House into something wretchedly close to disrepute. The cartoonists who display the presidential mansion with a placard saying For Sale, or with a neon

motel sign flashing Vacancies, are bang on target. We would be drawing parallels with the thoroughly corrupted administrations of Presidents Ulysses Grant and Warren Harding were it not for the openness of it all, and were it not for the equally unsavoury embarrassments of [the Spoke]r... And it is no accident that the two pre-eminent politicians of the day have each been pioneers in the use and abuse of fund-raising... [Both came] from a broken home and [were] raised by an alcoholic stepfather, each managed to avoid conscription to Vietnam, to “cause pain in my marriage” and to have been embarrassed by siblings. Neither has held any job except for undistinguished university teaching and paid political office. Even without the curious fact that each has a 1966 Ford Mustang convertible, as a private car, the parallels between them are uncanny.

...riding high on the success of the U[S] economy, the President has set his agenda... by urging... [other] industrialised nations... to abandon old ideas and take up the tools that helped America relaunch itself... [He] said the... economic boom over which he has presided was created by a new approach to economics based on balancing the budget, investing in education and expanding trade. Just four years ago, [he] was roundly criticised... for an economy that was stagnating under the weight of massive budget deficits. Now he was ready to boast: “America’s economy is the healthiest in a generation and the strongest in the world. All the countries in the world face the same choices we do. They have to decide: can they reduce their deficit and still invest in their people? Can they target people programmes; can they maintain a social safety net? Can they still grow their economy and reduce spending? You bet they can,”...

The U[S] President... yesterday sent Congress a \$US1.69... trillion spending plan that cuts taxes for the middle class, provides billions of dollars to upgrade education and health care and still claims balance in 2002... The Administration’s budget proposal[also] envisages savings of about \$US400 billion over the next five years... Most of the savings would occur in the plan’s final two years, after [the President] has left office... The US Department of Education’s budget would grow from \$US28 billion this year to \$US32 billion in the fiscal year of 1998, and level off at about \$US36 billion each year after that... [T]ens of billions of dollars more... would be set aside... for \$US1500 annual tax credits and \$US10,000-a-year tax deductions for college students, to boost grants for low-income college students by \$US300 to \$US3000, and to increase funds for school construction, classroom computers and reading initiatives... [The President] portrayed the five-volume set of documents as a good-faith offer to opposition Republicans to achieve the top priority of his second term, balancing the budget after three decades of red ink... [However, the] deficit would grow to \$US126 billion this year and \$US121 billion in 1998, a pattern that congressional Republicans have warned they would oppose... [The President also] pledged to restore \$US16 billion... in cut welfare funding, but Republicans are in no mood for changes to the new law... All this uncertainty, however, did not deter [the President] from grand thoughts of how he might be one day remembered. [Second-term presidents usually ‘concentrate on international affairs in order to try to make their mark on history.’]

...Beginning his first visit to South America... [the US] President... arrived in Venezuela yesterday and used Columbus Day to declare a “new world” was in the making throughout the Americas, based on economic and democratic growth... Invoking the memories of former U[S] Presidents John F. Kennedy and Franklin Roosevelt – who both stressed a commitment to Latin America – [the 42nd President] said: “Today I proudly follow the footsteps of both men...”

...a former nightclub singer who claims [to have] had a 12-year extramarital love affair with... [the 42nd President back] when he was governor of Arkansas in the 1980s... was questioned on the record yesterday by lawyers... [representing the woman who claims he] exposed himself... in Little Rock in 1991... [According to the accuser’s complaint, he] sat down on a sofa, lowered his trousers and underpants and invited her to perform oral sex. Whereupon she... [said] she was “not that kind of girl,” and headed for the door. Before she left, she claims, [he] told her, “You’re smart. Let’s keep this between ourselves.” ...[the President’s] \$1000-an-hour private lawyer, has... [dismissed] her story as “titillating allegations which really are just tabloid trash.” ...[she and her sisters were] brought up... according to a strict interpretation of the... Old Testament... No make-up, no jewellery, no tampering with the hair, which was to be worn long. No movies were allowed, no dancing or any other unsupervised fraternising with boys. As a further precaution against pollution of the mind and flesh, there was no TV in the house... To keep the inclement fates at bay, the [parents] would sit down every night with their girls to read the *Bible* and pray. To deter the girls from sin, [their mother] would dispense daily whippings with the branch of a wild cherrytree... One day in 1985[the father]... keeled over while playing the piano in church and died. According to the folks in... Lone Oak... the transformation took place overnight. The girls’ skirts shot up their thighs[they]... painted their nails, permed their hair, wore blue eye shadow, drank at home, stayed out late... A year on [the President’s accuser] posed in a G-string for a photographer boyfriend who, much later, after she had become famous, sold the pictures to *Penthouse*...

The Excelsior Hotel, a big marble and glass skyscraper on the banks of the Arkansas River, provides the closest thing to stylish living in the hot, corrupt city of Little Rock. It’s the place where... the... man who won a historic second term as President is accused of exposing himself in a sordid attempt to obtain swift sexual gratification. But alas for him, his alleged victim is a proud, religious woman... [The victim even claims she] is not interested in money: all she wanted was for the President to say sorry... Around 2.30 pm... May 8, 1991... the best-known figure in Arkansas... the state’s Governor for 12 years, strode through the [hotel’s] foyer, accompanied by his squad of state trooper bodyguards. As he passed the reception desk, he veered for just a minute and stopped, smiling directly into the face of... a small, dark-haired 24-year-old state clerical worker... Before he went into the main conference centre, [the Governor turned to a] trooper... and gave him... instruction[s to go]... to the manager’s office and request... the key to one of the suites, saying “the Governor needs a room for an hour – he’s got some urgent calls to make.” Thirty minutes later... [the trooper] sidled up to [the 24-year-old] and whispered... that... the Governor wanted to see her in an upstairs room. When... [she] asked him what it was all about, he replied: “It’s OK, we do this all the time for the Governor.” ...[the bemused 24-year-old followed the t]rooper... into the lift, assuming she was to be part of a thank-you reception. What happened in the next 16 minutes only [the accuser and the Governor] know for sure, and one of them is lying. But when... [the accuser] arrived back in the lobby, she immediately blurted out the story to[a] friend... who described her as shaking and in a state of shock. Within the next few hours she told another friend... and that evening she told her mother and two sisters... Her mother... has never doubted her; but... the... lay preacher[’s wife]... told her... daughter... firmly to say nothing. “These are powerful folks, honey, and it won’t do you no good to mess with them,” she advised. Like the dutiful daughter she is, [the accuser] agreed to say nothing; and if it had not been for the actions of others... she would have certainly remained silent... In December 1993, [the former Governor who was now the US President] suffered the biggest setback of his philandering career. Five of his Arkansas troopers, angered that he had not delivered on promises of promotions and better perks, decided to go public with a devastating exposure of his sexual conquests in a right-wing magazine, *American Spectator*. The 10,000-word article gave names, places, times and graphic descriptions of over a dozen affairs, varying from having sex in car parks to visiting the bedrooms of wives of his friends. Buried in the text was a reference to an incident involving... the picking-up of a woman at the Excelsior Hotel. It gave only [the accuser]’s first name but [the trooper] clearly implied that the woman in question was more than willing to indulge the Governor’s request for sex. [The accuser] made a basic error in her first move: she hired a lawyer who immediately scented money. He made a crude demand for compensation from the White House and began to discuss book and film deals. Faced by such demands, the White House damage control team moved into top gear, turning the words of old boyfriends and schoolmates to build up a portrait of what they called “a trailer park floozy hustling for a buck.” [The accuser] came close to collapse but she was saved by two respected Washington lawyers... who came to believe that the President had not only abused the rights of one of his employees, but was also a particularly vicious pervert. [The President] hired the services of... one of the highest-paid lawyers in America, whose first move was to try to settle out of court – an attempt which, when it later became public, was deeply damaging to... [the President, who then] agreed to a statement that “he had no recollection” of meeting [the accused]... While denying “any improper

sexual conduct,” the President was willing to state that he regretted any untrue assertions that may have been made about... [the accused, who] today... has reduced the damages sought in her sexual harassment lawsuit against [the] President... by \$525,000... from \$US700,000.

...[she] was vilified as a white-trash gold-digger when she claimed [the former governor] had sexually harassed her in an Arkansas hotel. Now... she looks set to humiliate, and perhaps even destroy, the American President... AS the egalitarian are wont to say, even the powerful put their pants on one leg at a time. In the case of [the] President... there may be even more to be humble about. The latest salvo in the... sexual harassment case came when the American media obtained [the accuser's] affidavit to the court in which she details what she claims to be the President's "distinguishing characteristics." These, reportedly, are confined to three things. His erect penis is about 5in... long, has the circumference of a quarter... and heads off at an angle. Which leaves the dire possibility for [the President] of the judge in the case ordering a medical examination to verify the claim. And despite the best efforts of [the President's] lawyers to defuse the political time bomb, the case will be tried next May... Like the celebrities in... Hollywood, [she] has become a prisoner of her own fame, rarely daring to go out in public... But much as... she may crave the return of her anonymity, she is determined to see the case through. "I want him to admit what he did... I'm not going to give up." ...The... President... yesterday emphatically denied all of the allegations made against him... and urged a federal judge to dismiss the case.

...Hoping to head off a major embarrassment until he leaves office, [the US] President... is asking the Supreme Court to delay... [the lawsuit. T]he justices are weighing whether [the President's accuser] can pursue her claim now or must wait until the President becomes a private citizen in four years... The Supreme Court ruled in 1982 that Presidents cannot be sued for damages involving their official duties, even after they leave office. The prospect of such lawsuits could harm a President's decision-making, the court said. But the justices have never said whether a sitting President can be forced to answer a lawsuit over acts unrelated to his official duties.

...A Supreme Court judge hearing a sexual harassment lawsuit against [the 42nd US] President... expressed scepticism yesterday about the [President's] argument that a President has a full-time job and should not be disturbed. "I don't find that terribly persuasive," said [the judge]... adding that Presidents find time to play golf, for example... Lawyers for the two parties in an encounter that allegedly occurred in an Arkansas hotel room in 1991 argued their cases for one hour before the nine judges... The... case... raises important political and constitutional questions[– such as]... should... the President... be placed above the law... [Incidentally, l]ong-silent Secret Service agents detailed John F. Kennedy's insatiable sexual appetite only after the 1994 death of his wife...

John F. Kennedy had sex with call girls in the... White House and on out-of-town trips... and an aide won their silence by threatening to have them thrown into an insane asylum, says a new book by... [a journalist who] wrote the first account of the US soldiers' massacre of Vietnamese peasants in My Lai... [and was the] winner of the 1970... Pulitzer Prize... for international reporting... The book, *The Dark Side of Camelot*, also says the... President suspected his wife, Jackie, of having an affair with Aristotle Onassis to get back at him for his own infidelities... [The book's author] had to delete a chapter about the President and Marilyn Monroe when it was discovered last month that documents [he] was using were forged. The documents said that Kennedy was paying Marilyn Monroe to keep silent about their alleged affair.

...[Monroe seems to have been unable to keep silent about the fact that she was having sex with 'the most powerful man in the world' ('Marilyn discovered in the President the perfect vehicle to play out her own emotional contradictions'). Not long afterwards, the actress was found naked and dead in her own swimming pool. The official verdict was suicide ('the diagnosis fit Marilyn to a tee'), but some conspiracy theories proclaim that she was killed by 'a lethal injection administered via her anus by CIA agents.' The CIA is also alleged 'to have been involved in the assassination of John F. Kennedy.'

...IT always takes Hollywood a while to catch a trend, but [the] latest movie, *Conspiracy Theory*, is as unobvious as its title... [It's about] a cab driver who lives in fear of a shadowy "They," the unelected power brokers who really pull the strings of government, the media and the public. It's been done before, and better, as anyone who's seen *The Parallax View* or *The Manchurian Candidate* can attest. But the marketing types had it right: conspiracy theories fit into the zeitgeist of our ...Pre-Millennium Times... Blame it on technology. The Internet buzzes with weird stories... Theories breed like rabbits and spread faster than Ebola plague... It doesn't mean they are true, but the one common requirement of any bone fide conspiracy theory is that it is impossible to confirm or deny. N[Z] doesn't have anything as wonderfully complex as the Kennedy assassination theories, which must fill entire libraries now. But... [among] my favourites is the one that says [the former PM] Norman Kirk could have been murdered by the CIA. I find that entertaining and intriguing. I also find it possible because the CIA was actively involved in getting rid of [AUS's PM in 1975]... The Vietnam war was nearing its end at that point and certainly [he] was having some real behind-the-scenes battles with the CIA and the A[US]n Security Intelligence Organisation. Documents have since been released officially and testimony from agents proves the CIA was involved in removing [him] from power. Did the CIA kill Norman Kirk? Well... [both PM's] shared a common theme as regards American [policies.

...as the PM] of Pakistan... vows to fight against the "conspiracy" facing his nine-month-old Government[(formed after his predecessor was sacked – r:p200, ln68), his counterpart across the border in the world's most populous democracy]... has been forced to resign by the Congress Party... - 1997

India's Congress Party, already embarrassed by the corruption charges levelled at its president and former [PM]... washed its hands of... a [another] corruption scandal yesterday after the seizure of... 36 million rupees (\$NZ1.5 million) in unaccounted cash from... houses of a former minister[. who]... was in London, reportedly for a medical check-up, and no arrest warrant was immediately issued. The Central Bureau of Investigation said it was easily the largest seizure of cash it had made from a politician. It took 20 detectives nearly 24 hours to count the numerous stacks of... rupees in various denominations... "I fear people may at this rate lose faith in the system," said... [a] spokesman for the governing United Front coalition. "Corruption grows when it is condoned. This is unfortunately what is happening in this country."

...Two people died in scattered violence yesterday as voters turned out for the second day of a three-stage local assembly poll in India's Uttar Pradesh state. Voting ends on Monday. - 1996

India was plunged into political turmoil yesterday when the federal cabinet decided to turf out the Government of its most populous state which had just won a confidence vote after a violent debate in the assembly... and imposed direct rule... The... decision was made after a report from the state governor that law and order was about to break down... Members of the Uttar Pradesh assembly threw chairs and microphones at each other during the voting in the state capital, Lucknow. The tussle pitted deputies of the... Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party... against centrist and leftist opposition groups. The opposition groups eventually walked out, leaving BJP to win... [A]nalysts said events in the state, which accounts for a maximum 85 seats in the 545-seat federal Parliament, could influence electoral alliances and eventually the composition of India's... Government.

...India's divided coalition government tried to defuse a political crisis yesterday by overturning its decision to sack a key state assembly... [The P]M... agreed not to dismiss the... state government in Uttar Pradesh... bowing to pressure from the Indian President... after a marathon meeting... Some... groups... [had] argued the brawl, which left 45 people hurt... was not a valid pretext for dismissal... [Meanwhile,] in the Indian state of Bihar... [h]undreds of men armed with sticks, spears and swords took to the streets... to enforce a general strike following the arrest of a scandal-tainted former chief minister... Thousands of paramilitary troops and police were put on alert across the eastern state to prevent violence.

...*'Kitchen cabinet' sparks political uproar in India...* The uneducated wife of a scandal-tainted Indian chief minister, chosen by him as his successor after he was forced to quit, assumed office yesterday amid all-round ridicule. Marxist allies of India's ruling coalition... lent voice to the condemnation of [the] former Bihar state chief minister... [The] Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader... said: "[The chief minister's] wife has never been in politics, she has nine children and she is not a member of the state assembly. What can we expect from such a replacement?"

...Unperturbed... [the chief minister]'s wife... aged 41, assumed office and addressed a meeting of top state Government officials before a cabinet meeting. "Work sincerely. Control the floods and look after the poor," she said... [The] Home Commissioner... said: "There may be some hiccups in her taking over. There is this cabinet meeting today which she will have to face alone... Let us pray God will give her the strength." ...[the chief minister] sparked a national political crisis on July 5 by splitting [the PM]'s party in the coalition and launching his own group. The move, which led to divisions within the multi-party coalition, was interpreted as an attempt to force [the PM] to protect him from investigations. When that failed, [the chief minister] finally agreed to quit – but only after deciding to make his wife Bihar's new chief minister. The *Asian Age* newspaper said [the wife], who barely completed primary education, had kept silent throughout a press conference on Saturday while [her husband] answered for her. When she failed to stand up during the national anthem and struggled to take the oath, [he] said: "I will train her within two days." [A] spokesman for the Congress[P]arty which keeps the [PM's] coalition in power with its parliamentary backing, said: "What do we do now? Democracy is being made a mockery of in Bihar and the P[M] has no answer." [The chief minister] is among 56 Bihar politicians and bureaucrats accused of stealing... \$472 million... from a cattle fodder fund... Bihar... a state of 100 million people... is one of India's poorest and most troubled... Per capita income in Bihar... is the lowest in India and most residents are without electricity, good roads or safe drinking water. The social structure is feudal, with money concentrated in the hands of politicians, bureaucrats and landowners[– who]... maintain private armies in the resource-rich region.

...India yesterday faced the prospect of fresh elections as the country was convulsed by a frenzy of political gamesmanship. The only real question appeared to be when, not whether, the new polls would be held... The strings are being pulled by the Congress Party, which is using an investigation into the 1991 assassination of its leader, Rajiv Gandhi, to make an audacious bid for power... Congress, which has ruled India for all but five years since independence in 1947, is chafing at playing second fiddle... The BJP is the single largest party... but with only 162 seats it is far short of a majority. Congress has 138 seats... The party provides sullen support to [the PM's]... shaky 15-party coalition while not holding any Government posts... Now Congress rebels are... [demanding that the PM's] coalition jettison the southern Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) party... Newspaper leaks of [a] report say the DMK is accused of sympathising with Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger separatists who were blamed by Indian officials for... [the suicide bombing that] robbed Congress of the last of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty that had given the party charismatic leadership... The Tamil Tigers have never claimed responsibility... Commentators were harsh in their verdict on the political ructions... The turmoil is hurting India's economy...

INDIA'S fractious... coalition government has fallen after its key Congress party ally withdrew its support following 10 days of deadlock.[The] President... accepted the resignation of [the P]M... and ministers of his United Front coalition of free marketeers, regional and communist parties, but asked them to stay on... [However, the President must now cho]se between inviting parties in the fragmented parliament to try to form a new government or open the way to national elections 3 1/2 years early... so sending India's 600 million voters to their second election in 18 months.

...India has a new P[M – its]... fourth in a year... [–] after weeks of political upheaval. [The]77-year-old... was sworn in just over an hour ago... [In related news, the Pakistani P]M... has said his Government plans to strip the President of his powers to dismiss P[M]s and their administration. He said the plan has the approval of [the current]President... The last four governments were dismissed by a President using this provision.

...From a distance the political crises in India and Pakistan may appear as double acts in the theatre of the absurd but there is a difference. Whatever its political turmoil, Indian democracy remains secure, whereas in Pakistan there is the fear that farce may easily degenerate into tragedy... Things have drifted dangerously for several months now amid speculation about the moves and counter-moves by the two highest officers in the state... and the economy is in a shambles... The bizarre spectacle... on Friday... when... an unruly crowd of thousands of [the PM's] supporters stormed the Supreme Court... while the police stood by watching helplessly... seems to complete the impression of a breakdown. So far the Army has not played an interventionist role but the Army chief, who is expected to keep a discreet distance from the political hurly-burly, is increasingly finding himself playing a central mediatory role in this crisis. But in Pakistan the Army has taken over in far less distressing times and on flimsy grounds... [T]he most recent... period... of martial law... [ended] in 1985... Unfortunately for Pakistan – where excessive authority is vested in the unelected office of the President and the Army chief – the past has once again come to haunt democracy.

...Pressed... [in] 1947... for a date to announce the formal transfer of power, Lord Mountbatten looked on the calendar, paused for a while and – as the fable goes – circled August 15... Since the... day the two nations of India and Pakistan were born, there... has been a social and economic revolution... [However, if] one is to circle a critical date for India it would perhaps be July 24, 1991, when... the finance minister [to] the then P[M]... presented a budget which ushered in what is now popularly described as an era of liberalisation. With one stroke the suave, turbaned Sikh ended four decades of the Nehruvian model of Fabian socialism and vigorous state intervention. The [finance minister's] complete absence of any previous political experience – touted by many as his biggest disqualification... [–] in fact turned out to be his main asset, as no Indian politician would have... dared to turn the Nehruvian legacy on its head... [The results of] Indian red tape capitulating... are quite dramatic. In a country where most items in the luxury sector were in short supply and substandard, there was a sudden glut in the market. Consumerism boomed as multinational corporations lined up to supply everything from fast cars to fancy electronic gadgetry. Foreign banks also opened shop, offering loans and other facilities to further fuel the economic boom. It was all a culture shock to Indians, most of whom grew up being tutored by their parents on the virtues of the Gandhian maxim of simple living, high thinking. But the consumer boom has changed all that and a new class of mortgaged, in-debt Indian has taken root. He doesn't give a damn about the homilies from his elders and would rather have his goodies now and pay later. It would take reams of paper to have a proper debate on the liberalisation process in the India of 1997, still only six years down the open market economy lane... But what does one say about small and medium-sector industries which have either been finished or are on the verge of extinction by the onslaught of multinationals? This is particularly true in the consumer sector where industry is in a state of depression. There is an argument about only the fittest being able to survive and there being no room for mediocrity. But the fact remains that the protectionist environment allowed mediocrity to thrive in the country for more than 40 years. Is it now fair to suddenly expose the local industry to international competition, without giving them an even playing field in terms of resources and expertise? And in a country where a third of the population still cannot read and write and more than half of whom cannot get a square meal twice a day, what is more important – a computer-wise, highly efficient and productive workforce or jobs for as many as possible? There are no easy answers... But as... a respected Indian columnist and editor of the weekly *Outlook* magazine, writes, the... coming millennium has nothing to offer except more of the same. Many will argue that [he] has painted a rather gloomy picture. A more accurate one may be painted through a tired cliché: that India at 50 is perhaps best compared to a half-full glass. More important is whether in the next 50 years this glass gets filled or the gains made to date are also squandered... [Incidentally, t]he Pakistan Army intervened in a constitutional crisis last week but has denied it is seeking power. According to an Army statement, the Chief of Staff... had cancelled a visit to Turkey last week and returned to find [the] Government preparing to impeach... the President... for failing to endorse a law making it easier for... the P[M]... to defend himself against charges of contempt of court. But the Government dropped the motion at the last moment, causing media speculation that [the Chief of Staff had persuaded the PM] against the step... before his... Supreme Court trial for contempt of court was due to resume... [The PM's] defiant stand... [had threatened to prevent an] early resolution of a constitutional crisis which has... also split the judiciary, with an attempt to unseat... [the] Chief Justice... paralysing the Supreme Court and stopping the P[M's] trial. The PM blamed the President] for... the crisis... and said... [it] was costing the country \$36 million a day.

...Pakistan's constitutional crisis deepened... when a Supreme Court bench suspended the chief justice... who immediately issued an order cancelling his suspension. Last night the status of the orders was unclear... [In further news from the Asian continent,] Taiwan's *National Assembly* has resumed its customary brawling. In the worst melee in the legislative session that opened three months ago, politicians hit, shoved, kicked and wrestled each other in a battle that resulted in two deputies being hospitalized. The scrap began when opposition New Party legislators rushed the podium to stop discussion of their Kuomintang and Democratic Progressive Party rivals' proposed constitutional amendments.

...Singapore's ministers and senior bureaucrats, among the world's best paid, will have their salaries cut... b[y] between 2 and 7[%]... to keep them in line with the private sector, the Government said yesterday... The Singapore P[M]... currently makes more than \$US1.2 million... and Singapore's top ministers and civil servants also earn several times more than their counterparts in the U[S], Japan and Europe. The Government said junior grade ministers would get \$36,200 a month after the change... Bureaucrats at the most junior grade in the administrative service would get \$12,900... This is the first time the Government has cut salaries of ministers and senior officers since it adopted a formula in 1994 linking their pay levels to wages of top private sector executives... The... revisions were based on 1995 income data which showed the average principal earned income of the top four individuals from selected private sector professions had fallen by 18[%], Singapore officials believe the city state's high Government salaries... prevent talent from being drained away by the booming private sector... [and] help maintain honest leadership.

...[two former Italian PM]s whose Christian Democratic party was wiped out by huge corruption scandals in the early 1990s have been ordered to stand trial on charges of graft and illegal party funding... Prosecutors allege that they received bribes from businessmen seeking contracts to build a plant for state electricity group Enel in the late 1980s.

...[Italy's] President... is embarking on the complex job of finding a new... government to resolve a potentially disastrous crisis sparked by the resignation of... [the PM and the collapse of] Italy's 55th government since the war... after a dramatic parliamentary debate in which [the PM's] hardline left-wing ally, Communist Refoundation, refused to accept a compromise deal on the 1998 budget.

...World leaders mainly concerned to stay put... [T]he unfolding of the first decade after the Cold War has brought to the fore leaders who do not pursue grand principles or ideas that they push forward by reaching compromise with opponents. They pursue compromise, to stay in office and to enjoy its attributes. They turn incumbency into a specialisation... [O]ne of the great compromises to stay in power has been made by the aged Leninists who run China and who have sacrificed Marxism to buy public acquiescence to their repressive rule. The transformation of Russia's economy has come to a grinding halt as the governing team has abandoned any serious effort at economic reform. The objective of [its] Government has become perpetuation of the transition, and the vast fortunes it has created for some insiders, permanently if possible. The great inequalities in income and unfair ownership arrangements of post-Soviet Russia could once be seen as unfortunate but temporary hardships needed to get a capitalist system jump-started there. But it has become clear in the past 18 months that the excesses are the objective for those who run the system. They are doing nothing to bring them to an end and everything to prolong them... [T]he young chief of staff... who headed a privatisation programme that in retrospect must be judged as a disaster of historic proportions, spends all his time struggling to stay in office rather than in pushing reform... [The P]M... finds himself in the same boat as he shuts off wage and pension payments for months to keep inflation at bay so the [I]MF will lend new money to Russia. "The new ruling elite is neither democratic nor communist, neither conservative nor liberal... It is merely greedy and rapacious." ...The Israeli and Russian leaders, men of different generations and principles, have this in common with their American [counterpart]: ...Ideology is secondary to them; staying in power is primary, even if that power is constrained by circumstances or their opponents... Ideology is also out in Britain... In France[the] President... has made a series of false starts towards domestic change that he has quickly abandoned in the face of public protest... T[hese 'are the days when men of all political faiths seek the comfortable and the accepted; when the man of controversy is looked upon as a disturbing influence; when originality is taken to be a mark of instability; and when, in minor modification of the scriptural parable, the bland lead the bland.' T]hose who debate whether leaders create history or history creates the leaders it needs can suspend their deliberations in this era of opportunistic incrementalism. Today's political leaders create themselves – as an act of will. That leaves them free to be what they need to be, on a daily basis if necessary... [T]hey... bend rather than shape their times.

...“WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU. STAYING IN GOVERNMENT OR STICKING TO YOUR MAIN PRINCIPLES?” “STAYING IN GOVERNMENT IS ONE OF MY MAIN PRINCIPLES.”

...[‘Did Labour’s 8-week PM (r:p213, ln17) really once say, “I’m an extreme moderate?” Apparently. We have the author of A DICTIONARY OF NZ POLITICAL QUOTATIONS to thank for this and other bon mots culled from his extensive reading of political writing for the Dictionary of NZ English. It is an odd comfort to find that from the days of George Grey to the present, the practise of politics has highlighted the petty, meanspirited and stupid.’

...a] Victoria University political studies researcher... has conducted the first poll to rank N[Z’s PM]s... according to their positive contribution to... government and society. Caretaker [PM]s, those who served for less than six months, or who never faced an election, were eliminated... That reduced the pool of P[M]s being rated... [by] historians, political scientists, current and former MPs, journalists and group sector leaders... to 30... Dying in office enhanced a P[M]’s popularity – all five PMs who died at the helm (Ballance, Seddon, Massey, Savage and Kirk) are in the top 10. 1. *Richard Seddon* (1893-1906): “King Dick” ...was the overwhelming choice among respondents as greatest [PM]... “His legislative achievements changed the NZ political culture for a century”... wrote one... Seddon has never been rivalled in his ability to win elections – five in a row... [– or in] his mastery of parliamentary business and his handling of crises. 2. *Peter Fraser* (1940-1949): ...the unanimous choice of the former and current MPs... Fraser was a ruthless cold and autocratic leader; he introduced conscription in W[WI]I after being jailed for opposing it [during WWI]. But none doubted his devotion to duty, enormous capacity for hard work, or phenomenal administrative skill. 3. *Norman Kirk* (1972-1974): ...had the good fortune to inherit an economy lifted on the tide of a global commodities boom and he died before the inflationary pressures created by that boom made themselves truly felt... For many who remember the man, the famous scene of his taking the hand of a young Maori boy at Waitangi still epitomises the promise of a future reconciliation and partnership that was snatched away by his tragically early death. In many ways, Norman Kirk is the N[Z] equivalent of John F. Kennedy. 4. *Michael Savage* (1935-1940): No N[Z PM] has been as loved as Michael Joseph Savage. For decades after his death, his benign portrait adorned the walls of thousands of Kiwi homes. His cheerful, non-nonsense attitude encouraged hope throughout a country forced to its knees by the Great Depression... Through the 40-hour week, guaranteed dairy prices and social security, his government created the “cradle-to-grave” social welfare state to ensure that all N[Z]ers shared the rewards. 5. *John Ballance* (1891-1893): ...became leader of the first great reform administration. He was a big man among a Cabinet of big men. With his party in power, N[Z] pulled out of the creeping depression of the 1880s. His achievements are all the more remarkable given the fact that, like Savage, he was dying of cancer throughout most of his brief term. 6. *Keith Holyoake* (September to December, 1957, 1960-1972): Today, the 1960s are commonly regarded as years of lost opportunities, an era in which N[Z] was content to live off the sheep’s back and ignore the ominous tide of global events. For these reasons, the contribution of Sir Keith Holyoake has often been underrated. The Holyoake years were in fact mildly progressive in economic and social terms. The most controversial aspect of his administration remains the commitment of troops to Vietnam... 7. *Sir Julius Vogel* (1873-1875; February to September 1876): N[Z] at the end of the 1860s was exhausted by war and depression. It needed someone with a magic touch to get moving again. That someone was Sir Julius Vogel. As Treasurer, he unfolded his vision quite simply: “We recognise that the great wants of the colony are public works...” His incredibly ambitious borrowing and investment programme opened up N[Z] with roads and bridges... “He may have been too fond of personal power, erratic in his course and his ideas too novel for many of his contemporaries, but his contribution to N[Z]’s development was both permanent and beneficial.” 8. *William Massey* (1912-1925): The political career of William Ferguson Massey... [– N[Z]’s

second longest serving P[M –] ...was devoted to advancing the cause of the N[Z] farmer. But Massey commands respect for his unflinching approach to the challenges which rocked N[Z] during his administration. No N[Z PM] was ever more tested in the role of crisis management. Working entire teams without a parliamentary majority, he... held the country together through the unprecedented strain of W[W]I, the 1919 influenza epidemic and the boom-to-bust economy of 1920-22... 9. *Robert Muldoon (1975-1984)*: It is doubtful whether any N[Z PM] polarised the country to the extent of Sir Robert Muldoon. While he was in power, many would say absolute power, it was impossible to escape him (other than by going into voluntary exile overseas, as many did). All political, social and economic debate centred around him as he struggled to hold together the old order, the N[Z] he remembered, in a changing world. None who contributed to the survey questioned Sir Robert's political skills, his dominance of caucus, his mastery of parliament. But some found it hard to separate political skills from the purpose for which they were used... "Muldoon I voted outstanding largely for the sheer force of the man, but I think his legacy almost entirely bad."

...The foul language emanating from in and around Canberra recently has to be heard to be believed. Profanities such as "interventionist" and "incentives" are being heard coupled with "industry assistance," "free-trade zones" and "business programmes" in a new lexicon which market economists believed had been banished in the early 1980s. But no, it appears that politically correct terminology such as "market economy" and "level playing field" are in danger of being tossed out. If the Government, and powerful sectors of industry, including the Metal Trades Industry Association, have their way then the nation is going to be re-educated as to what is acceptable industry policy and what isn't. Having embraced programmes in recent years to slash tariffs, bounties, quotas and other such industry-specific schemes, the hands of the clock are being turned back to the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. What happens to globalisation, regional trade blocks and the World Trade Organisation, we are yet to discover... The budget papers, released just two months ago... noted: "Industry assistance in the form of tariffs and quotas imposes economic costs by distorting the patterns of production and consumption, and results in lower aggregate output. The effects of such assistance include higher consumption prices for some goods and higher input and production costs for other producers." ...Now, we have a P[M] who... seems set to embark on schemes to spend tax money to pick winners. The prospect is truly alarming... There are plenty of people waiting to see how [the PM] argues his way out of that one. One way of easing his lot could come through... a recent newspaper article, [in which] he defended criticism that industry assistance was tantamount to business welfare by saying that it was an investment in A[US]'s wealth. "The objective of these programmes, if they have any validity of course, is to create wealth, which makes us more competitive," he said. "It's only where they have failed in terms of delivery or in terms of the design, that they could be construed as being a hand-out." How times change... [or could it] just... be... that our collective memories are becoming short... Has it been forgotten that... many of the industry schemes created [in the past] were regarded as wasteful and ineffective? Since when has any government ever been able to pick winners? At least N[Z]ers will be in a position never to cast off lightly the legacy left behind by the late Sir Robert Muldoon and his Think Big fiascos. Those projects should stand forever as monuments to political stupidity. - 1997

Here we go again; another flip through the photograph album of Rogernomics. Journalism might be, as someone said, "the first draft of history," but a dozen years after the event, journalism ought to be capable of more historical perspective than was evident in the first episode of *Revolution* (TV One) last night... Another way would examine the proposition that N[Z]'s terms of trade were in terminal decline in the 1970s and that the all-pervasive Government direction of economic investment was slowly crippling the country's prospects of sustaining any sort of social security. Some interesting people could be found to debate that proposition today and maybe say something new and stimulating about our economic experience in the 1970s and since. Instead *Revolution* has settled for narrative and, on evidence of the first instalment, it is the same old story, same pictures, same favourite film clips, same heroes and villains we have watched countless times now. The villain of the "Fortress N[Z]" last night was Sir Robert Muldoon of course. We heard (again) the standard glib criticisms of his outlook and style, including, gratuitously, his drinking habits. The series actually opened with a cheap shot on that score, demeaning itself more than him... [The] documentary arrives with some unwanted baggage[, which] was the reason given by TVNZ for refusing to screen another study of the subject, *Someone Else's Country*... before the election... In its own way *Revolution* ("and it was our revolution") is as overwrought as *Someone Else's Country*. We became "the laboratory for an experiment"... "around the world gurus of market-driven economic theory watched in envy as a small South Pacific country did an about-turn..." What tosh. There was nothing experimental about N[Z]'s early reforms. We started later than Britain, the U[S (as of the early 1990s, the 'trend to withdraw the Federal government from civil life had been ongoing for 20 years') and AUS,] and we started in worse shape than any of them. The reforms that attracted world interest are mainly in monetary and fiscal management, not the orthodox deregulation and market liberalisations that the series will probably feature. Still, there were some interesting moments last night... [A] minister in the Muldoon Government, attributed much of post-war policy to the fact that the Great Depression had scarred the self-respect of males of Muldoon's generation and they found it again in the shared sacrifice of... W[W2]... There was a former head of the Treasury... admitting that he... conceived think big "in Bahrain of all places" on a visit with Sir Robert after the second oil shock. [He] also revealed that Treasury managed to stall the wage and price freeze for six weeks before Muldoon made his last, hopeless, stand against the tide. Muldoon might have been wrong but he did know what he was doing (with the possible exception of the snap election). He made countless speeches in those years about the "human" side of economics which he believed politicians understood much better than the Treasury. It is time his reputation was at least given credit for good intentions and time that Muldoonism was examined in more than comic form. *Revolution* had ample time to do so last night. Instead it cantered lightly over the period before 1984... The rest, as they say, you know. But that is not going to stop *Revolution* reciting it all again. It will be good to look at the pictures again but I suspect the series will leave us none the wiser. [By the way, Muldoon was unkindly nicknamed "piggy" – a reference both to his facial features and physical stature. His political predecessor, Labour's Norman Kirk, also 'fought a personal weight problem all his adult life.' Muldoon's successor, David Lange, the Labour MP who 'became PM only seven years after winning the Mangere seat in a by-election', made NZ nuclear-free, and was once likened to Muldoon because 'they loved frivolous things,' is another person who had problems with self-control around food. Indeed, he eventually resorted to having his 'stomach stapled' – then, after losing weight, dumped his 'wife (and mother of his children) for his speechwriter'!

...Former Labour PM David Lange] has ruled out... an active return to politics "in any shape or form." Speaking to the National Press Club in Wellington yesterday, [he]... also ruled out standing for the mayoralty of Manukau. "Those of you who are familiar with it will know that it's a very demanding job; it requires giving greetings in 12 languages in a very loud voice and visiting 83 bowling clubs for their opening and closing ceremonies and I am not cut out for it." In addition, he would be forced to deal with south Auckland's Pacific Island Christian leaders who, in a recently televised documentary, he criticised for 'spending millions of dollars of congregation money on building new churches while most of the local children live in poverty'. "What I am going to do in future is to write more, to advance business on Indian connections and to speak, overseas probably more than here... [Certainly] I have no desire to chair the board of Television New Zealand... [A]ny political figure that appointed me to have any part on the board of... TVNZ... would be totally nuts..."

...A director of a crown company such as T[VNZ] is appointed by the cabinet, usually after its decision has been rubber-stamped by all Government MPs at their weekly caucus meeting. It would be wrong to assume, though, that filling a vacant seat on a board is simply a matter of dipping into some imaginary register of long-serving party lackeys. The process of putting suitable names in front of ministers is lengthy. It is handled by a stand-alone body called the crown company monitoring advisory unit, which has a database of people from a range of backgrounds who meet the "director profile." Independent, but serviced by the Treasury, the advisory unit monitors the performance of 57 crown companies, including state-owned enterprises and crown health enterprises. The appointment of directors covers about 340 positions. Directors are usually

appointed for three years and can expect to serve two terms... Once appointed, the candidate for a directorship is expected to carry out a “due diligence,” basically a sussing-out of the state company. No one wants to risk his or her reputation if the books look bad. But the candidate is also expected to check out potential conflicts of interest.

...David Lange[the former Labour PM who wa]s tipped to be offered the chairmanship of T[VNZ, has]... confirmed he was aware of the suggestion and understood it originated in National Government circles. But he said while he still had outstanding court action with TVNZ, an offer was not appropriate. Asked if he would consider appointments to state corporations or other governmental work, he said: “I’d consider appropriate work, but I’m not seeking political indulgence.” ...[an example of the type of work he considers to be *appropriate* is narrating television advertisements, such as the one targeting juvenile audiences in which he says: “]Once upon a time there were seven dwarfs. Every day they got up, had cold leftovers for breakfast and went off to work in the spinach mines. Not surprisingly, their names were Angry, Dodgy, Surly, Fury, Ugly, Snide and Pathetic. Then one day, as the seven were spending a quiet evening hanging each others’ hats out of reach, a beautiful young girl called Snow White came by selling packets of *Rices*. They were never the same again. In fact, they all went off to Hollywood, changed their names to Ecstatic, Silly, Funky, Groovy, Smilely, Floppy and Unbelievably Short, even by their standards, and made a fortune! The moral of the story is: eat your *Rices* all the time if you think spinach tastes like slime.”] ● ‘AUSn media face another six-figure bill from David Lange after his recent \$A100,000 out-of-court settlement of a protracted defamation action. His lawyer says the costs awarded are likely to total at least \$A200,000.’

...‘Former PM David Lange once said he would rather laugh off an insult than sue over it, but he felt compelled to sue for fear that people would assume it was true. And sue he does, although not always right up to the courtroom door. Instead, over the years the man who is unequalled at directing his devastating wit at other public figures has extracted apologies and confidential out-of-court settlements from, for example, Radio NZ, TVNZ, the *NZ Herald* and even the incumbent PM’ – who doesn’t have a problem with his weight but, instead, subconsciously ‘mimics the accent of people he talks to’ (an embarrassing habit for a diplomat)]...

Imitation, as they say, is the sincerest form of flattery... Suddenly, [NZ’s PM] is talking about “building a bridge to the 21st century.” And if you think you have heard someone else use that... catch-phrase before, you have. [The PM] has grabbed it from[the US] President... who was busy “building a bridge to the 21st century” at the Democratic Convention in Chicago just two weeks ago... [The PM] stamped the phrase across Tuesday night’s leaders’ debate on TV3, deploying it at least three times... [T]he President should now feel well flattered. Actually, National Party strategists take a far more pragmatic view. It’s an effective television “grab,” so why not use it?

...He’ll make you laugh, he’ll make you cry: it’s N[Z]’s own Mr Show Business... His head flicking like a tennis umpire’s from one autocue to the other, the P[M] tripped from comedy, through sickly sentimentality, to tragedy and back... yesterday... [during a] speech to a ticket-only audience of mainly party members at... [a t]heatre in Takapuna... This veteran of the political boards doesn’t always look poised or comfortable, and he risked arrest at times for committing indignities with the language. But give him... the adrenalin-overload of... a true-blue crowd, [plus]the glare of the floodlights and... he’ll try boldly to inject new life into a familiar script... In the verbal equivalent of a chocolate-box picture, he... talked about feeding orphan lambs and seeing again the sparkle in a child’s eyes. Together now: Ahhhhhh. Turning hammy mimic... [he] then... tried some horror stories, pretending to be a newsreader telling the disasters visited on the economy by a three-headed Government of the Left... [Indeed, the speech] concentrated on attacking what he calls the “gloom gang” – the... o[pposition] party leaders – and their “rehash of tired socialism.” ...[unfortunately, the PM is another who] has little new to pull out of the hat. And that is his problem. Even if he had, that would simply run counter to the key theme National has sought to project – no-shocks stability... He also reaffirmed National’s commitment to building the “decent society” – its 1990 campaign slogan that left a bitter aftertaste with many voters... [However, he] stressed social policy could not be divorced from responsible fiscal policy – “they’re opposite sides of one coin. It is no good having a warm heart if you don’t have the money to pay for it.” - 1996

[The incumbent NZ PM] began his career in Parliament with an eloquent plea for more subsidies. [The National MP] wanted the... Labour government to spend more, lots more, in his King Country electorate... The young farmer MP... praised the former National government’s big rural subsidy, the quaintly-named sheep retention scheme. “It was an investment in N[Z]’s major industry,” he explained... Twenty-five years on... [he] has been scoffing at the bad old days of big government. Last week, he recalled Finance Minister Rob Muldoon’s assurance in 1972 that prices for butter, milk, sugar and bread would be held. “Imagine – a government still decreeing what the price of sugar would be across the country,” he chortled. But in 1973, [he] was... like all the others. Since then, of course, the world has changed utterly and so has he. Nobody expects politicians to hold the same economic views now as they did then. But in [his] case... the changes of tack have been spectacular and increasingly frequent. The great anti-nuclear campaigner bitterly opposed the Labour government’s anti-nuclear legislation. In opposition he swore to cut the surtax and in government he increased it. The politician who last year was denouncing [the NZ First leader] as a racist rabble-rouser formed a... friendship with him after the election... While the PM is nowadays a great fan of [its president, an ANC member], his earlier stand on South Africa was different. When [the Labour PM visited the] ANC vice-president... in Lusaka in 1985, [he accused the Labour PM] of “consorting with terrorists”... His enemies say this proves he is a mere opportunist, if not a hypocrite. His admirers say it shows his ability to adapt. Anyway, they say, his principles haven’t changed even if his policies have... [They call him the] great helmsman... an ironic title conferred by city-slickers who thought he was a bumpkin. And certainly the PM, who left school at 15 without sitting School Certificate, has a somewhat strained relationship with the English language. Welcoming the Czech president... [he called his country] “Checkalabaka.” He once referred to halcyon days as “helicon days”... He [has] a special problem with words beginning with “con”. The first letter [gets] turned into a sort of gurgle and the whole syllable [goes] into his nose and [comes] out like a honk. The trouble [is] that “con” words are an integral part of political discourse... His speechwriters are said to have ransacked the thesaurus looking for suitable synonyms – to no avail.

...A political trivia starter for 10: Can you name this obscure N[Z PM]? He is, according to various accounts: a) “A pragmatic, down-to-earth successful politician; the supreme manager.” b) “Skilful in behind-the-scenes manoeuvring and in administration... but certainly not charismatic.” c) “A man who will do *anything* to stick in office.” Ring any bells? The man in question was Sir Edward Stafford, effectively N[Z]’s first P[M] in 1856. Usually confined to the footnotes of history, Stafford has lived in the shadows of more famous politicians... But yesterday the present P[M]... in a speech... to the Auckland Chamber of Commerce... titled *Renewing our Democracy*... revealed his vision to follow in Stafford’s sadly neglected footsteps... Describing Stafford as the country’s first statesman, [the present PM] said he had been determined to bring all N[Z]ers together as one nation. “Can we dare to be as radical as Stafford was?” [he] asked his audience of mainly Auckland businessmen. “Can we envisage a N[Z] in which all people have a genuine chance to have their voices heard?” The audience was more interested in cutting fringe benefit and entertainment taxes, judging from the applause which greeted these earlier suggestions from the chamber’s chief executive...

Approval of the P[M]... among business leaders has dived in the past three months, says the *National Business Review*. The newspaper polled 2000 chief executives... Forty-eight per cent... ranked [his] performance as poor or very poor, 23[%] thought he was doing either a good or very good job. In March, most chief executives were either neutral or supportive of the P[M]...

The PM] is... taking advantage of the two-week parliamentary recess... [by] going on the offensive this week in a bid to... reassert his leadership in a crucial... “scene-setting” speech in Auckland... [A]t a press conference... [he] said the honour of being P[M] came to very few in any generation... “I hope that... I have and will continue to make a significant contribution to the development of our country.” ...Asked about his greatest achievement, [the PM], for a moment, reverted back to the Great Helmsman by saying he could go from A to Z, before saying the grandiloquent

stage of the world had been great but resolving the problems of little people had been special too... He certainly [has shown] great skills as a political survivor in difficult times. But he can hardly claim to have delivered the Decent Society... On social issues, curiously, there is now a kind of consensus of concern. All sides... worry about social breakdown. Dealing with that, he said in his review speech last week, is “the hard task ahead”... He said it was important that N[Z]ers... focused their minds on the future... [Incidentally, NZ’s PM]s are not directly elected... Historically, the major parties’ leaders have been selected only by those members of the party elected to Parliament (the caucus). Even under MMP it is likely that the P[M] will continue to come from one of the major parties, meaning that only a very select minority have a say in who becomes the elected head of the country. There are some good reasons for selecting the leadership in such a way. For example, the possibility of having a party leader whom no one in caucus wants to work for is reduced by making the position reliant on caucus support. But in the MMP environment it is worth stopping to ask: is there a better way? ...the present leadership selection process of the two major parties is conducive to cloak-and-dagger lobbying, number-crunching and backroom horse-trading. While that process continues we can expect backstabbing and deal-making when leadership challenges arise... In other countries, including those with parliamentary democracies, party leaders are elected... by all party members. In Canada, for example, the governing Liberal Party holds national conventions where all sections of the party are represented through a delegate system – constituency, youth and aboriginal groups all contribute not only to policy formulation but to leadership selection as well. There are three ways of initiating a change of leader under this system. At each biannual convention party delegates are asked if they feel a leadership review should be held. If they demand one a leadership convention is called. The party leader may also call a leadership convention to seek a renewed mandate. A leadership ballot is also taken automatically at the first national convention after losing an election. In this way the party leader is regularly held accountable to rank-and-file members... If the major party’s MPs are really keen to know when N[Z]ers want a leadership change, perhaps they should divest themselves of one of the last vestiges of first-past-the-post privilege and open the leadership selection to all party members. Then [PM]s could claim to have been elected by more than just caucus colleagues. And with greater say in who ultimately leads the country, the public might come to feel that joining a major party is a worthwhile exercise.

...[NZ’s PM recently remarked] to reporters... “it is a tremendous thought that the son of an immigrant farm worker can be the P[M of NZ].” - 1997

NZ’s PM also said on TV during 1997 that ‘in politics you can’t drop those who don’t come up to standard’ (and added that ‘one of the jobs [of a PM] is explaining away the mistakes of colleagues’)! NZ’s general public can only remove a PM by voting its party out in parliamentary elections or via assassination (no NZ PM has been assassinated, officially – in comparison, four US presidents have been assassinated, the 40th survived an assassination attempt, and a further four presidents died while in office). But, if discontent is obviously widespread, the Queen’s representative – the Governor-General – has authority to insist the PM stand down. The Governor-General can also instigate such a request at its own discretion. A NZ PM has yet to be removed from office via this process – whereas, in 1975, AUS’s Governor-General ‘dissolved both houses of Parliament and appointed a caretaker PM.’

Employees in AUS and NZ are protected from unfair dismissal by legislation. To legitimately sack an employee, an employer has to first issue a number of *proper verbal and written warnings* (which expire after twelve months). Therefore, an informed employee knows that it has to commit a number of offences within a certain period of time before its position is threatened. This has led to protests like: *the law makes it hard to sack workers and that discourages employers from hiring new staff*. Some circumstances, though, can still justify instant dismissal. Obviously, an employee who commits criminal acts (e.g., theft of company property; attacking customers or other staff) would have little chance of defending a claim in the Employment Court that its dismissal was unjustified. Another no-no for employees is lying to, or deliberately withholding information from, their employers. However, while PMs (and MPs) clearly are the employees of the public (as they proudly declare), they constantly lie to, or keep secrets from, the public. Winston Churchill once declared that ‘in war the truth is so important it must be protected by a bodyguard of lies’ (in recent years ‘thousands of Americans have been publicly exposed for lying about their military records to gain jobs or impress people’) – but politicians often give the impression that the truth must also be protected in peace!

Papers stuffed and forgotten in a tattered old carrier bag, an out-of-date passport found in the bottom of a drawer – these are the crucial pieces of evidence which the Crown says will be the nemesis of... [the] Lord... of Weston-super-Mare, the politician and millionaire author accused of concocting a false alibi in the 1987 libel action he brought over the *Daily Star*’s claims he had sex with a prostitute... [T]he former deputy chairman of the Conservative Party walked away from that trial, pocketing £500,000... in damages, and rehabilitated himself in the highest Tory ranks...

[Lord] found guilty of lying in libel case [A d]isgraced British politician and best-selling novelist... has been found guilty of perjury and perverting the course of justice after a sensational trial at London’s Old Bailey court. The flamboyant... peer in the House of Lords... was brought to trial as the result of a chain of events put into motion when he decided to run for the Conservative Party’s candidate in London’s mayoral race...

[Britain’s PM] was this week trying to relaunch Labour... after another damaging gaffe by... [his deputy, who declared that:] “You can’t tell the truth all the time. Nobody does,”...

ACCORDING to a survey conducted by psychologists, we all tell... a lie every eight minutes, making a total of 200 a day on average... A study... at the University of Southern California... found the worst liars were those who had the most social contact or who were forced to make demands on people, such as getting information. Shop assistants, doctors’ receptionists, politicians, journalists, lawyers, sales representatives and psychologists all fell into this... category... This is the most heartening news I have heard for some time. Lies have always been underrated but they are the mesh that holds society together... “Society would be terrible if people started telling the truth. Anyone who did would be a subversive.” ...People who tell me the truth always say it is in my best interests. Knowledge is power, they piously intone after Francis Bacon – the politician, not the painter. Given the choice, I would rather remain powerless... The Caesars used to have their childhood chums executed, on the grounds that they knew the truth and were all too disposed to tell it. This is the best excuse for murder I have ever heard. [● ‘A Reader’s Digest poll of west Auckland readers found that we put pilots, nurses, pharmacists, police, the military and doctors top of our trust rankings – with car salesmen and politicians at the bottom.’

...‘When the US President tells lies, he is not abusing the privilege of his office, but exercising the privilege of his species. You can put your money on it: the President is a liar through and through; has been from earliest childhood. Examples? You don’t need examples, because you are in the same boat, and so are all of us. You know exactly what I mean. The oddity was George Washington. “Father, I cannot tell a lie” indeed. You would think he was mad, a horror, some terrible mutant, were it not for the fact that he was obviously lying. Without the faculty of lying, we would become inhuman; literally so, because the ability to dissemble is what distinguishes us from brutes. The cobra spreads his hood, the dog’s hackles bristle, the bull’s head goes down, while we smile and smile, judging the moment to slide in the knife. Eliminate lies and business would disintegrate, negotiations collapse, the normal intercourse of friendship crumble, and nuptial beds turn to thorns. The law would disappear, it being no more than a codified system of acceptable lies. Defence and prosecution alike talk exaggerated nonsense which they know to be untrue; the reason they get away with it is because they are allowed to, within the parameters of the law. Politicians agree to lie to us, giving us cause for hope or its equally satisfying (though less comfortable) sibling, despair; in return we agree to vote for them so that we don’t have to go to the trouble of thinking up our own lies. “Britain will be great again, people will become better, taxes will not go up, the war on terrorism will be won – as will the war on drugs – there will be no more hunger or poverty or horrid insects or nasty

children shouting in the street, we will be better than the last lot”: lies which we need, because without them we have to face the truth of our own insignificance and the emptiness of our lives. Even the foundations of statecraft are laid upon lies: the lie that there’s something special about the Queen, the lie of the oaths sworn upon the ghosted memoirs of a fictional Middle Eastern god, the lies of ritual and the lie of diplomacy, one hand extended in friendship while the other, behind the back, is busily loading the gun. It is about time we learned that the truth is greatly overrated; and we can begin by acknowledging that even John Lennon didn’t dare, in his wispy, cuddly, strawberry-pink-bonbon song, imagine a world without lies.’

...The FBI yesterday released previously censored files on former Beatle John Lennon, who was under surveillance in the early 1970s because of fears he would incite anti-war violence. The move was hailed as a victory by the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California, which filed suit 14 years ago to have the files on the murdered rock star made public... Its executive director... said: “This is a victory for every person in the U[S] who is worried about excesses of the Government.” At a news conference, [a] historian... who had sought the documents under the Freedom of Information Act, said the FBI investigation appeared to have been based on the Nixon Administration’s fear of Lennon’s influence over voters in the presidential election. Richard Nixon was seeking re-election, and the unpopular Vietnam War was at its height. “The Nixon Administration wanted to silence John Lennon... But all he was saying was Give Peace a Chance,” said [the historian], whose book *Come Together: John Lennon in His Time* was published in 1985. Besides releasing 80 previously censored pages, which the FBI had earlier said contained information that was confidential or related to national security, the agency agreed to pay \$US204,000... for [the historian’s] legal fees and costs.

...[the US government for decades “needlessly and wastefully” withheld millions of records about the assassination of President John Kennedy, causing Americans to mistrust their government, a federal review panel has concluded. Such secrecy “led the public to believe that the government had something to hide. Change is long overdue and the review board’s experience amply demonstrates the value of sharing information with the American public.” The Assassination Records Review Board closes shop this week after gathering and releasing a mountain of detail about the assassination. The board spent more than \$US8 million to gather and release the records. It got more than 60,000 documents from the FBI and other federal entities and private collections, some which gave them up reluctantly. The records will be kept at the National Archives. Some still must be processed before the public can inspect them. Remaining blacked-out sections on some records will come to light at different dates between now and 2017 when all records will be fully disclosed.’ By the way, a descendant of] the Emperor... BONAPARTE... who served as Teddy Roosevelt’s Attorney General... [came up with] THE IDEA... TO INVENT THE FBI IN 1908... and once initial suspicions were allayed that it would turn into some big, secretive, czarist police force, it did precisely that. The bureau quickly built its empire of white men in white shirts, chasing anarchists and Bolsheviks in the ’20s, gangsters and bootleggers in the ’30s, fascists in the ’40s, communists in the ’50s and civil-rights leaders and antiwar protesters in the ’60s. The enemies, always changing, are changing still, and the agency that confronts them now faces problems that [will] bedevil any FBI director trying to drag the agency into the modern age... For the better part of a generation, both political parties have thrown money and laurels at the FBI... Under [the current Administration], while agency after agency saw its budget dwindle, the FBI’s jumped 25%, to \$2.9 billion. Congress paid for 3,600 new employees, new computers, new field offices. Law-and-order Republicans were there first, but [the incumbent President] and the Democrats joined in until there was simply no constituency that didn’t see the FBI as the all-purpose answer to voters who routinely listed crime among their top concerns. For America, whose greatest enemy is suddenly within, the FBI has become the Pentagon of the post-cold war world. This means, like the well-protected Pentagon of 20 years ago, virtually... [any] lawmaker who raised concerns risked being flayed as soft on crime. But without accountability, several things happen, all of them bad. Money gets wasted. Officials get sloppy.

...[the US] President... said yesterday that he was kept in the dark about an FBI warning last year that China might try to funnel money into the U[S] election campaign, and is now trying to find out why... His disclosure added a bizarre new twist to a campaign financing controversy dogging [the]President... and his Democratic Party, and one with potentially troubling foreign policy implications. It is illegal for foreign governments to contribute to American political campaigns... China said the charges were unfounded...

Federal law-enforcement officials have found... “strong evidence” that... China secretly funnelled nearly \$US1 billion... into the U[S] to influence policy and politicians... [as] part of an “urgent new offensive” designed to counter “Taiwan’s successful US lobbying.” ...[the] President... said yesterday he felt “sick at heart” when he first learned his Democratic Party accepted... contributions from foreign sources and was angry that donations were not checked more carefully... [H]e was confident that more careful scrutiny... would have exposed the illegal contributions before they were accepted.

...“SOMETIMES,” [the US]President... mused on Friday afternoon, “there is a difference between what is legal and what ought to be done.” And with that... [the former] lawyer... offered a guided tour of Washington’s favorite hideaway – the fertile, foggy valley that lies somewhere between what is wrong and what is illegal. You don’t have to be a lawyer to get in, but it helps to think like one. [The First Lady’s] top aide... was spending the day there in March 1995, when [a] Californian businessman walked into her White House office one morning and handed her a cheque for \$50,000. It was just “a rather unusual circumstance,” [the President] explained last week. She didn’t actually ask... for the money as the price of admission to sit in on the President’s radio address two days later. She wasn’t “receiving” contributions on federal property; she was just passing them along. And she certainly didn’t “solicit” them, which federal law prohibits. Or does it? ...[the businessman’s] lawyer... told TIME that [his client had approached the aide’s] aide... the day before, hoping to arrange a cosy lunch in the White House for some Chinese businessmen and a later meeting with the First Lady. Somehow the subject turned to Democratic Party needs. [The aide’s aide] remarked that the President’s party had to cover the costs of political events held by the First Lady at the White House, although [the aide’s aide] “does not recall” that conversation. So [the Californian businessman] came back the next day and handed [over] that “unsolicited” \$50,000 cheque for the Democratic National Committee. According to [the Californian businessman’s lawyer, his client] did so with the understanding that it would help him gain access for his guests, who indeed dined in the mess and had their pictures taken with [the First Lady] the next day. But what makes last week’s spectacle truly rich is that the President doesn’t have to make excuses for [the aides]. And... he doesn’t even have to parse the legal delicacies of their actions. Based on what has come out so far, nothing they did that day or the next in the White House appears to have broken the law. What’s more, when [the] Vice President... sat in his office calling up businessmen whose careers and companies depended in part on decisions the White House could make, urging them to support his party’s efforts, he wasn’t breaking the law either... In one press conference after another, the... President and his top lieutenants... tried to explain that they were proud of what they had done, and now that they had been caught, promised never to do it again... [W]hatever pleasure the Republicans felt in watching the White House thrashing was offset by fear that... [an] investigation of campaign finance would wind up biting them too. After all, the Republicans raised \$200 million more than the Democrats last year without Air Force One or any presidential bedrooms to proffer.

...A... transcript of dozens of intercepted pager messages sent to... [the US president’s] Secret Service detail was posted on the Internet on Friday by a computer hacker. The messages included minute-by-minute updates about the president’s whereabouts as well[as] instructions to agents to call the White House switchboard, love notes, basketball scores and notification that [the president’s daughter] was on hold for her father. According to time stamps, the messages were intercepted on April 27... The White House said it knew its pager messages had been monitored but declined to say whether the transcript was genuine... [Meanwhile, the president’s] choice to head the troubled CIA... and... its 12 companion espionage outfits... acknowledged yesterday that his former National Security Council aides left him in the dark about an alleged Chinese plan to influence the U[S] elections improperly... But... in reply to later questions, [he] referred to the two former counterintelligence experts... as “very fine career officers.”

In his statement at the start of six days of hearings, [he] vowed if confirmed to head the sprawling, \$US30 billion-a-year... espionage apparatus he would promote "from day one a climate of total accountability" for management failures.

...A matter of intelligence... Spying is not what it used to be. Gone is the ideology, gone is the efficiency. The FBI last week arrested three middle-aged former student radicals and accused them of spying... for the East Germans[. initially.] and then for any government that wanted their services... It was also reported that the CIA and the National Security Agency mounted a bugging operation on international statesmen, many of them America's staunchest allies. Such was Washington's trust in its friends that even a boat taking the leaders attending a Pacific Rim conference on a fishing trip was loaded with eavesdropping equipment. In Bosnia, the Americans bugged everything the U[N] command in Sarajevo transmitted. But fellow spies cannot be surprised that the Americans do not trust their allies, for they do not even trust each other much. The CIA and the diplomatic service were often in conflict, with the State Department and its ambassadors demanding to see all communications between the agency and its men in the field, and the CIA in turn spying on even the U[S] Ambassador to Zagreb. Nor does [the most powerful organisation in the world] seem to have an exalted view of its own agents. Inside its vast headquarters in Langley, Virginia, there is a gift shop. Outside is a notice advising staff: "Do not wear CIA-branded merchandise if operating undercover." ...This is not a good time to be a spy. MI6[also] has image problems. The agency has been forced to negotiate a "sweetheart deal" with "Mr T," a disgruntled former operative, buying his silence before he sold his story. There are times when staff feel its headquarters, a futuristic building on the Thames at Vauxhall Cross, London, is a useful metaphor for MI6 itself. It is glamorous on the outside but cramped within. It is not like the old premises in Mayfair where staff used to grow tomatoes in window boxes... Nowadays staff enter their brash HQ with a swipe card and code number, and find themselves in a hive of corridors unmarked and directionless, except for signs saying "Exit." Staff are not allowed to discuss their work with colleagues – even when they are in MI6's secure (and mediocre) canteen... The 2000 people – mostly men – who work for MI6 like calling themselves spies and are very much at the sharp end of the business. They have to deal with defectors from nasty regimes such as Algeria and Libya. Their job is to "turn" diplomats or disgruntled terrorists who have valuable information. There are another 2000 people in MI5, Britain's domestic intelligence service, many of them women, except in the section dealing with counter-surveillance in Northern Ireland where most have been drafted in from the Special Branch. There are also 6000 at the GCHQ, a listening and monitoring centre, and a number of Military Intelligence agents. "GCHQ should be shut down, what it provides is so banal and obvious," said the former agent. "It is obsessive about government communications in Russia. Its eavesdroppers loved telling us where the briefcase containing the nuclear button was located." The Russians are little better. Their equivalent of GCHQ is called Fatsi and they, too, snoop on their own nationals from a network of listening posts. Imagine the embarrassment, therefore, when it was discovered a "top secret" Fatsi report to the Russian Security Council had been copied from local newspapers.

...Russia's spy agencies pointedly declined to join the CIA's 50th-birthday celebrations this week, maintaining a frosty silence worthy of Cold War relations. From its inception after... W[W2] to the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, the CIA made the thwarting of Moscow its prime aim. Since then it has been struggling to adapt to its new role. The pains of transition have been as keenly felt in Russia's post-Soviet intelligence fraternity... "Our position is no comment," a spokesman for Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service (SRV) said testily. "It is their anniversary, and there is no need to turn the spotlight on us. And we will not be sending them any official greetings." The domestic intelligence agency, the Federal Security Service (FSB), showed a similar reluctance to comment... It may be that the KGB knew – and its successor agencies still know – more than the American people about the CIA... [Furthermore, the US President, while leading] ceremonies on Tuesday at CIA headquarters... told employees: "The American people will never know the full story." ...It is also noteworthy that several spies working for the CIA have been caught and convicted this year... But despite its pride at having had two moles at the heart of the CIA until fairly recently, [the KGB] still has lingering regrets at having "lost" the Cold War[, and in]... an interview in a Russian weekly newspaper on Wednesday... [the FSB's] Major-General... bemoaned at least one aspect of the new role of his own service... He said the FSB faced a challenge from ex-KGB agents who now worked for private security firms, spying on competitors and even the Government for better pay than their former comrades got. Money seems, as ever, to be at the root of one of the oldest professions in the world, whichever side you are on. "According to informed sources, CIA employees being lured to work for the FSB or other Russian intelligence services attract a price of \$2 million,"... [Russia's] Itar-Tass news agency... said. "In the U[S], Russian turncoats, by some accounts, are half the price."

...[yesterday Russia's Itar-Tass] news agency reported that... Soviet dictator Josef Stalin served as an agent in the Tsar's secret police in the years leading up to the fall of the Russian monarchy... Stalin, who ruled the Soviet Union with a iron fist from 1924 until his death in 1953, supplied "important information" to the Tsar's secret police from 1906 to 1910... Despite his alleged role with the secret police, Stalin was arrested and exiled on several occasions before the Russian Revolution... [Incidentally], construction crews are working in secret to clean up one of the biggest embarrassments of the Cold War... 2km from the Kremlin... [i]n the U[S] Embassy compound, a six-story curtain surrounds the chancery building that was once supposed to be the top-secret nerve centre of US operations in the Soviet Union... Soon after construction began in 1979, the State Department discovered Russian workers employed for the job were planting listening devices in the structure... US officials said they thought they would be able to render the bugs ineffective before the building was occupied. But in 1985, when work on the chancery was nearly complete, they realised hidden microphones embedded in the blocks and building materials were so numerous and so cleverly designed that there was no way to remove or neutralise them without demolishing the structure. The chancery became known as the "Great Transmitter" and was unoccupied for more than a decade... The building... was... part of a deal in which the Soviet Union and the US built new embassies for each other. After the revelation of the bugging, US officials refused to let the Russians occupy their new chancery in Washington until 1994, nine years after it was completed... [As] part of a plan to make... the Moscow structure... usable... the "top-hat solution"... is to take off the two original top floors and build four new ones, increasing it from eight to 10 stories. The new floors will be used for top-secret activity, while the lower six levels... will be used by staff doing non-classified office work. At \$240 million, the remodelling work will cost nearly twice as much as the original building and the exterior will be clad in curved glass and marble instead of red brick... Like the Berlin Wall, some of the bricks are being sold as souvenirs for charity... The embassy is scheduled for completion by mid-1999... What is the reason for all the secrecy? No one is saying. That's secret too.

...[The CIA turned cats into walking bugging devices to try to crack Kremlin secrets during the 1960s, say recently declassified documents. The operation, codenamed Acoustic Kitty, involved surgically wiring a cat with transmitting and control devices. "They slit the cat open, put batteries and wires in. The tail was used as an antenna. They made a monster," said a former CIA man. Unfortunately, the would-be eavesdroppers wandered off the job when they got hungry. "So they put another wire in to override that." In the end, the re-engineered cats came up a whisker short and the CIA abandoned the programme.]

...A former member of Britain's MI6... with dual N[Z] and British nationality has appeared in court charged with disclosing information about the agency to outsiders... If found guilty he could face two years in prison... The last MI6 officer to be arrested on an official secrets charge was... sentenced to 42 years' jail in 1961 for spying for the Soviet Union. [That officer] escaped from jail five years later and now lives in Moscow.

...The N[Z]-born former spy... aged 34... has pleaded guilty to breaching Britain's Official Secrets Act by planning to publish a book about service with MI6... [He] was remanded in custody for sentencing at the Old Bailey.

...A N[Zer] who was... dismissed from the British secret service has been sentenced to jail for 12 months for threatening to publish material about his years with MI6... He is the first person to be charged under the... Official Secrets Act, 1989... He said afterwards that he had wanted to plead

not guilty, but “[the time I’d have spent on remand waiting for trial would’ve been longer than the eventual time spent in prison if found guilty’, and] the draconian nature of the... Act ma[de it] impossible. I would have been guilty even if I had disclosed the colour of the carpets in the office.”

...Britain’s public servants take note: The days of “obsessive secrecy” are at an end. “To get any information into the arena in Britain you’ve got to literally drag it out of government departments,” the... new Labour Government... Public Services Minister... said in Auckland yesterday. He... is visiting N[Z, AUS], Canada and the U[S], to see how existing laws covering government information work. N[Z]’s Official Information Act dates back to 1982... while the U[S] law is a decade older... Apart from some private members’ bills, which went nowhere, there has been no serious attempt by any British Government to adopt a more open official information policy... Britain has what are known as 30-year and 100-year rules for sensitive information... [to find] its way into the public domain... The 100-year rule particularly makes it “virtually impossible” to get information now relating to the two world wars. He cites as an example the difficulty of researching events that affected N[Z] soldiers at Gallipoli.

...A bill that would make public all U[S] Government records on Nazi war criminals compiled since... W[W2] has been introduced in the Senate.

...Nearly 100,000 U[S] troops were exposed to trace levels of nerve gas from a demolished Iraqi ammunition dump during the Gulf War, and 26 reported symptoms consistent with nerve gas poisoning, the Pentagon said yesterday. The latest figure was a dramatic increase over the Pentagon’s calculations last year, which placed some 20,000 troops within a 50km radius of the... dump... The Pentagon insisted for years that no U[S] troops who served in the Gulf War were exposed [to] Iraqi poison gas... It was also the first time the Pentagon had disclosed that any troops who were exposed to nerve gas reported symptoms. By the way, during ‘August 1990, British Airways flight BA149 to Kuwait was delayed in London for two hours due to a “mechanical fault”. However, just before it took off nine or ten young men boarded and sat at the rear. BA149 continued on its journey despite the fact that Iraq began its invasion three hours before the plane was due in Kuwait. The mysterious group of men vanished within minutes of the plane landing in Kuwait, leaving the civilian crew and passengers to be captured then held hostage by the Iraqis’ (‘some French and American passengers have since received more than half a million dollars in compensation’)...

I[n 1974... the 1100-tonne fishing trawler and factory freezer ship Gaul... [and its] crew of 36... vanished in the freezing Barents Sea off the top of Norway. Although an inquiry found it sank in 16m waves, many relatives never accepted that such a sturdy vessel with \$200,000 of communications equipment could have floundered without even sending out a distress signal. The trawler vanished near a Soviet submarine base and a television documentary in the 1980s fuelled relatives’ suspicion that it was a spy ship using unknowing fishermen to disguise an intelligence-gathering mission... [A] witness alleged that four naval officers joined the vessel after it had set sail... Among the relatives... [is] an Auckland advertising manager who immigrated from Aberdeen 11 years ago after meeting her N[Z-born] husband. On Wednesday, the past caught up when her sister telephoned from Scotland with news that a British-Norwegian television expedition had found the wreckage of the ship under 270m of water... 110km north of... Norway’s northern tip and near Russian waters... [The Auckland] said the news came as a great shock after so long, but it had not completely extinguished hope that her brother might still be alive. Although the chances certainly appeared dimmer, there was still a possibility that the crew had been captured and the ship then scuttled. [She] said her 82-year-old mother and relatives of other missing crew members had been haunted for years by anonymous telephone callers promising to free their loved ones from Siberian jails for large fees. She acknowledged it might be better knowing for sure that her brother was dead rather than living with endless uncertainty. “But Mum still has... hope that one day he will walk in the door – she is an old lady now and that is probably what keeps her going.”

...A “strange mistake and misunderstanding” over a letter to Indonesia from [the]South African President... resulted in international friction when it was sent to the Portuguese embassy in Pretoria and its contents leaked. The... letter [described] a proposal to free [an]East Timorese rebel leader... Portugal was the colonial ruler of East Timor until 1974. The following December Indonesian troops moved into East Timor with tacit Western approval and it was incorporated as Indonesia’s 27th province the next July, in a move not recognised by the U[N]. Armed guerrillas are still fighting Indonesian rule.

...Red-faced A[US]n politicians are ducking for cover after a briefing paper blunder... A[US]’s Acting Leader of the Opposition and former foreign minister... said it was no ordinary breach of security. “It’s the daddy of all security breaches – 15 countries offended in one go.” ...Classified... “AUSTEO” meaning... for “A[US]n Eyes Only”, the papers... include comments about various... leaders... [that] would cause grave offence in the South Pacific... [and damage AUS’s reputation. The] blunder... could spread to Kuala Lumpur... Malaysian logging companies... [are accused in the] secret document of corrupting several island nations... A copy of the document was left lying on a table outside the Cairns hotel conference room where Pacific economic ministers... met last week. Compiled by A[US]n foreign affairs staff to aid [the AUS]n Foreign Minister... and [AUS’s]Treasurer... before the forum, it was picked up by a Reuters journalist who assumed it was for general release... In a scathing indictment of mismanagement, corruption and... personal habits... the... 93-page document... divides the... island states into six groups, based on economic and social conditions, with headlines such as “Melanesian mayhem,” “Imprudent Micronesians” and “Bottom of the heap.” ...A[US]n officials would not comment on the paper or its contents, but a senior official privately confirmed it was genuine... Even though the paper reflects the reality that A[US] cracks the whip harder than N[Z] on Pacific Island economic reform, the A[US]n Government is trying to distance itself from it. It is pointing the finger of blame at bureaucrats. And it has instructed its High Commissioner in Wellington... to convey the message that such material is not necessarily the A[US]n Government’s view... [The commissioner] said the paper was a setback for A[US.] which regarded its engagement in the Pacific as a serious one and one in which “we are making serious mistakes.” ...A[US and NZ] are the forum’s biggest economies, dwarfing the poorer island nations... Most South Pacific economies are afflicted by low growth, high debt, bloated public sectors, growing populations and weak or virtually non-existent private sectors... “Pacific leaders will continue to flirt with easy solutions to their economic problems, especially quick-fix, easy-money schemes and over-exploitation of natural resources...,” the briefing said... Nauru... was in[the] worst shape, despite a once-rich phosphate industry and compensation for phosphate mining from former trustee A[US]. Nauru’s financial assets have tumbled to \$A200 million... from \$A1.2 billion in 1991... “Mismanagement is hurting, with... Nauru... the Solomon Islands... and the Cook Islands on the brink of insolvency... Financial collapse is imminent, the only question is timing.” ...The Cook Islands... set a precedent by being the only country that pays its parliamentarians more than 3[%] of the Government’s total operating budget... [of] \$NZ39.9 m... Salaries and allowances paid to the 25 politicians total... \$1.265 m... a year – and there’s an armload of other perks... that would increase this figure considerably.

...two[of the] nations judged to be at the bottom of the heap by a secret A[US]n briefing paper have questioned the quality of advice being given to A[US]n ministers. The... President... of Nauru... who is also the[country’s] finance minister... said he regretted that A[US]n ministers were being “so badly and inaccurately advised by their officials.” ...The P[M] of the Cook Islands... said claims [that his country] was being mismanaged were both unfair and untrue, citing a programme of economic reforms the country was already implementing. In the past 12 months the Cook Islands Government had laid off two-thirds of its public service... and begun state asset sales... However... the Minister of Finance... [for the] Solomon Islands... said yesterday... [that his country] could not meet its commitments... blaming the crisis on bad decisions by Government policy-makers... [T]he Government’s total debt stood at \$US234.2 million[including]... outstanding external debts... [of] over \$US116 million... Around 220,000 Solomon Islanders will today elect a[new] 50-member national Parliament despite[the] cash-flow problem... The Solomon Islands Electoral Commission had expressed doubts over whether the elections could be held after the Government was slow in paying the \$US1... million budgeted for them... [Meanwhile, a senior AUS]n Treasury official has lost a performance pay bonus of at least \$A10,000... because of the bungle... The official, who has not been named, was one of four Treasury officials disciplined over the security breach... [T]hree junior officials had received disciplinary counselling... [The] senior Treasury officer... [is likely to be] transferred to the U[S].

...‘some AUSn soldiers seconded to the CIA took part in so-called counter-terror programmes in which tens of thousands of people were killed in Vietnam. The troops were members of the AUSn Training Team Viet Nam, formed after a government decision in May 1962 to send military advisers to Vietnam. Some were involved in programs of profligate assassination. Yet AUS’s then PM says he was never told. More than three decades later, the sound of a bullet in a distant hut is no more likely to carry to a paneled prime ministerial office.’

...‘Elite NZ Special Air Services troops carried out orders to kill Viet Cong prisoners during the Vietnam War, says a book published in AUS. The shock allegation is in a biography of a former AUSn Deputy PM, a Vietnam veteran. Politicians and Army chiefs in NZ have dismissed the claims but the AUSn war veteran who says he gleaned the information after intercepting a radio message in 1968 has publicly backed them. The veteran claims he was with the other veteran, a second lieutenant with the 1st Battalion, Royal AUSn Regiment, when they overheard a message between a NZ SAS patrol and its headquarters. “The Kiwis were reporting three VC KIA (killed in action) and two WIA (wounded in action) and wanted the prisoners lifted out urgently as they were still in a bad situation. The advice to them was that there was no helicopter available. So, after a heated argument, the after-action report was amended to five VC KIA, and the patrol was moved out. I wondered what sort of war I was in.” The vice-president of the ex-Vietnam Service Association and the NZ SAS troop commander at the time, said the alleged radio message appeared to have been concocted “over a few cans of VB (Victoria Bitter).”

...the NZ ‘government misled NZers over plans to send more soldiers to the Vietnam War, formerly top secret AUSn cabinet papers have disclosed. The 1967 archives, issued yesterday by the AUSn Archives under the 30-year-rule, show that the then NZ PM discussed in Canberra proposals to send more troops while publicly denying that the government was considering the move. The NZ PM told the AUSns he was able to cloak the proposals because they involved officials only and had not gone before the cabinet. It was not the first time he had misled the country over Vietnam. In 1964, before the involvement of NZ combat troops in Vietnam, the 36th US President’s special envoy visited NZ, saying publicly he would not ask for military aid. The envoy met the PM, who confirmed afterwards that the envoy had not asked for aid, but AUSn government papers released decades later revealed that the envoy said at the meeting he would welcome an artillery battery, a tank company or anything NZ could provide. Later the same month (April, 1964) the PM rejected speculation that an artillery unit might be sent. Papers later showed that the cabinet had decided in principle nine days earlier to commit combat units. The latest AUSn documents indicate that NZ’s decision to double its infantry in Vietnam was more than the AUSns had expected. Canberra had believed NZ would send only a Special Air Service unit to join the artillery and infantry already deployed, rather than another full company of infantry. Wellington sent both, despite serious economic and military problems. The cabinet papers show that while agonising over the future of their commitments to the defence of the two fledgling nations, NZ and AUS believed they needed to do more in Vietnam to ensure the US security umbrella continued to shelter the South-east Asian region.’ Incidentally, m[aterial from N[Z] intelligence helped to form the damaging A[US]n assessments of Pacific leaders and countries, say high-level A[US]n sources. The [NZ P]M... would not comment on the suggestion, which was reported yesterday in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. But N[Z] departments and intelligence organisations commonly share information with their A[US]n counterparts. And N[Z] is credited with having better intelligence and insights into the Pacific than A[US]. The... author of *Secret Power*, a book on international spy networks, says... [AUS] reports on P[NG] while NZ’s responsibility within the western alliance is to spy on most of the South Pacific Forum countries... [“NZ] makes it its business to be the source of sometimes very sensitive information about all those countries there for A[US], the US] and Britain,” said [the author]. “There are people who are doing that five days a week.”

...AN UGLY industrial building in inner-city Wellington is the Security Intelligence Service’s bugging and surveillance centre, the *Sunday Star-Times* can reveal... Cars and utility vans used by SIS surveillance staff are kept in the... two-storey building in Kaiwharawhara Rd... behind a huge roller door. Some of the vehicles are registered to SIS front companies to conceal their identity. A reporter visited the building yesterday but found no sign of life. Spies, it seems, don’t always work on the weekend. The surveillance centre is one of a number of long-standing SIS secrets uncovered by... the *Sunday Star-Times*... espionage writer... This investigation has also confirmed that the break-in last year of a flat belonging to [a] left wing activist... in Christchurch was the work of the SIS. [The writer] says that this bungled operation raises the possibility that the SIS was acting illegally. The inquiry has uncovered details of the service’s internal structure and shows that a very large part of the SIS resources were devoted to spying on Iron Curtain embassies and local communist groups. But now that the cold war has ended... the SIS has very little to do. One source describes the SIS as “a service without a cause”. But the spies... have managed to dupe the politicians and save their own jobs.

...[the *Sunday Star-Times*] exposure of the SIS was shocking. Do you not give a thought to the safety of N[Z]? The world is still a dangerous place and you put the people of N[Z] under great risk, taking notice of pacifists and fellow travellers who have their heads buried in the sand and who wish to ridicule and do away with the SIS. You have not learnt the lessons of W[W]II.

...A previously classified chunk of N[Z] history is being brought into the light up to half a century after it was buried in restricted archives. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday announced the release of 1250 volumes of its files dating from... W[W]II in the first stage of a massive project to declassify 40,000 documents... While some were top secret in their day, the events many recorded were now well-known... The... archives research policy officer... said the ministry had set itself the task of screening 11,000 documents before August 1, 2000. He had four former ministry staff assisting him in the time-consuming task... [The officer said s]ome documents... would remain restricted because they contained material... from foreign governments, which was still deemed too sensitive for general release. However, researchers could... apply to the ministry to see restricted material.

...Government departments and ministries are being told to smarten up their acts in replying to requests for information from the public. The Chief Ombudsman... said in the Ombudsmen Quarterly Review that an increasing number of people were complaining about the time it took departments and ministries to answer requests. Under the Official Information Act public bodies are required to respond to requests for information “as soon as reasonably practical,” and in no more than 20 working days. One extension is allowed, and it must be for a good reason. One complainant said ministers and officials were abusing the act. “In many instances they appear to use the 20-working-day maximum as the minimum.” ...Radio N[Z]’s education correspondent... who has written a paper about the act, said politicians’ key trick to dodge requests from journalists was stalling. By the time the information was received it was out of date and useless... [A] senior researcher for the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, said: “It’s very rare that you actually get something quickly. In fact the... response is usually well after the time allowed.” ...the director of the law commission reviewing the Official Information Act, said the issue of time-frames was being tackled...

If questioning authority lies at the heart of a democratic system, taxpayers may well appreciate the more than \$1 million run up in the past six months providing... parliamentary answers... The P[M]... recently went public with gripes about the amount of time and money spent replying to parliamentary questions for written answer[s. Then a]... National MP... took up the challenge. He asked every minister how much it had cost their ministries and departments to answer questions since the election. The results added up to a grand total of \$1.1 million, with about 18 departments, including inquiry heavyweights such as Health, Finance, Housing and Courts, unable to provide costs. Education was the most sought after department, answering 517 questions at an estimated cost of \$362,000. The Defence Force estimated it cost \$87,846 to answer... 93 questions... But the answers were rendered virtually meaningless by the different ways agencies calculated the cost of staff time, which ranged from \$23.22 to \$100 per hour. Departments also took vastly different amounts of time to answer... Inland Revenue estimated its staff took 1.14 hours to answer each one; the Ministry of Forestry took four hours... The majority of questions are lodged by Opposition MPs, and have long been used as a way to dig up uncomfortable facts from the Government.

...Cabinet ministers have confessed to irritation with aspects of the Official Information Act which force them to release documents they would rather forget... Cabinet ministers are reported to have instructed public servants to destroy documents because of fears details would be revealed...

[T]hey did not want it known they were going against advice from officials, or that particular policies were not getting the expected results... [T]here was no evidence that the practice was common... One of the main purposes of the 1982 act was to increase "the availability of official information in order to promote good government." The Ombudsman... said... "Very clearly ministers need to take advice from officials and that is a very necessary part of operating government..." ...the Attorney-General... said it was worrying that advice between ministers was now viewed as official information... He said the review of the Official Information Act by the Law Commission would... include the provision of... allowing "free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to ministers from officials" to remain outside the public domain... People on both sides of the fence are quoted as saying that the Official Information Act has made officials less free with their opinions, often stopping them giving ministers advice they might not like. But suggestions that the act should be tightened to prevent such advice becoming public met opposition yesterday from representatives of some of the journalists who frequently use the act to get information. The executive director of the Newspapers Publishers Association... said that the law was already abused by politicians who did not want the public to know what went on behind the scenes. Politicians frequently delayed responding to requests for the maximum time... then asked for further clarification and finally refused the request, forcing journalists to seek the intervention of the Ombudsman. Even then there were still delays, as ministers were slow to respond to the Ombudsman's recommendation to release the information... "Then it arrives and large sections of the report – usually all the interesting bits – have been cut out," he said... A journalists' advocate... said that any move to tighten the act would be a return to the "bad old days" of the Official Secrets Act. "In those days a public servant could be sent to jail for releasing the most trivial piece of information[.]" H[e]... said that the Official Information Act already contained plenty of scope for sensitive information to be withheld... He was horrified to hear that some politicians had allegedly circumvented the system by destroying embarrassing documents. "If the documents don't exist then no-one has a chance to decide whether they should be in the public domain, and that's an abuse of the system,"... More than 1000 people a year appeal to the office of the Ombudsman after being declined information...

The P[M] is considering charging for information under the Official Information Act... [In related news, t]he Government is issuing secret instructions to state-owned enterprise boards on how to run their businesses... Traditionally, all financial instructions to the enterprises have been contained in annual statements of corporate intent, which are tabled in Parliament and therefore are public... In a new, unannounced policy, the Government is moving to control the companies outside the framework of the 1986 State Owned Enterprises Act. The Minister of S[OE]s... is responsible for the change, which is being implemented by the Treasury and Crown Company Monitoring Advisory Unit... A spokesman for the... Unit... said the detail contained in the strategic statements was likely to be too sensitive to be released... It is understood the instructions have also upset some directors, who were appointed because of their business management experience, but now face being told how to do their jobs. Instructions on how to operate as a board were apparently developed because of the extremely poor performance of some crown health enterprises. But they are being sent to all boards, although some have turned non-performing departments into extremely profitable companies.

...The S[IS]'s work now involves zeroing in on international money-laundering operations and terrorists masquerading as refugees. Those two "important" functions were outlined by the P[M]... in Parliament last night during debate on a doomed Alliance measure seeking to increase public scrutiny of the intelligence agencies... Lacking support from any other party in Parliament, the Alliance measure was defeated by 106 votes to 13... The P[M]... rarely makes any mention of the agency's activities. "Unfortunately... there are nasty people in the world," he told Parliament. He said many terrorists would like to use N[Z] as a "relatively soft haven." - 1997

The N[ZSIS] was given statutory recognition on Sept 11, 1969, although it had existed as an informal State service from W[W]II. According to its enabling Act, the NZSIS was to be a passive gatherer of intelligence with no powers or enforcement function. On Nov 16, 1977, an amendment which was possibly the most publicly contested piece of legislation in NZ's history was passed. This gave the NZSIS powers to intercept or seize communications and information by electronic means and the responsible minister, usually the P[M], power to issue interception warrants relating to a matter "prejudicial to security".

[The P]M... indicated yesterday that the law might be changed to allow... SIS... agents to break into people's houses. This follows the Appeal Court ruling that an SIS interception warrant did not give the agents power to enter a private residence. It also ruled that a certificate from [the PM] explaining why documents from the SIS were withheld did not explain, with sufficient precision, the reasons for those documents being withheld. The judges... ruled that... [the PM had seven weeks] to supply a certificate to satisfy them or to provide the documents for a judge to consider whether national security meant they needed to stay secret. [One]Justice... said that "courts today are not prepared to be awestruck by the mantra of national security." ...[the PM] said the Appeal Court ruling had raised a question as to whether the law was sufficient... A[n A]lliance MP... said the Appeal Court judges had acted as watchdogs of democracy and their judgment was a good one. "Clearly, democracy has won and [the PM] should accept that outcome with good grace and not be tempted to change the law..." ...[a p]olitical activist... had appealed against [a]High Court ruling that denied him access to SIS documentation. [The activist] is suing the SIS, [its]director... the officers involved, the Crown and police for \$150,000 for trespass or compensation for a breach of the Bill of Rights after two SIS officers were caught entering... [his] house in July 1996.

...To discover [the activist]'s views there is an easier way than breaking into his house: search the Internet, or flick through the pages of metropolitan daily newspapers over the past few years. If there is one thing that can be said about the 32-year-old who has captured the attention of [the P]M... and the S[IS], it is that he is public. Intelligence organisations have gone to great lengths to conceal their interest in him, but [the activist] has made no secret of his interests... [The] London-Pakistani who immigrated to N[Z] in 1988 for personal reasons... is against free trade, for workers' rights and is an advocate for the rights of indigenous people... His lawsuit against the SIS... has prompted new legislation giving the service the power to enter private homes. "This new law change is a declaration of war on dissent... [over] the free-market... religion... they want everyone else to follow,"... It has been suggested that the SIS agents may have been interested in [the activist]'s associates rather than in him. The service politely declined to comment when approached yesterday, and its leaders have remained tight-lipped throughout [the]court proceedings...

Labour['s] leader... has let slip why intelligence agents broke into... [an activist]'s house, saying they were not actually after him. Her disclosure of sensitive security matters is understood to have left the Government and the [SIS] fuming, although both refused to comment yesterday. [The MP], who as Leader of the Opposition receives regular briefings on state security, refused to comment further yesterday. In a magazine interview she said two S[IS] officers who were caught breaking into [the activist]'s Christchurch home were interested in overseas visitors staying with him. It is the first time anyone in authority has alluded to the reason for the bungled 1996 break-in. The details are deemed so secret that the Government is arguing through the courts that it should not have to reveal them to a High Court judge in private... But [the activist]... said the only person staying with him at the time was... a Mexican researcher and campaigner... [who] had been invited to a free-trade conference organised by [the activist] and fellow anti-Apec campaigners in Christchurch... [H]e doubted the service would have been interested in... the Mexican[, who] had not even been invited to N[Z] at the time the P[M] signed a warrant authorising the SIS operation.

...The SIS Amendment Bill was due back before the House last week but the Security and Intelligence Committee, headed by the... [PM, has] asked for another fortnight... apparently because [the] parliamentary committee has not decided who should issue the warrants. As it stands, the bill leaves the decision in the hands of the Minister in Charge of the SIS... [- in other words, the PM. A]n overwhelming number of those who appeared before the committee argued that it should be up to a judge to decide... The committee... has come under fire for not travelling outside

Wellington to seek the public's view. Two days were set aside for submissions last month... A[fter the A]uckland Council for Civil Liberties said it used up the last of its money flying to Wellington to support its submission... [an]Alliance MP... has revealed that the Government spent \$18,000 flying out the former head of British intelligence... to be an expert witness before the committee. "It is ridiculous that the committee refused to travel to Christchurch for hearings, when it was happy to squander \$18,000 on bringing an ex-British spy to [NZ]..."

...Legislation giving SIS agents explicit power to break into private homes will be rushed into Parliament today. The move comes a day after the Privacy Commissioner... recommended the removal of some S[IS] privileges under the Privacy Act. The Government has support from Labour, meaning the bill's passage is assured, despite Alliance... MPs'... reservations... Critics labelled the bill a "declaration of war on dissent"...

It's open home at your place Civil libertarians are disturbed at the Government's proposals to legalise the covert entry of private property by S[IS] agents... Yet N[Z]ers long ago surrendered the sanctity of their home. Either through complacency or ignorance, or in some cases necessity, we've let slip through without whimper more than 300 statutes and regulations which contain authority for some form of entry or search under warrant by the representatives of state agencies and other services. The best known is obviously the police, empowered by a search warrant issued by a judge. Less known is the authority given local bodies, health, agricultural, fisheries, environmental, postal and customs agencies – and bureaucrats who may not like what you read or watch on film or video in private. Exactly how many rights of entry exist is not known...

The Director-General of the S[IS]... has briefed top politicians about the level of [local] espionage from other countries' agents. "We have identified a number of intelligence officers from foreign nations living and working under cover in our country... They have been sent to target senior Government officials as well as their own communities of expatriates and emigres to pursue their homeland policies, often to N[Z]'s disadvantage." A list of more than 100 people alleged to be agents for Britain's MI6 has been posted on Internet sites around the world and includes the name of a 49-year-old first secretary at the British High Commission in Wellington. Publication of the list has been blamed on a disgraced... N[Z]-born... former spy... [However, the NZer] denied involvement yesterday, telling British newspapers his former bosses had linked him to the scandal in a bid to discredit him and make him look like a traitor.

...A High Court appeal has prevented extracts from the... book written by [a NZ]-born former spy... appearing in a British newspaper yesterday. But British Government lawyers seem to be losing their battle to maintain secrecy after a High Court case on Friday gave the *Sunday Times* the right to publish extracts from the book once it was in the public domain... [The] book's official launch [is] in Moscow today... The paper had tried to get altered a 1996 undertaking that prevented the newspaper from publishing anything from... [the NZer]'s experience in MI6... [The NZer] was dismissed from MI6 six years ago. He maintained his dismissal was unfair, and wanted his case reviewed by the employment tribunal. He was sent to prison for breaching the Official Secrets Act... after writing a synopsis of his book and showing it to a publisher. In the book, *The Big Breach: From Top Secret to Maximum Security*, he outlines how British spies hide their identities when posted abroad under diplomatic cover. Britain is convinced Russian intelligence is behind the publishing deal.

...The British intelligence services MI5 and MI6 – which previously were 'not answerable to the British legal or democratic systems' – [have been ordered to open their secret files to public scrutiny. Every British citizen will, in theory, have the right to look at his or her file. The Data Protection Commissioner... has ordered the services – and GCHQ... – to comply with data protection laws after years of frustrating failed negotiations... [A] 1984 act – which incorporates the data protection principles into British law – requires that data be collected fairly and lawfully, be accurate and kept up to date, and be used only for the purposes stated in its entry on the Data Protection Register. But after the new, tougher... Data Protection Act came into force in March this year... the commissioner informed intelligence chiefs that they could face court action if they failed to comply... The intelligence agencies are certain to seek to resist each application on the grounds of national security. It appears that the commissioner is determined to tackle each application on its merits – as with other organisations such as the police. This would result in a huge additional workload for the intelligence services and their overseeing ministers. Under the... act, a refusal... to disclose personal records "in the interest of national security" has to be endorsed by a certificate issued by a minister. A refusal can be challenged before a data protection tribunal. If all citizens can ask the intelligence service to see their files, the agencies may be faced with having to scrap many files of people they suspected in the past but who do not fit the exact terms of MI5's, MI6's and GCHQ's current remit... The MI5 security service alone holds approximately 440,000 files, according to a parliamentary reply from the Home Secretary... but unofficial estimates have put the figure much higher... [By the way, m]ore than 100 staff at... the Government Communications Headquarters at Cheltenham... have received compensation... of up to £20,000... because too much eavesdropping on the enemies of the West has damaged their hearing, the *Sunday Telegraph* reports. Staff... blamed their hearing loss on having to "turn the volume... on headphones... up to full if foreign transmissions were hard to understand."

...MI6's offices at Vauxhall Bridge has been dubbed by some staff as "Ceausescu Towers" after the former Romanian dictator with a penchant for grandiose and inhuman architecture. The offices, the target of a terrorist missile attack on Thursday... originally cost £240 million... to build. But to accommodate its strange new occupants a further £86 million of public money needed to be spent to cope with the secret service's needs... The cost of the... building[... which was opened]... in 1994... has left MPs gasping. The expenditure and high annual running costs have been criticised by Parliament's overseeing body the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee... As the attack shows the fortress like quality of the building is not misleading. The walls and windows have been specially modified to stop bomb and missile attacks... There is triple glazing installed on all windows as a safeguard against laser and radio frequency flooding techniques. [In addition, t]he building is... specially screened with metal shielding and wiring to prevent eavesdropping on its computers or the conversations that take place in the offices. For top secret meetings there is a special "silent" room deep in the centre which is designed to prevent any conversation being monitored... [T]here is also a secure command and control room to run major operations like those in Bosnia where war criminals were tracked and arrested by SAS personnel... [Speaking of the SAS, a] former... sergeant's book about his nine years in the elite British regiment... has become the biggest-selling war book, according to publisher Transworld. More than 1.5 million copies were sold in Britain (it still averages 7000 sales a month), 700,000 in the U[S], and has been translated into 16 languages. His follow-up autobiography, *Immediate Action*, was top of the non-fiction bestseller list for 18 weeks. It told of waging war in Northern Ireland, of two years as an undercover agent in South Armagh, of overt and covert action for the SAS on five continents. For that reason he hides his true identity. He has had two death threats. "They're not the problem, it's the others who say nothing – but you can't worry." ...ON THE street you wouldn't give him a second glance: average, passable, casually dressed, a pleasant enough, ordinary sort of bloke – except for the eyes... They are the eyes of... [someone] who shot up Britain's enemies to order, and who was brutally tortured by the Iraqis when captured during the Gulf War. Did he do it for honour, for Queen and country? "No mate," he says in a quiet London accent, "it was a job." Job or not, [he]... has cashed in and become a millionaire writing about his nine years as a member of... 22 SAS Regiment... Now he's written his first novel, which he is in Auckland to promote... In *Remote Control*... [–] a taut thriller with a Northern Ireland "Troubles" theme... [–] the central character and survivor, Nick Stone, at the end examines the motives of "the players" (as those taking part in terrorism and counter-terrorism are called in the trade) and the perfidy of those who control them. While they want to win, they're not doing it out of sense of altruism, of justice, of right or wrong. They are not interested in peace. There's no money or power in that. That is why every time some progress towards a settlement is made there's another outrage. Is that how it really is, how McNab sees it having been a real-life player, that there's a great conspiracy to keep "the industry" going? "Absolutely. It is an industry. Look at the whole power base of the terrorists and the benefits they get. There's guns, prostitution, gambling, drugs, authority. Then look at the military. Every year they sit down with the [British] Government and say we need more money. If they've got a conflict, they're going to get it... [Now I] look at what was going on during the Gulf War. The Brits were selling shells to the

Jordanians knowing that they were going straight across the border to the Iraqis to fire back at us [British and American] soldiers on the ground..." He left the SAS and the Army in 1993 and it was the regiment that suggested he write about his Iraq experience because there was so much misinformed conjecture in the media about what happened in the Gulf War.

...*Bravo Two Zero*, a book by [a former] British SAS sergeant... describes the activity of one NZSAS soldier – known only as “Mark the Kiwi” – in Iraq during the Gulf War. He served in a unit sent to attack communications facilities, pipelines and Scud missile sites. The mission was a shambles... [Intelligence gathered by others] proved dangerously inaccurate – [the unit was] dropped right next to an Iraqi military position and their radio did not work. On their first morning in Iraq they were spotted – by a boy herding goats – and from then it was a case of just trying to survive and escape. But they had almost no food and water... only light clothing, and nearly froze to death in snowstorms. They did, however, have a staggering arsenal of weapons and tried to shoot their way out. One escaped, four were captured and three killed. They estimated they killed or wounded about 250 Iraqis. Mark the Kiwi returned to Britain on a stretcher. Defence sources quoted elsewhere say no N[Z] SAS died during the Gulf War but three were killed in an incident in another, unnamed, country shortly after... NZ’S... Special Air Service... is... now being sent[back] to the Persian Gulf... [NZ’s PM says this time the NZ] SAS will be used only for search and rescue operations. All the SAS’s history suggests otherwise. The SAS is trained to fight and kill, not just to pick up stranded American pilots. What’s more, the SAS has been consistently “economical with the truth” about its real operations... The SAS needs to be recognised for what it is: An overseas intelligence and covert action organisation – the nearest thing to a local equivalent of agencies like the CIA and MI6... THE SAS has been fighting other people’s wars for more than 40 years. It has fought in a series of “dirty wars” in the Third World designed to promote the interests of the U[S] and Britain rather than N[Z]. It has helped prop up dictators and quell independence movements... SAS patrols... can travel by commercial transport or enter by parachute or small boat... There are a little over 100 N[Z] SAS members... The troops are moved between... two squadrons, one of which is trained and equipped for counter-terrorism operations and the other for commando-style “special warfare” operations. Each squadron is divided into small groups which are trained to operate independently... Even after leaving the NZSAS, members can remain on the payroll for up to five years, going on occasional training and being available for special operations. In recent years SAS has received nearly \$5 million of new communications equipment, including compact satellite communications units and “special warfare equipment”... [used for] sabotage, assassination and guerilla-style hunting of the enemy... On its first overseas tour in Malaya in 1955-57 the NZSAS was attached to the British 22nd SAS Regiment... In two 13-week operations in the Fort Brooke area they killed the opposition ASAL leader Ah Ming and his deputy, and in the mountainous Negri Sembilan area killed resistance leader Li Hak Chi. The deployment was regarded as a great success in a report from the time, with a total of 26 “terrorist eliminations”... The NZSAS was disbanded when it returned from Malaya, but was re-established in 1959.

...*Top NZ fighters shine in world hot spots*... More than a dozen former N[Z] SAS soldiers are believed to be serving with elite forces in politically sensitive areas overseas. Former SAS officers say these soldiers have resigned their N[Z] commissions before being employed as individuals by foreign Governments. Their resignations enable Defence Force staff quite correctly to deny any Government-sanctioned N[Z] armed involvement in conflicts around the world. N[Z]-trained SAS soldiers are highly regarded by armed services in Britain and A[US], said one ex-SAS officer. “Our guys have a lot of common sense... They are more independent and resourceful. A high percentage are Maori and they have instinctive bushcraft skills.” He said Maori soldiers especially could sense the presence of other people when on bush patrol, a potentially vital attribute. He likened their overseas service to that of a surgeon wanting to hone his skills. “They want to go and train and get the best experience... Their fitness is up with, or more than that of a triathlete... [but t]hey need a lot more strength. They have to be muscled because they will be carrying heavy loads and rock climbing in many circumstances. They have all got to be A-grade rifle shots. Some will do the sniper course. They are all good with pistols and small-calibre weapons. Most of them will have worked in our accident and emergency wards as part of their training. They are reluctant to retire. It is such an exciting job. Normally most of them leave because their bodies pack up... in the early to mid-thirties.” Another former SAS soldier disputed suggestions made on TVNZ’s *Assignment* documentary on Thursday of official cover-ups in the deaths of three N[Z] SAS soldiers overseas. He said the two incidents, one in the Philippines and the other in Zimbabwe, were “definitely accidents” during training exercises... Lance-Corporal Dan Flanagan... [was officially] stomped by elephants on a covert mission in Zimbabwe... in 1995... [T]wo Papakura soldiers, Sergeant Dennis Terry and Warrant Officer Dave Heywood, were killed while on a secret commando mission in the Philippines in 1981. They were among 23 people from the U[S, AUS] and the Philippines who died when their modified US Air Force craft mysteriously crashed into the sea.

...*When [our subject] became the youngest ever recruit to Britain’s Special Boat Service, he entered a world in which SAS men were considered amateurs*... In the middle of a stormy night in the late Seventies, when the North Sea, lashed with rain, was as black as ink, 20 members of the S[BS] leapt out of a helicopter. Fully armed and equipped with state-of-the-art “bubbleless” breathing apparatus, they were performing the first part of their mission: to rendezvous with a nearby submarine. Waves were crashing over the boat, but all 20 finally made it. They huddled in a trench on the outer casing of the sub, attached themselves to breathing umbilicals, and braced themselves as the sub dived to 60ft to take them near their destination. Because of the turbulence, the experience was like being strapped into a washing machine during the spin cycle. After an hour, the sub stopped, and a series of bangs from inside indicated that they should switch to personal breathing sets and fin up to the surface. Their leader, [our subject], was carrying rather more in the way of kit and hi-tech devices than the other men, and when he attempted to ascend, he found himself sinking under his pack’s anvil-like weight. He was about to ditch it, when a powerhouse of a swimmer doubled up with him, and together they reached the surface. They were now just a mile away from their destination – an oil rig overrun by a terrorist group. The rig workers had been taken hostage, and the SBS intended mounting the platform via the legs, “neutralising” the terrorists and rescuing the hostages. Such an assault and rescue had never before been attempted. The last mile was easily managed, with the raging current fortunately carrying them along at a terrific lick. But attaching themselves to the rig’s greasy legs, in 40ft waves, wasn’t so simple. Using leashes and a link system, the platform was finally reached, and the hooded SBS men began their task. All the troopers wore throat microphone communicators, and each knew which part of the labyrinthine rig to take out. Doors were hurled open, explosives, gas and guns were used, and a dozen terrorists were quickly mown down, with no SBS losses. Soon, just two terrorists were left: a flash bomb was thrown into the room in which they were hiding, and two SBS men shot them from behind. But one of the men wouldn’t lie down... It was... a senior NCO with the S[AS]. The whole operation had been a rehearsal, with the “terrorists” played by SAS men... Until now, the S[BS] have got on with their jobs, content to let the SAS be the glory boys of the British armed forces. But after years of obscurity, [our subject, who is now a] former SBS operative... has spoken out about life in the crack unit. “The main reason I wrote the book was to let people know that the SBS is better than the SAS,” he says. “Thanks to all these books and films, the world knows all about the SAS. But the final straw was when a friend of mine, who’d been in the SBS for 15 years, told me he’d just lost a job to a guy who’d been in the SAS for a couple of years. What was the job? Setting up a waterborne security force! ...But their guy got the job... First off, SBS men are recruited solely from the Royal Marines, one of the finest units in the world... They take soldiering skills very seriously. You must have served three years before applying for the SBS. The SAS take their men from all the armed forces... and some of them really aren’t very good. They’re all turning up to try for the SAS, and all they’ve got to be is fit. So, the first few weeks with the SAS is basic soldiering, like map-reading. The SBS don’t need that! They know the Royal Marines can already do it! At the end of our training, we fire live rounds. The SAS have to fire blanks, otherwise they’d end up shooting each other.” The two special forces are in the process of being merged into one unit, but [our subject] still believes the SBS have the edge. “...You ask the Ministry of Defence who’s best, SBS or SAS, and they’ll always say, off the record, ‘SBS, of

course.” It certainly wasn’t always so. When [our subject] joined the unit in 1975, the SBS was regarded as little more than a beach reconnaissance unit. They had acquitted themselves well in campaigns in Aden and Borneo, and in WWII the “cockleshell heroes” had paddled up to enemy ships and stuck limpet mines to their hulls. But they were losing many men to oil companies, who paid top dollar for them to work as rig divers... Threatened with being disbanded... [b]ecause of the shortage of manpower... its commanders decided to transform the unit into the finest special service of them all. “Why the SBS leapt ahead was mainly because the men became more involved... Everyone is encouraged to contribute to technology and tactics. Regular army guys are told when to eat, sleep and shit, but special forces are paid to think, to figure it out and learn... Security is big business, and if countries or corporations want the best, Britain is the first place they shop... Nearly every anti-terrorist incident in recent years has had an SAS or SBS operative advising... The Americans are all about technology, but comparatively, their men are useless. Every operation they’ve been involved in for 20 years has been disastrous.” But even the SBS has had problems. During the Falklands War, four operatives had the task of yomping across the barren landscape until they reached a rocky hilltop, from where they would report Argentinean activity. After several hours, they weren’t certain of their location. For every patrol’s operating area, there was a buffer zone which was out of bounds to that patrol and all others. If anyone came in, they were presumed to be the enemy. That night, the area adjacent to the SBS’s was manned by an SAS team. Both teams were slightly out of position, and the result was that Kiwi, the SBS team leader, was shot dead by the SAS. When the tragic error was realised, no words were spoken between the two units. But after the conflict, the patrols were on the same ship coming home. A fight took place, and, to avert mass murder, the SAS were helicopter[ed] to another boat. That apart, the Falklands had been good for the SBS, mainly because the SAS came out with a black mark against its name. The regiment had used its satellite communications system to report directly back to headquarters in Hereford, which [the Iron Lady] regarded as a severe breach of procedure. Thereafter, she sided with the SBS, and they began to be chosen over the SAS to conduct operations in volatile areas throughout the world.

...Meet the first special force – the Long Range Desert Group Between 1940 and 1943, the L[RDG] carried out close to 200 operations behind Axis lines, setting standards for special forces the world over. The LRDG was the brainchild of an English explorer, RA Bagnold, who had crossed the Egyptian Sand Sea in a Model T Ford in the Thirties. Bagnold invented a condenser to recycle water, and a “sun compass”. He proposed forming a motorised force to engage in “piracy on the high desert”, so in 1939 the War Office posted him to... Kenya. However, a naval accident stranded him in Cairo, where he rounded up a bunch of N[Z]ers and Chevrolet trucks. The LRDG was born. Bagnold recognised that the Sand Sea was just that – an ocean in which Axis garrisons were marooned, and that, like the Royal Navy in the Caribbean centuries earlier, a handful of skilled men could control vast areas. Within months, Bagnold, his Kiwis and a handful of desert-loving Brits were raiding airfields and fuel dumps, as well as lying up on “road watches”, providing precious intelligence. They went so far as to purchase two aircraft, on which a touchy RAF refused to allow them to paint British roundels. Operating in the desert for months at a time, the LRDG even began to look like pirates, adopting Arab dress and flowing beards. But it was the unit’s “taxi service” which was to have the most lasting effect: picking up the survivors from the SAS’s first, disastrous desert parachute drop in 1941, the unit’s professionalism so impressed SAS commander David Stirling that he remodelled the regiment around Bagnold’s men. The SAS soon took up the offensive from the LRDG, who focused on reconnaissance until the end of the desert war in 1943.

...The British Army has destroyed 90,000 copies of its own magazine, *Soldier*, after an article inadvertently revealed sensitive details about the SAS mission to free hostages in Sierra Leone. The Ministry of Defence ordered the glossy copies of this month’s edition be called back and pulped at a cost of more than \$[NZ]210,000. New copies were printed with the offending parts of the article... removed. A ministry spokesman yesterday told the *Herald* the magazine’s editors made a genuine mistake in breaching the hard-line defence policy of not publishing details of SAS or Special Forces operations. The ministry says the ban is so soldiers are not put in any danger. In the Sierra Leone mission, codenamed Operation Barras, the SAS freed six Royal Irish Regiment hostages from the West Side Boys militia... One SAS soldier, Brad Tinnion, was killed in the raid, and at least 25 West Side Boys died. The gaffe comes as the British Government tries to stop a former SAS soldier, a N[Z]er known as Mike Coburn, from publishing a book about his experiences in the botched Bravo Zero Mission during the Gulf War. Coburn has asked the High Court at Auckland to overturn a British interim injunction stopping him publishing... [Since] February 1997... 57 books [have been] published about the SAS – 22 by insiders and vetted by the ministry. The ministry has probably spent more than \$1 million fighting Coburn’s appeal.

...The British Government is sending a team of high-powered witnesses to N[Z] to block the publication of a book about the Gulf War by a former SAS soldier. The N[Z]er, now back living in Auckland, has written a manuscript called *Soldier Five* under the pseudonym Mike Coburn... The British are trying to stop the book even though two worldwide bestsellers about the... SAS patrol called Bravo Two Zero... have already been published. Two years ago it spent more than \$1 million in vain trying to block a TVNZ *Assignment* programme about Coburn. The Aucklanders’ take on events differs from that in the other two books. He wants to put the record straight about the [patrol]... Coburn’s role has already been publicised, first as the tree-trunk legged *Mark the Kiwi* in [*Bravo Two Zero*], and again in *The One That Got Away*... Both [authors] made millions by selling their stories... Coburn’s lawyer... [s]ays... “My client is not doing it for the money. He’s seeking the right to publish because he has something significant to say.”

...The story of Corporal Mike Coburn – or “Mark the Kiwi” – ...has all the elements needed for a brilliant war yarn. Coburn, now in his late 30s, worked under callous commanders in a career spent operating under false names (to this day his real identity is under wraps), showed courage under fire and endured almost unendurable hardship, cold and torture. Throw in a 100km car chase, a stray goat herd and “slotting” (SAS slang for killing) hundreds of Iraqis. But trying to tell his story of a botched SAS raid during the Gulf War has put Coburn on the wrong side of his old bosses – and the law. Even now it is impossible to tell Coburn’s story directly. Instead it must be clipped together from books, articles and broadcasts already in the public domain. What we know for sure is that the eight-man British mission was a shambles from the start. On January 10, 1991, days before Allied planes began bombing Iraq, the squad was deployed to Saudi Arabia. A few days later, a RAF Chinook helicopter dropped them a good 15km from where it was supposed to, and basically on top of the proposed target – an Iraqi Army encampment – 300km [nor]th of the Saudi border and 120km [sou]th of Syria. There was no cover in the tablecloth-flat, freezing desert, nowhere to take up position. Because the squad was sent out with the wrong radio frequencies, they could not communicate with their base. When they immediately ran into skirmishes with Iraqi soldiers, they did contrive to get a message to their leaders... through Guardnet, an emergency frequency that communicated directly to the SAS base in Saudi Arabia... but the SAS made a calculated decision not to get them out... “Without the shadow of a doubt, we were expendable.” The squad[, which] was headed by Andy McNab... started by following wadis – ancient river beds that twist through the desert – and shooting their way out of “contacts,” fighting for their lives every kilometre. The first night the patrol was split up. Three of Coburn’s mates walked on ahead out of contact and were killed. The remaining five, under McNab’s orders – and despite Coburn and the others’ misgivings – made a run for the Syrian border. They hijacked a yellow taxi and headed north. When they ditched at a checkpoint around 10km from the border, the team was surrounded by thousands of Iraqi soldiers... [W]ith the Syrian border – and freedom – in sight... they came under fire from Iraqi gunners. Coburn thought he was a goner... “The first round when it hit was like a huge wave of nausea went over me, I mean really intense... It was like somebody taking a sledgehammer to my ankle. Another round went through my arm and then the pain sort of came along and I started... screaming my head off.” Next came boots in the head, punches, blindfolding, interrogation and intermittent beatings. Because the Iraqis mistook Coburn’s tanned complexion and circumcision as proof that he was Israeli, he was singled out for particular torture. For weeks, while he was held in solitary in a foul cell, he was tormented by interrogators who refused him medical treatment for the gaping wound in his foot and indeed prodded the wound to cause him further pain... Unlike McNab, Coburn is bitter about his bosses’ decision not to rescue the squad... He felt

that he and the three who did not make it back had been betrayed by the very people whom they were bonded to trust their lives to. Getting involved in counter-espionage was what young Mike Coburn had in mind from the time he was 18. He grew up... on the fringe of West Auckland, and despite the fresh air and rugby lacked the excitement he craved. He was bored at university, and after watching news broadcasts on the SAS siege of the Iranian Embassy in London he saw an ad for the SAS and decided to give it a go... After earning selection, then qualifying in the N[Z] SAS squad, Coburn was hungry for some real action. He... headed for England... and... flew through the British SAS selection process[then] joined Andy McNab's squadron just before the Gulf War. Coburn's first stint in action in the Gulf was a shattering experience – both physically and mentally. He underwent six months' rehabilitation... Coburn's troubles with the authorities started back in London, where he was working with MI5 when his SAS bosses tracked him down to sign a new confidentiality agreement. By then – late November 1996 – most serving and attached SAS soldiers had been obliged to sign the agreement. The only way out was to be sent back to their regiment – an ignominious fate for daring, blood-and-guts SAS soldiers. Coburn, along with most of his co-workers, signed. Soon after, he resigned from the SAS... Coburn then joined the "circuit" of security jobs that tend to be filled by former SAS soldiers – and wrote *Soldier Five*... Coburn intends sharing any profits from his book... with the families of [his] fallen comrades-in-arms. That is if the British military Establishment does not stop him publishing.

...One week into a High Court bid to stop a former SAS soldier... publishing a book about his experiences in the botched Bravo Two Zero mission... the motives of both parties begin to crystalise... On one side... is a soldier who says he wants to salvage a dead colleague's reputation. On the other side... the British Ministry of Defence (MoD) is trying to... save face... Like Coburn, the SAS is most unhappy with the portrayal of "the desperate"... patrol in two big-selling books and movies. It says that although it holds Coburn in highest regard as a soldier and a man, an example must be made. Driving this heavyweight attempt to gag Coburn is a bid to keep SAS morale intact – and the Service competitive.

...It is the latest chapter in a war of words that is threatening to tear apart the most feared fighting unit in the world: the SAS. On Wednesday, while Britain was sleeping, a former member of the regiment was celebrating a court victory in N[Z] that will allow him to publish his account of one of the murkiest episodes in the history of the S[AS]. Already, four books have described the doomed mission of Bravo Two Zero... Now, because of the ruling in an Auckland court, a fifth will be published. So, what's wrong with that? Plenty says the M[od]. Because *Soldier Five*... will accuse officers of leaving their men to die and label the authors of at least two of the other books as liars... That is sure to embarrass the MoD.

...Modern France's most sensational political murder – a bloody case involving a vengeful king, secret agents and the Paris underworld – has taken a bizarre twist. For more than 34 years, the final resting place of Moroccan opposition leader Mehdi Ben Barka has been a mystery... Barka was kidnapped in daylight by French police and secret agents, who killed him in a house in a village south of Paris. That much was disclosed by arrested gang members, but the location of his body has never been resolved. The answer, according to the weekly *Paris-Match*, lies under a mosque. In an act of contrition, it suggests, the grieving monarch built the mosque on the site of a wood where his former foe was buried... Barka had once been the king's maths teacher and was on good terms with him. He became president of Morocco's National Consultative Assembly in 1956 after independence from France. But [a] shift to the left [by Barka] poisoned their relationship... Barka went into exile in 1960 and was sentenced to death in absentia after allegations that he had tried to assassinate [the king] and backed Algeria in a border dispute with Morocco. Against this background... [the then] Moroccan Interior Minister Mohammed Oufkir decided to get rid of Barka. In 1965 he sent an envoy to Paris who recruited a team including two members of the French secret police, the SDCE... President Charles De Gaulle angrily accused Morocco of orchestrating Ben Barka's death, insisting that France had "only a coarse and subsidiary [role]." But the police investigation, subsequent trials and a string of unexplained deaths have left the suspicion that the SDCE men and police acted with official approval. Four members of the team fled France, probably for Morocco. Five others were acquitted. Only two were convicted. One... a former secret agent who is the last known survivor in the affair... got eight years; the other... the senior policeman who whisked Ben Barka away, got six years. A trail of corpses could make investigation impossible. One gang member, Georges Figon, was found dead in a Paris flat in 1966, a bullet in the back of his head. It was classified as suicide. The two Moroccans – Interior Minister Oufkir and Chief of Police Ahmed Dlimi – were in the villa on the night Ben Barka was killed. Dlimi was acquitted; he died in a mysterious car accident in January 1983. Oufkir slipped back into Morocco and was never prosecuted. He died in 1972 – officially, another suicide – as he was implicated in a plot against [the king].

...The world's press was manipulated by British intelligence as part of a plot to overthrow Indonesia's President Sukarno in the 1960s, the *Independent on Sunday* reported yesterday... [I]t had obtained a Foreign Office document which revealed the full extent of a "dirty tricks" campaign orchestrated from London... to destabilise Sukarno by suggesting his rule would lead to a Communist takeover... "The disorder fostered by the British led to... [the present] dictatorship, and a wave of violence unseen since... W[W2]," the weekly said. Cabinet papers relating to the time were uncovered by... a historian at the London School of Economics, whose research is to be published this week in the journal *Intelligence and National Security*.

...The super-secret U[S] National Security Agency says its computer systems suffered a serious problem affecting their ability to process intelligence data for three days last week. The agency, which eavesdrops on conversations overseas to monitor possible security threats to the US, said the problem had been resolved and it was confident "that no significant information had been lost." But it noted that it took technicians thousands of hours and about \$US1.5 million... to get the computers running again... The incident follows the failure of a critical U[S] spy satellite system... [In related news, the US] military spied on A[US]n peace activists in 1989 amid fears that public hostility might force Washington to close a spy base in South A[US], says a new book... [The AUS]n Defence Minister at the time, [who is now the]... Opposition leader, said that while... he was not told about the surveillance... he was not surprised by the revelations. "If we had a base overseas and there was any particular threat to the security of the base or our personnel there, we would have an assessment of it... The only thing I note about it is they evidently decided the A[US]n Government was handling it well enough." Results of the 1989 investigation are classified and it is not known if they involved covert operations... [P]rotests at Nurrungar in the late 1980s... triggered concern at the highest levels of the American military at a time when Washington considered Nurrungar to be a vital link in its global military network.

...N[Z] is part of a satellite spying system now causing international uproar. Inquiries are under way in Europe and America into the Echelon network, which includes the Waihopai spy station near Blenheim... THE world's whistleblowers are puffing up a symphony over spy satellites. In this they are following the foremost whistleblower of all... [A NZer] literally wrote the book about the secret Echelon network, which can intercept phone calls, faxes, telexes and emails throughout the world. His 1996 work, *Secret Power*, hit a wall of official silence in this country. But now Echelon is under fire internationally. The E[U] and several European countries have launched inquiries into claims that the U[S] used it for industrial espionage. In the US, a congressional committee is to hold hearings on Echelon following claims it has been used to snoop illegally on American citizens... [NZ's PM, while somehow refusing] to even acknowledge Echelon exists... insists the information gathered at the Waihopai spy station is not being misused... [C]ritics ask: how does [the PM] know? Much of the information obtained at Waihopai, they say, is automatically forwarded by computer to the other four countries in the system – the U[S, AUS], Britain... and Canada... "Anyone who thought the Americans wouldn't spy on N[Z]ers would be grossly naive. They do it to their own people, and all their other allies. Why should they spy comprehensively on Europe and have high scruples about N[Z]?" ...The power of the system is awesome. Echelon, says... [the] author of a report on surveillance technology to the EU last year, intercepts "billions of messages per hour".

...N[Z] supplies intelligence collected at its top-secret electronic bases to overseas agencies, but it does not include information on its citizens, an official report has found. The Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security... [- a] retired... judge, appointed to monitor N[Z]'s spy agencies[-] was asked to investigate claims that the [GCSB]'s stations at Waihopai and Tangimoana operated at the direction of international partners.

...the peaceful, quiet Waihopai valley. It's a small farming community in the Marlborough foothills, not far from Blenheim... Farming is harder these days, but there are still compensations, like good neighbours and a beautiful environment. Until, that is, the government stepped in and made [one] neighbour an offer he couldn't refuse. To a struggling farmer in a depressed area a chance to sell part of the family farm at a good price is too good to be true. He sold off a substantial section. Now, the... neighbour is the Defence Department. The... view is security fences, operations buildings and huge 18m high satellite dishes. And there's not a thing [neighbours] can do about it. Any other developer would have to apply for permission to do something outside the District Scheme. People affected would at least be able to make objections and be heard... The people of Waihopai Valley were not consulted; they had no opportunity to submit objections or an alternative development proposal based on the needs and concerns of their community... Waihopai is a government satellite spying base and the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) is exempt from normal planning... Not only do Waihopai's closest neighbours have no say in its location, let alone whether it should exist at all, neither does anyone else. There is little information and no public debate... [The GCSB] is not in fact accountable to any of the N[Z] public except through the P[M], its nominal head... The GCSB is so secret that there is no annual report, budget or other means of accountability to the tax-paying public... Despite the Official Information Act, a great deal of information remains secret and restricted. The GCSB appears to be unaccountable to the public, to Parliament, even to Cabinet. Only the P[M] and the Minister of Defence are given information on the GCSB. They can refuse to give answers and the system allows such abuses. Clearly there is every chance that some material will be classified "For GCSB Eyes Only" and even the PM will miss out on it... Waihopai is just one example of current attitudes to defence and security... The anti-nuclear policy of 1984 has led to the breakdown of the ANZUS military agreement. N[Z] is supposedly now pursuing a more self-reliant defence policy. Yet with Waihopai, N[Z] will be gathering information of use only to a military alliance and giving that information to America, either directly or via the A[US]ns. Two steps forward, one step back. ANZUS has merely been replaced with alternative secret defence arrangements linking USA, UK, A[US], Canada and N[Z] – an international intelligence and military network. The controversial purchase of frigates is also a part of these alternative agreements... The process of law in N[Z] is supposed to uphold democracy and individual rights. Yet the experience of... [Waihopai] shows the government can ride over those rights if it so chooses... True democracy depends on access to information, so people can make responsible decisions. When a few people possess information and use it to maintain control and power over others, this is not democracy... [Furthermore,] Waihopai will be in breach of the International Telecommunications Convention, which N[Z] signed in 1982. - 1989

Beware: Big Brother is watching... Fuelling fears of paranoid people, a secret squirrel expert yesterday shattered any illusions that we lead private lives... [T]hat old black marker... was no longer the cover-up tool it used to be – computer equipment... [can] expose secrets once blacked-out by pen... That digital cellphone conversation you think cannot be intercepted? Bad news. "The code's been cracked." ...[in addition, carrying] a cellphone was a simple way of ensuring that you could be tracked. Every few minutes, the phone sends out a pulse indicating where it is. "Those movements are being recorded and a history of those movements can be made available to whoever is willing to pay as well as law enforcement [agencies]." ...Okay, but we can rely on the Internet for private chit-chat, can't we? Wrong. "It's like sending a postcard." ...Be careful with nasty notes, written and then deleted from a computer. They can easily be obtained in back-up systems... Oh well, how about just slipping into a darkroom, away from cameras we see everywhere for a clandestine conversation? Don't count on not being seen. "The cameras come as big as my thumbnail." And combined with the latest technology, infrared lighting can expose all... Then there are the interception devices which can pick up images from a video display unit up to 1000m away. "Moreover, it is virtually impossible to detect certain bugging devices." Espionage of this type was usually motivated by commercial reasons, he said. But no one was safe. "Anyone can be bugged. It does happen here in N[Z]." Incidentally, N[Z]... is paying its dues to Washington by giving the top-secret Waihopai spy station in Marlborough sweeping new powers and technology to tap into the international phone calls which foreigners make across the Pacific. Waihopai's satellite intelligence-gathering capacity is to be doubled in a move understood to be a pay-off to the U[S] for the continuing warming of relations in the wake of the break-through visit to Washington in March 1995 by the P[M]... A special exemption to the Crimes Act will allow Waihopai to intercept the "private oral communications" of a foreign state, foreign organisation or foreign person which might yield foreign intelligence... [T]he exemption to the Crimes Act was a "startling" development because until now Waihopai had legally been able to intercept only non-voice communications such as faxes, e-mail and telex messages. The law change effectively meant any call between a N[Z]er and a foreigner could be intercepted... [The PM] said the new powers would be strictly confined to foreign communications that contained or might "reasonably be expected to contain" foreign intelligence. The GCSB was still forbidden from "intentionally" intercepting N[Z]ers' voice communications. [The PM] refused to supply a detailed explanation for the new powers, except to say the need for intelligence that supported the Government's foreign, defence and trade policies had, if anything, increased in recent years... [T]he new antenna would enable N[Z] to monitor the two Intelsat satellites that carry the bulk of communications across the Pacific. Under previous intelligence-sharing arrangements, N[Z] had been responsible for monitoring one of these satellites. Waihopai would now monitor both satellites, freeing-up an A[US]n sister station for other tasks. Opposition parties have been briefed on the Waihopai expansion, but the Alliance was the only one to criticise the doubling of the size of a spy base designed to serve "foreign spymasters."

...Greens want to stand under their own colours... The Green Party is on the verge of creating a separate identity for itself outside the Alliance – a challenge that will prove a far greater test of the five-party grouping than the crisis posed by [one of their list MPs going independent]... The Green Party proposes to... form a coalition between itself and the grouping. Its three MPs would be known as Green MPs, not Alliance MPs. The co-leader of the Greens... yesterday confirmed that this was his party's preferred position... Since the Greens helped to form the Alliance in 1991 "that organisation has evolved to a point where we aren't happy with the current structure." ...Also admitting to troubles is the leader of the tiny Liberal Party... who yesterday said he had problems with the Alliance's structure and hierarchy. "We face a crossroads and it will take all our patience and goodwill to get through this successfully," he said. The Greens' position was crucial to his own future... "The Greens are pivotal for the outcome for the Alliance. If the Greens can be accommodated, we can all be accommodated. If they can't we are facing a new ball game."

...Delegates to a Greens special conference in Wellington yesterday voted 59-19... to leave the five-party Alliance and field their own candidates next election. They rejected the offer by the other parties to stay with a guarantee of 30[%] of a joint list... However, the three Green MPs will remain members of the Alliance caucus, sharing resources, staff and accommodation, until Parliament rises just before the next election... [Furthermore, the] Greens list MP... has given notice that she intends to stay with the Alliance at the next election... The huge gamble the Greens have taken... may see the party lose all its parliamentary representation next election instead of improving... [T]he party is unlikely to win an electorate seat without persuading Labour and the Alliance to stand aside... The Labour leader... has not been enthusiastic for... the Greens... [and] noted the party's previous success coincided with a higher profile for green issues: "It's yet to be seen whether the Greens can recreate that kind of magic. It may be that the Alliance is the party which proves to be the stayer rather than the Greens." - 1997

The accepted remedy for many of our social problems is “economic growth”. Greens do not accept this remedy, and we point out that this priority has played a large part in bringing us to the brink of disaster. We believe that we urgently need a new approach, one based on “being a part of” rather than dominating the planet; on intelligent co-operation, not ruthless competition... Greens would encourage co-operation, rather than competition, for everyone’s benefit... Greens believe that socially and environmentally responsible development are more important than short-term monetary profit... Sharing society’s wealth is important too... Greens believe every person is entitled to an individual Social Dividend... We feel it is essential that ordinary people take responsibility for changing the world... It is not enough for individuals to be hard-working and responsible – understanding and involvement in community affairs are necessary too... Urban decay is a symptom, not a cause, of conflicts that have been happening for centuries. Physical decay – of the beaches, of the streets – is the result of society in conflict with its own environment... [S]ocial decay – gangs and glue-sniffers on the one hand, the bored and wasteful wealthy on the other – is the symptom of conflict within communities. As people we seem incapable of caring for anyone other than our immediate families, sometimes not even then. We plan our towns for commercial convenience and industrial growth, not human needs and a multicultural mix. Do we really want to live this way? ...The aspirations of huge numbers of ordinary N[Z]ers should not be seen as a “wish-list”, but as the basis for planning social and economic policy... The Monetarist theory is that profit will pay for all other needs – Green thinking is that that is not necessarily so, that other needs have to be a part of the plan from the beginning... Economics should be taught as a tool for society to use to allocate its resources fairly – not a rigid system that controls society as in: “Economics dictates...” ...Most people need to feel useful and be rewarded. Unemployment breeds crime; crime brings fear. When people are unwanted in the commercial process, they feel failures. They turn on those who seem to have what they want, they turn on each other. They become less human – as do those who succeed in the system. Already, the rich are building their own ghettos, guarded by the up-market versions of the gangs’ barbed-wire and dogs. While rural areas are losing their services and their valuable people, urban areas are being stretched beyond their capacity to cope with the influx. Both suffer. Our whole society has become a battleground for survival, for the best-paid jobs, for the biggest slice of the pie. In all struggles, there are winners and losers – the present political attitude which encourages competition contributes to the problem. It’s the micro version of the cold war. - NZ Green Party, 1989

Economic activity is a root cause of ecological crisis. To solve our environmental problems we must also transform our economy. A green model would be based not on the nightmare of continual material expansion and waste but on sustainability, cooperation, justice and respect for nature. Although change is never easy and often uncomfortable, the green route is the only one that would lead to both ecological and economic sanity... The thing that makes our vision quite revolutionary is that we see economics as a tool for human progress, and the restoration of harmony with nature, and not as an end in itself... Only the Greens have looked at the economic roots of our ecological problem and found ways of achieving ecological sustainability without damaging economic stability... The Greens’ greatest challenge will be to deliver prosperity without pollution, to create an economy that provides material security as well as fulfilling ecological aims. - A Green Manifesto for the 1990s

...the most radical [Green aim] seeks nothing less than a non-violent revolution to overthrow our whole polluting, plundering and materialistic industrial society and, in its place, to create a new economic and social order which will allow human beings to live in harmony with the planet. In those terms, the Green Movement lays claim to being the most radical and important political and cultural force since the birth of socialism... - Green Political Thought

The restructuring of the economy along the lines proposed by the Greens will offer tremendous opportunities for human creativity, entrepreneurship, and initiative. There will be plenty of growth in the new economy, but all growth will be qualified; it will proceed in the direction of small-scale, community-based enterprises and of new forms of technology that incorporate ecological principles and are consistent with a new system of values. - Green Politics: The Global Promise

[Due to unresolved conflict between the conservative (or Light Green) faction and the radical (or Dark Green) faction, t]he Greens’ vision of how we shall live in an ecological, nonexploitative society is no better developed than their economic vision for the future... The party lacks a clearly articulated model of an ecological economy, at both the micro- and macro-level, and for the most part lacks even comprehensive theoretical visions...

Contrary to the conventional wisdom, Greens believe that competitive and cooperative inclinations are both natural. Diversity, though it seems on the surface to drive nature towards competition, may also be a powerful force working for unity. And the drive for unity, especially if it levels diversity into uniformity and sameness, may well lead to bitter competition and conflict. To the Greens, conflict is a natural part of life. They do not anticipate some future glorious time in which there will be some magical “graduation of humanity” to a perfectly harmonious existence. - The Greens and the Politics of Transformation

[Some people] were deeply concerned that members of the party who had ‘opted out of the formal economy’ were gaining strength. An alleged group of anarchist/decentralists who ‘simply do not accept the mainstream party-political objectives of the organization of which they are members and exercise undue influence at conference because our customs allow them to do so despite their patent lack of a constituency’ were also singled out. The party was accused of collective incompetence and weaknesses that would prevent it from becoming an important national political force. Another area of concern was that of image and leadership... Again, as far as romanticism is concerned, Green politics has little time for individualism or for geniuses, and one suspects (although this will be disputed by members of the movement) that the nonconformity so beloved of romantics would be a pretty scarce commodity in Green communities... In 1985... the most famous ‘fundamentalist’ in *die Grunen*, left the party. He argued that by then the party had ‘no basic ecological position’ because ‘what people are trying to do... is to save a party – no matter what kind of party, and no matter for what purpose. The main thing is for it to get re-elected to parliament in 1987’... [He] is here articulating the experience of a fundamentalist Green who has seen the party colonized by the demands of the very system that it originally sought to overcome. His conclusion ran as follows: At last I have understood that a party is a counterproductive tool, that the given political space is a trap into which life energy disappears, indeed, where it is rededicated to the spiral of death. This is not a general but a quite concrete type of despair. It is directed not at the original project which is today called ‘fundamental’, but at the party. I’ve finished with it now... And so we find ourselves back at square one: the radical Green demand to call today’s industrial order into question. But how to do it? ...The first point to note about ecologism and social change is that very little serious thinking has been done about it... ‘one reads very little about how to get there from here’... and it is noticeable how many conversations about Green politics very soon dry up when the issue of change is broached. Several reasons for the lack of material might be advanced. In the first place there is the belief that the changes required are so far-reaching that nothing short of an environmental catastrophe could produce the political will needed to bring them about: ‘it is quite “unrealistic” to believe that we shall choose simplicity and frugality except under ecological duress’... Second, amongst more optimistic observers there has been a tendency... to believe that the delivery of the message of impending catastrophe would be enough to generate social change. After all, how could a humanity aware of the threat to its existence fail to act in its own best interests? This certainly seems to have been the line taken in the original *Limits to Growth* report: ‘We believe that an unexpectedly

large number of men and women of all ages and conditions will readily respond to the challenge and will be eager to discuss not *if* but *how* we can create this new future'... Contrary to its authors' expectations, however, the publication of their report has not of itself produced the changes for which they argue.

For those of us who prefer the Government's role in the economy to be strictly limited, it is pleasant to come across a book that persuasively argues that the Government's role should be even more strictly limited than one had previously thought. This happened to me recently with a cracking new book... entitled *The Economic Laws of Scientific Research*. Though a scientist himself, [the author] has become something of a hate figure among publicly funded scientists – and one can see why. Not only does he suggest that the Government has no role in subsidising technological development (a conclusion not difficult to come to), he also argues that it has no role funding pure science either. To support his case he employs a commendable economic literacy and a good grasp of history. Everyone agrees that new technology creates wealth. But [the author] argues that subsidising science in the hope of stimulating economic growth puts the cart entirely before the horse. It is private property, trade and exchange – in a word, markets – which drive technological progress, science and economic growth, not the other way around. The human race had technology before science. Stone Age man was taming fire and shaping tools long before there was any "science" in today's sense. But technological progress was still painfully slow for very long stretches of time in the ancient world. Why? Because most of the great ancient civilisations were essentially totalitarian states in which economic freedom was minimal or non-existent. Those islands of comparative economic freedom – such as the early Greek city states, and the seafaring Phoenicians (who gave Europe its alphabetic script) – made technological advances quite out of proportion to their size. Have you ever wondered why the ancient Romans invented so little, despite long being head honchos of a large empire? It is probably because Rome did not really have a market culture, but a plunder culture based on slavery. By contrast, the so-called "barbarians" who eventually overran that empire, though doubtless barbarous in their table manners, actually had more fluid societies than the ossified late Roman Empire. Not surprisingly, the barbarians gave Europe many valuable inventions, from soap to the saddle. The same story of economic freedom driving new technological advances is repeated all through history. The end of feudalism was hastened by a commercial revolution in the late Middle Ages, in which the independent city states of northern Italy developed banking, insurance, double-entry book-keeping – and the crucial idea of the patent. The agricultural revolution of the 17th and 18th centuries brought big increases in agricultural productivity through innovations such as different crop rotation systems. It is no coincidence that this revolution happened in England and Holland – the two countries where the commercial revolution had gone the furthest. The late 18th century saw the beginning of the industrial revolution, a development whose impact on living standards was to be utterly spectacular by the standards of all previous human history. Tellingly, this revolution did not happen in France, although the French Government was heavily subsidising science. True to its tradition, France was then a high-tax, chronically regulated economy that would put off any entrepreneur. The industrial revolution happened in England at a time when the British Government was spending scarcely a penny on "helping" science and technology. England offered something vastly more important: the rule of law, low taxes and a largely free-market economy. [The author] demolishes the myth that the early industrial revolution involved recent scientific developments being given practical application in the form of new technology. There had certainly been important advances in pure science. But these had very little to do with the new technology. The pioneers of the industrial revolution were largely ignorant of science. They were simply taking advantage of their economic freedom to experiment, and mostly thought up new ways to improve old technology. For instance, the steam engine – that very symbol of the industrial revolution – owed nothing whatsoever to pure science; the succession of men who developed what became known as Stephenson's "Rocket" were largely semi-literate. - 1995

How far can a government be privatised? To the point where every politician is sponsored by a business? (Some people would say most politicians are already sponsored by businesses!) Would *those of us who prefer the Government's role in the economy to be strictly limited* prefer there to be no government at all? If privatisation is allowed to continue to a logical conclusion, *no government* might be the end result (i.e., politicians may eventually make themselves redundant by transferring all the decision-making power to business executives – guided by existing legislation or 'having no laws or no enforcement of them'). Would private enterprise do a better job of managing a country than people selected by public election?

Responsible N[Z]ers are entitled to wonder about their country's future... That populism is no substitute for principled leadership is demonstrated in our political system in many ways... Electorate disillusion with political institutions and the people who run them is universal in the parliamentary democracies. Influence peddling by members at Westminster and murky circumstances surrounding corporate contributions to their parties feed cynicism in Britain. France is seeing a round of indictments of established figures on major corruption charges and Italy witnesses a revolt by law enforcement agencies against institutionalised corruption. In Tokyo and Washington the political establishments and their financially free-wheeling ways are under critical scrutiny as never before... Corruption of politicians is not unknown in A[US. Political corruption]... is not a great concern in N[Z], although we can only speculate as to why no state secret is half as well kept as all information about donations made to political parties by business... A curious common element in all this is that the institutions themselves seem to be immune to the evolutionary forces continually at work in the societies they preside over. The only change of consequence in several centuries has been that disinterested, gratuitous public service in government has become a thing of the past. Professional politicians, the huge cash flows generated by modern economies to satisfy the taxes those politicians levy, and the economic power they wield by the exercise or withholding of influence and patronage, make up an unfortunate combination... N[Z] taxpayers provide, and the state spends, an amount which will soon reach \$10,000 annually for each man, woman and child in the country. Utopia? By no means. Considering the scale and range of problems our society faces it is clear that we get very poor value for our money from our political system and the people in it... The... speechwriters' efforts to persuade us that their[political] masters have overnight become inspired social reformers and champions of fiscal responsibility are silly. Voters will pay attention when they see proof. - 1997

Poor economic management is inexcusable; letting politicians persist with it is national flagellation.

NZ's voter turnout has remained above 80% since 1960 (with the exception of 1975 – when it was about 70%), which suggests that NZers are enthusiastic supporters of their political system. This could be related to the fact that the ratio of MPs to voters is relatively low by international standards. The existing 'formula, which works from the requirement that the South Island must have 16 seats, requires that North Island electorates have between 51,006 and 56,374 voters.' The formula also allocates Maori seats according to the number of Maori electors who opt to be on a separate Maori roll.

The Government will pay up to \$10.50 for each Maori voter who registers on the electoral roll. But its new campaign has been denounced by the Opposition as an "electoral bounty." The Electoral Office has contacted several Maori trusts and groups to conduct a "face-to-face" campaign encouraging Maori to enrol or re-enrol. The groups will get between \$5 and \$10.50 for each voter enrolled. The... incentive is part of a \$2.4 million enrolment campaign which starts on April 2 and runs for four months. Just over \$450,000 of the budget will pay for the national campaign to encourage Maori enrolments... Under the Maori Electoral Option, Maori can register on either the Maori roll or the general roll.

During 1997 '53.6% of the 336,997 Maori electors' opted to be on the Maori roll (thereby raising their allocated number of representatives from 5 to 6 – or one MP for every 30,000 voters).

[THE] NATIVE REPRESENTATION ACT (1867)... created four Maori parliamentary seats... bringing the Maori nation into the political system of the self-governing colony. The... Act was originally intended to be temporary. When Maori landholdings were converted from tribal to individual ownership, the Maoris were to have joined the general electoral rolls. Because of the difficulty of dividing the Maori holdings, however, the act was made permanent in 1876. According to its terms, the Maoris received universal male suffrage 12 years before it was granted to the European[s]...

[Prior to universal male suffrage, a European] over the age of 21 was entitled to vote in any electorate in which he owned a minimal amount of property. This compounded the influence of the wealthy property owners who could be on a number of electoral rolls.

Unlike in AUS, where it is 'compulsory to vote', 'it's not illegal to not vote in NZ, although it's an offence not to be on the electoral roll – you can be fined.'

More than 200,000 voters are not enrolled for the October 12 election. Only 68[%] of voters aged between 18 and 29 have registered. This compares with 80[%] of middle-aged voters and 94[%] of those over 60... The deputy chief electoral officer... said last night that... MMP was expected to produce a heavy voter turnout... In 1984, 93% of those registered voted... The last election in 1993 saw an 85% turnout...

The votes counted – excluding special votes – show a turnout of 1,836,030 people, 76.36[%] of those enrolled... In the general seats the highest turnout – 82.79[%] – was in Dunedin South. The lowest was in Manurewa at 66.37[%]. In the Maori seats the lowest turnout was the 34.94[%] in Te Tai Tonga, but the uncounted votes will add to that... Some 220,057 special votes, about 13,000 overseas votes and 21,739 Maori votes have still to be counted... and... these would add 10 or 11[%]... Based on past trends, about 20[%] of the special votes could be invalid... An electoral staff of 65 returning officers and 15,640 staff supervised the election in 7584 booths... Politicians, television commentators and voters complained on election night about having to wait well into the early hours of Sunday morning for results... Votes could be counted electronically in future to avoid the long delays... The chief returning officer... said supermarket-style scanners could be used to read votes from bar codes on ballot papers... [T]here had been no chance to test the technology for this election [because] the risk of a computer crash holding up the whole result was too great.

...[Party leaders are pressing for a quicker count of votes in Indonesia's election, but reports of irregularities have been coming in faster than results. As of last night, barely 3% of the votes had been counted, causing party leaders and angry voters to bombard the General Election Commission with complaints. Indonesia spent over \$US80 million installing a high-tech computer system to record and release results as they came in from polling booths. But rather than shedding light on the counting process, the new system has created more confusion. The commission's system of double and triple checking the tallies have slowed the process down considerably. An inadequate system of communications at the subdistrict level has also created a bottleneck for incoming results. Political analysts warned that further delays would raise public suspicion on the validity of the results. For what it was worth, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggles last night was leading the poll with 40%, the National Awakening Party had 23% and Golkar 18%.']

...The Japanese P[M]... began courting coalition partners yesterday after voters refused to give his Liberal Democratic Party a clear mandate in general elections... Like N[Z], it was the first under an MMP-style election, in which the Diet has 300 seats decided under... first-past-the-post... and 200 under proportional representation... The election... had offered Japan the chance to end the lethargy caused by three years of unwieldy coalition wrangling. But the hopes fizzled out into an inconclusive result likely to lead to more years of politics as usual and hamper efforts to reform the economy and bureaucracy... In the end, Japan's 98 million voters decided to... stay away from the polls in record numbers, which led to a 59[%] voter turnout, the lowest since... [WW2, and below the previous] record low of 67[%] for a lower-house vote, set at the last election in 1993... Only 45[%] of the electorate voted in last year's election for the less powerful upper house of Parliament...

Our recent election was astonishingly tame compared to the one culminating today in Thailand. Much of the \$1 billion-plus spent by candidates, says the Rajapak Research Institute, went on bribes – with the going rate for a vote being nearly \$12. Seventeen campaign workers have been attacked by gunmen, believed to have been hired by rival parties, and seven have died.

...[it used to be that a Mexican candidate could draw a crowd by serving sandwiches and soda pop. As the electorate becomes more sophisticated – and races become more competitive – the price of wooing voters is rising. So in the buildup to Monday's election, candidates have given away televisions, tool sets and washing machines, or delighted crowds with pop concerts, circuses and strippers. All this in a nationwide election many observers say is Mexico's cleanest. Some gift-giving appears to be legal, such as when candidates act on their own initiative and with their own money. Other practices are more dubious, such as when Government officials hand out gifts bought with taxpayers' money. Most of the accusations have been lodged against the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, which has been known for vote-buying throughout its 71 years in power. "It seems there's a calculation of the votes needed to make a difference, and a decision they can be gotten more easily by paying for them than by convincing people," said the director of the watchdog group Alianza Civica. "Unfortunately, there's a sector of the population that defines its votes by the question: What are they giving me?" Meanwhile, this month's b]otched local elections... have thrown Serbia into chaos... Some 40,000 people protested... against[the Serbian] President... on the streets of Belgrade yesterday for the ninth day running... A march in Belgrade drew 100,000 protesters on Saturday and leaders of the Zajedno (Together) coalition of opposition parties planned today to take control of seven cities where they claim to have beaten the ruling socialists in elections this month... [The] socialists admitted being defeated by Zajedno but balked at surrendering power and organised new ballots which secured their return to power in a blatant display of vote-rigging... Saturday's demonstration included parents who brought their children in to witness a disciplined show of opposition. One mother said... "...I want [my children] to learn what democracy is... I want them to remember this." Marchers... pelted [the]state-controlled Serbian television[centre] with fruit, paint... eggs and smoke bombs but stewards ensured there was no violence... [T]he protesters also accused the U[S] and other Western powers of dealing with the devil by supporting [the President] in exchange for his help in keeping the peace in Bosnia. - 1996

A government can limit freedom of expression in very subtle ways. But the beating... a small, lean woman in her early 30s... took from Serbian police on the evening of Dec. 27 wasn't subtle in the least... [She] suffered kidney damage, severe contusions on her face and legs, a cracked rib and a concussion... It happened in downtown Belgrade at the end of another day of massive demonstrations against Serbia's ex-communist ruling party. As [the woman] and a few dozen other protesters lingered on their way home, riot cops fell on them with rifle butts and boots, and with little warning... The government's message was clear enough: Think twice before you raise your voice in protest, and don't forget that when the day's demonstrations are done and the international TV crews turn off their cameras, you still have to walk home in the dark... As it turned out... [the woman was a] user of one of Serbia's small but growing number of commercial Internet services, [which meant] she had access to a global medium far more personal – and potentially more powerful – than television. Within hours of the assault, a local friend of hers sent E-mail to a few acquaintances outside the country describing [the woman's] condition and warning of the government's increasing violence. The message spread; recipients forwarded it to colleagues, mailing lists, electronic newsletters, Webzines. By the second day following the beating, a steady stream of

supportive E-mail was [mak]ing its way from strangers in the U.S., Canada, Germany, A[US]... and elsewhere to the home computer of a grateful [assault victim]. Almost from the moment Serbian demonstrators... took to the streets in late November, the technology of cyberspace has been helping keep the protest alive... The... freedom... movement itself has already been nick-named the Internet Revolution.

...[the Serbian President] has come under strong pressure from the U[S] and other countries who have warned he cannot expect financial aid to resume unless he respects democracy[. By the way, 'one of the world's smallest republics, San Marino, is a 62-square-kilometre dot of rocky terrain surrounded on all sides by Italy. San Marino is so rich and has so many citizens living abroad that it pays 75% of the fare of these citizens to return home to vote in general elections. Half heed the call']...

Some of the world's poorest and most chaotic countries, such as Albania and Angola, have voting rates that outshine many developed democracies, according to a world-wide survey. The Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance compiled figures from more than 1400 parliamentary and presidential elections in 171 countries since 1945... The study's mass of statistics does not provide clear indicators of what accounts for high turnout, but does challenge some conventional wisdom about voting patterns, such as the belief that high literacy equates with high election participation... It shows Malta, the Seychelles, Albania and Uruguay with turnouts of more than 90[%] in the 1990s. Angola was fifth-highest with 88.3[%]. NZ ranks almost level with the ravaged African republic – our turnout last year was 88.28[%]... At the bottom of the list were Guatemala, Egypt, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Djibouti and Mali – all with turnouts of less than 30[%]. The US ranked 139th, at 44.1[%]. - 1997

[In 1980 the 40th US President] was elected... with only 28[%] of the eligible vote; hopelessness and fearful apathy carried the majority.

The number of 'eligible voters in the US during 1992 was 189,524,000, while the number who actually voted was 104,425,000 (or 55.1%). The number of votes cast for the winner was 43,682,000', which meant he was only supported by 23% of those eligible! How low would support have to go before it is decided that no one has a mandate to become President? Although this is unlikely to ever occur, it is also unlikely to cause a problem.

...if no nominee gets a majority of the electoral votes... the House of Representatives... chooses a President from among the... candidates... Each state delegation casts one vote. A majority of the members of each delegation determines how the state's single vote will be cast. If members of a delegation are evenly divided, that state's vote is not counted. A majority of all the states... is needed for election. The five non-voting delegates from the House of American Samoa, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands take no part in this process.

Voter apathy in the US is more prominent when it comes to electing members to the House of Representatives. Only '36% of the eligible vote supported the 1994 election. Since 1932 the peak turnout for congressional elections is 58.5% in 1960 and the lowest turnout is 32.5% in 1942' (but, because this was during a war, the official *lowest turnout* should go to the 33.1% for 1990).

The nation has endured stretches of low turnout in the past. America's first five Presidents, from George Washington to James Monroe, won elections in which only 4 to 6 percent to the eligible electorate participated. Voting was a difficult enterprise in the early days of the republic: it was hard to get information about candidates or find out where polling places were... Turnout shot up to 57[%] in 1828 and reached 80[%] by 1840. For the remainder of the nineteenth century, the rates only once fell below 70[%] (69.4... in 1852) and sometimes exceeded 80[%]... For the first half of the twentieth century, turnout in presidential campaigns ranged between 50 and 60[%]. In the 1950s, it began trending back upward, as America became better educated – a factor that has always correlated with higher turnouts. The rate reached its modern peak of 63.6[%] in 1960. Since then, voter turnout has declined by more than a fifth, to 1988's 50.16[%]... the lowest in sixty-four years... Among the wealthiest fifth of the population, the turnout rate has ranged between 75 and 80[%] in the last three presidential elections[(1980, '84 and '88)]; among the poorest fifth, the rate has hovered around 40[%]... - See how they run

"My back is spineless, my belly is yell[ow] – I am the American non-voter." "...don't you think..." "Ah, Lisa, the whole reason we have elected officials is so we don't have to think all the time, just like that rain-forest scare a few years back. Our officials saw there was a problem and they fixed it, didn't they?" "No, dad, I don't think..." "There's that word again!"

"What I think this country needs is..." "Don't tell us – have your say on election day."

Saint, sinner or lotto winner, your vote is worth exactly the same as the next person... unless you don't use it, then it's worth nothing.

A study into N[Z]ers' values has found confidence in politicians is at an all-time low and many people might not bother voting [next election (when, due to population and electoral roll figures, there will be '7 Maori MPs and one more North Island MP (but, to counteract those increases, the number of list MPs will decrease by 2)']. Fifteen years ago half of us were bursting with confidence in our Government, but that figure has dropped to 16[%]. Even fewer (6[%]) have confidence in political parties, and hardly anyone thinks people have control over what politicians do... The... study... said the events of the past decade had done nothing to increase people's faith in government representation... [A] co-author... of... the... study... said... "The... dissatisfaction... levels[which include]... disillusion... with MMP, ...are so high that this has to be seen as... rather disturbing... It is hard to avoid the suspicion that it is linked to the changes that N[Z] has been through, the often speedy and forceful way they were brought about, and the often minimal regard for the social consequences." ...Anger was widespread at what people saw as the economics of greed, and poorer voters especially were annoyed at exorbitant salaries for chief executives. The authors said the satisfaction of voters was of profound importance as a reflection of the health of the democratic process. "Where [this is] faltering, the fibres of national life begin to unravel."

While some voters find it hard to understand why anyone would want to be a *non-voter* (or to at least have the freedom to choose to be a non-voter), some non-voters find it hard to understand why anyone would want to vote in the first place!

I've said it before and I'll say it again – democracy simply doesn't work.

Fair elections the key to democracy... Democracy, which literally means "the rule of the people" in Greek, is a system of government by the whole population, usually done through elected representatives... The idea of political representatives developed through the middle ages, when kings and queens would choose representatives from the nobility and clergy to advise them. In the 1600s, Englishman John Locke formed political theories on which much of the British Parliamentary system and some of the United States constitution is based. Locke claimed that, in their natural state, all people are equal and independent and the state should be governed by that natural law. The political theories of Frenchman Jean-Jacques Rousseau in the 1700s further developed ideas of democracy. Rousseau claimed the general will of the majority of rational people would lead to the

common good, a philosophy which influenced the American and French revolutions. Since the mid-20th century, many of the world's political systems have increasingly conformed to the ideals of Western democracy with multi-party systems and free and fair elections.

A democracy is a nation in which the citizens, either directly or indirectly through representatives, decide their own affairs... The earliest democracies were the Greek city-states, which were sufficiently small for each citizen, or freeman, to take a personal part in deliberations...

In the later fifth century, Athens was a democracy. We are told as much by the Athenians of the period, so we presumably cannot doubt it... The courts of democratic Athens appear to be one of her most democratic institutions. Membership of the juries, which might contain as many as 501 persons, was open to all... [T]hey constituted large assemblies of amateurs who were at once juries and judges, and received no professional advice, for the Greek court had no professional judges or lawyers. - MORAL VALUES AND POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR IN ANCIENT GREECE

After... the... 411 B.C... revolution... [t]he sovereign Assembly was to consist in future not of the whole people, but of a body of Five Thousand, those who were strongest physically and financially... The Five Thousand were to be divided into four parts, and each part was to act as Council for a year in turn. The Council would elect the higher magistrates from its own number. Thus the difficulties of administration which arose in the double system, where the Council's action was hampered by the Assembly, would be done away with; and the inclusion of the generals and magistrates in the Council was a necessary consequence. Under the democracy, the holders of office could influence the Assembly against the Council; under the new scheme there would be no room for such collisions. One fatal defect in this scheme was the size of the administrative body and if it had been tried we may be sure that it would not have worked. But it was never tried. It passed the Assembly as a scheme to come into force in the future; but in the meantime a further proposal of the Hundred Commissioners enacted that the state should be administered by a Council of Four Hundred, in which each of the ten tribes was to be represented by forty members. - HISTORY OF GREECE, J. B. Bury

Plato... considered democracy to be one of the worst forms of government because when it deteriorates, it degenerates into mob rule... Aristotle condemns [it] because in a democracy each person strives for his own self-interest.

It is inaccurate to use the word DEMOCRACY to describe the political system of NZ, for example – because while every eligible adult can stand for election (but generally just those who are VAIN – ‘1. conceited, especially about one's appearance. 2. having no value or significance, unsubstantial. 3. useless, followed by no good result’ – want to), only about one out of every 50,000 of them can actually win the election and just over half of those go on to participate in the political decision-making process (which could be called democratic if it wasn't for the fact that most MPs merely follow the instructions of their party leader when voting in parliament). This means that approximately 99.98% of NZ voters only get to participate in their political system for 1 day every three years (or roughly 1 day in a 1000). Therefore, for those 99.98%, NZ's political system is only 0.1% democratic (less if the fact that voters aren't directly participating in parliament is taken into account – although referendums and local body elections could offset that reduction). Yet, even if NZ's political system was 100% democratic, it would still be *one of the worst forms of government* – because democracy presumes that every voter is qualified to make important political decisions (when selecting representatives or acting as one). This presumption would be valid if all the adults were wise – but that hasn't been the case for any human society to date! If 49% of adults are wise, under MMP they could, at least, expect to have some influence. However, what if the adult population was 4% wise and 96% unwise? Would anyone in parliament care about the opinion of the 4%?

LYSIMACHUS: I am going to ask this favor of you, Socrates, as is the more necessary because the two counselors disagree, and someone is... still needed who will decide between them. Had they agreed, no arbiter would have been required. But as Laches has voted one way and Nicias another, I should like to hear with which of our two friends you agree. **SOCRATES:** What, Lysimachus, are you going to accept the opinion of the majority? **LYSIMACHUS:** Why, yes, Socrates. What else am I to do? **SOCRATES:** ...If you were deliberating about the gymnastic training of your son, would you follow the advice of the majority of us, or the opinion of the one who had been trained and exercised under a skillful master? **MELESIAS:** The latter, Socrates, as would surely be reasonable. **SOCRATES:** His one vote would be worth more than the vote of all us four? **MELESIAS:** Presumably. **SOCRATES:** And for this reason, as I imagine – because a good decision is based on knowledge and not on numbers? **MELESIAS:** To be sure. **SOCRATES:** Now too, then, must we not first of all ask whether there is any one of us who is an expert in that about which we are deliberating? If there is, let us take his advice, though he be one only, and not mind the rest; if there is not, let us seek further counsel. Is this a trifle which you and Lysimachus has at stake? Are you not risking the greatest of your possessions? For children are your riches, and upon their turning out well or ill depends the whole order of their father's house. **MELESIAS:** That is true. **SOCRATES:** Great care, then, is required in this matter? **MELESIAS:** Certainly. - LACHES

As Socrates expresses it in the *Protagoras* (319D), in professional matters the Athenian assembly demands expert advice, but in business connected with the policy of the State it is ready to listen to anyone... To Socrates the successful pursuit of any occupation demanded the mastery of a particular knowledge, skill, or technique; and this was above all true of the direction of the city's affairs, on which questions of peace and war, and the whole happiness of the citizens, necessarily depends. By his criterion Athenian democracy stood condemned. The political implications of this seemingly innocent procedure were not lost on the Athenians. The craftsmen, said Socrates, had their own expertise, but were at a loss when it came to an understanding of the large and important conceptions of ethics or politics. Athenian democracy, on the other hand, was based on just the opposite assumption, namely that all citizens alike, whatever their daily occupation, were equally well qualified to deal with questions of public policy, which was not a matter of any special skill.

Socrates implied that rulers should be men who know how to rule – not necessarily those who have been elected.

...my blessed Crito, why should we care so much for the opinion of the crowd? It is the best men, rather, who deserve consideration... But, Socrates, you surely see that we have to reckon with the opinion of the crowd as well. The present situation makes it clear that the crowd can work, not very little evils, but well-nigh the greatest, when anyone is slandered among them... Would that the crowd did, Crito, have the power to work the greatest of evils, for then they could also work the greatest good, and all would be well. As things are, they can do neither. They cannot make anyone either wise or foolish, and they do whatever they do by chance.

It should be safe to assume that modern voters fall into one of three categories: they either know nothing about the history of human politics; are intentionally trying to make history repeat; or simply choose to support what is available because they can't think of a better alternative.

Whoever it was who said “while democracy may not be the ideal form of representative government” they couldn't think of an alternative that looked better, was an analyst of real quality.

“...the system doesn’t work.” “I don’t know a better one, do you?”

...the system survived... only because there was no evident alternative and certainly none that was better.

...there [must] be better plans but none that I could ever understand...

...nothing is forever there’s got to be something better...

...I’m trying to think of a new society... don’t know what it will have but it won’t have...

I know you see the problems. The thing is, I just don’t believe you have the solutions.

“...this is America, and in America you’re never finished as long as you’ve got a brain in your head because all a man really needs is an idea.”
“Well, I’m licked.” “Me too!”

There has to be a better way. And in Britain, at least, intelligent and concerned minds are feeling after it.

...when people pride themselves on having a pedigree of [25] ancestors, which goes back to Hercules... he cannot understand their poverty of ideas.

The **he** in the above quote was Socrates – a man who could *see the problems* with democracy but, apparently, also shared in everyone’s *poverty of ideas*.

Socrates then, who started out, as he claimed, in all humility to learn from others, decided in the end that, whereas he and they alike knew nothing, he was to this extent superior, that he was aware of his own ignorance. And since no one will try to find out what... he thinks he knows... already, the task was to convince others too of their ignorance. Then together they could start the inquiry with some hope of success.

When a student of Socrates once said, “I cannot refute you, Socrates,” Socrates replied, “Say, rather, that you cannot refute the truth, for Socrates is easily refuted.”

Socrates himself repeatedly denied the role of teacher, and he never bores us with the wagging didactic finger.

In his discussions it was always the other person who put forward a thesis for examination, never Socrates himself. It was always the other person’s ideas that were being tested. Socrates’ famous irony consisted in... his constant refusal to claim to... have any settled philosophical views of his own. Considering the stringent requirements which... he imposed on true knowledge, this refusal seems only prudent... He seems actually to have claimed for himself the role of midwife to others’ ideas... Just as midwives are past the time of childbearing themselves, so Socrates, the intellectual midwife, could have no brainchildren of his own.

Socrates served as a hoplite, a heavy-armed soldier, in several Athenian campaigns, and as such had to provide his own equipment... Socrates had no special interest in political affairs, although, as his military record shows, he readily and honourably performed his civic duties. In 406 he was one of the presidents of the Boule, the executive council chosen by lot from among the mature male citizenry, when an illegal attempt was made to condemn en masse the generals who failed to pick up survivors after the naval victory at Arginusae. He alone insisted that the motion should not be put to the vote. During the short-lived oligarchy of the Thirty Tyrants (404-403[BC]) he again showed his strength of character by refusing to bring another citizen to them for execution as ordered. Despite all this he was himself condemned, under the restored democracy...

The irony of the trial and death of Socrates still challenges us. He had repeatedly risked his life on the battlefield... Yet he... [became] the gadfly of the state and... outraged citizens by asserting the superiority of individual reason over conventional wisdom... then... gave his life willingly in deference to the laws of his little community.

[Socrates] belonged to no party. But he held unswervingly to the idea of law in the historical form of the Athenian polis.

Socrates was a true patriot who felt that he could best prove his devotion to Athens by setting his face resolutely against the attractions of specious and popular, but deadly false theories of public and private morality.

Socrates may have appeared dangerous to Athenian democracy, but what he defended were the foundations of that democracy.

Although Socrates allegedly *defended... the foundations of... democracy* and *was aware of his own ignorance*, he apparently also knew of a superior form of government to democracy (r:p281, lns51-9) – which implies Socrates may have been wiser than Albert Einstein!

My political ideal is that of democracy. Let every man be respected as an individual and no man idolised... The thing that has brought discredit upon the prevailing form of democracy in Europe today is not to be laid to the door of the democratic idea as such, but to lack of stability on the part of the heads of governments and to the impersonal character of the electoral system. - Einstein

According to a previous statement *it takes many virtues to become wise*. This suggests that rather than being *wiser than Albert Einstein*, Socrates simply possessed one or more virtues that Einstein lacked (and, therefore, Einstein wasn’t completely wise). However, Socrates also *wasn’t completely wise* (r:p26, ln45) – because he apparently lacked at least one virtue that Einstein possessed!

War seems to me a mean, contemptible thing: I would rather be hacked in pieces than take part in such an abominable business. And yet so high, in spite of everything, is my opinion of the human race that I believe this bogey would have disappeared long ago, had the sound sense of the nations not been systematically corrupted by commercial and political interests acting through the schools and press. - Einstein

In 1939 [Einstein] wrote a letter to President Roosevelt, at the request of several prominent physicists, outlining the military potential of nuclear energy and the dangers of a Nazi lead in this field. His letter greatly influenced the decision to build an atomic bomb, though he took no part in the Manhattan Project. After the war he spoke out passionately against nuclear weapons and repression.

An old woman sits in your lap for a minute – it feels like an hour. A young woman sits in your lap for a hour – it feels like a minute. That's relativity. Einstein, at the end of W[W]II an American citizen, loved this new Jewish joke. It was one of the best explanations of his crucial theory he'd heard. But while his laughter rang out, the FBI were ineptly trying to crucify him as a communist, his famous $E=MC^2$ formula had just been used to kill thousands of Japanese... and the bright young things of the physics world were deriding him for not accepting the bizarre realities of Quantum theory. The archetypal scientist, Einstein admitted he was a failure as a father and husband. But he was hardly naive... Realistic enough to warn other pacifists to beg the Allied governments to take up arms against the Axis powers, he pulled every string to help relatives, friends and complete strangers escape the fascists... Speaking out against any oppression, he made enemies on all sides – fascist and democrat. As he wryly pointed out, fascism rules by coercion and lies – democracy by lies only... With a “distaste for violence and clubmanship”, he was against “nationalism, even in the guise of patriotism”.

The reason *Einstein refused the presidency of Israel*, despite championing *Zionism*, was more likely to have been due to a desire to continue working on his scientific theories than a lack of interest in politics and social issues.

IS IT ADVISABLE for one who is not an expert on economic and social issues to express views on the subject of socialism? I believe... that it is. Let us first consider the question from the point of view of scientific knowledge. It might appear that there are no essential methodical differences between astronomy and economics: scientists in both fields attempt to discover laws of general acceptability for a circumscribed group of phenomena in order to make the inter-connection of these phenomena as clearly understandable as possible. But in reality such methodological differences do exist... Science... cannot create ends and, even less, instil them in human beings; science, at most, can supply the means by which to attain certain ends... For these reasons, we should be on our guard not to overestimate science and scientific methods when it is a question of human problems... If we ask ourselves how the structure of society and the cultural attitude of man should be changed in order to make human life as satisfying as possible, we should constantly be conscious of the fact that there are certain conditions which we are unable to modify... Man is, at one and the same time, a solitary being and a social being. As a solitary being, he attempts to protect his own existence and that of those who are closest to him, to satisfy his personal desires, and to develop his innate abilities. As a social being, he seeks to gain the recognition and affection of his fellow human beings, to share in their pleasures, to comfort them in their sorrows, and to improve their conditions of life. Only the existence of these varied, frequently conflicting, strivings accounts for the special character of a man, and their specific combination determines the extent to which an individual can achieve an inner equilibrium and can contribute to the well-being of society... Man can find meaning in life, short and perilous as it is, only through devoting himself to society... The economic anarchy of capitalist society as it exists today is, in my opinion, the real source of [social problems]... It is only a slight exaggeration to say that mankind[now] constitutes... a planetary community of production and consumption... [which] is carried on for profit, not for use... We see before us a huge community of producers the members of which are unceasingly striving to deprive each other of the fruits of their collective labor – not by force, but on the whole in faithful compliance with legally established rules... Unlimited competition leads to a huge waste of labor, and... [the] profit motive, in conjunction with competition among capitalists, is responsible for an instability in the accumulation and utilization of capital which leads to increasingly severe depressions... [while] capital tends to become concentrated in few hands... The result... is an oligarchy of private capital the enormous power of which cannot be effectively checked even by a democratically organized political society. This is true since the members of legislative bodies are selected by political parties, largely financed or otherwise influenced by private capitalists who, for all practical purposes, separate the electorate from the legislature... Moreover, under existing conditions, private capitalists inevitably control, directly or indirectly, the main sources of information (press, radio, education). Thus it is extremely difficult, and indeed in most cases quite impossible, for the individual citizen to come to objective conclusions and to make intelligent use of his political rights... I am convinced there is only *one* way to eliminate these grave evils, namely through the establishment of a socialist economy... A planned economy, which adjusts production to the needs of the community, would distribute the work to be done among all those able to work and would guarantee a livelihood to every man, woman, and child... Nevertheless, it is necessary to remember that a planned economy is not yet socialism... The achievement of socialism requires the solution of some extremely difficult socio-political problems: how is it possible, in view of the far-reaching centralization of political and economic power, to prevent bureaucracy from becoming all-powerful and overweening? How can the rights of the individual be protected and therewith a democratic counter-weight to the power of bureaucracy be assured? - Einstein

If Socrates was a *midwife to others' ideas*, Einstein can be called a midwife to socialism – which, because socialism has yet to provide *the solution to some extremely difficult socio-economic problems*, might explain why he tends to ask questions rather than answer them!

We can imagine what life according to the [Iron Lady's] gospel of free enterprise, patriarchal respectability and authoritarian order would be like. We know how we would be expected to bring up our children, make them manage their pocket money; how women should live; who should have babies and under what circumstances; how teachers in our classrooms should dress and what lessons are to be read in the religious education hour – as well as what the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement should be. It is an 'alternative future'. It is a philosophy of life. The one thing nobody knows is what Labour conceives to be an 'alternative way of life'. It currently possesses no image of the future. It provides no picture of life under socialism. It has failed so far to construct an alternative 'philosophy' of socialism for modern times. In its profound empiricism, it has mistaken adaptation to the present as progress towards the future. - The Future of the Left

Marx, Engels and Lenin, who theoretically substantiated the principles on which the concept of socialism is founded, did not seek to give a detailed picture of the future society. And this is in general impossible to do. - Perestroika

At no time did [Marx] concern himself greatly with the practical problems of how the socialist society should be run; his interest was in the revolution itself.

...the political and economic theory of... Marx[i]s... that, as labour is basic to wealth, historical development, following scientific laws determined by dialectical materialism, must lead to the... overthrow of the capitalist class and the taking over of the means of production by the proletariat. Events would then progress towards the ideal of a classless society, but the initial transition could not be affected without violent revolution.

Both the failure to foster socially responsible technology management and the failure to achieve more equitable distribution of wealth grow directly out of a central weakness in the free-market system – its inability to place public needs above private gain. Socialist industrial states can apparently distribute wealth and regulate technological impact more successfully than states that are more dependent upon a free-market system, but socialist states pay for their gains by having to rely more heavily on central control, with its attendant risks of bureaucratic stultification and authoritarian inflexibility.

On this point we want to be perfectly clear: socialism has nothing to do with equalizing. Socialism cannot ensure conditions of life and consumption in accordance with the principle “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.” This will be under communism. Socialism has a different criterion for distributing social benefits: “From each according to his ability, to each according to his work.” ...Heroes of Socialist Labour... want... to earn more, which is entirely understandable... This desire is totally in a socialist spirit, so there should be no restrictions – whatever a person earns he should receive... Such is the only reasonable way for a further advance of European material civilization... At the same time, we should not allow a person to receive what he has not earned. - Last Soviet General Secretary; the author of *Perestroika* and recipient of the 1990 Nobel Prize for Peace

“To each according to his need” has been a frequent battlecry of socialists, but many of them would in fact settle for a society in which each would be paid in accordance with his contribution to the commonwealth, provided that society would first assure all citizens minimum levels of housing, clothing, and nourishment as well as free access to essential services such as education, health, transportation, and recreation. Socialists also proclaim the need for more equal political rights for all citizens, and for a levelling of status differences. They disagree, however, on whether difference of status ought to be eradicated entirely, or whether, in practice, some inequality in decision-making powers might not be permitted to persist in a socialist commonwealth.

In its earliest forms, socialism tended to be little more than a romantic vision held by a minority of social reformers, many of them well-to-do philanthropists.

In France... [the] term socialism... was applied to the writings of... the Saint-Simonians and... Francois-Marie-Charles Fourier (1772-1837), a lonely and neglected thinker who was more than a little mad... Possessed by an inordinately wide-ranging imagination, he argued that the regenerated world to come would be characterized not only by social but also by natural and even cosmological transformations. The ocean would be changed to lemonade, and wild animals would turn into anti-lions and anti-tigers serving mankind. With meticulous and obsessive care, Fourier set forth plans for his model communities, the *phalansteres*, the germ cells of the good society of the future. In these communities men would no longer be forced to perform uncongenial tasks but would work in tune with their temperaments and inclinations. They would cultivate cabbages in the morning and sing opera in the evening. Fourier’s was an antinomian vision in which human spontaneity made outside regulation unnecessary. Whereas Saint-Simon called for the rule of experts, Fourier was convinced that love and passion would bind men together in a harmonious and noncoercive order.

Socialism is an economic system, a political movement, and a social theory... The word... was first used in the early 1800’s. At that time, socialism meant opposition to the selfishness that some people thought was the root of any *capitalist*, or *free enterprise*, system... The... Industrial Revolution in western Europe caused severe social problems. For example, many factory owners made their employees work long hours with low pay and under unhealthy conditions. Socialists claimed that... free enterprise systems are inefficient and wasteful... [while] public ownership or control of resources would ensure fairer treatment for all members of society... [They also] believe that a country’s resources should be used according to an overall economic plan formulated by manufacturers, farmers, workers, and government officials working together. By such planning, socialists hope to adjust production to the needs of the people... During the early 1800’s... socialists were frequently called *utopians*. This term comes from the book *Utopia* (1516) by the English statesman Saint Thomas More. *Utopia* is an account of an ideal society that provides equality and justice for all its members. *Karl Marx*, a German economist and social philosopher, became the most influential socialist of the 1800’s... During the late 1800’s, several socialist political parties were formed in Europe and North America. In time, these parties became united in an international organization with a single set of beliefs inspired by the writings of Marx. Between 1890 and 1914, the socialist movement grew strong, and socialist parties nearly won control of the government in several countries. But beneath the seeming strength, deep divisions existed. The movement included moderates, radicals, and revolutionaries. In addition, some socialist leaders rejected the doctrines of Marx. The international organization even included groups or parties that were non-Marxist. For example, the Fabian Society, a socialist group in the United Kingdom, derived its beliefs from Christian ideas and long-established traditions for achieving reforms. After W[W]I began... the international socialist movement collapsed. Socialist leaders had to decide whether they were loyal to the movement or to their country, regardless of who governed it and how. Most socialist leaders decided to place patriotism above their socialist convictions. Following the Russian revolution... revolutionary socialists founded new parties, which they called Communist parties. Since then, democratic socialists and Communists have become bitter enemies... In addition, the countries in which Communist parties control the government are sometimes called *socialist*, but most socialists reject this use of the term... Members of Communist parties consider socialism as a stage in the development of Communist societies. During this stage, a Communist party is in power in a country, most private property has been eliminated, and the economy is run on the basis of a national production plan. However, the nation is not yet rich enough to give all citizens all the material benefits they need, and the government must *coerce*... people to work hard for little reward. In a latter stage, the nation will be wealthy enough to satisfy everyone’s economic wants. That stage of development is Communism. Communists claim that coercion by the government will disappear under Communism. Democratic socialists... believe that some government coercion is necessary because some people must be forced to be good citizens... Unlike Communists, democratic socialists believe in democratic processes and do not wish to get rid of all opposition parties... Today, socialists disagree on many important points. Some want a strong central government running the economy. Other socialists favour as much local control as possible. Still others believe that there should be no government in a socialist society. Some socialists argue that socialism can be achieved only through revolution and violence. Others believe that socialism must come gradually, within the framework of existing political institutions. Most countries today have socialist political parties. Many nations have socialist governments, and almost all countries have adopted some of the ideas and methods that have been part of socialist programmes... Most socialists today are more critical of the writings of Marx than were early socialists. As a result, socialism can no longer be described as a Marxist *ideology*... The idea of *collective ownership*... of property dates at least from the time of ancient Greece. In the 300’s B.C., the Greek philosopher Plato proposed that a ruling class own everything in common, putting the welfare of the state above all personal desires.

Greeks contributed more to art, architecture, drama and government than any people before or, in a comparable period, since... Greek philosophy and scientific thought... has permeated the entire fabric of Western civilization... The ancient Greeks called themselves Hellenes... In the 5th-3rd cent. B.C., federations of... Greek... cities were formed... The threat of the vast Persian empire... aroused many Greeks to a sense of common

danger... As a result, two great powers emerged: the land power of Sparta, centered in Peloponnesus, and the naval power of Athens and the Confederacy of Delos. Rivalry among these groups resulted in the Peloponnesian War... after which Sparta became dominant until... 338 B.C.[, when] Macedonia had become so strong that it was recognized as leader of all Greeks, and thereafter no city or state was independent for long. The Macedonians under Alexander and his successors conquered large parts of the “barbarian” world, spreading Greek culture... The Greek term *barbaroi* had originally no disparaging connotation, signifying only “non-Greek”... The end of Greek freedom came with the rise of Rome and incorporation of Greek communities, nominally liberated from Macedonian rule, into the all-encompassing Roman empire after 146 B.C... The... Roman contribution... [to the civilization of west] Europe and, therefore... the entire Western world... was that of collecting, assimilating, and passing on elements of earlier cultures... The Romans borrowed much from Greek culture but either patronized or enslaved its cities and people... Historically, Rome had its beginnings in a number of prehistoric villages, settled by Latins and Sabines... in the 1st millennium B.C., which gradually... dominated other Latin communities. Subsequently, the defence of a growing territory led to the organization of central Italy under Roman control by 290 B.C... In the next period, that of the Punic Wars, defence turned to aggression, and Rome acquired its first provinces outside Italy; Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica, and Spain were annexed before 200 B.C. Simultaneously, Rome began to intervene in Hellenistic affairs, initially as a result of Pyrrhus’ invasion of [southern] Italy in the 3rd cent. B.C., then provoked by Macedonian ambitions... Macedonia was defeated, 168 B.C... At the death of Attalus of Pergamum, 133 B.C., that kingdom, by legacy, became the Roman province of Asia. Thus, the *Roman empire* was formed... The resulting riches and prestige involved Rome in chronic internal strife... culminating after Caesar’s assassination, 44 B.C., in the civil war between... 42-29 B.C... The looting of Rome by Alaric... signaled the collapse of the empire...

Alaric... (c.370-410), king of the Visigoths... invaded first Greece (395-6) and then Italy (400-3), but was checked on each occasion by the Roman general Stilicho. He invaded Italy again in 408 and in 410 captured and sacked Rome... [The Visigoths,] the western branch of the Goths... a Germanic tribe... eventually established in Spain a kingdom that was overthrown by the Moors in 711-12.

Although Socrates thought that his peers were ignorant, they – or at least their immediate descendants – somehow managed to build an empire. However, as if to prove that this event was due more to chance than design, the ancient Greeks were unable to maintain their empire indefinitely. *The Romans borrowed much* from those ignorant people – including the inability to maintain an empire indefinitely! The Visigoths also managed to prove themselves equal to the ancient Greeks in this respect, as have many other communities since – including the Soviet Union (although the Soviets could claim to be superior because they managed to build and destroy an empire within the space of one century). Now the former Soviet republics are adopting the ways of the Western nations. Because the Western nations are, in many respects, simply modern versions of ancient Greece, it shouldn’t be hard to predict their future.

Man has gone through... cycles in history over and over.

...I’ve got the weirdest feeling that I’ve walked this path before... it all looks so familiar... but I can not quite be sure... still I’m coming back for more... I must be blind...

...don’t know what I’m doing but I know I’m gonna do it again...

...IT would be nice to think that we learn from our mistakes, that we progress, that we don’t give the impression of wandering in mindless and ever-decreasing circles, stumbling occasionally over the same hazards that impeded us earlier in the journey.

During its comparatively brief political history NZ has tried an economic system based on free enterprise, then one based on welfare, followed by free enterprise again. There is, however, a major difference – originally, NZ’s political structure was young but growing, whereas today it is old and shrinking.

Though the changes in the past 10 years or so have been touted as giving more choice to individuals in reality they have been about governments off-loading their responsibilities onto anyone handy. Regional health authorities have taken over health decisions, services provided by the Government have been either privatised or corporatised so responsibility for satisfactory service is off-loaded elsewhere and even something as inflammatory as the quality of petrol is left to the oil companies to monitor. Services to schools have been axed – and all this took place over a period when the tax take was doubled and user charges were introduced. Finally although monetary policy is fundamentally flawed, many politicians still cling to it because it allows them to pass the buck on an economic mess to the Reserve Bank. I wonder how politicians have the gall to pick up their pay packets.

...The nation’s chief inflation fighter, the Reserve Bank governor... need have no worries about his own personal money supply. For keeping watch over our economic destiny, [the governor]... earned between \$350,000 and... \$360,000 a year. That is nearly twice the P[M]... The Reserve Bank’s annual report, released yesterday, says... 21 other staff get... more than \$100,000 each. - 1996

The *Reserve Bank* was established in 1933 as a privately owned institution but three years later became a fully state-owned central bank with gradually expanding powers of control over the financial system... [Its] functions... are... to manage note and coin issue, public and local debt and foreign exchange reserves... to operate the banking functions of the government... and... its trading organisations... to advise the government on matters relating to monetary, banking, credit and overseas exchange policy... to give effect to the monetary policy of the government... to control by recommendation, or directive if necessary, and supervise the operations of trading banks and all other financial institutions.

The NZ Reserve Bank tends to stick to recommendations (perhaps *because it allows* [the bank] *to pass the buck on an economic mess to the rest of society?*), which generally follow the trends of economic forecasts, and are meant to assist businesses and individuals in making economic decisions.

The economy sits more in the Governor of the Reserve Bank’s office than it does in your head – but it sits in both places. While [the Governor] has his hands on some big levers... he... reacts to economic trends which are created by the decisions we all make every day – to save or spend, to trade-up the car, the fridge or the house, to start up a small business, to expand or contract an existing one, to take on new staff or to lay people off.

...WHILE several businesses were preparing plant closures and lay-offs, [NZ’s] Reserve Bank Governor... was last week... genially tolerating a further easing of monetary policy. Alas, few of the hundreds of people rudely bundled into unemployment are likely to find new jobs in a hurry... Companies are trimming costs and will cut them harder as their profit margins are narrowed by... rising local interest rates... Reserve Bank officials check their Monetary Conditions Index, to judge if it’s time to tighten, loosen or stay put, while the money markets decide the mixture of movements in bill rates and the exchange rate. If one comes down, the other must rise to offset the inflationary effects... Underlying inflation in the December quarter was 0.6[%], making... the... annual rate... 2.4% in the 1996 calendar year.

...The Reserve Bank is keeping monetary conditions way too tight and risks tipping the economy into recession [a] chief economist... said yesterday. Despite extra Government spending, tax cuts and easier monetary conditions, he does not expect the economy to grow by more than 1[%] this year and 2.5[%] in 1998. But even those growth rates would only occur if the Reserve Bank was persuaded to significantly ease monetary policy in the near future... He blames the bank's overly cautious stance on a preoccupation with restoring its credibility after breaching the then top of its inflation target range last year. But its current policy – which has the perverse effect of pushing short-term interest rates to “harmful” levels when the economy is in the trough of its cycle – was not credible either... Foreign investors had long concluded the bank's strategy was not sustainable, as the now strongly-inverted yield curve testified. The dogmatic application of the bank's 2:1 rule of thumb was inappropriate at this stage of the cycle... This ratio, enshrined in the Reserve Bank's monetary conditions index, says that a 2[%] fall (or rise) in the dollar is equivalent in its effect on inflation to a fall (or rise) of 1 percentage point in 90-day interest rates.

...MARKET reaction to news of the latest inflation statistics was another kick in the guts for exporters. It pushed up the exchange rate again... [The d]isappointing... inflation figures... signalled that [there wouldn't be] any relief for home mortgage-holders this year... The monetary markets had been poised to continue the sharp fall in wholesale interest rates that has taken place since October. Instead, rates for 90-day bills, a key source of funding for mortgages, increased slightly to 7.45[%]... The consumers price index rose by 0.7% in the... quarter... This was just 0.1% above the Reserve Bank's expectations.

...Inflation numbers out yesterday were bang in line with expectations and gave neither the Reserve Bank nor the markets any advantage in their current game of chicken. The consumer price index rose a bare 0.1[%] in the June quarter, pulling the annual rate down to 1.1[%], its lowest level for three years... The result disappointed those in the currency market who had looked for an even better outcome that might have excused a further easing in monetary conditions... [R]etail sales data for May, due tomorrow, may yet encourage the market to test the Reserve Bank's resolve by easing further... The most significant increase by a single item in the... CPI... was electricity, up 2.15[%] for the quarter. [Annual inflation is still way below 'NZ's maximum of 16.9% in the 1970s' but p]rices have risen 4.46[%] over the past year and 30.21[%] over the past five years.

...Any hopes of a fall in interest rates in the near future were effectively dashed yesterday when foreign exchange and money markets ignored a Reserve Bank warning that monetary conditions were too loose.

...The Reserve Bank yanked the financial market's leash yesterday with a warning that monetary conditions had loosened too far. Both the dollar and wholesale interest rates rose in response to the bank's statement, which caught the market unawares, coming as it did only 11 days before the bank is due to deliver its[next] monetary policy statement... [F]actors expected to reduce inflationary pressures are the prospect of cheaper petrol and ACC earner levies... On the other hand... wages growth is stronger than expected and... underlying inflation... was still a brisk 0.61[%]...

The Reserve Bank is to stop calculating its own measure of “underlying” inflation, by which its performance in conducting monetary policy is gauged. Instead, the new Policy Targets Agreement signed yesterday by the bank's governor... and the Treasurer... redefines the bank's inflation target in terms of the consumers price index excluding credit services (CPIX), which is compiled by Statistics N[Z]. Under the previous agreement, the bank was given the target of keeping the [CPI] between 0 and 3[%], but was permitted to exclude interest rates, one-off external shocks (for example, oil prices) and significant government charges. In practice, the difference between the headline inflation rate measured by the CPI and the underlying rate the Reserve Bank worked to was usually interest costs. By expressing the bank's target in terms of the CPIX, that difference would largely disappear, and the bank need no longer calculate its underlying inflation measure.

...Publishing the inflation rate is a bit like predicting the weather – sometimes the experts can't get it right. The Reserve Bank just could not make up its mind yesterday about the rate of underlying inflation. First it published a quarterly figure of 0.61[%], with an annual rate of 1.72[%]. A correction was published 20 minutes later, putting the quarterly rate at 0.56[%] with an unchanged annual rate. Proving that half an hour is a long time in economics, the bank published a third figure 30 minutes later, saying that the quarterly figure was indeed 0.61[%] but the annual rate of underlying inflation was 1.77[%]. “I think it was just a fat thumb on the keyboard,” a source said.

...The... economic forecasters' worst nightmare is volatility in their own forecast view... The reason? People think you're stupid if you change your mind too often. And loss of credibility costs: in income if you're a private sector forecaster; in economic growth and living standards of everybody if you're the Reserve Bank... In its latest economic forecast the Reserve Bank raised its growth expectation yet announced we can have easier monetary conditions. Such a combination is rare... A combination of new methods used by the bank's researchers to determine just what the full capacity level of the economy is... is the rationale. Seldom before has the bank put its credibility so starkly on the line based on the efforts of its research team.

...The Governor of the Reserve Bank... has a phalanx of highly skilled economists to advise him. Surely with such support his decisions that so crucially affect our interest rates and general economic well-being will be well-founded? Well, it depends. It is true that the group of research economists at the bank are an impressive bunch, at the standard of a good university economics department, and well ahead of their counterparts at Treasury. But, like Treasury... the bank has a tunnel vision which limits the value of its policy advice to the extent of possibly costing N[Z]ers billions of dollars in lost output, profits and well-paid jobs. In policy research as in everything else the value of an answer depends on whether it answers the right question. The right analogy here is of a drunk in a dark street endlessly looking for his lost keys under a lamp-post “because I can see better here.” The monetarist doctrine that illuminates the Reserve Bank's analysis does indeed shine clear and sharp, but what if the key to our economic dilemma is to be found somewhere else? ...In order to avoid doing grave damage to reality, the forecasting and policy modellers have had to graft onto their system what used to be called a “fudge factor” – an adjustment which is quite ad hoc or even “wrong” in orthodox theory, but which seems to work in practice. [The Reserve Bank's] fudge factor... states that it is harder, in terms of the changes needed in output and unemployment, to squeeze inflation down than to get it up. There is asymmetry in the economic system... Now, the Reserve Bank economists simply assume that this asymmetry is centred around the... 1.5[%] per year... target rate of inflation. But what if it isn't? What if the particular institutions of the economy are such that its natural rate of inflation – at which normal economic growth can proceed comfortably – is a bit higher...? Then we must confront the ghastly prospect that [the Reserve Bank] has been forcing us onto the awkward part of the asymmetry for the past eight years – inflicting substantial losses in output and employment – just to make the economy do something it really doesn't want to do.

...It could just be the world's most tightly run central bank and its right here in N[Z]. The Governor of the Reserve Bank... might be best known as inflation's scourge but he also heads a bank whose tightwad administration regularly attracts attention from all over the OECD... and... [in] studies by the I[MF]... usually comes out on or near the top for economical management... Indeed the Government could be forgiven for reappointing the Governor last week to an unprecedented third five-year term just because his Reserve Bank actually returns a profit, something central banks aren't really designed to do. It is a little known fact that the Reserve Bank gave a present of \$135 million to the Government this year out of an operating surplus of just over \$145 million. The bulk of that comes from seigniorage – fees for printing banknotes. Not that the Beehive is grateful; the Government has screwed down the Reserve Bank's operational budget even more tightly for the current financial year. However... the Reserve Bank is... confident of shaving... more than \$5 million... [off the budget of] \$39 million... In the latest financial year, for example, it spent \$4.7 million less... than was provided... The overall savings have... been achieved without turning the central bank into a sweatshop[– although staff numbers declined during the past]... five-year period... by 40 to the present 290... The pay scales cited in the annual report show that... [a] total of 24 staff earn \$100,000 or more... Reserve Bank employees earn salaries comparable to the wider industry... [and the Governor's] salary is... hardly an excessive amount for a central banker whose reputation is probably second only to his American counterpart...

[The] Federal Reserve chairman... says the U[S] economy is close to the holy grail of price stability... as prices rose at the slowest rate since the 1960s... Gross domestic product expanded... but the Fed has yet to make up its mind whether or not the world's largest economy had entered a so-called "New Age" of strong growth and high levels of resource utilisation.

...U[S] retailers rang up unexpectedly strong sales... last month... [It was] the fourth straight monthly increase... [The trend is worrying investors, who had been] hoping that slower growth would hold inflation in check.

...These are trying times for economists. The U[S] economy is performing amazingly well, but even the world's most important central banker... cannot explain why. "Many observers, including us, have been puzzled," he said in his half-yearly... testimony to Congress last week... [The Federal Reserve Board chairman] is not the only one who appears at a loss. "I believe that the recent performance of the economy is to some degree a puzzle," agreed[a] Federal Reserve Board member... in separate testimony to a House committee... Is this the new age of economics? ...Well, yes and no, analysts say. Most economists advise against consigning those well-thumbed macroeconomic textbooks to the scrapheap... [One said,] "I've seen this before. We're having luck and some good management... It's primarily temporary." ...But other economists are not quite as convinced. "This economic success isn't a result of only temporary factors or luck, but rather derives in large part from good economic policy choices and from favourable structural shifts," [a] chief economist at Chase Manhattan said in his own testimony to the House Banking committee this week. He said today's workers produced more in less time, primarily because the large-scale use of computers was helping them to do a better job... Experts site the strong dollar, which helps to keep import prices down, and low oil prices as among the key reasons... The old jokes are proving partly true – if you ask 10 economists what is going on, you will get 10[different] answers... But whatever the right answer might be, it works for the average American. The economic picture at United States Inc is almost too good to be true... But few insiders appear ready to surrender fully to the boundless optimism. Both analysts and Federal Reserve officials are now sitting tight, watching for the first signs that the old models might, after all, not be as dead as some seem to believe.

...The U[S] economy is slowing from its strong first-quarter pace but still faces the risk of higher inflation down the road... "We certainly have clearer signs that the economy is slowing, but we still have a tight labour market,"... [the] Federal Reserve vice-chairperson... said. That means that the central bank will again face a "tough call" next month in deciding whether to raise interest rates further... After raising short-term rates in March in a bid to keep the economy from overheating and head off inflation, the central bank held rates steady at its last meeting in May amid hopes growth would slow. That is what seems to be happening. Retail sales have fallen for three months in a row as consumers have cut back after a first quarter spending binge that powered the economy to its fastest growth in more than nine years. Federal Reserve policy-makers are to meet at the beginning of [next month] to weigh their next move and Wall St analysts are betting it will again be to keep rates unchanged... "We still have these two things going on at once... We have an economy which is really slowing and we still have inflation risk. It could be that way for months." [The vice-chairperson] confessed that the current economic situation was "quite mystifying" but nevertheless welcome... Besides the tight labour market, she pointed to the ebullient stockmarket as another area of possible concern. "You have to be quite optimistic about [corporate] earnings to justify these kinds of [share] prices," she said. With stock prices so high, there is a risk investors will respond sharply by stepping up their purchases of consumer goods, spurring growth too much and fanning inflation... Although retail sales have ebbed in recent months, consumer confidence is strong, personal incomes are rising and employment is high... "It looks like a very strong economy... The main risk is inflation." ...She noted many companies continue to report having trouble raising prices because of stiff competition from domestic and foreign rivals.

...Producer prices have fallen for five months in a row in the US, a cumulative 2[%] drop in prices so far this year. This is a streak unmatched since 1952 and is great news for that economy. So ingrained in our psyche has become the equivalence of price deflation with economic depression, that there is a shortage of explanation for this current US experience. Nobody would suggest the US is in a depression right now. Indeed it is quite the opposite... Over the decades of permanent inflation we seem to have forgotten that there can be a range of circumstances which deliver a fall in the price level. Not all of these are symptomatic of an imploding economy, as say was the case during the 1930s Depression. Arguably the advent of the Industrial Revolution... with its technological revolution of mechanised production led to many decades of falling prices as the productivity benefits were captured... The US, being the most free and competitive market on earth, is getting the deflationary fruits of [the modern technological] revolution rapidly and its households are benefiting... So a strong economy, one where competition and productivity improvement is delivering benefit to households in the form of cheap goods, can be expected to experience widespread price falls, even to an extent that these show up in general price indexes... Such circumstances of productivity-inspired price declines can present headaches for a central bank as it tries to maintain overall price stability. In particular, under conditions of rapid and widespread technological change, prices can drop generally and at such a pace that monetary authorities fail to adjust their policy sufficiently. The net result is that the central bank keeps untoward pressure on the interest and exchange rates, forcing the economy to grow below its potential, or non-inflationary rate. I am not suggesting that this is happening in N[Z] at present... Central to the rapid dispersion of the benefits are deregulated and deep markets which enable the competitive processes of creative destruction to vent their wrath on the economic structure... With our deregulated international borders there are few barriers presented to rapid infusion of the benefits of the technological age into our society. Once here though there are significant impediments to those fruits spreading rapidly... and a... government (central and local) sector which is not responsive to market pricing present a formidable drag on realising our potential. To boot, our central bank has not done a great job in reducing inflationary expectations... sponsoring inflation outcomes above the mid-point of its so-called target (which was 1.0 and is now by virtue of ill-informed and misguided political influence, 1.5). So throughout our productive sector there is still a tendency to raise prices rather than lower them. How often do we see the following sort of communication from firms: "We have not raised our prices for more than two years, but we regret we are unable to hold the line any longer, and as a consequence... we will be lifting prices by 3[%]." It is as though they expect congratulations for holding their price rises off. Such an admission is evidence that our firms still operate on a cost-plus mentality and see pass-through as a profitable practice. If the Reserve Bank had succeeded in its mission, firms would not have this attitude – they[d] be too scared of substantial loss of revenue. Rather, they would as an alternative concentrate on productivity as the source of greater profits... One day, if and when price stability is achieved, the Reserve Bank will perhaps face a different challenge...

A[US]'s Reserve Bank yesterday confirmed widespread market predictions and slashed 0.5[%] off official cash rates in response to last week's better-than-expected news on inflation and wages. The cut, to 5[%], is the fifth since the[change in] Government... last year. N[Z] money markets were volatile in the wake of the A[US]n rate cut... With N[Z] short-term interest rates now more than 3[%] higher than those across the Tasman, some switching from A[US]n to N[Z] dollars was occurring, dealers said. "The kiwi is starting to outperform the Aussie on interest rate differentials alone," one said.

...OVERSEAS hedge funds, we are told, put the skids under the Kiwi dollar last week... The term hedge fund has become associated with freewheeling investment vehicles taking big leveraged bets, particularly within liquid global currency and interest rate markets. They are attracted like bees to honey by unsound, politically driven policies... Whether it's hedge funds, banks or our own producer boards bidding down the currency is immaterial. The currency is falling because it was forced up previously – and responsibility for both the rise and now the bumpy fall lies at home. Journalists are fond of describing[the] Reserve Bank governor... as the country's most powerful financial figure. That shows a shallow understanding of what the good doctor does. Supported by advice from his own team of economists and armed with just two modest weapons – control of short-term interest rates and the ability to communicate his views to financial markets and the public at large – he ventures out to slay the inflationary dragon... In practice a Reserve Bank governor, in economic management matters, is fairly inconsequential... Our

Reserve Bank Act passed day-to-day responsibility for monetary policy implementation to the governor. Contrary to much misinformation, it did not take any responsibility for overall economic policy away from our elected politicians. They determine the budgetary (fiscal) balance, the inflation band and, in turn (with technical assistance from the governor), the country's economic health.

...[the new British PM's] first act was a surprise. He made the Bank of England entirely responsible for monetary policy. This is part of a trend to "central bankism" and the eradication of inflation. This is puzzling since the immediate cost will be more unemployment, less welfare and damage to business, while recent literature suggests that inflation is less harmful than previously thought. "Central bankism" is a cult with a deity of hard money, a devil of inflation and temples such as the Bank of England and the German Bundesbank. The central bankers enjoy lengthy periods of office which are sometimes extended to reassure financial markets. The trend is to make them more powerful and more aloof from political interference. Their pronouncements are closely scrutinised by the markets. They often detect the heresy of inflation in new releases of retail sales or employment statistics. These pronouncements have political effect. Bankers sometimes stop "inflationary" policies in their tracks. The dogma that inflation is dangerous and hurts society is widely believed. Everyone knows that high inflation is undesirable. But in 1996 the Bundesbank refused to cut interest rates (when inflation was 1.5[%] and unemployment high) and justified its stance by reference to the hyper-inflation of the 1920s. And the Dutch criticised the Germans for signs of laxity. Despite an unemployment rate of 12[%], the Bank of France prides itself on financial rectitude. The U[S] is more inflation-tolerant. The Nihon Ginko (Bank of Japan) has urges towards rectitude but is dominated by the Ministry of Finance. The ministry has been obsessed by bad debts since the 1990 crash and to get the economy moving had driven down 90-day rates to 0.5[%]. Forceful governors of the Bank of Japan have been dismissed. Central bankers have acted to manage their currencies through interest-like movements and also "open market" operations in which they engage in warfare with traders by trading currencies. Sometimes they act together to punish speculators... or to realign a currency. In Europe, the role of central bankers will grow as Europe edges towards a single currency. Admission to the European Monetary Union requires that budget deficits do not exceed 3[%] of GDP; that inflation rates be within 1.5[%] of the average of the best three performers; that interest rates also keep in step, and that public debt does not exceed 60[%] of GDP. It implies sharp deflation for much of Europe and a brutal slashing of budgets. Moreover a European Central Bank is being created... The European Central Bank will be quite god-like because it will receive no instructions from member countries or the E[U's institutions ('the EU squanders more than US\$5 billion a year – almost 6% of its budget – through poor accounting and slack controls on money movement')]. From January 1, 1999, the European bank will have total control over the monetary policy of all its member countries. These are extraordinary powers. An unelected body will control interest rates and credit. Moreover, it will be able to prohibit many financial and budgetary actions. For example, loans on favourable terms to public or private bodies are not allowed... and guarantees of some debts are prohibited. Perhaps the most disconcerting critic of central banking... argued... in I[MF] staff papers... that inflation has different effects when it is high and when it is low... More than 8[%] a year is very bad, but... low inflation is not malignant enough to justify stamping it out entirely... and... can be beneficial for growth... Similarly an important study... on American labour markets estimates that low inflation... would increase American unemployed by more than two million. Moreover, [a] prominent economist... has committed the ultimate heresy of arguing that if inflation is too low, growth will be damaged. Top British financial journals naturally denounce this "disease." The British establishment has been captured by "central bankism" and regards any inflation as evil and addictive. They want to root it out lest inflationary expectations mount. Although the criticism appears high-minded, there are excellent reasons to doubt that bankers have the qualifications to determine a nation's fate. Should they decide on how much is spent on welfare? Should they set the parameters of budgets, the level of national debt, credit creation, interest rates and foreign exchange rates? ...Europe seems unlikely to enhance the free trade mode which is proving successful elsewhere... [because] central bankers have a very limited view of freedom. Often freedom means that they are free of political restraints to intervene in the economy and set their own prices... not at a level which satisfies supply and demand but at a level that should (but often will not) bring about their target in the next few years... As Keynes wrote penetratingly a year or so before the Depression: "A proportion of them [savings] has been wasted, spilt on the ground, by the unwillingness of central banks to allow the market rate of interest to fall to a level at which they can be fully absorbed by the requirements of investment." - 1997

"One of the reasons why federal deficits usually turn out bigger than predicted is that the government had budgeted on the basis of prices at the beginning of the fiscal year. By the time the year ends, prices are a good deal higher – causing the government to go further into the red to cover the costs. And, of course, the added deficit is financed by inflation. So the government is much like a cat chasing its tail. It inflates, suffers higher prices because of the inflation, and so must inflate further, but then suffers even higher prices, requiring even more inflation..." ...When the Government spends more than it takes in, it's no different to you and me. It has to pay its bills... The easiest way politically for the government to operate, is to borrow money from the Federal Reserve. It just signs "notes" (bonds, certificates, etc.) which it sells to the Federal Reserve, and the Federal Reserve creates (out of nothing) a bank deposit for the government to draw on... just as though it were real money. *This dilutes the value of every dollar in circulation.* It's as though you were at an auction, and everyone present was given 10% more money. You can bet that prices would be bid up at least 10% higher... The theory is that this new "money" is backed by increases in the amount of goods and services produced in America. Even if this were true, which it is not... the... Federal Reserve has a vested interest in continued Government budget deficits. Why? Because it is a privately owned banking system whose principal income is derived from loaning the government money to finance its deficits! In 1971, the Government sent over \$18 billion into the pockets of the bankers who own the Federal Reserve banking system, as interest payments on Government securities owned by the banks – the interest on the national debt! And the Federal Reserve is not subject to audit or any kind of accounting! Attempts by Congress to pass such laws have been beaten back... The only solution that will really reduce inflation is to reduce government spending, and retire the national debt. This, however, means millions of government workers out of jobs, government subsidies eliminated, government contracts cancelled, and the worst depression in our history. No politician wants to be blamed for this.

depression, in economics, a time of crisis, when the business cycle is at its lowest.

Britain's economy appears poised on the threshold of a new era of steady non-inflationary growth, but many economists fear it could instead slip back into the damaging "boom-bust" cycle that has plagued it for decades. - 1996

Japan watchers talk about a sense of pessimism among the public that has come with the realisation that the economical miracle did not last forever and that its heyday is over. - 1997

Histories of human population don't show sustained growth over the centuries, but booms and crashes in good times and bad; these jagged curves depict immeasurable human grief. No longer is economic growth to be seen as guaranteeing increments in prosperity from generation to generation[(even ignoring 'that phenomenon you see all through history of the person who has the bright idea, makes a fortune and then perhaps the second generation maintains it only for an irresponsible heir to complete the cycle back to poverty in the third generation')]. At best it is more like climbing step by step up a stairway of S-curves built on new technologies; at worst you find yourself sliding down into periodic slumps.

By the mid-1960s western... Europeans who'd lived through hardship after [WW2] had become addicted consumers... [I]ncome had doubled since the war[(incidentally, 'Henry Ford had doubled the wages of his workers in 1914 to \$5 a day, a move which spread like wildfire through American industry')]. But one of the main assumptions underlying the long boom was about to change. Ever since the war both America and Europe had relied on cheap oil. It had helped to pay for the mass consumption and full employment. Suddenly they saw how dependent and vulnerable they'd become... The shock came in 1973 when the Arab oil producers quadrupled their prices. It marked a turning point and an end to the heady confidence. For twenty years they'd lived with little care for tomorrow but now the cheap petrol and the certainty that the West dominated the world was over. It was the beginning of the end of the greatest boom of the century. - PEOPLE'S CENTURY

The next major element of the changed world situation, in short, is the paradoxical situation known as stagflation. In contra-distinction to cyclical depressions as we know them (with the Great Depression of the 1930s as the worst of its kind) we now see unemployment accompanied not by falling but rising prices: stagnation of production and employment, combined with inflation. The Keynesian remedy against unemployment, namely to raise the demand for goods and services by credit or money creation, now tends to cure unemployment only at the price of more inflation. Hence several years of hesitation in socio-economic policy have brought stagnation to the world at large...

Money also brings problems of its own. In the last half century, it has been the apparent cause of many national and international crises... Often... we see the world's statesmen scurrying from capital to capital in frantic attempts to deal with the latest exchange crisis. Basically, this usually means that one (or more) currency has, in the eyes of the people using it, become worth more, or less, than the official exchange rate. The crisis is usually solved, after a great deal of anxiety and ill-feeling, by re-adjusting the exchange rates... Inflation hurts us all. Prices continually rise. However hard or conscientiously we work, we find that the promised wage or salary buys less than we expected. Young couples need to borrow money when they wish to buy a home. Yet often they are unable to do so because the building societies have no money to lend. So they have to go on living in unsatisfactory accommodation. As a nation, we seem always to be running into difficulties with our balance of payments. We are selling to other countries less than we buy from them and have to make up the difference out of our reserves. We are like a man living beyond his means who has to keep drawing on his savings to make ends meet. It is a situation that cannot continue indefinitely... Easy credit has helped to bring about an undreamed of improvement in the standard of living... [- but e]asy credit... contributes to inflation.

Eventually, of course, there will be no more capital to draw on and the real situation will become apparent. The dynamics of the system are such that, as capital exhaustion approaches, and as the rate of inflation increases exponentially as people try to maintain their spending power by more and more wage demands, eventually the system must collapse.

Purchasing power of currency increases in times of deflation, and decreases in times of inflation. Hence, labor sometimes tries to have wages made contingent on cost-of-living increases. On the international level, a purchasing power parity for foreign exchange is sometimes computed. In times of depression, the purchasing power of consumers usually declines because of unemployment, while the purchasing power of money is high.

Consumer dollar going far... Been thinking for a while about buying a new television? Tossing up whether to replace that old washing machine? If appliance retailers are to be believed, now might be the time to part with your hard-earned cash, or load up the "plastic fantastic." The combination of a strong N[Z] dollar, lower manufacturing costs and fierce competition in the local market means many appliance retailers are struggling to make a profit, and are therefore dropping their prices to attract more customers. The head of the company which owns [two appliance retailing] chains, glumly admitted yesterday that it was a buyer's market. A year ago, consumers were paying \$399 for a 14in television, he said. "Now you can buy a good brand TV at \$299." The joint chief executive of[a] Wellington appliance retailer... agreed. "It's a very good time to be a consumer... It probably won't get a whole lot cheaper." [He] said retailers could not afford to drop prices any lower.

...Ask anyone who has bought a... major appliance in the past few months whether they were happy with their purchase, and they will almost certainly smile... While consumers have been grinning, however, retailers have barely been able to conceal their frowns. Despite the bargains to be had, appliance sales have remained static over the past 18 months. The appliance industry, most agree, is in the doldrums, and most do not expect the situation to improve in the near future. Like other forms of retailing, appliance stores have undoubtedly been the victims of a slump in consumer confidence... However, there are other issues facing the industry too, such as over-capacity. According to a recent survey, N[Z]ers have one appliance store for every 3500 people. In A[US], the figure is one for every 14,500 people while in America, it is one for every 55,000 people. Fierce price wars among retailers... [- which, for example, resulted in] 14-inch colour [TVs] with a remote control[selling] for less than \$300... [-] have also reduced margins, at a time when many costs, such as property and advertising, have been increasing.

...Remember when a tiny television set cost more than \$1000? Television rental companies certainly do - or at least what is left of them. Plummeting prices for electronic equipment and an increasingly competitive retail market have seen the number of TV-hire companies dwindle over the past decade. And it now looks likely that only one major player will soon be left. - 1997

It's surprising what a difference a little healthy competition makes. Prices come down, standards of service go up.

But if COMPETITION leads to a situation where there is *only one major player* left, standards of service could go down and prices back up! However, even if competition in NZ's appliance industry remains healthy, the retail price of a 14in TV, for example, won't continue falling until it reaches \$1 or less. The price will eventually 'bottom out', then start to ascend again. The price of some products (e.g., apples) rises and falls throughout the year - because, although the supply of these products usually remains constant, they have to be sourced from outside the district when they're out of season locally - while the price of most products rises steadily (and even the lowest annual price of apples gradually increases over long periods of time - i.e., the lowest retail price of apples is unlikely to ever again match the lowest retail price of 1897).

...your penny rock will cost you one dollar...

The story is told of the modern Rip Van Winkle, who goes to sleep in 1974 and wakes up in 1984. His first thought is to find a pay phone and call his broker. He checks on his IBM stock which was worth \$25,000 when he went to sleep, and finds to his delight and amazement it is now worth \$3,000,000. Just then the operator breaks in and says, "Your three minutes are up. Please deposit \$7,000!"

A stock market is essentially a group of brokers each of whom has bought a "seat" on the exchange and is thus entitled to buy and sell securities, with its privileges and under its regulations, for fixed commissions... The price of a seat on the New York Stock Exchange... has varied from the low of \$17,000 in 1890 and 1942 to the high of \$625,000 in 1929.

The stock (or share) market – a sector of society that central banks have virtually no control over – can be both affected by inflation and itself cause inflation. It also has the potential to slash the price of most goods and services virtually overnight!

In the 1920s Americans were enjoying the fruits of a new prosperity. The greatest industrial nation fizzed ahead in a post war boom. For those who had money it was a time to get rich quick. Believing they could only win, a million Americans had their money in the stock exchange. In just 4 years their shares roared up 400%. “There was rank speculation... everybody was going to have two automobiles, and everybody and his uncle would be calling me up buying stocks. They never asked what price they were gonna pay – you just bought them and that was all.” Then, on the morning of October 24th 1929, the unthinkable happened. “All of a sudden these orders started up... sell... everything... the market kept going down.” ...Investors who’d been counting paper profits found themselves plunging into real debt. Teenage telegraph boys... were sent door to door delivering the bad news. “The people... would open it up and go into a state of shock. Most of the telegrams would say the same thing... We need more money to hold up your interest. Give us more money or else you’re kaput... you better hurry... we’re going under... [I]t was the same [people] getting telegrams left and right, until finally they just shut the door because they knew what it was. And it was shortly after that that we found out that people were jumping out of windows...” The crash affected people far beyond Wall St. The greatest victims were not the wealthy but working people around the world. Capitalism had promised progress and prosperity for all. Instead it delivered mass unemployment and the breadline... Within a year 2 1/2 million had lost their jobs... “...in New York city... a soup-line [had] 500 people then two days later a thousand people, the same line... kept on growing and growing...” Laid off men were driven to despair. Victims of a process they couldn’t understand... As people had less to spend and trade slowed, more factories closed in one country after another. It seemed unstoppable forces were at work which individual governments could do nothing to control. In South America, countries like Chile suffered immediately because they depended on trade with the U[S]. Chile’s copper miners had prospered in the 1920s but the good times were over... “...nothing like it had been known before... [T]o us it all seemed very remote... New York was a long way off, but when your own boss... [says] you haven’t got a job any more, then you really felt it.” Copper brought in 80% of Chile’s foreign earnings. Tens of thousands worked to prize it from the biggest man-made hole in the world... “...factories in the U[S] closed and they stopped buying copper... This paralysed the market here, so directly affected the entire working population... it was a crisis.” The slump was even more devastating for Chileans who produced nitrates, shipped to farmers all over the world as fertilizer... “...and what could the poor people do... who could we turn to?” Thousands of unemployed miners headed to the capital... The Government, now bankrupt, was overwhelmed by the demand. “...we looked out of the window and saw them lifting people up by the feet and arms... piling them into a cart... they’d died of hunger.” Chile’s plight was echoed around the world. Trade collapsed. Without copper, nitrate or any other cargoes to carry, merchant shipping was idle, and no new ships were needed. Britain had been the biggest ship builder in the world. Towns like Jarrow in the northeast were entirely dependent on the industry... The owners of the oldest shipyards were paid to close down for good, so the newer ones would have less competition... 3 out of 5 Jarrow workers were now unemployed. The Government said the only way to end the slump was to cut public spending and wait for what they called “natural recovery.” [The PM said.] “We must all join as a united nation and bear equitable sacrifices to see the present crisis through. And so I appeal to you all, do your bit like men and women cheerfully and heartily.” But there were no grounds to be cheerful in Jarrow. The only help from the State was the dole, guaranteed for just six months... In the U[S] there was no dole. In Chicago the new poor tore the wooden blocks from the city streets to use as fuel... “...tens of thousands of people [were] evicted from apartments... They could starve to death because there was no social security... no unemployment insurance. There was nothing.” ...By 1932 more than 13 million Americans – 25% of the workforce – had no job... “We’re talking about professional people – scientists, doctors, lawyers – all these people were thrown into this pit.” ...Angry farmers sometimes dumped their produce. Prices had almost halved. By destroying food they hoped to reduce the stocks available and so stop prices falling even further. “...There was a huge destruction of food in the U[S] at the same time that millions were starving...” All over the world the same contrast... was repeated. In Belgium there was plenty of coal at the pit-heads but Belgian miners had to break into their own collieries at night to scavenge for waste coal to use as fuel... The men’s pay had been slashed and then they’d been sacked after going on strike... “...potatoes, that’s all we were given. How did we live like that?” And all over the world, governments said the same thing – that there was little they could do to ease their peoples’ suffering... Hoover, President for the first three years of the slump... told Americans they had to let the crisis run its course and tighten their belts.[An American economics student recalled a lesson by his professor: “He said] cycles are part of the capitalistic... [system. H]e reached in his pocket and... pulled out a rubber band... pulled it all the way out and said boom, then he let go... and he said bust... [B]oom and bust[is, he explained], an inherent ingredient of the free enterprise system. To me this made no sense at all because I saw... the [factories] closed down... the people wanting to work... the people who couldn’t afford to buy anything... [Y]ou had a kind of vicious circle operating and nobody was prepared or willing to undertake major measures.” While Western governments stuck to the line that the world economy was something they had no power over, their citizens grew increasingly impatient. Some governments were shaken and others brought down. Bewilderment turned to anger... “...something was rotten with the whole system... this is the result of capitalism gone bananas...”

After the stock market crash, his land is worth less than he owes on it (though why that’s so isn’t clear to him)...

Although modern money is often made out of paper, the saying that ‘money doesn’t grow on trees’ continues to be widely used. However, people who have seen their economic worth grow via the stock market could be forgiven for thinking that it would only be easier to become wealthy if you could pick dollars straight off a tree! Consider the hypothetical example of an investor who buys 1000 \$1 shares which eventually rise in value to \$10 each. The original investor then sells all of the shares to 10 other people in blocks of 100. Each of the new owners will have paid \$1000 and the seller will have pocketed \$9000 (once his initial investment has been deducted). The \$9000 has, effectively, been plucked from the sky. Another way to describe the transaction is to say that the \$9000 was WON from the new investors. They now have to sell to someone else at an equal or greater price in order to WIN their money back. Stock markets seldom follow such well defined mathematical formulas but this example serves to expose the similarities between the legalised stock exchange system and illegal – at least in NZ – pyramid money-making schemes (where someone gets on a list by giving half the purchase price to the person currently at the bottom of the list and half to the person at the top, then sell two lists with its own name at the bottom in the hope of eventually being sent a lot of money when its name reaches the top of many lists – therefore the system mirrors capitalism, which requires a large base to support its small top).

When the world’s stock markets crashed in 1929, the shares didn’t suddenly disappear (unless the company that issued them went out of business). Some people got to buy shares *at rock bottom prices*. The people who sold at the lowest price probably did so because they had no money and, therefore, were desperate enough to accept whatever was being offered. The people who had money to spend were those who became rich before the crash without the aid of shares; or who sold their shares immediately prior to the crash, then had enough sense (or luck) to be able to avoid buying back into the market before it reached its lowest point. If a crash was to cause the \$10 shares from the hypothetical example to shed 90% of their value, and all of the 10 new investors sold back to the original investor at this price, that person would have regained the 1000 shares for their original cost price and still have \$9000 profit left over. Meanwhile, another 10 people have spent \$900 each but got nothing to show for it (apart from any dividends paid while they held the shares)!

Fortunes have been made by... individuals who have been able to manipulate stock prices through maneuvers ranging from company take-overs to the precipitation of mass hysteria by buyers and sellers... In the stock market... there is a certain amount of manipulation by heavy investors and insiders who control millions of dollars in mutual funds and pension funds, but the ebb and flow of the market is also influenced by the millions of small investors who follow blindly after the leaders... The stock market runs in cycles. Ideally, one buys at the bottom of the cycle and sells at the top. In order to do that, however, one has to be at the head of the pack, which takes courage, conviction, and an intelligent analysis of economic, social, political, and psychological conditions. The timid investor will wait until it is clearly evident that a bull market has been under way for a substantial length of time before risking any money. By the time all the sheep are convinced that the market is the place to make money, it is often too late. The peak has been reached and the market is on a downhill slide. The masses of unsophisticated small investors then panic and sell for whatever they can get, and drive the market still lower. By the time the market has reached bottom and there are bargains galore, these same people cannot be persuaded to invest. They may righteously proclaim that it is impossible to make money in the stock market – and hold onto that belief until the market is near the top of the next cycle.

Down in the trading pits of New York it's a constant battle between the bulls, the optimists, and the bears, the pessimists... It's said that when Wall St gets a cold the rest of the world starts sneezing.

The 1970s had been a dreadful decade for the [NZ] stockmarket. Share prices rose only 8.7[%] compared with a 216.9[%] increase in house prices and inflation of 172.7[%]. There]... was little to indicate that... the market... would have a major impact in the 1980s... The speculative boom began in earnest in 1983 when... 27 new companies were listed and spectacular share-price performances began to attract individual investors back to the market... [which,] on September 18... 1987... reached an all-time high of 3968.89... Black Tuesday 1987 was the day investors' dreams turned to nightmares... When Wall St sneezed heavily in October – the... trillion dollar... fall in its share values was twice that of the 1929 Crash – N[Z]... caught the flu... Empires fell... [as one now retired stockbroker] was watching. The newspaper photo of him became an emblem of the Crash: The stockbroker frozen on the floor of the Exchange, his finger plunged into his mouth, the whites of his eyes flashing. Dapper Dealer confronts the Face of Doom... [H]e remembers Black Tuesday for the silence after the first selling frenzy. "I was just totally stunned by how quiet it had gone... There was this... huge moment of... utter stillness..." And then the madness began again... For... [him, however, the Crash was] not completely personal: He had sold most of his shares. After a big plunge in May 1987, he told his clients to sell "and I put my money where my mouth was"... Legions of small shareholders... [were not so fortunate. They] followed the corporate princes into the swamp... [One businessman] was in his office... on October 20... and says he was not surprised. "I said to all my staff that morning, 'This is the Crash; this is the thing we've been long awaiting'..." He watched as 90% of his fortune burned to ash. "It was a very sad moment, because some of the companies I was involved with were very badly hit." ...A year after the Crash, [his corporation's] shares had sunk... to a mere 16c. The *Wall Street Journal* named it as the world's worst stock. When it delisted in 1992, the shares were worth only half a cent... Now he and his son-in-law... run a much-reduced [organisation]... "It's a very good company... It's going to go on forever." ...Like all human disasters, the Crash hit everyone from a different angle... For[one] investment banker... Black Tuesday was a good day. The previous 18 months had been "hellish": While he had been cautious, competitors had run with the bulls and done better than him. "When that happens for quite a long time... it undermines your confidence." He felt sure the runaway market "would end up in a big heap", but how come the end was so slow in coming? When the Crash finally did arrive, "I remember feeling just suddenly switched on. I felt energised – suddenly all my Christmases had arrived at once." ...not [everyone was interested in] being interviewed... The chairman of the now defunct... Chase Corporation Ltd, synonymous with glittering high-rise commercial developments, which had a market capitalisation of \$1.4 billion before... it was worth less than \$20 million... said... "but please report I politely declined." He... was an accountant... when he teamed up with two others to form Chase in the early 1970s. They each put in \$1000 to form the property development company. They called it Chase Holdings Ltd after someone made a joke about being chased by creditors – prophetic. In between times [he] is reputed to have personally amassed \$250 million on paper... Today, in conjunction with some other shareholders, he heads a private company, the Symphony Group, engaged in "property development, adding value and re-sale." Not that much different from Chase of 1987? "Oh, quite different in some ways. We're selling everything we produce. We're a true developer..." ...[the '87 Crash] still stands as a defining moment in our history: A bigger date in N[Z], in fact, than in many other countries. For the meltdown here was far greater, and the fallout lasted much longer, than almost anywhere else... [While the] rest of the world[only] experienced a stock market correction... N[Z] suffered a collapse of its economy... [from which] \$24 billion disappeared... Recovery was hard. A year after the disaster... Wall Street was 22% below its pre-Crash high, London 25% and Tokyo only 4%. But N[Z] was still down 50%. The Crash is still with us, as myth and object lesson. It showed that sober bankers could be fools and madmen, and captains of industry dreamers and crooks... In the euphoria of the fourth quarter of 1986... [there] were one or two new listings every week and investors who were lucky enough to obtain shares were making immediate returns of at least 100[%]... It didn't matter that overnight interest rates were 16[%]... and five-year Government stock 15.6[%]. The most important point was that N[Z] business was on a roll. Only fools and pessimists were not investing in the N[Z] sharemarket... The... professor of accountancy at Victoria University, recalls warning his students that a float "had no merit of any sort. 'All you're doing is putting money in... and the promoter is going to make a great killing'. But of course it would come on the market and zoom... [T]he students clearly felt I was being academic. I was criticising the gods! I described one float as a rip-off and then I got a phone call about an hour after the lecture from the company chairman. My heart sank, I thought, 'Oh boy, am I in trouble now'..." ...[the professor] says he "made a lot of money at the time of the sharemarket boom. It was pleasing for me to enjoy that but I didn't do any investing after about August 1986 because I thought it had reached its peak then..." ...the banks "were feeding the frenzy. If [an investor] wanted money he had no trouble at all in getting it... [T]he banks wanted to lend as much money as possible to maximise their profits." ...He... publicly criticised the property companies and sharemarket analysts for treating big gains in their... values "as part of income for reporting purposes. A lot of those gains were just inflation, just hot air"... There was a new breed of young entrepreneur who could bamboozle bankers and company directors... "Those directors... didn't want to show ignorance and they nodded wisely when they probably didn't have a bloody clue what was being proposed." Brokers and bankers were caught up in the frenzy – and so were the media. Journalists "fell down" at the feet of the new entrepreneurs: "These guys used to make announcements that announcements were going to be made." ...[He also] warned investors publicly that the boom could not last. For this, he was spurned as a nay-sayer and a Cassandra... About a week before it collapsed, [he] recalls... Judgecorp issued its accounts showing that "all its financing was from short-term sources, short-term commercial bills". It was inevitable that the company would die: When the Crash came, the banks called in their money and it was all over. But [the]Professor... admits that he "nearly bought a lot of Judge shares myself. Based on the projections of what it could earn, it was a damned good buy." If professors of accountancy could go so close to disaster, what hope was there for the mum and dad investors? ...No one group could be blamed for the crazy state of the market. "It was absolutely nuts and it makes everybody, just everybody, look totally stupid." ...[one property] tycoon... was playing tennis with [an art dealer on Black Tuesday]... In four hours... [the tycoon's] personal wealth plunged by hundreds of millions. "I don't think we really took it that seriously," he says now. "We treated it as if it was the news that one of the ferries had sunk, (that) sort of thing. Life was going to go on. For three months, there was a general expectation that commonsense would prevail and we'd all be back again." ...[previous to the Crash, while the tycoon was advising a professional tennis player] on his finances, "he turned to me and said, 'Gee, you must be worth a bit', and I had honestly not thought about it – we

were just caught up in the whole game. And we sat down and measured it – I was worth just under \$700 million on the share price... it was extraordinary. I remember running inside and saying (to my wife), ‘...Christ, listen to this!’ She wasn’t very interested, she said, ‘Oh, that’s nice’. It was never a consideration.” [He] says that in a way he regrets not selling up and pocketing the \$700m, “but I cracked it when I was very young; I’ve always had heaps of money, so money didn’t drive me”... [He doesn’t accept the professor’s] criticism of companies such as his... “we weren’t crooks... [or] stupid... The game is a capital exercise, it always has been and always will be... It was certainly ego, and it was fun... You could do anything.” ...It was a wild time where deals worth many millions could be done over the phone and “astonishing things” happened... “GREED is... good.” The catch-cry of *Wall St* – [the] 1987 morality tale about the perils of spiralling out-of-control capitalism – was one taken up in earnest by the “nouveau nouveau riche”... of the 80s. Running rampant on the profits churned out by the munificent Monopoly money-making machines called the stock exchange and the property market, they chanted the newly learned mantra with the fervour of the freshly converted. Conspicuous consumption was in; saving for rainy days of old age inconceivable... [The head of one corporation] had flown from Queensland to Christchurch en route to Queenstown for an investors’ conference, says [the tycoon], “and there was a slight delay with his plane. So he walks into a [car showroom] and spends \$200,000 for a Mercedes Benz – and then just left it there when he got back”. On another occasion a businessman from A[US] fell for a waitress in Christchurch. He persuaded her to come with him in his private jet, but “she said, ‘I’ll have to work until 5pm’, she wouldn’t just walk out. So he said, ‘Well look, I’ll go over and send it back for you’... [I]t flew him to A[US] and came back for the tart.” Some of the brokers at the time were naive and untrained. [The tycoon] remembers asking one how long he had been in the trade and the man replied that the year before he had been driving a crane in Auckland. “He referred to being headhunted, and he was quite serious...” ...OF all the names of the 80s... [the] founder and chairman of Equiticorp, was probably the biggest loser in personal terms. In 1993 he was sentenced to six years’ jail after being found guilty on 11 charges of conspiracy to defraud involving \$67 million, [after being] adjudged bankrupt in July, 1991, with debts totalling \$597 million... Some of the money he made was hidden in family trusts, the assets of which remain secret (a loophole in the law which still exists; assets placed in trust two years before bankruptcy cannot be touched)... He was automatically discharged... in mid-1995... and will[soon] be eligible to freely manage a company again... “You can bet your bottom dollar that about once every 50 years the market’s going to... be totally and... ridiculously overvalued and crash... It is beyond our control.” ...By then, those who had lived through 1987 would be retired or dead, and the lessons would have died with them... In hindsight, the Crash looks as inescapable as death. The new Labour Government of 1984 freed up the economy “and opened up a Pandora’s box,” says [the man] who recently stepped down after nine years as chairman of the Stock Exchange.

After three years in power the Labour Party was losing its traditional voters but... the N[Z]... middle classes felt they were getting richer... Nine weeks after the[1987] election the New York stock market collapsed. The... N[Z]... economy went into recession but that didn’t stop the progress of the new right agenda. [The Finance Minister said,] “I believe that the events of... [recent] weeks mean that we need to accelerate the process of reform rather than stop it.”

On the stock market its... PARTY TIME AGAIN! - 1989

The bull market for retail stocks... [on t]he NZSE Retailers Capital Index... lasted... to February 1994, when interest rates went up. After that, the sector became a dud... Underground Fashions is the screaming disaster of the retail grouping. Listed in 1994, the shares have [gone] down from more than 110c to hover just above 20c. If the company survives, the present share prices may attract those looking for a potential recovery stock. Omnibus retailer The Warehouse has also been a sharemarket black hole. Listed in 1994, the company was for a time a sharemarket darling. On a price basis adjusted for bonus issue, it quickly soared from around 210c on listing to 550c. Twice in a short time, the share price has crashed, once in December 1995 and again in May... The company seems to have persistent financial problems, as it announced the intention to sell off branch buildings before tenant business broke even. This year the stock hit lows of 200c before lifting to the 250c mark, but at this stage must be branded as speculative. [By the way, ‘the respected Financial Editor of the San Francisco Chronicle, said in his column “*The Money Game*” on July 20: “It isn’t only the rarefied level of short-term interest rates that continues to bug the stock market. It’s also the great credibility gap over corporate profit. Company after company has reported gains, some startlingly large. But there’s little or no market reaction. Let a company slip just slightly, though, or even show gain but one slightly below expectations, and its shares hit the skids. You’ve seen it happen again and again.”]

...Trans World Airlines, just emerging from its deep financial troubles, is likely to put on hold plans to ask investors for more money following the crash of Paris-bound Flight 800 last Wednesday... The crash occurred just hours after the airline reported a five-fold increase in profits during its most recent quarter, suggesting the airline was turning a corner, albeit with some uncertainty... TWA’s stock, which had traded as high as \$23.75 a share earlier this year, has been falling recently and dropped another \$1.37 to close at \$9.87 in the wake of the crash. The employee-owned airline has been on delicate financial footing for years. It has been in bankruptcy twice in the past five years, and last emerged from Chapter 11 in 1995 with a reduced debt load after a massive financial restructuring.

...TNT has distanced itself from its origins in announcing it will cut back its A[US]n general freight operations. The troubled transport giant has been under increasing pressure to speed up restructuring with its share price reaching the lowest level since September 1993... The company’s 50[%] stake in Ansett Australia has also been a drain on the company, with the airline losing \$9 million before tax for the months to 31 March... [In local news, the NZSE-40, which has been] out of step with global markets for more than two years, has strolled ahead in the past month and analysts say it may stride further while other markets pause or retreat. “I’d be pretty confident the stockmarket will be higher and I’d pick 10[%], which, with income, means a 20[%] total return before tax on a 12-month view,” said... [one fund manager. T]he historically light weightings institutions have in shares could drive the market higher, with sellers scarce. “It’s hard to see where the major selling is going to come from,” he said... The index has been a dismal performer compared with world markets, gaining just 3.8[%] in the past year against the Dow Industrials’ gain of 19[%] and 2.4[%] over two years against the Dow’s huge 47[%] leap. However, since June things have turned around, with the NZSE-40 up 7.3[%] while the Dow has fallen. So what has changed in N[Z]? “It comes down to political risk. There is much reduced concern on the political front which is reflected in lower yields, which in turn is reflected in shares,” [the fund manager] said... Bond yields had risen steeply in fear of the conservative National Party Government being ousted by a left-leaning coalition. But a series of polls last month showed a reversal in fast-rising support for the populist N[Z] First Party... N[Z] also appears to be a step ahead of most of the world in the economic cycle. It went through a spurt of rapid growth in 1993-94 and has been cooling off since. Analysts believe the economy is near bottom and will pick up again as government tax cuts bite and as the Reserve Bank unscrews its very tight monetary policy clamps.

...[US s]tocks rose sharply for the fourth straight day on Friday, after a lower-than-expected July employment report capped a week of data that quelled fears of the Federal Reserve raising interest rates... The Dow Jones index closed 85.08 points, or 1.5[%], higher at 5679.83. The index gained 206.77 points for the week – the largest weekly points gain on record. The index had recovered well over half of July’s losses. The Nasdaq composite index closed 26.07 points higher – its second-largest gain ever – at 1124.92, a rise of 2.4[%]. The rally began after the Labour Department said the unemployment rate rose to 5.4[%] in July, from June’s six-year low of 5.3... The economic news also cheered the bond market, where long-term rates dropped, which in turn bolstered stocks... Gains in technologies and stocks sensitive to interest rates led Friday’s rally.

...Industrial stocks rose sharply toward the 6000-points milestone on Friday, with the Dow Jones index closing 60.01 points higher at a record 5992.86... The Standard and Poor's 500 composite broke the 700-points barrier for the first time and closed... at 701.46... In LONDON, the sharemarket rose... on the back of Wall St. The FTSE-100 index set a record trading high of 4025.1 points, topping the[previous] record, set earlier in the week... - 1996

Wall St stocks blazed higher on Friday, propelled by fresh evidence that the U[S] economy was enjoying robust growth with low inflation. The Dow Jones index surged 83 points to close at 6856, just 27 points shy of their all-time closing high... [W]ith every step higher, the market has also exhibited increasing wariness. That skittishness was apparent during the session's frenzied afternoon, when comments about the dollar by[the] US Treasury Secretary... sent the markets gyrating... British shares soared to a record finish on Friday – the second time this week and eighth time in the first six weeks of 1997 – as investors continued to believe interest rates on both sides of the Atlantic would not rise in the near-term. The FTSE 100 index closed 41.9 points higher at 4307.8... [B]ut the strong dollar and pound could be the undoing of both the Dow Jones and the FTSE indices... according to... a strategist... The market could be in for a nasty shock next quarter if the strong dollar has an impact on earnings, he said.

...Inflation and interest rate fears in America have contributed to one of the biggest one day falls on the New York share market. The Dow Jones plummeted more than 160 points... The knock-on effect was a 24-point fall on [NZ's] share market.

...FINANCIAL markets face a volatile week as investors around the world sweat over whether[the] US Federal Reserve chairman... will raise interest rates on Tuesday. But N[Z] brokers believe the local sharemarket should prove reasonably resilient to any buffeting of prices on an overheated Wall Street... A[US]n and British markets (which correlated 90% with their US counterpart) had far greater potential to be affected... “You also need to remember that our market, unlike Wall St, has been trending down in recent months,” [an analyst] said... Three months ago, market watchers were saying N[Z] shares were the investment opportunity for 1997. Now analysts are advising clients to hold more money in cash to take advantage of possible further rises in interest rates... [R]ecent sharemarket prices had fallen by roughly the same amount as company profits were short of expectations, indicating a fairly priced local market... “If interest rates in the US do rise this week, then it will impact on us if for no other reason than psychological. But there is no great level of debt in the US market, there is still a huge funds inflow, and so any movement would be in the nature of a correction, and not the big shakeouts of the past,”... [The analyst also] said the 10% fall in the[NZ] sharemarket this year was largely on the back of a volatile Telecom share price and a down in the forestry cycle.

...NZ Forest Products held a 17[%] stake in... listed investment banker Investment Finance Corporation (IFC)... which in turn held 25[%] of refuge company Environ Corporation, 22.3[%] of Venture Pacific, 6.7[%] of Hawkes Bay Transport and 7.8[%] of Panz Corporation... [This is a] good example of the web of ownership among the listed companies of 10 years ago... Many of the listed companies in the investment category were floated to the public with no other aim than to buy stakes in other companies, some of which were themselves investment companies established previously with the same aim... Unfortunately, [late]... in December 1987 the N[Z] sharemarket, still] reeling from the wipeout of the October crash, had another major shock when... IFC... called in the receivers. Some smaller listed companies had already gone into receivership by then, but IFC's receivership was a major collapse[– though it was only] the first of many. By the middle of 1989 more than 40 listed companies had collapsed into receivership, liquidation or statutory management. Some, like Chase Corporation... and... Equitcorp... were household names. Most were not. [Nearly t]en years later it is a struggle to remember many of the companies and what they did.

...One day in 1987, I watched with hundreds of others as the sharemarket crashed. Crowded against the big glass windows overlooking the trading floor in Queen St, we witnessed a scene of pure frenzy playing itself out from inside the glass cage. From the distance, you could see the fear in the traders' eyes. You could hear the panic in their voices as they tried frantically to sell their clients out of a crashing market, or to snap up a bargain, depending which side of the deal they were on... Many people who lost a lot of money in those days, and those who witnessed others losing money, lost confidence in many aspects of the market. Stockbrokers were no longer respected for their advice, and the stock exchange itself was perceived by many to have allowed things to get out of control. [A decade] later, a great deal has changed. The trading floor is gone and shares are traded over computer screens from within the grey offices of the many stockbrokers making up the market. This has done wonders for its efficiency although, from a marketing point of view, some would argue that by closing the trading floor the stock exchange gave up its most potent visual symbol... The trading floor was the living embodiment of the market. It reflected both the market's excitement and its dangers... [I]n every way, the sharemarket has advanced and improved since the late 1980s. We undoubtedly have a higher quality market. The standard of conduct demanded by the stock exchange is higher, the requirements for a company listing are steeper... Yet research commissioned by the N[ZSE]... late last year, showed that the perceptions of 1987 are still deeply ingrained... The stock exchange, which is a business in its own right, reporting profits and comprising professional managers, is a guardian of the market... Much work has... gone into explaining the broader role played by stockbrokers nowadays. On the apparent assumption that no[-]one is doing the market any justice, the stock exchange has even produced a colourful share-price table which it is trying to convince newspapers to run in preference to their own versions.

...ONE of the “must follow” trends for investors and analysts over the next five years will be the fortunes of passive, or index-tracking funds. They hit the N[Z] market about a year ago, promising lower fees and taxes than actively managed funds.

...in life, people need security, rather than relying on private sector fund managers, many of whom are incompetent, according to... [a NZ property] investor... and political commentator... “Believe me, this current proposal will lead to tears... I know the funds industry. These fellows (fund managers) are not Einsteins – and I'm being awfully kind when I say that.” ...Today's fund managers believed that “this time is different”, an adage going back to the 1929 crash, [he] said... “Once you hear ‘this time is different’ being quoted, it's time to get out.” ...[Incidentally], using the team name Command and Conquer, [a]... Rangitoto College seventh-former... and his mate... have come second in a sharemarket game for secondary schools around N[Z]. The pair]... attribute their success... to adopting a high-risk strategy aimed at making maximum capital gains as quickly as possible. That strategy saw Command and Conquer... turn a nominal \$50,000 investment in March into \$70,463.99... But... [the 7th-former] was unable to attend the ceremony to pick up his \$800 prize from the chairman of the [NZSE] yesterday. This was because he is barred from school functions for the rest of the year as a punishment for trying to organise... a party after the school ball... The 17-year-old... entrepreneur... planned to charge students \$25 a head to go to the party. But he was sprung before it got started when the parent of another student contacted the school about the party... The national winner[of]... the sharemarket game... [-] a team from Wellington's Onslow College called Just Speculate [-] turned \$50,000 into \$72,936.55. [Editor's note: A sharebroker firm is promoting '\$5 portfolios for children under the age of 6'.]

...A NEW breed of novice is set to swamp the sharemarket and potentially take private share ownership in N[Z] to a new high. But these novices are not like those of 10 years ago, when green-horns bought shares on the strength of a tip from a neighbour, got horribly burnt, and fled the market. Now, all they will have done is to simply tick a box on a form provided by their life insurance company requesting shares instead of cash, and pop it in the post. They know little about the market and have probably never dealt with a broker. They are becoming shareholders for no other reason than they've been given the opportunity to swap their membership in a mutual society... for free shares... “By any account, small N[Z] investors were more ravaged by the crash of '87 than those in any other country... Having been so bitten, they will naturally be shy, but this development (life companies becoming public companies) can only be a positive in that healing process. Just how positive, we don't yet know. But I am sure it will not be another negative.” The negatives as far as private shareholding was concerned were seen in the float of power companies back in 1994-95, when power companies quickly bought back free shares issued to thousands of first-timers... In 1991, around 40% of the value of

our sharemarket was in the hands of smaller, private shareholders. That has now dropped to around 18%... Registry Managers, which looks after the share registries of about 85% of N[Z] companies, calculates around 350,000 N[Z]ers, or one in every 10, owns shares. But demutualising life offices have the potential to change that... AMP, due to list on the sharemarket in the second half of 1998, will be the daddy of them all. It has between 350,000 and 400,000 N[Z] policyholders and, hence, potential shareholders.

...DEMOGRAPHIC changes throughout the developed world resulting in a much greater proportion of retirees has created a growing awareness and concern about retirement funding. We see this in N[Z] with the debate about compulsory superannuation, while in the U[S] it has manifested itself in a dramatically increased interest in saving. These American savings are chasing the historically abnormally high returns on the sharemarket there. This has created a number of excesses that need highlighting, and a market that may strike a chord with a lot of N[Z] investors. N[Z]... is in something of a unique situation compared to other sharemarkets as it still sits well below its pre-'87 crash levels. It is now hard to identify the crash on longer term charts of the Dow Jones... Footsie (Britain) or Nikkei (Japan) indexes as the rapid recovery and subsequent substantial highs leaves the crash as a brief, albeit deep, correction in one of the longest bull markets seen... Having recovered from its steepest bear market since the Great Depression, in 1974 the sharemarket climbed a wall of worry from low valuations and low expectations to finally rising with the full support and expectation of most everyone... The major question for domestic N[Z] investors is: did our bear market end in 1990, or is there still room for more pain if the largest market in the world (U[S]) is perhaps only now starting to peak? To answer this, given the magnitude of N[Z]'s '80s bull market, a very long term perspective is required... After much research it has finally been put together using monthly data released annually from 1926 by the Department of Statistics and a combination of the [old Barclay's and new] NZSE40 indices... The chart shows that for 50 years – 1930 to 1980 – the N[Z] market was in a very steady uptrend with tight boundaries marking overvaluation and undervaluation. It wasn't until 1983 that the market started to dramatically disregard where it had come from and start the parabolic rise that would achieve in four years what it would take Wall St until now to achieve. Any market that is driven by people and therefore fear and greed tends to correct extremes. A correction can ultimately travel as far in the opposite direction, but this process can take a long time. Other major bear markets have taken up to 12 years or more. The bear market in N[Z] after 1987 may only have corrected the immediately preceding parabolic rise. But what if that rise was the final blow off of the much longer bull market that started at the 1932 low? Then a much longer bear market would be required that would bring the market back to a "fair" historic valuation or even an undervaluation as seen in the 1950s and 1970s. While it seems hard now to imagine what could cause this sort of move in N[Z], given that it hasn't enjoyed the same post-1990 bull market as the rest of the world, it's even harder to see N[Z] holding up if the rest of the world were to suffer a long overdue bear market. A few snapshots of the current situation on Wall Street may give some N[Z]ers a sense of déjà vu, and given the overall size of the US market and the heavy ripple effect it can have, some reason for continued prudence and some scepticism. The bull market in the US is now one of the longest. Economic expansion is continuing, inflation is at its lowest level in decades, the budget deficit is shrinking, the dollar is in its strongest rise since 1985 and the US leads the world in technology and efficiency. This sounds like the best of all possible worlds and has resulted in a widespread acclaim for a new "Golden Era". Now experts are working to justify the market's lofty valuations by adjusting previously valid tools to reduce how expensive the market looks... Ironically, all this is occurring after 20 years without a bear market. This has raised the US public's expectations and... its interest in the market to unprecedented levels. A total of 43% of all households now own shares and surveys show that they expect returns for the next 10 years to match the abnormal 14%-15% of the last 10... A total of 90% of all the money in mutual funds is from new investments made over just the last five years. Caution and fear are almost totally absent from the US market now... If the extremes in the US now are at all what the peak in N[Z] was like, then the risk of its first bear market for over 20 years is high. The increased global reach of US investors mean the effect of this will be more than a ripple around the world.

...[a billionaire US] financier... fears that the world stock markets' bull run will be followed by a massive crash... "Lots of the new investors have little experience of stock markets. If these inexperienced investors are all seized by panic and quit the market together, there will be a crash,"...

A DECADE ago when another US bull sharemarket was gathering pace, comparisons were made between circumstances then and the 1920s, the time of the previous accelerating sharemarket rise... This became a more popular pastime the longer the 1980s' sharemarket rise tracked that of the 1920s. Once the 1987 crash so neatly tracked that of October 1929 it seemed almost inevitable to many that a depression, or at least a severe recession, must follow. Hordes of investors cashed in their mutual funds in the US during late 1987, vowing never to invest again with the future so clearly mapped out in front of them... Of course, once recognition of the future had become this widespread the market was almost certain to follow a different path. And it did. By late 1988 the market hadn't started a second decline, the economy hadn't started to collapse and the 1920s' road map for the market became useless. It was certainly an interesting period that clearly showed that history can repeat itself for short periods, particularly in emotional markets and times... What is most interesting is that history may be repeating itself again... How similar are the last five years to the 1920s and 1980s? In all three moves the first 18 months saw a steadily rising market. The next 12 months was a period of consolidation, with a range of 50% of the previous rise. For the next five quarters the markets accelerated, followed in 1986 and 1996 by six months of consolidation... [T]he first quarters of 1929, 1987 and 1996 saw about a 10% correction. In all cases the market quickly recovered from this and in 1929 and 1987 the markets peaked within five months. One major difference between now and 1987 is that the resemblance between the current bull market and that of the 1980s has been generally unrecognised, even though the crash was less than 10 years ago. That is nothing compared to the nearly 60 years between the last two crashes. Certainly memories have got progressively shorter the higher the market has risen. Perhaps the eventual breaking down of the pattern in 1988 has stopped others from looking for similarities again. The most worrying feature of all is that because the pattern did break down in 1988 and the market left the crash behind as a brief correction, the public that vowed never to invest again has "learnt" that a correction is [a] great buying opportunity, not a portent of worse to come. If history was to repeat itself, the current bull market in [the US] should end soon and begin falling sharply before the end of August. In both 1929 and 1987, the initial drop took the market down to the level it was 12 months earlier – about a 20%-30% fall. This all sounds most unlikely. However, the market rarely accommodates most people by following its hoped-for or anticipated path.

...The lowest US unemployment rate in 24 years sparked... Wall St stock and bond markets on Friday. The Dow Jones... closed... at a record 7435.78... which eclipsed the mark set on May 27.

...YET another U[S] market watcher was in town last week predicting a 10% correction in super-hot Wall St, with implications for financial markets here. But can we believe him? ...[he] is the latest in a line of visiting US experts who have been saying that sort of thing since early 1996. But Wall St has powered on, with the Dow Jones... index rising more than 1000 points – or 15% – this year. What has changed to finally make imminent the long-awaited day of reckoning? If he had to pick a single factor, [he] would point to the unexpected fall in the US unemployment rate to 4.8%, which had raised the possibility of inflation as workers pressed for higher wages. And he said all the rules of thumb were suggesting the US economy was growing unsustainably... "It will take two or three quarters before the inflationary impact of the unemployment figures works its way through. But the fact is the US economy is inflating, fed by consumer demand, high wages and appreciating financial assets. I believe the US Federal Reserve will respond, very likely some time between August and December, and when it does financial markets will be hit hard." ...N[Z] and AUS[n] fund managers will be hoping [he] is right. Earlier this year they decided it would be best to go underweight in North American shares in anticipation of higher returns elsewhere.

...Last week the Dow Jones... briefly popped over the 7800 mark. It wasn't that long ago that the Dow eclipsed the 7000 mark (February 13) or even 6000 (October 14, 1996). The latest rally has extended a bull market that began in October 1990. The Dow has climbed 226% since then – the longest period without a 10% decline since 1914... Some analysts, meanwhile, are revising their forecasts for the Dow, predicting it will pass the 8000 mark later this year. "This is a lot like the late 1920s' blow-off that preceded the famous market crash," said... [a] chief stock strategist... "Even though the market is very expensive, it is going higher." He... wouldn't be surprised to see the Dow top 8500... but it was not time to gamble by pouring more money into stocks... [T]he Federal Reserve, alarmed at how much stock wealth was encouraging consumer spending, would raise rates to cool the market and the overheating economy. [The] treasury secretary said: "My sense is we're in a remarkable period right now." Investors had to weigh the combination of economic and monetary conditions... "and I think conditions are likely to be good at least as far into the future as I want to look... Maybe the sharemarket is too low relative to your view of conditions, maybe it's too high, or maybe it's at the right place. What[the] Federal Reserve Chairman... was doing in the speech in which he raised the question of 'irrational exuberance' was reminding people... what the risks are." [One] fund manager... said the sharemarket was proving to be a "runaway freight train...". He said stocks had broken all conceivable valuation parameters. "We are in the brave new world. As a value investor, this market is extremely challenging, uncomfortable and distressing... Maybe one day risk and fear will re-enter the marketplace... [I]nvestors are driving prices to levels that are going to prove to be unsustainable." [A] professor at University of California-Berkeley, [who is a] former chief financial adviser to [the] President... said... "We are in uncharted territory in some ways, and in other ways we're not." One major factor she said set the current economy apart from past expansions was the emergence of technology. But she had a warning: "I worry that an increasing number of people are in the marketplace, and that those people as a consequence (of never having lived through a major correction) might have expectations about future gains which may be disappointed..."

...The bulls were running on the sharemarket yesterday, rocketing the NZSE-40 to a post-crash high. After months of lagging behind[the] world... enthusiasm finally flowed into the market and pushed the NZSE-40 up 58.74 points to 2501.96 on hefty turnover of \$128 million... But with overseas markets pushing new highs, there was a certain amount of catch-up in yesterday's rally. While the Dow Jones and the all-ordinaries indices are now trading above their pre-crash peaks, the NZSE-40[still] is not... Yesterday's rise pipped the previous post-crash high of 2455, which was reached in September 1989, when [an AUSn funds management company] spent \$200 million-plus buying up N[Z] stocks only to see the market slump when its order was completed...

The puzzle as to why... [a NZ] entrepreneur... has spent \$A264 million... buying a stake in the ever-shrinking A[US]n foods group, Burns Philp, has come to the fore... after the latest round of bad news... [He]'s not respected or feared enough for people to trust that he has spotted something they have missed... [The entrepreneur], who holds a 19.9[%] stake in the company, is already down around \$40 million on his 250Ac entry price... (47c above the last trade)... after the shares dipped to 216c on Monday before they were suspended ahead of yesterday's announcement... [of] a harsher-than-expected writedown of the company's herb and spices business... Most had been expecting it to be written down to between \$A350 million and \$400 m... But the company took a more drastic step... down by \$700 m... to \$150 m... The writedown brings the company's total net loss after abnormal items for the year to... \$A873 m... Analysts were expecting the... group's shares to plummet when trading opened today... Burns Philp is [his] first investment since he sold Whitcoulls for around \$NZ320 m... last year. The bulk of that booty has been shelled out on Burns Philp... [F]rom an operational point of view the... 117-year old... company still has good underlying businesses... It is the largest producer of yeast in the world... [However, with] Burns Philp now riding on the charity of the banks... [his] investment might be in for a further buffeting.

...When [a NZer] booked a cool \$320 million profit on the sale of Whitcoulls in July last year, he said, "You can be sure I have not cashed up to put my money in the bank." The funds gathered interest for a year before he came true to his word... However, that fateful move by one of N[Z]'s wealthiest men has so far cost him \$191 million following yesterday's 126Ac plunge in Burns Philp's share price to 90c... If [he] does not have... a partner... lined up, or an unfriendly party comes aboard, he stands to be a pawn in a game in which he had set out to be king... At 90c, Burns Philp is valued at \$477 million... [K]nown in N[Z] for his thorough research, [he] must be kicking himself as his... investment would have given him virtual control... It is a shame that Burns Philp is not into poultry, because [he] would be right in his element. He is the biggest turkey strutting the bourse... [However, he] is not the only loser... As one of the nation's major wealth creators, his setback will adversely affect [NZ's] current account deficit... The A[US]n Securities Commission (ASC) said yesterday it was examining... the... Burns Philps & Co \$A700 million... writedown... of its herbs and spices assets... [Meanwhile, another NZer] has about \$47 million to play with after selling just under half his shares in US Office Products... "I could have sold all my shares if I had wanted to but I have kept a large investment in the company." ...[he] was US Office Products biggest shareholder after the sale of Blue Star, the[NZ] office supplies company, which he built from scratch in 1990 after leaving a post of divisional manager with Xerox Corporation... US Office Products shares have traded between \$US25 and \$US44 in the last year.

...Disney[']s... chairman... cashed in [his company stock] options to reap a windfall of \$US565 million... last week.

...THREE associates... through a sale and buyback procedure... are to make a total of £394 million by selling their holdings in Adidas, the highly successful sportswear company... Adidas released trading figures alongside the sale. It expects to post a pre-tax profit of not less than £83.9 million in the first quarter of this year – compared with £61 million in the same period in 1996. Sales in the first quarter rose 43[%] over a year earlier to £600 million... [T]he only Briton among the [three associates]... is said to have netted £427 million in total from his Adidas investment.

...Yeah, that was my best deal. I bought a 12% stake in... 1991 for \$1.9 million. Five years later the company was sold for \$720 million.

...CONVENTIONAL wisdom says hold on to your shares long enough and you'll make money. But analysis of five-year returns from [NZ's] 40 biggest listed companies shows actual results depend very much on which shares you hold. An investor buying shares five years ago... would have made an average pre-tax annualised return of 18%. But returns from individual shares differed markedly... The worst was meat, losing 7% a year. The best sector to be in was finance and banking (50%), followed by building (42%), media and communications (35%) and energy and fuel (33%). Still, investing in shares five years ago has proved to be a smarter move than playing safe and buying government bonds. A five-year government bond bought in 1992 would have returned 10% a year.

...The A[US]n Sharemarket has over time consistently outperformed traditional forms of investment such as property and fixed interest. Thus the A[US]n Sharemarket represents one of the best investment opportunities for N[Z] investors in the world today. So why are you not making the most of it? Chances are, it's because you haven't got the \$50,000 or more that'll give you a really worthwhile investment. Also you might be concerned that the risks are too high, or that you haven't got the necessary financial expertise to buy the right shares. In which case Macquarie's Geared Equities Investment is perfect for you... Macquarie provide you with A\$50,000 or more, which you can use to buy a range of over 70 blue chip shares for a one, two, three or five year loan term. What's more the money you borrow is protected. So if, during your loan term, the value of any of your shares falls below their original purchase price you will not be responsible for that loss. Macquarie will simply take back the unprofitable shares as full repayment of that portion of your loan. Macquarie will not offset any unprofitable shares against those that have made a profit.

...The A[US]n sharemarket jumped 1.3[%] to a record high yesterday as money continued to be shifted away from resources and into industrial stocks, particularly the banks... [By the way, a] third of A[US]n adults – 4.7 million – own shares, and of those, a third earn less than \$44,000, according to the A[US]n Stock Exchange's latest annual report. The average share portfolio value is \$37,000, but half the shareholders have less than \$11,000... The N[ZSE] does not keep comparable figures...

['The NZ and AUSn exchanges are in the preliminary stages of merger discussions. The NZ Government has already said it will help with any legislative changes. There are a range of possibilities in how joining with AUS could be done, said NZ's Minister of Commerce. The final shape of the merged entity could be one exchange and one set of rules for both countries. It could be the same rules with two exchanges or there could simply be protocols. The chairman of the local exchange said members of the NZ exchange would get an update at the annual meeting on Wednesday. The chairman says the NZ sharemarket's lack-lustre performance will not be solved by merging with its AUSn counterpart.' ■] **A combination of heavy buying, positive economic news and the potential of a large cash injection from offshore** [has] catapulted the A[US]n sharemarket to another record closing high... at 2745.9... Despite the sharemarket's claims to the contrary, there has been no investment safer or more profitable than houses... [R]esidential property has performed 50[%] better than the A[US]n sharemarket over the last 10 years, according to ANZ's *Investment Monitor*. But the report warns that over the short to medium term, the sharemarket has reversed that statistic, outperforming residential property by a similar margin. The danger now... is that global equity markets have risen too high and could be set to fall. "Investor optimism has [caused the US] equity market to double over 30 months. These sort of returns cannot be sustained in the medium term,"... said [the] ANZ Funds management chief investment officer...

When the Dow Jones average index of 30 industrials fell 192.25 points on a recent Monday and regained 153.80 on Tuesday, many financial journalists were prompted to use such verbs as "plunged", "plummeted", "soared" and "skyrocketed" to describe the three-figure moves. Such words [are] wearing thin, not only because of overuse but because price changes of this size are becoming more common place and therefore less significant... [Here's a piece of] advice for anybody troubled by the Dow's recent fluctuations and those of the market over all: "If you think it would do any good, go ahead and worry about it – but psychiatrist bills are expensive." ...people who feared a declining market should not worry about huge drops, even several in a row. A market in a decline – extended or short – presented the opportunity to buy stocks more cheaply. Of course, it [is] becoming more difficult to tell whether a market downturn [has] begun... When the Dow fell 700 points – or about 10% from March to April, there were many who said they believed a long-term slide had begun. Considering the Dow's rise since then, however, apparently that was not the case... As the Dow and the market rise in value, 100 points translated into percentage terms become smaller... A 100-point drop in the Dow when it stood at 2000 would have been a 5% drop. At the index's recent level of 7900-plus, that same 100 points translated to 1.2%. When the Dow fell 508 points in the 1987 crash, the fall was 22.61%. At 7900, the drop was only 6.3%... international sharemarkets [have] been returning around 7.7% annually for the past 10 [years]...

So far this year, Russian stock indexes have far outstripped all other general market indexes worldwide. The Russian/Stake Press general index of the 100 largest public companies has risen 196.42[%], while Brazil's Bovespa index is second at 76.13[%]. The Russian index also was the world's top performer last year with a gain of 142.8[%].

...China is rushing] to replace strict communist central planning with a market-style economy. Investors ranging from rich entrepreneurs to taxi drivers have pumped funds into volatile infant stock markets in Shanghai and the southern city of Shenzhen... A rush to the sharemarkets by China's leading companies is predicted to change the super-power's economic drivers within 15-20 years... [In related news, the US] sharemarket's main indicator breezed through the 8000-point milestone on Wednesday[, closing]... 63.17 points higher at a record 8038.88... and the Nasdaq composite index scored its highest one-day gain ever.

...Wall St stocks fell from their dizzying heights on Friday as investors cashed-in profits to end a record-shattering week... The Dow's fall came only a couple of days after it topped 8000 for the first time... "Without a doubt, it's profit-taking," said... [a] managing director of institutional trading... "This market is nervous at the moment,"... [a] chief investment strategist... said... The A[US]n sharemarket followed the lead of Wall St to close down, with profit taking and figures arbitrating causing the fall.

...The Dow Jones index rose to a record high on Tuesday after[the] Federal Reserve chairman... did not deliver the... speech that Wall St had feared. The Dow closed 154.93 points higher at a record 8061.65... and set... its 33rd milestone for the year with its fourth-heaviest gain in its history. In his Congressional testimony on the economy, [the chairman's] speech was devoid of the mentions of market bubbles and irrational exuberance – the sort of alarm that sent financial markets reeling last year... In LONDON, shares rebounded from two days of heavy losses... tracking gains on Wall St... Market nerves were steadied from the opening by Monday's firm close on Wall St...

NOW that the Dow... has punctured the 8000-point mark, the debate has switched to whether this milestone will be seen as a new blastoff point, a grazing pasture or a cliff. The atmosphere is a lot more upbeat than a year ago, when the market fell after a barrage of corporate profit warnings... But another rally on Wall St would push the ratio of share price to earnings beyond traditional comfort levels. "It's moved beyond the realm of predictability," said... a market-analyst... "All the technical indicators are off the map. One by one they've fallen by the wayside. I don't know what to look at to say this thing is over-done. It'll go down when it's ready to go down. Sooner or later, people will say, 'It's too high, I won't pay that much'. But tell me when that time will be." Many experts said this bull market was behaving more like an animal about to embark on a stampede rather than settle down for a rest. The Dow's record-setting rise had been accompanied by heavy volume and growing interest in mid-sized and smaller companies. The implication was that more investors were venturing beyond the perceived safety of the blue-chip sector as they sought values in a pricey market. That type of surge in investor confidence can result in what's called a "melt-up" or a "buying panic". "The Dow industrials could explode for several hundred points in a few days," said... [a] chief technical-analyst... He cautioned that "any subsequent sell-off would be accompanied by fearsome free-falls"... When the Dow hit 7000 in February, most observers expected the Federal Reserve to protect against higher inflation by slowing the economy – and profits – with a sharp boost in interest rates. Instead, inflation had eased and the Fed lifted rates only slightly. "If earnings are good, Fed monetary policy is good and inflation is still behaving, you'll see more multiple expansion," said... [a] chief investment-strategist... [However, someone else said: "If the] Fed... chairman... was concerned about a bubble with the Dow at 6200, what's he going to think at 8000?"

...Stocks rolled to another record close on Tuesday, boosted by a strong performance in the bond market... The Dow... closed... at... 8174.53.

...Stocks slumped [yesterday] as investors – lulled by recent signs of mild inflation – were shocked by surprisingly strong reports on U[S] employment and manufacturing activity. The market again proved its resilience, however, and shook off most of the day's fall to close with moderate losses... [at] 8194.04... The late recovery all but erased an early sell-off that dragged the Dow down as many as 120 points... [B]ut even so, analysts pointed to the heavy early losses as evidence that the market was ill-prepared to withstand any unpleasant surprises... [Incidentally,] British and American investors who have poured money into Asia's markets, have seen much of their capital evaporate in the past year as it has become apparent the region is living beyond its means.

...South-east Asia's sharemarkets are in crisis. A stampede to sell stocks in Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines has wreaked havoc not seen since the Gulf War or the October 1987 crash. Over the past two trading days, the Philippines market has fallen more than 12[%]... Thailand about 5[%], Indonesia about 10[%] and Malaysia more than 7[%]. Confidence is badly shaken and will take time to mend. Malaysia is the main culprit behind this week's turmoil... This week's rampage... came after Malaysia's P[M]... sanctioned rules to curb what he termed was speculative selling on the stock exchange. The region's markets toppled like dominoes. Malaysia's new rule governing the trading of 100 stocks require those wanting to sell to first deposit them into the Central Depository, a warehouse to clear scriptless trading. Those buying must pay up within two days after the trade, against the normal five-day settlement period. While [the PM] wages war with the speculative bogeyman, international fund managers, fed up with Malaysia's whimsical handling of the stockmarket's problems, are making a mass exit... What international investors dislike is Malaysia's insistence of approving mega projects which add no value to the economy while the current account

deficit grows... Malaysia is in a race to build the world's largest hydroelectric dam... mega bridges and mega malls. Economists have advised that Malaysia should first address its current account problems... "We don't know who is advising the P[M] but he is not listening to us," [said] one senior Government official...

South-east Asia's stockmarkets, once the darlings of international investors, are now pariahs following a region-wide currency attack which spooked investors already worried by Asia's inability to digest its rapid industrial growth. Over the past week, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, and to a lesser extent, the Philippines, saw their stockmarket and currency markets sold down... Malaysia's stocks are down 32[%] in the year to date in U[S] dollar terms... Some regional market watchers described last week's selling as a sort of capital flight... But... NatWest Market's regional economist, said that Malaysia had not done enough to cool the property, sharemarket and consumer bubbles in the economy. Offshore sellers were merely correcting what they saw as a mispriced market, he said. With industrial production growing faster than exports, Malaysia was uncompetitive. "Offshore people can't affect change in the domestic policy... But they can certainly whack the currency because it is internationally traded. What they are basically telling Malaysia is that, either you fix it on your end, or we'll fix it for you on the external end." ...Better returns from other emerging markets, like Eastern Europe and Latin America, also reduced foreign interest in the region while the U[S] stockmarket's bull run had kept funds preoccupied at home... [However, the] Singapore-based regional strategist for[the US-based brokerage company] Merrill Lynch... likes the Thai stockmarket and thinks the country's economic woes could be over.

...A FORMER stock exchange messenger has become one of London's highest earners. [The person] who began his career as a tea boy in the exchange, is believed to have been awarded a \$9.3 million bonus in his job as deputy head of American-owned investment bank Merrill Lynch International. The bonus is one of the highest known in London, where more than \$1.75 billion was handed out in bonuses at the end of last year. The Bank of England, still smarting over the collapse of Barings two years ago at the hands of[a] "rogue trader" ...last week fired a broadside at the high-risk, high-reward bonus culture. Its warning came as another "rogue trader" surfaced at NatWest, which announced a \$116m trading loss in the department that traded in interest rate options... After the spate of incidents where lone "rogue traders" caused serious financial damage... the authorities are trying to discourage the adrenalin rush caused by the prospect of huge bonuses. [However, l]ast Christmas, around 1500 London bankers and brokers were promised incentives of more than \$1.16m each... [The former tea boy] declined to comment on his payout. "I do not believe these things should be personalised," he said. It is thought some of his bonus is to be paid in New York, rather than London, and is partly in shares in Merrill, which he will have to hold for five years before he can sell them. These are common arrangements among American firms to stop top executives from leaving when they have made their millions. The payout came after a record year for shares in London...

Thirty Wall St brokerages have agreed to pay \$US910 million to settle a class action lawsuit alleging they colluded to fix prices on the Nasdaq market, says the counsel for the plaintiffs. Many of the financial world's best-known names are involved in the proposed settlement. According to the *Wall St Journal*, the biggest payout – about \$100 million – would come from Merrill Lynch... [Meanwhile, the t]hree... cases of insider trading this week are a reminder that the crime is very much alive and difficult to prevent, securities industry executives and attorneys say. Federal authorities charged former employees at J.P. Morgan and Co, Bankers Trust Securities and Smith Barney with trading on confidential information to make profits of more than \$1 million over the last three years. "...you are never going to stop it," said... a securities attorney who used to work for the Securities and Exchange Commission. "There are leaks all over the place, and people are willing to take the risk." ...Ironically... two of the people charged this week... were former compliance officers, employees responsible for preventing insider trading by colleagues at their security firms... Active SEC insider trading investigations have doubled in the past decade to 339 last year... Several factors accounted for the increase. The record level of corporate mergers provided ample temptation for some investors to make big money using information not available to others. The seven-year bull market, fuelled by the retirement savings of... baby boomers, had also boosted the number of investors and potential inside traders.

...IF YOU want exact dates for the long-expected boilover on Wall Street, [a] former global equities trader... has some for you – any time between the day after tomorrow and October 1. So hit the phone, big gambler. The word for your broker is sell, sell, sell! At the same time, [the former]... head of... Merrill Lynch's US equities business in London... admits, he has no way of really knowing what will happen. So don't rush the phones yet. It's just that his comparative plotting of U[S] share prices before the crashes of 1929 and 1987 have shown an uncanny similarity to what [is] happening on Wall Street now.

...The Dow Jones index... closed 247.37 points... lower... on Friday, partly shaken by an earnings warning from consumer-products giant, Gillette... It was the Dow's... steepest points fall since October 19, 1987 – the so-called "Black Monday" when the Dow sank 508 points – or 23[%] – to 1738.74. In percentage terms, however, Friday's fall... [was only 3.1%. In London, the] FTSE-100 index shed 2.5[%] – ...its heaviest one-day percentage drop since October 1992... For its part the... N[Z] sharemarket... closed just 1[%] lower. However, local investors]... are bracing for big falls when sharemarkets [overseas reopen] today...

US stocks continued their worst month in seven years, as concern that Coca-Cola Co and the other big stocks that led the market's surge to records are too expensive given their earnings prospects... [T]he Dow has fallen 7.5[%] since its August 7 record high of 8340.14... A market correction is usually considered serious beyond 10[%]... But some analysts said that with more people back buying and selling in the markets... this week after vacations and the holiday weekend... volatility could ease...

Financial markets around the world suffer less severe shocks these days from a sharp drop in the Dow... than they did in the 1987 Crash[, the]... chairman of the New York Stock Exchange, said yesterday. A Dow correction has "a psychological impact" on traders and investors in foreign markets but "they have become more sophisticated in separating out cause and effect. They look at value drivers behind their local share markets." ...U[S] investors' appetite for foreign stocks would double in the next few years to \$US750 billion, he said. To fulfil its ambition to be the first global stock exchange, the NYSE is seeking more foreign listings. They have risen from fewer than 100 in 1990 to 326 today. With domestic stocks, the NYSE has about 3000 listings. [The NYSE hopes to attract more foreign listings by 'extending the Dow's trading hours from 5am to midnight, thereby expanding its reach.'

...This week the] Federal Reserve chairman... sent U[S] share and bond prices tumbling when, appearing before a Congressional committee, he cast some doubt on the sustainability of the country's strong economic performance. Some observers have looked at the fact that the N[Z] sharemarket is now more than 50[%] owned by overseas investors (for blue-chip stocks the ratio is even higher) and concluded that that makes us more vulnerable... [than] 10 years ago... should there be another landslide on Wall St... [Speaking of landslides, Hong Kong's] Hang Seng index has fallen for five straight days[, creating]... a total drop of... 13.65[%]. The chief reason for the fall has been sales or redemption of Asia-invested mutual funds by overseas investors wary of the outlook for Asian currencies, interest rates and equity markets... [The slide comes as] China Telecom... is set to shake the... sharemarket... with the bourse's biggest-ever initial public offering.

...The Hang Seng index ended a five-day losing streak yesterday, closing 309.68 points, or 2.31[%], higher... but trading still showed wide and confusing intraday swings in sentiment... In TOKYO, stocks closed higher but sentiment remained bearish[, while in New York the]... Dow Jones... chalked up its highest one-day-points gain in history[– closing]... 257.36 points higher... [The figure] topped the 186.84-points rise on October 21, 1987... The[N[Z] sharemarket ploughed through its post-crash high... and it closed eyeing 2600... London's stock market closed at a record high... advancing by 160.1 points or 3.16% to end at 5225.6 points. It followed[a] report... of possible British participation in the European single currency much sooner after its 1999 launch than had been thought likely... [However, the British PM's] office dismissed the report as "speculation."

...LAST month, when... Malaysia's [PM] accused... the international financier[(r:p294, ln37)] of being a "moron" and trying to force a devaluation by speculating against the Malaysian ringgit, nobody paid any attention... But when he then accused [the financier] and others of trying to undermine the Malaysian sharemarket and announced that short selling was "akin to insider trading", the world took notice... The rout sent ripples around the world, helping to drive European and American markets lower. [This caused Asia to take another] tumble, with Jakarta dropping [a further] 16.8%... Europe and America again followed the downward trend, awakening fears that a sharp global correction could be under way. The Sultan of Brunei... waded into[the Asian] stock markets... buying hundreds of millions of pounds of shares in an effort to stop the regional collapse... Most Wall Street analysts see no reason to panic... But what does worry some analysts is that Asian investors may begin pulling their money out of US treasury bonds and repatriating funds to prop up wobbly finances. If that happens on a large scale it could be catastrophic for America, which has a low 4.4% savings rate and would have to jack up interest rates to attract new buyers. That, in turn, could be a signal for a much bigger sell-off in world share markets.

...Malaysia's P[M]... has a novel idea to prop up Malaysia's bourse by buying shares from local investors at a premium, and has set aside \$31.95 billion to do that. He will also buy shares from foreign sellers – but only at the market price. Global fund managers deride the move as nonsense. They say [the money] will quickly disappear down the plug hole and fail to stem a falling market. Earlier, [the PM] banned the short-selling of blue chip shares in an effort to prop up market confidence. All it did was send more foreign investors running.

...the Tokyo Stock Exchange yesterday... sank below 17,000 points for the first time since August 1995. Brokers attributed the fall to worries about the outlook for Japan's economy. The NZSE went in the opposite direction, closing at a post-crash record of 2612.90.

...WHEN sharebrokers around the country party tomorrow night to mark the 10th anniversary of the 1987 crash, they'll be drinking without fear... Doomsayers have had a field day pointing out uncanny similarities in trading patterns on Wall St today compared with 1987 and indeed 1929. But[, barring]... a bloodbath in the US... the Auckland Regional Stock Exchange... doesn't see any likelihood of a 1987 repeat... [Therefore,] if sharebrokers have a headache this Tuesday morning, it's likely to be nothing more than the after-effects of a few drinks the night before.

...Concerns over quarterly corporate earnings and a trade dispute caused blue-chip stocks... [on the] Dow Jones index... to fall 2.46[%]... 10 years after the October 1987 stockmarket crash... "A lot of things cause bear markets,"... [one analyst] said. "One thing that doesn't is the calendar."

...[yesterday the AUS]n... sharemarket plunged as much as 2.7[%] before recovering to end down 2.5... as... [the] Hong Kong bourse sank 14[%] in morning trade and panic selling spread to other Asian markets[, then]... touched off a world-wide chain reaction... that pulled London's FTSE-100... down by... £28 billion[, or 3.1%]... and Germany's... Dax index down 4.7[%]. NZ]... share prices plunged 5.35[%], the local market's]... largest points fall since the '87 Crash... wiping \$3 billion off the value of the market... The Dow Jones... closed 186.88 points lower...

CRASH, dammit, *The Economist* magazine urged global sharemarkets in an editorial in the issue for the week ending October 24. Market analysts had sniffed condescendingly at suggestions the 10th anniversary of the '87 crash had any bearing on what might happen 10 years later. Ridiculous to think anything as complex and hi tech as modern financial markets could be at the beck and call of something approaching superstition. But, as *The Economist* said, whether as tragedy or farce, the tendency of history to repeat itself is well documented. So come on the crash, "get it over quickly, is a common feeling – the sooner we can fill out boots with cheap shares." Hey presto!

...Landing home in Hong Kong yesterday... [the] head of the local government, stepped off the aircraft and said all would be well... The local stock market, slam-dunked by investors for a 23[%] fall in the first four days of this week, bounced up nearly 7[%] on the fifth. Crisis over? No. The Asian miracle growth story, too good to be true on the way up, is proving deeply damaging on the way down... Thanks to steep currency devaluations and \$US17 billion of IMF support for Thailand some semblance of stability returned earlier this month. But real economic change has yet to start, with every sign that politicians in Thailand are too weak willed and in Malaysia too angry with foreigners to take the necessary medicine. At least devaluations have made these countries more competitive again, conversely making China and Hong Kong less so... [E]vents this week were only the opening skirmish. The battle will be bloody for Hong Kong, particularly as Singapore and Taiwan caved in this week to devaluation... World financial markets are in for a rough ride.

...A new worry for world financial markets surfaced yesterday as the Hong Kong stock market lurched down again... [by 5.8%, which nearly wiped] out the market's... recovery on Friday... Trading was stopped... for the first time in the [Dow's] history... triggered by losses reaching 350 points... Trading resumed after half an hour. But it took just 25 minutes for the index to plummet another 200 points, triggering an hour-long halt that finished trading for the day... [The points total represented the Dow's] biggest ever one-day fall.

...The N[Z] sharemarket plummeted yesterday in its second-largest drop in history as fallout from Asian economic strife continued to ricochet around the world. The NZSE-40... closed down 12.46[%], worse than all expectations. This compares with 14.7[%] on... October 20, 1987... The sharemarket meltdown was greeted with surprise by institutional investors who saw it as a gross over-reaction to overseas events – not helped by retail investors spooked by memories of 1987... The A[USn sharemarket also] suffered one of its biggest plunges ever, with around \$27 billion wiped off the market's value... Shares in... Burns Philp tumbled again, to a low of A18c before recovering to A27.5c... Late bargain hunters lifted the market[, which has lost]... \$41 billion... in the past three days... In HONG KONG, stocks crashed to their biggest point loss ever... The Hang Seng index plunged 1438.31 points, or 13.70[%]... A Hong Kong science teacher, still clutching his share certificates, leapt 28 floors to his death after losing his savings... In LONDON... the FTSE 100 responded on opening with a slide of 9[%]. In related news, the]... automatic trading halts invented by two Harvard University professors after the 1987... crash... [to limit US investors' losses, has] left some analysts wondering if they had just delayed the inevitable. "The long halts actually did more harm than good," said one economist.

...First, the good news. Global stock market prices are heading back to realistic valuations... The U[S] was the biggest culprit... US shares were... last week... worth... 130[%] of the value of the net corporate assets they represented. That was three times the value a decade ago, twice the long-term average and the highest value since 1920. N[Z] escaped this euphoria because it suffered not a correction but a crash in 1987 and the years thereafter... but at least share market valuations remained realistic. Now the bad news. We can't stand in splendid isolation if the world losses its head. N[Z] equities, worth a mere 0.2[%] of world stockmarket valuations, are flotsam on a cruel sea... Lastly, the really good news. Either way, some foreign investors will quit N[Z] equities. Thus, we can buy back great chunks of corporate N[Z] at rock bottom prices.

...Ever more people in Hong Kong, devastated by losses on the stock market, have been jumping from buildings, hanging... or gassing themselves. This is despite assurances from Hong Kong's Chief Executive... that they have no reason to panic. [Meanwhile, for 'sharebrokers – who earn commissions on every sale – it's been their best week']

...Sharebrokers were talking warily of a "dead cat bounce" last night after the... NZSE40... staged its best comeback ever. The market... had improved 9.9[%] at the close... but brokers shied away from predicting the market's next move... Hong Kong's Hang Seng... made the largest rebound, surging 18.82[%] by the close of trading... Shares rose strongly... [on the] Dow Jones... to a record gain amid heavy volume... as investors swooped to buy shares, apparently convinced the impact of Asia's financial crisis would be limited on Wall St... A[US's sharemarket also]... did a backflip... as it recovered from Tuesday's \$27 billion loss and bargain hunters flooded the bourse... A total of 62,497 trades were recorded, 2497 more than the trading system's... capacity. This compared with a record 50,979 previously... "I believe we've seen the worst and people now realise there is nothing wrong with the economy in A[US or the US," one broker said. But the] Macquarie Bank head of equity trading... attributed the surge to "mums and dads" returning to the market... [L]arge institutional buying appeared not to be as strong. He predicted "a lot more turmoil."

...Wall St was cheered by... the US Federal Reserve [chairman's]... comments that recent market turmoil would eventually be seen as healthy. He also said that Asian economies should be able to sustain "above-average" economic growth "for a very long time." ...[However, his soothing] words... were not enough to keep Asian markets from falling[again] last night.

...FOR[local] investors, it was a week that began in hell and then climbed to heaven. Now experts are trying to decide whether purgatory is next on the list – and not just for shareholders. The average N[Z]er who does not own shares could still be hit by fall-out from sharemarket volatility through job losses, uncertain interest rates, lack of confidence and possibly lower economic growth... Half our manufactured exports go to A[US], whose economy was more exposed to Asia than N[Z]'s... Lower consumer confidence... could feed through to lower business confidence, which... was not as firm as bullish bank surveys revealed... [However, last] week's sharemarket gyrations did little to dent US confidence levels. A *Time/CNN* poll over the weekend found that 77[%] of those surveyed did not change their opinion... on the markets. And only 28[%] said they were now more worried about the country's economic future, compared with 46[%] who felt that way after the 1987 crash.

...DEEP within the DNA of every investor there's a gene that indicates investment stupidity. Unfortunately, most of us have it; our instinct is to do the wrong thing. We [sell on the rumour and buy on the news], which generally means we] buy when shares are high, and we sell when they're going down. The result: We shoot ourselves in the collective foot by cementing in place losses that would otherwise remain on paper only. Whether that maxim still holds true... after the momentous events of last week, depends on who you talk to. Fund managers... say small investors showed heartening maturity last week... "Our advisers took the initiative and rang clients on Tuesday morning to reassure them about value added to their investments in the past, and what was being done now to minimise any potential losses,"... [However,] the story is different... [according] to brokers... "Unfortunately we saw some pretty stupid selling on Tuesday when the market was at its worst... Unlike managed funds where you have to fill out forms to quit investments, it takes only a telephone call for brokers, and we have to complete orders that are given to us. Some people lost a lot of money and others made a lot. But that is the market place."

...The first little piggy went to market. His life savings were invested in blue stock... The second little piggy stayed home. She did the washing, stewed some rhubarb, went to the school to help with the "Trees for Survival" unit, came home, made muffins, wrote an article for the local paper on chemical poisons in the environment, planted a couple of dozen trees, weeded the potato bed and re-set the possum trap. After lunch she started to read the paper, but fell asleep before the Business Section... Before dinner, Piggy Three and Piggy Four went out to feed the chooks. They watched them rushing to the first dish, then racing to the next dish leaving the first dish half full, and then backwards and forwards, pushing and shoving, till every last pellet was eaten. "Just as well they lay eggs," said Piggy Four, "because they wouldn't get any credits for social responsibility." When they went inside, Piggy One and Piggy Two were watching the news. It was all about the market, slumps and slides, rallies and rises, predictions and prophecies. "Boring..." muttered the twins, [who] started arguing about how much it was worth to lay the table and do the dishes, and then went off to try to bribe Piggy Five to take over their chores for a week. Piggy Five was absorbed in two books – one on chaos theory and one on the bell curve... Over dinner Piggy One said he was worried about his blue chip nest egg. Piggy Two said it was silly to have all your eggs in one basket... Piggy Five said that her theory was that market forces could be explained, and probably predicted, by calculating intersection points between randomly generated fractals and a standardised bell curve. They all looked at her for a moment. "And anyway," she went on, "they all just behave like pigs in troughs. Or hens in feeding dishes... The Market Place is a Myth – a euphemism for insane, irrational greed on an international scale." There was a moment's silence, and then the rest of the family started talking all at once about *Shortland Street*...

Asian stocks are braced for another week of extreme volatility, with concern that instability in other world markets could put further pressure on the region's wildly fluctuating exchanges. A huge assistance package for Indonesia, engineered by the I[MF] and estimated at up to... \$US23 billion... was expected to offer a hint of stability to the region.

...The U[S] is ready to provide up to \$US3 b... as part of a back-up plan for an [IMF] loan package to help Indonesia regain its economic balance.

...Investors, fund managers, monetary authorities and government leaders have barely digested October's... turmoil – now more shocks have surfaced... Some Japanese financial institutions... are troubled... [and the IMF] this week investigates South Korea...

Angry South Korean investors demanded a halt in stock market trading as prices plunged yesterday to their lowest level in 10 years, with no signs of recovery... Dealers said the market was in serious trouble as panicky investors kept dumping shares in the belief that things would get worse once the IMF and the South Korean Government worked out details on an economic bailout package. - 1997

South Sea Bubble, speculative scheme intended to liquidate the national debt of England. A joint stock company, the South Sea Co., chartered 1711, was granted an annual interest payment and a monopoly of trade in the Pacific area in return for assuming the debt. Shares rose, 1719-20, to about ten times par value. Uncontrollable speculation was abruptly ended by attempts to prosecute rival and bogus companies; the crash ruined thousands. Inquiry revealed extensive fraud in the company's operations, involving cabinet members.

Thinking in money is always, in one way or another, trade or business thinking. It presupposes the productive economy of the land, and, therefore, is always primarily acquisitive... With money-traffic there appears between producer and consumer, as though between two separate worlds, the third party, the *middleman*, whose thought is dominated *a priori* by the business side of life. He forces the producer to offer, and the consumer to inquire of him. He elevates mediation to a monopoly and thereafter to economic primacy, and forces the other two to be "in form" in *his* interest, to prepare the wares according to *his* reckonings and to cheapen them under the pressure of *his* offers. He who commands this mode of thinking is the master of money. In all the Cultures evolution takes this road. Lysias informs us in his oration against the corn-merchants that the speculators at the Piraeus frequently spread reports of the wreck of a grain-fleet or of the outbreak of war, in order to produce a panic. In Hellenistic-Roman times it was a widespread practice to arrange for land to go out of cultivation, or for imports to be held in bond, in order to force prices up. In the Egyptian New Empire wheat-corners in the American style were made possible by a bill-discounting that is fully comparable with the banking operations of the West. Cleomenes, Alexander the Great's administrator for Egypt, was able to book transactions to get the whole corn-supply into his own hands, thereby producing a famine far and wide in Greece and raking in immense gains for himself.

Futures, commercial contracts calling for the purchase or sale of specified quantities of commodities at specified future dates. The origin of futures contracts was in trade in agricultural commodities, and the term commodity is used to define the underlying asset even though the contract is frequently completely divorced from the product. It therefore differs from a simple forward purchase or sale in the cash market, which involves actual delivery of the commodity at the agreed time in the future... The common characteristics of futures markets are that they can be made in any commodity that enters into trade on a scale large enough to provide the necessary liquidity, that is available to a broadly standard specification, and that is traded in free market conditions that allow price fluctuations based on the interplay of supply and demand factors and that preclude dominant producers from controlling the market... There are two basic types of traders in a futures market: hedgers and speculators. Both are necessary to the market in order to generate a sufficient volume of two-way business. Hedgers seek to avoid or minimize the financial risks associated with their current commercial activity by in effect taking an insurance policy in the shape of a future contract against adverse price or interest rate movements. On the other hand, the speculator, in the expectation of making a profit, seeks risk by committing his funds to back his own view of higher or lower prices or interest rates. It is the speculators who supply the necessary liquidity to the futures markets and are

instrumental in allowing buyers to be matched with sellers, although the actual contracts are made through the market's central clearinghouse. It is the intervention of the clearinghouse which removes the credit risk and permits standardization of contracts to allow easy buying and selling... Futures developed originally to provide cheap forms of banking and insurance... Bankers and financiers can also use futures to insure against changes in interest rates and currency exchange rates.

Money, which in itself has essentially no value, exerts more power over human lives than any single commodity... Theoretically, the economic value of money is determined by the government that issues it. At one time in the U[S] the value of a dollar was pegged to a certain amount of gold or silver held in reserve by the federal government. Ultimately, however, its value is determined by the law of supply and demand. Money is worth what someone is willing to give in return for it. Because the U[S] government has so determined, a dollar is always worth one hundred cents, but, at different times, it may be worth eight, ten, or eighteen eggs – depending on their availability.

The long-term trend of most currencies in modern times has been inflationary, and almost all important currencies have been devalued, a number of them repeatedly. In contrast to this common reason for devaluation, the devaluation of 1934 in the U.S. aimed primarily at forestalling deflationary tendencies by raising prices. Devaluation may involve the issuing of a new monetary unit... One result of currency inflation is that official exchange rates with foreign currencies become unrealistic, overvaluing the currency's comparative purchasing power in world markets. The currency becomes undesirable to foreign businesses or governments when used, at these official exchange rates, to settle debts owing to them. Devaluation makes such a currency competitive (realistically valued) once more.

1984... Certainty in the financial and business community that the new Labour Government would devalue the NZ currency resulted in a serious balance of payments crisis. Muldoon was reluctant to accept Treasury and Reserve Bank advice to devalue and it appeared that there might be a constitutional as well as a financial crisis if he refused to do what Labour, which had not yet taken office, instructed him to do. However, Muldoon reluctantly took[the Labour leader David] Lange's advice and devalued by 20%. At the same time all restrictions on interest rates were lifted, leading to considerable rises... Eventually the currency was "floated".

It seems that N[Z]ers are starting to get bored with keeping down inflation. And the means of keeping it down are likely to continue to divide Aucklanders from other N[Z]ers. The]... Governor of the Reserve Bank... would... like to see the dollar come down soon. And when the country has only one currency to work with, and N[Z] still wants low inflation, then the dollar coming down means interest rates have to go up. N[Z]'s largest city may soon be asked to sacrifice its low-interest-led boom for the benefit of the rest of N[Z]... Much of Auckland's economy right now is thriving on the fact that N[Z]'s monetary policy is having relatively less effect on interest rates than on the high dollar. The longer a low-interest, high-dollar regime goes on the more likely Auckland house prices are to keep on rising, for example. But the sooner a high-interest, low-dollar regime arrives, the better for most of the rest of the country... But need there be only one currency to work with? Can a civilised country have more than one currency? Advocates of micro-currencies... claim there is often conflict when different cities and regions have to share one currency and that for most of human history it was normal for each city to have a currency of its own. Today, a local money need not replace the national money people use every day. A micro-currency for Auckland would be something that would circulate in the city alongside, not instead of, national dollars... An Auckland micro-economy would enable participating local companies to put extra credit to work even if interest rates had to tighten nationally. It would allow Auckland to fund its own growth at its own speed... It would need a group of city firms enthusiastic about the concept but motivated by healthy self-interest, and it would need a lender – either an Auckland bank or city council already having to bear the costs of some non-repayment, either of bad loans or unpaid taxes... Micro-currencies come from seeing that the N[Z] dollars just circulating in Auckland wastefully tie up cash... If local IOUs were circulating inside Auckland instead of some of those dollars, some firms would have more national cash for important things like importing investment goods. If creating an extra currency zone sounds crazy, imagine it in the other direction. Would tying the N[Z] dollar to the A[US]n dollar benefit businesses in N[Z]? Alternatively, we could follow the lead of 'Argentina and other countries which have suggested switching their currency to \$US.' Incidentally, the US]... dollar fell against most major currencies on Friday... When trading opened in New York... disgruntled currency traders, impatient with the dollar's failure to rise, began to sell.

...Kiwi on top of the world The N[Z] dollar has been dubbed "the strongest little currency in the world" after an *Economist* magazine survey found it had performed better than any other against the U[S] dollar in the past nine months. Dealers and analysts were not surprised by the finding, which they attributed to N[Z]'s high interest rates... "And that attracts international investors, who have to buy our currency to invest here." ...High interest rates were also behind the Italian lira's ranking as the second-best performing currency... The A[US]n dollar, underpinned by a raft of dual currency Samurai bond issues, was the third-best performer. The dealers and analysts doubted the kiwi would hold its status... for long, as N[Z]'s interest rates were... likely to fall... over the next few months. That would reduce overseas investor interest and probably reduce the kiwi's value[(\$NZ1 is currently valued at '\$US0.71' – a level it last reached during '1988')].

...Overseas investors have been pumping money into N[Z] to take advantage of our very high interest rates... As the demand for Kiwi dollars increases, so does their price... [T]he Reserve Bank is using high real interest rates as a weapon in its fight to keep inflation down. Inflation is a problem because the economy is growing too fast. If interest rates are high, people will have less money to spend, and businesses will find it more difficult to invest. So growth will be contained. Paradoxically, a high dollar is a symptom of a strong and growing economy. *Who is hurt by a high Kiwi dollar?* Exporters... find that what they send overseas now earns them less money. And in a country like N[Z] where exporting plays such a large role in the whole economy, a high dollar can impact on us all. *Who benefits from a high dollar?* People who import goods which now cost less, and the people who buy those goods if the lower costs are passed on... [T]he Government... can intervene in the foreign exchange market [and] sell Kiwi dollars to try to lower their price. The problem here is that it risks being swamped by the huge global foreign exchange market which can easily negate its actions. Any losses the Government makes in such foreign exchange deals will be borne by the taxpayer. The Government could also change the tax rules on overseas investment to try to stem the flow of money from offshore. But that would lose it international credibility – it wasn't that long ago it loosened the rules to encourage more funds from offshore... [T]he Reserve Bank's continuing tight monetary policy will bring inflationary pressures firmly under control, allowing it to ease interest rates and thus make our dollar less attractive to overseas investors. *What is the likelihood of that happening soon?* Crystal ball, anyone?

...PROVINCIAL N[Z] is facing an economic crisis that may force farmers off their land... "No matter what the powers-that-be in Wellington think, this nation depends on exports... We have been saying for some time that a crisis is looming but no one wanted to listen..." said... [the] Hawke's Bay Chamber of Commerce president... The... Federated Farmers... national president... [agrees:] "We are in a bit of a recession, very clearly the export sector is having a really tough time and that does flow through and affect retailers and jobs. The rural economy goes through recession first, and we just hope 1997 brings some cheer, although that looks a bit premature." - 1996

THE high N[Z] dollar... is hurting exporters and bringing warnings of job losses... N[Z]'s climbing exchange rate reached its highest point in nearly a decade last week and if you believe what some of our exporters say, the high dollar is pushing N[Z] towards a precipice... [A] downturn in

exporters' fortunes means less money to spend and fewer jobs, said[the] Manufacturing Federation chief executive... And with imports cheaper, local manufacturers face greater pressures to keep their prices in check... But are lower import prices being passed on to the consumer? ...prices of imported consumer goods – taking into account exchange rate movements – fell an average of 4% in the year to June 1995. In the year to June 1996 they stayed the same... Like the Government, the Consumers Institute... doesn't keep track of import prices at retail level.

...In spite of the restructuring of the past decade, N[Z] remains a trading nation – exporting a relatively high proportion of its production and obtaining a similarly high share of its consumption needs from abroad. The health of the country is never too different from the health of its exporters. And they are in trouble. In the past few months a succession of export groups have put hard dollar estimates on the losses they are having to absorb as a result of a rising N[Z] dollar – dairy, fishing, wool, boatbuilding and apples to name but a few. These exporters are largely captive; they extract value from the natural endowment of the country and cannot relocate to a kinder economic climate. Manufacturers, on the other hand, can. And they are. In only two months last year, cuts, closures or relocations to A[US] were announced by [13 major companies, including]... Ford, Toyota... and... Bluebird Foods... Alarming... researchers estimate that “about... 85,000 manufacturing work-places are marginal.” ...If exporters' lobbyists will not confront that reality they should stand aside for people who will. The occupants of those 85,000 “marginal” manufacturing work-places certainly demand that they do.

...The overvalued dollar is hurting. The squeals of pain from farmers, manufacturers and exporters at least represent a frank admission that the exchange rate is now doing real damage to our productive sector and that something needs to be done. There will always be macho voices who say that those who complain are wimps and that a high dollar should simply be a spur to greater efficiency. This is to ignore the great wealth of evidence which shows that overvaluation is not only just as damaging to our competitiveness as any other price increase but will, if sustained for any length of time, undermine the profitability and therefore investment capacity of even the most efficient firm... If interest rates and therefore exchange rates have to rise to counter inflation we necessarily inflict damage on the real economy by pricing our goods out of world markets... For our customers on the internationally traded goods sector, a price increase is a price increase. We can assure them that we are keeping our costs down until we are blue in the face but they will still go elsewhere if a rising exchange rate means that our prices rise faster than those of our competitors. That is why we have seen the recent rash of closures and moves to A[US], why our trade balance is in bad shape and why growth is slowing dramatically... The more trouble our economy is in, and the higher interest rates have to go, the better the return to the speculators and the higher the dollar will go... It is one thing to state the problem but quite another to decide what can be done about it. The P[M] tells us that it is the markets which decide what the dollar is worth. He is, of course, right, at least in the sense that any attempt to defy the market, or to intervene directly to push it in a particular direction, would be bound to fail... [At least we aren't the only country being hurt by the value of its currency. Yesterday] British Airways Plc said the strength of the pound is crimping its earnings, joining other leading British companies that have complained about the problems caused by the currency's strength... British Steel Plc said the pound – up almost 24[% since August 1996] against a trade-weighted basket of currencies – is eroding profit and undermining competitiveness.

...A fall in the value of the N[Z] dollar in key exchange rates is not a quick cure for the economic woes of farmers and exporters, warns a Napier financial consultant. [‘Unless you can get orders, a lower dollar doesn't mean very much.’ He also] said a recent OECD study showed N[Z] was now one of the least attractive places in which to practice agriculture... [T]he removal of all support for primary producers while other farming nations retained generous subsidies had simply strengthened the position of the country's international competitors.

...Exporters are being advised to quickly take advantage... and sell at least some of their overseas earnings at relatively favourable rates... following a[nother dive of]... more than 1c... in the value of the dollar... The kiwi was [now] worth a shade under US65c... its lowest level in two years... “We haven't seen this sort of level in the kiwi for a while and it might be a correction that doesn't last for too long,” [the] executive director of treasury advisers Bancorp said... Banks are watching the[currency] market closely... and are expected to pass on steep increases in wholesale interest rates to borrowers... That could spell the end of the golden weather for the housing market...

The golden Asian growth story is becoming tarnished because of a change in economic circumstances which will affect countries with a dependence on exports... China, Indonesia and the Philippines were cited, while Malaysia and Thailand were expected to suffer the most... Malaysia's total indebtedness is rising, it was about 96[%] of nominal GDP last year compared with Thailand's 120[%] in 1995... two factors that had fuelled Asian growth – low American interest rates and an appreciating U[S] dollar – were shifting into reverse. Weakness in the U[S] dollar between 1985 and 1995 forced Japanese investors to invest heavily in Asia... European and U[S] manufacturers also looked to Asia for salvation.

...Heroes, it seems, are ready-made for times of economic crises and national self-doubt. They are sought out eagerly; often in sports, other times for deeds which transcend the national circumstances. They rise quickly, often individuals from obscurity, with no ties to the power brokers who manipulate events safe from retribution. And that is how, for a few weeks[a]... struggling Bangkok taxi driver... became Thailand's hero, praised for returning \$US25,000... in cash to a foreign visitor who had left it in his taxi. His tale became a symbolic challenge to the shady political and business ethics of Thailand's troubled economic times... Bangkok City presented [the taxi driver] with a certificate of honorary citizenship; he received plaques and national awards as a “dutiful son” from the Social Welfare Commission. He made guest appearances on talk shows, was showered with cash rewards of more than \$US5570 and offered free hospital treatment and a new taxi. For a man who finished only the equivalent of primary school education, this was a dream. But the dream became a nightmare when the “hero” was sentenced to 18 months' jail and ordered to return the money to “damaged parties” he had deceived. The truth was there was never any lost money or a foreign visitor – only a poorly planned hoax that nearly duped a country... [which has seen] 17 coups or attempted coups, the last in 1991[since becoming] a constitutional monarchy 65 years ago... The King of Thailand[– who is]... claiming the world record for the number of honorary university degrees[(h)e has 136, surpassing the previous record of 131 accumulated by... [the] president of Notre Dame University in the U[S] –] ...aged 69... has fallen ill because of his country's political and economic crisis, according to his personal physician.

...An IMF-sponsored \$US17 billion... rescue package for Thailand appeared to be a shambles yesterday as the Finance Minister threatened to resign after key elements were reversed... [by] minor parties within the six-group coalition Government... However, the... Thai military has blocked moves by [the P]M... to enact a state of emergency... The volatile political climate... has sent the Thai bhat plunging on regional exchange markets... Political analysts say the situation will put further pressure on... [the P]M... to step aside. The P[M] is due to travel to N[Z] early next month.

...CURRENCY speculators have been blamed for much of Friday's dramatic fall in the value of the N[Z] dollar and corresponding rise in wholesale interest rates... A number of investment banks in the US had been calling for the N[Z] dollar to go lower, and many North American fund managers had been less confident about Asian economies and had been reducing their exposure there... “The Aussie and Kiwi dollars get a bit of a backlash from that.” The other factor forcing the N[Z] dollar down was that it tended to follow the A[US]n currency very closely and that had been under a lot of pressure... However... a fall in the N[Z] dollar was expected[, although the]... Bancorp Treasury Services executive director... believed the dollar would soon begin to settle again and picked the long trend was for it to go back up.

...[yesterday the] Thai... bhat... rose... to 39.00 to the U[S] dollar after... the resignation of... [Thailand's PM. His planned trip to NZ has, obviously, now been cancelled. By the way, t]he fall in the[NZ] exchange rate over the past month has given exporters the equivalent of a 5[%] price rise, and is good news for firms competing with imports too. But the flipside is... [that] the dollar's tumble has come at the wrong time of the year, during the off-season for agricultural exports... But a 65USc dollar, if it sticks, would be a lot better than the 69c average last season... The extent to which

that benefit is offset by higher interest rates would vary widely depending how much debt a farmer was carrying... Grief for the domestic economy will outweigh relief for exporters, at least in the short term, if the dollar and interest rates stabilise at present levels, economists say.

...Comments by the Minister of Finance... after the local foreign exchange market closed sparked a[nother] fall in the N[Z] dollar last night.

...The vulnerability of the N[Z] dollar to the whims of large international investors was again clearly evident yesterday as it plunged in early trading under heavy selling from New York. The selling took the kiwi... to a low of 64.75c... Foreign exchange dealers said the ferocity and weight of the early selling from New York had taken the local market by surprise. The reaction of the local market was largely to withdraw from trading until the selling died away when the U[S] market closed for the day... Some dealers thought there might be some good support for the kiwi around the 64.5c level, but others suggested the kiwi had turned the corner from a multi-year uptrend to a multi-year downtrend which would see it reach new lows... "There's very little support for the kiwi at these levels," said one Auckland dealer. "The next big level for the kiwi is 64.3USc, and if it drops below that it is dire straits." ...Foreign exchange dealers said the currency was being sold by big American fund managers with billions of dollars under their control. "These are the guys who have stuffed several Asian currencies in recent weeks," said one dealer. Further depreciation of Asian currencies is expected[, which]... will dent economic growth across the world, but[it will] hit Japan twice as hard as the U[S] or Europe, OECD officials say.

...The kiwi came under attack again yesterday in what dealers said was U[S] hedge funds selling as well as financial markets continuing a cat-and-mouse game to induce the Reserve Bank to further ease monetary conditions. A bashing of the A[US]n dollar by offshore investors disenchanted with that country's monetary easing also added to the kiwi's volatility, dealers said... The A[US]n dollar fell almost half a cent to 72.77USc... The kiwi... lost nearly one per cent of its value overnight, to trade at 63.57USc late yesterday... its lowest level since March 1995, with no quick bottom seen ahead... "It [the kiwi] still looks pretty weak although it has come down quite substantially," one dealer said... [T]here were sellers at higher levels, giving the kiwi little chance of a sustained rebound. One market participant took a more sinister view, saying the current weakness of the kiwi could be a case of "the big boys" pressuring it to get their clients into N[Z] assets at a low entry level... [The] executive director of Bancorp Treasury Services, said... demand for N[Z]-dollar assets was healthy despite the doom-and-gloom surrounding the economy... Bancorp is forecasting the kiwi to return to the 68-69USc territory within three to six months. [However, a] US investment house... predicted 62c for the kiwi.

...The rapid globalisation of financial markets is vividly illustrated in the estimate that \$1.3 trillion is traded across international markets each day. This is equivalent to 100 times the value of world trade. Such a vast pool lubricates the laundering of money, especially from the drug trade, which with a \$500 billion annual turnover, thrives in today's deregulated environment.

...[the] record fine imposed on a man who set up a pyramid-selling scheme should serve as a warning to people against getting involved, says the Commerce Commission. A[n A]uckland... was convicted in the Henderson District Court on Wednesday of breaching the Fair Trading Act by operating a scheme called Black Magic. He was fined \$15,000 and ordered to pay \$2,000 in costs... [Incidentally, b]oth the N[Z and AUS]n dollars dived in value yesterday as... fallout from [a]Korean currency crisis spread... A[US] had been more strongly affected because Korea was A[US]'s second largest trading partner, but only N[Z]'s fifth largest, dealers said.

...South Korea will tonight unveil a long-awaited package to stabilise its fragile financial system. The package follows the sacking of the finance minister and another maximum permitted daily fall of 2.25[%] in the value of the won, to 1035.5 to the \$US. [The new] finance minister... said the government will consider seeking aid from the IMF "if necessary".

...South Korea said yesterday it would seek regional co-operation to resolve its financial crisis rather than go to the... IMF... for emergency help... On Wednesday, the Finance Minister unveiled a package of measures that included opening the country's \$US200 billion... bond market wider to foreign investment and buying 10 trillion won of bad debt from financial institutions this year. South Korea's total foreign debt is \$US110 billion... as of last March, more than two-thirds of it due in a year or less.

...South Korea is set to turn to the [IMF] for the first time, seeking... \$[NZ]32.5 billion... to contain a financial crisis that threatens to cripple the world's 11th-largest economy... The size of Korea's economy - slightly bigger than Spain's - guarantees that a full-scale collapse would reverberate around the globe. Foreign banks alone have \$200 billion of investments or loans there, bankers said... Over time, Korea may need as much as \$100 billion, a bailout that would rank among the largest since... W[W2]. The most recent bailout of a comparable size was the '\$80 billion'... extended to Mexico in 1995... Meanwhile[, a]... proposal to create a special bailout fund of up to \$100b for Asia was rejected at meetings among 15[Asian] countries in Manila... But they backed the idea of co-operative financing arrangements that could supplement the IMF.

...YOUR sharemarket is nosediving, your currency is sinking fast and investors are bailing out of your country. Who you gonna call? The [IMF, that's who. The]... IMF... is like a global credit union. It was created at the end of W[W]II as part of the U[N] system. It's job is to promote international financial co-operation and trade, and to bring order to unstable economies. It has 181 member nations... Each pays a quota based on its relative economic size into the common fund... The IMF has about \$US190b... in total reserves... Loans typically are repaid in one, three or five years. Loans are never written off as lost... [and no] nation has ever defaulted on an IMF loan. To do so would ruin its credit in the global economy, repelling investors.

...South Korea's troubles deepened... this week... as the won weakened further and... more companies collapsed... But... [a] last-minute dispute... [with the IMF] over how and when troubled financial institutions should be liquidated has delayed a formal announcement on a \$US20 billion rescue package...

South Korea's financial crisis deepened yesterday as the government closed more merchant banks and the country's battered markets dismissed government stabilisation measures. For average Koreans, especially those with money in the closed... banks, the bitterly cold day was filled with despair. One woman standing outside a... merchant bank in... Seoul that was ringed by riot police said to anyone who would listen: "Why won't they give me my money. It's all I have." It was unclear when she would be able to withdraw her money, although the government has guaranteed all deposits with financial institutions... Meanwhile... members of a leftist group rallied... downtown... [to] demand... the government renegotiate the IMF rescue package... [which means] South Korea will have to open its financial markets and allow mergers and acquisitions by foreigners.

...The South Korean President... has urged Koreans to "share the pain" of... the country's bankrupt financial and industrial companies[, which surely means]... decades of almost total job security... is about to end... [In an] apologetic... nationally televised address, [he] said the price of the... IMF... rescue... would be slow growth, higher unemployment and smaller pay increases... Seven of the nation's top 40 conglomerates are either bankrupt or unable to pay their debts, and a record 15,000 companies have filed for bankruptcy protection.

...South Korea will elect a new president on Thursday... With so much pain and helplessness ahead, perhaps it is not surprising that the campaign dwelled so little on the economy. None of the candidates wanted to admit that if elected he would raise taxes, cut spending programmes and sack workers. The governing party's candidate... spent a good deal of the campaign trying to prove that his sons had not evaded military service by dishonestly saying they were underweight for their height. One of his sons was even summoned to Seoul from his studies at Harvard to have his height measured publicly and show his father was not lying about it. That same day, the won currency nose-dived to a record low, interest rates soared to a 16-year high and another five insolvent merchant banks were closed... This election is viewed as a milestone in the development of South Korea's democracy, analysts say. The last election in 1992 was the first to elect a civilian president in more than four decades... The [incumbent]P[re]sident... is barred by the constitution from running again.

...The first full week of [the new president's] transition to power... will start dramatically today with... an amnesty for[two] former presidents... and 23 of their associates jailed in connection with a corruption scandal, a 1979 coup and an Army massacre a year later... Analysts said the move would please conservatives and help unite disparate political groups at a critical time. Families of the victims of the 1980 massacre in the southwestern city of Kwangju had agreed to accept the Government's decision to free the former presidents[who]... were convicted of mutiny, treason and corruption in August 1996. In April, the Supreme Court upheld an appeals court decision to commute [the] death sentence to life in jail [for one of the men and cut the other's] 22 1/2-year sentence to 17 years. They were also found guilty of taking bribes worth hundreds of millions of dollars while in office... [In related news,] Indonesia's financial woes have intensified despite a huge aid package from the [IMF] five weeks ago, but analysts say much of the troubles are beyond the Government's control. In the past week, the rupiah currency slipped past the 4000 to the U[S] dollar barrier for the first time, representing a fall of about 40[%] since the middle of the year.

...Indonesia's rupiah crashed past 4500 to the US dollar when rumours that[its] President... was ill created panic buying of the U[S] currency.

...*Indonesian rupiah goes into free fall*... The rupiah fell as low as 5555 to the US dollar... its lowest since the current account was liberalised in 1971. Indonesian officials have estimated that for every 100-point drop in the rupiah, the country's debt burden swells by \$US500 million... [Elsewhere in Asia, Thailand's] monarch... marked his 70th birthday by calling for economic self-sufficiency, amid the country's most severe downturn during his 51-year reign. In his birthday message, broadcast nationally on radio, [the]King... said the nation needed to remain united during the crisis, and be prepared to "step back" in development... [His] speech comes as up to 58 suspended finance companies face permanent closures... Unemployment is set to escalate by the end of the year with forecasts of about 3 million people losing their jobs... Members of Thailand's ruling coalition have agreed to a 20% cut in their parliamentary pay to help the country beat its economic slump...

[Yesterday,] South Korea, Thailand and Indonesia had their credit-ratings cut to "junk" status by... [a US] credit-rating company... as plummeting Asian markets erode their ability to repay debt.

...All but two of the 58 finance companies suspended by Thailand to win IMF approval for a rescue package will close[throwing]... 6000 out of work on top of the 20,000 who have already lost their jobs as a result...

The [IMF] has defended its handling of Asia's financial crisis, arguing that there is no easy way out for debt-laden economies... The IMF[also] said it would ask member states to cough up extra cash as Asia's worsening financial problems drain its resources. A... bailout for Indonesia... [has risen to \$US]40 billion...

The... IMF first deputy managing director... said the IMF would still have \$(NZ)73.3b of usable, uncommitted resources after paying out its \$35b share of the... \$95.84 billion bailout for troubled South Korea... [but] new crises could force the fund itself to beg for cash...

The U[S] must do what it can to help Asia through its economic crisis, [the US]President... said as he urged Congress to bolster funding for the IMF... However, US lawmakers said [the President] faced a struggle to win support.

...The president of the Korean Society of N[Z]... said local Koreans had given more than \$2 million... to save their homeland... The money was contributed during a two-week campaign... organised by the society and the Kook Min Bank in Auckland[which]... dropped its \$25 transaction fee charged to customers wanting to send money home... The society has about 17,000 members nationally, with about 15,000 living in Auckland.

...[an honest, hardworking woman, intent on building a new life, faces a deep sense of embarrassment when told by suppliers that, from now on, payment will be "cash only." No credit. No warning. No discussion. That she was a Korean-NZer in Auckland rather than a citizen of Seoul does not matter. She is Korean and a credit risk. Headlines about the economic crisis in Korea can seem remote but, in little and large ways, Korean-NZers all feel the ripples of the economic meltdown in their home country. Koreans have even coined a term for the situation – they refer to it as "the IMF season." I don't know what is more scary; the fact that an Asian powerhouse can be humbled so quickly or that people already have a name for the tragedy. Those here know it's worse in Seoul. At the airport staunch nationalists protest and hiss at those embarking for overseas destinations. On the once-busy roads of the metropolis there is a sense of quiet. People in Korea are not driving their cars. Once this nation bought more new vehicles than the US. But petrol prices have doubled, then tripled. People are taking pay cuts and redundancies. Fear is in the air. However, any misfortune can be seen by others as an opportunity. Foreigners and expatriate Koreans alike are taking advantage of exchange rates to buy up container loads of products at dumping prices to turn quick profits overseas. The local markets are bare because these sharks have already worked their way through. Perhaps some financial pundits did predict the economic crisis. Perhaps Koreans borrowed too much, expanded too quickly and after years of hardship and frugality came to love expensive imported products too much. Korea, it seems, became a nation that forgot its history of hardship and struggle for identity.' ●] The IMF executive board has adopted a new short-term loan programme that will rush funds to countries facing immediate debt repayment problems or low foreign currency reserves. The new mechanism could be used to speed delivery of a second payment to South Korea worth \$US3.6 billion... The... country... [has an] estimated \$US171 billion in foreign debt... [However, the IMF announcement failed to prevent the won falling 12.5%] to 1961 against the U[S] dollar... its biggest one-day decline...

[NZ] is pitching \$60 million of taxpayers' money into an international financial rescue package for South Korea as fallout from Asia's economic crisis begins to pound the local economy. Top-level conference calls in the early hours of [yesterday between]... the ministers holding the Treasury, Finance and Foreign Affairs portfolios[and]... officials both in Wellington and the U[S, sealed NZ's]... involvement... It is understood N[Z] will dip into its financial reserves or raise a loan of its own to fund its contribution[which]... is greater than the total the Government spends each year on promoting exports globally through Tradenz... The risk for N[Z] is that the Koreans will not be able to pay it back... However, it emerged yesterday that there had been approval in principle to pay three times that amount... [The o]fficials and ministers agreed that it was in N[Z]'s interest to be involved... Exports to Korea rocketed from \$672 million in 1990 to more than \$1 billion in 1996, and thousands of tourists... arrive weekly.

...“Over here please, this way please, over here!” On a chilly grey afternoon at Seoul's Kimpo airport, a flight from Tokyo has just landed, and the clerk at the Korean Exchange Bank is leaning over her counter, hustling for foreign currency in Japanese, Korean and English. It's an undignified scene that would have been unthinkable a few weeks ago in... a country that was proud of its rapid rise through the ranks to become the world's 11th largest economy. But the paper signs taped over the electronic rate boards with the latest low prices for the won currency said it all... Last week, the won fell against the U[S] dollar by its maximum daily limit of 10[%] on four consecutive days and hit... a record low...

The... Malaysian... ringgit, down 20[%] in three months, hit an all-time low of about 33USc... yesterday...

[‘You Can Profit From a Monetary Crisis’] Fancy a flutter... on the foreign exchange markets? It's simple. Try it next time you go on holiday to, say, Malaysia... You don't even need hard cash – a credit card will do nicely. If you believe our currency will strengthen against Malaysia's, pile all your overseas purchases on your credit card. If you're right, then you'll need fewer dollars to pay them off when you get home. The gains are tiny... But you have played the forex game without incurring the wrath of Malaysia's P[M, who]... argues, the US\$1260 billion of daily global foreign exchange trades far exceeds the value of real cross-border flows of goods, services and investments. Thus the weight of speculative money is dictating exchange rates. That's naive... And when speculators get it wrong, it costs them. For everybody who makes a buck, somebody loses a buck. Ask the Malaysian central bank. It bet the wrong way in the 1992 UK currency crisis and lost heavily.

...The war of words... [between Malaysia's PM and a] US financier... over the plunging value of some South-East Asian currencies hit a new level at the weekend... “The poor people in these countries will suffer, and these are the people that have to be protected from [the financier (r:p298, ln1)], who has so much money and power but is totally thoughtless. We have worked 20 to 40 years to develop our countries to this level, and along comes

the man with a few billion US dollars, and within a period of two weeks he has undone almost [all] the work we have done.” ...The selling was originally prompted by economic problems in Thailand. But responsibility for the declines is hard to pinpoint because local banks as well as outsiders have been involved in the selling... [However, the PM also said the financier] was using his financial might to... keep... the Association of South-East Asian Nations (Asean)... from admitting Burma as a member because of its human rights record... [The financier] has denied that his Open Society Foundation, which promotes democracy in Burma, has any connection with or influence on his financial dealings... [O]nce dubbed “the man who broke the Bank of England”, [he] has earned a fortune from speculative currency plays in the past... [He gained] his... title... after he gambled about \$US10 billion... that Britain would be forced to devalue the pound. Faced with a wave of speculators selling the currency, the bank gave in. [The financier] walked away with an estimated \$US1 billion. That same year, when more of Europe’s currencies were battered in a trading frenzy, European officials muttered darkly about speculators... Overwhelmed by speculators’ money, European governments were forced to weaken the links binding their currencies – a blow to dreams of a unified European currency... Speculators have never had a good press. Almost 30 years ago, British politicians found it convenient to blame the “gnomes of Zurich” for a big devaluation of sterling. Nowadays London itself has become the world’s biggest foreign-exchange market...

[The billionaire US financier] wants to meet the Malaysian [P]M... to discuss [the PM’s claims that he] was responsible for recent attacks on Southeast Asian currencies... [He] said it had been malicious of [the PM] to liken him to a drug dealer, but he did not intend to take that issue up with the [PM]. “I don’t need another enemy...” ...[he] said that except for selling about \$US10 million... of Thai bhat, his group has not sold any Southeast Asian currencies in the past two months... Meanwhile, in London, over the weekend it was revealed that... one of [the financier’s] leading fund managers, has been awarded a pay rise of more than £500,000... a week. [The employee], who manages the £1.8 billion Quota investment fund for [the financier], would collect £80 million a year, after the rise.

...These days... [the] billionaire financier... has been winning headlines for giving away money, not making it. His \$350 million in gifts last year made him America’s leading philanthropist. And he has been stirring controversy by directing his dollars to an array of hot-button political causes tied to his personal ideal of... free-market capitalism... [T]he Jewish, Hungarian-born... 66[-year-old]... who has lived under both Nazis and communists... backed the dissidents of Czechoslovakia’s Charter 77 and Poland’s Solidarity, helping topple totalitarian regimes in those countries... His Open Society Fund... has spent hundreds of millions of dollars more trying to nourish democratic practices and the rule of law throughout the former Soviet bloc.

...[the US] billionaire... has plunged \$US2 billion... into Russia on the strength of the Kremlin’s pro-market liberals. In a speech marking the 10th anniversary of his philanthropic Open Society[he said: “I sense] that the Government [is] determined to move beyond the phase of robber capitalism and establish legitimacy;”... [Incidentally, t]he world’s richest man, intervened in Asian currency markets last week to support the Malaysian and Singaporean currencies. Both recovered from historic lows after the move and held up in later New York trading. The cost to... [t]he Sultan of Brunei... was estimated by market dealers as hundreds of millions of US dollars, with \$US300 million being spent in support of the Singapore dollar alone.

...[the president of the] World Bank... says the crisis in South-east Asia’s financial markets has been largely contained... by the... IMF... rescue packages... and is unlikely to spread outside the region.

...The kiwi dollar crashed... yesterday to... 62.85USc... following... reports on the possible effects of the Asian currency crisis on A[US]... Foreign exchange dealers said the situation would have been worse but for some very heavy buying by local exporters during the afternoon session. “They really got stuck in,” said one dealer “and why not, it’s the lowest its been for some time.”

...yesterday... [the NZ] dollar fell... to a three-year low of 62.16USc... [following the AUS]n dollar’s dramatic decline to 68.95USc... But[the] Macquarie Bank... said... A[US]’s... dollar had been driven down by sentiment rather than fundamentals and was now oversold.

...[as the kiwi dollar falls, NZ bonds are faring worst among major bond markets. In US dollar terms, NZ bonds maturing in 10 years or less have tumbled 13% (British bonds have turned in the best performance, gaining 17% in US dollar terms’).

...last night US] bonds fell in Asia... after a senior Japanese Government official said it was possible Japan could sell the securities to raise cash for Japanese banks... [and] promised to act to prevent the yen from falling too far... “If necessary, we will not hesitate to intervene in the market in a way which would be surprising to the market.”

...The A[US]n dollar sank to a four-year low as distressed Japanese institutions dumped assets and headed home... The latest lunge took the A[US]n dollar to 68.00c against the U[S] dollar... The N[Z] dollar strengthened half a cent to 90.57Ac.

...The N[Z] dollar was dragged to its lowest level against the US dollar in more than three years yesterday by an A[US]n dollar weakened by a higher than expected current account deficit. The kiwi ended at 61.09USc... The A[US]n dollar finished... at 67.78USc... The kiwi cross rate[also] weakened to 90.18Ac... Dealers said the kiwi’s fall reflected a lack of buying rather than any concerted selling pressure.

...The N[Z] dollar was devalued by 2.8[%] against the U[S] dollar yesterday following the Reserve Bank’s policy statement. The kiwi ended the day at 57.43USc... Foreign exchange dealers said that [there] appeared to be... [no] hope for any recovery... “There is no one to buy it any more... There is no indication that this is the bottom.” ...In a commentary... a chartist with ANZ Bank, said he expected... the kiwi to resume its multi-year decline to all-time lows of below 42.5c. [Editor’s note: NZers generally expect their \$ to be worth about half a \$US (50USc) – although few, if any, understand why this is normally the case. What appears to be an unfair economic situation (for NZers) is confirmed by comparing the average wages of both countries. During ‘1994, the Average Earnings of Year-Round, Full-Time Workers (for persons 25 years and over) in the US was \$41,118 for males and \$27,162 for females’ – which, excluding the probable variance in numbers of male and female workers, gives an average wage of over \$US34,000 (the ‘median household income in 1994 was \$US32,264’). NZ’s average gross income during 1997 was \$411 for people over the age of 15 per week, which equals \$NZ31,372 per annum (alternatively, the figure is \$702 a week before tax – or \$NZ36,504 per annum). Therefore, it is possible to assume that two workers – one living in the US and one in NZ – could have the same qualifications, perform the same tasks and both earn the same annual wage of \$40,000. Now, suppose these two workers save up to go for a holiday in the other’s country and, after purchasing their airline tickets, each has \$10,000 to spend. The USer flies to NZ, where its holiday budget turns into \$NZ20,000, while the NZer flies to the US, where its holiday budget is worth \$US5,000!

...‘World Bank figures for 212 countries show that our average income per person has slipped from third in 1960, after the US and Switzerland, to 9th in 1994, 18th two years ago and 22nd today. At current exchange rates, AUS’s income per person is now 50% higher than ours; the US figure is 128% higher.’]

...A sharp fall in the kiwi dollar will be hard felt in the pockets of N[Z]ers heading across the globe... Now the exchange... [with the US] is close to two for one and it takes almost \$3 to buy £1... At the beginning if the year the kiwi bought... 42.15p... [In related news, p]reviously-secret details of [Britain’s] foreign exchange reserves would soon be released... [the] Chancellor of the Exchequer... said yesterday.

...Britain’s Chancellor of the Exchequer... is on the verge of ruling out British membership of Europe’s single currency during the current five-year parliament, the *Times* newspaper reports. However, [the chancellor] did not make a specific pledge.

...It is increasingly accepted in Europe that eight to 11 countries will join to create a common currency, dubbed the euro, at the beginning of 1999... Europeans admit that the creation of the euro, which will not replace national currencies in daily life until 2002, is still an experiment. But... U[S] policy-makers must now ask seriously what impact this new money will have on the... dollar – the medium of exchange for half of all international trade transactions today.

...Europe's [GDP] last year, \$8.6 trillion, overshadows America's \$7.6 trillion. Europeans today do not think or talk about creating a U.S. of Europe, a federal superstate, but they are getting ready to take control of monetary policy and interest rates from their sovereign nations and turn it over to a European Central Bank... This is very much a revolution from above, while ordinary citizens are increasingly rebellious. For the moment they are more resentful of the price of the monetary union – budget cutting and unemployment – than of its audacious surrender of national power.

...European corporations stand to suffer a heavy blow to their bottom lines as a result of the costs associated with a single currency, a new survey by KPMG Management Consulting said on Monday... The results of the survey, which covered 302 corporations across Europe with more than 5000 employees, showed a total bill of \$US50 billion... for conversion to the euro, with the average cost per company of about \$30 million. While 77[%] of respondents believe economic and monetary union... will have a positive long-term effect on profitability, KPMG... said there appeared to be a lack of awareness of the shorter-term implications.

...EU leaders ending a two-day summit in Luxembourg... agreed to open the 15-nation bloc's doors to six new members early next century, while reassuring five other ex-Soviet satellites that they, too, could begin the long road to EU membership, though at a slower pace... Turkey, excluded from that group and at best a long-odds bet for EU membership, was, however, invited to join the candidates and current members at a ceremony in Britain next spring to launch the enlargement process... Once complete, the expanded union will form a single market stretching from the Atlantic to the Black Sea with nearly 500 million consumers and no duties, quotas or restrictions to hinder the flow of trade.

...[the Turkish P]M... predicted yesterday that Cyprus would end up split for good unless the E[U] reversed its latest snub of Turkey's decade-old bid for membership... [He accused the] Chancellor... of Germany of secretly trying to turn the European bloc into a "Christian Club" that would unfairly bar predominantly Islamic Turkey... "Of course, the German Government will deny it," [he said. The]... German Foreign Minister... says Turkey has no one to blame but itself... The EU cited Turkey's human rights record, the presence of its troops on Cyprus and its sour relations with Greece, an EU member, as obstacles to inclusion.

...A key architect of closer transtasman trade is urging N[Z] to join forces with A[US] to create a single currency and a European-style common market across both countries... In an A[US]n article to mark next year's 15-year commemoration of the... closer economic relations (CER)... agreement[, the]... former Minister of Trade and Industry... claims the move is essential for the economic survival of both countries... The idea has received a luke-warm response from the[NZ] Minister for International Trade... who said last night that it was more theoretical than practical for transtasman business... [A] shared currency, which would require a single central bank for both countries, was "a long way off yet."

...[NZ] 'manufacturers say the diplomatic efforts required to create a single currency with AUS would not be worth the trouble, even though a larger economy would be good in principle. They took the view that one currency would work but only if AUS brought its economic policy more in line with NZ's and allowed our Reserve Bank to manage monetary policy. The secretary of the Council of Trade Unions said yesterday that the Government's approach of "open slather on the NZ economy" was in stark contrast to the AUSn's policy of protecting and assisting theirs – a policy which is unsustainable, according to the chief executive of the NZ Manufacturers Federation.' However, 'the executive director of the AUS-NZ Business Council said: "NZ would obviously have to run a monetary policy in line with that of AUS."'

... 'top-level Government officials have been given the nod to discuss setting up a single Anzac currency. The taskforce is being led by the head of the PM's Department and Cabinet and his AUSn counterpart. The NZ PM cautiously confirmed yesterday that the taskforce, announced when the AUSn PM visited last month, was looking beyond the CER issues then outlined. The NZ PM was at pains to emphasise the issue was at exploratory stages only. But as dim as the green light for discussion might seem, Anzac-dollar proponents are delighted. It signals an acceptance at the highest level that a single currency can be raised more seriously in future. And with 70% of our banking assets AUSn controlled, that sector could be expected to be enthusiastic. Merging the currencies – or what some say would be more an AUSn takeover of the NZ currency – would take two to three years, says the director of the Massey University's Centre for Banking Studies, a lot shorter than the eight years it will have taken to introduce the euro. However, he added that pundits predict as few as three world currency blocs within 20 years, and perhaps NZ might be better off linking with larger blocs in Asia or the US.'

... 'From 1 January 2002, the euro will replace the national currencies of 12 EU countries. There will be 7 euro banknotes: 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 that will be uniform throughout the euro zone. There will also be 8 coins – 1 Cent, 2 Cent, 5 Cent, 10 Cent, 20 Cent, 50 Cent and 1 and 2 euro. While each coin will feature a common face, the reverse will be decorated differently to represent each Member State.' The coins will 'contain high levels of nickel. EU officials agreed to include the metal despite warnings that allergy to nickel affects up to one in 7 people, particularly women. The British Journal of Dermatology warned that the coins could cause eczema among 45 million people. Bank tellers and shop assistants will be advised to wear gloves for work.'

... 'The "Maori Government of Aotearoa", which has profited by selling its own passports and driving licences to immigrants, is preparing to print its own money. The money will be called putea, meaning fund, but the Aotearoa "prime minister" is not prepared to place a value on it before it is introduced. She hopes it will be accepted internationally by other indigenous peoples. Section 29 of the Reserve Bank Act bans anyone other than the bank from making or issuing bank notes or coins, and imposes a \$300,000 fine for organisations and a \$100,000 fine or three-year jail sentence for individuals.' By the way, last year the Reserve Bank issued '2 million new \$5; 1.7 million \$10; 1.15 million \$20; and 20,000 \$100 notes.' The only other note in circulation is the \$50.]

...The Reserve Bank is considering removing the 5c coin from circulation and replacing the \$5 note with a coin within the next three years... Reasons for abandoning the 5c coin were partly financial. At present a 5c coin cost the bank 3.5-4c to mint. "There's not much in it. If it was costing us more than the face value to mint, then you have a loss to the taxpayer,"... said... [the] currency department manager... "You'd have to think very seriously [about dropping the coin] at that point." Swapping the \$5 note for a coin would also save money. A coin, though more expensive to mint, lasts 20 years. The average life of a note is only 15 months. The \$5 note, in particular, is given rough treatment by consumers. Half of all \$5 notes returned to the Reserve Bank are shredded and replaced... [However, 'in a move to increase durability and beat counterfeiters, the bank is switching to new polymer plastic material notes – the first of which will go into circulation on May 3, 1999 (AUS introduced polymer notes in 1992). At 9c a note, the new Melbourne-made bills cost about twice as much as the paper variety – but last about four times longer. "We would ask people not to put staples in them, but they are pretty indestructible."'] As well, the bank's currency department is looking at trimming the size of 20c and 50c coins, matching overseas trends towards smaller coins and saving minting costs... and a desire for the coins to be more user-friendly... Changes to the currency are usually controversial... In 1990 the bank phased out 1c and 2c coins, and a year later introduced \$1 and \$2 coins... New banknotes introduced in 1992-93 were the first without the Queen's face on each note['next month the Reserve Bank will follow its AUSn counterpart and begin minting coins with the Queen's new dour, double-chinned effigy – her third makeover since she first appeared on our coins in 1953; the other makeovers were in 1967 and 1986']... Any move to axe the 5c coin is likely [to] be opposed by retailers who would be forced to round the price of low-cost items to the nearest 10c. It would also come under scrutiny within, by the Reserve Bank itself, because of the possibility of rising inflation.

...The trouble with small change is that it keeps getting smaller. The public's opinion of the 5c coin has dropped to such a level that it is failing the Reserve Bank's unofficial test: If you saw one on the street would you pick it up? Apparently not. Why would one anyway, when the bank estimates that on average we already have 120 each?

...The Reserve Bank is expected to call today for public feedback on scrapping the... 5c coin... The coins are lost or hoarded in piggy banks, forcing the Reserve Bank to mint an extra 15 million to 20 million a year... The bank has also looked at... the 20c and 50c coins[, although a]... problem will be to find a size and shape unique to N[Z], to prevent people using overseas currency to feed poker and dispensing machines. To overcome this, the shape of the coins may be varied to five, nine or eleven sides. Even-sided coins will not roll easily down slot machines... Another

[consideration is]... varying the metal used in the coins – or putting a hole through the centre. Royalists, however, might object to a hole being drilled in the Queen's head... If the changes are confirmed, the 5c piece could be withdrawn in the middle of next year. The new 50c piece would be introduced at the same time and the new 20c a year later. The estimated cost of minting the new coins is \$9 million, but the bank would gain roughly that by selling the withdrawn 5c, 20c and 50c coins for scrap... After a year or so, the old coins would no longer have to be accepted by retailers, but would still be redeemable at the Reserve Bank... [P]eople still bring in buckets of 1c and 2c pieces. And while the changeover will have some effect on older parking meters and slot machines, most appear to have already moved to modern models which take \$2 coins. The... \$2 set-up... allows punters to build up credits for the 10c, 20c and 50c games... The Auckland City Council said most of its parking meters are now electronic – which weigh the coins – rather than the old slot type. Reprogramming of the weight mechanism would be required...

Proposals to axe the 5c coin have sparked fears of across-the-board price increases – especially when it comes to children's lollies... [However, the] manager of the Reserve Bank's currency department... said... some large retailers had told the bank they would put all prices down. As for lollies, he said at one corner dairy only one piece of confectionery cost 5c – the rest were more expensive. The bank... was consulting the Foundation for the Blind about whether blind people would be able to recognise the 20c and 50c coins, which would be indented. [The manager] said there had been few negative comments about the changes to the larger coins. A 25c coin had been suggested. Some people had even called for a return to pounds and pence. - 1997

A security man swung open the massive doors of the Queen St branch of the Auckland Savings Bank yesterday and a four-year-old girl, weighed down on one side by a bulging piggy-bank, marched in to open the bank's first decimal currency account... The bank, of course, was officially closed, but its staff is always ready to welcome a new account. Besides, they were dying to show off their new decimal currency hostesses, an attractive band of 80 girls dressed in silver, whose job is to help the public with the changeover. Dressed all in red, with a new red ribbon in her hair, [the girl] climbed on a chair, poured out her savings to be counted, changed to decimal currency and the amount entered in a brand-new pass book... [H]er savings totalled £2 6s 6d, or \$4.65c. There was 4d left over, so because 6d (5c) is the least the bank can take, [she] was given a new elephant [piggy]-bank to put it in. Meanwhile, bank staff were completing the job of changing over 500,000 accounts... after what has been the busiest banking week in N[Z] history. Incidentally, 2)... masked men held up the Oratia postmistress and her 13-year-old son at rifle-point last night and made off with... £100... Half the money stolen was in decimal currency – the first armed robbery in N[Z] involving dollars and cents... - 1967

When NZ changed from using *pounds and pence* as a currency in 1967, the £NZ was almost equal in value to the £UK (the difference was 'exactly 1p' – in '1933, £UK1 equalled £NZ1.25', but the 'NZ pound had been restored to parity with the British sterling in 1945'). At the same time, both £NZ1 and £UK1 were considered equal to approximately \$US2.80. £NZ1 effectively became \$NZ2, which would, therefore, have made \$NZ1 approximately equal to \$US1.40. One of the first things the NZ Government did was to devalue the \$NZ 'by 19.45%'. NZers can still take £NZ1 to banks and receive \$NZ2 in return, which makes the conversion easy for banks but rips off the customer – because \$NZ2(1967) doesn't equal \$NZ2(1997)!

For two decades... [a] sheep-farmer from Turangi... collected trading banknotes, dating back to a £1 bill signed by [the]Governor... in 1844, with the ambition of accumulating the finest collection of N[Z] banknotes ever. According to Melbourne auctioneers... he succeeded. They describe his collection as "without doubt the best to ever come on the market." And when they put up his collection for auction... they expect it to sell for more than \$A200,000... It follows the years when the Spanish gold doubloon was the only trustworthy foreign coin in the colony, the run of trading banknotes until the Reserve Bank took over all note printing in 1934, and the change to decimal currency... N[Z] coins include a... 1933 shilling – one of only two in private hands, worth an estimated \$22,600.

...The Department of Internal Affairs has intervened to prevent the auction of four extremely rare N[Z] trading banknotes worth about \$NZ20,000 in total. They are part of a 140-note collection of N[Z] notes which... are due for auction in Melbourne tomorrow night. But after publicity about the auction, Internal Affairs told [the seller] four of the notes must be withdrawn because they were "antiquities." Under the Antiquities Act, it is illegal to take out of N[Z] any chattel more than 60 years old without a permit. [The seller] said he was unaware he needed a permit. "Nobody here wanted to buy them..." He said he had offered the collection to the Reserve Bank.

...A record price of \$A17,000... was paid for a N[Z] banknote auctioned in Melbourne on Wednesday. The £100 note was issued in 1928... [In related news, a] lucky pensioner has hit a gold mine after discovering hundreds of Saxon coins in a country field... during a metal detecting session... Each coin is worth anything from £100... to £2000 and the discovery could net... [the] retired train driver... close to £750,000.

...A large collection of ancient coins has been discovered in a bank vault where it rested unclaimed for 40 years, officials confirmed yesterday. Although the state-controlled Ionian Bank refused to comment on the collection's value, Greek media placed it as high as 150 billion drachmas (\$[NZ]785 million)... Under Greek law, the contents of bank vaults can be appropriated by the state 40 years after the depositor stops paying the storage fees... Greek police have[also] seized 54 pieces of priceless gold jewellery dating back as far as 5000 BC and arrested two people for allegedly trying to sell them for \$US3.6 million... - 1997

Money is an easily manipulated means of exchange, hastens the transfer of goods and services in national or international commerce, and serves as the basis of a nation's fiscal system and as a unit and measure for rates of exchange. It functions also as a convenient instrument for temporarily storing material value... Through the ages different kinds of commodities (shells, furs, tobacco, etc.) have been employed as money, replacing the primitive mode of exchange – barter... Coins were developed... – probably first by the Lydians, 8th cent. B.C. – to replace barter... Coins struck from precious metal became the most widely accepted medium, since such qualities as uniformity, portability, relative great value despite small size, durability, divisibility, recognizability, stability, and the fact that their bullion value may correspond to their money value make coins the most satisfactory type of standard money yet devised. For many centuries silver coins were the chief form of metallic money. Gold coins were minted but to no great extent until the 19th cent. when they became the generally accepted standard of value. These coins were given a value equal to the value of their actual metal content. Coins that lacked this intrinsic value (e.g. silver, nickel, and copper coins) were only token coins; their value depended on the solvency of the country that issued them. In 1914 gold and silver coinage became inadequate to meet the needs of a world at war, and European governments issued paper money on an enormous scale. The result was that gold coins fell more and more out of use. This large increase in paper notes led to an almost universal adoption of noncommodity money, whose physical value does not correspond to the money value.

Inflation-hit Turkey will introduce its biggest-ever banknote, worth five million lire (\$NZ66.77) today to reduce printing, transport and accountancy costs. With inflation running at more than 80[%] Turks have had to carry brick-like stacks of notes to do business.

...If imitation is the highest form of flattery, the counterfeiters of Brazil have paid the country's financial reformers a big compliment. During August, sacks of poor copies of the Real coin were passed over counters in the country's rich central-south region. The scale of the operation was not big but its symbolism was. During the country's "lost decade" of the 1980s when hyperinflation destroyed the cureizo currency, forgers could not keep up even if they wanted to. New note issues – with a few more zeroes – were frequent as the giant of Latin America was ravaged by inflation sometimes topping 100[%] a month. Savings were wiped out in days for those unable to make a profit out of inflation. Banks indulged in

wild speculation as the financial sector boomed while millions living in or near poverty would rush to exchange what little money they received for something they could eat before its value was wiped out... [T]he Real Plan is based on a new unit of currency which, within a tight band, trades on par with the U[S] dollar... And inflation has plunged... to an estimated 14[%]. In local news, detectives]... seized about \$200,000 in counterfeit \$100 notes in South Auckland yesterday but say there could be thousands more in circulation. - 1996

Auckland police believe a printing press was used to produce counterfeit \$100 and \$20 notes plaguing shopkeepers around the North Island. The fake bills, which have no watermark when held up to the light, were initially thought to have been made by a photocopier or laser printer... [M]ost of the dud money carried the same serial numbers... Some notes had even been accepted by bank staff. The fakes have yet to appear in the South Island. A number of arrests have been made in connection with the bogus bills. A 17-year-old unemployed youth appeared in the Auckland District Court yesterday charged with having \$20 notes in his possession which he knew were counterfeit. The youth, who was granted interim name suppression, allegedly tried to offer the seven false notes in the central city earlier in the day. He pleaded not guilty to the charge – which carries a maximum sentence of seven years' imprisonment. The youth was remanded on bail... on condition that he reported to the police three times a week.

...Police fear that the latest distribution of counterfeit money is more widespread than expected, as... fake... notes surface across the North Island and as far south as Christchurch... Police intelligence sources suggest that counterfeiters have produced up to \$1 million worth of the fake... notes[, of which only \$300,000 has been]... recovered... "If they are going to go to the trouble of printing them, they are not just going to do a few hundred of them," said the head of the Auckland regional crime squad investigating the bogus bills... "They are not good enough to get into the banking system officially,"... Because the fakes are easily picked up by bank money checking machines, individual retailers bear the losses... [The crime squad head] tested the effectiveness of the forgeries by offering one to a service station attendant as payment for a packet of cigarettes – it was accepted without question "but I took it back and paid him with real money." He said \$100 notes had been accepted for purchases such as hamburgers and other cheap items. Sometimes the dud bills were passed with genuine bills... The production manager for the Security Print Group in Auckland... said the availability of new technology meant the biggest headache for counterfeiters would be getting the colours right. Counterfeit notes made in such a manner "would fool most people at the speed that money is passed." Making money involved specialised printing skills "but there are thousands of printers out there... a lot of unemployed ones, too." The manager of policy and supply for the Reserve Bank in Wellington... said the bank checked about two million of the 63 million notes in circulation each day, using seven machines in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. About \$1.6 billion in notes was in use at any one time...

The spate of forged \$20 notes has largely dried up, the Reserve Bank says. Its... processing machines detected 1100 counterfeit notes in the [financial] year... up from 70 the previous year... [In international news, s]even south Florida residents have been arrested on charges of trafficking in more than \$245 million in counterfeit bonds purportedly issued by the Central Bank of Venezuela.

...Three men appeared in a London court on Saturday on forgery charges after British police and U[S] secret service officers said they had uncovered a scam involving \$800 million in fake US Treasury bonds. The three, a Briton, an American and a Taiwanese-American are being held in jail pending a further hearing.

...AMERICAN hotels and shops[have] refused to accept \$50 notes issued by the US Government. The printing was so poor, with smudges on the face of General Ulysses Grant, they suspected these were forgeries. The Treasury has now destroyed 156 million of the notes...

A U[S] secret service agent visited Auckland to investigate a counterfeiting operation which could have produced \$US50 million... in forged American banknotes, the Auckland District Court heard yesterday. Police busted the businessman behind the counterfeit scheme before he could print any of the \$US20 bills at his sophisticated South Auckland workshop... His plan to produce... the banknotes was foiled when two slip-ups – which the police would not reveal – led detectives to the workshop... The court heard that in late 1994 the 32-year-old bankrupt, who described himself as a business consultant, brought three printing presses. He also completed a polytechnic printing course. In May 1995 [the defendant] began negotiating with overseas paper companies to buy up to 10 tonnes of vellum, or rag paper... American authorities sent a secret service agent who told police that the operation was the most elaborate he had seen for a sole operator and that 2.5 million fake notes could have been printed with the amount of paper... ordered... [The] Judge... said that if [the defendant] had succeeded a huge amount of forged foreign currency would have been in the system. A deterrence factor was necessary.

...Fake \$50 notes... are fooling Auckland retailers... The fakes are virtually indistinguishable from real cash as the forgers used paper similar to bank paper. The notes are worn, making it more difficult to tell if they are fakes... "They are unusual in that they look, feel and smell like the genuine article," said... a police media spokesman. "...These are very, very high quality. We are talking top-of-the-line laser printers." ...[Meanwhile, d]etectives... have charged a self-employed Auckland graphic designer with forging \$20 and \$100 notes. - 1997

The man with the long black hair paid for the \$1.80 packet of noodles with a \$100 note. [The shopkeeper] hesitated, and then carefully counted out the change across the counter of his Howick Japanese-Korean grocery. He took the note, felt it, and realised he had been done for \$98.20... "I went to give chase but I couldn't; I was alone in the shop. It makes me very angry. Normally I give kindness to all my customers and I was also kind to him, but he gave me lies." The "lies" were turning up in tills all round the country... "[The fake money] is still in circulation – we already have in excess of 1000 complaint files and there are three coming in each week..." says the head of Auckland's regional fraud squad... The paper does feel wrong. "Plasticity, slippery," says the owner of the Thunderburgers bar in Mission Bay, which was taken in twice during busy periods despite warnings to staff. Real money is printed on cotton-based paper not available to the printing industry in N[Z] – but... the... forgers used light ink and silver pens to imitate the watermark of the Queen's head and the metallic thread – the very traits introduced to protect against counterfeiters... There is no way of knowing how many times the notes changed hands, but... it was mostly small businesses... that got burned. "The dairies, service stations, bakeries and supermarkets – some would count back change and lose half the day's profit." The negatives, plates and printing press that were used to forge the notes have never been found. Police believe that they and bulk quantities of notes have been stashed for future use. The counterfeits were front-page news on December 5, 1996. A man named "N," now on the police witness protection programme, recognised the artwork... N's evidence would later nail a 27-year-old graphic designer... as a ringleader of the operation... [N] had been caught outside the Kelston McDonald's with a plan to rob it by threatening the manager with an imitation pistol. N wanted to do a deal with the police and told them he would plead guilty to all charges... According to N's evidence, [the ringleader] scanned images of real banknotes into his computer and then transferred the images to the film required to make printing plates. The notes came off the press of a legitimate West Auckland printing business, for which [the ringleader] had a key. He... worked at night without the knowledge of the owners, downing tools in time to tidy up... [T]he money was then distributed by criminal networks, mostly through gangs, particularly Black Power... The... [ringleader] was sentenced yesterday to five years' imprisonment... half the maximum penalty... [He] maintained his innocence throughout the trial, portraying himself as another victim of the forgery ring. His parents... and his fiancée... believed him... An appeal will be considered.

...TEENAGE counterfeiters are using classroom computers to print fake \$50 and \$100 bills... The gang is believed to then sell the fakes for around \$5 each... Wanganui retailers have been fooled by the forgeries and shop and bar staff have been warned to look out for the fake notes... One youth has been arrested and a computer seized. Police are wanting to talk to other teenagers about the case... Police... admit that progress in

the case has been slow and the counterfeits are realistic. “I scanned a \$10 note on to the computer and printed it out. It looked pretty good but does not have the same texture as the real thing,” an officer said.

In the spring of 1696, [Isaac] Newton was appointed Warden of the Royal Mint. It required him to live in the Tower of London, and his task was to prevent clipping or shaving of the coinage of the realm. Months later, Newton – who had just begun his study of comets – appointed [Edmond] Halley as Deputy Comptroller of the Mint at Chester... Halley spent two miserable years at Chester supervising the mechanized production of milled coins out of the old hand-made ones. When he and his local Warden discovered two clerks skimming precious metals for their own gain, they spoke out – unaware that their own superior, the Master of the Mint of Chester, was getting a cut from the clerks. An acrimonious feud followed and there were threats of a duel; but the Mints were closed in 1698, and Halley was free to return to London. He arrived just in time for a more agreeable assignment.

That *more agreeable assignment* was timely for Halley – his experience with handling money, and honesty, could instead have led to him being *headhunted* by the recently established Bank of England.

Some banking activities were engaged in by the Babylonians, Egyptians, the Greeks, and, particularly, by the Romans. Though the collecting of interest was held in ill repute during the Middle Ages, banks were founded at an early date in the flourishing commercial cities of N Italy, where they were mainly connected with the market in foreign exchange. Among the first public banks to be established were the Banco di Rialto of Venice (1584) and the Bank of Amsterdam (1609). Until the establishment of the Bank of England, 1694, such banking as there was in England was carried on by goldsmiths, who received deposits of money and valuables and issued negotiable receipts. In the 18th cent. numerous private banks sprang up...

The first difference between communism and capitalism in the 20th century was that capitalism won. The second difference was that the world, led by the U[S], was, in the end, always prepared to bail capitalism out. It had, you might say, no alternative. The mammoth rescue operations now being organised in Asia, under the aegis of the [IMF], may raise eyebrows. Many of the greedy and the impetuous will be protected from the consequences of their actions... A British Government economic adviser... says: “What is surprising, in retrospect, about the 90s financial turbulence... is not that exchange rates came under pressure, but that Governments were able to get away with unsustainable policies for so long...” ...But, in the end, banking systems have to be preserved, or societies will be cutting off their nose to spite their face.

...[due to increased use of cheque accounts and the advent of technology such as credit cards, Eft-pos terminals and automatic teller machines (ATMs – which] sell... for between \$US10,000 and \$US80,000... [each], banks are losing their *human face*. ‘Robert the Robot’ has even replaced humans in TV advertisements for the Auckland Savings Bank (ASB) – although it likes to be known as ‘Your future bank’. Now a [u]utomated walk-through kiosk-style bank branches are expected to open in supermarkets and shopping malls[throughout NZ] before the end of this year... BNZ opened the first kiosk-style branch, in Newmarket in Auckland... But the concept ha[s] developed greatly since then... About six big banks in A[US have] set up trial kiosk branches... The... move to kiosk banking was driven by retail banking’s shift to a 24-hour day, seven-day-week business.

...[‘BankDirect has no branches, so we don’t have doors, so we never close them.’]

...BankDirect, a fully-automated 24-hour virtual bank accessed by phone, the Internet and [ATM]s, was launched yesterday by ASB Bank... The bank’s low overheads would be reflected in competitive rates and fees... [There is] a \$10 join-up fee and \$2 a month [for maintenance]... Activity fees start at 15c per electronic, or dial-direct transaction, 25c per ATM withdrawal or transfer. Account “sweep” facilities or transfers done over the phone by an account manager cost 50c. The bank says it provides a more attractive fee structure for high-value customers... [However, customers] for Internet services were proving hard to recruit, the Bank of New Zealand[(BNZ)], said yesterday. Since it launched its own Internet service – Direct Banking – ...it had signed up only 15[%] of the high-value customers it had targeted against the 30[%] it had forecast.

...BIG banks are being strongly tipped to follow Ergo Financial Services’ decision to allow NZ Post to become a de facto bank branch network... Service stations, power company offices and supermarkets could soon become part of the retail outlet for banks and other lending institutions desperate to cut the costs of their own expensive branch networks. Ergo, a telephone bank which has no branch network at all, last week signed a deal allowing... NZ Post’s 297 shops... to collect money from depositors who still prefer to deal over the counter rather than electronically... While banks talked about the continuing importance of maintaining a branch network, the fact [remains that branches are] declining in number, and would continue to do so at an accelerating rate. Between June 1995 and June 1996, the number of bank branches in N[Z] fell by... 7.3%, to 1361. Biggest falls were recorded by ANZ Bank, whose branch network fell from 340 to 280, and the B[NZ], down from 290 to 267. Since then Westpac and Trust Bank have merged to create Westpac Trust with a total 412 branches, but rationalisation... was already under way... [which] could mean a final branch network of around 270...

[‘Banks are creaming customers and leaving heartland Kiwis in the lurch, says a small town businessman. He runs a Lotto and book shop in Patea – a Taranaki township abandoned by the billion-dollar banking corporations. Patea’s 1400 residents have to make a 54km round-trip to use the nearest cash machine. The town handed several major banks a petition of 900 signatures asking for an ATM but they were ignored. ANZ was the last bank to pull out of Patea. A company spokesperson said: “Where we have closed branches we have increased the service provision in surrounding areas and we are expanding new banking services like phone and the internet.” But Patea townsfolk are less than impressed with the big banks – especially when they are announcing record profits and raising service fees.’]

...Strong profit growth among[NZ] banks tapered in 1996, while underlying earnings actually fell, a Reserve Bank review of the sector says. Net profits for the industry as a whole totalled \$1.02 billion, up 1.1[%] on 1995 and a far cry from the double-digit growth since 1992 when sector profits were just \$313 million. While net-interest income was little changed in 1996, competitive pressures were revealed by its decline as a percentage of total assets... However... the Reserve Bank’s banking system department, said... restructuring... would, in the longer term, improve the sector’s efficiency... [B]ank margins were declining and all banks were addressing this with efforts to substantially improve... ANZ’s interest margins in N[Z] have declined to 2.6% in March 1997, from 3.5% in 1993, while those of N[Z] banks on average had declined to 2.8% from 3.1% in 1993... ANZ’s operating expenses as a percentage of average assets had fallen to 3.6%... from 4.4% in 1993... Much of the efficiency drive had been focused on removing cross-subsidisation between retail products and services and in developing new technologies, with electronic delivery through [ATMs (of which NZ now ‘has one per 2398 people – in comparison, the UK has 1:2794, AUS 1:2345, the US 1:2143 and Japan 1:987’)], eftpos, and telephone and Internet banking gathering pace... According to Bankers’ Association data, there is now one eftpos terminal [in NZ] for every 78 people, compared to one for every 132 in A[US, one for every] 474 in the U[S]... and... one per 4413 in Japan... However, it was ironic that, although leading the world in the number of eftpos terminals per head of population, N[Z] also had one of the highest ratios of bank branches... There is... one branch for every 2818 people, compared with one for every 4400 typical of OECD nations [(‘US = 4467; UK = 4737; Japan = 8287’). The AUSn figure is 2782]... This makes it more expensive for banks to operate [in Australasia], because operating branch networks is their second biggest expense. This gives the banks a powerful financial incentive to trim their branch networks wherever they can... IT is not just small rural towns that risk... losing their local bank branches... While mergers like ANZ-Postbank and Westpac and Trustbank have resulted in many branch

closures, the trend is far from over... There has already been considerable rationalisation within our banking industry, driven mainly by two factors: Technological change and deregulation... The next few years should see the rate[of branch closures] pick up considerably, driven by two new factors. The first is that the A[US]n banking industry is facing deregulation, opening the way for mergers or takeovers, with flow-on effects for N[Z]... The second major influence is another new wave of technology. In the 1996 Bankers' Association annual review... the chief executive of ASB Bank, pointed to the next generation of plastic cards – so-called “smart” cards able to store money and be topped up. The other change is in the way banks clear transactions. Eftpos has already greatly reduced the use of cheques. According to the Bankers' Association, the number of cheques is declining by about 9% each year. But this[technology] has mainly been for transactions by individuals. Soon banks will introduce a system linking companies with their own computers, allowing them to pay each other by instantaneous computer link... The growing familiarity of the younger generation is developing with computers almost makes it inevitable that they will want to conduct their banking affairs via this medium. Customers understandably focus on their local branches when assessing the services their banks provide. But the bigger challenge in the future may be to ensure they get a fair share of the bigger profits that the move to electronic banking can provide, in the form of lower loan costs and fees and higher investment returns.

...Banks have been enticing us into the push-button world of banking, wooing customers by charging less for electronic transactions. Customers who have so far resisted the move away from paper banking – cheques and over-the-counter withdrawals and deposits – have in most cases been penalised with transaction fees nearly double that of electronic ones. But news that Westpac has slapped a whopping \$2 charge on one of its electronic transactions sent alarm bells ringing this week. Consumer watchdog organisations wonder if the honeymoon is over for push-button banking. Are any other charges waiting in the wings? Westpac[– which]... has... also raised account-keeping fees by 40[% –] ...defended its move with the explanation that the new \$2 charge simply brought its policy in line with the former... Trust Bank, which the A[US]n-based banking giant merged with last year. Trust Bank has always charged \$2 to customers who make cash advances on their credit cards from other banks' [ATM]s. Now Westpac customers have to pay the charge too. [Westpac's]Public relations manager... said the \$2 covered the cost of processing the credit card transaction through two outside agencies – Westpac paid a fee to the bank which owned the teller machine used in the transaction, then it had to pay a processing charge to the credit card company. He did not disclose exactly how much each charge was. However, an academic who specialises in banking speculated that similar charges could follow for debit cards... [He] said charges could be coming for customers who used other banks' teller machines for any electronic transaction. Westpac said it had no plans to do this at present, but the bank's reply was not totally reassuring... “I'm not aware of any talk at Westpac at this time but that does not rule out that it will happen some time in the future.” It was a common practice overseas for banks to pass on to the customer the “interchange fee” which banks charge other banks for each non-customer transaction on their teller machines. Indeed, charges for using another bank's teller machines are fairly common practice across the Tasman – and Westpac's charge is one of the highest among the A[US]n banks. Westpac customers are charged \$1 if they use another bank's machine, and other banks' charges range from 30c to 75c. So, are Kiwis about to lose the luxury of being able to use other banks' teller machines free of charge? ...[the academic, a] senior banking lecturer at Massey University... said... [NZ b]anks... had held off... charging for using debit cards in other banks' ATMs... while electronic banking became established in this country. And more and more people are getting hooked on electronic banking... Paper banking transactions cost twice as much as electronic transactions at most banks, but... the gap between electronic and manual transactions could widen further. As well as increasing the cost of electronic transactions, banks could also bump up the charge for paper banking to more accurately reflect the cost. Most banks had been reluctant to do this... Banks had been absorbing the cost of both electronic and paper transactions... subsidising the cost from the interest earned on residential mortgages... ANZ/PostBank, however, does stand out. Its key saver and connect accounts charge \$3 for a teller transaction[(excluding deposits)] compared with 75c for an electronic one [if the account's balance is] less than \$300... [Furthermore, the bank] is to replace standard... cheque accounts with an account called ANZ Access, or PostBank Access[, for which the]... monthly administration fee would rise to \$3. The previous... transaction fee of 25 cents would become 25c for an electronic transaction and 50c for manual, and customers would lose their five free transactions. [Retired people] who had their superannuation direct credited and customers with average monthly balances of \$5000 would not pay fees... Current fee exemptions would be maintained and interest would be paid on balances of more than \$2000... However, any fee increases will be closely monitored by the Consumers' Institute, which is in the process of conducting its own study into bank fees... The[institute's] chief executive... said... “If we suspect the banks are exploiting the position of the consumer we would ask the Minister of Commerce for an independent inquiry... It could be that WestpacTrust is putting its toe in the water and has picked on a relatively small area to apply this \$2 charge, but we would want it justified... It seems extremely high for an electronic transaction.” Electronic services save the banks money, he said, and this should be passed on to consumers. “Banks can't have it all ways, and we are not going to let them.” [However, consumers let them get away with introducing service fees. Furthermore, ‘banks are not obliged to open an account for everyone’ but NZ's ‘Income Support pays benefits only by direct credit and a steady trickle of beneficiaries have been unable to open accounts because they could not save the minimum deposit required by banks (some beneficiaries used the account of another person, who sometimes spent the money’) – which vary from ‘no minimum’ (National Bank) to ‘\$500’ (ASB Bank). The cost of purchasing modern banking technology has made low-value accounts unprofitable for banks to maintain!

...‘As part of a survey, a consumer magazine set up a cheque account with seven banks and one savings institution. After a year two banks had negative balances of \$10 and \$8 respectively after the initial \$100 deposit had been “gobbled up” in bank fees, while the most left in the other accounts was \$76.’

...Back when the concept of asking customers to pay a fee to do things with their own money existed nowhere but in a banker's wet dream, banks could make a profit by simply paying depositors a lower rate of interest than was collected from borrowers. But after banks had invested in technology – partly to save money spent on accounting – they found that it could be used to do extra accounting calculations (e.g., computers enabled bankers to perform such activities as automatically calculate the interest owing on every customer's savings account at the end of each day, and to alter the rate of interest according to daily account balances), including recovering its cost via the introduction of fees. Because the technology could keep track of every transaction, banks were also able to offer high-interest accounts that encouraged saving by penalising customers for making any, or more than a set number of, withdrawals. For example, the ASB has 3 savings accounts: ‘the Accelerator (which pays 7% interest on balances over \$1000 – but deducts 1.5% interest for the first withdrawal each month and \$5 for subsequent withdrawals); MoneyMaker (\$2 monthly fee for balances below \$500, 5% interest, 50c for ATM transactions, \$2 for teller transactions); FlexiSave (as for the MoneyMaker except that ATM transactions cost 25c each and the interest rate is below 2%). All deposit transactions are free.’ In comparison, the BNZ offers 5 accounts: ‘Ready Money, which has a \$3.50 monthly Account Management Fee but no free transactions (electronic transactions cost 35c each; ATM, Cheques Written, and Freepost Deposits cost 50c each; staff assisted transactions cost \$1 each); Cash Draw Saver, which offers 100 prizes per month, pays at least 1% interest, has a \$2.50 monthly management fee and the first 2 withdrawals per month are free (after that, electronic transactions cost 60c; transactions via ATMs, etc., cost 75c; staff assisted transactions cost \$1.25), as are all deposits; Call Account, which has no monthly management fee but pays a low interest rate (0.0%p.a. for \$0-\$4,999, rising to 4.25% for balances \$500,000+), while all withdrawals are free with an average daily balance of \$5,000 or more a month (only the first 3 per month are free if the average monthly balance is less than \$5,000 – then each non-deposit transaction costs \$2); Achiever Savings, which pays between 2.5 to 5% interest as well as having no management fee and allows one free withdrawal per month (subsequent, non-deposit transactions cost \$2 each); Silver Service, a no fee account for superannuants’...

‘Not so long ago, customers at Wells Fargo bank in San Francisco just had to cope with mechanical faults and quirky operating hours when trying to extract cash from their dispensing machines. Now they have to put up with film trailers and advertisements. Starting this week, Wells Fargo is operating

three high-tech machines in and around the city that will be wired for commercials and news headlines as well as passing out money, and hopes to be operating 800 of these bank machines by the end of the year. Eventually the adverts will be tailored to the buying habits of each consumer withdrawing cash. This may be the banking wave of the future, but the first customers to undergo the experience were less than enthusiastic. "I just want to get my money," complained one. Yesterday's *San Francisco Chronicle* inveighed the notion that "even before you extract your cash, the machine tells you how to spend it. That's a lot of gall, even for avaricious bankers, who should junk the commercials in favour of machines that work, that spit out bills and transaction records – even on weekends – with no charge for retrieving our own money." While banks in the US forge closer links with the advertising industry, NZ's banks have entered the lottery business by offering prizes in addition to interest on accounts (e.g., for every \$100 a customer has in the designated account during the month, it goes into the draw for extra cash, a new car or overseas holiday, etc.).] **As the competition for their money gets more intense, bank customers can expect to be offered services they never dreamed of... A French bank has begun selling customers sports tickets, among other things, to boost profits.**

...[the] **blurring of the traditional distinctions between financial services providers is becoming ever more apparent with banks now capturing sizeable chunks of the life insurance market...** [Furthermore, plastic cards – which once were merely a] **medium for making payments[–] are fast becoming the bestowers of all kinds of goodies as competition drives financial service companies to stay one step ahead of the competition.**

...Telstra has launched the first A[US]n national smartcard system, beating the main trading banks by more than a year. The first cards – already supported by Cabcharge, Coca-Cola vending machines, Smiths Snack Foods, and Time Zone entertainment arcades – will be disposable cards, but they will be followed in December by reloadable cards. To take advantage of both types of cards[– smart and phone –] Telstra has begun replacing all A[US]'s 30,000 payphones with new phone technology that will eventually allow users to programme their rechargeable cards with their choice of loyalty schemes and partner programmes. Most new phones will be in by December. The new phones will also have capability for data transmission, allowing users to plug a notebook into a phone jack, to pick up Internet E-mail and other data-based tasks... The initial disposable smartcards will be available with \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50 values from the outlets that stocked Telstra old-style phonecards. Like the more advanced rechargeable cards they are designed for amounts too small to be economical on the eftpos network... Telstra expects to make a stream of announcements regarding future uses of the cards, including use in parking meters, transport systems, cinemas and fast-food chains... Users will be able to top up reloadable smartcards by using one of 10,000 Telstra terminals, to be positioned in outlets selling the cards. The terminal will work similarly to an eftpos terminal, taking value out of a user's bank account. Technically, there is no limit to the value that can be loaded onto a card, but... Telstra had imposed a limit of \$300... If a reloadable card is lost or stolen, unused credit will be recoverable if the user can give the serial number of the card. Telstra would issue a new card with the remaining value... Telstra has been consulting various consumer groups, but was still to provide the final terms and conditions for the reloadable cards... A smartcard code of conduct was being drawn up and should be ready by the year-end... The new phones will take coins and Telstra smartcards but initially not standard credit cards... [W]ith current credit card calls "there's a flagfall of \$1. We're uncomfortable with that and are trying to negotiate a way out of it. Our view is that everyone should pay the same for a call, regardless of the way they choose to pay for it."

...Telecom is considering whether to follow... Telstra in installing a network of smartcard-operated payphones to replace its magnetic stripcard phones... Telecom's nine-year-old payphones are only slightly newer than those being replaced by Telstra... Telecom has 5000 payphones compared with 40,000 in use by Telstra.

...In town last week were representatives of VeriFone Australasia, which in partnership with Datacraft NZ, wants to put an ATM in your kitchen. You need a personal ATM – or something like it – because of the imminent arrival of smart cards in N[Z]... The \$100 personal ATM... could... do things like access sharemarket data... [and] will also allow you to make automatic bill payments, if you're bored with the present arrangement all banks have with their customers. ['According to a report commissioned by the Information Technology Association last year, payments of social services benefits will probably be made using smart-card technology within five years.'

...research showing how simple equipment can be used to break into Government and banks' confidential electronic files was kept secret for months to allow the Bank of England and other institutions to review their security arrangements. A Cambridge computer expert broke the code for smart cards, once thought to be the ultimate security device. He found ways of attacking the smart cards allowing the contents to be read completely within minutes. "The most expensive items of equipment needed, such as electron-beam testers and ion-beam workstations, can be rented by the hour and there are a number of universities which have them for research purposes," the expert said. The British Government recently announced plans to hold information about tax, pensions, social security and driver's licences on smart cards' (and to 'give every child up to £1000 in an attempt to rebuild Britain's savings culture').]

...Frustrated with carrying round piles of plastic credit, loyalty and incentive cards? New smart technology might soon reduce your wallet bulge, according to Relationship Marketing Services[which]... is getting closer to the launch of a "VIP Infinity" smart card which will combine a community-based customer loyalty card with a range of other cards such as those offered by BP, Foodtown, The Warehouse and... possibly the Mondex "cash purse", all on the one piece of plastic... [A] recent announcement by a consortium of leading silicon manufacturers and smart card companies, including... Hitachi, MasterCard and Mondex International, provides a crucial link to make [this] proposal a reality. The firms are joining to introduce Multos - an "open systems" high-security operating system for smart cards which enables a number of different products or services to be held securely and independently on a single card. Smart cards differ from magnetic stripe, stored-value or memory cards in that they contain a tiny microprocessor which can carry out a variety of functions... [M]ost recent retail EFTPOS terminals were already equipped with the ability to read smart cards. Multos security features allow consumers to download new products or services on to the smart card via the telephone, ATM or the Internet, and allow card issuers to update, add or change applications while the card is still in the hands of the customer... The VIP (Village Interactive Platform) Relationship Marketing scheme involves a community (village) of retailers issuing customers with cards that, as well as offering individual benefits and prizes to their customers, com[es] with a matched 1/2c-in-the-dollar pledge for community projects. When a... card [is presented] to a contributing shop, retailers will be able to see the customer's name and address details and what recent purchases [i]t... has made in their shop if they have a PC-based terminal. Shops with ordinary EFTPOS terminals will simply accrue points to the customer's card.

...For customers, the ever expanding opportunities for eftpos use can take its toll on their cards... A spokesman for the ANZ Bank... said the ANZ had a policy to replace cards every three years, but customers who experienced problems could have new cards issued immediately. He did, however, issue a warning for eftpos cards to be kept away from magnetic fields, which could deactivate the card's magnetic strip. Among the worst offenders were the magnetic clasps on women's purses, he said.

...['cashless payments at the door by Eftpos – for everything from plumbing to pizza delivery – are on the cards. And BellSouth could beat Telecom to the draw in this virtually untapped market for mobile Eftpos service. To make mobile Eftpos cheap and reliable enough for the likes of tradespeople and taxi drivers, Telecom is planning a new cellular service dedicated just to electronic payments in the first half of next year. But its competitor said it will have mobile Eftpos ready for public use by the end of this year. A spokesperson for BellSouth said yesterday that its existing cellular network was based on a technology quite different from Telecom's and needed none of the modifications that Telecom's network needed. BellSouth has an agreement with an AUSn Eftpos terminal manufacturer, Keycorp, which set up a subsidiary in NZ last August. The transfer processing company Electronic Transaction Services Ltd (ETSL) estimates that NZers make more than 23 million Eftpos transactions a month.'

...some shoppers may soon pay up to \$1 every time they make an Eftpos transaction. This follows the decision by ANZ Bank to raise the fees it charges retailers. Other banks have not followed ANZ's fee rise, which one Wellington dairy-owner says will raise his monthly Eftpos bill from \$24 to \$200. He

has already warned that he will pass the cost on to customers. The man, who did not want to be named, said he would get rid of his Eftpos machine if customers balked at the charge. An ANZ spokesperson, said the bank's contract with retailers did not allow them to pass on its charges. If retailers did this, the bank would review the matter seriously. However, the Retail Merchants' Association said the alternative for retailers looking to recoup their costs is to raise prices. The association's chief executive said retailers, particularly smaller businesses, were annoyed because "they're actually doing the bank's job and being sluggish for it."

...Businesses charging customers who pay by Eftpos may face legal action if they fail to advertise the fee. A few outlets have for some time charged customers for cash withdrawals, but complaints about charging consumers who use Eftpos to pay for goods and services have led to a new warning from the Commerce Commission. It says it is legal for businesses to charge customers who use Eftpos to pay for goods and services and to withdraw cash – but customers must be advised beforehand... The commission has successfully prosecuted several companies... Most retailers absorb Eftpos costs but a few impose fees ranging from 50c to \$1 for the service. The commission's fair trading manager... said: "Businesses need to be careful when adding extra charges which consumers would not normally expect to pay." It was not sufficient to advise a consumer of the fee once he or she had agreed to enter into the transaction. "Signs indicating that there is a fee need to be clear. The print needs to be large enough to be seen and bold enough to catch the customers' attention." ...the general manager of E[TSL], which manages 80[% of NZ's] Eftpos machines, said consumers usually boycotted outlets that imposed a fee.

...The operator of the country's main Eftpos retail payment system wants to know why the telecommunications component of its service is not returning the same efficiencies as other parts of its business. "We see telecommunications as a larger percentage of transaction costs than it should be," E[TSL's] general manager... said... "Transaction volumes and technological efficiencies contribute to lowering the price of the transaction cost, but we are not seeing the same efficiencies in the communications area as we see in the central processing switches for example." ...ETSL, owned by the ASB, National, Westpac Trust and BNZ banks, handles about one-third of N[Z]'s retail spend through its Eftpos terminal network... "We need to fully investigate costs and technology such as ISDN, mobile solutions and anything else that might improve performance,"... ETSL was trying cellular Eftpos as a possible option but so far had found it not fast enough... ETSL established a national structure suitable for its business and negotiated a five-year contract with Telecom. "We are now into year two of the second five-year contract,"... [The general manager's] comments come at a time when the Telecommunications Users' Association is pushing for reforms to the Commerce Act to provide more open competition to the industry to drive down prices. The association claims competition is lacking in significant parts of the industry, including the local loop, ISDN, Centrex and other value-added services.

...Retailers are demanding answers about an Eftpos breakdown after millions of consumer dollars were affected yesterday. An estimated 100,000 transactions at 15,000 terminals were paralysed yesterday morning when... [ETSL] suffered a major computer malfunction. Massive queues formed at many shops after retailers were forced to hand-write dockets for two hours instead of using the machines which electronically transfer money from buyers' bank accounts to the shop. The breakdown happened at the worst moment for many retailers as shoppers and families jammed shopping malls for respite from the wet Queen's Birthday holiday weather. The system eventually started working just after midday. Today the Retail and Wholesale Merchants' Association plans to ask [ETSL] what went wrong and how to prevent it happening again. The association's chief executive... said last night that retailers were already struggling in an extremely competitive market. "We don't need these type of things to make life difficult... There are still ways around it through the manual system but it's obviously not desirable and holds the whole transaction process up." The Manukau branch manager of The Warehouse... said shoppers had faced considerable delays. [He] likened the situation to an accident on the motorway – the initial problem may be fixed but the backlog lasted hours. "It's usually at the most inopportune times – like on a very busy weekend or at public holidays." Other retailers, who did not have any dockets, asked customers to withdraw cash from automatic money machines... [while some service stations 'siphoned back petrol from the cars of customers who had no means of payment after their electronic transaction was declined'. A] shop assistant at... the Hamilton Chartwell Square shopping mall, said most customers were tolerant about the delay. "They know there's nothing you can do about it,"... It is thought that one of [ETSL's] eight processors had failed and back-up computer software, which should have taken on the extra workload, had not been activated. Data records had been sent to the company's U[S] supplier where experts would analyse the reason for the malfunction. An answer was expected within the next few days.

...[a paraplegic man fled from an attacker in his Whangarei home by wheelchair, pushing himself more than half a kilometre down city roads while still bleeding from his wounds. The police have been criticised for a slow response to the incident, which led to the arrest of a 37-year-old Whangarei woman who faces assault charges. Last night the 32-year-old victim was in a stable condition at Whangarei Hospital. The man had arrived at the Maunu Superette about 6.20 pm with his attacker in pursuit. The superette owner said the man wheeled himself in and wanted someone to call the police. The owner said he did not want to get involved. "However, my wife rang the police, who took a long time getting down all the details. It was holding us up because we couldn't use the Eftpos." In related news, negotiations are under way to improve N[Z]'s Eftpos system, after [the breakdown which] paralysed about 100,000 retail transactions on Monday... [ETSL] has blamed the breakdown on a rare computer malfunction that coincided with a bug in the Eftpos software. The chief executive... said it was bad luck the two problems coincided... He said the company was in a strong position to "negotiate aggressively" a better deal from its overseas supplier, following the breakdown. He hoped to reorganise the Eftpos system through a number of separate networks, so if one failed the others would continue unaffected. Suppliers usually sold licensed packages as a whole, and it was expensive to operate different packages within the same shop... But N[Z] was a comparatively big player in the Eftpos world, and he hoped to convince suppliers to unbundle their packages to suit our market.

...Bank officials have fingers crossed that a computer glitch which stopped about \$1 billion of pay going into employees' accounts yesterday has been sorted out. But banks cannot guarantee that customers will be able to withdraw money which should be in their accounts or avoid having eftpos transactions declined... All banks were affected by the... largest... computer breakdown... to hit the[NZ] banking industry in recent years... The chief executive of the Consumers Institute... said banks were liable for any financial losses customers incurred as a result of the failure[, which]... was blamed on computer changes at the... processing centre, run by EDS.

...Banks were criticised yesterday for failing to guarantee customers immediately that they would not incur any costs from this week's big computer breakdown... But the Bankers Association said the cautious response was to be expected in such a highly competitive industry... Thousands of bank accounts remained empty or plunged into the red on Wednesday after[the] breakdown... The B[NZ] was one of the first to assure customers they would not be penalised... followed by WestpacTrust, ANZ, PostBank and Countrywide[– which]... went one step further, promising customers left out of pocket that they would be compensated for both direct and indirect costs... EDS, the company charged with processing the daily banking transactions, was optimistic yesterday that the problem had been resolved.

...Direct debits, credits and payroll transactions were under threat last night following a wildcat strike by staff at the... American-owned EDS company... after an impasse in contract talks.

...Fears that millions of dollars of... pay and benefits might not be paid into personal bank accounts today because of [another] computer glitch were last night played down by... EDS... [T]he company... said... [a] corrupt computer disk... caused a power cut... But it admitted that the impact... would not be known until early today and it could not guarantee that pay would go through.

...Thousands of frustrated shoppers were left waiting for their... pay and benefits yesterday... EDS said yesterday's delay was not related to last month's inter-bank payments fault... [S]even million transactions totalling \$126 million were being processed... when the breakdown occurred.

Staff managed to fix the glitch by 5am yesterday, and it was then up to the banks to process their files. [By the way, if a bank error works in your favour and you deliberately or inadvertently spend that money, you can be charged with theft!]

...a Norwegian man briefly became the richest person in the world after a mystery bank error dumped 9,999,999,973,885 Norwegian crowns (\$NZ2515 billion) into his account. The newspaper *Verdens Gang* said the 29-year-old from Oslo noticed the astronomical sum – which would far eclipse the wealth of the world's richest man – when checking his account']...

More than 380 million cheques were processed last year in N[Z]. And financial experts concede that, because of the pressure, our banks could follow the pattern set by the Big Four in Britain. They've stopped checking signatures on personal cheques for amounts below £1000. A series of tests, which has won praise from the Consumers' Association, showed that Barclays paid out on a cheque... which was signed "Albert Einstein"... [and] the Midland Bank paid £10 from the account of a man... because of a cheque apparently signed by... H. G. Wells.

...[NZ service] stations are following the lead of supermarkets and starting to limit the number of customers they allow to use cheques. Mobil Oil – stung by \$120,000 worth of rubber cheques each year – is the first oil company to... [introduce] a new policy that customers can only use cheques if they have made prior arrangements... Figures collated by the Bankers Association showed cheque use had declined in recent years, from just over half of all non-cash payments in 1993, to a third last year.

...Criminals do not seem to be getting the message that "plastic payment" is cutting the proceeds of armed robberies... The use of Eftpos and other types of card payment means that cash is now used for only 46[%] of transactions at outlets such as supermarkets and bottle shops... Plastic payment had a high average use – 60[%] – in service stations, "and I know that the oil companies encourage their staff to offer cash-out to Eftpos customers specifically to reduce the amount of cash held on site..."... said... [the] general manager of [ETSL].

...\$15 million was taken in one... hit. No threats, no guns, no getaway car, just the stroke of a few computer keys... Bank robbers would be doing well to take \$1.5 million in one hit... The case of the Russian hackers who penetrated the veil of security around the Citibank system in America in 1995... sent shockwaves through the financial world. "They all think it only happens in America," said a computer security expert at Otago University... "You cannot say that just because we are in N[Z] we are safe. You can reach out and touch anybody, anywhere. Who would do a bank robbery if you could hack and get \$400,000 to \$500,000?" ...He said there were people in N[Z] with enough skill and knowledge to be top hackers. "...and they probably are doing it." ...Cracking programmes are available on the Internet and they sometimes contain information which would enable people to beef them up... [The Otago University lecturer] is one of two leading experts who have spoken at recent conferences – on the need for N[Z] companies to protect their computer-stored assets... "More and more people are working with modems, maybe from home. Anybody who considers their data to be confidential to their organisation should consider what electronic security means," said [the] product manager for [a] security equipment supplier... Many simple fixed password-based systems are inadequate. Last month, a hacker... cracked 100,000 passwords around the world, including some belonging to the A[US] Navy. The supplier... said computer-users had to set up their own defences... Banks in A[US] and N[Z] have adopted stringent security measures to ensure their systems are safe... But banks are not the only targets for cyberspace bandits... Even sales representatives should consider how safe their laptop communications are... Price lists, company plans, confidential communications – all stored on laptop – are valuable commodities for competitors. Stripping that kind of information from computer systems would give a rival company a jump in the market. Bank account details and other financial records could even give a criminal an easy source of a quick income... This week, 1000 hackers and security experts gathered in New York for a conference which drew international involvement. A *Wall Street Journal Interactive Edition* article quoted hackers as saying they were looking for knowledge, not trouble when they broke into computer networks. They complained they had been given a bad name by the minority among them who have damaged or stolen goods.

...[two hackers who broke into a bank computer network and stole 260,000 yuan (\$NZ61,000) have been sentenced to death by a Chinese court. The Yangzhou Intermediate Court in Jiangsu province also confiscated 40,000 yuan from the brothers, one of whom was formerly an accountant at the Zhenjiang branch of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China. The two opened 16 accounts under various names in a branch of the bank. The brothers then broke into the branch to install a controlling device in a computer terminal. They used the device to electronically deposit 720,000 yuan. Later they withdrew money from eight branches of the bank. All the money was recovered.' In local news, *lawmakers are moving to close a legal loophole allowing fraudsters to raid bank accounts by phone without committing a crime. The 38-year-old Crimes Act, passed before electronic banking, is to be tightened so prosecutors can deal with abuse of common-place procedures such as phone transfers or direct credits. As the law stands, some dishonest actions are not offences if payment involves the direct transfer of money between bank accounts. If they involved cash or cheques, the offender could be charged with theft or obtaining credit by false pretences. But it is not illegal to transfer money out of a bank with voice or touch-phone banking systems, using someone else's Personal Identification Number[(PIN)]. The loophole was exposed by the Court of Appeal this year when it overturned fraud convictions against a businessman charged with duping financial institutions. The court overturned some... [of his] 10... convictions ...[or] obtaining credit by false pretences... because false-pretences charges must involve tangible property. All five judges held that a credit in a bank account was not a tangible thing, and therefore could not be stolen. A Law Commission report said this "yawning gap" needed urgent attention. "It is manifestly wrong that criminal liability on a charge of obtaining by false pretences should turn on the chance of the particular mechanics of payment employed." The... Bankers' Association declined to comment on the report.*

...I haven't been going out much lately. The invariable pattern of drinking to the point of stupidity is rapidly losing its charm for me. But last weekend I made an exception to celebrate a friend's house warming with cocktails. By 2.30 am I'd had enough and prepared to call a taxi. "Don't!" my friends cried in their best debauched fashion. Determined to keep the night "alive," they propelled me down the street on foot, in search of an open bar. I was, however, quite resolute, and home being only a few blocks away, my friends bid me a cavalier adieu... But... [shortly afterward] I realised I was being followed. I turned to face my attacker and saw a stocky skinhead running towards me. I started screaming but before I knew it, he had grabbed my handbag, and he and his accomplice were already far away. While my situation could have been much worse, I was disturbed by the fact that no local residents were roused by my cries for help, and in the end I had to enter a stranger's house to call the police... All I had in my purse was a measly \$10, yet the damage these muggers caused me extended into the hundreds. After the event came the drudgery of cancelling cards and changing locks.

...["Stop, thief!" I yelled after the man who had snatched my black leather backpack. But he was already in his car and roaring off down the road. I managed to get his rego number before he disappeared. Still shaking, I dialled 000. I gave the police the rego number and they said the car had been stolen the day before. Then I called the bank and cancelled all my cards. A few days later I called the bank to get a statement and to my astonishment, \$800 had disappeared. "But you came in earlier today," the cashier reminded me. "You produced a health care card as ID." I shook my head as I explained the card had been stolen along with my bag and after filling out a few forms, the money was returned. "That should be the end of it," I told my mum that night. "I hope so, hon," she said. "Oh, Nan says she sent you a parcel." When the parcel didn't arrive, I contacted the post office. "I haven't received any mail recently – not even bills," I told them. "That's because you redirected it," they pointed out and my heart sank. Soon after, my impersonator withdrew \$850 from my account by changing all my bank details. The impersonator had even changed my password so that only she could use it. I expected apologies from the bank. But to my horror, they suspected me of criminal activity and refused to hand over any of my cash until the matter had been fully resolved. I left the bank, deflated and broke. It was another week before my stolen cash was returned and by the following weekend, my impersonator had taken it again. "I don't think I can take much more of this," I told mum, and then I heard a knock at the door. It was the police. Perhaps they'd caught my impersonator. "We're here about a room in a Surfers Paradise hotel trashed by a woman with your name who also stole a playstation and left without

paying her bills.” I was just starting to believe she’d had enough when a bill for \$1000 arrived from a posh hotel. I closed my bank account after another \$850 disappeared’]...

The rules say that if someone steals your credit or cash flow card and uses it wrongfully to withdraw money from your account, then your liability is limited to \$50. But banks will make you pay the lot if you’ve been careless with your PIN number. Which is where the debate begins. Being innocent until proved guilty apparently doesn’t wear with bankers. “If you lose your card, which is then used by someone else who enters the correct PIN number first time, it’s hard to argue there has not been carelessness,” sa[ys the]Bankers Association chief executive[. But the]banking ombudsman... clearly disagrees. “I take the view that the general rule is the customer is entitled to the protection of the \$50 limit,” she said in her latest report. It was for the bank to provide evidence that customer carelessness had contributed to the loss, she said. “While using the card with the correct PIN number may be significant, it is not conclusive evidence...” To prove her point, she quoted the case of a woman whose card was stolen from a handbag left in a car. After unsuccessfully searching for it, she drove to the police station to report the theft, and then drove home and telephoned the bank. In just under three hours, 16 Eftpos transactions totalling \$1500 were made using the stolen card. The bank refused to pay up, claiming the PIN number was clearly known to the offenders and must have been disclosed by the woman. But it was a random number not written down by the woman, who lived by herself and was at a loss to know how anyone got hold of it. [The ombudsman] said there was no evidence the woman had been careless, and successfully argued with the bank that it should meet its obligations by seeking no more than the initial \$50. But the bank was able to successfully argue the woman should also pay another \$290 – the price for being “careless” by leaving her card in a car.

...[an ‘81-year-old Auckland pensioner is delighted with a settlement reached yesterday with WestpacTrust over \$6000 drained from her modest life savings after the theft of her automatic banking card. The settlement, which neither party wants to disclose, followed an initial refusal by the bank to take responsibility for the losses after learning that she had kept her PIN number in her wallet. The pensioner, who has banked with WestpacTrust or its predecessors for more than 40 years, said she only reluctantly accepted the card in the first place and kept the number in her wallet to show a helper needed to guide her through cash withdrawals because of her failing eyesight.’ In this instance the customer was clearly to blame. However, i]n some countries, merchandisers were found to have Eftpos terminals connected to a scanner which read PIN numbers.

...[she had] arrived in England with her boyfriend that Saturday... at the start of their two-year trip. They had holidayed in Bali en route, were met at the airport by friends and... stopped at a local pub... [while driving to Cambridge. When she] reached down for her handbag [as they were about to leave, she found it] was gone and with it her ASB Bank Visa card. There was \$5000 in the account – her only travel fund. After a frantic search she telephoned her mother... at the family farm at Te Kauwhata. It was a little after six on Sunday morning N[Z time when her mother] dialled ASB Visa’s free-phone number to cancel [the] credit card and have a new one issued. Several days later when... [the daughter] tried withdrawing money with her new card, the transaction was blocked and she was told to contact ASB Visa in Auckland. It was then she learned her \$5000 had gone and she was \$839 in overdraft. It had taken the thief seven minutes to gut the account, making 12 withdrawals from a single ATM machine, in amounts varying between £50... and £500[(‘in NZ there is a \$500 daily limit on cash withdrawals with ASB Bank Visa cards’)]. The ASB Bank said thieves must have found [her PIN]... written on a piece of paper in her handbag, or that it matched birthday details found in her passport. To the bank that is enough customer negligence to absolve it from having to cover the loss. [She] denied negligence, saying her PIN was a random number she had never wrote down... Neither [she] nor her parents were prepared to pay the \$839 overdraft or the 19.25[% interest. Their]... lawyer... wrote to the ASB Bank alleging N[Z] banks are well aware of sophisticated international fraudsters who can either discover or bypass the PIN but that there is “a conspiracy of silence between the banks preventing such information being made public.” He added that the banks are unlikely to admit they are “negligently operating a system which can be accessed fraudulently[. it]... is in the bank’s own interest to claim ignorance... and it is against [the bank’s] interest to actively pursue the obtaining of knowledge about the existence of a fraudulent system and how it operates.” The ASB Bank was given 14 days to reply. On deadline day the N[Z] *Herald* sought its response. We were asked to wait another day. Soon after, the bank contacted [the lawyer] to advise him it would be accepting liability after all – [the lawyer’s client] would get her \$5000 back and the bank would cover the overdraft. In a reversal of its earlier position it said [she] had in no way contributed to the fraud. How then was [she] parted from her money? Even if the ASB Bank knows it cannot tell us, says [its] general manager of information services, because the Privacy Act prevents him from discussing an individual customer’s affairs... But[the] Consumers’ Institute chief executive... suspects the banks of trying to cover-up the degree of credit card fraud that is possible. “They don’t want more claims than they receive now,” he says. Many British computer experts agree... alleging banks either don’t understand their own technology or are ignoring the problems.

...Plastic card fraud is costing businesses billions of dollars worldwide... an A[US]n study says. And the protection once offered by isolation for countries such as N[Z and AUS] is being rapidly eroded... In A[US]... losses were last year estimated to have cost banks between \$5 m... and \$6 m...

...credit card fraudsters will soon target N[Z] unless the security of our card is improved, say senior executives of Visa International. The group... said magnetic strip technology, which had been used on credit cards for more than 35 years, was proving too easy... to copy. The way to combat this was to replace the strip on the back of the card with a computer chip at the front... The chip card technology was being trialled in Britain and Japan, and was likely to be introduced in other countries... As that happened it was inevitable the international fraudsters would target countries still using the old technology... The challenge for all credit card issuers was to develop worldwide standards for the chip cards... The introduction of card verification value in 1991 had reduced fraud by encoding a secret identifying number into the card’s magnetic strip. But recent years had seen an increase in the incidence of “skimming”, where criminals used recording equipment to produce a full replica of a card’s magnetic strip... [The] director of chip card for Visa International Asia-Pacific... described the battle between fraudsters and the developers of card technology[as] “an arms race”, with the good guys getting ahead, only for the bad guys to catch up. Credit card fraud as a percentage of transaction value, was now “extremely low” in N[Z, even by the]... already low Asia-Pacific standards... [of] only 5c in every \$100... The costs of fraud in the Visa system worldwide was 8c in every \$100... However... Eftpos fraud[in NZ] had leaped almost 70% between 1993 and 1996, much of it committed by bank staff and shop assistants who recorded PIN numbers and engineered multiple transactions.

...N[Z]ers have again been among the targets of a credit-card scam by a team of Nigerian fraudsters operating in the United Kingdom. The... BNZ... yesterday confirmed it had issued about 100 of its Visa card holders with new numbers after 50 or so had been found to be illegally used to obtain goods from mail order merchants in London.

...Since the early 1990s, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has endeavoured to combat the scourge of Advance Fee Fraud... being perpetrated by fraudsters via letters, telefax, telex, etc., both locally and overseas, through publicity campaigns, seminars, press statements, and co-operation with law enforcement agencies. To date, the CBN has placed advisory advertisements in over 80 newspapers and magazines in 12 languages in 36 countries, in its effort to forewarn all corporations and individuals who are likely to fall prey to the scam and thereby help stamp out the proliferation of Advance Fee Fraud, aka “419”... Unfortunately, the scam has continued unabated, even with increasing sophistication, because of the criminality, avarice and greed of the so-called victims of the scam, who are also villains... The use of fake Government, C[BN], Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation, etc., documents is a common practice... On numerous occasions, the so-called victims... have brought law suits against the [CBN], all of which the Bank has defended successfully... **YOU ARE THEREFORE, WARNED AND ADVISED, IN YOUR OWN INTEREST, TO IGNORE THE “GET-RICH-QUICK” BUSINESS SOLICITATIONS...** For the avoidance of doubt, it should be restated that the C[BN] will not accept responsibility for any loss sustained by any person or corporation that fails to heed our warnings.

...Years of underfunding have left the Securities Commission emaciated. Yet the need for a watchful agency to maintain standards of hygiene in the securities markets has never been greater. A greying population is daily exhorted to save for retirement and the variety of investments on offer expands constantly. The same modern communications which have brought our capital markets within reach of international investors have also seen the more gullible among us preyed on from as far away as Nigeria... A review by a former auditor-general three years ago said a strong case could be made for increasing the commission's staff and funding by 50[%]. Instead it was effectively frozen. And now another review, by the Ministry of Commerce, is gravid with the possibility that the commission's funding crisis be dealt with, at least partly, by stripping it of its role in advising the Government on business law reform. Admittedly, its advocacy of law changes in the past has often failed... But, as a constant and disinterested observer of the markets, its views deserve to be taken seriously... And a wise Government values contestability of advice.

...Levies on public companies and higher fees for those seeking exemptions are options to boost the cash-strapped Securities Commission's funding suggested in a review of the commission by the Ministry of Commerce... A study by Coopers and Lybrand... concluded that the commission's financial position was unsustainable beyond 1997/98 and it would either have to shed staff or secure additional funding from the Crown or third parties. For several years it has had to top up its income by drawing on reserves, which are now near exhausted. The commission devotes about 35[%] of its time to monitoring and investigating securities markets and there is a case for market participants contributing to those costs by means of a levy, the ministry review says. It points out that when public issuers file their audited account they pay a levy towards the cost of the Accounting Standards Review Board, and that listed companies pay a levy towards the costs of the stock exchange's market surveillance panel. In 1996/97 91[%] of the commission's \$2.1 million income came from the Crown, and the balance of \$180,000 from user charges from those seeking exemptions from the securities regulations. Considering exemptions represents about 30[%] of the commission's workload. Not all of that relates to applications it receives; it sometimes spontaneously issues generic exemptions, as earlier this year on equity warrants, in order to ensure new products meet the market without undue delay. A potential risk in adopting a more user-pays approach to this aspect of the commission's funding might be that it would become more reluctant to grant class exemptions. The other 35[%] of the commission's time is spent on reviewing and commenting on business law, and on its public education role.

...Staff at a London bank have discovered a mummified pygmy in a [securi]ty deposit box in their vaults... A burst water pipe in May led the mummifying process to start to reverse, the *Daily Telegraph* said, and the box began giving off an unpleasant smell... Workers were said to have been disturbed that there was a body in their working environment.

...[France came close to being the world's first cashless society this week as banks and post offices ran dry of money, hit by a national strike by security guards demanding higher pay and better protection after a bloody wave of robberies. At the start of the week, 40% of ATMs had run dry as the strike, launched 12 days ago, started to bite. By midweek, some banks reported that 60% of their machines were empty. In Paris, thousands of shoppers, some bemused and others angry, had to write cheques or use credit cards to buy a baguette or a bottle of milk. In contrast, supermarkets worried as they stockpiled wads of money with no one to transport it safely. French shops do not give cash with Eftpos transactions. After two guards had been killed and nine injured in seven robberies in less than six months, union leaders said an attack in suburban Paris in which three guards were injured and 23 million francs stolen was the last straw. Guards, who are paid 6000 francs (\$NZ1700) a month – just above the minimum wage – and who are armed with at most a .38 pistol, started walking off the job. Their union is demanding that the profession be classified as risky, enabling retirement at 50 and 1500 francs a month more. Employers have offered 400 francs but no early retirement. "In the old days, the only people you had to look out for were small-time crooks," says a 52-year-old driver's mate who has been in the business 23 years. "These days, you are talking about major criminals who are tooled up with Kalashnikovs and dynamite." The gangs observe the routes of trucks and use equipment to jam their radios and monitor police frequencies. After sandwiching trucks fore and aft with lorries, they use gelignite or even rocket-propelled grenades to blast open the rear doors, not giving a moment's thought for the guards inside, who were often reduced to shredded meat.' In local news, 'a massive manhunt is under way after two security guards were ambushed at an ATM and robbed at gunpoint in Wellington early yesterday by four balaclava-clad criminals, who left the guards tied up but unharmed then calmly took their keys and fled in their van. The holdup happened as rush-hour Wellingtonians walked by oblivious to the drama. Police aren't saying how much was taken but some ATMs hold two canisters of about \$80,000. Detectives were also silent about what else was in the van but said the robbery had the hallmarks of a planned crime. ■ NZ's largest security van holdup, in Paraparaumu last year, was worth over \$600,000.'

...Wellington's \$1 million security van heist is emerging as one of the best-planned and most expertly executed crimes in NZ history. No witnesses have come forward to say they saw the robbery or the Chubb van leaving Willis St some time before 8 am. Almost 40 hours later a motorist travelling up the Ngaio Gorge, about 3.5km from the money machine, noticed smoke coming from a historic 1879 brick military ammunition store. Inside, the Chubb van and all the valuable forensic evidence from the heist were blazing. The isolated warehouse is set among a Wellington City Council bush reserve. Its only vehicular access is a 300m private road which, because of vandalism, was blocked with a padlocked heavy metal swing gate. When the Fire Service arrived, they had to saw through the gate to get to the blaze. It appeared the criminals used a key to unlock the gate, drove the van into the warehouse and torched it, then fled and locked the gate behind them. In another strange twist, when police recovered the 12-odd keys from council parks and property staff with access to the warehouse road, none of them matched the gate. A council spokesman said that staff do not visit the site often and it appears the lock was changed mysteriously a couple of weeks ago. The criminals have so far proven so meticulous in covering their tracks that the police are asking the public for leads and the Chubb security firm has posted a \$10,000 reward for information.' ● IN 1963, a mail train travelling from Glasgow to London was robbed of more than \$10 million in notes destined for Bank of England furnaces. Most of the robbers were found, but not much of the money.'

...the '26-year-old who last month began a 10-year jail sentence for overseeing NZ's biggest armed robbery dreamed of achieving fame and fortune as a professional wrestler. More than \$250,000 was never recovered from the robbery – some of it burnt in the security van when it was torched to destroy prints.'

...sometimes thieves use heavy machinery to pull ATMs from their wall, although at least one robbery was solved after 'police followed a trail of gouges that an ATM had made while being dragged to the thieves' hideout'!

...two Britons were found guilty yesterday of fraud after tricking bank customers into using a home-made "hole in the wall" cash dispenser. While people tried without success to withdraw money from the cash machine installed in a street in east London, the two secretly recorded their bank details and PIN number. They then used this information to withdraw £120,000 from the customers' accounts.' In local news, 'a woman who used the identities of dead babies to forge documents admitted fraud charges totalling almost \$500,000 when she appeared in the Porirua District Court yesterday. The 43-year-old student pleaded guilty to 158 charges after police withdrew seven. She had enrolled false identities as voters and obtained drivers licences, tax numbers and four passports. She even invented an advertising business that provided identification such as pay slips and character references on bogus company letterhead. A sergeant said the student had told police she considered the fraud, involving at least 17 identifications, as her "job," and she was motivated by greed. She was remanded in custody for sentencing. Her lawyer called for a pre-sentence psychiatric assessment.'

...a NZer 'who used the names of dead babies to obtain 22 birth certificates, which she then used to receive 14 credit cards, has been jailed for fraud.'

...a former executive director at Macquarie Bank has been found guilty of fraud in AUS's largest ever insider-trading case. The 10-week trial at Sydney's Downing Centre District Court heard that the director visited 15 banks on one day in September 1996, withdrawing cash and buying cheques in a series of transactions aimed at avoiding reporting requirements. The 39-year-old was accused of using the cash and cheques to boost his personal fortune by \$A2 million through the use of confidential information about a \$A2 billion takeover bid that the Marquarie Bank, AUS's only publicly traded investment bank, was a corporate adviser to. The director could face a maximum jail sentence of five years on each charge.' In related news, 'a US financier sought in

relation to the disappearance of at least \$US300 million from several insurance companies has been negotiating his surrender, a Connecticut newspaper reported yesterday. The Hartford Courant said the financier was believed to be hiding in Europe, but had been in contact with federal prosecutors through a defence lawyer. The US Attorney's Office in New Haven declined to comment. Interpol, the international police organisation, has issued its highest alert to 177 member nations: a "red notice" to stop and arrest the financier. A lawsuit filed by some of the 11 insurance companies put the loss at \$US915 million. Also missing is as much as \$US1.98 billion from the St Francis of Assisi Foundation, which the financier established in the British Virgin Islands. Investigators suspect the charity was merely a front for fraud. Police are also looking for at least six people who worked out of the financier's sprawling Greenwich home, part of which he converted into a securities trading floor. Authorities found a hand-written to-do list in the house that included "Launder Money,"...

'International money-laundering has never been easier for big-time criminals – and the South Pacific has become one of the most popular destinations for their ill-gotten gains. The world has suddenly shrunk around NZ. At the tap of a computer key, local criminals can tap into a rapidly expanding cyberweb that can take in black cash generated from drug deals, robberies and a dozen other major crimes, launder it, and deliver it back as clean, legitimate money. For the moment at least, the US Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement believes we are still small fry, and that dirty money from serious players can be cleaned far more easily elsewhere. Money-launderers have been given golden opportunities by the proliferation of overseas financial centres, increasingly set up by poor countries as a means of siphoning off some of the hundreds of billions of dollars flowing around the globe. Most of these centres lack stringent regulation and supervision, and can be set up and operated on the Internet. Almost 20% of the drug traffickers, terrorists, money-launderers, tax evaders and other criminals operate in the Asia-Pacific region, including our close neighbours the Cook Islands, Nauru, Samoa, Niue, Marshall Islands and Vanuatu. The islands also allow international business companies to be set up. These, the bureau says, present impenetrable barriers to law enforcement. It says money-laundering and tax evasion are reaching a scale that threatens the security and stability of entire countries. Russia's precarious economy has already been rocked by the illicit export of vast sums of money. Rocked by the rise of the Mafia, over-regulation and economic turmoil, the flight of capital – and the resulting loss of tax revenue – has soared to an average estimated rate of \$US25 billion a year'...

'Something's rotten in the tiny tax haven of Liechtenstein where money laundering accusations are rife Desperately fighting international accusations that it is a haven for South American drug money and Mafia loot, the tiny European principality is now on the brink of an abdication crisis. His Serene Highness, regarded as Europe's richest and most authoritarian monarch, has announced he will hold a referendum on constitutional reform. If it fails, he will pack up and move to Vienna. With German secret service leaks implying that Liechtenstein's banking industry is teeming with crooks, these are dark days for the statelet on the banks of the Rhine with just 32,000 citizens but 80,000 registered companies. Germany would love to do away with such tax-havens'...

'Monaco is a rogue state which connives in the laundering of drug and mafia money claims a French parliamentary investigation. Although the accusation is not new, the severity of the language and the official nature of the inquiry makes its findings deeply embarrassing for the authorities in both Monaco and France. The report accuses the tiny principality, surrounded by France and the sea, of having no proper system of "banking ethics," of allowing its celebrated casino – whose directors include the head of state – to run "out of control" and refusing all serious cooperation with international efforts to control suspect flows of capital. The committee of inquiry suggests that France, which provides almost all senior officials in Monaco, including the chief minister, is partly responsible for allowing this situation to arise. It calls on the French Government to scrap all fiscal and judicial arrangements negotiated with the principality in 1963. Monaco has 6,000 registered companies (it also has 300,000 accounts for 30,000 people). Large sums of money pass in and out of the companies, without the judicial authorities in Monaco having any right to seek information on their activities.'

...Fallen from Grace When its head of state married film star Grace Kelly, everything seemed roses in Monaco. But it's no secret that a lot of dirty money sloshes around this 195ha piece of prime Mediterranean real estate. The principality's banks have no duty of disclosure and are famous for accommodating strangers carrying large amounts of cash. Interpol, which attempts to track the global movements of suspect money, says that everybody from the Sicilian Mafia to Colombia's Medellin cocaine cartel has some kind of account in Monaco. There are 10 times as many bank accounts in Monaco as there are residents, and the spinoff from this intense and sometimes volatile concentration of capital has helped to make it one of the richest places on Earth. But this summer a furiously worded report from a committee of the French Parliament alleged that corruption in Monaco reached far higher than generally thought, and for the first time the 78-year-old head of state and his family were accused of direct responsibility for the territory's state of rotteness. France, Monaco's protector and patron state, is threatening to tear up the 82-year-old treaty by which it recognises the principality's sovereignty. It would then, hinted the French, pass laws to administer what a former Justice Minister calls "a dose of reality." If that happens, Monaco may be finished. Reality hasn't been given houseroom for 700 years. A couple of expat-British brokers are worried. One won't give his name, but he will tell me what he thinks of Monaco: "It's fantastic. That's why they're out to screw it." The British are highly regarded in Monaco, where their financial skill helps to keep the cogs of the principality's money machine spinning profitably. And having virtually invented the Riviera as a destination 150 years ago, they tend to feel settled here. Or they did until recently. "It would be a tragedy to see this place go down the pan," the second broker says. "It's all dross on the Riviera these days. The French resorts are rubbish, but Monaco still has some style." And there is truth in this. There is no litter or graffiti and no beggars on the beautifully kept streets, bathed in 300-days-a-year of sunshine at an average temperature of 16 deg C. During one 10-day period last year the most serious crime was a nightclubber firing a champagne cork into another man's eye. Statistics show an average of one murder every 12 years. Police wear 18th-century uniforms and still salute when spoken to. Blondes in mustard-coloured Bentleys swoosh idly between the Beach Club and the bar of the Hotel de Paris. At its best, Monaco is a romantic curio, a throwback to the days of kings in castles, fortune-hunting bounders, raffish dandies and fairytale princesses. Its follies and scandals have entertained the world for years, but the tawdry realities of modern life have been slowly catching up and lately its archaism has ceased to be funny. The principality has survived the Black Death, the French Revolution, two world wars, the antipathy of General de Gaulle and the loss of Grace Kelly. When Monaco's independence was first accepted by France, Guy de Maupassant described the territory as being "peopled by the scum of all continents and society." Any poke around the place confirms that nothing much has changed – but it might be about to.' Meanwhile, 'in a report entitled "The Effects Of Technology On The EU Banking Systems", the European Central Bank said: "Internet banking is expected to have the highest future growth potential of all remote channels and market participants already anticipate that it will expand considerably within the next two to three years. The overall trend seems to be that more and more financial companies are moving along this path to promote increasingly sophisticated products." Such developments presented both opportunities and risks for the banking sector, the ECB said.'

...Secure Internet banking and credit card shopping may arrive here sooner than expected now that both Netscape and Microsoft have permission to export 128-bit encryption capability in their Internet browsers. Previously, Internet browser software outside the U[S] was restricted by the U[S] Government export controls to the relatively easily hacked 40-bit encryption... [By the way,] five young crooks... beat a computer security programme to get credit card numbers, which they used to order electronic equipment worth thousands of dollars. But... the monthly statements sent to victims detailed the purchases – and where they'd been delivered. And the fraudsters had used their own addresses.

...A[NZ] woman in hiding from her violent ex-husband was forced to flee to another secret location after her bank breached her privacy by sending him her bank statements. The woman was shocked and distressed to learn that he could trace her whereabouts by monitoring the locations of her electronic banking transactions. This case, highlighted in the Banking Ombudsman's annual report, led to the bank paying \$1200 compensation to the woman. The ombudsman... said it was a good example of the new powers she had been given in the past year making it possible for her to recommend compensation not only for direct financial loss, but for... embarrassment, humiliation and distress. [She] said it was of concern that someone other than the account holder could notify the bank of a change of address. "It was of even more concern that Mr R had

been able to secure a change of address given that the bank branch was on notice from Mrs B of the problems within her marriage and her desire to have nothing to do with Mr R,"... This year has seen a 30[%] increase in the number of complaints to the ombudsman... [T]he complaints tended to show that bank staff were poor communicators, possibly because of job insecurity or stress from the fast pace of change within the banking industry. "I am seeing more cases where the complaint, or an element of the complaint, relates to staff inattention to detail, failure to give appropriate explanations, inconsiderate behaviour, and in the worst cases, plain rudeness to a customer." [Editor's note: 'The post of Ombudsman was established on Sept 7, 1962, with the power to investigate complaints against government departments and report, with recommendations, to Parliament. Further legislation in 1975 provided for the appointment of a Chief Ombudsman and an unspecified number of other ombudsmen.'

...THE NZ] banking industry's performance has dropped significantly in the past three years, says the Consumers Institute. In... 1994... 29% of respondents rated their bank's overall performance very good. This time only 24% did. Customers satisfied with service fell from 43% to 36%... Consumer recommended... N[Z]'s only locally owned bank, Taranaki's TSB Bank... as the top service provider, followed by ASB Bank and BNZ... British research... found more than half of... customers[in that country] thought their banks were greedy, not to mention inflexible, complicated, condescending, arrogant and staid... [Incidentally, investors] in the Tower Spotlight Europe Fund are getting an average 10% compensation payment following trading irregularities in the British-based... European Growth Trust last year. Tower's fund invests in the... [trust,] which had to be bailed out to the tune of \$360 million by its parent Deutsche Bank. After the bailout, the... trust agreed with a British industry watchdog to pay compensation to investors in the fund between August 1 1995 and September 5 1996... About 2000 investors will receive compensation.

...Creditors of failed merchant bank DFC New Zealand will receive final payments of about \$1 billion on October 15 in accordance with a debt restructuring effected in December 1990... [The] \$1 billion will be repaid in full out of the proceeds of N[Z] Government zero-coupon bonds which mature on... October 15... The percentage recovery on... [the] debt was 129[% in NZ] dollar terms.

...Buy now, pay, well, whenever... Market leader Visa says one in three N[Z]ers now has one of its cards... Credit card transactions have doubled [in NZ] in value from \$3 billion to \$6 billion since 1993... [I]f you're in meltdown about how much you've got on your plastic you're probably not alone. N[Z]ers currently owe \$1.7 billion on their credit cards and that equates to \$472 for every man, woman and child[- or]... an average of \$1120 a card... Music to the ears of bankers.

...Consumers worldwide bought a record \$US1 trillion... in goods and services with Visa credit and debit cards in the year ended March 31, as more people found more uses for plastic payments. Visa, the world's largest payment system, said total purchases rose 23.7[%]... Visa issuers increased the number of debit and credit cards 12.8[%] to 572 million worldwide. "An increasing number of consumers are relying on bank cards as the best way to pay,"... In the U[S], total Visa cards generated \$467.7 billion in sales, capturing 51.5[%] of all card sales... The increased purchasing was accompanied by a slowing in the number of credit card write-offs in the... [U.S. W]rite-offs, when a company admits that customers will not pay their bills... declined to \$842 million... in May... from \$846 million a month earlier... Companies usually wait about 180 days before writing off an account. Debit cards... which draw funds from a bank account rather than a line of credit... were the fastest growing part of the card business, with purchases rising 40[%] to \$305 billion...

THERE'S a psychology behind credit card use that banks well understand, and can play to our disadvantage... Interest-free credit - what more can you want? And if you need a little longer to pay if off, interest rates will kick in, but the effect of that can be minimised if you decide to pay it off quickly... Interest rates on credit card purchases are still annoyingly high. With mortgage rates under 10%, and inflation around 2%, credit card rates are still around 19%-20%. Banks justify the high credit card rates because the money is lent as unsecured credit and is hence a risky business. They also have to offset the losses they make because of the disciplined few who pay their bills within the allotted time... But the... ASB Bank, for example, has a low interest credit card that charges 13.9%... The catch is you pay a quarterly fee of \$17... The ASB maintains it works fine if what you're buying costs more than \$1000. The [BNZ] offers tiered interest rates on its standard MasterCard. On purchases up to \$249, you pay the top rate of 19.75%; between \$250 and \$999, 15.75%; \$1000 plus, only 13.75%.

...At MasterCard we believe our Gold Cardholders are worth their weight in gold. So we're giving them a chance to win it... From now till August 31... every US\$100 you charge to your card entitles you to an entry to MasterCard's Win Your Weight in Gold Sweepstakes... At the end of the promotion, a draw will be held. Lucky winners at this draw will get an all expenses paid trip to the Gold Coast, A[US], to be part of the golden moment - the awarding of... his[or her] weight in real gold... [E]ach runner-up gets a solid gold MasterCard worth US\$10,000... You could discover you're worth a million dollars. Or maybe even more... So start using your Gold MasterCard for everything you buy... The Future of Money.

...[a small business supplying healthy lunches to 28 Auckland schools was hit by the ASB Bank with cash-handling fees of hundreds of dollars a week. The founder of the Cool School Lunch Company says the fees would have snuffed out the business if she had not found a cheaper way of banking through security firm Chubb-Securitas. Almost all Cool Schools' takings are in coins, with prices ranging from \$1.20 for crackers and Marmite to \$3 for a ham or chicken roll. The company banks more than \$2000 daily, all but a few hundred dollars in coins. Since February 28, ASB has charged \$3 to handle every \$100 in coins above the first \$100 a day, and \$3 for every \$1000 in notes above the first \$1000. On \$2000 in coins a day, Cools Schools would be paying \$285 a week in cash-handling fees (Chubb charges only about \$90 a month). "I just can't believe that the bank feels that it can charge those sorts of rates when a commercial business is making a profit that is just a tiny fraction of that. It's just crippling. I guess someone overseas has decided it's time we didn't have cash. Well, you tell that to 5-year-olds. I think it's criminal." An ASB spokesperson said some customers with large cash receipts had negotiated exemptions from the cash-handling fees. She said the ASB felt obliged to introduce the fees because other banks were already charging them, and their customers were bringing in cash to the ASB and then writing cheques to transfer the money to their main banks. However, the ASB appears to be the only bank that charges extra for coins. Meanwhile,' the ASB's 'profits are soaring.'

...ASB Bank has capped its 150th year in business by reporting a 29[%] leap in after-tax profit to a record \$92.5 million for the year ended June... [and the bank's managing] director... said the new year had got off to an exceptional start with the typically slow month of July being the best in the bank's history... Despite a slowdown in the real estate market and a continuing squeeze on interest rate lending margins, the bottom line jumped from \$71.8 million in 1996, helped by a 17[%] rise in operating income to \$408 million... While retail advances were up 18[%], the bank's \$2.3 billion growth in new home lending was slightly down from the \$2.5 billion in the previous year... Business and rural advances were up 34[% and 29[%] respectively... Total loans and advances rose 22[%] to \$9.3 billion, while deposits were up 21[%] to \$10.3 billion... The return on equity was 18.3[%] while the return on total assets was 0.9[%], just short of the traditional 1[% benchmark. 21[%]... growth in total assets, to \$11.0 billion, place ASB ahead of Countrywide's position as N[Z]'s fastest growing bank but for WestpacTrust, which doubled its size by acquisition.

...WestpacTrust has reported a net profit of \$333 million for the... year, just \$2 million short of the... record annual profit for any N[Z] bank reported last week by the... [BNZ. WestpacTrust's] result was... 162[%] up on... the 1996 year... [Also reported yesterday was t]he National Bank['s 68%]... rise in after-tax profit to \$73 million for the six months to June 30. It attributed the rise to new savings products, improved cost containment and management of margins. Last year the bank shed about 300 staff to turnaround its worst trading in five years... The latest result... was achieved on a 17[%] rise in revenue to \$320 million...

More branch closures and job losses loom for WestPacTrust staff despite the merged bank's making a near-record profit for a bank of \$333 million... A bank spokesman... said yesterday that another 50 branches would close and only 65[%] of the 4500 jobs in branches were guaranteed.

The other 1575 branch staff would go through a selection process over the next nine months. [The spokesman] did not know how many would keep their jobs but said... [m]any were being lost through natural attrition... Restructuring was due to be completed about... August... next [year]...

Westpac Corporation pulled itself back from the brink of extinction through a low cost re-engineering process... [T]he turnaround in 1996 to \$[A]1.13 billion profit could be largely attributed to efficient use of technology... In 1992 the bank set a record for having the largest corporate loss of \$A1.7 billion, and was rated among the 10 worst performing banks in the world. The other nine no longer exist... The... Westpac... chief executive... received total payments of \$A2.15 million... This included \$750,000 in salary... and... the same amount in bonuses... The second most senior executive... took home \$984,000, and the chairman... a more modest \$260,000.

...Westpac bumped ANZ Banking Group from third to fourth... [as AUS's] best performing bank... last year... A[US]'s most profitable bank... was... National Australia Bank... which is... the parent of... [the BNZ. NAB] made a net profit for... 1996-97 of \$A2.22 billion... up 5.8[%] on the previous year... [In comparison,] ANZ Banking Group... reported an 8[%] drop in annual profit to \$1.024 billion... Behind NAB, Commonwealth Bank of Australia maintained second place... [while the] Victorian regional Bank of Melbourne [was] the best-performing [minor] bank...

Bank of Melbourne is poised to bow out as a fully fledged regional with a... 6.5[%] decrease in net profit to \$85.2 million. The board did not declare a final dividend, given the 90c fully franked special dividend included in Westpac Banking Corporation's proposed \$1.4 billion takeover offer. The deal is due to be completed late next month... [Bank of Melbourne's] chairman... joined the chorus of bank chiefs warning of ongoing intense competition... [In related news, 'the AUSn treasurer – the junior minister responsible for banking policy – resigned last night following controversy over his ownership of shares in the ANZ bank.'

...ANZ NZ] reported a 7.2[%] increase in net profit after tax to \$126.9 million for the nine months to June, producing a return on shareholders' funds of 23.8[%]... "This is a good result in a competitive market..." [its]managing director... said... ANZ's costs as a proportion of income at around 72[%] are... high when compared with other banks which typically have ratios between 61... and 66[%]. One contributor to ANZ's high cost structure has undoubtedly been PostBank which, despite being acquired in 1989, is still not fully integrated... Another is an expense bulge as the bank invests in new delivery mechanisms. [● In 1996 the self-professed "Yes Bank" said "No" to a pay claim for 6% by its staff. 'ANZ paid less than other banks and wanted the right to put new employees on lower pay and conditions' (a move which led to 'a one day strike by bank staff in October').

...AUS]'s new banking players could be heading for a fall, according to the outgoing chief of the ANZ Banking Group... [There]s some evidence that new players had misread the market and this could lead to a late-80s-style bad-loan crisis for some... [B]ut... ANZ had improved its standards.

...China's already shaky banking system faces more non-performing loans risks because of high exposure to property lending. Property loans in Shanghai and Beijing are estimated to total more than \$US4 billion... China's non-performing loans to real estate are thought to be anywhere from 20... to 40[%] of all loans... Borrowing from the non-financial sector could be particularly expensive, with interest rates as high as 20 to 30[%]. When this cost of funds was put in the context of very low commercial-building occupancies and falling rents, the financial risks become very high... Occupancies in China's main commercial districts were 20... to 30[%] in many instances... Despite these near-term risks... [vacancy] rates... would go higher... China's major cities were in the grip of a property boom, the scale of which the world had probably never seen before... In Beijing alone, new office supply could total 1.3 million sq m by the year 2000... In Shanghai, property building was most rampant in Pudong[, which]... is immediately east of the old Shanghai city centre and was in 1991 designated as the new financial centre. At the end of 1994, office stock in Pudong stood at 250,000 sq m; it is now 1.25 million sq m and is forecast to grow to 2.4 million sq m by 1999... Across the river in Puxi and Hongqiao, [another] 52 commercial buildings have been completed, or are expected to be completed, in the next few years... [Shanghai's objective is to be] Asia's premier financial capital outside Japan... in 10 to 15 years...

AWARE [GDP] growth – which hit a healthy 2.5% in 1996 – is likely to slow this year, the[Japanese] government has been pushing ahead with deregulation and a "Big Bang" overhaul of the financial system. This will tear down the barriers between commercial banks, security houses and other financial institutions by 2001. It will also force banks to stand on their own two feet, instead of being propped up by the government when they get into trouble... "A third of the financial institutions will survive. The rest will merge or join with foreigners or go bankrupt." Last year the government allowed the first bank to collapse since 1945. But it got cold feet last month when Nippon Credit Bank, saddled with \$15,340m of bad loans from property lending, looked as if it might go under. The finance ministry ordered several other banks to bail it out, and allowed Bankers Trust to enter into an unprecedented alliance and take over \$26.1b of NCB's overseas assets. The bailout has annoyed the strong banks, which have seen their shares plunge as a consequence. The property market, down 70% from its peak in 1991, fell another 3% last year, making it impossible for the banks to recover their loans by selling repossessed properties. The government has announced plans to try to bolster prices by securitising mortgages and getting local councils to buy more land. But there is no guarantee this will bring any quick improvement. Most of the banks' assets are in the form of long-held securities, but the local stock market, down more than 50% since 1990, has been as unhelpful to the banks as the property market. Nevertheless... the... big industrial companies have performed well. Benefiting from the strong dollar and the weak yen, car producers are expecting record earnings and an average net profit rise of 65% for the fiscal year... Unfortunately, Japan's smaller companies have rarely been in worse shape. More than 1000 collapsed every month last year... A high proportion were financial firms. Economists have warned their collapse could have a knock-on effect for the rest of the economy and produce an even higher number of bankruptcies this year. But what worries analysts most is the effect the latest Nomura scandal could have on Big Bang... "Here you have the biggest player in the market turning around and saying you cannot enforce the limited rules you have now. What hope do they have of enforcing the rules after deregulation?"

...There were tears before bedtime as one of Tokyo's 'Big Four' broking houses collapsed, threatening to plunge the country back into recession and deepen Asia's financial crisis... The collapse of Yamaichi Securities is the largest corporate failure in Japan since 1945, and has left the country stunned. It's also true that the collapse – only the latest twist in Japan's seven year saga of financial woes – is part of an oft-predicted and ultimately inevitable shakeout in the nation's financial sector... A former chairman of... Yamaichi... has admitted hiding... losses of more than... 200 billion [yen]... He added that he felt he had no choice but to conceal the debts to maintain the brokerage's credibility...

His face contorted with tears and his voice quivering, the president of... Yamaichi... begged for mercy: not for himself, but for his workers. [The] plea for jobs drove home for many the dire realities of the Yamaichi fiasco, especially in a nation where massive lay-offs are extremely rare and major corporations aren't supposed to go under. But now, thanks to a mix of old-boy networking and a new brand of market-driven corporate self-interest, the sinking Yamaichi has found itself inundated by job offers... [I]t has received 9000 offers from some 1000 firms – Yamaichi and its affiliates employ 11,000. The offers... have taken the edge off the gloomy economic headlines that have dominated Japan's media over the past months. Still, some analysts say the response smacks of the old-style, Government-led approach Japan is supposed to be shaking off.

...An employee of a firm affiliated with failed Japanese brokerage Yamaichi Securities Co Ltd killed himself yesterday by leaping from a seven-storey building in Osaka... [In the aftermath of the Yamaichi collapse, r]etrenchment from costly and competitive overseas operations, established in the boom years of the late 80s, was inevitable for most Japanese banks, analysts said... with... [some warning that because of the] financial strife at home... many may not return to the international scene for another 10 years.

...Foreign firms are eager to apply to Japan their overseas experience in bundling and selling as securities everything from credit card debts to home mortgages... [One company] aims to buy as much as 500 billion yen... in bad loans backed by real estate from Japanese banks in a bet that Japan's real estate market will soon hit rock bottom... Real estate prices have been falling for seven years... "Now is as good a time as any to step in the market if you have a long-term perspective,"... a company official in Tokyo said.

...It may not have been the big bang, but... a... major overhaul of A[US]'s \$A40 billion... a year financial services industry has opened banking to new players and removed regulatory powers from the Reserve Bank. Overseeing existing banks and new competition from credit unions, insurance companies and superannuation funds will be a separate organisation, the A[US]n Prudential Regulation Authority... The inclusion of building societies, credit unions and friendly societies requires the agreement of state and territory governments... In moves designed to increase choice, boost competition and lower costs, a new watchdog called the A[US]n Corporations and Regulation Authority will be responsible for the integrity of market conduct... and... consumer protection... A third new body – the Corporate and Financial Services Commission – will absorb powers from a range of other bodies... The revamp... has been criticised heavily by banks...

While A[US] continues to agonise about allowing a degree of foreign ownership of its leading financial institutions, N[Z] went that way long ago. The [local] banking sector is now dominated by A[US]ns, with the consequence that decisions about the N[Z] banking environment are increasingly being made in Melbourne and Sydney. Both ANZ and BNZ are in the throes of group reviews which are likely to see many of their operational functions transferred across the Tasman... BNZ's review, announced to staff a few weeks ago, is aimed at seeing what functions can be shared with... its A[US]n owner. The logical extreme is that the BNZ finishes up as simply the regional (ie N[Z]) brand of N[AB]... ANZ is already moving its computer facilities to A[US], a simple enough task given the reach of modern telecommunications, and further such developments would be no surprise as a global restructuring of the group proceeds.

...The tropical island of Bali is hardly synonymous with the leading edge in retail banking. But as the host to some of the world's leading bankers last week, it was the venue for consideration of the major challenges faced by the industry. Two issues were at the forefront of the bankers' minds: rapid change and the virtually unpredictable nature of the industry in the next five years. As in many industries, traditional bankers are facing commoditisation of their services prompted by unfamiliar... new entrants seizing opportunities as the industry worldwide is deregulated. The problem for the old-timers is that the new entrants are making no attempt to behave like banks in the traditional sense. They are not setting up bricks and mortar branches, they are making no effort to offer a comprehensive service and they do not have the legacy [of] computer systems which are proving a burden to their long-established competitors. Indeed, they are relying on the huge savings in costs made possible by exploiting telecommunications to keep in touch with customers as they pick off specific market segments... With a low-cost base enhancing their capacity to offer loans at favourable rates, and higher interest on deposits, they are... forcing... the... [industry's] incumbents into a profound reappraisal of their own businesses.

...IT'S easy to see why banks love the home mortgage market: It's huge (around \$50 billion in N[Z]), it's profitable (banks leaning towards residential loans have been market leaders of late), and it's safe (as houses). No wonder, then, that others want to get in on the act. Barely a week goes by without another non-bank mortgage lending hopeful seeking a slice of the action. Last week it was the turn of a joint venture between financial services company National Mutual and realtor Harcourts Group. Mortgage Express NZ Ltd, as the new company is known, will kick off in November with around 20 mobile mortgage managers using their car as their office and a laptop connected to the Internet to get final loan approval for prospective home buyers... [The] chief executive of the new company... said banks still controlled about 88% of the mortgage market in this country. "In A[US], non-bank players now have 30% of the market, and that's the kind of market share [local] non-bank mortgagors should be working towards,"... Mortgage Express hoped to have \$1b of the annual \$14b worth of new mortgages originated each year within three years... Mortgages from his company would be different from those offered by National Mutual's direct-selling company, Freedom Financial Services... He said Mortgage Express would seek to be innovative in sourcing funds for its mortgage products, as well as being competitively priced. [By the way, a 'West Auckland couple are blaming stress from a bank error for having to sell a rental property next to their woodland home. For 12 months, the ANZ Bank mistakenly levied an unheard-of penalty rate of 24.15% on the bulk of their \$204,000 mortgage, leading to overcharges of \$24,976.99c. Not even when someone in the bank discovered in June last year that they were being charged too much were they told of the error. Their interest charges were simply adjusted back to a contracted fixed rate of 8.95% and they were none the wiser until their accountant told them eight months later that something was woefully amiss. Their bank manager arranged a refund of just over \$25,000 after accepting they were being charged too much, but it was not until this month that the ANZ recalculated its figures and admitted it owed them a further \$2412 in compound interest. The couple wonders if the bank would ever have owned up to the error had they not challenged it, and resents a suggestion by the ANZ that they should have done so sooner. The bank blames the mistake on human error compounded by a change in its accounting systems.'

...[H]uman error is the biggest cause of mistakes in banking... Ever suspected your bank might be overcharging interest on your loan or mortgage...? ...An A[US]n accounts bureau service claims 93[%] of overdraft accounts investigated have revealed errors... The chief executive... [of] Interest Savers... designed... software... to quickly check loan statements... after his own experiences as a banker of 14 years. On one occasion, while working in commercial loans, he claimed to have discovered errors that, left uncorrected, would have totalled \$A22 million... in overcharges. Since his programs have been sold, there have been countless examples of businesses and individuals finding overcharging on their loan and savings accounts... [One] customer found overcharges in 30 of 54 monthly statements... [while a]n insurance broking firm found that a trust account for its customers that should have received interest at different rates depending on the balance had received the lowest rate... over the whole term, amounting to a \$60,000 underpayment.

...N[Z]ers are paying, through higher interest rates, for their reliance on the savings of others, says the deputy governor of the Reserve Bank... If the substantial investment required by the forestry industry, for example, had to come from foreign savings, balance of payments deficits would inevitably continue... [However, the] Reserve Bank believes N[Z]ers have lost some of their sense of economic security and will put a higher priority on saving than spending over the next two years... [U]sing the most recent OECD numbers, for 1994, N[Z]'s savings rate was 20[%] of GDP, compared with 16[%] in the U[S], 17% in AUS, 13% in Britain, 21[%] in Germany and 31[%] in Japan. When people have a *sense of economic security*, an alternative to spending their money is 'withdrawing it from savings institutions to look for a better return – called disintermediation.' This can occur if 'inflation increases beyond the rate of interest that banks pay depositors.'

... 'Generally speaking, national saving equals national income minus national consumption and is identical to net national investment. Although data on saving are imperfect for statistical and conceptual reasons, they throw important light on the nature of the different groups of savers and the various forms of savings.' As for the adequacy of N[Z]'s savings performance, high... national savings are not the panacea to all economic problems – countries with impressive savings histories have their share of woes... Japan had high national savings but it had seen almost a decade of recession due to problems inflicted by inefficient parts of the economy which enjoyed high protection. Countries like China... and... Indonesia... might have high domestic savings, but they have problems in managing their economy... Malaysia and Thailand, which have [a] credible savings rate, have current-account and asset-inflation problems... What is more important is that a country keeps its economic house in top shape, economists say... "The classic example is the U[S]," a chief economist... said... "The savings rate is very low compared with the OECD average and yet it is the strongest economy in the world."

...the U[S] was rich enough and large enough to withstand the... \$US300 billion savings and loans debacle... - 1997

...on[c]e... SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATIONS... [were] financial depository institutions dedicated to promoting thrift and home ownership.

How did... the cleanest little savings & loan in Texas become the government's black hole... [and how was \$US]250 billion... stolen, squandered and finally sucked down the drain in a scandal that *Newsweek* has called "the biggest financial mess in U.S. history"? ...The main reason for the problems was inflation. Ever since the Vietnam War, the government had been fighting rising prices... Economics texts are littered with culprits in the losing battle. Some historians pin the blame for the problems on President Lyndon Baines Johnson's guns-and-butter economic policies. An equally convincing case is made that the Federal Reserve board during the [37th and 38th] administrations made America safe for inflation. Regardless of who is right, though, one thing is clear: The policies of the times provided few incentives to control inflation; Republicans and Democrats alike engaged in an extraordinary round of economic mismanagement that would literally destroy many savings and loan operators like [Vernon Savings]... Set on the flat, red, dusty plains of north central Texas, Vernon (population 12,500) is a hardscrabble town full of hard-working folks who for decades placed their life earnings in the hands of... [an old man who, with] a Bible in one hand and a butcher knife in the other... ran the local thrift in a manner befitting the S&L's Golden 3-6-3 Rule: Pay depositors 3[%], charge borrowers 6[%], and be on the golf course by 3 o'clock... By mid-1977, [the old man] had lured \$45 million worth of deposits into [his company's] vaults... But the status quo was turned upside down in 1981 when... a native son turned highrolling-Dallas-real estate developer, sweet-talked [the old man... into selling his beloved business... Over the past two decades, the savings and loan business had been good to him. Years of hard work had produced the rewards that a man of his era had come to expect in America – a nice home... the vacation place near Austin, an Oldsmobile in good repair, and enough Vernon[Savings] stock to make him a wealthy man... But making good money in the S&L business was getting tough, particularly with the government's erratic economic policies. Interest rates were 12[%] one month, 18[%] another. Inflation raged like a summer storm. Things were no longer predictable. People had stopped putting their money in a savings and loan forever; they'd pull it out six months later to get a better deal in... money market funds, which were really unregulated savings and loans with no deposit guarantees. To [the old man's] way of thinking, all of this was no good. It seemed excessive, greedy – the work of Satan. In just three months' time, Vernon Savings would post the first loss in the thrift's twenty-one-year history. Selling Vernon Savings definitely was... the [sensible option. As for the highroller, he] had a game plan for Vernon Savings... A bunch of low-yielding home loans buried in Vernon's portfolio wasn't the [prize]. The important thing was getting [the old man's] signature on a piece of paper... For a real estate developer, owning a savings and loan was about to become a mixture of bare necessity and golden opportunity... [The old man] signed the deal. [The highroller] had acquired his hometown savings and loan for \$5.8 million in cash. The price was fair – about 1.4 times the association's book value... [while, just] before the sale closed... Vernon's deposits totaled about \$72 million... [However, in] its current condition, Vernon Savings was no prize catch. But [the highroller] was looking toward the future... [T]he competitive advantages of an S&L were nothing compared to the potential they held... [Under new] rules that permitted him to average his deposits, Vernon had to set aside only \$7.4 million in reserve. In other words, [the highroller] could lure an additional \$750 million in federally insured deposits into Vernon Savings to be invested in his deals. But he had to invest only an additional \$2.8 million of his own money in capital. Best of all, [the highroller] didn't even have to put up cash as his contribution. The definition of capital had been expanded to include land, stock, or other assets... Once he took over, Vernon grew rapidly... By late 1983... Vernon's deposits stood at an astonishing... \$800 million... Nationwide, Vernon ranked second in profitability... [and] *Dunn's Business Month* would soon cite it for its professional real estate investment acumen... Owning a [S&L] had been a dream deal for decades, particularly in Texas. From its very inception, Texas had been a capital-importing state with a voracious appetite for borrowed money. Part of the reason was the state's oil and cattle industries, both of which require a lot of upfront cash. Texans had a penchant for thinking big, too... The state legislature was well aware of Texas traits when it passed the laws authorizing state-chartered [S&Ls]. To encourage a vibrant local industry, the lawmakers in Austin also passed liberal regulations that gave Texas S&Ls latitude to invest depositors' money in loans for a wide range of money-making ventures... The federal government, which guaranteed the safety of S&L deposits, didn't want financial institutions engaging in the kind of destructive competition for deposits that had characterized the Great Depression. So it adopted laws that limited the interest rates any federally insured S&L could pay depositors. Thanks to the liberal rules implemented in Austin, though, Texas S&Ls had a leg up on their counterparts in many other states... But S&Ls chartered in Austin had it even better: They got deposit insurance by paying a minuscule premium to a government-backed insurance fund, but they could invest more of their federally insured deposits in ventures such as oil and gas loans, which carried a far higher potential for profit. The legal anomaly created a Texas [S&L] industry that was more entrepreneurial but also more parochial in nature and spirit. Every once in a while, some faceless federal bureaucrat in Washington would frown upon the more liberal powers in Texas and try to crack down. But Texas S&L men would simply turn to their supporters in the state legislature. Pretty soon a bill would sail through the Texas statehouse preempting the Dudley-Do-Rights in Washington... It was hard to maintain a family, a big mortgage, three cars, a pleasure boat, and a small lake cabin on a legislator's salary... [an] anonymous Texas lawmaker explained to the *Dallas Morning News*... "It's hard to be pious because in all honesty I could use the money," he said... [However, by the 1980s, federal lawmakers were finding it equally hard to be pious. As a result, a] sweeping financial deregulation bill... [was approved by Congress which meant that] a developer who picked up an S&L could continue to operate a development business. It was unbelievable. Why borrow money from a commercial bank at 2 or 3[%] over prime, which was then 15[%]? A developer who wanted to build a twelve-story hotel in Coconut Grove could simply have the S&L set up a development subsidiary and use FSLIC-insured deposits to fund the venture... In effect, the new rules would allow [the highroller] and several hundred others like him to treat federally insured [S&Ls] as if they were personal piggy banks, borrowing billions of dollars at bargain interest rates for all sorts of ill-conceived projects. Building hotels would soon prove the start of something big. Why not hunting lodges, too, or ski resorts, or golf courses? ...If religion struck your fancy, go build a church on spec... It doesn't take long for someone with deep pockets and a [S&L] full of money to become well loved in the Catholic Church... Best of all, thanks to the [40th President's] administration and Congress, [the highroller] and his ilk would never have to worry about a shortage of funds. Even though it deregulated the industry, the federal government would continue to guarantee that all depositors in federally insured S&Ls would get up to \$100,000 of their money back, no matter how the S&L had invested the funds. In other words, the government deposit-insurance fund bore all of the risk. And if depositors started pulling their money out, all the owner had to do was raise interest rates a little, and the funds would rush back in. Those fellows in the [40th] administration sure understood the free market. They were [the highroller's] kind of guys... True... men wanted to get the government off everyone's back so entrepreneurs could earn real profits and make America No. 1... "All in all," said the President as he set down his pen after signing the bill into law, "I think we've hit the jackpot." ...In all, four government agencies engaged in federal financial regulation – a job that [a former] Federal Reserve Board Chairman... once called a competition in laxity. The comptroller of the currency in the Treasury Department regulated national banks; the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. watched over state banks; the Federal Reserve monitored bank holding companies; and the bank board rode herd on [S&Ls]. By almost every measure, the bank board was the worst of the lot. Created after the bank runs of the 1930s, the board's duties included prevention of financial failures at [S&Ls], enforcement of the law, and the prevention of conflicts of interest. The President appointed the three board members, who had to be confirmed by the Senate, and he named the chairman... Being named chairman of the system was a bit like running the Metropolitan Sanitary District in Chicago. You were pretty important to people with sewer problems, but most citizens had never heard of you... At least one of the members had to be from the opposite party, and they presided over a network of twelve regional Federal Home Loan Banks, whose stock was owned by the local [S&Ls] in their regions. On paper the board was a powerful organization that could pull a thrift's charter, examine its books, pass sweeping regulations, and set board policies for the industry, such as the standards for minimum capital. Actually, though, the whole system functioned as an industry booster under the thumb of the trade associations, particularly the U.S. League. It was virtually impossible to be named bank board

chairman without the support of the U.S. League, and the industry financed the entire system through annual fees and assessments paid by federally insured [S&L]s. No government money was involved. In other words, the thrift industry actually owned its own regulatory system. It could tell the watchdog when to bark and knew how to pull its chain. The government's only exposure to loss in the system was through the U.S. Treasury's backing of the S&L deposit-insurance fund – a guarantee of solvency that would turn out to be fatal for American taxpayers... Entry-level examiners at the bank board earned a mere \$14,390 a year, far less than at the other bank regulatory agencies... [The salary] didn't exactly attract Rhodes scholars... Unfortunately, [the bank board]... not only resisted pay and staff increases, they pressed for reductions in the size of the examination force. It was all in the name of deregulation. The examiner staff actually fell during the years when the industry experienced its most rapid expansion. Examiners had faced a struggle when they were merely scrutinizing institutions full of home loans. Suddenly they were expected to analyse far more demanding and complex land transactions. They didn't have a chance. Since the whole system was financed by the industry, the... [staff] cutbacks saved the taxpayer nothing... Nowhere was the sentiment for financial deregulation stronger than in the Treasury Department, headed by... [a] former head of the Merrill Lynch & Co. brokerage firm... Stockbrokers traditionally viewed the thrift industry with a mixture of envy and disdain. Brokers figured the money that poured into thrifts would have been theirs to invest were it not for the safety provided by federal deposit insurance... Thrifts were viewed as a coddled, inefficient industry that needed a dose of free enterprise... [The Treasury Dept. head's] old employer on Wall Street[also] had a vested interest in seeing the government remove the regulatory wraps on the thrift industry. Merrill Lynch made a lot of money scanning the financial markets looking for the best interest rate available for clients who had megabucks – deposits of \$100,000 or more, sometimes called brokered funds. Prior to 1982, the megabuck market had been limited by a federal regulation that said brokered funds could not exceed 5[%] of a S&L's deposits. But... the DIDIC committee, led by [the former Merrill Lynch employee], removed the 5[%] limitation. Suddenly Merrill Lynch had plenty of places it could invest... [Vernon Savings] and other S&Ls in Texas drew huge deposits into their vaults from outside their area simply by taking out ads in the *Wall Street Journal*... offering investors high interest rates... A broker with a client who wanted to deposit \$900,000 in Vernon Savings to capitalize on a one-quarter-percent interest-rate advantage would split the money into ten \$90,000 accounts, thereby qualifying for federal insurance on accounts of \$100,000 or less. The high-cost deposits fuelled a surge in demand for riskier loans that carried the higher returns needed to pay the interest to the big depositors. Thrifts started investing in the futures markets[and] financial options... A few days... [after the sale of Vernon Savings was signed, the old man was informed that instead] of \$5.8 million in cash, [the highroller would give him] and a handful of minority shareholders \$1.1 million in cash and a note for \$4.7 million[, which]... would be paid off in quarterly instalments over the next seven years at 8[%] interest. It would personally be guaranteed by... a company that reportedly had a net worth of \$19 million. [The old man] didn't know what to think... [The highroller] seemed like a fine young man. He dressed in expensive clothes, drove nice cars, and always seemed to have plenty of money. He hired... lawyers... from... one of Dallas's leading and most reputable law firms... To [the old man's] way of thinking, proper law firms... didn't take on unsavory clients. They simply had too much to lose... On July 10, 1981, [the old man] signed another contract accepting [the] new terms... Prior to the 1980s, developers had never been able to own federally insured [S&L]s. Under the prevailing wisdom, allowing a developer to own a [S&L] was considered crazy... But common sense took a beating when Congress passed the 1982 laws deregulating financial institutions... Even before the laws were passed, entrepreneurs... had started snapping up S&Ls like they were used cars, licking their chops at the prospects of what was to come... [I]nept U.S. Government policies had... by 1981... pushed the price tag on a barrel of crude to \$34.30... a staggering 1,000[%] increase in less than ten years. The rising prices sent the freewheeling Texas real estate market into orbit, too. In contrast to the gas lines and recession that formed around other parts of the nation, Texas saw new office buildings, condominiums, homes, and apartment buildings sprout from the ground. The state became a global symbol of prosperity... Building permits in Dallas would soar from \$4.3 billion in 1976 to \$17 billion by 1983... Vernon's prodigal son simply... figured out that he – and the [S&L] – could make a lot of money by acquiring... land and then selling it at inflated prices to private investors, who could borrow all they needed from the friendly S&L... There was none of this mumbo jumbo about adding value or creating a profitable concern. Inflation in land values and a little deal called a "land flip" would take care of everything. To one degree or another, it was a path that... many others would follow... The profits from the land deals were astonishing. On one day, an Empire[Savings] subsidiary bought eighty-two acres of land... for \$1.86 million, or fifty-two cents per square foot, and sold a few hours later to [a couple of property developers] for \$3 million, or eighty-five cents a square foot. That was a lot quicker way for an S&L to make money than by sinking it in thirty-year fixed-rate home mortgages. [The property developers] would then turn around and sell the land again to some of their cronies... More than one hundred investors had flocked to Empire deals, and more were waiting in the wings... [The property developers] soon started hosting Saturday breakfasts at [a grillhouse] on Interstate 30... "It was a rah-rah type thing. But it quickly changed in a month or two when... you got the politicians coming out here in droves." ...Once breakfast was done, a big ten-gallon cowboy[hat] would be passed among the throng to be stuffed full of cash for the visiting politico in case things got out of hand and everyone needed a friend to cool things off. "If two politicians showed up, they'd pass the hat twice... The message was clear. You've got to contribute if you want to get into any more deals." ...A... contribution from each would net a quick \$100,000 for a cash-starved political campaign... Faced with the prospect of huge profits, investors figured the political contributions at the breakfasts were a small price to pay... The deals struck by... [the property developers] were crude models for dozens of other S&Ls like Vernon... [A] group of investors at... Point West "flipped" four acres of land they had acquired weeks earlier, [before] marking up the price sharply and selling it to [four new investors] for \$4.50 per square foot. Empire Savings lent [the four investors] all the money they needed to close the deal. "The way it broke down was, on the first tract of land, which was just over one acre, we built thirty-two condos." Empire also provided the construction loan for the condos, and its alter ego, a subsidiary named Statewide Services Co., became a fifty-fifty partner with the [four investors] on the project. "[Empire] would take the sale of sixteen of those condos and pay off the construction loan and the land loan on all four acres... That left us with the remaining three acres and sixteen condos free and clear. Statewide got eight of the condos and we [the four investors] got two each... You wound up with sixty to ninety thousand dollars' worth of property you could sell or rent." That was just the first wrinkle to the deal. The[original] developer had originally set aside fifty cents per square foot from the land loan for development costs – things like utilities and streets. But he needed only twenty-five cents per square foot. So... the[West Point] development kicked back twenty-five cents per square foot to the[four] investors. That meant [the four investors received a further cheque] for about \$12,000 for going along with a no-money-down deal in which they [had already] made a bundle... Real estate agents used to making \$15,000 a year hustling single-family homes could suddenly make that much money on a single deal. "It was like a drug. All of a sudden they had fifty percent more income. A lot of these people got in on six or eight deals..." [one of the four investors] said. They bought Ferraris and Rolls-Royces; new homes, boats, jewelry, and dreams. At times, it seemed as if anything were possible... Everyone involved in the scheme had made money... "They had their builder in there. He's doing all the construction. You wanted to do business there, you used their builder. They sold ...t[h]e contractor all of the lumber. They had landscaping... everything. I discovered the concrete contractor is supposed to pour streets that are four inches thick, but he's only pouring an inch and a half. At some point in time, I discover I'm paying... nineteen dollars a yard for eight-dollar-a-yard carpet." [The four investors] overlooked the profiteering... The deals[also] generated extraordinary fees and paper profits for the S&Ls... Empire not only got condos; it had charged [the four investors 18 to 20%] interest on the loans plus... a 12[%] fee... for financing the deals... [The S&Ls] then dipped into their federally-insured deposits to pay fat dividends to their owners. The deals would eventually generate an unprecedented glut of unsold condos, but no one seemed to care... That was a problem for tomorrow. Besides, inflation would eventually drive up the land value and bail everyone out. This was Texas, land of opportunity and oil... The new era of liberal rules and financial deregulation made it all seem so dynamic. S&L regulators in

Washington thought it was a miracle. A few of the federal regulators who showed up to view the Dallas spectacle felt some nagging doubt tugging at their guts. But they ignored their instincts. "I went down there," one federal official explained, "and this Texan showed me this piece of land and told me how this guy had sold it to that guy, and that guy had sold it again, until it had been sold about six times, and I said, 'My God. That's terrible,' and he said, 'Only if you're sixth.'" ...The euphoria was everywhere. Other investors clamored to get in on deals. At one point... tables were lined all of the way down the hall of an office building... and the investors were lined up in front of the tables. The loan officers would close one sale and pass the papers to the next guy, who would close another sale at a higher price. It was unbelievable. It looked like kids registering for college. If an investor raised a question, someone would come over and tell them to get out of the line, they were out of the deal... [I]t was not unusual to see thrifts such as Empire quadruple their outstanding loans in a year or two... "...I remember how the S&Ls had coffee cups that said, 'You Do the Work; I Bring the Money and We Split 50-50.'" ...Vernon[Savings] gave developers... 100[%] financing and then some, a technique permitted under Texas law... A developer with a big project could not only borrow the \$10 million he needed for a deal, but also enough money to pay Vernon's fees and the first two or three years' interest. At closing, the three years' worth of interest would be set aside in a separate interest-reserve account. As each monthly or quarterly interest payment became due, Vernon's employees would simply transfer the money from one account to another to pay the interest and keep the loan current. Even better, usually included in the loan proceeds was an up-front developer's fee of 2 to 4[%]. In other words, a developer could borrow \$10 million with no cash down and take anywhere from \$200,000 to \$400,000 immediately as compensation for his management of the project... The thrift's earnings soared because it charged loan renewal fees twice as high as the rest of the industry, routinely rolling over loans every six months instead of the standard one year... During a twenty-month period starting in April 1982, Vernon officials approved \$706 million in construction loans, including seventeen that totaled more than \$10 million... On paper, the board members were the guardian angels of Vernon shareholders and the public citizens who placed their savings in the institution. They had obligations – legal and moral – to protect the public's interest against harm and ensure that the people running the place didn't violate state and federal regulations. In practice, though, the board was a joke... By mid-1983, Vernon was in danger of violating federally imposed limits on loan volume despite the more lenient rules under deregulation... None of the board members seemed to understand how Vernon operated under the new regime... For the most part, the directors were small-town, naive folks who... ran music stores, funeral parlors... ranches... and... had spent more than twenty years approving relatively simple home loans. Suddenly... [they were] faced with complex development loans that involved interest reserves, profit participations, and exotic ventures in far-off places... Yet the directors and the employees at the thrift didn't object. Vernon had taken on a new philosophy. Everything was geared to profit. "Anything that was done that was not profitable was just kind of a no-no around here," one employee would later tell federal regulators. Vernon Savings couldn't miss. As long as inflation drove land prices upward, Vernon and its customers could always unload the most ill-conceived deal at a profit... But Vernon also attracted borrowers who couldn't get loans elsewhere... [Furthermore, things] had changed dramatically since... the early 1980s. The Texas economy was no longer booming. Oil prices stood at \$26 per barrel... A prudent businessman might have cut back once he saw signs of an economic slowdown. But real estate developers don't think that way... Practically every... developer in Texas... continued to expand... [However, condos] are far different from residential housing projects. A homebuilder can start a sixteen-house development and quit midway through if the economics turn against him. Once a condo project is started, though, it has to be finished. "If you say you are going to build 146 units, you have to build 146. That's the law,"... By late 1983, though, there were too many condos and not enough buyers... [T]he Dallas-area developers had created a 12.5-year oversupply of condominiums... Vernon subsidiaries that had passed their profits up the line to the parent company... soon found [themselves] in deep trouble, with hundreds of unsold units... [and] now faced the prospect of passing their losses on to Vernon Savings... A wintry chill lingered in Washington when... [the] chairman of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board... assembled his staff in a sixth-floor conference room to decide if Empire[Savings] should be declared "hopelessly insolvent." A decision to shut down the place would create the largest insolvency in the fifty-year history of the deposit-insurance fund, which stood to lose a staggering \$165 million. No Texas thrift had ever been declared insolvent by federal regulators... [But] Texas was not the only place with problems... By year-end 1984, fifteen more federally insured thrifts had failed... One of them, San Marino Savings in California... which went under with \$812 million in assets... would cost the FSLIC... \$35 million more than Empire... If things were bad on the federal level, they were worse at the state... [level. Despite this, by] mid-1985... Vernon had set up a money desk so government agencies, pension funds, other S&Ls, and banks could bypass money brokers and invest their spare funds directly with Vernon Savings via a simple phone call. The consistently high interest rates it offered savers drew huge deposits from... well-heeled investors in New York, California, Florida, and Washington, D.C... Indeed, by the summer of 1985, Vernon's techniques in Texas and nationwide had propelled it to the top of the heap. The lead story in an August 1985 *National Thrift News*, the S&L industry's trade paper, carried a stunning headline: "Vernon, Tex., Tops ROAA at Big S&Ls." ...In fact, Vernon's financial performance was almost twice as good as the next most profitable thrift in the U.S., according to the figures... The trouble was Vernon's financial report was a joke... It was the old quality-of-earnings argument... [L]oans to developers were coming due, and Vernon's borrowers couldn't repay them. Some of the projects were incomplete and generating no rents; some were burdened by cost overruns; some couldn't attract sufficient rents because of soft real estate markets; and some were... fiascos that should never have made it off the drawing boards. Instead of foreclosing and taking over the properties, though, [the highroller] kept the developers afloat with the Vernon shuffle – he would simply refinance the loan and lend them more money. A developer with a troubled \$12-million loan would borrow an additional \$2 million in federally secured deposits... including about \$400,000 in loan fees... that Vernon would deduct from the proceeds and book as income. The loan also included enough money for interest to keep the loan trouble-free for another year. The thrift – in short – was borrowing its earnings from depositors. Thanks to the Vernon shuffle, it now had \$14 million of its depositors' money loaned on a project of dubious value in a sinking real estate market instead of just \$12 million... By mid-1985... Vernon had put scores of those \$14-million loans on its books. Overall, the thrift reported it had taken in about \$910 million in deposits and invested the money in assets that Vernon valued at \$1.03 billion... But... state examiners and [the highroller's] own auditors... questioned the accuracy of the financial report. No one doubted that Vernon owed depositors \$910 million. That much was clear. But there was considerable skepticism that its assets were actually worth \$1.03 billion. About 80[%] of the money... had been invested in risky assets... Despite their concerns, the state regulators didn't act against the thrift. They sent Vernon one of those... letters that expressed regulatory concerns but meant nothing. Vernon's outside auditors... also signed off on the thrift's financial statement for fiscal 1985... As a result... Vernon Savings remained able to cover up its problems and report record earnings, prompting investors to shove even more money into its vaults and vastly increasing the cost of eventually shutting down the place... Had the Texas economy turned around and had oil prices boomed as everyone had hoped they would, the whole mess would probably have been covered up. But the economy didn't go along with the sham... Between 1985 and 1986, oil prices fell 50[%] to \$12 a barrel. Texas's oil-based economy was devastated just as hundreds of new office buildings were coming onto the sales market... Between its inception in 1934 and 1979, the FSLIC had been forced to help only 124 savings institutions, mainly by quietly merging troubled S&Ls into healthy ones. In that forty-five-year stretch, only 13... institutions had actually been closed – the action that triggered a depositor payoff. By contrast, in just six years ending 1986, the FSLIC rescued 166 S&Ls and closed 49. The industry had never seen anything like it, and the worst was yet to come... Just two years earlier, the insurance fund had \$6.4 billion set aside in reserves to cover potential failures at [S&L]s with \$667 billion in insured deposits. That wasn't good; it meant the government had about one dollar set aside for each \$100 in insured deposits compared to \$2.07 per \$100 in 1970, an all-time high. By 1985, FSLIC-insured deposits had risen 26[%] to \$844 billion, mainly because so many troubled S&Ls were jacking up interest rates... But the insurance fund reserves had fallen nearly 30[%] because of the huge losses incurred covering failures such as

Empire. The agency had only fifty cents in reserve for each \$100 in federally insured deposits. If the FSLIC had to pay off depositors because of a few more large insolvencies like Empire, the fund could run out of cash. The system that had successfully stood behind S&L deposits since the Great Depression was threatened with bankruptcy... [T]roubled S&Ls were being kept alive by accounting gimmickry and financial sleight of hand because the industry didn't have enough money in its... fund to shut them down... [These S&Ls] eventually would account for billions of dollars in losses to the insurance-deposit fund... By the time the FSLIC moved to close Vernon the... [old man] had lost more than the institution he had founded. He feared he had also lost the nearly \$2 million... owed him... [by the highroller, who] filed for protection from his creditors in bankruptcy court in southern California... "I'm devastated by this," he said. "After all, this represents about sixty-five percent of my life's work and I can't start over." [The old man] was almost as disgusted with the government[... which]... seized Vernon's assets... [even though it had] helped create the problem... But government lawyers would also fight [the old man's] efforts to get his money back, arguing that anything left in Vernon or in [the highroller's] bankruptcy case belonged to the deposit-insurance fund. The... [old man didn't] lose hope, though. Every morning, usually at nine A.M., he would sit at his kitchen table, grasp his wife's hand, and pray for the man who owes him so much. "[That highroller] needs to know the Lord," he would say, bowing his head in prayer. "Dear Father, we all sin and come up short in the glory of God. But we ask for your forgiveness." ...The nation's first [S&L] had opened... about 130 years before Vernon appeared on the scene. The fledgling... institutions originally operated like neighborhood credit unions, often serving Americans ignored by the banks... At the time, anyone wanting a house had to save his own money or borrow the funds from a rich person. As a result, not many Americans owned their own place. The folks who formed... the Oxford Provident Building and Loan Society in Frankford... had a different idea; if they pooled their savings, they figured they could assemble enough cash for one of the members to buy a house. On January 3, 1831, the thirty-seven organizers of Oxford Provident each contributed an initial deposit of five dollars to the institution and pledged to continue depositing three dollars a month thereafter until all members had obtained the funds they needed... On April 11, the neighbors drew straws to determine who the lucky first borrower would be... He borrowed \$500 and used \$375 to acquire a house... [then] used the remaining \$125 to remodel it... He was supposed to repay his loan so another neighbor could draw a lucky straw. In an ominous sign for the future of the nation's thrift industry, [the first borrower] had a little trouble... and his relatives had to bail him out. - THE DAISY CHAIN

credit, trust given by the possessors of capital or other assets in return for a debtor's guarantee to repay in the future. The terms of the repayment are mutually agreed upon. The creditor's risk, taken in order to make a profit, is lessened by inquiries as to the debtor's reliability (credit rating) and by the deposit of property or securities (collateral) with the creditor. The credit system is an important aspect of business practice and facilitates the exchange of commodities, banking, and the development of enterprises. Credit is classified according to the agent granting it (bank credit, personal credit), the purpose for which it is given (consumer credit, investment credit), or the period it covers. Credit instruments are drafts, che[que]s, promissory notes, and instalment purchase contracts. The credit theory of business cycles maintains that the volume of bank credit is responsible for inflationary and deflationary trends. Instalment buying is a form of consumer credit which has played an increasingly significant role in the U.S. economy. In 1940 total consumer credit outstanding stood at c.\$8,340 million, of which c.\$5,500 million was instalment credit. By 1960, the comparable figures were \$52,100 million, and \$40,200 million... Consumers may now write che[que]s against bank credit, much as they are traditionally written against deposits. In the late 1950s there was a boom in "clubs," or credit-card organizations, whose members can charge purchases of all kinds of merchandise or pay for services at various retail outlets around the world, and pay later through a single remittance to this sponsoring club... Almost 90% of all the exchange in the U.S., as far as value in dollars is concerned, is transacted in che[que]s and other short-term credit instruments.

Savings institutions are primarily involved in credit extension... Of the total 66,945 banking offices in the U[S] in 1990, 63,130 were commercial banks and 3,785... savings banks. Of the commercial banks, 38,201 were members of the Federal Reserve... The 1980s represented both the best and the worst of times for U.S. commercial banks... [but the] nation's 3,500 savings institutions were hardest hit by the recession at the turn of the decade... In 1990, they had net losses after taxes of \$8.6 billion and their return on assets had deteriorated to -1.08% from 0.57% in 1970. Delinquent mortgage loans cost these institutions \$36.3 billion in 1990, when 52,800 mortgage loans were foreclosed... Outstanding mortgage debt reached \$3.858 trillion in 1990, compared to \$474 billion in 1970. Nonfarm residencies accounted for \$3.017 trillion. In 1991, the mortgage delinquency rate was 5.02%... The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) identified 1,069 problem banks in 1991, compared to 217 in 1980; also, 127 banks were closed in 1991 compared to 11 in 1980. Net income of all banks grew only slightly from \$14 billion in 1980 to \$18.6 billion in 1991. The percentage of banks losing money grew from 3.7% in 1980 to 10.8% in 1991... In 1991, U.S. bank loans overseas amounted to \$87.912 billion. Japan was the largest borrower with \$16.082 billion, followed by the United Kingdom with \$15.688 billion... Over the past 20 years, U.S. banks have lost their former preeminence in the world banking system and have been overtaken by Japanese and German banks. Of the largest 500 banks in the world in 1990, only 96 were American compared to 185 in 1970... Among the top 10, Japan is dominant... In the number of banks, the U.S. share was reduced from 27% to 19% during this period... In 1990, there were 288 foreign banks operating in the U[S]... The most numerous were Japanese banks, which numbered 45... The U[K] was second with 11 banks... [T]he U.S. share... [of an] estimated... \$15.854 trillion... [in total] bank deposits worldwide... was 8%[, whereas the Japanese share was]... 37%... In 1989, 72.7% of all [US] households carried some debt, compared to 69.9% in [1983]... The median debt in 1989 was \$15,200, compared to \$13,400 in 1983... The Public Debt is that which originates from the Treasury Department, but it excludes debt incurred by public agencies, such as the Tennessee Valley authority... The public debt in 1791... [was] \$19.21 per capita. By the time of the Civil War, it had been reduced to \$2.85 per capita. The Civil War and the half century following saw an expansion in public debt, but it came down to the very low level of \$11.99 per capita by the start of W[W]I. Thereafter it rose steadily, crossing the \$1000 per capita mark in 1944. In 1992, with a gross public debt of \$4.077 trillion, per capita debt stood at \$16,140. - DATAPEDIA of the United States 1790 - [1996]

Although the US Government managed to achieve a 'surplus of \$150,000 during the period of 1789-1791', it hasn't been out of debt since the term of its first president! The closest it ever came to being debt free was the '\$38,000 owed during 1834-35.'

national debt, amount owed by a nation for funds borrowed; specifically a funded debt as distinguished from the floating debt of current expenses. It is also distinguished from public debt, which is considered to be the total debt incurred by the national and local governments. The largest additions to national debts are from the cost of war, and of defense programs during peacetime... The national debt of the U.S. dates from the American Revolution. In 1791 it was \$75,463,000. After the Civil War it was \$2,773,263,000, and after W[W]I it passed the \$30,000,000,000 mark (including state and municipal debts). At mid-century it exceeded \$250 billion. Its rapid growth has been viewed with alarm by some economists, who consider it a threat to the financial stability of the nation, and with less concern by others, who contend that a rising national debt is not of necessity dangerous as long as the nation's productivity increases correspondingly. There is a statutory ceiling on the national debt, and as the debt continued to rise during the 1950s the president repeatedly was forced to request revisions of this ceiling from Congress. The \$275 billion limit was raised temporarily in 1954, and again in 1955... In 1958 the ceiling was raised temporarily to \$288 billion... In 1959 the ceiling was raised

permanently to \$285 billion, in anticipation of debts at the end of both 1959 and 1960 at about this level. In 1960 a temporary, one-year ceiling was established at \$293 billion; this was extended further in 1961.

In 1973, the [US A]dministration was compelled to devalue the dollar that had underpinned the economic order established at Bretton Woods. The U[S] thereby capitulated to an ascendant Japan and an emerging European economic community the sharing, on not yet resolved terms, of its hegemony over the world economy. Now the “rearmament” that began in 1980 has brought insolvency to the current accounts of the U.S. economy, redressed by the sale of assets. The Federal deficits incurred by military procurement have sustained a sluggish growth and moderated recurring recession, in accordance with the prescription of J. M. Keynes. The world’s largest creditor has become its largest debtor... Saving was long ago disjoined from investment in new productive capacity by the write-up of the consumer’s price to cover depreciation and the otherwise retained earnings that have been building and rebuilding the country’s industrial plant since before the middle of the century. In recent years, the managements of the biggest industrial enterprises have been putting these funds to other uses. The binge of merger, acquisition, and junk-bond buyout that closed the 1980s confounded equity with debt. The swapping of paper for paper had become more lucrative than the swapping of goods. The stock exchange, in the metaphor of [a] Cambridge University economist... has dropped its “saving for investment” fig leaf. Thrift has been disjoined from consumption as well. At \$300 billion, the debt incurred by U.S. consumers equals their country’s much deplored national debt. The instalment plan makes ownership of chattel property ambiguous. Title in real property is qualified by mortgage debt and by the public interest in what owners do with their real estate in this ever more crowded world.

And how much danger is there of a world-wide economic collapse caused by the huge US governmental, commercial and household debt, twice the size of each year’s [GDP]? ...Or from stock-market trading in ‘derivative securities’? This trading, most of it unregulated, has an annual volume approaching the combined [GDP]s of the U[S], Europe and Japan, so that... ‘observers have begun to worry that a major misstep could vaporize financial markets’.

While their country remains in debt, USers don’t need to worry that a major misstep could vaporize financial markets – because, if this were to occur, they won’t have to repay the creditors! NZers are equally fortunate in this respect because, as a collective, they also are debtors instead of being creditors. In 1991, NZ’s overseas debt was ‘\$NZ50,980 million (or \$15,000 per head of population)’; by 31 March 1994 it had risen to ‘\$70,068 million, of which the government’s share was \$29,370 million.’

Any N[Z]er closely following the turmoil in the U[S] over the ballooning federal debt can be excused a sense of déjà vu. The situation in the U[S] bears remarkable similarities to the debt crisis N[Z] faced up to in the 1980s. But N[Z]’s parliamentary system enabled the economic reforms... and the adoption of then radical moves like the elimination of rural subsidies, the sale of state-owned enterprises and the introduction of GST. America already has sales taxes and there are few state-owned businesses it can unload. The Washington system is based on a balance of power between the executive and the legislature – the president and congress. This provides a bulwark against autocratic rule from the White House, but mitigates against radical decision making. America seems like a society in denial... Politicians and voters are having a hard time coming to terms with... reality. Having the most powerful military machine in the world disguises the fact that the U[S] is losing the economic battle. Unless radical spending cut-backs can be implemented, it’s likely the U[S] will be unable to service the interest bill on its accumulated national debt within 20 years without imposing severe social strains. Pessimists are talking of a Brazil-like situation on a massive scale within a generation. For the last 25 years the U[S] federal government has spent more than it took in. [The 40th President] inherited a federal debt that equalled less than 25[%] of the gross national product. By the end of his second term in office in 1989 the debt had tripled to nearly \$3 trillion, largely because his administration cut taxes but did not reign in spending. In eight years the debt had climbed above 50[%] of the gross national product. Now at \$4.5 trillion and growing by about \$200 billion a year, the debt is expected to exceed \$5 trillion by the end of the decade. To cover the shortfall the government borrows on the international financial market. The annual interest bill is now \$235 billion, the third largest item of expenditure after social security and defence. Total annual government spending is \$1.5 trillion... Polls show that Americans are concerned about the debt but when it comes to specific cuts which would affect them support falls away. There is fierce debate over how to cut the deficit but little indication that the average person is coming to grips with the issue. Sound-bite journalism and entertainment news have taken over the electronic media. This does not lend itself to in-depth coverage of a complex issue. There’s no shortage of tough talk about deficit reduction, but little real progress. The new Republican majority in congress tabled an amendment to the constitution which would require the government to balance the budget within seven years. The amendment easily passed in the House of Representatives but failed by one vote to win a two-thirds majority in the Senate. Balancing the budget would require massive cuts in areas where politicians of all shades are reluctant to make change – social security, Medicare and farm subsidies. To compound the dilemma, the Republicans offered the electorate tax cuts and increased defence spending in last year’s mid-term elections, to win over the white middle class who proved to be the decisive voters. They have to cut even more from federal spending to meet these promises... To do this they will have to cut into the spending programmes their staunchest supporters enjoy. Pensions for retirees make up 70[%] of social security spending, the nation’s single biggest expenditure at \$310 billion a year[– but to] introduce entitlement caps for relatively well off retirees is political dynamite. Retirees are a rapidly growing section of the population and they generally vote Republican. Social security recipients are also the country’s most powerful political lobby. Nearly 43 million Americans receive social security benefits and they strongly oppose cuts in entitlements. Medical aid schemes like Medicare and Medicaid on which many Americans rely for health-care coverage in the sense of a national health system, are another obvious target. But they, too, largely benefit retirees and social security recipients. These medical entitlements cost over \$200 billion a year and are growing by 10[%] annually, due to escalating costs of medical care for the elderly... [L]arge numbers of Republican congressmen are from farm states. About \$15 billion is handed out annually to the nation’s farmers. Just as the National Party kept up this welfare line to its supporters in N[Z] in the 1960s and 1970s, so conservative rural politicians in America are loath to touch this guarantee to farmers’ incomes. There’s no shortage of hand-wringing about the federal debt issue. “We are living on the hog and are forcing future generations to pay for our excessive spending,” says [a] Senator... of Iowa. “We are borrowing from our future and that of our grandchildren.” The supporters of the balanced budget amendment maintain the country has to be forced by law to stop spending more than it takes in... Opponents counter that a constitutional amendment is not needed. “The constitution should not be trivialised with an amendment that addresses a problem that arose from a bout of temporary fiscal insanity in the 1980s,” says [a member of the House of Representatives. The 42nd President]... began his term in office two years ago by reversing some of [the 40th President’s] tax cuts and by slashing defence spending. It was a bold start and it cut the annual deficit he inherited by about 20[%]. There was even grand talk of major taxes on energy consumption to raise more income... and of cutting government bureaucracy, but the momentum was lost. Americans like their petrol cheap and there was fierce opposition to adding taxes above the current 14 cents a gallon. Putting a dollar a gallon tax on petrol and cutting government expenditure by 5[%] across the board would virtually eliminate the annual deficit... But for [the 42nd President] all the early talk of major debt reduction has faded, even though some prominent Democrats strongly backed the balanced budget amendment. Now concentrating on surviving in power, [he] seems to have lost his nerve and has backed off serious deficit reduction. He’s even taken up the Republican mantra of offering tax cuts for the middle class[, and ‘on Monday the White House proposed a

record \$7.3 billion bailout for agriculture – a pre-election-year “life raft” to keep farmers afloat (the largest amount of special aid ever given to farmers was the \$5.4 billion provided in 1988’)]. When the Republicans won Senate and House majorities for the first time in 40 years in November a lot of new members came in with guns blazing. They were going to cut taxes, balance the budget and rebuild defence spending. Brandishing the Contract With America they were going to reduce government and give more power to the individual. Now that reality has set in even the young guns of the Republican Party are feeling the heat. So far they’ve announced only \$17 billion in already controversial spending-cut proposals for the 1995 budget, including slashing funds for low-income housing, food stamps, school lunches and [the President’s] national service programme. The unease over cuts is spreading to state capitals. Local politicians are realising that big cuts in federal spending will inevitably cut deeply into aid many states receive from Washington. One estimate is that a balanced budget would require \$70 billion in cuts to federal grants to states each year... To compensate for this loss most states would have to hike state taxes by about 10[%] or substantially reduce funding of education, policing and social services.

The U[S] federal budget deficit shrivelled to \$US10.87 billion... for the first nine months of the fiscal year as a vibrant economy generated a record surplus for [the 3rd quarter], the Treasury Department said. The monthly report bolstered the notion that the surprising vitality of the economy could raise enough revenue to wipe out the deficit by the end of next year.

...The A[US]n Bureau of Statistics said the seasonally adjusted current account deficit... deteriorated... by 55[%] to \$A4.63 billion... in the... [latest quarter. AUS]’s net foreign debt rose by 4[%] to \$217.13 billion... [In contrast, t]he big gap between what [NZers] earn overseas and what we owe is narrowing. In... December the deficit fell to just over \$900 million. That’s an improvement of \$105 million. [However, ‘NZ’s total level of overseas debt rose by \$3.6 billion during the quarter to \$74.7 billion, mostly because foreigners were depositing more money in NZ banks and buying local bonds. The ratio of total overseas debt to GDP was 84.7%, up from 81.1% in 1995.]

...Credit rating agency Moody’s Investment Services has confirmed its Aa1 rating for N[Z]’s sovereign debt (Moody’s top rating is ‘AAA’)]. The agency noted that the current account deficit... [i]s... now 5.7[%] of GDP (‘NZ’s Standard and Poors rating is AA+’). ‘The rating affects the cost of borrowing not only for the Government but for private sector borrowers as well. ■’ A] welfare group is accusing a loan company that charges \$190 in fees and interest to borrow \$200 of preying on struggling beneficiaries. The company, Direct Cash Orders, opened a branch 10 weeks ago next door to the Newtown office of Income Support in Wellington. It said setting up next to Income Support was a coincidence... The company’s general manager... said it opened the office because it wanted to compete with other cash loan companies in Newtown. It was next to Income Support because the suburb had a shortage of good office space. He defended the high charges and interest. “It’s a very high-risk area. We are not in the business of losing money.” ...Borrowing \$1000 for 31 weeks costs an extra \$518 in charges and interest. Borrowing \$3000 for 100 weeks costs \$1530 in charges and interest. If borrowers get behind on payments, the company charges a \$25 fee for sending reminder notices and 3[%] a month extra in interest... A co-director of Downtown Community Ministry... said the ministry was having to help beneficiaries who had borrowed money from loan companies. “It’s just predatory. It’s designed to prey on the weakest and the least fortunate,” he said of the new branch... [S]ome beneficiaries were forced into borrowing from companies because Income Support was denying them special needs grants.

...Advising beneficiaries to get an overdraft if they needed extra money for food is abhorrent, says the Labour Party... [T]he Income Support operational manager... had said in a letter: “There are times when it may be appropriate for a customer to be referred to a bank to see if an overdraft facility can be arranged.” Yesterday he said that such times were rare... In the year to October... [1996 about 29,000 people who] applied for special needs grants... were turned down.

...[at the end of 1996, ‘about 143,000 beneficiaries owed NZ’s Income Support Service \$237 million for advance benefit payments, grants, fraud and overpayments’ – or a ‘total of \$662 million when outstanding debts by beneficiaries and liable parents is added.’] Non-custodial parents owed nearly \$200 million in child support payments... a rise of 16[%] since... last year, says the Labour Party.

...Clients of the N[Z] Federation of Family Budgeting Services owed up to \$33 million nationally in overdue accounts last year, statistics show. The number of clients using the service rose from 34,000 to 43,000.

...Debts of more than \$40 million have been run up by people who cannot repay them, says the Federation of Family Budgeting Services.

...[a character in a recently released movie declares that: ‘This is the 90s – you don’t pay, you reorganise your debt’! However, the] Citizens Advice Bureau... says it is concerned that people resort to credit and Income Support debt as a survival tool when they are impoverished... and... warns that easy credit is deepening the poverty trap for people with low income.

...Freedom Financial Services is a whole new approach... It’s all about making it easier for you to get the things you want. With Freedom CashLine... an unsecured revolving line of credit... you can access up to \$20,000, whenever you need it, at a very competitive interest rate of 16% p.a. And you’ll pay no fees whatsoever, just interest on your outstanding balance... To see how much you could borrow, call now.

...IN GOD WE TRUST (ALL OTHERS GET A CREDIT CHECK.) Sadly the time[for] trusting someone purely on face value is long past. A bad debtor can cost you thousands. [However, a] call to Baycorp’s telephone credit check system [– which ‘daily updates each customer’s credit information’ –]will cost you only \$20 (excl. GST).

...Baycorp Holdings[, NZ’s]... biggest debt collection agency[, has been]... turning bad money into profit... [Now the company] is moving into the mortgage business... [after] signing a major contract to... administer the Mortgage Express loan portfolio... Baycorp [would] not carry any risk...

The chairman and managing director of information and collection company Baycorp Holdings got pay rises of 71 and 25[% respectively – raising their salaries, respectively, to \$120,732 and] \$372,502... the company’s annual report shows. The report also warns shareholders to expect a rise in directors fees soon.

...Personal debt on rise with card use... Mismanagement of personal debt is “disturbingly high” reports the Ministry of Commerce, and budget-advice agencies say much of the blame lies with ready access to credit cards issued by banks and stores. They reported extreme cases of people holding up to 20 cards, with six “the norm.” ...Bankers wouldn’t reveal how much of their business is card-related, or the level of credit card debt and yearly write-offs. They claimed they were careful about vetting applicants for credit cards and that about 40[%] of applications were rejected. The banking industry did not have a system to check who had issued cards to whom. There was nothing to stop a person from holding the same brand of cards with several banks, although application forms did ask for details of other cards held... “The problem is you’re dealing with a competitive and profitable product and each bank is going to make its product as attractive as it can[,” said a spokesperson for]... the Bankers’ Association... [The spokesperson also said] that information about individuals could not be traded between banks, because of privacy laws[– although t]he banks did make inquiries about applicants with credit agencies and other companies within their group. However, there was no industry-reporting on bad debt or the number of cardholders in trouble. Baycorp Holdings Ltd was the... debiting collecting and credit rating agency used by most banks and companies offering credit facilities. Baycorp’s chief executive... said that over the past four years there had been a trend to use credit cards as opposed to hire purchase and time-to-pay deals, particularly for purchases up to about \$1500. The company had noticed a rise in credit card defaults over the past six months. [He] put it down to retailers saying to customers “put it on your card” rather than using hire purchase which required a credit check. “It’s the sheer convenience [of] cards that catch some,”... He said the majority of N[Z]ers had “matured” over the past 15 years in the way they handled credit[, but the] commercial affairs division of the Commerce Ministry said that in the past two years the U[S] and Canada had experienced bankruptcy surges on the back of consumer credit growth and it looked like the same

situation might develop here this year... [There] were... 2393 cases[of bankruptcy in NZ] last year compared to 2023 in 1995... [But] personal bankruptcy did not happen overnight. It caught up with individuals over several years and unemployment, illness and marriage breakdown were circumstances which could tip them over the edge. "By the time they get to us they're in a pretty sorry state,"... [a solicitor for] the ministry... said. "Increasingly we're getting more and more coming to us for a pre-bankruptcy interview [more than 2500 in the last year] and we seek alternatives for them to satisfy creditors and get advice from the budgeting agencies." The solicitor with the commercial affairs division... said credit cards were "a risk and temptation" because there was so little control over their use. When companies like Visa first started here they lost money because N[Z]ers, coming from a prudent financial heritage, tended to pay off their cards monthly, thereby avoiding credit fees. "That's changed dramatically... We're catching up with the bad habits of North America where consumer bankruptcy has reached such epidemic proportions that they've taken a different approach to insolvency law. For example, the stigma of bankruptcy... [-] that sort of quasi criminal approach that if you went into bankruptcy you were somehow no good[-] ...has been lost... [I]n today's American terms it means nothing more than that you have problems managing your finances." ...Americans had adopted the approach that insolvency law had to be supplemented with better consumer education by school and advisory agencies and the banking and financial sectors... [In NZ] the law need[s] changing to make those providing credit more responsible for checks, and more protection for consumers when repossession was enforced... The ANZ Banking Group's product manager for cards... said... "However, if people get several cards from different institutions there's only so much we can do to protect them from themselves and any over-commitment..." It was expensive to issue credit cards and the last thing the bank wanted was the further cost of recovering debt... [T]here was a time when the banks were more lenient and would waive interest charges to help to recover the principle... Two agencies giving budgeting advice to thousands were the Citizens' Advice Bureau and the Federation of Family Budgeting Services. They were staggered by the ease with which people could get credit cards. "If those issuing cards say they're acting responsibly, how come people with so few real assets have so many cards?" said... Budgeting Services['] spokesperson. He went on to point out that[... the ease with which credit was granted, plus the range of payment methods including Eftpos, debit billing, telephone selling by credit card number and store cards, had added to people's problems in keeping track of their finances. "It seems to us that some of the business providers especially are relying on repossession and guarantors as their safeguards in the process rather than the credit check on a client. The repossession scenario also adds to the problem of how much the person at the end gets back on their goods. They can still be up for payments because the resale didn't cover the debt... We need the advisory services and responsibility at the top of the hill rather than bankruptcy procedures at the bottom waiting to pick up the pieces after the crash."

...a former bricklayer who built one of [Germany's] largest real estate empires... went on trial on Monday... accused of causing one of the country's largest corporate scandals... [A] bankruptcy court judge said banks lost 2.2 billion marks... in the debacle... Lawyers have not yet decided whether officials of major banks, embarrassed by the apparent ease with which they doled out their billions, should be called to the witness stand... Germany's biggest bank, Deutsche Bank, which bore the brunt of criticism for loose lending and lax supervision, accepted the resignations of four executives as a result. [In local news, 'Alister Keith Finlay, a tractor salesman, took his life because of shame over being bankrupted by the Inland Revenue Department, his daughter says. In February it was revealed that Kapiti businessman Ian Mutton had taken his life in 1996 as a result of a ballooning tax debt. His 13-year-old son, Trevor, also killed himself after his father's death. The department did not believe it was responsible for Mr Finlay's death.']

...Inland Revenue has denied claims that it is largely to blame for the recent rise in bankruptcies. The claims were made in the *Sunday Star-Times* two weeks ago by Auckland-based Independent Business Foundation, and were supported by tax specialists. [The foundation's] executive director... said his organisation had evidence that many forced business closures were being initiated by Inland Revenue who were often first in the line of unsatisfied creditors... [The] Commerce Minister... said... "The advice I've had is that one of the major causes for the change [in the number of] bankruptcies) is actually a change in policy with IRD debtors. That's probably... why the figures have climbed up a little bit,"... The Commerce Ministry collected bankruptcy and liquidation figures. But Inland Revenue... produced figures which it said refuted the claim. The number of petitions filed by the IRD to recover money owed by taxpayers in the 11 months to May was down by over 40% on the previous year. Action was taken in only 0.15% of its debt cases, it said. The figures "clearly indicate that the actions of other parties had a far greater bearing on the recent rise in bankruptcy cases," said the IRD's group manager of customer services... Inland Revenue's policy on taxpayers with outstanding debt has not changed. Bankruptcy and liquidation proceedings were used only as an action of last resort... The IRD was endeavouring to intervene earlier to collect outstanding debt and this should result in fewer bankruptcy actions being taken... he said.

...Under [NZ's] Insolvency Act 1967, anyone can voluntarily declare him or herself bankrupt by applying to the High Court. The court will appoint an independent trustee, known as the Official Assignee, who will then look at your case. The Official Assignee has the power to investigate your past financial affairs to see whether you might have breached insolvency law. For example, you could be prosecuted if it can be proven you intended to borrow money without any intention of paying it back. You may be required to attend an interview and be questioned under oath. If you do become bankrupt... [all] your assets become the property of the Official Assignee and it will be up to him or her to decide whether anything should be sold to pay off your debts. He or she can inspect your house and you may be left with as little as \$2000 worth of furniture and personal effects, and \$400 cash. If you own your own house, the house can be sold if a valuation shows there will be money left over after the mortgage has been repaid. The Official Assignee can also decide whether or not you get to keep your car. If you are earning wages of any kind, you may be required to pay some of those to the Official Assignee to help pay your debts. You will continue to be responsible for any court fines, maintenance and child support payments, and any debts incurred after the date of your bankruptcy. You will be required to disclose to the Official Assignee any change of address or employment... Once you are discharged, you start afresh in the world. But that doesn't necessarily mean all your problems are behind you. - 1997

[An ex-bankrupt] blames a near-fatal heart attack on the shame and stress of not only being declared bankrupt, but also the "leper mentality" with which the financial community has treated him ever since. [Another's] 18-year-old daughter was refused a loan to buy a car after the bank discovered his previous bankruptcy, even when her grandfather offered to be the guarantor. It would not even open an account for her... Three years after serving the standard three-year "time" for bankruptcy... banks still refuse to open a cheque account for him, and have even turned down his wife. One... was told by a bank that if it gave him a loan to see him through a period of retraining, he would have to sign a document promising to repay his earlier debt to the bank, even though it had been written off in the bankruptcy and the bank had no legal claim to it. These are just some examples of how a declaration of bankruptcy can dog a person, and the innocent victims surrounding them, for years after they have been discharged... [O]nce a criminal has served his sentence, he is able to re-start the game of life on Go, "but former bankrupts start five squares back." [Ironically, humans are often conditioned for adulthood by the games they play as children, and few of the children who've grown up in NZ since the 1960s would have avoided playing the board game *Monopoly* – which is based on the premise that whoever manages to bankrupt everyone else wins!] It... takes an enormous amount of effort to crawl back from bankruptcy, "but it's like crawling with sandbags on, because of the burden and disadvantage of having that declaration on your financial record for the rest of your life." The fact that none of the former bankrupts interviewed was willing to be identified is an indication of the stigma attached to the declaration... IT raises the questions of whether the bankruptcy label should be removed from a person's record after a certain period of time to avoid ongoing discrimination; and why banks place such weight on previous bankruptcies when they don't investigate clients' criminal records for offences such as fraud, or even bank robbery... [I]t was easier for a

person with a fraud conviction to gain a loan than it was for a former bankrupt... The Ministry of Commerce is reviewing the three laws which cover bankruptcy... and... the “anomalies” that affect bankrupted people are being considered. “We still have the attitude that bankruptcy is a crime [it is a civil procedure], but among bankrupts are many consumer debtors who, through no fault of their own, simply couldn’t make ends meet. It could be proposed that they not be declared bankrupt at all, but face some other procedure that does not give them such a label. There is also a big difference between bankrupts – some pay their creditors no money at all, others pay back everything with interest – yet at the moment they’re all dumped in the same basket...” ...[between ‘1960 and the mid-1980s, NZ’s rate of bankruptcies never rose above 30 per 100,000 population’, or 1000 people in total during a single year.] They peaked at 2624 in the 1992 calendar year, as the effects of the sharemarket crash and the subsequent lull filtered through, then declined to 2037 in 1994... The number of bankruptcies in N[Z] started to level off after several years of decline... [However, our rate of bankruptcy is low compared to the US – currently, each year 6 NZers] in every 10,000 suffer the declaration compared to 44 per 10,000, or one in every 250 Americans[(which, statistically, means that during their life as adults – a period of approximately 50 years on average – 20% of Americans will be declared bankrupt)], and that figure is up 25[%] on two years ago. But there is not the same stigma attached to bankruptcy in the [US], and some people use the declaration to shield assets before instigating divorce proceedings... Americans refer to bankruptcy as “going through the car-wash,” because they can have their affairs sorted out and be back doing business in as short a time as six months. In N[Z], bankrupts do it hard. For three years they must not be self-employed, work for a member of their family or be involved in the management of a company without consent; leave N[Z] without consent; or raise credit exceeding \$100 without disclosing that they are bankrupt. During the initial asset stripping, all the bankrupts spoken to lost their businesses, homes, cars, appliances, even paintings. [One] says he was left with the clothes he was wearing, his watch, a car trailer, a handful of tools and a few pieces of furniture. He, his wife and their three school-aged children moved to another town to start a new life. Five years later he is still paying, and will continue to do so for as long as Baynet... retains a record of his bankruptcy on its files for a standard term of seven years... [B]anks are not obliged to open accounts, and can close them at any stage without having or giving a reason... None likes the idea of bankruptcy records being wiped after a certain period of time, saying they would prefer to know that a person had been through that “experience.” ...Yet none of the banks investigated applicants’ criminal histories, with most thinking that fraud convictions would show up on Baynet’s records. This is not the case. Baynet’s operations manager... says it is too difficult to gain information about convicted people, such as their home address, to accurately identify them, unlike details of bankrupts, which are listed in newspapers’ public notices... The Privacy Commissioner... says... “The argument is not quite the same as for spent convictions, where it could be said that, after a period of time, previous, minor convictions are not a very good predictor of someone’s ability to do a job or whatever, so should be erased. With bankruptcy, your previous performance in relation to credit is relevant in people’s judgments of whether to deal with you...” ...the Privacy Act is of some help to former bankrupts in that it gives them the right to see[a] bank’s files on them, and include their own version of affairs beside any information they feel is inaccurate, misleading or irrelevant. The Human Rights Act does not cover discrimination on the basis of prior bankruptcy, so the main course of redress for an aggrieved former bankrupt is to lay a complaint with the banking ombudsman... “...I would look into [a complaint] to satisfy myself that the bank was adhering to its own criteria...”

...A man in his third bankruptcy admitted obtaining by false pretences credit of more than \$80,000 from Christchurch businesses... and finance companies... - 1996

Insolvency laws may be amended to force students declared bankrupt to pay off student loans. The Ministry of Commerce will consider whether bankrupts should have their student loans written off when it reviews the laws. The suggestion has been called unfair by students, and extraordinary by lawyers... [because] it would make the Government a “privileged creditor.” When a person was declared bankrupt their debts were usually wiped – regardless of who they owed money to... [T]he proposed law change would mean a bankrupt could be forced to repay debt to the Government while other creditors missed out. “It’s hard to believe that it is only the Crown who suffers this kind of abuse... students can diddle anyone,”... said... [one] Auckland University law lecturer... “What makes a student loan any different from a mortgage or a bank loan? The Government would reserve for itself powers it doesn’t give anyone else.” ...A recent article in the Auckland University magazine... suggested students declare themselves bankrupt to avoid repaying loans. It began: “Declare yourself bankrupt, spend the next three years fruitpicking in the South Island and you’re home and hosed.” ...The president of the University Student’s Association... said very few students would deliberately enter into a state of bankruptcy because it had serious financial and lifestyle consequences... The Minister of Education... agreed that the number who acted on such advice was small and the idea was being explored to see if any legal loopholes existed. [Meanwhile, ‘the prospect of debt has already seen a fall in university enrolments this year.’ ● Last year, the ‘Auckland Central MP – an Alliance Party deputy leader – said “the student loan debt mountain” (which, at the time, was \$292.9m) would affect the community for years to come. “Many graduates will be paying 10c in the dollar above the tax rate for the rest of their lives. Furthermore, those with loans will not be able to get mortgages and will have low credit ratings.”’]

...FORMER students entering the workforce are finding it harder to get home loans from banks because of the size of debts incurred while at university or polytech. The... Banking Ombudsman... said she believed bank staff did not properly take into account the unique nature of student loans – repayments were income-based and did not need to be made if the debtor’s income fell below \$14,300 a year... However, at the current applicable interest rate of 8.2%, graduates with the average loan of \$21,831 would need to earn \$32,500 annually before the deductions even covered the interest being applied to the loan. If their income was below that, the total amount they owed would keep increasing.

...Appalled at huge debts being incurred by students, the... Federation of University Women... plans to lobby the Minister of Education to reduce the interest rate for loans... to 2.2[%], and wants... the promised system for student living allowances to be introduced without delay... [The] federation president... also said the maximum draw-down for loans should be \$400 a month, so students were not tempted to borrow more than they needed. “Once the first draw-down on the loan is made, further funds are available simply by making a phone call,”... [● A story] in last week’s Money section incorrectly said the average student loan debt was \$21,831. The correct figure is \$9100. The error was the result of a wrong interpretation put on data provided by the Ministry of Education.

...Threats of legal action by the Minister of Education... did nothing to dampen a protest march by about 600 Auckland University students yesterday... over... promised universal student allowances... The students had planned to burn effigies of [the minister and the Treasurer], but they were warned by police that they could be arrested for disorderly behaviour. Despite the warning, a few... threw eggs at the effigies. The vice-president of the students’ association... said the march showed how deeply students felt about being betrayed by the coalition Government... “They did promise us allowances and we were prepared to give them the benefit of the doubt, but now they are ratting on it... Without allowances students are starving; this is not melodrama, this is a reality that students have to face every day.”

...Up to 400 students are queuing daily at Christchurch Polytechnic for subsidised fruit, vegetables and bread packs. The students’ association says long delays for student loans are leaving students struggling for money... [By the way, student allowances will rise by 2.55[%] from April 1. From then, [they will range between \$97.40 for] students aged 16 to 24 living at home... to... \$146.13... [for] students 25 and over living away from home[(‘the full allowance is paid to students whose parents earn less than \$28,000 annually, then decreases incrementally as parental income rises’)]...

The Minister of Education... has conceded that the student allowance scheme is open to abuse by wealthy students. Universities say a loophole in the rules means wealthy new migrants are being paid allowances while poorer students miss out. They also say that rich N[Z]ers are using “legal, but morally offensive” income diversion schemes to meet allowance criteria. The University of Waikato’s loans and allowances manager... said any

money new migrants brought to N[Z] had to be ignored. It was counted as an asset, and students over 25 were only required to declare how much they expected to earn during the next university year. [The manager] said a large number of Asian migrants came to the university seeking \$118-a-week student allowance payments. "Then we see them race off in a sports car;..." The Education Department has decided to take on a second fulltime staff member to investigate student fraud complaints. Of a total of 900 complaints of suspected abuse and fraud of student loans and allowances over the past two years, 200 have involved recent migrant residents... However, [the minister] said it was "almost a moot point" because the... coalition Government... had pledged to reintroduce universal student allowances... before the end of its first term in office... [In the meantime,] fraudsters would still be pursued but it would be "very difficult" to change the [existing scheme to] test the assets of students and parents.

...More Auckland students are taking out loans to cover their study and they are borrowing larger amounts than in past years... [However, fewer students are taking tertiary courses, and some experts blame increased student fees... While a drop in the number of secondary school leavers in 1996 might account for... 843 fewer first-year student... numbers in 1997, the University Students' Association says "second-chance enrolments" are also falling... The chairman of the Vice-Chancellors' Committee... said... [the situation was disappointing. "But] I don't think you can be particularly surprised. If you put up the price of fees sharply demand will be affected by that." He said tertiary institutions had been forced to increase student fees in response to funding cuts from the government... Tertiary students... [currently] numbered 193,844... The release of the figures coincides with a survey by the [OECD] that shows N[Z] trailing other Western countries in tertiary participation... Since 1990 N[Z] has fallen from sixth to 12th place... for the participation rate of 22 to 25-year-olds [with 13.9%] of the population in that age bracket enrolled in tertiary study... [Our participation rate is] similar to Portugal and Switzerland, but ahead of Britain and Turkey. For the 18 to 21-year-old age group, which encompasses most school leavers in tertiary education, N[Z] ranked behind Canada, the U[S] and France in 1994 at 30.9%...

In 1989 – the year before the student loans scheme was introduced by NZ politicians (who, in many cases, had benefited from a free tertiary education system) and a book was published which declared that 'higher education, far from being freely available to all, is fast becoming a prerogative of the rich' – 1st-year tertiary students not only had their courses paid for (excluding miscellaneous costs of a few hundred dollars, including Student Association levies), depending on their age they also received a basic grant of between \$200 and \$264 a fortnight (in comparison, the adult unemployment benefit in 1989 was about \$160 per week) plus any additional allowances (e.g., accommodation). To enter a NZ university, a student had to have completed the 7th form – 5th year of high school – or scored below a total of 13 points in at least four 6th form subjects (where a grade 1 is the highest mark, followed by grade 2, 3, and so on through to a grade 9). Anyone over the age of 21 could 'apply for special entry'. Tertiary education in NZ 'officially became a user-pays system in August 1992'. Incidentally, [the lack of summer work at Auckland's Student Job Search [was a source of concern for] staff and students. The number of jobs available was down about 20[% to] 4635... while student enrolments increased... [to 13,608. Nationally, SJS] recorded the lowest number of... job offers in five years – 12,213 to go around nearly 45,000 students... The Auckland manager... said... "Students feel if they haven't got a job by [the time they finish their exams in November] they're not going to get one. They get very disheartened, and I don't blame them."

...[over the summer holidays] Wellington students... proved they will do anything to earn an average \$10 an hour... except, said one job search co-ordinator, jobs in massage parlours... although the budding lawyers, accountants, teachers and doctors... [could earn a day's pay in an hour at such places!] "We had a group dress up as vegetables for an outdoor fruit market promotion and a company offered a student \$20 to free a pigeon from a chimney. I wouldn't know what 'technoheads' are, but TVNZ wanted four of them for a television skit," she said... For thousands of N[Z] students waging war with the... bank balance... jobs such as these are their only means of saving to pay[for the] next year's tertiary fees... [In addition, during the year at] least 20 or 25 hours[of employment] a week are needed to pay for flats... and sometimes families...

Tertiary students should find it easier to get work during their[end-of-term] holidays later this month because job offers have increased at Auckland's S[JS]. The service has received 347 jobs... compared with 226 for the same period last year. But student enrolments are up 12[% to 7731. In related news, secondary school students]... are coming to school tired because of their part-time jobs... to save for tertiary education... says the principal of Western Springs College... The jobs worry her, "because of what it means to our kids and the pressures put on them." In newsletters sent home with students the school emphasised the importance of not letting part-time jobs get in the way of schooling... [A survey by the college] last year revealed 204 students, aged 13 to 16... held... part-time jobs... Most worked regularly in shops... catering, cleaning... and supermarkets... Only 33 said they had signed employment contracts... [but the average] hourly pay was \$7.50... The school's careers and transition teacher... said most... worked between five and 10 hours a week, mainly on Saturdays... Senior school staff, including its nurse, had met some of the main employers, such as supermarkets, to make them aware of the school's concerns... A member of the human resources team of the Woolworths supermarket chain... said store managers relied on students coming in part-time... [but added that] Woolworths had much experience in balancing the needs of the store with the students' needs for school, exam and social time... The president of the Auckland Secondary Schools Principals' Association... said student jobs had not been raised as a problem, though she was amazed at the hours worked... A standard finishing time at supermarkets seemed to be 11 pm for... week nights and weekends... But principals could not stop students working outside school hours, she said.

...secondary school pupils are signing up for student loans without checking with their parents or teachers first. In a Western Springs College newsletter, [its]principal... warns parents that students over 16 do not require a parent's signature on the application for student loans... [and] there is no "cooling off" period during which a student can change their mind as there is with a hire purchase agreement or insurance policy. She writes: "Once a student loan form has been filled out and signed, it passes quickly through the system..." Her caution comes after a school pupil signed up for a loan to do a course at a private training institute without telling anybody what she was doing first. When she told the school about the loan and enrolling for the course, staff tried to intervene on her behalf. But, they were told the enrolment was a private contract between it and the new student, and wasn't open for discussion with a third party. The school was unable to negotiate a lower course fee or reduced loan. "Nobody has done anything to break the law, but normally if you sign up for finance under the age of 18, you need a guarantor... Here, a pupil is taking a loan out like an adult but is only 16." The school contacted the teens' advocacy group, Youth Law Project, to see how widespread the problem is. Project staff say they can only intervene on a student's behalf when the student believes he or she has been wronged, and not because others believe they have done something ill-advised.

...Pound wise – debt foolish... YOU don't want your kids to be tightwads... [or] become... profligates, who seek to comfort [them]selves by shopping till... [they drop, and who] spend right up to the hilt of their income – no matter what that is. Then, when disaster occurs, they have to use their credit card and find they can't pay it off... But you don't want them to grow up to be spendthrifts either. So what can you do about it?... "Most p[arents] haven't got a clue. They open an account at the bank, or buy a piggy bank, and think they are teaching their kids to save. But they've got to teach them how to spend money wisely... If you can get your children to save rather than go into debt to buy things, you have won a major victory,"... After children have negotiated the monetary pitfalls of childhood, adolescence can bring a new set of problems. At tertiary level, the younger generation is not being encouraged to use money wisely, says[an] Act MP... She believes lump-sum student loans have a very bad effect on young people. "Other beneficiaries don't get lump-sum, three-monthly payments – so why should students?" she asks. "They get this money and go on a spending spree. Then they are broke... and can't pay the rent... When you are their age, living for here and now, this system encourages a sense of irresponsibility towards money." [Editor's note: A cartoon published during 1989 in the magazine NZ Listener showed a man who sees money on the ground. As he picks it up, more money falls from the sky. As the man hurries to gather the money he starts to transform into a rat and, because he keeps looking at the money instead of where he is going, he eventually falls into a hole in the ground. The dazed rat climbs out of the hole and slowly changes back into a man – then sees money on the ground]...

WIN THE RAT-RACE... *futureproof* [yourself by enrolling for a course at the]... MANUKAU INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY...

['The world is like a giant pie. The trick in life is learning how to get your share. To get a bigger slice of the pie phone Unitec' ...

'Advertisements enticing people to study at tertiary institutions have reached "saturation levels," two student associations said yesterday. Figures released to the unions, under the strict proviso that the source and institutions wouldn't be identified, showed advertising and marketing spending at six institutions had increased more than 58% during the past two years. "We seriously question whether public institutions should be allowed to spend student and public money in this way," said the University Students' Association president' (likewise, 'schools shouldn't be using their money on advertising to compete for pupils').

... 'THE multicultural, good-looking (but not too good-looking) students are always smiling or appearing earnestly intellectual as they gather in cafes clutching laptops or in corridors that echo with prestige and ivy-covered knowledge. They're enjoying themselves in a way you might aspire to if you were 18. They're all over the booklets, brochures and ads on which universities are spending millions of dollars to attract seventh formers making big life-choices about whether or where to continue studying. If you're considering a degree course you're supposed to want to join them. At their campus, not someone else's. Otago (whose advertising budget is at least \$1.1 million this year), for example, wants you to Get Over It (Cook Strait, perhaps?) while Massey (\$1.15m) wants you to know there's a whole universe available in the Manawatu. They're the latest examples of the increasingly aggressive competition for students that began in 1990 when the tertiary sector became a free market and every tertiary institution became financially dependent on how many students it enrolled. From October 1991 to October 1992 the total rate card advertising spend by universities, according to an advertising expenditure monitor, was a mere \$82,757. Of that, \$57,965 was by Massey alone. The latest figures available show the total has reached \$7 million for the first time. What's more, in an unprecedented move Southland Institute of Technology – which spends 2% of its total budget on advertising – will charge students absolutely no fees next year, marking the first time an institution has relied so heavily on price for its competitive advantage, ahead of branding exercises emphasising quality teaching and lifestyle which are favoured by other institutions. The battle for students is heating up.'

... *As universities and polytechs battle for students and funding, what checks are in place to measure quality – and allow students to make informed choices about their education?* MOST tertiary students... swapped study for paid work over the[summer] holidays to save for this year's course fees, but how can they be sure they... get value for money? [An 'information vacuum leaves the average 17-year-old unable to make informed decisions about where to spend thousands of dollars, and between three and four years, studying. The choices were once much easier when only the truly brainy with means and ambition went to university']... Concern has been exacerbated by complaints from universities and polytechs over funding cuts – and the possible impact on the number of teachers they can employ and how well resourced their libraries are. There is some debate over whether the British system of rating university departments on a scale of one to four should be adopted here so that students can see, for example, whether Auckland University's English department is considered better than Otago's. "Seventh formers have a right to know whether the history department of a certain university is poor, before they invest \$2500 in finding out," says the president of the national University Students' Association... By law, each of N[Z]'s 38 tertiary institutions has to produce a charter, following community consultation, for approval by the Minister of Education... Tertiary institutions here undertake their own internal reviews; must report to government on their objectives and success in reaching them and must have new courses accredited by bodies representing their relevant tertiary sector. Universities are also undergoing the first round of a new audit procedure run by the Academic Audit Unit of the Vice-Chancellors' Committee... [(the unit i)s considered a model for tertiary quality assurance around the world)]... The students' association also produces "alternative calendars" for five of the seven universities from surveys done of students' experience of courses. None, however, compare institutions as a whole or by department... The British university "league tables" – a name coined in reference to the English soccer league – can have enormous impact on the number of students enrolling at particular universities and, therefore, the amount of government funding the institution receives, its ability to attract top staff, and – in the case of separate ratings for research achievement – its acquisition of extra grants. A top research rating can add anything from \$200,000 to \$750,000 a year to the budget of a single department. But even [the student association's president] was sceptical about the value of trying to make such comparisons in a country the size of N[Z]. Furthermore... a former British academic who heads the Academic Audit Unit, said that the British rating system was flawed and gave a distorted picture of education quality at various universities. Departments were graded in relation only to the objectives they set for themselves, so a department with low objectives might get a high score, while a more ambitious one received a low mark. When it came to research assessments, a department needed to only nominate the work of its best researchers, to receive a high score even though the bulk of its staff was average or worse. [A member] of the Vice-Chancellors' Committee said a similar system tried in A[US] resulted in some outside organisations being sued by universities dissatisfied with their ratings. "A publisher, [who 'is looking to expand its operation into NZ'], got into trouble for putting out a book called *The Australian Good Guide to Universities*, which was not unlike the *Australian Food Guide*. When you take a superficial approach like that, you can affect the... viability... of universities..." ...The vice-chancellor of [Wellington's] Victoria University... said he was confident his institution's system could pick up inadequate courses, despite two appearing to have fallen through the cracks – one in environmental studies... and another in international relations for which nine students were each repaid almost \$400 by the university after complaining about the course's lack of resources. [He said: "It's always difficult to get things right 100% of the time. There's a danger that people start a new course, only to have it emerge later that it could have been better resourced. That sort of thing is happening more often now because of the funding restrictions." Universities are losing funding at the rate of 1.5% a year in line with the Government's intention that students pay 25% of the cost of tertiary education by 1999.

... *Tertiary education should not be[held] hostage to fickle market forces...* In a recently leaked paper to the Ministers of Education and Finance, officials in the Ministry of Education recommend a radically new system for funding tertiary education based on vouchers and full-cost fees. Under present arrangements public tertiary institutions receive Government funds in annually determined block grants. These grants are related to the number of full-time equivalent students attending the institution, with adjustments for the costs of different courses. The bulk fund covers both tuition and research costs. Students contribute about 25[%] of average course costs. Under the proposal the costs of tuition and research would be funded separately. The Government would no longer fund institutions directly for tuition. Instead, it would fund students through a voucher-type arrangement. Each student would receive a flat-rate entitlement, the equivalent to some five years of full-time study. Students would be able to draw on this entitlement to fund up to 75[%] of their course costs. The remaining 25[%] would have to come from private sources or the loan scheme. In effect, all students would have individual "learning accounts" with the Government... A further critical feature of the scheme is the suggestion that the "entitlements would be limited to a total amount of resource and that this could be reduced over time as the number of students participating increases." In other words, there would continue to be a budgetary constraint and if the demand for courses increased the funding for each student would fall... According to the report's authors, a voucher scheme of the kind proposed is likely to "promote further participation, improvements in responsiveness of providers to students, greater innovation and flexibility and more diversity." They assume that students know what is best and that competition promotes allocative and productive efficiency. Assessing the validity of such claims and assumptions poses serious problems... [because] there is no scheme of this kind anywhere in the world. There is nothing with which to evaluate the possible implications for participation rates, the structure of student demand, the range and quality of courses, the viability of various institutions and so on... One reasonably certain result of the proposed changes is that tertiary institutions would charge full fees for most, if not all, courses. Inevitably this would witness much greater variations in course fees: many expensive courses, such as medicine and engineering, could well exceed \$10,000 a year or more (depending on the level of research funding). Thus, unless scholarships were provided, students taking expensive courses would expend

most of their probable entitlement within two to three years, leaving many little option but to borrow significant sums in order to complete their courses. Potentially, this would have serious implications for equity. A voucher scheme would also create significant difficulties and uncertainties for tertiary institutions. In effect it would change the planning horizon from a year to a semester. Further, it would also make it much more difficult to cross-subsidise courses and, for instance, preserve courses which have high academic merit but, at any given time, relatively few students. Moreover, if student demand for particular courses varies substantially from year to year there would be major implications for staffing and research as well as the financial viability of certain institutions. To those who think a much fuller application of market forces will be good for the tertiary sector it is worth noting that many of the best universities in the world are significantly sheltered from the dictates of the market through large endowments. They are thus not at the mercy of rapid shifts in student demand. Such institutions regard this as being critical to their autonomy and the preservation of academic freedom. Since few N[Z] tertiary institutions have substantial financial reserves they will have little choice but to be slaves to the market.

...The Government's discussion paper on tertiary education was made public this week... While the paper held few surprises after an earlier draft was leaked last month, it provided more options on resourcing and managing tertiary institutions. However, controversial sections in the... draft were watered down in the official version, with the Government backing away from talk of voucher-funded students attending profit-driven privatised institutions... [But private training establishments still] have a lot to gain if [the] proposed changes to the tertiary system are adopted.

...Do the proposed tertiary education changes mean better value for money or are they a thinly disguised privatisation bid? ...The... N[Z] University Students' Association president... said... the report would lead to higher student fees – shutting out of study the very people the Government says it is trying to reach. He said the average student fee had increased more than 100[%] in the past five years and the paper completely failed to tackle the problem... But... the... Education Minister... disagrees... [He argues that] the present system... [provides] few incentives for institutions to be more efficient because when their costs increased they passed them on to the Government through seeking more money, and to students through higher fees... However... the... Association of University Staff is also skeptical of the discussion paper and says the earlier "half-baked" leaked paper has now "emerged from the oven covered in cream and icing." ...In contrast the Association of Polytechnics says it will probably support the main thrust of the paper... At present the Government spreads... money between all students regardless of age or how long they have been studying... Under[its] entitlement option... system those who had had the least tertiary education would receive the highest subsidy, and students who used up their entitlement would pay higher fees. The paper says it would encourage students to use their subsidy carefully... [– or, at least, discourage them from taking a lifetime to complete their degrees!] Student empowerment and institutional accountability are the important themes of the... review... But... [students can't do] whatever course they like. There will still be caps on course numbers and academic requirements to be met... The Ministry of Education has given N[Z]'s seven universities and 25 polytechnic institutions until December 15 to respond to its document... One thing shines through the paper. The Government wants more people to participate in tertiary education, but at the same cost as at present... A touch optimistically, the green paper envisions a time in the near future where support from alumni and corporations creates an endowment culture in N[Z], a country where the largest university... Auckland, remains unsure whether it can reach the relative modest endowment goal of \$20 million [for this year]. By comparison, in the U[S], last year's market value of Harvard University's endowment trust totalled nearly \$NZ12 billion, while the per student endowment at Princeton University came to more than \$1 million, according to the... *Chronicle of Higher Education*. [In 1990, higher education institutions in the US received \$US7.781 billion in gifts and grants. This was in addition to endowment earnings of \$3.144 billion.] Despite such sizeable gifts, grants and endowments, 'the average annual cost of attending a four-year private university in the US ate up 29.6% of median family income in 1970; by 1987, it took 40.4%'.]

...Competition for public funds does not produce better universities... [F]ar from improving university quality in N[Z], it will more likely create a situation where institutions in danger start chasing students by any means and so degrade quality. While competition can produce such high-powered, prestigious institutions as Harvard and Yale it can also make for the likes of California Union University, a diploma mill that grants its students a PhD for "life experience." In the middle to lower range of tertiary education in the U[S] and Britain, the need for student numbers has meant a steady erosion of academic standards over the past generation... Even more disturbing has been the proliferation of soft-option courses... The... Ministry of Education green paper... hopes students will make the right choices for quality by themselves, particularly if they are saddled with paying for a substantial proportion of their education. No doubt over the long run most students will choose the institutions with the best reputations. But in the short term of a university career, and given pressures of time and money, many will prefer easy courses in faddish subjects, trying to conclude their degree in the shortest time, thus accruing a lower student loan. In the free marketplace of fast-food outlets, the consumer is justifiably king. But outside the assessment of lecturing ability, the average 18-year-old is not qualified to judge the classics or mathematics department of a university... Who will accredit degrees, so that the education marketplace isn't flooded with expensive, worthless certifications? ...should the arbiter of university quality be the N[Z] Qualifications Authority? This would be a disaster. Despite its heavy cost to the taxpayer, the authority continues to experience difficulties in producing competent exams at the high school level... The authority took nearly three years, and thousands of education dollars, to decide that Aoraki Polytech cannot teach a degree course in naturopathy. For anyone who cares about the quality of higher education, it was a decision which should not have required even three seconds.

...[while a] group of 17 naturopathy students are planning legal action against Aoraki Polytechnic, Timaru, because the Qualifications Authority refused to grant degree status to their course[, an]... Auckland polytechnic has been forced to give back about \$139,000 to a class of students after they complained... [about] the quality of the equipment they were expected to use... and... that[the] course did not provide what was promised... 14 students doing a certificate in television and video operations each received a refund of their \$5000 course fee plus compensation of \$1000... 22 other members of the class were refunded half their course fee. The students also discovered that the year-long course – said to have been endorsed by TVNZ, TV3 and Sky Television – was not formally endorsed by any of the television channels. The deputy chief executive of... Unitec Institute of Technology... was reluctant to discuss the refunds because of [a] confidentiality agreement. He denied that students had complained about the endorsements and added that it was difficult for educational institutions to have state-of-the-art television and video equipment... Such deals could become more common as fee-paying students start to hold their educators to account over the quality of courses; several other tertiary institutions are involved in similar negotiations... News of the refund and compensation... comes just two weeks before a potentially ground-breaking legal hearing between Victoria University and four former students who filed a claim for \$345,000 against the Wellington university last November... [Elsewhere, 30] interior design students are in mediation with the Central Institute of Technology, Lower Hutt, over a diploma course that became a degree this year[, and a]... Lincoln University student has demanded a fees refund and compensation over delays in the marking of a degree.

...[Waikato University students may sue the university for \$20,000 if a planned academic staff strike goes ahead this morning. The president of the student union said yesterday that if students missed vital last-week lectures today it would constitute a breach of contract between the students and university under the Consumer Guarantees Act. The strike could affect up to 1000 students and the student union president said he had estimated the cost of a lecture at \$20 a student. The staff are striking over a 6% pay claim, and the university's non-negotiable 2% offer. General staff at the university are also holding a stopwork meeting at 8.30 am today, and may go on strike in support.]

...[Striking tutors have given Auckland Institute of Technology students a second chance at passing their exams. Students who failed mid-year assessments could now pass if they can prove they missed important lessons during their tutors' four days of industrial action in May. Dozens of students have applied for reassessment and the institute is writing to inform all students who have left since the exams. The student association president said one

business computing student got 77% in a paper with an 80% pass mark. The student claimed he had missed the last 3% because the strike meant he received only 28 hours of teaching instead of 32. The president did not know of any other polytechnic allowing course reassessment based on the strikes. The Qualifications Authority was unable to say last night whether secondary school students – who have lost several days of school during their teachers' strikes – would be able to use the same argument if they failed school certificate or bursary. The polytechnic staff dispute is still unresolved at AIT, where staff rejected an offer accepted by staff at 10 other polytechnics.' In international news, 'Mexico's President says he ordered a bloodless dawn raid which yesterday ended a nine-month strike at the National Autonomous University of Mexico campus in Mexico City, Latin America's biggest university. The speed of the raid, which met no resistance, stunned commentators who feared police intervention could lead to violence and loss of life.'

...An autopsy on a South Korean policeman killed during campus violence on Monday cast doubt on reports he was clubbed to death by students and supported student claims he was killed by a police vehicle... But... [the senior] prosecutor... said... "His death was still caused by the students."

...students ignite storm with 'water bomb' attack... Students holed up in a Melbourne building protesting against up-front tertiary fees are under investigation after they allegedly threw a bucket of urine over police... "At this stage... if we can establish which students... did it... they will be charged with assault,"... [a] police spokeswoman said... 80 students have been staging a sit-in for two weeks. But the National Union of Students denied that urine had been thrown on to police... [The union's] national education officer... said the students had released three water bottles as a "sign of their frustration" with the protest and restrictions placed by police on the goods and materials the student union support teams could send up to them. Police were trying to "censor" the protesters... despite the fact they had not been charged with trespass over the occupation... The incident came after... students earlier marched to Parliament House after a rally that drew strong support from unions... University staff in Melbourne also said they would stop work next week to support the protest. [Incidentally, 'a Melbourne University student who had his grades raised offered the university \$A2 million to set up a research centre, along with consultancies worth up to \$A250,000 for some of its professors, says the *Sydney Morning Herald*. The report said the issue was investigated by university authorities, who found there had been no improper conduct even though money for the research centre was accepted'...

'The AUSn PM said yesterday the coalition Government's intention to enable AUSn students to "buy" a place at university would create a more equitable education system. He told the NSW Liberal Party state convention that a free or heavily subsidised education system was unfair because it placed a greater burden on low income people than those on middle to high incomes. "What is the social justice of saying to a person on \$A30,000 a year whose children don't want to go to university that we are going to use your taxes to ensure people on \$A150,000 a year don't have to make any contribution to their children's university education?"'

'Thousands of angry tertiary students, staff and academics protested across AUS yesterday against an expected overhaul of higher education, including savage funding cuts. Police scuffled with students outside the NSW Liberal Party headquarters in Sydney, where up to 10,000 people rallied, before students burned an effigy of the Minister of Education. The president of the national student union said the Government had misjudged the mood of the AUSn community towards tertiary education and the expected cuts would spark larger and more frequent protests around the country. "I think there are two aspects that are very serious in higher education, the cutting back of funding despite the election promise and the imposition of higher fees for students which will deny equity and access in higher education. That is a very retrograde step for a nation as rich as ours."

...students are marching in the streets to protest against the decline of their universities... [and to request] a thorough overhaul of Germany's crumbling higher education... [system.] but the suggestion that they should pay for their education stops them in their tracks... "Germany has enough money for free education. It is outrageous that the state is failing to properly fund the universities." ...In Berlin, a city with three universities and 119,000 students, the nearly bankrupt local government has cut 300 million marks... from its higher education budget over the next five years... Humboldt University plans to cut 85 of its 450 professors by 2000... Impoverished by decades of spending cuts and a doubling of students since 1977, universities that served as turn-of-the-century models for many American colleges have become so desperate for cash that they have even encouraged their students to strike... "The students have legitimate reasons to protest," said the Education Minister... "They are lacking books, the lecture halls are overcrowded and there are too many students waiting in long lines to talk to their professors..." ...While many say German students enter universities with superior secondary-school educations, that advantage is quickly lost at the universities... "Anyone who can afford it now sends their children to universities abroad... The rest of us are stuck with... lower quality and far longer terms studying." German students were on average 28 when they completed their studies... compared to about 24 in the U[S], Britain and France... [In local news, t]hose who predict that universities will resist the green paper... because they are opposed to change, are wide of the mark... In the 1990s, N[Z] universities have adapted quickly to a different method of funding, a huge increase in students, a sharp cut in the funding per student, increased demands for accountability from students and taxpayers, changing competitive pressures on an international scale – and we have done it all at two-thirds of what it costs to produce an A[US]n graduate and with only half the general staff per student you would find in a British university.

...THE abysmal performance of Canterbury University students in a recent general knowledge test has brought predictable knee-jerk reactions about the deplorable state of our education system... I can appreciate confusion about the sun. I often doubt its existence. However, fallopian tubes are another matter. To regard them as a synonym for London's Underground is excusable with engineering or theological students, but far more serious at the Otago Medical School. And that is the nub of the matter. Higher education today has to be increasingly specialised... [or] compartmentalised... This has eroded the base of general knowledge... Grey-haired critics who write letters to the editor or call up talkback programmes all want our universities to teach better, and students to learn more. What they refuse to accept is that many students – possibly their own children – should not be there. Universities have become an absurd badge of prestige which was denied parents. Until it is realised that the ability to pay bears no relationship to the ability to learn we will continue to pay huge sums – both publicly and privately – turning out graduates who have the dubious distinction of putting a square hat on a square head.

...ABOUT one in 10 of the more than 20,000 university students being capped this month and next are estimated to be still looking for work. That is slightly better than the same time last year, when 12% of graduates were still looking for work. And even though the "still looking" figure has been dropping steadily since 1992, industry heads say too many graduates are destined to find jobs in the traditional professions of law and accountancy, rather than becoming the engineers and technologists needed to drive our export-led economy. It's a problem that will persist until society affords as much prestige to the wealth generators as it does to wealth servicers. NZ is one of the few OECD countries that produces more lawyers than engineers: last year our universities graduated 850 lawyers and 530 engineers. Denmark and Finland, for example, turn out five times as many engineers as lawyers... and Canada and AUS twice as many... If last year's figures are any guide, 20% of NZ's law graduates being capped this month and next are still looking for work. The figures don't mean that those still looking for work hadn't received work offers; just that they haven't yet committed themselves to a job... Of those who found work before capping last year, the biggest median salaries were in medicine and human biology (\$45,000)... Big winners in upper quartile graduate salaries were medicine (\$53,000) and commerce (\$50,000).

...A university degree generally earns a good salary but extra tertiary study can earn even more, according to the findings of a survey... [B]y the third year[of employment] honours graduates are earning a median base income of \$44,500 compared with just \$35,000 for bachelors graduates... Now in its fifth year, the survey produced other interesting data: ...Social science graduates did the best financially in this year's survey while law graduates earned the least... Fringe benefits have declined over the years because of the accent on simpler salary packages... [In related news,] Otago University... stopped some courses this year when staff were laid off... [Now h]undreds of jobs are set to go at the University of Auckland in a multi-million-dollar budget cut that could lead to courses being stopped and the student:staff ratio increased. About 2000 letters were sent to

academic and general staff yesterday asking them to consider voluntary redundancy... but... staff representatives said experienced and high-salaried employees could be made redundant if they chose not to take the offer. The president of the university's staff association... estimated that the university wanted to shed \$10 million in salary costs, meaning about 200 staff layoffs... [Last year, 'a \$7 million budget blowout (instead of an originally budgeted \$7m surplus) forced the university to freeze all new staff appointments and launch a cost-cutting drive in every department.'] Like all universities, it has been drawing cash reserves, turning a \$19 million surplus in 1992 into an expected \$3 million deficit for 1997. It is struggling to maintain or replace existing assets... In 1997 the University of Auckland's roll totalled 26,128, almost double the number enrolled 10 years ago... The Ministry of Education has written to the Vice-Chancellor expressing concern about the university's financial indicators... [and] asked whether the university is run as efficiently as it could be. [The Vice-Chancellor] says it is unfair to accuse the university of slackness, that budgets have been paid close attention to for some time. Nevertheless, the budget committee... wants the university to hire a project manager on assignment from "a major accounting or consulting firm" to drive the cuts through.

...Auckland University has billed students \$31,000 for costs run up during last year's registry occupation – including... \$24,572 for security guards hired by the university after the students stormed the registry building last September, protesting over fees[(the 'week-long occupation of the registry resulted in students having \$50 knocked off their fee increases')]. It also includes \$2627 for "spring cleaning," which the university says was needed after up to 150 students slept in the buildings' hallways for a week[and]... several hundreds of dollars for "laundry." Sheets were allegedly stolen from the sick bay and students were charged for a new set purchased at[an] upmarket department store... The student association president... said the university also alleged that \$50 was stolen from a locked office, watched over round-the-clock by the security guards. He said the bill was "over the top." Security guards were not necessary and a quick vacuum was all that was needed to clean up the building. A university spokesman... admitted that the registry was not left messy... after the occupation.

...Student[s] bunked down for a second night at the Auckland University registry last night after talks failed to resolve the row over fee increases. On Monday about 300 students stormed the locked registry building, smashing windows to gain access, in protest against a planned 18[%] fee rise...

University of Auckland students will have to wait until next month to find out whether... fees will rocket... Several tertiary institutions around the country charge different fees for courses that cost more, such as medicine, but Auckland University has until now chosen to stay with the flat fee system... The postponement has frustrated the Auckland University Students' Association, which claims students already have enough problems paying fees without the university giving only a couple of months' notice of fees for next year. The association vice-president... said it would not be fair for the university to introduce a differentiated fee system at such a late stage... He also accused the university of deferring the meeting until after the academic year ended so that students would not be around to protest against any increase. During a fees protest last week, 13 students... were arrested for trespassing when they invaded the university's registry building. But... the university's vice-chancellor... denied that the change was because of concern about protests. He said the extra time was needed for budgeting and to allow the Government to announce its funding allocation for next year.

...the Auckland University finance registry was [re]occupied yesterday during angry demonstrations. And student protesters are promising more fireworks as they fight Government plans to overhaul tertiary education. What started as a "loud but peaceful" march up Queen St departed from plan when student leaders speaking to the crowd from a truck were literally driven away by the police. The students' education vice-president... was spilled into the street when a sergeant took control of the truck and drove off with five students bouncing round on the back. One of them was [a]disabled student... who said he was on the truck fixing a flat tyre on his wheelchair. "I was scared, I really was... holding on for my life." The officer in charge... said the seizure was not part of the plan – "just good initiative on the part of the sergeant." "Inciting" students were disrupting traffic, he said. "People have a right to protest but we have a duty to make sure the rights of everyone else are looked after, too." At the university registry building, some of the 500 students tried to push the police line, chanting for[the] Vice-Chancellor... to front up on the issue of fee increases. The collective face of the police hardened when a woman officer fell from a retaining wall, injuring her knee and back... The march turned into an occupation when a breakaway group headed for the Old Arts Building. More than 50 protesters barricaded themselves inside on upper floors... [Reinforcements swelled police] numbers... and officers began forcing doors to reach the protesters. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor... said the damage to offices and the staff common room was shocking. Because of the mess made on records he could not guarantee staff or bills would be paid on time. Students would be sent a bill for the damage, he said... Police say the students caused 99[%] of the mess which was worsened slightly when police broke in[. By the way, 'a nationwide survey of 2300 tertiary students showed that 31% of university students and 30% of polytech students are not continuing next year because of education costs (in addition, 23% of university students and 29% of polytech students said fees had influenced their choice of course). Yesterday student groups said the results prove tuition fees are acting as a barrier to further study']...

Images of students having their knuckles hit with batons as they put their hands on a barrier while protesting in Parliament grounds... have done little to deter protesters... Student protests around the country have become increasingly angry and greater numbers are turning out... But visions of students challenging police barriers are doing little for their image or their cause, according to talkback listeners who flooded phone lines after Wednesday's Auckland protest. The protesters are routinely referred to as "radicals" and "rent-a-mob" but students say... those protesting were just "your average students" who "cared deeply" about what happened to tertiary education, not just for themselves but for future generations.

...Student protests are annual events. Spring arrives and students worry about next year's fees. Why are their minds not on exams which start next Thursday? ...Protesters find more fulfilment from living in tents than studying for exams. They are a minority because... the rest of us... studying law and commerce... can't wait to leave [university]... We are not apathetic because we don't protest; we just have more pressing matters to attend to. For us university is not for life; it is a mere pitstop on the way... Taxpayer funds spent on education amount to \$6.25 billion, according to the Ministry of Education. Common sense suggests that resources should be directed at those who are failing to improve... [A] mere \$300 million goes to early childhood education... Primary education gets \$1.35 billion and secondary receives \$1 billion. Tertiary students receive a total of \$1.78 billion and \$530 million in student loans. That means... students who get through the primary and secondary system unscathed receive over one-third of education spending. Why are we spending so much money on the most successful? Their rewards will naturally come. Society benefits more from a child reading who once could not. Society does not benefit from a student already able to read studying, for example, Russian history. If tertiary education was deemed that necessary it would be compulsory. Students should get their own house in order first. Student unions are the first to complain to ministers of education about accountability and honesty. Yet, where is their own? Unions are propped up by compulsory fees from every student... [– even though t]he Auckland University Students Association... is unable to attract quorums at general meetings; [and]protest marches draw 200 students from a university rol[l] of 25,000. The *N[Z] Herald* recently published school pass rates in the bursary examination. A staggering correlation between passing and wealth was evident. University students come from "rich" families[('new figures from 1994 to this year show that the number of students from poor schools going on to university has dropped by 23% – and just 8% of students enrolled in university this year were from schools ranked decile 1 to 3, the bottom level of the scale – while the number from wealthy areas has increased almost 25%; the trend also applied to polytechnics')]. Student allowances, which are means tested on parents' incomes, cost a mere \$300 million. Few students are entitled to them because their parents [have a combined income of] over \$50,000 a year. Census statistics show that... only 6897 people... earn over \$100,000 a year... a mere 34,479 people earn over \$50,000... 216,453 people earn between \$20,000 and \$50,000... [and] tertiary students are over-

represented in the upper income bracket... All the system achieves is the “rich” getting a golden pen in their hand [while middle] and lower income N[Z] struggles to pay tax from jobs not requiring a tertiary education, to pay for students in the higher rewarded jobs.

...A convicted fraudster tells students how to rip off allowances in the latest issue of the Auckland University student magazine *Craccum*... “Student Allowance Fraud (And How to Get Away With It),” suggests students falsify birth certificates, forge signatures and lie when filling in forms. The step-by-step guide, by “Ace Fraudster Mr S,” tells students how to claim a \$240-a-week living allowance by marrying a fictitious person... The... article recommends that students ask a colleague or pay someone to assume a false name and pretend to be their bride or groom... and, once the allowance is in the bank, head to the divorce courts. The university’s loans and allowances manager... admitted that students who followed the guide would succeed... The editor of *Craccum*... said students who took the advice were not criminals, because they needed the money to pay for food and rent. “Certainly I’ve got a conscience about it... I’m very saddened that we’ve got to go to these lengths. We’ve got to use illegal means, to survive.” Police have called the article “reckless” and warned that criminal charges could follow if readers acted on the advice.

...*Craccum* is unlikely to be charged... [A police] legal adviser... said it[']d be difficult to prove the article had encouraged students to act illegally. [In related news, ‘students at “rich” universities face fee rises as the Government moves to cut funding through a new charge on assets. The plan aims to cut state tuition subsidies at well-off facilities to boost the coffers of poorer institutions, including many polytechnics. The announcement is part of a shake-up of the tertiary education sector that student groups have labelled a full move towards privatisation. Universities last night said the new “capital charge” on assets was a serious threat in the face of already dwindling Government funding. Students would be forced to cop any loss in income through higher fees.’

...‘We already have “Bairds Mainfreight Primary School.” Will the University of Auckland become the “Lion Red University”? It could happen much sooner than many of us think if the executive director of the Business Roundtable has his way. In a lecture at the university he openly espoused the view that “NZ universities need to rid themselves of their dependence on Government funding.” Quite clearly the complete privatisation of universities in this country is firmly part of his thinking. Linking the idea of privatisation – although the word never passes his lips – with academic freedom, he argued that universities’ dependence on Government funding is always likely to make them run the risk of being forced to “bend to the Government will.” This seems to me to be a specious argument for the promotion of privatisation and the protection of academic freedom. Of course, it is not unknown for governments to put political pressure on institutions within their jurisdiction, but he needs to be reminded that governments are elected by us, the people, and if we don’t like what they are doing we kick them out. If we have to bend to anyone’s will, surely it is better that it be to a representative, elected Government than a non-elected, non-representative board of directors which might run a privatised university. But, in any case, university academics are not so easily cowed, as opposition to the Government’s green paper bears out. Companies that might run universities would merely be answerable to their shareholders. They might ignore the needs of the community – just as some privatised “public utilities” have. If universities have to genuflect to commerce, or if they have to modify their opinions to suit special interest groups, then academic freedom is doomed. But there is something more sinister than the loss of academic freedom that is under threat by the privatisation proponents, and that is the egalitarian nature of the university. Already there is a sense that things have altered significantly as a result of the high fees that students are now asked to pay. Let us have some private universities. After all, people should have options. But let them compete in the same way that private secondary and primary schools do, and leave our state-funded universities as they are.’ Incidentally, NZ] would be wise to heed Malaysian warnings about excessive costs faced by overseas postgraduate students to educate their children, education marketing officials say... [The] chief executive of N[Z] Education International, which markets education on a generic basis overseas, said international education was N[Z]’s most rapidly expanding export industry. Education industry earnings had risen from \$50 million in 1992 to \$300 million last year, [but – unlike]... many other countries[– NZ] was handicapping its drive for overseas postgraduates... Only 14[%] of overseas tertiary students in N[Z] were doing postgraduate studies, compared with 21[% in AUS] and about 50[%] in Britain and the US (where, ‘in 1991, 408,000 foreign students were enrolled in institutions of higher education, compared to 179,000 in 1976; the largest contingent, by region, was from Asia which accounted for 263,000’). An overseas student taking an Otago University science PhD pays \$16,000 a year in tuition fees and faces fees ranging from \$8000 to \$10,000 a child at Dunedin secondary schools, according to Ministry of Education officials. Many city primary schools charge about \$4500.

...5000... foreign fee-paying students... pumped \$30 million into secondary schools this year[, but the]... number of fee-paying overseas students to N[Z] may dwindle next year as the effects of the Asian stock market dive bite deep. The president of the Post Primary Teachers’ Association... said many schools relied on fee-paying overseas students to bring in money to meet running costs... [T]here were dangers in this reliance, but it was understandable when state funding was lacking... The principal of Lynfield College... said his 100 overseas students were paid up for the year and none had left... [but] some Asian students[at other schools are] already returning home... [However, the] head of Long Bay College... said many factors could combine next year to turn overseas pupils off N[Z] schools. AUS] and Canada were becoming competitors for overseas students and their governments were actively helping schools recruit with advertising campaigns... “I have often said the days of the golden egg with foreign students is over. Many countries... are doing what we are and we cannot assume [overseas students] will turn up on our doorstep.” ...The N[Z] Government, on the other hand, was next year doubling the tax of schools taking overseas students. Long Bay would pass that cost – a rise from \$450 to \$900 – on to the students.

...The decision by the immigration service to close its office in Seoul could cost NZ and the education industry in excess of \$70 million annually. In a market which was demonstrating accelerated growth... the immigration service appears to have made a decision without reference or consultation with those who would be affected, an industry spokesperson advised the... Chamber of Commerce... English language schools have also expressed concern that the immigration service appears to have acted unilaterally and made a decision based on incorrect information. The immigration service stated that one of the reasons for the closure was the drop in permanent migrant and student visa applications. Given that in 1994 the total number of students was 2047, in 1995 equalled 2702 and in 1996 was 3859, it would seem they have got it wrong.

...Economic turmoil in Asian countries is slashing intakes of students to Christchurch English language schools. The Southern English Schools director... urged the Government to allow study visas for students from China.

...English-language schools are[being] advised not to give up on South-east Asia in the face of a downturn in numbers of foreign fee-paying students from the area next year... [This year the region] accounted for just under half of the total \$300 million earnings for the English-language market here... [However, the] chief-executive officer... [of NZ] Education International... said... some schools would have to look to North and East Asia, where growth was most likely... The Minister of Immigration... said more than 100 schools and tertiary institutions would benefit from a more liberal Chinese student policy, which was restricted in 1992 to stop overstayers fleeing political instability in China. He said China’s subsequent economic growth and stable political climate had led to[a] trial policy change... [which meant 400] Chinese students will be allowed in...

[‘The teaching of foreign students is on track to becoming a billion-dollar industry. Already, fees from foreign students add up to NZ’s 8th-largest export earner, bringing in \$500 million a year. This year the private and public education sectors set up the NZ Education Trust to promote education as an export industry. Its chief executive said things were looking up, particularly in the Chinese market. Earnings for English-language schools and secondary and tertiary institutions are expected to double in the next 5 to 6 years. He said education could be in the top 2 to 3 industries within 10 years. Tomorrow’s Schools legislation in 1989 allowed foreign fee-paying students in schools (it also allowed the Ministry of Education to charge \$900 a student because the schools are running a business from Government buildings – in addition, the Government collects GST), bringing NZ into line with trends in AUS and the

US. Most secondary schools have at least a handful of fee-paying students, but some, like Piopio College in the King Country, often hosted Asian school groups for weeks at a time and billeted them out with local families.'

...Asian students are spending millions of dollars in NZ to end up lonely, depressed and in some cases dead, disturbing research shows. A Taiwanese migrant interviewed 144 foreign students and found dissolute lifestyles, neglect from homestay supervisors (interaction between students and their hosts was limited), gambling, fat bank accounts, fast cars and alleged extortion. She cited the case of 18-year-old Chinese student Zhao Yun-fei, who spent \$75,000 during his first 14 months in NZ before dying in a car crash, as a tragic example of the NZ experience gone wrong. "Many Asian students are irresponsible and do not use freedom wisely." The students, with no parental control and big spending power, developed bad habits in a short time and became an extravagant sub-culture, she said. "The behaviour of these adolescents then becomes quite unacceptable to the community, schools and their host families."

...A big increase in the number of fee-paying international students at NZ institutions in the past two years has brought with it more complaints. Key issues prompting complaints were: ■ Poor quality of or lack of orientation programmes; ■ Misleading representation by agents; ■ Inadequate internal dispute resolution processes; ■ Inadequate contract documentation; ■ Inappropriate class level placement of students; ■ Failure to follow the Education (Stand-down, Suspension, Exclusion and Expulsion) Rules regarding international students.' In related news,] **Auckland University students face a \$420 fee rise next year after a retracting to set tuition costs last night which degenerated into high farce. A student representative... even mistakenly voted for the 17[%] rise, then retracted his vote, saying he did not know what he was voting for. Meanwhile, the university council rejected every fee proposal put before it, while an official miscounted the show of hands, prompting accusations of procedural misconduct and manipulation.**

...University of Auckland students opening their cheque-books next February to pay for another year of study will be meeting the largest overall percentage increase in university fees in the country. At close to 17[%], the rise outstrips the next-closest increase – 13.3[%], to \$2200 for an arts or commerce degree at Otago University... The latest Auckland rise makes a mockery of... [the finance committee chairman's] assurance in 1996 that the 15.8[%] increase for 1997 would mean little or no increase in 1998. In absolute dollar terms, Auckland's fees will increase... to \$2884 a year. By contrast students at Victoria University will pay only \$2586 for the year – a 3.9[%] rise... Why is Auckland... more expensive than Wellington and increasing at a greater rate? [The]Deputy Vice-Chancellor... says salary margins paid to staff to cover the extra expense of living in Auckland and the extent of research done at Auckland, particularly in the medical school, contribute to... higher costs... Since 1992 the University of Auckland's costs have risen by 54[%]... The Government can rightly say it has increased the University of Auckland's funding by 34[%] since 1992... to \$155 million annually. [However, the] university argues that the amount for each student has decreased in that time. In 1997 it received \$7783 a head, next year that drops to \$7560. What is more, Government funding does not make provision for inflation... [By the way, after leaving university s]ome graduates leave the country to avoid... student loan... repayments because... Inland Revenue... has no means of enforcing collection overseas.

...Some N[Z] graduates living overseas are terrified of returning home because of outstanding debts from their student loans, according to a straw poll by a Christchurch company... "I don't even know if I want to come home to visit," said one honours graduate. "Will I be held at the airport?"

...Dodging the debt: why students flee... [S]he is too scared to come back to N[Z] to visit her parents because she fears being detained at the airport for overdue student loan repayments. She is one of 29,083 debtors who have defaulted on their repayments to the Student Loan Scheme, contributing to an overdue amount of more than \$16 million... [A]n additional \$2.5 million has been written off for students who have died or are bankrupt... At April 30, 227,000 debtors owed \$2.02 billion... Of those, 2452 owed more than \$35,000 each... In... courses, such as dentistry and medicine, loans are peaking at more than \$70,000... [S]tudent loans have become millstones around the necks of many young university graduates... Student loan debtors who stay and work in N[Z] are required to give the tax code G-Ed to any employer, which allows the Inland Revenue to take 10c in every dollar earned over \$14,300 as repayments... Debtors... who travel or move away from N[Z] for more than 325 days in a 12-month period are deemed to be non-residents [but are still] required to make repayments... Overdue payments both at home and abroad have penalty interest of 2[%] added, with 2[%] being added for every month past the due date. If the debtor dodges repayments for two years he or she may have to pay off his or her whole balance immediately. Interest begins accruing on accounts from the first drawdown of money, which is done through an 0800 phone line and direct credited into the borrower's bank account... However, for young Kiwis on their Big OE[(overseas experience)] in London, student loans waiting back home have become a bit of a resident joke. Graduates living and working in London say that while loans are a topic of conversation among expats, the majority just try to forget they exist. Others say that they know their debts are waiting for them when they return and it makes the option of coming home less appealing... People are generally overseas with the sole purpose of travelling... Work as nannies and in pubs does not pay enough to send money home for loans... The president of the N[Z] Students' Association... said it was sad that graduates were "hiding out" overseas to get away from their debt. He said the association maintained that students should not have to mortgage their futures for tertiary education which would benefit the whole of society. N[Z] needed to produce its own doctors, dentists... and accountants because otherwise those jobs would have to be filled by immigrants. Detractors of the scheme have voiced concerns about the ease with which students can access large amounts of money, the repayment days seeming a long way off. Students can draw down funds to cover fees – \$1000 in course related costs and \$150 in living costs for every week the course runs. After three years the average bachelor of arts degree student could expect an end debt of \$26,739 if the full... entitlement was drawn down each year... Since the scheme started more than six years ago it has cost the Government more than \$72 million in administration costs... Students also pay a \$50 fee each year towards the scheme's administration costs. [Editor's note: 'There is no limit to the size of student loans that retired people can obtain. Most are unable to repay their loans, so their student debts will be wiped when they die.']

...Dear Privacy Commissioner, your department owes us \$3.016 trillion in overdue student loan payments. Yours sincerely, the taxman. PS: Please note the late payment penalty of \$143 million and the interest of \$1.44 million accruing daily. That was the Inland Revenue [Department]bill sent to[the] commissioner... for student loan payments owed by commission staff. [The commissioner] said that "using my lightning reflexes and my quick calculating powers, I soon worked it out. There was a mistake." The... [IRD] said it could not comment on specific cases but occasionally "keying errors" occurred. [● Last year, 'an IRD computer glitch left 15,000 present and former students unable to get loan statements. The borrowers were affected by problems in a May changeover to a new format for statements. The department had stopped sending out old-style statements the previous September and some students went without a proper account of their current debt for almost a year.']

...I'd forgotten about my student loan. Pretended it didn't exist. For the two years I've been working, I've shielded myself from the true cost of the three years at AIT that got me a job. My wage slip shows how much a week I'm paying back – money I've never seen, so don't miss. A sort of education tax, I told myself, denying the horror that I'm not even keeping pace with the interest. But my head's been jerked from the sand by the news that [the IRD] is now in on what students have known for years – that loan statements don't actually reveal what you owe. The taxman has listened to a student who couldn't decipher her loan bill, and from now on a new widened format (for all the zeros) will show how much of the GDP I am responsible for. This is a good thing. It's about time I acknowledged I'm part of Generation Debt, and also accepted that the monster hiding in my finances is going to affect what jobs I take, when and who I marry, my chances of ever owning property, or travelling. And about time, too, that the country's biggest loan shark, the Government, reversed its position on charging students a killer 7 to 9[%] from the time they borrow, thus destroying any desire, or chance, they have to chip away at the debt mountain... The biggest scam is not people fraudulently obtaining student loans, but that young people are forced to shackle themselves to debts the size of their parents' mortgages with nothing to show for it but a job if they're lucky. No longer middle class, I'm part of the diddled class. I took on a huge debt to land myself a job in an industry you don't go into

for the money[– journalism]. The money lenders need a kick in the butt to force them from the Beehive and into schools to explain a loan scheme that will leave us in debt till we're grandmothers and grandfathers... [Incidentally, an economist] argued in a recent column that childcare should be fully tax-deductible and couples should be able to split the principal (male) wage between earner and non-earner – allowing each to benefit from lower marginal tax rates, and permitting some recognition of women's unpaid work. While such suggestions have some superficial appeal[, they] would benefit high earners more than low earners... [With childcare, the] higher your marginal tax rate, the greater the tax deductibility. So the median woman income earner – at \$369 a week – who spends say \$120 a week on childcare will pay \$29.64 less a week in tax while a woman graduate earning \$806 (still \$122 less a week than her male counterpart) will be able to deduct \$40.44 a week from her tax... The same goes for splitting the family wage... Split... the median male wage of \$423 a week... between the man and the non-earning woman and the total tax benefit to the family is \$16.69. Yet the man earning \$60,000 a year who splits his pay packet with his wife will save the family \$61.28 a week in tax. The more you earn, the more you benefit. What these figures reveal is the gross discrepancy between working women's wages and those of working men. Tax fiddles only serve to accentuate wealth disparity... I doubt many would agree that a system that systematically undervalues women's paid work is a fair one. With average earnings 27[%] less than men, women's wages have declined by 5[%] relative to men's since free wage bargaining was given cult status under the Employment Contracts Act... The productivity of women is not matched by the wages women earn. The reason? Gender-blind wage bargaining laws do not acknowledge the different working patterns of women and the way the differences affect wage bargaining itself. An exception to gender-blind employment laws is the 1972 Equal Pay Act. Looking back, it seems extraordinary that until 1972 employers were able to pay women less than men for the same work. - 1997

An Auckland headmaster drove 10 miles to his burning school last year, but when he claimed tax deductions for it he was turned down by the I[RD]. This week the Minister of Finance... said teachers who went back to school after hours could not claim their expenses as tax deductible, unless they were going to inter-school activities, seminars or courses. - 1972

...revenues for public finance in the earliest days of NZ settlement by Europeans came mainly from customs duties and property levies. In the mid-1870s about 70% of public revenue came through customs duties, and the percentage only declined in the following decade when revenues from public railways... the Post Office and stamp duties... became as important. Property tax was replaced by land and income taxes in 1891, to boost revenue for financing the... social welfare programme. By the turn of the century land and income taxes comprised only 7% of total public revenue, and by the beginning of W[W1], only 11%... Taxation sources expanded from the 1930s to keep public revenues high enough to match the demands placed on funds for social welfare services. There has been a long period, too, during which the graduated income tax system, and such devices as the gift and estate duty, have been used to gain a redistribution of income among N[Z]ers. From the mid-1970s through to the early 1980s, about 75% of public revenue came from income tax alone. In the early 1980s the government began to shift from direct to indirect taxation... [T]he breadth of taxation has increased markedly with public revenue now coming from a wide variety of sources such as beer duty, petrol duty, road taxes, fees from licensed industries, and sales taxes on many goods and services at the retail level.

The total tax we collected in the year ended 30 June 1995 was approximately \$24.3 billion; of which \$19.8 billion was income tax.

Last year 1.2 million N[Z] taxpayers, on salaries and wages, did not file income tax returns by the required June 7. In that year just 906 taxpayers were prosecuted... [Y]esterday, a senior I[RD] official... said: "I don't want to give the taxpayers of N[Z] cause to celebrate..." ...failure to file a tax return would not automatically result in a prosecution; only if it ran into multiple years. Consideration was also given to the background facts and reasons the return might not have been filed... [T]he department had to be selective about the cases it prosecuted. "Basically we do not wish to incur the cost and the effort of taking taxpayers to court to have them... [receive] a nominal fine." So the procedure for late filing, according to [the official], is: "There are a series of letters sent out, ranging from gentle reminders through to prosecution action." [The official] was asked, if it turned out that a company with significant income tax payable did not file a return, was that not a deliberate act of evading the department. He replied: "How do you mean evading?..." But [he] finished by saying that if "we have absolute knowledge of the process of what was going on with a single company" and tax returns were not filed, then he would accept that that was a deliberate act of evading the department.

...Now taxpayers may be fined if errors occur in their tax returns through lack of responsible care. For example, a fast-growing small business could see its inadequate or poorly supervised accounting systems lead to omissions of income or overstated deductions. Because even arithmetic errors come under I[RD] scrutiny, employers will have to ensure staff are competent and skill levels adequate. Failure to take reasonable care could result in penalties of 20% of the resulting tax error. There is also the concept of "gross carelessness" in new legislation, and will attract penalties of 40%... [A]n example of gross carelessness could be where an employee responsible for administering expenditure items had no training or written guidelines on how to treat them for tax purposes. Other areas of penalties under the new law are: • *Unacceptable interpretations*: This occurs where taxpayers make arguments to which no court would give serious consideration. This means that taxpayers must ensure they have reasonable arguments when making a claim. Failure to do so could mean a penalty of 20% of the tax error imposed. • *Abusive tax positions*: This applies where a taxpayer has already applied an "unacceptable interpretation" to a tax law, and then compounds the situation by making specific arrangements where their dominant purpose is tax avoidance. The penalty for this behaviour [is] 100% of the tax shortfall. • *Evasion*: The definition of tax evasion has not changed under the new law, and it remains the most serious offence. But the penalties have been increased to 150% of the amount involved. The person convicted of evading or attempting to evade tax is liable to a fine of up to \$50,000, or five years imprisonment, or both. • *Obstruction*: Taxpayers who deliberately obstruct IRD inquiries can have any of the above penalties increased by 25%. • *Disputes procedures*: These will include opportunities for taxpayers in dispute with [the IRD] to opt for a less expensive procedure, but which has no right of appeal. Although the act will first apply to the 1997/98 income year, the long lead time is designed to allow taxpayers to get up to speed on the new laws. Failure to act now could mean bigger tax bills down the track, particularly for businesspeople... - 1996

New tax laws imposing heavy penalties for mistakes in tax returns could force some small firms out of business, [an]... accountancy firm... says... [The IRD] was taking a "hard-nosed" approach, but the department claimed it was acting fairly and reasonably.

...The [IRD] is imposing huge penalties on people who have made simple mistakes in their tax returns, says[a] Lower Hutt accountant... He knew of a company being fined about \$10,000 for a GST claim on the purchase of a property worth about \$450,000 because the transaction took place a few days later than scheduled. The company was given no opportunity to correct its mistake... He also said the IRD was applying the rules differently for large companies than for smaller taxpayers... An IRD officer had said that if, for example, they found a company such as [BIL] had incorrectly claimed the construction of a new carport down to repairs and maintenance, they might decide that was not... [worth worrying about]. "...This is because if they pinprick a big company all hell would break loose," [suggested the accountant]...

The IRD] argues that the compliance and penalty provisions now coming into effect... haven't significantly impacted on wage and salary earners... But step out of line with the new rules, and IRD is promising a tough time. [The IRD] general manager of operations... said: "If you cheat, the likelihood now is that you will be caught, and if you are you will be penalised... There are no 'ifs or buts' – the new rules make that very clear."

Even first time tax evaders can now be jailed for up to five years. For wage and salary earners, tax-speak has often been pretty difficult to follow. The bad news is that the new laws introduce some new words and phrases to that exotic language – but hopefully they are not as foreign to the lay person's ear as some of a tax experts' vocabulary. The new tax laws, for example, are said to be about "voluntary compliance". By that they mean it's up to taxpayers to find out what's what under [the] new regime, and to make sure they comply with it. Ignorance of the law has never been a legitimate excuse for breaking the law, but one gets the impression that now, more than ever before, taxpayers will not so easily get away with the cry, "but I didn't know that". Another new catch cry is that of "reasonable care". The new laws set out penalties for underpaid and unpaid tax, and the premise is that all taxpayers are expected to take reasonable care in attending to their tax affairs. Gone are the days of filing in your return and hoping for the best. If you don't take reasonable care, then you may get the book thrown at you... This harder stance has been prompted by the large amounts of tax arrears owing in the Auckland region, with some \$230 million overdue in taxes at December 31, 1996.

...The national manager of the IRD's BusinessDirect division... said that by the end of [last month] exactly 100 shortfall penalties (78 of them for lack of reasonable care) had been issued, worth a total of \$107,000. About as many again are in the dispute resolution pipeline. "But in the same period over 1000 other adjustments had been made where we didn't apply shortfall penalties. So we aren't applying penalties willy-nilly," [he said in response to claims made by] two tax consultants... [in] last week's *Sunday Star-Times*... [that] the IRD had hard-nosed attitudes when dealing with taxpayers with whom they were in dispute. They said new departmental attitudes were in danger of resulting in a taxpayer and tax adviser backlash. But [the IRD manager said that]... taxpayers... who were careful and complied with the law had nothing to fear.

...[during question time in Parliament yesterday, an Act MP asked the Minister of Revenue whether he would be concerned about a claim that one IRD officer was responsible for five taxpayers killing themselves, and had bragged about it. "I would be concerned at any such assertion," the minister replied, "but I suggest the fact that such an allegation is made in no way makes it credible." The suicide allegations against the IRD were the latest in a catalogue of accounts which damn the department for the way it recovers tax debt.' They include the account of an Auckland couple who claim that 'when the IRD prosecutes, you are guilty until proven innocent.'

...a \$550,000 payout to an Auckland couple has ended a 14-year dispute with the IRD but critics say the officials responsible have escaped blame too easily. The Revenue Minister yesterday labelled the payout a full and final settlement of the concerns raised by the couple over a battle with the IRD that cost them their business. The compensation deal covers just over half the amount the couple estimated they lost as a result of the dispute, which started in the mid-1980s. They ran an engineering business employing up to 400 people when their dispute started with the IRD over the ACC categorisation of their workers. They borrowed and sold assets to pay \$100,000 to the IRD. In 1993, the IRD sent a letter threatening to wind up the company, based on the couple's failure to appeal against a letter sent to them in 1990. However, the 1990 letter gave no indication of any right of appeal. The IRD official involved in the case has since died. The minister said the compensation deal did not set a precedent and other cases between taxpayers and the IRD would be considered on their merits.'

...the 'Acting Inland Revenue Commissioner can be forgiven for feeling under duress before Parliament's finance and expenditure committee on Wednesday, when he unreservedly apologised for the tax department's hounding of an Auckland couple. The apology and promise of compensation came after 14 years of wrangling over a wrongly based tax bill, which cost the couple their engineering business, their home and hundreds of thousands of dollars. As the Great Barrier Island couple struggled to keep their composure, the acting commissioner displayed a humility rarely showed by post-Rogernomics public servants. For others who have fallen foul of the IRD, and for thousands who have been frustrated dealing with it, the admission of error was something of a watershed. Until the acting commissioner's star turn, the most visible effort to sway the public's opinion that the IRD's "never apologise" approach towards taxpayers is heavy-handed and dictatorial had been a soapy television ad, featuring downtrodden Bob from the IRD. The campaign, putting a human face on an increasingly invisible species, is credited with a slight shift in people's attitudes. However, the IRD's increased reliance on call centres has not helped perceptions that tax officers are faceless machines with whom arguing is pointless, and publicity that the shedding of 1000 jobs during a \$46 million restructuring had failed to produce any savings exposed the department to further contempt. The *Weekend Herald* fielded a steady stream of taxpayers' complaints yesterday after publicity over the apology. Cases ranged from 10-year-old disputes to two-year wrangles over ACC levies. Many said they had spent thousands battling the department in court. Officers were described as rude, threatening, dismissive, corrupt and uncaring. Some complainants said they hated the IRD so much they could not bear to watch the advertisements on the television. "I hate the IRD and if I met Bob in the street I would give him a good swift kick where it hurts," said one woman caught up in a five-year-old tax dispute with the IRD.'

...the gas] retailer Enerco has won a... \$4.4 million... five year old battle with the I[RD] over the tax treatment of its rehabilitation of gas lines...

The [IRD] has decided to go ahead with an appeal to the Privy Council in a test case over whether inducements to enter into leases were taxable. The law lords are expected to hear the case next May... [T]he Court of Appeal ruled that a \$5 million inducement paid to accounting firm Coopers and Lybrand in 1991 when it moved into... [a new office] tower in Albert St was not taxable income... Coopers and Lybrand argued the sum was a capital item, a negative premium paid in return for their acceptance of the burden of a non-assignable 12-year lease. It could be seen as compensation for leaving their previous premises under a penalty and making a loss on assets associated with those premises... The Court of Appeal overturned the decision of... the High Court, [which] had concluded the \$5 million payment... was essentially a form of rent subsidy and, as such, was assessable income... Such inducements were for a time commonplace in a depressed commercial property market and the IRD has more than 100 similar cases pending.

...[yesterday in the Auckland District Court a former IRD official faced 102 charges of corruptly selling information she gathered while working for the department. The 29-year-old is one of two former employees of the IRD's Manukau office to appear on corruption charges this year. Also in court yesterday were two repossessing agents, a finance company employee and an unemployed man who face a total of 121 counts of corruptly disclosing official information for advantage or pecuniary gain.' By the way, the IRD] is prosecuting at least nine of its own staff for not filing tax returns. An audit found that they, and other staff, had failed to file their annual returns by June 7 last year. A spokesman said the staff had been warned. The public had to know the same rules applied to I[RD] staff.

...The Department of Labour has been ordered to satisfy its tax obligations "to the letter" after paying more than \$2300 in penalties for late tax returns. Answering a written parliamentary question, the Minister of Labour... said monitoring procedures to ensure[future] compliance were under review.

...Businesses will be saved more than \$20 million a year in compliance costs by moving the due date for terminal tax back two months, says the Minister of Revenue. At present a taxpayer with a March 31, 1997, balance date has to make the terminal tax payment by February 7 next year, but does not have to file a return until March 31 next year. "So some taxpayers have to estimate what their terminal tax liability will be... because they haven't completed their return yet, then calculate it exactly for the return due on March 31,"... By moving the due date to April 7, the costs of that double handling would be eliminated. The use-of-money rules still apply, however. The taxpayer may not have to part with the final payment until two months later, but would have to pay the I[RD] two extra months' interest for the privilege. The change applies only to the 270,000 or so taxpayers who use the services of a tax agent... For other taxpayers, returns are still due on July 7 and final tax payments the following February 7.

...[IRD] policy is making tax dodgers out of parents and businesses who download computer games and other software from the Internet. A recent *Consumer* magazine article on shopping on the Internet included the question: "I bought computer games off the Net for my kids and downloaded them on to my PC. Do I have to pay tax?" The magazine said that if software was bought from an overseas trader, 10 to 15[%] of its

value was due as non-residents withholding tax. [A] tax director... in Auckland, said buying software off the Internet could technically be a very expensive purchase because, since April 1 this year, if taxpayers knowingly failed to send the required withholding tax to the IRD, they could be held to be guilty of tax evasion and subject to a shortfall penalty of 150[%] of the tax that should have been withheld. The problem arises because the IRD continues to maintain that all payments for the use of software under licence are to be taxed as a royalty and are subject to non-resident withholding tax when payment is to a company or individual based outside N[Z]. Most software purchased through the Internet is from companies based in the U[S]. While effectively making tax cheats out of families and businessmen who download software from the Internet, the regulation is virtually unworkable, [the tax director said. The]... IRD requirement on withholding tax for software was virtually impossible to police, and N[Z] should bring its policy into line with international practice... [M]ost OECD countries regarded the purchase of software as a payment for the purchase of a product and not as a royalty payment, as N[Z] did. Normally, royalties were paid for the right to commercially use or reproduce a creative work like a photograph, a book, a magazine article, an artwork, a piece of music, or a sports logo. However... an item of software was essentially a copy-righted product like a book or a compact disc. In most OECD countries – including N[Z] – anybody purchasing a book or CD on the Internet was not required to pay a royalty. Only when the right was granted to actually reproduce a computer game or make the software under licence in N[Z] should a company or an individual be required to treat its payment as royalty... [T]o help buyers work out what is and is not taxable... the I[RD] was developing guidelines that would assist taxpayers to “properly characterise the true nature of their software purchase.”

...BUCKETS of tax dollars destined for A[US]n state and federal coffers were likely to be lost to cyberspace unless action was taken to stop the Internet becoming a refuge for tax dodgers, [the]Tax Commissioner... warned... when launching an A[US]n Tax Office (ATO) draft report on tax and the Internet... [The commissioner] said major revenue losses linked to the Internet were not expected for the next two years... [but] there was plenty of scope for horror stories... He said state gambling revenue, worth \$[A]3.3 billion in 1995-96, was at risk by competition from Internet-based gambling sites. And most existing tax bases were also vulnerable... However[, he]... refused to buy into the goods and services tax... debate, insisting the report did not analyse the impact of the Internet on individual taxes. But he said some countries, which unlike A[US] (with the exception of the bed tax), taxed services, were concerned about the impact on this revenue. [He] stressed it was important for the nation's tax base for local firms to embrace the Web. “If they don't, what we'll find is as commerce increases, people will be acquiring their goods and services from overseas,”... But he confirmed the ATO would examine scrapping the tax exemption on tax advantaged computer programs... saying such software was increasingly becoming an integral component of many goods. The tax office would also speak to software suppliers about the merits of building in ways to check electronic paper trails... [T]he ATO was reluctant to impose a “bit tax” on data flows... [Incidentally, c]iting the... Commonwealth Bank of A[US]’s \$A650 million share buyback plan... that provides both a capital loss and a tax-paid dividend to shareholders[, yesterday the ATO]... Assistant Commissioner... said: “To the extent they are getting two tax benefits out of one arrangement, the outcome is an inappropriate one.” ...the tax authority would “closely scrutinize” the transaction and may counter the buyback if it is found to be against tax law.

...[the] shifting sands of tax legislation have had the unforeseen effect six years later of depriving 10,000... N[Z]... superannuation-scheme members of becoming shareholders in AMP's forthcoming demutualisation... [They] will miss out on shares worth more than \$1000 each. This is because their funds were moved out of the society in 1991 to take advantage of more favourable tax treatment for non-life-company superannuation schemes. The move was made under a change to the tax law in 1990, specifically so that superannuation savings could be shifted from direct life-office control. A spokesman for AMP... said... “The unfortunate thing[for our customers] is that at the time nobody saw demutualisation happening down the line.” [The spokesman] said making a special case for the[affected] members would open the way for people in non-qualifying global operations to argue for entitlements... [In related news, f]illing out governmental demands for statistical, tax and ACC information involves a real cost to the economy. Doctors complain of hours of patient time wasted filling out ACC forms and responding to crown health enterprise demands for details, while businesses and other non-government organisations say they are getting buried in a swathe of compliance costs. One estimate puts the cost to business of tax compliance at double the I[RD]’s expenditure. The Retail and Wholesale Merchants Association says a survey two years ago found that respondents made up to 52 PAYE[(employee income tax)] returns each year, spending up to three hours on each one. GST returns took between 30 minutes and one and a half hours, with similar times for ACC returns.

...Over the past few months I have been following an interesting series of articles on the costs that the tax system imposes on the nation as a whole. The... main stimulus for these articles has come from a paper... [called] Taxation and Economic Growth in N[Z], that was commissioned by [the IRD]. It examines the extent to which the tax system has reduced N[Z]’s growth prospects. That is, it seeks to estimate the “deadweight costs” – the extra cost to the economy of raising tax revenue. Its conclusions were startling: the cost of every extra dollar in tax, or alternately every dollar of public spending in 1994, was really \$2.70... According to [the professor who wrote the paper], high tax rates lead to increasing deadweight costs and our country's tax rates have cost every N[Z]er almost \$6700 a year since the end of... W[W2]. Not surprisingly, the paper has intrigued politicians as well as journalists. As a minister responsible for both taxation and controlling Government spending, I have particular interest. The question is: are the professor's conclusions correct? Other researchers have reached far different conclusions. It is worth, therefore, understanding the nature of the problem. The key purpose of the tax system is to raise the revenue required by the Government for its economic and social objectives... Unfortunately, any tax system also has costs. The actual cost of raising one dollar of Government revenue exceeds one dollar by an amount referred to as the “excess burden” ...of taxation. Some of the sources of deadweight costs are well-known to both taxpayers and the Government. For example, the disincentive effects on work, savings and investment. There are also what are known as the compliance costs of people spending their personal or business time filling in such things as GST or income tax returns. Other sources of deadweight costs, however, are much more difficult to observe. For example, the income tax system has the unintended effect of altering the relative rates of return from different productive activities. These unintended effects encourage less efficient use of resources, thereby reducing our prospects for increased economic growth and employment. This in turn can compromise the Government's ability to raise the revenue it needs... This is why... [NZ's] Government has been trying to foster increased empirical research into the magnitude of deadweight costs... Although the existence of deadweight costs has been recognised for many years, the first major attempt to estimate their magnitude empirically did not appear until March 1994. That study... estimated that the deadweight costs associated with raising the last dollar of revenue from the taxation of labour income have increased from 5[%] (or 5c) to over 18[%]... in the past 20 years... The... [1994] study also estimated that the deadweight costs associated with the last dollar of revenue from the taxation of consumption (all indirect taxes other than property tax and import duties) has increased from 5... to around 14[%] over the past 20 years. Most of this increase occurred after the introduction of GST in 1986... In view of the difficulties associated with this work, and the variety of approaches that can be used to estimate those costs, it is important not to seize on the results of one piece of analysis for the purposes of a few sensational headlines. Even in the U[S], where considerable resources have been devoted to estimating deadweight costs of taxation empirically, estimates still range from 17... to 56[%]. It is better to make a long-term commitment to fostering continual research... It is even more important for the Government to make a commitment to a low-rate and broad-based tax system. The coalition has been developing a revenue strategy and a series of detailed three-year tax policy objectives that will have the least cost to the nation as a whole... Unlike Act, we do not believe that the deadweight cost of taxation is a reason to blindly pursue a zero-tax, zero-Government objective.

...More than... 27[% of]... publicly listed and foreign-owned companies in N[Z] pay no tax... The overall level of corporate tax payments, at about 4.7[% of GDP], is high by international standards... But the... long-run average... [for the] proportion of zero taxpayers... was about 35[%], more than twice the OECD average. At the peak in 1991, 43[%] of... firms paid no tax... There is a distinction between abusive tax avoidance, which

attracts a sanction under the new penalties regime, and normal commercial tax-paying behaviour of arranging your affairs in such a way as to minimise tax within the law... Tax minimisation increased in the 1970s and early 1980s... Favourite mechanisms were the use of tax havens, redeemable preference shares, transfer pricing, thin capitalisation and loss trading.

...Companies are avoiding large amounts of tax by using loopholes that could be closed, says an I[RD] working paper. As much as \$1.3 billion in company tax may have been avoided in 1994... compared with the \$3.1 billion actually collected... "Past experience in N[Z] and overseas indicates that evasion is more the province of small firms and the self-employed." ...The paper does not consider evasion by people or companies not declaring income.

...N[Z]'s "black" or "hidden" economy – in which no one pays taxes... [because jobs are] done for cash and never declared... – could be worth as much as \$10 billion a year. That means the Crown is missing out on around \$3 billion a year in tax... Tax-paying households probably have to pay an extra \$50 a week to make up for revenue forgone.

...Is stealing \$500 from the Crown through not paying tax or GST on the proceeds of a cash job any more defensible than stealing a child's bike? Both carry severe sanctions, including fines and imprisonment. Both could lead to loss of employment following prosecution. Why then is the "cash jobs are okay" culture so prevalent in N[Z]? ...One of Wellington's radio presenters [said] last week that it was puritanical and naive to suggest full tax compliance was possible. Before you can say under the counter jobs are tantamount to stealing, "you really are going to have to make sure that the Government is worthy of respect... because at the moment when people feel they are being ripped off by Government then they will try to dodge their taxes... I am not condoning it because I know it's illegal... but I certainly don't see it as akin to stealing a kid's bike." An interesting line of argument. If the Government is not performing according to your expectations, withhold your taxes... [T]he black economy in N[Z] is of broadly similar size to that in other countries.

...the black economy [in NZ is about 10%] of GDP. What a bother for the taxman. The ability of income tax policy to clip the ticket on all contracts to hire labour will never be 100[%] because some people will simply break the law if they can... Income tax evasion can be addressed in two ways. We could employ heaps more tax enforcers to collect tax on the... transactions missed out. The costs of doing that could well exceed the tax dollars collected. Or we could continue to lower the average rate of income tax, switching more of the collect to GST (which is less fallible) or, best of all, decrease the overall drag on the economy posed by the need to collect tax by reducing Government spending... [By the way, a]bout 100,000 people earning less than the \$34,200 threshold have opted not to file an income tax return[this year (the option was introduced last year). The IRD – which has just]... published a list of 4376 people owed... \$3.3 million in... unclaimed money... [-] says those who sign a form indicating they are not bound to file a return may still claim a tax refund if they later find they are entitled to it.

...When is a tax return officially returned? When it hits the [IRD's] post box, according to a ruling by the Taxation Review Authority. The case concerned a refusal by [the IRD] to pay a taxpayer a GST refund because the return did not arrive at the department's office in time, despite landing in its post box four days earlier... The department had an arrangement that any mail which arrived at its post boxes around the South Island was forwarded to the Southern Processing Centre in Christchurch. By the time the return arrived at the centre via the departments' Nelson postal box, it was three days late for the cutoff date, and the return was refused... However, [the]Judge... said that under the Postal Services Act 1987 an article was considered delivered when it arrived at the recipient's house, office, letterbox or private post box, or was delivered in any other usual way... [The] Judge... ruled that the I[RD] Commissioner had acted incorrectly in disallowing the claim for \$7777.77... An I[RD] spokesman said yesterday that managers were not available to respond to criticism of the department in the ruling.

...[t]he IRD is sorry its computer has been miscalculating penalty payments and use-of-money interest charges. It is sorry it has been telling employers and banks that people owe it money when they don't. It is sorry it has been sending out letters which aren't very nice. And it is really going to try to fix its problems just as quickly as it can. The apologies are made in a letter to tax accountants, after complaints that the department has been sending out inaccurate and heavy-handed debt-collection demands. Its standard debt collection letter says that if the IRD does not hear back within 14 days, it will start taking action. This could involve compulsory deductions from the taxpayer's pay or bank accounts, legal action possibly including bankruptcy, a downgraded credit rating and publication of the taxpayer's name in the *Mercantile Gazette*. Paying off debts by instalments might be possible, the letter said – but only once the taxpayer had first tried to get a loan, considered selling assets, surrendered superannuation and insurance policies, or traded down to a cheaper house. Some people who got these letters were in debt to the taxman for the first time, or owed only small amounts of money. Now the IRD says it is rewording the letter "based on feedback received from our customers, who felt the letter was inappropriate" for such minor malefactions. It has also stopped issuing notices requiring employers or banks to make compulsory deductions to recover tax debt.' ● 'The IRD is trying to give away millions of dollars which has been sitting abandoned in bank vaults. One couple are owed nearly \$60,000, which they have not claimed despite efforts to find them. The \$2.6 million the IRD wants to hand back belongs to over 4000 people who have forgotten they have money sitting in bank accounts or with other financial institutions. Under the Unclaimed Money Act 1971, holders of unclaimed funds such as banks and insurance companies are obliged to make a register and try to trace the owners after six years. If they can't be found, the money has to be paid to the IRD, which puts it into the Consolidated Fund for the public good.'

...A parliamentary committee yesterday threatened [the IRD] with an inquiry into its poor customer service record. The [IRD]Commissioner... was publicly chided for mounting frustration with the speed and quality of the [IRD]'s dealings with the public, especially its "infamous" telephone system... [I]n many centres a... third of customers abandoned their calls; the national average was 25[%]... IRD information and forms... [were] also criticised... as being incomprehensible and too complicated... [The commissioner] said the IRD was... looking at... a revamp of the IR5 form...

The annual chore of filling out a tax return may soon be a thing of the past for many[NZers]... Each year, about a million taxpayers fill out IR5s and calculate whether they have paid too much tax, or not enough, during the past financial year... If the IR5 was abolished, [the IRD] and employers would work together to make sure the correct amount of tax was deducted from pay packets. It would not affect the self-employed... those who... have a student loan, paid or received family or child support, or earned interest on investments... [In addition, taxpayers no longer] have to file a tax return... [if they] earn less than \$38,000...

[H]undreds of thousands of taxpayers could receive inaccurate tax statements next year, says the IRD. It blames the faulty statements on teething problems with the introduction of the tax simplification system. However, a leading tax accountant said it was too soon to panic. "I don't think there is a major problem at this stage. This is a major new tax initiative that wipes 1.2 million people from the drudgery of filing tax returns and we've got some teething problems, but the great Kiwi clobbering machine seems to be at it already." Under the changes, three-quarters of wage and salary earners do not have to fill out an IR5 tax return next year and will not receive a tax statement from the department unless they ask for one.' Incidentally, [t]axation as a share of [NZ's gdp] is not shrinking despite last year's tax cuts... Taxation as a percentage of gdp was between 38... and 40[% said a]... University of Texas economics professor... An optimal tax take was about 20[%]...

The Business Roundtable is calling for a flattening of the tax scales to reduce the top personal tax rate to 20[%] or below over the next few years... Lower marginal taxes reduced the incentive to avoid and evade taxes... [the] Roundtable executive director... said... [He] does not quarrel with the idea that those on higher incomes should pay more tax. They would, even with a flat tax system... The Government expects to derive just over half its personal income tax take this year from the 15[%] of taxpayers whose taxable incomes exceed \$40,000...

High earners and companies are in for tax cuts to the top rate of 33c, the Treasurer... signalled yesterday... [However,] the Minister of Finance... stressed that no decisions had been made[although he admitted that]... the Treasury had started very preliminary work on further reductions...

[Last year, NZers were taxed at '24 cents in the dollar for income of \$30,875 or less and 33 cents for each dollar over \$30,875'; this year, income of '\$30,875 or less was taxed at 22.125 cents in the dollar, 24.375 cents for each dollar from \$30,876 to \$34,200 and 33 cents for each dollar over \$34,200'; and f]rom July next year the 24c tax rate on personal income between \$9500 and \$34,200 will change to 21c on income between \$9500 and \$38,000... A decision to proceed with further tax cuts beyond July 1... would be "weighed up in the context of which reductions are the best in terms of economic growth." ...The... Opposition finance spokesman... said there was no economic justification for reducing the top tax rate...

"Tax cuts as the pump primer to boost N[Z]'s economic growth," was the mantra on... [the Finance Minister's lips yesterday as he] outlined plans to cut the top tax rate and corporate tax rate to 25c and to remove the middle tax band altogether. "...Ideally you might have two steps, a 15% low rate, and a 25% top rate." ...At the moment there is a 15c rate for income below \$9500... [He] said the top rate needed to be brought down so that there was not too much incentive for people to manipulate their income to avoid the top rate of tax. The gap between the top and middle rate at the moment created such incentives... However... the Treasurer... emphatically ruled out a cut to 25c... [In related news, c]redit card transaction duty will disappear from April 1[next year] as a result of legislation introduced to Parliament yesterday. The 5c levy on purchases contributes \$3 million to the total tax take... but has become an anomaly with the widespread use of eftpos and electronic banking.

...The Bank of N[Z] says it is concerned falling government surpluses and the possibility of a deficit in 1998 could mean... the... promised tax cuts will be axed... [However, citizens] questioned for an opinion poll preferred by a margin of almost two to one that the Government cancel the tax cut next July and put the money into social spending.

...Employers stand to benefit from... a radical overhaul of the PAYE system outlined by the Government yesterday. All the information most employers have to provide on multiple forms would now be required on a single form only, to be filed monthly, electronically if possible... The... IR12 or IR13 tax-deduction certificates distributed to employees each year would become a thing of the past, as would the... annual PAYE reconciliations which many firms regard without joy. The... tax partner for Coopers and Lybrand, said the proposals were soundly based and wider in scope than most tax professionals had dared hope for... [especially since c]ompliance costs would[also] be slashed. To relieve 1.2 million wage and salary earners from the annual chore of filing income-tax returns, the... IRD... needs to ensure the PAYE information it receives from employers is accurate and timely. But its aim is to cut the overall cost of the tax system...

IT'S NOT the sort of... holiday reading most people would choose... but... Act's finance spokesman is turning his attention to the country's... tax legislation... [It means] wading through thousands of pages of tax law... and while MPs tired of his perkubusting might be happy, the IRD will probably be less than impressed... He... makes no apologies[, saying that]... if anyone needs proof the country's tax laws are unwieldy, they should check out his Bowen House office. It's there he's stored the... five volumes of tax codes... five volumes of income tax law commentaries, one volume of GST law commentary, one... of cases and 17 case books (law court cases), information bulletins and tax education office newsletters... which make up our tax legislation, and piled high measure more than 2.5m... And if that's not enough, there's a 12,000-page technical ruling manual containing 1.6 million words, the equivalent of 350 copies of the Bible. "This is out of control, it needs to be simplified – there can be no person in N[Z] who understands all this. There are 293 words in the Ten Commandments – and most of us struggle to keep them. How are we supposed to comply with [tax legislation]?" ...MPs were getting more complaints from people who had been "monstered by the IRD" than ever before. "I had a call from a company secretary who couldn't follow his daughter's student loan form – and when people try to get help they get these incredibly complex documents thrown at them. Either that, or their telephone calls to the IRD go unanswered... [Yet.] to run this outfit we have, per capita, three times the number of staff... than there is in America. For every five police officers... in N[Z], we have four people working at the IRD,"... [By the way, AUS's] Government is attempting tax reform... [f]or the third time in 20 years... Tax reforms are too important to leave to the next government or the next millennium, A[US's Liberal P]M... said last week... Tax reform was the Liberal's nemesis in 1993[, and a report released last year said '5000 AUSn families, each with assets of about \$A1.5 million, had used complex avoidance schemes to lower their taxable incomes during 1995 – some were even exempted from the Medicare universal health care levy "due to low taxable income" and also qualified for Austudy and family benefits, subsidised prescription drugs, free dental care and a wide range of discounts and concessions provided to welfare beneficiaries by state and local governments. The Government was still pursuing 100 individuals with a net worth of more than \$30m each who had declared annual incomes of \$20,000. Officials estimated they could raise \$2.4 billion over four years by pulling such people into the tax net by using new sophisticated computer analysis'...

'Billionaire wins dream tax bill: zero If tax policy were a soccer game the score in AUS today would be a media mogul 40 million, the taxman zero. The ATO assessed AUS's richest man as being personally liable to pay \$A40 million on income in the years 1990, 1991 and 1993. But the mogul took the tax collectors to court and after a legal tussle they offered a settlement that would have cut his bill to just \$30.55! Under the deal he would have paid \$2.87 for 1990, \$6.56 for 1991, and \$21.12 for 1993. But even this was too much for the mogul, whose fortune leaped by more than \$1 billion last year to \$5.2 billion. He refused to deal, and now the Federal Court has ruled that he need not pay anything at all. His company, AUSn Consolidated Press, had similar success in battling the tax man. The tax collectors wanted to take \$218 million but in court the mogul beat them down to a mere \$25,000. As outrage filled radio talkback shows yesterday, the Democrats, who will play a pivotal role in the final shape of the PM's planned tax reforms, joined the chorus of calls for an overhaul to close tax loopholes for the wealthy. The Democrats had identified loopholes costing the Government \$3 billion a year in lost revenue'...

Tax – 'the other three letter word ending in "X" that gets people hot under the collar' –] is one area where A[US]ns admire N[Z]'s reforms and which they hope to start emulating this year. "If the N[Z] system was applied to A[US], we would have huge federal budget surpluses because so much tax is not collected under the present system. There has to be restructuring of indirect taxation to some form of goods and services tax."

...The A[US]n Government should follow the lead of N[Z] and introduce a goods and services tax without fanfare[, former NZ Labour PM David Lange]... said in Adelaide yesterday. "With taxation like that you've got to get your finger into their wallets without disturbing their trousers... you don't sort of wave a flag and blow a bugle and say, 'I'm now going to put this on'."

...the Business Council of A[US] complains that A[US] is burdened with high reliance on income taxes, high corporate and business input taxes, and a narrow indirect tax base... The A[US]n Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which last year joined with key Welfare lobbyist A[US]n Council of Social Services to promote reform through a taxation summit... said the present system was holding back A[US]n industry's ability to compete... As confusion and stalemate continued to dog companies caught in the revenue mess between A[US]'s federal and state governments, business has heaved a sigh of collective relief at the first signs that the nation's unwieldy taxation system may at last be overhauled. Spurred by the High Court decision that states are not entitled to collect taxes on petrol, liquor and tobacco and the resulting bunfight with Canberra, [the P]M... has announced a high-powered task force to prepare options for reform... "We need a taxation system that gives incentives to ordinary A[US]ns to save, to invest, to take risks," [the PM] said. "We need a taxation system that helps, rather than hinders, exports and we need a taxation system that provides a more beckoning and more encouraging investment climate." ...If tax reform has been a personal crusade for [the PM] since his days as Treasurer in[a] previous administration, it has equally been a consistent objective of business enmeshed in a web of complex and expensive imposts. The High Court ruling was merely the final straw in a process of moving reluctant governments toward tackling a task that is both a technical nightmare and a political tinderbox, requiring a fine balance between the demands of business, unions and community and welfare lobbies. The political dimension became immediately clear when [the PM] unveiled his plans, focussing heavily on the prospect of a goods and services tax (GST) – which cost the Coalition victory in 1993 – and the level at which it might be pitched. [The PM suggested that GST would enable the 'middle income tax level of 43% to become 30%.' In fact, the PM's] agenda is far broader. The task force of officials set up to consider options will be required to consult a wide range of interest groups and will need to deal not only with a possible GST but with a raft of direct and indirect

taxes, tradeoffs, exemptions, and budgetary impacts. [The PM] will also try to rewrite the revenue-sharing arrangements with the states, spurred by the need for Canberra to collect excise on their behalf in the wake of the High Court decision and the more fundamental long-term requirements for a new system. For business this holds the potential for less complicated, and more certain, taxation – for example, uniform federal levies replacing state excises, once the impasse over tax refunds generated by the High Court ruling is sorted out.

...[‘It began at midnight, gripping first the nation’s buses, trains and toll booths. At 3 am, it spread to the first changes of shifts in taxi fleets in Sydney and Melbourne. And as the rest of AUS awoke, the nightmare became real: GST is here. The Liberal PM has fulfilled his election promise and introduced, against enormous odds, the biggest and most complete overhaul of taxation since the original colonies became a federation a century ago. This morning, like the rest of AUS, the PM will be biting his nails. No one knows yet the full impact of the new GST, despite the tsunami of projections, estimations, guides, promises and warnings. AUS’s GST is a horribly complicated creature and the popularity of both the tax and the PM slumped in direct relationship to the proximity of its introduction. It brought the Coalition Government close to implosion and has set even the PM’s natural allies – business and farmers – at his throat. Suburban AUS has been simply swamped by the mass of conflicting and often downright scary information, at the same time frantically analysing the merits of joining a health fund before close of business yesterday, or face a 2% a year lifetime penalty on health insurance fees for every uninsured year over the age of 30. The PM spent an incredible \$A424 million promoting the new tax, in addition to \$A500 million allocated to business costs involved in the transition. And what does Joe and Joeline Average get for all this? Confused, mainly. Wage and salary earners will get tax cuts and pensions and other benefits will rise – but not enough for many. About 80,000 of AUS’s lowest-paid workers will be worse off, tens of thousands more will receive just a few dollars extra, and almost one million students will be charged more for their university loans despite education’s GST exemption. The extra cash in pocket will also be deeply eroded by higher interest rates, inflation and, despite the PM’s fervent promises, petrol prices. If AUSns are renting their homes, their rents will be GST-free – even if they live in multi-million dollar apartments. But if they are down on their luck, living in boarding houses or caravan parks, their rents rose 5.5% today. If they are women, they can get GST-exempt food for their infants, but now pay 10% extra for their tampons. And with the mish-mash of exemptions and changes forced upon the Government by the Democrats in the Senate, shopping today becomes a truly new experience. Basic and fresh foods are GST exempt. Prepared foods attract GST. But not so fast. If bread is glazed, it is GST-exempt; if it has icing, it goes up 10%. Yoghurt for eating is GST-free, frozen yoghurt is not. Bones for dogs are charged GST, bones for soup are not. Carbonated mineral water attracts GST, uncarbonated mineral water does not. Soya sausages are GST-free, soya chips are not.’

...‘For those thinking of a quick shopping trip to the other side of the Tasman, airfares will not increase today – for now. AUSn domestic airfares bought with an international ticket here will also be exempt from the 10% tax increase which hits domestic flight routes. If, however, you reach AUS and are struck by a sudden urge to fly, bus, or train into the continent’s vast hinterlands then expect to pay for playing it by ear. The exemptions granted to a vast array of AUSn goods and services means a shopping list will need to be audited by trained tax specialists before you know if it is value for money. AUSn clothes, books and shoes are expected to jump in price, whereas TVs, videos, and stereos are expected to become cheaper. A purchased meal itself will become dearer, unless you decide to buy the tax-exempt ingredients separately. And there are reported to be five possible variations of applying the tax to AUS’s favourite food, prawns – depending if raw, hot, cold, in a can or mixed in sushi. As for alcohol and cigarettes – as always, best to pick them up at the duty-free shop on the way home.’

...[NZ] parents who take off to A[US] leaving their spouses holding the baby could find an A[US]n tax collector knocking on their door. The [IRD] is negotiating a deal with the A[TO] which could see the A[US]ns chasing N[Zers to]... bring in an extra \$10-\$11 million each year. Under the present system a N[Z]er who lives in A[US] and fails to pay child support is chased through the courts – a long and costly process. The system in negotiation would bypass the courts... The... agreement... would... [be reciprocal because] it was a “common problem.” [‘■ Targeting property tax cheats – if you invest to sell for a profit, any money you make is taxable – resulted in the IRD getting an extra \$106.6m nationally (\$52.9m from Auckland’).

...[NZ] companies are being given the first bite of a \$4 billion cherry in China’s economic redevelopment programme. Officials from China’s Bureau of Resettlement and Development are touring local businesses this week to attract investment and expertise... The visit is a coup for N[Z] because China has been extremely selective about western investment. The officials picked N[Z] as their first port of call because they want to tap specialist knowledge in areas like agriculture, food processing, hydro-electric power generation and environmental protection... The Chinese Government is offering incentives... including local income tax preferences, enterprise tax breaks and refunds on export taxes.

...[‘89 people including senior officials have been arrested in Zhejiang Province, in China’s largest tax fraud case, involving 6.31 billion yuan (\$NZ1.4b).’ In further news from Asia,] Japanese domestic shipments of colour televisions and videocassette recorders, indicators of consumer demand, fell[last month] as higher taxes continued to cut into spending... [T]he Government raised the sales tax 2 percentage points to 5[%] on April 1...

Japan’s [Government]... is expected to propose tax cuts totalling 950 billion yen... in a broad economic package aimed at stimulating the economy... [Meanwhile, Germany’s] budget plans have been thrown into question by major shortfalls in estimated tax revenue, heralding emergency moves to keep public deficits in line with the requirements of a single European currency. Revised official estimates predicted nearly 18 billion marks... less income for the federal, regional and local authorities this year than they were counting on under previous estimates[made last] November... An aide... suggested last week that... the Chancellor... wants to increase Germany’s version of GST from 15... to 16[%].

...Now the German Parliament is in the middle of a tax reform debate... “The state today is suffering in particular from the myth that its resources are inexhaustible. In other words, citizens ask too much of the state, while for its part the state asks too much of its citizens. The heavier the tax burden, the more is expected of the state – which then has no choice but to borrow more or else raise taxes even higher. When borrowing is too high, all that is left is a kill-or-cure treatment to balance the budget, involving painful economic consequences. It is a vicious circle.”

...[the tax system can be called cyclical because its rates are raised, then lowered, raised, lowered, etc. – although the recent trend is to keep on lowering taxes. ‘Germany’s company tax rate will drop from 40 to 25% and its top personal tax rate from above 50 to 42% over the next five years. France’s company tax rate will drop to 33.3% and its top personal tax rate to 52.5% by 2003. Ireland’s company tax rate – currently the second-lowest in the OECD at 20% – will drop to 12.5% by 2003.’ (‘Ireland has chosen to make itself more attractive than its potential rivals to transnational corporations. It is paying them huge subsidies – in the form of tax concessions – to set up in Ireland instead of somewhere else. Ireland’s success has depended on it pursuing tax policies that differ from other nations. If the majority of nations choose to emulate Ireland’s strategy, then Ireland’s miracle economy will disappear. It will not reappear elsewhere. Rather, the shareholders of the companies that get worldwide tax breaks will be the winners, and everyone else will pay through the loss of their tax-enabled social wage.’)

...In 1978 NZ had a ‘top marginal tax bracket of 60% and 19 rate brackets. In 1979 the number of brackets was reduced to 5; then to 3 in 1986, when the top bracket was reduced to 48%.’ The current top rate of 33% was introduced in 1988. During the same period, Britain’s top rate of ‘83% and 10 brackets (of which the basic rate was 33%) was reduced to 40% and 4 (25%); Canada went from a top rate of 43% and 13 brackets to 29% (plus 8% surtax) and 3; while the US went from ‘70% (although the maximum rate on wages, salaries and other earned income was limited to 50%) and 25 brackets to 2 brackets and 28% (although a tax-back device adds 5 percentage points for a range of income yielding four distinct positive marginal rate brackets with a maximum marginal rate of 33%).’ The US tax system is further complicated by having different rates in different states: ‘Alaska, Florida, Nevada, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, and Wyoming are the seven states that still do not have personal income taxes. Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, and

Pennsylvania have flat rates while Colorado, Rhode Island, and Vermont have taxes calculated as a percentage of Federal tax liability.' Although NZ, the US, Canada and Britain now have similar top tax rates, 'we rate well against our developed peers because we have no capital gains tax and no estate duty.'

...NZers and British expatriates with property and businesses in the United Kingdom are being warned that they are likely to face tighter tax rules in future, according to... a company in the business of minimising tax through measures such as using overseas companies and trusts. The firm says Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer... recently signalled plans to increase the number of people liable for inheritance tax on property in the UK, and to tighten the legal definitions which govern who is classified as domiciled in the UK for tax purposes...

A British taxman faces jail after he was convicted of taking bribes from foreign businessmen to fund a life of luxury, lust and deceit... [in] the biggest single corruption case to affect the British tax department... [Incidentally, t]he law lords in London have cleared the way for [NZ's IRD] to try to recover \$4.4 million in winebox-related tax from a [BNZ] subsidiary, BNZ Finance Ltd... A now defunct subsidiary of BNZ Finance called BNZ Finance Deposits Ltd earned \$26.4 million in dividend income from redeemable preference shares between 1989 and 1992... It was all passed on to the parent company... and no tax has been paid on it. The subsidiary was wound up in 1994, with the department's blessing and without being assessed for tax. Later the department reconsidered and decided, under section 99 of the Income Tax Act, that it was a tax-avoidance scheme. By then the \$13 million of income from 1989 to 1990 was out of reach because of a four-year time limit on the amending of tax assessments... The appeal to the Privy Council related to whether the parent company was liable for tax on income of its subsidiary, even though no assessment had been made before the subsidiary was wound up. The issue had split the Court of Appeal three to two. The Privy Council has... endorsed[a] conclusion in the High Court that the commissioner could absolve BNZ Finance of its subsidiaries' liability, because of a section of the act which has since been repealed and replaced. The old provision transferred any liability to shareholders of the defunct company, but its replacement transfers responsibility to its shareholders and anyone else responsible for leaving it in such a state. But the old version still applies to winebox-era transactions, and at least one other case is understood to hang on it[(the MP who later became the leader of NZ First – and is now the Deputy PM – had accused a number of major NZ companies of operating an illegal tax-loop through the Cook Islands during the 1980s; when asked to produce evidence of his allegations, he carried the relevant documents into Parliament in a cardboard box that had originally been used to transport wine bottles)].

...The winebox inquiry head... yesterday signalled that the finish line was in sight – two years late. The Cook Islands tax commission of inquiry was originally to report its findings to the[NZ] Government on March 31, 1995. The report... is now [expected sometime] this year. The inquiry's budget started at \$2 million and trebled to \$6 million after numerous legal challenges. It had reached \$11 million at the end of 1995.

...Taxpayers 'still paying' The Government says [the NZ First leader's] legal costs at the Cook Islands tax commission of inquiry are still being met by taxpayers, amid suggestions [that the Deputy PM – who]... took charge of the country for the first time yesterday when the P[M]... left on a four-day visit to Antarctica... [-] faced a conflict of interest over the inquiry now that he is Treasurer. [Furthermore, the inquiry head 'has been paid about \$840,250 for his work from July 1995 until March this year. The figure was provided in response to an official information request from the Wellington newspaper the *Dominion*. Asked to give the information himself, the commissioner refused. "It's completely private, what I have negotiated with the Government, and what it's got to do with you, I have no idea."

...the] Winebox commissioner... was... considering what action to take over an article in the latest issue of *Metro* magazine, commission staff said yesterday. The executive officer... declined to confirm whether *Metro's* publisher, A[US]n Consolidated Press NZ, would be summoned to the commission of inquiry into Cook Islands tax deals for an explanation... *Metro's* article, entitled "Oops, Wrong Winebox"... alleges that the commission may have based its 2 1/2-year inquiry on the wrong set of documents. The magazine issued a retraction and an apology over the article in advertisements.

...Hearing finally heading for home straight... The winebox hearings yesterday adjourned for at least five weeks as the commission reached the "business end" of its... inquiry... The intervening period will be used to prepare closing submissions [for]which ...a... date has not yet been set. The formal part of giving evidence was completed on Friday when the 73rd witness, [the]Serious Fraud Office director... finished being cross-examined on the 215th sitting day. The hearings began on November 7, 1994, and... produced 12,931 pages of transcripts and 26,138 documents. The cost of operating the commission will be near \$12 million.

...Big business [has]branded the Deputy P[M]... a liar who should be forced to help pay for the multi-million-dollar winebox inquiry. On the last day of the... hearing... some of the country's largest corporations adopted a forthright attitude in their criticism of [the Treasurer. The counsel for FR, a NZ]... merchant banking firm... said the commission was set up after allegations of bribery and corruption – made in 1994 by [the NZ First leader] under the protection of parliamentary privilege – against the then commissioner of the I[RD] and the then director of the S[FO]. Although the conduct of the two Government agencies was meant to be the primary focus of the commission, corporations involved in the transactions under scrutiny were tarred with the same brush and subjected to "unfounded allegations of fraud," [the]... QC... said. "He [[the Deputy PM]] had made the grossest allegations. His allegations were a lie... [He] must now be held accountable for his own corrupt conduct." ...[the NZ First leader] was not prepared to go on oath before the commission to support the claims he had made...

The winebox inquiry commissioner... has been in breach of a High Court order for the past week for not producing documents on the case in which he is accused of bias. His lawyer... then topped that by suggesting the inquiry report, due to go to the Governor-General by August 31, should be kept confidential to the court-case parties... [T]he report would[then] be in the hands of the very people... accused of fraudulent behaviour, while the public would see nothing... This followed the revelation on the last day of the inquiry hearing... that... the commissioner... had interviewed two businessmen and two lawyers two years earlier for "the purposes of ascertaining the history of the winebox documents." ...Meanwhile, the commissioner's opponents have no documents on which they can base an application for "interim relief," a term which seems to apply to suppressing the inquiry report, until the court case is over.

...[the] winebox inquiry report is finished... It has been printed under Government-ordered secrecy and will be tabled in Parliament tomorrow... [S]ecrecy was ordered to avoid tipping off any party thinking of an injunction against its publication... Printing of the findings was completed by Monday – the same day that[the] tax dodge designer European Pacific and[the FR] merchant bank... told a High Court chambers hearing that they would not now proceed with any proposals to stymie the report's publication... For [the IRD] and the S[FO] – the two parties whose competency in dealing with the affair has been under public investigation – a three-year wait is nearly over. The Government spin-doctors are getting their lines ready. And people like [the NZ] First leader... are poised to respond... The commission... finally concluded public sessions last month after a series of legal challenges, deadline extensions and setbacks to the health of key players... [The commissioner] had been charged with inquiring into whether the IRD and SFO acted lawfully, properly, and competently in dealing with a winebox of tax haven company European Pacific's documents. The documents were given to the SFO in October 1992. [The commissioner] will also report on whether there should be any changes to the tax or criminal laws in light of disclosures to his inquiry.

...A brief exchange between two knights in Wellington yesterday ended the longest-running and most expensive commission of inquiry in N[Z]. The commissioner] handed his two-volume report on the... inquiry into Cook Islands tax deals to the Governor General... [T]he commission was born out of allegations of corruption and fraud against... Government agencies and many corporates made under Parliamentary privilege by... [the MP who is now Deputy PM – although] the terms of reference did not permit the commission to investigate[his] allegations of criminal conduct against the corporates... Although the IRD identified 60 deals in the winebox documents, when pressed to outline which transactions evidenced fraud, [the counsel for the Deputy PM] limited his case to four...

It could have been his finest hour. Instead [he] was like a naked man trying to cover his embarrassment with a postage stamp. The Deputy P[M]... had his highlighter pen ready before the special parliamentary debate on the winebox report. But with few, if any, highlights in it for him, not much ink was used. The report abbreviated his name... after the first reference and cut off at the knees his claims of fraud and conspiracy. But on bloodied stumps [he] continued to fight back. He took postage-stamp sized parts of the 770-page report and used them to deliver a trademark counterpunching rebuke of [the commissioner] and anyone else in range. Perhaps that was why the P[M -] ...who had apologised to[both the SFO head and the]... tax chief... for any embarrassment caused by the allegations... [-] shifted from his seat next to his coalition partner to sit [elsewhere]... It also took him out of camera shot as [the Deputy PM] went for a KO... [The Deputy PM's] aim was not helped by... interjections to "just apologise" and that threatened further legal action by [him] should not use taxpayers' money... [A] powerful attack by[the] Labour deputy leader... said the Treasurer had to resign, but predicted he would carry on much like a professional footballer committing a professional foul... [However, the Labour deputy leader] said he held no flag for those in the corporate sector who attempted to delay and undermine the commission, or for those involved in clever tax avoidance schemes... Calls for [the Treasurer] to resign were also made by[the] Alliance leader... and... [an Act MP. The Treasurer] says the report points to the ability of big business under present law to falsify tax documents with impunity; and he is accusing... the winebox commissioner, of breaching his terms of reference in clearing winebox transactions of fraud... [He] also pointed to [the commissioner's] references that it was outside his terms of reference to "make decisions on the truth or otherwise of allegations against corporates and individuals"... [The Treasurer] said that in view of that, [the commissioner] "has made a finding he said he could not make and has made a finding that cannot stand." ...But [he] said yesterday that there was one crucial part of the findings – the part which refers to N[Z] courts giving the effect to the form (the legal form of a transaction) rather than the substance (the real economic content) of a transaction. [The commissioner] said a fundamental defect of form over substance is that the IRD is not a party to the transaction. "The parties may, therefore, document whatever falsities suit their tax avoidance purposes." ...[one] Labour MP... summed up the elusive nature of [the Treasurer's] argument for challenging the winebox findings: "It's like looking for the Loch Ness monster."

...The companies involved in the winebox inquiry spent tens of millions of dollars on legal teams and spoke vociferously to defend their honour at the long and winding hearings. But their reaction was surprisingly muted when the day arrived that absolved them of any fraudulent or illegal activity. No doubt one or two champagne corks popped deep in the boardrooms of [the accused merchant bank FR, the BNZ, BIL] and European Pacific wherever it is now domiciled... [The commissioner] said that although it was not possible for the corporates and individuals to take action to challenge [the NZ First leader's] allegations, as they were made under circumstances of absolute privilege, the findings of the commission might go some way to remedying the injustices done to them... Nor would they be able to claw back the... [million's] the corporates claim they have spent over the past four years contesting winebox allegations... [FR, BIL] and the BNZ were shareholders in the "mysterious" investment and merchant banking group, European Pacific, which operated mainly through tax havens, and in particular the Cook Islands. In the late-1980s European Pacific operated tax-driven transactions for clients and reduced the tax burden on their investments by designing complicated money-go-rounds. The clients received dividends or interest and European Pacific collected "healthy" fees for themselves. The Magnum and Japanese Investment Fund tax-credit deals and the redeemable preference shares transactions – in which the client's investments funds flowed through the BNZ and on to the Cook Islands and other parts such as Japan – were the most famous. [The commissioner], in his report, said Magnum was a "smart" transaction designed to take advantage of loopholes in income tax law. It did not exhibit any elements of illegality or fraud nor could there be any claim of evasion of tax. He said the tax credit certificates (presented to the [IRD] and showing tax was paid in the Cook Islands) must be regarded as valid receipts of tax. The proper returns of income were made and the IRD assessed tax on that income... There was no obligation on the taxpayers when filing their tax returns to report their gains as income. They had within the law been converted into a non-taxable form... The taxpayers, [the commissioner] said, were not making false representations, they were stating the true factual and legal position.

...No, Mr [former PM] – it was not a witch-hunt On Monday this paper published an article by [the last Labour P[M]... which severely criticised the media for its coverage of the winebox saga. The basic tenet of... [his] column was that the Winebox Inquiry was a witch-hunt comparable with Salem in the 1690s and McCarthyism in the 1950s. He went on to imply that the rich did not get a fair trial in N[Z], ordinary citizens had become fascist and paranoid and the media were biased... [His] assessment is a thousand miles wide of the mark. Since the beginning of the decade there have been controversial transactions which have resulted in a massive transfer of wealth from public company shareholders and the taxpayer to a few individuals. The seeds of the Winebox Inquiry were sown by some of these deals, a few of which involved the Crown. The calls for an inquiry were not based on a desire to punish someone for the pains of the 1980s, as claimed by [the last Labour PM], but were a direct response to incidents which took place during the current decade. [The last Labour PM] has called the media lazy and has asked for more scrutiny and analysis. The following brief descriptions of some of the more controversial transactions may go some way towards meeting... [his] request. *Capital Markets/F[R]* On April 23, 1990 Capital Markets, which was controlled by the principals of F[R], made a takeover bid for F[R]. The purchase price of \$225 million consisted of \$42.5 million of assets and \$182.5 million of goodwill. The purchase price was based on profit forecasts supplied by F[R] and was endorsed by an independent report prepared by... the auditor of both Capital Markets and F[R]. Evidence at the Winebox Inquiry indicated that a large proportion of F[R]'s earnings were related to tax deals and these profits could not be sustained following the tax legislation changes at the end of the 1980s. F[R]'s profit forecasts were hopelessly optimistic. In 1993/94 Capital Markets/F[R] group reported an operating profit of only \$4.2 million compared with a forecast of \$49.5 million for F[R] on its own. In 1995... the business, which was bought for \$225 million, [was]... valued... at less than \$50 million. *Telecom* When Capital Markets made an offer for F[R] in April 1990 it issued profit forecasts which led investors to believe the merger would be effective almost immediately. Although Capital Markets shareholders still had to approve the transaction, many mergers are made effective from a date prior to a shareholders' meeting. Following the announcement of the sale of Telecom by the Government on June 14, 1990, Capital Markets share price rose from \$1.01 to \$1.10. This was in anticipation that the merged company would receive a substantial fee – estimated at \$20 million – because F[R] acted for the two U[S] purchasers. The merger was made effective from July 1 – approved at a shareholders' meeting on August 29 – and the fee remained with the previous owners of F[R]. The principals of F[R] also received an option to purchase a 5[%] shareholding in Telecom. This has subsequently generated a profit of nearly \$300 million. If the Telecom shareholding had been placed in Capital Markets and F[R] had not been acquired, the listed company would have been better off to the tune of more than \$400 million. *B[NZ]* In March 1987 the BNZ issued new shares to the public at \$1.75 per share. Following the issue, the BNZ was listed on the stock exchange with the public owning 12.9[%] and the Government 87.1[%]. In June 1989 the B[NZ] announced a massive loss and a 7-for-10 cash issue at 70 cents per share. The Government gave most of its rights in the cash issue to Capital Markets for no cost. The Crown sold the remainder of its rights for between 6 and 10 cents per share and rights traded as high as 30 cents a share. The Government's decision to give free rights to Capital Markets created an uproar at the time. Following the issue, Capital Markets owned 30.5[%] of the BNZ at a total cost of just over \$300 million. The F[R]-controlled company had to borrow most of the money to invest in BNZ and would be in no position to assist the bank if it was hit by another wave of bad debts. Capital Markets' only identified investment at the time was a 30.6[%] shareholding in European Pacific Investments, the winebox company. In November 1990, just after the Capital Markets/F[R] merger, the BNZ announced further massive losses and a restructuring... [which] included, • Ring fencing the bank's bad loans into a separate entity called Adbro; • The Government buying 85.7 million BNZ shares from F[R] (Capital Markets had changed its name) at 70 cents per share. The purchase price compared with an assessed value in the

range of 55 to 60 cents per share... and a market value below 50 cents. • The BNZ issuing 131 million convertible shares to F[R] at 84 cents each. These securities had a pre-tax yield of 16.3[%] which was well above prevailing interest rates at the time. BNZ's minority shareholders were not given the opportunity to sell their shares at 70 cents or to participate in the attractive preference share issue. Finally, on July 21 1992, the National A[US] Bank made a takeover offer for the BNZ at 80 cents per share. The independent evaluation report, which... recommended acceptance of the offer, assessed that the bank had future maintainable earnings of between \$135 million and \$180 million. The BNZ has reported net profits of \$302 million and \$318 million in the past two years, substantially above[the evaluator's] forecasts. If F[R] had not been weakened by the Capital Markets/F[R] merger and the Government had been a more reluctant seller, the BNZ would probably be worth an additional 80 cents per share, or \$1.5 billion, on the stock exchange today. *Tranz Rail* In June 1993, seven months after the completion of the BNZ sale, F[R] told the stock exchange it had acquired a 40[%] interest in Tranz Rail from the Government. Two months later F[R] announced it had a 31.8[%] shareholding. The shareholding was lower than previously announced because... [two companies – one of which was a Mr R] family company – had agreed to subscribe for shares. In February 1995 Sir M[r F, Mr] R... and associated parties made a takeover offer for F[R] at 80 cents per share... [An] independent report valued the Tranz Rail shareholding between \$117[million] and \$130 million. There was no disclosure of a proposed \$100 million repurchase of shares by Tranz Rail which was known to both [Mr R and the person who prepared the valuation report]. This Tranz Rail shareholding has a current market value of more than \$250 million, including the capital repayment. This is double the... valuation. The 80 cents per share takeover offer for F[R] compared with a share price of \$1.06 just before the announcement of the Capital Markets/F[R] merger in April 1990. In the five-year period F[R]'s minority shareholders saw the capital value of their investment drop by 25[%]. During the same period F[R]'s principal shareholders became extremely wealthy individuals. The activities of the F[R]-related companies raise a number of important issues. One of these is why did the Government offer special deals to only one BNZ shareholder in 1989 and 1990, particularly when that shareholder was an active promoter of tax schemes which deprived the Crown of tax revenue? Another is the issue of market regulation and enforcement. The Labour Government, of which [the last Labour PM] was a key member[– but not, at that time, its leader –] initiated a number of inquiries after the 1987 sharemarket crash. Few of their recommendations have been implemented because of fierce lobbying by a sector of the business community, particularly the Business Roundtable. The Roundtable, in which Mr R... has played a major role, has argued that regulation places an unnecessary cost on companies and business operates much more effectively under self-regulation. Evidence at the Winebox Inquiry – where participants argued that business is not a matter of morality but of the letter of the law – indicates there is a massive gap between the theoretical concept of business self-regulation and reality... At the very least the Winebox Inquiry has clarified that certain businessmen operate at the limit of black-letter law and they do not place much importance on ethical considerations... The best one can say about the Winebox Inquiry is that some politicians may have learned a lesson or two. If they have, they will reject the arguments that self-regulation is better than legislation and enforcement agencies are a waste of taxpayers' money. This at least could be a step in the right direction.

...the two [merchant bankers, Mr F and Mr R,] have hardly hit the headlines for some slick corporate manoeuvre since[their] company... was taken private about two and a half years ago. The privatisation left them with a 25[%] holding in the former state-owned national rail company, Tranz Rail. There would be no sad faces atop of the big "pinky" (the [office tower housing FR] on Auckland's Queen St) about the investment. Valued at around 370c a share at the time [their company] was bought out, the Tranz Rail shares are now trading at 870c each. That equates to a \$190 million appreciation in value to \$331 m... So surely it would have been top-quality champagne that was drunk on Thursday night... As a private company they are coy about divulging what they are up to. But the interest in trains has not stopped. Last year a consortium... [the pair is involved with] bought three railway freight companies from British Rail for £225 m... [Furthermore, their company] is... believed to be involved alongside Tranz Rail in the purchase of A[US]n National Railways from the Government. Apart from trains, there was the purchase of a holding in a five-star resort in Fiji... and[they] also own about 23[%] in Cultus Petroleum. Last year the shares traded as low as 56c. Yesterday they were closed at 545c. That values their holding at \$191 m... So if the question was asked, "How are things going...?" the likely reply would be, "Very nicely, thank you."

...Corporate tax dodgers and their lawyers face a harsher future under law changes recommended by the winebox commission of inquiry. Champagne corks may have popped in the mirror glass towers... as corporates were cleared of wrongdoing, but [the commissioner] wants to give more teeth to the tax collector and remove grey areas of revenue law. His recommendations – which the coalition Government is committed to consider in detail – include ending the ability of taxpayers to hide behind the confidentiality of communications with their legal advisers. [He] also wants to wipe out time limits on chasing up tax payments and to stop the practice of companies being set up for one-off deals then liquidated to avoid tax... Tax experts expressed relief yesterday that he... has come out with only a minor list of firm recommendations for further reform of the tax laws... in view of the extensive reforms which had already occurred since the winebox transactions took place... The... commissioner... wrote in his report: "The legislative environment in 1997 is considerably different from that which existed in the mid to late 1980s when many of the transactions evidenced in the wine-box documents were planned and implemented. Since then, many of the real and perceived abuses of the N[Z] tax system have been addressed by specific legislation. The deficiency in... the N[Z] tax base which was facilitated by tax havens (such as the Cook Islands), was that a N[Z] resident was not subject to N[Z] income tax on income earned by a non-resident on its behalf." ...four major tax rules were introduced... to plug this loophole... Incentives for companies to invest a lot of time and resources in tax minimisation have been greatly reduced... And many in the business community have lost interest in aggressive tax avoidance... Corporate tax rates have been cut... and, crucially, the introduction of dividend imputation means companies could pass on credits to their shareholders for the tax they paid.

...The Cook Islands has strongly defended its controversial tax haven operation which has become the second biggest earner after tourism for the small country of 20,000 people... [I]n an official booklet the Cooks Government says... [that under NZ] rule the Cooks had been "a fruit bowl for its colonial parents" but this had changed and now the tax haven earns around \$4.8 million a year in fees and taxes. Salaries and services bring in thousands more. Sixty people are employed locally. "The offshore industry, unlike hotel development or concentrated agricultural practices, does not pollute the environment," the... booklet says... "In Asia, America and Europe, the Cook Islands is respected as a professionally run off-shore financial jurisdiction." ...[By the way, the IRD], which found legal professional privilege frustrating in winebox matters, has successfully invoked it itself in another long-running dispute. The Taxation Review Authority has ruled that eight legal opinions by IRD lawyers relating to tax avoidance schemes devised by[a] tax consultant... are privileged and do not have to be given in evidence by IRD witnesses.

...Moves to abolish privilege for tax matters have drawn criticism from legal authorities, fearful it will endanger lawyers' ability to do their job. In his report into the winebox inquiry, [the commissioner] recommends legal professional privilege for all tax matters be abolished. Claims by corporate taxpayers to professional privilege in respect of alleged confidential communications between them and their legal advisers were a constant source of delays and frustrations for the [IRD]... But the President of the N[Z] Law Society... said that removing legal professional privilege threatened the sanctity of the lawyer-client relationship. "It's something that has come down over the centuries, and it's a very important doctrine that a person should be able to speak to their lawyer fully and frankly, just as they would a priest. If they can't do that, then a lawyer may not get the full story and therefore may not be able to give correct advice." The recommendation needed careful consideration "across the whole spectrum of tax law." The president of the Law Commission... said [the inquiry's] recommendation was timely as the commission was preparing a report looking into the whole issue of privilege. "On one side, N[Z]ers do not like their privacy being interfered with by the state and for many years, in the particular area of taxation, there has been something of a sentiment against intrusion by the [IRD]," he said. "On the other side is that

if one N[Z]er, or group of N[Z]ers, escapes paying a fair proportion of tax, others have to carry it. Increasingly, there is a feeling that maintenance of the tax base is something of importance.” It was ultimately up to Parliament to decide how “that balance is to be struck.”

...Tax law, however, is notoriously complex, and one person’s legitimate tax-break is another’s tax-dodge... TAX, according to [a merchant banker involved in the winebox inquiry], “is not an area where moral issues exist.” Tax questions were decided “on the black and white letter of the law”, he said in November 1995. “There is no grey – it’s either right or it’s wrong and morality does not come into it.” It was the morality of tax avoidance, however, which captured the public imagination at the Winebox inquiry. Few people understood the technicalities of the notorious Cook Islands money-loop – but many had a view about its ethical status. Elaborate tax avoidance schemes of that kind... are immoral... Companies should pay their taxes “because of the sheer complexity of the tax system. There are always going to be clever people who can find loop-holes, because no amount of sophisticated tax drafting can cover every possibility and every contingency. It’s absolutely counterproductive to the country to have some of its best brains trying to sabotage the tax base of the nation.” The country had to have corporate taxes: “It can’t survive on the tax take from private individuals.” If business doesn’t pay its share of tax, “then that effectively transfers the load to other people who can’t minimise their tax burden. Wage earners get clobbered with more tax, and those on benefits also get clobbered.” If the corporates of the 1980s had not tried so hard to avoid tax... the benefit cuts of the early ’90s might not have been so severe.

...[the IRD] will next month issue draft guidelines for assessing corporate tax bills that could garner millions of dollars in taxes that would otherwise be lost overseas. The guidelines cover new rules on transfer pricing introduced at the end of 1995, but only now starting to affect companies. Transfer pricing is a technique multinational companies use to minimise overall tax bills by inflating the profits of subsidiaries in countries with relatively low tax rates and understating them in those where they are relatively high. It is not illegal. The multinational ends up paying all the tax pie it is supposed to – it’s just that the countries where it operates don’t get the appropriate slices... Rules governing transfer pricing have existed for more than 50 years, but matters came to a head in the early ’90s when the legislation was found to be ineffective... The potential tax gain is huge. A[US] lost more than \$2 billion in tax revenue to other countries last year, according to the [ATO]. No one has figures for N[Z] because... unlike its A[US]n counterpart, the IRD here did not undertake specific transfer pricing audits, but instead examined such issues as part of its regular company audits... [The IRD] international tax policy manager [said,] “We’d rather taxpayers voluntarily changed their behaviour rather than have our auditors pull them up on transfer pricing. We’re taking a moderate approach. We don’t want to waste resources and discourage companies from investing in N[Z], but at the same time we don’t want overseas companies ripping off our tax base.” ...[Incidentally, t]he winebox inquiry may have lifted the lid on the workings of some of the country’s biggest businesses but for [one person] it was a long-running saga which seemed to have no end. It was the 43-year-old American-born stenographer’s job to record – verbatim – every word spoken since the inquiry began... Her 13,000 pages of typed transcript... formed the working documents for all parties involved in the inquiry as well as the approved record of events... “There were some witnesses who had pretty colourful vocabularies. Certainly [the NZ First leader] went out of his way every day to use a new word for me... It was unknown throughout what the requirements were going to be and what dates we might sit. So in terms of being able to plan your life it was pretty gruesome... I couldn’t get sick because they wouldn’t be able to sit as I don’t have anyone that can back me up. I couldn’t leave town and it was difficult to plan a holiday.” [She] never imagined the inquiry would drag on for nearly three years.

...IT WAS billed as the clash of the Titans. It came complete with... some of the nation’s richest and most powerful... billion-dollar deals, tax haven bank accounts and crusading politicians... It was a case where truth was often stranger than fiction... It held the country both transfixed and bored simultaneously and when it ended... the Winebox inquiry took its final prisoners – but perhaps not the ones that many people expected... European Pacific’s highly paid legal warrior, rumoured to have received up to \$10,000 a day for his services... managed to snatch victory from the jaws of what his clients believed was going to be certain defeat... NO FRAUD, no conspiracy, no incompetence. That was the verdict... The Winebox saga began with a clandestine meeting in 1991...

[A key] winebox figure... last... night washed his hands of the affair... [T]he Auckland businessman who[in 1991, collected]... a winebox of documents on Cook Islands tax transactions, said he was so busy with a Hong Kong business deal that he had not had time to read... [the inquiry report. In] a private interview in 1995, [the commissioner questioned the businessman] about discrepancies in his evidence about the documents. “...the Commission determined that [the businessman], in light of his varied and confused statements, was totally lacking in credibility and that he could not be relied upon to account for his dealings with the documents,” the report said. [The businessman] was reported to have tried to sell the winebox documents for \$100,000... When asked last night whether he regretted his involvement in the affair, he said: “I don’t know. I haven’t got time to think about that today... I don’t know what the report says about me and I don’t care... I’ve got bigger things going on.” ...[his] lack of interest yesterday was at odds with his frequent appearance in the public gallery during the winebox hearings. Evidence was given during the inquiry that [he] had received death threats against his family for his role in the affair.

...the former head of the [SFO] who was cleared of corruption and incompetence by the winebox inquiry, is considering suing for compensation. [He] came close to blacking out as he gave evidence to the inquiry earlier this year... was unable to continue his evidence for several weeks and, before the inquiry finished, resigned from his post because of his deteriorating health... [Now] on holiday in Britain, [he] said the inquiry had had a “very, very significant impact on his life, his career and his health. Civil appointments have now fallen by the wayside and other doors have been closed on me in terms of opportunities, certainly overseas.” The inquiry had also taken its toll on his family... the stress of[the] campaign played a part in the break-up of his marriage... It’s hard to say exactly how much the inquiry has cost the taxpayer. The official estimate is around fifteen million dollars, but that doesn’t include the ongoing legal costs of the commissioner... The companies that have been named in the Winebox estimate it’s cost them more than eighty million dollars.

...Taxpayers face a bill of more than \$17 million for the commission of inquiry into Cook Islands tax deals – but they will have to fork out \$94.95 each if they want to read their own copy of the inquiry report. [The] 784-page report, in two volumes, is on sale at that price in... Government Bookshops. Last month the P[M]... revealed that the final cost of the winebox inquiry was estimated to be \$12.27 million and that the taxpayer-funded legal costs of the Deputy P[M]... amounted to \$1.38 million at that time. [The Deputy PM’s] costs have been taxpayer-funded since August 1995 at [the commissioner’s] request. Additional inquiry costs to be met by the taxpayer include a \$3.6 million bill from the [IRD] and an estimated \$1.5 million bill from the [SFO].

...The Commissioner has been paid \$1.248 million for his marathon performance. Other commission staff headed by[the] Queen’s Counsel... have been paid a total of \$4.8 million. And... the Counsel for [the NZ] First leader... has so far been paid \$1.472 million... [Furthermore,] a senior parliamentary committee... also noted both [the IRD and the SFO] were likely to have faced “opportunity costs” running into millions of dollars as a result of the inquiry. For example, [the IRD] had been forced to cut the number of tax audits of medium-sized businesses by 25 this year because it had to budget an extra \$640,000 to meet additional costs arising from the winebox inquiry. Each dollar spent on medium business audits is estimated to return \$4.70... [However, the Treasurer] rejected any suggestion that the inquiry represented a “black hole” in terms of cost when he appeared before the committee earlier this month. He estimated there would be a return of \$25 to taxpayers for every dollar spent by the inquiry.

...Tax collectors did not need a commission of inquiry to pounce on \$140 million owed by winebox tax deal companies, the [IRD] said last night... \$140.5 million in taxes was assessed from documents which the [SFO] put in its hands by February 1994. [The IRD spokeswoman] acknowledged that these would not have been assessed without access to the winebox documents but said the task was done regardless of the inquiry. The money related to six tax deals and the department had managed to get hold of only \$38,000 so far as the companies involved were contesting the rest.

...The Treasurer... is seeking to take[a] legal challenge of the winebox findings straight to the Court of Appeal... Normally, the case would be heard in the High Court and, depending on the outcome, then be subject to appeal. The reason cited for going straight to the appeal court is the need to have an issue of national importance “authoritatively determined.”

...In a decision released yesterday... [a High Court] judge has... turned down [the Treasurer’s argument that a]... challenge of the winebox findings should be heard... in the Court of Appeal... [instead of] the High Court.

...[the Winebox appeal has delivered the NZ First leader his best political news since last election night and he is firmly hitching his comeback bid to the case. A full Bench of the Court of Appeal unanimously overturned a High Court decision preventing the Deputy PM from appealing against some of the findings of the Winebox commissioner. The decision also awards the cost of the appeal to the Deputy PM. Now he will go back to the High Court and argue that the commissioner got the law wrong in finding that there had been no tax evasion in the so-called Magnum deal. But anxious to minimise backlash from a Winebox-weary public, he apologised for the time the issue had taken so far and said he would pursue the case “with all speed.” The Treasurer has driven the case largely single-handedly. Now he is intent on extending ownership for the campaign to his party.]

...The NZ] First leader... will have to accede to National [Party]pressure to keep off the ministerial task force on the winebox findings, or face the threat of a head-on conflict with the P[M, who last]... night... distanced National from... his coalition deputy and Treasurer for filing a legal challenge on Friday against the winebox findings... Legal sources say the bill could be several million dollars if proceedings drag on for months. However, if the presiding judge strikes out the action at an early stage it will cost taxpayers only about \$10,000... [The] Treasurer... has said his legal fees will not be at the taxpayers’ expense.

...[the Treasurer] has signalled an acceptance that he will not be appointed to the winebox ministerial review committee while he pursues a legal challenge to the winebox findings... [However, the PM] is now saying he may not establish a ministerial committee... [anyway] – thereby ending the argument over whether [the Treasurer] should sit on it.

...The P[M has given his deputy a] blunt message to put coalition unity first and drop any plans for a legal challenge to overturn the embarrassing findings of the winebox inquiry... But an unrepentant [Deputy PM] – still toughing out Opposition calls for his resignation – gave the impression yesterday that he was in no hurry to make up his mind. He indicated that it might be two weeks before he discussed the damning report in detail with his legal advisers. Such a delay would allow him time to engineer a face-saving backdown. He must also ponder whether he can politically afford another difficult court battle... The longer [he] keeps the winebox report a live issue, the more he risks driving a wedge between himself and [the PM] and damaging a key coalition relationship that has so far survived intact. Parliament has gone into a handily timed, two week recess.

...As happens in the sunset of long and illustrious careers, retirement ultimately beckons... And as so often happens in the dawn of the afterlife, one’s expertise just cannot be replaced... [The Winebox commissioner] put in a lot of hours since getting the call... three years ago asking if he could pop back to work for a couple of months to sort out a few things. Yes, it does seem to have gone on a bit... though... he’s picked up... the million or so dollars... from his little part-time number... [S]ome of the calls have been a bit hard to interpret for the lay people in the terraces. They, after all, will be picking up the tab for the extravaganza... The mean-spirited among them might well question whether, in the history of human diddling, so much has been owed by so many to so few... [However,] if you want the big boys you pay the big bikkies. But, comes the rejoinder, was it worth it? Why all the fuss? ...if someone dumped a winebox outside your door and after clawing your way feverishly through it you found it to be full of a load of old papers, wouldn’t you be jumping up and down? - 1997

For a comfortable retirement you need to do more than rely on... superannuation.

You’ve heard it before and you’re going to hear it a lot more... If you want a comfortable standard of living... for your retirement... you have to plan for your future.

MILLIONS of taxpayers’ dollars have been spent persuading us to think about retirement and most people now accept the need to save for the future. But evidence suggests many of us feel we don’t understand enough about financial issues and are hesitant about seeking advice in case we’re taken for a ride.

...[a] former Treasury official who advised the last Labour government on the issue, said... [retirement schemes] such as those advocated by... N[Z] First, ACT and the Christian Coalition would put a damaging impost on the whole economy but especially on the low-income or jobless... For today’s 35 year-old, a compulsory pension savings scheme would be the equivalent of a 30% tax increase for the next 30 years of working life. The cheapest scheme being mooted would cost 8c in the dollar... People with low or fluctuating incomes... would be subject to a complicated income test all their lives so the government could keep track of how much it would need to top up individual contributions so there would be a pension for them in retirement. Self-employed people would also be vulnerable to income-testing... [A] compulsory savings... scheme would not address N[Z]’s fundamental superannuation problem. - 1996

Over the past 25 years N[Z]ers have struggled to understand that the welfare state was never intended for the middle class. We should not perpetuate the myth that N[Z] has historically been able to afford a universal[tax-based] retirement scheme, nor should we pretend that this is possible in the future.

...N[Z] First has secured a commitment from the coalition to run a referendum on introducing... a... compulsory, contributions-based superannuation scheme... Maintaining the present superannuation system will require substantial tax increases or cuts in social spending, says the Treasurer... [– the NZ First leader who also represents Tauranga (‘Tauranga has more superannuants than any other electorate’ in NZ). He] said the ageing of the “baby boom” generation would mean a doubling of spending on super and health from 10... to 20[% of GDP] towards the middle of next century. Since the present system was introduced, entitlements had been cut from 80[%] of the gross average wage to 66[%] of the net wage.

...The country will vote on compulsory superannuation in September, and a “yes” majority – no matter how slim the margin – will be treated as binding. Through a postal ballot, voters will be offered the opportunity to remain with the status quo or to shift to a system of compulsory retirement savings. If they opt for change, legislation will be introduced into Parliament to have the new scheme up and running by July 1... [1998. L]ocal government experience showed that postal ballots drew more votes than the ballot box. They were also about \$7 million cheaper to run. The exercise is expected to cost about \$10 million: \$900,000 for preparing the electoral rolls, \$4 million for a publicity campaign and \$5 million for the ballot itself, which will be held over three weeks... The Alliance leader... attacked the whole concept yesterday, saying all the experts agreed that the deadline for designing the scheme was too tight. He questioned the fairness of any system which relied on private savings. “What happens to women who take time out of the workforce to raise children, or to people who get sick and spend a substantial number of their years on benefits? ...will... the Government... let them starve, or is it proposing to top up their incomes, which would amount to a massive surtax on everyone else?”

...A “yes” vote in the September referendum on compulsory superannuation seems likely to usher in income-testing for the state pension. The P[M]... indicated this yesterday when he linked the ballot to the long-term affordability of the state super scheme. Quoting Treasury estimates that by the year 2040, the ratio of workers to superannuitants would have dropped from 5:1 to just 2:1, he said: “It must be clear that a shift of that magnitude will result in fiscal pressures... This Government is not prepared to ignore the problem by passing it on to future generations to solve.

That is why we are exploring alternative ways of coping with that pressure now... My position is... I hope we can design a scheme that I can support.” ...The Treasurer... said that if the state scheme was scrapped... existing superannuitants and the soon-to-retire would be protected, as would those unable to save enough to support themselves... Immediately evident from [a speech the Treasurer made] to the Association of Investment Advisers and Financial Planners in Wellington was how far [he] has moved from the NZ First election campaign platform... He said then that people would be able to borrow against their compulsory savings to buy a home or expand their business, but now says the funds will be “locked away” until retirement. Lump-sum payments have also apparently been ruled out. [He] said they were tricky to manage “over an unknown future lifespan.” Instead the system will be annuity-based. Estimations are that an individual would need to have saved in today’s dollars \$160,000 to generate an annuity equivalent to what is now paid out in national superannuation. Under the scenario painted by [the Treasurer], the state would provide a one-off payment into a person’s account to bring it up to \$160,000... Whether people could stop saving once they reached this level or whether they would be forced to continue contributing had yet to be decided. If the [Treasurer’s scenario] is voted in, it will come into force on July 1 next year and, by 2002, contributions will be levied... on assessable income – earnings and dividends. But [the Treasurer] said taxes would be cut to compensate taxpayers for the full... levy. He did not specify where the cuts would be made... He made it clear that the Government was considering a highly deregulated contributory superannuation model in which there will be no Government guarantees. “The market needs to stand on its own performance,” he said. People will be free to choose from competing schemes and to spread their risk between them. No restrictions will be placed on pension funds investing overseas.

...The working group responsible for designing the scheme to be put to the referendum has yet to be announced[, and the Treasurer is]... defensive about the[retirement] policy details so far... “The real question is whether the Government will continue to ensure that[the] elderly will have sufficient income in retirement, and the answer is that we will.” ...So what he’s saying, of course, is... that... the Government’s going to take the whole risk of the failure of these private schemes.

...[a] compulsory superannuation scheme [(CSS) is predicted to be] a “gift for lawyers and accountants,”... [T]ax lawyers and tax planners would have a field day. People were already devising avoidance schemes.

...The... main winners would be bureaucrats. “A lot of rules and regulations will have to be written and policed. It will be good for the Wellington economy,”... [an] economist... said yesterday... [By the way.] Europe has no greater champion of private pension provision than Britain. But efforts to reduce the pension burden on the state have not gone smoothly... [T]he long-running personal pension misselling scandal that arose as a result[of those efforts] has been a highly damaging episode for the reputation of all British private pension providers... [T]he... debacle was dubbed “one of the biggest financial services scandals in the UK this century” by[the] economic secretary at the Treasury... Misselling began in the late 1980s, when the British Government was trying to promote personal pensions as a way to get people out of the state earnings-related pension scheme... Commission-hungry salesmen... persuaded... [thousands] of nurses, teachers and miners... to leave their big public sector pension schemes and take out personal pensions instead. In virtually every case, they should have been advised to stay where they were because employer contributions would result in a much higher pension at retirement. Other victims were simply persuaded not to join their company scheme... As many as 1.5 million people may have been wrongly advised to buy personal pensions over a six year period between April 29, 1988, and June 30, 1994... As one... insurance executive puts it: “There was misselling, there’s no doubt about that... People thought it was all right because everyone was doing it and getting away with it...” In fact, recognition of the problem built up in the early 1990s and regulators finally confronted it directly in 1993 when systematic sampling confirmed misselling was occurring. Initially, regulators published standards for future business – then came the guidelines to pension providers to sort out past transgressions and compensate victims... At the end of March, a mere 12,650 people had accepted compensation out of a staggering 570,000 identified cases. To the industry’s great shame, it emerged that 18,000 victims had died before even being compensated... Latest estimates suggest it will cost British pension providers more than £4 billion... to clear up the misselling scandal. Compensation for those lucky enough to have received it averaged about £9000 a head... Apart from headlines about the “extraordinarily slow” pace of efforts to compensate victims, there have been adverse comments about high charges on personal pension plans, and a tax change in... Labour[’s] recent budget which has made personal savings much less attractive. An estimated 6 million people in Britain have personal pensions.

...A legal tug-of-war has developed between the B[NZ] and its staff superannuation scheme over earnings on the fund’s \$100 million-plus surplus. If the bank wins the argument, the returns credited to members of the scheme are likely to drop by about a third, while the bank’s contribution holiday will be extended for years. In addition, an independent review of the way the scheme has worked since 1991 has discovered up to \$17 million in errors at the members’ expense, the BNZ Officers Provident Association (OPA) says in its most recent newsletter. But the bank disputes the existence of these errors and the OPA board of management’s right to rectify them. Meanwhile, frustration is mounting that the bank and the board have yet to finalise a \$31.8 million top-up payment to be made to some 1100 of the scheme’s 2900 members. That transfer is intended to put right anomalies and what now seem unduly pessimistic actuarial assumptions made back in 1990 when most of the association’s members switched from a defined benefit (pension) to a defined contribution (lump sum) scheme. In each case, a present value of the future pensions they were forgoing had to be calculated. That process left a surplus, which by October 1994 stood at \$144 million, and which is recognised as an asset in the balance sheet of N[BA], which took over the BNZ in 1992. The OPA has operated a policy that allowed the surplus to be shared between members and the bank: the members get the benefits of earnings on the surplus, while the bank pays its contributions to the scheme out of the surplus, whittling it down by about \$6 million a year. Since 1991, about a third of the earnings credited to members reflect earnings on the surplus... In other words, a return of, say, 4[%], after expenses, on the assets of the fund as a whole become an effective 6[%] return to the members. The bank began to challenge the validity of this policy in mid-1995, and High Court proceedings were begun in December 1995. The bank disputes that the board has the power to set the “distribution earnings rate” policy and also contends that the decisions it has made in exercising that power are invalid and unreasonable. [Last] September, a mediation process was started. The results were inconclusive, OPA says, but it may resume this year. Meanwhile, preliminary legal exchanges continue... Lawyers and actuaries representing two groups of members – those with more than 20 years’ service and those with less – have recommended several changes to the... \$31.85 million adjustment... proposals, some of which the OPA board has accepted and which it is now seeking the bank’s agreement to... Under the special legislation that governs the OPA, the proposed changes do not have to be formally approved by members, although they will be informally polled... The OPA has dropped its plans for a series of roadshows to explain the proposal[s], preferring an information pack and written feedback approach. It now also wants to avoid the delay and expense of High Court ratification of the adjustment scheme if it can. That would depend on the degree of dissension among members to the proposals... If there is a high enough degree of acceptance, OPA would seek the bank’s agreement to skip High Court ratification.

...Employer schemes worth signing up with... IF your boss has a company super scheme, then you’re most likely shooting yourself in the foot if you haven’t signed up... Company retirement schemes can be attractive says the retirement commissioner... They were popular in the ’80s when companies didn’t pay tax on money they contributed to the schemes, but many have closed since then as tax laws have changed. From 2242 employer schemes in 1990, the number was down to 392 in 1995. Besides the removal of tax incentives, other reasons for the decline were the costs of running them (especially so for smaller firms), and the move toward total remuneration packages. Of businesses surveyed by the retirement commissioner last year, 16% had retirement planning programmes in place, and it was big companies (with more than 50 employees) who were most likely to have one. While these companies comprise 1% of [NZ’s] businesses, they employ 48% of the workforce. Two thirds of employers surveyed told the... commissioner they intended to maintain their programme. But whether that intention stands the test of possible compulsory

superannuation is another point. Some observers are picking that if employers are forced to become collectors for compulsory super, they may give away running their own schemes in greater numbers.

...The fate of the September[CSS] referendum... will hinge on the attractiveness of the proposal the Government puts to the electorate. It has instructed officials to draw on NZ First's election manifesto and the compulsory scheme mooted by [a] 1992... Task Force in developing the model to be put to the public... Of the two, the NZ First policy is the most superficially appealing, but it is also widely considered to be impractical. It was developed with votes rather than implementation in mind, and avoids all the stiff decisions. The task force faced these issues head-on and came up with a system which includes a heavy clawback regime. This might embarrass the Government, given its commitment to abolish the existing surtax which is extremely modest by comparison. These dilemmas must be making a nightmare of the design team's task, especially as it is already under tight deadline pressure.

...The P[M] yesterday gave his bluntest indication yet that the state pension will become unaffordable with the abolition of the surtax on April 1 next year. He said that once the targeting achieved through the surcharge was removed N[Z] had only three options, given its ageing population: increase taxes, reduce the level of the pension or, at some future date, reintroduce income-testing. The warning... suggests he is trying to soften the public for some form of claw-back to replace the surtax... He acknowledged that the commitment to scrap the surtax represented the single largest item of new expenditure by the Government, but he defended National's adoption of it on the grounds that the majority of N[Z]ers were opposed to [pension] targeting. They had demonstrated this by giving National – the only party that had campaigned on keeping the surtax – only 34[%] of the vote... "Whatever is decided – a savings-based scheme or a tax-based scheme – they are both compulsory and the status quo is not sustainable on present tax levels for very long."

...The superannuation tax surcharge may have become a dirty word for retired people, but its history shows it became that way by political ambushes and public confusion. From its birth in 1984 to its abolition next year it has had blows and curses from halls full of angry elderly, spurred by politicians who knew an easy target... In its first budget the 1984 Labour administration said it was an "inescapable conclusion... that there were other priorities for welfare expenditure than assisting those superannuitants who already had enough income on which to live comfortably." The surcharge meant that once pensioners had a certain level of income (\$6240 for single people and \$10,400 for a couple in 1985) their state superannuation started reducing at 25c in the dollar.

...A National cabinet minister... has come out loudly against compulsory superannuation, saying there is simply no evidence in its favour except that it will benefit the rich... [He] told a meeting of his Clutha-Southland electorate committee that "around 90[%] of the people I represent may be worse off, one way or another... There is no evidence that [it] solves the problems that people say it solves. No one has proved... it actually works... there is no evidence that compulsory super increases savings." ...He also doubted the coalition Government's ability to compensate compulsory savings with tax cuts, saying "trends in Government spending show that the next round of tax cuts will be the last for a while." ...yesterday... the P[M] hinted that the... age of eligibility for national superannuation may have to be raised to contain the costs of the scheme... He did not put a time-frame on when this might occur but observed that modern health care meant people were able to work longer and that some Nordic countries already had a retirement age of 70... [In NZ, t]he age of entitlement for the pension was 60 but is now around 63 and will reach 65 by the year 2001. The policy change was set in train in the 1991 "Mother of All Budgets" and was designed to ensure the scheme's economic sustainability.

...White paper – or white elephant? For an idea whose time has come – as [the Treasurer] declared yesterday – the launch of the Treasurer's [CSS] was a surprisingly muted occasion. Absent was any sense of excitement from a man who has less than 12 weeks to shift public opinion around. Some of that public sentiment, which runs roughly two-to-one against compulsion, could shift on the back of one of the scheme's crucial characteristics – neutrality towards women. But [the Treasurer] pulled out few other rabbits yesterday. What he desperately needs are allies – non-political ones – willing to back compulsion and prevent the debate being fouled by people's dislike of him. He must weather an Opposition hunt for loopholes and anomalies. Those parties will try to kill compulsion by using the white paper's fine print to inflict death by a thousand cuts; [the Treasurer] must keep painting the big picture. But the fine print matters. [The Treasurer's] big problem is that the bulk of taxpayers – more than 80[%] – earn less than \$40,000. Those people will take at least 27 years to save the required \$120,000 just to get a pension similar to what they would get now... The highest paid executive in N[Z] – the man who helped to create Telecom when he was the State Services Commission chairperson ('and was deputy governor of the Reserve Bank when the dollar was floated in 1985') and now... aged 56... earns \$1.5 million... [or] \$28,846 a week before tax... for running Telecom... [-] will take just six months to save for his annuity... [target of] \$24,000... In stark contrast, a young worker on the average weekly income of \$589.54 will take 35 years to save for a \$120,000 annuity. Furthermore, someone the same age as [the chief executive of Telecom] on the average wage will spend the rest of his or her working life saving towards \$24,000 but fall just short of that goal – at which point some of [the chief executive of Telecom's] taxes could provide a top-up... The other Achilles' heel is the degree to which those people will view the scheme as a redistribution of income to the already well-off. Those able to save \$120,000 in a hurry get real tax cuts; those who cannot will see their supposed tax cuts diverted into the scheme for years. Little surprise, then, that [the Treasurer's] sales pitch is cast in gloomy terms of "look what will happen to your pension" should the existing scheme be retained. He warns pension levels will inevitably drop or the age of entitlement rise. But he has one hand tied behind his back. The current scheme's long-term affordability cannot be debated in detail until later this month when [the] task force on private provision reports on the sustainability of tax-funded super. To counter that in advance, [the Treasurer] insists his scheme offers "certainty" and "durability." [The PM] argues the "moral force" of a positive referendum vote will entrench a savings-based scheme, making it free from tampering by politicians. That will not stop future governments fiddling with top-ups and other details. The scheme's success is also contingent on the economy still delivering surpluses to allow tax cuts to compensate for escalating contributions into pension funds. It is also contingent on future (Labour-Alliance) politicians forgoing tax rises. [The Treasurer's] real agenda, however, is getting N[Z]ers to be more self-reliant, "to get non-savers off the back of savers." He is really punting that sufficient people will vote his way to force others to save. But the polls indicate there are few such people and that the majority are more worried about what will happen to themselves – and their money.

...The Treasurer... faces the challenge of selling a superannuation scheme full of loopholes for the wealthy but offering the rest of N[Z] no more – and often less – than they get now... "I take my boat on water – but if I pull this off, I'll be able to walk on water." ...A key problem in the white paper... is that people would have the opportunity to minimise what they contribute to their compulsory savings account and to maximise the amount paid by the state in the form of a top-up... Meanwhile, hidden in the white paper is the fact that the minimum guaranteed retirement income will reduce. The guarantee of an income equivalent to 33[% less than] the net average wage remains but the base will be pulled back because the superannuation levies – to begin at 3[%] and move to 8[%] within five years – will be deducted before that calculation is made. Not only that, but the 33[%] floor will apply only at the point of retirement. After that the relativity will be lost because the annuity payment will be adjusted only for inflation... A woman will have to live past at least 81 years to get a full face-value from her nest egg, which will be inflated by around \$14,000 to recognise the fact that females live longer... A N[Z] man will have to live until he is at least 80 years to get back the \$120,000 he invests... Because there will be a 40-year transition period, only those born on or after April 1, 1973, will be cast entirely into the new regime... The target sum has yet to be finalised but [the Treasurer] says it will be less than \$120,000... Money saved beyond [the target] threshold would be subject to risk... And, although the white paper states that "retirees' incomes will be unaffected" should a pension fund go belly-up, it is vague on how this will be delivered, saying only that the Government will "consult with the industry to explore mechanisms for recovering investor losses."

...The Government is proposing to... add... a surcharge on to the minimum amount people[']d be required to save, and using it to insure annuity funds against collapse. Figures... indicate this could be as high as 8.1% of contributions... [S]uperannuation industry leaders said yesterday... [that they couldn't] recall a retirement savings fund going under in N[Z], but... entry requirements and other measures would provide safeguards.

...AT least half of the \$5 billion-plus compulsory super would rake in each year would probably have to be invested overseas... [because the local] market is... too small to cope with such a huge demand for investments. Treasury forecasts estimate... by... 2011 more than \$51.8b would have been invested in such schemes and this would rise to nearly \$250b by 2050...

Foreign workers who stay in N[Z] for more than two years will not be able to take their superannuation contributions home with them... "Those who stay longer than two years will be treated exactly like N[Z] workers," says the [Treasurer's]... white paper. "Their savings will stay in the scheme until they turn 65 and will then be available only to purchase a retirement annuity, unless savings are not sufficient to purchase a viable annuity. Rules governing access in such cases are still being developed."

...[the 11-year-old boy] can't imagine being 65. But from next year, if [the Treasurer] has his way, the budding actor will watch hundreds of hard-earned dollars disappear into a retirement fund he won't be able to touch until 2051. "Being old is kinda scary. I don't really want to think about that now, I'm young," [he] says. Few children working on paper rounds or in supermarkets would earn the \$5000 a year at which superannuation payments kick in. But showbiz kids... and some teenagers with part-time jobs will be caught in the net... His mother... says that is ludicrous. "It's enough that he pays tax, otherwise it's not worth him going out there. Photographic jobs only pay about \$60, less tax – that's \$40 and me taking time off work to drive him there,"... [Roles in] *Shortland Street*... a short film... and a pile of television commercials have given the youngster significant earning power. In one year alone he earned \$10,500, with which he bought a computer hooked into the Internet and a new mountain bike and had enough left over for a reasonable stash in the bank. "I just save it until I see something I really, really want, like a... Playstation,"...

OF ALL [the details released] last week on the proposed [CSS], the item that exposed the raw Kiwi nerve was the insistence that payments would be by way of annuity, with no lump sum withdrawal. The traditional Kiwi preference has been to take a lump sum on retirement, often for spending promptly on travel or home improvement... [Another contentious detail was that if] a person [who] has bought an annuity... dies within 10 years of retiring, the estate will get a proportion of that annuity... [and if] part of [the] savings target was made up of a Government top-up, then the Government will take its proportion back... But if they die after 10 years in retirement, the surviving spouse or family will get nothing.

...About six out of 10 N[Z]ers could lose out by dying early under the proposed [CSS]... Their loss will be others' gain. By dying early and not getting the full value of their nest-eggs, they will effectively subsidise fellow N[Z]ers who live to a ripe age.

...Tis said that persons living on annuities Are longer lived than others, God knows why, Unless to plague the granters, yet so true it is, That some I really think do never die... ANNUITIES have been around... since the days of Lord Byron... [Yet when the] Treasurer... indicated last week that we may all become the holders of annuities under compulsory super, many people were asking, just what are annuities? Annuities are income streams provided in return for an upfront payment. An investor typically hands over a lump sum to a life office, and they then receive a regular payment (usually monthly) for a certain period, or more commonly, for the rest of their life.

...Normally a person buying annuity is betting that they will live longer than average and get more money from the insurance company than it bargained for. But some people get killed in crashes at the age of 66 and the insurance company, in the case of a standard annuity, respectably pockets the lump sum. There are arguments for and against annuities but they are a zero-sum system (with winners and losers). Moreover, an annuity-based system looks more expensive than the present system, will create gender and ethnic injustices and will not suit people... with an unhealthy lifestyle... Annuities have been used for centuries in Britain. Their chief merit was that a person could have a secure income for life. The person bought the annuity or the donor (often the Government) made one payment that guaranteed the recipient a dependable income stream for life... Payments cease at death. The insurance company decides the amount it can offer by combining interest earned with capital repayments to calculate what it can pay out over, say, 20 years. In 20 years the lump sum will have run out (the opposite to a mortgage). If the annuitant is still alive, the company begins to make a loss. If the annuitant is dead, the company profits. The company, therefore, has to estimate, even guess, the size of two variable factors: interest rates and life expectancy. Historical experience is a useful guide. In the 1820s a British inquiry established that annuitants were very long-lived. They were people who expected extra life, so from the 1880s the companies cunningly added four years to their life-tables. Moreover, the 1820 inquiry found that females lived longer and the industry would have to use different tables for men and women. Since the 1820s it has been normal practice to offer women a smaller annual income than men would receive from the same investment... At present, a 65-year-old female can buy a standard annuity that yields \$13,820 a year... [or] \$531 a fortnight... tax-free, for \$160,000... Men will get \$16,090 or \$618 a fortnight tax-free... This is neither fair nor unfair – it reflects the facts. To ignore them would destroy the insurance companies. And if the Government intervened to lessen the difference it would either rob men of the fruits of their investment or reward women at a further cost to the taxpayer... And when everyone has their annuity, will they be happy? Not if there is inflation. Usually annuities are not inflation-proofed, so income is stagnant. Someone on an annuity for 20 years is likely to need a top-up pension too.

...at a large London-based insurance company... workers joke that as punters walk down steep stairs outside... [-] the "annuity steps" [-] ...they might trip and fall to their deaths. Annuities are paid out until people die, so from the insurer's view, the sooner the client passes off this mortal coil the better... Annuities work by paying a combination of interest and principal on your investment – the exact proportion of which are worked out by whizz-kid maths geniuses employed by insurance companies. Arguably Maori, who statistically do not live as long as pakeha, get a bad deal from annuities. So might smokers or other folk with a relatively high chance of dying of cancer, those who have filled their arteries with plaque or the small number of retired folk who indulge in high-risk sports. Insurance companies are likely to steer clear of race differentials, but already take account of smoking and non-smoking... Smokers should... be able to demand cheaper annuities... It is possible that Maori may decide to opt out and have their own annuities... [because] there was nothing under the Human Rights Act to prevent a Maori organisation from setting up to offer annuities at a higher rate. Cost is the only thing in the way for such an organisation, but the flipside is that existing legislation provides considerable protection for the individual. The Insurance Act (1908) requires that such an organisation would need to pay a \$500,000 bond, a provision to protect people against cowboys. But, \$500,000 is worth only four annuities, so the effect of this bond is disputable... [Incidentally, t]he brief period of compulsory superannuation [NZ experienced] in 1975 has left the National Provident Fund with tens of thousands of "missing persons" on its books. In legislation now before Parliament's finance and expenditure select committee, NPF is seeking permission to extinguish its liability to some 48,000 people who have "gone, no address." The great majority are people who were working in local government or the meat industry in 1975. They joined the NPF... and stopped contributing when the compulsory scheme was terminated... NPF had undertaken extensive searches for these missing members, hunting in telephone books, advertising in newspapers and using Baycorp. The legislation scraps the obligation for the NPF to credit members' accounts with a minimum earnings rate of 4[%] (after tax and expenses) each year. The fund was closed to new members in 1991 because the Government, which guarantees it, wanted to limit its commercial risk. It still has \$2.9 billion under management, 62,500 current members and 26,500 pensioners. But that includes more than 15,000 members in defined contribution (pension) schemes with balances of less than \$1000. There are also more than 10,000 pensioners receiving less than \$25 a week. So another provision of the legislation will enable NPF to pay out lump sums instead of small pensions, while existing pensioners... will have the choice of taking a lump sum.

...[the Government-controlled NPF has told thousands of people with a small superannuation nest egg that their accounts must have a minimum balance of \$5000 or they will be closed. The policy change has outraged one Auckland woman who would like to kickstart her modest account of \$700 after raising

a family and returning to the workforce. The woman said: "The Government was saying save, and yet they are trying to kick out the small people like me who haven't managed to save because of raising children." She felt as though the rug was being pulled out from under her because there was no way she could bring her account up to \$5000 within the six-month deadline. The fund chief executive said 4573 of the 9500 members in the lump-sum cash accumulation scheme had savings of less than \$5000 and 3200 of these had less than \$1000. The Labour finance spokesman said the fund could not afford to run low level accounts, but he thought it had set the limit rather high at \$5000 and was not being reasonable about giving people on modest incomes enough time to come up with the balance.' In related news,] **the criterion for getting...** [the] **Government top up...** [from the proposed CSS] **is failure to have saved to an adequate level. Meanwhile, the state guarantee... would encourage people into risky investments by effectively removing the risk...** "You can take all the risks you like. If you pass [the target level], you are in clover. If you don't, the Government will ensure you still get [the target]... As the only result of saving[for the target] is to forgo any state contribution toward your savings, people will try to... [hide] as much of their income as possible..." ...the arrangement will... also... mean that the taxpayer pays the administrative costs of the scheme as these will be charged to the individual saver in smaller balances which will in turn require bigger top-ups... [To administer] today's superannuation scheme... is estimated to cost about 0.31[%] of taxpayers' money spent. Most fund managers in N[Z] charge between 0.5 and 5[%] on investors' personal funds... According to[a] research house... the average annual return provided by diversified balanced superannuation schemes in this country over the last five years was 6.37% after tax and fees.

...Fierce competition for only small amounts of savings in the early years of compulsory superannuation will make the scheme less of a bonanza for fund managers than it might seem at first sight... [C]ompetitive pressures would prevent institutions from passing on administrative costs and that would chew up much of the management profit... Fund managers often set their fees on a percentage of the amount under management, but it would be several years before savings had grown to profitable levels... [I]nvestment advisers could be cut out as institutions sought to cut costs by marketing directly to the public.

...it is not clever for the Government to steer... money to... the... "approved" fund-management industry. It is overwhelmingly evident that when the participants in this industry try to be active managers they do not proximate the average investment returns from a passive direct investment in cash, bonds and shares. It is equally wrong to conclude, as is the fashion in this industry, that the market average can be approximated by forcing large sums into index funds. Such reasoning ignores how the market average comes about – through myriad competing investments, some winning some losing. If a substantial proportion of household savings are forced to be average through indexing, then the average resulting from the diversity of investment flows is undermined... The Government will make a huge error if it rides roughshod over the diversity of investment flows, of which a free market is composed, by steering large volumes of investment money away from the owners of those funds to the "approved" manager industry. It will create a financial concentration and fund herd-like investment managers to an extent that their behaviour undermines market stability... [By the way, it was announced yesterday that t]he Employers Federation would seek to recover the extra costs of making pay packet deductions under the [CSS]... Unlike income tax, which can be paid on the totalled earnings of a company's employees, the compulsory retirement contributions would require individual deductions and statements each pay period... [A] rough estimate of the extra costs facing employers under the scheme was between 50c and \$2 each transaction... [E]mployers already footed the compliance bill for student loan, child support, court fines and other deductions. The chief executive of the Auckland Chamber of Commerce... said he did not believe compulsory super alone presented a big compliance issue. But he agreed employers should be compensated for the range of deductions they were required to make. One way would be for the Government to reduce business taxes by 1[%].

...Employers have shown the door to compulsory superannuation in a survey published yesterday, citing distrust of the Government... high compliance costs... and... [concern that] a yes vote... [puts at] risk... growth in 1998-99... Almost 76[%] of the 760 companies which returned questionnaires to the Employers Federation journal... favoured voluntary retirement savings. Only 22[%] supported a compulsory scheme and 3[%] were undecided... [Meanwhile, National's 5th-ranked MP] and... the Treasurer... appear to have ignored a cabinet understanding that ministers stop indulging in point-scoring arguments about compulsory superannuation which only confuse the coalition's stance on tax cuts. The coalition's position on tax cuts has become muddled by tit-for-tat arguments prompted by [the Treasurer's] blunt statement last week that a "no" vote in the September referendum would kill tax reductions scheduled beyond those coming into force next year. The Treasurer's remarks annoyed National MPs who see future tax cuts as giving their party substantial "brand differentiation" in the minds of voters.

...The super heavyweights... last night argued about guarantees under the proposed [CSS, with National's 5th-ranked MP] saying there is no Government guarantee and [the Treasurer] saying there is... [Incidentally, i]t's appropriate the superannuation surcharge will be dropped next year, as confirmed in the Budget, because 1998 will mark the centenary of NZ's Old Age Pensions Act. It made this country the first in the Commonwealth to introduce such pensions – 10 years ahead of Britain. The initial scheme was non-contributory and provided £18 a year... about 40[%] of the average wage... for those with an income of £34 or less. Men had to be 65 and women 60.

...More than 100 years ago compulsory superannuation was an issue. Now it is back on the agenda... EVEN before pensions were introduced into N[Z], the country's] Premier... suggested a [CSS] in the 1880s. The scheme was rejected by N[Z]ers, "who did not show much interest then in a compulsory savings scheme"... The public unease then... was much the same as[the unease] raised by today's N[Z] First scheme... People in the 1880s were concerned about the practical difficulties of getting everyone to contribute, the security of the investment fund, and the problems of people moving around the country and changing jobs. "What is being considered today is incredibly similar to ideas discussed 100 years ago... its amazing how circular it has become,"... The second time N[Z] rejected a CSS] was more controversial and illustrated how sensitive an issue retirement income is in politics. In 1974 the Labour Government pushed through the N[Z] Superannuation Act, which had been engineered by [the man] who led sweeping financial reforms as Minister of Finance in the Labour Governments of the 1980s. When the scheme was announced in 1972 it was initially well received... But as the features of the scheme began to emerge it was attacked. Criticisms included: The scheme would take 40 years to come fully into operation, and therefore most of the workforce would never receive its benefits; and that a large number of the population... whose working life was broken or halted were not adequately protected... Labour's superannuation policy was... one of the reasons Labour lost the election. Ironically, the closest relation to NZ First's superannuation policy... is Labour's 1974 Superannuation Act. NZ First has proposed a two-tier system, under which the state-funded pension continues but is topped up by a compulsory scheme. Under the system the minimum level of state super of a married couple would be raised from 65% of the average wage to 67.5%; contributions from wage and salary earners and beneficiaries and the self employed would be placed in each contributor's personal fund; and people could choose who to invest with, or have the Government choose a scheme of private sector fund managers... Whether N[Z]... accepts or rejects compulsory superannuation, debate and [controversy] over payment to the elderly is sure to endure if history is any guide. It took years of argument in the 1890s before The Old Age Pensions Act became law. The Act was generated by the 1880 depression, which saw unemployment and bankruptcy destroy people's ability to provide for themselves in old age... Cost, which has since hung over the superannuation/pension debate like the grim reaper, played a decisive role in the final form of the 1898 act which granted a benefit for those aged over 65 who had lived in N[Z] for 25 years, and were of modest means and a requirement to be of "good moral character and sober habits". Over time, the pension was gradually increased [and]the qualifying conditions relaxed. In 1925 a pensioner's house became fully exempt from a means test so that home ownership was encouraged relative to other types of investment. By 1937, the residency qualification had been reduced to 10 years. The 1930s depression again sparked reform and the N[Z] Social Security Act 1938, was seen by the world as pioneering social legislation with the provision of universal superannuation to all people over 65

regardless of means. It was a token amount but there was also a means-tested age benefit for people in need. The act saw heated debate in Parliament over the amount of payment. In recent years N[Z]'s ageing population rather than hardship has had the biggest impact on the superannuation debate... The National Superannuation introduced by the [National] government in 1977 was linked to average wage, not means tested, and was, in essence, what the 1930s Labour government wanted. However it was hugely expensive and national super began to "blow out", by the end of the 1980s... In 1975 N[Z] spent \$365 million on national superannuation. This had risen to \$1.3 billion in 1980. Measures (such as raising the age of eligibility [from 60] to 61 in 1992, with the age rising progressively to 65[depending on the worker's age in 1992]) saw superannuation payments peak at \$5.5 billion in 1992. In 1996 \$5.1 billion was paid out, against the \$3.5 billion total... paid out in unemployment, sickness, invalids and domestic purposes benefits... A full circle return to a pension along the lines of 1898, which was largely a safety net for the poor, would not surprise some historians.

...Today N[Z] superannuation amounts to \$241.49 for a single person, subject to a surcharge on earnings over \$80 a week. If... one of the country's original pensioners... had been a superannuitant now, he would have got a lot more for his money than he did in 1899, but the payout would still be equivalent to 40[%] of the average gross wage... If... one of the... 7500 recipients... back in 1899, had saved all his pennies from the state he could have bought a horse within two years... [The] seven shillings a week would have bought him little more than a loaf of bread, a pound of beef, a quart of milk and a bottle of whisky. The first universal payment was introduced in 1940... At £78 a year, it was still around 40[%] of the average wage... [F]or those 65 and over it would have barely bought a loaf of bread and a dozen oranges each week... By 1960 the Government had gradually increased superannuation to match the age pension, but at £274 a year for a single person it was barely 30[%] of the average wage. It would have kept the cupboards stocked with groceries for the week, but would not have covered the rent... In 1980... National Superannuation for people aged 60 and over... paid \$80 a week – about 35[%] of the average wage.

...Could you live with a figure like... \$10,344... at sixty? ...It's what fifty-five percent off [NZ] women over 60 live on.

...WOMEN advising other women on money matters are keeping an anxious eye on September's [CSS] poll. Some believe compulsory super will helpfully force the issue for many women – others are not so sure. [One f]inancial adviser... said attitudes among 25 to 35-year-old women towards saving had changed significantly since she began targeting the women's market in Auckland 2 1/2 years ago. "They are realising the impact that compounding interest can have on savings gathered over the long term, and are really getting their act together,"... However, women in the 35-55 age group were slower to respond. "Many are still relying on what their husbands or partners are doing, and they don't realise the seriousness of their position should circumstances change..."... A financial adviser with "Big Six" accounting and advisory firm Coopers and Lybrand... is worried about any scheme that is related to income-earning capacity. "Women earn less, they tend to leave and re-enter the workforce with family commitments... Compulsion is so opposed to the flexibility women need when handling their finances." [A] Hamilton-based financial adviser... said compulsion could be a double-edged sword for women. "For women who have jobs and keep them, it could be good,"... But low-income earners, many of whom are women, could find themselves in even greater difficulty if up to 8% of their income was siphoned off into compulsory super. "Yes, it may be the right thing to force these people into some form of compulsory scheme, but it could also make life even more of a purgatory, and I am opposed to that. Life is for living, and for living today."

...The Government has developed one of the best [CSSs] in the world for next month's referendum... [says the] Minister of Finance... but all the surveys of public opinion suggest... it will be rejected by a decisive margin... Barely one person in 10... supports the scheme... Interestingly, younger voters, aged 18 to 29, were more heavily opposed... than older groups... Significantly more women (83[%]) than men (74[%]) were opposed...

It seems certain already that we are going to turn down an opportunity that has been offered only once before in my lifetime, to put superannuation on a sound financial footing. Those of us well into our working span, who will comprise most of the voters at the referendum, will do exactly what our elders did in 1975: tote up the time left to make compulsory contributions and decide to keep the money, especially when we learn that our voluntary savings for a windfall at retirement will not give the Government sufficient security. This referendum is about social security but most of us will vote on calculations of self-interest.

...Scrooge McDuck certainly had it. The Alliance doesn't want a bar of it. But it could be deep inside a psyche near you, possibly in your grandparents. What we are talking about here is "capitalist spirit," a concept plucked from obscurity yesterday into the blinding light of the superannuation debate... [I]t means the desire to accumulate wealth for its own sake, without any thought of ever spending it... The capitalist spirit factor in the complicated mathematical formula can range from zero to infinity, but if it is greater than one it implies the spirit is a greater motive for saving than future consumption. [The Alliance leader] said he hated to think about money spent on such research. He believed the last thing the... debate needed was "mystical calculations of the degree of capitalist spirit at large in the community." In any case it is an extremely academic way of saying what comic readers knew all along: Scrooge McDuck loves having money for its own sake.

...On Sunday the Alliance leader... issued 10 ways to avoid payments into the retirement savings scheme... "Avoidance measures are irresponsible... but a Government that encourages avoidance with an ill-thought-out scheme is just as bad," he said.

...N[Z]ers are being sent mixed signals. Why save more if the Government is going to pick up more of the bill for health, education, and welfare, as it has announced over the past few months? ...WHETHER we stick with the present voluntary super scheme, or opt for a compulsory one... we will still have to pay more taxes if the elderly are to have adequate superannuation... Compulsory super is being proposed on the basis that N[Z]'s level of saving is inadequate and that the present scheme is unsustainable. Both claims are misleading... It is not obvious N[Z] has a saving problem. Historically, it has not been the level of saving but the poor quality of investment arising from distortionary government policy. It is also not clear a [CSS] would increase national saving. Compulsion will influence the form rather than the overall level of saving... The evidence is overwhelming that high savings lead to high growth. But it is not so clear high growth is always a good thing. Savings rates in many Asian countries are extremely high, and they have grown quickly as a result. However, they do this through sacrifice. They give up the joys of consumption today in order to be able to consume more in the future. In many cases the extra future utility may not be enough to compensate for the lost utility today. Either way, the trade-off between consuming now or in the future is a personal choice and it is presumptive of a government to claim it knows better than the individual.

...Business Systems and Forms Ltd has won the tender for processing the personalised voting forms... The massive mailout... [contains] a post-paid envelope, fact sheet and multi-language directions... The towering stacks of 2.5 million superannuation referendum packs in a Mt Wellington warehouse would fill seven N[Z] homes... Posties can expect to clock up overtime as they deliver... [the] packs to households... N[Z] Post's general manager of letters for the Auckland region... said the referendum packs would almost double the usual volume of mail... Voters have until September 26 to return their completed forms... The task... [of] collating the returned votes... has been made easier with the first-time use of an electronic scanner to count the votes and read the bar codes for individual voters.

...On Friday the debate ends and voting begins. Papers for the referendum on [CSS] will arrive in letter boxes throughout the country over next weekend and into Monday. But the question may fairly be asked: Did we ever really have a debate? Or has it been a case of interest groups with a financial stake or political point in either the [CSS] or NZ Super camps arguing their respective cases while ordinary citizens got on with watching the All Blacks win, or enjoying some fine weekends in a largely mild winter. Unlike MMP, for example, there was no real grassroots push for this referendum. It's been seen as the baby of one political party... and one politician in particular... Because there was no groundswell of public opinion wanting compulsory super put to the vote... there has been no genuine public debating of the issues by ordinary people. Experts have

disagreed over many issues, leaving ordinary people unsure and almost certainly determined not to vote for change. Not the kind of issue, it has been argued, that is the proper subject of a referendum anyway.

...Observers of voting habits in N[Z] might think we are addicted to referendums. No other country consulted its citizens... once every three years [on average] for almost a century... In 1993 the... Government passed legislation allowing citizens initiated referendums. A poll must be held on an issue for which a petition has gained the signatures of 10[%] of registered electors – about 235,000. One petition since, by firefighters, had enough valid signatures. A mere 27[%] of voters turned up at the polls. Referendums are uncommon overseas, except in Switzerland where just 1.1[%] of voters can request one, Italy, where it takes 1.5[%] of voters, and in some states of the U[S]. This may be because they are expensive to run, require careful reduction of what might be a complex issue to be a yes/no question, and appear to some as an abdication of parliamentary authority.

...Some voters in the superannuation referendum are still without their ballot forms... However... [the] referendum returning officer... was confident that all eligible voters would receive the forms in time to have their say.

...After the “no” vote has been counted in the referendum on retirement savings, the nation’s leading executives expect a loud cry for another solution. Three-quarters of those responding to the latest... University of Auckland survey expect political pressure for another answer to the perceived superannuation problem... Two-thirds expect economic pressure to find a solution.

...SUPERANNUATION looks likely to be put into the too-hard basket by the Government for some time if the [CSS] referendum delivers a “no” vote. [The PM] said yesterday: “I would think that there will be a pause for a while.”

...One day... you... may be scrolling through an archive for the authentic voices of the past... trying to understand how N[Z] missed a golden opportunity to install a system of properly invested superannuation funds... You will be agonising over the cost of pensions just as we were all throughout the entire last quarter of the previous century, though our retired population was literally not half the burden we will be to you. Yes, we saw it coming... Those of us born in the 20 years between the war and the pill knew the dependency ratio we would present to you when we began retiring. But look, honestly, it still seemed a long way off in 1997... Looking back, there never was a better time to set up a [CSS] than the mid-1990s. The country was coming out of a long, painful reconstruction of its economy, dismantling a protective system with its high taxation to redistribute the easy profits from restricted competition. Once the opened economy began to grow vigorously from about 1993 the Government suddenly found itself with surplus taxation. What better, you wonder, than to invest the surplus in retirement funds... Most of us would never have missed the money except for one thing. We knew – and this I think is what really killed the scheme – that if we voted against compulsory saving we would get a tax cut. Yes, it was short-sighted; all right, selfish if you must... but it’s the old story, bird-in-the-hand... None of our reasons will sound very rational even to us in time. And I have not even mentioned that many will vote down the proposal just to spite [the Treasurer]. You don’t believe a referendum so important could be stampeded so easily? You had to be there.

...N[Z]ers should be wary of predictions that there will be fewer workers to support each pensioner in 30 years’ time, says the Government statistician. [He] told an Auckland population conference yesterday that the figures often used in the superannuation debate could be misleading... Countries such as Sweden already had the high level of pensioners to workers predicted in N[Z] by 2031... the ratio was “a crude and brutal instrument,” which did not allow for a gradual increase in the retiring age that had already started... The concept of retirement is in the... throes of being radically altered. It is increasingly likely that the first wave of baby boomers to reach retirement will have to keep earning a wage, albeit in a reduced capacity... The proportion of 60 to 64-year-olds still working had jumped from 36... to 50[%] for men and from 17 to 28[%] for women since 1991... [Furthermore,] there was no guarantee that a [CSS] would increase the combined level of private and public savings. [The statistician] said if the country had stuck with an earlier Labour scheme begun in 1974 “we would probably still be discussing the issue now because we would have lost the money either in Think Big or in the stock market crash of October 1987.”

...ARE we about to sail off the edge of the world if we don’t have compulsory superannuation? Truth is, says the *National Bank*, we have already circumnavigated the globe. In its latest bulletin, it says there were more dependents (those aged under 15 or over 64) in 1965 than there will be in 2050 when the supposed... “crisis” hits. “If we managed then, why can’t we manage in the future?” asks the bank... “Kids are just as expensive to keep as the elderly,” said the bank’s chief economist... [Even the Treasurer has confirmed that the 1992] review had found that the current pension could be maintained without alteration until at least 2015... “...N[Z] Super is okay until the year 2015 but there is a question mark from then on.”

...N[Z] has no ageing crisis and there is no need to panic... says... an expert on demographic history... The proportion of those older than 60 will increase by 24% by the year 2020... but in much of the OECD the increase will be 30%-50%. In Japan, it would be 67%. Many European countries already had a considerably older population than N[Z] and spent much more on state pensions. While N[Z] superannuation cost 5% of [GDP], in many European countries it was 10%-15%. “N[Z] should keep the ageing problem in perspective, and not adopt the anxieties of those with much more pressing problems,” he said... In fact... countries like Germany and Japan, with a long history of compulsory super, were even more concerned than N[Z] about the growing burden of supporting the elderly... Western countries had worried for more than a century about the ageing of their populations. The crisis had failed to arrive, and had even produced notable benefits. People had better health, lived longer, had more freedom from child rearing, more money and fewer dependants. The notion that an older workforce would be feebler, less innovative or less productive was not borne out by the evidence... It was absurd to believe that a country could, by a [CSS], determine “who got what share of the cake in 50 years.” It was better to continue with the present scheme, which was simple, easy to administer, and comparatively easy to change when change was needed.

...The reason for the likely failure of the... referendum lies buried in hundreds of pages of official advice to the Government on the [CSS]. The documentation, released under the Official Information Act, shows that the main aim was to save the Government money rather than develop a proposal which would be attractive to the voting public.

...“Stop being self-indulgent. Start listening to the people.” Last night’s stunning referendum result is the rudest possible message to head-in-the-sand politicians in Wellington sent at the best possible time... So overwhelming was the defeat... [–] “no” from... 91.8[%] of the 80.3% turnout [–] ...that the N[Z] First leader... and the coalition Government have to take it personally... [Indeed, 10.9%] voted no because of... the Treasurer[, who suggested yesterday that superannuation]... is set to become a political football again next election... The superannuation referendum cost \$6 million – not including the cost of the Independent Referendum Panel.

...Almost before it got under way, the debate over reforming America’s social security pension system has run into a wall. A commission appointed to examine the scheme’s future has split publicly over whether, and how, to move from a tax-financed, pay-as-you-go system run by the Government to one in which individuals would have more control over their pensions. Many of the commission’s members think that privatisation would expose people to greater risk and bring lower-income workers an impoverished retirement... For... [others,] moving America from a pay-as-you-go pension scheme to a properly funded one... would help eventually to speed economic growth. That benefit would be large, but it is uncertain... To many[, the existing system]... has... proved an exceptional deal... [T]he Urban Institute, a think-tank in Washington, DC, reckon that a typical one-earner, low-income couple retiring in 1980 had paid a total of \$26,511 (in 1993 dollars) into social security over the years. They could expect, before their deaths, to receive benefits (also in 1993 dollars) of \$149,945. No wonder there is no rush to change the system. But change it must. Popular fictions hold that every worker pays taxes into a personal account in a social security “trust fund,” which later pays his pension. In fact yesterday’s workers are supported by today’s. A tax of 12.4[%] of the first \$65,400 of each worker’s earnings covers today’s benefits and, for

now, generates a surplus. But in about 15 years' time, the baby-boom generation will begin moving into retirement. By 2030 about 50 people will collect social security for every 100 active workers. Finding a way to finance the ageing of America was the task of the ill-fated commission.

...I'VE been thinking about how to fix Social Security. Ordinarily, I don't. Ordinarily, I focus on issues such as how to remove little pieces of pepperoni from between my teeth, and I leave government problems to the trained professionals in Washington, D.C... But, frankly, they are not getting the job done. [The]President... hasn't had time, what with all these pesky scandals, which have forced him to scale down his vision for his second term from "build a bridge to the 21st century" to "settle out of court." Congress has also been busy, focusing its brainpower on the scandal swirling around[the] House Speaker... who was... violating the tax laws. Now you may say, in [the House Speaker's] defence: "But everybody violates the tax laws. The whole point of the tax system is to be so complicated that no normal human can conform to it, or even think about it for more than 10 seconds... This system enables the Inland Revenue Service to select random taxpayers for audit with 100[%] confidence that they will be guilty of something, even if they live in isolated wilderness areas and measure their annual income in squirrel meat." Yes, but [the Speaker] is not a "normal human." [He] is a member of Congress, the very organisation, if you want to call it that, that passes the tax laws, and he is therefore theoretically supposed to have some idea what they say. Of course, the truth is that the congresspersons are too busy raising campaign money to read the laws they pass. The laws are written by staff tax nerds who can put pretty much any wording they want in there... My point is that our leaders, what with one thing and another, do not have time for leading, which leaves the Social Security problem up to me... What can we do? ...Unfortunately, there is no one easy answer. There are, in fact, four... 1. Go ahead and force Generation X workers to pay ridiculously high taxes. They deserve it, for starting this stupid cigar craze. 2. Set a mandatory five-year-minimum prison sentence for any person convicted of using social security benefits to make a purchase from the home shopping network... increased to 10 years if the purchase was of a ceramic cat. 3. Do not give social security benefits to people who spend the equivalent of the gross national product of Chile trying to look as though they're too young to qualify for social security... 4. Reduce... Social Security benefits. But this is out of the question, because of the powerful senior-citizen lobby. If any politician dares to even talk about cutbacks, the American Association of Retired Persons notifies the politician's mother, and she immediately flies to Washington, marches into his or her office and twists his or her ear until he or she promises never to do it again. [● 'In 1930 only 4% of America's population were over 65'. The 'proportion of the population aged 65 and over in the US during 2020 is estimated to be 16% (up from 13% in 1995). AUS's figure is also expected to be 16% (up from 12%) while NZ's is 15% (12%). The predicted figures for 2050 are 21% in the US, 22% in AUS, 20% in NZ, and 30% or more in Italy, Greece plus Japan. Other 2050 predictions are 22% in Sweden, 23% in Britain and 25% in France' ...

'Tens of thousands of French workers and retirees took to the streets across France yesterday, paralysing the centre of major cities in a protest aimed at protecting pensions.' A]t present, superannuation, is similarly vexing Japan where the age of entitlement is being extended to 70 and population bulges are pushing pension schemes into the red.

...Compulsory superannuation is not a policy employed in Korea. Indeed, the whole concept of retirement there is slightly different to put it mildly... Most striking is the full inclusion of its elderly in productive endeavour and the anathema of putting them out to pasture thereby condemning them to be a burden to taxpayers... Older people... still have leisure time, of course, but it is not a permanent or enforced state as it is prone to be in N[Z] or AUS – where, 'six years into a compulsory scheme, they've already made hundreds of amendments.' AUS's]... retirement savings pool is far outstripping predictions, but below the surface there are many concerns...

There's a different kind of compulsory superannuation across the Tasman... paid for not by the beneficiaries, but by their bosses. In essence, corporate A[US] is buying the future security of the nation's aged. Although the coalition Government elected last year has created new incentives for wealthier A[US]ns to pump money into private retirement schemes... compulsory super has survived political criticisms and misfortunes and the howls of businesses which must either pay their employees' superannuation or have it removed by federal levy. [The previous PM] did intend to transfer promised tax cuts to super funds as a 3[%] top-up on workers' behalf, but that was axed in this year's coalition budget in favour of tax rebates for payments into private superannuation and new retirement accounts at banks. Even so, the savings pool has now swollen to a massive \$A279.5 billion, a figure which is expected to soar to about \$A1500 billion by 2020... The annual average investment return for super funds for the five years to June 30 was about 11[%], and the average annual for fund managers in 1996-1997 was 18.6[%]. The]... proportion of A[US]ns covered by superannuation has risen from 51[%] of the workforce in 1988 to almost 90[%] of full-time workers, and two-thirds of part-timers... At present employees can top up their superannuation accounts with their own payments, and withdraw these personal deposits when they change jobs or leave the workforce. From July 1999 any private top-ups will be locked into the fund until retirement.

...Expect plenty of hand wringing in corporate head [offices around NZ] as the era of the retirement gold watch draws to a close. From February 1, 1999, organisations cannot force an employee to retire because of their age. Many employers are worried, said... [the] associate professor of industrial relations at Victoria University, Wellington. "The law will have huge ramifications in the workplace, especially those that have career structures." ...[the] deputy chief executive of the N[Z] Employers' Federation, said voluntary retirement would focus employers' minds on performance... "Sixty-year-olds will be compared against employees half their age." Many organisations today might chose to ignore the fact that an older, long-service, employee nearing retirement was no longer up to scratch. But they could no longer afford to take this attitude... No one wants to go on record, but the nagging question for employers as the compulsory retirement deadline looms is: How do we legally replace dead wood with a fresh crop of eager ambition?

...The P[M] has signalled to tens of thousands of Pacific Islanders living in N[Z] that they may soon be able to take national super and retire to their home islands. At present, only people from the N[Z] dependencies of the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau can take super home beyond six months, but they must have lived in N[Z] for 40 years to get the full amount. These countries want the restrictions dropped altogether, while other Pacific countries such as Samoa want to join a scheme that could pour millions of dollars into their struggling economies... [L]eaders of Tonga, Niue and Samoa... would dearly love more of their 135,000 nationals living in N[Z] to retire back home... Niue... has a population of barely 2000, and its economy would be greatly boosted if any of its 14,500 N[Z] residents returned... In Samoa, where the weekly wage is about \$50, an elderly married couple returning on the weekly national super rate of \$397 gross would be rated as wealthy and provide an alternative to N[Z] aid, which is routinely siphoned off into unauthorised hands... Pacific Islands pensions represented less than 2[%] of superannuitants here so the cost to the Government of sending pensions overseas would be minimal. - 1997

If the NZ Government succeeds at setting up a pension agreement with neighbouring Pacific Islands it might be encouraged to try forming one with the US. '100 NZers are being denied their US pension funds because the two countries don't have a pension agreement.' One NZer, who is owed 'over \$200,000 by the US Government pension system, was told to return to NZ to make a claim then, when he got back to NZ, was told the process could only be completed in the US – but he was initially refused re-entry to the US for being "loathsome and contagious" (i.e., HIV positive) according to a law confined to the US.'

N[Z] is closely monitoring a British parliamentary inquiry into Britain's refusal to update pensions it pays to its expatriates living in N[Z] and other Commonwealth countries. The manager for international policy and agreements at the Social Welfare Department... confirmed N[Z] paid about \$160 million a year to top up expatriates' pensions to the level of N[Z] superannuation. This was because Britain would pay only the value of the pension at the time the expatriate left Britain or at the time they became eligible for a pension. About 31,000 expatriate pensioners lived here,

and N[Z] “simply couldn’t refuse” to top up their income, he said. “It would just be grossly inadequate and unfair.” Commonwealth counties have been battling successive British governments for more than 20 years to unfreeze the pensions... Britain paid pensions to expatriate N[Z]ers, but this would amount to probably fewer than 1000 people. - 1996

There are over 10 million people of pensionable age in Britain today. By the end of the century there will be 4.1 million people aged over 75. Some will be lucky enough to have good occupational pensions, and their retirement will be joyful; many will feel that they are a burden to the younger generation. British pensioners are among the worst-treated in Europe – the standard pension is a disgrace, and it is likely to get worse for millions of our elderly. Private pensions mirror the inequities in the labour market, leaving in poverty those who worked intermittently or had low-paid jobs. More than 2 million elderly people live on income support, unable to afford proper heating or food. Nearly half of our most deficient housing is inhabited by old people. Over 30[%] of all pensioners live alone, receiving no regular visitors, in the certain knowledge that they will end their days in the geriatric ward of a large hospital. Being old and poor in Britain today means being thrown on the scrapheap...

Of the British pensioners who are poor and alone, many have been abandoned by their family. Such pensioners might think that their lack of wealth is a contributing factor and, therefore, may wish they had been rich instead. Ironically, due to clashes over their money and property – such as how it will be divided after they die – some of Britain’s rich pensioners (and their peers in other countries) may wish they had been poor and abandoned by their family!

THE story has all the makings of a fictional family saga. An old woman dies and leaves several hundred thousand dollars to her grandson and great-grandchildren. Two years later, two other family members, who received \$10,000 each, contest the will. A further two years on – just before the case goes to court – the family settles. The plaintiffs receive \$40,000 each and the original beneficiaries receive less than was left to them in the will. The ruling was made in 1994 and the Auckland family... is disillusioned with the legal system... They are also annoyed that two cousins, who had little contact with their grandmother, could receive such a large inheritance. Last week the Law Commission announced that it was proposing a new law that would make it more difficult for children to contest their elders’ wills... [The commission] criticised present law which can allow grown-up children to change wills against their parents’ wishes... Half of the 27,000 people who died each year left significant property for distribution... [and] around 1400... have wills that end up in dispute. Most are settled out of court. A University of Otago study of family protection claims against wills between 1984 and 1995 shows that 90[%] are successful... “That’s a whole lot of unhappiness.” The amount claimed is usually between \$20,000 and \$100,000... Current law gives judges the right to alter the provisions of a will under various circumstances. Judges must take into account the degree of need of the person making the claim, how much they did for the parents[or family member], the needs of the widow[or the original benefactors] and the equality of the will’s provisions. The latter aspect angers some lawyers, who claim some judges end up giving money to claimants because they feel sorry for them. One Auckland lawyer described it as a Santa Claus attitude... [I]ncreasingly complex claims are coming from families of first marriages or a partner who was in a de facto relationship... Under the Law Commission’s proposed changes, de facto partners[‘who can prove when the relationship began’] would receive half the estate. The law would also apply to couples of the same sex.

...Call me naive but I always imagined a person’s last will and testament was literally the final word in the private property rights sanctioned by the law of a free country... The Law Commission, inviting discussion on some legislative proposals recently, reported that almost every adult child who challenges a will succeeds. And life expectancy nowadays means that children are usually well established and far from needy by the time they can lay claim to their parent’s estate... The whole notion that private property may confer rights to decide its inheritance has somehow come to rank rather low in the principles of present law and not much higher in the commission’s suggestions for updating the code... [C]ourts should be always reluctant to interfere with the clear intentions of a person who is no longer able to argue the case. Who knows why someone has directed assets in any way whatsoever? Unless there is evidence that the will was made under mental incapacity or duress, the wish of the dead ought to be sacred... Who are judges to impose their definition of equity – a witless numerical equality in most cases – over a clearly stated will of the only person who could really know the relationship between the deceased and all claimants? ...And, anyway, does it matter if a will-maker could not justify the decision to the satisfaction of most others, even if he or she could speak? In life, property owners have a right to be unjust. They are free to make substantial gifts to anyone they fancy. A liberal society respects their rights even when most might not agree with their decisions. In death they are being deprived of the right. In death, of course, they do not know it. But we live by principles that do not let agents of the state presume superior wisdom in the disposition of private property[(unless ‘a person dies leaving no will, in which case the property is disposed of according to the law of intestate succession that prescribes to which family members and in what shares the property is to be given’; ‘Howard Hughes’s estate at the time of his suspicious death – he was too weak to give himself an overdose of codeine, but nobody was charged – was estimated to be worth between \$1b-\$4b, but he died without a legal will in place’)]. It is a principle not always respected in too many quarters of the law... [Incidentally, 11] elderly Singaporeans have filed claims against their children. A new tribunal gives them legal aid to seek support under the Maintenance of Parents Act. - 1996

Many regard it as an article of faith that they should leave their children as much as possible... [– even though, ‘not infrequently, the children will vie with each other to be the nicest or the closest to the parents so they will be favoured in the will (greed and deception to gain parental inheritance is a time-honoured reality and was a central theme in Shakespeare’s tragic play *King Lear*)’ – but] there is a direct trade-off between your standard of living and the amount by which your children will benefit from your estate... In many cases our children are now front-end loaded – they are given the best health care and education at the beginning of their lives far beyond previous generations. Their parents (us) pay very high taxes to manage this. We are paying for our children’s development willingly, but in doing so we are diminishing our own wealth, our own estates, which would in former times have been left to our children... Having fulfilled our responsibilities, should we not then be free to enjoy what is left of our wealth? Do we really have an obligation to leave valuable estates? More and more of my generation (and a few of my parents’) are answering this with a “no”... YOUR financial strategy... should be based on your own security and living to your full capacity... The problem with this – going out on the last dollar – is that most of us do not know when we are going to die.

...Families are denying their elderly parents hospital care because they do not want to lose their inheritance, the social services select committee on asset-testing heard yesterday. In one case, a severely disabled Wellington man was living under threat of removal from hospital while his bedridden wife was kept at home because their son believed hospital care was using up all his money, according to the Hospitals Association... While both parents were in hospital temporarily for “respite” care, the father had pleaded to be allowed to stay, but his son refused. The father, who is 89, insisted he had enough money to pay for their care but that their son had taken over control of his finances. Eventually, the son agreed to his father’s returning to hospital but the mother was still being cared for by her son, who was often abusive, according to the association in its submission to the committee. The example was representative of a growing number of cases... the select committee was told.

...[‘a High Court judge is allowing new evidence on the shooting of farmer Patrick McCarthy by his son to be called in a civil action over the dead man’s \$2 million estate. The decision opens the way for an outcome similar to that in the US regarding a former sports star accused of murdering his wife and her lover – acquittal of murder in a criminal trial, but a possible finding of intentional killing in a civil trial where the standard of proof is lower. The son was 15 when he killed his 57-year-old father with a rifle at their farm at Parakai, north of Auckland. The son, now 17, was found not guilty of his father’s murder but guilty of manslaughter by a jury in the High Court at Auckland. He is now claiming a share of the estate but the dead man’s brother and sister

are implacably opposed to his getting a cent. They want to call new evidence, including testimony from an expert about the discharge of the gun. They also want the court to hear about the boy's relationship with his father and his behavioural history at one of the country's top schools. They claim that the allegations of violence levelled against the dead man were not sufficiently investigated. In a reserved decision after a preliminary hearing last month, a judge said it would be necessary for the son to show that the public policy preventing a person from benefiting from crime was not a barrier to his claim. If that threshold were crossed, it was then open for the dead man's brother and sister to contend that their nephew's actions disentitled him from sharing the estate. The nephew's lawyer had argued that his client's killing of a violent and abusive father involved such a low degree of culpability and such a high degree of mitigation that it would be contrary to public policy for him to forfeit his inheritance. The lawyer relied on the jury's verdict of manslaughter and the trial judge's comments at sentencing that the killing was the "unintended result of reckless use of the rifle."

...**'A SCHOOLBOY who killed his millionaire dad and tried to claim his inheritance has told why he did it. "He made me eat sheep poo and rubbed it in my face and hair." He has now dropped his inheritance claim. ■'] The Court of Appeal has finally sorted out which of Cambridge farmer Aubrey Hooker's 14 wills should apply to the disposal of his \$2.25 million estate. Mr Hooker died on May 30, 1992, and had no children. After a 19-day hearing at Hamilton, [the judge]... granted probate on the 12th will, deciding that Mr Hooker did not fully appreciate what he was doing when he made the final two.**

...[**'One summer night, a butcher, a baker, a jeweller and a housekeeper gathered in a Glendowie bakery to discuss the death of an elderly friend. They had two things in common – they had all worked with or for German-born optician Robert Leidl, and they all wanted more from his \$5.5 million estate. They allegedly planned to corroborate one another's claims and went so far as to try to make another man lie for them – something they were all to deny later in court. Mr Leidl, who was 65 when he died, was described by associates as astute, loyal and trustworthy. He was also generous and over the years had given his housekeeper \$100,000 to help her buy a house, a car and to travel overseas. Before he died, he gave the jeweller a bag of rubies, worth \$20,000. But in the months before his death, Mr Leidl appeared to have become wary of some who called themselves his friends, including those who had benefited from his generosity. The multimillionaire was concerned enough to confide in his cousin, "Die Geier umkreisen mich" – the vultures are circling around me. Mr Leidl shifted here with his wife, Traudi, in the 1960s. He owned two optical companies until the 1980s and later had business interests in a bakery, a specialist Swiss butchery and a company called A Taste of Europe. Mrs Leidl died in the US in 1992 from lung cancer. Her husband died a few years later in Auckland after his diabetic condition worsened. Over 50% of the estate was left to the Royal NZ Foundation for the Blind, the Salvation Army and Auckland University. As the couple were childless, the remainder of their wealth was distributed between Mrs Leidl's goddaughter and extended family. But Mr Leidl's four associates lodged claims on the estate. The butcher claimed entitlement to Mr Leidl's shares in Haro Foods, the company Mr Leidl incorporated to run the butcher's Swiss Butchery and Delicatessen. The baker claimed he was promised the bakery business owned by A Taste of Europe. He said that it would be handed over debt-free. The jeweller said he had been gifted Mrs Leidl's jewellery, gold and diamonds. The housekeeper wanted \$450,000 so she would not have to work anymore – a promise she said Mr Leidl had made her. Their case was heard in the High Court at Auckland. The judge rejected all but the baker's claim – because the promise to him was "more probable than not." The lawyer acting for Mr Leidl's estate said she was pleased with the decision, and Mr Leidl's cousin – who lives in Germany – felt vindicated.'**]

...**Five people were arraigned[in San Francisco] yesterday on charges that they were part of a ring which romanced wealthy elderly bachelors to secure places in their wills, and then slowly killed them, using a poison derived from the foxglove plant. The so-called "Foxglove" case, a bizarre tale involving members of a famous gypsy clan... had stumped investigators for four years. The five suspects... did not enter pleas. [The] defence lawyer for one of the suspects... said the police case was full of holes... At one point during the investigation, law enforcement officials dug up... graves... in an effort to pin down the group... In one case stretching back to 1984, [an] 87-year-old... married [one of the suspects, who was] then 24. Within a couple of months, [the groom] was dead and [the widow] had inherited his entire estate, including savings of \$US125,000... Later the group, which includes [the 24-year-old's]... boyfriend... and... mother... got hold of an apartment house, numerous bank accounts and even a Mercedes belonging to four other alleged victims, who are all in their 80s and 90s, according to police. [Incidentally, 'hundreds of thousands of hopeful heirs have bombarded Chicago website www.cookcountytreasurer.com to comb lists of people who died without wills and left assets of \$30 million.'**]

...**A Napier man... aged 52... who believed he was heir to... [an] oil fortune in the U[S]... died last Friday of an asbestos-related lung disease from which he had suffered for several years... but his family intend continuing the fight for a portion of the money... He said he had documents to prove he was descended from a Texas rancher... on whose property oil was discovered in 1901. Royalties paid by oil companies on the property now total \$US465 million... and the money awaits a claim by those who can prove they are the original owner's heir.**

...[a 'former Playboy model has gone to court in a bid to get her paws on her deceased husband's millions. J Howard Marshall II was 89 when he wed the bunny, then 26, in 1994. He died a year later bequeathing everything to his younger son. That outraged the bunny and his eldest son, who said they deserved a share. The battle over the fortune – estimated at anywhere from \$US48 million to \$US1.6 billion – began in court on Friday with the start of jury selection.'

...[it's been a few years since her 89-year-old billionaire husband went to his grave smiling, but only now has she got her hands on his loot. The former Playboy bunny, stripper and Jim's Krispy Fried Chicken worker, is now one of the world's richest women after a judge ordered her stepson to hand over a billion dollars of his dad's legacy. The bunny plans to use the money to make "Marilyn Monroe-style movies". Nice to see she doesn't plan to waste it!]

...**'Frog-gone it!** Master Four was begging his grandpa to croak, so grandpa did his best frog sounds. Master Four was overjoyed: his mother had told him they would go to Disneyland when grandpa croaked!' Speaking of inheritance money, 'former topless model Anna Nicole Smith may not get the \$1 billion from her late husband's estate after a Texas jury ruled oil Tycoon Howard Marshall II's son was the sole heir to his fortune.'

...**'A federal judge has thrown out a US bankruptcy court ruling that gave a former Playboy Playmate \$US475 million from the estate of her late husband'.**

...a 'former model was awarded US\$88.5m from her billionaire husband's estate in the latest twist of a long-running legal battle with her former stepson.'

...**Battle of wills may be over for children... Adult children may soon be blocked from contesting a parent's will to get a bigger share of the inheritance. The Law Commission wants Parliament to curb the power of the courts to interfere with the provisions in a dead person's will... The commission president... said children were contesting wills on the grounds of the dead parent's alleged breach of moral duty to provide for them and it is... sad that a claim may succeed although there is no financial need whatsoever... [But adult] children will still contest their parent's wills... say lawyers[(who are less outspoken about 'attorneys who have become wealthy through having themselves made beneficiaries in the wills of aged clients')]]... A bizarre legal anomaly which left some surviving spouses worse off than a spouse involved in a divorce settlement would also be removed.**

...[**'thousands of out-of-court divorce agreements that awarded half shares in a business asset, such as a farm, but made no provision for future income, could be overturned if the Court of Appeal upholds a landmark ruling on the Matrimonial Property Act, says the Law Society. The Minister of Justice yesterday played down the national impact of a Family Court decision awarding part of a man's future earnings to his former wife. The issue was limited to rare cases where a husband who earned a very large salary separated from a wife who had given up a career "to enable her husband to earn that sort of money," he said. Speaking on National Radio, the minister said he agreed with the judge's decision in principle but it was difficult to legislate for the change. He did not think judges would make awards based on one partner's future earnings if the income gap between husband and wife was only about**

\$20,000. It would be pointless, however, for Parliament to set a minimum income gap – perhaps \$200,000 – as this would give judges no discretion in \$190,000 cases. The minister then said any law change could also upset the “clean-break principle” of the act, which was intended to do away with long-term maintenance obligations. A family law specialist welcomed the judgment as recognition of the sacrifice made by a non-earning spouse, but the lobby group Families Apart Require Equity – which has campaigned against the maintenance payments required under the Child Support Act – said the decision was grossly unfair.’]

...The Government will introduce a long-awaited legal regime for dividing property from broken de facto relationships this year, and will also bring in amendments to the Matrimonial Property Act. The Minister of Women’s Affairs... said last night that the National and N[Z] First caucuses had agreed to give the legislation priority and include it in this year’s crowded law-making programme. There will be separate bills to deal with the de facto regime and matrimonial property reforms. Policy details have yet to be finalised in both areas. The Minister of Justice... foreshadowed the introduction of property rights for de facto partners early last year, but indicated the regime would not be the same as for married couples. There would be the same presumption of a 50-50 split of the home and chattels, but for de facto couples the courts would have greater discretion to decide on a different division if justice required it. Other property from the de facto relationship would be split according to contributions, both financial and non-financial such as child caring. Another proposal would be for the regime to apply only to relationships of more than three years. It is understood that an unresolved point over the de facto regime is whether it should apply to same-sex couples. [The Minister of Justice] said last year that it should, even though he did not condone same-sex relationships. On the matrimonial property reform the Government has been considering changing the act to better reflect the role of divorced partners, usually women, who have care and custody of children. Women’s lobby groups have strongly argued that the “clean break” principle in the existing legislation is unfair because the wife is usually left to look after young children while often having to try to restart a stalled career.

...[‘the end of a relationship often leads to problems, ranging from arguments concerning the care of children, the division of property and issues of financial support. These problems are often ongoing, in some cases continuing to cause problems between couple’s years after they have ceased to live together. “Each situation is unique, and it is important for a family solicitor to be able to identify all of the issues facing a client. We always take the time to fully understand the background and the needs of the people we are dealing with,” says a partner in Smith & Partners. “Our team are qualified family lawyers, who are all members of the Family Law Section of the NZ Law Society, are experienced in dealing with the full range of family disputes – whether between married or defacto couples. If you find yourself in a situation which may end up in Court, early skilled advice frequently results in the problem being resolved quickly and efficiently,” advises another partner.’]

...Lawyers’ adversarial attitudes may not necessarily be the best for couples going through divorce, say two Californian judges... “For the most part lawyers in family law are not very happy people. It’s amazing. They get quite wealthy in the practice but they’re out to get what they can [for their client]... and that inevitably affects them... Some of the nicest letters I’ve had are from lawyers... relieved when mediation has succeeded and taken the acrimony out of proceedings.” ...[such letters support the judges’ opinion that mediation] is... the best way of settling marital disputes... [One, who] is a senior (federal) circuit judge of the U[S] Court of Appeals... said some couples have to be led into the process but the earlier they can be got into mediation the better. The success rate of mediation is about 80[%] if it is entered into before divorce proceedings are filed. That drops off by more than 20[%] once the matter is before the courts. While regrettable, in some cases divorce is necessary and in her opinion nothing should be done to exacerbate the process. However, that can occur because divorce is such big business with many lawyers advising a client to hang on, often adding to the conflict of an already emotional situation... [In related news, a] German court has halved a vengeful wife’s... monthly maintenance... [of] 1874 marks (\$1830)... because... she reported her ex-husband to his boss as a pilferer. A Karlsruhe court said she had damaged his wealth because he was sacked after the tip-off. Judges said they would have cancelled all her alimony as a penalty, but... she had been distraught at the time... The divorce court said the ex-husband was not entirely free of suspicion, but the key point was that he had been unemployed ever since.

...A lawyer for the estranged wife of... the... brother of... [the] Princess of Wales, has accused him in a divorce hearing of “serial adultery.” ...[the wife], aged 32, is seeking a settlement of £3.75 million (\$[NZ]6.3 million) and annual maintenance of £5000 for each of their four children, according to papers filed in the Cape Town High Court... The earl (33) is offering a lump sum of... 2.4 million rand (\$823,800), monthly payments of 20,000 rand... a Cape Town house and contents, including a car, worth two million rand... and full medical insurance... The case, which began yesterday, is to settle where the divorce itself will be heard – in Britain, as... the countess... wants, or in South Africa, as her husband would prefer... [A] British family law expert... said that if the divorce were heard in Britain, the overall value of the award to [the countess]... would probably be at least £3 million... [The court heard that] the earl’s personal fortune was estimated at £6 million and his family fortune at £100 million. His annual net income was around £580,000... The [couple] moved to Cape Town in 1995 but separated soon afterwards.

...[a] businessman... is making a stand for “the benefit of future unfortunate divorces” after a judge granted [his ex-wife] a... £10.5 million... divorce settlement. The award [is] believed to be the largest in a contested divorce in Britain... [The businessman], aged 68, whose fortune is estimated at £80 million, said he had always wanted to see that his ex-wife was financially “well looked after.” But “the judge seemed to view this case as a cause celebre... The fact that this case will now influence family law and become a precedent for generous settlements to husbands and wives who have taken a marginal interest in their spouses’ businesses [is something] I find very disturbing.”

...[the] ennobled restaurateur, bon viveur, gastro-tycoon, friend of [the British PM, feeder of the US President]... and breeder to style gurus – is the man who gave Britain the chicken brick in the 60s. He did not invent it, of course; simply appropriated it and sold it through his new Habitat stores. The nation could not get enough of them, and soon Brit-chicks were being cooked in red clay bricks with the addition of weird foreign things such as garlic... A call to the King’s Rd branch of Habitat, [his] first, reveals that... chicken bricks now cost \$50... So... [the] record-breaking divorce settlement... has cost h[im]... 525,000 chicken bricks. That’s a lot of roast, but I think [his ex-wife] is probably worth it. [The restaurateur], despite claiming his divorce has been amicable, doesn’t: “The settlement figure is unbelievable – just because she cooked a few meals now and again... I taught her how to cook. She left me on the thirtieth anniversary of our marriage... [and, anyway, I] made the bulk of [my fortune after she] left... in 1993...” ...If he was as graceless as this throughout their 30 years together, she deserves a million chicken bricks. [She] is, however, happy with the settlement: “I think it’s very fair indeed. I’m very pleased.” ...[she] is one of those superwives and mothers that men like [the restaurateur] attract. Indeed, he’s got through a few. Number one... whom he married in 1952, left him for a civil engineer and never featured in his *Who’s Who* entry. None the less, [wife number one]... haunted wife number two... who remembers [the restaurateur] keeping an unlocked box of [his first wife’s] love letters on the living-room table, which he banned her from reading. After giving birth to... [two sons, the second wife] divorced him, citing adultery in 1962 (and went on, much later, to write *Superwoman*...)]. The restaurateur married his third wife a year later and opened the first Habitat in 1964. By the end of that year [the third wife] could be found charting her New Year’s resolutions in the *Observer* magazine: “...I will continue to cultivate the cult of housewifery as little as possible.” Before being consumed by actual house-wifery, [she] made it her business... [by writing] a few books... [– including] *Delicious Home Cooking*, which is... both the best and bestselling book on English cookery... [–] and was very much involved in the planning stages of her husband’s new enterprise as a founding director... In fact, as the store’s kitchenware buyer it is a safe bet that it was [she] who gave Britain the chicken brick... It is [also] highly improbable that he taught her how to cook.

...The former wife of a General Electric executive has been awarded \$US20 million... in cash, investments and real estate in a high-stakes divorce case that sought to put a price tag on the value of a corporate wife... [The wife] insisted she deserved exactly half of their estate as compensation for

31 years as a corporate wife. Her lawyers estimated their estate to be worth up to \$US100 million, but [the husband] insisted it was worth about \$US21 million when they separated two years ago... [He] called the decision fair. [In related news, 'the President of the United Arab Emirates issued a decree yesterday approving a law which sets a ceiling of 20,000 dirhams (NZ\$9440) of mahr – the money paid by a bridegroom to his future wife. The law also sets a limit of 30,000 dirhams on compensation paid by men to their former wives upon divorce, and says wedding celebrations should not be more than a day long with no more than nine camels sacrificed. The law is aimed at encouraging weddings between UAE nationals by reducing costs. In a region where men may have four wives at once, high marriage costs are driving up to 40% of them to seek a foreign wife, a trend officials blame for rising divorce rates.'

... 'In other times and in other cultures, marriage was primarily a business agreement. Either the bridegroom bought the bride or the father of the bride bribed the bridegroom by means of a dowry. In either case, a monetary value was put on the bride in much the same way that a price was established for a cow or a piece of furniture. That kind of dehumanization has not been tolerated in this country for a good many years. Long before the advent of Women's Liberation, such blatant male chauvinism became totally unacceptable. Some spokespersons for the Women's Liberation movement advocate that since money is the universal measure of value in our society, wives should be paid for their services. Others maintain that women should bargain for better terms and should enter marriage with some kind of business contract. For these and other reasons, the idea of a financial agreement signed before marriage is slowly gaining acceptance. Surely, too many people, both male and female, have been financially ruined by divorce. When the former Jackie Kennedy married the late Aristotle Onassis, many romantics became disillusioned. To them her marriage was more a business arrangement than an affair of the heart. Whatever her motivation, there was more than a little comment when it was learned that a formal marriage contract was a precondition of the marriage. In this agreement, she allegedly would receive \$US10 million for each year of marriage if he should leave her, a flat sum of approximately \$18m if she should leave him, and about \$25,000 a month for expenses and spending money while married.'

... John F Kennedy junior and Carolyn Bessette are about to divorce after only four months of marriage, the *Express on Sunday* said yesterday. The tabloid said Carolyn was asking for \$US10 million... in compensation, or half of her husband's fortune, but Kennedy lawyers argue she is entitled to only \$US650,000 according to their pre-marital contract.

... A FLORIDA couple who won \$8.75 million in the state lottery agreed on how to divide their jackpot last week and were promptly granted a divorce... As she signed, [the wife] said winning the lottery had been bad luck for the couple. They bought a new house, but within a month were arguing over who owned it... [The couple] had been scheduled to begin a divorce trial on Thursday, ending an acrimonious five months since they claimed their fortune. Instead, [the wife] agreed to take 38% of the winnings and leave her husband 62%... - 1997

Would you survive in a world without men? Fact: [1-in-3 NZ] marriages end in divorce. And it's generally women who are left with little to live on.

[NZ] law now encourages you to become financially independent as soon as possible after your marriage breaks up. It is only in special circumstances that one partner must pay maintenance to the other... As a general rule you and your partner are each entitled to half of all the matrimonial property, that is all assets which you have acquired during your marriage. The matrimonial home is matrimonial property whenever acquired. There are, however, many special rules, for instance about: • marriages of less than 3 years duration • what is and isn't matrimonial property • contributions made (eg household duties, childcare) • debts and creditors... ['The Government is currently considering how to clear up loopholes, such as treating heirlooms as separate property, allowing gifts to be treated as matrimonial property, and providing greater powers for compensation to a spouse disadvantaged by matrimonial property being hidden in trusts.' 'NZ currently has 1.3 million married and 247,000 de facto couples.'] Unmarried couples face many of the same difficulties as married couples... Traditionally the law... offered little to unmarried partners. This has begun to change... For example, the Family Court can now make orders to protect an unmarried person from a former partner who becomes violent. In other ways, however, (and particularly with inheritance rights and disputes over property) an unmarried person can be in a weak position and faced with uncertainty if the relationship breaks down. - NZ Law Society

you need a family trust now (even if you don't have a family) If you're thirty or older, earning good money, have your own business, a house and a few more assets or a family on the way, then you should be looking at a Family Trust right this minute. You could save thousands of dollars in tax a year, protect everything you have from lawsuits, a bitter divorce, or the expensive mistakes of your staff – and have something to pass on to your family (if and when you have one.) If you're between 55 and 65 years of age, are about to retire or have done so, a Family Trust is the best way you can protect your assets from surtax, and avoid losing the whole lot in rest home fees later. [One financial guru... specialises in people who want no nonsense answers to the big financial questions... Walk away from ...his seminar with the power to protect your future assets... **Tuesday 26 August 1997 7.30-9.30pm, Auckland Conference Centre 27-33 Ohineru Street Remuera** ... Only 90 seats are available, and they sell out quickly, so phone us now... or fill in the coupon and post it with your cheque (\$25 per person, \$40 per couple, tax deductible)... [If you] can't attend but want ...his audio tape... [send] \$29.95 include GST... - independent financial advisers

ON A balmy spring evening in Remuera, about 50 well-heeled urbanites file into the Auckland Conference Centre to hear why "there are no downsides and many upsides with a family trust." Their host... advises them on ways to divest themselves of their assets so that if there is a lifestyle mishap – and, say, long-term care becomes necessary – the state pays the bill... Although individual trusts can be complex, the basic structure is this: you systematically gift – at a maximum value rate of \$27,000 a year per person (\$54,000 for a married couple) – as many assets as you wish into the trust, naming other people, generally children, as the beneficiaries. You retain control either as a trustee with power of veto, or by nominating trustees who will protect your interests. The family home and perhaps the beach house can be gifted over years to the trust, but they remain your castles in every way except title. Trusts are perfectly legal devices to protect assets and avoid the tentacles of the state, or civil litigants. People may open your wallet only to find you are, on paper, a pauper. As ancient as the Roman Empire, trusts are the tools of smart legal and financial minds and, for some law firms, have become as valuable as conveyancing fees to build business. [One TV commentator] calls family trusts insurance policies and, in his view, lawyers who tell their clients they have no need of such a strategy are "unpaid agents of the Government." Others would argue that governments are agents of the taxpayer, and the push towards trusts runs counter to a fair and just society. No statistics are available on the background of the 98,789 N[Z]ers who, up until last year, had drawn up discretionary trusts, most of them family trusts. But the trend is growing, up 16[%] from 1995, and may accelerate if a bill giving greater property rights to de facto couples is passed. The faces behind these figures will almost certainly be dominated by the well-off – business tycoons, lawyers, dentists, accountants, architects, sharebrokers and doctors. Farmers will be well represented too. There won't be many factory workers and shop assistants on the list. If everyone had a trust, the Government would have to find another way of financing services that are reliant on asset-testing. The present policy relies on sufficient people being ignorant of trusts or too disorganised or without the means to get one... But... [s]hould the beneficiaries of a family trust inherit riches when the taxpayer is picking up the bill for rest-home care, while the elderly without trusts are forced to sell the family home to pay their way? ...The more N[Z]ers turn to family trusts, the more obvious the inequities will become – and, perhaps, the greater the pressure on the Government to intervene. The taxpayer is presently billed \$450 million a year for the long-stay care of the elderly in hospitals or rest homes. And as the baby boomers go grey, our ageing population is pushing costs higher.

...Tens of thousands of N[Z]ers who use trusts to protect assets for their families may face huge retrospective tax bills from next year. The I[RD] wants tighter rules on gift duty, which will mean trusts will either have to have their deeds redrafted or pay up. Under the proposed change, the department will waive duty only if close friends and near relatives are listed as beneficiaries but not if beneficiaries are charities or even distant relatives... Lawyers believe that... [because the] department has reinterpreted the Income Tax Act's accruals rules... to... say that... to qualify for a tax-free \$27,000-a-year forgiveness of debt, people with family trusts must have natural love and affection for those who are named as beneficiaries[, this means]... any trust that lists... distant relatives, charities and even descendants... as beneficiaries will be liable for income tax of 33[%] on every amount gifted. The department wants submissions on the ruling, but if it proceeds as planned next October it may be made retrospective to include the tax year ending March 30, 1996.

TRUSTS – sometimes called family trusts – were first used in England when noblemen set out against their two biggest enemies, the Infidel and the French. Even if these brave warriors weren't killed in battle, being away from the family estate for many a year meant taking long-term measures against a business failure, say a plague of insects or an unexpected tax-hike. These days the *raison d'être* for trusts, protecting family interests, is pretty much the same as in the Middle Ages. It's just society, business and the economy that have become more complex. The main reasons for setting up a trust are: protecting wealth or family security if you're sued, avoiding death duties (if they are re-introduced) and protection from the ravages of an asset-hungry ex-spouse. A trust is a private agreement – unlike a company. It has no publicly detailed records. So although it's likely N[Z]'s wealthiest families have much of their riches tied up in trusts, it's hard to tell how much unless they say... [Nowadays, an increasing number of people] in the middle [income range] are keen to pass something on to their children and feeling that they have spent their lives paying taxes, are divesting themselves of their personal wealth. Realistically, we have to have – or expect to accumulate – more than the average level of assets to make the costs of setting up trusts worthwhile... Establishment costs are around \$1000, but once you start putting assets into them – there is no point having an empty trust – conveyancing costs and other documentation (say mortgages) may bring the total bill to around \$3000, plus running costs of a few 100 dollars a year... But you don't have to be super-rich... [P]lenty of people with assets of around \$600,000 (\$400,000 in an Auckland home, \$200,000 in the bank), set up trusts. Often such people have both the rest home clawback and superannuation surcharge in mind... Until the National Government axed death duties, prudent couples protected their heirs with mirror trusts. These segregate each spouse's interests into a separate trust – essentially husband and wife are the principal beneficiary of the other's trust, and assets are divided 50/50. Now, without death duties, it's possible to achieve everything in one trust, although... this is a controversial area and quite a few lawyers – with re-introduced death duties in mind – are still setting up mirror trusts. Some lawyers question whether mirror trusts will be an effective barrier against any new set of death duty rules. Anyone starting a business should seriously think of setting up a trust to act as a bullet-proof vest when times get tough or to protect a spouse or children when you're dead. Such trusts may not be watertight when the proverbial hits the fan, though... We tend to associate trusts with grey-haired people sitting in financial planners offices. But a \$27,000 annual gifting limit (per individual) makes for every reason to set up a trust before being old and grey... And for people thinking about the rest home clawback, there's no time like the present. A Social Welfare Department five-year rule means that trusts must be set up at least five years before a rest home subsidy is requested. A trust can also minimise individual income tax by spreading income about, to a partner, several children, even a charity or two... and if the trust is set up for a variety of reasons, the IRD is unlikely to see it as a means of avoiding the surcharge... A trust does alienate you from your assets, making for some increased hassle when you want to sell things... Unless there is some wonder drug or hormone, a newly set up trust will probably outlast the person who set it up... Most trusts have a wind-up date of 80 years after the trust was set up – the maximum under N[Z] law – although it's normal to stipulate in the trust deed that you can wind one up before this... No matter what Governments do to make it harder for individuals to retain their wealth, trusts will always be a useful part of a lawyer's toolkit... - 1996

A court battle is being waged to try to prevent a man convicted of murder getting a half share of his victim's substantial property... [The man] was sentenced... in 1992... to mandatory life imprisonment for the December 1991 slaying of... his former de facto wife... [The] 39-year-old nurse... was stabbed seven times and her throat was slashed. By law, those convicted of murder cannot benefit from their crimes but [the man] is in the unique position of being the beneficiary of a trust set up by [the nurse]. In July 1987, two years after they met, [the nurse] drew up a trust declaration in which she undertook to transfer to [the man] upon demand half of her interest in a property... in Titirangi, valued at well over \$100,000. Since 1994 the Public Trustee... has been trying to have the declaration of trust set aside. But [the man], who will not be eligible for parole until June 2002, has tried to have the Public Trustee's High Court action dismissed, claiming that the proceedings were frivolous and vexatious and that the Public Trustee had no reasonable grounds for the action... The half-share of the property was never in fact transferred, but by fighting the Public Trustee's legal action, [the man] is effectively claiming his right to half the proceeds of the property which has since been sold. Much of the argument in front of [the High Court] involved complex questions of trust law... [The man] also was named in [the nurse's will with her] daughter as equal benefactor... [His] conviction disqualifies him from benefiting from the will.

...The High Court is going to be asked to determine who the owners of the Public Trust Office are. The move is a precursor to the Public Trust being corporatised which could lead to its sale... The trust, founded in 1872, provides independent trustee services, mainly in the administration of wills and deceased estates... [Incidentally, t]he Government is calling for submissions on the future of the... Auckland Regional Services Trust [(ARST) which, going by the size of its] net assets... is... the fifth largest... business... in the country... This year the A[RST] made a cash surplus of over \$30 million on behalf of the people of Auckland.

...The Government is reviewing the future of... A[RST] – to the puzzlement no doubt of many ratepayers who are not... aware of what the trust is.

...The A[RST], owner of Ports of Auckland shares... the Yellow Bus Co, waste services and forests, is responding to a debate about its future by suggesting that it is no longer needed in the region's government structure. The trust may well prove to be a victim of its own success. Set up in 1992 with the primary task of repaying \$224 million of regional debt, it[s]... six elected members... achieved that remarkable goal within only 31 months – this despite Government predictions that in order to achieve its goal the trust would have to sell all its major trading assets, take more than \$180 million from Auckland ratepayers and take 20 years to do it. The fact is... the... elected trustees... sold no major trading assets... other than property... took not one cent from ratepayers... paid [its] last instalment on the debt in less than three years[, built]... a business empire with a market value of about \$2 billion and... [has] \$100 million in the bank... Auckland is rapidly getting too big for its support services – what the bureaucrats call infrastructure... things like roads, water systems, sewerage systems and public transport services – the unglamorous things which we take for granted but without which we cannot survive. An awful lot of money has to be spent on upgrading these services in the next few years and... the fruits of the trust's outstanding financial management should be used to help... [However, the] trust is prohibited by law from providing that help... Without a law change the trust will simply continue to own its assets and accumulate very large amounts of money... Some Wellington bureaucrats have an... extraordinary proposal. They think [the ARST] should sell everything, collect a huge pile of cash, then send a cheque to every ratepayer in the region... [– whereas the ARST proposes that it] should effectively turn itself into a regional bank which would lend money to projects which meet certain standards. Qualifying projects would have to fit the regional plan (when we get one), would need to have a measure of public support and would need to be capable of earning an appropriate financial return... [I]t all comes down to settling on the best way of using the money for the overall good of the Auckland region... [The ARST chairman] said: "...The more... money... we've got, the more people want it."

...Two A[RST] chiefs are on a publicly funded American fact-finding trip, despite the uncertainty over the trust's future... They will visit infrastructure funding banks in five states and a range of public utility owners or managers such as the California Department of Water Resources... The trust was unable to give the cost of the trip but a spokeswoman said its policy was to fly business class on international flights of more than eight hours, economy class within the destination country and stay in reasonably priced accommodation.

...Auckland's infrastructure bills are mounting but new research reveals the region's spending... at \$120 million... remains... \$40 million a year... short of the total needed to pay the costs of... an extraordinary growth surge which began in 1991 and shows no signs of abating... An outlook prepared by a senior regional council officer... said Auckland's growth... would swallow up 25,000ha over the next 30 years... [The outlook pointed out that a]lgeing drainage systems and water supply networks were[already] stretched to capacity[. Consequently, water]... quality, though good by international standards, was slowly deteriorating.

...The Minister of Local Government... last night dangled a \$500 million carrot in front of Aucklanders as a partial solution to the region's development woes. At a city conference on local government research and development, she linked the future of the cash-rich A[RST] with the huge costs the region faced replacing inadequate infrastructure. Investment of about \$1.33 billion is needed by 1999 and some \$4.5 billion over the next 30 years. The trust is expected to amass \$500 million without asset sales by 2001... If the trust's assets were put to work on improving Auckland's public transport, roads and bridges, the Government would have gained a convenient fiscal fix as it would not need to dip as deeply into its own resources to satisfy Auckland.

...The A[RST] fears it will be forced to waste public cash because a decision on its future has been delayed by the Government. The P[M]... said yesterday that the decision would not be announced until late February[next year. By the way, last year 'the chairman of the ARST was granted a 46% pay rise, which meant his maximum salary jumped to \$50,000. The other trust members got a 16% increase, which took their salaries to \$15,000 (although the person who holds the new job of deputy chairwoman, gets \$20,000). The maximum meeting allowance for members increased from \$65 to \$150. At the time of the increase the chairman, who said the trust had a policy of always paying the maximum and estimated that he works about 30 hours a week, said the salaries of the "grossly underpaid" members were "way out of kilter" compared with those for other similar bodies such as the Auckland Regional Council (ARC) and Auckland City Council.' • 'Hamilton City councillors have voted to give their chief executive a \$16,000 pay rise to \$176,000, in a year when more than 120 council jobs were axed.' Furthermore, the council is currently saying it]... may lay off[more] workers if they do not accept new employment conditions. About 400 of the council's 650 staff are threatening industrial action after rejecting the latest contract offers... The... chief executive... said he would continue to negotiate with salaried staff but waged workers[who] refused to negotiate... could be in line for redundancies.

...The chief executive of the A[RST]... is in line for a pay rise. Trust members discussed his bonus yesterday... In the 1996 annual report [his] pay package totalled \$180,000, up \$17,000 from the previous year... However... the chief executive of the Auckland City Council... [is paid \$219,468, and the] chief executive of the A[RST] owned Watercare Services... is paid up to \$290,000... In the private sector he could command a salary of \$300,000 to \$400,000... [because] Watercare... has... 386 staff, an... annual turnover of \$112.5 million... [and] assets of \$1.03 billion...

The privatisation of... local government assets, is being pushed by the Associate Minister of Agriculture... [When t]he privatisation of Government Property Services and some small power stations was announced... the Treasurer... also signalled that other assets could be privatised on a case-by-case basis. "I believe other activities need to continue being looked at, including local government assets such as power companies, airports and Local Authority Trading Enterprises [LATEs]," [the minister] said yesterday. He also said central and local government should continue to contract out services that private enterprise could do better.

...The Government appears to be working on plans to water down a key clause in the coalition agreement giving ordinary N[Z]ers a veto on the privatisation of local assets. A confidential cabinet paper leaked to the Alliance requires local authorities to consult ratepayers about any plans to sell certain assets but it does not say councils have to be bound by the wishes of the community... "As far as the privatisation industry is concerned, local authority assets are one of the ripest fruits remaining in the garden,"... the Alliance leader... said... [when r]eleasing the document from the cabinet strategy and priorities committee... The document raises questions about... the future of assets held by the A[RST. Ironically, the]... Minister of Local Government... said yesterday that she had heard rumblings about the existence of the paper... but... had not seen it.

...The Government yesterday failed to dispel fears it plans to break the coalition agreement giving ordinary N[Z]ers the power to block certain assets sales. No one from the offices of the Treasurer... and the Minister of Finance... would give an absolute undertaking that local authorities and consumer trusts would be bound by the wishes of their communities when putting assets on the block. Instead, a spokesman for [the Treasurer], who is overseas, sought to play down a confidential committee paper... leaked to the Alliance, by saying it had never been discussed by the committee.

...The Manukau City Council is considering selling Excell Corporation... to help stem... the... council[']s... projected... debt of \$119 million for the present financial year... The c[orporation is]... one of three LATEs in Manukau... [It] carries out contracting work such as stormwater and drainage works, roading maintenance and pumping stations. It has nearly 600 staff spread over Auckland, Masterton, Rotorua, Melbourne and Brisbane... Earlier this month, Excell Corporation bought the Tasman District Council's contracting Roads and Parks Services for more than \$3.1 million. The other two Manukau LATEs are Waste Disposal Services and the engineering company Manukau Consultants Ltd.

...Local authorities are forced to consult enough already, and should not have to hold polls before selling assets, says an organisation representing them. Such sales were complex, and councils looked at the interests of future residents, not just those who voted in a poll... "It should be the quality of the argument, not the quantity of the numbers,"... said... the president of Local Government New Zealand[(LGNZ).

...the North Shore City Council plans a telephone poll to test citizen approval to borrow \$3 million to spend on parks. A random survey of 500 ratepayers has been planned after a questionnaire mailed to 63,000 households failed to generate an emphatic response. Only 1229 residents returned the questionnaire on the council's annual plan, which included a question on the loan to buy more green space. The chairman of the council community facilities and parks committee said that the parks spending issue was lost among other questions in the survey. "There was not enough information. We felt it was better to focus on that issue alone." The loan was needed for speedy purchases to meet the needs of growth.'

...Planners are embarking on an extensive opinion poll this week to decide how to handle an Auckland population explosion. The Greater Auckland population is expected to reach two million within 50 years and... 420,000 homes will receive a discussion paper from the... regional growth... forum, a group made up of the A[RC plus Auckland's] four city councils and three district councils... Capacity for growth inside Auckland metropolitan limits is enough to last for about 15 years... About 330,000 more homes will be needed... [by] the time the population reaches two million... and the region could need... an area... of rural land for urban development... three times the size of the Auckland isthmus.

...in 1951 the Auckland Metropolitan Planning Organisation produced its "master plan" for Auckland's growth and advocated an optimum city size of 600,000. This figure was surpassed in 1968...

Manage? We can handle millions says the mayor THIS WEEK IN... 1972 [t]he Mayor of Auckland... sa[id] the present metropolitan area could support as many as four million people. He was commenting on a report... [that] said Auckland was fast approaching the limit of manageable size.

...Auckland's population grew by 12.5[%] between 1991 and 1996 – about 120,000 more people... Growth, to most people, is a good word. So shouldn't we sit back and let Auckland go on growing for ever? Sydney and Melbourne each have more than three million, and we have only 1.1 million, [so] why be concerned? Horror stories like Mexico City and Bangkok exist, but there's no way we could get like that, is there? And, anyway, how can you stop a city from growing even if you want to? Aucklanders should be vitally concerned about the city's future directions. If it

is to keep on growing it should be planned. You can't turn the clock back on growth. Once it has happened you are stuck with it. At present the only planning that takes place, as far as I can determine, goes like this: estimate what the population will be in 10 or 20 years' time on present trends; work out what services will be needed; and set about supplying them. When the 10 or 20 years are up, start again.

...Auckland's four cities and three rural districts must pull together if the regional growth strategy is to work, warns[the] Auckland Central MP. She says the local authorities will need to commit to the guidelines established, otherwise it could be another expensive waste of time and money... The Auckland Regional Growth Forum is to produce a 30-year plan by October 1998...

The... Local Government Amendment Act... requires long-term financial planning by local authorities. The principles in the new legislation focus on matching funding sources to functions carried out and on intergenerational equity in terms of funding costs in the years in which the benefits accrue. The idea is intended to be a further iteration of transparency and accountability in local government. However, the varied interpretation by councils of whether a particular service is a public good or a private benefit is confusing and a long shakedown period looks likely... [An] idiosyncrasy of the local government structure in N[Z] is the community... boards[, which] are elected as a substructure of territorial councils. They were intended, post restructuring, to provide a consultation and participation mechanism to compensate for the loss of smaller communities after amalgamation into larger cities and districts... The reforms have not addressed the need for integrated planning across territorial council borders... Restructuring... in... 1989... left... 159 community boards, 29 of them in Auckland. Auckland City alone has 91 elected politicians for a population of 350,000... – 24 city councillors in 10 wards, a mayor, and 66 members in 11 community boards... No wonder business interests are apt to say that the region is over-governed. The truth is that many community boards behave in a far more political role than originally intended, often being dominated by pressure groups. Many have a tense relationship with their parent body. Some are openly rebellious and see their role as making their parent councils as uncomfortable as possible... Common sense tells us that good local governance is about fostering durable, cooperative communities. The respective roles of local and central government in pursuit of this ideal are still not clear in N[Z] after nearly a decade of reform... Who should be doing what is still a bit woolly and the new MMP parliamentary system doesn't help the prospects of clarification.

...[I] – the author of *The End Of The Golden Weather* – do think that people thought after the last [parliamentary] election that they would get something better than what they've been getting [in the past. They didn't, and it seems like bad politics has]... been spreading down to local government as well...

In what we like to think were simpler times, much brain power was exhausted on matters religious. Calculating the number of angels that could dance on the head of a pin; using the *Bible* to fix the actual hour of Creation – that sort of thing. We like to think such sillinesses belong to more primitive, less rational times. But I reckon the old church theologians would find themselves right at home in the present... Since the Local Government Amendment Act (No 3) came into force in July last year, teams of bureaucrats and elected officials in every local body in the land have... [by] order of Parliament... been waving wet fingers in the air, counting tea leaves and tossing coins trying to decide what percentage of a dog licence is a public as opposed to a private good. They have judged whether burying Uncle Fred in the council cemetery is of greater benefit to Uncle Fred than it is to the community at large – or less. This huge time and money-wasting exercise is all part of Treasury's effort to force political activity into a straightjacket of "economic principles." The bottom line, of course, is to define which activities can be classified as "user-pays." ...To complicate things further there is provision for goods and services which are a mixture of public and private good. Inherently... all this is subjective and political. Is a child's visit to the zoo purely a private benefit? Or is the fact that the kid learns about protecting endangered species while there a benefit to society as a whole? A case can be made either way... but only according to political principles surely, not economic. How subjective this all is can be seen by comparing the preliminary theological discussion in North Shore City and Auckland City. With libraries, for instance, North Shore has decided on a public-private benefit split of 2:1. Auckland, on the other hand, comes up with a 9:1 split. North Shore sees dog control as a 50:50 split, Auckland seems to see it entirely as a private benefit. With pensioner housing, North Shore sees no public benefit, while Auckland lists it at 69[%] public and 31[%] private. Can both council's be right? Sorry, I can't help. I'm still working on the angels on the pinhead puzzle. It seems more worthwhile.

...Local politicians on the North Shore may pull their support today for public consultation on the future growth of Auckland. A number of city councillors are outraged at how the A[RC]'s growth forum has pushed forward... to May... [from] October next year... the process aimed at dealing with growth over the next 50 years... But the regional council... chairman... said... "so what?" ...six other territorial authorities supported the... \$50,000... forum's plans, and North Shore would simply be left behind if it chose not to participate... North Shore's planning committee meets today, and its chairman... predicts it will recommend asking the [ARC] to go back to its original consultation timetable. [In related news, 'four city councils paid a total of \$72 million for consultants' services last year – more than 40% of their staff payroll bill. The councils – all in Greater Auckland – are increasingly turning to outside consultants as they tackle multimillion-dollar infrastructure projects beyond the expertise or capacity of their own staff.']

...Sleep and democracy are on the line as accusations of gerrymaking fill the corridors of Auckland City Council. A meeting to consider the shape and political representation of the city's wards will be held at the "indecent" hour of 7.30am... and some councillors are outraged.

...[his] peers were outraged last year when[an] Auckland city councillor said the city had too many local representatives and their numbers should be cut by a third... [H]e would like to see the city with 19 councillors, not 24, and 48 board members instead of 66... [An] Invercargill businessman... agrees... [He] founded the lobby group One Southland in April to try to create a 16-member Southland council by merging the Southland and Gore district councils with the Invercargill City Council. He believes this could save the region \$9m a year... Generally, councillors earn around \$25,000 a year, with board members earning up to \$10,000 depending on their position... Last Wednesday, the Waitakere City Council voted to cut the number of councillors in the city from 16 to 13... Hutt City Council has gone against the wishes of its three community boards and the Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce by calling for the boards to disband and be replaced by six smaller boards. The council has also decided to cut the number of councillors from 13 to 12... The Local Government Commission has the authority to step in if, following a council's ruling, a community board refuses to disband voluntarily. Two weeks ago, the commission introduced a scheme to be enforced in Auckland's North Shore in time for next year's election. Under the scheme, the number of councillors has been cut from 19 to 15 and the number of wards halved to three. Community boards have been retained.

...Pressure is mounting for a new court battle over the Local Government Commission's reshaping of the North Shore City Council. Councillors will meet behind closed doors today to decide whether to appeal to the High Court against the commission's ruling last month. Another option is to ask the Minister of Local Government... to appeal. The council has already won a High Court battle, when the scheme was in draft form... The final scheme... most controversially, stops the council delegating resource consent powers to the boards.

...Plans to reorganise local government on the North Shore are heading back to court... The appeal... will cost \$5000 to \$10,000... The council will ask for financial support from L[GNZ]... although it declined to help on the first appeal... However, the appeal could cause headaches at election time in October 1998 if the matter has not been resolved. [Incidentally, unlike parliamentary elections, there is 'no limit for local bodies' on the amount that candidates can spend during their campaigns. Last time, the mayor of Auckland City – who next year will be 'seeking his fourth and last term as mayor – reportedly spent about \$300,000 on his campaign (\$250,000 of which came from his son, who owns a group of gyms, and the remainder came from other supporters; of the total, about \$70,000 was spent on TV advertisements, about \$40,000 for advertisements in the *Herald*, \$32,000 for a glossy mailer, and a combined \$100,000 was paid to an advertising company and a public relations firm), or about \$8 for every one of his 42,542 votes. The third-placed candidate also spent about \$8 for each of his 12,268 votes. The mayor strongly defended the cost of his election campaign, but the Green Party candidate

called for a spending limit. "Mayoral races are in danger of becoming the preserve of rich people or those with major corporate backing." The Minister of Local Government – who has indicated that she intends to leave parliament and become an Auckland mayoralty candidate next year – believed a campaign cap of \$50,000 should apply to stop the "Americanisation of local body politics." Unfortunately, spending on TV and newspaper advertising will rise if other wards follow the lead of 'Avondale and Blockhouse Bay – which have declared themselves election hoarding-free zones.'

...local politicians... have... their... exam... in [October 1998] when voters – at least those who bother[('voter turnout for the last local body elections ranged from 35.5% in Manukau City to 50% in the Franklin district')] – decide whom they want back at the town hall. But life for some could become a little uncertain as moves to cut local government gather strength... At last count the region had a staggering 370 elected politicians – just 65 fewer than the U[S] Congress. Some community board members did not even face the voter last time – they took their seats unopposed. But who can say whether Auckland has too many politicians? Or too few? The big Auckland City exercise may succeed in... moving a ward boundary and delivering 16 fewer politicians[, but there] is no guarantee it will make for better decisions... [However, members] of the A[RC] have voted themselves \$26,000 to improve their skills in areas where they feel shaky. The Citizens and Ratepayers-initiated move will allocate each of 13 councillors a \$2000 grant for training... A proponent of the idea... said... [regional] council staff members had about \$1000 a year spent on their training needs, so it was reasonable that councillors should have training as well. "Why not pay for the people who make the decisions?" ...The motion... was passed at a recent meeting by seven votes to three... [One councillor] who voted against the decision, said if councillors needed training, they should pay for it themselves.

...Aucklanders may be asked to pay for some of the region's local body councillors to learn how to do their job. Courses for "experienced" councillors are being offered at \$495 a head by the Auckland University local and regional government politics unit... The course, beginning next month, offers between 20 and 40 places... The university is contemplating running similar courses next year.

...Examinations in Manukau City schools may soon include questions for young pupils on the identity of their local councillor... The proposal is the brainchild of [a local councillor who is] an advocate of civics teaching... [Meanwhile, t]he dominant local body group in Auckland[, the]... Citizens and Ratepayers Association... is aiming to sharpen discipline and centralise its selection process... The association has a majority on the Auckland City Council, the A[RST] and the Auckland Energy Consumers Trust, and a strong power base on the A[RC]. However, a C&RA... city councillor who sometimes takes an independent stand, yesterday interpreted the performance reviews as a disciplinary measure that would make the group more like a national political party. Parties had no place in local government, she said. One of the association's strengths was that its members expressed varied opinions as councillors. Another member... predicted that centralised selection would split the organisation as ward-based groups clung to power. But the[C&RA] chairman of the services trust... said performance reviews were a common business practice. Voters were entitled to know that the people they put into power were subject to some kind of review.

...The Mayor of Waitakere... wants his sometimes belligerent council to consider a code of conduct... He... has cited the Rangitikei District Council's eight-point code, which reminds its elected members and senior management to act with integrity and honesty... "One or two... around this council table... have demonstrated that they... would fail this "Rangitikei test" on a number of counts." [The mayor], who is travelling to Sweden to speak at a conference on planning... did not name the councillors he had in mind. [However], an independent councillor who has frequently clashed with the mayor, disputed the need for a code. "I can't think of anyone who would fail the test. And if they did, it would be sorted out at the next election." ...[Speaking of which, o]ne simple law change would save Auckland City ratepayers \$120,000 and all of N[Z] \$2 million, says the city council returning officer... [He] said the 1976 Local Elections and Polls Act predated the technology now available... Because the ballots were not allowed to be opened before the final Saturday of polling, 650 people had to be hired and the Town Hall used to count them all manually... If the postal voting papers were allowed to be opened as they arrived at the council, an electronic scanner could be used to put the results into a computer.

...The influential Deputy Mayor of Auckland... has infuriated Alliance supporters with a restructuring plan they say amounts to a "gerrymander" of their inner-city power base. [The deputy mayor], the leading C[&RA] councillor, is pushing for a boundary carve-up which would split the Alliance-dominated Western Bays ward between Hobson and Avondale-Mt Albert. An Alliance Western Bays councillor... was alarmed by an option that would move one councillor from Western Bays to Hobson. The... council must choose an option before... [they] vote on Thursday.

...In national politics we ensure that all votes have equal value by creating electorates of identical size, give or take 5[%]. We guarantee there will be no political jiggery-pokery with the boundaries by employing an independent commission. Unfortunately in local politics it can still be very much the political wild west... when it comes to such matters. Take last Thursday's resolution of the Auckland City Council... to reduce the number of councillors representing the Western Bays ward (population 35,991) from three to two, and to increase representation in the... Hobson ward (population 35,804) from two to three... Of course if I was of a paranoid nature I would suspect that it is really a blatantly political move to punish a ward which regularly returns Labour, or more recently Alliance councillors... who have constantly sniped away at the... [C&RA juggernaut. ■] Almost half the... people who responded to the clip-and-return survey in... [the c]ouncil's... *City Scene* newsletter favoured reducing the council... About 130,000 households received *City Scene*, but only 1.8[%] had responded.

...Consultation: just what does it mean? ...My interpretation is that one or more propositions are placed before people and comment sought. These proposals are impartial with balanced argument for and against and with no attempt to influence the consultation. The results are considered when a decision is being made. Not all see it this way. Inserts in... *City Scene* [invited] comment on a very important topic – the political structure of the city, the number, size and boundaries of wards, the number of councillors and also community boards. This is legally required of the council... People[were] asked for comments on several options... [However, the council had] already voted on which option it prefers. This is just a process under the guise of consultation but is really looking for approval of a decision already made... [A] constant remark made to me is that *City Scene* is purely a organ for council propaganda.

...Auckland City's community boards are campaigning against their membership being slashed by almost a third as part of a move to cut the number of city politicians... Four options for change have emerged, all involving a cut to 19 councillors plus the mayor and 48 elected community board positions. Two options change some boundaries but keep all wards and boards. Two others forge five new super-wards but retain the 11 boards. The... chairwoman of the Auckland Regional Community Boards Association and a Waiheke Island board member, said yesterday that boards performed vital work in community consultation. "We can't keep up our level of service if they reduce our numbers," she said... Community boards were "cheap labour," she [added]... However... a councillor prominent in the push for a single "super city" for the region, claimed slashing representation from 91 to 68 would carve \$1.8 million from the city's annual democracy budget of about \$7 million.

...Take note those who say Auckland is too big for its boots: some politicians want to trade the boots in for an even bigger pair. High-powered councillors in Auckland are pushing for the creation of a super-city. The group, which lists [Auckland City's] mayor among its supporters, wants to see one big body swallow the existing four city and three district councils that now control Greater Auckland. Supporters say it would cut the number of elected politicians in Auckland from 371 to 36.

...The drive to mould an Auckland super-city struck opposition yesterday from politicians worried that the proposed regime would be an impracticable giant. "Everything can be improved but I don't think putting everything together in one big grab-bag is the right answer," said the Mayor of North Shore... "We should work to make what we have got work properly first..." The Deputy Mayor of Rodney... said Auckland was

too broad a place to throw everything into one council. "We are a very different animal to Auckland City. The Hibiscus Coast has always been looked upon as a separate entity." She[also] disagreed with another proposal by a North Shore City councillor... to merge the North Shore and Rodney... [He] said the merger would protect lifestyles north of the harbour bridge. "The lifestyle of North Harbour will change forever if the urban intensifiers of the metropolis-minded Auckland City Council get their way." ...Members of the Auckland City Council have written to the Government urging it to create a single authority to control Greater Auckland... They argue that the super-city would cut ratepayer costs... [and t]he Mayor of Auckland... said a super-city was something Auckland would need in the future. "I believe in the long term it is going to be in Auckland's best interests."

...*Bigger cities do not cost any less to run...* A university lecturer in town planning once defined a region as "an area somewhat larger than the one whose problems we could not solve last time." This great truth probably explains why some politicians and members of the public have called for the cities of the Auckland region to be combined into one single "supercity." This idea maintains the N[Z] belief in "amalgamation" – based on a conviction that big organisations are more efficient than small ones. Business has long abandoned this simple-minded faith. Our politicians continue to find it endearing. We have always been promised that urban amalgamations would lead to more efficient cities because of "the economies of scale." For example... the Mayor of Auckland, has argued that[the] proposed super-city would be more cost-effective because we would not need as many mayors and councillors. Not surprisingly, this idea has been poorly received by other mayors and councillors – which makes it only more attractive to the many citizens who hate their politicians... There are areas where the economies of scale do apply, but access to our elected officials political accountability is almost certainly not one of them... [The] proposal presupposes that Aucklanders would benefit from having fewer councillors and more bureaucrats... [because] statistics indicate that the bigger the city the more numerous the bureaucrats. This is best illustrated by comparing Christchurch with Papakura, a small district sitting on the edge of the Auckland region. Christchurch is a single super-city occupying the heart of the Canterbury region and is presumably a role model for[Auckland City's] Mayor... Papakura has about 40,000 people, Christchurch about 320,000, a ratio of eight to one. Papakura has three people administering the Resource Management Act within a total of 22 in its development and environment division. We would expect Christchurch to have about 24 in its team of a total of about 176 in its development and environment division. If there are economies of scale there might be even fewer. In reality, the equivalent figures[are] 170 and 277. There may be some good reasons for this huge discrepancy[(e.g., Christchurch may place greater emphasis on its development and environment than Papakura)] but Parkinson's Law probably accounts for most of it... Statistics also indicate that the bigger the city the higher the rates paid a head. The... bureaucracies[of supercities] boom and find more and more things to do with their ratepayers' funds – many of which have little merit in the eyes of the public... Anyone for a supercity?

...[Should we merge into a supercity? An Auckland supercity is being bandied around by the region's councils. The idea coincides with calls by Waitakere City's mayor to take over parts of Rodney and Avondale in Auckland City. On the street, the *Western Leader* asks readers if the west needs the rest. Mr Electrician: "I don't think we should merge. Waitakere's got its own identity and we don't need to be burdened with other people's hassles." Mr Stonemason: "I'm quite happy with the way we are. I don't think we have to answer to anyone – the more we have the more involved and complicated it is." Mrs Office Manager: "To be honest I haven't actually given it much thought so I'm not sure what the benefits or disadvantages would be. The only thing I know about Rodney is it's lost most of its staff." Mr Retired: "No I don't think we should have a supercity because they are uncontrollable. Rodney certainly seems to be in a mess." Mrs Travel Agent: "Yes, I think everyone would benefit from it." Incidentally, 'Waitakere City is rated seventh best city in NZ in a *North and South* survey, beating the likes of Auckland, Dunedin, Hamilton, Invercargill and Napier. But we didn't do as well as North Shore which comes in as runner-up behind Wellington. In the next edition of the *Western Leader* we'll find out why readers like it here – and if the North Shore really is better.']

...*Jury's out on big is best...* My impression is that any such proposal would also get rid of the region's environmental guardian – the A[RC, of which I am]... the chairman... The timing of the super-city protagonists is stunning and, by my reckoning, about as intuitive as E. J. Smith, captain of the Titanic, who said before his last voyage: "I never saw a wreck and have never been wrecked, nor was I ever in any predicament that threatened to end in disaster of any sort." Only a matter of a month ago I attended the Auckland Mayoral Forum along with the region's mayors. The sentiments expressed in that forum were that real leadership for the Auckland region can be provided by putting aside any parochial interests and working together. We know from experience that this is achievable... Having observed local government amalgamation and restructuring over the past decade, it is quite clear in my mind that it would be totally unacceptable and abhorrent to Aucklanders to have a single authority which is both gamekeeper and poacher when it comes to environmental issues. The suggestion is, at the very least, naive. There is a growing... understanding that our place in the world – our future – is tied in with our relatively unspoiled environment. To whom do we trust this future? ...But... [s]ome people commend the single-city proposal as having fewer politicians[, and on this point I concur. The]... region's councils together have more than 370 elected members – clearly ridiculous. We are not running the United States of America... The regional council has only 13 elected politicians representing one million people. [By the way, I'm 'delighted with a recent Privy Council ruling which forces the IRD to refund more than \$2 million to the ARC. The case goes back to 1989 when the Auckland Harbour Board was abolished and its assets and liabilities (including tax obligations) were transferred to the ARC.'

...The ARC] is convinced it does not need additional councillors, despite the population boom in its area. While it is busy developing strategies to deal with the growth and accompanying infrastructure and environmental problems it does not want to increase spending ratepayers' money... If the policy, established in 1994, was to be followed in the local body elections next year and if each councillor was to represent the same population as in 1994, the membership would rise to 14... By resolving to stick with 13 members the ratio will be one councillor to more than 88,000 residents.

...The Auckland City Council spent three hours debating its size last night but finally spared itself the knife. Only the mayor... and four councillors voted for... the cut... One... later said it was a disgrace his colleagues had voted against the cost-cutting proposal. He claimed they were afraid of losing their seats... [However, i]t should be pointed out that bigger wards and fewer councillors... result[s] in the concentration of power in fewer hands... If community boards were reduced in numbers but given more work to do, would they be able to cope? Would they be effective as far as ability to do what was required and... would... the cost... be less than it is at present, or more to service fewer councillors needing more backup support or delegating to more staff? ...It is fallacious to quote the number of elected representatives (as against full-time members of Parliament) without acknowledging that councillors are regarded as part-time and they do much more work than what they are paid for.

...Local politicians' meetings are full of "waffle and claptrap" and achieve little, says a rebel Waitakere City councillor... The... self-employed businessman, said yesterday that councillors should give up inflated allowances and do the job for free. [● 'Last year, the 24 Auckland City councillors' salaries cost \$444,551; when combined with the \$415,106 paid for attending meetings (the councillor who received the largest share attended 216 meetings) their combined pay cheque was \$859,657. The \$87,442 salary of the mayor brought the total to \$947,099. This financial year the budget for councillors' salaries is \$575,000 and for meeting allowances \$390,000. The mayor's salary is \$88,900, making the combined total \$1,053,000.']

...Local politicians are "grossly overpaid" and their pay system needs a shake-up, says the Mayor of Papakura... Councillors in the big cities can earn \$15,450, but make a lot of their money from meeting allowances... He said... many councillors were being paid more than \$40,000 a year: "That's far too much for a part-time job. Some of them are making a career out of it." ...[his] comments last night came in the wake of a report by Local Government N[Z] that suggests the way councillors are paid does not give value for ratepayers' dollars. The report says decisions take too long, with redundant subcommittees meeting to claim daily allowances which, in the Auckland region, range from Franklin's \$110 to the \$175 on

offer in Auckland, Waitakere and Manukau and with the regional council... [According to one councillor, these "meetings" average under two hours.] ...Two senior Auckland City councillors... disagreed with [the Papakura mayor's] view, saying the present system should remain... [One] said: "In all my nine years in council I have not known councillors to drag on making a decision just to make a few more allowance claims." [However, a lecturer from] Auckland University, who specialises in local government, said the system of paying councillors per meeting had been abused in the past, with committees adjourning, then reconvening straight away under a different guise. This had been curtailed by the introduction of the rule allowing only one meeting allowance to be claimed a day... The rates are set by the Minister of Local Government... who does not know whether councils abuse meeting allowances. She favours capped spending... [Unlike councillors, mayors are] not entitled to the [daily] meeting allowance... Mayors of cities with populations above 150,000... are entitled to a... maximum annual salary of \$91,570 plus a car... Mayors of cities with populations between 75,000 and 150,000... can get \$79,420... An independent pay-setting body would be a useful way of distancing local politicians from being seen to be rewarding themselves pay increases.

...It's not easy being a mayor in N[Z]'s biggest cities – but an extra \$20,000 a year could ease the burden. That's the thinking of local government lobbyists, who want a 21[%] pay rise for the top mayors. The proposal would mean salary increases... to \$108,000 for the mayors of Auckland, Manukau, North Shore, Waitakere, Wellington and Christchurch. The Government has been asked to approve the pay rise by L[GNZ, whose]... acting chief executive... said the proposed increase would restore a lost pay balance between top mayors and junior Government ministers.

...Rural mayors want to be paid more... They said working in a rural environment involved a lot of travelling and councillors and board members were disadvantaged by the meeting allowances. The mayors of Southland, Waimate... and Taranua... [to name a few, also said that] because of distance, several meetings were often held on one day but councillors could claim only one meeting allowance... ranging from \$100 for small councils... on top of a "pittance salary." ...at \$36,000[... the]... Waimate Mayor... is one of the lowest-paid mayors in the country... [However, the] Southland Mayor... who is paid an annual salary of \$53,550... [to cover] the largest area of any of N[Z]'s councils... said she did the job because she loved it, not for the money... [The maximum mayoral salary for towns 'up to 19,999 in population, such as Taranua, is \$44,130.'] In Taranua, board members and councillors are paid \$3000. Chairpeople get a salary of \$4000... [Meanwhile,] Auckland City... councillors... [have] voted a 3[%] pay rise to themselves, the mayor... and... community board members. The rise, which took two minutes to rubber stamp, was permitted for all councils two months ago by the... Minister of Local Government... and is backdated to July 1 last year.

...All local authorities in the Auckland region, except Waitakere[(where 'Go Waitakere party members – who campaigned on reducing the running costs of the council – voted themselves a 6% pay hike')], have accepted a... 3[%] pay rise, their third in eight years... But... the Mayor of... North Shore... has opted to take home about \$1700 less than the maximum... The Mayor of... Papakura... has always opted to take home about \$1000 less...

A Papakura political group is... [opposed to] the planned franchising of the district's water services. The plan effectively to lease the water and wastewater assets... is being promoted by the dominant Papakura Action group on the district council. The minority Papakura Residents and Ratepayers Association on Monday began a petition to delay picking the franchisee until people are given more information.

...Complaints to the Ombudsman mount as more people lodge objections to the Papakura District Council's "inadequate" public consultation process over the sale of control of its water and sewage services. The council used the dead days period of Christmas, New Year and the summer holidays to publicly advertise the franchising of local water services... which is nothing but a backdoor method of privatising... Despite complaints from the public, the council voted last Monday night to call for tenders from the private sector to buy control of water and sewage supply for 30 to 50 years... Councillors [expect to receive]... between \$7 million and \$13.1 million for the franchise... At last count, 19 companies were interested, including several from Britain and France. If the experience of other countries is an example of the control of water by private companies, whether local or foreign, it will mean higher prices, poorer quality service, reduced investment in infrastructure and lower environmental performance... [A study of records obtained from British companies during the] six years... since the involvement of private [enterprise] in water and waste-water services... [showed] that on average prices have increased by 159[%], profits have trebled, executive pay has increased by 339[%], and pollution incidents have gone up by 53[%]. Yet investment in water supply fell by 20[%] in the past year, and the companies paid virtually no tax.

...*Water, water, everywhere, but not a drop to drink... unless you're prepared to pay the private contractors...* The idea of franchising water supplies has angered those who insist that water is public property and should not be used for private profit. The debate has been revived by the plan to franchise Papakura's water services. That district council's decision on Monday... coincides with the fifth annual water conference in Auckland... Last year the Alliance staged a protest outside the venue. This year, as has become fashionable for some major conferences, an alternative is being organised. The Alliance's Keep Water in Public Hands conference in a suburban Auckland hall tomorrow costs \$15 a head. In contrast, the two-day water management conference... beginning the next day at the Centra Hotel, costs \$1500... Supplying water and disposing of sewage have been defining features of local government in New Zealand. Municipal water and wastewater assets, owned mainly by councils, are valued at \$6 billion. This is comparable to the investment in the electricity transmission and distribution system... Supporters of reform say that as politicians and bureaucrats are replaced by investors and managers with strong incentives to perform, the better the industry will be. They predict gains in efficiency and an end to what they consider the inequity that results from charging, through local body rates, for sewage disposal... Opponents of privatising water services... argue... [that it] will inevitably mean price rises as consumers start paying a percentage into investors' pockets as well as for the services.

...Auckland bulk and retail water prices are likely to double... from [the] present level of 39c a cu m... in the next few years, according to the Waitakere City Council. This would cut the region's water demand by an estimated 20[%], the council... said yesterday... The council... favours fostering the use of efficient home appliances which it believes are likely to cut domestic water use by 40[%] over the next 10 years... [W]ith additional savings, the need for a new source can be delayed for many years. Watercare[Services Ltd], however, maintains the need for a new source is more pressing than ever with Auckland population growth of about 25,000 a year... Watercare[... which]... yesterday announced a surplus of \$19,547,000 for the year... [– after recording 'a profit of \$293,000 last year and a \$15.4 million net loss before tax during the 1994-95 year' –] is prevented by statute from paying a dividend to the... A[RST, a law that] has got the company looking at phasing in a rate of return on investment over the next 10 years to make it a more commercially run business... It can return surpluses to its customers, the city and district councils, but never has. They have been reinvested or used to cover the losses of the 1994 water shortage. A company spokesman... said outside the hearing that its water price would not double. It would, however, rise by 5[%], to 40.95c, from July 1 – the first rise since 1989... This would add about 30c a month to average domestic water bills if passed on by the councils. And it would rise in line with inflation in coming years... He said it was ironic for Waitakere to raise the question of pricing since its retail price was Auckland's highest, at \$1.22 a cu m, and was aimed to rise to \$1.34 on July 1.

...Auckland City residents will buy their water from Metro Water, a new council-owned company, from July 1... [after] councillors voted 13-11 to commercialise the council's water services... And three months later they will also start paying a user-charge to the company for wastewater disposal, a service now paid for from rates... Council critics of the move said it was anti-democratic, hard on the poor, lacked public support and would lead to privatisation. Supporters said the company structure would be more efficient and lead to more investment in the decaying wastewater network... [An] associated... council-owned holding company, [to be] set up to own Metro Water at arm's length from the council, will have seven council-appointed directors... [This means that the] council will have no direct control over Metro Water and its prices although it will be

able to set the rate of return annually and could sack directors... The cap for the holding company's directors' fees is \$120,000, and the ceiling for [Metro Water directors] is \$140,000.

...On July 1... Metrowater, took control of water supply to Auckland city residents. On the same day United Water, of which British Company Thames Water and French water services giant Compagnie Generale des Eaux are major shareholders, took over Papakura city's water supply franchise for 50 years... [after t]he Papakura District Council... voted 11-2 to accept[its] \$13.1 million bid... United Water, the world's biggest water supplier, operates in A[US], Britain and the USA... [(t]he group, with about 2500 subsidiaries and 204,000 employees, has an annual turnover of \$45.6 billion[)] ...It will bill Papakura customers, set charges and be responsible for systems upgrades. Water prices are frozen for two years and then capped at the Auckland city rate thereafter... Papakura[']s... decision to put its water services in the hands of private managers has led to the slashing of its annual budget by 28[%]... Water rates in Papakura will initially fall by 18[%] but residents will then pay a sum, which may be more or less than 18% depending on consumption... Metrowater will[eventually] work in a similar manner... [Previously, people were charged] for water and wastewater based on the value of their land. "Some people are charged \$500 to \$600 a year through rates for water when they only use \$100 worth." ...[the] Papakura Mayor... said a big factor behind the switch to United Water was a \$310[million] upgrade to the Mangere oxidation ponds which he predicted would have seen a 50% Papakura rate rise over the next decade... [- although a] build/own/operate/transfer (BOOT) scheme might cut the facility's costs by 10[%], and some]... critics have said the upgrade could have been \$160 million cheaper if an option with less stringent effluent-discharge rules was adopted. The... new plant will use electricity to treat effluent rather than breaking it down with sunshine... It is possible some of the electricity will be generated by a cogeneration plant, perhaps using methane gas from the waste... [T]he treated sludge might [also] be a good nutrient for forests and it is even being looked at as a fuel for the old Meremere power station... [In related news, resource] consents have been obtained for the construction of[a] \$16.4 million Wellington composting plant between the... [refuge] collector and recycler Waste Management NZ... and the Living Earth Company... [The announcement came as] Waste Management... reported... all divisions contributed to... [a] \$3.92 million... six month... profit... compared with \$3.27 million for the same period last year and was after tax of \$2.13 million (\$1.81 million in the 1996 period)... During the period, Waste Management successfully re-bid for the... five-year... Hastings District Council residential refuse collection contract... The company also bought Bin Hire Services (Whakatane) but was unsuccessful in bidding for the Gisborne District Council residential refuse collection contract... Sales revenue was 13.3[%] higher at \$34.05 million... [L]eading the way... [was] the landfill at Redvale on the North Shore. The site had increased its share of the... Auckland... region's waste volume and continued to meet expectations. The landfill had the capacity to receive significantly larger proportions of the... region's waste[, which is fortunate because the 'half filled tip at Rosedale Rd has recently been closed because of its smell. The North Shore council had wanted a cricket ground and four rugby fields on the fully filled site but slopes on the unfinished part are suitable only for open parkland.'

...[the] North Shore City Council-owned company NSM Contracting... which manages parks, gardens, sewerage and cleaning on the Shore... has reported a before-tax surplus of \$1.37 million for 1996-97. The company... returned a dividend of \$460,000 to the council – more than double that of 1995-96... [Incidentally, a]nother publicly owned Auckland asset is being lined up for a possible sale. The A[RST] is looking at privatising its 100[%]-owned waste-management company, Northern Disposal Systems Ltd, which has a book value of \$18.6 million... The trust is required by law to sell Northern Disposal "as soon as is practicable and prudent." ...Northern Disposal, which paid the trust an \$875,000 dividend in the past financial year, owns half of Enviro Waste Services, the country's third-largest waste-management operation.

...The leasing of Papakura's water services to the private sector has sparked strong interest from[other] councils... No law bans local authorities from selling their water operations, except Watercare Services Ltd, owned by the A[RST].

...Auckland City's 25 councillors are there to make far-reaching decisions as a result of the popular vote. The status quo must be paramount when consideration is given to a sudden and large alteration in the way we manage any of our core functions. The closeness of the decision when we first voted on setting up a... LATE... to manage our water resulted in an 11-all split. The casting vote of the mayor... meant the company did not proceed. [Yet, a month later], when the matter was revisited, the decision was reversed 12 to 11... This huge decision [aw] the transfer of \$100 million of capital assets to this council-owned company and a loan of \$75 million which has to be serviced. This, long before [Metrowater started] invoicing us for fresh water supplied and foul water removed... Watercare... has to find \$340 million to upgrade the Mangere sewage works and \$150 million of that is to be levied on Auckland City (or rather [Metrowater]) as the largest user... [Metrowater] will have to service a \$75 million debt and the other charges. It will have to borrow more and/or levy us with additional charges... Auckland's water business... operat[ed] very successfully as a stand-alone business unit... As N[Z]'s 14-th largest business we ha[d] the income and asset backing to repay our water loans and defuse the fiscal effect of Watercare's upgradings and expansions. The setting up of [Metrowater], as a profit-making corporate, places[Auckland City's] water supply and removal function a step away from full privatisation. Some[councillors] may bleat: "I... definitely [didn't vote] for privatisation but for a sharper operation" ...increased loan servicing? ...regional levies? Who said we are going to privatise our water? No one. However, there will not be any one of us now governing... Auckland City... around in 20 years when future councillors will find it easier to privatise because of what we are doing now.

...The Metrowater company model is being officially promoted for a second Auckland City Council department. The works committee yesterday narrowly supported investigating the conversion of... City Design... into a... LATE... City Design is N[Z]'s eighth-largest engineering consultancy, with 130 staff, mainly engineers and a few architects. In the June year it produced annual earnings for the council of about \$1.2 million from total turnover of about \$12.6 million. All but 10[%] of its work is for the council but outside work is expected to increase to 30[%]... The Deputy Mayor... said... that while not pushing the issue, he was interested in creating trading enterprises from the[rest of the] council's... profit-making business units: ...City Parks Services, Fleet Services, City Contract Services, and the parking buildings... [●] Manukau plans to establish a ...Late[for its water services by January next year], while Waitakere is still consulting residents.

...Activists had the sting pulled from their protest against water commercialisation yesterday when Waitakere City politicians welcomed them into the debate. Twenty Alliance and Citizens Against Privatisation members mounted the protest outside the council offices and waved placards with slogans such as "hands off our water." But the mayor... and his deputy... swept down from the chamber to usher them inside and invited two of their number to address the council meeting. The meeting later adjourned to next Wednesday without making a decision on the proposal to set up a company, tentatively referred to as Eco Water, in line with the council's image. The company would own and run the council's \$230 million water supply and sewage disposal assets. An Alliance protester... said... "...the issue of privatisation is more about who will own the system in 20 years, than who will own it tomorrow."

...The... Alliance co-leader and energy spokeswoman... said other councils should wait to see what happened in Papakura and Auckland before making a decision. "It is a dangerous agreement between Papakura and United Water because the council loses all control... and United Water has the power to disconnect services at any time. It has no obligation to upgrade pipes or improve quality..." ...She said there... were 21,592 disconnections... [in] Britain... in 1992... Despite the criticism, [the Papakura mayor] said he had community support and believed it[was] a step in the right direction... [His comments were supported by] the Business Round Table[, which says the rest of NZ]... could be forgoing huge savings by not reforming its water industry...

[The] executive director of the N[Z] Business Roundtable... argues for privatising water supplies and selling water at market rates like any other commodity... British water industry privatisation is often criticised. Indeed it seems to be the only example of water privatisation known to Alliance

politicians and many journalists, and they seem to think it demonstrates the failure of privatisation. The heavily regulated approach adopted by the British Government is certainly not a model that commends itself. In many ways the industry swapped a Government owner for a Government controller and regulator. However, it is important not to overlook that in Britain substantial investment was required for maintenance, which was neglected when the water companies were under political control, to meet E[U] environmental standards (whether justified or not), and to improve the quality of drinking water. This investment meant that regardless of privatisation prices would rise and consumers who did not value such improvements would be dissatisfied. In fact, charges have risen in all E[U] countries, in part as a result of the need to finance higher standards. A rise in prices following corporatisation or privatisation is not necessarily an indicator of policy failure. If prices were previously held down artificially – for example through failure to undertake adequate maintenance of assets, or for political reasons – over-consumption and other distortions would occur causing resource misallocation and environmental damage. Artificially low prices are as harmful to society as artificially high prices – the goal should be to promote efficient pricing. Despite these significant weaknesses in the implementation of water industry privatisation in Britain, the balance sheet is clearly positive. Real improvements in drinking and bathing water quality and efficiency gains have been made. Compared with the momentum of reform of water utilities around the world, progress in N[Z] has on the whole been extremely slow.

...There is nothing new under the sun; old ideas come round again. [The Business Roundtable's executive director] would take us back to 19th-century Britain with private companies selling water for profit. Perhaps history will serve as a better guide than untested economic theory. For centuries in Britain water was supplied by private companies with many public attempts to control pollution and profiteering. The issues were the same as now – water quality, reliability of supply, pricing, access for low-income people. Competition was well-established, too, with eight private companies competing to supply London. Some streets had three sets of pipes with three sets of labourers – selected for their belligerence – making fortunes persuading customers to change supplier while the streets were constantly torn open to allow connections to be switched. The stink of the Thames and high death rates from cholera, while poor families had no water connections and at best shared standpipes in the streets, led to efforts to bring water under public control. But the struggle took decades as water companies strenuously resisted demands for clean water sources, filtration, continuous supply and access for the poor. While Manchester took water into public control in 1847 and Liverpool soon after, in London the private water companies succeeded in holding up progress until 1902. Britain has recently reversed this decision and sold its water companies. [The executive director] argues that all that is wrong with water privatisation in Britain is that it is “heavily regulated.” That may be a problem for the companies, but N[Z] water users should envy them. We have no mandatory standards for drinking water quality. There are voluntary guidelines, but some water authorities fail to meet them. At least when the authorities are publicly elected voters can force a change, as they did recently in Dunedin when [a new]Mayor... was elected on a platform of cleaning up water quality and investing in the crumbling pipework. The guidelines are derived from World Health Organisation standards designed to be achievable by Third World countries. They allow much higher levels of nitrates than exist in water from the Auckland dams at present, and other trace minerals as well. We do not need to lower our standards that far but private suppliers will lower them for us if we let them. [The executive director] would allow people to decide how much they value water quality and be prepared to pay accordingly. That imposes huge and inefficient costs as each consumer has to find out what the various contaminants are and the likely effects on their health. That is what we elect public bodies to do; we expect to hold them accountable if water quality is seen to be inadequate and we don't expect them to downgrade the quality of our present supply. [The executive director] argues the British experience is clearly positive... There is evidence to the contrary. Just this month Three Valleys Water in north London concealed for some weeks that its water was contaminated with cryptosporidium. Thirty-two people became ill and three were put in hospital, including two infants. This company is owned by Compagnie Generale des Eaux – the major partner in... the successful tenderer for the Papakura water franchise. Drought management has been poor – much worse than in Auckland in 1994 – and communities have run out of water. Disconnections have grown... That has not been normal practice in N[Z] where councils would have to face the wrath of electors, but disconnection for those who cannot pay their bills is expressly provided for in the Papakura franchise agreement.

...[AN Avondale petrol station owner vows he will fight Metrowater over wastewater charges even if that means being cut off. The owner of the Caltex service station in Great North Rd doesn't agree with paying 100% for his wastewater charges. He says about 200 to 400 gallons of water a week are used to top up radiators and wash windscreens. He also refuses to pay for an audit which could reduce the wastewater charge by up to 25%. “I am a businessman being sent an invoice for the wrong amount. If I did that to a customer I would be expected to put it right at my expense.” He expressed his concerns to the Avondale Community Board which has asked Metrowater to explain its audit charge. Metrowater's communications manager says initially each of the city's businesses is charged a flat 100% waste water charge. “The reasoning behind that is in the normal course of everyday residential life, gardens get watered and cars get cleaned which means water doesn't go into the wastewater system. Those aspects of life don't happen in the business world.” She says the \$100-plus fee for an audit is for the time and staffing it costs to access premises. “I don't think it's fair for our 122,000 residential customers to pay for an audit which could save a business money.” She said some businesses, especially those where water is used in the manufacturing process, have saved thousands of dollars by spending the money on an audit. But she says, in her experience, only a negligible amount of water doesn't enter the wastewater system from petrol stations.]

...[Water Pressure Group campaigners dug up an Onehunga street yesterday to restore water supply to a house cut off by Metrowater. The water company disconnected the Grey St house more than a month ago because its owner refused to pay the wastewater component of his bill. The group said the occupiers, three generations of one family, had survived by filling pots and pans from a neighbour's garden hose. A “turn-on” squad of 100 supporters took about three hours to reconnect the pipe to the water main. A pickaxe was used to dig through the asphalt and expose the water main and feeder pipe. Road cones warned passing motorists of the work. A previous attempt to restore the supply brought a public safety warning from the company. Its spokesperson said last night that the water main was under enormous pressure and if proper procedures were not followed a fitting could blow off and kill or injure bystanders. Metrowater's spokesperson was not sure whether the company would again cut off the supply. “We have a responsibility to our other customers if they are paying to make sure everybody pays. But there doesn't seem to be anything to gain from inflaming the pressure group – it just seems to make them more dangerous, which is not in the public interest.” Metrowater was relying on a High Court ruling to clarify the issue of wastewater payments once and for all.]

...[a lobby group boycotting wastewater user charges said its “turn-on squad” plans to reconnect a Blockhouse Bay family whose supply has been shut off. It intends digging up the water mains in Chaucer Place and installing new pipes, before concreting over the hole so Metrowater could not remove the pipes. A barbecue and street party are also planned. The action comes a day after a group member was arrested during a protest involving 10 people outside the company's Three Kings headquarters. The man, who allegedly spray-painted “Dump Metrowater” in big yellow letters on the headquarters' steps yesterday afternoon, faces wilful damage charges next week. The increasingly strained relationship between Metrowater and the group was underlined when Metrowater asked police to investigate another reconnection attempt. Metrowater said its contractors had seen two men tampering with the water supply in Grey St, Onehunga, last Saturday, putting nearby householders at risk. Metrowater's communications manager said the men had dug up the road without using safety barriers or warning cones. She said the group's plans were both illegal and dangerous. Metrowater's chief executive said it had a responsibility to ensure a reliable supply and to keep residents safe, “and we will take whatever steps are necessary to do that.” The group claims it has more than 700 members. But Metrowater says that so far only 36 customers have had their water cut off because of non-payment. Chaucer School, which is in the same street as today's protest, is also in dispute with Metrowater and has refused to pay the wastewater component of its water bill.]

...the corporatisation of Auckland's] water system will add more than \$40 million to consumers' bills over 20 years, according to a new study. The main extra cost is almost \$100 million for corporate overheads, including directors' fees... but this is offset by a \$55 million saving on maintenance.

...A community backlash against plans for a water services company in Manukau may force a council rethink. More than 95[%] of a record 3700 submissions... opposed the idea on the ground of cost... The council usually receives only a few hundred submissions... each year... Manukau City ratepayers are[already] being asked whether they want their council to sell its contracting company, Excell Corporation. The [LATE] has interests as far away as Brisbane, where it manages a civic works project. The council says the company... needs more capital to fund growth and wants to hear from ratepayers whether they should be exposed to the business risks of expansion.

...Manukau City's transtasman lawnmowing business is again under fire in Queensland after the renewal of its \$A2.3 million contract by the Brisbane City Council... [C]ritics say the company won the work by undercutting its closest local rivals by 50[%], and has since provided an "atrocious performance record." The business, described as "wholly subsidised by Manukau City Council," was first blasted when it won the grass-cutting contract last year. Critics said it was sending A[US]n ratepayers' money to N[Z]. This time the]... council opposition leader... said a report by [BCC] staff on Manukau has shown unsatisfactory work, 20 problems having been identified in the past year in his ward alone... However, the Lord Mayor of Brisbane... has defended the business, telling the *Courier-Mail* newspaper the latest allegations were utter nonsense. "We've had only one complaint in the past year," he said.

...Congratulations to Manukau City for backing off plans to corporatise its water and wastewater systems... Too many councils around the country have been bullied by the Government and business interests into setting up their service units as "businesses." ...Formerly free or subsidised services are being charged for at full market rates. The public sector seems to have forgotten why it exists. In fact, the public sector exists because our objectives as a society are different from the objectives of any private business. Business has to make money. We bring in government when businesses are not providing needed services. This is not to say that people in business don't have non-monetary goals too. They do... But at the end of the day the quality of service that anyone in the private sector can provide is limited by what the customers are prepared to pay for it. A business will prosper to the extent that its good service attracts more paying customers. But if its service merely attracts people who can't pay it will fail. You only have to go to almost any developing country to see the result of a pure market system where you only earn money if you can sell something that the wealthy will pay for. The able-bodied and the educated tend to do alright. Anyone with less than the full quota, physically or mentally, is liable to end up begging in the streets. Disease is rife because many people can't afford adequate water, shelter or health care. Our forbears created a strong public sector because they were not prepared to tolerate this situation. They introduced welfare so that no one had to beg. And they provided basic services such as water free to everyone, so that all citizens had access to it even if they squandered their welfare cheques on beer and cigarettes. They provided these services directly, rather than contracting them out to corporates, for good reason. Because of the cost of the pipeline network, it made sense to have only one water supplier, for example, rather than several competing networks. And it was important not to limit how much of the service was provided because the service had to be available on the basis of need. In any situation where there is only one... private... supplier... [the] monopolist can hold a gun to the council's head, saying it will not supply services unless it gets a good price... [By the way, l]awyers worked through the small hours of yesterday to iron out objections to the \$360 million upgrade of the Mangere sewage treatment plant... [- a project that will] result in a cost-effective means to deal with wastewater needs... [and its effect on] the Manukau Harbour... into the next century...

Metro Water... will use its income to pay for the upgrading of the city's aged and overloaded drains, a job it inherits from the council. The biggest task is the 30-year separation of the harbour-polluting combined stormwater-foulwater network, at a cost of \$360 million... The company... has[also used its income to] start... posting out to its 120,000 residential and business customers what it calls a "welcome pack" - information on the company, its service aims and promises, and customers' obligations.

...Metrowater is keeping secret the costs of its huge advertising campaign to [explain its customer charges from]... October 1, when the user charge, based on 75[%] of metered water, kick[ed] in... Customers, who... pay[ed] for the advertising... will not be told the costs because of commercial sensitivity... [However,] a city councillor who opposes the water company [said the cost was \$500,000-plus]... FOR years N[Z]ers have taken for granted the amount of water they use, but... [an Auckland] family of four using the average 165 litres of water each day... [is now] paying \$611 a year for water and wastewater... Service charges for residential customers [have dropped] by 50c to a flat fee of \$63 and households... pay 87c per cubic metre of water... ['Unmetered customers pay \$330. There is also a new connection charge of \$495 and a reconnection charge of \$100.' Some companies received] bills for the first three months... which were almost 50[%] of last year's total bill... Businesses are charged \$172 per pipe unit... Most homes have the minimum 20mm diameter pipe (one pipe unit)... A 40mm-diameter pipe... cost[s] businesses \$687, 80mm[pipes] cost \$2749 and a 200mm-diameter... attract[s] a \$17,182 charge... [About 20%] of businesses have... pipes of up to 200mm, which are often not used to full capacity... Customers are able to have a pipe made smaller if it is bigger than necessary. Reducing a 150mm pipe to 50mm... cost[s] \$800 and cut a business charge from \$9664 to \$1074... An Onehunga industrial landlord... [who] owns five factories on a 5ha site... is facing a \$17,640 base charge for water and waste water in 1997-1998, which will increase to \$29,440 the following year... [T]he new costs... were "outlandish" when compared with the tenants' actual water consumption, worth about \$5500 a year... The wastewater user charge for all customers is 95c a cu m... [It has also been announced that] big water users, such as breweries, would soon be able to choose between competing water suppliers, a choice likely to be extended to residential consumers within five years.

...Metrowater... got a roasting last night from councillors outraged at... the expense of the advertising campaign and brochures and the secrecy surrounding the spending... [E]stimates of the cost of the campaign ranged from \$100,000... [However,] Metrowater says its customers will be the winners from a precedent-setting ruling that lets it off the tax hook. [The IRD] has spared... Metrowater... from liability for the 33[%] company tax, because it was set up as a charitable... enterprise.

...A Government decision to abolish tax-free charity status for Metrowater... came under fire from Auckland's deputy mayor... last night. The Treasurer... and the Finance Minister... announced yesterday that from April next year all... LATEs... will have to pay 33[%] tax on money they hand over to their parent councils... Aucklanders will pay more for water if the Government revokes the tax-free status of Metrowater, a city councillor... claimed yesterday... [In related news,] Metrowater... has finally revealed it spent \$269,000 on its heavily criticised... advertising campaign[which] was undertaken after legal advice indicated that "it was important that all ratepayers were introduced to Metrowater and the c[ompany's] charges]." ...The spend-up - which its directors admit was "greater than necessary" - was accompanied by a further bill for \$83,000 for the yellow-covered service standards booklet sent to its 130,000 customers... The contract booklet, which Metrowater accepts is flawed and has agreed to amend, was printed before the company started operating on July 1... Last night... the company's interim chairman... promised an improved customer contract would emerge from discussions with consumer groups... [He] said that the company had been launched under enormous pressure and amid considerable uncertainty, with the council vote unclear until the last minute... [Councillors only] voted... on June 24 to proceed[with the corporatisation of its water services]...

The Consumers' Institute has attacked Metrowater's customer contracts as a one-sided abuse of its monopoly power... Metrowater... denies abusing its position and has defended... its "terms of contract"... The terms, which spell out the company's view of its own and its customers' rights and obligations, have worried some customers. One... in a letter to the N[Z] *Herald* tags the terms "all care, no responsibility." ...The sales and marketing manager for Metrowater... said the contracts were needed since Metrowater operated under the Companies Act, unlike the council

water division it replaced which came under the Local Government Act... Contracts were standard practice for commercial utilities... [M]eters will continue to be read six-monthly, but customers will now be billed quarterly instead of six-monthly with the non-metered bills based on estimates.

...The controversial Metrowater customer contract has come under fire from the Ministry of Consumer Affairs[, whose]... officials are understood to have challenged... the... 21-point contract... in the areas of disputes procedures, including its measures for resolving disputed accounts, its lack of specific details on supply disconnections and its assessment of the extent of its liability... The... company's "cut-off first" option for late-paying... puts the health of its customers at risk, warns the Minister of Consumer Affairs...

Auckland City councillors may pull the plug on... Metrowater... A leading councillor... said... the public outcry... [means] the time was ripe to change the minds of the councillors who had supported water corporatisation... [H]e believes he has the support of the required nine councillors to force a special meeting to dump Metrowater... [Incidentally, r]ed-faced Auckland City officials plan a new public notice to correct a public notice published last Sunday to correct an earlier flawed public notice. A computer has been blamed...

Red-faced Metrowater officials have backed down and apologised to Auckland City water users over the lack of detail in their customer contract... There was more flak... after more than 500 properties found their water costs had tripled because of a computer glitch... Metrowater initially offered credits to fix the problem but has since offered refunds, one of which was nearly \$200.

...A Red Beach resident... [is] unhappy that Rodney District has won renewed permission to dump treated waste in the sea 750m from the main beach at Orewa... The council should have a land disposal system instead of "chucking sewage" into the sea... [The resident, who has lived on the] Hibiscus Coast... for 25 years... said the sea frequently had a bad odour and scum was regularly seen. She had stopped swimming at Red Beach after seeing water discolouration... A council environmental consultant's report says there is no threat to humans from eating shellfish from the area. Contact between swimmers and discharge effluent is effectively prevented by limiting the discharge to night. The council blames water discolouration on the plankton from the oxidation ponds... But the district council[also] says it has been shortchanged by the A[RC] commissioners who made the decision.

...[Hibiscus Coast residents are being asked to sign a petition calling for a byelection to fill the vacancies on the Rodney District Council. But a muted response of about 200 signatures so far was reported yesterday by the petition's organiser, a Whangaparaoa solicitor. He said some people had refused to sign because they wanted an election for all 12 seats on the council. Five councillors and the mayor resigned earlier this year on the assumption that other councillors would follow suit. They intended to clear the way for the Local Government Minister to call prompt elections for all seats. But the seven remaining councillors decided to appoint five people to fill the vacancies. The minister is expected to announce after a cabinet meeting today whether she supports the findings of a ministerial inquiry into the council. The inquiry recommended that the minister appoint a commission of one or more people to run the council until local body elections in October next year.]

...Auckland's "Mr Fixit" has been called in to run the dysfunctional Rodney District Council, which was sacked yesterday by the Minister of Local Government. The management consultant, aged 54, has in his 30 years in local government been Auckland City Council's troubleshooter, but from today he takes the place of Rodney's mayor and 12 councillors. Asked last night how he proposed to take the place of 13 councillors, the commissioner said: "You have to have a good ear for what the community is saying. Councillors are no longer active but the community's voice needs to be heard." He said he aimed to let people have their say by getting a good communications network going. A forum would allow the public to know what was happening in place of the present council meetings. In appointing him as the Rodney commissioner, the minister said she was accepting the "compelling" recommendations of a ministerial inquiry into the council. The cabinet had endorsed the appointment at yesterday's meeting. The commissioner was not a replacement for local democracy, she said. "It is a holding measure until fresh elections can be held by March next year." However, the minister said she would have to introduce legislation next month to stop the process of a planned byelection for the mayoralty and to appoint five council vacancies. The legislation would also enable the council elected next March to have an extended term, instead of needing to be re-elected during the next scheduled triennial body elections in October next year. Rodney's MP, who attended the minister's press conference, said it would support the necessary law change.]

...the appointment of a commissioner in Rodney is a major development for NZ politics, but most of our politicians could be excused if they were more interested in the news that] Wellington has canned the idea of asking people to spend a penny. A city council review of its very private public service, which costs \$660,000 annually, decided user charges would be feasible only in the inner city, but a "major culture change" would be necessary to counter public resistance... [Returning to Auckland,] Manukau residents face a 6.3[%] rates jump following their city council's decision not to set up an Auckland-style water company.

...Residents of the sleepy town of Clevedon want to escape the big city lights of Manukau City for greener pastures... The residents have made a submission to the Papakura District Council requesting a boundary reshuffle. The chairman of the Clevedon East Combined Residents group... said there was no problem with the Manukau City Council management of Clevedon but many... in the town of 3000... found the lower rates of Papakura enticing. "We are the only rural district represented by Manukau. Rural communities tend to be more basic. Such things as roads and drainage are more important to us than things cities focus on,"... The Mayor of Papakura... said [his council] would investigate the possibility of taking in Clevedon... The Mayor of Manukau... said he had heard nothing of the proposal.

...A group of East Auckland home owners, angered by rates rises of up to 48[%], have lashed out at the Manukau City Council and are demanding a better deal. The Cockle Bay and Howick Residents and Ratepayers Association alleges inefficiency in the council and wants a move away from land value-based rates to greater use of flat rates – which hit each property equally – user charges, and rating differentials.

...the residential portion... of the rate levy... is... a selective wealth tax which, of course, raises the issues of equity. It is selective in that two homeowners with the same wealth, but with differently valued properties, will pay different taxes to the local authority.

...Last night the... Manukau City Council... introduced rates differentials for residential properties of less than 1500 sq m. For the portion of a property's land value between \$85,000 and \$300,000, the rates drop to 75[%] of the base value; and above \$300,000, to 60[%]. This will carve hundreds of dollars off the rates of higher valued properties. The majority in the middle and lower range will pay more.

...Owners of plush West Auckland homes have come up trumps with a rates cut of about \$1000... Waitakere City Council cut the rates for exclusive properties by 25[%] to about \$3000 when the rating differentials were changed in favour of expensive properties. The changes follow the High Court's ruling last June that the council was hitting high-value home owners too hard... However, the losers in the deal would be owners of properties of low and mid-value. Rates on homes with the average land value of \$54,000 would rise 7[%]. The... figures might change yet as an increase in one of the items in the rating mix, the \$305 uniform annual general charge, would not be settled until this week. It was expected to rise by \$15. All this while the Waitakere City Council claims a "nil" rates rise... th[is] year... The nil refers only to the council's activities and excludes the effects of rising payments to Watercare Services Ltd, the A[RC] and Auckland Museum. Collectively, these produce a 4.26[%] rates rise.

...Some Auckland City homeowners could find themselves paying an extra \$1100 a year under a phased rates policy to go before a council committee today. An increase in rates – some by as much as 69[%] – for many residential ratepayers seems inevitable after the recent city-wide revaluation showed big increases in property valuations... A smaller number would fall by 20[%]... The rates setting process is also likely to mark the end of a differential enjoyed by inner-city residents. Struck to encourage settlement of the central business district, the rates advantage was designed as a short-term device.

...[a homeowner] says that when his father built the wooden house 75 years ago on the edge of the Waitemata Harbour, people were surprised he wanted to live so far from the city centre. But now the three-bedroom home, with a flat underneath, is in a sought-after area. [The homeowner] and

his wife are upset that as a result of the new annual values[proposed] by the Auckland City Council, the annual rates for their West End Rd home may leap by 49[%], from \$2158 to a possible \$3221... The couple has appealed. "I think the values around here are artificial. The only thing is it's on the seafloor," [he] says... The extra rates will be "quite a lot to find" on the couple's annual income of about \$30,000.

...The [Auckland City C]ouncil's finance committee yesterday approved, narrowly, a rating policy that would burden homeowners with a 5.8[%] average rates rise which, with the general 5.3[%] rise, comes to 11.1[%]... The highest differential, on inner-city businesses, is aimed to rise from its present 118[%] of the benchmark residential rate, to 140[%]... Officers' reports about costly infrastructure investments... led to the move... A final decision on the rating policy will not be made until the outcome of objections to the new valuations is known... There are worries that if this level of [rate] contribution to capital is not achieved, debt will hover too close to \$425 million, the level considered the maximum, in three years. "Ruthless project prioritisation will be necessary," one report says of capital expenditure and major maintenance... The finance committee also supported putting \$15 million a year in the council's bank account from operating income.

...Divided Auckland City councillors will[continue to] grapple with controversial rating issues tonight as the business community gears up to attack central city levies... Ask anyone in business and they will tell you local government expenditure is high and out of control.

...the... Waitakere City... council's \$97 million debt could jump 400[%]... in the next 20 years... if it continues to fund services as it does now.

...Ratepayers across the upper North Island are being left to foot large debt servicing bills as city and district councils go on a borrowing binge. A *NZ Herald* survey found that the indebtedness of the 29 councils in its circulation area is on track to leap by more than 20[%] this financial year – from \$906.1 million... to \$1091.5 million... taking the debt for every man, woman and child in their districts to \$498... The biggest borrower per head of population in the... survey... is the Tauranga District Council at \$1684. A spokesman said a \$14.6 million debt raised on behalf of council-owned company Tauranga Electricity, and a \$20.8 million debt for the toll-generating Tauranga Harbour Bridge and associated roading were two factors pushing up the debt... [Another] reason cited for the borrowing boost is the fundamental change to local body financial management wrought by the Government last year. Councils are now obliged to... spread... the cost of long-life infrastructure across the generations which benefit from them... A spokesman for L[GNZ] predicts that the increasing indebtedness of upper North Island councils will be reflected elsewhere as other councils "realise that they are funding assets that have very, very long lives." [However, the] local government sector's indebtedness is low... at \$11 of assets for every \$1 of debt, compared with a ratio of about 2.5:1 in the private sector and an even lower ratio in central Government.

...North Shore City Council won a legal battle against the upper echelons of central Government yesterday when the High Court ruled that an order-in-council signed by the Governor-General... which would have forced it to reorganise its ward structure and stop community boards hearing resource consents... was invalid... because it should not have been issued until an appeal against the reorganisation was heard before the High Court... next month... The council[had] argued that the reorganisation scheme should not have gone to the Minister of Local Government... who sent it to the Governor-General... [A] North Shore City councillor... said the council was sick of being told what to do by the Local Government Commission, a non-elected body made up of three former local body politicians. "The argument is about whether a democratically elected council that pays its own way can have its powers interfered with by the non-elected Local Government Commission." ...[Meanwhile, b]uilders dodging resource consent payments have created a \$244,000 bad-debt headache for the North Shore City Council. About 20 builders and developers a month skip on payments, forcing council staff to spend 30 hours a week on debt recovery... Half of the bad debts are \$300 or less and another 30[%] owe between \$300 and \$1200... There are about seven court actions in progress, at a cost of up to \$10,000 a case. Applicants give incorrect contact details, on-sell properties and disclaim responsibility for payment or refuse to pay because they object to the decision, charges or processing time. Building consultants sometimes claim to be the applicant but when an invoice is sent the consultant denies any responsibility for payment. Consents are required for developments that are not permitted as of right in the district plan... Non-notified consents cost between \$350 and \$1500 and notified consents range between \$3000 and \$7000, but can be higher depending on complexity... North Shore staff... suggest non-notified consent application deposits increase from \$500 to \$850 and notified applications double to \$4000. This would reduce bad debts and provide refunds in some cases... Deposit charges in Auckland City are \$600 for non-notified and \$4000 for notified consents... Auckland City Council is dealing with consents debts of \$408,000 by withholding the approval until it is paid.

...North Shore City Council is looking to increase its rates take by \$5.1 million, or 6.6[%], for the year... taking the average rates bill... to \$1057... The mayor... said the rise was needed to finance upgrades to core services... But ratepayers could yet be called on to bail out the... North Harbour Stadium. A report was given to councillors yesterday about the new venue... The council... has already contributed \$6.37 million towards the \$41 million stadium and is guarantor for \$12 million of... a \$20 million loan.

...The Government would make a contribution to economic growth if it removed... the monopoly privilege which enables councils to spawn expansive "visionary" projects (such as sports stadiums or land development...) with apparent minimal accountability... There is a place... for local leaders to champion municipal projects but they should be subject directly to the citizenry for the funding consequences... [because there] remains a costly dislocation between the outputs local authorities produce and the means of funding which makes production of those outputs possible.

...Statistics N[Z] yesterday published figures for the first time showing local authorities have increased their revenue from rates, petrol tax, licence fees and fines by more than 19[%] in the past five years... [while an] operating deficit of \$31.5 million in 1993 has been turned into an estimated \$75.7 million surplus... The survey covers all... city, district and regional councils... The total revenue of local government is around 3[%] of... GDP... and last year increased by more than 4[%] – well above the rate of inflation... A policy analyst at L[GNZ]... said... the... present surpluses were no more than was prudent to provide for unforeseen events... [but some local] governments... had, in fact, dropped rates...

With \$64 million in the bank, earning an average interest of \$6 million a year, the Taupo District Council has more money than it knows what to do with. In the past 10 years, the council has built a \$9.6 million cultural centre, a \$5.4 million state-of-the-art sewerage system, its famous Superloo and a \$1 million water reservoir, and developed its sports fields. Work is also under way on a \$9.5 million sports centre and a \$4 million swimming pool redevelopment – all despite a rates discount of \$1 million annually in the past two years.

...Councils around the country might have to make multimillion-dollar refunds to ratepayers if they have interpreted their valuation roll as the Far North District Council has... It had treated each roll entry as a separate rateable property, which resulted in one Kerikeri orchardist paying two annual charges because he sold fruit from a 6 sq m garage and car park at the front of his property... The Valuer-General has told the council it wrongly applied its \$355 uniform annual charge. If that opinion is upheld, the... total... to refund... could be \$1.2 million for the past five years... A council critic... said 338 properties... were affected... [Incidentally, a man who has lived] for five years in Kaipara District Council territory... pays rates on his farm to two district councils and two regional councils... [because last year he] bought an 11ha piece of land from... a... neighbouring farm... that was in Rodney District Council territory... In July when the 1997-1998 rates demand was due, [he] received one for \$1976 from Kaipara... [for the original] 77.5ha... including a levy of \$196.60 from the Northland Regional Council, and one from Rodney for his new piece of land. This demand was for \$698.20, including a levy of \$43.29 from the A[RC].

...a Waikato couple] and 394 other rural landowners have been included within the expanded city boundary of Hamilton... [They] have been told that this will double their rates over the next two years. If the Hamilton City Council adopts proposals in its draft plan, the [couple] will in 1998-99 pay rates of more than \$9000 for the 31ha of their farm now within the city. Nobody lives there and it has no buildings. Across the road, the [couple] live on 54ha in the Waikato District, to whom they pay \$6500 in rates, including charges for three houses.

...Rural residents have failed to convince the Hamilton City Council to rethink a new rating scheme... Councillors yesterday voted 8-4 to approve new rating differentials which will have most of the 400 rural property owners on the city's fringes paying at least 25[%] more this financial year... [S]ome farmers' rates bills[will go] up by 40[%].

...a Hamilton City Council report... says... [refuse] charges for Hamilton ratepayers will go up because of a \$5 million loan to expand and improve the Horotiu landfill...

A Hamilton ratepayers' lobby group has asked the Audit Office to investigate the city council's controversial shift... from the ground floor... to the top floor of its office block... a shift which will cost ratepayers \$325,000... [By the way, t]he controversy over councillors having financial conflicts of interest has spread to include the Mayor of Franklin... He sparked the inquiry that led to the Audit Office's ticking off a Franklin District councillor... for voting on a Pukekohe scheme that may affect the value of her nearby home. But now it appears that [the mayor], too, may have run foul of the rules about councillors voting on issues in which they have a financial interest. Following the Audit Office finding against [the councillor], the mayor sought a ruling on his debating and voting on the council's involvement in upgrading the Pukekohe, Tuakau and Waiuku central business areas... as he owns shops and commercial properties... in... the Pukekohe business district...

Human error put last year's Franklin District Council budget blowout at only a quarter of the \$2.3 million total found by auditors. Before the audit the mayor... said the figures showed the overspending was \$510,000, but... the... audit found some figures had been put in the wrong column...

The Auckland City Council admits that it gave deficient information to community boards during the present budget round. At least three of the city's 11 community boards have criticised the way they were asked to comment on service levels in the city because they were not given any costings for what the council planned to provide in the next financial year. In a report to the council released yesterday, the democracy services manager... says the document... had been prepared during restructuring and was released in draft form. Improved budget documents would be distributed to the boards... [In related news, d]irect marketing gurus, the bane of posties the world over, can now get their hands on more information about you and where you live – thanks to an ombudsman's decision that local councils cannot legally refuse bulk-buying of their rates rolls. The Waitakere City Council last year told[a] real estate agent... that he could not buy their entire rates roll which says who owns what property, its value and what improvements have been made. He appealed to the Ombudsmen's Office... But it may be a hollow victory for... the real estate industry, because the ombudsman and[the] Privacy Commissioner... have joined forces to restrict access to rating rolls. An ombudsman spokesman... said the Rating Powers Act made it clear that rate records must be available to the public... [but the] Act could be changed to include provisions similar to the Dog Control Act, which lays down strict criteria for who can obtain details of dog owners.

...[a ratepayer] wanted to know the cost of developing the... Waitakere City Council... district plan and details of payments to consultants. But the council's manager of social and environmental policy... told... him... that getting the information would cost between \$7144 and \$10,344. The figures were based on an estimated two days of staff time at \$48 an hour, plus two to three weeks' work by a temporary accountant at \$80 an hour. The first half-hour of work would be free of charge, and the research would begin when [he] had sent a \$7000 deposit... [The ratepayer], who battled the council for a year over subdivision of 49ha of land near Bethells Beach... said the cost of the plan so far should have been readily available, and the council was apparently spending ratepayers' money with total disregard to costs. "Bureaucrats are running berserk. Surely they have a ballpark figure...." [In reply, the manager] said the district-plan development began in 1991, so an extensive search of archival records would be needed. Dozens of staff had worked on the plan, hundreds of formal committee meetings had dealt with it and there had been more than 200 different consultant contracts. Further complicating the matter was that studies and systems improvements associated with the plan had also benefited other council services. This made it unfair to attribute all costs to the plan... [However, the] Waitakere chief executive... said[that although] the detailed nature of the request made it time-consuming... a general assessment of the cost would take only a couple of days. "Depending on the level of accuracy of the assessment, we probably wouldn't charge." ...A spokesperson for L[GNZ]... said the costs did not sound unreasonable... "I suppose in a user-pays world they are quite within their rights..." ...but she thought it unusual that... the information... was not readily available... [Incidentally, t]he... Auckland City... council this week finally settled on its complex rates structure for [next year], with an average 4.4[%] rise. But... the... Auckland Regional Chamber of Commerce is threatening legal action after the city council radically raised commercial rating differentials... The inner-city business differential has increased... to 245[%]... above the benchmark residential rate in the dollar of property value... The chief executive of the chamber... said the move was "fatally flawed" and predicted that all but big business would be priced out of the central city... Auckland could ultimately end up a "soulless city" dominated by the banking industry, like Frankfurt in Germany... [and the] council had wrongly assumed that property values meant that the commercial sector could afford to pay higher rates compared with residential sectors... The council also voted to slow its move to near-market rentals for the tenants of its remaining non-pensioner houses and flats.

...A spokesman for rest-homes says old people could be out on the street if rates rises being considered for Auckland rest-homes and geriatric hospitals go ahead. The city council is looking at reclassifying the 85 private-sector rest-homes and geriatric hospitals in the city from residential to commercial. This would more than double their rates in the suburbs and triple them in the inner-city... A finance committee member... said some rest-homes were making "huge profits" and ought to be rated as businesses. Another member... said that because people lived there, rest-homes were residential. The Northern Regional Health Authority says the rate increases could lead to higher fees, waiting lists and declining standards. There would be no more Government money, only a reshuffle of where it went. An authority spokeswoman... said half the 4000 people in Auckland rest-homes and geriatric hospitals received a Government subsidy. She disagreed that people would be out on the street because "something would be done." ...The 34 [rest-homes and geriatric hospitals] run by charitable groups are not affected because they are non-rateable.

...Auckland City Council boosted its average rates rise... yesterday. The council meeting was meant to confirm the 4.4[%] rise, but after rejecting amendments proposing rises of 6.1... and 5.25... councillors approved 5[%]. The actual rate rises for individual properties will vary... However, it was revealed at yesterday's meeting that [the rise] was significantly lower than intended, because of greater-than-expected development in the city. Council accountants were banking on growth producing an extra \$3.8 million in rates. But when calculating the level of rates in the dollar of property value late last month, it was found to have more than doubled to \$7.9 million... The 5[%] rise will reap \$285.2 million in rates, restoring the budget to the \$1.2 million surplus flagged in the annual plan.

...[universities, schools and hospitals will no longer get rates relief under a proposed Auckland City Council policy. Ports of Auckland and Tranz Rail will also have to pay rates to the council. The city's finance and property committee yesterday endorsed the plan to seek a law change enabling the council to collect a net \$10 million in rates from groups which have been exempt or have had a rates remission. Some of the money would be channelled into providing financial support for organisations, but the council would decide whom it helped and in what form – for instance a loan, grant, or special rates differential. The committee voted to exempt religious organisations and charitable groups, which already get rates breaks. The council's strategic aim is for central government services and SOEs not to be "subsidised by ratepayers." "These organisations are supposed to pay their true operating costs," says the report.

...the attempt by the Auckland City Council to charge schools full rates was a blatant attempt to "milk easy money" from the state system, the School Trustees Association said yesterday. The association's president said schools had spent the past five years fighting such moves, which contravened the principle of free education. "People who sent their children to school are already taxpayers and ratepayers and they already pay plenty for education. The Auckland City Council obviously look upon parents and schools as a soft touch and expect them to pay up without a whimper." She said schools were

being used by both local and central Government to try to “score” against each other. “The Government expects schools to lobby against increased rating while local authorities expect schools to lobby for more money from the Government.”]

...For the second time in almost two years, the High Court has ruled that the Auckland City Council can charge business rates for Telecom's 1400km of telephone lines and 700 phone booths. The council has hailed the ruling... which Telecom said yesterday it was considering appealing. It will not say if it will increase the cost of phone calls if it loses. If other councils follow suit, Telecom could be levied for 4000 phone booths, and many thousands more kilometres of phone lines, throughout the country. The council finance director... said Telecom owed about \$3 million in rates on utilities which it had refused to pay since 1991. Telecom was charged a rental rate based on the commercial return of each phone box and phone line. In 1993-1994, it was charged \$412,048. As a result of the ruling... the council planned to levy rates on all other utilities not at present charged for – such as postboxes, communications cables, gas lines and stormwater drains. “This opens the way for us to charge everyone. We need to be consistent and treat other utilities the same,”... NZ Post's letters manager for Auckland, said NZ Post had been watching the case with “interest.” It feared rates might be charged against the city's 1000 mail boxes and might have to review some if that happened... The L[GNZ] policy analyst... said the ruling was “a rating victory” for local government.

...LOCAL authorities say they are losing millions of dollars a year because central government has exempted itself from paying rates on much of its land and property. The councils are calling for an urgent law change to force the Government to pay its way... Key Crown-owned land exempt from general rating under the Rating Powers Act includes central government buildings... Crown Health Enterprises and Department of Conservation[(DoC)] land. Trans Rail is exempt from paying rates on its 3913km of track and its loading and unloading platforms. Some parts of ports and airports are also exempt... Local Government N[Z]... said non-rateability of government land and property was one of the most important issues facing local bodies. It was a matter of equity and transparency... Tens of millions of dollars a year was at stake... [The] LGNZ chief executive [said,] “[Central government's philosophy is that the costs should fall where they lie, that people should not be cross-subsidising other people's costs... but they are not applying it [to central government]... They have to admit they are not paying their way.” [However, if central government was to pay its own way, that way would come through higher taxation or lower central government spending across the entire country – and taxpayers living in districts where the central government rate levy is low would be subsidising ratepayers in districts where it is high]... Wellington City Council... said there were around 500 properties in Wellington that were non-rateable, including Parliament buildings and the Governor-General's residence. The properties had a combined capital value of \$1298 million and the council is collecting just \$900,000 in sewerage charges from them... If full residential rates were charged, the council would gain \$4.4 million and if commercial rates were charged that would rise to \$12 million... Tertiary institutions now occupied prime commercial land in the central city, but weren't paying any general rates, while other commercial ratepayers were coughing up large amounts... [The] Chairman of WCC finance and corporate services... said: “It's no good trying to obscure the issue by pretending there's not a major cost to running the Government, when in fact it's local government that is paying the costs.” ...South Island councils with large areas of DoC land have been calling for the changes for years. DoC land makes up nearly 90% of land in Westland and Buller districts. The mayors of these councils... say when DoC took over the land, the milling industry in the area was severely affected and because the land has been made reserve there's little scope for new industrial development. [The] Westland Mayor... says the land was reserved for the benefit of the nation, but the locals, not the nation, were paying... [In international news,] [the Microsoft Corp co-founder... and [his wife] have decided not to contest an assessment that will see them paying more than \$US600,000... in annual rates on their lakefront mansion. [The couple], who spent the past seven years building[the] 3600 sq m house... questioned the county tax appraisal which valued the home at \$US53.4 million[(although, if they were concerned about rates, they could've built elsewhere in the country – ‘in 1990, property tax rates varied from the highest level of \$4.40 per \$100 in Detroit, Michigan, to the lowest rate of \$0.48/\$100 in Honolulu, Hawaii’)]. The county had determined the value based on construction costs for the home[, which]... features an 18m pool, a sauna, a 150 sq m guest house, a trampoline room, a 20-seat theatre, a dock for water skiing, two spas, and a reception hall for 100... The county's highest assessment was on his Microsoft... [partner,] whose property was valued at \$US60.2 million. - 1997

It is approaching midnight in the suburban heart of Silicon Valley, and all is quiet aboard the number 22 bus. This is the service that never stops, plying the length of the valley from Menlo Park to San Jose all night long. For a hard core of its passengers, it is also the closest thing they have to home. Some are the traditional sorts of homeless: the drug addicts, the mentally ill, the social dropouts. One woman dresses as a nun but spews an endless stream of obscenities... But some are just ordinary folks with jobs – cleaners, restaurant bus boys or shop assistants – who have no idea how to put a roof over their heads in the monstrously affluent epicentre of the U[S] high-tech revolution. With house prices raging out of control, they have little choice but to haul their most immediate belongings aboard the number 22, enjoy the relief from the wet and the cold, and try to get a little shut-eye before embarking on working days that can last up to 16 hours. “These are people earning anywhere from \$US15,000 to \$US50,000 a year, and it still isn't enough to make ends meet,” says the bus driver... who himself endures a daily 80km commute because he can't afford to live closer to his work. He calls his bus the “rolling hotel.” This is not the Silicon Valley politicians like to boast about... They would prefer simply to see an unalloyed success story of tech companies and dot-com Internet enterprises popping up in thick clusters and driving the economic boom that has sustained the [42nd President's] era and will, they hope, last several years longer. But if Silicon Valley is a symbol of American economic dynamism on the threshold of the digital age, with its rivers of stock options and venture capital funds and its estimated 63 new millionaires created each day, it is also a graphic illustration of the price such success forces a community to pay. For the 70[%] or so of Valley residents who are not lucky enough to be in high-paying technology or professional jobs, life is turning into a nightmare. Salaries that would make them middle-class in any ordinary setting put them on the verge of poverty. Jobs are often temporary or part-time, stripped of benefits, and prone to being terminated at any time... According to Working Partnerships, a community group dedicated to improving the lot of ordinary workers in Silicon Valley, up to 40[%] of the workforce is employed on a temporary or contract basis – more than double the national average. Around 20[%] of jobs do not pay enough to allow a single person to be self-sufficient. Around 40[%] of the jobs do not cover the needs of an adult with one child, and around 55[%] are too low-paid to keep a family of four out of poverty... Cold economic logic – more ruthless here than in any other part of the country – has pushed living costs into the stratosphere, triggered suburban sprawl without adequate planning or infrastructure and created vast social and economic disparities between the elite and the rest. There are neighbourhoods in the ritzier parts of Palo Alto and Mountain View where it is impossible to find family practitioners because doctors can't maintain a decent lifestyle there. On Sand Hill Rd in Menlo Park, once a stretch of pleasant suburban housing and now the venture capitalists' Main St, there are no restaurants or shops or cafes because no trader could afford the rent. Even Stanford University, one of the most prominent institutions in the area, is having trouble attracting staff in non-technological faculties because there is nowhere decent to live on an English or history professor's salary. The housing market has become so heated that a modest three-bedroom home in Menlo Park recently went for more than \$US1 million over the asking price. One venture capitalist offered almost \$US4 million in cash for a Palo Alto house, sight unseen, handing over the money before the house hit the market... [A] small home costs \$US1 million... “It's beyond crazy. It's madness,” said[a] local real estate agent... [The people who are] just short of the desperation of the night riders on the 22 bus... are... sleeping in their cars all over the valley, or[in] single housing units in San Jose shared between five or six families.

Before NZ changed its currency to dollars in 1967, an average family home in Auckland sold for about ‘£5000 (\$10,000), a stately home only 50 yards from the Takapuna water's edge sold for £17,000 and an executive home on the city side sold for £21,000.’

Auckland residential property was an outstanding investment in the June half-year, with the average sale price jumping 14[%]... to \$262,000. In contrast, the average price for Wellington rose by 4.8[%]... to \$179,500... according to Valuation New Zealand. Its figures show that N[Z]ers spent \$7.72 billion to buy 43,655 residences in the first half of the year. That was up 26.7[%] from the preceding six months. By local authority, the best performer... was Waitakere City. The average sale price there increased by 14.8[%] to \$200,500. This was followed by Auckland City, where a 14.5[%] surge lifted the average price to \$320,000... Within Auckland City, the best median price[gain was] in St John's South – up 42[%]... The most active [suburbs were] Forrest Hill-Sunnynook[on the North Shore] – 366 sales – followed by... Avondale-Waterview[in Auckland City], where there were 323 sales... The most expensive suburbs were Herne Bay[in Auckland City] at \$550,000 and... Takapuna-Milford coastal... [on] the North Shore... at \$529,500... The... cheapest... suburb[in Auckland] was... Otara-East Tamaki (\$103,000).

...Blocks of 4ha... on the 146ha Hauraki Gulf island... Rakino... which sold five years ago for about \$150,000 are now selling for nearly \$300,000... which, while cheap by Auckland standards, are records on Rakino... [A r]eal estate agent... said many of the sales were to people from... nearby... Waiheke who thought th[at] island had been spoiled by an influx of Aucklanders... Rakino is not serviced by high-speed ferry and the journey by[a standard-speed ferry or] boat to downtown Auckland takes nearly two hours... [In related news, t]he Rodney District Council is planning hefty increases in the charges developers pay to subdivide land. The cost of a change to the district plan for an average residential site on the Hibiscus Coast, valued at just over \$100,000, would rise from around \$8000 to \$16,000. A \$60,000 site in the Kaipara Harbour town of Helensville, which is on the verge of a development boom, would incur a charge of around \$15,000. The charges, called financial contributions, are levied to cover the capital cost of community assets that have to be provided, upgraded or extended as a result of new developments. These include roads, sewerage, water supplies, stormwater systems and reserve purchases. The Mayor of Rodney... said the increases “weren’t a matter of getting tough [with developers] but of being realistic.” The area was no longer a holiday resort but is one of the fastest-growing regions in the country. “The community costs don’t finish at the edge of the street.” ...He did not think that the move would put a brake on development... But one developer... said the additional costs could have a dramatic effect on the profitability of subdivisions with section values at the lower end of the market. The people affected would be either the original landowners, who would be forced to accept lower prices, or the section buyer, who would pay more... [However, the developer] was still planning to continue with a 250-lot development in Helensville despite the increases.

...Some Tauranga property developers are upset that local Maori are demanding fees for subdivision consents and keeping them waiting weeks for consultation. Frustrated at long delays for approvals, the developers have taken their concerns to the Mayor of Tauranga... and want the district council to take responsibility for consultation with iwi under the Resource Management Act.

...A report prepared for the Reserve Bank has blamed Auckland councils for driving up housing costs through heavy-handed use of the Resource Management Act. But the bank has been accused of trying to deflect the blame for high interest rates on to the councils.

...immigration has generated 49[%] of the increase in Auckland house prices since 1993... says an Auckland University study... Job growth – including N[Z]ers moving to jobs in Auckland – is responsible for 40[%], and higher wages for 11[%]. The study also warns that the Auckland housing boom has been exaggerated. It claims true house prices for the whole region – rather than the “fast movers” in central and eastern suburbs – have risen by only 27[%] since 1993. The... study tracked 45,000 “repeat sales” – more than one sale of the same house – to see the real change in house prices over time. Houses with renovations were excluded from the study... The figures support a popular theory that Auckland house prices have eased this year because Asian immigration has been cut to a trickle by tighter entry criteria. An Auckland City Council study estimated that Asian immigrants spent \$2 billion on Auckland houses during 1995... Auckland house prices affect the national economy because they are regarded as the leading cause of inflation, which is prompting the Reserve Bank to keep interest rates high... Last week the Governor of the Reserve Bank... said any fall in interest rates would depend on a 4... to 5[%] drop in house prices by the end of the year, leading to lower inflation in 1997. “If this assumption proves incorrect, monetary conditions might have to be firmer than otherwise. We will be keen to resist any movements in mortgage rates that might reignite house price inflation.” Housing made up 1.3[%] of the 2.3[%] rise in underlying inflation in the latest June year... [By the way, a] new house weighing 14 tonnes was lifted from Aotea Square early yesterday in preparation for its move this morning to Otara to become a home for [a low-income] family... The house will cost them \$70,000, interest free, over 20 years... The wooden house was built in less than a week in a partnership between Habitat for Humanity, a non-profit organisation providing housing to the needy, and 120 University of Auckland planning students... [The family], who... were picked from 80 applicants to be the owners... as part of a campaign highlighting housing needs... are required to put in 500 hours of “sweat equity” building other houses but... “They have already completed their 500 hours and are still helping.” ...The N[Z] Housing Network calls today “national housing day” and says that Auckland is not far from having a permanent homeless community.

...[50%] of Auckland City Council tenants live near the poverty line, according to a report by University of Auckland planning department lecturers... [T]he report painted a distressing picture of tenants trying to pay market rents. The report comes on the eve of the council's expected confirmation tonight of the sale of 604 rental homes... The... report says the sale has the potential to destroy stable communities such as Freemans Bay, where hundreds of tenants face the task of finding a new home... [T]he inner-city location of most flats helped tenants financially by being close to work, education and health services... [L]ocation was important when people were trying to break out of poverty. If tenants had to move, transport costs would cancel out cheaper rents... The report measured poverty using methods developed by the N[Z] Poverty project team in a 1995 study funded by the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology. These analyse a household's income after housing costs have been met... It found that... [t]he elderly were the worst affected by housing pressures... About [8] out of 10 households with two or more children were below the poverty threshold... 65[%] of households had... income of \$300 a week... 35[%] had an income of below \$178.11 (an invalid's benefit)... 5[%]... had an income greater than \$750 a week... The... [c]ouncil yesterday declined to comment on the report... Following is a sample of tenants' responses to the proposed sale of their inner-city... houses: “...In September my rent went up to \$165. My weekly 55+ benefit is \$218 including the accommodation allowance.” ...“We are in a no-win situation – not enough money coming in for a mortgage and can't save anything because of the rent increases.” ...“Having to move would affect me very little. I own my own home in Freemans Bay and will return to it. I'm lucky!” ...“To move from the area would cause havoc for my parents for they don't speak English. The familiarity of Freemans Bay helps them to survive and be happy...”

...The letter was intended to touch the heart. And it did. [The 9]-year-old Israeli-born... son of a soldier, wrote to Auckland City councillors: “I go to Freemans Bay School and I love Freemans Bay. I got so upset when Mum came home saying that they MIGHT sell the flats... I want to stay there and get taught by my teacher. I love my school and house & my park [Western Park]... PLEASE DON'T SELL THE FLATS.” A tender plea, as notes from children can be. But as US President Woodrow Wilson once observed: “We are all caught in a general economic system which is heartless.” That observation seems truer now than ever. The universal movement from regulated national economics to a deregulated global one, backed by governments run on the premise that less is more, has created a world that is increasingly individualised and selfish. [The boy]'s letter was moving, but it was futile. Since June this year, when Auckland City voted 13-9, with one abstention and two absentees, to sell 604 of its 679 non-pensioner houses and flats, an outraged and anxious ad hoc Tenants Action Group based in Freemans Bay, where most people affected by the decision live, has fought the council in vain. Indignation over the decision to sell was made greater by the fact that the council simply ignored overwhelming public opposition. Of 104 submissions examined by *Metro*, 99 opposed the sale. That did not include 5000 signatures on a petition beseeching the council not to sell... The selling of the council's houses and flats has been called “immoral”, as if morality is a factor in the politics of

the bottom line. It is not. Money is not a morality play, and no matter how loud people scream, nothing will change the fact that decisions today are made on the basis that if the numbers don't stack up, nothing else does. In the case of the council's non-pensioner houses and flats the numbers don't stack up. They don't stack up with pensioner housing either, but, says one source, the council is leaving the sale of pensioner housing for another time... In a fax to *Metro*, [the mayor] wrote: "Under present rentals, the return on the very considerable investment is only 3.38[%]. Even with rental increases to be phased in over the next 12 months, the rate of return would still not be satisfactory." ...[the mayor] told the *Herald* that, given the council's investment in its houses and flats ought to represent a return of [9%] on the... asset, the council is arguably *losing* money... These are notably pecuniary times. Business is booming and economics, not sociology, guides both public and private decision making. People generally, not just Auckland City or central government, are less inclined to be loose with money. Money is more important than social responsibility. Greed is cool, productive efficiency and competitiveness is more valued than social stability, and history – where we've come from as it relates to where we're going – is worth little... [MPs] from the Alliance... and... Labour, the Tenants Action Group, church groups, trade unions and others, the amorphous left, have been fighting the politics of the bottom line for a long time. In the case of the sale of the council's houses and flats, they remind us that this issue is not just a passing altercation in Freemans Bay, not just a spat between some people and the council. It's a battle which epitomises the issue that has divided this country ever since it divided [the 1984 Labour P]M... David Lange from his finance minister...

60 Auckland City Council tenants and supporters braved the rain yesterday... to protest against the sale of 40 council-owned units. A... Whitson Tce block... tenant... said a rent rise last month... from \$260 to \$312 [per week]... and news that the flats would be sold had brought uncertainty for his family... of six... [T]he family's resolve to stay in the inner city to be close to their church and friends will be tested by the shortage of affordable housing... The Whitson Tce flats are the first properties of a \$25 million package due to be sold this year... The council decided to sell almost all of its non-pensioner housing, valued at about \$60 m... because it was not a "core business" and was the responsibility of the central Government.

...One in three N[Z]ers eligible for the accommodation supplement is not receiving it, according to a research report released by the Government yesterday. The Labour social welfare spokeswoman... said the figures in the report, requested by Labour months ago, showed the Government had willfully neglected its responsibility to inform low-income people of benefits they were entitled to... A total of 31[%] of non-beneficiary renters used the supplement, while the take-up rate for superannuitant home-owners was 15[%], and non-beneficiary home-owners just 4[%]. "The survey's findings are an absolute disgrace," [the spokeswoman said. "81%] of non-beneficiaries who are on such low incomes that they qualify do not get it. [45%] of superannuitants who are eligible – or around 18,000 older N[Z]ers – do not get it." ...She said questions had to be asked of the Income Support Service which was obviously not informing people of their entitlements. "Even a fifth of non-superannuitant beneficiaries who would regularly report to Income Support are not aware of their entitlement,"... The ministers... of Housing... and... Social Welfare... said that the small take-up could be explained by several reasons, including faulty data which overstated the number of eligible people. In addition, some eligible people might have discovered the amount they were entitled to was so small it was not worth applying.

...The Minister of Housing... is under attack for appearing to condone overcrowding in state houses as a way of paying the rent... In answer to a parliamentary question, [he] said rents were recorded against properties rather than tenants, "therefore do not take into account the number of occupants in a property able to contribute towards the rent..." Nor did... figures take into account financial help paid by the Government... The Leader of the Opposition... said doubling up was becoming more common... "The accommodation supplement never makes up the difference," she said... "The minister's statement concedes that the market-rent policies of this Government are so onerous that people are having to accept overcrowding and multiple stack-ups in individual tenancies as a means of putting a roof over their heads," [the] ...Alliance housing spokeswoman... said... But... [the] minister strongly denied[their] claims... "The statement was referring to boarders. In many cases sons and daughters may be eligible for the accommodation benefit in their own right." Of the 270,000 people receiving the accommodation supplement, just over 67,500 were boarders... [However,] a Housing Lobby spokeswoman... said tenants received an extra \$15 a week from the supplement, but faced rent increases of up to \$70 a week. She said she had written to the minister demanding that he put a freeze on the round of rent rises. "The supplement goes up and so do the rents. It's a vicious circle,"... The explanation means little to one family who have been doubling up with relatives in a Mt Roskill state house since last year... [A]t one point 12 people from two families were living in the house, with two teenage boys sleeping in the cellar. The... [boys] now boarded with another family... [T]hree teenage daughter's have also moved... To give the family space [the daughters] now live in a damp, rented caravan outside the house... Their mother said the girls' health had suffered in the cold conditions and they found it impossible to study for school. [She] is also worried about their safety... The family could not afford exorbitant rents charged by private landlords and were still waiting for a state house [of their own – something the mother] cannot understand. "I know there are houses around because there are three empty in this street." ...A spokesman for Housing New Zealand[(HNZ)] said there were many reasons for state houses standing empty. "Just because a house is empty doesn't mean it matches these people's requirements." ...[However, the mother said: "HNZ]... is selling all the houses..."

...A Mt Roskill family of six living in a two-bedroom [HNZ] unit have been told they will have to wait a year for a bigger house... [The mother] said, she would need that long to save for the higher rent. The family face a rent rise of between \$80 and \$100 a week for the extra bedroom... Housing lobbyists say the family are the victims of a company push to sell sought-after state houses despite growing waiting lists... The family are among 10,115 Aucklanders on state-house waiting lists, 86[%] of whom have requested two- or three-bedroom houses... The average wait for two-bedroom houses was 164 days... Those who needed three bedrooms faced a 170-day wait. [In comparison, there is a '34-day wait for a bedsit or one-bedroom flat, and a 26-day wait for a four-bedroom house.' A]... spokeswoman for the Housing Lobby, said... would-be tenants on the waiting list had resorted to living in garages. A tidy three-bedroom state house in Pakuranga, which had been empty since February, was on the market for \$210,000... "Why didn't they put someone in there?" A spokesman for [HNZ]... said the house was being sold because it was worth too much... [HNZ] is only selling houses that are old or uneconomic to maintain and, therefore, not wanted by tenants... The company could build or buy more than one house in a cheaper area, and charge more affordable rents for them... [HNZ] earned \$73 million in the last financial year from the sale of 515 state houses in Auckland... Figures... show that 87[%] of the... houses sold... had two or three bedrooms... It bought or built just 87 new properties in Auckland in the year to May, but leased another 597 houses from private landlords.

...An Auckland state house[was] sold to a... [former] *Shortland Street*... star for \$398,000 – \$100,000 more than the tenant paid six days earlier. Sale documents... show [HNZ] sold the house at 127 Kohimarama Rd to the tenant for \$297,500... In another case made public yesterday, a retired tenant... paid [HNZ] \$154,000 for the house he was renting... The tenant next door... bought her house from the company a week later... and sold it to [her retired neighbour's] son... for \$193,000[making]... \$17,000 profit, minus legal fees... The two houses fetched a total of \$435,000 when they were sold to a builder... and shifted to Whakatane... later that month... Three new houses being built on the site are on the market for a total of \$1.2 million... The Minister of Housing... has acknowledged that the Home Buy scheme for sales to tenants was being exploited for profit... [He] said steps had already been initiated to tighten up the scheme, including a review of the panel of valuers[, and]... was also considering a buy-back clause, or some alternative, in agreements for sale and purchase, where it was believed there was a prospect of later on-sale. He called for a report last week after it was revealed that a tenant in Hillsborough made \$56,000 from the quick sale of the state house she had bought through the home-buy scheme. He found there had been 15 cases of on-sales so far out of a total of 1004 sales.

...HOMES and... mortgage subsidiary Residential Mortgages Ltd... [has] consistently denied allegations of improper conduct with regard to the value of... [its homes since the] Labour housing spokesman... first raised allegations of misconduct in Parliament on May 29... [RML] responded... on June 17: "We totally refute the general and wide-sweeping allegations... The issue of new house prices and subsequent values is very complex.

Any proper debate can only occur with a full understanding of the circumstances of each property.” ...In response to... questions, [RML’s] corporate affairs manager... said a study commissioned by the Real Estate Research Unit at Auckland University[showed] property values are cyclical and volatile. “...It is worth noting that in the late 1980s RML was leading the way in terms of providing finance to people with low deposits. This brought home ownership within the reach of many people who were traditionally excluded... While it is true some people have experienced a loss in the value of their properties... no claims of over-valuation had ever been proved against [RML.” He also said RML]... could not accept responsibility for mistakes made by independent valuers... Two weeks later [RML issued] its first press release announcing it was setting up an in-house mediation process to deal with customer complaints... [RML’s managing director said:] “If there has been any transgression at a local level of the company, or by any independent valuers engaged by the company, then we would be as concerned as you... If customers have been disadvantaged by improper conduct by any of the 37 valuation firms engaged to value properties... we... will... seek the co-operation of those firms to join the [mediation] process.”

...They’re hard-working, honest, decent N[Zers who]... may never write a cheque again... but they’re not unique, just another struggling young couple who lost everything in a house that [Challenge] Homes built... Like other owners they’re bitter, confused and angry. What was to have been their life’s foundation has crumbled... They bought one of two... show homes under construction in the Auckland suburb of Howick in 1989... attracted by the promise of little or no deposit, interest-only loans and a company with a blue-chip reputation for building quality budget homes. [The couple] secured their home with a \$1000 holding deposit while their house was completed. The asking price was... \$38,000 for the section and \$127,000 for the house. A further \$7000 in loan-establishment fees, insurances, valuation and a Housing Corporation building guarantee gave a total contract price of \$172,143. [Challenge] Homes, through its subsidiary mortgage company... RML... offered to lend them \$155,883 subject to a valuation for mortgage purposes[, which the couple]... were never given a copy of... even though they paid for it... and their mortgage had been approved... The valuation... said the property was adequate security for a mortgage not exceeding \$112,000. Despite the valuer’s advice, RML loaned... [the couple] a first mortgage of \$147,900 and a second mortgage of \$7983. [The couple] also paid a \$16,000 cash deposit. As advertised, RML agreed to charge interest-only of 12.5[%] for 12 months on their first mortgage and 17.5[%] on the second. Monthly repayments on both mortgages worked out at \$1741.16... They had no difficulty meeting payments in their first year and even managed to carpet and curtain their new home. A year later RML increased their first mortgage interest to 16.25[%], increasing monthly payments to \$2233.56. [The couple] struggled, falling into arrears after several months... [The husband] visited RML... seeking relief from penalty charges while he looked for a second job. RML refused, charging \$600 for every missed mortgage payment on its due date. The situation was getting out of hand. RML then wrote giving two months’ notice of a mortgagee sale. [The couple] immediately put their home on the market but were told by estate agents it was only worth \$125,000. They were horrified. They had spent thousands on improvements and expected some capital gain in the previous two years. The house eventually sold for \$127,000... [The couple] paid the entire proceeds of the sale, less the agent’s commission, to RML and moved into a flat. They had lost everything – their initial \$16,000 deposit, the \$37,599 they had paid off in mortgage principal, and the thousands poured into improvements. They were destitute. [They] never heard another word from RML or [Challenge] Homes but on October 19, 1992, received a demand from [a debt collection agency] on behalf of the Housing Corporation claiming \$52,096[, which was]... what RML had claimed under... [the] mortgage guarantee scheme as the amount outstanding on [their] mortgage. How RML arrived at the figure bewilders [the couple but]... there was no way they could meet the corporation’s demands and [the husband] was advised by his solicitor to file for bankruptcy. [The debt collectors then pursued the wife] and she, too, filed for bankruptcy four months later... Wellington solicitors representing [Challenge] Homes owners say they have 280 cases from around the country alleging over-valuations. [Challenge] has agreed, as part of an out-of-court settlement with the Commerce Commission, to review more than 560 individual cases... The commission had filed a High Court action in Christchurch alleging [Challenge Homes, RML], and Christchurch valuers... had breached the Fair Trading Act.

...As bargains go it is hard to beat the \$US22.50... a year rent which the U[S] Department pays for its ambassador’s residence in Russia... Not surprisingly, Russian authorities want more money, and have opened negotiations with embassy officials. The... Russian Government suggested a more realistic rental of \$US60,000 a year... [In local news, t]he number of disputes before the Tenancy Tribunal has jumped from 9455 in 1990 to 17,304 last year, and is expected to rise 147[%] by the year 2005, says a report ...[from the NZ] Judiciary. The national manager of Tenancy Services... says that the best explanation for the increase was better education and an awareness of the service. People were more aware of their rights and obligations, she said. About 72[%] of applications made to the service initially went to mediation. Many were resolved without needing to go to the tribunal. Last year the service received more than 400,000 calls for advice nationally... According to Tenancy Services, in the year ended June 1995, about 87[%] of applications to the tribunal were by landlords. Of those, about 59[%] were for recovery of rent arrears or termination of tenancy for rent arrears... A member of the Housing Network secretariat... said that more people were buying rental property as investments, while others were unable to afford their own houses and were forced to rent... “I think the trend in housing policy has had a real influence... People moving from state houses to private rental...” The widening gap between rich and poor would see more cases of people struggling to meet rent payments. [She] said there needed to be an education package offered by the Property Investors Association on the responsibilities of being a landlord... She said that many did not understand the Residency Tenancy Act... She wanted to see landlords foot part of the bill for running the Tenancy Tribunal. “It’s the tenants who pay for the service but the landlords who benefit from it... I think they use it more frequently because they don’t have to pay for it,” she said.

...A High Court ruling in favour of H[NZ] is a bitter blow for an elderly Onehunga woman. She now faces a \$4000 rent-arrears bill... [The] 75-year-old holder of the Queen’s Service Medal, took [HNZ] and the Government to court to seek a judicial review of the market rent policy... [She] claimed to the court that the rent rises breached N[Z] law and international conventions. But the judgement... this week found for the defendants – [HNZ] and the shareholding ministers. [However,] it also said there was little doubt she and others had been... adversely affected by the move to market rents. [The pensioner] says she cannot understand how hardship can be acknowledged but the claim dismissed. “I never thought a government would be so bloody-minded to make old people suffer as they are making them.” ...The decision rejecting her claims affects 140 other current and former state house tenants who... went on[a] rent strike three years ago, refusing to pay the increases which would bring them in line with market rent. [‘State house rents used to be set at 25% of the tenant’s income.’ The 75-year-old] and her 83-year-old husband... have lived in their now shabby two-bedroom state home for 49 years. She said yesterday that she could not afford to pay the arrears or the market rate and the couple would stay until evicted... A [HNZ] spokesman said the company was pleased with the result. “When you are under attack from a lot of sources from time to time, it’s nice to know the court has supported the company’s actions.” The Minister of Housing... said: “I am naturally pleased to have the court confirm the Government’s position.” - 1996

[The 75-year-old rent strike pensioner] is ready to barricade herself... and her 83-year-old husband... in her house whenever H[NZ comes knocking for]... about \$4000... She has the hammer, nails and wood on standby. “I’m not going to move out,” she says. “Everyone thinks I’m a stupid old woman but I honestly feel someone has to take a stand, somehow.” She and about 20 others have been paying only 25 per cent of their income since the move towards market rents, but in November [last year] she lost a claim in the High Court at Auckland for a judicial review of the... policy. H[NZ] can now move to retrieve the money but confusion appears to reign over what will happen... [HNZ] says that they have not evicted anyone in Auckland in a year... The State Housing Coalition is preparing to occupy the houses of anyone evicted. “There is going to be a very heavy

political stand-off over this... We are going to use everything we can to mobilise mass public support for these families... If it means we've got to occupy houses and be arrested for defending little old ladies and... children, that's what we will do." ...[Incidentally, t]he Children, Young Persons and Their Families Service expects to raise about \$9 million from selling 55 surplus family homes, the Minister of Social Welfare... confirmed yesterday... [T]he homes were not at present being used by the service... The service would put the funds raised towards the cost of setting up secure residential units for young people in Auckland and Christchurch.

...A woman who has cared for neglected and abused young people for decades says a crippling Auckland City Council rent rise could force them under bridges and into despair... Four other Auckland community houses are also facing huge rises as the council moves towards market rents and sale of housing stock. It is also reducing subsidies to community houses... The Ponsonby council house... has been a haven for thousands of young people over the past 20 years. Its future now hangs in the balance... With the subsidy... the rent on the... property was \$186. In May it spirals to \$618... [A] former deputy mayor and now chairman of the[council's] promotions committee, said that although charitable groups had received letters notifying them of rent rises, they should write seeking a special arrangement. Applications would be carefully considered.

...A Ponsonby woman's rent rise from her landlord, the Auckland City Council, will use up her entire pension and then some... She has lived in the three-bedroom house for nine years but faces moving because her hardship subsidy from the council will be scrapped[meaning a weekly rent]... rise from \$198 to \$380... The size of the rent increases has shocked tenants already waiting for their homes to be sold by the council. It... delayed putting the rents up until... this month to take account of the recent city property valuations... [W]ithin the past month the council had told many tenants they could buy their homes [while knowing] they could not afford them, and then the offer had been followed by rent increases... The rent increase represented more than \$1 million in revenue and the council had made a financial decision. Properties, especially those near the inner city, were worth a lot of money; sometimes single people were living in houses worth \$400 to \$500 a week in rental... [A dissenting] councillor... said the increases made a "complete mockery" out of the tenure protection offered to pensioners, tenants of more than seven years and those whose Freemans Bay homes were demolished for a council urban renewal project. They would be priced out of their homes...

Some Auckland City Council tenants may receive a windfall of up to \$1500 if a Tenancy Tribunal ruling is upheld. The tribunal has ordered the council to refund money to 47 tenants after finding they were given inadequate notice of rent rises introduced in September[last year]. However, the council's property department is considering appealing against the decision[although it]... has only 10 working days to [do so]... The property manager... said the council had been "clobbered" on a technical foul, saying the ruling went in favour of the tenants because the council had been nice to them. Tenants were given the required six weeks' notice for the rent rise, but some appealed against the increase on hardship grounds. The council agreed to reduce their increases, but kept the same date for the rent rise. "If we had persevered with the increase for all tenants, it would have been in order..." ...He said the council could feel "quite aggrieved" by the decision because it had bent over backwards to help its tenants... However, [a dissenting]... Councillor... said the matter was not simply a technical issue. "I would expect officers in the largest local authority in the country to act within the law, but they haven't paid attention to the law. The council slipped up badly." Even though what the tenants had to pay was less than what they originally thought, it was their right to have greater assurance on the amount of rent they had to pay, he said. The tribunal ruled that the council look into previous rent rises which may also have fallen foul of the law.

...While Auckland City is getting out of unprofitable pensioner housing and charging market rents on most properties or selling them, 30km south at Papakura the council is making "a small profit" on 72 units it provides for the elderly. It charges a single pensioner \$40 a week and a couple \$65. They pay their own power and phone bills but get water free. Ask Papakura's mayor... how his district council serving 40,000 people can do what Auckland can't, and he says it's an example of "small is beautiful and efficient... We're interested in the welfare of people, who must always come first, and not piles of bricks and mortar or empires... We aren't top heavy with bureaucrats..."

...The Ministry of Housing has criticised the state landlord... for heavy-handed tactics with tenants. In a report to its minister... the ministry said Housing NZ was too quick to take people to court and used eviction threats more often than private sector landlords... [HNZ] was also the biggest user of the ministry's tenancy services in actions against tenants... Despite having less than a third of the country's rental homes on its books, [HNZ lodged 56%] of all applications for breach of tenancy in the three months to September 30[1996. 29%]... were under section 56... [of] the Residential Tenancies Act... which provides for eviction, whereas only 8[%] of applications made by private sector landlords were under that section... The... report was released... under the Official Information Act. In it the ministry said its staff believed the eviction threats were to get rent paid rather than to enforce evictions. [■ West Auckland realtors and landlords are applauding a ruling allowing the addresses of beneficiaries who are bad tenants to be passed on to the courts on a case by case basis. Up until now courts have battled to track down bad tenants to serve them order papers. Many leave with no forwarding address. Realtors spoken to are delighted – but wish this was a blanket ruling applying to all beneficiaries who are bad tenants. One Harcourts property manager is thrilled: "People vacate a house with rent owing, things may be damaged, you need to change the locks – it can be very expensive."

...[In *Renters* (screened on TV2 last month), a property manager insisted an owner look at the damage to his family home. While the owner was looking like he was close to tears (and I do not blame him) the property manager stood there passing whimsical comments about "how could a tenant do this?" and "the laws protect the tenants, not the landlords." The property manager made it known she was not accountable and that her hands were tied when it came to the law. Why did she not notice that the house was in a terrible state? Surely rent payments were overdue and a drive-by would indicate that the house was in disarray? To wait 90 days was totally incorrect and to allow the family to see this mess was inexcusable. *Renters* reflects that bad tenants can get away with it. Not so. I do not think it is a good idea that the tools we can use to evict a tenant be made obvious, so those wanting to exploit the situation can.]

...[A tenants group is fuming at tactics used by some Auckland landlords to generate more rental income. One St Mary's Bay landlord recently tried to increase a long-term tenant's rent by \$50 a week, giving only seven days notice. The group says this is illegal, because a landlord must give 60 days written notice of any rent change, or 90 days for tenancy terminations. The Residential Tenancies Act allows landlords to evict tenants using a 42-day period of notice if a family member needs accommodation quickly.] By the way, 'a government mansion has been empty for seven months as nearly 13,000 wait for a state house. The \$530,000 four bedroom Wellington house in a posh Wellington suburb is owned by Internal Affairs and is loaned to government ministers. But it appears no one wants it. While the home is empty, the taxpayer is forking out \$500 a week to cover a minister's rent elsewhere.')

...The taxpayer is paying \$5960 a week in rent to house 12 ministers in top Wellington suburbs... [and i]nformation provided by the Minister of Internal Affairs... also shows that the Government spent \$94,000 maintaining ministerial houses in the three months to December 31 last year... The highest rent is paid for the Karori property of the Minister of Foreign Affairs... – \$700 a week. At the other end of the scale, the city pad of the Minister for the Environment... costs \$250. The 26 ministers inside and outside the cabinet are each entitled to a ministerial home or a taxpayer-funded rental property[because they 'live in their constituency but spend most of their time working at parliament'. The P]M... lives in the \$2 million Premier House, while the Minister of Justice... lives in the historic Vogel House, valued at \$2.2 million... The youngest cabinet minister[who is] a Wellington resident... has moved out of a previous flat and into a house in Karori, valued at \$326,000... By comparison, the N[Z] First leader and Deputy P[M]... bunks down with relatives, although he is considering some kind of taxpayer-funded accommodation.

...[a nun from] the Wiri Sisters of Compassion, wants to spend a night with a politician. Preferably, she says, with [the]Housing Minister... in an over-crowded three-bedroom state house in South Auckland. Then... she would like to invite the minister to cast aside state house statistics and discuss the real housing crisis in N[Z –] ...the desperate struggle hundreds of low-income families have each week paying market rate rentals...

"Most people seeking help are working but... are only earning \$7 or \$8 an hour. They work all hours as it is. They can't do anything more. It comes down to cold hard cash and they just don't have it." ...a H[NZ] report showed... waiting lists... had increased from 2.5 months to 4.5 months for emergency cases...

An Alliance deputy leader... said the Government was ignoring its social responsibility for housing the most needy N[Z]ers by allowing emergency housing waiting times to nearly double... [in] the year to last September... Emergency applicants are people living in overcrowded, substandard, refuge or emergency housing. They are also people who have become homeless by virtue of a fire or other circumstances beyond their control...

Wanted: people who are living in an overcrowded house owned by H[NZ]. But the chances are that [HNZ], which is keen to talk to people living in such conditions[– where]... when one child gets ill they all get ill... and... when one family member wakes they all wake... [–] will not get a rush of replies. Occupants are scared the Crown-owned company will evict them for breaching conditions of leases that limit the number of tenants.

...[a bill that would let a US county prohibit its residents from sleeping in rooms other than a bedroom has won approval in Virginia's Senate. Jamming 15 to 20 people into a tiny two-bedroom house diminishes property values, takes up parking spaces and robs neighbours of peace and quiet, said the bill's sponsor. "About 80,000 Fairfax County households would be in violation of this bill." The legislation passed by a 20-19 vote, but opponents demanded that it be reconsidered today. A county Board of Supervisors member said the legislation made him uncomfortable. "I have a lot of problems with the Government telling people where they can or cannot sleep." Other civic leaders criticised the bill as a misplaced, hostile response to those struggling to pay for accommodation.' In local news, 'more than 40% of Pacific Island families are sharing their homes and living in overcrowded conditions, compared with 17% of families in the general population. Worst off were Tongans – 50% of them earned less than \$9900 a year, \$6000 less than the national median. The official records, from the latest census, contradicts the claims HNZ chiefs made last month that many Island families shared accommodation by choice. The claims were withdrawn after an outcry.'

...Feeling crowded? Census proves it... Final results released yesterday from the five-yearly population count last March show the country's resident population on census night was 3,618,302 people – a 7.2[%] jump on 1991. The total population, which includes overseas visitors but not N[Z]ers who were out of the country on March 5, also jumped 7.2[%] to 3,681,546... Statistics N[Z] staff had to work out the addresses of more than 34,000 people who did not provide enough information. More than 106,000 people had forms completed on their behalf because of reasons including illegibility, their missing out questions, or only partly completing them... The figures will be used by Government departments and local authorities to plan for future growth. N[Z]'s 30th census... shows Auckland was the fastest growing centre. Auckland grew by 124,871 people, or 13.2[%], passing the one million mark for the first time... Auckland [now houses 29.5%] of the country's population... After Auckland, the most populated areas were Canterbury [468,040] and Wellington (414,048)... 13,000 New Zealanders now lived in mobile or temporary accommodation.

...Home, sweet crowded home GREENACRES caravan park is no holiday home. The police have condemned the living standards and one of the residents describes it as a "rat hole." But... the row upon row of caravans[are] home to 150 children... There is no privacy... Ask the children how they cope with homework and the answer is simple. According to... on[e]: "I don't do homework." ...Across town in Mt Roskill, [a bright, confident girl]... aged 11, is tired of living with her sisters and parents in one room of an emergency house. Still, compared to Greenacres, it is luxury accommodation... She... is one of the 24 children living in the Monte Cecilia emergency house and the overcrowding has begun to take its toll... She has been at the house for two months and has been sick twice... It will almost certainly be many, many more months before her family can afford to move out... "We move a lot because every time we get to a house there's too many kids."

...During the 10 years [that she] has worked in emergency housing in Auckland, she has never seen so many empty beds. The manager of the Monte Cecilia House Trust in Mt Roskill believes the Government's... rent rises ha[ve] pushed the dream of a state home further from the homeless and stopped them seeking temporary accommodation. Housing workers throughout Auckland ha[ve] reported unprecedented falls in the numbers of people seeking emergency accommodation... They... were living in... caravan parks, garages, or with relatives.

...Tenants seeking emergency housing have to wait longer than non-urgent clients, Ministry of Housing figures show. The 91-day average waiting time for emergency houses... compares with... 85 days for non-priority clients, 115 for all new tenancies... 187 for tenancy transfers and 132 for tenancies relating to health. The ministry yesterday described as a "statistical quirk" the longer waiting time for emergency clients... [because] two-thirds of emergency applicants were housed or offered housing in the circumstances they sought within one month of their application... A Labour MP... earlier released figures showing [HNZ] had 1821 empty properties... Of those... 405 were for sale and 279 were under repair... The number of empty state houses in Auckland has more than doubled in nine months... [from] 252... to... 538[, yet for]... every empty state house in Auckland, 10 people stand in the queue for a tenancy... The figures do not include people already in a state house who want to be transferred to another... The national waiting list at March 31 was 12,896, compared with 14,155 at the same time last year... [However, according to] a spokeswoman for the Housing Lobby... the lists were a farce because many people on them could not afford the rents anyway... "There are[also] hundreds of people that don't even bother putting their names on a waiting list in the first place because they know they can't afford it," she said... Labour is promising the Government "a battle" if it proceeds with[further] plans to sell state houses to private landlords on a lease-back basis... Labour's housing spokesman... said the move would force up rents as investors buying the properties sought a high return from their investment.

...[the sell-off of HNZ stock is gathering pace. In the six months ending December, the Crown-owned company sold 1841 homes, up 60%. Labour's housing spokesman said a \$7.7 million drop in maintenance spending indicated HNZ's tactic of letting homes run down then claiming it was forced to sell. HNZ owned more than 70,000 homes nationwide five years ago.' HNZ also revealed in its] half-yearly report that it made a \$70.8 million profit between July and December last year. ['Almost 60% of the profit came from house sales.'

...STATE houses are being sold off at the rate of one every three hours... [The Housing Minister] said... "It is the Government's desire for tenants of [HNZ] to have the opportunity to become home owners." ...but... Labour's housing spokesman... claimed the sale programme was doing more to make quick profits for property speculators than to enable low-earning people to buy homes... "...So far this financial year, there is only one home-buy for every five houses sold." ...Houses were instead being bought by people who could afford to do them up and sell them at sizeable profits. "Groups of real estate agents, lawyers and builders are making a killing." ...this was occurring because they were being sold "dirt cheap", and [HNZ] was "too lazy" to do the houses up themselves. The public's money was being lost... "The massive state house sell-offs are exacerbating the pressure on rents throughout the country. While the Government and [HNZ] chase profits, thousands of families are doubling up, with other families in cramped accommodation, or living in converted garages or caravan parks." ...[he] said many of the sales were occurring in areas where there were sizeable waiting lists, such as Wellington and Christchurch... But[the] Housing Minister... said [the Labour MP] was misrepresenting the situation... [T]he Government had a reconfiguration policy, which aimed to sell off houses people didn't want and to buy them in areas of high demand. But he conceded that acquisitions of property for state rentals in Auckland – where the average waiting list for a three-bedroom house in the central city is 771 days – were slower than they should be and [HNZ] was being advised to speed up its purchasing programme... Figures released... by [HNZ] show that 4122 homes have been sold since 1992, while only 655 have been added to the state housing stock... The sale figures include 928 properties owned by Community Housing Ltd, which was sold to the Housing Corporation... 866 properties[are also leased] from private landlords... The total number of state homes at the end of December was 66,634... About 37,000 of the houses were more than 30 years old. "They have specifications for the 1960s not the 1990s."

...A block of flats in Otara that [HNZ] sold less than two years ago for \$240,000 is back on the market, with renovations... The block of four three-bedroom flats... was sold in December 1995... [at] \$9000 less than the Government valuation. Two months later it was sold again for \$251,000, though the new owner said it had been attacked by vandals in the meantime. He said he spent up to \$100,000 on renovations, and sold it in March 1996 for \$400,000. Now the flats, looking like new, are on the market again with a price tag of \$495,000... [T]he initial deal was an example of the Government's fire-sale approach to state house sales. "State houses are being sold at bargain-bin prices so [HNZ] and the Government can make a quick buck. Property developers are making an even quicker buck."

...[house-proud HNZ tenants are being urged to demand compensation for any improvements they make to their state homes. In last week's *Sunday News*, a housing expert said good tenants in state houses should be rewarded for looking after their houses. Earlier this year the housing minister said he would look into rewarding model tenants. One reward suggestion was a gift of household items, such as a backyard barbecue. However, last week's article fired up a 64-year-old who took HNZ to the tenancy tribunal seeking compensation for the work he'd put into a state home he rented for 30 years. When he moved out of the home and into a smaller state house, he asked HNZ to cough up for the landscaping, gardens and other improvements he made to his former property. The tenancy tribunal ordered HNZ to pay him almost \$10,000, but the decision was overturned in an appeal at the Lower Hutt District Court last year. He has now decided to take the case to the Court of Appeal.]

...[she] has no pets but her baby... is covered in flea bites. [The woman], her husband and the little girl pay \$140 a week for their flat on the third floor of a large [HNZ] apartment complex called Greenstone Gardens in Otahuhu... Six months ago, [the] eight-month-old... had pneumonia. [Her mother] says she believes it was caused by the damp from the leaking, mouldy ceiling... The roof is so rusty workmen fear they will fall through if they stand on it... There are no lifts in the apartment block so when [the mother] goes shopping she must drag her pram down three flights of concrete steps. "It's very horrible to live here,"... Children play in long, gloomy corridors and concrete stairways which smell of urine... Down on the ground floor... [another] family say they have been waiting years to be transferred out. They also are overrun by fleas... The fleas are part of a plague of problems that... [HNZ] is unwilling to fix: "They never worry about the people living here." The family sleeps in the lounge because water from the bath leaks into the bedroom. Part of the carpet was cut up because it was always wet. The kitchen sink leaks. The toilet has no seat. Wires are exposed through the broken cover of a bedroom light switch. At \$115 a week for the one-bedroom apartment, [the mother] says it is not good enough. "It's cheap here – but we need to move... my baby [aged one year] is always sick. He's coughing and wheezing all the time. He cries all the time..." Evidence of overcrowding is obvious in another flat – two double beds and a single bed crowd the lounge... [Many of the] mainly Pacific Island tenants... [speak] poor English and, therefore, [have] limited lobbying powers [and even less chance of gaining well-paid employment]... The 89 units have been condemned by Labour politicians as... not fit for human habitation but [HNZ] says they represent value for money... A [HNZ] spokesman... said... \$1,130,735 had been spent on maintenance since July 1993... [A] Labour MP... says the flats should never have been built. They were privately constructed in the 1970s but the owner went broke... The Government then bought them because of the housing shortage. "There's no way they would comply with any modern building standards and they probably didn't comply back then." He believes they are part of a bigger picture of squalid housing conditions in Auckland... [HNZ] rejects allegations of squalor but a local doctor... said health problems of the type described by the tenants were common in South Auckland... "It's quite shocking and also for the families, because they're doing the very best that they can in my experience to protect their children. They often feel overwhelmed by the conditions they are in." ...she had written to [HNZ] on a number of occasions to ask them to look at the conditions of some of their South Auckland properties. "One that springs to mind is a patient who had an infestation of cockroaches and also was trying to fight off rodents, mainly mice, which were coming through the walls from the flat next door." ...In Otara... was another patch of "disgraceful" state house units and in Lappington St... children played in rubbish, she said.

...A parliamentary committee has criticised [HNZ] for the way it looks after some of its properties and is going to call its chief executive back every three months to report progress... "We are not satisfied with the level of service delivered by [HNZ] in some parts of the country and, in the case of the Greenstone Gardens apartments, it did not act as a responsible landlord..." the committee said... "We are far from satisfied that adequate maintenance systems are in place and we conclude that there is an urgent need for a significant improvement in, and more expansive, systematic processes of monitoring individual stock." ...The Labour Party housing spokesman[... who was]... a member of the committee, said the report was "further proof that the Government's profit-making market rents policy precludes [HNZ] from meeting social objectives."

...Families with children may be moved out of the three-storey [HNZ] apartments in Otahuhu known as Greenstone Gardens. The company expected to decide in the next few weeks whether the 89 units, originally built as a motorway motel, were suitable for families... So far the rusty roof and downpipes have been replaced, many units have been painted and new carpet laid. Carpet in the ground-floor corridors, which stank of urine, has been replaced by easily cleaned rubber material. The rubbish skip has been moved, the ventilation system is to be replaced and a fumigation programme has started. Units on the southern bottom level, which never see the sun, may be taken out and [turned into] car parks...

H[ZN] apartments condemned as squalid continued to be used as a political football yesterday... Housing workers yesterday told... there were "streets of shame" dotted throughout the city where people on low incomes struggled to survive amid mould, damp, pests and illness. [HNZ] owned some of the properties but private tenancies were often worse... Health inspectors [agreed that] there are dozens of properties in Auckland City in worse condition than the Greenstone Gardens apartments... "In Kingsland there is a place... like a mini-ghetto area." ...the Federation of Ethnic Councils, said immigrants and refugees often ended up in inadequate housing but because of poor English were unable to complain. "The migrants definitely have setbacks in getting good housing conditions."

...A South Auckland refugee resettlement centre has been forced to close its doors to local people needing cheap board... Boarders at the Mangere centre – who included a teacher from a nearby private school, a senior public servant and unemployed men – were paying just \$112.50 a week for accommodation, power and three meals a day... The Labour MP for Mangere... said it was ludicrous that the Immigration Service was tossing them out when the centre was under-used... [However, the] manager of the centre, said... "We were actually running at a loss and it was just not appropriate. The money we get from the Government for refugees is... not for subsidising people in the community who might like to board here." About 120 refugees stay at the hostel for six-week periods to help them adjust to conditions in N[Z].

...Soaring city rents are forcing low-income families to move to cheaper housing in small centres, according to a survey. Beneficiaries and people who live in rental homes have been migrating to satellite towns such as... Masterton in ever greater numbers since 1991... This was particularly noticeable in the trio of towns near Auckland... [-] Huntly... Te Kauwhata... and Coromandel... [-] where the number of migrating beneficiaries in rental homes jumped by 209[%].

...state house residents face rent increases from July 1... Auckland will be hit hardest, with rents rising by up to \$181 a week for a [5]-bedroom house in Mt Albert... [T]he average rent rise for a [3]-bedroom... house will be at least \$34 a week... Rents on all properties will rise by at least \$5...

The Mt Albert woman who faces the biggest... rent rise is being pressured to move out of her home into a cheaper house... [HNZ has offered her] a four-bedroom house in Avondale for \$300 a week, but she said it was filthy, there were holes in the walls and the stove did not work. She said [HNZ] told her about the house on Monday and wanted her to sign the lease today and be out of the Mt Albert house this weekend... [She] does not want to move from her five-bedroom house but is worried about how she will feed her five children... "I don't want to go, but I want food for my kids on the table. It's a lot of pressure. This is not fair." ...Her rent nearly doubled, from \$194 to \$375 a week. The most she would earn in a week from her night job at a fast-food restaurant is \$280. Her accommodation supplement has also risen by \$70 to \$135 a week, but she says that does

not leave her with enough money after rent to cover food and bills... [T]he most she could afford to pay in rent was about \$250 per week. "I begged them [H[NZ]] yesterday, they were just laughing at me. They said it's all the same for other people." She has calculated she would be better off giving up her job and going on the domestic purposes benefit, but she enjoys working. "I don't want to stay at home feeling depressed about it. When I go to work I think I am somebody. I don't want to live on a benefit the rest of my life. It's really tough."

...Two key pieces of received wisdom commonly reiterated by supporters of the new economic order of the 1990s are, first, that private enterprise should not be protected by state subsidies, and secondly that the state should avoid "distortion" of the market's price system by any direct or indirect intervention. One would have thought that these principles had achieved a status equal to the Ten Commandments for today's policy-makers, but one only has to look at Government housing policy to find that this is not so. There are aspects of this policy that are not as ideologically pure as they might seem. I refer to the divestment of the state's housing stock in favour of a greater reliance on the private market. Those on low incomes who cannot afford the market rentals are increasingly being supported by an accommodation supplement as a cash transfer, rather than being moved into rent-controlled state houses as in the past. In 1995, about 78[%] of those receiving the accommodation supplement were either renters, boarders or mortgagors in housing other than that provided by the state. That year, about \$491 million was spent on the supplement, more than double the old accommodation benefit only two years earlier in 1993... Taxpayers' money, rather than being used to maintain a housing asset, is thus increasingly channelled, through beneficiaries, into the hands of bankers and landlords... The effect of these handouts to landlords would appear to have a number of adverse effects. Landlords will, over time, gradually increase rents to extract the maximum possible gain from the accommodation supplement, up to the limit set, leading to the inefficient use of taxpayers' money. The increasingly unaffordable rents for those on lower incomes will inevitably lead to demand for increases in the maximum level of the accommodation supplement (which is what the coalition Government is due to consider this year). This will, in turn, lead to landlords extracting higher rents from the larger subsidy available and rents will once again become less affordable. This rent-subsidy spiral seems inevitable as long as policy-makers rely too heavily on the private market. The market is naturally geared towards increasing the returns on property investments. The higher the rents that landlords can extract from their properties, the higher the values of those properties on the open market. Hence it gets harder for people on low incomes to afford a first home, and the upward stimulus to property values only contributes to inflation.

...Housing lobbyists plan protests across Auckland to mark the end of the... coalition's rent freeze tomorrow... and what they believe is the beginning of increased hardship for state house tenants... [However, the] Housing Minister... says this is nonsense... [H]e was adamant that... the country's 281,000 accommodation supplement recipients would be better off... [because t]he Government was dishing out much more in extra help... Rent rises would equate to \$22 million a year, [while] the Government's housing assistance package would deliver \$58 million extra... But [he]... conceded that 10,000... tenants... would be "slightly worse off" even after taking into account the increased supplement... State house rents have doubled in some parts of N[Z] and trebled in parts of Auckland since market rents were introduced in 1991.

...a retiring state housing chief... told Parliament's social services select committee yesterday that studies revealed flaws in Income Support's accommodation supplement system... [HNZ] research showed Aucklanders were 8 to 10[%] worse off than those in... provincial areas... [because of] Auckland's higher cost of living...

Almost two-thirds of weekly state house rentals in Auckland now fall between \$200 and \$299... and 1.8[%], more than 400 state houses, had rents over \$300... Two years ago 75[%] of them were less than \$200... Now only... 8500 of Auckland's 25,300 state houses[a]re rented for less than \$200... [A]ffordable rental accommodation was "swiftly becoming a distant memory for most low-income families." Pointing to [HNZ]'s latest annual profit of \$111 million... Labour's housing spokesman... said state housing had become a "cash cow" producing profit and dividends for the Government from the poorest... Private landlords are[in turn] reaping the benefits of the accommodation supplement to the tune of \$6 million a week...

A version of musical chairs in the state housing sector may help the merger plans outlined in the coalition agreement... [The person who] is already chairman of the two entities due to merge with H[NZ]: the Housing Corporation, the state's house lending arm, and Community Housing, which manages about 900 properties for groups such as the intellectually and psychiatrically disabled and those needing emergency housing... was yesterday named the chairman of H[NZ]... The Minister of Housing... said [the new chairman] would head a small team to work out the details of the merger. For Community Housing, it will be a yo-yo exercise. Until last August, it was part of... H[NZ]... But running a charity conflicted with H[NZ]'s profit focus, so Community Housing was sliced off and made a subsidiary of the Housing Corporation... Now under the coalition agreement, the profit focus of H[NZ] has been toned down and replaced with a brief "to meet the Crown's social objectives in a business-like manner." And Community Housing is going back to H[NZ]. While the Housing Corporation is part of the merger, the business of the former lending giant is being wound down; only \$78 million will be lent this year.

...THE Coalition Government is due to announce radical changes to housing next month as it admits National's five-year-old housing reforms have failed to provide affordable housing for many low-income tenants... That ill-fated attempt to marry business with social imperatives has formed the battleground ever since for clashes between[the Housing] Minister... and a hapless parade of short-lived chief executives and... chairmen[of HNZ]... Government sources said... state houses are[now] to be rented out purely for profit, with no restraining social objectives. The housing stock may remain with one Crown-owned company or be split among three or four competing state companies. The aim of a split would be to create competition among several state landlords, thereby keeping rents down... The accommodation supplement, which is expected to subsidise the rents of 310,000 N[Z]ers this year, will continue as it is. The supplement is forecast to cost \$774 million this financial year... The changes will be a fresh attempt to harness market forces to address housing problems, instead of a return to the low-rent, state-owned housing of the past.

...['getting the private sector to provide low cost housing will be hard, says a west Auckland social agency. The idea has come from the latest Auckland Regional Growth Forum. The forum's social infrastructure team is planning a seminar on how to provide affordable housing in the region. A team member says they are unsure if the private sector will be willing to help but the seminar is a good way to find out and make a start. However, the Auckland District Council of Social Services liaison officer says the private sector hasn't shown itself to be a good provider of low cost housing. "People want to make a profit. What's the incentive to take on cheaper housing and keep it in good condition? It's not a good return. I'd be asking how it's going to be different from what it's been in the last five years." In related news, a] landlord who refused to rent a house to a solo mother - then refused to say sorry - has been hit in the pocket for breaching the Human Rights Act... [He was] ordered to pay the woman \$1000 for humiliation, loss of dignity and injury to feelings and \$2000 in costs following a Complaints Review Tribunal hearing... It turned out she was the third single parent who had wanted to rent the Auckland property... Contacted last night... the owner... said the suggestion that he was prejudiced was ludicrous. Of the 10 properties owned by the trust he represented, six were rented by solo parents. But he would not appeal the decision because he could not afford legal representation.

...A Far North solo mother sick of living in a garage with her three young daughters and a bucket for a toilet is one of many low-income rural dwellers hoping a trial Housing Corporation scheme will open the door to a new home... Targeted are those not able to get private sector finance but who might otherwise meet the costs of home ownership with careful planning, providing they meet "affordability criteria." They must attend a series of home-ownership workshops to gain an eligibility certificate to apply for the loans requiring a 5[%] deposit, where usually 15 to 20[%] would be necessary... Partly because of such affordability constraints, the low deposit scheme has barely scratched the paintwork in addressing the desperate housing needs in the trial areas caught up in complex, multi-factorial related social problems... Ministry of Housing briefing papers

prepared shortly before the October 1996 election said by then 1000 people had completed the workshops, with 88 loans issued valued at \$5 million... Since its inception there were no significant arrears, illustrating that the programme was “sound and sustainable” for both the borrower and lender. However[, relative]... to the number of loans advanced under the programme its price tag appeared high – costs of \$413,000 in 1995/96 when 53 loans were issued a total of \$2.9 million... In the Far North authorities report people living in caravans, shacks with dirt floors, and tents. With overcrowding and no running water or power the “living” conditions are ripe for disease or disaster... [Fortunately for the solo mother, she] completed the workshops and thanks to a “crucial” family donation raised the \$2900 deposit... The application is still being processed but the woman says without financial assistance from her family she would not have passed “Go.”

...Three young children... died on Saturday when fire... sparked by a candle... engulfed their makeshift Northland home... In a statement... yesterday... [the] Housing Minister... said the family was trying to build a home through the Government’s Low Deposit Rural Lending Scheme, but had faced delays. He said the deaths of the three children should not be used “as the focal point of a cheap political debate.”

...Horror stories about poor housing in rural Northland have attracted a great deal of recent publicity. Unfortunately, this experience is not limited to families in the North; poor housing standards blight life in both rural and urban N[Z]. In all the debate and discussion that has surrounded this issue there has been a failure to come to grips with the essence of the problem – profit-oriented market forces. The Housing Corporation’s rural loans scheme illustrates the Government’s market approach. It seeks to bring some people on the lowest of all incomes in N[Z] into the housing marketplace by lowering deposit requirements but at the same time charging above market interest rates for finance. Yet how can families living from day to day on a benefit save one dollar towards a deposit, let alone several thousand dollars. A recent report in the *Listener* highlights the... many families walking away from Housing N[Z]’s housing seminars knowing that the offer is unrealistic for them. The Cooperative Housing Association of Aotearoa-N[Z] proposes patenting... technology which uses conventional materials and meets all N[Z] building codes but is... only... available... to the third economic sector and is designed specifically for community housing schemes.

...BUILDING a house for less than \$60,000 may sound too good to be true, but a contest organised by the Housing Corporation has proved it can be done. The competition was organised to encourage housing designers to think of innovative ways of providing low-cost housing, particularly in rural areas... The designs needed to comply with the Building Code, were allowed to include an element of owner’s self-help labour if properly supervised, and could use second-hand materials worth up to 25% of the building’s total cost. The corporation received 98 designs, which have been included in a handbook that is available through its head office. The entries ranged from conventional kit-set homes submitted by mainstream building companies [– such as Versatile Buildings’ ‘2 bedroom cottage (which costs \$49,950, including a 5-year guarantee, G.S.T, a stove, verandah and delivered to your site, but excluding services like power, water, stormwater, sewerage, plans and permits – or \$24,990 for a lock up shell only’), and IDEAL Homes’ ‘2 bedroom, 60 sq m SUNSEEKER (which is built on site for a cost of \$51,600 – complete with a Quality Kitchen and stove, bathroom and laundry, a large feature bay window, a timber deck and verandah roof, plus a 5-year peace of mind’ guarantee) –]to innovative... homes submitted by individual designers. One of the entries attracting a lot of attention was[a] straw-bale house... Putting his design to the test [the designer] built a 99sq m studio, with no interior partitions, plumbing or fittings, for \$27,000 including materials, GST and labour... And the thick walls make it very energy efficient and sound proof... Building with straw bales is relatively common in the prairie land of the U[S], where they obviously have a lot of straw.

...The cost of house building has risen to almost \$900 a sq m, says the N[Z] Institute of Valuers... The typical form of modest-cost housing being built, according to the institute’s modal house specification, is a 100sq m building constructed on a timber foundation using[a] prefinished corrugated steel roof and wood-cellulose-fibre-cement wall claddings. The specification provides for three bedrooms with separate service rooms and open plan lounge-dining and kitchen areas. Construction of the modal house was most expensive in Auckland at \$942.53 a sq m...

Delays in getting resource consents adds 4.4[%] to building costs, a survey by the Building Owners and Managers Association estimates. Direct and indirect costs of actually gaining the consent added another 2.6[%]... Those were the averages from a pilot study carried out in the Auckland region[, which saw]... \$1 billion of residential construction last year...

Builders are concerned that the cost of new North Shore housing may rise if the North Shore City Council forces them to pay towards new infrastructure and community facilities. The council is looking at levying builders and developers around \$10,000 a section... The North Shore formula will be similar... [to the one which] is close to [being finalised in the] Rodney District... “It’s fair enough to work on a user-pays basis, but how do you establish a fair and reasonable charge? Creating subdivisions increases the rating base. To add another rate seems a bit unfair,”... said [the]... president of the Auckland Master Builders’ Association... [Incidentally,] Manukau is the fastest growing city in N[Z], and its... 1996 census... population of 254,278 makes it N[Z]’s third largest city, behind Auckland (345,768) and Christchurch (309,028). The Mayor of Manukau... has predicted the city will... soon overtake Christchurch... The Manukau City Council believes the intense building activity on vacant Howick sites partly drove the strong growth. In the Howick South area, the population has tripled since 1991 as scarce land became available for subdivision.

...Earthmovers have uncovered several tonnes of potentially lethal asbestos on the site of a housing subdivision... Labour Department officials stopped construction on the 40-section Hilltop Park in Manukau City after workers began digging up asbestos pipes, fittings and fibrolite sheets containing the fibre... An Occupational Safety and Health inspector... said the asbestos appeared to have been used to fill in a deep gully several years ago... A spokesman for the Manukau City Council said the site boundaries would be monitored for airborne asbestos fibres until the cleanup was completed... Health problems... [associated with asbestos such as] cancer and other diseases... can develop years after exposure.

...Labour Department officials expect to find more asbestos dumps on former farmland in South Auckland, but say residents have no cause for alarm. The discovery of tonnes of potentially lethal asbestos pipes and sheeting on a 40-section housing subdivision... sparked dozens of calls from neighbours concerned about the health threat... [but an OSH inspector said m]onitoring had found no airborne fibres from the material, which is to be buried 4m under a road to be built on the subdivision.

...[‘HNZ has offered to move any of its 1000 tenants who live in East Tamaki properties where asbestos was dumped between the 1930s and 1970s, if they fear for their health. HNZ officials have met the Mayor of Manukau, who is complaining that the Minister of Health has not responded to requests from his council for professional support and funds to help it determine the actual health threat from the asbestos so it can work out what action to take.’ By the way, HNZ plans to add] 2000... homes... to the[Auckland] region in the next 12 months. [Some ‘homes are to be physically relocated from Wanganui to Auckland’ – although HNZ is also ‘advertising Wanganui homes to Aucklanders’ (because their rents will be cheaper and HNZ will save the expense of moving a house 450km!).

...HNZ] yesterday revealed plans to... spend millions of dollars on a Glen Innes development... [A] block of 44 houses... will be renovated and shifted back on their sections so the company can fit an extra 42 homes on the sites... [A] Housing Lobby spokeswoman... said the development would force people to live like sardines. Similar developments... [such as the] \$12.7 million... Maybury St revamp, in which 68 houses were relocated to make way for 65 new homes... had left tenants with inches between the house and the edge of the section... But [HNZ’s]... Auckland regional manager... said the new development was well within density limits permitted by the city council.

...A property in a leafy Westmere street has become a suburban battleground in a test case for the Auckland City Council district plan [after dozens] of local residents... joined forces to oppose a... couple cross-leasing their 943 sq m property... [The couple’s] proposal is seen by its detractors as opening the door to in-fill housing in a... suburb where the district plan restricts cross-leasing. [However, council] planners approved the subdivision... They concluded that although the proposal for a second house on the property did not comply with density, tree-protection,

earthwork and excavation controls, development conditions would limit any environmental damage... [Council planners were] also criticised... for striking an agreement with the applicant before... a resource consent hearing.

...Residents in upmarket parts of Henderson say they will fight a low-cost subdivision planned near their neighbourhood... A resident... [from one of the] exclusive homes in adjacent Braeburn Estate, Burgundy Park and Palm Heights... said the \$180,000 two-storey houses would lower the value of surrounding homes and[will] soon look like a ghetto... The sections are understood to be about 127 sq m each, compared to the... North Shore City minimum size of 150 sq m. The Waitakere City Council does not have a minimum section size, but its planning manager... said the sections... [satisfied] height and other restrictions.

...The North Shore City Council is looking at a zoning u-turn because[of] intensive housing in some subdivisions... [Terraced] houses completed or under construction... [at] the Ponderosa housing subdivision... have a section size of between 167 sq m and 350 sq m. The standard size is 550 sq m to 650 sq m... Council engineers were worried about pressures on stormwater, fresh-water and wastewater systems and felt roads were too narrow for emergency vehicles...

Gas contractors cutting corners in an Auckland house building boom have prompted emergency repairs to stop dangerous leaks... after the discovery that kilometres of pipe were laid above the ground, increasing the risk of corrosion and breakage. The gas supply company Enerco disclosed yesterday that... [the problem affected] about 800 of 1100 connections to new customers in the past year... and Enerco has given former contractors a one-month amnesty to own up to any more or face repair costs if their work has to be redone... Enerco acknowledged last night that there was a delay before it realised contractors were milking the system... They profited by using stainless steel pipes from Enerco's supply depot to get the job done much faster than with polyethylene, which can be laid only underground... Up to 100 contractors had been replaced by three main operators, who were now responsible for keeping subcontractors in line... [In related news, t]he Auckland Regional Growth Strategy Forum heard... yesterday... that [there is]... enough vacant land to build an additional 70,000 households, room for 36,000 "infill" homes on existing sections, and enough room for 24,500 redeveloped homes. This included renovating buildings in the current business district for apartments... There are at present 366,000 households in the region...

Home-buyers and property developers will foot a multi-million-dollar bill to computerise N[Z]'s land information records... The only Government funding... will... be about \$1 million. A spokesman for... [the] Minister of Lands... said that despite the funding concerns, the cost would be widely spread as N[Z]ers changed homes every seven years on average... About... 70[% of NZers]... own the homes they live in... An "automation levy" will add \$30 to \$40 to the cost of transferring a property title for the average home-buyer, a spokeswoman for Land Information said. The levy will disappear when the project is completed in 2001, and the Government promises that a more efficient automated system will take fees to below today's level... Land Information processes 900,000 land transactions and approves 18,000 survey plans a year. It holds 30 million records.

...A total of 77,687 house sales were recorded in 1996... for an average price of \$177,000... Southland has the cheapest housing with a median price of \$91,750, although that was up by more than 13[%] in the past year... Nationally, nearly 81[%] of houses were sold for \$250,000 or less[while]... less than 2[%] of the houses cost more than \$500,000, but in Auckland City more than 11[%] did. In fact, more Auckland houses were sold in this price range than any other ('431 compared with 391 in the \$400,000-\$500,000 range; 394 in the \$225,000-\$250,000 range; 93 for \$125,000-\$150,000 and 40 below \$125,000')... The Treasury expects house prices to increase above inflation for just two more years... After that alarm bells may ring for property owners looking for capital gains... House prices have not dropped since 1991-92... Land has become more expensive in the outer areas of metropolitan Auckland, with the median price of sections sold in Manukau reaching three figures for the first time at \$124,000, and Waitakere pushing its median to a record \$125,000. Both were higher than Auckland (\$120,000) and North Shore (\$123,000) for the first time.

...Residential construction continues to race ahead, defying the soggy state of the market for existing houses. Councils last month authorised the building of 2691 houses and flats, a 48[%] increase on... last year... Economists... doubt if it can continue... but... are at a loss to explain the strength of the residential construction market... [The] sharp increase partly reflects a cluster of large apartment developments... [Speaking of which, it has been announced that a] second mortgage... of... \$8.95 million [in bonds will be issued]... on the Tower Hill apartment project... The second mortgage comes in behind a \$23 m... ANZ Bank facility financing the 19-storey, 161-apartment building under construction... The building, costing \$35.4 m... has been given a completion value of \$44.6 m... Questions were raised... recently when similar bonds, known as mezzanine finance, were offered on another inner-city apartment block, Parklands[which]... has since begun construction after getting the sales to make the project viable.

...Against suggestions that time is up for the inner-city apartment market in Auckland, [a] property agency supremo... produced figures this week showing capital and rent returns for investors were still good... "This was the year of the 1100 settlements, as opposed to the 500 or 600 last year, and I've been amazed at how the market's stood up..." Among apartment completions requiring settlements in the past two months were Quay West on Albert St, containing 166 apartments, CityLife with 253 and Park Central with 117, both on Queen St. Among developments approaching completion is the first part of the Symphony-Dynasty Pacific combination of the Heritage in the old Farmers' building and Heritage Grand behind it, which will add 450 serviced apartments between them. Quay West, which has about half its apartments leased back to[the] developer... for managing, is running around 50[%] occupancy... One of the two two-level apartments at the top of Quay West has been let, unfurnished, for six months at \$2200 a week, giving an initial gross yield of 8.6[%] on the 269 sq m apartment and its two parking spaces. Among other Bayleys leases in Quay West signed in August were \$1200 a week for a furnished three-bedroom unit on level 27, and \$800 a week for an unfurnished unit on the same floor. [A spokesperson for] Bayleys Real Estate, said good rents were being achieved for cheaper inner-city units, starting at \$225-\$250 for unfurnished and \$300-\$375 for furnished studios, [rising to]... \$475-\$550 (unfurnished) and \$550-\$650 (furnished) for three bedrooms... The next city apartment market will be on the waterfront, where four projects are planned... [including] three apartment projects... [a]round the Viaduct Basin... [One] Viaduct Basin project... [has] 100 New York-style loft apartments above commercial space... on the old Turners & Growers[markets] site... More than \$100 million of sales have been achieved in... [the] Metropolis apartment tower, to be built on Auckland's old magistrates' court site... and it remain[s] on course for completion in October 1999.

...[t]he Metropolis tower opens a window on the whole inner-city accommodation market in Auckland. Ever since the conversion of the first weary office blocks to apartment use in the early 1990s, Auckland's apartment boom has, in the view of many observers, been about to end. What it has done, instead, is change direction. And it has kept growing as developers turn to purpose-built structures, offering high-priced units'...

'METROPOLIS HAS TRULY INTERNATIONAL APARTMENT RESIDENCES FROM \$280,000 TO \$4,000,000. *Services and facilities* include: Butler, Concierge, Valet Parking, Room Service, Maid & Laundry Service, Swimming Pools and Saunas, 24-Hour on-site Security.'

...*'Its Grandeur Will Have No Equal'* 'The design was inspired by New York, the marble is coming from Italy, the natural timbers are growing in AUS, the carpet is starting life eating grass in Southland - it's taking the world to create METROPOLIS'...

'There's a magic, a mastery, a perfection to a Metropolis penthouse home that cannot be surpassed. No address will enjoy such continuous acclaim. No address offers such distinction or importance. A few residential penthouse homes are available offering incomparable views, ambience and services. Each an integral part of the "Metropolis" way of life. View a display suite at Level 2, 48 High Street between Midday and 2pm, Today and Sunday.'

...Aucklanders have watched with interest as the Metropolis has shot upwards from within the character-filled buildings on High St, backed by the green of Albert Park. Its art deco-inspired exterior is the result of its developer's passion for early American office buildings, and will be a testament to his dedication for detail. The 40-storey building will eventually house 345 apartments, 21 penthouses and be topped by a private suite of rooms and offices for

the developer's use. Sales of the one and two-bedroom apartments (which can be purchased for one of three uses: for owner occupation; to rent; or as a serviced apartment to be leased back to the managers) have been sure and steady. There are just 32 left. 11 penthouses (which can't be used as serviced apartments) also remain.' 'The developer is intensely proud of what he is creating. "What this building has that others don't is a public scale. Everything has a size and scale and grandeur that will stand the test of time.'" Incidentally, 'a legal black hole that leaves subcontractors at the mercy of developers has claimed a west Auckland building firm. Henderson steel fabrication company Power House Ltd has been forced to close, laying off eight people. It's one of several west Auckland building-related firms forced to the wall by the lack of laws protecting subcontractors. An arbitrator says because builders and developers don't pay for work already done, some subcontractors haven't been paid for two or three years. The payment loophole has plagued the building industry since the Wages Protection and Contractors Liens Act was repealed in 1987, leaving subcontractors without any protection. That act allowed subcontractors to put a lien or charge on a property if they weren't being paid. Now, pay-when-paid or pay-if-paid clauses are a standard feature of building contracts, meaning subcontractors don't have to be paid until the builder gets paid by the developer. The owner of Power House said: "The law means we are left carrying the can. The whole thing has just got out of hand and I can't handle it any more."

... 'the collapse of Auckland builder Goodall ABL – which was managing projects like the Quays apartments in the Viaduct Basin and Shed 24, the apartment block at the end of Princes Wharf – has spurred a push for legislation to protect construction industry subcontractors. The builder's voluntary liquidation, with 400 creditors – mainly subbies and suppliers – owed an estimated \$20 million, couldn't have come at a better time for those pushing for a law change. The question is how to stop the subbies getting hurt in such cases. "Such an act would have major implications for contractors and subcontractors," says the Institute of Building, which is promoting debate on the topic, beginning with security of payment for building subcontractors. Also behind the push is the Building Subcontractors' Federation, which sent questionnaires to Goodall ABL's creditors asking them what they wanted done to protect others who might find themselves in a similar situation. The Law Commission has already rubber-stamped proposals for a change. Proponents were given further impetus when a similar law was passed last year in NSW. Goodall ABL is not the only collapse used to further the industry's cause. Christchurch developer Tuscany Enterprises went into voluntary liquidation in January last year, owing 70 creditors \$1.3 million after not being paid itself. Tuscany was building three blocks of flats. A year earlier, Auckland apartment developer First Investments collapsed.'

... 'a slowdown in sales of Auckland inner-city apartments has spelt disaster for a high-profile block in the central city, with the company which owns it put into receivership 10 days ago. Metro City Apartments in Wakefield St, a towering 16 storeys with 109 units, has been dogged with ongoing problems since it was finished recently. The latest came when the first debenture holder the BNZ, instructed accountants to place the owners in receivership over a \$5 million debt. One of the central reasons for the block's problems has been the softening in Auckland's apartment market, according to the director and majority owner of Metro City Apartments. The receiver for the accountancy firm agrees. But the bank still wants its money back and the lack of sales has resulted in a failure to service the debt. The director acknowledges a high amount of debt involved in the project. As well as the \$5 million owed to BNZ, \$3.5 million is owed to Canterbury Asset Management Ltd of Christchurch, while a further \$2.5 million is owed to Hartford Group of Auckland, the second debenture holder. But this \$10.5 million does not include money owed to 17 investors who have bought the apartments, guaranteed a 10% net return for two years.'

... 'hundreds of subcontractors face lean times after the collapse of NZ's fourth-largest building firm, Hartner Construction. One predicted that, while not unexpected, the collapse would send a "cascade" of small firms to the wall.' One subcontractor, who 'employs 40 people – and lost \$45,000 on Shed 24 on Princes Wharf when the ill-fated Goodall ABL went under – is now owed at least \$25,000 for electrical work on Sheds 19 and 20. "This is just sucking the construction industry to death," says the subcontractor, who was last year forced to write off \$100,000 in bad debts.' 'Hartner Construction's founder and managing director points the finger of blame well away from himself and his managing director. He blames the way the construction industry works for his company going into receivership. It is an industry which, he says, operates in an "insane" manner. He wants developers to be bonded in a system not unlike in America, where, before a developer lets a contract to a builder, the developer has to prove the money is there.'

... 'an insolvent Auckland apartment developer is trying to stave off bankruptcy proceedings after running up debts of \$44 million. The debt is a result of the collapse of a string of companies. It is owed to 75 creditors, including banks, suppliers and family trusts, although documents lodged by his lawyer in the High Court note that their "total estimated net exposure" is only \$16 million. This is because various property assets are being used as security to help reduce the debt and because the developer had loan facilities and guarantees, listed as debts, which he did not use. The developer, who was to turn the MLC Building in Queen St into apartments, has proposed a debt compromise with creditors which could see them get as little as 0.3c for every dollar owed. They will decide whether to support the plan at a meeting in two weeks. However, many have already filed individual bankruptcy petitions.'

... 'at least 10 people died when a 12-storey building collapsed in the southern Russian city of Zernograd yesterday. Russia's NTV channel said 6 people were injured in the collapse of the apartment block, which was home to about 44 people. A local official said the structure of the building and the foundations had given way. Police have ruled out a bomb blast.'

... 'screams of relatives punctuated the recovery of bodies at a flattened apartment house in the southern city of Foggia, the scene of Italy's deadliest building collapse in decades. The death toll rose to 34 yesterday, with almost as many still missing. Many people were caught by a slow-burning fire seeping through the underground garage where many of the victims were believed to be trapped. The fire lessened hope of finding any more survivors. After the six-floor building collapsed on Thursday, a number of theories were offered – none conclusive: construction used substandard steel bars or concrete; a sudden settling of the sandy soil; renovation work on the underground garage; water eroding the foundation. Whatever the cause, Italy's national statistics institute said 3.5 million houses nationwide were at risk of similar collapse. Age had weakened some, while cut-rate building during the south's construction boom meant some were weak to begin with. Lawmakers want legislation which would mandate inspections of buildings. Backers of the legislation have argued that too little was done after Italy's last fatal building collapse, when a Rome apartment house fell down in December, killing 27 people.' In local news, the AUS]n contractor... build[ing] the \$200 million serviced apartment project Metropolis... [aims to keep the project] on target for a late-1999 completion... despite rumours its staff have gone home.

...N[Z]-like housing policies [a]re creeping across the Tasman and w[il]l... wreak increased havoc among beneficiaries and low income workers. The recent A[US]n budget had cut \$200,000 million in public housing, so the public housing stock would reduce... [At the time, a]bout 230,000 people were waiting for public housing and the intention was to move to a system... where rent subsidies [a]re paid to individuals... Private rentals took up about 50[%] of a family's income. Public housing rent took up only 26[%], but that was also likely to change with the introduction of market rents... [Meanwhile, a] survey showed that... Sydney's residential property prices had grown by 30[%] since June 1996 and Melbourne by 14.9[%], but other A[US]n cities had only grown by around 9[%].

...THE British] housing market continues to rise... according to a new survey... Prices went up by... 7.2[%] over the past year... Nationally, the average price of a semi-detached house is £65,875. The highest prices are in London, where a semi sells for £132,148; the lowest is Dyfed in Wales, where a typical semi fetches £40,561.

...A central London flat the size of a store cupboard has been sold for £42,500... The studio... in Orme Court, Bayswater, measures 4m by 2m.

...A resurgent British property market began to stretch credulity yesterday after... [an] unnamed London businessman paid £495,000 for a vacant 1920s shoreline boathouse in Poole in the west of England, to have as an unusual holiday home... and... the owner of a four-metre-by-one-metre lock-up newspaper kiosk in Piccadilly Circus in the heart of central London... [announced he i]s asking £500,000 for his stall. Reckoning the street shop had the most valuable location in Britain, [the owner], the third generation of his family to man the kiosk, has already turned down an offer of £200,000. "I have the best pitch in London and I know what it's worth. I want half a million or nothing."

...[‘runaway property prices in London have made reading the property pages almost a disturbing experience. The average price for a one-bedroom apartment in central London is around the \$NZ600,000-\$720,000 mark. Rent in a similar flat – say near the British Museum in Bloomsbury – would set you back around \$4800 a month. In prestige locations, prices go up each year as regular as clockwork by about 10% or more. In up-and-coming quarters, price increases can exceed 20% annually. This situation is unique to the capital. A two-bedroom flat in Edinburgh costs around \$144,000. In London, you can quadruple that price and still not get a good view. The 1980s housing policies of the Conservative Iron Lady are partly to blame. Wanting all people to benefit from the middle-class dream of owning a home, she made it possible for people who rented subsidised properties from local authorities to buy them at knockdown prices, usually yielding an immediate re-sale profit of more than 100%. In the long term, it is hard to imagine things carrying on. How long will the market be able to bear the rise in accommodation costs? And there are casualties – the tens of thousands of street-dwelling homeless, and the commuters who spend millions of hours commuting to and from work.’

...‘For those looking for a new house in England, the bad news is that, with 30 bedrooms and as many toilets, five swimming pools, tennis courts with underground heating, a marble-lined shooting gallery, two bowling alleys, squash courts, a cinema, an ornamental lake and tropical gardens set in 45ha, the country’s most expensive new property has been sold. The good news is that, at £70m it would probably have been affordable only to a few of the world’s super-rich. According to British newspaper reports, the owner of the house being finished in Windlesham, in a tranquil corner of Surrey, is from the UAE.’

...‘A Sydney house has sold for \$A22 million, the highest price yet paid for a house in AUS, according to the *Australian* newspaper.’ In local news, [two of NZ’s richest men – Mr F and Mr R (r:p340, ln43) –]have sold their Auckland homes... and will move to Europe next year to expand their investment banking empire. They will take with them personal fortunes of at least \$250 million each... [Mr F’s] home in Godden Cres, Mission Bay, has sold for \$5.1 million... Sources say Mr R’s] two-storey mansion in Remuera Rd has sold for \$8 million – a record price for a [NZ] residential property... It is understood the home, which has a tennis court and a swimming pool, had a Government valuation of \$3.1 million in 1994 and sold for \$850,000 in 1984. The price... includes a neighbouring property of 2084 sq m, which had a Government valuation of \$1.1 million in 1994.

...No 68... Paritai Drive... might... fetch... a record, per square metre, for metropolitan Auckland... Real estate agents believe the 1699 sq m section... [and] the much modified... house, which is in disrepair... w[i]l... fetch... close to \$4 million... • A 1168 sq m, vacant section at 58 Paritai Drive sold last month for, it is believed, close to \$2.3 million.

...A Paritai Drive property donated to the... Auckland City Council... by a pensioner... was bulldozed yesterday after a neighbour purchased it for \$3.6 million... The demolition means that the purchase price is one of the highest for residential land in metropolitan Auckland – \$2117 per square metre... [The donor], now in his mid-90s and living in a pensioner flat, gave the property to the council in 1974 as a museum to house his collection of clocks and objets d’art. The council is putting \$500,000 of the sale proceeds towards maintaining his collection...

[‘Million-dollar homes common as brass The NZer who paid \$8.3 million for a beachfront Takapuna house is not an isolated figure in the market for top-dollar homes. The 32-year-old who grew up on the North Shore and went to Westlake Boys’ High School, and has just left his position as a senior director with Cisco Systems – the internet networking giant which has 38,000 workers throughout the world and in the past year had sales of close to \$50 billion (at one stage last year it was named the world’s most valuable company) – paid what is believed to be the highest price for a house in NZ. Real estate agents say the top end of the property market is booming and the 32-year-old’s record could soon be overtaken with the sale of the Victoria Ave, Remuera, mansion of NZ’s richest man. The house, which has a Government valuation of \$7 million, is tipped to be the first property in NZ to sell for \$10 million. One of Auckland’s top residential agents said he sold his first \$1 million house in Paritai Drive 14 years ago. Last year, 115 homes in the eastern suburbs sold for more than \$1 million. His personal tally of 25 million-plus sales include 11 at more than \$2 million and one for \$6.75 million. A rival agent sold \$50 million worth of properties over nine months last year. The agent who sold the \$8.3 million home sold eight \$2 million-plus North Shore coastal properties last year. He said homes on Takapuna and Milford beaches started at \$2 million’.]

...IT IS now relatively more affordable to rent or buy an apartment in New York than Auckland, according to a survey... [of] 18 cities around the globe... [P]roperty prices were higher in Hong Kong than any other city in the survey – \$US1.9 million for an apartment 30 minutes from the city centre, which meant it would cost 7.92 times the annual salary... [of] \$US240,000 a year... for middle ranked executives... [New York salaries were highest in the survey at \$US300,000, while] Auckland was second from bottom on the salary index, with an indicative salary of \$US90,000... [By the way, ‘six million people are crammed into Hong Kong, a city not much bigger than Wellington’...]

‘The housing chief in Hong Kong has resigned over the worst construction and public housing scandal in the territory. Two unfinished 34-storey government housing blocks are set to be torn down at a cost of HK\$250 million because of faulty foundations. The scandal, which touches a sensitive nerve in Hong Kong, has met intense public anger. Last month a Government-appointed commission blamed a subcontractor who had run into money problems for the fact that only three of 36 piles holding up the two blocks reached the standard depth of 40m. But the commission said the Housing Department was also at fault for failing to supervise the project closely enough’...]

Economic woes have rapidly changed the outlook of most South-east Asian property markets and developers and investors are in for a tough time... Some Singapore-based analysts say Hong Kong property prices might fall by as much as 30[%] at the top-end of the market... The Hong Kong property market’s plunge will also have significant impact on Singapore’s outlook as the latter had been a beneficiary of Hong Kong buyers seeking second homes... In fact, developers are already running to the Singapore Government asking for slower land sales on concerns of major price corrections... Already, stocks in Singapore’s property development companies have been dumped by international investors on that basis... Demand, estimated at around 7000 new condominium units this and next year, is unlikely to match supply, forecast at around 11,000 units a year. In Indonesia, new completions are expected to triple the existing stock of condominiums and apartments. Occupancy rates in Jakarta, for instance, were 62[%] at the end of 1996 but were expected to dip to an alarmingly low... 43[%] by the end of this year. Malaysia’s capital city... is also... heading for a glut... the new supply of condominiums is projected to more than double the existing stock with excess units likely to take more than three years to clear. Thailand is no different... with a five-year period needed to clear the backlog flooding the marketplace...

[NZers] who have bought homes as investments are biting the bullet as a glut of rental properties forces rents down... [The] Real Estate Institute vice-president... estimated that around 51,000 new landlords have entered the market over the last few years... [M]any... borrowed against their existing home to buy an investment property, hoping the rent would cover the mortgage... The overheated Auckland residential property market has been particularly hard hit, with inner-city apartments suffering most. “The inner-city market is just a shambles... It’s just a matter of supply exceeding demand, with more bedrooms than there are tenants to fill them, and there’s a lot more coming on the market. You’d have to have rocks in your head to be buying in the inner city at the moment,” said... [someone who] manages a large number of rental properties in Auckland... Competition for tenants was so intense that local landlords would often poach tenants away from houses owned by out-of-town landlords by offering a sweeter deal... And the worst could be yet to come as the country’s biggest residential landlord – H[NZ] – prepares to drop its rents as a result... But... rents had “plenty of room to fall.” They were now at an all-time high of 24[%] of the average wage. In 1970 they were about 12[%].

...‘in 1973, a 30-year-old USer earning the medium income for his age paid 21% of his monthly earnings for a medium mortgage on a medium-priced home. In 1984, he had to pay 44% of his income for such a mortgage. In 1973, 23.4% of USers under the age of 25 owned homes. By 1988, just 15.5% did. Among those in the 26-to-29 age group, the rate dropped from 43.6 to 36.2% according to a study by the Joint Economic Committee of Congress.’ • ‘Mortgage interest rates in NZ hit 23% in the late ‘80s’ (‘in 1986 NZ topped the international table of the percentage of people who owned their own homes; NZ is now 8th at 67% – Singapore, at 90%, is the new leader’)].

...Home mortgage rates jumped dramatically last night, with Countrywide Bank pushing its floating rate to 10.5[%] – and other major banks likely to follow suit. Precise figures were not available on exactly what the big rise – from 8.95[%] – would mean to most mortgage holders. But it will certainly be a jolt... The increases are effective immediately for new customers... Countrywide defended the 1.55[%] jump to the new industry high. The managing director... said it was disappointing but “we have been left with no alternative, in view of the unexpected rise in wholesale [interest] rates.” ...the Treasury predicts... floating mortgages... could rise... to 11[%] or more before falling below 6% in about 12 months.

...A widow is being] forced to sell her house because she can't afford... the cost of the mortgage, rates and maintenance... [Her] partner died four years ago. The marriage was a second one for both of them and... they didn't have a lot of money. The couple had been on national super but... [because of her age, then 54, she] was put on the widow's benefit which is worth less... She said there had been times she hadn't had the money to buy food for herself and so had no option but to put her house on the market.

...HOME buyers looking for a mortgage will soon have to go no further than the real estate agent who sold them their house... From next year Frontline Finance, an offshoot of Motor Trade Finances, will provide real estate agents throughout the country with competitive, point-of-sale mortgage finance... Home buyers would... benefit from low home loan rates through money provided by a method of financing called securitisation. Instead of borrowing money on the wholesale bill market to relend, or relending deposits like banks, Frontline Finance would tap into overseas lines of credit to onlend. These loans would then be bundled into debt securities and sold to institutions on the wholesale markets, with the international creditors being repaid. [In related news, 'a couple were checking out the housing market when an advertisement caught their eye – particularly the phrase “\$280,000 plus.” But when they saw the house, it was obvious that \$280,000 was hardly a fair offer. The real estate agent later agreed with them that around \$400,000 was more realistic, before trying to interest them in a \$350,000 property around the corner. Practices such as this have spurred the Commerce Commission to launch a crackdown on deceptive advertising. The real estate industry says it is like any other, with a small minority using dubious methods, but the acting manager of the commission's fair trading division said there were “major, systematic problems” in real estate that showed no sign of abating. In one of the first prosecutions of a real estate agent under the Fair Trading Act, the Orewa Property Shop, trading as “The Professionals,” was this week fined \$3600 for using photos of sweeping beach vistas to advertise homes not on the beach. The Orewa prosecution comes after more than a year of escalating action from the commission, which says that its attempts at educating the industry into compliance have failed. That campaign involved the Real Estate Institute organising seminars up and down the country to help agents recognise the limits on advertising.’

...‘Phantom bidders at auctions will be exposed under new ethical standards proposed for real estate agents. New, agent-initiated rules will ensure dummy or vendor bidders declare themselves, making the sale business more transparent. Dummy or vendor bidding is not illegal in NZ. It happens when a representative of the vendor or real estate agent bids for a property at an auction to drive up the price. The Real Estate Institute's moves are in line with the Victorian Government's ban on dummy bidding, introduced two months ago to overhaul the Melbourne house-selling system and impose fines of up to \$65,000 on real estate companies which break the law. In this country, a Christchurch case is being carefully observed by the industry for the impact it could have on the auction process. The case concerns the auction of a historic Lyttelton house advertised for \$110,000 when the vendors had set a \$235,000 reserve. The vendors said the only bidder at the auction last month – attended by 35 people – was the auctioneer, so none of the bids was genuine.’

...‘A security guard will be stationed outside an East Auckland open home today in a bid to deter thieves. The Real Estate Institute has warned agents to be on the lookout after 29 thefts at open homes across Auckland since June. A Century 21 agent admits that in his 16 years in real estate there has never been a theft from any of the hundreds of open homes he has overseen, but wants to send a message that agents are determined to protect vendors' valuables.’]

...With all the debate about whether there is any real value doing business over the Internet, one group that does seem to have taken to cyberspace, and shown positive results, is the real estate industry. There are several N[Z]-based real estate sites on the Net. In the U[S], there are over 8000 such sites. Local realtors report that the Internet is particularly useful in generating “out of area” leads – involving potential buyers, whether overseas or locally, wanting to know what's available in areas they are unfamiliar with or far removed from. Yes, the real estate industry is starting to smell an opportunity. A recent Main Realty newsletter noted that, “The Internet is definitely the future way of buying and selling real estate. That was the message emphasised by virtually all of the thousands of exhibitors and presenters at last year's annual convention of the American National Association of Realtors.” What's extraordinary about all this is that realtors could get so excited over a new communications tool that could well bring about their demise... Some say, that... [i]f buyers and sellers can sit at their PCs and... gather enough information about each other's offerings – and make an offer – why should they pay agents? In a paper delivered in N[Z] earlier this year, [a couple of lecturers from]... the University of North Texas College of Business Administration, noted that... “In any real estate market, information is power... This power has in the past been controlled largely by real estate agents...” At the same time, the inherent inefficiency with which information is handled in the industry “has been capitalised into the real estate agent's fees,” they said. In other words, when you pay an agent \$11,000 to dispose of your \$250,000 house in Glen Innes, you are also subsidising an inefficient system. What you are paying for are not only the costs associated with selling your house, but some of the costs involved in the agent having had to take four other people from house to house without concluding a sale. You are paying for their time wasted, and the overheads accumulated, on sales that never happened, or happened very slowly. One might ask, why are we prepared to pay all this money? The fact is there has been no efficient means of bringing buyers and sellers together, other than doing it through the official network of estate agents. Many have tried to bypass the system, and create their own market of buyers and sellers, with limited success... Recently, more concerted efforts have been made by new businesses specialising in private sales, and these have had some success. However, the Internet dwarfs all these efforts. Here is a cheap, efficient medium where anyone can set up a private real estate site with a modest capital outlay. More importantly, the Internet is capable of providing a level of information unmatched by other mediums...

[The ‘Real Estate Institute national president believes that most Auckland agents pay their top performing salespeople too much. South of the Bombay Hills, agents pay their salespeople about half of the commission gained from a house sale, he says. In Auckland, some get 80% of it. When he started in 1963, agents charged \$110 a sale. “We got 40% of that, and everyone was happy.”]

...Lawyers have blamed real estate agents for the rising cost of buying and selling houses and suggest they could do the job cheaper... The Law Society president... urged the Government to deregulate the real estate industry to allow consumers the choice of who to use when selling property. At present only registered real estate agents can legally do the work... [He] said estate agents benefited most from having a protected position. Ninety-one per cent of the cost of selling an average home in the Auckland region was agent's commission, with the lawyer's fee 9[%]. Since the real estate agents' scale of commissions was abolished 12 years ago, commissions charged had risen from 2.9[%] of the average sale price (\$137,000) to 4.2[%] of the present average (\$235,000). But since the lawyers' conveyancing fee scale was abolished in 1984, fees had gone from about \$460 (0.34[%] of the average sale price) to about \$500 (0.21[%]). This implies that... if lawyers were allowed to do both jobs, the public would get better value for money – although [the Law Society president] urged caution before taking away the monopoly lawyers have on property conveyancing work[, as was recently suggested by]... the Attorney-General... The[Law Society] call infuriated the president of the Real Estate Institute... who asked why lawyers would want to get into the business of selling property. [However, his question seems hypocritical considering how some real estate agents want to get into the business of selling mortgages! Many are already in the related business of managing rental properties on behalf of owners, who tend to be encouraged to increase their rents as often as possible – especially whenever the agent's fee is calculated as a percentage of the rent collected.]

...When it comes to maximising rent, landlords know all the tricks. However... lease... discrepancies are coming under closer scrutiny in N[Z], says the... managing director of a... firm which holds the A[US]n and N[Z] rights of American tenant representative Leasehold Analysis International. "Eighty or 90[%] is human error made by the property manager or landlord. The other 10[%] is landlords deliberately, dishonestly overcharging their tenant and waiting to see if they get found out... Accountants sometimes audit accounts, but in the U[S], even after a member of the Big Six accountancy firms has done it, they've found errors because they match invoice and payment. They don't go into the detail of whether the invoice was correct." ...[he] used an example from Sydney of how wrong measurements could make a huge difference. Westpac had contracted to buy a North Sydney building for \$70 million but checked the floor measurements made by the seller's surveyor and found a 20sq m error on every level. The result was a \$2.5 million cut in the price... The next category of overcharging was management and administration fees... [Most NZ] leases said these fees should be... fair and reasonable. A[US]n companies coming into N[Z] now are saying that means there should be a 100[%] increase. Incidentally, a)... Te Atatu North couple were able to sleep more easily last night after [HNZ] withdrew moves to evict them for not paying a rent rise... [following intervention from the] Minister of Housing... The couple... were relieved at the reprieve but say they will continue to refuse to pay the increase until their house, which has damp carpet and walls, is fixed... [HNZ], which manages the tenancy but does not own the house, is fighting with the owner... over who is responsible for repairs.

...Thousands of H[NZ] tenants in Auckland are set for rent falls as [a result of the coalition Government's demands for] a stronger social mandate from the company... However, the lower rents could be matched by a similar drop in the accommodation supplement... Meanwhile... Te Atatu residents are crying foul over a... bid to split up the last green space on the edge of Waitemata Harbour. The Waitakere City Council's city development committee will discuss a proposal today to divide 40ha of the council-owned... Te Atatu Peninsula into reserve and sites for "employment-focused development." ...But [the] mayor... said last night that any decision by the committee would have to be ratified by the full council – and that was not going to happen. "We, the elected members of the council, run the show and it would be a brave council that would go... and put in light industrial development." ...The... space... is adjacent to 30ha on which the council has initiated a seaside housing development.

...Standards are slipping out west, according to results of a... Waitakere City Council... questionnaire designed to gauge the performance of councillors and officers, and the effectiveness of council services... The annual survey, called Resident Link, provoked a mixed reaction from residents about the council's image. More than half failed to answer... [If the council is seeking inspiration, perhaps it should look to the east – where, for example, a] gorse-ridden Manukau stream in danger of being covered over to make way for housing has won a new lease of life. The watercourse, known only as stream 320, runs through former farmland in Flat Bush... The Richmond Park development... could have led to the stream being piped underground – a common practice in subdivisions. But with Manukau City Council approval and work by a youth training programme, it has instead been cleared and the banks planted with 12,000 natives. The ongoing \$200,000 project will bring walking tracks and a playground nestled among more than 3ha of landscaped reserve... In another break from housing development tradition, the stream will be flanked by a road and a single row of houses. That reduced the cost-effectiveness of the 300-site project, said the land development manager for Universal Homes... But the design made the area... safer for children... discouraged rubbish dumping... and added amenity value. "If you have houses backing up on either side no one ever uses it except burglars. We hope to eventually attract pukeko and other birdlife back into the area."

...[a doctor] is turning to the Court of Appeal in his fight over Rodney District... building consents. The council has received the news with alarm because of the prospect of adding to the \$51,000 legal bill it has run up defending itself against the Manly doctor's many actions... [S]o far... the council... had been awarded costs of only \$2500... [The doctor] believes the council should insist that his neighbour obtain a resource management consent to build a home because of potential danger to an oak tree's roots. The council granted a building consent a year ago, with a special condition that the owner... retain an arboriculture firm to supervise the tree as construction progressed on the Whangaparaoa Peninsula site. But [the doctor] objected, saying the council was palming off its monitoring responsibility... Since then he has pursued the matter several times in both the Environmental Court and the High Court.

...A... doctor's obsession with ensuring the safety of a 20m oak tree has been a farce and a financial burden for all parties involved, the Environment Court has been told. The comment was made by the lawyer representing a Manly couple whose bid to build a house next to the 37-year-old tree has brought them into conflict with their neighbour... "He [the doctor] has gone from court case to court case... this court, the High Court and anywhere he could fight this case. Every case he has lost, he has appealed... It has cost my clients, so far, more than \$20,000 and the... council about \$60,000... He doesn't know when to stop and it's been... difficult for my clients... to build their house on their chosen piece of land."

...Residents living on the hillside of Mt Eden are considering legal action against a neighbour who has bulldozed trees on the slopes of the volcanic cone to make way for a private sports complex. [The doctor] won an Auckland City Council resource consent in May to build a full-sized squash court, swimming pool and spa pool with a recreation hall on top... Neighbours said the consents were issued without consultation. They did not know about the plans until the bulldozers started... One neighbour... said many of the trees were natives. "He has totally remoulded the shape of the mountain. His house is so far up the mountain that it... does not look like Mt Eden any more because his buildings have almost completely covered the views[.]" The doctor, who is the... owner of Anaesthesia Auckland, refused to comment last night... But the council said submissions were called for in newspaper advertisements leading up to a resource consent hearing... Council files show he won approval from seven Maori iwi and several archaeologists before being granted consent to build the extension to his home, a few doorsteps from Government House. In his application, [he] said two trees would be cut down and that the mountain's appearance would not be affected.

...[a woman] could not stop the tears yesterday as she relived the horror of a lucky escape from a landslide that destroyed her... home... She had just gone to bed on Saturday night when her neighbour... rang to say he was worried about the earth moving under his house, farther up a hill from hers... [She] barely had time to run down the stairs... and ring 111 when, with a loud groan, [his] entire house came crashing down on to hers, trapping him inside his destroyed kitchen... [She] escaped unscathed, but [he] remained trapped for nearly two hours before the Fire Service cut him out with a chainsaw... "The Fire Service did a wonderful job... They risked life and limb to save him because while they were cutting him out of the house, the earth and the whole house were still moving..." ...He was taken to Auckland Hospital and last night was in a satisfactory condition... The Earthquake Commission will pay [both owners]... its limit of... \$112,500, and insurers will compensate them for the rest of their loss... Remedial work was done on the site yesterday to prevent any further land movement... She spent the day moving her belongings to her father's house on the North Shore – and looking for her charcoal-coloured cat... who has been missing since the landslide hit. [■ 'On December 3, 1981, three houses were destroyed by a landslide in the suburb of Grey Lynn. There were no fatalities.'

...*'On August 8, 1979, half a Dunedin suburb disappeared in a giant landslide. Scars on the land have healed, but for those who were there it still seems a bad dream.* During July, 1979, residents of several streets in the Dunedin suburb of Abbotsford had been woken by strange creaking and groaning noises – their houses were moving. Each day the cracks in the walls and pathways were widening. But when the slip came in the cold dark night it was something no one could have imagined. Seven hectares of hillside slid away gouging a 50-metre wide canyon which split the suburb in two. Parents and children, many in pyjamas, fled leaving behind all their possessions (some families had escaped only minutes before the slip). Many family pets were never seen again. In the darkness the slip site was enveloped by confusion and uncertainty, not helped by officialdom's efforts to keep journalists out of the disaster zone. No one knew if more slips were to come. At dawn a grim picture was revealed. In the canyon lay almost 70 homes, broken and squashed in the mud with furniture, cars and children's toys. More than 170 homes had been evacuated. As the initial shock subsided it was replaced by anger. Residents had been campaigning for weeks to have the suburb declared a disaster area, but in spite of growing gaps in walls and paths nothing had been done.'

...The... landslide that destroyed two houses[in Auckland] on Saturday was an accident waiting to happen... Slips in the area date back at least 50 years, and the residents say they have long been at loggerheads with the Auckland City Council to get stormdrains above the... properties fixed... [One neighbour, who] bought a 150-year-old cottage two doors down from the houses six years ago... was... not surprised at what happened. "I'm angry because two people could have died the other night because of the council's inaction." An engineer's report into a slip on his property on July 1, 1979, said: "The present situation is precarious, with many tons of soil poised to slide down... there is a real probability of disaster to the houses below." [Another neighbour] and her family were evacuated from their... house... when a swimming pool in a neighbouring property started to crack and sent water down the hillside, collapsing the retaining walls... The insurance agencies said they would consider recovering their costs from the council, which has commissioned a report into the cause... But the council's public relations manager... said yesterday that... it was unlikely the council could be held directly responsible.

...The clean-up of a second major landslide in Auckland will fall on the shoulders of the Auckland City Council. A hill... in the central business district slipped after heavy rain on Sunday, sending tonnes of soil and shrubs into... [a] building... carpark... The council public relations manager... said he was sure the council would clean up the mess... because it was council-owned land which had fallen... Engineers assessed the site yesterday, but made no decision on how the hill would be stabilised... Workers in the office received parking tickets because their cars had been [trapped] in restricted time parks... Meanwhile, a slip has closed off a section of Scenic Drive in the Waitakere Ranges[. • 'About 300 slip-related house and land damage claims to the Earthquake Commission have been filed so far this year – some 50% more than usual. Most were from Auckland']...

In a climate like Auckland's there is always an element of risk when houses are built on sloping ground but, engineers say, the trick is to minimise it. That includes adequate stormwater drainage. But what is adequate when a 12-hour downpour dumps more than 40mm on some suburbs...? That is almost impossible to define... The two previous winters had been among the wettest on record and... Earthquake Commission... payouts had jumped sharply to \$5.75 million... the commission's insurance manager... said. "The land hasn't had a chance to dry out before another bad season. It's so sodden that it just can't take any more." Included in those payouts was damage to properties in Glenfield and Torbay caused by landslides on steep subdivisions. A North Shore engineer and city council consultant... said that with recent development there was more building on "marginal land in terms of stability than was the case in the past..." The Earthquake Commission had managed to stabilise both the Glenfield and Torbay slips and the home sites were now all right for building, if precautions were taken to[prevent] any risk of further movement, he said. Pole houses might be the most suited for steep slopes, but there was no guarantee they would hold where others might slide... West Auckland is another area where houses hang... above steep slopes. Waitakere City Council's strict ordinances include the preservation of trees and bush cover on building sites and subdivisions to reduce land movement as well as to retain the city's "greenness," said... [the] manager of the city's regulatory services. "We don't permit any wholesale stripping of land or clearing of trees. Of course, most people who build here are usually tree lovers, but nevertheless our bush clearance controls are so tight that we don't have too many worries,"...

Landslides have swept down on isolated villages in China and a state capital in India during the past few days and killed up to 178 people, many of them in their sleep. In the worst landslide, 150 people are believed dead in a mountainous area of China's south-western Sichuan province... The torrent of mud and rocks in China fell after two days of heavy rain. It turned parts of four villages in the Yangshanzhou region into a lake of mud and destroyed 84 houses and damaged 223... And in the Indian city of Gangtok, capital of Sikkim province... torrential rains triggered a series of powerful landslides that killed at least 28 people... Mountainous Sikkim is hedged in by Tibet in the north, Nepal in the west and Bhutan in the east. Landslides are common in the region during the monsoon... [In local news, t]he Kaipara District Council has been criticised for a slow response to concerns about a landslide near four Dargaville homes. After heavy rain about three weeks ago a slip knocked down about two thirds of a 35m concrete retaining wall behind some units, and on Tuesday the council advised 11 tenants to leave after another section of the wall collapsed. One tenant... said she was upset the council had not acted sooner. The... problem first came to... the... council's... attention earlier this week.

...The Auckland City Council has started a \$60,000 cleanup of an inner-city slip, but the owners of the affected building say work should have started sooner... "People with their offices right below the slip are quite apprehensive about working under it,"... [However, t]he... council's property manager... did not accept the council had been slow to react... "I think we have responded very quickly. We got an engineering assessment immediately..." ...[In related news, the council]'s insurers may be stopping it from admitting liability for the... landslide that claimed two... homes[last month]. The Hobson councillor... said last night that in such a situation, the council's insurers took over and it could not get involved... A group of... residents appealed to the Hobson Community Board on Wednesday night to get the council to stabilise the ground and improve drainage. However, to so do could admit liability and the board felt it was an issue for the works committee... Reports show that... the council was warned in 1947... [about the] imminent danger of[a land] collapse.

...Two... sections have lost their insurance cover for natural disasters after a landslide destroyed two houses last month. The Earthquake Commission's insurance manager... said yesterday that it had accepted claims for both... houses and for damage to a third house... But he said the land titles of the two destroyed houses would be flagged, as required by law, and the commission would not insure the two sections until the owners had completed remedial drainage work at their own expense. If either property was found to be a write-off, the commission would pay the value of the minimum property size allowed by the Auckland City Council in that area – about \$100,000.

...The Fire Service in Auckland fielded about 70 calls on Saturday night and early Sunday morning, mostly reports of flooding and road slips, after rain had fallen steadily all day. More showers are expected today. With ground still saturated, more slips could result... [Incidentally,] Fielding police believe an electric single-bar heater caused a fire that swept through a caravan killing two... children[over the weekend]. The 9-year-old girl and her 5-year-old brother were asleep in the caravan with their mother and two-year-old sister... The mother escaped with the youngest child but her attempts to return to rescue her elder children were thwarted by the intense heat... [According to fire officers, 'the 9-year-old got half-way out of the caravan before being overcome by fumes while the 5-year-old appeared to have tried to hide from the flames under a blanket in the corner.'] A Fire Service safety spokesman... said a \$20 smoke alarm might have saved the children. "The risks of death from fire are even more hazardous in a small, confined space like a caravan." - 1997

The Fire Service and Insurance Council are calling for compulsory sprinkler systems in rest-homes following the deaths of two residents... in Fielding... early yesterday... The Licensed Rest Homes Association [responded by blaming] Government under-funding for the lack of sprinklers[(which, according to 'research, fail where computers or TVs catch fire because plastic doesn't produce enough heat to immediately trigger them')]... The president of the association... said putting sprinklers in an older-style, 18-bed rest-home would cost nearly \$40,000... However, [the]... Auckland fire hazards manager... said he did not generally accept the poverty cry and fire safety had to be given higher priority. "We don't allow people to drive around in unsafe cars because they don't have enough money... we do not allow hospitals to operate that are unsafe," he said. The Fire Service had run an aggressive campaign in past months targeting the 150 rest-homes in the Auckland region... [but] he could not say what proportion had sprinklers. The Insurance Council also has taken a hard line, saying the Fielding fire could easily have been prevented. "The cost of [sprinkler] installation should be seen as the cost of running a commercial enterprise. Those who can not afford this basic safety requirement should not be in the business," said the [ouncil's c]hief executive... All new rest-homes with more than 20 people must have sprinklers. A cigarette is thought to have started the Fielding blaze... The home had smoke detectors, fire walls and an alarm system. Thirteen residents were safely evacuated... Some of them yesterday were at a nearby rest-home; others were being cared for by their families... Rest-home associations told the

N[Z] *Herald* in March that many owners were struggling to stay afloat on inadequate Government money, paid through the regional health authorities[(RHAs)]... North Health, which buys services for the Auckland/Northland region, said it looked favourably on homes equipped with sprinklers when deciding which to fund... [– although it is up to each rest-home to decide on] the best way... to use their money... to meet both patient care and safety.

...The Government has placed caveats on nearly 1500 homes owned by old people in order to secure loans to pay for their long-stay hospital care. The Labour social security spokeswoman... said that although public focus had been on[one particular] Far North pensioner... there were many more who together owed... \$26 million for long-stay geriatric care. “A... further \$12 million has already been recovered.” ...The Government’s approach was shameful, [she] said. Asset-testing... was cruelly unfair. “No other group is required to pay for long-stay hospital bills except older N[Z]ers who have already paid years of taxes and saved a little for their retirement. It seems the Government sees them as a major revenue earner for the state. It looks upon older people as a defenceless cash cow to be exploited because their assets are easily obtainable... [The Far North pensioner], aged 80... has received national publicity over his refusal to pay \$30,000 towards the care of his wife, [aged] 84, who is in Kaitaia’s long-stay unit with Alzheimer’s disease. [He] has already paid \$21,000 towards her care but is refusing to pay the next bill, which is increasing daily... Under the Government’s income and asset-testing policy, [he] must subsidise his wife’s care because the couple have assets, other than a house, worth more than \$40,000... Northland Health has now served papers on him to pursue the debt.

...The last time he was in trouble with the law was as a 16-year-old who gave a smart answer in a Whangarei billiard saloon. For that indiscretion he came close to feeling the summary justice of the day – a kick in the backside by a disgruntled constable. Since then he has never had so much as a traffic ticket. Nor has he borrowed any money. But in the eyes of the restructured health system he is a defaulter who unless he pays up will be charged in the same Kaitaia court where thieves and drug dealers are regularly dealt with... [I]t is as if in his twilight years the stable ground he has walked and worked on all his life has turned to quicksand... At the kitchen table of his neatly presented... home... [he expresses] amazement at the momentum gathered by his stand... “I never dreamed it would end up like this. Refusing to pay those bills is just something I did off the cuff... I’ve had phone calls and messages of support from all over the country, it is all new to me. I had never protested about anything before, never. But I was having a beer with some of the boys at the golf club after paying the first... bill... and then receiving another one for \$8000 when one of them said he would not pay a bill for that sort of thing. That started me thinking... It all seemed so wrong. One of the chaps in the ward... was smashed up in a road accident... and has been there ever since. He has to be fed and toileted just like Alzheimer’s patients but his family don’t get any bills.” ...The couple... who were unable to have children... went to work for the same grocery chain for 28 years... until they quit the company in 1970 to set up house at Ahipara. It was not until... six years ago, when an elderly neighbour... mentioned that she thought [his wife’s] memory was failing, that their long retirement was anything but ordinary... [H]er condition... gradually[deteriorated]. He looked after her at home for as long as possible but one day in 1994 the inevitable happened: [she] was admitted... for long-stay care. Six days a week ever since, apart from when his own health has prevented it, [he] has driven to Kaitaia to visit her. Included in his ritual is a chocolate fish and when he gives it to her he thinks that on most days she recognises him... Elderly patients suffering from Alzheimer’s are required to contribute to their long-stay care because Alzheimer’s is considered to be an “age-related condition” that does not qualify for free hospital care. [However, ‘people can also get it in their 40s and 50s. ● 10% of over-65-year-olds will get Alzheimer’s.’]

...A MAN fighting Northland Health over a hospital bill for the care of his wife said he was humbled by a protest march in Kaitaia yesterday. A crowd estimated by police at more than 500 marched through the town... Many more lined the streets as the march, complete with pipe band, brought the central business district to a standstill... He... was too frail to take an active part... [himself and] his wife would not be aware of the march. She was too ill to comprehend what was going on.

...The fight between a Northland pensioner and the region’s crown health enterprise [(CHE)] appears to be far from over. Confusion arose yesterday when Northland Health said in a statement that it was withdrawing court action against[the] 80-year-old. But that does not mean the [CHE] has decided to drop efforts to recover around \$36,000 which it says... [he] owes for the hospital care of his wife, Ida.

...Public hospitals have been thrown into confusion over whether to charge some older people for on-going care. The High Court has dismissed a case against a 57-year-old Palmerston North Hospital patient with dementia for \$33,000 of care. The case, taken by MidCentral Health was the first to test a 1993 amendment to the Social Security Act which allowed hospitals to charge people under 65 for on-going care if they have no spouse or dependent children and are “close in interest” to people over 65. The High Court at Palmerston North questioned the hazy wording of the amendment. [The judge] said he was unsure what “close in interest” meant. He urged Parliament to consider writing guidelines on the meaning of the phrase and how it was to apply... The chairman of Northland Health... said he doubted whether anyone at his [CHE] had heard of the amendment. He said the interpretation problems were another example of a system over-burdened with legislation that few could understand. A Ministry of Health spokesperson said the ministry would work with [CHEs and RHAs] to clarify the issue... [Meanwhile, a Northland pensioner] is still holding out against a Northland Health bill... which rose this week to nearly \$39,000. - 1996

Northland Health is refusing to... confirm or deny whether... it will pursue an outstanding debt of just over \$58,000 from[an] 81-year-old... Last August... Northland Health summonsed [him] to appear in the Kaitaia District Court to sign a document to make him his wife’s guardian so legal proceedings could start against him to recover the money. But on August 19 the [CHE] decided to cancel the hearing and instead mail... the necessary papers, which he never signed.

...Ten days before his wife died, [the] Northland pensioner... learned health authorities were to renew their efforts to recover money he owed for his wife’s care – with the backing of the Minister of Health... Yesterday the minister refused to say whether his support for Northland Health had changed since [her] death. He considered it inappropriate to comment on the day of her funeral, a spokesman said.

...N[early all NZ]’s elderly will continue to be asset and income tested if they need resthome or hospital care, despite measures announced in the Budget. The Grey Power Federation has only belatedly realised the good news... was far from what it was cracked up to be. The Budget suggested... testing for the elderly was to go from October next year. But the fine print spelt out that... testing would be abolished only for people in long-term public hospital care. Asset testing for... long-term private hospital care was also abolished, but [patients] would still be income tested. And, most critically... testing for those in resthomes was to stay... [M]ost people who needed care first went to a resthome, which provided a lower level of care than a hospital. A couple... need[s] around \$1000... a week to pay for it, and many would be forced to sell their homes to meet the bills.

...A 97-year-old woman had her foot partly eaten by gangrene this year because she was not given adequate rest-home care, the Hospitals’ Association said yesterday. Many more elderly patients were suffering because their needs had been poorly assessed. Medical staff in hospitals continually saw “gross negligence” in elderly residential care, often leading to serious health problems... The... association... blamed funding constraints, family interference, delays in assessments and rest-home operators wanting to keep beds full... forcing the patients to stay in rest-homes when more specialist treatment was needed.

...A funding crisis in the Midland Health Region will see old people shut out of rest-homes unless it is considered “unsafe” for them to live in their own homes... [Its] chief executive... said yesterday that Midland Health would fund 50,000 fewer rest-home beds than last year.

...[James Lynch] is our most patient [in-]patient: he has spent 40 years in a bed in the same ward of Tauranga Hospital... [where the staff have become] his family... It has been a confinement impossible for most people to imagine... but he... has touched the hearts of hundreds with his

indomitable spirit and uncomplaining manner... A heroic act 66 years ago cost [him] a life to savour. As a 14-year-old, orphaned when both his parents died in the 1918-26 influenza epidemic, he was visiting a ship berthed in Tauranga when he saw a sailor holding a live cable. He grabbed the man's hand to pull him free, but could not let go as the current passed through him. [‘Tragically, the sailor had been fatally electrocuted. The 14-year-old was so badly injured’ that o]ver the next 26 years his body’s motor functions slowly deteriorated, until he was admitted... in November 1957... to the ward that is still his home... [He has become] almost completely immobile and[can be] understood only by those he is close to... [H]is eyes are sensitive to light... But... [he] can thank his lucky stars that he slipped through the health-reform net. Under today’s cost-cutting service, he would not get a bed in an acute hospital such as Tauranga, let alone live there for 40 years. Acute hospitals generally deal only with the sickest patients, who need urgent medical care or surgery. Elderly people needing long-term care are usually transferred to cheaper, smaller, often privately run hospitals. Fortunately... the accountants seemed to look the other way – perhaps deliberately – when his case was considered. Even[the] health reforms champion... could not remember last night exactly why he had let [him] stay when he ran Tauranga Hospital in the early 1990s[while the]... Western Bay Health customer services manager... said the 40-year stay was “proof of compassionate service.” She said [James] had “his own special fund” through “a private arrangement” with the [CHE].

...Northland Health... is being praised for its performance after returning a... \$499,000... operating profit for the year. Northland is the only one of the 23 CHEs to have met its budget forecast and return an operating surplus... [O]nly two others have achieved a bottom line profit... The latest indications are that Southland, about the same sized operation as Northland, will report an \$11 million deficit for the year. In total, the country’s CHEs will fall \$200m short for the year, a deficit increase of 28% over the previous year... [when ‘only two CHEs stayed within budget and services provided by the enterprises exceeded Government funding by \$403 million – although income from hospital charges (e.g., \$50 a night for people who earn above a set level), investments and selling or leasing assets cut the 1996 operating loss to \$164.2 million, taking the accumulated operating loss since July 1993 to \$546m.’ Northland Health’s] profit... would be invested in more health services for... [the region. The profit hasn’t, however, softened the CHE’s position regarding a] Kaitiaki pensioner... Northland Health is continuing with legal moves to recover \$58,000 in unpaid fees from [the pensioner]...

Medicine is an industry that defies the normal market-balancing forces of competitive suppliers and consumer price resistance. The retailers of medical knowledge are a tightly unionised profession so anti-competitive that it forbids its members even to advertise. But... I once heard an American medical insurance executive get to the heart of it. Health care, he said, is unlike any other product because there is really no limit to our demand when our bodily well-being or even life might be at stake. The normal cost-benefit equations we all make for every other thing we buy – education, legal services, property security, for instance – do not enter our heads when we have a health tremor. Ask yourself how much you would lay out to save your health. More than... the Government spends on your behalf probably. You would bankrupt yourself if it was a matter of life and death. And such is our ignorance that health can easily seem a matter of life and death... When governments and insurers become more assertive consumers on our behalf – when demand is as well organised as the suppliers – then they will reasonably set limits on the costs we have to accept. Until then services will expand on the pretext that “patients demand them.”

...waiting lists and unending public clamour for better services and the latest high-tech equipment had... long been the source of continuing political embarrassment for whatever minister of whatever party had been unlucky enough to occupy the health minister’s chair... [F]or many decades, the nation’s health system comprised of a Health Department in Wellington, elected hospital boards which managed public hospitals and numerous independent health practitioners, specialists in private practice, private hospitals and agencies like Plunket and IHC[(originally the ‘Intellectually Handicapped Children’s’ service, it now also handles mentally disabled adults)]. There was little co-ordination between any of them and all were paid for in different ways... “What we found was that nobody knew the value of anything... Money was just poured into the system. If a service cost \$20,000, how did you know if that was good or bad unless you knew the value? You can’t compare it with what other people could do with the same resources... You couldn’t find out the value of health services because there were no markets and no prices. We wanted to introduce markets into one of the most heavily socialised areas of our economy.” ...“In the early 1980s, it was thought it would be fairer to base hospital funding on an area’s population and demography. The process was begun, but by the early 1990s we still didn’t have equity. It was hard to shift boards to equity funding if it meant taking money off them.” ...[a report] recommended replacing the bureaucratic Department of Health with a small health ministry charged with giving policy advice to the government. Beneath the ministry it proposed a tier of “regional health authorities” whose job w[as]... to decide what health services were needed and buy those services on behalf of the public from hospitals, doctors and agencies... Instead of public hospitals being funded by block grants each year, they[’]d... be funded according to the services they provided. [RHAs] would not be limited to buying services from public hospitals – private hospitals could also tender. This would provide the health market that... was needed.

...[‘trends in the private health sector since the health reforms do not necessarily provide comfort that, as an alternate provider, it is superior. Early last year I was in need of a hernia operation. Being fully insured I did not even stop to consider whether the public system would be in a position to provide the operation at a time that was convenient to me. Once he determined I was insured, my specialist agreed he would carry out the task at a private sector facility. All went well with the operation and my turnaround at the hospital was about 24 hours. The bill for the operation was \$5500. Now, from friends in the medical supplies and surgical fields I obtained an informed audit of the costs to find: The hospital’s mark-ups on individual elements of the largest single item, surgical sundries, are obscene – up to several hundred per cent in several cases. Hospital sundries also were subjected to similar pricing. The total cost of the operation could have been performed profitably for \$3000. Now, being disposed to market solutions, I have little objection to any individual player pricing his services at whatever he likes and if he can extract a premium all power to him. After all it is the regulations which define the competitive environment that limits the scope for market exploitation. In my case a couple of normal “checks” on the activities of the supplier were absent. First, why did not I find out the cost before I purchased? I didn’t care. I am insured and I have almost without exception been rebated from my health insurer each year more than my premiums. So I figured I wasn’t paying, the rest of the insurer’s clientele were. Secondly, wouldn’t there then be a check on pricing by the insurance company? When it comes to health care, our personal ignorance of the true costs, our general acceptance that the public system cannot deliver when we want treatment, and our preparedness to insure against all health risks the industry will offer to insure, leads us collectively to be quite insensitive to the shared, premium cost. After all, the premium is but a fraction of the direct cost we might face if one of those really serious surgical needs fell upon us personally. This, of course, is the hazard faced by the American health system. The cost of health care just keeps rising inexorably as the insurance industry invokes a cost-plus approach to its suppliers’ market power.’]

...We’re a pretty healthy lot, we N[Z]ers. Our life expectancy is among the best in the world and keeps rising. With a few exceptions, our major illnesses are the diseases of affluence, not poverty. If we get sick or are injured in an accident, highly trained doctors and well-equipped hospitals are waiting to treat us, for little or no personal cost. A visitor from Somalia or even the U[S] might think the state of the nation’s health system would be the least of our worries. On the contrary, it’s the number one political issue... it far outstrips issues like immigration, racial problems, interest rates, housing, unemployment, law and order and virtually everything else that regularly creates headlines, according to a... poll published on July 13... Probably because hardly a day goes by without newspapers, radio and television running prominent stories on the latest problem in the health system. While this article was being prepared... the news was[about] the man who for a time came to epitomise the alleged failings of National’s bean-counting health reforms, [an] Auckland pensioner... denied kidney dialysis until he went on [a current affairs] show. Far from treatment being of little use to him as he was told, it seems he’s now in good health... The[National] Government’s health reforms were meant to

cut costs, reduce hospital waiting lists and make everyone happier. Instead, costs and waiting lists have soared... Every government for more than 20 years has stumbled on health. The time might have come to accept that health is a voracious black hole no amount of money can satisfy... - 1997

There are many problems associated with providing a universal free health care system (e.g., tax-funded health means healthy people subsidise the unhealthy; people may be less inclined to worry about their health if they don't have to pay for it; free health equals a sick health insurance industry). However, the problems associated with a user-pays system are at least as bad, if not worse (e.g., poor people can't afford health care; health insurance means that *healthy people subsidise the unhealthy*; it creates a paradox whereby insurance companies want people to be healthy in order to maximise profit but doctors want them to be unhealthy *in order to maximise profit*! Since 1993, NZ's public hospitals have been expected to compete on the open market and also make a profit (or at least break even), effectively taking the country's health industry down the path that leads to the US version – where patients may be given an expensive treatment when cheaper, more effective treatments are available, and some doctors deliberately prescribe medication to people for illnesses that they haven't got (a consequence, perhaps, of drug companies competing with each other to give doctors perks for supplying their products).

Is this factory making essential medicine or creating a market for it?

Her career was faltering, her weight was ballooning, she was drinking too much, taking too many prescription drugs. The world was stunned when three of her doctors were investigated for prescribing nearly 19 thousand drug doses to [the actress (r:p18, ln20)] over a single five-year period.

Despite a dazzling career, romances with some of the world's most eligible men and a fortune measured in the hundreds of millions, [the actress] lacks the one thing we all need most – good health... [She] has admitted to taking more than 10,000 tablets during her life, which has included more than 40 stays in hospital, 30 major operations and two stays at the Betty Ford Clinic to fight drug and alcohol addictions. A renowned doctor shopper, she has also battled the bulge, at one stage ballooning to 81kg. "People like... [her] go through their lives looking for a magic cure,"[a] psychologist... says. "She's looking for something to fix her pain. When the doctor or husband doesn't work, it allows her to repeat the cycle again." ...The latest instalment in a life-long saga is a tumor – believed to be benign – about to be removed from her brain. - 1997

"Is brain cancer mortality increasing in industrialised countries?" "Without any question it is." "Why?" "We don't know... There are multiple factors we have to look at but one of them may be, for some people, increased consumption of Aspartame." Better known by its brand names, NutraSweet or Equal, Aspartame is the most popular sugar substitute in the world. Since the [US Food & Drug Administration (FDA)] approved it back in 1981 it has become a multi-billion-dollar industry. It's now being used in thousands of products, from table-top sweeteners [and] children's vitamins to diet soft drinks. What most consumers don't know is that... [some people] have reported more than seven thousand adverse reactions, ranging from dizziness... to seizures. But the makers say it [is one] of the most tested food additives ever, and is safe for the tens of millions who use it worldwide... [However, a doctor] who has been studying Aspartame's effect on the brain for more than twenty years disagrees. He is the neuroscientist at Washington University's School of Medicine... "We've found that in the last eight or nine years, which is about three to five years after Aspartame was approved, there has been a striking increase in the incidence of malignant brain tumours." [He] does not say flat out that Aspartame is responsible for the rise... but he does believe that his analysis of the data shows that it's the most likely suspect... and... he says, the same type of aggressive brain tumours found in the Aspartame animal studies over twenty years ago are now increasing in the American human population... "...I'm saying that there is enough basis to suspect Aspartame... FDA needs to reassess it and this time around... do it right." ...Aspartame was discovered in the mid-sixties... The FDA originally approved Aspartame back in 1974 but FDA investigators soon found serious problems in some of the studies... submitted to the FDA and so a task force was formed to investigate... Because the FDA taskforce found so many discrepancies in... late '75 the agency put the approval on hold... The FDA Commissioner back then... said their investigations revealed "...a pattern of conduct which compromises the scientific integrity of the studies." "According to the FDA... [the manufacturers] in making their presentation to the FDA had wilfully misrepresented the facts and had withheld some of the facts that they knew would possibly jeopardise the approval of the product[," said a former senator and chairman of the Consumers' Federation of America. "... FDA officials themselves were so upset that they sent the file to the US Attorney's Office in Chicago for the purpose of presenting it to the Grand Jury as to whether or not there should be indictments. It wasn't presented, it was delayed." ...[Furthermore,] the US Attorney who[eventually] led the Grand Jury probe withdrew from the case while he was in... discussions with[one Aspartame manufacturer's] Chicago law firm... [for a] job that he later accepted. The investigation stalled and the Statute of Limitations on Aspartame charges ran out. As a result the investigation was dropped... [The current FDA Deputy Commissioner said recently:] "The critical question is not whether there were... mistakes made in recording data. That clearly occurred. The scientists looking at that information decided that the basic strength of the conclusion remains intact... We believe that based upon all the information that we've received to date that this is a safe product." ...[but the senator says:] "...I found 164 studies. 74 were funded by the NutraSweet industry. Every single one of them attested to the safety of Aspartame. Of the 90 independently funded studies, 83 identified the problem... I think it's inappropriate for researchers to have a vested interest in the outcome of their research." ...[an epidemiologist agreed with him, and went on to say:] "...when we have evidence that something produces cancer in animals, we'd better pay attention to that evidence. That's a basic tenant of public health..."

The high incidence of disease in rapidly expanding urban areas, in the 2nd quarter of the 19th cent., provided the impetus in the U.S. for research in public health. In 1847, the American Medical Association[(AMA), which was]... founded in... the interest of the medical profession – to improve training facilities, to set up a code of ethics for doctors, and to spread knowledge of medical progress among the general public... [while] opposing the replacement of private medical practice by government agencies and programs... [-] surveyed 12 cities... and documented the relation between illness and urban filth... In 1849, the Massachusetts legislature authorized a survey of state health conditions by the Massachusetts Medical Society in association with the American Statistical Association. The findings led to recommendations... which included all major aspects of modern public health practice: standard census and vital statistics compilations, a centralized board of health and local branches, a health education programme, and specific measures for sanitary control. Little implementation of this program took place until after the Civil War... In 1872, the American Public Health Association was formed and surveyed the extent of organized public health activity. Medical discoveries and new techniques constantly added to the effectiveness of public health practice. Federal activity in this field, as in other fields, has broadened widely in the 20th cent. The *U.S. Public Health Service* is a Federal agency which had its origins, in effect, in 1798, when Congress passed an act providing for hospitals for care of merchant seamen. Since 1953, it has been under the Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare.

In 1953, [a] US Senator... began a Senate investigation into the cancer industry... [which] concluded that the AMA, in collaboration with the NCI and FDA, entered into a conspiracy to suppress alternative, effective cancer treatments... The A[MA]... has a long history of corruption. Its most infamous leader was Morris Fishbein who reigned from 1924 until 1949. He had failed anatomy in medical school and had never practised medicine a day in his life, but during his years in power he was recognized as the virtual dictator of American medicine... [H]e "managed to hold

back the twentieth century for 50 years for the benefit of organized medicine"... Those who paid large advertising sums to the AMA Journal were given the AMA "seal of approval" for their products, despite the lack of any benefit, while those who wouldn't pay the advertising tax often had their products labelled as worthless. It was essentially a lucrative blackmail scheme. Fishbein supported drugs but adamantly opposed any food or natural remedies. Fishbein's opposition to any therapy or technology unrelated to drugs was based on the simple fact the AMA's power base and economic growth *required* drug sales. Anything which threatened the growing dependency on drugs threatened the AMA's entire empire. Public health was not and could not be the primary concern of the AMA... Evidence... suggests that Fishbein ignored medical documentation to the effect that products promoted by the AMA were dangerous... [O]ne such product caused blindness in a number of people. Another quietly killed people in their sleep. Another was so poisonous that it eventually caused the deaths of many, many people. Another of Fishbein's primary interests was his attempt to corner the rights on promising cancer treatments, or insure that any cancer treatment which threatened AMA financial interests was kept from the public. When the owners of a promising cancer treatment refused to sell it to the AMA, "difficulties" started[(e.g., 'their laboratories were burned down; the inventors were imprisoned or murdered; doctors who used the treatment had their licences revoked')]. In collaboration with the government and private interests within the cancer industry, Fishbein and his successors have left a history of illegal acts, bribery, conspiracy against medical innovation, monopolistic suppression of competitors and contributing to the physical mutilation and death of patients and consumers... There is reason to believe that the AMA has been hasty, capricious, arbitrary, and outright dishonest[said a]... 1953 Congressional Record... In 1971, the AMA's Council on Drugs, an independent group of scientists and doctors, completed a \$3 million evaluation on prescription drugs. Over 300 experts had been involved. Unfortunately[the then] chairman of the board of directors of the AMA, did not like what the independent council concluded in regard to drugs. He asked that the report not be published until "our friends" at the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association... looked at it. The P[harmaceutical Manufacturers Association] came back with "three or four crates" of revisions, but the Independent Council refused to make major changes, especially in its criticism of the drug companies' heavily advertised drug combinations. In September 1972, a second edition of the "AMA Drug Evaluation" was ready and the Council gave the AMA Board of Directors another advance look. One month later, the AMA disbanded its independent Council on Drugs. On February 6, 1973, two former chairmen and one vice-chairman of the AMA's Council on Drugs testified before Congress. They accused the AMA of being "a captive of and beholden to the pharmaceutical industry". The ad revenues from the drug companies, which had been the basis for the AMA's power and had distorted medical procedures and policies for decades, was shown to be still the driving force behind the AMA in the 1970's. It hasn't changed in the 1980's and 1990's. Policies and procedures which are in the interest of the public, but not in the financial interest of the drug companies, are suppressed. In 1987, the AMA was found guilty of conspiring for 20 years to destroy the profession of chiropractic.

MAJOR drugs companies are banding together to fight the mounting threat of [unscrupulous companies or individuals]... flooding the world with weak, adulterated and counterfeit medicines. Representatives of the pharmaceuticals giants put competition aside and met in London 10 days ago to discuss how to tackle a problem believed to cause thousands of deaths every year. The... meeting was told that... about 10% of medicines sold outside the Western industrialised countries were believed to be fake. In some countries, especially [in]Africa, the figure might be 60%. Many of the bogus drugs are simply copies of the genuine medicine but sold rather like a fake Rolex watch, as though they were the real thing. Others may be more or less safe but the dosages will be wrong. In the worst cases, they are made up of anything from coffee and sugar to toxic chemicals. Some are manufactured in factories, others brewed in bathtubs... 2500 to 3000 children are believed to have died in the African state of Niger in the past year after being injected with a fake anti-meningitis vaccine. The medicine, hidden among batches of genuine vaccine, bore the labels of highly reputable British and French firms. In a notorious case in Nigeria, 109 children died in 1990 after being given a syrup that turned out to be antifreeze solution. Some 250 children are known to have died in Bangladesh in the past few years in similar cases... [F]raudsters in Europe were making large amounts of money exporting to the former Soviet Union, although... Russia and neighbouring countries would ship counterfeit medicine to the West within a few years... Drug companies, which spend billions on research and development, are understandably keen to stamp out the trade.

...One by one, the multinational drug companies are leaving N[Z], and as each one goes, the last remaining Kiwi [drug manufacturer]... grows bigger... While the company's growth has been fuelled by the success of its own drugs, much has come as a dozen multinationals which once manufactured here have left... The latest departure... saw [the Kiwi company] take over its clients, products and its marketing personnel... [The Kiwi company] also acts as agent and local manufacturer for four other multinationals which have decided to quit the N[Z] market... Turnover for the family-owned company, which started life as a chemist shop in west Auckland 40 years ago, has risen 25% in each of the past few years... To keep up... last week[the company] opened a \$15 million manufacturing facility with the capacity to produce half a billion items a year... It's a long way from 1957... Then, pharmacists weren't allowed to own more than one shop... Despite such rapid growth and big plans to boost exports – 20% of the company's production this year is destined for Asia – the company won't be raising capital by going public... Around 40% of the drugs [it] makes are generics... And sometimes... [the company] has been able to make... drugs because of legal oversights by others. Frucid, a diuretic and one of the company's mainstays since 1974, came about when the German company that developed the original drug forgot to register a patent in N[Z], believing we were part of A[US]. The Kiwi company saw the loophole and went for it. Growth may be rampant, but it's not all beer and skittles in the drug world. One of [the company's] concerns is the lack of [local] incentives for research into new drugs, in contrast to A[US] where government subsidies to manufacturing and research has led to a thriving pharmaceutical industry and a steady stream of patents being filed on new drugs. "With our academic base in N[Z], we could be doing some very good things in original research if there was a return. But as the market sits in N[Z], you're not going to get reimbursed in selling price, because our selling price is around the lowest in the world. And you won't get reimbursed for new products. So what incentive is there...?" [The company], and the rest of the industry isn't happy with the way the government handles pharmaceuticals. The health reforms created Pharmac... which manages a kind of Schindler's List called the pharmaceutical schedule. Chemists who fill out prescriptions for drugs not on the schedule don't get reimbursed... So if a drug isn't on the schedule, chemists won't stock it. Not only does Pharmac decide which drugs get reimbursed, but it also effectively decides the price companies are paid for their drugs. Companies... have to meet the price or miss out on Pharmac's list... "There's no easy solution. We understand the Government's need to control expenditure as well as anyone. Pharmac is saying 'Meet our price or you don't sell.' We're coming back and saying, 'That's fine, but give us more volume.' If we could get our machines working for a week at a time on one drug, as opposed to a day, the costs of our drugs would fall dramatically..."...[the Kiwi company] and its generic drugs can benefit by undercutting the brand-name drugs on price, provided Pharmac will put the drugs on the schedule. Often the brand name drug will attract a premium – the difference between the base price Pharmac will pay and the price the company is asking for. That premium is paid by the patient prescribed the drug. [The latest multinational company's] decision to leave... was in part prompted by its failure to get several of its products on to the Pharmac schedule.

...PHARMACISTS and drug companies believe patients will pay more for the common painkiller paracetamol if the drug funding agency Pharmac goes ahead with a groundbreaking plan to put supply of the medicine up for tender. The tender would apply to prescribed paracetamol and result in only one company winning a subsidy for the product when it is supplied on prescription. About five companies currently receive subsidies for the drug, which is sold under a range of tradenames... [I]ndustry sources believe the loss of the subsidies will cause price hikes on the \$15 million worth of paracetamol supplied over the counter through chemists and supermarkets each year. The country spends about \$2.5 million

annually on prescribed paracetamol... [The] Pharmacy Guild president... said... “The volume produced for over-the-counter sales would go down and the cost of production would rise. We believe it will have an effect on availability and price.” ...Companies say the profits on over-the-counter sales enable them to offer cheaper rates for paracetamol used in hospitals and prescribed by doctors. They say Pharmac has nothing to gain by seeking cheaper rates on tender... One drug company source, who declined to be named, said he thought the Pharmac proposal was a forerunner to plans to put other drugs up for tender to further ratchet down prices. “Paracetamol is a nice easy place to start and if that goes well, it will be a test case, but I doubt there is fat left in its price.” ...One paracetamol supplier... says it receives \$30 for each dispensing pack of 1000 tablets, which cost more than that to produce. “How can you tender when you are already making a loss?” ...But Pharmac... said the agency proposed the tender because it believed it was paying three times the world price for paracetamol. It was “fuzzy logic” to suggest the move would result in higher over-the-counter prices...

More than 100 high-ranking Italian health ministry civil servants, former deputies and business executives are to stand trial on charges of giving and receiving bribes to inflate the price of medicines... [In local news.] Pharmac has decided to pay for treating the rare and debilitating Gaucher’s disease which affects 14 N[Z]ers. Pharmac will fund the drug ceredase, which... is extracted from human placentas, 50,000 of which are needed to produce enough of the medicine to treat an adult patient for a year, at a cost of up to \$75,000. - 1996

A last-minute turnaround by... Pharmac has given [a N[Z]er] the chance of a better life. The 44-year-old sufferer of Gaucher disease – a rare condition which affects the spleen, liver and bone marrow – has been waiting three years for treatment with ceredase, a drug which costs \$85,000 a year for each patient even at low doses. In the last week his spleen has swelled to eight times the normal size and he has developed knee pain, a possible sign that the disease is spreading to his bones. He was due to get a letter this week from a Pharmac-appointed committee of specialists telling him he had missed the cut-off point for treatment. But the letter was headed off by a... phone call yesterday from the Pharmac general manager... assuring him that he would receive ceredase after all. [The manager] also warned that Pharmac might drop its subsidies on products such as pimple creams and decongestant nose sprays to pay for the high-cost treatment. [The 44-year-old] said he was sure the change of heart came because he was prepared to go public on his plight. The North Shore man was rapt to get the treatment but disappointed that he and fellow sufferers had waited three years and that at least three would still miss out. He said low-dose treatment would work for him but worse-off patients needed a high-dose treatment, ruled out because it cost \$500,000 a year... [The manager] said Pharmac had not given in to public pressure or criticism by the Alliance. He... said funding was originally limited to nine of the 14 Gaucher sufferers... based on criteria set last year. Further assessments showed two more people... met the criteria because their conditions had worsened... [Incidentally, Fernz] Corp is preparing to launch a new version of its much-vaunted wonder drug Interferon with applications for treating some forms of cancer. Up until it embarked on its recent headline-grabbing international expansion programme, the drug was the sexiest thing about the blue-chip pharmaceutical and chemicals company. Fernz started developing the drug in what it dubbed a venture capital exercise five years ago, but production delays and marketing problems in its biggest market, China, have dogged progress... The project in China, managed through subsidiary Pharma Pacific, has cost the company a net \$5 million in each of the past two years... and... the loss would be similar for... 1997... Developing the drug had cost Fernz \$30 million and the company had little to show for it. But that may now soon change. [The]Fernz managing director... said the company was trialing high-dose oral treatments of Interferon in France, and so far there had been no sign of the side effects associated with the drug in previous high dose treatments. The company should be ready to apply for worldwide patents by next month... Most analysts placed a value of \$30-\$35 million on the Interferon business... [but the managing director] estimated the worldwide market for Interferon at close to \$4 billion... The drug was also being trialed for hepatitis treatment in N[Z] and AUS], while its use in an HIV trial in the US has another 18 months to run.

...[‘the ad shouts out from the recruitment pages: Earn £100 per day! Reading on, it sounds too good to be true. No mention of 14-hour shifts packing fish in frozen shipping containers, holding “Golf Sale” signs in high streets or “glamour” modelling for unlisted agencies. Just a requirement for healthy males and females aged 18 to 45. So how do you get your hands on this free money? The picture of a pill bottle full of pound signs is the giveaway. Deal is, it’s a pharmaceutical company looking for volunteers to take part in drug trials. Paid to take drugs. Brings a twinkle to your eye, doesn’t it? But in the beady peepers of medical multinationals, a healthy human represents a commodity. A laboratory with legs. A walking, talking guinea pig, if you will. That’s not to say the volunteers are being taken advantage of. They ain’t doing this to further medical science. It’s just a 90s version of the oldest profession: selling your body for cash. With the same possibility of bizarre repercussions. “Phase One” is the medico term for experimentation on humans. They’re usually testing unlicensed drugs that have thus far only been administered to animals. Drug trials can last anywhere from two hours to a month. In theory, the money is paid for “time, inconvenience and discomfort.” If you’re involved in a study where nurses constantly stick a tube in your nose or into your lungs, say, it’ll pay you more than the basic rate of around £100. In practice, though, part of the fee is danger money. The Phase One trial originated as a check on the inadequate research procedures which had allowed the clinical use of Thalidomide in the late 50s. Nearly 40 years on, the system is still bound to an antiquated and embarrassingly inept series of guidelines. Unbeknown to most guinea pigs of the upright-walking kind, there’s no legislation in place to govern human experiments. In theory, any wannabe doctor could set up a clinic and enlist volunteers in the search for that elusive cancer cure. The guinea pig industry has been known to step over to the dark side, where notorious cowboy doctors offer thousands for irregular practices and short cuts, but for travellers wanting to finance that next leg of their journey on the continent, a London-based company called Carra Recruitment offers a directory in international clinics. The Association Of Independent And Clinical Research Contractors also holds lists of drug companies looking for guinea pigs. London itself has eight “official” Phase One clinics. Visit one and you’ll experience something akin to a halfway house for the terminally bored. Once the trial has started, the usually Antipodean male students are banned from leaving the clinic, and forbidden every vice that might affect results. Namely chocolate, fags, caffeine, alcohol and sex. “I suppose it’s a bit like being in jail, except the food’s better, we have cable TV and we get a wad at the end,” says a veteran of 15 trials. His latest job, 28 days using an experimental incontinence drug being developed for the elderly, will net him more than £3,000. Of the estimated 20,000 people a year volunteering for Phase One trials in the UK, by no means all get the opportunity to make any cash. They’re comprehensively screened to ensure they don’t have any surprises in their system which could alter the outcome of the experiment. After years of testing drugs on America’s inmates and liver-corroded homeless, the labs – commissioned by the pharmaceutical firms – need to find the “best of the best” subjects, to get the most accurate results. The screening of subjects came under close scrutiny in the mid-80s however. In 1984, arts student Niall Rush expired almost immediately after taking an experimental heart drug. It was concluded that Niall’s death was due to a reaction with other medication he was taking at the time. He was to be paid £20. The previous summer, 21-year-old Philip Jones suffered a slow death after taking a new variation of a tranquilliser already on the market. When he entered the clinic to earn £70, Philip was a strapping, rugby-playing medical student. In the months afterwards, he developed a number of ailments which led to his death. When Philip eventually died an inquest ruled that the drug may have caused his condition. The pharmaceutical firm concerned paid his family £50,000. Indeed, since 1990, pharmaceutical companies have paid compensation to at least 11 healthy volunteers in Britain. In a recent review of Phase One trials over a single year, the *British Journal Of Clinical Pharmacology* reported 610 cases of adverse side effects and three potentially life-threatening incidents where subjects had to be resuscitated. What these figures don’t tell is the number of ill or drug-taking guinea pigs who blag their way through the screening. Some drink half a gallon of vinegar to flush out their system. Others smuggle in a jar of mate’s urine, heating it up under a hot tap for that “fresh” feel, before handing it over. Here are some more human guinea pig blunders: 1984 New York student nurse Bernadette Gillcrist, 23, died after testing drugs that affected sleep and mood patterns. Officials believe she had concealed a history of heart trouble. 1986 Three Japanese testers died in trials for a shingles treatment. The company continued selling the medicine, which proved fatal when

combined with cancer drugs. A further 15 died. 1990 Three young male volunteers at a Manchester clinic contracted hepatitis B from another trialist. Nobody was screened. The clinic is now closed. 1996 Hoi Yan Wan, a 19-year-old NY student, died after a 10-minute procedure in which a tube was inserted into her lungs and her throat was sprayed, poisoning her.'

... 'revelations that thousands of AUSns are being used as unsuspected guinea pigs by multinational pharmaceutical companies have brought demands for tighter controls on drug testing. Those tested, including children and intellectually disabled people, have been included in trials by doctors who have received up to \$A6000 in a booming trade that has seen the number of such tests rise 20-fold in the past decade. An investigation by the *Sydney Morning Herald* said patients were being bought and sold like commodities by doctors and pharmaceutical companies without being told that money changed hands when they volunteered for new treatments. The investigation came in the wake of resignations from the committee overseeing the inclusion of drugs on subsidised lists. The Health Minister had earlier overridden the committee's recommendations on the subsidy level of the anti-arthritis drug Celebrex, and made it AUS's most heavily subsidised drug. As the reaction from the newspaper's investigation gathered pace, ABC Radio was yesterday contacted by a large number of people claiming they had been persuaded by their GPs to take part in trials of Celebrex, with painful results. An 84-year-old said he had been told Celebrex was harmless when he was asked to trial the drug, but eight weeks later was still suffering agonising skin problems. A Sydney woman told the paper she had been placed on a trial for the anti-epilepsy drug Gabapentin by her neurologist without being told that he was being paid for recruiting patients by its manufacturer. The *Herald* investigation said this trial was, like most others, designed to speed up the registration of the drug in the US and Europe. The report said AUS was being targeted for trials because of the decision in 1991 to end national over-sight of the approval of clinical trials by the Therapeutic Goods Administration and to pass it to ethics committees comprising medical professionals and lay people. The federal watchdog was obliged to directly review only two of the 1712 clinical trials done in AUS last year, almost one in six of which were run by private organisations.'

... 'new drugs are constantly appearing, designed to combat everything from obesity and impotence to battling heart disease or cancer. Although these drugs will have been through years of clinical trials, who ultimately decides they are safe for pharmacists to sell or for doctors to prescribe? Unlike the US, where advisory committees of the FDA discuss new drugs in open forums that are both televised and published on the Internet, NZ makes its decisions on new drugs in comparative secrecy. Drug companies submit a weighty dossier on the drug to Medsafe, the Ministry of Health's unit that deals with drug registration. The dossier describes how the drug was developed, what is in it and the results of clinical trials. It must also comply with standards set by the EU's Committee of Proprietary Medicinal Products. The ministerially appointed Medicines Assessment Advisory Committee, made up of experts in clinical pharmaceutical chemistry, pharmacology, infectious diseases, psychiatry, anaesthetics, general practice, oncology and biostatistics, advises the Minister of Health when it is satisfied a new drug has reached the necessary standards. The Ministry of Health then comments on the recommendation, advising the minister whether to accept or decline the drug. Medsafe will be aware of where else a new drug may or may not have been registered, but it likes to make its own decisions, unlike AUS's Therapeutic Goods Association, which takes a closer interest in the FDA. Medsafe's medical adviser is unimpressed with the FDA. He says the structure is so dense it can be difficult to get a drug through – taking between two and five years compared with NZ's 12 to 15 months. Does the FDA's caution mean Americans are more protected from unsafe drugs than we are? The adviser says there is no proof the FDA's approach is safer. For example, the FDA approved two weight-loss drugs, Redux and Pondimin, which were withdrawn from the market last year when they became linked with heart damage in obese patients. The adviser suggests the FDA may even be unnecessarily denying Americans early access to beneficial drugs. Medsafe doesn't tend to grant registration more quickly than its overseas counterparts because it is lax, but because it doesn't have the workload of overseas authorities because not as many drugs companies come here, he says. Being a small market, and one where the drug-funding agency Pharmac has a tight grip on the chequebook, means we are not considered a worthwhile market, dollarwise. But NZ has another attribute – it is a market to watch. Our small, isolated, easily monitored, largely white, affluent and educated population is representative of the larger, more lucrative markets of Europe and America. Plus, says an Auckland Medical School specialist in clinical trials of drugs, "NZ has a small and relatively tight-knit medical community and a well-established system for detecting and reporting adverse effects of medicines. This makes it a good place from a post-marketing surveillance viewpoint. Rare adverse effects that are essentially impossible to detect during the pre-marketing phases of development are perhaps more likely to be detected in NZ." Local medical school academics regularly undertake drug company-sponsored research. UniServices, the business unit handling these commercial research projects, last year earned Auckland University \$8.7 million from pharmaceutical research.'

... 'Auckland University has established a company, NeuronZ – effectively the country's first research and development-based pharmaceutical company – to take two drugs that its researchers have discovered to clinical trials. Offers of donations and calls from desperate patients have poured in to the Auckland Medical School since the *Sunday Star-Times* revealed last week that the drugs could stop the progression of diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and multiple sclerosis. Negotiations are under way with international biotechnology merchant bankers for the \$20 million required for clinical trials of the growth factor IGF1.' In related news, last month a pharmaceutical company's UJ\$... **patent on the herpes drug Zovirax ended. In July, it faces the expiry of UJ\$ and UJ\$K... patents on peptic-ulcer treatment Zantac...** [These are] its two biggest products, which together accounted for almost a third of its revenue last year... As one commentator explains... the best defence strategy against generic competition[is]: don't be reliant on one drug... The effect of losing a patent on a blockbuster drug can be dramatic. Copycat companies soon produce generic versions, which sell for as little as 20[%] of the original's price... Once generics are on the market, the original drug is effectively on Death Row... The pharmaceuticals companies pull out all legal stops to try to hold on to their patents... Intellectual property is the life-blood of a pharmaceuticals company. Filing a patent is one of the first steps when a potential drug is discovered, but although the patent guarantees exclusive rights to that chemical compound for the next 20 years, it takes an average of five to eight years, including three rounds of clinical trials, to get the drug to the market[('99 out of 100 new drugs fail to get onto the market')]. Once a drug is launched, the patent usually runs for 12 to 15 years during which time manufacturing costs are minimal; the main cost is sales and marketing. Margins can be 30[%] or more.

...Pharmac believes it can slash... [NZ's] medicine... bill by breaking the stranglehold on supply by pharmaceutical companies and assisting other companies to import generic drugs... Pharmac believes the existing pharmaceutical companies are charging excessive prices for generic drugs and says the potential savings in the scheme are formidable. It says it has already identified savings of \$47 million – including \$22 million on ulcer drugs... – with more to come if direct imports can be established with the UK... Pharmac[, which has already]... approached 60 generics companies overseas to try to entice them into N[Z, said]... the underwriting offer was open to any company for any drug... The[existing] companies say the policy is anti-competitive, threatens the future of the local pharmaceutical industry and could cost N[Z]ers jobs and export earnings.

...[NZ's] health reforms have produced their share of battles but few as bruising as the present struggle over the cost of the medicines we use... Pharmac, the agency which decides which drugs will be subsidised in this country, is involved in a long-running and costly war with the drug companies themselves... [A] bitter animosity exists between pharmaceutical companies and the state-funded agency... At the heart of the debate [are] questions over who should get drugs, when should they get them and how much should taxpayers pay for them. The scrap is costing millions of dollars in legal bills... The companies say [they've] got to go to court to protect a reasonable right of access for[their] products to the N[Z] market... Both sides claim the real losers are health consumers... Pharmac... acts on behalf of the country's four [RHAs]. The RHAs buy drugs which are then dispensed through doctors and hospitals... Pharmac can only spend what the [RHAs] decide they can afford... "...N[Z]'s health sector... is funded to the tune of \$5 billion... committed to a wide range of services. The fact of it is that when we go to the [RHAs] and say, 'this looks like a good drug, we should have it,' the [RHAs] aren't immediately able to make that money available... We do need to look at the bottom line... [I]f we don't then we have to cut health services somewhere else because the amount of money that we have to work with... as a whole, is fixed." Pharmac deals with a steady stream of applications from drug companies who want to get their new or improved products on to the subsidy

list... [T]he length of time it's taking Pharmac to list new products... is where the conflict arises... The drug companies say Pharmac's deliberately dragging the chain and that's costing them their products and sales. Pharmac... says[the] drug companies deluge them with so much paperwork it takes a lot of time to process... The result: some people are missing out on treatments that are potentially life-saving or could greatly enhance their health... [A] heart specialist... says Pharmac's delays are killing his patients... [while a] doctor... says elderly women are being denied a powerful treatment for brittle bones... [and a] multiple sclerosis sufferer... says Pharmac's cutting off her access to a significant new drug... There's no cure for multiple sclerosis but there are treatments that can improve a sufferer's quality of life to such an extent... that they can continue in work. One such drug is Betaferon. It's very expensive. A year's worth... would be about \$20,000... [In AUS], Britain, even Slovenia or Hungary, it would be on the list and [a] doctor could prescribe it, but not here... "I presume... that... it goes like this[Pharmac says,] '...we could approve Betaferon and give it to [each sufferer but for every] \$20,000... someone else[(i.e., someone with a different health complaint that also costs \$20,000)] would have to miss out.' ...we wouldn't want to see someone with a serious life-threatening illness go without a drug so [someone else with a non-life-threatening illness] can have one... We[already] figure, based on scientific data, that there are probably four N[Z]ers who die per week because of the current policy.'" ...[Betaferon is just on]e of the faces from a debate in which there are few easy answers... Whether it's an expensive drug like Betaferon or a relatively simple antibiotic... Pharmac believes the way forward is to hard-nose the negotiations with the drug companies and take its time putting new drugs on the list. Money is the number one issue. In its 1996 annual report Pharmac claimed that if it registered every new product seeking approval the annual cost would be up to 200 million dollars more a year. By hanging tough, Pharmac says it saved taxpayers nearly 50 million in the last three years and will save nearly a 100 million more in the next two years... Pharmac's strategy is open for all to see. If it can drive down the cost... it can, in theory, free up money... The newly discounted price... then becomes the industry benchmark and everyone else has to discount to compete... Pharmac... is in the business of doing deals which are clearly forcing drug companies to scrap with each other and undercut, sometimes savagely, in order to get new products listed... It's... [undeniably] a real boon for the[NZ] taxpayer. But... is it an appropriate strategy when it comes to something as complex as listing new medicines with considerable patient benefits? ...No matter which side of the debate you favour it's clear that the international pharmaceutical trade is, for many companies, exceedingly profitable. On the basis of a return on capital, American companies have, in recent years, recorded returns as high as 60% per annum... Pharmaceutical companies... [say] this battle... is... more about the nation's health... [and] the agency which decides which drugs you as the consumer can access... [than] about big profits... Their anger towards Pharmac draws on the idea that with so much money invested in product development this country's slash and burn approach to pricing would make it impossible to do business if these policies became more widespread. But how realistic are the drug companies' estimates on what research and development really costs? In Washington [a] consumer watchdog group... has just produced a report seriously challenging what the drug companies say it costs to get a new product onto the market... "The industry has an interest in exaggerating how much it spends on research and development." ...public demands, once the miracle cures are announced, can be awfully loud, as is the cry of foul from the international pharmaceuticals [companies] when they don't get their way... Drug companies argue their profits have to be seen in the light of the expense involved in getting a new product on to the market... "Typically it... costs between 400 [to] 600 million US dollars... [and] takes about 14 years... [including] a very lengthy process of trials... to develop a product from the laboratory to marketing it..." ...Critics of the industry say that many drug companies have... made big profits by making and marketing drugs that were originally developed with taxpayer money... [A] number of American drug companies have done exceedingly well in recent years out of making products where the bulk of the research was done by bodies like the National Cancer Institute... "[One company] was charging 20 times more to the consumer than it was paying its supplier for the drug, and this was for a drug that [the company] didn't even invent... [It] was invented by the U[S] Government..." ...Although drug companies make a lot of noise about the amount of money they spend on research they are still in a profit-driven business. Pharmaceutical companies, by way of promotion to chemists and doctors and... advertising... also... spend a great deal of money... on their pitch. In the early '90s, American studies determined that drug companies were actually spending more on advertising than the billions in research they were so keen to talk about. The wealth of multinational drug companies also makes them very influential... [They] exercise their muscle in Washington through... PhRMA... the US drug companies lobby group. It's this organisation which has been applying none too subtle pressure in the US Congress over the policies of Pharmac... There's even been speculation that the American Government might be asked to take trade sanctions against N[Z] as a consequence... Likely? Not really. Even during the worst days of ANZUS we were still trading. But it's an indication that this subject has a real depth of feeling to it... What's best for the industry, the taxpayer and the patient? ...what you learn when you start delving a bit in this area is that there is a high degree of sensitivity over how much drugs cost and over how much we actually need the new products on offer... There's a greater willingness these days to ask whether every new product that comes onto the market which is supposed to be really good for us actually deserves to have a halo around it.

...[Pharmac is spending money to wean us off expensive drugs. Pharmac is determined to combat the sometimes subtle and sometimes blatant marketing techniques used by drug companies to persuade doctors and ordinary people like us that we need drugs when probably we do not. Set up to manage the supply of drugs, Pharmac soon realised that if it was to control the budget it would have to control that demand for drugs, a demand it sees as largely manufactured by the drug companies, especially since NZ joined the US as the only two countries in the world to allow drug advertising directly to the public. Pharmac has now even gone as far as asking a select committee considering new legislation to give it the role of promoting the responsible use of pharmaceuticals. This demand-side strategy operates on several fronts, employs two people, and cost a total of \$1,076,000 in the last financial year. Some of that money paid the bills for Cabix, its public relations arm that helps it communicate with doctors, pharmacists and patients. Occasionally it also uses a firm called Viewpoint to help it communicate with its political masters. The bill from both public relations companies last year was \$221,000. Compare that with what Pharmac estimates could be as much as \$350 million spent by the drug companies on marketing here and it looks as if Pharmac is using bows and arrows against the commercial equivalent of a nuclear power. The demand-side budget also finances the Preferred Medicines Centre, which advises doctors on good prescribing habits, and an anti-drug company magazine, *Healthy Scepticism*, that goes to GPs and is run by the Medical Lobby for Appropriate Marketing. Pharmac paid for its AUSn editor to tour here last year, teaching doctors how to read between the lines of drug company advertising. But the idea that Pharmac has to spend more than \$1 million to untangle doctors from the grip of drug companies rankles with many doctors. The Medical Association chairwoman says not only do many doctors refuse to see the sales representatives, but doctors are not gullible and there is no evidence they succumb to undue influence. However, Pharmac's general manager says studies by the US advertising industry show 80% of people who went to the doctor asking for a certain drug got it, even when in 30% of cases the doctor did not think it was the best treatment. The chairwoman agrees that advertising directly to the consumer drives up the drug bill, but often because it is the first time people suffering from a particular condition find out there is a treatment for it, so they see their doctor. But "Pharmac has got to accept that appropriate, effective use of pharmaceuticals sometimes means more." She gives the example of cholesterol-lowering drugs, too few of which were being prescribed in this country. Pharmac's medical director says Pharmac does recognise that more is sometimes better, and that it gave presentations about the best use of cholesterol drugs. Pharmac is also paying to remind doctors that exercise is good for their patients. It is putting \$425,000 annually towards financing the Green Prescription campaign, whereby patients leave the doctor's surgery with a note telling them to walk around the block twice a day after meals rather than a prescription for drugs. Why does Pharmac need to fund a campaign telling doctors something they should already know? "It helps to be reminded," says the general manager. But wouldn't a patient whose preferred drug is not subsidised because there isn't enough money in the kitty be angry that Pharmac is spending \$425,000 a year telling GPs about the importance of exercise? "If you can get behaviour change in people the benefits are large." But if indeed doctors have been busily over-prescribing all these years, isn't there something wrong with their training? Before Pharmac put the screws on them, drug companies assumed much of the responsibility

for educating doctors about drugs, although where the line was drawn between education and marketing was anyone's guess. Pharmac is considering stepping into that education role, particularly once nurses are granted the power to prescribe.¹

...Pharmac... is budgeting... for legal costs... to defend its querying new products and refinements which international drug companies want to market here. It's... [money] which should be going to help the sick but Pharmac's management is convinced that the drug bill would be much higher but for its watchful role. Seven legal actions are underway and... the agency has been threatened with two more... Even with its scrutiny Pharmac is budgeted to pay out \$715 million dollars to subsidised prescriptions and related products this year – up from \$694 million last year... “...that's a hell of a lot of drugs for a country which is slightly smaller[in population] than Sydney.” ...Without its intervention, the agency estimates the drug bill would be more than \$800 million. Two men drive Pharmac... a 35-year-old economist and accountant, and... a[49-year-old] doctor who had more than 20 years' experience in general practice before venturing into administration. They admit to some “fiery times,”... in sifting recommendations on what[to] subsidise and what to delist... [Pharmac] has to do what it can within a given budget and patients' needs come first... Their job is to deliver the best within the country's ability to pay. That on average is nearly [7%] lower in terms of [GDP] than most developed countries[(the 'OECD average for 1995 was 7.9% of GDP – NZ's level was 7.5%, which placed us ahead of Japan, the UK and Greece, whose levels were 7.2, 6.9 and 5.3% respectively; but behind Italy, Finland and AUS, whose levels were 7.6, 8.0 and 8.4% respectively)]... We don't get within cooee of the U[S (14.5%)], Switzerland and Germany. “Then again... we only have an average income of about \$28,000 a year, not the \$40,000 to \$60,000 of the more developed countries... and if we are to have an equivalent health system to that of the Swiss or Americans we're going to have to work much harder in terms of being smarter in what we purchase... However, I don't think anyone would argue the U[S] delivery [of health services], for example is equitable... Sometimes people will get good news but at others the therapy that they want is either not within the finances of the health system to provide or we don't, from a medical perspective, perceive it as being as important as individuals may see it from a survival point of view.” To the suggestion that they may “be playing God” by withholding life-prolonging drugs, he retorts: “Delivering the message can be hard. But by fronting up to the issues and having them debated openly we hope at least to earn respect. It's uncomfortable when some mooted 'wonder drug' is being pushed [by a drug company] with inflated hopes and expectations and we put the damper on... Then again interaction with user groups can often provide useful information. The Aids groups are a good example. They are quite expert... and they can add to the quality of our decisions.” ...Pharmac's creation three years ago was a radical departure from the way N[Z]'s pharmaceutical needs used to be assessed and funded. It is a non-profit-making company owned equally by the four [RHAs] and its lists cover about 3000 prescription drugs and products... A large proportion of pharmaceuticals subsidised through Pharmac were from U[S companies who]... are “very fearful” of what Pharmac is doing... “This is quite a change for the drug industry, which is parochial in its attitudes and seems to believe it has a God-given right of entitlement to public moneys, whereas what the new health sector has done is put drugs basically in competition with all other health sectors. We have to now think about whether it is better to fund a drug for treating a heart condition or alternatively fund a public health programme which looks at smoking rates and attempts to reduce the incidence of cardiovascular disease by cutting smoking. We have to toss up spending money on services in the mental health sector verses drugs. So that's particularly challenging for a drug company and they're fighting back.” Some doctors have challenged the agency's competence to limit the choice of a prescription. Pharmac has bitten back, including citing an Auckland study which showed that medical practices have on average more than a thousand promotional items from drug companies... it's hard to believe these giveaways don't have an influence... “Somebody's got to give advice and somebody's got to make a decision. At least we are explicit about what we are doing and why which may not have been always true in the past when decisions were hidden... But we're not aggressive compared with the stance by the drug companies. We don't want to spend health dollars on court actions... but at the end of the day that's always their right.”

...Pharmac needed to play hard-ball with drug companies, given the number of legal actions it had faced, [its general manager] said. It spent \$1.6 million in legal fees last financial year and \$680,000 the year before, facing about seven cases. One case involved 17 products. Most cases remained unresolved. “We get a [threatening] letter from their lawyers on average about once a week. Each company obviously has a taste for litigation,”... The Government expects to spend up to \$4 million battling drug companies in court this year. Pharmac... said the legal costs were worthwhile given its track record in cutting profits made by manufacturers... One of its best court victories had sliced \$13 million off the drug bill... \$1 million was budgeted for each time a drug company took legal issue with a decision on whether to subsidise a drug or by how much... The rift between health officials and the drug industry will be cemented by the Government's get-tough plan to cut drug spending.

...TOUGH new measures to tighten the supply of medicines are expected to be announced this week, with Pharmac claiming the drugs bill is heading for a \$30-50 million blowout... [T]his year Pharmac expects to spend at least \$747 million... [P]atients are likely to have restricted choices of medicines while doctors face pressure to prescribe cheaper drugs they regard as less effective and with more side effects.

...Health officials have outlined an eight-point strategy... which promises to get tough on prices paid to drug companies. The general manager of Pharmac... warned that other health services would be cut if a forecast... budget blowout became reality... [M]oney would be taken from elsewhere... general surgery was... [among the areas] threatened... Doctors, patients and pharmacists will also come under the spotlight in the drive for savings. [Pharmac] signalled a move towards pharmacists actively questioning what doctors prescribed. Although the pharmacist would have to know the patient's drug history... this would act as a check on inappropriate prescribing. Pharmac's concern was that doctors often opted for expensive drugs, despite little evidence they were better than cheaper alternatives... A key strategy is to cut the price on asthma inhalers, which cost the country \$110 million a year. Pharmac said it would save \$15 million if drug companies charged the same price for inhalers as in A[US]. This included one inhaler which cost \$107 in N[Z] but only \$38 in A[US]. But 3M Pharmaceuticals, one inhaler maker, said the comparison was out of context as the A[US]n Government paid manufacturers for research, development and manufacture of drugs. In return, they got lower prices... A health sector researcher... said Pharmac was working within an unrealistic budget which disadvantaged patients... Before Pharmac was formed in 1993, drug subsidies paid to companies rose about 10[%] each year. That has halved in the past four years... “...It's now about 5[%]. Compare that with A[US] where they're expecting growth of 17[%]. Pharmac]... redescribed the market place...”

...DRUG companies have hit back at claims they are the fat cat villains of the pharmaceutical budget blowout... [F]igures from U[S]-based International Medical Statistics show that, at manufacturer level, N[Z] spends \$197.43 per head each year on medicines, while A[US] spends \$217, the UK \$203, Canada \$211 and the US \$441... [(‘1995 state health spending in price-adjusted US dollars per capita for OECD countries went from \$101 in Turkey, \$256 in Mexico and \$456 in Greece, to \$1703 in Switzerland, \$1833 in Luxembourg and \$1853 in the US – NZ = \$942; UK = \$1077; AUS = \$1175; Canada = \$1475’). P]er capita spending had increased 18%-19% in N[Z] since 1993, compared with 28% in the US, 30% in A[US] and 39% in the UK. Canadian figures were unavailable... [The] Pharmac general manager... said if the figures were true, they showed Pharmac's policies were working and N[Z]ers had access to the drugs they needed, but costs were being kept down. But, he said, the figures should be treated with caution because the mix of drugs used in the different countries was not the same... Previous rows between Pharmac and drug companies over pricing and subsidies have ended in court action.

...Drug companies are to appeal against the High Court ruling last month that... Pharmac was not subject to the Commerce Act... The chief executive of... the Researched Medicines Industry Association (RMI)... said yesterday that the industry had decided there were aspects of the judgment that needed to be further addressed. “[However, the] industry genuinely regrets the level of litigation produced by the current system...”

...PHARMACEUTICAL companies are calling on[the] Health Minister to set up a national advisory group to change the way Pharmac runs the country's budget... In a stinging attack on the current set-up... [the chief executive of the RMI], which represents 35 research-based pharmaceutical

companies in N[Z.] ...said... Pharmac... practiced an “exclusive, divisive and combative approach to pharmaceutical issues”... N[Z]’s drugs bill is steadily rising... and... funding constraints were leading to incredible tension in the health system. “Every group in the health sector is fighting over a smaller share of the cake and it’s something we need to overcome.”

...the drug-funding business came under attack again yesterday as a public health lobby group joined drug companies in pressing for a new independent body to make decisions about drugs.

...N[Z] is paying seven times more than other countries for some common medicines. Figures... showed that drug firms were making big profits on treatments for... illnesses including diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure and depression. Pharmac’s head... said a reason for the high prices was a lack of competition in the N[Z] market. With the country’s relatively small population, some companies found it unattractive to operate here... Pharmac paid up to 10 times the British price for a heart drug, but could not find another competitor to drive that down... N[Z] could save \$38 million annually by buying 27 top-selling drugs at the same price as A[US]... Drug companies had argued that the small market and the country’s isolation were factors in the price differences.

...The small size and isolation of Pacific Island countries makes them a target for the dumping of defective drugs by rogue pharmaceutical companies, a... WHO adviser on pharmaceuticals... has warned... “Some big manufacturers do not take small islands seriously... Once they combine forces they can put down their request for good-quality drugs.” The Governments of... Tuvalu, Kiribati, the Cook Islands, the Marshall Islands and Niue[recently] agreed at a meeting... to set up a joint drug procurement and testing office... [Incidentally,] a long-time critic of excessive drug prices... says... [the NZ] Government’s get-tough stance on pharmaceutical firms is decades overdue... For the past two decades, [he] has milked the huge price gap by importing drugs and on-selling to chemists at discounted rates... [H]e has brought in cancer, ulcer and heart drugs and sold to a ready market. Advertisements were placed in the N[Z] *Herald* to promote his wares. The flipside was a string of court cases challenging his war against drug giants. These include blackmail charges in 1985, when he asked three companies for between \$100,000 and \$150,000 in return for not marketing cheaper imported drugs. He was cleared of demanding money with menaces... “I am detested by drug companies, not for the money I made out of them but for the publicity when I went to court.” ...The courts were not so forgiving in 1992, when he admitted holding up a central Auckland bank... Last year he was taken to court by health authorities, accused of fraud and charged under the Medicines Act. He started a nine-month prison sentence... after losing an appeal. Fresh out of jail after serving four months, the 61-year-old faces more charges next month for importing without the Health Minister’s consent and trading while insolvent... “I’m not angry that they caught me. They had my invoice book, I admitted importing, I admitted the sales. All the chemists I had dealt with all knew I only sold imports.” ...The 25 fraud charges laid against him last year involved his importation of asthma inhalers from A[US], repackaged to look like the N[Z] product. One type of A[US]n inhaler he brought in cost \$37 each. The Government pays \$107 for the same product. He estimated bringing in 800... inhalers between October 1994 and June 1995... “It took a long time for the department to come down on me... I never had a belief it would go on for so long undetected. What I intended to do was... have it publicised so politicians would ask why was this guy able to buy the medicines so damn cheaply... I never disguised that I wanted to make money. But the Ministry of Health has sat on its backside and the public have paid for it.” ...He said he was approached by a Treasury official in the early 1980s for a list of comparative drug prices – proof enough, he said, that N[Z] was being ripped off. “It took them from 1984 to 1994 to establish an independent buyer such as Pharmac, which is only what the A[US]ns have been doing for 20 years – hard-nosed, up-front negotiations.” ...[he] feels his point has finally been made... [T]he Government was[now] aware of how much could be saved if drug companies lowered prices... But he said there is “a hell of a lot more that Pharmac could do.”

...People with heartburn, hayfever, hypertension and heart problems will be the first to bear the brunt of the new wave of Pharmac cost cutting... Pharmac... plans to subsidise only one or two brands of some medicines and drop all subsidies on others...

If you’re sick of the health cuts we’d like you to make one of your own... Pharmaceutical companies launch a million-dollar campaign today calling for public support in their fight against... Pharmac. In a series of “Mayday, mayday” newspaper, radio and television advertisements, the industry will ask doctors and patients to send protest coupons to the Government to counter Pharmac’s cost-cutting measures and seek an independent review of prescription subsidies. [The RMI’s] spokesperson... said Pharmac’s proposals meant many patients would have to change to different medicines because they might... face hefty part-charges to continue on their present drugs... [The spokesperson also] said the industry disputed claims that the medicines bill was blowing out... Prescription medicines, including those used in hospitals, cost only 76c per person per day... (8c of this is GST) – less... than the Government was spending per person in 1987.

...Drug companies have shied away from threats to pull out of N[Z] and take their products with them. In past weeks, industry heads have repeatedly said that they were likely to ditch the country because of the Government’s crackdown on medicines spending. But when pushed to get specific yesterday on those likely to leave, the threat turned into more of a whimper... In other developments... attempts at selling its message to the public has landed... the industry... in hot water.

...The advertising campaign launched this week by the drug companies has drawn strong criticism from MPs on both sides of the House and been condemned by Pharmac as “American multinational gunboat diplomacy.” But a suggestion from the Minister of Health... that he might complain to the Advertising Standards Complaints Board brought an apparent concession from the [RMI that]... it did not want to provoke a fight with [the minister] and would consider pulling the campaign... [However, the offer was] conditional upon the minister and Pharmac agreeing to enter negotiations with the industry based on “certain bottom lines and assurances that we were not just going to be buried in process again.”

...No end is in sight for the bitter row over the country’s drug spending. The Advertising Standards Complaints Board yesterday issued a lacklustre ruling that passed no judgment on the controversial advertising campaign... This prompted both sides... to claim victory.

...The drug industry has abruptly dumped its... advertising campaign after being told by doctors that it was unnecessarily scaring patients.

...On its past record, the result of Pharmac’s renewed “get tough” policy is likely to be a worsening of the nation’s health... Two years ago, in a bid to reduce “unnecessary” use, Pharmac introduced a policy by which patients could get only one month’s supply of asthma-preventer medicine at a time rather than the three months’ supply previously available... but only 70[%]... picked up their second months’ prescription for inhaled steroids and only 11[%] their third. N[Z] asthma hospital admission rates have jumped by a horrifying 30[%]... since this policy has been in place... The average stay in hospital for asthma patients is three days at a cost of about \$1350 to the taxpayer. By comparison, the taxpayer pays about \$88 for a year’s supply of preventer medicine for an average asthma patient... [O]f five western countries – Britain, A[US], the US, Sweden and N[Z] – which have defined the direct costs of asthma management using the same methodology, N[Z] spends the least... \$216 an asthmatic a year compared with \$450 to \$1100 an asthmatic a year for the other countries.

...WASTE and incorrect use of prescription drugs is costing nearly \$1 billion a year, says a pharmacy lecturer... [He] says most of Pharmac’s eight moves... to rein in the drugs budget fail to address the real problems. “The product produced by the pharmaceutical industry is excellent – the delivery of their product by health professionals... is an abysmal failure.” He says pharmacists could help to save \$500 million a year almost immediately... if the Government... wanted to make it happen. Under the present system, after a drug was dispensed there was usually no follow-up and no measures of outcomes, client satisfaction, success or failure. The anecdotal evidence of drug misadventure was rife... In one case, he interviewed a woman who in two years had gone from a healthy working mother to someone who had had numerous hospital admissions, was unable to work and was using vast amounts of medication without improvement. He established she simply did not know how to use her asthma inhaler correctly... [He] said international research shows... [up to] 60% of all prescription medicines are not taken as prescribed... 17% of

prescriptions are never presented to be filled... Medicine non-compliance causes 10% of hospital admissions... For every \$1 spent on pharmaceuticals, there is approximately another \$1 spent by the taxpayer because of drug “misadventure” – over-use, under-use or non-use of prescription medicines and the economic costs of hospitalisation, time off work and welfare payments... [In related news, Pharmac] has offered drug companies a \$37 million a year payout to match the A[US]n Government’s support for pharmaceutical manufacturers. But... in return, the companies would have to match A[US]n prices – and cut the drug bill by \$149 million.

...A drug company has massively undercut its rivals to get exclusive access to Government subsidies for prescription paracetamol, a monopoly which has outraged the competitors... The company which markets Pamol... agreed to supply the pain killer at 44[%] below what the Government pays now for it, saving \$1.19 million on the drug budget. Previously, six brands of paracetamol were available on prescription... The Pharmac general manager... said it was the first time the agency had used tenders for medicine and he was happy with the outcome.

...Pacific Pharmaceuticals has agreed to drop prices by between 25 and 40[%] on heart drugs and nasal sprays, a move... Pharmac says will save \$8 million a year.

...MORE than 100,000 heart patients will get free access to lifesaving medicines previously denied them after a Pharmac decision late last week to ease prescribing restrictions on cholesterol-lowering drugs... The drugs, known as statins – fluvastatin, pravastatin and simvastatin – have been available previously only through specialists, to... [about] 12,500 people... with a cholesterol level above 7... Now GPs will be able to prescribe the drugs[to] patients with... a cholesterol level of 6 or over... Patients who have had a coronary bypass operation will qualify if their cholesterol level is over 5.5... 115,000 patients will qualify under[the] new prescribing rules... The agency spends about \$13 million a year on statins already... But [Pharmac] says taxpayers will not pay for the increased patient numbers because of a deal it has hammered out with... [the] suppliers of fluvastatin. [The supplier] has agreed to supply fluvastatin for just \$1.05 a day, compared with the \$3.60 a day Pharmac now pays. This means that unless the two other statin suppliers... agree to lower their prices, patients will be forced to pay a part-charge on their products to make up the difference.

...A MAJOR heart drug is facing the Pharmac... scalpel. The drug funding agency says the \$35 million spent each year on the drugs known as calcium channel blockers may be a waste of money. The drugs are used mainly to treat mild to moderately raised blood temperature but Pharmac says... there is insufficient evidence of their benefit in hypertension to justify the spending.

...Pacemakers that shock a stuttering heart into beating are more effective than drugs for keeping heart-disease sufferers alive, according to two studies in the *New England Journal of Medicine*... The devices cut the mortality rate by 39[%] the first year, 27[%] the second year and 31[%] the third year... [By the way, our] Government is asking doctors and chemists... to help fix the medicines spending blowout.

...Doctors are saving millions of dollars on drug bills by managing their own budgets through large GP-run organisations... Until recently most doctors claimed a “fee-for-service” Government subsidy each time they saw a patient. But... a former Wellington Medical School researcher, said 65[%] of GPs were now members of independent practitioner associations. These associations ran their own budgets based on numbers of patients, rather than numbers of consultations. A survey of 33 of the 35 associations last year showed annual pharmaceutical and laboratory savings ranging from 8 to 26[%]. The 1[%]... increase in administration costs was easily outweighed by the... savings... Procare... saved \$2.9 million over eight months last year by targeting drugs to patient needs. It had also developed guidelines on the best drugs to prescribe for certain conditions... Labour and the Alliance have condemned the trend, saying it will lead to funding cuts once budgets are capped and eventually a private takeover of the public health system.

...Doctors will keep about 20[%] of the money they save on drugs this year under an “integrated-care” health plan in Auckland. ProCare, the country’s largest group of family doctors, expects to save about \$2.5 million through tighter drug-prescribing guidelines... [H]alf the money saved... [will] go to North Health... for general health needs. The other half[will be] returned to the group... about 60[%] of this money will be spent on various health and training initiatives. The remainder will go towards \$200-a-meeting payments for the 340 doctors, who average 70 to 75[%] attendance at 10 meetings a year... The chairman of ProCare... said... GPs who earned about \$80,000 a year were losing money by attending[the] two-hour daytime meetings... [because] they could make \$150 an hour by staying in their surgeries.

...[“Knowledge is the best medicine, so always see your pharmacist for advice.”] Doctors are keeping a close watch on pharmacists who charge patients up to \$50 for health advice – a move they warn may be over-stepping the mark. Thirty pharmacists nationwide are offering private consultations with customers. But the Medical Association... says pharmacists [– who ‘get a \$2.60 fee plus 22% of the drug cost’ for dispensing prescriptions –]should already provide advice free of charge. The association chairman... said the consultations may lead to pharmacists diagnosing illnesses and taking over the job of doctors... But the president of the Pharmaceutical Society... said pharmacists wanted to work with doctors in giving comprehensive care... [and] the new service was a growing international trend which had started in the U[S]. He expected the service to lead to less wastage of expensive drugs and lower hospital admissions... Pharmacists had no intention to diagnose or to prescribe drugs... Customers would be unable to claim the consultation fee back through health insurance... The consultations concentrated on medication management for people on large or wide-ranging drug doses or with complex diseases. Pharmacists would review the drugs a customer was taking, how they were taken and explain why they were needed. Most sessions would last at least 20 minutes... “We are talking about something completely different from normal dispensing or... sale of medicines. Doctors deal with disease states; pharmacists... with drugs. Doctors do not have the training to deal with things that may happen because of adverse reactions to the same extent. They are also unaware of other things the person may be taking... [T]he pharmacist is the only one who gets the whole picture.” Pharmacists paid \$1800 to take part in a comprehensive pharmaceutical care course which lasted two to three days.

...I was taken aback by the news item that pharmacists want to charge \$50 for a consultation on the drugs they’re selling. The story said they have paid \$1800 for a comprehensive pharmaceutical care course which lasted two or three days. That long, huh? Why would anyone want to know how a prescription works? You get your medicine, take it and wait around for the problem to clear up. Imagine this. You’ve just had a cosmolectomy because of suppuration through the reciprocating torque winding valve. The doctor prescribes some pills to ease the pain and writes – using the word “writes” in the loosest sense in the case of physicians – that you should take one three times a day with meals. You take the prescription around to the shop and this joker in a white coat who’s been suckered into a comprehensive \$900-a-day course wants to tell you how the stuff works and to clip you \$50 for the privilege. Not me, buddy. I might just give him 50 bucks to shut up... Personally, I have steadfastly abided by the principle that the less you know about your body the better.

...These tablets help save a lot of lives but, if a child sees them and thinks they’re lollies, just two could kill. Now I know we’re all careful and we all keep medicines out of harm’s way but every year kids die. That’s why at Unichem we believe it’s better to be extra safe than sorry. So if you’ve got kids around please ask us for... a child safety cap. In fact, please talk to us about any medicine matter because at Unichem it’s our job to give you the right medicine, the best advice, and anything else that can help you and your children’s health. That’s a promise.

...A COUPLE fed their baby a serious overdose of a gastric drug because of a pharmacy’s botched prescription... The correct dosage was in fact 0.8ml, but the pharmacist incorrectly labelled the bottle with instructions to give... [the] ailing three-month-old... 8ml of Ranitidine... [The baby] was taken to Christchurch Hospital that night and treated for an overdose... [plus] very low blood pressure... Weeks earlier [the baby] had been diagnosed as having the rare von Willebrand’s disease, which means her blood is slow to clot. She remained in hospital on a heart monitor for 12 hours... The [family] have been fighting for redress since the 1995 case. The pharmacist, who admitted her mistake, was found guilty of professional misconduct in April, censured and fined \$450 and ordered to pay \$3110 towards the cost of the inquiry. Her name was suppressed. Although the

miscalculation had been made by a pharmacy technician beforehand, the pharmacist failed to notice it... [The pharmacy's] owner... said the incident had been distressing for all staff, as well as the family. "It is a very, very regrettable situation..." ...The ACC found last year that [the baby] suffered as a result of medical error but law changes mean... no... lump sum compensation. [The] single income family with two children... struggled to find the \$50 fee to apply for legal aid towards suing the pharmacy for exemplary damages. In July they were granted \$1500 to obtain an expert's report on the viability of their claim but they had to refuse because they could not afford to pay it back at the requested rate of \$100 a month. Attempts by the [family's] lawyer... to negotiate an out-of-court settlement with the pharmacy's legal representatives have been fruitless. Last week any hope of legal action finally faded when the two-year deadline within which proceedings must be brought under the Limitations Act expired. The [family] has been left facing a yet-to-[be]-determined legal bill, potentially worth thousands of dollars. [●] It is 'estimated that 7000 people die in the US each year because – due to the poor spelling – chemists have misread doctor's prescriptions.'

... 'the NZ Government is planning to deregulate the pharmacy industry by allowing supermarkets and similar outlets to dispense prescriptions and sell discount drugs, aided by removing import restrictions.' However, the risk of stomach irritations caused by aspirin means the pain reliever might soon be available at pharmacies only. The Ministry of Health has prepared a paper for the Medicine Classifications Committee on non-steroidal anti-inflammatory agents, of which aspirin is one.

...An Auckland woman who tried a Chinese "herbal remedy" for her skin disease received a dose of the world's most powerful skin steroid instead... A report in the *N[Z] Medical Journal* says... misuse of the cream could cause stretchmarks on the skin and up to 50g a week could start reducing the protection mechanisms of the body's internal hormone system... [Incidentally, child]-resistant safety caps become mandatory for a new range of medicines from Saturday... But... a consultant pharmacist for the National Poisons Centre... says the Government backtracked on the original agreement, cutting the budget from \$800,000 to \$200,000 and in doing so left some problem drugs out. All medicines in tablet form were dropped from the list of drugs identified as a danger to children. Only liquid medicines will have safety caps funded by the Ministry of Health.

...['Pharmacists in the top half of the North Island have launched a legal fight for about \$2 million they say they are owed by health authorities. The battle is part of court action against the four RHAs to recover about \$4 million in prescription claims owed to pharmacists nationwide, the Pharmacy Guild said. Pharmacists were also seeking big amounts of interest – possibly 11% – following "intolerable delays" by the authorities in processing prescription claims since monthly dispensing was introduced']...

'Vending machines dispensing drugs may soon be seen in AUS, but NZ looks unlikely to follow suit. The AUSn plan to make a range of medicines more freely available would see paracetamol, pain-killers, cough remedies and other medicines dispensed through vending machines in public places. Both the Pharmacy Guild of AUS and NZ's Pharmaceutical Society have voiced concerns. The latter's spokesperson said a similar proposal was raised in NZ last year. He said the society had made its opposition clear then. "We certainly put forward an opposing view, saying it wasn't appropriate to have machines dispensing potentially dangerous medications. We certainly don't believe a vending machine is the appropriate dispensing method for paracetamol, which is very dangerous in overdose. These are not lollies." The Pharmacy Guild of AUS national president said the proposal was a major threat to public health and safety. Children would easily find a way to buy drugs from the machines, no matter what steps were taken to make the dispensers difficult to access.'

...PHARMACIES will increasingly become the first line of defence against ill health for most people, according to... the new president of the Pharmaceutical Society... [The] Manurewa pharmacist... believes this will happen because pharmacies are easily accessible and have more contact with the public than most other health professionals... [She] is the first woman president of the society, which was established in 1981... [Incidentally, osteoporosis researchers say that drugs... such as alendronate (sold as Fosamax) and... calcitonin-salmon [–] a synthetic version of a natural hormone available as a nasal spray... – helped to prevent new fractures in women who had already suffered fractures and also in those at risk because their bones were thin. The U[S]'s National Osteoporosis Foundation... estimated that 10 million Americans have osteoporosis and 18 million more, mostly women, have low bone mass that puts them at risk. Experts said 200 million people worldwide suffered from the disease.

...Success in cervical cancer war... The number of new cases of cervical cancer, and deaths from the disease, are going down. The national cervical screening programme, set up in the wake of the... report of the cervical cancer inquiry seven years ago, appears to be working. [82%] of women aged between 20 and 69 are now having regular smear tests. Between 1990 and 1994 the incidence of new cases of cervical cancer dropped from 249 to 208 and deaths from 101 to 77. Although figures for 1995 and 1996 will not be available until the end of the year, they are expected to show a continuation of the downward trend. However, [the]... coordinator for the... screening programme... [was concerned that 18%] of women are still not on the national register... [A gynaecologist... of the Columba Clinic in Auckland, said there was no doubt that early treatment of any cervical abnormalities picked up through a smear prevented cancer in most cases. "...one laser treatment has a 97[%] success rate at six months. The chance of getting a cancer after that is one-fifth of 1[%]..." On Friday the National Cervical Screening Programme promotional week begins.

...A Mt Maunganui family are praying that research soon to be extended to other parts of N[Z] will help lift a lethal curse that has ravaged their members for generations. The Maori family have lost at least 30 members in 30 years to gastric cancer caused by a mutant gene inherited from a distant ancestor. More cases have been uncovered and earlier generations traced, producing the world's largest genealogical record of a genetic disease. The MP for Tauranga... yesterday announced a \$931,171 Health Research Council grant to finance, over the next three years, a pioneering collaboration between Otago University scientists and the specially established Kimihauora health clinic[... which]... operates out of a simple building on the Tamapahore Marae... on the outskirts of Mt Maunganui...

A Masterton woman says she and her husband may have to find \$700 a week to save the lives of their twin daughters... [They] are angry that the Government will not pay for... a drug used to treat cystic fibrosis, unless they test the drug first – at their expense... [T]heir identical five-year-olds... had to show a significant improvement before the Government would consider financing it. "At a cost of \$100 a day for the two of them, how are we meant to find that sort of money?" she asked. "The drug is funded in A[US], so why not here? ...The Government wants to see a 10[%] improvement but I think even a 1[%] improvement is worth it." ...Cystic fibrosis is a genetic disease and having children with it means both [parents] carry the gene... The girls catch the school bus every day... and then get a taxi to Masterton Hospital for physiotherapy... Every two to three months [the twins] spend about two weeks in hospital for intense physiotherapy... "Basically we just battle on," [the mother] said... Their other daughter, [aged] 12, does not have the disease, "but she will carry the gene too."

...Going to the gym and getting on with normal life are the main ambitions for Canterbury's \$1.3 million teenager... The Ashburton teenager has returned... after a Christchurch Hospital haematologist... made a N[Z] medical breakthrough in haemophilia treatment that stopped [the teenager's] system rejecting medication... The solution came when [the haematologist] decided to use a European drug, Feiba... [which] cost \$900,000, or about 60[%] of the total cost of treatment... The discovery that teenagers can be successfully treated with Feiba has caused great interest in the Australasian medical world as previously it was thought the treatment would work only on infants... [In related news, Pharmac wants] to tighten up use of a hormonal treatment for acne, Diane 35, which acted as an oral contraceptive. [Pharmac's general manager] said some patients were using it solely as a free contraceptive, which was irresponsible since it was double the normal price... Pharmac was... also... considering making savings [by excluding mild pimple creams, which cost \$6 a tube over the counter but \$3 with a doctor's prescription.

...Expect to see more spotty faces on the street once some pimple cream subsidies are wiped to save the country's drug bill more than \$500,000... Pharmac plans to take off its list... about 12 creams used in the treatment of mild cases of acne... [because 'acne treatments rose to \$11.64 million a year' in 1996, and] there were other drugs which had higher priority for public money. Subsidies would remain for treatments of moderate and severe acne, where systemic antibiotics or hormone therapy is used... About 20[%] of the pimple creams were obtained by... people with community

cards[(which identify them as *beneficiaries or low-income earners*)]. Meanwhile, Pharmac has decided another Aids drug, ritonavir, will be added to the two protease inhibitors... already subsidised. They will cost the country \$1 million in the first year... There were 76 cases of Aids last year in N[Z], bringing the total number since 1984 to 598. A further 92 people newly infected with the HIV virus brought the total... to 1168.

...[‘HIV patients have been heading to AUS for new Aids drugs which cost about \$15,000 a year a patient when combined with existing drugs in large “cocktail” doses. One of the drugs, Saquinavir, is subsidised by the AUSn Government, meaning each patient paid \$40 for a month’s supply. The drug was available in NZ but without a subsidy, which meant patients pay more than \$500 a month. A survey of NZ Aids patients taken last year showed many spent up to half their incomes trying to cope with illnesses. They were often beneficiaries or low-income earners – earning less than \$1000 a month – because of their poor health.’]

...The protease inhibitor Saquinavir will be available from[Pharmac] next month... Up to 150 Aids patients are expected to benefit... The drug – taken three times a day – will cost the taxpayer about \$7600 a patient a year. [The 150 people will have satisfied Pharmac’s ‘prescribing restrictions’. In comparison, ‘protease inhibitors are distributed via a lottery’ in parts of the US (e.g., New York).

...A US] Government trial of Aids protease inhibitor drugs has been aborted because it was so successful, say scientists... [T]hey had halted a 1200-patient trial because the new three-drug therapy had cut in half the number of deaths and new Aids-related illnesses compared with a two-drug regimen... A Pharmac spokeswoman said yesterday that this was not the first protease inhibitor trial that had been aborted because[of] good early results... This had made it difficult to get good scientific information from the trials. [The spokeswoman pointed out that other research showed ‘Aids drugs were not as effective as first thought – they don’t eradicate all of the disease; they have side-effects such as diabetes and heart disease.’ Furthermore, an ‘untreatable strain’ of Aids has been identified.]

...Researchers say they have isolated a weak spot in the Aids virus which may allow new drugs to stop the infection from spreading... [A]t the Whitehead Laboratory in Cambridge,[Massachusetts,] scientists have pinpointed an image of the viral protein that allows HIV to attach itself to a healthy human cell and kill it... Part of what has made Aids difficult to combat is that the virus mutates so often. What... [the scientists] discovered was that the protein’s structure remains constant – an unchanging target for scientists developing anti-Aids drugs... To speed the process of drug discovery, the Whitehead scientists will make the precise, three-dimensional information about the protein structure accessible to all scientists through Brookhaven National Laboratory’s protein data bank.

...Evoking the memory of John F. Kennedy’s challenge to Americans to put a man on the moon in the 1960s, [the 42nd]President... has promised that the U[S] – where ‘more than 300,000 people have so far died from Aids’ – will find an Aids vaccine within a decade. Speaking at Morgan State University, Baltimore, [the President] yesterday announced that an HIV vaccine research and development centre would be established at the National Institutes of Health to spur the effort. “With the strides of recent years, it is no longer a question of whether we can develop an Aids vaccine – it is simply a question of when,” he said. “And it cannot come a day too soon.” ...[the] director of the White House Office of Aids Policy, said the special HIV centre would be fully operational within months and involve 40 to 50 scientists. It would add about \$US17 million... to Aids spending, bringing the annual total to \$US150 million... But that’s[still] too little funding to address all facets of the Aids epidemic, say some Aids advocates. “We applaud the President’s commitment but stress that this project will require a large infusion of federal money, which must not be siphoned from other programmes that support people with HIV and Aids,” said... [the] legislative director of the Human Rights Campaign... Aids researchers had been toiling since the mid-1980s but had not found a vaccine[– although last year ‘a vaccine that protected an entire test group of monkeys against the HIV virus was genetically engineered by a team of immunologists at Guy’s Hospital in London’ –] and “one has to be in awe of the problem.” Central to the task was the nature of the disease... The virus mutated so quickly that a vaccine that seemed effective one day might not be the next. In addition, the human immune system’s inability to make any antibodies to fight HIV made the search for vaccines even more difficult... [T]he president of the American Foundation for Aids Research... acknowledged problems, but said the short history of Aids in the U[S] had proved past Cassandras wrong... “People said we’d never find a treatment, and now we have 11 treatments.” Another “impossible goal” – prevention of transmission of HIV... from pregnant women to their babies – was achieved in 1994 with the drug AZT.

...The U[S] and other Western nations funded experiments on Aids in poor African countries that would not be allowed at home, a consumer group claims. Consumers International said the... “unethical” experiments... with unproven AZT-type drugs... could kill hundreds of babies at risk from infection with the Aids virus from their mothers... The drug AZT, a standard treatment for pregnant women infected with the Aids-causing HIV virus in the West, reduced the transmission of the virus from mother to baby by about two-thirds.

...N[Z] children with HIV are being treated with revolutionary drugs designed for adults... This could see a child taking up to 15 tablets a day... [S]pecial doses had to be worked out... [because] treating children with drug cocktails was complex. Children had to stick to the regime or face drug resistance. The long-term effects of inhibitors on children were not well known... “People think development of drugs for HIV is slow but when it comes to children it’s even slower because everything has to be used on adults before they do paediatric studies...” ...A U[S] drug company has now developed a new inhibitor including a child formulation. [One drug] manufacturer... has applied to have the drug... registered here. It goes before a Ministry of Health committee shortly... [C]hildhood HIV was becoming an issue for N[Z] as there was a 20[%] chance of the disease being passed on through pregnancy. Research showed that an HIV drug, AZT, could cut that risk to 5[%] – and ‘one dose of the “cheap” drug Nevirapine administered to a pregnant mother, plus one dose administered to her newborn, cuts the transfer of the virus between them by 50% over AZT’ –] so it was important women knew if they had HIV... Eighteen N[Z] children have been diagnosed with HIV since testing began in 1985. Five have developed Aids.

...Notifications of Aids have halved[in NZ] so far this year compared with the past two years, but medical researchers say it is too soon to draw conclusions... The total number of people... with Aids... is[now] 621, of whom 28 are female.

...bucking national trends... HIV infection is on the rise in Auckland... for the second year in a row... There were 54 new people in Auckland with HIV in the first nine months of 1996, compared with 48 for the whole of 1995... Numbers dropped in Auckland from 1990 to 1994... The figures showed the number diagnosed in Auckland, although many may have come from outside the region... Latest findings continue the trend where infections from homosexual transmission has dropped and heterosexual infection is increasing. Homosexual transmission, however, is still the most common method of reported infections... The Auckland Healthcare public health registrar... said the increase of heterosexual transmission stemmed from people having sexual encounters while overseas. [● ‘Heterosexual intercourse accounted for 70% of infections worldwide during 1996.’]

...‘studies of HIV-infected people in Los Angeles show disturbing behaviour trends that could lead to the rapid spread of the virus that causes Aids, say researchers. One of the most disturbing studies involved 113 HIV-positive bisexual men. It found that 54.4% failed to disclose their infection status to sex partners. 31% reported having unprotected sex. In another study of 53 men in Los Angeles County, 50% reported having had sex with an average of 28 partners in a public place in the previous six months. And 41% said they had had unprotected sex in a public place. A study of 305 black men with HIV or Aids found 31% identified themselves as heterosexual even though they reported previously having sex with men. In another control group of 305 black men who were not HIV-infected, 16% said they were not homosexual but reported having had sex with men. Researchers cautioned against applying the Los Angeles findings to other parts of the US. But one noted that California often provided a look of things to come for the rest of the US.’ Incidentally, a] jury has awarded \$US12 million... to a former... intern who sued the Yale Medical School after she contracted the HIV virus[after] working on an Aids patient nine years ago.

...[NZ's p]risoners believe they are at greater risk of contracting HIV and Aids than the general public because the Department of Corrections continues to refuse to supply condoms and syringes. The department argues that sex and drugs are banned from prisons so it will not do anything that could be seen as promoting or endorsing illegal activity, but health workers and inmate support groups say that position is a denial of reality. The... only report... [the] department... has about HIV/Aids in prison is seven years old. That Health Department report found sexual activity between inmates was rare but did occur. There were reports, but no evidence, of sexual violation in some prisons... Research in Britain indicated as many as one in 10 inmates had engaged in sexual activity with one or more other inmates. Condoms were not used. The same research found a wide variety of drugs available in prisons and that most people who injected drugs used syringes which were also used by others.

...Overcrowding, drug abuse and sexual promiscuity have caused an Aids explosion in Europe's jails. One in five prisoners in Spain and Ireland are infected... says a U[N] agency.

...The number of people testing positive for HIV is growing rapidly in Russia, and may reach one million by the start of next century, said health officials yesterday. Up to 90% of the infections occur among drug users.

...[‘virtually 90% of Aids cases are in the developing world’, and ‘the majority of victims don’t know they are infected’]...

Prostitutes, truckers and... one-night stands have spread Aids along Africa's economic highways... The spread of the Aids epidemic is far worse than anyone feared, say... experts. They say the HIV virus is infecting twice as many people as they previously calculated and is threatening to orphan more than 40 million children... Twenty thousand children in Kenya have[already] lost one or both parents to Aids... “More than 42 million people have been infected, and a staggering 30.6 million are living with HIV... which is one in every 100 adults in the sexually active ages of 15 to 49 worldwide... This year alone, some 5.8 million people globally were newly infected with HIV...,” said... [the] executive director of the... programme UNAids, at a news conference to mark World Aids Day... “The implications of this in terms of human and social costs are rather extraordinary,”... said... [the] director of USAID... “It’s having a devastating impact on development and we cannot ignore it.” Countries would be unable to develop their economies as their productive workers died, and would be subject to social unrest as the orphaned children – poor, malnourished and uneducated – grew up... The... director of Aids Control and Prevention Project... said teenagers and young adults accounted for three out of every five new HIV infections around the world. “Two-thirds of all those who acquire HIV will become infected before they reach 25. The risk is greatest for teenage girls. Worldwide up to 60[%] of all new HIV infections in women occur before the age of 20... [M]ost will not benefit from expensive new antiviral therapies... prevention is the only hope.” ...studies had shown early and comprehensive sex education programmes could influence young people to postpone sexual activity. “At the same time, we must recognise that many young people are already having sex,” he added. An educator from a Kenyan university noted that it was very hard to start telling young people: “No, don’t do it” when they were already doing it.

...IT WAS the summer of 1990... Her husband had just succumbed to Aids. She knew he had infected her. Now her in-laws clamoured for her to allow one of her husband's brothers to make her his responsibility, as tradition has long dictated... [Then 28, she] could scorn tradition, be driven from her community and face starvation with her three children. Or she could marry a brother-in-law, feed her offspring, protect her property – and pass on the virus. She chose the brother-in-law. He died of Aids two years later, but not before infecting two other women. Then they both died. Another man has since inherited [her], and when she was recently interviewed, she was pregnant with his child. She says she knows the child may have the... virus... which causes Aids. And she knows that the disease likely will kill her inheritor. Just as it will soon kill her... “It’s a terrible cycle,”... In Western Kenya, the custom known as wife inheritance once held an honourable promise... If a brother-in-law could not care for her, then a cousin or a respected outsider would. The inheritor... could take on a widow only if he had a family. His first wife would accept the arrangement because tradition frowned on his having sexual relations with his inherited one. The system worked until the inheritors began to shun that taboo. They had sex with the widows and that helped HIV explode throughout central and East Africa. One out of every eight people with Aids lives in sub-Saharan Africa, where in some countries 10% of the population is HIV-positive... the HIV rate in... some... large towns and cities is as high as 25%. - 1997

[A 62-year-old] has photographs of her four eldest daughters on the wall of her tiny shack in Nairobi's Kibera slum. She has buried three of them in the past 12 months. The other died four years ago. All were victims of Aids... And now her fifth daughter – she has six – has been diagnosed HIV-positive... [She] seems overwhelmed by the scale of the epidemic which is wiping out her family... [and had] thought her mothering days were well behind her. But now she cares for 13 of her orphaned grandchildren... “I’m very worried because my grandchildren... could go out and get it[, and]... I don’t know what will happen to my grandchildren[if I die,” she says.] “I have no brothers and sisters...” ...Kibera is one of Africa's largest slums and easily the most crowded on the continent. About a million people – a third of the population of the Kenyan capital – live here, crammed into just 2.5 sq km of land. At least one in five of the people in Kibera aged 15 to 45 are thought to be HIV-positive, well above the national average of 14[%]. But the figure could be much higher. No one really knows... There is no recreation space in Kibera, scarcely a tree, no benches for people to sit and talk and no public squares – just narrow, muddy streets stinking of sewage and rotting garbage. There is little for young people... [-] fewer than half [of whom]... go to school... [-] to do except have sex... “When people are idle they think of sex, because idle minds think of idle things.” [The 62-year-old]'s home is typical of Kibera – only 9 sq m... [- but she] somehow fits 10 of her grandchildren in [t]here at night and the three eldest sleep with a neighbour. Backing on to the house is a crude bar which sells illegal home-brewed spirits. By noon it is already full of drunk middle-aged men. Alcohol and casual sex go hand in hand. “The women who run the bars often sleep with their customers to keep them loyal,” one aid worker says. “Then their customers, these old men, turn their attention to their daughters, often very young girls.” Girls in Kibera often become sexually active from as young as 10, boys from 13. Youngsters here often know what condoms are, although... “...if they are given them, they just throw them away.” Perhaps the greatest challenge, aid workers say, is changing the way a community thinks... “Everybody here does everything because everybody else is doing it,” says... a project officer with Unicef. “Sex is part of leisure here. They have nothing else to do, they have no jobs. They are HIV-infected – so what? What is death, after all, to a poor man?” ...[Kenya's] President... declared Aids a national disaster late last year, but experts say the Government is still not devoting anything like enough effort to curbing the epidemic, which has killed two million Kenyans. As well, little seems to be done towards solving the special problems of Kibera[, where]... there are about 50,000 Aids orphans... alone... To Kibera's north, the greens and fairways of the Royal Nairobi Golf Club look on almost mockingly. It is the closest Government ministers ever get to the slum.

...*African apocalypse looms as Aids toll mounts*... The truly devastating threat that Aids poses to Africa comes into painful focus when the President of Botswana... says his country faces extinction from the disease. [The President], who leads a diamond-rich country of 1.6 million people, is not being alarmist or playing with rhetoric. The U[N] estimates that one in three of the country's adults are living with HIV/Aids, giving Botswana – which is roughly the size of France – the highest percentage infection rate in the world... At Gaborone's main hospital, up to 80[%] of the beds in the male ward are filled with sufferers in the last stages of the disease. More than a third of patients in the children's ward also have Aids... As in virtually every public hospital in sub-Saharan Africa, no anti-retroviral drugs are available because they are too expensive. All the overworked staff can do is treat opportunistic diseases such as meningitis... The alarming statistics and overflowing graveyards still have little impact on the spread of Aids across the continent. [90%] of the sex workers who ply their trade with the long-distance truck drivers at the town of Tlokweng on the Botswana-South Africa border are HIV-positive. Commercial sex is driving the disease throughout the continent. In neighbouring

Zambia, [one prostitute] works the top hotels in the capital, Lusaka, where her clients are mainly Government officials... and... foreign businessmen... “When a man doesn’t want a condom, I ask for more money. They usually pay extra.” ...[the prostitute whose] tale is one of parental abuse and poverty... is hardly unique – a U[N] study in Ndola, Zambia, found that only one in four sex workers had used condoms with their last client and only one in seven used condoms with all clients... 24.5 million of the 34.3 million people with HIV/Aids live... in Africa... Most are without hope of effective drugs, proper supervision, basic health care or counselling. The... [lack of these] basic care provisions have al[so allowed Aids] to go unchecked... There is no sign of a quick cure.

...A newly approved medicine has enabled doctors to develop Aids drug cocktails that are easier to take, cause fewer side-effects and appear to work more effectively in children... [The] class of medicines called protease inhibitors have made Aids a treatable disease. But some patients fail to benefit, largely because they cannot cope with taking 15 or 20 pills a day on a precise schedule. Two studies suggest that Sustiva, one of a new class of Aids medicines, may work better than the standard treatment, perhaps because it requires fewer pills... [T]aken once a day... Sustiva is known as a non-nucleoside analogue. Like older drugs, such as AZT, it blocks a certain enzyme the virus needs to reproduce, but does it in a different way... In the study of 450 HIV-infected adults, blood levels of the virus fell to undetectable levels in 48[%] of those given the standard regimen of a protease inhibitor plus two older drugs, compared with 70[%] of those taking a mix of Sustiva and the same two drugs. Also, 43[%] of the protease inhibitor patients stopped treatment because of side effects. Only 27[%] of the Sustiva group dropped out... Sustiva, generically called efavirenz, goes under the brand name Stocrin in N[Z], where it was approved for use last month. Pharmac has been asked by the manufacturer... to subsidise it. The drug was approved last year in the U[S]...

A small Californian biotechnology company has engineered the first Aids vaccine to win federal approval for a large-scale trial in humans. The study, which will begin sometime in 1998, will involve 7500 healthy volunteers, cost \$US20 million... and take three years to complete. If successful, the vaccine would be made available to the public in the early part of the next century... [By the way, r]esearchers measuring the rate of genetic change in HIV... [believe it] originated from a common ancestor that first evolved from a simian virus in southwest Africa between 1915 and 1941, with 1931 the most likely year[, but Aids]... stayed in remote Africa until jet travel, big cities and the sexual revolution spread it worldwide...

As medical mysteries go, this one is about as big as they come. An unknown virus somehow emerges from the heat of a tropical jungle to cause one of the most frighteningly stealthy pandemics in history. Before doctors are even aware of the Aids virus, it has already infected hundreds of thousands, probably millions of people around the world. Now scientists are on the verge of answering... the [mystery]... The answer might turn into the ultimate medical irony. A modern-day plague is unleashed with the unwitting help of doctors... [- and u]p to 400 wild chimps... many dying in scientific experiments that would constitute dubious practice by today’s animal-welfare standards... [-] trying to fight another, equally appalling disease. If true, it means that Aids was a terrible side-effect of the polio vaccination campaign which took place in the Belgian Congo at the end of the 1950s. If false, the allegations would amount to a damaging slur on a heroic attempt to rid the world of a devastating paralysis.

It was the miracle of the baby boom. Throughout N[Z] in the 1950s tens of thousands of children lined up at schools for their dose of... the medication that would keep them safe from the crippling and potentially fatal plague of the polio virus. Unknown to them, their parents and the officials who ordered the huge programme of mass vaccination... the vaccine carried a rogue hitchhiker: a monkey virus potentially linked to brain tumours and skin cancer in humans... Since crossing the barrier from monkeys to humans... Aids... has taken less than four decades to establish itself as the worst pandemic in human history, and by 2010 will eclipse even the 300-year ravage of the Black Death in Europe... Yet the real message of both polio vaccination and Aids has still to be accepted. There is now powerful evidence that Aids was unleashed on the world by the pioneers of polio vaccination, and that the lessons of this tragedy have yet to be learned by the new pioneers of cross-species medicine. True or false, the scientific establishment has steadfastly attempted to squash debate on the theory, and publicly sees no need to understand fully the origin of Aids... But the appalling fact of Aids remains as a warning beacon. From only a few thousand early infections it has raged to a global toll that is extended by one new case every nine seconds. A medical breakthrough tomorrow would still not prevent the plague causing over the next 25 years more deaths than... W[W2]; even if a vaccine appeared hundreds of millions of people would be economically beyond its protection... “The polio vaccine theory is essential both to medical history and probably to finding a cure for Aids itself... But it is even more important in what it can teach us about how new plagues invade humans and the risk of this occurring in the future. Without objective testing of the theory the perils to humanity are bound to be discounted – as in cases such as thalidomide, breast implants, toxic shock syndrome and many other medical mishaps.”

...Claims of a N[Z]-based Aids breakthrough have failed to excite the American media. An Auckland company... announced this month that it had helped develop the first biological Aids remedy... called HRG-214[– that ‘helps rid a body of the HIV virus by improving the body’s immune system’ –] which it held the exclusive[‘worldwide’] rights to manufacture. The N[Z] announcement was followed by widespread media releases in the U[S], where the therapeutic treatment has been jointly developed. The American lawyer acting for the drug developers... said the treatment was yet to make any headlines or score any air time. He... [added that the US] public had probably grown tired of Aids claims, hence the cold media response.

...The first urine test for HIV... has been approved by the... [FDA]. “The urine test could become a significant weapon in the battle to slow the Aids epidemic because it makes testing safer, easier and more accessible compared to traditional methods,” said [a spokesperson for] the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Community Services Centre. HIV is currently diagnosed by testing blood or saliva samples... [However, the FDA] said that if a sample tests positive it would be retested and that even a second positive result would have to be confirmed via a more accurate blood test.

...[‘Philippine health officials have advised patients who have had blood transfusions to take Aids tests after an HIV positive man boasted he’d sold contaminated blood five times in the past year. The Department of Health barely avoided a huge public scare as it flipfopped over whether it had been able to find his blood. The 26-year-old, who has been confined in hospital for drug rehabilitation treatment, said he used false names to sell his type AB blood to two Manila blood centres. The scare highlights the appalling state of the country’s blood donor and transfusion system. A 1994 US-backed study by the department called the system “unsafe, inadequate and wasteful” and revealed that 4% of the country’s blood supply was contaminated. The study found that only one out of every 500 Filipinos donated blood, and for every 10 patients who needed transfusions, three did not get one. Most blood is supplied by commercial banks. The problem here, the study said, is that a paid donor is three times more likely to lie about his or her medical history and have one of the four transmissible diseases – hepatitis (B or C), syphilis, malaria or Aids. Blood from commercial banks has infected at least 11 people with HIV.’

...‘Villagers in China sold blood to a government organisation (that made a profit out of selling it to pharmaceutical companies). The organisation used dirty needles – infecting 500 out of 800 blood-donors in one village, and possibly 600,000 in all.’

...A US] judge gave preliminary approval yesterday to... [the] settlement of claims against four drug companies accused of knowingly selling Aids-tainted clotting products to haemophiliacs. People with haemophilia who used blood-clotting products between 1979 and 1985 and who are HIV-infected would get roughly \$US100,000 each under the settlement... Also eligible for payment are survivors of haemophiliacs who died of Aids as well as family members and others who have contracted HIV from a person with haemophilia. Lawyers... estimate the number of people eligible... at 5000 to 6000... Although some haemophilia activists contend the offer is inadequate, [the]Judge... said it had sufficient earmarks of fairness... Terms of the settlement say \$600 million will be distributed to victims, and \$40 million will pay for expenses and lawyers fees... The main lawyer for the haemophiliacs... said the settlement was probably the only way many of them could get compensation for their suffering. He said most who had sued the drug companies in the past had lost. Those who had won later had their victories overturned on appeal. Individual suits by about 800 people remained. Haemophiliac groups say the companies purposely failed to protect them by refusing to treat the products with heat that would

kill the virus, and by manufacturing the products from blood... taken from people at high risk for Aids. The companies contend that reliable Aids-killing treatments were not available until the mid-1980s.

...[t]he Accident Compensation Corporation must cover a woman and her son who contracted HIV after her husband received an infected blood transfusion, the High Court at Wellington has ruled. The judgment overturns a district court decision upholding the ACC view that they were not entitled to be covered. The mother was diagnosed as HIV-positive in June 1993, a month before she gave birth. In December 1993, her baby was found to be HIV-positive. They now have Aids. Her husband, Shannon Hughes, was given a blood transfusion in 1984 after a motorcycle accident. He did not know he was infected until after he had passed the virus on to his wife. Mr Hughes, who died last year, had been covered by ACC because he had suffered a medical-mishap, but ACC denied cover to his wife and son, arguing that how they contracted the virus could not be termed an accident because the ACC law specifically excludes contracting a virus. The family's lawyer said last night the decision was a victory for common sense. It meant rescuers who caught a disease while giving mouth-to-mouth resuscitation or attempting to stem the flow of blood would be covered by ACC. "So this case is wider than just the medical misadventure case," he said. ● "The "bad blood" scandal, in which a number of people were infected by HIV, is part of a wider international uproar. In the 1980s, in countries as diverse as Canada, Britain, France, Germany and the US, tainted blood and blood products infected tens of thousands with hepatitis C. Official inquiries were held and governments sued. The Canadian government offered a \$1.1 billion payout to some 22,000 people.'

...about 400 Canadians who said they were infected with hepatitis C from blood collected in US prisons have launched a \$C1 billion class-action lawsuit against two companies and the federal Government – and vowed to expand their case into the US. The group's lawyer said 1000 Canadians were exposed to the tainted blood: "In our view it was irresponsible to even consider collecting blood within US prisons. We certainly hope there will be some American investigation to explain why the FDA would allow plasma that wasn't good enough for its own citizens to be exported." The lawsuit is another blow to the Canadian Government, already reeling from a tainted blood scandal that drew thousands of outraged hepatitis C sufferers to the steps of Parliament Hill in Ottawa and ultimately forced Canada's Red Cross to file for bankruptcy protection. In March Canada's federal and provincial Governments agreed to a \$C1.1 billion compensation plan for those who were infected with hepatitis C from tainted Red Cross blood. The package does not cover those afflicted before 1986, however, the year that comprehensive testing of blood samples began in the US.]

...Victims of hepatitis C from contaminated blood say they will not allow a court ruling to stop their claims for lump sum compensation. The [ACC] successfully appealed to the High Court in Auckland against a District Court decision awarding a lump sum payment as compensation to a haemophiliac who had contracted both hepatitis C and HIV from blood products given for accidental injury... [T]he decision would affect more than 100 people... A Hepatitis C Support Group co-ordinator... said... the... group believed that the Government had a "moral and ethical responsibility" to compensate people who received hepatitis C from contaminated blood and blood products... [A]ccess to lump sum payments had been barred since changes were made to the law in 1992... All the claimants were injured before July 1992. But only those who found out by that date, and lodged claims by October 1992 were eligible for the lump sum. Many did not discover until much later that they were infected... [L]awyers originally found loopholes in the legislation which would have allowed more claims, but the Government amended the act in 1993 to exclude the claims. The group could now take the decision to the Court of Appeal.

...A woman who contracted hepatitis C through a blood transfusion is incensed that the hospital where she was infected will not finance her treatment. [The woman], aged 58... has demanded that Waikato Hospital pay for the drugs which are vital to her life. Health Waikato officials... have not disputed that the infection occurred at Waikato Hospital... [She] was given infected blood during a transfusion at the hospital in 1992. Twelve weeks later she developed hepatitis C, which causes liver disease and can be fatal... In a letter to her doctor in January 1993, a Waikato Hospital haematologist... confirmed that her disease had been contracted through the transfusion[, that her]... treatment should be financed if she developed chronic hepatitis, and she could lodge a claim for accident compensation as a result... Between April and October 1994 Waikato Hospital gave her Interferon injections. She relapsed after the treatment stopped... She receives... [the minimum weekly ACC payout. In May she] met a Waikato Health physician... to see if more Interferon treatment was available for her but was told that she would have to pay \$7000... At the time of the transfusion, hospitals were not legally required to screen blood for hepatitis. Although [the woman] told her doctor that she was nervous about the risk, she was reassured that there was only a slim chance that she would be infected.

...Auckland blood experts are working to cut the risk of a potentially deadly bacterium being passed through transfusions... [The] medical director of the Auckland regional blood services, said officials were not ready to divulge details but they thought the risk could be reduced by 50[%]. "It's a problem we will try to reduce as much as we can but no medical procedure has zero risk." He warned that any measures would cost "an awful lot of money." ...A woman died last year after she received blood in a transfusion of stored blood at National Women's Hospital. About eight patients had then been known to have received yersinia-contaminated blood over the previous 10 years, four of whom died... The Ministry of Health says yersinia is one of more than 30 readily identifiable infections which can be transmitted through blood... A ministry spokesman said rigorous procedures were employed by blood banks at the time blood was collected and when it was issued to recipients. Routine screening was carried out for hepatitis B and C, HIV and syphilis. It is also carried out on blood from donors who have recently travelled to certain countries... Donors must be fit and healthy and answer a health survey which included questions about travel, occupation, sexual or "at risk" behaviours. Once donated... blood is kept refrigerated to minimise bacterial growth. Plasma is heat-treated, disinfected and filtered. People who have haemophilia... rely on blood products... [●] People who want to store their own blood for an upcoming operation are going to have to pay for the privilege. The Minister of Health... is putting through law changes which allow [hospitals] to charge for blood checks and storage services... [I]t cost about \$165 per unit plus GST to store the blood... People usually stored between two to three units of blood for an operation... Records show that 71 Auckland patients stored 155 units of their blood for surgery in the last financial year. [An] estimated 1000 units of self-supplied blood was stored nationally a year... The ministry said the charge was coming in to recognise an increased demand for this service which had no proven safety improvement... Most of the patients who requested the use of their own blood were elderly private hospital patients... The medical director of Auckland Regional Blood Services... said most elected to use their own blood for peace of mind and because of an unwarranted distrust of donated blood... [T]here was virtually no medical benefit in using one's own blood, as donated blood was so well screened.

...The country's first blood donor club is being launched in Auckland in a bid to boost desperately low supplies... [T]here had been a huge run on certain types recently – a road crash victim last week needed 250 units of blood. The average patient used just over three. Stocks of type O negative, used extensively in emergencies, were at about half what the blood bank regarded as a safe level... [I]n dire shortages, supplies could be flown to Auckland from down country... The service's donor recruitment supervisor... said it was important to get a steady flow of blood rather than huge waves of enthusiastic people. Each unit had a shelf life of about 35 days. A long-time donor... will be held up as a brave example for would-be club members. The 57-year-old has rolled up his sleeves 148 times since his first donation 38 years ago. Club members will occasionally be able to meet recipients whose lives had been saved by donations... The club is named after an English obstetrician who performed the first human blood transfusion in London in 1818. [*85% of people are Rh-positive. Such people can't be donors for patients without the Rh factor. Second or later pregnancies resulting from the union of an Rh-positive father and an Rh-negative mother may end in miscarriage or produce a child with a blood disorder.] - 1996

Fears that... [diseases] could be spread through the public blood supply are driving the establishment of a national computerised blood supply management system... Health Otago's system, which recently went live, could instantly track donor and/or recipient details while maintaining a high level of confidentiality... The Ministry of Health... is expected to give top priority to developing a... single national blood service.

...Provincial... cities will lose their blood processing and testing centres under a new National Blood Service structure announced yesterday. The number of... [centres] around the country will be cut from 19 to three... The other blood centres... will be reduced to blood collection sites.

...The Auckland Regional Blood Service has issued an urgent appeal for blood. The critical need is for O positive type blood, with type A also required. The service is offering to transport donors to and from their workplace.

...As the holiday season looms pressure on blood stocks is expected to intensify as regular donors take time off. The Auckland-Northland region needs 250 donors a day to maintain stocks. The... [manager of] donor services at the Auckland Regional Blood Centre, says he faces a battle to attract donors outside a core of 32,000 regular providers... [The centre says it needs to increase its stock levels of] A+... A-... B+... AB-... [and AB+ blood types, but u]rgently needs... O+... O-... [and B-. One reason 'blood banks are facing shortages is because body piercing rules out many young donors.'

...Teenage trends for body piercings are preventing one of the most generous group of blood donors from giving. The Blood Service has to decline donations from those who have had a body piercing or tattoo within the past year, because of the potential for serious infection. The national donor manager said donations from 10% of the total Auckland donor base had to be deferred for 12 months. Tests were being developed that might mean donors with piercings or tattoos had to stand down for just six months. "My problem is getting donors in the door. It's a constant challenge to make sure there are enough. We do get stressed." A "red felt-tip" advertising campaign seemed to capture the public's imagination. The national donor manager says one of the toughest things about keeping numbers up was getting first-time donors to return. AUSn and US research suggest 40 to 60% of first-timers do not return.]

...British doctors have begun a legal battle to overturn an American company's patent on the use of blood from the umbilical cord in the treatment of leukaemia and genetic disorders... Newborn babies have spent 9 months being nurtured through the umbilical cord and at delivery it still contains a rich supply of stem cells which can be used to help restore healthy blood... The discovery is being claimed by a firm in Philadelphia... which has been granted patents... [requiring] a royalty to be paid to the... firm... every time cord blood is put to medical use... in the U[S] and Europe... It wants to create a massive bank of cord blood samples which will be sold to hospitals. "We invested in this idea early on, we've spent millions of dollars developing it, we sponsored the very first transplant... in France, we pioneered this technology and we have submitted this before the patent offices and they have agreed that it is a patentable idea." [However, blood]... specialists in Britain... say the patent is immoral... "It's just entrepreneurs who want to make a lot of money [out of] something that could help lots of people [from] something that's freely donated."

...A Wellington mother has won her battle to have blood from her newborn baby's umbilical cord stored for future use by her daughter... aged 4... who... was diagnosed with leukaemia a year ago... [The mother] is expecting... in 10 weeks and would have gone to A[US] to have the blood stored if it could not be done here... [She] has been fighting since early this year to have a cord bank set up... Cord blood transplants give leukaemia sufferers a better chance of survival and are much less painful.

...A public appeal is being launched... to raise \$1 million... for a special blood bank... which will store blood from placentas... to help children with life-threatening diseases, after health officials cried poor... [A] Starship children's hospital specialist, was dismayed by the[officials'] rejection. He said that up to 40 seriously ill N[Z] children needed bone marrow transplants each year. Most had cancer or immunodeficiency disorders and stood a high chance of dying before a suitable bone-marrow donor was found. The discovery of umbilical cord blood as a substitute was regarded as a major breakthrough. The blood is taken from the severed umbilical cord after a child's birth. It can be stored indefinitely... [A] national cord blood bank would save at least two children a year.

...Buying [a] Life Link Cord Blood Development Appeal "Bonus Bag" for \$4.95 will help to keep a child alive... One dollar from the price of your bag will be used to provide the equipment and services needed to provide this Life Link... *Please be generous...* Your \$4.95 will get you over \$20 worth of products and coupons, *plus* the chance to win a 5 door Daihatsu Mira LS or a 7 night holiday for 2 in Tahiti or a matching pair of His & Her Seiko Kenetic watches.

...[an Auckland couple 'are beautiful, young and in love. They dream of a future together and of having a baby. It seems the perfect romance – if only he lives long enough to enjoy it. Despite the love and support of his 18-year-old partner and his beloved family, the brave 19-year-old is starting to lose his battle against leukaemia. After two rounds of chemotherapy and a failed transplant of his own bone marrow, doctors are running out of options. His only hope now lies with donated bone marrow, but the worldwide bone marrow registry has failed to come up with a match. It is far harder for people like the 19-year-old, who is part Tongan, to find a compatible donor as there are only 4500 Pacific Island and Maori people on the registry compared with six million people of European descent. "I try not to think about what might happen if I don't get the transplant, but it is scary," says the talented songwriter, who longs to be a rap star. His family is committed to increasing the number of Pacific Island and Maori people on the bone marrow register. They encourage everyone they meet to become a donor, and with the help of a Pacific Island health service in the Waikato are hoping to take a blood donor van to Auckland to test potential donors at the Otara Flea Market and at churches in South Auckland. "This is our mission now," says his mother. "We realise we may not find a donor for our son, but it might help someone else." Her son has his own message for anyone thinking of becoming a bone marrow donor: "It would only take a bit of your time. Please help me. I'd be your friend for life." ■ The bone marrow is collected in major hospitals under general anaesthetic from cavities in the hip bones, using four to eight needle punctures. ■ You can go home the next day and return to normal life after two to three days. ■ The marrow quickly replaces itself, and the only cost is your time. ■ Your name will stay on the register until you are 56.']

...Lack of money is... preventing bone marrow transplants... in N[Z], according to a] visiting American expert... [An] Auckland Hospital haematologist... [agreed. He said that] tight budget restraints... [meant NZ] could do only six bone marrow transplants per million population each year... compared with 30 per million in A[US] and 60 in America. N[Z] had 800 people on its bone marrow transplant register which was established last year. Since then, two children have been matched with donors for successful transplants... [Incidentally], the Haemophilia Society is lobbying the Government to finance alternatives to treatments which use human plasma... A society vice-president... said the situation was appalling, and that the Government had fobbed sufferers off for long enough... [H]aemophilia was devastating enough for... sufferers without the complications of life-threatening viruses... The campaign, centred around World Haemophilia Awareness Day today... coincides with calls for an urgent meeting of the Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease working party, which will take place in the next few weeks... [following a WHO... endorsement of a warning by a U[S] scientist that people at risk from the brain-wasting disorder must not donate blood. "N[Z] has got one of the safest blood systems in the world, but having said that, people whose lives depend on the blood products can't help but remember 1983 and HIV... [They also] are still smarting from the hepatitis C scare, and now we are aware of other viruses." ...With the credibility of the blood service "shot to pieces," the society president... said recombinant products should be available to everyone who wanted them... [S]ynthetic products were internationally recognised as the preferred products, and there had been no documented cases of viral transmission through their use... The society has been lobbying for three years to get recombinant factor 8 introduced in N[Z]. The synthetic product would enable 80[%] of sufferers to stop using blood products. The 20[%] of sufferers with factor 9 deficiency would still be reliant on plasma products until a replacement factor 9 product became available... [10%] of severe haemophiliacs in N[Z] have contracted HIV... from their treatment. [● 'American hospitals have been using accident patients to trial synthetic blood (which can be used by any blood type and doesn't clot) without their consent.']

...A visiting Japanese expert... said artificial blood had been studied in Japan for 30 years and had received a government grant of \$5 million... [The grant means that within 2] years... haemoglobin solution... transfusions... would be available in ambulances to be given to accident victims on the spot – with less than a 0.5% chance of infection. [However, the] Auckland Blood Transfusion Service... said... a lack of money means it won't happen here... in the near future... But... N[Z]ers receiving transfusions could feel safe knowing that hepatitis had not been detected in blood since 1992.

...A new hepatitis virus has been found in donated blood but people with the virus do not and will not know they have it because the researchers worked with anonymous samples... The testing method also means it is not possible to trace back from the samples containing hepatitis G and withdraw blood products from those people's donations... The virus was present in 2.3[%] of... more than 1000 samples... The... action of the virus was still unknown, but blood carried a lot of viruses that did not cause disease "and we think this could be one." No country had withdrawn blood because of possible problems... There was no evidence implicating... hepatitis G... in liver damage... The Director of the Auckland Regional Blood Centre... said... it was difficult to know what to tell people shown to have the virus when so little was known... [Meanwhile, h]aemophilia sufferers have labelled new Health Ministry initiatives for improved treatment discriminatory. Proposals announced yesterday... would see increased use of the blood-clotting agent Factor 8... Some haemophiliacs already receive the safer artificial product... and it is expected that plasma-based blood products, derived from humans, will be phased out over the next two to three years... But the... Haemophilia Society said the ministry's access proposals limited the virally-free recombinant to... sufferers aged under-18 who had not contracted hepatitis C.

...The Ministry of Health has made public the results of a \$1 million review of blood products that were donated during the two years that it took health officials to act on a recommendation to introduce... hepatitis C screening... The National Hepatitis C Lookback Programme found that 56 people who received contaminated blood between August 1990 and July 1992 now have chronic hepatitis C infection. Up to 5[%] of those people were likely to develop liver cancer... while 10 to 20[%] would suffer serious liver damage. A further 76 were found to have antibodies to the disease and were at risk of developing a chronic disorder... In one case it was believed that hepatitis C... had contributed to the person's death... The lookback programme identified 669 people who were at risk of contracting the disease from contaminated blood. Of those, 374 were still alive; the rest had died as a result of the illness for which they received the transfusion. The ministry was able to contact 339 people of whom 277 were tested. The others could not be contacted or did not want to be tested.

...The first of 120 High Court claims for people infected with hepatitis C from contaminated blood were filed yesterday... [The] scandal... could cost the Government tens of million of dollars... [because they are claiming] damages of between \$750,000 and \$950,000 each... The Government was told in early 1990 that blood should be screened for the disease, but that was not done until 1992. Screening tests were available from 1987.

...The number of hepatitis C "bad blood" claims filed against the Government has doubled in past weeks... [to more] than 200... Claimants stand to lose more than a third of their payout in legal fees, if victory comes their way.

...[the Government has offered to pay compensation to 77 hepatitis blood transfusion victims, but the rest get nothing because they contracted hepatitis before the date when testing could have begun]...

The 'people who contracted hepatitis C from contaminated blood are disgusted with the Government's latest compensation offer of \$22,000 – just \$2000 more than the amount they turned down in October. After subtracting lawyers' fees they'd receive about \$13,000. "We feel like it's a kick in the teeth."']

...Devastated. That's how [a] lawyer... described the feelings of cancer patients who Good Health Wanganui said were in good health. The patients feel that way because the High Court has told them they can not sue for compensation for misdiagnosis. Another group of patients who did not have cancer but... had unnecessary cancer surgery can sue...

But the eight women... whose cancers were not diagnosed for up to six years... can still sue for \$250,000 of exemplary damages, aimed at punishing those responsible... the former Wanganui Hospital pathologist... his employer, Good Health Wanganui and the Residual Health Management Unit... Ten other patients wrongly subjected to cancer procedures such as mastectomies... are also seeking exemplary damages of \$250,000 each... The case was seen as an important test of N[Z]'s "no-fault" accident compensation laws... The... [pathologist], who is understood to suffer from Parkinson's disease, seriously misdiagnosed 43 patients between 1975 and 1994...

Suing for damages from illness and injury will become commonplace as growing numbers of people become aggrieved at the lack of adequate accident compensation, says an expert on ACC law... The result would be "good for insurance companies, good for lawyers – but bad for the country,"... [the] Victoria University law lecturer... said on radio... [following] a High Court ruling that eight former Wanganui Hospital patients whose cancer biopsies were misdiagnosed can sue for exemplary damages... [He adding that the] surge in litigation probably suited ACC, because it meant the money for compensation was not coming from its budget...

AN INQUIRY into patient safety at Wanganui Hospital is being urged after specialists failed to see a woman with a malignant breast tumour and an elderly man with a newly-amputated leg was sent home in a taxi, bleeding and without a dressing on his wound... "He was writhing in pain from the amputation... and it appeared no decent pain relief was provided... The wound was infected when he got back to the rest home... [The 43-year-old woman] has a five-year-old son to take care of, but things may be too late for her... People are just not getting the treatment they deserve." ...Good Health Wanganui has promised to investigate... A woman was [also] sent home from Timaru Hospital with a broken ankle because there was no one to x-ray her leg. [Her son] is furious that his 72-year-old mother had to spend the night at home in agony.

...A doctor who told a patient that a growth extracted from her breast had proved to be benign, when in fact it was never tested, has been found guilty of professional misconduct... The mother of three... later developed breast cancer and died... aged 41... despite radiation and chemotherapy. The doctor told... the tribunal... that he did not believe the earlier growth had any connection with the cancer that killed the woman. He denied lying to the woman... He could not explain why routine testing of the removed growth had not occurred, but took responsibility. "I can only assume that for some unintended reason the tissue was disposed of,"... The woman's husband told the hearing the doctor had shown genuine remorse and paid \$18,000 towards her cancer treatment... The Medical Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal is seeking submissions on an appropriate penalty.

...[a patient] spent 10 years waiting for her doctor to realise she still had breast cancer. She repeatedly told him about the sore lumps under her armpit, but he assured her each time there was nothing to worry about – even though he had removed her right breast because of cancer in 1985. Eventually in 1995 she went to another surgeon, who cut out the malignant lymph nodes immediately. Now the 47-year-old Kaikohe beef farmer is waiting to find out if any more cancer has survived inside her... Because of [her original surgeon]'s continuing reassurances, she had her right breast reconstructed in 1991, in a 12-hour operation which cost her \$16,000. She now wonders if the ordeal was worth it... Her original surgeon... was disciplined by the Medical Council... for allowing her cancer to go untreated for a whole decade. He was found guilty of conduct unbecoming of a medical practitioner and fined \$500 – half the maximum fine... The top penalty had since been increased to \$10,000 but this applied only to complaints received after July 1 last year... The medical practitioners' disciplinary committee also said that [the original surgeon] should pay the inquiry costs of \$6693. It said he should take at least two courses or attend two conferences about breast surgery within the next two years if he wanted to continue practising in this area... [He] said this week that he was not trying to hide the truth from [his patient] but admitted he might have been influenced by his hope that she did not have cancer. - 1997

[A] Paihia woman... who is dying of cervical cancer, is trying to sue her former gynaecologist... for \$60,000. The *Herald* understands [the patient]'s lawyers have put forward a claim for exemplary damages against [the gynaecologist], alleging his actions in relation to her care amounted to more

than gross misconduct. Last month, [the gynaecologist] was found guilty of disgraceful conduct over his treatment of [the patient], whom he initially failed to diagnose when she was referred to him with abnormal bleeding in August 1997. The Medical Disciplinary Tribunal's ruling criticised [the gynaecologist] for not examining [the patient]'s cervix at the time, saying it was grossly negligent and reckless. The tribunal is expected to release its decision this week over penalties for the disgraceful conduct finding. [The gynaecologist] could be fined... have supervision conditions imposed or be struck off. Last night, [the patient]'s husband... said he preferred not to comment on the lawsuit... It is the second such claim for exemplary damages in the past two years. The woman *Herald* readers know as Jane lost a lawsuit last year against [a] former Gisborne pathologist... who under-reported her cervical smear slides.

...A woman who developed cervical cancer has lost her lawsuit against the pathologist who repeatedly missed signs of the disease. After the specialist cleared [4] suspect smear slides, the 30-year-old developed invasive cervical cancer, requiring major surgery. She has a near 50:50 chance of the disease returning. Lawyers say the pathologist's win yesterday in the High Court... sets an almost impossibly high threshold for proving negligence and is likely to deter further cases against health professionals. Had the woman's claim been successful, she would have been the first person in N[Z] to win exemplary damages from a health professional... [The judge] had found the case extremely difficult and... [a]lthough he had no doubt the doctor had been guilty of negligence and some of his care had been "sub-optimal," his actions narrowly did not fall into the category that warranted the awarding of exemplary damages. The woman – whose name was suppressed, as was the defendant's – had alleged that the doctor was incompetent... that he had no quality assurance methods in place and failed to keep up with continuing education... The woman said the doctor had been found guilty by the Medical Practitioners Disciplinary Committee and ACC. "I don't know what more it takes." ...In closing submissions, a member of her legal team... said the pathologist had shown no remorse. In defence, [a lawyer] said the doctor had been practising in accordance with the standards of his day... Following yesterday's decision, the doctor expressed remorse for the woman's plight. "Having spent most of my professional life trying to avoid this sort of thing, I was very distressed in 1995 to find out that [the woman] had developed cancer."

...[the Gisborne] doctor accused of misreading cervical cancer smear tests is still listed as a consultant pathologist by the laboratory testing Gisborne women's slides... The revelation by [the] Alliance health spokeswoman... sent health officials darting yesterday for legal guidance. [The pathologist] last held a practising certificate in March... and in 1997 was found guilty of unbecoming conduct in his reading of a woman's cervical smears. Following a High Court case this year, the [health funding] authority urged Gisborne women to have new smear tests and announced it would recheck 30,000 slides read by [the pathologist], who retired in March 1996.

...A new cancer-test botch-up has Gisborne men in a state of fear as [the] Health Minister... moved swiftly yesterday to sack the region's... six-member... health board... [in an attempt] to restore faith in the public health system... Hundreds of men may have been given incorrect results from tests on their prostate glands at Gisborne Hospital... The errors are blamed on a senior laboratory technologist at the hospital repeatedly misusing a testing machine. He left last year and is working at another N[Z] laboratory. The Ministry of Health is checking the other 18 hospital and community laboratories which use the same machine for the prostate specific antigen... test to ensure the same errors are not being made elsewhere. It is expected to know the answer today. About 465 Gisborne men aged 50 to 90 will be sent letters warning that they may have received incorrect test results... It is the third health scare to rock the region in a year. A ministerial inquiry is under way in Gisborne into possible widespread misreading of cervical smear slides, which affected 1500 women. The region was also shocked by revelations that a former anaesthetist reused syringes on patients, rubbed cold ice on their nipples and threw sharp objects around the theatre.

...Inexperienced staff and a shortage of money have been blamed in part for a health scare at Gisborne Hospital... A Canadian anaesthetist who worked at the east coast hospital from October [last year] to last March is being investigated... over reusing syringes on 134 patients. The anaesthetist is understood to have left the country. Gisborne's MP... told the *Herald*... that although it was unacceptable to reuse syringes... she believed a lack of money had led to the loss of many experienced staff who might have picked up the anaesthetist's healthcare breach earlier... Meanwhile, [six of the]... women caught up in the Gisborne cervical cancer scare have lodged ACC claims for medical misadventure.

...A Howick woman, once a... kickbox[ing]... singer and model, is paying with her own money and tears for a medical blunder that has ruined her life. Today she is in so much pain she cannot perform normal household tasks or care for her 10-year-old son. "I have to pay someone else to be his mother," said [the] 34-year-old... Her case has come to light in a *Herald* investigation into the limits of compensation for victims of medical misadventure in this country. [Two years ago, the 34-year-old] was admitted to Green Lane Hospital with a collapsed lung. A week after the successful surgery a nurse tried to remove the drain, but it had been mistakenly stitched to the intercostal nerve between her ribs. The nurse pulled the drain out, wrenching the nerve. [The 34-year-old] writhed in pain, but even with the intervention of pain specialists she cannot get relief. Doctors tell her there is nothing they can do and she should seek medical help overseas, an option she cannot afford... Her wedding has twice been postponed and she fears her partner will no longer want to marry her... [In addition, she] has become addicted to an expensive cocktail of painkillers and anti-depressants. "I'm basically turning into a junkie. I'm so drugged to the eyeballs I can barely stand at the bench to cut my son's lunch." Her claim for medical misadventure was accepted by ACC, which pays her \$184 a week for loss of earnings. She also qualifies for a \$175-a-week invalid benefit. ACC contributes 80[%] of her medical expenses. She pays the remainder of specialist and prescription fees, which she says is unfair. "Why am I paying anything? Some doctor did this to me and ruined my life. Why can't they pay for everything? They tell me I have to reinvent my life and learn how to be an invalid." [The 34-year-old] and her fiancée... wanted to sue the hospital to get enough money to get an operation overseas, but their lawyer said there was nothing they could do... [The] ACC Minister... yesterday rejected the idea of returning medical misadventure cases to the courts. "Suing is a lottery and the first prize always goes to the lawyers and the victims end up with very little," he said. Instead, the Government is planning to restore lump-sum compensation on top of other ACC allowances... He could not specify the amount the Government would offer in lump sums but said it would cover both loss of function and pain and suffering.

...An Auckland couple whose son was born severely brain damaged... at National Women's Hospital on April 14, 1993... are suing doctors and hospital authorities for more than \$1 million... However, [lawyers representing]... the doctor who induced labour, as well as [a] special obstetrician... and... the Residual Health Management Unit, the successor to the Auckland Hospital Board... [a]re seeking to have... claim struck out for being brought out of time... [Furthermore, t]heir clients "rigorously denied" negligence. The... [lawyers] told the court that two independent reports by an internal hospital inquiry and by the ACC misadventure unit in Wellington had concluded that the adverse outcome was not the result of medical error, but rather of treatment properly given... [– even though the couple] say that a vital pelvic x-ray and an accompanying report... were sent by Green Lane Hospital's radiology department to the wrong hospital. The report noted: "Successful vaginal delivery of a normal-sized foetus through this pelvis seems unlikely." A letter from [the obstetrician] signalling possible difficulties with pelvic restriction was also not placed on [the mother-to-be]'s file at National Women's... In their statement of claim the [parents] say that as a result of the omissions from... [the] medical file, none of this information was available to the specialist on-duty team that ultimately stepped in to deliver the baby. They say [the doctor] induced labour without making sure he had seen the pelvic x-ray report. When the baby became severely distressed an urgent caesarean section was performed. The child was stillborn but was resuscitated by paediatric staff and admitted to the neonatal intensive care unit. As a result, [the baby] suffered cerebral palsy with significant physical and psychological impairment which required constant care and assistance.

A jury in New York has awarded \$US23 million... to an 8-year-old boy for the botched birth that left him severely brain-damaged, with cerebral palsy and unable to speak. The jury decided that [he] was the victim of negligent treatment his mother... received when he was born prematurely.

...Two doctors have been found guilty of... the death from meningitis of an 11-year-old boy who was misdiagnosed with a tension headache and sent home from a hospital emergency department... The Medical Practitioner's Disciplinary Committee found... a former Middlemore Hospital house surgeon and his registrar... guilty of unbecoming conduct... [The house surgeon] was fined \$400 and ordered to pay \$10,877 costs... [The registrar] was fined \$600 and ordered to pay \$18,128 costs... The... [registrar] bore the major responsibility as... supervisor. He failed to examine [the boy] himself and approved giving the narcotic painkiller pethidine which might have masked the rapidly developing meningitis. Use of the drug was "grossly unwise". [The house surgeon], who graduated in 1992, had been on the emergency department roster for only three weeks and had never diagnosed a case of meningitis when he saw [the boy] on March 21, 1994. The head of Middlemore's emergency department... told the committee that where a large casualty department was understaffed and staffed with comparatively inexperienced people, such incidents were inevitable... But the boy's mother says the... fines handed out... are a joke and she is lobbying MPs for a change in the law to allow relatives to sue... She said the opportunity to sue would help to relieve her suffering because she would feel justice had been served... [A] medical law expert... said Appeal Court judges in 1989, when considering the police shooting of [a suspect], said estates could not sue because of a 1936 law which ruled out claims for exemplary damages when a person had died. "While N[Z] society doesn't want to go the same way as the U[S] where you can sue for anything, it does create an injustice for families," ... - 1996

Consider the following scenario... As he left hospital Bill was approached by a smartly dressed young man with a pad in his hand. "We're just doing a survey of patient satisfaction with their treatment in hospital. Could you spare a moment to answer a few questions?" Bill said yes and was asked, "Did you have any complaints about the way you were treated in hospital?" "Not really," replied Bill. "But I think they might have made the diagnosis a bit faster. I was uncomfortable and very anxious, but things are better now. I really can't complain." "That doesn't sound very good," said the young man. "Perhaps you should get some compensation for that delay in diagnosis and consequent suffering. You might help other people in a similar situation and make yourself a nice little nest egg at the same time if you took the hospital to court. I can give you the name of a lawyer who will not charge if he doesn't win a settlement. I think he will probably ask the courts for something like \$200,000 in compensation... If he succeeds he gets half and you get \$100,000. It's a win-win situation for you. How about it?" This may sound a little fanciful... but I understand that it is not very far from what happens frequently in the U[S] – the spectacle of lawyers or their agents actively seeking to create discontent in the minds of patients in the hope of generating work and, of course, big money. As a result the American public and the American medical profession are very litigation-conscious... It is widely recognised in medical circles that many patients in the U[S] are over-investigated and over-treated. American doctors are the first to admit this, but they say that for fear of litigation they are obliged to practice what has become known as "defensive medicine". The extra tests designed to cover almost every diagnostic possibility also add greatly to the cost of medical care... Medical care is an imperfect science and much depends on judgment and experience.

...A jury in Portland, Oregon, decided a cancer survivor's sperm was irreplaceable and ordered a hospital to pay him \$US1.25 million... [The cancer survivor] was a 25-year-old medical student when he was diagnosed in 1985 with Hodgkin's disease. His doctor suggested he should deposit his sperm because chemotherapy could leave him sterile. But when [he] returned to the lab in 1994... ready to start a family, the hospital's sperm bank told him they did not have his sperm... [The] jury found the hospital at fault. A hospital spokeswoman would not comment... [Incidentally, t]he parents of a British boy who suffered brain damage during a heart transplant operation have lost their claim for damages. [He] was 16 months old when he had the operation. His parents claim the medical team at the renowned Harefield Hospital hadn't warned them of the risks associated with the operation but the High Court has disagreed.

...A mother who left her only child at Tauranga Hospital for minor surgery returned two hours later to find him brain dead and on a ventilator. [The mother] told a depositions hearing in the Tauranga District Court she had asked medical staff more than once about the risks of her 13-year-old son... going under a general anaesthetic for an exploratory operation on his knee, which had been pierced by a [plant] spike. She had been assured that he was a "big, fit, strong boy and it would be okay." ...The boy was allegedly deprived of oxygen... He was not able to be revived... Interim name suppression has been extended for a 63-year-old Tauranga woman charged with manslaughter... The woman was not on trial and there was a presumption of innocence "at this point." ...the crown is alleging that the defendant omitted to use reasonable knowledge and care, and failed to follow recommended protocol, resulting in [the boy's] death.

...a 9-year-old] was told at 11 am last Saturday she had appendicitis. By 3 am on Sunday it was clear her appendix had ruptured, flooding her system with toxins... Because it was the weekend, only one operating theatre was available [at the local hospital]. Because of minimal night-shift staff, there could be no surgery until 8 am. And even then, because of pressure on the theatre, hours of pain lay ahead. Her mother... is livid about the hours of agony her daughter endured... She wants to know why Tauranga Hospital is being forced to cut services to save money... "My blood boils when I learn that the hospital has been told to cut back by another \$4 million, and I want to know why the public health system is being so drastically cut." Tauranga Hospital said yesterday that [the girl's] safety was not compromised at any stage. The delay was not related to service cuts, but was caused by other emergency admissions... [By the way, the] retired Tauranga hospital anaesthetist charged with the manslaughter of a 13-year-old boy... has been committed for trial in the High Court at Rotorua.

...A woman bled to death after an anaesthetist's needle missed its target... the jugular vein and punctured a major artery and also the membrane of the chest cavity, allowing blood to flow into the chest cavity... a pathologist told an inquest yesterday. [The woman], aged 44... died in Rotorua Hospital... after an overnight operation for serious but not life-threatening fractures from a car crash... [A] bid to attach an intravenous line to [the woman's] neck about two hours into the operation had gone wrong... The eventual loss of blood, on top of that lost because of the car-crash injuries, killed her, he said. [The woman's] son-in-law... said the family felt someone should be held accountable for the death and steps should be taken to prevent such a mistake happening again. The family were very distressed and had been unable to settle back into their lives. A police investigation found no one criminally liable after a Melbourne specialist... said sufficient care had been taken during treatment... [However, t]he inquest was told the doctors... were called in to do the emergency surgery after a full day's work... [and, therefore,] had worked a total of 20 hours each by the time they... finished the eight-hour operation... to mend severe fractures to both legs, an arm, hand and foot.

...Anaesthetists' mistakes and the reasons behind them will be investigated in a wide-ranging project aimed at reducing drug errors. Researchers in Auckland and Wellington are to scrutinise the part fatigue plays in mistakes and pitfalls in systems used for giving drugs. The new project follows a N[Z] study published in 1995 which found that most of the 66 anaesthetists surveyed admitted at least one drug mistake in their working lives and 12.5[%] had harmed patients as a result... [The] chairman of the N[Z] committee of the A[US and NZ] College of Anaesthetists, said mistakes included giving the wrong drug, the incorrect dose or failing to give the drug at all. However, the track record of anaesthetists... [- who, i]t has been estimated... can give 250,000 drugs in their working lives... [-] was very good compared to other specialities.

...A trainee specialist... [who failed] to diagnose meningitis in a toddler... has been... censured, fined \$800 and ordered to pay \$25,142 towards the cost of the inquiry... His competence must also be reviewed by the Medical Council each year for up to three years... The... 18-month-old... girl was twice seen by her [GP] on June 23 last year. She was referred to the... Palmerston North Hospital... emergency department after the [GP] suspected a viral illness or bacterial infection... [T]he hospital duty paediatric registrar, examined the girl after speaking to the [GP] by phone... The parents mentioned meningitis and pneumonia, but [the trainee paediatrician] diagnosed flu and sent the child home. Paracetamol was prescribed every four

hours to lower her temperature. The family left the hospital at about 5pm and within three hours the mother noticed about 12 red marks on her daughter's legs and groin. The parents checked the girl four times during the night, but the next morning her father found her dead.

...AN ACCIDENT victim whose spinal injury went undetected for three weeks, despite checks by two hospitals, urges patients to complain about doctors' mistakes... [The woman] spent two days at Wairau Hospital in Blenheim after crashing her bike while holidaying... On her return home she visited Christchurch Hospital twice in one day for relief. She got morphine, but the hospital did not notice... on her X-ray... that a shattered vertebra was... pressing on her spinal chord... She still has problems with her back... "It is incredible that my back fracture was picked up only because I insisted on another X-ray... For three weeks I was trying to be mobile... I was trying to take a walk every evening... What if I had become paralysed in this time? Doctors need to be more accountable for their mistakes." ...She still has problems with her back... 18 months on and wonders if this could have been avoided... if she was correctly diagnosed... [The] Health and Disability Commissioner... said she could not find a breach of standards because the incident pre-dated the introduction of a code of rights in July, 1996.

...A Hong Kong doctor removed a young girl's Fallopian tube, thinking it was her appendix, in the latest in a spate of alarming blunders in the territory's hospitals. "We all make mistakes," [the] head of surgery... at Queen Mary Hospital... was quoted as saying... Earlier this month a car-crash victim died at Queen Mary... after he was given a transfusion of the wrong blood type... [and] a woman had her right Fallopian tube cut at the hospital during an appendectomy... Local newspapers yesterday took aim at the medical industry. "Potential patients, who may already be nervous about having the wrong type of blood, now have a fresh source of concern at the possibility of having the wrong organs removed... At this rate, fewer and fewer patients will be willing to be admitted to Queen Mary Hospital – where a disproportionately large number of the recent mistakes have occurred – and many will think twice about seeking treatment at any other government hospital,"... the *Sunday Morning Post*... said... The young girl... has not had her appendix removed since the botched operation... Officials at Queen Mary... could not immediately be contacted for comment. It was not known whether the girl's family planned to take legal action against the hospital.

...[the operating theatre at a hospital in Auckland was originally set up for surgery on the correct hip of a patient given the wrong hip replacement. The surgeon marked the patient's correct thigh, but only after the patient had been checked into theatre. The anaesthetist and a technician then injected an epidural anaesthetic into the patient's spine – and he was asked to lie down on his left side, the side to be operated on. But the patient was not turned on to the correct side for his surgery. When the surgeon returned to the theatre he assisted nurses with preparing the incorrect leg. Before surgery both the anaesthetist and the scrub nurse recalled having to change their plan to operate on the right side. An independent review of procedures leading to the botched operation was released yesterday. It outlined human error, but found procedures at the hospital were consistent with guidelines for hip-replacement operations. The case has led to a call by the Health and Disability Commissioner for junior medical practitioners and nurses to challenge the actions of senior staff.' In international news, 'a terrified South Korean woman was left trapped in a hospital scanning machine when a medical technician forgot about her at the start of a four-day public holiday. The 38-year-old housewife, who was receiving treatment for injuries sustained in a traffic accident, was strapped into the barrel-like magnetic resonance imaging machine for a neck scan. The routine scan should have lasted no more than a few minutes. Frightened and exhausted, she shouted in vain for help through the night. She finally managed to free herself from the pitch-black scanner about 29 hours later.'

...an Egyptian doctor got the shock of his life when he opened a refrigerated compartment in an Alexandria morgue and had his hand grabbed by the occupant. The occupant had been taken to the morgue five hours earlier, after holidaymakers saw him collapse while swimming and thought he had drowned. Instead of being examined in hospital he was taken straight to the morgue. When a doctor carrying out an autopsy happened to pull open the draw where the 29-year-old was lying, he was too frozen to talk, but made his situation clear. He has laid a complaint with the hospital.' In local news, a 'morgue worker is seeking compensation for the distress he claims to have suffered when blood spurted from the body of a Maori woman he was starting to perform an autopsy on. Health officials are confident that the woman was already dead.'

...Rheumatic fever is killing about 120 N[Z]ers prematurely each year – second only to Aids among communicable diseases... [– while] an average 134 people a year [are] admitted to hospital with the disease, and one in five was probably a repeat admission... One in five victims is Maori... Rheumatic fever can develop from a simple throat infection, often in childhood... A study in some Auckland schools is looking at the effectiveness of having nurses on site to pick up students with a sore throat and test for the bacteria that causes rheumatic fever... Overseas studies have pinpointed poverty and overcrowding as factors... A report from the Ministry of Health, Progress on Health Outcome Targets[– which had studied rheumatic fever cases]... between 1990 and 1994[– said some]... food and waterborne diseases, such as campylobacteriosis, might also be considered "emerging," [and]... noted the... re-emergence in the 1990s of... tuberculosis... and... meningococcal disease...

Modern technology could help stem the spread of... meningococcal disease. Deaths and hospital admissions are expected to hit record numbers this year, but Auckland public health officials [will use] computers to track each case and identify geographical hot spots... [In international news, an African] meningitis epidemic... has now claimed 1506 victims, says the W[HO]. The epidemic has struck 11,175 people... [across] seven countries...

Wellington health authorities have treated residents at a Victoria University hostel to try to contain a serious meningitis outbreak linking the North and South Islands. Drinking games at a function in Christchurch may have enabled the spread of the highly contagious disease... which has killed one athlete and left another seriously ill... [A 19-year-old] Christchurch athlete... was admitted to Wellington Hospital on Sunday morning... but is now out of danger, according to his family... Top Otago multi-events athlete Vance Latta, aged 25, died of meningococcal disease on Monday within hours of being taken to Dunedin Hospital. Latta's flatmate, [NZ's] top sprinter... is in A[US] and visited a doctor yesterday to check that he was not carrying the disease. A[US]n authorities called for athletes who had contact with [the NZ sprinter] when he competed at Brisbane on Saturday to be checked... The chief executive of Athletics N[Z]... issued an urgent plea to all athletes... [who] competed in the national championships in Christchurch this month and... especially the 120 to 130 people who attended the... function at the Pegasus Arms Restaurant and Bar... to contact their local doctor or the medical officer of health in their region. He had been advised that the 500 athletes who competed could be at risk. Immediate action had been taken to inform them... So far about 30 people... who attended the function... had been traced... Six other athletes from the Western Samoa Athletics team were also at the Pegasus Arms party, but according to their Christchurch contact... none was reported sick... The owner of the Pegasus Arms... said he did not know of the problem until yesterday.

...The impact of the deadly meningococcal disease has been declared a public health emergency as hospital admissions and death rates soar... Thirteen people have died this year, compared with six at this time last year. Middlemore Hospital is seeing about one child a day with the illness... N[Z] has the worst rate of the disease among developed countries... [–] 14.6 per 100,000 people... [–] with no sign of improvement... South Auckland has a disease rate of 43 for every 100,000 people and central Auckland a rate of 27 per 100,000... Most developed countries had two per 100,000... "The epidemic can last for 15 years and we have no evidence our epidemic has peaked..." [There is]... no proven vaccine for the type B-strain prevalent here... Auckland health officials hope to test a Dutch-manufactured vaccine... But a limited trial of 100 children will cost several million dollars and getting participants could be tough... "It's fraught with difficulty telling people we are doing a vaccine trial but their child may just get a jab of water. It's likely one of those in the trial will get the disease and die so it's a public relations job from hell to sell the idea."

...[a new vaccine against the deadly brain disease meningitis is to be given to thousands of babies, children and teenagers in a mass immunisation programme in Britain over the next few months. The vaccine, which protects against group C meningococcal infection, the type most commonly associated with mass outbreaks of the disease, is said to be the first to offer real protection against meningitis and could save hundreds of people. Last year in Britain 1530 people were infected with the group C strain and 150 died, mainly children and teenagers. The only other vaccine available lasts for just three years

and is not considered very effective. The latest vaccine, developed by British scientists, is being made available on the National Health Service a year earlier than expected after successful trials on more than 25,000 children. There is still no vaccine for group B meningococcal infection, which tends to occur in more isolated cases'. By the way, a 'mother has caught polio after taking her child to be vaccinated – the 6th case in NZ in the past 40 years (compared with 8-10 per year in the US). Officials say parents catch polio by failing to take adequate precautions when handling their child's saliva or faeces.'

...NZ] should consider switching from oral polio immunisations because the risk of disease from the vaccine is greater than the chance of catching polio naturally, says a new medical paper.

...The Ministry of Health has no immediate plans to change the type of polio vaccine being used to immunise children, despite the availability of a newer, safer version. The oral vaccine... used in N[Z] is made from live polio virus and can cause "vaccine-associated paralytic polio" in a very small number of cases... – ...one case in 750,000 doses... A newer... injectable... version, made from inactivated... [or] killed... virus, has been recommended for use in the U[S. NZ has]... seen no cases of locally originated wild polio since 1977. Polio had been eradicated from the entire Western Hemisphere and western Pacific...

['More than 112 million children under the age of five were yesterday vaccinated against polio in India. It was the world's largest public health drive which sought to banish the disease from the face of the Earth. Pakistan and Bangladesh conducted simultaneous campaigns. Indian health officials said 90% of 125 million children were vaccinated by tens of thousands of doctors and paramedics across the country's 25 states. A second dose of the vaccine will be administered on January 18 next year. The Indian PM flagged the drive by giving two drops of oral polio vaccine each to five children invited to his office with their mothers, signalling the start of the campaign. Schools, colleges, banks and Government offices shut down as the Government declared a public holiday to help parents to bring their children under the age of five to free vaccine centres. India, polio's last real bastion, vaccinated 93 million children in the first phase of the anti-polio programme a year ago. There were 2993 reported cases in India last year compared with 2836 cases in the rest of the world.'

...the mass vaccination campaigns of the 1950s and '60s may be causing hundreds of deaths a year because of a cancer-causing virus which contaminated the first polio vaccine, says London's *Daily Telegraph*. Known as SV40, the virus came from dead monkeys whose kidney cells were used to culture the first Salk vaccines. Doctors estimate the virus was injected into tens of millions of children before being detected and screened out in 1963. Those born between 1941 and 1961 are thought to be most at risk of having been infected. Until now, SV40 was regarded as harmless, with no evidence of long-term health effects emerging in follow-up studies of those vaccinated. Now it appears these studies may not have been conducted over a long enough period. New highly sensitive laboratory tests have disclosed the presence of SV40 in many different types of human tumour. The most startling results centre on mesothelioma, a once-rare type of lung cancer whose prevalence is rapidly increasing – over the past 30 years, the number of cases has risen 10-fold to about 1000 a year – and until recently was linked primarily to exposure to asbestos. Studies have found that around 70% of mesothelioma cases test positive for the SV40 virus. Some scientists remain sceptical of the link, however. A professor of viral oncology at University College, London, said SV40 is widely used in laboratories and could easily contaminate tumour samples, fooling the ultra-sensitive tests used to detect the virus.'

...A test case legal action for damages is to be launched in Britain following new A[US]n research backing claims that thalidomide deformities can be inherited... [A child of] one of the first generation of thalidomide victims... was born with badly deformed hands and legs and undeveloped tear ducts... But... [s]ceptics maintain that those cases where children have been born with deformities are not necessarily linked with thalidomide.

...[a drug company] said yesterday that it had received an "approvable letter" from the US F[DA] for thalidomide, which was once withdrawn from the market for causing severe birth defects. The letter did not mean the drug had been approved for sale, but was a big step towards that approval... It covered using the... drug for a side-effect of leprosy known as erythema nodosum leprosum... Thalidomide... was introduced in Europe in the 1950s as a sedative... The problems associated with the drug led to stricter drug approval regulations... [The manufacturer] has said it would use careful procedures to make sure any women given the drug did not become pregnant while using it. But experts, as well as thalidomide victims, said they were certain someone would get pregnant and birth defects would result if the drug was prescribed.

...The 30-year-old Wyoming woman suffers from Behcet's disease, an auto-immune condition that inflames the joints and ulcerates the skin, eyes and genitals. Her teeth were falling out, but the sores in her mouth kept her from wearing dentures. She often suffered fevers that led to convulsions, and joint pain confined her to a wheelchair. Today, she walks, drives and works with ease. Her skin is clear and her joints feel fine... The secret to her success? Thalidomide. Thalidomide has been synonymous with horror since the late 1950s, when 10,000 deformed babies were born worldwide to mothers who had used the drug to alleviate morning sickness. The sight of those children – some lacking eyes or ears, many born with tiny flippers for limbs – still haunts drug regulators. Yet the [FDA] is poised to let thalidomide [go back] on to the U[S] market – and thousands of sick people are looking to it for relief. Thalidomide's rehabilitation started almost as soon as it was shelved in the early 1960s. Studying the drug, researchers discovered it blocks the formation of new blood vessels, while slowing the immune system's production of a troop-rallying chemical called tumour necrosis factor alpha (TNF- α). The first effect had disastrous consequences for the developing foetus – limbs can't grow without blood vessels – but it had potential benefits for people with cancer and other conditions in which vessel growth causes trouble... By the 1970s, researchers had found that thalidomide could forestall the fever, joint pain and skin nodules associated with leprosy – presumably, by modulating TNF- α . Further study has shown that it can ease the symptoms of lupus, multiple sclerosis and rheumatoid arthritis, and can combat Aids-related wasting. Researchers are also studying it as a possible treatment for brain and prostate tumours and macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy, the two leading causes of blindness in adults. The drug administration is approving thalidomide only as a treatment for leprosy conditions. But once it reaches the market, probably early next year, doctors in America will be free to prescribe it at will. And, as the drug comes into wider use, the odds increase that unborn babies will be exposed. Other drugs can damage foetuses, but thalidomide poses extreme risks... Researchers are now working to develop thalidomide-like drugs that yield the same benefits without the same hazards. Until then, we can only hope that [the] triumphs... don't come at too high a cost... [In related news, a]n outbreak of leprosy... is threatening the... Kiribati Islands... Leprosy specialists from N[Z, AUS] and Fiji... have flown to the republic in a bid to contain the disease, which spreads through close contact with a carrier over a long time. Last year, 78 new cases... were diagnosed... So far this year, the number has stretched to 115 new cases – a high prevalence rate of 14.93 cases for every 10,000 people. The normal prevalence rate is one case every 10,000 people... The real worry is [that] more than 30 cases involved children under the age of 15.

...Honduran health officials [have] announced that 65,000 people in the country are in the late stages of Chagas disease and will die from the parasitic illness during the next few years... [They] estimate... 300,000 of the country's 5.8 million people are infected with Chagas, which weakens the heart and eventually causes it to fail. There is no known cure for the illness, which is spread by insects carrying the parasite *Trypanosoma cruzi*. The Pan American Health Organisation believes between 16 and 18 million people are infected throughout Central and South America.

...the world could eliminate four tropical diseases by 2007... New therapies... and creative disease-fighting strategies in developing countries provide... an unprecedented window to curb the illnesses. "If we don't do it, we may see drug resistance and [elimination] will be more difficult in the future;"... [the] WHO tropical disease chief... said. The diseases are: Chagas... which has infected about 18 million people in Latin America; river blindness, a parasite that has infected about 18 million people, mostly in Africa and Latin America; leprosy... the age-old scourge... which strikes one million people every year; and lymphatic filariasis, spread by mosquitoes to about 120 million people between India and islands in the Pacific... Eradication is expected to cost more than \$US160 million... a year. "If you add the cases... that's less than \$US1 a patient a year."

...[‘an immunization campaign instituted by WHO saw the last death from smallpox in 1976. In 1974, WHO launched a second campaign to secure the immunization of all the children in the world against polio, diphtheria, whooping cough, and tetanus. Less than 5% were then being immunized. Now more than 60% are. The cost is estimated at \$1.20 a child.’]

...When the W[HO] launched its Health for All strategy 20 years ago, with a mission to expunge preventable disease by the year 2000, Fortune took an easy hostage. As its deadline approaches, the always ambitious strategy is looking sickly: a situation blamed on too few government resources and a lack of willpower on the part of vested interests... World Health Report 1997... shows that the human race is far from outsmarting disease... The encouraging news is that deaths among children under five declined from 19 million in 1960 to 11 million in 1996[while the number of births increased]. The number of leprosy cases has fallen by 82[%] in the past 11 years... Further improvements “demand integrated, comprehensive action against all the determinants of ill-health.” It seems that inaction can seriously damage the health of millions... The report estimates that the number of cancer cases is expected to at least double in most countries in the next 25 years... Other non-infectious diseases are also on the increase. Dementia, particularly Alzheimers disease, is likely to affect three times as many people in 30 years time... Diabetes is affecting more people... Infectious diseases are still a huge problem, killing about 17 million people a year and afflicting hundreds of millions of others, particularly in developing countries... “As long as developing countries have to spend so much of their national incomes servicing their debts, then ill-health is likely to continue.” ...Tuberculosis killed 3 million people in 1996... and diarrhoeal disease claimed 2.5 million lives... Malaria accounted for between 1.5 million to 2.7 million deaths.

...[‘South Africa faces another major malaria epidemic as wet, warm weather creates ideal breeding conditions for the malarial mosquito. The Health Minister said the previous year’s malaria season had been the worst in 30 years, with 42,000 cases of malaria and 310 deaths. The worst-hit areas were Northern Province and Mpumalanga, which are suffering some of the worst flooding in half a century as abnormally wet weather batters the region. Malaria is the biggest single killer in neighbouring Mozambique, the continent’s poorest country, where about 60% of child and 40% of adult hospital admissions are malaria cases, while the disease causes 20% of hospital deaths.’]

...One hundred years after the discovery that mosquitoes spread malaria... [made doctors] hope this disease could soon be eliminated... organisers of a conference on parasitic illnesses said the disease has made a comeback... About 40[%] of the world’s population, or about 2.5 billion people, are at risk in more than 90 countries. More than 1 million children die of malaria each year... In India, malaria was almost wiped out... Between 1950 and 1970, an eradication programme reduced annual infections from 75 million to 100,000, and deaths from 800,000 to almost none. But over the past two decades the trend has reversed, with four epidemics since 1994. In 1996, 2.85 million cases were reported, and the official death toll – believed to be far below actual numbers – was about 3000... About 20 million Western tourists travel in regions prone to malaria every year.

...Doctors are still prescribing the malaria prevention medicine maloprim to N[Z]ers going overseas, despite the drug’s links to adverse effects, says a report... The report looked at the adequacy of advice about malaria given by [GPs to N[Z]ers about to go overseas. It said 340 cases of imported malaria were notified in N[Z] between 1983 and 1992... Chloroquine, alone or with a standby drug such as quinine or mefloquine, was the most commonly prescribed anti-malarial. The side-effects of mefloquine had also been a source of controversy, particularly in regard to reported neuro-psychiatric effects... [M]aloprim had not been recommended for use in N[Z and AUS] since 1992... The first neurological side-effects... from... Mefloquine, otherwise known as Lariam... were reported in 1987 and in 1989 doctors were encouraged to notify the [WHO] of such problems. They did and the result was a one in 10,000 statistic of people suffering serious neurological side-effects. A British study carried out between 1993 and 1995 showed more than 9[%]... of users reported neurological side-effects... [– such as] fatigue, insomnia and phobias... [– that were] bad enough to interfere with daily activities... [80%] of the travellers who had disabling neuropsychiatric effects were women...

[‘That buzzing, biting nuisance in the middle of hot summer nights could be put to good use if a molecular biologist’s research is taken up. The biologist who works at Sydney’s University of Technology is investigating whether mosquito saliva can be used to replace aspirin as an anti-clotting agent. About a dozen molecules in the saliva secreted by mosquitoes when they bite have functions that maximise the success of feeding. “They stop coagulation, dilate the blood vessels and suppress the immune system locally, all things which have evolved to allow the mosquito to get its blood meal.” These are the exact properties to combat cardiovascular problems, for which many take aspirin. “What is wanted in anti-clotting agents is something which can be absorbed through the stomach pretty easily, doesn’t cause bleeding, and has a long half-life in blood.” His work may also be useful to researchers developing vaccines. “If you cocktail these molecules with a vaccine, you may be able to turn up the amount of protection against mosquito-borne viruses.”’]

Incidentally, a) genetically engineered vaccine against the deadly Ebola virus has been developed... The University of Michigan medical centre... had created an immune response... by injecting... plasmid DNA encoding Ebola proteins... into the muscles of animals... [G]uinea pigs showed strong immunity two months later... “Researchers examined the organs of the animals and found no traces of the Ebola virus, meaning that immunisation completely neutralised the infection.” ...After four months they showed good immunity from one version of the vaccine but not from another... [T]he next step would be to study the DNA vaccine in primates and then hold controlled toxicity tests in humans. All four strains of Ebola would need testing. Ebola[, which]... kills between 50 and 90[%] of its victims... is spread by direct contact with body fluids such as blood, vomit and diarrhoea... [T]he virus was first identified in 1976... in Zaire...

Thirteen people have died from an unidentified disease in the north-east of Kenya. A doctor rejected rumours of an Ebola outbreak, and said the disease, which leaves victims bleeding uncontrollably from body cavities, could be haemorrhagic fever passed on by a species of the malaria-carrying mosquito.

...Close to 1000 people have contracted dengue fever... which causes internal bleeding... in Rarotonga, despite efforts by the Cook Islands Ministry of Health to get the epidemic under control. Spraying the homes and surrounding grounds of infected people has not eradicated the type of mosquito which carries the disease – *Aedes aegypti*... “It is threatening our health and in its worst form our life and... our tourist industry,”... says... [a local] expert in public health... [who] was intensely annoyed by the... outbreak as the disease and its carrier were eliminated... in the Cook Islands during the 1940s... The Rarotonga Hospital laboratory has been stretched to the limit carrying out blood tests on suspected dengue cases, with up to 70 people needing tests a day. A laboratory source said they were running desperately short of blood-testing apparatus and N[Z] suppliers are demanding payment of overdue bills before supplying further essential equipment. The Ministry of Health is reported to be trying to source funding to pay[the] outstanding bills... The disease... has hit New Caledonia heaviest, with 7000 reported cases already this year... Outbreaks... have [also occurred in] Fiji and Samoa...

A DENGUE FEVER epidemic has hit Western Samoa, killing two children and sparking concerns that tourists may carry it home to... [NZ. M]osquitoes... carrying the... no[n]-contagious... fever have been known to travel on planes and on board ships. [There were ‘12 cases of dengue fever reported in NZ during the past 12 months (including one death’). But when it comes to people travelling on planes and ships, NZ health authorities are more concerned about tuberculosis. ‘NZ and Canadian health officers had to try and track down 220 people in order to screen them for tuberculosis after they had shared planes with a woman who was suspected of being infected with the disease when she flew from Auckland to Canada and back again during 1996.’ ‘Approximately one person a day dies of tuberculosis in NZ’ (worldwide, ‘more people have died from TB since the 16th century than from anything else’).]

...World health officials have warned of a new plague of incurable drug-resistant tuberculosis threatening to sweep across Asia and the Pacific to A[US and NZ. The director of the Who’s]... global tuberculosis programme, said the region already accounted for two-thirds of the world’s TB cases... About one-third of the world’s population is infected... According to Who estimates, worldwide deaths from the disease soared from

900,000 in 1993 to 3.1 million in 1995. By the end of the decade, it estimates more than 6 million cases will be reported annually in the Asia-Pacific region. "Unless national TB control programmes utilise the treatment strategy which has proven to be effective, it is likely that the emergence of multidrug-resistant strains of the disease would worsen the situation dramatically," [the director] said at a Who TB training workshop in Sydney... About 14% of current cases are believed to be resistant to at least one antibiotic, but researchers are most concerned about those strains – about 2% of new diagnoses – able to withstand the two most widely used antibiotics. This multiple-drug resistant form of TB is extremely expensive to treat – up to \$270,000 per patient... The new antibiotic-resistant TB bacteria develop by mutation when patients discontinue treatment early, either because they begin to feel better or they cannot afford to take the drugs[. so]... Who is urging... health workers... to ensure patients took the complete course of medication. "When patients do not take their full course of anti-TB treatment not only are they not cured – they continue to infect others... For every person who is provided incorrect TB treatment, at least 10 additional people annually can be infected... With world travel increasing and HIV infection further accelerating the speed at which TB infection spreads, everyone – from Kathmandu to Tasmania – is vulnerable to this threat." ...[he likened] the potentially fatal disease to... a forest fire – it was no good ignoring a fire raging in a different part of the forest because everyone was likely to be eventually engulfed by the flames. "It is in A[US]'s interest to fight TB on all fronts if TB is to be defeated at home and abroad."

...A[US] is being tragically reminded that old killers never die. In hospitals around the country children are fighting the return of whooping cough in a... battle not all win: last month a six-year-old boy died in Sydney, the third death in N[SW] in three months. Another 42, according to federal health officials, have been killed by measles in the past two years. Immunisation rates that have plunged below some Third World countries raise further fears of new epidemics of diseases such as polio and diphtheria. Said the Federal Health Minister... "In A[US] we are now starting to see again babies who are born deformed because of German measles, one in every 4000 unimmunised kids dying from whooping cough, and young men becoming sterile because of the complications of measles." ...children who had not been immunised risked the health of other children as well as their own... Finding an answer is not easy... [A] range of proposals to lift the rate of immunisation is now being prepared, including the possibility of paying parents for each injection administered to their child... Others are more drastic... [– such as] banning children who have not been immunised from enrolling in schools, an option which, while winning support from the A[US]n Medical Association, has met with resistance from the state Education Ministers who will meet later this month to discuss the move... Opponents of immunisation are also rallying... claiming... more than 200 serious reactions and deaths from child immunisation. "It's time the Government acknowledged that the freedom to determine whether vaccines are administered rests with the parents, not with the medical lobby,"... Reluctance to immunise is significantly entrenched. According to a survey last year by the Bureau of Statistics, a third of the parents who had not immunised their children against diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough, and a quarter of those failing to immunise against polio, were opposed to immunisation, were worried about side-effects, or were advised against it... At present A[US]n children need six sets of injections by the age of four to be fully immunised... But the Statistics Bureau's survey shows that even among parents who start off well, immunisation rates fall noticeably by the time children reach the age of two... The overall rate for immunisation against all diseases on the recommended schedule is now just 53[%] – well below developing countries such as China and Vietnam... [T]he outlook is grim unless the trend can be reversed, possibly by a combination of policy and technology... In the meantime, A[US] faces serious difficulties. Up to 150 children could die this year from whooping cough because they were not immunised against it...

[An Auckland doctor and his 8-month-old son are experiencing first hand the early arrival of a whooping cough epidemic. The Middlemore Hospital emergency department registrar caught whooping cough after treating three babies with the disease. He passed it on to his son, who was immunised but appears to be among the 10% of the population for whom vaccination does not work. New figures show 558 NZers have been diagnosed with the infectious bacterial disease in the past two months, compared with 1042 in the whole of last year, and 153 the year before that. Most people with whooping cough carry the infection for a week without realising they have it. Sufferers later experience symptoms, including a runny nose and cough which becomes progressively worse. The most severe coughing attacks can cause vomiting and bleeding into the eyes and brain. Babies may stop breathing in their sleep, suffer pneumonia and brain damage or even die. Doctors say the early arrival of the epidemic can be attributed to NZ's poor immunisation rate.]

...Fewer children would end up in hospital with gastroenteritis if babies were immunised against a virus which causes the disease, say health researchers. A report in the *N[Z] Medical Journal* suggests all children could be vaccinated against rotavirus, which causes about seven out of 10 cases of gastroenteritis. The disease, which mainly affects children under five, causes severe diarrhoea and loss of body fluids and can lead to brain damage or even death. The authors of the report... say gastroenteritis was the fifth highest cause of admissions to the Starship children's hospital in... 1995-96. They suggest an oral dose of a vaccine called RRV-TV should be given to babies with the present oral dose of polio vaccine at the age of six weeks, three months and five months. The report... argues that overseas research shows the benefits of reduced hospitalisations would outweigh the costs of giving the vaccine to all babies... [T]he latest U[S] trial showed protection for 49[%] of children against all rotavirus illness[es] (which, worldwide, 'kill over 5 million children each year'), for 80[%] against severe episodes and for all against dehydrating illnesses. However, four of the 1278 babies were hospitalised within a week of the first dose with fever, vomiting and diarrhoea. Other side effects were less severe diarrhoea and increased temperature... [N]one of the 2748 children who received RRV-TV in previous trials had to be taken to hospital... N[Z]... has low immunisation rates by world standards for the nine diseases covered by voluntary immunisation.

...Hepatitis B is a killer... So why do some countries still not immunise their children against it? ...Peter... was aged 17 when tests showed he had contracted hepatitis B. The... student had been infected in infancy – by his mother... The effect on the [their] lives was cataclysmic. [The mother] discovered she had been a hepatitis carrier for years and had been responsible for giving her son a disease 100 times more infectious than HIV and a frequent trigger of fatal liver illness. Peter (not his real name) was shunned by fellow pupils; the family were treated like lepers. Peter's mother found she could no longer afford to buy him life insurance; his chances of getting a mortgage in later life were badly dented; and Peter's prospects of becoming a dentist – his career choice – were destroyed. "Hepatitis will almost certainly affect his chances of settling down and marrying as well... Who would want to put themselves at risk of contracting a fatal disease every time they had sex or shared a toothbrush?" Peter has a one in 10 chance of becoming a carrier of the disease... It is a grim story, one that is likely to be repeated many more times in coming years as... infection rates stubbornly refuse to drop. Yet, while dozens of countries including the U[S], Germany, France and Italy say they now immunise all infants and adolescents, a handful of Western countries revealed they still do not: Scandinavia, the Netherlands, Ireland – and Britain – where Peter lives. Health chiefs in Britain pledged several years ago to implement a countrywide immunisation programme to eradicate the disease... [Instead, Britain continues] targeting only high-risk individuals – needle users, gays and promiscuous heterosexuals – for screening and vaccinations. The policy has allowed thousands to become infected by a virus that is spread through contact with any body fluid, including saliva. There are about 50,000 carriers in Britain. Because many do not show symptoms, they are often unaware of the deadly cargo they carry in their blood... It is estimated that more than one-third of the world's population has been infected with hepatitis B. Most have recovered, but there are still 350 million carriers. Every year a million of them die, usually from liver cancer. Researchers... said they were progressing towards the creation of a cheap combined diphtheria, typhoid and hepatitis vaccine.

...as renewed fears are raised in Britain about links between vaccines and serious illnesses in children, N[Z] authorities release a five-year study reassuring us all is well. What's going on? ...IF THE report of the Adverse Reactions Monitoring Centre is any guide, not a single N[Z] child has been permanently damaged by a vaccine in the... years the study covered. We can trust the findings, it says, because our reporting rate, though voluntary, is the best of all the [WHO] nations collaborating in side-effect monitoring, including those who have mandatory reports. But hang on,

what about the 44 children the [ACC's] medical misadventure unit have accepted since 1992 as being injured by vaccines and entitled to Government help? [The centre's] medical assessor... was unaware of those cases, saying the Privacy Act prevented the ACC passing on the data. The problem had now been rectified, he said. But that does not explain why doctors seem to report apparently minor vaccine reactions – including rashes and injection site inflammation – while overlooking brain damage. The centre's report... appeared in the *N[Z] Medical Journal* on the same day as a British doctor's journal reported links between the Measles Mumps and Rubella vaccination and two other conditions, the incurable bowel disease Crohn's and autism, a mental illness which makes children withdraw from their surroundings[('the condition is also incurable – although studies suggest that half of the people with autism gain some benefit from high doses of vitamin B6 and magnesium, and autistic people can be taught to socialise if other people understand how to respond to them; about one in 10 have special skills in a single area, such as a memory for numbers or drawing')]. In the last few days, three[NZ] parents have reported suspected MMR-related autism to the anti-vaccine Immunisation Awareness Society... Evidence linking MMR to autism has emerged at Utah State University, where researchers discovered the genetic structure of the measles virus was similar to myelin, which insulates the central nervous system. Delayed or incomplete myelination in the brain has been suggested as the cause of autism. The Utah doctors believe the immune systems of children react inappropriately to vaccination, harming the host instead of battling the “invader” vaccine... The doctors at London's Royal Free Hospital medical school say they didn't set out to prove a link between MMR and Crohn's, but believe Crohn's is caused by the failed response of the immune system to the measles virus... The team... believes exposure to the virus through vaccination at... around 15 months, when the immune system is still developing – carries greater risk than natural exposure to the wild virus later... [However,] British and American health authorities have pronounced the study seriously flawed... [and the company] which produces the MMR vaccine, says rates of Crohn's disease are rising in some countries but falling in others, regardless of immunisation rates. [Furthermore, the] managing director... says autism is expected to strike one in 10,000 children, but statistics his company has indicate rates among vaccinated children are lower... British statistics put the accepted risks of measles vaccine at one in 10 of mild rash/fever, one in 100 of mild measles reaction, one in 1000 of convulsions and one in 12,000 of fits. Anaphylaxis, an allergic reaction that can lead to breathing difficulties and – rarely – death, occurs in about one case in 200,000. About 1% of children who get measles will get pneumonia. One in 5000 suffer brain inflammation – and one in 5000 of those may develop a hardening of the brain which can kill. Anti-vaccine campaigners argue death rates from measles have been slashed by better living standards and nutrition. They say the risks of vaccines are unacceptable and ineffective – [one mother] says her children caught measles from vaccinated kids who got the disease anyway. The Health Ministry says... the benefits of vaccination far outweigh the risks.

...[a new question is being asked of parents enrolling 5-year-olds for school this year – has your child been vaccinated? The Ministry of Health has asked schools to obtain immunisation certificates from parents. The aim is to raise NZ's immunisation rates, which are low by the standards of the developed world. Only about 70% of NZ children are immunised']

...[a] survey, conducted last year, found 63[%] of children in the northern region had received all recommended immunisations by age two. In 1992 the number was 55.4[%]. The] North Health communications manager, said the increase was in part due to a national Immunisation 2000 Strategy programme, started in 1995, and regional awareness programmes. Despite the improvement... [there] is... concern that one child in every five is not immunised against measles by age two... [T]here was potential for a measles epidemic unless 95[%] of children were immunised.

...Health officials are on the alert as a measles epidemic takes hold in Auckland and Waikato. Twenty-three cases have been confirmed in Auckland this month. The country recorded no cases last year... [The] last epidemic: 1991[, left s]ix dead, 570 hospitalised. This year's predictions: six to 10 deaths, 900 hospitalised, 40,000-50,000 infected... Children aged between one and 10 should be vaccinated to guard against the highly infectious virus... However, the public health physician for North Health... conceded last night that only 50,000 vaccine doses were available nationwide – well short of what would be needed for all the unvaccinated children. A further 180,000 doses are expected from A[US] next month. “The Ministry of Health predicted there would be an epidemic and that it would be most likely to start next year but events indicate it is starting now. We have two weeks to get as many children immunised as possible.”

...Fifty-seven cases have been confirmed in the past month in the measles epidemic in Auckland and Waikato... A shipment of 72,000 doses of vaccine would arrive in N[Z] by next Thursday, and further shipments of 514,000 doses were expected later this month... Only two or three cases have been confirmed in other districts.

...A national measles immunisation campaign covering more than 500,000 children is about to begin to stop the spread of the epidemic... Parents are being urged to vaccinate babies as young as six months old... as infant cases start to pour in[, even though]... the Immunisation Awareness Society said vaccinating at such an age could seriously damage a baby's long-term health... Public health figures show that a quarter of 63 confirmed cases in Auckland in recent weeks have involved toddlers from six to 11 months. This has brought a revision of the earlier recommendation by health officials that children aged from one should be vaccinated... But health officials are racing against time. The disease is already well established in Auckland and is expected to spread rapidly... Most cases have been in West Auckland, where there have been outbreaks in three schools and four pre-school centres... The Ministry of Health... was “as in control of the situation as we can be,” considering that the epidemic had happened faster than expected.

...THE measles epidemic could have been contained earlier if doctors had acted on Ministry of Health advice... says[the] public health director... Doctors were advised in December to start ensuring all children were up to date with immunisations. But... “Health professionals did not take a lot of notice of that warning.” ...Of the 1543 confirmed measles cases this year, 118 have been hospital cases but there have been no deaths. - 1997

A British nurse has been suspended from her job amid a police probe into the allegedly suspicious deaths of 18 children, health officials confirmed yesterday. The police are investigating claims that the youngsters, all aged between eight weeks and 17 years and all suffering from terminal illnesses, were given lethal doses of painkillers between 1996 and last year. The nurse has yet to be charged or questioned. If the allegations hold water, Britain would be faced with a second case of dark medical practices at the heart of its much-maligned and chronically underfunded National Health Service. Last year, [a] doctor... was jailed for life for the murder of 15 elderly patients in his charge.

...the bearded, bespectacled doctor who became Britain's – and perhaps the world's – most prolific serial killer, was undone by a simple signature. [The doctor], who... killed at least 15 of his patients... forged the will of Kathleen Grundy, his final victim... in order to obtain cash and property worth £300,000... Her lawyer daughter... became suspicious of the document which bequeathed her mother's estate to the GP. She analysed specimens of her mother's signature and questioned the so-called witnesses only to find out their signatures were forged. When his trial ended[, the] 54-year-old [GP] was convicted of murdering 15 of his devoted and trusting patients with lethal injections of medicinal heroin, in Hyde, a town near Manchester. Most of the victims were murdered after they let him into their homes, usually by appointment. One was killed in a consulting room at his one-man surgery in Market St. As he was jailed for life, it emerged that [the GP will] be charged with the deaths of 23 more patients... Greater Manchester Police believe he has killed 95 times.

...If anyone can come close to unlocking [the doctor]'s mind, it is probably... the only psychiatrist to interview him since his arrest. Because [the doctor] denied the... murders, he has given no explanation of what motivated him, or what pleasure he derived from the killings. However, [the psychiatrist] sees him as the “classic” necrophiliac; a man obsessed not with having sex with the dead, but with the act of inducing death, and controlling and observing the moment when life leaves the body. [The doctor] appears to have been meticulous about details, such as the positioning of his victims before he injected them... and was excited at being present when his handiwork was discovered by others... He no doubt relished the

fact that he had evaded capture for so long, and he perhaps gained particular pleasure from those he murdered in his surgery. He also enjoyed breaking the news to some of his victims' relatives. Whether he achieved some sexual release after a murder is unknown. [The psychiatrist believes the doctor's] choice of career could have been influenced by his developing tendencies towards necrophilia, perhaps originally triggered by the death of his mother from cancer when he was 17... Prosecutors at... the... trial... of Dr Death say... his drive to kill was fed by a desire for God-like power over life and death... "There are enough recorded instances of multiple murders by doctors to make at least a prima facie case that the profession attracts some people with a pathological interest in the power over life and death,"... says... a retired psychiatrist in Berkshire...

At first glance, [the suspect] was everything a patient could want in a physician: confident and competent, with a good bedside manner. Prosecutors took a longer glance and saw something else – someone they believe fatally poisoned three patients at a Long Island veterans' hospital and left a trail of dead bodies stretching from Ohio to Zimbabwe. Now the man dubbed "Dr Death" by the tabloids faces the death penalty himself. [The physician] returns today to Long Island for his arraignment on [three] murder charges... but the best selling book *Blind Eye: The Story of a Doctor Who Got Away With Murder* suggests he may have killed as many as 35 patients... [The physician] graduated from Southern Illinois University Medical School in 1983. There... classmates... joked that he had a licence to kill after several of his cases ended in death. While an intern at Ohio State University in 1984, [he] allegedly killed a 19-year-old gymnast with a dose of potassium. [He] was never prosecuted for that death, or for another alleged poisoning of a patient who survived. When denied permission to return for the second year of his residency, he... took a job as an emergency medical technician. His stint ended with his conviction for lacing co-workers' coffee and doughnuts with ant poison. Five of them became ill. [He] served two years of a five-year prison sentence and lost his medical licence. He made several attempts to revive his career, eventually landing a 1993 residency at the State University of New York by lying on his job application... [He] was dismissed after his past record became public knowledge, and he soon moved to Zimbabwe. Within a year of his arrival, patients in a hospital there were showing signs of poisoning. In July 1995, a Zimbabwe hospital suspended [him]. He was finally arrested two years later at O'Hare Airport in Chicago, boarding a flight to Saudi Arabia... [In related news, the] British doctor... who is serving life imprisonment for killing 15 patients, may have killed up to 265 people, says a Government dossier... Immediately after the conviction, [the British] Health Secretary... ordered a statistical audit of [the doctor's] clinical practice [since] 1974 and... found at least 250 more deaths during his career than in the practices of other doctors in the same area at the same time... The findings of that study have now been passed to the police... Soon after [his] conviction, police opened inquiries into the deaths of a further 39 of his patients and were investigating as many as 175 cases... However, a new trial was ruled out.

...It's a funny thing, the politics of grief. The little town of Hyde ought to have been in a state of shock after discovering that an official Government report suggests as many as 300 of its residents may have been murdered by a local GP... And yet, while there is shock in the town at the new numbers, there are also some very different responses. Some people are still in a state of denial. A baker, whose shop is just up the road from the surgery where [the GP] practised for more than two decades, said: "After all that has come out, I still get customers saying that [the GP] was such a nice man." Other townsfolk demonstrate a sense of weariness – mixed with anger – that the dreadful saga is continuing. One resident... screamed at reporters... outside [the GP's] former surgery... "Why don't you lot bugger off and leave us in peace!" The surgery is still open... An angry man, whose wife works in the surgery, tried to chase away the press. "There has been enough trauma and illness through stress here without you adding to it," he said. "Go away. This is over." Only it isn't. Some of the relatives of [the] victims were angry too. But their ire was directed at the Ministry of Health for not having given them advance warning of the report's contents. Their solicitor... was demanding that the coroner open inquests into many of the 300 deaths. Some local people support her in this... But many others feel that nothing would be served by it... There is a close-knit sense about Hyde. It is there in the fact that almost everyone you meet... appears to know someone who was killed by [the GP]. Everyone seems to have a story about him. And almost everyone, at some point in the conversation, mentions the Moors Murderers. Almost half a century has elapsed since those child murderers shocked British society with their gruesome crimes. But few of us could remember where they were from. In Hyde, they have not forgotten, because... [the Moors Murderers] perpetrated their killings less than a mile from [the GP's] surgery. Behind the surprise, the anger and the weariness in Hyde lurks another unspoken emotion. It is shame.

...Deaths of at least 466 people in the two areas where... the former GP from Hyde... practised will be investigated... [Staying in Britain, a surgeon has defended his] decision to amputate healthy limbs of two patients suffering from rare mental disorder as [his] hospital bans further operations.

...Dozens of babies died unnecessarily at Bristol Royal Infirmary because of a "club culture" among surgeons, who adopted a paternalistic attitude to patients and wielded too much power, a damning report says. The long-awaited report of the... inquiry, the biggest conducted into the National Health Service, said that one-third of young children who had open-heart surgery at the hospital received less than adequate care because of the arrogance of doctors and fundamental failures of management. Those who raised concerns over the number of babies dying were ignored or threatened because of a "poisoned" atmosphere that existed between management, surgeons and other staff... This led to a "Greek tragedy"...

The British pathologist at the centre of a scandal over stockpiled human organs kept a child's head stored in a jar, a damning report is expected to reveal. The findings make such distressing reading that the British Government is braced for violent scenes at Alder Hay Hospital in Liverpool when grieving parents see them. The report comes after a one-year inquiry into how hundreds of children's organs, many taken at post-mortem examinations without parents' knowledge, were stored... apparently without the knowledge of senior hospital officials. The findings are expected to conclude that the collection of organs went far beyond what would have been necessary for [the pathologist's] work. Some children lost almost all of their internal organs... after unwitting parents signed consent forms asking merely for samples of "tissue." The report will only severely criticise [the pathologist], who has insisted the backlog of body parts built up because of lack of funding to complete his cot death research, but also the hospital's management for its complete failure to monitor him, and its treatment of parents when news of the scandal first emerged. Families were repeatedly given false information and some were offered body parts of their children to take home in cardboard boxes. Others had to reopen their children's graves three or four times to ensure they had buried the entire bodies... Last week it emerged that the hospital had passed discarded thymus glands from living children during heart operations to a drug company for research in exchange for financial donations. Such is the level of suspicion between the parents and the hospital that many suspect the trade in organs could have been more extensive... The report will be published tomorrow, alongside a second survey by [the] chief medical officer for England and Wales... revealing that up to 40,000 body parts are stored for teaching and research at hospitals throughout Britain, many without relatives' knowledge... The Government is not expected to offer a central compensation fund... The report was passed to the Department of Health [two months ago]. Its publication has [been] delayed by the need to ensure that new guidelines hampered neither research nor organ donation for transplants... The... [pathologist] moved to Canada in 1995, where he was subsequently sacked and disciplined for "incompetent acts." He then moved to Holland.

...[a couple of Aucklanders] say their lives were shattered last night when Green Lane Hospital revealed to them that it has held their dead baby's heart and lungs for the past 17 years... The Henderson couple's second child, Lance William James, died in Green Lane's intensive care unit... aged 8 months. He had undergone open-heart surgery to correct a valve defect and his survival chances had been put at 50[%. They]... are one of the 18 families the hospital has matched up with hearts stored without specific consent... Green Lane revealed last week that it was holding more than 1300 abnormal hearts, mainly from children, babies and aborted fetuses. The collection dates from 1950... Six families wanted the organs back and six had opted to leave them with the hospital... [F]amilies who wanted to retrieve a heart would be given financial help to cover agreed travel costs of two people and burial of the organ... Hospital staff were about to start calling back families for whom there was no organ match.

...My first-born Travers, was 25 – old enough to make up his own mind. That’s why I didn’t object when he renewed his licence and opted against organ donation. ‘I’d like to leave this world in the same way I entered it,’ he said... A week or so later, I was tidying the house when... his younger brother phoned... A wall had collapsed at a demolition site and Travers had been crushed by falling debris... Somehow, amidst[my] sadness... I organised Travers’ burial... [F]or some inexplicable reason, 18 months after Travers’ death I decided to obtain a copy of his post-mortem results. It indicated certain parts of his body had been removed. ‘But we didn’t give consent,’... I was horrified... – Travers’ brain had been removed and destroyed, while his spine and spinal cord were in storage. ‘We have to get them back,’ I said... The very next day, the coroner organised for their release... [from Western AUS’s] Royal Perth Hospital... and I went to Travers’ graveside, where they were buried in a child’s casket.

...[‘AUSn research shows that up to 30% of cot deaths may be caused by babies sliding down under bed covers. “Especially the thicker, softer combinations. In particular, duvets allowed carbon dioxide levels around the baby’s face to go up to about 4%, when normally there’s very little,” says one of the researchers. He points out that in Holland young babies often go to bed in small sleeping bags, which avoids this risk, but he stresses the main rule is still to make sure babies sleep on their backs with their face clear of the covers. • NZ’s rate of cot deaths has fallen from 400 a year in the 1980s to 130.’ ‘Each year 10,000 infants in the US die in their sleep from unknown causes which are classified as “crib death,” or sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).’]

...Parents must not give up sleeping their babies on their backs despite fears about them developing flat heads[, because it]... is the single most effective way of reducing... SIDS... “The development of babies is not harmed in any way if they do get a flat spot... on the back of their heads from lying in the same position all the time... and in most cases no-one except the parents would ever notice it,” says... Plunket’s national pediatrician...

Background noise may help to keep babies at risk of cot death alive, says an Auckland clinical psychologist... [The] senior lecturer at the Auckland School of Medicine, has completed a review of cot-death literature with[a] Scottish acoustics specialist... and two Italian researchers. Their theory suggests that from about 3 months old, babies’ breathing during sleep is improved by exposure to a level of background noise. A lack of noise over a period could trigger breathing problems among vulnerable babies... The theory[, which]... was partly developed from research [the lecturer] did 10 years ago at Otago University on infant pigs and dogs... has been greeted with reservation by[a local] cot-death researcher... who said she would be surprised if sound was a big factor.

...Wrapping baby up warm – it is a natural maternal instinct, but experts say it is something we need to reverse, as thermal stress is putting babies’ lives at risk... A baby could not... easily... kick off blankets or cool itself if hot... An Otago Paediatric Physiology Group spokesman... said it had long been recognised that temperature played a part in ...SIDS... A recent survey of parent knowledge in Britain showed that parents tend to overheat their children. Almost two-thirds... did not know what temperature was needed to keep their babies comfortable and 64[%] of the rooms checked in the survey were too hot. Doctors suggested keeping a room at a temperature of between 16 and 20 degrees C... A 1997 study of more than 500,000 babies in northern England and... western England, of which 325 had died of SIDS, revealed the link between overheating and cot deaths. Mothers of those babies had been much more concerned about their babies being too cold than too hot... [By the way, a]n ACC finding of health workers’ negligence sparked the inquiry announced this week into baby deaths and brain damage at National Women’s Hospital. ACC said yesterday that it had paid compensation for 10 medical misadventure claims for physiotherapy given to premature babies... who had been on respiratory ventilators... at the hospital between April 1993 and December 1994... The treatment[, which] involved tapping babies’ chest with a soft latex cup to clear secretions[, was]... stopped... when it was linked to death and brain damage... When asked why it had taken so long to address the issue, [the]... chief medical adviser at the Ministry of Health, which set up the inquiry, said... ACC had reviewed its original findings... The Director-General of Health... said the main issue appeared to be an increase in the intensity of the chest-tapping method, used to a lesser degree by other hospitals... Management at Wellington, Waikato and Dunedin Hospitals... [– where n]o deaths or injuries were linked to the treatment... [–] said they used the treatment in the same era but less vigorously and less often than at National Women’s[, where it]... went from being applied only during an eight-hour period to round-the clock... The[inquiry] panel head... said two babies suffered rib fractures[, which]... indicated the therapy was too vigorous... The hospital’s general manager... yesterday declined to expand on an earlier written statement, which welcomed the inquiry and said staff followed international standards of the time... The Nurses Society national director... said it would be unfortunate if the inquiry became a witch-hunt. He predicted the inquiry would find National Women’s and its staff were blameless. While it was tragic that babies had died, there had been a good rationale for the treatment.

...A physiotherapist at the centre of the... inquiry says that ideally nurses should not have given the treatment. Nurses trained in the therapy... started giving it to premature babies at National Women’s Hospital in 1993. That was owing to funding cuts and because it was considered an improvement to make the therapy available around the clock. The physiotherapist told the... inquiry yesterday that if she had “all the resources in the world” she would prefer the therapy to be given by physiotherapists rather than nurses. “A physiotherapist has a repertoire of skills that are over and above nursing skills [so] that she can always individualise her treatment to the baby.” ...A National Women’s paediatrician told the inquiry yesterday that the chest tapping was difficult to watch as it conflicted with the policy of handling premature babies as little as possible.

...In 1995, a paediatrician from the country’s largest maternity hospital... issued national and international warnings that a form of physiotherapy could be the cause of death and disability in premature babies aged 13 to 16 weeks with low blood pressure. The treatment... could have been behind 13 cases of brain damage. Five of the babies died... The Ministry of Health’s chief medical adviser... said that in the majority of cases ACC had found that a medical mishap had occurred. But two cases came under the more serious medical error or negligence category, which meant that, effectively, the ministry had to step in... To his knowledge, the... increase in the frequency of the physiotherapy to meet international standards... occurred in only two places in the world: Birmingham in England and National Women’s. The investigation had been driven by... some parents[who were] anxious to pursue the matter.

...A parent whose child died after receiving controversial chest-tapping physiotherapy at National Women’s Hospital believes he is close to a breakthrough in getting compensation... [His] persistence forced an inquiry into the physiotherapy after his son, Alistair, died and Alistair’s twin sister... was brain-damaged. He is threatening legal action against the public hospital company if it does not come up with a “satisfactory settlement.” ...He had not put a total figure on what he was seeking but said the costs before the inquiry were more than \$100,000. His driving motivation was to provide a secure future for... [his daughter, who] cannot run, has a speech impediment and has difficulty eating and drinking...

Chest-tapping physiotherapy on premature babies has been held up to international ridicule, according to an A[US]n expert opposed to the practice... [The] neonatal specialist at Royal Children’s Hospital in Melbourne, said yesterday that during a “joke session” at a U[S] conference last year participants discussed the “10 most useless treatments” for babies in intensive care. “Number one on the list, at last, was chest physiotherapy. For 20 years we have been telling everyone it’s a waste of time and potentially harmful.” ...[he] said it destabilised babies, potentially triggering a sequence that could occasionally lead to brain damage, although not to the rare type of injury discovered at National Women’s... Only one other hospital in the world – in Birmingham... – has reported cases of the rare brain damage in live-born babies. Fifteen babies suffered from it from 1988 to 1990 and all but one died.

...Many cases of the unusual baby brain damage... may have gone undetected elsewhere, an A[US]n medical expert says. The... leading neonatal specialist from Sydney, told the Government-appointed inquiry yesterday that only one case... had been reported in A[US] and NZ], outside National Women’s. It was from a Western A[US] hospital... and was not well documented... The brain lesions [in 13 babies]... at... National Women’s... were detected on ultra-sound scans, but the witness said that at some newborn units other than at National Women’s, there was often

“missing data for a lot of ultra-sounds at four to six weeks.” ...These “late” scans were missed in up to 25[%] of babies born eight or more weeks prematurely in N[Z and AUS] in 1994, the first year from which the data was collated... The missed scans might be because of health workers not getting around to doing them or because of infants being transferred out of newborn intensive care units in big cities “back to lower levels of care in peripheral hospitals.” He said health workers looking at scan results also might not have recognised the lesions because of their rarity... He... [added] that “percussion” therapy... was still practised elsewhere...

The Cartwright inquiry into what was widely known as “the unfortunate experiment” at National Women’s Hospital upended... the relationship between doctors and patients. The landscape would never look the same again. Slowly, new services came into being to mediate the relationship between a medical profession seen as aloof and arrogant and its patients, who felt that for too long they had not been listened to. Few would dispute that the change has been for the better. But in the wake of the report into “baby-tapping” at National Women’s, questions are being asked about how responsive the medical profession is to the concerns of patients. The inquiry found that parents’ concerns about the “tapping” were ignored, even when they were expressed with some vigour, and that parental consent was not obtained for the treatment. Inquiry members said in their report that the issue of informed consent – even though it lay outside their terms of reference – “needs to be properly addressed for the future.” ...So does this new report suggest we are back where we started? ...[the] co-writer of the *Metro* article that indirectly launched the Cartwright inquiry, says at least some of the gains made since then have been lost. The latest inquiry is a “snapshot of the system which shows informed consent is not being observed in an adequate fashion at all... The doctors were saying you don’t need to get informed consent for a procedure if there isn’t a risk involved, which is a bit bizarre when in this instance they ended up killing people.” ...Before the reorganisation that changed hospitals into [CHE]s, some area health boards employed their own advocates... [A nationwide patient advocate service... w[as] established under the office of the Health and Disability Commissioner in June 1996... Today, the equivalent of just over 25 fulltime workers are employed by the commissioner’s office, which will spend a shade under \$2 million this year on the service. Few of the advocates are on site at hospitals. They can be contacted through toll-free numbers – although a patient facing a tricky decision in the small hours of the morning won’t get any help...

It was close to 2am on a Monday in late August when the police cars cruised quietly through the deserted North Shore streets and down the long driveway, stopping below the concrete steps leading to the 50s-style bungalow. The family were woken by the pounding on the door. Something like a dozen people, police and social workers, pushed into the hall. Believing the mother was drugging one of the two children in the house, the social workers – having just learned the results of a urine test taken 26 days earlier – scooped them up and took them to the Starship children’s hospital for further tests. Their mother has not been allowed to see them again. This same mother was separated from her first four children in Britain four years earlier after a court found she suffered from a rare and controversial disorder known as Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy (MSBP), believed to cause sufferers to induce or fabricate illnesses in their children to get attention. She has since married a N[Z]er, but the allegation that she suffers from MSBP has followed her from Britain, to A[US], where the younger child was born, and now here... In the time she has been under suspicion here, the mother has laid complaints against no fewer than 39 people in the case. This, too, was considered a symptom of her personality disorder... By the time the case hit court last October, the... Family Court... judge was asked to decide whether the allegation of MSBP upheld by the British courts was indeed correct, whether the mother had given an adult hypno-sedative drug, Zopiclone, to her 18-month-old son whose development is considered severely delayed, and whether leaving the children in the care of their parents was an unacceptable risk... The judge not only accepted that the mother had indeed given the child Zopiclone – a sedative she had been prescribed a month earlier – but also reached the view that the mother, and “to a lesser extent the father,” were not available to meet the children’s daily demands. He accused the mother particularly of focusing all her energies on challenging the earlier removal of her four children... Her history of having children removed in Britain and the subsequent improvement in their health, plus his belief that she drugged the boy, were enough to convince [the] Judge... that the children “will be subjected to an unacceptably high level of risk should they be returned into the care of their mother.” They now live with extended family members outside Auckland. However, the [mother is appealing against the judge]’s decision... Her chief accuser in Britain... [- who] was... seen in this country on the controversial documentary screened by *Assignment* two years ago showing secretly filmed footage of alleged MSBP sufferers suffocating, poisoning or assaulting their defenceless babies... [-] is now himself the centre of controversy and is under investigation for the conduct of ventilator trials where he is alleged to have either not obtained or falsified parental consent. Some of the babies on the trial died or are brain damaged.

...The last time... [two young children] saw their mother, she had just given birth to their baby brother... in Rotorua Hospital. Two days later, Jeanette Van Leeuwen died in the hospital from a severe infection that caused a fever and vomiting, but was not diagnosed by doctors or midwives. Yesterday, Rotorua[’s] coroner... gave his report on Mrs Van Leeuwen’s... death, and expressed concern at the lack of communication between hospital staff and independent midwives about her condition. Two days before she went into labour, Mrs Van Leeuwen, aged 36, scratched her leg on a picnic table. She was vomiting and had a fever before she gave birth... on December 19... [A] Rotorua Hospital obstetrician... examined Mrs Van Leeuwen and suspected she had either a viral infection or a stomach upset from something she had eaten. But[a] Rotorua pathologist... later found that Mrs Van Leeuwen’s symptoms were most likely caused by a rare streptococcus, probably from the scratch on her leg. Mrs Van Leeuwen... told doctors after the birth that she was feeling better. But her condition fluctuated and two days later, a senior medical officer called to examine her prescribed antibiotics. But it was too late, and she died four hours later from severe blood poisoning... Yesterday, [her husband – who had]... arrived at the hospital on December 21... to find staff trying to resuscitate his dead wife... [-] said the report made no difference to his family’s grief. “Ultimately, no one will be found responsible for Jenny’s death – I can’t be expected to tell my kids when they grow up that their mummy died because of a lack of communication,” he said.

Midwives are threatening legal action if the four [RHA]s accept changes proposed by doctors to new maternity services arrangements... Doctors have been boycotting the funding system that came into force on July 1, saying it would compromise the care received by mothers and babies. Midwives are angered by the doctors’ alternative proposals, which they say would reduce the maternity care options available to women under the new system... The... [new system] gave women the option of choosing either a midwife, a doctor or a specialist as their lead maternity carer. - 1996

The maternity system... introduced last year... puts mothers and babies at risk because of confusion over when specialists should be consulted, according to an expert...

A North Shore man whose 38-year-old wife bled to death... last November... after giving birth to their stillborn baby... is suing his doctor and Waitemata Health for more than \$1 million... [T]he man claims compensation for his nervous shock as a result of his wife’s death, which he alleges was caused by doctors’ negligence and breach of duty of care... The inquest heard that [his wife] was given the drug oxytocin to make her uterus contract, despite a specialist’s recommendation that a different method of induction be used... The drug is known to carry some risk of over-stimulating the uterus and causing rupture... At the hearing... the... family doctor... admitted she had not used the method recommended by a consultant gynaecologist-obstetrician. The specialist had written in... clinical notes to use prostaglandins... [but] the notes were not properly read until after the induction had begun... The family doctor – a veteran of more than 1000 births – said she knew [the wife] was a high risk patient for the use of oxytocin because of her age and because she had had several children. However, it was chosen because [the wife] wanted a painless and quick delivery... [To further complicate the situation, the wife’s] ruptured uterus was misdiagnosed by a specialist who believed she was suffering

from toxic shock... A... report identified... [a] failure to recognise that seven topups to [the wife's] epidural, administered by [an] anaesthetist... were needed because of the overstimulated uterus. There was also a failure to communicate how often they occurred and that they were accompanied by drops in... blood pressure... [O]ne mother dies in every 10,000 births], and 'around 50,000 babies are born in NZ each year'...

A REVIEW of maternity care at south Auckland's Middlemore Hospital has recommended improved safety monitoring systems, coinciding with claims from family members that their stillborn baby girl should have been saved... A... midwife... detected... the baby's heartbeat [before] an emergency caesarean section was arranged...

A Lower Hutt midwife criticised for her role in the death of a baby boy has complained to the Privacy Commissioner about her name being made public... [after] the Health and Disability Commissioner... found she had breached the code of rights by ignoring danger signs and failing to call in a doctor for almost four hours. She will appear before the Nursing Council next month. The baby boy was born brain damaged and died five weeks later. [The commissioner] said that being able to make public comment was an important part of her job... [Incidentally, following an] amendment to the Nurses Act in 1990, midwives were able to claim the same delivery fees and hourly rates as doctors. However, because they tended to spend longer at births, midwives collected relatively more money. This infuriated some doctors. One Remuera midwife mimicked the doctors by purring around in a gold BMW (number plate STORK) and a small group was rumoured to earn around \$200,000 a year. Certainly, between 1990 and 1993, payments to doctors and midwives rose from \$50[million] to \$90 million.

...[it won't yet affect the length of time that is required to deliver babies – and, therefore, the pay of midwives and doctors – but 'AUSn scientists have discovered the hormone that induces labour. The discovery could lead to a test that identifies mothers at risk' of having premature births and, perhaps, will also lead to the development of safer inducement drugs? 'All drugs are passed onto babies who do behave differently.'

...a comatose woman who authorities believe was raped gave birth to a premature baby girl at the weekend while investigators tried to solve the case. No employees have been fired or suspended at the Town Manor Nursing Home in Lawrence, Massachusetts, where the woman was cared for. Nursing home officials discovered that the 24-year-old was pregnant only last Monday, when she appeared uncomfortable and a doctor examined her. She was five months pregnant. The *Eagle-Tribune* of Lawrence reported that the woman had been comatose for four to five years since a drug overdose. The girl, who has not been named, was yesterday in a critical condition.'

...doctors in Rochester, New York... delivered... [a] baby girl... by caesarean section... at the weekend... [after keeping] alive... her... mother... Lisa Nottingham, aged 20, [who] was about four months pregnant when she suffered a brain haemorrhage and was declared brain dead... Shortly after the delivery of the 1.4kg baby, doctors removed Lisa from the machines that had kept her alive for 14 weeks and 20 minutes later she was dead. [In local news, 'Whangarei Hospital has successfully delivered the baby of a woman who was seriously injured in a car crash. The woman's family had wanted her life-support equipment to be turned off, but her husband wanted it to be left on until the foetus was old enough to be born.'

...A CONTROVERSIAL new funding scheme that limits care for premature babies funded by the Southern [RHA] is "market madness", says Labour[']s health spokeswoman... The new approach to funding neo-natal care was "attaching financial risk to the most critical of services in our hospital"... It has also caused a stand-off between the Dunedin-based health purchaser and... Healthlink South. [The spokeswoman]... said it was unethical and immoral for the RHA to make Healthlink South adhere to a system it did not want. "It's like holding a gun to their head." ...The proposed "capacity contract" means that instead of funding Christchurch Women's Hospital to care for all premature babies who need it, the RHA has set a cut-off point of... around 600 a year. Healthlink South must take financial responsibility for babies born after that limit is reached. Should the hospital not reach the limit it keeps the spare change... [The hospital's] general manager... said the neo-natal unit tended to be used as a last resort. "Babies go in there if they need to. We pick up babies from other areas like the West Coast and South Canterbury and we don't want to have to refuse those." The babies were very expensive to care for, he said... Another CHE, Healthcare Otago, has a limit of around 300 babies. The estimates are based on the hospital's previous records of premature births... [T]he RHA's general manager of primary care, said capped funding was one way for the authority to manage its \$1.1 billion budget. Neo-natal services were in high demand because of improved technology and higher expectations of saving babies. "People are pushing technology boundaries so now it's possible to have babies less than a kilogram survive and that comes at a cost." [He] said... the... RHA was prepared to listen and discuss alternative ways of funding services.

...CHRISTCHURCH Women's Hospital is expected to lose one-third of its... 28... obstetric nurses... The N[Z] Nurses Organisation... blamed the cuts not on the [CHE] Healthlink South, but on a lack of funding... from the Southern R[HA]... In the long term, the number of midwives may also drop as some will not be replaced when they leave. The NZNO is upset about the cuts, [and]... is also concerned that the quality of care... will suffer from a move to replace nurses with unqualified caregivers. [Meanwhile, a baby 'born 13 weeks (91 days) premature and weighing just 570g – 54g lighter than the baby listed as the world's tiniest – went home yesterday. The little girl, who now weighs 3.49kg, spent the first 105 days of her life in the Christchurch Women's Hospital neo-natal unit. She was born by emergency caesarean section after a routine scan intended to determine her sex found complications with her mother's placenta. Her parent's finally felt confident enough to issue a birth notice this weekend. ■ The *Guinness Book of Records* lists the world's most premature surviving baby as a boy of Ontario, Canada, who was 624g when born 128 days (more than 18 weeks) premature in 1987.'

...A healthy 3 1/2-month-old girl who came into the world weighing just 285g spent her first full day home from the hospital yesterday, and her doctors say they believe she is the tiniest human on record to live so long. The "miracle" baby now weighs 2kg and doctors say she has a nearly 100% chance of enjoying a normal life. She was delivered by caesarean section in Rome during the 27th week of pregnancy. At that stage of prematurity, some babies do survive, but they have weighed much more at birth.' ● 'NZ's smallest surviving baby – who weighed just 385g when he was born 16 weeks early, and had another close call when his heart faltered during surgery to mend two hernias – has been allowed to go home from the hospital's neo-natal unit with his proud parents 10 days before his official due date. When born, he was no bigger than a ballpoint pen from head to rump. Now he weighs 2 kilos, small by newborn standards, but huge to his parents. "He isn't so keen on sleeping but loves feeding."

...pressure on women – including their breasts being seen as sex symbols – is leading to a worrying decline in breastfeeding, academics warn. More women returning to the workforce after giving birth and the misconception that formulas are as good for babies as breast milk are other reasons. Breastfeeding rates have been declining for years and now fall well short of an aim by the former Public Health Commission to have 75% of three-month-old children fully breastfed by the year 2000. The latest Ministry of Health statistics show that last year just 48% of three-month-old children were breast fed. Even very young babies are coming off the breast early. Back in 1993, 83% of two-week-old babies were breastfed; by last year this figure had dropped to 72%. For six-week-old babies the drop-off was from 75 to 64%. A Massey University medical anthropologist says NZ culture fails to encourage breastfeeding and men can feel threatened. "In my own research I've come across mothers who admit they are happy to swim nude with friends but they wouldn't breastfeed their baby in front of them." People also found wet T-shirt competitions or topless sunbathing more acceptable than breastfeeding.'

...*'Research favours breastfeeding over bottle, but that leaves many women feeling guilty about letting their babies down.* IT was 5 am. Tears streamed down my cheeks as I cradled my sobbing baby. I could count on one hand the number of hours sleep I'd had since giving birth four days earlier. We paced the living room, as we had done most of the night. The baby's screams echoed and I tried to feed him once again. He nuzzled me, fed for a while and started beating his fists in rage. Years of exposure to the idea that "breast is best" had made me determined to breastfeed. But the images of a happy mother and sweetly contented baby were a world away from what we were going through. Hospital staff, aware that they had only 48 hours to get the baby feeding before we went home, spent hours with us. A succession of midwives and nurses pinched my breasts, heaved me into uncomfortable sitting positions and pushed my nipples into the baby's mouth. By 11 pm – 18 hours after his forceps birth and with me falling asleep sitting up – I was hooked up to an electric pump and my baby was fed 20ml of creamy colostrum from a medicine cup. The next day – a Friday – a midwife decided that I needed to see the hospital's

lactation consultant. Unfortunately, she works Monday to Thursday. We persevered, and by the end of the day my baby was feeding every two or three hours. As we left the hospital the next day I felt happy and confident. The feeling lasted until that night when the baby refused to settle. The next 39 hours passed in a blur. Relief came when my partner took matters into his own hands and bought formula. Our baby guzzled it hungrily, was overtaken by a fat and happy look we hadn't seen before, and fell asleep. We were told we had done the right thing. The fact that the baby was wetting only two nappies a day and his urine contained pink urates indicated he was dehydrated, a potentially fatal condition. He was also losing too much weight and we were advised to give him a bottle every night. The mixed feeling continued for six weeks, through the baby's oral thrush, which he passed to me, and the first aching stages of mastitis. Now, with my milk dried up, I am plagued by guilt. I am not alone. The dearth of information and the constant messages of guilt prompted an American mother to write *Bottlefeeding Without Guilt*. As well as giving practical advice on bottlefeeding, the book criticises a "cult" within the breastfeeding movement for promoting the idea that all women can and should breastfeed, regardless of the difficulties.']

...THE AGE of the breastfeeding househusband may one day dawn, according to... an award-winning scientist and author who is one of the world's leading experts on human evolution. In a new book, he says the physical and physiological barriers which have prevented men from breastfeeding their children are breaking down while they face increasing social pressures to help bring up their offspring... All men have a latent potential to lactate and there have been rare cases of this happening naturally. At first, however, it would have to be induced artificially, says... [the] professor of physiology at the University of California in Los Angeles. H[e]... says the incentives for men to consider the possibility of lactating have never been greater. "Today, many or most mothers in first-world societies have already become unavailable for breastfeeding, whether because of jobs, illness, or lactational failure... The first men to breastfeed will undoubtedly be ridiculed by many other men. Nevertheless, human reproduction already involves increasing use of other procedures that would have seemed ridiculous a few decades ago." ...[an] author of best-selling childbirth books, said the ultimate challenge to gender roles may prove too much for many men... [A] professor of genetics at University College, London, agrees with [the UCLA professor]'s biological arguments but is also sceptical: "In principle it's feasible but I doubt it will happen in practice." ...a 64-year-old man... produced milk for seven years after hormone treatment for cancer. There are... thousands of incidents of lactation in male prisoners of war where starvation led to diseased livers, which failed to break down the natural hormones in the body that can induce breast development. Lactation can also be induced by manual stimulation of the nipples, which is known to trigger the production of prolactin, the female hormone essential for breastfeeding... [● The UCLA professor's] theories will be detailed in *Why is Sex Fun?*, to be published in July. His bestselling first book, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Chimpanzee*, earned him the Rhone-Poulenc science book prize.

...It's a great endorsement of the value of breast milk – even if some mothers would balk at the idea. New mums at Waikato Hospital recently saved the life of an abandoned newborn spider monkey at Hamilton Zoo by donating their expressed milk... Of course, it's always been possible to express and freeze your own breast milk for your baby. But access to banked milk is important for premature or sick babies and for mothers who can't breastfeed, says[a spokesperson for] the NZ Lactation Consultants Association... With this in mind, National Women's Hospital may re-establish its breast milk bank, says[its] newborn services manager... A decision should be made later this year. The bank would work by collecting, screening and storing donated milk, which has a shelf-life of only three months. The hospital's original bank was opened in 1969 but like many others, closed in 1986 after fears that HIV... could be passed on through human milk. Researchers are still divided on the role of breast-feeding in transmitting HIV. It's believed several American babies could have contracted HIV this way... However, nothing adverse has happened in N[Z], and a handful of banks in the U[S] and Europe operated throughout the crisis period without problems. New screening and sterilising techniques mean we know for sure the risk of disease transmission through banked breast milk is now practically zero... Once cleared of HIV by a blood test, healthy lactating women can donate any extra milk they have. Smokers and big drinkers can't... Mothers on medication – even the contraceptive pill – or at risk of HIV infection from their own drug use or that of their partners, are also unable to donate. However, you can't be paid for giving milk. N[Z] law prevents the sale of human material, though in parts of Europe, such as Sweden, a litre of breast milk earns about \$27. Australasia's about to see its first private breast milk bank but it's a non-profit foundation and donating mums won't be paid.

...Would you let another woman breast-feed your baby? A storm in a C-cup erupted after [a] Porirua mum... discovered another woman had breast-fed her infant daughter... while the child was under a babysitter's care. [The mum] says her consent was not sought and demanded blood tests to prove the unauthorised wet-nurse didn't carry hepatitis or HIV. Experts agree consent is a crucial issue but, within certain conditions, they can't see anything wrong with cross-nursing... However, [breast]... milk composition changes with the age of the baby, so the best wet-nurse is one with a child of her own about the same age as the child she's feeding... [In related news, n]ewborn babies could be getting sicker because their mothers are being sent home from hospital earlier. Health authorities are investigating whether shorter stays for new mothers are connected with a recent drop in breastfeeding and a suspected rise in the readmission rates of sick babies. Mothers are now generally sent home from hospital within two days... Hospitals maintain that the practice is safe but the Maternity Services Consumer Council claims that women are "hobbling out of maternity hospitals in Auckland barely able to walk." ...Underfunded hospitals were cutting back on midwives' visits... to help[mothers] to learn to breastfeed and care for their babies... [the] council coordinator... said. Sick babies less than two weeks old now made up 15[%] of visits to Plunket family care centres, even though Plunket was not funded to care for them... [The coordinator] said a constant downgrading of postnatal services had grown worse since spending on maternity services was capped last year... [The] new lead maternity carer system... introduced in July last year to stop rising costs... gives each woman a limited budget for the... [lead maternity carer] of her choice.

...Being pregnant for the first time is scary enough, says [an expectant mother]. The last thing she needs right now is a constant battle to make sure she will be looked after... Based on mainly anecdotal evidence... thousands of N[Z] women are feeling the same way. Many have had a struggle to find someone to deliver their baby, because of a drawn-out battle between doctors and midwives over limited maternity funding... Some say they have been charged by their GPs... up to \$500 if they want independent midwives rather than hospital midwives... Those who can afford it are reluctantly paying up to \$2000 for a specialist to gain extra security... The controversy came to a head on the North Shore... when a group of doctors called Shore Birth began charging women \$880 for maternity care. Shore Birth claimed it offered a superior service for the money but admitted the charges were driven by frustration with the new system... North Health says these fees are illegal because the Government insists that midwifery care must be free... Until the new system began, pregnant women could get care from both doctors and midwives... Now... [in] theory, if they choose a midwife they can still see a doctor and vice versa. In practice, many find this difficult because the lead maternity carer has to pay the other health professional out of his or her budget. The scramble for limited money is made worse by a frequent lack of trust and mutual respect between doctors and midwives, based on strongly held philosophical differences about how to handle childbirth... In the process doctors have accused midwives of not intervening quickly enough to protect mothers and babies from medical complications. Midwives have strongly defended their safety record and accused doctors of being more concerned about their falling incomes than the women in their care. Caught in the middle are pregnant women and new mothers, trying to make sense of a confusing system. The first problem, says[the] founder of Action to Improve Maternity Services... is finding someone to deliver your baby... [She] has no doubt that family doctors are abandoning obstetrics because of the new system and midwives are struggling to cope with the increased workload. The doctors agree. A telephone survey in February claimed 70[%] of GPs who had offered maternity care in most parts of the country two years ago had quit. The startling figures included... North Shore[going] from 60 to six in five years... [and] South Auckland from 30 to three in one year... [The] Medical Association's maternity services committee chairman... said GP deliveries had fallen from more than half the births in N[Z] a few years ago to about 20[%]. He predicted virtually all family doctors would stop delivering babies within another two years... Officially there is no shortage of midwives yet.

...Some Lower Hutt doctors have run foul of the Commerce Commission... The commission said the doctors' attempted collective agreement to pay midwives specified rates was a form of price fixing and risked breaches of the Commerce Act, which prohibited people getting together to agree on prices... "We have advised the doctors that under the act it is up to the doctor and midwife involved to agree on the fees... For groups of doctors and midwives to get together and agree on standard prices is... price fixing." ...The doctors had changed from setting fees to now negotiating individually with midwives, and the commission was not taking further action... The commission... was focusing on the \$7 billion health industry this year – "and our involvement with it shows that its awareness of the Commerce Act is poor." ...The General Practitioners' Association said yesterday that the price-fixing problems showed that the new maternity scheme arrangements had become an administrative nightmare.

...Twelve South Waikato [GPs] have quit offering obstetric services, fed up with the new maternity system. The decision by the 10 Tokoroa and two Mangakino GPs means expectant mothers in an area with a population of 23,000 will have to travel to Rotorua or [Hamilton] to give birth... Plunket condemned the Tokoroa situation, saying it was dangerous for women in labour to travel so far for help... [A] Tokoroa GP... said that 10 years ago Tokoroa Hospital had four full-time specialists and an anaesthetist. Now GPs had no immediate backup in the event of an emergency during a birth. GPs had spent many anxious moments waiting for rescue helicopters, which took an emotional toll... They feared a baby or mother would die because of a complication and that they would be held responsible. He doubted the [CHE or the RHA], or specialists, "would stand by us in a messy court case. That could be the end of our careers." [He] said the maternity system introduced last year was bureaucratic, restricting, unrewarding for GPs, and pitted them against midwives.

...The Kaitia Maternity Service is patting itself on the tummy over its complication-free partnership between doctors and midwives. The... business cooperative of six midwives and five [GPs], which first contracted Far North maternity services in April, was unique as they "get on really well." ...[while all is well in Kaitia, a] mutiny by Tokoroa family doctors has forced the [ir] local health authority to back down on the Government's much-trumpeted "lead-carer" maternity scheme – the first crack in the plan's unified front... Since [the]... GPs had refused to provide free care to pregnant women and to deliver their babies... Tokoroa women have been forced to rely on independent midwives in Rotorua and Hamilton, as there are none in the South Waikato timber town... But now Midland Health has agreed to pay for Tokoroa's expectant mothers to visit doctors in the first three months of their pregnancies – putting pressure on the scheme in other parts of the country... The patients will still be entitled to care under the lead-carer scheme... Although only the lead carers can claim subsidies for delivering babies, Tokoroa GPs will be paid to help in "unexpected, life-threatening emergencies." ...The women will also get two free routine checks after six months, and Midland will pay for any urgent consultations at night and on weekends... The traditional free six-week check-up has also been reinstated... A spokesman for [the] Tokoroa GPs... said... "Common sense has prevailed at last."

...New mothers are being offered \$120... plus 50 free nappies... to leave... Waikato Hospital within 24 hours of a normal delivery or within four days of a caesarean section... The communications manager for Waikato Health... said the \$120 was to be spent on home help, such as housework or minding other children... [A] new women's group fighting for increased maternity services... has... condemned... [t]he offer... as a bribe... [because mothers] who left hospital early saved the health system money... Meanwhile, hospitals are also gaining \$100 for each woman who leaves within 12 hours, if the hospital is [the mother's] "lead maternity carer"... The extra money is supposed to be used for postnatal care but is not specifically tagged to any service.

...A new private birthing clinic set up to compete with the Waikato Hospital public maternity service was kick-started with Government funding worth \$350,000. River Ridge Birth Centre... has been contracted by Midland Health to provide primary birthing care, in direct competition with Waikato Hospital. A public health lobby group is furious that the private midwifery operator... was given... Government funding towards "development." ...the Waikato Coalition for Public Health says the private clinic duplicates services and undermines the public health system... [The funding also] gave the clinic a competitive advantage. "Why do that when Health Waikato operates a delivery suite and wards, and is in desperate need of capital investment?"

...Government funding for a free nappy service in Waikato has been cut, two months after it was called a bribe to get women out of hospital more quickly. Midland Health says it could not afford to extend the service throughout the region... "Access to primary maternity services, particularly in rural areas, is costing more than anticipated, and the dollars saved from cancelling help at home will be used to enhance access."

...[early discharging became] routine amid a belief that neither maternal nor infant health was compromised... However, [sending]... mothers home early from hospital is "an uncontrolled human experiment" designed by governments to save money, say two A[US]n birth specialists... [Their] editorial... in the *Medical Journal of A[US]*... said casemix funding had led to a situation where choice was losing out to cost effectiveness... Women discharged early from hospital after childbirth have an increased risk of developing postnatal depression... [14% of them developed postnatal depression] compared with 7[%] of those who had a standard stay of more than three days... "While health services are having to cut costs, early discharge may result in short-term savings[, but]... the consequences of postnatal depression could lead to escalating costs in the long-term... Struggling depressed mothers are often undiagnosed and unsupported, which leaves their children at long-term risk."

...A teenage mother, distressed at having no milk for her two-week-old baby, was turned away from a Palmerston North medical centre because she had not paid a previous bill of \$60. [The mother], aged 17, was eventually admitted to Palmerston North hospital with a fever caused by an infection in the wound from her caesarean section. The general manager of the practice has apologised to her[, saying]... its policy was to see anyone who was seriously ill, regardless of their financial status... [Incidentally,] Middlemore Hospital has posted a 24-hour guard in a paediatric ward to stop a child's parents from removing him... Police are on standby in case the [parents] arrive to forcibly take the child home. A direct line has been set up between the hospital and Otahuhu police. The head of South Auckland Health... said the child had been at risk because of the parents' lack of care and reluctance to follow hospital instructions. The child was legally taken from his home and admitted to hospital yesterday morning. He was operated on last week to prepare his legs for artificial limbs. The boy's legs were amputated below the knee when he was a young baby because they became infected after he developed complications from meningococcal meningitis. Since then, the family have been reluctant to bring the child to hospital. Six surgery appointments were missed before the parents finally brought the boy in for last week's operation. They returned home after the surgery but the parents then removed a plaster cast which was to straighten his legs. Infections were also found on his leg stumps. Hospital lawyers urgently contacted Children, Young Persons and Their Families Service, which was granted guardianship of the child for six weeks by the High Court. On top of that... the hospital had an array of legal means to hang on to the boy and continue treatment... The security guard will cost the hospital about \$3000 a week to monitor the ward.

...Middlemore Hospital has spent \$27,000 posting a 24-hour guard... to stop a child's parent[s] removing him... The Middlemore chief executive... said the case put immense pressure on staff and the need for security had added to the strains of a cash-strapped budget... "We have an obligation to the child but we will get no compensation for this." ...The child... had had ongoing surgery so he could wear artificial legs. [By the way, 'researchers have found toys kept in surgery waiting rooms are crawling with disease-causing bacteria. They may be responsible for cross-infection after being handled by youngsters with different illnesses. There are strict rules on toy hygiene in pre-schools but not GP clinics. "There may be a case for GP surgeries to follow the same rules," said a spokesperson for Auckland Healthcare's public health protection department.']

...Auckland Healthcare officials are investigating reports that a cocktail of chemicals dumped in a West Auckland park may be linked to health problems in children... [A] 12.9ha former landfill in Kelston, was closed after 11 complaints from children about skin problems, including rashes, boils, infections and dermatitis... Residents believe that uncontrolled dumping up to 15 years ago of timber treated with arsenic, zinc and copper

may be contributing... The park was a landfill between 1965 and 1970 and from about 1982 to 1992, before being developed into a... widely used... park... A truck driver and local resident, who did not wish to be named, said last night that he had told the Waitakere City Council his former employer was among companies which dumped treated timber at the site. "We had five trucks on the road dumping stuff... [K]nowing what's gone into the park I would never let my kids play down there," he said... The council manager of city infrastructure... said there was no clear link between the park and alleged health problems but the council was taking residents' concerns seriously... Signs have been erected warning the public... [and the] council has begun soil tests...

[Four children have been tested for HIV and hepatitis after hundreds of dirty hypodermic needles were dumped in an Auckland playground. The children – aged 3 to 7 – now face an agonising wait to see if they test positive after playing with the bloody needles. Other children may also have come into contact with the needles, and health officials say any worried parents should seek urgent medical advice. The *Herald* has been told that the children found a shopping bag filled with up to 300 syringes in a rubbish bin at Miranda Reserve, Avondale, on Sunday morning. Other syringes had been scattered around the bark-strewn play area of the reserve. A bloody-looking syringe with needle intact that the *Herald* found buried in the bark under the children's swings was confirmed as having been supplied by the Auckland needle exchange programme (nearly half of those on the programme have hepatitis C). On two occasions, reporters saw children playing in the bark in bare feet. A health inspector was due to inspect the playground early today before children arrived. It is the second recent find of dumped syringes – about 30 were found at a Mairangi Bay bus shelter two weeks ago. It is understood that a child was pricked after handling those needles. The national co-ordinator of the needle exchange programme said needles were found in public eight to nine times a year. While more than a million needles were distributed every year, only 25 to 30% were returned. The problem was that while the needle exchange programme was legal, drug users could still be arrested for possession of injection equipment and so tended to hoard syringes and secretly dump them. The law surrounding the disposal of needles for diabetics also needed changing because they were entitled to get rid of them in the domestic rubbish, "which is not a very safe thing to do." In related news, c]hildren's health in Auckland has been under renewed scrutiny after parents told a confidential research project of serious problems with suburban services. Difficulties with after-hours medical care, costs of repeated visits to doctors and weak relationships between doctors and families were cited in the study... The information was obtained by the... *Herald* under the Official Information Act and after intervention by the Office of the Ombudsman... The report was commissioned by the Starship children's hospital to find out why so many parents bypassed other health professionals and took their sick youngsters to the emergency department... Auckland [GP]s and the Starship have been working on projects to improve the situation... [The GP]s did not agree with all of the report's findings but decided to make improvements in service rather than expend energy disputing parts of the document.

...The *Herald's* recent [article] on the plight of children in our society was... illuminating. But there was a dimension missing from the discussion: the rural story. South of the Bombay Hills and rather more than a comfortable car journey from the Starship hospital, the difficulties faced by children... go largely unreported. So do the efforts of the health professionals in our rural communities. Many urban children undoubtedly fall short of having an acceptable level of health. But their problems tend to arise more for economic reasons than through a lack of health facilities. Generally, the health infrastructure is in place to help. Children outside our cities and towns face a dual obstacle: both cost barriers and a shortage of appropriate medical facilities and people... A key plank in the health... [strategy of the coalition] Government... was the concept of equity: fair access to health services. The goal was for every N[Z]er to achieve health gain through having the same rights to their share of the health dollar as the next person with a similar level of need. That is a huge challenge. How do you ensure equity when an Auckland child can be a short taxi ride away from cancer treatment while his Gisborne cousin faces a taxing and costly series of connections to get to the same facility because there is nothing in between? ...To achieve equity, ironically, requires an inequitable commitment of resources... There are unquestionably a host of serious issues around children's well-being in the cities on which we must focus and shed light. Our plea from this large central North Island slice of your circulation area is not to leave us in the dark.

...Leading the world in ills that ravage the young... As we head towards the year 2000, we are set to remain world leaders in lots of areas... Figures from Auckland-based North Health reveal the state of play: • child hospitalisation rates of 65 per 1000 (the U[S] rate is one third of that)... [include] 30,000 children entering hospital each year with injuries that are preventable... • world leaders in rheumatic fever, Maori and Pacific Island cot death, motor vehicle injury, suicide, meningococcal disease, hearing loss and teenage pregnancy... More depressing still is the fact that health officials do not expect the figures to fall for perhaps another decade. That old, feel-good jingle trumpeting energetic, carefree Kiwi kids as Weetbix kids has become a fading fantasy: Kiwi kids being sickly kids is closer to the mark... Appalling child-health statistics have been reported for years – and we have screeds of... *Herald* clippings to prove it. So what has been done to ease the situation? Many argue very little. The biggest complaint is that no one has taken charge of children's health. Within the Ministry of Health the issue has been handled by staff across different departments rather than by one specifically focused team. The more cynical say that children do not vote... and therefore... are not a powerful lobby group... - 1997

Those in the front line of care say our society does not treasure its young and are calling for leadership and direction from the top... N[Z] has some of the worst child health statistics in the developed world... Of 145 countries in a 1995 Unicef report, 74 had higher immunisation rates for diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough for 1 year olds. Those bettering N[Z]'s position included Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania and India... Whooping cough hospitalisation figures in the period 1980 to 1989 were up to 10 times higher than those of the U[S] and about six times those of the U[K]... Rates of respiratory disease among Maori infants are three times higher than their non-Maori counterparts... Glue ear rates are also high and about 14[%] of Maori and Pacific Island children fail the hearing test given to five-year-olds compared with 7[%] of other youngsters... Rates of rheumatic fever... which can cause life-long heart problems... are said to be "Third World." ...[a GP] working... in West Auckland... is convinced that poverty is a major cause and the children worst affected come from families with little power to fight the system... [M]oney is a factor in some parents not seeking early medical help for their children but there is also a financial problem on a grander scale... "The philosophy in the health sector is around competition which isn't terribly conducive to members of society who are vulnerable." ...Issues like waiting lists, maternity and mental health services appeared to carry much more political clout than children's health issues... "The people who have the greatest ability to push for change are the people whose children are least affected, [so] they don't see the need." ...to win new money for child health... [is] extremely difficult... but if N[Z] could bring down Maori and Pacific Island children health statistics to a developed world level, huge amounts of money would be saved.

...Enveloped in beds... in the Middlemore paediatric ward... are children suffering from diseases that N[Z] health professionals thought were on the way out... Not all are suffering from what have been tagged "Third World diseases." but for the staff on the ward it is obvious that they are dealing with the results of poverty... [They] once told a young rheumatic fever patient she could go home for the weekend on the condition that she sat on the couch and relaxed. The girl looked worried. Her family had no couch, and no house. Her parents, siblings and grandmother lived in a garage with mattresses on the floor. There was no other furniture... [One staff member noted that] parents of sick children often ask which of two prescription items they should get because they could not afford both... While it was inappropriate to transport sick children to hospital on buses and trains many low-income parents have no choice... There are calls of desperation... "In the last two days I've had two phone calls from mothers saying baby is sick, they have no money to get baby to the GP and no money to get a taxi to the hospital."

...DOCTORS told a desperate mother the only way to guarantee the care her severely epileptic and intellectually handicapped daughter needed was to abandon her in a hospital emergency department... Where once [the 12-year-old girl] may have been admitted to the now-defunct Mangere Hospital for the vital respite care her mother needs, she is now unsuitable for the alternatives – too mobile for... [a specialised hospital on the] North Shore... and too medically sick for the IHC... She has hundreds of fits a day... has behavioural problems exacerbated by medication and is aggressive and hyperactive, sometimes sleeping for just three hours a day. Until last year, when respite care was administered by Income Support, [the mother] was entitled to 28 days' fulltime help... but now health authorities assess the needs in each case and contract the job to caregivers... Because few caregivers are adequately trained to care for children such as [her daughter, the mother] has had little respite in the last 10 years... In July, when [the mother] became severely ill with flu and was admitted to hospital, six days of 24-hour home care was arranged... "Then the agency supplying the caregivers said they had blown their budget and no more care would be available. If I wanted caregivers, I had to find them and pay for them out of my 28 days' carer support." When [the girl's condition worsened, the mother] tried to have her admitted to the Starship but the hospital could not guarantee 24-hour supervision because of a "nursing crisis". "I knew [my daughter] wouldn't remain in hospital unsupervised for more than five minutes." A week later, a psychiatrist and social worker told an exhausted [mother] the only way to force the system to look after [the girl] was to take her to the hospital and leave her there... Now [the girl] has spent the past six weeks in a \$500-a-day bed in [the] Starship Hospital while health authorities try to organise help so her mother... can bring her home... [The mother] wants to look after [the girl] at home but only with a specialist package of help, including respite care. North Health last week hired Spectrum Care, an agency for people with intellectual disability, in a \$55,000 annual contract. But [the mother] said the RHA was still unable to say where respite care could be provided away from the family home. [Another mother said she and other friends with severely disabled children had discussed abandoning them at the Starship just to get some breathing space. Her daughter has cerebral palsy and other medical problems and can go without sleep for days on end. She gets 28 days respite care a year but says carers are paid just \$71 for 24 hours of intensive work so it is hard to find anyone prepared to take on her daughter.]

...Midland Health has introduced new guidelines that cut the number of days off it gives people who care for disabled people at home. The new scheme removes a standard 28-day annual entitlement for respite care, and replaces it with priority levels ranging from 10 days to a flexible number.]

...In 1975 a significant piece of legislation was passed in N[Z] – the Disabled Person's Community Welfare Act[– which]... gave families an entitlement to 28 days' respite care... Under this act the Government acknowledged that families of people with disabilities lived lives that were often stressful and outside the normal sphere of parent commitment. Family members who are disabled take more time, more family resources, more energy and more family commitment than a typical family member... To families, this piece of legislation was a way of valuing what we did for our family members. We did not have to ask for handouts, we did not have to justify why we needed respite care; it was there for us when we needed it. As a parent of a 16-year-old with Downs syndrome I valued that right to plan where our son could go for a few days so the family could have a break. It was important that we as a family could pay the caregiver a realistic amount of money to cover that cost... The state had created a right, an entitlement, for families. It seemed inviolable. Families asked themselves: "Surely no government will take this right away from us?" Enter the 1990s – the time of accountability, the time of the individual, the era of so-called choice and competition. Early on in the decade the Minister of Health... had endeavoured to make respite care means tested. Families wrote letters, marched, [and] collared members of Parliament... The minister publicly backed down on this issue. We thought we had won. But the Government regrouped and led another charge – this one is not upfront. It is a wily, mean-spirited move to make an entitlement into a subsidy... North Health has decided on a method of delivery after what it calls a round of "consultation" with the public. The rate for caring for a family member with a disability has been adjusted so that a close family member can now be paid \$60 a day, and institutional carers such as IHC and CCS are paid \$71.84... Auckland families can now go to one of 13 needs assessment agencies, have their needs assessed and then a request for days of respite care will be sought from North Health by the provider on behalf of the family. It all sounds so straightforward – until the sums are done. North Health has a budget of \$6.1 million a year. It has 7200 people with disabilities for whom to provide service. At \$60 a day this means that those people can only get 14 days' respite care. The message to families is very clear: the state – and by definition the people of N[Z] – no longer value what we are doing.

...You don't have to be brilliant, beautiful, or very bad to make a major impact in many peoples' lives... Born with Down syndrome... Nigel Simmons... struggled with severe mental and physical limitations until his death 12 days ago... aged 39... following complications... [after having] corrective surgery... for... a defective heart... But his simple courage, his determination and his joy in living have been a great inspiration and his mourners are many... When Nigel was a child [his parents] were told their son would never learn to read or write; they did not believe it. "My wife and I had both been teachers in England of what they call the 'educationally subnormal.' We knew what could be achieved." Attending a special school in Dunedin, Nigel was the first child in N[Z] with Down syndrome to be taught to read and write... Until just before his death, Nigel worked one morning a week each in the Remuera and Panmure libraries. He was also employed three-and-a-half days a week at Taniwha Enterprises, a company employing disabled people to do production work... "He was a delight, and one of the very few people in the workshop who lived a 'normal' life. Nigel was right out there in the community, challenging the prejudices so many people have against those with mental disabilities." He was a familiar figure around the streets of Remuera through his many years delivering community newspapers and pamphlets. This kept him fit and financed trips to England with his mother, and to Rarotonga and A[US] as part of an organised group. It also helped to finance the purchase of a small block of land in the Kaipara where he had plans to build a small cottage for his nephews.

...A REVAMPED home care scheme for the disabled, which clocks jobs... down to the minute, is being described as "market-driven madness". The doctrine was introduced by the Southern R[HA] on September 1 after a "phenomenal growth" in the demand for help for the disabled... – up... 200% for domestic care... and... 1000% for personal care... Personal care – bathing, toileting, grooming, feeding – has been "averaged" at four hours a week for each client. Domestic assistance – cleaning, laundry, maintenance – is 2.5 hours a week. Precise times have been allocated for tasks, such as 20 minutes for toileting, 15 minutes for dressing, 30 minutes to assist with meals and 10 minutes to transfer a patient from a bed to a chair... It takes five minutes each week to change a light bulb... The SRHA has warned that because of budget constraints, clients may get only half – or even less – of the hours they are assessed as needing. They could, however, pay for extra hours themselves... Families are able to offer the carer the maximum sum of \$2.50 an hour before tax... [The] SRHA communications co-ordinator... said... \$5 million has gone into the... scheme[s]... budget this year, boosting it to \$17.6 million... [T]he Central R[HA]... said \$16 million was to be spent on home care this year, up from \$4.7 million in 1993. North Health is spending \$26.4 million on personal, home and respite care, up \$3 million on last year.

...[Daffodil Day raised \$530,000 in Auckland and Northland for the Cancer Society. Last Friday's street appeal brought in \$10,000 more than last year. The national total will be released today.] Last year, 'Daffodil Day raised more than \$2 million, the society says.')

...Saturday night's fashion show to raise money for the Starship hospital's bone marrow transplant unit is expected to have raised \$25,000... [The show was] one of several moves by the Child Cancer Foundation's northern division to fulfill its pledge to raise half of the \$400,000 [needed. By the way, a recent article said that 'more children and adults overdose on paracetamol than any other drug.' A paracetamol manufacturer has responded by 'saying the extent of paracetamol overdosing has been exaggerated. Pharmacists are calling for tougher controls on the sale of the over-the-counter painkiller, following recent moves by the British Government to lower the numbers of accidental and deliberate overdoses. In Britain there is a limit now on how many packets may be sold at one time to one customer, and labels must have health warnings. But paracetamol was safe when taken in the recommended dose, SmithKline Beecham, which makes the paracetamol Panadol, said yesterday. Overdosing on the painkiller was extremely rare, and accidental poisoning of children happened almost solely with liquid preparations, which were sold only by pharmacies, the company's medical director

said. Liquid paracetamol sold over the counter had safety caps, but that was not always the case when dispensed by chemists, said the director of the Starship hospital's child safety service Safekids'...]

According to the latest N[Z] *Medical Journal*, more than a third of surveyed medical staff at Auckland[']s Starship] Children's Hospital either did not know safe doses for the drug... paracetamol... or over-estimated the safety limits... A two-month survey at the hospital found 140 out of 823 prescriptions for children older than four months were for toxic doses of the drug. Only 3% of the drugs were administered because most prescriptions specified the drug was to be given as required... But four times newborns were prescribed doses at the limit of safety for older children... Paracetamol[, which] is widely available... is in the top 10 medicines most commonly associated with accidental poisoning in children. Pharmacists have recently failed in a bid to ban it from supermarket sale...

Auckland's Starship... hospital has rejected claims that its doctors are prescribing toxic levels of paracetamol to children... "The... Starship compares favourably with international practice." Referring to the... claim that more than one-third of medical staff at the hospital did not know safe dosages for the drug or overestimated the safety limits[, the]... hospital's clinical director of the paediatric pain management unit... said the study referred to findings on newborns, for which there were no international guidelines... "In fact, there is very little data about safe doses of paracetamol for children, particularly those under the age of three months..." ...The... report... [stated] that "53 out of 80 medical staff thought toxic levels of the drug were safe in children aged four months and older." Levels occurred over time, whereas doses were measured at a given point in time, [the clinical director] said. "It takes a week for paracetamol to accumulate to cause liver and kidney damage and the daily checks by pharmacists on prescriptions at Starship are carried out to prevent any such occurrences."

...N[Z] children have the highest rate of asthma in the world... A study... which measured asthma in 500,000 children in nearly 50 countries... [-] the largest international collaborative study on childhood asthma... [-] found the... rates... in places like... North America, A[US] and Britain were... [also] well ahead of other countries... While a number of different questions were used to measure the incidence, the study found one in every three Kiwi kids under seven had had an episode of wheezing... [and, although NZ]'s asthma death rate was now down to 0.5 for every 100,000 from a peak of four in 1980, the incidence of the condition was rising... A sixth of the country's drug bill was now spent on asthma medication... [T]he study was important because it used the same criteria worldwide and should trigger further research into the cause... Other countries' figures indicated increasing asthma rates with increasing affluence... [The] study... said a range of factors... [-] cigarette smoking, diet, air pollution involving farm fertilisers and pesticides, housing materials, fungi and possibly changing climate... [-] could be responsible for levels of the disease in the West. [● Another NZ study found 'babies born with a larger head are three times more likely to get asthma. Researchers intend to see if mothers' diets affect baby head sizes.' 'Overseas research suggests the practice of giving antibiotics to babies is a cause as it prevents their immune system from developing naturally.']

...A battle over asthma fundraising has left research the poorer and confused many would-be donors. Jeans Day yesterday was run by the Child Health Research Foundation... But it came under attack last week from the Asthma Foundation which was unhappy with how funds raised from the inaugural Jeans Day last year were spent... [A] spokesman for the Asthma Foundation... said it was unacceptable that only 25[%] of the funds raised last year were actually spent on asthma research... Hundreds of people had called the foundation yesterday asking whether they should give money... Many people chose to make donations directly to the foundation... [The] project manager for Jeans Day, said that although it would be three weeks before yesterday's total was known, he felt the campaign had suffered as a result... [He] said that high start-up costs accounted for the poor profit margin last year but it would improve this year. For example, Jeans Day organisers were able to re-use last year's television commercial and leftover stocks of badges which would lower the cost of the campaign[. ● Asthma is 'estimated to affect 20% of NZ's population (in comparison, the rates for the US and AUS are 6 and 11%' respectively)]...

Deafness is becoming a bigger problem... [A]bout three N[Z] children in every 1000 needed hearing aids, similar to rates in A[US] and the U[S]. The worry was that children... are suffering problems for longer before being noticed... and given help. [Although 'it is possible to check for deafness soon after birth', t]he average age at which hearing loss is identified has climbed to two and a half years... Nationally, the goal is to identify children with hearing problems by the age of six months... [T]he squeeze on health dollars was likely to be a major cause of worsening problems. "The policy is that there should be at-risk screening of all babies but... it's not happening... ['Only infants considered a risk are currently given hearing tests.'] Plunket is not continuing to see children for as long as they used to[, so]... maybe the continuity of care and general surveillance is not being done as well as it was,"... the National Audiology Centre... said.

...[in 1907 the Plunket Society was established following the foundation of the Royal NZ Society for the Health of Women and Children. Hospitals were subsequently established throughout the country to help mothers and their babies, and nurses were trained for work in these hospitals and within most NZ communities', usually via family centres. Today these] centres are under threat... Management proposals to rein-in spending... [to overcome] a \$90,000 cash shortfall... [in the] northern region... include closing one or two of the region's eight... centres, cutting staff or reducing their hours... The proposals... come hard on the heels of... closures further south. Hamilton, Gisborne, New Plymouth and Tauranga centres shut their doors in April to cope with a \$250,000 deficit. The... centre in Hamilton has since reopened after a private laboratory, Medlab, donated \$35,000. - 1996

Women and children have come a poor second to the economy, business and the market over the past decade, the Plunket Society conference in Auckland was told last night. Many supports and benefits that N[Z] women had used to enable them to raise healthy children had been unravelled... "The state is only interested in families when they fail. It does little to ensure that families succeed. In fact, many policies have had the effect of dooming a greater number of parents to failure by eroding their security and incomes." Advocates of the free market had tried to force families to adopt business values and operate as business units, in competition with other families. Children had been reduced to the personal property of their parents and acquiring them was like acquiring a car. Plunket had suffered through the ideology of the free-market state... The organisation[that has helped raise 'over 93% of NZ babies' i]s needed more than ever, even though surviving under the health reforms might seem one of the toughest calls it had faced.

...The Plunket 24-hour parent helpline is being cut back... to 18 hours a day. Plunket[']s president... said the society regretted the decision, but it could not secure committed funding for a full day. "Plunket requires \$850,000 per year to provide a 24-hour service. We have relied on bequests and donations for the service and these have been insufficient to meet the full cost." ...Plunket has already had to cut back on the number of home visits it can provide new mothers.

...Only 8% of... Plunket Line... callers [have managed to get] through on their first attempt... [since the] free advice line... was cut from 24 hours to 16 hours a day and... staff were reduced from five to... two or three nurses on duty at any one time... Most[callers] try five or six times before they get through and about 40% of callers... never get through.

...Plunket Line, which has given free advice... [that] helped thousands of parents of young children in the middle of nowhere has been axed... The chief executive of Plunket... said the helpline had been a success and the decision to close it was a sad one to have to make, but the society had exhausted all financial avenues... [He] said the loss of the line would affect the future health of many N[Z]ers. "It shows once again the lack of willingness by the Government to fund preventive services which can and do make such a difference to child health." ...In the year to June 30, the 0800 number received about 83,000 calls from parents worried about illness or problems with feeding, sleeping or behaviour; parents seeking nutritional advice; and parents reporting cases of suspected child abuse... "The line was set up with the expectation that we might get 50 calls a

day... Instead we got upwards of 250 calls a day..." ...the society considered replacing the line with an 0900 number, but that did not meet Plunket's philosophy... [A]bout 17,000 callers a year are referred to their GPs, preventing problems from reaching the stage of needing more expensive care...

The Commissioner for Children has described the looming end of the Plunket Line as tragic... especially as infant mortality and child abuse levels in N[Z] were unacceptably high. A rally for people to show their support for the service will be held in the grounds of Parliament today... [In related news, t]he Cot Death Association has blamed a rival researcher for a 25[%] dive in takings from its Red Nose Day... [The researcher,] who before last year's Red Nose Day put a large advertisement in the N[Z] *Herald* questioning the work of the association... has long been at loggerheads with... [it. The researcher, who] believes cot death is caused by toxic fumes from fungi reacting with chemicals in mattresses... acknowledged that he had probably caused the Red Nose Day takings to fall. "I told... [the association's chairman that] I will do whatever I can to destroy Red Nose Day... The price of peace and co-operation is that I expect the association to endorse my work or maintain a benign attitude." ...Last year, the association commissioned an Auckland University lecturer to begin studying... [the researcher's] findings. The association chairman... said yesterday that the investigations were continuing... "However... [m]illions of pounds have been spent trying to substantiate these claims in the U[K], but they have been unable to..."... The association said yesterday that[of the] \$750,000... collected last year, down from just under \$1 million in 1995... almost 60[%] will go to education and research. About \$255,000 will be spent on costs such as distribution of the funds and Red Nose Day merchandise.

...The Red Cross[– 'an international organisation set up, at the instigation of the Swiss philanthropist Henri Dunant, according to the Geneva Convention of 1864 for the treatment of the sick and wounded in war and those suffering by large-scale natural disasters (nowadays it also undertakes first-aid and welfare work as well as participating in relief work abroad') – has announced that it] raised \$40,000 from the sale of 46,500 roses at shopping centres and hospitals in the northern region... [The announcement coincided with the launch of the NZ] Crippled Children's Society [annual appeal. The society, which began]... life over 60 years ago... primarily to help young people with polio[, now]... helps over 6,000 children and adults with a wide range of physical disabilities... [Its] core services include early childhood programmes, education, information, accommodation, job training, lobbying, disability awareness, recreation and disability parking [schemes]... To continue its work, NZ CCS needs to raise more than \$8 million every year from the public... [Incidentally, a]bout 200 parents and children marched on Parliament yesterday... [to put] pressure on the Government to save the Plunket helpline[– a protest which] is doomed to fail. Health officials last night ruled out funding the service, due to close next month, because of tight budgets. A... Health... spokeswoman... said money had to go on services that led to most gain – and that did not include the helpline. [She] said that instead... parents could ring a 24-hour medical clinic, go to their local doctor or take their child to a hospital... [Furthermore, the Coalition Government's *pledge of free*] doctor visits for under 6-year-olds[would mean] that cost should no longer be a barrier.

...The Minister of Health... plans to... [introduce] free doctor visits and prescriptions for children aged five and under... [He is] confident of receiving the backing of most [GPs] for the new child health policy... But he acknowledged pockets of resistance, and that family doctors would want to maintain some control of their fee structures... [S]ome GPs could... have a problem with the final fee agreed with the Government. In Auckland... fees for children ranged from \$25 to \$45 but could go higher for longer consultations... with discounts for lower income families with a community services card... With a card the[pre-schooler's] fee could vary from no charge to \$9... [F]or over-5s... the fees... [for] cardholders... ranged from about \$9 to \$15... [However, under] the new system, N[Z] families will still pay more for their medical care than Britons and A[US]ns. Both countries pay a specific health tax – Medicare in A[US], national insurance in Britain – which funds a free, or largely free, service for both adults and children. A[US]ns can be liable for doctors' bills in some expensive cases but can claim back 85[%] of the costs. In the U[S], families rely on private insurance, which covers only about two-thirds of Americans, to pay their hefty doctors' bills. [• '12.9% of USers weren't covered by health insurance in 1987; by 1994 – when the uncovered figure for people 65 years and over was 0.9% compared with 33.7% for Hispanics – the average figure had risen to 15.2%.' In the same year, there was 'no charge for a visit to a doctor in Britain; it cost \$33.00 in NZ; \$NZ4.38 in AUS; and \$NZ97.17 in the US.'

...a healthcare plan in Poland has found 11,000 dead people on its patient register, costing it \$NZ269,438 since the beginning of the year. An official said the number of people on the register for the Podlase region had grown by 5000 since January, with several of them even managing to change their primary care doctor.'

...America's Medicare system, which subsidises health care for the elderly, has been much in the news for waste and fraud. Now it appears that the system also has a less obvious fault: it redistributes money from the poor to the rich. At first glance, Medicare seems quite progressive. Every American is entitled to [t]he same health benefits on reaching the age of 65, yet the system is financed with taxes that fall disproportionately on the wealthy. It would appear that the rich bring more to the table, and then everyone shares equally. Not exactly, says a recent study by... Stanford University, and... Dartmouth College. Using a sample of 1.5 million Americans eligible for Medicare in 1990, [the study's authors compared]... lifetime Medicare taxes paid by different income groups with their projected lifetime benefits. True, the wealthy bring more to the table; but then they gobble up more than they brought. For example, the authors reckon that, among Americans born in 1925, the richest 10[%] will collect \$1000 more in Medicare benefits than the poorest 10[%]. How can this be? First, wealthy Americans live longer. For men aged between 65 and 69, the mortality risk for the wealthiest decile of the population is 40[%] lower than the risk for the poorest decile. So, by cheating death, the rich collect benefits longer. At the same time, the wealthy use the system more intensively. Among individuals over 85, the wealthiest 10[%] of the population claim nearly 40[%] more in Medicare expenditures than the poorest 10[%]. When the analysis is extended to younger workers, who will be more affected by recent changes in Medicare financing, the system becomes only slightly more progressive... Medicare still has much to offer the elderly poor. Many would have no health insurance without it. Before the creation of Medicare, over 60[%] of elderly households in the bottom third of the income distribution were uninsured. Yet it looks as if Medicare is not welfare, at least not for the poor. [Speaking of health insurance, 'when a 22-year-old Aucklander left for an extended overseas holiday, he decided that travel insurance was an expense he didn't need. But six months later, while hitch-hiking in Corfu, he broke his neck and injured his spine in a car accident. Had the partially paralysed Aucklander taken out holiday cover, the insurance company's international assistance network would have assessed his medical needs quickly and ensured the most appropriate treatment. This would have included transfer to a major or specialist hospital. Then, when doctors felt he was ready, he would have been flown home, all at no personal cost. Instead, his father, a sickness beneficiary, and mother had to pay \$46,000 – the amount lent to them by the NZ Ministry of External Relations and Trade to cover his medical and repatriation costs. Thanks to donations from sympathizers and parishioners at their church in Massey, they've paid back \$34,000, but are struggling to find the rest. "Our son's story should be a warning to all Kiwis going overseas," says his mother. Some 760,000 NZers made overseas journeys last year, but at least 150,000 of them did so without travel cover, suggesting that many people take a risk that they won't need insurance while abroad. Statistically, chance may favour them: just one person in nine makes a holiday-insurance claim. Half the number of claims arise from stolen, lost or damaged baggage, 30% are for medical expenses, and the rest are for holiday cancellations, personal liability, death and disability payments, and the financial failure of travel companies. Costs of holiday insurance vary widely. For three weeks in AUS, premiums range from \$60 to \$80 per person, and for worldwide cover from \$170 to \$200. These rates exclude the riskier activities, such as mountaineering, scuba-diving and parachuting. As a minimum, your policy should provide medical expenses of \$200,000 in AUS and the South Pacific, or \$1 million for the rest of the world; personal liability cover of \$2 million; up to \$40,000 for the loss of personal belongings; \$750 for immediate needs if baggage is delayed; and at least \$200 for out-of-pocket expenses in cases of aircraft delay of more than six hours. While on holiday with his wife and four children in California during 1991, a 36-year-old Hamilton real-

estate agent collapsed and was rushed to a Los Angeles hospital. A team of neurosurgeons performed five operations over the next 48 days, saving his life. The hospital bill came to \$500,000, including a \$35,000 fee for x-rays. Luckily the family had taken out a comprehensive travel policy at the last minute because of the children. The insurers promptly paid the hospital and bills for the wife and children's hotel accommodation, phone calls and food. Also, the company's international assistance network regularly rang the wife to ask if she needed further help.'

...one of the hottest ideas on the US business scene, "customer care outsourcing" – handling customer inquiries in everyday parlance – is spreading to NZ. In April, a US leader in the industry, TeleTech, bought Access 24, a Sydney-based customer care group begun by a NZer. While travelling, the Aucklander saw a need for travellers dealing with health emergencies to be able to get expert advice through a 24-hour telephone support system. This led him to form a telephone call centre manned by qualified nurses and doctors, in AUS, NZ and London. People buying medical insurance before going overseas were given the centre's telephone number. The network arranged to fly about 500 people who became sick overseas home to AUS and NZ each year. TeleTech handles about 300,000 calls a day in the US and expected to double its number of employees to about 6000 this year to maintain its growth.' ■ 'The chief executive of Southern Cross has unexpectedly resigned. His sudden departure follows weeks of damaging publicity over delays in processing medical insurance claims and comes after a series of *Herald* articles about the firm's problems. The country's largest health insurer has been beset by disgruntled clients who have waited weeks, and sometimes months, for their claims to be settled. Private hospital operators and medical specialists have also complained of being out of pocket. The problems arose after Southern Cross' controversial purchase of a multimillion-dollar computer system last year. The chief executive took responsibility for the delays and admitted that the company had failed to hire and train enough staff to handle the switch to the new system. Yesterday, the chairman of the Southern Cross board denied that the chief executive was pushed or that there was any serious falling out between the parties.'

...From where the] former chairman of the Business Roundtable... who [recently] stepped up to chairman of Lion Nathan... sits, N[Z]ers are unrealistic in their demands. He describes how, when... [his] charming Tahitian/French... [wife] was rushed into hospital in Los Angeles to investigate a possible heart attack, it cost \$20,000 for two nights. "And the doctor's bills haven't even arrived yet." His point is not that the American health system is better, but rather that by charging upfront people get a realistic idea of what these procedures cost, whether they're paid privately or out of public money. "N[Z]ers want the world's best health service but refuse to recognise that the funds needed to provide it can only come from a competitive, world-class, business sector..."

...Too many N[Z]ers are in danger of being brainwashed into accepting a misdiagnosis of, and treatment for, troubles in their health system. Good health is not the automatic outcome of dollar injections. A recent American study compared the financial inputs and outcomes of the Canadian, Cuban and U[S] systems. Hardly unexpectedly, the U[S] easily came top for spending and Cuba bottom. The big shock for Americans on the health delivery side, though, was that the Cubans beat them. Let's take a personal example... of a well-insured couple... [from] Washington DC... The woman had an operation and was soon discharged from the topline hospital. But not for long. She became a one-woman epidemic of emergency dashes to hospital, in great agony and violent sickness. And regular swift discharges back home. Clearly she was considered the problem; it could not be anything the highly paid "experts" – for all their elaborate equipment – had or had not done. Despair and chance eventually conspired to take the couple to the door of another doctor, who quickly... discovered... that the other surgeon experts had left things so twisted that the woman was vomiting her own faeces. He treated her – on the next floor up in the same hospital. The dollar cost of all the coming-and-going blew out to the best part of \$100,000. It was kept as low as that because the couple resisted some charges, even though they were not paying the bill. For instance, two in the initial medical team each claimed \$700 or so for the same service – simply admitting the woman to hospital. It was not dollars that brought her return to health. It was brains. The couple did consider litigation, but didn't pursue it: they reckon life had so many more better things for them to do. Their next-door neighbour is another story. We missed saying goodbye to her because the dear little 84-year-old had flown off to care for her son who was being discharged from hospital because his cocktail of sicknesses, headed by cancer, were either beyond treatment or not yet bad enough to warrant attention. He was clearly going home to die. His insurance, for all that he had paid, didn't run to hospice care. Whose health system isn't sick? Friends at home here chuckle about the tale of a funeral director driving past a bowling green crowded with busy players and commenting... "I see our holding pen is still full." One could ask as a footnote: How many of those people were enjoying themselves thanks to happy hip or knee replacements, successful heart, stroke and kidney treatments..."

...Children have long missed out on health spending because politicians have pandered to powerful lobby groups... says the Associate Minister of Health... He said the elderly, in the form of Grey Power, had ensured... that money went to cutting waiting lists. "That may be justified because we have a ballooning older age group, but it shouldn't be at the expense of children's health." Claims that children had missed out on money because they did not vote had "an element of truth." Politicians had been too easily swayed, he said... The result was children filling hospital beds and high child death rates... [T]he case of a Christchurch toddler waiting eight months to see a specialist for glue ear was further proof child health needed more resources... The 85-and-over age group has more than 10 times as much spent on it (per person) than the... five to 14 age group. ['Children make up 24% of the NZ population but receive only 7% of the health budget.']

...An unrelenting tide of sick children going to hospital is seriously threatening strained budgets... Middlemore Hospital has... admitted... [almost] 500 children... compared with about 290 in the same month last year... [M]any in the health sector argue that poor families are... missing out on health care because of wider financial difficulties.

...Financial barriers to health care for people in lower socio-economic groups have not been taken seriously in N[Z]. An Auckland Medical School senior lecturer... said yesterday that the country was not looking at social policies like housing and benefits and how they affected health care. [The lecturer] was speaking to delegates of the Cardiac Society of A[US and NZ] in Rotorua.

...Economic change has hit the health of N[Z]'s poor hard, says... Green Lane Hospital's... coronary care director, w[ho w]as speaking at the annual meeting of the Cardiac Society of A[US and NZ]. He said the... main causes of disease were social and political and it followed that the solutions should also be social and political... Politics and medicine could not be separated... Time would tell, he said, if... [NZ's] lower socio-economic... communities reaped the benefits of programmes [such as the proposed 'entitlement to eight free checkups from 6 weeks to starting school.']

...Free doctors visits for children under six are still not guaranteed, despite the fanfare...

The coalition pledge of free doctors' visits for children aged five and under still relies on GPs agreeing to waive their fees for these children. This in turn depends on GPs accepting a higher Government subsidy in compensation and any attached conditions, which are both still under negotiation. Last night both sides appeared to be close on the level of subsidy... and on guarantees of good service... Doctors will have to meet new national standards – such as guaranteeing an after-hours service – to get the full child subsidy... [V]irtually all GPs already provided an after-hours' service to their patients... North Health's contracts negotiations manager... said increasing the subsidy to \$30 a child would cost \$10 million in the... region, plus about \$5 million for free prescriptions. It was therefore important for North Health to make sure patients were receiving a good service for the extra money... Experience testifies that services invariably expand in response to a higher subsidy and doctors soon reinstate a charge if they can... [so be prepared] for another round of medical inflation.

...DOCTORS have warned free health care for children under six may not happen if the Government fails to fund the consultations properly... [A]t stake is whether after-hours care consultations will be free... [The] GP Association chairman... said a study carried out by the group revealed GPs believed a reasonable minimum fee would be \$35 a head, and this would not include late-night call-outs. "We would be most uncomfortable with anything less than that... We hope to offer a situation where over 90% of care (to children under six) is free. What the Government said was it

wanted a simple arrangement. We can't necessarily cater for every situation." ...The association fears the RHA team could offer as little as \$27 a consultation... [The] RHA free child health negotiations spokesman... said the Government wanted to pay a reasonable rate for consultations. However, the \$35 suggested by the association was "substantially above the average fee listed by most GPs." ...The RHA figure was likely to be related to a study that showed the average cost of a consultation for children was \$29.50... The association's own survey had shown 30% of doctors didn't charge above the current subsidies... for children under five... [and] for community service cardholders.

...Parents may need to change their children's doctors if they want to qualify for the free visits... Doctors and the [RHAs] are at odds over the maximum cost of each consultation... and it appears unlikely all doctors will sign up for the deal. But the chairman of the Medical Association... believed all children would be able to find a doctor prepared to treat them for \$32.50 or less during normal business hours. That is the amount being offered by the authorities... However, the GPs say it is not enough to cover the fees of doctors with high overheads in central city locations, or after hours consultations and house calls... "It's a tricky exercise to pick a figure which is going to cover 100[% of cases] and still have a certain amount of equity about the whole thing." ...[the chairman] said the Government caused the problem by promising free doctor visits and it was now worried about its credibility. A sensible option would be to set the Government payment at a reasonable level and let those who wanted to go to expensive doctors pay the difference... A spokesman for the Minister of Health... said the Government remained committed to the free-visit policy. "My personal view is that the GPs are just trying a bit of posturing," she said. The Asthma Foundation issued a statement calling for the Government and GPs to "get off their high horses" and fulfill the promise. The foundation believed \$32.50 was sufficient for normal hours... and \$40 should be offered for after-hours consultations, based on a survey of Doctors' charges by the Consumers Institute.

...On school holidays as a child, I was sometimes allowed to get in the way at my father's busy general practice in Hamilton... Patients might pause at the desk on their way out with purse held inquiringly open but they would seldom be asked to supplement the seven shillings and sixpence of the... General Medical Services (GMS) benefit – the Government's payment in respect of each consultation... Dad's commitment to free health care was a grumbling one: when he got a plumber's bill he always announced that his fees were going up... For all his spluttering, those fees hardly ever went up... It's these memories that I'm keen to put in front of... [the] chairman of the General Practitioners' Association... [He] has the same memories. "My father was a GP, too," he says, between mouthfuls of a five-minute lunch. "It was in Manurewa and most people didn't pay anything then either." Free health care is a misty memory now, [he] says... because the technology and pharmaceuticals available to doctors are so much more sophisticated. But, he adds, primary care is better as a result... Barely 10 minutes before afternoon surgery is due to start, the waiting room is finally clear of the morning appointments and the doctor sits down to field the suggestion that the public might see him and his colleagues as rich and greedy. After all, I suggest, the possibility of free care for the littlies is foundering on \$2.50 – the difference between the \$32.50 offered and the \$35 he says most of his members would settle for. But [he] says the fee should be "about \$60." His group practice cost \$1 million to set up... "Doctors don't pluck that sort of money out of the air. They're small businessmen and they have to beg and borrow and service loans like any other small business." He begins a 12-hour day at 7.30 most mornings and while he does have the famous half-day Wednesday, "I haven't played golf for years. The afternoon disappears in paperwork." [He] rarely does housecalls these days; most patients prefer to come to the surgery where staff and technical resources mean they get better treatment. When he does, the fee is meant to be around \$70 but, he explains, those who need a home visit almost invariably can't get to surgery so it's rarely charged in full. By contrast, the glazier who came late on a weekday afternoon to repair a window broken by his son's cricket ball charged a \$110 callout fee. "Doctors have lost plenty of income," he says. "Some of the specialists earn a fortune but plenty of GPs struggle."

...The Government seems to have little chance of delivering its key promise of free healthcare for children under six. In a compromise solution announced yesterday, [GPs] will be paid \$32.50 for each child they see in normal hours... But the General Practitioners Association predicted that only two-thirds of GPs would provide free visits for this subsidy... A... survey this week showed it usually cost between \$20 and \$30 to take a child to the doctor in Epsom, St Heliers and Queen St in Auckland... [T]he top fees... would probably drop... to \$12 because of the new... subsidy... But the survey also showed that in Otara and Panmure most children could already see a doctor for no charge. The new subsidy meant these doctors would receive up to \$17.50 extra for each child.

...Free doctors' visits for children under six could force cuts... to other health services in Auckland and Northland. The free visits... would cost about \$6.6 million more than the Government is providing... [according to] North Health figures...

Health officials are clamping down on doctors overclaiming for expenses, estimated at about \$30 million a year for Auckland and Northland alone. Some [GPs] in the upper North Island are claiming... \$700,000 a year each in Government subsidies for seeing low-income adult patients and children... The average paid to a doctor in subsidy claims was \$60,000 a year. Over-claiming extended to laboratory tests, or doctors asking patients back for minor complaints... The North Health general manager of primary care... said it amounted to fraud, ethically... But the chairman of the General Practitioners Association... described North Health's figures as exaggerated and pointed to a flawed claiming system... [In reply, the general manager] said North Health had already recovered more than \$600,000 after investigating a number of suspicious cases. It began focusing on inappropriate claiming about two years ago... Health Benefits Ltd, which pays subsidies to doctors in the rest of the country, estimates the overclaiming "risk" at more than \$50 million a year... [Its] general manager... said only a small percentage of that would be outright criminal fraud. Many cases would stem from doctors being lenient to those whose community services cards had expired.

...Low-income patients may have to prove their cash-strapped status before receiving Government-subsidised medical care. The Auditor-General... has suggested that doctors "be required to sight and record" patients' community services cards so others do not get subsidised drugs that only cardholders are entitled to... [Health Benefits] estimates that 20[%] of claims... are invalid. This translates to about \$21 million a year... But... [the] Auditor-General... said making patients show their... cards to doctors was unlikely to save the Government money. Only 75[%] of those eligible for cards had one, and the suggested crackdown would probably result in more people formally obtaining one.

...The National Community Services Card Centre believes some employees are unaware they are entitled to the community services card... The qualifying income limits... are: Single person sharing accommodation, \$17,769; Single person living alone, \$18,846; Family of two (either a couple or a sole parent with a child), \$28,000; three (couple with one child or a sole parent with two children), \$32,846... six, \$47,385. Income limits are before tax and, where there is more than one earner, mean a family's combined income... Those eligible to hold the card pay, for each visit to a doctor, \$15 less an adult and \$20 a dependent child over the age of 6... and are charged a maximum of \$3 for each government prescription charge.

...The very poor are still not going to the doctor... [according to a] survey... It was "extraordinary" but many... families had been unaware that [GP] charges for under sixes had been scrapped and did not know they were entitled to a community services card... the Auckland City Mission... missionary... said... "I can't stand there and say it's disgusting that there's not medical care there for these people, but they have been put in a position where they have lost the will to get there and to find out what is there for them..." ...In a "significant" number of cases children's symptoms had been ignored in the hope they would go away but instead the children turned out to be seriously ill with meningitis. The problem crossed ethnic boundaries and was a symptom of exhausted, distraught families who were never able to make ends meet... [E]ven the... prescription... charge of \$3 was unaffordable.

...A surge in spending at chemists in July may have been caused in part by the introduction of free prescriptions for children under six, say pharmacists... Retail spending figures released this week show that pharmacy sales were up 23[%]... from the same month last year.

...Coalition ministers yesterday affirmed that free medical care for children under six will remain, despite public questioning of the scheme by... [the PM. But the PM] told the *N[Z] Herald* that he was not seeking to relitigate it but had raised it to “highlight” some of the unintended side-effects created by universal access... He gave as examples the “tiny tot” who was prescribed a quart bottle of cough mixture and the wealthy couple who took their three children for a free health check before taking them on holiday overseas... He has given a series of speeches over recent weeks advocating more targeting and more private provision in both health and education. [Meanwhile, ‘hundreds of college students have been forced to travel long distances for free dental care because local dentists have turned their backs on “inadequate” Government subsidies. Teenagers in two towns in the Rodney district have been unable to get free dental treatment locally for over a year. Young people in Warkworth and Wellsford must travel to Orewa or Whangarei for the free service, pay for local treatment or go with their teeth unchecked. About 1700 teenagers in the towns were affected. The gap in services also affects primary school children needing emergency care out of school dental clinic hours. A dentist in Warkworth for 15 years said he and his surgery partner resigned from the scheme a year ago because they could not afford to treat the 1000 children on their books on the subsidies without increasing fees for adult patients. While they could run at a loss for routine examinations they could not sustain the losses for higher levels of treatment which could climb to \$100 a patient. North Health pays dentists about \$37 for check-ups, with payments for additional work such as fillings and extractions. About 250 dentists were still offering subsidised care in the Auckland and Northland region’.]

...Health officials fear that universal free[dental] treatment for secondary school students will become just a memory unless the Government pays dentists an extra \$6.8 million a year. Briefing papers to the Minister of Health... say the additional money would be the best option for saving the scheme... Many dentists, fed up with fighting the Government year after year to cover costs, have already pulled out... About 100 in Auckland and Northland had quit last year and eight out of nine dentists had walked out in Manurewa... Others threaten to follow suit... Teenagers... get free dental treatment from the time they leave primary school (where a free service should be provided) until the age of 18, as long as they are not working... Figures... suggest that only about half of the eligible teenagers in the wider Auckland and Wellington regions use the service... [T]his was only partly because of the lack of participating dentists. Teenagers with the worst dental problems were usually from poorer families who did not know about the service. Most patients were from better-off families who could afford to pay something.

...The Dental Association supports concerns about the state of *N[Z]* children’s teeth. A new lobby group, the School and Community Dental Services Forum, criticised [RHA]s this week over a deterioration in child dental health for the first time in 20 years. The president of the Dental Association... said dentists in practice who provided 12-year-olds with emergency and special care and also treated first-year secondary students had reported the same thing. “Evidence of untreated cavities and larger-than-expected fillings... point to a disturbing change from the pattern of past years, which had seen a continuously improving situation.” The Otago Dental School has previously said that while some children had shown great improvement more than half still had dental decay and many of these at high levels...

[‘Diet, general health, structural defects of the teeth, and heredity affect one’s chances of developing caries (tooth decay). Treatment includes attention to diet, often entailing the avoidance of sweets, and care of the teeth by cleansing and by restoring teeth that have cavities. The addition of sodium fluoride to municipal water supplies reduce the incidence of caries by as much as 65%. Hypocalcification, in which there is insufficient calcium and a soft enamel is produced, may result from excess fluorine in the diet. Normal enamel may vary in colour from yellow to grey.’]

...‘American dental researchers are closing in on a treatment that eliminates the corrosive action of bacteria in the mouth, and a vaccine that makes tooth decay virtually impossible. To counter the loss of business formerly generated by tooth decay, dentists have already begun to develop new services, such as tooth painting, which makes teeth perfectly, lastingly white.’

...consumers are being ‘warned to stay clear of some teeth whiteners. Prolonged use of hydrogen peroxide-based whiteners could damage the teeth, opening them up to further staining.’ Consumers were previously warned that the ‘mercury-based fillings that have been used for generations in NZ’ are ‘causing problems in people with such fillings and, among dental nurses, an increased incidence of reproductive problems, miscarriages, still births and SIDS.’ There are ‘alternatives to amalgams but they are more expensive.’

...a few years ago a dental technician proposed ‘covering teeth in a kind of plastic to protect them from decay’. Although his proposal seems to have come to nothing, ‘tooth decay deterrents are expected to be developed in two years’ or more, and Swiss scientists have developed a gel that ‘dissolves tooth decay but leaves healthy parts of the tooth alone – dentists only have to drill to tidy up.’]

...The General Dental Council said... [a] dentist... earned more than... \$2.38 million... in four years by unnecessarily drilling, filling and crowning the teeth of hundreds of patients... in his “deliberate pursuit of financial gain.”

...A Pukekohe dentist is on trial in the Auckland District Court for falsely claiming Government dental subsidies... [for children. The dentist], aged 45, faces 20 fraud charges of using a document to gain pecuniary advantage between July 31, 1991, and October 27, 1994... The Crown says that... the... [dentist] lied to get more money back than he was entitled to... [H]e would use a variety of ways to submit false claims. His most common method was to “hold over” fillings so that he could claim for them later. Dentists can only claim one fee for fillings on the same surface during one treatment period... [He also] claimed for fillings and wisdom teeth extractions that were not done. A favourite ploy was to extract all wisdom teeth on the same day but falsely claim for separate extractions and emergency consultations for toothache... [The dentist] had been a contractor since the 1980s and in that time his surgery had had problems with the subsidies, in particular with late claims. In 1989, 1991 and 1993 audits of his practice detected discrepancies. The trial is due to continue for four or five weeks.

...A woman who says she suffered for nine months because her dentist failed to remove packing after an extraction has been told she cannot sue him... for \$250,000. The High Court at Auckland ruled that she was too late to bring the 1992 claim and the Court of Appeal in Wellington has agreed... [By the way, s]ince buying... the Geddes dental practice... in 1988, which was then a business only making dentures, [the new owner] has lifted the turnover... from \$120,000 a year to \$6.5 million last year. It now has seven branches, employing 25 dentists and technicians to service 40,000 patients – the largest in *N[Z]*. He was among the first to see the potential for business that was ushered in with the new Dental Act in January 1989. The new act enabled dental technicians to make and fit dentures directly to the public, where previously these had to be supplied through a dentist. It created a new class of worker, the dental hygienist. And it revoked all restrictions on who could and who could not own a dental practice... Suffice to say, an element of protectionism and elitism[still] exists in dentistry, as it does in all professions. The pecking order is very clear, with dentists at the top, and dental technicians... some distance below. Overlaying all this is a deeply rooted conservatism... The conservative, restrained dignity of dentistry took a bit of a shaking when [the owner] started appearing in his own, high-profile television advertisements offering his service... Ironically, [he] could not have taken on the dental profession with his aggressive marketing had he been a dentist himself. “For one thing, peer pressure would probably have prevented me from advertising.”... Eighteen months ago, Geddes won the North Health contract to treat community service card holders. This division was sub-branded as “Dentcare” four months ago. A second contract, and potentially a more interesting one, will enable Geddes to treat 14,000 secondary school children at school. Geddes has built a mobile dental unit, which examines the kids and, thanks to computer technology, enables it to produce a “report card” on the spot, complete with X-ray pictures of the... mouth. If treatment is required, the kids are referred to a Geddes surgery. [The owner] says one of the most valuable elements of this contract is the data can be stored, providing details of all the kids’ dental make-up. “I can tell you how many... schoolchildren living in Hurstmere Rd have cavities in their left molar,” he says. And if this sounds like the type of information that only a nut would collect, it must be remembered that this data base is valuable for the group’s overall marketing strategy of providing dental care through a patient’s entire life. The key is to get them young and make them comfortable with the Geddes brand... he believes.

...Most teenagers in Auckland schools need dental treatment, especially in poorer areas, say the organisers of a mobile service. Geddes Dental Group... says only 8[%] of the students it sees have been to a dentist during the past year. The managing director... [also] said tooth decay was coming back in schoolchildren after 30 years of improving dental health because of fluoridation. N[Z]ers had treated fluoridated water as “a false security blanket” but it could not protect children against the effects of a regular diet of takeaways, soft drinks and chocolate bars. - 1997

Chocolate may be rehabilitated from its place as an enemy of children’s teeth – the future versions may even make teeth healthier. The reason? Cocoa beans contain antibacterial agents which offset the sugar content and reduce the chance of decay, Japanese researchers report in *New Scientist* magazine. The problem is that the useful chemicals in the cocoa beans are predominantly in the husk, which is normally thrown away. But... husk extracts could be used in mouthwash or toothpaste to fight tooth decay... It could also be added to chocolate confectionery... Teeth begin to rot when the common bacteria *Streptococcus mutans* secrete a sticky molecule called glucan, which helps them anchor themselves to teeth, and so form a layer of plaque. In that plaque, the bacteria convert sucrose molecules into acid which attacks the enamel.

...Adult humans have 32 teeth in a full set... The enamel they are covered with is the strongest natural material known.

...the A[US]n Dental Association... said tooth wear had become more common in recent years and one of the reasons was clenching and grinding because of stress. It said people were working longer hours and cramming more into their busy lives, adding further to the problem.

...[a] Muscovite... is delighted that at the tender age of 104, she will at last be able to munch her favourite ginger cookies – after growing three new teeth. [She] has become the oldest person to grow new teeth, baffling doctors in the remote southern region of Tatarstan, where she lives alone in a small village tending a garden and raising poultry... Local dentists are studying the rare event.

...*Hope for those too long in the tooth*... Dental scientists at Guy’s Hospital in London have discovered what type of tooth an embryonic tooth bud will develop into. They have used their knowledge to make a tooth that should have become an incisor become a molar instead. It is a big step towards their long-term target of making it possible for people who have lost teeth through accident or decay to grow new teeth... [(t)he tooth is the only part of the human body that cannot repair itself]... That we grow a second set of teeth in childhood may seem to make it more likely that we could do the same again. But the second set grows from the same bud-like structures as the first set and these disappear after the second set is formed. Other genes that are normally only active in embryos have been switched on in adult animals in experiments. Genetic dentists may be some years away but they are coming.

The dentists who stand in the last line of defence in the dental care war are losing the battle... In Auckland, several patients a week on average are admitted to hospitals after neglected tooth problems have escalated into potentially dangerous conditions... Pain relief and extraction are the only options left... North Health said the number... had doubled since 1993... The northern [RHA has] paid for 15,000 such treatments. Patients still have to pay between \$30 and \$40 at the hospitals... Why adults wait so long before seeking dental help is the subject of debate... [S]tudies showed that less than half of N[Z]’s adult population went for regular dental checks... Some say that people cannot afford to pay for consultations... These days, the charge... ranges from around \$50 to \$100 depending on what is done, according to figures supplied by the Dental Association... According to the most recent national statistics... 36[%] of 20- to [34]-year-olds said they could not afford dental care... 17[%] of 35- to 44-year-olds avoided care because of the expense... Among the economically depressed, dental care was pretty low on the priority list... The president of the Dental Association... said that in countries where dentistry was more or less free, half of the population [still] did not seek care... The dean of the Otago University Dental School... this week said... [fewer] students are enrolling... and those who do are paying higher fees which seems likely to push charges up even further as graduates seek to recoup education expenses by charging more.

...The cost of dental care was blamed this week for some people failing to seek help and becoming sick when infections spread through their bodies, but a study by an Otago University dentistry student has found that fear may also be a potent factor... [People] were frightened of the sight and feel of needles and of the sight, sound and vibrations of drills... The news... comes as Auckland health officials delve into why many college students are avoiding the dentist... The authority spent about \$12.5 million a year on free dental care for primary and secondary students in the region... Officials fear that the reluctance to turn up for free annual checks will lead to an upsurge in people later needing expensive emergency care... About 20 or 30[%] of the people admitted to hospital with[tooth] infections ended up in intensive care... What started as a toothache put... [a] 50-year-old Otara father... in hospital for several months and left him with scars all over his upper body. The infection in his teeth raced through his system... An Auckland dental specialist who treated the man said he believed one of the operations at Green Lane[Hospital] had been the difference between life and death for his patient. He said some similar cases he had treated had cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

...As the ache in your jaw eases, another starts in the pit of your stomach. Surely that dentist bill can’t be right? There was a time when car mechanics seemed to eat up our disposable income. These days it feels as if doctors and dentists are taking a disproportionate whack – and Statistics Department figures bear this out. Over the past 15 years, dental charges have increased by three and a half times – almost twice the rate of increase of the consumers price index. Going to the doctor is also costing dramatically more, by about three times. By contrast, your car mechanic is positively restrained – servicing and repairs charges rose only 98[%]. An... overview of the economics of dental practice in N[Z], from 1974 to 1993... pointed out that while N[Z]’s supply of dentists had risen over that period (from 34 to 39 per 100,000) and our dental treatment needs had reduced, the fees charged by dentists for almost everything except dentures had increased considerably... When all the sums are done, real after-tax dentist incomes are higher in the 1990s than they were in the 70s and 80s – despite a reduced workload. More recent... figures show the average self-employed dentist had a net before-tax 1994 income of \$109,740. Dentists in group practice earned 30[%] more, and the average dentist worked 199 days... Auckland-North Auckland dental incomes are about \$20,000 higher than the national average. Surprisingly the highest-earning dentists of all are not in central Auckland but out west, where... figures show the average gross income is \$482,282, which nets \$168,936. Since West Auckland practitioners don’t charge higher fees than other Auckland dentists, that is puzzling. Perhaps they are better at making sure their bills are paid.

...PATIENTS’ access to dental care and the size of their dentist’s bill depends on where they live. Studies have shown that inner-city Auckland is the most expensive place for treatment and Christchurch the cheapest. The price difference is around 40% for no apparent reason... The cost of a single filling starts at around \$80 in central Auckland and can range up to \$200, but shop around in Christchurch and you can find dentists who charge \$45... per filling. The same dentists charge as little as \$40 for an examination without x-rays, compared with some Auckland practices at... \$75... Having a tooth pulled can also leave a hole in the wallet, particularly in Auckland. Straightforward extractions there can cost... \$160. In Christchurch you can easily get rid of a troublesome tooth for \$50... Dentists are at a loss to explain why the regional variations exist, except to say they are historical and accepted by patients and practitioners alike... “Competition may be a factor but it is hard to quantify. [Christchurch] dentists’ incomes are the lowest in the country and dentists accept that,”... said [a Dental Association spokesperson. Incidentally, a]... patient at Christchurch Hospital recovering from an uncomplicated mild heart attack had recurrent chest pain that was not recognised as significant by the casual nurse on duty, according to a report by senior doctors. The woman, in her 60s, died. Her case is labelled a potentially avoidable death by... the executive of the hospital’s Medical Staff Association... [The] report... has details of 40 cases and was leaked anonymously. An accompanying letter to the Minister of Health from the association chairman... says the report outlines four categories of system failure: understaffing, inappropriate staffing, inappropriate patient location, and loss of quality indicators or practice falling below stated standards. On a ward in July

one registered nurse with intravenous certification and one enrolled nurse were required to nurse a ward of 30 cases, including acute surgical, medical and cardiac patients. At 4 am, two patients were bleeding significantly, one becoming severely shocked. The registered nurse twice telephoned the duty manager to ask for extra help, to be told none was available. The duty manager finally sent a nurse from surgical recovery while the ward registered nurse ran to obtain blood for transfusion.

...Lives “were not, and will not be” at risk at Waikato Hospital, despite a management taskforce identifying a chronic staff shortage, a Waikato health chief said yesterday... [He] was responding to a report... which detailed a shift in one of Waikato’s acute medical wards... [that] was staffed by two nurses who had to care for 23 patients – of whom six needed one-on-one care, 12 required intravenous antibiotics and four were incontinent. The report, written by a registered nurse... was entitled “Nightmare on Night Shift.” It outlined how the skeleton staff was forced to leave one man lying in faeces for more than three hours as they struggled to cope with the other patients... A taskforce... recommended more staff be employed immediately... But the Nurses Organisation said that as long as Health Waikato offered low pay rates, the [CHE] would find it difficult to attract staff... “Since the Employment Contracts Act was introduced in 1991, Health Waikato nurses have had a mere 1[%] pay rise...” Health Waikato nurses were paid 8[%] less than their Auckland Healthcare counterparts... An organiser... said the ultimate blame lies with the Government, which has forced Health Waikato to cut its costs by \$30 million over three years. “...you can’t take \$30 million off an organisation without screwing the staff too tightly...”

...Nurses at Waikato Hospital say a staffing emergency has been brewing for two years... “We have been heading towards a staffing crisis across the board – not just nurses, but orderlies and cleaning staff,”... said... one nurse, who would not be named for fear of losing her job... Another nurse, also afraid of dismissal if named, said... “We cannot get experienced nurses. We can get graduates but they take up to six months’ training and that is yet another demand on the senior staff.” ...Hospital management has forbidden nurses to speak out about the problems, highlighted in the article ‘Nightmare on Night Shift’... However... [the NZ] *Herald* has discovered that other nurses have recounted their own nightmares in a journal unofficially dubbed ‘The Grizzle Book.’ A March, 1996, entry reads: “Shift from Hell – 11 admissions and no help available in entire hospital.” Another in March: “Horrible shift – 13 admissions, one patient unable to be taken to high dependency unit because of no beds.” And in April: “Receptionist sick, can’t get relief; 27 patients, no agency nurses, two staff nurses sick; overflow hideous.” ...The charge nurse in the Intensive Care Unit... and the operations manager for the Emergency Department... confirmed that a shortage of experienced staff is at the heart of the problem at Waikato – and numerous other hospitals.

...Women with breast cancer may be forced to have their breasts removed unless up to \$30 million is spent on methods of less drastic cancer treatment, doctors say. The Australasian College of Radiologists believes the extra funding will be needed to cope with a 20[%] rise in cancer cases by the year 2000 expected as a result of... an ageing population... and... a breast screening programme [being introduced next year (the potential rise should be higher than 20%, but NZ’s health funding authorities decided that ‘they can’t afford a thorough breast-screening programme’)]... The college says that unless resources are boosted waiting lists will grow so unmanageable that only the most severe cases will be treated. Women found in the screening programme to have early stages of breast cancer could be low priority. “People would face the risk that their treatment would be less effective because of the delay,”... Already people with all sorts of cancers are waiting nearly three months for... therapy in some parts of the country... N[Z] was short of about two radiation therapy machines to cope with the 15,000 cancers found last year. It was also short of about 30 personnel to run the machines, some of whom took 10 years to train.

...Nine out of 10 women are still alive five years after breast-cancer treatment, according to a new study... conducted in 35 countries,[which] involved more than 5500 women who all received a combination of radiotherapy and conservative surgery for tumours up to 5cm in diameter.

...[a NZ] Cancer Society survey has found most women believe that at least one in four will contract the disease: the truth is it’s only one in 10. Women also tend to suspect a family link, when most women who develop breast cancer have no history of it in the family.

...[research has linked increased rates of breast cancer to prolonged use of ‘sports bras, or similar clothing that hold the body too tight and, as a consequence, restrict the passage of blood through adjacent skin, while also putting extra stress on the lungs, etc.’]

...As Auckland expands, so does the quandary health planners find themselves in. More people means more health care, which also throws into question where those services should be... A key issue for Waitemata Health is distance to health services. People living on the North Shore and in the west must travel outside their Waitemata Health area for some treatments. There is no intensive care unit or 24-hour emergency department at North Shore Hospital, which is also devoid of several other services.

...liver transplants could be performed at Auckland or Wellington hospitals, cutting the need for patients to travel overseas. The country’s four [RHAs] are reviewing tenders from Auckland and Wellington Hospitals along with bids from Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne... [O]nly a relatively small number of people needed liver transplants each year, which had to be weighed up against the high cost of keeping a liver transplant unit running... A decision is expected by late next month. The [Surgical Services manager] at Auckland Hospital... said staff were very keen to win the contract, which involved only adult patients... Children needing new livers will continue to travel to A[US] for operations. Up to 20 adults a year go to A[US] for liver transplants, receiving up to \$120,000 of Government money for surgery, travel and accommodation. [The manager] said he did not expect Auckland Hospital to be able to do the surgery any cheaper than A[US]n counterparts, but many people would be spared big accommodation and travel costs. The money would also stay within the N[Z] economy rather than go overseas... If Auckland Hospital won the contract... worth up to \$2.5 million a year... it would need to spend \$150,000 training staff and about \$500,000 on equipment. This money would probably be raised through philanthropic trusts... If successful, Auckland could start the work during the second half of next year.

...Auckland Hospital has closed a surgical ward for up to eight months because it has run out of money to take extra patients waiting for operations[, a move which]... has embarrassed the Government... The hospital’s general manager... said the closure was the result of more efficient patient management which cleared beds faster... Last week Auckland Hospital announced a go-slow in four areas – urology, neurology, general and eye surgery – after surgeons worked 40[%] ahead of their financial targets in the first two months of the financial year... The empty 25-bed ward is capable of taking up to 1000 general surgery and urology patients between now and its likely reopening in April or May next year... [T]he ward could stay open only if the... [RHA] decided to buy more surgery from Auckland Hospital... North Health had switched its funding priorities from elective to acute surgery, leaving less money for people on waiting lists. The Government has produced a \$130 million fund aimed at cutting national waiting lists but this was aimed at specific operations.

...Green Lane Hospital says the future of its heart surgery[unit] is threatened by the Government’s refusal to pay the full cost of operations. The hospital claims underfunding means it loses \$8650 for every coronary bypass operation it performs... North Health, disputes the figures but conceded yesterday that the hospital might be underpaid... Heart surgery costs were highlighted by the Government’s announcement on Thursday that 120 fast-track coronary bypass operations for Aucklanders at the top of the waiting list would go ahead... The extra \$3.74 million of work will be split between Green Lane (20 operations), the private Mercy Hospital in [Auckland] (20), Waikato Hospital (20) and the private Wakefield Hospital in Wellington (60)... [T]his time Green Lane was being paid the full \$17,486 cost. Normally it received only \$8836 from North Health. Wakefield... was understood to have tendered \$14,500 an operation...

A... Government blitz on hospital waiting lists has come too late for an Auckland man who finally made it to the head of the queue. After 19 months waiting for heart surgery, [the man] was told yesterday by Green Lane Hospital surgeons that his angioplasty could not be completed. A block in one of the main arteries of his heart means he now faces a heart bypass operation and the likelihood of going to the end of another long

waiting list... The 51-year-old journalist said it took him about four months from last March to get an angiogram before then being put in the queue for surgery... [H]e had spent the last 19 months in a drug-induced haze to help reduce pain. "This has ruined my life. I can't hold down steady work. This is the end of a 35-year-career." ...One Green Lane cardiologist... has labelled the delays in coronary treatment "a national disgrace"... [P]atients could not get angioplasty operations until they deteriorated to the point they needed to be in hospital.

...The new chief executive of the country's biggest [CHE], Auckland Healthcare... steps into one of the thorniest health jobs in the country with a warning: if a service... [at the] Auckland, Green Lane, National Women's and Starship hospitals... is not funded adequately that service will go... The 44-year-old, like his predecessor [– who]... had a salary package of more than \$220,000 a year... [–] is keen to spread the gospel that waiting lists and trade-off decisions are the property of [RHA]s, not hospitals. Authorities... says... the man who, until recently, ran the Hamilton-based Midland authority... must assess the needs of their population and set the priorities. "It's our job to provide good-quality services according to what North Health wishes to buy from us." [By the way, one CHE 'spent \$60,000 advertising a job throughout the country then reemployed the incumbent employee.'

...The northern RHA has spent \$82,551 on advertising itself in newspapers, and is planning to pay out at least the same amount again... The North Health communications manager... said yesterday that money for the advertisements had come from the administration budget and would not affect services being bought. Advertisements were also planned for Maori, Pacific Island and mental health services... The advertisements met requests from the public that North Health tell them what it was doing, he said... "It's a stupid waste of money," said [one person] whose 58-year-old wife... has apparently been on the priority waiting list for knee replacements since February last year.

...Just over 94,000 people are on waiting lists for hospital operations... down slightly from 95,470 in March... [(but higher than the previous year's figure of 85,171),] according to Government figures issued last night. The Minister of Health... said... "I can tell the public that we've been able to hold the trend that's been dogging governments for the last 30 years,"... The figures show that more than 18,000 people have been waiting two years or longer. Of them, 329 have been waiting for cardiology or cardiothoracic operations. Nearly 19,000 people have been waiting between 12 and 23 months.

...Being on the waiting list for ear, nose or throat surgery at Waikato Hospital is not an ideal position... The specialist department is the only one of its kind in the Midland region... Not only does the waiting list for surgery exceed 1000 but the number of people waiting for an initial appointment is around 3000. To make matters worse, the department's five surgeons have resigned and will hang up their scalpels in December. The "potential horror stories"... include the one about the patient recovering from cancer of the larynx being given solid food; the patient who was left for hours with "bloodied crusts all over his face" from a bleeding nose the nurses did not have time to clean up; and the time the surgeon rang to inquire about his patient and discovered the patient's wife answering the phone – the nurses simply did not have time. For... the surgeons... such incidents were too common for comfort and gave them ample motivation for their decision. The ear, nose and throat specialists said over the last year, the problems have compounded and despite continued talks and meetings with Health Waikato management, no "concrete" solutions have been found. The surgeons... did not want to quit but said their resignations and the guaranteed chaos created by their absence, would "hopefully force the issue to a sensible conclusion." In the meantime, patients are suffering...

Bosses of the 23 [CHE]s were paid bonuses of up to \$34,000 last financial year, despite some failing to keep within budget. Chief executive salaries – all over \$100,000 – and top-up bonuses were revealed yesterday by the Labour health spokeswoman... from information gathered under the Official Information Act. She criticised bonus payouts when thousands of patients were stranded on waiting lists... The Association of Salaried Medical Specialists said... that the bonus payments were largely financially driven and paid little attention to quality healthcare.

...The Government has repeated that it has no intention of selling public hospitals, although it continues to be equivocal about whether all 23 [CHE]s would be retained. The Association of Salaried Medical Specialists claimed yesterday that the Government had plans to sell up to seven provincial hospitals. But both the P[M]... and the Minister of C[HE]s... rejected the statements... Speaking on radio, [the PM] said it was true there were some facilities "at minor hospitals" that were no longer needed and that [CHE]s might want to sell them. "But we are not in the business of selling hospitals that we require for a public health system... There are some out there on the Right who say we should [but] we have rejected that emphatically." ...[the minister] had previously stated that he doubted whether there would be 23 [CHE]s in five years.

...Two more heads of [CHE]s resigned yesterday, bringing the total number of resignations of chief executives or chairmen and women to at least 17 in the past three years. The resignations of the heads of Health South Canterbury... and Nelson Marlborough Health... were announced by the Minister for C[HE]s... Their terms were due to expire... he said. Their resignations are effective immediately... [The minister] also announced the roll-over of the appointments of a further 29 [CHE] directors whose terms were due to expire... [In related news, t]he Wellington public hospital system has blown its budget just months into the financial year, raising fears of cuts in services. Capital Coast Health was about \$6 million in the red for July and August – about \$1.7 million more than budgeted.

...Capital Coast Health is reviewing all of its services after forecasting a deficit of between \$31 million and \$44 million at the end of this financial year. Announcing the proposed deficit... the Minister for C[HE]s... said the amount was unacceptable and much worse than the earlier budgeted figure of \$13.3 million. The board had been told to take steps to ensure that the deficit did not occur.

...The chief executive of Capital Coast Health received a bonus of almost \$30,000 last year despite the [CHE] recording a \$19 million loss... in the 1995-96 year and forecast[ing] a deficit of \$44 million this year... says the Labour health spokeswoman... She said yesterday that she was astounded the Minister for C[HE]s... had approved the bonus... [The minister] was not available for comment.

...Labour is taking aim at big bonuses for public servants, attacking in particular a possible \$65,000 top-up for an Auckland health chief already earning more than \$180,000... Labour's state services spokesman... said that it was "appalling" that a public servant could be paid such a bonus... [A]t \$1250 a week [it is] double the average household income. His predecessor had received between \$160,000 and \$170,000 and a bonus of \$47,000. The increased amounts... equated to a 12[%] pay rise and a potential 38[%] increase in bonus payment... Figures released by the Government in response to a Labour question show that Auckland Healthcare has budgeted \$1.623 million of its funds for bonus payments... The chairman of Auckland Healthcare... said in a statement that the pay and bonuses for management reflected the market... [The chief's] salary and bonus had been approved by the State Services Commission. The Minister for C[HE]s... said that the Government supported bonuses that were based on performance and accountability. "It is important that our hospitals are well run."

...The caretaker Minister for C[HE]s... says likely changes to National's profit-driven model for the enterprises will not solve the problems in public health. National has already flagged that it is prepared to drop the profit motive in hospitals and could bring back elected representatives on [CHE] boards as a result of coalition talks. But [the caretaker] said yesterday that whatever model was chosen "doesn't change the nature of the problem." ...He was commenting on a blow-out deficit of Auckland Healthcare to \$34 million, coming on top of the news that Capital Coast Health... was projecting a deficit of between \$31 million and \$44 million.

...a new Treasury report... criticises Auckland Healthcare's ballooning deficit and Waitemata's inability to meet financial targets... Waitemata Health, serving Rodney, North Shore and Waitakere, recorded a \$7 million deficit... well over the predicted \$4.5 million... [The] report said Auckland needed to address "fundamental infrastructure inefficiencies" to be financially viable... But there is recognition of Auckland Healthcare's problems. It is the biggest, most specialised provider of health services, with more than 1.4 million patients treated each year... and is predicting bigger losses this financial year "due to an ethical obligation to treat all acute patients,"... While... South Auckland Health... delivered a

surplus, it ranked the lowest nationally in terms of customer satisfaction... [M]anagement was addressing its poor... rating with suburban Super Clinics[, 'where public and private health providers will work under one roof']... The report noted that South Auckland Health's attempt to address customer dissatisfaction had been at the expense of financial performance. It recorded a \$20.4 million profit in 1993-1994... [down to] nearly \$1 million last year and \$1.3 million forecast this year.

...The Ministry of Health has warned the Government of a growing gap between the cost of health care in N[Z] and the level of public spending... [O]verall health costs over the next decade were projected to increase at about 5[% a year while public] spending would grow by only 1.9[%]. The ministry has recommended to the Government that it drop its funding model based solely on demographic factors and put public health funding on a new, sustainable growth path... The Treasury believes the health reforms have become a kind of "half-way house" with managers overspending their budgets and central Government tampering with decision-making... The Crown Company Monitoring Advisory Unit said the long-term payback for the reforms, "may still be two to five years away. [The] reforms have... not achieved their full potential." The unit said there had been considerable public anxiety about health reforms and whether this was based on perception or reality, it needed to be addressed... [A]reas of public concern[included] a perceived increase in bureaucracy... the number of well-publicised resignations of the chief executives of the enterprises, and the jargon of management and economics rather than health. [However, the]Minister of Health... said... many of the issues raised... [by] the briefing papers... had been superseded by the coalition agreement.

...The coalition Government has outlined priorities which will... be the death of key parts of National's largely unpopular health reforms brought in three years ago... although hospitals will[still] have to behave "in a businesslike fashion." ...Ironically the coalition compromise to cover children aged 5 and under matched Labour's pre-election position... [and] Labour was the first to offer free doctors' visits for pre-schoolers... in 1990, just a few months before it lost the election.

...Crucial details are still missing from the latest restructuring of the health system announced this week. Some observers think the ambiguity is deliberate because National and N[Z] First could not agree... [The result is that] it is hard to tell just how far the... coalition Government has backtracked on National's health reforms... Interpretation of the many grey areas is likely to fall to the next Minister of Health... The most significant change is... the new "benchmark" contracts system. Contracts will no longer be decided by a simple market model in which the purchaser sets an order for health services and providers compete to supply it at the lowest price. Instead contracts will be based on "historical funding information and levels, benchmarking information, changes in technology and comparative data." This is similar to the agreements some [CHEs] were reaching with [RHAs] anyway – after long arguments about the true cost of providing services. But it changes the emphasis from competitive bargaining between buyer and seller to a forced agreement on what needs to be bought and at what price. It also looks as if private patients will be able to use public hospitals.

...Nauruans, once the world's richest but sadly also sickest people, have been told they can no longer be treated in hospitals in Melbourne because they have not paid their bills, according to the *Pacific Report*. In its latest issue, the fortnightly newsletter quoted the Nauru Health Minister... as saying they had clocked up \$A400,000... in unpaid bills in 28 years... [The minister] said it was vital Nauruans be treated in Melbourne because of its diabetes expertise... [(Nauru's) 9000 people have the world's highest rate of diabetes[])... He said former Nauruan Presidents had made large donations to various Melbourne hospitals and "now they are closing the door to us." ...N[Z] taxpayers often foot the medical bills of overseas patients treated here because their own Governments renege on payment deals... The Starship general manager... said the hospital was treating an overseas youngster who had turned up with an acute condition. There was no guarantee the treatment, which could run to tens of thousands of dollars, will be paid. In May, the Starship treated a four-week-old baby who needed \$150,000 of medical care. The overseas Government concerned guaranteed payment, but has paid only \$32,000. [The manager] said there was no time to secure payment guarantees in emergencies, which should not be left for clinical staff to decide... [He believed] any decision to decline medical treatment to countries had to be made by the Government after diplomatic considerations.

...Frustrated health chiefs are calling for urgent Government restrictions to stem the flood of sick foreign patients arriving on hospital doorsteps. They say a clearer policy is needed on treating overseas patients who are draining their shallow coffers... The situation has been highlighted in a... report about a 12-year-old Fiji cancer patient. The girl has received about \$53,000 of treatment but her family cannot afford the bill, leaving the Starship out of pocket... The country's public hospitals run into mammoth debts every year through treating foreign patients who easily take advantage of N[Z]'s goodwill. Auckland hospital services are bearing the brunt of the problem with a large influx of people from the Pacific region. The chief executive of South Auckland Health... said the Government ordered all public hospitals to treat acutely ill people. As a result, many people jumped on a plane to N[Z] when they were seriously ill. But the Government had arrangements with only some countries. Hospitals were left footing much of the cost when treating patients from outside those areas... [He said] "non-eligible" foreign patients clocked up \$1.3 million of care at his [CHE] last year. The Government wrote off about \$500,000, leaving the enterprise about \$800,000 out of pocket. The chief executive of Auckland Healthcare... said... the Government's lax policy meant a lot of taxpayer money was going on foreigners... Newcomers to N[Z], whether tourists, visitors or immigrants, needed to know exactly what they were entitled to, he said... "Realistically, a significant number... can't pay. Some of the treatment is most expensive..." ...most non-eligible patients turning up at Middlemore Hospital needed maternity or kidney dialysis treatment. Kidney treatment could easily cost tens of thousands of dollars a year per patient... "The responsibility is clearly at Government level to get clarification. It is very messy... we are very keen to point out the situation is far from ideal... If the Government feels it is necessary to provide these services it needs to sort out the details... We are left to feel the heat at the coalface." ...An Auckland businessman has offered to pay[the] young Fiji cancer victim's medical bills...

Hospital debts clocked up by overseas patients will be docked from N[Z] foreign aid payouts under... new policies. The move comes out of coalition Government talks on foreign affairs. Auckland health chiefs yesterday welcomed the news, saying it would bring long-awaited relief to stretched budgets... But the get-tough policy is sure to raise the hackles of many Pacific Island neighbours who rely on foreign aid money. This year N[Z] expects to spend \$184 million in foreign aid. The largest chunk – \$70 million – is destined for the South Pacific. The Western Samoa High Commissioner... last night said the policy was unfair and drastic... "I have seen the debts cleared before. Why can't we do the same thing again?" ...N[Z] officials needed a better monitoring system so it was not so easy for "non-eligible" patients to have access to healthcare. It would have been courteous for the coalition Government to alert Samoan officials before the announcement, she said. Last financial year South Auckland Health and Auckland Healthcare were left more than \$4 million out of pocket by non-eligible patients... The general manager of the Starship... said his hospital was on the verge of bringing in protocols to stem growing unpaid debts. The protocols, which were to start early next year, would see Starship doctors stabilising emergency overseas patients and returning them to their home countries... [T]his could mean children going home to die, but his hospital was financed for N[Z] children unless other arrangements were made... - 1996

About two thousand Aucklanders are being denied elective surgery in public hospitals [each] year because of overseas patients' refusals to pay their hospital bills... The main debtors are Samoans, Tongans and Fijians in that order. They have either skipped the country without paying, or remain on visitors permits, and won't or can't pay... But in other parts of the country they are American, Japanese, German and Taiwanese... The Government's reimbursements... [-] 60% in Auckland Healthcare's case... [-] are due to end in the year 1999/2000... The... Auckland Healthcare chief executive... said the system was being abused more often than most people believed. This included women coming to N[Z] specifically to give

birth so their babies become citizens. In another case a mother concealed her child's serious condition on arrival in the country, in order to be treated at the Starship Children's Hospital... The Government reimbursements had to continue while a long-term solution was negotiated, he said... A[US]n and British patients are treated free in N[Z] because of reciprocal arrangements between their governments and ours. People from Niue and the Cook Islands, classed as external N[Z] territories, are also treated as Kiwis. Hospitals pick up the tab for these patients and ACC covers accidents, such as car crashes, for all visitors.

...[an] Auckland businessman and budding political leader... has so far failed to honour his promise to pay a young Fiji cancer patient's medical bills... now \$61,000... The Starship children's hospital confirmed that \$2224 of donations had come in from [Auckland's] Indian community to help to pay the bill... [By the way, i]mmigration officials have warned the coalition Government that implementing its... [health] screening of overseas visitors... policy could harm tourism and international relations. The advice is contained in a paper on the... coalition agreement... The paper, obtained under the Official Information Act... points out the practical difficulties of screening visitors from the 34 countries with which N[Z] has visa-free arrangements. In 1995 visitors from those countries averaged 2000 a day... If the plan went ahead despite the objections, the airports would be in chaos as they coped with thousands of medical checks every day of the year... "Furthermore, other governments may be prompted to introduce similar measures for N[Z] nationals travelling abroad."

...The country faces a public health disaster as asylum-seekers are forced to wait... up to three months... for medical screening... endangering the public with serious diseases such as tuberculosis... says the Auckland Refugee Council... With about 1200 asylum-seekers each year – most of them coming through Auckland – it was vital to contain threatening illnesses... "Every asylum-seeker who comes in must be screened as soon as possible. Some asylum-seekers go into our new hostel but if that's full, they go straight into the community."

...A Somali refugee family looking forward to a new life in N[Z] has been forced to deal with heartbreak and tragedy... [N]ow living in Wellington, [they] have had to cope with the death... [through] malaria... of a 17-year-old son and brother since arriving... The... [family] came to N[Z] after their... refugee camp was burned to the ground. They joined an elder son... who[had] been working in N[Z] for three years raising[the] \$10,000 needed for his family's travel expenses... [T]hree other children [were left in] Kenya. One, a 10-year-old, became separated from his immediate family and is with relatives in a refugee camp in the Dadaab region. The other two are in Nairobi... [One, a] 14-year-old... was left in a Nairobi hospital when the family left for N[Z]. He is now well, but the hospital will not release him until the bill for hospital and air ambulance travel has been paid... [The mother, who is] a widow... does not have the estimated \$10,000. The director of the Refugee and Migrant Service... hopes a public appeal will help to pay the child's hospital bill and air fare to N[Z]... Meanwhile, another child, [a] 15-year-old daughter, is in Wellington Hospital with an unknown illness.

...[a young] Somali refugee... could barely talk when he was finally reunited with his family last night. But his wide smile said it all as he was swamped in hugs and kisses from his mother... at Wellington Airport... [T]ired from his two-day flight, [he] shook his head when asked if he felt the chilly Wellington evening, but nodded that he was happy to be here... [He] is still recovering from a tetanus infection which forced his family to leave him in a coma at a Nairobi hospital... His survival was touch and go. When he did recover, the hospital refused to let him [go]... He was made to sleep on the floor of a ward, risking reinfection... [An] appeal raised \$13,000 to cover his bill and his airfare... [His mother] said through an interpreter that she wanted to thank the N[Z] public for their generosity... [Incidentally, 'the Government is looking at whether babies born in NZ to foreign women should still get citizenship. Last week, the Cabinet closed a loophole that allowed women from other countries to have their babies in NZ free of charge.' But d]ocking foreign aid to Pacific Island countries to recoup unpaid hospitals bills has been thrown in the too-hard basket.

...It is commonplace for political parties at election time to make promises which, although they sound simple enough, often prove more difficult than expected to put into effect. It [was a NZ] First policy that children should have free medical treatment. This has been modified... to free treatment for children... five years of age... [and under. But GPs don't] consider that every service is equivalent... any more than lawyers or plumbers would be happy to charge the same sum for everything they did. Like most other people, doctors take the view that the fee should be adjusted according to the nature of the service and this does not necessarily relate only to the time taken. It can also reflect the skill or training required to perform the task. If we assume that all services a doctor provides are equal value we discourage doctors from training themselves more highly which in turn is likely to put a greater strain on specialist services necessary to fill the gaps and is inevitably more costly for the patient or the state. It was because the courts recognised differences in the value of services that in a very celebrated case some years ago the Labour [Government]... failed to fix a price for the medical care of children. The attempt was halted as a result of a successful court injunction sought by three prominent [GPs]. The truth is that most [GPs] do charge the same fee for most of their services but they also believe that they should have the right to charge more when a special, out-of-the-ordinary service is provided. Such services would include prolonged counselling of parents, minor surgery, extended consultations and certain specialised or semi-specialised procedures. An alternative would be an increased subsidy for such services, but this could be difficult to regulate.[In addition, experience has taught that doctors can be dishonest!] Experience has also taught doctors to be wary of fixed subsidies. Many still recall the institution of a general medical services subsidy at 7s 6d which, despite considerable inflation over the years, remained at that figure – although converted to decimal currency – for well over 30 years. Had there not been a right to charge a fee from the patient in addition to the subsidy, medical practice would have become quite uneconomic for the majority of practitioners... [S]ome would claim that a small fee discourages trivial consultations. However, where the service is free, as in Britain, there is little evidence that it is abused... The system of payment known as capitation has been established for many years in Britain... The doctors get a regular payment for all who are on their register irrespective of whether they are seen in the course of the year. In this way doctors can afford to give extra time to those who need special attention, knowing that many of the people who registered with them will use less time and effort than the payment would allow, and some will not attend at all. Many people would favour such a system in N[Z] since it also enables doctors to assume more responsibility for patients registered with them. In this country a patient may be regularly attending several [GPs] and no one doctor can be said to have ultimate responsibility. In Britain the... doctor as a result has a much more defined responsibility to the patient. In fact these responsibilities are clearly specified in a legal contract... The capitation system theoretically should encourage doctors to do even more to keep people well as they will have fewer people to see and hence less work to do for the money they receive.[But what happens to the principle of getting a *second opinion* – and what happens when, for any one of a variety of reasons, patients are unable to see the doctor they are registered to? Are they told: "Fack off! Can ye no see I'm abo' to go play golf?"] Many doctors believe that the community would be best served by a system which integrates capitation and fee-for-service and some experiments along these lines are in operation already in this country... Such a system would require registration and it would become more difficult, but not impossible, to change from one doctor to another in the event of dissatisfaction. It would, however, encourage continuity of care, which is something which is often lacking in N[Z] medicine... In the end the concern must be for the health of our children, which is not as good as it should be in a highly developed country such as this. To what extent this can be put down to failure to get medical care because of the fee barrier remains unknown. After all, inoculations are free but many children do not get them.

...Most countries that pursued a market model in health were now having second thoughts because of proliferating bureaucracies and other negatives... such as transaction costs... [an] English health... Professor... said yesterday.

...Cold weather and a flu epidemic... [- that caused] 130 deaths... in the first week and 60 in the second... [-] have strained hospitals run by Britain's state-funded National Health Service[(NHS)], with some blaming their problems on staff shortages and lack of cash... "We're facing the biggest crisis in accident and emergency in this hospital that I can remember in 12 years of being a consultant here," said... [the] clinical director of

Royal Liverpool Hospital's [A&E] department. His workload is up 50[%] in five years; funding has not increased. [However, t]he Government... maintains it has increased spending on health every year in real terms, and says its injection of market-style reforms has shortened waiting lists for non-emergency care. This year the service's budget is \$NZ106 billion... A poll conducted by the Gallup Organisation late last year found health was rated the nation's second most urgent issue, behind unemployment. Another Gallup survey found 60[%] believed the service would get worse...

BRITISH doctors, alarmed by a funding crisis in the state health service, are considering options to find more cash, including charging patients to see their family doctor... "The very fact we have to consider any such possible option demonstrates just now desperate doctors are," [the]British Medical Association chairman... told BBC radio... The BMA, a professional body, has no power to set fees for patients... Increasing taxes and making patients pay for hospital rooms and tests are other options being examined... [However,] the new Labour government was against raising taxes... [The NHS] was set up in 1948 to provide fair, free and state-of-the-art medical coverage... [Today] doctors say it does not have the money to provide treatment for everyone when they need it. Hospital closures, a lack of intensive care beds, year-long waiting lists for routine procedures and operations cancelled at the last minute make daily headlines.

...[*British hospitals are in chaos and it could lead to a formal rationing of care* Patricia Trimble (68), a grandmother with pneumonia, spent 10 hours on a trolley at Hope Hospital, Salford, before being transferred to the Halifax Royal Infirmary. She later died. At Portsmouth's Royal Alexandra and St Mary's hospitals, staff handed out notices to patients' families asking them to help wash, feed and shave their sick relatives. In Northampton, the town's general hospital effectively closed its doors to the sick and injured for 3 1/2 hours. Even emergency cases were diverted. Nearby Kettering General hospital ran out of beds the next day and turned away patients for the first time in its 100-year history. A 24-year-old was left stranded in France after being seriously injured because no suitable hospital space could be found for her in Britain. The NHS, like a car crash victim, seems to be suffering cardiac arrest after multiple injuries. Although the health secretary tried to make capital from the falling numbers of NHS waiting lists, he was forced to admit: "There is a crisis." Amid the tragedies and headlines, many patients remained sanguine. They recognised it was not so much an exceptional crisis as an exacerbated symptom of chronic malaise. Has the NHS, after years of argument over cuts versus efficiency, finally reached a point where it no longer has the capacity to cope? One element of the NHS illness is that the service is short of 8000 nurses and finding it difficult to keep those it has. Some hospitals have sent managers on recruitment drives to the Far East, Scandinavia, and Commonwealth countries; it is estimated that last year more than 5000 nurses working for the NHS came from abroad. Others turn to agency services. Thornbury Nursing Services, based in Bristol, has been charging hospitals \$180 an hour to hire nurses, of which \$114 goes to the nurse – equivalent to more than \$210,000 a year. In comparison, the starting salary for a newly qualified NHS nurse is \$38,400; the average pay is \$45,000. However, alongside the shortage of nurses and low pay there are questions over the number of beds. In the 1960s there were more than 3000 hospitals providing 550,000 beds in Britain. By 1995 the number of beds was down to 250,000. Now it stands at 194,000, of which 108,000 are for acute cases. Further reductions are likely as hospitals are modernised under the Private Finance Initiative. A new hospital in Norwich, for example, will provide 800 beds, about 400 fewer than the hospitals it will replace. There are some good reasons for the decline. Quicker techniques and better management have led to a 50% reduction in overnight stays. Although there are fewer beds, more patients are being treated – 11.5 million in-patients last year, compared with 8.2 million in 1987. But Britain could spend more. Among European and Scandinavian countries it is fifth from bottom based on the amount spent per head of population on health services. There is a limit, however, as to what can be done and how much taxpayers are prepared to pay. Recently, the chairman of the junior doctors committee at the BMA said that what most annoys doctors is: "People are literally calling 999 because they have got the shivers. This is not just the old, but people in their 20s and 30s. When you tell them they've got a common cold or the flu, they then ask to be taken home in an ambulance. There is a general increase in the unwillingness of people to take responsibility for their own health." Was this exaggeration in the heat of the moment? The Department of Health could not supply figures. But, by some estimates, there were 18 million admissions last year – suggesting that an extraordinarily high proportion of the population sought hospital help. Patients complain they often have little choice but to go to their local A&E unit for swift treatment. In big cities, getting appointments, let alone home visits, from GPs can be a lengthy process, especially during holiday periods. Part of the problem is the increasing use of locums – who may be more ready to refer patients to hospital – to cover out-of-hours calls. GPs, however, also complain of unrealistic demands. "Patients were using us in the same way as they use supermarkets," says a GP in Bolton, referring to his experience in recent weeks. "Medical services are quite simply undervalued by the majority of the population. Try calling a plumber on Christmas Day and see how much it costs." Against this background of demand outstripping supply, health experts are urging the government to acknowledge what many already accept: there will have to be some form of rationing. It is already happening informally whether patients like it or not. A survey of 3000 GPs, published in *Doctor* magazine this month revealed that 8 out of 10 had denied patients treatment, with the situation worst in the south. The government, the journal said, was "like a child hiding under the bed covers in the hope that the rationing monster will go away".

...[*While insisting that the NHS was safe in her hands, the Iron Lady trumpeted the virtues of privatised, US-style health care. Essential to her plan was the idea of getting hospitals and GP surgeries to compete for patients within an internal market. The more patients an institution gets, the more money it receives from the public purse. Those who don't satisfy the customer go under. In theory it sounded like a way of increasing choice, but it had obvious drawbacks. There was no incentive for GPs to take on patients with chronic and expensive illnesses. Without very strict regulation the elderly, the disabled and those needing long-term treatment lost out in such a market. AIDS victims and those who suffer from related syndromes can find it impossible to get care other than in expensive private clinics, or they are moved from practice to practice, hospital to hospital. Doctors had to become accountants first and carers second to survive the harsh climate of competition. The internal market led to an enormous growth in paperwork, administration and non-medical costs in the American system. There was nothing to suggest that the situation would be any better in Britain. Indeed most health professionals, from doctors to hospital administrators, believed that it would be a great deal worse. "The motive in business is to make a profit. The Health Service cannot make a profit. The Health Service in this country has been very successful. I'm not sure the same can be said of British business," claimed a London consultant when the former Tory PM first trumpeted her plan*']...

No other people ever look half so lost or so piteous as former cabinet ministers. Once, whenever they descended from a plane, government chauffeurs stepped forward to carry their briefcases and to open the car door. Now they must queue for shuttle buses... The former minister I banged into the other day actually said he was surprised to be recognised. Not that he has completely sunk from view. He is now chairman of [an RHA]... So, either rudely or honestly, I flew into him over the hopeless state of public hospitals. With a practised tongue he put me in my place. And then he said that the real crisis is still to come – and no one will talk about it. At some stage, he said, people must decide where we are going to draw the line on other people's lives... As he sees it, doctors can now perform tricks that are so clever and so impossibly expensive that we are forced to ask ourselves: How are we to decide who gets treated and who gets left to die? This is the first time in history that people have had the choice. Until now people, like other worn-out animals, could only lie down, try to get comfortable and wait. Then the question began to answer itself. If the dying were bossy and important enough their final days could be stretched out into months. While the rest of the world looked on in disbelief, the taxpayers of Spain, Yugoslavia and Portugal were forced to keep alive the wasted shells of their former dictators, Franco, Tito and Salazar. Yet at the same time it was possible to see in public hospitals motionless forms in beds on which were hung DNR cards... Do Not Revive. The Franco-Tito-Salazar treatment was too costly for ordinary people. For them a bed, a bedpan and a DNR card were good enough. Today doctors are cleverer. And they have cleverer machines. So they could spin out the last comas of more people. But who gains if Granddad lies motionless and silent for a month longer than the term of his natural life? And... has anyone the right to force everyone else to pay for those blank and costly days? Thirty, 40, 50 years ago the world was more passive. The doctor decided... Sheeplike, we accepted the decision or preferred not to

know. Today we are more nosy. And stropplier. So, if the old cabinet minister... is right, we must take the responsibility of setting up the rules on when we keep pouring money into the not-quite-dead and when we pull the plug...

Auckland Healthcare will be thumped with an extra \$87,000 on its annual water and wastewater bill because of Metrowater's new system charges. The [CHE] is wondering where the money will come from to meet the unexpected charges and the facilities manager... is considering refusing to pay... [He] said the charges were already unreasonable and the enterprise had been negotiating with the Auckland City Council-owned company for months... The annual \$600,000 water bill... will jump 14[%] now that the fixed charge is based on pipe sizes... Three 150mm pipes run into Green Lane Hospital and Auckland Hospital has two... [E]ach hospital needed only one, but the Metrowater system was unreliable and backup pipes were necessary... However, the commercial wastewater removal charge will drop from \$1.44/cu m to 95c.

...First it was the neon S[HARP] sign on top of Auckland Hospital – now it's going to be McDonald's "golden arches" at the front of the Auckland Starship children's hospital... [T]he hospital had lacked a seven-day food outlet for staff, parents and visitors... [Now] the McDonald's chain is to open in the front foyer... a move that some health lobby groups fear will confuse healthy lifestyle messages. But the Starship general manager... said McDonald's food was analysed by experts and deemed suitable within a balanced diet. He said McDonald's would expand its menu to include cereals, low-fat milk and seasonal fruit. The National Heart Foundation medical director... said the extra healthy foods were commendable but could be a token gesture. "McDonald's isn't going into the Starship for the nutritional sake of children, they are there to make money..." ...obesity among children was rising... due to lack of exercise and poor diet... "Kids will be getting the message from elsewhere that if you eat too many takeaways it's not good for your nutrition – yet here it is within a hospital." ...The creeping commercialism of hospitals is not new. McDonald's is set up in 50 hospitals around the world...

The Starship hopes to feast on a deal struck with its new tenant, McDonald's, in which the rent goes up as more hamburgers are sold... Under the deal, the Starship will earn either \$70,000 (as a base rate) or... 7.5[%] of gross sales up to \$1.29 million... Then 8[%] for sales from \$1.29 million to \$1.69 m... Then 8.5[%] of sales above \$1.69 m... The Starship general manager... said the rent would go into the hospital's operating budget. About 96[%] of that is spent on treating sick children. The deal was commercially favourable... especially given that the foyer space had been empty for four years... McDonald's will also run two public awareness campaigns a year by printing health messages on placemats in its 138 [NZ] stores. The theme for its next campaign, scheduled for next month, is child safety. It will also support one fundraising effort a year run by the Starship Foundation.

...It is a popular fiction that doctors are money-hungry and mercenary in their dealings with patients. It probably does apply to a small minority[, but the] majority have entered medicine with a genuine desire to help humanity through medicines.

...The Human Rights Commission will take legal action next week over a ruling which stops about 200 foreign doctors from working in Auckland. The commission is seeking a High Court judgment to overturn the North Health ban, which prevents overseas-trained doctors from receiving a Government subsidy. It is expected to argue that the ruling is unlawful discrimination based on nationality. The hearing... is expected to take three days... North Health has refused to register overseas doctors since October 1995, in an attempt to save about \$80 million a year in drug and laboratory testing costs... Without a state subsidy... foreign doctors could not hope to compete with local GPs.

...The High Court yesterday found that a North Health policy unlawfully discriminated against [overseas doctors] by subsidising only N[Z]-trained doctors... The South African doctor who originated the legal action... said last night... "I'm sure all 200... doctors are extremely excited by this. It will mean we can practice where we want to instead of being completely restricted. We definitely have to talk about compensation, depending on how much people suffered during this time."

...[the] North Health primary care general manager... said the authority would appeal against the High Court decision on a number of grounds... He said discrimination in favour of local doctors happened around the world, because other countries had the same problem of too many doctors and not enough taxpayer money[('of the 645,000 active physicians in the US in 1989, 116,000 held foreign medical degrees')]... Auckland already had too many GPs... It will not issue any more general practice contracts unless applicants can identify a shortfall. Doctors selling their practices must try first to find buyers with existing contracts, and new documents will be issued only if none comes forward. The ban is not the first in N[Z], but it is the biggest... A senior North Health manager... said... [he] expected the immediate reaction of many Auckland doctors would be: "That's wonderful – that protects my patch and stops competition." Although new medical graduates might object, he said they would only be facing the same kind of competition specialists seeking hospital positions find. There might still be openings in "overdoctored" localities, but probably only as assistants to existing GPs... [Yesterday the] deputy chairman of the General Practitioners' Association... said... "We're putting our own graduates into unemployment. They are casualties and we're not comfortable." He said it was vital to look at policies on how many doctors were able to immigrate to N[Z] and the number of medical students able to train locally... [In addition,] doctors should be offered incentives to practice in locations outside their preference.

...YOUNG doctors already frozen out of practicing in GP-saturated main centres face further restrictions, with limits likely to be placed on those wanting to set up in central N[Z]. Central Health has... been forced to regulate the number of doctors it subsidised because graduates had been targeting the region after failing to establish in other areas, such as Auckland, Dunedin and Christchurch. The Southern RHA[has taken] steps... to restrict for two years the number of [GPs] wanting to set up in parts of its region.

...[the government hopes to solve doctor shortages in rural areas by recruiting overseas doctors whose qualifications the Medical Council has refused to recognise. A package announced yesterday aims to give immigrant doctors training and registration in return for their accepting remote GP postings shunned by NZers. However, some immigrant doctors plan to refuse the jobs, which one Ukrainian orthopaedic specialist described as just another humiliation. He was not willing to start over as a GP. "I will go anywhere I am needed, to the West Coast or Invercargill – but as a surgeon, not a beginner." Another problem is that there are not enough rural vacancies for them all. The Health Minister said there were about 200 overseas doctors living here whose qualifications did not meet registration requirements.]

...[one in 10 foreign doctors seeking full registration in NZ is struggling to meet requirements, says the Medical Council. This is based on supervisors' reports on 142 doctors who passed exams but have been on probation for a year to qualify for full registration. The council found the doctors were inadequate or poor in one or more of the assessment areas, which included competence in English, medical knowledge, ethical standards, practical skills, initiative and judgment. The council's annual report said: "The transition of a significant percentage of overseas trained doctors into the local workforce is unsatisfactory from the point of view of the public, the employer and the individual doctor." Normally, doctors needed two reports to prove themselves, but a third of the doctors surveyed had to have three or four reports, and 5.6% required five to 10 reports. The council said some were unlikely ever to succeed. The Overseas Doctors' Association blamed the registration process. A spokesman said doctors took on average three years to pass the exam because they had to re-learn theory. During that time they were unable to work and their clinical skills could wane. He said the exam should be scrapped and replaced with clinical training and assessment. A Medical Council spokeswoman said the majority of overseas trained doctors became valued professionals in the workplace. "It is to be expected some doctors will take longer than others to adjust."]

...[the surgeons who assessed whether he was fit to replace the bones and torn muscles of NZers were brutally frank. It was highly unlikely, they concluded in April last year, that the Bosnian orthopaedic surgeon would qualify inside two years to work here, even if he managed to pass the specialists' examination. There were "major deficits" in the total joint replacement area, his arthroscopy was not up to scratch and he had hardly picked up a scalpel since 1992. He "requires further training," remarked the NZ committee of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons. The 48-year-old immigrant was]

dumbfounded. In a six-page riposte he lashed out at the “wrong statements and lies” in the report, listed references and tributes from European specialists about his work and enclosed a string of job prospects in Norway, where authorities accepted his qualifications. He has a medical degree from Sarajevo University, a doctorate in clinical immunology from the University of Zurich and a 20-year work history in European hospitals and clinics. He is registered to work in Germany – but not in NZ. He calls himself a victim of the scandalous discrimination meted out to foreign trained doctors trying to enter the NZ medical workforce. He complains that NZ’s highly paid specialists don’t want competition. “I’ll be honest and say if I earned more than \$1 million a year in a tax paradise where no patient could sue me for mistakes, then I’d want to keep a closed shop too. But what have you got? There are patients who wait a couple of years for simple procedures while I sit jobless at home.”

...‘up to 60 overseas doctors living in west Auckland are likely to benefit from a \$11.8 million retraining package announced by the Health Minister. The Overseas Doctors’ Association president says it’s the “best deal” they’ve had from the Government so far. “It’s a wise investment because we estimate foreign doctors on the unemployment benefit have cost the Government nearly \$45m.” More than 300 overseas doctors granted permanent residency in NZ between 1991 and 1995 have not been able to practice because of the NZ Medical Association’s registration requirements. The minister has been asked to bring NZ’s registration standards into line with international requirements.’

...about] 50 migrant doctors... yesterday began a hunger strike outside the N[SW] Parliament in protest at “discriminatory” policy that keeps them from practicing in A[US]. A spokesman for the doctors said about 1000 of them were on social security while rural areas were suffering a shortage of doctors.

...The dire shortage of Maori and Pacific Island doctors has come under scrutiny at the Auckland School of Medicine... It had hoped to create 50 spots for first-year Maori and Pacific Island students, but the Ministry of Health torpedoed the proposal, saying the country did not need such a large rise in young doctors... The school... was now negotiating for 30 extra places and hoped for Government approval. These places would be on top of the 110 first-year spots for medical training at Auckland. Only about 13 of the present 110 first-year students are Maori or Pacific Islanders. Plans are also being finalised for a “foundation year” aimed at high school graduates needing extra preparation before tertiary health training.

...A charity famed for performing eye operations in Third World countries wants to set up “eye camps” in N[Z] and blitz what it says is an appalling wait for cataract surgery... The Fred Hollows Foundation conducts low-cost, fast-turnaround corrective surgery in countries like Nepal, Eritrea and Vietnam – and says it can perform cataract surgery for less than half the... \$3000 some... N[Z] specialists are charging... The foundation’s technical director... said hospital and Government representatives had asked the foundation to come up with a scheme to slash the cataract waiting list... The most recent figures from the Ministry of Health show that about 10,300 patients were waiting for ophthalmology procedures in 1996. Most needed cataract operations... N[Z] would be the first developed nation the foundation has set its sights on... Foundation surgeons in the Third World performed “conveyor belt” cataract operations every 15 minutes, improving the sight of thousands of people in just days... The quality of the operations was equal to that in first-class clinics... The foundation was launched by the late Fred Hollows, a N[Z]-born AUS]n eye surgeon.

...The Commerce Commission will decide within a week whether to take N[Z] eye surgeons to the High Court over the blocking of two A[US]n surgeons from working in the South Island... A landmark proposal by the Fred Hollows Foundation... hinges on the outcome of the commission’s inquiry... into the South Island case – which could take up to 18 months if it goes to court.

...It is fitting in a way that eye surgeons should provide an insight to the forces that have helped to sink [NZ’s] health reforms... On Christmas Eve [last year]... Southern Health, had to abandon an arrangement for an A[US]n to treat 130 people waiting for cataract operations at Southland Hospital. Not one N[Z] ophthalm]ologist would provide a signature authorising the surgeon to practice in this country. They did not doubt his capabilities. [The doctor] is reportedly one of the best in A[US]. He was going to be in Dunedin visiting family and agreed to help clear the backlog at Invercargill. Unfortunately for the patients, eye surgery turned out to be a closed shop. The Ophthalmologists’ Society insists that there is no shortage of surgeons in N[Z], though Southern Health could find none to help to attack Invercargill’s waiting list after the Government provided extra funds for the cataract operations last year. [The doctor] was the second Sydney substitute sought. The first demurred when, according to Southern Health, he was warned that the work was “not in his career interests.” If the story begins to sound like one of the cruder cloth-cap tactics of yesteryear, it is not redeemed by the society’s explanation for opposing the employment of “itinerants,” as it calls them. The suggestion that [the AUSn] would have left too much post-operative work for others to do added insult to injury for Southern Health if not for the surgeon. The difficulty has evidently disappeared now that publicity has embarrassed the society and two ophthalmologists from Christchurch will do the operations... [T]he new Minister of Health, who blew the whistle on the Invercargill blockade, [accused the society] of “closing ranks in order to maintain the private business generated by waiting lists.” ...To compare the incident to the worst days of the unqualified preference clause is probably a trifle unfair – to trade unions. Had any individual member of most unions the power to authorise the hire of an itinerant it is likely one could have been found to sign the paper. Not one of [the society’s] adherents to the Hippocratic oath would do so. That, brothers, is solidarity. But the real lesson of the piece was not the closed ranks of the medical profession which is well known; the revelation rather was that ophthalmologists – and who knows what other specialists – have been given such control of the gate to their field. We should have guessed, I suppose. The Medical Association has demonstrated the same power to exclude immigrant doctors from general practice in recent years and on pretexts equally transparent... After all, health is no stranger to markets. Competitive private enterprise produces the very potions that heal, the technology that keeps expanding diagnostic and surgical capabilities and costs, the insurance benefits that not all can afford, the food and fitness studios, footwear, physiotherapy, counselling for every anxiety. Health is good business in all countries where people have the money and leisure to pursue it. And in all those countries the subsidised services are struggling to contain the demand. None has yet found a way to check the rocketing costs that consumers can pass to taxpayers and nor yet has N[Z]’s new Government.

...Some public servants are attempting to frustrate the coalition agreement, says the Associate Minister of Health... who was the principle author of N[Z] First’s health policy... They were treating it as an obstacle rather than a mandate “which flags a fundamental shift in Government direction,”... [he said. He] also attacked National’s health reforms. They had failed to match the claims made for them and in some areas had proved disastrous... They had shifted the emphasis from a service to making a profit and had put the public health system on the track to privatisation. [He] described... the introduction of competition between public and private health providers as “madness.” ...[he went on to attack the RHAs as bureaucratic because today] the four authorities and the Ministry of Health spent 82[%] more managing the health system than had been spent before the 1993 reforms. The authorities argue that they have taken on far more work, including rest home care, and... have saved the country far more than the extra spending by cutting fraud and inefficiency.

...Public spending on health has fallen in real terms under the National Government. A damning Ministry of Health report... said “funding is less generous now than it was in 1988-89.” ...expenditure was now 10[%] lower. Most growth in health spending had been in the private sector. Between 1980 and 1995... private spending grew at an annual... 5.8[%]. The... Minister of Health... said... “People now realise that health services have an insatiable appetite for money and we must put the brakes on somewhere.”

...The first is to break down traditional barriers between GPs and hospitals so that a single organisation takes responsibility for a patient’s care... The Minister of Health... said... “...where it’s going to make a bigger difference is not so much in trying to control particular sets of costs, but in crossing the traditional boundaries... You wouldn’t want to underestimate the extent to which these people had nothing to do with each other and held nothing but contempt for each other’s clinical practice.” He said a typical GP attitude was to see hospitals as a black hole, which swallowed up

their patients. Many hospital doctors in turn regarded GPs as incompetent and blamed them for the poor health of their patients... [C]ollectively they could do a much better job for their patients. This had rarely happened under the old system because doctors did not have the financial incentives to keep their communities healthy...

In a quiet revolution, doctors are being put back in charge of running hospitals. In the process a host of non-medical management jobs will go... [The] Health Minister... is, in part, going back to the kind of hospital management that existed before CHEs were invented... This shouldn't be seen as a complete turning back of the clock, nor do doctors see the changes as the answer to all their prayers.

...The former *Alice in Wonderland* world of public hospital clinicians being separated from any of the financial allocation decisions was surreal – incapable ever of an efficient allocation of taxpayers funds. Similarly, the idea that financial managers could take charge over medical professionals and effectively dictate to them what medical options they did or didn't have reeked of poor corporate design.

...DOCTORS at Christchurch Hospital are so worried by faulty systems they have told management that patients are no longer safe... [A] confidential report written by senior doctors provides a behind-the-scenes look at... the hospital's over-stretched systems... [and] documents the numerous attempts by staff to alert management to problems as they developed from critical to terminal... The problem came to a head[last] July when the hospital was struggling to cope with its winter rush of patients. Doctors painted a bleak picture of a total breakdown in the system for admitting acutely ill patients. Seriously sick patients were scattered throughout the hospital. They were difficult to find, reports were going astray and an increasing pool of casual nurses was not trained to manage such sick people... The hospital's main problems can be traced back to February when the top layer of experienced nurses, 23 unit nurse managers (similar to the old charge nurses) was stripped away. They were replaced by seven patient care managers and 20 "facilitators". The facilitators do walk the wards, but spend much of their time doing rosters and administration. "The major problem we have is that we have lost the institutional knowledge the 23 unit managers had," said[an] organiser of the N[Z] Nurses Organisation. "Some had been nurses for up to 20 years and they knew their stuff backwards. Apart from people going sideward, or occasionally upwards, we lost about 15 of them. That's an awful lot of knowledge in highly specialised areas." ...[the] Nurses Organisation area manager... wrote to the Health Ministry on June 10, warning that patients were being put at risk by inadequate planning for a predictable rise in winter admissions and increased use of casual staff. (In the last four years the casual pool has risen from 20 to 180). "...We think it is timely for you to review your monitoring of the risk to patient safety at Canterbury Health. We do not want to see another Cave Creek..." [his letter] said... Three days later, the first of four deaths that the Medical Staff Association linked to system failures occurred.

...Untrained junior staff trying to cope with situations beyond their expertise are contributing to hospital system failures, says the Medical Practitioners Disciplinary Committee... Budget cuts in hospitals do not help to decrease the potential for such failures... The committee was also disturbed by cases in which parents' concerns, later established as legitimate, were ignored by the practitioner. "It seems as if on occasions the mere suggestion by the parent of a particular diagnosis was enough to make the doctor reject this." It was a doctor's obligation to listen to the parents because they knew what was going on with the child, the committee said... The Medical Council said that of 116 complaints in the year to March 31, 35 were about inadequate/wrong diagnosis and 22 were about inadequate/wrong treatment... Sixty percent of complaints were upheld. Lack of communication was a feature in many cases...

Health Care Hawke's Bay is on the verge of launching a... scheme which will see the work of enrolled nurses being taken over by "clinical associates". The new aides, with only a fortnight's training, will provide basic care – for less pay – under the supervision of registered nurses. They will assist with technical procedures such as... bone marrow collection, answer call bells, clean equipment and do reception duties. Hospital orderlies, trained as "support associates", will assist with domestic chores, such as lifting and toileting patients... Critics say the new workers could miss dangerous symptoms which more qualified nurses would have spotted... [A] Nurses Organisation spokesman... was... concerned about the "brain drain" from Hawke's Bay of 185 enrolled nurses whose jobs were on the line. The nurses have had 12 to 18 months of formal hospital-based training, and up to 25 years of experience. "It is the most incredible waste you could imagine." ...[a] Napier MP... said the scheme was aimed at cutting costs rather than improving patient care... Clinical associates will get \$26,000, whereas senior enrolled nurses receive \$27,609 plus a shift allowance of around \$8000 a year... [The] CHE... denies the system is a cost-cutting exercise – it says staffing costs will be roughly the same as they are now... It... saw registered nurses as the key to future nursing and is urging enrolled nurses to re-train... The CHE was increasing the number of registered nurses, while taking away the menial jobs that took up 25% of their time... So far, only one enrolled nurse had applied and been accepted as a clinical associate... [The spokesman said many enrolled] nurses could not afford the two years of bridging training before they could gain registration... N[Z] has around 6500 enrolled nurses in the workforce. The training of enrolled nurses stopped in 1993. There are about 28,000 registered nurses who have three years' training, now known as a degree in nursing.

...The Minister of Health wants to see nurses taking on some of the tasks of junior hospital doctors and [GPs]. The minister [told a nurses conference in Wellington yesterday that highly skilled nurses in hospitals had the... experience to do a better job than junior doctors... [The minister] told the N[Z] *Herald* that hospitals were already beginning to regard junior doctors as too expensive, and they might be forced to try other avenues for training. But the Resident Doctors' Association said last night that the minister was misinformed and was trying to play nurses off against doctors. The association's senior advocate, said junior doctors were paid less than many nurses but played a vital role in plugging the many gaps in the public health system. Junior doctors had no problem with nurses taking over simple tasks, so long as they then took full responsibility for their work[. He thought i]t was unlikely hospitals could cope without junior doctors who often worked unattractive hours and performed medical tasks that nurses could not. The chief executive of the Nurses' Association... said the minister's comments received a mixed reaction yesterday, especially since nurses had previously been told they would have no further pay rises. "The issue is how much more does he want nurses to do with no recognition?" She said... many nurses were keen to take on new responsibilities if they were given training.

...[The experience of doctors on the night shift for emergency departments in at least two North Island hospitals falls short of the international minimum. The international standard is that doctors in charge should be third-year registrars training to become emergency medicine specialists. But at Whangarei Hospital a second-year house officer is left in charge, and at Tauranga Hospital a senior house officer or a second-year junior house officer']...

Junior doctors at Health Waikato may strike over a contract offer which the health provider admits reflects its... [burgeoning] deficit. About 180 doctors will meet in the next two weeks to discuss Health Waikato's final offer... [By the way, Health Waikato has confirmed that it] spent \$6736 advertising the positions of five ear, nose and throat specialists who quit last year – only to reappoint them at the end of the recruitment process...

Labour has criticised as an "outrageous waste" the \$553,000 to be spent... by Central Health... on [consultants]... for a secondary services study...

The \$5.2 million paid by Taranaki Health to consultants could have kept hundreds of threatened jobs going for four years, says the Alliance health spokeswoman. Taranaki Healthcare said yesterday the aim of its "re-engineering" was to remain competitive in a rapidly changing environment. Staff would be reduced from 1200 full-time equivalent staff to 900...

Constant restructuring and threats of redundancy within Health Waikato are leaving staff bewildered and demoralised, says the nurses union, and is affecting the quality of service... [S]taff are waiting for the completion of two reviews, both of which are likely to result in redundancies... The reviews stemmed from the [CHE's] worsening financial position. It had estimated a \$3 million deficit, but... this was now more likely to be between \$8 million and \$12 million. One review was of non-clinical staff. About 40 people in the accounting and business support service areas were expected to lose their jobs, saving... about \$2 million annually. The other review was announced... as a "full organisation-wide functional review."

...The Minister of Health... told a [CHE] that staff should have no pay rises for at least two years, unless they can be funded by cutting costs or jobs... "He instructed that any changes to wages should be offset by productivity improvements using 'fewer or a less costly mix of staff'." ...It was revealed yesterday that Capital Coast Health was "technically insolvent" and had borrowed money to pay wages this week.

...Capital Coast Health nurses yesterday besieged a recruitment agency which is seeking staff for British hospitals as news broke of job losses at the [CHE. Its] deficit is heading towards \$50 million and the chief executive... has triggered formal consultation with unions about possible redundancies. The enterprise has 3170 fulltime-equivalent positions, but more actual staff because many work only part-time. Earlier predictions had suggested that up to 600 jobs could go as [the chief executive] implements a recovery plan. The Minister of Health... made it clear yesterday that [the CHE] was one of the worst performers... and needed to be more cost-effective rather than relying on increased Government revenue. He said the Government was being "quite hard-line" about pouring more money into hospitals "when other providers could do a lot with \$1 million."

...As many as 1000 jobs will[eventually] go at... the cash-strapped... Capital Coast Health... A summary of its business plan shows 411 jobs to go in the next two years and a six-month wage freeze for staff on collective employment contracts... [In international news, t]housands of doctors working for Greece's main social welfare fund have started a... strike, leaving affiliated hospitals and out-patient clinics operating on skeleton staffs. They are demanding salary increases and the payment of a variety of bonuses.

...[about] 70,000 Israeli health workers held a national strike yesterday, paralysing Government hospitals and clinics, to protest at planned reforms to the universal health system. Hospitals continued emergency services... but most patients were refused medical facilities.

...Nurses are preparing for possible strikes at six Auckland hospitals... But health chiefs have warned that services will have to be cut if nurses do walk out the door, which would affect thousands of patients. About 3000 nurses at Auckland Healthcare and Waitemata Health have rejected pay offers based on no increase now and 1.5[%] later next year... A Nurses Organisation spokeswoman... said yesterday that the union would hold a round of meetings late next month, followed by a possible ballot on striking.

...More than 2000 disgruntled Auckland nurses are set to vote on strike action that would throw major emergency hospitals into turmoil... The country's largest... [CHE]'s nurses were paid less than counterparts at neighbouring hospitals, the union said. New graduates were on \$14.05 an hour, compared with \$14.72 at South Auckland Health and \$14.38 at Waitemata Health... A union organiser... said management would not offer base-rate pay rises. It did offer to pay higher-ranked nurses more, but only if junior nurses took pay cuts. Auckland Healthcare's stance falls in line with a Government letter ordering hospitals to freeze pay unless they can shed staff or slash wages elsewhere... The Nurses Organisation said yesterday that talks with Auckland Healthcare had broken down and a strike ballot would be held later this month... The head of Auckland Healthcare... said he had not heard of the strike threat and hoped to meet nurses before they voted.

...Nursing staff turnover at Auckland Hospital is 23[%] per annum. That is too high. Recruitment and retention of nurses is a key problem. Fair and reasonable pay settlements are an important part of managing turnover. CHE managers know this perfectly well. But there is the instruction from Wellington to contend with. The problems with top-down, bureaucratic decision-making are reasonably well-known. It leaves those at the coal face with no way of influencing decisions while those at the top of the pyramid have insufficient information on which to make good decisions... [Incidentally,] Palmerston North Hospital staff face increasing violence and abuse from patients and their visitors. A spokeswoman for MidCentral Health said... [s]ick people could not be turned away or discharged because of their behaviour and it was distracting for staff to have to divert their attention from caring for patients to cope with abuse.

...Seventy-one complaints about nurses and midwives were made to the Nursing Council last year – a third of them by the ACC. The complaints include negligence, assault, verbal abuse and sexual impropriety.

...ACCORDING to [the witness], the doctor asked her to take off her clothes and then masturbated her for what seemed like five minutes before telling her to get up and get dressed. "It was nothing remotely like a medical internal examination," she said... [She] went home crying hysterically and told her story to the family friend looking after her. Her parents reported the matter to the police who informed them they had had other complaints against the doctor but no charges had been laid because there had not been sufficient corroboratory evidence. [She] went public when she heard of other females, including a 12-year-old, who apparently had similar stories. The publication of [her] story inspired 12 other women to join her in laying assault charges in court. Ten complaints were also made to the... ACT Medical Board... which entered into a prolonged legal battle aimed at suspending the doctor's medical registration... [T]he attempt to lay... criminal charges against the doctor came unstuck when[a] Supreme Court Justice... granted a permanent stay on the proceedings. Among his cited reasons were the prejudice to the doctor that would result from the... 20-to-35-year delay in taking action... and the fact that relevant medical records had been destroyed. An appeal to the full court supported[the] decision... "Although there is a public interest in bringing allegations of serious criminal conduct to trial, there is no public interest in doing so under circumstances of irreparable unfairness... [T]o force [the doctor] to stand trial on these charges under these circumstances would offend the court's sense of justice," the appeal judges said... [T]hese judges took issue with... one case where the complainant continued to visit the doctor 11 years after the alleged assaults and another where the complainant reported having four orgasms in response to the doctor's attentions... For the women, there was one small victory in June 1995 when, after an application from an ABC Radio journalist, the Appeal Court overruled the confidentiality notice suppressing publication of the doctor's name... In N[Z] about two doctors a year are found guilty of some form of sexual misconduct, according to the Medical Council. Sixteen have been struck off the register for sexual offences since 1987.

...[the] agency that sent the nurse who killed an elderly Auckland couple in their home later billed the couple's estate for nursing services... No covering note or expression of regret accompanied the bill... [A] lawyer who was close to the couple... was unsure whether it covered care provided on 17 August [1996] by... the former nun who kicked and beat the couple to their deaths that day. [She] was found not guilty of their murders by reason of insanity in the High Court at Auckland on Friday and committed to a mental hospital... Nurses With Hearts... has refused to comment since suppression orders protecting its identity were lifted by the court. The Labour Department's occupational safety and health service... was satisfied that the agency complied with its legal obligations to people affected by the actions of its employees... [In related news, a] former intensive care unit nurse who was on duty during dozens of unexplained deaths[at] a hospital in the American Midwest was arrested yesterday and accused of killing six people. [The suspect], aged 36... has maintained his innocence throughout the 2 1/2-year... \$US1.5 million... investigation... He was suspended from his job after authorities realised the death rate when he was on duty was triple the normal rate. There were 130 deaths at the hospital while he was on duty. During their... investigation, authorities exhumed and examined the bodies of 15 patients. An affidavit said police had searched [his] former residence and seized several syringes and needles... He was not authorised to give injections...

Medical problems in Auckland's public hospitals – ranging from bad side effects to unexpected deaths – will be analysed in a new survey. Researchers at the Auckland University medical school... say the results will be used to improve future medical care... But they will also give the first accurate picture of what goes wrong and how often...

A Ministry of Health draft report... ranks each of the country's 23 [CHEs]... Auckland public hospitals are leading the way in patient care with the lowest death rates in the country – well ahead of many poorly performing counterparts. Patients appear to fare better in northern hospitals than those in the central region and the South Island... The findings, worked out by complex statistical formulas... using death and readmission rates... [to find a ratio] of actual to expected death rates... reflect a similar ministry report last year ranking hospitals on safety... To make valid comparisons, the hospital data was adjusted for patient risk on admission. The adjustments mean that large hospitals... will not be disadvantaged when compared with a basic, smaller hospital... South Auckland Health and Auckland Healthcare have the lowest [ratio of 0.89]... Hutt Valley

Health and Nelson-Marlborough Health had death rates [of 1.19, which is]... far higher than... the national average... [of 1.0. By the way, h]ealth ministers want more study of the options for providing surgical services in the Bay of Plenty. A joint Lakeland-Eastbay working group presented its proposal for a merger of the Rotorua and Whakatane-based [CHE]s in Wellington on Thursday. A merger would... significantly reduce operational and administration costs, the group's report said... [It] would also... maintain the clinical viability of services in the region... This meant patients could be assured they were in a safe environment when undergoing surgery.

...The level of services provided by Northland hospitals is unsafe, say Bay of Islands doctors, whose concerns were raised in Parliament yesterday... [T]he doctors... also said that unacceptable delays for urgent treatment were causing patients undue pain and suffering.

...Northlanders are being put at risk because of unacceptable delays in getting... radiology, which is a crucial tool in detecting the [cancer]... says a spokesman for Whangarei GPs... He said some patients with suspected cancer had been waiting more than six months... [and] that although the waiting list had been reduced... [a] large number of cases had gone on to a "new" waiting list, which... already included hundreds of people. North Health's communications manager... said discussions were taking place to allocate more funding for radiology in Northland next year.

...Cancer patients are waiting up to 12 weeks for radiotherapy treatment at Auckland Hospital – three times what international guidelines suggest... Most of the patients have had surgery to remove the cancer, but needed radiotherapy to cut the risk of relapse... Auckland Hospital's director of radiation oncology... said the present situation, although far from ideal, was an improvement on waits of up to 18 weeks last year... However... a \$1.9 million Government plan, launched last September, to cut queues, largely by sending patients to Christchurch or Palmerston North[, fell]... well short of the 124 originally expected to have gone by late next month... [O]nly 40 patients have taken up the offer... [The director] said... he could understand people's reluctance to travel. "People are incredibly anxious after being diagnosed and then to have to disrupt their lives to travel for treatment is a major thing. For people who work, having to go away has a huge financial impact." ...North Health... yesterday said that the 12-week wait was unacceptable... Waiting times are expected to drop early next year when Auckland Hospital gets two new linear accelerator machines for radiotherapy.

...Cancer patients will be victims in an industrial dispute likely to leave them without vital radiography treatment. Radiation therapists at Auckland Hospital have issued strike notices for four days in the next two weeks. But management say that would make treatment impossible, and they have given notice of a lockout. The parties have been negotiating the collective contract for the past four months. The sticking point is Auckland Healthcare's efforts to have radiographers work a night shift... [T]he four linear accelerators used in radio therapy cost \$4 million each and the hospital wanted to utilise them for longer hours to treat more patients.

...[H]ospital radiation therapists strike this morning in Auckland, Hamilton and Palmerston North (hospitals have rebooked more than 160 radiation therapy appointments until the 48-hour strike is over) adding to pressure on the health system from a 2-day walkout by more than 3000 Canterbury workers – the most serious strike to hit the public health sector, reducing services in 16 hospitals and prompting warnings that patient safety cannot be guaranteed. Auckland hospitals have fielded pleas to take critically ill patients from Christchurch, with only a handful of empty beds remaining around the country to cope with emergencies while nurses and other Canterbury health workers remain on strike. The cancer centres are embroiled in a separate industrial dispute to that of the Canterbury District Health Board, but the combined effect is increasing calls for Government intervention. The therapists are seeking pay rises of 20% to 35%, saying an offer of 3% for each of two years is woefully inadequate for attracting enough new staff to cut unacceptable waiting times.]

...Women with pre-cancerous conditions have been left untreated because specialist laser equipment at National Women's Hospital was broken for six months... [due to] holdups in obtaining a part from the U[S]... The Alliance health spokeswoman... said... [no] alternative arrangements had been made for treating urgent cases... while the machine was out of action... [Furthermore, the] patients had not been told of the problems with the machine... But the National Women's manager... said none of the women had cancer and none of their cases was urgent[, although he]... said he was not familiar with... one case[of] a woman known as Anne with a pre-cancerous growth on her vulva[who] was told by her specialist... [two months after the machine failure] that she needed the laser treatment within three months. The woman was still waiting. "National Women's treatment of Anne and others waiting for laser treatment on pre-cancerous growths is utterly deplorable and inhumane." ...[the Alliance spokeswoman went on to label] the situation a repeat of the hospital's so-called "Unfortunate Experiment" 10 years ago when women with serious levels of pre-cancer were left untreated['so the natural progression of the condition could be monitored (the women were not aware of the experiment'; in addition, 'smears were taken from about 2000 newborn girls without their parents' permission or knowledge')]. More than 30 of the women died unnecessarily of invasive cancer... A N[Z] study published last month in the prestigious American College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists journal found cancer of the vulva in women under 50 years had increased by 10 times during the past 20 years. The pre-cancerous condition known as VIN, which Anne is understood to have, had also increased in women under 50. The study identified "early and effective treatment" as imperative.

...Women who have been waiting... for pre-cancer treatment at National Women's Hospital will now be seen almost immediately at a private clinic – one week after publicity about the delay. National Women's says it will pay an extra \$4000 for laser treatment within the next few weeks at the Columba Women's Health Centre in Epsom, because its own laser machine is still not working properly... The hospital... [also] plans to repay two women who had private treatment... when faced with a standstill public queue... For one patient, receiving treatment last week... brought fresh problems. Anne, aged 35, said she had laser treatment at the private clinic but was sent back to National Women's to recover. Despite being in intense pain, she was discharged the next day and sent home without appropriate painkillers or nursing care. Last night she said she would complain formally to the hospital[, which]... has admitted that... some... women had been waiting a year... for laser treatment.

...Women who have annual mammograms are not endangered by radiation exposure from the procedure, says a radiologist... [While] addressing the Radiological Society of North America[, he said that]... his findings provided more evidence that women should be screened annually after the age of 40, a recommendation not subscribed to by all health advisory groups. A U[S] Government panel decided this year to leave it up to the individual whether or not to have annual mammograms after 40. Among the concerns were possibly unhealthy doses of radiation, possibly unnecessary biopsies on younger women whose dense breast tissue can falsely appear to be a tumour, and the cost of the procedure... [However, a US] Army doctor... told fellow radiologists the advantages of catching and treating breast cancer early... outweighed the potential costs of full-scale cancer treatment later on... Also, a recurrence of the disease after treatment was less likely if it was discovered at an early age.[Meanwhile,] Thomas Jefferson University has... announced the results of a study, which said digital technology that can create a three-dimensional image could reduce the need for breast biopsies in women.

...A[51-year-old] woman with ovarian cancer says she and others are being "relegated to the dustbin" by North Health's decision not to fund... the drug Taxol... which could extend her life expectancy by up to 18 months... after her tumour failed to respond to conventional treatments... North Health, said using Taxol to treat the 40 to 50 appropriate cases each year in the... area could cost \$1 million... Yet if she lived just 130km away in Hamilton she would receive the drug free... [Incidentally, t]he initial treatment of a now terminally ill cancer patient was delayed 10 weeks beyond... the... maximum acceptable delay... [of] four weeks under the "best practice guidelines" of... the [RHA] funding the treatment... [The 35-year-old man] was diagnosed with melanoma in an eye in December 1995. He was referred for treatment in Christchurch, designed to remove the cancer and save his sight, but by the time it took place three months later the growth was too large. The eye was removed and liver cancer was found six months later... However[, a report says the man's]... melanoma was unusually aggressive and grew unusually fast from the time of referral. Prompt treatment was... unlikely to have prevented the cancer spreading to the liver... The report failed to explain why no one had taken charge of

his care, sought urgency and co-ordinated treatment... [An] Alliance list MP... says [the man] should be compensated because the system had failed him.

...The death rate from prostate cancer is predicted to double in 20 years... to 6.2[% of NZ] men... over 45... There's no explanation for the continuing increase... and improved diagnostic techniques do not account for it. There is a suspicion that environmental factors may be involved and this aspect is being worked on in the U[S] where more than 42,000 men will die from prostate cancer this year, far outstripping Aids... [An] Auckland Medical School... pathologist... [is] critical of the lack of official interest in prostate cancer. "It may be a men-only complaint but it's much more than that. It impacts on... partners and families and the increasing mortality makes it a national disaster. Whereas breast cancer death rates are constant, prostate cancer age-specific death rates are doubling each decade. Despite this statistical evidence there is a concerted effort in N[Z] to discourage intervention and curative therapy for prostate cancer." ...there was a perception... that the disease mainly affected elderly men, who were more likely to die from other ailments such as heart disease. This was based on a general assumption that... prostate cancers were slow-growing and, combined with the difficulties of treatment, not worth the trouble... He said this muddlement... was disclosed by the Government's health advisers' opposition to an education campaign to encourage prostatic specific antigen... blood testing which could be effective in detecting early and potentially curable prostate cancers. Some were aggressive and killed quite quickly... The Cancer Society has estimated that an educative and treatment programme would initially cost \$27 million a year and progressively reduce.

...An undeclared diabetes epidemic is costing N[Z] at least \$200 million a year... [The] Royal Australasian College of Physicians conference in Auckland... [was] warned... that the epidemic would get worse because of a rapid increase... among Maori and Pacific Islanders... [One] of the best ways of stopping the spread of the disease was diabetes screening of all pregnant Maori, Pacific Island and Indian women. Research showed that the children of diabetic mothers in these groups were likely to suffer from diabetes, too. Women whose diabetes was picked up by screening could be offered diet or insulin therapy, or the option of early delivery to protect their babies... [B]etter diet and more exercise were still the best long-term options but changing people's lifestyles was "phenomenally hard" and could take many years... In the next 35 years the number of Pacific Islanders with diabetes was expected to grow from 3000 to about 25,000... [T]he number of Pacific Islanders with diabetes-related hospital admissions for kidney disease was increasing at a rate of 10[%] a year.

...TREATING diabetic women with insulin during pregnancy may help control the coming epidemic of diabetes... says a prominent researcher in the field. [The] South Auckland physician... is co-author of a new study which shows that insulin-treated diabetic women produce slimmer babies than those treated with diet alone... "It suggests that when you treat the mother, you are treating the baby." ...About 75%-85% of non-insulin-dependent diabetics are obese, and current prevention strategies focus on diet and exercise. The rate of diabetes, a leading cause of blindness, kidney failure and a major risk factor for stroke, heart attack and heart failure, is expected to increase 20% in Europeans, 50% in Maori and 130% among Pacific Islanders in the next 10-15 years... [The] diabetes specialist... said a significant part of that problem was the generational cycle in which children of diabetic women became diabetic because of the damage to the pancreas during gestation, and obesity from birth.

...It can start with symptoms so vague you may not notice them, but it can kill. Now experts say diabetes is spreading so quickly that an epidemic is on the way. Already the fourth main cause of death in many countries, diabetes affects 135 million people worldwide and experts say the number of sufferers is rising sharply. "By 2010 there will be 240 million diabetics, the majority of them in developing countries," said [a] Professor... of the University of Helsinki, who is heading an international conference on the disease this week... She was citing research by [an AUS]n Professor... of the International Diabetes Institute, on "type two" diabetes, which affects 90[%] of sufferers... About 8000 scientists and diabetes specialists are focusing on that prospect at the conference. So are drugs firms eager to promote new discoveries in treatment. Driving the increase in diabetes are the world's ageing population and modern lifestyles – people eating too much of the wrong kinds of food, becoming overweight and failing to take enough exercise. Statistically, that spells North America. In the U[S] and Canada, diabetes is the third-largest cause of death by disease, above breast cancer and lung cancer. But obesity and diabetes had also reached "alarming, and indeed epidemic, proportions... in Polynesians, Micronesians, Melanesians, and migrant Asian Indians of the Pacific[.] The AUSn professor's... team at Monash University has found that among adults in the Pacific Island state of Nauru, up to 35[%] have diabetes.

...the] Government of the tiny Pacific Island republic of Nauru will take a 50-50 share from any profits resulting from genetic research into its diabetic population. An agreement between the Government and the Melbourne-based International Diabetes Institute will allow the institute to carry out genome studies in... Nauru where 40[%] of its 9600 inhabitants suffer from diabetes, the second-highest rate in the world. The chief executive officer of the institute... had sought the agreement on "ethical and moral grounds" to dispel the perception that research exploited indigenous people. The advent of the U[S]-funded Human Genome Project had raised ethical questions about the ownership of genetic material, he said. Research and pharmaceutical companies could potentially reap millions of dollars in profit from products developed from the discovery of a rare antibody or gene, with no financial benefit to the source country. The research... will take place over the next 20 years... in the hope of isolating one or more diabetes genes.

...[researchers have localised a second gene responsible for the most common type of diabetes, and believe severe mutation of the gene may cause a rare form of the disease among younger people, MODY3. An international team of scientists studied 217 individuals from the Botnia region on the western coast of Finland, considered an ideal locale for genetic studies because its largely homogenous population makes it easier to detect genetic defects. The subjects were from 26 families who had three or more members stricken with non-insulin dependent, or type 2, diabetes (NIDDM). The researchers located a gene called NIDDM2 on chromosome 12. Earlier this year, researchers from the University of Chicago reported that they had found among a group of Mexican-Americans the first gene linked to type 2 diabetes, located on chromosome 2. The disease is caused by different chromosomes in different groups of families.]

...Wellington diabetics and their families are frustrated that blood glucose monitoring machines are gathering dust at Kenepuru and Wellington Hospitals because of a lack of funding. Now they are preparing to raise the money to buy the machines themselves... [T]he machines... save people the trauma of having full blood tests regularly to check their glucose levels, because they work on a pinprick of blood. Also, results would be available within a few hours instead of a few days.

...Diabetes is becoming more common but less severe in Auckland, a new study of children has shown... The study looked at glucose levels, length of stay in hospitals and insulin treatment... [By the way, a k]idney dialysis patient... does not mind travelling from Orewa to Auckland Hospital three times a week to get to his "lifeline." However, he has a problem with paying half his \$360 weekly taxi bill – a cost he has suddenly been landed with. The Government has cut transport assistance to high-user kidney and transplant patients by restricting eligibility rules. Exceptions apply for under-16-year-olds and community services cardholders, but patients must travel at least an hour to get to the hospital. The 71-year-old has had to pay the \$180 since... North Health brought in the changes[about six weeks ago]. The remaining \$180 is paid by the Kidney Association. His wife... said her husband had relied on the kidney machine for the past two and a half years. Their income was too high for a services card, but she said it would be tough having to pay the \$180 each week long term. There was little choice, given that neither of them could handle the hour-long drive. Moving to Auckland to be closer to the hospital would be stressful, she said, as they were settled in Orewa... North Health spent \$1.5 million on transport and accommodation assistance a year and that kept rising, [its]... general manager... said. "At the end of the day you have to prioritise."

...The Ministry of Health has been faulted over the delivery of its service to Maori. A review by the Ministry of Maori Development has censured the health ministry, finding that no single section within it co-ordinates research and sometimes one group does not know what another is doing. "Groups and sectors have failed to advise the Maori policy sector of the work they were undertaking even though the subject of their work had a direct bearing on Maori health," it said... • Maori are more likely to suffer diabetes, cataracts and respiratory, kidney and circulatory diseases than non-Maori. In some cases the rate is twice as high.

...The high fertility and poor health of Pacific Island people living in N[Z] add up to significant implications for the health sector, says a Ministry of Health report... Making a Pacific Difference, sets out a strategy for dealing with problems such as the number of babies admitted to hospitals – the Pacific Island rate is nearly 40[%] higher than that for Europeans... The late foetal death rate among Pacific Island women was 48[%] higher...

Traditional health practices in [NZ] have failed the Pacific Islands people, says the Minister of Health... Faceless people in Wellington who decided the best way to deliver health did not take into account the different economic and cultural environments... "The health needs of the Pacific people are no longer invisible and there has to be a change in health delivery... Traditional health has been ignorant of the obvious, commonsense principles and establishing a relationship with those who already have the management and experience would make the job a lot easier." ...[he] said altering the eating habits of Pacific people through education by Pacific Island health workers could effect positive change.

...When they arrive in N[Z], Pacific Islanders' health problems tend to get worse... Traditional dietary habits have been carried from the... Islands to suburban Auckland – with a little high-fat embellishment... Western-style diet – takeaway fried chicken, hamburgers, ice-cream, milkshakes and fish and chips – and a sedentary lifestyle lead to obesity and consequent disease... In fact, attitudes to food and feasting are so deep-rooted that the Pacific Islands Heartbeat wing of the Heart Foundation has dropped middle-class palagi[(European)] scruples and is unashamedly feeding the anti-obesity, anti-dietary fat and pro-exercise message through Pacific Island churches and ministers. Part of Heartbeat's... \$1.1 million programme, which is due to return some data soon, revolves around a series of three-day training courses... The main focus is aerobics classes, weigh-ins and nutrition education, including instruction in the art of healthy feasting... So far the programme has delivered 1492 sessions and has reached 40,000 Pacific Islanders... Seventy per cent of Pacific Islanders are overweight... One in six has high blood pressure as against one in nine Europeans... Arthritis and asthma are also common.

...Asthma has reached epidemic levels among women and Maori, the Asthma and Respiratory Foundation says. Unpublished Ministry of Health figures released to the foundation show one in six N[Z] women have been diagnosed with asthma, and more than one in 10 suffer attacks. The figures... also show one in four adult Maori have been diagnosed with asthma, and more than one in seven suffer attacks.

...The word asthma means different things to different people. This is because it is used to describe both very mild and very severe forms of the condition... Because asthma varies so widely from person to person, the management of asthma needs to be designed for each patient. ['Latest research shows 3-out-of-5 people with asthma are not controlling it as well as they could', yet in NZ] there is now a well-developed system of asthma management where individual plans can be developed by doctors, and patients should know what to do when their asthma worsens. Asthma occurs when the air tubes in the lung react to some trigger in[the] environment... *It is often not clear what triggers asthma... but we know that asthma, like other allergic conditions, does run in families...* [Next week] is Asthma Awareness Week. This year's theme is "Breathe Easy in the Workplace."

...researchers hope to establish through a national survey why farmers have the highest rates of asthma and respiratory problems... Last year the Wellington Asthma Research Group studied 1609 people from 21 job groups and rated them... [The results showed that] farmers are four times more likely to suffer respiratory illness than other occupational groups... "Grain and dairy farmers suffer an abnormally high rate of chronic bronchitis and about 30% of grain and swine workers suffer organic dust toxic syndrome,"... Behind farmers and agricultural workers, were food and chemical processors and laboratory workers. Bakers, spray painters and woodworkers, jobs often associated with occupational asthma, did not show a high degree of risk. Hairdressers also had low levels, despite the potential exposure to chemicals known to cause asthma.

...Asthma costs N[Z] at least \$376 million a year in medical costs and lost productivity, says a... Asthma and Respiratory Foundation report... [M]edical costs of about \$160 million a year are borne by the taxpayer while \$216 million is lost in indirect costs, such as time off work. Costs borne solely by asthma sufferers – including prescription charges and doctors' fees – are not included in the report... [I]t was vital... all children under 12... had... free... [and] easy access to primary health services so they could receive appropriate treatment and care... [S]tudies had consistently shown that asthma was caused by environmental factors in those with a genetic predisposition to the disease and was therefore potentially preventable. Yet funding from Government bodies for new asthma research was only \$170,000 last year... [M]any of the costs could be avoided or significantly reduced with greater commitment from the Government... [A]s part of Asthma Awareness Week... the foundation... [is lobbying] the Government for greater recognition. The report says asthma affects about 450,000 people, or 13[%] of the population... Prevalence of the disease drops in adulthood, with about 8[%] of adults of working age thought to be sufferers... about 15[%] of 15 to 24-year-olds are sufferers... while... about 21[%] of children aged up to 14 have asthma... The number of working days lost due to asthma is estimated at 690,000... based on overseas studies showing the average time off work for adults with asthma is five days a year[(in comparison, 'migraines – which affect 1-in-3 NZers – annually cost the country \$80m and 700,000 work days lost')... Asthma is also estimated as affecting workers on a total of 306,000 days to the extent that their effectiveness at work is reduced... The number of working days lost due to a parent remaining at home with a sick child is estimated at 550,000...

German research indicates that... the incidence of classic children's diseases ha[s] decreased over the past two decades... On the other hand... more children are suffering from typical adult illnesses such as allergies and stress... A survey... found out that 24[%] of 9-to-11-year-olds complained of at least one allergic reaction... As many as 30[%] of 12-to-16-year-olds, above all girls, suffered from psychosomatic complaints, most frequently from headaches, anxiety, giddiness and stomach upsets... [A] youth research scientist at the University of Bielefeld... said children were increasingly overtaxed by schools or their family situations... [Modern] civilisation... did not seem to be good for building healthy immune systems.

...Many Aucklanders are suffering slipping health standards, despite the advances in modern medicine. A report looking at the use of Auckland public hospitals shows... 22,500... more people needed care in the past financial year compared with 1994-1995. The report by North Health... says population rises accounted for busier hospitals but many illnesses were on a dramatic rise... The region also had many poverty-stricken residents who lacked the skills and money to stay well. Child health remains a grim area in Auckland... Signs that an aging population is making big demands on services are obvious in the growing number of hip joint and cataract patients queuing for surgery. Many face long waits as more urgent types of surgery take priority... North Health is keen for patients to have shorter stays in public hospitals. Many cataract operations are being performed as day surgery, while coronary heart bypass and angioplasty patients may also be out of hospital sooner... A North Health general manager... said Aucklanders had to be sicker to get into hospitals because the region received less money than others. About \$43 million was lacking because of the population boom. The Government was finally going to address this by adding more money to North Health's coffers from July, he said... The solution was to get rid of the waiting list backlog so patients were helped before developing chronic problems.

...It's a plain tale, so I shall tell it plainly... A man I know in Whangarei had been waiting months for a hernia operation. Unable to afford private hospital fees, he was placed on a list. In the meantime the lump in his groin got bigger and sometimes he had to lie down to ease the soreness... But being normally an uncomplaining man his inquiries about his place on the list remained polite. Six months later, just after its chairman had trumpeted that Northland Health was the country's most efficient health enterprise, and the local paper had detailed the size of its managers' salaries, perks and so on, the man was told to be at the Kawakawa Hospital[50km north of Whangarei] by 1.30 on a certain date. He was told he

would be on his way home by about 4 o'clock. After all, the operation was not really much. So "nothing much," in fact, that it would need only local anaesthetic. The man was a little surprised at this and asked me, having already had a couple of hernia operations myself, how sore he would be on the way home. I told him I was damned if I would even come home. I would want a night in the hospital... to be sure that if something went wrong it could be fixed on the spot. After all, he was going to be knifed in the abdomen, have various bits and pieces pulled about inside and pushed back into place and be sewn up again. Go home immediately afterwards? Get real. But being a trusting man, he said he was sure the system knew what it was doing. He had been assured of it and he believed it. So he was driven to the Kawakawa Hospital... and the job was done. During it he was told it was as well he was being fixed up now since the hernia had also begun to affect his bladder and bowel. The wound was relatively painless on the way back to Whangarei since the anaesthetic had not fully worn off. But his wife did wonder in passing that he had been given no painkilling tablets to take when the anaesthetic wore off. She supposed an aspirin or two would suffice. Later that evening he was feeling faint and there was a lot of blood coming from the wound. Was it normal? What should she do? We said she should immediately ring their own doctor or better still take him to a private clinic. She opted for the clinic. Staff there said there was nothing they could do; he should go to Whangarei Hospital. He was charged \$20 nevertheless. He arrived at the hospital about 9 o'clock but it was after 1 am before he was admitted. In the meantime, the man told me, he was "writhing in agony." He must have been since he is a man not particularly prone to imagination. Then he began passing in and out of consciousness. His alarmed wife, who in the meantime had been soothing his fevered brow and, probably more helpfully, mopping up the continued seepage of blood from the wound, finally asked that someone should do something. A test showed his blood pressure had gone too low. This was attended to and the man began to regain himself. He was given more local anaesthetic, the wound was reopened for things to be put right. During the putting right, however, he said he didn't think he had had enough anaesthetic because what they were doing was very painful and so they put him right out. He went home a couple of days later somewhat recovered but with the area around the wound now bruised black and blue. Early that evening he was carried by ambulance back to the hospital, this time with an apparent heart attack. It turned out his system was receiving insufficient oxygen because of the amount of blood lost, thus the symptoms of a heart attack. He's home again now and on his way to recovery. Now, I don't know what your reaction is to all this. Mine is that because of the system's obvious inefficiency the man was not in hospital soon enough, and because of its alleged efficiency was out of it too soon. And that makes me angry... I am angry that, if cost really must be a consideration, the whole episode must have ultimately cost much more than a night in hospital. I am also angry at the man and his family's complete loss of trust in the health system[, and]... at the impotence of those caught up in it... I am angry at the system... I am angry at the politicians and bureaucrats who devised it and are encouraging it to get worse... Of course everyone except the central figure, the patient – sorry, the customer – could explain it away. They would talk earnestly about reforms, throughputs, outputs, objectives, strategies, mission statements, bottom lines, customer service, efficiency and similar business-suited managerial garbage. Even worse, they would believe it. Would you?

...Hundreds of patients are being sent home on the verge of surgery at Auckland Hospital because they do not need operations. Staff say about one in 10 of the mainly frail and elderly people admitted for urology operations goes through the stress and inconvenience of preparing for surgery for nothing... [A]bout 165 urology patients each year come into hospital overnight – often after months on a waiting list – mentally prepared for their operations the next day. The surgery is then cancelled or postponed at the last minute when a consultant assesses their urinary problems for the first time. A day surgery pilot study... suggested a "one-stop shop" for pre-surgery assessment, followed by single day surgery which would free-up hospital beds... [I]t would... cost \$900,000 to build the new facilities for day surgery but... the savings would pay back the cost in two years... The cost of pre-operative tests could be halved from \$270 to \$127 per patient under the [proposed] system... But the hospital says it cannot afford to spend... [\$900,000] to make sure no one is admitted unnecessarily.

...[a] urological surgeon, sits comfortably in front of his screen, directing the thin red line that slices cleanly through the flesh 2mm around the enlarged prostate gland... The super-sensitive area at the base of the bladder above the prostate is virtually unaffected. Meanwhile, the swollen gland is deftly isolated by the laser, cut away and removed – all in the space of 30 minutes. The patient... has lost almost no blood and suffered minimal shock to his system... His prostate symptoms will rapidly resolve. This is just one example of the new face of medicine. Procedures such as prostectomy, which used to mean five days in hospital and possible blood transfusion, are now 24-hour affairs with very little pain. Formerly inoperable cases can be treated quite safely. Overall costs are reduced. Trauma – to surgeon and patient – is minimised. However... the procedure has its downside. "A lot of patients who were too unwell to undergo surgery, in some cases facing catheters draining their bladders for the rest of their lives, can now be operated on. It's great for the patients but it also means that there are more people waiting for operations." [These] comments apply right through straight-forward surgical procedures. In the past five years hospital time for many operations has been cut dramatically. Thanks to advanced diagnostic techniques, lasers, laparoscopes... and modern surgical, nursing and convalescent techniques, recovery times have been halved or better... But high-tech, fast-healing, short-stay is only half the story of modern medical care.

...[AS [he] plays with his train set it's hard to imagine that here is a man who only has half of a brain. The 42-year-old was one of the first patients to undergo one of the greatest medical feats this century: The removal of the damaged right side of his brain, an operation that transformed him from a drugged vegetable into a human being... [with] a mental age of eight... "He's happy, relaxed, has friends and enjoys life. It's almost a miracle." ...What's even more incredible is that this medical marvel happened right here in N[Z] 32 years ago... [He] was born in 1955 with Sturge Weber syndrome, a rare condition of the central nervous system in which part of the brain is affected by malformed blood cells. It is the reason why his face is scarred with a large red birth mark. And not only did his damaged brain not function properly, it also triggered epileptic convulsions. At the age of four he suffered fits every day, often losing consciousness. The only option was to put him on a drug called Dilantin, which controlled his seizures but reduced him to a vegetable-like state... The breakthrough came in 1965 when a neurosurgeon from Scotland visited Auckland, explaining how he had performed a hemispherectomy... The little-known procedure defied all medical belief. Doctors refused to accept it was possible, thought it unethical, and believed it would almost certainly lead to permanent brain damage and possible death... Over the years hemispherectomies have almost become an accepted practice. There have been at least eight in N[Z]... and many more around the world. But even today some doctors still shake their head in disbelief and refuse to accept this... is possible... [By the way, arthritis affects 'one-in-three NZers' but] sufferers are... waiting an average of two years for surgery... [T]he number of people waiting for outpatient appointments for [all types of] surgery increased from 47,194 in 1995 to 52,437 last year.

...Thousands of people will be cut from surgery waiting lists this year as health authorities move towards a points-based booking system. Yesterday, a Wellington professor of surgery condemned the Government-driven move as a way to ration health care. But [RHAs] say it would ensure that the sickest patients got treatment by placing them at the top of the queue. Under the new system, set to operate in Auckland and Northland by mid-year, patients will be graded according to how urgently they need an operation... [O]perations would go to people who most needed them rather than those who had been longest on a waiting list... Those who meet the pass marks – which are still to be determined – will get surgery within six months. Those who do not will miss out on state-funded operations until their condition gets worse. The points system will in theory be based on medical criteria agreed on by doctors. In practice the cut-off points will still depend on the limits of the [RHAs'] budgets. North Health... rejected claims that the new system was designed to save money by cutting back on surgery, saying [the RHA] wanted to see an increase [in surgery]... North Health already used the points system in some areas such as cataract operations and cardiac surgery. About 10 to 15[%] of patients waiting for cataract surgery in Northland would not qualify under the new system... [North Health] did not yet know how many of the 25,000 people on waiting lists in the region would lose their places when the points system was extended to other common operations such as hip

and knee replacements... On Tuesday, the Wellington-based central [RHA] said about 770 out of 4650 patients would be taken off its waiting lists for cataracts, joint replacement, gall bladder and prostate surgery... [RHAs] have to introduce the system to gain access to the Government's \$130 million fund to tackle waiting lists. [● 'Angie Webster, a 15-year-old diagnosed with Wolfe Parkinson White Syndrome (which causes an irregular heartbeat), was put on the drug flecaionide. Her dosage was increased and she was put on a waiting list for heart surgery to correct the abnormality. But she died before making it to the top of the waiting list' for the 'simple operation.' 'There was a 1 to 2% chance that the drug could trigger a heart attack.']

...a young man [has died] while on the waiting list for heart surgery...

A SENIOR N[Z] cardiologist says people will continue to die waiting for heart operations under the Government's proposed new booking system... [The] senior lecturer at... Christchurch School of Medicine, said the system would not ensure people who had a high risk of dying would be operated on first... [P]atients will need to score 35 priority points or more to get bypass surgery within six months. Fewer than half... [of the N[Z]ers awaiting this surgery... would score enough points... [A] study... due to be submitted to international health journals, analysed the 324 patients accepted for bypass surgery at Christchurch Hospital during 1994-1995. When the priority points were awarded to the patients retrospectively, 76 scored fewer than 35 points. Of those, three died awaiting surgery, seven had a heart attack and 27 were admitted to hospital with serious chest pain... 257 of the 324 patients waited an average of 212 days for the surgery – around a month longer than the new system's six-month guarantee. A quarter of those 257 patients... waited more than a year... [The] number of operations done in N[Z] – 33 per 100,000 people – was less than half the rate in Canada (75 per 100,000), a country that had a lower mortality rate from bypass surgery than N[Z].

...N[Z]ers are being forced to wait dangerously long times for heart surgery, according to an international comparison with Canada... [The N[Z] *Medical Journal*... says this country's lengthy heart bypass waiting lists are a direct consequence of chronic underfunding and "embarrassingly low" treatment rates... N[Z]ers had to wait on average 196 days... [whereas] Canadians queued for 34 days... [B]oth countries had a similar threshold for referral... [A] senior lecturer at Christchurch medical school... said 13 out of 415 Christchurch patients had died waiting for heart surgery in a continuation of the study. Most had been waiting more than a month. "A couple of people died after having surgery and you just have to wonder, if they had had the operation earlier, would they have survived? There's always going to be a few people die – that's the nature of heart disease – but I think it's unacceptable to have a 3[%] chance of dying while you wait." ...He... said waiting times were now even higher.

...In 1993, because of mounting concern about the resources available for coronary surgery in N[Z], a review was undertaken of the 260 patients who were on the Green Lane Hospital waiting list at the time. A numerical coding system was devised... It was concluded that waiting times for surgery were grossly excessive despite our waiting list criteria being very conservative by international standards. They also showed that numerical ranking systems can be no more than aids to establishing priorities. They cannot replace clinical judgment, for each patient's priority is determined by a small cluster of factors which vary from one individual to the next... [In related news, h]eart disease is replacing infectious disease as the leading cause of death worldwide, reflecting lifestyle changes in less developed countries and a gradual ageing of the world's population... Only in sub-Saharan Africa are infectious diseases still the leading killer... Statistics are sketchy because only about a third of the roughly 50 million annual deaths worldwide are documented. But... [a doctor at] the M.I. Bassett Research Institute in Cooperstown, New York... estimates that in 1990, cardiovascular disease caused about 25[%] of all deaths in less developed nations and 50[%] in the developed world. By 2020, as many as 34[%] of underdeveloped nations' deaths will be related to cardiovascular disease, with the industrialised world holding at about 50[%], the doctor] says, citing forecasts based on statistics from the World Bank and the W[HO].

...While you were worrying about your heart problem, you and your deteriorating health were being given a score. The number allocated to your condition has an important bearing on your future. If you fall on the right side of the magic mark, you should, in theory, be booked for that longed-for coronary artery bypass surgery in the public system. A score on the low side of the same line means you will not even feature in a queue. You will be referred to your doctor until your number is big enough to cross the divide. You will be judged on factors including how badly your coronary arteries are obstructed, angina (pain due to shortage of oxygen to the heart muscle) and how you fare in an exercise stress test. Social factors, such as ability to work or whether you look after others, will also come into your health equation. The critical number in your case is 35. Doctors wanted the cut-off point to be 25 but money – or lack of it – set the threshold 10 points higher... In some cases, however, even those qualifying do not get an operation booking. A backlog of patients and continued demand mean some with a high enough score go on to a list with no definite date for treatment... [Incidentally, a] common sleeping problem could be a bigger risk factor in heart disease than high blood pressure or cholesterol, say Swedish researchers. They found a three-fold higher risk of disease among patients with the sleeping disorder called obstructive sleep apnoea[, which causes people to]... have uneven breathing patterns and unusually long periods when breathing stops altogether.

...Surgery on a beating heart has been performed for the first time in N[Z]... Usually the heart is stopped using drugs, and a heart-lung machine takes over. But... [a] Wellington Hospital surgeon... used a device called an octopus, which sucks on to the heart. Octopus "arms" surround the area of the heart to be worked on, and this keeps it still... About 2000 operations have been done worldwide using the procedure... [T]he method had potential as there were sometimes complications from using the heart-lung machine. These included neurological problems, infections, bleeding and kidney problems. The procedure could also hasten recovery time and reduce operating time... [However,] it was hard to say if... [the first NZ patient] was better off than if the usual method had been used... The head of cardiothoracic surgery... said the technique... might be useful only on a small range of cases... The patient had been selected... because his blood vessels were suitable... [By the way, l]egal complexities are continuing to delay setting up the Christchurch heart unit... A long-time Christchurch heart unit campaigner... said the continued delay was unacceptable. "My concern is that deadlines are rolling over and over... In the meantime, people are dying and waiting lists are increasing..." ...[the] chief medical adviser to the Minister of Health... said complex legal issues, including a \$7.5 million lawsuit by the Southern Cardiothoracic Institute, were still unresolved... The... original contract[was] awarded to a public-private consortium involving Healthcare Otago and the Southern Cardiothoracic Institute... [Then] the Minister... announced... that the unit would be run as a joint venture by Canterbury Health... and [the consortium]...

Heart disease patients from Canterbury south were dealt a blow yesterday when... it was... confirmed... Healthcare Otago... [will get funding for] only 300 angioplasties [– or 150 surgical hours ('30 minutes per operation') –] this year... The move was described by a senior Dunedin cardiologist as a step back 30 years. At the same time... a tough new threshold level... [of] 55... points... for patients hoping to qualify for heart surgery [was] also announced... effective immediately... Cardiologists say this means only people too sick to leave their hospital beds will get their operations.

...More than 30,000 N[Z]ers on hospital waiting lists will soon get the health message they have been dreading: they must get sicker before they get the operation they need. Letters are due to go out over the next few weeks to patients who have missed the cut-off point under the Government's new booking system. Hospitals are now finalising their cull to match the one-in-three cuts predicted a fortnight ago... But health staff worry that patients who need surgery will suffer and that doctors will bend the rules to get their patients seen first. Doctors warn that rich patients will still leapfrog queues... At least half of the 10,000 patients on Midland region waiting lists will receive letters next month telling them they have been knocked off the list.

...Doctors fear they will unfairly cop public fury... and... hostility... over a surgery booking system that will openly deny operations to thousands... Auckland Healthcare's chief of surgery... was concerned that some patients denied surgery would not have the money to keep seeing their local doctors and would be lost from the system... Urgent surgery cases... often ate into funding for elective surgery. He said this could still easily happen under the booking system.

...Auckland Healthcare warned coalition ministers several months ago that elective surgery was falling below minimum levels required to run the [CHE] properly. A confidential draft business plan, released yesterday... shows the enterprise striving to achieve a minimum 20:80 balance between elective and acute surgery. "We presently operate at approximately 15[%] elective... The acute-elective mix... is critical to efficient hospital management." However, funding levels as well as "the declining input into discretionary electives" were placing considerable pressure on the balance... [And now t]he hospital booking system for elective surgery looks set to be delayed as the Government searches for more money.

...More and more, the murky grey uncertainties of hospital waiting lists are moving closer to black and white. Lines are increasingly being drawn between patients who meet criteria for treatment and those who do not... [Patients] must wait until they are deemed sick enough to make the grade... as the Government marches towards a booking system which it insists is fairer... People have always lingered and died on traditional waiting lists but the new and growing sets of "clinical guidelines" come into sharp focus every time someone misses out and cries foul. The latest outrage over health rationing comes from Wellington where a kidney patient has been denied long-term hospital-based dialysis... because of a 20-year-old policy of not offering hospital dialysis to long-term patients and he has been sent home to die. The 24-year-old was considered to be clinically unsuitable for home dialysis. Hospital treatments were, reportedly, for those with chronic kidney problems where recovery was likely and those with chronic kidney failure awaiting training for home dialysis... In 1995, a 76-year-old kidney patient went public when he was denied dialysis at Middlemore Hospital... because of his age. [He] fought the ruling which was turned around after it was deemed discriminatory under the Human Rights Act. [The 76-year-old], who died in September last year, was expected to live only two or three months without dialysis but with the treatment, lasted 20 months... An Auckland Hospital renal physician working with dialysis guidelines... said about 12 patients a year were turned down for dialysis treatment. Problems which could preclude patients from treatment included acute diseases of other parts of the body, a mental illness or dementia. "They are, on the whole, usually major heart disease patients who are not likely to do well on dialysis and live for very long." ...About 70 Auckland central renal patients received dialysis at the hospital three times a week and around 140 treated themselves at home... [H]ospital dialysis was by far the most expensive option but some people could not dialyse at home because of a range of limitations including lack of help and confidence. As a result, central Auckland health officials were looking to open a satellite centre this year where kidney patients could have their treatment with some support, without having to come to the hospital. Middlemore Hospital... also turns down about 12 patients a year on clinical grounds and treats up to 27 a year in hospital. About 132, including... 20 Auckland central patients, receive... home dialysis each year... Supporters say that on balance... criteria and points systems... are superior to the old waiting list system because patients know exactly where they are in the queue... Critics... say they are unfair because they inevitably involve decision-making about the value of an individual's life. The guidelines, tools for people making the decisions, were a mixture of national and regional policies... "The real fear with clinicians is that bureaucrats and the Government will raise the thresholds..." But what really rankles critics is that such systems gauge social worth as well as medical need... [T]here were judgements made on whether someone was a "productive member of society." ...some treatments were given to people looking after others, but not those who lived alone. "If they live alone, they don't get the points... that's not fair." ...meanwhile... the Auckland car salesman who offered \$10,000 for a spare kidney, has... been enjoying a new life since starting dialysis last November. While he is still waiting for a suitable kidney donor, the dialysis treatment has boosted his energy levels. His wife... had their first child last month... She said without dialysis, her husband was expected to die before Christmas last year. Like... [the Wellington patient, her husband] was at the final stage of renal failure.

...The Wellington kidney specialist at the centre of a row over refusal to provide dialysis treatment to a young man who will die... within a few months... without it spoke yesterday of staff anguish over the issue... [The young man] says he feels he has been given a death sentence, perhaps because he has a psychiatric history... [The] renal physician... said he was immensely saddened by the situation. "I know him and like him... [but] I have to let him down,"... The decision was made by medical and nursing staff as a group... He said similar decisions were being made for six to eight people every year. "The decision does not get any easier. It's anguish each time." [The young man's] father... indicated he would be prepared to pay for the dialysis for his son, but his offer had been received "not at all well."

...Even as technology allows people to be kept alive longer, death is often still the best option, doctors say... The Starship children's hospital considered fighting for custody of a gravely ill patient so it could stop treatment against the parent's wishes. The Starship head... said medical specialists felt strongly that it was best to let the child die. "We were going to go to the High Court to make the child a ward of the hospital. Care would not have been accelerated if we had won custody. As it happened, the child died before court action needed to be taken." ...With such an intense focus on health spending, doctors could be unfairly accused of making decisions just to save money. "What the public doesn't understand is that some of the treatments that can be offered are horrendous: they are prolonged, painful and, for kids, they are a nightmare. The focus is not on the dollar but what's best for the kid... This hospital can keep anyone alive for 200 years so long as we put in the money, but we won't do it because it's not the right thing to do. Quality of life coupled with survival are key considerations. People confuse clinical effectiveness with cost-effectiveness. If we can't guarantee long-term survival with quality of life, we should not apply the technology." ...The clinical director of paediatric intensive care... said... "The important issue is unnecessary suffering for no gain." She had seen the flip side when working in the U[S], where children were kept alive at all cost, largely to prevent law-suits from families. "I stood back in horror at the suffering – not being able to say to... the family it's okay to allow this child a dignified natural death. Sometimes death is the best answer."

...[South African nurses were baffled when patients in one particular bed kept dying. They were starting to suspect a curse when all was revealed – every time the cleaning lady went to polish the floors she would inadvertently unplug the patient's life-support system. By the time she plugged it back in the patient had usually passed away. There have been no more unusual deaths since an extra power socket was installed.] In local news, the] chairman of the Nephrology Group, which represents all renal physicians, and head of renal dialysis at south Auckland's Middlemore Hospital... says diabetes is about to engulf us... and... send demand for renal dialysis soaring... Hospitals are funded for 7% annual growth in dialysis, but... demand would soon outstrip that figure. The problem was exacerbated in south Auckland with its... growing and ageing... Pacific Island population – a group with a rate of renal failure two to four times the European rate... [● A] Wellington kidney patient who had been rejected for dialysis is now to get the life-saving treatment... [T]he opening of a new facility outside Wellington Hospital meant he could be treated when he required it. Capital Coast Health says that until the facility is established, [the 24-year-old] will be eligible for dialysis treatment in hospital.

...The family of a dying Whangarei man say the decision... to deny him dialysis treatment is tantamount to murder. Papers were filed in the High Court at Auckland yesterday seeking an injunction against Northland Health to force it to continue giving dialysis treatment to 64-year-old Rau Williams at Whangarei Area Hospital. The Northland Health chief medical adviser... said Mr Williams was not on the dialysis treatment programme and had only been treated as part of his assessment for the programme, for which he was turned down two weeks ago. He would not give the reasons for Mr Williams' unsuitability because of privacy concerns, but said expert medical advice showed it was a clear case of someone not eligible for dialysis. "This is one of those decisions made nationwide dozens and dozens of times." [He] said family members had initially been quite happy with the decision but had later been "talked around." He confirmed that Mr Williams could die within a few weeks without the dialysis treatment, but said Northland Health would oppose the injunction. A member of the sick man's extended family... said that Northland Health had decided Mr Williams' quality of life was not worth keeping. She said her husband had discussed the matter with Mr Williams, who did not want to die. "He's not brain dead."

...Rau Williams... retreats into a long silence. "Nobody wants to die," he eventually murmurs. Mr Williams... realises he may have just a few weeks to live... Yesterday, he missed dialysis... for the first time. The subdued former patient was left accepting that without the treatment he

would die... [He then says] flatly that the decision should be “looked at.” His 26-year-old daughter... said the family had been given false hope by the dialysis treatment. “It seems cruel to now suddenly take him off it.” ...The Northland Health medical adviser... said the “difficult decision” to stop treatment would have been made in any N[Z] hospital. The Whangarei team had consulted renal experts elsewhere, and it was agreed dialysis should stop in line with national guidelines... the guidelines related to what was in the best interest of patients. “Clinical staff obviously feel this is the best treatment – to let nature take its course.” [The adviser] said the decision had upset all involved.

...While more than 700 people around the country with chronic kidney problems are being kept alive with dialysis treatment, dozens are denied treatment because they do not meet national guidelines... [The] guidelines state that patients must be able to cope both medically and socially with the therapy. For instance, dialysis puts additional stress on hearts and lungs, so these organs must be working well... The guidelines also rule out dialysis for many people who have previously had a major stroke or liver failure, and people with severe heart, lung, or brain diseases. People who are about to die from another terminal disease, such as cancer or Aids, do not qualify either, but the guidelines do not disqualify people with cancer who have a good prognosis for recovery. The dialysis treatment, which costs from \$30,000 to \$50,000 a patient, must also be able to give the patient “a quality of life acceptable to him or her,”... Patients remain on dialysis either until they get a kidney transplant, or they die. This could be anything from two to 20 years... [The] clinical director of Auckland Hospital renal service, said... “There is a bottleneck in the system. I’d like to see more kidneys available, but there is no quick fix.” He said he was not aware of anyone who is refused dialysis on cost grounds “although a couple of years ago that could have been an issue.” ...North Health has budgeted \$13 million for dialysis. “We buy dialysis for everybody who meets the criteria.” ...there are 450 people on dialysis in the northern region.

...It would take a heart as hard as flint to be unmoved by the plight of the dying Whangarei man who has been denied kidney dialysis treatment. But I cannot help feeling sorry for the doctors and clinicians in many disciplines who daily deny treatment to patients not because it will not do them any good but because it will not do them enough good to justify the expense. It is easy to say withholding treatment is condemning a patient to death, and when the patient is your flesh and blood or loved one, I do not doubt that is how it looks. But it is not the full story. The inescapable and unpalatable truth about public provision of health services is that demand is endless and supply is limited... Managing scarce resources is like a Chinese puzzle and when individual cases take on a human face, it always seems to mock the wisdom of the wider view. Denying one patient dialysis might free up money to do, say, 50 hip replacement operations or treat several thousand cases of glue ear in children. Meanwhile, we do not hesitate to give nursing home care to an old person with dementia who has next-to-no quality of life but deny dialysis to a patient who might get 18 months of good life out of it... [The] professor of community health at Auckland University medical school, points out that society – that is us, not the doctors – makes the life-and-death decisions when it decides how much to spend on health... “...when people make the decision how much to spend on health or frigates, they must be clear that it’s rationing and not medical futility.”

...[she] turns 10 tomorrow but birthday celebrations will be muted because her great-uncle... will not receive the greatest gift of all. The tearful youngster made an emotional plea for her relative’s kidney dialysis treatment to continue although a legal bid to force Northland Health to provide... [the treatment floundered yesterday. The High Court] Justice... did, however, recommend that Northland Health tell Mr Williams and his family exactly why he had been refused dialysis treatment... Family members then drove back to Whangarei... to tell him the court had, in effect, sentenced him to die... [An] appeal was a possibility although he [is] expected... to live only another three weeks.

...[the] family are expected to decide this morning whether to fight a High Court refusal to readmit their uncle to dialysis treatment... His nephew... received offers of financial help for his uncle over the weekend and his family was considering an appeal. “...A lady said we should save the \$10,000 we would spend on appealing the High Court decision and spend it on private treatment instead. We have a hard decision to make.” ...The term uncle... is applied loosely: Mr Williams’ wife is [his] wife’s great-aunt which means... “that I’m not actually related to him at all. But when it comes to whanau [family] I am...” More than family ties keep... [him going for] up to 20 hours a day looking after Mr Williams’ interests... He traces his bloodline directly back to... the Ngapuhi warlord who was a fierce opponent of colonisation and among the last, most reluctant and most suspicious signatories of the Treaty of Waitangi... [He] is no stranger to fighting the system. In 1994, he helped his father... to appeal against an ACC decision which... failed to recognise that an injury to his [father’s] leg had eroded his mana because he could no longer stand on the marae.

...The niece of a... man who is no longer allowed dialysis treatment wants Whangarei Hospital to teach her how to administer it so she can keep him alive... “...at home.” ...Home treatment cost about \$25,000 a year... [In the meantime, politicians] have taken up Mr Williams’ fight. In a letter to Whangarei Hospital, the Minister of Maori Affairs... urged the medical health manager... to reconsider... “People like Mr Williams have contributed to the welfare of the nation through years of hard work... and you, the hospital... should give him the opportunity he richly deserves.” ...Northland Health stopped his treatment last Wednesday...

It takes a lot to bring a full Parliament to silence. But [one MP] did it yesterday in question time after an outburst that shocked the House... [The MP] was ordered out of the chamber by the Speaker... during questions on Rau Williams... Mr Williams is not a constituent of [the MP] but the case involves a hospital in his constituency, Whangarei. The Speaker has ejected MPs often enough before but it has almost always been because someone has ignored his warnings about being rude to a parliamentary colleague. [The Whangarei MP], however, was rude and defiant to the Speaker, waving his arms and yelling at him – unknown behaviour, according to one long-server, since the worst indiscretions of Sir Robert Muldoon. [The Whangarei MP] had tried to get the Speakers’ attention for about 15 minutes to ask his question... He had a poke at the Government [– of which he is a member –] on the way, so it took a while to ask his question. The Speaker accused him of grossly abusing the privilege of having been allowed to ask a seventh question, after the matter had been closed. “This is a matter of life and death for this man,” [the Whangarei MP] shouted back. “Order! Sit down!” “Nothing is more important than this man’s life!” “The member will leave the chamber.” “Nothing is more...” “Now, out, out... You’re defying the chair. Leave the chamber immediately.” ...[the MP] wanted to know how to judge between the clinicians who say Mr Williams has been turned down on medical grounds and the clinicians who say he has been turned down on funding reasons.

...THE family of... Rau Williams is considering opening his medical file to the public... “The doctors say there are other things wrong with him which influenced their decision... Well let’s open the file and see what the public thinks... [We’re] worried about this country. The public is apathetic. They don’t realise what is going on. This should not be allowed to happen,”...

[THE] NORTHLAND Health boss... does not want Rau Williams’ medical files made public after calls were made yesterday that such a move could clear up the dialysis controversy once and for all... [He] said public debate would achieve nothing and... possibly be misleading. “I don’t think a simple expose in public would be helpful. Dialysis is a very complex area; there isn’t any simple explanation,”... [He believed] Northland Health had been put in an invidious position over the controversy.

...Citing privacy rules, Northland Health has repeatedly refused to elaborate on the “serious and multiple underlying conditions” given as the reason for its decision to stop Mr Williams’ treatment. His family have now released the file... [H]undreds of medical papers... show that [he has] chronic renal failure, diabetes, dementia, gout and hypertension, and... [carries] hepatitis B. They clearly show that Mr Williams initially made progress towards managing home dialysis but eventually could not handle it and developed peritonitis and septicaemia. But the papers do not explain why the [CHE rejected the] offer by a niece... to administer the home treatment.

...The Human Rights Commission is lending its weight to a family’s campaign to help their dying relative... Rau Williams’ family last week wrote to the commission asking for an ethical review... The commission announced yesterday that it wanted to help... and was seeking full details from all the parties involved.

...North Health has warned politicians, judges and the Human Rights Commission not to interfere... after an outcry over the Rau Williams case... [They] could check the procedure was fair, but it was not appropriate for them to interfere with individual clinical decisions... The acting chief of North Health... said yesterday that the decision... was made according to guidelines developed with... the Kidney Society and the Human Rights Commission... A medical and psychiatric team assessing Mr Williams agreed that he did not meet the guidelines. But according to the Kidney Society, the guidelines are not working because there is a lack of money for treatment and each doctor interprets them differently. The manager of the society's northern region branch... said... "If the guidelines were applied equally across the region, things wouldn't be so bad..."

...IF KIDNEY patient Rau Williams lived in Reefton... nobody would have heard of him. He would be quietly sitting at home having dialysis, supported by his doctor... "We would have turned him away over my dead body," [the Reefton doctor] said. If Mr Williams was unable to pay for home visits, he wouldn't be charged. "If he had a Community Services Card we'd put in a claim every time we saw him. If he didn't we would write it off as a service. We would have genuinely enjoyed seeing him and written it off as a professional indulgence... You cannot apply economic principles to health... [A]s soon as you do you fall over... The market philosophy is replacing the caring philosophy with the dollar and it breaks my heart." It is also setting the scene for absurd competition within the system.

...Mr Williams – his health steadily deteriorating – has now gone 11 days without dialysis... [While] his whanau prays the scales of justice will tip in their favour... [the legs of his] trackpants have... had to be cut to accommodate his bloated limbs... "He put on 2 1/2kg in one day. I was too scared to weigh him again after that, the toxic fluid is all building up in him, he's having trouble urinating." [A] businessman had approached the family offering to pay for Mr Williams' treatment[, and the]... Maori Affairs Minister... yesterday backed a proposed claim under the Treaty of Waitangi... [The] Maori Council chairman... said an urgent claim may be lodged under the Treaty... because "there seemed to be no other law that could save him"... [A relative] said if the... intervention failed he may approach the Governor-General... "If I had a dog and treated him the way they are treating uncle... I would end up in court... [U]ncle... hasn't committed a crime... [but he]'s been sentenced to death, he... needs a pardon."

...THIS is what it comes down to: After all the green papers, white papers, prestigious conferences, think tanks, the steering groups [and] media campaigns... we have now got down to the essential meaning of the health reforms. This is where it was leading: A man who is condemned to die. State euthanasia. Oh, no, nothing to do with me, says [the Minister of Health]. While staunch on the right to life of foetuses, [he] wants nothing to do with saving the life of a man... [The minister] is finding the public has strong feelings about these things. After all, Rau Williams could be any one of us. Truly these clinicians are God-like creatures, or at least convenient to hide behind... [The minister] is in awe of them. He will abide by their bidding, unless of course, they were to ask for more health dollars to be able to do a proper job. The High Court has even put the doctors above the law. This is part of a worrying trend for the courts to support anything doctors want to do, including, in the U[K], enforced Caesarean sections... The refusal to treat Mr Williams is justified on the grounds that he has not met some mysterious criteria... [But] the criteria are not graven in stone. They were not brought down from the mountain by Moses. They have emerged as part of the politically driven rationing process... The Human Rights Commission said they were illegal when they were used to prevent [a 76-year-old] getting dialysis because he was one year older than the cut-off. Since then they have been reworked at... [RHA] level, but age and disability still earn you bad points. This is probably illegal under the Human Rights Act, which outlaws discrimination on such grounds, as well as the Bill of Rights, which gives rights "not to be deprived of life" and "not to be subjected to torture or cruel treatment". The decision could also breach the Code of Health Services Consumers' Rights. [The minister] says Mr Williams would have got the same decision in any N[Z] hospital. That... is an indictment, not a defence... In America, people's right to dialysis is enshrined in legislation and is provided publicly. Our rates of dialysis are half those of the US and Japan but similar to those of A[US] or the U[K], although we have far lower rates of dialysis among the elderly – only around a sixth. Since we have high rates of kidney failure among Maori and Pacific Island people, one might expect N[Z] would do more dialysis than those countries. We are moving into an era when the Government wants to put money only into those areas where there is a measurable benefit. Mr Williams is not a "health gain" area. He is not going to get better, only worse. In purely fiscal terms, he is wasting money. But a society that succumbs to this kind of reductionist logic is in grave moral danger. If Mr Williams is expendable, then so are people with serious disabilities, long-term prison inmates, and the very dependent, fragile old. We stand judged as a society by how we protect the most helpless among us... [● Tomorrow] Northland people will march on Whangarei Hospital... in an attempt to save the life of Rau Williams... More protest action is planned...

Police will investigate whether Northland Health can face a culpable homicide charge for failing to provide Rau Williams with lifesaving dialysis treatment... The Acting Senior Sergeant in charge of the Whangarei station... said the police legal section in Auckland would determine if charges could be laid... under section 151 of the Crimes Act... "A charge of culpable homicide is possible under the Crimes Act, even if the victim is still alive, if it is found that someone is guilty of failing to provide the necessities of life..." Mr Williams' lawyer... said the neglect case could be a first. Mr Williams' family are running out of options... [The Crimes Act] move came as Mr Williams' brother... dropped a discrimination complaint which had been laid with the Human Rights Commission. In another development, the Whangarei MP... said he would ask the U[N] Human Rights Committee to intervene. It has been more than two weeks since Northland Health stopped treating Mr Williams...

Rau Williams' whanau have failed with one legal avenue in the fight for his life but still have another to pursue. Police told them yesterday that they could not charge Northland Health... The whanau are expected to file papers... this morning seeking an amended injunction to the one they failed to win last month... His whanau said doctors had given him about a week to live.

...Rau Williams' condition worsened yesterday as supporters gathered in the rain outside Whangarei Hospital... Although the hospital said his condition last night was stable... [he] had "gone downhill. He's not in a coma but it is in the wind. Time is running out... His spirits are low and... he didn't know how much longer he could hold on." ...[the support group was] appealing to public and private hospitals to accept Mr Williams for treatment, and for renal-failure doctors to volunteer services. A financial appeal was launched, along with a national "fax attack" on Northland Health and the Government. The intervention of the Queen and the "international community" was also being sought via the internet.

...Rau Williams received another setback last night when Whangarei Hospital refused to allow an A[US]n renal specialist to examine the dying man. A charitable trust, Lifecare N[Z], has offered Mr Williams private dialysis treatment. It bought a machine on Wednesday for \$30,000. Yesterday the trust flew [the AUSn doctor] from rural Victoria, where he runs two dialysis units, to access whether [Mr Williams] is suitable for treatment. A Nelson technician was also flown to Whangarei in case the doctor cleared Mr Williams for treatment. However, Whangarei Hospital said [the AUSn doctor] could not examine the patient. He could visit as a friend... but he could not act as a specialist because he was not registered in N[Z]... "I was surprised a bit," said [the AUSn doctor]. "I wouldn't have thought [registration] would be required if all that was to be done was look at the patient and give an opinion which had no authority and would carry no responsibility." ...A whanau spokesman... said he would ask [the AUSn doctor] to examine Mr Williams as a friend... Meanwhile, hopes of having a dialysis machine up and running for Mr Williams lie with an Auckland doctor due back from holiday this weekend... [Mr Williams' supporters hope that the Auckland doctor], a renal consultant, will accept a plea to help oversee the operation of the machine... [A Court of Appeal] Justice... will decide... this morning on an application to force Northland Health to provide... interim treatment "to bridge a gap until his family had another option in place."

...The Court of Appeal early today refused the last legal bid from relatives of... Rau Williams... The three judges, who heard legal argument last night in a hastily convened session in Wellington, returned just after midnight with their decision. Their reasons will be given later.

...AFTER... 24 days... of [waiting] for medical treatment that money couldn't buy... Mr Williams' much-publicised fight for life ended with his last breath about 3.30am yesterday... just hours after... [his niece, who maint]ained a constant vigil at his bedside in ward 14... whispered to him

that an appeal to the highest court in the land... had failed... Mr Williams hardly registered the final disappointment... As dusk fell in Whangarei yesterday, Mr Williams began a long journey to his ancestral home in the Bay of Plenty, a place he left when he was 13... Six or seven years ago, Mr Williams'... wife... died from renal failure... which ironically she refused treatment for[, and]... his father... died last year after also battling with kidney problems... [The] Health Minister... said he would send his condolences to Mr Williams' family. He said the public way the saga had been played out was "disappointing"... Mr Williams... had received the best care possible, he said.

...The Minister of Health... has decreed that if hospitals want money for more operations they must prove their sickest patients benefit first. This means a ranking system – which sounds fair and logical but... [rankings or points] are just a small part of the rationing process, which starts with the Government deciding how it funds health and ends up with a patient being given or denied public treatment. Although health rationing has always existed, it is commanding centre-stage against the backdrop of Rau Williams' futile fight for life-lengthening dialysis and the developing criteria for ranking people's relative ill-health. Where politicians and bureaucrats once deflected flak over people's lengthy waits for treatment by simply ploughing more money into particular services, they are now forced to admit that some suffering patients will inevitably miss out. How much money should go into services is something health officials must grapple with over the next few months... [Is] it better to do a major operation on a patient with severe lung cancer or more hip replacements? "Doing the lung cancer operation may not help anyone, yet we often do these things because they're urgent and people feel helpless." The points system and the level of money devoted to health have predictably riled some and pitfalls are already being pointed out. These include private system shortcuts, continued regional inequities and the number of operations funded not matching the tally of people who qualify. Some are wondering whether it is a blunt instrument for ushering in means-testing... A senior health official wants to see means-testing introduced so that the poor are not disadvantaged by health rationing... In N[Z], the Core Health Services Committee (now called the National Health Committee) was the group charged with giving public health services priorities. It went to the U[S] and investigated a much-debated system used in Oregon... The Oregon Health Plan involves a constantly reviewed list which defines the treatments the state will provide for the poorest citizens and those who cannot get insurance... No other procedures were taxpayer-funded... [M]oney saved by restricting the number of publicly funded services was poured back into the system to allow more people to get those services. It did not disappear into the likes of roading, prisons and political trips... [The] system is by no means perfect. Real fairness could be achieved only by all the needy people having full access to a full range of health care... The Oregon... [list is] constantly reviewed... Of about 750 identified conditions and treatments, about 530 are on the list... An example of one condition left off the list in 1993 was cancer when a patient had a less than 5[%] chance of surviving five years.

...[the] 44-year-old... accepts he is going to die, and now he just wants to go home to be with his family. His twin sons have built a wheelchair ramp... and friends have raised funds to buy an old ambulance to transport him around. Aside from the odd day visit home, however, the ramp and ambulance sit unused. His wife... can't afford the home nursing care [her husband], who is dying of cancer, needs. Given one to two years to live about a year ago, [her husband] has spent 11 months in a windowless intensive care unit at Wellington Hospital, waiting for health authorities to decide if they will pay for that care... An assurance that the CHE would respond by Friday was not followed through... What infuriates the family most is that the hospital estimates the cost of home care is the same as the cost of keeping him in intensive care... Ironically, he could claim ACC if he was an accident victim, the couple said... [Incidentally, i]t was alleged on TV3's 20/20 programme on Sunday night that bungling by... Wellington Free Ambulance... staff contributed to... the death last month of a [27-year-old] Wainuiomata mother of two... Mrs Trueman... died on June 3 after unsuccessful attempts by an ambulance officer and Fire Service staff to revive her. The previous day she had gone to hospital in agony with a bruised leg but was told by a nurse to go home and take Panadol... On Wednesday... [the WFA] chief executive... sidelined two officers pending an independent review... [He] confirmed yesterday that... [the] service's communications manager had also been stood down for an "undetermined" period. [However, he pointed out that the 'WFA – which is one of the few ambulance services in NZ not run by St John – has been saving lives for 70 years'.]

...At least eight Wellington patients died or were further injured because of a lack of skills and resources among the ambulance service, a former ambulance officer claimed yesterday. [The officer], who left the WFA service in March after 10 years' service, said he was frustrated and disgusted at the way the service was managed. His claims follow details shown on TV3's 20/20 on Sunday surrounding the death of Karen Trueman[, whose]... widower... said he would seek a legal opinion about the care given to his wife... He had not realised there had been a problem with his wife's treatment until contacted by TV3 on Sunday... "The biggest problem I had was that [the WFA chief executive] had full knowledge of other cases where patients have suffered and he hasn't done anything about it,"... said... [the former officer. However, the] chief executive... said he had no details of any other cases being referred to... [He pointed out that the former officer] had twice been passed over for the paramedic training course at the National Ambulance Officers Training School in Auckland... The service had the money to pay for training but was spending it on vehicles, management reorganisation and researching the buying of a rescue helicopter, he said.

...Night-vision goggles that show up people as green figures in the dark are the latest aid for Wellington rescuers. The Life Flight Trust – which operates the Westpac Trust rescue helicopter and the NZ Post air ambulance from Wellington Airport – had spent about \$53,000 on two pairs... [In related news, a] dogfight broke out yesterday after St John Ambulance revealed it would soon dump the services of the Westpac Rescue Helicopter and use an expensive new aircraft for air emergency work in Auckland. The Order of St John has bought a Sikorsky S-76 helicopter from A[US] for \$1.7 million and given the Westpac operators three months' notice that their services are no longer required. The Westpac operators, the Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust, are angry at the apparent end of a 25-year relationship with St John. The trust chairman... could not understand why St John had decided to buy its own helicopter when the Westpac machine – leased from Helicopter Line – had worked successfully for the organisation for so long... [The] BK-117... had completed 8000 successful missions... St John Ambulance claims it will make huge savings by ditching the Westpac rescue helicopter... [A]n Auckland board member... said St John could run the Sikorsky for just under \$1 million a year, compared with the more than \$3 million it cost to run the Westpac helicopter... [But t]he trust chairman... called the St John costings "absolute garbage" and accused the organisation of trying to create a national monopoly on road and air ambulance work... [Indeed, t]he trust had contacted lawyers because it was concerned that St John was trying to shut it out of funding contracts with North Health and ACC... [The chairman] claimed the Sikorsky would... struggle with parts and maintenance because there were no others in the country... [In addition,] St John would have to pay a further \$500,000 to kit the helicopter out properly and... it would cost \$2500 an hour to run, compared with the trust's \$1800 an hour charge-out rate... – which the... trust sought to increase by \$400, withdrawing the claim on April 17... [He believed] his operation would probably be forced to close if St John went ahead with its plan... If his trust was forced to close its operations no one would be left to do winch rescue work... He [then] said there was not enough work in the Auckland area for two air ambulances... [However,] St John... believes there is work for two helicopters...

[The Auckland helicopter trust which ousted a Northland operator for rescue work in the north had to call in its rival for a job it could not do. The community-owned helicopter used its winch to hoist a woman with a broken ankle from a gully in the Whareora Forest east of Whangarei on Thursday. The Auckland Helicopter Trust's helicopter, which is based in Whangarei, did not have a winch capable of lifting the woman from the gully.]

...A mysterious benefactor... who wanted to remain anonymous... has helped the Northland Electricity rescue helicopter to extend its lifesaving grasp through the purchase of two long-range fuel tanks, worth \$100,000. The... tanks increased the helicopter's range by 150 nautical miles. That meant ocean mercy dashes would not have to be delayed until the victim was closer to shore... [The donation is timely,] because... North Hokianga ambulance staff [are saying] lives could be lost in the Far North... [due to] a shortage of drivers [that] will keep one of their vehicles off the road

from next week. The Kohukohu station has four volunteers but only one is qualified to drive the ambulance. The station will lose him when he starts fulltime work next Monday. The nearest backup ambulance is at Mangamuka, about 30 minutes away.

...Five severely burned people had to wait more than three hours to get to hospital after their caravans caught fire in the remote Wairarapa coastal settlement of Tora at the weekend. A 2-year-old Martinborough boy and his father, aged 27, were battling for their lives in Wellington hospital's intensive care unit last night. The boy's mother and two elderly Hutt Valley residents were in Hutt Hospital's burns unit in a satisfactory condition. The two families were cooking together in one caravan about 10.30 pm on Saturday when they went to change a gas cylinder without first turning the gas off. "It... just blew the end off, which acted like a flame thrower." Bad weather prevented the WestpacTrust helicopter from reaching the injured, so they had to be taken out by ambulance.

...Lions, Lionesses and Leos will be out in their hundreds in Auckland today and tomorrow raising money for the Westpac Trust rescue helicopter... The service clubs aim to raise \$90,000 during the appeal... which will fund urgently needed medical equipment and flying expenses. Each year the demand for the service grows, and this year more than 600 rescues are expected to be flown by the trust.

...Rival services will soon bid for helicopter work in the Auckland region. The A[CC]... confirmed last night that it would put its majority share of the service out to tender. An ACC spokesman... said a new contract became necessary when St John Ambulance bought its own machine instead of relying on the Westpac rescue helicopter, which is co-sponsored by the N[Z] Herald... Last night... the Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust[s]... chairman... said he was delighted with the corporation's decision and confident that the trust would win the contract. The ACC pays for about 70[%] of the service. The other 30[%] is funded by North Health, which is waiting to see details of the tendering process before deciding what to do... Earlier [the trust's chairman] said the... S-76 Sikorsky... would cost \$2.7 million once St John added a winch for emergency work... [In response,] the order's chief ambulance officer... said a winch could be added but the total cost would still be within \$2.2 million.

...A bitter battle for the right to operate Auckland's air ambulance service has ended with the Auckland Regional Rescue Helicopter Trust winning the [ACC] contract... The chief executive of the Order of St John in Auckland... said last night that he would not comment until being formally advised of the contract going in favour of the trust... St John... is to build a half-million-dollar hanger for its new Sikorsky helicopter...

The dogfight over air ambulance duties above Auckland is set to resume as the new St John helicopter prepares to start work. The Order... bought a Sikorsky S-76... earlier this year... But its plans to take over air emergency work hit a snag when the contract was put out to tender and the incumbent[provider won. The]... trust chairman... said last night that all hospitals in the Auckland region... had refused contracts with St John when approached recently... "St John might be in the air... but they'll have no work." ...St John... was confident of gaining the ACC contract when it went out to tender next year. "We have the superior helicopter. It can travel faster and further than any other air ambulance operating in N[Z], and it can carry more passengers..."

...Allegations that a... St John rescue helicopter was unavailable for mercy missions because it was carrying commercial passengers will be investigated by North Health today. The Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust... says St John... [was] ferrying passengers from New Plymouth to a Taranaki oil rig... While the... trust's Westpac rescue helicopter... [was flying one of three missions and the] St John's... helicopter... was... in New Plymouth... a Waiheke resident suffering chest pains had to be evacuated by the police launch...

[The Order of St John is facing enormous losses, and the future of three helicopters is in question, after crucial ACC contracts did not materialise, or were rejected. A Sikorsky helicopter, intended to secure the service emergency work in Auckland, has instead left it with a \$1.5 million budget blowout, although the Auckland St John chief executive denied that the helicopter was a white elephant. And St John in Christchurch is having to rethink the role its newly acquired \$2.35 million BK117 helicopter will play in the Canterbury-West Coast region after ACC accepted Garden City Helicopters' tender. This month the Sikorsky was swapped with Northland's BK117 rescue helicopter after St John decided it was too expensive to justify the short flights it was running around Auckland and would be better suited for longer flights in the north. But ACC officials are believed to have pulled the plug on that plan after refusing to allow the Sikorsky to fly regular ACC-funded missions in Northland. They said the aircraft did not meet ACC requirements. And the Sikorsky specifically has the tender to provide the backup for the WestpacTrust aircraft in Auckland, not the BK117. St John officials were yesterday still hoping to secure ACC-funded contracts, enabling the helicopters to fly. But failing that, the emergency ambulance service organisation faces substantial cost-cutting.]

...although 'one woman who recently gave a large donation to St John was understood to be unhappy at the thought of her money being used to "pay for a white elephant," public donation money – that had been earmarked for charity work – is plugging a million-dollar hole left by the failed bid by the order to take over air emergency work in Auckland. The Auckland St John chief executive confirmed yesterday that money for the road ambulance service had not been siphoned off to cover the Sikorsky losses. The order receives \$20 million through the ACC, regional health funding authority and hospitals to provide Auckland's road ambulance service.' Editor's note: 'When a 3-year-old began having seizures, his mother didn't hesitate in phoning 111. But \$67.50 later, it's something she'd think twice about doing again. "This is an essential emergency service and it should be free for everyone." The bill for the five-minute ambulance ride arrived when the Otahuhu family couldn't afford it. The Order of St John relies on financial support from the public, but says a Health Select Committee inquiry into ambulance services is underway. Last year, St John contributed nearly \$10m towards running costs of the ambulance service. The ambulance provider says, under its contract with Crown funding services, the bill for ambulance users ranges from \$45 to \$67.50.'

... 'Ambulance staff would treat more people over the phone and in their own homes rather than taking them to hospital under plans to improve services (about 40% of callers are currently taken to hospital). The suggestion, based on the British method, is one of 14 recommendations made by Parliament's health select committee after an inquiry highlighted inadequacies in ambulance services. But an Auckland ambulance officer said there were far bigger ambulance issues that needed to be addressed than introducing the UK plan. The main ones were the lack of funding and staffing that meant many officers had to go on jobs alone. The inquiry recommended the Government work to achieve double crewing in metropolitan areas in three years. NZ ambulance services are run by four main providers – the Wairarapa and Taranaki District Health Boards, Wellington Free Ambulance and St John.'

...Staff in the Auckland control room of St John Ambulance could soon work like air traffic controllers, directing ambulances from the station to emergencies and on to hospitals if satellite tracking – or automatic vehicle location – is introduced. Operators can already place ambulances on a computer map of Greater Auckland and locate the site of the emergency using mapping technology. But St John... hopes to upgrade its computer system so its fleets of ambulances from Cape Reinga through to Tauranga can be watched on the computer screen... If the costs can be met, St John will be the first emergency service in the Southern Hemisphere to introduce satellite-tracking... "All this has to be good for patients as it means we're cutting time off how long we take to get to emergencies," said... [the deputy ambulance chief... [Now if only someone could work out how to cut time off how long we take to supply children with wheelchairs!]] Due to a premature birth, [a boy] has cerebral palsy, and despite his parents' best efforts, he had to start school last week in a pushchair. He could have been there months ago, but his parents... had kept him home in the hope that he would reach the top of the waiting list for a standard-issue junior wheelchair before turning six and being legally required at school. This week his sixth birthday arrived and so did first day at Marist School, Herne Bay, where [he] was greeted by other children asking if he was a baby. After his parents explained his condition to a school assembly, [he] now loves going to school, but is frustrated he cannot get about by himself. In [his] own words a wheelchair would be "good for the... playground... zoo and holidays, good for going to the shops and on aeroplanes..." ...He wants... a pink one – "you write that down." ...[his mother] first contacted Equipment for Independence, which is contracted to provide services to North Health, about six months ago... The Alliance spokeswoman for disabilities... highlighted the case, saying [the boy] had been stripped of dignity. "North Health has an absolute responsibility to ensure that [this boy] has his wheelchair now." ...the general manager of disability support services

at North Health, said wheelchairs had waiting lists just like every other service in the health system. She had a lot of sympathy for [the boy] and said the situation was improving. The waiting list was now under 50.

...[yesterday the] Opposition health spokeswoman... released statistics showing 99,161 people... are on waiting lists for surgery at public hospitals.

...Health chiefs are alarmed at Government-driven demands for yet more cost savings in hospitals... [and,] in the face of burgeoning waiting lists, they say they are unsure where the savings will come.

...Medical specialists see a disturbing trend of creeping privatisation of the public health system... [However, private] patients should be treated in public hospitals, says a health chief... concerned that... public hospitals were losing cheaper, less complex procedures... to private providers.

...A private hospital taking public patients for day surgery could soon be [operating] in the grounds of North Shore Hospital. Waitemata Health is considering the plan as part of selling more than \$15 million of property assets to pay for new services... Waitemata would lease the old hospital site... to [an investment bank, which] would then lease back operating theatre time to North Shore Hospital for public surgery, as well as treating its own private patients. The chief executive of Waitemata Health... said the cost of paying mortgages and maintenance on the buildings was about the same as leasing. Selling the properties allowed Waitemata to move away from being a landlord and concentrate on its real business of delivering health services. Waitemata will take over responsibility for an extra 50,000 people in West Auckland next year... The Government has said it will pay for the increased services but Waitemata Health has to find the money for new buildings and equipment itself... [By the way, a]bout 40 patients and staff have been struck down by an unknown infection at Waitakere Hospital... forcing the isolation of two wards. The infection is thought to have contributed to the death of an elderly patient in recent days, although it was not the main cause... [S]cientific tests are being done in Wellington to identify the bug[, which causes]... diarrhoea, vomiting and occasional abdominal pains.

...A nurse at Waitakere Hospital claims that managers failed to stop the potential spread of an unknown bug through two wards[, which]... were reopened last night... [The] maternity nurse... said... she and her colleagues had learned about the gastroenteritis-type illness only after reading the *N[Z Herald]*. Furthermore... management claims that the two geriatric wards were isolated were a joke... [-] signs had not been put up around the two... wards, and staff were walking between them and other parts of the hospital. This could have easily spread the disease to other vulnerable patients... The communications manager for Waitemata Health... said adequate precautions had been taken, but it would investigate the nurse's allegations immediately.

...Hospitals are usually places for people to heal but infectious diseases can easily turn that around... The unknown infection which... swept through two wards at Waitakere Hospital... is thought to be a viral infection which clears within three days. Therefore, in the context of hospital infections, it is set to go down in the history books as a relatively minor event. Health officials have reserved their biggest worries for bigger threats – like[if] a drug-resistant “superbug” arrives in wards. International headlines this year announced the discovery of an untreatable and deadly superbug from Japan. It was... found in a four-month-old baby. Hospitals in N[Z] were jolted into boosting infection-control programmes in fear of it reaching our vulnerable shores. But the case may have been a false alarm. The infant had an abscess which was not treated properly to start with, leading doctors to think it was resistant to drugs. When this was picked up, drugs were prescribed and the abscess healed. While hospitals and health officials worldwide breathed a sigh of relief, it is thought to be only a matter of time before another scare emerges. A British report last year said a superbug epidemic was set to take hold of British hospitals, with clear signs emerging. It said at least 50 hospital patients died each year from the superbug (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) and “that every hospital in the country will sooner or later be hit.” The superbug and drug resistant germs were also the focus of 12,000 disease experts at a 1995 conference in the U[S]. But the attention has not been restricted to science boffins overseas. Earlier that year a ward at Christchurch Hospital was isolated after two patients were found to be infected with a potentially dangerous superbug... The Ministry of Health's chief adviser of regulation and safety... said if a strain of *Staphylococcus aureus* was resistant to methicillin, it was treated with a combination of antibiotics, or, as a last resort, vancomycin. The need to use vancomycin was rare in N[Z]. One thousand cases last year, 4[%] of all cases, were found to be methicillin-resistant.

...*War on superbug strains*... Medical experts are calling for special precautions after Japanese doctors identified new strains of a superbug with some resistance to the most potent antibiotic... [Doctors] at Jutendo University in Tokyo found a strain of the common infection *staphylococcus aureus* earlier this year – known by its initials as VRSA – that did not respond to vancomycin, the last line of defence against infection. In their latest research, reported in the *Lancet* medical journal, they uncovered more strains of the organism that showed variable resistance to the drug... [They] examined vancomycin resistance in 1149 strains of... the so-called MRSA bacteria... isolated from patients in 203 hospitals... Variable resistance was found in 20[%] of strains from Jutendo... in 9.3[%] of those from [another 7] university hospitals and in 1.3[%] of strains in clinics.

...Resistance to antimicrobial agents is seen widely among the microbes or micro-organisms which infect humans. It is an inevitable evolutionary response to a world in which antimicrobial agents are extremely widely used in human medicine and used as growth-promoting food additives in young[farm] animals in many countries... No one has ever isolated a *Streptococcus pyogenes* resistant to penicillin. Resistance of *Escherichia coli* to amoxicillin developed slowly over 20 years in Auckland and by the early 1990s about 50[%] of them were resistant. However, the percentage has not changed at all in the last few years and we don't know why. All *Streptococcus pneumoniae* used to be sensitive to penicillin and for years there was no change. Then in the late 1980s and continuing until now there has been an explosion of resistance which has reached us here in N[Z]... Last week a *Staphylococcus aureus* resistant to the antibiotic vancomycin was isolated in Japan. Why on earth has that created such a furore when the world is clearly already awash with antimicrobial-resistant organisms? ...*Staphylococcus aureus* is a common bacterium which makes people sick in N[Z] every day. It is not some weird organism which very occasionally invades people already weakened by disease or immune-suppressing drugs – though it can do that as well. About half of us carry it around in our noses all the time so that it is an integral part of the microbial world that we share. Let's go back in history a bit. Within a very few years of the first use of penicillin in 1941 against *Staphylococcus Aureus*, microbiologists started seeing occasional strains which were resistant to penicillin... In terms of the endless battle that we wage against infectious disease with antibacterial drugs, it has taken just over 50 years for these particular organisms to become completely resistant. That is, of course, but a microsecond in evolution.

...*It seems every year brings a new health scare*... REMEMBER them? The scare stories which became the fodder of dinner parties for months... Each new disease was billed as the scourge of the decade; each seemed more terrifying than the last. But where are they now? ...NECROTISING FASCIITIS “Attack of the flesh-eating terror bug” the headline from 1994 screamed. “Killer necrotising fasciitis spreading worldwide”. Well, not quite. But two unexplained surges in rates of so-called “galloping gangrene” – severe, invasive infection by the common bacteria *streptococcus A*, caused the horror headlines... In N[Z, a] Masterton man... thought he was in the grip of a science-fiction story as he watched his leg being eaten away... He quickly accepted his leg had to be amputated to save his life. “Goodbye you bastard,” he told it as he was wheeled to surgery... N[Z now] sees about 10-15 cases a year, but there are “very few” deaths because the disease is usually quickly diagnosed. It strikes young and old alike, often healthy, vigorous people whose infection begins with no more than, say, a scraped knee from a fall off a bike... The bug has been known to kill healthy people in 24 hours... In [the Masterton amputee]'s case, the bug moved up his leg at the rate of three centimetres an hour... TAPANUI FLU Named originally after an outbreak in Southland in 1983-1984, Tapanui flu (Myalgic encephalomyelitis) is now known as chronic fatigue syndrome and is thought to affect about 3500 N[Z]ers – a number which has been static for many years. [A m]edical virologist... of Otago Medical School... believes about 75% of those 3500 are not suffering [CFS] at all – but about the same number again have the disease but have not been diagnosed... In 1994, he discovered that syndrome sufferers appeared to have fewer “natural killer cells” and that those they did have were not working

properly. His team has just received ethical approval for a pilot study to investigate natural killer cell activity in people severely affected by [CFS]. In the US, [a] researcher... has identified a crucial enzyme that triggers a biochemical fighting reaction in response to a challenge from a virus. In CFS sufferers, the enzyme is either absent or of a defective type... **TOXIC SHOCK SYNDROME** It was the disease which took tampons off the supermarket shelf and on to the front pages of... newspapers. Toxic shock syndrome claimed 28 lives in the U[S] in 1980, and... researchers announced they had identified two kinds of fibre... used in tampons as fostering the production of a bacterial poison which could, particularly when tampons were not regularly changed, lead to high fever, low blood pressure, a rash, vomiting, diarrhoea and death... In October, 1980, just when the first sanitary protection ads were being run on [NZ] television, the Health Department advised women to stop using tampons while tests were conducted... A week later it withdrew the warning, saying tampons used here were not a problem. Only three cases a year were reported for the next three years and since 1986 the condition has not been notifiable. There have been no recent reports... **LEGIONNAIRE'S DISEASE** The bacterial lung infection killed 26 American ex-servicemen at a Philadelphia convention in 1976 and was thought to have claimed its first N[Z] victim in 1979. But there were "hundreds" of suspected cases in the late 1970s. In May, 1985, the Speaker of Parliament, Sir Basil Arthur, died from a rare form of Legionnaire's. The bacteria was commonly found in water cooling tanks and circulated through ventilation systems, and by the late 1980s, it was popping up everywhere... [I]t was found in office blocks in Christchurch, Auckland and Wellington... In Britain, 58 BBC workers contracted the disease and two died... While Legionnaire's has long since faded from the headlines, it is now believed to be greatly under-reported... 37 cases were notified [in NZ] last year, with three deaths, but... Environmental Science and Research... networks indicated there were at least 60 cases nationally. In 1995 there were 33 cases, in 1994, 66... [Speaking of scourges of the decade – in this case, the privatisation of public facilities –] South Auckland Health is considering selling its \$7 million Howick superclinic to local doctors... The Howick centre, which is due to open in two weeks, is intended to take some of Middlemore Hospital's annual load of 240,000 day surgery cases... The chairman... said yesterday that the day surgery centre – which is [to be] jointly run by hospital staff and [GPs] – could be fully or partly sold... It would either keep part of the building where its specialists worked or lease the space back from its partner, Eastcare, a business group of Howick doctors... South Auckland Health is building another, larger superclinic at Manurewa and hopes to build a third in Mangere. Waitemata Health, meanwhile, yesterday confirmed it was planning to go ahead with a private hospital venture with [an]... investment bank in the grounds of North Shore Hospital.

...T[aranaki] Base Hospital could be the first in N[Z] to privatise its radiology services... [It] is also considering contracting its laboratory services.

...[A Government cost-cutting drive could force some people to pay for the 8 most common state-funded diagnostic tests for serious diseases. Health funding officials raised the idea of charging for the tests as a means of curbing overuse by doctors and other health workers. Medical groups are aghast at the suggestion. The Government pays the laboratories more than \$160m a year for the work – about 27 million individual tests. The top 8 absorb over half the spending. Disorders revealed by these tests include hepatitis, urinary infections and all types of cancer. Possible strategies include introducing part-charges of up to \$20 a test for a quarter of public patients, and making specialists' private patients and private hospital users pay the full cost of their laboratory tests – about \$20m a year.' On a positive note,] **the country's first liver transplant... will... [be performed] early next year at Auckland Hospital**, which... won the... three-year... contract in April... [The annual] budget... allows the hospital to operate on about 22 patients a year[, including]... travel, accommodation and follow up care. But... [the] head of the new transplant unit, [who] [has... returned from the U[S] where he was associate professor of surgery at the prestigious Mayo Clinic... expects demand to rise once the service is running... [Over] 30... staff have gone to the U[S], Britain or A[US] recently to get transplant experience... From next month patients will be accessed and one chosen as the inaugural patient to go under the knife... Most of the patients needing the life-saving operation have a history of hepatitis C or B or alcoholic liver disease.

...[supporters] of... the man convicted of killing Martin Luther King Jun, will try to raise the \$US250,000... he needs for a life-saving liver transplant in Pittsburgh... He is serving a 99-year sentence in a Tennessee prison for killing the civil rights leader in 1968... Doctors said... [three months ago that the prisoner, who is now aged] 69... would die within six months unless he got a liver transplant. Tennessee court officials have barred [him] from leaving the state for a transplant, and the state's two transplant centres have denied him admittance... [In related news, a British girl] born with a rare liver disease that killed her two brothers as infants... was just five days old when she received a new liver and became the world's youngest liver transplant patient... Now five months old, [she] has overcome the trauma of surgery and her body has accepted the new organ[, which]... had to be cut down to one-eighth of the original size and was transferred in a delicate six-hour operation... Transplants in infants are helped because for its first 30 days, a baby's immune system is too immature to detect foreign bodies, reducing the risk of rejection.

...Japanese citizens Toshio Okano and Kazuo Mori[went] to the Philippines to save their lives by buying a kidney for transplant, but instead the trip killed both. Japanese, Koreans, Micronesians and Saudi Arabians, eager to circumvent long waiting lists at home, regularly [g]o... to th[e] poverty-stricken archipelago seeking donors for dollars... [S]ources who asked not to be named said each[patient] paid around \$25,600 for his new kidney – more than a year's salary for many Filipinos... With more than 30[%] of the Philippines' 65 million population living below the poverty level, the dollars from selling a kidney can be hard to resist... [However, a]n official at the Japanese embassy in Manila sa[ys it i]s "immoral" to buy a kidney from a living donor. And medical treatment in the Philippines [i]s not as safe as in Japan she [adds]... Many of the transplants... [– which] cost... about 500,000 pesos (\$31,800) excluding doctor's fees, donor-screening costs and pricey preparatory and follow-up treatment... [–] have been successful. But... the patients run the risk of losing more than their money, as both the Japanese men found out... Mr Okano was treated at... Manila's St Luke's Medical Centre... in 1994 and Mr Mori in 1996. Mr Okano died just before his transplant as a result of an infection caused by a minor operation – the removal of a tooth. Mr Mori died of cancer last June, about a year after his transplant. Apart from the cancer his second kidney – not the transplanted one – had also become infected... Before and after a kidney operation, patients are given immunosuppressives to prevent their bodies rejecting the new organs. These drugs weaken the immune system, leaving the patient prone to infection. They can also promote the growth of tumours[. Incidentally, a NZ 'MP is fighting bureaucracy to give his air miles to a sick girl. New Plymouth's Labour MP has built up thousands of air miles through taxpayer-funded flights. But parliamentary services officers are stopping him passing them on to a 15-year-old New Plymouth girl who needs to fly to the USA twice a year to treat her rare disease. The bureaucrats would rather the air miles pass their use-by-date than be given to the girl, who has melas – which causes severe fits and was ruining her life. Her case made national headlines two years ago when her dad drove a tractor from Cape Reinga to Bluff to raise \$120,000 to send her to Florida, where doctors were trialling a new treatment for melas. But health authorities here wouldn't pay because the treatment was experimental. She has flown to Florida every three months for the past two years and the drug trial appears to be working. But she still needs to get to America twice a year for follow-up treatment and her family is running short of cash']...

Cleaning up after preventable accidents in the country's health services is estimated to be costing more than \$400 million a year, says the Ministry of Health. [The total would be even higher if the cost of medical misadventures, and inquiries such as the one into the practice of chest-tapping premature babies at National Women's, had been included.

...residents who live around Green Lane and National Women's hospitals say a user-pays hospital parking policy forces staff on to nearby streets. Consequently, the neighbourhood is choked from 8.30 am while hospital car parks sit empty. Eight years ago hospital staff used council-owned land next to the hospital as a car park. It held 500 cars. But the land was sold']...

Green Lane Hospital is due to get a \$2 million upgrade of an intensive care unit... which may be used for only three years... as all high-tech surgery at Green Lane is due to move to Auckland Hospital... in 2000 or 2001. The hospital manager... estimates that until then the extra facilities could reduce waiting times by allowing up to five more operations a week... It needs to make the improvements to pass an accreditation test, which may soon be used to decide if hospitals are fit to carry out state-funded operations.

...CASH-strapped[public] hospitals which cannot pull themselves out of financial difficulty could lose some of their services... That's the warning from[the] Health Minister... who says taxpayers cannot continue "feeding the monster... We are still putting too much taxpayers' money into organisations which are not doing as well as they should be... Some CHEs need capital spending to fix their deficits... And where they are not able to... [eliminate] their deficits... quickly enough, we will have to take more significant action to fix the problem. It might mean restructuring them or having someone else run some of their services... Hospital wages and salaries are one of my big concerns. Some groups have had huge increases in the last few years but the reality is, they are working for organisations which are insolvent."

...Patients are missing out on millions of dollars of medical care because health coffers are being "bled dry" by bureaucrats, says a former hospital manager. [The man] who quit his \$150,000-a-year job at Auckland Hospital last month, said frustration at the management structure became overwhelming... [T]he "parasitic approach" saw funding spent on executives well before it got to doctors, nurses and patients... Auckland Healthcare's chief executive had financial, legal, media and planning advisers[, who]... should all go as the Auckland, Green Lane, Starship and National Women's hospitals had general managers and their own advisers... But the acting chief executive of Auckland Healthcare... said [the former manager's] naive call ignored the commercial realities of a \$500 million organisation...

[The former] Health South Canterbury chief executive... received a taxpayer-funded golden handshake of between \$65,000 and \$85,000 when he quit his job last year... [The] Health Minister... w[il]l... not divulge how much... ha[s] been paid in leaving packages... since the reformed health system came into effect in July 1993... The *Sunday Star-Times* requested that information from the individual CHEs, but not all responded. However, up to \$472,000 [in total is known to have] been paid to[just] four resigning chief executives[, while two]... CHEs did not pay their resigning chief executives any golden handshake... The payouts have been condemned by[the] opposition health spokesperson... "I'm speechless, and I'm sure the public will be suitably outraged. I know of one instance where a health manager quit, leaving his CHE in absolute disarray, and still got a bonus payout. Some of this is hush money, pure and simple. They're being told that if they go quietly and don't tell anyone what's been happening, they'll be paid off. It's unacceptable," she said... [A] Coalition for Public Health... spokespe[rson]... said the money would be better used to treat some of the... N[Z]ers waiting for surgery... "These managers are being paid for the risk they undertook in taking on the job when, in fact, the evidence is that the commitment was not there to see the job through and in many instances, they probably did not have the skills to do it..." [The Health South Canterbury chief executive] said when he resigned that it had become increasingly difficult for him to meet the conflicting expectations of the public, his staff and the Government.

...The Government's preoccupation with financial "success" has distracted hospitals from their health goals, says the Auditor-General. In a strongly worded report to Parliament, [he] questions the way [CHEs] were established with huge debts by the previous National Government. He says the country's 23 hospital-based enterprises, which now owe almost \$1.2 billion, are still in poor financial condition. Sixteen are relying on letters of support from the Government to say that they remain a "going concern" and will not be allowed to go under... The Minister of Health... acknowledged that the enterprises could be losing money because they were not paid enough to cover their costs. But he said the fault could also lie with the enterprises, which was why the Government wanted better cost controls and sanctions. "As long as CHEs can forfeit on loan repayments and turn to the Government for extra funding for debts, the incentives for CHEs to examine the cause of the debt are lost."

...Figures from the Government statistician show the enterprises' operating deficits for the[financial] year... at \$219.2 million, up 28.4[%] from the previous year's \$170.7 million. Twenty of the 23 health enterprises were in the red... The total debt of the 23 [CHEs has risen] to \$1.219 billion...

MOST hospitals will chase former patients for \$2.26 million in outstanding fees, despite the charges being abolished in the Budget... [T]he Health Ministry has told CHEs they are expected to collect outstanding fees, like any other unpaid debt. Already... Eastbay Health... has said it won't pursue the \$16,849 owed by 764 outpatients. "But if someone comes to pay, their money is receipted,"... For the remaining CHEs it will be business as usual for their debt collectors... Health Waikato wrote to the *Sunday Star-Times* that it would be flagging the \$92,000 owed until the end of June. However, after being spoken to by a representative of[the] Health Minister... it telephoned back to say the debt would be collected. Health Waikato said the mistake resulted in a misunderstanding between its finance and communications departments, and the debt "was always going to be pursued". It denied there was pressure from the minister's office... The removal of fees is... expected to cost the country \$6.2m annually... Hospitals charged out around \$9 million last year, with outstanding fees rising to 25% from 17.4% the previous year... Last year, debt collectors had \$1.64m to pursue on behalf of CHEs... Hospitals in Auckland are owed about \$453,000... Auckland Healthcare [alone has a debt of \$272,860 from a charged total of \$2.1m last year - the highest total of any CHE by more than \$1m]... The revenue manager of Auckland Healthcare... said patients were generally given two months to pay... Patients should not think it was acceptable to simply ignore a hospital bill... [The] Budget scrapped outpatient and day patient charges - \$31 for adults and \$16 for children without community service cards...

Health chiefs are furious that... [while] free doctor visits[for under-six-year-olds have gone] ahead... a \$30 million-a-year "safety net" budget for [child] health and disability services... is off limits for a year while the Ministry of Health assesses the need[for it]... The head of the Starship children's hospital... said... "There's no doubt [RHAs], medical authorities and community groups have a very clear understanding of the need... The Starship will again become the place of last resort for... desperate... families... It makes me wonder whether the [coalition] agreement... has any integrity." ...An area of urgent need was "medically fragile" children dependent on continuing support and care. At least 500 children in the... North Health... region fitted this category... [T]he delay had really upset the authority's plans to help their families. "We had spent a lot of time thinking we could do something for them." ...North Health[']s medical adviser... said the current system was unfair because medically fragile children were eligible for only minimal Government support... [Furthermore, although p]hysically disabled children were given a needs assessment so services could be specifically designed[for them, n]o assessment was given to medically fragile children... "I don't think the needs of chronically ill children have ever been looked after well in this country."

...It's not often I find myself agreeing with [the Deputy PM,] but I have to say the spectacle of the whingeing Grey Power mob at the Wellington Town Hall on Wednesday last caused me to do just that. As [the Deputy PM] put it, they only have health to whinge about now that their universal entitlement to national superannuation has been restored.

...A few weeks ago, for an article on health cuts in Wellington, I visited two wards for the elderly. One was a specialist psychogeriatric ward at Porirua Hospital. It is a modern, self-contained, single-story building, rebuilt virtually as new in 1989, set in a large garden. There are only 15 patients, all either with their own rooms or sharing with one other person. The whole ward is "dementia-proofed" - the elderly patients can fiddle with the appliances and other things without hurting themselves or others. This ward is closing, along with the rest of what's left of Porirua Hospital. The... patients will be transferred to general geriatric wards at the nearby Kenepuru Hospital and at Wellington Hospital. The other ward I visited was Ward 5, the only remaining geriatric assessment, treatment and rehabilitation ward at Wellington Hospital... [After] Porirua's other geriatric ward was closed... the patients were all moved into Ward 5. Ward 5 is a small ward on the first floor of an old block. Twenty-five patients are crammed into an area that previously held 15. Most are in four-bed cubicles. Although there is a pleasant view of the gardens below, there is no easy access... Somehow, some of the patients from the Porirua psychogeriatric unit are going to be squeezed into this environment. The specialist doctors and nurses who look after them now say it will mean "going back into the Dark Ages." The only reason this is happening is financial... [Capital Coast Health] overspent its budget for services for the elderly last year by \$3.8 million and has to cut spending by 25[%]. It is squashing four wards into two so it can cut total geriatric beds from 80 to 55. Most other departments also overspent and their services are being cut, too. [That could mean a further reduction in the number of non-geriatric beds available in the Capital Coast region - although the region has already

lost '48% of its hospital beds since 1993 (nationally, the number of hospital beds has declined by 11% since 1993'). Returning to the topic of geriatric wards, in the]... British... House of Lords[a] Labour peer... has... called on ministers to finance "preventative medicine". He suggested informing people about "methods of hygiene such as washing hands and not picking their noses, especially during the winter".

...It has been a record-breaking year for many public hospitals. But don't count on any celebrations – seriously ill patients have poured into wards like never before... Most Auckland hospitals are having to spend almost their entire surgical budgets on emergency cases. As people have to get sicker to be admitted, fingers point at the lack of strategies to keep people out of hospital... "The call to throw money into hospitals is a whiplash reaction. The question is why are people going into hospital and why are we having such high acute levels of demand? We should be managing that a lot better as a country." ...Government spending on acute services had risen 31[%] since 1992 while the percentage on services like family doctors (primary care) had fallen... "People become increasingly dependent on hospital emergency departments and are more likely to come back. They could easily have had the illness prevented if someone had seen them beforehand." ...investing health dollars on keeping people well would ultimately benefit the public, but there was immense pressure from those already sick. "Most of the people using most of the health resources are older people. They are in the know and are a powerful political lobby... [Therefore,] it's very hard to change the balance at the moment... The challenge is to take away bureaucratic boundaries." But the strain on hospitals remains constant. Almost 4000 people were admitted to Green Lane Hospital in the past three months, up about 600 on the same period last year... [A]cute cases made up 85[%] of Middlemore Hospital's work... and urgent cases are growing by about 8[% a year. At]... that rate, elective surgery faced being squeezed out. The big winter surge in urgent cases had already thrown... South Auckland Health... \$500,000 over budget.

...Long-awaited extra health funding is heading to Auckland and Northland to meet booming population growth... [However,] Auckland hospitals are[still] planning further service cuts for next year... The new official [population total for the North Health region] is 1,205,697 – an 11.2[%] increase since the 1991 census... Although the population in Auckland had exploded... Government money had not followed. "Some \$27 million of health funding this year has stayed with other [RHAs], instead of following the people moving to the North Health region,"... [Funding figures show the Northern region] getting \$1216.79 per head[; the Midland region]... getting \$1328.48 per head[; the Southern region getting \$1360.20; and the Central region – where more]... than \$28 million in savings can still be squeezed from hospitals... according to a report on the future of hospital services... [-] getting \$1303.74 per head.

...More than one-third of residents in the Central North Island struggle to pay for health care, says a new report by Midland Health. The report makes grim reading, stating Central North Island people are sicker and more likely to die[through poor health] than other N[Z]ers... "This is attributable to the poor health status of Maori and their comparatively high proportion in the Midland population....," it said... [T]here were "serious inequities" in health services across the region, with low socio-economic communities experiencing poorer access and worse health than wealthier communities... Women found it harder to find the money... to pay for visits to GPs and other family health practitioners... than men... It also says people in the rural... areas wait too long for ambulances... The report recommended ambulance providers and health professionals review their training and co-ordination of services in the region... The report... was a landmark publication and the first comprehensive picture of family health services in N[Z]. Its findings would be used when making future decisions on health services.

...Chances are your local doctor will undergo a huge transformation in the next few years. GPs are having to rethink how they operate and how they manage your health. By the next millennium, many will be the gatekeepers to specialist services. It will herald the dawn of managed health care where doctors are given a set budget for a set population and are responsible for keeping within that. Any savings will be spent on additional health care. Doctors will act as the Government's frontline foot soldiers to try to curb mounting pressure on health dollars... To gear up for the challenge, most GPs have formed groups called independent practitioner associations. Many groups are already taking responsibility for drug and lab-test spending and savings are starting to roll in... The focus would go on efficiencies and keeping people well. Rather than traditionally working in isolation, doctors could review their work against others in the group and follow guidelines on the best way to manage diseases. Managed care, which opened the way to better co-operation and communication between GPs and specialists, was historically unprecedented. GPs could use agreed guidelines so they knew which patients to refer to specialists and which to "manage" themselves... The Procure chairman... said... "If we are able to reduce admissions before people are really ill it will be better for everybody. But this means putting resources and training in the hands of primary care to cope with that challenge." The general manager of a West Auckland doctors' group... said managed care involved a big shift in how GPs worked. "Instead of a GP being driven by seeing lots of patients, you could have appropriate patients seen by nurses and nurse specialists and those who are really in need seen by the GP... [The GPs should have enough spare time] to get into preventative care. The current funding structure is not geared for good health care. An incentive for primary care is to practise throughput medicine – the more people you see the more you earn. If you have a potentially complicated case as a GP and your incentive is to see lots of patients, the easy option is to quickly refer it on to secondary care, which can be expensive... You hear of patients on 10 different drugs. The best clinical practice may be the pharmacist, doctor and rest-home owner sitting down to talk about the best treatment." He said giving doctors a capped budget for a given population was the best way to foster cooperation between professionals. But strict guidelines and monitoring were needed so patients did not feel they were missing necessary treatment for the sake of penny-pinching. The head of South Auckland Health... said bulk funding responsibilities could not be given solely to GP groups. "If you have one group holding the budget and having all the power you will have the same problems as now. You don't want high-risk patients not being referred on until they are really sick." ...[By the way, t]housands more people on hospital waiting lists can expect surgery next year with the Government's firming up of a \$200 million reprieve... In total, the Government has earmarked an extra \$435 million over four years for waiting lists... \$190 million has already gone to fund 55,800 operations... But the... Labour health spokeswoman... said the \$200 million was a mere sweetener ahead of planned cuts in rural services.

...RURAL people might be slow to anger, but when they feel they are being short-changed they can get very angry indeed. This is happening at the moment due to the strong talk that rural health services are to be downgraded further... largely because of the whole business of population-based funding and the diminishing power of the rural regions... Population-based funding has worked to the great detriment of rural communities, and it is clearly going to get worse. It would have been unthinkable during the golden... years[of 1960-72] that rural folk could be put at a disadvantage by city people, either in health or in anything else. But that was... when farming was the backbone of the nation, and farmers not merely the aristocrats but a mighty force in Parliament and within the Cabinet power centre. That status and that power has diminished, just as the voice of the South Island has become a whisper since MMP – 16 electorate seats now in a Parliament of 120, compared with 26 out of 96 previously. Oh, nostalgia, where is thy balm?

...THE southern public is awaiting the new deluge of health news telling of more cuts to services... A funding spokesman talks of[any] decision to cut back as "a pretty tough call"[, especially while the Government is promoting]... some weird idea that problems in the health service can be solved by pouring... [another] \$200 million... into a maw already chomping on record spending... So is it about insufficient funds? Well, Healthcare Otago published a 16-page, four colour "piously worded annual report" (to quote the local newspaper) on heavy ivory paper for 54,000 readers at a cost it refuses to release... within... which... was a mealy-mouthed piece... stat[ing] that the transition of community control of our rural hospitals at Oamaru, Balclutha and Dunstan... "[was] planned for the coming year..." Planned by whom? Healthcare Otago walked away from its responsibilities to rural health with a bald announcement it was withdrawing. Any planning has been done by local people forced to pick up the

pieces. From July 1 [next year], Dunstan Hospital, an efficient, effective and caring institution with a good record amongst the... people it serves from Wanaka to Haast to Roxburgh and places in between, will be on its own.

...S[outhern] people are bemused, confused and disconcerted about what is occurring within[their] health services... They are angry, even bitter, that Healthcare Otago... can shed responsibility for both Dunstan (Clyde) and Oamaru hospitals. In other words, Healthcare Otago is effectively to become Healthcare Dunedin, as it cuts adrift rural servicing, with the recommendation that it be managed by some “community-based organisation”... Dunstan Hospital services a wide area... with a scattered population of some 33,000 – all within helicopter emergency services at Dunedin Hospital... What... Healthcare Otago... [wants] for central Otago is... a community trust operation... [to set up] an efficient, small hospital... This will involve a greater financial burden falling on residents, either through donation, investment or rates... and [they must] run the organisation as well! ...The... Health Minister... has offered no rebuke to Healthcare Otago for its abdication of responsibility for rural servicing, possibly because it is a policy he espouses, though one that has undermined his popularity in Southland and Otago, where protest meetings have become the order of response... There is concern about the future of the Otago Medical School, the heart unit, oncology services and the crude measurement instrument of population-based funding... N[Z] health protest thus far has been largely ignored. The official attitude is change it or lose it.

...IT'S TOUGH enough to attract new blood to Waimate at the best of times. The small community of 7620, [situated midway between Oamaru and] Timaru, is suffering the small town syndrome of an ageing, declining population. It's doing its best to entice people to detour off State Highway One for a visit, but it is much harder to make them stay... “You get older people coming here for a quieter life, to get out of the Christchurch rat race. One of the things they ask is ‘what are the health services like?’...” ...Since losing the 124-year-old Waimate Hospital last year, the township can no longer offer full medical facilities. For the most minor surgical procedures, and even x-rays, residents have to make the 40-minute trip to Timaru – and that hospital is downsizing... [Furthermore, ‘many rural patients are going to the larger hospitals only to be sent straight back’ to their local services! “However, a]t Waimate... the... surgery... cut[s] toenails... and that is all,” says [the mayor, who believes]... a piece of Waimate's history died when its hospital closed down... It had grown... from a three-room cottage... to a modern 80-bed facility. There were threats of closures in the early 1900s, but W[W]II, ironically, brought hope. Waimate was called on to help cope with the 30,000 sick and wounded returning soldiers. It led to the hospital being effectively rebuilt and it flourished until the late '60s when health chiefs decided to cut services for minor operations and casualties. In February 1994, further major cuts were proposed. There was a brief plan for a new hospital-rest home on site, but it never eventuated... [Today] Waimate Hospital is empty, apart from odd pieces of medical equipment and broken beds.

...ASHBURTON residents may have won the battle to keep their hospital open, but the war is not over. The feisty Mid-Canterbury community successfully fought off plans to gut its hospital of specialist services in 1994... But... [as] the hospital's three year contract with Southern Regional Health, which pays for virtually all services, comes up for renewal... campaigners are more scared than ever to call it a victory... If faced with a cut... Ashburton's troops would certainly rally again... Meanwhile, [more]... than 1000 people marched in Thames yesterday to protest against the downgrading of their hospital... into a community hospital and cutting 24-hour surgery and secondary obstetrics care.

...The 20-year-old cerebral palsy sufferer has been in and out of the hospital all her life – and she would like to see politicians swap places with her “just for an hour.” A regular customer at the accident and emergency department because of her congenital condition, and veteran of 27 operations, [the wheelchair-bound protester]... was to the fore at a “save Whakatane Hospital” march yesterday... Many had marched the 3km from the town centre through streets lined by hundreds of supportive onlookers... Although the turnout... equalled about 10[%] of the population served by Eastbay Health, the crowd's call for their local members of Parliament was wasted. [Their] MP... was holidaying overseas and [another local], the Associate Minister of Health, was in Wellington... [In related news, a] letter from the Deputy P[M]... to a Far North resident about future services at Kaitia Hospital has set a cat among northern pigeons. The letter... says “most medical and surgical services for the people of Kaitia will now be provided at Whangarei.” ...the Labour spokeswoman for health... said that was the “kiss of death” for Kaitia. “Far North people will have to travel up to 250km to Whangarei for virtually any hospital service.”

...Hospital funding cuts will result in early death, blindness, deafness, undiagnosed cancer, increased abortions, infertility, amputations and strokes, says a secret health report. Written by doctors at Waikato Hospital... the report outlines in detail the effects of the latest Government clampdown on health spending...

Senior[Waikato Hospital] doctors pleaded last night with the Government to spare provincial hospitals from more severe cuts... “We consider that there is no excuse for blocking access to patients with serious conditions...” ...Documents obtained by the Waikato coalition for Public Health have indicated Midland Health funding for base contracts for Waikato Hospital will be cut by 6[%] this year, and up to 12[%] the following year... In an emotive open letter to... the Minister of Health... [the] doctors said more reductions in funding would... affect all major specialties... and... the hospital's ability to retain clinicians, train staff, and keep all services viable... Services outside the hospital, such as disability support would face increased workloads... [The letter went on to say that] it is pointless relying on private services to fill the gap... because a high proportion of children and elderly on waiting lists are from low-income families... The doctors went public as the Alliance... [said that more] than 40 hospitals have closed their doors since 1986 and... released a list of[another] 40 hospitals facing service reductions, private ownership or closure in the latest squeeze on health spending. More details have been promised today by the... Associate Minister of Health... who says he will reveal hospital cuts from business plans which he saw... in the cabinet...

Government ministers have cast doubt on claims... [made by the] Associate Minister of Health... that widespread hospital closures are planned... The... Minister of Health... said some of the figures were wrong[although he]... did not detail them... The political heat also went on Wairarapa Health last week with its decision to close Greytown Hospital in six months. The CHE said it had to close because it could not get \$960,000 a year from... Central Health... to keep it open. The cost of running the hospital was \$80,000 a month, more than it was receiving in revenue...

GREYTOWN'S first hospital was built in 1873. At its peak in 1975, it had 74 beds, including 56 for geriatrics. Now it has 11 beds, housing five long-term patients and a birthing unit, staffed by 25 people. Soon, it will have none.

...Pahiatua Hospital, in the Northern Wairarapa, will close next June. The chief executive of... MidCentral Health... told the hospital's 47 staff yesterday that her hand had been forced by the funding agency Central Health.

...As with delivering the mail, the cost of providing hospital care in remote locations is, of course, higher than in major centres of population such as Auckland... Clearly it's already the case that the most remote locations are denied ready access to the level of public-sector health available in the cities... The furor that has again erupted over small hospitals needs to be seen in the context of fair access to the public health purse. Over time the N[Z] population base is becoming more concentrated in the major cities so these capture an increasing share of the budget. For smaller population areas this implies a total rewrite of health service delivery, invariably including reduction of the investment in fixed facilities and instead improving the ability to transport patients to capable city-based facilities... A central tenet of taxpayer-funded industries is that the total cost of provision to all should be the same – otherwise it is an intervention designed to effect change in population distribution – hardly a understandable objective of, say, health policy. This invariably means services to provincial patients will fall short of those available to citizens of a major city – well short for the residents of Milford Sound. Media sob stories, such as those of the patients from East Cape having to drive[96] more kilometres to Tauranga if Whakatane hospital closes, should not distract from the core issue. Health policy is not a vehicle for supporting population numbers in areas where market forces would have them lower. In a similar vein the availability of the dole to people in locations where

there is no work is incongruous. If the area is one of little or no work, then providing the unemployment benefit certainly cannot be justified as a temporary measure until people find a job. Yet that is the central reasoning behind having that particular welfare benefit.

...Largely by historical accident N[Z]ers are accustomed to paying for some health services, not others. Interestingly, those they pay for, such as general practice and dentistry, rarely cause public outrage. Discontent erupts usually where governments, not prices, ration the supply. Governments are proxy customers, easily pressured to pay more, and private insurance companies are proving even weaker.

...Private medical insurance companies have taken their policy holders for a ride... by paying doctors astronomical fees and simply passing the costs on... says[the] Health Minister... "Private insurers have been lazy and short-sighted and their customers are now paying for it literally,"... The average N[Z] household spent 125% more on medical insurance in 1996 than in 1990... [The] Southern Cross Healthcare chief executive... said insurers would no longer passively accept doctors fees, as they had previously done. They now wanted to hold fees, and hopefully reduce them.

...Insurers are cracking down on surgery costs, forcing some customers to pay extra if they want the most expensive treatment... Southern Cross has started by cutting eye surgeon fees... for cataract surgery... [It] is now paying up to \$2500... [compared to] the \$3000-plus that it has sometimes been charged... [M]odern equipment meant cataract surgery was much shorter, with less risk... The move to curb cataract surgery costs follows revelations this year that surgeons could get \$2000 an hour[and last year's decision to 'drop cover for laser eye surgery after the company discovered that many customers were only taking out policies to have the work done. Around \$12 million was paid out to policyholders in 1995 for the surgery used to treat short-sightedness, or myopia, which normally means patients no longer have to wear glasses']... The president of the Ophthalmological Society... said most eye surgeons performed only up to three operations a week in private practice... But he conceded that the new price seemed fair... [Insurers are also] asking surgeons to undercut colleagues' prices, the Medical Association claims.

...Cover high cost hospital expenses... You may not need healthcare that includes doctors visits and other day-to-day medical treatment you are unlikely to use... Hospitalcare is the hospital-only plan that provides cover of up to \$60,000 per operation. There is no limit to the number of operations you can claim for in any one year. Plus, in addition to your hospital and surgeon costs you can also claim on your pre and post operative expenses – up to generous amounts... *Here's how affordable it really is.* Age... 0-18... Monthly Premium... \$10.47... 19-45 \$21.34... 46-64 \$30.50... 65 plus \$94.96... CALL TOLL-FREE ON 0800 4 HEALTH... Join... before 31 October 1997 and we will waive the usual 90 day no claims period... Southern Cross Healthcare... Keeping *your* healthcare in *your* hands...

"Rue the day" is not my kind of phrase... But with all due gloom, I rue the day that I cancelled my medical insurance. I recall the conversation with the Southern Cross rep. How, young... and naive I was. I didn't realise she was not just trying to sell me something, but tell me something. "We've rung a fifth time to make extremely sure you want to do this," the voice beseeched me. "I haven't changed my mind," I said, in the tone usually reserved for persistent religious door-knockers. "But you'll lose your life-long benefits, we're sure you'll find it worthwhile in the future..." Me: "Future schmuture." I hung up. When they rang back a sixth time, I told them why I couldn't be bothered part-funding the health of a third of the nation any more. All I'd wanted out of it was a few thousand dollars of elective laser surgery, to fix a little bit of myopia. And just when I'd decided to bare my eyeballs, the letter came. I would not be getting my operation, as health insurance no longer covered it. So for all the cajoling of the insurance rep, I didn't see the point of sticking around. I was healthy, not so wealthy, and thought it was wise. So then what happened? Well, my ageing body started to let me down. From teeth to toenails, you name it, I trotted from specialist to specialist, stopping at the bank in between... [So now I'm] just letting you know, Southern Cross, that I'll be back. No hard feelings. I'm not too much of a bad risk, still only 23... I'll declare all my pre-existing conditions, pay increased premiums, whatever. And even though, in my day, I could have had my 20/20 vision, I won't whinge once about having to wear glasses.

...Southern Cross... has offered to sterilise an elderly couple free as a reward for their loyalty... Aged in their 70s, the Christchurch couple have been customers for 30 years and are involved in a dispute... over payouts lower than the 80[%] returns advertised.

...Southern Cross is trumpeting outstanding financial results for the third year running, but this does not mean premiums will drop. Over the past financial year revenue rose 9.3[%] to \$411 million... Its chairman... said... 95.6[%] of every dollar was returned to members.

...N[Z]'s biggest health insurance company, Southern Cross, is raising premiums... for the third year running. The company yesterday blamed the average 12[%] increase on the rising number of people using private surgery to avoid public waiting lists. The general manager... said that about three-quarters of customers would pay 6[%] more. This meant a typical family of four on a regularcare policy – which pays about 80[%] of most medical bills – would pay about \$1365 a year, a \$77 increase. Customers on supercare and ultracare policies, which offer close to full cover, face increases of 20... and 15[%] respectively. The manager... conceded that steep premium increases would probably drive away some "marginal" customers – "and that's a big worry for us." ...Southern Cross has two-thirds of the medical insurance market and about a million members... The second-biggest health insurer, Aetna Health, which boosted premiums by an average 20[%] last October, said it had no plans for another increase. But the marketing manager... said Aetna was now telling its 235,000 customers to check prices first before having operations. If the costs were too high the company would refer customers to cheaper surgeons.

...Southern Cross, says it now pays for more elective surgery than the public health system... The chairman... said yesterday that the private sector supplied two-thirds of elective surgery and the Ministry of Health had predicted the state's share could be halved within three years. He suggested all N[Z]ers should have compulsory health insurance, as waiting lists showed the Government could not afford the rising cost of health services... Southern Cross... has seen its claims bill jump 63[%] in the past four years... to \$155 million. It blames the blowout on more claims from people who cannot wait for public surgery. The company has responded by raising premiums an average 12[%] a year for the past three years. Some policy holders have had their premiums rise up to 70[%]... The Southern Cross warning comes a day after the P[M] told the country to be more accepting of private health care. [His] comments were interpreted as a signal that a bigger share of public money would go to private organisations, including insurance companies, at the expense of public hospitals. ["Should taxpayers' money be used for healthcare, or wealthcare for shareholders?" asked one Alliance MP.']

...People should consider getting health insurance because access to public health care is worsening, *Consumer* magazine says... [I]n 1985, around 12% of health care was funded by the individual and 88% by the Government. Now, the Government picked up only 76% of the bill...

Private hospitals are receiving a growing share of taxpayer funding while spending on public hospitals is being slashed, says a medical specialists group... [F]igures equated to a 1[%] cut in public hospital funding and a 238[%] rise in Government funding of private hospitals in the same period.

...PATIENT charges could be increased to pay for more health care, according to a draft report by the high-powered Government adviser the National Health Committee... [Incidentally, t]he hospital cuts row turned into a furious privatisation debate yesterday, with the Government's health policies[coming] under attack from both left and right.

...Back in 1990 I met one of the architects of the new right. He brought to our discussion on health matters the same ignorance, arrogance and vindictiveness that characterises today's Government's attitudes to health care. *Ignorance* in its misguided belief that the market model of health care delivery leads to cost efficiencies when all the evidence points the other way. For example, the... competitive system has led to huge cost blowouts through duplication of services... in the U[S, where 15%] of GDP is spent on health... [(up from '5.1% of GDP in 1960'),] yet in any one year 40[million] to 50 million American citizens are at some time uninsured. *Arrogance* in its "I know best" attitude and failure to respond to the overwhelming concerns of the public and medical community. *Vindictiveness* in its callous disregard for the suffering of increasing numbers of N[Z]ers.

...The public health system is on the brink of disaster... says the Alliance. A report released yesterday... says full privatisation... is inevitable unless the Government moves now... Privatisation is already so far advanced in some [CHEs] that the process will soon be irreversible... The Alliance estimated an extra \$1.1 billion was needed to avert the financial crisis facing health enterprises.

...“...This year 530,000 N[Z]ers will go to a hospital, 16 million will go to a GP[(i.e., on average every NZer will go to a GP about 4.4 times – in comparison, the ‘average American male visits his doctor 4.7 times a year and the average American female visits her doctor 6.1 times’)], hundreds of thousands will go to resthomes or use district nurse services and so on. That doesn’t sound like a crisis to me.” ...You might expect a health minister to be looking a little down... After... the harrowing Rau Williams dialysis saga, constant headlines about cuts in provincial hospitals and the launch of a national petition to increase health spending by about \$1.7 billion, [the minister] has been a man under pressure. In an interview... this week, he acknowledged... “There are obvious pressures in the system and we’re not fudging those pressures...” But most of the time he preferred to talk enthusiastically about his radical prescription for solving the country’s health... Expressed in its simplest terms, [he] would like to see doctors paid to keep their patients well, rather than paid when their patients get sick. The scheme is technically known as budget-holding... Critics claim it will lead to cost-cutting – or “underservicing” in health jargon – as doctors skimp on treating their patients to stay within budget. Worse still, they could keep profits for themselves, like the insurance companies that dominate the U[S] health system. The minister] accepted that the underservicing argument needed to be tackled... He was more reserved about the other big possible change in health raised by the P[M] last week. The PM] suggested state spending on health and other social services should be targeted to those who could not afford to pay their own way. [The PM’s] speech implied that those who could afford to buy health insurance would have to do so, as the state concentrated on looking after the poor. [The minister] played down the prospect of more targeting. But in doing so he emphasised that scrapping user-pays for health services meant there was less money to make those services go further.

...More money would be available for surgery and other health needs if the Government were not paying for two key N[Z] First policies, says the Minister of Health... [He] listed free doctors’ visits for children under six and scrapping the superannuation surcharge – estimated to cost \$465 million a year between them – as two obstacles to spending more on the country’s most urgent health needs... He said... yesterday that if people wanted more than the health system provided, they would have to pay for it. That might be by way of an extra health tax, he told a meeting on health issues in Dunedin.

...The Government has been dealt a double blow in the latest... opinion poll which confirms public disquiet over health policy and places a question mark over the coalition’s credibility. The poll... found 33.2[%] of committed voters pinpointed health services as “the most important issue in the country at the moment.” Government, leadership and the honesty of politicians was the only other issue that reached double-figure support, scoring 27.3[%] of voters... Urban dwellers are more anxious than rural people, and only the “very wealthy” (earning over \$67,000 a year, many of them with private medical insurance) do not see health as their... concern.

...THE ALLIANCE yesterday became the first political party to officially support the health referendum... The Public Health Referendum group’s petition was lodged with the Clerk of the House last week... It asks the Government to increase its annual spending on health to at least 7% of [GDP], funded if necessary from income tax... [T]he move would mean health spending was increased by \$1124 million a year... The organisations supporting the... Cancer Society... campaign include Age Concern, the Arthritis Foundation, Hospice N[Z], IHC, Plunket, the Multiple Sclerosis Society, the Stroke Foundation, the Alzheimer’s Society, the Asthma and Respiratory Foundation, the Nurses Organisation and the Consumer’s Institute... Under the National Government, government spending as a proportion of GDP seems to have slipped significantly. Exactly how much is open to debate – the statistics can, as usual, be variously interpreted – but Health Department figures suggest a slide from 6.1% of GDP in 1991 [(after rising from ‘4.6% in 1986’)] to 5.7% in 1995. OECD figures suggest a steeper fall, to 5.4% in 1995... Present spending is about 6%... The actual total is bigger because the \$5.9 billion does not include the Government’s annual bailing out of CHE losses... Private spending is excluded. So is health spending by ACC and various other Government departments, such as education spending on the health needs of disabled children at special schools... We rank 17th out of the 25 developed countries of the OECD on overall health spending and 19th on public health spending. In 1995 our public health spending of about \$NZ1300 a head was converted into a “purchasing power” (allowing for different prices around the world) of \$US942... about \$200 less than the average... The US spent \$1853 a head even though its citizens paid more than half the bills themselves.

...Taxes would have to rise substantially to fund the level of health spending specified in a proposed referendum, the Minister of Health... said yesterday... [H]e had been advised that [to achieve 7%] a family on an income of \$30,000 could need to pay an extra \$15 a week... [However,] an umbrella body of health groups, Public Health Referendum, chaired by a former auditor-general... said the increase being sought... was less than next year’s planned tax cuts.

...eight out of ten N[Z]ers say they[’]d give up their tax cuts for better health services. About the same number fear the public health system will fail them if they or their families need medical help... More than half... were very concerned about getting treatment if a serious medical condition affected them or their families... In other words, most people want the Government to spend more on health, so that sick people do not suffer. In particular, we want to see people on hospital waiting lists get their operations. So if we give up the \$1.1 billion we have been promised in tax cuts next year, will the people we care about get the medical care they need? Maybe. The answer depends on a string of hard questions... At the start of the Health in Crisis series this week, the N[Z] Herald spoke to [a 44-year-old] who is crippled by severe degenerative osteoarthritis in his left hip. The pain is so intense that he can no longer work... He has been off work a year, sustained by an invalid’s benefit of \$415 a week... He sits or lies stranded in his house, watching television for most of the day. Despite his clear medical need for an operation – and the equally clear benefit to society of having him fit and working again – he will... have to wait at least three years for a hip replacement. He is one of 24,370 people waiting for orthopaedic... operations as of March 31 this year, including 6600 who have been in the queue for more than two years... [He] finds it hard to accept... especially since his benefit costs the country more each year than a hip operation, for which he has been quoted \$14,000... Doctors say he loses out because he still has one good hip. Most top priority patients have lost the use of both... Rather than exclude anyone, you could try to treat everybody. Health planners estimate it would take... \$280 million to clear the waiting lists in one hit, plus up to \$160 m... a year to stop a backlog building up again. The problem is that other areas of health need the money just as urgently... Financial pressure has forced hospitals to check how they spend their money and find better and cheaper ways of treating patients. For instance... Auckland Hospital discovered last year that it... could halve the cost of pre-operative tests by giving patients a “one-stop shop” based on their needs, rather than the[needs] of the hospital bureaucracy... South Auckland Health will soon carry out minor surgery on many patients in one day at a new \$25 m... high-tech superclinic in Manurewa, saving on costly overnight stays at Middlemore Hospital... All these savings could... be used to pay for more operations... Other efficiencies take longer to arrive... The Minister of Health... talks enthusiastically about the next step, which is coordinating hospital and community services...

Public outrage at health cuts has forced the Government to unveil plans to return community representatives to the boards of hospitals throughout the country... Details of the package – not expected to contain any new money for health – are under wraps...

Two seats on hospital boards will be reserved for members of the public under the coalition Government’s health reform agenda – but they will be appointed rather than elected. The move, which was announced yesterday, is little more than a polite nod to the coalition agreement’s undertaking to “consider” restoring some form of elected community representation and falls well short of N[Z] First’s campaign policy to return to majority-elected boards. Labour attacked it as window-dressing... that would not deliver anything like democracy... [The] appointments would

begin [next] April. Pay would be in the \$15,000 to \$24,000 range as for other directors. Smaller boards would be expanded to accommodate the community representatives, but the Government would wait for vacancies to arise on the larger ones.

...Local body leaders are taking a national stand against health cuts – just as the Government appears to want their input on [CHE] boards. Civic leaders nationwide have voted overwhelmingly for a coordinated initiative against the erosion of public health, despite reservations from some metropolitan mayors... The national initiative was organised by Local Government N[Z] after 45 of the 86 local authorities requested [one]... The initiative comes as the Government acts on a coalition agreement commitment to return community representation to the boards... [The] Minister of Health... refused to comment yesterday on suggestions that the coalition had rejected the idea of elected public representatives in favour of asking councils to suggest local people... But local government officials were concerned they might be co-opted on to [CHE] boards and be too closely associated with unpopular decisions.

...Finally the Government has got people who will give it the advice it wants, because they have no stake in the health care system and they never have to look in the eye of the sick, weak and old on whose lives they so readily pass judgment. Consequently, they are happy to work within restraints pre-set by Treasury, and they will never make themselves unpopular by pleading for more money... Spending on health should not be... [linked with] government spending in other areas. Let's start rationing elsewhere, before we do so in an area as life-threatening as health.

...Within the space of a decade this country has been transformed from a sleepy backwater to a wannabe player in the global economy... In my own field of health delivery, the nature and pace of change have had ruinous results for the people of N[Z] and created among the medical community a culture of mistrust that will take years to overcome... [H]ealth care delivery is... [being] driven by ideology rather than by practicality... We have wasted several billions of dollars on new structures, new people, new committees, new commissioners, new career paths... The politicians argue that our problems are not unique, and are seen throughout the OECD countries. They state confidently that the "blowout" in health expenditure is due to increasing numbers of elderly patients who are inexplicably sicker, and to the increasing costs of technology. But there is little evidence to support the first point. On the second, it depends on how that technology is used and whether we are looking at short-term costs or long-term savings. Their slavish adherence to a rhetoric of crisis is really just a political and ideological ploy which says more about the relevant priorities of the politicians than about the real issues. The demand for increased health expenditure throughout the OECD is in large part the result of years of chronic underfunding and social neglect that has been a central part of the governing philosophy of many western countries.

...The Government announced a transitional health authority yesterday to replace the boards of the four existing authorities... The new centralised board... will run the four [RHAs] until... a new funding agency is... set up... [The] head of the new central health funder said... [more] changes will be needed to the way hospitals deliver services... Further cost savings could... be achieved... [but] changes would not mean lower quality hospital services... Previously, [RHAs] had followed different guidelines, resulting in an uneven level of access to health services... He said the... regional bodies were supposed to use competitive tensions to contain costs but gradually policy changes and other pressures had muted the competitive element "to a point where I believe we got the worst of both worlds." ...[the transitional authority has] the freedom to make choices available to patients, by purchasing health services from non-public providers under strict guidelines and to remove high-price, low-quality contracts... It... also... could do better in a non-competitive environment... [The changes] have been dismissed as meaningless tinkering by health lobby groups and Opposition parties.

...The new structure is expected to look very like the present system but with only one corporate office in Wellington... [The] Associate Minister of Health... said... staff and infrastructure of the four[existing] authorities would probably stay. But he said they would work co-operatively... [now that the Government] has abolished market rhetoric – "profit," "competition"... – [from the provision of health services]...

But the concept of "profit" was never central to the health reforms. [CHEs] were created as State-owned Enterprises principally so that they could ultimately be sold off, like the railways or Telecom... The health reforms created a market in health with competition between providers. This had no greater purpose than the belief that competition is a pure good in its own right and that "the market" should be the prime means of human organisation. Improved health status for N[Z]ers hardly came into it. Allied to this, National wanted to disentangle itself from the state provision of public services... Publicly provided healthcare was destined to become a welfare service, a safety net reserved for those too poor to pay. Hence the tills set up at the doors of public hospitals. Hence the running down by costcutting of public health services so that anyone who could afford it bought health insurance out of fear... The coalition agreement does not stop this flow of public money into private providers' hands.

...The Transitional Health Authority is employing a public relations agency at \$18,750 a month, despite having 13 fulltime communications staff on its payroll... [Furthermore, the former] heads of the four [RHAs] have received golden handshakes... [that] represent an average payment of about \$72,000 each... But yesterday [one of the four, who is] now the ACC chief executive, said... [all] the chief executives would have gained a payout at the end of their contracts anyway, as part of the normal commercial package for such a job... [before adding that,] judging by the \$324,000-a-year salary paid to... [the] head of the [THA], he and the other executives had been underpaid.

...One of the country's top health bureaucrats has attacked the system he works for as penny-pinching and damaging to the health of N[Z]ers. The maternity manager for the T[HA]... says a short-sighted fixation with saving money in individual areas is costing the country more in the long run. The public comments are highly unusual for an official whose job is to buy national health services within a limited Government budget. Unlike hospital heads who have a vested interest in opposing spending cutbacks, [the THA manager] is one of the health system's game-keepers who normally try to cut costs... The manager of National Women's Hospital... said[the] comments on false health economies were refreshing to hear.

...The health reforms have not worked properly because hospitals... had upset health reformers' theories by using savings... [on] treating extra patients... instead of staying within budget... says the... chairman of the... new[ly formed] 'Health Funding Authority, which is spending about \$7.5 million on offices and furniture as it completes its restructuring'... The former head of Treasury told the Association of Salaried Medical Specialists that the Government had deliberately underpaid [CHEs] to make them break even... The... [chairman then indicated that rural communities] face further health cuts next year as more services are centralised in the main cities.

...Public hospitals are finding it difficult to plan for next year with four potentially large pools of unallocated cash dangling before them. They have been sent funding indications... but the figures could change markedly in coming months... [To make matters worse, the] Government has signalled that it will no longer pay the deficits of enterprises which run over budget.

...taxpayers, mute in the face of evidence of catastrophic health management overspending, look like rabbits mesmerised in the shooter's spotlight. They can't think what to do, so they just sit there and take it... They read about the purposeless paper-shuffling... absurdities like the [now-disbanded THA], an unnecessary layer of managers perched on top of the already teetering pile of CHEs and RHAs... packed to the doors with thousands of busy men and women in power suits with business administration diplomas, cellphones at the ready, striding happily from the purified water gurglers to car parks filled with new... [cars,] but healing not a soul... From Napier an eye specialist reports: "Five years ago in Hawke's Bay we had five managers and made \$3 million a year profit, with a nest-egg of \$17 million for future development. Now there are 88 managers with 140 cars, and \$27.5 million in the red." ...The expression "the mind boggles" was invented to cover such situations, in which millions of dollars disappear without trace, without one sick patient made well, and nobody taking a blind bit of notice... What do you do when there's no boggling capacity left? ...[but at least the] profit focus will be removed from [CHEs] by July 1 next year[, and local]... offices would try to arrange long-term contracts with health providers, who would no longer have to compete with each other.

...The long-running scrap between the two health ministers is heading for meltdown, with the National Minister of Health... accusing staff in the office of his N[Z] First associate... of leaking information.

...High level attempts are under way to stop scrapping between the Minister of Health... and his associate[minister] before their relationship becomes irreconcilable. Both the P[M]... and his deputy... made strenuous efforts yesterday to downplay the escalation in hostilities in one of the most crucial areas of their coalition... [The Deputy PM described] the row as media speculation and rumour, but said "in any working arrangement there will be people who have different interpretations."

...the man who sardonically called A[US] "the lucky country" and had to stand by while the phrase was pinched by a generation of advertising copywriters – had the measure of those who think they are born to rule. "Politicians," he concluded, "cannot help being clowns. Political activity is essentially absurd." If he's right (and who will argue with him?) we should probably stop hoping that the two biggest clowns in the Beehive... will kiss and make up. But in the interests of national harmony... I sought professional advice about how to get the Minister and Associate Minister of Health to sort out their differences. Sad to say, there is little comfort to report... [T]he professional services manager for Relationship Services (what used to be called Marriage Guidance), says that the essence of resolving disputes in any relationship is for "both parties to say how they feel and what's going on for them and have the other party really listen to them." That process requires a mediator who is independent, "without any vested interest in the outcome, who doesn't have an alliance with either party," she adds. Thanks a lot, but we are talking about Wellington. "The other party" isn't in the habit of listening down there and the Beehive is not the sort of place you find people without a vested interest. So can[a] sports psychologist... give us a few tips? Bad news there, too. Faced with a team where two players weren't working together, he says, he'd expect the captain to act. "In any team, you have to empower your players," he says, "get them to run by the rules. If they won't, you've got to intervene. If it's to the detriment of the wider team, then one of them's got to go." Sensing that the PM would want to keep sport out of politics, I ask a serious peacemaker... [T]he head teacher at Ponsonby Kindergarten, says that the children in her care seldom fight over toys because "it's very rare that there's only one of anything." But we have only one health system to destroy, I explain. "Then I would try with a little gentle persuasion to tell them that something else might be just as fun," she suggests. Brilliant... "I would suggest that maybe they could play with something together," she says. "Or when one has had a turn the other one could have a go." Of course, these two men know all about taking it in turns to have a go, if only at each other. But if the experts can't sort them out, maybe the ministers could drop in on the sick kids at Starship or sit for an hour in a busy general practice in South Auckland. That way they might remember why they are where they are, and what they are meant to be doing.

...Feeling puzzled by the trench warfare between the Government's two health ministers? The row between National's [Minister of Health and NZ First's Associate Minister of Health] goes well beyond claims of dirty tricks by rival press secretaries... The argument between the two men is based on fundamental differences about the Government's role in providing health services... [The associate minister], a former Waikato Health manager, is committed to preserving a publicly owned and operated health system, with clear boundary lines fencing off the private sector... [The minister], a former Treasury staffer, likes to describe his health policy as the "no-model model." Translated, this means health professionals should generally be left alone within a broad framework of rules to provide services in the way they think fit. The public will then decide which service it wants to use. State funding will go to that service, whether it is public or private... [T]he underlying philosophy is basically unchanged from National's reforms since 1990... About the only thing the two ministers have in common is a genuine interest in health and a desire to fix the problems they see there – with their own very different solutions. They have been on a collision course ever since the coalition agreement last December... As... [their] war rumbles on, N[Z]ers will probably continue to feel the everyday consequences [from] dilemmas like the examples listed above.

...[the Associate Minister of Health's] brief ministerial career ended at 10.05am yesterday... when the 41-year-old father of four, sacked from his beloved health job, relinquished his other portfolio of Customs and took a \$50,000 drop in salary to become a backbencher... [He] was stripped of the associate health job... [for] seemingly ignoring the "explicit instructions" of his leader... not to talk to the media ahead of a meeting yesterday where [the PM and Deputy PM] were to try to resolve the[health ministerial] impasse... An orchestrated campaign by the Minister of Health and others in the National Party was the real reason... says... [a political adviser, who also said the minister] had "got off scot-free" while [the associate minister] had lost his job for trying to uphold the coalition agreement on health... He said similar tactics were used in 1991 against the... [now Deputy PM,] then a National MP, before he was sacked from cabinet. "I remember... being a member of the National Party caucus and watching the same sort of gang bang... I'd hoped that [the Deputy PM] would remember that... there are principles worth fighting for."

...The ruling coalition is likely to take out insurance against the possibility that N[Z] First's sacked minister... might become an independent MP by quietly shoring up support from United... and Act N[Z]... If he becomes an independent, the coalition's 61-59 majority in Parliament would become a 60-60 deadlock. A tied vote is deemed lost, making the coalition more reliant on United's sole vote or the eight votes belonging to Act... Act appears willing to trade support for influence on policy but will not be seen to be making deals with N[Z] First – and vice versa... His N[Z] First colleagues are unsure what he will do... Wise heads in N[Z] First... are now keen to cool things in recognition of ...h[is] value... to the party and the way he was seen to make a difference within the coalition. Given its paucity of talent, the party knows it may need his skills again next year when N[Z] First will take up extra ministerial posts as allocated under the coalition agreement... Neither... [the PM] nor his deputy... has begun seriously to work out how to allocate... [the two vacant portfolios. The Deputy PM] remains adamant he had no choice but to sack... [the Associate Minister of Health. But the former associate minister] claimed... his sacking had been done in collaboration with [the PM] because he was resisting the creeping privatisation of the public health system... [He said the Deputy PM] had asked him to become "a house-trained, neutered National Party poodle."

...[in the parliamentary elections the sacked Associate Minister of Health] captured almost 4000 votes, and took a seat in the House because he was 12th on the N[Z] First list... The N[Z] First Associate Treasurer... said he believed [the sacked associate minister] would either stay with the party or resign from Parliament. "[He] is a very moral sort of person. He believes very deeply in everything he does. That is probably one of his difficulties." ...[the sacked associate minister] yesterday spoke as though he would stay with N[Z] First... "I'm here to battle for the coalition agreement. I will stand up at every opportunity... I'm not going... [to] watch the National Party roll over and walk away from their obligations."

...Fears were mounting yesterday among [the 41-year-old's] supporters that his removal would leave a devastating void... The political battle lines in health have shifted significantly in the aftermath of the sacking... The Minister of Health... has taken full control of [CHE] monitoring and ownership under responsibility changes made public yesterday... [The sacked associate minister's] rapid fall... is being mourned by child lobby groups who hailed him as a prized fighter for the small and powerless. But others in the much-divided health sector welcome the sudden dumping of a man they say was politically green... Another group that may not be sorry to see [him] turn in his warrant is the imported car industry. As the Minister of Customs, [he] was conducting a much-publicised campaign to uncover the extent of odometer "clocking" and revenue avoidance.

...Although 68 vehicles have been seized in a customs crackdown on fraudulent odometers and many more are still under investigation, progress was now in the hands of the Attorney-General's office, the chief executive of Customs... told the foreign affairs, defence and trade committee. No prosecutions had yet been taken and if one was to be considered in any particular case it would probably require evidence to be obtained from Japan... Diplomatic and legal delays could mean it would be three to four months before a customs official went to Japan to gather evidence... [Of] the 12,000 vehicles inspected in June, about 550 were considered to have suspect odometer readings and were set aside for further inspection. Of those, 325 were held for more extensive checks... The next stage was to check documentation in Japan.

...The cabinet has moved swiftly to quash the inquiry set up by [the] former customs minister... into how the Customs Department handled investigations into odometer tampering. The Acting Minister of Customs... would also make changes to a special task force which has been investigating imported vehicle fraud... However, [the former Minister of Customs] made it plain on Tuesday that he would continue his crusade against odometer fraud by issuing a press statement headed "Worst Fraud in N[Z]'s Recent History." The statement said he was "ever hopeful" that the cabinet would approve an independent and public inquiry into the actions of the Customs Department since 1991. "Without doubt the odometer tampering issue ripped off both consumers and the taxpayer to an extent much greater than the winebox transactions." ...He estimated that on average each person who bought an imported used car from Japan might have been defrauded of \$3000... The assistant director of investigations at the Serious Fraud Office... told a parliamentary select committee yesterday that the office was prosecuting three people for odometer fraud after targeting fewer than 10 motor vehicle dealers in three main centres "to make an example of the problem."

...[a] Labour MP... plans to use the cloak of parliamentary privilege this week to name N[Z] importers who, he claims, put in orders for clocked cars in Japan... [The MP] also claimed to have evidence from a Japanese exporter which backed up other claims that between 80 and 90[%] of imported Japanese cars had been clocked, and which he said made a mockery of [the Acting Minister of Customs]'s decision to cancel an inquiry called for by [the former Minister of Customs]... into "speedogate."

...The chief executive of Customs... is taking action against increasingly strong attacks by the former [Minister of Customs]... of corruption in the department... Over the weekend [the former minister] continued his efforts to get an inquiry... claiming that... he will produce evidence to the Acting Minister of Customs... "that will add substantial weight" to his claims that [C]ustoms turned a blind eye to large-scale odometer fraud... Customs files proved that the department had been a "silent witness to massive odometer fraud." ...[he also] claimed the fraud was now touching \$1 billion – which contrasted sharply with a figure quoted by [the acting minister] of several hundred thousand dollars... [The acting minister] said he had not seen, nor did he plan to see, any of the documents which [the former minister] alleged showed how Customs handled investigations... [He] said he was satisfied with the department's work. "I have been advised that since 1991, the service has inspected more than 80,000 imported cars – around 13[%] of all used vehicle imports." ...[a Labour MP who] supported calls... for an inquiry into the handling of odometer fraud by Customs... said [the acting minister]... was paid a substantial salary to find out what was going on and it would be a dereliction of his duty not to look at the papers... "You have to ask if [the acting minister] is being a National Party neutered poodle on this matter... The public want to be confident what they buy is what it says it is, and the industry wants to make sure public confidence is restored,"... An action group was being established by the [Licensed] Motor Vehicle Dealers' Institute [LMVDI]...

The... Minister of Customs [from 1991 to 1996] released seized imported cars "in the face of departmental advice," [said] a Customs prosecutions officer... at the time... The concerned officer... said in a letter of complaint to his supervisor in September 1994 that [the minister] was "sympathetic to waiver applications." He said there "seems to have been some ministerial pressure brought to bear on head office to couch their reports/recommendations in such a manner that enables the minister to return the goods, even though they had good reason to recommend otherwise." His complaint is about the minister allowing five cars suspected of having their odometers wound back to be returned to a dealer... [The prosecutor] alleges that head office acted unlawfully. Another letter, from the director of Honda N[Z] to the 1991-96 Minister of Customs, says a S[FO] investigation into odometer fraud should identify "Government officials and ministers whose departments had not only failed to curb it but also actively encouraged it." [The 1991-96 Minister of Customs] strongly rejected the claims last night saying the new-car companies had their own vested interests and had made extravagant claims. Diverting officers to check used cars made it easier for smugglers of drugs, pornography and endangered species. The Comptroller of Customs exercised a sense of proportion about the resources he allocated to the various tasks. [The 1991-96 Minister of Customs] denied having sympathy for waiver applications and said most of the waivers he approved were for innocent third parties like "nice old couples who brought in their dream car." ...[the sacked Associate Minister of Health and now former Minister of Customs said the 1991-96 Minister of Customs] predecessor... had a much stauncher line in attacking the fraud and had been responsible for the introduction in 1991 of the import prohibition order to tackle the problem. [He] said documents... showed the order was strongly enforced for the first four or five months until [the next minister] took over... Customs meanwhile... said paperwork on the full-scale check in June... had yet to be completed in Japan.

...The chief executive of the Customs Service went on the offensive in the odometer winding war yesterday, saying attacks on the service were politically motivated... [He] said a former customs officer who told a *60 Minutes* documentary crew that the service turned a blind eye to odometer winding had never worked in sections dealing with vehicle inspections... [He] had no doubt that customs had handled the imported car issue properly. "The way some people talk you would think they had the impression that customs had wound the odometers back." He said people who criticised the service had no idea of the volume of work involved in inspecting every vehicle "and absolutely no idea of how difficult it is to obtain the evidence to prove that an odometer has been tampered with." ...He said wholesale seizing of vehicles for full documentation checks penalised innocent importers in an industry which relied on cash flow. With shipments of 1000 cars at a time "you've got to put in a huge amount of effort to get those cars inspected, documents checked and off the wharf fast enough to stop the importer complaining that you are putting his business at risk. The month we were doing every one of them we had the innocent waiting alongside the guilty, and I'm not sure that N[Z]ers would tolerate that for too long." ...The service was working closely with the Serious Fraud Office in investigating the odometer tampering and was establishing protocols on evidence gathering with the Japanese authorities and the Imported Motor Vehicle Dealers Association [IMVDA]. The association's chief executive... said every customs service in the Western world based its border enforcement on risk – "assessing what is important, who is important, what kind of transactions should we be interested in, and intelligence." ...[● The] Government plans to puncture the mounting pressure for an inquiry into odometer fraud by releasing a big bundle of its own [c]ustoms documents.

...An estimated 3000 pages of customs documents were tabled by the temporary Minister of Customs... in a move to silence... calls for an independent inquiry into the department's handling of odometer fraud. Some of the papers, which are yet to be thoroughly assessed, contain allegations from customs officers that the service inspection fell short of what was acceptable. [The temporary minister] said such claims were healthy. The documents would show "some tremendous diversity of opinion among officials." [However, he]... acknowledged that they were not all the documents the Customs Department held on odometer fraud. But they were... copies of... the documents upon which... allegations... had been based. He would not be requesting further documents "at this stage. The Customs Department like most other departments has hundreds of thousands if not millions of pages of other documents and I'm not going to waste departmental resources to ferret those out. In the end I can't get away from the fact that threequarters of a million cars have come in and I believe that the... majority of people who bought their cars are very happy with them."

...Cross-party warfare over odometers picked up yesterday as the Labour leader... and the Minister of State Services, each produced documents to add to the 3000 pages... And inter-party warfare on the issue is equally bitter in the NZ First caucus... [The] Minister of Customs from 1991 to 1996, was [the Labour leader's] target. She accused him of favouring someone "alleged to be a former Young National" in considering the return of two similar cars seized by Customs. She produced an affidavit from the Hamilton owner of a BMW... whose application for a waiver of forfeiture had been turned down. He cited a waiver for another BMW imported by the same agent for another person, which had been approved. In other developments... the... P[M said that of]... 456,000 used cars imported... from 1991 to April 1997, Customs had seized 300 vehicles, 161 for false odometer readings and the rest for false valuations. It had received 125 applications for waiver... of which 50 were approved, 60 declined and 11 deferred pending court action... [A] Labour MP... claimed he had met people who had seen a document telling customs officials to "lay off"

imported cars... The Speaker... turned down a request for a snap debate on the cancellation of a review, saying that, according to [the Minister of State Services'] statement, no review had been instigated in the first place.

...The hopelessness felt by some customs officers about their ability to prevent a flood of clocked cars flowing through N[Z] ports is summed up in a 1995 memo. In it, Customs' senior technical officer... suggested the department revoke a 1991 order to seize motor vehicles with incorrect odometers. "The enforcement of the order has involved a considerable resource commitment by the department for little or no return." He wanted the order written into the Fair Trading Act – as was intended when it was introduced in 1991; Customs to stop seizing... vehicles with incorrect odometers, and the Commerce Commission to act as referee between buyers and used-car dealers. "The public are aware that imported used vehicles may have had their odometers wound back. This is obviously being taken into account when the vehicles are purchased." ...In August 1995, [he] produced figures showing that at Auckland and Lyttelton ports just 1[%] of... vehicles were examined for odometer tampering. This caused considerable tension at the ports of Napier, where 70[%] of... vehicles were checked, and Dunedin, where 95[%] were checked. The controller of customs in Napier... said his port was concerned about a loss of cargo to Auckland owing to "lax cargo/entry checks being undertaken by Customs at that port," a view also shared at the Tauranga and Wellington ports. The controller of customs in Dunedin... complained to head office stating that: "I'm not prepared to stand by and see Port Otago lose trade because we're doing our job properly." He blamed [Lyttelton], which "is obviously not undertaking its responsibilities in terms of the import prohibitions seriously." [He] was outspoken towards the actions of his own department, writing to [the senior technical officer] in February 1995 describing the import prohibition as an "absolute farce and no longer properly enforceable... [A] person buying a Jap import would have to do so on the realisation that the odometer is... probably false... [It] is my opinion that consumers be warned accordingly. To do otherwise is to mislead the[m,] ...particularly if they wrongly believe that Customs and the import prohibition is effective and can be relied upon." In another document, the Ministry of Commerce was made aware of the problem by a Gisborne car dealer... The dealer, who asked for anonymity, claimed that not only were clocked cars entering N[Z] in large numbers but driving schools' cars, taxis and badly smashed cars that had been done up were... sold to unsuspecting buyers. He also said... some Auckland importers... had changed their trading names so they could continue trading and not be liable for previous discrepancies... The Acting Minister of Customs... sought to divert interest from odometer fraud yesterday with primed parliamentary questions about Customs' recent haul of the drug Ecstasy.

...staff from throughout the Customs Service have been pulled into the crackdown on imported used cars... leaving other potential threats to the border unchecked. "Basically we are doing nothing but cars," said one customs officer, who did not want to be identified... [However, the] Auckland regional collector of customs... said anyone planning to import drugs should not assume they were more likely to get away with it. Sniffer dogs were still at work. "Dogs aren't much use in examining motor vehicle odometers."

...The Bill of Rights Act stopped Customs detaining Japanese imported cars suspected of having been clocked, according to the Comptroller of Customs... [T]he low number of seizures was because of the need to... satisfy the "beyond reasonable doubt" requirement of the courts... [V]ehicles were seized only when Customs could produce corroborating evidence, such as service (log) books and stickers revealing a higher distance travelled, or the independent advice of an automotive instrument specialist.

...Odometer specialists in Auckland have found evidence of tampering in... 62[%] of the 280 vehicle odometers... checked since June[. 'The clocks on some cars have been wound back as many as 300,000km']...

Business is booming for car instrument technicians as more motorists seek evidence of odometer tampering on their vehicles... A Hamilton odometer specialist, Waikato Automotive Instruments, had been swamped with concerned motorists referred to the firm by local garages... A spokesman for Auckland Speedometer Services confirmed that... [three] of the four odometers checked by the firm in the past five days had evidence of altered readings... The manager of [another firm] in Auckland... said about 40[%] of the distance recorders inspected by his company so far appeared to have been interfered with. "Basically what we do is take them out and strip them down to look for things like missing screws and marks on the assembly." The inspections, which included removing the speedometer from the vehicle, took about two hours at \$50 an hour. Some of the firm's customers included car dealers who agreed to have odometers checked as a condition of sale... One or two had even asked to have their car odometers wound forward after records showed they had false readings, not realising that altering the distance reading either way was illegal... Meanwhile the Japan-based, N[Z]-owned shipping firm Kiwi Car Carriers is to increase freight charges for privately imported Japanese used cars from \$900 to \$2500. Commercial importers will continue to pay \$900 for each vehicle. The Isle of Man-registered company hopes to discourage private individuals from competing unfairly with licensed dealers and genuine wholesalers. Private... buyers had four or five other shipping firms to choose from if they did not like Kiwi's stance... said a spokesman for the company.

...After 10 years of odometer winding allegations, the Government is wasting no time investigating the adequacy of consumer protection for buyers of imported used cars. The Acting Minister of Customs... yesterday approved the establishment of a working party to consult motor industry representatives before reporting back to the cabinet next month. He said the working party, made up of officials from Customs and the Ministries of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, would consider the Government's role in policing the importing of used cars and its effectiveness in safeguarding buyers. Other issues to be looked at included... [restricting] the importing of secondhand vehicles to members of the [IMVDA].

...Setting up a working party... appears to have been welcomed within the trade. The founding chairman of the [IMVDA]... is positive about the move. He said the industry will continue to flourish, although some people involved would be forced out of business... After 35 years in the trade, [the]... Auckland car dealer... cannot see a return to the days when prohibitively priced new cars forced motorists to keep old wrecks running with bits of fencing wire... Stopping the flow of used imports was not an option... He said used imports had dragged the cost of new vehicles down to more realistic levels to the point where a new four-wheel-drive Daihatsu could be bought for \$20,000. "It would have been worth \$40,000 if there were no used imports – I'm selling cars now cheaper than I was in 86. The used car market indirectly triggered inflation down, because that's the main component of cost for the average household. You take the imports away tomorrow and you will trigger inflation away again – that's why the Government is so keen to keep them... It would be the worst thing that could ever happen to the consumer, because new car people will just put their prices up again..." ...[he] said the new car industry is intent on destroying its competition and provides financial backing to the industry's knockers... The Government, which collects at least \$1500 duty on each car plus GST on the sale price, has found the trade as lucrative as the dealers, pocketing an estimated \$1.8 billion.

...Vandals have attacked an Auckland car yard for the second time in a week after the owner defended the imported used-car industry on radio... [S]taff arrived at his Greenlane yard yesterday to find intruders had forced a security fence to break windows on 10 cars, seven of which had only just been repaired after the first attack... Repairs to the vehicles, which were insured, are expected to cost more than \$15,000. Nothing was taken from them. [The dealer], a founding chairman of the... [IMVDA], said recent heart surgery had prevented him from speaking out earlier against attacks on the imports trade... Auckland used car dealers are offering \$15,000 for information leading to the conviction of those responsible... In another development... the[sacked Associate Health] Minister... yesterday... said the State Services Commission had cited the Government's exposure to liability as a key reason for opposing his plans for an independent public inquiry... when he was... [the Customs Minister. He] raised the prospect of a class action against Customs... [for] not clamping down on odometer fraud.

...[of]ve[r]... 300 people will take action against the Customs Department... says [an]Auckland car-clocking campaigner... [T]he action would also be against the [LMVDI], and legal advice was being sought on whether it was possible to take action against... the [guy who was]Minister of Customs for five years until last year's election... [The campaigner] had so far helped duped car buyers to recover \$500,000 in compensation from dealers...

Most motorists are satisfied with their used Japanese imports regardless of the furore over... 'Speedogate'... says the Automobile Association. The association's secretary-general... said there had been little adverse reaction to used imports among the association's 770,000 members, who now had access to a wider range of later-model cars. "A vehicle is no longer an investment, it has become a disposable item."

...The Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal has cleared an 85-year-old widow accused of winding back ...he[r] odometer... The claim was made by... [a Greenland car yard. The widow] complained that the Nissan Bluebird she bought there three years ago had been "clocked." After a five-hour hearing, the tribunal found that the odometer was probably tampered with before it was sold in Japan... Meanwhile, a reward for information leading to the conviction of those responsible for vandalising vehicles at [the Greenlane] car yard this month has been increased to \$50,000.

...Taxi drivers using devices to stop their odometers are under investigation by Government inspectors, amid claims that the practice is widespread... The devices were usually put in new vehicles... One Auckland man... who imports and installs taxi meters... said yesterday that he was regularly asked to add such switches... [He] had put such a switch in a cab "only once," as a favour. "This guy went shooting his mouth off and the... Land Transport Safety Authority [(LTSA)]... came and read the riot act to me... I was told I could be fined \$10,000 if I get caught." [He] said that whenever a taxi driver asked him to install a switch in his or her cab now, he would do so but would charge \$10,000. Cabs travelled, on average, between 75,000km and 100,000km annually, but he had worked on cars three years old that had just over 100,000km on the clock. [The] national secretary of the Taxi Federation, said he had heard of such tampering only once in the past few years.

...Several Auckland taxi drivers are likely to face fraud charges... This follows a police crackdown on the tampering, which is designed to avoid road taxes and defraud used-car buyers... Many of the taxis had diesel engines and... pay road-user charges, which were calculated on the mileage travelled... Squad members found at least 10 cabs fitted with the switches... [A] Sergeant... said the use of the switches was more prevalent than police had expected. [In related news, the 'British tabloid the *Sun* reports that an 83-year-old of Tewkesbury, Gloucester, is selling a Morris Marina with just 24km on the clock. He paid \$4500 for the new 1.8-litre Super Delux model in 1973 and has driven it just once. He now wants \$16,000 for it.]

...like many in the industry, the president of the Motor Industries Association (MIA) and the managing director of Mazda NZ, wants to see an age-ban on used imports, to address safety and environmental issues. "With 72,000 of last year's used imports being built between 1988 and 1992, the reality is that many of them are coming from the scrapyards of Japan. These vehicles do not meet the higher safety standards introduced in Japan in 1994 and are far short of the safety standards NZ now has for new vehicles. We are allowing vehicles that are near their use-by date to proliferate, and using this as an excuse to delay progress on the introduction of mass-transport systems."

...NZ is unlikely to run out of used imports from Japan, despite increasing demand from other markets like the UK. Each year more than three million vehicles are scrapped in Japan – and NZ takes only 3% of them.]

...Legal action by the American automotive giant Chrysler to prevent unauthorised sales of its vehicles in N[Z] could signal the beginning of the end for the imported used car industry. The company says it has the sole right to import, distribute and market its vehicles in N[Z] – and will target importers to protect its position. Chrysler has a team of international lawyers investigating cases of so-called parallel imports with a view to taking civil action in the courts. The move follows similar action by the Ducati and Kawasaki motorcycle companies, which recently succeeded with High Court actions to uphold their legal rights to the registered brand names, preventing others from importing their products. The general manager of Chrysler Jeep-Astre N[Z] Ltd... warned yesterday that his firm's aggressive policy would apply not only to commercial importers but also to individuals who brought Chrysler vehicles into the country for profit. The chief executive of the M[IA]... said the Chrysler distributor's bid to protect its franchise would be watched closely by other automotive manufacturers... [who] are looking at doing the same...

Japanese car giant Toyota is using the Copyright Act to ban N[Z] used car dealers from importing its late-model vehicles. The company has lodged a notice with the Customs Service seeking notification of any unauthorised imports of Toyota vehicles manufactured or first registered in the country of origin since January 1 this year... Toyota was acting to protect its new car sales. "It is not a case of a multinational company preventing people getting access to Toyota used imports."

...JAPANESE car makers [were] so scared of gangsters they... told their N[Z] subsidiaries not to take legal action to limit used vehicle imports. N[Z] car makers have known for years that trademark and copyright laws give them powers to act against secondhand imports, but have been frustrated by the "hands off" ruling from Japan. However, earlier this month, the local importers of Chrysler and Jeep vehicles, which are made in the U[S], began legal proceedings to stop the used imports. The implications of Yakuza... involvement in used car importing have been raised at meetings of the M[IA], which represents all new vehicle assemblers and importers. Car company executives acknowledged the situation, but declined to be named. One said: "The companies regularly pay protection money to Yakuza, who have been active in advising the companies not to do anything to stop or slow the trade in used imports. Executives and their families are directly in line for pressure from Yakuza extortionists. It seems no one in Japan is willing or likely to challenge the Yakuza because there are immense amounts of money involved in this trade and their foundations in crime and extortion are just too strong." ...A S[FO] investigator has been in Japan following leads on used imports scams. Under the influence of the Yakuza, and with the co-operation of greedy N[Z] importers, mostly unlicensed, abuses such as odometer rewinding and undervaluation of cars for duty assessment have flourished largely unchecked. Once Chrysler Jeep announced its moves... [the recently resigned] Customs Minister... revealed four out of five imports randomly checked were undervalued by an average of \$1700 each... [A] Customs taskforce... estimated... tax evasion on imported vehicles... [is worth] \$100 million... The... [IMVDA] said legitimate importers of Japanese used vehicles were unable to compete with the rogue importers who bought high mileage cars cheaply in Japan, had the odometers rewound so they would appear good value, and underpaid duty... Meanwhile, a small player in the imports trade has moved independently on the abuses issue, filing a writ in [Auckland's] High Court... alleging that Customs and the [LMVDI] breached the provisions of the Fair Trading and Consumer Guarantees Act by failing to adequately police legislation on odometer rewinding and (in the case of the department) not collecting the correct duty.

...[Licensed car dealers have demanded that the Government crack down on blackmarket used-car traders – including a ban on anyone apart from licensed dealers importing cars for sale. The IMVDA yesterday placed full-page ads in two Sunday newspapers criticising the Government for not doing enough to enforce laws to stop the illegal sales, estimated at 55,000 in the last year. But the Acting Customs Minister said dealers were not blameless. "Customs is currently intercepting about 10 dodgy cars a week. The majority of importers in those interceptions are licensed dealers. Dealers should be careful about blaming everyone but themselves for what they call rip-offs and shady practices. People who live in glasshouses shouldn't throw stones." The minister said some of the association's concerns were valid but the Government was already acting to bring in new laws to deal with the problem. A discussion document proposes replacing the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act with a new act focusing more generally on all vehicle sales, other than private sales. A new Motor Vehicle Dealer Disputes tribunal was also proposed. It would cover disputes under the Consumer Guarantees Act and the Fair Trading Act and would not be limited to vehicles sold by licensed dealers. Motor vehicle dealers would have to meet strict criteria for registration under the new proposals, including a clean sheet on convictions for dishonesty, fraud and odometer tampering. A list of people banned from any involvement in the trade was also proposed. The IMVDA's chief executive said he backed the Government initiatives but asked why the law as it stood could not be enforced immediately.] Incidentally,] the... glut of used imports, particularly at the cheaper end of the market, has seen dealer indifference when these have been offered at auction. Many are now being offered at car fairs, which are flourishing as other owners also try to get the best price possible for their vehicles.

...LICENSED car dealers – under pressure from a sales slump, over-keen pricing and odometer tampering jitters – are preparing to prosecute sell-your-own car yards for alleged breaches of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act. The yards, which are springing up in many parts of the country,

have grown from the popularity of weekend car fairs, where private sellers display their vehicles and deal directly with potential buyers... While there is nothing illegal in this, [the LMVDI] director... said many of the yards had gone beyond that by employing salespeople on behalf of sellers and receiving a commission if they made a sale. He said that put them in the realm of unlicensed dealers, and liable to prosecution... Under the Act, fines of up to \$10,000 can be imposed... In 1993 there were just over 1800 licensed dealers, but this had climbed to 2258.

...Motor vehicle dealers are stepping up action against unlicensed dealers, but believe they are only scratching the surface of illegal trade. About 40 alleged illegal car dealers will be prosecuted by a firm representing the [IMVDA]... The dealers' association chairman... said up to 20[%] of imported second-hand cars were sold by unlicensed dealers... It was hard to know how big the problem was but a four-month survey revealed 950 suspicious cases involving 3700 vehicles... People selling more than six vehicles a year for profit had to be licensed... The institute had taken 70 prosecutions in the past 10 years, all but one of them successful... Although the dealers would prefer police to investigate the illegal traders... they understood the pressures police were under. [The] Police Assistant Commissioner... said it was within the right of anyone to prosecute privately.

...Private investigators say an Asian couple have... [emptied] their bank accounts... [and fled NZ] during inquiries into a backyard car-dealing ring which sold more than \$2 million worth of vehicles in Auckland over the past two years. [By the way, the person who 'is acknowledged as the world's No 1 car salesman has been inducted into the US Automotive Hall of Fame. He once sold 18 cars in one day.'

...a contest-winner 'was given his gleaming \$27,000 prize on Tuesday night after almost seven months of wrangling. The Papakura resident threw a paper dart into a box from about 15m in the competition for a gold-coloured Toyota Corolla, which was organised by the Papakura District Business Association but run by the Papakura Lions. However, he was denied his prize, put up by Papakura Toyota, when insurers Sports and Events Marketing, the NZ agent for American marketing company Golf Marketing, said the throw breached conditions because it was wind-assisted. In a goodwill deal, Papakura Toyota, Toyota NZ and Sports and Events Marketing finally agreed to split the cost of the car – which was presented during filming for last night's *Fair Go* programme – but the business association voted not to put any money in. The association's president said lawyers had told the group it was not legally responsible and he believed the insurers should have paid out in full for the car. The wind had been swirling around and did not aid the throw, he added. Papakura Toyota's chief executive said his company had not decided whether it would take legal action against the business association.' Also undecided about taking legal action is the contestant who entered a competition where the person that kept one hand on a car the longest amount of time won it, but was 'disqualified after temporarily removing his hand in order to take a break that an official mistakenly said he was entitled to have.'

...an Auckland car dealership that misled customers about trade-ins has clocked up more than \$33,000 in fines. Enterprise Motors Group and its Panmure dealership were ordered to pay the fines by the Auckland District Court yesterday after pleading guilty to breaching the Fair Trading Act. The company had advertised a "minimum trade-in of \$4000" in television commercials. One commercial had claimed that it would pay "\$4000 on your old bomb" and that there was a "huge selection available", but the Commerce Commission's lawyer told the court that a customer had gone to one of the company's yards asking for the trade-in, only to be told his Bedford van would not fetch more than \$3000. On top of this, the trade-in could only be used on half the vehicles in the yard. The commission said that of the 122 sales under the trade-ins scheme, only 46 customers received the full \$4000, with some customers being paid nothing at all. The Panmure subsidiary was also convicted on four charges of breaking the law in advertisements in a mailout to 300,000 Auckland homes. These advertisements promised a "guaranteed minimum buyback." This was not an offer to buy back cars but actually a large final payment by customers to get full ownership. Enterprise Motors did not spell out that customers would not sign a purchase agreement but a leasing agreement'.]

...A... "destination auto mall"... will be the main feature of a... \$25 million development... on 5.25ha... between the Ellerslie-Panmure Highway and Mountain Rd... [which is] set for completion by... [the middle of next year. In] addition to being a single centre for automotive shopping and service, the site would have children's entertainment, public transport facilities and good security for extended trading hours.

...[the] country's largest vehicle financier, Motor Trade Finance[...], has recorded]... a record \$40.5 million tax-paid... [annual profit, which is 30.6%] higher than the previous year... During the year new loans accepted... fell 17.8[%] from \$467 million to \$383 million[... while loans]... under administration fell from \$639.4 million... to \$599.5 million... [and total] assets fell by \$172 million to \$146.9 million, reflecting the securitisation of loans... The securitisation programme of [MTF] entails the issue of short term Euronotes into the European and U[S] markets. Profits]... were not reduced commensurately because the profitability of [MTF] largely reflects levels of business accepted in the past... [By the way, the] president of Mazda in Japan... says... [flooding the N[Z]... market with used car imports will have a negative effect...

A glut of cheap imported used cars has sparked savage discounting among car dealers... The number of [used] imports by dealers jumped from 2541 in 1987 to a staggering 117,025 last year... Dealers say the gap between new and used prices is likely to narrow further – meaning the bonanza for buyers is set to continue... The cost of bringing used vehicles into the country has dropped in the past year as the N[Z] dollar has strengthened against the Japanese yen, cutting importation costs by about \$2000 a vehicle... The price reductions on used vehicles is also putting pressure on the cost of new vehicles, with one major brand advertising 1997 new vehicles at 1993 prices. The chief executive of the L[MVDI]... said the "dramatic" rate at which new car prices had dropped in the past year had surprised the industry... Six or seven years ago 50[%] of new cars were sold to private buyers – now about 80[%] of new cars were sold to commercial buyers for fleet vehicles and work cars.

...Yesterday Honda N[Z] followed other car companies in announcing price cuts on its vehicles. [The] general manager of marketing for Honda, said the company had reduced prices by about 10[%]. He said the reductions were not because of imports or currency movements but were refining a strategy to make new cars more affordable. "We want more people driving new cars." ...He did not think there would necessarily be further reductions: "We do not want to get into a price war. There are plenty of other car companies here that are bigger than Honda." ...[he] said there was some concern about the increased rate of depreciation on new cars because of the flow of used imports... [New cars in NZ 'currently depreciate by 37% of their price in the first year.' The] rapid fall in car prices had left dealers holding stock they bought at "yesterday's prices." Dealers were having to sell those vehicles at a loss to get some cash to buy cars at today's lower prices to stay in business. Private car owners paying off vehicles may be even worse off. The rapid decline in car prices has also reduced trade-in prices, leaving many car owners owing more money on the vehicle than what it is worth. Dealers said car owners had yet to accept a market that had reduced the value of their vehicles so rapidly. "They come on to the yard with unrealistic expectations about the value of their vehicle and then call us a bunch of rogues when we quote them the market price," said one dealer. "We just tell them to go away and see how much anyone else will give them." ...[In related news,] other countries such as Russia and Ireland have cottoned on to the attractions of importing used cars...

The British car industry is trying to come to terms with used Japanese imports coming into mainland Britain via Ireland... "...the European Union is getting a bit excited about it... But, of course, once the cars have been accepted into Ireland they are part of the E[U] – they can go into any country." ...But the appearance of the imports on car yards in Britain is not new. [What's new is that some manufacturers – including 'VW, Volvo and Mercedes-Benz – have been buying up and stockpiling tens of thousands of used fleet cars in order to "fix prices".' In further news from Britain, 'Ford is to restructure its European operations next month and the first to feel the pinch will be workers at its Dagenham assembly plant. Ford is expected to announce that the plant will close after the output of existing Ford Fiesta models ends next year. Dagenham employs 7000 workers. More than 1300 were made redundant when the company switched to single-shift production. Ford is building about 400,000 more cars than it can sell in Europe.'

...Daewoo's award-winning city car, the Matiz, is coming to NZ to flaunt its Latin looks and cost-effective charms. The Korean-built five-door is Europe's bestselling car in the "city car" segment. This is for teeny-weeny cars, those designed for an inner-city lifestyle and parking spaces hardly big enough to swing a cat in. The category is popular in European cities, where many people live above alleys and avenues. Since its launch the Matiz has won

all sorts of international awards, including Best Value Small Car from the BBC's *Top Gear* people. The British gong was for a car costing £7145, or nearly \$23,000, with standard items including power steering, central locking, driver and passenger airbags and electric front windows. Air-conditioning was an optional £350 extra. But for the NZ market Daewoo has thrown in air-conditioning – and priced the car at \$15,000. How can it do that, sell the same car for \$9000 less than in Britain? Because the British Government imposes duty on imported cars and still heavily subsidises its car industry']...

“The Government intends for N[Z] to be a leader, rather than a follower” in the process of trade liberalisation, said [the]Commerce Minister... Tariffs on motor vehicles will be an immediate focus. The current regime will lower motor vehicle tariffs from 25% to 15% by July 1... with annual 2.5 percentage point reductions until July 1, 2000... The post-2001 regime is to be reviewed and the Government expects this to result in “a swift move” to zero tariffs soon after. “This will mean even cheaper cars for all N[Zers,” the minister] enthused. The other side of the coin became clear the next day... the removal of tariffs would make the local industry unviable. The local car assembly industry’s output would be replaced by imports... [and] jobs would be lost. Too bad. There’s not much benefit in N[Z] producing cars, said [an economist]... Consumers are paying in excess of \$300 million a year in motor vehicle tariffs – that works out at around \$180,000 a job in the assembly industry... And the industry doesn’t fit into the long-term economic strategy set out in the National Government’s *Towards 2010* document.

...the Government... has brought forward a review of the tariffs to later this year at the request of vehicle assemblers... Only Toyota, Nissan, Honda and Mitsubishi still make cars in N[Z] following the closure of the Ford-Mazda Manukau factory in March... 29,727 vehicles were assembled locally last year, less than half the total in 1989... At present the... Mitsubishi... plant built to produce 22,000 units a year is running at less than one-third capacity... In Thames, home to Toyota N[Z]’s assembly plant, the district mayor... said that if the early review suited Toyota he was in favour because it helped remove uncertainty for the community.

...The Government has taken away the survival option for the local motor vehicle assembly industry, the managing director of Toyota N[Z]... said in Christchurch yesterday... “Toyota will accept the Government terms of reference but these basically say the assembly industry has no future.” Toyota sells more new motor vehicles in N[Z] than any other make... The company... expects new vehicle sales this year to total 74,000 – down 6.5[%] on last year... [A] decision would be made about the future of the Thames assembly plant later this year... The Thames plant... has been running at about 50[%] capacity this year. “There are many spin-offs from the local assembly industry in terms of manufacturing and components. It’s not just a matter of jobs,” [he said. The situation means that the new ‘Avalon sedan, the biggest car in Toyota’s lineup, will be built at its assembly plant at Altona, Melbourne, and come into NZ completely built-up. Although the Avalon was designed to cater for American large-car tastes, Toyota NZ expects its design, quality and roomy interior will appeal in NZ. It is powered by a 3-litre, quad-cam, 24-valve V6 engine and will be aimed at the Holden Commodore and Ford Falcon. The large-car market now represented about 13% of total new-car sales’ in NZ.

...‘sales of large cars in NZ are zooming ahead. They were up 20% last year’ ...

‘December sales figures from the US show the popularity of sports utility vehicles. Americans wrapped up last year by buying less cars than vans, utes and pick-ups’. Speaking of which, ‘a Ford F150 passed me on the motorway the other day. Big, powerful beast it is, too. But the fire-breathing model is the SVT F150, rare as hen’s teeth in America even. *Auto Motor and Sport* on Friday takes a look at the muscle-bound pick-up, powered by a 265kW 5.4-litre V8. The television show also checks on the progress of ‘the recall of 6.5 million Firestone tyres. So far 3.7 million of the recalled tyres have been replaced.’

...‘French tyre maker Michelin has apparently signed to provide tyres for the new Ford Explorer. The contract comes after accidents involving the current model Explorer in America forced supplier Firestone to recall more than six million of its tyres. Low inflation pressures recommended by Ford apparently contributed to the tread separation. The estimates of deaths in the tyre-related accidents stands at 101.’

...‘Ford’s tyre woes with its four-wheel-drive Explorer continue. American authorities are investigating reports that anti-roll bars on 1995 and 96 Explorers have been failing, says Britain’s *Autocar* magazine. This after a *Washington Post* probe which concluded that, even though Ford executives insist the Firestone tyres were at no fault in roll-over accidents, the Explorer itself may be contributing to crashes. Ford’s president had said the higher centre of gravity in four-wheel-drives meant they were more susceptible to roll-overs when tyres failed. But safety authorities say Ford must accept some of the blame for the tyre problem because it recommended that the Explorer run on lower inflation pressures than those advised by Firestone.’

...‘fallout from the Ford Explorer tyre problem means production at Bridgestone plants in the US has been cut and about 2000 workers could be laid off. The 40% fall in demand for Bridgestone tyres has been blamed on bad publicity by the recall of 6.5 million tyres, mostly fitted to four-wheel-drive Ford Explorers. Both companies are still trying to find out why the tyre failures have been linked to more than 100 deaths in America alone. Ford Explorers in NZ have not been affected.’

...‘Firestone has replaced hundreds of tyres in NZ – mostly found on Ford Explorers imported since 1996 (1500 vehicles might have been imported here with the problem tyres; there have been no problems with NZ-made tyres) – amid reports of a growing international death toll from blowouts and tread separation. The Japanese-owned company has already recalled over 6.5 million tyres internationally as investigators probe over 130 deaths in the Americas.’

...‘Ford has announced a huge recall of 13 million Firestone Wilderness AT tyres on its vehicles at a cost of \$US2.1 billion – the latest salvo in a bitter war with the tyre maker over who is to blame for accidents in which at least 174 people have died. Ford said it had lost confidence in the ability of Firestone tyres to keep Ford customers safe.’ In local news, NZ] is in the grips of a tyre price war that... is likely to get even more competitive before it ends.

...Firestone NZ turned in a net loss of \$1.88m for the six months to June, compared with a \$2.18m profit last year. It blamed cheap imports.

...[an] Auckland importer of used Japanese tyres said yesterday that he was not worried about what he saw as an attempt by local tyre manufacturers to put used-tyre importers out of business. Yesterday Firestone N[Z] launched a range of budget tyres... and stopped making passenger tyre retreads... This will mean the loss of 28 jobs... though the company says the introduction of the budget tyre range will create about 30 new jobs at Firestone’s new factory... South Pacific Tyres, a joint venture between Dunlop and Goodyear, will also introduce a budget range of new tyres this week, though it will continue to make passenger tyre retreads, says its chief executive... “We have to match what Firestone are doing,” he said... but... thought Firestone had “made a big mistake getting out of retreads. There are a lot of motorists who can only afford to run retreads on their cars.” The general manager[of] sales and marketing for Firestone... said making passenger retreads was no longer profitable. Firestone market research showed that motorists preferred imported tyres, he said. [He] estimated that 665,000 used tyres would be imported into N[Z] this year, rising to 800,000 next year... [The] co-owner of Japan Tyre Co and Japanese Tyre Co, both of which import used tyres from Japan, said... the budget-priced Firestone tyres were of inferior quality.

...Firestone says it will take legal action against used tyre importers making “false and malicious claims” about its new budget tyre... “You don’t have to be a brain surgeon to work out why the competition is so hell-bent on trying to undermine confidence in our new product,”... the company’s marketing manager... said... “A survey Firestone did on the prices of used tyres found some priced as low as \$10. Now there’s got to be something wrong with a tyre selling at that price.” ...there was talk some rivals would counter Firestone by importing new tyres from Indonesia, for example. “But in many cases the compounds used in tyres made for concrete roads in Asia are torn to bits on the volcanic chip roads of N[Z]. Often the sidewalls are thin, the tyre is less resilient and the oils used in them can cause them to crack under our harsh ultra-violet sunlight. Storing them for too long can also cause them to crack, and the inferior oils used in making these tyres dry out.”

...[here's 'a couple of facts from Dunlop tyres: "The tread pattern on a tyre disperses water on a wet road and helps keep the rubber in contact with the surface. Tests at 100km/h on a road covered with 2mm of water show that a tyre with 1mm of tread depth has just 11% of the tread in contact with the road, compared with a new tyre at 79%. Obviously, with that little contact, emergency stopping distances and tyre grip during cornering are dramatically reduced." The law in NZ says "tread must be 1.5mm or more deep right around the tyre and over three-quarters of the width of the tread pattern."'

... 'tyre companies are constantly talking about the importance of having sufficient tread on tyres. About 4 out of 10 NZ drivers don't listen to them. These are the people a Dunlop executive wants to reach. "The thought that about 40% of cars passing in the opposite direction at 100km/h on our highways have one or more bald tyres must be a worry to all road users." Easy to visualise, isn't it?']

...Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co said it plans to produce for mass distribution tyres that eliminate the need for spares on passenger vehicles. Goodyear said it is "aggressively converting" all of its replacement-tyre manufacturing to production of its so-called extended mile tyres. The tyres can be driven for 50 to 200 miles at 50 miles an hour when flat or low on air and still be repaired... [Incidentally, u]sed tyres will start to cause environmental problems if disposal solutions are not found soon, says... Firestone. Since import restrictions were relaxed in the late 1980s, used tyres have flooded into N[Z]... About 1.5 million tyres are being sent to scrap each year... Saturation point will be reached by the end of this year, as uses for old tyres can no longer be found. "That's when we will start to face the sort of dumping problems that have become prevalent in the U[S and AUS], where mounds containing large numbers of tyres are piled up in the countryside,"... says... Firestone[s] marketing manager... Previously, 98[% of NZ's] used tyres ended up on farmers' silage heaps, but this market is limited. Tyres with good casings are sold as retreads... Firestone suggests one use[for bad casings] is to mix the ground rubber with bitumen for road-making. Technology has also been developed for burning old tyres in cement production kilns. Neither of these options has been proved for large-scale tyre disposal in N[Z].

...In Auckland... old tyres are piling up at the rate of about 1.2 million a year... – a similar number per head of population as in the U[S]... What to do with worn-out tyres has always been a problem... Although non-hazardous, used tyres are one of the most difficult items in the waste stream to deal with... Some European countries put them through a giant shredder and use the pieces to cushion the ground around school jungle gyms. Ford's solution is to turn tens of thousands of the things into ergonomic floor matting for its factories. [■ What is Ford doing with the 13 million Firestone Wilderness AT tyres it recalled after the rollovers of its Explorer four-wheel-drive? Most of the tyres have so far been shredded or burned for fuel. Of the 273 million tyres discarded in the US last year, fewer than 36 million were recycled, with most thrown in landfills or burned.]

... 'An Iraqi-born scientist believes he's found an unlikely use for old tyres. The Auckland University researcher, who emigrated from Basra in 1996, says tyre-derived activated carbons could be used to remove contaminants from the water of creeks and streams. "There are companies in the US using tyres to create gas and liquids, but no one has been using the solid waste." Tyre disposal is an international problem. Most old tyres end up being shredded']...

Tyre shops, garages and anyone with an eye for a cleaner landscape will welcome what appears to be the first real solution to a longstanding waste problem. About three million old tyres are sent to scrap each year[in NZ] – most have ended up on farmers' silage heaps or in landfills. But the farmers can't keep up with the supply, and local authorities are increasingly banning tyres from landfills. Their bulk causes problems, because oxygen and methane build up in tyres, causing them to rise to the top and break landfill surfaces... [NZers] may have to get used to forking out money to get rid of their old car tyres, as well as paying to buy new ones. But... that[is] a small price to pay for a clean environment... [says the man who] has just imported the country's first tyre shredder. From his west Auckland base, he is buying used tyres from two big contractors, shredding them into 30mm long pieces of rubber... [in t]he \$1 million... machine... and then selling them as capping material in landfill. Later on he hopes to import a bigger shredder that will reduce old tyres to crumbled rubber, which can be mixed with bitumen when making roads... [His] company... charges \$1.40 to collect a used car tyre, \$2.80 for a light truck tyre and \$4.20 for a truck tyre... But it is not difficult to see new disposal costs being built into the price of tyres[, although]... tyre retailers claimed that to pass the charge on the customers would make them uncompetitive. And manufacturers said a tax on new tyres would disadvantage them in competition with imports... Greenpeace has said tyre disposal – and presumably its costs – should be the responsibility of tyre manufacturers or retailers.

...[an 'environmentalist found 8000 illegally dumped tyres on his property when he returned from a trip to Peru. Now he's battling bureaucrats to have the tyres taken away and could be forced to pay up to \$30,000 to remove them. "I am the victim – yet it appears I could be the one expected to pay for the crime," he says. "The situation is farcical." After three weeks of night and day surveillance, he cornered a man unloading tyres from a truck and adding them to the pile. A neighbour took photos. Police are now interviewing the truck-driver over the Albany dumping but have yet to lay charges.]

...an 'environmentalist is angry at the sentence handed down to a man caught unloading used tyres on his property. In the North Shore District Court on Thursday, a 43-year-old, whose business is disposing of old tyres, admitted adding 250 tyres to the rubber mountain of illegally dumped tyres but escaped conviction on condition that he remove the 250 tyres and pay the environmentalist \$100 reparation. The 43-year-old told the court he was driving along the highway with a load of tyres, when somebody stopped him and said they wanted the tyres and would show him where to dump them. He did so, instead of taking the tyres to his usual dump in West Auckland. He later learned that the unidentified person had no authority for the dumping at the disused tree nursery on the Albany Highway. He told the court he retrieved the 250 tyres he put on the pile, which, police estimated, contained 5500. The environmentalist said he would refuse to accept the reparation. "It's an insult when the cheapest quote I have for removing the dump is \$8500." The council had threatened to prosecute him under the Resource Management Act if he did not remove the tyres by January 31. He refused and the council did not carry out its threat. The environmentalist said he was angry that the police had chosen to prosecute the 43-year-old under the Litter Act, which carries a maximum penalty of \$500. He had asked the council to instead prosecute under the Resource Management Act, where acts of pollution carry fines of a maximum of \$200,000. The authorities' reaction to the problem was "the last straw" in a string of unsatisfactory dealings with officialdom. "NZ is a filthy, moral-less rat-hole. We crow about how clean and green it is, yet if everybody behaved like NZers there would be no planet left." The council's environmental protection manager said the council was frightened of an environmental disaster if the pile of tyres caught fire. But it was sympathetic towards the environmentalist because it realised he was caught up in a problem that was not of his making. The council could not have prosecuted the tyre-dumper because dumping occurred on private property. It was a criminal offence which had to be handled by the police. However, under the Resource Management Act, removal of the tyres was the landowner's responsibility. Any move to force the environmentalist to remove the tyres was on hold. But the council could not remove them at ratepayers' expense because it set a precedent for any further cases of illegal dumping. Ideally, residents would promptly report any dumping they might suspect was unauthorised.')

...West Auckland roadsides are becoming... dumping grounds for... rusting car wrecks... Most vehicles were left parked on urban... streets, some were dumped on quiet rural roads and a few were pushed over banks... [In the past year, more] than 3000 cars were inspected and their owners tracked down so arrangements could be made for removal or disposal. That was roughly double the number inspected in the year to June 1996 – an increase probably best explained by the tougher warrant standards and rust guidelines introduced that month... [However, many] vehicles were... unregistered... 900 abandoned cars have been towed away by the Waitakere City Council in the past 15 months and the removal cost is mounting.

...[the] Alliance... says the costs of removing tariffs in the motor vehicle assembly industry far outweigh the benefits. A cost-benefit analysis by the party has estimated a \$128 million a year gain, "under the most favourable assumptions," but puts the costs... at between \$241 million and \$862 million a year... A[US is] keeping tariffs at 15[%] until 2005... Hong Kong, Singapore and Japan are the only... countries which have no tariffs on cars. [● 'Only a few of the over 2000 Trekka utility vehicles – a blend of Skoda mechanicals and a NZ-designed steel body – built in NZ from 1967 to 1973 remain.']

...when the Government... [decided to remove] protection for local car assembly... there was no word of compensation for anyone... But... workers will be on the streets[and their communities will be] devastated... It seems... fair that if the Government – that is, all of us – cause that much damage to people's lives then we should pay whatever is needed to minimise the damage. We should pay for relocating and retraining people, as well as providing an adequate income until they find new jobs. And we should offer to buy not just the car plants themselves but any other businesses and any home in Thames or elsewhere that relied on the car industry, at whatever those properties were worth before the Government's announcement. When we on-sell them, we should be prepared to take big losses. Unless we are willing to pay that kind of compensation, we have no moral right to change the rules on people as suddenly as the Government has done... The irony is that removing the car industry's protection makes sense.

...The Coalition Government is expected to tell the motoring industry next week that zero tariffs on imported cars will be introduced [earlier]... The cabinet recommendation is expected to... [reduce] duty... by 0.5[% a month from July 1]... 2000... until it no longer applies, which is expected to be July, 2002... But should assemblers... shut their plants before 2000, zero tariffs would be introduced almost overnight... The four remaining assemblers... are expected to announce early next year how they plan to phase out their plants... [If they all close, it will mean] the loss of 1500 jobs... A further 4300 jobs in the car component industry are also shaky... In theory, the end of car assembly need not kill off the manufacture of car parts. Nimble producers could sell to assembly plants abroad... Between 1989 and 1994, exports of N[Z] motor components rose 45[%]... to \$170 million... This year, Ford has exported alloy wheels worth \$60 million... almost exclusively to the U[S. Hella NZ Ltd also]... announced a \$25 million U[S] car parts deal which involved exporting up to 30,000 high-level stop lamps a month... But the hurdles are high. First, they are losing their local links with the multinational car companies. Keeping up with technology... and contacts in the customer companies will be harder... Given these difficulties, it would be logical for parts producers to move their operations close to their customers. The Victoria state government, for example, might offer a N[Z] parts maker incentives to move its operations near to Melbourne's Toyota plant. All this suggests a de-skilling of N[Z]'s manufacturing work-force... The axe is[also] hovering over hundreds of clothing, textile, footwear and carpet companies and their 25,000 employees[– but some people in the car sales industry are looking forward to further tariff reductions in the hope that cheaper prices will encourage people to buy cars, thereby saving their jobs]...

There will be fewer new and used vehicle dealers when tariffs are removed, says the president of the M[IA]... "There is already a shakeout of dealers... [However, I believe the] new vehicle market under zero tariffs will be boosted long-term... [because the] cheaper price of new cars will... take some of the market away from used imports... But... the knives will be out and the car buyer will be the winner... Honda has shown the way... by taking on the used import industry with aggressive pricing. It sees the life of its cars in the market at more than just three years, more like four or five years." ...But consumers should not bet on benefiting... Exchange rates, the machinations of multinational production, the consolidation of dealer networks and other factors could deny them the savings... Four Mitsubishi dealers... have closed down in recent months. Others, mainly second-hand dealers, are closing all the time.

...Mitsubishi N[Z] will close its Porirua small-car assembly line in May... next year... Between three and five hundred workers from the... plant... are heading to Parliament this morning to protest against government policies...

Businesses in Thames closed for an hour yesterday in a protest against planned tariff cuts which would see the town's largest employer shut down. The Minister of Commerce... told a hostile rally that the town had to start planning for life after the death of the Toyota vehicle plant.

...Referring to the company's Thames plant which has run for 30 years... Toyota N[Z]'s boss... said the... team of workers there were the best in N[Z]. "But at the end of the day, all that good work by more than 300 good people cannot overcome the Government's policy settings that are stacked against the... local assembly... industry." [He] says it is ironic that as N[Z] is discussing the possible closure of vehicle assembly, Vietnam is planning a new vehicle assembly operation with 10 assemblers[already] supplying vehicles to a market smaller than N[Z]. "We are not suggesting that this formula should apply for N[Z], but it does demonstrate that N[Z] is one of the few countries in our region to be slavishly following a zero-tariff plan with any urgency." ...and he said Ford's own multi-million dollar restructuring of its[now-closed] vehicle assembly operations in conjunction with Mazda made it clear the company was convinced the automotive industry had a place in... N[Z]... History records that N[Z]ers have been building other people's cars since the earliest years of motoring... [without] designing and building our own viable alternatives.

...[NZ Motor Bodies Ltd took over a small concern that had been established at Petone in 1926. In March the following year, the plant produced the first all-steel truck cabs made in NZ. The plant closed in 1984, the same year that General Motors closed its plant at Petone.] 'General Motors was the first big carmaker to set up an assembly plant in NZ. It started production on August 31, 1926, at Petone. Petone occupies an important place in GM history: it was the first overseas plant to be owned lock, stock and barrel by Detroit. Before then, GM had leased its offshore buildings. The carmaker's decision to build the first plant in 1926 was "an act of faith at a time when NZ was at the beginning of its industrial development and when motor vehicles were fewer than horses." With the arrival of WW2, production switched to munitions, including 1100 bren gun carriers made almost entirely from NZ components. In addition, 900 war-damaged Army trucks were reconditioned and put back into service.' 'In 1936 the Ford Motor Co of NZ Ltd was incorporated. Vehicle production began at the company's new assembly plant at Lower Hutt. During WW2 the Ford Lower Hutt plant produced 10,323 vehicles as well as huge quantities of munitions. In 1970 Todd Motors acquired the Mitsubishi franchise. Todd Park, the largest vehicle assembly plant in NZ, opened in 1975.'

...The US Government has launched a case against Toyota's American subsidiary, seeking as much as \$US58 billion in fines from the car maker. It accused Toyota of equipping 2.2 million cars since 1996 with faulty emission-control monitoring systems. Toyota last week rejected an out-of-court settlement under which it would have paid \$US100 million in civil penalties. A spokeswoman for Toyota NZ said the company did not know if the issue affected it (NZ does not have specific environmental standards to control motor vehicle emissions, although they are our main polluters). In another motor vehicle case – that comes three days after a Los Angeles jury awarded a record \$US4.9 billion to six people who were severely burned when their Chevrolet exploded in a rear-end collision – a jury in Ceres, California, has awarded \$US295 million to the family of a couple and their son who were killed when a Ford Bronco rolled.]

...A breach of the Commerce Act cost Toyota N[Z] \$260,000, the Commerce Commission said yesterday... The case related to Toyota's fleet sales assistance scheme during 1992 and 1993, under which Toyota helped its franchised dealers with discounts on sales of new cars to fleet owners. [The]Commission chairman... said the operation of the scheme had acted to limit discounts Toyota dealers might offer... This was a contravention of the resale price maintenance provisions of the Commerce Act... Toyota had stopped the practice before the investigation and had co-operated with the commission. Toyota agreed to having the judgment entered against it and the... \$250,000... penalty... had been accepted as appropriate...

In the traditional sales battle between industry leaders Ford and Toyota, Ford just pipped its rival for total sales [last month]. However, the big news for the month was the 14[%] slump in new-vehicle sales compared to... [the previous month, and 30[%] fewer than the number sold in [the corresponding month] of last year. THOSE figures make sobering reading for many people in the vehicle industry – but Porsche does not seem to mind... While there is little doubt [the vehicle industry] had an horrific year – sales were down by about \$750 million... [-] the... recent arrival of 10 brand-new Porsche Boxsters is the largest single shipment of new Porsche sports cars to land in this country for more than 10 years. The most pleasing aspect for the importer... is that all of the cars were pre-sold... By the end of this year, [the importer expects] to have delivered approximately 50 new Boxsters to N[Z] owners, despite retail prices starting at \$125,000. [By the way, 'Porsche has grabbed plenty of the Paris Motor Show headlines with a stunning new sports car study which could become reality by 2003. Conceived as an ultimate performance road car, the 1250kg Carrera GT is based on pure racing car technology. Porsche predicts a top speed of over 330km/h and acceleration from 0 to 100km/h in under 4 seconds.

Acceleration from 0 to 200km/h will be achieved in under 10 seconds. Use of carbon fibre as the body's base material combines optimal strength and safety with a minimal vehicle weight. The Carrera GT also uses the new Porsche Ceramic Composite Brake technology now available as an option on the new 911 Turbo.' 'The technology – which will bring a high-speed Porsche to a stop quicker than anything else the carmaker has used – marks a revolutionary step in the future of car brakes, says Porsche. The downside of traditional metal discs is that once they get hot they lose their stopping power. But with the new technology brake temperature is no longer a crucial factor in stopping distances.'

... 'a typical 3-litre Formula One car weights about 600kg with the driver, has a top speed of 350 km/h, and accelerates from zero to 100 km/h in a touch over 2 seconds, two-and-a-half times faster than the latest lickety-split Porsche 911. Drivers experience loads of up to five times the force of the most extreme emergency stop in a road car. McLaren-Mercedes says its car will travel from zero to 160 km/h and back in 6.6 seconds.'

... 'GERMAN carmakers Mercedes-Benz, Audi, BMW and Volkswagon have an unofficial agreement: they electronically limit the top speed of their premium production models to 250 km/h, or 155 mph. Porsche isn't a party to it. The Japanese have a similar agreement, but with more red tape. It limits not so much the top speed of high-performance cars but the engine's power. The industry standard in Japan is around 205kW (275bhp), give or take a kilowatt or two. For example, lickety-split cars like the Subaru Impreza STi, the Mitsubishi Evo VI and the VR4 Galant stick to the standard. The Nissan Skyline GT-R – named Godzilla for the way it demolished everything in its path on racetracks in the early 1990s – sneaks past the standard, producing 206kW. So does the luxury Lexus LS400, with 209kW. Now there's another car with 206kW. It's Godzilla's stablemate, the two-door Skyline GT with four-wheel steering. Nissan NZ launched it in the rain on the roads around Rotorua the other day, a year after it made the GT-R available by special order. The GT-R costs \$129,995 – the GT costs \$64,495 for the five-speed manual and \$65,995 for the four-speed automatic'...

'THE WORD quickly went around the car industry: half-a-dozen Lamborghinis from the Sultan of Brunei's stable of 5000 exotic cars were under wraps in Auckland. The story seemed to fit. News had only just broken that the world's richest car nut had just pulled \$15 billion worth of investments out of London and \$3 billion out of New York. The cash was needed at home. He had just told his spendthrift brother – a layabout playboy who named his personal yacht Tits and its tenders Nipple 1 and Nipple 2, to curb his spending or find new digs. The younger prince did as he was told. And to help bolster the family's petty cash he put the word about that he wanted to flog off a few of his own exotics. Some of these are expected to crop up on the international second-hand market. But the right-hand-drive Lamborghini Diablos that go on sale in Auckland this week aren't second-hand – and they have nothing to do with the sultan's collection. "They are all unregistered cars with a factory-recorded 200km on the clock," said the managing director of Clark's of Parnell who landed the Italian supercars the other day. The Diablos were bought in Asia – where the economic meltdown has reduced demand for exotics – and approved for sale in NZ by Lamborghini's distributor for this part of the world. "The confusion about them coming from the sultan's collection probably came about because the cars came from Asia. But I bought them from an authorised Lamborghini dealership. The only person who has driven them is Lamborghini's test driver. Each one comes with a 12-month factory warranty." Until a few weeks ago, Lamborghini was owned by an Indonesian company. Now German car-maker Audi owns Lamborghini. It bought it for an undisclosed sum. It has been said that Audi, part of the Volkswagon group, will continue production of the Diablo but will fit smaller-capacity and lighter turbo-charged engines. The existing Diablo is powered by a 5.7-litre all-alloy V12, producing a neck-snapping 363kW at 6800 rpm. The director, a passionate Lamborghini lover who owns a 1988 25th anniversary Countach, bought in four Diablos – three four-wheel-drive VTs and a two-wheel-drive SV. A yellow VT was sold the day it arrived. The SV doesn't have the top-end speed of the VT (307 km/h against 327 km/h) but its close-ratio five-speed gearbox catapults it from zero to 100 km/h in 3.6 seconds, about half-a-second quicker than the VT. The SV and a 1995 silver VT are retailing for \$395,000. The top-range Diablo, a 1997 purple four-wheel-drive Roadster, is priced at \$495,000. "I have wanted to bring Lamborghinis into NZ for some time. Lamborghini could have arranged to ship these cars to Britain for sale immediately. The factory only makes 220 Lamborghinis a year. 50% go to America and 20% go to Germany. These are the last of the handbuilt supercars. There has never been a Diablo in NZ. There are so few made in right-hand-drive."

... 'Now here's a novelty: a Korean car that costs \$110,000. Meet the SsangYong Chairman, a super-luxury sedan being imported in limited numbers. If you think the Chairman looks a bit Mercedes-like, you're right. A technology licensing agreement between the three-pointed star and SsangYong allows the Korean maker to use the underpinnings and 161kW 3.2-litre powertrain from the previous-generation E-class as a base for its luxury limo. Now here's the catch – SsangYong's agreement with Mercedes forbids it from selling the car in certain markets, including Europe and America. NZ gets the thumbs up, but the distributor isn't allowed to advertise the car for less than the price of a new Mercedes C320 – hence the hefty price-tag in the window. The distributor says he expects to sell four Chairmans this year.'

...There were 6309 new vehicles sold [in NZ last month, down 15.6%] on the same month last year according to the [LTSA]. Sales of used imported vehicles were down 18.4[%]... Toyota had 17.7[%] of the new vehicle market, Ford 15.4%, Nissan 11%, Mitsubishi and Holden 10.1[%] each, Honda 9.2[%], Hyundai 6% and Mazda 3.7[%]... Meanwhile, as the Government moves towards introducing zero tariffs, which will mean the end of vehicle assembly in N[Z, Toyota AUS] is expected to push output at its Altona plant, near Melbourne... from 80,000... up to 140,000 cars a year after 2000, making it the biggest car plant in A[US]. The increase in capacity will be part of an all-in capital investment of more than \$1.2 billion between now and 2005... Included... is a new research and development centre, Toyota's third outside Japan.

...Toyota's plans to celebrate 10 years as market leader in N[Z] are on target, despite sales of[its] new vehicles being down 9.6[%] on last year... Fifth placed Holden... is counting on the new VT Commodore to boost its [sales]. Demand for the new model has reportedly been strong since its launch in N[Z] last week.

...Holden claims its new VT Commodore will be the safest family car on N[Z] roads... Holden's manager of advanced engineering, believes only the luxury S-Class Mercedes-Benz is safer... He says General Motors has spent millions of dollars in developing the... new Commodore VT...

Developed at a cost of \$A600 million, including plant investment, the new VT series Commodore is expected to earn increasing export dollars for General Motors Holden in the expanding Asia-Pacific region. Longer, wider and slightly heavier than its VS predecessor, the completely new model is the first A[US]n-made car to be produced in right and left-hand drive. N[Z], which has traditionally been the largest export territory for A[US]n cars, will soon be overshadowed by bigger markets. Holden is to start exporting the Commodore VT to lucrative markets in the Middle East and Brazil next year. The car marks a turning point for the A[US]n motor industry, which has had a reprieve from a lowering of tariffs on fully imported cars until the year 2005. The new Commodore is being built at Holden's Elizabeth plant in Adelaide... Increased robotics at the Elizabeth plant meant that 80[%] of the welding was now totally automated. The managing director of Holden N[Z said his company]... was keen to see the Commodore return to the number one model position which it held in N[Z in 1995.

...General Motors has announced that it] will cut initial production at its new plant in Thailand by at least half because of Asia's economic slump... However, the cutback... from the planned 80,000 to 100,000 vehicles... capacity... does not mean GM will reduce the size of the plant, originally projected to require an investment of \$[NZ]750 million... The plant will be opened in mid-99, about three months later than initially scheduled... 80[% of its output has]... been earmarked for export. [In related news, 'GM was the biggest carmaker in the US last year and not just in terms of production. It spend nearly \$4 billion on advertising, compared with DaimlerChrysler's \$2.6 billion and Ford's \$2 billion, says Detroit's *Automotive News*.'

... 'GM spends more than \$80 million a week on car advertising in America alone. GM Holden averages \$112,896 a week on advertising in NZ']...

Holden Commodore has just set the standard by becoming the number one selling large car in N[Z]. (Probably due to all the standard features...)

...Ford Falcon goes on a diet to make Commodore sweat... Ford has been stung by the success of Holden's VT Commodore, which makes Ford's existing Falcon look very old indeed. Ford wants to redress the balance and has targeted the Commodore's weight gain of 130kg over the previous

VS model's 1420kg. Ford engineers are said to be trimming the Falcon so it tips the scales at about 1440kg. The weight saving should bring significant improvements in fuel economy and acceleration. Ford's stylists have... also... dipped into the global parts bin, opting for large head and tail lights... and... the... new shape cuts wind noise significantly.

...Common sense does not always prevail. If your idea of driving pleasure is a quiet drive on Sundays, that's fair enough. However, if pin sharp handling, fat feet, leather rimmed steering wheels and all that kind of stuff make your eyes light up then the Tickford enhanced XR Falcon is for you. We almost hesitate to tell you that the output of the legendary Windsor 5 litre V8 engine has been upgraded to crank out 185kW of power, and 16[-inch] five spoke alloys are now standard. All of which, to a quiet, sensitive, politically correct, new age person like your good self, should make an inordinate amount of sense.

...I REMEMBER writing a road test on a car in which I predicted that if cars kept improving at the same rate, before long there would be no need for motoring writers. Having recently driven the new Ford Mondeo, I suspect that prediction is coming true faster than I thought possible. That doesn't mean the Mondeo is the greatest car in the world – because it isn't. What it means is that year by year, new cars are becoming more... vice-free. They don't rattle... don't have torque steer anymore, the extremes of understeer and oversteer are long gone, and their brakes are seldom anything short of superb. Computer-aided design and engineering has helped car builders iron out the technical kinks to a point where in most cars there's little at which to aim criticism anymore – constructive or otherwise. Sure, there are differences. Some are more exciting than others. Some are bigger, some are more powerful. The demands of global, big-business car building means that there's no room for a mass-market manufacturer to make a "lemon" anymore, however. If a car is to sell large numbers across dozens of different countries, as Ford intends the Mondeo to, nor is there room for eccentricity. A big-selling car has to be easy to drive, fault-free, relatively unadventurous, and not quirky in any way. It has to be easy for its manufacturer to build and its owners to maintain, and it has to make sense economically... Back in the early 90s some motoring writers bemoaned the fact that the new luxury Lexus model was so quiet, so luxurious, so fuss-free it was almost boring. They were quite rightly whacked around the ears by Toyota, who ridiculed the inference that maybe they should have built in some deliberate faults, just to satisfy the critics!

...['What does the world's richest man, the Microsoft boss, drive to work? A Rolls, Bentley, Jaguar, Cadillac? Nope. A Lexus LS400, says the newspaper *USA Today*. □' A Lexus] GS300 sports sedan will be launched[in] February. It has more computer power than it took man to land on[the] Moon.

...Holden has risen to second place in passenger car sales... [B]oosted by its new Commodore VT[, t]he brand took 14.2[% of the NZ] market, behind leaders Toyota with 19.6[%].

...The new Holden VT Commodore has missed out on A[US]'s most influential motoring prize, the NRMA Best Car Award. The rejection this week has shocked A[US]ns. The NRMA (A[US]'s equivalent of N[Z]'s Automobile Association) picked Toyota's new Camry ahead of the Commodore and two other A[US]n-built cars... The judges said Toyota delivered a better product at a cheaper price. In N[Z], the V6 Camry starts at \$42,000; the V6 Commodore at \$39,845. However, specifications differ.

...Toyota, rated the best in product quality in the world motor industry, wants to do even better. The... car-maker has begun a 20[%] expansion of its global manufacturing capacity, with all expansion taking place outside Japan... Toyota's automated engine plant in North Wales is expected to be a principal supplier... for a 100,000 a year... 4 billion franc... small car plant... [in] France... due to commence production in 2001... Toyota Motor Corp says its pre-tax profit has risen 26[%] to... \$NZ4.35 billion... as growing exports to the U[S] and Europe and a weak yen made up for slack sales at home. The results were in line with forecasts... [But it] could take another 25[%] out of the cost of building new vehicles, according to... the company's managing director of finance... Toyota intends... cutting costs... gaining market share... and... doubling operating profits...

Each new US Accord is expected to earn Honda Japan around \$4000 – a sharp rise on the \$2000 profit for the outgoing model.

...The German car industry is reaping the rewards of years of painful restructuring, with its global standing intact and sales climbing. Industry organisation VDA said... although the sector still faces major difficulties, car and truck production this year should rise... to 5 million vehicles. This growth... is a victory for an industry which earlier this decade saw sales and profits dive on the back of high labour costs and weak economic growth... Stung by the poor performance of those years, German car companies undertook massive cost-cutting, slashing jobs, developing new relationships with suppliers and developing cars that are cheaper to produce. Over the past three years, the industry has invested ...\$NZ49 billion... in products and equipment... The VDA report follows half-year financial reports from companies such as Volkswagen and Mercedes-Benz, many of which reported double-digit profit rises.

...Mercedes-Benz... believes some producers of expensive vehicles will face problems. More competitors are fighting for a steady level of demand. In 1986 seven car-makers were competing in the top luxury segment, but ten years later there were 15 wanting the same business... Because of lack of growth at the top end of the market, Mercedes decided to "move down the pyramid" by introducing the new small A-Class... Meanwhile, in N[Z], new cars costing more than \$50,000 are taking a larger slice of the market. This year they account for 15[%] of total new car sales compared with 8... in 1992... [However, total sales] of new vehicles were... down... 16[% on last month, and down 2% on the same period last year]...

MERCEDES-BENZ buyers[in NZ] can't have heard the news. Sales figures say the new vehicle market is running on empty, but the luxury German marque is selling more new cars[here] than ever. Last month, 47 N[Z]ers bought a new Mercedes-Benz. Another 40-odd are going to buy one... this month... And already 65 have paid deposits on the company's new four-wheel-drive M Class – which doesn't get here until August [1998]. As a result of the demand, 'the luxury S-Class Mercedes-Benz range will soon be joined in NZ by its premium S600 model, which comes with everything that opens and shuts for \$279,000'... "I don't want to sound like we are boasting... But we are getting record inquiries and record sales. The sign-up rate for us at the moment is fantastic. The company puts the demand down to... the exposure the products are getting worldwide... But[previously] we haven't had the cars regularly available. Now that we are getting them we can be very competitive against the likes of Audi and BMW."

...['without doubt, the great Egyptian pyramids are testimony to a truly superior form of intelligence – the same can be said of the new BMW'.

... 'stands at the Detroit Motor Show change overnight so that there are always new displays next morning to keep America's television networks coming back. European shows stick to the script – what you see on the first day at Birmingham, Geneva, Paris or Frankfurt is pretty much what you get for the week.' Incidentally, i]nternational companies can hit problems when their slogans are translated into local languages. Bosses at G[M] couldn't figure why their Chevy Nova wasn't selling in South America – until they discovered that No Va in Spanish means "it won't go." And in Taiwan the Pepsi slogan "Come alive with the Pepsi generation" was transformed into "Pepsi will bring your ancestors back from the dead."

...Mercedes-Benz surrounded its stand... at the recent Tokyo motor show... with wooden poles with words of welcome written down them in various languages. But to most Japanese... the stand looked like a graveyard... [T]he poles were similar to burial messages used by Buddhists.

...German]'s Chancellor tried]... out Daimler Benz's new two-seat Mercedes Smart car during the opening of the Frankfurt Motor Show... [However,] Daimler Benz said it would delay the launch of its Smart mini-vehicle until October 1998, due to quality problems. The Smart, like the A-Class, tipped over during testing.

...Mercedes-Benz is showing its controversial A-class to potential N[Z] buyers – and assuring them that the car won't roll over at 60km/h as it did in Sweden recently... The car turned over when the driver performed a Scandinavian "moose" test – a quick, evasive turn to avoid a large animal or obstacle... The factory in Stuttgart has slowed production of the car so it can upgrade suspension and tyres and include as standard equipment an anti-skid system, which was going to be optional... [The] general manager of Mercedes-Benz in N[Z], said... the moose test... "...is a violent manoeuvre which isn't used as a benchmark. But since the modifications, the A-Class passed the test. It did so at more than 70km/h." ...The rolling... by five European motoring writers[, who all]... escaped injury... is the worst sort of publicity a car-maker could imagine. German

newspapers plastered pictures of the smashed A-Class across their pages... Subsequent tests... revealed that the tyres used on the damaged vehicle were too soft for extreme evasive manoeuvres... “We therefore immediately stopped using this make of tyre, and we[’ll] change the tyres on... about 1500 cars in all...” ...Industry analysts in Britain and Europe said that as long as future tests do not reveal similar problems, the A-Class should survive on the strength of Mercedes-Benz’ safety record and doubts about how the Swedish test was conducted... [A] Mercedes-Benz spokesman... was earlier quoted as saying the format used by the motoring writers, where the car was put through evasive lane-changing manoeuvres at about 60km/h without braking, was unrealistic. “You never drive like that in normal traffic,” he said... Last year, 10 Swedes died in road accidents involving elks and 5500 elks were killed in collisions with cars[(last year it was announced that ‘10 million birds are annually killed on British roads’)].

...The Trabant, a spluttering two-stroke... car with 1950s technology, has passed with flying colours the “moose-avoidance” test that a high-tech Mercedes-Benz model famously flunked... With about 20 horsepower, the Trabant may be the slowest car in Europe with top speeds of just over 100km/h... It was the world’s first mass-produced car with a plastic frame. East Germans had to wait up to 15 years for delivery of the cars, which have long since become a symbol of identity for thousands of easterners nostalgic for the communist past. Three million Trabis... were produced between 1957 and 1991, when the state-owned car factory closed... There are about one million still running... The... Trabant... [was] long derided as a mechanical joke... But in Stuttgart, headquarters for Daimler, not many people were laughing.

...If you are sufficiently brutal, it’s possible to turn any car on its side[so]... it would be sad if the recent publicity about a Swedish journalist managing to capsize the new A-Class... were to impact badly on a vehicle which is, on all the evidence, an outstandingly safe small car... The A-Class, with its canted engine designed to slide under the passenger compartment in a crash, incorporates many other safety features new to the small car market.

...Daimler-Benz AG said cancellations of orders for its... A-Class Mercedes subcompact[have] doubled to 2000, although analysts said the car... would likely weather the storm of negative publicity. The German automaker said on Tuesday it was suspending delivery of its A-Class... until February and would spend 100 million deutsche marks... this year and 200 million next year to relaunch a modified version of the car.

...[while independent sources were publicly stating that ‘production had been stopped due to major design faults because Mercedes cut corners from the start and existing models were to be recalled in order to be modified’, Mercedes was ‘humming over the latest crash test which rated its A-Class model the safest car in its class. It passed everything they threw at it.’

...‘The Opel research centre in Germany has started using the first of a new bunch of IBM super-computers for simulating crash tests and investigating vehicle dynamics. Each computer can perform more than 500 million calculations a second. Opel parent GM was so impressed that it will install its own in Detroit.’ By the way, a ‘two-year study found evidence that drivers were becoming ill when they drove their new cars. The study by AUS’s Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation found high levels of toxic emissions in cars for up to six months after they leave the showroom. The emissions include the cancer-causing toxin benzene, acetone, a mucosal irritant, ethylbenzene, a systemic toxic agent and xylene isomers, a foetal development toxic agent. “Sitting in a new car can expose you to levels of toxic emissions many times beyond health guideline goals. To avoid some exposure to this toxic cocktail, people who buy new cars should make sure there is plenty of outside air entering the vehicle while they drive, for at least six months.”

...‘Honda is recalling more than 500,000 passenger cars sold in Japan for defective audio equipment and a flawed engine oil seal. An electronic part of the audio unit supplied by Alpine for six models could heat up and cause speakers to catch fire. The oil seal flaw affects the Odyssey people-mover and American-made Accord. The recall doesn’t concern cars Honda NZ has sold new here, but it does affect used Honda imports.’ ● As if to prove that anything Honda can do it can do better, [t]he Ford Motor Company is voluntarily recalling more than one million vehicles in the US for safety-related defects.

...[Ford] is recalling 23,000 Galaxy people-movers in Germany. The reason? Rodents are wreaking havoc with the... under-bonnet insulation... [T]he silicone aroma attracts mice, which nibble at the insulation and scatter debris over the exhaust manifold. So far [4] fires have been recorded.

...The Euro-NCAP motor vehicle crash test... to determine the structural strength of a car’s bodywork... is again under fire from motor manufacturers... “We believe the test could actually lead to more people suffering serious injuries in road accidents than is already the case,”... says... [a] Daimler-Benz... board member... [Normal] road accidents often involve vehicles of different size and weight... Because of this, Mercedes-Benz believes larger cars need to have a more flexible structure... to absorb more impact energy... than a smaller vehicle... in order to provide adequate survival space in both vehicles... [But] NCAP tests do not take into consideration the effects of all vehicles in accidents involving two or more... In the NCAP test a car is driven against a reinforced barrier constructed from different material at high speed. Mercedes knows what has to be done to make all its vehicles compatible with the NCAP test. “That’s not the problem... If we were to simply comply with the test’s criteria, then Mercedes vehicles would doubtless excel in such tests, but more people would suffer serious injuries as a consequence.” Saab agrees. The Swedish company says it can either design and build safe cars or design cars to pass the NCAP test.

...The technical head of the A[US]n New Car Assessment Programme... (NCAP, which is jointly funded by state governments and automobile associations, [and] is based on American and European models; Japan began a similar programme in 1996)... – whose work consists of buckling in crash-test dummies [(‘that are close to a reconstruction of the human body and can cost up to \$1.5 million each’)] and sending them hurtling into immovable objects at around 60 km/h – says there are no accidents, only crashes. [He] says the NCAP has one simple aim: to make crash safety information available to consumers, which in turn gives consumers the right to make a choice and to choose safer cars. He would like to see A[US] and NZ] entering a mutually beneficial arrangement to share the expensive-to-obtain data[because]... it would make sense for the two countries to be close on safety standards... At present the information gathered by NCAP programmes is... of limited use because there is no single standard... If consumers in N[Z] are likely to be in for a long wait before any joint standards are achieved, [he] says NCAP has observed that some manufacturers in A[US] are now actively involved for the first time in “looking at crash safety and they have started to learn about what is happening to their product in the market place.” If car manufacturing trends are indeed becoming increasingly global, this can only be good news for those shelling out for what they hope will get them from A to B as safely as possible. In the meantime, [he] says, the best approach for consumers is to ask as many questions as possible of car dealers and to read whatever material is available on car safety. [Editor’s note: Material on car safety has been available since the year 1938, when the forerunner to Audi – ‘Auto Union AG – introduced front and side collisions, as well as rollover tests.’]

...Radical engineering, mixed with flair and a high level of safety have resulted in the arrival of the most significant small car in almost 40 years... [T]he man behind the \$3.75 billion A-Class project which includes a new plant, said it was a trend-setter for the future of car development... and would be regarded as an icon alongside the Volkswagen Beetle and the Mini. While expensive... [at] around \$45,000... in N[Z]... it would have more prestige than other small cars.

...Buying and running a new Mercedes-Benz in N[Z] now costs less. Since 1989 the price of a C-Class sedan has dropped by 22[%]; the E-Class is down 16[%] and the S-Class 15[%]... Parts prices have also taken a tumble... Assembly time for the... A-Class is down to 10 hours – 20 fewer than it takes to build the company’s larger models.

...Described as the most advanced car production facility in operation, the Mazda Hofu plant in western Japan has the largest metal press in the world... Mazda says producing a car now costs less. Previously it took ten months to change a manufacturing system for a new model – now it requires little more than three months... Three models can be produced on one body line and the overall production line has been halved in length...

Even though the assembly line runs slower than when the plant opened in 1982, efficiency is measured in terms of people and quality. Fewer staff are needed to operate the facility. Compared with most plants, Hoku uses three times as many robots... The body shop is now 100% automated. The... entire manufacturing process takes just 16 hours... All cars are[then] tested on a road circuit... [Speaking of car tests, there has been m]ore fallout from the prestigious NRMA... awards in A[US]. Holden is questioning NRMA... test procedures after its... all-new Commodore... failed to win the best family car award last week... "Perhaps the NRMA criteria do not match what the market is looking for in cars." But the NRMA fired back that its test procedures were exceptionally thorough. "Each car we drive covers a minimum distance of 1500km and is also performance-tested to very high standards," said a spokesman.

...Holden and Melbourne's Monash University have been studying the effects on the human body of car crashes for some years. The two recently turned their attention to the effectiveness of seatbelts. Now they are going on to bigger things – joining the A[US]n Government in a nearly \$2 million project to design the world's safest car.

...if you want what European NCAP tests say is the safest steel chariot to have a head-on crash in, you're going to have to start saving now for that Volvo S60.

...[NZ's Volvo distributor, Scandinavian Motors Ltd, has been inviting the country's movers and shakers – those people who are driving Audis, BMWs or Benzes and can shell out \$110,000 for a posh set of wheels – to drive the carmaker's new flagship, the S80 T6. A T6 has been parked at a marina south-east of Auckland. Potential owners were flown from the city by helicopter, given a drive around Maraetai Beach and Clevedon, and choppered back to the city.]

...[Volvo is appealing a decision by a German judge fining it more than \$50 million and preventing it from continuing to use the letters S, C or V to name its models. Mercedes-Benz brought the case to court, claiming it was the first carmaker to use the three letters and that customers could be confused if Volvo was to do so as well. The ruling applies only in Germany. The case brings to mind Peugeot's clever international patent many years ago enabling it to exclusively use the number "0" in the middle of three digits. That's why it has called its models the 203, 404, 405, 504 and so on. Porsche was one of the first carmakers to find out how secure Peugeot's patent was. It wanted to call its 1963 model the 901 but was forced to change it to the 911.] By the way, l]uxury convertible roadsters are as safe in a crash as big four-door sedans, says Germany's *Auto Motor und Sport*. The magazine crashed a Mercedes SLK, a BMW Z3 and a Porsche Boxster in 70km/h offset frontal accidents. The Boxster did best overall, while the Z3 fared worst.

...THE pace of advances in vehicle safety is so swift that it's only realistic to note that the average... motorist in a car seven or eight years old is at significantly more risk in an accident than the relatively few fortunates in a new or near-new vehicle... Every model launched makes significant gains on its predecessors. Anti-lock brakes, enabling the driver to steer while making an emergency stop, have become commonplace; passenger airbags now generally join driver's airbags even in cheaper models; the use of special steels and the computer analysis of vehicle structures makes today's passenger compartment... stronger but without weight penalty, while the controlled deformation of front and rear "crumple zones" to soften the initial impact of a crash has become even more sophisticated... Honda, the first Japanese company to use seatbelt pre-tensioners, has now come up with one of those "why didn't I think of that?" innovations... Its "air belt", which inflates across the chest and shoulder of its wearer upon impact, further cuts seatbelt slack, reduces pressure on the chest, serves as a cushion reducing head movement, and also absorbs kinetic energy as the inflation gases are released during deflation... [A]lready arriving... are BMW 5 and 7 Series models fitted with no less than eight air bags. While Volvo led the way in introducing side airbags, BMW now also has special airbags mounted in the A-pillar which upon side impact inflate diagonally across the side window to protect against head injuries... [T]horax bags to protect the chest are standard both front and rear... Saab... has also targeted the high incidence of neck injuries in crashes. Its new 9-5 premium class saloon incorporates a novel head restraint which upon impact moves forward to take up any space between the restraint and the passenger's head, reducing the potential for the excessive head movement which causes whiplash. Saab, 50% owned by G[M], joins Holden in concentrating... its safety research on answering the problems posed by the "real-life" accidents... [- such as] two Saab 9-5s[saying] hello... at 60km/h... [-] upon which they have extensive databases, rather than what they regard as some of the more questionable crash testing practices. The results of Holden's research[were] incorporated in the latest VT Commodore... which the company believes is at the leading edge of safety performance. [In related news, 'an Italian firm has invented a \$1500 jacket for motorcycle riders. The jacket has three airbags to cushion crashes.']

...BMW's C1 scooter is to go into production... The... company... will build up to 15,000 a year. The German Government has said riders will not have to wear helmets, thanks to the C1's roof and seatbelt. Government's in countries with poorer road safety records might not be so generous. [Meanwhile, 'sales for beleaguered carmaker Rover slumped by more than a quarter in Britain last year, according to latest figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders. Rover, which has struggled since BMW took it over in 1994, sold 143,343 units, a drop of just over 26% on the previous year. The numbers give Rover just 6.25% of the 2.2 million new cars sold in Britain last year. The disappointing statistics came despite the launch of the new Rover 75 and 25 models, which company executives said earlier were notching up encouraging sales figures. Last June, BMW pledged about £3 billion over the next five years for its investment in the British auto sector in return for a Government grant of £50 million, conditional on the German company rescuing an ailing Rover factory in central England. The Government grant is being investigated by European regulators.']

...the good news for Rover is that its parent company, BMW, is committed to future development. The bad news is several thousand Rover employees and product suppliers in Britain will lose their jobs. The British carmaker has been haemorrhaging money for years, certainly since BMW bought it from British Aerospace for more than \$2 billion.']

...The Rover Group is on target to become Britain's largest export earner... [by] the year 2000[, overtaking]... British Aerospace... Booming Land Rover sales are set to take another leap with the arrival of the Freelander which goes on sale in Britain this week... Freelander is a £450 million investment – the largest expenditure for a Land Rover model... The five-door Freelander was the first real evidence of BMW and Rover cooperation. Rover... is understood to be in the running to buy Rolls-Royce, but... [the] corporate affairs director of the Rover Group... would not comment on this development. He also said there was no truth in the rumours that Chrysler in the US was about to acquire the Rover Group. "We have a joint engine development with Chrysler for the next generation Mini but beyond that we have had no discussions with Chrysler..."

...Chrysler importer Astre (NZ) Pty Ltd has been fined \$10,000 in the Auckland District Court for making misleading claims about Jeep prices. The company admitted two charges laid under the Fair Trading Act by the Commerce Commission... [In international news,] Rolls Royce posted net income of £96 million... in the first half, compared with a loss of £179 million after one-off charges a year ago. Earnings per share rose 40%...

Word] from Britain is that Rolls-Royce [- 'the ultimate British status symbol' –]will almost certainly be sold to a German car-maker... Rolls-Royce owner Vickers, the British defence company, says it can no longer afford to invest in new models... Ford... says it isn't a player... Favourite is BMW, which has an engineering agreement to supply engines to Rolls-Royce from next year... But industry watchers haven't ruled out Fiat and VW... Key bidders also include Mercedes-Benz and Toyota. Even a Saudi prince is said to be interested... [Incidentally,] Swiss newspapers reported yesterday... [that the] Saudi Defence Minister... hired 100 Mercedes for his 300-person entourage... [while] recuperating from a knee operation at a Geneva clinic... The cars were for ministers and other top brass who flew into Geneva on Saudi planes to comfort the 72-year-old prince, the brother of Saudi Arabia's King... The Mercedes fleet was brought in on trucks directly from Germany and most of the gleaming vehicles never even left the airport parking lot.

...[the merger of Daimler Benz and Chrysler Corp resulted in a lot of things, one of which was dual head offices. So, DaimlerChrysler has leased an Airbus 320 jet to ferry employees between Stuttgart and Detroit three times a week. The plane has room for 50 passengers. Each one travels first class.]

...*Even more EXCLUSIVE* ROLLS-ROYCE Silver Seraphs and Bentley Arnages fitted with BMW engines seem likely to become two of the most exclusive cars ever made – for the wrong reasons. The parent company, Vickers, this year sold Rolls-Royce to Volkswagen, and in the wake of that BMW has announced it will discontinue supply of the V12 and V8 powerplants. Unless that decision can be overturned, the BMW-powered V12 Seraph will be the shortest-lived Rolls-Royce model ever, having started production only this year. This would make the few hundred Seraph and Arnage models that have come off the Crewe production line in England this year collectors' items. The three NZ businessmen who will soon take delivery of their right-hand-drive, \$550,000 Seraphs are presumably very happy indeed. They now have not merely a luxury car, but a gilt-edged investment. Three BMW-powered Seraphs is all NZ will get. Reports say that under its contract with Rolls-Royce, BMW can cancel the engine deal within 12 months, which may leave VW insufficient time to build new powerplants. However, if this happens VW may consider using its upcoming new V12 motor, first shown in the VW roadster, for the Seraph. Another alternative, and one it has hinted at, is to get British engine-specialist Cosworth to build new motors. Cosworth is part of the Vickers group and comes with the sale. "It is going to be interesting to see what happens," says the person who is responsible for Rolls-Royce and Bentley in NZ. "Whether BMW can actually cancel the contract with Rolls-Royce to supply the motors will obviously be a point of litigation." VW also faces some last-minute hurdles with other companies. It still has to reach an agreement with Rolls-Royce plc, the aircraft-engine manufacturer, which owns the famous marque's brand name. Rolls-Royce plc and BMW are partners in a jet-engine venture. Whatever it does, VW is sure to increase Rolls-Royce and Bentley production from the present 2000 cars a year to 10,000. It intends to build a cheaper Bentley, smaller than today's model'...

Jaguar's foray into the smaller luxury car market could well be a success, but analysts have warned that pressure to build... abroad could tarnish its image as a pedigree British carmaker. A debate is currently raging between Jaguar Cars Ltd and its U[S] parent Ford Motor Co over where to build the X400... as part of a... [plan to] double output to 200,000 by the year 2000... "If it's not built in Britain, it could be a marketing disaster..." said[the] head of European research at LMC International... But... [most analysts] were betting that Ford would win the argument to build overseas on the grounds of cheaper costs... A likely possibility would be to use an existing Ford car-building platform, which would be cheaper than building a new plant... The... decision to invest "hundreds of millions of pounds" in another new model marked Ford's confidence in Jaguar's turnaround from years of losses. Ford paid \$US2.5 billion... for Jaguar in 1989.

...[in a 'decision that echoed Renault's purchase of a 36.8% stake in Nissan Motor last year', 'GM took a 20-odd per cent share in Subaru some months ago. It said the agreement would allow both carmakers to share technology and cooperate on new models. The first of those models has been confirmed. It will be a four-wheel-drive people-mover based on the Subaru Legacy stationwagon. Expect to see it in some markets in about three years.' Meanwhile, 'German-US car giant DaimlerChrysler has knocked down the price for a stake in Japan's Mitsubishi Motors. However, DaimlerChrysler would still have a tough job making it pay, say analysts. The cost of its 34% stake in Japan's fourth-largest car maker was dropped by 10% to 202.4 billion yen on Friday as Mitsubishi became mired in a cover-up scandal. Despite the gloom, Mitsubishi Motors' stock rose 20 yen to close at 404 yen on the Tokyo Stock Exchange on Friday, partly on hopes for a better management. The task ahead at Mitsubishi was formidable, experts said. Mitsubishi's passenger car operations were very weak. Its European and AUSn sales were also sluggish. It had reported a group net loss of 23.33 billion yen in the year to March 31. Big obstacles lay ahead, said an auto analyst at Merrill Lynch Japan. For instance, Swedish truck maker Volvo AB, which has a 5% stake in Mitsubishi Motors, was in direct competition with DaimlerChrysler in the truck market'.

...Mitsubishi Motors will face criminal charges over a car defect cover-up that stretches back 20 years, the first time a carmaker will be charged for a recall violation in Japan, say Government officials. Since last month, Mitsubishi has been forced to recall 620,000 vehicles for defects, including failing brakes, fuel leaks and malfunctioning clutches. The recalls came only after Government inspectors found documents about car defects hidden in a company locker room. Last week, the company submitted to the Government its internal investigation that found workers and managers had knowingly and systematically filed away customer complaints about car defects. The embarrassing disclosure strikes a stunning contrast with the image of the nearly perfect cars, disciplined autoworkers and technological innovation that has been the pillar of Japan's carmaking reputation both at home and abroad. US federal car safety officials have also asked Mitsubishi to vouch for the quality of cars it has sold in the US. About 45,000 of the cars affected by the recent recalls were exported to the US. Consumer activists say the Japanese Government has too little muscle in cracking down on recall violations. For example, the Transport Ministry is considering filing a complaint demanding from Mitsubishi Motors a fine for up to 1 million yen per recall case. But the ministry is including only 4 verified violations. An additional case would seek a separate, one-time fine of 200,000 yen against the company for filing false reports. The ministry also says that since the violations were systematic, they have no plans to prosecute any individual Mitsubishi executives. Only one other company, Fuji Heavy Industries, has been penalised for not reporting a recall. Fuji was reprimanded but never criminally charged. Mitsubishi sales have not taken a hit from the cover-up so far. Protests against product liability are rare in Japan, boycotts even rarer. Lawsuits common in such cases in the US are drawn-out, painful processes that most people try to avoid. A 28-year-old software salesman who owns 2 Mitsubishis, shrugged off the scandal. "It's probably happening at the other automakers," he said. "But something is rotten at the core of big companies," said the secretary-general of the grassroots Consumers Union of Japan.')

...South Korea's Kia Group has asked a Seoul court to freeze its loan payments and keep its executives in place as it digs out from under... debt. The action came one week before a grace period on its debts expired... Kia is the first victim of South Korean car-makers' zealous expansion in the face of a global glut in car production and a slowing domestic market. Things will get worse over the next three years, as Samsung gradually adds the capacity to make 500,000 cars a year. By 2001, South Korea will have the capacity to make more than 6 million cars, but not much more than half of it is likely to be used... This looming over-capacity has already forced car-makers to slash prices in South Korea. Firms are suffering because they no longer enjoy cheap, hard-working labour. Factories are heavily overmanned: a South Korean car-worker assembled, on average, 26 cars last year, while somebody working at Nissan's British plant made nearly three times as many... Many analysts think that by 2000 South Korea can afford to have only two or three car-makers at best, compared with today's five... [P]oliticians want Kia to be taken over by Samsung... The prospect makes its rivals, Hyundai and Daewoo, shudder... Kia, however, would rather recover on its own.

...A Seoul court has frozen the assets of South Korea's third-biggest car-maker, Kia Motors, and two other firms in the group – Kia Steel Co and the trading firm Kia Intertrade. The decision protects the assets from creditors. The group has debts of about 9.5 trillion won.

...The South Korean creditors of Kia Motors Corporation and Asia Motors Co say they will put the sister companies into court receivership by the weekend, bringing a conclusion to a crisis... Their decision followed an announcement by[the] Finance Minister... that the Government wanted the two car makers put into receivership to... calm financial markets.

...Only a few years ago... [the company's] chairman and CEO... was known as "Korea's Iacocca", lionised for having taken Kia Motors from near-bankruptcy in the early 80s to glory as South Korea's second-largest carmaker... No more. [He] has stumbled, rather grandly... [from] star to scapegoat. In October, the Government finally stepped in, pushing Kia into receivership and [its chairman] out of a job. But by then the damage was done. The confidence of the world's investors was shattered... It is an ignominious end to a career that started at Kia 40 years ago, when [he] began work making bicycles. Kia's founder wanted the company to become a carmaker... Kia's record is miserable. But with eight large conglomerates having collapsed in South Korea this year, there is plenty of blame to apportion. In the wreckage, South Koreans will look for a new approach to business... Had [its chairman] known when to slow down and when to leave, Kia might have pointed them in the right direction. Instead, the stubborn [chairman] has come to stand for South Korea's difficulties. His downfall might have made reform remoter than ever... [●] Ssangyong Motor Co says it and its creditor banks have agreed on a takeover by the giant Daewoo Group. Two trillion won... of its debts would be transferred to Daewoo, with the remaining 1.4 trillion won staying with the Ssangyong Group.

...[‘at a union office of Daewoo Motors, just outside of Seoul, a big “wanted” poster hangs on a wall. It promises a \$US500 reward for information on the whereabouts of the company’s former chairman. Next to a picture of the white-haired former chairman is a list of his alleged misdeeds: bribery, embezzlement of \$US20 billion, destruction of family lives and paralysis of the national economy. Daewoo Motors is bankrupt and up for auction, and the union blames the former chairman of the sprawling conglomerate. Daewoo was South Korea’s second-largest company before becoming swamped by debt. This week prosecutors investigating Daewoo’s collapse indicted 34 former executives and auditors – but not the chairman. They said that because they did not know where he was, it was impossible to request extradition. The news did not go down well with Daewoo workers – 1750 of whom were laid off last week. On Tuesday they hurled firebombs and set ablaze police buses blocking a march by 1000 protesters at the main plant. Since the 65-year-old former chairman fled South Korea, he’s been seen only a few times – once at a mansion in Nice, and more recently at a golf course in Florida. Glimpses of the former chairman living the good life infuriate Daewoo’s workers and a three-man “arrest squad” has flown to Paris to search for him. “We will search the whole world to find and punish him,” says a union leader. Three years ago a group of business professors heaped praise on him in a book, describing him as “a visionary with passion and belief.” The former Daewoo patriarch is, in some ways, the classic fallen hero. Until recently, he and his company were a huge success story – a symbol of Korea’s dramatic transformation from an impoverished, war-torn economy into a world powerhouse. The chairman’s story is legend. In 1967 he started a small trading house in a Seoul back alley with little money and five employees. Thirty years later, Daewoo had grown into a global empire with 320,000 workers in 110 countries. But Daewoo proved to be a house of cards. It was a *chaebol*, a favoured conglomerate nurtured by the South Korean Government with contracts and cheap money. The chairman built the company through acquisitions, borrowing heavily to buy troubled companies that his management team could not turn around. His strategy of building market share, rather than profits, failed. And he never learned to say no to a deal. Even when both Daewoo and the Korean economy were sinking, the chairman bought the ailing Ssang Yong Motors. It was \$US2 billion in debt. By the time the game was up, Daewoo’s debts totalled \$US80 billion. To cover the red ink, prosecutors believe the chairman conspired to inflate Daewoo’s assets (and reduce its liabilities) by \$US40 billion – which, if proven, would be the largest book-keeping fraud in history. The word Daewoo means “Great Universe.” Daewoo made everything from cars to TVs to ships and computers. Watching his empire and his reputation grow, the chairman may have come to believe he was invincible. Renowned for his work ethic, he travelled constantly and made Daewoo a major corporate force in Russia and China’]...

Production of cars in China is expected to jump from the current 200,000 units a year to 1.5 million within the next decade. By the year 2010, [annual] sales of new motor vehicles in China will have risen to 3.5 million units.

...[‘Malaysian carmaker Proton, looking at the enormous growth potential in China, notes that China has 11 million millionaires.’

...‘so you think world vehicle production is confined to a handful of countries, eh? A French survey shows that 28 countries build passenger cars and commercial vehicles. 50% of them build more than 1 million vehicles annually, with the top four being the US (11,773,082), Japan (10,049,792), Germany (4,952,000) and France (4,517,900). AUS (285,200) was placed 22nd.’]

...New car sales in A[US] this year are expected to top 710,000. The market is as buoyant as it’s ever been. Hyundai, Honda, Subaru and Kia... all [reported] a record... The N[Z] market will struggle to reach 62,000 new car sales in 1997. Point to ponder: A[US] has about five times NZ’s population and nearly 12 times our new car sales.

...[‘*Love American Style* A columnist recently said that the automobile is the “handiest tool ever devised for the pursuit of that unholy, unwholesome, all-American trinity of sex, speed and status.” Which leads us to the latest American bumper sticker: “You’ll Get Me Out of My Car When You Pry My Cold, Dead, Foot from the Accelerator.” Americans sure love their cars. There are more than 200 million in the US, and more cars registered in Los Angeles than people.’ Speaking of car registration, w]e still have x, y, and z to go but the present letter-number combinations of [NZ’s] number-plates are running out fast. Transport officials calculate that combinations in this series of vehicle number plates will be exhausted at the turn of the century. The most likely successor to the two-letter and four-number combination is a switch to three numbers and three letters. This will make ZZ9999 the last plate in the line and... subject to legislative approval... AAA1 the first of the new series... [It] will create 17 million new plates, which should last for about 30 years... But those hoping to reserve ZZ9999 or AAA1 for themselves are too late. They were both sold for about \$300 the year after personalised plates came on the market, in 1987... The existing plate series – which is now at the WLs – was introduced in 1962 and since then six million plates have been issued... for cars, trucks and buses... at an average of 200,000 a year... and about two million of those are still on the road... That rate is expected to increase to about 250,000 a year... The... three-letter configuration is bound to create some interesting words, but... the Motor Registration Centre... would have the right to withdraw anything that was offensive or deemed unacceptable... And when the new number plate series runs out? It’s not something... the centre’s general manager... plans to be around to worry about. “They’ll last a lifetime... and then someone else can figure it out,” he said. [● ‘40 years ago, just 38,000 NZers owned motor vehicles.’ Today, ‘NZ is in the top-10 of car-owning countries. Lebanon heads the list, with 732 cars for every 1000 people. Brunei comes next with 576, followed by Luxembourg (566), Italy, (528), Germany (506), AUS (488), Iceland (487), the US (487), NZ (470) and Switzerland (469). Britain, despite its huge new-car market, has just 371 cars for every 1000 people, behind Slovenia with 384, Finland with 378 and Japan with 376’ – despite its huge carmaking industry. ‘The distribution of cars worldwide has changed over the years. In 1950, the US had 75.7% of the world’s cars, Europe had 18.8%, Canada 3.7%, Japan 0.3%, and the rest of the world 1.5%. In 1990, America had 20.1%, Europe 38.9%, Japan 27.8%, Canada 4.0% and the rest 9.3%.’ ‘Auckland’s vehicle fleet is growing at 5% a year’.]

...Next time you sit in an Auckland traffic jam, ponder the fact that the world’s car population will soon reach 500 million[(up from ‘250 million in 1970’)]. And this excludes trucks, motorcycles, tuk-tuks and rickshaws. When... nations like China and India adopt Western-size vehicle fleets, car numbers will double – and the environment will be threatened. - 1997

Auckland motorway traffic increased tenfold between 1989 and 1994 and [the Auckland City Council manager of transport planning] says that traffic is “threatening the quality” of the city’s life and environment.

...Long-standing plans for a new four-lane highway in eastern Auckland have run up against a 500-strong lobby group... Schemes for a highway from Tamaki Drive to Panmure, following the railway for much of the route, have been on the planners’ books for 30 years... Much of the land needed for the route, worth about \$16 million, is already owned by the [Auckland City C]ouncil or the Government. The council has sought to preserve the route, which crosses Hobson Bay, Orakei Basin and Purewa Creek, with a roading designation in the district plan but the[lobby] group has appealed to the Planning Tribunal. The two are also arguing before the Auckland Regional Council, whose proposed coastal plan, if not altered, would upset possible reclamation in one of the waterways to be crossed. The highway would need a new reclamation or more likely a concrete pile structure, beside the railway across the waterways... The[lobby] group is also concerned about the noise and visual pollution of a road, and the environmental damage its reclamations or concrete pile structures would cause to waterways... However... the road had strong support... [because building it is] essential to ease traffic congestion, improve road safety, and to help the area’s economic development. These issues outweighed the environmental concerns... At peak times, motorists faced delays of up to 20 minutes on Kepa Rd, Orakei. Residents were particularly concerned about heavy vehicles through the area, although counts showed trucks make up less than 2[%] of the 22,000 vehicles using Kepa Rd daily. Existing main roads could not be widened sufficiently... [The Auckland City Council’s transport planning manager] believes the road, if it proceeds, is at least five years away... The Auckland City Council recently watered down its resolve to get on with the \$120 million job... Although it would ease congestion through the eastern corridor... it would boost the rush-hour crush at the city end by 40[%].

...About 300 people attended a... Stop the Eastern Motorway... meeting last night... The meeting... chairman... wanted a “death blow” dealt to the... 8.6km, four-lane road... for reasons including the environmental damage it would wreak on the waterways it crossed, its escalating cost, and the disincentive it would be to the development of public transport... [By the way, a NZ] First spokesman wants... to tackle a big infrastructure project – such as a four-lane motorway running the length of the North Island... [Such a] motorway would not only mean more efficient transport and jobs but would also “excite people about N[Z] technological prowess.” ...the[party’s] associate spokesman on finance and revenue... also suggested a tunnel between Wellington and Marlborough.

...A proposal for a \$40 million... 650m bypass... tunnel to relieve traffic congestion in Newmarket has been scrapped. It was dropped by an Auckland City Council committee despite a recommendation by traffic planners that a \$100,000 study be carried out... The Mayor of Auckland... said the proposal would be fraught with difficulties – it was expensive, there was nowhere for traffic to go once it emerged from the tunnel and it would meet hefty opposition from affected property owners... [However, the] way for demolition of [an] old corner pub was cleared yesterday by a... Council decision to iron out the dog-legged intersection at Symonds St and Khyber Pass Rd. The city’s traffic planners say traffic flow will be improved for 12 years before it is clogged again by cars. But if nothing is done, commuters could have to wait at the lights for 15 minutes. The decision came in spite of last-minute pleas from local business and residents’ groups, public transport campaigners and the Auckland branch of the Historic Places Trust for the council to wait until a public meeting had been held on the issue... The local groups say the council’s plans for eight lanes east of the intersection[that leads to Newmarket] will create a motorway and destroy the character of the area... [V]ehicles now waited at the intersection for 1m 20s... The new design aims for a 43s delay... A senior traffic planner... said the solution was also relatively cheap at \$3.5 million, with an application to Transfund expected to recoup half of that.

...A \$6.5 million blow-out in the Auckland City Council’s roading budget has led to 12 projects being deferred... The largest was the \$3.9 million fixing of the under-strength Sylvia Park bridge at Great South Rd, which must be done to handle traffic from the new south-eastern arterial... More than half of the cost overrun is the result of a \$3.4 million increase in this year’s budget for the south-eastern arterial route... because of inadequate monitoring of the project’s cashflow. Overall, the arterial will cost \$2 million more than the expected \$37.5 million, with additional management costs accounting for \$1 million... The council also has not received roading subsidies it expected from Transfund, according to a report to the works and services committee.

...Transfund, an arm of Transit N[Z] dedicated to purchasing roading and transport services, told... the Minister of Transport... in briefing papers that the possible growth in urban traffic requires serious consideration... Traffic volumes could increase 50[%] in urban areas in the next 20 years... if present fuel prices and traffic growth remain the same in real terms... and cities would not be able to cope...

N[Z]’s... under-funded and... overused... transport system... works like this. The Government pays[for] the cost of state highways. If they need repair, the Government fixes them. But the moment that state highway veers away and an intersecting road heads off in its own direction, the local ratepayers are responsible for the wear and tear. More than that – they have to pay to build it in the first place. Central government will subsidise part of the cost. An example of this is the Ewen bridge, recently constructed a little south of the Hutt City centre, across the Hutt River. The Government paid less than half of the cost. However, forty thousand vehicles a day stream across [i]t... I haven’t stopped every car in a day and quizzed the drivers to find their home address but I know that many, perhaps most, of th[em]... came from outside the rating area for Hutt City.

...A second Auckland harbour crossing has been put on the “back burner” for too long, says the Mayor of North Shore City... [B]ecause of the problems involved, it had been put in the too-difficult basket... But [he] said now was the time to begin thinking about options... With the strong sustained growth of the North Shore and Rodney County, the situation would be critical 10 years from now... He had asked Transit N[Z] to look at the Birkenhead-Meola Reef route as a “serious option” because it could be the cheapest and could be linked to the North-western Motorway[(which leads to the upper-harbour or Greenhithe Bridge that is, technically, a *second Auckland harbour crossing*!)]... Getting the necessary consents could be an uphill battle... Apart from the cost of a new bridge (which... would be between \$800 million and \$1 billion), there would be the environmental cost... [The mayor] foresaw two to three years of public debate before even a willingness arose to undertake the project... [The first harbour] bridge is not the problem. It has a peak capacity of about 10,000 vehicles an hour, theoretically even higher... About 8800 vehicles an hour cross the[eight-lane] bridge during peak times and that has not changed since 1987. A yearly traffic growth of 2.5 to 2.6[%] is met through a lengthening of the traditional peak period... It is the bridge approaches which cannot cope. No more vehicles can get through... “spaghetti junction” at peak times... In the morning, city-bound... queues back up five or six kilometres... Last year the regional land transport committee decided a second crossing would not be built until at least 2011.

...The North Shore City Council was told yesterday that traffic congestion and delays would become unacceptable to motorists without the proposed northern “super highway.” ...The... \$135 million State Highway 1 realignment project... is to begin at the Northern Motorway interchange at Greville Rd, south of Albany township, and extend 26km to... the Puhoi turnout... Transit N[Z]... managers said the existing highway and the Greville Rd routes could not cope with the present traffic congestion and delays would increase rapidly... The most substantial delays... occur during holiday periods when queues extend for several kilometres and it takes motorists up to five hours to get through... [The situation isn’t helped by the fact that] the existing routes had poor accident records, particularly in the case of State Highway 1 where the rate was twice the national average. The new road would be significantly safer... The... four-lane road is expected to meet the region’s needs for 25 years... [T]he entire project will be finished by 2001-2002... Once the new road is complete, the existing State Highway 1 will continue to be used as a local road... The Environment Court is expected to take up to four weeks to hear the appeal of an Orewa farmer... against the highway’s proposed route along the boundary of his farm... [Meanwhile, r]apid progress is being made on the 6.8km Pokeno-Mercer State Highway 1 realignment... Transit’s regional highways engineer... said the job had run into huge problems because of the weak, wet terrain the four-lane highway was being built on... Because of the terrain problems the cost is now expected to be about \$23.5 million. The highway begins at the bottom of the Bombay Hills[south of Auckland,] and the Pokeno bypass leg should be completed by[next] March or April... The divided highway would replace a section of State Highway 1 on which there had been many fatal accidents... The realignment project is also changing the character of the region, with a lot of old established small enterprises fearful that the loss of passing traffic spells the end of business[for Pokeno].

...A Mt Wellington road was closed for two hours yesterday morning after a truck carrying containers of toxic chemical lost part of its load. About 30 litres of a dilute mixture of chromic and phosphoric acid spilled for 75m along Sylvia Park Rd, in an industrial area of the east Auckland suburb. A witness to the spill... said the 20-litre plastic containers of acid began dropping off the truck as it came through a roundabout... The truck’s driver was alerted to the spill by the driver of a truck behind, who blocked the traffic and helped to pick the containers off the road... [B]oth drivers and a passenger were taken to hospital as a precautionary measure after handling the leaking bottles. They were later discharged. The acid, used to treat metals, can cause nausea and skin irritation. The Otahuhu Fire Service used a pumice-like material to absorb the acid, which was then swept up to ensure it did not enter the stormwater drains. Police said the driver of the truck was charged with failing to secure a load. The charge carries a maximum penalty of \$2000 and possible loss of licence.

...Heavy trucks account for virtually all the damage inflicted on[NZ] roads. Yet on local roads they pay only about half of that cost in the form of... road user charges... So... ratepayers are subsidising... the truck operators... It seems to me unfair.

...After three rounds of talks aimed at breaking a deadlock, the... French Government said yesterday that a mediator should be appointed to help to end a six-day protest by truck drivers... In the meantime, unions called on truckers to continue staging blockades across the country. The

companies have agreed to allow truckers to retire at 55 instead of 60 but they want the state to foot the bill. Unions said talks were stuck over... working hours and payment for all working hours, including time spent loading. The P[M]... has called on both sides to end the dispute quickly.

...France's economy faces a further battering after the breakdown yesterday of Government-mediated talks between striking truck drivers and employers to end an 11-day dispute... And snow and sleet in several areas of northern and eastern France, including some Paris suburbs, brought new misery to motorists trying to find a way around the truckers' blockades on main roads and at key industrial sites... Truckers have demanded a pay rise of up to 23[%] but employers have offered only 1[%]... The truckers vowed to maintain... about 250 roadblocks around the country... The roadblocks have forced some factories to close and cut supplies of perishable goods ranging from fish to fruit... Farmers reported shortages of animal feed as grain shipments were hit. The strike has also disrupted mail deliveries... Barricades around petrol depots and 12 of 13 refineries across France have closed up to 2000 of the country's 18,000 petrol stations... School buses stopped running in the south-eastern Drome department because of lack of fuel... Petrol rationing was imposed in some areas so supplies could be maintained for fire engines and ambulances. Tempers flared when frustrated motorists saw official cars drive up to petrol stations and receive precious fuel while they were denied... The police were called to several petrol stations where irate motorists refused to allow emergency vehicles, including doctors' cars, to jump queues... The strike and a parallel one in Denmark[have] caused problems in other European countries... The Danish truck drivers are fighting for higher allowances for working outside of Denmark. They receive 150 kroner (\$36.72) a day, a sum which is scheduled to be abolished on January 1, 1997.

...British police yesterday diverted about 800 freight lorries into holding areas near the ports of Dover and Ramsgate because the French truckers' strike had spread traffic chaos across the channel. The trucks entered the ports only as places became available on a ferry. Police put the delay for freight leaving Dover at 12 hours... [● A British lorry driver has been] charged with five counts of death by dangerous driving after [the arm of a] digger he was transporting swung out and sliced tops off oncoming cars[(a similar accident has killed a girl walking along an Auckland footpath).

...an] 11-year-old girl die[d and 3] people were injured when [a 7]-tonne truck crashed into their car at [a]toll booth on [the]M25 near Dartford... TRUCK drivers lifted most of their roadblocks across France after unions signed a deal with employers... to end a 12-day strike... 2 1/2 hours after talks ended at the Transport Ministry, the number of roadblocks had fallen to 46... "Our feeling is that our profession has won dignity and recognition in these 12 days of struggle," said[a] spokesman for the biggest union, the Socialist-led CFDT... Negotiators for the truckers had signed five agreements covering retirement at 55... for drivers with 25 years' service, sick pay, travel expenses, union rights and a ban on Sunday driving... The unions said that[the agreements] would be equivalent to at least a 10% pay rise... [P]olitical commentators said [the strike had highlighted the PM's] weakness, with both sides leaning on the government to sign cheques to settle the dispute. The state made most of the concessions in the private sector dispute by agreeing to cut payroll taxes on employers and help finance early retirement for truckers. It also had to step in to resolve the working hours issue by decree... The strike in the crucial pre-Christmas commercial period cost European food and haulage industries tens of millions of dollars a day, prompting protests from France's neighbours. It stranded up to 14,000 Spanish trucks and left about 90% of Portugal's total truck fleet idle. Belgian ports were clogged by British-bound lorries avoiding France... [The PM], calling for a rapid return to normal, said: "I am happy that the efforts made by all negotiating partners are now apparently crowned by success. I think a balanced solution has been found." But even as the truckers began going home, unions for oil industry workers said they would consult their members about staging their own disruptions at refineries across the country to press their demands over pay, retirement age and job cuts. That came as... the... industry ministry said up to 10,000 petrol stations... had run dry or were about to close and it would take two to three days for supplies to resume fully... [In local news, a]most half the ambulances in the central North Island have been struck by engine failure following the change to unleaded petrol. St John Ambulance staff believe the same problem will gradually affect about 300,000 car owners – 15[%] of all motorists – who use a recommended additive called Valvemaster to replace the missing lead. But oil companies and Valvemaster said last night there was no evidence that the ambulance engine failures had been caused by either unleaded petrol or the additive, although BP said it was willing to investigate further... The Valvemaster project manager... said if anything the detergent properties of Valvemaster would help to prevent sticking... About 30 Bedford ambulances in St John's Midland fleet have been affected by valve sticking, which has caused engines to misfire and has bent the rods which push the valves open. The volunteer ambulance organisation estimates it has spent \$5000 fixing serious... push-rod... damage... in three ambulances and installing \$340 fuel-conditioning units in all the Bedfords to stop the problem. The Midland fleet manager... said... "Our vehicles are quite high mileage – 5000 or 6000km a month – and that's probably why we've struck the problem first in comparison to someone having an old HG Holden out in his shed. It'll catch up for sure with people who are running older cars. It might be[next] year, it might be the year after but once they start knocking up some miles it'll start to show." Continuing problems with unleaded petrol have also affected jet boat operators around Queenstown, who are lobbying the Government to allow them to use a mix of petrol and aviation fuel. Kawarau Jet Services said yesterday that two jet boat engines had been wrecked by high speed detonation problems in the new fuel. The company's workshop and development supervisor... said the boats were now running on two-thirds petrol, one-third aviation fuel. St John Ambulance and Kawarau Jet Services are served by Mobil, which could not be contacted for comment last night.

...Like drivers everywhere, Queenstowners travelling long-distance often put up notices in backpackers', offering rides on a share-petrol basis. But enforcement officials are determined to stamp out the practice – as demonstrated by the revelation this week of an undercover [']God Squad' sting which cost an unsuspecting Queenstown man \$1,300. The police commercial vehicle investigation unit (CVIU) sting... could have been worse – his car could have been confiscated. CVIU went to great lengths to entrap the Queenstown, who had a permanent card on noticeboards around town offering a fortnightly ride to Invercargill for \$12. According to the Queenstown man – who won't be named, to protect his reputation – the elaborate charade started with a phone call from an unknown man wanting a ride for "his niece". But when the "niece" was dropped off in Invercargill, the driver got a sudden tap on his window. "You're busted, buddy," said a plainclothes cop wearing a police cap. The man claims this undercover policeman – and another – had tailed him all the way south, a drive of more than two hours... [H]e was "devastated and stunned" by CVIU's action. He can't believe they went to such lengths to entrap him for a victimless offence. If he'd been approached and told he was breaking the law he'd have stopped immediately, he told *MOUNTAIN SCENE* this week. [The s]enior constable... in charge of the Invercargill vehicle unit who made the arrest, says CVIU got a complaint from a reputable Queenstown organisation about the offender touting for business[, and]... the only way police could prove the case was to put someone in the vehicle for the ride. "What it (the law) is designed to do is keep the rat-bags out of the industry." ...Christchurch police said drivers who accepted ANY offering at all from passengers could theoretically be prosecuted. Asked by *MOUNTAIN SCENE* if accepting even a bag of lollies in return for a ride would be illegal, [a Christchurch]... senior sergeant... said that could be considered charging for freight. "It depends on how far you want to take it to the extreme," he said... "Yes, we look after the local operators – you bet. We've got to protect the tourist industry and the licensed operators..." Other Queenstowners this week described the CVIU sting as smacking of Al Capone tactics. [A]Queenstown backpacker pioneer... says he was incredulous on first hearing the driver had been convicted and fined without a warning[, while a]... Queenstown tour operator and prominent conservationist... said he thought it was justice gone wrong. For as long as cars have been on the road, drivers have shared fuel costs with passengers. This wasn't a case of a commercial business, more a car pooling arrangement, [the operator] said. Some local authorities, including Auckland, encouraged pooling. The use of police resources – the woman in the car, and two officers tailing the unsuspecting driver for two hours – was "absolutely pathetic,"... [Speaking of tailing drivers, in Britain three people have died following a] hundred-vehicle pile-up at [the]junction of M1 and A11...

[British] police blame speeding drivers for mayhem on M42 at Alvechurch in which three die and 62[are] injured in fog.

...[‘one person died and about 80 were injured in a 150-car pile-up in thick fog in eastern Spain’. In further news from overseas,] Calcutta rickshaw owners are to stage a one-day protest strike tomorrow over attempts to ban their vehicles from the city’s roads. The Marxist state government has proposed to outlaw the slow-moving vehicles, a symbol of the... Indian city, because... [the] estimated 30,000-plus rickshaw pullers... clog up traffic.

...Ponsonby residents upset by a planned \$45 parking permit have been urged to consider creative solutions to street congestion. Property owners in the fashionable Auckland suburb face parking restrictions under an Auckland City Council plan designed to accommodate residents and visitors to Ponsonby Rd cafes. The plan covers the length of the busy road... and a short way into St Marys Bay. Residents near the main roads would be required to buy... annual parking permits. One permit a household is proposed, and the fee will cover council administration costs. The system already operates in [three Auckland suburbs] and parts of Wellington. The chairman of the Western Bays community board... accepted yesterday that the plan created problems for households with more than one vehicle... [Being an old suburb, many of the roads are narrow with little or no off-street parking, and a lot of Ponsonby houses contain groups of flatters instead of families – although families are just as likely to possess more than one car. The chairman] thought ideas could emerge from consultation over the plan... “It might not be a perfect system but we have to start somewhere.” ...Council officials say the use of permits is the fairest solution in a neighbourhood with limited off-street parking. They argue that households with two or more cars may be taking parks from neighbours[, and]... that Ponsonby residents were getting off cheaply... Auckland University studies suggested that the land value of Ponsonby parking spaces could be as much as \$10,000. A fairer annual rent for space would be closer to \$1000[– which is approximately the price of a new bicycle (and accessories), an inner-city congestion solution.]

...A West Auckland cycleway which ends abruptly at a busy motorway off-ramp poses a death threat to cyclists. Many motorists whizzing down the Waterview off-ramp are unaware that cyclists might be crossing at the bottom of the hill [in order to] continue along Great North Rd... Work on the cycle way stopped two years ago and plans for its completion are in limbo. Auckland City Council’s senior transportation planner... says the cycleway... was never completed because of reconstruction of the motorway off-ramp. [The planner] says the council wants to use nearby Unitec land for the cycleway but the tertiary institution is stalling... Unitec’s director of facilities... says the tertiary institution is not being “deliberately obstructive.” Unitec administrators are concerned that the proposed cycleway would require making a hole through an existing wall and would take cyclists close to a recreation area used by students. Others suggest the institution’s main concern is that access through the north wall will increase the risk of psychiatric patients from the Mason Clinic escaping into Unitec grounds. The other option is for the council to build a cantilevered pathway over the off-ramp for cyclists and pedestrians... the cost[of which] is estimated at between \$100,000 and \$500,000. Nothing is likely to be done before the council produces a cycle and pedestrian strategy at the start of next year... “The underlying thing is to encourage cycling and to provide safe opportunities around the city,” [the assistant planner] says. Meanwhile, cyclists will continue to risk their lives at the Waterview off-ramp. The debate over the Waterview cycleway reflects the general state of planning and design for cycling in Auckland. No one is prepared to take the blame for Auckland’s lack of user-friendly cycle routes; everyone is quick to criticise others. Motorists tend to hate cyclists, cyclists hate motorists, and cycle lobby groups blame local authorities... Local authorities try to appease all parties – and fail... Cycle Action, says no consideration is given to cyclists’ needs... [T]he solution Aucklandwide is to make lanes wider so that cyclists can travel safely[, but]... Auckland’s traffic lay-out makes it difficult... [The ARC] is trying to produce cycle-friendly maps... [A cycling] network should provide as direct a route as possible for cycling commuters. Recreational bikeways are likely to be away from roads... Before Auckland starts developing any strategy it would do well to look at overseas experience... In other countries, like Germany, millions of dollars has gone into building cycle routes[(‘bike lanes run parallel with footpaths all over the wide streets of Munich – they even have their own traffic lights’). Several AUS]n states are streets ahead of Auckland in promoting cycling... Victoria puts \$NZ2.25 million a year into recreational cycle routes and \$1.12 million into cycle routes along Melbourne roads. Melbourne-based organisation Bicycle Victoria is lobbying for the metropolitan fund to rise to \$7.86 million... Around 50[%] of adult Melburnians own a bicycle... Cities like Brisbane (which has more than 300km of cycleways) have bike routes alongside their rivers... [and land b]eside motorways is ideal for building a comprehensive cycling network... INTERNATIONAL groups like Critical Mass have opted for confrontational methods to show motorists that cyclists are legitimate road users. The group raised the heckles of drivers in March when Mass riders took up lanes in central Auckland in the evening rush-hour.

...[‘Dirty war waged on cyclists “Wild westies” and teenage hoon drivers are out to get cyclists on Waitakere roads. In just one weekend last month, two cyclists ended up at North Shore Hospital with injuries relating to road rage. One had a hunting slug pellet, fired by a passing motorist, surgically removed from his backside. The other had gravel extricated from his buttocks after leaping out of the way of a car. The manager of Hedgehog Bikes in New Lynn often heard of cyclists out west having cans of fruit thrown at them. A senior salesman at Pins Cycles in Kelston knew of cyclists in the area who had been knocked off their bikes. Some of the cyclists had recently started taking down the numberplates of dangerous drivers. But Henderson police said they did not get many complaints from cyclists about motorists’ behaviour. Waitakere City Council’s road safety coordinator was also unaware of the cyclists’ concerns. An Auckland cycling club president said he did not believe cyclists in the eastern and southern parts of Auckland were being targeted by motorists.’]

...IF safety is your concern don’t cycle on Auckland’s roads. More than 1000 cyclists are injured every year on the city’s roads – a high number given that around 15,000 people are estimated to bike to work or school regularly. Children are twice as likely to end up[in] hospital after an accident. Last year 154 children aged between 5 and 14 were admitted to Auckland hospitals after falling or being knocked from bikes. Eleven cyclists were killed in N[Z] last year and around 340 made injury claims totalling more than \$1.2 million. The Accident Compensation Corporation is concerned. In 1994 it issued bumper stickers to cycle retailers, cyclists and motorists as part of its Look 4 Bikes campaign. Last year the corporation launched another campaign... aimed at ensuring cyclists’ helmets fit snugly. It’s against the law not to wear a helmet. Failure to do so incurs a \$35 penalty and serious infringements can result in a district court fine of \$500. A 1995 [ARC] survey shows 86[%] of Auckland cyclists wear a helmet. Apart from the law, you’re mad not to wear one. Most fatal accidents are the result of crashes between cars and cyclists. Cyclists’ injuries tend to be severe – around 50[%] involve head injuries. - 1996

Most cycle helmets are being worn wrongly, four years after publication of a [LTSA] booklet detailing how to wear them, says a safety campaigner... [T]he figure of 90[%]... of... school pupils... wearing them wrongly had not changed since 1994... This is keeping the number of cyclist head injuries high... She wants retailers trained in her fitting method, which she says is backed by medical specialists, scientists and school principals. Police should also be trained to teach schoolchildren... [how to wear their helmets correctly. Incidentally, j]obless people in Whangarei are being pushed to get on their bikes[by an] Employment Service... scheme[that] will see... new bicycles handed out... To qualify for one of the \$370 bikes, the person must first prove that mobility is a major obstacle to full-time employment. Those who qualify are issued with a bicycle once they start work, but if they leave the job within three months they lose the bike. Otherwise it is theirs to keep... Cyclists are also provided with wet-weather gear, a cycle helmet and spare chain. They are... taught road safety... and... shown how to maintain their bikes[, although a]... bicycle shop has... offered free monthly maintenance checks... [T]he service’s Whangarei branch came up with the idea because about 30[%] of the city’s 2400 unemployed claimed lack of transport was their main barrier to getting a job... The... pilot programme[, which] is on trial in the city for 10 months... has funding for 100 bikes... and, if successful, could be extended to other parts of the country.

...Auckland transport planners are aiming to cut the danger factor in cycling around the city... The council's strategic plan says it is committed to developing walking and cycling as modes of transport and recreation... Auckland City's works chairman... said 50 years of dominance by the car had reduced cycling and walking levels in the city to insignificance compared with vehicle use and the council wanted to redress the imbalance... 2[%] of the 315,000 population... [in] Auckland City... (in 1991) cycled to work and 7[%] walked... There is 19km of cycleways. Of this, 14.4km is shared with pedestrians and only 7.5km is feasible for commuting. There is 2312km of footpaths... About \$720,000 would be spent on walkways and \$120,000 on cycle measures in the[plan's] first year but no estimates have been prepared for future years... Several "strategic link" paths for cycles and pedestrians would in future years cut across and around the city, often through green areas, or beside railways and motorways, and they would have lights. "Regional links," proposed along arterial roads, would be the frame of the cycling network. They would have wide kerb-side lanes, cycle advance lines, smooth gutter edges, and regular road sweeping... The Automobile Association, however, said local authority proposals in several areas to improve cycle safety and allow cyclists to move more quickly through built-up area[s] raised serious questions about the safety of other road users. One was who would have the right of way when motorists or pedestrians were using the same section of road or crossing a cycle route... 83 cyclists and 183 pedestrians were injured in accidents[in Auckland City] in 1995.

...Four pedestrians have been killed on the Southern Motorway near Papatoetoe... since the Manukau City Council closed a subway... An Otara woman whose 12-year-old son was killed in October[last year] trying to dash between high-speed traffic to visit a friend in Papatoetoe wants the council to reconsider... [and] has gathered about 2000 signatures on a petition... In November 1994, the council's resource management committee narrowly voted to shut the subway, amid accusations of racism. Some Papatoetoe residents saw the subway as a source of crime and vandalism in their suburb. People on the Otara side regarded it as a vital accessway, particularly for children attending Papatoetoe High School. The alternative crossings involve diversions of several kilometres. Since the death of [the 12-year-old]... Transit has installed barbed wired-topped fences around the subway but children can easily bypass these by climbing across the lower fences of neighbouring properties... [By the way, the] child in Social Welfare care who was hit by a... four-wheel-drive vehicle... while wandering on an Auckland motorway is the sister of another girl critically hurt in a similar accident almost four years ago. Both children are intellectually handicapped. The child hurt on Sunday is mute and, although she is 12, has an intellectual age of 18 months... [She] left Starship children's hospital yesterday... The... girl and her nine-year-old sister... were left behind when their parents returned to the Cook Islands to study theology in 1991... [The younger girl] was taken back to the islands by her father after her accident... [The older] girl... was living with an aunt... but... ran away... on Sunday...

A schoolgirl aged 12 has played a major part in securing safer roads outside rural schools in the Western Bay of Plenty. The district council will spend \$80,000... this financial year... [after the girl] presented a 600-signature petition... Her stand was in memory of her close friend Sammi-Ann Rikihana, who was killed last year while walking near Te Puna School.

...Community Support Road Safety Ltd has been contracted by the Safer Streets Trust, which funds school visits by police education officers. The... Auckland fundraising company... was criticised by the... Consumers Institute... for a road safety telemarketing campaign it ran in April, when homes and businesses were phoned and asked for donations towards road safety equipment for schools. At that stage the schools knew nothing about the fundraising plan undertaken in their name – and the institute said the drive was unnecessary anyway because equipment was already supplied free through a joint police-Caltex initiative... [Furthermore, the] institute says it found no evidence that Auckland schools lacked... safety equipment. It also advises people to "think twice about donating to any 'charity' which refuses to say what proportion of funds will go to the cause." ...About... 90 South Auckland and North Shore schools... are still waiting for equipment to be distributed from the telemarketing campaign. A company co-ordinator... said \$10,000 worth of exercise books, flags and first aid kits would be distributed this week. He would not say how much of the money went to the trust... [In related news, a] court battle is looming between the Manukau City Council and the Ministry of Education over a \$180,000 pedestrian crossing for children at a new Howick primary school. The traffic lights-controlled crossing on the busy intersection of East Tamaki Rd and Kilkenny Drive will be installed in just over two months through a special loan raised by the council... The four-lane [East Tamaki Rd] is a 70km/h zone and "very busy" most of the day... Point View School, located about 25m from the intersection, opened two weeks ago. Construction is yet to be completed but classes for 145 pupils are already running... [T]he school could cater for 260 pupils when completed. The row over who foots the bill for the crossing has been going on since building began in June last year... Manukau believes that since the ministry developed the school it had to pay "fair and reasonable" costs for the crossing... The ministry does not think it should pay for the crossing but has offered... \$53,333 towards the cost... Council officials are seeking legal advice with a view to taking the ministry to the Environment Court.

...Robert... [was] attacked following a road accident on Saturday night. He had stopped after hitting a woman in his car on a Glen Innes pedestrian crossing and when he went to her aid he and a man at the roadside got into a dispute. As his wife looked on in horror, [Robert] fell and cracked his head on the road, entering a deep coma... At 7pm, surrounded by... family members, the life-support machine was turned off and [Robert] died within minutes. Tears flowed freely at... [Robert's] family home in Glen Innes yesterday as they remembered the machine operator "with a heart of gold." ...[his] brother... said Robert abhorred violence and would "sooner run the other way than get involved in a fight." While the family accepted he might have faced charges after the crash they are still grappling with how a trip to the stock car races turned to tragedy... Robert and... his wife... had recently separated but were hoping for a reconciliation. [His wife] is distraught that they will not have that second chance... The woman pedestrian was[also] taken to hospital, but her injuries are not thought to be life-threatening... A 35-year-old Glen Innes man appeared in the Auckland District Court yesterday charged with assault and was remanded on bail. Police are considering more serious charges.

...The death of an Auckland woman crossing a busy central city street has prompted a police warning that the battle between motorists and pedestrians is putting lives at risk... Jaywalking by pedestrians and impatient motorists at traffic lights are an ongoing problem, say the police... The traffic-signalling system meant pedestrians and motorists faced each other in the middle of central city streets at the same time. [The s]uperintendent... of the Auckland police traffic division, said that when the wait signal flashed[to walk] pedestrians were already launched on to the crossing. At the same time motorists got a green light, but they were supposed to give way to pedestrians. The Auckland City Council traffic signals manager... said the signalling system was copied from A[US], but the council was considering making changes to improve safety. "There should also be more education for drivers that they must watch for pedestrians."

...The Minister of Transport... has signalled a hefty increase in fines for people caught driving causing harm or death and tougher action against repeat offenders. [The minister] told a driver education conference in Wellington yesterday that the measures would be in legislation to be introduced by the end of the year.

...[our correspondent 'in Sydney reports on AUSn and British driver education initiatives. We take advice from investment planners and are coached by sports experts. We learn to cook from qualified chefs. Personal trainers show us how to exercise. Yet something as important as teaching a young person the difficult and dangerous task of controlling a motor vehicle is often left to those steeped in incompetence – dad, mum, friend or sibling. To ensure motorists have the competence to stay out of trouble, a new licensing law comes into effect in AUS on July 1. Before gaining a provisional licence, applicants are required to complete a computer-based driver knowledge test, a minimum of 50 hours of learner driving in different conditions (recorded in a log book on the honour system) and the usual too-easy on-road ability test. Hopefully, the tougher demands on L-platers will produce better-prepared young drivers, although many experts say the new system does not go far enough – because, with inexperienced instruction, the wrong attitudes and bad habits of one generation are still passed on to the next. For city people hoping to give an L-plater some quality driving time, finding deserted streets in the suburbs is nigh impossible. Picture the fraught scenario of a raw novice in a frightening and foreign environment attempting to use a complicated device for the first

time with other traffic coming from every which way. No thanks. A far safer and less stressful alternative in Sydney is the old St Ives police driver training facility, now used by Honda Australia Roadcraft Training for learner and post-licence defensive training. Learners can concentrate fully on coming to grips with the mysteries of operating the clutch and accelerator pedals in some unison, without being concerned about a Mack truck looming large in their mirrors or dad yelling at them. Instructors gently ease the learners into the demanding task ahead. Useful classroom lessons with a whiteboard involving hypotheticals at red lights and T-junctions serve as an adjunct to the one-on-one practical work. Back in the car considerable emphasis is placed on reversing because it's inherently unsafe and difficult. Did you know that the first motoring incident for most people is reversing into a small pole? The student, at the wheel, also learns about stopping distances. Finally, after showing competence in the basic tasks, the learner is taken on to the driving track to develop observation skills while steering, braking and changing gears. For parents it's an investment in stress avoidance and there can be no better way of equipping a learner with the fundamentals. Meantime, road safety authorities in Britain cite ample evidence that many new drivers learn unsatisfactory techniques. Too many ill-prepared drivers are taking the licence test and less than half of drivers pass first time. In one in 10 tests in Britain, examiners have to intervene physically on safety grounds – by grabbing the handbrake or steering wheel, or using dual controls. A tougher, more realistic driving exam will soon be put in place. It is currently possible to pass the British driving test, as it is in AUS (and NZ) without ever having driven in the dark, a fact that shows up starkly in statistics on young driver crashes. The new exam will also place more emphasis on taking greater social responsibilities towards fellow citizens, particularly those who are more vulnerable. Another priority is to foster a culture that values on-going driver education. British safety authorities now concede there could be a wider role for advanced driver courses in fostering this culture. In AUS literally anyone can set up in the business of advancing skills.']

...Driving instructors fear bad learner drivers could pass their licence tests with flying colours under plans to privatise licence testing. The Government is considering a proposal to hand driver's licence testing from police to private companies... [S]chools would have to form a separate company if they wanted to examine drivers too... Already, 30[%] of tests are done privately in Auckland and the Waikato... [The] Drivers Institute fears driving standards could drop if the police pull out... [Its] chief executive... said there was... potential for corruption in a competitive market... The Automobile Association – which confirmed it is one of 118 organisations which wants to examine learner drivers – also fears licences could be tarnished under privatisation... [The] AA... chief executive, said... “...someone who is teaching a bad driver... may be tempted to pass them because they've spent a lot of money on their course... No one should get into licence testing because they're motivated by profit.” ...[Incidentally, a] German road safety expert... says... [15] years of age is too young to hold a driver's licence... [The] engineering vice-president for Mercedes-Benz, believes the legal driving age should be 18, despite the fact that drivers aged 18 to 21 fall into the danger category. “The older you are the more responsibility you have,” he says... [D]river training has a major role in road safety. In Germany learner drivers need to spend about \$NZ3000 for tuition before they are allowed to sit their licence.

...[the] legendary German rally driver... [who] is in Auckland this week, showing Audi owners how to become better drivers... still likes testing his 50-year-old reflexes at speed – but the... man who won four world rally championships... believes... N[Z]'s... legal driving age... is too young to be behind the wheel. “These young guys, they don't realise how dangerous it is to be on the roads. The legal driving age in Germany is 18. There is no way in Europe we would... make it younger.” [‘18 is also the age limit in Denmark, Finland, France, Holland, Norway, Sweden, and Victoria (AUS). The minimum licensing age is 17 in Britain, Israel, New Jersey (US), NSW, QLD, WA, Tasmania and the ACT; 16 in SA, NT and most of Canada; 15 in NZ and the US states of Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico and Sth Carolina. In Sth Dakota (US) people can drive at the age of 14’. ■ The state of California has issued six drivers' licences in the name of Jesus Christ.']

...Several states, concerned at statistics which show more young people are killed in the US by car crashes than by the combined total of Aids, drugs and firearms, are introducing tougher driver-training measures... Novices get a learner's permit at 16, an intermediate licence six months later (this requires a passenger 21 years or older to be in the car) and a full licence at 18. Michigan's graduated licensing law, introduced in April, requires 50 hours of practice driving with a parent or guardian, at least 10 hours of night driving and a period where participants must not have crashed nor be[e]n... booked before a full licence is granted... The programme... called Licensed to Learn... contrasts sharply with... the... NZ Government's move to increase the minimum driving age...

First-time drivers will be most affected by Government plans to toughen driver licensing... [The] Minister of Transport... yesterday confirmed that the driving age would be lifted from 15 to 17 if new licence plans proposed by transport officials are accepted... Raising the age to 17 was “a compromise.” It would save \$86 million in road crash costs a year. But the change would have an impact on young rural drivers in particular... Both the [AA] and driving instructors argue that the minimum driving age should be set at the school-leaving age – at present 16... Under the sweeping restructuring plans, more than 70,000 new drivers a year will have to pass two separate driving tests – after three months and again a year later – before they can graduate to a full licence... “This should mean drivers are more competent on the roads[– although, ‘under the proposals, a NZer who is 15 years and 9 months old will still be able to get behind the wheel of a car’].” ...all learner drivers – including for the first time those over 25 – will be banned from drinking alcohol while on a restricted licence. All [learners will also] have to attach “L”... or “R”... licence plates to their vehicles... If the plans proceed unamended... more than two million... N[Z]ers will have to carry their licence with them and will be slapped with an instant... fine if caught driving without it... Admitting that some of the plans would be controversial, [the minister] unveiled plans to discard the paper lifetime licence and introduce a plastic, credit card style licence with a barcode and photograph... costing about \$35... Drivers will have to sit an eye test every 10 years to renew their licence. But because of the cost they will not be forced to sit further tests once they have a full licence. Older drivers will be exempted from retesting until they turn 75, but they will find it harder to retain their licences after that, facing tough tests every five years.

...Every N[Z] driver will have to find \$60 to pay for a new credit-card style, photographic driver's licence, as part of a new Government road safety plan... Legislation due in Parliament later this year will begin the reform of driver licensing, the biggest since “lifetime licences” were introduced 10 years ago. The new licence will come into force in the first half of 1999... The plastic card will last 10 years and carry a signature... The chief executive of the Consumers Institute... said... that the \$60 fee seemed high and the Government should justify it... An industry source said while manufacturing such a card would cost around \$20, putting in a national system for processing and holding the information would make up the rest... Fears that the new cards would be used for data matching between Government departments were quashed by the Minister of Transport... who said they would only carry licence details... [The] Assistant Commissioner... said police were “thrilled”. “We have been enforcing the law with one hand tied behind our back,” he said... Among other changes, the licence age limit will increase from 15 to 16, and will be tougher to get. Police will be able to... [stop] drivers for up to 15 minutes for an identity check... [and impose] a \$55 instant fine for not carrying a licence... Licences will be suspended for 28 days when: • Drivers refuse to supply a blood sample. • Tests show more than twice the legal alcohol limit. • Drivers exceed the speed limit by more than 50 km/h. To effect the 28-day suspension, police will seize the driver's licence and send it to the [LTSA]. The driver will be issued a temporary licence valid for seven days and a suspension notice... Police [can also] impound... cars for 28 days if the driver is disqualified or unlicensed... Overseas [licences will be] valid for three months (down from one year) before a N[Z] licence is needed.

...Every 10 years, N[Z] drivers who wait until the last minute may have to spend their birthday getting their licence renewed... But experts[also] want all N[Z]ers to sit a driving test, either practical or written, to check their road knowledge every decade. This happens in nine American states... [The LTSA] says it would be costly – at \$4.8 million a year, or \$20 a test – and would not necessarily save lives. [In addition, the LTSA's] policy manager... says overseas research found that drivers often swot hard before each exam “and then they forget everything they've learned.”

...However... a member of the W[HO]... argues: “Every fatal accident costs \$2.4 million. The[refore the] cost of retesting drivers is a small price to pay.” ...[Furthermore, he believes the minimum age] should remain at 15. He says the most dangerous drivers in N[Z] are aged 20 to 24... [H]e fears that by raising the age to 17, new drivers will have less time to perfect their driving skills before they hit the risky age bracket... A newspaper survey last year found that 80[%] of the 50,000 respondents wanted the minimum driving age raised, while 86[%] said photographs should be placed on licences.

...[photo driver licences enable easy and effective roadside identification of drivers, which makes it much more difficult for disqualified and unlicensed drivers to flout the law and put innocent lives at risk. This group of drivers was responsible for killing 52 people and injuring a further 250 last year alone].

...it ‘was revealed yesterday that police caught nearly 130 unlicensed or disqualified drivers every day – or 36,000 unlicensed and 11,000 disqualified drivers in the past 12 months. These categories account for 10% of road deaths last year’]...

A disqualified driver caught driving a carload of other disqualified drivers told the police it was his turn to drive... The man had eight previous convictions[. It is estimated that ‘there are 8000 disqualified drivers who reoffend.’ Last year ‘a judge in the Whangarei District Court told a man facing his 27th conviction for driving while disqualified that he wished he could confiscate the man’s vehicle – but he did not have the power to’].

At least one in 10 cars in parts of Auckland and Northland is on the road illegally, despite major vehicle licensing changes aimed at making enforcement easier... The last big [LTSA] survey, in 1995, found 16,908 expired warrants of fitness and 10,681 unregistered vehicles among 579,000 stopped over four weeks... but... a... [recent] survey... has dismayed safety officials... Of 836 vehicles at three South and West Auckland shopping centre car parks, 82 vehicles lacked valid... certificates – an average fail rate of 9.8[% compared with the LTSA figure of 4.8%]... Twenty vehicles in 164 at two Whangarei car parks set a sorry 12.2[%] fail rate... the Road Safety Trust[’s chairperson]... said such “sad” findings showed a need for more policing “so driving becomes a privilege again and not a right.” ...Unwarranted and unregistered cars were predictably more common in poorer areas... Drivers face fines of \$150 for having no inspection certificate and \$200 for no registration... At present... the... registration fee... is... \$157.75[for 12 months for standard cars, or ‘about \$60 more for motorbikes under 50cc or less; \$70 more for motorbikes greater than 50cc’]...

A loophole where motorists could reregister their vehicles months after the expiry date for a further 12 months was closed on Monday... [In related news, old] cars will have to limp along for warrants of fitness only... once a year, instead of every six months... if new [LTSA] proposals are accepted... The authority also proposes that owners of new cars will not need to renew their warrants for three years. However, the longer time-span between inspections means safety checks will be more vigorous.

...N[Z]’s biggest-selling car company has taken aim at insurance companies which fit second-hand parts when repairing damaged vehicles... Toyota N[Z]’s managing director, said last week he was disturbed at the number of insurance companies adopting this practice. “One insurance company even has a substantial shareholding in a company set up to import these crashed or suspect parts... One can only wonder if customers are aware that this is happening to their vehicles... We wouldn’t argue with the sale of a second hand mirror, but we do have concerns about the sale of second hand parts for body or mechanical repairs, particularly where the part is safety related and may have come from a crashed vehicle or be to an incorrect specification... Any accidents caused by unmatched suspension specifications or by parts previously cut out of a... wreck and spliced on to the family runabout are unlikely to be recognised in an accident report. They will be put down to bad luck or bad driving... In the aviation industry it is generally illegal to fit imitation or second-hand parts for obvious safety reasons. But in N[Z] on any one day there were 100 times more people travelling by car than travelling by plane. While I don’t expect a law to force motorists to fit genuine replacement parts, we would expect insurance companies to be more responsible to ensure standards are maintained.”

...OWNERS of some family cars and wagons face higher insurance premiums – depending on the make and model – because of the widely differing prices vehicle manufacturers charge for spare parts. Insurance companies say some parts prices are excessive... [but] made it plain they regarded the cost of all new car parts as too high... [Y]ou could buy for around \$500 a new clothes drier, which was a sophisticated piece of technology incorporating electronic sensors, several cabinet panels, a motor, heater and a fan. “But all you would get from the car makers for the same price is a bit of bent metal or plastic. Spare parts are one area which must be very, very profitable for car makers.” ...However, [if you agree that the price of spare parts (and insurance premiums) are excessive for cars, be thankful you don’t own a ‘quarter million dollar 40-tonne truck.

...each day is a real-life catwalk for the thousands of truckers who ply NZ roads. They’re competing in a rolling beauty parade. “It’s simple really, good looking trucks get business,” says Provincial Freightlines’ managing director, who explains that this is the reason behind the country’s top beauty contest for trucks – the NZ Trucking magazine-Bridgestone/Firestone Top Truck Award. The winner of this year’s grand prize – \$10,000 worth of commercial tyres, the trucking equivalent of a cosmetic makeover – spends countless hours grooming his two-year-old Mack CH600 Elite. Eye-catching features of the big red Mack powered by a 454bhp V-Mac engine are alloy wheels, extra lighting and a host of chrome additions. The winner is a self-confessed truck fanatic driving 110,000kms each year on air suspension between Auckland, South Waikato and the Bay of Plenty, and taking his 40-tonne “baby” home at weekends to work on it – he even landscaped his driveway to accommodate its five-axle step-deck curtainsided B-train.’

...the term ROAD-TRAINS is given to a series of trucks or vans, equipped to travel on roads. They are used for the movement of stock (each can carry a thousand sheep or several hundred cattle), and sometimes merchandise, in remote parts of AUS where railways are not available. A typical road-train consists of a diesel-powered prime mover of around 110 kilowatts, equipped with hydraulic brakes, and three or four trailers with Westinghouse air-brakes. Trailers can be double-decked and divided into compartments for even load distribution. Large pneumatic tyres are used to help prevent stock damage in transit.’ However, while stock animals are protected, the road-trains ‘run over many wild animals while driving through the NW Territory dessert at night.’

...‘They lumber along our highways and are sometimes hard to get past, but trucks are still the backbone of our transport system. About 80% of NZ’s freight goes by road so plans to make trucks even bigger are expected to make most businesses happy even if other road users aren’t. The LTSA last week released a discussion paper on the size of vehicles allowed on NZ roads. It includes a proposal from Transit NZ to increase truck sizes on selected routes by 5 metres and 18 tonnes – creating 62-tonne, 25m-long trucks (current limits on axle weight mean a large truck can carry only around 20 tonnes, or half its weight; a 62-tonne truck could carry 30 tonnes). For many firms the benefits are obvious. A logging truck could take another 12 tonnes of logs. Introducing bigger trucks to NZ’s roads could boost the economy by almost \$1 billion and create 33,000 new jobs, a parliamentary select committee has been told. But the Automobile Association condemns the idea saying the extra stopping distance and overtaking room required by the trucks would make them dangerous.’]

...a third of logging trucks on N[Z] roads are dangerously unstable when carrying a full load of short logs, and police are attending an average of three accidents a week involving the vehicles. Many trucks are rolling and losing their loads, and amid fears for public safety, police and the [LTSA] have given the forestry industry a week to fix the problem or the trucks could be taken off the road... There were about 650 logging trucks on the country’s roads and... [the] head of the commercial vehicle investigation unit, said one in 11 of them would roll each year. “That’s quite frightening.”

...[‘a Northland truck driver has been convicted of dangerous driving causing death after his overloaded trailer rolled and spilled its logs as it was going through a curve. Alan Jackson, who was driving home from work in the opposite direction, was killed instantly when his car was crushed. A witness following the truck estimated it had been driving at more than 100 km/h with a load that appeared unstable. However, Mr Jackson’s widow said she did not blame the driver. “I don’t want to see him jailed. He didn’t deliberately set out to do anything wrong.” She hoped the verdict would make logging truck drivers and companies more cautious.’]

...‘a guilty verdict against the truck driver whose load of logs crushed four Auckland women in their car brought tears of relief and anger from relatives yesterday. In the Tauranga District Court, the judge found the driver, aged 55, guilty of four charges of careless driving causing death, two of careless driving causing injury and one of making a false entry in his log book. He was remanded until June 9 for sentencing. The judge said he was satisfied the truck would not have rolled if it had not been travelling at more than the legal 90km/h speed limit. Old school friends Joyce Corless, Patricia Audain, Meryl Spencer and Patricia Towers, all in their late 60s, were crushed when the fully laden Rotorua Forest Haulage Ltd B-train – a tractor unit towing two trailers – rolled on a gentle left-hand curve on State Highway 2 at Apata, between Katikati and Tauranga, last May 25, spilling logs onto their car. Two Waihi men travelling in another vehicle suffered minor injuries. The widower of Patricia Towers – who was driving the car – said the verdict made the family feel better, but nothing would bring the lives back. “That’s something we’ve got to live with. But the Government has got to do something about 60 logging trucks overturning in one year.” A daughter of Patsy Audain said her family were upset that neither the driver’s family nor his company had apologised to the dead women’s families. “We’ve been sitting in court with them all week. Not one of them has offered us an olive branch. That hurts us.” The driver’s family declined to comment after the verdict. The driver had got up about 4 am to start work in Rotorua an hour later, and had travelled that day to Te Kuiti, Kawhia, Pokeno and Hunua before heading to Tauranga with the load of logs. The false entry in his log book meant police had not been able to determine exactly how long he had been driving that day. But it was clear he had been awake for more than 13 hours when the accident occurred.’ Truckies are only ‘allowed to drive for a maximum of 5 1/2 consecutive hours (after which they must have at least a 1/2 hour break away from their truck), and a maximum of 11 hours driving – or 14 hours on duty – in a 24-hour period.’

...the ‘Rotorua father of four daughters whose logging truck rolled and killed four women has been sent to jail for six weeks and disqualified from driving for one year. The maximum penalty on the driving counts is three months’ imprisonment, a \$4500 fine and mandatory disqualification for six months. The judge said the driver, who has previous driving convictions, was before the court on a specific charge. A more serious one entailing greater penalties had not been laid. However, his carelessness was “at the upper end of the range.” On the log book charge, he imposed a \$200 fine and an additional one month’s disqualification. Later, Mrs Corless’ son said he did not think the driver should be made a scapegoat for the whole industry but said the LTSA “and the rest of those people” should be held accountable. He called for the removal from roads of “dangerous” B-trains which were classed in the worst 2% of the logging fleet. They roll on average once a week.’ ● There were ‘118 truck-related deaths in NZ in 1995 – a 15-year high’...

‘Cornerstone rule of driving: stick to the left unless passing. A truck and trailer carrying building-site huts and hurtling along what is popularly known as the fast lane at 100 km/h caused some anxious moments on the Southern Motorway the other day. The truck’s load appeared so insecure that drivers following him backed off and those in the centre lane dived towards the inside. Two deaths on the motorway this year have involved trucks travelling in the fast lane. The LTSA says that next year highway patrol officers will be cracking down on trucks hogging the fast lane. Why not force trucks on a multi-lane highway to use the inside lane where they would have traffic on only one side? AUS, Britain, Europe and America do this. The only exception in Auckland’s case would be the Nelson St off-ramp, probably the only exit off a fast lane in the developed world.’]

...Speeding truck drivers are in the gun from the police following a damning parliamentary report on the high number of crashes... The police and the [LTSA] have implemented or are looking at all 74 recommendations put forward by the transport select committee’s report... [U]nder review is maximum speeds for heavy trucks. Limits... are[currently] 80km/h... for eight-axle trucks and trailers... or 90km/h [for all other trucks]... Some truck drivers want the limit to be increased to 100km/h – the same as for cars... A national survey of... trucks found that 30[%] were unsafe. The faults included inadequate brakes, steering faults, worn tyres, insecure loads and overloading.

...YOU may not be able to get the police around after your house has been burgled, but if you drive a truck that weighs too much, watch out. Police are taking to the roads to crack down on commercial vehicle offences. It may seem an anomaly, but according to Police National Headquarters, it is not... “Police recognise that the transport industry has a huge impact on N[Z], from damage to the roading network from heavy trucks, to public safety. The chances of a motorist in a car surviving a smash with a truck are very slim – we need to make the industry as safe as we can.” ...An extra 21 officers joined the unit during the past financial year, and another 20 officers were set to join this year, taking the number patrolling the commercial trucking routes and weighbridges to 85. And while penalties of about \$1 million a month were dished out... the extra staff had led to a big reduction in offending. In the first quarter of the 1996-97 year, the unit stopped 17,293 commercial vehicles and detected 5013 offences – a rate of 28%. In the past quarter... 69,555 vehicles were stopped and 7987 offences detected, an offending rate of 11.4%... The unit was charged with monitoring driving hours, the transportation of loads and dangerous goods, passenger safety, road user charges and appropriate licenses, vehicle fitness and weight limits. It also investigated crashes involving commercial vehicles... Today, the unit’s annual share of the police budget was \$10m... compared with \$35m for drink and drug driving offending... [The head of the unit] said there were three groups of commercial vehicle offenders – the inadvertent, the blindly indifferent, and the deliberate. One operator clocked up 130 offences in the past 12 months... The new staff were introduced to address the high level of unpaid road user charges, estimated to be between \$40 million and \$80m.

...The Government will next month issue options for how[the country’s ‘92,000km of’] roads should be funded and managed, says the Minister of Transport... The options range from creating a new state-owned enterprise... to manage state and local roads, a mix of local authority trading enterprises... and state enterprises, [or]maintaining the status quo... [A] study raised the option of putting an end to paying for roads through rates. Home and landowners pay \$300 million towards the roading network... The study had concluded that on various classes of road, users should directly pay the proper costs for their road use... [The minister said:] “It’s fair to say that some of the options are likely to lead to an increase in road-user charges and petrol tax, but the overall economic effect may well be small if we are prepared to take out the roading component of rates.” ...If the Government adopted all the suggestions... Aucklanders would... pay more than their country cousins...

A major issue facing urban transport around the world and one that is likely to confront Auckland motorists is that of pricing. If motorists had to cover the full cost of car use – including the cost of pollution, parking, and other external costs – commuters may well opt for residential work that reduces the need to travel... AUCKLANDERS’ perceived right to drive to and from work is likely to be challenged by the findings of a Ministry of Transport report evaluating alternative... funding methods. The report, due for release next week, will attempt to quantify the true social, economic and environmental cost of commuting and examine ways of recovering those costs from motorists. Measures are likely to include regional petrol taxes, parking taxes and road tolls... Unacceptable motorway congestion – defined [when traffic speeds average] less than 46km/h – has increased tenfold since 1984 and will, according to traffic planners, get worse as Auckland adds the equivalent of Dunedin’s population every few years. A recent joint Government and Auckland taskforce review of Auckland transport concluded that the city is grinding to a halt as increasing numbers of commuters abandon public transport in favour of cars. It was unanimous in its findings that urgent action must be taken to reduce congestion, and that the best way to achieve that may lie in recovering the true costs of congestion from motorists. [The ARC] environment manager... says there is no one solution to Auckland transport woes... In a recent paper to a land transport conference in Wellington, [he] said the seeds of Auckland’s transport crisis were sown in the 1960s and are strikingly similar to problems now experienced in many cities in the U[S]. And that, he says, is not surprising given that Auckland’s transport plan came straight off the drawing boards of American transport engineers. After... W[W2, the US] embarked on a freeway building programme of unprecedented proportion, linking one end of the country with the other. Two decades later, the wisdom of freeways was being challenged. Freeways... were not solving problems but creating them... [The Auckland] decision to pursue the motorway option was based in part on the prediction that employment in the central business district would reach 100,000 by 1986. It never came close. The number employed now in the CBD is roughly 54,000, or 12[%] of the Auckland workforce. In Auckland, car ownership is growing at twice the rate of population with one vehicle for every two people in the region. By 2021 it is expected there will be one car for every 1.5

people, and that, says [the ARC environment manager], is a real concern... “Present trends are not sustainable and hard decisions will have to be made if Auckland is to maintain a reasonable quality of life.” [He] says Auckland’s low density urban housing has produced inefficient travel patterns and increased reliance on cars... On a global scale, Auckland represents one of the worst cases of urban sprawl in the Western world with just 14 people a hectare compared to Los Angeles with 20 and Sydney with 19. “We can’t find a city in the world that has a lower population density than Auckland. If we said Auckland was more spread out than Los Angeles, and by a whole third, we would be laughed at. But it’s a fact.” [He] says recent traffic studies predict traffic congestion in Auckland will double in 15 years, a reality that means a one-hour peak-time drive from the city centre to the airport will become a two-hour drive... “Problems in the past have stemmed from inadequate funding which has led to band aid solutions. Under-investment must not continue. We need funds to modify our growth – and we need them now.” ...The Keep Auckland Moving campaign for better road funding estimates road congestion on Auckland’s motorways now costs the regional economy \$185 million a year... mainly in transport and manufacturing industries...

Motorists may have to wait longer than expected for a four-lane expressway from Auckland to Cambridge if present funding policies continue, says Environment Waikato. Transit N[Z] has set a 2026 completion date for the project, but the council’s annual report on the regional land transport strategy indicates that target is unlikely to be reached. Environment Waikato says the funding of the roading system is inadequate and the system of allocating money flawed... [However, Transit NZ] has again delayed its decision on which side of Hamilton... [the] expressway should run. It is backing a \$70 million eastern bypass, but said yesterday that it would ask for public feedback on an alternative \$185 million western route through the city’s industrial suburbs... [Incidentally, last] weekend... a man was struck... by a rock... throw[n from a]... motorway overbridge... The man, aged in his late 50s, had just driven under the Market Rd overbridge towards central Auckland, when the bowling ball-sized rock went through the windscreen and hit him in the throat... The man was knocked out immediately... His late-model Ford Fairmont[, which] was in the fast lane travelling at about 100 km/h... hit the median barrier as his wife tried to take control. Three other northbound vehicles were hit as she steered the car towards the left-hand shoulder... [A s]ergeant... said youths throwing stones or rocks on to the motorway were a regular problem for police. He was unaware of anyone being arrested for throwing dangerous objects at cars because they usually fled, but he said Saturday’s incident showed the consequences could be serious.

...[four US high school students have been arrested in Germany on suspicion of killing two women by dropping stones on to their cars from a bridge. The four, aged 14, 16, 17 and 18, were arrested in Darmstadt. Police said the group would be officially charged with murder and attempted murder today. Police had earlier said that the rocks, some the size of baseballs, were dropped on cars from a footbridge that crossed over a highway. Two women, one aged 20 and the other aged 41, died within minutes of each other when rocks shattered the windscreens of their cars. Four other cars were hit by the projectiles. Five people were injured.’ In local news, m]otorists travelling across the harbour bridge and on the Shore complained of jammed roads... yesterday morning... without any apparent obstacles to traffic flow such as accidents... Police traffic control staff reported several minor accidents, but officers thought the abnormal congestion was more likely to be the result of... more people using cars because it was a wet morning. A further reason for choked roads was suggested by the... North Shore City Council[’s]... traffic planning manager... who said the Scat computerised traffic control system failed to function for some of the peak time. The system assesses traffic volumes and changes traffic lights to allow a steady flow. “All I can say is for motorists to sit back and enjoy it, because it will never get any better, because more traffic is coming on the roads every year. It may be the norm in the future.” ...North Shore traffic is growing 2.5[%] a year.

...The prospect of another Auckland harbour crossing has been revived with \$100,000 committed for an official investigation... The initiative comes about a decade after a series of studies... looked at possible tunnel and bridge options for crossing the Waitemata Harbour. The new work will focus on traffic impacts on the Auckland City side of the harbour which the earlier research did not examine in detail... And next month Transit N[Z] expects to issue a report on a \$7 million addition to the [existing bridge’s city-side arterials]... The bridge carries about 125,000 vehicles a day – about the same as the San Francisco Golden Gate Bridge. Research a decade ago suggested a new bridge could... have a significant environmental impact. Indeed... the council’s... transport manager, concedes that an outcome of its new study could be a finding that another crossing could pose such unacceptable effects that it could not proceed.

...If Aucklanders want a second harbour bridge they will have to pay for it... [or] call... in... international investors... – that was the hard-hitting message from the Minister of Transport. Aucklanders got more than their fair share of roading funds, the minister said... at a conference in Timaru at the weekend... before releasing a road pricing study today. Far more roading funding went to Auckland than the city contributed, she said. Aucklanders paid a very small percentage of their rates to roading while many other areas around the country paid up to 65[%]. However, the minister’s... comments “flew in the face” of the information collected for the roading pricing study, said a spokesman for the [ARC’s] transport committee. The committee chairman... said: “Aucklanders are paying well in excess of what they receive back in funding for roading.” The minister’s “parochial” comments appeared to be tailored for her South Island audience, he said... The city’s roads carried 27[%] of all N[Z]’s traffic, despite having only 8[%] of the roads.

...The Auckland region gets... \$158 million from the Government’s \$743 million roading allocation – 21.3[%] of it... Statistics N[Z] reckons that the Auckland region it measures is home to 1,068,645 of the 3,618,302 N[Z]ers it counted on census night. That is 29.5[%] of the nation’s population. Is 21.3 verses 29.5[%] fair? Consider the traffic ratios. Nearly 649,000 of the more than 1.97 million cars, trucks, buses, coaches, rental vehicles and taxis in the country are registered in the Auckland postal district, sandwiched between the Whangarei and Hamilton districts... Is 21.3 verses 32.9[%] fair? Certainly drivers based in the Auckland area do venture beyond the Bombay Hills just as cousins come to town to explore its streets and motorways. True, there is a lot more road length outside Auckland... Certainly some big distances can be run up travelling long rural routes, but many Aucklanders average big workday mileages in their home region. And remember... [that Auckland’s] local governments, like those in other regions, spend rates on their own roading programmes... The debate should be more about what users pay... The Government has forecast these revenues... for funding the \$25 billion roading network... this year: Petroleum fuels[tax,] \$729 million; road-user charges, \$443 million; motor vehicle fees, \$155 million (total \$1327 million). What happens to the [\$584] million left after deducting the [\$743 million] from the \$1327 million of revenue? This is the question that needs to be asked[both here and in Britain (where ‘motorists pay £116 billion in taxes each year, but less than a fifth is spent on roading or improving the lot of the driver’)] when people start suggesting there should be higher fuel taxes and road-user charges to pay for more regional roading and transport services.

...*Auckland v the rest in battle of transport*... A war is raging between Auckland and the rest of the country over who should fund transport projects... to ease the region’s traffic logjam... The Road Transport Association has told Aucklanders to fund their own “grandiose” transport plans... [Its chief] executive... says... drivers... should not be forced to pay more to ease congestion on roads they do not use... But [Auckland’s] local bodies have hit back... [The ARC], says: “We can argue that Aucklanders are funding under-used roads in other parts of the country.” ...Sitting on the fence is the Government... [– a]lthough the... Transport Minister... says the Government is keen to work with Auckland to find a solution.

...More than a decade after tolls were scrapped on the harbour bridge... [they] are likely to be reintroduced in Auckland under a Government proposal to shake up the roading network... [The] proposal for tolls has won support from a local government transport task force and the National MP for North Shore... [The MP] said tolls could fund new transport projects. A second harbour crossing would likely need to be partly funded through tolls. He said North Shore people appeared to support a \$1 toll if that was what it took to get a second crossing... Tolls would have to be introduced on both harbour crossings to reap about \$60 million a year... [T]he Government has... also... suggested that motorists could... be

charged more to drive at peak times to cut traffic congestion... New technology meant that Auckland drivers could be tracked as they drove on congested roads... and billed accordingly... through electronic tolls which would debit money from drivers' bank accounts... Vehicles would be fitted with sensors, linked to a central control unit, which records information as soon as a car passes through a zoned area... The chairman of the... [ARC,] who also chairs the Keep Auckland Moving Campaign, said... "It might be that if you want to use the road during peak-hour traffic, it will cost \$2 at 7.30 am and 20c more half an hour later,"... [He] said Auckland "might do quite well" out of proposals to commercialise roads and put them under the control of a state-owned-enterprise... The Minister of Transport... said in unveiling the proposal that international investors might build an Auckland-to-Hamilton toll highway in opposition to State Highway 1... The Minister... has described private investment in roads as inevitable... Another matter for debate, [the minister] said, was whether more of the money collected from the petrol tax of 30.2 cents a litre [- '32.885c when all local authority, ACC and petrol monitoring levies' are added -] could go on roading. At present 9.4c of this tax... was spent on roading with the remaining[portion] going on associated costs... The AA... said that [all of the money] raised in petrol tax should be put... back into improving roads.

...[an 'AA survey has found that the total average cost of travelling a kilometre is 54.2c for a car below 1200cc, compared with 92.8c for cars over 2000cc.' In related news, district and regional councils, environmentalists and transport sector stakeholders are figuring out how to respond to a Government transport initiative which has turned out to be something of a surprise. While the "options for the future" paper includes long-awaited relief for sea and rail freighters, who for decades have been labouring under a roading regime which gives trucking an unfair advantage, other aspects of the paper may endanger the ability of regions to plan for the future. When the various chapters of the land transport pricing study were released in 1995 and 1996 there was some hope that the ability to calculate the true costs of transport to society would prompt a more realistic way of charging car and truck users. Many submissions focused on the environmental chapter, agreeing with the plan to charge users directly for local air pollution, carbon emissions, toxic water runoff from roads and noise and adding to that the cost to society from congestion, the social dislocation effects of new roading and the burden of increased traffic on neighbourhoods. Other submissions focused on the chapter about charging a rate of return on the value of the roading network... What the Government produced was a series of options about corporatising road-funding administration in N[Z] with a view to borrowing to build more roads while still relying on the widely discredited benefit-cost ratio to decide what roads are to be built. The main problem is that the land transport pricing study has moved far away from pricing to concentrate on changing the road ownership system. Essentially, the preferred Government option seems to be to set up a state-owned enterprise and a series of local authority trading enterprises, each charged with running the roads in their area as a profitable business... At the lunatic end of the spectrum there are even suggestions that... every pedestrian and cyclist must carry an electronic chip. These chips would activate a toll meter on street corners and the bank accounts of pedestrians and cyclists would be automatically debited for the use of footpaths and roads. This may be carrying user charges to the extreme, but private toll roads are a common occurrence overseas - with two... Hills Motorway and Transurban... listed on the A[US]n Stock Exchange - and they may become a more regular feature in N[Z]. At present the country only has one major toll road, the... Tauranga Harbour Bridge... One of the unique features of the... 20km M2 motorway in Sydney between the North Shore and Baulkham Hills to the north-west of the city... is the Electronic Toll Collection system which allows motorists to pay the toll without stopping at the toll plaza barriers. The M2 motorway opened a few weeks ago and early usage is disappointing with only 39,000 cars a day compared to a forecast 72,000. Nevertheless, investors in Hills have doubled their money since listing at the end of 1994... [By the way, a] four-lane motorway across Hobson Bay is still on the list of options for the Auckland City Council's eastern corridor.

...Drivers using the \$128 million proposed eastern highway may have to pay for the privilege. The Auckland City Council transport planning chief... said tolls were one option to help pay for the highway. But as no decision had been made to proceed with the four-lane road through the Orakei Basin, no decisions had been made on finance... Auckland City Council transport planners have begun sifting through about 3000 submissions... [If the] highway goes ahead... [the] remains of eminent N[Zers at]... Purewa Cemetery in east Auckland... may not rest in peace... [The proposed] development narrowly bypassed the graves of... former P[M] Sir Robert Muldoon[, former NZ] Premier Sir William Fox... and[a] former Auckland mayor... The[current] Mayor of Manukau... said a four-lane highway would have a "profound and devastating" impact on Pakuranga, where heavy traffic generated by the road would affect residential amenities in the suburb.

...[opponents will] draw swords tomorrow over a \$32 million highway to ease congestion between central Manukau and east Auckland. A panel of commissioners will hear submissions on the 7.8km, four-lane highway... The Manukau council has pushed the project... since 1980... [Incidentally,] Greenhithe residents are threatening court action if the North Shore City council does not improve the rural area's roading before opening it up to urbanisation... [T]hey fear the roads will not cope.

...Plans for two roading projects have sparked fears of urban development in the green belt between the North Shore and the Hibiscus Coast. Routes proposed for the Albany to Puhoi State Highway 1 and a motorway access road for the Whangaparaoa Peninsula run through the extensive buffer zone... [They] would fuel enormous pressure for development because it brought the North Shore and Auckland City within easy reach.

...Residents groups fear the Rodney District Council is rushing towards a decision on building a tollway for a second link to the Whangaparaoa Peninsula... [The] groups are opposed on environmental and social grounds to [the] \$35 million road crossing the Weiti River to link the eastern peninsula with the new Northern Motorway. The link, to be accompanied by a \$16 million widening of Whangaparaoa Rd, is one of four strategies offered by council consultants in a final report on ways to ease traffic congestion on the rapidly developing peninsula. Other suggested strategies include... widening Whangaparaoa Rd for \$56 million and containing growth; and containing growth and not building the Weiti crossing. Consultants... favour a package of options. The council received the report 10 days ago. Last night groups said in statements that they had understood no decision would be made on an appropriate strategy within three months. But they had learned that the matter would be decided at a special meeting of the council in three to four weeks. The Stillwater group president... said the full report, which sells for \$426, had not been seen by the public. Six to eight weeks should be allowed for proper... consultation before a vote was taken... The council... [had] received 440 submissions, which raised 1600 issues. The Weiti bridge option was supported by 337 submissions and opposed by 108.

...The Rodney District Council[has] opted for... a new route across the Weiti River at Stillwater and widening of Whangaparaoa Rd... The council's decision at a 50 minute special meeting stunned residents... whose farmlets will be affected by the bridge's link to the State Highway 1 motorway. "We will fight it," said the president of the Stillwater Residents Association... "We love the river... and we want the opportunity to bring our children up in an unpolluted environment as people before us have." ...The only vote against the Weiti option came from the meeting chairwoman... She said the Weiti crossing would encourage traffic growth... Further [decisions] will include whether the council should build the project and charge a toll of \$1.50 each way to cover costs, or let a private company build and run it as a toll way, with \$9 million to \$15 million contributed by ratepayers.

...Why ratepayers should not have to fund roads... Ratepayers by and large are a liberal lot. We fund many good works, from swimming pools to sewage systems, art galleries to green belts. As well, we provided \$265 million (1993 figures)... [or] fully \$1 of every \$7... to pay for local roads, saving road users from having to pay their way for the damage which their vehicles inflict on tar seal and asphalt. We are, it seems, exceedingly generous with our rates, because this figure was... about \$30 m... more than that paid on local roads by all road users combined... The extent to which roads should be funded by rates... is a serious issue, particularly in rural areas. Thirty-wheeler logging trucks and big tourist buses pounding country roads should not be the business of farmers and householders to subsidise... So what happened to user-pays? Rates have been

diverted into funding roads for so long that it has gone largely unquestioned at a time when generally N[Z] thought it had outgrown the subsidy philosophy... The present system has no logic and is a hangover from our history. Last century, the first roads were often laid by the people who used them to gain access to their properties and after 1852 were paid for largely by property rates collected by roading networks. Society evolved and roading networks grew. Rate funding was supplemented progressively by provincial or national taxes. Eventually, there was a partial movement to different forms of road-user charges... We[']ve gone part of the way towards user-pays; let's complete the process... There is plenty of evidence that heavy motor vehicles cause virtually all road surface damage. Their activities are governed by physics, explained in an equation called the fourth power rule. It states that pavement repair costs increase 16-fold when the axle weight is doubled... The Ministry of Transport has conducted the land transport pricing study which, for the first time, gives us an idea of what our roads are worth and how much money we'll have to put aside to maintain, repair and expand them. This pricing study will decide Government policy for many years to come. It is important to get it right because it will also allow us to decide what level of fees to charge users of these assets so that the network is self-funding. In an ideal world the land transport pricing study would tell us what road users needed to pay to fund their activities fully and Transfund would spend those funds on our roading network... In the world we have Transfund contributes the full cost of state highway construction and maintenance but just half towards the cost of so-called local roads... If local authorities can't afford their half share of the cost of [a] roading project it doesn't happen.

...Transfund... wants... the 75 organisations... [it funds] to build and maintain roads... cut to six... [In related news, the] \$6.2 million Orewa replacement bridge should be built in time for the... holiday rush... Traffic flow will be further improved when traffic lights are installed this month at the intersection of State Highway 1 and Red Beach Rd.

...[plans for a \$70 million, 1.5km elevated highway to reduce traffic holding up Stanley St and The Strand prompted about 100 people to turn up at a public meeting in Parnell last night. Unfortunately, there were more questions than time allowed. Many of the participants were grumpy at being refused the chance to voice their views on the Transit NZ scheme. Most worries about the viaduct related to noise and the visual impact it would cause, its impact on property values and the possibility Parnell would be cut off from the city. Many in the audience were not impressed when an official of Transit said it was not possible for his agency to foster rail to get container trucks from the port off the roads. Transit would fund only the most cost-effective means of transport, and that was by road. Questioners wondered why a tunnel was not possible, given that Wellington and Christchurch had them. They also wondered whether the viaduct would be used to foist the eastern motorway on people, affecting the sensitive environment of Hobson Bay'...

'What about the environmental impact the proposed eastern highway would have on Auckland's oldest remaining mangrove forest at Purewa Creek? The mangrove trees grow twisted and slow – the oldest are about four metres high, and up to 100 years old – along the banks of the creek. The silence is immense. Mangroves seem so obviously to be at the beginning of things and are "the most biologically productive ecosystems on Earth." As well, mangroves prevent erosion by trapping silt, and improve the outer harbour's water quality. Mangroves have clung to Auckland's shores for 10, maybe 15 million years, and Auckland is the southernmost city on Earth inhabited by mangroves. Current estimates measure about 475ha of mangroves in Manukau Harbour, and 950ha in the Waitemata'...

'Residents fighting to save a swathe of green space along Oakley Creek hope the 170 native trees they will plant on Saturday will not be uprooted in a few years for a motorway. Ten kauri are among the natives the Auckland City Council has provided for the Harbutt Reserve between Avondale and Mt Albert. The reserve, Oakley Creek and another public park, Alan Wood Reserve, are all at risk from a possible link between the Hillsborough-Manukau motorway (State Highway 20) and the North-western Motorway. The connection would ease traffic problems between the west and south and allow north-south traffic to bypass the inner city. Transit NZ has already designated an extension from State Highway 20's current endpoint, at Hillsborough Rd, to Richardson Rd. A further extension is not yet official but the Springleigh Residents Association is preparing for a battle with bureaucrats. The association points to Oakley Creek as an astonishing rural sight in the middle of Auckland City. Its waterfall is the largest in the region outside the Hunua and Waitakere Ranges. The association says the area is a sanctuary for busy locals and the reserves contain sought-after playing fields. "Aucklanders have spent millions on motorways over the past 40 years and all it has produced is gridlock. Motorways cause congestion. They don't solve it."

... 'more motorways are part of Transit NZ's plans to get west Aucklanders moving. Transit's Auckland regional manager says the western ring route is the highest priority. This involves completing the SH20 corridor, including the Avondale extension, to connect the southern and northwestern motorways, upgrading the northwestern and creating the new Upper Harbour motorway – SH18. The new SH18 through Hobsonville to Greenhithe will cost \$140 million and be completed by 2004. The Avondale extension is estimated to cost \$72m and will be completed by 2009. Transit is still investigating options for the Avondale extension connection from Richardson Rd to the northwestern motorway. Plans for upgrading the northwestern motorway include widening the section between Great North and Te Atatu Rds to eight lanes and creating six lanes between Te Atatu and Hobsonville Rds. Widening the lanes will take place between 2004 and 2009 at an estimated cost of \$38m. Among Transit's plans that will affect the west are an extension of the northwestern motorway to Brigham Creek Rd by 2004. That will be extended further north toward Kumeu by 2009 at a total cost of \$40m.'

... 'Twenty homes stand in the path of motorways planned for the northern rural fringe of Waitakere City. This was revealed yesterday when consultants gave Transit NZ preferred routes for new sections of State Highways 16 and 18. Option SH18C is preferred to replace Hobsonville Rd as the link between SH16 and the Upper Harbour Bridge. The SH18C option had the lowest capital cost of four options as well as the least impact on use of rural land and the least social and noise nuisance. It affects 43 properties, compared with 40, 37 and 108 for the other options. A Trig Rd couple was relieved when they heard about the preferred option. Another option would have put the highway through their home of 20 years. "This one misses us and puts the road in a deep cutting, so we should not hear too much traffic noise."

... 'one of NZ's largest construction companies is soliciting support from the AA in pushing a scheme for a second crossing of the Waitemata Harbour. Mainzeal aims to overcome residents' opposition to crossing proposals by tunnelling under suburbs to build the approach roads. "The greatest public good to both residents and vehicle drivers will be achieved by erecting a second bridge with four lanes that adjoins and replicates in shape the existing bridge," says Mainzeal's chief executive. The bridge would go into a tunnel on the southern side, running underneath Herne Bay. Such a short tunnel would not need mechanical ventilation. Two more tunnels, one under Westmere, the other under Pt Chevalier, would limit the need to knock down houses. The new motorway would be above ground at Western Springs and Cox's Creek and link with the proposed western extension of the Hillsborough-Mangere motorway. Regardless of what crossing was decided, private money would be used to build it and a toll would be used to pay off the debt. An exact cost of the Mainzeal scheme is not known, but it is likely to be between \$500 million and \$1 billion. The ARC has made no commitment to a new harbour crossing and has asked for public submissions next year. It has said that such a costly project may never get off the ground.'

... 'details of the ARC's proposed \$939 million tunnel linking the harbour bridge with the north-western motorway have been revealed. Twin tunnels would slice into the St Mary's Bay cliff face and run 50m underneath Shelley Beach Rd, Ponsonby Rd, Great North Rd and join the north-western motorway, and eventually SH20, near the Western Springs on-ramp. Between three to five air vents the size of two-storey commercial buildings would need to be built along the route. The tunnel project would be built in conjunction with a second harbour crossing near the existing bridge, but not for another 20 years.'

... 'up to 30 people may have been killed when a truck carrying flour and margarine caught fire, turning the Mont Blanc tunnel through the Alps into an inferno, tunnel operators said yesterday. The fire had still not been brought under control yesterday, despite firefighters battling for 30 hours. Questions have been raised about safety in the tunnel. Chamonix's mayor said the tunnel had safety installations dating back more than 20 years. The French Transport Minister earlier said the tunnel would be closed for several weeks. An inquiry has also been ordered to establish the cause and responsibility for the blaze.'

...‘80 people were missing in the Gotthard road tunnel through the Swiss Alps after a fire started by a truck crash killed at least 10 people. Rescue workers were battling intense heat to reach the site where two trucks hit head-on, setting off an inferno in the two-lane tunnel. Toxic fumes caused by burning tyres loaded on one of the trucks killed some people in their cars and others as they tried to flee to nearby emergency shelters, authorities said. Authorities fear the Gotthard toll will worsen once they reach vehicles trapped in the collapse of the roof in a 100m stretch of the tunnel. The accident renewed questions about the safety of Europe’s Alpine road tunnels. A fire in the Mont Blanc tunnel between France and Italy killed 39 people. Two months later, 12 people died in the Tauern tunnel near Salzburg, Austria, after a truck ploughed into the back of a car, setting off a chain of explosions. Yesterday’s fire closed one of Europe’s most important North-South road routes indefinitely (at 17km long, the Gotthard was the world’s longest road tunnel until Norway opened its Laerdal tunnel last year). The traffic chaos worsened last night when the main alternative Alpine route – the San Bernardino pass – was shut after a fatal accident between a truck and a minibus’. ● The number of fatalities is unclear after ‘fire swept through vehicles caught in a motorway pileup in British fog’.

...‘high speeds combined with dense fog were blamed for a 74-vehicle chain-reaction crash that killed two people and injured 51 others on Highway 99 in California’s Central Valley. The 1.5km pile-up, about 300km southeast of San Francisco, closed about 40km of southbound highway for nearly 12 hours.’

...during ‘rush-hour in Auckland on Friday night a motorist driving along the northbound outside lane of the southern motorway was on a cellphone going under the Penrose roundabout and was still on it going past the Nelson off-ramp – all the while sitting at 80 km/h with traffic banked up behind him. (A driver who did something similar in Sydney recently was fined \$A1200.) A short while later, in the outside lane near Takapuna golf course, another chap was sitting at 90 km/h in a Mazda MX6. Flashing the headlights – a universally acknowledged sign that you want to pass – provoked an abusive, two-fingered response and a deliberate slowing of his speed. We hope Transit NZ’s new motorway aids encourage drivers to make more use of the inside and middle lanes and less of the outside. The outside lane on three-lane motorways should largely be an overtaking lane. Driver education would help.’]

...New signs pointing to offramps along the Southern Motorway follow the first major review of motorway signs in more than 40 years... A traffic safety engineer... said motorway signs had not changed since 1953 when the first Auckland motorway opened... Transit... was quick to claim yesterday that the planned \$6.5 million overhaul of Auckland motorway signs – based on the American system and aimed at visitors and tourists – would not confuse the city’s drivers. However, it urged them always to carry a map in their cars... “Gone are the days where Aucklanders can fly by the seat of their pants and expect to arrive somewhere. Drivers must plan their trip. They must check a map first.” ...If the new system is rubber-stamped... a quarter of signs pointing to suburbs along urban motorways will be replaced by pointers to local streets... [The] Papatoetoe/Otara sign will change to East Tamaki Rd... New numbered exit signs would not run in consecutive order but would measure the kilometre distance from the start of the motorway. For example, Water St, Otahuhu will also read Exit 47, as it is 47km from the start. The next offramp, East Tamaki Rd, is 3km along so will be signposted Exit 50. “They found overseas that this is particularly valuable for truckies... It’s a long-distance navigation tool and it’s... introduction is useful to self-drive tourists not familiar with the English language or those unused to our difficult place names.” [Speaking of tourists, someone has suggested that ‘NZ change all of its roads from being left-hand-drive as a solution to the accidents caused by visitors from the US and Europe who forget that they are no longer in a right-hand-drive country’!

...‘This is how the motoring world works: 77% drive on the right-hand side of the road; 23% on the left. Of the 56 million cars built last year, 12.8 million went to lefties like us. Sweden drove on our side, too, until 1967 when it smoothly swapped sides.’

...‘Why does half the world drive on the left, and the other half on the right? At last, the answer to this burning question is within reach. “We do not know which side of the road the Romans drove on. There just isn’t evidence either way,” says an expert on Roman archaeology at the British Museum. But a member of the Association for Roman Archaeology says he does know, and his argument is very persuasive. Though the straight roads built by the Roman Empire still define the routes of many modern roads in Europe and the Middle East, they have been rebuilt so many times over the past 2000 years that little original material remains. And since Latin literature did not go in for stories about the lives of cart-drivers, which side they drove on was unknown – until this year, when the member found the track into the old Roman quarry at Blunsdon Ridge. The track was used only for bringing stone from the quarry to a major Roman temple being built on the nearby ridge (near Swindon in England), then fell out of use, so it is very well preserved. And since the carts went in empty and came out laden with stone, the ruts on one side of the road are much deeper than they are on the other. The conclusion: Romans drove on the left. Why they chose to drive on the left remains a mystery. Perhaps it dated back to earlier times when travellers on horseback preferred to keep on the left when encountering strangers, so that their sword-hand was free in case of a problem. (Most people everywhere are right-handed.) But at least as far back as Roman times, it seems clear that wheeled traffic in most of Europe and the Mediterranean world kept to the left. So why does all of Europe (except the British Isles), all of the Western Hemisphere (except some former British possessions in the Caribbean), and all of the Middle East drive on the right? That seems to be Napoleon’s fault. In the long Dark Age after the fall of the Roman Empire, and even in the Middle Ages, there would not have been much need for the drive-left rule, since what little wheeled traffic there was travelled mostly on narrow tracks. But when you met somebody else on narrow tracks both parties had to veer either left or right, and in that sense the Roman rule seems to have survived: mostly, people swung out to the left. In early modern Europe, with the volume of road traffic rising steadily, the old Roman customs of driving on the left was the likelier candidate to become the new legal system – as it did in Britain, Sweden and in various other places that Napoleon never reached. But wherever the French Emperor’s armies invaded, they imposed a new rule: driving on the right. Why? Napoleon never said, and subsequent historians have mumbled half-explanations about his need to impose traffic discipline on European road traffic so that his armies could get through. But why did he go against the existing custom? Probably precisely because driving on the left was the custom. Napoleon was a product of the French Revolution (however he was far from the ideals of the original revolutionaries) and the whole ethos of the revolution was about the breaking of the old rules and the creation of a new, rational world. The year 1789 became Year One and the new era and even the months were renamed. Driving right is no more rational than driving left, but it is more “revolutionary.” Because Spain ended up driving on the right, that meant all of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies in the Americas ended up driving on the right. So did the infant US, presumably because it felt closer to fellow-revolutionaries in France than to the former British oppressor. British North America (now Canada) eventually switched to the right because it made no sense to drive on different sides of the road along the world’s longest land frontier. And the Middle East drives on the right because the Ottoman Empire, which used to rule most of the region, was heavily under the influence of the right-driving French and Germans at the critical time when its Army laid down formal traffic rules in the latter half of the 19th century. But in most of sub-Saharan Africa, except for former French colonies, people drive on the left because of the British influence. They do the same in almost all the countries from Pakistan and India to AUS and NZ; only ex-French Indochina and the Philippines, a former American colony, drive on the right. Even Indonesia (which was briefly occupied by the British two centuries ago) and Thailand (which was never colonised at all) drive on the left. So does Japan, though nobody seems to know whether this is due to 19th-century British influence or whether it is as deeply rooted in Japan as it was in post-Roman Europe. Korea now drives on the right, but only because it passed directly from Japanese colonial rule to American (and Russian) influence at the end of WW2. And I just don’t know why China now drives on the right, or if it ever drove on the left. By making the “wrong” side his standard, Napoleon has left us a world permanently divided between the countries that drive right (about 3.5 billion people) and those that drive left (about 2.5 billion). Napoleon was a great admirer of the Roman Army. If only he had known which side the Romans drove on, it might all have been different.’ By the way, ‘there are 68 standing committees for transport across the Auckland region’...

‘Only the Lord knows if anybody will ever succeed in solving Auckland’s transport problems. Faint hope springs eternal, of course, but five minutes at an ARC transport committee meeting is all one needs to understand that this committee will spend the bulk of its term trying to get its head around the nightmare. The committee conceded that the public itself had more or less abandoned hope of ever understanding precisely how its transport-planning

authorities proposed to lead Auckland out of its transport shambles, short of blowing the motorways up and giving everybody a bike for Christmas. The ARC group manager of transport planning hit the nail on the head when he noted that the public increasingly felt that transport-planning authorities like the regional council were good at dreaming up ideas, "but not so good at putting them in place." A councillor hit the nail again when he noted that the public was increasingly struggling to understand any idea that transport-planning authorities came up with at all. "I think there's a real problem with understandability," he said. I certainly found real problems with understandability when the manager began to explain how the regional council, territorial councils and the agencies spawned from Government roading reforms might jointly give birth to a regional transport strategy. Councillors looked at each other in desperation, clearly wondering who these other bodies were and how they were going to pull the programme the manager had in mind out of the bag without killing each other. There will be fewer problems with understandability all round when we finally work out whether national, commercial or regional interests are leading the transport-planning charge.' □ Councillors in Hamburg, Germany, formed a committee to work on solving traffic problems in the city. Only one man turned up on time for the first meeting – the others were held up in traffic.'

...Traffic on main arteries in Britain is becoming so congested (the average speed of London traffic in 1996 was 12mph) that the Government is looking at a plan where drivers would book space on a motorway before setting out on their journey. Those in a hurry would pay extra to use designated fast lanes. Those who didn't want to pay anything would be confined to the slow lane. Opponents ask, "How would this be policed?"

...In New York, drivers pay \$1.50 to drive across a tolled bridge in off-peak and \$3 at peak times. In other parts of the city drivers have to buy a car sticker to enter congested areas. • In San Diego, drivers pay \$40 for a transponder in their car, which sends a signal picked up by an electronic device overhead or on the side of the road. San Diego has dedicated car pool lanes on its motorways, where charges are graded depending on passenger numbers. • On Highway 407 in Toronto, Canada, the number-plate of every vehicle is videotaped and motorists are later billed for driving on the road – a more costly system than a debit card or transponder.'

...some] **\$3 billion worth of...** [satellite] **tracking systems and electronic transponders** [for cars, which are linked] **to a central billing house** [computer, are currently]... **being installed in at least 20 countries.**

...[the Government this week opened the door to the commercialisation of road funding and ownership, and new companies – publicly owned – will be able to instigate a sliding scale of tolls intended to reduce clogged arterial arteries – called "congestion-pricing." Drive in peak hour when the roads are congested and you will pay a higher price than if you are driving at 9 pm. Those with memories long enough to know what "Nippon clip-on" means or who have experienced the highways of Asia, Europe and the US will grumble at the prospect of fiddling around on the dashboard looking for coins for the tollbooth – but that's not how it's going to be. It's high-tech but low-cost, we're told. While nothing has yet been decided, it looks likely we will go down one of two roads, so to speak. We could follow the Singapore model where roadside or overhead computer technology "reads" from a display unit (or card) mounted in your car and the appropriate amount is deducted from your account or card. Naturally this comes with its own language: the thing in your car is called a transponder (from the Latin: "trans" meaning tax, and "ponder" meaning one more damn thing you have to think about). Or we could simply go the whole card route. That means you can simply buy a credit card-sized card for your windscreen, with charges automatically deducted. There are numerous privacy issues here, of course. But as the Ministry of Transport's policy general manager points out, privacy hasn't been an issue in the US where people seem alarmingly litigious. And anyway, our privacy laws are stringent. The police would need a search warrant to monitor or trace vehicles. The information the companies hold can't be on-sold either, which is doubtless good news for those conducting affairs on the far side of town. Lending cars to friends isn't a worry, either. If you forget to give them your card, your vehicle's picture is taken automatically and you get a letter. The current egalitarianism of our highways may be changing. Where once we all shared the same potholes, inconvenient chicanes and holdups when the two nuns in a Mini didn't notice the lights had changed, now there may well be a tiered system of motorway travel. In Los Angeles, the SR91 freeway charges by lane. If you want the guaranteed congestion-free lane it costs around \$5 for about 17km of hassle-free driving. Then there's a cheaper lane not guaranteed to be clear. And the cheapest lane is free. This system isn't quite the social hierarchy it looks. The LA experience indicates that those who want to get somewhere fast are people for whom time is money (plumbers, electricians and the like). The rich, who have cellphones and laptops, don't mind sitting in traffic because they are still getting their work done. Is this going to be expensive, then? According to the manager, the technology is getting cheaper by the day.' Incidentally, **in three-to-five years, Aucklanders with a personal computer may** [be able to] **call up closed-circuit television cameras monitoring motorways to pinpoint traffic jams...** [Such] **systems already operated overseas... in American cities.**

...Transit... **plans to test a computerised traffic management system on the Northern Motorway...** [The trial] **will see signs placed along the motorway telling motorists when there is a crash or incident ahead...** [and is designed] **to gain experience with an advanced traffic management system before it was extended over the entire Auckland motorway system...** [– if] **funding is approved...** **A highway advisory radio station giving traffic information would also be part of the system, which is expected to cost between \$2 million and \$4 million...** **The project manager... said "non-recurrent delays," caused by crashes and incidents, cost Auckland \$27 million in 1994.**

...The police respond to an average 30,000 incidents on overloaded Auckland motorways each year... a motorway system that is approaching gridlock... Since Auckland motorway delays cost an estimated \$63 million a year, Transit... is working with the police, the [LTSA] and others to achieve... [faster ways of] **getting to accidents or problem spots... and removing damaged or broken down vehicles...** **It wants to install an advanced traffic management system, already used overseas, to help return traffic flows to normal quickly. The nearest most advanced system of the type operates in Melbourne, where there are about 100 television cameras on motorways to spot breakdown or accident problems** [('morning snarl-ups in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane dwarf Auckland's congestion; Auckland's average per-kilometre delay in the morning rush-hour is 35.4s, compared with 42s in Melbourne, 48s in Sydney and 52s in Brisbane')]. **Transit... has made a start... here. It has installed "electrical induction loops" just below the surface at 11 sites on the Northern, Southern and North-western Motorways. Two video imaging cameras have also been placed on the Auckland Harbour Bridge. The loops and cameras do the same job – they are part of a computer monitoring system that measures vehicle numbers, speeds, vehicle classification and lane occupancy. The manager of the project... says the key objective of this detection system is to build up profiles of traffic conditions and travelling times over critical sections of the motorways. When the management system becomes operational this "historic" data will be used for comparison with "real-time traffic flow rates." Any change in the flow will be relayed to a command centre, where operators will visually scan what is happening on the motorway through a network of closed-circuit television cameras such as the seven which watch harbour bridge traffic now. In perhaps 12 months a pilot of the full scheme will be run... Transit... hopes that construction of an Auckland-wide motorways management system will begin in late-1999. It will cost at least \$10 million...** [Meanwhile, a] **final coat went on the outer northbound lane of the Harbour Bridge yesterday. Resealing of a second lane is due to begin shortly...** **The project is part of a \$7 million plan begun two years ago to replace asphalt with polyurethane. Standard asphalt has not bonded properly to the steel plating of the bridge.**

...[Transit has announced that] **officials will regularly ban trucks from the outer lanes of the... Harbour Bridge during high winds now they have the latest computer simulations which show the effects of wind and earthquakes on the structure...** [L]arge trucks travelling on the clip-on lanes in gales caused problems both for the bridge and motorists. Trucks could be blown around, and if a breakdown caused a long line of heavy vehicles to stop, a high wind gust could knock the clip-on lanes into the main bridge structure, causing damage... But Transit yesterday assured motorists that the bridge is safe, and there is no risk of the clip-on lanes falling off... \$166,000 had been spent on specially designed brackets used to brace beams in large boxes under the bridge... It was not clear what the next stage of... Transit's study of the Bridge's earthquake damage risk... would recommend, but the work would be a bigger job, perhaps costing up to a million dollars... The outside lanes were last closed... when gusts reached 143km/h. [In related news, 'the big traffic jam last Friday cost Auckland more than \$2 million, say truck operators. The Northern Regional Road Transport

Association, which represents truck owners, says the cost could be as high as \$5 million if associated problems are included. The association's general manager said costings were based on 28,000 vehicles being trapped in northbound lanes of the Southern Motorway and 20,000 in southbound lanes after a truck lost its load of printers' ink on the harbour bridge early in the afternoon. Half an hour after the accident, traffic was at a standstill on the Newmarket Viaduct. Transfund uses a formula of \$25 an hour productivity loss for each light vehicle and \$40 for heavy trucks. The association believes a loss of \$40 an hour is too low and puts the figure closer to \$80. But some local politicians say trying to establish a true figure is difficult and potentially meaningless.']

...Trucks blocked the Northern Motorway... for five hours yesterday. Witnesses say the crash happened when a police officer stopped to speak to a hitchhiker[who was illegally] standing on the side of the motorway. A truck following the police car stopped behind it, but a large truck-and-trailer unit ploughed into a concrete truck in the other lane, which in turn slammed into the stationary truck, flipping it. The driver of that truck... said he got a "hell of a fright"... [N]o one... was injured. [One car was also involved but 'it only lost a wing-mirror.']

...IT is 5pm on Monday evening... and all hell has broken out on Auckland's streets. Commuters are in for the long haul as motorway traffic backs up bumper to bumper through whole city blocks. There are no shortcuts. The city has ground to a standstill... How it happened: • 1.31 pm: North-bound vehicle hits median barrier on Grafton motorway off-ramp. • 2.11 pm: Truck rolls on car on Southern approach to Auckland Harbour Bridge. • 4.03 pm: North-bound two-car collision near Ellerslie on-ramp. • 4.30 pm: Two breakdowns reported on lane two of the North-western Motorway. • 4.40 pm: Bus collides with car on Symonds street off-ramp. • 6.01 pm: Car hits median barrier near Ellerslie off-ramp on Southern Motorway. • 6.15 pm: Two-car collision near Penrose on-ramp to Southern Motorway... Whether they realised it or not, commuters were given a glimpse into the future... And the experts' opinion? Get used to it.

...The social cost of traffic crashes in the Auckland region dropped substantially last year but that is no cause for complacency, warns the [LTSA]... The social cost takes into account all costs to the community following an accident... In Auckland last year the figure was \$748 million – down \$283 million on 1995. The figures are revealed in a series of road safety reports... which analyse trends over the past five years. Traffic crashes in the Auckland region... have fallen to the lowest levels for a decade. Marring this, fatalities on Auckland roads are up. Figures for the year to Tuesday show 71 people died compared with 58 at this time last year. A problem described as being of "epidemic proportions" is motorway drivers who follow too closely to the vehicle in front... Intersections also pose a major problem for drivers in Auckland... The multi-laned roundabout near the Panmure shops is way out in front when it comes to the number of intersection crashes... Over the past five years the busy intersection has seen 152 crashes, 67 more than the second-worst accident black spot, the intersection at New North Rd and St Lukes. ['Accidents at intersections cost NZ \$28 million a year.' • 'Unreported car accidents are costing Waitakere City at least \$62m a year in road repair handouts. Councils cannot gain funding from Transfund for road repairs and upgrades without accurate crash statistics – and that's where the unreported prangs become an issue. Figures show only 0.23% of all accidents are reported. This is because there is no law that requires non-injury crashes to be reported to the police.']

...A third of all fatal accidents this year involved only one car and happened when the driver lost control, the [LTSA] said yesterday. Alcohol was a factor in more than half the accidents and speed in a third of them. Three-quarters of the accidents happened on the open road. The authority said 47 lives could have been saved if the victims had worn seatbelts... [as they are legally required to (all 'front-seat passengers must wear a seatbelt in NZ, and back-seat passengers must wear one if available; new cars are all required to be fitted with front and back-seat belts'). Though] seatbelt wearing... is high in central Auckland, rear seatbelt use has fallen significantly... • Drivers are responsible for making sure children in their vehicles are safely restrained. Failure can mean a \$75 fine. ['Passengers aged 15 and over are responsible for themselves if they get caught not wearing a seat-belt.'

...a] Pukekawa man... made sure he buckled his 3-year-old daughter... into a child carseat... It probably saved her life. But... the 37-year-old father of seven... neglected to buckle himself up and was killed instantly when he lost control of his car on the way to his... [son's] first birthday party... [and] his car crashed through a fence. The impact threw him out the car's back window and he ended up lying on its roof. His daughter walked away unscathed.

...A U[S] Government report says... [only 68%] of occupants in America wear belts. If everyone was belted in it would save \$US14 billion...

['Big, big Americans say they are becoming uncomfortable about the fact that carmakers in the US are apparently obliged to make seatbelts only to safely fit people under about 100kg. The author of *Largely Happy*, and chairwoman of the International Alliance for Size Acceptance, e-mailed us to say: "We have people who simply cannot fasten the belts, and those who can but would suffer in a crash because the belt would not hold them."']

...motorists] round the country are being declined vehicle warrants of fitness because of faded seatbelts... The [LTSA] has told testers that a seatbelt should be failed where the effects of ultraviolet light has bleached most of the colouring from any part of the webbing... [U]ltraviolet damage... eventually broke down the weave. The problem was in judging when the discolouration was significant enough to refuse a warrant... Some testers say the advice is unacceptable because it is not specific enough[. By the way, 'the odds of getting hurt in a head-on road smash have just doubled. Researchers have found there are in fact two points of impact in many front-on crashes. The first impact is the collision itself while the second happens when the car rears up high into the air and lands with a very large thud. With only the rear suspension to take the shock, the landing can often be the source of secondary injury'. The researchers didn't say if such secondary injuries could be averted by air bags...

'AIRBAGS have come a long way since Henry Ford II said they were a "lot of baloney" and pressured the 37th US President to delay for five years a proposed law to gradually introduce the safety systems in American cars. Carmakers largely didn't want to know anything about seatbelts or airbags until the late 60s, when research from Volvo was too revealing to ignore. The manufacturers feared installing safety devices would undermine the American public's confidence in their products. The Swedish company – the first to install seatbelts in cars – came up with a study involving 28,000 accidents. Of those in which driver and passengers had worn lap/sash seatbelts, there were no deaths in impacts at below 100 km/h. But unprotected drivers had been killed at speeds as low as 20 km/h. This research was one of the reasons the 1976-80 Administration passed a law that required all large cars produced in the US after September 1, 1981, to have automatic restraints (seatbelts and airbags). GM, Ford and Chrysler had used seatbelts and airbags, and while there were arguments for and against, they were collectively against legislation that made them compulsory. They tried to sabotage the legislation and found an ally in the 39th President's successor. In one of his first speeches after taking office in January, 1981, the 40th President told the National Auto Dealers Convention that "this Administration opposes regulations." He appointed a lawyer who had a reputation as an anti-environmentalist to head the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and told him to revoke the automatic restraint law. The lawyer did so just as it was about to come into effect, but supporters – including the all-powerful insurance industry – sued the safety administration to have the law reinstated (the Supreme Court eventually found against the safety body and the carmakers). The author of the book *Crash*, wrote that in the 80s: "The standard of manufacturers was then so low that one out of every five cars sold was the subject of an NHTSA recall request with which the manufacturer refused to comply. The NHTSA gave in – over such scandals as faulty transmissions on more than 20 million Ford cars that jumped from Park to Reverse." This fault was responsible for 500 deaths before the head of a powerful consumer body pressured Ford to recall and redesign the transmission. The delaying tactics by America's Big Three from the early 80s, when the 39th President's automatic restraints proposal would have come into effect, until 1990, was estimated to have cost about 60,000 lives on American roads. Today's carmakers, like the public, are better educated about safety and design. Now the education of the airbag reaches new heights with what Honda calls the first "smart" airbag in a luxury car. The new system is standard in Honda's facelifted Legend, which goes on sale next week at \$NZ75,000, up \$6000 on its predecessor. Honda calls it the i-SRS, for intelligent Supplementary Restraint System. It is designed to ensure maximum protection with minimum risk, something top-10 seller Honda will push publicly in the US, which largely remains twitchy about airbags. The smartest part of the Legend's technology is the front passenger's seat, where sensors provide information on the size, body and head positions of the occupant. This allows the system to recognise when a child is in the seat. In this instance the seat-mounted side airbag, which is in line with the child's head, is disabled.'

...‘An airbag decapitated a one-year-old Idaho girl in an infant seat in a low-speed collision between two cars in a parking lot yesterday. “Otherwise it would have been a minor traffic accident,” said a police officer. The accident triggered the passenger-side airbag in a VW Jetta driven by the girl’s mother.’

...‘An Ohio man was sentenced to two 12-hour jail terms after his two-month-old son was killed by a passenger-side airbag. He will serve the terms on the son’s birthday and the anniversary of the crash, which was caused when he ran a red light in his pick-up and collided with another vehicle. His son was in a rear-facing child seat and died from injuries caused by the airbag bursting from the dash next to his head. Obviously the father didn’t know what carmakers have been saying for years: never put a child seat in the front seat of a car equipped with a passenger-side airbag. Since 1990, airbags have caused the deaths of 121 people in America, nearly all of whom weren’t wearing seatbelts. The same research says airbags have saved about 3600 lives.’

...‘French carmaker Peugeot is recalling more than 40,000 of its 206 model from European and worldwide markets. The German weekly *Focus* reported that there had been at least 60 cases of the car’s airbags inflating in mid-journey for no reason.’

...‘it can cost thousands of dollars to replace an airbag that has deployed in an accident. But the Automotive Recyclers’ Association of America is short-circuiting the process by buying second-hand airbags from wreckers for about \$450.’

...‘undeployed air bags are a serious hazard to rescuers and accident victims, says the NZ Fire Brigades’ Institute. Air bag systems would activate only during head-on collisions, or collisions within 30 degrees of a head-on, the institute’s president said. The circuits controlling the bags were independent from other car circuitry and also had a safety capacitor back-up charge, making them operable even if the vehicle battery source were destroyed in the crash. “There is no way of disarming an undeployed air bag other than to remove the battery terminals and allowing the backup capacitor to discharge from the system, which could take up to 30 minutes.” The bags – which could be present on both sides of the front compartment, although they might not be obvious – were activated “in the blink of an eye” with a great deal of force. “They could cause very serious injuries to a rescuer or victim.” Furthermore, seatbelt retractors were often connected to the air bag circuits and tightened the seatbelt when the bag deployed. “This could have the effect of snapping the seatbelt tight against a trapped victim, aggravating back, neck and other injuries.” Rescuers should cut the seatbelt first, stay away from air bag areas during rescues, disable them, if possible, and never place tools between an undeployed air bag and themselves, or a trapped victim. There had been no reported cases of rescuers being hurt by such bags in this country.’]

...**Air bags are the biggest advance in motoring safety since the seat belt laws of the seventies, according to Holden’s manager of advanced engineering...** [T]he man who put so much into the Commodore air bag system, claims Holden is the only motor manufacturer who developed an air bag system for people who wear seat belts. And he is concerned most people only talk about the effect of air bags on road deaths. “It’s not simply about reducing fatalities which is where all the media focus is... The air bag’s big contribution is the reduction of serious irreparable, non-recoverable injuries to... the... face... brain... neck and... chest.” He says this benefits thousands of people beyond the relatively small number of fatalities... According to data from the state of Victoria, half those people from road accidents who end up in hospital suffer brain injury.

...**Road accidents cost...** [NZ] \$3.1 billion last year, about \$3 million down on 1995... The [LTSA]... attributed the decrease to the drop in the road toll, which fell from 581 in 1995 to 515 last year... the lowest since 1964... An authority spokesman... said that the social cost was based on fatalities, serious injury, minor injury and non-injury crashes, and took into account all costs inflicted on the community, from loss of earnings to clean-up costs... emergency services[and] medical expenses... the average cost to the community... for someone killed in a road accident... was... \$50,000... compared with... \$4.5 million... for [treating a survivor] with brain damage... “I think it’s a tremendous drain on the country,” [an LTSA spokesperson] said... “It’s just unnecessary carnage and there is something we can do about it.” ...The LTSA spends about \$33 million of its overall... budget on road safety initiatives... [The] number of people dying on N[Z]’s roads has dropped by 35% in the past 10 years, down from 796 in 1987... [but N[Z]... still ranks poorly alongside other developed countries... 15th of 26 in the OECD listings. N[Z] recorded 2.5 deaths per 10,000 vehicles and 16.5 deaths per 100,000 population. That’s well behind A[US] with 1.8 and 10.9 respectively], but is ‘comparable to the US (15.8 deaths per 100,000). Icelanders boasted just 3.7 deaths per 100,000 in 1996 – although there aren’t a lot of roads there’...

NZ] rates a mention in... **The World’s Most Dangerous Places... Not as a dangerous place as such but our death wish on the roads puts us in the top 14 countries... India gets top billing at 34.6 deaths... for each 100,000 people.**

...[“□ By 1990, with at least 500,000 people being killed yearly, traffic accidents were listed as the world’s ninth-biggest killer. □ The first pedestrian death occurred in 1896; the first driver was killed in 1898. □ The car has claimed an estimated 30 million lives in the past 100 years.’

...More NZ]ers have been killed on the roads than in any of the wars the country has been involved in, a Rotorua District Court judge told a man convicted of dangerous driving causing death... [The judge fined the 46-year-old] \$3000, to be paid to the deceased’s family. He was disqualified from driving for 12 months. The jury had heard that... [the] forestry consultant... had overtaken a logging truck-and-trailer unit. This... caused... John Takapuna Ratapu... who was driving an oncoming car, to collide with... [another car, injuring its driver and]... causing the death of... Mr Ratapu...

[He ‘was driving his van near Milford when he was hit head-on by a Ford Falcon – and he reckons his bullbar saved him. During the smash, in 1993, the Mitsubishi L300 van’s bullbar seemed to spring the vehicles apart, stopping the van’s driver from having his legs crushed. “I wouldn’t be without bullbars on vans even if the law is changed. It would be civil disobedience.” But the law could change. In AUS, calls for a ban on bullbars have sparked fierce debate between pedestrian lobby groups, who say they are dangerous, and rural folk who say they are essential for “roo strikes.” A country author said: “I don’t have a problem with banning them in cities. They only pose a problem there. But it would be a disaster if country people couldn’t have bullbars. It’s not until you hit a kangaroo that you realise how much damage they can do.” However, the Pedestrian Council of NSW blames 14 out of every 100 pedestrian deaths on bullbars: “A bullbar is designed to knock an animal under the vehicle – well, humans are animals.” Our own safety regulators are watching the debate closely, and a draft safety standard is being drawn up for both countries. Apart from killing pedestrians, opponents say bullbars cause more damage in smashes and make impact-sensitive airbags deploy too quickly. They are especially irked by bullbars on urban 4WD vehicles cruising Ponsonby Rd.’]

...Thousands of car owners will have to remove dangerous bullbars next year, as part of new vehicle safety rules announced yesterday... **Dangerous bullbars, mirrors and spoilers are technically illegal at the moment, but the new rules will standardise regulations and enforcement. Other rules relate to collapsible steering columns, safe door locks and hinges, head restraints and car interiors. The group manager of the [LTSA]... said the new rules, effective from January 1, brought N[Z] car safety standards up to the world’s best practices... The director-general of the AA... said that while he supported the new rules, the restrictions on bullbars did not go far enough. “It is our view bullbars should be restricted to vehicles used in the rural sector... We do not support bullbars being attached to passenger cars... or [any] vehicles that are used on public roads.” Bullbars nearly always increased injuries to pedestrians, could break away and injure the car’s occupants, interfered with airbag sensors, and if fitted to unsuitable vehicles, increased risk to the drivers. [Furthermore, the risk of injury to occupants of other vehicles is increased if they are hit head-on or side-on by a bullbar-wearing vehicle – which is a major issue in the US at the moment.**

...‘for American visitors, who are used to driving the multi-lane, divided inter-state highways which criss-cross the US in homage to the car, our SH1 often comes as a surprise. “It’s a death-trap,” said one such driver, recently interviewed on the perils of driving the topographically challenging route between Auckland and Whangarei. On American, European and AUSn highways, there is generally no getting on or off except at carefully sculpted official exit points, the only way to go from one side to the other is over a bridge, and on-coming traffic is separated either by a wide, flat strip of grass, or a median barrier. In this country, except for the motorways out of the main cities and occasional stretches elsewhere (e.g., passing lanes on hills), our main highways are far less forgiving. Yet how many NZers know either what they are missing, or recognise the inherent dangers in driving at speed on main

roads mostly little more than glorified two lane streets; where all that separates drivers from a head-on smash is a strip of white paint and the combined skills of the drivers with whom they share the road? The way the LTSA's chief executive sees it, "travelling on an undivided highway has to be seen as driving along a 100 foot chasm, represented by the white line. Move over that chasm, and you will die." He agrees the fact NZ has comparatively few divided or multi-lane highways "has a considerable contribution towards the effect and incidence of road crashes". On the divided Hume Highway between Sydney and Melbourne, completed after 25 years in 1994, AUSn authorities reported a halving in road deaths. While the national road toll in NZ last year was the lowest for 30 years, LTSA figures show it is virtually no safer to drive on any of the 10,500 kilometres of state highways than on any of the rest of the country's 80,000-odd kilometres of public roads.'

...Auckland's] road toll... is the highest in five years, despite a steady decline in... most of the rest of the country. By this week, 101 people had been killed on roads in the Auckland region, up from 85 for the same period last year. Road deaths in the Waikato were up 14... to 76... [Incidentally, dozy] Auckland motorists are about to get a wake-up call. New "rumble strips" are being installed along 40km of the city's motorway system as part of resealing work to alert drivers who begin to veer off the road... Embedded with glass beads, the... reflective [strips] are standard fixtures on European motorways... Transit... hope[s] they will stop 15% of crashes. About]... 400 vehicles run off the motorway system each year...

[A survey estimates that '60 deaths on NZ roads each year are caused by sleep deprived drivers.']

...Police believe... fatigue and inattention, during what is traditionally a stressful time of year... may have contributed to a spate of fatal crashes on Waikato roads... The... message to drivers... [from the] head of traffic safety for the Waikato... was, "Just try to take life a little bit easier..."

...[NZ] drivers are proving much pushier than those in Europe. High speeds and tight tailing here are too much for European traffic control software being introduced to help solve motorway jams.

...Auckland police are tailing tail-gaters in a motorway campaign running until November 16. Police say half last year's 2000 motorway accidents were caused by motorists following too close, not signalling or making unsafe lane changes. They say cars should be five-to-six lengths [(or 'two seconds')] behind the vehicle in front. The instant fine for following too close is \$75... [In international news, t]he republic of Georgia has waived diplomatic immunity for a Washington-based diplomat implicated in a car crash that killed a teenager. Police said [the diplomat] had been drinking and could have been speeding...

[A son's battle for his beloved mum The police made a mistake when they told a son they would not bring charges over the car crash that killed his mother. They said it would be "frivolous" to prosecute the other driver and indicated that Pauline Van Syp was to blame for the head-on smash on SH1 near Te Kauwhata 18 months ago. So the son began his own investigation. Last week a Melbourne businessman was found guilty in the Hamilton District Court of careless driving causing death. Now police will formally apologise to the son, a Tauranga father-of-three, for the mistakes in their investigation. "I really knew something was up when all of the witnesses said the same thing even though they had never met each other. They all said they saw the businessman's rental car drift slowly into the southbound lane and hit my mum. There were just so many inconsistencies. I went back to the police and pointed them out but they just blew me off." However, the case was referred to the Waikato complaints review manager, who decided the case should be reopened. Charges were eventually laid against the businessman eight months after the crash. The 53-year-old was fined \$3500 and disqualified from driving in NZ for one year after hiring a top NZ lawyer for his defence and flying in a crash specialist from Melbourne as a technical witness. The businessman, who is a member of a family featured in AUS's *Business Review Weekly* Rich List between 1989 and 1994, said through lawyers this week that he did not want to comment about the accident or trial. The son said the businessman's punishment was inconsequential. The fine was small and the disqualification was a waste of time because he lived overseas. "To his credit, he came up to me afterwards and apologised and I appreciated that. He said he only pleaded not guilty because the technical evidence said he was not in the wrong." The judge said the witnesses were more convincing than the technical evidence from crash analysts.')

...A young woman convicted... [in] the New Plymouth District Court last month... [for] causing her mother's death by careless driving has had her conviction quashed in the High Court... The accident occurred... when [their] car... went over a bank and flipped... [while] travelling from Auckland to New Plymouth... The... [District Court judge] decided that the car had entered a bend where there was a 55 km/h warning sign at too great a speed... to control it properly in the conditions. He fined her \$1250, disqualified her from driving for a year and ordered her to pay \$100 witness expenses. But the High Court... said [the District Court] had not sufficiently considered the evidence of a technician who had examined the car and found a large amount of moisture in the brake fluid... [He believed that] might have been a contributing factor... "The appellant's own statement is that she was aware of the limit recommended for the corner and had applied the brakes to achieve it." ...[the High Court judge] had also come to a different conclusion to that... reached [by the District Court judge] about the degree of difficulty posed by the corner... After the accident, a new signpost, which warned that the road was slippery near the corner, had been put up. [(Editor's note: Some rural NZ roads become slippery near or at corners because of bad engineering – e.g., insufficient roadside drainage where a corner cuts into the side of a hill can cause rainwater cascading down the exposed bank to run across the road's surface.)]

...THE accident toll at one of N[Z]'s worst crash blackspots has dramatically reduced... [The] curve under the Petone underbridge on SH1 was described by the A[A] as "very dangerous when wet"... Since 1984, there had been more than 200 crashes on the curve, 40% involving injury... Then Transit... and the [LTSA] tested a skid retardant. The... new surface was effective in the wet because it contained bauxite, a synthetic aggregate imported from South America that resisted polishing. Bauxite stones had sharper edges than traditional greywacke stones, allowing them to break through the film of moisture and make direct contact with a vehicle's tyres – resulting in greater grip... The innovation costs \$45 a square metre, compared to \$10 for traditional surfacing but... [the] LTSA's Wellington regional manager... said it was worth the expense, estimating the cost of past crashes at the site at \$2 million a year.

...[the president of Rodney Federated Farmers said road dust costs farmers dearly in production lost from roadside paddocks, but anyone complaining about dusty roads is being offered a bitter pill by the Rodney District Council – a bill for \$475. That's the charge – additional to roading rates – for spraying 100m of road with a substance that locks up dust particles. The council is offering the service through contractors at cost price to try to avoid residents pouring waste oil on roads to stop dust drifting to their properties. Waste oil is frowned on by the ARC because it is washing off into waterways in regional parks, says the council's roading operations manager. Council trials showed several non-polluting alternatives were available, such as a substance made from wood pulp. Rodney has 877km of unsealed roads, many of which carry more than 250 vehicles a day.')

...motorists... ignoring the 30km/h speed restriction... are turning... a stretch of roadworks on S[H]1 north of Puhoi... into a stone-chip war zone... [Rodney] glass companies have repaired scores of windscreens damaged by stones flicked up by other vehicles. The manager of Warkworth Glass Glazing and Auto Glass... said his company had repaired 68 windscreens in less than a week.

...Coroners have the authority only to note and recommend action. They have no power to follow up their suggestions... This is clear under the Coroners Act and from personal experience, according to the Auckland coroner... who has been conducting inquests for more than a decade. "I sometimes draw attention to a cause of death which should be attended to, such as a camber on a road where a fatality has occurred... I did just that in the case of a motorcyclist who died near Warkworth some months ago through no fault of his own. He did everything right but still became a tragedy. But whether that camber has been fixed... I have no way of knowing and I can't be expected to know. I'm just one individual, like all coroners, and we have no investigative or follow-up role – and no time to do it anyway..." To try to ensure more reaction in future, particularly by Government agencies, six officials who attended the first national conference of coroners last weekend have been appointed as a strategy group to work on ways to get recommendations acted upon. They include the Napier coroner... who is concerned that after two years nothing has been done

on recommendations he made on the safety of old vehicles turned into house-buses. Eight people died in one house-bus crash into the Mohaka River which he investigated. While the occupants had hot-wired the bus after police took the keys from them, the main reason for the accident was the vehicle's substandard condition. [He] said there were similar vehicles still on the roads and they are a menace. It is only within the past 10 years that coroners have been licensed to make comments. That privilege arose from the campaign of the former Auckland coroner... against drink-driving, which he called "road murder." His forthright approach was described as "too tough" by some lawyers representing drink-drivers and they sought to curb him... However the general rule, particularly in a Government department, is that comments are "noted for action," according to the Department for Courts which is responsible for coroners... Napier[']s coroner for the past nine years, said he found that where... professional bodies... were... involved, they were "quick to respond and behave in a proper... way. But seemingly, and I'm very much generalising, where you've got the awful blankness that a Government agency represents, there tends to be a 'this is not my problem I don't want to know about it' approach... I think we [coroners] should have the ability to insist that we be taken seriously. The comments come after a pretty full inquiry and evidence from the police, so they can hardly be said to be a light-hearted matter. You should be able to be confident that, in many instances, something is being done to prevent a similar happening and save a life... [A]n area of much concern[] is auto-suicides. The public should be made more aware that... [some] people out there[] are prepared to take their cars and use them as a means to end their lives – and possibly take you with them."

...Using cellphones while driving poses great safety risks, according to the results of recent Japanese experiments. Accidents occur while drivers are talking on phones because of a narrowed field of vision and reduced attentiveness. Rear-end collisions studied in 1996 were up more than three times over the previous year, said the survey. The experiment monitored police drivers wearing miniature cameras which tracked the movements of their eyes. Drivers not using phones observed a wide area and maintained an awareness of their surroundings. But, when simultaneously driving and talking on cellular phones, drivers tended to focus on just one point in front of them... [Incidentally, t]hings are not what they seem to be in Santiago's affluent eastern suburbs. Two Chilean policemen stopped 49 motorists for using cellphones while talking and were amazed to discover that a third were talking on fake phones in order to create an impression. "I was only doing it to look better," said one of the culprits. Another said that in Chile you have to show off to get ahead, and using a fake phone was much cheaper than the real thing. It was not clear if the penalties for using a mock phone while driving were the same as for a real one.

...[A 'Beverly Hills 90210' actress is facing a real-life drama of her own. The star of the movie *Urban Legend* has been charged with vehicular manslaughter for an accident that killed a 9-year-old boy crossing a Los Angeles street. Witnesses claim the actress was talking on her cell phone and ignored other cars that had stopped for the boy. If convicted, she faces up to a year in prison and a \$10,000 fine.' ■ 'In some US states, people can't be prosecuted for causing deaths after using a cell phone while driving because it's not illegal to drive and use cell phones at the same time' ...

'TEXT-messaging while driving could be banned after a spate of road deaths. British authorities are considering outlawing the practice after a truck driver was jailed for five years for dangerous driving causing death. He was sending a text message to his girlfriend when he crashed and killed another motorist. It was the 16th fatal accident on UK roads in the past 10 years involving drivers using a cellphone. A young woman pedestrian was killed as she tried to send a text message while crossing a road. And a policeman died when he drove into a tree while reading a text message on a cellphone. The LTSA said it would look at overseas studies of text-messaging causing accidents on the road. A spokesman said: "We urge people to pull their car over if they make a call on their cellphone. If it's crazy trying to drive while using a cellphone it is even more crazy to try and drive while texting, which requires you to look at a small screen instead of the road and to use the fingers of a hand that should be on the steering wheel.'"]

...MOBILE phones are becoming a deadly accessory for motorists on N[Z] roads. The number of accidents caused by drivers making or answering a call behind the wheel have risen sharply... Yet in N[Z] it remains perfectly legal to dice with death by juggling a phone in one hand and trying to negotiate a sharp corner with the other. While the use of mobile phones has caused one of the biggest increase in accidents, it is by no means the most common cause of distraction among motorists. The latest[] LTSA figures... reveal that in 1996, 228 accidents, including five deaths, were caused by drivers trying to light a cigarette or fiddle with their radio. Passengers who distracted the driver caused 124 accidents, including six deaths... [O]ne person died after being put off by an animal... However, it is the use of mobile phones in cars which is causing the most concern in some quarters... "The use of cellphones should be banned," said... [the] Auckland City Council road safety co-ordinator... The local authority allows employees to use only hand-free sets... Using a cellphone while on the move is considered a motoring offence in Britain. In N[SW] and Victoria using a hand-held phone is punishable by a fine. A University of Toronto study issued this year concluded that drivers are four times more likely to have an accident while using a phone... "Here people can drink, eat and talk on the phone while driving. We are living in crazy land."

...[a traffic safety study shows that more than 20% of the 6.5 million car accidents each year in the US are caused by drivers who are talking on a mobile phone, drinking or eating. One woman was eating a bowl of cereal in her four-wheel-drive when she lost control and collided with an oncoming car, killing the driver.' In local news, 'NZ's number one rule on the road – "always give way to the right" – may need to change, say transport officials. The LTSA has told the Minister of Transport that work will soon start on new road rules. "Consideration will be given to changing the left turn/right turn give-way rule, as NZ is the only country where motorists drive on the left-hand side of the road with this rule," says a briefing paper to the minister. In other countries, such as Britain, the car turning across the line of traffic must give way. NZ's give-way rule has been criticised by visitors as confusing and has sometimes been blamed for car accidents involving tourists. However, politicians have previously steered clear of changing it for fear of creating even more confusion and a backlash from angry motorists.']

...All road rules will be reviewed over the next two years... said... [a LTSA] spokesman... In 1976 the road rules were changed to make it compulsory for drivers turning left to give way to those turning right. Before that, those turning left had right of way. N[Z] is now the only country to have such a rule.

...Frustrated motorists making right turns cause more accidents in Auckland than drunken or speeding drivers, new studies reveal. Motorists misjudging gaps in oncoming traffic streams... were involved in 10 fatal accidents and 900 reported injury crashes last year... [The LTSA] regional manager, said motorists' failure to yield right-of-way was a major problem in Auckland traffic. The right turn required skilled judgment of traffic gaps and awareness of approaching vehicle speeds... Overall there were... 4000 intersection accidents in the past five years... The total cost between 1992 and 1996 for intersection accidents was \$323 million... [The chairman of the ARC's] land transport committee, said while safety measures and intersection design could help to cut the right turn crash toll, drivers had to take responsibility themselves... A University of Auckland behavioural psychologist... said because many intersections were ambiguous and frustrating, some drivers could become aggressive and take risks. Ambiguity arose because drivers were not always certain what to do at intersections. "Hence research finds that the longer people wait, the smaller the gap they are willing to pull out into." ...Studies suggested some considered red lights "obstacles" to driving and that intersections presented challenges to compete with others behind the wheel... She also noted that young male drivers tended to be over-confident in their driving skills, less tolerant of frustration and more impulsive... [In related news, police] want the power to confiscate vehicles of young hooners who drag race on roads while crowds... of up to 500... onlookers egg them on. Cities countrywide are blighted by the after-dark activities of organised groups that taunt police or roar off when the law arrives. "Nine times out of 10 they generally leave for another location,"... In some cases, spectators were injured – one fatally in Auckland several years ago... [– but] street racing was not a straight traffic offence... Currently police can confiscate vehicles from repeat drink driving and driving while disqualified offenders[], or... charge drivers with a range of offences, including careless driving and dangerous driving, but they are often no deterrent. "Officers make about 50 prosecutions on a Friday night but the same names keep cropping up,"...

Auckland police are lobbying for a law emulating legislation recently introduced in N[SW]... which allows police to impound vehicles for up to three months... But... [the] Assistant Commissioner... was unsure if a new law would help, saying: "It's a phenomenon of youth. However, there are legitimate ways of pursuing this excitement with car clubs and legalised drag racing,"... The Manukau City Council can fine motorists \$500 if their vehicles are caught on selected streets in industrial south Auckland after certain hours.

...NIGHT time in a deserted industrial area of Auckland. A black panel van, registration plate Evil 8, idles lumpily to the middle of the road. The motor roars, the wheels spin and smoke soon envelopes the vehicle. As it moves slowly through a series of screeching circles the acrid odour of burning rubber fills the air. In drag-racing parlance this is a "donut" and judging from the hoots of spectators it is a good one... "That's a real driver, man. I've not seen any male do better than that,"... [says one spectator. T]he driver and owner... at 22... is... a veteran of eight years attending these unauthorised gatherings of petrol-heads. Her car, with its 5.9-litre engine, commands its own respect... [The] 1972 XA Ford Falcon GT panel van, she tells me, is one of three in the country. It may have been bought for only \$2500 but these obsessions don't come cheap. She estimates more than \$15,000 has been lavished on improvements. This is where her spare money... goes. Burnouts, it seems, are[also] an expensive habit. "I was spending \$240 a week on tyres (but) I was earning \$750... so I could afford it,"... Her ambition is to become the fastest woman over a quarter mile... at Meremere drag strip... But for now she is much more likely to be found... in the south and east of Auckland. By spreading the word – usually by cell phone – 200 cars can descend on a quiet cul de sac... where they do the burnouts and donuts that are not allowed at drag strips, presumably because of the damage they do to the road surface. Although the meetings are referred to as illegal drags, it is rare for cars to race... Racing, however, is popular with young Asians who have their own sessions in East Tamaki where, she says, big money can be bet on the outcome... [Furthermore,] \$150,000 BMW M3s can be seen racing Toyota Supras (\$100,000) and Nissan Skyline GTRs (\$75,000). "These guys are all 18 or 19... I don't hold it against them that their parents bought them (the cars), I just hope they work for them later." ...Drivers consider the gatherings, which have gone on in some form for more than 20 years, to be harmless fun... Not all agree... Police recall one death. [The 22-year-old] remembers it too... a passenger, who was swinging from the window ledge, died after falling from a car during a drag race... [She] doesn't see that blame should be attributed beyond the victim's own stupidity. But clearly it can be dangerous. [She] tells of her own close call when her car's drive-shaft dropped out while racing. Had its tip dug into the road it could have acted like a pole vault on her car. "That was my near death experience... I didn't touch the car for a week, I was in a major state of shock. Then I thought, 'No, I'm alive, might as well go out and tempt fate again'." ...Then there's the horror story she tells of a driver who injected nitrous oxide (laughing gas) into a car's fuel to increase power. He lost control... [She and others] reckon most drivers would go to an authorised venue if one was set aside, but police don't believe them... "If you had an area with supervision I don't think anyone would come because half the fun is to take the mickey out of the police. It's the illegality that appeals." [She] rolls her eyes at the comment and tells of her own efforts... arranging a venue with Waitakere City Council and police only for it to be squashed by the police hierarchy. Both sides agree that violence and tension is increasing. The police tell of lone patrol cars facing barrages of flying bottles, while the dragsters complain of having been strip-searched when held on charges of dangerous driving or unlawful assembly.

...The squeal of street racing tyres proved the last straw yesterday for a South Auckland man who turned to a mean machine of his own. The resident gunned a digger down sleepy early morning streets, allegedly ramming several cars with his front-end loader and provoking a response that left suburban Wiri resembling a riot zone. Police said the Wiri resident was woken by the racers' racket about 4am and decided to put a stop to them. His digger allegedly turned over one car with four people in it. [A]Senior Sergeant... said the man was then chased home by members of the group, who pelted his McLaughlins Rd house with rocks, breaking most of the windows and terrorising his family inside... [He] labelled the behaviour of both sides "disgusting,"... Police have arrested 46 people, aged between 15 and the mid-40s, on charges of breaching the peace and unlawful assembly... The land where the attack took place is being developed into an industrial park... [N]umerous batteries had been taken from earthmoving machines on the site, hydraulic lines cut and diesel stolen, which the racers poured on the road to aid burnouts. One of the racers... aged 20... yesterday said he could understand the frustration over the thefts but said the digger attack was the most dangerous thing he had ever seen... [The] digger hit his Honda CRX, which he estimated had cost him about \$27,000... The petrolheads regularly spin around McLaughlins Rd, with up to 300 cars... from wider Auckland and beyond... revving through the early hours.

...Auckland authorities are moving to clamp down on illegal drag races in city streets which they have so far been unable to stop... Persistent, resource-heavy police campaigns – even undercover operations involving covert video surveillance – and individual prosecutions had only moved races to [a]new location... Police may go as far as seeking a law change to prevent people from gathering for the races... [L]egislators in N[SW] had passed the Traffic Amendment (Street and Illegal Drag) Racing Act last year. The Deputy Mayor of Auckland... said the... Auckland City Council... should lobby Parliament for such a law[, and]... suggested that the council should also respond with a bylaw, possibly confiscating cars involved. [He believed that t]aking half a dozen cars each weekend would soon put a dent in dragsters' activities... A... council report said the most promising solution was to ban parking during problem times to force spectators to move on. This had been tried in Quay St... but the sign vanished.

...Four Great Barrier Island families now have vehicle access to their properties... but bureaucrats on the mainland are unimpressed. Previously, the residents faced a tough 10-minute walk to get to the nearest road... But last week... one... resident... had to return a borrowed bulldozer and said the only way to get it out was to cut a track over the last 100m section of a "paper" road, across a slope. The rough track can now be navigated by a four-wheel-drive vehicle but the chairman of the Auckland City Council planning committee... understands that an abatement notice will be served to stop further work on the road... In 1995 the council declined resource consent for the road because of environmental concerns... [The chairman] said... "I'm very unhappy about this[act of vandalism]... People go through a process and then don't accept the decision and take the law into their own hands." ...[By the way, c]ompanies like Mercedes-Benz and Lexus... are studying the projected growth of four-wheel-drive vehicles... [A] record 220,000 off-roaders were sold... in the U[S]... in May. The same companies are also looking[at] buyer profiles. One that perhaps doesn't apply to N[Z] is that the average Grand Cherokee owner in the U[S] has a household income of about \$150,000.

...LET'S not muck about. There are... grown blokes... that love the smell of mud in the morning. They will roam miles in fearsome four-wheel drives to find it. They will take turns to motor madly through it, spraying their brothers with ooze. They relish being stuck in, then towed from, the mire... More than 90 [4WDs will] spend upwards of 10 hours careering through a swampy Coatsville quarry... and kicking up dust and dirt in Riverhead and Woodhill forests... [during] the North Shore Four-Wheel Drive Club's annual "safari" through the nether parts of Rodney District...

[While 'Otago farmers are complaining about the serious damage being caused to their access roads by Dunedinites going for joy-rides in 4WD vehicles', environmentalists and wildlife enthusiasts are complaining about damage '4WDs cause to sand dunes and bird nests on Canterbury beaches']...

Local politicians, the police and a community group have joined forces to stop off-road vehicles damaging... the volcanic cone... [of Auckland's] Mt Wellington in nighttime escapades... There were... suggestions that... residents set up neighbourhood watch groups to monitor the mountain... The Tamaki Community Board is promoting a number of measures[, including]... notices around the mountain banning off-road use of four-wheel-drives and the spreading of litter and glass... [which] it thinks will stop illegal joyriding.

...[the] Minister of Consumer Affairs... has told off her daughter... for joyriding with friends in a ministerial car. The police caught... [the] 17-year-old[, who had taken] the car without her mother's permission or knowledge, says a spokeswoman for the [minister. Incidentally, 'rescuers took an unconscious toddler from a car after he was discovered overcome by heat in Masterton yesterday. The 2-year-old was found alone in the car by a passer-by, who alerted staff at the BNZ branch in Queen St at 1.40 pm. They took the toddler from the unlocked car into the bank, removed his clothes and wrapped him in cold towels to cool him. Ambulance staff took him to Masterton Hospital for observation and he was discharged last night. A Senior

Sergeant said it appeared the child was in the care of a babysitter while the parents were at work. He said police were investigating why the babysitter had left the toddler alone in the car, and how long the boy was unattended. A decision on whether to lay charges would be made once that investigation was complete. An emergency consultant said young children should never be left alone in a car. "A young child shouldn't be left unsupervised anywhere." Young children were especially sensitive to changes in temperature, but were not able to take off clothes or wind down windows to cool down. In Sydney, 2-year-old Leo Nguyen was discovered dead in the back of his mother's car last week after being overcome by heat when abandoned by thieves who had stolen the vehicle.'

... 'A 26-year-old drifter will today face manslaughter charges over the tragic death of Leo Nguyen in the 50-degree heat of a stolen car two weeks ago. The drifter was arrested in Canberra's sprawling Tuggeranong shopping mall on Monday after a hunt involving the AUSn federal police and NSW crime agencies. Police allegedly found his fingerprints on the black BMW belonging to Leo's mother. The drifter was taken to Sydney yesterday after unsuccessfully fighting an extradition order, required because the ACT is a separate jurisdiction from NSW. The arrest brings to a close the widespread hunt launched after a death that shocked AUS. Leo's mother and her sister had stopped briefly to buy noodles at the largely Vietnamese shopping centre at Cabramatta. The two women left the sleeping Leo in the car with the engine running to keep the air-conditioning going. The drifter spotted the car, jumped in and fled. The car was driven just a few blocks before being abandoned, the engine off and the windows wound up. Police began a desperate grid search of the area but, unable to call in a helicopter, did not find the BMW for 2 1/2 hours. Despite mouth-to-mouth resuscitation by police and treatment by paramedics during a frantic dash by ambulance through rush-hour traffic, Leo died of a heat-induced heart attack in Liverpool Hospital.'

...the person who is responsible for 'a bizarre case of road rage in California has a price of nearly \$US110,000 on his head – thanks to contributions from infuriated animal lovers. The money is earmarked for anyone giving information leading to the arrest and conviction of the man who allegedly killed Leo the Bichon Frise after a minor traffic altercation outside San Jose International Airport last month. The owner of the 10-year-old fluffy white dog lightly bumped a car in front. The driver of the car, a sports utility with Virginia licence plates, stormed back and began hurling abuse at the owner. She says when she opened her window to reply he reached in, grabbed Leo by the collar and threw him into three lanes of oncoming traffic. Local newspapers, radio and television stations took up the story, transforming Leo into a cause celebre that has touched people as far away as Norway and AUS. This week police released a composite sketch of the suspect, described as white, aged 24 to 28, of medium height and wiry build.'

...an] investigation into causes of road rage and possible solutions is expected to take another six weeks. Police are studying a growing number of N[Z] and overseas cases, trying to find a link between drivers and the nature of their crimes. The term "road rage" was coined in Los Angeles during the 1980s after a spate of freeway killings... [A] psychologist... explained road rage by saying being in a fast-moving vehicle in lanes of traffic seemed to bring out "some kind of primal urge" in people... "People, especially men, seem to change when they get behind the wheel. They suddenly have this enormous power and a chance to be aggressive and release stress, and they get incredibly frustrated by anything which inhibits or delays them. If someone cuts in front of you, forget it. Let it go. You don't need to be aggressive and retaliate. A simple toot of the horn or a two-fingered sign might be tempting, but it could lead to injury or even death,"... Auckland's regional traffic co-ordinator... [agreed] men were the main offenders. "We usually find the most outrageous reactions come from people who would normally resolve their conflicts that way... They would have the same response on the sports field, a drinking establishment or the family home – it's just the way they conduct themselves," he said.

...MOTORISTS convicted of road rage offences will be used by the A[A] in the fight to change the attitude of N[Z] drivers. People punished for their part in road-related physical altercations will be asked to explain their actions at a road safety conference at Wellington in November. [The AA's] chief executive... said current driver-awareness programmes were not as effective in reducing the carnage on our roads as they needed to be... Changing inconsiderate attitudes was the key to more harmonious motoring but road rage was becoming more prevalent. [He] thought it may be time to use lighthearted signs, similar to those used in Britain, to encourage drivers not to take bad driving so personally. "We seem to concentrate on graphic road trauma. It might be time to use humour."

...Tougher penalties for traffic law breakers will bring down the road toll and save millions of dollars a year... [the] Chief Commissioner of Police for Victoria... [said] yesterday at the Local Authority Traffic Institute conference on the Auckland North Shore... [He] said drivers must be put in a position where they feared to go over the speed limit, street-race or drink-drive. If drivers felt comfortable with fines and penalties they would be comfortable breaking the law... Victoria has won accolades from around the world for its road safety strategy, which has brought down the state road toll by a considerable margin... [It] was not until Victoria recorded a horrific road toll of 1061 in 1970 that the decision was made to get tough. Vehicles owned by road-rage drivers were forfeited, repeat offenders were liable to be jailed, drink-drivers lost their licences on the spot and heavy fines were imposed on speeders. More than \$5 million w[as] poured into random breath-testing programmes and speed cameras were introduced... The state has maintained a figure of about 400[road deaths] every year since the mid-1980s... Each fatal crash cost the community \$700,000, he said, and each injury requiring hospital treatment cost more than \$100,000. The new strategies have saved an estimated \$2 billion. [The commissioner] said warning drivers about speed camera zones was counter-productive. "Sure, I believe in civil and human rights, but the rights of the individual must come second to the rights of the community." ...[Speaking of putting oneself second, how about the] one-year-old Belgian shepherd dog... [who pushed a] six-year-old... boy out of the path of a speeding car... as the car raced down an alley outside... [their] home... While experts disagree as to whether Missy knew what she was doing, [the boy's] stepfather... was clear that Missy took her role as a watch dog and protector of his six children and stepchildren very seriously... "...She jumped in the air and her front two paws pushed him to me." [Unfortunately, at] about the same time, [the] car struck Missy's hindquarters... Rest in peace, Missy.

...Residents in a city street besieged by speeding cars have won their battle against bureaucracy – but their peace of mind comes with a \$45,000 price tag. The North Shore City Council says it cannot afford to put judder bars into Arran Rd, Browns Bay, but has told residents they can have them if they foot the bill. North Shore police say the street is one of the most dangerous in the area, with cars travelling at up to 117 km/h[in the 50 km/h zone ('research shows that pedestrians hit at 30 km/h have a 5% chance of dying, compared with a 70% risk of death if hit at 60 km/h and 95% if hit at 70 km/h')]. The officer in charge of traffic control on the Shore... said police had spent a lot of time issuing tickets in Arran Rd but could not afford to continue. The organiser of a petition... said the once quiet neighbourhood had become a thoroughfare for cars heading to and from the Northern Motorway. "People are too scared to let their children walk to school on their own in case they are hit by a car." Another resident... said the council had refused to take the matter seriously until he offered to contribute \$1000 towards the cost of the judder bars. Residents were trying to raise money through sponsorship but wanted the council to pay half the cost. But[one] councillor... who lives in Arran Rd, said judder bars were a waste of time and money. "You just transfer the problem to another street. We'd end up having to put them all over the North Shore, and who'd pay for it?" ...Speeding was a problem throughout Auckland and one that local authorities would have to address eventually...

['Auckland's motorists are facing a new, none-too-subtle hint about their speeds. Drivers on Portland Rd, Remuera, last week had their speeds flashed to them and fellow motorists on a radar-controlled electronic sign in an Auckland City Council trial. The machine will also be tested at Forrest Hill Rd and Glenfield Rd on the North Shore this week. While errant drivers do not receive tickets, road safety campaigners hope they will heed the warning to keep their speed down. Both councils will study the equipment's lasting effect on motorists before deciding whether to buy the \$24,000 mobile machine.'

... 'There is no conclusive evidence, to our knowledge, that speed cameras save lives. But what they certainly do is earn governments money – more than \$20 million, or \$385,000 a week in NZ last year. Therefore, the government will probably do its damndest to prevent the appearance here of a British device called a Backflash. It's a \$600 unit which fixes to the front of a car. It fires its own flash when it detects either the light flash or radar of a speed camera and over-exposes the speed camera's film. British police are looking at ways to ban it so it must work.'

...‘a British fellow who received a £40 speed camera fine and a photo of his car sent back a photo of £40. Police then sent the man a photo of handcuffs. He paid the fine.’ In local news, the Government is ‘planning to fine everyone caught exceeding the speed limit by 10km/h instead of just the top 15%’]...

The \$75.6 million collected from speed camera fines should be used for road safety and the police, says[a] Labour MP. The cameras were not supposed to be revenue-gathering devices... [Incidentally,] Christchurch ratepayers have paid \$90,000 for 23 speed cameras. Police believe the Christchurch City Council is the only local authority in the country to fund speed control.

...[a motorist has managed to get off a speeding fine after he convinced a Christchurch court that ‘speed cameras are sometimes unreliable – because they can pick up outside interference if not positioned carefully. One test in the US found a tree moving at 85 km/h’!]

...‘MOTORISTS snapped by mobile speed cameras are being advised to get out their protractors before they pay their fines. The advice comes from a Hamilton sales rep who has twice beaten fines after arguing the cameras that snapped him were set up illegally. They were set up at an angle to the road of more than 22.5 degrees. Speed cameras in the back of cars must be mounted so the radar only catches vehicles in a 22.5 degree arc – the maximum allowable for accurate speed measurement. The sales rep, who drives more than 60,000km each year, was twice snapped at 115kmh in 100kmh areas – but was sure he wasn’t speeding. Now the salesman is wondering how many others paid up for illegally recorded fines. Each year more than 800,000 speeding tickets are issued’ to drivers photographed by speed cameras.

...nationwide, about] **1300 blackspots have been identified and marked on the roads w[ith SPEED CAMERA AREA signs to warn that] cameras may be located[nearby]. While the police rotate only 31 cameras round the country, the uncertainty they create helps keep speeds down.**

...A hidden speed-camera trial in the upper central North Island has led to a fourfold increase in the number of drivers being snapped... on designated sections of highway... from 3.59... every hour... last year to 12.53[or a total of]... 30,000 drivers... in[the] four months... since the trial began... “We anticipated there would be a sharp increase in the number of photos per hour as we picked up those speeding when they thought they were safe from detection,”... [the] Minister of Transport... said... Since speed cameras were introduced in 1994, speeding drivers have paid more than \$75 million in fines. [The minister] said the covert camera trial... was aimed at improving road safety... “Any driver who objects to contributing to the Government’s revenue through speed-camera fines has the solution in his or her own hands. If they don’t exceed the speed limit, the Government won’t get an extra cent,”...

[A] promise to look at putting money raised from speed camera fines into road safety programmes is on the back burner, despite the Minister of Transport... telling Parliament... it would happen soon... [In related news, the] latest “radar/laser jammers” will not enable motorists to get away with speeding... say police... They warn the public that the... Phantom and Lazer radar jammer and scrambler... devices have “no scrambling capacity whatsoever, and are very poor detectors... [T]he performance is the worst of any detector... including those costing one-fifth the price.” ...Police National Headquarters paid out \$572.62 for their own Phantom and Lazer devices and tested them against their speed cameras and the Hawk radar speed trap... Radar Protection Ltd, the company which imports the devices, yesterday stood by its products... “Hundreds of satisfied customers,” showed they were effective. The police criticism of them was “a PR exercise...” ...and police just did not want people to buy them.

...[a speed camera maker, ‘Rocky Mountain Radar, has what it calls the Phazer, a device which detects both radar and laser sensors and causes them to register no speed at all. The company is so confident about its Phazer that it says it will pay the fines of anyone caught speeding using the device.’]

...The importer of a device that helps motorists avoid speeding fines says police are powerless to stop its use. The Rocky Mountain detector temporarily jams speed cameras, laser guns and the Hawk detector... The head of the police safety branch... said yesterday that he had not seen the device. Although radar devices were legal, he said any jamming device that transmitted a signal was not... but he suspected... the Rocky Mountain detector... was “just a radar detector with bells and whistles.” He said jamming devices had never been used in N[Z], and he has not heard of their use in other countries. The device was developed in the U[S] by a company specialising in military technology... A spokesman for the importer... said... [the] company... had sold more than 500 of the \$599 devices in two months. Travelling salespeople were the best customers. Meanwhile, another tactic to avoid speeding fines failed for... drivers travelling south on State Highways 1 and 3 on Friday. Police issued \$200 fines to 17 motorists who had removed their front number plates, hoping to avoid speed cameras. [● ‘The Minister of Police was let off with a warning when he was stopped by police about 9.30 pm last Saturday for exceeding the 50 km/h limit in Wellington. It is understood he decided to go public yesterday only after a journalist found out about the speeding incident and began making inquiries. Hard on the heels of the minister’s admission came an assurance from the head of traffic, the Assistant Commissioner, that it was common for police to issue verbal warnings instead of tickets to traffic offenders in appropriate circumstances. The head said the minister was clocked speeding just short of a 100 km/h speed change sign in Petone as he approached the SH2 motorway. The head refused to say how fast the minister was driving but the NZ Herald understands it was about 70 to 75 km/h. The hapless minister – who has taken a hammering this week for his handling of police restructuring – said that he very much regretted his lapse. “As Police Minister, I am very aware that excess speed is one of the prime causes of death and injury on the road. I can assure the public I will be more careful in future.”]

...‘Speeding police officers are clocked breaking the law almost every second day. Figures obtained by the Herald reveal that at least 886 officers driving police vehicles have paid speeding fines after being caught by the force’s cameras since February 1994. The Police Minister admitted last night: “It’s not good news,” and added that the police should set an example to motorists. 3449 officers were let off speeding tickets because they were legitimately carrying out their duties when caught by speed camera. Explanations were accepted from a further 175 and the tickets were dropped. In a further 287 cases, the tickets were transferred to the individual officers’ names, but the records do not show whether they paid or fought the charges.’

...‘NZ policemen are certainly getting speeding tickets, but they are not crashing too many official vehicles – unlike many British bobbies, who have been forced to resit their driving tests because they are hopeless drivers. In London, police cars have an average of 21 crashes every week.’

...‘Wealthy drivers will pay more and poorer drivers less, if a recommendation to means-test traffic fines is adopted in Britain. A Department of Transport report concludes that fines related to incomes would be a more effective deterrent in the war against speeding motorists. But one critic said: “Means-testing is a minefield. At what point does a fine actually become a deterrent? Should a chap of obvious means doing 160 km/h in a new Porsche equipped with the best brakes and tyres pay more than one on a below-average income doing 160 km/h in a 1989 hatchback with worn brakes and tyres? Is the Department of Transport saying that the wealthy should know better, therefore they should pay more?” The ruckus continues.’

...‘A dot-com millionaire in Finland was fined \$100,000 for driving his Ferrari 360 Modena dangerously. Traffic fines in Finland are linked to income.’

...‘Nine Belgian drivers who turned up in court to answer speeding charges instead found themselves charged with unlawful sexual intercourse. A computer made the mistake.’ By the way, ‘an Italian study found that men who receive a kiss just before getting behind the wheel of a car drive more safely. Kissing is said to release hormones in men’s brains which makes them less likely to drive aggressively.’

...‘An American Automobile Association study of California highways has found that fatal car crashes declined after speed limits were raised. On the other coast, authorities in New York found the same thing – fatalities were down 29% on roads where the speed limit increased from 88 km/h to 105 km/h. The number of crashes on the same roads fell 4% and the injury rate dropped 5%.’]

...Decisions by 12 states in America to raise speed limits... to 112km/h... on interstate roads and freeways cost the lives of 500 Americans in the last nine months of last year... Some states, such as Texas, raised speed limits even on two-lane highways... The... Insurance Institute for Highway Safety... estimates a 12[% increase in highway] fatalities... and a 6[%] increase on all roads in the 12 states concerned... The institute study coincides with an article in Time magazine last week which looked at Montana, a state where legislators have done away with a numerical speed limit during the day for car drivers, instead telling motorists the daytime legal speed limit can be defined as “reasonable and prudent” speeds. Trucks driving in Montana have to keep within... 104km/h... and at night, all vehicles are restricted to that speed... But... Montana’s decision not to post a numerical

speed limit is again under review... *Time* reports that cars frequently travel through Montana at speeds of more than... 160km/h... and police there have clocked drivers at... 241km/h... In the U[S], many people frequently dispute the idea of the police and safety legislators that "speed kills." However... "It reduces the time drivers have to avoid crashes, and increases the likelihood of crashing and the severity of crashes that do occur,"... says... the institute...

THE faster you go, the bigger the mess. This is the message at the sharp end of a major anti-speed campaign launched today... [by] police and the [LTSA]... If you crash, you are twice as likely to die when travelling at 120km/h than... at 100km/h... 130km/h means you are four times as likely to die... Apart from bolstering road patrols a series of hard-hitting television advertisements will also be screened, starting tonight.

...[The faster people go, the bigger the fine. 'The minimum is \$30 (for exceeding the speed limit by up to 10km/h) and the maximum is \$490 (for being 45 to 50km/h over the speed limit). Exceeding the limit by 50km/h is regarded as being a serious offence' and, therefore, offenders are sent to court instead of receiving an instant fine. '1800 NZers a year are nabbed breaking speed limits by at least 50 km/h.']

...Police chased a 14-year-old girl driving a stolen car at speeds of up to 150 km/h through mid-Canterbury for 25 minutes early yesterday.

...[HOT PURSUIT (7.30pm, TV3) is a special looking at the officers who make split-second decisions to chase criminals in high-speed pursuits. Each year there are more than 20,000 high-speed police chases in America.] ● 'In Munich, Germany, a bank robber gave police cars the slip after a 180 km/h chase through the streets. But when he drove on to a high-speed toll road and queued to pay his way, they caught up and penned him in.'

...[British police are looking for a high-profile patrol vehicle, one so intimidating that no one will consider trying to outrun it. They favour the rally-bred Mitsubishi Evolution VI.] Hopefully the move won't simply mean there is 'another high performance car with a low performance driver' on the road!]

...Police are using high performance sports cars in a new speed enforcement campaign which began yesterday. And they are under strict instructions not to become involved in chases... "There is no way in the world we will be chasing cars around at the top speeds of these vehicles..."

...police in the four areas where the cars were being used... had been told to return them in showroom condition... The Nissan 200SX has a top speed of 235km/h, but[the] Assistant Commissioner... said it was the car's power in acceleration that would be most important... [The car] could go from zero to 100km/h in 6.5 seconds, making it ideal for catching speeding motorists quickly. He said that in almost all cases motorists ordered to pull over did so without having to be chased[. ● 'In the US, one person a day dies as a result of high-speed police chases – one-third are innocent bystanders.' Many more are injured.

...[The police used road spikes to stop a stolen car yesterday morning. The car, stolen from Paeroa, was chased through Cambridge about 10 am, reaching speeds of 180 km/h, often travelling on the wrong side of the road and forcing on-coming traffic nearly off the road. A sergeant said the car passed several vehicles on blind corners. The spikes were set up 2km north of Tirau and punctured both front tyres of the car. It stopped a kilometre further on, and a 17-year-old female and four juveniles were caught. A 14-year-old was to appear in the Hamilton Youth Court on charges relating to the incident']...

Hastings police... used road spikes... yesterday... to stop a 14-year-old driver in a stolen car... after the boy failed to stop... Police reported a quiet Labour Weekend overall... with most vehicles travelling at sensible speeds. But one officer, surprised at the high speeds recorded on S[H]1 near Tokoroa, blamed Aucklanders... unaware of the district's emphasis on enforcing speed limits. Yesterday morning, in his first few hours patrolling, he apprehended two... "white-collar workers"... [- one] travelling at just over 160 km/h and one at 155 km/h.

...Seasoned traffic enforcers have been horrified by speeds recorded on Auckland roads as irresponsible drivers get behind the wheels of powerful, late-model cars. Police recently stopped a car which was clocked travelling on the Southern Motorway at 220 km/h... "He was going so fast, officers had to abandon the pursuit and he was eventually caught in the Waikato," said... the head of the Auckland police motorway section... Other horror stories in recent weeks include... [a] car reaching 148 km/h on the Auckland Harbour Bridge... [and a car that] was snapped speeding six times in 80 minutes... The highly publicised programme using slick Nissan 200 SX pursuit cars has been extended until Christmas[. In related news, 'McLaren is looking at building a model to compete with the best from Ferrari. Something less than \$500,000, or \$1.5 million cheaper than the McLaren F1, the world's fastest road car it gave us a few years back.'

...[McLaren's F1 three-seater road car is in danger of losing its title as the world's fastest production car to a Swedish convertible called the Koenigsegg CC. The V12 F1 speeds from zero to 100 km/h in about 3.6 sec and has a top speed of about 375 km/h. The Swedish challenger, powered by a supercharged V8 engine producing 480kW, gets to 100 km/h in 3.2 sec and charges on to 385 km/h']...

Car makers can now build cars with lower top speeds dictated by built-in computers... But would Governments ever encourage them to do so? The first appearance of the motorcar in England last century so inflamed fears of pedestrians being run down by the "horseless carriages" that the law required runners to jog ahead of the car to warn of its progress. But to a fascinated public its potential uses outweighed its risks and the car and its noisy internal combustion engine quickly left runners and law-makers behind. Soon cars were running every which way. Sometimes they ran into each other. One of the first recorded collisions between cars happened in France... The story went that both drivers were so captivated by the sight of each other that they simply met head-on. Hand in hand with the new source of power and motion came the need for more power. More power meant more speed. More speed meant more risks, new challenges... Enter the racing driver, a new breed of daredevil. Crowds in Europe lined rough-and-tumble roads to watch early rallies and races. Spectators and drivers were killed. Never mind... Man's desire to go faster and farther was insatiable. Nothing has changed. Nearly 100 years down the road, [a] Royal Air Force pilot... goes 1227 km/h – 20 times faster than the first official land-speed record of 63 km/h set in 1898, not in a petrol-powered car but an electric one... BMW, Mercedes-Benz and Audi buy into... an agreement... [that] they limit their cars to 250 km/h... But what happens if one day... [Governments] move in, telling the car industry that speed kills and to go full circle and build cars limited to, say, 100 km/h...? ...car makers would not have to build them as strongly to withstand crashes.

...Police cars are crashing off the road at a rate that is alarming police chiefs, who say they do not have the money to repair... them... or... to buy a new car when one was written off. Police did not have insurance for vehicles because premiums would be too high... The situation is critical in Auckland, and officers will be forced to walk... if more money is not made available... About seven cars had been damaged and taken off the road in the past seven weeks in South Auckland alone. None would be replaced... The Auckland director of the Police Association... said he had supervised nine staff at Papakura station recently and they had only one car among them. Three staff went out on a job and when reports of a motor vehicle accident came through, six staff were available to attend but they had no car. A community constable's sponsored vehicle had to be seconded for the job. The Auckland region police commander... admitted more cars than usual had been damaged recently... [He] said the increased number of crashes might have something to do with the driving skills of officers, but there was plenty of training through the police college and in each region... It was vital that officers took care when driving, particularly during pursuits... he said... While the lack of money was a concern, N[Z] still had a higher ratio of cars to staff than many other countries, including A[US] ('NZ has 2506 police vehicles, or roughly one for every 1590 people; in the past 12 months, 531 of these vehicles have been replaced, at a cost of \$17.7 million'). By the way, a]... television advertising campaign targeting speed as a killer on the roads has been airing for 10 days. In that time, 33 people have died on the roads... Of 29 fatal crashes, more than half involved vehicles travelling at excessive speed. Half of those killed were not wearing seatbelts... Crash attendants estimated that eight... would have survived if they had been belted in... The campaign is... [financed] by an \$8 million allocation from the Government[. Despite the apparent failure of the campaign, the LTSA estimates that 'every \$1 spent on advertising seatbelt use, anti-speed and anti-drunk driving messages eventually saves the country \$28.' 'Based on a 1991 valuation, taxpayers are considered willing to pay an extra \$2.25 million on a project for every additional life it could save']...

Police have received more funding to crack down on speeders and drunks behind the wheel at accident hot spots around Auckland. But there are fears that a lack of officers specialising in traffic will make it difficult for police to reduce the road toll in some areas... [Police] in Auckland and

Northland have received about \$40 million of the \$146.6 million traffic safety fund from the [LTSA] – up 5[%] on last year... But... Wellington police have been told to reduce their road safety work this financial year and a local body is taking action over this funding cut.

...The Wellington City Council is taking legal action in a bid to get more police enforcing traffic safety in the city. Council lawyers say it should sue the Government for breaching a 1972 contract between the council and the Ministry of Transport. That agreement binds the Secretary for Transport to provide a certain number of dedicated traffic enforcement officers based on the population... Legal action... would cost the council \$20,000, plus GST. [■ An Italian traffic cop has been suspended after giving his former wife's divorce lawyer hundreds of fines and parking tickets. Another traffic cop, this one from Varkaus, Finland, wrote himself a ticket for driving on an expired licence and was fined \$500. "It wouldn't be fair to give others a ticket and not myself," he explained.]

...Motorists are beginning to snitch on bad drivers... Two weeks ago, 300,000 forms were sent out, encouraging people to fill out the registration details of dangerous or inconsiderate drivers. More than 200 have been returned and those targeted will receive a warning letter from police. The scheme, called Community Roadwatch, will initially run for six months and follows a similar four-week experiment in 1995-96, during which 2684 forms were returned. During that period, 30% complained about dangerous overtaking, 21% about careless driving and 12.8% about slow drivers holding up traffic. Police followed up how many reported vehicles were later involved in an accident. The offending motorists were four times more likely than others to be involved in a crash.

...Unemployed people will soon be dobbing in motorists who run red lights. The Wellington City Council road safety subcommittee yesterday approved a 12-week pilot scheme in which unemployed people will stand near traffic lights and note the registration of every car which ignores red lights. The chairwoman of the subcommittee... said the working party still had to finalise details, including the number of spotters, where they would be based, at what times, and how much training would be needed. The spotters could be... available for work three days a week and receive up to \$20 a day on top of the dole to cover travel expenses... Motorists face a \$75 fine for running a red light.

...Motorists have been slapped with almost \$20,000 in fines after being caught on video running red lights through Auckland intersections. Plainclothes police officers began filming intersections... six months ago to battle an epidemic of red light jumping in the city... The... hand-held... \$2000 video camera... would operate until the end of the year, when the strategy would be reviewed. Up to five cameras would be bought if it helped reduce intersection accidents... [In related news,] Cantabrians could face a walk home from their summer holiday in Nelson because of an aggressive campaign to recoup unpaid fines. The courts will watch popular holiday spots for offenders' vehicles and seize or clamp them until outstanding debts are paid.

...The wheel clamp proved a successful pay-up reminder to vehicle owners, as part of a Wellington Department for Courts blitz on unpaid fines at the weekend. The department's district collections manager... said... 13 collectors went door-knocking to try to reduce the city's \$14.8 million of unpaid fines. Fourteen vehicles were seized and \$9000 of fines paid.

...Police chiefs have left the door open to other agencies wanting to join them at random road blocks to catch bad debtors. Fuelling the fears of privacy watchdogs, police top brass yesterday backed moves made in Auckland to allow bailiffs to tag along during traffic checkpoints... Lawyers and the Opposition were outraged. "What next? Perhaps N[Z] on Air staff could get in line behind bailiffs and collect television licence fees at the same time," said the Labour justice spokesman... He was reacting to news that the Department for Courts joined police on the North Shore during a series of checkpoints at which bailiffs trapped nine unsuspecting motorists who owed unpaid fines. Vehicles were initially checked by police constables who viewed registration stickers. Any cars which were not registered were pulled to the side for closer examination and further checks from bailiffs. The Privacy Commissioner... warned that the operation was on shaky ground and that he would be watching closely. "There is definitely an issue that needs to be sorted out. It illustrates the danger that always occurs whenever there is an incursion [on privacy] for apparently good reasons." ...The president of the Criminal Bar Association... said he believed the presence of outside agencies at police roadblocks was tantamount to information sharing between departments, and therefore a breach of privacy legislation... But the Attorney-General... told Parliament that he hoped all MPs would support the idea... "I would have thought most MPs would consider this was a very effective way of collecting fines and I would say to members of the House that driving a car is a privilege. And if you are driving a car and you haven't paid traffic fines then the authorities should be able to haul you up and ensure you pay those fines... that was sensible action."

...Police and court bailiffs are now formalising plans to catch fine dodgers at random road blocks after... \$12,500 had been recovered in overdue fines from nine unsuspecting motorists during the half-day trial... [The] North Shore police area controller, said the joint venture at road blocks should happen more often as... [obtaining] information... from the Wanganui computer and reminding people about fines absorbed police time.

...[charges] for unpaid fines will increase from the beginning of next month. The Department for Courts has announced that... infringement fines, such as speeding or parking tickets, would have a \$25 charge added when they were passed to the court for enforcement. The current charge is \$15. Overdue fines would have a \$100 court enforcement fee added – currently \$90... A department spokeswoman... said... people... who found it difficult to pay in full could apply for time to pay...

[A] taxi driver... is without her taxi – the family's only source of discretionary income – [after it was] seized by the Lower Hutt District Court... fines-collection unit... because[her] 27-year-old son... had unpaid fines of nearly \$1000. [The mother] was devastated as the car belonged to her, not her son, although he sometimes drove it for her. To try to get her taxi back, [she] must file a notice of interest at the court, get a judge to hear the case and determine if the seizure was correct. But a judge will not be available to hear the case in Lower Hutt [for over a month]. "We can't wait that long. My husband's job only covers the mortgage and food..." ...she was[also] angry the court did not notify her that the taxi had been taken... [Her] lawyer... said seizing a vehicle from another family member had ramifications for anyone who had a relative with fines... [By the way,] police will use roadblocks to catch mobile burglars in a plan which a leading lawyer claims is unlawful... It infringed people's right to go about their business, he said... Burglary squad police will join traffic police [at] roadside checkpoints as part of a crackdown in the Auckland inner-western suburbs on burgeoning burglary rates... which averaged 400 a month... "The specialist traffic unit will be checking cars and we will be there to see if these vehicles have stolen property in them or if there are people we want... Innocent people have not got anything to be worried about." ...[a] civil liberties spokesman for the Auckland District Law Society, said yesterday that random road stopping was being abused... "Unless the police have reasonable cause to suspect that a burglary has recently been committed, they don't have the right to stop people." ...the Auckland police media office, said the burglary squad would have to get warrants to search vehicles if suspicious drivers refused to cooperate... The squad is also appealing to the public to do in known criminals. It has set up a special phone line for people to phone in anonymously with information.

...Stopping drivers at random... has brought police unexpected bonuses in Sicily. Eighty-three drivers have been arrested for fraud. All were drawing social security because they were registered as blind. One optimist claimed he'd been cured two days earlier at Lourdes... [In local news, a] police chief has ordered his staff to drop a plan to catch burglars at roadside checkpoints after finding out it was unlawful. [The]Assistant Commissioner... said the squad had not viewed it as unlawful. "I don't want to be hard on my staff but, having said that, they have to work within the law..." ...Present legislation allows police to stop motorists only for traffic offences, or when officers have reasonable grounds to suspect an offence has been committed... [A] Masterton court ruled last year that stolen property was inadmissible as evidence because the alleged burglar's vehicle was stopped and searched "illegally." ...The head of the burglary squad... said many members of the public had called to support the planned operation... [T]he Police Association... president... said: "Criminals are still empowered, not police. The power should be transferred back to police... We can drive past a burglar, know it's a burglar, but be unable to search his vehicle... Good burglars know they can't be stopped..."

...Although most drivers are stopped on average once a year, nearly half still think there is a good chance they can drink and drive, yet not get caught... [LTSA] research shows that despite the millions of dollars being spent on advertising and police checkpoints, 42[%] of drivers think there is a low risk of being caught drink-driving. This is in the face of 800,000 drivers being stopped at checkpoints in Auckland and Northland in the past year. Of male drivers in the Auckland region, 38[%] said they had driven drunk in the past 12 months... [Despite the findings of its research, the LTSA's] advertising manager... said the... \$8.7 million... advertising campaign... [– which meant that t]he authority was the fourth biggest television advertiser last year... [–] had been successful... [However, r]esearch overseas had shown immediate penalties, such as taking away a licence from a drunk driver at the roadside, could be more effective.

...[Parliament will consider next week whether to give police the power to automatically suspend drivers' licences for up to a month under tough new laws targeting drunk motorists.]

...The courts will overflow... if tough new drink-driving penalties are introduced, says an Auckland traffic lawyer... [He] predicted more people would plead not guilty, because of the fear that police could impound their car after a second conviction and seize their licence if caught again... The Government would also have to deal with hundreds of impounded cars that convicted drink-drivers could not be bothered paying to collect... "Most of these people drive old bombs. Do you think anyone will pay \$300 to recover a \$500 car they are disqualified from driving? The Government will have to move into the scrap-metal business." ...However, he believed that sentences for repeat offenders should be tougher...

[The police have] backed a decision last week by a Whangarei district court judge to sentence a first-time drink-driver to 14 days jail... Jailing first-time drink-driving offenders may be the short sharp shock needed to get the drink-driving message through... say police... who are fighting rising numbers of drunk drivers.

...At a time of rising crime and low police numbers... officers are being pulled off crime work to screen rush-hour motorists in a bid to enforce Government-imposed breath-testing targets... North Shore police have to ask about 50,000 drivers to take breath tests this financial year, recording their registration numbers as evidence. "We are finding it's a real imposition to achieve those numbers,"... [a] Takapuna... Inspector... said... [He acknowledged] large-scale checkpoints at peak times did, however, get the message across to N[Z]ers that drunk-driving was a crime... The strategic policy manager for the... [LTSA said asking] police to screen a specific number of people was effective as the number of alcohol-related deaths had dropped from about 40[% to 30% of the total number of road deaths 'over the past ten years'. This mirrors the trend in the US where, 'last year, there were 16,189 alcohol-related traffic deaths, or 38.6% of the total. In 1982, alcohol-related deaths made up 57.3% of the total.'

... 'In 1986, 1.782 million drivers were arrested in the US for drunken driving compared to 946,000 in 1970. The arrest rate per 100,000 drivers rose from 729 to 1,130. The arrest rate was highest (2,075) among 18 to 24 year olds but remained high for other below 40 groups as well. Of drinking drivers involved in fatal accidents, 25 to 30 year olds constituted almost one-third.'

... 'American police are testing a portable eye-scanner called a SafetyScope, which will reveal whether motorists are too drunk or tired to drive. The device analyses eye movements and displays its findings inside 90 seconds.' Such a device would, however, be too slow for use in NZ – where l]arge-scale drink-driving blitzes will become more common despite complaints from rank-and-file police... staff[, who] are concerned that the road toll is dropping while crime is rising... [The] Minister of Police... and the Commissioner of Police... came out in support of full-scale checkpoints yesterday... The [LTSA] also had a meeting with police to ensure the drink-driving checkpoints were worth the \$35 million spent on them. And police bosses agreed to meet their contract to breath-test more than 1.5 million drivers – 450,765 hours of checkpoint work.

...Police are targeting drink-drivers in the wrong places and at the wrong times with number-crunching checkpoints... [according to] a road safety expert... [who] says large-scale blitzes before 10 pm miss hardcore drinkers and waste police time and resources. Half the alcohol-related fatalities happened between midnight and 5 am... He was speaking after revelations that overworked police were screening motorists in dense traffic to meet breath-testing targets. The Minister of Police... plans to consult officials about the style of checkpoints... after... 90... North Shore... police stopped rush-hour motorists... from 5 pm on Friday to test as many drivers as possible in one hit... [The minister] said forcing police to fill quotas might not be the most effective way of targeting drink-driving... Of the 9778 drivers who were breath-tested on the North Shore, only 12 were found to be over the limit... [T]he Auckland police media unit, said police realised that drunks were more likely to be on roads after midnight. But... "For the huge majority of people, we want to tell them that, 'Hey, we're out there.' There's 1[%] of the population who, no matter how hard we try, they will always drink and drive."

...I remain puzzled at the gesture of the Auckland Police, the Friday before last, of mounting, at five in the afternoon, and at, of all places, the northern end of the Auckland Harbour Bridge, a blitz on drink-drivers. According to one report, 12,000 vehicles were checked. Five drivers were apprehended after failing breath tests. I am all for driving drink-drivers off the road. Over the years, relatives and friends have been killed in collisions. But the timing and the place for the blitz surely demonstrated that, for once, the [police]... were off their rockers... [A] great many of the inhabitants of... the[North] Shore... work, as their forebears did, on the south shore. By Friday evening every one of... [them] has had a gutsful (no other word is so expressive) of working in the city and has one ambition – to make the bridge crossing as fast and as safely as possible. I am thankful I did not hear the cursing as one shorebound car after another was stopped and checked. I doubt the police copped one kind word from what was surely an idiotic exercise.

...[Nearly 5000 motorists were breath-tested during a Friday night blitz on Melbourne's expressways which caught 73 drink-drivers – including a naked man wearing lipstick. When police approached the car they discovered the man was alone, with his clothes strewn over the front seats. Driving naked was not an offence in Victoria, said the Acting Superintendent, but "before he was taken to the booze bus he was asked to dress himself."

... 'How do you get off a drink-driving charge? Send the court a fake death certificate. A fellow in Germany did it twice – once for a heart attack, the second time for yellow fever. But a copper who booked him for the first offence later recognised him – and said that police would probably want to revisit the drink-driving charges now that he was alive again.'

... NZ 'POLICE admit the Intoxilyzer 5000 breath testing devices can be unreliable, despite having fought a legal bid to challenge their accuracy.'

... 'a judge has thrown out a drink-driving case because a blood-testing kit was incorrectly labelled. The label does not say the kit had been approved by the "Science Minister." Instead, it refers to the "Minister of Research, Science and Technology." The Auckland lawyer and drink-driving specialist who argued the case for his client on this point in the Auckland District Court said police could not appeal to the High Court as the time limit had expired. His 25-year-old client had been caught driving in Auckland with a blood alcohol reading of 95. The legal driving limit is 80. The lawyer said the case raised an important issue, and had not simply been thrown out on a minor technicality. The law made it quite clear blood-testing kits must be approved by the "Science Minister" so police could not just use any old device. Governments kept changing the name of their ministries, but the law was written in a particular way to ensure that things were done properly. The suspect labelling could cause hundreds of drink-driving cases to be thrown out. About 25% of drunk drivers are convicted on the basis of a blood sample rather than an evidential breath test. The Police Minister said he would be immediately asking for a report. "Some of those in the pipeline at the moment may get away with what they normally wouldn't have, and that's always a concern with drink-driving."']

...A MOTORIST who exceeded the drink-drive limit has exploited a legal loophole by successfully arguing a police advertising campaign was misleading. Charges against the man were dropped at an Auckland District Court hearing last week after his counsel... claimed a billboard proclaiming "Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere" was not true. [The lawyer] said the hoarding gave the impression police could demand a breath test at all times, even on private property, although the Transport Act 1962 says this is not always the case. He claimed his client, who registered 729

micrograms per litre of blood (the legal limit is 400 micrograms[– although ‘measurements taken from a trial group of people consuming the same amount of alcohol found that some were at the limit, some were above and some below’!]), would not have agreed to a test at his home had he known he could have refused. “...because of the advertising my client presumed they were entitled to be there. They had no right to demand a test – it is misleading advertising.” Police said the man was tailed after his vehicle was clocked travelling 110 km/h in a 50 km/h zone. [The lawyer] said his client was first charged with dangerous driving but the offence was later scaled down to exceeding 50 km/h. His client pleaded guilty and was fined \$200. Police pursued the excess alcohol charge but after considering the defence argument, [the]Judge... ruled the test results inadmissible. A 1992 amendment to the act allowed for police to carry out tests on private property but only if certain criteria were met... A police spokesman said officers who tested the man had not claimed jurisdiction under section 66a – they maintained the breath screening was carried out in a public place – “We said the test was on the footpath; the defendant said it was up the driveway.”

...[‘A court in the US has upheld a police decision to confiscate a man’s four-wheel-drive after he was found drunk behind the wheel, listening to music. He was in his own driveway and had bought the car that day.’

...‘A South African judge, caught drinking and driving, has resigned. He wasn’t convicted but police checks found he was driving home from a party celebrating the conviction of a drinker-driver.’ In local news, a] **Hamilton labourer was sentenced to... three years’... jail after being caught drink-driving for the sixth time in the past year... He was also disqualified from driving indefinitely and had his 1981 Holden Commodore confiscated...**

Drunk, disqualified and dangerous drivers will be hit harder than ever under legislation introduced to Parliament yesterday... Maximum fines for some offences have been doubled or tripled and prison sentences extended. But views differ on whether the stiffer penalties will work.

...[‘New transport laws giving civilians the power to stop cars and arrest drink drivers have alarmed civil libertarians, lawyers and the police union. The Police Commissioner could now save money by appointing security guards as “enforcement officers” to staff checkpoints or stop cars at night. Critics say the move opens the way for the privatisation of powers previously held only by sworn police and traffic officers. The Police Association president said: “To give those powers or have that done by non-trained police would be setting a very dangerous precedent. What’s next? Giving people the power to arrest for minor street offences?”’

...‘A Timaru driver stopped at the weekend had what police believe is one of the highest breath-alcohol levels ever for a NZ motorist. The 46-year-old, who had driven several blocks when he was stopped outside his home on Saturday night, recorded a breath-alcohol reading of 1952 micrograms. Earlier this year, an Auckland man appeared in court after giving a breath-alcohol reading of 2000’]...

Auckland motorists have returned the country’s worst drink-driving record... [T]he ratio of drink-drivers was nearly twice the national average... Of the 34 people caught over the limit on Saturday night, 38[% had previous] convictions for drink-driving.

...**Drink-drivers in Kawerau** [– ‘trumpeted 50 years ago as NZ’s first truly model town’ –]will rob schoolchildren under a new scheme. The six schools in the timber town will share \$20,000 in June next year if drivers stay sober. The fund was established by the [LTSA] and Kawerau District Council. From Monday, the fund will be docked \$70 for each over-the-limit driver caught by the police. The scheme was introduced because of Kawerau’s abysmal drink-driving record. Had the scheme been run last year, the fund would almost have been wiped out. A... Senior Sergeant... said one in ten drivers stopped by Kawerau police was over the limit, compared with the national average of one in 40.

...The first blow to a \$20,000 fund for Kawerau schools was delivered into a breathalyser yesterday. A 33-year-old mother had a breath-alcohol level allegedly more than twice the legal limit when stopped at 11.15 am... only 33 hours after the start of the scheme...

AS STUDENTS go, they’re not exactly in line to become rocket scientists. In fact, Christchurch police reckon they must be two of the stupidest scarfiest they’ve come across... The pair were initially spoken to by a police patrol car called to a disturbance outside the student union bar at Canterbury University. One had driven to the function, but it was quickly clear to the law he was no longer functioning. He agreed with police advice to walk home. After sorting out the disturbance, police decided that for [the] second student’s own safety they would give him a lift home themselves... But on the way the patrol spotted a car being driven erratically with its front grille smashed in. They stopped it. Behind the wheel... was the student who was supposed to be walking home. They determined he’d damaged the car – his father’s – by crashing into a traffic light. On the way to the central police station to process the student for drink driving, the other student, whom the officers were still to drop off at home, remarked in view of what had happened he’d never go near a car after drinking. Famous last words. Later, when the same police returned to measure the crash site, they spotted another car being driven erratically. Behind the wheel this time was the student they had dropped off earlier. He was incapable of walking then, and his driving skills weren’t much better now. His explanation? He was hungry and needed to get to a hamburger bar for a late-night snack.

...A husband and wife were both picked up for drink driving in the same car near Manchester, England, this week. [The man, aged] 56, was first to be caught after he collided with two cars. Then it was the turn of [his wife, aged] 52, who also collided with two cars. She was fined £300... and banned from driving for 18 months. His case was adjourned for pre-sentencing reports after the court heard he was more than three times over the legal limit... 16[%] of fatal accidents in Britain involve drunk drivers.

...[during the past 12 months, ‘540 people died on British roads from alcohol-related crashes. 540 people died on NZ roads – 153 were alcohol-related. However, if NZ had Britain’s 63 million population, 10,800 people would have died – 3060 of them in accidents in which alcohol was a factor. Which is why the Government is looking at lowering the drink-drive limit to 50 milligrams. Britain is about to do the same.’

...‘A British man who was drunk when he drove his car into another vehicle, killing six people – the three occupants of the other vehicle and three of his friends – was jailed yesterday for 15 years and banned from driving for life. Prosecutors said the man, who had consumed 7.4 litres of beer during a bar-hopping expedition, was not supposed to be driving on the day of the accident because he was still serving a previous four-year driving ban for driving while drunk. He fled the scene of the accident near Sheffield, and later lied to police that one of his three dead passengers had been behind the wheel. “I did not feel out of control or drunk. I felt sure of myself and safe,” he told the court.’]

...**The family of a 17-year-old Napier girl killed when she was hit by a car as she tended an injured dog were too traumatised to attend the sentencing of the driver yesterday.** [The driver], aged 40, was sentenced to three years imprisonment and disqualified from driving for five years... Six months of his sentence were taken off through mitigating circumstances which included pleading guilty to driving with excess breath alcohol... of 774mcg... and causing the death... The crown prosecutor... told the court [the driver] had three previous convictions for drink-driving... [However, t]he defence... described the accident as a momentary lapse and said [the driver] had shown “profound remorse” and would have to live with what had happened for the rest of his life... [Incidentally, the] **Kawerau... Dollars for Sober Drivers scheme... is now down to \$16,570...**

POLICE are finally winning the battle against drink-drivers. As the... party season gets into full swing, motorists are being convinced to leave their cars at home... Taxi companies are reaping the benefit... Last weekend saw the launch of the national festive crackdown and so far only one in every 250 motorists stopped had tested positive... The change in society’s attitude is put down to a number of reasons. Pubs now offer a wider selection of food and low-alcohol drinks, while this year many companies are laying on free taxis for staff... parties. According to the Alcohol Liquor Advisory Council[, the]... average male... should drink only six beers in an average session and women four... Three years ago, a record was set when one man was caught over the limit by six times with a blood alcohol reading of 480mg... per 100ml of blood... That’s the equivalent of drinking seven-and-a-half pints of average strength beer and then 13 doubles of spirits... The legal limit in N[Z] is... equal to countries like Great Britain, Germany and Canada, but far more relaxed than Hungary or Turkey which ha[ve] a zero limit. In A[US] and Japan the figure is 50mg...

An Auckland woman is furious after a dial-a-driver company crashed her car, refused to pay the bill, and then told her she should not drink alcohol... [The woman thought] she did the right thing after drinking and called Corporate Dial-A-Driver to take her and her car home safely. A couple picked her up from a party in Otara, then the man drove her in her Mitsubishi Mirage while his partner followed behind in their Toyota Hilux. At an intersection the Hilux crashed into the back of the car, leaving it badly damaged but drivable... [T]hey told her to get a quote and they would pay for repairs, but when she sent them a panelbeater's estimate for \$705 they wanted more quotes. When those came in at \$888 and \$1620, Corporate Dial-A-Driver... said they could get the job done for \$300 and that was the most the company was prepared to pay... Other dial-a-driver companies said their drivers were liable in the event of any accidents and were told to take out insurance... The [LTSA] said dial-a-driver operators did not have to have public liability insurance, although the authority encouraged it.

...[AUS plans to introduce a gadget which means convicted drink-drivers have to pass a test before they can start their car. The scheme enables them to get their licence back earlier, but they have to pay the cost of the gadget (about \$2000/year).] In related news from Britain, 'families of crash victims are protesting about Government plans to pay cash bonuses to tow-truck owners who clear damaged vehicles in less than 30 minutes – so traffic can quickly flow again – because doing so could hinder police investigations into the cause of crashes and lead to fewer drivers being prosecuted.'

...[People think towtruck] drivers can be tough in N[Z] but few would go to the lengths of a pair in Nimes, France. They removed an ambulance from a no-parking spot. And the crew had to carry the patient nearly 1/2km to hospital. [By the way, 'two weeks ago at a South Auckland shopping centre I noticed a Porsche parked in the "Disabled" parking space. This vehicle displayed no "Disabled" sign and was parked there from when I first saw it at 9 am until late in the afternoon. This week it was there again. I decided to investigate, inquiring at several shops to find who it belonged to. Finally a woman said she knew whose it was. She left her shop and to our amazement went along to the after-hours doctor's surgery and berated the doctor on duty, who, after much arm-waving and pointing, eventually moved his vehicle. We frequently find vehicles displaying no signs parked in these spaces and think of the driver as being either inconsiderate or illiterate. But for a doctor to treat his own clients or potential clients in this manner is beyond our comprehension.'

...[Auckland City is among the first to act on an amendment last month to the Transport Act allowing maximum penalties to rise. Traffic safety offences such as double parking or parking on a dotted yellow line will climb from \$40 to \$60, as will other offences such as inconsiderate parking, parking on a clearway, near an intersection or a pedestrian crossing. Motorists will also be hit harder for overstaying their welcome. Fines for parking meters are being raised to the maximum. The present charge for overstaying more than four hours increases from \$34 to \$42, for more than six hours, \$57. The council's parking services manager said fines had not risen in eight years and an increasing number of motorists were deciding the risk was worth taking.'

...[The PM has copped a \$60 ticket for parking on a broken yellow line for more than an hour in Auckland yesterday. The PM's late-model ministerial car was parked in Upper Queen St for the launch of a NZ on Air initiative promoting local music. Asked who would pay for the ticket, one of the PM's press secretaries said: "It might not be a question of it coming to that." However, he rang back five minutes later to say he was certain the ticket would be paid. "We don't want to give the impression that we would get away with not paying when anyone else would have to front up." He said there "wasn't necessarily a ready-made park outside every venue the PM attended." The parking warden who featured in the *Herald's* story yesterday about parking problems at Auckland University, was again the man on the spot. "It doesn't matter if it's the PM or the ordinary guy. You can't park there unless in an emergency," he said.] • [The House of Lords in London has scrapped plans for a \$7m upgrade of its carpark. Peers decided the upgrade could spark a wave of protest.'

...[p]arking meters in some cities in Britain now accept credit cards... [T]he rates were so high that most people didn't carry enough change. Some traffic authorities complained that a normal day's business was jamming the meters – they weren't big enough to hold all the money. The move will foil crooks cutting off the meters to take them home to get coins. [(Editor's note: 'parking meters were first introduced in Oklahoma City in 1935.')

...[A grandmother in Ohio was jailed for feeding a stranger's parking meter. The 62-year-old was charged with obstructing official business and disorderly conduct after a police officer saw her put coins in an expired meter.'

...[A California Highway Patrol officer has been suspended for revealing in a book that a colleague tore up parking tickets in exchange for sex.'

...[Motorists in the Hungarian city of Monor applauded the vandal who injected every parking meter in the city with plastic cement.] In local news, [t]he Auckland City Council [has installed] electronic meters on several hundred parks in a bid to crack down on what it sees as freeloading by students... ignoring signs restricting parking... to three hours... The Auckland University Students Association describes the move as "disastrous" and says parking is already a major problem in the university precinct[, especially for the many students who are]... forced... to use cars but... could not afford to use [- or arrive too late to find room in -]the \$5-a-day university car park. [But someone has already 'vandalised the meters by pouring acid into them.')

...[Some downtown Auckland firms are paying more than \$100 a week for top executives and directors to park in their building, and the premium for on-site parking is widening. Rents for parking spaces in buildings a block back from Queen St are also rising... But... the high price of city parking was not yet at the peak in the late 1980s. The... car park in the... building at 151 Queen St commanded more than \$500 a month in 1989 and the average rent for on-site leased spaces in the [CBD] peaked at \$450 a month. New tenants in the main towers on Queen St – the National Bank twin towers, the BNZ Tower and 151 Queen St – were paying up to \$110 a week... at the end of last year. In the second tier, in buildings just off Queen St, parking spaces were renting for \$75 a week a year ago... Recent negotiations have been around \$90 a week... The parking rent rise has come on the back of a steady increase in central city employment figures – a rise of 8000 in three years... [The] premium for on-site parking had historically been about 25[%]. "But over the last three years that's widened to about 50[%]." ...[Landlords could extract big parking rent rises while "in relation to an executive's \$100,000 salary, it doesn't matter whether carpark costs are \$75 or \$100 a week,"... a national research manager for [a]property consultancy... said. But the same does not apply at the lower end of the scale. Workers who paid for their own parking were being forced outside the CBD... A Bayleys parking study last month found inner-city tariffs for public spaces had risen from an average \$6 a day in 1995 to \$9 last year and would soon rise to \$12... [In related news, as a] Kaikoura parking warden... walked towards her car she noticed the driver's window was broken. Then she saw a mass of blowflies, and discovered 20 litres of stinking[shellfish] guts and rotten eggs... spread all over the seats and floor... Damage to the \$6500 Ford hatchback is extensive, in what police believe is a work-related vendetta... The Mayor... said he was shocked by the incident. "Obviously people out there hold personal grudges for the work these wardens do... Sure, in a small town it is hard to take someone telling you that you can't park where you are used to parking, but we must all accept that."

...[Parking-meter inspectors, like everybody else, need love and respect. But in Norway they also need higher education. The city of Kristiansand... has introduced a plan that requires parking-meter attendants to take a four-year university level course, at a cost of 70,000 kroner (\$[NZ]16,082). Until now, three night courses of instruction were thought sufficient for inspectors to identify incorrectly parked cars and issue tickets... [N]ow they need in-depth knowledge of... traffic signs and legal aspects of parking... protection against robbery and fires... as well as... first-aid...

[A car received 'numerous tickets for being parked illegally while not one warden noticed that the driver was sitting dead at the wheel'! In further news from Europe, a 'Paris traffic warden thought the car she was writing a ticket for looked familiar – it was her own, stolen two days earlier.'

...[NZ] POLICE are hoping to slash the number of cars being stolen and trashed with a campaign that advertises the age of the driver. A prominent "25" sticker on the vehicle indicates its owner is aged 25 or over... If police see a car with the sticker being driven by someone obviously younger than that, they can stop them and check their details. The Catch a Car Thief scheme is to be trialled in Christchurch, where 3517 vehicles were stolen last year, mostly by offenders 24 years and under. The idea came from... England, where research has shown the scheme halved the

risk of cars being stolen. [The scheme has the support of NZ's insurance companies who 'are disturbed that instances of teenagers setting fire to stolen cars have doubled in recent years' ('in the past 11 months, there were 923 car fires in the Auckland region, and although figures do not show how many fires are related to mechanical faults, firefighters say that "it would be reasonable from our experience to say that the majority are stolen and burnt"').]

...Insurance companies approve of the latest anti-theft device in Britain. It's the auto equivalent of the stun-gun. The \$450 [device] emits a 120-decibels warning – and five seconds later zaps the thief with a 50,000-volt low-amperage shock. It's not fatal but will cause spasms.

...[A new weapon against car theft which can pin-point the scene of crime the moment it occurs and take action to deter or trap the thief is about to be launched in Britain at a basic price of about £500 plus tax, excluding the cost of installation and line rental. SkyNet 2000 monitors an owner's vehicle 24 hours a day, transmitting information by satellite to human operators at a central bureau. At the heart of the system is a small computer which can be hidden almost anywhere within the vehicle and which communicates automatically with the bureau (it will also summon help if the vehicle is involved in a crash').]

...[Skilled thieves average two minutes to break into a parked car. Nissan was dismayed to find with its top model in Britain, the Almera, the average was six seconds. To boost security, it has sent questionnaires to jailed car thieves – asking them to describe tricks of the trade.]

...[A car-thief turned insurance-investigator once told the Good Oil that he could break into, start and drive off in most cars inside 60 seconds. The throwaway boast was made a few years before the better electronic locks appeared, like those used in the Lexus IS200. A security test run by Britain's *What Car* magazine found the Lexus IS200 the most difficult car to steal. Almost as difficult was the BMW 3-Series and 7-Series. Easy-peasy was the Peugeot 206. Testers took just two seconds to open the doors.]

...[When a woman in Britain reported her car stolen, police dialled the cellphone she had left on the passenger's seat and told the thief they got the number from a classified ad and wanted to buy the car. They arranged to meet and the thief was arrested.]

...[Is your mobile phone charger beside your bed? It might be if a new car alarm system arrives here. Two Japanese mobile phone companies have developed a car alarm that automatically warns the driver by telephone if the alarm is set off. It also flashes the car's lights and sounds its siren. In Japan, it costs about \$1300 plus a monthly fee.]

...[have you ever wanted to go joyriding in a stolen car but lacked the courage? If so, just go to any car sales yard and pretend to be a prospective customer! Incidentally, 'three weeks ago a local was trying to tow his boat out of the sea at Kennedy Bay when his Izuzu Bighorn bogged down in the water for nearly 15 minutes. But just two weeks after being paid \$20,000 by his insurance company and the vehicle was written off, he saw a curious advertisement in the newspaper. Same number of kilometres, same type and size of vehicle, but selling for only \$16,000. His interest piqued, he took a trip to the Kumeu car yard where, sure enough, his once-water-logged wagon was up for sale. He asked the dealer why the vehicle, now reregistered with new licence plates, was so cheap. The salesman did not tell him it had been in the sea just three weeks earlier. The car-yard owner said yesterday that he would always tell a genuine customer this fact, but this weekend visitor (the vehicle's original owner) had not been genuinely interested in it. The car-yard owner said he was told the vehicle had been in seawater when he bought it from Turners Car Auctions, but felt his visitor was a troublemaker. "I can tell genuine people when I see them and we had a turkey in on the weekend. Because of his attitude I told him nothing because I knew he was just there to be a problem to me." The vehicle was a four-wheel-drive, designed to go through water anyway, and the wiring had not been affected, he said. An LTSA spokesman said if a vehicle had been deregistered, it needed to go through a rigorous inspection to prove it was safe.]

...[A Henderson Valley Rd car yard has been stung by a scam that transfers identification from written off cars to stolen vehicles. The owner of Fast Lane Autos says he ran all the usual identification checks before buying a station wagon and selling it on. The new owner – a lady with a disabled child – had the car repossessed by police. "I felt really terrible when police confiscated it and she was left without a car for a couple of weeks." The car yard owner, who has refunded the woman but is now out of pocket by \$20,000, says AA Insurance sold a written off car with all its identification and registration papers. A car was then stolen to order to match the identification. Under the Transport (vehicle and driver registration and licensing) Act 1986 insurers are required to deregister written off cars. The motoring product manager from AA Insurance says the car should have been deregistered and puts it down to human error, saying it was "an uncharacteristic mistake. An outside assessor hasn't spotted that the car needed to be deregistered, the claim manager didn't see it was structurally unsound from the photographs, and even the auction house didn't spot it." The LMVDI executive director says he hears about dealers being scammed "quite often" because insurers don't deregister cars. "Less than honest" people also do up cheap written off cars for a couple of hundred dollars, and sell them on for thousands, because they haven't been deregistered. "Then the new owner gets hit by another car and because it isn't structurally sound, the car literally falls apart." He says it is in insurers' best interests to maintain standards as they are having to compensate owners of vehicles stolen to order because of the identification scam.]

...[Forged chassis numbers and parts from Subaru motor vehicles stolen in Auckland have been used to re-identify and rebuild unroadworthy vehicles imported from Japan. The scam, involving more than 50 cars imported by Penrose company Access Sub Spares, has been revealed in the Auckland District Court. One of the company's directors, aged 39, of Bucklands Beach, yesterday pleaded guilty to 18 charges of receiving, forgery and obtaining documents with intent to defraud. At least 20 Subaru cars were passed off to the LTSA as genuine Japanese imports. The prosecutor said many of the imports were Subaru "test" cars that had been kept aside by the manufacturer in Japan to ensure that vehicle assembly quality and standards were being maintained. Subaru never intended the vehicles to be used on the road and cut the chassis numbers from their firewalls to prevent the cars being sold. The cars were supposed to be sent to a wrecker yard for destruction but the 39-year-old's company managed to buy them for as little as \$1000 and ship them to NZ.]

...[An Auckland company director has been sent to prison for 2 1/2 years for his part in a stolen car ring specialising in Subaru vehicles. The Crown prosecutor said the director's contacts had "given the operation a level of professionalism and expertise not previously seen in NZ." While the director was probably not the prime mover, he was directly involved in altering vehicles with forged chassis numbers. Three other men associated with Access Sub Spares have pleaded not guilty to similar charges and will reappear in court next month. The LTSA is seeking to remove certification from the engineer who had approved one of the test cars, because he was one of two car inspectors who had agreed to sign off each other's vehicles without looking at them.]

...[A corrupt Customs officer accepted cars, overseas trips and took about \$200,000 in bribes for helping Singapore gangsters sneak luxury stolen cars into NZ. In 18 months, 257 top-end vehicles worth \$3.8 million entered this country. The Customs officer's activities came under scrutiny after Singapore investigators informed NZ police. The Customs officer admitted his role when questioned by the police. His job was to shortcircuit the Customs system by handwriting delivery orders with bogus numbers and authorising the records with a Customs Service stamp. Another method of bypassing the system was to alter data on private import declarations, removing references to motor vehicles. His 12 years experience with Customs gave him the in-depth knowledge and opportunity to commit the large-scale fraud. The officer in charge of the police investigation said the Singaporean importer had voluntarily returned to Singapore to face serious charges there, but had disappeared after being granted bail. Despite that, a local judge agreed to remand the Customs officer on bail for sentencing next month so the married man, who has a young family, could get his affairs in order. The Customs Service national manager investigations, said yesterday that procedures had changed since the officer was caught. As far as the manager knew it was the first large-scale fraud involving a Customs employee. The offender's actions were an isolated incident and did not indicate any erosion of the high standards of integrity and professionalism in the service. Customs says it has tracked down most of the stolen cars and is sorting out ownership issues with local buyers.]

...[A customs official who helped to sneak more than \$4.4 million worth of stolen cars into NZ has been sentenced to jail for four years.] The official said 'gangsters had threatened his family.' By the way, '80s rockers the Beastie Boys used to wear a VW badge on a chain around their necks. Adoring fans copied them by pinching VW badges from cars. Angry owners complained and VW worked hard on replacements. Now Honda owners in Los Angeles are facing a similar problem. A notorious LA street gang has taken to wearing Honda's "H" badge as a signature sign.]

...‘Toyota lost 11 gear knobs from its cars at the Sydney Motor Show last month, twice as many as it expected. A few buttons from radios went walkabout too. Kia reckon its new Mentor must have been a hit – five gear knobs hit the road. An admirer of the new Audi TT struck early. Its coveted gear knob was stolen between Germany and Sydney. Audi had to quickly fetch a replacement.’ • The car which tops the thieves Top 10 list in AUS is the VN Holden Commodore of the late 80s. It was built before immobilisers were common.]

...Car thieves in Detroit, the auto capital of the U[S], are, if nothing else, patriotic. The top-10 list of stolen cars is all-American... In 1996, 1.4 million cars were taken in the US, a 5[%] fall from 1995. [There were ‘32,000 cars stolen in NZ in 1996 – one of the worst rates in the world’ per capita.]

...They say that a car is stolen in Auckland every 11 minutes. That at best is mildly interesting until the thieves turn their attention to your car... I stood there in the middle of the road gawking at the place where I had left my car. I was absolutely dumbstruck. Unable to believe my worst fears I checked my other parking [space]...

Imagine you’ve had a night out on the town and returned to your parking space just in time to watch your vehicle belting off down the street. You quickly grab your cellphone, punch in a code and the stolen car comes to a standstill, windows wound up, doors locked, thieves secure inside until the police arrive. Now that the idea has been patented around the world and a working prototype developed, Auckland company Network Technology is seeking to take the Secure-Net Unit (SNU) device to the world... [While the] satellite-based... global positioning system... [or] GPS is ideal for the wide-open spaces, it falls down in built up areas because of building density. “Our system is ideal for cities because there are a lot of cell sites...,”... said [the company’s director, who]... has been working with the electrical engineering department at Auckland University for the past four years to try to perfect the SNU – essentially a cut-down Nokia GSM cellphone... The phone looks at cell sites and always talks to the strongest one as it hands off from one site to another... [T]he development team are now keen to improve the accuracy of the device beyond the current 150m.

...[‘Lend an ear as car-audio freaks crank it up. A Hawke Bay baker’s rumpy old Vauxhall Viva is faster than a tall building – when being pushed by the lads in his support crew – more valuable than a speeding bullet and almost as loud as a jumbo jet. The secret to the noise factor is a \$6000 stereo system, which dominates most of the interior of the car and which hit an ear-splitting 142.9 decibels at the sixth national car audio sound-off finals yesterday in Penrose. His stereo proved itself the fifth-loudest in the country, but his vehicle fell somewhat short of the gleaming examples owned by other audio buffs at the show. The 19-year-old splashed out just \$300 six months ago for the car. Late yesterday he was asking \$50 for the Viva, but was eventually forced to sell for just \$5. The drop in value occurred quite suddenly on Friday evening as the baker began his trek from Hastings to the finals, held at Turners Car Auctions. The Viva’s drive shaft deposited itself on the highway as its colleague, the differential, seized. Fortunately, the baker was being escorted by a dozen of the lads in support vehicles. They took turns towing the Viva to Auckland – a trip that took nearly 13 hours. Many people wonder at the appeal of spending thousands of dollars on a car stereo that is too loud to listen to while actually sitting in the vehicle, but the baker has a revealing answer: he has no idea why he does it. Others in the show seemed equally obsessed by their hobby, but for the person who smashed the Australasian loudness record with 163.9 decibels, the \$30,000 spent on his Ford Escort van and sound system is a business. He said he often hired the van to beach partygoers for up to \$800 a night. The winner was stoked at setting the record, and was sure he could crank even more noise out of the 16 sub-woofers, each measuring 30cm. The event organiser said the number of car-audio hobbyists had exploded in the 1990s and he estimated yesterday’s crowd at 3000. Thirty finalists competed in six events for sound quality, while another 12 vied for loudness. Some had spent \$50,000 on their systems. Most of the noise fanatics will return next year to challenge for the coveted loudness trophy, the Wooden Bogan.]

...Reliance on the private car is socially, ecologically and environmentally the worst transport alternative we could have devised, says... an emeritus professor of the University of Auckland... When nearly a million people choose to live on a narrow isthmus environmental problems can become expensive... In Auckland, with virtually no flat land for treatment sites, human waste disposal is one such problem. But Auckland’s worst environmental problem today is passenger transport, with no way round the periphery, only strangled roads bringing through travellers or commuters into the crowded centre. However we decide to tackle it, Auckland transport will bring substantial costs that, in one way or another, we shall all have to pay... The problems have been so long argued, and so unanswerably, that the only talk today must be about solutions.

...Thirty years of data on Auckland air quality has revealed a shift in the kinds of pollution poured into the region’s atmosphere. Traditional industrial pollutants, such as sulphur dioxide from oil-fired boilers and lead from old-style petrol, have given way to other contaminants – domestic fires and car exhaust emissions. The data, collected by various agencies between 1964 and 1995, has been put together... by the A[RC] as air quality monitoring becomes a priority. The ARC is already measuring the region’s meteorological conditions to track pollutants in the atmosphere... and is working on a visibility study on Auckland’s orange hazes in the west and south and brown hazes in the north and [CBD]. The region’s subtropical climate provides relatively windy conditions resulting in good ventilation – breezy fresh air adding to the quality of life in Auckland. But not all the pollution is blown away. While the pattern at various places in the region shows carbon monoxide peaks corresponding with morning and evening rush hours, monitoring in Queen St shows consistently high levels even later at night because of the [CBD]’s “canyon effect.” “Monitoring shows we have relatively high carbon monoxide levels in Auckland compared to urban areas overseas,” said an ARC air quality scientist... About 300,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide are discharged into Auckland’s air annually... Experts hope that... new vehicles will at least have... clean technology... 90[%] of petrol-fuelled cars produced last year were fitted with catalytic converters. This severely cuts emissions of carbon monoxide...

The ARC wants catalytic converters on and certified emission standards for all new cars and an investigation into more environmentally friendly fuels... Brown hazes in winter and drifting clouds of photochemical smog in summer... are a growing hazard, the council heard yesterday... The smog was first detected in the late 1970s... Under the Resource Management Act the ARC has the responsibility of managing the effects of motor vehicle emissions in the [Auckland] region, but with no national policies it has limited powers to introduce measures to cut emissions... N[Z] is the only country in the [OECD] which does not have emission limits requiring catalytic converters. The devices remove unburned hydrocarbons, including cancer-causing benzene, and up to 90[%] of poisonous carbon monoxide from exhausts... A report by the [British] Automobile Association shows that total pollutants have fallen by 25[%] since 1992, the year before catalytic converter exhaust systems became compulsory in Europe.

...An aircraft will test Auckland’s air in the next six weeks to find out what causes brown summer haze, often blamed on vehicle exhausts. The aircraft being used in the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research project flew for the first time yesterday but it was not the best of days to detect smog over the city. It was too cloudy, meaning there was not much ozone being produced by sunlight reacting with pollutants in the air. Equipment in the aircraft detects ozone, an indicator and main component of photochemical smog, and cause of various respiratory and other health problems. Fine particulates in the atmosphere, of growing concern to health authorities, are also being detected by the aircraft... A recent study in 50 of the most polluted cities of the U[S] estimated that 66,000 deaths a year were caused by people inhaling fine particulates. The W[HO] specifies there is no safe level of fine particulates which when inhaled can penetrate deep into the lungs carrying a payload which can include carcinogens such as dioxins and acidic compounds. In Auckland sources of fine particulates include dust from incomplete combustion of burning petrol and diesel fuels and gas and smoke from domestic wood fires, industrial air discharges and sea salt in the atmosphere. Levels of fine particulates in the atmosphere have been within ARC guideline[s] since 1992 but it is doubtful whether the trend will continue because for most of the time Auckland’s weather has been influenced by El Nino conditions, causing good dispersion of pollutants... In N[Z] the health cost of air pollution has been put at \$700 million and while the accuracy of the figure has been questioned most of the cost will be borne in Auckland and Christchurch where maximum exposure to polluted air occurs. N[Z] has no effective motor vehicle emission standards or policing of smoky vehicles but policies are on the way.

...Smog alerts for Aucklanders are a step closer after the completion of a major investigation into the pollutants which affect metropolitan Auckland's air. The investigation findings give environmental managers a powerful tool for forecasting harmful photochemical smog formation in Auckland and for formulating and evaluating regional growth policies impacting on air quality. The findings, contained in the Auckland air emissions inventory prepared for the A[RC] by the Victorian Environmental Protection Authority, remove any doubt over what causes air pollution in Auckland, its increasing brown hazes and photochemical smog. The major cause... [is] motor vehicle emissions... On an average summer day, based on 1993 estimates of emissions from motor vehicles, marine engines, rail, shipping and aviation operators, Auckland produces 117 tonnes of volatile organic compounds, 87 tonnes of nitrogen oxide, three tonnes of particulates... 764 tonnes of poisonous carbon monoxide and 6800 tonnes of carbon dioxide... The manager of the centre for air quality at the Victorian EPA... presented the inventory to the ARC yesterday describing it as state-of-the-art and, because it was so up-to-date, better than any similar work carried out by the centre for A[US]n cities. She described as unique Auckland's motor vehicle fleet and its contribution to air pollution. While the impact of new vehicle registrations would ordinarily signify an improvement in emission levels, many new registrations were of imported cars up to five years old... In the early 1980s the region had about 12 days a year of smog... Melbourne has about 21 days a year on which classic Los Angeles-style smog occurs[, but the EPA manager]... said that... new regulations... in A[US]... were helping to reduce smog-forming chemical emissions. In Melbourne, the EPA dealt with 12,000 smoky vehicles a year after motorists were caught driving vehicles which produced more than 10 seconds of visible smoke through their exhausts. Drivers who fixed the problem escaped penalty. But in Auckland, like the rest of N[Z], there were no effective controls on the ageing motor vehicle fleet.

...A report showing air quality would improve if car and truck owners were made to pay more for the roads has been kept secret... "...because making private users pay for the damage they do is contrary to Government policy..." says[an] Alliance list MP... The report, written by the Institute of Economic Research and commissioned by the Ministry for the Environment, comments on the effects planned roading reforms would have... The manager of the ministry's environmental policy directorate... said the report had not been "buried"...

The belief car emissions are choking air quality in cities is not backed up by scientific analysis, the Ministry of Transport says. No nationwide carbon monoxide problem has been found, says the Secretary for Transport... However... the... Alliance spokeswoman on transport... said... long-term monitoring... indicated significant air problems in certain parts of the country, yet the ministry was playing down the problem "to justify [doing] nothing."

...It is estimated that the social cost of water-related environmental degradation attributable to road usage in Auckland is about \$100 million a year, and the cost of air pollution \$250 million... "Our transport system already produces close to two million tonnes of CO2 each year... Pollution at major intersections has, on occasions, already exceeded W[HO] levels..." ...Unlike other cities around the world, where traffic causes high emissions of nitrous oxides, Auckland traffic produces greater quantities of carbon monoxide, reflecting its ageing and poorly tuned motor vehicle fleet. Cars and trucks account for 90[%] of the carbon monoxide in the Auckland air... Khyber Pass Rd has shown that consistently high levels have been occurring... at the site. Readings for March show an unusual feature for the time of year... air quality guideline safety levels for carbon monoxide were exceeded for 10 hours between 10.50 am and 8.50 pm... Carbon monoxide levels around Auckland traditionally rise during winter... The gas, when inhaled, diminishes the oxygen-carrying capacity of blood... Most healthy adults will not suffer greatly from exposure to carbon monoxide at the levels recorded. But to people who spend all day driving or moving about on pavements next to busy roads, or to people in fragile health, the levels could cause problems such as headaches... [Incidentally, p]olice yesterday ordered four washers from the Symonds St-Khyber Pass Rd intersection.

...window-washers may face stiff fines if they continue to approach motorists with their squeegees on Auckland city streets. A bylaw banning window-washers from working on the streets will be considered by the Auckland City Council today after complaints of intimidatory behaviour. The council refused to pass a similar bylaw last year. But, after strong public and police pressure, it will again consider raising the present \$10 fine to a maximum \$500... [The council's] special projects manager, said... "[Roadside window-washing is] a great tax-free income and at the end of the day, it's a service that people don't ask for." ...the planned law should remove "the diehards" and stop the expected influx of students over the summer. "We have a real problem with young ones out there - 10 and 11-year-olds who turn up on the roads during the school holidays. They will cause an accident if they're not stopped... We've[also] had sides of cars kicked in if people refuse to pay. We've had fights which are territorially-based when a window-washer sees someone else on his intersection. We've had all sorts of problems with them and we don't need it. This only adds to traffic congestion," said... [the] head of the police traffic safety branch.

...[the] squeeze was put on Toronto's squeegee kids by a new Ontario provincial law that came into effect yesterday. The Safer Streets Act, passed last December by Ontario's ruling Progressive Conservative Government, changes the Highway Traffic Act to make begging on streets and other aggressive soliciting illegal. It is part of the Government's campaign to clean up the streets after protests from motorists badgered by aggressive squeegee kids. "Our Government believes that all people in Ontario have the right to drive down the road without being, or feeling, intimidated," said the Attorney-General. Toronto, Canada's largest city and the hub of the country's booming industrial heartland, has long been a magnet for squeegee kids. The Attorney-General believed that the outlawed squeegee kids would now have the opportunity to look for more permanent employment. The new law gives Ontario police power to arrest people for the designated offences and for courts to impose fines of up to \$C1000 with a jail term of up to six months for repeat offenders.')

...Auckland police are set to be given wider powers that will let them arrest... car window-washers... people who tag along uninvited on parades, sniff glue in public places or drag race illegally. The move comes after police complaints that they have "no teeth" to enforce city council bylaws. Proposed changes will give police the right to demand the name and address of anybody suspected of breaching the regulations. They can then prosecute offenders, or arrest them for obstruction if they refuse to provide the information. Police sought the change after trouble controlling a group called Information on Ireland at parades to mark St Patrick's Day in Auckland. The group was protesting against the British Government role in the "Troubles" in Ireland. [An] Inspector... said they provoked a great deal of animosity from crowds... [However, a] spokesman for Information on Ireland... said the move was "retaliation" against the group for lodging a complaint with the Police Complaints Authority after police refused to let the organisation's float join this year's parade. The 30 supporters marched with banners instead. He denied the group had caused trouble and said crowd antagonism was directed at the police...

The police now have more clout to clamp down on bylaw breakers in Auckland. A controversial bylaw amendment giving police the right to demand the name and address of anyone suspected of breaching local laws was passed at an Auckland City Council meeting last night... Civil libertarians are likely to contest the bylaw in court. Some councillors believe it is an issue... [that has consumed more of their time] than... it's worth...

Few affairs have been more passionate in the 20th century than that between man and his motorcar... [T]ruly, it has revolutionised people's lives. The car is not just an aspect of modernity; it is a precondition for it. Owning a car remains a goal for millions of poor people in every part of the world... Unfortunately[, for]... years people have understood that the car was a cherished but dangerous thing. As one British inquiry put it in the 1960s: "We are nourishing at immense cost a monster of great potential destructiveness." The truth of that warning is all too apparent in the horribly polluted and congested streets of European, American and Asian cities. Road transport accounts for about a quarter of the man-made gases that may be contributing to global warming... Cars in the U[S] may be 90[%] cleaner than they were a generation ago, but this improvement has been largely wiped out by growth.

...*World war against car pollution* Car mania in Asia and Latin America threatens to swamp any gains made in protecting the world from automobile pollution. Most new petrol-powered cars no longer pump out killer gases, [but] they still spew ever-increasing amounts of carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas. A U[N] meeting in New York to discuss progress since the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, has hinted that, if the environment is to be protected, a firm grip must be taken on the ubiquitous automobile. "Worldwide there's going to be a problem because there are just too many cars coming..."

...In... big Asian cities, growing wealth has unleashed a flood of cars... and... trucks... that foul the air with exhaust and snarl the streets with traffic jams. Yet even as Singapore has matched their growth, it has escaped the curse of their traffic congestion. Its air is clean... This happy situation is no accident. It is the work of a traffic-control programme that... [makes] this South-east Asian island nation one of the costliest places in the world to drive. At the heart of the system lies an unusual tool that has become a badge of middle-class success: a permit to own a car. Sold at monthly auctions in limited numbers, the 10-year licences command prices of up to \$NZ110,000. Add sales tax and import duty totalling 195[%] of a car's value... before hitting Singapore's tidy, pothole-free streets. On top of that, Singapore charges drivers... \$2... to enter downtown on weekdays and is getting ready to impose tolls on all major roads. Heavily taxed petrol is kept expensive to discourage driving... [Singaporeans pay] \$1.18 for a litre of unleaded, compared with 60 cents a litre in neighbouring Malaysia. To prevent drivers from slipping across the causeway just to fill up, cars are barred from leaving Singapore with a tank less than half-full... Police use closed-circuit television to co-ordinate stop lights and manage traffic flows. Stores, churches and other owners of public parking spaces are taxed for each space to discourage them from offering free parking... But Singapore's approach can't be easily reproduced. The government party has been firmly in power since 1965 and is so sure of its control that it can ignore resistance that might make other governments back down. It helps, too, that a car isn't a necessity in a country so small that a cyclist can pedal from one end to the other before lunch.

...[There are over 5,000 deaths & 70,000 serious injuries a year on British roads alone. Not only do we kill with cars but we are slowly killing our planet because of them. Although the car gives us tremendous personal freedom & mobility, such gains must be balanced by the damage to the environment that their ownership entails. It has been estimated that the cars in use worldwide together produce about 10,000 billion cubic metres of exhaust fumes annually. If it were not for the fact that most of the poisonous fumes rise up into the atmosphere, we would be suffocated by them & life would be annihilated.]

...Benzene levels in Auckland and Christchurch exceed international safety guidelines for air quality... [I]n Christchurch... Manchester St was 5.2 and Riccarton Rd, on 12, was more than three times the... safe benzene levels[of] between 2.5... and 3.24... mcg per cu m... [B]enzene, which causes leukaemia, and other aromatics have been boosted in petrol since the Government banned leaded petrol... last year... At the time, Labour's environment spokesman... said the ban should have been accompanied by a reduction on the limit on benzene in petrol from 5... to 3[%]... A Ministry of Health report... found poisonous lead levels in the air have dropped but... benzene[is] emerging as a deadly hazard... [T]he report estimated up to three deaths from leukaemia... a year could be attributed to benzene. Motor vehicle exhaust was the main source, although smokers tended to get more benzene from cigarettes than from cars... Owners of the Marsden Pt oil refinery had put \$150 million aside to upgrade the facility with an isomerisation unit, which would have allowed compliance with the lower limit[of 3%], but kept the money when the Government decided not to tighten the regulations... [In related news, researchers] at Kyoto University in Japan have... isolated a hydrocarbon... in diesel... which produced the highest score ever recorded when subjected to a standard test of cancer-causing potential. The team also showed that the chemical exists in the air above Tokyo. - 1997

...[during] the Victorian Age... a close cousin of the petrol engine... brought new levels of efficiency and reliability, and made its inventor a household name across the globe – yet hardly anyone has ever heard of him. The very first glimmer of this extraordinary engineering concept can be found on a note he scribbled in the margin of his book when he was attending at the Munich College of Engineering way back in 1878. 'Study whether it isn't possible to achieve the isotherm in practice'... [A]t that moment the diesel engine was conceived. And he was only 19 years old at the time... Rudolf Diesel... was a driven man who throughout his life excelled at everything he did... [T]he secret of the diesel engine [was that you can] simply inject fuel into compressed hot air and, bang – the explosion powers the engine. No need for a spark plug, so it's much simpler and therefore more reliable than the petrol engine. Clever Rudolf knew he was on to something big... When people saw [his] babies running, they realised what a fantastically economical and hard-working engine it was going to be – and it was enough to get him a world patent. And old Diesel absolutely cleaned up... Everyone in the world wanted one... not surprisingly, which is why Diesel became a frighteningly rich man very quickly. But, you know, [he] deserved to – I mean, he didn't invent the Smurfs, so to say... Anyway, the money began to roll in. He bought the most expensive plot of land in Munich, and built an enormous house on it... Hats off to Rudolf, I say... Diesel's personal story ended tragically. He slipped off a ship at sea and drowned... there's not a lot of doubt that he killed himself. Suffered from depression all his life. He was a classic great man brought low... But then, look what he's left us.

...*Diesel's Day* Keep an eye on the progress of diesel engines, now that new technology has made the engines exciting. Citroen and Peugeot were the first to import oil-burners into N[Z] in any numbers back in the late 80s and early 90s, when turbochargers gave the cars new life. Both French carmakers still dominate diesel sales here. BMW is now having a look-see and has imported two 3-Series models, the 320d and 330d...

We mentioned recently that BMW N[Z] is testing two 3-Series Diesel models. Now we learn that BMW A[US] is testing a 7-Series diesel, powered by a 3.9-litre twin-turbocharged V8... What's with this interest Down Under in oil-burners? Is it because they are more fuel-efficient than petrol engines and... sales figures in Europe are difficult to ignore? Diesel has 25[%] of new car sales in Germany... 45[%] in France and 55[%] in Austria.

...Oil company Shell is to sell a diesel fuel in Britain with an ultra-low sulphur content. It says its Pura Diesel contains 90[%] less sulphur than standard diesel, lowering emissions of soot-like particulates and producing less smoke. Some of the dirty, smelly diesels which leave a trail of particulates around Auckland could do with Pura Diesel.

...The Waitakere City Council will encourage motorists to boycott Mobil Oil for refusing to reduce the sulphur content in its diesel... "We are at war with Mobil, make no mistake about that... We have one oil company that just won't come to the party to reduce the diesel sulphur content. For the first time in a 100 years you are seeing the oil cartel squabbling among themselves..." ...The council endorsed the call for an immediate cut in sulphur in diesel to 100 parts per million and urged continued efforts to reduce it further to meet the U[S]'s goal of 15ppm by 2005-06.

...Diesel manufactured in India is 250 times dirtier than the world's best. It is estimated that 50,000 people die each year in Indian cities as a result of vehicle pollution-related illnesses.

Air pollution contributes to 400 deaths in Sydney each year and will worsen, says the state Health Department.

...Joggers wear face masks; children at the US-run American school play inside a giant glass bubble; a clear blue sky is front page news... On bad days, the Government warns residents to leave town or stay inside their houses with the windows shut. It dispatches extra staff to city health clinics to meet the crush of patients and it bans use of motor vehicles, industries and gas stations. "No end to pollution misery," screamed a recent... newspaper... headline... as – barely two weeks into the year's most intense air pollution season – city officials issued five consecutive days of emergency alerts. It was the longest continuous period in the six years of the warning system. The alerts close industries and cut back car usage when pollution is 2 1/2 times the maximum considered safe by the... WHO[, which]... has ranked the air of Mexico City, with its gumbo of pollutants belched from motor vehicles, industry and millions of rooftop cooking-gas tanks, as the most contaminated in the world. In each of the

six categories of pollution – from ozone to suspended particles – Mexico City's levels are at least double those considered safe for human habitation. The next closest cities are Los Angeles, Jakarta and Sao Paulo. As a measure of just how bad pollution is here, the WHO says humans shouldn't breathe air with more than 100 to 120 parts per billion of ozone contaminants for more than one day a year. Last year, residents breathed that level, or more, for 321 days, according to city officials. The impact on the health of the city and its residents is devastating. Two weeks ago, when readings rose above 250 parts, or points, city hospitals and clinics reported a deluge of 400,000 pollution-related patients and 300 deaths during the five-day emergency. Health officials estimate that one million residents have permanent breathing difficulties, headaches, coughs and eye irritations. And new studies have suggested that children living in neighbourhoods with the worst air could develop cancer later in life... - 1996

France banned half of all cars from the streets of its capital yesterday in an unprecedented assault on eye-stinging air pollution smothering the city... [A] noxious brownish haze of... fumes has built up in hot, still air after days without rain... [The] AirParif monitoring agency said nitrogen dioxide, largely a product of car exhausts, had increased pollution to "level three," the highest on its scale and reached only three times since 1992... About 1000 extra police ticked off drivers defying the rules at road checks and handed out leaflets explaining the rules. In theory, offenders risk fines of up to 900 francs (\$240)... The cars banned first were those with licence plates ending in an odd number. But police cars, fire engines, ambulances, and electric or liquefied gas-powered cars are exempt. Cars transporting at least three people are also allowed, along with hearses, removal vans, refrigerator and newspaper delivery trucks. Some in the opposition centre-right denounced the ban as technocratic and badly prepared. Others express fears that people will buy a second car to let them drive every day, as has happened in Athens where similar measures are enforced... Public transport was free in the entire Paris region under the crackdown, bringing... fewer tailbacks on the roads in the morning rush-hour. [● A 'carless day scheme and ban on weekend petrol sales was temporarily introduced to NZ in 1979, but only as a method of petrol rationing'.]

...PM sets example as Paris battles pollution [France's P]M... swapped his usual car for a tiny two-door electric model when Paris banned half of all cars in an unprecedented attack on stifling air pollution. [The PM] was driven to a weekly cabinet meeting in a diminutive blue-green Peugeot 106, forsaking his powerful Peugeot 605. Four other ministers also turned up in electric vehicles. [The PM] said the car was "silent... it went along smoothly and I found it rather pleasant." But he... found it rather cramped and... his security guards complained there was no space for them. They trailed in a large Peugeot, fuelled by low-pollution gas. Paris commuter traffic was bumper-to-bumper again yesterday after the... capital lifted its one-day emergency traffic curbs imposed to fight record levels of air pollution. Yesterday the smog was back to an acceptable level. Public transport was also back to normal after the free fares... Parisians, who are fond of stretching the law if they can get away with it, appeared to have generally complied with the Government-ordered ban. In a poll for the daily *Le Figaro*, a surprisingly high 83[%] of those canvassed approved the idea of alternately banning cars with even and odd licence plate numbers when smog hits dangerous levels. The evens were banished from Paris roads on Wednesday. [93%] said the ban, which reduced the traffic in central Paris by about 20[%] and reminded many of quiet summer days, did not bother them. Asked what they liked most about the traffic ban, the most frequent response – in 39[%] of the cases – was the fact they could participate in the fight against pollution. Lighter traffic and free public transport followed with only 18[%] each. The enthusiasm the normally anarchic Parisians showed for the restrictions – only about 5[%] of the cars on the road on Wednesday were even-numbered – was so surprising it was still headline news yesterday... [The rest of the headlines were devoted to the] French truck drivers demanding higher pay[who] have set up some 80 roadblocks around France. The roadblocks were set up after last-ditch wage talks failed... Truckers claim many employers failed to pay a 3000 franc bonus negotiated after a 12-day strike that caused similar chaos last year... British trucks ended up in queues of up to 18-hour waits at Belgian ports, having tried to avoid French roads; the British Road Haulage Association said it was losing the equivalent of \$2.7 million a day.

...[police officers across NZ] are refusing to issue traffic tickets for minor infringements as they take part in unofficial industrial action designed to cost the Government tens of thousands of dollars a day. They are incensed that seven months of pay negotiations have produced only a "paltry" pay claim from their union and are vowing to leave traffic infringement books in lockers when they go on patrol. Police bosses are bracing themselves for action and warn officers caught will be disciplined. [The]Assistant Commissioner... said: "[Such]... action... would be totally unacceptable and unlawful. This goes to the heart of our profession." ...[However,] messages showed the action has widespread support... In Temuka, one officer wrote: "A substantial pay increase is needed immediately, especially when labourers and forklift drivers at the cheese factory are getting heaps more than us. No tickets works for me." ...[In international news, a]s negotiators struggled to resolve the French truck drivers' strike yesterday, pressure came from other European nations who are feeling the economic effects of the strikers' blockade... In Spain, officials estimated that about 8000 Spanish trucks have been delayed, trapped by roadblocks or forced to take alternative routes. Spanish farmers have threatened to boycott French goods if the strike continues... An estimated 350,000 French truckers are involved in the strike.

...Money and working hours were the core issues. By the time the largest union signed a deal with employers at the weekend after a seven-day blockade, the drivers had won an immediate 6[%] rise for long-distance... Looking to the future they also were promised a 20[%] increase by the year] 2000 with a guaranteed monthly salary... for 200 hours of work... [Meanwhile,] Indian truck... owners... [have] vowed to continue their action, which has kept two million vehicles off the road since Tuesday, until the Government agreed to scrap a planned transport tax and rise in insurance premiums... [The] nationwide strike... left the usually congested national highway... quiet.

...Road and rail traffic ground to a halt across much of Bangladesh yesterday as jute and textile mill workers began a two-day transport blockade in protest at Government privatisation plans.

...Bangladesh was yesterday gripped by a strike called by opposition parties to protest against a pact to end a 22-year insurgency in southeastern hill districts. The strike went ahead despite appeals to defer it since it coincides with an annual immunisation day for 20 million children.

...Police used batons and teargas in running battles with opposition activists during a general strike that kept transport off the streets and shut businesses across Bangladesh yesterday. Clashes erupted in the capital, Dhaka, and its suburbs after activists exploded dozens of home-made bombs to scare away the few people who ventured on to the streets... Police arrested nearly 20 activists... Witnesses said that... four people died and... up to 50 people were injured... The day-long strike was called... to protest against a recent increase in fuel prices. Last week the Government raised prices per litre of unleaded petrol to 23 taka from 14.65[and] leaded petrol to 21 taka from 13.7... The Government said the price hike was necessary to reflect the decline of the taka against the U[S] dollar. Government officials said only the small proportion of the population who had cars and minicabs would be affected. Other categories of vehicles such as lorries and buses used diesel[, which only rose]... from 12.7... to 12.95[taka. The ruling party]... said the... main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party... was using the price rise as a "pretext to intensify its anti-government campaign."

...[British drivers are being urged to support a one-day boycott of petrol stations next month to protest the rising price of fuel. The organisers also want the British Government to cut fuel tax, which is 75% of the pump price.]

...NZ motorists] would face an immediate increase in the dedicated petrol tax from 9.4c a litre up to 16c under plans revealed yesterday... Earlier this month, a Government advisory group report... recommended that petrol rise by up to 12c a litre over three years as part of a move to user-pays for roading funding... Petrol might rise [a further] 3c a litre if the Government moves early next year... to fully fund ACC... [Incidentally, 'criminal gangs in Britain are trying all sorts of ways to beat the rising price of petrol, now approaching \$2.50 a litre. One scam is to fit two fuel tanks to

cars – then fill up and drive off without paying. The extra tank of petrol is sold at a discounted price on the black market. British police report that the number of drivers doing a runner at petrol stations is up 250% in two months.’

...in the US, ‘an Alabama petrol station owner chased a customer, who filled up without paying, for more than 200km. The garage man gave up the chase when his car ran out of petrol.’ ■ Motorway service stations in Britain are renting old police cars and parking them on the forecourt in a bid to stop motorists “doing a runner” and driving away without paying for fuel. Station operators report that the ruse has cut non-paying by 70%.’

...‘For years people in the UK thought they were better off than many of their Western counterparts. Now, though, they are slowly waking up to the depressing fact that they work longer hours, earn less money and their cost of living is among the most expensive in the world. The news will come as no surprise to thousands of NZers who have gone to Britain in recent years, and been shocked by the high prices. And with a poor exchange rate meaning fewer pounds for their dollars, more and more travellers are ditching the traditional destination of London, now officially the most expensive city in Europe – but still significantly cheaper than the world’s most expensive city, Tokyo – in favour of other continental capitals. It is no wonder. Catching a movie at a London cinema will cost £7 (\$22.21), and the 10km taxi ride will come in at £9.40, excluding the expected tip. The rest of the country may not be quite so expensive, but pity those who have to stay permanently in what is now commonly referred to as “Rip-Off Britain.” This week it was revealed that an average family pays £4421.33 a year more to live in the UK than on the Continent. The Rip-Off Britain issue is threatening to become a major battleground at the next general election. For nearly a decade there have been mutterings about the rising cost of living in Britain. But nothing more. In the past year though, there has been a dramatic sea-change in attitudes. Earlier this year, Britain’s major banks announced plans to charge customers up to £1.50 for using an ATM machine. A massive public outcry erupted. The banks backed down. It started last year when a European Commission investigation found significant discrepancies in new car prices. Britain was the most expensive market with some popular models costing thousands of pounds more than in other parts of Europe. Buyers have since flocked to the Continent to buy cheap cars, and new discount retailers have opened up to cash in. As motorists virtually have boycotted traditional showrooms, some established dealerships are struggling to survive. Attention is now turning to other areas where Britons say they are being ripped off. Today petrol costs between 85p and 90p per litre – three times more than in America. Food, clothing and leisure goods are also dearer, as are utilities such as phone calls and electricity. Manufacturers claim Government taxes on everyday goods push prices higher. Almost 80% of the price of petrol, for instance, goes straight into the coffers of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. That has prompted a consumers’ Dump The Pump campaign which urges motorists to boycott petrol stations every Monday until prices drop significantly.’

...‘For a few days Britain stared into the abyss, and the very fabric of a modern, first-world society began to unravel. Hospitals were put on a state of emergency. Schools closed. Supermarkets introduced food rationing. Business leaders warned that the economy was in danger of collapse. A nation ran out of fuel and fell to its knees. Not even the royal family were immune from the troubles. The Prince of Wales cancelled engagements because he had no fuel. And all because nine days ago 150 well-organised farmers and truckers decided to protest against petrol prices by blockading the country’s oil refineries. If nothing else, this week’s crisis has hammered home just how reliant people are on fuel, and more chillingly, just how quickly everything falls apart without it. Britain has seen nothing like it since the notorious Winter of Discontent in 1979, when rubbish remained uncollected and the dead unburied. But while the 1979 strike was highly emotive, it was a culmination of months of union-inspired unrest. Contrast that to the lightning speed with which this latest uprising has plunged Britain into chaos. Yet at the height of the blockades, opinion polls showed public support for the protests running at anything between 70 and 90% of the population. A salesman echoed the views of millions when he said: “Sure, it’s no fun sitting in a queue for hours to fill up your car. But I’m right behind the truckers. It’s an absolute disgrace how much we have to pay for our fuel.” The protesters were fully aware that the most important goal was to keep the public on their side. Yesterday, just 24 hours before it was predicted that most people and businesses would completely run out of fuel and the nation would lurch even further into crisis, most of the blockades were lifted. However, the protesters have warned that fuel duty must be cut within 60 days – or they will return to the refineries.’

...‘Slowly but surely tankers started restocking Britain’s empty fuel stations yesterday. But the nation was warned that it would be several days, and possibly weeks, before the situation was restored to normal. Yesterday just 300 petrol stations were back on line and no more than 20% of Britain’s total of 12,500 were expected to be operating today. The Petrol Retailers Association said the industry faced a “massive logistical problem” to restock. In a move that underlines the Government’s anger with the oil companies for recent price hikes and allegedly colluding with protesters, the *Independent* has learned ministers are planning to force the industry to set up a watch-dog. The new regulatory body would prevent “profiteering,” excessive price rises and help ensure future supplies are not disrupted by any repeat of this week’s protests.’

...‘The first wave of Europe’s oil shock appeared to be receding this weekend after a turbulent fortnight that saw two of the world’s largest economies crippled by truckers angered at the spiralling cost of fuel. Petrol supplies in France were returning to normal, while in Britain tanker trucks fanned out to replenish filling stations. In Belgium, truckers lifted a ring of steel from around the heart of Brussels and in Germany, blockades remained limited despite angry noises from the freight industry. But tensions remained high in the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Spain, where truckers have threatened to jam roads, stop access to oil refineries or stage go-slow convoy protests to voice their anger at high fuel taxes. The action began two weeks ago after French trawlermen blockaded their country’s Channel ports. They, and the French truckers and farmers who emulated them, wrung \$NZ880 million in fuel tax cuts and social charges from the Paris Government. Within a couple of days of these concessions, the protest movement caught fire in Britain and France’s neighbours. Using mobile phones, fax machines and the internet to identify their targets and rotate shifts on the picket lines, the demonstrators caught the British Government on the hop. Stunned by the emergence of this unlikely army of ill-shaven, tubby men, the authorities have made a show of firmness, leavened with a promise or hint of concessions, that appears to have won them breathing space. The Labour PM stared down the protesters, accusing them of mounting illegal blockades and inflicting human suffering. In Germany, the Chancellor flatly refused to scrap a detested green tax on fuel but suggested that corrective measures could be found within the social system to help the worst affected hauliers. The Belgian Premier declared the public’s patience is running out, as he put forward a compromise, accepted by the protesters that involved cuts in road taxes, insurance levies and social charges amounting to \$165 million. The president of the European Central Bank has warned against any fuel tax cuts that weakened budget discipline or wage concessions that drive up inflation. Against this background, the mood in Europe is one of helplessness mixed with hope that oil costs will quickly ease, averting a second bout of turmoil.’

...‘EUROPE is becoming deadlocked by fuel protests as more countries join the growing chaos. Truckies in Spain, Ireland and Poland have launched their own protests as Britain and Belgium struggle to recover from a week of fuel blockades. Irish truckers have clogged major roads around five cities with a 24-hour go-slow protest after the government rejected demands to cut diesel fuel taxes by a third. In Poland, columns of slow-moving trucks snarled city traffic, mirroring action in Germany and the Netherlands in the past week. Norway – which has some of the highest fuel prices in Europe – is also threatening to take strong action. Angry Norwegian truckers said they would block five oil terminals at key ports from Monday after their government refused to make any promises to cut fuel taxes. If they go ahead, southern stations will run dry this week. In Italy the government bowed to truckers’ demands for fuel discounts, avoiding protests.’ Incidentally, a new product, ‘PS23 – which reduces engine friction by over 90%’ – has just been released on the local market.

...[the] promoter of an engine additive is being investigated by the Commerce Commission after the A[A] tested the product. The petrol catalyst, known as Fuelstar[, was proclaimed to]... allow cars that formerly needed... 96 leaded... petrol to run just as well on... 91 unleaded... The product, pellets made of 70[%] tin, is installed in the fuel line. Performance is said to be improved after fuel flows through the pellets... The AA... believed the tests[, which were performed] at an A[US]n university laboratory... showed that[the] Fuelstar promoter... had breached the Fair Trading Act by making misleading claims. It was originally also claimed Fuelstar helped save petrol, though those claims were withdrawn... [by the promoter.

However, in regard to the university's test results, he said they] were "ill-founded, inconclusive" and had not been conducted to the proper standard... [Meanwhile, NZ 'oil companies have received another 1096 complaints about unleaded petrol. Of the previous 2636 performance complaints about the effect of high levels of aromatics on rubber components in the fuel systems of some cars (as well as petrol station pumps), 94 included fires. So far the industry has settled 1124 claims at a cost of \$373,575.']

...The health risk posed by new unleaded 96 octane petrol may be seriously underestimated, say Auckland University environmental scientists. The first evidence tracing harmful aromatic hydrocarbons in motor vehicle exhausts to mutated cells in oysters was... revealed at a public lecture at the university yesterday. In his inaugural lecture, the... Professor of Environmental Science... said studies centred on the Southern Motorway in Auckland traced the link between exhausts and contaminated oysters growing in the Pahurehure inlet of the Manukau Harbour alongside the motorway. While air upwind of the motorway was found to be relatively clean, downwind air contained elevated levels of aromatic hydrocarbons, including... benzene and harmful toluene and xylenes. "[The]... surprisingly high levels of these contaminants... in air adjacent to the Southern Motorway... suggests the estimate of human health risk may be seriously underestimated," [the]Professor... said. The health risk referred to by the professor was the Ministry of Commerce calculation that the benzene content of the new fuel posed a one-in-a-million chance of someone contracting cancer over a lifetime... The Ministry of Commerce has estimated the new fuel would increase tailpipe benzene emissions 71%. By the way, the... Minister of Energy... wants to see supermarket chains selling petrol[- as i]s common in Britain, France and Japan, and was starting to happen in A[US]... There was evidence, he said, that the profit margins on petrol and diesel were rising. The Ministry of Commerce says only four industrialised countries have higher petrol prices, excluding taxes, than N[Z] and is engaged in "please explain" discussions with the oil companies.

...Oil companies are making more profit on petrol[in NZ] than before the market was deregulated, according to Ministry of Commerce figures... As a result, the 5c a litre price cut that deregulation initially delivered has been eroded completely... The figures suggest an opportunity for a new importer to bring in petrol, in competition with the four oil companies. Supermarkets, however, yesterday poured cold water on a suggestion by the Minister of Energy... that they should be the ones to do it. Woolworth's marketing director... said there were too many petrol stations here already... [while] Foodstuffs, said the N[Z] market was too small... The ministry regularly compares N[Z] pump prices with the price of refined petrol from Singapore - the main source of N[Z] imports of refined oil. Since 1990, the gap between the two prices has steadily widened... The difference is known as the importer margin. In the second quarter of 1990, it dropped about 5c to 15c but has since increased to 21c. Out of that margin, the importers must pay for transporting the fuel and other costs, as well as make their profit... The oil companies argue that the ministry has not made the right comparisons. A spokeswoman for BP Oil... said[only] about a quarter of N[Z]'s petrol was imported refined. The rest was imported as crude oil and refined at Marsden Pt. "The margin between crude prices and pump prices since deregulation has remained pretty much the same," she said. Over the same period, the gap between the Dubai crude price and the Singapore refined price had shrunk because demand for refined petrol had been weaker than for crude oil.

...Oil companies have been accused of pumping \$100 million a year out of the economy through excessive petrol prices. The Economic Research Institute says N[Z]ers are paying \$160 million a year more than they should for petrol and most of the money - after the Government gets its tax - is going overseas. The institute suggests that increasing margins indicates "at least tacit collusion" and raises the question of... breaches of the Commerce Act. The Ministry of Commerce... issued the institute's report on petrol prices to back the assertions it made this month that the four oil companies are charging about 6c a litre more than they should be for petrol. Last year the ministry asked the four to explain why prices here were significantly higher than in A[US] and the institute was asked to assess their responses... The companies... argued that the ministry used the wrong data, that there are more benefits from fleet discounts here than in A[US], that prices are in line with other OECD countries and... A[US's] oil industry is unprofitable. The institute did not support any of those arguments. It argued that if there were true competition, margins would be squeezed over time, not increased.

...['PETROL rage is hitting the forecourts as motorists are driven to anger by price rises.irate customers are blaming staff at petrol stations. "We had one guy go mental at us over the increases," a Caltex petrol station owner told *Sunday News*. "He was furious and I thought he was going to hit me. I'd be surprised if someone didn't lose it sometime soon. Most people are philosophical about it and realise we only sell the stuff. But nobody is happy." The increases have hurt Kiwi consumers but NZ still has some of the lowest prices in the world. Shell figures from last year show only America, Canada and AUS have cheaper petrol. Britain's and Norway's is the most expensive, costing 2.5 times more.']

...in Europe... petrol costs three times as much as it does in the U[S]. Petrol usage in American cities is 4.5 times higher than in European cities.

...Fuel consumption in the U[S] is running at record levels. July figures show Americans used 1.35 billion litres a day[or about 5 litres per USer]. That's nearly 500 billion litres a year... [In local news,] Aucklanders are subsidising the rest of N[Z]'s petrol prices, say the oil companies... The costs of coastal shipping to the main ports are equalised regardless of their distance from the Marsden Pt oil refinery outside Whangarei... As a result, Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin have identical pump prices - 90c a litre for 91 octane and 95c for 96 octane... The price of petrol varies only away from the ports. For example, motorists in Hamilton... were yesterday paying an extra cent a litre. More remote areas charge more again... The companies have acknowledged that historical agreements, made up to 20 years before deregulation of the petrol market in 1988, are still in place... They are under scrutiny by the Ministry of Commerce, which has questioned how cross-subsidy arrangements can exist when the four companies are supposed to be in competition... Shell "would probably agree" that the arrangements were an anachronism but it also had its other customers to consider... A Shell spokesman... said that if the pricing agreements were discontinued, Aucklanders would pay marginally less than they do now, while most other centres would pay more... More than a third of the fuel market is in Auckland, which gets most of its petrol from the Marsden Pt oil refinery by pipeline... The level of subsidy, which the companies will not reveal, is likely to be increasing every year, because the Auckland market is growing faster... A Caltex spokesman... said Auckland subsidised other parts of N[Z] in other ways, including income taxes and road taxes. That was hard to avoid when one city was so large and fast-growing in a country with a small, low-density population.

...Concerns about high petrol prices in N[Z] have led the Government to investigate the barriers to further competition. The International Energy Agency said yesterday that N[Z] had among the highest pre-tax petrol prices in the developed world.

...Oil companies appear to be operating a cartel in N[Z] and it should be broken, says the president of Federated Farmers... He said there was no difference between each company's retail fuel prices and all were too high... [P]rofit margin increases and no new competition showed that the four oil companies - BP, Caltex, Mobil and Shell - had the market "pretty well stitched up." ...But the chief executive of the Consumers' Institute... said he doubted that a Government study looking at how to increase competition in the oil industry would lead to lower prices... Only draconian Government regulation could break their dominance and that would fly in the face of Government free market thinking... A four-yearly review by the International Energy Agency, released on Monday, said that the dominance of the four big oil companies and high petrol prices in N[Z] relative to elsewhere, suggested a lack of competition... [However, the] oil companies argued that competition was fierce... [Indeed, despite the oil companies' profits, around] two-thirds of petrol outlets are barely profitable and[, according to]... the head of Caltex N[Z]... many may be forced to close[if] new competitors enter the market...

Three... oil companies have been charged with price fixing by the Commerce Commission. The commission says Mobil, Shell and Caltex arranged to withdraw free car-wash offers within a few days of each other in June last year. The oil companies were offering the free car washes to customers who bought \$20 or more worth of petrol at more than 50 stations in Auckland. The commission said the free car wash, which usually

cost \$2, was effectively a discount on the price of petrol... All three companies said they would vigorously contest the action. The public relations manager for Caltex... said the companies had simply reacted to each other's moves in a competitive market... [The commission] said the other oil company, BP, removed its free car-wash offer some time later and there was no evidence that it was involved...

BP Oil has been ordered by the Court of Appeal to pay \$1.75 million to the suppliers of its Lucky Can recycling machines... for failing to promote the machines sufficiently and not keeping them in good repair. The scheme to recycle aluminium cans started in 1991 but public interest waned after a child was injured in 1992. [In related news, 'a High Court judge has found that Caltex, Mobil and Shell illegally colluded when they simultaneously ended free car-wash offers in Auckland in mid-1996. And he said representatives of the oil companies lied to the court and the Commerce Commission over the matter. He also noted that people with key roles in the decisions to stop offering free car washes were not called to give evidence by their companies. The court will hold another hearing at a date yet to be set to decide what penalties to impose. The highest penalty so far is the \$1.5 million which North Island meat companies were fined for colluding over prices. The highest penalty is \$5 million for companies and \$500,000 for individuals. A spokesman for Mobil said the company was disappointed and was considering its position. Caltex said it would decide whether to appeal once it had reviewed the judge's decision. Shell declined to comment.']

...Shell, with its Fly Buys promotion, has made significant gains in market share recently at the expense of BP and Mobil. BP remains the leader with 29[%] of all petrol sales, followed by Shell (27[%]), Mobil (25[%]) and Caltex (19[%]).

...BP Oil N[Z] is negotiating alliances with supermarkets and fast-food outlets to increase its retail petrol sales... BP's newly-appointed managing director for N[Z], said... "We have to look at any way we can expand our retail presence... It is supermarkets that will have to react to what we are doing." ...So far this year the company had spent more than \$20 million establishing so-called BP Express stores in 32 key locations... Of the 32... 21 were refits, four were rebuilds... and seven were entirely new developments. The revamp in N[Z] was part of a global strategy by BP to turn its petrol stations into merchandise outlets. "We still like selling petrol but we have recognised people want convenience shopping..." ...About 3000 lines of goods[will be] sold at the new stores... The wide range of goods being sold meant more staff were needed. A BP Express outlet employed 20 to 30 people, compared with just 2 to 3 at an old-style petrol station. The development of the chain had so far created more than 300 more jobs within BP N[Z]. The network would be expanded to about 120[outlets] in the near-term... There has been widespread speculation recently about the prospect of a new petrol retailer coming into the N[Z] market to compete with BP and the three other organisations that make up the Big Four oil companies here... "If another company enters the market, BP will compete with them as vigorously as we do with our existing competitors," [the managing director] said. He suggested any new entrant would have to offer a wide range of outlets and products to attract customers, and therefore setting up an operation would be expensive.

...A few years ago, most N[Z]ers would have had to be on the brink of starvation before they would have contemplated entering the nearest service station for a hot meal... [They] could have expected to find a pie warmer of dubious hygiene, and some home-made sandwiches with their edges curling up... The coup de grace, of course, was the sight of a mechanic straight from the lube bay sauntering over to serve the food... You only have to look around at the service stations nowadays to realise there is a quiet revolution going on in the convenience store market. The oil companies are pulling out all stops to design stores that dispel any notion that oil and food can never mix successfully. BP has its Express stores, Shell its Select brand, Mobil the newly named On the Run chain, and Caltex the StarMart. Judging by the advertising emerging from the oil companies, much of their branding is being directed through their convenience stores, rather than through the petrol they sell. There are at least two reasons for this. Firstly, petrol margins have been falling... making petrol sales a far less profitable part of the service station than it used to be. Secondly, we have long stopped believing that the petrol sold by one oil company is fundamentally different to that sold by another... [B]randing themselves through the quality of their fuel no longer has the same impact... [for] the oil companies... Through their service stations, the oil companies already have the prime locations needed to establish the stores, and given that many service stations are open 24 hours, they are perfectly suited to run a modern convenience store... Not everyone is delighted at these developments. When a new BP Express opened in Howick recently, there was much comment in the local press and elsewhere from people who complained that you could now get a great meal at the service station, but you would be hard-pressed to get a tyre changed or buy a fanbelt there. "It's a fact of life that service stations are now selling food rather than servicing cars," says... [the] BP Express... marketing manager of reseller products... Some serious advertising campaigns will be needed to drive this growth... BP... has kept a high TV profile for its Express stores... Caltex showed how serious they were when they appointed [a high-profile company] as the agency handling StarMart as a separate brand, despite having [a different company] as their main agency in charge of their overall advertising. The StarMart advertising account, however, reverted to [the usual agent after the other agent] announced it was dropping the \$1.5 million account only three months after winning it because it conflicted with another... client... All this is bad news for the local corner diary and convenience store, which have already seen their market share drop from around 37[%] in 1990 to 24[%] by 1995. That is a trend that is likely to accelerate next year, when the service stations begin developing their store brands in earnest, and start backing it with aggressive advertising.

...FOR motorists fed up with petrol stations where they have to pump their own gas, help may be on the way. Do-it-yourself petrol tank filling could become a thing of the past along with traditional pump attendants – if the Shell oil company gets its experimental robotic petrol pump developed. Promising to "radically alter the gas station experience" Shell in the U[S] has begun field tests on its smart pump. This automated fuelling system could... dispense fuel without the customer having to get out of the car. It is being field-tested in Sacramento, California... Shell's smart pump identifies the make and model of the car by reading a barcode transponder fitted to the vehicle. It then positions a robotic arm to open the fuel tank flap and dispense fuel through a special cap... Shell N[Z]'s corporate relations man, is not certain whether the smart pump will be used here, but... it looks as though the technology will work. "It's not about to reach into your car and take your child's ice cream or fill your dog with 91 unleaded," he says... Shell in America is saying the smart pump is already proving reliable, simple to use, safe and "environmentally friendly." The company says the possibility of spills and drips is reduced and that petrol vapour emissions are minimised. According to the company's research, motorists in the U[S] want to spend less time at the gas station, and have protection from the weather without petrol fumes. Along with the automated pumps, the company is also field testing a new easy-pay system that will eliminate the need to fumble for cash or the right credit card. Instead, the customer will use a personal electronic key chain device with a tiny computer chip inside. When the customer waves the key chain in front of the pump, the system automatically identifies the customer's credit card number, activates the dispenser and records the charge. Shell may offer an optional vehicle-mounted electronic device to be used in place of the key chain and motorists will be able to use the same system for car washes and food store purchases. There are a few drawbacks to the robotic fuel dispensing system now being tested. Each car that uses it must have a "retrofit" fuel cap to replace the car manufacturer's original cap. The new cap, which can also be used for conventional fuelling, has a spring-loaded slot in the middle, which means the robot does not have to unscrew it and hold on to it as humans do... Unfortunately... cars which have fuel filler caps mounted in unusual places – including the Mazda MX5... the Chevrolet Corvette, Ferraris, certain Jaguar and Maserati models, along with some Peugeots, Renaults and Rolls-Royce[s –] are not compatible with this dispensing system.

...First there was vodka. Now the Russians are trying to sell another high-octane product to the U[S] – gasoline. AO Lukoil Holding, Russia's largest oil company, opened a gas station yesterday in Altavista, Virginia... the first of 100 outlets planned for the U[S] this year and 2000 in coming years... [However, Russian tankers won't]be lining up to unload oil in U[S] ports. The new Lukoil station will use gasoline from local suppliers... The Russians celebrated the grand opening with gifts and bargain-price gasoline at US99c a gallon... But Lukoil said it would not start

a... war on prices... Many U[S] oil companies are reducing their downstream operations or merging with others to cut costs, discouraged by excess capacity...

A Government-commissioned study by A[US]n consultants... has concluded that there are no effective barriers to entering the N[Z] petrol market, for anyone with \$100 million to spend. [The study] estimated it would cost \$25 million to establish a port terminal and \$75 million for a retail network. That assumed the retail sites would be developed by the new entrant... If existing retail outlets or supermarket sites were used, the cost could be as low as \$30 million. The costs of setting up a service station are high... the land could cost between \$600,000 for a suburban site in the main centres to \$4 million for an Auckland CBD site and \$5 million for one in Wellington. The costs of buildings, tanks, fit out and so on would add \$1.3[million] to \$2.2 million. But... [an] independent might opt for less-than-prime sites and skip facilities like car washes, reducing development costs to \$1 million. One way of avoiding high start-up costs would be to take advantage of existing retail sites becoming available as independent dealers came off contracts with one of the oil majors. Only about 20[%] of... this country's 1900... service stations are managed directly by the oil companies or by agents who take a commission per litre of fuel sold. Another 20[%] are operated by dealers who lease the service station from the company whose product they sell. The other 60[%] are classified as independent, though they sell one of the majors' brands. The dealer owns the station or leases it from someone other than the oil company. Typically, supply agreements with the oil company have five-year terms with roll-over provisions... [Unfortunately,] extensive land holdings by the oil companies at ports would make it difficult for a new entrant to set up suitable terminal facilities. [The study] concluded that the port of Auckland would be a hard nut to crack, but not Tauranga, Wellington or Lyttelton. The pipeline owned by the four oil companies, which runs from the Marsden Pt refinery to Wiri, is also... seen as a barrier, especially to the Auckland market, but the pipeline is fast approaching its maximum capacity. The cost of carrying petrol along it was about 0.9c a litre... Getting it from Wiri to Auckland service stations would be about another 0.5c a litre. The cost of transporting motor spirit from the port of Tauranga to Auckland service stations was estimated to be about 1.7c a litre.

...Petrol prices are rising for the first time in a year. BP, Caltex, Mobil and Shell all increased their pump prices 1c a litre this week. The last increase, also 1c a litre, was in October last year but in March prices dropped 1c. Since then the Government has been concerned about the increasing margin oil companies are charging on the cost of fuel imports. The Minister of Energy... welcomed suggestions of a new player preparing to move into the petrol retailing business. However, apart from some secretive purchases of prime Auckland real estate sites, the newcomer... has not raised its hand. The latest increase has been blamed on rising crude prices and a weakening NZ dollar.

...[following] months of speculation that a fifth player in the retail petrol market was behind the purchase of up to 30 properties[, a still]... mysterious challenger to the dominance of N[Z]'s four petrol barons[has announced] plans to launch its new chain from two prime sites in Auckland and Hamilton... [The] newcomer has lodged planning applications for a central Hamilton site overlooking the Waikato River... opposite the Anglican cathedral... and a Western Springs, Auckland, site which is believed to be a block of shops opposite the Museum of Transport and Technology. The Hamilton City Council yesterday confirmed a Tauranga firm had lodged an application on behalf of an unnamed oil company... The Hamilton petrol station would have a "clean and inviting innovative design" with a peaked fabric roof, resembling a sail. "The clean, sweeping curves of glowing white material will have a less commercial effect. The curved shape and use of open lattice trusses would set a new environmental standard," the application said. Discrete planting would create a "pleasing and uplifting" visual effect... Challenge refused to confirm it was behind the \$850,000 purchase of the prime block of land... [in Hamilton. A spokesperson] said the company was still investigating whether it wanted to enter fuel retailing and would not announce a decision for several months... [Challenge] would have to supply its stations with imported fuel, as the Big Four... control production from N[Z]'s only oil refinery at Marsden Pt.

...The Marsden Pt oil refinery will shed 72 jobs over the next two years as part of plans to save up to 25[%] in costs. The... redundancy bill is likely to top \$6 million[, but]... the... refinery's annual wages bill is expected to drop from \$40 million to \$29 million... [Incidentally,] Challenge is moving into petrol retailing, a Hamilton city councillor revealed yesterday. The councillor... said [Challenge] had told him in confidence that it was behind a proposed service station in the city's main road... [He] said he breached confidentiality with [Challenge] because he believed this might stop the development. He said the acting mayor... was keeping residents in the dark over the site... A [Challenge] spokesman... yesterday refused to confirm or deny the claim.

...A petrol price war is on the way with plans by an A[US]n discounter to muscle in and cut pump prices by 10c a litre. Liberty Oil yesterday confirmed it intended opening at 35 sites within six months... The service stations would be large by N[Z] standards, with big forecourts and 200sq m convenience stores operating under the Time Saver banner... A 10c price cut would have a significant economic impact, reducing costs not only for private motorists but for taxis, couriers and other transport companies. Liberty may not be the only newcomer... Challenge said last night it was still considering its options... By heavily discounting prices Liberty has snatched 8[%] of the A[US]n market in just three years. It now has about 270 outlets. It imports fuel from Asia as well as buying from A[US]n refiners... "We do not have the overheads that all the major companies have. We don't have great glass towers, we do it simply and that cuts the overheads back." ...However, continuity of supply might become an issue if it did not have sufficient transport and storage facilities... It is looking to have storage units in Tauranga and Wellington... Liberty is a Melbourne-based company owned by... [two men], both of whom have featured in the list of A[US]'s 200 wealthiest people... in a large part thanks to the actions of their major oil rivals. Just after [they] opened their first petrol discounting outlet in 1970... they struck a supply deal with Mobil. That deal turned out to be exceedingly generous because it established a fixed price for unlimited supplies. Then along came the first oil price shock. While their big sister rivals were forced to pay substantially more for the crude oil they refined, Solo outlets got their tanks filled at bargain basement prices. It was the sort of break which allowed the Solo chain to expand rapidly, eventually snaring 5[%] of the total A[US]n market by 1989 when the... entrepreneurs sold to Ampol. That deal... worth \$A200 million... made them both very wealthy... but they were forced to sign an agreement that they would not compete in the oil retail industry for 10 years. However, when Ampol and Caltex merged their operations in 1994, the Trade Practices Commission would only agree on the basis that independent operators were not disadvantaged. The non-competition agreement was scrapped, giving [the pair] their second big break at the hands of their rivals. Since re-establishing themselves back in the petrol discounting game with Liberty in 1995... [the company has quickly grown to] a \$A700 million-a-year... business... Liberty pumps in excess of one billion litres each year and it aims to double that amount this year... Earlier this year, Liberty expanded into the Perth market and said it wanted to have 40 outlets in that city by the year's end... [It is also] looking at setting up in Tasmania, a state which Liberty says has unacceptably high petrol prices thanks to the lack of independent petrol retailers. Not satisfied with their success in A[US], the pair have also laid plans to take their brand... into Thailand, Cambodia and China... By[A[US]n] law, the big oil companies have to supply any discounter at fair market prices. Discounters are also able to import cheap petrol through facilities they do not own. That means they do not have to service vast sums of capital tied up in refineries, ships or oil terminals. An irony behind Liberty's success in A[US] is that its single largest source of product now is Ampol.

...LIBERTY OIL'S expansion into the N[Z] market could be financed by a public float of shares and a Stock Exchange listing. The Melbourne-based company has confirmed it is considering the float option as it prepares to take on the big four...

LONG-SUFFERING shareholders in[a] furniture maker... can look forward to a resumption of dividends following the acquisition of a majority stake in the company by the two Wellington businessmen... who have formed a joint venture with... Liberty Oil...

Petrol prices may be forced down by up to 15c a litre, says price discounter Liberty Oil... Its chief executive... said from Melbourne that the cost would depend on how much the existing oil companies responded to the threat of competition... Disgruntled service station operators had been

flocking to Liberty hoping to change their allegiance to it from one or other of the existing companies, he said. So far 15 franchise holders had made direct approaches. One operator told... yesterday that he expected to be able to make a bigger margin than the 3c to 4c a litre he got now.

...Big petrol price cuts planned for Auckland and some other North Island cities by Liberty Oil will not be enjoyed by the rest of N[Z]... Liberty... said yesterday its strategy was based initially on the North Island and on Auckland in particular... Auckland's size, and the pipeline connecting the storage facility at Wiri with the Marsden Pt oil refinery, make it the most lucrative market for the oil companies – and the most attractive target for a new entrant... [But its] managing director... hoped Liberty would eventually become a nationwide supplier. A BP spokeswoman... said last night... that South Islanders, particularly, may face higher prices as a result of the A[US]n discounter entering the North Island market. Centres such as Whangarei, Tauranga and Hamilton, which now pay the same or similar prices as the four main centres, will benefit from the price cuts only if Liberty opens outlets. Rural[North Island] areas and towns in which Liberty does not open... may pay more than now... In Wellington yesterday, the Minister of Energy... welcomed Liberty's move... [and] he warned the[other] oil companies against colluding to sell below cost and stave of the competitor... "I will be keeping a very close eye on any predatory behaviour oil companies may wish to adopt or think they can get away with to try to force competition out," the Minister... said... Predatory pricing involves an incumbent firm dropping its price to below cost to drive a rival out of business. As none of the oil companies is individually dominant any one of them is free to sell below cost if it wants to, but they cannot get together to agree to do that without contravening the Commerce Act. While the incumbents are liable to be in trouble if they sell below cost, Liberty is expected to... Liberty had made a substantial investment already and had indicated to him that they were there for the long term and would do whatever[is necessary] to establish themselves in the marketplace. "I assume that means competing at a loss in the short term at least,"... [The minister] expected it would cost between \$50 million and \$100 million to set up the Liberty network. Another area the regulatory authorities will watch closely is misuse of the Resource Management Act process. Objections by competitors on trade grounds are not permitted under the act, but it is argued that firms sometimes exploit the act by raising environmental issues, perhaps through another organisation.

...Oil companies may find it much harder to build petrol stations in Auckland City residential areas after a landmark Environmental Court decision. The judgment gives [Auckland City C]ouncil-appointed planning commissioners much wider powers to reject applications for new service stations because they must consider a range of matters under the district plan. The ruling could have repercussions for the intended new entrant into N[Z]'s petrol retailing scene... Liberty Oil... The council believes Auckland is adequately served by the 135 petrol stations located along main arterial routes on the Auckland isthmus, 13 of them in residential zones[*The Telephone Directory Auckland 1997* lists almost 250 petrol stations in the four cities]. Manukau and Waitakere cities have indicated they may follow Auckland's stance... The court case followed an appeal by Caltex...

Oil companies began a round of price-cutting and special discounts for Auckland motorists yesterday amid a growing climate of petrol sales competition. Caltex and Shell followed the lead of BP in dropping wholesale prices to all their service stations between Wellsford and Huntly by 5c a litre – although it is up to retailers to pass this on. The price cut was greeted with "deep suspicion" by the Minister of Energy... A spokeswoman for BP... said the company had decided to drop its prices to service stations in the region for a limited period rather than "compete with another promotional activity this month." She was referring to the Mobil offer of \$1 petrol discounts posted to every household. A Mobil spokeswoman... said the promotion had been extremely successful. "We are puzzled as to why competitor response has only taken place in Auckland, given that Mobil's promotion went to all households nationwide."

...A computer glitch has left Mobil searching for 21 people who were overcharged for petrol in Auckland. They are among 25 customers who paid twice as much tax as they should have from the... station in Karangahape Rd in the past two days. Four have already been tracked down. Only customers taking advantage of electronic banking services available on the station forecourt were affected... Eftpos payments at the petrol pumps were closed temporarily yesterday when a vigilant customer spotted the error on his receipt... Mobil is still investigating how the computer system at the K Rd site was altered... [By the way,] BP Oil last night rejected a claim that the rest of N[Z] was subsidising Auckland's 5c a litre petrol price cut... A spokeswoman for BP... said... that was "definitely not the intention." ...The company also warned the cut might be short-lived, lasting days rather than weeks... N[Z]ers buy 2.7 billion litres of petrol a year, or 52 million litres a week[, or approximately 2 litres per NZer per day], and the Auckland region makes up just under a third of that market. Every 1c price movement is estimated to cost (or save) motorists \$27 million a year, so the 5c a litre price cut would save[Aucklanders] about \$43 million if it continued... Meanwhile, a union expressed concern that service station workers could suffer as the price war heats up... The Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union, which covers some service station attendants, is concerned a... war will put increased pressure on workers' pay and conditions.

...Independent Shell service stations are bitter at having to fund the oil companies' 5c a litre petrol price cut in the Auckland region out of their own pockets. Caltex and BP have ensured their operators are not disadvantaged... [by giving] a 5c rebate for every litre sold. Mobil simply cut the wholesale rate. Shell, however, had[only] given independent dealers rebates of between 2c and 2.5c a litre.

...Aucklanders no longer have cheap petrol themselves. BP extended its cut-price petrol promotion to Christchurch at the weekend and the other three oil companies quickly followed suit... A BP spokeswoman... likened the price cut to happy hour in a bar... As with the Auckland promotion, it would last days rather than weeks...

Motorists in Auckland and Christchurch are saving \$150,000 a day as a result of the oil companies' 5c a litre price cut... Meanwhile, Caltex has announced that 61... staff had accepted voluntary redundancy.

...Auckland's relief from high petrol prices was short-lived. Most motorists would have filled their cars no more than once in the 6 1/2 days the BP-led promotion lasted. BP... [said] it had been very successful but could not be sustained with present international oil prices and the N[Z] dollar's value. The other three oil companies, which copied BP by cutting prices last week, followed it back up yesterday. Caltex said it has ended "our promotion," Mobil said it has "matched" the latest price rise, while Shell said it was "restoring" prices to pre-promotion levels.

...BP Oil's... 5c a litre... petrol price-cut promotion moved to New Plymouth, Nelson and surrounding areas last night... Caltex, Mobil and Shell [stations in the region] immediately moved to match the lower prices. BP canned its promotion in Auckland on Tuesday... but was continuing Christchurch's promotion into its eighth day...

['Businesses are already counting the cost of the closure of Whenuapai's service station. They say trade in the small, closeknit community has dropped off since the station on Brighams Creek Rd pumped its last drop of gas 10 days ago. "Economic reasons" are cited by longterm lease holders Shell NZ as the reason the company was not prepared to spend the \$100,000-plus to upgrade the tanks required. The service station has been in the township for more than 40 years. Local shop owners and residents alike have been angered by Shell's decision to turn off the pumps. As well as the inconvenience, local retailers are worried the closure will affect business in the area. The owners of Shree Superette say they're already feeling the pinch at the checkout.]

...Supermarket customers in the North Island may soon add petrol to their shopping lists, in a move which is expected to further fuel petrol price wars... Liberty Oil and [Challenge] Energy... were talking to supermarket operators about potential deals which could eventually see petrol pumps set up in supermarket car parks... Deals between supermarket operators and oil companies have already sparked fierce petrol price wars in Britain and A[US], as the line between grocery shopping and petrol retailing becomes increasingly blurred... In Britain, petrol sales have proved profitable for supermarkets... driving many independent garages out of business... Britain's biggest supermarket chain, Tesco, is now responsible for about a quarter of all retail sales of petrol... Across the Tasman, Woolworths A[US] is so far the only supermarket chain selling petrol. However, it has already prompted BP to test a joint promotion in Canberra with an independent grocery chain. Both... offer a discount of 2c a litre on petrol to customers who spend \$30 or more on groceries... [The] Big Four oil companies operating in N[Z] were coy yesterday about the latest threat to their

empire. BP would not say whether it was considering a similar deal here to A[US]. Shell and Mobil also declined to comment. But Caltex said talks with supermarkets were not planned at this stage... Liberty Oil confirmed yesterday that it planned to meet... Progressive Enterprises and Woolworths NZ, early next month. Progressive[, which]... owns the Foodtown, Countdown and 3 Guys chains... has been looking at petrol retailing for some time and is believed to have already had talks with Malaysia's state-owned oil company, Petronas. The other major player in the grocery market, Foodstuffs, said yesterday that it did not have room at most of its sites for petrol pumps, and therefore was not yet considering any deals... [Challenge] would say only that it had been talking to "a number of people" for some time.

...Challenge has reaffirmed its strong interest in moving into selling petrol. The chief executive... said... [Challenge] had done a... three year... feasibility study on petrol retailing... [and the company] was the "most logical next participant" in the market because it was already producing oil in N[Z]... "There is a value lift for us in using our crude and condensates in the N[Z] market,"...

Challenge Energy has moved a step closer to selling petrol by launching an extensive marketing campaign for a business that only partly exists. The company has begun a series of television advertisements lauding its oil and production activities in N[Z] and overseas.

...Challenge Energy is teaming up with other companies to speed its entry into the petrol market... The vital link in the petrol plan is a contract for supply of bulk refined products from the Asian division of Japanese oil giant Mitsui... [Challenge] got to know Mitsui through marketing arrangements for its Taranaki oil and gas fields. At Taranaki, [Challenge] operates an oil tank farm and will extend that to include storage of up to 30,000 tonnes of petroleum products... But it will not be doing the local distribution itself. That will be handled by listed transport company Owens Group. The arrangement is potentially a huge deal for Owens, which recently sold a small business with about five tanker trucks that was involved in rural and home delivery of fuel for BP. The transport company has already begun building new trucks... Those trucks will carry fuel to the 20 initial service stations [Challenge] intends to own and operate by itself. They will also carry fuel to other outlets... but... what these other outlets will be is being kept secret[, although the]... Warehouse is tipped as a possible partner... [Challenge] is likely to be pumping gas before A[US]'s Liberty Oil... The first... Challenge... station is likely to open in the new Albany Stadium retail area. [The company] has already installed fuel tanks at a site beside its Placemakers building products store there... [Challenge] has the potential to become the strongest and most profitable of the oil companies operating in this country... [and expects to at least] secure about a fifth of all fuel sales. That represents an \$800 million bite of N[Z]'s \$4 billion fuel industry... At the processing end of the fuel chain, the Marsden Pt oil refinery... faces a challenge. The refinery is already suffering declining sales in large part due to new and efficient refineries in South-east Asia coming on stream. [Challenge] will import its fuel from those very refineries. The N[Z] refinery is slashing costs in an effort to compete more aggressively, but that alone might not be enough to make it competitive. As luck would have it, [Challenge] wants to use Marsden Pt to process crude oil extracted from its Taranaki fields. It is prevented from doing this at present because the majors have a contract to use the refinery exclusively. This despite [Challenge] owning a 14[%] share in the facility. [Challenge] intends to test those exclusive arrangements... N[Z] Refining is keen to discuss... Challenge's fuel requirements, but in the short term has no refining capacity available to sell... At the retail end, owners and operators of small petrol stations... also... face a battle... [because Challenge] intends to... pump fuel in large volumes... [at] key outlets. This will give economies of scale that small petrol stations don't have.

...Bulk users of fuel such as bus companies... are set to benefit from the entry into the N[Z] market of... Liberty Oil... "We believe there is a very large opportunity for us in the commercial market and we will be attacking that market with... gusto..."... [the] local principal of the A[US]n group... said yesterday... - 1997

The bus originated in Paris in 1827. It was originally a horse-drawn vehicle, known as an omnibus (= 'a vehicle for all'), with the entrance at the rear. Later versions were motor-driven, first by petrol engines and then... diesel engines...

The tram (or tramcar, *US* streetcar), was invented in New York in 1830 by John Stevenson, an Irish coach-builder. Trams were originally horsedrawn... and then steam power was used so that they were either self-propelled or hauled by cables using stationary engines. The great expansion in their use came with electric traction in the 1890s, with current collected either from overhead wires or sometimes from a conductor rail beneath the road surface. The rise of the motor bus and the electric trolleybus with their greater flexibility of the course caused a decline in the use of trams in both Britain and the USA, but some transport planners forecast a return to the tram on grounds of economy and ability to use electric power rather than the oil fuel needed for buses.

TRAMWAYS came into their own in NZ when they began to be powered by electricity, first in Auckland (1902), then in Dunedin (1903), Wellington (1904), Christchurch (1905), Wanganui (1908), Invercargill (1912), Napier and Gisborne (1913), and New Plymouth (1916). During the second and third decades of the 20th century, electric trams were the main means of public transport for the citizens in the cities and the large towns of NZ... By the end of W[W2]... 220 million passengers a year were carried on all the systems: nearly half in Auckland (100 million)... Trams were gradually superseded by trolley buses... during the 1950s...

Trolley buses replaced trams on Auckland's Herne Bay run on Sept 24, 1949, spelling the end for trams... Auckland's first trolley-bus service began when the Farmers Trading Co offered shoppers free transport from Wyndham St to Hobson St[on]... *Dec 19*... 1938... The company had started a free tram service from Beresford St two years earlier.

Children's discount fares and many subsidised school bus services are under threat in Auckland. The [ARC] transport committee voted this week to reconsider its \$5.9 million involvement in providing the subsidised services and public transport discounts. The surprise shift was prompted by the council chairman... who said later that ratepayers should not be subsidising school transport. It should be a central Government responsibility... An estimated 30,000 of 180,000 Auckland school pupils travel to and from school on public transport... Children under 15 and secondary school students over 15 qualify for a 40[%] discount on the adult fare. Council officers said the rationale for subsidising school transport was that it reduced peak-hour traffic congestion as fewer parents drove their children to school, and that public transport was safer than walking or cycling. The president of the Auckland School Trustees Association... said scrapping the subsidies would increase the strain on family budgets. He urged the council to retain them unless the Government agreed to pick up the tab. The Ministry of Education manager of school transport... said of... the Government paying: "I don't see it as a goer." He said 5000 Auckland pupils rode to and from school on 104 bus services[already] funded by the ministry. A partial transport subsidy was paid for a further 750 pupils and 1500 children with special needs were provided with transport.

...Auckland's traffic mania affects everyone, from families taking their children to school, business people struggling to meetings, manufacturers getting orders delivered on time, shoppers getting to Queen St. Having recently returned from a fact-finding mission to England and Scotland, I... [-] a director of the Yellow Bus Co... [-] am convinced that the quickest, cheapest and most flexible way of reducing Auckland's congestion is to improve bus transport... Auckland could incorporate many of the successful innovations seen overseas. They would not inconvenience the motorist... Overseas, local councils and transport operators have formed partnerships to improve public transport and its image. The transport operator agrees to supply modern systems... while the council agrees to make special investments. Many of the changes required[in Auckland] fall within the council's domain, such as developing shelters and facilities for the travelling public, park-and-ride facilities and priority lanes... The cost

of the park-and-ride is no greater than the parking cost in town... and[customers] are picked up by the bus for travel into the city along the priority lanes... Transport priority lanes on roads should be a “win-win situation.” ...[they] can... be altered easily if traffic patterns alter... Depending on the daily traffic flow, some lanes can be available for all traffic during most of the day and designated public transport lanes at peak periods... The travelling public is soon educated as to which lanes can be used... They need to be well policed,[however,] especially against delivery vehicles... [and cars carrying less than three people. ● The first Auckland trial of] a... traffic lane... [which] only buses, cyclists and private vehicles with at least three occupants may use... [was instigated in 1982 along] Onewa Rd, Northcote.

...[Yesterday, the] group manager, transport, for the [ARC]... said that the existing harbour bridge could take an “awful lot more people” if buses carried more people... [Unfortunately, t]he public might have to pay to get information about Auckland public transport services in future, if the chairman of the [ARC]... has his way. The Yellow Bus Company, which is owned by the Auckland Regional Services Trust[and made an \$8.3 million profit this year], intends dropping its... [free-call phone] information service in early December. The service handles about 2000 calls a day. - 1996

Auckland's Buz a Bus service has been saved by court injunction from an 0900 phone service... better known for providing sexual fantasy... phone services and pornographic videos... [The owner of the pornographic 0900 service] thought he was on to a good thing last November, when he read... that [the ARC] chairman... thought it was time to sell the bus information service... [The ARC chairman] said it was the era of the user-pays 0900 call – and [the 0900 man]... saw a perfect opportunity. He promptly arranged listings in Telecom's 1997 Auckland directory and Yellow Pages... due out in April, offering a 24-hour 0900 service. Suddenly the company which runs the... free 0800 phone information service, Transportation Auckland, wanted to protect the asset it ditched... for its Rideline service, which [covers 'bus, train, ferry and carpool information']... It sought a High Court injunction after [the 0900 man] applied... to register his double-zed Buzz A Bus as a trademark... A High Court hearing this week... showed the service cost \$1.3 million in 1996, with a \$1.2 million forecast for this year[, and the ARST]... decision to ditch the Buz a Bus calls showed it put a zero value on its service... [However, the judge said the 0900 man] could only use his 0900 bus number if a precise Telecom diversionary message was installed... [The judge] found the... service was evidence of passing off – trading on the established goodwill of the local government name – and ordered an injunction restraining [the 0900 man] from using his double-zed or similar trade name... Transportation Auckland, meanwhile, was going through its own trademark registration, winning a trademark for its single-zed name... after applying back in 1994... [The 0900 man then] terminated his use of the number, after [the judge] told him court costs of \$1500 were not “unreasonable” for the injunction hearing and could be imposed if he chose to take the matter to a substantive hearing.

...[as a result of court action, Aucklanders have ended up with a '24 Hours 7 Days 0900 BUZZ-A-RIDE service costing \$1.75+GST/min' and a free Rideline service that is operated for a maximum of 15 1/2 hours each day. Incidentally, 'Swanson bus company Ritchies has been fined more than \$50,000 for allowing its bus washing system to discharge detergents into a local stream. Company directors were also fined \$4000 each. The company holds a discharge consent which allows a discharge of excess wash water during high rainfall into the stream, but not detergents, degreasers or solvents. The consent also bans the washing of the underside of buses. A court hearing last week heard that last year, pollution control officers visited the site several times and gave warnings. "In light of our continued warnings being ignored," says an ARC councillor, the council had little option but to proceed with legal action."']

...[On the corner of Vermont Avenue and Wiltshire Boulevard, in the teeming heart of Los Angeles' Mid-City district, ordinary commuters were massed outside the shuttered underground train station, praying for a miracle on the fourth day of a public transport strike. All were poor, desperate to get to work, without cars and utterly stranded. Then the miracle happened – at least for some of them. Dilapidated pick-up trucks and rickety old cars swooped by, their drivers shouting out directions and prices in Spanish. The cars and trucks filled up, like service taxis on the outskirts of Cairo or Tirana, four or five people crammed on to back seats, and they were off. Elsewhere in the city, cars stopped to offer rides to janitors, cleaners and restaurant workers marching incongruously down the long, straight pavements of a city where, in theory, nobody ever walks. It is easy to forget that in LA, a city built on freeways and private enterprise, almost half a million people struggle daily against the whole ethos of the city because they cannot afford to drive cars. The transport strike has made this vast underclass visible to all, and in a city notorious for its lack of civil sense or neighbourly good feeling a wave of solidarity has taken hold. The drivers of the city's 4000-odd buses walked off the job after their bosses asked them to take cuts of up to 15% in pay and overtime. The rationale was a crude one – the Metropolitan Transit Authority is mired in debt after wasting billions on a subway system that does not begin to cover the span of the LA basin, and now it has to make cuts wherever it can. Since the drivers are already on wages little better than the house-cleaners, nannies and menial workers they carry on their buses each day, their dispute has triggered a wave of sympathy. But the strike's economic toll is beginning to be felt. People are spending so much time, energy and money getting to and from work that they have no time or cash to go shopping. The strike began on Sunday (NZ time), initially amid chaos. Old women waited for hours at bus stops, apparently unaware of the strike. Yellow taxis fleeced passengers of their whole day's wages to get to jobs they could not afford to risk losing.]

...[an Auckland mother] is furious that the Yellow Bus Company is charging more for her children's fares... The bus fares have risen from 80c to \$1.20 per trip, with a 10-ride concession ticket costing \$10 instead of \$7.20. That means [the mother] needs to pay \$30 for bus tickets each week, instead of \$21.60... As a protest, the West Auckland mother is driving three of her four children to Massey High School each morning. She lets the children catch the bus home after school... [She] blamed the price rise on the Yellow Bus Company taking over West Auckland bus services from the Whenuapai Bus Company. Until Monday, the 4km ride to school from [their] home in Massey was one stage. However, the Yellow Bus Company... has made the journey two stages. The chief executive of the Yellow Bus Company... said... “The fares that are being rearranged are consistent with the sorts of fares being paid in other parts of Auckland.”

...[Bus fares could jump... if a push by operators to covers costs succeeds... Bus operators... asked the [ARC], which regulates fares, to approve a price increase... [F]ares were unlikely to rise more than 10[%]. A one zone fare, covering inner-city travel, would then be \$1.10... [The] chairman of the Auckland Bus and Coach Association[(BCA)], said bus prices had been static since 1991, when the industry was deregulated, but the [ARC] had continually cut the subsidy... However, the Campaign for Public Transport said it would fight any fare increase. Its convener... said bus fares should not rise unless the service improved. “If they had a bus service that was delivering people to work on time and was of a high standard, then that would be acceptable, but they don't.”

...[I'm a bus person – been one for 10 years. There's nothing like relaxing in a Flyer, cruising along... the Northern Motorway every morning, book open. That half hour or so of peace is worth the grind of the homeward journey when the slower Express trundles up the East Coast Rd, picking up noisy teenagers in school uniforms. But it wasn't worth it last week. And it hasn't been worth it several times this year. The bus was late (only seven minutes) and, amazingly, it was full with two people standing – at 3.20.[Some drivers won't stop if they already have standing passengers but, fortunately, this one did.] Off we chugged, around the curve of the approach to the Harbour Bridge and at the very beginning of the climb, the yellow thing died – simply crawled to a halt astride the white line. The chuckles (or sniggers) were of no surprise. Yellow Bus travellers have been down this road before. The driver, amused resignation on his cheerful face, tried the starter button and then reached for his RT. We settled in for a wait... Rush-hour traffic was beginning to build and horns tooted at this hulk in the middle of the road. Another bus pulled up in front of us but on viewing our load, went on its way... The replacement came nearly half an hour later and we tramped outside like grateful lambs protected from the traffic by a line of red cones and a policeman. More chuckles and snide comments as we realised this[replacement] vehicle had been painted many

colours before it became a yellow bus. And more delay as the driver pushed buttons and turned knobs as he tried to shut the doors. "Never mind!" roared the frustrated policeman. "Get that thing out of here." Off we lurched, to a volley of backfires – towards the next surprise. At the Tristram off-ramp our disoriented driver swung a left, instead of a right to East Coast Rd. It seemed anger was beyond this good-natured band of travellers: they exploded in a roar of helpless laughter... That driver is the fifth this year who has gone the wrong way, and that's the second bus to break down on the way home. Lateness may be excusable but twice the bus has left from the city five minutes early. I'm still a bus person, but I understand why many aren't.

...If only the buses... worked cheaply and efficiently, then motorists would leave their cars at home. All the evidence, sadly, suggests otherwise. One European study found that halving bus fares would reduce car use by less than 1[%]. Drivers are so wedded to their cars that they will be deterred only by higher motoring costs or regulation.

...[a study has found that '50% of local car rides in NZ last less than 10 minutes.' By the way,] community groups have stepped up their campaigns against building an eastern Auckland motorway... [An] Auckland City Council study... of the Panmure-Tamaki Drive route says public transport options are unlikely to attract sufficient passengers to offset expected increases in traffic. But Stem, the Stop the Eastern Motorway group, dismissed the report, which it claimed had a predetermined outcome and was based on the assumption that Aucklanders were "hooked on cars." A Stem spokesman... said the figures had been skewed to the extent that the motorway option, detailed in the report as environmentally damaging and expensive, came out on top. He also attacked the "inadequacies of the environmental analysis" in the report. It failed to explain the long-term effects of a motorway carving through the inner-city's last wetland habitat for wading birds, marine life and mangroves.

...The Minister of Transport... signalled her support for a second Auckland harbour crossing yesterday[after] touring the Auckland motorway system with Transit officials and local MPs... She said the Government would decide later this year on how the roads would be paid for and managed... [M]oney could be borrowed forward, instead of new roads and bridges being fully paid for once opened, as at present.

...[Question: When is a tax not a tax? Answer: When it's an excise duty. And that's how the PM ducked "hypocrisy" claims last week after government slapped 4c a litre on petrol to sort out Auckland's shambolic road problems (protesters against the hike remembered how the Deputy PM stomped the country branding fuel companies as "greedy" for raising their prices; now it seems it's OK for government to do it – if you call it a tax by any other name').]

...solving Auckland's "transport crisis" will require a co-ordinated hands-on approach by regional and central Government and the political will to adequately fund vast improvements in public transport... "Funding for public transport is not a matter of subsidies, it's a matter of making necessary commercial decisions." ...Statistics paint a gloomy picture, particularly those which show the number of people using public transport dropped from 14[%] 10 years ago to just 7[%]. Adversely, the number of commuters driving to work increased from 53... to 80[%].

...[Significant patterns of travel to work at the 1991 Census related to male-female differentials in means of transport. Males – who made up 64% of the then 1,073,743-strong full-time labour force – showed a much greater tendency than females to drive company vehicles (138,150 v 16,665), or ride motorcycles, powercycles or bicycles to work (62,733 v 14,832). Females, by contrast, tended to make greater use of the public transport system (21,951 v 28,065), drive private vehicles (310,362 v 217,881), travel as passengers in cars, trucks and company vehicles (39,294 v 41,625), and walk more than their male counterparts (46,635 v 30,342). This male-female structure of transport use reflects a combination of demographic and economic variables including living arrangements, household composition and income, number of household income earners, access to household vehicles, distance travelled to work, occupation, industry and employment status.] • The ARC] has given a clear signal of support for local councils' efforts to clear the way for buses on congested streets... The regional council is funding the trial of an Intelligent Transport System... beginning in the city next month. The chairman of the committee... said: "We can't build our way out of Auckland's traffic problems... We need to look at moving more people rather than more cars." ...And next month Transit N[Z] expects to issue a report on... ways to push more people, rather than vehicles, across the[harbour] bridge using a priority lane on the Shore for buses and cars carrying three or more people.

...[a Californian] judge... fined a driver for using a car-pool lane reserved for cars with at least two people, although the man had four passengers. He was a mortuary worker transporting frozen corpses. "The dispensation," ruled [the judge], "doesn't apply when all the passengers are dead." ...[In local news, a]n \$18 million plan to get more people through the Auckland Harbour Bridge jam in fewer vehicles was unveiled yesterday. Transit N[Z]'s three-year scheme involves the extension of the North Shore bus shoulder lane, a new park-and-ride bus station at Constellation Drive and a bus terminal at Smales Farm. Transit believes its solution... could save commuters 20 minutes a trip... Included also are new priority lanes for southbound traffic heading for the harbour bridge in the morning peak hour... and, on the south side of the bridge, an extra lane through St Marys Bay and over the Victoria Park viaduct. The \$6 million viaduct widening would involve an extra 6m of roadway and a new row of supporting piles in Victoria Park... However, Transfund needs to approve the project before it gets the go-ahead... A second, \$25 million stage would involve changes to the Onewa Rd interchange, [and] a separate dual carriageway between the new bus stations... The Transit report also argues for... an extra lane between Hobson St and the Khyber Pass Rd on-ramps... The regional state highway manager... described the Transit plans as economically and socially responsible but cautioned that they would not cut queuing on normal motorway lanes: "The benefits of the priority-lane system will only become apparent when a significant number of commuters choose to forgo the single-occupant car." ...[but] he believed that Aucklanders would sooner than later change their travel habits and switch to buses when the advantages became clear.

...Forty new buses which "crouch" beside kerbs for easier passenger access are being bought by the Yellow Bus Company for use on Auckland arterial routes. The \$9 million investment follows a trial of the low-floor buses... The buses use hydraulics to drop [themselves]... Part of a fleet modernisation programme, they are intended to complement the push by regional planners for public transport.

...Using mathematical principles, [a] Professor... developed the theory of "the mating habits of buses" that explained why after waiting an age for a bus, two always seemed to arrive at once... [He']s spent his life applying mathematics to transport problems... He formulated the theory that if the first bus gets slightly behind schedule, more passengers arrive at each stop, slowing it even more. The second bus has fewer and fewer passengers to pick up at each stop, enabling it to travel faster and faster. (The theory works best in countries where buses do not pass each other.) ...Now he has turned his experience to Auckland, where [buses do pass each other. But instead of being concerned about passengers missing their bus because its driver wrongly assumed they intended to board a bus already parked at the stop and, therefore, drove straight past,] he has looked at [another] bane of the commuter's life... Traffic lights are a particular challenge to the mathematician, who says that proper systems, developed logically, can make a big difference in easing traffic flows in a congested city... He does not approve of diagonal pedestrian crossings, such as those on Queen St, as they close down intersections to traffic for too long. Auckland has, however, increased the number of intersections controlled by advanced, computerised traffic lights. A senior traffic engineer... said 187 Auckland intersections were now controlled by the systems [the] Professor... studied.

...Little grey boxes attached to buses could get passenger loads through traffic lights... faster than usual. The [ARC] has agreed to fund a \$150,000 trial to fit four buses with devices which turn lights green... [by signalling] the approach of the bus to traffic lights... at selected intersections. It is part of an Auckland City Council plan, called "Buses First," to give buses priority on Great North Rd... A manual study conducted over a week[last] November showed that 10[%] of buses on Great North Rd changed the lights a minute sooner than normal, with another 30[%] snapping them to green 10 seconds early. "The results were wonderful,"... a transport planner at Auckland City Council... said. "We were slightly worried it would congest traffic in other lanes but that didn't happen." The council hoped to eventually have bus-sensitive traffic lights in most parts of Auckland. They would not work in heavily congested intersections... or in traffic snarl-ups... Asked whether the council

would try to stop motorists sitting behind buses to fast-track through the lights, he said: "That has been raised as a concern. We're not sure whether it will be a serious problem but we'll keep checks on it." What would happen when two buses going in opposite ways came to the lights at the same time? [The planner] said that would be worked out during the trial... [The] equipment being tested – including electronic loops in roadways and a central computer – would give full and late buses priority over other buses. Eventually it would allow bus companies to flash timetable information to passengers waiting at bus stops... [The] chairman of the Auckland [BCA], said bus companies were excited about getting priority at traffic lights. Savings from speeding up travel time were likely to cover the cost of fitting the devices... The technology for the trial is based on the successful Brisbane system, and it has also proved a success elsewhere overseas.

...Little grey boxes attached to buses to signal traffic lights to turn green begin trials in Auckland this week. Four buses have been fitted with transponders... The... project is... a... joint [effort between the ARC], Whenuapai Bus Travel and [the] Yellow Bus Company... The "Bus First" trial will run for up to four weeks using the traffic lights at the Pt Chevalier Rd and Great North Rd intersection. The four buses will be marked "not in service" and will not pick up passengers.

...Buses and cycles may become kings of the road on two of Auckland's busiest arterial routes – Dominion Rd and Mt Eden Rd. The Auckland City Council... has invited public comment on short-term options for relieving congestion on the two isthmus roads... The bus priority option would give buses and cyclists exclusive use of [one of two city-bound lanes] during morning peak traffic hours and [one of two out-bound lanes] during the evening rush-hour. Buses would get a further jump on private cars with traffic lights giving them pre-emption at major intersections... But the Mt Eden Business Association... yesterday challenged the council's view that the bus lane would relieve congestion... [The] association's chairwoman... said the three minutes the council estimated bus travellers would save on a city trip was not enough to convince people to use public transport... Cars in peak-hour traffic carry an average 1.3 passengers and buses carry between 20 and 25 passengers. Traffic planners believe buses could carry 30[% more passengers (although there is seating to carry between 140 and 200% more!)]... Traders fear a loss of business and... are unhappy because 200 car parks would be lost during rush hours on Dominion Rd and up to 100 on Mt Eden Rd... Shop owners want more parks – not fewer.

...Buses will take control of two of Auckland's busiest roads when priority lanes are introduced in January... Along with the no parking, bus-only lanes heading north in the morning and south in the afternoon... [on] Dominion and Mt Eden Rds... the Yellow Bus Company has promised newer buses, improved stops and a more frequent service. The council has modified some of the original plans, agreeing to shorten the hours priority lanes are in operation... [They] will remain at the current [1 1/2 hours]... The scheme is initially on a trial basis, with six-monthly reviews planned. These will include pedestrian interviews and surveys of bus patronage. The... plan[s] will cost \$360,000 to set up, and \$21,000 a year.

...Buildings along Dominion Rd and Balmoral Rd face demolition if a new \$60 million road widening plan gets Auckland City Council approval. The plan, which would see more than 4m added... [along] only one side of... the key arterial roads... [that currently] have an average width of 20.1m from fence to fence... provoked an outcry last night, with one property-owner declaring it would fail... Balmoral Rd would... [have] rush-hour lanes exclusively for buses and vehicles with three or more people.

...Motorists' abuse of bus lanes has reached "epidemic" proportions, say bus operators. The president of the Auckland B[CA]... said bus lanes were jammed with cars that should not be there. And cheating motorists were paying only a small \$50 fine when the abuse was policed. "There is no use building these lanes unless they're enforced,"... [The] North Shore police area controller... said yesterday police had not patrolled the Onewa Rd bus lane for about five weeks because the officer in charge was on holiday. "We don't regard it as a priority at the moment because we've been so busy,"... Police usually watched it every day and fined about 10 motorists caught creeping across to the wrong lane. "If motorists see a clear lane, then I guess it's either ignorance that prompts them to use it or they're frustrated because there's so much traffic and they try to cheat,"... Birkenhead Transport... [i]s pushing for a law change to raise the fine as it was not a sufficient deterrent. In Adelaide, for example, motorists were slapped with a \$200 fine if caught in a bus lane.

...[The North Shore City Council wants its parking officers to take over enforcement of bus-only lanes from police to make sure the job is done properly. It is seeking Government permission to extend the parking officers' powers. Only the police can stop moving vehicles and issue offence notices. The council says it also needs Government support to pay the \$140,000 a year extra cost that a beefed-up parking operation would cost. North Shore is the only city seeking to extend its powers from dealing with only parked-vehicle offences. But staff of the ARC and Auckland and Waitakere Cities are also interested in stopping misuse of bus lanes. They joined North Shore in discussing enforcement of priority lanes for buses and carpools with the Ministry of Transport']...

People driving in bus lanes will soon be sent tickets just like those caught by speed cameras... Due to be presented to Parliament before the end of the year, the plan would allow local authorities, or whoever looks after a stretch of road, to send a ticket to the registered owner of a vehicle seen illegally using a bus lane. At present drivers have to be physically stopped and issued with a ticket at the time of the offence.

...Police are set to crack down on boozing on buses. They have warned bus charter companies they will be prosecuted if they allow alcohol to be drunk on their coaches... [T]he operators... could be fined up to \$10,000... The head of operational planning for the Auckland police... said the growing use of charter buses for sporting and entertaining events often resulted in patrons being refused entry because they were intoxicated on arrival. "The issue has become one of health and safety... Such behaviour is a hazard for drivers whose task it is to get passengers safely to and from the venue." ...But bus companies have warned that enforcing the law will put more drunk drivers on the roads... [and the BCA] executive director... said drinking on charter buses rated fairly low on the scale of criminal activity... "The police have got sufficient to do... protecting us from drunk drivers in private cars..." ...For groups such as sports teams travelling long distances, chartering a bus was the only sensible option... The manager of The Party Bus company in Auckland... believed the move was "just another way of gathering revenue for the Government." ...Bus companies could apply for temporary liquor licences at \$55 each if they want to continue carrying drinkers... [The Party Bus manager] said police groups were among the worst offenders. Participants in a police stag night last month smashed a bus window and tore out a seat during a five-hour drinking binge. "They were just terrible... but how do you tell 60 cops 'no booze?'" ...[By the way, t]wo elected Auckland bodies are in dispute over... bus-subsidy savings... A meeting is being set up to discuss the matters.

...Auckland ratepayers should get a \$20 million rates cut because of savings by the publicly owned Yellow Bus Company... [the] chief executive of the [ARST]... says... A Yellow Bus spokesman... explained yesterday that the company now received about \$20 million a year from the [ARC] for passenger service contracts, compared with about \$40 million in 1991. But the council transport manager... said the savings were less than claimed since subsidies for passenger service contracts were now provided separately from concessionary fares. In 1991, when the company was created out of the council buses division, they were all rolled up together. He added that the savings were ploughed back into expanding public transport services... Transport spending was forecast in the draft annual plan to decline from \$55.4 million this year to \$51 million next year.

...Many Auckland students may pay more for bus fares under plans to bulk fund school transport in the region... [as the ARC tries] to make school transport more market-driven... [The] council's transport committee wants to discourage pupils from taking long, expensive trips to schools of their choice... Ratepayers spend about \$4 million a year transporting Auckland children to school, at an average of \$2 a trip... "Expensive school trips will be maintained if parents are prepared to pay," a report... says... Subsidies range from 30c up to \$7, depending on how far pupils travel... Parents would have "a greater appreciation" of the true costs of school bus services if a flat subsidy was set... However, those on short trips at off-peak times might pay less. "It might be that some children could travel free, although I doubt that bus operators would do that."

...[following calls for buses to have seat-belts, the LTSA has confirmed that u]p to 12[% of NZ]'s 8000 buses are unsafe... More than a quarter... pose a high risk to passengers and drivers... A further 25[% a]re operating with minor defects... The authority's national co-ordinator of vehicle compliance... said figures gathered during the past 18 months, based on stopping buses and trucks on the roads and depot inspections, showed only 10[%] of buses had no defects... The figures include all types of buses... [About] 5000 buses were used by commercial operators. The other 3000 were courtesy buses, or used by rugby clubs, schools and as house buses... N[Z]'s figures were on a par with those of Britain, Europe and A[US].

...school buses that fail to meet Ministry of Education age limits could soon be used by any school that wants to save money, says the [BCA. Its] chief executive... said yesterday... any bus with a ministry contract could not be more than 26 years old, [but this] could easily be avoided by schools that organised their own transport... [because schools] have the option of "direct resourcing" their transport, with the ministry giving them the money... [and] owners of older buses had usually paid them off, so could charge less to schools. [He] said the association supported the maximum age limits, although replacing about 950 school buses would cost between \$50 million and \$100 million... The Minister of Education... said he would ask the ministry to investigate the issue.

...The Yellow Bus Company is indemnifying its drivers against civil lawsuit after brakes failed to respond correctly on two new Nissan Scorpion buses... [N]ylon air hoses serving the brakes and the mechanism that made the buses "kneel" at stops had overheated and prematurely failed. Warning buzzers alerted the drivers, and the two buses still had their emergency brakes... The problem... was being remedied... Mechanics[will] work... through the night to modify... 13... buses before the morning rush... "and they will be safe,"... The president of the Auckland Tramways Union... said drivers [had been] concerned that they [could] be held liable in the event of an accident caused by mechanical defect.

...The New Delhi Lieutenant-Governor... said... a "speed race" between two school buses... led to the crash that killed 30 schoolchildren... About 60 children were injured... The bus that crashed had been carrying about... 120 schoolchildren... [-] double the number of passengers legally permitted... Students[had] cursed the driver for driving too fast... [before t]he bus apparently skidded on rubble, crashed through the barrier of... the Wazirabad bridge... and dived 10m into the Yamuna river. The driver and conductor survived... [In local news, a] shortage of bus drivers in Auckland is forcing companies to recruit inexperienced drivers. New routes [are due to start next month but] Cityline and the Yellow Bus Company are still searching for... drivers... The Tramways Union is concerned that if bus drivers are inexperienced passengers will be at risk. It claims improved pay and conditions will solve the driver shortage. But both firms say their drivers are not allowed on to the road until they have passed their full bus licence and are safe... Cityline stresses in its job advertisement that new drivers do not need a bus licence as it will provide training... New drivers on learner licences were put through six to eight weeks' training before they were allowed on the road, he said... And the [LTSA] has no concern about their safety record... [However, the] president of the Tramways Union and a former bus driver, said it took about four months to train a bus driver to be safe behind the wheel. "Drivers are having to get to grips with... [negotiating] their way through pretty thick traffic... [in a large] vehicle which is carrying up to 60 people at a time..."

...A Yellow Bus Company bid to cut staff pay packets... has had its effect on the balance sheet... [A]n Appeal Court ruling on staff compensation payments over its 1992 employment contract w[il]l... cost the company about \$4.69 million. The case involved five workers getting compensation for the company's "harsh and oppressive" actions during a pay dispute. The deal was later extended to other staff... [A] report notes that the last employment contract was settled without disruption – "a tribute to the progress made in relations between the company and its employees." ...The size of the liability meant the company made no final dividend. However... its... balance sheet is strong, with shareholder equity up \$1.63 million to \$58.65 million.

...From Wellington, the Minister of Transport has directed that Aucklanders must sell the Yellow Bus Co... [- NZ]'s largest public transport company... [-] by November 30 next year... Commercial and democratic logic argues that any decision for sale should be driven from Auckland by the company's owners and managers. But this sale is motivated by politics, not economics, and driven by an ideological belief that public bodies should not hold assets that the private sector wants to invest in. The bus company is a commercial success... perform[ing] as well as or better than other large bus companies in private ownership... This sale is disruptive when the company is trying to improve patronage and decrease congestion.

...The public will have no direct say over the privatisation of the Yellow Bus Company. Nor is it likely to be an election issue at the October 1998 civic polls, says[the] chairman of the Auckland Regional Services Trust... [H]e favoured a complete sale but if the divestment unit recommended selling, for instance, only 75[%] of the shares, "I would support that." This would be in recognition of what he perceived as the public mood on asset sales... The use of sale proceeds has not been settled as the trust's future is being reviewed by the Government... [An] Alliance MP... who as a broadcaster in 1992 led the successful opposition to the sale of the 80[%] stake in Ports of Auckland now held by the [ARST], said the bus company should stay in local body ownership. It belonged to the region, she said, and its dividends... should continue to benefit the region. "It's anti-democratic to hock it off and it's ridiculous."

...[Scene: The [ARST]'s boardroom early this week. The members are all well-dressed, unsoiled by the rain or muggy heat, fresh and smiling having arrived in their late-model cars, now in privileged parks in the basement of the building.] *Chairman:* [The Minister of Transport] has demanded we privatise the Yellow Bus Company. So I move. Do I have a seconder? (Several Citizens and Ratepayers, lackeys to contemporary ideology, shout "Yes" to get their names in the minutes.) *Independent member (IM):* Having been to Bangkok recently, I think we should be very careful about allowing public transport to leave the control of the people. *C and R Person (CRP):* People? People? What the hell do they know about it? That smacks of democracy, man. Don't be an anachronism in today's climate; the market will sort this out, as a policy consultant explained recently at length... *IM:* I'm sure we can find another consultant to say the opposite. And what about the curtailment of free use of private cars in Paris recently because of smog? We don't want that to happen, do we? *CRP:* This isn't Paris, in case you haven't noticed. Privatisation has worked well in Wellington. *IM:* And this isn't Wellington in case you haven't noticed. What about the traffic jams we have now? And we don't personally use buses. Don't you think we should consult ordinary people who do? I'm sure they would oppose the sale. *CRP:* Of course they would; that's the point. They don't know what's best for themselves. *IM:* But wouldn't it be democratic to consult? *CRP:* Democracy's all right in its place. But you can have too much of it as [the PM] warned recently when he said politicians shouldn't be swayed by public opinion against taking hard decisions. *Another CRP:* You mustn't over-estimate the intelligence of the average slob... er, person. Their asininity is extraordinary. I use the word asininity advisedly because so few people can say it with precision. I can because I was a television news reader for years. Did the average person listen to my dulcet tones? Yes. But did they understand what was going on? Of course not. They loved my voice but they're stupid; wouldn't know a vowel from a sibilant. *Yet Another CRP:* What's a sibilant? *Chairman:* One's brother or sister. But let's not digress, let's take our lead from the coalition Government whose motto is, "You can't fool all of the people all of the time but it's worth a try in the short term." The Minister of Health, for example, has decided to have public representation on the CHEs. Will there be elections? Of course not. Appointments. As he pointed out, they want people with special skills, by which he means accountants, old National Party hacks, real estate salespeople or car dealers. Democracy's all very well but it's slow and sloppy. If we are going to compete in the global economy with regimes that are corrupt but efficient and where citizens are poor but pliant then that's what we need here. All those in favour... Good.

...The [ARC] supports the Government directive to privatise the region's publicly owned Yellow Bus Company and does not want Aucklanders to have a say in the sale. At its monthly meeting yesterday, the council voted eight to four against public consultation on the sale.

...Privatisation of the... Yellow Bus Company won the support of the Auckland City Council last night. Councillors voted 13 to 9 against a motion... to oppose the sale.

...A deal has been struck over the Yellow Bus fleet that could lead to the public being offered shares... The options now involve a sharemarket float alongside a tender process to get the best price and separate property sales, such as the Gaunt St bus depot... But a float would be an expensive method of sale due to expenses such as having to produce a prospectus... There is also some concern about the potential for losing the premium that buyers would be prepared to pay for control of the company through a complete sale by tender.

...The Auckland Yellow Bus Company is likely to end up in overseas hands... Scottish-based Stagecoach, which runs 90 Cityline buses in Auckland and buses in Wellington, has confirmed it wants to buy the Yellow Bus fleet, which runs two-thirds of bus routes in Auckland city. Another British company showing interest is First Bus... The[ARST] chairman... said... he knew of no potential N[Z] buyers able to pay the \$70 million to \$100 million the company was worth... [The Yellow Bus Company] has a book value of \$61 million and assets, including 500 buses, valued at \$70 million... The Tramways Union said it would fight privatisation of the company. The union's Auckland president... said Aucklanders owned the bus fleet and it should not end up in foreign hands... The convenor of the Campaign for Public Transport... said Auckland would be ripped off by a sale... Fares would inevitably rise if the company was sold off... "To sell the Yellow Bus Company would be a mistake because the value of the business will increase markedly once bus priority measures, bus lanes and busways are implemented in the next few years." ...[The Minister of Transport] was obviously intent on making life as difficult for Auckland as possible... an Auckland MP and the public transport spokesman for Labour... said, as privatising the bus company would add to the region's transport woes... A new lobby group, Bus Stop, [was] launched... yesterday to oppose the impending sale... But the Citizens and Ratepayers' chairman of the [ARC]... yesterday said privatisation was long overdue. "The company has been functioning as a commercial entity for a number of years so the move to privatise is nothing significant in terms of its operation. It makes sense to unlock the value of the asset and return it to the public," he said. "The proceeds of the sale should be used to help alleviate our transport problems." ...The company was making an annual profit of \$6 million to \$10 million.

...A few of Wellington's traditional red buses can still be spotted on city streets. It's not just their colour that stands out, but the grating roar as they arrive and the puff of black diesel smoke that follows. They were as synonymous with public transport in the capital as Auckland's yellow fleet, but these days the "big reds" are an endangered species... Stagecoach entered the fray here in 1992 when a cash-strapped Wellington City Council sold its bus fleet... Stagecoach has since taken over... 75[%] of the capital's urban services... From a consumer viewpoint in Wellington, even transport lobby groups agree that passengers are getting an improved service... [Routes have been] extended... fares... have not increased since May 1990, and in some cases Stagecoach has reduced prices... [Most] agree that the company's financial muscle and international experience has brought a modernisation of the capital's ageing fleet beyond the resources of a council operation. The managing director of Stagecoach N[Z]... said the company had spent \$25 million on 110 new lower-emission diesel buses for Wellington, out of its total capital fleet of 200... The capital's two transport lobby groups... both agree that Stagecoach has done a relatively good job, particularly with innovative fare deals... But both also say much of the credit for expanding routes and keeping a lid on fares lies with the regional council. The real threat to the service, they say, is the year-to-year insecurity over the council's transport funding from the Government. The Tramways Union in Wellington... says[the] improvements would have occurred anyway with a council-run operation. The Wellington union secretary... said he could see no reason why a commercialised, council-owned company would not have brought in similar fleet modernisation and returned profits to ratepayers. He said the union had also been in a constant battle with Stagecoach to regain the wages and conditions cut in 1991, and said its management style was aggressive and fixed on short-term profits. [Stagecoach] rejects those claims, saying... about 12,000 of the company's 20,000 staff... [in] Britain... had shares in the business.

...A British stockmarket darling plans to overrun Auckland bus routes. Its foot-down style has produced run-ins with regulators but the man at the wheel isn't stopping... N[Z] is where he] now goes shopping for those bolt-on acquisitions which have built the... company into one of the most highly-rated in Britain... Floated in 1993, with a market value of just £134 million... Stagecoach is now capitalised at a jaw-dropping £1.64 billion... Turnover last year grew 48[%] to £501.2 million. Stripping out acquisitions, it grew 22[%] and operating profit from continuing operations grew 42[%] to £56.4 million... What started off as a two-man band with three buses is now a business with a total British fleet of 7147 buses... and operations that span Malawi, Kenya, Sweden as well as N[Z]... Much of the growth has come from aggressive expansion, as Stagecoach snapped up pieces of Britain's National Bus Company[when it was] broken up... The company's appetite for gobbling-up smaller rivals did not go unnoticed by British competition authorities... The company has been the subject of some 20 Office of Fair Trade investigations. One Monopolies and Mergers Commission report two summers ago, criticised Stagecoach for anti-competitive behaviour in the British towns of Darlington and South Shields. Its activities... were described as "predatory, deplorable and against the public interest." Stagecoach rejected the MMC's conclusions, pointing out that bus passenger numbers had risen in South Shields and that market research indicated it was the "best-rated" operator in Darlington. "They ignored empirical evidence... supplied by us and relied instead on anecdotal evidence supplied from small operators,"... [the company's chairman] said in 1995. The MMC responded that it had no "vendetta against Stagecoach. Every case is judged on its own merits." ...[Stagecoach's chairman] will surely go down in British corporate history as the most unlikely looking of the captains of industry. The 42-year-old evangelical Christian, who neither drinks nor smokes and worked on buses to help pay his way through Strathclyde University, has a 15[%] stake in Stagecoach... His fashion statement is a pair of red kicker shoes... and he usually carries his belongings with him in a plastic bag... And for all his thick-skin at the various brickbats he has received from the competition authorities, he is very sensitive to any criticism that his networks are providing a less than impeccable service. Reflecting on... a spate of... cancellations earlier this year, [the chairman] said recently: "We have always been associated with a good product. But the last few weeks have been like swallowing poison. You are only as good as your last trick and our last trick was not very clever." ...As for Stagecoach's debt pile, forecast to rise to over £700 million for 1997, one analyst reckons the cash-flow from buses is so strong that the company could pay it off in just three years if it stopped investing in new buses.

...The Yellow Bus Company is putting new white buses on inner-city streets which will take people from one side of the central city to the other for just \$1. The Link service, which starts on Monday, will run in a loop through the central city, Ponsonby, Newmarket and Parnell. Buses will run in both directions around the loop every 10 minutes during the day and every 30 minutes in evenings and weekends... The marketing manager... said an across and around town service had long been debated for Auckland. The... company planned to extend the service in three months to link up with North Shore ferries... "Our objective in all this is simply to avoid the procrastination of previous times and get on with building a modern, reliable... system that actually meets the changing and growing needs of public transport users around the Auckland region."

...Where have all the Yellow Buses gone? ...There are buses masquerading as mobile phones... [or] a chocolate drink carton... Appearances to the contrary, there are just 15 bus billboards on Auckland routes... The impression that the dressed up buses are all over town suggests that the mobile advertising approach has impact... For advertisers, the appeal lies in getting a message to loads of consumers in a relatively brief time. Buses... can spend the morning in the eastern suburbs and head over the Harbour Bridge for the afternoon... Allovers, as the decorated buses are known, rent for about \$1500 a month... The look costs up to \$30,000 and is achieved by stretching a special film over the bodywork... For some jobs, the actual yellow paintwork is stripped back and the advertisers' colours applied... The company, however... draws the line at liquor and tobacco products[, and]... is quick to point out that while it may be for sale it has no intention of turning over its distinctive chariots to the ad agencies... [One] bright idea... that got a Wellington bus firm in trouble... involved the rear end of a bus dressed up to resemble the front, complete with a "driver" behind the wheel. The coming and going bus confused other motorists and has been withdrawn.

...Stagecoach Holdings has applied for clearance from the Commerce Commission to buy[the] Yellow Bus Company... [S]ubmissions need to be in by January five with a sale expected sometime in February... [Meanwhile, Auckland's] bus operators have negotiated the right to raise their fares

for subsidised services by up to 10[%]. Accountants who]... checked costs of the Yellow Bus Company, Birkenhead Transport, Howick and Eastern Buses, Whenuapai Bus Travel and Cityline Auckland... concluded that costs had risen by 10.65[%] since July 1991, mainly because of wages, new bus costs and inflation... Each of the five operators will now decide how much of the increase, rounded to 10c increments, will apply in their areas. About 70[%] of passengers travel on unsubsidised services. Their fares may be increased without regional council approval. Operators are likely to put up fares for both subsidised and non-subsidised services at the same time to avoid confusing passengers... The new Link services... would stay the same price... [However, the] service... has been so popular... up 206[%] on predictions... it has made some bus routes unprofitable.

...[Auckland bus tickets aren't normally transferable – which means that a passenger who travels 3 stages on one bus currently pays \$2.70, but pays \$3 if it travels one stage (or within a stage) on three separate buses. However, passengers can purchase an 'all-day pass that, for a cost of \$9 (\$4.50 for children), gives the holder unlimited travel on any Yellow Bus after 9am until the last buses' – which leave the central city prior to midnight – or a 'family day pass that costs \$14 and can be used by 2 adults and 4 children, or 1 adult and 5 children.' Commuters can also purchase an 'all-zones monthly pass for \$99 that includes ferries.' Incidentally, the proposed fare increases, rounded to 10c increments, mean stage 1 and 2 fares will rise by exactly 10% to \$1.10 and \$2.20 respectively, while stages 3 to 8 increase by 11 to 12% (taking them to \$3, \$3.80, \$4.50, \$5.10, \$6.10 and \$7.20 respectively), and the central-city fare of 40c becomes 50c – a 25% increase!

...the 10%] price rise... will lead to delays for customers, a transport lobbyist said yesterday... "It will be irritating dealing with shrapnel and it holds up drivers," he said.

...[a commuter from] Mt Wellington didn't think twice about paying for her bus fare to Newmarket with... [a] dented... \$2 coin yesterday morning. But she was stunned when the Yellow Bus Company driver wouldn't take it... She said the driver told her the money-counting machine at the depot would reject it. [The commuter] thought it was legal tender, and a bank has since confirmed it, but she said the driver wouldn't budge and she had to go home to get more money... making her late for work... "It was very, very bizarre and I was taken aback by the whole situation." She alleged the driver also refused to give his name and bus number, which [the] Yellow Bus Company marketing executive... said was very unusual. [However, he] had spoken to the driver, who said [the woman had beco]me abusive and got off the bus before he could accept it. The company is investigating the incident before deciding whether an apology is necessary.

...Police were speaking to three people last night after a Yellow Bus Company driver was punched in the face and his cashbox stolen in St Heliers.

...[after 'a Wellington bus driver phoned his base one Saturday night in order to inform his supervisor that he'd just been robbed and beaten for a few dollars, he was told that his pay would be docked' – to cover the missing money – 'and he would have to make his own way home because the company wasn't going to pay for him to catch a taxi'! In related news, the] popular Link bus service is increasing its night and weekend frequencies. The white bus fleet... will now operate every 20 minutes... Two-thirds of... [the] one million passengers... [the] service... has carried... [since it] was introduced... have used the bus instead of their cars.

...Aucklanders are increasingly likely to leave their car at home, according to an A[RC] passenger transport survey. The study shows... buses... experienced a 36[%] rise in patronage... during the... last year... The survey also showed that the public transport operators were offering more trips. The arrival of the LINK bus service brought a 9.7[%] rise in the number of buses travelling around the central city.

...[The last link in a grand master plan for Auckland has been decided. For the past six months, transport planners and local politicians have been working on a plan to secure commuter transport corridors across the region. The corridors would provide the platform for heavy trains, light rail or buses to travel at high speed and often enough to get commuters out of cars and on to public transport. Engineers, planners and politicians all say not enough commuters will use public transport if they have to share the roadway with other traffic.]

...The Minister of Commerce... a Waikato farmer, has a solution to Auckland's traffic nightmare – sell the port company, airport, and shares in the Yellow Bus company and Mercury Energy. "Then Aucklanders might get real transport infrastructure improvement." ...he wondered if Aucklanders were happy being banked up in heavy traffic in order to experience the "warm fuzzies" of owning a bus company or a big building. He was pleased that the Minister of Transport... had ordered the privatisation of Auckland's bus company and that "finally the Auckland ratepayers are not going to continue to be asked to invest in, and take the risks of owning, yellow buses... By selling assets Auckland could then invest more in its internal transport system and also gain the other benefits from reducing their public ownership interest." The National minister was giving a "personal" view that the size and role of government in N[Z] was still too big and should shrink... to about 20[% of GDP]... Local and central government should only perform absolutely necessary core functions... "We need less government... and more private enterprise," he said.

...Auckland can readily achieve the public transport system it demands and deserves... It requires only the involvement of transport operators... in the network and services arena... Under today's regime operators... with their first-hand experience... have little say or direct input into the structure of public transport... Public transport was deregulated in 1991... [but] I cannot think of one other industry where a business has so little control over the products it offers for sale and which is so constrained by regulation from developing the products and services that it knows its customers want... Auckland needs a customer-driven public transport plan... that puts public transport where customers want it and will use it.

...[a] recent article asked "Why isn't Auckland's public transport doing the job?" It would be tempting to turn that question... on to the public transport operators. After all, the competitive environment in which they operate gives them considerable scope to decide their own direction. However, I believe we need to look at how the [ARC's] public transport planning and the commercial imperatives of bus, train and ferry operators can be coordinated to improve the system. Under legislation introduced in 1989 regional councils are responsible for strategic planning of their transport systems through the preparation of regional land transport strategies. In Auckland our strategy emphasises the movement of goods and people rather than vehicles. The regional council no longer owns or operates buses. Our role is now to let contracts to bus, train and ferry operators when public funding of services is needed. We must ensure that the public receive value for their funds. To date this has mainly been achieved through the specification and tendering of services. Increasingly, however, the council has recognised the need to move towards funding which gives incentives for operators to act in ways which meet our strategic objectives. These are efficient transport and combating traffic congestion. Passenger transport clearly has an important role. In some respects, however, legislative requirements for a competitive passenger transport market have not helped us to achieve some of these objectives. Until recently, the focus of the key players has tended to be on market share rather than market size... We need to recognise, however, that as long as the price signals for motorists are inadequate there will be a need for some public funding to ensure adequate public transport is provided. So far we have done this by letting contracts for services we ourselves have planned... We... need to separate the "social" and "commercial" elements of fares. Hence our moves in recent years to introduce concessionary fare schemes which reimburse operators for concessions offered to groups such as the elderly and schoolchildren... The council has also... [been] recognising that if buses travel faster... [by giving] buses priority lanes... more people will use them... Faster buses also mean that operators can run more services with the same number of buses... Can we go further? Undoubtedly yes. But we must remember that the objectives of the regional council do not always coincide with those of public transport operators who are concentrating on running successful business ventures[, and]... we must remember that the major competition for public transport is the private car, not operators.

...the present... Auckland... motorway system was designed by American engineers... in the early 1960s. Their report advocated a two-pronged approach, a motorway network and a substantial rail upgrade, including a subway running from the existing railway station to the Civic Centre[, situated near the middle of Queen St]. Auckland's development over the next 30 years was primarily influenced by the decision to pursue the motorway and ignore rail, a factor [the ARC's environment manager] says created urban sprawl and Auckland's transport crisis. It is also a factor,

he says, responsible for the fact that in the 1960s there were 76 million public transport trips in Auckland a year servicing a population of 500,000. The figure now is just 35 million trips a year[servicing twice as many people]... - 1997

Major legislative and financial difficulties stand in the way of Auckland getting to grips with its increasing traffic chaos, says Auckland City Council's manager of transport planning... Auckland has "no direct ability to ensure that the required public transport improvements will indeed occur,"... The decisions about where money is spent are made nationally through the... Transfund arm of the Government. This body should implement bulk funding, says [the planning manager], so regions can make their own decisions. The [ARC] does not even have the legal power to designate and own land for public transport projects. The lack of legislative teeth has prevented the regional council from putting[projects] in place... Some of the problems and the conflicts inherent in the existing legislation are illustrated by the difficulties in implementing the... isthmus passenger transport strategy, initiated by the Auckland and Waitakere City Councils, the regional council and Transit N[Z]. This aims to design a public transport system which better meets the needs of existing and potential public transport users. It involves better cross-city routes, a simplified route system, higher frequencies in some areas and more use of the rail system. Buses are to feed rail at appropriate centres in Waitakere and the eastern suburbs. Yet, says [the planning manager], bus operators have shown little enthusiasm for the feeder system and have yet to accept an integrated ticketing system. The regional council feels it has little choice but to accept the status quo. [He] says that local authorities seem to be left in the position of being unable to ensure that the public transport system will support strategic land use policies, particularly in introducing higher density residential and mixed-use development around selected railway stations. "It bodes ill for future major investment in passenger rail, requiring an integrated, complementary public transport system to be fully effective." In the shorter term the lack of legislative teeth may result in a more conservative approach to decision making. In the longer term, he says, there is a risk that continuing delays in public transport improvements will force an emphasis back on roads and cars.

...When we climb into a car... it is because we want to go shopping, go to work, travel the world, or whatever. Surely then, we should first find out what people want to do, then design transport systems which help them do it... The private motorcar is truly "private" because we own it and we don't have to share it; it is a mobile extension of our own home. The private motorcar has allowed us to organise our trips to suit ourselves... [while o]ur "New World" cities, built since the advent of the motorcar, have been shaped to suit our individual, and ever-changing, needs. While the average citizen has taken to this idea like a duck to water, this freedom of the motor age has long offended those who want to control the way we live... Lenin once said that "It is true that liberty is precious – so precious that it must be rationed." Most central planners feel the same way about motorcars... The problem is that transport networks require substantial investment in public facilities. We may drive our own car, aircraft or boat, but we have to share the roads, landing strips and wharves. These facilities cost large sums of money and so they are usually built and maintained by public bodies. The result is that major transport investments are driven by political interests and pressure groups rather than by public need... Up until the 1950s, Auckland City was the centre of the Auckland region. Aucklanders shopped... worked... drank... and courted there. The trams were the main form of transport and delivered Aucklanders where they wanted to go – which was downtown, where Queen St ruled. But the winds of change were blowing. The rapid rise in private car ownership which followed the war led to... [a] wave of decentralisation. The first suburban malls were built and it was clear that the harbour bridge was about to spawn a host of new "suburban cities" in the North. So the Auckland City Council decided to design a transport system to deal with Auckland's needs until 1986. They commissioned... [a report], which proposed a motorway network with on-off ramps around the ridges of Ponsonby, Karangahape Rd and Newmarket. Its "spaghetti junction" was located over a large piece of open land just behind Grafton. The proposal horrified the city councillors of the day. Even this meagre decentralisation was intolerable. The other mistake was that the large "open space" on the planning maps turned out to be the grounds of the Auckland Grammar School. The young engineer was sent back to San Francisco and a more senior partner arrived to soothe the ruffled feathers. He quickly designed a new [system] which ensured that all motorways led to Queen St. This scheme was much smaller in every way and many asked how it could cope with the projected flows? The shrewd engineer replied: "Build a rapid transit system as well." Auckland's love affair with trains began. Every politician and pressure group in Auckland City demanded that the rapid-rail be built – always at someone else's expense. None of the city's own traffic planners or transport engineers would have a bar of it and were banned from saying so. But surely [the] vision of "rapid rail" has been proven right – spaghetti junction really is seriously congested. But the[spaghetti junction] system was designed (and badly designed at that) to cope only until 1986. Here we are in 1996 and we have not built the Dominion Rd motorway, the South-eastern Motorway to St Heliers or the Grafton junction bypass. Most importantly, we have not built the outer ring motorway to connect Massey-Henderson with Penrose-Otahuhu using the railway land which is sitting there waiting. Given that 50[%] of the traffic on spaghetti junction has no interest in Auckland City but is heading for points north and south, this ring would dramatically reduce congestion on both the junction and the Auckland Harbour Bridge. We have built the upper harbour crossing at Greenhithe to connect to it – and it sits there near empty and waiting to be used. How come the system still works at all? It works as well as it does only because Auckland decentralised anyway, and no one could have stopped it. Here we are in the 1990s. Once again, Auckland City is facing a second wave of decentralisation of work and lifestyle. Once again Auckland's mayor and councillors are determined to stop it... If light rail comes up as their answer it can mean only that they are asking the wrong questions – questions set by the agenda of Auckland City rather than by the region as a whole. The Britomart proposal is no more than a desperate move to lock us into the central business district's agenda before wiser heads prevail... Britomart and light rail are to the 1990s what spaghetti junction and rapid rail were to the 60s.

...International interest is sought for the building of an enhanced Auckland public passenger rail system – despite the funding not being in place. The[ARC] transport committee yesterday approved an \$877,250 budget to cover the cost of seeking interested parties that are prepared to build, own and operate the... system... Both the council and the Auckland Regional Land Transport Committee favour a light rail transit system, but interested parties will not be limited to that... [The] council was looking for a system which embraced [Auckland's existing heavy]southern and western railway lines with links to Queen St. In May, a steering committee identified three options... [-] light rail, heavy rail (diesel multiple units) and a mix of light and heavy rail. Depending on the option chosen, the cost was expected to be from \$170 million... with the light rail option costing an estimated \$386 million. The programme was heavily dependent on the early resolution of the funding issue and getting access to the Tranz Rail-leased railway system. The company has already said it would not be happy if light rail were adopted... [Previous] ambitious plans to upgrade Auckland rail services have always failed because the Government refused to share the cost... Auckland transport planners say the Government's method of allocating transport funding, based on comparing the costs and benefits of particular projects, has an inbuilt bias towards building more roads... The Regional Land Transport Committee[also] favours having light rail in the eastern corridor. It would use the existing rail tracks...

A light rail transit system for Auckland would be "extravagantly expensive" and hurt Auckland ratepayers in the pocket, according to the [BCA]... The \$385.95 million system would cost each Auckland household \$1080 to build and an additional \$48.75 a year to operate, the association says in a submission to the Auckland Regional Land Transport Committee. The committee meets today to consider submissions on light rail options. The... association... said that light rail would cost either the Auckland ratepayer or the N[Z] taxpayer \$9.21 a journey... Buses carry 9.8 million unsubsidised passengers a year and a further 21.35 million at a subsidy of \$1.15 per trip... [but] the light rail proposal required subsidy-free bus services to be prohibited along rail corridors. Passengers are also expected to transfer from buses to rail, something which is "doomed" to fail, the association says. Experience has shown that people do not like this and will opt instead for the convenience and comfort of the car. To make the

system work, rail patronage must be increased by almost 400[%] to 6.66 million passengers by the year 2001, 45[%] of which would come from subsidy-free bus patronage... Compared with light rail, it says, the region's bus operation is cost-effective, efficient, flexible and low risk... Meanwhile, a private consortium which has proposed a \$230 million light rail system for Auckland called Superlink says that what is needed from the council is leadership and prompt implementation... The network it envisages will, it says, be able to compete effectively with buses as long as the regional council does nothing to improve bus services along main-haul routes...

Both Tranz Rail and the Road Transport Association have been lobbying hard ahead of the August 31 deadline for submissions to the Ministry of Transport's land transport pricing study... "It seems to us that the influence... of Tranz Rail is becoming insidious within the transport industry,"... the chairman of [a major] trucking company... said. He declined a subsequent opportunity to expand on that view. However, the managing director of Tranz Rail... denied the railway company was acting behind the scenes to influence road-user charges. Tranz Rail was completely open about where it believed N[Z]ers' long-term interests lay, he said... Tranz Rail... believed... [there] was no logical reason why motorists and ratepayers should subsidise one sector of the transport industry... [A] report on this issue released by the Institute of Economic Research last December showed that trucks were being cross-subsidised by ratepayers and motorists. According to that report... road-user charges paid by trucks should double to produce a level playing field. The chief executive of the Road Transport Association... said that Tranz Rail's greed was almost unbelievable. Tranz Rail was the single largest recipient of taxpayer subsidies in N[Z]'s history. Taxpayers poured between \$10 billion to \$20 billion into building the railway system, which the new owners bought for \$328 million... [A trucking company] chief executive... said that Tranz Rail had a monopoly position in rail and paid \$1 a year in rental for the land on which the tracks run... Truck industry figures suggested that increases in road user charges could be worth up to \$50 million a year in extra profit for Tranz Rail and its shareholders, many of whom were based overseas. And any increase in road user charges would have to be passed on to customers... [because] the trucking industry was very competitive.

... "We have another five years before gridlock starts to turn off investors and Auckland becomes uncompetitive with other cities on the Pacific rim," writes... [the] chief executive of the Auckland Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry... Auckland is now a mid-sized international city... and a cost-effective commercial "hub" of the South Pacific. But growth pains are emerging... Business is facing increased costs of moving goods, services and people as a result of traffic delays, extra travelling time, missed appointments and late deliveries... It is imperative that we invest properly in the infrastructure required to maintain Auckland's... business efficiency, and attractiveness as a place to live, well into the next century... Action to establish light rail cannot come fast enough... Ensuring that we have an efficient, effective light rail system capable of taking the overflow on our roads has become a test of our collective resolve and leadership to do what we know in our hearts is inevitable... Light rail must be introduced under a purposeful and far-reaching strategy and not be a last-minute panic response to the growing congestion... While not wanting to overstate the sense of urgency, I believe that Auckland must learn from... [overseas examples of] transport chaos... and do everything practical to avoid a repetition, even on a reduced scale, when the city hosts the America's Cup defence, spin-off events from... the... Olympics... [in] Sydney 2000, Apec and other major global events... But the real urgency is not for these one-off events, it is for routine use over the next half century. If we don't act now, future generations will wonder at our selfishness and lack of leadership... As with large cities overseas, successful light rail will need to be integrated with all other transport modes, including... harbour ferry services and bus and private vehicle usage...

Businesses in the Britomart precinct have joined forces to fight their eviction to make way for the... underground transport centre. Most tenants are on notice to leave by November if their landlord... decides to go ahead with the... biggest commercial development in N[Z]'s history.

...Auckland is about to buy a... one-way ticket to Britomart. The decision to climb aboard belongs to the 24 Auckland City councillors and the mayor, who are only weeks off making the vote on... the... development [project for]... an estimated \$1.5 billion of hotels, office towers, apartments and [a] shopping centre. The council's motivation is an underground transport centre which will put rail, bus and ferry services close together, right at the foot of Queen St. With greater Auckland growing fast... it is surprising it has not been done before now. The Auckland City Council has been working on it for close to a decade, producing a \$17 million plan in 1993 which, after a re-think in the city's property department, re-emerged as the current plan. [The original plan] was a "no risk, no cost to ratepayers" transport terminal... Is [the new plan] a good idea? The controversy has simmered for two years. The believers say Auckland is about to be... persuaded into a new era of public transport. The non-believers say Auckland is about to be stuck with a well-intentioned but ineffective Think Big monument on its waterfront. The most cynical picture private companies laughing their way to the bank. And after two years, the nitty-gritty of the deal is to be made public on November 1. Britomart's supporters would not contribute to this article before then, and the council is locked into an agreement that any information releases must be scrutinised by parties in the property deal. This cloud of confidentiality has been the theme of the criticism that has dogged the project since its conception. In recent weeks groups such as... the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) and the Auckland Regional Chamber of Commerce have repeated their concerns about the project. Can the council prove that Britomart is a good deal? ...three questions determine whether [it is]... They are: how it helps public transport; whether it is financially sound; and, environmentally, should there be such intensive development... The environmental questions are as curly as the financial ones. Britomart is [going to be] a highly intensive use of the area – five levels below ground, 11 building sites above ground. The buildings have to be big enough to be profitable enough to help pay for the terminal (beyond the council's contribution). The hole below has to be so deep so there is parking for the buildings above... The council has not said how high the towers will be, perhaps still smarting from the backlash from an early artist's impression of the development which showed a glass tower, Buck Rogers' backdrop style of skyline – an image rejected but not replaced by the council... The... Chamber of Commerce chief executive... has [asked]... whether Britomart will clog the CBD more than the public transport terminal will help... Could the... [money] be better spent elsewhere in the city? Who will carry the financial risk? What is the value of the assets? ...The council plans to sell its Britomart properties for \$57 million and buy back the terminal, public spaces and underground shopping centre for \$100 million. With other projects such as drainage improvements, [protecting] heritage buildings and turning Quay St into a tunnel, the council's net investment is \$104 million... BOMA estimates the value of the land is about \$100 million, a claim supported by the city's former property chairman... Assessing Britomart's value-for-money is extremely murky territory because most financial and contractual arrangements are still... known [only] by a selected few... On the information available, [the BOMA and Chamber of Commerce] are unwilling to take the leap of faith and trust what the Britomart believers tell them. In BOMA's case, taking a punt at what the project could cost ratepayers brought threats of legal action... The power brokers who have driven the deal are the council's harbour edge committee chairman... the city's former property manager and now Britomart consultant... and the proposed developer/financier of the project, NatWest Markets A[US] Ltd. City councillors will be briefed before they vote on November 4. They have been kept in the dark so far because of the commercially sensitive negotiations... Some councillors feel extremely uneasy about the lack of information. They learned what the council would spend from reading this newspaper. A poll of councillors this week shows most want to take a good look in the mouth of what was supposed to be a gift horse. But Auckland City councillors are known for voting in the safety of homogeneous agreement, usually following a cabal of senior Citizens and Ratepayers councillors. Following the usual voting pattern, combined with an overwhelming feeling that something needs to be done about public transport, Auckland City ratepayers can expect the development to go ahead, taking the equivalent of half the rates paid this year... Whether Britomart is a good deal depends on whether Aucklanders will get out of their cars. Sceptics say the boost to numbers on buses [and] trains will be from blotto to bugger-all. But Britomart is a vision, one compared with the building of the harbour bridge. Its champions admit it cannot solve the region's transport problems alone, but will at least provide some basic infrastructure. The simple theory is that the transport

centre is a building-block towards a future public transport system which will help untangle the roads and motorways. It would allow people to move across the region, transferring from rail, bus and ferry with relative ease. Provision has been made so light rail could be added later... The... [BCA's] president... says Britomart is not a good deal for buses city-wide... [Buses] en route to the North Shore, Whenuapai... Remuera... [and many other areas] do not leave from Britomart. "It's a concern that so much emphasis is being put on one terminal..." he says... Other BCA concerns are that buses will not be given priority over cars entering and leaving the four levels of [underground] car-parking, and that tourist and coach services which now take passengers on Queen St have been ignored. Something desperately needs to be done about the "grotty" [bus] terminal at Britomart now, says [the president], but that alone does not justify the amount of money being spent. The [ARC]... thinks Britomart is a good idea. The ARC is not paying for it... Bringing rail into the city will boost patronage – a previous study estimates there will be 2.8 million trips done on rail each year instead of 2 million if the [central] station stays where it is [– about a km from Queen St]. Britomart is the best available site for a terminal... given that the ideal [mid-city] site on the corner of Victoria and Queen Sts is an impossibility – though a second city terminal will probably be needed.

...The "Auckland disease" is a condition well known to students of this city's development. It refers to the chronic inability of public authorities to reach decisions about major projects of civic improvement and bring them to fruition... The disease has ravaged no enterprise more than the provision of a modern rapid transit system. Until the 1950s an excellent street electric tramway network served most of the isthmus, but not a thriving and expanding hinterland. The first serious investigation of that problem, in 1925, recommended that the suburban rail lines be electrified and run in a central city tunnel. Political and financial difficulties stymied action, as they did when the issue was regularly revisited, though the original conclusion was inevitably endorsed. Ironically, a "master transport plan" of 1955, the genesis of Auckland's motorway network did proceed, rather rapidly. Since 1980 there has been a remarkable resurgence of the once-despised tramway in the form of light rail transit. With steel-wheeled vehicles powered from overhead wires and running on steel rails, it may be loosely described as "the tram modernised." ...In 1989 the [ARC]... adopted a policy of constructing light rail along the southern and western rail corridors. In 1992 expressions of interest were sought from possible developers, which then included N[Z] Rail, but legislative and financial barriers intervened. Instead, a 10-year contract was concluded with N[Z] Rail for running the three suburban rail services using Rex-Perth diesel multiple units.

...[People are remembered for some offbeat reasons. Example: Italy's unmourned dictator Benito Mussolini. He intended history to mark him as a modern Caesar. Instead, he is more often labelled as a posturing clown. But, and it's a big *but*, he did get the notorious Italian trains to run on time. We need a Mussolini. We've got a terrible train service – old rolling stock, late leaving and arriving, even not arriving at all because they've broken down. Lack of detailed planning has produced the worst possible image. Not that this is anything new for the veteran trains. Before Perth scrapped them and unloaded them at bargain rates on to Auckland, they had been such a disaster that station staff there stood at exits handing out letters so workers could explain to their bosses why they were late again. And staff at Perth's David Jones store brought the "please excuse" letters in so often that management refused to accept them. The Aussies at Perth's Westrail overcame the crisis by scrapping the trains and bringing in a brand new fleet. We bought the discards off the sidings where they had languished for months.' Auckland also had to modify many of its railway facilities (eg., stations, bridges and tunnels) in order to accommodate the oversized carriages. However, the gamble that Auckland's commuters would be more accepting of transport delays than Perth's appears to have paid off, because –] suburban train patronage [in Auckland has] virtually doubled between 1991-92 and 1995-96. Passenger numbers went from 1,057,395 to 2,065,856 and the biggest part of that increase came since there was a doubling of services in July 1994]. Unfortunately, the nation's public transport patronage figures remain a source of concern – of the '1,432,443 people aged 15 and over who were classified in the 1996 national census as being employed, only 60,000 rode to work on public transport – and 47,637 of them used a bus (143,280 walked, jogged or biked to work, while the mode of transport was not specified by an additional 53,805 people, and 158,100 people worked at home')].

The only parties to take the Auckland City Council to the Environment Court over the Britomart development have lost an appeal against noise limits during construction. Two corporate bodies representing the occupants of two buildings containing residential apartments wanted lower limits than the council proposed. The occupants have to live and sleep during the three-year construction period... [but t]he court agreed with an expert witness that community expectations of noise in such an area were quite different from suburban locations... A spokesman for the body corporates... said the result was disappointing and that there were no avenues for further appeal... [In international news, 15] rail commuters died in a station stampede yesterday after security guards with electric cattle prods tried to prevent ticketless passengers from boarding early-morning trains... at the main station in the Tembisa township north-east of Johannesburg... "Apparently it was a misunderstanding between commuters and ticket inspectors," said [the] Metro Rail area manager... [Meanwhile,] 1.6 million commuters... took buses, drove cars, pedalled bicycles or walked through snarled traffic... as striking drivers demanding reduced working hours again halted London's underground rail network.

...After two years planning the underground Britomart transport centre, the Auckland City Council has not sought environmental approval for a rail tunnel allowing trains into the five-level... complex. The city council has also failed to apply for resource consents to underground Quay St which, together with the rail tunnel consent applications, will take months to sort out... The [ARC] water resources manager... confirmed yesterday that the city council had only last week approached the ARC to find out what consent applications would be needed... The ARC has since July been assessing the consent applications for the construction of the centre itself, a job still not over. The underground tunnel work will require similar applications to be lodged to permit water discharges and other work with a potential impact on nearby buildings... [However, t]he ARC has still not determined whether the consent applications for the... construction should be publicly notified opening up the question of Britomart to more objection. A Western Bays councillor... said last night the lack of applications for the tunnel work showed the council had not planned Britomart well. "These consents are essential and if declined could stop the project." A spokesman for the council said approval of Britomart could be conditional on the consents being granted... In another development late yesterday, the chief executive of the Yellow Bus Company... distributed a hard-hitting letter to councillors saying th[at like 'a \$9 million bus station in Hong Kong which had to be redesigned – buses wouldn't fit under its roof' – t]he underground station would not work for bus transport and ran "the risk of being boycotted by both bus users and bus operators."

...B[ritomart] critics point out[that] Tranz Rail has yet to agree to use it, [while] bus and light rail operators [also] have problems with it... Detractors say its 2900 underground car parks will contribute to traffic congestion – the very thing the scheme is supposed to counter... *We asked the people who will use it what they think:* ..."Auckland needs some sort of transport centre, but I don't know about the car parks that are also planned. Don't they defeat the purpose? ...You used to be able to get easily to town and back on the trams." ..."I don't think it'll alleviate transport problems in Auckland. All it's providing is a link between the railway station and the centre of the city..." ..."At the moment, public transport is centralised to go into town. There are a lot of people coming from east to west but they have to go into town first. If we're going to spend money then we should have a grid system – that would work better."

...When the Britomart underground transport centre was unveiled to the public in December 1994 it came as news to a majority of Auckland City councillors, the Historic Places Trust and even council transport planners. The project almost immediately sidelined a plan for a rail extension to an upgraded surface Britomart terminal costing \$17 million which had Transit N[Z] funding of \$7 million and which was due for completion by December last year. The December 1994 proposal was however described as the most exciting development in Auckland's history providing a new world-class underground transport terminal and a new commercial heart for downtown Auckland... [T]here was no evidence which suggested the centre was anything other than excellent from a public transport view. In August [1995] it was clear council publicity on the proposal was misleading... The University of Auckland real estate research unit described the project as "simply too large, too speculative and too risky." ...Concerns over the scale of the scheme continued along with concerns over its impact on heritage buildings... The local body elections loomed in

September[1995] and the majority group on the city council, the Citizens and Ratepayers, promised in its manifesto no final decisions would be made until full public consultation had been completed... [– although the] proposal remained on track with the chairman of the harbour edge committee... proclaiming that public consultation showed overwhelming support. But 500 signatures contained on petition-like forms, many written in the same handwriting and including large family groups, were included among 921 submissions received. Names of the petitioners were not verified and many came from outside Auckland City... Britomart was seen as a key issue in the local elections pitting pro-Britomart C and R against anti-Britomart Alliance candidates and the pro mayor against his anti opponent... The election resulted in C and R strengthening its hold on the council, routing the Alliance in a poll described... as showing support for Britomart and the vision of C and R. In December[1995] behind closed doors the council vetoed a proposal from [the mayor] for a referendum on the scheme.

...A possible alternative to the... development has been produced by the Auckland Institute of Architects... The institute's scheme, roughly costed at \$50 million, would bring trains at one level underground and put buses and light rail at ground level... Meanwhile, the Auckland branch of the Engineers for Social Responsibility has joined groups asking the Mayor of Auckland... to defer the decision on Britomart...

The financial risk to the Auckland City Council and its ratepayers cannot be fully eliminated in the Britomart property deal, say documents made public by the council yesterday... The Mayor of Auckland... said he still considered the project to be “no cost to ratepayers” because rates would not rise as a result of the development, because the cash the council needed for the deal could be raised from the sale of commercial property, and because the total value of the council's assets would rise by almost \$30 million. - 1996

The Mayor of Auckland... and his council are almost certain to commit more public money to fighting for the besieged Britomart project despite a surprise knockback and damning report yesterday. Three independent commissioners appointed by the [ARC] refused resource consents for the... development. They gave as their main reason the city council's failure to show that pumping groundwater out of the site would not damage nearby buildings through land subsidence... Some of the uncertainties on technical matters... were of “vital significance,” said the commission's 26-page report. This despite more than two years' work on the controversial scheme by council staff and consultants at a cost to ratepayers of \$13 million... The ruling was disappointing and surprising, [the mayor] said, “considering we presented evidence from the best engineers in N[Z].” The evidence would be “double and triple-checked” for... an appeal to the Environment Court... and he expected to get a “tick” from the court. The council was having no second thoughts about... Britomart, he said. The appeal was “purely a technical matter.” He admitted the delay would increase the project's cost to the council but he could not give figures... [He also] ruled out a redesign... The council faces a second penalty payment of \$375,000 on November 30 to NatWest A[US]... for the delay to the project, which was meant to begin last January. [Ironically, although ‘the mayor says that objectors have delayed proceedings and added to council costs, the council voted 8-6 on Thursday against pursuing Britomart opponents for about \$750,000 in court costs. “That, coupled with the decision by the council not to fully resolve all of the resource consent issues before signing the Master Development Agreement, has meant that there has continued to be a great amount of controversy surrounding the project.”]

...The proposed Stock Exchange listing of the... Britomart project... has added to the controversy of the massive upfront profits being taken by the promoters. Over the past few years, the Auckland City Council has bought most, but not all, of the undeveloped and run-down properties in the block between Customs St and Quay St and between Queen Elizabeth II Square and Britomart Place. The total area is 3.215ha. These properties were accumulated with the primary objective of establishing a new bus and rail underground transport centre for Auckland. But the city council has gone further than this and has decided to promote the above-ground area as a massive development of high-rise commercial, hotel and apartment buildings. If the above-ground developments go according to plan they will contain... more than 300,000 sq m of space. The above ground developments represent the bulk of the project as the underground transport centre is valued at only \$125 million, compared with the total estimated value of the completed Britomart... of \$1800 million. Because the city council did not want to undertake the development risk associated with the project, it scoured the world for a developer. But it met with little success because of the huge risks involved. Finally, last year, it struck a deal on its own doorstep with... the 34-year-old new controlling shareholder of the small listed company Parapine Timber. On December 20[, 1996], the council signed an agreement with [the 34-year-old] and NatWest Markets A[US] to sell all the properties and development rights included in the Britomart block for \$56 million. Settlement will be 45 days after the council has received all resource consents. The purchase will be funded by a \$56 million interest-free, three-year loan from the council. Subsequent to this agreement, [the 34-year-old] was granted full purchase rights and he has introduced a number of new investors to his consortium. These are mainly Asian or Asian-controlled companies. The new float – Pacific Capital Assets – will buy the Britomart properties and development rights from [the 34-year-old] and his associates for \$126 million. Effectively, on the same day as [the 34-year-old] buys the assets from the council... he will on-sell them... to the new listed company. This will be an immediate after-tax profit of \$70 million, or 125[% for the 34-year-old] and his investor consortium... Pacific Capital will then own the properties and development rights of the Britomart project. The company will be obliged to undertake the stage one (underground) development and will have a strong incentive, but no obligation, to proceed with the stage two (above-ground) scheme... The transport centre will be sold to the council for \$125.33 million, leaving Pacific Capital with ownership of the 2900 car parks and 11 foundation pods as its main asset from the stage one development. These new car parks will increase the number of spaces in downtown Auckland by approximately 16[%]. The company expects 2400 of the car spaces to be taken up by the occupiers of the commercial properties, hotels and apartments which form part of the above-ground stage two development... Pacific Capital will need to undertake a number of the above-ground developments in order to generate momentum and to create value for the four-storey underground car park... [The] expected after-tax profit on these development sites will be \$81 million and Pacific Capital's directors have agreed to pass on \$70 million of these anticipated profits to [the 34-year-old] and his consortium... The directors believe that [the 34-year-old] is entitled to this reward because he established Pacific Capital and has been largely responsible for arranging and structuring most of its complex contractual and financial arrangements... The \$70 million profit is based on an assessment... of the land value of the 11 foundation pods on the ground level and five historic buildings following completion of the stage one development.

...The Audit Office has accused the Auckland City Council of using one-sided publicity to promote its Britomart project... The publicity – a supplement in the council's *City Scene* newspaper – fell short of Audit Office guidelines for local government and was confusing about Britomart[s] projected finances... The council was unaware of any disadvantages in its Britomart scheme that needed to be listed in the supplement... [the] councillor overseeing the council's involvement... said. Among the specific criticisms of the publicity listed by the Audit Office were... [the council] did not indicate there would be no rates from the Britomart site during development or that revenue would be foregone from the sale of \$62 million of other council property to partly fund the council's Britomart costs[, and a]... diagram refers to a “standby takeout facility” but it was not mentioned in the text. “Given that the facility is for up to \$230 million – which is considerably more than any of the other sums mentioned – we would have thought it a material feature of the deal.” The facility carried some risk but it was [also] not explained.

...The owners of two downtown buildings have withdrawn consent for the Britomart project after fresh evidence has revealed a risk of serious damage to the ageing structures... The... excavation and de-watering process... could shear off the buildings' pile foundations, which would require major and costly repairs involving manoeuvring a pile driver in at ground level, digging the floor and repiling... The buildings stood between two big excavations sites – the main Britomart construction area and that for the proposed Quay St underpass. An old valley running through the western end of the excavation area had been identified which would be significant in terms of damage to buildings... [The owners] originally consented to the project because they were led to believe any damage would be of a minor nature such as cracks in the plaster and walls.

...Motorists face 18 months of inner-city traffic jams as thousands of cars are diverted around the Britomart project... during the construction of an access tunnel... says a traffic engineer... [M]ost developments had to provide for vehicle access and movement on-site but Britomart appeared to be seeking to use the street network for that purpose. It could easily use conventional graded driveways for access on Gore, Commerce, and Britomart Sts, and therefore avoid having to construct the Quay St tunnel, he said. The Quay St closure would force 29,000 vehicles a day to find alternative routes, adding pressure to roads and intersections that were already at capacity... Customs St... would be hardest hit... Quay St and Customs St provided the main east-west route through town and few alternative routes existed... Buses forced out of the downtown area into lesser streets would add to congestion and the loss of short-stay, on-street parking... would affect work and shopping opportunities... While motorists modified their travel times and routes during events such as the two-day Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 1995, it was unrealistic to expect them to do so in the long term... the... consulting engineer... claims... in a statement of evidence for an Environment Court appeal hearing into Auckland City Council's bid for resource consents... Auckland City Council staff would not comment on [his] evidence until after the Environment Court hearing [next February. One councillor]... said there was widely differing technical evidence being submitted on the impact of the development and ultimately the court would decide its future.

...[the majority of respondents] supported an urban boundary using the metropolitan urban limits, which the [ARC] set and fought to base future development on in an Environment Court case and High Court appeal concerning Okura, at the top of the North Shore... [In general,] respondents felt the limits should not be used, as they had in the past, to regulate the orderly release of land for urban development, but should be a set line... Businesses have[also] shown a clear preference for a compact city rather than see Auckland forever-spreading on the periphery... [Incidentally, the] opening of a new light rail system in Sydney may help people to envisage a similar system in Auckland... The council transport planning manager... said Auckland could learn a lot from the mistakes and successes of that project... However, stage one of the Sydney line runs for less than 4km, and has cost \$65 million. Estimates for the much bigger Auckland system run to \$400 million. Sydney's light rail was funded by a mix of private money and the N[SW] government using federal funds. Funding for an Auckland system remains unresolved.

...The [ARC] will spend up to \$700,000 more on preparations for light rail despite there being no guarantee the multi-million-dollar project will get off the ground. The council's transport committee has agreed to allocate[part] of its transport capital budget to prepare a tender process... although... [the] committee says it will not know until the end of the year whether light rail can be paid for. And the project team is still trying to get access to Tranz Rail's tracks. In a light rail progress report discussed behind closed doors at the last... committee meeting, transport officials say there is "a temptation to pause" while these problems are sorted out. But they say this would be risky. The project would lose impetus and it might cost more, and take longer to build. A councillor... who also chairs the finance committee, said ratepayers should not have to pay more for light rail investigations... when [the council] had "no idea" if Auckland would be able to afford the project. "It's like driving around Auckland searching to buy a house, even though you don't have a cent in your pocket," he said. However, the chairman of the committee... said [its members] overwhelmingly agreed to press ahead.

...Civic politicians argued yesterday over whether tenders should [have been] called for light rail before the funding is certain. Some members... feared they could look "stupid" if the tender process had to be halted because of funding doubts.

...EXPECTED arrival: a decision to end our paralysis of many decades on the future of rapid rail for Auckland. The [ARC] promises a major announcement in the next couple of weeks. Until then, commercial sensitivity veils the tendering process begun last year... No such shyness surrounds one light rail proposal which was not part of the above process, but is claimed to be stunningly cheap and cost-effective. Has this scheme missed the train? Probably. But its creator... [-] a 57-year-old design engineer... [-] is still optimistic... His FLIER (for Free Light Integrated Express Railway) really would be free if costs could be kept within the current subsidy of \$4.50 a passenger trip. "If I could be part of the current tendering, I would win it. I could be building this thing by Christmas, and be in operation by the next local body elections in October." ...[However, covering] the full route from South Auckland to Albany, with harbour tunnels, would take about 10 years... The vehicle he has designed is a light-weight train along the lines of a bus on rails – "it will have a little 100hp diesel singing away just like a bus... It will have standard bus components and cost less than \$600,000 to build, whereas a traditional [rail] unit costs around \$6 million... No one has faulted my system except everyone in political terms. You don't give something away for free. Politicians and engineers are at opposite ends of the spectrum with a vast communication gap. The engineer has a multi-path mind, and if one thing goes wrong he corrects it. A politician takes a single, critical path to a solution. If something goes wrong he throws out the baby with the bath water. I've spent 20 years being deferred by politicians who've always chased the \$400 million option while overlooking the[funding] reality." ...This interest in light rail, which has cost him \$10,000 so far in patent fees and taken a chunk of his life, began when he was enraged by the way the rail option was made grandiose and untenable in the [1970s]... "They were talking about 1000hp trains in tunnels with overhead power lines, that shook buildings. It did not need to be like that. They were forgetting that the old trams, which had two 50hp motors, used only one of them to get up the 1-in-9 gradients at the top of Queen St." [By the way, 'Auckland's trams were removed in 1956 because they were deemed too expensive'! The trolley buses that replaced them utilised the same overhead electronic wire system. However, the trolley buses were themselves phased out for the same reason – 'the last one being driven in September 1980. The cost of the system was considered more expensive than buying diesel buses – although, not in the long-term.' Another motive put forward for their removal was that 'increased use of private cars created problems for the trolley buses' (whose movements – because of their connecting poles – were restricted). Ironically, members of the 'Auckland Tramways Union had designed a trolley bus system which would have been similar to the Link bus service introduced this year. New power poles, buses, etc., were purchased from Italy – but the plan was scrapped and the equipment was eventually sold to Wellington for a \$6 million loss.']

...A nationwide campaign to promote the use of public transport and rail freight as a means of easing air pollution was launched in Auckland yesterday. The Eco-Transport Campaign, [was] initiated by the environmental group Friends of the Earth[, which]... has operated in N[Z] for 25 years... The organisation's director... said the Government had never taken transport pollution seriously enough, nor had it acted swiftly enough to find solutions to counter it. "The environment movement in N[Z] has for some years needed an initiative of this sort and 1997 looks like a watershed year for transport planning and funding. We could not have picked a better time to start making people aware of the environmental effects of their transportation choices."

...The Mayor of Auckland... has criticised the leaking of documents revealing that big changes are being considered for the Britomart project... as the Auckland City Council tries to extricate itself from an engineering nightmare... One[suggested change] is to reduce the size of the five-level, underground carpark. The lower three levels would be sacrificed at the western end... [by about 75m, slicing] about a fifth off the length of the three lower floors. About a quarter of the 2900 carparks would be lost, raising questions about the deal between the council and the private sector Britomart Developments company... The chairman of the council's harbour edge committee... would not confirm yesterday that the smaller Britomart plan was being considered... [However, he] said... Auckland City councillors are unlikely to get a say over... [any changes. T]he council wanted a transport terminal and related developments, "and that's what we will get." There was therefore no need to go back to any committee or the full council. He also understood there would be no need to renegotiate the development agreement.

...After five days without trading, Pacific Capital's share price dropped... to 37c yesterday. The managing director... reiterated that the company's future did not rely purely on Britomart... It has secured... a tollway project in China.

...[after a train company] director... saw a similar scheme in operation in Hong Kong[rail]... commuters heading to London from eastern England are being offered a chance to work as part-time train guards on their way to the office... Great Eastern, the private train company which took over

routes to Essex and East Anglia six months ago, said it decided to make the offer to regular passengers because of a very disappointing response to its recruitment drive for part-time workers... [However, the] general secretary of the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers, called the plan “the most bizarre proposal I have come across in nearly 40 years in the industry.” Great Eastern agreed that it was an unusual recruitment method but called it a “mould-breaking work-to-work scheme.” [The director said that although “m]ost commuters prefer to relax, read the paper or sleep[, others]... use the journey as part of their working day, so there is no doubt this could be a lucrative way of spending the journey.” The part-time guards would swap their office clothes for blue uniforms for the journey. Their duties would include making announcements on platforms, checking that train doors are slammed, and giving a signal to the driver to set off – before jumping on the train themselves. Great Eastern said those recruited would be given the same safety training as full-time guards. But... [the] general secretary of Aslef, the train drivers’ union, said the plan was a “safety nightmare.” “This half-baked scheme is yet another example of safety being seriously compromised – and on crowded, rush hour services,”... - 1997

I’m sitting in the Glasgow Central Hotel reading about this train crash that happened last night. ‘A train from Glasgow... ploughed through buffers and... the platform into a row of shops.’ It said ‘nobody had time to panic.’ So that’s good, isn’t it? ...also somebody’s complaining... [‘cause] ‘no announcement was given.’ “We are just about to tear up the platform and run through the ticket office!” Oh, and there’s another train crash here. ‘Wigan to Liverpool commuter train went into the buffers at Line Street Station.’ [That’s] a bit worrying... [I also worry about] what’s going to happen when they sell off the railways. Suppose nobody buys... [the unprofitable lines?] It must be difficult to make a profit on a line that’s mainly used by documentary film-makers and suicidal livestock. I mean, it’s going to be like being picked last for the netball team. Everybody will want the [attractive lines] like Network South-east and Intercity. Lines like [Thurso] will end up pretending they don’t mind... holding everyone else’s jumper... I had a wander around [the city] before I caught this train, and it was filthy. You could hardly breathe because of the traffic pollution. We need to stop using our cars. We need good, fast trains that connect with other trains that are affordable, reliable, safe, with proper food on them[and]... clean toilets. There’s no point calling us customers and smiling at us with walkie-talkies if we can’t ever buy a ticket at our local station, or book over the phone for a journey that involves two different railway companies. They could do through-ticketing a hundred years ago but they can’t do it now! ...[is] through-ticketing... something you could forget how to do, like ploughing? - GREAT RAILWAY JOURNEYS

The last time I travelled the main trunk line... [the train] chattered through the darkness... Things have changed a bit in the last quarter century... Beyond the double-glazed window is a seldom-seen N[Z]. The country that primps its roadside face, painting fences, mowing yards and weeding gardens, lets its guard down on the back as we often peer into the backstage clutter of provincial and suburban life. It can be a sobering sight, not least because it can show us the side of provincial N[Z] that the promulgators of the economic miracle don’t like talking about. The industries of the heartland that has stopped beating grew up along the railway that transported its output to distant markets. And the decaying remnants of that enterprise are everywhere: factories sit glumly with windows shattered and boarded up, empty warehouses are hangers for sparrows, heavy machinery rusting in the long grass by the trackside... With every passing kilometre, it becomes more obvious that the romance of train travel is something to be found in third-world countries with third-world wages. It would be nice to sit in a dining car and watch the countryside blur past as we dined off white linen... [Instead, a] cabin crew of two... serve... pallid liquids in... flimsy disposable cups and hand... out cellophane-wrapped biscuits in a ritual that generates sacks of unrecycled rubbish... Stations are silent and windswept now, like large city bus stops... [However,] it’s hard not to feel smug as the road traffic has to stop and salute us at level crossings.

...Passengers stranded at a California railway station had more than the usual bureaucracy to blame... The... 30-minute... hold-up... to board a train for Seattle... was caused by none other than Microsoft’s chairman, who] has three railway carriages and his own engine and... requested that the tracks be yielded to him. [In further news from the US, after becoming ‘driverless a train pulling hazardous chemicals continued by itself for an hour’.]

...Rescue crews used cranes to move mangled, smouldering pieces of metal as they searched for victims of one of the U[S]’s worst train wrecks – a fiery collision with a truck loaded with steel bars. At least 14 people were killed and 119 injured. Investigators at Bourbonnais, Illinois, questioned how the truck moved into the train’s path on Tuesday night (NZ time) despite crossing gates that apparently were working. The driver... aged 58, told investigators he did not see the train as he approached the tracks and that lights started flashing after he had started driving across. [However, the Wisconsin Governor who is] chairman of rail corporation Amtrack, charged that [the driver] was trying to dodge the crossing gates, thinking the oncoming train was a slow-moving freight train instead of a faster passenger train. “The engineer said he saw the lights flashing, he saw the barriers down and then he saw the truck stop and try to get around it...” Authorities also said [the 58-year-old] was driving on a probationary licence after receiving three speeding tickets within a year. He sustained only minor injuries. As many as 216 people were on board the City of New Orleans when it hit the tractor-trailer at a rural crossing near a steel mill 80km south of Chicago... The crash sparked a fire that burned for more than five hours. The train’s two engines and leading cars were scattered like burned, broken toys over 400m. One engine punched through a double-deck sleeping car that had been three cars behind it before the derailment. All of the dead were found in the sleeping car... Four to six people were[still] missing and feared dead in the wreckage.

...A JLTED... PHILADELPIA[N]... used his vehicle to push his ex-girlfriend’s car into the path of a freight train. He chased the woman and both stopped at a crossing... A witness said the second car revved its engine and shoved the first car... Candice Wertz, her two-year-old son, another woman and a six-year-old girl were killed. Wertz made a 911 call on her cellphone and was talking to a dispatcher when her car was struck by the train... Police are still looking for the man.

...from the files of the N[Z] *Herald*... 100 years ago... A lamentable accident took place yesterday afternoon at the Kingsland railway crossing, which resulted in the instantaneous death of a well-known and esteemed lady... It appears that Mr and Mrs Battley had been in town on business and on getting near the railway line, the driver of their... trap... saw the train, which whistled. [The driver] jumped down and held his horse by the head, but it got quite unmanageable and reared up... [T]he frenzied animal[then] made straight for the passing train... As the [trap] neared the passing wagons it was struck by one of them... causing the vehicle to tilt towards the moving train and Mrs Battley, who was sitting on the near side, was shot... under the wagons. Her dress became entangled in the wheels and her body was carried 60 feet and terribly mutilated... Mr Battley was also thrown towards the train and got several contusions on the head from the passing wagons.

...*The family of Katie Connolly, killed crossing a railway, fear a coroner’s warning about pedestrian safety has fallen on deaf ears*... [Katie’s mother] stands on the bare asphalt of Glen Innes railway station, clenches her fists and toughs it out. This is the first time in almost three years she has been to this barren, uncared-for place where the wind whistles down the platform and the pedestrian subway is so shadowy and threatening it is considered dangerous, even by locals. Back then, [the mother]’s life was different. She had two talented, high-achieving children, a successful barrister husband, a job as a secretary of day surgery at the Adventist Hospital in St Heliers and a comfortable home only a kilometre from the beach. Katie, her 16-year-old, clever and loving would-be actor daughter was a special delight. Mother and daughter were close. That morning Katie had left early for a doctor’s appointment to check a suspected virus before the pair were to head into the city to collect her new... dress for the Kings College ball. [The mother] will never know exactly what Katie was thinking as she hopped off the suburban DMU train... and headed across the track that runs down the other side of the station. As... the woman who walked behind her, and [the] Silver Fern driver... would testify,

Katie's head was down, as if deep in thought, as she headed towards the crossing that led over the east-bound tracks that she used every day. It was 11.50 am on June 18... nearly the shortest day of the year. The light was flat and Katie did not see the steely Silver Fern railcar, merged against the overcast sky like a shark in a shadowy sea, as it rounded the bend 300m away on her left on its trip to the Westfield Train depot in Otahuhu. Nor, above the noise of the suburban train as it roared and tooted out of the station and the nearby timberyard, did she hear the almost silent railcar as it slid down the tracks at 80-odd km/h. Although [its driver] tooted his whistle too, she kept on walking. And the train did not slow. Only at 15m – that is half a second before impact with the slight figure in her grey and maroon school uniform – did [the driver] squeeze on the Silver Fern's brakes, causing the empty railcar to stop 218m down the track. But by then Katie was dead. As her mother says now, "Why weren't there bells and flashing lights to warn Katie a train was coming? Why didn't he brake earlier – just to slow down in case Katie hadn't heard him? ...Why didn't the lady walking behind her call out?" Last week, Auckland's coroner... released his report into Katie's death and echoed [her family's] frustration and anger. His findings, especially around Tranz Rail's attitude to passenger safety, were damning. "While it is enshrined in the legislation that a train track is the exclusive corridor of rail traffic, nevertheless I consider that there should be a duty... towards pedestrians using pedestrian crossings." Meanwhile the toll on Katie's family has been harsh. Almost three years after they laid their beautiful daughter to rest at the Purewa Cemetery in Meadowbank, [the parent's]... happy marriage is under pressure as they grapple with the pain and despair that comes from losing a child on the edge of her prime... Says [the mother] through the tears that most of the time sit behind her eyes and tremulous smile, "I'm still angry. There's been no justice for Katie." While [the mother], with help from... Katie's brother... wrote to [their local MP, the]... then-Transport Minister... and [the] Minister of Justice[the father]... worked on the safety and risk aspects of Tranz Rail's performance. [The mother] also put together two meetings – one at home with the Land Transport Safety Authority... the second in the Bledisloe Building with the Auckland City Council, the LTSA, Tranz Rail, Occupational Safety and Health. And as she says now, except for being stunned by the attitude of a Tranz Rail safety analyst who, when asked why the driver didn't brake, replied, "No evasive action was required," nothing happened. "I organised all those meetings, wrote all those letters and we came away with nothing." By the time the inquest into Katie's death came before the Coroner's Court on September 21 last year, the [family's] evidence was substantial, rigorous and had cost them thousands of dollars – most of it in time and sweat. Their argument was clear. Since Wisconsin-based Tranz Rail... took over our rail service... there have been 65 level-crossing deaths, 291 car crashes on railway crossings, and 16 rail workers have lost their lives while working for the company – five of them in the past seven months. Tranz Rail, which has had plenty of practice in inquests like this over the past [few] years, was also well prepared... [The] Wellington-based... lawyer... who acted for Tranz Rail over the case of a six-year-old... who was blinded and lost a leg when a Tranz Rail handrail gave way, acted for Tranz Rail... Ten exhibits were produced and 11 statements read to [the] coroner... Then, for three harrowing days, both parties slugged it out... The evidence and information, teased and squeezed out of witnesses, paints a disturbing picture... [The] safety manager for Tranz Rail and the company's liaison point for the Transport Accident Investigation Commission... and the LTSA, informed the court that Glen Innes station (although used by... Kings College and other students plus workers every day) is not considered busy enough to meet the company's formula for "active" pedestrian warnings such as bells and flashing lights, let alone an overhead bridge. Tranz Rail installed its pedestrian crossing because pedestrians tended to avoid the tunnel and had routinely broken through the fence to cross the tracks. [The safety manager], who could not produce a safety budget, either for N[Z] or Glen Innes station, did not have accurate knowledge of pedestrian numbers at the Glen Innes crossing and, under cross-examination, revealed that the decision to build it was taken without "undertaking any sort of investigation in terms of safety issues." While Tranz Rail argued that local pedestrian level-crossing collision rates are very low, international comparisons revealed an appalling death rate. Figures showed [that] fatalities at level crossings in N[Z]... average... almost 10 a year, compared with three fatalities in Britain ([which has more than 17 times NZ's] population...)... U[S] data showed similar anomalies: America has only half the number of fatalities that we have... per capita basis. Part of the problem is that Tranz Rail has no designated safety manual and is protected by the Railway Safety and Corridor Management Act – an act drafted for a safety-conscious Government department rather than a profit-driven private company which, in the year of Katie's death, won the Roger Award for "the worst transnational corporation in... N[Z]." The act enshrines in law that "rail service vehicles have the right of way" and is backed by the company's operating rules which state: a locomotive engineer who believes the line may be obstructed must only sound the whistle at a sufficient distance to give ample warning of the approach of a train. Trains are authorised, indeed encouraged, to pass through... any busy commuter station... at 100 km/h to meet their operating schedules. Nor is Tranz Rail under any legal obligation to provide warning systems at public level crossings. When it does so, it shares costs with local authorities and Transit N[Z] on a 50/50 basis. The costs of safety measures, when compared to the estimated cost of loss of a human life – which is put at \$2.3 million – seems trivial. The price of an overbridge over one track at Glen Innes was estimated at \$85,000 to \$135,000. To span both tracks the cost rose to \$100,000 to \$140,000. Warning bells and lights are estimated to be worth from \$15,000 upwards. Most chilling is the evidence of [the] train driver... who, [when the parent's]... lawyer... questioned him about his attitude to a perceived problem, when he had been able to see Katie approaching the rails 200m away... [said]: "...There would be no difference to being in a car and expecting people to keep off the road... I can't drive predetermining what members of the public are going or not going to do, but just assess the situation. In this case it wasn't until the last minute I realised that something was going to happen – by then it was too late... If you slowed down for everybody you saw on the track, we'd never go anywhere." When asked if he would have braked had he personally recognised the child, he was staunch. "No – a pedestrian's a pedestrian." ...[the coroner], who had been personally shocked by the silence of the Silver Fern approaching Glen Innes station during his three fact-finding missions... recommend[ed that]... when trains round the bend down the 380m straight that they reduce speed from 80... to 25 km/h. "By doing so the train would be losing eight seconds in its schedule instead of a possible life." Tranz Rail's answer to the coroner's recommendation... was dismissive... Slowing trains to 25 km/h through the station... was anathema: "That would actually build a delay into the N[Z] transport network." ...Meanwhile, Glen Innes station remains resolutely unsafe. Over 30 minutes one afternoon this week, 18 schoolchildren and workers used Tranz Rail's pedestrian crossing and only one stopped, looked and listened... [T]he larger warning signs, erected after Katie's death, are beginning to fade... [A Tranz Rail] spokeswoman... said that the company might scrap the crossing and force people to use the... underpass which is still long, gloomy and threatening... Says [Katie's mother] wearily, "Tranz Rail are not obliged to be responsible for their own passengers. I hope this serves as a wake-up call for N[Z] and Auckland in particular... There is no doubt about it, nobody was held accountable for Katie's death."

...Tearaway kids are dicing with death around railway tracks – and it's not only their own life they're putting at risk! Tranz Rail is fed up with school kids booby-trapping lines with stones and pieces of timber to get a quick thrill as trains smash over them. "It's a... very old game but it's a dangerous one – nobody should be playing on a railway line period." ...the New Lynn Community Board chairperson... says she recently saw two girls, aged about seven, waiting to hear a train's whistle near Fruitvale Station (near Titirangi Rd) before racing down to lay stones on the tracks... "I tried to yell at them but I was too far away." Luckily the girls got away but it could easily have turned to tragedy... ■ [In Britain, a]... couple have been convicted of the manslaughter of two girls in their care who were killed by a train when they played on a railway line... [T]he mother and stepfather of 7-year-old victim Sophie George... had taken the children for a picnic near their home near Aberystwyth, West Wales, a year ago. Sophie and her playmate, Kimberley Allcock, aged 8, were struck by a 100 km/h train as they played on a railway bridge.

...THE driver who sparked a fatal rail crash near Selby in February has been charged with causing the death of 10 people by dangerous driving. They died when the Land Rover driven by [the 36-year-old] ran off a motorway on to a railway track and derailed a train that was carrying 100 passengers. It was sent into the path of an on-coming freight train carrying 1000 tonnes of coal... An interim report in March described the... crash

as... “wholly exceptional” and said the rail industry could have done nothing to prevent it... There was only a minute between [the 36-year-old] calling the police on his cellphone to warn that his car was on the track and the train hitting it... [How the car] left the road... was unknown.

...The family of a man whose Land Rover crashed on to a British railway track in a disaster that caused the death of 13 train passengers denied yesterday that he fell asleep at the wheel[. If the Land Rover driver], aged 36, is found to be responsible for the crash, it could produce what papers have described as Britain’s biggest car insurance claim. If no one is blamed, then victims and their relatives might not receive compensation.

...Rescuers predict the death toll from the collision of two packed commuter trains near Paddington could be as many as 90. They resumed their search of the wreckage last night (NZT) and almost immediately found a body, bringing the number of confirmed dead to 27... Thirty-five people were killed in a crash at London’s Clapham Junction in 1998. [The latest crash] was the second tragedy on the same stretch of line in two years, sparking renewed concerns about safety on Britain’s rail system, privatised by the previous Conservative Government... [The] deputy editor of *Railway Gazette International*, said... lessons had not been learned from... the... collision at Southall, which killed seven... because two years had been wasted in pursuing court cases. A key point of the investigation will be a signal controlling a crossing where there have been eight instances of red lights being missed in the past six years. The Chief Inspector of Railways... said investigators would examine the... possibility of human error... Both drivers were thought to be among the dead... ■ Britain has had 17 fatal train accidents in the past 25 years... The country’s worst train crash was on May 22, 1915, when a wooden troop train and a passenger train collided at Gretna Green between England and Scotland, killing 227...

A SIMPLE warning system could have prevented London’s horror train crash... on Tuesday... The first official report on the disaster, released last night, has revealed a warning system – due to be installed in 2003 – would have stopped one of the trains from passing through a red light... The... outgoing Thames Trains service... smashed almost head-on with the heavier Great Western train... At least 30 people, including two NZers... have been confirmed dead... with 127 commuters still missing...

Travelling in different trains, Matthew MacAuley and Allan Stewart did not know each other. But the common link was a ticket to support the All Blacks in this morning’s [rugby] test against England. A minute’s silence was held before the test... Matthew... would have celebrated his 27th birthday today watching the... game. Last night his father... visited the spot where his son was killed... “He loved being active, doing things that were exciting... Yet this terrible thing has happened when he was sitting down...” Emergency workers identified MacAuley by the Maori carving he wore round his neck. He also had his test ticket with him... The death toll following Tuesday’s tragedy is at least 40 – with 64 people still missing.

...The company which maintains Britain’s railway network, Railtrack, will be stripped of its responsibility for passenger safety in emergency legislation which follows last week’s horrific London crash... With the scale of the tragedy still unfolding, there was alarm among ministers that the Government would be deemed to have failed to live up to its commitments made in opposition to putting safety ahead of savings... A new independent safety authority will be created to impose higher standards on rail operators and Railtrack itself. In future, Britain’s individual train companies will not have their franchises renewed if they are deemed by the Government to have a poor record, such as on drivers passing red signals[. There are ‘at least 22 sites where drivers ignore red lights’]... The plans emerged as two masked pathologists began the grim task of raking through human ashes in coach H of the express train into London’s Paddington, where most of the unaccounted victims perished... It has emerged that... some of the carriages involved in the disaster had been salvaged from the Southall crash. The disclosure that passengers were riding in coaches which had been damaged and repaired after a fatal accident prompted fresh anger. Rail unions said the death count might have been lower if new, undamaged rolling stock had been in place. One of the most alarming features of Tuesday’s crash was that some carriages concertinaed on impact, leaving passengers trapped by metal. [● ‘The most tragic rail accident in NZ’s history occurred on Christmas Eve, 1953. 151 people died when the northbound Auckland Express was swept off the Whangape River Bridge. A sudden discharge of water from Crater Lake on Mt Ruapehu was responsible. A huge wave carried thousands of tonnes of ice, ash and boulders down the river, striking the railway bridge only moments before the train arrived. The concrete piers gave way, 46m of bridge fell and the locomotive crash-landed across the gap on to the opposite bank. The first five coaches nose-dived into the flood waters and one of them was swept nearly two km. The sixth car teetered on the edge for a time before it also fell into the river. The coaches were torn to pieces, then with uncanny swiftness, the flood waters subsided. Darkness added to the horror and greatly hampered rescue work until the Army arrived with lights. Twenty passengers have never been found.’]

...An independent expert investigating the head-on collision between two... trains in Auckland is still trying to figure out what went wrong... He will examine possible causes, including human, computer, signalling and mechanical error. The two commuter Tranz Metro trains – one carry 35 passengers and the other only a driver – crashed at Ellerslie on Thursday just before midday. A Tranz Rail passenger service officer suffered minor head injuries and a 77-year-old passenger a cut leg. The crash happened after one of the trains broke down at the Ellerslie station about 11.30 am. Its passengers were taken by taxi to their destination. A railcar was sent from Otahuhu to retrieve the stricken train, which was on tracks for northbound trains only. The railcar hooked up with the train and then travelled south. At the same time, the next northbound train rounded a bend. Its driver braked, but was unable to avoid hitting the other train, which was already stopped... The drivers have been stood down from duty.

...The head-on collision of two freight trains near Christchurch on Friday was not caused by a failure of the track warrant control system, says Tranz Rail. The company’s nightmare year continued when three workers were injured in the dramatic collision, which happened about 4 am when a heavily laden train that had just left the Middleton shunting yard ploughed into a stationary locomotive, derailing several carriages and closing industrial Annex Rd for six hours... Two cranes worked for hours to stabilise, then free, the jack-knifed wagons. All traffic along the Main South Line was cancelled for the day... Friday’s crash has again raised the spectre of the company’s dismal health and safety record... When Dunedin train driver Graham White, aged 53, died in a head-on crash at Waipahi, South Otago, on October 20 last year, a report said Tranz Rail contributed to the accident by choosing not to adopt recommendations made in 1996 about its track warrant control system... [In international news,] Indian authorities who cleared the last of the wreckage from a two-train collision on Thursday have declared a final death toll of 208. Eighty bodies were yesterday still unidentified in a Patiala mortuary, north-west of New Delhi.

...500 people were last night thought dead and 1000 injured after two trains collided at... Gaisal station, near New Jalpaiguri... At least 14 wagons and the engines of the two trains had meshed together in the crash. Rescue workers are facing a tough time in pulling out bodies trapped inside the carriages... The trains were the Assam-Awadh Express, bound for Guwahati in the... state of Assam, and the Delhi-bound Brahmaputra Mail. First reports said there had been an explosion at the site. Officials later ruled out a bomb, although the BBC reported that one of the trains was carrying explosives... The accident is expected to affect trade in the region, compounding problems caused by the bombing of a rail track in the area by Assamese separatist guerrillas on Saturday. The crash could be the most serious in a series of train accidents in India in recent years. About 340 people died in a collision on August 20, 1995... in... Uttar Pradesh.

...A white elephant railway running thousands of kilometres through the Siberian wastes was given a final touch at the weekend as engineers finished boring a tunnel they began 25 years ago. The 3400km Baikal-Amur railway, one of the former Soviet union’s most grandiose projects, was built on and off from the 1930s to 1984 but was widely seen as a waste of time. The 15km tunnel was plagued by bad planning. Workers would find themselves flooded by water, often freezing or even scalding from geothermal activity.

...The twisted and gutted chassis of a “fireproof” train lying in an Austrian alpine tunnel was being examined by investigators last night, after the deaths of as many as 165 people, many of them children and teenagers. The chassis was all that remained of the 30m train, which caught fire while

being drawn on a funicular railway to an Austrian mountaintop. Flames engulfed the train, packed with skiers and snowboarders, when it was 600m into the tunnel... Experts believe the "chimney effect" of the tunnel sucked in air from below, making the flames spread quickly and producing dense smoke and lethal fumes... Only a dozen people escaped with their lives: they broke a window at the rear and fled to the lower entrance of the tunnel, avoiding the fumes. Others who fled up the tunnel were asphyxiated, as were three skiers waiting at the stopping point near the top... There was disbelief when it emerged last night that there was no fire-fighting equipment in the tunnel or on the train... [T]he railway's security director, said: "We never thought it was possible that a fire could break out." ...One early suggestion was that... [w]hen it was built in 1974... the materials[used] were not as fire-resistant as they should have been... Police had noted the names of all the 2500 people who had been on the mountain to establish who was missing. "Now there is the painstaking work to establish who is among the victims,"... 85 of the victims had been identified... Most... were... young Austrian and German skiers who had decided to go up the mountain on the spur of the moment, on the first day of the skiing season in the area. But... among... the victims had been... three Americans... and... 10 Japanese...

Japanese electronic games-maker Nintendo is toying with the idea of fitting its Gameboy consoles into new London Underground trains. Nintendo has drawn up plans... to have the normally hand-held consoles fixed to vertical handrails.

...London Underground is removing fire extinguishers from its train carriages – despite fears raised by last week's Austrian ski train inferno... It says the move has been prompted by repeat vandalism of firefighting equipment... [L]ast year... officials found that deliberately damaged equipment forced 400 trains out of service each year... London Regional Transport said it was satisfied passengers were not at risk and had no plans to carry out further safety checks... [But t]he move has caused unease in the wake of... a spate of British rail crashes in recent months culminating in a major derailment near London last month that killed four. The aftermath of a fire that swept through King's Cross underground station in 1987, killing at least 31, is still seared into the public memory.

...On February 28, 1975, London's worst underground rail smash claimed 43 lives and injured more than 100... IT was a trip veteran... driver Leslie Newson (56) had done many times. He was at the controls of the six-carriage 8.37am train from Drayton Park in the Highbury extension of the Northern Line to Moorgate. The station is a major terminus for workers in the city and is only a stone's throw from the Bank of England. As usual, the train on this Friday morning was packed with commuters. But this trip would end in disaster. Instead of coming to a halt at platform nine at Moorgate – one of the oldest stations on London's underground network – the 8.37 ploughed on, through a 20-metre over-run, across a 12m long sand-drag designed to stop over-shooting trains and into a wall at the end of the platform. Newson had driven the train into the wall at an estimated 65km/h and he died instantly. Behind him, carriages telescoped into a shuddering mass of tangled metal. The first two were crushed to less than half their normal length by the impact. The front 15 seats of the first coach were compressed into half a metre... As the first two carriages crumpled like concertinas, the third was forced into the air, wedging itself between the tunnel roof and the top of the second carriage... Although no firm evidence could point the finger at a cause, the Moorgate crash led to the introduction of a number of safety measures on the extensive London underground network of 410km of track and 270 stations. The main improvement was a device which stops a train automatically if the driver does not follow standard and regular safety procedures. It's called "the Moorgate control".

...Tunnel... tragedies in Europe in the past 25 years include: February 28, 1975: A driver's error in a tunnel in the London Underground at Moorgate station... October 28, 1995: A fire in the underground at Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, killed 337 passengers trapped between stations and injured at least 270. [November 18, 1996:...]

FIVE people were injured, one seriously, last night when fire broke out on a Channel Tunnel freight train carrying lorries from France to England. Another 28 passengers were transferred to a car shuttle in an emergency evacuation from the middle of the tunnel to the French side... The evacuated passengers were moved to safety through the service tunnel, which was designed to cope with the sort of emergency encountered last night... A fire brigade officer said: "It is our worst nightmare come true. We have had a few fires break out on vehicles at the terminals before entering the tunnel, but nothing like this has happened inside the tunnel before..." A Eurotunnel spokesman said that the fire had broken out on a truck... The cause was not known. The fire was the second in a Channel Tunnel train, but the first to cause injuries. In December 1994, shortly after the tunnel opened, a car caught fire on *Le Shuttle*. Freight trains are equipped with two fire detection systems and three fire extinguisher systems to meet stringent safety requirements that Eurotunnel had to meet before getting its licence. Once detected, the fire would have been immediately drenched by halon and water foam, and the tunnel fans directed to blow smoke away from other trains.

...CHANNEL TUNNEL services could be disrupted for months after the train fire on Monday night, which burnt for nearly 20 hours and left nearly half a mile of devastation in the Folkestone-bound tunnel. As three inquiries were launched into the incident... Eurotunnel executives said they hoped that services would be back to normal within four weeks. But... engineers thought the repairs would take "months rather than weeks". Six people were kept in hospital overnight after inhaling smoke... all were released yesterday. They were among 31 passengers and three crew rescued by emergency crews who yesterday spoke of hellish conditions in the tunnel. Chunks of concrete from the tunnel roof had rained down on them as they worked and the 6in thick reinforced concrete lining was said to be so badly blistered in one place that chalk was showing through. The fire, thought to have reached temperatures of 1,000C, also destroyed miles of wiring and cabling, and buckled part of the track. The undamaged half of the train has been pulled out of the tunnel, but the burnt-out section is still on the track. No trains ran through the tunnel yesterday because of the high levels of carbon monoxide, but the company hopes to begin a limited service through the undamaged north tunnel this morning... [T]rains will be able to bypass the damaged section of track using two cross-over tunnels a third of the way from the entrances. This means that services will run normally entering and leaving the tunnel, but will have to share a single track along the middle ten-mile section... [● On April 8 this year, *The Times* published a letter which went:] Sir, Our daughter, a slightly apprehensive traveller, insists that we play the hymn *Eternal Father, strong to save*, whenever she crosses the Channel by ferry. We wondered what we should play when she flew to Germany recently and eventually selected *He who would valiant be 'Against all disaster* reinforced by *All my hope on God is founded*. Is there a more appropriate hymn and also one which would be suitable for the Channel Tunnel, should she brave its perils in the future?

...THE fire on Monday night is the latest of many blows to Eurotunnel[– 'the largest underwater tunnel ever built (100% privately funded, it took six years to complete with 15,000 construction workers, 12 of whom lost their lives during construction), the complex has two rail tunnels, one primary service tunnel plus nine smaller service tunnels' –]whose shares peaked at £8.67 in June 1989. Construction delays and financial problems brought the price down to less than £1, and yesterday they fell 3 1/2 p to close at 88p. Analysts agreed, however, that while the fire was bad for the company's image, the disruption expected in the coming weeks would do little damage to long-term cash flow. Last week Eurotunnel announced a 70[%] increase in its three-month turnover, and that improvement has helped to secure further backing to tackle the company's £9 billion debt. A refinancing package has yet to be sealed by a consortium of 225 banks, but it is thought unlikely that the fire will prompt any of them to pull out.

...[‘damage to the Eurotunnel will cost \$US100m to repair and one tunnel will be closed for over 6 months’. In local news,] Tranz Rail is installing flashing strobe lights on its trains to reduce the risk of level-crossing accidents at night... Tranz Rail has reminded motorists to be careful at railway crossings after a Canterbury couple were killed at a country crossing this week. Seven people have died on level crossings this year. - 1996

Tranz Rail Holdings may need to tap capital markets to sustain its expenditure of between \$70 million and \$75 million a year to maintain its existing rail network. Other major capital expenditures required... [include] the cost of revamping freight handling capacity at Middleton, south of

Christchurch, estimated at \$28 million... \$15 [million to \$]20 million needed through the 1999 financial year to eradicate the year 2000 bug... \$130 million over a 20-year period to meet changes in requirements for transporting coal from the South Island's West Coast to Lyttelton[, and]... the replacement of the Wellington ferry terminal, costing up to \$35 million over the 1998-2000 financial years... Tranz Rail has net cash flow from operating activities of \$123.99 million but has net outflow of \$113.19 million from financing activities. Its cash balance at the end of the financial year ended June was \$6.87 million... [However,] Tranz Rail is expected to see modest improvements in its operating efficiency over the intermediate term... This was the conclusion of Moody's Investor Services... which gave a Prime 2 short-term rating for Tranz Rail... Moody's said that since US Wisconsin Central bought Tranz Rail, the N[Z] company had accelerated several of the restructuring plans started before its privatisation.

...[yesterday] Tranz Rail said it had established an unsecured committed \$180 million five-year cash advance facility that is expected to be syndicated to a group of commercial banks... [The company also] sees significant earnings potential from its foray into A[US]'s rail network earlier this year. Tranz Rail... holds a 27% stake in the consortium which... bought Tasrail, a freight operator in Tasmania, for about... \$NZ27 million...

[AUS's P]M... has honoured an 86-year-old election promise by announcing \$A100 million... in federal funding for the 1410km Alice Springs-to-Darwin railway.

...Trains are staging a comeback in A[US] as privatisation and huge new projects promise a transport revolution... In recent weeks, the federal Government has sold the A[US]n Railways Commission, pledged... [funding] for a... Alice Springs-Darwin railway and pushed negotiations for a... \$2 billion-plus... Sydney-Canberra 'Very Fast Train'... Interest has been received from France, Germany and else-where in Europe for tilt-trains, magnetic levitation and speedtrains able to reach 450 kph on dedicated tracks[('the fastest train in the world is the French TGV – in speed trials during 1990, this train reached an amazing 515 kph')]. The even more ambitious Melbourne-Darwin railway plan also remains on track, its chief promoter... said. [His] dream is for a railway which travels through south-eastern A[US]'s wool and wheat areas, north to the N[SW] coalfields, through Queensland's sugar and coal districts, to Mount Isa's base metals mine before ploughing through the Northern Territory's goldfields and on to Port Darwin. Backing has been committed by finance houses in London, New York and Tokyo... [while accounting] firm KPMG has declared a \$5 billion single-line track profitable... The sell-off of A[US]'s railway system is based on the logic that the business sector will offer services and control work practices better than government. This the Government has learned from entrepreneurial truckies who have left the railways standing still over the past two decades. In 1975, rail carried... 60 billion tonne-kilometres against 34 billion by road, 101 billion by sea – the main route for bulk commodities – and 0.11 billion by air. By 1990... trains carried... 87 billion tonne-kilometres against road's 91 billion, sea's 94 billion and air's 0.08 billion. City passenger transport shows similar trends, with road and air passenger kilometres rising strongly but rail's falling, to 2.5 billion in 1990 from 6.1 billion in 1971. Car use over the same years motored to 137.5 billion from 6.5 billion...

[The recently merged Bovis Lend Lease has won the management of the \$A1.4 billion Parramatta Rail Link project in Sydney, a key element of the NSW 10-year transport development programme. It will link Chatswood in Sydney's northern suburbs with Parramatta in the west. A total of 27km of twin-track will be laid for the link. Of this, 19km is underground, with 12 stations to be built along the way. Bovis managed the development of a redesigned Sydney Airport, a \$A500 million project, and has also been busy on the Olympic Games site at Homebush. Bovis, owned by AUS's Lend Lease Corporation, earns \$A3 billion annually, making it one of the world's top 10 global project management, design and construction companies.' In related news,] an Auckland City Council report... outlines seven transport options to link Orakei with Panmure. [One is the *four-lane-highway* already being considered, while t]hree options involve variations of light rail... • Light rail on existing tracks with park-and-ride and bus interchanges... overhead power lines, station upgrades, 10 light rail units and a new station at St Johns. Cost: \$121 million • A two-lane arterial road-light rail combination, with 10 light rail units. Cost: \$219 million... • Light rail options at Mt Wellington quarry, which becomes a rail station, along with St Johns and the Auckland University Tamaki campus. Cost: \$45-59 million. [Another option involves upgrading] existing heavy railcars, [while providing] better stations, bus transfers[and] park-and-ride systems. Cost: \$61 million.

...An Auckland City Council team studying the eastern corridor transport system overestimated the cost of enhancing the existing rail network by \$12 million... At a public meeting in Parnell last night red-faced city council officials and consultants said the cost was, in fact, \$49 m... Officials also revealed... they had overestimated the costs of the... light rail options relating to the Mt Wellington quarry site [by about \$20 m]...

Tranz Rail last night suggested the Auckland City Council had further bungled its estimates for enhancing the eastern corridor... The council team... said that 10 new diesel carriages would be needed to provide a train every 10 minutes. However... Tranz Rail officials said the revised figure should be slashed by a further \$20 million, because only six new train units were needed to provide a frequent service between Panmure and the city... [for] 3300 passengers every hour. The present half-hourly service catered for only 550 passengers an hour. A council transport spokeswoman... said estimates in the initial report were never intended to be final – and cost was not the only factor the public had to consider.

...Auckland City Council consultants last night stuck to their assessment that 10 new diesel train units will be needed... [A principal of the] consulting engineers, told a Panmure meeting... that "we've agreed to disagree" with Tranz Rail...

The debate over... Auckland rail services has taken a new twist with Tranz Rail being accused of short-changing commuters... "Residents have been lobbying Tranz Rail for several years about a new[western] service but the company won't do anything unless regional ratepayers pay for it,"... [an] Auckland regional councillor... said. The company had not responded to an offer by the regional council to apply for funding to set up a trial service... [to] Helensville, Huapai and Kumeu[, where about]... 18,000 people live... and several large housing developments are under way... More than 400... residents say they would take a train to work instead of their car if the rail commuter service was extended... [But Tranz Rail] says it is struggling to cope with demand for the core service and extending the service to Kumeu... and Helensville is a low priority... Crush-capacity loads have forced Tranz Rail and the regional council to double the size of peak-hour trains from Waitakere to Auckland central in a new service which began on Monday... The... general manager... said setting up a trial would involve two extra units at a cost of around \$8 million. "I don't believe the ARC would set up an economically marginal trial with that sort of capital outlay for the benefit of relatively few people." Research had shown that demand for additional rail services was higher in[South Auckland and] Pukekohe than rural West Auckland.

...The Auckland Regional Authority last night decided it wanted a true rapid transit system for Auckland and not a revamped suburban system. Rejecting a standard 3ft 6in gauge, a special ARA meeting unanimously backed the 4ft 8 1/2in gauge widely used overseas.

...A mass pickpocket operation that went wrong on a crowded Tokyo commuter train yesterday led to 65 people being taken to hospital after the thieves sprayed teargas on passengers. The incident triggered panic as passengers feared they were involved in a repeat of the 1995 sarin nerve gas attack on Tokyo's subway system which killed 11 and made thousands ill... A fire department spokesman said the man who sprayed the gas was arrested... Most of the gang escaped.

...[an] Auckland teenager 'has been arrested and charged with breaching the Railway Safety and Corridor Maintenance Act, which carries a maximum \$20,000 fine and/or six months in prison. A second teenager, who will spend tomorrow in hospital undergoing plastic surgery for extensive burns instead of flying out for a year-long Rotary exchange in the US, has yet to be interviewed. 45% of his body was severely burned by an arc of current from 25,000-volt overhead powerlines when the pair climbed on top of a stationary train in Ohakune early on Tuesday. Together with five friends from Mt Albert Grammar School, they had travelled to the second teenager's parents' chalet in Ohakune to celebrate his 18th birthday and say goodbye before the star goalkeeper in the school's second XI soccer team left on his overseas journey. But his plans changed in a flash of blue and green light when the electric shock set him on fire and sent him flying 4m to the ground. He is expected to be in Middlemore Hospital for another two months while he undergoes skin grafts and heals from the burns, mainly on his lower body. He will need physiotherapy to help the muscles in his legs recover. His father said he would ask

Rotary in the US if his son could start his exchange in the middle of this year. The father said the family had been upset by the accident but were thankful their boy was alive. The father was outraged at suggestions that his son had been skylarking and might be prosecuted. It had not aided his son's recovery. The father said his son was adamant that he went up to retrieve a cellphone that was thrown on top of the train. "He has been made out to be an irresponsible idiot." The father added that his son would not be alive if it were not for his friends. The friends put out the fire, and one resuscitated him while another ran to call' 111]...

Passengers stuck in a train in the Rimutaka tunnel for two hours yesterday were angry that a communication breakdown delayed the call for help... Tranz Rail is urgently reviewing its communications system after the incident, which stranded 61 passengers in the Masterton-Wellington train a third of the way into the 9km tunnel... It meant the guard had to run the 3km to the... end of the tunnel before he could use his cellphone... Tranz Rail said a minor fault at its Wellington train operations centre meant the telephone system in the tunnel did not work... Passengers were initially told the driver had stopped because of a possible engine fire after his cab filled with smoke, but the problem was later identified as electrical arcing... A Carterton woman... wrote a protest letter in the dim emergency lighting and other passengers signed it... "If it was a serious fire situation we would be dead," said one passenger[. 'Emergency equipment problems were also identified after Eurotunnel's fire last year']...

Electronic grids, one of several devices designed to keep animals out of the Channel Tunnel, have broken down. Water from road spray dripping off lorries as they travelled through the tunnel caused a short-circuit in the electrified cattle grids. Officials were content that video cameras and perimeter fences, which are working normally, were enough to keep animals out of the tunnel... [Meanwhile, the latest] survey shows one-third of [the] British public remain convinced[that the] Channel Tunnel is still unsafe for passengers following [the] fire in November...

The French and British Governments[have] agreed to extend Eurotunnel's lease to operate the Channel Tunnel by 34 years to 2086 but in return will take 40[%] of after-tax profit[, which is]... more than Eurotunnel had expected.

...Eurotunnel's] chairman... said the company will beat its own forecasts for first-half profit and urged shareholders to approve a £8.5 billion... debt reorganisation. Eurotunnel lost £685 million last year as interest payments on its debt, mostly accumulated in building the tunnel that opened in 1994[for a 'cost of £10 billion', overwhelmed a 71[%] increase in revenue.

...[Ailing rail – it's all dark at the end of the tunnel Pssst, wanna buy a railway? If you think your summer hasn't been the greatest so far, spare a thought for the people trying to present a positive image of our national rail company as a dynamic, caring and professional business. Barely a day has gone by without some aspect of Tranz Rail's activities hitting the headlines, invariably for the wrong reasons. Train crashes, derailments, stranded passengers, job losses, line closures, safety inquiries, power struggles for control. So it is hardly surprising that the two major shareholders want to sell most of the company. They are Wisconsin Central, with 24%, and FR, with 14%, making a 38% controlling interest. Up for sale are all the passenger train services, both the long distance Tranz Scenic and the Auckland and Wellington suburban Tranz Metro businesses, the track and train maintenance divisions and the refrigeration business comprising trucks, containers and wagons. The plan is that within two years, 85% of the 4000 employees will no longer work for Tranz Rail. They will have a new employer or employers, depending on how many pieces the business is chopped into, or they will be laid off. Bids for Tranz Scenic closed two months ago, and about five companies, including Transdev of France and West Coast Railway of AUS, are said to be interested. What further complicates the issue is that FR and Wisconsin Central want out altogether. Before they even approved the management plan to radically restructure the business and boil it down to its most profitable component – freight including the inter-island ferry service – both had, apparently independently, already decided to put their shares on the market. But that did not become public until later, and it is not even clear that senior managers were aware of it when they announced the restructuring. As a result, many observers, and no doubt prospective buyers, are asking how good the restructuring plan is. If the aim of increasing profitability and the share price is expected to be achieved, why sell now? FR is not saying. A company spokeswoman said: "It's a private company with private interests. If they make a decision to sell, they're not under any obligation to say why." Wisconsin Central was itself bought by Canadian National Railway for \$US1.2 billion last month, and the Canadians are said to be just as anxious to sell its Tranz Rail shares. Interestingly, many NZers still think of the railways as something we all own. In reality, all NZers still collectively own is the rail corridor, the land the 3904km of 1067mm-gauge track runs along, and even that is leased to Tranz Rail for a token \$1 a year until the end of 2030, with a right of renewal for a further 40 years. Some, notably the Greens and Alliance, are wondering whether the Government would not be better off buying back in rather than helping the ARC lease the rights to the Auckland suburban rail network. But why would the Government want to buy a business rendered dysfunctional by years of neglect just when it has started making losses again?' 'Prior to selling NZ Rail, the Government wrote off \$1.2b of debt (the network was losing \$1m/day plus lots of cargo – even an entire train'!).

...AUSn transport group Lang Corporation, in aggressive expansion mode, is being touted as a potential buyer of a 38% stake in Tranz Rail. On Tuesday, Lang's managing director outlined a range of growth opportunities for the company, which has a war chest of \$A400 million for acquisitions with more than that in reserve. He said that the company might bid for AUS's National Rail and/or Freightcorp, either alone or in a consortium. A Lang spokeswoman said any opportunities in NZ were more likely to be in stevedoring than rail. Tranz Rail's share price closed 15c higher on Friday at \$3.80, which means that a 38% stake is worth \$175 million.'

...Tranz Rail locomotive engineers have threatened to put a ban on more than half of the company's fleet – a move that could cripple it as it tries to sell its intercity passenger service, Tranz Scenic (which incorporates the Northerner, Overlander, Bay Express, Tranz Coastal, Tranz Alpine and Southerner routes). The 482 engineers say that 70 of 114 diesel-powered Dc locomotives in service are badly corroded and must pass safety checks by next Friday. Failing that, they will refuse to drive any of them faster than 50 km/h, and a fortnight later will refuse to drive them at all. But Tranz Rail said last night that it was "quite confident" there were no safety problems with the engines, which are all more than 50 years old. However, the Dcs fared particularly badly in recent derailments. When a milk train went off the rails north of Wanganui in November, the cab of the engine came off, said the general secretary of the Rail and Maritime Transport Union. Fortunately, the driver was in a different engine. Another driver, who gave evidence at last year's ministerial inquiry into Tranz Rail health and safety, told how he fell through the rusted floor of a Dc and cut his leg. Repairs to that locomotive cost nearly \$50,000'.

...7 small towns lose train service in a bid to cut the Auckland to Wellington travel time.' Incidentally, 'a British train company left passengers standing on platforms on the day it pledged all services would arrive on time. Stunned passengers watched the train from Ramsgate to London sweep through four stations without making scheduled stops, because it was running late. "We couldn't believe it," said one stranded commuter. "There's no point in running trains if you don't pick up passengers." The company said: "It is a standard operational decision taken to avoid longer delays to more passengers."'

...the world's longest suspension bridge at almost 4km is due to be completed in 1998, providing the final link between Japan's four main islands'...

The 'Crown Princess of Sweden and Crown Prince of Denmark yesterday inaugurated a bridge linking their countries for the first time since the two were landlocked during the Ice Age 7000 years ago. Wearing construction hard-hats, the royals watched a floating crane put in the last section of the 16km Oeresund Bridge, named after the narrow strait separating eastern Denmark and southern Sweden. When the \$NZ4.2 billion link opens to traffic next July 1 after four years of construction, it will take just 10 minutes to travel between Denmark's capital Copenhagen and the southern Swedish city of Malmo. That compares with today's 45-minute fast-ferry ride. The bridge, built partly across an artificial island, has a four-lane motorway, a dual-track electric railway and an undersea tunnel. Traffic volume is projected at 11,000 motor vehicles daily in the first year. With expected annual growth of 1.7%, bridge tolls should repay the investment in about 30 years.'

...a] planned 95km... 36-metre-wide... bridge linking Indonesia and Malaysia across the Malacca Strait will cost \$[NZ]3 billion and take at least five years to build.

...Macau has proposed to build a \$HK14.1 billion... bridge to link the Portuguese enclave with Hong Kong and the... Chinese city of Zhuhai.

...the world's longest rail and road suspension bridge [will be opened]... in Hong Kong today... The 2.2km long bridge... was built by an Anglo-Japanese consortium...

Hong Kong gave full rein to its party spirit on Sunday by celebrating the opening of a spectacular new suspension bridge in extravagant style, barely a week after a suspected sabotage attempt... Anxiety about security ran high after cables at the bridge were cut... earlier this month... As the shadows lengthened, the former British P[M]... who signed the 1984 treaty governing the handover of Hong Kong to China, declared open what she called "an impressive and inspiring entrance to this modern city." ...Fireworks and lasers lit up the sky... [as curtains] of fire dripped down from the bridge-deck – a pyrotechnic special effect created especially for the \$HK5 million (\$[NZ]933,000) display... For Hong Kong, the \$HK7.2 billion bridge... marks more than just an engineering feat... The bridge links Hong Kong to a new airport taking shape on the island of Lantau... due to open next year... The completion on schedule of [the] vital... component in the \$US20 billion... airport project represents a practical victory over the political row that dogged Sino-British relations... China denounced the project as extravagant and accused the British of trying to squander Hong Kong's wealth. The bickering dragged on for more than five years before agreement was finally reached in 1995. But in the meantime, the Hong Kong Government quietly got on with the work.

...Back in the first heady days of his term as Hong Kong's last British governor, [he] declared he would make his final departure in 1997 from the huge new airport his administration was determined to build... whether China liked it or not. As it turns out, [he']s catching the royal yacht Britannia rather than a plane out of Hong Kong. But he is leaving behind the magnificent airport he promised to build... For years, the British and Chinese wrangled over whether or not the airport should be built and later how the total cost of \$HK156 billion would be met. The Chinese were deeply suspicious that the whole thing was a... plot to drain Hong Kong's coffers of its vast reserves and repatriate that money via architectural, engineering and building contractors to Britain... The Tsing Ma bridge... which will carry the estimated 35 million visitors expected to use the airport every year... was opened this April... [The] bridge is... satisfying Hong Kong's obsession with superlatives. Hong Kong people love to boast of having the world's longest outdoor escalator, the world's busiest container port – although it's only 'the world's third largest container port' – [and of holding the record for the greatest number of Rolls-Royce cars per head... [Hong Kong also 'has several restaurants claiming to be the world's largest'] There is another record in the offing the airport authorities are less proud of. According to the disgruntled airlines the new airport's landing fees will be set much higher than those for Kai Tak airport and will make Chek Lap Kok the world's most expensive airport outside Japan. - 1997

Take about 40[%] of... the N[Z] economy... and you've got the amount the Hong Kong Government has spent on transforming two islands into a state of the art airport... For that sort of money you would expect to produce some amazing trivial statistics – and there are plenty of those. For example... the... terminal is the biggest building in Hong Kong[. it contains]... 6.5km of sheet glass[, and]... the wool used in the 135,000 sq m of carpet... would stretch all the way to the moon – and part the way back – if unravelled... Its baggage claim area alone fits five Boeings wing-to-wing... marine operations to reclaim... 938ha of land... for the airport moved the equivalent of an Empire State Building every five days... the entire reclaimed island is the size of Kowloon peninsula... Few would question Hong Kong's need for a new venue. The lack of space surrounding the old Kai Tak airport in the central Kowloon peninsula – which had become the world's third busiest for cargo – limited its development and constrained capacity. An estimated 15,000 flights could not be accommodated in 1995, costing Hong Kong 2.5 million passengers and billions of dollars in tourism receipts. Chek Lap Kok, on the other hand, has excess capacity. Once the second runway is completed... Chek Lap Kok, which unlike Kai Tak can operate around the clock, will be capable of handling almost 80 movements an hour. Kai Tak could handle only 31. Chek Lap Kok will also have an ultimate capacity of 87 million passengers and nine million tonnes of air cargo a year... [However,] charges at Chek Lap Kok... have come under much scrutiny from airlines – placing a cloud over hopes the airport will become a regional hub. The charges are to ensure the Hong Kong Government gets a 5[%] return on its investment of \$HK50 billion. There seems an unwillingness to buy into the argument that the Government should offset its cost by using the proceeds it stands to get from the sale of land at Kai Tak, estimated to be worth \$HK240 billion... The director of corporate development for Cathay Pacific (Hong Kong's flag carrier)... felt the airport charges[, which are]... about 30 to 40[%] above Kai Tak's]... were "unrealistic" in the current environment... Cathay has more at stake in the airport's succeeding than most, as it is the largest private sector investor, having shelled out \$US1 billion. With hindsight, [the director] admits Cathay had not needed as big a facility from day one... Airlines are not the only ones affected by the high airport charges. Duty free retailer King Power Alpha pulled out of its contract, leaving 12 shops empty at the airport on day one. The blow came despite the Airport Authority appeasing retailers about a month ago by granting them a 50[%] rent reduction for the first six months. For tourists, departure taxes have been cut in half... [to] \$HK50. Travel to and from Chek Lap Kok... [on the] Airport Express train... [that takes] 23 minutes... to[reach] Central HK... has been reduced by 30[%]. Even so, the new airport... adds at least \$HK500 in costs for a family of four holidaying in Hong Kong... Despite the spellbinding... price tag and apparent meticulous preparation, its first days of operation have been marred by problems. Cancelled flights, passengers stranded on the tarmac, software bugs blanking out flight information and misplaced luggage were among the things that went wrong... [By the way,] Kansai International Airport, with its 1.6 km long terminal building with 92-metre high glass ceilings, is the only man-made structure, other than the Great Wall of China, to be visible from space.

...The administrative capital of Malaysia is being progressively moved from Kuala Lumpur to... Putra Jaya, 25km to the south. The new airport – which has cost nearly \$5 billion – is close to this area. A high-speed rail link between Kuala Lumpur and the airport is planned. The journey by road takes between 35 and 40 minutes. The site occupies 100 sq km. The airport has 80 gates and the capacity to handle 25 million passengers a year. When another two runways are built, this is expected to increase to 60 million in 20 years' time... Some parts have been designed to cope with loading "double-decker" jets – super-large passenger planes still at the computer design stage... All domestic, Singapore and mixed flights are served by a pier connected to the main terminal, and all other international flights arrive or depart from a satellite building on the main parking apron. An automated shuttle train takes passengers between the main terminal and satellite building.

...EVEN the elk have been taught how to avoid trains on a high-speed rail link to Oslo's new airport which opened last week. Food has been laid out to lure them to safe underpasses... [A] collision between a train and an elk could spell long delays and missed flights[, although]... most of... the rail track... [is] fenced in to avoid collisions... Human travellers may have a tougher time adapting to Gardermoen airport almost 50km north of the capital... Getting to the airy wood, glass, stone and steel terminal will be the biggest problem. A 14km rail tunnel north of Oslo is unusable because of leaks that have drained lakes from forests above, meaning trains will have to take a long, slow detour. That may prompt travellers to use cars or buses on the already clogged highway between the city and the airport... [However, in] a bid to keep traffic off the roads, the cost of parking a car at the airport will be as high as \$35. And a taxi ride to the airport from Oslo is likely to cost \$135 – almost double the rate between Stockholm and Arlanda airport which is almost an identical distance... Passengers are likely to grumble about long distances in the 819m terminal, despite the distractions of works of art, including... one sculpture widely compared to a penis. The baggage system has crashed repeatedly for charter passengers who have been trying out the \$2.8 billion airport... Officials dismiss the problems as teething troubles. Dubbed "circus Gardermoen" by one television documentary, officials ascribe much of the media doom-mongering to reluctance to give up the convenience of the existing Fornebu airport, just 10km west of the city centre. Fornebu, with one runway to Gardermoen's two, is being closed because of lack of capacity and... Boeing 747 Jumbo jets are unable to land there. Travel is surging in Norway... Air traffic has[risen] from 4 million in 1980 to 11.8 million[, making]... Norway... one of the biggest per capita markets in the world. The country is cut by fjords and mountains, making air the first choice for many.

To keep pace with the rapid growth in tourism, air travel and air freight, Auckland International Airport Limited has spent millions of dollars improving facilities since it [took over the management of NZ]'s primary gateway airport in 1988... Faced with forecasts of twice as many passengers using the airport in the early years of the 21st Century, including a predicted four-fold increase in the number of people who require processing at peak times, [AIAL] has embarked on an even larger project, the complete redevelopment of the International Terminal.

The \$150 million expansion to the international terminal at Auckland Airport is more than two-thirds of the way towards completion. Begun in August 1995, the project is on target to be finished by the end of this year... The airport company's corporate affairs manager... said that the project would double the size of the terminal... Work is almost finished on the ground floor and is about to start on the first floor, where there will be 30 shops – around twice as many as at the existing terminal... She said a difficulty of the expansion was that it was like remodelling a house while still living in it... It was prompted by the 50[%] increase in the number of passengers using the terminal between 1989 and last year.

...Soaring air passenger growth through Auckland might soon out-strip the capacity of a \$150 million airport terminal expansion, Manukau City councillors were told yesterday... Meanwhile... [the] chief executive of [AIAL]... told a planning hearing that... use of the new eastern road access had risen to 12,000 vehicles a day just four months after opening – up from an initial projection of 7000 vehicles – and he suggested a dual carriageway might be needed. - 1996

A commercial “code-sharing” arrangement has been established between Air N[Z] and American airline giant United Airlines... with the two airlines planning to share customers and operational facilities on flights between the U[S, AUS, NZ] and the wider South Pacific region... It is predicted that this will increase the number of passengers flying between North America and N[Z]... The total number of US passengers arriving in N[Z] through Auckland International Airport for 12 months to October 1996 was in excess of 250,000.

Auckland International Airport sees approximately 50 planes arrive from or depart for Los Angeles every week, making it the airport's second most popular international route next to Sydney, which averages about 40 planes per week each way (while approximately one plane a day flies from Auckland to Los Angeles via Sydney). ‘In 1996 the total number of passengers who travelled through the airport was up 7.1% to 7,494,783 (4,452,479 were international travellers); aircraft movements were up 4.5% to 135,762 (23,564 international); cargo totalled 193,004 tonnes (153,262 international).’

On current predictions, passenger movements through Auckland International Airport could increase nearly six times to as many as 18 million a year by 2010. [AIAL] is ready to meet this growth through its Strategic Development Plan which foreshadows an investment in airport facilities of over \$1 billion... Planners are already seriously considering the next major steps – including a new domestic terminal and provision for a second runway to the north of the present runway... - BEYOND 2000

Half a million bags have now been sorted by the new automatic baggage sorting system which was “switched on” in December[1996]. When bags are checked in at the International Terminal they are given a tag with a bar code... A bar code reader reads the baggage tag before selecting which lateral conveyor the bag should follow to be put into a container with the other bags for the same flight. The bar code reader works in a similar way to the bar code reader used at a supermarket checkout. However[as]... the system is automated, there is no operator to check that the baggage tag is in a position in which it can be easily ‘read’. To minimize the potential problems that these difficulties could create, the bar code reader has eight heads which search for the bar code from above, beside, in front, behind and... underneath the bag. If for some reason the bar code can't be read, the bag is directed to a loop where an operator enters the bag's details into the computer... We've come a long way... In just 30 years Auckland International Airport has grown from a small regional operation to... a significant contributor to N[Z]'s economic growth and development... Auckland International Airport today is the home of 28 international airlines, 8 domestic airlines, 6 commuter airlines, 5 cargo airlines, 7000 employees... and over 150 companies... But still we're building for the future... And, in the next 30 years the sky won't be the limit... we're looking to create an airport... that offers greater prosperity and exciting opportunities for our children, and their children after them. - AIAL

A Papatoetoe school fed up with lessons being disrupted by low-flying aircraft from nearby Auckland Airport is seeking compensation. The principal... said noise from planes landing and taking off... disrupted all out-door events, from school assemblies to sports activities... [He] said a new school hall would go part-way to solving the noise problem – and he reckoned the airport should foot the bill... The scream from the jet engines was also a problem inside classrooms, where teachers had difficulty making themselves heard. The nuisance appeared to be getting worse... and the school feared disruptions would increase when a second runway was built. The Manukau City Council is considering setting noise tolerance zones in its 10-yearly district plan and restricting aerial access to the new runway... According to a submission to the council by Residents Against Airport Noise, the school is exposed to “undesirable” average noise levels of 60 decibels... [T]he average noise level was taken over 24 hours – a single aircraft overhead produced a maximum noise level of about 80 decibels to those on the ground. Noise levels could range from 30 to 40 decibels in the council debating chamber, to 90 decibels from a domestic lawn mower. The residents' submission said[four] other primary schools in the area[are] exposed to similar noise levels...

Auckland aviation chiefs went down “on their knees” to Manukau civic leaders yesterday against proposed constraints on a future second runway... A[IAL]'s chief executive... said a ban on using eastern approaches to a parallel runway, expected to be built in 10 to 15 years about 2km north of the existing one, would place a severe and unreasonable limit on a facility of critical importance to Auckland and N[Z]... He confirmed a willingness, however, to accept no or only limited night flights over Papatoetoe from or to the second runway. Pressed by council members, [he] said he did not want to exclude special cases such as emergency landings. Manukau planners say about 60,000 people would be adversely affected by aircraft noise if carte blanche was given to operate the runway from any direction. Their preference is for noise restrictions forcing aircraft to use only the second runway's western approach – over harbour waters – and taxi to the existing one if needed to take off into easterly winds. This would affect only 36,000 residents. The proposed district scheme also required new houses, schools and hospitals in specified zones under the existing runway's flight path to be insulated against noise at the owners' expense.

...Manukau City councillors won a guarded indication from the Auckland airport company yesterday of help in insulating homes from new runway noise. The company's chief executive... initially told a council committee that costs of land-use controls such as insulation must be treated as a “community-wide issue.” He said the company and airlines were investing heavily in new airport facilities and quieter aircraft to the economic benefit of the community at large, so it would be unreasonable to have to foot more costs. Questioned by the committee, however, he left the door open to assisting established home-owners in Papatoetoe and Otara who might need insulation. Manukau planners have proposed noise tolerance zones up to 14km east of the existing runway, where future homes would have to be insulated... The Manukau planners do not believe they can force existing home owners to install insulation retrospectively.

...[‘concern about aircraft noise is a common problem for communities that are situated near an airport. Managing that noise is a challenge for airports worldwide. In a bid to be more proactive and sensitive to community concerns about noise levels, AIAL is a member of the Airports Council International

– the worldwide association of airports, which advocates the need for more stringent aircraft noise and engine emission standards. Its aims are to encourage manufacturers and airlines to produce and operate quieter and cleaner aircraft engines. The likely overall impact of aircraft noise on the environment is measured by a number of factors that take into account: aircraft type and age, landing and takeoff times, flight paths and overall weather conditions.’

... ‘After two years of battling, three trees intruding into Rotorua Airport’s flight path will be cut down to allow Boeing 737-300s to land and take off. Two-thirds of the runway cannot be used because a 4500-strong forest of Kahikatea trees is too high. To meet international safety rules passengers and luggage have at times had to be offloaded to make planes lighter. But the move has angered some Maori. The local Ngati rangi Teaoere hapu argued trimming or felling the Kahikatea would damage the forest and the airport – which the group has a Treaty of Waitangi claim over – should close instead. 400 trees might have to be trimmed or felled to ensure planes could land safely, said the Rotorua Regional Airport Authority chairman. Kahikatea had been cut down in the past, including by the owners – the Ngati Rangiteaorere trust – who chopped down 100 that were shadowing their homes, he said. While the airport authority plans to extend the runway, a report said all planes would be grounded if the 400 trees continued to grow at their current rate and the runway wasn’t lengthened.’]

...TROUBLED air traffic control company Airways Corporation... advertised yesterday for 18 trainee air traffic controllers, twice any previous intake, and also asked the applicants to pay tuition fees for the first time... [The corporation’s operations] manager... said the tuition fee of \$12,000 or \$10,000 if paid in advance, was not excessive when the potential earning power of the job was taken into account. “We can’t guarantee the jobs but it’s our intention that anybody that completes training will get a job,” he said... [while adding that] there was no staffing shortage at Airways Corp... Last week, the *Sunday Star-Times* revealed that Auckland International Airport was without air traffic controllers for a 20 minute period because of a staff shortage. On Wednesday, [the]Transport Minister... ordered a Civil Aviation Authority investigation into the incident. Wellington has also been affected with aircraft being ordered to fly at a separation of 12 miles, rather than nine, during a short staffed eight-hour period on Thursday. The extended separation caused delays for an unknown number of travellers in and out of the capital. Despite the problems, Airways Corp claims N[Z] has an excellent air traffic system and safety is being maintained rigidly, which sometimes disrupts services... During the last 12 months, [it]... has brought controllers from South Africa and Canada. The 10 Canadians had worked out well but three of the eight South Africans had returned home... Meanwhile, flight operators are threatening to withhold tens of thousands of dollars in fees until air traffic control improves.

...Air traffic controllers claim that the Airways Corporation has ordered them not to tell pilots the cause of holdups at airports... When flight delays are expected at an airport controllers have to send out a Notam – notice to airmen – warning of delays and advising the carrying of extra fuel. The Notam lists the reason for the delay. A July corporation memo tells controllers to leave the reason off the list. It says: “A perception has developed that any or all traffic delays are caused by staff shortages.” The controllers’ advocate... said the shortages led “to a curtailment of services from one end of the country to the other.” The Airways Corporation was sufficiently embarrassed by the shortage that it did not want them to be known any more and would prefer not to publicly acknowledge them, he said. The corporation’s operations manager... said... [it] was important for pilots to know the effect of the delays but not the reason behind them. It might be useful for pilots to know that lightning had struck and knocked out a navigation aid, but knowledge of internal operations would be of no use. Meanwhile, a controllers’ internal information bulletin says reduced controller numbers are becoming “the norm” at Wellington Airport. It was claimed that at the weekend one radar controller covered the work usually done by three...

Friday 13 could be a black day for some travellers, as air traffic controllers have called another strike. The controllers... had already given notice of a strike on[the preceding] Monday... Minutes before the strike notice was given, an embarrassed Airways Corporation admitted it bungled its lockout plan for the first strike. It intended suspending the staff for 21 hours after the strike but it failed to deliver up to a third of the lockout notices in time. Two weeks’ notice is legally required by either party for strikes or lockouts... The Airline Pilots Association, which represents the controllers, said the corporation had not told it the lockout threat was withdrawn.

...Air travellers face a morning of frustration today – and no sign was to be seen last night that a further strike by air traffic controllers on Friday will be averted. The three-hour stoppage will bring national and international airports close to a complete halt from 7 am to 10 pm, the peak commuter period... [7] international flights will depart, mostly from Auckland, and none will arrive... Between 10,000 and 20,000 travellers’ plans have been disrupted for the third time in 10 months... Controllers struck for three days from December 4 and for four days from December 12.

...Air traffic controllers say they will strike again after yesterday’s three-hour stoppage. However, the school holidays are likely to be unscathed. The controllers are angry that they have been unable to renew their collective contract with the Airways Corporation. They want a 7.75[%] pay rise but have been offered about 3[%]. At strike meetings yesterday morning they rejected a plea from the corporation to cancel a fourth strike scheduled for Friday and instead discussed the timing of further action... One long-serving controller said that at the Auckland meeting there was considerable frustration. Many of the controllers wanted to hurt the corporation and its management. “There’s no trust any more. There’s so much stress, it’s not a particularly nice place to work.” ...“It’s got nasty, now it’s going to get personal,” another controller said... Controllers did not want their names published. They say they will be sacked if caught talking to reporters.

...Airlines are disappointed that aviation regulators will not relax contingency flight restrictions this morning for another three-hour strike by air traffic controllers... The contingency plan meant reducing more than 400 flights to about 36...

The Airways Corporation and air traffic controllers will return to talks today to try to resolve the pay dispute. Controllers went on strike for the fourth time yesterday, walking off the job at airports throughout the country for three hours from 7am. A repeat of Monday’s action, it affected... about 10,000 travellers. Only the four main centres were part of the Civil Aviation Authority-approved contingency plan and fog closed Christchurch for much of the strike... [A] spokeswoman... said the cost of the strikes to the corporation was significant... An Air N[Z] service clerk said international passengers checking in for domestic flights had been angry, but on the whole passengers had handled the delays well.

...Air N[Z] ground staff have given notice of a strike that could cripple the airline on October 9. About 700 baggage handlers, administrators and receptionists threatened to walk off after pay talks broke down... A strike would ground most of the airline... but an Air N[Z] spokesman... said: “We aren’t of the view that everything comes to a halt.” ...caterers and maintenance engineers, covered by separate collectives, wo[n’t] be involved.

...Air N[Z] maintenance engineers will meet next week to consider lifting a 10-week-old overtime ban, but more than 2000 other workers remain intent on striking... Maintenance engineers backed by two unions began industrial action... against a company proposal to make any pay rise conditional on removing a requirement to give 14 days’ notice of shift changes. Since then Air N[Z] has sent three aircraft overseas for maintenance and there has been some delay to scheduled flights.

...Air N[Z] has upset unionists by looking at opening an Indian accounting office with... salaries starting at \$5000 a year for computer operators, rising to \$10,000 for supervisors and \$30,000 for senior managers... Accounting staff facing job cuts in Auckland are outraged... “Here is a company returning \$200 million-plus in profit seeking to use cheap labour from overseas... It is our national airline – where is their commitment to our country if they are going to sell our jobs to India?” ...A Service Workers Union spokesman... said accounts workers had already been told to expect deep job cuts as part of a company-wide savings project after a \$35 million decline in profit... last year... Air N[Z] saw British Airways, a company with a record of “outsourcing” work, as a model of operating efficiency. British Airways has a large reservations office in Bombay, where clerks linked by computer lines to London take bookings from passengers thousands of kilometres away... Unionists would seek a guarantee that the airline did not intend sending jobs to where workers were paid 20[%] of NZ salaries. By the way, a[... contract to clean Port Vila’s Bauerfield

Airports was awarded to a company which has made political donations to Vanuatu's UMP party, the country's ombudsman... says... The significance of this "dubious transaction" was that the new five-year contract was worth five to six times what it cost the Department of Civil Aviation to do the job themselves, she said. The tender is therefore a needless and reckless misuse of the public's money. She recommended that the politicians responsible pay for the losses they had caused the Government and the people.

...Air N[Z] and Ansett are among airlines considering lifting fares... after a recommendation by the international aviation body for a global rise of 3[%]... This follows an emergency conference of the International Air Transport Association in Geneva over a 43[%] increase in the price of fuel in the past year – 37[%] since June. Prices have rocketed since the renewal of tensions in the Middle East ruined an agreement to bring Iraqi oil back on to the world market... The international organisation... says fuel accounted for an average of 10.9[%] of total operating costs last year... Qantas confirmed that it would raise A[US]n domestic fares by 2.5[%] today... But British Airways, which raised fares by 1[%] several weeks ago, says the strength of the pound sterling[– and a cheaper salary bill, perhaps? –] means it is unlikely to go to the full 3[%]... A Ministry of Transport spokesman... said there were several bilateral agreements between N[Z] and other countries which required airlines to apply "at both ends" to introduce new fares. Aside from these, Air N[Z] and other international airlines operating through this country could apply as a group for an exemption from Commerce Act restrictions against pricing arrangements, and factors such as fuel costs would be considered.

...engineers at Air N[Z]'s three maintenance bases have lifted a three-month-old overtime ban after reaching a deal which a union spokesman said involved a 3.5[%] salary rise now... 2.5[%] next year... and payments of up to \$180 a day had been agreed to for shift changes required by the airline at short notice... [Incidentally, u]sers of Ardmore Airport... are aghast at plans to boost some landing fees by more than 1000[%]. The South Auckland airport's new private owners have provided its 600 users with a proposed fees schedule which some fear will drive them out... Ardmore Airport Ltd, which bought the airport from the Government last year for \$3.42 million, will not discuss the plans before holding a meeting with users in two weeks. A consultation paper sent out this week, however, discloses charges for final landings of 1.35c plus gst for every kilogram of an aircraft's maximum takeoff weight and 0.67c a kilo for "touch and go" manoeuvres. The airport company inherited landing fees of only about \$3.50 for most aircraft, which users acknowledged yesterday were unrealistically low. These are in addition to an air traffic control charge of \$7.31 but have been unchanged since 1987. Users also accept that the company was trying hard to smarten up the 54-year-old airport, which had been neglected in its last years with the Government. But they were shocked to discover the size of the proposed charges, which will vary from about \$11.50 for light Cessna aircraft to \$192 for every landing made by Ardmore's 52-year-old Catalina flying boat. The 12.7 tonne Catalina, owned by a trust of about 100 enthusiasts, now pays about \$18 a landing... Also hard hit will be charter aircraft such as the three-tonne Chieftain air ambulance which faces a charge of almost \$50 compared with \$3.50 now. Its owner... said there were minimal facilities at Ardmore and he accepted having to pay \$40,000 to upgrade his taxiway but the[airport's] new owners "can't have it both ways." ...One industry source suggested flying schools were already looking for grass airstrips nearer Auckland to practice landings instead of facing "touch and go" fees, which... were not charged elsewhere... The general manager of Ardmore Flying School... said the fees would add \$900 to the cost of obtaining a private pilot's licence, \$3500 for commercial tickets and \$5000 for advanced multi-engine instrument ratings. "We are astounded at the magnitude of the increases." His counterpart at the Flightline Aeronautical College... feared the "ridiculous" extra costs might drive students to cheaper airports such as Hamilton or Tauranga.

...Users of Ardmore Airport... have won a compromise over contentious landing fee proposals but are warned of more rises next year... Although the fees are substantially increased, the company says they are generally below an average of charges imposed by 14[similar] airports and this means it must delay some upgrading plans, including those for runway resealing. It describes them as interim only, saying... [the company] will spend the next 12 months formulating future charges aimed at recovering all costs. Missing from the interim scale are fees for "touch and go" practice flights, which would have fallen hardest on flying schools... But the airport company's chief executive... indicated yesterday that these would be reconsidered once ways of recording all aircraft movements had been streamlined. [In related news, 'chronic jet lag causes a part of the brain to shrink and impairs mental functions, including memory. A study compared the size of the brain's temporal lobes of two groups of flight attendants who had different amounts of time to recover from jet lag. MRI scans found the group who had less time between flights had smaller right temporal lobes.']

...Overworked airline pilots on long-haul flights routinely fall asleep at their controls, an aviation industry report has revealed. A Combination of Human Factors Incident Report leaked to[London's] *Sunday Express* newspaper found pilots on transatlantic routes complained of inadequate rest periods between flights. One British pilot reported that... colleagues[are] given just 24 hours' rest on a return flight from the U[S] to Britain... According to the report, pilots complain 24 hours' rest is insufficient to recover from jet lag. Another British pilot said: "The constant three-day transatlantic trips are totally fatiguing. Now I have catnaps of up to one hour on the west-bound portion, as well as the night sector back." ...Flight crews on Qantas aircraft flying the Kangaroo route between A[US] and Britain have two to three days' rest in London before a 12-hour journey to Bangkok or Singapore. They would usually have another night's rest before the final flight back to an A[US]n destination and be given a week off after the nine-day, 35,000km journey to and from the U[K]... Despite aircraft having autopilot systems, the flight crews have to be alert for any sudden incident such as the loss of cabin pressure or turbulence which could destabilise the plane.

...Air travel could become so dangerous if safety standards are not improved that in 10 years the equivalent of 400 passengers on a jumbo jet will die every week in crashes around the world, pilots warned yesterday... at the British Airline Pilots Association's annual conference... [An] emergency resolution to the conference... noted with "regret and dismay" the "worldwide increase in air accidents during the 12 months since last year's conference." The resolution went on: "So far this year there have been 81 fatal accidents resulting in 2376 deaths – which is equal to a 70[%] increase over the whole of 1995." Balpa, the pilot's union, called on Governments, airlines and aviation agencies to "take all possible measures to reduce this appalling accident rate." The conference delegates... were particularly worried about "critically deficient" air safety in Africa... The warning... comes in the wake of the mid-air collision in India between a Saudi jumbo and a Kazakh aircraft in which 350 people died[(in 'the world's worst aviation disaster, 583 people were killed when two Boeing 747s collided on the ground at an airport on March 27, 1977'). However, 'flying is still safer than driving on the road. US National Safety Council statistics from 1986-95 reveal 23,371 car deaths per 100 million miles of travel compared to 125 airline deaths. But it is even more dangerous than either air or car travel to take an after-dark walk in New York']...]

For the second time in as many days, a piece of an aircraft has fallen out of the sky on to a New York street. Police in the Howard Beach neighbourhood of Queens, near John F. Kennedy International airport, said a resident found a 2.8m long forward wingflap... "There is about an inch and a half depression gouged out of the road and there are other little parts of metal in the area... it appears it fell from a great height...,"[a] police detective... said. On Wednesday, a Delta Air Lines jetliner was forced to make an emergency landing because of an engine failure that ejected a 25cm piece of metal from the engine on to two houses and a car in Flushing, Queens. No one was injured in either incident. On Thursday, a fuel tank from an F-16 fighter jet crashed through the roof of a house in San Antonio, Texas. No one was injured.

...[a] '25-year-old Auckland builder knows all about being dropped right in it. He was at a south Auckland building site when a deluge of human waste and chemicals soaked him and splattered the house he was working on. He thinks his unwelcome shower came from a plane discharging effluent before landing at Auckland airport. An AIAL spokesperson said she'd be surprised to find a plane's toilet system – which keeps waste in storage tanks until it can be pumped out – malfunctioned, but wouldn't rule it out. However, the builder doesn't need convincing. "We're right beside the airport and there's planes flying over all the time. Furthermore, where we're working is a wind tunnel so any discharge could have blown this way. At first I thought it was just bird

droppings but there was too much of it. It really stunk – I was dry-retching all afternoon from the smell.” It took several washes to get the smell out of his clothes. He doesn’t know what airline was responsible but says he’s come to see the funny side of it now. “It’s lucky I wasn’t looking up open-mouthed.”

...A ‘Helensville resident believes he can shed light on the mystery brown muck raining down on homes throughout the country – including Huia, where a plumber says his home was splattered with faeces last weekend. Some suspect the waste comes from aircraft. But the resident says ducks are the culprits.’

...*Flying toilet-class* An American had no need to fasten her seatbelt on a flight from Scandinavia to the US after a high-pressure vacuum flush sealed her to the toilet seat of the transatlantic airliner. The American had pushed the flush button while seated. The American had to wait until the Boeing 767 landed so that ground technicians could free her. The American complained to Scandinavian Airlines System after her ordeal’. In local news,] **Kiwi International Airlines** will announce a major “re-focus” this week, after the chief executive said his company “may have bitten off more than we could chew.” ...Kiwi would review its operation following six weeks of problems which left hundreds of passengers irate at flight delays and cancellations. [He] said the airline’s problems stemmed from a mixture of Mt Ruapehu’s volcanic activity, Hamilton fog and a “ridiculous curfew” the Civil Aviation Authority imposed on Hamilton airport. The [CAA] ruled last month that Kiwi and its rival Freedom Air could land at Hamilton only between 10pm and 6am if provided approach control by the Airways Corporation. But Airways did not have enough staff for round-the-clock coverage. After Kiwi took court action, a judge ruled that it could land before 6am, but the plane would have to be empty... [Passengers] on a Friday shopping trip to Sydney did not arrive back in Hamilton until 5am on Saturday, after landing in Auckland and being bused home... to Hamilton...

Passengers... are no longer insured for losses if... Kiwi... collapses... Travel agents were told yesterday that [the company] which offered cover for Kiwi... had withdrawn its service. The company said it would not cover airlines which were not accredited members of the International Air Transport Association... or had not been operating for three consecutive years. Kiwi Air passengers who buy travel insurance must now sign endorsement forms to acknowledge that they are aware of the exception to their policy... [The insurer] has been the only company offering cover in the event of Kiwi’s collapsing since August 9 when Commercial Union amended its policy to rule out non-IATA airlines... The director of travel for... [the insurer] said the company had not singled out Kiwi Air by changing the policy, although it was the only airline affected by the change. The Kiwi rival Freedom Air is covered because it is a subsidiary of Mount Cook Airlines... The Kiwi Air chief executive... said... the company... is not in danger of folding, and... he was not concerned by the withdrawal of the insurance firms.

...Two years ago this month, a 28-year-old former Air N[Z] pilot stunned the nation with the offer of flights to A[US] for less than \$400. [The] chief executive of Kiwi... said he could cut trans-Tasman airfares by half, and fly people out of airports never before considered international gateways. Within months Kiwi... was a name on everyone’s lips, and thousands of travellers sacrificed the in-flight meal and alcohol for the “peanuts and cola” fares to A[US]. Yesterday... the... chief executive... admitted he had got it wrong. He announced a major company restructure at the cost of 91 jobs. Kiwi’s two years in the air have been turbulent and the problems started before day one: 11 days before takeoff, Polynesian Airlines backed out of an agreement to lease Kiwi an aircraft. The theory behind Kiwi was simple: lots of flights at low prices, and at first it was a winner. Within five days of the announcement of the \$349... fares to Brisbane, 3000 people had booked a ticket and expansion into Dunedin and Sydney followed quickly. Air N[Z] was not perturbed... A spokesman... said Kiwi’s popularity would be monitored, but the company would not follow in its footsteps. But the newcomer could not easily be ignored and a year later Freedom Air – which is still Kiwi’s only competition in the cut-price market – was launched in Hamilton, offering flights to A[US] for the same cheap prices. Freedom is a... distant cousin to Air N[Z]. Flushed with its early success, Kiwi announced in September 1995 it would fly into[the Cook Island’s capital of] Rarotonga – a plan that attracted plenty of attention but never got off the ground. Two months later the airline was grounded altogether when two tyres burst during a landing at Sydney. A few days on the ground forced the cancellation of several charter flights – and cost the company \$500,000. But that was quickly overshadowed by the announcement of a \$1.2 million profit, before tax – double what the company had forecast. [The chief executive] hinted at more expansions, but no plan saw the light of day. Freedom meanwhile announced the lowest-ever fares – \$299 to Sydney [(including ‘theatre tickets’ or other types of extras). Kiwi’s chief executive]branded the move as a deliberate attempt to put Kiwi out of business, and said his company could not afford to match the fares. But with almost the next breath, [the company did and he] announced more expansion and aimed his nose at Perth and Melbourne. The new schedule which started in July, brought the number of Kiwi flights to 30 per week. In the next few months Kiwi’s plans to run a domestic schedule and to fly into Asia were both curbed, as were [his] own political aspirations – he shelved plans to stand for N[Z] First in the Hamilton West electorate. In April 1996 the first hints of major changes for Kiwi began to eventuate. The airline’s 757 jet was recalled by its owners, and replaced with a smaller plane. Three quarters of the people booked to fly with the airline in May were suddenly out of a seat. Chaos followed as passengers demanded their money back or rescheduling... But Kiwi ploughed on and in May a new plane – the A320 Airbus – touched down in Hamilton ready for service, instantly doubling the airline’s capacity. Bookings were steady and the airline was running smoothly until... the ash clouds [started]billowing out of Mt Ruapehu. The airline – like all others – had to reschedule, postpone and cancel flights. Airports were closed and the costs of transporting passengers to their original destinations escalated. Then came a C[AA] announcement it would inquire into Kiwi’s use of check-in staff as cabin crew, which was soon followed by the authority’s decision to put a curfew on flights between 10 pm and 6 am... [Kiwi’s chief executive] threatened to pull his airline out of... [Hamilton Airport (which – largely for the benefit of Kiwi – had invested in an upgraded terminal)] if the problem was not resolved, but backed down when the CAA offered a flight by flight coverage. But the solution came too late to avoid disruption to the travel plans of hundreds of passengers... Kiwi’s new focus is solely on its provincial regions. The Christchurch operation has been scaled down... Kiwi will no longer land in Auckland or Perth, and one of the two planes has been returned to its owner. Its 30 flights per week have been reduced to 14. The days of the \$299 fares have also gone, and “this company will probably never offer flights at that price again,”... The standard fare will remain under \$400 however, which... was a “fair price, and a sustainable one for Kiwi.” Luckily... the [airline’s]support... in Hamilton has not waned despite all the problem[s it]s passengers have faced... Day after day for the past two years the *Waikato Times* has printed a string of letters to the editor, praising [Kiwi’s chief executive] for choosing Hamilton as a base. His popularity has also spilled over to the wider community. Last month [he] was voted resoundingly onto WEL Trust – the community trust holding 40[%] of the Waikato community’s power company and in March he was judged Waikato Entrepreneur of the Year. He may have a vote of confidence from the community, but things look a little different at work. This week one of [his] fellow company directors, and[a] close personal friend... walked away from Kiwi, citing “differences” as his reason. The company lawyer... was “terminated” – his own word – recently, while another company director... is soon to shift to Brisbane... The fourth member of the original shareholders... resigned last year because of a conflict of interest. That leaves [the chief executive] alone on the flight deck. “You can’t read anything into that though,” he says. “There are various reasons for those things that don’t actually point to company problems.” ...his resolve to turn Kiwi around has hardened. He said the decision to reduce its operation and cut staff was the right one, and Kiwi will now start over. “But we’ll still be here... in five years, probably bigger and better. I have every confidence that I’m going to pull this off.”

...While Kiwi retreats back to the regions to regroup and lick its wounds, others are moving into the gap already. From a Brisbane base, Central Pacific Airlines will offer Brisbane/Auckland return trips on Fridays and Saturdays... Central plans to follow the Kiwi model in offering \$359 cheap seats with a boxed lunch and no free booze. But[a Central] spokesman... who is well aware of the Kiwi story, says his plan is to provide a solely travel agent-based service. Forget the big advertising campaigns. In A[US], he says, agents sell 60[%] of airline tickets. [Central] will also test the underdog theory, but... has no plans to move further afield. “Staying put is the way you keep your costs down, and you get to keep your

regional loyalty,”... While Central Pacific will stay well away from Sydney (which... is over-served by airlines) rumours are wafting over about a little aviation company based there with a brand-spanking new overseas operator’s licence and an eye on Auckland – city of aviator’s dreams... The news that Kiwi... is limiting its operation to the provincial gateways of Hamilton... and Dunedin comes as no surprise to those within the industry. Many say that in straying from its regional corners Kiwi lost its way – and Kiwi is not the first little airline in the world to take that particular wrong turning... [An] aviation analyst... has had her eye on Kiwi... since its inception. She says most start-up airlines fail, mainly because they are undercapitalised. Look at the difference in shareholders’ funds between Kiwi and Freedom Air (a subsidiary of Air N[Z]), she says. Freedom... has... funds of \$1.2 billion. [She] understands that Kiwi started out with about \$750,000 – “which is not adequate really.” ...Competing against the big, rich and powerful airlines was always going to be a problem... Still, she says, things were looking healthy for the airline, but only if nothing went wrong. Things went wrong all over the place [– including the same ‘engine start-up fault occurring three weeks in a row at Sydney’ – and] Kiwi was also forced to take part in a price war which... was not necessarily of their own choosing... But all of these factors are standard problems, she says, “and the reasons many small start-up airlines are grounded.” [However, she] stresses that while she thinks the company “...moved a bit too fast, none of this means they’re going to go bust.”

...Around 3000 passengers were stranded last night on both sides of the Tasman, as Kiwi... came to an abrupt halt, grounding both its planes... [A]ccountants began a post-mortem examination of the Hamilton-based Kiwi yesterday, following the announcement the airline was going into voluntary liquidation... [The] founder of the two-year old airline... admitted defeat yesterday, and blamed a legal wrangle with the owner of one of its planes – Region Air – for “hammering the final nail” in Kiwi’s coffin. Kiwi was forced to take court action against Region Air three times last week, after the Singapore-based company terminated the lease on Kiwi’s A320 Airbus without warning. The Queensland Supreme Court finally ordered Region Air to continue with Kiwi’s flights last Monday night. Kiwi... filed a multimillion-dollar claim against Region Air for damages incurred in the three days the plane was grounded in Brisbane. But the grounding cost Kiwi almost \$3 million – costs that [the chief executive] said were not likely to be recovered without a “long, drawn-out court case. In the end we just could not wait for that, we just did not have the cash on hand to keep running.” He said the public lost confidence in the airline, “and at the end of the day, that’s the final blow.” He said he was sure the liquidators would continue to “aggressively” seek damages, and said the amount sought was left open to incorporate the losses following the liquidation. The liquidators... said it was too early to comment on the amount of debt owed by Kiwi. Passengers who were already in transit would be offered flights home by Qantas, Air N[Z] and Freedom for a further \$150, but passengers who booked and paid for flights from today onwards have become unsecured creditors. Travel agents were bracing themselves last night for an onslaught of calls from passengers... Auckland travel agents were already busy fielding calls from would-be Kiwi passengers wanting other seats across the Tasman. Kiwi’s 259 staff in Hamilton, Dunedin and Brisbane have all lost their jobs and are unlikely to be paid redundancy money. But they have refused to criticise their employer, and many stayed on at Kiwi headquarters yesterday to help with incoming calls, despite the liquidator’s insistence to lock up the building. In Hamilton, staff applauded [the chief executive] after being told of Kiwi’s liquidation, and sang *How Great Thou Art* in Maori. “They said they don’t blame me for what has happened. They are... very loyal... I could not have asked for a better team to go to battle with,” [the chief executive] said. The staff will be told by the liquidators later this week if they will receive their final pay.

...Some redundant Kiwi... staff say that they were surprised the collapsed airline lasted as long as it did, and had expected yesterday’s news that they would not be getting paid. The... liquidator... explained that staff fell into two groups: unsecured creditors, who were “highly unlikely” to see their money, and preferential creditors, who he “could not guarantee” would be paid. The first group was owed bonds, redundancy, notice of redundancy and sick pay, while the preferential creditors were awaiting wages and holiday pay. Workers in Kiwi’s Christchurch office, who had not been formally told of the liquidator’s announcement, said they had been “kept in the dark” about the airline’s collapse all week. One of the check-in staff... said she was told on Monday – the day the airline went into liquidation – that she “might not be needed to work the next day.” ...“That’s the risk you take with any job I suppose. We don’t blame anyone, it’s just one of those things.”

...[when asked whether the Government intended to introduce legislation to give air travellers greater protection following Kiwi’s collapse, the PM replied that ‘it isn’t the Government’s responsibility to sort out the problems of the free market’]...

Two travel insurers are set to pay \$2 million to passengers booked on the failed airline... The manager of Commercial Union Travel Insurance... estimated the company would lose close to \$1 million in payouts... for bookings made before August 9... [T]he loss to the company was its biggest in several years... The travel director of the... last... insurance broker... to pull the plug on Kiwi... would have to pay around \$700,000 but he estimated the final figure would be closer to \$1 million.

...Around 12,000 Kiwi... customers holding unused tickets are most unlikely to get any money back, the liquidators said yesterday... [while confirming] that tickets issued and paid for, but not used, had a face value of around \$5 million.

...Kiwi Air liquidators are seeking a court injunction to prevent \$US2.5 million of spares and equipment used by the failed airline from being taken out of N[Z]... However, the counsel for the aircraft leasing company Region Air Ltd... said most of the equipment belonged to third parties who had not been given the opportunity to be heard in court. She said only about \$US400,000 of the assets were owned by Region Air... Kiwi’s lease liabilities were far higher than the \$US1.1 million deposit it had paid Region Air. She said the evidence before the court suggested Kiwi was “totally insolvent.” ...In an earlier hearing yesterday, [a judge]... rescinded a High Court order he made 12 days ago preventing Region Air from repossessing the A320 Airbus it leased to Kiwi and upholding the contract between the two companies... [The judge] said he would not have made the order if he had known Kiwi’s financial position at the time. Meanwhile, one of Kiwi’s liquidators... was unable to say what assets the airline had... “Quite honestly, at this stage it is unlikely that there will be much recovery for creditors...,” [he] said...

The failed airline Kiwi International has left debts that could total more than \$8 million... [The AUS]n Customs Service is also understood to be a major creditor, having lost about \$1.2 million in departure tax... A[US]’s Federal Airport Corporation was owed at least... \$209,000... and Qantas A[US] about... \$581,000... for ground handling fees... Another creditor, Air Services A[US], seized one of Kiwi’s former aircraft... after it landed at Brisbane about 2 am yesterday. A source said the aircraft was to have refuelled at the airport after leaving N[Z] for Europe, but was impounded by Air Services in lieu of the... \$381,000... it says it is owed for two months of unpaid airport fees... Kiwi’s other jet... leased from... Region Air Ltd, had also been impounded for unpaid airport fees but was now back in Singapore. Meanwhile, the airline’s liquidators have failed to obtain an injunction preventing Region Air from taking... \$3.6 million... of aircraft spares and equipment... out of N[Z]. The... High Court... dismissed the application, saying... [under] the terms of the lease Region Air was entitled to deduct more than... \$2.9 million... in costs, the biggest of which was a... \$1.275 million... cancellation fee payable to the owner of the... plane. Other expenses included... \$381,000... paid to Air Services by Region Air on behalf of Kiwi after the Airbus was impounded at Brisbane.

...The \$70 million A320 Airbus, owned by a Dublin-registered Japanese company... was leased to... Region Air Ltd for a total of \$US375,000 a month. Region Air in turn leased the aircraft to Kiwi International, supplying aircrew... Kiwi agreed to pay... an initial... security deposit... of \$US920,000 and six monthly instalments of \$US65,000. Kiwi was also obliged to pay a minimum rental of \$US907,500 on the 12th day of each month... Region Air representatives visited... Kiwi... on August 18 after [the airline] failed to pay its monthly security deposit instalment. [Kiwi’s chief executive] blamed various problems for the airline’s failure to meet its obligations... [and] asked for a later payment date for the monthly rental... In a letter faxed to Region Air... he... said... “Kiwi now finds itself in a difficult position. We hope that with your help we can work our way out of this problem.” ...On August 26 Region Air told Kiwi it would not agree to defer the monthly rental but indicated it would accept a

change in monthly payment dates provided all accounts outstanding were paid in full within five days... The next day Region Air gave formal notice of its intention to terminate the lease on the Airbus.

...The Sultan of Brunei... has given one of his daughters an Airbus A340, worth about \$US100 million, for her 18th birthday. It is being painted grey, black and green, her favourite colours... [In local news, only 2700 pre-paying Kiwi International passengers did not get their fares refunded by banks or insurance companies after the airline's liquidation, the] airline's former chief executive... said yesterday... "At the end of the day only \$1.5 million was lost by the travelling public, although for anyone to lose anything was very regrettable and for that I am very sorry." ...[a further \$1.2 million is owed to AUS]n Customs and \$700,000 to Qantas A[US]. The national manager of A[US]n Customs passenger processing... yesterday confirmed Customs was owed \$1.2 million and it was still deciding if any civil action could be taken to recover the money. Although it ended up as a major creditor, at one stage of Kiwi International's operation Qantas was negotiating to form an alliance with the Hamilton airline. In [the former chief executive]'s book about Kiwi, titled *Dogfight*, which went on sale this week, he explained how he spend two weeks working with Qantas' N[Z] and Pacific operations manager... on the possible alliance... Kiwi would deliver passengers from Hamilton to Sydney, where they would board a Qantas flight to a further destination in Europe or Asia. The talks came in August as Kiwi tried to work out a "recovery plan" after finding the airline was heading for a \$500,000 loss. "The possibility of Qantas and Kiwi having a full alliance was so exciting, it was beyond words," [the former chief executive] said in the book. But Qantas decided not to go through with the alliance... *Dogfight* will be officially launched in Hamilton next week, and the proceeds of the book will go to the liquidators.

...The founder of failed Kiwi [Air]... will take a figurehead role in a new transtasman airline, set to fly from provincial airports from next July. [He] said yesterday that he had accepted the position after negotiating with the airline to fly 2700... no[n]-refunded... Kiwi... passengers for free... But the establishment of the airline depends on whether [he] can persuade an MP to introduce a member's bill... modelled on legislation similar to that used in Britain... giving 18 months' protection to the first airline to fly to a particular destination. The bill would prevent existing airlines, or their subsidiaries, flying to the same destination, but would allow new airlines to compete... [Kiwi's founder] would not reveal the identity of the new airline, but said it was a "relatively well known UK airline." An unnamed N[Z] investor would also be involved in the new company... Its accounts would be managed by a unique trust system that would prevent money from pre-paying passengers being used until the day after the passenger had flown... [Kiwi's founder] would not have shares in the company or be on the board... An investigation by the Companies Office into the actions of [its founder] and the other directors of Kiwi International is... under way. - 1996

Directors of... Kiwi were "reckless and careless" to keep operating after they were told they were heading for a loss of \$2.8 million, says a Commerce Ministry report. But the report also says there were "justifiable" reasons for Kiwi to keep trading in the short term after July 1996, when it was told by its advisers... it was insolvent. The report... gives causes of failure as: • Inadequate accounting systems. • Inadequate management reporting systems. • Mismanagement of pre-paid ticket income. • Inexperienced and under-resourced accounting staff. • Under-capitalisation. • Lower yields and loading resulting from competition from other airlines... • Inexperience of, and mismanagement by, directors... [Although the airline's] board... tried to find an urgent solution... in July... they did not take legal advice from Kiwi's then lawyer... to put passenger deposits into a separate trust fund... [The] founder and chief executive... faces six fraud charges relating to the airline's 1995 application for an international air licence.

...the founder of collapsed budget airline Kiwi... has switched from plying the airways to selling the airwaves. After completing... study at the Waikato University law school, [he] has taken a job as national marketing manager for Auckland-based cellphone and technology company ROCOM Communications Ltd... A director of ROCOM... said the company expected the appointment, and[a] continuing court battle, to bring both good and bad publicity... This year [the Kiwi founder] was committed for trial in the Hamilton District Court... He has successfully applied to have the depositions hearing re-opened next month so he can have new evidence presented. He will then ask the judge to dismiss the charges.

...[the Kiwi Air founder's] parents testified in court yesterday as part of... [his] fight against five fraud charges... The case against him centres around statements he made about his financial situation while Kiwi was evolving from a charter service into an airline... The prosecution alleges [he] misrepresented his own financial position, and that of two other airline shareholders, in a bid to raise money required for the air services licence. Yesterday a banking consultant... told the court that statements of financial position produced as evidence of the alleged fraud were "inadequate" as credit application forms. The crown prosecutor... said [the consultant's] testimony was irrelevant because evidence given at a... depositions hearing made it clear the documents had the potential to be used fraudulently.

...[Yesterday Kiwi's founder was found 'guilty on four counts of fraud.' The airline was estimated to have lost in total 'close to \$35 million.']

...The liquidators of Kiwi... are taking court action to recover money they claim the collapsed... company's four shareholders owe... The claims relate to drawings on the company's shareholders' current account... [A] lawyer for the liquidators... said the amounts sought ranged from about \$16,000 to \$200,000... [He] said the hearing was likely to be adjourned until[early next] year because not all the shareholders had been served with notice of the action.

...Air N[Z] has] admitted that the cost of flying the Tasman would keep climbing without Kiwi International to hold fares down. The company's chief executive... indicated that the days of "unsustainable" return fares of \$399 to A[US] were well and truly over... He indicated that the standard fare might climb back to the pre-Kiwi level, which... was \$649... His confession was decried by the Consumers' Institute as sad news for travellers. Its chief executive... recalled comments from Air N[Z] after Kiwi's collapse... that this would not influence the larger airline's own pricing structure... Several Auckland travel agents were yesterday offering \$529 return fares... and one quoted \$505. The lowest quoted return fare was for \$435 with Thai Airways, which flies across the Tasman three times a week... Freedom Air, which Air N[Z] formed to compete with Kiwi, is offering fares ranging from \$459... Air N[Z]'s chairman... said Freedom would continue to have a place serving a secondary market... [The chief executive] said at a briefing held to discuss a 43[%] drop in Air N[Z]'s overall profit for the six months to December that it had cost a substantial amount to match Kiwi's "irrational" pricing. He would not say how much, but the airline has reported a \$3.9 million revenue drop on A[US]n routes over this period... [of] unprecedented transtasman travel.

...Air N[Z] may announce redundancies next week as part of Project Save, which aims to save the company \$100 million a year in operating costs. The airline would neither confirm nor deny when the announcement would be made. It was reported before Christmas that Air N[Z] could lay off as many as 1000 of its 10,000 staff early this year and was considering contracting out services such as baggage handling, catering and ticketing. Unions representing staff at the company have not been advised of the announcement. Analysts, who had predicted \$200 million in annual profit for the airline, have lowered their forecast to \$180 million.

...Air N[Z] has quietly slashed 800 jobs... under its "Project Save" cost-cutting drive, and hundreds more might follow. The airline disclosed yesterday that it had paid \$25.4 million in restructuring charges... mostly as compensation to redundant staff, and slimmed its workforce to about 8500... The project had already yielded \$15 million in cost cuts and would reach its annual savings target of \$100 million this financial year... [T]he airline had "liberated" capital from non-core business by selling its catering for a \$6 million profit, passing the management of its Auckland computer centre to IBM and merging its Christchurch engineering operations. It had also removed duplication of tasks. All but 50 to 100 catering staff are believed to have been re-employed by the new owner, Cater Air, though unionists say they are on lower pay.

...Former Air N[Z] in-flight catering staff protested yesterday against the... refusal of their new employer, Caterair, to allow Service and Food Workers' Union officials access to staff in the workplace... 60 staff and supporters rallied outside the... company... premises... at Auckland Airport.

...An American firm which took over Air N[Z]'s in-flight catering business has been accused of using heavy-handed tactics to keep a trade union away from its staff... A union official... said that on two previous occasions union organisers had been refused access to the site despite giving written notice of their intention... Cater Air management had told her she would not have access to staff in the workplace until the contracts came up for renegotiation in 2 1/2 years... [The official] said the union had filed a claim in the Employment Court to have employment contracts offered by Cater Air to its... staff struck out on the grounds that they were harsh and oppressive... And the Labour Department has been chided for giving... Cater Air, an employment award... A department manager... said Cater Air's award was for hiring 44 unemployed people. But... [the union organiser] said the Labour Department's employment service had failed to recognise that Air N[Z] had made all the 380 catering staff redundant when it sold the business, which allowed Cater Air to re-employ some of them on reduced wages and conditions... [while] between 70 and 80... former staff... were struggling to find new jobs... She... [also] said that in the U[S] Cater Air had violated labour laws by withdrawing recognition of a union, refusing to bargain with the union and sacking workers for striking. It had been forced to pay about \$4 million in backpay, bonuses and interest to 235 Teamsters Union members.

...The Government will not withdraw the employment award it gave to Cater Air... the Minister of Labour... said... in Parliament yesterday...

Cater Air's anti-union actions were illegal now but could become legal if the Employment Courts Act were altered, says [a] Labour list MP... He said Cater Air... was obliged to allow unions access to members... [but] it was ominous that the removal of a worker's right to be represented was a law change being considered by the Minister of Labour...

[U]nder a decision just issued by the Employment Court... [the] former leading-hand catering assistant at Auckland Airport stands to gain... [compensation] from... Air N[Z] after being consoled over his mother's death and then sacked moments later... [The] 51-year-old Mangere man said... [he] was sacked with a week's pay in lieu of notice for what Air N[Z] said were his frequent sick days off, often unpaid, from a chronic disease of the pancreas. But the court noted that he ought to have been entitled to bereavement leave during a period in which his manager... said he had taken too many days off... [The] Judge... accused the company of "improper considerations" in deciding to dismiss [the leading-hand] before making hundreds of catering workers redundant... These considerations were... dismissing him on a week's notice instead of making a redundancy payout[, that]... the airline was wrong to blame workers for losing catering contracts... and... criticism of managers at a staff meeting... The judge has left it to the parties to work out the exact amount, but said [the leading-hand] would have received more than \$30,000 had he been made redundant... Air N[Z] may decide to lodge an appeal.

...Two of Air N[Z]'s regional airlines will be hit by pilots' strikes on Monday, after... [the] company failed in a bid in the Employment Court in Auckland yesterday to gain an injunction... [Members] of the Air Line Pilots' Association... intend stopping work for 18 hours at Air Nelson, their second strike against that airline, and for eight hours at Hamilton-based Eagle Air... About 81 of Eagle's 101 pilots will take part in the industrial action, and about 130 of Air Nelson's 155 pilots... Both airlines say they have contingency plans to minimise disruption to passengers. Air Nelson hopes to move all booked passengers with non-union pilots and some help from chartered aircraft... The pilots' action is the result of stalled contract negotiations, some of which have been going on for months... The company had offered a 3[%] wage rise for this year against a range of increases the pilots claimed – as high as 20[%] for first officers on Saab aircraft... Ansett N[Z] pilots are planning a 24-hour strike...

Negotiators for Ansett N[Z] pilots will meet the airline in Auckland today for more talks aimed at heading off a... stoppage... [by] 140 pilots...

A one-day strike by Ansett N[Z] pilots planned for Friday has been called off. They said a year-long settlement had been agreed to and a "mechanism for working parties to address a number of difficult issues" put in place.

...Ansett N[Z] has reported a 23[%] fall in operating profit to \$7 million for the year[, a result which was]... better than the company expected... Ansett NZ, which is 100[%] owned by... News Corp, turned in revenue of \$264 million. Passenger numbers grew 7.7[%] to give the company a 36[%] share of the local market. On the main trunks, Ansett's share has risen to some 50[%]. The airline's chief executive... said... News Corp... was happy with the performance of Ansett NZ for 1996/97. He declined to comment on speculation that News Corp was looking at a leasing or franchise arrangement with Qantas, or selling Ansett NZ to N[Z] investors. Another option reportedly being considered as a way out for News Corp was a float of the airline, which has accumulated losses of over \$200 million since 1987[– when the airline was formed and built a terminal next door to Auckland Airport's existing domestic terminal, which is predominantly used by Air NZ]. - 1997

Air N[Z] is prepared for... [an increase in business today as s]triking pilots... force... Ansett N[Z] to cancel another 100 flights... The pilots, all members of the Airline Pilots Association (Alpa), are on strike from 4 this morning till 4 am tomorrow. [However, t]he chief executive of Ansett NZ... said the strikes were "only hardening management determination to secure the changed work practices the company is looking for. We have had enough of the out-moded industrial tactics used by the union." Today's is the second 24-hour strike by Ansett pilots in less than a week, and stems from stalled discussions over a new employment contract... An Alpa spokesman... said the company wanted to... lay off 30 to 35 pilots out of a total of 146... and... extend pilot flying hours[by '16 hours a month. Currently, Ansett NZ pilots fly a total of 82 hours a month'. Their]... present flying and duty times are almost identical to Air N[Z]'s.

...Ansett has closed its bookings for next Tuesday and is bracing for further industrial action after a second pilots' strike yesterday... [An] Ansett spokesman... said passengers were transferred to Air N[Z] or had their flights changed before the strike... The pilots are striking in protest at new contracts which... [are designed to] save Ansett \$5 million a year.

...The third 24-hour strike this month by Ansett pilots is set to halt 100 flights today. An A[lp]a spokesman... said the strike would go ahead unless the company negotiated the pilots' contract... [But] Ansett management has refused to discuss changes to the... contract it has drawn up.

...After losing \$2.25 million from three days of strike action, Ansett N[Z] says it will offer a new employment contract to its pilots.

...The travel plans of about 1000 people were disrupted yesterday when 25 of Ansett N[Z]'s 146 pilots called in sick and 50 flights were cancelled. Similar numbers are expected to be hit today after Ansett decided last night that it would cancel at least 15 flights. More may be cancelled depending on how many pilots declare themselves unfit for work. The dispute has spiralled out of control since the threat of lockout notices was made this week... [and b]oth sides say they will not budge... Previously, the pilots had held three one-day strikes, in each case giving the fortnight's notice required in "essential" industries... A fourth strike is planned [in a fortnight's time] and, if the collective contract is not settled three days later, Ansett says it will lock the pilots out... The airline has been trying to recruit pilots on short-term contracts.

...The International Federation of Airline Pilots is telling foreign pilots to stay away from strife-torn Ansett N[Z]. NZ's Alpa is part of the federation, which covers about 100,000 members. Ansett N[Z] has issued lockout notices to its striking pilots and has been trying to recruit overseas pilots on short-term contracts to keep its planes in the air... [Alpa] asked the federation to blacklist the airline after learning that Ansett was advertising on the Internet for pilots from A[US]. The federation's executive director... said last night that it could not enforce the ban, "but it's effective to the extent people do not want to become scabs." Ansett's spokesman... said the company had not been told officially it was on a federation blacklist so would not comment... [He] continued to refuse to discuss how many pilots had been recruited or if they had begun training. Fourteen flights were cancelled yesterday because of pilots calling in sick.

...**STRIKE-BUSTING** foreign pilots are expected to start training with Ansett N[Z] this week as its industrial row escalates. The pilots – including some from A[US] – will receive classroom, simulator and cockpit training over the next month, under a veil of secrecy and security.

...Foreign pilots... will be barred by immigration rules from flying to Ansett N[Z]'s aid. The pilots would not meet the work permit requirements needed to take up short-term contracts during the lockout because Ansett pilots were still available for work, said [the]Immigration Minister... in reply to a query from [a Labour MP]... However, the ban does not apply to A[US]n pilots, who do not need work permits. Ansett... locked out 125 pilots last week in the dispute over a new contract, [which six]... pilots are now believed to have signed... [An Alpa spokesman] said the remaining staff were still determined to fight.

...*Judgment renews Ansett dogfight*... Another bitter argument between Ansett N[Z] and its pilots started yesterday over an Employment Court decision, despite the judge's hope it would calm the industrial waters. [The j]udge... granted an interim injunction preventing the airline from contacting employees direct about their industrial dispute, but then both sides launched into another argument[over] whether it extended to all 146 pilots or just the six named in the papers... [Alpa had] complained that Ansett N[Z] breached the Employment Contracts Act last month by sending a copy of its contract directly to the pilots, thereby undermining its role. [The j]udge... said in her decision that relations between both sides could hardly be worse...

DANGEROUS things, advertising slogans. One moment they're a statement of intent – perhaps even of fact – and the next day they can sound like a fiction dreamed up by some deranged marketing imagination. Take Ansett N[Z]'s motto: "Our People Make Us Ansett." It comes as no surprise, as the airline's lockout of about 130 pilots enters day 17, that the phrase rings hollow for those on one side of the dispute's industrial divide. "That slogan's absolute bullshit now," says one locked-out pilot who we'll call Bob (he, like every other Ansett pilot, cannot give his real name because his expired employment contract says he can't talk to the media). What is surprising, however, is the tone of surprised bitterness in Bob's voice. Since joining Ansett less than five years ago, he and his partner... freely admit they have been well and fairly treated by the country's second domestic airline. So much so, [his partner] says, that friends who are pilots with other airlines have been jealous of the relationship between Ansett and its pilots. But that was then and this is now. In just a few weeks they, and most of Ansett's other 146 collective-contract pilots, have been humming a different tune. The reason: a loss-making Ansett N[Z] wants to be more competitive for its owner... News Corp, and, claim the pilots (though the airline strenuously denies it), to make it a more tempting purchase for a new owner. To do one or both those things, Ansett needs to save \$4.7 million a year. To do that it needs pilots on a new employment contract, make 35 of them redundant and have the rest flying longer hours. No deal, the pilots and their union... told Ansett. They believe the new contract will compromise professionalism and passenger safety. No choice, said the airline... News Corp has a reputation for being tough-minded in its approach to industrial relations, says... the... industrial editor... [for the] *Sydney Morning Herald*... It is... the company which, along with TNT, helped to see off the pilots and their union in A[US] during the campaign against Ansett A[US] and AUS]n Airlines over pilot pay demands a decade ago. Out of the 1600 workers involved in that dispute, about 350 were taken back by 1990 and 50 have since returned. About 400 pilots have retired, or accepted that they will not fly again and taken other jobs. But the bulk of about 500 moved overseas to fly – the largest single exodus of A[US]n labour – and now call themselves "exiles"... So was there any other option for Ansett N[Z]? An airline spokesman says he's not aware of any... "We tried to get a meeting of minds on this. We've offered them the opportunity to have their accountants go through the books to satisfy them that what we've been saying about the financial position is correct, but they've declined that... At the end of the day, when you get to a position when people are not only not prepared to listen but not prepared to hear, then you are left with very few options to where you can go next." He says the length of the dispute is now immaterial, and that Ansett is prepared to spend money now... to secure what it wants: a profitable future. "It will be resolved, to the company's satisfaction." [So far the dispute has 'cost the company twice what it planned to save']

...*The 28-day lockout has ended, the planes are to fly again but the battle has left scars*... "I feel betrayed by the pilots who came in from the outside. I think factory workers would have stuck together. Scab is a nasty word, but it's one that will be heard around Ansett for a long time." That is an emotive burst from a pilot, more usually a disembodied voice from the cockpit telling airline passengers the altitude or weather conditions at the flight's destination. The 130 pilots' decision to go back to work has come none to soon for some people, including tourism operators in Queenstown whose businesses have been hit by the reduction in flights. "There is urgency for Ansett N[Z] to give priority to restoring those services quickly so business can return to normal," the Tourism Industry Association's chief executive... said yesterday. "Normal" it will not be for the pilots... One said: "This is not even the same contract we were offered back in July. It's got worse... I've lost about \$30,000 in pay and superannuation benefits, a fifth of my annual leave and all medical insurance provisions. Sick leave is now a quarter of what it was. We used to have three months because of the nature of the job. If you have a cold or blocked ears, you can't work." Another pilot, a veteran of more than 10 years with Ansett, said: "It has been financially stressful, but the fact that I thought they valued me as staff and then to find out that they didn't hurts even more... Ansett... kn[ew they could] get away with giving us a good kicking. They will rebrand, remarket and carry on... The public have short memories. They will buy the cheapest ticket." ...How did the[pilots] survive almost a month with no pay? Some flew part-time for other companies. Others relished the chance to spend the school holidays with their kids. Money was growing tight for some. One picked lemons. Another rented out his house and moved his family in with his parents. Many sought mortgage holidays from their banks... Any regrets? "None at all. It's been a fight worth fighting... Who would sign a worse contract that has not one common clause with the one you had without a fight?" A[third pilot] said: "The perceptions of pilots as rich, lazy bastards is really insulting. I've been working in this industry for 20 years and averaged a salary of \$47,000 a year. The job can be quite lucrative if you take an international job, but I've always wanted to stay in N[Z]." His 20 years led to a salary of about \$60,000. Yes, the "top tier" can earn over \$100,000 but the average is \$70,000 to \$80,000 at a guess... [● Earlier this year t]he *Sunday Star-Times* revealed... [that] Qantas was again interested in buying Ansett N[Z] from News Corp, provided Ansett sorted out its employment contracts, which it says are a throwback to the 1980s and no longer sustainable. Ansett has lost more than \$250 million since starting in 1987.

...Qantas is looking closely at setting up a domestic service in N[Z]. Sources in the A[US]n airline say it may forget about buying the... troubled Ansett N[Z] and start an airline from scratch... Qantas ha[s two further] options: ...operating with local investors; or doing nothing... Qantas wants to establish domestic services here to boost its international flights from Auckland to A[US], the Pacific Islands, South America and the U[S]. By the way, Qantas has been ranked 'the 15th largest airline in the world. Air NZ is in 39th' place...

'Air NZ has a new shareholder, an American investment company. Franklin Resources, which has also bought a 6 1/2% share of Trans Rail for about \$70 million, paid Qantas more than a quarter of a billion dollars for an 11% stake in our airline.'

... 'Air NZ, which spent most of 1996 tightening its operations, is forecasting clearer skies ahead: a net profit of \$200 million for the 1998 financial year. The profit forecast would mean a 33% rise from the \$150.2 million reported for the year just ended, compared with a 33% fall in profits from last year's \$225 million. Revenue for the year just ended fell 2.3% to \$2.93 billion. The airline's chairman told a media briefing that a softer NZ dollar and lower fuel prices in the second-half of the operating year were not sufficient to offset declines in the first half due to slower tourist growth and heavy discounting on the Tasman route, hence the lower profit. But company officials said the company turned in a very creditable performance in a tough operating environment. The recent currency turmoil in Asia is the wild card. Last year, solid traffic growth from South-east Asian markets helped the company. Qantas Airways predicts a decline in business from Asia. "Approximately 6% of the company's total revenue passenger kilometres are inbound to AUS from this region," the airline's chairman said while announcing a 2.6% rise in earnings to \$A252.7 million, on sales of \$A7.83 billion. Signs of flatter

Asian growth had already led Air NZ to tighten some capacity for Asian routes this year. However, next year Air NZ expects a softer NZ dollar to attract more tourists over the Tasman. The company also expects international alliances will mean lower economic risk in accessing international markets.' Such alliances share 'planes, baggage handling, marketing, promotions,' etc.

...Air NZ] is already seeing benefits from its participation in the Star Alliance... [- t]he airline network for Earth... – before it formerly joins. The grouping of international airlines will this week launch a multi-million dollar media campaign in all member countries to announce the... entry of Air NZ and Ansett A[US]... The existing Star Alliance members are: Air Canada, Germany's Lufthansa, Scandinavia's SAS, Thai International, American carrier United Airlines and Varig Brazilian Airlines. Japan's ANA will join in October... and Mexicana will become a member next year... Ansett A[US]... expects... immediate... benefits. Its executive chairman... also... told the A[US]n *Financial Review*... [that j]oint purchasing would be a future trend. "I suspect that in five years' time, alliance members will be negotiating with manufacturers and suppliers collectively rather than individually." In May... Air Canada, Lufthansa and United formed a new company called AirLiance Materials that buys and sells used, spare engine and aircraft parts. The airline industry spends more than \$US10 billion on spare parts annually and such a company would help AirLiance cut costs. A competing alliance, one-world... [- comprising] American Airlines, British Airways, Canadian Airlines, Cathay Pacific, Finland's Finnair and Qantas... [-] was announced last October.

...oneworld revolves around you... Now there's an alliance that makes international travel easier, and more rewarding, than ever before. With worldwide recognition on five of the world's finest airlines. Access to even more lounges. Smoother transfers. And the ability to earn and redeem frequent flyer miles to even more destinations. All, with over 220,000 people at your service to help you enjoy every trip.

...Deregulation of the airline industry has resulted in open skies around the world and the phenomenon of mega-alliances. To meet market demand, the air transport industry is gradually transforming through the formation of these alliances. The Star Alliance is the most well established and largest of the global alliances. It... services more than 700 destinations in more than 110 countries, has more than 7900 daily departures and a fleet of more than 1600 aircraft. It is expected as aviation laws are increasingly liberalised the number of global families operating under brands such as the Star Alliance will converge into a few major partnerships... Fares... are... coming down because of alliances. A University of Illinois study... concluded that non-alliance carriers on the Atlantic had prices 36% higher above those of alliance partners... [Incidentally, a]n informal survey of people who fly for business, sport or a passion for travel (including those fonts of all flying knowledge, flight attendants), has come up with the following golden rules for getting through long flights in good shape... *The preparation:* Try to get a good night's sleep before a flight. Be organised so you are not rushing to the airport... [and causing yourself] last-minute stress... *The flight:* Don't... sit on your wallet (common cause of back pain)... Eat lightly, preferably only one meal a flight... Don't worry if you can't sleep – 45-minute cat-naps have been shown to be as effective as longer sleeps on long flights... Drink plenty of water... Fluid replacement is the health issue affecting all passengers. People don't actually get dehydrated on flights but fluid pools in the legs and feet, starving the organs and blood vessels and causing symptoms like disorientation. To prevent this, [the]... medical director of Auckland's Worldwide Travellers and Vaccination Centre... recommends a fluid intake of 750ml to one litre for every eight hours of flying. While others preach on the evils of alcohol at altitude, he's refreshingly realistic. "Alcohol is essential for any flight because it's free," he says... "Provided people remember that, firstly, it's two to three times more potent at altitude and secondly, they follow it up with glasses of water every hour." ...MANY travellers believe airline cabins are fetid places, swarming with viruses and bacteria. But... constant recirculating and effective filtering actually makes cabin air relatively sterile. So why do so many people suffer colds and flus after long flights? The most likely, but not scientifically proven, explanation is that the stress, fatigue, temperature and time zone changes which go hand in hand with travel temporarily weaken your immune system – making you more vulnerable to any bug which crosses your path.

...international... business trips and tourism carry diseases quickly around the globe. Today there are about twenty times as many international travellers as in 1950. - 1996

United Airlines net operating profit leapt 200[%] in the first quarter compared to the same period last year.

...Deutsche Lufthansa has reported a trebling of first-half earnings... to 397 million marks... [In local news, n]early 90 Air N[Z] domestic cargo handlers were given redundancy notices yesterday.

...[Redundancy notices will soon be heading to the homes of some Air NZ administration staff now that the airline has signed] an estimated \$20 million outsourcing and personal computer purchase deal with Wang N[Z].

...Ansett Holdings is looking to divest non-core assets, including the sale of its hotel business, to help boost its bottom line... A two year cost-cutting programme to reduce bills by... \$NZ170 million... a year has also been put in place... Air N[Z] and News Corp each own a half share of Ansett[AUS. Air NZ]'s stake is \$540 million and analysts are keen to see what returns the company would get out of its stake to help Air N[Z] reach its targeted... profit in this year... For the financial year ended June 30... Ansett[AUS] brought in \$17.6 million to Air N[Z] in the form of earnings. This was despite Ansett A[US] reporting a net loss of \$35 million ([compared with a] profit of \$57.4 million in 1996) on a 1.1[%] rise in revenue to \$3.3 billion. [In further news from AUS, 'two NZers are among eight men who died after their plane flew 3000 km across the continent without a pilot before crashing in flames. Investigators believe the pilot and everyone else on board lost consciousness soon after takeoff from Perth when a loss of cabin pressure starved them of oxygen. The ghostly flight ended five hours later when the plane plummeted into the ground near a cattle station in remote north Queensland. The eerie flight is similar to one last October in which champion golfer Payne Stewart died after his Dallas-bound Learjet took off from Orlando, Florida, and flew across five US states before crashing in South Dakota, 2414 km later.' The 6 people on board that plane also 'died from oxygen deprivation. After trailing the jet for 4 hours Air Force fighter crews could only watch helplessly as it ran out of fuel and spiralled into an empty field.'

...Passengers on a Canadian charter airliner are hailing their survival as a miracle after the plane's engines failed over the Atlantic. They owe their lives to the pilot, who managed to keep gliding long enough to land on an island in the Azores. The Air Transit Airbus carrying 304 people burst its tyres as it hit the runway, slightly injuring 10 passengers. The drama began after a fuel leak developed. It was the second repeat problem with an Air Transit plane.'

...The CAA has issued its third warning in two years about Fairchild Metroliner aircraft and has told airlines to urgently repair a wiring fault. The authority's emergency airworthiness directive warns that frayed wires found near fuel tanks in some of the twin-engined aircraft could arc, sparking an explosion. In another aviation mishap yesterday, a London-bound Air NZ 747 was delayed at Los Angeles International Airport after its wingtip smashed into another plane as it was being towed. The 404 passengers and 17 crew had to wait for more than two hours for repairs to be made.' ● 'The Boeing 747-400 that entered the Air NZ fleet in 1990 is the most fuel efficient airliner in commercial operation. Its range capacity of 13,600km is a 2080km increase over the 747-300. It consumes 9 to 12% less fuel than the -300 model, and improved performance of up to 25% a seat over the older 747s. The 747-400's range makes possible nonstop service with typical full passenger, three-class payloads on such routes as London-Tokyo, Los Angeles to Hong Kong, Singapore-London and Los Angeles-Sydney and Auckland. An optional 12,490-litre fuel tank in the horizontal tail can boost the 400's range by 645km.'

...Some 5000 planes have been grounded in AUS for safety during an aviation fuel contamination crisis, launching a \$A100 million class action against Mobil, the fuel supplier.'

...The RAAF grounded three Caribou planes yesterday because they had been exposed to contaminated aviation fuel. The revelation came as the Acting PM told Mobil Oil to immediately compensate those affected by the problem fuel, though the company failed to reach a deal in a meeting with owners and pilots last night. The grounding of nearly 5000 civilian planes worth \$A600 million this week is said to be costing the industry \$A5 million a day. And a

test to detect which grounded aircraft have dirty fuel will now not be ready until at least the middle of next week. The Acting PM said: "The Government will be formally contacting banks and other financial institutions urging them to show flexibility in dealings with aviation customers." Airservices AUS said yesterday that it would extend payment times on air traffic control accounts and interest would not be charged.'

... 'Seven million litres of contaminated aviation fuel that has led to the grounding of thousands of light aircraft could be cleaned and used in cars, says Mobil in AUS. The chemical that caused the contamination would be removed.' The contamination hasn't affected NZ directly]...

The... resignation of the A[US]n Minister for Transport... [due to] the... scandal over MPs' travel rorts... has shaken N[Z] negotiators inching towards an open-skies agreement. [The minister] had hinted he was leaning towards considering a new deal, although he was saddled with the arguments that had prompted the former A[US]n Labour Government to end the accord and make it harder for N[Z] airlines to pick up passengers in A[US] on flights to Asia and other big markets. He still faced a mammoth task in shifting the opinion of Liberal colleagues, but N[Z] at least had a foot in the door... [H]is replacement will become a key concern for N[Z] negotiators trying]... to insert an open-skies wedge into the language of a new air-services treaty, which both sides see in place early next year. The agreement will be more an administrative update than a significant advance on the agreement that allowed trans-Tasman airlines to fly freely in each other's domestic markets – and which set Air N[Z]'s beyond rights at existing levels.

...N[Z] and Malaysia had agreed on an open-skies pact... the Minister of Transport... said yesterday.

...A[US]'s International Air Services Commission has approved code-sharing by British Airways and Qantas on... route flights through Singapore... [In related news, Air NZ] and Singapore Airlines are planning direct flights to Malaysia by the end of this year...

The Cabinet has approved a new air services agreement between Singapore and N[Z], paving the way for what could be the world's most liberal aviation agreement. Under the new agreement, airlines in each country are allowed to operate over any route they choose, subject to third-country agreement, and with as many flights as they see fit. Another key point... is that airlines in the two countries need not seek approval from the authorities for fare or tariff changes. The new... agreement also removes foreign ownership restrictions... [and] gives "seventh-freedom" traffic rights for cargo to each country. This means a Singapore company is free to establish a cargo-only airline in N[Z] and third countries with no requirement that the aircraft touch Singapore. Similarly, a N[Z] company would be allowed to do the same.

...As a result of joining together, the airlines would take cargo and passengers to more than 200 destinations in 47 countries. "Singapore Airlines is now a truly global network,"... said... its deputy chairman... [at] the airline's recent 50th anniversary celebrations... [Furthermore, it] is the world's first airline to offer[a] global inflight telephone service... Singapore's Communications Minister, said the Singapore Airlines Group was a major contributor to the Singapore economy, contributing \$S6 billion... in foreign earnings last year... Since its 1972 split from a merged entity called Malaysia-Singapore Airlines, the company has transformed itself into a modern, shrewd operator... [while helping] to make Singapore the aviation and tourism hub of South-East Asia... It has made a profit every year in the past 10 years and consistently increased spending every year... Its 83-aircraft fleet is... only 5.1 years old on average... [and the airline] has placed firm orders for 43 new aircraft... with options on 48 more... [However, now] other countries in the region – Brunei and Taiwan – had signed "open skies" deals with the U[S], Singapore Airlines faced] tougher competition... as passengers... had more travel options...

[An] Aucklander... is among the victims in the... crash of a near-new Boeing 737-300 airliner in Indonesia. Mr Ward, aged 23... was first officer on the SilkAir plane which was 50 minutes into a flight from Jakarta to Singapore on Friday when it disintegrated, falling into a river with the feared loss of all 104 on board... Indonesian divers found a large chunk of the plane's fuselage in the Musi River... in southern Sumatra, on Saturday. But they fear tidal currents from the sea have shifted the wreckage... Divers have... recovered only some body parts, clothing, luggage and documents... A British immigrant to N[Z]... was among the passengers. It is understood he was to have made a connection flight in Singapore for a flight... to Auckland early on Saturday, to join his wife and children... and a brother in N[Z]... Airline officials were unable to contact the wife... before she reached Auckland International Airport to welcome him... as there was no reply at the contact... telephone... number... provided when he made his travel bookings... Police and Singapore Airlines representatives had to seek out the wife and two children... at the arrivals lounge... They took her aside to break the news... Mr Ward went to Asia about four years ago under a training deal between Massey University's aviation school and the Indonesian national airline, Garuda. After his two years with Garuda were up, he returned home with a completed aviation degree before starting work in September last year for SilkAir... His older brother... said yesterday that [Mr Ward] had enjoyed flying in Asia but saw it... as a stepping stone to an airline job based in N[Z]. The former student of St Kentigern College in Pakuranga had first become interested in aviation watching old Warbirds aircraft at Ardmore airport. He learned to fly after enrolling at Massey straight from school... Massey's chief flying instructor... said the aviation school had sent up to 50 students to Garuda to accumulate about 1500 flying hours each on Boeings. Mr Ward had been one of its top performers. "He was a very quiet and very competent and capable student,"... Several other former students were still flying for SilkAir, which is... the regional arm of Singapore Airlines... The crash was the first air disaster to befall SilkAir or its parent company... [and] was the second major air disaster in Indonesia in three months... SilkAir officials say they are mystified why the 10-month-old plane with an experienced pilot should have crashed in good weather... The pilot... was identified yesterday as a former member of an elite aerobatics team of the Singapore Air Force with 6900 hours of flying experience... The airline... said the pilot[– who allegedly also 'had a history of erratic behaviour in the cockpit and was unfit to be in command of a plane' –]made no distress call but radio contact was lost a few minutes before the plane went down. Some witnesses said they heard one or two explosions before the Boeing plunged into the river, causing a huge wave that sank several fishing boats. An explosives expert is included in a team of U[S] inspectors who have left for Indonesia, but the National Transportation Safety Board described this as a routine measure... Air N[Z], which leases a Boeing 737-300 to Freedom Air, said it would be following the investigation into the crash very closely... The Boeing company is also sending investigators to Indonesia. A spokesman... warned against making any comparison with the crash of TWA Flight 800 off New York last year – ...in which a spark... [from] bundled... high voltage electricity... wires... is believed to have ignited the central fuel tank... causing the blast that brought down the jet, killing all 230 on board... Tests to replicate conditions in the centre fuel tank... show the tank was ripe to explode, according to an expert witness at a hearing[. • In '1967 a blaze aboard the giant US Navy aircraft-carrier Forrestal (at three blocks long, the 76,000-ton carrier with a crew of 4400 was the largest ship ever made) struck as the ship was preparing to launch planes against North Vietnam. 134 crew were killed and at least one-third of her 85 planes were reported destroyed. Many more planes were damaged. The fire was caused when a fuel tank dropped from one of the planes and was ignited by a hot stream catapult (initially, authorities had tentatively blamed a freak back-fire from a jet fighter for starting the fires). Fire-fighting teams rushed to action as the blazing kerosene, racing across the deck, turned waiting clusters of bomb-laden jets into balls of fire. Four 750-pound bombs exploded on one aircraft, blowing gaping holes in one part of the deck. Repairs cost some \$135 million; plane losses \$75 million. The worst naval disaster since WW2' led to the practice of 'training all crew for fire-fighting and the development of a less flammable jet fuel']...

A jet fuel used by the U[S] Navy could increase civilian aviation safety drastically if it was produced in sufficient quantity, an expert has told a Baltimore, Maryland, hearing into the TWA Flight 800 disaster. Investigators suspect an electrical fault ignited vapours in the plane's main tank.

...['An independent panel of experts has lambasted the results of an official investigation into the 1996 fatal TWA Flight 800 crash, and maintained its theory the plane was downed by a missile. The Flight 800 Independent Research Organisation said the official investigators had concealed crucial pieces of information in their findings. The report is expected to argue that the crash was most likely caused by an explosion in the plane's central fuel tank. But FIRO claims 13 witnesses had seen an object strike the plane. ']

...The FBI agent in charge of the TWA Flight 800 investigation acknowledged for the first time yesterday that the plane could have been brought down by a shoulder-fired terrorist missile... He noted that similar missiles have been used to down more than 25 commercial planes over the past two decades... But so far, there was no evidence to prove that theory, [the agent] said.

...A French magazine has published radar images it says support a theory the U[S] Navy accidentally shot down... T[WA 800]... – despite renewed US denials. *Paris Match* said yesterday the images from a radar videotape from John F Kennedy airport showed an unidentified plane, which it said was a US Navy Orion P3 surveillance aircraft, and another blip that it said might have been an intended target for a missile... *Paris Match* said... [a] former US presidential spokesman and television correspondent... believed the US Navy had fired a missile from the sea, perhaps from a submarine, and that electronic equipment aboard the TWA plane lured the missile off course to hit it... [By the way, Air France's] chairman... has quit after losing a battle with the new left-wing Government over the privatisation of the airline... [The chairman said] he had been forced to quit after four years of pulling the airline from virtual bankruptcy to its first profit this decade. The resignation came less than 24 hours after [the Socialist PM told the chairman]... he would not sell the airline. But later, the Government said it would partially privatise Air France but retain a controlling share. The previous government pledged to privatise the airline in return for a 20 billion franc... capital injection from the European Commission... Air France... and Aeroflot... [have been] laying foundations for an alliance, for which privatisation is considered important.

...according to Air N[Z]'s annual report... [our privatised 'national airline made a bottom line loss of \$600.1 million for the year, with a \$786.2 million one-off accounting charge obscuring an improved operational performance.' Benefits paid to its chairman] amounted to \$76,000 while another director... pocketed \$63,500 in fees and benefits. Other directors... received \$41,000 each... The... managing director... received total remuneration of \$1.06 million... A total of 110 out of 115 of Air N[Z]'s management team received remuneration ranging between \$110,000 and \$250,000... [while the other 5 were in the] \$250,000 to \$530,000 range... Over 80[%] of the aircrew and overseas employees had remuneration exceeding \$100,000 but beneath \$250,000... [Incidentally,] Air Force pilots will have to sign up for 10 years from now on, in the military's battle to keep enough aircraft aloft. A return of service obligation reflecting the almost \$1.5 million spent training each recruit to fly combat, transport or surveillance aircraft has been extended from eight... years after a pilot's basic "wings" graduation. This follows acute staff shortages caused by heavy recruiting in 1995 by international civilian airlines and air forces in the Gulf. After losing 30 flyers that year, the Air Force offered \$45,000 to about a quarter of its pilots and navigators to stay two more years after their contracts expired. The loss eased to 19 last year, leaving about 160 pilots, while the latest annual graduation yield was up five recruits to 23. But the Air Force is still about 60 short and fears recruitment drives by airlines offering... four times its top pilots' pay of no more than about \$60,000 a year... The Air Force's chief of personnel... said yesterday that it took pilots 10 years to get... to a military operational level, thereby ensuring the survival of the Air Force's skills base.

...Survivors of an Ansett Dash 8 airliner crash may have to wait until next year to find if they can sue for damages. In the High Court at Auckland yesterday the airline asked [the judge] to throw out[the] compensation claims by 12 survivors and the estates of three men who died when the aircraft crashed while approaching the Palmerston North airport on June 9, 1995... Each of the plaintiffs seeks unspecified damages under the Carriage by Air Act 1967 for pain and suffering, injuries, loss of income and medical costs as a result of the crash. They also claim alternative damages of \$150,000 each for the airline's alleged negligence and disregard for their safety, and \$42,000 for economic losses and medical costs... If successful, the case could open the floodgates to court action for damages in addition to accident compensation payments... Ansett's lawyer... said section 14 of the Accident Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1992 provided a statutory bar to the plaintiffs' claims for damages from the airline[which]... sought to strike out the claims on the grounds that they had no reasonable cause... and the plaintiffs' pleadings... were an abuse of the court process... He said it was obvious Parliament intended the act to provide a no-fault compensation scheme which prevented those who had suffered personal injury from suing for damages. The right to sue was abolished by the 1972 Accident Compensation Act and the ban remained in subsequent legislation, which... over-rode any other statutes which provided for such legal action. [However, the] passengers' lawyer... said... the claims related to contract provisions set out in the air tickets sold by Ansett. He submitted that establishing the intent of Parliament in the 1992 act required a more extensive examination than possible in a one-day strike motion hearing. [The judge] reserved his decision and told the court he would try to deliver it by the end of the year. [● 'Last year, 674 people were killed in passenger air crashes, well below the average of 1326 since 1990. With just two minor non-fatal accidents in the last 12 years, Air NZ is ranked 20th in terms of safety, according to a table that lists 500 airlines under a risk-assessment system revealed in Brussels this week. Air Canada comes out on top, its passengers having only a one in 1.3 million chance of being involved in any kind of accident. By contrast, those on the Eastern European Air Georgia have a one in 333 chance. Ansett NZ was 128th following its Dash 8 crash']...

Victims of the Ansett Dash 8 air crash have lost an unprecedented court bid for compensation but are pressing ahead with punitive damages claims against the airline. They have also filed a lawsuit in the U[S] against the manufacturer of the... aircraft over its undercarriage and its ground proximity system. Ansett N[Z] is not cited as a defendant in that case.

...[a 'former Ansett pilot is to be tried on manslaughter charges over the deaths of four people from the June 1995 crash of Flight 703 near Palmerston North. A judge ruled yesterday, after seven days of depositions in the Palmerston North District Court, that there was sufficient evidence supporting the prosecution case to bring the matter to trial. The pilot, who will stand trial in the High Court, has pleaded not guilty. He was remanded on bail at large. "What I wish to make abundantly clear is I'm not determining guilt or innocence as far as the pilot is concerned," the judge said. The key issue was whether the crash and the subsequent injuries had been the result of a failure by the pilot to take reasonable care and precautions to avoid the dangers inherent in operating the aircraft under his control.' The charges won't please the country's pilots, who are already upset about the police's attempts to gain access to the plane's cockpit voice recorder – or black box – in order to use it as evidence ('for security reasons, voice-boxes are not carried on military aircraft').

...The former Ansett NZ pilot walked from the High Court at Palmerston North a free man yesterday after being cleared of all seven charges. The decision to prosecute him angered the Air Line Pilots' Association, which fought police efforts to obtain the cockpit voice recorder. The association president said pilots around the world would welcome the decision. "Sanity has prevailed. There would have been a hell of a lot of angry pilots if there had been a guilty verdict." In related news, 'the controversial report that accused Air NZ of "a predetermined plan of deception" after the Erebus crash, is to be officially tabled in Parliament by the Transport Minister. The report by the one-man royal commission of inquiry was never tabled – because the late Sir Robert Muldoon "flatly refused to allow it" – which means the only official account of the crash remains that of the Office of Air Accident Investigations, which concluded that pilot error caused the disaster. The minister told the Aviation Industry Association conference in Dunedin that it was time to acknowledge the debt to the report's author, the late Justice Peter Mahon. "Muldoon commissioned the inquiry but he wanted Mahon to rubber-stamp what the chief air accident inspector had said. But Mahon decided there was more to it than a pilot making mistakes and he kept drilling deeper and deeper." The Mahon report became famous for its accusation that airline officials were guilty of "an orchestrated litany of lies." Air NZ challenged the finding, which the Court of Appeal overturned after it found that Mahon had exceeded his terms of reference. Mahon resigned. 257 people were killed when the Air NZ DC-10 crashed into Mt Erebus in the Antarctic on November 28, 1979' – 'NZ's greatest air disaster and the fourth worst crash in the history of aviation.'

...The temperature in the cinema seemed to drop a few degrees as the 90-year-old images flickered on the screen. The film, *90 South*, was of Robert Falcon Scott's doomed expedition to the South Pole, and when the first shot of Mt Erebus flashed up, the silence became dense. Rightly or wrongly, I fancied that everyone else felt what I felt – that it was eerie to see that Antarctic mountain without the DC10 wreckage carving an ugly black scar on its

flank. Before November 28, 1979, most of us didn't even know its name. Now, the word brings the images flooding back and we feel again the stab of the shock we felt when we first knew 257 people had died there. The disaster had other victims, including Peter Mahon, then a High Court judge who was the one-man royal commission of inquiry into the disaster. The Appeal Court later ruled that his findings had overstepped the bounds of natural justice. Valuing his name more highly than his career (and you can't help thinking immediately of judges in recent times who should have quit and didn't) Mr Mahon resigned so he could take the matter to the Privy Council. In the end, the Law Lords didn't back him either, but history has. Mr Mahon said at the time that the Privy Council finding – which included the memorably inane injunction that those involved in the matter should “let bygones be bygones” – was “a clumsy patchwork designed to placate Air NZ management and smooth the ruffled plumage of the Government.” Time, of course, has sided with Peter Mahon, although he did not live to see it. And this year the Transport Minister will complete the vindication of that judicial warrior when he tables the Mahon report in Parliament. The then PM, Robert Muldoon, had wanted, expected, demanded that the disaster be attributed solely to pilot error. But Mahon saw it this way: if a pilot is instructed to follow a course which leads him to crash into a mountain he can't see, and if he follows that instruction and does crash, it's not his fault. Seems simple. But it is the concept underpinning that finding that makes Peter Mahon a hero and a man we should silently thank every time we land safely in an aircraft. The Mahon report pioneered the idea that when something goes wrong in a big organisation, it will never be the fault of an individual. His analysis drilled deep to find that catastrophe is always the end result of a long series of errors. He knew the destruction of flight TE901 began in Auckland hours before it took off. But he also knew – and he stood on the side of the mountain on the first anniversary of the disaster – that the Antarctic landscape can deceive the eye so the land and the sky can merge. That's why I still shiver to read the final paragraph of his report, when he lamented that the airliner had been “unerringly” guided to that place by sophisticated navigation systems, “only to be destroyed, in clear air and without warning, by the malevolent trick of polar light.”

...*'Pilots must share blame for Erebus'* It is highly regrettable that controversy still surrounds the Erebus tragedy. The recent tabling of Justice Mahon's report in Parliament and publicity of the accident have rekindled former polarised positions on the cause of the crash and its aftermath. Sadly, a one-sided portrayal of events has re-emerged, seemingly at the behest of those determined to rehabilitate the Mahon report despite its serious imperfections. The other side of the story – less dramatic, better balanced and unimpressed by the excesses of the Mahon report – should not be forgotten. Controversy over the cause of the accident stems mainly from the fact that there were two official investigations which arrived at different conclusions. Common to both investigations was the finding that, shortly before the flight, there had been a change to the McMurdo position on the computer-produced Antarctic flight plan provided to the crew before departure. The change had the effect of shifting the flight plan track from a route over the flat sea ice of McMurdo Sound to one that passed overhead the highground on Ross Island, including Mt Erebus. Both investigations found that the flight crew had not been informed of the change. The airline officials responsible for the change testified that they believed it to be minor, representing the difference between the geographical coordinates for Williams Field at McMurdo (as the southernmost flight plan position on earlier Antarctic flight plans) and those of the nearby Tacan radar facility chosen as a replacement position. This difference was thought to be some 10 minutes of longitude (or about 2 miles) and thus made no appreciable difference to the topography of the intended inbound track across Ross Island. In fact, the change amounted to 2 deg 10 minutes (or about 27 miles), the extent of which did not become apparent until after the accident. The change in coordinates was to have fatal implications. The cockpit voice recorder revealed that on approaching McMurdo, the flight crew had been advised by local air traffic control that there was a low overcast in the area, with a cloud base of 2000ft and visibility of about 40 miles. Contrary to the airline's instructions, the pilots had accepted an offer of a radar-assisted let-down through cloud to 1500ft. But this proved impossible because, before reaching McMurdo, they could not establish radio contact with the radar controller, nor were they positively identified on radar. Instead, the captain elected to carry out a visual descent from the minimum safe altitude of 16,000ft in an area true north of both McMurdo and Ross Island. The chief inspector of air accidents found this descent to have been in a cloud-free area, but in contravention of the operator's briefing, and outside the sector approved for visual descent below minimum safe altitude by the Civil Aviation Division and the airline. On completing descending orbits, the pilots recaptured the inbound computer navigation track along which they continued their descent towards McMurdo, eventually levelling off at 1500ft. In his report in June 1980, the chief inspector found the probable cause of the accident to be “the decision of the captain to continue the flight at low level toward an area of poor surface horizon definition when the crew was not certain of their position and the subsequent inability to detect the rising terrain which intercepted the aircraft's flight path.”

...*'Two air disasters involving US bombers at Whenuapai during WW2'* feature in the *Secret New Zealand* television programme on Monday. Both aircraft were involved in secret missions and crashed on take-off. Although they were among the worst aviation disasters in NZ, killing 26 people, both incidents were hushed up. NZ's obligations to keep military operations secret prevented the truth being told for more than 50 years. In June 1942, NZ still faced imminent threat of a Japanese invasion and there were plans to abandon Whenuapai and demolish facilities to prevent Japanese use. The first crash – in which a B-17E Flying Fortress went down near State Highway 16, killing all 11 on board – came a month after the Japanese Navy suffered defeat in the Coral Sea, and was hushed up because NZ was planned as a base for US combat aircraft, as the country was the last remaining Allied base between AUS and the US. The second bomber crash involved a B-24 Liberator. An engine caught fire on take-off and while trying to turn back the plane hit mudflats near Herald Island on August, 1943, killing 15 of the 30 people on board. The dead were mainly Japanese women and children, the families of diplomats heading for a rendezvous with Japanese authorities in an exchange for US diplomat prisoners of war who had already landed in Sydney. A 6-year-old Japanese girl was found dead a day later, buried up to her neck in mud without a mark on her. Survivors were taken to the Whenuapai Base Hospital and their treatment kept secret. Those killed were taken at night to the Waikumete Crematorium. The plane's remains are buried at the Hobsonville dump.

...*'Coverup claims in air-crash inquiry'* Claims that mobile phones may have brought down a Thai Airways jet have muddied the waters of a crash investigation already dogged by rumour and intrigue. Flight TG 261 plunged into a swamp just outside the southern Thai airport of Surat Thani in December after making a third attempt to land during driving monsoon rains. The crash killed 101 people, 45 others survived. Speculation about the cause of the disaster has been fuelled by competing Thai aviation agencies who are determined to clear themselves of any blame. The latest among numerous theories about the cause of the crash was outlined in the English-language *Nation* newspaper. The paper quoted unnamed investigation sources as saying that after the third failed landing attempt there was a flurry of phone calls from passengers to tell relatives that the plane was being diverted. It is alleged that the phones may have caused a malfunction in the aircraft's altitude adjustment equipment and a Thai accident probe panel had asked Thai Airways if this was possible. The Transport Minister, whose sister died in the crash and whose ministry oversees Thai, has said he was not aware of the phone theory. So far the dead pilot, Captain Pinit Wechasilpa, has borne the brunt of the blame for the crash. Survivors and air traffic control tower staff and the Aviation Department said he should not have made a third attempt to land when visibility was so poor. Thai's senior executives have defended the pilot, his record, the condition of the aircraft and the company's safety record. In turn, the Aviation Department has been attacked for the state of its airport. Only 50% of the runway lights were working and instrument landing gear had been removed six months before the crash to allow the runway to be extended. In possibly the most bizarre claim so far, one Thai newspaper said a Thai MP for Surat Thani may have been in the cockpit at the time of the crash pressing the pilot to land the plane against his better judgment. Thai has strenuously denied the allegation and aviation analysts consider the scenario unlikely.

...*'Singapore Airlines says Friday's air crash is its fault.'* The company has accepted full responsibility for the crash at Taipei airport which killed 81 people. The company said pilot error led the Boeing 747-400 down the wrong runway where it hit a barrier and exploded in a fireball. Two Kiwis were among the 98 survivors.

...*'Investigators probing the crash of a Singapore Airlines jet in Taiwan are focusing on why the pilot tried to take off from a closed runway.'* Aviation experts in Taiwan said the Los Angeles-bound Boeing 747-400 lined up on the wrong runway during a typhoon. The airline accepted full responsibility for the first fatal accident in its 28-year history. But the airline and investigators were also looking at whether Taiwan's Chaing Kai-shek International Airport

took adequate safety measures, and the part that strong winds, rain and poor visibility played in Tuesday's disaster. The director-general of the Civil Aeronautics Administration, which runs the airport, defended its operations and said it was clear that human error led to the disaster. "The three pilots must shoulder all responsibility," because the captain and two first officers knew the runway was under repair, and should not have entered it. The crash has struck a sharp blow to Singapore's national pride and relatives have lashed out at the airline for not divulging information quickly enough. The airline has offered \$US400,000 in compensation to relatives of each of the dead, and will meet medical expenses of those injured and discuss compensation with them. The compensation package is worth \$US32.8 million, but the airline is also likely to face lawsuits.'

...Survivors say flight attendants on a Singapore Airlines jet that crashed in Taipei directed some passengers into a burning cabin then fled before everyone could be rescued. A report in the *Weekend Australian* also said some flight attendants failed to help passengers open emergency doors and rescue attempts were hampered by the weather – an inflatable escape ramp was blown back into the crashed aircraft by an approaching typhoon, while fire-smothering foam was blown away. The airport's fire chief said the wind meant it took 40 minutes to extinguish the fire, instead of the usual 15.'

...the *Asian Wall Street Journal* says there were several indications suggesting that the recent SilkAir crash could have been caused by pilot suicide.' However, other sources proclaim that the crew had been 'allowed to fly a faulty plane, and that air inspectors knew of the problems but didn't act. A stabilizer was missing rivets, which could have caused a catastrophic loss of control, and the rivets may have been missing since the plane was built.' In local news, the trial of an Opotiki man charged with causing the deaths of two men in a helicopter crash in 1995 by having counterfeit parts fitted to the aircraft began in the High Court at Rotorua yesterday... The trial is expected to take about three weeks.

...In a case believed to have been a world first, [a 50-year-old... [was] jailed yesterday for three years over two deaths caused by bogus helicopter parts... The judge... also ordered him to pay restitution of \$22,500 to the families of... [the dead men. The judge said it] was a classic case in which a businessman deliberately put the lives of others at risk for financial gain. He had shown an arrogant disregard of known risks... [while] making himself a \$67,000 profit... Calling for a long jail term, [the crown prosecutor... compared the case to that of a man sentenced to seven years' prison for knowingly infecting five women with the HIV virus... A Rotorua jury found [the 50-year-old] guilty a fortnight ago of causing the men's deaths by... fitting... blades... [he obtained] from a backyard workshop in California... [that had been] "remanufactured" using... damaged[parts] from a U[S] wreck... The two 27-year-olds who went to school together and were trying to make a living in the competitive venison-recovering business, had bought their Robinson R22 helicopter from [the 50-year-old] two weeks earlier and had flown it for only about 30 hours... It was on their return from a deer-recovery operation that one of the counterfeit tail rotor blades... disintegrated in mid-air... In an expensive trial, 17 overseas witnesses took the stand. Of the other 59 called for the prosecution, many were from the South Island. It was a "logistical nightmare," said [the detective]... who spent 16 months working on it. Aided by[a] civil aviation investigator... he travelled the country gathering evidence. The pair spent a month in the U[S] piecing together parts of the jigsaw. For... [the detective,] Operation Blade was "the ultimate inquiry" – a case involving homicide, international intrigue, large-scale fraud and deception, elements of laundering... and the chance to work with top American investigators... Experts described the tail rotor blade-making attempt as extremely poor... leaving the blades basically held on by rivets... The families of the two crash victims were relieved at the outcome and happy the true story had come out at the trial. Attempts to blame the crash on pilot error had upset them.

...Work is under way to find the buried wreck of the R22 Robinson helicopter that crashed... says the wife of the man jailed over the accident. [The wife] hopes an examination of the wreck will prove her husband is innocent... [of causing] the deaths of pilot Christopher Michael Midgley, aged 27, and hunter Ross George McMurtrie, 26, both of Opotiki... [She is] disputing a Civil Aviation Authority finding that the cause of the crash was a "bogus" blade which disintegrated in flight... [She] said the Opotiki District Court had given permission to excavate the helicopter from the Opotiki dump... and... the search[, involving]... council workers and a tow-truck operator... had been going on for the past two days... She had a "rough idea" of where the wreck was... The chief executive of the Opotiki District Council... gave the go-ahead 10 days ago but police stepped in on behalf of the families of the dead men. When the police were unable to come up with a legal case to prevent the excavation, the council allowed... [it to continue. The chief executive] said it was understandable that the families... of the dead men... were likely to be distressed by the matter.

...[after 5 days of searching, the helicopter's remains still haven't been found.] In international news, US authorities] are investigating a fight between two air traffic controllers that erupted in the control tower at New York's La Guardia airport. The altercation apparently did not delay aircraft or cause safety problems. [A]Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman... said: "We have absolutely no tolerance for this type of behaviour..."

...THE BIBLE MAY TEACH THAT HUMAN LIFE IS PRICE-less, but [a 'General Motors memo compared the cost in human life against the cost to fix a gas tank problem' and]in my early years as Inspector General, I heard rumors that a U.S. Federal Aviation Administration study assigned a worth to the average passenger who might die in a plane crash. In its cost-benefit analysis, the rumor went, the FAA easily determined that the value of those lives didn't amount to much compared with the hard, cold billions that saving them would cost in aircraft-safety devices, in beefed-up monitoring of planes, pilots and air traffic, and in airports hermetically sealed against bombs and hijacking. Curious and incredulous at the macabre implications, I frequently asked about these elusive valuations and talked to many people who had heard about them or knew someone who knew someone who had heard about them. Yet I never met anyone who had actually seen the official figures, much less helped compile them. In many meetings, FAA officials argued as if they had those figures on the tips of their tongues – "losses," they would explain patiently, from the small number of crashes and even smaller number of attacks on planes just did not justify vast airline investments in safety and security. After all, as the FAA's associate administrator for civil-aviation security... would tell me, the terrorist bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, cost \$[US]1 billion. Trying to prevent another Pan Am 103 would cost \$5 billion over 10 years. Couldn't I understand? The numbers just didn't add up. "We regulate by counting tombstones," an FAA official told a journalist a few years ago. The nickname's origins are unknown, but... agency officials, government bureaucrats, staff on Capitol Hill, aviation lobbyists, airline representatives and journalists all understood the irony of the nickname. The FAA will not do anything until people die. It was a sad, bad, inside joke. Only the public never knew how much truth was in it... In August 1990, I... became the watchdog of the FAA. The FAA, in turn, stood guard over the airlines. But that role could be interpreted two ways: as policing the airlines to ensure safety at all costs or as protecting the airlines from any opposition or criticism. During five years as Inspector General, I came to realize that the FAA believed that statutes ordered it to champion the aviation industry. Time and again, my office uncovered practices that would shock the public: sloppy inspections of planes, perfunctory review of pilots, lax oversight of airline procedures, disregard for bogus airline parts, sieve-line security at airports, antiquated air-traffic-control systems. Only with a major crash, only with people dead and sobbing survivors filling television screens, does the FAA step up to the plate and make changes. I found the FAA's complacency toward accidents difficult to accept. IN 1994, 68 PEOPLE DIED WHEN AN AVIONS DE TRANSPORT RE-gional plane, flown by American Eagle, crashed into a soybean field in Roselawn, Indiana. A design flaw made the French-Italian plane become violently uncontrollable in cold weather. Pilots and aeronautical engineers knew what the problem was: the deicing boots on the ATR wings were not big enough... But the FAA determined that lengthening the boot would cost too much money. It took three plane crashes... before the FAA ordered extension of the deicing boot and limits to ATR flights in icy weather. It also took a fatal plane crash for the FAA to heed... evidence showing that the distance between planes landing at an airport should be increased. For years, the National Transportation Safety Board... told the FAA to increase the distance between jets... but the FAA refused... The board studied 51 accidents caused by wake turbulence from 1983 to 1993. Twenty-seven people had been killed, and 40 planes had been destroyed or damaged... It would be three years more before the FAA ruled that the separation between heavy and lighter aircraft should be increased. Since 1982, the NTSB has urged the FAA to order airlines to install better black boxes... All the NTSB wanted was black boxes that

can continue recording for fractions of a second beyond a catastrophic explosion or massive electrical failure aboard an airplane. European airlines have used such advanced black-box technology for years. That means many American planes flying to Europe have the advanced boxes. But the FAA did not want to *compel* airlines to install improved boxes. No, the agency declared, the new technology would cost the airlines too much money. The NTSB was especially keen to have the boxes installed on Boeing 737s. Investigations of two accidents involving B-737s – one outside Colorado Springs, Colorado, in 1991 and the other in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1994 – have been seriously hampered by the lack of this information... [I]n the days after TWA Flight 800 crashed into the Atlantic Ocean, the public, politicians, investigators and grieving family members waited tensely while scuba divers searched for clues. Eventually the recorder was found, its body remarkably undamaged. But it played back only a millisecond of a mysterious loud noise. The box was one of the old models... The FAA regularly told the NTSB that it couldn't have anything on its wish list of safety measures because of cost considerations. It told the same thing to the Inspector General, Congress and the White House. It reassured the public with the mantra "Accidents are not happening; planes are not falling out of the sky." Yet they are, and the danger is growing. In one meeting I attended, the FAA said that... we can expect a major crash every week or so after the turn of the century. Stunned, I wanted to study the data... I asked the FAA to send me the graphs and any supporting research. The reply was swift: no such data existed, I was told... In fact, no such research had been done, no such conclusions reached. But I'd seen them, I argued; I'd held them in my hands! That didn't matter; suddenly none of the officials knew what I was talking about. Over the next years, I learned firsthand that, sadly, withholding information was routine for the FAA... **IT WOULD TAKE THE DEATHS OF MORE THAN A HUNDRED PEOPLE** aboard a ValuJet plane that burst into flames, smashed into the Florida Everglades and sank in a murky swamp to expose chronic weaknesses in the FAA. The 110 souls on board that flight probably never knew what caused the fire that... *probably asphyxiated them*... *before they were swallowed by the swamp*... At first, government investigators could not pinpoint the reason for the disaster, either. [It was later found that the fire was apparently caused by dangerous oxygen generators loaded into the cargo bay without being carefully handled according to regulations.] But the tragedy would expose what the FAA had long known: ValuJet was primed for a major crash; its maintenance was slipshod; it had an accident rate 14 times as poor as those of its peers; its managers were out of their league; and the FAA's own inspectors had wanted ValuJet shut down months before the Everglades disaster. Atlanta-based ValuJet was a phenomenal success story. In just three years, it had leaped from two planes on eight routes... to 51 planes with 320 itineraries. Founded in 1993, the discount carrier saw revenue soar to \$368 million in 1995. But i[n]... 1995, when ValuJet bid for a contract to ferry U.S. Defense Department personnel, Defense specialists had scrutinised ValuJet's books, inspected its facilities and talked to its pilots, mechanics and managers. The Defense Department had complaints about virtually everything, and its report was breathtaking in the scope of its condemnation. The answer: No contract. ValuJet is not good enough to fly our people. If the FAA had properly regulated ValuJet, its rapid growth might not have led to disaster. But that February in 1996, all that seemed clear to me was that the FAA simply did not know what to do with ValuJet... As I probed, I learned that FAA inspectors had looked at ValuJet planes nearly 5,000 times in the three years it had been flying yet had never reported any significant problems or concerns. What are the odds of that? ...Spurred by the gruesome deaths[in the Everglades] and public outrage... the carrier was grounded within weeks... ValuJet agreed not to fight its grounding and paid \$2 million toward the FAA's cost of reinspecting planes. It was not a penalty; in fact, the airline bought itself a virtually clean slate... *ValuJet was grounded for more than three months... [then was] returned to the air, although reduced in size*... "The FAA agrees that, except for violations of regulations concerning hazardous materials and civil aviation security," the consent order said, "it will not pursue any civil penalty for any violation of the regulations known by the FAA as of the date and time of the execution of this agreement." How could it? The FAA could hardly go back and find the faults without admitting that it was to blame for missing or ignoring them in the first place. Yet... ValuJet was not alone. Shoddy inspections were an FAA plague. Exposing them had occupied me since my first year on the job... *In the wake of [my] campaign, Congress has changed the FAA's mandate to make safety its primary mission.*

...[h]oliday plans have been disrupted for thousands in AUS by the Ansett crisis that has brought an unwelcome spotlight on to the management of Air NZ, which is now the sole owner of the airline. Ansett has been ordered to ground its fleet of 10 Boeing 767s and given three weeks to improve or risk losing permission to fly. The AUSn Civil Aviation Safety Authority (Casa) imposed the three-week deadline to get the 767s fixed after it found that an Ansett plane had flown eight times in three days with none of its escape slides in the operating position. This came just a week after cracks were found in the pylons joining the engine to the wing of four 767s (there have been two fatal crashes in the past 20 years caused by similar cracks) and it was revealed that Ansett had missed by more than six months a deadline issued by Boeing to check them. Reports from AUS show the airline has coped fairly well with re-booking passengers, but many individual travellers have been forced to hurriedly change holiday plans or delay flights. Air NZ has pulled one of its own planes off transtasman duties to help its beleaguered subsidiary, and Ansett has been forced to charter jets from its arch-rival Qantas. The groundings did not make Ansett an unsafe airline, but the public perception of it being so would be hard to shake. It came at a time of intense competition in AUSn domestic aviation, and Ansett would have an extremely difficult job regaining its market share. AUSn engineers are calling for a parliamentary inquiry into Ansett's safety culture, which they say has deteriorated due to the preoccupation of successive owners to 'extract a maximum amount of profit from the' '\$A6.7 billion Australasian global carrier'. ● 'Air NZ bought News Corp's 50% share in Ansett AUS' 'for more than \$A580 million'...

'Air NZ's chief executive flew to Melbourne last night to face criticism over the crisis that has seen subsidiary Ansett AUS's jets grounded at the busiest time of year. Ansett faces its most stern test today as it tries to fly 37,000 passengers around AUS while 10 of its 63 aircraft are grounded. As the crisis escalated yesterday, the airline faced criticism on a number of fronts: ■ A union in AUS claimed that the airline had been delaying repairs and maintenance until the last moment to save money. Increased competition in the AUSn aviation market, staff cuts and economic measures had also affected maintenance and safety, said the AUSn Manufacturing Workers Union. ■ Politicians and the media claimed that the airline was not doing enough to help passengers who had bookings – although the chief executive told the *Herald* that he could not leave sooner because the trip would have robbed him precious time on the phone arranging alternative flights. He also said four people had been suspended – two engineers who had signed off the chutes, and two technicians – but added that most of the maintenance problems stemmed from a system that had been in place before Air NZ took over Ansett, and which have since been changed to give more efficient safety checks. Ironically, the crisis only evolved after a problem with paperwork had caused safety checks to be delayed by 24 hours. The chief executive believed the problem was caused by Casa officials failing to pick up the paperwork, but Casa told the *Herald* that it was up to the airline to deliver the papers. A Casa spokesman said the documents were being checked late yesterday, and the first plane would be physically checked today. It would take until tomorrow or Wednesday for the first plane to be cleared to fly. If the first plane passed, then inspections might be sped up on the others. If not, then the planes would have to stay grounded for more thorough checks. Either way, it would take at least two weeks to check all the planes.'

... '170 passengers booked on a flight from Auckland to Los Angeles had to switch airlines at the last minute and were delayed for several hours after Air NZ sent one of its 747 jets across the Tasman to help its troubled subsidiary Ansett AUS. Only one AUSn domestic flight was delayed yesterday. The airline's chief executive, who flew to Melbourne on Sunday night, said leasing planes from other airlines and booking seats on other aircraft had cost \$2.4 million so far and would cost \$600,000 a day. Ansett would relaunch its brand and buy new aircraft after it resolved all its safety woes. "This is a setback, but it is consistent with the need for us just to relaunch the whole airline." However, an aviation analyst told the *Herald* that the safety crisis could not have come at a worse time for Ansett AUS. Normally, an airline tried to recapture market share by heavy discounting. The recent arrival of two new AUSn domestic airlines, Impulse and Virgin Blue, had already driven fares down to an unsustainable level. Getting the extra money to buy new planes and relaunch will be hard for Air NZ, as its share price is at 10-year lows and are expected to be hard hit tomorrow when sharemarkets reopen after the holiday

break. It is expected to ask the NZ Government again to allow Singapore Airlines, which already owns a 25% stake, to increase its shareholding, bringing in much-needed capital. Ansett AUS management were not the only ones spending the weekend trying to spread blame, with claims of dangerous cost-cutting levelled at AUSn Governments and Casa. The AUSn Manufacturing Workers Union has repeatedly called for a federal parliamentary inquiry into the effects of recent deregulation. Its national secretary said aviation was “plagued by a culture of cost-cutting,” which had affected all airlines as well as Casa. Air NZ’s engineers yesterday took pains to point out that they should not be blamed for the alleged shortcomings of their AUSn counterparts.’

...‘It’s Monday, 9 am Melbourne time, and Air NZ’s spokesman has just stepped off a plane to join an Ansett AUS rescue team. His jet slipped into Melbourne after a fine, sunny journey in which there was only one black cloud to be seen – over Melbourne, as it happened, perhaps right over the Ansett AUS head office in the central city. The early-morning reception lounge is quiet, but a few people upstairs are reading newspapers. Each has a similar headline: Ansett head hits out at safety body. The Ansett head referred to is also the chief executive of Air NZ. Together, he and the spokesman are poised to swing into damage-control mode. The damage is less than 10km away, at an Ansett maintenance base. There, nine Boeing 767s have been sitting on tarmac doing absolutely nothing for up to four days. They are grounded, and will stay that way until Ansett convinces Casa that no more cracks will be found in engine mountings, that no more planes will fly with their emergency escape ramps deactivated, that none will have gaps under their doors. The tenth Boeing is sitting in a shed at Auckland Airport for routine maintenance by engineers at Air NZ. “1900 seats sitting vacant,” the spokesman says, looking at the Boeings. “It should never have got to this.” He blames Casa for grounding the aircraft during one of the busiest flying seasons of the year. “There’s eight planes been sitting there ready for inspection since, when, Thursday? And where is Casa? Still looking at paperwork.” In the two glass-walled Casa offices, four grim-faced men bend over folders. They refuse access. They will not answer questions. The *Herald* wants to know how there could be confusion with paperwork for 24 hours when Casa is working in an Ansett building, within 10 paces of Ansett offices. But that question will not be answered today.’

...‘Casa has released a photo of the cracked engine mounts on one of the grounded Ansett jets. The picture was published on the front page of the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper in Sydney at the weekend under the headline “On a wing and a prayer.” Casa is understood to have released the photo after criticism that it had been too harsh on Ansett AUS. On Friday Ansett moved closer to getting its Boeing 767 fleet back in the air with the first of the 10 grounded jets cleared for takeoff by safety officials. The company said the cost of grounding the fleet was \$2.5 million. That included leasing aircraft, buying seats on other planes and loss of business. The company also announced it would sell the 767s, which are between 8 and 18 years old’. □ Because an Air NZ 747 is still being used by Ansett AUS, ‘passengers on the daily Air NZ flight NZ122 from Melbourne to Auckland are being re-booked on a United Airlines flight.’]

...A 32-year-old Japanese woman died and 83 people were injured on Sunday night when a United Airlines jumbo jet plunged 300m in massive air turbulence on a flight from Tokyo to Honolulu[, throwing]... passengers... with seatbelts undone – even though the seatbelt sign was on – ...flight attendants and serving carts to the cabin ceiling... Meals littered the cabin and the ceiling was damaged... When the airliner landed, passengers were helped off... bloodied... and... with broken limbs... Several had neck braces fitted before they were carried away on stretchers... A spokesman for the F[AA] in Washington said it would look into the “turbulence issues and whether procedures were followed,” although Japanese authorities would handle the formal investigation.

...An Auckland woman has criticised Qantas for not having enough infant seatbelts on a flight from Brisbane... The C[AA] requires children under four on aircraft registered in this country to be restrained, either in approved safety seats or by extension belts if sitting on adults’ laps... Air N[Z] and Ansett N[Z] said they carried ample supplies of extension belts... But... A[US’s Casa] allows children under three to travel unrestrained and... [NZ] officials say they cannot compel overseas airlines flying to N[Z] to provide seatbelts for young children... Qantas said it did not offer infant extension belts unless parents asked for them. Qantas recommended the use of approved child safety seats... although this meant parents would have to buy separate fares. [However, the Auckland woman] said she received no such information when buying her tickets... [Concern] has grown with word that a woman was killed and dozens injured when a... jumbo jet hit turbulence over the northern Pacific...

A C[AA] inquiry has begun into the potentially lethal practice of international flights carrying duty-free alcohol in over-head lockers. A spokesman... said the study was commissioned following concerns raised after the crash of Korean jumbo jet Flight 801 on Guam this year. Twenty-six people, including[a NZ] helicopter pilot... survived the crash but 228 people died. [The helicopter pilot], of Te Anaau, said yesterday that he strongly believed a cocktail of oxygen from emergency masks, mixed with fumes from duty-free alcohol, sparked... [a fireball that] went through the cabin moments after the jumbo went down. [The helicopter pilot] said he was sure it was not caused by the fuel tanks... He said all the bottles of duty-free alcohol flew out of the over-head lockers like missiles when the plane crashed... “It’s my assumption, based on what happened and what I know about those goods...” ...American air accident inspectors spoke to [him] in Guam hospital but he said they did not want to know about the alcohol issue[, probably because it wasn’t a direct cause of the crash. However, he felt NZ] was being responsible about it... [because he knew that ‘some passengers who survived the initial crash were burnt to death before they could exit the cabin.’ The CAA spokesman] said the inquiry would be completed by the end of the month. “If it finds changes need to be made, such as recommending 40[%] alcohol spirits should not be allowed on to the plane, it would not be a short process.” ...any recommended changes would have to be put to the International Air Transport Association and the International Civil Aviation Organisation... Air N[Z] said it would fully cooperate with the study, and agreed that any action should be standardised internationally. A spokesman... said Air N[Z] endorsed the principle of passengers[only] being able to buy duty-free alcohol on arrival. That was not yet possible in all countries... Some airports could be upset if... [restrictions were placed on selling] duty-free alcohol.

...[‘a pensioner battling against being charged 72c GST in Auckland Airport’s tax-free area may force a national book chain to change its prices. The pensioner tackled Whitcoulls, AIAL and the IRD after he discovered the \$6.95 he paid for a magazine at the chain’s store in the tax-free “air side” of the airport included GST. “It might only be 72c, but you think of the number of people who go through the airport, and it’s a lot of money,” he said. “If they want to do business in a duty-free area, they should not be charging tax.” An IRD spokeswoman confirmed yesterday that GST should not be charged in the area and said the department would investigate a complaint of overcharging if the pensioner wanted to lay one. AIAL said the anomaly would be corrected, while Whitcoulls, which runs stores on both the “land side” and “air side,” was less committal, saying it was reviewing the charge. Whitcoulls’ problem was that it had a nationwide pricing policy. Whitcoulls passes the GST on to the Government and does not profit from the charge.’ In related news, d]escendants of people buried in a Mangere cemetery yesterday spruced up the graveyard which one day may be covered by a... runway... [A]fter uncovering... many fascinating tales about the people buried there, [a]... Mangere woman... decided to organise a working bee, thanksgiving service and picnic for relatives of the 41 people buried in the Methodist Church cemetery... [T]he graves may have to be moved if... Auckland Airport... expands next century.

...[the] first part of a \$71 million Christchurch international airport terminal expansion, comprising a new overseas arrival hall, baggage claim and departure lounge, will open... on August 26, [the airport company’s] chief executive said yesterday... [By the way, t]he Government is selling its shares in the Rotorua and Palmerston North airports, in line with a policy to gradually quit its ownership of regional airports... The Rotorua airport has assets of \$4.7 million, and those of Palmerston North airport are worth \$10.4 million... The Crown also owns 66[%] of Wellington airport and 25[%] of Christchurch airport... The Crown has already sold its stake in Hamilton airport and has been discussing the sale of its holding in Nelson airport. The Government sees regional airports as beyond its core business.

...Argentin[a’s] President... has issued a decree authorising the sale of the country’s airports, warning there could be an air disaster if they were not improved urgently... Concern about airport safety has grown because of a series of near misses. The decree breaks a deadlock which has

delayed the Government's plans to find a private company to run the country's 38 airports. A condition of the 30-year concession is that \$US3.1 billion... be spent on improvements... [Incidentally, a] dispute over firefighter numbers at A[US]n airports is threatening to cause major disruption... and... may force airlines to cancel some flights.

...A burger bar fire last night closed part of Heathrow Airport, Britain's main international airport... [and] the world's busiest... bringing chaos as hundreds of flights were delayed... [or] diverted... and huge traffic jams built up.

...TRAVELLING to London's Heathrow Airport by bus is now much easier. For the first time, a bus express lane has been introduced along part of London's busy M4 Motorway which leads into Heathrow Terminals 1, 2 and 3. The initiative is part of the British Government's drive to encourage more people to use public transport.

...THE Civil Aviation Authority yesterday confirmed it is investigating a near collision between two aircraft in Britain's skies – the third to be reported last week... Britain's national news agency... reported the aircraft may have been only 60m apart, 3 km west of Heathrow, when pilots were forced to take evasive action. The airlines involved were not identified, and no other details were available. On Wednesday, the authority reported two British Airways planes carrying more than 300 passengers came within 120m of each other on November 22 [last year] after an air traffic controller mistakenly told one pilot to descend. A report into that incident called for a review of air traffic control procedures when dozens of aircraft were "stacked" over southern England while waiting to land at Heathrow.

...Oceanic airspace controls at Auckland Airport are under review after two airliners crossed too closely on opposing Tasman flight paths. The Transport Accident Investigation Commission homed in after an Air N[Z] Boeing 767 bound for Brisbane was cleared to climb before an opposing aircraft... an EVA Air Boeing 767... passed overhead. It reported yesterday that, although[the] aircraft... were not in danger of colliding, an absence of checks on clearances by controllers was of concern. "The circumstances of this incident had the potential for an in-flight collision which could have cost the lives of 421 persons," it said... It turned out there was still vertical separation of 1800ft before the Air N[Z] pilots noticed a vapour trail from the other aircraft and an automatic collision avoidance alert went off. Aircraft flying above 29,000ft must generally stay 2000ft apart, although this requirement had recently been halved on some electronically monitored Atlantic routes.

...Two air traffic controllers have been suspended after an Ansett[NZ] passenger jet overtook a slower commuter plane above Taranaki with only about 200m to spare. Both aircraft... were cleared to fly at the same level of 22,000ft as they headed south from Auckland on Sunday afternoon. Aircraft flying on the same track should normally be separated by... at least 5 nautical miles... if on the same level. Separate inquiries are being conducted by the Transport Accident Investigation Commission and the Airways Corporation...

Air traffic controls above Auckland are being tightened after conflicts involving passenger aircraft, a military transporter and a troop of parachutists... 10 parachutists jumped from an Air Force Hercules ahead of an Eagle Air Bandeirante flying from Auckland to Whangarei... The Transport Accident Investigation Commission, in a report out yesterday, said the clearance was given after a misunderstanding between controllers at [the Whenuapai Air Force base] and at Auckland International Airport... The Airways Corporation says it has introduced extra safeguards... Whenuapai controllers, who are employees of the Airways Corporation, are now instructed not to approve parachute drops without specific telephone clearance from Auckland International... It is also modifying radar equipment to warn ground controllers when aircraft are heading too close, such as in a second incident when the same Hercules passed within 1300m of another Eagle aircraft south of Hamilton.

...An airliner which landed at the wrong airport features in the latest crop of aviation escapades highlighted by the confidential reporting organisation Icarus... which is independent of but funded by the Airways Corporation... The... co-pilot had used the global positioning system... for navigation while the captain was absent from the cockpit for 20 minutes. When the captain returned, the right identification for waypoints to the destination airport was displayed... [but] the aircraft's latitude and longitude... went unchecked... And the crew could not make radio contact with their destination or see any identifiable landmarks when landing time approached. They checked latitude and longitude and found them to be for a different airport... more than 270km from its intended international destination... [Icarus] cited an article... which warned against an over-reliance on the... GPS... Though the system appeared highly accurate, it was statistically only 97[%] so. Pilots... could not know of any error without cross-checking with other navigation sources. Reasons could vary from keying in incorrect data to poor reception from satellites used to fix coordinates.

...N[Z] will be the first to use a new satellite navigation system for oceanic air traffic control, says the Airways Corporation[, which went on to remind everyone that 'in 1959 Wellington Airport became first in the world to install a precision approach radar.'] The corporation, which has 33 million sq km of airspace to monitor, will next year start feeding aircraft positions from signals bounced off satellites into traffic control screens. Controllers [currently] use a manual display board to monitor flight movements outside radar reach, relying on pilots to radio back from reporting points. But the corporation says it has tightened this system since a controller cleared an Air N[Z] Boeing... to climb out of turbulence, not realising that an EVA Air flight had yet to pass overhead.

...Airways Corporation of N[Z] Ltd is poised to participate in the privatisation of air navigation services companies around the world... Canada had already privatised its navigation services while Britain had announced plans to. Many countries also realised navigation was a key aviation infrastructure asset essential for their economic growth, yet lacked the resources and knowledge to operate an effective system... said [the corporation's] chairman... he added... [that] the company... had built its own expertise over the last five years through its consulting business. This had resulted in assignments in Nepal, Scotland and the Pacific... "The next phase of our growth is to pursue opportunities in the ownership or management of air navigation service organisations offshore. These opportunities are likely to present themselves as privatisation, concessions or joint-venture partnerships." Airways said it might have to raise prices for its customers to rebuild its revenue... A recent directive by the Commerce Commission had prompted the company to re-examine its pricing structure... [The corporation's chief] executive... said that with the Commerce Act no longer permitting Airways to apply a standard charge for aerodrome control services throughout the country, the company had to move to location-specific pricing to ensure that prices were competitive at each airport, without cross subsidies.

...Air traffic control services at... Ardmore[NZ's]... busiest airport... in terms of aircraft movements, with about 220,000 a year... are under threat from a row over fees. Aviation users have refused to pay a 23[%] increase, and the Airways Corporation has retaliated by threatening to withdraw control services for landings and take-offs... [Meanwhile,] Auckland Airport development costs have ballooned to \$180 million with another 12,000 sq m of terminal floor space added to an earlier design. The airport's chief executive... said the international terminal had grown to 76,000 sq m, N[Z]'s largest public building by far. Three years ago it measured 46,000 sq m... [T]he terminal should now be big enough for passenger growth until about 2005, when more space could easily be added to its modular construction... Despite hasty additions to the original specifications, the company will officially open the enlarged terminal on schedule on Monday.

...Auckland International Airport landed a record \$40.5 million after-tax profit... up 3.8[%]... for the June year just ahead of a decision by the Government later this month on its continued ownership. The Government, with a 51.6[%] stake, is already understood to have received a copy of draft recommendations from its sale advisers[, who]... valued the airport at around \$1 billion. Council holders, accounting for virtually the balance, are also seeking advice on their options... Whether the airport remains in the public or private hands seems not to be of great concern to... [the] airport's chief executive, [who] said the company was in "good shape." ...[AIAL] is confident strong passenger traffic will give it the cash flow it needs to keep expanding... As an indication of the quantum leap in visitor growth, [the chief executive] pointed out that it took N[Z] 140 years to attract 500,000 visitors just before 1980, and another 15 years to get to 1.5 million. Today the airport handles some 7.6 million passengers... However[, he]... expected further competition to come as a result of the recent sales of Brisbane, Perth and Melbourne airports. "The new owners

will doubtless market themselves aggressively and compete not only with each other, but also with Auckland for a greater share of the airline business. Auckland must, therefore, recognise these possibilities and develop strategies to minimise any potential risk."

...A day after the P[M] cautioned against hurried asset sales, the Government... faced... a sale recommendation for Auckland International Airport... A report prepared by the consultants... recommends the Government quit its 51.6[%] stake. The consultants envisage] some of Auckland's local bodies wanting to get rid of their stakes, which total 47.4[%]... But world stock markets are again hanging on Wall Street's overnight performance to see if it has decisively broken the vicious downward spiral of global share prices... Winning the public over to putting Auckland's gateway on the block is another likely hurdle. A decision is due by Christmas. Privately, some in the Beehive have questioned the wisdom of [the PM speaking]... out on asset sales. However, the offices of the Minister of Finance... and the Minister of State Owned Enterprises... last night moved quickly to say nothing had been changed by [the PM's] statement and that the condition of the sharemarket was always a factor that would be taken into account when assets were sold.

...The... Auckland International Airport could come under foreign control within five months of a Government decision to sell its majority stake, say consultants... The report, completed before this week's sharemarket uncertainty, says "market conditions are favourable" to getting a high price through a public float... It says a float would attract strong domestic and international interest as there are only four listed airport companies in the world [– 'and all of them are in the Northern Hemisphere']... The Auckland City Council may be willing to sell some of its 25.8[%] as it wants \$30 million for big city projects such as the Civic Theatre restoration. However, the deputy mayor... last night reiterated his concerns about the possibility of foreign control and monopoly problems with a trade sale. He wants a cornerstone local government stake retained, with the Government's shares being widely dispersed through a float. The Mayor of Manukau... strongly opposes the sale of any of his city council's 9.6[%] stake... while his Waitakere counterpart... is keen for his council to sell its 3.7[%] slice.

...The lack of public furore over the mooted sale of Auckland International Airport is likely to give the Government confidence... Since the idea was raised in April, hardly a murmur has been heard against it. This has pleased the dries in Government and pushed the sale up the agenda. The main question has become how the Government should sell its 51.6[%] stake. Easiest is a trade sale to the highest bidder among investment companies or airport operators. In the past, the Government has opted for this exit because the new owner pays a premium for control. This has maximised the cash for reducing Government borrowings and taxes to the[initial] benefit of the public. The airport would attract no shortage of interest abroad from the likes of Lockheed, the US aerospace group, or BAA, owner of London's three largest airports... But... given the fragmented ownership structure of the airport, it is not clear what level of ownership could be offered to a trade buyer, possibly reducing its appeal... [Furthermore,] a trade sale could be unpalatable to a public which has watched a few people enriched by their purchase of state assets. It also runs against the grain of the N[Z] First leader and Treasurer... He might like the Government's other option – a sharemarket float which would encourage wide distribution of ownership among the[wealthier sector of the] public. It would also give the Government the flexibility to retain a stake. Local councils holding most of the rest of the airport's shares would also benefit. They could raise much-needed funds by selling shares... Politics aside, the key issue is how well management runs the airport. If it stacks up against international comparisons, the opportunity for a new owner such as Lockheed to extract greater efficiency and thus value is much limited... The verdict will come in a report by... [an] investment bank assigned by the Government and the Auckland City Council to review the airport's capital structure. If the report gives management a low rating, the Government should weather the political turbulence to bring in an experienced operator through a trade sale.

...Local politicians were warned last night that they faced a major battle if they decided to sell North Shore City's stake in Auckland Airport without public input. North Shore councillors meet on Wednesday but remain divided o[ver] the future of the council's 7.1[%] share... the local body... has debts of \$72 million.

...North Shore residents will have a say on whether to keep the city's \$80 million stake in Auckland Airport, but the city council will continue to look at its sale option.

...Manukau's... shareholding equates to 20 million shares worth as much as \$100 million... However, you may ask why Manukau does not sell its share to reduce its public debt of \$107 million, a figure which is relatively low by local government standards. I do not believe that selling the airport shares to repay council debt would be in the council's best interests, given the likely increase in value. The council has developed strategic alliances with the airport company over the years that are not shared by other local authority, and we have worked together to achieve projects that benefit the city and the airport company. An outstanding example is the \$20 million eastern access between the airport and the Manukau City Centre... A[IAL] is a great success. N[Z]ers should be given the opportunity to share in this prosperous enterprise and its ongoing success.

...Auckland and Manukau city councils want to retain effective control of Auckland Airport and restrict foreign ownership under a plan bound to run into trouble with the Government's intentions for the... asset. The... Mayor of Manukau... said if the Government must sell its 51.6[%] stake, it should sell the shares to ordinary N[Z]ers. He... suggested Manukau City could increase its stake in the airport and hinted that other ways of protecting the public stake were being looked at. These ideas will be greeted with alarm in Government circles where ministers are trying to make local authorities stop running trading enterprises and a sale recommendation by the Government's consultants... has warned that restrictions on foreign ownership will depress the price. The report said... the Government... needed... to "maximise" the proceeds from its stake in the airport.

...The Treasurer... has an open mind about Auckland councils holding a strategic stake in Auckland Airport and N[Z] residents being offered cheaper shares than overseas investors... But he said no decision had been taken by the Government to sell its shares in the airport. The Minister of Finance... was cautious about the possibility of making any sale more attractive to N[Z] buyers. "There was considerable criticism of some floats in the UK where the people who were issued the early shares went on and sold them at substantial premiums." The chief executive of the Auckland Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry... criticised[the] Auckland and Manukau[city councils], saying they were mistakenly holding back Auckland's growth and development.

...['Auckland City will soon have up to \$370 million in spare cash after councillors yesterday voted to sell the council's 25.8% airport shareholding. Auckland will sound out three other councils – North Shore, Manukau and Franklin – on putting their collective 43.4% up for sale in one block to get the best price. The Mayor of Franklin says her council has already decided to sell its 1.17% stake and could join the others. North Shore City has expressed interest in selling most of its 7.14% stake. Manukau is still considering whether to sell its 9.64% stake.']

...The green light for the sale of around 60[%] of Auckland International Airport has been given by its major shareholders. The Government and the Auckland and Manukau city councils... yesterday called for advisers for both a public float and a trade sale.

...['The prospect of Auckland International Airport being put on the market is already attracting the attention of Changi Airports Authority of Singapore, which has appointed an investment bank to advise it.' In the meantime,] Manukau City Council is still agonising over planning provisions for a second runway at... [the a]irport... and council staff predict appeals could drag the saga into 1998. Debate has heated-up in the 18 months since the second runway appeared in the council's proposed district plan. The draft shows a new runway to the north of and parallel to the existing one. Various submissions have mooted the alternative of reclaiming land from the Manukau Harbour and building the second runway to the south... The Air Safety League of N[Z] – a group of former pilots, engineers, navigators, and others from the aviation industry – said a southern runway would be safer. Its spokesman... said most air accidents occurred on takeoff or landing and it was safer to have a runway with water at each end rather than houses, businesses or roads. But the Huakina Development Trust, the environmental arm of the Tainui Maori Trust Board, has threatened legal action to prevent more harbour reclamation. The main promoters of the runway are [AIAL] and the airlines. The chief executive [of AIAL] said the

existing] runway could reach capacity by 2007 and local and international economies would suffer if increases in passenger and cargo traffic were not planned for. [He] said the airport company was completely confident the northern runway would be safe.

...[76 people were killed and 26 injured in Ecuador when a Cuban airliner crashed and exploded. Witnesses and survivors said the plane seemed to have engine problems before the accident because the pilot had tried and failed twice to take off. On the third attempt the Russian-made Cubana de Aviacion plane crashed into a nearby soccer field, killing seven on the ground, five of them children. Red Cross workers said that the accident was evidence of the riskiness of situating Quito's airport in the highly populated zone of the Andean city.] In local news, o]pponents of a deal to swap regional park land to make way for an airfield on Waiheke Island can vent their displeasure at a public hearing. The A[RC] parks committee is not obliged to hold a hearing, but yesterday decided it would, to minimise the risk of legal challenges... The Waiheke Airfields Ltd development would intrude about 100m into [the park]. In January last year the committee gave initial approval for swapping 0.8ha of the park needed for the airfield for 4.7ha of wetland owned by the company. Of the 183 submissions on the land-swap, all but two oppose it.

...A bird strike involving an Air N[Z] jet has highlighted an environmental dilemma with the habitat of protected grey duck near Samoa's international airport. The engine of the... jet sucked in a flock of grey ducks as it landed on Sunday, bending engine blades and causing a six-hour delay for passengers flying to Los Angeles and onwards. Among the delayed passengers was the [Samoa] P[M]... who was on his way to Scotland for the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting. The Apia manager for Air N[Z]... said many near-misses between the ducks and aircraft had occurred in the past. The ducks breed in a swamp which [he] wants the airport authority to fill in or drain to rid the area of the "pests". An airport authority spokesman... said the birds were shot whenever they threatened planes... He said a few ducks being shot was the price of passenger safety – although other measures were used overseas for reducing the threat of birds, such as electronic buzzers[(Auckland Airport uses 'model owls, streamers and loud speakers' to keep birds away)]. The problem worsens during the wet season when the ducks are attracted to ponds formed beside the runway... [A local] environmental group... believed grey duck populations had increased since the cyclones earlier this decade.

...A Qantas jet headed for Auckland made an emergency landing at Sydney yesterday after an engine exploded in flames, filling the cabin with smoke. The plane had hit a bird on take-off. [Editor's note: as there are 'hundreds of minor bird strikes a year worldwide', laypeople could be forgiven for wondering why aircraft engineers haven't yet worked out how to fit bird-proof grilles over jet-engines!]

...Travellers were stranded at Auckland Airport when taxi drivers went on strike briefly this week in protest over the actions of a marshal... About 60 cabbies angry over the lack of taxi spaces at the airport staged a sit-in... The airport company's communications manager... said the marshal was carrying out her duties as instructed... The official was "going by the book" and stopping taxis not in the rank from parking on grass areas. [By the way, 'Sydney has roughly one taxi for every 572 people. Auckland has one for every 266 people. If Auckland had Sydney's population it'd have about 13,800 taxis (instead of nearly 4000). Scary, isn't it?' ■ London has 19,000 regular and 80,000 deregulated cabs vying for 7 million people.]

...NZ has been praised as taking the right direction as NSW grapples with how to improve its frequently criticised taxi services. The NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal has recommended increasing the number of cabs in the state by 240 a year over the next five years to take the total to 5700. But in a report to be considered by the state Government, the tribunal ruled out major restructuring of an industry that is still heavily regulated. However, the Centre for Independent Studies, a Sydney-based research organisation, yesterday argued that taxi industry deregulation had worked in NZ and would be the best solution in AUS. Deregulating in NZ in 1989 led to a tripling of taxi companies in the metropolitan areas in the first five years. According to the latest figures, there were 24.3 cabs per 10,000 people in Wellington, compared with 9.62 in NSW. A policy analyst at the centre pointed out that new specialised services had emerged, including taxi vans and executive cars, while fares charged by most companies fell by as much as 10% from 1989 to 1995. The NZ taxi market had been able to sustain growth that outstripped population increases in many regions because of the greater availability of cabs and improved ease of payment.]

...A KIWI condoms-in-cabs campaign has sparked worldwide interest. The Erection for Protection programme was run by Timaru's public health office. It gave local cab firm Budget Taxis 2000 condoms to supply free to customers. The condoms were expected to last 6 weeks but ran out in a month. The taxi scheme targeted the 18-year-old-plus group who were more inclined to have unsafe sex following alcohol or drug use. Following a story in this newspaper about the initiative, Timaru's public health sexual health promoter has been interviewed by the BBC and featured in an article in the New York Times.]

...Through the windshield, Manhattan reclined like a movie star on her plush little sofa of an island: a shimmering siren both forbidding and enticing. And for our cab driver, in his '88 Chevy on the wrong side of the East River in Brooklyn, totally unattainable. He is what is known in New York as an unaffiliated or "gypsy cab" driver, which just at the moment is perhaps the most dangerous occupation in the city. Nine of his fellow drivers have been shot dead this year, four of them in the past month alone. "Is always dangerous," he said of the seven years he has spent fending for his family behind the wheel. "I have been robbed 12 times. Nine times, I go to the cops. But so far I not been killed, and that is good. But every night, believe it, my heart is about dying. Us drivers, we all think about the bullet." Just why the city's predator class has decided to declare open season on cab drivers is a question he is too preoccupied to ponder. All he knows is that he would like to be over there in the relative safety of Manhattan, driving a nice, new, shiny Yellow Cab. His problem is that he cannot afford the \$US250,000 it costs to buy one of the Yellow licence medallions, which are actually red, and were last issued by the city in 1938. So while Manhattanites sometimes come to blows in their efforts to grab one of the scarce Yellows, a driver who would dearly love to take them is forced to hustle his old bomb down streets where every fare could be his last. City officials concede there are not enough Yellow cabs. But every time a study group or task force recommends issuing more licenses, the Yellow owners lobby ferociously to have the reports shelved. More cabs would mean cheaper medallions, which would render their own substantial investments that much less valuable. The result is a mess. Bureaucrats produce reports that will never be heeded, the Yellows seldom stray from the rich pickings of Manhattan, and desperate men like our driver fill the void in the danger zones of Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx. "Is not fair," he complained as the unlicensed, unmarked taxi rattled along Flatbush Ave towards the Williamsburg Bridge. "These crazy kids, they kill you for a few dollars. I could have picked up two kids tonight in Red Hook," he continued, referring to a part of Brooklyn that is a high-rise slum of graffiti-daubed housing projects. "But I passed them by. The risk now is too much." What has made the spate of attacks so striking is the fact that they came hot on the heels of a furore sparked by an actor, who complained late last year that he had been left on the kerb outside an East Side restaurant by a succession of Yellow taxi drivers who, he charged, refused to pick up a black man. The First Lady weighed in with a lament about lingering racism in the city. The mayor responded by sending out black decoy police to ticket drivers who refused to stop for them. Everybody did the right thing. And then the killings started. The spate of cabbie murders in New York began in February with an incident that set what soon became a familiar pattern: a gypsy answered the hail of three black teenagers, who directed him to an out-of-the-way street and then shot and killed him for \$US127. Other attacks soon followed, until it has begun to seem that hardly a day goes by without a driver being killed or wounded. Now it has become almost a fad. □ Taxi driving is officially the most dangerous occupation in America, according to the latest government crime figures.]

...A Texas taxi firm that discounted fares to Catholics going to Mass on Sunday has been fined for contravening laws aimed at preventing religious discrimination. In related news, the Auckland taxi company Yellow Cabs has been ordered off the road after inspectors found the company had breached traffic regulations. The company, which operated 28 vehicles in central Auckland, was closed down yesterday by the LTSA. The regional compliance manager for the authority said Yellow Cabs had allowed its drivers to operate in some parts of Auckland without proper area knowledge certificates, and had failed to keep a proper register of drivers. Furthermore, 8 of the vehicles driving under the Yellow Cabs name were not up to a certificate of fitness standard. The owner of the company had left the country. The national secretary of the Taxi Federation said the Yellow Cabs company did not belong to the organisation, which represented about 55% of taxi companies. Thirty taxi organisations operated in the Auckland region, employing about 2500 drivers.]

... 'Auckland City has succeeded in removing dangerous taxi driving antics from Victoria St – but now they're doing u-turns on Queen St instead. The council closed the 10-car Victoria St rank a fortnight ago after a pedestrian was hit by a taxi doing a u-turn at the busy intersection with Queen St. A driver from Economy Taxis said a lot of passengers still turned up at Victoria St looking for taxis. He said the council should put a barrier in the middle of Victoria St if it wanted to prevent dangerous u-turns. Although it was the council's role to monitor parking, it was the police who controlled u-turns and the LTSA that ensured taxis were not seeking fares within 50m of a rank.' Incidentally, most NZ taxi drivers think 'drunks are the worst' passengers – especially when they 'throw up in their cabs.' Taxis are allowed to charge passengers a 'soilage fee' (~\$50) – but the passenger might refuse to pay it! There are an average of '30 attacks on NZ taxi drivers a year – often to avoid a \$3-\$4 fare.' As a consequence of political inaction, some 'taxi drivers are arming themselves' – although doing so will get them into trouble with the police. An alternative – but more expensive – 'remedy is to install video cameras in cabs' [...]

A Wellington taxi driver may lose some of his fingers after a knife attack. But his boss believes the attack could have been avoided if the Government had heeded the taxi industry's pleas for help... The owner of Gold and Black Taxis... said attacks had increased since 1989 when the Government decided it was not a criminal offence for people to refuse to pay taxi fares... If a passenger ran away without paying a fare, all a taxi company could do to recover it was drag him or her through a civil court case. That usually cost the company more than the fare was worth... The Minister of Transport... and her predecessor... had both been told about the problem, but neither had done anything... [Incidentally, a] \$1.6 million... subsidy scheme for disabled people has been abused by taxi drivers. The *N[Z] Herald* reported yesterday that the scheme was to be tightened up to crack down on able-bodied passengers using the disability vouchers. However, at least two cases of abuse by taxi drivers have also surfaced. Financed by the Auckland Regional Council, the vouchers, worth up to \$25 each, are handed out to GPs and 89 care agencies and rest homes... [The] chief executive of Eastern Taxis and a member of the council's Total Mobility Advisory Board, said a disabled woman on the board had told of a taxi driver who took six vouchers off a group of disabled people in a taxi van for the one ride... [The] chairman of South Auckland Taxis, who is also a board member, said he was forced to investigate a case where a taxi driver regularly cashed in two vouchers to take two passengers to the same place. [The chairman], who is also the Auckland representative on the *N[Z] Taxi Foundation*, said he alerted the regional council, which approached the taxi driver and the abuse stopped. Representatives of the board told this week's council meeting they were considering restricting the vouchers to a handful of taxi companies.

...Frustrated cabbies are threatening legal action against [AIAL] over its decision to change the rules of the... air terminal taxi rank... Last month the airport company brought in a system for domestic and international terminals where each rank had eight spaces – one for each of the eight taxi companies. But five days into the new system, Auckland Co-Op Taxi Ltd complained it was unfair on its drivers because of its greater number of vehicles. It argued that with a fleet of 700 taxis, each driver had a one-in-700 chance of finding a space. The smaller companies had better odds of picking up lucrative fares. The airport company called a meeting of the taxi operators, where it was decided to return to a "free-flow system." ...six companies... have since formed a front to seek legal advice about a bid to scrap the free-flow system. The manager of South Auckland Taxis... said the free-flow system was not what they signed for when the \$250-a-car operating licences were put up for tender. "In the free-flow system there will be times when most, if not all, spaces will be filled by cars from one company. The customer has the right to choose which company to use. That is only possible when spaces are divided among the companies." ...[By the way, t]here was a time, not that many years ago, when waiting for a plane in an Air *N[Z]* terminal involved having to protect your sandwiches from marauding sparrows while you battled to keep warm. It is hard to imagine that next week Harrods, the legendary British department store, will be opening a branch in Auckland International Airport, becoming one of scores of big-branded stores to open up in the newly-completed international terminal. Interestingly, the airport has signalled this event with a massive mailout last week of 260,000 glossy booklets to homes in the greater Auckland area, promoting the airport as one huge shopping mall. "With the booklet," says [the] chief executive of [AIAL], "we wanted to get across that Auckland airport is a whole new ball game." In effect, that it is worth visiting just to do your shopping... The catch, though, is that much of what the airport has to offer is in the secured area, available to travellers but not visitors. So why send out booklets advertising so many stores that ordinary Aucklanders can-not shop at unless they are travelling? [He] points out that... "We don't want you to be surprised by what is here when you do travel. We don't want you to say: 'I wish I knew... and I would have made more time available to shop.'" When [he] took over as chief executive officer in 1988, airport shopping comprised more or less of three duty free shops, a book shop and a sandwich shop that would not have been out of place in any rural, hick town. What's more, the duty free shops were expensive, preparing visitors for the lousy value for money they would encounter all the way down to Queenstown. There has been a 360 degree turnaround in the airport's attitude to duty free shops, brought about by competition and, presumably, some tough words from [the CEO]. In a recently published survey by European Data Research Ltd, Auckland airport was judged to have the "best value in duty free shopping in the Asia-Pacific area." The airport has been consistently innovative in recent years. When it put in McDonald's in 1989, it was the first southern hemisphere airport to do so, and only the fifth in the world... The long wait for passengers to arrive has been alleviated by a massive video screen, part of which runs international and local news, and part offering a blown-up display of passengers heading into the arrivals hall, for easy recognition by those waiting. The airport is part of the community, [the CEO] believes, and must reflect the culture of the city. It is also an important way of conveying a certain image with foreigners, he believes, as to many visitors "this is their first and last impression of *N[Z]*..." Because of that, the "city of sails" theme runs very strongly through the airport... A giant sail suspended on two masts, 80ft off the ground, will act as the centrepiece for the sailing metaphor... The place was designed to be bright, clean and airy, making a lot of use of the natural light.

...When... [he] became chief executive of British Airways in 1983, he saw that the future of the airline industry lay in customer service and set about turning around BA's culture with a series of motivational programmes... "Putting people first,"... "A day in the life [of BA]..."... "To be the best,"... "Winners"... "Managing people first"... The next stage of the programme is now more than halfway through but its process is complicated, as with the other courses, by the arrival of new staff. "Our present expansion poses a whole new set of problems,"... During [his]... influence on B[A], first as chief executive and now as chairman, it has fought to reinvent itself. He has not been afraid to authorise massive expenditure... \$NZ16 billion [will be spent]... between now and 2000 on new services, products, aircraft (43 new planes, including 29 Boeing 747-400s alone), facilities and training. And in the past two years BA has invested \$533 million in its top brands – First, Club World and Club Europe... He regards the airline as a franchise that can be exploited to attract new business such as travel publications and guides, financial services such as branded credit or charge cards, travel insurance, badged luggage and leisurewear... B[A] is just one of several major jobs. Very much a global man, he is also the chairman of the Confederation of British Industry, a member of the New York Stock Exchange board, deputy chairman of British Telecommunications, and chairman of London First Centre, the city's agency for attracting big-ticket investment. [His] belief in open global markets is unshakeable. "The most important political aspect of contemporary commerce and industry is the almost universal drive towards deregulation and open markets, such as we have in the European Union. This... has opened up enormous potential for competitive growth and expansion with few inhibitions to new market access." This is probably why B[A] wants the world... [and why it] has also been transformed from a very British airline to one with a deliberately global appeal, hence the controversial removal of the British flag from the tail[of its aircraft].

...World's favourite airline not so popular with its staff... The new... chief executive of B[A]... inherited... the world's most profitable airline; latest pre-tax profits were £640 million... with an enviable reputation for service. Yet this week [he] was on the edge of an abyss. Not only is his grand alliance with American Airlines increasingly bogged down in regulatory squabbles on both sides of the Atlantic, but... the airline's usually placid union[is] up in arms as he moves to compete in a deregulated European air market... [Consequently,] BA is on the brink of a strike at the start of

the peak summer travel season... Worldwide, airline revenues are falling by about 2[%] a year in real terms. It may not seem that way to business travellers in Europe, where flexible fares have kept on rising, but... [a] growing flock of new entrants, such as EasyJet, Debonair and Air UK, is undercutting the prices of BA's European flights by well over £100 a trip. As deregulation takes effect, this competition will grow... [The chief executive's] answer is to turn BA into a virtual airline, contracting out everything other than the actual sale of tickets and the handling of flights. By this he hopes to slash £1 billion of BA's cumulative operating costs by 2000. Since employees account for 30[%] of costs, many jobs are either to be hived off to contractors or downgraded. The new employment package for short-haul cabin staff is really intended to downgrade their jobs and pay to compete with rival British airlines, which pay cabin staff up to a third less than BA. From now on, new BA recruits will start on lower rates than existing staff. As a sop, the airline promises that no existing employee's take-home pay will fall. But once that guarantee runs out in three years, the union sees the writing on the wall. But then aviation in Europe has been over-priced and over-paid for too long.

...I noticed an article in your business pages... containing very extravagant and factually incorrect claims about the cost of some services in N[Z] compared to those in... Britain[, where there is]... a "light-handed" regulatory system... In the so-called deregulated N[Z] market for air travel, prices are simply not competitive. The European HQ of American Express has published a table of comparative prices which state that the "Air Economy IATA price" of a London-New York return is £219 (\$520). This does not contrast well with the regular Auckland-Wellington return of \$499 or the Auckland-Sydney return of \$649... United and Qantas are currently offering Auckland-London-Heathrow-Auckland tickets for \$3289... However, [the latest edition of]... *Sunday Times* (of London)... carries a short article in which London-Auckland-London tickets on Qantas are available (with some conditions) for £720 (\$1700). B[A is] currently selling tickets for £800...

['Thieves stole aircraft engine parts worth £4.5 million from a Portsmouth factory but blew any chance of making a fortune by melting them down into scrap which they sold for just £1000.' Incidentally,] Boeing and McDonnell Douglas shareholders have given the... go-ahead for a merger... [at separate] meetings in Seattle and St Louis...

Boeing Co's \$15 billion acquisition of rival McDonnell Douglas Corp... which would create a \$48 billion aviation behemoth... is not anti-competitive... because... Douglas' weakened position in the commercial aircraft market limited its ability as a long-term rival to Boeing... and can proceed without changes, U[S] officials said, setting the stage for a final showdown with... European anti-trust authorities[, who have already]... expressed concern about long-term contracts Boeing has signed that make it the exclusive supplier of aircraft to three major U[S] airlines... for the next 20 years... Boeing's exclusivity clauses tie up about 11[%] of the global market... Boeing already had two-thirds of the world's commercial aircraft market, while... Douglas' market share has dwindled to about 5[%]. Europe's Airbus Industrie controls the remaining 30[%]. The... merger also cleared the U[S] Defence Department, which said it saw no competition problems on the military equipment side... [despite] last year's \$3.2 billion purchase of Rockwell International's space-and-defence businesses... [by] Boeing, which has not made a fighter plane since before... W[W2, but will now]... turn into the world's biggest maker of fighter jets practically overnight.

...The planned... merger between Lockheed Martin Corp and Northrop Grumman Corp, effectively concentrating the U[S] defence industry around two groups, is putting the heat on Europe to speed up its restructuring... "Boeing-McDonnell was a major move, Lockheed-Martin was a major move, this Lockheed-Northrop is another nail,"... [a] European defence industry... analyst... said. The main names in the European defence industry... [are] Thomson-CSF... Aerospatiale... British Aerospace, General Electric and Daimler-Benz Aerospace AG and they are all engaged in an intricate multiple chess game to take the best from a European overhaul... BAe recently took out an insurance policy against its not receiving a key part in a European restructuring by teaming up with Lockheed Martin for the U[S] joint-strike fighter. BAe was also a main contractor for the Eurofighter project with Daimler-Benz, CASA of Spain and Alenia of Italy, that was still hanging on a thin thread because of German concerns about costs. BAe and Daimler, with Aerospatiale... and CASA, made up the Airbus civil-plane consortium. While Airbus was slowly moving to become a single corporate entity, there was a growing consensus to include some military activities as well.

...Boeing looks set to miss its goal of capturing at least 60[%] of new orders for commercial aircraft in 1997... So far this year Boeing has booked orders for 566 jetliners, giving it 55.1[%] of the market, while rival Airbus... won... 44.9[%]... In China, Airbus delivered more planes than Boeing for the first time...

Asia's growing economic crisis could force Boeing to delay delivery of as many as 20 airplanes a year over the next three years. That was the "worst-case scenario," a company spokeswoman said, and so far Boeing had not received a single request for a deferral from an Asian customer.

...Mounting production problems at Boeing will delay some plane deliveries well into 1999 – longer than previously expected – says the world's largest aircraft manufacturer... Boeing said it was negotiating with airline customers individually and declined to comment on specific orders... [However, sources say] Boeing told United Airlines that the... delays would affect deliveries on 12 747s, two 757s and four 767s... Other airlines said the delays meant they would have to reorganise some flight schedules and push back the phase-outs of some older aircraft... Some airlines – including Southwest Airlines and U[nited] – said they... had spoken to Boeing about compensation for the delays, although... [they] declined to provide details... [But,] based on Southwest's \$4 billion in yearly revenues and its fleet of 258 Boeing 737s, each aircraft represented about \$1.3 million in monthly revenues. Boeing missed its October delivery date on four 737s to Southwest Airlines and had told the company that some of the 21 aircraft scheduled for delivery next year could be affected also... Delivery delays were also expected for Delta Air Lines, which recently signed an agreement for 106 Boeing aircraft valued at \$6.7 billion. Last week Boeing signed a \$3 billion pact to deliver 50 jets to China but the Boeing chairman... said delivery problems were "not an issue" and would not affect the agreement... Boeing said last month that it would take \$US2.6 billion... in charges through the end of 1998 to cover late-delivery penalty fees, overtime and other costs associated with the problems in ramping up production... Boeing production problems included parts shortages, training 32,000 employees hired in the past 18 months and an expected rebound in aircraft demand... The company has almost doubled in size over the past year with the purchase of McDonnell Douglas Corp and its monthly production was rising from 18 jets last year to a projected 43 jets by April next year.

...Boeing Co, struggling to keep up with a flood of orders for its 747 and 737 jetliners, reported a third-quarter loss... of \$US696 million... on Friday that was heavier than Wall St had expected... [and] compared with earnings of \$466 million a year earlier. Boeing cited higher research and development costs, losses at the former Douglas Aircraft Co and a higher tax rate.

...['Boeing Co says the Asian economic turndown is forcing it to scale back the output of many passenger jets beginning in 1999 and to cut as many as 48,000 jobs by the end of 2000; says its earnings next year will be between \$1.5 billion and \$1.8 billion, down from an earlier estimate of \$2 billion; is still committed to delivering 550 planes this year and 620 next year']...

'Boeing Co is the biggest employer in the Seattle region, providing jobs for tens of thousands of blue-collar workers, so the company's announcement that it is cutting 20% of its worldwide workforce over the next 2 to 3 years represents a potentially serious blow to the region's economy'...

'The Star Alliance of airlines, which says a slowdown in the US economy and signs of a global recession are starting to hit the high-margin business-class travel market, has hailed Boeing's decision to drop plans for a 520-seat superjumbo jet so it can build a superfast, 200-seat passenger plane. The new plane (development cost \$10 billion) is expected to cut 3 hours off a trip between Sydney and London, thus making it popular with business travellers.'

...air passengers outside business and first class risk potentially lethal blood clots because of cramped seating. Travellers in the more expensive seats – which often cost double the price – are able to stretch and move their legs. But the... prolonged pressure on economy class passengers' legs... squeezes their veins and restricts the flow of blood. When compounded by dehydration as a result of poor-quality air and drinking alcohol to relieve boredom, economy passengers face a greater likelihood of deep vein thrombosis or blood clots. Although harmless in many cases... [the] clot

becomes fatal if it takes on a long, eel-like form... [T]hese can travel up from the legs to the lungs and block arteries. While airlines say the risk is minimal, doctors from one of Britain's leading hospitals believe it is sufficient to justify a study of 2000 long-haul passengers to establish how many suffer clots during flights between Britain and A[US]... British doctors have registered an increase in the numbers of patients suffering blood clotting as the legroom for passengers has been reduced in some airlines over the past five years... At Ashford Hospital, near Heathrow airport, [a doctor] said he saw at least one case a month of a passenger suffering deep-vein thrombosis... Dubbed "economy class syndrome", one suspected first symptom is swollen ankles. Victims may also feel feverish and experience soreness in their legs... Some travellers are believed to have died from the condition... Although no link has been proven with seat size, there is evidence that increasing airline competition on some routes is contributing to a reduction in legroom in many economy seats. Most of these have legroom of 79cm, while charter flights have even less, at 71cm – much too small for a 1.82cm person, according to the Consumers' Association... [However, international regulations only] say passengers should have at least 66cm between the back support cushion of their seats and the back of the seat in front when both are upright. A survey of 32,000 travellers this year found legroom was the biggest cause of dissatisfaction on flights... Middle-aged and elderly passengers are more susceptible to blood clots... To reduce the risk of clots, doctors advise passengers to avoid alcohol, rotate their ankles and occasionally walk up the aisle...

[A TOP doctor has advised long-haul air passengers to take aspirin to minimise the risk of lethal blood clots. Aspirin acts by reducing the stickiness of platelets in the blood, therefore decreasing the likelihood of clotting. The *Sunday Star-Times* revealed last week airlines were coming under increasing pressure to beef up warnings to long-haul passengers about the risk of in-flight clots.] 'One woman who needed to have her leg amputated after she flew across the Atlantic with Northwest Airlines is trying to sue the airline. However, the airline says "there is no evidence that it caused her condition". BA says evidence of a link is "anecdotal".'

... 'Air NZ, which already stamps tickets, timetables and itineraries with a notice advising passengers what they can do to reduce the risk of economy class syndrome,' is adding new advice to its inflight video to combat the problem of blood clots forming in passenger legs. The move comes as Britain's House of Lords calls on airline flight staff to lead their passengers in exercise routines that will stop clots. The Lords also urge that planes have more leg space, more comfortable seats and better aisle access, and that airlines serve less alcohol. The House of Lords select committee on science and technology released a report on the problem last Friday. It followed the death of 28-year-old Emma Christofferson from a clot that formed during a flight from AUS to Britain last month. The Lords found that evidence existed that being cramped in a plane seat for a long time could spark a blood clot, and that this could be fatal up to several weeks later. The risk was small, and one study had found three times as many clots in people who had been on long car trips as in those who had been on airplanes. The committee has no power to back its report, but the Government must respond within two months. The British report was kick-started by the Lord of Edmonton, who suffered from a blood clot after a long flight from NZ.'

... 'A British Lord who counts himself lucky to be alive after getting a blood clot on a flight from NZ is urging the use of special cushions to beat the problem. Lord Edmonton displayed his own cushion to the House of Lords while speaking about the week he spent in hospital three years ago fighting a near-fatal blood clot. He felt "a real ninny" to have had a clot when he now knew there were many ways to avoid them, such as taking aspirin, drinking lots of water and exercising. He had earlier recommended a vitamin blood-thinner called Jet Ease, made in NZ and marketed in England by NZ Health Products. His theory is that clots are more likely to form at a height of 10km because low air pressure causes the blood to thicken. The Lords decided on Friday that the British Government should work harder to protect airline passengers from the "real and serious" threat of blood clots. A Tory Baroness urged that immediate action be taken to study the condition. "We were astonished to find so little work had been done on this issue."

... 'Economy-class syndrome kills four air travellers landing in Auckland every year, doctors say. Many of the cases cited involved passengers dying on arrival, but one passenger died in-flight in 1994, en route from Los Angeles, and another last year. The syndrome – also known as deep vein thrombosis (DVT) – kills up to 30,000 travellers a year worldwide, aviation-health researchers in Britain have calculated. Mass legal action is now planned against many carriers. Yesterday, an AUSn MP claimed that an AUSn airline had reached a "substantial" out-of-court settlement with a passenger who suffered DVT on a flight six years ago, but Qantas and Ansett AUS refused to comment.'

... 'a 55-year-old Christchurch builder struggled around Germany with a painfully swollen leg for nearly three weeks without any inkling that a life-threatening blood clot had formed in his veins. It was only when the holidaying NZer's sister pointed out a newspaper article about a woman who died from a clot after flying that he realised he might have the same condition. It was discovered that the clot had shifted from his leg to his lungs. "The doctors in Germany reckoned I was an inch away from death." He was warned off flying for several weeks but eventually flew home – business class, thanks to his insurance policy. He is still taking drugs and has to wear a special compression stocking to prevent a new clot in his leg. A married man with two children still at home, he has to rely on a sickness benefit. He lacks the resources to sue airlines so, like 10 other NZers, he has approached the Melbourne law firm which is coordinating a multimillion-dollar lawsuit against up to 20 international airlines for 1000 claimants, including 40 cases where deaths were linked to DVT. British lawyers are also preparing cases. The Melbourne law firm said that even in minor cases, compensation might run into tens of thousands of dollars, as victims often had to take six months off work. Its managing director, explaining the basis of the claim, said of the airlines: "They knew there could be things done to reduce the risk, yet, mysteriously, it appears they failed to warn passengers, or at least adequately warn them." Despite the huge attention focused on DVT, it is not a new condition. Its link to long periods of immobility was noticed during WW2, when people spent long nights in air-raid shelters. The term "economy-class syndrome" emerged in the 1970s, because of the perceived link to cramped cheap seats in aircraft, but that is misleading because DVT has also killed business-class passengers. And long-distance bus, car and train travellers can also be at risk. United Airlines said this week that it would increase the leg room for some economy class seats from 78cm to 91.5cm. American Airlines has followed suit, and others will not be far behind, says the president of an American-based travel company. Airlines, who had been decreasing leg room to squeeze in more passengers and make bigger profits, told the British House of Lords that increasing seat pitch by 5.8cm would raise fares by about 10%. Air NZ says its economy seat pitch is 86.4cm on Boeing 747-400s.'

... 'One in 10 air travellers on long flights risks contracting the potentially fatal "economy class syndrome," a British vascular surgeon says. And as concern about the condition grows, the *Observer* newspaper in London revealed yesterday that British airlines ignored warnings about the condition for decades. The dangers of sitting immobile were revealed in 1940 when a British doctor found that the deaths of 23 people who had slept in air-raid shelter deckchairs were due to blood clots in their lungs. In 1968, two doctors alerted airlines, in an article on cardiovascular disease, to the dangers of blood clots during long flights. In 1985, three British doctors wrote to the *Lancet* about blood clots causing problems after landing. Their letter said: "We understand that airline passengers, even those on very long flights, are given no specific advice to prevent venous thrombosis." Air NZ was aware of the risks in 1991.'

... 'One of the world's most comprehensive studies into the link between air travel and potentially fatal blood clots is likely to start in NZ this month. Up to 1000 volunteers will take part, using for the first time a special blood test. Doctors from Green Lane Hospital and Wellington Hospital, who have worked on the project for six months, hope to get approval from the Health Ministry's Auckland Ethics Committee this week. The project aims to find out exactly who is in danger of developing economy class syndrome and why. A British study already completed and an AUSn one due to start have not targeted as many people, and are looking at travellers – usually with a scan of the lungs – only after their long-haul flights. The NZ project, costing up to \$250,000, would test volunteers before and after their flights. If a patient initially tested negative for clots but gave a positive blood test on return from overseas, more tests, including lower limb and chest scans, would be done. Volunteers also have to fill out questionnaires about their behaviour on the flight – whether they slept the entire way, if they exercised or if they took any preventative medicine such as aspirin. The blood test central to the study – called a D-dimer test – is available in NZ only at North Shore Hospital. But some doctors do not believe in economy class syndrome. At a conference in Sydney last Friday, attended by AUSn and NZ airline officials, unions and medical specialists, the AUSn Society of Thrombosis and Haemostasis said the

risk had been vastly overstated. Scientists from Griffith University's aviation medicine centre went further. "Economy class syndrome does not exist," they said'...

'What does flying really do to your body? DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS ■ Despite the fact that people have been getting taller and fatter over the years, aircraft seats have become smaller. Most people would find a seat pitch of 76cm to be the absolute minimum for comfort yet many airlines give you less. Cramped seating makes it more difficult for passengers to get up and move around. The dry air in the cabin may also contribute to DVT – blood thickens when water is lost from the body. Lower oxygen levels may also cause the capillaries to shrink, reducing blood flow further, although there is little hard evidence low pressure in the cabin can contribute to DVT. Some people are more at risk of DVT than others. About 4% of us have a genetic defect called Leiden V factor, which makes blood clots more likely. Women taking the pill or undergoing hormone replacement treatment are also more at risk. RED-EYE ■ Flying is tough on the eyes. The main cause is the dry air in the cabins – usually set at about 2% humidity. This is drier than the Sahara and desiccates skin and eyeballs. Use moisturisers on your skin. Drink lots of water and use a facial spray to keep the eyes moist. DRINKING WATER ■ Recent tests found around 15% of the drinking water stored aboard commercial jets is contaminated with food poisoning bacteria and human faeces, although, in the vast majority of cases, the contamination was not sufficient to pose a health risk. It is unclear where the germs enter the water supply – the main culprit may be the water storage tanks at the airport. The best way to avoid the bugs is to take your own water. AIR FLOW ■ In the 1960s, when aviation fuel was cheap, aircraft cabins were well ventilated with fresh air drawn in through the engine intakes and pumped into the cabins. Then came the fuel crisis and the airlines looked at ways of saving money. One way was to reduce the amount of fresh air pumped into the cabin – recycling saves about 6% on fuel bills. Ironically, the drive to banish smoking from the skies has contributed to the problem. In the days of smoking flights, the air had to be changed more frequently to prevent the build up of unpleasant smells. Air passes from front to back so the freshest most oxygen-laden air is found in front of the wings, favouring first-class and business-class passengers. Not only does stale air contain less oxygen, it is also the ideal medium for the transmission of bacteria and viruses. Many long-haul passengers develop a minor infection such as a cold within 48 hours of flying. Air supplied into the cabin must be at least 50% fresh while the balance may be re-circulated and mixed with the fresh air. Most modern aircraft do have filters fitted to their cabin air re-circulation systems, to filter out bacteria and viruses. HEART ■ The air in most cabins is pressurised to an equivalent of between 6000ft and 8000ft above sea level. This in itself is not dangerous – millions of people live at this altitude or higher with no ill effects. Your body is able to acclimatise to changes in altitude. But it is the sudden depressurisation which can cause problems in a few passengers, possibly triggering DVT and putting an added strain on the heart. People with heart conditions should contact their doctor before flying. THE BENDS ■ This is a potentially fatal condition caused by bubbles of dissolved nitrogen forming in the blood. If you have been scuba diving while on holiday, you must allow sufficient time for any absorbed nitrogen to leave your system before flying – at least 24 hours from your last dive. RADIATION ■ Flying increases the body's exposure to radiation from space, originating either from the Sun or from distant exploding stars (cosmic rays). Aircrew are exposed to more radiation than workers in nuclear power plants and a long-haul flight can expose your body to as much radiation as a hospital X-ray.'

...Aircraft crew who are exposed to cosmic radiation and sleep deprivation, not to mention obnoxious passengers, are fuming over Parliament's refusal to give them legal protection. The flight attendants' union says it is baffled that Parliament has denied them protection available to most workers by throwing out a private member's bill to amend the Health and Safety in Employment Act. This follows the failure of an Auckland Labour MP and former union leader... to get any National or N[Z] First politician to support a second reading of his bill. [The Labour MP] said aircraft attendants were left without legal protection against a long list of hazards including excessive noise and turbulence, heavy lifting, time-zone changes and long and irregular working hours... He said employment conditions had deteriorated to the point that international flight attendants could be expected to work up to 20 hours at a time... [They] were on board aircraft primarily to provide first aid and safety assistance in the event of an emergency, an imperative which demanded physical and mental fitness... Scientists at the Ministry of Health's National Radiation Laboratory say flight crew are more exposed to radiation than any other workers, including radiology staff... [The Labour MP] acknowledged a commitment by the Minister of Labour... to extend civil aviation regulations to cover the safety of cabin crew but said this had worn thin after five years of inaction. Civil aviation regulations already specify maximum flight hours, limitations on duties and rest periods for pilots in line with international aircraft safety requirements, but cabin crew are not covered... Air N[Z] crew members... recently had to handcuff a drunk passenger who bit one of them and choked another by his tie after being told to stop smoking on a flight to Hawaii.

...Airlines have noticed a marked increase in the number of unruly passengers since the imposition of in-flight smoking bans. Pilots and aviation security officers are worried at the potential danger to aircraft safety presented by violent, abusive and intoxicated passengers. N[Z] aircrew can tell their share of hair-raising tales of the nasty airborne antics which abound worldwide... Air N[Z]'s manager of public affairs, said that in the six months to June the airline had eight incidents involving unruly passengers... The police were called to deal with all eight cases... The company intended to introduce a new training programme for airline staff to develop further "conflict defusing skills" that could help them take the heat out of confrontations... [An Air NZ] 747 pilot and president of the Airline Pilots' Association, said there were times when all-women cabin crews might be confronted with an abusive passenger. They tended to call on flight deck males to deal with such passengers, presenting a potentially dangerous situation if, as a result of confronting the passenger, the crew member could not return to his post on the flight deck... Aviation sources told... that during the past financial year, Qantas had 42 cases of violent passengers, 137 of verbal abuse and 118 of unruly behaviour. More than one third of the incidents were alcohol-related. Although unable to confirm the figures, a Qantas spokesman said the number of disruptive incidents was very low when compared with the 18.6 million passengers the airline carried each year. Singapore Airlines recorded 15 unsavoury incidents for the whole of last year, about half of which were alcohol-related. [40%] of them were termed "molesting." ...[last November a NZ] man indecently assaulted a female flight attendant on Singapore Airlines' Auckland-Singapore flight. The pilot diverted the aircraft to Melbourne where the offender was off-loaded... With 13 similar incidents in the first six months this year, the airline is experiencing the rising tide of unruliness. Cathay Pacific noted a 50[%] jump in passenger incidents – from 168 in 1995 to 251 last year... [S]ometimes chilling examples of unruly behaviour in other parts of the world include: • The case of a Saudi princess who became so annoyed with the slowness of her drink service, she choked and scratched a flight attendant. • Passengers on a domestic U[S] flight applauded when one of their number indecently assaulted a flight attendant. • A passenger on a flight between Los Angeles and Dallas/Fort Worth struck a flight attendant to the ground because there was no fruit on his food tray... • A passenger on a flight from Miami to Madrid repeatedly tried to open an exit door, screaming that he wanted to commit suicide and take the... aircraft with him... Many pilots, airlines and civil aviation officials oppose having armed guards on aircraft. But pilots are ready to discuss the pros and cons of unarmed sky marshals skilled in self-defence and the law so order can be maintained during flight... [The] aviation industry... is on the brink of developing aircraft capable of carrying up to 1000 passengers... Some offending passengers claim sleeping tablets have affected their behaviour while others fearful of flying drink alcohol to subdue their dread.

...Two air hostesses were assaulted and a plane-load of passengers had a nightmare flight when more than 70 Polish seamen went on a drinking binge on a N[Z]-bound plane... Police had to call in a Polish interpreter to interview them when the plane arrived in Auckland... Two of them spent their first night in N[Z] behind bars after being charged with assault... A passenger from Scotland said... "They were smoking in the toilets and swigging bottles of duty-free alcohol. We couldn't get any sleep because they were carrying on and we were afraid to say anything because there were so many of them... They were giving the wee lasses a hard time and... I could see... the poor things... were really upset." He said the crew spent the entire flight trying to quieten the Poles... The rest of the... [seamen, who] are employed by a Polish fishing company... and will spend a year working on fishing vessels chartered by Nelson-based Sealord Fisheries... headed for Nelson last night.

...['Air NZ says it has no plans to adopt a British tactic in the war against airline drunks who get rowdy on flights. British Airways has taken a leaf out of the football referees' rule book and staff will issue yellow cards to passengers who act up.' However, 'the very nature of long-haul aviation means troublemakers cannot be ordered off the plane at 30,000ft']

... 'You're crammed into a metal tube with 350 other people, you're fighting for elbow room with the person next to you and the baby in the row behind you has just started yelling, and then one of your fellow passengers loses control. As more and more of us are taking to the skies, airlines and the police are grappling with a violent and growing problem, one that puts every traveller at risk – air rage. In all there's been a 400% worldwide increase in air rage incidents over the last 3 years. "Sooner or later there's going to be a passenger incident which results in a major catastrophe in the air." Earlier this year in Japan it very nearly happened. "A passenger got into the cockpit with a knife that he had, and placed the knife against the neck of the captain, then drove it into his neck killing him." At this point the passenger took control of the plane, hoping it would resemble a flight simulation game. It didn't. The plane fell to 300m over Tokyo before the co-pilot managed to regain control and land the plane safely. Heathrow is the world's busiest airport. It handles 1200 flights a day, 60 million passengers a year. The police at Heathrow are in the front line in the battle against terrorism. Disruptive passengers are an unwelcome addition to their workload. "Air rage incidents come under the heading of public safety and we are spending more of our time dealing with these." The majority of air rage incidents happen on transatlantic flights between the UK and USA. Many transatlantic incidents happen over open seas, and in these cases the pilot has no choice but to push on to the nearest airport. This often means Heathrow. This morning the Heathrow police have been called to meet a flight from LA, to deal with an alleged incident of drunkenness and assault by a 45-year-old decorated Gulf War veteran who was on his way to a security conference in Sweden, accusations he denies. He was charged with threatening behaviour and released on bail to continue his journey to Stockholm, and then back to the US. Three weeks later his case was heard at Oxbridge's Magistrates Court. After only 20 minutes the veteran was free. The judge had dismissed the case against him on the grounds of insufficient evidence (after a flight, passengers and crew disperse, making it difficult for police to gather evidence). The whole process cost the veteran £15,000 in lost work, the cost of flights and hotel bills. The cost of proceedings to the British taxpayer is tens of thousands of pounds. Many experts believe that more expensive cases like this are inevitable as long as the emphasis remains on using the law to handle alleged infringements rather than trying to prevent them happening in the first place. Fear of bad publicity means the airlines overlook behaviour like this but now, in Britain, there is a clampdown on any mid-air infringement. "The airlines themselves have not paid enough attention to this yet. They are the ones who very often have raised passenger expectations. Passenger advertising doesn't show people cramped up very close together in their seats, suffering the discomforts that very often they do actually experience in air travel these days." The airlines want you to think air travel is spacious, relaxing and First Class. But in reality it's often more cramped, stressful and frustrating. Air travel is changing and is continuing to change. The number of passengers travelling each year is set to explode from the current figure of 500 million to 1 billion by the year 2015. A journalist who champions the lot of the air passenger thinks the airlines are making a fortune out of passenger discomfort, and that air rage is a natural consequence. Tighter airport security, although necessary, has added hours to peoples' check-in times. And then, of course, there are the delays. "When there is a delay, you get people who walk over to the bar and begin drinking." "From the surveys that we've done of our unions, the major single cause that's been identified for these incidents is alcohol." Many disruptive passengers are drunk before they board the plane. Says an ex-passenger who caught a flight from Johannesburg: "We very soon noticed that one of the passengers who had boarded the aircraft and was to be seated close to us was the worse for wear. My husband then approached the stewardess and said, 'Are you aware this guy's drunk? What are you going to do about it?' She said, 'We are aware of this and we intend to keep a close eye on him.'" But a few minutes later the drunk passenger headed for the toilets, which were occupied. "He then proceeded to kick at a toilet door. Continually he banged the door and eventually managed to open it, and there was a lady sat inside the toilet in a state of shock." Staff got him back to his seat, but then he started to watch pornography on a laptop computer. "The senior cabin guy came down and told him to pack it away, and that, I suppose, really lit the fuse. This guy fought the steward with everything before headbanging the door. He was kicking and pushing the door. What the outcome of that could have been at 35,000ft frightened the life out of us. We had no idea whether that door was going to open at any point, and that could have been the end of us all. Yet the incident could have been avoided because he was drunk on the ground. The ground staff allowed him to board the aircraft drunk. Somebody made the wrong decision." "The gate agent has to decide to let a drunk person on the flight, and possibly endanger the flight, or delay the flight. Well, 9 times out of 10, she's going to go for the on time departure. No airline wants to delay a flight. It can be very, very costly indeed. However, we must do everything we can to prevent these incidents because it's no good picking the pieces up afterwards and thinking about what we could have done." The captain of the flight from Johannesburg was faced with a terrible dilemma. Did he risk everyone's safety by landing in Africa at night, or did he push on to London with a madman aboard? He chose London. There's one airport that actually wants to receive air ragers. "On any given day we're going to have 700 airplanes go very close to Bangor on route to and from Europe, and when an incident arises the first thing that the captains think of is where can I put this airplane to have this problem taken care of." Because Bangor is the first port-of-call for flights entering the States, and the last for those leaving, it markets itself as a drop-off centre for air ragers. So what's in it for Bangor? Well, air rage has become a business. In general, it costs an airline between £5000 and £40,000 to drop off an air rager. Once the offender is removed the plane must be refuelled, damage to the cabin repaired, and distressed passengers soothed and fed.'

... 'passengers aboard a flight diverted to Anchorage after an air rage incident were forced to stay overnight so the crew had the required 18 hour break'.

... 'A 19-year-old man's air rage proved fatal when other passengers killed him trying to hold him down until the plane landed. None of the passengers will face charges, authorities in Salt Lake City said.'

...the singer from the band *Roxy Music* 'feared for his life during a mid-air jumbo jet takeover by a crazed passenger. A Kenyan man stormed the cockpit of the BA jumbo, plunging the plane out of control and into a nose dive.' 'Flight 2069 from London to Nairobi was carrying 379 passengers and 19 crew. BA officials said that the cockpit door was normally locked during take-off and landing, but kept open during the flight. A spokesman said the airline would assess "whether our procedures are adequate." The Kenyan, a suspected mental patient, was cleared by police to board the flight. He was said to have been "confused" at the check-in desk at Gatwick Airport.'

... 'An AUSn man who admitted assaulting a pilot and several other crew members during an Air NZ flight from Sydney to the US has been released into the care of his psychiatrist. Immigration officials were in the process of sending him back to AUS on Saturday, after a US District Court judge sentenced him to three years of supervised release. The defendant said he couldn't recall what happened but regretted any trouble he caused. The court heard that he suffered from depression and lost control because he drank too much wine after taking antidepressants.'

... 'NZ's Government has agreed to put up new laws to deal with air rage. The Transport Minister said the proposals would be introduced to Parliament next year. The announcement followed a meeting yesterday with the Flight Attendants Association, which does not feel the law is adequate. NZ law allowed for prosecutions only if a passenger was travelling on a NZ-registered flight. The Flight Attendants Association's executive officer said AUS, the US, Canada and Britain had already closed the legal loophole, so they could prosecute any air rage incident on almost any airline.' In related news, 'a US inquest has blamed the deaths of the passengers and crew aboard a crashed Egyptian airliner on the co-pilot, saying he deliberately pulled the plane into a fatal dive while the pilot was absent from the cockpit. However, to appease Egyptian authorities, they avoided using the word suicide.'

... 'Tighar's executive director has been chasing the same woman for more than 12 years. Now he reckons he knows where she is. If he's right, then one of the longest-running mysteries in the history of aviation has been solved. The director believes he knows what happened to pioneer aviator Amelia Earhart, and that the expedition his foundation is planning for next year will prove it. Since July 2, 1937, when Earhart and her navigator Fred Noonan disappeared over the Pacific on her second attempt to circle the globe close to the equator, there have been dozens of theories as to what happened after the pair took off from Lae, New Guinea. For many years the accepted wisdom was that their Lockheed Model 10E Special Electra had simply run out of fuel

and crashed in the ocean as they searched for Howland Island, their final refuelling stop before flying on to Honolulu and completing the journey in California. And that was what The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery (Tigar) also believed. At first, "It wasn't until I learned about the navigational logic that suggested it should have been possible for her to reach land that I became interested in seeing if that could be investigated." In 1988 Tigar set out to find her. The group has mounted five expeditions to a speck of land called Nikumaroro, south of Howland Island, and the director is confident that a fresh expedition will provide the final piece of the puzzle. But scouring a deserted atoll 3.2km long and 1.6km wide for proof that could be as small as a single shirt button or human tooth is a daunting undertaking. The plan for the expedition is to hire a ship out of Fiji and take a team of about 10 people for 10 days. Previous expeditions have not turned up identifiable pieces of the aircraft on the atoll, so the next step is to put divers on the ledge of the surrounding reef, and on a sandbar at the mouth of a passage into the lagoon, where it is believed wave action is likely to have deposited aircraft debris. Earhart's final flight is not the only aviation mystery the Tigar foundation is investigating. In 1985 the director opened Project Midnight Ghost to track down what he calls "history's most important missing plane," which disappeared into thin air 10 years before Earhart's ill-fated journey. L'Oiseau Blanc (the White Bird) took off from Le Bourget Field, near Paris, on May 8, 1927, bound nonstop for New York. Had the pilots, Charles Nungesser and Francois Coli, succeeded they would have been the first to fly non-stop across the Atlantic. But their plane went missing and it was the American Charles Lindbergh who, 12 days later, entered the history books in their place. Intrigued by speculation that Nungesser and Coli had actually reached North America, the director followed up a report of an aircraft crash heard by Anson Berry, a hermit who lived in the woods of coastal Maine, exactly on the plane's flight. Although Berry was long dead, surviving witnesses told of hearing or seeing an aeroplane that day, an unusual event in the 20s, and of an aircraft engine partially embedded in the ground. However, 20 search expeditions mounted by Tigar revealed nothing.'

...*'Glamour plane shows off her wings* Visitors to the MOTAT Aviation Museum on Meola Rd gain an exclusive insight into air travel in a bygone era. Fifty years ago Tasman Empire Airways Ltd (Teal) seaplanes were state-of-the-art aircraft for the glamorous and wealthy. A former stewardess on the Solent planes served famous passengers such as movie star Gary Cooper. Stewardesses had to be single women, and were not allowed to wear their uniforms before getting on board the plane. From April 30, 1940, Solent planes travelled the "Coral route", which took about 45 passengers on a flight from Auckland to Fiji, Western Samoa, the Cook Islands and Tahiti. These days RMA Aranui is the only Solent of four in the world to have survived the rigours of half a century. About 15 to 20 members of the Solent Preservation Society work on the plane each week and "it will never be restored, we'd be out of a job then". Although visitors to the MOTAT museum usually have to view the planes from the outside, an open day in two weeks will allow them inside this unique slice of NZ aviation history.'

... 'At some time between 1900 and 1904 Richard William Pearse of the Waitohi Valley, near Timaru, designed and built a high-wing monoplane of unusual and advanced design, constructed of steel and bamboo, with elevator controls. Pearse made a number of short flights at a very early date, but it is not certain that he flew any distance before 31 March 1904. The first recognised flight by a heavier-than-air machine was that by the Wright Brothers at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, on 17 December 1903. The Pearse machine was ahead of the Wright's in the use of ailerons, or movable flaps on the wings to control the aircraft, which Pearse invented and patented, whilst the Wright brothers used a system of warping the wings. Ailerons are now universal.'

... 'Without financial backing from a Te Kuiti baker, the Airtruck would've been nothing but a figment of aviation imagination. But the baker's injection of \$200,000 helped get to top-dressing aircraft off the ground. The plane – the first commercial aeroplane developed in NZ – came about thanks to the money, a former WW2 pilot's drive and the drawing board skills of an Italian who designed trainers for Mussolini. The pilot, now living in retirement in Tauranga, recalled the top-dressing planes of the late '50s lacked what Bomber Command could have called "a payload". He enlisted the aid of the Italian, then based in AUS, and cannibalised parts from WW2 Harvards. "I was looking for an aircraft that was pilot-safe first, and could carry about a tonne and a half of fertiliser, second." What the Italian came up with was not a thing of beauty, but it incorporated some unique features. It placed the pilot above the loaded hopper, in a sort of steel cage, which would prove very strong in prangs (the plane was tough – one lost a boom in flight and still flew). Trucks loaded with fertiliser could back up between the plane's twin booms, fill the hopper and the pilot could then simply taxi away to take off. "A pilot could take off with a load of 1.5 tonnes of fertiliser, 10 seconds after landing." For farmers, that meant more top dressing in a shorter time. Two Airtrucks were built, powered by 600hp Pratt and Whitneys, but not without considerable obstruction from the air authorities. "CAA said 'We won't let you build it, you can't build an aeroplane in Te Kuiti'. You can't tell a Kiwi he can't do something when he damned well knows he can. So we did it." The first was destroyed when it crashed in the King Country after 500-plus hours of flying, the second about 1968 when it crashed near Dargaville – but in each case the pilots walked away without a scratch. The WW2 pilot, who in his wartime days flew one of the most beautiful aircraft ever built – the Mosquito – is used to all the taunts directed at the Airtruck. One is: "The ugliest plane ever built." "When they say, 'Gosh, it's ugly' I agree. Ever seen a truck that was beautiful? Nobody has. Sure it's ugly. But, by God, it worked.'" ● 'Topdressing with artificial fertilisers was an important factor in the intensification of NZ grassland farming.'

...**Airwork (NZ) Ltd, N[Z]'s largest airfreight and general aviation company, has acquired A[US]n-based... Pacific Turbine... for an undisclosed sum... making the company the largest independent turbine engine overhaul operation in Australasia. The acquisition[, which]... puts the company in a good position to compete for more business in Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East and Africa... was funded by equity provided by Direct Capital, a venture capital company which has a 44[%] stake in Airwork... Airwork operates seven aircraft in Airpost, an aircraft joint-venture with N[Z] Post. It also owns and operates 10 other aircraft and helicopters leased to customers including the police and WestpacTrust rescue operations.**

...**One of the key findings of the investigation into the Eagle helicopter crash four years ago is being challenged in the High Court at Auckland. Four people were killed when the police helicopter collided with a traffic spotter plane over central Auckland in November, 1993. Among the conclusions of the Traffic Accident Investigation Commission report in October the following year was that the helicopter continued to climb 400ft above its normal operating altitude. But that finding was yesterday disputed by an aviation expert in a civil case... An aviation consultant... told the judge... a transponder showing the helicopter's position at five-second intervals indicated that it had levelled out before the crash... He... was called as a witness for the helicopter's owner, Vertical Flight Management Ltd, which is suing the owner of the Piper Archer spotter plane, Airworks NZ Ltd... Vertical's lawyer... told the judge that the accident was caused by Airwork's negligence in failing to provide a safe system for the operation of both aircraft... Airworks also operated the Eagle under a management contract with Vertical... It is also claimed that Airworks, which had a contract to supply traffic information to the police, was using an unsuitable aircraft for the job because its wings were below the cockpit, blocking the pilot's view. Also, the spotter plane did not have a traffic observer, leaving the pilot to perform that function as well as fly the aircraft – something which has changed since the accident... [– and] that Airworks failed to provide proper communications systems so that each pilot would be able to know where the other was. Vertical claims rather than the helicopter ascending, the accident was caused by the pilot of the Piper flying too low... Airworks says the accident was the helicopter pilot's fault because he was flying too high.**

...**Pilots have reported many "near misses" with other aircraft over central Auckland since the fatal Eagle helicopter crash four years ago, the High Court at Auckland was told today... The potential for a similar accident still existed, despite the introductions of new mandatory broadcasting regulations, said a witness... Pilots were supposed to broadcast their location when they flew into the uncontrolled airspace over central Auckland, but many failed to do so, said [the] operations manager of Airworks NZ Ltd... The owners of both aircraft – or rather their insurers – are suing each other... Vertical is claiming \$US840,000 for the loss of the... helicopter, although Airworks says \$US605,000 is a more accurate valuation. Airworks has filed a counterclaim for \$75,000 for its spotter plane. In his opening address, Airwork's lawyer... said the system of communications between planes was inadequate at the time of the accident and no significant improvements had been made since then. Efforts to have the airspace**

over central Auckland controlled by radar had come to nothing, he said, because neither the C[AA] nor the Airways Corporation were willing to pay the cost. [He] said the helicopter pilot was at fault because he knowingly flew into airspace already occupied by the traffic spotting plane.

...Damages of \$1.5 million face the owner of the traffic spotter plane aircraft that collided with the Eagle police helicopter... The High Court has blamed Airwork (NZ) Ltd... The judge ruled that although the Eagle pilot was Vertical's employee, Airwork was liable for his acts and omissions because of the control it held over him... All three on the Eagle and the sole occupant of the Piper were killed when they collided... before plummeting on to motorways, miraculously missing peak-hour traffic.

...Ironically, the Airways Corporation has had the facilities in place to monitor the skies over the city at least since a \$90 million upgrade to its equipment in the early 1990s. Critics say that all it would take to improve safety would be for someone to monitor a terminal at the air traffic control room at Auckland Airport. "The facilities are there, but they just say they are short of staff,"... But the C[AA] said since the mid-air collision three reports had concluded that radar coverage was not required. A spokesman said significant safety improvements had been made since the accident, and the authority did not believe the expense of extending radar coverage was required. But cost was not an issue, the spokesman said: "The user would pay – just as they do everywhere in N[Z] where air traffic services are provided."

...Air N[Z] could be forced to pay extra charges every time its noisy 737 jets land at Wellington Airport. City council officers are preparing a report investigating how to raise money to insulate homes around the airport...

Engineers will no longer do final checks on some aircraft before takeoff from Wellington Airport. Air N[Z] has confirmed that ramp staff will do final checks on aircraft, but it says safety will not be compromised... 10 engineering jobs at the airport were being cut. The changes apply only at Wellington – which, because of problems caused by frequently strong winds, has been labelled 'one of the world's 15 most dangerous', and, as a consequence, has been 'blacklisted by the International Pilots Union'...

The way is now clear for a new \$41 million terminal building at Wellington International Airport, after Air N[Z] announced yesterday that it would drop... legal action against the airport authority. The project will be partly funded by increased departure taxes for international travellers.

...Airlines fear international passengers will have to pay up to... \$30... to leave the country if the Government saddles them with full border protection charges... Although most costs arise from screening arriving passengers, it would be considered more practical to levy any new charge at exit points... [A '\$2 international departure tax was first introduced in 1971', but] passengers leaving Auckland now pay a departure tax of \$20, most of which is a local airport development levy. Aviation security accounts for \$4 and the C[AA] takes \$1... The Government... envisages having to claw in an extra \$27 million a year... to recover all it spends on agricultural, customs and immigration services... Only about \$3.5 million in border protection costs is now recovered from airlines, which object to paying even that for the functions of Government departments... The airlines would not take kindly to having to pay agriculture inspection costs, which... [will] spiral... with the installation of x-ray screening machines, each requiring three operators... A particularly sore point for the airlines was having to pay the over-time costs of customs inspections at what were supposed to be 24-hour airports... [The CAA also] wants domestic air travellers to boost its coffers by \$4.19 million a year... Several funding options have been proposed, including a tax on aviation fuel and increasing levies on each domestic passenger from \$2 to about \$3 a flight... It needs the top-up to meet a shortfall in its 1997-98 budget, which is estimated at \$18.11 million, up from \$13.54 million for the 1996-97 year.

...Touching down on the tarmac in Godzone has always inspired an adrenalin rush for me... But the treatment dished out by jumped-up bureaucrats at the terminal... as we shuffled into Auckland Airport... [after] a holiday across the ditch... left me with a sour taste I haven't experienced since being interrogated at Heathrow... The ice-cold manner of the customs and immigration officer suggested he was having a really bad hair day. No smiles, no welcome home, nothing... No sooner had I stepped away from Dr Frost than I was pounced upon by another man drunk with power, sporting a sheriff-style hat. He demanded to see my passport and customs declaration form (what, again?) and my ticket, asking which flight I had arrived on. I asked him what he was doing, and he said it was just a bit of "routine monitoring." Fine, but shouldn't he have said that first? Recovering from that minor aberration, I joined the "Nothing to declare" queue and handed in my form, expecting to be finally free. Officer: What's in the case? Me: Clothes. Him: Didn't you buy anything in A[US]? Me: Yeah, clothes. Him: Well, you better get that x-rayed. Me: Do you do this to everyone? Him: Lady, a lot of people lie when they fill out their forms and we catch 90[%] out this way.

...['*Officious functionaries offer chilly reception* If NZers imagine their bureaucracy presents a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere to visitors, they should think again. The sad fact is that people coming to NZ for the first time are subjected to a system that appears never to have been tried before. As an observer I try to put myself in the place of the visitor trying to cope with the subtleties of NZ. What I found is an indictment of the society we call God's Own. My wife and I host a home-stay student who has just arrived here from China. Recently I took him back to the airport to pick up a suitcase he had sent as air cargo from Hong Kong rather than pay the cost of having it come as accompanied overweight baggage (unknown to him, and most other students I suspect, many airlines allow students an extra baggage allowance to cover the extra weight they might have with books – unfortunately, most ticketing agencies omit to tell students of this concession when tickets are booked). We called the Air NZ cargo terminal at the airport. The suitcase, we were informed, was there and could be picked up during working hours. We found the cargo terminal, but it was closed. A notice suggested we go to the office for Exporting Cargo. We entered this office to be met by a rather officious woman. "Have you cleared this with MAF?" At the MAF office we were told to: "Take this form to Customs and get it cleared. Then you can collect your suitcase, okay?" Finding Customs turned out to be our biggest challenge. The Customs office, it turned out, was not at the airport. It was 3km away. When we eventually found Customs, we handed over all the paperwork and the officer stamped the Bill of Lading. Back at the Air NZ cargo terminal we triumphantly handed over our stamped piece of paper to a still sombre woman. "Where's your MAF clearance document?" "It is with the Customs officer. He kept it when he stamped the release paper." "You have to go back to MAF and get them to stamp this.""]

...*'REAL BAD APPLES* I was outraged at MAF staff on *Border Control* (TV1) fining lots of overseas visitors \$200 each for bringing an apple into NZ. The apples were handed out in package form by an airline just before arrival. It is blatant revenue gathering. The MAF should have used discretion and fined the airline for handing the apples out. The poor people were crying at the desk. They had just arrived and already their holiday was ruined. A MAF officer said the visitors will tell friends not to bring fruit in. It's more likely they will tell friends not to bother coming.' Speaking of bureaucracy, NZ] aviation officials say they will not register any new passenger aircraft unless they are fully satisfied with safety documentation. Their assurance yesterday followed an admonition to Boeing by the U[S FAA] to correct "flawed" inspection procedures in the aircraft company's drive for record production. The *Wall Street Journal* quoted the agency as telling Boeing in a letter in May that production increases and customer-driven design alterations had "created an environment that is out of control." ...The deputy director of N[Z's CA]A... said his agency was sending an official as a matter of course to Seattle next month to inspect a new Boeing 737-300 before delivery. It is understood the aircraft is one of three which Air N[Z] intends leasing...

Air N[Z] is about to press twin-engine Boeing 737s into service on Tasman routes, in head-to-head competition with Qantas. The N[Z] carrier... has lost considerable ground to Qantas out of Wellington and Christchurch... Air N[Z]... has had an order for six 737s with Boeing for eight years, but a spokesman for the manufacturer said it was not delivering any new ones to... [Air NZ,] although two 767s have recently arrived from Seattle... Qantas... introduced 737-300s... on Tasman routes... some months ago.

...Qantas[announced] that it will... turn more competition heat on Air N[Z] by boosting... its trans-Tasman services by 11 flights to 79 a week... [Meanwhile, Ansett AUS] and... Air N[Z]... have deferred purchases of new aircraft pending a study of joint purchasing options. Ansett... put off

plans to spend as much as... \$NZ2.26 billion... on new aircraft until next year[and Air NZ]... has delayed the purchase of six Boeing 737 aircraft... worth about \$NZ500 million... [However,] Qantas... is to spend... \$NZ735 million... for three Boeing 747 aircraft, to be delivered in 1999 and 2000.

...[Qantas' and Air NZ's 'international airfares are likely to drop under a long-awaited "open skies" deal between NZ and AUS, which would boost tourism and increase flights across the Tasman. AUSn airlines are at present allowed to fly only the equivalent of 12 full jumbo jets out of NZ each week, and vice-versa. The president of the Inbound Tour Operators Council said the deal sounded like good news for his industry because AUS was becoming an important hub for Asian travellers and was NZ's biggest source of inbound tourists. Letting Air NZ fly more Asians through AUS would help kill seasonal bottlenecks, when tourists from countries such as Indonesia swamped airlines with their numbers. NZ has also just struck a five-way open skies deal with the US, Singapore, Brunei and Chile, and has other deals with the Cook Islands, Samoa, Peru, Luxembourg, Malaysia and the United Arab Emirates. But the deal is a first for AUS and comes after years of haggling and the occasional wrong step.' By the way, there are some unusual pricing mechanisms involved in airline ticketing. For example, an Auckland travel agent has been advertising a 'return airfare to London for \$1269 per person (\$4899 for Business Class) and one-way fares for \$899.' Better examples of this anomaly can be seen in the pricing of airfares across the Tasman (e.g., 'Auckland to Sydney - \$349 one-way/\$399 return; to Brisbane - \$389/\$399; to Melbourne - \$495/\$495') and within NZ (e.g., a 'standard one-way ticket from Auckland to Christchurch costs \$389, but a return fare booked 21 days in advance only costs \$289'; a 'business class ticket for the same return route costs \$1032'). Ideally, airlines want two people to buy standard one-way tickets instead of one person buying a return ticket in advance - but, to encourage air travel, airlines are also willing to offer reduced fares under standby (where tickets for empty seats are sold shortly before departure - so standby travellers are unsure about when or if they will get to their destination), 2-tickets-for-the-price-of-1 and 'piggy-back' deals.

... 'Buy a return adult fare to Sydney for \$559 and get a companion fare for just \$298 or a child fare for \$98. Find a special friend and jump across to a stunning Sydney. Seats are limited, special conditions apply.'

... 'Families with young children are disadvantaged by new airline safety rules and changes in child fares. On domestic flights toddlers now need to occupy a seat of their own and use an adult seat belt. This requirement of both the major airlines brings to the forefront issues of child safety, accessibility of air travel for children and affordability for parents. It is a move that both Air NZ and Ansett NZ claim is designed to enable more families to travel. If you ask families with children, they will say the changes are a considerable disincentive to go by air. Both airlines have lowered the age for child airfares from four to two years. Children up to four have until now been able to travel free if not occupying a seat. The airlines also now require children over 11 to pay adult fares. Previously, the limit was 14. Take a family of two parents with two preschoolers aged two and three and a half. The total cost of travelling between Auckland and Wellington return for this family on the cheapest special fare has increased from \$398 to \$597. It could also be harder for families to get the cheaper rate for travel at the time that suits them best. Access to special fares will depend on the availability of four seats now for this family, not two. I travel regularly around NZ and my airfare is usually paid for by whoever is sponsoring my visit. I am now faced with either saying sorry, I cannot accept your invitation unless you also pay for my infants, or pay the extra myself. My children have benefited tremendously from being able to travel with me as toddlers. They have learned much about planes and are very confident travellers. A range of experiences best enhances children's learning in the early years. It is a shame that the airlines are now making it more restrictive for young children to have the opportunity of flight travel. More importantly, the emotional and safety costs for young children, parents who travel regularly as part of their work, and families, have been ignored.'

...Vanuatu looks like snubbing French and A[US]n aid in favour of a project which it hopes will give it direct access to the Asian tourism market. The Minister of Trade... has announced a feasibility study for a multimillion-dollar project including an airport big enough to take Boeing 747s... as well as... the construction of a luxury tourist resort featuring a casino and hotel, a free trade, industrial and finance zone... However, France and A[US] are already backing a \$US13 million plan to revamp the[island nation's] airports at Santo and Port Vila. Both strips would be extended and new lighting, navigation and approach systems installed, but only to allow landing of aircraft up to the size of Boeing 737s... [The] regional director of Caisse Francaise de Development... said this plan was not compatible with the one proposed by [the minister. But the minister] said Vanuatu had "waited too long. We've been sitting around for years and the A[US]n and French advisers have told us we would get Asian tourists from New Caledonia. They have been lying to us. We now know the tourists will only come here if we have direct flight."

...A fall-off in visitor traffic from South Korea - and the unlikely prospect of any upward swing - is causing Air N[Z] to suspend services from next Wednesday... Air N[Z] flies four times a week to Korea during the November-March period and twice a week between April and October... Korea accounts for about 7[%] of the airline's Asian revenue... [The] deputy manager for Air N[Z]'s public affairs department, said Air N[Z]'s other Asian traffic was "all very solid." ...For the financial year ended June 30, 1997, Air N[Z]'s combined Asian revenue was \$632.46 million against total international airline revenue of \$1.72 billion.

...Qantas and Ansett[AUS] face a trying time as economic turmoil in Asia cuts demand for air travel. Heavy price discounting by rival Cathay Pacific on Hong Kong flights is one sign of the pressures on the industry.

...Cathay Pacific is predicting a difficult 12 months ahead amid a steep decline in tourism to the... British colony. Cathay executives said... [there] had been... a deeper-than-expected drop in the number of Japanese visitors. [● 'More than 200 people clad in destination-inspired costumes flocked to Auckland International Airport yesterday, hoping to win one of 25 return trips in Cathay Pacific's annual Dress Up and Fly competition. A 19-year-old, dressed as a chicken carrying blocks of butter, won a trip to Delhi as "butter chicken." Someone won a trip to Istanbul for dressing as a flying carpet (the carpet had been bought locally for \$70). Los Angeles inspired a guy to go in drag as Marilyn Monroe.'

...US] airlines flying between America and Asia may have found a silver lining to the black cloud hanging over the economies of the region. Plummeting currencies... are prompting more Americans to take advantage of the exchange rate by travelling there, say airlines and travel agents... Passenger numbers travelling to Korea have been increasing rapidly and will continue to increase as the won falls, the Korean National Tourism Organisation said... The declining value of the Asian currencies means travellers can buy goods for less, including hotel rooms, food and souvenirs... "There's no comparison to the bargains," said... a spokeswoman for the Pacific Asia Travel Association in San Francisco... Airlines in general are faring better than many other U[S] companies in the wake of the Asian crisis... U[nited Airlines Ltd] said this week it expected higher profits next year, even though Asia accounts for one fifth of its revenue. Northwest Airlines will increase its flights from Detroit to Beijing next year from three to five flights weekly... It is also increasing flights between Los Angeles and Shanghai from one to two weekly. Asian destinations, in particular Bangkok, have become increasingly popular in the past 18 months, as governments promote tourism and as baby boomers reach an age where they have the money and inclination to explore. "A lot of these folks have done Europe and the more traditional destinations, so they're looking for something different," said[a] spokesman... of the American Society of Travel Agents. "More people than ever are looking to travel to Asia, and certainly the exchange rate is playing into that."

...Air N[Z] is trying to coax more tourists from Europe with an additional weekly London flight and shorter waits at airports en route. From April, the airline will fly six times a week to London and back. It will no longer require passengers to change aircraft at Los Angeles. Aircraft will[only] stop there to refuel... Two weekly services to and from Frankfurt will be rescheduled to weekends, and passengers will no longer face long night-time interruptions to their journeys in Honolulu. There will be brief daytime stops there... Air N[Z] says... Germany and central Europe... are strong tourism markets... and the extra... London flight follows a new air services agreement with Britain... Other changes announced yesterday will include a sixth weekly flight between Los Angeles and Sydney, and extensions of island-hopping Pacific services to the U[S]. Boeing 767s will replace jumbo jets to increase the frequency of services between Auckland and Los Angeles. - 1997

More than 1.2 million visitors arrived in N[Z] in the year to 31 March 1994[, up 11.7%]... compared with... the previous year... The government has a tourism grants programme administered by the NZ Tourism Board... The funding available under this programme for the 1994/95 financial year [wa]s \$600,000... The Tourism Board is[also] responsible for the co-ordinated marketing and promotion of N[Z] overseas as a tourist destination... The social consequences of tourism are largely beneficial... stimulating a diversity of activities and facilities... As a... labour intensive industry, tourism generates a... wide range of jobs for [‘one out of every ten NZers’ in paid employment]. The number of equivalent full-time jobs supported directly by tourism is about 83,000. A further 109,000 jobs are in areas servicing tourism. In the period 1991 to 1994, it is estimated that the growth in expenditure by overseas visitors... generated more than 23,600 additional full-time equivalent jobs in N[Z]. Given further expected growth in tourism, the tourism industry will continue to be a leading generator of new job opportunities for N[Z]... In a 1994 survey of N[Z]ers’ attitudes towards tourism, 97[%] of people... saw tourism as important or very important to N[Z]ers’ lifestyle... N[Z]ers regard holidays as part of their lifestyle. Relaxation, socialising, new experiences, nostalgia, visiting friends and relatives and participation in sports and other special events are all reasons for a holiday, and N[Z]ers often travel for a combination of these reasons. During 1989-90, N[Z]ers made 10.3 million trips away from home which included at least one night away, and spent 41.1 million person nights away. This information has not been collected since 1990.

Ironically, the opportunity for NZers to experience their own country – or the quality of those experiences – can decrease as the number of tourists from overseas increases. Furthermore, while the NZ Government encourages people from overseas to come and spend money here, that revenue is being undermined by NZers spending money overseas (in ‘1991, 14,415,000 USers travelled to foreign countries, creating total expenditures abroad of \$US39,416 million, while the US had a total of 16,155,000 visitors, creating \$34,407 million’ in revenue)!

Figures extracted from Statistics N[Z] departure forms show a 20.2[%] jump in N[Z] residents who took overseas holidays in the year to July 31. The trans-tasman fare war started by the ill-fated Kiwi International airline played a large part in nudging people overseas, but N[Z]ers are enjoying cheaper holidays in a wide range of destinations, thanks to the stronger dollar... [One Auckland travel] agency... said many[people] introduced to overseas travel by budget fares were now keen to go further, such as to the U[S] and its island state of Hawaii, which together hosted a 28.4[%] increase in N[Z] holidaymakers. There was a 26.4[%] rise in N[Z]ers going to A[US] for holidays. A total of 495,503[– or approximately 1-out-of-every-7 NZers –] went overseas for holidays while a further 274,905 visited friends or relatives abroad and 205,088 left on business trips. The strong dollar conversely means less purchasing power for tourists arriving from overseas, but figures issued yesterday nevertheless showed a 9[%] growth in their numbers last month compared with August last year. A total of 100,830 overseas visitors marked a 3[%] rise from July, which suffered a 9[%] slump from June.

...A rise in the number of N[Z]ers taking mid-winter overseas holidays to warmer climes... resulted in a population decrease of 61,300. Statistics N[Z] figures showed the population dropped by 1.69[%] by June 30 from the March 5 census figure...

Figures showing a sharp growth in tourist numbers to N[Z] were not as rosy as they seemed, a tourist industry leader said yesterday. International visitors to N[Z] increased by 8[%]... in the past year, according to the latest Tourism Board statistics. Visitors brought in record foreign exchange earnings of \$4.8 billion... But... [while the] number of tourists... might be up... the number of bed nights was not going up as fast... The... Hospitality Association said most of the increase was from Asia, with tourists from South Korea showing a 40[%] increase... “These tourists only stay three or four days at the most, only getting to see Auckland and probably Rotorua... This year we have had 15,000 fewer visitors from central Europe and North America – the people who tend to come to N[Z] for... up to a month... and move beyond Auckland.” ...[the] general manager of the Christchurch Parkroyal Hotel... said the key to tourism growth was not the number of visitors, but how long they were staying... [S]tatistics for August showed that overall accommodation occupancy was just 27[%]... forcing hotels to slash room prices... The low occupancy rate was mainly due to the off-peak time of year.

...[‘Terrorists love tourists’] Spanish explosives experts deactivated two bombs at a hotel in the north-eastern coastal resort of Salou yesterday, bringing the total in the area since the weekend to six. A bomb attack on Sunday at the airport in the town of Reus injured 35 people, most of them British tourists. Two more devices exploded later in coastal hotels but caused no injuries, while another was found and deactivated next morning. The Basque separatist group ETA, which planted all the bombs, made a call to the radical Basque daily *Egin* warning it had placed two[bombs] in the Hotel Augustus II... ETA... has frequently staged attacks in holiday resorts in an attempt to disrupt Spain’s vital tourist industry, usually setting off small explosions, preceded by warnings, aimed more to scare than to kill...

German tourists appear to have said Auf Wiedersehen to N[Z, 14%] fewer coming here a year than two years ago. Just 52,203 of the big-spending German visitors came here in the year to June... Damaging German media reports about this country in the past year have been partly blamed. N[Z] was reportedly affected by fall-out from French nuclear tests, and the North Island was evacuated when Mt Ruapehu erupted. However, some experts say German economic problems... are to blame for the slide in visitor numbers... [In international news, f]ierce fighting dogs chasing unarmed volunteers are being used to entertain high-paying foreign tourists in north-eastern Hungary’s Zemplenyi mountains...

Growing range of ways to sell N[Z]... A logo of “Sheepie chan” is one of the weapons being used to sell N[Z] as a tourist destination. The British sense of satisfaction with their own way of life is another. At a conference in Rotorua last week the managers of the Tourism Board’s seven regional offices overseas reviewed their various markets... British visitors to N[Z] had all their expectations exceeded. It was not just the scenery and activities they took part in, but the unexpected friendliness and openness of the N[Z] people. “We were told of an amazing number of ‘good news’ stories, where Kiwis had gone out of their way to help,”... said... the U[K] and Nordic manager... After their visit, the travellers all described feelings of well-being and replenishment. They asked what magical ingredient N[Z]ers put in the food. The... board’s manager for Japan... said that by tradition the Japanese consumer was frugal, but the high yen, record low interest rates and other social reforms had encouraged growth in consumer consumption. This had influenced a remarkable surge in overseas travel, which grew by almost 13[%] to more than 15 million people in 1995. Since 1991 Japanese outbound travel growth had averaged 7.7[%] a year and for N[Z 7.2%] a year. The board, he said, was aiming at 179,200 visitors – up 12[%] – from Japan and foreign exchange earnings of \$728 million for the 1996-97 year. The “Sheepie chan” logo being used had been found to be the brand which best identified N[Z] to the Japanese consumer. As customers... the Japanese were second to none. They were delightful to entertain, appreciated service and quality, visited N[Z] year round and paid on time. The market was almost inexhaustible.

...*Tourism driven by dollars will cannibalise itself...* [The NZ] Tourism Board chief... who announced his resignation last week, has been the target of both brickbats and bouquets. Few in the industry have been able to remain neutral... [The] board, its composition, objectives, methods and results have been increasingly questioned in recent times and it remains to be seen whether his departure will succeed in calming the troubled waters of tourism in this country. N[Z] was the first country in the world to establish a national tourism organisation (1901). Despite this pioneering, the economic potential of tourism was largely unrecognised until the mid to late 1980s. By then the Government had adopted a dual role as the primary marketer of tourism and the largest single operator of facilities for what was a relatively minor economic activity. By 1990, a radical change of policy saw the Government abandon direct involvement in tourism operations (such as ownership of the Tourist Hotel Corporation and Air N[Z]) in favour of a role limited to the marketing and promotion of N[Z] tourism for its economic benefits. The market-driven approach was exemplified by the creation of the... Tourism Board, a partnership between public and private interests. The government was to set

policy and provide resources while private enterprise people were considered best qualified to put the policy into effect. Under [the chief]'s direction the board has enthusiastically pursued a purely economic set of goals – visitor numbers, foreign exchange earnings and job creation – and there can be no doubt that the results have been spectacular. International visitor numbers have increased by more than 50[%] over the past five years. Foreign exchange earnings of \$4.7 billion in 1995-1996 have underlined the contribution made by tourism to the economy. Critics of the board, however, suggest that there is more to a successful tourism industry than simple economics, and that an unfettered dollar focus is outmoded. The idea of planning tourism for economic benefit dates from the early 1960s and arose from the war rubble of Western Europe. Countries like Eire and France were the first to introduce master plans for tourism, seeking its foreign earnings and job creation possibilities, and the following years saw a series of Government-generated plans which focused on similar benefits. Economic considerations dominated to such an extent that the desirability of tourism growth was virtually taken for granted, a philosophy that a Canadian expert... calls 'boosterism', or growth at all costs. When the N[Z] board was formed in 1991, just as many countries were beginning to doubt the wisdom of such a strategy, the Tourism Minister... reaffirmed the role of tourism as a flagship of economic revival. High priority was given to marketing activities, and considerations other than economics were absent... N[Z] is still obsessed with 'boosterism', and there are few indications that this is changing. Worldwide, however, enthusiasm for the undoubted economic benefits of tourism have been tempered by a realisation that these are accompanied by costs... and... have led to a realisation... [that] social damage could[be the] result. Some of these effects are already evident in N[Z]. There has been damage to the physical and cultural environment, overcrowding and pollution in some popular tourist destinations, competition between locals and visitors for recreational facilities, and local antipathy (or even aggression) towards visitors. There is evidence that these can have serious repercussions... [A] former... director of tourism for Switzerland and an acknowledged expert in the social impact of tourism, has argued that social and environmental harm will eventually lead to a less attractive destination and a consequent reduction in visitors – effectively, that tourism will kill tourism.

...[in Bermuda they certainly know a thing or two about the tourist dollar. As the island that's widely credited with inventing the island resort holiday, it's been enjoying visitors for more than half a century. Today nearly 500,000 come here. Not bad for an island with a population just 13% of that, and in total they spend half a billion dollars. But it's all come at Bermuda's expense, and tourism is on the decline as the resort's jet-setting former patrons seek out unfamiliar or unspoilt holiday destinations. In response, the island has turned itself into an offshore banking haven – in fact, Bermuda is third after London and New York as a centre of catastrophe re-insurance – and as the off-shore financial industry has thrived, tourism's taken a back-seat. Although tourism is no longer the biggest revenue earner, it certainly ensures employment on a large scale. "The reality is you've got quite a lot of locals here that rely on the hotel infrastructure. Socially, and economically, you can't just make a decision to do away with the hotels and go after the international financial sector."]

...[Bali, says its tourism chief, has become a victim of its success, with environmental, cultural and social pressures threatening its survival. "When is too much already enough?" he asked, a surprising question from the president of the Bali Tourism Development Corporation. "Tourism brought great prosperity to Bali over the decades. But it also brought traffic, pollution, environmental damage, petty crime and street hawkers." Travellers eager to escape the madness of Bali's Kuta Beach usually look at nearby Lombok and Lombok islands. Both are serene, promoting themselves as "the Bali of the 1970s," and offer fantastic surf, cheap accommodation and none of the exhaust fumes, traffic noise and overcrowding that scars Kuta. The only way to Lombok from Bali is on a ferry that leaves Sanur, about 20 minutes from Kuta, about 8 am every day. The \$3.70 cost is well worth it. Double rooms less than 20m from the water for the equivalent of \$NZ6.20 a night, steaks for about \$10 and a Bintang beer for \$1 draw people to the island like moths to a flame. But Lombok has fallen from grace after the death of an island chief led to breakdowns in some services, including the rubbish disposal system. So instead of strolling along stretches of perfectly white sand, visitors now have to contend with waste – bottles, food, old clothes and more – that has been dumped on the beach.' The beaches on Thailand's Phuket Island are still pristine, but the locals complain that 'we have no beaches left because they are all privately owned by tourist operators and fenced off for their client's use. We have to ask permission to use' our beaches.

...[For two weeks Niue has been one of the world's loneliest places. The tourists have left, its resorts are empty, and there is no one left to answer the phone at the island's airport. Royal Tongan Airlines, the only airline flying there, shelved its weekly return flights from Niue to Auckland and Tonga after the CAA in Nuku'alofa grounded its two planes. Niue now has a tourism crisis, which has prompted its Premier to appeal to NZ for urgent help. In the high season, up to 70 tourists go to Niue each week, making tourism a multimillion-dollar enterprise. The crisis left an unknown number stranded on the self-governing island for 15 days, and has stopped NZ's 20,000 Niueans from visiting their relatives back home. Royal Tongan Airline's chief executive officer had said he hoped the two grounded planes would be allowed to fly again by the end of next week. However, the airline is now saying the flights were unprofitable and may not be resumed. Air NZ will double its flights to Tonga from Monday, but a spokesperson says there are no plans to fly to Niue. The only way to get to the island is by hitching a ride on a cargo ship, which visits once a month, or by chartering a small Air Fiji plane']...

Fiji's infamous souvenir sword sellers are to be banned after being accused of losing the country... up to \$F40 million a year... in tourism dollars. Renowned for hassling tourists with their hard-sell methods, the street vendors who flog the cheap carved wooden swords are said to be having a negative impact on visitors... The deputy head of the N[Z] Embassy in Fiji... said the sword sellers tended to operate... [by] accosting tourists and asking their names. "As soon as they have your name, they quickly carve it on to a sword – then they say you have to buy it... Some of them are virtually using standoff tactics to force people to buy their swords." Unsuspecting holidaymakers were usually stung for between \$5 and \$20 for the unsought souvenirs, "but I have heard of them being sold for up to \$50." Licences were issued to the sword sellers in a bid to curb their excesses, "but it hasn't stopped them from continuing with the same sort of tactics." [The deputy] said the sellers were "very unhappy" about the proposed ban. [By the way, 'one thousand labourers at any one time worked in 24-hour shifts over 21 months to construct the Hotel Burj Al Arab in Dubai. The \$US2 billion hotel towers 321m high above a man-made island. Featuring 200 suites no smaller than 1700 sq m each, a restaurant graces one side and a heli-deck the other – both cantilevered 200m above the ground. The project to build the world's only 7-star hotel was a joint venture of three companies – an Arabian company (labour) a South African company (structural steel) and NZ's Challenge Construction (project management and methodology)']...

Nestled between Mt Tongariro and Mt Ruapehu, 'the Grand Chateau Hotel was built in 1929 by a fledgling Challenge Construction Company. An 80-year-old who first stayed there as a 15-year-old has returned every year since 1934 (apart from seven years in the 1940s when it was closed to guests). "We would always take the lift after playing tennis or golf but when it came time to make an entrance for dinner we would dress to kill and float down the staircase to be as grand as possible for an evening of waltzing and romance. They were my flirting days and oh, did I have a time." She honeymooned at the Chateau in 1940 and continued her visits after her husband's death in 1950. The widow plans to continue her Chateau holidays, despite sometimes finding them difficult because they are "riddled with memories" of family and friends now passed away. "But because it makes me feel like I'm in heaven the Chateau will always be in my heart." Incidentally, last year's volcanic blasts... wiped an estimated \$10 million from the... Ruapehu District... - 1996

Ohakune chartered accountants... estimated that the Mt Ruapehu ash-fall cost the district \$70 million in lost revenue for 1996. The Earthquake Commission has paid out \$48,000 for more than 200 claims relating to the volcano's 1995 and 1996 eruptions, but it faces \$3.9 million in outstanding claims. The Whakapapa ski field general manager... said a claim for more than \$1 million for material damage had been accepted but a "substantial" claim for interruption to business would take a year to settle...

WHEN Mt Ruapehu erupted for the second year in a row last year, there were dire predictions that many of the businesses around Ohakune would not survive without government handouts. Certainly the effect on the town and its surrounding area has been devastating, but there have

been no handouts. Neither has there been any wholesale closing down of businesses... Skiing is estimated to bring in \$100 million a year to businesses around the mountain. When the first eruption cut the season short by at least five weeks on 23 September 1995, it was estimated to have cut the year's takings by about \$10m. That made for a bad year in an industry that can also have its ups and downs because of fickle weather conditions. Locals swallowed the loss and hoped that, in the swings and roundabouts of the ski industry, one poor year would be followed by a good one. Instead, the mountain followed a bad year with a disastrous one, choosing June 26, the opening day of last year's season, to launch an even more spectacular pyrotechnics display, which closed the skifields for most of the winter... A 10% loss of business one year followed by a 75% decline the next would be enough to send most businesses to the wall. Their problems have been made worse because the town has no significant summer tourism business to compensate for a bad ski season. Yet surprisingly... the marketing manager for [the] Ruapehu District Council, which has co-ordinated much of the work to counter the effects of the eruptions, knows of only three businesses in the area that have closed their doors as a result... Sure, some people did sell up when last year's season didn't happen. But there was always a buyer willing to jump in and take up the risk. Typical of those who have hung on is [the] proprietor of the Turoa Ski Lodge. He moved into the area 11 years ago and bought the old railway hotel, which he has modernised and extended over the years. When the mountain erupted in '95 he had just finished building new accommodation units at the back of the lodge. "I just thought, 'it couldn't happen twice', and kept going,"... During the summer he dipped further into his capital reserves and extended his bar, in anticipation of the good times over winter. On the opening day of last year's ski season [he] had 60 staff ready to go... Overnight he cut his staff from 60 to five. With his reserves already depleted... [he] opened a bar in Napier. "That has given us a cushion to get through until now,"... Others adopted similar strategies.

...THE spectacular eruptions of Mt Ruapehu in 1995-96 cost the country at least \$130 million, said [a] geologist... He put the loss to tourism at \$99.2 million... He estimated ECNZ's losses at \$21.5m. Almost half of that was the cost of repairs to the Rangipo power station, whose water intake was buried in ash. The rest was in lost electricity generation. [He] was not able to calculate precisely the losses of the aviation industry, frequently disrupted by the ash plume... His estimate was \$2.4m, which represented only the value of cancelled flights. That was almost certainly too low... Administrative and emergency service costs were estimated at \$6.5m. Most surprising... was the relatively low impact... on agriculture, with an estimated loss of only \$400,000. About 2000 ewes and lambs died from grazing on ash-covered fields and ash destroyed a year's cauliflower crop in Gisborne. The relatively light loss was entirely a matter of luck, said [the geologist]. If the wind had blown in a different direction, or the timing of the eruptions had been different, far more valuable crops would have been destroyed.

...[the 'Pink and White Terraces were a tourist attraction which was already world famous by 1886, when the eruption of nearby Mt Tarawera completely obliterated them. The terraces had been formed over thousands of years by a geyser, which had left deposits of silica creating a fanlike staircase covering about three ha, in delicate shades of pink and white. The only records of these scenic phenomena are paintings made by some of the thousands of people who went there. The night Tarawera blew up, three Maori villages were destroyed and ash was flung over thousands of square kilometres of forest and farmland, while the three craters on the mountain and the typography of the surrounding countryside were altered beyond recognition – so much so that no one has ever been able to identify for sure just where the terraces were.' We still know for sure where Happy Valley is, although volcanic activity picked up at Mt Ruapehu yesterday, with at least one small eruption, spotted in the Crater Lake by ski lift staff...

For beginner skiers the slopes of Happy Valley are quite aptly named. It is unique as the chair lift is free and you can catch this slow chair down the slope to start your lessons... The Valley has a world class ski school to put you on the right track to enjoyable skiing. Intermediate skiers can enjoy a vast range of varied skiing... Advanced skiers can rejoice because from the top of the Valley T-bar you can glide around the precarious Pinnacle Traverse to the Front Stage and even more demanding Back Stage Runs. Extreme off piste skiers can try the runs like Outer Limits, Black Magic, The Chimney and The Chute to satisfy their adrenalin buzz. Touring enthusiasts can ski from the Crater Lake area with spectacular views back to Whakapapa or Turoa[, and]... the awesome terrain... is ideal for snow surfers of all standards. This Magic Mountain... can truly be classified as the ski area for all skiers... SKI MAGIC RUAPEHU on the Whakapapa Ski Area [for] \$99 per day (midweek) Includes: Days Lift Pass or Beginners 1 1/2 hour lesson and beginners pass *Plus* • One days ski hire • Ski Jacket & Pants hire • Transfers to and from the ski area • One night backpackers dorm accommodation... \$169 (Weekend)...

SNOW machines, from Happy Valley at Whakapapa to Coronet Peak at Queenstown, have been working overtime in the last couple of weeks to get slopes ready for the school holidays. The aircraft jet engines on wheels that you see on most fields are a tad smarter than nature because they trigger snowmaking with a bacteria whose distinct shape makes water freeze at higher temperatures. The discovery has revolutionised snow sports. So long as it's cold, the humidity is low and you have a dam full of water you can put enough of the white fluffy stuff down to keep shareholders and impatient skiers happy. That is just the beginning because the snow freezes a bit more while it is lying around and packs down as the little arms break off the snowflakes. When it is solid enough the groomers do their sculpting – and it's goodbye slow starts to the season.

...[I knew, but couldn't quite believe, that those 9.7km from base camp to summit usually take six days to complete. And even at the daunting pace of 1.6km a day, most don't make it. Only one in three of those hardy (or foolhardy) souls lured to Aconcagua actually gets to the summit. Aconcagua, surrounded by emptiness, is in one of the remotest parts of the Andes. Twenty years ago, a Uruguay rugby team's plane crashed nearby, stranding them for weeks with little hope of rescue and forcing them to eat their dead colleagues to survive. These days, however, Aconcagua is an island of activity, with 3000 people drawn to its slopes last year. They come not just because, at 6962m, it is the highest mountain in the world outside the Himalayas. No, it combines its stratospheric altitude with a remarkable quirk of geology: you can simply walk to the top. Someone has ridden a motorbike almost the entire way to the summit, and a one-legged man has made it. But despite, or because of, the ease of Aconcagua, death is all too possible. The cemetery for people who have died on the mountain has thoughtfully been placed at the trail head where you take your first steps up the mountain. Fresh new crosses mark the graves of a 22-year-old American, a 36-year-old Korean and a 60-year-old Argentinian. Last year, eight people died. What on earth was I letting myself in for? Every 30m you ascend Aconcagua, the temperature drops, the air gets thinner and you collect another anecdote about an injury or death. Like the man there the week before us who took off his gloves to adjust his crampon only to have them blown away in the wind. He lost all the fingers on one hand to frostbite. The big worry on the mountain is acute altitude sickness, which hovers around the climbers like the grim reaper, picking them – us – almost at random. My tired mind entered a hypnotic state. With my eyes glued to the ground, all I could see was my boots and those of the walker in front, hour after hour. Then disaster struck. I thought I detected the taste of blood in my mouth. I walked on, but the taste came out loud and clear. It could be nothing, but it could be a symptom of pulmonary oedema. After months of planning, thousands of dollars of expenses, and two weeks of walking, I was just four hours from the summit. The temptation to go for it was overwhelming, but the rational part of my mind told me that the biggest killer on Aconcagua was summit fever. Those who ignore the risks and press for the summit are the ones who die. It's just one mountain, and I have just one life. With a heavy heart, I turned round. I wasn't alone. Of the nine of us, four made it to the top, although one, a fast marathon runner, had to be carried down because his legs had given up on him. A couple of days later, sipping congratulatory champagne back in the security of base camp, we each agreed it was the hardest physical thing we had ever attempted. None was keen to do it again, but we were glad we had done it. We might not appreciate the hardship, but we'll certainly appreciate the memories.'

... 'A SMALL South Island town is split over one of its most important tourism lifelines – helicopters. Some Franz Josef residents want their helicopter base moved out of the West Coast town because of noise and fumes. But others say it's important the base stays for the sake of the lucrative tourism benefits – about 31,500 flights a year buzz in and out, ferrying tourists to Franz Josef glacier. Helicopters operate from a riverbed site less than 100m from the shopping centre area and near some houses. In the peak season, they are booked from dawn to dusk. "Last summer the noise was so bad you couldn't

hear people on the telephone or watch television. The house shook," said a resident. "I was pregnant at the time." One suggestion is to relocate the helicopters to an airstrip 4.5km out of town. But Mountain View Accommodation's owner-operator said any move which impacted on helicopter operators would be felt by everyone. "Economics are very important in a small place like this and jobs are precious." "We like to hear helicopters taking off and landing because it means the tourists are still coming through," said the general manager of Franz Josef Hotels, which has just put \$2 million into building a 32-room development across the road from the helipad.'

...halving a tortuous nine-hour road journey is the rationale for a proposed new road link between Queenstown and Milford which includes a 38-minute 12.6km aerial gondola trip that would be one of the most spectacular in NZ and the longest cableway of its type in the world. The head of Skyline Enterprises Ltd – the successful operator of the gondolas and luge rides in Queenstown and Rotorua – points to the Skyrail Rainforest Cableway in Queenstown as an example of a gondola which promotes eco-tourism and has won major awards. The gondola, built in 1995, starts from a base station at Caravonica Lakes, just 5m above sea level. It runs 7.5km up into the rainforest to the township of Kuranda, famous for its alpine train and a hub of tourism in the area. But environmentalists are shaping up to oppose Skyline's application for resource consent, taking the stance that the development would be a scar on the pristine landscape of the Southern Lakes region, would threaten endangered species and introduce pests and weeds – the most vociferous opponent being the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society. The society's field officer in Christchurch decries the gondola proposal. She points to her home patch and the Port Hills gondola as a development which is sometimes closed, especially during high winds, and predicts the \$80 million Milford Skytrail would be dogged by similar problems.'

...Some places, like Queenstown, are totally geared to tourism, with no other source of income. When the tourists do not come, the tills do not tinkle... Result? Gloom and concern. There has been a building boom in Queenstown and 5000 hotel and serviced apartment rooms are due for completion... th[is]... year. An... annual hotel industry survey released last December suggested the over-supply of rooms could cost Queenstown "its position as the most profitable centre (in NZ) for hotel operations". But a particular issue now upsetting southern hoteliers is the acute shortage of peak-season airline seats, claims regarded with sufficient importance by[the] Tourism Minister... that he has ordered an urgent inquiry into the extent of the problem. In Christchurch, Dunedin and Queenstown there have been cancellations of tour parties because of the unavailability of airline seats, particularly from Asia and the U[S. Air NZ] is the obvious Aunt Sally, especially when Singapore Airlines, Cathay Pacific and others have increased their capacity from the Asian area, and a British charter airline has permission for more than 30 flights from Britain and Europe. Air N[Z] denies culpability – especially allegations that its programme has been determined to a large degree by its [subsidiary Ansett AUS]... moving Asian tourists through A[US to NZ] to the detriment of visitor time spent in this country... [By the way, a 25%] jump in the number of N[Z]ers visiting A[US], to 671,900, helped to increase th[at] country's short-term visitor numbers to a record 4.2 million last year. The A[US]n Bureau of Statistics said yesterday that the number of A[US]ns going overseas for short trips also increased, by 8[%] to 2,512,600. For 15[%] of them N[Z] was their leading destination.

...Britain has overtaken the U[S] as a source of visitors to this country... Tourism Board figures confirmed on Wednesday that Britain had become N[Z]'s third largest single source... Arrivals from Britain rose to 146,638 in a year when visitors from the U[S] fell by 4[%] to 145,346... Only A[US], which contributed 436,068 visitors, and Japan (162,660) exceeded Britain.

...[N]Z... attracted 9[%] more visitors last year than the previous year and topped the 1.5 million tourists mark for the first time. The Tourism Board said there were 1.53 million visitors in the year ending December 1996, compared with 1.41 million in 1995.

...N[Z]'s tourism growth last year was among the best recorded by OECD nations... Japan led... with a 25[%] increase in arrivals... while A[US] benefited from a 13[%] increase. Overall... tourist arrivals in the Asia-Pacific region grew by 15[%]... niche marketing for tourism, such as eco-tourism and cultural tourism, helped to make the... region such a popular destination... The average growth of tourism among industrialised nations was 3.4[%]. OECD countries accounted for two-thirds of worldwide tourism last year. The U[S] was the biggest earner, taking in \$US64 billion. France attracts the most tourists annually – '60 million' – but they only 'spend \$NZ40 billion'. Britain was the 'sixth most popular tourist destination with 7 million visitors'. • 'DESPITE LACK OF scientific proof that the Loch Ness monster exists, it is said to generate more than \$50 million a year in revenue from tourists who visit the Scottish lake hoping to see the legendary creature. The monster myth also creates about 2500 seasonal jobs'...

'Just after London was dismissed as "squalid" by one tourism guide, a rival book dismisses some of England's best-loved villages and towns as mean, cold, ugly, clapped-out dumps. The West Yorkshire village of Haworth – home of the Bronte sisters – is "wretchedly over-visited." The Cotswolds is "afflicted by plagues of tea-and-souvenir shops." Blackpool is full of "predatory, half-dressed gangs" of stag and hen parties. The Isle of Man is a "tax haven for greedy Brits and a refuge for the sort of people who think that even Victorian values were a bit on the lax side." And although nothing can completely destroy the beauty of Lands End, the *Rough Guide to England* says, "the colossal theme park built behind the majestic headland in 1987 comes close to violating irreparably the spirit of the place." Tourism officials across England have fired off indignant letters of protest. They are furious at the battering leading attractions have taken in the latest crop of guidebooks, which follow the recent decision by France's top gourmets to downgrade English restaurants. Only one restaurant now enjoys the coveted three Michelin stars – compared with 21 in France.'

...A mere 15km off the coast of France, the Channel Islands are British – or sort of – with a few leftovers of a French legacy. Luckily, French cuisine is one of those. The Channel Islands have become increasingly popular with European tourists looking for more than hot summers and palm trees. But their real appeal comes from their generous taxation law: only one rate of income tax – 20% – no capital gains tax and no inheritance tax. Little wonder the rich and other celebrities have set up camp here next to local families who have lived on the islands for generations. From Alderney, the northernmost of the five islands, you can see the French coastline on a clear day. For lovers of history and old bricks, the island's numerous Victorian fortresses are not only a must, you can't avoid them. They're dotted along the entire coastline and at almost every outcrop you'll find remnants of past battles'...

British tourists overwhelmed in the battle of the beaches... After decades of sunbed warfare with the Germans, Britain has finally thrown in the towel. [Britons] can't fight them on the beaches because they outnumber us there by almost two to one... The Germans are the master-race at world travel and spend more money on going abroad than any other nation, despite economic problems at home. New figures show that one in eight tourists is German. Only the combined might of wartime allies Britain and America could knock them off their perch as the world's leading tourists. Almost 80 million of them are taking foreign holidays. That figure – including people taking more than one annual vacation – is up by a third since 1991. In the same one-year period only 44 million Britons go through the departure lounges, say market analysts Euromonitor. [Britons] are fourth in the table of globe-trotters behind Germany, the Czech Republic (yes that's right, the Czechs... 57.3 million Czechs visit foreign parts annually – up 87[%] in six years) – yet the 'population of Czechoslovakia was only 10,339,000 in 1993'... and the U[S]. But it seems that to afford the vast number of holidays they take, Germans are choosing the cheaper spots... There is no corresponding tourist invasion of Germany. It does not even figure in the top 10 tourist spots... They've got nothing to match our British Museum or Blackpool. The museum is more popular than even the Eiffel Tower – and Blackpool's pleasure beach is Europe's fourth most visited attraction. Beat that Berliners! ...China is currently the fifth most popular tourist destination, beating the UK for the first time.

...[he] 'could well be the most travelled of us all. He's visited more than 150 countries including China 22 times and South America 14 times. He has explored all 51 American states and all of east and west Europe. A few years ago a newspaper poll listed him as having one of the best 10 jobs in the country, that of an independent tour guide who writes his own itineraries and gets paid to make them happen. It's his job to "dream up incredible journeys." He has taken 28,000 slides, which he uses to publicise his tours and to illustrate the great beauty and desperate problems of the world. This year's schedule includes seven weeks on Marco Polo's Silk Road, a British canal trip, 40 days in South America, the less-visited regions of Spain, Portugal

and Morocco and, finally, Vietnam and its neighbours. Until recently he travelled for 11 months a year, keeping all his worldly goods in two suitcases stashed at an Auckland travel agency. Is he bored with travelling? "No way! I consider myself lucky." His early working life as an auditor in Birmingham, England, did not give much indication that his life would be one of such adventure. But later, in London, a sustained burst of enthusiasm for all the city had to offer saw him out every night for two and a half years. Even so, he says, "Like a lot of Poms I didn't want to go anywhere. I didn't even want to go to Scotland." An encounter with an AUSn traveller and her slides of the world changed all that. In 1960 he immigrated to AUS and two years later the accountant-turned-nomad visited NZ and fell in love with "this most beautiful of countries." He moved across the Tasman, giving up his old profession to pick apples and sort mail and to save money for long periods of travel of the overland, backpacking kind. A job in a travel agency in Auckland led to him escorting his first tour group in 1970. Since then he has escorted more than 2000 Kiwis to the far corners of the world and back.']

...MORE Kiwis are visiting Canada than ever before... Statistics Canada figures show that... 38,954 N[Z] residents visited Canada... during the p[ast nine months]... – an increase of 21.26% over the same... [months of the previous year. NZ] had the third highest rate of visitor growth to Canada behind mainland China at 29.40% with 52,131, and Ireland at 27.10% with 20,768.

...DUBLIN, with its reputation as a young, vibrant city, is enjoying a tourism boom. Some 16 new hotels have sprung up in the past year to cater for the influx of visitors. Short breaks from Britain are growing in popularity and it is increasingly fashionable to go to Dublin for hen and stag weekends. Ireland is fast becoming one of Europe's top holiday destinations and is forecast to welcome five million visitors this year, up 10[%] on last year. Meanwhile, a marketing campaign is under way to raise the profile of Shannon International Airport and the west of Ireland. The airport is undergoing a \$108 million upgrade so it can handle three million passengers by 2007.

...[expect to see a boom in the development of airport and hotel facilities in northern India now that local authorities have 'opened 20 unclimbed peaks in the Himalayas, as well as 176 other summits in previously closed areas bordering China and Pakistan. Their heights range from 6000m to 7800m.']

...Making a mountain of money... While the greater mass of humanity might dream of riches, more and more rich people dream of standing on the "roof of the world" – the dizzyingly high peak of Mt Everest, a plateau no bigger than a double bed, in winds of up to 160km/h. These people pay thousands of dollars to join the exclusive club – only 600 members so far – of those who have reached the summit. Or indeed to add their names to the list of 142 people who have so far died in the process. "A lot of people think they can buy their way to the top," says [a spokesperson for] the Ministry of Tourism in the Nepalese capital of Kathmandu. "But they forget just how dangerous Qomolungma [the seat of the Gods] is." Spring has begun, and more teams of mountaineers than ever are converging on the world's highest peak. Ten teams each have gathered below the North Wall on the Tibetan side and the South-east Ridge in Nepal. About 2000 climbers, guides and sherpas are competing to get on to the routes first. At least seven of the expeditions are "commercial groups" – climbers led by professional mountain guides. The Everest trip costs between \$40,000 and \$100,000. Business is going well, even though in May last year eight climbers died within 24 hours. This year's arrivals again include the N[Z] company Adventure Consultants. If this group manages to reach the summit, it will pass near the body of the company's founder... His body lies frozen in the ice only a few steps off the trail... Rob Hall... died because he delayed his descent too long when he tried to bring one of his customers safely back to the camp. He ended up climbing in the dark, stopped to rest, and never got up again. Hall's body is unlikely to discourage anyone on their way to the top. "The mountaineering ethic is lost," [the] owner of Everest Trekking in Kathmandu, says with regret. He blames the commercial enterprises for relying on professional groups of climbers to set up the necessary ropes and bases. "If those are missing, disaster is inevitable in poor conditions." He is critical of commercial groups for failing to set up emergency camps with oxygen reserves 100m to 200m below the summit. Not every Everest climber has the stamina of the sherpas. Although the sherpas' job of carrying loads of equipment on the ascent might seem menial, it is thanks to their knowledge and stamina that many climbers have survived the descent. They get paid between \$2600 and \$3000 each for a six-week expedition. That puts them in the lower income bracket in terms of the Everest business, which is worth millions of dollars. For each expedition of a maximum of seven foreign mountaineers, the Nepalese government earns \$72,500. Internationally accredited guides, most from the U[S or NZ], cost another \$22,000. The power of money has long since held the upper hand in the Himalayas. "If people want to pay to get up, why not," says [a spokesperson for] Himalaya Expeditions. He doesn't see anything wrong with up to 30 climbers a day pushing or shoving to get started on the climb. "You hardly notice them once they are on the mountain." That is true except for one spot... on the southern route. Only one climber at a time can cross the ladder which bridges a dangerous crevasse. If there are too many people at one time, they may have to wait up to one-and-a-half hours to get over, and not reach the summit until late in the day. "There are often terrible fights in the camps," says... a "mountaineering correspondent" who has been observing the Everest business for 37 years. "There are fierce arguments over who gets to set off first, who gets to tighten the ropes." Kathmandu is teeming with 500 mountaineering companies and 600 travel agencies... [The first person] to climb Mount Everest solo, is seen as responsible for the boom. [The soloist] led the marketing of tours. [In comparison, NZer] Sir Edmund Hillary[– who, together with 'the sherpa mountaineer Tenzing Norgay', is accredited with being the first to ever climb Everest –] took a different approach. [He] finances schools in the Sherpa regions and is trying to save the Sherpa language, now spoken by only about 6000 people... Hillary [has] suggested a "moratorium" in the interests of nature, recommending that climbers be banned from Everest for several years. In response, the Nepalese government introduced a rule that no more than one team could climb a route at any one time. The result was that climbers took to ascending on the Tibet side. And so the Seat of the Gods has become the highest rubbish heap in the world. Since Hillary[and Tenzing] reached the summit in 1953, those who followed have left around 15,000kg of rubbish behind. Empty oxygen bottles, tin cans, tattered bits of tents, old ropes, ice-picks, frozen excrement and corpses line the routes. Recently the German embassy in Kathmandu built a large cold-storage chamber for the bodies of foreigners who lose their lives in the Himalayas. But even death itself has become a lucrative business. A[n A]ustrian... restaurant owner, has a sideline as an undertaker specialising in repatriating dead tourists. Transportation costs for a corpse range [between] \$8500 and \$10,000.

...as [t]he... climber from Seattle... paused to take a final photo of the queue of climbers who were still making their way to the summit, [he] noticed something he had not seen before. The mountains surrounding Everest, which had been bathed in sunshine only an hour earlier were now covered in clouds. But neither [he] nor the 38 other climbers moving towards the summit that day realised a storm was brewing. They had no idea that within hours, eight climbers would be dead and others left permanently scarred in Mt Everest's most tragic day. The disaster received worldwide attention, not only because of its scale but because many of those caught on Everest were not mountaineers. They were amateurs – who paid up to \$84,400 to be guided to the roof of the world. One of those was... a writer for *Outside* magazine and author of the 1996 best-seller *Into the Wild*, who was sent by his magazine to join a guided ascent of Mt Everest and write a story about the commercialisation of the mountain. Of the six people in [the writ]er's group – led by veteran N[Z] guide Rob Hall – only two survived. A year later, [he] has written a harrowing account of the tragedy... His memoir is... seared with guilt about his role in the tragedy and whether he could have done more on the blizzard-swept slopes to save the lives of some of his colleagues... *Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mt Everest Disaster* combines [his] recollections with those of other survivors and radio logs to piece together what happened on Everest on the night of May 10, 1996. The... gripping account of how human error, ego and greed and a liberal dose of bad luck came together at the top of the world... has become a best-seller in the U[S], where its release last month coincided with another tragedy on Everest in which up to nine climbers have been killed...

Nepalese authorities are about to embark on their biggest effort to retrieve the bodies of climbers – now more than 150 – many of which they regard as posing a health risk. The recovery operation, made possible by an unusual spell of mild weather, threatens to upset relatives who would prefer to see their loved ones left at peace on a mountain they dreamed of conquering.

...[according to a 'Canadian mountaineer: "Images of Sherpas and western climbers jostling for positions on ropes that are now fixed all the way from Base Camp to the summit have taken away any mystique the mountain may have had."'] Everest has even been successfully 'climbed by an amputee'...

'Late last year, a Sherpa reached the summit of Everest in a record time of 24 hours and 20 minutes from base camp. Hardly anybody noticed. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says attempts to climb the mountain began with the opening of the Tibetan route in 1920. There were seven attempts on the northeast ridge between 1921 and 1938 – including Mallory's last attempt in 1924 – and three missions up the southeast ridge in 1951 and 1952. Whether the first footprints on the summit were those of Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing or Mallory and Irvine, is still what fascinates.'

... 'A pair of finds – one near the icy summit of Everest, the other in the depths of the Atlantic – may help unlock two of the great puzzles of exploration. From the Himalayas, a US-based expedition yesterday announced the discovery of British climber George Mallory, who some believe beat Sir Edmund Hillary to the top of the world's highest peak, while off the Bahamas salvage experts found the space capsule in which an American astronaut nearly drowned during a controversial splashdown in July 1961. Two pieces of vital evidence are still missing, however: the hatch which an author accused the astronaut of releasing in a panic, causing the capsule to sink before frogmen could retrieve it, and the Kodak camera which Mallory carried and which experts believe may contain film that could still be developed.'

... 'An expedition to Mt Everest is unlikely to find a camera that could prove two Britons were the first to scale the mountain, says Sir Edmund Hillary, who reached Everest's peak in 1953 with Tenzing Norgay. Britons George Mallory and Andrew Irvine disappeared about 250m from the summit 29 years earlier. There have already been several expeditions up the north side of Everest to find a camera which might not have existed, Sir Edmund told National Radio. However, he said Mallory was a greatly admired figure and it would be nice to find out whether he had been successful.'

... 'A 38-year-old Slovenian became the first person to ski non-stop down the world's highest mountain on Sunday. He said that during his descent he came across the frozen body of a dead climber whose identity was not known.' In related news, 'the discovery of George Mallory's body has sparked a race to rewrite Everest's history with New York publishers and Hollywood studios fighting for the spoils.'

... '*High altitude, low morality* "A BITTER wind raked across the shattered rocks of Mount Everest's South Col, brushing gritty snow into the folds of a dying man's clothing. He lay on his back with his bare hands resting at his sides. Less than a rope's length away, in a huddle of tents, seven men slept in snug sleeping bags. The dying man had lain outside for hours, exposed to a withering wind." Thus writes a mountaineer and award-winning author in the introduction to his latest book, *Dark Shadows Falling*, a fascinating indictment of what he fears the culture of mountaineering is becoming. "Had he been able to concentrate he might have heard the flexing and flapping sounds of the Dutch tents less than 30 yards from where he lay. In the darkness he might have understood what the noise meant – comfort, warmth, companionship. Perhaps the familiar sound had stirred something in his frozen memory, or the recognition of voices drifting over from the tents into his fading consciousness had triggered the almost superhuman effort to wave one hand. The effort in itself should have killed him as the chilled blood released by the spasms of his arm rushed back to his precious core. Either way, it was too late, and he died within reach of sanctuary." His analysis is instigated by the story of that Indian climber dying alone – because, shockingly, his wave was seen and the occupants of those nearby tents chose not to go to him. "No one acknowledged his last despairing movement, knelt by him and had the humanity to hug him. They let him die alone for reasons known only to themselves." Other recent expeditions to Everest are scrutinised in detail through the lens of morality. The heroism of some are recognised – for instance, the valiant rescue efforts that went on in the days after the vicious storm that swept the mountain in May 1996, killing NZer Rob Hall. But there are enough stories here to cast the shadow of truth over the thesis that ambition, selfishness and greed are turning the Himalayas into an overcrowded, "glorified theme park" in which "the age-old sense of concord thought common to mountaineers and sailors in the face of death and distress" fails to stack up against the ferocious – but senseless, given the fact that it's all been done before – competition to "summit." There are examples of terrible inhumanity among ostensible equals – the Japanese climbers who walked straight past three dying Indians without offering even a word of comfort, let alone abandoning their own expedition to try to save them. One of those Japanese climbers later told the *Financial Times*: "Above 8000m is not a place where people can afford morality." His partner added: "They were Indian climbers – we didn't know them." Or the South African team who, after the storm that led to the death of Rob Hall, refused to lend their radio to the rescuers. The book also reveals some extraordinary treatment meted out by Westerners to their porters. One, dressed in little rubber boots and cotton pants, dies of cold while carrying down clothing and Gore-Tex jackets on his back. Other Sherpas are left behind to fend for themselves when their employers, unwilling to pay \$200 a head to rescue their staff as well, are evacuated by helicopter. Two Westerners are in too much of a hurry to make their international flight connections to bother carrying their sick Sherpa to the rescue helicopter. The littering of the Himalayas with all the detritus of climbing, including bodies, the author compares with Sherpa Norgay's statement that as he climbed the mountain he craved forgiveness for every step he cut into her side. The author sympathises with the call for a complete ban on climbing Everest: "There is nothing left to be proved by an ascent other than to massage the egos of rich clients whose motives leave a lot to be desired. It is time for Everest to be made inviolate, closed to all suitors for all time, to become a sanctuary to be honoured, admired and respected, rather than abused." Unfortunately, Everest isn't the only mountain that attracts a high mortality rate – for example, '71 people have died trying to climb Mt Rainier in the US since 1987.'

... 'the grand-slam of adventuring encompasses going to the North and South poles plus climbing the highest peak in each of the seven continents.'

... 'adventure tourism company] **Shotover Jet has reversed its decision to sell Rainbow Springs and Rainbow Farm Show in Rotorua after none of the bids matched expectations. Directors blamed negative publicity about the state of the N[Z tourism industry.** On a positive note, '8 NZ destinations made up the top 100 cities for tourists following a poll by a prestigious US magazine. But only Christchurch made it into the top 10, headed by Sydney.')

... **Warning to Aucklanders: Napier wants you. The Napier City Council is spending more than \$200,000 to attract more tourists to Hawkes Bay – and Auckland is top of the hit list...** [By the way, less than half of Aucklanders regard tourism as vital to the local economy... A Tourism Board survey found that only 47[%]... saw tourism as "very important"... a further 37[%]... said it was "important." The remaining 14 cities and towns surveyed, with the exception of Wellington, said tourism was more essential... The Mayor of Manukau... said Aucklanders needed to shake up their ideas if they were to cash in on upcoming opportunities... [He] said Auckland International Airport was the gateway to the country, but the challenge was to intercept tourists before they immediately fled to Rotorua... Tourism contributed \$2 billion to the Auckland region in the last financial year, with 3.3 million international and domestic visitors.

... 'The tourism industry cannot afford to sit back and relax despite recent success, says the Minister of Tourism. N[Z]ers needed to make additional investment if that achievement was to continue... The industry had performed extremely well over the past six years, visitor arrivals jumping 42[%] since the Tourism Board was set up in 1991... [However, the minister] said the country needed to maintain and build on its investment in marketing, concentrating on smart, well-targeted campaigns. Extra money would be needed if the board was to achieve its goal of \$9 billion a year in foreign exchange earnings by 2000... [The minister] said later that he wanted the Government Statistician to keep a tourism satellite account so that the country's largest foreign exchange earner could be measured... The Tourism Board calculates the industry[currently] earns about \$4.8 billion in foreign exchange a year, but the Government does not produce figures... An official measure of the contribution the industry makes to our total foreign exchange earnings was urgently needed... He said more money was also needed for forecasting and tourism research... In the past the value of tourism was calculated on International Visitor Survey statistics[which]... had a margin of error of 6[%]. About 10[%] of tourists filled out the surveys... [The minister] said the new methodology, to be announced within the next month, would include details about domestic tourism. He would not comment on how much the new research would cost.

... 'International visitor growth will slump to 3[%] this year, a report prepared for the Tourism Industry Association says... [G]rowth in visitors to NZ slowed to less than 5% in the year ended June 30, according to Statistics N[Z].

...THE Tourism Board may have to review its much-championed target of \$9 billion in foreign exchange earnings a year by 2000. It distanced itself from an earlier target of three million visitors annually by the new millennium after a national outcry from N[Z]ers against the country being "swamped" with tourists. So rather than spend its \$50 million-plus budget on encouraging as many visitors as possible, the board has been trying to entice big spenders. We have, in the words of [a] former Tourism Minister... become a "boutique" destination. But as the growth in arrivals slowed... the money earned from tourism has also started to shrink... And the average spend per person per day decreased 6% to \$143, while the average spend per visit per person was down 7% to \$2595... Visitors from Germany, Switzerland and Japan were the highest spenders. But while earnings from Germans rose to \$4055, spending by the Swiss dropped to \$4013 and by the Japanese to \$3783 (down 7%). South Koreans continued to spend the most per day, although this was down 2% to \$337.

...The tourism industry is bracing itself for its worst year since 1992 after a dramatic drop in visitor numbers... In the... [2nd quarter] the amount spent by foreign tourists on services such as transport and hotels fell significantly, while the amount spent by N[Z]ers overseas increased, contributing to a \$128 million deterioration in the balance of payments... While hotels in Auckland are believed to be doing a steady business, those in other centres such as Christchurch, Queenstown and Rotorua are understood to be struggling to fill rooms... [O]ccupancy rates in some hotels were as low as 15[%]... The occupancy rate for all accommodation in June was only 21.7[%], compared with 24.6[%] in May and 30.5[%] in April... The slump has sparked calls for more Government support of the industry, including greater funding for the Tourism Board... An extra \$10 million of marketing expenditure would bring in 31,000 more visitors a year, according to the... National Bank's chief economist... After years of lobbying by the industry, the Government announced last week that it was doubling the amount of money available for tourism research over the next three years... What the... [latest statistics] have shown is that tourist operators cannot continue to assume that N[Z] will always be in big demand as a holiday destination... There are numerous reasons for the reduced growth, but the strength of the kiwi[dollar] takes centre stage... The international tourist industry is also highly competitive and other countries are managing to attract visitors away from N[Z]. Germans are responding to aggressive promotion by the Canadian tourist industry and A[US] has been particularly successful in attracting Asian visitors.

...[Building a Web site to showcase NZ to the world should cost far less than the proposed \$3 million budgeted for the Xena site by advertising agency Saatchi & Saatchi, says a new media entrepreneur. The managing director of Auckland-based Matcom, surveyed local Web designers and concluded a major tourism site would cost at most \$250,000, including all the bells and whistles. He said the \$3 million quoted by the advertising agency for a Xena site as part of its Destination New Zealand tourism campaign was a joke and should immediately be redirected to a saner project'...

'The Tourism Board expected to spend at least \$14m promoting the television star Xena as the "big idea" behind its global marketing strategy. Details of how the Warrior Princess would spearhead the campaign – and gobble up nearly a quarter of its three-year \$50m budget – emerged yesterday. The Auckland actor's role in the now-foundering strategy is touched on in a censored board report. But the *NZ Herald* has the uncensored version, which shows that the ambitious plan was to have debuted last month at a \$500,000 Hollywood launch with a "constellation of stars." The campaign allowed for a \$2m contractual agreement with the actor, a special \$5m episode of *Xena – Warrior Princess* with the actor showing viewers her favourite homeland places, a \$3m Web site, a 60-second TV commercial and a \$5m "new image" library to satisfy what the contracted advertising agency believed would be an "unprecedented demand for new source material." The agency described the use of Xena's cult and celebrity status as a "media virus" which would "get global cut-through and interest in visiting NZ." The "Xena project," as Saatchi & Saatchi called it, has collapsed and the board is hurriedly revising its plans.'

...The PM has been dropped back in the Tourism Board row – this time by the Minister of Tourism. Another document has emerged raising fresh doubts about the PM's explanations of what it knew, and when, of Saatchi & Saatchi's \$50 million tourism strategy. The damaging contradiction is contained in a summary of a meeting in the minister's Beehive office during September last year. The one-page document from Saatchi records advice from the minister that "the PM approved the idea in principle when given an overview by" the Saatchi boss. However, the PM has said on National Radio that it never agreed in principle "to anything that was put in front of me by the Saatchi boss or anybody else." The PM was yesterday directing all enquiries to the minister, who disputed the Saatchi report, saying: "At no time did I believe or tell anyone that the PM had seen or approved the Tourism Board campaign." He agreed the briefing occurred, and said he had remarked that the PM would be enthusiastic about the plan to use *Xena – Warrior Princess* as the big campaign idea. The minister also took a swipe at Saatchi – the world's 11th-biggest advertising network – saying the quality of their reports "is a matter for them." The Saatchi report is the third document in the tourism row to draw Government denials. The advertising firm was not returning calls yesterday. Meanwhile, TV3 last night reported that Saatchi's revised campaign is to show live images of NZ on billboards.'

...Tourism chiefs will demand answers from the Tourism Board today at a special meeting called to brief them on plans to salvage NZ's global promotion campaign. After scrapping Saatchi & Saatchi's plans, the board must now come up with a new campaign and get it into the international marketplace or NZ will fail to capitalise on the big events they were relying on to kick-start the \$4 billion-a-year industry in the run-up to the millennium. Last night the Tourism Minister and the PM were distancing themselves from the failed deal. Both said it was now up to the board to deliver.'

...Government sources believe the aborted Saatchi & Saatchi campaign could cost taxpayers as much as \$3 million – for nothing – and may yet cost the Tourism Minister his portfolio. Money set aside for promoting NZ overseas may now be needed to defend the Tourism Board in court if the jilted advertising agency sues after losing the \$53 million contract. As the tourism industry reeled from the announcement that the agency's global promotion campaign had been scrapped, Saatchi moved to recoup money for the work it has done since getting approval for it last July. One of the board's main reasons for dumping the agency was the likely budget blowout of the Saatchi plan. Figures of \$75 million to \$100 million have been suggested. Two weeks ago the minister said the campaign was outstandingly good. The week before, Saatchi had unveiled its revamped campaign to the board, which remained unimpressed.'

...The Tourism Board offered Saatchi \$220,000 at the end of their strained relationship, but denies the proposal was hush money. Saatchi executives were unavailable for comment last night, but have made it clear that they are pursuing legal action against the board. Although the board is believed to have explored its legal standing before dumping the agency, contract law experts say Saatchi has a strong case to claim for considerable compensation.'

...A letter which lay unopened during a watershed Tourism Board meeting is being investigated by the Auditor-General. The hand-written letter, from the office of the Tourism Minister, was assumed by directors to sack the board's chairman. But the white envelope remained undisturbed beside the chairman during the meeting on December 16 last year, with directors warning that opening it would mean accepting its contents. The letter, which was apparently returned unopened to the minister's office, was written when relations between the minister and the chairman were extremely tense and the board's global marketing strategy with Saatchi & Saatchi was close to collapse. The directors were sceptical that the advertising agency could deliver extra tourists with its \$50 million board deal, and were shocked when Saatchi pushed for a higher fee and a copyright claim over campaign material. The advertising firm refuses to defend itself over the now scuttled board deal and its chief executive – back in Auckland yesterday – had nothing to say when asked for the Saatchi story. The mystery letter had reached the board as it verged on a total breakdown with the minister. The *Herald* understands that the board's chairman and his deputy had consulted a lawyer over a High Court injunction against what they saw as the minister's excessive interference. Aghast board members cautioned against legal action and instead sent a three-member delegation to the minister's office, where a departure deal for the chairman and deputy was settled.'

...The Government may face long court battles in trying to recover \$340,000 in payments to former Tourism Board directors. An Audit NZ inquiry has found that the severance payments were unlawful. But the agency says there was no suggestion that the Tourism Minister directed the board to make any payment. The former board chairman said last night that he was seeking legal advice. The PM is seeking an opinion from the Solicitor-General on the

money, and the board, which believes the payouts were lawful, says it will also talk to its lawyers. The chairman was paid \$200,000, based on a formula he had proposed, as compensation for his premature resignation last December. His deputy resigned with him and was paid \$140,000. Labour yesterday stepped up calls for the minister's sacking, pointing to a conflict of evidence about whether he approved the golden handshakes.'

...'The Government is due to decide today if it will try to recover severance payouts of \$340,000 to two former Tourism Board members. The cabinet meeting is expected to weigh up the probability of large legal bills if the Government decides to pursue the money.' 'But of greater concern was whether the board may still have a "dysfunctional" relationship with its minister, as laid out in the Auditor-General's report.'

...The PM wants assurances from the Tourism Board that it can work with the Tourism Minister and if the PM does not get them it may force the minister to resign. The damaging row between the minister and the board was discussed by the cabinet yesterday – although the minister, said to have the flu, was not present. The PM has also demanded the board tell by the week's end what it was doing to get the severance payments to its former chairman and his deputy back. One way or another, the PM wants the matter sorted well before it leaves for South Africa in two weeks.'

...'AN end to the wrangle over Tourism Board payouts is in sight, with its former chairman and his deputy signalling they may return some of the \$340,000. But in return they want a concession by the Government the payments were not unlawful. The PM initially vowed to get back all the money, through the courts if necessary. But by late last week the legal complexities and costs of pursuing the payments had persuaded the Government to try to cut a deal with the men instead. The PM has hinted the Government would be content to get back just three-quarters of the payments, leaving the men with a total of \$50,000 and \$33,000 respectively. While the chairman and deputy still say they believe the payments were justified for being forced off the board, they are also feeling the heat of public condemnation of the deals. Their resignations triggered a series of public revelations about the Tourism Minister's management of tourism which led to his resignation from the portfolio last month'...

'TOURISM NZ will pay Saatchi & Saatchi \$225,883 in expenses after it was fired from the \$53 million NZ global campaign'...

'The Tourism Board's new plans for selling NZ overseas are expected to be revealed today. It is understood the board has decided to award the contract to an Auckland and Wellington-based agency, M&C Saatchi, over a Wellington-based firm. The board has been considering ideas from the two companies since dumping its initial choice for the plum contract, Saatchi & Saatchi Auckland. The decision to use M&C Saatchi is also a further twist to the Tourism Board saga, as the agency takes its name from the original owners of Saatchi & Saatchi. The brothers founded the new agency in 1995, after they were dumped by their original firm. It is understood the board has gone for a less grandiose campaign than the one Saatchi & Saatchi proposed.'

...'The greenrush is on. "100% Pure New Zealand" is the open invitation to party at our place. Tourism has become a markedly bigger concern than any other export earner – although NZ has only a 0.31% share of the \$3.5 trillion global tourist industry. But the "100% Pure" slogan thrashed overseas by Tourism NZ, the trading name of the state-owned Tourism Board, is raising expectations of a clean, green oasis that some experts say is becoming increasingly challenging to deliver. They fear that unless a sustainable national strategy is put in place down to regional and grassroots levels, where tourism planning is often haphazard if it happens at all, the natural assets used as beacons in the brochures risk losing their international allure. Tourism leaders and the Government are at last working on such a strategy, but it has taken them more than three years to team up since the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment warned in a major report that the industry had become largely unsustainable. It remains to be seen what chances the strategy – the final draft is just being completed – will have of reining in an industry of predominantly very small businesses, 80% of which employ fewer than five people.'

...'This is not about private dinner parties, advertising agencies or who said what. I – the leader of the Act Party – am not interested in the politics of personal attacks. I'd rather talk about the people's business. Should \$67.5 million of taxpayers' money be spent promoting an industry? That's what the NZ Government is spending on tourism this year, and among a huge pile of papers released last week by the Government was the former Tourism Minister's proposal to spend an additional \$20 million on tourism marketing. I was relieved that Treasury opposed this proposal. Treasury cast doubt on the absurd claim that a \$20 million ad campaign would earn \$240 million in additional foreign-exchange earnings. It's the same argument that says \$1 million of ratepayers' money for a car race will earn Wellington multimillions. If that were true, we could spend a billion and get richer than California. Treasury has produced a list showing how much various governments spend for each visitor. NZ now spends more than any other. Our taxpayers outlay more than \$30 a visitor. Italy spends just 49c, the US 34c and France \$1.20. Are they wrong and we right? The mess in Parliament must be making National start to doubt it. The idea that if only we gave taxpayers' money to tourism all would be well, is not new. Another Tourism Minister was forever putting up papers to the last Labour cabinet that read just like the current proposals. It's nonsense that there is some market failure peculiar to tourism that only packets of money can fix. Otago farmers are in a serious drought and the total support from the Government is just \$80,000. The Government did not step in to protect the timber industry from the Asian crisis. Wool prices are at their lowest for five years, yet no one so far is advocating SMPs. What's the difference between spending taxpayers' money on advertising tourism and spending it on, say SMPs for sheep?']

...Taiwanese tourists are being fleeced by a tourism scheme based on one of N[Z]'s best known symbols: sheep. For an undisclosed sum, Taiwanese are flocking to adopt and name a sheep... Adopt A Sheep is a joint venture of the Tourism Board, Rural Tours, EVA Airways and eight Taiwanese travel wholesalers. The proud "parents" are photographed alongside their adopted ruminant and take home a certificate proclaiming them as its foster parents... Tourists also take home a toy memento which goes baa – so they can never forget what their woolly "offspring" sounds like. More than 150 people have signed up in the venture's first month.

...['Two Peruvian thieves convicted this week of passport and theft charges are a reminder that the age-old art of tourist fleecing is alive and well. Police believe the pair were part of a South American ring of thieves preying on tourists in Auckland, Rotorua, Christchurch and Queenstown. Such scams, where one person distracts the tourist while another steals, are common all over the world, but relatively rare in NZ.' In related news, t]he Fullers Group is working on plans that will help it maintain its grip on... tractor-driven shuttles around Rangitoto Island... About 44,000 people visit Rangitoto Island each year and Fullers has been offering shuttle tours on a trial basis since 1995. A Fullers spokesman said the company wanted to consolidate its position by receiving a permanent concession... The concession limits the company to running six trips a day, using two shuttles.

...Fullers Group is in line to get a 15-year monopoly running Rangitoto Island visitor operations. The Department of Conservation intends issuing a concession to the company to run tractor-driven shuttles around the volcanic island[in Auckland's Waitemata Harbour], conduct guided walks and maintain roads. The company has operated island services for some time and, if confirmed, the new arrangement will place the operations on a long-term footing. The department will not reveal how much Fullers has paid to secure rights to Rangitoto.

...The Commerce Commission has warned tour operators against trying to "fix" the commissions, or kickbacks, which tourist businesses must pay. Warning letters ha[ve] been sent to the Inbound Tour Operators Council, the Bus and Coach Association and the Drivers' Guild. The groups' recommended industry standards included a 5... to 15[%] range for commissions to be paid by retailers and other tourist businesses to tour operators who brought tourists to their businesses.

...Tourism industry plans to put a 15[%] cap on commissions... and kickbacks... given to tour operators have been condemned by the Commerce Commission. The organisation said yesterday that it had not approved the guidelines... and... it would monitor them to ensure they were not a form of price fixing. The guidelines... set the 15[%] cap on commissions provided that the money is declared to the Inland Revenue Department. The commission's communications officer... said the kickbacks did not breach the Commerce Act. But competitors... were not supposed to come to an agreement on prices or commission rates. The deputy chief executive of the Tourism Board... said there had been a misunderstanding between the board and the commission. The board had liaised with the commission while the guidelines were being developed but had not realised the commission did not give its approval or disapproval on such documents... The deputy chief executive of the Tourism Board... said he was happy for

the guidelines to be “tested in practice” and they would still be released today... The guidelines are the latest attempt to rid the industry of illegal commissions and kickbacks. In some cases bus drivers and tour guides demand... cash, from shopkeepers and tourist attractions before they will take tourists in. Others – particularly Korean guides – tell tourists that prices for goods are in U[S] dollars not N[Z] dollars.

...Some tour guides have been “ripping off” tourists by asking them to pay to visit places which are free of charge, Rotorua police say.[A] Detective Inspector... said police had been told that over the past few months the guides, mostly Korean, had charged their overseas clients \$US10... to walk in Redwood Forest, Rotorua, and \$US20... “departure tax” to cross between the North and South Islands. Police had also heard of tour guides demanding \$US100 from tourists to play on golf courses, telling their patrons it was a golf club fee. [● An Asian tourist walked into the pro shop of a Waikato golf course, paid the price advertised on a new set of clubs, then returned the clubs after completing his round. Although the pro assumed that the tourist had mistakenly believed it was only hiring the clubs and paying green fees, the pro didn’t bother to refund the cost difference of about \$450!]

...TWO beers bought by tourists in Athens proved to have an unexpected punch when the bill came – they cost more than \$650 each. The Athens prefecture has fined the owner of... [the] cafe \$6000 for overcharging... City officials said the beers should have cost \$18... “Greece’s foreign exchange needs depend heavily on tourists and this kind of stupid trick damages the reputation of the entire country.”

...PRAGUE is trying to stop taxi drivers from overcharging tourists. Unscrupulous cabbies have been picking up tourists from the airport and main railway station and charging up to \$24 a kilometre. After a barrage of complaints from angry tourists, Prague authorities plan to introduce a blanket fare of 77c a kilometre.

...[known as ‘the fairytale city, Prague has a population of about 1 million but is visited by about 80 million tourists each year. “It’s real difficult to come across a local who isn’t trying to sell you something.”] It’s also difficult for tourists to know whether or not the prices charged are valid – but this is a problem that isn’t confined to Prague. This year, US tourists have allegedly been paying ‘about \$250 each for a day bus trip from Auckland to the Bay of Islands’ (a standard bus service to the same destination is ‘\$42 return – or \$29 if booked two weeks in advance’). Furthermore, the bus trip takes four hours one way, which means that the tourists only have enough time for lunch – spending more money if they haven’t brought a packed lunch – or a short walk before the return journey. However, the tourists could’ve spent about ‘\$10 busing to Auckland’s airport to catch a 50 minute plane ride to Kerikeri (for \$182 return – \$91 if booked in advance), arriving about 9.30am, paid \$15 (\$30 return) busing the 23km to the Bay of Islands’, spent another \$20 or so on a boat trip round the islands, returning on a 5.50pm flight, leaving themselves with enough change to catch a bus back to their hotel in the city!

...[NZ] is a nice, safe place for tourists to get ripped off in, according to an Otago University survey of international and domestic travellers. The university Centre for Tourism found about 27[% of English-speaking]... visitors surveyed in Christchurch and Queenstown felt they had been ripped off during their stay solely because they were tourists... However, 95.6[%] of the respondents recommended N[Z] as a safer place than Canada, Sweden, A[US] and 11 other countries. South Africa was considered the most dangerous tourist destination. Big, bad Auckland was seen as the most unsafe place for visitors[in NZ], with Dunedin and Nelson the safest sightseeing spots. About 5.5[%] of tourists said they had been the victims of crime – mostly theft – while in this country, although incidents of violent offending against visitors were few... Japanese travellers appeared to be the most trusting, with just over half saying they avoid leaving valuables where they were visible. By contrast, 90[% of AUS]n tourists took security precautions while on this side of the Tasman. Hitchhiking around the country was considered safe by 54[%] of the survey group.

...a new service may make life a little safer for those who choose to [hitch-hike] this summer. The hitching post... matching hitch-hikers and drivers... [who] put a notice on the post, advising where they’re going and when... will be installed... at Wellington’s Youth Hostel... The free service will be available to the 35,000 people who stay at the hostel each year, as well as Wellingtonians and other travellers. “It’ll work just like car pooling, only on a grander scale,” said[the] hostel manager... The idea came from a Canadian hostel guest. [The hostel manager] said while hitch-hiking around N[Z] wasn’t as dangerous as other parts of the world, there were still risks... Police get dozens of “missing person” reports each week about people hitch-hiking, although most are found safe... [In related news, a] Danish tourist has had his N[Z] holiday destroyed after being savagely beaten in central Auckland early yesterday... He had been in the country for less than 12 hours... [He was] robbed of U[S and NZ] cash, his backpack, glasses and camera. Nursing swollen eyes, a heavily stitched mouth and a broken nose, he told the N[Z] *Herald* that he could not come to terms with the vicious attack. “I had heard that crime was non-existent in N[Z]. In the last 30 years I have travelled to more than 80 countries and never had something happen like this,” he said... after being discharged from Auckland Hospital. “I didn’t do anything to provoke anybody.” He will spend his time quietly recovering before leaving N[Z] on Wednesday as planned.

...A 21-year-old German tourist was so disturbed by an attack on him in central Auckland at the weekend that he left the country the next day. [The German], who arrived in Auckland on Friday, was attacked and robbed by two men in... broad daylight on Saturday. [He] was treated in hospital for minor injuries and flew out of N[Z] on Sunday.

...A German couple were left with nothing but the clothes they were standing in when they were burgled just hours after arriving in N[Z] yesterday. They] arrived at Auckland Airport at 6 am after a marathon flight across the globe, and three hours later all their belongings had been stolen. The couple have been left feeling bitter about N[Z] on their first trip here and will return home as soon as possible. They had planned to tour the country for three weeks. [They] were checking into the Airport Travelodge and had been away from their rental car just five minutes, but that was enough time for the thieves to strike. A screwdriver was used to pry open the lock. The couple’s hand luggage and suitcase were taken, containing passports, credit cards, clothing, expensive camera equipment and about \$10,000 in cash. Mrs [German] said she had travelled to many countries around the world and never had any problems... [S]he had been told N[Z] was virtually crime free... [The] airport police, said tourists should be told about N[Z]’s “huge” theft problem. He was concerned that thieves were beginning to target tourists at the airport and surrounding accommodation houses. Steps were being taken to ensure the problem did not get out of hand.

...Faith in N[Z]ers was restored last night for three holidaying Israeli friends when they were reunited with their stolen van. [The trio] were shattered when their van containing almost all they owned was stolen from central Auckland. But they were overjoyed last night when their [van] was recovered on a day when the public overwhelmingly responded to their tale in the N[Z] *Herald*. “We don’t believe in luck, but miracles do happen,” said [one of the men]. “We are so grateful for all the good Kiwis who have helped us and who have found our van.” ...Although their cameras, most of their clothes and camping gear is missing, the men were elated to have many of their possessions returned. “Films, diaries... we have them back,” said [another]. The men were showered with offers of help and hospitality by well-wishers. Rover N[Z] offered the use of a County Defender Land-Rover to replace their rusty van, while Great Barrier Airlines wants to show them Great Barrier Island. The owner of the Park Lodge in Paihia... went to Bay of Islands businesses and arranged a holiday for the trio. They spent yesterday on a chase boat watching the mini-America’s Cup regatta, and were entertained... “It has been unbelievable,” said [the first man]... Offers of help have[also] poured in for a German couple who had all their belongings stolen at the weekend... [Mrs German] said people had offered food, accommodation and a yacht. She was thankful, but she and her husband... would not continue their planned three-week holiday.

...[the latest tourism] survey shows many visitors don’t feel safe in our main cities. Nearly 40%... felt Auckland was unsafe... The good news is that most of the... tourists surveyed felt N[Z] is still one of the safest places in the world to visit. [Incidentally, the ‘47-year-old who was jailed for life in 1990 for the murders of Swedish tourists Heidi Paakkonen and Urban Hoglin is going before the parole board next month. Paakkonen, 21, and Hoglin, 23, vanished while tramping on the Coromandel Peninsula in 1989. The 47-year-old, who unsuccessfully appealed his conviction for their murders to the privy

council, has maintained his innocence' – even though he 'admitted stealing the couple's car and selling some of their effects. He had skipped bail for a 1986 rape and was on the run when the murders were committed. He also has a conviction for the 1972 manslaughter of an Auckland prostitute.'

...“Come with me and I will show you the real India.” The smooth invitation came from a man with Bollywood film-star looks, and a penchant for blond women and foreign cash. Saying yes was the worst mistake Diana Routley made in her short life. What she could not know was that the 32-year-old had a criminal record for beating and attempting to rape tourists, and that his first wife died suspiciously. On August 10, the 24-year-old Aucklander scrapped her plans to travel from Varanasi to Darjeeling, and made a fateful train journey with the 32-year-old to his home in Brindavan, Uttar Pradesh, northern India. The pair arrived the next morning. He spent two days parading her in front of the villagers, calling her his “beautiful Kiwi girlfriend.” At 10 pm on August 13, after a drinking binge on 90% proof country liquor at home with three friends, the men made sexual advances towards her. She rebuffed them and threatened to call the police. The foursome allegedly strangled her with her own scarf, stole about \$5600 in travellers cheques, her camera and sleeping bag, and bundled her into a shallow grave beneath the floor of a spare room. They called a stonemason to relay the floor and returned to their drinking. This month the four men will go on trial for murder. If found guilty, they will die for their crimes. According to the inspector in charge, the men confessed and said they had killed for cash – their share of her travellers cheques is 20 times the average annual wage in India. “I was never that happy about her travelling alone, but she did a safari through Africa the year before so I thought she would be okay,” says her father.’

...‘Ugandan tourism authorities have started “a fully integrated sustainable tourism programme”, under which special packages have been arranged for well-to-do tourists. “The Ugandan Trail”, a full tourism adventure, will cost between \$5106 and \$12,000. Uganda was visited by 220,000 tourists last year, down from 230,000 in the previous year. They brought in \$214 million, compared with \$250 million. This was an improvement on the 53,594 arrivals and an income of \$10 million in 1986, when the current president seized power in the East African state. Uganda Tourist Board officials are hoping to arrest the decline which is thought to be due to conflict around the nation’s main tourist sites between government forces and Allied Democratic Forces rebels.’ In related news,] **Brazil has launched a \$342 million programme to develop ecological tourism in the Amazon.**

...Japanese... students... o[n] a... rafting expedition in the Peruvian jungle... were robbed... hacked to death and thrown into the Amazon River...

Officials have detained 14 soldiers in connection with the murder of two Japanese students... Part of the remains of Chiaki Ito, aged 22, and Takahiro Miyashita, 23, both students at Japan’s Waseda University, were apparently found hidden in brush near the El Pijuayal military base. The soldiers are members of a military unit that controls river boat traffic from Peru to Colombia and Brazil.

...Radio Tanzania said... a 52-year-old German tourist who wanted to sleep on a... beach on the island of Zanzibar... was advised by a soldier that it was restricted. The tourist refused to be searched, the radio said, so the soldier shot him twice in the neck. He died shortly afterwards in hospital. [By the way, ‘for the average person the risk of dying in a fire is ten times greater when staying in a hotel than when in his or her own bed. And over the last decade fire brigades in the United Kingdom have been called out to deal with, on average, nearly 20 fires in hotels every week.’

...‘The small, rust-coloured Albergo-Rifugio Campo Imperatore Hotel perches precariously near the summit of the Gran Sasso mountain range in Abruzzo, north-east of Rome. This is where Benito Mussolini was imprisoned for 15 days after being overthrown by his own Grand Council. Our guide tells us the tale of Il Duce (the leader) of Italy whose Fascist reign lasted for 21 years. He laughs at the irony as he explains that this very hotel in which Mussolini was incarcerated was being built by Mussolini to honour Mussolini. When it was finished the structure was to have spelt, from the air, the word “Dux.” Obviously the people’s taxes couldn’t stretch to “Il Duce” so the Latin version of leader had to suffice. Unfortunately, construction only got as far as D before Mussolini’s demise began. Up the stairs we creak. The air hangs heavy with history as we enter the bedroom where Il Duce spent his captive nights. Mussolini had a reputation as a womaniser who suffered from venereal disease. The guide laughs as he tells us that people paid “lots of money” to sleep in this bed and even today, if you pay “lots and lots of money,” you can still have the pleasure. Leaving the room I decide that I will watch the movie *Tea With Mussolini* and leave sleeping with Mussolini and his memories to the more dedicated historians. Il Duce was freed from his mountaintop jail in a daring raid by German paratroopers sent in by Hitler. What are friends for? Mussolini was carried to power by the country on a tide of disappointment and frustration. At the end of WW1 the soaring cost of living contributed to an atmosphere ripe for a strong, vocal leader. Ordinary people were sick of being cheated, with their incomes not increasing at the same rate as others. Italy was also worried at missing out on its rightful share of the spoils of war at a series of peace talks that started in Versailles in 1919. For too long this quick-witted, shrewd man was the epitome of Italian aspirations – to be influential abroad, to be seen as a great nation, to be prosperous and attain justice. But the man who started life as a journalist was kept in power by tyranny and the force of unchecked propaganda. So when the tide turned, his demise was brutal and quick. He was caught by liberation forces, shot with his mistress Clara Petacci and lynched with 15 other leading fascists in a square in a drab district of Milan. This square already had a history of bloodshed. In 1944 German soldiers had executed a number of partisan prisoners there. So now the people who had been forced to watch that spectacle gathered to howl and chant their hatred and spit at the corpses of the oppressors. As we journalists crawl on to the bus to wind down the road towards Rome I see the only graffiti on the trip, on a crumbling wall. In Italian it says: “It is our duty to make love.”’ ● ‘Most of the coins that tourists toss into Rome’s Trevi Fountain end up in the pockets of a man who’s made coin-fishing his profession. For 6 days a week, at dawn, he jumps in and rakes up the coins for 20 minutes, making about \$NZ1065 a day.’]

...NEW hotels... have been springing up in southern Italy after a cash injection from the European Union. Over the past two years, some \$90 million has helped boost tourism to the region by adding 2500 rooms to the accommodation stock. Under the scheme, historic buildings have been developed into classy hotels...

THE [head of Virgin Airlines] certainly knows how the other half want to live and with his latest travel venture he makes their dreams come true. Virgin Ultimate’s collection of hotels around the world are not only exclusive and unusual, but a great many of them are fabulously expensive. For example, a 24-hour stay at his 30ha private paradise in the Caribbean, Necker Island, will set you back \$US11,000... Mind you it does have a staff of 26 to cater to your every whim, and you (and up to six others) do have the island and accommodation, called the Great House, to yourself... Virgin Ultimate has properties in... London... Majorca... Malaysia, A[US] and South Africa. Two N[Z] properties are being developed.

...[‘Indulge yourself in the pleasures of world travel’] Fancy spending an intimate evening on a private Caribbean island... for \$16,000? Or what about booking 14 rooms in a Gothic castle in Dublin for a little more than \$12,000 a night. Former guests include Queen Victoria, [the 40th US President] and the rock group REM. Or if you prefer a sailing vacation, there’s always a seven-day cruise in the Mediterranean on a 40m motor yacht with nine of your friends for just over \$76,000. Kiwis will be able to choose such lavish holidays from next week when... [a] British multimillionaire... sets up a branch of his empire in N[Z]. Virgin Ultimate opens its Australasian head office in downtown Auckland on Monday to promote and take bookings for its collection of luxury destinations around the world. The... N[Z] sales representative... said there was a growing market for the holidays... “People are looking for something different, an experience of a lifetime. These are not trips you’d do every year.” The company expected to make 60-80 bookings through the office a year, with clients likely to include company executives and honeymooners.

...[‘Queenstown is abuzz with talk that the world’s most famous newlyweds are honeymooning at an isolated resort nearby. The Hollywood stars, who wed in a secret ceremony on the Malibu coast two weeks ago, are said to be staying at Blanket Bay, a lodge on the northern shore of Lake Wakatipu. Blanket Bay staff yesterday refused to comment on whether the couple were guests at the American-owned resort. Residents of the nearby settlement of Glenorchy said they had not seen the newlyweds. However, the locals added that it was common for film and television stars staying at the resort to slip in and out of the area unnoticed. Access to the lodge is via a restricted road or by helicopter. Rooms at the lodge cost up to \$2390 a night and guests are promised a “haven of comfort – a sanctuary from the outside world.”’]

... 'Rudyard Kipling's visit to AUS and NZ, described in his autobiography *Something of Myself*, took place after an illness that left him feeling he needed to get "clean away and re-sort" himself. His vivid terse notes on NZ are an accompaniment to the famous line of poetry (from *The Song of the Cities* and often quoted by other travellers) he wrote about Auckland: "Last, loneliest, loveliest, exquisite, apart."']

...Construction of Auckland's latest major hotel is expected to begin in [three to four months]. The \$78 million... 35-storey hotel... in downtown Auckland... is the first time a hotel investment prospectus has been offered in... [NZ. P]ackages start from \$207,557 and include the unit title to one of the 268 rooms, a furniture package and a share in the hotel's 60 car parks. Investors will receive returns based on how well the hotel does in all of its operations in an income pooling system. The three-star Albert St hotel[is] aimed at tourists and business travellers... A tourism consultant... said at the launch that Auckland needed a mid-range hotel if it is to cope with tourism numbers from 1999. "This is the fastest growing hotel market and yet most hotel developers build five-star hotels,"...

['The 170-room Auckland Park Recency Hotel, overlooking Myers Park in central Auckland, has closed its doors after a dispute between owners who invested in the rooms and the management. The hotel in Greys Ave, marketed as a "stunning boutique hotel" with all the trimmings of a four-star plus, stopped taking guests last week. Last September, members of a Philippines delegation, including the Philippine President, left the hotel for the Auckland Heritage Hotel as they were unhappy with the size of the rooms in the Park Regency. Finance for the \$39 million hotel opened 14 months ago by the Governor-General was provided by private investors who paid up to \$300,000 for a unit-titled room with the guarantee of a 9% net return for 10 years, annual inflation adjustments after two years and surplus profit share. The chairperson of the Auckland branch of the Major Accommodation Providers said the recent surge in the number of new hotel beds in Auckland was outstripping demand.' Incidentally, 'for most of us the fact that beneath Albert Park are 3.2km of WW2 air-raid shelters is, at best, of passing interest. But for a 60-year-old Glen Eden butcher, these tunnels are something of a magnificent obsession. For 13 years he has battled for the right to open them and create a subterranean tourist park. Now, \$109,000 later, a bill has been introduced into Parliament which makes his dream possible. The bill, now before the local government select committee, will remove the public reserve classification from the underground labyrinth, allowing Auckland City to permit development of the site. The 22-tunnel complex was started in 1942, soon after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, when 114 council workers began the eight-month task of hacking through the hard papa, scoria and basalt under the park. The resulting shelter had toilets, first aid units and could accommodate 22,000 people. In February 1946, the plumbing and wiring were ripped out and the whole lot filled in again with millions of unfired bricks. The butcher's first proposal dwelt not just on the tourist potential of reopening the tunnels but incorporated a solution to the city's parking problems. He offered a multi-storey car park below the High Court on Constitution Hill. This was adjacent to one end of the main 616m tunnel, which ran from Constitution Hill under the university through to portals at Victoria St, Princess St and Bacons Lane. He envisaged commuters rapid-railing from the new car park to these city-side exits. The council gave him permission to explore, at his expense and responsibility, the feasibility of his proposal. However, his financial backers refused to get involved unless the council entered into a long-term lease, which it did not. Eight years later the butcher was back, with no talk of parking, but keen to build an underground Disneyland of rides, shops, markets, offices, a museum, underground rafting and other entertainments. He rejected suggestions he was crazy, and councillors seem to have agreed, giving him permission to excavate the first 62m to carry out his feasibility study. Still, before we scoff, who of us at the time thought Kelly Tarlton's dream of an aquarium in some abandoned underwater sewage holding tanks would work?'

... 'The \$15m resort proposed for overlooking the Gap at Piha, is to have a giant water-purification machine, an electric people mover and a helicopter landing site. A public relations consultant who has helped put the Hong Kong-based Amanresorts proposal together, said the people mover, known as an Aerotram, was a special vehicle with rubber wheels similar to a tram car. An electric cable sunk beneath the road powers the Aerotram along a fixed course. Similar devices have been used in theme parks such as Disneyland. Guests would arrive in style by catching a helicopter from the airport and approach the hideaway from the sea. "These sorts of people don't take the bus," the consultant said. But plans for the 30-room resort have incensed some locals. A freelance journalist, whose family bach borders the site, said the proposal made a mockery of the land's special conservation designation. "Appalled is not a strong enough word. The location is wrong, the scale is wrong, and the purpose is wrong. We need to protect the land for future generations." The Piha Residents and Ratepayers' Association said a major concern was that residents would not have land access to the beach at the Gap, or to the blowhole, or an area of land known as the "tennis courts." However, the Mayor of Waitakere, who met the Amanresorts founder and the consultant last year, said the doors to the city must remain open, and potential investors should be welcomed and listened to. The Waitakere City planning manager said there had been no formal proposal put to the council yet. He said a special planning application would need to be made, and that public submissions might be sought.'

...NZ]'S tourist industry faces many challenges as it approaches the 21st century. Among these are who to target, how to attract them and how to balance the interests of the industry and local residents. The problem with attracting wealthy, big-spending tourists is that simply by their wealth they render most Kiwis menials in their own country. (That many of these types happen to be particularly arrogant and objectionable is also rather galling)... My eldest brother... and his long time fishing and hunting buddy... have stomped the mountains and valleys of the lower South Island for decades and their over-riding feeling is of great remorse. They feel N[Z]ers are gradually being disinherited from their own country. The mountain streams that were brim full of wild trout are increasingly becoming the preserve of wealthy foreign fishermen... N[Z]'s trout fishing industry is quickly becoming a victim of its own success... ['Zane Grey's success in catching giant marlin and broadbill swordfish as well as hammerhead, thresher and mako sharks provided the material for his book, *Tales of the Angler's Eldorado, New Zealand*. The American author, known internationally for his Western novels and his accounts of his fishing experiences, first visited NZ in Jan, 1926. The size and frequency of his catches on his visits, and his vivid descriptions of the country and its people, undoubtedly popularised NZ and gave it an international reputation for fishing.' However, my eldest brother believes that reputation is now under threat because he] has seen an alarming decline in the quality of back country fishing, and that impact on local and foreign anglers has disturbed him... Majestic valleys where one could find peace and solitude, valleys that were inaccessible enough so as to be largely the preserve of only those enthusiastic enough to truly appreciate them are now the tramping equivalent of the Northern Motorway. That Kiwis are required not to camp within 300m of the Milford Track so as not to disturb the paying clients is enough to make the ample hairs on the back of my brother's neck bristle... It is a curious irony that our efforts to make our wilderness areas more accessible is actually destroying their charm... In tourism, as in life, so often what people think they want and what they actually want can be very different things.

...Over 140 million years of evolution have provided N[Z] with spectacular landforms and a unique assemblage of plants and animals at which overseas biologists and visitors marvel. Opening conservation lands to more intensive tourism development... would further compromise this biological treasure-house and leave this and future generations immeasurably poorer.

...The impact of tourism on N[Z]... has come under the spotlight. A wide-ranging investigation into the... risks tourism poses concludes that the sector is in danger of failing to protect the interests of N[Z]ers and their environment... It said the sector was woefully short of the information needed to develop a strategy to ensure tourism has a sustainable future. The report suggests that N[Z] has been marketed to an extent that tourism may have outstripped the capacity of the sector to manage the environmental consequences of growth... Visitor pressure on at least two leading attractions - Milford Sound and the Waitomo Caves - cannot be sustained, "even in the medium term, without major attention being given to reducing adverse visitor effects... Overall, the Government system for the management of tourism is fragmented, with poor communication and coordination between those agencies which promote tourism and those which manage the environmental effects associated with it. Government agencies have very little ability to influence the direction of the tourism industry and thus its effects on the environment." ...Eco-tourism representing sustainable, environmentally sensitive tourism is also targeted in the report, which notes a growing demand for the experience in

N[Z]. But some of those consulted suggested that it does not exist here “because virtually none of the operations are actually sustainable, let alone beneficial to the environment.” ...One operator noted that tourists who responded to advertising for eco-tourism activities were often disappointed because the experience did not measure up to expectations. “Such tourists may also react negatively to other aspects of N[Z] life that run counter to the country’s clean, green image.” ...The Coromandel Peninsula (population 24,000) attracts about 700,000 domestic and nearly 100,000 international visitors a year. A high proportion of the houses are holiday homes. The report says the influx of summer visitors strains many services, including roads, sewage disposal and water supply. Additional capacity to meet peak demand goes unused for much of the year.

...The humble lavatory could end up as the Achilles’ heel of the[N[Z] tourism industry, says the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment. Toilets were listed as a major concern in submissions to the commission for its report on environmental effects associated with tourism... The state of the nation’s[public] toilets – many of which were dirty – could be an indicator to a range of other... problems... “We’ve got small communities struggling with the cost of providing this resource – there are examples in the Southern Lakes and in Northland... It’s really about who carries the cost and how should you share it.” He was aware that the issue of toilets and tourism is not new: [Whangarei’s National MP] had referred to the appalling state of the country’s toilets[(many country ‘highway rest-area long-drop toilets are threatened with closure because they are continually being blocked by bags of rubbish’)] when he was Minister of Tourism. A single tourism strategy was needed...

The *Business Herald* tells us that N[Z] tourism is in danger of going into decline. In the late 1960s, when jet-powered international tourism was getting into its stride, I worked in London as a creative group head at [a company which was] then the world’s biggest advertising agency. I asked my boss... why our tourism client always had such difficulty in meeting targets though he was not under-capitalised and there was a boom in nearly all other consumer spending. [My boss] had worked for years on the Jamaican Government tourist account... He explained the nature of the tourist business to me, in very simple terms, thus: (1) The desirable tourists are well-off, free-spending trend-setters. The expensive investment in hotels, resorts and infrastructure is put in to attract them. High-quality shops, restaurants, golf courses, trips, vehicle hire firms and the like appear in order to encourage their local spending. Local people often invest at this level. (2) But very few destinations have good weather for more than half the year. Even the tropics have their season of fog, rain or hurricanes. The free-spenders will not come in the off-season. The operators cannot let their facilities stand empty, so they must offer lower, off-season rates to the less well-off. These people spend less on the services put in for the rich. (3) The rich make a fickle, fashion-conscious group. Once “everybody” has been to “that marvellous little place” it is no longer smart to go there, and they find somewhere else. (4) The investors are left with the second-grade market and must now canvas it to fill beds in the “on” season. But they must also price their product accordingly and the return on investment is less. (5) The off-season is now left to the package tour or “bums on seats” market – people who look for bargains, pay for their holiday in their own country in their own currency, who eat in their hotels and spend very little on souvenirs or day trips. They help to keep airlines in business but do little or nothing for local economies. (6) This process spirals on... The final condition is a destination over-crowded with low-spenders and a local economy with too many jobs dependent on tourism struggling to extract their few dollars. Nearly all the original big investors are long gone and small (local) investors are struggling or bankrupt. It is useless to try to return to Stage 1 because the environment that first attracted the wealthy is so altered that it cannot be recovered. And that, said [my boss], is tourism. I have watched many tourism markets since then and have seen that what he said is generally true. It seems to apply not where a modest level of tourism exists, but wherever tourism becomes dominant in a local economy. It is an industry too fragile in its nature, too dependent on outside factors and too destructive of its own best product – a fresh new environment – to bear the weight of expectations put on it.

...After struggling with an over-supply of hotel space caused by a 35[%] increase in hotel rooms during the past two years, Christchurch hotels are now having to cope with a 20[%] drop in Asian visitors resulting from the economic crisis in South-east Asia. Christchurch has 2000 first-class hotel rooms. To supply an anticipated continuation of a tourism boom, four city-centre office buildings were converted into hotels in the past two years, adding more than 700 rooms to the market. While average occupancy... in Christchurch was reported... to be “not bad” at 69[%], the pain is being felt in prices which are down 20[%].

...N[Z] has the potential to become a major destination for international conventions, says an American expert. Changes to U[S] tax legislation dealing with hotel construction during the [40th] Administration have caused a shortage of hotel space for conventions there. This is pushing up accommodation costs 5 to 7[%] a year... says [the] senior vice-president and chief executive officer of the Professional Convention Managers Association of North America (PCMA). [He] was in Christchurch recently at the invitation of... the managers of Christchurch’s recently opened convention centre... [and] says American hotels are pricing themselves out of the market... [As a consequence,] conference organisers are starting to look overseas for cheaper venues... Despite the shortage of hotel rooms in the U[S]... it is not economic to build convention-sized hotels. Some hotels, built in the 80s as tax write-offs, are now selling for “50c in the dollar.” ...The PCMA represents 60[%] of the convention industry in the U[S] and its members book 35 million room nights each year... The meetings and convention business in the U[S] is worth \$US120 billion... a year, providing a third of American hotel revenue, 20[%] of US airline operating income and \$12.3 billion in sales and income tax. While still in its infancy, the N[Z] meetings and conventions business is an important part of the tourism industry. In the year to September 1997, 27,500 conference visitors came to N[Z], staying an average of nine days and spending an average of \$365 each day. This produced \$98 million worth of foreign exchange. Not only are these visitors “high-yield” tourists, but 66[%] come between April and October, the industry’s low period... Airfares are seen as an impediment to international conference trade. However, N[Z]’s scenic attractions can compensate for the added cost and travel time... [Furthermore, the] sales and marketing manager of... Christchurch’s Conference Centre... says it comes as a pleasant surprise to Americans to learn that N[Z] is closer than... Singapore... or... Hong Kong... [–] destinations to which they already fly for conventions.

...Tourism, Hong Kong’s biggest foreign earner, has plummeted so seriously... [in the past] three months... that a top-level task force has been appointed to find ways to reverse the slump... Already the hotels, which scared off many of those planning to come to Hong Kong during the handover... to China... by demanding sums of \$HK20,000 or more for a few days’ stay, have got the message and cut their rates dramatically. This week, even the top hotels are offering rooms for \$HK1000 per night. That’s half their usual “special-price” rates... [To compound the situation, none] of the usual tourists, the British, Germans, Taiwanese and Japanese[plan]... to come after the handover... The numbers coming from Japan... [–] traditionally Hong Kong’s best market and certainly its most lucrative... [–] are more than 50[%] down, a terrible omen for the Hong Kong[tourism] industry... Worse still, mainland China visitors who make up 20[%] of Hong Kong’s arrivals were not permitted to come to Hong Kong because Beijing slapped a ban on travel there to avoid complicating the handover. Although that ban has been lifted, mainland visitors are still not coming to the territory because China is still having problems determining what sort of visas need to be issued to mainlanders visiting... Hong Kong... The airlines servicing Hong Kong are offering all kinds of incentives for passengers into and out of Hong Kong, including long-weekend packages to the UK and A[US]...

China is poised to become A[US]’s greatest long-term tourism competitor in the Asia-Pacific region... the A[US]n Tourism Commission said yesterday... “We are facing competition in this country like we’ve never seen before,” [the commission’s managing director] told a hotels forum in Sydney. “[China] has a commitment from the highest levels, from... the Premier himself, to develop their inbound tourism industry. The Chinese are going to order 1900 new jets in the next 20 years – they are Boeing’s forecasts...” ...[‘on the other side of the coin’, AUS] has to recognise the region’s potential to compete for[China’s] outbound tourism... “The Chinese Government is committed to outbound tourism. We’ve been working very hard with the Government there to have A[US] designated as an official tourist destination.”

...Air N[Z] expects to start flights to China next year after N[Z] became the first non-Asian country to get official tourist destination status. With the P[M visiting there]... last week, China decided in principle to... a move which could boost tourist numbers from that country... Chinese officials are working on an implementation date... The airline's arrangements would develop alongside the Government relationship... Air NZ said flights could be through A[US], in conjunction with... Ansett Holdings... Chinese visitors to [N]Z... increased 50[%] to 17,000 in the year to September and more than 7000 N[Z]ers paid return visits. China is expected to take up some of the slack from falling numbers from elsewhere in Asia after the economic strife there, with the new status possibly leading to an annual 70,000 to 80,000 Chinese tourists, most in organised groups. [Previously, Chinese citizens 'had to be travelling to NZ on business.' Obviously, 'only wealthy Chinese will be given visas by their Government, because poorer people might not want to return to China' – although they couldn't afford to leave their country on holiday in the first place!

...while visiting Samoa, NZ's PM] refused to be drawn into the... [controversy surrounding its PM, who's] been linked to a passport scam. Some 500 passports went missing and it was alleged they had been sold for \$70,000 each to Chinese people who could use them to enter N[Z]. By the way, the... problem of size and isolation were highlighted at the Matavai Resort where... [NZ's PM] stayed... on his whistlestop tour of the South Pacific this week... N[Z] aid contributed \$2.4 million of the \$2.8 million cost, but since opening 11 months ago few tourists have stayed there. Some nights it is empty.

...work... has started... on the Denarau Villas luxury apartment project between two of Fiji's five-star hotels, after contracts were signed for 44 of the 82 villas... The \$36 million project is being... marketed most strongly in N[Z]... but also in A[US, the US] and Asia... Units, mostly with two bedrooms, were... price[d]... between \$340,000 and \$695,000... Tabua Investments[– the NZ]... consortium developing the project[–] bought the whole Denarau Island resort in June last year... for... \$160 m... from the Long Term Credit Bank of Japan, which had put the resort up for offers the year before as it sought to mop up part of the collapse of the Japanese developer EIE International. EIE spent about \$US265 m... developing Denarau, which has an 18-hole golf course opposite the villas and a marina which is the launch point for... island ferries... and... cruises...

[Cruise ship company P&O AUS] has bought three of Queensland's best-known island resorts from Qantas for \$A25 million... substantially less than the original asking price. They are the exclusive 16-villa Bedarra Island Retreat, and 148-unit Dunk Island Resort (both off Cairns) and the 108-room Brampton Resort, in the Whitsunday region to the south... [The] acquisition would double P&O A[US]'s resort holdings... [In related news, o]ne of the world's most acclaimed cruise ships will berth at Mt Maunganui... to begin the season of liner visits to the Port of Tauranga. Passengers on board the Seabourn Legend pay around \$1500 a day for the five-star comforts on board.

...The annual cruise ship season kicks off this weekend – and with it the sound of cash registers jangling with the flow of foreign exchange... The Ports of Auckland general marketing manager... said... "Each day there is a cruise ship in port represents major business for local retailers and tourist operators." ...The liner Fair Princess will be the first of 24 cruise ships[– representing 'about 1.5% of the world's cruise ship traffic' –] scheduled to call at Auckland during the summer months[, and the]... season will close with the departure of the Island Princess... 25,000 passengers and 10,000 crew are expected... Most ships will spend a day in port, although some will tie up overnight.

...Thanks for coming – but if you want a farewell party you will have to pay for it yourselves. That is the message to cruise companies, which are being forced to pay \$300 per ship... The charge, which covers the fee for a brass band to perform as ships leave the city, was introduced this year to bridge a funding gap... [However, a] report released yesterday shows that passengers on cruise ships spend about \$42 million a year in N[Z] and the flow-on value of the market is estimated at \$150 million. That means retailers – not the shipping companies – should pay for the farewell parties, according to tourism groups and the port authority... Tourism Auckland had approached retailers and chambers of commerce to fund the shortfall... but "every time we approach somebody they run like scalded cats." ...[a] spokesman for the Heart of the City Association, which represents 400 retailers, said the association could not afford to pay for the farewells... The chief executive of Tourism Auckland... said his organisation would love to pay to give visitors a decent send-off but[also] could not afford it... The marketing manager for Ports of Auckland... said... some... cruise companies... were opting not to have the farewells... [while others had told him that] the quality of the performances was embarrassing compared with those overseas.

...ANOTHER Travelwise... holiday is the Orient Lines Marco Polo cruise... From \$3175 each you can spend 13 days travelling from Auckland to Brisbane by way of Tauranga, Picton, Milford Sound, Melbourne and Sydney. - 1997

Last year, worldwide, five million people went on an ocean cruise and this year that figure is expected to rise by at least another million... [O]ne of A[US]'s most experienced cruise executives, knows why cruising is so popular. "It's the complete holiday... Almost everything... is done for you, making it a completely stress-free holiday... There's entertainment galore... And to top it all, you're seeing different countries almost every day."

...The Cruise Bible is out now! It's your guide to adventure, indulgence, romance and outstanding value... For heaven's sake get your copy today!

...SOMETHING about life on a luxury ocean liner smacks of romance... [Unluckily, thirteen] years ago I sailed from Sydney to Auckland on P&O's original Oriana, shortly before the dear old lady was decommissioned. Back then we squeezed into a twin-cabin barely big enough to fit our suitcases in through the door. The "twin" beds turned out to be bunks and the shared women's bathroom down the corridor dripped water and smelled. But things have come a long way in 13 years. This time I was crossing the Tasman in the opposite direction on P&O's newest superliner Oriana, 69,000 tonnes of stylish luxury. One of the first things you do on boarding a passenger liner is eat, no matter what time of the day. The stream of food is almost non-stop, punctuated only by breaks for the staff to wash up and reset tables... Staff have 1800 passengers to serve in two sittings so they don't muck about... Not to mention 24-hour room service and a pizzeria... It is while showering in the cleverly-put-together-in-a-small-space ensuite that I begin to feel queasy... Surely not... seasickness, not me who has boated in all weathers since I was a nipper. An hour later I am in no doubt as I cling to the ensuite loo... I crawl down to the Grenada deck to the doctor's surgery. Yes, the doctor confirms, you are seasick. There's a long, slow transtasman roll... and the motion has affected you. "I've treated skippers of fishing trawlers who have been seasick on passenger liners," he says reassuringly, adding that Oriana has the largest stabilisers of any cruise liner afloat. His nurse gives me an injection in an unmentionable place, charges me \$100 and I weave my way back to my cabin... However, the expensive jab works... The next morning dolphins show up below my window... [and] the day stretches luxuriously ahead. Choices, choices. To blob out in a deckchair with a book from the library... or... soak in a spa pool... Then there's table tennis, golf... walks/jogs around the promenade deck and the highly competitive shuffleboard. You can practice ballroom dancing during the day, learn line dancing, bridge, whist... or knit squares of a blanket which will be donated to charity. For a little solitude, the gymnasium is the place to be... [Instead of seeking solitude,] I... pop in to visit... a retired couple from Surrey, happily on their ninth world cruise... Their... suite on A deck with its own balcony has cost them around \$195,000 a double (which includes hors d'oeuvres served each night in the cabin) with drinks, parties and shopping extra. They... [came] aboard with enough eveningwear to see them through a three-month cruise without having to wear the same outfit twice... Time to visit... [the captain, who] sits in an ergonomically designed chair and manoeuvres the ship with a tiny knob. Oriana is 260 metres long... and is kind of like steering a 13-storey apartment block[, but getting]... in and out of port is a doddle, it seems. The ship has computer software developed especially for the ship which means the captain can have a bit of a sly practice beforehand at docking using a simulator, taking into account wind and tide.

...The World, marketed by U[S] company ResidenSea, is nearly 200m long and contains 110 apartments... There are also 88 guest suites for rent, starting at US\$2100... a day. The Norwegian-built liner... is certainly magnificent, boasting the only full-size floating tennis court in the world, two swimming pools, a jogging track, a business centre, two golf driving ranges, a... spa and six restaurants for its "global village at sea" of 390

residents and guests[('the owners of each luxury apartment can live on the ship permanently – and can even commute to work by helicopter from whichever ocean the ship happens to be traversing – or use it as a holiday home; for personal use and renting to other wealthy holidaymakers')]. It... has 320 staff... If you have a spare US\$2.5 million to US\$7.5 million... an apartment aboard luxury liner *The World* could be yours. Otherwise, you will have to settle for a view of the ship when... after cruising the Pacific... it berths in Auckland for the start of [the yacht] racing in February.

...If you had to endure the frustrating – and ultimately doomed – wait for the yacht racing to start yesterday, the pool bar of *Silver Cloud* was as good a place as any to do it. There, in the shade of the terrace, you needed only to wave a hand and another glass of Moët would be gently slipped into your hand... *Silver Cloud*... is one of two identical ships of Silversea Cruises, an ultra-luxury line which takes passengers to all continents in the style to which any of us would like to become accustomed... *Silver Cloud*'s passenger capacity is a mere 280 but it is never full... [C]atering to their every whim is the constant task of 210 crew and staff – a ratio better than three to four. Of course, with fares that range from \$1400 to \$2800 per person per day, the passenger list is full of people who are used to having their whims catered to. "They kiss my butt on a regular basis and that's the way I like it," one told me... in a jocular snarl... [The snarler] and... her... husband... had taken more than a dozen cruises aboard *Silver Cloud*. Yesterday was their 255th day on her immaculately sanded teak decks... The vessel and its sister ship, *Silver Wind*, are barely five years old, but for four years running the line has been voted the world's best small ship cruise line by readers of the upmarket *Conde Nast Traveler* magazine.

...Ngati Whatua o Orakei's historic carved waka Mahuhu o te Rangi... was on the Waitemata Harbour on Saturday morning to welcome the... 70,950-tonne luxury cruise liner *Legend of the Seas*. The *Legend of the Seas*, which left Auckland late last night for the Bay of Islands, is believed to be the largest cruise ship to visit N[Z] waters... The ship can accommodate 1800 passengers and has a crew of 900... [E]verything on board... the floating hotel, designed to an ancient Greek theme... is on a grand scale... And the environment is not neglected. All combustible refuse – including human waste – is burned on board to avoid polluting the ocean.

...The biggest cruise ship ever to dock in N[Z] takes less effort to drive than a family car. Not only can the 76,000-tonne *Aurora* spin around in her own length, it takes just a few flicks of a joystick to accomplish the feat. "It's just like Pacman," says her captain... "I've had this new toy since April, and all the technical aspects make her a joy to drive." And she should be, because the new British superliner has all the latest nautical gadgets for her maiden round-the-world cruise. Aucklanders driving along their waterfront yesterday could easily have mistaken the ship for a massive hotel that suddenly sprang up overnight... Longer than 2 1/2 football fields, at 270m, the P&O Cruises vessel is also 10m taller than the Niagara Falls, which means she is too big to pass under the Auckland Harbour Bridge. Between those 62m-tall walls are 850 crew and 1900 passengers in 939 cabins spread over 10 decks. Her diesel-electric engines produce as much power as 1330 Ford Escorts, pushing her along at 24 knots... But... in... [comparison, Britain's old superliner, the 70,327-tonne *QE2*, had a speed... of... 28.5 knots...]

It's staggering but true. The *QE2*'s nine diesel engines gulp 441 tonnes of fuel a day. They also power huge alternators that generate more than 10MW of electricity each to drive two 44MW electric engines... And the stately old girl, recently in N[Z], continues to draw praise, being rated... as the best large cruise ship last year.

...[T]HE world's biggest cruise ship – more than twice the size of the current largest liner and more than three times the size of the *QE2* – is due to be launched before the end of the decade by the US-based Westin Hotels Company. The first major passenger vessel to be built in the US for almost 50 years, the Westin ship, at 250,000 tonnes and carrying 5,600 passengers – the ship will have 2,800 rooms housed on three 8-floor towers (the *American World City*, which will cost £800 million, has 21 decks in total and will also have a crew of 2,400; a special feature of the vessel will be an internal marina housing four small boats, each able to carry 400 passengers ashore at destinations where the mother ship is too big to dock) – will take over the mantle of the world's largest liner from the 101,000-tonne *Carnival Destiny* which is being launched next week in Venice by Carnival Cruise Lines – the biggest cruise company in the world. Carnival's ship will carry more than 3,350 passengers and replaces P&O's 77,000-tonne *Sea Princess* as the world's biggest cruise ship.

...[T]he world's largest ever luxury cruise ship – the *Grand Princess* – built for \$700 million, is due to take its maiden voyage' later this year]...

It seems the designers of the latest "biggest cruise ship in the world" had one thing in mind – to ensure passengers would want for nothing in the way of activities... From November the 142,000-tonne ship from the Royal Caribbean International fleet will cruise the Caribbean on seven-night jaunts, leaving Miami every Sunday evening of the year... About 50 cruise ships have been built this decade, each reportedly bigger than the last. The *Voyager of the Seas* brochure says it is 30[%] bigger than the next largest...

['Growing in ruthlessness, gangs now sack or hijack some 120 merchant ships a year worldwide (insurance data suggests the problem costs up to \$170m a year). Pirates attack pretty much anything that floats, including moving bulk carriers and oil tankers. Victims have included the 120,000-tonne Korean tanker *Ocean Runner*, the 80,000-tonne US tanker *Ocean City* and the 114,000-tonne Greek ore carrier *Konkar Dinos*. Where yesterday's cutthroats may have measured their booty in metres of silk or kilos of jewels and spices, today's measure theirs in tonnes of cement, coffee, car batteries, steel reinforcing rods and ladies' undergarments. As many as 300 ships a day enter the Strait of Malacca off Singapore, making it a rich picking ground for pirate gangs.']

...A Japanese-owned cargo ship that went missing three months ago has turned up at a Chinese port with a new name and crew, sparking fears for the fate of the original hands. The freighter, originally called *Tenyu*, was discovered in Zhang-jiagang port in eastern China's Jiangsu province... carrying 16 Indonesian crew, maritime officials say. It went missing in the Straits of Malacca... after setting sail from Indonesia for South Korea carrying aluminium ingots. The... Straits of Malacca between Indonesia and Malaysia are the scene of many incidents of piracy.

...FOR Mustapha, the ship's parrot, the lure of a life before the mast proved to be a fatal attraction. As the elegant barquentine... sailed majestically through the Malacca Straits, Mustapha, hampered by clipped wings, laboriously climbed high into the rigging, sadly surveyed the indulgent scene 60m below on deck and then dived, beak-first into the sea. [The captain], a dour German master mariner unused to recalcitrant crew members – specially a mutinous parrot – immediately hurled two lifebelts overboard to mark the spot and, in a remarkable 12-minute display of seamanship, turned the giant clipper ship 180 degrees, plucked the bedraggled Mustapha from the water and threw him in the brig to dry off. A few days later, Mustapha did it again. Parrots on [this captain's] ships only live twice. Bye, bye birdie... The fabled era of these... greyhounds of the sea... lasted a mere two decades between the California gold rush of 1849 and the opening of the Suez canal 1869 (and the advent of steamships) but for those who yearn for a tall ship and a star to steer her by, the clipper ship and her ilk will forever remain a true symbol of the sea. On January 13, 1946... a child destined to rewrite history, was born in Stockholm... Building such a ship became the schoolboy's dream. In May 1991, by now a successful maritime lawyer and noted yachtsman, [he] watched as his square-rigged four-masted barquentine *Star Flyer* – the first true clipper ship built in more than 120 years (albeit a high-tech re-creation with the latest [GPS] navigational equipment and a 12-cylinder 1350hp engine) – moved down the slipway at Ghent, Belgium. Almost a year later, a sister ship, *Star Clipper*, was launched. [He] was \$100 million poorer but, in his heart at least, infinitely richer. Today, these... high-flying passenger... ships ply the glamour seas and off-beat ports of the Caribbean, Mediterranean and South Asia. And before the clock strikes 2000AD, there's a good chance that clipper No 3 will be sailing the waters of east coast A[US and NZ]. Both the *Star Flyer* and *Star Clipper*, at 360 feet (110m) are the longest clippers ever built, and with masts at 226 feet... the tallest... Replicas these may well be, but the gleaming white, steel-hulled clippers come complete with all the comforts of a millionaire's yacht – air-conditioned spacious cabins for 170 passengers with TV, en-suite marbled bathrooms... in-house movies, satellite telephone and a unique ballast stabilising system that ensures a brimful glass of champagne stays on an even keel, even if the partying passengers are sometimes not... A seven-night cruise from Phuket to Singapore costs from \$2113 a person including all meals, port taxes and most shore excursions (plus airfare)... Or, for a mere \$250,000 you can organise a private charter – as did the U[S] publication *Naked Magazine* for its Nude Cruise around the eastern

Mediterranean in June 1997. “Climb aboard, get naked and get ready for an unparalleled sailing adventure with 170 other naked guys,” went the promotional blurb in the magazine, “...Pack only T-shirts and shorts for shore excursions.” For... Mustapha the parrot, this may well have been the final straw that sent him tumbling from his perch... [Or perhaps], unlike anyone else on board, Mustapha was suffering from an incurable case of ruffled feathers brought on by... the inability to find a lady parrot with whom to share the fantasy of sailing in a tall ship with wind in the sails and romance in the air... On this night, stars dripped out of a black sky, jazz music filled the air... endless cocktails appeared like magic... and almost hidden in a tangle of ropes, blocks, winches, mops and buckets sat a tanned, Swedish goddess tinkering with dive tanks. Ah, how the crews of spartan 19th-century clipper ships must have longed for such things as they experienced the terror of Cape Horn, sails in tatters and bodies bruised and bloody.

...A thousand years after Leif “the Lucky” Eriksson discovered North America, [one of his descendants] has set sail on the open Viking boat *Islandingur*, to follow his ancestors’ route from Iceland to Greenland and North America. The crowd cheered when the... vessel... departed from Reykjavik’s old harbour on Iceland’s National Day... The discovery of North America, or Vinland the Good, as Leif... named it, is well recorded in two medieval Icelandic manuscripts, the *Saga of Erik the Red* and the *Saga of Greenlanders*... “Icelanders do not take credit for discovering America,” [Iceland’s P]M... said as the vessel left. “But we do reckon that we played a significant role in the first contact between native Americans and Europeans one thousand years ago.” ...[Leif’s descendant] was determined to re-enact the voyage when he designed and built *Islandingur* of oak and pine from Norway and Sweden. The sail was made in Denmark. Completed in 1996, the 23m-long vessel is a replica of the well-preserved 9th century Gokstadship, which was excavated from a Viking burial mound in Norway in 1882. Like the original Viking ships, *Islandingur* is fast and exceptionally stable... The tight-knit crew counts nine experienced sailors. In the Viking era, a battleship like *Islandingur* would have had a crew of 70, including a double shift of 32 oarsmen for a quick getaway. This time, they will rely on a motor and an interpreter to deal with the locals in a more peaceful manner. The 4200-km voyage will take four months and include more than 20 scheduled stops.

...Nearly four centuries after the Duyfken became the first European ship to reach A[US], its \$A4 million... replica has hit the high seas off Fremantle, Western A[US]. The original vessel (“Little Dove” in Dutch) sailed into the Gulf of Carpentaria, northern A[US], in March 1606.

...Two entrepreneurs aim to build a replica of the doomed cruise liner Titanic in Belfast, the city where it was constructed... [T]he pair – one Irish, the other South African – hope to recreate the splendour of the luxury liner, including artefacts from the sunken wreck... [that] went down with the loss of 1503 lives... They reject claims that they are cashing in on the tragedy... The plan hinges on... [whether] corporate banks will lend the company up to half of the estimated £360 million needed to recreate the Titanic. Titanic II will be longer and heavier than its predecessor, at 1200ft and 96,000 tonnes. The first Titanic was 882ft and weighed 46,000 tonnes. Prices for a week on board will range from \$US15,000... The... Belfast-based [partner]... denies that the project is pie-in-the-sky, insisting that it makes sound business sense. “We’re getting around 80 calls a week, mainly from rich Americans who want to book tickets on Titanic II even though it isn’t even built yet.” ...[his] alliance with... the... [South African] began after he presented a proposal to the Titanic’s builders, Harland and Wolff, for a yacht with a Titanic theme inside. “The company told me [the South African] had been speaking to them about a more challenging project, to replicate the original Titanic... so it was natural we came together.” [● ‘MORGAN ROBERTSON’S novel “Futility”, published in 1898, described the fate of the “Titan, the largest ship afloat and the greatest of the works of men”. A special feature was the water-tight compartments which closed automatically in an accident. Even if the ship hit an iceberg, the theory went, she would not sink. Titan hit an Atlantic iceberg and sank. In life, 14 years later, the Titanic sank in the Atlantic for the same reason.’]

...For the woman who adores perfume and is not superstitious, the cosmetics industry is about to put on sale one of its most bizarre offerings – a Titanic fragrance, based on essences discovered in 80 phials that sank with the vessel... The essences, manufactured in Britain, would have been marketed in America in 1912 if Adolphe Saafeld, the Manchester salesman who carried them in his first-class compartment, had survived the Atlantic crossing. Now the American salvage company RMS Titanic, which has exclusive rights to the vessel and discovered the phials, will try again on his behalf. “It’s the smell of that perfume which really captures the Titanic for me,” said... the wreck recovery manager... If the market in Titanic memorabilia is anything to go by, [he] may be on to a winner. Handwritten Titanic menus are valued at £2000 to £3000... Titanic II is the latest plan to cash in on the [tragedy]... In the wacky world of passenger ships, naming one after a liner that sank with the loss of 1503 lives is just the tip of the iceberg. Titanic II... is set to be built at the Harland and Wolff yard in Belfast...

A row has erupted over who is to blame for shipbuilder Harland and Wolff’s failure on Friday to win the £450 million... contract for Cunard’s new liner, Queen Mary II. Harland and Wolff is one of the mainstays of the Northern Ireland economy, but the 140-year-old Belfast shipyard that launched the Titanic now faces its own sinking. Britain’s Department of Trade and Industry indicated that the Belfast yard approached it for aid too late. The company praised the department for acting quickly to secure a £400 million aid package, but said its bid had been thwarted by lack of support from Northern Ireland’s Industrial Development Board. Up to 1700 jobs at Harland and Wolff are threatened, plus 1500 more in supporting industries. The contract is to go to French yard Chantiers d’Atlantique.

...The giant shipyard cranes of Harland and Wolff that dominate the Belfast skyline may never work again but there are those in the city who are quietly cheering. The yard’s history is long, but so are the divisions of which it has been a part. On July 21, 1920, a mass meeting of Protestant workers was held in the yard of Workman, Clark and Co in Belfast. After the meeting, during which “speeches were made about not allowing Sinn Féin and Roman Catholics to work in the shipyards any longer,” men carrying sticks and clubs descended on Harland and Wolff – the site of the third most important shipbuilding centre in the British Empire. A police report described the subsequent violence as a “general hunt” for Catholic workers, some of whom were beaten and thrown into the water. Thus began, in the middle of the Irish Republican Army’s war against British rule and the establishment of a separate Northern-Unionist state, the mass expulsion of Catholic workers from the shipyard... The expulsion sparked off an orgy of sectarian violence in east Belfast that continued sporadically for two years after partition. The expulsion of thousands of Catholic workers left a deep psychological scar on nationalists who found themselves living inside the new partitioned Northern Ireland two years later. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that when news broke last week that the shipyard... was on the verge of closure, there was a certain amount of schadenfreude within the republican community in the city. In republican eyes at least, a Protestant working-class institution was coming to an end, another death knell for the Victorian-Unionist version of old Belfast. They point to the fact that the yard’s workforce continued to provide the shock troops for loyalist street protests right up until the... 1980s. But such delight over the shipyard’s imminent closure is short-sighted and as sectarian as the bigotry which kept Catholics excluded from the yard’s gates for decades. The loss of shipbuilding in Belfast will have a negative spin-off for the entire Northern Ireland economy. Everyone will be a loser... Nearly 2000 liners, tankers, bulk carriers and rigs have started their days at the Harland and Wolff yard... [In related news, 26] workers were killed and three more are feared dead after a wall of water flooded into a giant dry dock... Dubai Drydocks employs about 3500 workers and claims to be the premier ship repair yard between Europe and the Far East.

...“Isn’t she the most beautiful baby you ever saw?” ...the chairman of... a large U[S] printing company whose publications include *Time* and *Sports Illustrated*... is one very proud dad. And his new “baby” is certainly a looker. It is the... largest motor-yacht of its kind ever built in Australasia. The 47m superyacht... took Sensation Yachts of Henderson more than two years to build, involved more than 400 staff, and cost \$16 million... Local politicians, Sensation workers and [the owner’s] family members gathered yesterday to watch the *Aria* slip into the upper Waitemata Harbour. [The owner] obviously has a slightly superstitious streak. Among the beautifully coiffured American women and their blue-blazered husbands quaffing champagne were two Catholic priests, looking slightly out of place as they sipped cups of tea. The pair were flown in to

bless the Aria. No one else would do, apparently, as the two priests had blessed the [family's] last yacht and their house... The launch was appropriately accompanied by a trilling opera soloist singing arias... The yacht... will undergo sea trials and a final interior fitout over[the next] six weeks. It is likely to cruise to South Pacific destinations over the next few months but will sail the world... [The owner] is looking forward to spending time on the yacht. "It's even better than having a toy one in the bathtub. This one is a little bigger... and the waters of the world are my bathtub." ...More than 85[%] of the Aria could be labelled Made in N[Z]... "It is tremendously exciting that this magnificent... Kiwi designed and built... yacht will be sailed around the world... It shows that we can foot it with the big boat boys,"... Sensation Yachts['] managing director... said.

...QUEENSLAND is trying to steal west Auckland's boatbuilders, enticing them with tax breaks and other incentives. The move is worrying the Waitakere City Council which has backed the setting up of a marine industry cluster in the city. Cheaper rent and a readily available workforce in Waitakere have already attracted several boatbuilders to move west from the North Shore. [The city's] projects manager... says Queensland has set up facilities similar to what Waitakere is trying to establish at Hobsonville airbase... "Geographically it's closer to European and U[S] markets and it's likely to take business away from us,"... Alloy Yachts International['] managing director... says the Henderson company has been approached to relocate to Gold Coast Marina at Century Cove[, where]... a big marine facility on 600 acres of land has been set up... with the backing of the Queensland state government.

...DICTATORS make trains run on time. Dictatorial premiers create resorts like Sanctuary Cove on Queensland's Gold Coast. The 474ha resort... between Brisbane and Surfers Paradise, owes its existence to a law pushed through the state's parliament in 1985... Before the law change there was no such thing in Queensland as private roads, let alone private waterways... With [the Premier's] help the bulldozers carved a rundown dairy farm and swampland at the mouth of the Coomera into a network of private canals fed from the sea and roads for residents and guests only. They fashioned two superb 18-hole golf courses – the Pines, a challenging championship course... and the Palms, a resort course open to the public – a marina, a marina village to go with it, and turned the sods for the luxurious 247-room Hyatt Regency Sanctuary Cove. I know about these things because I have the good fortune to be staying at the hotel which has what I consider the ultimate in pig-out indulgence. For a couple of hours each evening a lounge is run like an airline VIP lounge and the free whisky is tempting. It also has a novel restaurant where perspiring chefs cook your choice of dish in front of you in an open wood-fired oven. And I hear how tourist development used to be done in these parts from... a retired daily newspaper journalist, sometime PR man, travel writer, and occasional contributor to these pages, [who] lives in Brisbane but has his bach at Sanctuary Cove. The bach is a 12m luxury launch and a marina berth that costs around \$NZ3450 a year... It's quite a cunning concept; dig out a farm to create your own private "rivers" so there can be no complaints about desecrating the Queensland equivalent of the Queen's chain. The odd thing is that the million-dollar homes that back on to these waterways, with their private jetties, perhaps a sleek launch tied up, and a jetski under a tarpaulin on the deck, seem mostly deserted. I'd noticed as much driving around the private residential streets of the resort the day before. Apparently it's almost always like that. My hosts are nonplussed and can only surmise that the owners are bogged down in the boardrooms of Sydney, Melbourne, Hong Kong or Singapore. I'm not complaining... The next day we do my obligatory round of the theme parks. Dreamworld has turned itself around in recent years and can hold its head high, especially with its 33-storey high Tower of Terror that uses electromagnets to propel its riders to 160km/h in just 7 sec. That is it; a 7-second thrill. My children admit to more long-term enjoyment from the opportunity to cuddle a sleepy koala. Movieworld is mainly for movie fans who ooh and aah and rush for photographs to be taken with Marilyn Monroe lookalikes, Batman, Bugs Bunny and various other Looney Tunes cartoon characters... Movieworld, Sea World and Wet'n'Wild can all be seen on a three-park ticket that costs \$A99 for adults and \$A63 for children. Dreamworld admission is \$A41 for adults and \$A24 for children and pensioners.

...When [the entrepreneur] thinks about the direction of his development company, he hangs his head. The family which brought Aucklanders their canal-side holiday playtown of Pauanui, on the Coromandel Peninsula, are seriously considering shifting into operating retirement villages... [The Ower-based company is] tired of being hamstrung by the Resource Management Act – the costs, the waiting and the delays to its ambitious projects. In the 5 1/2 years spent fighting to get permission for his Whitianga Waterways development... the firm has spent \$2 million. "And that's a lot for a small family firm like this one... [I]t was hailed as an act to restate and reform the law relating to the use of land, air and water"[], and]... was supposed to be enabling for people like... [the entrepreneur] – but instead it is a huge thorn in his side. It did not start out that way. In 1991 [the entrepreneur] saw it working as he thought it was supposed to when his Pauanui Waterways unveiled its radical canal and housing project in the Tairua Harbour. The project flew like a bird, buoyed on the wings of an exciting new piece of legislation. "The proposal drew... submissions in a ratio of two to one against development," [the entrepreneur] recalls. "Issues included variations to the district plan, subdivision consent, water take, water diversion, water discharge, land use, seawater diversion, dredging permits and depositing sand in an inter-tidal zone." In other words, it looked like a real nightmare. But under the act's rules the issues were dealt with, an appeal in the Environment Court was dismissed within three months, and the first stage of Pauanui was finished by September 1993... "I believe this early experience provided a glimpse of what the [act] intended." But how different is the experience... with the similar Whitianga Waterways project. These days the company spends \$1 million a year in the Environment Court with an average wait of between eight and nine months. With 3000 cases waiting to be heard, the company can consider itself lucky to progress that fast.

...A N[Z] woman... told the *Guardian* newspaper that she was angry... "W[e]... are normal people wanting answers to questions we have asked for... years." ...[she] believes her son, a victim of the Marchioness disaster on the River Thames, was among those who had[their] hands cut off for finger-printing... 22-year-old... Dean Palmer, was one of 51 people who drowned when the sand dredger Bowbelle collided with the cruiseboat of partygoers in London in 1989. Two years ago relatives learned that the hands of some of their loved ones had been cut off... [Dean's mother] has been at[tending] the formal inquiry into the accident in London... For the past week, as coroner's officers have been forced to publicly defend at the inquiry what they did, details have emerged that the hands of more victims than originally thought may have been severed. Relatives were refused the opportunity to see the victims at the time of the tragedy, which was marked by a lack of information and support from officials. One black family, whose son's hands were removed, were given a white body when they tried to reclaim him for burial. Officially, the hands of 25 victims were removed. The Westminster coroner, police and a pathologist decided visual identification of bodies recovered from the Thames would be too distressing. Some were in the river for up to two weeks... The Marchioness had 113 party-goers on board when, 20 minutes into the trip, the dredger ploughed into its rear, causing it to tip over and sink.

...IT was a story which galvanised England and the seafaring world and spawned, nearly a century later, one of Monty Python's funniest sketches. The 17-year-old, 50-foot wooden yacht *Mignonette* set sail from England on July 5, 1884, under the command of Captain Tom Dudley and three crew, on a delivery voyage to her new owner in Sydney. Sixty days later, the *Mignonette* foundered some 1000 miles off the Atlantic coast of Africa, her aging timbers sprung by the impact of a freak wave. All four survived and drifted in an open boat for 24 days. When finally they were picked up, only three were left. Or rather, three were left and one was leftovers, for in their extremity the castaways had resorted to "the custom of the sea": they had killed and eaten 19-year-old Richard Parker, the cabin boy... [S]hipwrecks were far from uncommon last century, given the parlous state of English shipping, a testimony to the deleterious combination of legislative laissez-faire and entrepreneurial greed if ever there was one. Not infrequently, there were survivors, and in a surprising number of cases, these were forced to resort to the same desperate remedy. Only 10 years earlier, an emigrant ship bound from England to N[Z] had caught fire and sunk in the Southern Ocean. Of the 433 souls aboard, only 81 survived the wreck, in two boats. One of these was lost, the other drifted, was sighted but ignored by one ship... [-] something

which happened to many... castaways... [-] before being picked up by another 10 days after the sinking, by which time the survivors had resorted to cannibalism. Only three people survived undrowned, unstarved and uneaten. Because of the comparative frequency of this unspeakably un-English practice, there was a feeling at the highest levels that a leading case needed to be established to deter other seamen from having their shipmates for dinner and to encourage them to die a ghastly but Christian death instead. When Dudley and his companions were repatriated, making no secret of the events of their ordeal and convinced they had done no wrong, a prosecution was brought. Public opinion was overwhelmingly sympathetic to the men, but it was the political agenda which carried the day. One of the three, Edmund Brooks, who had opposed the execution of poor Dicky Parker and who had only reluctantly partaken of his share of the filet mignonette, was persuaded to testify against his companions and they were convicted of murder. Out of compassion, the mandatory death sentence was commuted and replaced with a light prison sentence... [Incidentally, a] new report criticising a captain who drank six pints of beer before his barge rammed the Marchioness pleasure boat[, which]... had been hired for a birthday party and was crammed with 131 partygoers... will be referred to the British Director of Public Prosecutions... But Brit[ain's] Deputy P[M]... admitted that there was little chance of prosecuting [the captain] – whose trials for failing to keep a proper lookout twice resulted in hung juries – [this long]... after the sinking... “This is a shameful consequence of the failure to hold a formal investigation following the disaster,”... The captain of the Marchioness died in the accident. He had not been drinking but may have been tired by long working hours, the report found. “The basic cause of the collision is clear. It was poor lookout on both vessels. Neither vessel saw the other in time to take action to avoid the collision,”... said... [the report's author. The barge's captain] is believed to be now serving as a mate on a non-British registered vessel in Northern European waters... Although it was believed that he would have had no alcohol in his blood at the time of the collision, the report added: “We cannot stress too strongly how much we deprecate [the barge captain's] conduct in drinking so much before returning to the vessel as master.”

...The Greek ferry that sank with the loss of at least 66 lives yesterday, was like a ship without a crew in the hours before tragedy struck... Some sailors were watching soccer when the Express Samina hit rocks off the island of Paros. Even after the impact, with the ferry in darkness and sinking fast, the crew failed to supervise as the 530 people on board struggled to abandon ship... Survivors claim... the tradition of women and children first was abandoned. They describe how they clung to the topside of the ship wondering how to launch the lifeboats themselves. A few lifeboats do appear to have been launched, but most passengers seem to have ended up in the water, without so much as a lifejacket... Two N[Z] cousins... were among the hundreds who jumped for their lives. Both... were sucked under the sinking ferry but emerged unharmed on the other side... A massive rescue operation swung into gear with a small flotilla of fishing boats rushing to the scene, followed by dozens of other vessels and British Navy helicopters... The operation, reinforced by passing British warships, continued through the night. Greek investigators say they are struggling to explain why the ferry... hit a charted islet with a lighthouse, which some officials say only a blind person could have missed.

...As Greek investigators try to work out why a ferry sank and killed at least 72 people after hitting a... well-charted islet with a lighthouse... questions are being raised about the age and safety of the country's coastal fleet. Authorities yesterday charged the captain and three crew members of the sunken Express Samina with manslaughter. The ship, with more than 500 aboard... sank on Wednesday in a storm. It was Greece's worst maritime tragedy in 35 years... Investigators focused on reports that the vessel was on automatic pilot minutes before it struck the rocks. Survivors say the crew panicked and failed to organise an evacuation. [However,] sailors' unions... said the sunken ferry was “problematic, overaged, with worn-out sheet metal.” The Greek Merchant Marine Mechanics Union described it as a “rusting hulk.” But the coastguard said the... 34-year-old... ship was inspected this month and found seaworthy. In Greece, ferries must be decommissioned after 35 years... A Greek member of the European Parliament... said his country should adopt the E[U]'s more stringent regulations and decommission ships after 27 years. In Greece's coastal fleet of about 130 ferries, 18 are over 29 years of age, many of them on the busiest tourism routes.

...An elderly American died when... [t]he Zeus Three... a chartered Greek boat carrying... 31... US tourists ran aground and sank off the Aegean island of Naxos yesterday. The sinking came just four days after at least 77 people died in a ferry disaster off the nearby holiday island of Paros, and less than two days after another ferry... with 1081 passengers aboard... ran aground while approaching Naxos... The Express Artemis, a big vehicle and passenger ferry, managed to dislodge itself after three hours and docked safely without injury to passengers or crew. Since the sinking of the Express Samina, the merchant marine ministry has confined 65 ships to port, saying they had failed to meet safety standards.

...With the death toll still rising[-] ...divers pulled three more bodies from the wreck... [yesterday -] four men accused of causing Greece's deadliest ferry disaster in 35 years began giving testimony as the Government promised an overhaul of Greece's troubled shipping industry.

...UK ferry company may take over routes around Greek islands after series of recent accidents; ...bereaved families scorn compensation offered as captain admits he was not on bridge when ferry hit rocks... [F]erry co. manager commits suicide following disaster in which at least 80 died.

...N[Z]'s worst sea disaster... [occurre]d in 1863... when the HMS Orpheus sank... [at] Whatipu... with the loss of 189 lives... [Incidentally, the] pilot who directed [a]... cruise liner on to rocks in the Marlborough Sounds in 1986 [has] admitted he drank vodka and beer several hours before the accident but said it did not affect his judgement. A book released tomorrow reveals for the first time the full testimony by... [the] pilot... to a government inquiry into the sinking of the Russian ship... after[it] hit... rocks in a passage of water between Cape Jackson and a lighthouse beacon... [He's] never spoken publicly about the sinking, and only bare details of his testimony were released, including that he made a “sudden decision to navigate the ship through... a... passage... [where I had] no detailed knowledge of the rocks... other than... that... the... depths[were] estimated at 35 to 40 feet... [on] a soundings chart... drawn up in 1895... In hindsight, the only explanation I can offer for the action I took is that I was suffering from mental and physical exhaustion and that I was over-stressed as a result of working long hours for an excessive period of time.”

The [\$]45 million liner with 741 passengers and crew on board... [was] the biggest ship to have foundered on the NZ coast... The ship was under the control of the Marlborough Harbour Board's harbourmaster and acting general manager... On leave from his job, he was working on a private contract when he made the fateful decision to steer the liner through the narrow passage... The ship's owner, the Baltic Shipping Company, ultimately admitted its decision to employ [the harbourmaster] made it indirectly responsible for the sinking. Yet the harbour board... paid an extraordinary \$2.5 million to the owner... The ship left Picton a little after 3pm on a fine February Sunday. [The ship's c]aptain... left the bridge and went below to his cabin at about 4.30 pm, asking to be woken when they reached Ship Cove. [The harbourmaster], who was gaining a reputation as a knowledgeable tourist pilot, was to give a talk about the cove... and [the captain] was interested. But when they reached Ship Cove the [captain], who had been on duty since the liner left Wellington late the night before, decided to catch up on some sleep. From Ship Cove, [the pilot] headed for Farewell Spit... But when he came in sight of the Cape Jackson lighthouse, which is separated from the cape by a passage of open water, [the pilot] made a sudden and tragic decision. Without reference to charts, he ordered the helmsman to steer through the passage instead of going around the lighthouse[, and a]t her full speed of 15 knots... [The pilot] – like several other skippers – had taken vessels through the passage before but none had the 8m draught of the Mikhail Lermontov. The chart which [the pilot] did not consult showed a shaded area and a line representing foul ground and a reef in water less than 10m deep. It was not enough: at 5.37 pm the ship shuddered under the first of a series of sickening jolts. She had struck rocks on a remote and dangerous coast with night only a few hours away and hundreds of passengers on board... Pavel Zaglyadimov, a 32-year-old refrigeration engineer[, was making]... his last round of checks for the day... when... sharp rock sliced through the steel hull and the seas poured in. Zaglyadimov is presumed to have died instantly... [The captain] rushed on to the bridge and, refusing early offers of assistance from nearby vessels, began a desperate attempt to prevent his stricken ship from sinking... But his bid was doomed... Fortunately, the masters of the

LPG tanker Tarahiko and the Cook Strait ferry Arahura had ignored [the captain]'s refusal of their offers of help and had entered Port Gore searching for her in the growing darkness... The sinking ship... was... without main power and almost blacked out, [making it] difficult to see... These days [the pilot] is master of... a live-stock and general freight carrier, plying the waves of Cook Strait. The inquiry, conducted by [one of his friends'], found that in the absence of [the captain] from the bridge, the safe navigation of the ship was the responsibility of the two Soviet officers on duty[– 'who twice questioned the pilot's decision to move through white water at speed']. They were officially reprimanded while [the captain] was prosecuted by Soviet authorities and given a four-year suspended prison sentence. Today his rank is restored and he is serving as master of a Maltese-registered freight ship operating between Russia and Hong Kong... Interviewed through an interpreter, [the captain] is in no doubt that the accident was caused by "the reckless decision of the pilot... to navigate close in-shore." But he also agrees with a Moscow newspaper's verdict that "the captain bears the responsibility for everything, even when he is asleep." The ship's navigator was blamed for not being sufficiently decisive to overrule the pilot... [The person who conducted the inquiry in NZ] recalls the Soviet master as a very competent and experienced seaman whose skill got the ship into the shelter of Port Gore where everybody could be taken off safely. "His action in not dropping his anchors when the vessel grounded on the sand bar probably saved hundreds of lives. He only had a few seconds to decide but realised people could well have gone over the side if panic had broken out and the beach seemed so close."

Hundreds of passengers were on their way to Wellington on board rescue vessels early today after... the 20,000-tonne... Russian... ship... Mikhail Lermontov... which left Sydney on February 7 for a cruise of N[Z] and the Pacific Islands, sank in Port Gore about 10.30 pm after hitting rocks at... the northern tip of the Marlborough Sounds about four hours earlier... [T]he ship smashed on to rocks after both its engines failed. The helpless ship had drifted into the sheltered Port Gore where the captain ordered all... 740 passengers... and crew to take to the lifeboats. They were then picked up by an armada of small craft answering the ship's distress signals... [S]earch and rescue... officials said later that everyone had been safely evacuated from the boat minutes before it sank in about 33m of water. Most of the passengers and crew were later transferred to the interisland ferry Arahura... Major hotels in the capital have been alerted to be on standby to receive the passengers[, most of whom]... were reported to be either from A[US or NZ. There]... were 330 Russian crew and 10 A[US]n cruise staff... A Wellington travel agent... who was on board the Mikhail Lermontov before she left Wellington on Saturday night, said... the Picton harbourmaster... was on board to pilot the ship for the last five days of the cruise. "I had dinner with him last night. He's very experienced. He takes all the passenger liners out of Picton and he knows the area well. I can only think it might have hit an uncharted rock – it's such a big area down there." ...A weather spokesman in Wellington said conditions in Cook Strait at the time of the incident were poor. Visibility was down to only a few kilometres, and a strong 55.5km/h southerly was picking up the seas... The Mikhail Lermontov went down in historic waters – close to Captain James Cook's favourite anchorage at Ship Cove... Captain Cook found safe haven in the Sounds, but the N[Z] coastline generally is notorious for hazards, and in the country's[European] history the loss of more than 1400 craft has been recorded. - 1986

Rescue teams in the Philippines resumed their search this morning for survivors of what may be the world's worst peacetime maritime disaster this century. The coastguard posted 1,530 people as officially missing after a ferry packed with Christmas travellers collided with a tanker 100 miles south of Manila yesterday morning and the two vessels sank in a sea of flames. Survivors said the ferry Dona Paz was packed with more than double that number. "We just don't know, we may never know," a coastguard spokesman said. If the feared death toll is confirmed, it will surpass the Titanic disaster... Yesterday, after an extensive rescue effort in the disaster area only 26 survivors had been found... Most were suffering from burns after jumping into oil that caught fire in the collision, engulfed the two vessels and formed a slick over the sea... Radio reports quoting unnamed officials, said several people had been eaten by sharks... The 20-year-old Dona Paz, licensed to carry 1,493 people, and the tanker Victor, carrying 8,800 barrels of oil products, collided in straits off the island of Marinduque... There has been no official explanation of how the accident happened. Weather conditions were good, but it was a particularly dark, moonless night.

...As rescuers stepped down their search for victims of the Philippines ferry disaster and the clamour for more controls on the country's chaotic shipping industry mounted, a remarkable story of survival emerged... Government radio operators monitoring the search in the area where the 2,215-tonne Dona Paz collided with a tanker... reported that a five-year-old boy had been found alive after two days floating on a piece of timber. The boy was last night in hospital after being found in "serious condition" by fishermen, and was given a "50-50" chance of recovery. The boy, whose name was not known, brings to just 27 the total of those saved from the Sunday night collision. Meanwhile, as hundreds of anxious relatives and friends jammed the offices of the Sulpicio Shipping Lines company, owners of the Dona Paz, waiting for word of those who were lost, a company spokesman admitted that, while records showed that 1,490 passengers and 53 crew should have been on board, the list did not include children and passengers who boarded at an intermediate stop. The incident has sparked numerous calls for tighter controls of the Philippines passenger shipping industry. Coast guard records show 80 collisions, 117 sinkings and 53 shipboard fires in Philippine waters since 1972, when records were begun... A... member of the panel which will begin hearings on Monday to investigate the cause of the disaster, described the Board of Maritime Inquiry as a "toothless lion" when it came to enforcing safety laws and awarding damages, with the biggest fine that can be imposed set at 1,000 pesos (£33)... Yesterday's search was hampered by bad weather, but it soon became clear that hopes of finding a[ny more]... people alive were fading. Under new government regulations, the relatives automatically receive about £650 for each victim in insurance compensation. However, with no confirmed passenger list and the impossibility of identifying victims, it will be some time before payments can be made.

...A quarrel started in a mortuary when two families both claimed the disfigured body of a woman as relatives tried to identify the victims of the Philippines ferry disaster. Only 253 bodies have been recovered, although 2,000 people are feared to have died...

Key witnesses to the world's worst peacetime shipping disaster... have disappeared... When an official inquiry into the collision... opened... yesterday, the authorities said that they did not know the whereabouts of the two surviving crew members of the tanker's crew... They disappeared soon after a rescue ship arrived in Manila on Monday last week. Meanwhile, a... lawyer for the registered owner of the tanker said that the vessel had been sold as long ago as 1985, and that his client... denied any responsibility for the disaster. No one was there to represent the alleged present owners, Vector Shipping Corporation. The owners of the ferry also denied responsibility[, and]... a vice-president of Sulpicio Lines, said the ferry was not overloaded, countering reports from survivors that up to 3,000 people were on board. A survivor had earlier said that an apprentice was at the helm of the Dona Paz when she went down, that the first and second mates were on the deck drinking beer, and that the captain was in his cabin watching videos. The company denied the claim, but there was no attempt at the start of the inquiry to corroborate or disprove this controversial account... The hearing was continually disrupted by dozens of relatives of the ferry victims, together with journalists and television crews, who crowded around the conference table. At the same time, a special Senate investigation into the disaster opened and adjourned, with the investigation chairman... accusing the authorities of taking a "cavalier" attitude towards the inquiry.

...Relatives for the victims of the Philippines ferry disaster questioned the competence of the Marine Board of Inquiry at yesterday's hearings, insisting that the board must not include coastguard officials "because the coastguard, too, is on trial in this case". The collision between the tanker Vector and the ferry Dona Paz has become the worst peacetime shipping disaster, with [as many as '4341 people'] believed dead... During yesterday's hearing, lawyers for the owners of the vessels argued over which ship rammed the other... "According to my belief, if the Dona Paz was the one which rammed the Vector, Dona Paz would be able to survive and not sink because she was built with a collision bulkhead,"... said[the

lawyer for]... Sulpicio Lines Inc... [The] lawyer for the Vector Shipping Corporation retorted: "If the tanker was the one that rammed the Dona Paz, there would have been no explosion." He explained that the Vector had a bigger collision bulkhead and a device next to it to prevent its oil cargo from exploding in flames. • DHAKA: More than 150 people were feared drowned yesterday after they jumped in panic from a ferry which caught fire and sank in the Bay of Bengal... Local police said that 11 people with serious burns were rescued from the river. The ferry was carrying about 200 passengers from a village carnival. - 1987

In the darkening of a grey winter's evening, the majestic ferry *Herald of Free Enterprise* set off on a routine crossing from Belgium to England. The sea was calm, the weather quiet. There was nothing to suggest that within minutes there would occur the worst British peacetime marine tragedy since the sinking of the *Titanic*... The *Herald* had nosed into her berth at the Zeebrugge ferry terminal at 5 p.m. that Friday, March 6, 1987... A crew of 80 manned the *Herald* on the run to Dover. They worked 24-hour shifts, which came to two round trips, then had 48 hours off. Some were uneasy with this arrangement. They knew the ship would sometimes be operated by a tired crew... [Her captain on that Friday] had other concerns about the new breed of roll-on roll-off ferries, or Ro-Ros. Six months before, he had written to the other masters and chief engineers who operated on the *Herald*, commenting on the ship's tendency to stay nose down after taking on water ballast in the bow tanks. This was a routine procedure to facilitate loading vehicles in high tides, but it took up to two hours to pump the water out. Thus... sometimes "the bow wave is well up the bow doors." The Marine Department had been made aware of this problem, but no action had been taken. There was talk that a high-speed pump would be installed during the overdue annual refitting, scheduled for the following week. But on this Friday, [the captain] knew, the *Herald* would be leaving Zeebrugge about a metre down in the bow. Just after 7 p.m., [the captain] stepped into the wheelhouse... All hands on the bridge... were thoroughly at ease with the departure procedures. [The captain] knew them by heart. He gave the familiar orders softly: they were softly acknowledged. What [the captain] did not know was that the massive steel bow doors... had not been closed... AT EXACTLY 7 P.M., the loading officer of G deck, [the] Chief Officer... went to a control panel and notified the bridge that the shore ramp was being lifted... A moment or so later, the public-address system called all hands to harbour stations. At five minutes past the hour, the *Herald*... began backing away from the wharf. [The Chief Officer] looked around to see who would be closing the bow doors. Across the dimly lit deck he saw – or thought he saw – [the]... assistant bosun, in his orange overalls, threading between the parked cars towards the control panel. It was [the assistant bosun]'s responsibility to close the 12-tonne hydraulically operated bow doors. That satisfied [the Chief Officer]. His harbour station was on the bridge, so without speaking to the man in the orange overalls, he... began climbing up to the wheelhouse. But if [the Chief Officer] saw a man in orange overalls on G deck when the *Herald* began slipping out of its berth that Friday evening, it was not the assistant bosun... That afternoon, [the assistant bosun] had busied himself with maintenance and cleaning work. Then he reported to the vehicles deck and helped secure some semi-trailers. After a while he encountered [the] Bosun... who told him there was nothing else to do. So [the assistant bosun] went back to his cabin to await the harbour-stations call. At that time he would report back to G deck and close the doors, if someone else hadn't already done so. Meanwhile, he would make himself a cup of tea. Feeling chilled, he closed the porthole, then sat on his bunk to read for a bit. Almost at once he fell asleep. He slept right through the call to report to harbour stations... [S]tanding on the bridge wing, [the captain] might have noticed by the bright dockside lights that the bow doors, only just visible from the bridge, were open. But with the *Herald* backing out of her berth, he was facing the stern. By the time the ship swung round, she was in darkness, accelerating out into the night with her nose weighted down by ballast and the open car door only three metres above the sea. The elements for disaster were all in place... At 7.20, the *Herald*... passed the beacon on the inner breakwater and turned into the main shipping canal... As the *Herald's* speed increased, a bow wave began to pile up under her blunt prow. For a while it was suppressed by the forward extension of the main vehicles deck... But... at 15 knots, churning white water began to break over the top of the car deck at the rate of 200 tonnes a minute. H-deck [']s steward... was one of the first to notice anything wrong. Standing in the linen room, he heard water rushing down a nearby staircase and thought a pipe had burst. He went directly to the telephone and called the purser's office... At that moment, 7.27, the *Herald* began rolling over on her port side... For an excruciating moment, there was a pause... Then she went over on her beam-ends and started to sink. Everyone on the bridge was flung down to the port side. The captain... fell the full 12-metre width of the wheelhouse, seriously injuring his left side and collapsing a lung... Aboard the dredge *Sanderus*, working near the inner breakwater, [the] First Skipper... was horrified by what he saw. The big ferry had barely cleared the harbour wall when her lights tilted sharply to port... Then the lights went out; [he]... was sure the ship had gone down. He ran to the dredge's radio and raised the alarm... AS RESCUE VESSELS sped to the scene, their crewmen could see that the *Herald*... had somehow slewed out of the channel and crashed on to the shallower sea bed, less than 2000 metres outside the harbour, in just ten metres of water. Her orange hull and starboard propellers stuck incongruously out of the sea... But at least the ship had not gone down in deep water. There were lives to be saved – if the rescuers were quick... There were about 460 passengers aboard. No exact tally was made – there were always uncounted children, a few extras in the cars that drove aboard, even fare-dodging stowaways in the trucks... One hundred and ninety men, women and children, including 38 crew members, are counted as having perished... Each of these deaths – so utterly unexpected – left heartache in homes across Britain and Belgium. But some survivors suffered losses so devastating, so complete, as to stir the pity of the watching world. A five-year-old girl... lost... her mother, father [and] baby brother... a London postman, lost four generations of his family... At 10.30 a.m. on April 27, just as the refloated *Herald* was towed back into Zeebrugge harbour, the formal investigation into the disaster got underway. It would produce ample evidence that there was enough responsibility to be shared by everyone – by [the assistant bosun], who should have closed the bow doors, and didn't; [the] Chief Officer... who should have made sure they were closed, and didn't; [the] Captain... who should never have sailed out of Zeebrugge harbour without knowing that the doors were closed – and did. Some of the sharpest criticism was reserved for [the ferry company] Townsend Thoresen, whose management, said the report, was infected with the "disease of sloppiness." And the configuration of modern ferries also came under attack. The very design that makes Ro-Ros such a dramatic commercial success makes them vulnerable to what marine engineers call "free surface instability." ...New safety regulations are being implemented. Design changes are being studied. We can only hope that tragedy will be a teacher, that the catalogue of lessons learned will help to close the gap between man's exhilarating self-confidence in his technological skill – and the inexorable claims of the sea. - 1988

THE *Titanic* was sunk by six separate slits in its hull, a team of divers claims. Ever since the liner went down... experts have argued that an iceberg tore a single 300ft gash in its side. Engineers involved in the latest deep-sea investigation said the damage to steel plates was astonishingly small. [The *Titanic* was divided into numerous compartments that could be sealed off, thus enabling the ship to remain afloat if the hull was only breached in a few places.] But each of the slits punctured a different watertight compartment. The slits were no bigger than a person's hand. "Everything that could go wrong did," said [an] American naval architect. [The ship may also have 'suffered "brittle steel fracture" due to the cold temperatures'. 'In the wake of *Titanic*, an international ice patrol was established and regulations were introduced to make ships carry enough lifeboats to hold all people on board' (although, when a Mediterranean cruise ship carrying 800 passengers recently caught fire, the 'fire alarms didn't work, life jackets couldn't be found and life raft mechanisms didn't operate'!).]

...back in 1912... [when] the RMS *Titanic*, the largest moving object then ever made, was sinking slowly into the north Atlantic it was definitely an advantage to be a woman. No surprise then, that the survivors featured in tonight's documentary... are, bar one, female. Man proposes and God disposes, so when it comes time for divine retribution perhaps it's only fair the seats in the lifeboats are reserved for women and children. Says one

of the survivors, ruefully: "To say a ship was unsinkable – which was indeed what was claimed – was flying in the face of God." ... "It will go into history as the one disaster in which there was no excuse for anyone to die," says another survivor... Another theme is the lack of information from the crew and general disbelief that the mammoth ship was actually on its way under the waves... The Titanic was the ultimate boy's big toy. At 11 storeys high and "four city blocks" long, it represented the acme of human technological achievement. Such was the confidence of its makers and owners that it set out on its maiden voyage with only enough lifeboats for less than half the 2200 passengers and crew... The hour-long programme may not reach quite the heights of passion of the blockbuster movie or titillate viewers with hints of lost treasures, but its first-hand accounts are all the more powerful for their spare descriptions and understatement. And it follows the story further than the fictional version, describing the arrival of the rescue ship, the Carpathian – dubbed the "ship of widows" – in New York where it was greeted by a curious crowd of over 40,000. The programme examines the plight of the women passengers from third class, most of whom were immigrants to America and had lost their men and everything they owned. It also looks at the stigma which instantly became attached to any of the men survivors as public outrage boiled over that more first class males survived than children in steerage... Then there's confirmation of some of the more famous stories – the orchestra playing calmly on deck, the passengers locked in third class, the... putting on best clothes to "go down like gentlemen."

...Edith Haisman, the oldest survivor from the sinking of the Titanic, has died in a Southampton nursing home, aged 100. Mrs Haisman remembered being in a lifeboat and seeing her father, Thomas Brown, waving from the deck as the Titanic sank in 1912...

The Haitian President... and Government ministers were grilled by angry villagers yesterday when they visited the scene of this week's ferry sinking... "Why are you coming here now... everyone's dead...?" screamed a woman who had lost five children in the accident... Divers pulled 28 bodies from the shipwreck yesterday, bringing to nearly 80 the number of victims now recovered. But many more who were trapped on lower decks have proved difficult to reach... The vessel... sank in 35m of water close to the shore... Witnesses said the vessel rolled when passengers eager to disembark went to one side. In an area with no dock, people routinely disembark from ferries by wading, swimming or being carried to shore... Haiti's Secretary of State for Security... said the vessel might have been overloaded. It was permitted to carry 200 passengers, he said. Between 260 and 280 people are reported to have been on board. The Haitian national police chief... said an investigation had been launched. Both the owner and the captain of the ferry would be questioned. [By the way, a 'former *Shortland Street* star – who played receptionist Moira Crombie's first husband Earl – cheated death after his boat was run over by a skipper-less launch. The actor and his brother-in-law were fishing in the five-metre boat on Thursday morning in Auckland's Hauraki Gulf when the 12m launch hit. The launch's owner was relieving himself from the stern and did not see the dinghy. "He was very sorry but now the weather's great and I have no boat. It was a very dear boat and we've had a lot of fun on it. It was like part of the family."

...[THE] FAMILY of the five... fishermen – [two] [brothers... their brother-in-law], a cousin and a friend – who all... died... in last year's tragic Wellington Harbour shipping collision are to ask the coroner to reopen the investigation into the accident... The news comes on the eve of tomorrow's first anniversary of the collision between fishing trawler Maria Luisa and container ship Sydney Express... [The] owner of the fishing boat... still has not received an insurance payout... The Maritime Safety Authority [MSA] and the Transport Accident Investigation Commission blamed both vessels for the accident, but family and others connected to the Maria Luisa maintain crucial evidence was ignored... "We believe we can prove the original inquiries were not conducted properly..."

...Failings in the [MSA's] new ship safety code are among critical findings of an official... investigation... into two groundings of... the Auckland-to-Coromandel passenger ferry... Neither accident resulted in injury to passengers or crew... [T]he Transport Accident Investigation Commission... found in both cases the skipper... – a different one each time – was at fault. The main factors in their errors of judgment were fatigue, lack of training and experience, and the absence of documented procedures... But the investigation also identified shortcomings in the... new ship-safety management system and in how a company authorised by the [MSA] operated... Although the ferry had a certificate from Maritime Management Systems, a safe-ship management system had not been installed effectively when the first grounding occurred... The system had been installed by the second grounding but still did not comply fully with the code. So the ferry was not considered "fit for purpose" during either grounding.

...[Dozens of people were on board a ferry when it went out of control approaching Queen's Wharf in Auckland and smashed into another ferry, the 150-seat Manu, which then bumped into a third – the 94-year-old Kestrel. No one was hurt. All three ferries are operated by Fullers. The MSA is investigating the incident, which has put the Manu out of action for at least a week. Fullers uses the Manu for charter trips and runs to Stanley Bay, serving 70 to 100 people. The firm spent much of the weekend hunting for a charter vessel to replace the Manu, but said that there would be no disruption to services this week. Fullers said the crash occurred after a generator failed on the Kea. It had been fixed and the ferry had resumed service. The crash was the latest in a series of incidents involving Fullers' ferries. On October 21 last year, the Kestrel smashed into Queen's Wharf while carrying 60 passengers. On January 16, the skipper of Quickcat II was fined \$3000 for going too fast. His ferry hit another vessel in the Waitemata Harbour on May 31 last year.]

...Passengers on high-speed Auckland ferries need not worry about a safety risk revealed in a confidential A[US]n report, say experts in N[Z]. The... head of naval architecture and ocean engineering at the A[US]n Maritime College in Tasmania, says high-speed aluminium ferries are unsafe in certain conditions. N[Z] has about a dozen such ferries, including some of the Fullers Gulf Ferries in Auckland and Tranz Rail's Lynx... [Such] a ferry travelling faster than the waves can plough into the wave in front, take on water and quickly submerge... N[Z] experts say the risk disclosed in [the] report has been known for some time, and rules are in place for dealing with it... The deputy director of maritime safety... said all commercial fast ferries in N[Z] operated under strict conditions. He had contacted his A[US]n counterpart... and was satisfied that N[Z]'s regulations were adequate.

...Two new Cook Strait fast ferries may have severe restrictions placed on them when they can sail from Mana, north of Wellington, because they are relatively small... [The MSA] said the size of the catamarans – 24m long and 36m – meant there was a safety risk... The first vessel... will carry up to 150 passengers... The second [will carry] up to 300 passengers... [and take] 75 minutes to cross the strait... The Straitrunner, which travelled the same route but went into receivership last year, was 31m long. The Lynx, which runs between Wellington and Picton during summer, is 76m long. [A spokesperson for the MSA] said he expected the director of Cook Strait Sea Cat Ferries... to be responsible and not push the ferries to the limit of weather conditions... [The director of Sea Cat] said the ferries were being built to the highest safety standards. Catamarans were suited to cross the Paremata sandbar in Porirua Harbour and to the side-on seas of Cook Strait, [and] he said... the \$10 million project would create 39 jobs initially, plus 20 more when the second ferry began sailing... In bad weather passengers will be able to use a backup air service...

The Lynx fast ferry is still damaging Tory Channel marine life, a Department of Conservation study shows... [M]arine life that had recovered during the winter months has again "been knocked back" by fast ferry wash over summer. - 1997

One small council should not be able to dictate Cook Strait freight and ferry options, the Road Transport Forum said yesterday. Marlborough District Council's bylaw halving fast-ferry speeds to 18 knots (33 km/h) in the Marlborough Sounds was unacceptable, [according to the forum's] chief executive... "They allowed fast ferries to start up, but now after much investment has been put into them, the council pulls the plug." The council passed the bylaw on Tuesday and it takes effect [in a month]. The forum, which represents 4000 truckers nationwide, said it would be "pleased" to work with ferry companies in appealing against the decision... Fast Cat Ferries ['] chief executive... said the bylaw was passed without regard for the impact on local and national economies. The alteration to the speed limit would add half an hour to a 1 3/4-hour journey – a crucial time difference in an industry where speed was everything... [The forum's chief executive said his] industry would lose operational benefits provided by the time-saving the ferries offered. In an environment of high fuel prices, the last thing needed was another knockback.

...A “ridiculous” Cook Strait fast ferry price war has forced Mana Seacat to close... [Y]esterday... 22 mainly part-time staff were laid off and 600 booked passengers were being offered refunds after the sudden halt to services on Tuesday... [T]he decision was made at a directors’ meeting on Monday... “[We met] to evaluate the market conditions, given the abundance of fast ferries and cheap plane seats, and made the decision that it was not prudent to trade over the winter months given the capacity that’s available and being discounted,” [a director] said. The company... had not met budget targets since the new fast ferry Top Cat started and Tranz Rail’s Lynx ferry began winter crossings.

...[a Marlborough District Council bylaw has been blamed for Fast Cat Ferries’ decision to shut down its Top Cat service]...

Last Friday, a [Marlborough District C]ouncil bylaw came into force restricting the speed of fast ferries in the Sounds to 18 knots. But yesterday the council said it had granted a Tranz Rail application to test-run the Lynx at up to 23 knots. The... [council’s] regulatory department manager... denied the decision was a weakening of the council’s stance on ferry speeds. The 18-knot restriction was a very black and white rule, but the dynamics of ship wake generation were more complex, so there was always an exemption provision. “Tranz Rail have trialled their vessel between 25 and 30 knots and feel they can’t comply with the wave formula in that bracket, but are of the view the Lynx will run to about 23 knots without causing a problem.” ...[a] Guardians of the Sounds spokesman... said the trials would be meaningless if they were conducted without the Lynx carrying commercial vehicles. The ship is not due to carry commercial vehicles until early in the New Year.

...Tranz Rail has confirmed it is considering preliminary plans for a new ferry, drawn up by the same Spanish shipyard which built the... Aratere. Maritime sources are incredulous the company would think of using the Spaniards to build a replacement vessel for the ageing Arahanga freight ferry. “No doubt it will carry on the great traditions of the Aratere and the Albayzin,” said one source. The Albayzin was an ill-fated Spanish-built fast ferry used by the Sea Shuttles firm on Cook Strait in 1994-95... The \$106 million Aratere, which arrived in Wellington on January 20, was plagued with early operational problems... The M[SA] detained the ship on February 24, after it was left with 220 passengers on board drifting in Wellington Harbour. An electrical fault had cut the fuel supply and an emergency generator failed. Other problems have included railings too widely spaced, and unbolted seats in the ship’s main lounge bar. [A] Tranz Rail spokesman defended the Spanish yard. “It wasn’t really the shipyard that was the problem. It was some of the suppliers. The shipyard has copped a bit of unfair flak.” Earlier this year, another company spokesman angrily spoke of the media depicting the ship as a lemon. Under the new plans, a new ferry would be slightly bigger than the Aratere – capable of carrying 500 passengers rather than 350. The new ship is nicknamed Ara-7 – this being the seventh Cook Strait ferry which would carry a Maori name beginning with Ara. The Arahanga has been operating on Cook Strait for more than 25 years and was due for replacement in 2003. However, Tranz Rail is reviewing its entire “retonnaging” project taking into account which South Island port it uses in future. If it goes ahead with a long-running proposal to move to Clifford Bay, it will be able to use bigger ships.

...Tranz Rail may be forced to move its Lynx fast ferry terminal out of Picton to stop environmental damage in the Marlborough Sounds, a Marlborough District Council report says. The council said wash from the ferries was eroding shorelines and destroying marine life. One option was moving fast ferries to Clifford Bay, 40km southwest of Blenheim, an option put back on Tranz Rail’s agenda last year, the report said.

...a \$100 million-plus terminal... at Clifford Bay, 38km south of Blenheim would cut 30 minutes off the normal [3]-hour Cook Strait sea travel time, and about an hour off the car journey time to Christchurch... The move... [to] replace Picton as the gateway to the South Island... could cut ferry fares but would cost Picton up to 260 jobs and 44[%] of its visitors... [But there may be new jobs up north, as] Fullers Gulf Ferries says it is prepared to order two new low-wash ferries to start a passenger service between... the eastern suburbs... and[downtown] Auckland. Subject to getting approval from the [ARC] it will put in the \$4 million order for the new craft and build a ferry terminal at Half Moon Bay... The catamaran ferries would carry 150 passengers each and take about 24 minutes to get between the two points... The company is[already planning] to begin a subsidised Bayswater to downtown Auckland ferry service in the first quarter of next year. When Fullers and the Yellow Bus Company put in a joint tender for the Half Moon Bay service earlier this year, the regional council had to defer it because it ran out of money for trial passenger transport services. The [ARC] is now budgeting more than \$1 million for such services in the 1996-97 financial year and hopes to award contracts before Christmas. The council... said there had been interest in the Half Moon Bay service, but the cost [per] passenger had previously been too high. The council has developed a system for “weighting” proposals, the highest weighting going to “innovative” services which would improve passenger transport use during peak travel times... [and] has now changed the weighting to give ferry services an increased chance of getting funding.

...An engineering blunder has left the Auckland port company with an \$11 million super-crane on a wharf too weak to support it. The 810-tonne container crane, towering more than 60m above the waterfront, was assembled on Bledisloe Wharf from sections imported from Germany. It cannot be used because tests have shown that it is too heavy to run along rails on the water’s edge... The crane is one of two designed to allow Ports of Auckland Ltd to offer shipping companies wide-boom lifting capacity to service a new class of big ships. The other crane has been installed, apparently successfully, at the Fergusson Container Terminal... Strengthening work would be done in phases, and although this would take some time enough progress would be made in two months for the new crane to operate safely... A spokeswoman... would not say how much the... work would cost, but added that it would have been needed sooner or later anyway because of long-term plans to add more crane capacity.

...The planned \$100 million expansion of the Fergusson container terminal in the Waitemata Harbour has run into strong public opposition... Ports of Auckland Ltd... wants to extend the container terminal about 180m eastwards by reclaiming 10ha of the harbour bed... [Strong public opposition itself isn’t an issue – public outrage failed to prevent the ports company spending money on dredging the harbour a few years ago to make it more accessible for larger container ships, then dumping the dredgings ‘over recreational seabeds’ – but t]he company needs the consent of the... A[RC]... the Auckland City Council and the Minister of Conservation.

...The consent hearing for the expanded Fergusson container terminal has ended with its promoters arguing that the... project was of “critical importance to both the region and the country.” ...The company sees the 10ha reclamation as the first stage of increasing the port’s capacity. The extension would allow more ships to berth at the wharf and more containers to be handled.

...A combination of economic growth and more frequent visits from container ships helped Ports of Auckland increase container trade by 6.6[%]. Annual container... trade through the ports topped 400,000 units for the first time. Most of the increase occurred at the Fergusson container terminal, where throughput was up 12[%]. Nearly 276,000 20ft equivalent container units were handled at the terminal... [T]he Ports of Auckland chief executive, said the capacity of Bledisloe Wharf... [– which] takes a mix of containers and cargo... [– had been] increased as a short-term measure to accommodate the increasing container... traffic until a proposed expansion of the Fergusson terminal was completed in 1999... The proposed expansion would increase container capacity by 46[%]. Ports of Auckland handled more than 10 million tonnes of cargo during the latest year, nearly 6.5 million tonnes of it in containers. Non-containerised cargo increased 2[%]... in the June 30 year.

...Since June... four... Russian fishing boats... have been tied up at the... Port of Otago... two [due to]... wage disputes, and... [the other two] are stranded by an international financial wrangle... The body of a woman crew member was found yesterday on the Russian fishing boat Novopskov[, but the police]... said the death was not being treated as suspicious... In late June, a crew member on the Yefim Gorbenko died of natural causes.

...To say life on board the stranded Russian fishing vessel Ivan Korobkin has been difficult in recent months is an understatement. What should have been a nine-month fishing voyage has turned into 15 months of tension and boredom for the 10 crew who remain aboard. For most of their stay in Timaru the crew have gone virtually unnoticed except by the half-dozen families who have befriended them. Occasionally the ship hit the headlines – such as when it was arrested for unpaid debts, or when the crew refused to leave even though the High Court was arranging their

repatriation... For the 53-year-old... ship's cleaner... this trip should have been her last; her retirement nest-egg... The nine-month trip promised \$US8000... in wages, enough to buy a small flat. She has received only \$NZ1420 so far... [plus] \$428 the captain gave each crew-member... [She] could have gone home with most of her shipmates last November, but a promise of much-needed additional pay was enough to make her swap her job... for that of the cook... [The] single woman... knows if she doesn't get the wages she is owed she will have to beg on the streets when she returns to Russia. [The ship's chief engineer] worries about a family at home with insufficient money to live on... His... pay packet is crucial to the family budget. [He] wanted to go home... but as chief engineer the ship's owners insisted he stay. The crew's only remaining hope seems to be with their Dunedin lawyer... She attached a writ to the Ivan Korobkin a week ago, and is confident that move will guarantee the crew's wages – even though it could be three months before the court pays up out of the proceeds of the ship's sale. It now looks likely the ship's new owners, All Weather, a subsidiary of a family-owned Hong Kong shipping company, will pay the crew to get them off the ship. They could be flying home soon.

...[after 'five Russian fishing boats were impounded at Lyttelton for violating fishing quotas, a total of 90 sailors went without pay for over 10 months – sustained only by charity from locals plus a food and fuel grant from the NZ Ministry of Fisheries. After the ship owners paid their fines to the NZ Government they offered to back-pay their workers \$NZ59/week'.

...the South Port operations manager said the Russian trawler Abruka was not allowed to discharge while in port so four temporary toilets had been installed on the wharf. But gales sent one into the harbour and tipped the other three over. The toilet was caught before it floated away and within hours all four were back in action, much to the relief of the Russian sailors. "However, we did get a complaint about soggy toilet paper," the manager added.

...Greenpeace received a warning from the Nelson City Council for letting its ship the Rainbow Warrior II discharge treated sewage while in port. Vessels are allowed to discharge treated sewage, but the council and Greenpeace are at odds over whether the discharge was within acceptable limits. Council staff arrived too late to test water samples, but said the discharge last week was unlikely to have complied. Greenpeace disagrees, saying the sewage was little more than discoloured water. Greenpeace specifically asked about toilets before deciding to come to Nelson for maintenance, which included replacing the on-board sewage treatment system. The port had agreed to let the crew use its staff toilets and arranged for a key to be provided last Thursday, the day the spill happened. Most visiting crews made their own arrangements if they could not use ship toilets. The crew are now using hired portable toilets'...

The Auckland City Council wants a crackdown on shipping to reduce the risk of foreign marine organisms entering local waters through ballast water discharges. Scientists have listed 53 foreign organisms introduced by shipping. The Waitemata Harbour, site of N[Z]'s busiest international port, has at least 38 introduced species living in it... The council said all ships should be checked by engineers to see if they were capable of discharging and exchanging water ballast in mid-ocean. This enabled ships to rid themselves of unwanted marine organisms and sediments. The council also advocates a look at the practical difficulties of sampling each vessel's ballast tanks to establish the presence of unwanted marine organisms and installing telltale pump meters in ships. - 1996

Ports of Auckland is taking part in a study of the effects of ballast water discharges from ships entering N[Z] harbours. Ballast water, which is taken on board ships to enhance stability, can carry unwanted organisms into foreign ports when discharged.

...[It is known that exotic marine organisms have been introduced to NZ waters over many years by human activities. What might Captain Cook have left behind when he scraped the Endeavour's hull at Ship Cove in Queen Charlotte Sound in 1770? Because large oceans separate NZ from all its trading partners, we are totally dependent on shipping to sustain our economy. Almost 99% of our exports by volume, and 90% by value, are transported by sea. Unfortunately, empty or partially loaded ships also carry thousands of tonnes of water to keep them stable and structurally sound. Ballast water is pumped into a ship while it unloads its cargo. Usually a coarse screen prevents large items being sucked in but in one reported case 50 fish were found swimming in the tank of a ship docked in a US port. Smaller species inevitably get through. One teaspoon of ballast water could hold five million tiny organisms – and it is impossible to predict which could cause a problem. They can survive long journeys and when a ship begins loading cargo at its next port, at the same time discharging now-unnecessary ballast water, surviving organisms are flushed out along with it. The design and location of most ballast tanks have so far made treating the water and cleaning the tanks impossible. Voluntary controls on ballast water discharges have been operating in NZ since March 1992. Ships entering NZ waters are required to exchange ballast water in mid-ocean, treat it before discharge or refrain from discharging if at all possible. It is dangerous for ships to exchange water mid-ocean but compliance is reportedly good. Crucial to us, the possible import of ship-borne nasties is a worldwide issue, too. The efforts of scientists in many countries have been motivated and made urgent by already occurring marine ecological disasters – one as close as Tasmania involving the predatory starfish, the Pacific seastar.]

...At the end of 1995, NZ's Ministry of Fisheries and DoC asked 'people to watch for a voracious starfish from Asian waters.' In 1994 the NZ Government had 'imposed a seasonal ban on the discharge of ballast water by ships from Tasmania.' The 'northern Pacific sea star arrived in Tasmania as larvae in ships' ballast water, devastating shellfish beds within a decade. There was no evidence that it had arrived in NZ' as of the beginning of 1996.]

...The potential devastation of living coral by a voracious starfish in N[Z]'s largest and only sub-tropical marine reserve is going unchecked. A University of Auckland marine scientist... is calling for more research on the crown of thorns outbreak in the Kermadecs... It is now more than 14 months since [the scientist] and a D[OC] biologist... visited the islands where they found the outbreak. The density in the area studied in the northern Raoul Group of the Kermadecs was 84 starfish a hectare in water five to 10m deep. A density of more than about 30 crown of thorns a hectare is cause for concern in the tropics such as A[US]'s Great Barrier Reef where the crown of thorns have resumed their attack on its famous corals. The starfish occurs in the Pacific and Indian Oceans and is thought to have infested the Kermadecs naturally, having probably drifted in on ocean currents as microscopic larvae.

...[an invader is devastating thousands of kilometres of seabed throughout the Hauraki Gulf, says a top scientist. The tube worm is a tiny marine organism that rapidly reproduces inside a crustaceous tube. The 6cm worms build their papery tubes, up to 20cm in length, at an alarming rate, and cement them together to form a carpet-like layer over huge tracts of seabed, suffocating other marine life. Auckland University's senior marine biologist said that since the worm was discovered by scallop fishermen near Whitianga three years ago, debate had raged over whether it was a native species or an alien. However, he said that: "It's sudden appearance in such large numbers, and its dominance close to the main shipping lanes into Auckland, strongly suggests we are witnessing a major marine invasion." The worm has now spread as far north as Houhora and as far south as Tauranga. Coromandel scallop fishermen are frustrated that the Ministry of Fisheries has ignored warnings about the worm. "It's bugged our industry but the ministry has just shoved us aside," said the secretary of the Coromandel Scallop Fishermen's Association. "We don't want compensation but we need help." He is adamant that over-fishing is not the cause of this latest problem in the troubled industry, which was affected by black skirt disease last year. The ministry could not be contacted for comment. The scientist said the ministry had agreed to finance a survey of the worm's spread but it might not be able to get rid of it. "I don't want to sound alarmist but at the moment we just don't have the information to act to stop it." A similar organism had invaded coral reefs off the coast of northern NSW. But its spread had not been as rapid as in NZ.]

...The intruder arrived sometime in 1982. It rode from the Atlantic in the ballast water of a cargo ship and was flushed into the Black Sea, experts believe. Then it began to eat and multiply at a frightening rate... By 1990, the total mass in the Black Sea of all the jellyfish-like creatures, known as Mnemiopsis leidyi, was estimated at 1 billion tonnes, equal to the total weight of all fish caught in the world that year. The tale... reflects the devastation that a single alien species can cause in an almost-closed ecosystem... Free from its predators in the western Atlantic, the animal devoured fish larvae, eggs and the plankton needed by small fish. Anchovies and the Azov Sea kilka, two commercially important fish, were among

the hardest hit... "What is certain... is that mnemiopsis altered the Black Sea as perhaps no other alien species ever had anywhere," said... a biologist at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute in Massachusetts. [The biologist] has been studying the possible introduction of the butterfish... which averages about 700g and... can eat its weight in jellyfish every hour. But he said... "The intentional introduction of yet another species poses ethical questions... We must face the possibility that something could go terribly wrong."

...[Less than two decades ago, *Caulerpa taxifolia* was an innocuous seaweed whose long, fluorescent green tendrils were familiar to the inshore fishermen of its native Caribbean and to a handful of marine biologists. Today, after its mysterious introduction to the warm waters of the Mediterranean, the weed has been condemned as a killer. Growing at prodigious rates, depriving the seabed of sunlight and starving it of oxygen, *Caulerpa* has already ravaged marine life along the Mediterranean's poshest resorts, and experts say an environmental disaster looms if no action is taken. First spotted as a patch of about 1 sq m off the coast of Monaco in 1984, *Caulerpa* has now taken root across 5500ha of Mediterranean seabed. "I am sorry to say that the battle is lost," says a researcher from the French marine research institute Ifremer. "*Caulerpa* is now expanding at the rate of about 50% a year. When the weather is hot it grows at about a centimeter a day. Ordinary seaweed takes a century to cover 3m." Already, ecologists say, it has led to a decline in the variety and size of fish caught in the affected coastal areas. It is toxic to fish and has no significant natural enemy in the Mediterranean. France is resorting to costly and frantic attempts to get rid of it. These range from the use of plastic sheeting or aluminium film to cover the weed and starve it of sunlight, to the uprooting of the plant by hand by scuba divers, a process that costs about \$100 per sq m. Other possibilities are treatment by copper, which has been found to be highly effective, and the discovery of two species of Caribbean seaslug that feast on *Caulerpa* but not on other species of flora. Both options are still at the laboratory stage, however. Scientists are still trying to devise a cheap way of administering the copper to the weed without contaminating the neighbouring sea area, and they are leery about introducing the slugs until they are completely convinced that the newcomers will not become a pest in their own right.'

...Scientists blame recreational boaters for the spread of the tropical killer algae *Caulerpa taxifolia* by not cleaning their anchors before moving to a new area. The weed now covers more than 6000ha of Mediterranean seabed.'

...The Ministry of Fisheries says the sunken trawler *Seafresh One*, infested with the invasive Asian seaweed *undaria*, must be moved from the Chatham Islands. The fishing vessel, which sank eight days ago in Hanson Bay on the east coast of Chatham Island, was found to be carrying the weed on Saturday. The plant is a threat to other marine life and animals. It has spread to several east coast harbours since it was discovered in Wellington Harbour in 1987. However, it is not thought to be present near the Chathams. A ministry spokesman said it had ordered the trawler to be moved within 30 days and either sunk to a depth of 1500m or taken to an area where *undaria* already existed. *Seafresh NZ*, which owns the vessel, says the boat had recently been in dry dock and cleaned. Its managing director said he would be asking questions of the firm that cleaned the vessel.'

...the Chatham Islands will continue to offer its bays to sheltering ships, but does not want to be exploited any more. The mayor said yesterday that he did not know the trawler *Seafresh 1* was a "dead ship" until four days after its arrival. The Wellington-based fishing vessel was towed to Hanson Bay on March 10 after its engine-room caught fire and it took on water while at sea. It sank and began leaking diesel, launching a national operation to contain the spill before it harmed marine and wildlife in the area. The mayor believes the ship still had power and would have been able to leave the area without help. He will seek answers from the company that owned the vessel about why *Seafresh 1* was not towed to the mainland immediately, instead of the Chathams. Local people had also questioned why a crippled fishing vessel was towed close to the island's fishing resources. The MSA said yesterday that there was no trace of the 2km-long by 100m wide slick seen drifting 8km offshore. On Saturday, divers had plugged vents leading from the vessel's fuel tanks.'

...The owner of a North Sea shuttle-tanker, on charter to Norwegian state oil company, Statoil, has been fined a record amount for an illegal oil discharge from a ship, the British Coastguard Agency said... [The] owner... was fined £35,000... after pleading guilty to responsibility for a spill of 10... to 20 tonnes of oil in the Humber Estuary on January 3...

[There's no sign of the Asian fishing fleet off the North Otago coast now – people are still picking up rubbish washed on to beaches though. "There are Sprite and Coke bottles with foreign labels, peanut butter jars, shampoo containers, medication, sauces and even dozens of full packets of noodles." New marine pollution regulations are in the process of being written.'

...a world fleet of 50,000 ships dumps at least six million tonnes of metal, glass and plastic containers overboard every day.' Ships even lose containers overboard (e.g., during storms)! Sometimes – such as when a ship is called to aid in a rescue – 'containers are deliberately dumped to make the vessels lighter' (although, ironically, 'several ships have sunk after hitting stray containers').

...the 'two-tonne rolls of industrial packaging paper being washed ashore in the Bay of Islands after being lost off a container ship are likely to be collected by barge and taken back to the Carter Holt Harvey paper plant at Kinleith, where it will be decided whether they can be recycled or disposed of. CHH has told the Northland Regional Council that three containers, among six lost overboard from the Malaysian container vessel *Bunga Kenari* off Northland last Saturday, held a total of 44 rolls. The rolls were loaded in Tauranga for export to Malaysia. So far, the regional council knows of 29 rolls washed up or floating in the Bay of Islands. The council and CHH will work together over the next few days to try to collect and clean up the rolls before they deteriorate further. They will also search for more containers.'

...Areas of the Queensland coast requiring ship's pilots may be extended to include the Whitsunday Islands. Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's chairwoman said the authority was considering changes even before the Malaysian container ship *Bunga Teratai Satu* ran aground on Sudbury Reef near Cairns earlier this month. It was freed 12 days later in a controversial operation involving blasting away several sections of reef. The ship was in an area where compulsory pilotage was not required. Charges of causing serious environmental harm have been laid against its owners, captain and first mate. The chairwoman said the authority was concerned not only about coral damage but about removing anti-foulant paint scraped off the ship's bottom. The authority's executive director said a specialist park team had prepared a report on what was required to rehabilitate Sudbury Reef. He said shipping insurers had given him verbal assurance they would immediately begin removing the paint and repairing the reef – expected to cost \$A500,000'. Meanwhile, a 'second snorkeller has been left behind by a Great Barrier Reef charter boat.' ● The 'US diving couple who were left behind on another part of the reef by a different charter boat, whose skipper failed to check numbers before returning to port, are presumed to have either drowned or been eaten by sharks.'

...Police fear for the safety of the 4th tourist to go missing off Queensland's coast in 3 weeks.' In local news, 'pollution experts say the air force is responsible for a spill that turned part of Auckland's Upper Waitemata bright fluorescent green. An ARC pollution control officer says a non-toxic dye, fluorocine, contaminated the estuary foreshore near Hobsonville airbase on Wednesday. Small packets of the dye are kept in air force lifejackets so personnel can mark their location if they need to be rescued from water. Two matchboxes full of the powder is enough to colour 2 sq kms of water. "They were doing some form of maintenance at Hobsonville. The guy removed the packets and tipped them down a sink, which was unfortunately connected to the stormwater not the sewerage system." "The air force takes full responsibility and is rectifying the situation," said a spokeswoman. Waitemata volunteer firefighters pumped 100,000 litres of water containing about 90% of the pollutant into a tanker. The liquid was taken to a waste disposal area and treated.'

...HELP! Nobody should be out there. But they are. Engine breakdown. Battery failure. Equipment or hull damage. Accident or illness. Inexperience. Poor judgement. Or sheer carelessness. Whatever the reasons, whatever the conditions, our volunteers are regularly called on to offer assistance (last year we received 2,669 calls for assistance, and 5,447 people were rescued), often in the most extreme and dangerous circumstances. Saving lives. Risking their own. Now we need your help. We are not a government department. And while we are very grateful for the generous support we receive from grants and the community, it is never enough. We have 62 action units on coastlines and lakes throughout NZ. All weather purpose built vessels and aircraft are available 24 hours a day to effect rescue missions up to 12 miles off shore. To operate quickly and efficiently we need the latest technology – radar, G.P.S.

location and computerised radio direction finding equipment and pagers. We need sophisticated first aid facilities, training and safety education programmes. And we need money. If we had more, we could do more. And for someone, somewhere that could be the difference between life or death. By helping us, you help many NZers. And of course, you could be a big winner! Thank you. And good luck. DON'T MISS THE BOAT, OR THE EXPLORER, OR ANY OF THE OTHER SUPERB PRIZES (100 prizes worth \$210,460) in the Royal NZ Coastguard Federation Lottery – Tickets only \$10 (limited to 100,000)'...

'COROMANDEL coastguard services are angry a prank mayday call tied up police and coastguard resources all day yesterday. Whangamata Coastguard received a mayday call at 11.13am from a man who said his five-metre runabout had hit a 44-gallon drum near Shoe Island, had a damaged hull and was sinking. Two planes, a helicopter and 30 boats were called upon to help, but the search was abandoned after four hours when police failed to find any wreckage. A constable said the Coastguard received another call at 3.17pm from a boat called the May Rose, claiming it had rescued the survivors near Tairau. The caller said they were all well and he would bring them to Whitianga. He later rang back to say the boat would be delayed because of electrical problems. But at 7.30pm Whitianga police decided the calls were a hoax after a search failed to find the rescue boat. "It's the work of a real sick person," said Whangamata's Coastguard co-ordinator. The calls were too short to be traced. Meanwhile, Blenheim police were last night still looking for a couple missing in a remote part of the Marlborough Sounds. Benjamin Smart (21) and Olivia Hope (17) were last seen at the Furneaux Lodge, at the Endeavour Inlet on the northern shoreline of Queen Charlotte Sound, 34km by launch from Picton. Anxious parents contacted police late on Friday and off-duty police were called in yesterday to bolster the search party after initial inquiries failed to locate the pair. About five launches and at least 30 searchers were combing the area, said Picton police. The search was expected to resume this morning.' By the way, the] **American who defied authorities when he sailed from N[Z] in breach of safety regulations has appealed against his conviction... [He] had left Opuia for Noumea... on his Maltese-registered 12m cutter... in May 1995 without satisfying the director of maritime safety that the vessel carried appropriate safety equipment and crew to make the voyage. He was the first foreign yachtsman to be prosecuted under section 21 of the Maritime Transport Act, which required yachts to undergo a safety check before leaving N[Z], and was... fined \$1200. In submissions to the High Court at Whangarei yesterday, [his]lawyer... argued that section 21 could not apply to foreign-registered pleasure craft... [and] said no other nation was known to require foreign pleasure craft to undergo inspection. But the lawyer for the... [MSA] submitted there was no conflict between N[Z]'s maritime law and international convention, and [the USer] had made a deliberate decision not to comply. Outside the court [the USer] said that if he did not fight the charge other countries might adopt similar procedures if "they thought they could get away with it." He said funds to fight his battle had been raised by concerned boaties worldwide... [He] was meanwhile stuck in the Bay of Islands but was considering having his yacht towed out of N[Z] waters. The court ruling against him infringed on the principle of freedom of all small boats in international waters, he said.**

...A conviction against a yachtsman who refused a safety check before leaving N[Z] in 1995 was upheld in the High Court at Whangarei yesterday... He... is considering going to the Court of Appeal. [Editor's note: Every year yachts become distressed or go missing in or near NZ waters. Most of the searching is usually done by volunteers and the air force (which, excluding fuel, is funded in advance – and regards search and rescue missions as being 'part of its regional role as well as providing valuable training'). 'Volunteer search and rescue teams receive partial funding from the police training budget.' Rescued yacht owners aren't sent a bill. Perhaps the USer would prefer NZ maritime authorities to let unsafe boats leave and, if a distress call comes from any boat 'without a clearance certificate', either exercise the *principle of freedom* to ignore it or charge them for the search costs?]

... 'a weak ionosphere can cause high-frequency emergency radio channels to not work properly worldwide for several months, meaning that cargo ships, fishing boats and other vessels have to rely on either VHF signals – the cheapest option but which provide only "line of sight" communications and have limited range – or emergency locator equipment that relies on satellites. The ionosphere's effectiveness as a mirror varies over an 11-year cycle.'

... 'When yachts are battered at sea by walls of water, driving wind and rain, helicopters are often in the front line of rescue. Bad weather – usually responsible for grounding aircraft – sometimes means rescue teams have to take to the air in treacherous conditions to haul stricken and injured people to safety. On Saturday, a team took off to find, then rescue, a US family from the crippled yacht Freya, 90 nautical miles off Whangarei. In 70-knot winds, the Northland Electricity rescue helicopter hovered over the vessel, and eventually winched a couple and their 13-year-old son out of danger. Giant waves, 10m and higher, crested just 5m below the helicopter during the rescue. But there are other problems for crews battling the forces of nature to save lives. Visibility is a key factor. During Saturday's rescue, the crew had to scan the ocean in visibility of just 400m. Big waves can create turbulence for a low-flying helicopter trying to hover. Masts and rigging swinging wildly as vessels pitch and toss are big dangers to rescuers being lowered from helicopters.'

...A RESCUE helicopter last night battled treacherous weather to pluck nine crew from a stricken... yacht adrift and threatening to sink off the South Island coast... A distress call was sent about 4pm after a crew member suffered head injuries and the National Rescue Co-ordination Centre in Wellington swung into action... The Westpac helicopter was dispatched at 7pm but fears winds gusting to 60 knots might prevent the rescue resulted in the Lynx fast ferry, heading to Picton with more than 300 passengers, being diverted to assist. Unable to battle the high winds, it was sent back on course and the ferry Aratika, travelling to Wellington, was diverted about 8pm on the three-hour trip to the scene... [A second helicopter] airlift... was completed just after 9pm, and the Aratika rediverted... During a dramatic incident, one of the crew became entangled in the hoist rope... was nearly strangled... and... dropped into the sea...

A woman sunbathing on the shores of Lake Taupo yesterday afternoon got the shock of her life when a jet-skier coming into the beach landed on top of her... The jet-skier is likely to face charges, but authorities are unsure how to proceed because it is the first time an accident involving one of the machines has happened on shore rather than on the water. The Taupo harbourmaster... said he would seek legal advice on how charges could be laid under the Maritime Transport Act. He said jet-skiers were out of control on Lake Taupo, colliding into one another and zooming close to swimmers... [The harbourmaster] said more than 150 jet-skiers were on the lake each day and he received 120 complaints about them yesterday. "They're a huge headache. I'm spending all my time chasing jet-skiers." ...He was fining about 15 daily up to \$500 each for exceeding five knots within 200m of the shore, or being closer than 30m to a swimmer... it was only a matter of time before someone was seriously injured or killed.

...['A woman was run over by a four-wheel-drive vehicle while on a picket line outside the Port of Lyttelton yesterday. The woman, the wife of a port worker, later died in Christchurch Hospital. The incident happened as port workers picketed over a dispute about the Lyttelton Port Company's contracting its coal-loading work to a West Coast firm. Picketers said the driver of the vehicle was becoming abusive when forced to stop. He drove off at speed, leaving the woman, who had had her hands on the bonnet, sprawled unconscious on the ground. "He went right over the top of her," said a picketer.'

... 'A jury in the High Court at Christchurch has found a pleasure-boat importer guilty of the manslaughter of Lyttelton picketer Christine Clarke, a 45-year-old mother of two, after deliberating for almost 12 hours. The importer's counsel had argued that the Port of Lyttelton picket was illegal, and that he drove off after being illegally detained and attacked by picketers. The Crown said the importer could have retreated by reversing his 1.8-tonne Land Cruiser. It said the fact that the picket was illegal was irrelevant, and the importer had driven forward out of impatience or anger, not as an act of self-defence.' In international news, m] **ercenaries were undergoing training in Dubai at a cost of \$A10 m... in preparation to break up union power on A[US]n docks, it was claimed yesterday. The A[US]n Opposition leader... said the first contingent of up to 70 men had been recruited through advertising in the defence force magazine *Army*... But the Opposition admitted it had no documentary evidence as to who was bankrolling the plan, while suggesting it could be private shipping companies with the approval of the Government. The Government has vowed to break the power of the Maritime Union of A[US] on the docks, with unions warning of war on the water-front if troops were brought in... The Labour Party's transport spokesman... said... [up] to 180 further people would be trained... [T]he men would be paid between \$A46,000 and \$60,000 per annum... "This is indeed a very sinister operation... this is a clandestine, covert operation of industrial mercenaries, effectively similar in concept to the**

problem... with Sandline in Papua New Guinea... They will be deployed as... a scab labour force... to attack the Maritime Union of A[US] and the members of that union," he said... The Workplace Relations Minister... strenuously denied any involvement in the plan. "It is quite frankly news to me..." he said.

...The... International Transport Federation... which represents 500 unions worldwide... forced the expulsion from Dubai of A[US]n soldiers being trained as potential water-front strikebreakers yesterday[, and] warned it would hound any other "scumbag" country that accepted the trainees[– who are being 'bankrolled by farmers organisations concerned about the effects of inefficient ports on their ability to compete with other exporting nations'.

...AUS]n dockworkers, fresh from an international victory... yesterday rejected Government attempts to modernise the waterfront... [Unions] refused to accept targets for crews to work more efficiently.

...The Columbia Star, a... freighter from N[Z], has been waiting to unload at Long Beach, California, since the middle of last week... Paralysis strangles this seaport and that of Los Angeles which adjoins it – the two largest American ports in terms of the dollar value of container cargo. The two ports are crippled by a combination of troubles which began with the inability of a giant railroad merger to meet the demand for haulage, and are exacerbated by a shortage of motor transport and port workers, a harbour pilots' strike, chaotic mixups of laden and empty shipping containers, and a booming increase in Pacific trade... expected to increase 28[%] for the year ending next June... The International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union in Southern California is training workers and adding 30 every day to cope with the overload... The Columbia Star, which arrived... with a cargo... meant for Los Angeles, has been diverted to Long Beach and is still standing off while waiting for dock space, probably tomorrow... according to the Maritime Exchange, which co-ordinates shipping for both harbours. Unloading the Columbia Star may take five or six days – a task usually requiring only 24 hours. If ship arrivals stopped completely, it would take five or six weeks to clear the port congestion, said[the] executive director of the Maritime Exchange... Blame for the shipping nightmare, which also affects other Pacific coast ports as well as wholesale and retail commerce across the western U[S], is concentrated on the Union Pacific Railroad. It recently took over the Southern Pacific and is struggling to integrate two major rail systems, with 56,000km of track. Ineptitude in the huge new systems' management is also being blamed for tying up the movement of grain in the Middle East[of the US], where corn and wheat are being piled up out of doors; in Texas where oil shipments are stalled, and in the Pacific north-west where timber and steel shipments are stalemated... The national Surface Transportation Board is said to be threatening measures to punish... Union Pacific.

...N[Z]'s maritime industry faces a staffing crisis... the Merchant Services Guild has warned. Officer cadetships have fallen from more than 50 annually a decade ago to just a handful today, leaving the industry with little alternative but to recruit from overseas – often from countries with inferior training standards, the union says... [Unfortunately, t]he problem was not confined to NZ... International Shipping Federation figures showed that in 1995 there were 409,000 qualified deck officers in the world – 18,000 short of the number needed... The[union's] secretary... said that the full effects of the shortage would not be felt for another five to 10 years, when half of the N[Z] officers and masters were due to retire. That would leave the country struggling not only to man ships but also to fill the myriad of shore jobs taken by officers who had retired from the sea. "In the next 10 years we are going to be short of stevedoring supervisors, compass adjusters, maritime surveyors, harbour pilots, tug masters, insurance assessors, maritime safety inspectors and so on." ...[Incidentally,] Port Nelson pilots will soon head to A[US] for training on a computer simulation of their own harbour. The simulation, being built by the A[US]n Maritime College at Launceston, Tasmania, from charts, soundings, weather and tidal information, will hone pilots' skills and test how well the harbour can take larger ships.

...Port Nelson Ltd plans to spend \$23.6 million on capital works over the next two years... in preparation for a predicted rise in cargo tonnage to 3 million tonnes a year between 2003 and 2008. The planned expenditure included a new \$4 million container crane, a new repair and layup berth, wharf upgrading and a cargo container tracking system... reclaiming more than 2ha of the harbour... and deepening areas of the harbour floor. Up to six ships at a time would be able to berth at the new facility.

...Investigations which started 20 years ago into a deep-water port at the entrance to the Whangarei Harbour have come to a head with the start of a hearing into the port application. About 80 members of the public attended the opening session of the four-week hearing yesterday in front of a panel of independent commissioners appointed by the consent authorities.

...[the] Northland Port Corporation chairman... wants the Government to pay more attention to the soaring costs businesses incur in complying with legislation and regulations... He cited the \$4 million plus costs of the hearings and public consultation process for a new deep water port at Marsden Pt when the port company sought consents under the Resource Management Act.

...Northland Port Corporation expects a decision in the next two weeks on its proposed deep-water port at Marsden Point... [The] proposal was subject to... approval from independent commissioners appointed by Northland Regional Council, Whangarei District Council and the D[OC].

...after years of planning and investigating... Northland Port Corporation said yesterday it had been given the green light for its \$76.5 million... deep-water port project... [which] will include a 32ha reclamation, stretching 500m into the harbour... The 2.8 million cu m of fill dredged from the adjacent seabed will create a 45ha ship-turning basin with a minimum 13m operating depth... needed to cope with an imminent upsurge in Northland's forest product exports...

Anglers are preparing to resist plans to dump Onehunga port dredgings off the Manukau Heads. The Ports of Auckland wants to dump 10,000 cu m of dredgings a year... in water depths of about 30m... 8km from the Awhitu Peninsula, which forms the south head of the Manukau Harbour. The company bid for A[RC] resource consents for the dumping will be discussed at a public meeting in Waiuku on Tuesday night. Company spokesmen can expect some close questioning from the Counties Sport Fishing Club, which has 500 members. The club president... said last night she felt any dumping should take place outside the 12-mile territorial limit instead of in part of the recreational fishing grounds. "The dump will be over a popular snapper fishing spot. Two marlin were also caught there last year,"... Dumping beyond the 12-mile limit was too costly... said... [t]he company's manager of port planning... [He added that] the life of the port depended on annual dredging of up to 10,000 cu m to cater for cement carriers, coastal container ships and the fishing trawler fleet... For decades port dredgings have been dumped in the Purakau Channel inside the Manukau Harbour. The channel, near Puketutu Island, also takes the discharges of treated waste from the Mangere sewage plant. Permits granted in 1991 for the company to use the channel expired last month.

...A plan to dump Onehunga port dredgings off the Manukau Heads will be given closer scrutiny by Ports of Auckland. This follows a complaint from Counties Sport Fishing Club members... The ports planning manager... said a further study would be made of marine life in the area to determine the impact of dredgings on the food supply of snapper... [He] also undertook to review a suggestion from anglers that an alternative dump site be found outside the 12-mile limit.

...[P]orts of Auckland is considering building an inland container port beside the main trunk railway line in Hamilton. The Mayor of Hamilton says he and Ports of Auckland's chief executive have been discussing the proposal for nine months. A port industry source says it would make sense to have Hamilton as a loading and unloading point for the Ports of Auckland's recently announced \$5 million plan to extend its container catchment area in the North Island by running its own rail freight service between Auckland and Palmerston North. Plans for an inland port at Hamilton also appear to have been hatched to take back some dairy and meat export business lost to the Port of Tauranga in recent years. Last week Port of Tauranga took the Far East service of major shipping line Fesco off Auckland. Tauranga was able to cater for the extra business by the development of its own inland Metroport container

distribution hub in South Auckland. Tauranga and Auckland were both the same distance from Hamilton but all the dairy factories in the Waikato, except Te Rapa, were closer to Tauranga. Dairy export volumes passing through Tauranga have risen to 550,000 tonnes from 370,000 tonnes two years ago.'

... 'Tauranga Harbour is one of the best kept secrets in the Bay of Plenty and many areas are left unexplored by the locals. THE CENTRE of attention is the Mount at the entrance to Tauranga Harbour and the Port of Tauranga, NZ's largest export port. Shipping movements can take place at any time, day or night, so the channels leading to the main wharves must be kept clear. Tauranga has a lot more to offer however with a harbour that covers 200 sq km and is 24 km between the Katikati entrance at Bowentown and the larger entrance at Mount Maunganui. Approximately 290,000,000 tonnes of water flow through the entrances for each tidal change. This flow generates currents up to 7 knots within the entrance channels.'

...Financial uncertainty in South-east Asia is disrupting log shipments out of Tauranga... Challenge Forests, said a couple of log orders for South Korea had been cancelled because of an inability of the customer to get a letter of credit through the banking system... [By the way, t]he sale of property worth \$2.95 million boosted the Port of Napier's after-tax profit to \$6.73 million for the year...

For the financial year ended June 1997... Ports of Auckland... container volume... totalled 464,056 boxes... up from 405,092 boxes in 1996 and 380,964 boxes in 1995. Ports of Auckland already has 50[% of NZ]'s container market... [Despite the growth, its net] after-tax profit for the year... [was down 33%] compared with the previous period... [However, the] profit decline is mainly due to a number of one-off property sales which boosted its bottom line with extraordinary gains in 1996.

...Northland Port's after-tax profit... for the year... fell 16.6[%] to \$7.12 million... The profit included an abnormal gain of \$854,000 from the sale of a site near Auckland's Viaduct Basin, which realised extra value added by the upcoming America's Cup. Revenue for the year totalled \$66.56 million, against \$70.75 million last year... The chairman... warned of slower export demand and more intense international competition in the light of Asia's economic turmoil... The company... paid... a... dividend of... 8.25c, the same as last year.

...Port of Timaru announced a record \$2.8m loss and said no dividend would be paid this year to its shareholders, the Timaru District Council and listed investor *South Eastern Utilities*.

...N[Z] has 12 ports and in the first half of the year offshore cargoes fell at seven of them. Volume was about flat so... that fall in tonnage was being picked up by other ports. But as[the] outgoing Port of Wellington managing director... said last week, ports have limited ability to influence the direction that cargoes take. Port costs, he said, were small compared with the cost of moving the freight inland, so road and rail pricing was proportionately a greater determinant of where freight was landed or shipped from. Even when ports were able to increase volumes, margins were under real pressure. Port of Wellington, for instance, last month reported a 6[%] slide in annual profit to \$5 million, despite a 2.9[%] increase in cargo tonnage to 7.46 million. Ship arrivals were up 4.5[%] at 4969, although container vessels visits were down... Margin pressure might be good news for exporters and importers, but a "destructive" level of competition... among shippers is putting a real squeeze on some ports – ports that are predominantly rate-payer owned. And when ports start losing money, as Timaru did this year, that comes off the shareholder's value. The warnings are not new and councils have enjoyed good returns from the port stakes they inherited in the 1988 local government reform. In 1993 Waikato councils sold their stakes in the ports of Auckland and Tauranga and since then have been using the \$66 million fund created to offset rates. In the past year, several councils have enjoyed multi-million dollar capital returns as ports re-gearred their balance sheets, with Hawkes Bay Regional Council due in December to distribute about \$13.5 million among its ratepayers. But as high-value container traffic has been inevitably sucked toward N[Z]'s hub ports at Auckland and Lyttelton, and more North Island bulk cargo has headed to Tauranga for shipping, the warnings have become more strident. Even Lyttelton, which reported a 17.4[%] rise in post-tax profit this year, warned of the risks. In May, [its] outgoing chairman... asked how Christchurch City Council could justify keeping its 65[%] stake... when Solid Energy was... building a... 2.2km jetty on the West Coast for coal it now ships through the port. "Strategically and financially the council is not acting prudently," he said. [The] Ports of Auckland chairman... believes fundamental rationalisation – mergers and acquisitions – will begin among the ports within the next two years. But he is concerned at the value loss that may be incurred in the meantime as parochial shareholders continue investing to retain business. "There is already surplus capacity within the ports but people, in order to try and be more competitive, are still spending money and further increasing the surplus capacity,"... [With] the increase in coastal shipping, some ports have a future that they did not before. But he believes only a few have good prospects for growth, and that there is an urgent need for ports generally to decide what business they are in.

...Southland Regional Council will next week consider selling between 18[%] and all of its \$35 million shareholding in Bluff port operator South Port.

...privatisation of Ports of Auckland Ltd has been thrust back on to the political agenda by last week's roller-coaster ride on the sharemarket... [T]he chairman of the Auckland Regional Services Trust which has a \$700 million ports stake, said last night from Brisbane: "I believe we must sell some of the shares." The[ARST] chief executive... says... that the sharemarket volatility threatened the value of the trust's 80[%] stake... \$120 million was wiped off the value of the trust's ports investment when comparing the shares' highest price, \$7.55, with last week's low of \$6.41 on Tuesday. But by Thursday evening they had bounced back to \$6.80, representing a \$42 million recovery. [The chief executive] says it is financially unwise to carry that form of exposure without a clear strategy for managing and minimising the risk... The issue of the sale of the trust's ports share has been dormant since 1992, when the then owner of the stake, the [ARC], narrowly voted against privatisation... [The ARST chairman], who at election time flagged the possible sale of some shares, said last night: "Regardless of what might have been in [the Citizens and Ratepayers Association 1995 election] manifesto, we have to take a sensible business attitude because we are stewards of public funds." He said that if the trust decided to sell some or all of its ports shares it was required to consult the public. An Alliance list MP... said... "Some Gucci-wearing jerk in Hong Kong has a bad day and suddenly we're looking at selling our flaming port." As a radio talkback host in 1991-92, she stirred up a successful public campaign... against selling the ports. But in 1993, the Waikato Regional Council floated its 20[%] stake on the stock exchange at \$1.60 a share.

...The [ARST] has been promised "war" if it tries to privatise... Ports of Auckland Ltd. The warning shot was fired yesterday by a trust member... after the chief executive... raised the possibility... "I'm sick of this push, push, push to sell the ports. That's not his job," [the member] said. "He is not there to promote policy. He is there to give advice." ...[the] Alliance deputy leader... [also] warned in a statement that the trust would have a serious fight on its hands if it tried to sell... "The public of N[Z] paid for the development of this valuable asset and it is the public that should reap the rewards of keeping it rather than private business." ...The... trust received dividends of \$41.3 million from the ports company last month, boosting the trust's total cash holdings to about \$89 million... The executive director of... [a sharebroking company said the] ports company was a "gem" of an investment and many investors, locally and internationally, wanted a piece.

...The Mayor of Manukau... last night vowed to fight Ports of Auckland for the ownership of two popular South Auckland marinas. [The mayor] was reacting to a High Court ruling which favoured returning ownership of the Half Moon Bay and Bucklands Beach marinas to the port company. It overturned an earlier decision by the Minister of Transport... who said the facilities were not part of the former Auckland Harbour Board assets approved for transfer to the port company in 1988... The marinas were valued at \$2.2 million on a peppercorn rental basis when they were bought by Ports of Auckland in October 1988, but are now worth considerably more. They were set to be vested in Manukau City with no apparent compensation to the port company, had the minister's decision been allowed to stand... The minister's decision and the way he exercised his discretion was wrong in law, the judge said.

...Auckland's "poor" boaties are nervous about plans by the new owners of the Okahu Bay hard stand to improve it with... \$250,000... [of] landscaping and better facilities. The Auckland City Council has taken over ownership and management of the 3.2ha reclamation from Ports of

Auckland. The land is home to the Royal Akarana Yacht Club, several boating clubs and a kayak hire business. It also provides an area where boats can haul out their vessels for maintenance, and a boat ramp and car park... The... chairman of the Okahu Maritime Park Group... said... Okahu was the only public place... [for “poor” boats in] an era where expensive marinas were taking over harbours]. By the way, a ‘storm has destroyed Lyttelton’s half-finished marina, sinking 27 boats’...

‘The pockets of Aucklanders who do business or have facilities occupying the coast and sea are set to be hit – if ARC plans for a coastal occupation tax get the go-ahead. Marinas, private jetties, wharves, boat ramps, moorings, and marine farms are all possible targets, in a move the ARC’s environment committee says has been a council option since the beginning of the year. ■’] The threat of huge legal bills has forced... [the abandonment of] a legal challenge against Ports of Auckland’s \$100 million plan to extend the Fergusson container terminal. The... lawyer acting for the... Auckland Yacht and Boating Association[, which] joined... other objectors... [because] the extension would make the Devonport side of the Waitemata Harbour congested... said... [along] with the estimated \$100,000 cost of taking the appeal, Ports of Auckland would be able to seek costs if the appeal failed. While shared among the [7] appellants, these could come to half a million dollars. Ports of Auckland had never said it wo[n]’t try to seek such costs.

...Plans to erect a large tower crane over the Devonport naval base are likely to be opposed by residents wanting the military bound by tighter land designations. The Navy wants to replace four aged cranes with a \$2.58 million permanent tower structure rising 45m above its dry dock. This will be higher than the Calliope Rd ridge running behind the base’s south yard, and the crane will have a 50m horizontal jib. The Navy says it needs this to lift modular components from the new Anzac frigates, especially as the older cranes have had their load capacities downgraded... The Navy’s head of fleet support... said it recognised any crane of such height would have an impact on the views of Devonport residents and harbour users alike. But he said a consultants’ visual assessment report noted that, as part of an operational dockyard scene, the crane would be “in keeping in general terms with the appearance of this type of industrial area.” The consultants went further, however, in saying a large horizontal jib held high in the sky was of a shape not seen before in the dockyard and was more commonly associated with temporary construction sites. “The impacts therefore on the residential neighbourhood of the dockyard when perceived will be significant,” they say... Its jib and upper tower would appear above house roofs to become visible along the length of William Bond St, which now saw nothing of the dockyard.

...Balloons are about to go up over the site of a giant tower crane at the Devonport naval base, but it may not be party time for all the neighbours. The Navy has agreed to fly the balloons on Saturday and Sunday to give nearby residents a graphic measure of a 45m-high crane that it intends erecting as a permanent feature of its dry dock. This follows disagreement by residents at a community board meeting over the Navy’s prediction of just how visible the crane will be from neighbouring streets... [The situation wasn’t helped by February’s announcement that r]adio emissions from the Navy’s communications station at Devonport exceeded safety standards inside a neighbouring childcare centre – but test results were kept secret for two years... Navy staff admitted the cover-up... after inquiries by the N[Z] Herald. They said things would be done differently if radiation levels again exceeded maximum limits, but insisted staff and children at the creche were never in danger... The North Shore City Council says it should have been notified of the radiation levels in 1995. Instead, Navy staff shut down two of the station’s six aerials, took new recordings and sent those results to the council indicating all was well... Compliance with the standard was a condition by the council when it issued resource consent for the... station in 1993. The childcare centre is on Defence land and can take up to 50 children. The aerials, two of which are less than 10m away, are used for communicating with Navy ships. Radiation levels... more than double[d the NZ] standard... for up to six months, possibly longer.

...A high radio transmitter radiation reading near a Devonport childcare centre in 1995 was the fault of incorrect testing methods, the Navy has told the North Shore City Council... Navy representatives... [said] that the high reading was the result of measuring the radiation from the Navy side of the fence, rather than the childcare centre side. Some of the radiation was reflected back and magnified because of the fence... The explanation for the high reading was given to the council’s regulatory committee... The council asked for annual readings, but... the Navy declined the request because it was a huge inconvenience and expense... The Navy’s head of fleet support... said someone made a mistake... in 1995... and the incident was a storm in a teacup... [The Navy has largely diffused the radiation issue, but t]he 45m crane planned for Devonport naval base may have to shrink 14m if North Shore City Council planners have their way – making it too short to work on Anzac frigates... Council planners have recommended a shorter crane or a single luffing jib crane with a maximum height of 53m above the dock, which is considered less intrusive than the construction-style tower... The Navy and Devonport Community Board would not comment yesterday, preferring to wait until a recommendation was made to the council after next Monday’s board meeting. The Minister of Defence will then respond to the council’s recommendation, receive advice from the Navy and decide, which the council may appeal in the Environment Court.

...The Coromandel ferry service is again in the midst of a storm even though its boat is still in dry dock in Auckland. The 17m ferry... under repair at the Devonport dockyard after a grounding... has been refused permission to land at wharves in the Coromandel harbour. The order has been made by the Coromandel-Colville Community Board, which after a year of negotiation has been unable to reach agreement with the ferry operators over landing charges. The ferry skipper... said he would be willing to accept the same \$800 annual fee charged similar-sized vessels, usually fishing boats, for landing at the Coromandel wharf and the Hannaford Point jetty. The board and the Thames Coromandel District Council wanted to charge \$2500 but had failed to justify the amount, he said. “Why should it cost less for dead fish than live people?” The community board chairwoman... said the fee had been calculated at a rate of 15c a passenger and based on patronage estimated by a former ferry company director... The... [ferry] seats 59 and is licenced to carry 70 passengers...

A compromise over wharf user charges was reached yesterday in a bid to end a long-running dispute between Hauraki Gulf commuters and ferry operators. The wrangle centres on maintenance fees which are levied from passengers using the Auckland City Council-owned wharves on Waiheke, Great Barrier and Rakino Islands. More than \$500,000 in fees is levied each year. It is sourced largely from ferry services operating out of Waiheke... Two... operators... say the passenger-levy system is unfair and gives fishing boats and other users a free ride. They want to see vessels charged berthage fees for each visit instead. But other operators and island residents want to stay with the status quo. They fear that high berthage fees could deter new businesses and allow a monopoly which could lead to price rises... [In related news, t]he company operating the trouble-plagued ferry between Coromandel and Auckland has been placed into receivership... The... ferry bought for \$430,000 about 18 months ago is up for sale.

...A new ferry service to Pakatoa Island has been launched by the owner of the resort... The 18m catamaran, which carries 130 passengers, will make day trips to the Hauraki Gulf island. [The owner] is discussing with other tourism operators a plan to offer a “loop” between Auckland, Pakatoa and the Coromandel Peninsula.

...A GOOD way to avoid the traffic jams in Paris is to see the sights by boat. The hop-on hop-off services link the main attractions of Notre Dame, the Louvre, the Eiffel Tower and Musee d’Orsay. Three boats cruise the route between 10 am and 7 pm and a daily pass costs \$13. [In local news, Auckland’s Yellow Bus Co has been ‘sold to Stagecoach for \$110 million.’

...‘Auckland bus and ferry passengers will enter the world of seamless travel on Sunday, when they will be able to transfer between services on one ticket. Stagecoach yesterday announced the introduction of integrated ticketing from Sunday, ending years of frustrating delays for commuters who have had to buy new tickets for different journeys. Public transport users and politicians have long complained about the lack of co-ordination between different bus and ferry operators. Now, passengers buying a \$99 monthly Gopass can use it on all Stagecoach Auckland services. A \$7 day pass, Aucklandpass, will also be able to be used on buses and ferries. The services involved include the Link bus and routes operated by Whenuapai Buses and Cityline. The alignment of fares and passes is a result of Stagecoach buying the Yellow Bus Company last month, then a week later buying 51% of ferry company

Fullers.' A family (2 adults plus up to 4 children) Aucklandpass costs \$14. Also available is a 'single-person "Rover" pass, which allows 3 consecutive days of travel for \$17.'

...Fullers has shut down non-public holiday sailings to Great Barrier Island' because the three hour service – which sometimes carries no passengers – is unprofitable. The decision has dismayed islanders, especially those whose children go to school in Auckland and return to the island at the weekend.]

...Key decisions surrounding the purchase of a new Hokianga Harbour ferry will be reconsidered following an allegation that a Far North District councillor had a financial interest in the matter... [Meanwhile, a different] ferry operator has been granted a subsidy for a struggling commuter service between Gulf Harbour on the Whangaparaoa Peninsula and downtown Auckland. The transport committee of the [ARC] yesterday approved the subsidy for Gulf Harbour Ferries Ltd which amounts to \$125,000 over 12 months. But the... subsidy came with a condition it was for a six-month trial and that should it continue, the operator must reach a target number of commuter passengers within two years... [The] target was confidential but it is understood... to be about double the present number – 40 to 45 passengers a day. More than 28,000 now live on the peninsula and the number is expected to increase to 45,000 in 15 years. Since the commuter service began in 1995 it has received a subsidy from the developer of an expensive marina, housing and golf course complex... Gulf Harbour Investments Ltd... [Its] general manager... said yesterday the company would stop its subsidy but would consider subsidising a weekend service.

...Some North Shore commuters will have up to 25 minutes slashed off trips to downtown Auckland with bus and ferry services which began yesterday... Link feeder buses will take Chatswood and Highbury residents to the Birkenhead ferry, and those in Milford and Takapuna to Bayswater. The ferries will connect with the inner-city Link buses. The Bayswater service is the area's first passenger ferry service since the construction of the harbour bridge, while Birkenhead has had only a morning and evening service. The ferries and feeder bus services operate during the week – every 30 minutes at peak times, then hourly until 9pm and 11pm on Fridays. Bus and ferry operators said they were encouraged by the first day's patronage... The Bayswater ferry carried about 10 people each trip and the feeder bus about six. The Link service... received a \$650,000 subsidy from the Auckland Regional Council kitty... It will get the same sum this financial year... North Shore politicians say additional Waitemata Harbour commuter ferries could be used to relieve Auckland Harbour Bridge congestion... A push for... [further] funding from the [ARC for] ferry services from the East Coast Bays and Takapuna to the downtown wharves is under way.

...The Bayswater wharf is now legally owned by the North Shore City Council following an amicable out-of-court settlement with the Auckland port company. The transfer comes as the wharf handles increasing numbers of ferry commuters crossing the Waitemata Harbour[, indicating]... its significance and benefits to Shore commuters... Ownership of the wharf and an adjacent piece of land had been unclear since the abolition of the Auckland Harbour Board in 1989, when the Ports of Auckland Ltd bought the board's assets worth \$250 million... The chief executive of Ports of Auckland... said yesterday that the ownership of the wharf land had presented a "small but complex" legal problem that was left over from local government restructuring... However, the council believed the wharf was part of "non-profit" properties transferred into its hands instead of being bought by the port company... Part of the settlement involves the port company transferring the land to the council but retaining some of its rental income... The managing director of Fullers... said his company had spent \$100,000 modifying the Bayswater wharf for ferry berthing and was completing canopies on the gang plank and pontoons. He said that in the first month of the 20-trips-a-day service about 300 people a day had taken the ferry from Bayswater, which was a third better than company projections. Use of the bus feeder service was about 40[%] more than expected.

...LAST week we looked at the possibility of saving money by buying a hull and deck package and building the rest of the launch yourself. This week's boat may appeal to... hunters with fatter cheque books. Bayswater Marine Ltd, which has just taken up the[Australasian] franchise for... luxurious... American Hatteras launches, has a 20m "convertible" which... is for sale at what[the] director says is a bargain price of \$3 million. The [latest] model, not yet released in America, will be priced at \$4.5 million, he says... The [old model]... has... the interior to provide four "staterooms" to sleep eight people, with three bathrooms... five refrigerators, including a massive mirror-fronted model with ice-maker in the saloon, a microwave oven, dishwasher and waste compactor in the gallery, three freezers, a laundry with washer and dryer and two electricity generators.

...When... [they] gained the agency... the couple thought they might sell one... luxury motor yacht... a year in little old N[Z]. Instead they sold five... The price of th[e agency's] Rolls-Royce-on-water is something only millionaires can say out loud without squeaking. In other words, it's not for ordinary mortals to speak of.

...CUSTOMS has stepped outside the square of civil service conformity with the appointment in Northland of its first two community customs officers. In the Far North – where cruising yachties once had to tie up and wait for an officer to drive from Whangarei or Auckland – a Kerikeri-based inspector is now available 24 hours a day. Around 90[%] of the cruising yachts visiting N[Z] make their landfall in the Bay of Islands... [The] Customs manager for border services in the northern region... said the new approach arose after an extensive survey of client needs in Northland. "For a long time Customs has had district offices in the regions which were essentially clones of the main centres... Our officers were working to traditional public service conditions. It was Monday to Friday, eight to five, and when we wanted to provide a service outside those hours there were expensive penal rates to pay. But yachts arrive at all hours."

...Information technology and isolation are N[Z]'s best defence against smugglers, says the head of intelligence for British Customs. After a week here comparing notes with his counterparts, [he said NZ] Customs' two-year, \$22 million computer systems upgrade had given it a leading edge. But geography was also an important factor... "We don't have that luxury, because if you think in terms of Europe then the furthest flight would be about four hours. Most of them are about an hour..." [(It takes about 3 hours for a 747 to cross the Tasman.)]... Intelligence-based risk management is the best way to detect smugglers in a country where 1000 trucks come through Dover alone every day. "You can't deal with 1000 trucks a day in a traditional way. You need to develop information about the ones that you should be looking at. If we started searching every passenger coming through Heathrow, it wouldn't take an hour before the entire airport would grind to a halt." ...[he] is responsible for 1300 customs intelligence officers, which includes liaison staff in 40 countries. N[Z] is not one of them... Although there is a huge difference in the scale of the problems confronting the border authorities of the two countries, the solutions are similar. Throughout the world, customs organisations are turning to information gathering to maintain security on more limited budgets. "Everywhere you go these days you get the same sort of pattern to some extent – resources are being constrained and people are being invited to do more." ...Unlike the N[Z] service, British Customs had the added responsibility of administering and collecting VAT... which accounted for half of the department's 23,000 staff. Revenue collected for the Government totalled... about \$[NZ]227 billion... a year... Unfortunately, it is almost impossible to gauge the success of the new border protection. No one knows how much contraband gets through.

...An Auckland firm has won an \$800,000 contract to build a high-speed, long-range Customs boat for frontline duty against seaborne smugglers... The... new launch would enhance the service's ability to prevent smuggling... [by replacing] the converted 11.5m pleasure boat Hawk III, which the service has used for the past 11 years... Customs' northern inspections manager... said the Hawk III had notched up... 65,000 nautical miles patrolling N[Z]'s vulnerable northern coastline. A larger boat was needed to carry out long-range patrols in bad seas and weather...

Anxious police planners may have succeeded in convincing their bosses that a fleet of patrol boats in Auckland is vital. The police have awarded a contract to a Henderson boat-building company to build a prototype, 12m patrol craft as a forerunner to the fleet... [The] specially designed rigid-hull inflatable boat – dubbed "Interceptor" – ...is expected to undergo sea trials ...[ext] April... The... design allows[it] to be easily manoeuvred alongside other boats for simple boarding action. The craft would provide large stable platforms in seas up to 4m... Police strategists believe they need 11 such patrol boats... [Each] would have a crew of four police officers; some staff had already begun special training for their new duties...

Neither police administrators nor boat-builders are divulging the contract price, but it is believed the budget for the Interceptor fleet could exceed \$1.5 million... [The boat-building company already has an order] for five 10.5m aluminium boats... worth \$1 million... for the South Korean maritime police[, and the company's]... general manager... hoped the[South Korean] deal would lead to a further order for 95 boats.

...As the hot, sunny weather drew... Auckland boaties... out of hibernation, the National Coastguard Federation also took to the Hauraki Gulf waters. It was launching a new \$35,000 rescue boat for Waiheke Island... At the launch, the federation president... said coastguard units around N[Z] constantly struggled to stay afloat financially... Half of the money for Waiheke's inflatable craft had come from a lottery grant and the rest had been raised locally... Earlier, four of the region's rescue units had united to form the Hauraki Gulf Coastguard Alliance... [The federation president] urged Waiheke businesses to donate money towards a headquarters for the alliance. Waiheke Sea Rescue, with 18 volunteers, attended 47 callouts in the past year, saving boats worth a total of \$873,000.

...Italian fishermen joined police and the coast guard yesterday to rescue hundreds of Kurds from Turkey and Iraq stranded on a ship that ran aground in rough seas... The Turkish-registered ship... was carrying some 750 illegal immigrants when it grounded 300m off the coast of Calabria... before dawn. All were brought ashore during the day by rescuers in motor boats after the coast guard sounded the alarm at first light. Hospital officials in the nearby town of Soverato said many of the children were sick, mostly suffering bronchial problems, and one woman was ready to give birth. The woman told reporters that... most families had paid about \$US7000... for the trip... Albanians and Tunisians were intercepted in separate incidents at the weekend. They were among the thousands who arrived in Italy each year, hoping to use it as an entry point into the European Union and then move north in search of work. The Italian Government has been urged by its E[U] neighbours to tighten border checks. Italian coastal and police authorities... have stepped up the fight against illegal immigration, and a tougher law to allow immediate repatriation is being debated in parliament. Despite the effort, the coast guard faces an almost impossible task in monitoring the coast and its thousands of isolated coves and beaches, especially during the night.

...A fishing vessel bound for N[Z] with 39 Chinese boat-people on board has disappeared near New Caledonia. The 27m boat... and its cargo of asylum-seekers has not been seen since late on Friday, when it was spotted by a French military aircraft monitoring its progress towards the island. The... boat was expected to arrive at New Caledonia later this week to refuel and take on provisions before continuing its unscheduled voyage... The boat is believed to have been at sea for a month after Indonesian authorities refused to let it land, despite claims by the refugees that they were heading for N[Z]. They... were assisted through the Torres Strait by the A[US]n Navy and were last reported to be 200 nautical miles north of New Caledonia. Under international law, New Caledonia can replenish the boat's supplies but is not obliged to accept the refugees unless they claim asylum... N[Z] authorities estimated it would take at least a week to reach this country after leaving New Caledonia... Possible contingency plans included using Air Force maritime surveillance aircraft to follow the refugees' progress as they neared N[Z] and having a Navy ship escort them into Auckland... If successful, the party would be the first boat-people to complete the voyage and could encourage further attempts by seagoing asylum-seekers. A Ministry of Foreign Affairs source said five boatloads of refugees had named N[Z] as their destination in the past two years. "The other four boats never made it."

...[the] Chinese refugees... appear to have ended their voyage in New Caledonia... A reporter for the Noumea-based *Les Nouvelles* newspaper... said... "First of all the refugees wanted to go to N[Z], but now they are in New Caledonia they don't want to continue their travels." ...They have yet to formally claim asylum. The N[Z] Consul-General in Noumea... said the 32 men and seven women disembarked from the wooden fishing boat... yesterday and were taken by French authorities to a disused hostel in the capital. [The authorities]... are expected to spend about five more days checking the identities of the refugees... most of whom carried no identification papers... After leaving Hainan in southern China they spent 54 days at sea before landing... in northern New Caledonia last Wednesday... [The] refugees were kept under quarantine on board the crippled... *Pek Hai*... for six days before being taken by road to Noumea yesterday. They were given food by humanitarian aid groups and the local Chinese community. The *Pek Hai*, which has a broken engine, is anchored offshore awaiting a thorough search.

...French authorities suspect an illegal immigration ring is shipping Chinese refugees to New Caledonia after the arrival of a second... wooden fishing boat carrying 71... asylum-seekers in Noumea... Some of the occupants of the two boats were believed to be related... [The] first boatload... had allegedly cited China's economic regime and stringent birth controls as their reasons for making the hazardous two-month journey.

...[A shipload of 102 Chinese boat people who may be just days away from landing in NZ forced Parliament into urgency last night to debate new powers of mass, indefinite detention. Faced with the arrival of the vessel *Alexandra II* this Sunday, the Government rushed forward changes to the Immigration Act.]

...a Royal NZ 'Air Force Orion may begin sweeping seas south of the Solomon Islands from Saturday as the Immigration Service monitors the *Alexandra II*. Parliament passed emergency legislation bringing forward the implementation of tougher regulations to deal with this possible influx of more than 100 "economic refugees". Under the new law they can be held indefinitely until deported by aircraft back to China, which is required to accept the return of its nationals. Until now, the detention period has been limited to 28 days. There was still no indication last night that the *Alexandra II* is heading for NZ or whether its real destination is AUS. It is understood that intelligence sources have detected another 2 vessels which could be heading for either AUS, NZ or New Caledonia. Most of the would-be refugees are fleeing China in search of a better standard of living rather than for political reasons. They are lured into paying high fees to local migrant traffickers for a place on a boat in return for the empty promise of jobs in AUS. The *Alexandra II*, which had run out of fresh water, arrived in Honiara, the Solomons capital, last Saturday after three weeks at sea. The local authorities immediately ordered the ship to leave.'

... 'This week, as the ship *Alexandra II* and its cargo of 102 Chinese boat people left the Solomons reportedly for NZ', 'two Indonesian fishing boats were intercepted at the remote Ashmore Reef, Western AUS. The 86 desperate people on board were the latest of nine boats and 225 illegal immigrants who have tried to sneak into AUS from the barren islands of the reef this year. Several days earlier, another Indonesian boat had landed 12 further "illegals" on the razor-sharp limestone escarpments of Christmas Island. Earlier this month, a guest at the Kooljaman Resort at Cape Leveque, a speck on the West AUSn coastline 2500km north of Perth, saw a boat unloading illegals when he rose early to photograph the dawn. In April, a rusting tugboat rammed ashore in northern NSW. More than 50 Chinese fled for the bush and the coastal highway to Sydney, many donning suits as they ran. No one knows if, or how many, others might have slipped ashore elsewhere. In China, officials announced a sweep against the "snakeheads" now sending hundreds of men and women to sea in rusting ships for the dangerous voyage to a country that will, almost without exception, arrest and return them immediately. But the boats keep coming, mainly from southern China and the neighbouring region, but even as far away as the Middle East and Somalia. Others with more money to spend are flying in with forged travel documents provided by organised crime groups in a new wave of illegal migration that has trebled to more than 1500 illegals a year in the past four years. It is, according to the International Organisation for Migration, a small but growing part of a worldwide traffic in illegal migrants that deals in four million people a year for an annual global turnover of \$US7 billion. AUS, with its sparsely populated coastline of 37,000km, has been learning rapidly as a ballooning army of illegals land in remote, waterless and dangerous parts of the country infested with crocodiles, deadly snakes and spiders, or in country towns, even moving down the east coast as far as Sydney. Between 1989 and 1994 about 780 illegals landed in AUS: 48% were allowed to stay overall, rising to more than 70% for three of those years. But in 1994 the number leapt alarmingly to 977. AUS's tolerance waned as the numbers mounted, economic distress overtook political persecution as the catalyst and trafficking became more apparent. The proportion of illegals allowed to stay fell to between 2 and 13%. This year AUSn concern has deepened further. Already, more than 680 illegals have been caught, more than three times the 200 found last year. There are fears that others might have slipped through an inadequate net of part-time Air Force, Navy and Coastwatch patrols.'

...while 'AUS was ejecting the Chinese boat people who had arrived in the country aboard the Alexandra II', on the other side of the world 'the corpses of 54 men and four women, thought to be Chinese asylum-seekers, were found crammed into the back of a refrigerated truck. It was not clear how the victims of Britain's biggest illegal immigration tragedy had died, though suffocation or hypothermia seemed the most likely cause. The driver of the Dutch-registered vehicle was arrested and two survivors taken to hospital. The lorry left the Belgian port of Zeebrugge on Sunday evening and was searched by customs officials a few hours later at Dover. Its journey has been traced back to Rotterdam and police across Europe are coordinating their investigation. British police say they were stunned by the scale of their overnight discovery. "The numbers speak for themselves. The scale of the find is something that officials here have not found previously and it has had a huge and very distressing impact on anyone who has been involved in it." "This is a most terrible event. I am appalled by this loss of human life. Our thoughts are with the relatives of those who perished," said the British Home Secretary. The British Government introduced fines earlier this year for people who try to smuggle illegal immigrants into the country. "The Government is determined to continue to crack down on the evil trade in such trafficking, whose perpetrators have no regard for human life."

... 'Chinese gangsters are believed to be behind the botched ride to hope that ended in death for 58 illegal immigrants on a packed tomato truck. British police are concerned about the safety of the two men who survived and have placed them under armed guard. The two hold the key to what happened, and the police are taking no chances that triad-style gangsters may try to stop them blowing the whistle on human smuggling scams. Early indications are that the victims died a slow and agonising death through suffocation on board the sealed 18m truck. The truck's cooling system was switched off, turning it into an oven in sweltering summer temperatures of up to 32 degrees. The *Daily Mail* newspaper said the two survivors had told an interpreter some of the victims screamed desperately for rescue as they tore at the hot metal walls of the truck. The possibility of a Chinese gangster link was fuelled when a British lawyer told BBC Television's *Newsnight* that he had been approached by people who said they had relatives on the truck. "They have spoken with us and we know they are in great fear," he added. Police experts said smugglers called Snakeheads were behind the hugely profitable traffic in illegal immigrants from China. Charging migrants £15,000 a head, they "traded in human misery," a spokeswoman for the National Criminal Intelligence Service said. At a summit in the Portuguese town of Santa Maria da Feira, EU leaders expressed shock at the deaths, and pledged to step up the fight against the traffic in illegal immigrants and adopt severe reprisals against smugglers. Individual asylum-seekers have died on journeys to Britain, often after jumping from trains to avoid detection. The average wage in Britain is nearly seven times what is on offer in China and acts as a powerful magnet for illegal immigrants. About 400 Chinese a month seek asylum in Britain, anxious to join the 200,000-strong Chinese community. Each day in London's busy Chinese quarter, groups of them stand around clutching mobile phones, waiting for calls about work. "I do not know why they come to England. It is really difficult to earn anything here," said one Chinese newsagent. "They have to work long hours in restaurants or supermarkets and every week must pay back some of the money they borrowed to get here. But most days they stand around doing nothing."

... 'For many Chinese who make the 9700km overland journey to Britain, the dream of a comfortable life in the West is short-lived. British detectives have investigated a series of cases in which migrants have been kidnapped by the Snakeheads until their families in China make a ransom payment in addition to the trafficking fee. One hostage only escaped by jumping out a second-floor window in a South London flat. He was found in a disoriented state by local police and reported he had been one of five hostages in the flat. Another man discovered by London police had been manacled for 22 months, treated like a slave and had his finger slashed to the bone with a machete when he refused to rape a female hostage. Those who have been helped to find work often find themselves paid £150-a-week for long hours in the Chinese food industry, with the bulk of their earnings sent home to pay the money-lenders. Most dread the prospect of being deported. A London-based lawyer said that deportees and their families would probably commit suicide in the face of insurmountable debts and fear of retribution from Snakeheads. "There is no way back, it would take them 200 years to pay off their debts in China." Senior immigration officials are concerned that although 95% of asylum claims from mainland China are rejected, very few are returned because they have deliberately destroyed identification documents, without which the Chinese Government will not accept them as citizens. Among Dover residents this week, sadness of the deaths was limited. Many feel besieged by the influx of illegal immigrants and asylum seekers. One driver, who asked not to be named, said: "Good riddance. It's 58 less for us to support. We're sick of it." The driver of the truck in which they were found dead was charged with manslaughter yesterday.'

... 'The Dover tragedy is the worst of its kind in modern British history but joins a growing list of mass fatalities linked to organised illegal immigration in other parts of Europe. At least 490 people have died from drowning, suffocation or road accidents in the past year alone, according to an unofficial toll compiled from news reports. At least 165 Asians are believed to have been lost on a Greek ship which sank in the Mediterranean in 1996 en route to Europe from Alexandria. A series of tragedies off the Adriatic coast of Italy have led to the deaths of around 200 Kosovars and Albanians after light craft used by smugglers have capsized or collided with police boats. And in a similar incident to this week's horror, 18 Sri Lankans died from suffocation in a lorry in Hungary in temperatures of 33 deg in 1995. According to the International Organisation of Migration, flows of illegal migrants to western Europe have run at between 300,000 and half a million per year since the collapse of the Eastern Bloc in the early 1990s. How many of them are genuine asylum seekers rather than economic migrants seeking a better life is impossible to know. But the influx has strained traditional tolerance, as well as welfare budgets to house asylum seekers. Germany has a million asylum seekers. In Britain, 71,000 people filed for asylum last year, double the figure of the previous year, and 100,000 more cases are still being handled. In France, there were 30,000 new asylum seekers, up from 22,000 a year before. The suffocations this week are likely to act as a powerful spur on the EU to beef up co-operation among national police forces and forge a single policy on immigration.'

... 'For generations, the path for anyone with more ambition than money in China's southeast has been clear: work abroad. Those who do not return send money, vaulting families up the social ladder. Foreign earnings buy land, build houses and start business back home. In the 19th century, poverty drove a flood of migrants from Fujian and Guangdong provinces to Southeast Asia. Their descendants are the elite of modern Singapore and the Philippines, and money sent home has transformed villages. Today, *Forbes* magazine ranks a migrant who left Fujian in 1938 to seek his fortune in Indonesia as the world's 473rd richest man, worth \$US1 billion. He has lavishly supported his hometown, paying for roads, schools and a hospital. The deaths in Britain seem especially tragic in light of the economic revolution being wrought in Fujian. The province, which retains ties of language and culture to Taiwan, is the mainland base for billions of dollars in Taiwanese investment. Factories that make everything from umbrellas to computer parts have created hundreds of thousands of jobs. And the area is hardly barren. The countryside around the capital Fuzhou is carpeted with rice and vegetable fields. The province exports produce and fish. Yet the people still leave'. ● '3 more people were charged yesterday with the deaths of the 58 Chinese illegal immigrants'...

'A Dutch truck driver was jailed for 14 years yesterday for killing 58 Chinese. The driver, aged 33, who closed the air vent to cut the noise, was sentenced to six years on 58 counts of manslaughter and eight years for conspiracy to smuggle illegal immigrants. His co-defendant, a 30-year-old Chinese translator and organiser for Chinese criminal gangs, was sentenced to six years for conspiracy. But the case also raised disturbing questions about whether Dutch and British police knew in advance about the immigrants' fatal journey to Dover and whether the deaths could have been avoided. There is talk of a failure of communication between officials in the two countries and claims that a "sting" operation had gone wrong. Two months before the driver's journey, police stopped his friend at Dover with 50 Chinese hidden in his container truck. In events that proved a harbinger for the second expedition, the illegals had begun to suffocate in the back of the friend's lorry. They were heard and the friend was forced to open the back of the container, resulting in the 50 running round the decks of the freight ferry. The friend was arrested in Dover on suspicion of facilitating the entry of illegal immigrants but he was not charged because of lack of evidence that he knew they were on board. Even so, he became a marked man. In the Netherlands, police were watching a Turkish gangster who had been hired by the Snakeheads to organise the next trip. The Turk agreed to the friend's suggestion that one of his mates transport the shipment. The mate had helped his friend on the earlier trip and he needed the money. His small transport company had gone bust. Worse, his uncle's

firm, for which the friends drove, had also gone under as a result of the £100,000 in fines and the impounding of the lorry when the friend was caught. But there were no attempts to stop the mate leaving Rotterdam with his Chinese cargo, behind crates of tomatoes. The Dutch authorities said the watch had been called off a few days before, but refused to reveal why. The organiser and the friend are among 11 Dutch and Turkish nationals on trial in the Netherlands on charges in connection with the deaths in Dover.'

... 'The woman in her mid-30s moves widely throughout Europe on her Dutch passport to organise the illegal immigration routes and she is also seemingly able to travel in and out of China with ease. She is said to have powerful connections there in the Communist Party and among police. She is from a tiny village in the Fujian province of China (which is almost all that is known about her after years of police investigation) and she is among the most prolific traffickers of human cargo in Europe. She has built up a fearsome reputation for running a criminal empire that combines the efficiency of a modern conglomerate with vicious, punitive violence. She is also suspected of being one of the main organisers of the fatal shipment. In Westkruisad, Rotterdam's shabby and windswept Chinatown, they shudder when they talk about the retribution she is supposed to exact on those who cross her. The driver and his fellow defendants are minor players, as are the others in the support network through Europe. A Dutch detective said: "To destroy the organisation you have to get to the 30-year-old and the figures close to her. But that is proving extremely difficult. The Chinese are very tightly knit, they don't mix with the others and they terrorise their own people into silence." The criminal Snakehead gangs are ruthless in protecting the profits of trading in illegal immigrants. And these profits are huge. European law agencies estimate the business to be worth about £8.5 billion a year. American agencies say it is nearer £21 billion.'

... 'The UN estimates that worldwide, people smugglers made around \$US6 billion in the past 12 months. The coordinator of the UN's project to set up a functioning Bosnian State Border Service says that more than 10% of the half million illegal migrants who reached the EU last year came via the Bosnian route. There is a rising sense of crisis in the EU about illegal migration, which has increased more than tenfold in the past 10 years. In Bosnia, the traffic in illegal migrants conceals a second, more venal trade in humans – the trade in sex slaves which lures women and young girls to Bosnia, mainly from Eastern Europe and former Soviet republics, with the promise of jobs as au pairs or waitresses in the EU. Few doubt that the smuggling of migrants through Bosnia is being aided by police and politicians at the highest level.

... An agricultural labourer and father of two children had sold his land and spent all his savings to enter Europe as an illegal migrant. But he fell at the first hurdle of the "Sarajevo Route". His lack of education let him down. He thought he was arriving in a country called Sarajevo, at a capital called Grozny. The State Border Service told him he would be sent home. As the 26-year-old Turk sat in the arrivals area at Sarajevo Airport, surrounded by police, his head bowed, close to tears, dozens of young men with similar ambitions passed through immigration en route for Fortress Europe.'

... 'Encouraged by the calm summer seas, over the past few weeks thousands have headed for Europe in flotillas of high-speed launches and rusty cargo ships, mainly organised by ruthless smugglers and racketeers, proving that "Fortress Europe" is far from impenetrable. The 1993 Schengen Treaty, which abolished border controls between 13 of the 15 EU states (Britain and Ireland did not sign), placed the burden of policing Europe's southern shores on countries such as Spain, Italy and Greece, which are struggling to defend the coast from Crete to Andalucia. Since last November, at least 200 would-be immigrants have died at sea off Italy, either in collisions or being thrown overboard by traffickers fearing more for the fibreglass hulls of their dinghies than for the lives of their passengers. Recently, Albanian traffickers cast into the sea 60 Chinese to protect their hull from the rocks. A policeman said: "Poor people. In this sea, even a few hundred yards from shore, they don't stand a chance. In these waters you have about two minutes to live if you can't swim well. Most of those people who make the crossing have pockets stuffed with valuables, and when they are forced overboard they try to take their clothing and other belongings with them, and so many drown." Police in Otranto, where a Nautical Squad was created 18 months ago, said Italy was too soft on the smugglers. One member of the squad of just seven officers says: "In my opinion we ought to be allowed to shoot to kill these Albanian traffickers of human beings. They treat people as if they were animals. They make them sit on petrol tanks that in the case of an accident or a shoot-out could explode. To save their boats, they throw women and children overboard, and sometimes into the propellers. But if we were to maltreat them, we would go to jail." He said that much of the traffic to Italy of Albanian immigrants was with children, "because they are merchandise for prostitution, paedophilia, or to be butchered to provide human organs. Why else would whole boatloads of 10 to 12-year-olds be continually brought to Italy." According to official figures, 47,000 would-be immigrants made the crossing here last year. But the officer said that for every illegal immigrant known to arrive, at least one other managed to slip through the net. At least 100 illegal immigrants were intercepted this week off the southern coast of Spain. This year in Spain, 7000 migrants from Africa have been expelled. Under a law to be passed soon, a further 80,000 could be thrown out, and at least 250,000 more are seeking permission to stay. In Greece, 4256 immigrants have been picked up at sea this year, while 13,502 have been caught at the land border and sent back. In the past 18 months, 100,000, mainly Albanians, have been repatriated. There are now so many illegal migrants in Greece that state radio broadcasts in 12 languages. Greek authorities say there are at least 600,000 immigrants in the country – the figure could be a million. A Greek court in Lasithi, Crete, imposed record 10-year prison sentences a week ago on six Turkish seamen arrested for smuggling 334 Kurdish and Afghan migrants who were put ashore at a cove near Ierapetra.'

... 'One man was found dead and two in critical condition yesterday when authorities in the Greek port city of Corinth discovered 31 refugees hidden in a container on a truck. The illegal immigrants from India and Middle East countries had been trying to sneak from Greece into Italy.'

... '*A port where body parts come in with the cod can no longer resist an inquiry into the drowning of 283 Pakistanis.* It was a shock at first to haul in a corpse with the fish. An unusually heavy load became something to dread and some of the fishermen would retch. As time passed they got used to it. In any case there were no more bodies, just bits of bodies – thrown back in the sea and forgotten. The fishermen of Portopalo, a desolate village on Sicily's southern tip, knew that reporting the finds to the authorities risked investigations, police inspections and impounded equipment – a bureaucratic morass adding up to lost fishing days. So they said nothing. Last week Portopalo's secret was revealed, exposing the Mediterranean's worst tragedy since WW2. The bodies were those of illegal immigrants from the Indian subcontinent, drowned at 3am on Boxing Day 1996. They had been decanted from the freighter Yiohan into a ferry that collided with the larger vessel and sank. The Yiohan limped to Greece, where survivors spoke of the horror. And no one cared – not the coastguard, not the Italian Government, not the media. A cursory search for debris or bodies yielded nothing, so the story was dismissed. It became a "phantom shipwreck." That changed on January 12, when an *Observer* investigation proved that the shipwreck had happened. Reporters reconstructed the voyage with testimonies from survivors and relatives. The Italian authorities were forced to investigate a massacre: crew members from the Yiohan forced more than 300 passengers (whose \$US7000 fees to the immigration mobsters were met by their families' sacrifice and borrowing), allegedly at gunpoint, to climb into a craft designed for a third that number. Most were sucked under when it sank. Only two dozen made it back on to the freighter. In May a 43-year-old Lebanese went on trial for multiple charges, including manslaughter, in the Sicilian port of Syracuse, but he skipped bail and has disappeared.'

... 'A GROUP of 10 Indian and Middle Eastern men claim they sneaked into NZ on a Malaysian-owned container ship that stopped in Napier last month and disappeared undetected. The Immigration Service will investigate their claims which raise serious concerns about the country's borders.'

... 'A man and a woman were arrested on Monday as part of a police operation against an alleged organised crime syndicate trading in human cargo. Police said the syndicate smuggled more than 1000 people into NZ and AUS in the past 5 years by selling them fake passports and documents. Detectives were still hunting 20 others.' ● 'Libyan authorities have found the decomposed bodies of 93 African immigrants who were stranded and died of thirst in the Sahara'...

'Hungarian police have found 46 mostly Asian illegal immigrants near death in the back of a van designed to carry 15. The immigrants from Afghanistan, India, Nepal and Somalia, were found during a routine traffic check in the north-eastern province of Heves. "The immigrants owe their lives to the

policeman who carried out the check,” said a police spokesman yesterday. “There were so many of them in the small truck that if they had been found 60 minutes later the police would have found only corpses.” Dutch police said at the weekend that they had detained 23 Chinese illegal immigrants, who were attempting to enter Britain hidden in the back of a van. Meanwhile, French truck drivers are said to be furious with British immigration authorities over new fines slapped on them whenever illegal immigrants use them for a ride to Britain. Some drivers have chalked up as much as £40,000 in fines and some are refusing cross-Channel routes for fear of getting a £2000 ticket for even unknowingly harbouring illegal passengers. About 8500 illegal immigrants were stopped in France trying to make their way to Britain via the French Channel port of Calais last year. A new machine which detects carbon dioxide from human breath was installed by Calais port authorities last month and has so far found 1400 illegal immigrants hiding inside lorries.’

...yesterday, French ‘authorities evacuated 908 passengers – including three newborns – from an ageing freighter the East Sea, which ran aground about 20m from the shoreline, not far from the resort city of Nice. Emergency health workers said the refugees, who endured a week-long voyage without sanitary facilities and with little food or water, looked weak. One Kurd told reporters, “We were down in the holds. You couldn’t tell if it was night or day. There wasn’t even room to lie down.” Another said they were given no warning that the ship was going aground. “We all thought we were going to die.” It was unclear how many passengers evaded authorities by swimming ashore when the 60m bulk carrier washed up on a sandbank in the early morning darkness. “The captain has fled, leaving the boat facing land, the propellers turned, so that the boat cannot drift away. It was professional work,” the mayor of nearby St-Raphael said. The vessel sank after the refugees had been evacuated. The grounding of the East Sea is certain to increase pressure for further action to clamp down on the world’s fastest-growing criminal activity, which – UN experts believe – has already affected 200 million lives.’

...‘Immigration officials were yesterday questioning nine illegal immigrants discovered hiding beneath a Eurostar train from Paris. A girl aged 3 was among the group found in a compartment under the 300 km/h train when it arrived at Waterloo Station in London. Police seized them after passengers on board heard frantic banging noises and raised the alarm shortly before the train was due to leave for Brussels. The men and women said they were Romanian and have claimed asylum. A British Transport Police spokesman said the immigrants were all found wedged in a recess used for luggage. A Eurostar spokesman said the train had been “stabled” overnight at a depot in Paris. Strict security measures applied at the depot and at Eurostar stations in France to prevent unauthorised access to trains. The spokesman added that this type of stowing away had not happened before.’

...‘A TICKET to ride which turned to tragedy is the subject of a former singer’s latest work. The wife of Beatles star John Lennon has unveiled a freight car bored through with hundreds of holes and illuminated from inside at an art installation in Berlin. The piece – simply called Freight Train – was inspired by the deaths of 18 Mexicans in 1987 who perished in a sealed freight car trying to illegally enter America.’

...‘Authorities have rescued 40 Guatemalans trapped inside a truck-trailer in blistering heat for more than 10 hours. 7 were yesterday in a serious condition in hospital. The group was buried among sacks of corn inside the trailer before one of them managed to break open the doors of the truck, which had been abandoned on a highway outside the southern Mexican city of Villahermosa near the Guatemalan border. The group had hired a smuggler in the Mexican state of Chiapas, which borders Guatemala, and paid him \$US1500 to take them to the US-Mexican border. Despite the harrowing journey, those who came out relatively unscathed said they planned to return and try to cross Mexico again on their way to the US. “Of course we’ll try again. Even if the heat kills us or we drown, we will keep on trying because in our country there is no way to live.” A week ago, 22 bodies washed ashore after a boat carrying Guatemalans trying to reach the US sank off Mexico’s Pacific coast. The lone survivor told the government news agency Notimex the boat was caught by a storm.’

...‘a small boy lost and found at sea has fanned one of the biggest storms to hit the US-Cuba cold war in years. The international custody battle that engulfs the innocent victim of a migrant boat tragedy has made strange bedfellows of the US and Cuba as they vie with the determined distant relatives who have temporary custody of the 6-year-old and vow not to return him to live in communism with his father.’

...‘THE six-year-old boy at the centre of an international tug-of-war is set to return home. He was rescued off the coast of Florida last November after a shipwreck. His mother – and 10 others – drowned. The boy has lived with his relatives in Miami since his mother’s death. They want him to stay in America, claiming that’s what his mother wanted, and have threatened to prevent the boy from being taken from his uncle’s home. But his dad, who arrived in Washington on Thursday, wants to return to Cuba with him. The boy’s parents were divorced. The father’s bid is backed by Cuba’s President.’

...Good news for the 6-year-old boy who may be about to return to Cuba – ‘the garrulous “Maximum Leader” may have ended those oratorical tours-de-force when he would often speak on his feet, without so much as a sip of water, for up to six hours. The first clue he gave was in an interview several weeks ago published by the ruling Communist Party’s daily, *Granma*. “I have reached the conclusion, a bit late perhaps, that speeches should be short,” the President said at the end of an interview that filled four pages of small print. True to his word, the President’s longest speech since then was for just 90 minutes, when he accepted a prize from Latin American non-governmental organisations last week. Then, at a mass rally yesterday, he shocked many of the 200,000 Cubans gathered to hear him with a speech barely lasting half an hour on a patriotic celebration that last year drew two five-hour discourses. “Everything changes,” he told his audience, gathered to commemorate the anniversary of the start of the revolution.’

...‘About 100,000 Cubans staged another rally yesterday, demanding that the 6-year-old shipwreck survivor be immediately reunited with his father. The latest open-air rally in Cuba’s campaign of daily protests, meetings and televised discussions during the four-month custody battle took place in the eastern province of Las Tunas. Urged on by their President, the Cuban people have united behind the boy’s father, a 31-year-old tourism worker, in his demand for the boy’s return from relatives in Miami. After US Government and court rulings in favour of the boy’s return to his father, the father flew to Washington last week to press his case. Havana has expressed dismay that the US Government, while supporting in principle the boy’s return to Cuba, has not been able to enforce it. A legal expert said the saga showed the irrational nature of US immigration policy, particularly the Cuban Adjustment Act, which favoured Cuban immigrants over other nationalities. She said the group behind that policy, which stimulated dangerous, illegal trips from Cuba, was “the Cuban-American Miami mafia.” Cuba’s Foreign Minister, speaking on state television yesterday, said the visit of the boy’s father to the US was helping to shift American public opinion to Cuba’s side.’

...‘the US Government was set to tell relatives of the Cuban castaway today how to hand the boy over to his father, after sending mental health experts to Miami to discuss making the transfer as painless as possible for the child. With the custody handover expected in two or three days, thousands of Cuban exiles who have backed the boy’s Miami relatives in battling to keep the 6-year-old gathered in a vigil in Miami’s Little Havana district, waving Cuban and American flags and praying the boy would be allowed to stay. Lawyers for the relatives worked on last-ditch legal salvos. They planned to complete today their appeal of a federal judge’s ruling upholding an Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS) ruling that the boy should be returned to his father. The relatives will also file briefs in a Florida family court to have the boy’s great-uncle declared his legal guardian. The 4 1/2-month tug-of-war has bitterly divided an extended family and fired up decades-old enmity between Cuba’s President and anti-communist exiles in Miami.’

...‘Even while officials have been debating the future of the boy found floating off Fort Lauderdale after his boat capsized, there has been no letup in the exodus of Cubans seeking wealth in America. Last year alone, some 1300 fled the island clandestinely, clutching a few possessions in plastic shopping bags, and waded into political exile. But although over 60 would-be refugees drowned in the attempt, hundreds of others keep trying to sneak across the shark-infested straits. Owners of swift cigarette boats, which also are the mode of transport preferred by Miami drug traffickers, can charge a cool \$US8000 per passenger for the 144km trip north. But the penalties are harsh and, if caught, smugglers of human cargo can languish for years inside Cuban prisons. The boatbuilder who sold a 5m aluminium craft to the boy’s mother’s hustler boyfriend was hauled off to jail soon after the overloaded boat floundered and 11 people drowned. He is still awaiting trial. Most of the Cubans who attempt such perilous crossings are under 30. Over half of Cuba’s 11 million citizens were born after the 1959 revolution, and they take for granted the free schooling and healthcare available under communism. But, increasingly, young people chafe under the restrictions of the post-revolutionary lifestyle. One enterprising teenager at Varadero Beach, unable to afford the trendiest

sports clothes, recently tattooed a Nike trademark on his chest. Rebels embrace capitalism not only to annoy their hardline parents, but in order to find their way out of a stagnating system. Since the economy bottomed out in the early 1990s with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Government has encouraged foreign tourists to bring in hard currency. Cruise ships call at Havana Harbour and dollars fly freely. With two million foreign tourists expected this year, Cuba has invested heavily in beach and scuba diving resorts suitable for holiday packages. Youthful Cubans compare lifestyles with the visitors and many want out. Average salaries in Cuba are only \$US8 per month, with top professionals earning \$US30. The Government hands out rations books for basic foodstuffs, but families with no access to dollars are hard-pressed to scrimp through the month. Many Cubans must rely on friends and relatives who send money from abroad back to their poor cousins. The estimated \$US800 million that comes in from outside is vital to prop up the Cuban economy. Relatives frequently arrive with their suitcases stuffed with medicine, even simple aspirin, that is otherwise unavailable in Cuba. Society is now three tiers: the communist party elite, those with access to dollars, and the workers. "We must give our youth a future," argues the founder of the Christian Centre of Reflection and Dialogue in Cardenas. "That is the wake up call that we've been given. After the return of the 6-year-old-boy we can not slack off and simply return to our homes."

...the 'US President yesterday said there was "no conceivable argument" for keeping the Cuban shipwreck survivor from being reunited with his father now that a court has temporarily banned the 6-year-old from leaving the US. Earlier, the boy's father accused his relatives of abusing the boy by keeping him from his father and appealed to Americans for help in getting him back. The US Attorney-General has been considering whether to send in federal agents to remove the boy from the house where he has been staying. A federal appeals court in Atlanta ruled on Thursday that the boy must stay in the US until it resolves an appeal filed by the boy's Miami relatives, who are asking that he get a hearing for political asylum. It is due to be heard' in 3 weeks.

...'ARMED federal agents stormed into a Miami home in a pre-dawn manoeuvre yesterday and grabbed the six-year-old boy. At least 20 agents arrived at the home shortly after 5am and kicked in the door. A short time later, a woman and man brought the boy out of the Little Havana home and put him in a white van. Some of the 100-strong protesters at the scene climbed over barricades and unsuccessfully tried to stop the agents, who were armed with automatic weapons. "The world is watching!" yelled the brother of the boy's caretaker.'

...'The raid was carried out by eight armed federal agents – backed up by 130 other agents, including federal marshals. After three knocks on the door and "identifying themselves," the agents used a battering ram to force their way in. As the agents were battering the door, the boy was taken from his bed and hidden in a cupboard. But not for long. He was wrenched from the fisherman who rescued him last November by a male agent, under the watchful barrel of his colleague's gun, and handed over to a Spanish speaking woman – the only compromise with gentility – and taken to a waiting van. Then it was off and away – first by helicopter and then by plane to Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland and his father. The Attorney-General explained why she had had to abandon a promise that the boy would not be taken under the cover of darkness. "We had hoped that it could have been done another way. But the crowds began to suggest they were going to prevent it happening." She said the family had continually "moved the goalposts" and was still defiant in obstructing the law. The stand-off between the US Government and the Cubans of Miami is now absolute. Yesterday, as the boy's Miami family cranked up the hysteria in and around their house, crowds gathered to express their outrage. Hundreds of Cuban-Americans poured into the streets of Little Havana. To meet them were 400 riot-ready Miami police who made 260 arrests. Some protesters threw rocks and shouted. Others waved signs and flags – Cuban and upside-down American ones. One man stalked through the crowd with a baby doll pinned to a cross, fake blood streaming from its hands. In Cuba, the President downplayed the shock that the boy suffered during the raid. "That boy cried for three minutes, for something that probably saved his life." He told a crowd of 400,000 people: "Today is a truce with the US, perhaps the only one since 1962. This is a day of glory for our people."

...'A thousand words a minute tumbled in a torrent over the airwaves yesterday as America scrambled to make sense of the bold raid that wrenched a 6-year-old boy from his Miami relatives and returned him to the arms of his father. But not one of those words – from the bland assurances of the US President's Administration to the stunned stammers of Miami's outraged Cubans – was worth a dime beside that picture. The picture. The one that was never supposed to have been taken. The one thing the US Justice Department, which planned the 5 am snatch-and-run with military precision, never expected. It is the shot that last night even the most dutiful and durable defenders of the White House seemed embarrassed to explain. What leaders of the INS assault team did not know was that a freelance photographer was one of the few journalists not napping at 5 am on Saturday, when the federal agents' trucks charged onto the street outside the home where the boy has spent almost five months in a legal limbo. Nor could they have known that the photographer would jump a side fence, run through the home's rear door and take photographs as the troops poured in, guns at the ready. It's all there in that picture, the whole sad story captured in a single arresting image – the snarl on the face of the goggled and helmeted Swat squad officer, the submachine gun pointed at a fearful 6-year-old, the expression of amazement on the face of the man who holds him. That man is the Florida fisherman who hauled the boy from the sea last year. He spoke to the cameras less than 90 minutes after the 130 members of the federal assault team holstered their weapons and pulled out of Little Havana in a cloud of tear gas and pepper spray. "America, you sent troops – I call them 'troops' because that is what they look and act like – into a citizen's home at 5 am to told people at gunpoint and kidnap a child. Cuba's President must have approved of those tactics," he said amid the smashed furniture and broken doors of the trashed home. "What have you done, America, to this little boy?" More to the point, what has the saga done to America? As piles of tyres burned in Miami and every cop on the force was summoned back to duty, a Florida TV station was broadcasting the inflammatory accusation that the official photo of the boy's "joyful" reunion with his father at Andrews Air Force Base near Washington was a cut-and-paste fake. As for the human impact of the case, the fisherman's own experience speaks most eloquently of that. When he hauled the boy from the water back on Thanksgiving Day last year, he was with his cousin, who had been his best friend and fishing partner for more than 20 years. Now the men no longer speak. "He thought the boy should go to his dad. It was something that became so sensitive, we couldn't just agree to disagree."

...'LARGE NUMBERS OF HISPANIC PASSENGERS are nothing unusual on flights at Sky Harbor International Airport in Phoenix, Ariz. But there was something not quite right about the group of more than 100 Hispanics boarding Delta's Flight 1800, a red-eye to Atlanta, on Tuesday, Feb. 16. When the INS was brought in to investigate, sure enough, 102 of the 186 passengers were illegal aliens. Two days later, the INS checked another Phoenix flight, American Trans Air Flight 751 to Chicago. Of the 171 passengers aboard, 60 were illegals. Another ATA flight later that day turned up 29 more. The INS says all three groups were part of an organised ring smuggling illegal aliens into the US. Since February 1996 the agency has arrested more than 3,000 people at Sky Harbor. The smuggling of human beings includes the use of stolen airline tickets. According to the INS, stolen tickets are part of a package deal, including phony IDs and Social Security cards, that smugglers provide to their clients. And for one person, that news was vindication of sorts. For three years, ever since her Classic Travel Agency in Naperville, Ill., was one of 28 agencies in the suburbs west of Chicago hit by what police describe as a Colombian burglary ring, she has waged a one-woman crusade to focus attention on what she and others say is a serious public-safety issue that the airlines have ignored. At all 28 agencies the take was the same: blank airline tickets – 6,000 of them, worth \$6 million on the black market. The Chicago break-ins were part of a nationwide crime wave that has victimised more than 600 agencies, netting perhaps 500,000 tickets. The crimes are continuing. A Marietta, Ga., agency was recently hit twice for 6,000 tickets. Travel agents are eager to get federal agents involved because once a ticket is used, the carrier can demand payment from the agency, even for stolen tickets. The agents say the airlines could thwart these crimes by using scanners capable of detecting tickets that have been reported stolen. Such technology would have enabled Hawaiian Airlines, for example, to intercept two passengers who flew from Honolulu to Maui last year with stolen first-class tickets on a plane that had no first-class section. The airlines reply that the scanners don't always catch the bogus tickets. But last week British Airlines – one airline that does scan – caught a man who was flying from Miami to London and trying to get a \$26,000 refund for seven tickets. A scan revealed that four were stolen, part of a batch of 24,000 taken from Hudson Holidays in Elmwood Park, Ill., in December 1996. Liability for stolen tickets is potentially fatal to travel agencies, which have already seen their commission payments cut by the airlines at the same time that the agencies' business is being eroded by customers using the Internet. "We don't have that kind of money," says the Naperville agent,

who got a letter from American Airlines demanding \$16,000 for stolen tickets written on her ticket stock. The airline later relented because she had followed security guidelines. A Government Accountancy Office report due out shortly will recommend that the airlines be forced to scan tickets, thereby rendering stolen ticket stock worthless. For some travel agents, that will be a little too late. A travel agent in Libertyville, Ill., who lost 6,000 blank tickets to the ring and owes the airlines \$300,000, was forced to close her 7-year-old Travel Incentives Inc.']

...Overseas criminal syndicates are responsible for one in every five asylum-seekers arriving in N[Z], say immigration officials. A... spokeswoman for the Minister of Immigration said yesterday: "There are people in other countries issuing them with documents, telling them exactly what to do when they get here and organising lawyers to meet them at the airport." The manager of border investigations for the Immigration Service... said... asylum-seekers obtained false documents en route to N[Z]... The service was helping airline staff to identify falsified or altered travel documents. [The manager] said the service's new \$6.1 million computer system would make it easier to trace illegal immigrants because it combined information from all of its branches on to one database... Immigration officials monitored 16.5 million movements a year... The executive director of Amnesty International in N[Z]... said he was disturbed that the Government seemed to be preparing the public for a tightening of refugee procedures "through the random release of information."

...Seven airlines had immigration charges dropped against them in Auckland yesterday on a promise that they will tighten their scrutiny of passengers' travel papers... The 22 members of the Board of Airlines Representatives have agreed to work with the... Immigration Service... on a review of screening systems overseas... The executive director of the board... confirmed his members were happy to work with the service to reduce problems, although there was a limit to what could be done... The Immigration Service's national border investigations manager... acknowledged that airlines would not be expected to foil every elaborate illegal entry scheme... Those charged under a section of the Immigration Act providing a maximum penalty of \$20,000 were: Air N[Z], Air Pacific, Aerolineas Argentinas, Polynesian Airlines, Qantas, Royal Tongan Airlines and United. It is understood to have been the service's biggest crackdown on the aviation industry in years.

...[A Somali microbiologist was denied entry into NZ because immigration and airline officials believed his sky-blue suit and yellow socks were not the clothes of a real scientist. The scientist, now a Hamilton laboratory technician, sued the Immigration Minister and the Attorney-General for more than \$180,000 over the fiasco, but reached a confidential out-of-court settlement last year. He also received an apology from the Immigration Service. His plight remained secret until last week, when the *Herald* won a legal challenge in the High Court at Auckland enabling the newspaper to search court records. The registrar at the High Court had refused to allow the *Herald* to search the file on the case. The Immigration Service, through the Crown Law Office, had earlier turned down a *Herald* request for the documents. A memo obtained yesterday from his Auckland lawyer indicated that the 34-year-old scientist's fashion sense, and his failure to tie his own tie, played a big part in the saga, which included being locked in a Singapore airport jail for two days. The drama began on August 16, 1995, when the scientist arrived at Changi Airport in Singapore. He had flown from Yemen, where he was working at the University of Sanaa, and was in transit, bound for Auckland. His Somali passport contained a NZ residence visa issued by an immigration officer at the NZ High Commission in New Delhi, as the scientist met all criteria under the service's points system. But after several unsuccessful attempts to collect his boarding pass from Air NZ staff, he was told he could not board his flight. Staff wanted to check his visa with the NZ High Commission in Singapore, which was shut. To his horror, when his passport was returned it had been defaced by a handwritten entry stating: "The bearer of this passport can not use this passport for entry or travel to AUS (or transit) under any circumstances." AUSn immigration officials later told him that the entry had been written by an AUSn who was attached to Qantas Airways. It appeared that airline staff referred immigration queries to the AUSn when the NZ High Commission office was closed. The AUSn said the scientist's passport was illegal and likely to have been forged. The visa had therefore been mistakenly issued. The AUSn had torn the page containing the visa out of the scientist's passport. The scientist was placed in custody and told he would be deported to Yemen. The scientist believed he would then be sent back to Somalia, which was torn apart by civil war. "That was a death sentence for me. I would have easily been killed." However, he was able to remain living in Yemen, where he reapplied for NZ residency. Sixteen months later, he arrived in NZ with his wife and two children. "This is a beautiful country with beautiful people," he said, "but those people who are representing NZ outside should be clever, broad-minded, well-educated, who do not generalise anything." The scientist still owns the sky-blue suit. "I sometimes wear it but I just keep it." Incidentally, t]he Race Relations Conciliator... said... on Wednesday that globally, there were 20 million displaced refugees.

...[according to the latest statistics, 'the world has 11.8 million refugees from Africa, 7.9m from Asia, 6.5m from Europe, 1.08m from America and 0.05m from Oceania. Most of the refugees accepted into NZ during the past 12 months were from Iraq (437), with the next most coming from Ethiopia (34). The US resettled 83,000 refugees' during the same period. ● 'NZ's only hostel for asylum-seekers may be forced to close as money dries up and arguments rage about who's responsible for its upkeep. The Auckland Refugee Council says the occupants will be homeless if it doesn't get finance within the next six weeks.'

...[The Refugee and Migrant Service says it will be forced to close its doors to asylum seekers within weeks unless it can find other funding. The service's director said the service, which has offices around the country, had been using its cash reserves to pay for the advocacy service but could no longer afford to do so. Two staff based in Auckland and some casual staff would lose their jobs. The director wants Government funding for an advocacy service, which he estimates would cost \$200,000 a year. "We feel very strongly that the Government is shirking its responsibilities in this area and merely paying lip service to some of its obligations under the UN High Commissioner for Refugees convention." The Minister of Immigration said the Government recognised its responsibilities and planned to review funding because of the rapid growth in the number of people applying for refugee status. In 1993 there were 693 applications. By 1995 there were 1251. People seeking asylum must complete a complex form to apply for refugee status. The Refugee and Migrant Service helps them with paperwork, arranges interpreters and helps present their case to the Immigration Service. Legal aid is no longer available for asylum seekers in the initial stage, but if their case is refused they have the automatic right to appeal to the Refugee Status Authority and are granted legal aid. The director said that without the free help provided by the service at the first stage, many applicants would be unable to lodge well-presented and complete applications, resulting in a "far greater number of unnecessary and expensive appeals."■ 'The Government said yesterday that mandatory overseas HIV-Aids tests would be introduced for all refugees, immigrants and anyone wanting to work here for longer than two years. Anyone who failed the test would be barred entry. Aids and refugee groups immediately condemned the policy. At present, refugees are asked to take a voluntary test for HIV-Aids and none has yet refused.']

...After years of dramatic shifts in immigration numbers, a new rationale has been established – a net population gain of 10,000 a year from migration. Other moves announced yesterday by the Minister of Immigration... will limit to about nine months the time it takes to appeal against immigration decisions and to determine whether someone has refugee status. [The minister] has set a target of attracting 500 investor migrants to N[Z next year]... He said there was competition for good-quality migrants and N[Z] needed to market itself more positively. He has been told one of the main reasons for[a] fall in business investors was the English language test and that would be relaxed from requiring a modest level of English skills to a basic level – or from level five to four in the approved standard test. The test was introduced in October 1995 as part of changes to the points system that gave the Government greater control over the flow of immigrants. The previous year 50,000 approvals were granted – double the target. In 1995 more than 500 business investor immigrants were approved and more than \$330 million was transferred to N[Z]. That has been reduced to a trickle. Up to September this year, for example, just 63 business investors had been approved with about \$30 million... N[Z] experienced net losses from long-term migration frequently before 1990 but more recently has had gains of about 20,000 a year. The 10,000 net gain translates to a population increase of about 0.2[%] a year... But the measures to clamp down on immigration scams were the most important part of the package. N[Z] was seen as a soft touch for asylum seekers and the system would now be less open to exploitation. More than 1600 had

applied this year and there was a backlog of 2400 people being processed. The application and appeal procedures would be simplified. Only two appeals would be possible and they would have to be lodged within 28 days to the Refugee Status Appeals Authority and to the High Court. [The minister] said cutting the delays would save on social benefits. For, say, 780 asylum seekers the savings would be more than \$8 million a year... [T]he Government is[also] considering cutting its annual quota of 800 refugees and instead picking up the travel costs for the reduced number... The U[N] High Commission... which pays for refugees to get here, has pressed N[Z] for some time to pick up their travel costs as some other countries do... [T]he Labour immigration spokeswoman... said yesterday... [that any] fall in the refugee intake would be shameful and sully N[Z]'s name as a generous international donor... [Furthermore, problems] are likely to loom with the Government's plan to limit the time it takes to determine refugee status, says an Auckland Refugee Council spokesman... "The trouble is... the backlog of cases... and no staff available to interview them. Those people, as things stand and unless more money is spent, will never get a hearing." ...[likewise, praise] for the 10,000-a-year net migration gain target was faint... The biggest beef was the numbers... But an immigration consultant... said that comparing total immigration with net migration was like contrasting apples and oranges... "...they think immigration is about numbers... It's about appropriateness of selection. Are they working? Are they paying taxes? That is the issue." Immigrants would still be left unemployed and people with diplomas would still be reduced to driving taxis, he said... N[Z] already exceeded its net population gain target, and the figure included N[Z]ers returning from overseas... [A] spokesman for the United Asian Association... remained cynical of the Government's intentions and was angry at the retention of the English test, which he said was a poor way to gauge migrants. Alone in welcoming the initiative, the president of the N[Z] Ethnic Council... said... [migration] was needed to "strengthen the existing cultural richness of N[Z]." ...Immigrants now formed about 8[% of NZ]'s population...

At a place called Waitangi a treaty was signed... on behalf of... Queen Victoria, and... by a number of Maori chiefs, with a great many more adding their names later. The treaty has often been called the founding document of N[Z] for it gave legitimacy to the British settlement that followed; and as well it created what is best described as a living partnership between the Maori people and those who were to come here in the years ahead. As the signatures were being affixed, Captain Hobson... of the Royal Navy... obviously using words supplied to him, said in Maori, "He iwi tahi tatou," which is usually thought to mean "Now we are one people." But the meaning is more subtle than that. It is, rather, "Our peoples are joined together as one." Maori had not seen themselves as one people in any sense of nationhood and there is no reason to think that they saw the newcomers any differently. Thus the concept of unity in diversity, the over-arching theme of the Federation of Ethnic Councils, harks back to the beginnings of what became our nation. Maori were able to accomplish their incredible feats of navigation because they were very skilled weavers and plaiters. And an appropriate image of what is meant by unity of diversity is the plaited rope, consisting of many strands, each retaining its individual identity but, bound together, achieving a strength that even exceeds the sum of the strength of all the individuals. The plaited rope that is N[Z] society today has several major strands, but many others too, all giving strength and purpose to the whole. But the analogy of the plaited rope breaks down a little at this point for its strands are all alike while those of our society come in many shapes and hues... We have the unique inheritance of Maoridom, stretching back into the Pacific mists of time and legend[, and – 'since 1901' – the inheritance of other Polynesians]. We have the inheritance of Europe which has come down to us from the earliest days of history. To these two mainstreams have been added the mainly more recent contributions of our... Asian neighbours... The result of that is a unique national identity... to be appreciated and enjoyed by us all and which cannot but enrich us all. Sadly, this is a truth that many have still to learn. And rather tragically some have a great deal to learn. Recently the media reported several incidents of racist or cultural aggression. Th[es]e sort of ...in[cidents]... cannot be too strongly condemned. There is no place for it, or for those who behave in this way, in N[Z] society. Almost all N[Z]ers would agree with that, at least in theory... One can only hope that we have all learned something from these incidents... But more than that is needed. We need not only to know how to deal with visible manifestations of ignorance and prejudice, we need to address [them]... It is essentially a matter of education and training, best dealt with at the stage in life when attitudes are formed. I must say how enormously encouraged, uplifted indeed, I have been as I have visited schools drawing on a multi-ethnic community to see how the children accept each other for who [or] what they are. As in so many other ways we can all learn much from the innocence of our children. All to often we see and hear people emphasising the differences between N[Z]'s peoples and cultures as if differences were undesirable; and we hear people talk about the friction that our cultural diversity is somehow supposed to create. This sort of talk can only create disunity, whether through envy or fear or anger... For the truth is that we are human beings first, N[Z]ers second and only then may we justifiably separate ourselves into ethnic groups, races or adherents to different creeds... It is very important for our own sakes and for the nation's that we should retain and cherish our own particular cultural identity. But our culture must not become a cocoon in which we wrap ourselves to the exclusion of all about us. We must be willing and eager to share it and equally willing to understand... the cultures of our fellow citizens. None of us has the right to claim any cultural superiority. And, of course, it adds no status or worth whatsoever to our own culture to disparage, let alone to insult, the culture of others. Here in N[Z] we are singularly fortunate for all of us are beneficiaries of more than one cultural inheritance[, but as]... is too tragically obvious these days... countries which live in perpetual, or even in recurring, strife never prosper and never can achieve true happiness for any of their people.

...Ethnic groups that cannot afford to send representatives to the Government's \$750-a-head population conference in Wellington in November will receive a limited number of sponsored seats... The Government, under fire for refusing funds for a conference of ethnic councils... [and faced] with having only 250 participants signed up... has increased its allocation of free tickets... from 30 to 50... The Government[claimed it] wanted as diverse a range of people as possible to attend... The fees[were meant to] cover \$133,000 of the conference cost; [with the Government covering]... the remaining \$428,000 bill. The keynote speaker... from California... [will join NZ] experts... covering the effect of population changes in areas such as the labour market, business, education, social services, the environment, and the settlement of migrants here... [He] has led a research panel examining the impact of immigration in the U[S]... Its report this year concluded that immigration had a net gain for the country, perhaps adding up to \$10 billion a year to the economy... not much considering that the total economy runs to trillions... About 820,000 immigrants settle legally in the U[S] each year, largely lower-skilled workers... while up to 300,000 enter the country illegally.

...N[Z]ers and AUS]ns can apply for 837 immigrant visas being offered by the U[S] to the Oceania region from a worldwide lottery of 55,000. The annual lottery boosts immigrants from areas that receive few visas. The winners will be selected at random following the October 24 to November 24 mail-in. [By the way, 'between 1900 and 1913, 13 million people arrived in America from Europe – the greatest voluntary migration.'

... 'Between 1939 and 1945, Somes Island – recently renamed Matiu – in Wellington Harbour was home to 220 men. Branded as "enemy aliens" they were guarded by 30 rank and file soldiers armed with rifles but no bullets. The Government of the day, immersed in WWII, interned as a "protective and preventative measure" a Japanese man, Italians, Austrians, Russians and Germans as well as German Samoans from Apia. Jews and fervent Nazis were delegated to the same huts. For some of the German Samoans, the experience was *deja vu*. They were interned as children with their parents at Motuihi POW Camp in Auckland from 1915 to 1919. Letters and statements held at the National Archives record escapes, protests and pleas for release, and the woe of families left behind. Their stories paint "an interesting portrait of NZ when paranoia in this country rose to such a height that they locked away NZers with foreign sounding names." The on-going battle was against boredom.' While on the topic of migrant 'misery, the new Minister of Immigration concedes that hundreds of migrants, mostly granted residence in 1995 and 1996, were victims of a flawed policy.'

...A leader of the Pakistani community said yesterday... at celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the birth of Pakistan... that his people had been lured to N[Z] under false pretences... and then left with little support once they arrived in the country. The Auckland Pakistani community number about 600, with many more living in other parts of N[Z]... The frustration of not finding work had led to relationship breakdowns and three

suicides that... the president of the Pakistan Association of N[Z]... knew of... Doctors, pharmacists, engineers and computer programmers featured among the... many... now living on the dole... [A]ll had uprooted their lives to bring their families and their skills to N[Z]. Some... had already returned to their home country.

...[‘Smile and say “namaste” next time you meet a Nepalese-Kiwi. Nepal has enjoyed an almost mythical connection with NZ since Hillary conquered the tiny kingdom’s giant mountain in 1953. Yet for many of us, the country and its people are still shrouded in mystery. A west Auckland man, fired by successful Nepalese New Year celebrations held in Auckland, wants to make the cultural festival a regular event. But the day almost never happened, as around a third of the 45 Nepalese families in Auckland have packed their bags for AUS in the past few months. 75% failed to find work here, though all have since been employed across the Tasman. Most had masters degrees, doctorates and engineering qualifications, and came to NZ from 1994 to 1996’]...

A Russian migrant fluent in... Russian, English, Ukrainian, Japanese and Chinese and can also read French, German and Arabic... but who cannot get a job says N[Z] is not ready to absorb immigrants... [The] former linguistic researcher with the Academy of Sciences in Moscow, said she had spent a futile year sending out hundreds of job-seeking letters. She said a cross-party organisation was urgently needed to offer new migrants a helping hand into employment... “It makes me very sad not being able to contribute.” Her being on the dole was a “human waste.” ...[she] lives in Auckland and wants to become a language teacher[, having]... published more than 100 scientific articles and books on “super-intensive teaching,” a method which claims to offer automatic computer recognition of foreign language characters and give English-speaking students a grasp of Japanese in two days.

...According to the Korea-N[Z] Business Council, some Korean immigrants are finding it too difficult to assimilate in this country... [The council’s] chairman... says Koreans have high expectations of N[Z] as a paradise with bright open spaces, plenty of places to play golf and an excellent place to educate their children. But once they get here they are troubled by problems with the language and adjusting to a country with fewer than four million people. Seoul alone has a population of 14 million... [The] Korean Residents Association president... says a number of Koreans are leaving... In one case, a Korean businessman left after losing \$250,000 after setting up an Auckland business which failed three months later... N[Z] Immigration has arrival and departure figures but departure figures are not broken down by nationality... Census figures... show the number of Koreans applying for residency... fell by more than 40% last year from 3463 to 2055.

...[‘ABOUT one in five Asian immigrants can’t hold a conversation in English. The statistics, in the Ethnic Groups report compiled from 1996 Census data, shows the country’s Korean population is worst off, with 40.7% of the 12,657 population unable to converse in English. Of the 4302-strong Cambodian population, 24.5% of men and 33.6% of women also fell into that category, as did just under a quarter of the 70,000-strong Chinese community and more than 30% of Vietnamese. While Census data revealed a 7.7% unemployment rate for all NZers at the time of the survey, Vietnamese, Koreans and people from Middle Eastern groups had unemployment rates of between 20% and 30%. The Ethnic Council had long believed large numbers of immigrants were becoming isolated because of their inability to speak English. In AUS, under the Adult Migrant Education Programme, all adult migrants were entitled to 510 hours of co-ordinated government-funded English-language education.’]

...Migrants from non-English-speaking backgrounds who came to A[US] more than 20 years ago are suffering unemployment at unprecedented levels. The problem is greatest among blue-collar workers, says the study by the A[US]n Centre for Industrial Relations Research and Training. The study... found that the answer to migrant unemployment was complex, but appropriate policies could be developed... Also important are better access to... vocational skills-related training... and... English language skills...

[An] Iraqi woman... has failed the English language test... three times. The first time cost her \$6000... [She] is trapped by a two-year-old requirement that every member of some immigrant families reach a “modest” level of facility in English. Refugees and immigrants admitted on humanitarian grounds don’t have to sit the test – but general and business immigrants do. Those who fail must post a \$20,000 bond. If they cannot pass within three months, they lose \$6000; if they still cannot pass after being here a year, they lose the lot. The Minister of Immigration... hinted this week that the requirement could be softened. We used to require only the principal applicant in an immigrating family to speak English but now everyone over 16 has to. But any change won’t come in time for [the Iraqi woman], the only member of her family doing battle with the test. She has passed three of four parts, but failure in the reading section means failure overall and she must pass [in less than two months], or lose her bond... [In] a long discussion with her, I have trouble with only one word – the extraordinarily difficult “thigh” which she makes rhyme with “dig.” Her neighbours understand her and she shops with ease. But we want her to pay a small fortune for her linguistic hesitancy and she says the stress of it has made her ill and is eroding her self-esteem. “I’ve always been the person who solved every problem for my family,” she says. “Now I am the problem.” [Her] two Korean classmates... feel even gloomier. Each has already forfeited \$6000 and [one of them] says she will pay the \$20,000 because she is so scared of exams – but she still comes to daily classes... The test, designed at Cambridge University, is littered with English placenames, and it is harder for Asians than non-Asians... If we do make the test easier, it will be out of self-interest. Officials are worried that the test is discouraging Asian interest in us and potential immigrants, rich in talent or capital, are looking elsewhere... Whichever way you look at it, the test scarcely helps immigrants settle here. Unlike Canada or A[US], we offer non-refugee immigrants no English teaching ([the Iraqi woman] has spent \$4000 on lessons). And failing it doesn’t mean exclusion; it means paying what looks suspiciously like a tax – or even a fine – for not being a N[Z]er before you arrive.

...As a teacher of English as a second language I sympathise with the students in[a] recent article. The English test which immigrants must sit is very dry and essentially British in culture... Are we asking immigrants to pay large sums of money to do a test which many of us Kiwis would find difficult? ...I would be extremely interested to see how senior students in an average N[Z] secondary school class would perform in the test. The reading would be a challenge to many since today’s young people “tune out” to any reading which is not stimulating and interesting to them. The listening test, always a difficult task, requires a level of concentration beyond many N[Z] youngsters, brought up as they have been on the two-minute television sound-bite.

...[the] recent argument for lowering English language standards for immigrants defies belief. While[its] three hand-picked cases may seem hard-done-by, a policy allowing immigrants to pay \$20,000 to avoid learning English is insane (after paying \$500,000 for residency, the sum is paltry). Auckland University is crammed with Asian students with English ability no better than primary school children, who are marked more leniently than N[Z]ers... Competition between universities and even departments for funding ensures that standards are continuously lowered to increase the numbers of... graduates compromising their, and our, futures. By seeking residency, foreigners avoid the English requirement for international students and get to pay much smaller fees. Is it any wonder our own graduates cannot spell?

...The controversial English test and \$20,000 bond for immigrants will probably remain despite calls to remove it to attract more immigrants. The Minister of Immigration... said yesterday that he would be cautious towards his previous indication of softening the requirement, in a bid to make sure that future migrants would become a benefit rather than a burden to N[Z]... Addressing the N[Z] China Trade Association at its Auckland business luncheon, [he] said his ministry had to balance risks... Those risks included a big incidence of overstayers or asylum seekers from some countries – especially China... Last year, 987 Chinese people claimed refugee status – a third of all claimants.

...Refugees are a huge problem internationally. Until recently N[Z]’s geographic isolation has shielded us from this problem to a large extent. Western countries, particularly Germany, France and Britain have... reacted... [to their] large numbers of refugees... by tightening procedures and discouraging claims for permanent residence. In N[Z] we take two categories of refugee: quota refugees [– ‘NZ is one of only 10 countries that opens its doors to a set number of refugees every year’ –]and convention refugees. Quota refugees are part of N[Z]’s overseas aid activities and are

essentially not a problem. N[Z] takes about 800[quota] refugees each year[('AUS takes 7000')]. Convention refugees are a different category... a[nd a]re far more difficult to deal with. Basically a convention refugee is a person outside their country of nationality who has a well-founded fear (a real chance) of being persecuted on the grounds of race, nationality, political opinion, religion or membership of a particular social group. There can be no serious objection to N[Z] providing asylum for genuine convention refugees. The major difficulty is separating genuine convention refugee claims from bogus claimants who are essentially economic migrants (seeking a better life); or from bogus claimants telling lies and presenting false documents; or from people who are genuinely scared and fearful but are none the less not at significant risk. N[Z] operates a fair and humane system of refugee determination. The major difficulties are, first, delays in processing claims... [- a]t the end of May the refugee status branch of the Immigration Service had 1613 outstanding applications from convention refugees... [(a) year earlier there were 864] -] ...and, secondly, the failure to send... refugees back to their homelands once they have exhausted all the avenues for staying in N[Z, which] is costing taxpayers millions of unnecessary dollars every year... Last year this cost the taxpayer \$19,707,000. Add to that the cost of legal aid which many of those seeking asylum get from the taxpayer and the cost skyrockets further... Clearly the branch is either understaffed, poorly managed or both... Compliance officers are... people employed by[the] Immigration Service to remove illegal immigrants. In May this year 29 compliance officers were employed by the service. Immigration statistics show that as at March 1996, 16,574 people were still in N[Z] after their permits to stay had expired. However, given the inadequacy of accurate record keeping within the Immigration Service, this figure could well be understated... [Yet, e]ven if, say, 12,000 (of the 16,574) were in the country illegally... there is no way 29 compliance officers would have any chance of detecting and deporting 12,000 illegal immigrants.

...The Immigration Service has been slammed for failing to address continuing inaccuracies in its overstayer list, and has been told it cannot do its job properly without cleaning it up. The office of the Controller and the Auditor-General... accused the service of failing to implement nine of the 24 recommendations made three years ago to improve efficiency... [The] office says: "It is worrying that the accuracy of the list has not improved since... 1994... when the... Immigration Service told us it was initiating a programme 'to purge' the list. The overstayer list contains the names of all people who, having been recorded as entering the country, have not been recorded as leaving... and no longer have the legal right to remain here... [The service] supplied us with a list of 13 'reasons' for this inaccuracy - including clerical error, people travelling on two passports, U[S] citizens leaving on military flights to Antarctica and tourists having died here." ...About 15,000 people are deemed at present to be overstayers.

...Overstayers, now there's a word you don't hear bandied about much in the politically correct 90s. Nor do you hear the phrase it was synonymous with in the mid-70s: dawn raids... In 1976 the raids (evidence that spin-doctoring is no new political phenomenon is revealed in newspaper reports of the time with the then Minister of Immigration... declaring them "visits") were designed to deal with what the[National] Government decreed a problem of illegal immigration of escalating proportions. To keep the record straight... such raids had also been carried out under[the] Labour Government in 1974. Immigration division figures in the mid-70s estimated the number of overstayers at between 10,000 and 12,000 with up to 75[%] of them being Pacific Islanders. The campaign involved not just police, immigration officials (and occasionally dogs) arriving at houses in the early hours of the morning, but warnings being issued that those who didn't quite look like true-blue Kiwis should keep their passports with them at all times. The problem... said those pointing the finger at the activities of the Department of Labour which was charged with administering the Immigration Act, was that those with brown faces were prone to be picked because, like Friesian cows in a herd of Jerseys - to paraphrase a remark allegedly made at the time by one of the main defenders of the raids - they were easily identifiable... [One] policeman... of the time... says the order to "go to areas where brown-skinned people are congregated and question them as to the validity of their stay," came from the top. Pitt St, Karangahape Rd and upper Symonds St were the "first ports of call" for [the policeman] and his colleagues. The memory of a job to be carried out in the line of duty still makes the Samoan-born constable laugh immoderately: "We collected four or five people and took them down to the station. Among them was a Niuean, a Rarotongan [both legally entitled to residency] and a Maori - they weren't particularly happy that we took them and it was probably illegal that we did." [The constable], who was outspoken at the time about what he saw and still considers... "a very bad policy," says the campaign was originally hung on a law-and-order issue; part of a task force initiative to clean up the streets. From there it developed into dawn raids and [he] was involved in three or four of them. They were, he says cautiously, "a bit insensitive... when the dogs were sent in there at that time in the morning. You'd think it was the crime of the century." ...But there was, according to [the constable], another side to the story. "A lot of the problems came from the Pacific Island community itself... You bring your cousin into the country, he's not conforming, not sending money home, not paying rent, so you... [phone the police] and send him back." He'd try, he says, to let people know the consequences of the many anonymous calls to the station to inform on relatives. His worst memory is of "old Joe" whose nephew was playing up. "We went and picked him up and half an hour later who turns up crying and saying he'd changed his mind, but Joe. It was too late. The nephew was taken into custody and deported." ...It was a time of painful learning for everyone... Outrage. Injustice. It was certainly there says... an Auckland-based lawyer who was then president of the Law Society of Western Samoa. In legal terms, he says, the attitude of the Samoan people affected is today much as it stood then: "If you've breached the laws of another country and you're caught... well, so be it..." Retrospectively, though, he suggests that history might judge the episode as an occasion where "the immigration system failed to filter and then, suddenly, it was amputation time." ● 'In a morning raid yesterday, police and immigration officers took a screaming 10-year-old from her adoptive parents' home to deport her to Samoa - although she has no close family there (her family had all come to live in NZ legally; adopted in 1991, she is in this country on an expired student permit; her adoptive parents were granted citizenship in 1996). A lawyer got a last-minute court order to stop the deportation.'

...In times of economic prosperity migrants can be absorbed. In times of unemployment and recession, however, popular pressure means that governments are often forced to expel foreign workers, as Nigeria did in 1985. Nigeria had absorbed 900,000 workers from neighbouring countries. In the small Gulf state of Qatar, 88% of the workforce is made up of foreign workers; 80% in Kuwait (the great majority of them Palestinians').]

...Thailand says it will deport all illegal alien workers from the country and stop issuing work permits for unskilled foreign labourers to preserve jobs for Thais. An estimated one million aliens working in the country will be affected. Thailand is fighting its worst economic crisis in decades and unemployment is rising.

...[The Thai Government is considering joining legal action against NZ's Immigration Service over the treatment of Thais arriving here. Thai Embassy officials in Wellington are alarmed at reports of their citizens being held as suspected overstayers or prostitutes after arriving in Auckland or Christchurch. A total of 1238 people were refused entry to NZ in the year to June, 900 of them from Thailand. That number is more than 20 times that of the groups with the next highest rate of refusal, AUSNs and Malaysians, with 42 each. Embassy staff looked into the treatment of their nationals after reading the *Herald's* October 13 account of a Thai woman who was held for 2 1/2 days at the Papakura police station awaiting a flight home until a last-minute court hearing allowed her to continue her holiday. The woman claimed police denied her sanitary napkins and she had to resort to tearing strips from a handkerchief. Since then the *Weekend Herald* has been told of five more cases of alleged mistreatment of Thai women. □ One woman, with children aged 3 and 5, came to Auckland to stay and work for her sister to escape an abusive partner. She flew home to see her critically ill father after being advised by an immigration consultant that as it was an emergency she would not require a visa to return. She was turned away at Auckland Airport on August 29. □ The 25-year-old daughter of Thai Government officials spent a night locked up at the Papakura police station before being flown home, despite having guaranteed accommodation and a credit card. The university graduate was coming to Auckland to study English. □ A 23-year-old Thai woman came to NZ to visit her aunt and NZ-born husband after finishing university exams. She spent two days in the Otahuhu police station despite having a passport, return ticket,

accommodation and a financial guarantor. □ The Ombudsman is being asked to consider the treatment given to a 26-year-old woman who was visiting a NZ man she met in Thailand and has subsequently married. After being stopped because of visa problems and despite having accommodation, a NZ sponsor and available money in her Thai bank account, she was handcuffed and held before being sent home. □ A young Thai girl was held at the Papakura police station for two days after arriving with a friend who was a regular business visitor to NZ. Immigration officials said she had insufficient money for a brief visit despite carrying \$750 and an ATM card with \$5000 credit. She was released an hour before her flight home after the intervention of a NZ friend and a lawyer. The lawyer for the woman held on October 13, who is also dealing with two of these cases, said it appeared all young, attractive Thai women arriving here were considered potential prostitutes and turned back if they aroused suspicion. "If this was happening to NZ women on a regular basis everybody would be up in arms." She said many problems arose because the women spoke limited English. Thais do not require visitor visas to holiday here for up to three months. An Immigration Service spokesperson said only about 5% of Thais arriving in NZ were refused entry. Of those, only a very small number were detained. He said evidence showed many of those sent home had been forced to borrow money to travel.'

... 'In a matter of minutes, heavy-handed, inept migration officers resurrected the spectre of the 70s – memories of dawn raids and random street checks based solely on skin colour. All they needed was that one near-dawn swoop which led to the illegal deporting last week of a Filipino overstayer family despite a pending appeal. The family was immediately returned from Kuala Lumpur after the department had badly misinformed the Immigration Minister on the details. She was forced into an abject, angry explanation and apology to Parliament. A terrible start to a new look, tough policy on overstayers. There are no simple answers to the overstayer issue. Outcomes which will appease legal sticklers affront liberals and ethnic advocates alike. Politicians are uncertain which way to jump, knowing they'll be damned if they do and if they don't. For their own political and socially PC reasons, various Governments, both National and Labour, have ignored the obvious migration controversy waiting to happen. They've pretended that the legally invisible yet socially very visible hidden population of illegal immigrants does not exist. But they do exist – national estimates are as high as 22,000 – protected by their families, churches and their ethnic communities sometimes for years, living underground, working under assumed names and illegally, without official records, bearing and raising children. Always in fear that a chance encounter with officialdom will reveal them. One minor traffic smash and their cover is blown. Now, that terror is magnified since the recent law change could mean near instant deportation – as the Filipino family knows only too well. This is not an attempt to cloak the facts. Make no mistake, most overstayers are here illegally and deliberately so. They chose to come here on some pretence and then officially disappeared. As they had intended. While the Immigration Service busied itself with other business – like preventing a British grandmother from living with family here because she had a daughter in the UK, ignoring that they were permanently estranged. She may well have left from an airport crowded with other elderly grandmothers from somewhere closer, arriving here for permanent residence without the same issues being raised. Immigration is not noted for its judgment or its heart – obviously for good reason. Too many overstayers, too many opportunities for mistakes and bad decisions. Too many unanswered questions. Like the pleas from Asians trapped into illegal deals by dishonest agents. They ask why there should be amnesty for people who for five years knowingly evaded detection for what was a deliberate illegal act.'

... 'The Government is considering a selective amnesty for overstayers, which would allow thousands of Pacific Islanders to stay in NZ if they have strong family ties. It would help if they had jobs. The amnesty, similar to policies applied in 1991 and 1987, would not include serious criminals. Of the 20,000 overstayers three years ago, about 4000 were Samoan, 2400 Tongan, 1900 British and 1600 American. Ministers are also looking at developing a special Pacific Island access category, which would include Tonga and Fiji as well as Samoans. At present, up to 1100 Samoan citizens annually who have a job offer in NZ and are aged between 18 and 45 may be granted residence. They may also qualify under other categories, such as family, humanitarian or general skills. A cabinet minister said he wanted a review of the Citizen (Western Samoa) Act 1982, which overturned a Privy Council decision confirming NZ citizenship rights on Samoans born between 1924-1949 during NZ's administration, and their children.' ● 'The PM is expected to acknowledge, if not say sorry for, the deadly flu epidemic of 1918 that killed thousands in Samoa after the crew of a NZ trading ship lied about sick passengers and let them ashore, and the Mau killings under NZ colonial rule a decade later when NZ police gunned down unarmed independence protesters, killing nine and wounding 50.'

... 'The Government's payroll tax apology to the Chinese is seen as the first step on the road to reconciliation says Waitakere City's lone Asian politician. From 1881 till 1944, all Chinese immigrants had to pay £10 entry tax, valued at \$20 million in today's terms.' In related news, **a n ugly row has erupted in West Auckland over the right to bestow citizenship on new immigrants. The Mayor of Waitakere... says [the] Waipareira MP... has muscled in on his job by organising a mass "vote-catching" citizenship ceremony. "This is blatant political hijacking of what is supposed to be a non-political event and, in my view, sets a dangerous precedent,"... But the National MP lashed out last night, describing the mayor as "insecure" and "egotistical"...** ["The mayor] thinks he is the king pin in Waitakere City, but he is proving that he is really only the court jester,"... **The backbench MP denied the initiative was politically motivated, saying many of the residents were not even in his electorate. He contacted the Department of Internal Affairs offering to hold a function because he was concerned that some residents had been waiting[for seven months] to become N[Z]ers... He was fronting a ceremony at Waitakere College involving 300 immigrants on Friday in a bid to reduce a backlog of around 800 people.**

... ['Foreigners who come here to live often seek assistance from immigration consultants to help them with the process of becoming NZ citizens. Often clients speak little or no English but are willing to pay large sums of money – between \$1500 and \$25,000 – for some consultant assistance in securing a visa. However, dishonest immigration consultants are giving the industry a bad name in NZ. One consultant, who deals mainly with Japanese-speaking people, says it is too easy for the unscrupulous to set themselves up as immigration consultants in NZ. He knows of clients who have hired an immigration consultant and paid high sums of money only to see nothing done. He wants to see compulsory registration for all professional consultants. Says the police officer in charge of Auckland's Asian crime unit: "If you're asking me if immigration consultants are involved in fraud, then yes, it would seem to be the case." He says the on-going Operation Passport is an investigation that looks at the fraudulent sale of NZ passports to foreign nationals.'

... "'Sex, lies and money" lured a high-flying immigration official into a passport scam that allowed foreigners to stay in the country. The former team leader of the passport office in Auckland was jailed for 2 1/2 years yesterday after issuing 48 false passports to mostly Asian immigrants. The 31-year-old, separated from his wife, became ensnared when his Thai girlfriend introduced him to the mastermind of the immigration ring, allegedly a city restaurateur. It is believed immigrants were charged about \$35,000 for the passports. Authorities were tipped off when a Chinese man was stopped last July at Auckland Airport with a letter saying passports could be brought from a staff member at the Department of Internal Affairs. Several other people will also appear before Auckland courts in connection with the scam and police say they were still hunting some of the illegal immigrants.'

... 'Two cabinet ministers are today ordering officials to investigate an immigration scheme where homeless Aucklanders are lured into sham Asian marriages for thousands of dollars. An undercover reporter exposed how an Auckland company arranged marriages from which the Asians hoped to gain permanent residency.' Incidentally, 'an organised crime ring blamed for bringing over 1000 illegal immigrants into NZ on fake passports was run from west Auckland homes. Two men and a woman are on bail for a variety of fraud charges and will appear in the Waitakere District Court on Monday. Houses in Glen Eden and Glendene were among properties raided by police last week. A Henderson detective says the syndicate of Iranian and Afghani nationals – which is linked to three others around the world and has been operating in NZ for the past five years – was mainly involved in smuggling immigrants and refugees into NZ and AUS. To track down the ringleaders, Henderson police are working with the immigration department and officials in AUS'...

'This week, in yet another warning of the soaring global trade in people and passports, authorities in AUS and Hong Kong cracked a gang supplying AUSn citizenship for cash. Unlike scams operating in the Middle East, where fake AUSn visas and identity documents are openly on sale for \$US5000, this was the real thing. At its heart was a corrupt and not-yet-named immigration official in Sydney who earned about \$A1 million in bribes by flashing 140 Chinese through the citizenship process under special provisions bypassing normal requirements. In Hong Kong, the Independent Commission

Against Corruption arrested a local emigration consultant, two associates and 26 customers following a year-long investigation. By the time of his arrest, the commission said, the consultant had earned \$A5 million by charging up to \$A100,000 for new passports. The client list ran from people simply wanting a new life to criminals increasing the scope and flexibility of their international travel. And in Nairobi, the UN is investigating five refugee officials – one Italian and four Kenyans – who allegedly charged up to \$US5000 a head to push the fortunate and moneyed to the front of queues heading to Canada, the US and AUS. AUS has been a growing destination for traffickers. The trade is a low-risk, high-return venture for traffickers – but expensive and dangerous for the desperate. Last year, more than 2700 people made the journey that most often ends at Ashmore Reef, a desolate strip of land off the northwestern coast of AUS. They do not find a ready welcome. AUSn officials track the boats through intelligence arrangements with agencies in the Middle East, China and Indonesia, and intercept many with RAAF Orion aircraft and patrol boats. Last year, AUS poured \$A124 million more into its coastal surveillance network, including two new Dash 8 patrol aircraft and a new night-capable helicopter to patrol the Torres Strait, new satellite communications technology and a new national surveillance centre linked to state government agencies and defence bases. Tough new fines and controls have also been introduced to establish the identities of asylum-seekers who frequently try to conceal their origins. The cost to AUS, both financially and politically, is high. Finding, intercepting and detaining illegal immigrants costs about \$A120 million a year. Their detention has become a political nightmare, with riots, hunger strikes, mass breakouts and persistent claims of neglect, violence and sexual abuse plaguing the Government.’

... ‘The Government is under pressure to drop laws forcing expatriates to choose between AUS and their adopted country. Present laws prevent people born in AUS from keeping their passport if they take up citizenship elsewhere, but allow some migrants dual citizenship, depending on the laws of their homeland. The AUSn Citizenship Council recommends AUS follow the lead of countries such as Britain and the US, which allow their citizens 2 passports. The Opposition immigration spokesperson said AUSns shouldn’t be penalised because globalisation forced them overseas for jobs, study and business.’

... ‘At the beginning of this year, the head of the Auckland University Business School asked her 800 first-year students how many of them were born overseas. Two-thirds put up their hands. How many, she asked, expected to be overseas in five years? 80% put up their hands. Perhaps they were just going on their “OE” and would come back. So she asked how many thought they would still be overseas in 20 years. This time they hesitated. “It will depend on how well NZ’s doing.” For most NZers, this is a deeply worrying time. After pumping money into the country for much of the past 15 years, suddenly foreign investors are pulling out. The dollar has dropped to its lowest value ever – so low that the PM has suggested we might be better off to give it up and adopt the AUSn currency. From 1960 to 1984, the income of the average NZer slipped from 100% of the average in the world’s 23 rich countries to 67%. Since 1984 we have slid to 54% of the rich-country average. The head, an American, says our pay levels for professional people are now even lower. “Ten years ago, when I came to this country, our salary levels were about 50% of the international levels. Now they’re 30% and falling. So attracting top talent here is impossible. There are areas of the university that haven’t been able to hire anyone except for Third World scholars for five to seven years – in business, information technology, high-technology engineering and medicine.” It is not much better on the factory floor. A South Auckland manufacturer lost three people off its production line a few weeks ago, all going to AUS. Its chief executive, who divides his time between the company’s Auckland and AUSn plants, says a worker on the average wage in AUS is now just over \$10,000 a year better off after tax than a worker on the average wage here. The result is a shortage of skilled workers’ in NZ.

... ‘Migrants from countries other than Pacific islands accounted for 11,471 – or 17% – of Auckland’s registered unemployed in June. Of the legion of jobless migrants, 3980 held university degrees or other tertiary qualifications. Many migrants pack up after years of fruitless job-hunting and head for AUS. The AUSn Immigration and Multicultural Affairs Department says 30.8% of the 31,610 NZ passport-holders who emigrated across the Tasman in the year to June were born in third countries.’]

...Almost 5300 N[Zers left] for Queensland in the year to March... according to its Local Government and Planning Minister... making them the state’s major source of overseas immigrants at 36%. [However, Sydney remains the most popular adopted home for NZers in AUS – ‘70,000 live there.’

... ‘I feel smug when AUSns mutter about putting limits on the number of Kiwis going to West Island. Years ago, in a preemptive strike against just that, I got my mum’s Aussie birth certificate, threw some money at the relevant bureaucrat, and got a beige piece of paper saying that hence forth I was advancing Australia fair. Just as well. Our cuddies are trying to push the doors shut. Since February, Kiwis arriving have faced a two-year stand-down before becoming eligible for benefits – inference being that they turn up on Bondi Beach and slum it on the AUSn government. This overlooks the fact that both governments balance their welfare books, and that NZ’s much-lamented brain drain isn’t going to Burkina Faso or Alaska. More and more of our professional people train here, but give their gifts to AUS. Some would say that working in AUS is a dubious privilege – you might get more money, but you enjoy sand flies the size of small aeroplanes, crocodiles and snakes. But I have to admit that there are lots of things to like about life in Aussie. People are laid-back – okay, brash – and have an ability to laugh at themselves. NZers often seem to prefer the gloomy side of the street. Look at the respective nation’s recent films if you doubt this: Aussie has given the world hilarious gems like *The Castle*, *Simply Ballroom* and *Muriel’s Wedding*. We’ve offered up *The Piano*, *Once Were Warriors* and *What Becomes of the Broken-Hearted?* Generally, I sit on the fence on the Aussie/Kiwi reciprocal rights issue. Neither passport has an advantage over the other – neither will let me work in Europe without a big fight. Thus, I can be bought – and right now I’m sticking with’ AUS.

... ‘in a secret transtasman deal expected to be signed before Christmas, the Government is preparing to let AUS cut permanent residency rights for NZers, meaning they would be treated the same as other migrants. NZers could still live in AUS under the proposed deal. But without permanent residency, they would not be entitled to family tax relief, maternity allowances, childcare benefits, housing benefits and even education for their children. It will not apply to those who already have permanent residency in AUS. In return, AUS will stop asking for millions of dollars from our Government to pay for NZers receiving benefits in AUS. The PM last night went to great pains to stress that NZ’s taxpayers were paying the social welfare benefits of expatriates living in AUS – something they did not do for NZers in other countries. A briefing paper from the Foreign Affairs Minister, leaked to the NZ Press Association, said the agreement would halve the annual flow of people across the Tasman. The uneven nature of the present arrangements has long concerned the AUSn Government. AUS’s Immigration Minister produced figures last month showing 31,615 NZ citizens moved permanently to AUS in the year ended March, compared with 5208 AUSns moving in the other direction.’ In related news, from] **next year 400 N[Z]ers aged between 18 and 30 will be able to take a year-long working holiday in Canada, with the same number of Canadians having the right to come here.**

...Vancouver and Auckland are the best cities... to live in, according to a report just published... by the Swiss-based Corporate Resources Group... The study... is widely used by Governments and international companies in assessing how to pay staff they send abroad. The annual survey focuses on “quality of living” issues that most concern business people[, rating]... the cities for political and economic stability, crime, pollution, health, environment and schooling... This year it covered 192 main cities, including 31 appearing for the first time. These were mostly from developing countries... The... top-ranked cities... for business executives to be posted to... were: Vancouver, 1; Auckland, 2; Toronto, 3; Zurich, 4; Geneva, 5; Melbourne, 6; Sydney, 7; Helsinki, 8; Vienna, 9; Brussels, 10. The five lowest-ranked cities were: Phnom Penh, 188; Khartoum, 189; Sarajevo, 190; Baghdad, 191; Brazzaville, 192... Last year Vancouver, Toronto, Zurich and Geneva took top honours, and Tashkent and Sarajevo were the lowest ranked. [‘Auckland was ranked as the world’s fifth best city, and the top city to live in among Asian and Pacific countries (Wellington was the only other NZ city rated – coming in 7th in the Asia/Pacific region). In 1995, Auckland and Sydney were ranked equally’. The Treasury Department will be hoping that the latest rankings encourage more people to migrate to NZ.]

...The Treasury has cut its estimate of the economy’s sustainable growth rate because of net migration slowing to a trickle... The Treasury has for some time assumed the economy can grow at a sustainable trend rate of 3.5[%] a year... But in yesterday’s December Economic and Fiscal Update

it said the sustainable growth rate was now more like 3[%], because the reduction in net migration would pull labour force growth below 1[%] a year. Annual net migration inflows have dwindled... as fewer would-be immigrants are approved and the number of people permanently leaving rises... The effect of the economy being able to take 3[%] strides rather than 3.5... is, very roughly, \$500 million less a year flowing through pay packets, cash registers and tax coffers.

...N[Z] will open its gates to an expected 45,000 immigrants next year after a 1995 clampdown slashed numbers and saw investment plummet... A formal announcement is not expected until at least next week once the matter has been considered by Cabinet. The decision will mark a huge policy switch for [the leader of NZ] First... who, during last year's election campaign... claimed... that immigration had put massive strains on services "to the detriment of other existing residents." ...[he had] pledged to slash immigration to 10,000. That target was described as "crazy" by... [the] Immigration Minister... who yesterday said the party was ill-informed about the "critical importance" of immigration. "I have a number of reforms in the pipeline..." [the minister] said... during a three-day visit... [to] Hong Kong. - 1997

N[Z] is throwing open its doors to the elderly in the hope of boosting the flow of immigrants... [T]he business investor category has been extended from 65 to 84, although applicants aged over 65 will lose points. The Government is also looking to attract more pensioners to retire to sunny N[Z]... On present rates of departure, residency approvals need to rise from about 28,000 to 38,000... to meet... the Government... target of a net population gain of 10,000 a year... Although the age restrictions in the investor category have been relaxed, the minimum investment required has risen... to \$1 million. The new policies undo some of the tougher restrictions National imposed in 1995, including a \$20,000 English language bond. Instead, non-English speakers who are otherwise accepted must prepay for approved English language lessons. The cost will vary according to competency but could be between \$1700 and \$6500. Immigration offices will be opened in Shanghai, Moscow and Pretoria, and nationals from Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay will be able to travel here without a visa. The new posts' location and the visa waiver signal where the Government wants to expand N[Z]'s trade and tourism potential... The Government is to boost its overseas tourism promotion by \$12.5 million... to cash in on "millennium opportunities." ...The move follows a *Time* magazine article that billed Sydney as the first major city to see the new millennium, but failed to mention N[Z] at all.

If decreased immigration and tourism thwart the Government's economic plans, its focus may have to totally revert to expanding NZ's first official method of earning revenue from overseas – exporting ('in 1818, 60 tonnes of NZ flax, valued at £2,600, were exported – the first record of export of a NZ processed product; the fibres of NZ's indigenous flax plants – used by the Maoris for clothing, matting, baskets, cordage and fishing lines – were used by Europeans for ship sails and rigging; as steam superseded sail, the demand for flax fell, but WWI needs led to a revival and a record export of 32,000 tonnes in 1916').

In order to increase the volume of produce that NZ can export to certain nations, or to gain access to others, NZ's Government is an advocate of FREE TRADE. Unfortunately, free trade agreements mean that NZ must accept imports from those nations – and, if the economic value of the imports exceeds that of the exports, NZ loses money. It can also lose money if someone fails to ensure that unwanted plants, insects or larger animals aren't imported at the same time (e.g., an importer or transporter who tries to save a few dollars by not fumigating thoroughly – if at all – can cost NZ \$millions in eradication costs).

The Government has injected a further \$1 million into a programme to prevent the Asian gypsy moth from establishing itself in N[Z]. Officials... believe the moth would pose a serious threat to the \$2 billion forestry industry if it becomes established... Forestry officials have been on the alert for the arrival of the moth since egg masses were found on a Russian ship in May 1993. The moth has been described as the "foot and mouth" of forestry... To catch the moth before it spreads here some 2500 traps laced with a sex stimulant which attracts male moths have been laid near the ports and airports. No moths have yet been found... - 1995

Forestry officials have banned shipping containers from the Russian Far East to stop the destructive gypsy moth from entering N[Z]. In the past few years several of the distinctive containers have been found to have been infested with... eggs.

...[The discovery of 20 live gypsy moth caterpillars and a nest in the wheel of a used Japanese imported car caused a scare at the Port of Auckland yesterday. A Ministry of Forestry quarantine service spokesperson said the vehicle was immediately isolated and fumigated. The rest of the shipment was reinspected and cleared, and ministry staff also inspected vegetation in the surrounding area.]

...The Minister of Forestry... wants tougher action to keep unwanted pests such as the white-spotted tussock moth out of the country. He said yesterday that the risks of foreign pests entering N[Z] had increased as 20,000 used cars were imported each month... There were regular checks for the Asian gypsy moth which was easy to see, but the white-spotted tussock moth was smaller. A cluster of eggs could be concealed under a car's mudguard or flap. "I am not satisfied, having looked at the evidence, that the... vehicles coming into N[Z] are clean enough." ...Importers of second-hand forestry equipment had been told that if it came into the country dirty the equipment might be sent home. Subject to the recommendations of the ministries, and if the cabinet agreed, he was[also] prepared to order that shipments of second-hand vehicles be reloaded and sent home if dirty cars were found.

...Residents of Auckland's eastern suburbs will be losing sleep this spring over the white spotted tussock moth. Within the next few weeks, the Government is expected to approve aerial spraying, based on the threat to N[Z]'s forests posed by the moth's highly mobile and voracious caterpillar. Civil Aviation Authority assent has yet to be given, but the operation will probably involve low-flying aircraft dropping a mist of insecticide over 40 sq km... Flying could begin before sunrise over several days... with aircraft applying the insecticide 10m to 30m above roof lines... [The spray zone contains 80,000 people, including] 37 schools and 25 rest homes and hospitals... The general manager of protection operations for the Minist[ry] of Forestry... said last night: "When we spray, people will be woken up. There is no question about it. All we ask is for people to bear with us for the short time we are spraying so we can protect our forests." ...An... entomologist... [from the] Forest Research Institute at Rotorua... said young and older caterpillars had differing diets. Young... ate blackberry plants but, as they grew older, they moved on to eat radiata pine and other trees. With blackberry being a common weed in pine forests the impact of the caterpillars could be significant on the \$2.6 billion forestry export industry... The species, originating from Asia where it is not considered a major pest, was discovered in Kohimarama... after possibly entering the country in an imported secondhand car. Scientists believe the infestation has been contained in a 7 sq km zone in the Kohimarama, St Johns and Mission Bay area. Garden trees have been stripped by the caterpillar which has a fondness for roses and plum, peach and apple trees. Testing... has also found the caterpillar likes native beech trees and rosaceous natives... Inside the... zone, masses of whitish eggs, individually the size of a pinhead but laid in clusters the size of a 5c coin or smaller, are being monitored two or three times a week by scientists for signs they are hatching. No-one knows for sure when they will hatch. But just one female, if left to survive, could be responsible for producing 3 million more females by autumn. The best prediction is that hatching will take place in spring, and the plan is to have the spraying operation ready by September 1. The ministry proposes using a spray of Btk... to battle the newly hatched caterpillars, which in their young stage can be dispersed by the wind on long silken threads. The spray is claimed to be one of the safest insecticides known. The bacterium occurs naturally in soils, foliage, water and air in most countries, including N[Z]. It has been used for 30 years in North America... It has not been used to eradicate white tussock

moth before... The toxin in Btk is activated by the gut contents of the caterpillar, causing paralysis and death in two to three days. No evidence has been found that Btk causes any problems for people other than those involved in the spraying, who can develop minor irritations such as dry skin, burning eyes and runny noses. No effects on... bees, spiders, worms, reptiles, birds or marine life, have been reported, apart from the temporary loss of caterpillars as food... [I]t does kill all exposed caterpillars of moths and butterflies... but populations should recover after a time... The spray itself is made up mostly of water but also contains non-toxic thickening and sticking agents. It can be applied at a volume of 75,000 litres per 25 sq km... The ministry would mount a huge consultation exercise before any aerial and ground spraying began... "Even though this spray is so environmentally safe and harmless to life other than caterpillars, people will still not like it and you cannot blame them for that."

...When the BTK organic pesticide begins to settle on Auckland's eastern suburbs... residents can take some comfort in the fact that they are not guinea pigs. Cities have been sprayed with BTK before and the verdict... is that harmful effects that can be directly blamed on the pesticide are unlikely... The largest health study of an urban population took place after extensive BTK spraying over Vancouver... in April 1992 to eradicate the Asian gypsy moth... believed to have arrived on Russian freighters... The moth... posed a threat to Canadian forestry... Swabs from 128 patients produced positive cultures likely to be BTK, with 74 of those patients coming from within the spray zone and 50 from outside. The positive results from patients outside the spray zone might be explained by the natural occurrence of BTK... But none of the positive cultures could be linked to clinical illness... The main author of the study... attributed reported illnesses to anxiety rather than the effects of the spray.

...Health concerns over plans for aerial spraying in Auckland... are now focusing on the chemical ingredients... rather than the insecticide itself... The spray to be used in the Ministry of Forestry's Operation Evergreen is Foray 48B... The precise make-up of the formulation, manufactured... in Chicago, is a trade secret... Information from the *US Journal of Pesticide Reform*... identifies some of the chemicals which "could cause health problems." The information states that Foray 48B has contained sodium hydroxide, sulphuric acid, phosphoric acid, potassium phosphate and methyl paraben, a potential allergen... [A]sthmatics, allergy sufferers and people with compromised immune systems... [could be] at some risk... The Ministry of Health says the spray will not be a health risk but Auckland Healthcare is preparing a spray health impact study... The chief adviser (public health medicine)... said proving links between symptoms and spraying was not always easy and no one could give a blanket guarantee to every individual. "There is no such thing as zero risk in any aspect of human endeavour." The Ministry of Forestry says spraying is likely to begin about the middle of next month. It has \$5.1 million for the operation...

Eastern suburbs households, all 28,425 of them, will receive information packs from today on the... spraying programme... The information... contains a conclusion that "generally, no special care needs to be taken by the public..." The document also states, however: "People with severe or unstable asthma or other respiratory conditions, immune conditions, allergies, or others who have concerns such as pregnant women, can reduce exposure to the spray by staying inside with windows and doors shut during the spraying operation."

...Beware the white-spotted tussock moth caterpillar – even a dead one can exact an itchy revenge... The caterpillar... has hairs which can irritate the skin of people allergic to them.

...Six white-spotted tussock moth caterpillars were discovered in Kohimarama yesterday... If hundreds more... hatch in coming days officials will probably have no option but to call in a DC-6 aircraft from Canada to start... spraying... The aircraft could be here... in a week... [A] huge \$1 million public information campaign will begin next week in newspapers and on television and radio. For the estimated 20[%] of residents who do not have an interest in the news, officials are considering towing an Operation Ever Green... banner behind a light aircraft over... eastern suburbs.

...The... Minister of Forests... said that the estimated cost of combating the moth had risen almost 60[%]... to nearly \$8 million. The sharp cost rise is partly a result of the selection of... Canadian-based... Conair Aviation Ltd... to carry out up to six early morning spraying runs... By starting flying at first light, the area can be covered within three hours, but weather conditions might delay flights until later in the day... The 40-year-old... DC6... has been chosen by authorities for safety reasons: with four engines, it can return to base without jettisoning its load of up to 12,000 litres... The plane... entered service with United Airlines... then was sold to Ansett... During one flight, an engine fell into a bay off Melbourne before the pilot safely landed. Ansett sold it to Far Eastern Transport, where it had a passenger role during the Vietnam war. Conair bought it in 1972.

...[a] Canadian DC-6... with two pilots and two engineers is expected to arrive at Whenuapai on Monday night and should be ready for spraying in a few days. The [CAA] has yet to approve the operational plan for the aircraft... The authority has specified a minimum altitude of 150m for a multi-engined spraying aircraft... It is understood, however, that the authority is set to agree to a spraying altitude of between 45m and 61m because of the net benefit to the country... [S]cientists have determined that a spray release height of 61m or less is required... Helicopters will be used for inaccessible areas such as gullies.

...The aerial war against the white-spotted tussock moth is due to begin today with a helicopter targeting densely vegetated gullies... Ground spraying of infested properties also will start... The... DC6... is to make a test drop of... Btk over Woodhill Forest to fine-tune equipment.

...Auckland has come under siege from unwanted and harmful insects. As the eastern suburbs braced themselves for the first aerial spraying... investigations were already under way into two new bug threats. Ministry of Agriculture quarantine officers intercepted 15 dead fruit fly larvae and many eggs contained in two commercial consignments of Tongan watermelons at the Port of Auckland yesterday... An operation to exterminate fruit flies in Mt Roskill involves insects from the same family... Earlier in the day, forestry officers found seven clusters of eggs of the destructive gypsy moth on the outside of a container on board a ship from Russia. Each cluster is thought to contain at least 1000 eggs.

...Ministry of Forestry officials[have] found another unwanted overseas visitor – a small tortoise beetle about one centimetre long believed to have come from A[US]... on an air stream... The beetle attacks primarily acacia wattle trees and is perceived as a much lesser threat to forestry and garden trees than the white spotted tussock moth. However, officials are wary of the possibility the beetle will adapt to N[Z] conditions and widen its eating habits... [Ministry] officers have been checking all over Auckland since the first beetles were found in April... Three sites of the beetle infestation have been found in Mt Wellington and Remuera... Pyrethrum spray – derived from chrysanthemum flowers – will be used to kill the beetles... [By the way, fruit] fly eggs found in a shipment of Tongan watermelons last week have failed to hatch after incubation, showing the fumigation treatment in Tonga was effective.

...Fruitgrowers' representatives expect a tough new border control strategy... which will lift the cost of border control by \$19.9 million over the next three years... will help to persuade overseas markets to lift restrictions imposed after the Auckland fruit fly discovery... Three more sniffer dogs will be used at Auckland Airport, which now has two beagles sniffing incoming international baggage, and the scheme will be extended to... the international mail centre in Auckland... and to the... Wellington, Christchurch, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Dunedin and Queenstown... airports... If it's not sniffed it will be x-rayed... About \$16.5 million will be spent installing and staffing... seven x-ray machines... to detect illicit food... at the Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch International Airports and at... the mail centre... The increased scanning of baggage would speed the processing of passengers because the... machines were fast and each would have seven staff... About \$500,000 will be spent on a public awareness campaign, including an in-flight video in a variety of languages to inform N[Z]-bound passengers about our agricultural laws. There will also be new passenger declaration forms in a wider variety of languages and improved signs and amnesty bins. The Minister of Agriculture... said officials were confident... the strategy... would push the detection rate higher than 80[%]... The President of the Fruitgrowers Federation... welcomed the strategy. "It's what we've been calling for," he said. Most countries that buy N[Z] fruit responded to the fruit fly larvae discovery in Mt Roskill in May by banning imports from within a 15km radius of the site and demanding fruit passing through the zone is insect-proofed by special wrapping. The bans are expected to come off early next year if no more flies or larvae are found... [Incidentally, m]ore than... 96[%] of this

year's export... apple... crop, have been sold, the Apple and Pear Marketing Board said yesterday. As of September 20, the board had sold 17.1 million cartons... in its four main market sectors – Europe, Britain and Scandinavia, Asia/Pacific and North America.

...N[Z] is the world's biggest exporter of apples but our closest neighbour is being denied the taste of Kiwi-grown fruit because A[US]n growers claim this country's crop is diseased... N[Z] has never exported apples to A[US] but Enza – a division of the Apple and Pear Marketing Board – wants to change that. It has officially applied... for permission to sell premium grade apples on the A[US]n retail market. The application is supported by A[US]n retailers who... welcome the chance to stock high quality N[Z] varieties, some of which are not available from their own domestic growers... The move is strongly opposed by A[US]n growers. They say the risk of contracting the disease fire blight from N[Z] apples could slash production by at least 25% with up to a third of growers going out of business. But... [Enza's] market access manager... said the A[US]ns are being alarmist. Extensive testing showed the bacteria were not present in mature fruit. [Incidentally, 'the search for the painted apple moth will be widened today. Properties within 1km of the infestation in a Waitakere industrial area will be checked by forestry crews over the next week. However, officials are cautiously optimistic that the intense outbreak of the AUSn import is concentrated on five Glendene industrial properties, which were sprayed with insecticide on Saturday. Another infected property had been found within 300m of the cluster. The chief forestry officer said that because the infestation appeared to be highly localised, eradication should be possible through ground spraying. The moth had probably been shipped here in a container. It was an AUSn native and generally considered a minor pest there, although it was sporadically a problem on pine and acacia trees. It had natural predators in AUS which kept the population in check. In NZ it is a more serious threat than the white-spotted tussock moth because it fed on a wider range of trees.']

...The unwelcome discovery of a batch of older tussock moth caterpillars in the eastern suburbs has Operation Ever Green staff on full alert. Ministry of Forestry staff have... found about a dozen... of the hairy pests in their final stage on five or six... properties... The operation leader... said discovery of the older caterpillars... was... not unplanned for. "Operation Ever Green has eradicated the vast bulk of the infestation but there was always a risk some stragglers would escape the spray,"... Appallingly wet spring weather had added to the problem, he said. Heavy rain following recent aerial spray days could have washed some of the organic spray off leaves before caterpillars started feeding on them... Meanwhile, the last DC-6 aerial spray... was planned for tomorrow morning, weather permitting, and ground spraying was expected to continue until closer to Christmas.

...Christmas trees are causing a headache for Operation Ever Green... The Ministry of Forestry is scared that the... moth could travel further if Christmas trees sold in eastern suburbs are taken out of the area... Tree growers or sellers could be given packs of fly spray and asked to spray the pines themselves... A Glendowie Christmas tree seller... said people came "for miles" to buy her trees, but none would be sold without meeting the ministry's regulations. It is illegal under the BioSecurity Act to remove anything from the controlled area without ministry approval. An initial ban on the sale of fresh trees had eastern suburbs residents worried... "People are quite distressed – they think they won't have a... tree at Christmas time." But... [a] forest health worker... said he hoped the issue would be resolved in time for the Christmas tree rush.

...HUNTERS of the dreaded white-spotted tussock moth were scratching their heads yesterday as to how the bugs survived one of the heaviest hit areas... Five adult male moths were trapped on Christmas Eve and Boxing Day... "[The area] was severely dealt with," [the operation leader] said. "It was sprayed from the air with the DC-6, then with the helicopter and also on foot. Some caterpillars survived all that." ...the moths may have been a small group not feeding at the time the Btk insecticide was sprayed... [E]ach aerial spray was thought to kill between 90-95% of the caterpillar population. Operation Ever Green staff are back on full alert today, with traps being set and checked daily throughout the danger zone. More traps would be added outside the infested areas during the next few days. - 1996

Auckland's eastern suburbs are to come under aerial attack again... Scientists and Operation Ever Green staff were called back from holidays... A larger twin-engined helicopter would be used to meet civil aviation regulations for flights over houses... Thirty-nine males have now been found... The males were attracted to traps by a hormone secreted by females. No egg clusters or females have been discovered in ground searches.

...While Auckland's eastern suburbs have been under a strict quarantine to contain the white-spotted tussock moth, a Rotorua entomologist... has been driving carloads of the pests across the country every week. Thousands of female tussock moths have been bred in the past three months to lure males into traps... "I'd rather not use real moths but there are no synthetic pheromones... [although] we do have people working on it," he said. Females were raised to the cocoon stage under secure conditions at the Forest Research Institute... one of the few facilities with a building designed specifically for rearing insects in isolation... Each week 500 cocoons were stacked inside plastic containers, stored in chillbins to keep them cool, and packed into the back of [the entomologist's] station wagon. "I tape the chillbins closed, too, in case I'm involved in an accident or something, and I drive non-stop to Auckland. The car is never, never left unattended,"... The moths were delivered directly to a secure "hatching" room within the spray zone, where they were locked in individual cages before being placed in traps. Their five-day lifecycle meant that between 50 and 60 were needed every day to replenish the 300 traps scattered throughout the eastern suburbs. Forty-nine male moths have been discovered alive... The leader of Operation Ever Green... said that weather-permitting, 100 properties would be ground-sprayed next week and about 100 ha aerial-sprayed. "We may still not get them all but we will continue until we completely wipe them out."

...THE Government will be asked for the second time for more money to eradicate the white spotted tussock moth... [after] Ministry of Forestry investigations... confirmed that the... moth is a threat to a larger list of trees and shrubs than first expected... Poplar, citrus, alder, birch, macadamia, wisteria, elm and grape were all now part of a list just compiled by... researchers... The ministry announcement comes as opposition to its spray campaign intensifies. In the past four weeks more than 1500 households in the helicopter spray zone have written to the ministry to withdraw their consent to spraying the area. But... under the Biosecurity Act, the ministry did not require residents' consent for aerial spraying or for inspectors to enter private property... The bigger issue is that forestry is now such a large part of N[Z] business. It directly employs more than 32,000 people... A helicopter completed the 20th aerial spray of the Kohimarama hot zone yesterday.

...Angry residents in the... spray zone last night demanded that the use of the chemical Btk be stopped immediately... Despite assurances by the Operation Ever Green leader... that the spraying was medically proven to be harmless, residents said they feared for themselves and their children... Headaches, nausea, skin rashes, itching, breathing difficulty and burning soreness of the throat and lungs were some of the symptoms the residents reported... One said the spray was too powerful because her children had been sick... immediately after spraying. "It's like dropping an atomic bomb to kill a spider," the woman said. Another woman said: "We're not against killing the moth, we're against hurting people. And the sound of the helicopter is enough to drive somebody up the wall."

...The Eastern suburbs has been a community under siege for six months... [After being] "bombed" 21 times... [s]ome very concerned residents began to communicate with specialists and groups in Canada and the U[S]. What they learned left them] aghast. No community has been sprayed with Btk more than three times... Opponents of the... anti-moth campaign... are considering legal action to stop further aerial spraying... One resident, whose wife is expecting a baby in June, said he would personally sue the Government if the child suffered defects... Reports of premature births and miscarriages have jumped in suburbs that were sprayed... Auckland Healthcare[']s environmental healthcare manager... did not know of any ingredients in the... spray used... that could cause such effects on pregnant women. "At this stage I believe there is no cause for concern but we would certainly investigate any cases that people report to us." ...If there was a genuine "cluster" of premature births or miscarriages, officials would also need to check other potential environmental causes such as lead poisoning from paint in older houses... Health officials... signed secrecy deals to stop them revealing what was in the insecticide... The helicopter spraying is due to finish at the end of the month...

People living in Auckland's tussock moth "hot zone"... are being asked to put their names on a register to be held in the National Archives... [An] independent medical adviser to the Ministry of Forestry, said registration would be voluntary and the information confidential. She said health risk assessments in N[Z] and overseas had concluded there were no particular concerns for people exposed to the Btk insecticide. "However, the register will provide people with an assurance they can be identified should studies be undertaken in the future." ...Research... showed... [the eastern suburbs had] 201 miscarriages per 1000 deliveries in 1995-96, dropping to 156 during the spraying months. The rest of central Auckland recorded 223 miscarriages per 1000 deliveries in 1995-96, compared with 189 during Operation Ever Green... [T]hree more spraying sessions [a]re scheduled before the end of spring, when an assessment would be made whether more spraying was required next year.

...Residents in the eastern suburbs have no guarantee that they have seen the last of spraying... The last aerial spray... was carried out yesterday... [after] 9 DC6 sprays... [and] 14 helicopter sprays... Officials said it was too early to tell whether more spraying would be required... 72 moths[have been] caught to date... Cost: \$8.27 million to June 1997...

Savings made by linking the Ministries of Agriculture and Forestry are to be put towards[future] eradication of the tussock moth. Up to \$2.5 million in operational savings is hoped for.

...A new moth pest which strips the leaves from eucalyptus trees has been discovered in... [NZ. The AUS]n Uraba lugens, commonly known as the gumleaf skeletoniser, is considered a potentially serious defoliator of a wide variety of eucalypts. It has attacked a dozen of the about 120 eucalyptus trees on the... Mt Maunganui Golf Course. Ministry of[Agriculture and] Forestry health officers and a Tauranga District arborist... are checking gum trees within a 5km radius... It was too early to say how the moth entered the country, but it was found within 4km of the Port of Tauranga.

...Another new pest, the brown lace lerp, is sucking the life out of some species of eucalyptus, and threatening a small but growing industry producing high-value timber from the trees. By the time the[then] Ministry of Forestry discovered the insect pest about a year ago it was too widespread to control. "There was no option other than we're going to have to live with the critter, which is often the way," a [Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry] spokesman said yesterday. "At this stage the decision is to do nothing." ...The Opposition spokeswoman on biosecurity... questioned whether the M[AF] had enough resources to fight more than one new pest infestation at a time... The pest is a major problem in parts of A[US], and it is believed it was introduced on foliage imported for a trade event... More than 7 million eucalyptus seedlings are available for planting by the industry this year... [T]wo mills in the country had invested more than \$5 million in the past three years in specialised drying and milling equipment... Timber... is already being exported to its country of origin, A[US]... An Auckland environmental consultant... first noticed gum trees around Auckland Airport were losing their leaves... last year and told the forest health service. Yesterday he was back at the airport complaining nothing had been done. "These[trees] were a picture of absolute beauty two years ago... This is an absolute disaster." ...[In related news, U[S]... environmental groups... concerned over the presence of bugs or pests in products from... [other countries have recently] taken court action that could affect N[Z]'s \$100 million timber exports to that country.

...['By 1920 about 100 species of insect pests had been introduced into the US, although this number has now been reduced by careful controls. ']

...A weevil introduced in North America to control rampaging European thistles itself went haywire and started preying on native plants. Scientists said the case illustrated the dangers of using living organisms to control pests, and recommended U[S] authorities be more careful about such imports... [A] professor of biology at the University of California... said public concerns about such issues were much stronger elsewhere. "Europe... A[US] and N[Z]... are way ahead of us on this."

...AgResearch Ruakura said that DNA studies... [of t]he clover root weevil, which is causing severe damage to pastures in the northern North Island... had shown that the insect was an almost exact match with weevils found in America. The discovery means that scientists can now target American sources for more information about the insect.

...Angry dairy farmers are demanding to know why action was not taken faster to control a clover weevil which they say could cause an agricultural catastrophe... Dairy farmers in the North Island have reported weak clover growth since spring and poor response to fertiliser applications. Recently, scientists in the Waikato have found clover weevil infestations of up to 600 adults a square metre, which can completely strip pasture of clover... Both... adult weevils... [and] larvae... reduce the amount of nitrogen clover is able to fix in the soil... [C]lover was the basis of N[Z]'s low-cost farming, giving it a real advantage over overseas producers. While the damage to the dairy industry alone could run to hundreds of millions of dollars, sheep and beef production could also be affected along with clover seed export in the South Island. "It may be absolutely necessary to stop it getting across Cook Strait." ...[the] chairman of Federated Farmers' dairy section... said he and most of the farming world found out about the alarming explosion of numbers of the weevil only in the past few weeks. But AgResearch scientists say the weevil arrived in this country in 1994 and a survey carried out in the following year showed it had spread to areas of Auckland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty... [An \$8000 MAF] survey showed the weevil would be impossible to eradicate... "...it has come into a very favourable environment with a lot of white clover which is fairly unoccupied with other insects and seems to be in an outbreak phase." ...It is estimated to be spreading at a rate of 35km a year, but there is no up-to-date information on its exact location... Emergency funding has been sought for research into the weevil's spread and possible predators. But the ministry's national adviser on plant pest control... said the weevil was not a priority for further funding... It is possible that some parasites already in N[Z] may adapt to control the clover weevil... When the closely related lucerne weevil arrived in N[Z] 23 years ago, it posed similar threats, but it is now well controlled following the release of two natural insect parasites... Two Morrinsville farmers... have put together figures for a 130ha dairy farm showing that it might cost \$13,565 a year to replace the lost nitrogen and \$91,000 if farmers adopted a do-nothing strategy... Nitrogen-fixing bacteria... may soon... be... imported from the U[S]...

Desperate farmers in drought-stricken Marlborough have been forced to refuse donated hay from the top half of the North Island because of fears that the clover-root weevil pest might spread... The... Federated Farmers... president... said many farmers in the "forbidden area" had made generous offers of hay, and it was regrettable that they would all be turned down. "We just can't run the risk of spreading the weevil further south." ...[However, h]e said the insect could fly a few kilometres a year, so its spread was inevitable. "We just want to contain it in the north until we find a way to get rid of it..." A chemical spray could be used, but that option had been ruled out because it could harm people and was expensive... Marlborough farmers were now looking at getting immediate hay donations from the deep south... [By the way, yesterday a MAF official said] that the white-spotted tussock moth was no longer seen as a significant threat to commercial forests, native forests or horticulture, but it [still posed] a significant risk to urban trees and gardens. In Auckland City alone, parks and private gardens had a value of at least \$1 billion.

...Another insect has slipped past N[Z]'s border control and infested an Auckland suburb. A European species of... sawfly not previously reported in N[Z]... was found by an Onehunga resident stripping his willow trees and taken to Landcare Research, Mt Albert, for identification... The sawfly is thought to attack only willow trees... Another sawfly already exists in N[Z] but it causes only small, reddish galls on the leaves of willows. The new species is thought to have more potential to cause harm because it is a defoliator... It may be the same species which invaded southern Africa in 1993-1994 and severely defoliated exotic willows... While the sawfly is not thought to pose the same threat to trees as the white-spotted tussock moth, border control authorities will take the finding seriously. Willows are mainly used as shelter belts and along streams to prevent erosion. The... [MAF is] expected to survey its distribution to see if anything can be done to halt its spread, and to find out how it got into N[Z].

...A new sawfly species found in Onehunga two weeks ago has spread rapidly across the Auckland region... A biological approach will be among the weapons analysed to fight the fly... Pest experts say its swift spread suggests attempts at eradication would not succeed... [Incidentally, f]ruit

flies have made it tough for travellers hoping to slink through the country's airports with undeclared contraband. X-ray machines installed at... [airports] last month to protect agriculture... after Mediterranean fruit flies were found in Auckland last September... are also being used to detect firearms, narcotics and undeclared alcohol and tobacco... The flies, whose existence threatened the country's \$1.4 billion fruit export industry, were thought to have entered in passengers' undeclared luggage.

...Six live fruit fly larvae... have been found since the start of the year in passengers' undeclared luggage. X-ray machines... picked up four of [them]... But a M[AF] briefing paper which says only 30[%] of baggage can be x-rayed at certain times has raised fears about ongoing surveillance. Coverage drops to this level during peak arrivals from high-risk countries because of lack of space to x-ray all luggage. Of 30,000 passengers who passed through the green, nothing to declare lane at the airport in the first month of x-ray surveillance, 378 seizures of material which could harbour fruit flies were made. A further 232 finds of other quarantine material was made... [In comparison, one] of the new dog detector teams found 576 quarantined items in the three months to December 31[, 1996]. Three-quarters of the travellers did not declare the illegal items... "It is a pretty alarming situation that that number of people can come in and not declare these items... It really breaks my heart," said... [the] national adviser (border inspection)... [D]etection rates of illegal quarantine risk goods are expected to increase from 55... to 85[%] by September this year. But with passenger numbers increasing, it is estimated the rates will fall back to 74[%]... unless extra steps are taken.

...Smugglers have been given the strong message that crime doesn't pay after the M[AF] fined two travellers... [An Aucklander] was fined \$3500... for attempting to possess unauthorised goods and making a false declaration to a MAF inspector... [He] was intercepted at Auckland International Airport with 2.5kg of mangoes and 4.5kg of other fruit. The fruit was found concealed in layers of clothing in a bag. It was later found to contain no fruit-fly larvae... [A] tourist from Indonesia, was fined \$800... on each of the same charges after 17 salak (snake fruit), 53 limes, 12 pieces of lemon grass and a bag of fresh leaves were discovered sewn into various items in his luggage.

...Tough fruit fly restrictions blighting N[Z] trade have prompted calls for a worldwide uniform export standard. A[US] yesterday lifted trade restrictions imposed on all fruit grown within a 15km radius of Mt Roskill... after one fruit fly generation and 28 days had passed since the last fruit fly was found. But the U[S] and Japan required three cycles... and... China has said it would lift its import ban on fruit from the North Island one year from the date the fly was first found.

...Recent *Herald* articles have painted a vivid picture of the A[US]n apple and pear industries' battle to keep fresh N[Z] products out of their market. Much has been made of their willingness to accept our competition if it was not for our fireblight status. Emotional blackmail makes good copy but how real is it? Who in A[US, or NZ] for that matter, was concerned when citrus growers in N[Z] found their livelihoods destroyed when our market was opened to uncontrolled international competition and A[US]n navel oranges flooded in at prices less than our cost of production. The response of Kiwi citrus growers was to search the world for new products and new markets. Today we have burgeoning orchards of easy-peel mandarins and lemons for the lucrative markets of Japan, closed to A[US]n growers because of their fruitfly... A[US]n apple and pear growers could well look at their stonefruit counterparts who, when faced with the challenge of substantial volumes of imports from N[Z] some years ago, invested in developing new varieties and production technologies to such a degree that today they have not only almost closed our opportunity in their market but also now compete head on with us in Asian markets... A[US] has at least 11 different species of fruitfly in residence yet N[Z] still accepts assurances of the A[US]n authorities that their protocols are robust enough to make sure fruitfly do not accompany commercial shipments of fruit and vegetables to our shores. Many of our fruitgrowers feel less accommodating. The A[US]n fruitfly menace has a relatively far greater potential to decimate N[Z]'s fruit industry than fireblight has to affect A[US]n growers... Fireblight was first recognised here over 80 years ago. It caused devastation until knowledge advanced to the point that fireblight is just another problem to be managed... Today... understanding... is increasing rapidly; work being done at Ruakura on using honeybees to deliver biological control agents while pollinating flowers looks particularly exciting... Fireblight is simply not an issue. A[US]n arguments heavily distort the incidence and management of fireblight here. Claims of vast quantities of antibiotic sprays being used are simply not correct... A[US]n growers want guarantees that they will never get fireblight. Should we require guarantees that we will never get fruitfly? Over the years more than a few Aussie growers have sneaked back home with some exciting new plant material in their pockets; a few have been caught. That is a far greater risk area... Of course, the fact that you could take a crate of apples off the Auckland market, whiz it over to Sydney and sell it for three times the price would have nothing to do with the issue at all.

...You have to believe that it was all done in the interests of science and was the result of a well-trained, inquiring mind... According to the diplomatic members of the local scientific community, A[US] owes N[Z] a debt of gratitude over the discovery by [a] Kiwi scientist... of the potentially devastating plant disease fireblight... in Melbourne's Royal Botanical Gardens... While there he happened, by chance, upon a nondescript bush in an out-of-the-way corner of the vast gardens. On the bush he noticed a couple of suspicious-looking twigs and a clump of diseased leaves. [The scientist], who is something of an expert in diseases such as fireblight, was so alarmed at his discovery that he smuggled the plant out of the country and back to N[Z] to perform tests which confirmed that A[US] wasn't as clean as it claimed... The curious nature of the... affair hasn't been helped by [the scientist] himself. In a rather tongue-in-cheek way, [he] described his Melbourne discovery in a fairly low-key style. "I took a few little twig things and, lo-and-behold, they had fireblight," he told the N[Z] media... But the story... is tipping transasman relations in the direction of cricket's infamous underarm incident...

N[Z]'s Apple and Pear Marketing Board says it has previously sent scientists to A[US] specially to search for fireblight disease. But a big search in 1993 - with the support of A[US]'s quarantine authorities - failed to turn up the disease... The disease was eventually found by another N[Z] scientist... while he was holidaying in Melbourne last month. Since then Victorian fruit-growers upset over the discovery - and subsequent bans within A[US] on their produce - have called for legal action to be taken against [the NZ scientist]. And other growers have called for an investigation into how the disease was discovered, with suggestions that it be carried out by A[US]'s Government spy agency, Asio... A board spokeswoman... did not know whether the samples taken... [in 1993] had been tested in A[US or NZ]. "But it wasn't an underhanded thing," she said... Today it was revealed that the [MAF]'s chief plants officer... had reported another suspected outbreak of fireblight in Adelaide, after he took a sample from that city's botanic garden while attending a horticulture conference... and was given permission by A[US]n authorities to take the sample away for testing... Scientists on both sides of the Tasman are now testing material from the garden...

South A[US]n orchardists are now facing financial ruin. Their fruit's been banned from sale in other A[US]n states because fireblight has been discovered in an Adelaide orchard. A[US] is the only country in the world to ban apples and pears for fear of fireblight. Even a strict market like Japan accepts that N[Z] apples are not a fireblight risk, so long as certain procedures are followed.

...Tasmanian apple growers say they have taken legal advice on suing the N[Z] Government over the fireblight scare... [B]y leaking preliminary test results indicating fireblight in A[US, the NZ Government]... has... "cruelled" Tasmania's Japanese export drive...

Apple and pear orders in A[US] plummeted by 40[%] yesterday as the transasman row over fireblight disease worsened... The sales fall was "of enormous concern..."... [the] chief executive of the A[US]n Apple and Pear Growers' Association... said. "If it's not a N[Z] plot to damage A[US], they've been inordinately successful doing so without trying."... A senior N[Z] agriculture official... told A[US]ns on national television he had nothing to apologise for after earlier disclosing that he had taken a twig from Adelaide with fireblight symptoms. "They are the ones who should be apologising,"... [he] said last night[, adding that while N[Z]... had spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on research, A[US] did not have an effective system to detect fireblight. "What we are finding is that their... system is rather lacking,"... He said A[US]n suggestions of sabotage to explain how

fireblight was introduced were “utterly insulting.” Indications were that fireblight had been in the Melbourne gardens for 10 years... As the war of words intensified, the [NZ] minister for international trade... appeared to modify his stance after previously apologising for the initial discovery by a HortResearch scientist in Melbourne’s Royal Botanic Gardens... [NZ] scientists are supposed to be helping the A[US]n testing effort. But it was understood last night that key staff from the A[US]n Quarantine Inspection Service and the [NZ] ministry were virtually not on speaking terms.

...WHAT’S A[US] got that [NZ] hasn’t? Good neighbours. Yes, it’s the trans-Tasman sparring season again, sparked this time by... fireblight.

...For such a sensitive debate, there is very little tact. In A[US] the MAF’s senior official... is perceived as a Machiavellian headkicker who believes A[US] deserves all it is getting in the way of fireblight disease. In [NZ], the A[US]ns are regarded as commercial chickens, hiding their orchardists from competition behind a wall of pseudo-science. They are seen as unwilling to take far less of a risk with [NZ] apples than Kiwi orchardists accept through shipments of A[US]n fruit and their potential invasion of fruit fly. These are hard words from both sides and they are getting harder. The debate over the exclusion of [NZ] apples is moving into murkier waters tinged with nationalism and scientific rivalry. Reputations are at stake and the two countries are in danger of getting into conflict in a broader diplomatic arena. We have been through this before. In the early 1980s [NZ] shearers fought a war over the use of “wide combs” which led to death threats, brawls, beatings and arson. A decade after losing that round the A[US]n unions were back in a confrontation, with allegations that [NZ]ers were destroying the award system, wrecking the livelihood of A[US]n shearers, and ripping off the tax and social welfare system[– although a]... Senate inquiry rubbished the claims... [However, with] parliamentary backers, the unions pushed industrial grievances into political prominence... The apple dispute is approaching a similar critical mass... [NZ] regards the science of its fireblight case as superior to that presented by A[US] in its rejection of [NZ]’s third bid to ship apples across the Tasman. A[US] rejects this claim and asserts that [NZ] has left large holes in its case... While both sides agree that two Melbourne plants have the disease, there are significant differences... For Adelaide, the [NZ] tests are inconclusive, A[US]’s negative. A[US] now looks likely to call in an international mediator. But even if the mediator confirms the [NZ] results, the line has been drawn in the sand. Canberra says A[US] can still reject [NZ] apples on the ground that the disease is “present but not widely distributed and being officially controlled.” ...A[US]ns have a track record of trying to have it both ways. Take Phar Lap, the legendary racehorse who was bred in [NZ] but bought and raced by an A[US]n. Before one of his big races, an A[US]n newspaper prepared two headlines: “Aussie Horse Wins”, and “New Zealand Horse Loses”...

[A defiant jockey shocked Melbourne’s] Flemington Racecourse when he declared Might and Power’s win better for him than Kiwi’s legendary Melbourne Cup victory in 1983. Kiwi’s last-to-first dash for cash has become an icon in racing, but [the jockey] said it did not compare with the thrill he had in leading throughout yesterday... You can thumb your nose at anyone when you win a Melbourne Cup, and... [the jockey who] was left almost friendless when disqualified for two years for bringing racing into disrepute after being found guilty of tipping to undesirables... was milking it... “Winners are grinners, and losers are boozers... Rival jockeys were saying in the papers they were going to get up alongside Might and Power and start yelling to get him to race fiercely. They’re not doing too much yelling now. Where are they?” Might and Power’s fierce racing manners in front are well documented, and many doubted he could last a tough 3200m at Flemington... The win was a great boost for the [NZ] breeding industry, as both Might and Power and runner-up Doriemus were bred here. [NZ horses have now ‘won 12 of the last 21 Melbourne Cups’...

‘An A[US]n diagnostic laboratory has brought NZ’s multimillion-dollar horse-breeding industry within a nose of catastrophe. On Tuesday night, a pregnant thoroughbred mare was destroyed at a Cambridge stud after she was found to have the horse equivalent of Aids – equine infections anaemia. Seven other horses on four studs in the Waikato and Pukekohe are in isolation while their anxious owners wait 45 days for test results. The MAF has already reported worldwide the occurrence of the notifiable disease, which it says could disrupt trade. Last night, an equine industry spokesman and top studmaster – who has Australasia’s leading thoroughbred stallion Zabeel at his Cambridge Stud – said he was appalled at the peril the \$100 million export industry was in because of “total and complete incompetence.” The MAF said the slaughtered horse was one of six imported from NSW last month after Aqis certified five of them clear of the disease. The results of tests on the sixth were still to be confirmed and it was quarantined on arrival. But last Thursday, 10 days after their importation, Aqis reported a labelling mistake at the NSW testing laboratory that meant the wrong horse had been isolated. Questions would be asked of Aqis at the “highest technical level.” But an Aqis spokesman said the mixup was nothing to do with the service because the testing was carried out by a laboratory on behalf of the MAF. The MAF adviser on international animal trade said the disease was not present in NZ and the last NSW case occurred in 1986, but it was found in Queensland.’ In related news, a) **new trade deal between [NZ and AUS] comes into force today.** [To mark the 14th anniversary of the signing of CER, b) **both Governments have agreed to give unrestricted entry to low-risk food products manufactured in the other country, meaning lower compliance costs for exporters. An agreed list of high-risk foods will remain under examination.**

...Closer economic relations may not be all they’ve cracked up to be, if the results of the latest... University of Auckland survey are anything to go by. Asked how great an impact A[US] had on their business, just 27[%] of those questioned replied ‘very great’ or ‘great.’

...[NZ and AUS]n Trade Ministers meeting in Canberra this week will push the annual review of closer economic relations beyond the Tasman... While there remain key issues outstanding... both countries are anxious to develop joint strategies for the rest of the world. A free-trade agreement linking CER with the fledgling Asian Free Trade Area (Afta) formed by the South-east Asian Nations, for example, is being driven by both sides of the Tasman... Their discussions will also touch on the tentative moves to link CER to the Mercosur trade agreement between Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay... Closer to home, the labyrinthine and almost intractable stumbling blocks of new aviation, taxation and investment regimes... and a highly technical maze of lesser matters... will be reminders that CER retains some hooks... [T]ax harmonisation remains complex and slow-moving... and... there is virtually no chance of a new investment agreement... The key barrier... is A[US]’s Nara agreement with Japan, which ensures that the rules applying to Japanese investors will be no more restrictive than those for any other foreigners. A[US] maintains that this agreement prevents Canberra granting [NZ] more favourable investment rules, and that even under the existing regime [NZ] investors enjoy privileged treatment... On the other hand, with the 15th anniversary... coming up next year... CER... [is] an agreement that despite hurdles has achieved extraordinary success... with trans-Tasman trade set to pass \$10 billion this year after a decade in which exports between the countries had grown by about 50[%]... Last month, [NZ] signed an agreement... allowing companies from both sides of the Tasman to compete freely for each other’s public contracts. This week, legislation to establish the trans-Tasman mutual recognition agreement is expected to enter the A[US]n Senate, following [NZ] acceptance and Wellington’s dilution of privacy laws to accommodate their weaker A[US]n counterparts. This... will allow goods and services meeting the standards of one country to be sold freely in the other. However, standards harmonisation will still be discussed... Both sides also want unrestricted access to each other’s salmon markets... Quarantine will... force itself on to the agenda, with the... hunt now under way in A[US] for traces of fireblight disease... and [NZ]’s application for apple access still in limbo.

...A[US]n fruitgrower representatives yesterday renewed claims of [NZ] sabotage after... no further incidence of the disease had been found in its countrywide survey of fruitgrowing areas, nurseries and gardens... [NZ]’s Minister for International Trade... said the application process for [NZ] to export apples to A[US] could now continue... The [NZ] Government and authorities have yet to be officially advised of the... survey... findings.

...[‘Wanted – dead or alive, preferably dead. MAF officials are concerned that 10 scorpions that stowed away in a shipment of Portuguese wine bottles and then escaped on to a Hawkes Bay vineyard could breed in the warm weather. A MAF spokesman said officials had searched for the escapers since Wednesday. He said entomologists were confident the scorpions would be found and would not spread. The biggest hurdle to finding the scorpions was the time between the sighting and reporting them. “We are very concerned that we were not notified for three weeks. People should notify immediately in this situation and not wait.” Officials were told about the scorpions only after a chance remark to an entomologist. A winery employee saw the scorpions when

he was unpacking the empty wine bottles. He did not realise the significance of his find because he did not know that scorpions were not found in this country. The scorpions are likely to be of the *Buthus occitanus* variety. They can inflict a painful sting but are not deadly. The consignment was fumigated before it left Portugal and must have been reinfected before shipment or in transit. Meanwhile, in Britain, police are trying to trace a man who handed in a black widow spider to a reptile house yesterday, claiming to have found it in a consignment of wine from AUS.'

...MAF officials are concerned] about redback spikers lurking in bunches of A[US]n grapes... The poisonous redback discovered by N[Z] quarantine officials in... January sparked N[Z] demands for a speed-up in improved fumigation methods. That led to A[US]n accusations of sour grapes. The *Melbourne Age* suggested the fumigation change was simply retaliation for A[US]s insistence on banning N[Z] apples, and said that there wasn't]... any chance of compromise on the grapes... A[US]n grape growers have complained the new fumigation method will virtually destroy their grapes. [A]Federal Liberal MP... said N[Z]s demand for better fumigation came close to the imposition of a non-tariff barrier. [However, the] communications manager for MAF was bemused by the accusations. "This is not part of a trade war... There's no comparison between fireblight and redback spiders... We think it is reasonable to try to prevent someone picking up a bunch of grapes at the supermarket and getting bitten... Fireblight causes minimal problems. We should know. We've had it for... years and it hasn't destroyed our apple and pear industries." ...The change in fumigation methods was agreed with the A[us] in October last year. "They chose it, out of several options." ...The[fireblight] battle's not over... N[Z] has a month]... to make a case. Next stop, if this is rejected, can only be the World Trade Organisation.

...N[Z] apple growers should not hope for too much... A[US] has already gone to the line with Canada over its quarantine policy, and will be prepared to step up to it again should Wellington, too, go to the [WTO]. The Canadian protest over A[US]s continued ban on imports of fresh salmon, and any attempt by N[Z] to overturn this week's... rejection of its case for sending apples across the Tasman, will test the WTO's credibility on one of the most sensitive issues in agricultural trade... But agricultural trading nations have always been deeply suspicious of each others' quarantine regulations, complaining regularly and bitterly that they are often thinly-disguised barriers erected to protect local farmers. A[US], which has long sought the moral high ground in international trade, has now become the target of those claims, despite Canberra's protestations that its quarantine decisions are made in strict accordance with the WTO's sanitary and phytosanitary guidelines. Denmark, Thailand and the U[S] are also demanding access – for their cooked chicken products, and the U[S] is supporting Canada's salmon case in the hope of opening A[US] to its own salmon. The European Union, long the butt of A[US]n trade complaints, has also been scathing of Canberra's quarantine rules. Earlier this year, the EU's Agriculture Commissioner... attacked A[US]s "subtle" trade barriers. The row with Ottawa... has gone on for 22 years. It was imposed because of a long list of North American fish diseases. Like N[Z], Canada argues that it had scientifically established that A[US]n salmon stocks will not be at risk from imports of fresh fish. A[US], which had previously accepted the safety of Canadian pigmeat products, rejected Ottawa's case and refused to lift the ban. Canada retaliated with a sudden and unexpected cut in A[US]s beef import quota, slashing it from 42,000... to 35,000 tonnes, outraging Canberra and hardening its intention to fight the salmon case to the last before the WTO. If it loses, it will not only be forced to open its market to Canadian fish, but also suffer a major dent to its trade credibility. N[Z]s dispute with A[US] is fundamentally the same... Wellington must[now] decide whether its science is tight enough to win over the WTO. [But if that doesn't work, Wellington can try to take advantage of the selection of our last Labour PM (r:p263, ln42) as 'the new Director-General of the WTO in Geneva.']

...The treaty establishing the W[TO] in 1994 is one of the most important international agreements that N[Z] has ever entered into... [There] are already 132... members... and... more than 32 countries queuing up to join... But Parliament was never asked to vote for or against membership. What Parliament was presented with was a miscellaneous collection of amendments to trade and copyright legislation that, taken together, made N[Z] law compatible with membership of the WTO. Once that legislation was passed the Government was in a position to adhere to the treaty... According to the latest annual report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, N[Z] entered into 25 treaties (including amendments to treaties) in 1995-96... This system, whereby many treaties never come before Parliament for consideration and those that do are considered only indirectly for their legislative consequences, is a deficiency in the parliamentary process... [T]reaties can no longer be pigeon-holed in a special category called "foreign affairs," as treaty-making is pervading many areas of N[Z] life. The process whereby the executive have exclusive powers to make treaties, while less than satisfactory from a parliamentary perspective, is tolerable... Parliament... does retain the final word before the law is changed to give effect to a treaty, illusory as this power may be at the end of a long set of treaty negotiations. What has turned a less than satisfactory parliamentary situation into a thoroughly unsatisfactory one are the related judicial developments. Increasingly, treaties that have not been legislated into N[Z] law are being held by the courts to have legal significance in our domestic law... This seems, on the face of it to be a reasonable attitude to take. But there is a contrary view. Treaties, especially multilateral treaties, are often the product of negotiations reflecting many conflicting views. They are drafted in a language or languages which is not the first language of most of the participants. They are subject to drafting timetables that have nothing to do with domestic exigencies. The text of a treaty is likely to look very different from that of a domestic statute implementing it. It will be open-textured and broad in its phraseology where our statutes are (or aim to be) precise and detailed... Whether a move to more general statements in legislation rather than detailed rules is desirable or not is debatable. Until such a move is made there is a major question of drafting compatibility between treaties and statutes... There should not be any suggestion of bad faith because a treaty has not yet been incorporated into N[Z] law. The difference between adhering to a treaty and incorporating it into law has existed for over 700 years. It is unfortunate if those who have negotiated treaties on the basis of that distinction should now be criticised because the courts must, if it runs to its logical conclusion, abolish the distinction altogether. In sum, the courts in a number of instances have effectively incorporated into N[Z] law treaty obligations that Parliament has not legislated for. The Government, which ostensibly has by treaty made what the courts have now held to be legal obligations, has been surprised by the developments. It has been cast in the role of arguing against the judicial incorporation of the treaty in each case that has arisen. As for Parliament – it is not consulted and the courts perform the task of incorporation into domestic law. It is where this leaves Parliament that demands a reconsideration of the treaty-making process. Is it justifiable any longer to leave this as an exclusively executive function? ...One problem with "globalisation" is that people can lose control over decisions on the rules that affect how their society is governed. Moving rule-making to an international plane exacerbates the danger of remoteness which is already present at a national level. No parliamentary system can guarantee that everyone will subscribe to the policy choices that are made, nor should it do so. But it should provide an effective forum for alternatives to be examined and advocated. There have been numerous process failures in... N[Z]s Parliament; nevertheless, the one defining characteristic of the way it works that distinguishes it from overseas parliaments is the degree to which it involves members of the public in its legislative deliberations. The calling of public submissions by select committees is something we take for granted but which is unusual and either envied or regarded with suspicion in many overseas Parliaments. As a participatory democracy N[Z] is second to none... The question then, is whether Parliament should share in the treaty-making function... The requirement for prior parliamentary approval of trade treaties was repealed only in 1965... [Previous] trade arrangements with Canada and A[US] were presented to Parliament for... formal endorsement... N[Z]s adherence to Gatt and membership of the IMF and World Bank were specifically approved by Parliament...

A total of 20 bilateral... and 15 multilateral treaties were signed, ratified, accepted, approved, acceded to... or entered into force by N[Z]... without reference to Parliament... in the year to June 30...

The cabinet is preparing to sign an international agreement liberalising foreign investment rules without seeing the need to consult the N[Z] First or National caucuses or debate the issue in Parliament. The new rules being devised by the OECD would put foreign companies on the same footing as local companies when it comes to investing in N[Z], and prevent future Governments from tightening them up... The agreement would not force

the Government to privatise assets, but any future privatisations would have to be open to foreign companies on an equal basis to N[Z] companies... The Minister of Foreign Affairs... said: "...we do not see this as a threat to [N]Z... sovereignty."

...The[NZ coalition Government's] latest u-turn on privatisation highlights yet again the dangers of the foreign investment treaty being negotiated, behind closed doors at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. If all goes to plan, the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) will deliver to foreign investors a "high-quality" guarantee that they will be treated at least as well as the domestic investors of countries which sign the agreement, and their investments will be protected once they have been made. The head of the [WTO] has dubbed this agreement "the constitution for a single global economy." ...Because the MAI will bind local governments, foreign investors must be given equal rights to bid for assets like the ports or bus compan[ies], and for contracts to run the sewerage works or the libraries. De facto discrimination, such as arranging for employee buy-outs, issuing shares exclusively to local consumers, requiring joint ventures with a local company, or setting a minimum domestic shareholding, may all be prohibited... unless they are preserved... Governments signing up to the MAI have the chance to lodge reservations to exclude certain areas of investment from its coverage... At present... [the NZ] Government's proposed commitments to the MAI would prevent any such proviso... While the[coalition] agreement says that local authorities will need prior approval from ratepayers or consumers to sell over 25[%] of power and gas utilities, airports and ports, there is no suggestion that foreign ownership should be restricted once approval has been gained – hence no need to preserve any right to discriminate... However, the... MAI... is expected to prevent future governments from adding to these reservations as economic circumstances, policy preferences and attitudes to foreign investment change... Binding future governments in this way seems outrageous in a functioning democracy. The Government's arguments are even more untenable now the coalition's commitment on privatisation are being cast aside... The political silence that surrounds the negotiations reflect the dysfunctional state of our democracy... Time is running out. The final signing of the MAI has been delayed until May next year, but negotiations are 90[%] complete... The problems... [this] controversial and anti-democratic treaty... will cause become more manifest every day.

...The Deputy P[M] and Treasurer... yesterday released the draft [MAI] prohibiting the sort of restrictions on foreign investments he once made his name promoting... N[Z] is believed to be the first country to release the draft... Each country may attach agreed exemptions. N[Z] proposes 13 exemptions, including... [foreign] ownership restrictions on Air N[Z] and Telecom, a... bar on foreign ownership of fishing quota (without Government approval)... one to allow Maori to receive favourable treatment in various undertakings... and all current producer board legislation... The participants have not yet agreed on the wording under which countries would endeavour to review their own exemptions... Once a country has signed, the treaty is binding for at least five years.

...The Government has accepted criticism about the treaty-making process and agreed to put international agreements before Parliament before signing them... The new policy will be tried for the rest of the parliamentary term. Pressure has mounted on the Government to change the... process after an Alliance-led assault on the [MAI] and criticism from the Clerk of the House... that the process was "anti-democratic." ...The Government will still retain the power to decide whether N[Z] signs a treaty...

There has been a failure at the highest political levels to explain the virtues of... [MAI] and other international economic arrangements, such as the [WTO], and their attended benefits to N[Z]. If NZ... was not part of the MAI it would risk being seen as a relatively unsafe place to invest... Why am I for foreign investment? We need the capital... N[Z] cannot survive without [it]... One in three jobs in N[Z] is based... directly or indirectly... on overseas investment... Only 10[%] of profits are remitted offshore. Only 0.25[%] of staff are non-N[Z]ers... Are these... agreements perfect? Of course not: they simply offer the most hope for N[Z]... to get a fairer share of the world's wealth and markets... Some commentators have pointed out that N[Z] already has an open environment for investment. So what do we stand to gain from this agreement? Simply that N[Z]ers are also overseas investors and we want to make sure they have a fair chance to compete in other countries... [Furthermore, the] agreement would provide a measure of security for the \$28 billion N[Z] already had invested abroad... But for every \$1 N[Z]ers have invested abroad, foreigners have roughly \$4 in N[Z]. In comparison, 'in 1990 US assets abroad amounted to \$US1.764 trillion and foreign assets in the US, \$2.176 trillion. Foreign assets in the US have exceeded US assets abroad since 1983.'

...US] officials hailed a global agreement to open banking, insurance and securities markets... reached at the weekend at the... WTO... The... agreement... will not require any changes to laws and regulations in N[Z]... and... is scheduled to be ratified by the end of January 1999...

American business interests are being asked to lobby the[US President's] administration to push through the necessary authorities to allow a free-trade agreement between the U[S] and N[Z] to be negotiated. The N[Z] division of the American Chamber of Commerce has asked 360 N[Z] companies which are either owned or controlled by U[S] interests to seek congressional support for the legislative change. Congressional approval is needed... but it is being opposed by powerful labour movements in the U[S]. The unions contend[free trade means] jobs could be lost to low-paid workers in countries with poor environmental records... [However, the] administration has already signalled it favours N[Z] as a free-trade partner because labour and environmental laws here are considered to be progressive... N[Z] is keen to have... [an] agreement ready for [the US P]resident... to sign on his visit downunder in 1999...

Securing congressional authority to negotiate free trade agreements will be a tough fight but[the] President... is determined to win it, the U[S] Deputy Secretary of State... said yesterday. "Fast-track" authority, expected to come to a vote on Friday, is an essential precursor to a bilateral free trade agreement between N[Z] and the U[S].

...The NZ] Minister of Trade... is confident the[US President's] administration will gain the necessary... fast-track negotiating authority from Congress... Such authority would mean that once the administration had negotiated a free trade agreement, Congress could vote to ratify it or not, but could not alter its content... [In talks] he had in Washington with the U[S] Trade Representative, the minister]... made it clear... [that NZ] was not interested in any areas – especially agriculture – being excluded from a free trade agreement. A potential sticking point is the single-desk seller status of the Dairy Board[, although]... it was not Government-owned and thus differed from the state-trading enterprises the U[S] looks askance at. The proposed deal would be a model of a new generation of trade agreements... Unlike the enormously detailed and prescriptive North American Free Trade Agreement, [Nafta] the approach would be to rely as much as possible on sound competition policy within both countries to ensure markets functioned fairly... The three-week tour from which [the minister] returned yesterday also included a meeting of the Cairns Group of 20 agricultural exporting nations in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

...Formed in 1986, the Cairns Group operates under A[US]n leadership on an informal basis... The Rio de Janeiro meeting was the first in which Paraguay participated as a full member, bringing the group to 15 countries. South Africa, which also attended as an observer, had formally asked to join and could be received as a full member at the next meeting... The Group's members[currently] account for about 20[%] of the world's agricultural exports... N[Z] has played a key role from the outset, promoting reduction of agricultural subsidies and protectionism as a way to free up international agricultural trade.

...Ask farmers what they got out of the last Gatt round and the response is likely to be a shrug of the shoulders. Such worthy aims as freeing up international agricultural trade and reducing subsidies and protectionism are close to their hearts, but it is to their chequebooks that they look for the real benefits. The process has begun all over again with a meeting in Brazil last week... The group decided to push for further reforms... Particularly mentioned is the application of scientific principles to trade that N[Z] has had some recent and rather bitter experience of at the hands of A[US]... Another specific... M[AF]... goal is to minimise technical barriers... [The EU ruling that NZ's] award-winning spreadable butter... is not

made directly from cream – and therefore should attract a higher tariff – is being challenged at the [WTO]. Farmers might be forgiven for thinking that it was all so much easier when a gentlemanly hand-shake between the agricultural ministers of two countries with historical links secured trade deals. But one of the most difficult lessons to the new world trading environment is that no one is granted favours any more.

...Up until 1973 Godzone was one of Britain's farms. Most of our exports were food and most went to "The Old Country." Britain's entry into Europe[– 15 years after 'the Rome Treaty establishing the European Economic Community came into effect' –] changed all that.

...BRITISH Customs agents arrested the entire London-based hierarchy of N[Z]'s export dairy industry to the UK and Europe during a secret lunchtime raid[yesterday. As the six] men responsible for a \$4.8 billion industry sat stunned in the dock at London's Magistrate's Court[, industry sources said the move]... could be just a small taste of what may follow... "We are astonished... We have been working (with Customs)... for some months. In co-operation, you understand. This came out of the blue... What we can't seem to communicate (to Customs) is that we have 100 years of... exemplary trade... history... behind us..."... said[t]he Dairy Board[']s... public relations consultant... The swoop, potentially a major political embarrassment, will be seen by the N[Z] industry as part of a concerted European campaign against its successful discovery and marketing of softer butter that can be spread straight from the fridge, the "holy grail" of butter manufacturers and one proving a huge hit in Britain, N[Z]'s biggest dairy market... N[Z] exported around 50,000 tonnes of butter to the UK worth around \$300 million annually... The "spreadable, designer" butter... is growing at up to 20% a year in Britain. A front-page article last month in the *Financial Times* said Anchor believes there is demand for at least twice the 6000 tonnes of spreadable butter it sells... Supermarket giant Sainsbury's has helped fund a newly privatised farm research and consultancy company called Adas, which the *Times* reported as having produced the UK's first spreadable butter by feeding cows a special oil-rich diet. Anchor produces its spreadable butter by remixing the fats and fluids in cream... The British problems were revealed just hours after[the head of the] British Council... and [the NZ PM had]... met to discuss closer links.

...Some of N[Z]'s top dairy industry officials in Europe have been charged with a £5.4 million... fraud by British Customs and Excise. Six officials from Milk Products Holdings (UK) Ltd, the British arm of the Dairy Board and Anchor Foods, the retail company, were charged in the City of London Magistrate's Court and released on bail. They have pleaded not guilty to a series of charges relating to imports of butter in 1995 and 1996... If convicted, they could face up to seven years' imprisonment and unlimited fines... The Dairy Board... has rejected the... charges in a strongly worded statement. Its chairman... said he was astonished at the arrests. "The board is entirely satisfied of its executives' innocence. It will vigorously defend any charges. It is outrageous that senior executives of our companies should be subjected to this treatment, despite the fact that the board has been co-operating fully with Customs and Excise on the issues which have led to the arrests." ...N[Z] qualifies for lower dairy tariff rates – \$800 a tonne rather than \$18,750 a tonne – if certain conditions are met. Customs says the Dairy Board claimed lower tariffs on some butter consignments... when it knew full well its quota had already been exhausted... Other charges relate to product which Customs and Excise said did not meet the criteria for the preferential quota... [The chairman] said the arrests amounted to an attempt by Britain to bully N[Z] into reducing butter exports when they were guaranteed under the Uruguay round of Gatt. "Coming on top of the exclusion of spreadable butter from the quota, we find it hard to accept that this sudden and draconian action was not motivated by a desire to restrict trade by non-tariff means,"... The[NZ] Minister of Agriculture... said he could not say if the arrests resulted from a "trade war" but he would watch developments closely... The Government will step in if... [the] fraud charges... are proved to be "trumped up." ...N[Z]'s dairy-product access to European markets has long been a source of discontent to local farmers, particularly those in Ireland and France... One manifestation of that... [discontent] is the much closer eye kept on our regular shipments of dairy products and the flurry of querying by customs officials which has been going on over the last 12 months. That scrutiny found one butter shipment to Holland last year to be over the 80 to 82[%] fat level, touching off investigations which culminated... in fraud charges being laid... The board's Wellington head office has been unshakeable in his assertions that testing of all butter before it leaves the country is up to the highest standards of accuracy so any discrepancy must be on the receiving end.

...[Butter exports to the EU containing too much fat could cost the Dairy Board \$800 million in back-duties. Although British courts have cleared board executives of customs charges, the European Court of Auditors still claims that higher tariff rates should have been charged on butter exports for the past 20 years. A NZ parliamentary source said the board might have to liquidate its high-profile Anchor brand in order to settle the matter, which has been dragging on for several years. The Minister of Food said yesterday that the longer the matter took to settle the higher the cost would be.]

...The Dairy Board battle to regain access to E[U] markets for spreadable butter will come before the [WTO] for the first time next week... The dispute is on the agenda for next Tuesday's monthly meeting of the WTO dispute settlement board, at which N[Z] will formally request that a panel hear the dispute. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade says it is usual for the opposing party to turn down the request the first time it comes up. That cannot be repeated the second time the request is made, which could be at the board's meeting in the middle of next month. A panel is then expected to be established to hear the case. The three panellists hearing the arguments will be drawn from lists submitted by a number of countries or from experts with particular expertise in the disputed area. Their report is generally issued within six months of the panel's establishment but an appeal process can then mean the issue is not finally determined for another four-and-a-half months. A Dairy Board spokesman... said it was confident the dispute process would establish that what the board had always claimed about the manufacture of the butter was true... Sales which were worth around \$100 million a year were halted last year after an EU claim that the butter was not manufactured in the traditional way and so was ineligible for importation under N[Z]'s quota arrangement... Since exports to the EU were banned Britain and Portugal have been supplied with spreadable butter manufactured in Belgium from local milk supplies... The butter has been available on N[Z] supermarket shelves for the past few weeks... Sales... on the local market... are expected to be close to \$7 million in the first year... and new export markets have been found in Chile and A[US]. The board will shortly launch the product in South-east Asian and Pacific markets.

...A[US]'s biggest dairy co-operative... launched its Western Star butter to the N[Z] cafe and restaurant trade six weeks ago... The Auckland-based manager... said [the co-operative] had taken the soft-entry approach... The... single-serve... sachets do not show a country of origin... The general manager of N[Z] Dairy Foods... who is responsible for the Anchor brand within this country, said Western Star's trade was small but would be taken seriously. "We don't want them to gain a foothold in N[Z]. We are not unduly concerned but we will not be making life easy for them." ...If offered A[US]n butter in a cafe... he would eat his bread dry... The trade needed to be seen in the light of the Dairy Board's aggressive marketing to A[US]ns of NZ butter. By the way, when the WTO... came into existence... [and members] signed on to a set of rules founded on the reduction of tariffs and subsidies... there was never any suggestion that its creation would bring an end to the protectionism that has blighted world trade, particularly in agriculture... However, the new global regime was likely to create an industry as countries tried to find innovative ways with which to protect home-grown products against foreign competition. So it has come to pass... Canada is charged with using selective pricing as a means of subsidising exports of milk products.

...N[Z] will file legal proceedings against Canada today at the [WTO] in a bid to stop cross-subsidies in its dairy sector... Canadian dairy farmers had two special milk classes, one for export and one for domestic consumption. They are paid an artificially low price for the export milk so that the resultant products could compete more cheaply than otherwise on world markets. Then they were cross-subsidised from their high-priced domestic market, getting paid an average for the two classes... The case was serious and could have a severe impact on further trade liberalisation, says the Minister for International Trade... "If Canada gets away with it, the Europeans are almost certain to try it on as well... If it wasn't for... subsidising... world dairy... prices would be higher and our farmers would get more for their products." ...other countries had tried to get Canada

to drop its scheme... The U[S] initiated its own case against Canada a month ago and... it was possible N[Z] could... join that... N[Z]'s resources were stretched because it had taken the E[U] ban on spreadable butter to the WTO.

...A U[S] congressman believes the N[Z] Dairy Board is dodging American taxes... A spokesman for the board... rejected the allegation. "The Dairy Board pays all the tax it is obliged to pay in the U[S] and not a cent more. There is no tax evasion,"... However, the board, like any other competitor, paid as little as legally possible, as required to meet its duties to shareholders... In a letter to the U[S] Inland Revenue Service the congressman... said law changes may be needed to ensure foreign producers did not have an unfair advantage over American farmers... The board, which is owned collectively by about 14,000 dairy farmers, has been under increasing pressure from U[S] dairy lobbies for having statutory support for its monopoly. The pressure is growing, even though the board gets no financial support from the Government. N[Z] agriculture is also subsidy-free, while the U[S] is still phasing out subsidies.

...['For many years, the Milk Board – set up in 1953 to organise and control domestic milk supply on a national basis – operated a government subsidy on domestic milk but this was abolished from April 1 1985.' Next year, the board responsible for milk exports – and similar boards (such as the 'Apple and Pear Marketing Board, set up in 1948') – will also cease to exist. The 'Government plans to disband producer boards to obey US wishes.']

...The Government should not take away the Dairy Board's export monopoly unless it can deliver something worthwhile in return, says the board's chief executive. Such as access to the U[S] market. That might be an acceptable trade-off, he said... Its export monopoly was... seen as a potential obstacle to a bilateral free trade agreement with the U[S]... The board's annual sales of some \$6 billion made it N[Z]'s largest exporter and represented about 30[%] of the international dairy trade.

...['Producer boards and their monopoly on major primary exports have all but ended. In a whirlwind three days, the Government and the three major single-selling boards – dairy, kiwifruit, and apples and pears – have sliced through more than a decade of debate to agree in principle to axe the boards' governing legislation, which should allow more freedom for other would-be exporters.']

...*'Boards prevail in battle to sell solo* Yesterday, the Government rushed legislation into Parliament to deregulate the dairy industry and allow it to form a company which will amalgamate most cooperative processing companies and their marketing arm, the Dairy Board. It was the third such move in as many days by the Food and Fibre Minister and Finance Minister. On Monday, they announced the kiwifruit industry would retain its single-seller status and corporatise its marketing arm. Then they revealed almost identical plans for the apple and pear sector's marketing arm. Yesterday, they said that dairy industry legislation paving the way for the integrated company was "epoch-making". "That enterprise, known as the MegaCo-op in industry circles, would be NZ's biggest commercial company by a significant margin. That would provide the critical mass necessary for successful global operations, but on a commercial, rather than a regulated, basis." However, the bill would not proceed without Commerce Commission authorisation for the mega co-op, and a 75% vote of support by dairy farmers. The ministers said dairy farmers would exchange their company shares for shares in the mega co-op which would own 100% of the Dairy Board, reconstituted as a commercial company. Farmers exiting the industry should be able to recover fair value for their mega co-op shares and the industry has proposed there be a commodity milk price, a "Q" class of shares covering returns on quota, and an "A" class covering all other returns. Farmers would get to vote on the mega co-op proposal in 3 months at the earliest. Formation of a mega co-op also hinges on an agreement to merge by the two major dairy companies, Kiwi and NZ Dairy Group. That could yet be the stumbling block. The board has said that a complete refiguration of the industry would boost gross earnings to \$40 billion a year in 10 years. The Dairy Board's chairman said that could translate into \$100 billion for the economy. Under the legislation, planned to take effect from September 1 next year, exporters would be free to market dairy products except in the quota or similarly restricted markets of the US, EU, Japan and Canada. The dairy single-seller will have exclusive access to the countries that set quotas for 6 1/2 years, with the rights phased out in the following four years. Around 84% of the industry's sales revenue is earned outside the quota markets.'

...The US Administration has been unable to muster the numbers to get Congress to give it "fast track" authority to conclude trade deals. The [NZ] Minister for International Trade... said: "Our information is that the House of Representatives vote on granting the President such authority looks likely to be deferred until next year..." Although the setback was disappointing, [he was optimistic the] President... would finally succeed... Meanwhile, members of the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (Apec) forum are due to meet in Vancouver later this month... Apec groups A[US], Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, N[Z], Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and the U[S].

...The NZ P[M]... is one of Apec's veterans – one of just a handful of the 18 P[M]s or Presidents who has been to every leaders' meeting since the informal gatherings began in 1993. This means that despite representing one of the smallest economies, [he] has status which otherwise might elude N[Z]. He has in the past used the forums shrewdly. Four years ago in Seattle he forged a relationship with [the US] President... and helped to repair distrust which followed the Anzus breakdown. In Canada he will renew his friendship with [the US President] and hold talks with the leaders of Chile, Hong Kong and, crucially, China. These are invaluable opportunities. [NZ's PM] has also been an enthusiast for Apec's free-trade agenda and will want his two cabinet ministers already in Vancouver – the Minister of Foreign Affairs... and [the] Minister of Trade... – to make progress fast-tracking the abolition of trade barriers for fish, forest products and fruit and vegetables.

...The Minister of International Trade... rates as 50:50 N[Z]'s chances of securing Apec agreement for the early liberalisation of trade in forest products and fish... "Among Apec there is as much support for N[Z]'s proposals as for any others..." ...Forest products and fish are also areas in which the U[S] Government has residual fast-track negotiating authority, left over from the [41st] Administration... It was an advantage, [the minister] said, that most of the trade – 80[%] in N[Z]'s case – in forest products and fish occurred within Apec. That minimised the problem, that under [WTO] rules whatever trade benefit was granted to one country (unless under a bilateral agreement) had to be granted to any other... But there was also strong opposition, especially from the Japanese and Koreans, who fear that opening the door on any primary sector will threaten heavily protected agricultural industries.

...Who wants Apec? Not a lot of Vancouver's citizens who live and work downtown, apparently. They are suffocating under a massive security blanket thrown over this attractive Pacific... city. Downtown retailers and restaurateurs complain that business has slipped more than 50[%] since the early summit vanguard arrived a week ago... Apec means "lockdowns" where entire blocks are closed, helicopters circle overhead and high-speed convoys chase down empty streets carrying unseen leaders behind blacked out windows of stretched limousines. It is a taste of what Auckland will get in 1999 when N[Z] hosts the... summit. More than 8000 people are here on Apec business – leaders, ministers, huge delegations, hangers-on and some 2500 journalists. Keeping them safe involves 500 Vancouver police officers, 2500 Mounties and 1000 members of the Canadian armed forces.

...The... [US] President... the big guy here, came with the White House press corps, about 250 journalists. With him, too, were hordes of nervous Secret Service agents, sharpshooters to station on highrise towers around the downtown hotel he occupies, and two helicopters and a spotter plane to clear airspace ahead of his tightly scripted forays into the world outside Apec's hermetically sealed meetings.

...[the US] President... is to meet China's President... [and, separately, the Japanese P[M]... to discuss financial turmoil sweeping the region and to examine major political issues... [The US and Chinese presidents] also are expected to discuss... China's ambition to join the [WTO]. China's President] said... China's foreign trade would exceed \$US310 billion... this year... The meetings will precede the formal start of the [Apec] summit... The financial crisis which has struck Thailand, Indonesia and South Korea, has overshadowed the Apec gathering and is expected to dominate the summit agenda. While economics remained at the top of the official agenda, protesters attempted to make their points on the street... [M]ore than

2000 demonstrators marched through heavy rain to the edge of the waterfront convention centre where Apec is meeting. Billing themselves a "People's Summit" they pushed causes from workers' rights to the environment and the perils of free trade. "There are two words that can't live in harmony together – Apec and democracy," said... a N[Z] professor who helped organise the event.

...Police, using dogs and pepper spray, arrested 38 demonstrators in clashes during a noisy protest by a crowd of about 1500 yesterday... The protesters... who waved banners and sang and chanted through megaphones, urged the Apec forum to focus on human rights, particularly in China and Indonesia... Groups... repeatedly charged a security fence just a few hundred metres from where the leaders... met on the University of British Columbia campus. About 100 officers of the Royal Canadian Mounted police, backed by a 50-strong riot squad[... prevented]... them from marching on the leaders' meeting... At least two students were given first-aid treatment after being overcome by pepper spray... Pressed on whether he condoned the use of pepper spray, which can cause intense pain when sprayed into a person's eyes, the Canadian P[M]... claimed ignorance. "I don't know what you mean by that... For me, pepper, I put it on my plate."

...[Try to remember the Canadian Government's shambolic attempts to flatten student protests on the quiet. NZ's politically active persons must be allowed to hold large, internationally embarrassing protest rallies during Apec if they want to. Western Governments which allow the public to protest freely at events such as Apec are the very last word in sophistication, beaming a positive image of a mature, functioning democracy around the world. We only have to keep it up for a week. As a card-carrying member of Generation Apathy, I doubt I'll personally manage to roll out of bed to hunger-strike, but anybody who wants to protest against human rights transgressions must be allowed to protest. Apart from anything else, it will prove to the rest of the world that NZers read newspapers. It is best – especially in a country of NZ's humble proportions – to allow demonstrations to run their course. Human rights demonstrations here usually get ugly only when authorities try to shut protesters up before protesters are finished marching about with a placard. Let the people speak and be done with it. It ultimately makes for a quieter life. Actually, NZ's PM has no choice but to let the public speak. Particularly at the moment. There's a groundswell of opinion against high-handed elected leaders who try to tame protesters. Here's an example: The Mayor of New York, a lovable fascist, is getting it for tightening the rules regarding who may protest through New York. He cites security concerns for tightening the rules, but the public has its doubts. As well it might. It turns out that the mayor was happy for thousands to rally through the streets for the Yankees. However, he refused a permit to a small protest held by the family of a youth who was murdered by a member of the NYPD after hitting that policeman's car with a football. "There's no freedom of speech," said the mother of the unfortunate footballer. You said it lady. The public is tired of transparent attempts to quash the public's right to protest. Keep this in mind for 1999, NZ's PM. If you're still around.]

...Auckland has two years to gear up for a superpower security challenge after it was confirmed yesterday that the... leaders of the U[S], Japan and China will take their seats alongside the Russian President for the Auckland forum in September 1999. The presence... of the world's most powerful leaders for three days presents officials with severe security and logistical tests... far tighter than those imposed for the 1995 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Auckland. The leaders' motorcades... are expected to have exclusive use of roads between Auckland Airport, the city and their hotels. Police intend to ensure all parked vehicles are cleared from roadsides before the leaders pass... The Auckland Museum is being touted as the venue... Surrounded by domain parkland and trees, the museum building can be easily isolated and cordoned. Few high-rise buildings overlook the museum's main entrance so the security officers' bete noire – a sniper – would have little chance of finding a vantage point... [The forum means] a sizeable bill... [for the Government, which also has] the job of convincing N[Z]ers that the investment, and disruption, is worth it. Canada spent \$C50 million (\$[NZ]55 million) on Apec over the past 12 months... mostly paid by the Canadian Government. Sixty Canadian firms kicked in \$9.1 million, and got to stick their corporate logos in places where they got noticed... For \$500,000, firms became "diamond" level sponsors, and got to host breakfasts and schmooze around delegates at \$1000-a-head dinners... [A] leather retailer, pulled off the conference coup by outfitting the leaders in brown, \$500 bomber jackets at yesterday's informal retreat... The British Columbia Government stumped up \$5 million and Vancouver ratepayers put in \$1 million... An estimated \$C23 million was pumped back into the British Columbia economy but many Canadians have challenged the value of a forum which seems remote from their lives. The decision of the 18 Apec members to add three members to their club (the others are Vietnam and Peru) was made a year ahead of schedule and had the rider that no more could join for at least a decade... [The] 21... Apec economies... [will account for 54%] of global output and[cover] nearly 2 billion people.

...[The Tourism Board expects Apec to cost NZ \$44m (40% for security), inject \$60m into the economy and generate publicity worth \$384m.] NZ got some free publicity when 'agents protecting the US Secretary of State on a visit were forced to hand over their weapons at Auckland Airport. NZ forbids foreign security services accompanying leaders from carrying arms. But warnings that NZ would "have trouble" applying similar strictures to agents protecting the US President, and pressure from other security-conscious governments, is expected to result in a temporary amendment to the Arms Act to allow agents to carry guns during the talkfest – with a possible proviso that weapons be kept hidden from public view.' ● 'Eight countries were allowed to carry guns at the recent meeting in Vancouver – including Indonesia, three of whose members were arrested by Mounties for threatening to shoot protesters.'

...the Government is moving to change the law to allow guns to be carried by bodyguards protecting some foreign dignitaries at Apec. Authorities have created the impression that on previous visits of overseas dignitaries, including for Chogin in 1995, delegations left their weapons at the border. But the *Herald* understands that on some occasions, the "no firearms" policy has been read out to visitors, with officials then turning a blind eye. When the Queen attended Chogin her officers were allowed to carry arms after being sworn in as temporary constables by the Commissioner of Police. The *Herald* understands that bodyguards for some American VIPs, going back to the late 1970s, were also made temporary constables. And it is believed other delegations at Chogin brought handguns into the country without police taking any action. However, one leader's party was blocked from bringing in an AK-47 assault rifle. The *Herald* understands that the US made it clear that its president would not come to Apec in NZ – which will be the 'first official visit by a US president' to our country (although the '36th US President stood on the tarmac at Auckland Airport – in an attempt to drum up NZ support for his war in Vietnam – while on his way to AUS', to gain its support for the war; an 'official visit to NZ by the US Vice-President occurred in 1970') – 'without armed protection. Officials believed the same would be true for other member countries.'

...Officials flying into NZ for September 1999's Apec forum may end up staying in youth hostels as accommodation resources in Auckland are stretched to full capacity. Around 7000 people – 5000 dignitaries and 2000 media – are expected at the event. With at least a dozen America's Cup challenger syndicates expected in town at the same time, the big question for organisers is where they will all stay. The chief executive of the Hospitality Association said the whole event was proving to be a logistical nightmare. A big problem would be putting up the usual tourists and business travellers during the Apec week. A tourism specialist said previous smaller, international conferences had been big money-spinners, though the scale of Apec raised the question of "are we stretching it too far?" ● 'The rest of NZ will be stripped of a third of its police power during Apec. More than 2000 police officers will be on duty.'

...More than half the \$5.215m bill for the Auckland City Council's planned spruce up of downtown Auckland for the Apec summit is for road sealing and footpath upgrading in the inner-city. Streets will get an extra footpath clean and graffiti removal sweep just before the summit. NZ flags and Apec banners will be hung throughout the city. Downtown flower beds will be freshly planted, with a strong NZ natives theme. Work on the Domain includes repaving the museum forecourt for \$100,000, and sprucing up the kiosk for the leaders' luncheon there. Park benches will be repainted and extra planting carried out. The council is budgeting \$564,000 for staff time and communications about Apec and its impact on the city.'

...At last, Auckland's main street is moving out of the 1970s. Soon to go are the concrete, stone-chip-clad rubbish bins, memorably described by a city official as a relic from the "Fred Flintstone era." In their place will be gleaming grey metal containers more resembling the robot R2D2 from *Star Wars*.

Also disappearing are the orange street poles and their cluster of globe lights which threw "dirty" sodium-bulb glare. The poles are being painted charcoal grey and the single replacement lights will shine a cleaner, white light. Small cabbage trees are being installed in planters flanking Queen St, replacing the taller plane trees, some of which had begun to wither as their root growth was restricted. The work is part of a \$450,000 Auckland City Council budget to improve Queen St and Queen Elizabeth Square for the Apec leaders' conference – although the US President and other world leaders are unlikely to wander down Queen St, let alone notice the new bins'. Editor's note: Last year, as part of the '£30 million that the Philippines Government put aside to stage Apec, luxury villas were built to house the heads of state while shanty slums were demolished to hide them from the heads of state' and the rest of the world.]

...leaders gathered yesterday for a 12-nation summit which was meant to be a grand celebration of Asean's 30th birthday but was shaping up into a sombre dialogue on what went wrong.

...Burma, East Timor and other human rights issues hung like thunderclouds over major meetings between Asia and Europe yesterday, aimed at forging a new era of relations. Foreign ministers of the seven-nation Association of South-East Asian Nations... insisted that such issues not be raised in meetings with their 15 E[U] counterparts today and tomorrow. Indonesia threatened to walk out if East Timor was brought up at those meetings or on Saturday, when the 22 ministers will be joined by colleagues from Japan, China and South Korea to plan a second Asia-Europe summit. But European politicians facing pressures back home, especially on the crackdown on Burma's pro-democracy movement by the military Government in Rangoon, were seeking ways to discuss such issues without bringing the meetings to a crashing halt... [An EU] official... said... "How do you speak about the unspeakable? These subjects have to be raised, yet no one wants to be the one to do it." Burma is an issue because Asean – Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam – has promised it membership. The European Parliament has repeatedly warned the European Commission – the ...p[arliament]'s executive – that it will not tolerate dealings with Rangoon.

...Once again in Europe the discussion about admitting new members is coming to the boil and, once again Turkey, promised membership to the E[U] more than 30 years ago, is not on the list. In fact, it is even worse than that. Turkey is being actively blacklisted. At a get-together of European Christian Democrats in March a prominent member... was widely quoted as saying, "The E[U] is in the process of building a civilisation in which Turkey has no place." ...The hand of European chauvinism is again being dealt to Turkey, home to Istanbul, the city that strides two continents, the only city to have served as the capital of three empires, the historic meeting place of east and west, cradle of Christian Byzantium as well as Ottoman Islam. What is it then that blocks Turkey from assuming its natural position as the easternmost flank of Europe, a role it has played quite happily as a member of Nato since 1960? Is it Turkey's state of economic development, its human rights record, or its religion? It is a bit of all three, but none are totally convincing if looked at with even a modicum of good sense. Turkey, admittedly, is still a developing country with high inflation, a heavy load of debt, a growing maldistribution of income and over-rapid urbanisation. Nevertheless, according to the World Economic Forum, Turkey is ahead of Greece, not to mention its rivals for European membership, Poland and Hungary, in a league table that compares... economic strength... It is certainly as well placed economically as were Spain, Greece and Portugal when they negotiated entry. The human rights story, in contrast, is as painfully true as outsiders paint it, although there are many insiders, not least the late president Turgut Ozal, who have worked hard over the years to get their country's house in order. Torture is still practised widely, as a recent report from Human Rights Watch underlines. The war against the dissident Kurds continues with an obsessive ruthlessness. It is powerful hard-line elements in the Army who make it difficult for civilian leaders to reach out to the accommodation now being offered by... the leader of the Kurdish insurgency. If America didn't feel itself so obsessively in hock to the Turkish military in its quest to keep Iraq isolated and Iran and Syria on the defensive, it could use the muscle of its large scale military assistance and arms sales, much of which is used to fight the Kurds, to push Turkey to be more accommodating... [Incidentally, duty]-free shopping within the E[U] is due to end next June... The EU's Council of Ministers decided in 1991 to abolish duty-free sales within the union as they are seen as an anomaly within the single market... Travellers to destinations outside the EU will still be able to buy duty-free goods... However, [a]... survey by the British Consumers' Association... [- that] compared prices of alcohol, cigarettes and perfume... found hypermarkets]... in Calais, France, were... offering particularly good value for money when compared with duty-free shops at ports and airports.

...[In 1996, travel shopping world wide was valued at \$NZ160 billion and predicted to reach \$NZ300b by the year 2010. The Asia Pacific region makes up over 30% of this industry, the biggest proportion of any world sector. Latest statistics show that NZers take 4th place in the top 10 travel spenders in the region (spending an average \$US424.71 while travelling internationally) – the top three were Japanese (\$US820), South Koreans (\$US573) and AUSns (\$US508). In assessing the total amount spent by each nationality, NZ drops to tenth place (\$US300 million), while the Japanese remain the biggest total spenders (\$US12b), followed by South Korea (\$US1.7b) and AUS slips to 4th place (\$US1b). However, NZ and AUS are the favoured countries in the region for travellers to spend their money. In fact, 1993 and 1995 saw Auckland International Airport voted best value duty free in a survey of 12 airports in the region. When arriving in NZ, the allowance on duty free liquor is six 750ml bottles of wine, plus one 1125ml bottle of spirits, plus 200 cigarettes. Travellers entering the country are entitled to bring duty free goods (for personal use) to a value of \$700. This is known as the passenger concession.]

...A NEW \$22 million Customs Department computer system... – installed over the past 16 months in a complete Customs overhaul – ...has run into problems with thousands of shipments of goods entering the country unchecked for duty... Goods have been released on trust to avoid huge bottlenecks at ports and airports... The system... started having hiccups about two weeks ago. In the process of taking the system "up and down" to get it fully operational, electronic processing of duty declarations was not possible and they had to be filled in manually... [In international news, during June the US] trade deficit... soared by 17.0[%] to \$US10.23 billion... as imports rose for the seventh straight month to a record high... [E]xports fell 0.8[%] to \$77.2 billion, which reflected a drop in exports of such capital goods as telecommunications' equipment. Imports continued their steady rise by a modest 1.0[%]... to \$87.5 billion, led by demand for capital goods, primarily civilian aircraft and automobiles... The [previous month's] trade gap was revised upward to \$8.75 billion from the \$8.36 billion originally reported... The U[S] trade deficit with China surpassed that of Japan, only the third time that has happened[. widening by 9.1%]... to \$3.76 billion... The gap was the highest since the October 1996 deficit of \$4.9 billion... The politically sensitive deficit with Japan was the lowest since last June. It shrank by 25[%] to \$3.63 billion from \$4.84 billion [the previous month. The US] trade deficit with Mexico swelled by 21.7[%] to a record \$1.7 billion from \$1.4 billion... In trading with Canada, the deficit more than doubled[. It rose 104.1%] to \$1.74 billion... Imports from Canada of \$14.5 billion... were the highest[monthly total] on record with any country...

The [U]S... yesterday accused... [some countries] of unfair trade practices, starting a process that could eventually lead to economic sanctions... [Under] a provision of U[S] trade law known as Super 301... the President... [can] impose punitive tariffs if negotiations to remove... unfair trade practices... are not successful. [The US] Trade Representative... announced that such a case was being brought against South Korea because negotiations between the two countries had failed to resolve all complaints. "Korea was not prepared to undertake the reforms that are necessary for real opening of their auto market." Despite South Korea's commitments in 1995, sales of foreign cars make up less than 1[%] of the Korean market," she said. The U[S] car industry has urged that both South Korea and Japan be cited... However, the U[S] did not bring a case against Japan on cars. Instead, it cited Japan, Canada, the 15-nation E[U and AUS] for other alleged unfair practices. But instead of instituting cases under the Super 301 provision, the administration said it would file cases with the [WTO]. While the U[S] could still file trade sanctions, it could only do so if a WTO hearing panel ruled in favour of its complaints, a process that normally takes more than a year... [The Trade Representative] said the Super 301 review demonstrated the administration's resolve to ensure other countries lived up to their commitments to remove trade barriers.

...South Korean civic groups yesterday threatened to boycott American products unless the U[S] halted pressure on their country to further open up its car market. "We demand the US stop putting pressure on us so that they can sell more cars here," said a spokeswoman for the Citizens' Movement Against Over-Consumption... [By the way, record] imports helped by car purchases from Japan and falling exports pushed the U[S] trade deficit up sharply in July...

[The US] ordered Japanese cargo ships barred from its ports yesterday... and the Customs Service to detain those already anchored... but delayed enforcing this in the hope that last-minute talks could resolve the escalating trade dispute... The move came after the... U[S] Maritime Commission... had received word from Japanese shipping companies that they will not pay an estimated \$US4 million... in fines... which... were levied on Japanese cargo ships entering U[S] ports, and amounts... to \$100,000 a vessel... The fines were imposed after negotiations between the two countries failed to agree on American demands for freer access to Japanese harbours.

...The... [WTO] has sided with Japan against the U[S] in a dispute over access to Japan's photo-film market... [which] had pitted the two governments against each other on behalf of their respective photo giants... Kodak [and Fuji]... The preliminary decision... prompted[a US] trade representative... to suggest that Washington might retaliate with sanctions... [In related news,] Japan's merchandise trade surplus surged... 51[% from the previous month] to 1.1 trillion yen (\$NZ14.5 billion)[, while bulging]... oil imports and a record deficit with China... helped push the [U]S... trade gap... [for] August... to \$US10.36 billion...

Commerce Department figures show the U[S] trade deficit shot up in September... by 17[%] to \$US11.07 billion... its highest in eight months... and well ahead of Wall St forecasts. And Labour Department figures show the number of newly out-of-work Americans seeking unemployment benefits has also exceeded economists' forecasts, rising by 20,000 in mid-November... as trade with troubled Asian economies showed early signs of deterioration... Asia's deepening economic woes[also] took a bite out of Japan's November merchandise trade surplus, the fourth decline in six months. The surplus was down 7.6[%] on October at 1.144 trillion yen... [but] was up 58.7[% from]... November a year ago...

N[Z] ran a trade deficit of \$395 million last month. That was a deterioration from the deficit of \$279 million a year ago[– and the 'surplus of \$10.4 million for the last month of 1996' –] reflecting a 10[%] increase in imports, while exports fell 0.7[%].

...Moves are under way to revive the defunct Export Institute of N[Z] by reformers hoping to raise a sense of urgency over the need to rebuild exports... [There] had been... criticism of Tradenz. "We see that as disastrous for N[Z], that there should be a knocking of what little trade organisation we have... That has probably caused a loss of confidence in people working with Tradenz... We are not out to undermine anything that Tradenz is doing... I think we, and Tradenz, have a common objective[," said the]... director of the N[Z] Trade Centre...

Tradenz is being revamped into a sharper, more focused organisation... aware that continued expansion depends on proof of its effectiveness and the ability to increase revenue should Government funds shrink... Tradenz is also streamlining its products and organisational framework... and... [its] chief executive... is... in the process of getting the budget for major technological spending that would be spread over two financial years... [C]harges would be increased, but clients need not worry about exorbitant jumps, as subsidies would continue... "We... are careful with the introduction of any change... But... [that] is just the reality of N[Z]. All Government agencies are being asked to increase revenue, it is not something new or exclusive to Tradenz." ...The organisation is looking at models in the market to find a right charging base... In future, when Tradenz does work for clients, they will be told in advance the cost of that work or if they are eligible for a subsidy... With a more consistent charging base, Tradenz hopes to raise internal revenue to about 10[%] of its operating budget. Currently it receives some \$49 million per year from the Government to run its activities.

...International activity at the Auckland Regional Chamber of Commerce is hotting up. The Chamber's World Trade Centre... sponsored by ASB BANK... is planning a serious attack on the international trade resources of the 320 World Trade Centres in cities world-wide... The WTC offers research... advertising... trade fairs and... is a joint venture with TRADENZ...

EXPORTERS and manufacturers are angry that their representative bodies have turned down a \$100 million assistance package from the Government. They say individual companies that are hurting would have welcomed the help, and they should have been consulted... [R]ifts within industry groups are emerging... The \$100 million package was outlined in the coalition agreement last December... The offer included a \$50 million export credit guarantee scheme, an extra \$10 million for the Government's venture capital fund, the Greenstone Fund, \$32 million for organic farming research and technology transfer and an extra \$5 million for Tradenz... [Incidentally, t]he *Vegetable Research Council*[has] released a document examining the industry's strategic direction, citing the extensive research into improving quality and marketing. The industry has a retail value of \$1.2 billion and exports of \$327 million, but 70% of exports come from just two species – onions and squash. The challenge, says Vegfed, is to diversify that base.

...[NZ] vegetable growers are being urged to explore new market opportunities so they can depend less on Japan. The president of the Vegetable and Potato Growers Federation... said the whole industry needed to invest in market research to offer diversified products. The federation is working towards establishing a single brand which would be recognised as a consistent guarantee to quality. N[Z] asparagus exporters to Japan in particular are under pressure from A[US]ns.

...NZ missing out on a huge market for organic foods Ten thousand crates of export apples last year fetched \$10 a crate more than any other export apples. These highly rated apples were certified organic – produced in a system without toxic pesticides and herbicides and fed with compost instead of mineral fertilisers... The market for certified organic food is huge. Tokyo alone has a million consumers who actively seek out organics. So far, no one can keep up with Japanese, European and U[S] demand.

...Exporters are responding too slowly to the growing demand for organic food says a Tradenz business development executive... Two years ago Tradenz helped to form the Organic Products Exporters Group in response to... demand for certified organic products from established markets in North America, Europe and Japan... Results have been extremely positive, [the development executive] said, with organic exports totalling \$20 million in the year to June, a growth of 50[%] over the previous year. "However while opportunities way outstrip the capacity of our tiny organics industry, there is only a glimmer of evidence that the majority of our highly efficient agricultural export industries are alert to this demand, let alone gearing up to meet it."

...[The NZ Government doesn't support the production of organic food. When it tried, its attempts were blocked by the Federated Farmers. Why? Because if we promote organic food, people will start to ask questions about what goes into non-organic food.]

...A Japanese food flavouring manufacturer has bought a \$500,000 Oamaru property to open an international college for the study of organic agriculture. Nikken Foods plans to attract post-graduate students from NZ, the US, Japan and Europe by offering courses in organics and health studies. They will be accredited by the Qualifications Authority. Qualifications are likely to be centred around the growing, processing and marketing of organic foods. The college will be a private institution and is due to open in two years. The firm believes NZ is placed to be a world leader in organic produce and sees great demand for qualifications in such agriculture. The number of certified organic growers in NZ has doubled in two years to 700. But the country is still a small player in the \$40 billion global market, which is tipped to be worth \$210 billion a year by 2004.]

...A price war in the packaging market is beginning to hot up with exporters the main benefactors of the battle for business... The intensifying industry rivalry has already resulted in big cost-cutting measures, including factory closures. Now prices are being slashed... Some customers have been able to negotiate discounts of more than 10 to 15[%]... For businesses in the export industry, especially producers of agricultural products such as kiwifruit, meat and cheese, the packaging represents a significant element of their costs... The main spur to the price war was the entry to

the market last year of A[US]'s second-largest paper maker, Visy Board... "Visy have had some impact but we have adjusted to cope with them,"... said... [the] managing director of Amcor subsidiary Kiwi Packaging... In fact, it is understood Visy has found it tough to win orders from customers of Kiwi and the other traditional supplier, [CHH]... "The competition has the potential to be fierce," a [CHH] spokesman said. "There are a lot of deals being done." Last August Visy Board beat Kiwi Packaging in a bid to supply boxes to brewer Lion Nathan and Pepsi-Cola Bottlers A[US]. It is understood Lion is considering moving back to Kiwi, whose managing director... said superior technology and flexible production methods were ultimately likely to win the packaging war. In line with his theory, Kiwi Packaging yesterday opened a \$25 million refit of its Wiri facility that will boost production 50[%] to 60,000 tonnes a year... Output from the refitted plant will include around 40[%] recycled paper, compared with 30 to 35[%] previously. The move to raise recycled materials means Kiwi will increasingly obtain raw material for the factory from Amcor's A[US]n mills, rather than its traditional supplier, the forestry division of [CHH].

...Companies that are usually fierce rivals in the forestry sector are splicing together a long-term strategy report on their industry to help secure Government research and development funding... The self-proclaimed Forest Sector Taskforce... maintains that as forestry is set to become the country's largest industry by the turn of the century, there is a good case for increased Government nourishment... At present the industry attracts \$25 million a year from the... Public Good Science Fund... less than a 10[%] share... The taskforce is spearheaded by the N[Z] Forest Industries Council, which is a representative organisation for large industry players such as... Challenge and [CHH]. But the taskforce also aims to be broadly representative, including small foresters and other sector groups such as the... Federated Farmers. It also wants to pool ideas from those not at present involved in forestry but who might become involved later, such as general manufacturers.

...[Timber was the first major export from NZ. A Royal Navy brig took a load of kahikatea (white pine) from the Coromandel Peninsula in 1794 and established a trade that grew over 60 years. It peaked in the early 1850s at 11 million broad feet (3.35 million m) a year (much of it kauri) which represented more than one-third of the country's exports at a time when wool was less than one-quarter. The decline thereafter in timber exporting was swift as settlers hacked and burned large areas of native forests in the North Island to establish livestock farms. By the 1870s laws were being passed to encourage settlers to plant trees. The first exotic forest plantings followed the establishment of tree nurseries in 1897. In the first 25 years of this government-sponsored afforestation, 19000 ha were planted, but the first boom period was between 1922 and 1936 when government agencies planted 150000 ha and private interests 120000 ha. In the years before WW2 the export of native timber was banned. At that time, and until after the war, the native timber reserves were needed for building wooden houses and for all purposes requiring durability because of the rapid deterioration of the exotic softwood timbers. The change of emphasis came with the development of thoroughly reliable preservative techniques for the softwoods. In the 1960s the government stepped up planting again and made financial inducements to private companies to plant as well. During the 1970s the planting rate multiplied by five to an average of more than 20000 ha a year. This enthusiasm for the future of the industry was compounded in the early 1980s, with a number of major companies expanding their interest in forestry products and accelerated plantings. During the post-war period the production of pulp for export has increased enormously. The production of paper and paperboard is now approaching three-quarters of a million tonnes a year. Total production of NZ forests for sawmills, plywood, pulp and paper and fibreboard mills (and not including firewood) is now about one billion m3 a year. Pulp, paper and paperboard exports represent in earnings about 5% of all export income.]

...[Since we started trading with the rest of the world 200 years ago, we've lived mainly off the resources of the land and sea. Getting those resources out to market required more brawn than brains. But in a world of instant "dotcom" millionaires, the Science Minister warned this week that NZ needed to "transform its economy from a reliance on primary industry commodities to more value-added and knowledge-based production. This transformation is more than a shift in economic strategy. It is also about creating a society that recognises and rewards innovation." The challenge of rewarding innovation – encouraging the "nerds" – without leaving everyone else behind has become a key issue in most of the 27 countries that sent speakers to the world research and development conference in Wellington this week. NZ has dropped behind the pack of most other developed countries when it comes to spending on R&D as a percentage of national income and that failure is reflected in average pay packets. According to the latest figures available, we spent 1.1% of our national income on R&D, exactly half the developed countries' average of 2.2%. And our average income was worth only \$US17,583 each in real purchasing power, against the developed country average of \$US21,544. After a period of decline, many developed countries have responded to the surge of new information-based businesses by boosting R&D spending. US federal R&D spending is up 9% this year; Japan doubled its basic research spending over the past 4 years; Singapore, with the same population as NZ, is spending \$S5 billion on a "Science Hub" to house 200 high-tech companies and institutions such as Johns Hopkins University. Last week, AUS's PM unveiled a five-year "innovation package," which doubled grants for private sector R&D, announced "world-class centres of excellence" in information technology, and topped the existing 125% tax reduction for R&D with a 175% offer for the labour costs of additional research spending. In its own way, NZ's Government is paddling hard to catch up. Last year's budget boosted R&D spending by 10%, to \$474 million. And the minister plans to use crown research institute profits and private sector capital to launch a "seed capital fund" for new high-tech businesses.] • In '1990 a total of \$US145,450 million was Expended for R&D and Basic Research by the US – 44% of which came from federal sources.]

...[Last week... the [AUSn] Federal Government unveiled its latest strategy for raising economic performance – Investing for Growth... The new four-year A[US]n industry policy package amounted to a \$A1.3 billion of initiatives including tax breaks of between 100 to 200[% on R&D]... Added to what is already in place, spending on industry policy will now be... \$4 billion over the next year... The chances of a similar package being announced here are extremely slim... Shrinking funds for the nation's Small Business Enterprise Centres may render some of these centres obsolete...]

The Be Your Own Boss programme (BYOB), a scheme to help N[Z]ers achieve self-employment, will not be axed. Instead funding for the programme will be trimmed... to just over \$2 million from about \$3 million over the next two years and capped in the future... The BYOB programme teaches small businesses a host of skills relating to starting up or evaluating a business. They are available mostly either through community-based centres or some Small Business Enterprise Centres. In 1995-96, 11,000 people went through the programme throughout the country...

Fledgling businesses were thrown into a state of uncertainty yesterday when the Government froze cash grants because of fears the system was being abused. The Ministry of Commerce put a temporary halt to payments of claims under the Business Development Programme, which awards \$19.8 million a year to firms nationwide... "It has been a concern that some Business Development Boards have been issuing grants which are not in line with the criteria they are required to follow," said the Minister of Business Development... Up to \$2.4 million should not have been handed out... according to checks on grant files... Grants are made through 21 regional committees to assist with projects and training in small and medium-sized businesses. Applicants pay for the project themselves and are then reimbursed for some of it, usually about \$5000... Money is made available on a dollar-for-dollar basis, with each company limited to \$20,000 of grants in any year, and \$50,000 over the life of the company... It is understood the concerns include that grants are being given to companies for an innovation... [which] is later found... [to be] not that new after all. Other firms are not filing the appropriate receipts and invoices which show what the money has been spent on... Labour's spokesman on industry and business development... said the suspension of payments caused several pressing problems. "The first, and most urgent, is that those new business initiatives which have already spent money on their investigations, in the expectation of a partial refund, need a ministerial letter of comfort to take to their bank manager. Many recipients will be just starting out in business with a bright idea. They will have no spare cash. That is precisely why the grant scheme is available in the first place... If they go bung now, we will squash the entrepreneurial spirit."

...Business Development Board grants... have been... suspended by the Ministry of Commerce... [amongst allegations that] the apparent downfall... was in part due to the greed of consultants... “...who benefit greatly from the 50% fee subsidy for professional services that forms the cornerstone of the scheme.” ...[However, nearly] a third of the firms receiving grants... did not qualify, an audit has found... Boards with more than two-thirds of surveyed files showing substantive non-compliance were: Aorangi (100%), Auckland (80%), Marlborough (67%), Waikato (90%) and Wairarapa (78%)... The... manager for the Auckland Business Development Board... said the issue was in the interpretation of the code for the [boards], introduced in 1995... What had to be established was whether the instances of non[-]compliance cited were merely clerical mistakes or more serious... “My view is that you will find minimal serious breaches.” ...The Auckland board processes over 1000 applications a year, sometimes as many as 145 a month. But it admits to lacking the resources to supervise or monitor its clients’ progress... The Auckland board did a rough estimate and found that for every dollar the board gave out, the return was \$25.

...Should the government scrap its Business Development Programme which is aimed at helping small businesses compete internationally? ...Free market proponents say government must not meddle in business. Intervention breeds massive distortions in economies, reducing competitive ability. Further, if someone chooses the lonely path of owning a business, why should tax-payers fund them? Abroad, government help for small enterprises continues in many shapes and sizes. [Why should N[Z]... differ? N[Z]’s unique business profile is such that 90[%] of the country’s 200,000 enterprises employ fewer than 9 people. Yet just 150 or so large enterprises contribute some 80[% of NZ]’s exports... If the programme is ditched, so should all other government-funded programmes, including money for Tradenz and Technology for New Zealand... (TNZ).

...An investment of less than \$2 million by a Government agency is helping 10 companies chalk up total revenues of more than \$200 million in under five years... said... [the] manager for T[NZ]... The Government would have collected about \$19 million in taxes from these companies, giving it a return on investment of more than 10 times... He said TNZ clients had been concerned over recent news that no future grants would be approved for the Business Development Programme... [H]e opposed the idea of Government funding specific projects, but felt that it had a genuine role to play in helping develop the skill base or infrastructure... to build successful businesses on... R[&D] investment... in business[is] critical for future competitiveness... “In the decade to 1993 R&D investment in N[Z] declined by 27[%], while it rose 52[%] in the... other OECD countries...” ...[one] technology success story in TNZ’s file is the [company] which used the funding to develop pulse-control technology that gave them a breakthrough in the electric fence market. [Editor’s note: ‘Electric fences can affect the Internet and other forms of telecommunication.’]

...Telecommunications exports are estimated to be worth \$250 million in the current year... Combined with other electronic exports, such as fire alarms, electric fences and control systems, they could hit \$1 billion in the year 2000, said the immediate past chairman of... Telecommunications Exporters of New Zealand (TENZ)... “I can assure you... stuff that is being produced in N[Z] is right up there, well able to compete with huge international manufacturers... Where we tend to have an edge is that we specialise and do it very well,”... An important factor was the natural ability of N[Z]ers to get along with people, acting as advisers rather than attempting to force their views on people. TENZ, an industry export group which grew out of a Tradenz joint action group, has been boosting its profile at international trade fairs[– because ‘TRADE MEANS JOBS’]...

Through sheer hard work and kiwi ingenuity... [an] Auckland... company... has... put N[Z] on the world map for crystal manufacturing... [I]t has expertise the rest of the world is just catching onto. The company makes... highly stable crystals which form the heart of telecommunications equipment, something its Japanese competitors haven’t quite come to grips with... The crystals have applications in satellite-based GPS... equipment, wireless communication, fibre-optic hubs and microwave links, among others... 90[% of the company’s turnover comes] from exports.

...Every night 40,000 Coke-vending machines in A[US phone NZ] to report their day’s takings. A N[Z] invention has allowed the machines, and 7500 in this country, to link with base using a telephone line and a modem. The computer software technology[which]... has been used in N[Z] and AUS] for four years... is undergoing extensive trials in the U[S]... and is now being installed in vending machines in many U[S] cities... “It tells you how many cans have been sold each day, so you can be much more efficient about sending people to refill them,”... the public affairs manager for Coca-Cola Amatil... said. The system also indicated the cause of malfunctions and whether a machine had been vandalised.

...One of the world’s highest paid business executives... yesterday recommended N[Z] promote itself as a regional corporate capital... and... he recommended companies in Asia and North America consider N[Z] as “the most rational country in which to locate their international headquarters for the region.” ...Locating in Auckland rather than, for example, Sydney, had many advantages... no capital gains tax... a more pro-business environment, its legal and banking facilities were world class and it had a simpler political structure. “If I had a criticism – it would only be that you hide N[Z]’s light under a bushel too much,”... The multinational food giant Heinz of which [he] is chief executive, could have gone anywhere, he said, but chose Auckland as its regional headquarters. Heinz owns[NZ’s food giant] Watties... To promote businesses to locate here [the Heinz CEO, who is also] chairman of Dublin-based Independent Newspapers, owners of the N[Z] *Herald*, suggested incentives needed to be offered such as tax breaks. He pointed to a bustling Irish economy as an example. However, [he] stopped short of recommending that N[Z] adopt the 10[%] tax rate that Irish companies now enjoyed. “N[Z]’s corporate tax rate [of 33[%]] is necessary to pay the bills here.”

...The difficulties of running an international business from N[Z] show through in the latest survey of senior executives... Some 40[%] of the respondents gave N[Z] only a moderate rating... Of the balance of respondents, more were less favourable about N[Z] than favourable. The country was rated more highly by smaller companies (under 200 employees)... than by big companies. This indicates that the bigger the scale of international operations, the harder a company finds to run them from N[Z].

...N[Z] traders operating in the global marketplace face numerous risks they would not expect to confront at home... Whole firms of New York lawyers do little else but hunt among listed companies for opportunities to file damages suits against management often on the flimsiest of pretexts, knowing they can usually settle them profitably out of court. Espionage is one of the constant problems of international technology companies... corruption and bribery are omnipresent risks... and[there are usually] lower standards of corporate governance than in N[Z]... The quality of corporate governance is highly variable... even in Britain[– where]... only a third of companies had a proper strategy, another third said they had a strategy which was in fact “really only a budget,” and the last third operated without any plan whatsoever... [The] chairman of British Airways... who is also the chairman of the powerful Confederation of British Industry, regrettably accepts that it would be too much to hope for a single global set of corporate governance rules in the foreseeable future even though it would make life much simpler... [According to him, a] major impediment to simplified global management remains different accounting rules... One of the most onerous burdens of global governance can be the requirements of commercial watchdogs. [A]Wellingtonian... now spends two days in every three months attending compulsory briefings with the US Securities and Exchange Commission... The SEC requires companies... [listed] on the Nasdaq stock market... to keep up with all changes in commercial law but the trouble... “is that they are often talking about amendments to amendments that haven’t yet been issued.”

...N[Z] has slipped from third to fifth in global competitiveness according to the annual survey of the World Economic Forum, an international grouping of government, business and academic leaders. The report said N[Z] had come a long way towards being an efficient, competitive economy, but still faced the task of consolidating a decade of fiscal and structural reforms and translating those into solid economic growth. The forum, which has its headquarters in Switzerland, made its conclusion after assessing eight critical factors: the openness of the economy, government, development of financial markets, infrastructure, business management, labour market flexibility, and judicial and political institutions. Leading the world rankings were Singapore and Hong Kong, economies that “excel in nearly every major area that counts in terms of competitiveness...” They were followed by the U[S] and Canada, while A[US] was ranked 17... Although N[Z] was ranked fifth in competitiveness

by the forum, it did not carry the same status in a separate survey of international business executives which placed its competitiveness at 17, still ahead of A[US] on 20. That re-ranking was in part explained by a tendency of survey respondents to give more positive assessments to large, wealthy, highly visible economies, even if those economies were not performing particularly well. Japan, despite recent problems, was ranked number two. In terms of N[Z]'s impact on the overall growth of the 53 countries in the survey, N[Z] was ranked a lowly 35, a reflection of its small size, as much as anything.

...It keeps getting harder for N[Z] to earn its living as a trading nation. The terms of trade index, which measures what volume of imports can be funded by a fixed volume of N[Z]'s exports, fell 0.4[%] in the... quarter and is at its lowest level for six years... Despite the declining trend in the terms of trade, export volumes have been growing faster than imports. Export volumes for the... year were 7.7[%] up on the previous year... Import volumes... were 4[%] up.

...N[Z] continues to face an uphill struggle as a trading nation, with the terms of trade having worsened in the[latest] quarter... It fell 1.2[%]... making a drop of 4.1[%] for the year, as import prices rose twice as fast as export prices.

...Agricultural exporters are concerned about the turmoil in Asian financial markets but say it is too early to get a clear picture of how their businesses might be affected. The Dairy Board exports more than \$2 billion worth of products to Asia each year – more than a third of its total tonnage. “The markets are crucially important,” said [the board's spokesperson. Pipfruit]... exporters are unlikely to be greatly affected because Asian markets are not so important as those in Europe and the selling seasons are almost over.

...Asian financial turmoil is having an impact on Otaki-based necktie maker Sander Apparel, with the cancellation of two \$50,000 orders from Malaysia... [The company's] managing director... said the buyers had told him they were following directives from the Malaysian Government to conserve foreign exchange by buying Malaysian-made products... Sander Apparel... had exported neckties to Malaysia since 1989 and the cancelled orders were from two of i[t]s main customers there. [The] company, which directly employs 28 people, exports about \$2 million of neckties a year. About a quarter go to Asian countries.

...[while Asia] is throwing great black clouds of negativity over N[Z]'s economic growth prospects for the year ahead[, t]he... Warehouse is hoping to capitalise on the turmoil in South-east Asia by taking advantage of cheaper prices for manufactured goods... More than half [of the budget retailer's] stock comes from Asia... The company's buyers were already receiving offers from Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia and Indonesia,[the] merchandising director... told the annual meeting yesterday... [H]e expected the currency problems... would put pressure on Chinese producers to bring down their prices. However, it was possible The Warehouse would change some of its suppliers. The cheaper prices are likely to offset those the company expects to pay in some markets because of the weaker N[Z] dollar... The company's buyers hoped to counter the... drop... between the N[Z] and US dollars... with better buying strategies, he said. [● The cabinet today is expected to put the heat on Enza over big foreign exchange losses. The Government hasn't ruled out appointing a statutory manager if Enza doesn't stop deducting about \$19m of projected forex losses from growers' payments (Enza's been deducting \$4.50 a carton from suppliers' returns which would reduce to \$1.85 if it took responsibility for next years' losses). Enza's chairman said last night that to legislate property rights away from any shareholder group to another group would “put NZ back in the financial dark ages.”]

...West Auckland orchardists want a quick resolution to a row over Enza debts – one saying he will resume exports if the situation improves (this year is the first time he has decided against exporting, as he could forecast trouble, along with rising costs in packing and transport). Enza is taking \$4.50 a carton from apple grower payments this year to cover about \$19 million of foreign exchange debt forecast next year. That's part of about \$50m in foreign exchange debts which growers believe Enza shareholders should bear. The Auckland Citrus Growers president and owner of Huapai's Sunnyview Orchards questions the need to pay for Enza's losses. “They were appointed to export, not to borrow foreign money.” He says the Government must do something or there mightn't be any apples to export. “I've been growing fruit for 50 years and we've got a wonderful industry that's on the verge of being destroyed.” 40 years ago the Huapai Fruitgrowers Association joined many others in making submissions about the Apple and Pear Marketing Board. Seems their doubts were justified.

...‘A 10-year rollercoaster ride of foreign exchange dealings may have cost the apple industry at least \$67 million – or nearly \$48,000 a grower. Although there were good times during those years, the last of the bills for failed forex contracts are now hitting home, pitting apple suppliers into a battle with major exporter Enza. The clash is unlikely to produce any winners and has soured relations between the interdependent foes.’]

...Pipfruit and kiwifruit shipments are to link next season in what it is hoped will be a catalyst for further joint activities. The chief executive of the Apple and Pear board... said it and the Kiwifruit Marketing Board had reached a global shipping agreement... to all markets. “Enza and Zespri have a significant opportunity to be able to leverage critical mass,” he said... It is believed to mean cuts of over 10[%] in the present shipping costs for both boards, who last week announced that they would combine marketing operations in Britain in the coming year... Further arrangements could include marketing of Chilean fruit handled by the Apple and Pear Board's Chilean company, Zeus, under the Enza brand and working with Zespri in the packaging area. The chairman of the Apple and Pear Board... estimated at only \$20 million the cost of poor quality fruit this season, saying an earlier running total of \$64 million took into account “\$30 to \$40 million” of opportunity costs.

...the... 1700 pipfruit growers around the country... [are] reeling from a season when hailstorms took their toll in most growing areas then international markets did much worse damage... [A] smaller crop should have meant higher prices, but quality problems meant a total of \$64 million so far has been spent on checking, repacking and sending unsaleable fruit to be used for fruit juice or cider. The... Apple and Pear Board... [is tightening] quality controls for next season – a move which was endorsed at the recent Pipfruit Conference, along with clawback provisions which will see the cost of poor quality fruit being charged back to individual growers... The average per carton payout to growers this year is \$10.21 compared with \$12.17 last year.

...Kiwifruit growers' surplus per tray has risen 50[%] in the past ten years and their per hectare surplus has doubled, says the chairman of Kiwifruit N[Z]... “The profits are a long way ahead of what they were under the old export system in 1987,”... However... a director of the post-harvest company Hukapak, said the kiwifruit industry was locked into an enforced marriage. “Some of us want a divorce.” ...Zespri International's chief executive... said fragmenting the supply of N[Z] kiwifruit to world markets would be “a formula for disaster.” The marketer was already below the size needed to be a key supplier to world supermarkets... The cost of running Zespri International was \$16.1 million a year, or 4.5[%] of the shipped value of the crop. For that cost of 38c a tray, the single seller had added \$100 million in sales growth over the past two years. Prices under a free-marketing system might be similar to those received by Chilean growers – \$2 a tray less. “That is not a future this industry can contemplate,” [the chairman] said.

...An exciting future for kiwifruit sales to India is being predicted following an agreement which will allow exports to begin next year... [WTO] countries, had persuaded India to bring forward... the... phasing out of import restrictions... [A] spokeswoman for offshore kiwifruit marketing arm Zespri International, said the company would “very aggressively pursue the opportunity.” She said: “There is the potential to grow quite rapidly. It is one of the last untapped markets.”

...China could be a kiwifruit export market of three million trays annually in [five years says the] chairman of Kiwifruit N[Z]... who made his first visit to the original home of the crop recently... N[Z] began exporting kiwifruit to China several years ago and sends about... 300,000 trays of fruit a year... work was [also] underway to develop a Chinese industry based on the fruit popularised by N[Z]... The Chinese still eat the fruit kiwifruit was developed from, which is known as monkey peach... [I]t was small, a different shape and “nowhere near as appealing as kiwifruit.” - 1997

KIWIFRUIT... is a sub-tropical fruit which has become the fastest growing NZ export commodity since the mid-1970s... [O]riginally known as the Chinese gooseberry because of its origins in the Yangtse Valley of China[, it has]... been developed in size and succulence by the industry here...

1937 The first commercial planting of Chinese gooseberries... took place at Te Kuiti, Otahuhu and Wanganui.

An ugly little fruit brought back from China in the early years of the century, the chinese gooseberry was developed by plant propagators in Wanganui and Auckland and was grown in many home gardens. But it was not until the 1950s that its potential as an export crop started to be exploited when production exceeded the demand of the local market. By the late 1950s Turners and Growers were sending fruit to the U[S] but were meeting buyer resistance because the name chinese gooseberry meant little to the Americans. At the suggestion of Turners and Growers the fruit was renamed kiwifruit. Now it is one of the more popular fruits worldwide, with most grown in countries other than N[Z].

TAKE a good look at that unfamiliar plant before you dig it out of the garden; it could make you rich. Several new fruit and vegetable types crop up each year through accidents of nature. Occasionally, as in the case of the [kiwifruit], they prove to be commercially viable. These accidental discoveries are exploited by... a few... entrepreneurs... [The latest example is] the Luisa plum[, which was discovered at a]... property in... Hamilton... There was a number of old fruit trees on the property and [a new owner] reckoned they were past their best and had most of them bulldozed. Two, however, looked ideal for supporting the ends of a hammock, so he kept those. In the spring one of them blossomed, and produced a strange greenish fruit the size and shape of a small mango. It was succulently sweet, with the texture of a plum and hints of apricot in the taste. [The new owner] went to the M[AF] and every other expert he could find, but no one could identify the fruit. All they could say was that it was[a] freak... result of some odd cross pollination... “You sometimes find that, where people have been eating fruit on a verandah and tossing the stones away into the bush, the seedlings that grow as a result may recombine to produce something new,”... Having taken advice, he found that he could claim the fruit as a new species, and named it Luisa after his daughter. The process of gaining a grant of plant rights, a so-called plant patent, took a lot more time and money than [he] expected, but with the help of... a horticulture consultant, it was completed in 1990. The grant of rights under international convention makes the plant the exclusive property of the [owner] for 17 years[, and means that each]... time a tree is sold a royalty from the sale is paid to the [owner]. Orchardists the length of N[Z] have planted Luisa plum] trees, and this summer the first fruit appeared on a large scale in supermarkets. Trial exports of fruit to Japan and Taiwan have excited interest, but the exports will not be profitable until much larger quantities are available. Growing rights have also been sold to fruit-producing companies in Chile and France, and negotiations are continuing to sell the right to grow the trees in the U[S, AUS] and South Africa... [L]icensing growers overseas is the only way of protecting the “patent” on the variety. “If it proves a winner, growers overseas would acquire it anyway without your authority,”... [That can lead to a new set of problems:] “There... is a legal battle going on over the rights to a pink apple from Western A[US].”

...Twigs that make export millions... In 1996, 18 million cartons of N[Z] apples were sold to 56 countries – up nearly 150[%] on the 1986 total... Our apples take (by value) 31[%] of the European market, 56[%] of the North American and 50[%] of the Asian... [70%] of our exports are from varieties developed here... [such as] gala... royal gala... and braeburn[, which]... came off the side of the road somewhere... Meanwhile, other Southern Hemisphere producers have continued to rely on traditional apples such as red delicious and granny smith[, which]... was found in the back yard of a little old lady in Sydney... The Fruit Industry Improvement Association, an Enza subsidiary, oversees new apple variety development and its latest successes have been southern snap and Pacific rose. Pacific rose, which took more than 15 years to develop, is being hailed as the industry’s new flagship apple – and it was apparently the target for the Chinese... [A] Matamata orchardist... noticed one very red apple hanging high on a tree in 1969. Four years later he had turned that... apple into 12,000 twig-sized trees... [Therefore t]he finder of the royal gala knows what can be done with one apple bud, let alone several twigs...

The Chinese Government has been asked to explain a case of industrial espionage involving a group of horticultural scientists who tried to smuggle a new variety of apple out of N[Z]. The four... scientists and an interpreter were caught by a joint customs, police and M[AF] swoop at Auckland International Airport on Sunday... One of the scientists was found with 15 cuttings wrapped in wet tissue and plastic, in his hand luggage. The scientists told police they had planned grafting the new strain of apple when they returned home, which has alarmed N[Z] fruitgrowers. Police did not lay charges against the scientists and allowed them to leave the country the next day, but the matter has not been left there... The... scientists were on a N[Z] Government-sponsored trip to visit horticultural research institutes... The president of the Fruitgrowers Federation... said the N[Z] apple industry had to be wary of China’s “huge potential” to swamp the Pacific area with cheap apples... The world was tending to target N[Z] for industrial espionage-type activity because of our “wonderful research capability,”... In today’s competitive environment there was real advantage to be gained in being the first to release a new variety of apple on to the market... Chinese Government officials could not be reached for comment last night.

...Chinese visitors have previously been caught trying to smuggle fruit tree cuttings across N[Z] borders... This year, when a Chinese delegation arrived from A[US], border authorities found tree cuttings inside thermos flasks. It is understood these were taken but no further action taken. The delegation continued its tour of N[Z]... Outrage was also expressed yesterday that no charges were laid [after the latest incident]. Accusations were laid that the[N[Z] Government had taken a soft line because of fear of China. The Minister of Customs... defended the decision not to prosecute... He said it was not worth jeopardising trade with China “and our relationship with a huge, industrially mighty country for that incident.”

...Chinese officials retaliated to this year’s apple-smuggling scandal by accusing N[Z]ers of stealing plant material from China. At that point our Government decided it was satisfied with China’s response to its concerns about the initial incident and took the matter no further. Papers released... under the Official Information Act provide a peek into the delicacy required of diplomats and Government politicians from small countries dealing with a superpower. China... is shown as particularly sensitive to anything casting it or its people in a bad light. Its officials required prompting before admitting wrongdoing and instead tried to blame N[Z] for the row that blew up when one of its horticulturists was caught at Auckland airport with 15 cuttings in his suitcase. This country’s \$200 million a year pipfruit industry was outraged when the Chinese national was freed without being charged. The official was in N[Z] at the Government’s invitation as part of an economic aid project... Chinese officials, particularly at the Wellington embassy, deeply resented the way the N[Z] Government made the incident public and the news reports that followed... Ministry of Foreign Affairs... staff said last night the claim... that our consultants involved in the aid project had removed plants from Wulian County in China... had not been substantiated... The Government fears that releasing further details about the... incident... will damage relations with China[– which could, perhaps, accuse NZ of stealing the chinese gooseberry].

...Brightly coloured cars... are spreading the new Zespri kiwifruit brand around Europe in an extension of a similar successful promotion carried out last year. Twelve Volkswagen beetles are touring Germany and Holland, while six Citroen deux chevaux cars are visiting holiday spots in southern France. A train which runs between resorts on the Belgian coast has also been painted in the bright green Zespri colours. In Spain, which has one of the highest growth rates for kiwifruit consumption, the fruit is being taken out in chilly bins on the back of bicycles for consumers to sample. Zespri International Europe[’s] commercial director... said the travelling promotions were... aimed at reinforcing the message that kiwifruit made a healthy snack any time of day.

...A joint venture between two apple orchardists has put into production the first corporate-branded apples. The Sheraton hotel company is giving guests apples with the word "Goodnight" and a trademark "S" on them. The marking is produced by covering the outlines of the letters from coloration by sunlight. [The orchardists, from] Gisborne, and... Hawkes Bay, have formed a company, Ad-apples, to market the shadow-branded apples. The partners have spent five years researching and refining methods to produce fuji apples marked without use of chemicals.

...[according to] Tradenz's manager, fresh foods and agribusiness[, the]... question is not whether we can afford the costs and discipline of branding primary products destined for the world stage, but whether those companies which have not already grasped the benefits of marketing branded products will stay in the export business without this approach... As Zespi International['s] chief executive... says: "In an increasingly competitive marketplace, the greatest rewards go to those who create the strongest brands."

...N[Z] needs to be up on the world stage if it is going to make it in the age of globalisation, [according to] a leader in PR... [He] means this in the nicest possible way... N[Z], you see, is just not up there... "I wouldn't like to use the term backwater, but there's an element of that," he explains... We need to promote ourselves more.

...[The North and South Islands are the most exciting places in the world, but they have the duller names, a branding whiz says. Imaginative and exotic names, such as Maui and Pounamu, derived from Maori names for the islands, would be much better, he told tourism bosses yesterday. "It will definitely create tension between NZ and the Hawaiian island of Maui. That should be good for awareness." His company was sifting through ideas and promised it would come up with "a huge iconic idea" for its global contract with the Tourism Board. Other ideas were a new flag – black with a silver fern – a new national song, and bringing back a stamp for passports. And Air NZ could paint its jumbo jets all black, with a silver fern stretching along the fuselage.]

...In marketing a branded product, we are making a promise to consumers... that today, tomorrow and the next day we will supply to the same quality, reliably and consistently... Just like a packet of soap powder or a car, a country can be branded in some powerful way... Companies seeking to gain leverage from N[Z]'s favourable image in our markets can... adopt the New Zealand Way fern brand – a country-of-origin branding initiative... When it comes to branding, however, some countries have it and some don't... Detailed research on the impact of The New Zealand Way's efforts has yet to be done, but... [its] chief executive officer... says: "The results are very encouraging." It still has a long way to go, she concedes. "N[Z] is a dot on the globe. But you have to start somewhere. And you have to start with a vision." ...One problem with branding N[Z] may be that N[Z]ers themselves don't believe in the brand. We will accept we have one of the most beautiful countries in the world, but will still head for Fiji or A[US] on holiday, instead of the South Island. Kiwis know that many N[Z] products have reached world-class quality, but will still look for A[US]n or overseas labels.

...N[Z]... consumers... just have to look for "Made in USA" or "Made in UK" labels to find what goods to avoid – if the huge pricetags have not already told them.

...[a brand (or trademark) is a 'distinctive mark placed upon goods to identify the manufacturer – either a device, label, ticket, heading, signature, word, letter, or numeral. If a word, it may not be one in general use as a name for that particular product and not the name of a person (except a signature in facsimile) or place. It may not be morally objectionable or misrepresent the product.' ■ In '1990, there were 53,600 trademarks registered in the US and 7,200 were renewed (the respective figures for 1980 were 18,900 and 5,900').]

...“Brands have to work harder than ever before,”... observed... an identity consultant, or in other words an expert on branding. He was responsible for the development of some of the greatest brands in banking... The benefits of a strong brand lies in the unique mix of rational and emotional qualities associated with a product which enables it to be sold at a premium. Hence, a plain white T-shirt is worth \$20, but add the Nike symbol and it can be worth four times as much. The Virgin brand is an example of how a strong brand can support a range of products with little in common... Brand comes in the form of logos, typefaces and slogans and how they are applied across all manifestations, from letterheads to brochures and, most importantly for banks, the exterior appearance and interior layout of branches... In an address to a banking conference in Bali, [the consultant] said the brand might soon be the only sustainable competitive advantage in financial services... In a world where banking products are little more than commodities, the power of the bank's brand may be the difference between it and a competitor... The importance of branding to banks lies in the promise to increasingly busy customers who cannot do comparisons with other market offerings to make sure that the product will meet their expectations... However, [he] said, banks had a lot to learn from retailers... Just to complicate things, mergers and joint ventures between banks and non-banks are posing a new set of branding issues... “This whole issue of brand sharing is taxing many identity consultants... and increasingly we are having to look at how we fit two sometimes incompatible brands and their identities together...”

...Union Bank of Switzerland and Swiss Bank Corp have merged to create the world's second-largest bank... The new group will have assets of 1320 billion Swiss francs (\$NZ1534 billion) and is expected to cut 13,000 jobs worldwide.

...Two of Germany's oldest industrial titans... on Tuesday said they planned to merge their companies, ending over a century of intense rivalry. The companies were created by 19th-century industrial barons... built the weapons for Adolf Hitler's armies and later stoked the furnaces of western Germany's post-war recovery. If completed, the merger would create Germany's fifth-largest company...

...the U[K's]... Real Estate group... is to merge with U[S]-based CB Commercial Real Estate Services Group Inc. The companies said the merged group – yet to be named – would have 8000 employees in 31 countries.

...Accountancy firms Ernst & Young and KPMG hope to merge early next year, cutting the world's Big Six down to four once Coopers & Lybrand and Price Waterhouse complete their merger. The Ernst & Young-KPMG... marriage (if consummated) would create the world's largest accountancy firm... employing more than 163,000 people. It's whispered from London that image consultants have been retained to find a name, and the possibilities are horrendous... But one possibility... is simply KEYS... The point of the deal seems to be that bigger internationally is best, a logic which could see the number of big international firms whittled down further.

...Global business is in the grip of a new round of merger mania... ON THE morning of October 13... the whirlwind of activity began. Within a few minutes, [6 merger] deals potentially worth \$203 billion flashed up on screens all over Europe... Never, in the history of business, has there been a day like it. Mad Monday, as the dealers labelled it, may have been a shock, but it was no isolated incident... 1997 will break all merger records... What sparked off this sudden determination by so many companies to turn into giants? ...The common thread running through most of these deals is globalisation. Everyone is boasting of becoming one of the biggest of their kind in Europe, the US or the world. “Small is beautiful” is a phrase confined to mobile phones. Unlike the mergers earlier in the decade, this batch is not based on saving money by putting... workers out of jobs. Although cost-cutting remains important, these takeovers are justified by the need for scale, not penny pinching... “...the world is getting smaller... All these companies are operating in a... larger market and to operate effectively you have to become larger yourself...” There are other factors at work besides the simple urge to merge... Many companies have... their balance sheets in reasonable shape. They spent years slimming down their organisations. Now they are rich... and confident enough to risk a big move. A [merger] deal is a much easier way of adding profits than seeking and developing new markets. Many of the deals announced this month will take months to wrap up. While they drag on, with regulators investigating and courts approving, the fees clock up. Naturally, advisers rebuff any suggestion they might play fast and loose with their client's billions.

...Adidas AG said on Monday the German cartel office had approved its 2.4 billion mark... takeover of sports equipment group Salomon SA... Combined 1996 sales would have been more than six billion marks... The deal enables Adidas to offer a dizzying array of products from shoes and sports apparel to... ski, golf and tennis gear... The new company will be called Adidas-Salomon AG.

...Turmoil on the sharemarket is expected to foster a round of management buyouts... [However, t]akeovers are good for shareholders and the economy as a whole, according to a... study released yesterday... by the Securities Institute of A[US]... The study of more than 2500 takeover bids for A[US]n Stock Exchange-listed firms... said at least \$A20.4 billion... was earned by shareholders directly as a result of such bids between 1974 and 1995. The study found an active takeover market resulted in the allocation of corporate assets to higher-valued uses and prompted otherwise entrenched managers to act in the interest of shareholders through better management practices. The report... found investors did well by identifying firms that were the subject of imminent takeover bids... “...experiencing, on average, an abnormal return of 32[%] after allowing for market-wide movements and firm size,” it said. - 1997

If mergers and takeovers continue at their present rate, the world may eventually have just 2 corporations (perhaps with one being legal, the other illegal?!)

...the next thing that will happen – corporate wars.

Of course, the ultimate scenario would be to end up with just one worldwide corporation!

A great ambition has been fulfilled. We are now, without question, the richest, the greatest, the most powerful company this world has ever seen!

corporation... a group of people authorized to act as an individual, especially in business.

We’re a business, and like every other business we try to make a profit. Hopefully more profit than the others.

A company must operate profitably or it dies: this is the system by which our production operates and, in many ways, it is a good thing, for it removes unprofitable businesses which might otherwise waste a lot of material – and... people’s time for... a negative amount of effective work.

In 1991[, US corporations]... with assets over \$1 billion... accounted for only 0.05% of all corporations in number[(‘3,563 thousand corporations operated in the US in 1988 – compared with 13,679 thousand proprietorships and 1,654 thousand partnerships; and 412 corporations in 1944’)]; yet, they accounted for 71.2% of corporate assets and 73.2% of net profits.

General Electric Co’s profits soared to a record of \$US2.16 billion... in the second quarter as most of its global businesses registered strong growth. The giant manufacturing and broadcasting company said its net income for the three months ended June 30 rose 13[%]... 10 of its 12 businesses reported higher operating profit for the quarter, with nine... achieving double-digit increases.

...Telecom N[Z] has been listed at 380th among the world’s top companies, according to the *Financial Times* annual global FT-500 survey. Telecom, which placed 396th last year, was the only N[Z] company to make it into the top 500. Among top Asia-Pacific companies, Telecom ranked 32nd, down two places... while [CHH] was 74th, down nine places[– although ‘Challenge would be larger than CHH’ if its four trading divisions (Energy, Paper, Forests and Building) were counted as being one company, and ‘would be larger than Telecom going by the value of its assets’]... The FT-500 provides an annual snapshot of the world’s leading companies, ranked by their size, at the end of each September year. A company’s size is measured by its market capitalisation, which is the number of shares the company has on issue multiplied by their market price. Telecom’s market capital was valued... at \$US8841.5 million... with [CHH] at \$3791.7 million... British Sky Broadcasting, headed by... [a NZer], topped the list of the most profitable companies in Europe... U[S] company General Electric, with a market capital of \$150,264.2 million, topped the FT-500, up from second place last year. Netherlands-British company Royal Dutch/Shell also moved up one place to rank second with a \$135,350.2 million market capital. The U[S]s’ Coca-Cola Corp was third at \$126,872.4 million... - 1997

Company *market capitalisation* allows corporations to prove who is the biggest – although it is possible that one corporation might have the largest market capital but not gain the most annual revenue or profit. Other ways in which a corporation can claim to be *the biggest* is through having the most employees; or because it has the most offices (or, alternatively, most buildings). Then there is always the simplest ambition – to have the biggest (or tallest) building!

Empire State Building, tallest building in the world... When it was built, 1930-1, it was 1250 ft. high, with 102 storeys. In July 1945 the building was struck by a B-25 bomber, causing the death of 13 people. The addition of a television-sending tower in 1950 increased its height to 1472 ft.

Having pierced the sky with the world’s tallest building, the 451.9m twin Petronas Towers[– however, a building ‘planned for construction in Shanghai will be taller’ (‘7 out of 10 of the tallest buildings completed or currently under construction are in Asia; a decade ago they were all in America’) –] Malaysians are now about to erect the world’s longest. Budgeted at 10 billion ringgit (\$[NZ]5.73 billion), the 10-storey tube-like “Linear City” structure on stilts is supposed to snake for 2km above the Klang River that winds through downtown Kuala Lumpur. The centrepiece is “Giga World,” so named by its backers as a step above “mega.” The open-sided building is to have a canal running through the seventh floor, an artificial rain forest, shops, restaurants, offices and even an in-line skating arena. The entrepreneurs behind [it] hope to begin the first phase – an 8km monorail through the heart of the capital – by September. The P[M]... wants it ready by September 1998, when Malaysia plays host to the Commonwealth Games. - 1996

Great wall of towers... Stand anywhere on Nanjing Rd, the very long main shopping street of Shanghai, spin around and you can quickly see more office space under construction than is contained in the whole of Auckland’s central business district... The amount of development is awesome... Shanghai is possibly the largest construction site in the world with 20,000 buildings under construction... [i]n an area which until 1900 was paddy fields... Behind these towers, where a 94-storey giant is about to make the normal 40 to 50-storey buildings look small, Shanghai has a new container terminal and industrial zone... Shanghai is undoubtedly pushing to become China’s main commercial centre... although... western businessmen dealing in Shanghai and Hong Kong are divided on which will be the more important in 10 years... [A] 1995 report... warned... that, because of the magnitude of construction in Beijing and Shanghai, rents were starting to fall. No matter: Jones Lang Wootton recorded[that a further] 200,000sq m of top grade office space[was] completed in Shanghai’s main business district last year... In the space of four years, JLW has forecast that 3.3 million sq m of new offices would be completed in Shanghai. Naturally enough, this has made the market more competitive and the overall vacancy rate has pushed up to 25[%], with rents dropping back more than 20[%].

...RENTS for good quality office space may be rising, but tenants should count their blessings. Commercial office rents in this country are among the cheapest in the world, according to... [a survey of] the commercial property market in 87 cities... And they can be grateful they do not rent space in Hong Kong where the pending takeover by China has done nothing to diminish property values, pushing the annual cost up to a whopping... 27% more expensive than the next most expensive city... 1, Hong Kong... \$2014 sq m... 2, London (West End) \$1588... 3, London (City) \$1472... 4,

Singapore \$1462... 5, Bombay \$1411... 6, Beijing \$1321... 7, Moscow \$1320... 8, New Delhi \$1200... 9, Shanghai \$1160... 10, Seoul \$1159... 11, Tokyo \$1033... 12, New York (Midtown) \$1028... 13, Paris \$898... 14, Edinburgh \$862... 15 New York (Downtown) \$826... 56= Rome... Sydney \$447... 74 Warsaw \$302... 75, Wellington \$301... 76, Auckland \$292... 78, Melbourne \$257... 80, Christchurch \$211... 87, Bulawayo (Zimbabwe) \$95...

Demand for new office space should push gross rents in the best buildings to \$440 a sq m in Auckland, \$425 in Wellington and \$235 in Christchurch by the year 2001, [according to the]... latest office review... Those figures are well above the generally accepted level of about \$350 a sq m used as the benchmark for new construction to start because, as gross rents, they include the outlay for operating expenditure... Vacancy levels in both Auckland and Wellington's CBDs... had... dropped below 10[%]...

About 38,000 sq m of office space was [rent]ed in Wellington's [CBD] over the first half of 1997... But bring that gross absorption rate down to net impact, and a net 3500 sq m was taken up in the six months, compared with 18,700 sq m for the previous half-year... [T]he overall Wellington CBD vacancy rate fell just three percentage points over the half-year, after substantial falls in the previous three years from a 20.6[%] vacancy level in December 1993. The prime space vacancy rate actually rose three points to 4.6[%]... The survey showed a 10.4[%] vacancy rate in the Wellington CBD core, 14.5[%] on the fringe, 13[%] in Te Aro and 4[%] in Thorndon.

...Overall demand for office space in Auckland's [CBD] fell in the first half of 1997... However... demand for prime space remained strong and the vacancy level fell to 4.9[%] in June, while indicative prime rents rose 10[%] over the six months... A... survey of major business districts in N[Z and AUS] showed the net absorption rate in Auckland's CBD over the past five years was 21,891 sq m a year – slightly more than the space in Queen St One, the former Air N[Z] House... That absorption rate closely matches the average of office supply in Auckland over the 11 years preceding the 1980s boom, but is well short of the 83,000 sq m a year supplied from 1985 to 1987. The Auckland absorption rate for the past five years has run at about one-sixth that of Sydney CBD's 124,280 sq m a year... [Sydney's CBD] now has just over 4 million sq m of office space, of which prime quality space forms about 7.5[%]... Two buildings totalling 65,000sq m are under construction on Pitt and George Sts and the threshold to make new developments viable was a gross \$A700... a sq m, [although]... Bayleys DTZ... beat that figure with the leasing of 396sq m on the 36th floor of the 44-floor Chifley Tower for \$770, to Nikko Securities for seven years... The overall vacancy rate in Sydney had fallen from 22... to 6[%] since 1992... Sydney's vacancy rate for prime office space has fallen from 28... to 2.4[%] in five years... The survey shows prime rent in Auckland in the third quarter reached an average of \$203 a square metre, with the top space averaging \$220, compared with prime rent averages of \$195 in Wellington and \$135 in Christchurch. Capital values of prime stock in the three N[Z] cities were \$4120 a sq... m... in Auckland, \$3750 in Wellington and \$1600 in Christchurch, while the yield range for prime city property was 8 to 8.5[%] in Auckland, 7.5 to 8.5... in Wellington and 8.5 to 9.5... in Christchurch. Looking forward[, a firm specialising in]... property consultancy... said new CBD construction[in Auckland] would be of prime grade office towers... Large occupants of medium-quality space – some of that being the best premises built during the 1980s boom – are expected to upgrade to prime space again as their leases expire over the next five years, leaving... large refurbishment opportunities.

...“We're back in a development market,”... says... *Moving Times*. One difference between the 1990s version and the 1980s boom is that, this time, tenants are not racing each other to jump into the next highrise before the concrete has dried. They are examining workspace solutions. At least, that is what consultants would like them to do. Another difference is that the solution is not just [CBD] highrise... At least 27 concepts around Auckland are being touted to potential tenants. Most are on the city fringe and in the under-\$10 million bracket... The fringes offer more parking, business parks and low-level office blocks... One company that has decided to move from fringe city (Symonds St) to a greenfields site, Smales Farm on the North Shore, is Clear Communications. Its \$50 million new headquarters will have 17,364 sq m, housing 1100 staff on six levels, with ready motorway access and a signposting opportunity better than most. That removes the best part of a large office tower from CBD planning... Kiwi Income Property Trust[s] joint managing director... however, believes there will be more than one new tower in the central city because of tenant incompatibility, “and the emotional factor will drive people wanting to put their name on a new building for the turn of the century.” Other factors impinge on demand for new office space, not least being the dramatic reduction in space required for every employee. New terms such as hot-desking (desk-sharing, where a work-station or office may be booked for use by more than [one] person a day) and hotelling (an extension of hot-desking) are taking effect, although they are not practical for all industries and have not been received well by all potential participants... Telecom[s] spokesperson said a typical office building around the Pacific Rim at the moment would allow 20 to 23 sq m for every occupant, but technology, cultural and design opportunities existed to take that average down to 12 or 14 sq m “without any significant impact on productivity. Businesses will make this paradigm shift to maintain competitiveness.”

...a consultant with PA Consulting Group in London... arrived in Auckland this week proclaiming the message that, among the changes to come in the use of offices in the next decade, a key one will be that organisations use less space in total. They would also spread themselves over a greater number of buildings: the grand statement would be no more. However, these notions are at odds with [hi]s own work... managing the shift of two banking institutions into 100,000 sq m of new[London] office space. And the theory that the grand statement is dead defies the existence of city developers and tenants who want their name up in lights on the tallest building. But, slowly, as developers recognise how to make money out of changes in office use, we may get smaller new office blocks, which are more efficient... Creative Spaces... created a model for Trans Tasman[s]... former *Auckland Star* site between Shortland and Fort Sts... that measured tenant efficiency, worked out as the percentage of usable space to rentable space. This showed that on a 30-level building with 18,939 sq m of net lettable area, usable space was 13,179 sq m, giving 69[%] efficiency. But by reconfiguring and dropping the number of floors to 27, [Creative Spaces] showed Trans Tasman that although the net lettable area was slightly less, the usable space increased to 13,516 sq m and efficiency to 74[%]. By changing the building design, the model showed an accountancy firm which previously allowed 24 sq m for each staff member could get down to 15 sq m each... Telecom expected that through new, flexible work systems it could reduce its space requirements by 30[%] and the cost of... “churn,” or staff movements... by 70[%] in the next five years. But there was another side: saving too much space could hurt morale and cut productivity.

...Trans Tasman Properties moved closer this week to its aim of building an office tower on the old *Auckland Star* site... between Fort and Shortland Sts... with results back from a three-way design contest... Trans Tasman is competing with several sites, developers and property owners to be the first off the mark with a new tower... One of its competitors is Kiwi Income Property Trust, hoping to develop the old Lion Nathan premises between the same two streets, and another is the NZI property owner, Sentry Investments, hoping to go ahead with its Chancery Square project backing on to Albert Park... In property terms, there is an unquestioned need for two and possibly three more high-rise office buildings in Auckland's [CBD] over the next five years. It is six years since the city's two flashiest towers, the ASB Bank Centre and the Coopers & Lybrand Tower, were completed and the vacancy level in prime office space is down to about 6[%]. That is quickly pushing rents up towards a level to make new development viable... Two of the designs are traditional and rectangular – “buildable, practical buildings,”... The third is elliptical and has the longest way to go to prove to Trans Tasman the efficiency of its floorplates. All three designs used mid-level plant rooms, increasing the height of the building, removing the need for a transfer floor for the lifts and also reducing duct sizes... Meantime, the company still has to convince some major tenants to go with it before the project becomes reality.

...Work is to start on Monday on a seven-storey office building alongside Farmers car park in downtown Auckland, although the assumed occupant, accountancy firm Deloitte, has not signed a tenancy agreement... The... Symphony Group's building at the foot of Nelson St... would give it prime exposure to traffic entering the city along Fanshawe St from the harbour bridge... Symphony's building would have about 7700sq m

of office space and would be cheaper than high-rise towers to build. Rents would also be lower, about... \$301 a sq m... compared with... \$320 a sq m and higher... for high-rises. The departure of one major tenant to that site... leaves proposed tower developers with a tight field to choose from for their plans for buildings of 20,000sq m and 30,000sq m. Developers of the larger towers cannot make a start on the commitment of a single major tenant, and two large firms in the same profession will generally not take space in the same tower, so the developers have had to seek out a combination of law and accountancy firms.

...Kiwi Income Property Trust has won the race to build Auckland's next office tower... The new trust its managers have created, Kiwi Development Trust... will raise \$194 million to build Auckland's tallest office tower... [at] 170m... with a completion value of about \$250 million... The 38-storey Royal SunAlliance Centre will top the [39-storey] Coopers & Lybrand tower on the Auckland skyline... It will... have higher ceilings than most office buildings completed in the 80s, at 2.7m... Royal SunAlliance, the seventh largest general insurer in the world after mopping up operations such as Lombard, Guardian Royal Exchange and Commercial Union in the past decade, has 350 Auckland staff spread around four city buildings. It will take six floors in the new building. Its existing Shortland St headquarters will be demolished toward the end of construction of the new tower to make way for a foyer area... In most eyes in the property industry, the 37,000sq m net lettable area... will leave room for only one more tower to be built in Auckland in the next five years, and that tower will need to be smaller... In the Auckland CBD... annual absorption had averaged 28,000 sq m a year since 1965[but with]... the number of people working in the CBD... [now rising at] just over 1[%] a year... the extra space requirement... at 15sq m a person... was only 12,000 sq m a year... Among the contenders for the other is... a 20,000sq m tower of about 29 levels... on the old *Auckland Star* site... A third Fort St proposition is the Imperial site[where]... a medium-rise tower of 26 to 30 levels and 28,500sq m has been planned... Then there is the... seven-storey Symphony Group building... [on] one city fringe... On the other city fringe, Quay Park's developers[recently] began looking for office building developers and tenants for the former rail land... If firms... choose to occupy single-tenant projects such as Symphony's and small office blocks on Quay Park, the contest for core downtown tower tenants must become even tougher... Even so, [the] Kiwi Income joint managing director... said yesterday projections done for the trust showed office tenants occupying more than 200,000sq m were due to renegotiate expiring leases or find new space in 1999 and 2000... Capitalisation will increase in significance in the new-verses-refurbished debate in tenants' offices. Compared with a cost of about \$390 a sq m for brand-new office space, some tenants may be convinced to stay put for another 12 years if they can get the right improvements and have their rent held around \$250 a sq m.

...Win-win-win, a nice combination but a rare one. That is the way the Kiwi Development Trust has been presented in the prospectus launch...

Kiwi Development Trust's prospectus to raise \$144 million for a new Auckland office tower was registered yesterday, with 35.7[%] of the 48 million units already taken... The building's cost has been put at \$195 million, with bank debt totalling \$51 million. Projected pre-tax internal rate of return is forecast at 19.9[%] of capital growth a year up to December 2000, based on net rentals of \$424 a square metre and annual parking fees of \$6017 a space... The prospectus shows net asset value of the units should be \$4.08 on building completion, giving the building a total value of \$247 million at a capitalisation rate of 7.5[%] in December 2000... [By the way,] Royal SunAlliance has cut its space requirement by 30[%] from its existing premises and... law firm R[MMB]... will take about 20[%] less. Law firms have been accustomed to having well above 20sq m for each employee, but [RMMB's employees] will get down to 16sq m a person in the new tower... Royal SunAlliance will get down to 13sq m a person by moving to full open plan. That is short of the performance in some of Sydney's new buildings, where the ratio is being brought down to 10sq m. But that sort of tight occupancy depends on new methods such as hotelling and hot-desking, which are less applicable to a major law firm.

...As AMP Investments prepares to launch a new listed property trust tomorrow, investors in unlisted property trusts have been warned they risk being left behind as the size of the listed market increases... AMP's... \$500m listed property trust... highlights how much property listings have become the flavour of the month, even after recent sharemarket turmoil... The AMP move follows last week's registration by Kiwi... of a prospectus for a \$145m trust... Early next year Trans Tasman Properties plans to raise \$300m towards a \$620m float of most of its existing N[Z] assets... Trade journal *Property Australia* recently tipped the listed property trust sector across the Tasman to double in size to \$33b by the turn of the century... In the US, the size of the listed property sector... already capitalised at \$160b, is expected to double over the next three to four years. [Meanwhile, 'more than a decade after work started on one of Sydney's most controversial CBD sites, a 10-storey-deep hole in the World Square block has been filled to ground level. When the \$500m World Tower development is finished in 2003, its 75 storeys will be home to 1,300 residents, and the tallest residential tower in the southern hemisphere (the tower will also be the city's third-tallest building, behind the 235m MLC Place and the 305m Centrepoint Tower.'

... 'An AUSn world swimming champion made a brief splash in Auckland yesterday when he flew in to drum up sales for the world's tallest apartment building – Sunland Group's proposed 80-storey Q1 tower on Queensland's Gold Coast. NZers have already bought about 18 apartments in the 323m tower.'

... 'Slow apartment sales and lack of interest in above-ground retail areas in Metropolis' – 'the tallest apartment and hotel building in the country' – 'has resulted in a cash crisis for its developer. Bondholders were due to have their \$21 million capital – plus 14% interest a year amounting to \$4.5 million – repaid last month. But the general manager for Trust Tower – acting for the bondholders – expects the new plan will better the first rescue package, which promised a combination of only 7% interest for the existing period and 5% for the next three years. For the second rescue plan to work, many of the remaining 44 Metropolis properties, valued at \$45 million, must be sold, freeing the capital to repay bondholders.' In related news, 'concrete from a Christchurch building site fell 10 floors on to the road and cars yesterday. Fortunately, no-one was hurt.'

...Pedestrians in... central Auckland... [are] in danger from glass falling from high-rise buildings because the code for installing windows is often ignored, according to glaziers... In the past year Woods Glass had surveyed 30 buildings with glass problems. All windows in seven of the buildings had been replaced... [T]he chief executive officer of window makers Thermosash Commercial... said [some]... companies did not understand the effects of wind on the buildings... He... said an incident on Tuesday in which glass from the MLC Building almost hit[a] pedestrian... could be repeated if the standard of window installation was not improved... "There's not a lot of supervision by the council. At the end of the day it's their responsibility and I don't believe they are taking the risk seriously." ...Following the MLC incident an Auckland City Council spokesman said the building would be checked if a complaint was received... The national director of the Building Owners and Managers Association... said... [c]hecks were made once a year but safety was essentially the responsibility of the... owners[who] had to meet the requirements of the Building Act.

...Just as the next generation of building technology is being touted for the office towers likely to start rising in downtown Auckland before the turn of the century, a troupe from [a lift manufacturer] arrived in town promoting something better. The Otis technology would integrate vertical and horizontal people movers, inside buildings and between them, in a system called Odyssey. Double-deck lift cars would travel in the same lift shaft and there is even a three-car shuffle, which would enable faster movement between levels in very tall buildings. The shuffle would require horizontal as well as vertical movement of a lift, with the passengers still inside. It would be automatic, driverless, quick... The double-decker idea, alone, can be a major space-saver... [T]he Petronas twin towers in Kuala Lumpur... [have] five large double-deck shuttle lifts... The amount of core space taken up for lifts in the World Trade Centre in New York was an example of the savings that could be made. There, the 50-person shuttles took up 24,500sq m of floorspace. "If double-decker lift cars had been used, they would have occupied 9000sq m. With Odyssey, we could have brought it down to 8000sq m." ...[a f]amed architect... planned the mile-high (1600m) building in the 50s but was beaten by lift technology... At 700m to 800m of travel, elevator ropes start to distort and fracture and the rope becomes the heaviest part of the system... The Odyssey system, by using both vertical and horizontal movement, gets over the rope-length problem but still uses ropes... "The next stage will be transistors which...

will be able to move under their own steam... It opens up a completely new dimension of designing buildings and complexes... Ropeless linear technology... has major problems and is still some way in the future,"... Otis has designed its "Transitor", the cab for vertical and horizontal transport, to enable people to commute from parking buildings to the top of "hyper" skyscrapers or to the end of sprawling "metroplexes", within large industrial and distribution centres, universities, hospitals, airports and [CBDs] – places with the density to justify it.

...[yesterday, 'a lift in a Beirut building site plunged 20 floors after its cables snapped, killing 12 Lebanese workers and injuring three others.' Incidentally, 'the world's tallest tower is to be built in Melbourne. The Victorian premier announced the Grollo tower concept had won the bid for the Batman's Hill precinct at the Dockland's site. The 560m tower, estimated to cost up to \$A1.5 billion, will include apartments, a luxury hotel and offices.'

... 'Plans to build the world's tallest building in Melbourne have been shelved. The tapering, 120-storey office and apartment block would have surpassed the Petronas Towers in Malaysia, which wrested the world's highest building title from Chicago's Sears Tower in 1996. "When it was clear that a fundamental financial condition would not be met, the development agreement was terminated," the Docklands Authority chief executive said yesterday'...

'In Taiwan two towers are planned, each of more than 100 storeys. Hong Kong is building 88-floor and 102-floor skyscrapers that will, in turn, become that city's tallest. Plans for the 94-floor Shanghai World Financial Centre are being revived after an impasse when the Chinese and the Japanese construction companies squabbled over design. Shanghai's tallest building at present is the 421m, 88-storey, Jin Mao Tower.' By the way, 'towers can cause "ghosting" on local residents' TVs. Japan's tallest building – the 800ft JRC Towers (that took seven years – at a cost of \$1m per day – to build) – had to undergo a multimillion-dollar redesign to change it from being square-shaped to circular-shaped to prevent TV ghosting. The redesign included not having metal or glass on walls facing the transmitter. The twin towers of New York's World Trade Centre were designed to withstand being hit by aeroplanes, but the design created a fire smoke trap for workers inside (the terrorist bombing earlier this decade knocked the emergency sprinkler system off-line')...

When fire broke out on the 14th floor of Shangri-la in Herne Bay this week, the Fire Service quickly brought it under control. The systems in place to protect the building worked well – this time. But the Fire Service fears the emergency could have ended in a death if the fire had broken out at night. The problem with apartments like Shangri-la, and up to 11 others built in Auckland before 1991, is that they are not fitted with sprinklers... "We asked them as forcibly as we could to put sprinklers in," said the district chief fire officer at Ponsonby... who was involved in discussions between the Fire Service and Shangri-la developers in the mid-80s. Before the Building Act 1991... high-rise residential apartments below 45.7m did not have to have sprinkler systems. That measurement was taken from the highest point on the ground to the highest occupied floor... Shangri-la[']s... developers... built up a piece of ground on one side of the block, which brought the 16-storey building under 45.7m. "I don't know whether they did that deliberately,"... Five years after Shangri-la was built the regulations were tightened, and the level at which apartment blocks must have a sprinkler system was lowered to include those above 34m. The level from which the measurement was taken... also changed, from the highest point on the ground to the lowest point. If Shangri-la was built today it would need sprinklers. Instead, the developers chose to install heat detectors, which set off an alarm at the Fire Service when activated. The Fire Service arrived within minutes and water was pumped up to the 14th floor through a specially built pipe, known as a "dry riser," quickly quelling the fire in the laundry and containing the damage to the one room... The area fire hazard manager... said the dozen or so high-rise apartment buildings in Auckland without sprinkler systems were an ongoing problem. Early fire detection was crucial because the upper floors were beyond the reach of the Fire Service's aerial appliances.

...[yesterday the] Auckland... assistant area chief fire officer[received] the keys to Parnell station's new turntable ladder appliance... which can reach up 10 storeys. The \$1.1 million weapon against high-rise fires was unveiled at the central station... [Yesterday also marked the start of 'a bid to save the country's only shot tower. A Mt Eden landmark for almost a century, the tower stands among the munitions factory buildings in Normandy Rd. The only other shot tower in Australasia is in Melbourne and has been preserved within a department store. The Mt Eden tower's owner, Chamko Holdings, a company associated with one of Auckland's wealthiest property companies, believes its location is now inappropriate and wants it demolished. However, the tower's strong historic classifications have forced Chamko to make an application for resource consent under the Resource Management Act 1991. In its application, Chamko claims it would cost \$300,000 to repair. Some of its structure is corroded, making it unsafe. The owners would be happy to see the tower moved to the Museum of Transport and Technology. But the Historic Places Trust, which describes the tower as being "of great historic significance," opposes any suggestions of shifting it out of Mt Eden. The Auckland area coordinator said the trust believes Auckland City Council could create a reserve around the tower. The trust is preparing a submission to the council, and the coordinator says it has received many letters and phone calls calling for the tower's retention. In the city's 1993 district plan, the council had given the tower the highest classification of a category A building but this was dropped to a B when its owners objected "on the grounds that the listing was inappropriate given its condition." Shot towers were common earlier this century. The process of making lead pellets for bullets was a true art, affected by the temperature outside, the skill and experience of the shot-maker and the quality of materials. The process started with 28kg bars of solid lead which were hauled from ground level 30m to the top of the tower via a lift, which is still visible today. The lead was put into a melting pot in the tiny corrugated iron shed, where it was left to reach a searing 480 deg C. The molten lead then flowed into what looked like a kitchen frying pan before it ran into a lower pan which had hundreds of tiny holes in its base. The lead then dropped to a deep water trough at ground level to break its fall and stop it from flattening out. A perfect ball shape, the shot was then cooled and polished with graphite in a revolving barrel where it was sorted until the finished product was a series of identical ball bearings. The Mt Eden tower, which was built in 1916 but closed in 1982, made the .303 shot used by soldiers during NZ's war efforts.']

...Auckland City Council has guaranteed itself a war with developers as they discover the potential impact of restraints under the new central plan... It received a roasting yesterday at a seminar on key issues, run by the Building Owners and Managers Association... [T]he new plan reduced the ratio of building floor area to the size of site from the existing 13:1 to 10:1 for most sites and 8:1 for some... Kiwi Development Trust has won consent for its... [building] under the existing district plan, but Trans Tasman Properties looked in possible trouble with its plans for a tower on the old Auckland Star site... Parking provisions under the new plan are far more restrictive, ranging from one to 120 sq m up to one to 240 sq m gross floor area, depending on the street, and reducing from two to one for dwelling units.

...The Auckland City Council proposes a 5[%] levy on development... which is 10 times higher than the present levy the council can apply to mitigate the effects of development... but it will not affect new downtown office blocks... that already... have permission to proceed under the existing central area plan. Developers... said the new Auckland levy was disappointing... "It adds another \$85 a sq m to a construction cost of about \$2000 a sq m of net rentable area." ...[one company developing a] new Auckland tower and the tower under construction on George St, Sydney... said the contrast was sharp between levies in the two cities. Sydney had brought back its 1[%] development levy, dropped after the 1980s boom, to upgrade the streetscape for the Olympics in 2000... The proposed plan is expected to take at least two years to bring in[, and]... will also have a wider selection of heritage structures – a schedule of 187 listings compared to about 50 now – which... would be... used to... encourage... developers... to retain buildings and other heritage features, gaining a bonus on their building in return. [■ A sharp-shooting reader sighted last Saturday's article about the shot tower in Mt Eden and said .303 shot was never made there but shot for shotguns was. Another phoned to say that a third shot tower is still in existence in Australasia. This is the brick shot tower in Hobart.]

... 'The Tower of Pisa has leaned since day one. Over the past 800 years, the lean had changed in direction and extent. Contrary to popular belief, the Leaning Tower has never been in danger of tipping over. However, it has long been on the verge of collapse due to the excessive stresses in its stonework. Efforts were made in 1935 to deal with excess water under the tower believed to be weakening the foundations. Workers drilled angled holes at the base with the intention of pumping in grout to provide a seal. The up-shot was a badly damaged foundation which caused the tower to decline at an even faster

rate. All bets were declared off until the Pisa Commission and its expert consultants rolled into town in 1990. Prudently, in 1992 the commission first had the stressed south side of the 2nd floor wrapped in plastic-coated steel wires. In 1993 any tilting was temporarily arrested by the stacking of 300 tonne lead ingots on the north side of the tower. These provide a counter to the south-directed load. In 1995 work on a full new underground foundation began – until it almost caused the tower to collapse for good. No one had realised that plates had been added to the foundations in 1838. These were effectively supporting the tower. The 1995 work cracked these plates and the tower now slowly and steadily started a relentless fall to the south. Immediately a further mass of emergency lead was piled on the north side and, for a moment, disaster was averted. In 1998 soil extraction will be attempted – very cautiously. Every 100 years or so soil will be taken from beneath the tower, something soil mechanists believe could keep matters hunky-dory for at least the next 300 years.']

...In China's headlong rush to develop, first in its fanatical left-wing past and then in the get-rich-quick days of reform, it has hacked or bulldozed away much of its architectural heritage. Graceful old courtyards of Beijing have fallen victim to the... onslaught in recent years, crumbling alongside one of the earliest casualties – the once majestic Beijing city wall. Built to ward off invaders centuries ago, the wall was unable to withstand the inroads of its own people bent on discarding what was considered out of date. But China's capital is trying to make amends for some of its past excesses by restoring a small portion of the wall that[once] encircled the city... Residents of Beijing have been answering a public call to return city-wall bricks to help rebuild a small section of the structure... Now some 30,000 donated old-wall bricks sit stacked in a city lot. Workers chip off hardened soil, revealing the names of Ming dynasty kilns (1368-1644 A.D.) where the bricks were fired. "As a child I remember helping take down part of the wall," said... [a worker for] the Beijing Historical Relics Construction Co of the municipal government... "Now I have a chance to put some of the wall back together." The wall, in some places 12m tall and 16m wide, was built largely in the Ming dynasty, although some parts dated back to the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368 A.D.), a period of Mongol rule. Large chunks of the wall were pulled down in the 1950s when Beijing's communist leaders created Tiananmen Square. More was torn down in the 1960s and 1970s for the construction of one of the city's main roads and for the subway... In more recent years, soaring real estate values led to the wholesale clearing of buildings to make way for office towers. One such project demolished homes that had been built up against the wall. Their outline is still visible on the section being restored.

...A Hong Kong investor has gone against the Asia jitters and bought two central Auckland buildings for \$20.2 million. The two sales were... the Vulcan Building, on the corner of Queen St and Vulcan Lane, sold by Kiwi Income Property Trust at its \$10 million book value, and the former Grand Slam building on the Strand... Kiwi Income acquired the Vulcan Building and six other buildings when it bought the N[Z] Land portfolio in 1994. The 70-year-old, seven-storey building was refurbished in 1989...

Architects say a proposal to knock down... the only 1930s building left in Queen St... [at] the corner of Vulcan Lane... to create a small park is stupid... The property has a net rental of \$264,000 a year... As part of its[new] district plan, the Auckland City Council wants to buy the five-storey... [building] and demolish it to create an open space [– even though Vulcan Lane, being a pedestrian mall, already serves this purpose!] ...The chairwoman of the Auckland branch... [of the] Institute of Architects... said a park would be a waste of money because neighbouring buildings would make it dark and gloomy... [However, t]he... acting chairman of the harbour edge committee, said demolishing the building would open up views of the Occidental Hotel, which has a category one listing because of its historical value.

...The 70s are becoming hip with heritage fans. Flares have long remained street-cred. Now the establishment seems to have caught on and has begun venerating icons of that decade. Thus, the Students Union Association building at Auckland University, completed in 1973, has found its way into the Auckland City Council's new district plan for the central city... The reinforced concrete building – birthplace of many a student protest about fees... and other causes – ...gained category B protection, along with 131 other heritage buildings or sites. Developers need resource consent from the council to knock down category B buildings and the council has flagged that they would need to mount a strong case. There are also 55 category A items – 51 buildings, [2] parks, one cemetery and a chimney. Demolishing buildings on this list is prohibited... Queen St has [8] category A buildings and 26 Bs... Other changes in the plan include... [p]rotection for 541 trees (up from [7] in the existing plan) and 14 Maori heritage sites. The... new plan legally stands alongside the old one for the next two-or-so years until after public submissions, council hearings and court appeals.

...Preservation of this country's cultural heritage depends on a political awakening, sa[id] a senior Historic Places Trust official... [in response to] consulting engineers... describ[ing] the trust as a toothless tiger strapped for cash... [T]he manager of heritage conservation for the trust, told a heritage seminar that the issue was an example of the conflict between the community good and private property rights. While the general public wanted to preserve heritage buildings, it was the owners who carried the burden of cost... Nineteen local authorities throughout the country had established heritage funds to encourage preservation but the amounts were pitiful. The seminar organised by the Resource Management Law Association looked at how to assess the real cost of heritage and what should be saved... Traditionally, property owners had no interest in heritage but they were now starting to value such buildings. However, incentives... such as rates relief... were poor.

...Too many of this country's heritage buildings and sites have been lost because[the] Historic Places Trust's attempts to get owners on side have lacked... incentives... [The trust is] still waiting for the \$500,000 incentive funds for private owners promised by the P[M]... before the election but not included in the latest budget... We are losing our heritage at a disturbing rate. Central Auckland and Wellington alone are estimated to have lost more than 80 registered historic buildings in the past 10 to 15 years... But it is money not sentiment that talks and saving our heritage usually gets back to financial concerns.

...Challenge Properties is pushing for the rezoning of its valuable harbour site overlooking the America's Cup village to allow buildings up to seven storeys... The application has surprised the... Auckland City Council... as it follows months of negotiations with Challenge and other companies over the council's own rezoning of the area and its acquisition of the properties needed... for public spaces around the Viaduct Basin. The harbour edge committee will rule on the application on Thursday. If it is turned down, Challenge Properties... can appeal to the Environment Court. The 3384 sq m leasehold site... is[currently] used for marine businesses and car parking. The council wants the site for its planned Waitemata Plaza, the hub of a network of public promenades designed to help convert the rundown area to a "people place." Concerts and other big events, such as next year's Whitbread [round-the-world-]yacht-race welcome, would be held there. The council aims to spend almost \$50 million on the scheme, including buying and developing the public spaces and fixing seawalls. About half would come from levies paid by developers... Challenge representatives could not be contacted last night.

...[Challenge] Construction has chopped \$8 million off the estimated... cost of Kiwi Development Trust's Royal SunAlliance Centre project... The savings had come from "a lot of small numbers, not a particular trade,"... [the] directors of the trust's management company... said. "[Challenge] are saying the worst position is a construction cost of \$126 million, but there are some innovative ideas which should deliver further savings." ...More importantly from a tenancy perspective, the office tower's completion date has been brought forward three and a half months... Earlier completion will take the tower closer to the peak of Auckland [CBD] lease expiries, in 1999, improving its leasing opportunities significantly.

...Kiwi Development Trust's bid to raise \$144 million to build this country's tallest[office] building has made a dismal start with subscriptions falling 23.8[%] short. Underwriters have been forced to soak up 11.41 million units – worth around \$8.6 million – of... the first of three tranches... The... Trust is set to make its debut tomorrow and all eyes would be on where the units, issued at 75c each, traded.

...Kiwi Development Trust, under the weight of a... shortfall in subscriptions, sunk 7c below its issue price yesterday to close at 68c.

...[the Environment Court's] decision to adjourn the Britomart resource consent hearing indefinitely takes the... 11 building... project out of a crucial high-rise office time slot... The uncertainty will cause some office tenants to decide to stay where they are, while space vacated by tenants

moving to... other new towers[, such as the one being]... built by Kiwi Development Trust... will come on the market to compete with... Britomart... None of this is good news for Pacific Capital[, which]... has bought back 22.9 million shares at 40c, a 10c discount to issue. Unless... Britomart agreements can be rolled over and renegotiated, remaining public shareholders in Pacific Capital will be looking closely at their option to get their 50c back on June 30 next year, when the Britomart master development agreement needs to have become unconditional... [By the way, m]ore shareholders are attending annual meetings now than five years ago, and most are knowledgeable about the companies. Yet senior executives are divided on how useful the traditional gatherings are for keeping in touch with shareholders... Fewer than 10[%]... of the executives... considered shareholder knowledge poor.

...Over the past decade, [US] companies have tried hard to find ways to discourage senior managers from feathering their nests at the expense of shareholders. The... most popular measures have been recruiting more outside directors in order to make boards more independent, linking bosses' pay to various performance measures, and giving bosses share options. These reforms have been widely adopted by the U[S]'s larger companies. But have they done any good? Three papers presented to nearly 5000 management theorists at the annual meeting of the Academy of Management in Boston recently suggest not. As is usually the case with boardroom tinkering, the consequences have differed from those intended. Start with those independent boards. On the face of it, evicting the boss's cronies and replacing them with outsiders looks like a perfect way to make senior managers more accountable. But... bosses with a boardroom full of outsiders spend much of their time building coalitions, doing personal favours and generally ingratiating themselves with the outsiders. All too often, these seductions succeed... [A] professor at the University of Texas, based on a survey he conducted... found that, to a remarkable degree, "independent" boards pursued strategies that were favourable to senior managers rather than shareholders. They diversified their businesses (a policy normally associated with managerial empire-building), increased the pay of executives and weakened the link between pay and performance... The big discovery was that bosses attended to measures that affected their own incomes and ignored or played down other factors that determined the company's overall success. Instead of aligning the interests of bosses and shareholders, "performance-related" pay frequently promoted opportunism and tunnel-vision. Such findings are not new. They are the main reason that share options have become the most popular way of linking pay to performance. By aligning an executive's pay with the firm's share price, options reduce the scope for playing games. But not entirely, it seems... [A] professor at Brigham Young University... found that one effect of giving bosses a significant portion of their pay in share options was to stimulate acquisitions and divestitures. Bosses relish such "symbolic churning," as [he] dubs it, because it gives the impression that they are strong leaders, vigorously reshaping their companies. Hyperactivity is further encouraged by the fact that bosses lose nothing on their share options when share prices fall, but stand to make virtually unlimited gains if they rise. In short, bosses are quick to turn every imaginable system of corporate government to their advantage. But there is a paradox for the management theorists: any boss who cannot outmanoeuvre a system designed to keep him under control is probably not worth having... [Incidentally,] Coca-Cola's Roberto Goizueta has added his name to the list of CEOs who must battle cancer while heading some of America's best-known companies... The C-word evokes horrific images of death and incapacitation, even though these days many cancer victims survive and are able to come to the office every day throughout treatment. Still, disclosure of a CEO's life-threatening illness can devastate stocks and force re-evaluation of succession plans. The challenge for companies is to balance a CEO's desire for privacy with the fears of employees and investors that the company will be left rudderless... "There's an immediate feeling of fear and insecurity about what the illness could mean to ...a... worker's... future and stability..." said... [the] social service director for Cancer Care, a non-profit education and outreach organisation... Coca-Cola's handling so far of Mr Goizueta's illness demonstrates that a well-timed disclosure of the top boss' illness can allow the news to sink in without causing undue corporate damage. It made its announcement on a Monday, after the market closed, and after Mr Goizueta personally called each board member and internal announcements were made to employees. Coca-Cola's stock took a minor dip shortly after the market opened the next day, but analysts dismissed it as only an emotional reaction to news of Mr Goizueta's illness. But there was every reason for the stock price to rumble. Though the company said the tumor was isolated, Mr Goizueta is considered a critical reason for Coca-Cola's soaring success... [H]e is revered in business circles as the brilliant tactician who won the ballyhooed "cola wars". Though now 65, Mr Goizueta said he planned to work indefinitely. And Coca-Cola said he would remain in control while he underwent therapy. By disclosing the news early, Coke was a "textbook example" of how to let investors and employees know of a CEO's illness, said... a vice-president at[an] executive search firm... in Atlanta. "If it's done properly, it should almost be a non-event." But not always. When... an apartment house developer based in Georgia, announced last October CEO Peter Knox had colon cancer, the stock price dipped slightly to about \$18 a share. But in the transition after Mr Knox's December death, the price bounced back to \$22.25. "It was a fairly rapid demise," said [the company's] president... who took on the CEO role after the death while Mr Knox's brother... became chairman. The transition was fairly smooth, however, because the top executives had operated by consensus. Cancer – unlike heart attacks and car accidents – gives even fatally stricken executives time to pass on their responsibilities and say their goodbyes. Donald Karcher worked as president of the Carl's Jr hamburger chain in Anaheim, California, until the days before his death from lung cancer in 1992. He stayed at his desk even when he had to keep an oxygen tank at his side. "He was so dedicated to the company and loved his work," said his brother[, who was] the company's founder and former chairman. Gradually, Don spun off duties to his brother, who became president and chairman again after the death. Mr Goizueta is one of the estimated 1.4 million Americans who will be diagnosed with some form of cancer this year, said the American Cancer Society.

...Coca-Cola[']s chairman and chief executive officer Roberto C. Goizueta, one of the U[S]'s most respected corporate executives, has died from complications from lung cancer. He was 65... After becoming [CEO] in 1981, Mr Goizueta was credited with transforming the culture of Coca-Cola, once a genteel Southern institution that was slow to react to challenges. When he arrived, the company dabbled in everything from shrimp farms to wine. Now, it focuses solely on making the concentrate and the advertisements for soft drinks... Mr Goizueta built the company's market capitalisation to more than \$150 billion from \$5 billion in 16 years... Coke's shares have multiplied in value nearly 40 times... Mr Goizueta is expected to be succeeded by[his] protegee... who was named president in July 1994. "The transition should be seamless," said... a[n] analyst...

'Coca-Cola's chairman and CEO has walked away with a golden handshake worth at least \$NZ62.67 million. The former president whose tenure in the top Coca-Cola job coincided with a rocky period in the company's history, would pocket three annual payments of \$3.1m and \$177,000 every month through to the end of his and his wife's life, Coca-Cola said in a statement. The 52-year-old, whose salary was about \$2.7m a year, was also awarded 335,000 Coca-Cola shares. Coca-Cola said the package was reward for "long and loyal service." But as CEO he oversaw an embarrassing contamination scare in Europe, a racial-discrimination lawsuit in the US and a failed takeover of France's Orangina drinks brand. He was criticised for failing to quickly deal with the crisis. Coca-Cola continues to struggle with a massive restructuring, including laying off more than 6000 staff – 20% of its workforce.'

...Even successful companies can run into bother when it comes to replacing CEOs. Having someone in mind beforehand can avoid problems... This is more urgent than ever. A freak of demography means that an unusually large number of CEOs of U[S] firms are preparing to retire in the next few years. In addition, more boards are being pushed into firing the boss by increasingly active institutional investors. A recent Harvard Business School study found that CEOs of big American firms are now 10 times more likely to be fired for bad performance than they were 20 years ago... Not surprisingly, firms in trouble are much more likely to look for fresh blood. When the business is running smoothly, directors are more than happy to pick an experienced insider to continue along the same path... As might be expected, firms which replaced the CEO with an insider tended to show little change in performance, even if the CEO had been fired... [H]owever... outsiders replacing a chief executive who had been fired tended to improve their firms' performance, [while] most of those who took over from CEOs retiring for normal reasons failed

miserably – even after allowing for the possibility that firms which fired their CEOs were already struggling. The study's calculations provide concrete evidence of something that many directors have long suspected: in the absence of a crisis, it is hard to recruit an outsider without infuriating managers who have been passed over. And without support from the insiders, the new CEO is usually a flop.

...[the small NZ economy means career paths are restricted. Thus, we may be short of executives and technicians with the necessary education and experience. Perhaps the greatest single weakness, though, lies in boardrooms, particularly among outside directors. They are meant to bring additional skills to the table and, crucially, challenge management to examine issues every which way. Yet, NZ companies draw their directors from a remarkably small pool. It's the norm for one moderately competent person to sit on many boards (one top company director is on 97 boards). Not only are meagre skills stretched but conflicts of interest can arise. Globalisation of business means more NZ companies have to work to the highest international standards. But when it comes to corporate governance, NZ is well off the international pace.' "When I left school going into business was the bottom end of the totem pole in terms of career aspirations. The bright ones were doctors, the next bright were lawyers, the dummies were accountants and those who had no hope whatsoever went into business," says NZ's richest businessperson (r:p379, ln32) – who made his wealth by turning water into drunks, and 'believes in God but not utopia'...

□ 87: Percentage of AUSn executives who daydream during meetings.']

...MOST listed A[US]n and British companies fail to deliver adequate returns to shareholders, and there's no reason to suspect N[Z] companies aren't equally at fault... In Britain more than half of the top 400 listed companies earned less than the market's expected return. And more than two-thirds of A[US]n listed companies deliver equally poor returns... [I]n only three of 15 industry groups were A[US]n companies delivering shareholders decent average returns – chemicals, development and construction and banking... What was clear was that the companies' top management needed to perform and turn their companies around before it was too late... Simply paying them more didn't produce the results... [S]tudies showed paying above-average salaries had proved self-defeating in Britain, drawing companies into a vicious money spiral. If every firm tried to offer above-average salaries, the average salary rose. Next year, each firm must offer more to pay above the market average. By definition, if most companies sought to pay above-average salaries, they would fail because most companies could not, by definition, be above average. Instead, the key was to balance the remuneration package to provide the right incentives. Companies that paid below average bonuses tended to have poorer long term results for shareholders. For those companies which offered high bonuses, paying above average salaries resulted in no increase in performance. A better approach... was to pay the boss less than the market average but to offer them incentives, [such as] shares in the company...

The chief executive of the AMP Society... A[US]'s largest financial institution... has defended his salary package... [He] could receive 1 million shares worth up to \$10 million by... the year... 2000 depending on the company's performance, on top of his present salary of about \$2.46 million. He said the salary package was justified because a large part of the 1 million shares would be earned by the company's achieving certain targets...

When salary and bonus were the primary source of CEO compensation, they made 30 or 40 times what the average employee made. But with massive stock options, which regular employees don't get, the differential has grown enormously, to 150 or 200 times. - 1997

As a general rule: the more money a CEO has to control, the more money it will earn. This rule seems to confirm that, nowadays, in the eyes of most people – or, at least, most shareholders – the art of making money is considered the most valuable talent a human can have!

[A NZ]er... has emerged as Britain's highest paid executive through a £3.8 million... salary and bonus package with British Sky Broadcasting... [The former] managing director of [an AUSn media mogul]'s Nine television network from 1976 to 1990, has been chief executive of BSkyB, formerly Sky television, since 1990. The former farm worker has watched the pay television company grow from a £20 million-a-week loser five years ago to a huge success within [an AUSn media tycoon]'s News Corporation. A BSkyB spokesman said [the CEO]'s actual salary was just over £288,000 with the remainder made up of performance-related bonuses.

...A DEBATE in A[US] last week about the level of pay for chief executives there following revelations that... Coles Myer[']s CEO received \$NZ3.3 million produced... [a table which indexes CEO] salaries in A[US] at 100, and compares salaries in other countries to that... U[S]... 173... Germany... 146... Singapore... 143... Japan... 141... France... 130... Hong Kong... 119... Britain... 113... Canada... 101... South Africa... 89... N[Z]... 70... On the same subject, we can understand political support for a law that requires executive salaries to be disclosed.

...Up to half of the payment to B[IL]'s executives was incentive-based, the company said yesterday as it disclosed that four of those executives earned more than \$1 million a year... The disclosure, in B[IL]'s 1996 annual report, that the chief executive... was paid \$1,437,270, was expected. But more surprising was the revelation that the Asian operations head... was paid \$1,247,490, while his British counterpart... received \$1,156,462, and the head of the Thistle Hotels chain... [was paid] \$1,014,721... Their remuneration was... justified... [because], in the past year, shareholders received a gross return of 33[%] through the combination of a 22[%] increase in share price and the payment of 9c a share in dividends, a BIL spokesman... said. The... BIL quartet joins Telecom's [chief executive]... in the million-dollar club. The former chief executive of C[HH]... also stood to receive about \$1.5 million in the 1996[financial] year, but he returned to the parent company, International Paper, before the year was up. The disclosures of executive pay are required under the new Companies Act.

...The Business Roundtable has defended the salaries of executives, saying people think... models and opera singers deserve high pay but industry leaders do not. The executive director of the Roundtable... told a National Party... meeting last night that many "in the chattering classes" were "particularly allergic to the idea of high rewards to top people in business. Ours is a curiously selective type of censoriousness. It hardly ever applies to... golfers, television personalities and others who earn high incomes, many of whom were born with unusual natural gifts which may in some sense have been undeserved. Yet the school of resentment certainly lets its views be known about remuneration in private business and about top earners in the public sector." ...[he] said that, in all cases, high rewards to outstanding performers reflected the value of the job they did. "Our top business executives do jobs that are among the most difficult and demanding in the country and in a highly competitive environment." He said companies undertook huge investments and made decisions affecting thousands of jobs... [He ignored the fact that the PM]'s salary of \$185,000 puts him at the bottom (save one) of chief executive salaries revealed so far[, and instead]... cited the recent example of publicity given to the chief executive of Telecom[']s... salary "as if it could possibly be major news that [this person] is paid a lot of money." ...A... survey estimates that three N[Z] executives earn more than \$1 million with 10 earning between \$500,000 and \$1 million.

...[another person] has confirmed his membership of the select group of executives being paid more than a million dollars a year. As chief executive of the \$13.3 billion forestry, energy and building giant... Challenge... he received \$1.08 million in salary and incentive payments... - 1996

The... Challenge... 1996 annual report revealed that it had no fewer than 2301 employees paid more than \$100,000 a year... At the top of the pyramid, the CEO... received \$1 million in salary and bonuses not, I suggest, because he is in charge of 23,000 workers, but because he is in charge of four – the four senior managers just below him in the hierarchy over whom the chief must of course be paid a decent premium.

...Challenge[']s chairman... has been reappointed a Reserve Bank non-executive director... [The] chartered accountant, is[also] chairman of Fernz Corporation and Guardian Trust and a director of BOP Fertiliser... [In related news, d]irectors of some crown health enterprises and state-owned enterprises are complaining of being overworked and underpaid and want the taxpayer to increase their fees to levels enjoyed in the private

sector. A little-known group of officials, the crown company monitoring advisory unit, has undertaken the first review of directors' fees since 1991, but refused yesterday to release the results of a survey comparing public and private sector fees. It is due to report to the Government next month... A typical crown director is[annually] paid anything from a few thousand dollars for an average two and a half days' work each month... [– providing leadership, monitoring] the chief executive and be[ing] collectively responsible for the company... [–] to \$25,000 for the largest [SOE], the Electricity Corporation. By comparison, Auckland merchant banker... [Mr R (r:p379, ln15)] was paid \$25,000 in 1995 as a director of TranzRail, a publicly listed company considerably smaller than the Electricity Corp... In 1996 his fee increased more than 500[%] to \$132,000. Other directors of publicly listed companies receive more modest payments, although generally they are still better paid than crown directors. The non-executive directors of B[IL] are each paid \$50,000, the Natural Gas Corporation pays its directors \$25,000 each and \$35,000 for the chairman, while Colonial Motors – a small publicly listed company – pays directors \$8850 and the chairman \$22,859... “Basically you are getting professional people at very, very cheap rates,”... said... [t]he... advisory unit director of appointments and governance... “If you dragged in consultants it would cost an arm and a leg to do the same thing.”

...Non-executive chairmen... and directors of N[Z] companies... earn between 15-25[%] less than the average \$A84,000... of their A[US]n counterparts after adjusting for exchange rates. Non-executive directors earn between 25-33[%] less than the \$A37,000 benchmark in A[US]. The relative pay position of N[Z]ers improves however if they are in the hot seat. Chief executives of publicly listed companies here receive on average “about 90[%] of the A[US]n benchmark,”... Best off, relatively speaking, are chief executives of N[Z] SOEs. Their packages are typically worth 50[%] more than their A[US]n counterparts... No less than 75[%] of N[Z] boards pursued a formal process of evaluating the CEO's performance compared with just 61[%] across the Tasman... Just [6%] of directors are female. However, only [1%] of women in A[US] had gained executive director status. In N[Z] among the surveyed companies, none made it to executive directorships... On both sides of the Tasman, there's a serious absence of foreign nationals among directors. In fact, hardly any companies appointed foreigners... [56%] of directors on N[Z] boards were under 55 compared with 47[%] in AUS... Last year just 36[%] of AUSn companies received “adverse media attention” compared with 61[%] here.

...DIRECTORS in N[Z] see themselves as the Cinderellas of the corporate landscape compared with fees internationally. This despite a... directors fee survey released this month that shows an average annualised increase of 11.3%. Yet a third of 1199 N[Z] directors surveyed believe they remain overworked and under paid... Almost two-thirds... of the companies surveyed this year paid for or reimbursed their directors for liability insurance coverage, up from 68% of companies surveyed three years ago. In the past 12 months, the average amount of liability insurance coverage increased from \$15.5m to \$20.9m. According to... [the] survey manager... the increase reflected the growing myriad of laws which now held directors directly accountable for their actions. A growing number of directors were seriously considering whether the rewards still outweighed the risks. [The c]hief executive of the N[Z] Institute of Directors... said even though the institute membership was growing 25% annually, the risk/reward ratio meant the pool of capable directors was diminishing. The downstream effect would see lost corporate governance within N[Z] business... “The average hourly rate for non-executive directors is \$160, whereas the hourly rate for an accountant from the top six firms is more than \$500 per hour... So where's the encouragement to take up directorship?” The... average fee paid to non-executive chairpersons was \$30,832, while non-executive directors received \$20,231... “While most non-executive directors are independent board members who help make strategic decisions affecting shareholders, some directors who find themselves on boards due to a shareholding may, in practice, offer little value,” said... an Auckland-based remuneration consultant... [The consultant added that the survey] results needed to be interpreted with caution. There was a danger in comparing the fees of... non-executive directors, who were typically recognised as the cream of N[Z] business... with fees paid to executive directors, gainfully employed by a company.

...If your board doesn't count among its directors a retired general or at least some former top brass from the armed forces, its probably missing something. That is the view of... [the] retiring chief executive of the Institute of Directors (and a former professional soldier with 22 years experience in the N[Z] Army). He laments the peculiar absence of ex-military people on N[Z] boards. You can see his point. In Britain and many countries, companies set considerable store on the expertise that military training can bring to a company's direction... “In the eyes of many[N[Z] business people, a general is somebody who is trained to shove bayonets down people's throats, which does not exactly equate to what they do in reality,” he suggests... But it's not just generals, rear-admirals and wing commanders who are... missing from N[Z] corporate life – it's also mandarins... Absent generals and mandarins aside, the institute's outgoing chief executive leaves with a sense of a job well done after 11 years masterminding the revival of what was a virtually irrelevant and cobwebbed institution. The institution's courses for directors now receive international recognition and attract directors from overseas to learn about governance, law, accounting, strategy, planning, human resources, marketing, capital formation and other essential directorial skills. These days, the standard of N[Z] boards is as high or higher than practically any other country in the world, [he] insists. Indeed, he compares American boards unfavourably with our own, in particular... their failure to separate power at the top, such as in their habit of combining the president and chief executive's job. He's pleased at the increase in women members to about 9[%] of the total. Likewise, Maori members have gone from zero to [5%]... Revenues did even better, up 33 times... As the retiring chief executive is the first to admit however, the fortunes of the institute could only go up in 1986. Elevated from Wellington branch secretary, he was expected to resurrect a moribund organisation on two hours a week. Now it's practically a full-time job... [T]he Government routinely seeks the institute's help in finding chief executives for corporatised government departments... His predecessor was in his 70s and the institute's main – indeed sole – preoccupation was to lobby Government in its own interests. It was, in fact, a club. One did not actually apply to be a member of the Institute of Directors; one was invited... [T]he standard method of recruitment was to go through the membership list of posh business clubs. Nor were N[Z]'s directors exactly representative of the shareholders... in those days... As a specialist on corporate governance, it's only to be expected that he has strong views on the composition and modus operandi of boards... A powerful major shareholder should not be in a position to call the shots... Seven to nine directors is ideal, but even five is alright... Effective boards contain a mix of skills... And every board should include an “argumentative bastard” who isn't afraid to take on accepted wisdom and is not... afraid to ask what might seem dumb questions... An “assenting” board of yesmen lays the foundation for uncontested decisions.

...A new “how to” guide for company directors will remove the need to learn by trial and error, the A[US]n Institute of Company Directors says... [By the way, i]t is 10 years almost to the day since [a young man] destroyed his family inheritance by bidding \$A2.1 billion for the company which would be his anyway... That single act of stupidity set in train a remarkable tussle for control of the... media group... company which continues unabated today. Doubtless it will do so for many years to come. [The young man], of course, went broke and receivers were appointed. That was not before he went through two different groups of management and sacked them both. The head receiver, too, got his marching orders after he meddled in the editorial coverage of a lawsuit about his firm's responsibility for losses suffered by electronics company AWA. By 1990, moves were made to refloat Fairfax, and [a]rival media mogul [(r:p604, ln36)] was the front runner. His family – which had owned Sydney's *Daily Telegraph* – and the Fairfax's had been bitter opponents for many years. The Fairfax's had a lofty station in society, while the [mogul's family] were looked down upon as owners of the tabloid press. [The mogul] saw it as his chance to put things right... [and] get the last laugh by grabbing ownership... of [the company that the Fairfax family had controlled for] 149 years... But he... pulled out when a parliamentary inquiry threatened to unveil information he wanted kept private. That left the running to [a]Canadian media man... who won a tender to float the company. But, last year, he too sold because of countless knockbacks by the Federal Government for his plans to cement control. Out of the blue, in came [BIL] to buy part of [the Canadian's] shareholding and to challenge [the mogul] who had quietly bought a 15[%] stake. But the Kiwis too were not welcomed

when shareholders rejected an attempt to lift their stake to 25[%]. You get the picture. The facts about Fairfax are bigger than *Ben Hur*, *Gone With the Wind* and *Days of Our Lives* all rolled into one. As a long-serving employee... it is nice to feel that so many powerful people want to fight over us. If only. The real attraction is the so-called “rivers of gold” – the cashflows generated from the lengthy classified advertising columns run in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age* newspapers... The barriers which so far have stopped anyone winning these riches are widespread beliefs that the media already is controlled by too few people, and that foreigners should be kept out because they threaten A[US]n culture (such as it is).

...Five [BIL] employees are in the millionaire’s corner – one more than last year. There is also another million-dollar salary noted in the 1997 annual report for [a former BIL] director... whose salary was \$1,214,506. He retired as a director in September last year. The bulk of his remuneration was from his job as chief executive of... Thistle Hotels.

...In reporting... an otherwise satisfactory trading performance... [of] a flat \$311.34 million after-tax profit, B[IL]’s chief executive... expressed disbelief[that] the share price of Thistle, the British hotel chain which is BIL’s largest asset... has slumped to a record low... The share price of Thistle, in which BIL has a 46[%] stake, has fallen 17.5[%] to 125p since earlier this week reporting a 58[%] jump in pre-tax profit for the six months to July of £38.1 million, a weaker-than-expected result... Executives of [BIL] must be wishing they had exited Thistle... when it was relisted on the British sharemarket last year at 170p a share... With every 10p movement in the Thistle price roughly equalling a 2.5c a share change in the [BIL] price, there was the double-whammy of watching the BIL price slump too. [BIL’s] logic for keeping the asset was to cash in on further upside in the British hotel market. It might also have hoped to get back at its critics who have incessantly slated [BIL] for having made the blunder in buying the asset six years ago... Rubbing salt in the wound is the performance of Guinness Peat Group, which is run by [BIL’s] ousted founder... GPG consistently trades at a premium to its asset backing, not least because of the market’s faith in [its leader] and his team to do deals. Part of the secret to GPG’s success is its relatively small size, which enables it to do meaningful deals. This is where BIL falls down. To do anything worthwhile it needs to invest \$500 million. While [BIL’s] size masks mistakes like its \$100 million investment in the A[US]n retail group Vox, it also swamps its successes like the \$52 million profit it made from a quick foray into... the N[Z] *Herald*. Having Thistle on board also means management is not given any credit for some of its better investments such as Sky City... and James Hardie, in which it has a 28% stake. However, the BIL chairman has... dismissed any suggestion the \$577 million, 23[%] investment in the A[US]n publisher... Fairfax Holdings was bought as a quick flick. “We intend to remain a shareholder long-term. We will pursue any avenues open to us to significantly increase our Fairfax shareholding.” [‘The total value of BIL’s assets as at June 30, 1997, was \$6193m – less net debt (including minorities) of \$2453m.’ Editor’s note: after its ‘debt had risen by another \$1 billion and the company had made a \$1.19 billion asset write down, causing BIL to fall foul of its bankers and its chairman’ – r:p212, ln63 – to ‘tender his resignation, the once-feared predator, whose shares were down to 36c, became the quarry of a Californian-based investment firm with ties to the Disney empire.’]

...The Disney chief executive... is poised to become one of the most richly rewarded employees in the history of American business thanks to a new 10-year pay package worth nearly \$US771 million... [In addition, t]he former Disney president... has received a severance package worth nearly \$100 million... which consists of \$36.9 million in cash and stock options valued at \$54 million... A small group of Disney stockholders, the Washington-based Council of Institutional Investors... have voiced displeasure with [the former president’s] severance package... and... is set to protest at the [chief executive’s compensation package. ■ The ‘highest paid employee in the world this year received a salary and bonus totalling \$415 million’...

NZers, who have a bit of a problem about highly paid chief executives, will doubtless begrudge Telecom’s [chief executive] his \$1.5 million salary reported yesterday... “Nobody’s worth that much!”, a sixty-ish woman remarked in the supermarket last year at the news that... [h]e earned a mere \$1.2 million... Mark Twain sums it up: “Few of us can stand prosperity. Another man’s, I mean.” ...Now that the Telecom chief executive’s income has shot up by an extra \$5769 a week, the chorus of complaints will no doubt double, especially because Telecom’s profit fell. Clearly, [Telecom’s chief executive] has benefited from the market economy he once toasted at a black-tie dinner and which he feared had become “an extinct species.” But before we all get an attack of the envies, a few points should be made. First, [his]... bonus salary this year is based on the prior year’s improved profits and presumably it will fall next year... Second, [while]... there may be better executives around, working for themselves or for smaller companies that can’t pay them what they are worth, [Telecom’s chief executive] probably is “worth that much.” ...by overseas standards \$1.5 million is about par for the course for roughly similar telecommunications companies[– although] Ameritech’s CEO earns more than \$US3 million... BellSouth’s \$US2.27 million... and Bell Atlantic’s \$US1.2 million... Third... we’d better get used to escalating salaries for chief executives because they are rising all the time toward international levels, especially performance-based packages... Telecom’s rival, Clear Communications, is offering top money for its next chief executive in an international search.

...Twenty people were interviewed for the \$1 million-a-year top job at... Challenge. According to the group’s chairman... 12 of the candidates head-hunted were from overseas. However, he pointed to some difficulty in luring them here. “We found that many of these overseas people were extremely well paid. They are leading a very comfortable life,”... Others were reluctant to come to N[Z] because it was a small place and off the beaten track. Some, however, were interested in the job almost in an intellectual sense because of the letter stocks – it was different and it was a challenge. The applicants were either chief executives or the number two at their present positions... There were three applicants from inside... Challenge. • ...the chief executive of Steel and Tube Holdings, took a... pay cut... [of] \$6728 or 1.8[%] less than the \$370,000 he earned in the 1996 financial year. The cut comes as a result of a fall in Steel and Tube’s net earnings from \$25.3 million in 1996 to \$19.59 million in 1997. Approval is being sought at next month’s annual meeting to allot 80,000 shares valued at \$3.60 a share ex bonus to [the CEO] on a deposit of 1c each.

...Executive pay is still increasing, but more slowly than last year. The reason? The weakening economy, according to Hay Management Consultants latest executive compensation report. Fixed remuneration has risen by between 5 and 6.5[%] so far this year, which is down by 1 to 1.5[%] on last year... The overall lesson from the survey is that [executive]s need to take a hard look at their current pay systems to ensure they match an increasingly turbulent future... and... that they link pay and performance...

Chief executives should not get pay rises of 10 to 15[%] when many companies were under-performing, says Labour’s employment spokesman... He said... [m]ost chief executives received their pay increases for little more than sacking people.

...[‘An American CEO who sent his staff an e-mail accusing them of being lazy and threatening them with the sack has seen the share price of his company plummet after his message was posted on the Internet. Three days after publication of his outburst, stock in the health care company Cerner Corporation dropped by 22% because of concerns about staff morale. Now, three weeks later, it is trading at one-third less than it was before the e-mail was sent. The author of the offending e-mail now spends most of his time trying to mollify investors. Cerner, which is based in Kansas City, was included last year in *Fortune* magazine’s list of the 100 best companies to work for in America. The CEO, who founded Cerner in 1979, attributed his blunt management style to growing up on a farm in Oklahoma. “You can take the boy off the farm,” he told the *New York Times*, “but you can’t take the farm out of the boy.” He is not the only business high flyer whose blunt speaking cost a fortune. In 1992, a British jewellery magnate described the merchandise in his chain of stores as “total crap.” His customers deserted in droves, the company made a loss and by the end of the year the magnate was out of a job.’]

...In 1995 a British economist... wrote a book called *The State We’re In* which became an immediate best-seller... [The author] lays much of the blame for “the state we’re in” on what he describes as “shareholder capitalism,” which places immense economic power in the hands of the few who pursue short-sighted policies of what he terms “short-termism.” He documents the way in which this practice has handicapped the British economy in contrast with its competitors.

...STRESSED managers grappling with information overload and heightened shareholder expectation are increasingly turning to outside consultants for help. But the quality of advice they are receiving is being questioned. Pressure on managers to deliver short-term results in an environment of tougher competition, fewer staff, and where accountants rule with a firm eye on costs is taking its toll. "The sheer bulk of decision making and processing is overwhelming a lot of people," said [a] lecturer in human resources management at Auckland University... "There are fewer managers today and flatter organisation structures, but the amount of information that has to be processed has not decreased. The same amount of decisions need to be made. Managers are judged on quarterly results and rewarded or punished accordingly." Demand was exceeding the ability to supply, [he] said. "There's a limit to what the survivors can achieve."

...Most companies that make a \$A550 million cock-up would not survive to clean up the mess. If they did happen to be big enough to handle it, however, it would be expected that the heads of those responsible would roll. Not so BHP. The oil, minerals and steel giant... [with] 65,000 employees in 50 countries... has adopted the unusual practice of promoting... the man who claims credit for the purchase last year of U[S] copper miner and processor Magma Copper. He was head of BHP's vast minerals division and is now chairman of the board... The Magma debacle is the best example of how BHP's board and senior management has lost the plot in recent years. The chief executive... took the only option open to him last Friday – short of resigning – and made \$976 million worth of writedowns on the carrying value of assets, including \$550 million for Magma and \$220 million on steel... [Another man, the one who sold Magma] to BHP and was considered so important that BHP created a copper division for him to head, was let go. One might argue that someone smart enough to extract such a price from BHP should be kept... [The new chairman] gets a chance to play on, for now, but only if he can deliver significantly improved returns to shareholders... Capitalised at \$37.5 billion, the company speaks for so much of the A[US]n Stock Exchange's market... that no serious investor can afford not to own shares.

...An improved operating performance at N[Z] Steel was among the major contributory factors... which saw net profit... [for] BHP's steel division... rise 25.6[%] to \$A113 million... in the first quarter... BHP said... [However,] BHP has set itself a May 1998 deadline to fix or sell its underperforming assets... [as part of a drive] to reduce the company's debt by \$A4 billion... and the future of N[Z] Steel is squarely on the line... BHP, which bought the mill outright in 1991, is understood to have lowered its usual requirement that a subsidiary return 15% on its assets to around 10% for Glenbrook. But even that figure has proved beyond... a mill that should never have been built... Last week, BHP announced huge cuts to its steelmaking operations in A[US], costing 2500 jobs, to be phased in by the end of the century. It also said Glenbrook's steelmaking facilities are unlikely to be replaced at the end of their working life – estimated at another 10 years – and if business did not improve, they could close earlier... as early as 1999[... although the]... mill's metal fabrication and painting operations, employing 200-300... workers, would continue even if steelmaking was shut down... Glenbrook [was commissioned in 1970. In 1981, despite] poor returns the Muldoon Government[spent] \$700 million to increase the plant's size fivefold as part of its ill-fated Think Big drive.

...BROKEN Hill Proprietary Co was forced to surrender its title as The Big Australian last week, after unveiling a massive cost blowout at a key project and a worse-than-expected first quarter profit. BHP's share price briefly slumped to a level where it was no longer A[US]'s largest capitalised stock. Although it regained its top spot later in the week, in the minds of many investors it no longer lived up to the name. One irate shareholder at last week's stormy annual meeting in Brisbane suggested the company be renamed Broken Hearted Proprietors. Another suggested Bloody Horrible Performance... "You've got your finger in so many pies, the oven will burn them," [one] shareholder... told BHP's 11 directors... Shareholders called for the dismissal of [the] chief executive... but BHP[']s chairman... was having none of that. "The board believes he is the best person to run BHP... We are poised for growth." Which would be a change after BHP's recent performance. Profit to May 31 was slashed from \$A1.39b to \$A410m because of asset writedowns... BHP had written off about \$A2b in assets in two years... The shareholders' association... asked how many more write-downs of assets and losses shareholders would have to bear... BHP had \$A7.5b tied up in development projects which were yet to produce income, representing 27% of the company's total investment in non-current assets. "The continual growth of a company is clearly in the best interests of those who work in it... However... is continual growth always in the best interests of shareholders? Is the board policy simply a case of growth for growth's sake?"

...Three senior managers leave BHP. The company's market capitalisation plunges by \$A1.8 billion... The exodus of talent from the giant steelmaker is one of the best examples of the link between human resources and the bottom-line, A[US]n experts say. They have embarked on studies of ways to establish a more meaningful correlation between human capital and company performance... Other tangible results of managing or mismanaging human capital are absenteeism, labour turnover, customer service and employee satisfaction. Eventually, predict experts... organisations will be valued more for the quality of their intellectual capital than for their bottom-line results.

...Selfish businesses, concerned with their own sector's interests but not broad reform, will hurt A[US] in the long term, warns the chairman of the National Competition Council... The short-term gains for those businesses will result in long-term losses for A[US], he said on television yesterday... "I think that there is a clear leadership problem occurring at the business level at the moment..."

...When a legend in American business says the world is on the brink of "an epidemic of institutional failure," it sounds like the corporate version of Armageddon. But... the villain is the "current, hierarchical, command-and-control organisational model." This structure is the child of the industrial revolution and is now so long in the tooth that its general unsuitability for today's commercial environment threatens the very fabric of commercial life as we know it.

...[an] American "strategy consultant"... improves on the old adage that business is war. He says it's two wars... the combat is fought on two fronts – the battle for talent and the battle for profits. And victory in the second depends on winning the first. In an interview in Auckland... [he] explains that most U[S]-based businesses – and he suggests N[Z] is little different – have spent the past decade wrenching profits out of cost reductions and other slimming strategies. That has worked reasonably well until recently. But now that companies have run out of room for further "re-engineering" they are bereft of ideas for growing revenue. For some, it's almost too late. "Some businesses have taken out so many costs that they have damaged their ability to grow revenue,"... [Furthermore, too] many companies give managers too many conflicting responsibilities. "I have seen managers who can do a lot of jobs but who did none of them well... In America and many other countries the pool of really talented people has shrunk. Quite average people are earning top packages," he explains.

...The battle for corporate immortality... For all of 1996... 71,811... U[S] businesses failed, with liabilities of \$[US]34 billion... During... the first half of 1997... 43,461 business failed... [and] the dollar liability... totalled \$US20.8 billion... A seminal 1990 study of 200 big firms in America, Germany and Britain, carried out by... the Harvard Business School, found that most long-lived and successful companies are those that are the first to make two kinds of key investments: in marketing and distribution networks, and in managerial manpower... For most firms, life is nasty, brutish and short. The life expectancy of a typical multinational is between 40 and 50 years, which means that of all the companies now featured in America's *Fortune* 500, about one-third will have merged, been broken up or gone bust by 2010. For least exalted firms, life can be even shorter. A recent study... found that the life expectancy of the average European and Japanese company was fewer than 13 years. On the other hand, Stora, a Swedish paper and chemicals giant, dates back to the 13th century. Other wily old birds include Japan's Sumitomo (now 400 years old), America's Du Pont (195) and Britain's Pilkington (171). Whether longevity matters is the subject of heated debate in management circles.

...[In 1991, there were 880,400 business bankruptcies in the US, compared to 360,300 in 1980. Of these, 124,200 were in California.]

... 'In 1990, there were 4449 company insolvencies (840 companies placed under receivership; 1012 court ordered liquidations; 2,597 voluntary liquidations) in NZ – up from 2997 (1,103; 831; 1,063) in 1989. In 1994 the respective figures were down to 1751 (222; 888; 641'). Incidentally, NZ has about] 237,000 business enterprises, the vast bulk of which are small to medium-sized with about 85[%] employing 10 or fewer people. - 1997

Ask[the] Employers' Federation boss... and he will tell you small businesses are the engine-room... of N[Z]'s buoyant economy. Ask[a] Wellington consultant... and he will tell you they are hard work, more likely to fail than succeed and, as often as not, the only option left to those wanting the dignity of work after long-term unemployment or redundancy. On one matter, both agree – the number of small businesses... defined as employing five or less people... set up in N[Z] in the past decade has exploded... "In the three years between 1987 and 1990 there was a net increase of 8211 in the number of small businesses – and that takes into account businesses which fail. In the years 1991 to 1994 that figure was 28,826." ...Last year, 178,000 small businesses provided a total 261,000 full-time jobs and a further 121,500 part-time jobs. In 1991 there were 149,000 small businesses employing a total of 292,000 people (there is no breakdown for full-time and part-time work)... But if the growth in small business numbers is one of the measures of our success, statistics for just how many fail are not so readily at hand. [The boss] admits he can provide no figures on small-business survival. Studies have shown a high failure rate but he stresses this is not unique to N[Z]. "That's universal. There will always be a proportion of small businesses that fail..." Figures from Statistics N[Z] show that in 1987, there were 22,946 new businesses set up. In the same year, 19,919... closed... [The boss] is quick to point out that such figures mean little unless you know why a particular business closed. - 1996

For every Colonel Sanders who parlays a small business into an international chain of Kentucky Fried Chicken franchises, there are hundreds of owners of small businesses who struggle along inauspiciously or go broke.

Since unsuccessful competitors drop out of the race – often by merger or absorption by the more successful – unbridled competition rapidly tends to the creation of cartels and monopolies. Huge aggregations of privately owned wealth arise, and their possessors acquire the power to control markets and limit competition by those who are less wealthy.

The problem is particularly evidence in relation to cartels... [However, NZ c]onsumers should get far more protection against price-fixing and other anti-competitive practices with stiffer fines – and possibly even criminal penalties – now in store for companies which breach the Commerce Act. A Ministry of Commerce discussion paper issued yesterday concludes that present fines are too low to deter firms which profit from breaching the law... The maximums are \$5 million for firms – under half the A[US]n and U[S] equivalents – and \$500,000 for individuals. But the highest penalties imposed were \$500,000 on Port Nelson Ltd for three offences, while seven car dealers were ordered to pay \$350,000 for price-fixing.

...The [NZ] Government intends to strengthen the Commerce Act's key provision against anti-competitive behaviour... The legislation, which seemed to be in doubt after some high-level lobbying earlier this month, will be put before Parliament in the dying days of the session. It will change Section 36 of the act, which prohibits a dominant firm from using its position for specified anti-competitive purposes. The proposed amendment defines "dominance" as a "high degree of market power". It says that in determining whether a firm has high market power, regard must be given to the extent to which the firm is constrained by the conduct of competitors or potential competitors, or by the conduct of suppliers or customers... One of the options canvassed by the Ministry of Commerce in its discussion paper... earlier this year was to adopt the A[US]n legislation's language. Instead of dominance, it speaks of "substantial market power" and "substantial lessening of competition"... [The] Enterprise and Commerce Minister... said that although the high market power test was not exactly the same as A[US]'s "if the courts do what we would expect them to do and look at similar jurisdictions, they will take a view which is not too dissimilar to A[US]'s." The minister added] that... the intention was to restore the strength of Section 36, which had been watered down by court decisions since 1992, which relied on dictionary definitions of dominance rather than the economic test Parliament had intended. The amendment will also ensure that "purpose" can be inferred from the firm's conduct or circumstances. The other major change relates to Section 47, which prohibits mergers and acquisitions creating or strengthening dominance in a market... [The minister] said the changes set a delicate balance between preventing dominant firms from using their market power to stifle or eliminate competition, while at the same time allowing them to compete... Labour's commerce spokesman... said it was fundamental that major industries had a proper opportunity to look at the measures and give reasoned submissions... Eleventh-hour legislation with little opportunity for input was not the way to do major micro-economic reform, [he]... said.

...An English doctor, one Thomas Fuller, writing in 1732, claimed: "[Whoever] resolves to deal with none but honest men must leave off dealing"; Napoleon suggested in his *Maxims* (1804-15) that "the surest way to remain poor is to be an honest man." They were given significant precedent for their cynicism in Plato's claim that "honesty is for the most part less profitable than dishonesty." Noticeably, such reservations focus on the world of commerce, implying that, by definition, the competitive nature of business and the need to turn a profit from which to make at least a living... ensure that probity in commercial dealing is much more difficult to maintain. Keep in mind that these were opinions reflecting the 17th century and very much earlier – rules and regulations restraining sharp practice were notable for their absence. Perhaps it says something about the ambivalent attitude of the human animal that society had to have honesty in business dealings enforced by legislation.

Shareholders don't have to know anything about a business in order to make money out of it. Likewise, an individual doesn't need to know anything about business in order to start one up – just the money (or capital) to finance it! This capacity for freedom in business is related to an unproven theory that competition leads to perfection (i.e., strong or efficient businesses are successful over those which are weak or inefficient, who grow strong themselves or disappear). However, theories seldom work out in practice the way they should. This particular theory looks a little unbalanced when, apart from the fact that many new businesses fail (which wastes resources and inconveniences customers), it is possible for an unlimited number of small businesses to be created while the trend is to merge into fewer, larger and more powerful corporations (which ought to be more efficient – and, therefore, be more desirable – than having lots of small businesses). Furthermore, the impact of a new business on existing ones – within the same industry – can be negative overall (unless the market for a product or service is expanding). If, for example, 10 companies have established themselves to full capacity in a limited market then another begins, the existing businesses will, on average, be faced with a 10% reduction in market share (which may lead to redundancies at the original businesses – i.e., new workers may enter the industry at the expense of existing workers) or, if the new business survives, one or more of the others must fail completely. This process of elimination works well if those that fail deserve to do so. Unfortunately, those which remain can be least deserving – they survived because they had the most capital instead of the most talent; because they were prepared to act in an anti-competitive or illegal manner. Also, business failures can affect consumer confidence in the product or service being provided (commonly known as the 'bad apple effect'), thereby threatening the profitability – and even the existence – of the surviving businesses. In addition, competition can divert businesses from their core activity – that being the provision of a particular product or service to customers (a 'survey of Australasian retailers found that most rate beating off new competition as a major concern'). On top of all that, if the business is a 'limited liability company – and most are – the owners are only liable for the money they put in at the start' (i.e., most business owners are able to make potentially risky economic decisions without being responsible for paying the full costs of their failures).

People generally choose to start up a business because they see it as a way to fulfill their ambition to become wealthy – although some also have an ambition to provide something that the world needs. Sometimes business people succeed at doing both – but often they succeed at neither! Yet, if no one

failed at business, would it be possible for anyone to succeed? However, being successful at business creates new problems. If a person is self-employed (i.e., owns a business which only employs itself) and is so successful that offers of work outstrip its capacity to complete them, that person faces two primary choices: (1) select only the best jobs and cruise through to retirement; (2) take on an employee. The problem with the second option is that previously the business was effectively earning enough revenue to pay one wage and suddenly it must pay two. But if the businessperson has empire-building aspirations it will risk taking a cut in its own income in the hope of reaping the rewards later. If the decision to expand proves ill-fated, both workers might end up unemployed. If it proves otherwise, the businessperson may eventually face the expansion problem again – and will continue to do so whenever the business receives more work than it can complete. A successful business could continue to grow indefinitely, aided perhaps by purchasing competing businesses, or ultimately itself be purchased – by a competitor, or by an individual (or investment group) who wish to enter the industry via an established concern.

I am looking to purchase a plumbing supplies business. The information I have been given shows assets amounting to \$450,000, comprising a small amount of plant and machinery, inventory, and debtors. However, the asking price is \$650,000. When I asked the owner for justification for the price exceeding the value of the assets, he replied this was attributable to goodwill. Is this reasonable? Unfortunately, there is no straightforward answer to this question... Goodwill is very much an intangible factor, representing the value associated with an amalgam of contributing factors... Goodwill is the essence of any business. Goodwill transforms what would otherwise simply be a collection of assets into a viable business that generates profit. There is no standard formula for determining the value of goodwill. In a technical sense, goodwill can be regarded as the price paid now to acquire a future earnings stream. Without knowing anything about the earnings stream, it is impossible to assess the goodwill value... In practice, many factors will contribute to the existence of goodwill, and affect its value. One of the most traditional factors is location... The nature of the market in which a business operates, and its position within that market, can justify goodwill... Goodwill might be derived from the business having a unique product which no one else can offer; perhaps as a result of a sole agency arrangement or because the product has been developed by the business and protected through patents and trademarks... Goodwill is often justified in the case of businesses that have products that enjoy high-profile branding, such as those frequently seen on... television commercials. This branding means there is high consumer recognition and regard for the product, leading to increased sales over competing products, often at higher prices... [Where] there are significant barriers to entry, the value of an existing business will be higher... Sometimes goodwill will be reflected within a set of financial statements... A business may enjoy cost advantages over its competitors, perhaps because of sophisticated manufacturing processes or better distribution systems, but in any event its cost advantage boosts profits and increase the value of goodwill. A company that has a well-diversified clientele comprising largely high-quality customers who pay their accounts on time will clearly be regarded more favourably... However... the goodwill may very much belong to the individual proprietors, rather than their company, and, as a result, may not readily transfer with the company to a new owner... Perhaps the most overlooked factor justifying the existence of goodwill is a company's staff. The customer relationships, experience and know-how possessed by staff will not appear as an asset on any balance sheet, but are nonetheless key indicators of the existence of goodwill.

...[Unless a potential business owner wants to risk buying one that is failing, it is necessary to have the business thoroughly checked out beforehand – but sellers aren't completely obligated to make the task easy! The bigger the business, the harder it is to check. There are usually various laws to protect buyers, but creating a law is much easier than enforcing it – and they only truly come into effect after being broken, which is of little use to a buyer who may have lost everything (especially if faced with a long, expensive – and possibly unsuccessful – court case to prove it was defrauded).

...If most companies could not, by definition, be above average, then the same must be true for bosses – who need to have numerous talents, but can be above average at some and below average at others. It isn't essential that a boss be above average – a below average boss can get a business to succeed with above average employees (likewise, an above average boss can get a business to succeed with below average employees). However, is it sensible to allow the LAW OF AVERAGES to be a central part of business? Is it valid to accept that, statistically, up to 50% of businesses, possibly more, would be expected to fail through having ineffective leadership (or that an unknown percentage of employees could be miserable in their work – and, therefore, their lives in general – because their employer is below average to the point of being 'a complete bastard', but they can't afford to leave, or can't find employment with an above average employer because such positions are popular and, therefore, competition for them is strong)? From the perspective of the business owners there might seem to be little wrong with having to cope with failure, but what about the effects of allowing lots of independent businesses to operate in a closed – or semi-closed – system such as an economy or a community (i.e., a system where every person and business is unavoidably, and necessarily, linked)? Each failed business affects the staff, their families, its suppliers and customers – who may depend on the products or services supplied (or purchased) by the failed business for their own survival. Expect everyone who has an association with Levene to be losing some sleep at the moment.]

...The man whose... family founded... one of N[Z]'s best-known retail chains... with a single paint store in Auckland more than 70 years ago... choked back the tears yesterday as he contemplated the uncertain future facing... the 28-store... [business which] has become synonymous with stylish household goods... [The former owner], who still owns around a third of the properties in which the Levene stores are based... could only say he was "desperately sorry" for the 600 staff whose jobs are now in the air, following a decision by its[new] owners to place the company in receivership. The move follows months of rumours that... [the] nationwide chain was in serious financial difficulty... At the time... the company... [was] sold... to the Skellerup Group... for \$74 million... three years ago... it had a turnover of \$150 million and was highly profitable. It has since plunged into debt, and... lost around \$12 million last year... It is understood creditors are owed around \$10 million... Suppliers... said the company stopped paying its bills two weeks ago. Several suppliers stopped delivering their products, placing staff in the embarrassing position of having to explain to customers why orders could not be taken... Some customers are believed to have been asked to pay cash up front for their purchases in recent days, even though the goods could not be delivered immediately... Sources said some suppliers realised how serious the situation was on Thursday and moved quickly to reclaim their goods... Suppliers reclaimed about a dozen couches from the Newmarket store on Thursday afternoon... Staff had turned up for business as usual yesterday, by and large unaware of the severity of the company's financial difficulties right up until the public announcement of the receivership at lunchtime... [But] yesterday morning there were some clues that the receivers were taking charge, with security guards posted at the entrance of stores. They were under instruction not to allow any stock to be removed, unless it had been paid for by customers... Stores were closed at midday yesterday for stock-taking... The receivership does not affect nine stores independently owned and operated by franchisees...

Ten office staff at Levene got the news they were dreading yesterday: no job and no redundancy pay... Twenty-five of the 600 Levene staff have now been made redundant... Levene receivers have placed the remaining... staff on week-by-week employment contracts... [Staff] were on the same pay and conditions as before except they would receive just one week's notice of termination and no redundancy compensation.

...Under the terms of the Receivership Act 1993, [the receiver from]... KPMG... had to make a decision on all contracts of employment by November 14... [In] accordance with the Companies Act 1993, employees' wages and holiday pay owing to the time of receivership was protected, up to a ceiling of \$6000 per employee, but redundancy pay did not carry the same protection.

...A trouble-shooter sent into Maine Investments' by... [its principal shareholder, a US] investment bank, believes that cutting Levene loose was the only way to proceed... Levene was sucking too much cash from the profitable industrial operation, which would be floated next year under the name Skellerup Group. The decision taken by... Maine Investments... to put Levene in receivership, however, gives rise to an "enforcement event."

This means the trustee for holders of \$77 million worth of bonds can call for an early redemption. The bonds were not due for redemption until 2001 when they were issued at the beginning of last year to help fund the ambitious \$520 million leveraged buyout of Skellerup Group by [the investment bank] led vehicle, Maine Investments. Maine is calling for the trustee not to take up this option... With group debt at uncomfortable levels... now at \$225 million, and the bond debt... a forced redemption would require [the US bank] to come up with the funds. The other option would be a fire sale of Maine's assets. [The bank], along with a small group of the original Skellerup management, has so far put in equity of \$170 million[, which]... includes a recent \$40 million injection of capital of which \$10 million was allocated to the retail division. Those extra funds had already been swallowed up. Of the retail allocation, \$2.5 million was put into Palmers Gardenworld, with the balance going to Levene. As a result of the capital raising, [the bank] increased its shareholding of Maine from 83... to just under 90[%]... At the time of the buyout, DML Construction was its largest single asset. But with moves underway to wind up its troubled A[US]n arm, only a N[Z] operation is left. Its sale could not be ruled out... the appointee said... Palmers Gardenworld... would be kept as a stand-alone business outside the industrial group... The man who introduced [the bank] to the asset... remains as chief executive of Maine. But his responsibilities have been trimmed.

...Essentially a leveraged offer is an attempt by the buyer to make a financial killing by borrowing a large sum of money to pay for the acquisition. The strategy is to pay the interest costs from the cash flow of the acquired businesses... Leveraging the company with a debt of \$400 million supported by equity of only \$130 million was always going to be a big ask.

...THE Levene brand... looks set to disappear now the company has gone into receivership... [I]t was unlikely anyone would be interested in continuing to operate Levene as a nationwide chain... [The business person] who bought The Store chain of homeware shops after it went into receivership last year... expected... [Levene's] stores would be sold individually and the sites used for other purposes... Meanwhile, Levene's receivers said yesterday there will be bargains for Levene customers today but no fire sale... By keeping going Levene was not looking to trade itself out of difficulty but was instead hoping to find a buyer, said... [one] of the receivers... Levene's major suppliers are understood to have agreed to continue supplying the chain until Christmas, as the receivers talk to potential buyers... In an interview in June... [the] man who... came here to run Levene and Palmers Gardenworld for Skellerup but returned to Britain a few months ago, citing family reasons... admitted Levene had lost touch with its customers and many key staff had left, apparently unable to make the adjustment to a new management regime.

...Retail giant The Warehouse Group is being tipped as the saviour of the Levene home decorating chain... But... [analysts] said yesterday that The Warehouse might be more interested in picking up Levene's sites rather than the brand name as its own brand was probably stronger.

...Levene stores should either honour their gift vouchers or shut their doors, the Minister of Consumer Affairs... said last night. She questioned the legality of a store in receivership continuing to trade but refusing to repair or replace faulty goods or honour gift vouchers, which she said were effectively promissory notes... Customers queued for bargains when the paint and household goods retail chain reopened yesterday. Many were angry and disappointed, however, when told their gift vouchers would not be accepted and there would be no exchanges or refunds... [The minister] said she would not blame customers who tried to stop cheques or credit card transactions after being refused repairs or replacements for faulty goods... A spokeswoman for the receivers said last night that they were acting within the law. She said secured creditors had first call on any money held by the company... [and] voucher holders... are at the bottom of a pecking order of creditors fighting to get their money back...

The Minister of Consumer Affairs... yesterday urged legal action against Levene over gift vouchers which Levene's receivers are refusing to honour. [The minister] said she could not instigate the legal action but could refer the matter to the Commerce Commission, which enforces the Fair Trading Act. The commission seemed less enthusiastic, but did not rule out a prosecution... The Minister... lost about \$1100 in 1995 when she bought a dishwasher from a Tauranga firm that went into receivership. She said she paid in advance and asked that it be delivered a month later when her home was built. "It was on special..."

...Pity Levene customers who took advantage of the Labour Weekend special on couches. For just under \$1000 they could select the sofa of their dreams, providing it was in blue or green. The only catch, it appeared then, was waiting four weeks for the furniture to be made and delivered. How could they have known that [four days later], Levene... would be in receivership? If the receivers opt for winding up rather than trading on, the would-be couch owners will become that most unlucky of commercial casualties – the unsecured creditor; best described as the miserable character standing at the end of a long line of people with their hands out for their money. In front stand unpaid staff, followed by secured creditors – normally banks... The law is certainly on... the... hapless customers' side, according to[a] lawyer... who practices in the area of consumer law and trade practices. After all, the Consumers Guarantee Act gives them rights. But with the cupboard bare... Levene is unlikely to be able to meet its legal obligations to supply the goods or pay a refund... One benefit of the new Companies Act (1993) is that if customers stung by a receivership can prove the company was trading while insolvent – and there is no reason to believe that applies to... [Levene] – the directors become personally liable for debts, says... [the] Consumers Institute chief executive... But reality can be cruel. Not only may the directors have already salted away their assets into family trusts, but litigation is expensive, although there is always the possibility of class action. In the meantime, [he] has good news for some... Levene customers: if they bought goods on layby and those goods are in the warehouse, "all you have to do is pay the balance and take the goods." ...But perhaps the best advice to minimise the risks in buying... is to pay by credit card. Visa, for instance, guarantees your money back if the goods are not delivered. Liability rests with the bank of the defunct retailer. However, when airlines collapse, it is the travel agent who has to refund the money – a little-known fact that caused a fracas between the travel agents and Visa last year after Kiwi International went into liquidation... A supplier of goods will often include a clause in its conditions of sale stating that ownership of the goods will not pass to the buyer until payment is made. Such clauses are known as reservation of title or "Romalpa" clauses. If the buyer becomes insolvent, the clause will enable the seller to recover the goods from the receiver in priority to other creditors. Most reservation of title clauses simply seek to recover goods for which payment has not been made. However, some clauses also seek to retain ownership in any finished products made by the buyer using the goods. Generally, for such a clause to be effective, the goods supplied must retain enough of their original character to be identifiable. For example, a seller was able to retain title in logs that were processed into sawn timber... [W]hether the clause succeeds will also depend on the wording of the clause itself and on the facts of each individual case. This was illustrated by a recent High Court case resulting from the supply by ICI of raw material (polyester terephthalate granules) to Lab-Plas for use in the manufacture of plastic containers. ICI's conditions of sale contained a clause stating that ICI retained ownership of the goods until it received payment in full of all sums owing. Lab-Plas went into receivership in December 1995, and into liquidation in April 1996. The receivers accepted that ICI's claim for raw material stock at the start of the receivership was valid and that payment would be made for it. However, ICI also claimed ownership of plastic containers and the sale proceeds of containers... [but] because the security had not been registered as required by the Companies Act, it was void against the liquidator.

...One of the two major players in the N[Z] paint market has bought Levene and Co's commercial business for an undisclosed sum. Wellington-based ICI Paints plans to open up to five new outlets in Auckland in the new year and another two outlets in Wellington and Christchurch, to ensure supplies of its Levene-branded paint will continue to be available... ICI is believed to have paid around \$17 million for Levene's paint factory only a year ago, along with the right to use the Levene brand. It promptly closed down the Auckland factory to enable its own paint to be sold in Levene stores... At present, it owns just one trade outlet in... Auckland... Before the... Levene... receivership, ICI had between 10 and 12[%] of the commercial paint market. ICI's main competitor, Resene, is also believed to have looked at the trade business...

Levene voucher holders may be able to recoup most of the value of their chits by "double-dipping." Resene Paints, one of two companies accepting Levene vouchers as part-payment for goods, yesterday returned the tokens to customers. "We want to give the vouchers back so

customers can have two bites of the cherry by using them at other companies offering special deals,”... As well as being able to use the vouchers at other outlets, the customers could hold the chits for a possible claim on the Levene receiver... Also caught out by the collapse... were 15 winners of a *N[Z] Herald* promotion. The subscribers won \$500 of Levene gift vouchers... [T]he *Herald* has now offered them alternative prizes to the same value. Another 15 winners cashed in their vouchers before the collapse.

...Two of Levene’s three directors quit within weeks of the company being placed in receivership, Companies Office records show... Their resignations have left Maine’s chief executive... as sole director of Levene... Meanwhile, DML Resources, once the jewel in Maine Investments’ crown, has been put into receivership owing an estimated \$10 million to creditors... However, Maine Investments said it should be noted that DML did not form part of its charging group and thus the action did not affect the holders of Skellerup finance bonds. As part of the restructuring of the ownership of the former Skellerup Group in August, DML was sold to Vermont Investments, which in turn is controlled by [the US investment bank that owns most of Maine Investments]. Once worth around \$90 million, DML was sold for \$6 million... DML holds the earthmoving contract at Solid Energy’s Rotowaro Mine... In the wake of the announcement, Solid Energy said that coal supplies would be unaffected by the receivership... Levene has closed down one of its four trade outlets as talks continue with potential buyers for the business.

...The Levene home-decorating chain has shrunk from 28 stores to 21, as the search continues for buyers interested in picking up what is left... [The] co-founder of Harvey Norman, has confirmed the company is... one of several A[US]n firms taking an interest in the assets of the Levene home-decorating chain... But the furniture, computer and electrical goods chain is playing down whether it might be interested in buying the business as a going concern... “I don’t know at this stage...” said [the co-founder]. “My experience over the years is that when a going concern falls down, you can very rarely, if ever, bring it back.” Other companies known to be eyeing Levene’s assets include... the Farmers Deka Group...

The Farmers Deka group is believed to be one of several companies talking to Levene’s receiver about taking over some of the collapsed company’s sites... Farmers Deka has already bought fixtures and fittings from several of the closed stores... However Farmers Deka is not believed to be among the parties interested... in Levene’s giant store at Wairau Park, North Shore... as it already operates a Farmers Home Centre and Freedom Furniture store in the area.

...After disputing its numbers, the auditor has valued Maine’s goodwill at \$160 million... Adding goodwill back into the accounts and stripping out \$86 from Levene and DML, total assets would be \$361 million. That compares with combined bank and bondholder debt of \$357 million.

...The \$77 million of Skellerup Finance paper plunged to new depths yesterday, even for junk bonds. As banks and management haggle over a rescue package for the former Skellerup Group of companies, the yield of the bonds hit 250[%]. That means a dollar invested is worth only 9.2c... At the close of trade there was one large seller at 250[%], with the only buyer in sight being at 325[%]... Bondholder debt ranks behind that of banks, which are owed \$230 million.

...BONDHOLDERS of embattled Skellerup Group... have been told the company is technically insolvent. At June 30 it had debts of \$290m, exceeding its tangible assets of \$265m... The trustee said Maine had also claimed intangible assets worth \$198m.

...At September 30 total assets of \$386.9 million were unable to cover... Maine Investments... total liabilities of \$433.5 million. But the backbone of the group is made up of 10 heartland *N[Z]* industries producing \$360 million of sales and \$30 million of earnings before interest and tax.

...Bondholders... said they remained perplexed how a parent company which two years ago was in fine shape had gone downhill so fast. [The] general manager of the Presbyterian Savings and Development Society, which owns 200,000 Skellerup bonds, said how Maine could lose more than \$300m from its balance sheet... was “a mystery”. Other bondholders to take a bath included the Salvation Army, which owns 500,000 bonds, and Lincoln University, with 2.2[million] bonds. However, the failure of corporate bond issues are rare.

...God knows there is little charity in big business. So when some of the country’s leading churches got involved in high-powered business investments, they knew there was no chance of their being sheltered from any financial thunderbolts... The Salvation Army... and Presbyterians had no exceptions made... The Methodist Trust Association has also been worrying about what will become of the \$500,000 of bonds it bought... According to the bondholders’ register, there are several other churches... involved in the Maine strife[, including]... the St Francis Charitable Foundation, and the Lutheran Layman’s League...

More than 120... Levene... staff... were delivered the news... [that] they are to lose their jobs three weeks before Christmas. The move follows a decision by the stricken firm to close a further 11 stores, including three in Auckland.

...Hopes are fading that the Levene... chain will continue trading beyond Christmas, with no potential saviours emerging... Companies[are] still believed to be talking to the receiver... However, none is believed to be interested in taking over the company as a going concern.

...The Levene’s trade store in Hamilton and stores in Rotorua and Tauranga have been sold to... a Taupo-based operator of independent Levene stores. The Levene receiver... has also confirmed that the retail stores in Hamilton and Lower Hutt would close from December 14... Just five Levene stores... [– excluding the franchised stores – will] remain trading in the lead-up to Christmas...

Two of the remaining five Levene homeware stores trading under receivership closed yesterday...

The last[non-franchised] Levene store – sited at Newmarket – will close its shutters at 5pm today...

Levene’s... was a good asset turned sour by trying to take it upmarket[, while]... Skellerup’s preoccupation with growth through acquisitions created nervousness among investors and analysts... Analysts were not sorry to see Skellerup go from the market, perhaps for no other reason than the difficulty in valuing such a diverse group of companies. Hindsight has proven the same to be the case for Skellerup management.

...Seven banks holding \$221 million of debt in beleaguered Maine Investments were locked in meetings yesterday poring over a revised proposal understood to include a partial interest-payment holiday. The new proposition put in front of banks comes after they scuttled a plan late last month to swap around \$46 million of their debt for shares in Maine. Much of the opposition among banks to accepting such a swap is believed to have stemmed from A[US], where most of the original financing... would have come from.

...Maine Investments’ bankers are understood to be contemplating wiping around \$70 million of their debt as negotiations reach a critical point... But in doing this banks, holding around \$280 million of interest bearing debt, are now proposing to take an equity stake in the restructured group which will include 10 industrial companies. A portion of the reduced debt will be held in a company called Otherco, which holds non-core assets... Estimations of the value of these non-core assets are around \$35 million to \$50 million. The deal with the banks is also based on a \$30 million cash injection from Maine’s shareholders – principally [the US investment bank] and its clients. Together this will cut debt by \$100 million, boosting the group’s bottom line by around \$10 million a year. This would put annual pre-tax profit for the industrial group at around \$12 million...

Maine Investments and its bankers are expected to sign off on a rescue package... today after weeks of intense haggling. The company’s finance director... would only say that negotiations were at a delicate stage.

...Maine Investments’ future hangs in the balance after its bankers rejected a rescue package.

...Maine Investments breached Stock Exchange listing rules... the market surveillance panel said yesterday... In April the company, in response to two inquiries from the exchange, said that it was unable to explain sharp falls in the price of... \$77 million worth of bonds... Yesterday the panel said the information was material to the price of the company’s securities under rule 10 of the exchange listing rules requiring the “timely” release of relevant information. - 1997

N[Z]'s insolvency laws are heading for a major overhaul in a bid to boost flagging confidence in the system. A Government review of the existing laws has yet to be completed, but at this stage the likely outcome looks like being: ■ Much tougher enforcement in cases of commercial irresponsibility, including the creation of a new office of Inspector-General of Insolvency to oversee investigations and prosecutions. ■ A new company rehabilitation regime aimed at enabling basically sound companies to trade their way back to solvency. ■ Stricter checks of the qualifications and impartiality of the private practitioners appointed as receivers and liquidators. ■ A bringing together of the myriad laws affecting insolvency into a single statute.

In order to check that private businesses apply with the various regulations relating to business practices, standard of premises and employee rights, etc., governments have to set up surveillance panels or departments of inspectors – although these departments never seem to have enough power or funding to perform their tasks thoroughly! However, their funds might be enough if most of their work didn't involve dealing with the same offenders (who react to having their business shut down by simply starting up a new one), or the same offences (i.e., an offending business can be shut down only to have a new one take its place and cause exactly the same problems). Some employees may help the relevant authorities by dobbing in their employer, but most workers seem to choose to remain silent – perhaps because they are more concerned about losing their source of employment than the wider issues or principles at stake?

The owners of a business can be the only people who benefit from it being successful but, if a business fails, the entire community – including the environment – may get hurt. Unfortunately, the environment can get hurt by businesses regardless of whether they fail or not! Lots of so-called successful corporations or large businesses depend on the destruction of Earth – be it directly during the process of extracting raw materials, or indirectly via pollution. Small businesses can also damage the environment, but the problems they cause are often harder to see because their scale is minuscule in comparison (although the combined effects of many small businesses can be greater than one corporation).

“Business” means one thing when it is small; quite another when it is large. Both apparently exist to make profit, but small business is affected by the forces that shape society – big business can largely ignore them... Big business' response to a financial crisis (largely due to short term profit-oriented decisions) is to cut and run – dumping whole factories and thousands of people to preserve the company. An international company has no real responsibility for the victims of the dumping – their social welfare is paid for by the wage and salary earners and the taxes of small business people... who themselves are affected by these closures. The less that government is involved in holding big business accountable for their environmental and social impacts, the more control big business has over society and the shape of its future... Unlimited growth without regard for its consequences cannot last – yet there is little opportunity for most people to put controls on the big corporations who take what they can now... Air and water are still seen as free resources and acceptable dumping grounds for wastes, however toxic. Communities affected by big companies polluting air or water still do not have any real say, even when the damage is done... In a “market-driven” society business creates “needs” to keep up the cycle of growth and profit. For local authorities, the pressure to provide jobs is a big incentive to allow industries to set up... [The] health and welfare of all the people of the planet are more important than private profit.

Why deplete the earth's resources in privatised consumption? ...while this occurs to some of us as a problem, it is viewed as a virtue by those who see increased consumption of goods and services as the way to prosperity.

THE GROWTH DILEMMA besets not only th[e US] but the whole industrialized world... The dilemma, simply stated, is that we cannot sustain the unregulated growth of the sort we have had in the past – but we cannot afford *not* to keep growing because of the massive economic consequences that would result from a halt to industrial growth. Stated more bluntly, the industrialized countries of the world are structured in such a way that their economies demand growth that the world's finite resources can support only with increasing difficulty.

In their continuing efforts to expand and grow, the giant transnational corporations are extremely careless in the way they treat the natural environment, to the extent of creating serious threats to the global ecosystem.

In every ecosystem, human understanding is challenged by the same fundamental strategy of life. Unlike human economies, ecosystems never proceed as if energy, air, water, and soil were infinite. In a finite world, the strategy of life is to make the most of what is at hand... The economic calculus motivates the same behavior that made deserts of the Mediterranean lands. The peasant got the tree and, centuries later, the goat ate the last blade of grass. In modern parlance, the calculus internalizes benefits and externalizes costs. On the manufacture of solid waste, the packaging industry makes its profit now. On the disposal of it, the taxpayer pays later to open up new landfills. The market, reconciler of contending interests and objectifier of value, cannot see farther than the discounted future. The higher the interest rate, the nearer is that future. Against the always ready calculation of the interest rate, the political forum must be convened. There, as well, present optimum return holds plainer visibility than the countervalue of long-range future potential benefit. People only live once, and even the 70-plus years of present expectation are fleeting. In the contest over who gets the electricity and who gets the pollution, now and not in the future, it is also to the political forum rather than the market that contenders must repair. For these two functions, self-governing people have yet to perfect their political institutions. A [41st US A]dministration spokesman... improved on [someone else]'s cost/benefit analysis with the estimate that eliminating acid rain would soak up the military budget. A more reliable calculation, employing the... input/output model of the economy maintained by the Environmental Protection Agency, shows that management of all the major forms of pollution should cost no more than 4[%] of the GNP. That would create more jobs than equal military expenditure does now... A measure of the long lead that technological innovation has held over social invention is presented by the problem of the toxic waste dump. On the E[PA] list are 27,000 toxic waste dumps marked for cleanup at an estimated average cost of about \$25 million at each site. The product of these two numbers comes to about one-third the assets deployed by the 500 largest U.S. industrial enterprises. Protection of ground waters across the country must also reckon with numberless buried fuel tanks of households, shopping malls, and filling stations; taint from these sources has made the bottling of spring water a growth industry.

The Department for the Environment acknowledges 7200 contaminated sites in N[Z].

...By the Government's own admission, N[Z]'s environmental record falls well short of its rhetoric. Last week's State of the Environment report, a 650-page “audit” by the Ministry for the Environment, reminds us of how little progress we have made in reducing the strain that we put on nature. Even if we have changed some personal habits we have failed as a political society to confront the fundamental changes we need to make if we are to use fewer non-renewable resources and produce less waste. It's easy to ignore these issues, because dealing with them seems so difficult.

...The... International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics at Lund University in Sweden... [carried] out a study of company reporting on the environment in [the US, Canada, AUS, NZ and 9 European] countries... And when the results were released earlier this year... N[Z] was the only country among those surveyed where not one company produced a separate environmental report[(the 'US topped the survey with between 40 and 50% of companies producing separate reports; AUS's figure was about 6%')]. For the purposes of the survey a separate environmental

report was defined as either a one-off report or a section in the annual report on the environment of three pages or longer that contained relevant information. Overall, 24[%] of companies published a separate report... A much larger number (71[%]) mentioned the environment in their annual reports but in [N]Z... only 39[%] did even that... The perceived costs of gathering information were not a significant reason[for the NZ figures, although]... most of the [N]Z companies were much smaller than others in the survey... [Incidentally, a] book written for the Business Roundtable suggests that conservation assets could be better utilised by applying market forces and that people should pay to use public parks and reserves... The... proposals for privatisation and increased exploitation of conservation lands, access charges and the disembowelling of the Department of Conservation are essentially corporate greed masquerading as concern for the environment. [The Roundtable] argues that wild places and native plants and animals have no right to exist in themselves, that they are valuable only if they can be bought or sold. This attitude and the desire to make a dollar from everything is at the heart of many serious environmental problems...

An Auckland businessman plans to set up a new group to challenge the Business Roundtable's view of social policy... He said... [what] business did also had implications for employees, other businesses and the wider community.

...*Civilisation and profits go hand in hand – US president Calvin Coolidge*... That's the view articulated by the Business Roundtable... Indeed, the Roundtable's core argument could be summarised by[the] economist... observation that "nothing contributes so much to the prosperity and happiness of a country as high profits." Although... Auckland's warm-hearted cereal manufacturer... pays tribute to the Roundtable's contribution to economic debate, he insists that a business can and should do a lot more than just enrich shareholders... [H]e's at one with[an] American humourist... who once said: "The trouble with the profit system has always been that it was highly unprofitable to most people." ...But [the Auckland] thinks a lot can emerge from a more organised debate and that the idea has a particularly important relevance right now. "Business needs a more human face," he says. "This might help the perception of business in the values-based nineties." ...The notion of businesses with social responsibility isn't new, as [the Auckland] is the first to admit. America's Businesses for Social Responsibility, formed in the early 90s, is exploring the dynamics of how business can interact with the community. And a number of [N]Z businesses have individually practiced social responsibility in isolation...

America's Business for Social Responsibility is much more than the standard trade lobby. Described in America's *Management Review* publication as "a combination of New Age corporate social and environmental activism and cutting-edge management thinking", it was launched with a dramatic philosophy different to any other business organisation. Basically, BSR aims to change the way business is done in America. [Its chief] executive... explains: "Our starting point is, if something is bad for customers, employees or the environment, then it is probably not going to be good for business. We believe long-term business profitability must incorporate environmental responsibility and social equity... Socially responsible business is not a new idea," [he] adds... "But it is an idea whose time has come."

...[a NZ]-born scientist... is no surfer, but the A[US]n Surfers Hall of Fame thought she deserved a prize for high-lighting pollution of Sydney's beaches by raw sewage. Since then... [she] has become known internationally for speaking out on global concerns. Her latest book... targets the world's major corporations, claiming they dominate so many aspects of society that the environment is being sacrificed for economic growth. It argues that with strategies to manipulate public opinion and the law, corporations have been able to conduct business as usual with little care for the environmental consequences. [She] was in Auckland recently to publicise her book. Mysteriously, at least one function... was cancelled. "I don't know why," she says... [What she does know i]s that with their new powers of domination, corporations are now beating environmentalists in the battle of ideas. Before the late 1960s, businesses wanting something had to negotiate with politicians. Then hippies, public interest groups and environmentalists forced business and governments to accept consultation. At the same time environmentalists changed public perceptions of the environment. As a result corporations found themselves on the back foot, prompting... the first wave of corporate strike back – the formation of conservative think tanks and business councils. The second wave of corporate strike back came towards the end of the last decade and early 1990s... and... aimed at proposing free market solutions to environmental problems... It is now the environmentalists, she says, who are on the back foot... "The environmental battle... is not going to be won by lobbying the people at the top... It's only going to be won by changing the hearts and minds of the general public." [She] says at present people vote in elections on the basis of their standard of living, failing to see the links between doing that and what is happening to the environment. "Individuals pursuing their self-interests and profits will benefit society... to a large extent that has been true. For many years Western society has benefited from that sort of thing. But I think we have come to the point where we need to reappraise where we are, and whether continuing along the same old path is any longer the best way to go. We can't continue along the same old path. So the question is what sort of change is necessary..."

...A new wave of global corporate activism is emerging from the U[S]. It seeks to counter the gains made by environmentalists, to undermine public support for environmental protection, and to persuade politicians against increased regulation. Corporate public relations tactics now dominate most debates about the state of the environment. That poses grave dangers for the ability of democratic societies to respond to environmental threats. Environmental public relations, or "greenwash," is a billion-dollar industry. A large part of this is spent on advising companies how to counter environmentalists. Equally large sums flow into intellectual arguments to support corporate goals, casting doubt on the magnitude of environmental problems and exaggerating the costs of regulations that are designed to solve those problems. By combining activist techniques with huge financial resources, corporations are beating environmentalists at their own game. But isn't this simply democracy in action? It is true industry has the right to lobby governments and run campaigns just as any other pressure groups do. However, what we are seeing is a perversion of democracy. Democratic expression is becoming a commodity that is more effective the more money is spent on it. For the right fee public relations firms can generate the appearance of widespread support for their corporate clients using specially tailored mailing lists and computer databases to identify potential supporters. Banks of telephone "salespeople" sell the corporate interpretation of an upcoming piece of legislation and persuade people to agree to having a letter written on their behalf to their local politician... The aim is to persuade politicians that there is a spontaneous outpouring of public opposition to the legislation. The manufacturing of grassroots support, or "astroturf," is now an \$800 million industry in the U[S] and has become a normal part of business for corporations and trade associations. The use of corporate front groups enables industrial interests to take part in public debates behind a cover of community concern. The names of these front groups are carefully chosen to mask the real interests behind them but they can usually be identified by their funding sources, membership and who controls them. The Forest Protection Society is an example of an A[US]n front group, funded by the forest industry and headed by a long-term staff member of the National Alliance of Forest Industries... Another, front group, the Global Climate Coalition – representing oil, gas, coal, automobile and chemical interests – has spent millions of dollars to persuade the public and governments that global warming is not a real threat. Dissident scientists, who oppose the general scientific consensus on global warming, have had their voices greatly amplified by fossil fuel money. These scientists do not disclose their funding sources when talking to the media... Corporate tactics being exported from the U[S] include Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (Slapps) by which citizens who speak out are intimidated and silenced by the threat of lawsuits that have no legal merit. Every year thousands of people are sued in the U[S] for doing no more than exercising their democratic rights – circulating petitions, writing to public officials, speaking at (or even just attending) public meetings, organising boycotts and engaging in peaceful demonstrations. Slapps are already widely used in A[US] and in Canada they have even been used by [the NZ]-based transnational corporation... Challenge... Democracy has become dominated by a vast propaganda industry aimed at achieving the consent of the public to the goals and values of those who can best afford the experts, the think tanks, public relations firms and media outlets. Governments are less and less responsive to public demands and more and more

influenced by these corporations and monied interests. The result is that the overwhelming public support for environmental protection in most countries is not being translated into government action.

...*Don't look to business to solve society's ills...* More than 200 years ago, Adam Smith made a simple observation about business. The butcher or the baker do not provide our dinner out of benevolence... they do it out of self-interest because they can make a profit in the process. The better they do their business, the better off we all become. When they take their eyes off their jobs their businesses suffer and the community is denied the benefits generated by the honest pursuit of profit. To many that is still an unpalatable truth. Many retain the feudal notion that to be responsible business must put down its tools and attend to social concerns. They are asking butchers to be social workers not business people. What they would get, sooner or later, would be bad meat and bankrupt butchers. We should not confuse corporate social responsibility with gestures such as saving endangered species or sponsoring Christmas concerts in the park. If they are honest, most businesses that make these efforts admit they do so to add value to their firm or brand. When businesses are asked to go further and become social guardians in the name of corporate responsibility they end up failing to serve anybody properly... I can think of no other legal activity where success is so frowned on. We expect schools to be good at educating and encourage them to be better. We want hospitals to strive for excellence in a pursuit of saving lives. We do not thrust extraneous tasks on them. Yet when businesses achieve excellence, words such as "greed," "profiteering" and "exploitation" are thrown about. We hear demands that those which do well should somehow make amends for their profits. That is one reason there is much more focus on the social responsibility of business than on that of Churches, trade unions or universities, for instance. The business of business is business... Those that do the best job for consumers make the most profits. This is not a radical idea. As[the current] Pope... put it: "When a firm makes a profit this means that productive factors have been properly employed and corresponding human needs have been duly satisfied." [Someone else] put it somewhat more provocatively in 1970 when he famously said that "the social responsibility of business is to increase its profits." ...Generally, this means maximising the return on the shareholders' investment... The... shareholders should dictate the charter under which businesses operate. Managers must carry out the shareholders' aims, whether they are for quick returns or protecting Planet Earth... Recently, the idea of wider social responsibility for business has been promoted under the banner of the "stakeholder" theory that has been revived by the British Labour Party. This is the notion that businesses have diverse constituencies such as employees, customers, suppliers and local communities, all of which, it is argued, should have a voice in the firm's governance. The theory poses an immediate problem. Of course firms must be concerned with the needs of such groups, if only to be successful. But it does not follow that these wider stakeholders should exercise power over corporate decisions without having to bear the cost of mistakes. In practice the shareholders would be exploited and alone pay the price of failure. Those still imbued with the romance of socialism may see that as an overdue turning of the tables, but in fact nobody would benefit. How would the clamour of conflicting demands among stakeholders ever be resolved? Workers, inevitably, would be inclined to vote against any proposal to lay off staff though it may improve the value of the firm. Consumers would apply pressure for more and cheaper products, disregarding the profitability of the firm. The local community would inevitably lobby against the closure of a plant. What of the other communities affected because of the reduced profitability of a company forced to maintain an inefficient operation? And we should consider also the unidentified constituents in another location where the company may have begun new operations if it had been able to close down an unprofitable plant. In other words, company decision-making would become a matter of politics rather than economics... Perhaps we have difficulty accepting it because we do not like to face our individual responsibilities. I believe that we do have a duty to care for such amenities as the environment and endangered species and to make personal efforts to alleviate poverty and other social ills. These responsibilities fall on individuals' shoulders, working independently or voluntarily with others. Indeed, the attempt to evade responsibility, to push fault further up the line to "Government" "society", "big business" or anyone other than ourselves, lies behind many of our problems. One day we may be honest and mature enough to admit where real responsibility lies.

...[Why should individual members of the public be responsible for trying to ensure that businesses aren't being irresponsible – be it in regards to the environment or corporate law? 'Corporate interests still don't understand that they do their own cause harm with the public at large by fixating on policies that reflect narrow self-interest and by insisting that their interests must be paramount and at the expense of all others'. By the way, 'seven out of 10 employers in NZ admit that their mission statements emphasising customer satisfaction are fiction, according to an international study by a lecturer in business at the Auckland University of Technology. The customer comes behind meeting budgets, getting good returns on investment and making profits.']

...*"Did you ever expect a corporation to have a conscience when it has no soul to be damned, and no body to be kicked?"* asked Baron Thurlow, Lord Chancellor of England, some 200 years ago. [The executive] director of the Business Roundtable, unwittingly confirmed this soulless concept when he addressed a business seminar recently. "Those who argue that companies have a social responsibility beyond enhancing shareholder value are mistaken," he is reported as saying. "Corporations have a responsibility to maximise profits for shareholders." ...he goes on: "Many are uneasy about the profit motive but economic theory says that business promotes the general interest more effectively by pursuing its own interest rather than by directly trying to 'do good.'" Exactly which "economic theory" supports this ethically neutral view goes unstated... This dichotomy between private virtue and corporate amorality raises urgent questions in the public mind[, such as: how come, when corporations are successful, generally only the shareholders and the percentage of the public who actually want, or can afford, their products or services benefit, but when they are unsuccessful every member of society can end up paying the *price of failure*; if a business has exploited its customers in order to *make the most profits*, how can that business be described as doing *the best job for consumers*; etc.? He seems to believe that businesses should be free to provide anything that they can sell profitably without first asking themselves whether the product is really something society needs (i.e., they don't need to consider whether *productive factors have been properly employed*); shareholders shouldn't be exploited, but their businesses should be able to exploit the environment (including fauna) and other people; individuals should be responsible for what happens in their society, but groups of individuals acting as a business should only be responsible for making a profit!] What other sector of society can claim to operate in a value-free zone? ...The grateful shareholder... might find comfort in not having to examine his conscience as to just how the company in which he has invested conducts its business and earns its profits. Such a blanket declaration of a social ethics-free zone might, however, trouble the wider community... Big business often finds its operations called into question on ethical grounds, and the corporate public relations spokesman's bland reassurances are likely to be greeted with some scepticism... Corporate tax avoidance and tax evasion are at present very much in the public mind... Ethical concerns[underlie] many apparently simple economic issues such as the payment of a minimum wage. The rationalising of business accompanied by downsizing of company labour, or the decision to pull up stakes and relocate production offshore, may throw individual careers, families and communities into turmoil... One could go further. Tobacco companies fight for the right to manufacture and market their wares, come hell or high cancer rates. Decriminalised brothels would no doubt be able to maximise their profits. At the wider edges, if maximisation of profits is the supreme objective, what moral condemnation can be brought against drug traffickers, overseas industries built on child labour, child prostitution, and kiddie porn on the internet? ...Business ethics... have little to do with ethics in the classic sense, which deal with absolutes, the greatest good for the greatest number, obedience to some universal moral law, the special care of the weak, the vulnerable and minority groups, concern for unborn generations, the husbanding of the earth's resources... When it comes to such matters, the established doctrines and practices of today's prevailing economic philosophy has little to offer.

...Big business is bad business for the mass of the people. International big business is the worst and most dangerous sector in big business... [Yet] multinationals already accounted for 60% of world trade and this grew each year. - 1997

...big business only understand supply and demand Pollute the sky and rape the land The whole thing's getting out of hand... and they just keep on taking everything that they can get... with no regret... are we one big family Look around what do you see Starving people on TV and soldiers where they should not be... everyone hopes it'll be alright... [but] every generation has not learned to listen yet... [so] I... can't see no end in sight...

Power grabbers come in all shapes and sizes – from pool hall hustlers to giants of industry. Sometimes they operate outside the law, sometimes within it. And sometimes they make the laws. Whatever their calling, they seek to dominate and control everyone within their sphere of influence. While exploiting the weaknesses of others, they deny any sign of weakness in themselves. Since they view life as a “dog-eat-dog” existence, they can justify their power-grabbing behavior. “That’s the way the world works,” they will say. “It’s survival that counts. And anything it takes in order to survive is okay.” ...Money is seen as the key to survival... Like all power-grabbers, the manipulator uses money to get power and power to get more money. To the manipulator, life is a contest. But it is a contest played with little fun or enjoyment. The manipulator is likely to appear competitive, yet only participates in contests where the possibility of losing has been all but eliminated. Importance is placed not on the process but on the victory... Frequently they are fast thinkers and fast talkers who use flattery, promises of easy wealth and a variety of manipulative promotional and sales techniques to induce people to part with their money... There is probably no area of endeavor that some manipulator has left untouched if it offers the opportunity to glean fast money and power... Not infrequently, their greed for power and money blinds them to reality and allows them to be hustled by someone a little more clever than they are... Even the sharpest manipulators are at times manipulated by someone else... Increasingly with age, they are surrounded by manipulators who are now using them as they have used others.

You might be a financial wizard with a sack of loot... in an expensive suit... but... it won't make you wise... Go on... run your corporation... feed your big fat face... make another deal... and kiss some arse You can buy up half the nation but you can't buy class You bastards think it's funny lying and thieving all your life Big corporation money got your future wrapped up tight... got it writ[ten] down in black and white but remember... just cause you got the power that don't mean you got the right... not you or anybody... - Eat The Rich

This kind of economy... cannot work for man; it can only work for itself. It produces more and more means of production – that is, machines, equipment, electricity, fuel, metals – in order to again use all this in the next cycle for still more production of nonconsumable goods – that is, things that people cannot eat.

Corporations in the U[S] and Europe that have lost markets to environmental regulation have made up for those losses with the continued sale abroad of products banned at home... Preindustrial countries have been protesting double standards that permit sales to them of products banned in the domicile of the manufacturer; yet they continue, in ignorance or desperation, to use such products... [Another] mode of pollution export practiced by some transnational corporations... is... the failure to observe abroad the occupational health and safety practices enforced by law at home and even the establishment of plant abroad expressly to make products illegal at home.

Companies... frequently move their factories to... nations whose environmental regulations are less stringent... British exports of DDT... a powerful carcinogen, rose by seven times soon after it was banned from British farms. Its use became illegal in the US in 1972, yet that country exports [20,000] tonnes a year... Further, some [20] million tons of toxic waste are sent by the rich to the poor each year – often it ends up in illegal dumps.

Poorer countries victims of toxic waste policies... The issue of N[Z] sending toxic waste abroad has arisen recently. Unfortunately, the focus of concern has missed the bigger picture, which is not the trade between industrialised countries but between rich and poor nations, and N[Z]'s role in it. N[Z]ers enjoy a fairly high standard of living. Waste is part of the by-product of that living standard, toxic waste in particular. Exactly how much is produced and where it is disposed of is speculative. There is uncertainty about what is... reported, to whom, and where it eventually goes. For example, N[Z] began shipping toxic waste for final disposal in France in the 1980s but until the early 1990s neither the Foreign Ministry nor the Environment Ministry were aware of that and the trade was not formalised until 1994. Awareness has greatly increased as the amount of waste being generated has increased... At the end of [last year], the Environment Ministry estimated the amount[of toxic waste] generated in N[Z]... at 8.5 million tonnes a year... Globally, perhaps 400 million tonnes of toxic waste are generated annually. At least 90[%] comes from the wealthy countries... Initially, after dumping into the ocean was outlawed, the wealthy countries started to send it to the poorest countries all over the planet. That practice was permitted by an international convention devised by the wealthy countries to control the trade in toxic waste. Soon it began to arrive in multiple guises in the most remote countries in Africa. It then began to flow into South America and later into parts of the disintegrating Soviet Union. It goes to such places because their costs of disposal are a fraction of the cost in industrialised countries, and the wealthy countries have discerning and vocal populations who do not want waste in their back yards. Sometimes the toxic waste arrives in poor countries illegally. Other times the importation is agreed to by their Governments. This is the crux of the problem of the trade in waste: there is a disparity in bargaining power between the two sides. Countries agree to accept toxic wastes, not because they like it but because it offers an easy source of foreign currency. While the practice may be an exemplar in economic theory, ethical issues arise in a transaction where people's strongest saleable asset is their poverty and their willingness to tolerate the hazardous waste of others. In a world of increasing poverty the trade would never cease unless all poor nations stood together against it. Eventually they, and some of the more ethical wealthy countries, did just that. Rather than trying to regulate the trade in toxic waste, as the international community had intended, they banned it. The ban[was] agreed to by the majority of countries in 1994. It does not cover the trade between wealthy countries... because the obvious focus of concern was the dumping of waste on the poor, who were unable to deal with it... Unfortunately, the trade in toxic waste between rich and poor countries... did not end with the ban. By way of compromise, the international community agreed that trade was to be allowed if the produce at issue was for “recycling” and the material was not classified as “hazardous.” Not surprisingly, a huge debate (and a vast amount of reclassification) developed over what was recyclable or toxic. Keeping open the “recycling” loophole has certainly been to N[Z]'s benefit. Not only have we shipped waste to a number of developing countries (the Philippines, Indonesia, China, Korea, India and Pakistan) for “recycling,” we have also imported a bit ourselves. N[Z] has also argued against a blanket ban on the trade of toxic waste between rich and poor countries. Such an approach is now seen as the antithesis of free trade.

There are two additional problems... First, multinational advertising is selling the poor [in preindustrial (or developing) countries] food... produced and distributed by the multinational corporations... [that] they cannot generally afford. Secondly, much of this food is of little nutritional value. The result... in poor villages... is[that] less... of the virtually nonexistent family food budget... is... available for nourishing food and thus a malnourished population... According to one executive of a British-based multinational corporation, “It is a sad fact that most nutritional food products marketed by commercial firms are aimed at the segment of society least in need of them.” The poor spend their meagre resources in response to the high-powered advertising campaigns of the soft-drink corporations more than on any single item. Coke, its co-product Fanta, and Pepsi are the big three. But soft drinks are not the only villain. ITT packages its Hostess Twinkies singly; Nabisco does so with individual Ritz crackers; and Del Monte has its single slices of pineapple – all to reach into the pocket-books of an increasingly malnourished population... [Consider] two devastating

illustrations of this power of the multinational corporations. The first is a letter from a Mexican priest... written in June 1974: ["It seems that soft drinks are a very important factor in the development of villages. I have heard some people say they can't live one day without drinking a soft drink. Other people, in order to display social status, must have soft drinks with every meal, especially if there are guests... Near the larger towns where salaries are a little higher, soft drinks are cheaper. But in the very remote villages where people earn much less, and where soft drinks have to be transported in by animals, soft drinks cost in many places up to twice as much. The typical family in Metlatonoc can't earn more than 1,200 to 2,000 pesos a year. But even the little they receive each year they spend drinking soft drinks. In the richest village in this area, Olinala, where the majority of people are artisans and earn from 25 to 70 pesos a day (\$2.00 to \$5.60), about 4,000 bottles of soft drinks are consumed each day. Olinala has 6,000 inhabitants. The great majority of people are convinced that soft drinks must be consumed every day. This is mainly due to extensive advertising, especially on the radio which is so widespread in the mountains... In the meantime, in these same villages, natural products such as fruit are consumed less – in some families just once a week. Other families sell their own natural products in order to buy soft drinks..."] The second statement offers a sharp contrast. In the words of [the] Chairman of the Board of International Flavors and Fragrances (IFF) – ["How often we see in developing countries that the poorer the economic outlook, the more important the luxury of a flavoured soft drink or smoke... To the dismay of many would-be benefactors, the poorer the malnourished are, the more likely they are to spend a disproportionate amount of whatever they have on some luxury rather than on what they need... Observe, learn, study (how to sell in rapidly changing rural societies). We try to do it at IFF. It seems to pay off for us. Perhaps it will for you too."] - Bread and Justice

Recent reports suggest Mexico's soft drink situation has worsened since 1974 (although *worsened* is RELATIVE – soft drink companies probably say the situation has improved!). Another example, theoretically worse, is the promotion of baby formula to *Third World* mothers – who are often uneducated – in a manner that has caused many of them to believe this milk, which is designed primarily to substitute for human breast milk when the mother is dry (or so other people – e.g., au pairs – can feed the child if the mother isn't around), is actually better for babies than their own breast milk. Breast milk costs nothing to obtain but to artificially feed a baby 'in 1979 worked out to be 3% of the parents' income in Britain, 16% in Burma and 63% in Egypt.' Furthermore, 'baby formula requires sterilised water and utensils, and temperature control,' but few people in the Third World have proper facilities to make and heat the formula – or clean (and easily accessed) water supplies. If the mothers have to use a fire to cook or heat anything, they have to go out and collect the wood – but often their local area has 'already been denuded of vegetation for use as firewood,' which means they then have the additional expense of buying more firewood than would otherwise be necessary. This trade has resulted in 'malnutrition, chronic diarrhoea and sometimes premature death' in the babies.

The dramatic success of the consumer boycott of companies selling infant formulas in Third World countries led to a strict set of recommendations at the joint UNICEF/World Health Organisation meeting in Geneva in 1979, including a provision to ban advertising of such infant formulas and curb their sales and promotion.

Infant food manufacturers, including Nestle... systematically violate international codes by pushing their products in developing countries without saying breast milk is best, a UN-sponsored report charges. The report, released yesterday, was based on research in Poland, Thailand, South Africa and Bangladesh. In each country, health clinics had received information either promoting bottle-feeding and/or discouraging breast-feeding, it said. This was despite a 1981 W[HO] code seeking to ensure that women knew breast-feeding is best and that infant formula promotions acknowledge this... However, researchers found clinics in all the countries involved displaying promotional material from manufacturers, including calendars, leaflets and posters. Health workers accepted gifts from manufacturers and passed on samples to mothers... The WHO reported in 1993 that 1.5 million babies' lives could be saved annually through effective breast-feeding. Yesterday's report... said the risks of bottle-feeding could be particularly great in poor countries, citing over-dilution because of the cost, literacy needed to follow the label instructions, and hygiene... The report was commissioned by a group called the International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes. - 1997

Breast-feeding "zealots" are denying N[Z] women the right to choose how to nourish their babies, says the author of... *Bottle Babies: A New Zealand Guide to Guilt-Free Bottle Feeding*... [S]he... claims a... WHO... code on the marketing of infant formula is being used to force women to breastfeed. A N[Z] version of the code effectively bans the advertising of infant formula and breaches women's rights... to make decisions... [The author attacks NZ] policies and a "religious" fervour among health professionals who steadfastly push the message that breast is best... [The former NZ] *Herald* journalist, said her book was inspired after she was unable to adequately breastfeed her new son. When she decided to switch to bottle-feeding she found a dearth of information and a campaign to keep women in the dark... The result was a sense of failure by those who could not breastfeed and years of needless suffering... She said... the WHO code was designed to protect women in the Third World by promoting breastfeeding after one company said its formula was better than breast milk... [However, the] Ministry of Health's child health adviser... said there was no ban on the marketing of infant formula. Rather, infant formula companies had adopted a self-imposed advertising ban. He said the ministry was pro-breastfeeding, because that was the best nutrition for a baby, but it was not anti-formula. [Incidentally, 'the UN's WHO plays an important role by, for instance, declaring that the Nestle corporation cannot continue in false advertising for selling formula to mothers in the Third World. The UN Development Fund and similar agencies can also do a great deal for the Third World by showing the right way in which foreign aid should be given.'

...NZ] has been ranked in the top four when it comes to helping out the world's poor in a new international index which ranks the efforts of 21 rich nations. Developed by *Foreign Policy* magazine and Washington's Centre for Global Development the index grades countries on more than their level of foreign aid... The index also considers whether the nations' trade, migration, investment, peacekeeping, and environmental policies help or hurt poor nations... The Netherlands finished first, followed by Denmark and Portugal. At the other end, A[US] finished ahead of only the U[S] and Japan, the two largest aid donors... Of the US, the researchers said: "Like Japan, an economic titan with little measured commitment to development. Tops on trade, but last on aid and environment, and surprisingly low on migration[– giving it a score of 2.6." Japan scored 2.4.] The top-ranked countries should not be congratulating themselves... "Even the Netherlands... gets only 5.6 on the 10-point scale." N[Z]'s score was 5.1]...

Faith in humans key to cash aid... It sounds simple when... [the] vice-president of... the largest transatlantic philanthropic consultancy... describes it: "You have to believe that people are ultimately generous. If you believe, then you believe people have the desire and willingness to [give others] a better society and culture in which to live." He's talking about convincing individuals to part with their hard-earned cash to support... the... development... of... beggar... countr[ies]. He... says... that... in the U[S]... the growth in philanthropy... [– 'concern for the welfare of mankind, especially as shown by acts of benevolence' –] is not from corporates but individuals... "If you look at American philanthropy, 95[%] is from individuals and 5[%] is from companies. Ultimately it is down to individuals. If they have more than they need, then they will do things for the benefit of [less developed] communities."

Corporate spending on philanthropy is meager. As a percentage of worldwide pretax income, manufacturing corporations spent only 0.9% on philanthropy in 1990.

Developing countries with healthy economic prospects are benefiting from a boom in foreign investment – but from corporations seeking market opportunities rather than governments donating aid. According to the O.E.C.D., *private investment in the developing world* reached \$159 billion in 1995, double the 1992 figure. Official aid from 21 O.E.C.D. members, however, fell to \$60 billion, a drop of 9% since 1994.

Aid for development in 1995 fell for the fourth year in a row, with 16 of the 21 major donor countries cutting back.

Recently, in Chad, hundreds of thousands of people were threatened by the combined effects of drought, malnutrition, disease, and famine. Although famine brought on by drought occurs periodically in this region, the situation has become even worse because of the inability of other countries to help out this time. The worldwide economic crisis has forced many formerly generous countries to cut back foreign aid programs and to funnel the money to the needy within their own boundaries. While this may only be a temporary setback, it may also be a glimpse of the future: We may never again be able to afford easily large-scale international aid programs.

Sweeping changes to A[US]'s programme of aid to the Pacific, recommended in a review presented yesterday to [the] Foreign Minister... would end guaranteed aid to P[NG] within three years, see some countries dumped and others progressively weaned off assistance. Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa are high on the list of island states which could see A[US]n aid vanish in response to rising economic indicators. Fiji receives almost a third of its aid funding from Canberra. While recognising the "great national importance" of the Pacific to A[US], the review recommends tightening the rules for its \$[A]430 million-a-year regional aid programme... [S]o island Governments realise that A[US]n largesse cannot be taken for granted, and that Canberra wants results for its money... the review[recommended] that... aid to the Pacific[be] tied to the development of good economic and social policies... [Briefing papers for NZ's] Ministry of Foreign Affairs... also express concern about... the misuse of aid... N[Z] contributes about \$80 million in direct aid to the South Pacific. [□ Last year 'NZ gave \$227.8 million (0.26% of its GDP) to help developing countries'.

...NZ] is providing more than \$1 million in emergency funds to help refugees in Africa's Great Lakes region. The U[N] has asked for help for up to two million returning refugees in Rwanda... Zaire, Burundi and Tanzania.

...The U[S] is donating another \$18.45 million in aid in response to an appeal for the Great Lakes area of East Africa. - 1997

From 1946 to 1990, the U[S] extended \$374.076 billion in foreign grants and credits. Of this total, \$269.375 b... were extended to developing countries under assistance programmes and \$14.846 b... represented famine and emergency relief. In 1990, the U[S] forgave \$7.2 b... in foreign debt owed by severely underdeveloped countries. Political considerations have played a major role in determining the size of U.S. assistance.

The interaction of states on the world stage, each pursuing different aims of foreign policy, creates what is known as the International Political System. Each state tries to achieve what its leaders feel is essential for survival – keeping its territory intact, national wealth, access to markets and protection from potential enemies. The state's leader pursues these aims using a mixture of diplomacy (persuading other states to accept its needs), economic power and force. Because some states are more powerful than others, either through size, economic strength or geographical position, the system is inherently unequal and constantly fraught with danger... In an effort to reflect the reality of the international system, it has become normal to divide states into different categories, based upon their strength and influence. The most common such division, introduced in the 1950s, is the idea of the First, Second and Third Worlds, largely based on political considerations... Western Europe, North America, Australasia and Japan... [form] the First World... [T]he Second World[is] essentially the Soviet Bloc and China... This is the basis for the main ideological split in the world – that between "West" (First World) and "East" (Second World). This leaves the majority of countries, situated in Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia, to be lumped together into the Third World, characterised by its general lack of power and influence. This stems from the fact that the countries involved are, in most cases, struggling to develop the political and economic structures so essential to stability. For this reason, they are often called "developing states" and some commentators even distinguish a group within them, known as the Fourth World, which means much weaker than the rest... All this is unsatisfactory on a number of counts. First, not all countries fit neatly into the categories laid down... Second, many states, particularly in the Third World, regard the use of such terms as insulting, implying as they do that First World states have somehow achieved a superior form of government which other states have to struggle to match. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the division is not very accurate, ignoring the power and influence of some Third World states (notably those with access to oil, primarily in the Middle East) and presuming that the East-West divide is the only important element in international politics... This latter point has led, in more recent years, to an acceptance that the world can be divided far more realistically into "North" and "South"... [(o)bviously, countries such as South Africa, A[US and NZ] do not fit the pattern... [of the South]. Between them, the South's genuine] member states may encompass a large enough part of the world to form a potentially powerful voice, but they are inhabited by people with little economic strength. Canada, for example... has more industrial power than the whole of Black Africa, [which has] a population ten times as large... Today seven out of 10 African countries... are actually "underdeveloping", a source of grave social and political instability which has given rise to persistent military coups, riots and even insurrections as the people demand services which their governments cannot afford to provide... [T]he threat of a "resource war" is a much discussed possibility... [However, although] Northern countries... export arms to the South... the military balance has not shifted in the latter's favour... The rich nations spend every year on development aid less than 0.5[%] of worldwide military spending... Furthermore, the economic assistance which the South has received from the North, far from solving its problems, has in some cases merely contributed to them... Unfortunately, aid often carries heavy interest payments, especially when loans are provided by the... IMF... or the world's leading (Western) banks. As a result, the developing countries have become increasingly indebted. By the mid-1980s, they owed nearly \$300 billion in back payments. The international economic order is becoming increasingly unstable. Many countries are finding it impossible to live within strained means, let alone develop their economies. In some cases, countries need to borrow simply to repay the interest on their loans. At the end of the 1970s the most indebted country in the world, Mauritania, owed more than 115[%] of its annual income. The Sudan owed 80[%]; Tanzania and Indonesia more than 60[%]... Given such problems, there is the possibility that the South might one day simply refuse to repay what it owes. This would have catastrophic consequences if carried out since it would destroy confidence in the Western banking system...

WHILE mega-rich Saudi princes might have no trouble handing over billions in cash to fund purchases, banks in their cash-strapped near-neighbours Libya and Niger have been forced to adopt more novel funding mechanisms. Libya is making Niger a \$27 million loan, which is to be repaid in part with camels rather than cash... They'll hand over 1500 annually for the next 10 years.

...Recently I returned from Senegal after being sent there to debrief World Vision workers who were forced to flee Sierra Leone after a military coup. It was a nasty business and completely unexpected. Marauding soldiers, taking advantage of the confusion, roamed the streets of Freetown smashing and looting. The wife of one of our staff had a gun thrust through her kitchen window and was threatened with being shot unless she opened the door... When they entered, they insisted that she hand over cash and jewellery. In a final act of terror, one of them put a gun to the head of her eldest child and demanded the children's shoes. It was my job to counsel our staff and their families and help them to deal with their traumatic experiences... Their position is akin to the social worker who is beaten up by an angry client: "Why me? I was here to help."

Nevertheless, attacks on aid workers around the world are becoming increasingly common. No longer can they rely on working under a non-governmental organisation (NGO) banner such as a red cross to offer them any protection, and it would pay for all countries and individuals interested in humanitarian work to consider why this is so. The first thing to note is that increasingly first-world governments channel aid money through NGOs. This circumvents money being siphoned off by corrupt administrations. But if a third-world government is dependent on foreign money to maintain stability, then NGOs are going to be a prime target of attack by any dissident element which wishes to destabilise that government. The situation is made worse because there is no better way to attract attention to your country's plight than through the well-being of a first-world citizen. In my experience few things get the media buzzing more in the U[S] than the kidnapping of an American citizen in a third-world environment... The West has much to contribute to the Third World in terms of expertise and experience, but we should... give aid for the right reasons. I read a report in the *Los Angeles Times* recently which showed how the U[S] is assisting the development of poor villages in Mexico. Nice, you might think. But it transpired that the real motive of this "aid" was to provide a slightly trained workforce for American-owned companies (car companies especially) in order to enable them to keep labour costs down and continue to compete with foreign vehicle importers. Third-world citizens are not stupid. They can work out just as easily as anybody else who the real beneficiaries of this kind of "aid" are and inevitably will become contemptuous of it... The Cold War maintained a kind of neutrality in third-world environments but now the situation is much more volatile. As a consequence terrorism and violence is likely to continue to increase in the foreseeable future. - 1997

As the politicians and lawyers never tire of telling [everyone], there is just so much to go around, and you have to be aggressive in getting a piece of it. What is not said, but of course is always tacitly understood, is that you must get there ahead of others, and if this means that some other equally "worthy cause" gets short shrift, well that's the nature of the game.

Developed countries are consuming energy and raw materials at five times their rate of population growth... [T]he addition of 75 million Americans (current population increase projections for the year 2000) in terms of consumption of ever-scarcer, non-renewable resources, is equal to that of 10 billion Nigerians or 22 billion Indonesians.

The people of the U[S] consume... a third and more of the world output of energy... From all the different primary sources – coal, petroleum, natural gas, falling water and nuclear fission – expressed in the common denominator of the energy evolved from the burning of a ton of coal, they consume the energy-equivalent of 2.3 billion tons of coal each year. That is nearly 14 tons of coal per capita.

The [U]S... comprises 5[%] of the world's population and uses approximately 30[%] of its energy[('70,569 trillion btu. in 1975; 80,246 in 1988')]. Our enormously powerful and expensive military forces exist, as[the] Secretary of Defence... reminded Congress in his annual report for fiscal year 1984, not only to protect us but 'to protect access to foreign markets and overseas resources.' Once our multinational corporations expropriate those resources, usually on terms that cause great hardship over time in the Third World, they – in co-operation with the big labour unions, who seldom look beyond the immediate issues of wages and growth – produce for us planned obsolescence; toxic products; polluted air, soil, and water; and manipulate advertising campaigns to convince us the quality of American life has everything to do with having and little to do with being.

The wealthy nations naturally use their economic and political power to protect and enhance their privileged position... Trade policies consistently discriminate against products imported from poor countries, especially potentially competitive processed goods. Unprocessed commodities typically enter duty free, whereas the same products are subject to tariffs if they have already been processed. This practice keeps the poor countries from taking advantage of their lower labor costs, one of the few resources the poorest of the nations possess; it discourages industrial growth and reinforces the dependence upon industrial nations of countries that supply raw materials. As a result of all these factors, the poor countries' share of total world trade is small and declining. Because they maintain a much greater volume of total trade, rich countries even export more primary resources than the poor countries. The resource-supplying nations are slowly learning to band together for mutual assistance and to use such devices as cartel-controlled pricing. But such a technique only works for nations that control strategic resources in sufficient quantity that they provide an effective bargaining position.

In 1973, the sellers of... oil found it in their power to set its price... Frightened by the prospect of inflation upon repercussion of the oil-price increase elsewhere in their systems... the industrial market economies... put deflationary brakes on their economic growth. Especially for conservative governments in the U[K] and the Federal Republic of Germany, such policies comported with ideology; they tightened the money supply, reduced social expenditure, and gave freer rein to private enterprise. The... U.S. economy was becalmed with... the rest of the industrial world in the doldrums of no growth. To the preindustrial nations, the forces thus exerted on the world economy brought deepening distress. Decline in their exports and in terms of trade for what they did export put one nation after another into current-account deficit. Growth of the "newly industrializing" economies was sustained for a while by the recycling of the petrodollars in loans, especially by the U.S. banks. Interest payments on debt swollen by these easy-money loans at rates inflated by the U.S. Treasury soon increased to punishing percentages... In 1983, the flow of funds between the industrial and preindustrial worlds went into reverse; by 1990, the preindustrial countries had, in effect, extended \$200 billion in aid to the recovery of the industrial countries. The weak and tentative recovery of the industrial market economies in the late 1980s – by which time inflation had discounted the price of oil in current dollars back to its pre-OPEC level – brought no corresponding increase in their imports from the preindustrial world. Especially to the distress of sub-Saharan Africa, the rich nations had learned to live without certain agricultural raw materials and were recycling copper and other metals above ground more efficiently. Food exports from some African countries were displaced by competitive cultivation of their products in Southeast Asia and the Caribbean under sponsorship of the transnational marketers of luxury foods... The most serious untoward human consequence of the recession relate, of course, to the halting of economic growth and the consequent decline in GNP per capita in so many... preindustrial countries. Many African countries had been experiencing decline in available calories per capita in the 1970s... The number of malnourished people in Africa is estimated to have increased from 60 million in 1970 to 100 million in 1985. Statistical reporting from these countries tends to be belated and uncertain[but] women and children suffer first and worst in reversal of national fortunes... The economic downturn in the Latin American countries worked its principal harm on the poorest people there. According to... UNICEF... 30,000 more infants died in Brazil in 1984 than in 1982, indicating a pronounced increase in the infant-mortality rate... As early as 1985[the] then Secretary of the Treasury of the U[S], conceded for the industrial creditors that the preindustrial countries could not service, much less ever pay, their then \$800 billion debt without economic growth... The adjustment measures urged and effected... [by] the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as well as other bilateral lenders... reflect not only the ideology of the creditors but the priorities of the debtor governments. In most countries, balancing of the national budget seriously reduced expenditures and programs that had channelled economic growth into human development. Budget cuts in the low-income countries, most of them in Africa, reduced expenditures on health by 50[%] between 1972 and 1988; the middle-income countries cut their health expenditures by 30[%]. The low-income countries made equal cuts in

their education budgets, from 20.5 to 9[%] of their governmental expenditures, during the same period. Under counsel from their creditors and under the burden of their debts, the newly industrializing countries in Latin America cut their health and education budgets as well: Argentina, by 65[%]; Brazil, by 42[%]; Mexico, by 43[%]... Everywhere, the budget cutting uncovered a feature of the social order emerging in the preindustrial countries... the percentage of total government expenditure reserved for “public administration” invariably increased. The government payroll identifies the elite of these new societies and furnishes the living and the social security of the higher-income, more highly-educated people. Overloading of that payroll often leaves inadequate funds for office equipment and supplies. Thus, in Kenya, budget cutting increased the percentage of the public administration budget allocated to salaries from 60... to 90[%].

...in the current system of so-called international division of labour the industry and agriculture of Third World countries are controlled by foreign aid and by credits from international banks so that their production is primarily oriented towards the needs of the industrial countries. They are forced to sell their goods cheaply and to buy expensive industrial products in return, which leads to massive indebtedness. To pay their debts, Third World countries have to increase their exports, which is possible only by paying starvation wages. At the same time, their purchasing power keeps decreasing. Thus massive poverty becomes the foundation of an economy totally oriented towards foreign countries.

The foreign debt burdens of many of the world’s poorest countries remain a serious impediment to their development. The 1996 Trade and Development Report, just released by the Geneva-based U[N] Conference on Trade and Development... describes 40 countries – 34 of them in Africa – as “heavily indebted.” The money some countries owe to multilateral aid agencies, chiefly the I[MF] and the World Bank, accounts for more than half their total debt and is a “rising proportion of total indebtedness,” according to the report. Africa, the world’s poorest continent, faces the most serious difficulties. Its debt service payments – interest and capital repayments – shot up from \$NZ31 billion in 1994 to \$47 billion last year. Although a number of debt relief schemes have been tried over the past 10 years, most of the countries affected have seen little benefit. In 1994, for example, lending countries approved the “Naples terms,” which permit up to two-thirds reduction in debt service payments. But because of strict criteria for eligibility, only a handful of countries have benefited... “It’s critical for the human welfare of millions that progress is made on debt relief...”

Popular disillusion from... experience with economic assistance – and official disappointment, just as often, in what it bought politically – has put “foreign aid” at the bottom of the priority list in the politics of the U[S] and most other industrial countries. Starting as a trickle and then surpassing government outlays, investment by transnational corporations and lending banks have established the closest economic links between the industrial and traditional worlds. The flow of private funds has been even more narrowly directed, however, than the flow of official funds... The transnational corporations... constitute an entirely new kind of world-besiding sovereignty. Only four preindustrial economies had a [GNP]... in 1985 larger than the turnover of the biggest transnational that year... One-third of the 159 members of the U[N] in 1989 were smaller, by that comparison, than the smallest of the 350 largest transnationals... Some 15 transnational corporations control more than half the food trade. Fewer companies control higher percentages of the shipment of each of the more lucrative commodities. To their “home” countries or to the world market... the preindustrial countries have found their access and connection being made by an ever smaller number of ever larger transnational corporations. These corporations are the winners in the world market contest... Whatever their country of domicile, the transnational corporations tend to do an increasing percentage of their business outside that country. Some make more of their sales, more even of their product, and most of their profit in other countries... As increasingly stateless entities, they burke the sovereignty of nation-states, large ones as well as small... The corporations are in those countries, it goes without saying, for their own purposes, not to promote the economic development of their hosts.

Recall that US *multinational corporations cause great hardship over time in the Third World*. Most multinationals would dispute that statement. After all, many have moved production to the Third World, thus providing stable employment for people who mightn’t have it otherwise, which also causes money to be circulated though the local communities. However, while this means that in most instances products will be manufactured at the source of the raw materials (which is desirable), it also means that people in one part of the world lose their jobs to people in another. Why would a corporation decide that it is sensible to make one lot of workers (who may live near the corporation’s head office) redundant, close down a factory, build a new one in another country, then employ – and train – a different lot of workers to staff it? Because the people losing their jobs are high paid; those gaining jobs are low paid. If a corporation has to pay \$10 per hour to a worker in one nation but only \$0.30 per hour in another – but can still sell the product for the \$10 per hour price in the original nation – it’s easy to see what the motivation behind such apparently mindless endeavours is. A corporation’s primary reason for investing in the Third World is to maximise profits by exploiting the low wages that are maintained by national debt (and, in part, by foreign aid)!

MICKEY MOUSE, who has delighted youngsters for decades, is facing tough questions from children over alleged abuses of workers who make Disney clothes and toys. Although Walt Disney Co said the charges were either unsubstantiated or dated, a labour rights group has started a week-long campaign to highlight Disney business in countries with questionable human rights records. The New York-based National Labour Committee said it planned pickets, marches, leaflet distribution and protests at Disney stores in several major U[S] and Canadian cities. The action was scheduled for a time of year when the company’s popular products were in demand... [The] NLC executive director... alleged that wages as low as US\$30c an hour were paid to workers at a factory in Haiti making two-piece *101 Dalmatians* garments. Disney said that the median wage for workers who make Disney-licensed goods was “well above the Haitian minimum wage”.

...Women making Nike shoes in Indonesia work up to 80 hours a week for as little as 40c (NZ) an hour, the aid agency Community Aid Abroad said in Sydney yesterday... Workers were often forced to work overtime... the women lose fingers in unsafe machinery and are subjected to abuse by supervisors, the agency said in a report on the sport shoe manufacturing industry. It said Nike did not actually make shoes but designed and marketed them, contracting the manufacturing out to suppliers. - 1996

Vietnamese women as young as 15 toil for US\$20c... an hour to make a million Nike shoes a month, suffering corporal punishment and sexual harassment, according to a report. “Supervisors humiliate women, force them to kneel, to stand in the hot sun, treating them like recruits in boot camp,” [a] labour activist... of the U[S]-based Vietnam Labour Watch said in New York. [His] report on working conditions was made after a 16-day inspection of four Vietnamese plants that make products for the athletic shoe giant... [It] said that about 35,000 workers at the plants – more than 90[%] young women – put in 12-hour days in over-heated and noisy environments to make shoes with labour costs of under \$US2 that retail for up to \$US149. In one plant, he found workers who during an eight-hour period were allowed to go to the bathroom once and to take only two drinks of water. Their average wages are \$US1.60 for eight hours of work – and it costs more than \$US2 to buy three meals a day... He said at one Nike subcontractor... a floor manager forced 56 women to run around the plant in the hot sun as punishment for wearing non-regulation shoes. Twelve fainted and were taken to hospital. That manager has been suspended, Nike... said... About 3[%] of Nike’s output is produced in Vietnam, a Nike spokesman said. [Incidentally, Nike (which uses the phrase: ‘I’ve failed over and over in my life’ in an advertisement; and is also known for the statement: ‘At Nike our philosophy is you can’t be afraid to make mistakes or you won’t take chances – our one and only rule is there’s no such thing as a

dumb idea') 'is recalling 350,000 pairs of its Air Force Up range, because a design flaw has injured about 35 people who wore the studded basketball shoes. Nike says the shoe, which went on sale five months ago, has a small rivet attached to the outside of the shoe that can be bent to form a sharp edge.'

...Sports marketing giant Nike Inc[has] posted a 12[%] increase in quarterly profits... [after its r]evenues rose 21[%] to a record \$2.77 billion... Nike said it earned \$US253 million... or 85USc a share, in the quarter...

Next time you light a stick of incense spare a thought for... the millions of... Indian women who get paid 6c for every thousand sticks they roll. Surprisingly this is a "good" rate, made possible only with the help of India's biggest trade union, Sewa, the Self-employed Women's Association[, which was]... started... by an Indian woman... who wanted laws to protect the millions of women working on their own. Statistics indicated that of the total workforce at the time 90[%] were in unorganised labour. Of those, 94[%] were women... Before joining the Ahmedabad-based union [incense rollers were] paid even less... roughly half[the] current rate... Each of the women deftly rolls a tiny amount of... black paste... a mixture of charcoal, clay, perfume or oil on to each bamboo stick. The mixture can be bad for their health when it gets into their lungs... alongside the ugly textile mills with their huge brick smokestacks belching thick plumes... the underbelly of Ahmedabad[, which is home to] hundreds of Sewa's 162,000 members. In a neighbouring house [another woman] and her two daughters-in-law are busy hand-rolling the small cigarettes known as bidis. For every 1000 she will be paid just over \$1. With time for domestic duties taken into account, it will take her about a day and a morning to earn this sum. "Those who are fast in rolling bidis, they can make 1000. I am old so I can't make 1000 a day... I do around about 800 or 900." She is 40 years old and has been rolling cigarettes since she was a small child... [W]omen must buy the tobacco and tobacco leaves from the trader to whom they are contracted. Each leaf has to be wet to prevent it from breaking during rolling. The leaves have to be cut to size and the stems shaved with a razor. After rolling, each cigarette is tied with fine cotton... [By the way, Triumph -] the world's biggest underwear company - ...makes most of its products in China due to cheaper labour costs...

Singer Co plans to close factories and fire about 6000 workers, or 28[%] of its staff, in a bid to cut costs and boost the sewing-machine maker's earnings... The company will be moving production to facilities in northern Brazil, Russia, and... China... The moves will save the company money. Workers in the new locations will make \$US3000 to \$US4500... a year, compared with as much as \$US65,000 in some existing locations... Singer estimates the restructuring will reduce its costs by \$104 million annually... Singer is the largest maker of commercial and industrial sewing machines with about 43[%] of the consumer market and about 20[%] of the industrial market.

...A leading labour rights activist has accused [a group of companies] of subcontracting in a Nicaraguan "sweatshop" despite efforts to end exploitation of Central American, Caribbean and Asian workers... [An] investigation found sewing workers making 15c an hour and children as young as 15 in one apparel plant. [A spokesperson for one of the companies] said: "We take allegations regarding the manufacturing of our merchandise very seriously and we are investigating this..." ...The company noted, however, that the minimum wage in Nicaragua was 15c an hour and 14 the legal working age... [In related news, w]ith its share of the U[S] men's jeans market dropping from 48[%] in 1990 to an estimated 26[%] because]... Wrangler and Lee brands... have taken about \$US1 billion... each in annual sales away from... [it.] Levi Strauss and Co is cutting back. It has announced it will close 11 plants in four states, putting nearly 6400 out of work - 34[%] of its manufacturing workforce in the U[S] and Canada. Last February, Levi announced 1000 job cuts in the U[S]. Levi says the layoffs are limited to the U[S], since the company is growing abroad. The company, which says it tries to make most of its product near where it is sold, employs 13,500 workers outside North America... Despite its problems, Levi says it had a record \$US7.1 billion in worldwide sales last year. That included \$US4.3 billion in sales in the U[S]...

SLICK AND SEXY, GUESS?, INC.'S LONG-cultivated image began turning seedy last year. First, five contractors for the \$500 million clothing empire were cited by Californian inspectors for illegal home-sewing operations. Then a class-action suit accused Guess and 16 subcontractors of paying their mostly immigrant workers less than minimum wage... Last week... the jeans giant... revealed that in the past year - just as it was fending off an organizing campaign by UNITE, the nation's largest garment-workers' union - the company was quietly shifting about 40% of its manufacturing to Mexico and South America. Only three years ago, Guess was making 97% of its garments in the U.S... The shift may already be showing results: Guess's profits improved slightly for the first nine months of 1996, with \$40.5 million in earnings on \$411.9 million in sales. In Mexico the company's stitchers earn \$20 to \$40 a week, compared with about \$5 an hour for their Los Angeles counterparts, who are overwhelmingly Latino immigrants. The difference shaves up to \$2 off the cost of each pair of jeans and explains, in part, why U.S. apparel jobs have dropped 43% since 1973. [In local news, 'an Auckland factory busted for paying its mainly Chinese immigrant machinists less than the minimum wage has started paying legal rates. The factory owner, who was notified of the rate by the Clothing Union, also promised to give the workers backpay.']

...After rattling global financial markets two years ago when it nearly defaulted on \$30 billion in foreign debt, Mexico tried to spotlight its return to creditworthiness last week by announcing prepayment of the remaining \$3.5 billion it owed the U.S. from a \$12.5 billion emergency-aid program negotiated in February 1995... Mexico's financial crisis erupted the year the North American Free Trade Agreement went into effect... But the Mexican economy rebounded last year as exports surged. Mexico will also save about \$500 million in interest charges by replacing its higher-cost U.S. debt with cheaper currencies like the Japanese yen. - 1997

To make their low-priced labor force more accessible to employers from overseas, preindustrial countries have established "export processing zones." Manufacturers ship into these zones, tariff-free, their raw materials, intermediate products, and component parts for the handwork that takes them to the next or final stage of production... In 1980, there were more than 50 of these zones in preindustrial countries... In the Mexican zones... U.S. corporations have come to employ 500,000 Mexican workers over the past decade. They pay them less than \$1.00 per hour... The nearly 2000 factories owned by U.S. companies along the northern border of Mexico are called *maquilas*, after the mill to which a farmer takes his corn for grinding. In this transaction, there is no technology transfer. The *maquiladora* arrangement is a measure of the poverty of Mexico and its people. It is equally a measure of breakdown of social arrangements and the decline of factory jobs in the U[S]... The nations of the poor shed most of the blood drawn by the Cold War... With the end of the Cold War... the time has come to address the important questions: Environment and Development... [The] industrial revolution that began 400 years ago is very much a current event. Abruptly, it has divided the planet into two worlds: a new world of rich industrial nations and the traditional world of the poor. Since 1950, the people of the rich nations have taxed the planetary ecosystem with a fourfold multiplication of their consumption of goods per capita. Industrial revolution long ago increased production ahead of the increase of population. Now, assured of the survival of their first children, these fortunate people - nearly one-quarter of the world population - are bringing their population growth to zero, with low death rates and low birth rates. In contrast, for the people of the 130-odd poor nations, the industrial revolution has just begun. Already it has brought a lengthening of life expectancy; however... they maintain high birth rates. The consequent population explosion in these regions accounts for most of the doubling of the world population since 1950... If [humanity's] population is to be stabilized, the industrial revolution of the poor countries must be accelerated... [because] development has proved to be the surest mode of population control... As such, it is the ultimate environmental protection measure. To that end... "common humanity must heal in time the estrangement in which for so long some people have lived rich and most have died poor." ...Among the necessities taken for granted by people fortunate enough to have their industrial revolutions behind them are potable water, sanitary disposal of their excrement, and a dwelling secure against the weather. The same lucky people know still other necessities: electric light to lengthen the day, retinues of large and small household appliances, personal mobility and the public services of communication and transportation, safety, medical care, and education. All of this comes from the value that these people add by technology to their resources, the same resources that are available in one combination or

another in preindustrial countries. Presently, for lack of industrial technology, the human and physical resources of those countries go underemployed and under-utilized... In the export of agricultural products to the industrial world, the terms of trade for the poor countries have declined 15[%] over the past decade and 25[%] over the past 15 years. The terms factor in not only the decline in prices for their exports but the relentless increase in the prices of the industrial goods they buy in exchange... Ever since the beginning of civilization, people have organized their social institutions to secure the inequitable distribution of goods that were always, until recent times, in short supply. Now the inequity that divides humankind is international; people are inhabitants of rich nations or of poor nations. And the rich go on living at the expense of the poor. From historic habit, nations make policy and people continue to root their morality in the assumption that there can never be enough to go around. The industrial revolution has confuted that assumption... The internationalization of inequity is absurd because it is not compelled by any scarcity of physical resources – and absurd again because the stock of objective knowledge that commands the Earth's resources, going back to the first stone tool, is the common heritage of all mankind. It is a menace... to the survival of the human species... because the poverty of the 75[%] amplifies the destruction that the rich have been wreaking on the biosphere. [Even if] the industrial nations... succeed in reducing the destruction they do, it must continue to be amplified by the rising numbers and desperation of the poor[, who]... have seen little or no improvement in the supply to them of food and other necessities... Want is the one thing that the peoples of the preindustrial world have in common... The well-being of the 25[%] who live in the industrial nations was won and is maintained in part at the expense of the 75[%] in the preindustrial world.

Coming *third* isn't normally a bad thing – unless there isn't a *fourth*, in which case it is just a polite (or condescending) way of saying LAST. In the same instance, coming *second* merely represents being average. The above quote split the world into two unequal parts, which a previous quote called *North* and *South*. For the remainder of this thesis the *two unequal parts* will simply be called the FIRST WORLD and the LAST WORLD, with countries belonging to one or the other depending in their economic wealth.

In order to compare the respective wealth of countries they are most often ranked according to the figure produced when 'the total value of goods produced and services provided in each country in one year' is divided by their population – otherwise known as the GDP (or GNP). However, a country's GDP doesn't take into account hidden labour (e.g., voluntary work – including housework) and environmental costs.

Gross National Product (GNP) essentially measures how many goods are produced by the country, but Greens reject the simple notion that goods = growth = happier and healthier human beings. If goods could be made to last longer or could be repaired more easily, this would increase our standard of living in the most material sense, yet if goods were better made and didn't need to be replaced so often, GNP would fall. Goods produced with built-in obsolescence are part of economic 'progress'. As they are replaced, jobs are created, profits rise and the balance-of-payments position of the country producing them tends towards surplus. Real growth should take account of qualitative factors such as workmanship and durability rather than crude quantitative measures of how fast goods are consumed and destroyed. Where production takes place, the use of scarce resources, the contribution to the greenhouse effect and the creation of other ecological ills should be taken into account. At present, if factories pump toxins into a river, leading to increased spending by local water authorities, such spending is counted as 'growth'. If racism and poverty prompt inner-city riots, the resulting increase in police overtime is also regarded as 'growth'.

A badly designed pulp mill leaking mercury waste into a river may run at a profit of so many hundred thousand per year, but in the process may destroy a fishery worth twice as much; thus the pulp mill apparently runs at a profit, but the overall effect to the system is a loss. Atmospheric pollution in cities costs millions in crumbling stonework, lost working days, hospital beds and so on, with probably as much loss by way of reduced agricultural production outside. If this cost were borne by the factories producing the pollution they would probably prove uneconomic. Usually the cost of removing the pollution is less than the cost of the damage done...

Modern industrial systems still do not normally include in the cost of what they produce such diseconomies of production and distribution as the spewing off of effluents into the air or the overloading of the land with solid waste or the lack of any charge for eventual disposal of the used-up goods. Thus they pass on a hidden and heavy cost to the community, where it is either met by higher taxation and public spending or by the destruction of amenity. The costs cannot be avoided. The citizen pays either as consumer or as taxpayer or as victim. The political and economic problems raised by the inexorable and unavoidable price spring from the fact that different citizens are involved in the problem in quite different degrees. The taxpayer may be out of reach of the major pollutions and have no direct incentive to clean them up. Yet poorer citizens can hardly welcome an increase in consumer prices for daily necessities even though they might be glad of cleaner air. The calculus of who shall pay for what improvement is *the* political issue at the core of any policy designed to deal with hidden subsidies and external diseconomies that underlie many of the present methods of satisfying economic needs.

Every N[Z]er is born with a silver spoon in his mouth. If you're Vietnamese, Chinese or whatever, you look at what the average Kiwi has got, so all life is relative.

...Our standard of living is worse than most other developed countries, including A[US], says a new international report. N[Z] ranks 20th out of 28 OECD countries for living standards and a large gulf separates us from the world's leading... economies. One of the smallest countries, Luxembourg, scored the highest standard of living, followed by the U[S], while Turkey came last... □ Statistics N[Z] does not consider gross domestic product per capita, used in the OECD report, an accurate reflection of standards of living because it says quality of life cannot be measured solely by production.

In the *Human Development Report 1990*, the statisticians of the UN Development Program propose a new kind of index of progress. It is to stand alongside GNP per capita and to counter the "narrow and misleading attention to only one dimension of human life" that is fixed by that familiar index number. The "human development index number" [HDI] is the summary expression of three indicators: life expectancy, literacy, and "income for a decent living standard." ...Since "there are diminishing returns in the conversion of income into the fulfillment of human needs," these numbers in the [HDI] are transformed to their logarithms. This operation narrows the gap between the top and bottom incomes stated in GNP per capita. Thus, the GNP-per-capita scale... suggests that the Swiss, at \$21,330 per capita in 1987, were 142 times better off than the people of Zaire, at \$150 per capita... [Going by the HDI], that difference shrinks to about 20 times. While it would take teams of anthropologists, social psychologists, and, perhaps, psychoanalysts to prove it, the smaller gap seems more plausible... The [HDI] ranks Japan at the top... Switzerland in third... and Niger at the bottom. On the GNP... scale, Japan's \$15,760 places it fourth... In second place on the GNP... scale, at \$18,530, the U[S] drops to nineteenth place on the [HDI]... At the top of the list... appear, of course, all of the 31 industrial nations.

Generally, the First World is now said to consist of '27 developed countries' – the 21-top OECD countries plus the 'newly industrializing countries: South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Argentina and Brazil.' However, those last six countries probably have more in common with the industrialised Second World than the First. For the purposes of this thesis, the *First World* countries will more precisely be those where the majority of their population

have a comfortable standard of living (i.e., where the *survival of their first children* is assured; where the *necessities are taken for granted*; where human rights are generally acknowledged and life is mostly peaceful), while the *Last World* will be the remainder (i.e., the OECD countries that aren't ranked in the *top-21*, plus most if not all of the *newly industrializing countries*, plus China, Russia and most if not all of eastern Europe).

People in eastern Europe went from one dictator to another... [Consequently,] **there is a very high level of poverty.**

A possible exception to the eastern European trend (i.e., a nation with a very low level of poverty – or a First World contender) is the Czech Republic.

Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia were united in the independent nation of Czechoslovakia from 1918 to 1992. A separate, independent Czech Republic came into being on Jan. 1, 1993... Czech Republic has a high standard of living as compared with other formerly communist countries.

Times are heady in Eastern Europe... Eight years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and six since the collapse of the Soviet Union, most of the region's economies are growing smartly. Perhaps too smartly. Economic growth is good but too much, too soon, can transform fantasies of prosperity into nightmares. Mexico learned that lesson in December 1994, when the crash of its peso threw the economy into a deep depression. Last May a currency crisis brought an abrupt end to the boom in the Czech Republic... Early warning signals... [mean all] of Eastern Europe's governments still have time to avoid currency crises. But budget cutting and monetary tightening are always painful. It is easier for governments to cross their fingers and publicly deny the warning signs. Of all the indicators of trouble ahead, this may be the most reliable.

...[In one of the poorest nations in Europe, tyrant Nicolae Ceausescu built one of the world's most monstrous palaces. Now the architect is going back to finish it. He won't be drawn on how much the palace, a mish-mash of architectural styles, has cost so far – estimates start at US\$2.5b – or how many workers, political prisoners among them, died during its construction. But other vital statistics roll off his tongue: 84m high, 270m long, 245m wide and stretching 92m underground, the House of the Republic (also known as the marble palace) is the largest public building in Europe, and the 2nd largest in the world after the Pentagon; there are 13 floors and 7000 rooms. There's no air conditioning (Ceausescu feared chemical attacks through the ventilation system), but just as well – if all its lights are turned on the palace burns more electricity in 3 hours than Bucharest's 2 million inhabitants consume in 24.]

...Prisoners join protest... Thousands of inmates, some sleeping three to a bed, have intensified a protest in Bucharest's main prison to demand better conditions and faster parole... Inmates at the 19th century Jilava prison on the capital's outskirts refused food, burned bedsheets and shouted "Freedom, freedom," and "We want new laws" for the third day in a row. "We will go to the bitter end with our protests,"... said... one of 3500 convicts in... Cell No 56. The room was jammed with 51 inmates, three times normal capacity. Unshaven inmates stuck their heads through the narrow windows of steel cell doors, shouting: "We want our rights." The prison, intended to hold 1500 inmates, is typical in a country where post-communist crime has swelled the numbers of those serving time. Officially there are 43,000 inmates in Romania...

Just four months after they staged noisy strikes to demand job security, the traditionally militant miners of Romania's Jiu Valley are queuing up to... [receive] redundancy money from the Government... worth between 12 and 20 months of salary, depending on length of service... Prices have doubled as shopkeepers try to take advantage of the money suddenly accumulating in miners' wallets... Labour leaders predict 60[%] of the 43,000 Jiu Valley miners will eventually opt for redundancy. Up to 56,000 miners across Romania... have already signed up for severance pay... They have been pocketing the equivalent of between \$US1700... and \$US2200... The Government says 110 inefficient pits will close[because it 'is cheaper to import coal from Yugoslavia and the Ukraine']... Those staying behind are resigned to complying with the general line of austerity promoted by the Government keen to meet the demands of Western creditors... What is certain is that the traditional militancy of Jiu Valley miners has all but faded away. They wreaked havoc on Bucharest streets in 1990 and 1991, ransacking opposition party offices and beating up anti-communist strikers... [who had been denouncing the] dictator Nicolae Ceausescu... Under communist rule, conditions deteriorated sharply at Jiu Valley mines, many of which date from Romania's 19th century drive for industrialisation. But the promise of high pay – miners still earn double the average monthly wage of \$US80 – plus free housing and fuel and electricity discounts lured thousands from Romania's less-developed south and east. Most of those... say they are returning to their native regions... Many people see departure as the only option... There are no jobs on offer... No one seems to have contemplated what they will do when the money runs out... "It's hell down there and it's hell out here too." - 1997

Coal-fired power stations currently provide 40% of Romania's power. The weight of nuclear power is increasing... [a]lthough oil and gas are... sources of energy... Romania... [is Eastern Europe's] only... significant oil producer... 314,000 barrels a day last year, higher than the 294,000 recorded a decade earlier. Yet a bigger push is needed to help step up production further, modernise 3,000 km of pipelines and improve pollution control at power plants. The World Bank is playing a leading role in backing a 20-year programme to help develop Romania's oil and gas industry... Exploiting the country's vast oil reserves is a main ambition of foreign investors... [The] President and General Manager... of... Renel (the Romanian Electricity Authority)... emphasises the importance of Romania's newfound independence from Russian electricity imports. "This country is in a better position than its neighbours..."

Hungarian males heading for early grave... World Bank figures show that the average life expectancy for Hungarian males between the ages of 35 and 69 is the lowest in Europe. Half the men in that age group are not expected to live past the age of 70. About 21[%] will die of lung cancer linked to smoking... [35%] of Hungary's seven million adults are smokers while one in five males is an alcoholic, according to a Central Statistical Office survey published in the newspaper *Nepszabadsag* at the weekend... Deaths from cirrhosis are soaring while... hypertension and depression... contribute to the high mortality rates... [However, t]he report said the high mortality rate was more the result of unhealthy lifestyles and environmental factors than the quality of health care services. Only a small proportion of Hungarians regularly eat fresh fruit and vegetables, 30.3[%] are overweight and 13.1[%] are seriously overweight... based on 5476 interviews with Hungarians between the ages of 15 and 64... [Incidentally, yesterday a] statue of the Soviet founder... Lenin toppled from its pedestal in a Siberian town and killed a 15-year-old youth.

...[Nicolai Lenin was the assumed name of Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (1870-1924), Russia's revolutionary statesman. A lawyer by training, Lenin was arrested in 1895 for socialist agitation and was subsequently exiled to Siberia. Living in Switzerland from 1900, he became the leader of the Bolshevik party and took a prominent part in socialist organization and propaganda in the years preceding WW1. He returned to Russia after the overthrow of the Tsar in 1917 and quickly established Bolshevik control over the revolution, emerging as Premier and virtual dictator of the new communist State. He took Russia out of the war and successfully resisted counter-revolutionary forces in the Russian Civil War (1918-21), but was forced to moderate his socio-economic policies to give the country a chance to recover from the dislocation caused by war and revolution. In 1918 he was severely injured by a would-be assassin, and died in 1924 before he had completed the reconstruction of the Marxist State.

...After Lenin's death, Joseph Stalin – one of Lenin's right-hand men – won a long struggle with Trotsky for the leadership and went on to become sole dictator. His large-scale purges gravely weakened Russia and the country only just survived Hitler's attack in 1941. Due to his policy of removing anyone whose power might threaten his own, Stalin stayed in power until his death...

'Stalin died a slow, angry, and painful death on March 5, 1953. He had suffered a stroke after retiring on the night of 1-2, but this was not perceived until the morning because of his concern for personal security. The top leadership gathered around his bedside. Beria – one of the nine-member Bureau of the Presidium – was delighted at his boss's coming demise and showed it – earning him the undying hostility of Stalin's daughter. Others in the entourage

were more circumspect. They found themselves in a predicament: How were they to choose Stalin's successor? How were they to ensure that no one acquired his awesome power? This would put their careers, and even lives, at risk. The country was also confused. Even in death Stalin took some with him. During the elaborate state funeral on March 9, some people were crushed to death in their desire to pay their last respects to the dead dictator. Collective leadership was the only possibility. When the first division of power was agreed to on March 7, the main beneficiaries were Malenkov, who became chairman of the Council of Ministers, or prime minister, and Beria, who stepped up to become first deputy PM and also headed the amalgamated Ministry of State Security and Ministry of Internal Affairs. Molotov returned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was also a first deputy PM. Bulganin became minister of defence. To calm the population *Pravda* reported that the new collective leadership would "prevent any kind of disorder or panic." When Stalin died there was no title that identified the head of the Communist Party. Stalin had given up the title of general secretary of the party in 1934 and was afterward merely described as secretary of the Central Committee Secretariat. Malenkov's name appeared at the top of the list of secretaries on March 7. Hence he had succeeded Stalin as head of government and party. This nice arrangement broke down within a week: there was too much power concentrated in one pair of hands. The main beneficiary was Khrushchev. His name was placed at the top of the list of 5 secretaries of the secretariat. Khrushchev was now in charge of the party, although he was not formally made first secretary until September 1953. Malenkov, in choosing to remain PM, made a grave mistake, even though Lenin and Stalin had both occupied the office. Khrushchev now had a power base from which to attack Malenkov and win precedence for the party over the government. The primary goal of the new leadership was to ensure stability in the country while the power struggle at the top got under way. An amnesty freed prisoners from the labour camps but affected only the elite and their families and friends. Those in exile were allowed to return to the city of their choice. Molotov got his Jewish wife back, his associate Mikoyan his son, and Khrushchev's daughter-in-law also returned. There was a mood of optimism. Malenkov launched the New Course, an economic programme that promised higher living standards, and there was a promise to dismantle the worst excesses of the Stalinist legal system.' The 'Perestroika economic reforms were adopted at the Party's 27th Congress, for the 12th 5-Year Plan (1986-90).'

... "Everyone must vacate within 90 minutes!" As the announcement crackled over an intercom at the Communist Party Central Committee headquarters in Moscow, a worker stepped out of his office and saw pandemonium. Officials were frantically stuffing top-secret documents into briefcases and carrying piles of them to shredding machines. Shouting matches broke out as the shredders jammed. It was August 23, 1991, only 24 hours after the failed coup by communist hardliners. The President of the Russian Republic had just suspended the party's activities. Outside, an angry crowd demanded a war-crimes trial for party officials. Suddenly, the worker's boss rushed up and told him to destroy a thick sheaf of notebooks that he'd given to the worker earlier. As soon as the worker had received the books, he'd realized what they were: records from the "Special File" of clandestine Soviet funding of foreign communist parties. *The Russian people – the world – should know about this*, he thought. He put the papers in a safe. About 2 weeks later, the worker dropped the documents onto the desk of a journalist for the newspaper *Rossiia*. On October 2, 1991, the contents were splashed across the paper's pages under the headline, "Hard Cash for Hard Leninists." The publication of these papers – and subsequent revelations – make for a devastating indictment. They detail how the Soviets made direct payments to 98 parties and movements in countries around the world, spending over \$320 million since 1981 alone. The money was disbursed from the party's "International Fund to Support Organizations of the Left," bankrolled by Moscow with "contributions" from East Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia. In addition, hundreds of communist-linked companies did business with the Soviet Union and gave a cut of their profits to local parties, sometimes even helping them keep afloat. Moscow also provided money, training, weapons and equipment to international terrorist groups. Besides the foreign communist parties, the Soviets relied on a wide array of front organizations to advance its goals vis-a-vis the general public. Chief among them was the Helsinki-based World Peace Council (WPC). With affiliates in 100 countries, the WPC was involved in organizing massive demonstrations in Western Europe to protest the planned deployment of US Cruise and Pershing missiles. Soviet control was nearly total. At WPC headquarters, all the national chief representatives had to be approved by the Soviet Party Central Committee. In return for well-paid jobs, they were expected to wage a permanent propaganda war on behalf of Moscow. The WPC was but one of a dozen or so such front groups. They included the International Organization of Journalists, the International Union of Students, the World Federation of Trade Unions and the Women's International Democratic Federation. Every one of them got Soviet cash – an estimated \$102m per year in all. While Soviet workers remained underhoused and poorly nourished, while the country's hospitals went without basic medicines, millions of dollars were being spent on foreign communist parties and front groups – all to perpetuate the illusion that the world was moving steadily towards a socialist paradise. If a day of reckoning is to come for the crimes committed during 74 years of Soviet communism, a place in the dock should be reserved for those who bled their people in order to give substance to this mirage.']

...*Six signatures that destroyed the old Russian Empire... Five years ago this weekend, six men met in a snow-bound hunting lodge... near the Polish border to sign a political death certificate. "We... state that the USSR, as a subject of international law and a geopolitical reality, ceases to exist," they declared in a three-page communique. Within three weeks the once mighty Soviet Union had vanished to be replaced by 15 separate states, plunged into an independence which some of them had barely imagined, let alone sought. Russia's President... took over the nuclear button while[the] Soviet President... warning of chaos and anarchy, reluctantly accepted the inevitable and moved out of the Kremlin into early retirement. Few toasts are likely to be drunk on the anniversary of the meeting in the hunting lodge, only one of whose signatories – [the Russian President] – is still in office... The pact to abolish the Soviet Union is still seen by its many opponents in Russia as the "Belovezh conspiracy" – a coup d'état by a small group of plotters in the pay of the West... who had concealed the full economic implications of the agreement... to destroy the historic Russian empire... To replace the Soviet Union, the... leaders improvised a new body, the Commonwealth of Independent States, with a single economic space and a joint military command and foreign policy. But within days sharp differences emerged... And it soon became clear that each state would have its own foreign and economic policy, and its own currency. The logic of setting up 15 independent states had not been fully thought out, least of all by Russia... Though Russia's Parliament voted by a big majority to ratify the Belovezh agreement, it soon came under attack from communists, nationalists and even liberal politicians who felt that Moscow lost far more than it gained.*

...[the] Russian President... was [re]sworn in... yesterday, promising to uphold the constitution and protect human rights. The President, in his first public appearance since June 26, spoke slowly and somewhat woodenly as he swore the oath on a special leather-bound edition of the Russian constitution. [The President], aged 65, had two heart attacks last year and his disappearance in the run-up to the inauguration had prompted speculation that he was ill again.

...Since[Russia's] President... fell ill four months ago, the most intriguing question for Kremlin watchers has been – who rules Russia? There is no easy answer... [The general who was the President's security adviser and newly appointed representative to Chechnya], but was also considered a]... Kremlin troublemaker... has been sacked. [The PM] is a low-key number two. The opposition points an accusing finger at[the current] Kremlin chief-of-staff... saying he has assumed the role of a regent. But more and more often another name slips in among the influential figures behind the scenes – ...the President's younger daughter. Opponents and experts say that while [the President] is ill and awaiting a heart operation due next month, [his daughter] has exerted some influence on affairs of state despite having no official position. Further hints of this emerged this week. "Between the first and second round of the [presidential] election [the President] was not concerned with anything and did not want to be concerned," [a]former chief-of-staff... said in a newspaper interview. "The only person to whose opinion he listened was his younger daughter..."... said... [the former chief-of-staff], who was sacked after [the President's] re-election... Both [the President's] wife... and [his younger daughter], a mother of two and a mathematician, have said they opposed his decision to run for a second term. "No one knows how much time fate has given you and I would have liked my father to live for himself, to spend time with friends, grandchildren and children," she said in a newspaper interview in June.

...The grandson of [the]Russian leader... was ordered to have a shave on his first day at a top English public school. [The grandson], aged 17, arrived for his first week of term at the \$33,790-a-year Millfield School sporting a moustache.

...The Russian Minister of Defence... has appealed to [the]President... and the Government for urgent funds to ease a crisis in the Army before matters get out of control. His cry for help provoked an immediate response... [The President, who] is in hospital preparing for heart surgery... told the P[M]... to convene a special cabinet meeting on Army financing and announced that a new defence council would meet on Friday.

...Talk in the Kremlin of an early ceasefire in Chechnya looked premature yesterday as Chechen rebels stormed the Russian Army headquarters in the region as a week of heavy fighting showed no sign of let-up. Military sources told Russian news agencies that... [i]t took over an hour to repel the attackers. The raid added insult to injury after seven days in which well-disciplined guerrillas have humiliated Russian troops and inflicted hundreds of casualties. It boded ill for a ceasefire... [A] Reuters journalist... who managed to make his way through the fighting and out of the ruins of the Chechen capital, said large central and western areas of the centre still appeared to be in the hands of the rebels, who last week launched their biggest offensive in 18 months. Hundreds of civilians streamed out of Grozny, hungry and exhausted after a week spent cowering in basements. Troops, holed up in bunkers and fortified buildings, continued to exchange fire with the rebels across the city. The only Russian soldiers [the journalist] saw in the open were dead. The Muslim guerrillas patrolled many streets wielding Kalashnikov assault rifles and the rocket-propelled grenade launchers which have destroyed wave upon wave of Russian armour... "We're going to stay until the Russians leave," one... said.

...Chechen separatists are taking the fight to Russian troops outside the capital, Grozny. Twenty Russian troops were killed and 37 wounded in an ambush in southern Chechnya, the Interfax news agency quoted a federal command source as saying yesterday. The agency... described as explosive the situation in Chechnya's second biggest city, Gudermes, and said about 50 rebels were active in Argun, the third largest town.

...Seventeen people, including six children, were confirmed dead after a powerful blast... levelled a military apartment block... in Kapiysk, Dagestan... on Saturday... The... Interfax news agency... report said 39 people were still unaccounted for, and 511 people were taking part in the rescue operations... The Russian security council secretary... blamed opponents of the Chechen peace process for the explosion. War-shattered Chechnya, where a fragile peace has reigned since the end of August, lies just west of Dagestan in the north Caucasus region... [T]he vice-premier of the Chechen coalition Government, told Itar-Tass news agency that Chechen leaders had issued a statement condemning the blast. He said Government leaders believed the attack was directed against the peace process in the Caucasus and that some so-called third power was active in the region attempting to derail it.

...Russia's P[M] yesterday flew to the site of an explosion that killed at least 43 people in a building housing Russian servicemen and their families. As rescuers continued to dig through the rubble... [s]ome officials said there might be a link between the explosion and Chechnya, where an uneasy peace is holding after a 21-month bloody conflict... [However, a]uthorities have several theories about the explosion, including revenge from organised crime groups angry about a crackdown on caviar and sturgeon poaching in the Caspian Sea, or on the smuggling of drugs and weapons from neighbouring Azerbaijan.

...Russian police are hunting for the gangland bombers who slaughtered 13 mourners at a Moscow cemetery yesterday... The odds are stacked against the police, who rarely clear up gang murders. Yet the massacre... has managed to shock a nation where mafia killings have become commonplace in the chaotic five years since the collapse of communism.

...The victims included the widow, mother and uncle of... a veterans' leader whose murder in a bomb blast on November 10, 1994, was being commemorated by about 130 people gathered around his grave. Investigators said the killing was linked to a bloody feud between two rival branches of a charity set up to help disabled victims of the Afghan war. The State Duma lower house asked Russian prosecutors to open a full investigation into the... Afghan War Invalids' Foundation, while some politicians said it was time for a wider crackdown on tax breaks enjoyed by non-profit organisations. "It is well known that these organisations spend between 2 and 5[%] of their revenue on their ostensible field of activities. The rest all goes to bandits," [a]liberal politician... told Ekho Moskvy radio... [The] *Sevodnya* newspaper quoted tax inspectors as saying criminals had used the foundation, which benefited from tax and excise exemptions on imports and exports, to launder money and send it out of the country. At the end of 1995 the foundation and other charities lost their rights to import alcohol and tobacco without paying duty, a scam which is estimated to have cost the Russian treasury billions of dollars in lost taxes.

...[Russia's] President... yesterday announced the creation of a special commission to improve tax collection to provide cash to pay off a huge backlog of wages to state sector workers, servicemen [('Russian soldier conscripts are paid just £2/month')] and pensioners.

...In Russia a job is no guarantee of a pay cheque... Millions of workers have not been paid for months. Miners, musicians and teachers from St Petersburg to Sakhalin are staging more and more strikes and demonstrations, demanding their pay and protesting a 70[%] decline in the buying power of those wages since 1990... Western labour experts on Russia express puzzlement over how a significant segment of the workforce can go without pay for up to six months. Among the possible reasons, they say, are union disarray, fear of unemployment and a national psyche not fully geared to striking... As a result, workers find second jobs to make up for low or no wages. A Moscow neurosurgeon works as a night watchman... Workers sometimes get their pay in shoddy or basic goods... Trucks pull up periodically behind cash-strapped government ministries and state-subsidized companies in Moscow, dispensing cheese, eggs, bread, potatoes or sausage instead of cash to sullen workers carrying vouchers... People scrape to get by, and wait for things to improve... But... [there] are worrisome signs that the deteriorating pay situation may be reaching a critical stage. Overdue wages and social benefits have more than tripled in a year to about 40 trillion roubles (\$NZ10.20 billion). The Labor Ministry counted 8856 strikes lasting a day or more last year, a huge leap from 514 in 1994, and the number is soaring again. In two of the largest walkouts since the Soviet collapse, coalminers and Far East energy workers staged huge strikes this year that ended only when the Government came up with billions of roubles in back wages. Hunger strikes, too, are starting to occur regularly. - 1996

A desperate battle for survival against hunger and disease... a pale... boy[stands] very quietly by the open door of the bedroom. Behind him his grandmother lay on the bed, a tiny wizened woman. She was too weak to get up. Neither she, [the boy], nor his father and mother had eaten for three days. This scene of human misery is not a description of Victorian London, nor Zola's Paris but is a contemporary story of a small town, not 320km from Moscow, Yuzha in Russia's Ivanova region... The plight of [this] small town... epitomises the Russian economic nightmare... Like many such small towns all over Russia, Yuzha's economy has collapsed. The [family's] fate, like that of the entire population of Yuzha, is linked to that of the town's main factory, a textile plant built before the Revolution which produced uniforms for the Soviet Army. The break-up of the Soviet Union halted the flow of cheap cotton, and one by one the textile mills of Ivanova region went to the wall. Yuzha's factory now employs 1400 people where once it employed 5000. Soviet planning policy and market reforms have both been blamed for the town's plight... [T]he first deputy head of the town's regional administration, is not sure who is at fault anymore. He seems to stoop under the weight of the catastrophe which has befallen his town; a place where mothers sell their blood to feed their children... It is not just the local economy which has failed the... family, their Government has also deserted them. Pensions and benefits are not being paid. [The boy's] mother... last received unemployment a year ago. Her mother's pension of 290,000 roubles (\$[NZ]50) and child benefit of 58,000 roubles... have not been paid since January... In his seven years [the boy] has known little else other than want and hardship. Unfortunately there are many more like him. More than 1557 of the town's children are considered to be living below the poverty line... Russia's social safety net is in shreds, and families like these are falling through it... [A] plasterer, last worked six years ago. He sits on the broken bed in his flat which he shares with his wife, and four children. The reek of poverty hits you as you

walk through the door. In the gloom (the electricity was turned off two years ago) you can make out the peeling wallpaper, the broken bits of furniture. There is no sign of children's play except for one little drawing of a bear on the wall... The tools which have been essential to the family's survival during the pitilessly cold winter months stand in the hallway: [the plasterer's] bicycle, his fishing rod, and his drill for boring through the ice. He can catch about 1.4kg of fish a day, which... sells... for 8000 roubles. That is enough to buy a litre of milk, and a loaf of bread, or 2.7kg of potatoes. [The local] head of administration... [says: "The authorities in Moscow] promised us a market, but we haven't seen any market. All we can see is our poverty. In the old days there was always a plan, and now there isn't." ...The town's factory was bought a month ago by a company called Onyx. "They are new Russians from Moscow," she confided. What they intend to do with the factory neither she nor anyone knows. The director hangs up the phone when she calls. So she sits and waits, as do the citizens of Yuzha. In the meantime Yuzha is a town which is dying. In 1996, 182 babies were born, but there were 599 deaths. There are other equally discouraging statistics. The infant mortality rate is 24 deaths per thousand. Poverty and disease walk hand-in-hand. As well as having the distinction of being the poorest region in Russia, Yuzha has the highest number of recorded cases of tuberculosis; 33 last year, and 14 cases already this year. [One woman] and her friend... are both 22, and pregnant. They profess not to dwell much on what the future will offer their unborn children, other than hoping it will be a better one. Their more pressing concern is their diet which consists almost solely of potatoes and bread. Today, however, they are going to be fed three square meals by the town's soup kitchen which operates a feeding scheme for Yuzha's neediest people... If the citizens of Yuzha are searching in vain for the promised land, in Moscow it is already here. For some people at least the new economy has delivered the goods. As another day begins at Moscow's Russian International School, a steady stream of BMWs and Mercedes cars deliver their precious charges to the entrance. Rivalry between children here takes the form of one-upmanship over the make of car, or which exotic location the family will fly to for their next break. [One child], fashionably tanned, and just back from Florida, lisped: "We have just been to Disneyland, and for Easter I am going to Paris."

...Russia pays high price of freedom – fear... The end of state control has left most Russian people worse off, a visiting professor of criminal law tells... For 30 years he has conducted research into criminology, deviant behaviour and social control. Things have never been worse, he says... The crime rate continues to soar with a huge rise in violent crime. Between 1985 and 1995 murders increased from 8.5 to 21.4 in 100,000 – N[Z] averages around 2 in 100,000 – and for serious bodily harm from 19.9 to 41.7. There were almost five times the number of robberies and assaults increased by 6.5 times. These are the official statistics. The real figures are much higher, says... [the professor, because] many crimes were never reported as victims have no confidence in police or the legal system. "More and more the police are there to make money for themselves, not to protect the population." Surveys of victims in St Petersburg suggest a crime rate at least 10 times higher than the official statistics. In... 1991... 12[%] reported being victims of crime that year; by the 1994 survey the figure was more than 30[%]. Everyone is afraid, he says. "I don't feel safe. Every night, as I return home, I wonder if I will become a victim too." ...The cycle of violence, crime and fear is a long one. There is corruption at all levels of government and bureaucracy... and high levels of imprisonment throughout this century have criminalised large sectors of the Russian population. Organised crime has burgeoned with the introduction of a market economy from 1989, after decades of state control and private businesses being illegal. Around 50[%] of the country's banks are controlled by mafia-type organisations, he says... Business may now be legal, but you couldn't run a business legally even if you wanted to... "If I want to set up a business I have to bribe an official to get access to a building. Bribery is illegal, so already I am committing a crime. I need a licence to conduct my business. I have to pay another bribe for this. Then I have to pay money to gangsters for protection. And because it is impossible to run a successful business when you have to pay up to 85[%] of your profits in tax, people don't give true information about their profits, and that's a crime." ...Now there is no stability, no security of employment, and the widespread corruption and high unemployment rates provide a wide social basis for organised crime. Russia is going further and further along the path of criminalisation... and he can see no solution. [Due to Russia's socialist past, 'businessmen feel like criminals – so they behave like criminals.'

...she] comes from a place where murder occurs next door. The police saunter over to take the body away, and generally nothing more happens. It's a place where her mother, a doctor, is still waiting for December's pay and friends who work in a bank – of all places – haven't been paid for nearly three months. [Her] birthplace breaks her heart. Khabarovsk, in Russia's Far East, has grown into a city the size of Auckland. It straddles one of the world's last great pockets of natural resources which has everything from gas to gold. "We have everything in Russia but corruption is everywhere," says the 26-year-old judo exponent. "If you want something you have to pay huge money. You can't buy something delicious. Prices are always going up, I don't know how other families survive." She says her family is lucky that her engineer father still gets his salary monthly. But it's those problems which bring her to [our] land of affordable milk and honey.

...Life expectancy has plunged to its lowest in years in Russia... The W[HO]... said life expectancy had dipped in all 15 republics of the former Soviet Union, but the worst hit was Russia. The average Russian man could now expect to live 57.4 years compared with 61.1 years in 1981 – and nearly 64 years before[the current] President... started Russia's painful transition to capitalism. Health services were a cradle-to-grave right of every Soviet citizen, but they slipped into a crisis after the start of market reforms brought unemployment, disorder and stress. The data pointed to a growing health gap between East and West... Life expectancy was more than 75 years for men in Greece, Sweden and Switzerland and also in Israel, Japan and A[US], and more than 81 years for women in Canada, France, Japan, Spain and Switzerland... [The data shows] that although N[Zers'] life expectancy compared favourably with the world average of 61[, and NZers]... are living longer than they used to... comparison with other OECD countries was less flattering... Thirty years ago, N[Z] men had the seventh-highest life expectancy in the 25 countries in the [OECD], but now they rate only 13th. Female life expectancy has slipped from 10th to 17th over the same period... N[Z] had high mortality rates, compared with other OECD countries, for ischaemic heart disease, respiratory diseases, breast and bowel cancer, motor vehicle crashes and suicide. [● An article published last year said 'the homeless in London faced a life expectancy of 42 years, robbing them of 34 years enjoyed by the average Briton.']

...RUSSIA'S ROBBER BARONS They started in business by running rings around the lumbering Soviet state; now they're taking it over... They are forming new power centres, built mostly around commercial banks and natural-resources companies, that control huge swaths of the Russian economy. Anyone doing deals in Russia's hot short-term bond market, where trading totaled \$[US]100 billion last year, will have run across them. They dominate the country's trade in arms and precious metals, as well as its production of copper, nickel and a quarter of its oil. They control the No. 1 and No. 3 television networks, the Visa bankcard network, a big chunk of the pulp and paper industry and an increasing portion of the food processing industry... Though largely in favor of reforms to the market, it remains to be seen how dedicated Russia's new elite is to economic liberalization over the long run. This group, after all, is not made up of ideologues... Many of these businessmen, like America's robber barons at the turn of the century, bend the rules of honest competition... [A] Princeton professor... writing in the *Nation*, dubbed them a "semi-criminalized oligarchy" that has made ordinary Russians "suffer unduly and unjustly." ...But unlike the communists they whipped and the managerial old guard they are shouldering aside, the robber barons offer at least a chance that Russia can begin fulfilling its vast economic miracle. Nice guys, alas, seldom lead revolutions.

...Once, Russian schoolchildren aspired to be cosmonauts above all other professions. Times have changed, to say the least. These days, young Russians would rather grow up to be mobsters or prostitutes... a news agency said yesterday. The most popular profession of all? Accountant.

...In Russia... crims are getting more audaciously imaginative. A seven-man gang has been caught posing as tax officials in the Siberian city of Abakan. They waved phoney documents when arriving at the homes of the wealthy and carted off expensive possessions – ostensibly in lieu of unpaid taxes. Some victims were beaten up for being slow to co-operate. But not one complained to the police, because, it's believed, that might focus attention on their tax status.

...ORGANISED crime in Russia is a growing security threat to the U[S], says a taskforce led by[a] former CIA and FBI director... Nearly 8000 crime groups operating in Russia... had made alliances with criminal organisations in 50 other countries... [He believed that the US] President... should use diplomacy and espionage in more aggressive efforts to fight Russian crime... [which, according to his] report, could turn Russia back to authoritarianism... Equally important for the U[S], was the danger Russian criminal groups might get their hands on nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. [The danger is compounded by the fact that 'scientists at Russia's germ warfare plants are amongst the state workers who haven't been paid.' Other former Soviet republics are also a growing security threat to the US. For example, the 'President of Belarus – where criticism of the leader is illegal – openly admires Hitler and wants the state to return to Stalinism.']

...Leaders of other former Soviet republics blamed [the] Russian President... yesterday for the failure of their post-communist grouping and for conflicts on their soil. The Kremlin leader, clearly chastened after being put on the spot at a summit of the... Commonwealth of Independent States... said the CIS... would have to be completely reorganised... Several CIS leaders... [said] few of its agreements were ever implemented. The summit session lasted more than twice the allotted time and ended abruptly when the Kremlin leader and the summit host, [the] Moldovan President... unexpectedly left.

...[Russia's President plans] to take tougher stance in fight against economic crimes... "The President's address will include special measures on the decriminalisation of economic life and the suppression of the basic conditions that feed corruption,"... He would demand that all channels of state spending be brought under tighter control and that their property and powers be more clearly defined... [He] envisaged a stronger role for the tax police and for the Federal Security Service (successor to the Soviet-era KGB) in the fight against economic crime. Any officials demonstrating "excessive wealth" would be subject to more thorough checks. Last week, [he] gave the Interior Minister... "carte blanche" to crack down on economic crimes, which cost Russian state coffers billions a year. The Government often blames tax dodgers – companies and individuals – for chronic delays in paying wages and pensions. ['Russia receives 15% of its revenue via tax, compared to 80% in the US.']

...yesterday, as part of a requirement of the President's] recent anti-corruption drive[, Russia's PM –] ...who is reported to have vast riches... [–] declared his... and his [wife's]... personal wealth at... 268 million roubles... [(\$US50,000). By the way, f]ed up with promises that their "cheque is in the mail," Russian teachers have gone on strike demanding \$US1.2 billion... in back-pay.

...UNPAID workers in one Russian village will at least look good, now that the local government has hit on a new form of barter. Workers in Kalevala will be offered pay in the form of trips to the hairdresser... [I]n addition... workers will be rewarded with free fishing licences – so that, well-coiffed, they can catch their dinner in nearby lakes.

...[the] Russian President... has proved an ace fisherman on holiday in the Karelia region... His wife... said he had caught 20 fish in one day... but not without a little help... The secret, said a fisheries commissioner, is rather fishy. "We were told by the city administration to make sure [the President] had a good time and that's what we're doing. There are probably an extra 10,000 fish..."... dumped in his lake.

...[the] Russian President... flogged the Finnish head of state in a sauna during a visit yesterday. "I used a Russian birch switch to spank the [Finnish] President very well," [he said.

... 'THE PRESIDENTS OF THE US & RUSSIA, ARGUABLY THE TWO MOST POWERFUL MEN OF OUR TIMES AND ROLE MODELS FOR OUR MALLEABLE YOUTH – A SEX-ADDICT & A DRUNK!']

...The Russian President... stood up the Irish P[M]... on an airport tarmac in 1994, because he was too ill to get off his plane, says [the president's] former bodyguard. The... [president] was accused by critics at the time of being drunk, but... his... bodyguard and adviser for 11 years, said the Russian leader had suffered a heart attack or mild stroke... [The president] had got up in the night while flying over the Atlantic to go to the lavatory. But he had then collapsed. Doctors treated [the president], who feared a diplomatic scandal if he did not greet [the Irish PM]... "You have disgraced me in front of the whole world by doing this." ...["The president] was shouting so loudly that he must have been heard outside... Every time he stood up, he fell over... Naturally the president was assumed to have been drunk."

...Earlier this week... a senior communist deputy... led a parliamentary move to remove [Russia's leader] from office on health grounds, saying the 65-year-old President was too sick to lead the vast country. The vote was not conclusive and... lawyers ruled the motion legally void. But it helped fuel a sense of drift and paralysis in a country where the President holds most power and his absence puts ever more pressing issues on hold. [The President] caught pneumonia just two weeks after returning to work from a half-year absence during which he had a heart bypass operation in November. [The President's] aides said he briefly visited the Kremlin two days ago but his doctors say he needs two or three weeks to recover... [However, he might not get that long. He] faces a key test today when deputies decide whether to approve his Government's 1997 budget. The Communist Party, the largest faction in the State Duma (lower house of parliament), has said its support for the spending plans hinges on the Government's readiness... to... swiftly... pay wage and pension arrears to millions of impoverished Russians. The Government, battling a deep economic slump, has already agreed to raise spending in several areas in its efforts to win over the opposition.

...A hoarse President... said yesterday that he was in full command of Russia despite a respiratory virus... keeping him confined to a sanatorium.

...[the Russian] President... said yesterday the thing he wanted most after regaining consciousness a year ago following major heart surgery was to claim back his biggest symbol of power – the nuclear "red button" briefcase... with the codes needed to order the launch of... nuclear missiles... [The President] issued a decree hours before going under the knife which passed control of Russia's nuclear button to his number two, [the PM]... Minutes after the effects of anaesthesia weakened, [the President] signed a decree claiming the nuclear button back.

...[she] will always rue the day she over-slept and arrived an hour late for work. She was sentenced to 10 years in dictator Joseph Stalin's... Gulag camps. She ended up serving a total of six years, cutting logs in a prison brigade in one of the Soviet Union's bleakest, most remote corners. Now aged 71, she is one of several hundred former prisoners still living in the Kolyma region 8000km east of Moscow. And like many of the millions sent there during the Stalinist terror half a century ago, [she] is still dreaming about leaving for good... Historians estimate that at least two million died during Stalin's rule in Kolyma's camps[(and '20 million in total due to purges and collectivisations between 1926 and 1955')], which were notorious for their bitter cold, isolation and cruelty. The overwhelming bulk of those who survived... left in the 1950s and 1960s after Stalin's death. But some remained, often because they simply had nowhere else to go, and over the years they found it ever harder to escape a region cut off from rail and other transport links to the rest of Russia... "After my sentence, I had no one to go back to in Leningrad... All my relatives had either died of hunger in the war or at the front," said [the woman], who survived the 900-day Nazi siege of Leningrad before being exiled to Kolyma. "Today, of course, I'd leave if it was possible." ...[another woman, aged] 77, earned her ticket to the Gulag in 1946 by refusing to dance with a drunk officer from Smersh, the Soviet wartime anti-spy service. During her decade in camps near Magadan, she bore a daughter with a Belgian prisoner. As happened with many other camp veterans who remained, the child would root her in the region... Yet even today the city is short on comforts. A gloomy array of badly made pre-fab housing and abandoned construction sites, it rarely sees sunshine. Conditions were so austere that the mass settlement of the region began only in the 1930s when the Soviet Union decided to develop its rich gold mines using prisoners as the overwhelming bulk of the workforce. For veterans of the Gulag, there are constant reminders of the past... [The] old barracks are still surrounded by barbed wire since they now belong to the... special police... Perhaps most eerily, camp survivors sometimes see the handful of remaining ageing ex-guards of the Kolyma police state administered by the NKVD, the KGB's forerunner. Like their former inmates, they stayed for family or other reasons and today suffer the same woes as their ex-prisoners. "A few days ago I saw the guard who once gave me an extra piece of bread and she was begging in the street," said[a] 67-year-old... [woman] who was 17 when sentenced... [to] Butugychag, one of the most notorious... camps, and home to a

radioactive uranium mine. "I gave her 100 roubles and said 'you once gave me the last piece of bread.'" ...Some of Stalin's victims, however, say they were happy living in the region after their release... [A]n 83-year-old Leningrad native who spent 12 years in the Gulag system after his 1934 arrest, lost an arm during a gold-mine accident but seems unusually cheery in recalling the past. After his release he rose to become deputy director of a factory, earning eight times more than he would have at home, with six months' holiday for every 30 months or so of work... But even an enthusiast... has had enough. He plans to return to his birthplace, now renamed St Petersburg, next year. Unlike most ex-prisoners in Magadan, he was given an apartment for the one he lost long ago, so he has somewhere to go.

...THE deputy governor of St Petersburg... knew he was a marked man. As head of the city's privatisation committee, he had made enemies by refusing the demands of local gangster businessmen to sell several state assets at a fraction of their worth. So recently, as Manevich (36) drove to work along Nevsky Prospekt, with his wife by his side, a rooftop sniper pumped five bullets into his body and killed him. In Moscow, an extraordinary battle over the richest jewels in Russia's privatisation programme is tearing apart the six-man oligarchy that pooled its resources last year to ensure [the Russian President's] re-election... More fireworks are expected... when the Government sells 47% of Rosneft, the country's fifth-largest oil company... Last month... the powerful head of Oneximbank, won control of 38% of Norilsk Nickel, a giant nickel-mining company, and 25% of Svyazinvest, a telephone business... [The Oneximbank head was also] made a deputy [PM] and put in charge of the economy... His victory was denounced by his former allies... [One of them, a 50-year old] whom *Forbes* says is worth \$US3 billion, was made effective head of the National Security Council... But [the 50-year-old], who also obtained an 80% stake in Sibneft, one of Russia's top oil companies, is clearly not satisfied. He is angry with the press, too, and is suing *Forbes* for claiming... [in] an article titled "The God-father of the Kremlin"... [that] he used gangsters to build his fortune. What is not in dispute is that Russia is a violent land where crime pays. Last year about 40,000 people were murdered and 70,000 disappeared; Moscow had 50% more murders than New York. Dozens of bankers, business leaders and journalists have been killed... Last November, the *Wall Street Journal* reports, 13 Russians died and 50 were injured in a bombing war between local cigarette distributors... In 1992 when [a foreign tobacco company] tried to cut out exorbitant middlemen and sell its cigarettes direct by opening its own kiosks in St Petersburg, the booths were blown up, one by one, night after night... But... the new deputy premier... a [37-year-old] former physicist, said: "The most terrible time is behind us." The economy, which has shrunk 43% since 1990, should achieve zero growth this year and expand by 2% next year. Inflation has remained below 3% a month for 16 months... But for direct foreign investors Russia is still a decidedly dodgy place... Paul Tatum, an American hotel developer, tried to resolve his battle for control of the Radisson Slavianskaya hotel by publicising the issue. Shortly afterwards he was gunned down, in front of his two bodyguards. Other foreign investors have seen their investments disappear or been told they never existed. With crooked civil servants often working in league with local businessmen, foreigners find it hard to prove their claims.

...Where he comes from, [he] says... with a... smile, taking risks is a tradition... [T]he First Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Development of the Russian Federation, might not seem to be [a position] dicing with death. But the success of the huge reforms he's billed as master-minding is crucial – both to him and to the whole country... That's part of the reason he's here. Since 1990, when he first entered the Russian parliament, he has known about N[Z]'s public sector and labour market reforms – as any economist with an international perspective should... Statistics indicate that things are so bad... in Russia... that almost the only way is up. Life expectancy is equal to, or worse than, that of many [Last] World countries... The birth rate is so low and emigration so high that the country has a population loss of 750,000 a year. Crimes of violence and suicide are high... The vast majority of deaths of men occur at weekends, which is when everyone drinks... Alcohol consumption, particularly cheap vodka by men, is almost at twice the level considered by the [WHO] to be a sign of a country with a serious problem... [I]t's clear that a radical approach is needed. So radical, in fact, that [the deputy minister] has the impression, after three days talking to officials here, that Russia is further ahead than we are with its health reforms... Now private providers... will compete for public money which is allocated on a per person basis by private insurance companies. People will have an unrestricted choice of insurance companies which, in turn, will have[an] unrestricted choice of providers. [The deputy minister] agrees that for a former communist country, this is pretty much an about-face – and it's controversial. But the system is in such disarray the reformers had virtually no choice. Health workers have had no wages for two and a half months and drugs are in short supply. ['According to statistics, only 1-in-5 Russian children are now born completely healthy.']Education is undergoing a similar shake-up, and... [the deputy minister, whose] special charge is the drafting of pension reform... expects the Government to pass legislation in November giving equal access to public money for private and public schools, on a capitation basis... On the whole, [the deputy minister] is optimistic for his poor country's prospects. "We've already hit the bottom..." Meanwhile he and... a member of the Working Party on Labour Legislation... are on holiday, albeit a working one. [The deputy minister] paid his own fare to come here because, he says, he's been fascinated by [N]Z... for years. [Today] he's... off to watch the whales at Kaikoura.

...[a] Russian... pickpocket... hit the jackpot when he flinched \$US22,000... from the handbag of a woman taking the streetcar home after selling a flat... [Incidentally, the] Russian President... has ordered a full reorganisation of the Government, leaving only the P[M]... and a first deputy premier... in place. Interfax news agency said: "All other members of the cabinet resign."

...The Russian Government, in the throes of a deepening financial crisis, is scrambling for cash including a syndicated loan of up to \$US2 billion... and more help from the IMF, western banking sources said.

...After 10 days of scrutiny, an... IMF... mission to Moscow has said it will recommend the release of a frozen loan instalment of \$US700 million... The team... was "particularly encouraged" by the government's efforts to improve its woeful tax collection performance, which caused the international body to freeze the loan tranche in October... [T]he IMF board of directors will consider the IMF mission's recommendation on January 5. The move... "will become an important signal both for the financial markets and for the World Bank. - 1997

Leaders of the Group of Eight... countries, gathered yesterday to chart a strategy to help poor countries break the chains of debt and poverty and catch up in the race to harness new technologies... The G8 also wants to free up more money for health and education in [Last World] countries by speeding implementation of a debt-reducing pact agreed at last year's summit... The group boasted that the deal would wipe out as much as \$US100 billion of debt owed by the world's poorest states if they followed reforms supervised by the I[MF], but the initiative has stalled badly. Debt campaigners and [Last World] countries would like the strings attached to debt relief to be loosened. But, reflecting a widely held view within the G7 – the... world's richest... [countries – Canada's P]M... said the IMF's conditions were not too strict. "I think, for example, we don't want to give debt relief for them to go and buy arms and start wars. We're not interested in that." While affirming their backing for debt relief for the poorest states, the G7 is expected to reject the overtures of Russia, the other member of the G8, for a write-off of \$US42 billion in debt owed to rich-country Governments that it inherited when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. The Seven are likely to tell [the] Russian President... they will give Russia more time to repay.

...MEETING... one of the 'masters of business'... is a pretty nerve-racking business. Not, you understand, because the former president of the Soviet Union, the man who dismantled communism and ended the cold war, is unfriendly. Quite the contrary. In the flesh – there is rather a lot of it – he is cherubic, charming and exudes the most infectious, upbeat jollity of anyone I have met. He is, I must confess, a mischievous little darling. No. The reason I feel sick with terror, sweaty with fright, is because it's really him... The man who freed 300 million Soviets from the straitjacket of socialism. The peasant boy who rose to become Communist Party general secretary (like Stalin before him) and, rather than becoming a tyrant, changing the system because he believed it was rotten. [He is], you see, the real thing. In 20 years, the Spice Girls... will be forgotten. [The author of

Perestroika], however, will be going strong; his deeds taught in history lessons to the world's children. So where do you rendezvous with an icon? At an international hotel in... upmarket... Mayfair, central London... [He] is late. That, I suppose, is his prerogative. Eventually, I ring an aide. "Excuse me," I say, "we need Mr [Perestroika] soon. He's late... Could Mr [Perestroika] possibly get a move on?" I can't believe I'm saying this. Suddenly, he is there. The president, as he is called, is accompanied by a phalanx of menacing flunkies: a female bodyguard (serious leg muscles), a beefy security man and an interpreter ([Mr Perestroika] speaks no English)... This is the man of whom [the most famous *James Bond* actor] said: "I can't answer for women, but I find him a very attractive man's man. He has an extraordinary combination of intelligence, baldness and serenity. Almost Buddha-like." [Mr Perestroika] is a pro. Within seconds he is crooning to... our photographer, *Ochie-chorniye* or *Dark Eyes*, an old Russian love song she heard as a child. [Mr Perestroika] is working his magic. There is, however, nowhere for me to sit – all those henchmen – so I find myself cross-legged at his feet. He twinkles at me. Later I realise he had a perfect view down my shirt. "This is the way an interview with a president should be done," he says. "You should be on your knees in front of [me]." Everyone in the room laughs and he grins. I remind him his most high-profile recent appearance in the West was advertising pizza – would he do it again? "I think once was enough," he chortles. "The advert worked very well for me because I didn't say a single word and I didn't have to eat any pizza..." At this, he laughs so hard I think he might burst. "But seriously," he adds, "the best thing about the advert is that it celebrates my achievement in opening up Russia to business." But was he not worried, I ask, such a tacky undertaking would ruin his gravitas? "I agreed to do this commercial... because [my Self-named] Foundation had its building confiscated by... [Russia's current president, who ousted him]. We needed to raise money to build our own headquarters. All the royalties went towards the new building, which will house a library, archive and museum of perestroika." Although [he] is phenomenally popular in the West – the noun *Gorbymania* even appears in the *Oxford English Dictionary* – many Russians blame him for the chaos enveloping their country. He has been branded a Judas for destroying the communist system and dismantling the empire. Has he, I ask, ever considered leaving Russia... and living in the West? After all, he spends many months each year on the kind of book tours and speaking engagements so beloved of [the Iron Lady] and other members of the former leaders' club. And he has a penchant for the Mediterranean, where he often holidays with... [his] famously glamorous... wife... "Not at all. I would never leave Russia," he says, looking rather hurt by my question. "This idea I am so unpopular in Russia is generally more speculative than fact. The truth is that as a result of what I did – in our country, in Europe and indeed the world – everyone benefited. We have nuclear disarmament, we don't have the cold war, my country is open now and I know my people welcome and support these moves. But Russia is moving from one system to another and many people live in great hardship." But if the Russians welcome his reforms so much, why did he receive only 1% of the vote at the last election? "...One independent body has said I got at least 15% of the vote but was denied the true result because of vote-rigging..." So will he be standing in the presidential elections next year? "No, I will not be running," he says, a trifle regretfully... Is he, I wonder, worried the social and economic turmoil will lead Russia to seek a more tyrannical ruler? "Well," he says, looking grave. "I don't want to talk about it because I am really doing my best, everything I can, to stop that from happening. The West can help, too. The [MF] loans we expect imminently will not save Russia. They are a drop in the bucket towards reviving our economy, but every little drop is important to keep the situation under control." So what does it feel like to go from wielding great power to being a normal citizen? "It feels fine... I am not crazy about power. Had I been... I would never have made the reforms I made... Remember, I used the power I wielded as general secretary of the Communist Party to transform it into a different system." How could I – or any of us – forget?

...For the second time in four days a powerful bomb has smashed a Moscow housing block... leaving little doubt that the Russian capital is under siege by ruthless terrorists. The blast demolished an eight-storey apartment building in a residential area of southern Moscow yesterday, when most people would still be sleeping. By midday local time more than 40 bodies had been pulled from the smouldering ruin, and authorities said they expected the death toll to rise to 100 or more. [Russia's]President... summoned security chiefs to an emergency meeting in the Kremlin, and ordered them to put "tough measures" into effect within 24 hours to catch the culprits and prevent further acts of terror... He... pointed the finger at Islamic militants and battle-hardened Chechen warlords who are fighting against Russian forces in the southern republic of Dagestan. One of the rebel leaders... seemed to take responsibility for the terror wave in Moscow during a weekend interview with journalists. "From now on we will not only fight against Russian fighter jets, tanks and such... Let Russia await our explosions blasting through their cities." However, another guerrilla leader... said his people were not responsible for the Moscow attacks. Four terrorist bombings in just over two weeks have killed upwards of 200 people and radically changed the political atmosphere in Russia... After yesterday's blast, many Muscovites said they were terrified of going outside, using public transport or sending their children to school... Moscow has been rife with rumours that the Kremlin might try to exploit public fears by introducing a state of emergency... [In related news, t]here has been international condemnation of the gruesome murders of three Britons and a N[Z]er in the breakaway Russian region of Chechnya. The four men – N[Z]er Stanley Shaw, Darren Hickey, Rudolf Petschi and Peter Kennedy – were captured by unknown gunmen[two months ago] in... Grozny, where they were installing a mobile phone system.[The UN] Secretary-General... expressed shock yesterday after [hearing] of the discovery of the four severed heads in a sack on a deserted road. Although kidnappings have become common in the region it was the first time foreign hostages had been murdered since the end of the 1994-96 war with Russia. This year alone, about 176 people have been kidnapped, including dozens of foreigners... Chechnya has suffered from poverty and lawlessness since... Moscow withdrew its troops two years ago.

...International outrage is growing over the barbarous deaths of [a N[Z]er... and three Britons... in Chechnya. Revelations that the hostages may have been butchered after local authorities bungled attempts to free them have led to calls for a clampdown in the lawless breakaway Russian territory. Mr Shaw's wife... and 4-year-old daughter... left their home in Surrey, England, last week to stay with her family in Wellington after being told he would soon be free. They now face a grim wait for news of the whereabouts of the 59-year-old telecommunications worker's body. N[Z], British and Chechen authorities are working to bring the remains home to the victims' families... Mr Shaw... [also had] three adult children here... [by] his first marriage... Family say Mr Shaw knew of the risks of working in Chechnya... [-] the men were paid a basic \$NZ62,000 a year, plus \$15,500 danger money... [-] but British newspapers are claiming that in sending workers into the area, Granger Telecom was defying Foreign Office advice... Chechnya's national security chief said a suspect had been detained, but others disputed this.

...Confusion surrounds the whereabouts of the bodies... beheaded... in Chechnya last week. A relative of Mr Shaw told the N[Z] *Herald* yesterday that the family had been informed the men's bodies had been found. But news reports from the lawless Russian region, and in Britain, say the bodies... have yet to be recovered... The *Daily Telegraph* reported... that the kidnappers had asked for £1200... for each body. They have also insisted that members of their gang who have been arrested be released unharmed... The killings have dealt a severe blow to the efforts of [the] Chechen President... to win international recognition for the breakaway northern Caucasus region. He led the separatist armed resistance against an ill-fated Russian military onslaught in... 1994-96[, but k]idnapping, which has turned into a profitable business for many criminal gangs and unruly warlords in the war-devastated region... threatens [hi]s authority.

...THE bulging potato sack lay in a roadside ditch among the barren, snow-covered fields of western Chechnya. When a motorist stopped to see if it contained something for his family to eat, he found the severed heads of four bearded men... Policemen at a checkpoint 1.5km down the road summoned investigators from... Grozny, who placed the heads on a piece of grubby cloth... and photographed them. The picture was printed on the front page of Russian newspapers the next day and appalled diplomats were able to confirm[who] the victims were... Beheading is not unusual in Chechnya. During the... war for independence, the severed heads of Russian soldiers would appear in the Grozny marketplace. These four victims, however, were not soldiers... They were not trying to destroy Chechnya but to rebuild it. Although the contract was worth nearly \$600 million,

large international telecom companies turned it down when security specialists told them Chechnya was as dangerous as Algeria and Colombia. Islamic militants have turned Grozny into a new Beirut and would like to make Chechnya a new Afghanistan. About 400 people have been kidnapped in the last two years and ransom demands of up to \$1m are made for foreigners. Granger Telecom, a small British company... took on the challenge, however, and signed a contract with Chechen Telecom in August 1997. To Granger, it was a godsend. In the 15 months to December 31, 1997, it made a pre-tax loss of more than \$2m... Granger employees started going to Chechnya last spring... It was neither a comfortable nor lucrative existence... They lived behind a steel gate and barred windows and Chechen Telecom provided six bodyguards, armed with machineguns and pistols, who shadowed them around the clock. According to sources in Grozny, however, these bodyguards were not experienced fighters but relatives of... [the] head of Chechen Telecom. The four might have been safer had they registered with local authorities and also with the only other westerners in town, the diplomats at the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. But they failed to do so... [A]fter the release of... [two] British aid workers who had been held for 14 months[, the British] Foreign Office advised Granger Telecom to move its men. This was one of several official warnings. It was also the last. At 4am on Sunday, [two weeks later], 20 armed men in camouflage fatigues surrounded the house. A gun battle flared, but within minutes the gang stormed the compound. The foreigners were bundled into two cars and driven off. Soldiers from an anti-terrorist unit were located only a few doors away but failed to respond because gun battles are so frequent in Grozny. They had not been told of the presence of the four men. The engineers were taken to Urus Marten, a town in south central Chechnya where [the other two British captives] had been held. It is the stronghold of the Wahabis, fundamentalists financed from Saudi Arabia and influenced by the Afghan Taleban. A Wahabi leaflet passed around Grozny last spring declared the struggle to build an Islamic state justified the kidnapping of Westerners. The prisoners were locked in a damp room on the first floor of a five-storey block of flats on the eastern side of town... At some point their captors made them record a video that amounted to a confession of spying... "We installed a satellite aerial so all phone conversations on Chechen territory were heard by German, English and Israeli special services and the CIA,"... said... [their confession. Two months later], Chechen security forces... surrounded the five-storey block, [and] a gun battle broke out. Five gunmen and two members of the security forces were killed. In the chaos, a rescue commando team rushed up the stairwell and shot its way into the flat where the hostages had been held. But it was empty. The kidnappers had been tipped off. The four men had probably thought they were being moved to another hideout when they were woken at gunpoint in the early hours. Instead, they were led away to be killed. It is still unclear exactly how they died, but they were decapitated with a kinzhals, a traditional Chechen knife. The kidnappers seem to have decided holding on to them had become too difficult. The savagery of their deaths is a horrifying blow not just to their families but also for [the Chechen President], a moderate, Western-leaning figure by Chechen standards who knows the episode has destroyed all hopes of Western aid for years to come.

...N[Z]-born engineer Stanley Shaw... was the only [Granger engineer] to escape weeks of twice-daily beatings, says a man who shared their final days... He... was taken hostage with his son, while searching for his other son, who had also been kidnapped. "For a toilet there was one bucket for [7] of us. There was also a bucket of water for drinking. If the kidnappers had been smoking marijuana they might give us some bread and onions. We were told not to share it with the British, but we did share it. For this we were beaten." ...[the] academic and former Chechen official, spent almost one month imprisoned with the men before his family paid a ransom and he was released. Days later he learned that the four had been beheaded... [He] recalled the regular telephone conversations... Rudolf Petschi... was forced to make to Granger to plead for a ransom payment. "He said that during the conversations he was beaten with the handle of a pistol to make him ask for money. At first it was \$US10 million... then \$US8 million and then \$US6 million. The last time he spoke he seemed very sad and upset and kept silent for 1 1/2 days. He said he could not find the money to pay the ransom." [He] said the men were also forced to watch videos of other hostages being beheaded and their remains mutilated... □ Russian checkpoints and the lack of a cellphone network since the invasion of Chechnya... have curtailed the kidnap business, but an estimated 200 victims are still being held... [Russia's President has] called for tougher measures against kidnappers... said... the... Kremlin...

[The 'Kremlin has undergone a \$US823 million refurbishment. The cost was almost the same as the Russian Government owes in wages – and still it asks for overseas loans.']

...Just to keep the record straight, Moscow is not the only city with a 'kremlin'. The Russian word actually means 'citadel' and describes the defensive central fortress of many old Russian towns... As cities grew and as artillery rendered the walled fortress obsolete, these central sites began to be used for all those grand buildings that governments and churches like to show off with. As you gaze around you inside the Moscow Kremlin you'll see the Bell Tower of Ivan the Great, the Armoury with its fabulous collection of Crown Jewels, a clutch of ornate cathedrals, and a bunch of splendid palaces. Mind you, what may catch your attention more than the architecture could be two unusual objects on display. One is the biggest cannon in the world; the other is the biggest bell. I wouldn't want to quibble over these biggest-in-the-world claims. The two artefacts are colossal alright, and casting them must have been incredibly difficult. As far as I know no-one ever managed to outdo them... or wanted to. Russian guides love to point them out... and then to laugh at themselves. Typically Russian, they tell you. Make it big – too big to use! The largest cannon in the world has never fired! The biggest bell in the world has never rung! ...Oh, one other thing. Moscow... boast[s] the first McDonalds in Russia. And... wouldn't you know it? ...it seats 350 people and is apparently the largest in the world! ...It's all part of the Russian psyche. For centuries they've wanted to prove to western Europe that they're every bit as civilized and capable. It matters to Russians to be first, to have the biggest, or the wealthiest, or the most beautiful... [T]he Soviet regime took this competitive business to endless lengths. Moscow was flossied up to be the success story that the Communist bosses wanted the capitalist world to see. While the rest of Russia languished, the capital was filled with monuments on a grand scale... [- in t]he... 82 m... tall... concrete statue called The Motherland[, Russia has]... the largest full-figure statue in the world... [-] to prove that their bankrupt system was actually working. Plenty of these communist displays are just pieces of crass propaganda. I don't know how often I saw Comrade Lenin, pictured in painting or sculpture or stained glass, melodramatically pointing the way forward to an earnest band of heroic citizens. But, to be fair, other monuments make deserved claims. Moscow's grand War Memorial has huge and graphic displays of the desperate battles fought during W[W]2. They leave you horrified at the cost in human lives and destruction, when Stalin's Russia threw back the Nazi invasion. And the city has a soaring monument to the first flight in space. Yes, the Communists beat the Capitalists that time! And they proudly made sure the world knew about it. The memorial reaches to the skies, made of stainless steel covered with polished titanium... What makes me mad is how I could have got it so wrong. All my life the Russians have been the enemy, that alien country on the other side of the Iron Curtain. But now that I've been there... I've discovered they're exactly the same as other Europeans! Literally the same. There's nothing to distinguish the citizens of Moscow from those of any European or American city. They might even be better educated... And that's scary – discovering that ordinary Russians are just the same as the rest of us. All that they've suffered, all that cruelty they've endured, all those millions starved to death by Stalin and others... How could such intelligent, well-educated people be so brutalized for so long? And not just during the 70 years of communism, but under centuries of oppressive aristocratic rule as well. It's a chilling thought – just an accident of history and you or I could be living in a country where the rulers treat their citizens as rubbish. Communists, of course, succeeded in pauperizing a great country. But Moscow does revel in one unexpected operation that the Communists managed to do well – the Moscow Metro. Of course, plenty of the world's mega-cities have an underground rail system. But this one comes with 200 stations, some of which are works of art. Like mini-palaces. Marble everywhere. And stained glass. Chandeliers, murals, mosaics, roof paintings. Travelling on these trains is not just a convenience... it's an experience. Ten million people live in Moscow. Eight million of them use the Metro each day. And they're proud of their transport system. Incredibly, the carriages... platforms... stairways and escalators are spotlessly tidy. No graffiti. Only very rarely a scrap of paper on the ground.

And, believe it or not, you are nowhere safer in Moscow than down here. Muscovites are very protective of their Metro. In this city, whatever crises may occur up above, the Underground is sacred!

...A black BMW with tinted windows and a blue flashing light on the roof stops on Moscow's main Tverskaya St. "Where to?" the driver asks, and after agreeing a rouble price equivalent of \$NZ4 he whisks a journalist to work in unexpected style. It turns out to be a Government minister's car and, as is the case with virtually every other underpaid or unemployed driver in the country, furtive private use of the vehicle is a main source of income. He might make an extra \$20 or \$30 a day moonlighting between the minister's appointments, and although he suspects his boss knows exactly what's going on, nothing is said. Another man at the wheel of a clean, but ageing, Russian Volga is the personal chauffeur of a senior police officer. His boss actively encourages him to make what he can on the side. He knows full well that no one can survive on the official salary. And so on, from coaches to ambulances to hundreds of thousands more private cars choking the capital's streets. Although registered taxi drivers like to moan about the "chastniki," or cowboy cabbies who spend their spare time "bombing," as it is known, they have their own territory in the main tourist areas, at hotels, restaurants and railway stations. Along New Arbat St, in the city centre, yellow cab drivers are loath to interrupt their snooze or put down their detective novel to take a fare of less than \$8. There, at least, if someone else wants to get snarled for hours in traffic jams for less money, that's their business. Other places remain dangerously off-limits and the novice risks a barrage of obscenities, threats or worse from regulars who jealously protect their turf. An unmarked minibus belonging to the French medical relief organisation *Médecins Sans Frontières* had its tyres shot out as it pulled away from Moscow's Sheremetyevo 2 international airport with guests from overseas. This incident was simply a case of mistaken identity, since the airport's notoriously brazen taxi Mafia assumed the vehicle was poaching and decided to teach the driver a lesson. The traffic police take a more laidback view of the practice, which according to the law is punishable as unlicensed conveyance of passengers. "We don't touch them unless they break other rules in the process – everyone's got to make a living, haven't they?" said a traffic cop standing in freezing temperatures at a roadside post. (The fact that many traffic police officers themselves handsomely supplement their own meagre income by imposing "fines" without issuing receipts is not mentioned.) Since not even the city hall's threat of \$10,000 fines managed to stamp out the *chastniki* in... St Petersburg in 1997, it looks as though they are here to stay. Meanwhile, the passengers' part in the transaction is simple enough, providing they are willing to take the risk – albeit still relatively low in Moscow – of travelling with strangers: Put your arm out and get ready to haggle over the price. In fact, the greatest downside of an activity that seems to feed and clothe a hefty part of the population is that, Russia being Russia, too many drivers regard their new passenger as fair game for a 40-minute tirade about the state of the country.

...Workers in Ukraine's energy sector staged strikes at all five of the country's nuclear power plants yesterday, claiming they had not been paid in five months... [By the way, teachers in central Russia will receive their monthly salaries in vodka because the Government's coffers are empty. The 8000 educators in the Altai republic will get 15 bottles of vodka each... Officials in Altai... had previously tried to pay part of the teachers' six-month wage arrears with toilet paper and funeral accessories. The payments were refused.

...Russia seems as far as ever from sorting out its economic mess and the head of the [IMF] says it will take time before Russia gets new cash for its woes... [Furthermore,] it was now unlikely that some \$US4.3 billion... the second tranche of the \$US22.6 billion credit arranged by the IMF... would arrive before late December... [The] centrist Deputy P[M]... warned that without it Russia risks defaulting on its foreign debt.

...Russia's Acting P[M] – who was brought back by Russia's... embattled President... after his successor... was forced to devalue the rouble and default on some foreign debt last week due to a Government and banking cash drought... [–] headed back to Moscow yesterday after unexpected closed-door crisis talks with the head of the [IMF] to try to avoid more agony for his country's battered economy. The talks took place after growing signs that the Russian financial system was verging on meltdown... Across Russia many Russians continue to seek dollars, but supplies at many banks and exchange points have simply dried up. Prices have already risen through the vast import-dependent country, raising fears of widespread industrial unrest among workers who... were unable to draw their salaries as the banking system was grinding to a halt... inspiring an Opposition campaign to force [the President]... to resign... It remained unclear what [the President] planned to do today or whether he planned to show up at his Kremlin office at all. "He probably has some plans, but they haven't told us about them," a spokeswoman said... Since [last week] things have gone from bad to worse. The central bank declared yesterday it could no longer afford to intervene to support the currency and Western analysts said they feared an outright default... The rouble fell to 11.10 to the U[S] dollar, which is... 41% less... than... [it was] last... week... prompting Russia to suspend trading on the Moscow Interbank Currency Exchange.

...[the President], absent from the Russian capital for days despite deepening financial and political turmoil, was back in the Kremlin yesterday and sacked the country's debt negotiator. [The Acting P]M... is running short of time to avert the complete collapse of the Russian economy... The Russian Trading System's... shares index ended on Thursday at its lowest recorded level since its introduction... and millions of Russians besieged banks trying to swap roubles for dollars... For the second day in a row... the Russian central bank called off currency trading without setting any rate whatsoever against the U[S] dollar, leaving the entire economy in an odd sort of limbo... The market plunge[was] triggered by the Government's decision to... restructure domestic debt... default on some foreign debts... and... effectively devalue the rouble... Far more dollars than roubles are in circulation in Russia, but only roubles can be used in shops... Even at the peak of Russian post-Soviet inflation in the early 1990s, people were constantly aware of the rate, often changing prices several times a day. But now, with the rouble... in freefall, the rate is not merely lower, it is simply not there... That has left anyone with an inventory to sell, from the lowliest cigarette pedlar to the flashiest importer of luxury cars, at a loss as to just what the goods are supposed to cost... "We're not selling, but you can order," said the saleswoman at [one] furniture shop. "Next week, maybe, we can tell you what it will cost." ...Many shops, forbidden to take dollars but afraid to take roubles whose actual worth is now anybody's guess, have simply closed.

...Economists say the rouble's collapse could have wider implications for Europe... With German banks and exporters exposed to the Russian economy, some commentators have raised the spectre of a dampening of economic activity in Europe... The British pound rose to more than 2.97 marks... as a crumbling Russian rouble undermined demand for the German currency... The kiwi dollar also continued to fall, hitting a 12-year low of 48.25c against the U[S] dollar... Foreign exchange dealers said there had been strong evidence of U[S] hedge funds selling the kiwi to bank some profit in the face of their losses in Russia... Across the Tasman, the A[US]n dollar was hit even harder, reaching US\$55.95c, the lowest since it was floated in 1983... Market analysts described the A[US]n dollar as one of the commodity club currencies – others are the Canadian and N[Z] dollars – which would suffer if Russia unloaded stocks of minerals and farm produce... [B]ut its exports were running pre-crisis at only \$US80 billion a year and imports at \$US60 billion. N[Z] exports about one-eighth with only one-fortieth the population... [Even so, the NZ] Treasurer... has called for an urgent report on the unfolding Russian currency crisis as N[Z] companies and markets brace for more financial fallout... The Government called for a similar report after the Asian economic crisis... The largest exporter to Russia, the Dairy Board, said it would lose sales of butter and cheese but it was too early to say how much. The board sells around \$270 million of milk products to Russia each year, about 6[%] of its business. Last year, it exported 50,000 tonnes of butter there – making it our biggest butter market after Britain... A spokesman said the board... had little debt owed by Russian firms because it extended only short-term credit... The director of the Institute of Economic Research... said that while the Russian crisis was born of its own domestic problems and not a domino effect from Asia, it added to a more unstable world picture.

...The spectre of Russia's raging economic turmoil drove Asian sharemarkets lower yesterday, with Tokyo dropping 3[%] to its lowest close in six years. The N[Z] sharemarket fell 1.66[%] while A[US]n investors suffered a 1.8[%] fall... "There is a general feeling of helplessness. The A[US]n market has been caught up in the big picture and been dragged down and there is very little we can do about it," said one broker... One investor,

newly arrived from Russia and not wanting to be named, said he was disappointed that the problems of his home country had travelled this far. "There is no way to run away from Russia... [It has] very long arms that come out and grab you, like the KGB!" ...Against the trend, Hong Kong's blue-chip Hang Seng index closed 1.13[%] higher... as its Government flexed its muscles by pumping huge amounts of money into the stock market to counter heavy selling... [During the past two weeks the] Hong Kong... Government... has spent \$US12.5 billion of its \$US96 billion of currency reserves on such intervention.

The Hong Kong Government is shredding double the usual amount of its files, including top secret police and security branch records, according to figures published yesterday. Officials deny the increase is due to the impending handover to Chinese rule...

The only way China can restore confidence in Hong Kong is to reverse its policy of unwinding democratic reforms and dismantling the elected legislature, says[the] British Foreign Secretary[who]... arrived in the midst of a bitter political quarrel over the future of democratic elections and human rights laws, which China plans to scratch after... midnight on June 30[when the]... British colony... reverts to China... Beijing argues its plan to install a provisional legislature in place of the elected legislative chamber and roll back key elements of Hong Kong's civil liberties, including part of its bill of rights, would not materially affect freedom.

...Hong Kong has seen many boat people come and go. But a boatload of refugees leaving Hong Kong harbour today is travelling first class, five-star hotel, champagne all the way. In what is perhaps a more potent symbol of the end of empire than the last Union Jack, the cruise ship Oriana is sailing from Hong Kong with more than 100 English civil servants enjoying this last perk of their pampered colonial lives... The idea of the cruise home was that civil servants, worn out by the travails of administering the natives in the tropics, needed a slow boat home to reward them for their hard work. At a cost of \$HK62,700 a berth – totalling \$9.9 million to Hong Kong taxpayers – it is certainly a reward. A flight back to London costs less than a third of the fare... A couple of years ago when the public began making noises about the luxury cruises home, the Hong Kong Government tried to end the perks. But this raised howls of fury and energetic opposition rarely seen in any civil service. The cruise stayed. While the Oriana may represent all that Hong Kong will be delighted to see the end of come handover day... there are many on board this last cruise who will find it hard to leave... For these people, many of whom have spent most of their lives here, are leaving a place they know far better than the cold, wet Britain they are returning to. Many have married and raised their children here and are taking their families from their homes to a new country because they are no longer welcome in their old one.

...Although the British and Chinese communities have lived on top of each other in this tiny corner of Asia for more than 150 years, each has hardly left an impression, beyond distrust and disdain, on the other... [A]n enduring symbol of just how little success the British have had in dislodging the... traditions from this land... is a lonely Chinese grave... of one of the Tangs, the New Territories clan which resisted invasion of their lands by the British last century... The Tang ancestor looks from his carefully chosen hillside across a vast monument to western civilisation and technology. Once upon a time he looked out at Hong Kong harbour. Now all he sees are the towers of Tsuen Wan, a new town built almost entirely on land reclaimed from the sea – not because the area lacked suitable building sites, but because there was not enough land the British could wrest from the New Territories clans without long, complex arguments about traditions and ownership. Although the British leased the New Territories for 99 years from China in 1898 (the lease of which expires at the end of this month and led to the agreement to hand back the whole territory, including Hong Kong island which was never leased), nobody asked the people of the New Territories whether they agreed with this arrangement. As it turned out they most emphatically did not, and opposed the arrival of the British in every way they could. Initially it was by... burning down police stations. Later it was by... telling the British that every time they tried to build a town, a road, a police station, that it was interfering with the forces of nature, or feng shui, believed necessary for health, fortune and harmony... [T]o avoid... confrontations and arguments... the British... let the Chinese use their own laws to police their communities, including marriage laws which allowed Chinese men to take more than one wife and property laws which prevented daughters from inheriting land. It was not until the early 70s that Hong Kong had a marriage ordinance permitting only one wife at a time. It is still ignored by many men who keep a second wife on the other side of the border with China. AS a result of this extreme form of cultural laissez faire, the New Territories is now one of the world's most precious repositories of Chinese culture. So it is overrun by anthropologists seeking to tap traditions that disappeared from the mainland years ago... On Hong Kong island, where the British first set up in 1841, the... middle- and upper-class British lived on the top and slopes of Victoria Peak... so, the locals believed, they could look down upon the Chinese who were not permitted to live there. Administration was carried out in English, often by officials who spoke little or no Chinese, even where the decisions affected locals who spoke little or no English. Official notices were sent around in English. There were few appeals against official decisions, because few people understood what had been decided. The English belonged to clubs which the Chinese, no matter how rich, could enter only as servants. Elderly Chinese still talk... of signs saying: "Dogs and Chinese not allowed." This sort has not entirely disappeared: only the groups being discriminated against have changed. Recently a luxury tower block in the heart of Hong Kong island put notices in its lifts saying Filipinas and dogs should use the service lifts. Two things helped the blatant discrimination disappear. The first was the invasion of Hong Kong during which, in less than a month, the Asian nation of Japan crushed, executed and imprisoned the seemingly invincible British forces. That changed the local acceptance of British superiority. And the post-war arrival of Shanghai's ruling merchant class, escaping the communist takeover of their city, brought a very different element to Hong Kong's Chinese community... They had money, or if they had lost it all to the communists, knew how to make money... [T]hey were used to being in charge... and... [were] able to challenge the British bourgeoisie... Now it is unquestionably the Chinese merchants who dominate Hong Kong... IT is also the Chinese merchant princes who most oppose the move toward democracy fostered by the last British governor... As far as they are concerned the British bits they have been happy to assume – like the well-run administrative and legal systems, the snooty clubs and the well-tailored suits – are quite enough. Imposing things like power-sharing with the ordinary people is an imposition of British culture that Hong Kong's British rulers never wanted or needed, argue the Chinese businessmen. And as they have done with all other bits of unwanted British culture, they are now doing their best to jettison it... Most other refugees arriving in[post-war] Hong Kong were impoverished southern Chinese escaping disease, warfare or starvation in the chaos of mainland China... Those who survived the journey to Hong Kong usually took jobs in the sweat-shops of Kowloon and spent the rest of their lives just surviving.

...[the woman], aged 40... spends her days shopping at Chanel and Cartier... and... lunching at the American Club... [L]ike all her generation, the Hong Kong-born children of mainland refugees, [she] is a hybrid... When Chinese leaders talk of the joy of reunification with Hong Kong... they think of Hong Kongers as a Chinese population just waiting to cast off the culture of their British masters and go back to being truly Chinese. But Beijing is in for a nasty shock... one China may ultimately find more difficult to swallow than that of its irritating but temporary neighbour, the British... [A] lecturer in literature at the Chinese University... says that while Hong Kong people have only recently begun to identify themselves as Hong Kongese, rather than Chinese, they now show a strong preference for that identity... [Furthermore, many] of the traditions Westerners call "Chinese" are now more accurately "Hong Kongese." On ceremonial ancestor worship days such as Ching Ming, police in Hong Kong are put on crowd control duty to make sure the hordes out to sweep grandma's grave and offer her roast piglet and oranges don't crush each other. Over the border in China, the graveyards are empty and the piglets still with their mothers because no one bothers with the rites[for keeping] ancestors' ghosts and other roaming spirits happy... [Indeed,] according to the *Workers Daily*... Chinese authorities have removed 7.4 million graves in Jiangsu province to create 80,000ha of farmland... The paper did not say what became of the bodies, but China is in the midst of a campaign to encourage cremation to preserve scarce farmland... Everything people do in Hong Kong is influenced by[superstitious] beliefs... Most of the mobile phone

numbers still available on the biggest network in Hong Kong end in four. That's because the Cantonese word for four, *sei*, sounds like death and no-one wants a number which ends in death. Equally, eight is the best number to have... because the Chinese character for eight is linked to money. If you can't get eight, something with two and three together is a good compromise because, said together, they sound like "easy life" in Cantonese. This obsession with the right numbers, the right place, the right names is more than mere superstition. It is about storing up your luck. Hong Kong Chinese... believe success comes from two things: luck and hard work. Hong Kong is a city built on optimism. And Hong Kongers put vast stores of energy into looking for that lucky break that is going to make them rich. It is no accident Hong Kong has the world's highest per capita horse race betting turnover. The punters who mass the streets outside the Happy Valley racecourse... are not there for love of horses... That overpowering optimism has made it possible for people in Hong Kong to endure living conditions that would cause despair elsewhere. More than half the population, 3.19 million, live in Government housing estates, endless tiled tower blocks in a sea of cement, where the "flats" are often little more than one room... Three-generation families of six or seven live in these flats, the children expected to top the class by studying in a corner of a stuffy room where the television is permanently turned on and mother plays mahjong with fourth aunty and her friends. "It's easy to get these children to come to school and behave," a teacher... says. "It's the only place they get any peace." Somehow the children survive, though a sadly increasing number do give up and throw themselves off the tower blocks. And they grow up to become the people who may prove to be mainland China's biggest challenge yet, the people who implicitly believe in their ability to make the Hong Kong miracle happen, with a little luck, just one more time... [Unfortunately, no one has] bothered to plan properly for the arrival of children... entitled to come to Hong Kong from July 1, even though everyone is... agreed that the last thing wanted [is] for the 65,000 children known to have the right to settle in Hong Kong to come all at once before the 16 new schools needed to educate them and thousands of flats needed to house them [have] been built.

...A "Pillar of Shame" – a copper sculpture of 50 anguished figures – took centre stage last night at what may be Hong Kong's last pro-democracy rally. The 8m high statue bears inscriptions in English and Chinese saying "The old cannot kill the young forever," a reference to the Tiananmen Square massacre eight years ago when the Chinese People's Liberation Army crushed the student-led pro-democracy movement. Last night's anniversary vigil by candlelight was expected to... go ahead despite the storms that hit the island yesterday. The territory's future leader... also tried to dampen proceedings by appealing for the Tiananmen Square "baggage" to be dropped. He said that protests "within the law" will be tolerated after the handover, an assurance that will be tested by students at Hong Kong University who have vowed to continue displaying the Pillar of Shame at their campus... Yesterday, more than 20 Nobel laureates... petitioned[the] Chinese President... demanding the release of the 1989 protest leader... and all... 303... political prisoners... [still] detained as a result of 1989 pro-democracy activities... China still denies that any citizens were killed... in the Tiananmen tragedy... [However, under] the watchful eyes of plainclothes police... families of those killed... on June 3-4... flocked to cemeteries in Beijing.

...China's disgraced Communist Party chief, who was] sacked after the 1989 student demonstrations... has been barred from receiving visitors as punishment for his appeal for a review of[the] pro-democracy protests, Chinese sources said yesterday. A weekly golf game that was one of his few privileges, offering him an occasional escape from virtual house arrest, has also been cancelled... [He] was last seen in public when he visited student protesters in Tiananmen Square on May 19[of 1989], just hours before the Government declared martial law, and begged the protesters, with tears in his eyes, to vacate the square.

...[Documents reportedly smuggled out of China by a disaffected civil servant say the Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping ordered the violent crackdown on demonstrators at Tiananmen Square out of fear they could topple the communist regime. The documents reveal deep-seated paranoia that the protests were controlled by unknown anti-communist conspirators. They also showed anxiety by the party's top leaders that the more than one million demonstrators gathered on Tiananmen Square could demand their arrest. According to the transcripts, one month into the protests Deng told other Chinese leaders: "Anarchy gets worse every day. If this continues we could even end up under house arrest." He is quoted as saying at a meeting held at the Communist Party Central Office on May 18, 1989: "After thinking long and hard about this, I've concluded that we should bring in the People's Liberation Army and declare martial law in Beijing." Two weeks later, troops using live ammunition moved in on the demonstrators, ending seven weeks of pro-democracy protests in Beijing. Two days after the violent crackdown, Deng defended the decision in a Central Politburo standing committee meeting. "If we hadn't been firm with these counter-revolutionary riots, who knows what might have happened? The People's Liberation Army has suffered a great deal; we owe them a lot, we really do." Publication of the documents follows 'an unprecedented legal action, in which a group of 105 victims' relatives and people wounded in the shooting have submitted a petition and evidence to Chinese courts demanding they conduct a criminal investigation into the deaths and prosecute those they hold responsible. Success would be "as difficult as changing China to a democracy," said the executive director of the New York-based group Human Rights in China. There has so far been no official response to the petitions and evidence. Chinese authorities maintain the decision to use military force was correct and the verdict will never be changed.'

...The release of the details of the secret debate among China's leaders before they crushed the pro-democracy protests on Tiananmen Square in 1989 don't just tell us about China's past. They also tell us a lot about its present, and even about its likely future. What comes through clearly in the documents leaked to the Washington-based journal *Foreign Affairs* is the extent of the generational split in the Chinese Communist leadership at the time. That same split also explains why the "Tiananmen papers" have been leaked now – and why China will probably get democracy, in the end, without having to go through all that again. It was always clear who decided to open fire on the students and citizens of Beijing on June 4, 1989, killing several hundred of them at least and probably many more. The nine Communist "elders" who made that choice, most of them semi-retired men in their 80s and 90s, were the original revolutionary generation who had spent their lives ordering the deaths of any Chinese who opposed them. They were outraged at this challenge to Communist rule by "those goddam bastards" on Tiananmen Square, as one elder put it on June 2, according to the leaked documents. "These kids don't know how good they've got it. When we were their age, we lived in a forest with rifles and a rain of bullets. We've got to use force or the common people will rebel. Anyone who tries to overthrow the Communist Party deserves death and no burial." It is no surprise, either, that the "senior leaders" imposed the policy of massacre by removing those among the younger generation (that is, those in their 60s and 70s) who opposed it. Their key move was the illegal replacement of the party's General Secretary, who is still under house arrest in Beijing, with the incumbent. This generational argument is still going on in China, and will determine whether the world's biggest country becomes a democracy or remains the great exception to the historical record.'

...Tiananmen Square was originally designed and built in 1651. It was enlarged to four times its original size and cemented over in 1958; it covers an area of 40.5 hectares and each flagstone is numbered for ease in assembly of parades. The square derives its name from the massive stone Tiananmen ("Gate of Heavenly Peace") – once the main gate of the former Imperial Palace – situated at its northern end. In the centre of the square, on a two-tiered marble terrace, is the Monument to the People's Heroes (completed 1958). A monumental museum complex (opened 1961) lying to the east of the square includes the Museum of the Chinese Revolution (dedicated to Chinese history since 1919) and the Museum of Chinese History (dedicated to Chinese history before 1919). To the south is the Mao Zedong Memorial Hall (completed 1977), in which the body of Mao lies in state. A well-planned site for massive gatherings, Tiananmen Square has been the rallying point for student demonstrations since 1919.'

...Some of the most dramatic events in China's history took place in 1989, most of them televised globally. Hundreds of thousands of students marked former party leader Hu Yaobang's death in mid-April by staging massive demonstrations in Tiananmen Square. The students demanded curbs on government corruption and called for improved conditions in China's overcrowded colleges. A six-week standoff took place, with the students now joined by thousands of workers, civil servants, journalists, and ordinary citizens. Similar demonstrations quickly spread to scores of other cities. Finally troops moved in. Hundreds – perhaps thousands – of demonstrators were killed or wounded. Foreign (especially Western) reaction was severe. Tourism naturally

plummeted, and in 1989 alone China lost over \$1 billion in tourist revenues. More important were other economic losses, owing to large-scale postponements of loans and diminished trade. On the domestic scene, especially in urban China, a sullen mood took hold. Notwithstanding the repression of 1989, the China of Deng Xiaoping was a far more open society than the China of Mao Zedong. Nevertheless, severe problems remained, including over 180 million illiterates, serious pollution caused by rapid industrialization, energy and transportation shortages that idled up to a fifth of all industry, and persistent unemployment. Perhaps the most difficult problem, however, concerned the enormous population, which had risen from about 540 million in 1949 to 1,133 million by 1990. Because of this growth, the government had instituted a "one child per family" policy. Conformity was generally good in urban China, but there was much noncompliance in rural areas. Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait in 1990 helped bring China back into the world community. China supported sanctions against Iraq and did not block authorization of the use of force in the crisis']...

THE SHOCK of the Tiananmen Square massacre eight years ago sent more than a million Hong Kongers on to the streets in a protest march[a few weeks ago]. When Hong Kong is returned to China... Beijing will be handed vast sums of wealth in cash reserves, infrastructure and talent. Can it be trusted with Treasure Island? ...Winning back Hong Kong has made China explode with patriotism. Taking back Macau in 1999 will mean another big party. But the real prize is Taiwan. Even the "one country, two systems" formula under which Hong Kong will be allowed to run its internal affairs was worked out with Taiwan in mind. China lost the island in 1949, when the defeated Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek fled there with the last one million of his troops and set up his alternative government of all China. Taiwan has given up any real claim to rule China, but China is still fiercely determined to win this "rebel province" back. It isn't so much about Taiwan's huge wealth, and its population of 21 million – more than three times Hong Kong's. Or about controlling the main sea lanes to Japan and South Korea. It is more about nationalism and protecting the power of the Communist Party regime. Winning back Taiwan will finally reunify all China after 150 years of dismemberment and end the last small threat to the Chinese government's legitimacy. China still does not rule out invading democratic Taiwan, but knows a peaceful takeover – with Taiwan allowed to run itself – is its best chance. It has invited dozens of Taiwanese to witness the handover. But it knows Taiwan will be more interested to see what happens after the fireworks.

...Just as Hong Kong prepares for the biggest party of its life, drug-resistant cholera has emerged and is threatening an epidemic guaranteed to ruin the handover party. Nine people in different parts of the territory have developed cholera in the past week and all have a form resistant to tetracycline, the drug normally used to treat it... With 8000 journalists expected to converge on Hong Kong for the handover to China... and tens of thousands of tourists, returning residents and officials also expected, the stage has been set for a medical disaster of epic proportions should health authorities be unable to locate the source of the infection and control it. Hong Kong's last serious outbreak of cholera was in the summer of 1994 when it was traced to the water in live fish tanks used by seafood restaurants in Aberdeen, an industrial and fishing centre on the south side of Hong Kong island.

...Britain hands its last colony back to the Chinese next week... [However, the swapping of rulers is expected to change little in a region that will be] allowed to keep its capitalist system for the next 50 years.

...Celebrations to mark Hong Kong's first day as part of China saw a fireworks display which outshone the one put on to farewell its British colonial masters. Twenty tonnes of fireworks lit the sky, bringing oohs, aahs and applause from the crowd of... people lining both sides of the harbour. In a city not noted for understatement, the business community spent \$HK100 million... on the show.

...The last firecracker celebrating the change from British to Chinese sovereignty had barely burst before... the new Hong Kong [Government's]... first big problem began demanding attention. Parents carrying small children and babies besieged the... Immigration Department to hand them in... The children were all "illegal immigrants," children smuggled over the Hong Kong border in trucks, speed boats, cargo holds – any way possible – to get them into Hong Kong by July 1... the date on which, so the parents believed, the... new constitution... gave every mainland-born child with a Hong Kong parent the right of abode in Hong Kong... However[a]... quick decision was made to start sending them back to China. Hundreds have been... hauled off to prison to await deportation. Some of the children, including an eight-year-old who was born on the Lo Wu bridge dividing China from Hong Kong but was ruled to have been born in China not Hong Kong by the Immigration Department, have gone back underground. This means they cannot attend school, see a doctor or even play in local playgrounds without risking detection. If you see a doctor or go to school you must bring along an immigration-issued identity card or birth certificate to prove you have the right to be in Hong Kong. Doctors, hospitals, and schools are obliged to report anyone they believe has illegally entered Hong Kong. While the Immigration Department was struggling to cope[the]... Chief Executive-elect... weighed in with legislation preventing the children already in Hong Kong claiming the right to stay... [T]he Provisional Legislature rushed the legislation through... It also obligingly backdated the legislation to July 1, so none of the children whose presence was declared in Hong Kong last week could slip through the net... [In addition, the Government intends 'to abolish an asylum-seeking policy set up under the British era that made the territory a haven for would-be refugees, mainly from Vietnam, and has already agreed to overturn the policy under which Vietnamese boat people can remain while applying for status as political refugees.'] At this time of year, Hong Kong is usually winding down... [for the] summer holidays... But this week, holidays and resorts could not have been further from the minds of those with jobs in the new Hong Kong Special Administrative Government.

...[the girl's] mother died giving her life seven years ago. Now she is at the centre of a battle to prevent the Hong Kong Government strangling the rights of children like [herself] at the birth of Chinese-controlled Hong Kong. [The girl] has spent the past two years in hiding, ever since her father rescued her from her mainland village in 1995 and brought her to his home in Hong Kong. She could not go to school and has lived in constant fear of being discovered by the authorities. But she and her 58-year-old father had been waiting for a magic day... when they knew Chinese-controlled Hong Kong's new constitution, the Basic Law, would give her the right to live in Hong Kong as the child of a Hong Kong resident. As soon as the Hong Kong immigration department opened its doors after the five-day holiday to celebrate the handover to China, [the father and daughter] joined thousands of other parents and children lining up to declare their presence in Hong Kong. But the welcome was not forthcoming. The new administration, appalled at the social burden the estimated 65,000 mainland children who now qualify for residence in Hong Kong was going to impose on the territory, hastily pushed legislation through the Provisional Legislative Council making it mandatory for all such children to go through complex bureaucratic procedures. First, they must get a "Certificate of entitlement" in Hong Kong and then wait over the border in mainland China until the local authorities grant them a permit to enter Hong Kong. These permits are notoriously difficult to get unless the applicants are well-connected or willing to pay hefty "tea money" demands to expedite the paperwork. Those who simply wait in line can wait for 10 years or more, often staying with relatives or even paid babysitters. [The 7-year-old girl] spent the first five years of her life being raised by a paid baby-sitter because she had no relatives in her mother's village and her father was not able to get her in to Hong Kong. It was only when the baby-sitter abandoned her that her father had no alternative but to bring her back to Hong Kong with him and wait... until July 1, 1997, gave her the right to stay there. Far from being given permission to stay, [she]... was arrested... In scenes more reminiscent of a Stalinist state than a capitalist paradise, hundreds of children who had registered their presence in Hong Kong were rounded up by the immigration authorities and held in detention, pending, their parents feared, deportation to China. [The 7-year-old's] father and all the other parents under-estimated the Hong Kong Government's determination not to be landed with a mass of immigrant children... Not only did the Government take the unprecedented step of passing a law which alters its own constitution... [-] something which is supposed to be done after public consultation and in agreement with China's supreme legislative body, the National People's Congress[-] but it also backdated it to midnight on June 30... Here it has opened itself up to question over the validity of passing a law backdated to a time before the body which passed the law... had been legally established. It is this

validity issue[rather] than sympathy towards the plight of the children, many of whom have heart-breaking stories, that has prompted such a flurry of legal activity and has got the finest legal minds in Hong Kong lining up to represent the children for free. [The 7-year-old]’s case comes before the courts again on Monday.

...Children have returned to their classrooms for a new academic year to find history textbooks... for high schools... have relegated Taiwan to a Chinese province and that the Tiananmen Square massacre was not a massacre at all... The chairman of the Hong Kong Professional Teachers’ Union... was stunned by the changes. He also expressed concern at the raising of China’s flag at schools and the playing of the national anthem, but Pui Kiu Middle School[’s] principal... said the flag “serves as a reminder of the integrity and dignity we Chinese have always possessed.”

...*Academic’s sacking sparks row over teaching of law...* The sacking of a law professor has fuelled fears of an erosion of legal standards in Hong Kong... At the centre of the storm is a British academic... who was sacked last week by the City University for, he says, daring to criticise poor academic standards... within his faculty and for refusing to pass students whose work he considered unworthy of a pass. [The]Professor... called it the “beginning of the end of freedom of speech in Hong Kong” and said it indicated the rule of law, something Hong Kong prides itself on, was now seriously compromised. “It’s not just about academic freedom – it’s the rule of law,” he said. “What governs now is the expediency of the moment.” With Hong Kong’s legal system, which is a common law system based on British law, under siege from changes brought about by the handover to Chinese rule and fears that the widespread commercial and criminal lawlessness troubling China will spill over into Hong Kong, problems with legal teaching are the last thing Hong Kong needs.

...The Hong Kong Government is preparing itself for a state of emergency if a judgment, due out today, finds that all law ceased when the territory was handed over to China because Beijing illegally imposed its own legislature on Hong Kong... However[, the]... newly created Secretary of Justice... said the administration was “prepared to do whatever was necessary” if Hong Kong’s Appeal Court rules that the new legislature, the Provisional Legislative Council, has no legal standing. But she refused to give further details of how the administration would rule the territory without a body to debate and pass law... Hong Kong’s new Chief Executive, has remained silent on what will happen if the judges rule against his Government... Pressured or not, the judges ruling on this, billed as the most important case in Hong Kong’s legal history, have a very difficult job. The case came before the Appeal Court as a legal emergency because defence barristers in one of the first criminal cases to be heard after July 1 argued their clients... [-] three businessmen accused of criminal conspiracy... [-] had no case to answer as the laws under which they were charged were now unenforceable... The judge hearing the case recognised this argument could let every person facing criminal charges escape prosecution.

...Senior British Foreign Office officials are reportedly pressing for... the former Governor of Hong Kong... to be prosecuted under the Official Secrets Act for allegedly leaking classified documents revealing a secret deal with China over Hong Kong... MI6... has uncovered evidence that intelligence reports were passed to[a] writer and broadcaster... while [he was] writing *The Last Governor*[, although]... no direct quotations from the documents appear in[the] book...

...it will... be in Beijing’s own interest to ensure that the Hong Kong success story is not tarnished under Chinese rule. Much face will be lost if Hong Kong’s vibrant economy is allowed to falter. And there’s more than face at stake. After the handover ceremonies, [the]... Chinese President... made it clear that with Hong Kong’s return to the motherland, his next target was Taiwan, in order to bring about “the complete reunification of the country.” Taiwan’s 21.5 million may not share that goal and are better placed than Hong Kong’s 6.5 million to resist it. But if Beijing is to have any hope of recovering Taiwan, it will have to govern Hong Kong not only as well as Britain did but even better. It will be no easy task... Beijing must beware that stars are at their brightest before they start to burn out.

...The common assertion that China is emerging as a Great Power would carry more weight if it had not been made so often before... This time what is prompting the... [assertion is an astonishing level of growth. T]he Chinese economy... is on the way to [becoming... the biggest in the world – as it was until the 18th century... China has achieved in a couple of decades what it took Britain and America a century or more to achieve... Parallels are being drawn between China and other countries that have gone through rapid industrialisation. The one most often picked out is... the Germany united by Bismarck last century that shattered the balance of power in Europe. China has a long history... but it contains little militarism. In fact, the soldier was near the bottom of the traditional Chinese scale of esteem, even though several dynasties were founded by military adventures. Then and later, Asian rulers paid tribute to the Chinese Emperor because they wanted to trade with China, not because they were forced to do so... China is the biggest country in[modern] Asia, in population if not in area, and still one of the poorest: Russia is even bigger and not much better off – but few see it becoming a threat again, at least in the foreseeable future. The Chinese call their country Zhongguo, the Middle Kingdom, the centre of all that is “Under Heaven.” They are now learning how to treat others as equals and they have come a long way... Why is it then that so many people see China as a threat? ...Under Mao, China supported revolutionary movements in other countries, especially in South-east Asia. Under Deng it stopped that and these days it has good relations with all members of Asean... The most serious danger now is that China and the U[S] will come into conflict over Taiwan... Taiwan made it easier for the generals by sending its President to America... threatening the basis of the relationships between the U[S] and... China. But, contrary to the usual assumption, generals are not necessarily war-mongers. Mao was not a general: nor was Stalin or Hitler. In this century at least, wars have usually been started by ideologues rather than military men. So it is relevant to ask, what role do ideologues play in China’s policymaking at present? Most observers seem to agree that, for all practical purposes, ideology is dead in China – except the ideology of capitalism.

...[“China is still on schedule for its long-awaited, hard-earned economic soft landing, judging from its performance in the first half of the year. But the question economists are posing is what will the pilots do once the plane is docked? Retail price inflation, China’s favoured measure, came in at a comparatively miserly 7.1%, after dizzying yearly figures of 21.7% in 1994, and 14.8% last year. However, the longer-term scenario presents China’s leaders with problems requiring more baffling solutions than a clamp on credit or a freeze on prices to rein in growth and inflation. The hulking state-owned enterprises continue to show little or no signs of improvement, entrenched as they are with problems such as chronic over-staffing, crippling debt, and a lack of flexibility to adapt to a changing market because of their historical roles in China’s old planned economy. Millions of people are also tied up in the agricultural sector, preventing any sudden and obvious measures for reform because of a fear of a sudden boom in the numbers of jobless, and listless’]...

China’s media is under strict Government and Communist Party control and has guidelines to cover 70[%] positive and 30[%] negative news... In an apparent loosening of... controls on the media... China’s... Premier... urged... journalists to cover more of the “dark side” of China’s economic reforms... The casualties of China’s economic growth have been growing unemployment lines, urban poverty, worker exploitation and an end to free medical care and schooling in the cities. Rising corruption among Government officials at all levels has also become a major gripe nationwide.

...Chairman Mao Zedong swept the communists to power in 1949 on a wave of popular rage against the corruption of Nationalist Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and oversaw the effective elimination of the centuries-old practice of squeeze. For three decades just about everyone in China was as poor as each other. But then in 1978... Deng Xiaoping... took over the reins and launched his economic and open-door reforms that created the opportunities for ordinary Chinese to make money and for officials to abuse their position for personal gain. In the early 1980s, Mr Deng replaced Maoist egalitarianism with such slogans as “to get rich is glorious” – and many Communist Party officials took it to heart, using the lack of a legal framework and loopholes in rudimentary economic controls to make themselves, their relatives and their friends rich... Resentment against corruption was the leading grievance in the 1989 student-led demonstrations for more democracy centred in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square... By the early 1990s, corruption exploded as the economy boomed, growth soared and the race to get rich moved into high gear.

...HE WAS A VERY SMALL BOY, BUT THE VILLAGE ELDERS RE-member him distinctly because his family was descended from a mandarin, the most famous citizen of the humble settlement of Paifangcun until, well, until the very small boy came along. The eminent ancestor had passed the torturous series of civil examinations to prove he was a master of the Confucian classics and thus fit to serve the Emperor in faraway Beijing. And the boy's forefather did just that, at the every height of empire, when the Sons of Heaven, as the Emperors were called, could afford to sneer at the Western barbarians begging to trade with their Celestial Kingdom. By the time the boy was born, in 1904, the empire was moribund, preyed upon by the very foreigners it despised... [T]he boy was remembered not just because he was a good student like his ancestor but because he liked to turn somersaults. He would roll out of his family compound... and away into the countryside... then back home again, turning and turning and turning. And his life would be one of many somersaults... [until, finally, he gained] the role of emperor of a nation that could once again afford to sneer... The eldest son of the county sheriff was given a two-character name that meant "first saint," perhaps a reference to his father's Buddhist piety. Only later, in France, did Deng Xiansheng become Deng Xiaoping, the two syllables a prescient nom de guerre, literally meaning "little peace,"... In France he learned to love the game of... soccer... [-] he once pawned an overcoat to buy a ticket for a match. But Deng had landed in a France mired in a deep postwar recession, with few opportunities for a student to support himself with part-time work. He spent most of the next five years working at various menial jobs: arms-factory worker, waiter, train conductor and rubber-overshoe assembler. As a member of the proletariat, he learned something else: communism, the doctrine spreading among French industrial labourers and the Chinese students among them. In 1922 Deng joined the Communist Youth League set up by his expatriate countrymen... He earned his true credentials, however, in Moscow, where he studied Marxist-Leninist thought in 1926. Then it was back to a strife-torn China to propagate the faith. Deng's first assignment, as ideological watchdog to a Soviet-supported warlord, fell through when his patron defected to the Nationalists. Deng's next mission was even less promising: the young communist was ordered to the backcountry of Guangxi province in the far south, where he was to organize ragtag rebels to seize huge cities. Deng went loyally, even though he knew the task was impossible. The journey, however, proved to be momentous. On it he met up with Mao Zedong. The two hit it off almost at once... When Mao was denounced and demoted by pro-Russian elements of the party as an "escapist" for advocating a hit-and-run campaign of attrition, Deng was ousted along with him... Their fortunes changed after October 1934. Harassed by superior Nationalist forces, the Red Army of Jiangxi joined the arduous Long March, threading in round-about ways through the hinterland until it straggled to the caves of Yan'an in north-western Shaanxi province a year and 12,000 km later. The retreat cost the lives of more than 90,000 troops, but sheer survival, along with the self-sacrifice the soldiers displayed towards civilians en route, made heroes of the communists. Mao's guerrilla strategy had by then made him the movement's unchallenged leader... But the civil war... was soon subsumed into the bloody conflict with invading Japanese forces... After Japan's defeat in 1945, Deng was instrumental in driving a military wedge down the middle of China, forcing the Nationalists to withdraw and enabling Mao to press on to victory by October 1949. With the establishment of the People's Republic, Deng began a rapid rise. From 28th in the communist party pecking order in 1945, he became General Secretary of the party and one of Mao's 12 Deputy Premiers in 1956. That was the year Khrushchev came to power in Moscow and denounced Stalin at a secret Soviet party congress. Learning of this indictment of a "personality cult," Deng commended it to his own party – a move used to discredit him in the following decade by the Mao-worshipping Red Guards of the Cultural Revolution. In truth, Deng was still loyal to Mao. Indeed, when Mao moved against his intellectual rivals in the Anti-Rightist purge, Deng organized a merciless roundup of as many as half a million of his friend's ideological enemies. Mao appreciated the fervor... Nevertheless, one of the most devastating, man-made catastrophes of the 20th century would fray their comradeship and wound China almost mortally. AT LEAST 30 MILLION, PERHAPS 40 million, Chinese died as a result of Mao's Great Leap Forward, his campaign to overtake the per capita industrial production of Britain within 15 years. It was Mao's attempt, by sheer force of will, to march a deeply impoverished nation into the front ranks of modernity. The Leap's un-scientific agricultural practices and inane technologies turned China into an immense archipelago of unproductive communes racked by famine. No one had clean hands... Deng himself sycophantically proclaimed high expectations for grain harvests: "We can all have as much as we want." His own home county would be ravaged by hunger. Mao refused to believe reports of famine, at one point joking that "even if there's a collapse, that'll be all right. The worst that will happen is that the whole world will get a big laugh out of it." By 1961, however, not only were people dying by the millions but the state was on the verge of collapse. By then President Liu decided the time had come to make a leap in another direction – and Deng collaborated with Liu's economic reforms. During a visit to Guangzhou, Deng declared, "It doesn't matter whether the cat is black or white, as long as it catches mice." It was his way of arguing that any method could be tried as long as it meant the people could eat. The words would later be used against him. Mao continued to ordain idiotic agricultural experiments, but Liu and Deng side-tracked the policies. The strategy – a sort of bureaucratic guerrilla warfare – exasperated the Great Helmsman... Finally, even Mao recognized that China was famished and dying. He made a strategic retreat and allowed Liu and Deng to restore order to the food supply. But he never forgave them for showing him up... Mao's revenge came in 1966 with the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution... By August 1967, with China in tumult... Deng... and Liu were put on public trial. Liu's leg was broken in the spectacle, and he later died of pneumonia in a makeshift prison in the city of Kaifeng. At the trial Red Guards decried Deng as a "capitalist roader," a "fascist" and a "traitor" and shouted, "cook the dog's head in boiling oil!" Confronted by such rantings for hours on end, Deng simply removed his hearing aid. What saved him from Liu's fate, evidently, was... [that while] Mao had always despised the patrician Liu, he remembered with some affection his wartime adventures with Deng. Thus Mao declared Liu "an enemy of the people" but defined the opposition of his old comrade as an antagonism that emerged "from among the ranks of the people." Deng and his wife were allowed to live under house arrest in Beijing for two years before being sent south to the old revolutionary base of Jiangxi. They were... required to work mornings in the tractor factory. Their greatest sorrows at this time were the death of Deng's younger brother, driven to suicide by Red Guards, and the crippling of their son... A promising student of physics at Peking University, [their son] was hounded by radicals until he fell – or was pushed – from a fourth-storey window. His spine was fractured, leaving him paraplegic. Deng spent his spare time in exile reading, pacing the grounds of his house and calculating what China needed to recover its sanity. His moment came in 1973. By then, the Red Guards were nearly a spent force, and the army had to intervene to save the nation by manning civilian posts. Mao, wary of the increasing importance of the People's Liberation Army, thought Deng, whom the military respected, would serve to check its influence. Beyond that, Premier Zhou, Deng's onetime mentor in Paris, respected his knack for down-to-earth statecraft. Summoned back to Beijing, Deng... resumed his post of Deputy Premier and within two years had helped author Zhou's Four Modernizations, the manifesto of practical reforms that launch[ed] China's rapid growth. After Zhou's death in early 1976, [the wife of Mao] and her radical Gang of Four accused Deng of orchestrating massive demonstrations of sorrow for Zhou that loudly criticized the Gang. The clique suppressed the marches in Tiananmen Square – precursors of the 1989 demonstrations – and purged Deng, who took refuge in Guangzhou. In the meantime, an ailing and indecisive Mao, unable to trust his wife and her cohort[s], anointed as his heir... a man without allies. Yet Mao would not throw Deng out of the party... Within a month after Mao's death in September 1976, the Gang of Four was under arrest. Deng staged his third and last comeback the next year. In Paifangcun there is a cactus-like plant whose hundred-year blooms are an omen. When the flowers burst forth in 1979, the village knew whose good fortune they portended. By then the greatest son of the village was firmly in control of Beijing, having outmaneuvered [Mao's anointed heir] and eased the Maoists out of power. Millions of peasants were allowed to cultivate private plots, sell surplus crops and invest in village factories. Soon Chinese peasants were not only adequately fed... but more than a few were able to... fill the[ir]... houses... with television sets, refrigerators and clothes washers. For a moment dissent was allowed to flourish in the "Beijing spring" of 1979; hundreds of the walking wounded from the Cultural Revolution plastered public spaces with denunciations of Mao and

even of Deng. Before long, that spectacle triggered Deng's deep distrust of spontaneous mass movements... The Beijing spring was cut short, and the champions of political reform were imprisoned. By 1984, economic reform was being introduced in the cities, so much so that Old Guard Marxists began to decry the "Spiritual pollution" of cosmetics and discotheques. But Deng persisted... By the late '80s, however, economic liberalisation had spilled uncontrollably into political yearnings... labor unrest and student demonstrations for greater freedom... His conservative rivals took advantage of the [Tiananmen] massacre to pull back the reforms – or at least slow their pace. And as Deng retreated into a self-critical silence, they seemed to succeed. But Deng, though increasingly frail, fought back... doggedly cl[inging] to power, despite becoming less mentally sharp [– like]... Mao before him... In February 1992, sensing that the populace was exasperated by conservative austerities, he emerged from seclusion to rout his opponents... Nearly deaf by now, he urged Chinese to "seize the opportunity" of... go-go, free-market examples. The result was an explosion of economic growth and the elevation of "Deng Xiaoping Thought" to gospel, an ironic turn for a man who shuddered at "cults of personality." But it was the final somersault he had to perform to ensure the survival of his legacy. "LEADERS ARE MEN, NOT GODS," said Deng Xiaoping. Mao Zedong, the man who would be a god, lies embalmed and displayed in his mausoleum in Tiananmen Square. Deng has asked that his eyes be donated to medicine, his ashes be cast into the sea and no monuments be built to him. Mao had resided in Zhongnanhai, the walled district of Beijing that is China's new Forbidden City; Deng chose to live... in a block-long house called Miliangku... not far away. It was there that China's unquestioned leader, its emperor without portfolio... drifted into senescence, dealing with the specters that haunt the capital and the realm. They were ghosts as hoary as the last Emperor of the Ming dynasty who hanged himself on Coal Hill, just east of Deng's home; the students gunned down outside Miliangku by a reactionary government in 1919; the many spirits of Tiananmen; the tens of millions who died of hunger in the Great Leap Forward. And finally there was that most troublesome shadow of all, Mao Zedong, Deng's friend and foe, his rival for the soul of a country so ancient it has had the misfortune both to forget its history many times over and to repeat it again and again.

...A senior Chinese official has revealed for the first time that the heirs to the late paramount leader... Deng Xiaoping, who died last week... are embroiled in a power struggle over his legacy... The ruling Communist Party elite are gathered at the seaside resort of Beidaihe for their annual round of political infighting that is set to be even bloodier than usual since it precedes a crucial five-yearly party congress to elect the 200 men who will rule China into the 21st century... The... remarks reveal... that a strong bloc of opposition exists to the capitalist-style reforms... Deng... launched in 1978... The ensuing rash of bankruptcies, dismissals and labour unrest has prompted a fierce backlash from leftists over the destruction of state control over production, and more importantly, what they see as selling out socialism... Even official reports tell of unemployment in the countryside as high as 35[%], with joblessness in some cities 20[%] or higher... Sporadic protests have been reported in many cities. Dissatisfaction runs deep. Although the ban on public dissent remains in place, many Chinese grumble in private... "To serve the people" says the red and gold placard above the entrance to the imposing grey... compound along Beidaihe's west beach... Despite the slogan, China's leaders are as removed as ever from the masses they serve.

...The man most likely to be China's next Premier[, the current]... Vice-Premier... is not modest. Last year, he told pro-China newspapers in Hong Kong that... [because he was] the man credited with engineering China's economic "soft-landing" from double-digit inflation three years ago... he deserved the Nobel Prize for economics... He is said to be the smartest thinker, the toughest manager, and the straightest arrow: qualities not necessarily considered endearing among China's chummy communist elite... An engineer who graduated from Beijing's Qinghua University, China's most prestigious technical school, [his] abilities are widely respected. He has been designated economic trouble-shooter since he was made a Vice-Premier in 1991. "If we could vote, I'd definitely vote for him," said one senior official. "He's... very capable." ...Western diplomats, analysts and Chinese with close ties to the party say that [he] is likely to get the job, despite the fact that he is 70 years old – the same age as... [the current Premier, another candidate, but one] best known overseas for his strident support for the 1989 military assault on pro-democracy protesters in Tiananmen Square... – and said to be in bad health... [However, t]here is a general consensus among Western diplomats that [the current Premier] has probably done enough to consolidate his power – in the short term at least... His most important power base is the 3.2 million-strong People's Liberation Army, where he appears to have won the loyalty of his appointees with promises of bigger budgets, better technology and a greater say in the key foreign policy areas of Taiwan and the US.

...[F]ighter jets, bombers and lumbering tankers filled the skies over Beijing's Tiananmen Square yesterday in a giant military parade to mark the anniversary of the People's Republic of China. Tiananmen became a sea of colour as half a million civilians – all carefully vetted for their party allegiance – surrounded floats carrying everything from fashion models to newly-weds. To kick off the military parade – the first in 15 years – a unit of machinegun-toting female troops in scarlet berets and black boots goose-stepped past. From the balcony of the Gate of Heavenly Peace, where Mao Zedong proclaimed the birth of the Communist state on October 1, 1949, the current President (the former Premier) – who hoped that the lavish celebrations would elevate himself to the pantheon of socialist greats alongside Mao and Deng – declared "socialism is the only way to save China." He also declared China would eventually win back control of Taiwan, to Chinese leaders the last unfinished business of Mao's revolution. Taiwan, whose history was changed irrevocably by the events on the mainland half a century ago, yesterday remained customarily silent in public, and indifferent in private. The public's disinterest has been heightened by the perceived exploitation by China of last week's devastating earthquake in which more than 2000 people were killed and 100,000 made homeless.'

...*'The anniversary that China officially forgets* Mao launched his crusade to overturn the last vestiges of capitalism and feudalism, and vanquished his rivals, in the northern spring of 1966. The chaos spun to an exhausted, devastated halt 10 years later. With his call to "hold high the great banner of the Proletarian Cultural Revolution," Mao unleashed a reign of mass terror and destruction that left at least one million people dead and sanctioned the persecution and torture of another 30 million. Today in China there is little public discussion about this upheaval that rent the fabric of one of the world's oldest civilisations. No special events were planned to commemorate the anniversary of the Cultural Revolution's start. Schools dismiss the Cultural Revolution as a "mistake" of Mao's dotage. Filmmakers and publishers are advised to avoid the subject. In private circles, though, memories are still fresh. Many Chinese feel they should stay that way. "You don't want to forget the past. To forget the past is to lose control over the future," an economist wrote last year in his book *The Cultural Revolution and Me*. A revered novelist, who was labelled a class enemy, banned from writing and forced to clean drains during the Cultural Revolution, has called for a museum similar to the Auschwitz Memorial Museum that documents Nazi atrocities. At the beginning, no one could foresee that the Cultural Revolution would spin so violently out of control. The political storm had been brewing for months. On May 16, 1966, Mao issued a call to arms against the "bourgeois" forces he accused of conspiring to overthrow the Communist Party. Anyone accused of having been associated with things feudal, old or foreign was persecuted. Doctors, teachers, artists and other intellectuals, labelled the "stinking ninth category," were ridiculed, beaten, marched through the streets wearing dunce hats. Those who survived the beatings and did not commit suicide were then exiled to the countryside, ordered to sweep streets, clean toilets or perform other menial tasks. Student Red Guards smashed their way through China's cities and temples, under orders to destroy the four "olds" – habits, ideas, customs and culture. Many Chinese believe that the Cultural Revolution was far too successful in wiping out much that was good of China's traditions: the concept of right and wrong, courtesy, filial piety, kindness.

...While millions of Chinese peasants were dying of hunger during the famine unleashed by Mao's Great Leap Forward of 1958, a British communist was busy setting up the English section of the Peking Foreign Languages Institute. He, like most people living in Chinese cities, was oblivious to the famine in the countryside and did not come up against the nasty side of Mao's perpetual revolution until the following decade. In 1967, Red Guards accused him of spying for Britain and had him incarcerated in solitary confinement for more than five years. He was never formally charged, but his revolutionary crime was to have been in British Air Force intelligence during WW2, when Britain and China were on the same side. He was eventually

released in 1973, but he resolved to stay in China, with his Canadian wife. He still keeps a picture of Mao on the wall of his apartment. "After I was released from prison I thought a lot about that picture and in the end I decided that it should stay because Mao did make very significant achievements. It is an over-simplification to condemn it all." His ambivalence towards Mao is reflected across the nation. A migrant worker from eastern Anhui province also finds difficulty in blaming Mao. She grew up with almost no relatives as eight of them died in his famine. But the question of Mao's complicity in their, and probably 30 million other deaths, is not discussed. "I don't think Chairman Mao knew about the food problems. It was the local officials who took away the grain, and let people starve." A historian saw both of his parents persecuted to death by the Red Guards in the Cultural Revolution. But in spite of his personal tragedy, he gives Mao high credit and swallows his bitterness. "From the first Opium War in 1842, China was thrown into upheavals and revolutions, one after another. The goal of each one of these was to make China strong again, but it was only Mao who succeeded. That was and still is the root of Mao's popularity." China's new leaders have unleashed economic reforms that have retreated from Marxism and created unprecedented wealth since Mao's death, after 27 years in power, in 1976. They have also disbanded communes and launched economic reforms aimed at privatising large sectors of state-owned industry. "I was not a Communist and not even a Marxist, but I was a sympathiser and I had an understanding that a revolution, a complete change, was indispensable," says a lawyer from Manhattan who came to Shanghai in 1946. Now 83, he does not like everything he sees in modern China. "I am very happy with the material gains that have been made, but there has been a backsliding. China's not becoming capitalist, it's more and more feudal." Most worrying, he says, is the rampant bureaucratic corruption and the dismantling of the all-encompassing state welfare system.')

...the *Xinhua Daily Telegraph* said yesterday... [that] China is to set up a welfare system in urban areas by the year 2000 to help workers laid off from state enterprises... [To be covered people will need to be able to guarantee that they have] a per capita income below the local minimum cost of living... The plan would be funded by local governments and apparently would not cover China's huge "floating" population of migrant workers from rural areas who have flooded the cities in search of jobs.

...“...You want go Anshun?” queried the... travel agent in the... city of Kunming. “Why? Westerners no go there.” Precisely... [My wife] and I wanted to get out of this touristy part of China, far from the madding crowd of other Westerners, of cafes and coffee bars and CNN television, of tourist touts chasing a fast buck from visitors, and seek out the small-town, backblocks China and its fascinating people that we had experienced on three previous visits to this emerging country. We knew such a China must still exist. A nation of 1.2 billion people in such a vastness of land could not turn all of itself inside out in a few short years, despite the overwhelming changes and developments in the major cities and urban areas in the east. “No go Anshun,” repeated the travel agent. “It no progress.” That settled it. He had now made Anshun and its province of Guizhou in China's central south sound even better than our guidebook declared – “one of the most backward and sparsely populated areas in China... 60-70[%] of population illiterate... 50[%] of villages not accessible by road.” ...OUR tickets for Anshun, bought at local price at the Kunming long-distance bus station, cost 80 yuan (\$NZ14.50) each; a bargain for a night's bed plus 500km of onward travel, even if the journey would last 26 hours because of the mountainous terrain and state of the road... Chinese sleeper coaches, an innovation in the field of long-distance bus travel that the rest of the world just has to copy... did not exist a year or two ago. How they evolved, and what parts of China they run in, seem to be state secrets at present... [The latest issue of Lonely Planet China guide (July 1996) briefly mentions the sleeper coaches, saying they are available on some popular routes...] ...They cater for a small portion of the long-distance local passenger traffic in Guizhou and neighbouring Yunnan province... Chinese bus-travellers are the greatest rubbish-droppers, the loudest talkers and the biggest hoickers and spitters (no matter the practice is now officially banned across the nation) this side of the Taj Mahal. If some personal behaviour came to be viewed in different lights, we all shared the need for toilet facilities. There were none on the bus, so the roadside sufficed, women to the rear, men to the front... Roads in rural China are poor by Western standards, choked with slow-moving lorries and routed through every possible hamlet and town. There is much grinding uphill in crawler gear, then racing down in “coaster,” that dangerous extra “gear” the Chinese obtain by switching the engine off and letting the vehicle run downhill, thinking they are saving fuel. Our driver was a hardy fellow, remaining behind the wheel for fully 15 hours before stopping for a 90-minute snooze, then driving on again. No one else seemed concerned about him, so [my wife] and I did our best to forget how tired – and dangerous – he must have been... ANSHUN, when reached on the afternoon of the second day, turned up trumps. It was grubby, with narrow streets and tumbledown buildings, street stalls and smiling people. It had clean little restaurants with incredibly cheap and tasty food. We could walk around all day through markets, alleys, general stores and parks, then hail a tuk-tuk... to ferry us back to our seedy hotel beside the bus station... Anshun's old men, it can be confirmed, wear Mao suits and gather daily in the park to play chess and checkers as always; street dentists still set up tables on street corners; performing monkeys dance and play on the pavement alongside dumpling cooks, fruit vendors, pancake sellers, palmists and fortune tellers; ordinary Chinese men and women laugh and joke as they go about their lives in much the same fashion that they always have. There are... no Westerners... [-] the last Europeans to have signed the visitors' book before us at the Ming Dynasty Wen Temple had been a Canadian couple, 12 months earlier... [-] no monster hotels being built, no major factories under construction, no huge joint development projects...

Hong Kong has set in motion a... \$2b... scheme designed to get the sewage out of Victoria Harbour, [a task that was] originally contracted out at \$HK1.3 billion... [In related news,] Beijing officials have announced they will carry out a \$US24 million... facelift of China's second most frequented tourist attraction... including cleaning up the often malodorous moat. All 480 sewage outlets emptying into the waterway... surrounding... China's legendary Forbidden City... would be closed and the moat dredged, yesterday's *China Daily* newspaper said. The cramped homes along the edge of the Forbidden City would also be torn down, with their residents moved out.

...authorities have sacked a relics official and ordered repairs to parts of the Great Wall of China torn down to make way for a road and a vegetable warehouse... [Incidentally, a] grab-bag of new rules for listed companies giving China's stock exchanges sweeping new powers comes into effect tomorrow. Exchanges will have the power to suspend shares when net asset value falls below par and halt trade for unusual activity which might mislead investors, the China Securities and Shanghai Securities News said. Daily price movements can also be limited to [5%].

...Losses by China's small and medium sized state companies totalled 64.5 billion yuan... in the first 9 months of the year, the State Statistics Bureau reported. [However, overall] profits were boosted by the large state-owned enterprises and were 10.3[%] up at 199.65 billion yuan.

...[since China's leaders decided] under the shade of their beach umbrellas... to promote private enterprise as the sole means to revive their sagging state sector[, cities]... once closed to foreigners due to their involvement in China's secretive strategic industries are now openly vying to attract foreign investors.

...China is likely to continue to grow at an annual rate of 10[%] a year up to 2005[, the]... executive director of the University of Auckland's School of Business and Economics told a seminar on understanding the Asian consumer market... Those wishing to sell to China had to first understand how widely spread the country is geographically and not be dazzled by the prospect of the market's 1.21 billion population. Forget rural China... he added... as disposable income there was low. Stay focused on the top-nine cities, because that is where the earning power is. These cities account for nearly all of the Chinese households earning over RMB27,000 (\$US3200) a year... If the economy grows at the most likely rate... then there will be 40 million urban households earning over RMB48,000... per annum... by 2005...

Many... are well on their way to becoming multi-millionaires in terms of Chinese yuan... On the road north from... the Yellow Sea port city of Dalian... is the \$US160,000[-a-year]... Golden Pebble Golf Club, its membership list heavy with... senior political leaders who jet down from Beijing for the weekend. The course[is] a joint venture with American and Hong Kong partners...

The morning sun bounces off the Yellow Sea as... the vice-executive general manager of the... \$US50 million... Dalian Golden Pebble Beach Golf Club... gazes across the manicured expanse... a[t] the clusters of Japanese and Korean businessmen on the greens. "This is a place for people in economic and cultural circles to meet," he said. "If they come here they will have more opportunities to discuss business and other undertakings." ...welcome to the new China. Here... golf is becoming both a symbol of wealth and a means of adding to it. In Dalian, an industrial powerhouse on the coast east of Beijing, both are pursued shamelessly in a city whose economy has grown at an average rate of 8... to 10[%] a year for the past five years. Much of that has been stimulated by the \$US2 billion that has flowed into the city from foreign investors... "I think foreign investment has changed the face of the city," said the vice-mayor... who, since a visit to N[Z] several years ago, has become an enthusiastic advocate of N[Z] food and agricultural technology, and of a proposed joint N[Z]-Dalian deep-sea fishing venture... Over a Japanese lunch at the Pebble Beach Golf Club[, the vice-executive general manager]... reflected on the role that the American-designed course has assumed in the business of his city... The club's publicity shows... [a] beaming... American... President... in the days before the scandal over Chinese money in the presidential campaign sharply closed the door of the White House to mainlanders. At home, only a handful of Chinese have yet fought their way through the[golf club's] door, but their numbers belie the weight that came with them: among the privileged are... members of the politbureau's Sanding Committee, [the Premier's]... inner ruling circle, and other members of the elite...

China without a map on the road to reform... When the leaders of China's communist revolution were faced with extinction at the hands of enemy troops 60 years ago, they embarked on the famous Long March... At the Communist Party's 15th congress... China's rulers embarked on a long, tortuous trek of their own – over-hauling much of the tottering state sector. Their path to victory may be nearly as hazardous as that taken by their revolutionary predecessors... Among the problems facing China's 370,000 state-run firms, none worries Beijing so much as the tens of millions of workers who will be thrown out of jobs if money-losing enterprises are allowed to close or downsize. Up to 30 million people, mostly in the central and north-east "rust belt" where state-run dinosaurs rule, could find themselves out of jobs, said[the] editor of the *China Journal*. "That's an enormous number, and they're concentrated in large cities, where mass unrest would make the Government very nervous indeed... The Government doesn't seem to have thought through yet what it will do," he said.

...About 1000 demonstrators have clashed with police in the central Chinese city of Zigong after a strike over wages at a state-owned factory. The... U[S]-based rights group, Human Rights in China, said... the workers were protesting against their low monthly salaries of 50 to 100 yuan (\$9.44 to \$18.87) which sometimes were not paid. They were also angry that no health insurance claims had been repaid in two years. The workers called on the local authorities to support them, but when they received no reply, they decided to take their campaign to the streets... Troubles have broken out several times in recent months in Sichuan, the most populated province in China with 100 million residents... Riot police charged crowds of... drivers... demonstrating... on Thursday over rules banning three-wheeled passenger vehicles called pedicabs from downtown Zigong... The ban threatened their livelihoods... [There had also] been clashes after the licences of some of the push-bike riders in Dujiangyan were revoked, preventing them from using their adapted vehicles to transport goods. In July, thousands of workers laid off when three Mianyang state enterprises declared bankruptcy took to the streets, charging that unemployment funds had been embezzled and demanding compensation. These reports are never mentioned in the official Chinese press, and only come to light via dissidents abroad.

...China has "silenced all public dissent," the U[S]... State Department... said in its annual report on human rights around the world. The Chinese Government in 1996 continued to commit "widespread and well-documented human rights abuses, in violation of internationally accepted norms,"... Chinese authorities were faulted for their "intolerance of dissent, fear of unrest and the continuing absence of laws protecting basic freedoms." While criticising China's human rights record, the... Secretary of State... said the US relationship with China was too important to be held hostage to human rights or any other single issue. The report... also criticised the human rights records of numerous other countries... in Asia.

...Mongolia plans to privatise 200 state-owned businesses over the next 18 months and will also take steps to privatise land ownership, [its P]M... has said. The businesses to be privatised include the... Godi Cashmere Factory, Mongolia's second biggest source of foreign exchange. [The PM] has said privatisation is one of the highest priorities of his 10-month-old reformist Government... It was unclear whether last month's upset election of [the] candidate of the former communist party, as president would affect plans. Some Western diplomats have expressed concern that the new president might slow the pace of Mongolia's market style reforms...

NINE government officials and MPs were killed in anti-Beijing unrest in China's north-western Xinjiang province and neighbouring Inner Mongolia, a Chinese-language newspaper reported in Hong Kong. They were killed after the... 15th congress... last month and before National Day celebrations on Wednesday... Sporadic disturbances in Xinjiang, mainly inhabited by Muslims of Turkish origin, have been routinely silenced by Beijing, except for a short period between 1944 and 1950, when the state of East Turkestan emerged during the Chinese civil war.

...In China's westernmost city of Kashgar hundreds of mourners filed into the Aidkad Mosque to bid farewell to Abdul Miti... aged 65, [who] had died in the night and was buried within 24 hours in accordance with Muslim law. A Government official and veteran of the 1946 "Three Districts Revolution," an uprising against the then-ruling Nationalists, Miti was guaranteed a solemn send-off. Recent uprisings in the western Xinjiang region... [by the] Turkic-speaking Uighurs... against rule from Beijing have been met with less warmth by China's communist rulers. Ringleaders and participants have been swiftly executed or jailed.

...About 1000 Chinese farmers have gone on a rampage in southern Guangdong province after accusations that the Government was underpaying them for their grain... Authorities were forced to send in several hundred paramilitary armed police to restore order and about 30 people were arrested... The latest incident began last Thursday when a farmer handing in his quota of grain for purchase by the state... claimed that the scales were inaccurate and were underweighing the grain by 30[%]. The farmer got into an argument and was beaten up by the local grain station officials. The next morning the angry farmer told colleagues arriving to sell their grain that the Government scales were inaccurate and a new quarrel broke out... Whether the scales were inaccurate will never be known because they were destroyed in the riot... [However], the local Government decided to make a 30[%] compensation to farmers who had handed in their quota of state grain.

...Riot police fired teargas to disperse angry farmers in southern China after one person died in protests over plans to remove ancestral tombs from a tourist spot... Hong Kong newspapers said the trouble started when local officials decided to take over a site allocated to villagers a decade ago, to expand tourism facilities. They said villagers were angry at the low compensation as well as the short notice given before the graves were removed. Workers brought in to clear the graves allegedly destroyed a newly-interred body... China's Communist rulers – sensitive to land shortages and disdainful of what they see as the extravagance of traditional rituals – have been promoting cremation since the 1950s with only partial success. According to official figures, 7.9 million people died in China in 1995, and their burials consumed more than 75,000ha of land.

...Like N[Z], China is facing an ageing population and a shrinking purse to pay for its retirement – but at a pace and scale that makes N[Z]'s concerns barely a blip on the anxiety meter. Simply put, the enforced reduction of Chinese families to one child has flattened the population pyramid, shrinking growth in the workforce as the nation... begins a wholesale greying... At present the elderly comprise 6[%] of the population. By 2020 this will double to 11[%]... Today's 10 people of working age for every pensioner will by 2020 become six, and by 2050 only three. The nation's ailing state-owned enterprises... provide pensions for their workers... [but] some have... already... [been] forced to stop pension payments. Outside these businesses, life is even harder for the elderly... In non-state companies, pension coverage ranges anywhere from 20... to 90[%] of workers... For most rural workers there is no pension scheme.

...In a sign that the Asian economic “flu” is taking a toll on China, the country has released inflation data clearly showing its economy is stalling... “We had zero growth in September and negative growth in October and November. This is not reasonable,” said [the] professor of economics at Beijing University. “Demand is insufficient and we are seeing investment falling off... This will arouse the concern of authorities, who will take steps to stimulate demand.” ...China [has already announced that it] will extend tariff breaks on capital goods imports for some foreign-funded businesses after a sharp drop in foreign investment... [despite] a huge trade surplus [that has swelled] foreign exchange reserves... [to] \$US134 billion... Weakness in the domestic economy is particularly worrying for Beijing at a time when its export prospects are clouded by sharp currency devaluations... which will make goods sold by countries such as Thailand and Malaysia more competitive.

...In Malaysia, the tourism minister has suggested that mass circumcisions be turned into a tourist attraction. “By charging tourists a small fee of between four riggit (\$1.18) and five riggit to watch such cultural events, the organisational costs can be covered,”... But tourism, or lack thereof, is no laughing matter [– although, the economic]... crisis has produced semi-comical side-effects. The formerly rich in Thailand – or those who like to say they were – have been snapping up T-shirts emblazoned with “Former Rich” at the market.

...Thailand has a whole generation who knew nothing but a bright future... Now, as a severe currency crisis throws the nation into recession, Thais are finally asking some hard questions. Like how could a country with an average income under \$9500 become the world’s second-largest market for Mercedes? ...Few saw the folly of trying to... [live] truly lavish lifestyles... “I think [the wealthy] are in shock,” said... [the] president of Thai Farmers Bank. “The world they are used to is no longer there... They didn’t know how poor Thailand really is.” ...For the rising ranks of the unemployed, there is... no safety net. The Government is already deeply in debt to its decade old social-security fund.

...A leading Thai politician said he will not publicly reveal the wealth of his many wives as required by the country’s new constitution because he isn’t legally married to any of them. [The f]ormer Deputy Interior Minister... said: “I have many wives, but... I have to show only one to society.”

...[“Bangkok has millions of people but they are all faceless. It’s an ‘each for himself’ society,” said a child rights advocate who hit out at passengers who did nothing to help two teenage girls who were dragged off a packed bus and forced into a house where they were gang-raped. Thais are famous for their tolerance but the open kidnapping of the girls, aged 15 and 16, while bus 134 inched its way through congested city-centre traffic has led to public outrage and a flood of irate calls to radio talkback shows. Bangkok citizens wonder if their congested city, famous for the friendliness of its people, has become another New York. The director of the Bangkok Mass Transit Authority also bemoaned the apathy shown by the driver, conductor and passengers.”]

...MAHACHAI is at the mouth of the Mae Glong... [where it] meets the Gulf of Siam... It is a fishing village familiar to Bangkok people for its fish restaurants and markets... We knew it had a temple, but the rest we would find out for ourselves... The train is a trip through Bangkok’s green suburbs, some quite affluent... Then a landscape under cultivation – buffalo and rice fields. People wave to trains here, and as you pass you wonder at something you once read about the Thai way of life, namely “saen sanuk” or making work playful and pleasurable. Reaching Mahachai you find a busy place, but not congested like Bangkok... Here people look with interest at Europeans – you are the diversion and it is plain the people enjoy it. Thais are fluent in smiles and welcoming gestures... On the jetty there is a big sea-food restaurant. You take your seat in the upper level to get the view and you look out across the peninsula, a short ferry-ride away. That is where the temple is, and we’ll go there after lunch... After the ferry ride we walk, taking photographs and talking to people we meet. There are 20,000 temples in Thailand... Wat Chong is a grand one. It sits amid green lawns, saffron robes and picnickers. A picnic is not sandwiches here. It is seafood cooked in mobile kitchens you see everywhere. For about \$1.50 you eat well... We left Wat Chong in a samlong back to the train, and found ourselves, as we rolled back through the suburbs, possessed of a new equanimity. We had had an experience we had called, in shorthand, Mahachai. And we had got a bit closer to Thailand. When I looked in my pocket, there was a hundred baht (around \$5) less than when I started. It was the best \$5 I had ever spent.

...[“A NZer on a working holiday in Thailand has been arrested in a swoop on a worldwide stock-trading scam that has cheated investors out of an estimated \$369 million, including at least \$5 million from NZ in the past six months. “And that’s just the tip of the iceberg,” said a NZ Securities Commission spokesperson. Thai Securities and Exchange Commission agents, working with AUSn federal police and the FBI, arrested 84 people in a raid on the offices of two “boiler room” investment firms in Bangkok on Thursday. The NZer was among 54 foreigners detained. The ringleaders are likely to be charged under anti-money laundering and securities legislation and face lengthy jail sentences.”]...

Thai fishermen recently freed from... Insein prison... in Burma have returned home with graphic details of life behind bars in the country’s most notorious jail... The descriptions add weight to official human rights reports of the prison conditions, described by a... reporter as “extremely harsh.” More than 100 members of Burma’s opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) remain in prison, according to a U[S] human rights report. Political prisoners’ sentences are often arbitrary, with terms of seven years for possession of “subversive” literature not uncommon. - 1997

The baleful eye of the Burmese regime has fixed itself on a quiet, middle-class home in south London. As dusk fell on the Thames and late commuters hurried home, [the home’s owner] stood at his front door... and explained why he could say no more to the press. Far away, in Rangoon’s notorious Insein Prison, his daughter... aged 28, was starting a seven-year jail sentence with hard labour imposed under tough laws to crush dissent. She... was arrested... on September 7 for tying herself to a lamppost in the Burmese capital and singing pro-democracy slogans. She infuriated the authorities by attracting a crowd of about 1000... [Her] partner for three years... says... “I’m very concerned about her... I still love her in a friendly way and am very proud of what she’s done.” Like her, [he] took sides in the forgotten civil war that has tormented Burma for years. When they set off [from Brita]in... together they were just another couple of idealists keen to see the world. Their visit to Thailand changed their lives. They met a Canadian who taught English in one of the Karen refugee camps about 6.5km from the Burmese border. These are regarded by the Burmese as hotbeds of sedition, and their soldiers intermittently attack them with random brutality. The Karen people are among the chief victims of Burma’s vicious war between the state and various ethnic minorities. The Karen fought with the British against the Japanese, and were led to believe they would be granted a free state. In the past five years at least 20,000 are thought to have been killed by the Burmese military. All this is complicated by turf wars over a lucrative trade in drugs. Until this year’s bumper Afghanistan poppy crop, Burma produced 80[%] of the world’s heroin... The struggle of Burma’s minorities has fused with the pro-democracy movement led by[a] Nobel prizewinner... under house arrest in Rangoon.

...DOWN a treeless suburban street in Glen Innes, in a state house much the same as all the others, eight men drink tea and talk about their time as revolutionary soldiers in the border jungles of Burma... [T]he men recall battle, hunger and, all too often, defeat. There are memories too of Maneeloy, the notorious Thai refugee camp where they all lived for months or years; the place that became their protection – and their prison – until last year, when N[Z] accepted them among 207 Burmese nationals as part of our annual refugee quota. Their... paramilitary action[was] against the murderous regime ruling Burma, the State Law and Order Restoration Council. Known, like a group of villains from a James Bond film, as Slorc, it is the latest incarnation of the military dictatorship that has ruled Burma for nearly 40 years... The insurgents... [and their] Karen National Union (KNU)... have been able to fight only a guerrilla war of ambushes and skirmishes against the regime. Ethnic divisions have split opposition forces into numerous fragmented armies that have increasingly struggled to get enough guns and ammunition, leaving some soldiers unarmed. Disillusion and defeat have taken their toll and many... headed across the border to Thailand for safety. Safety, but no security – Thailand has not signed the U[N] convention on refugees and considers Burmese political refugees as illegal immigrants, subject to arrest and deportation... The Thai Government’s treatment of persons of concern has hardened as it has tried to improve relations with the Burmese regime

and as Thai public sympathy for refugees has waned. The country has been inundated with refugees from all sides – Burma, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam – since the 1970s... [However, international] sanctions are hurting even the most powerful... of Rangoon, [and]... there have been reports that a transition to democracy is on the agenda. Western governments have expressed cautious optimism. Back in Glen Innes the refugees hope... [that d]emocracy will come... to their homeland... but... they are committed to starting again in N[Z]. Their fight now is to learn English and find work as they force their way through the jungle of a new culture.

Eight years after troops gunned down hundreds of pro-democracy protesters, a new generation of Burmese is taking to the streets – and they aren't led by... the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize winner... The students express no animosity toward[s her], but they're focused on their own agenda. And that basically means more student rights rather than [the Nobel winner]'s call for broad political dialogue with the Government... The students complain their degrees are worthless due to disruptions in the academic year still felt from the three-year closure of the universities after the 1988 uprising. They also complain of lack of material and poor facilities... But one thing is the same as 1988: Rangoon resembles a city under siege.

...In an ominous warning to student protesters and other opponents of the military regime, one of Burma's top generals has vowed to annihilate anyone disrupting his Government's work... [He] is one of the four most powerful generals in the ruling junta that seized power by violently crushing the 1988 uprising[, when m]ore than 3000 civilians were gunned down by the military... The [general's] remarks... were carried by the state-run media yesterday following six days of student protests in Rangoon and Mandalay. Thousands of students... demanding an end to police brutality, the right to form a student union and other freedoms have staged the most serious show of dissent since the nationwide democracy uprising of 1988, which was also sparked by student protests. The protests have diminished to brief demonstrations during the last two days as police and intelligence agents have sealed off universities and other rallying points such as the thousand-year-old Sule Pagoda in Rangoon's city centre. Schools remained closed for a fourth straight day yesterday, and [the pro-]democracy leader... remained confined to her home by the military... Military men frequently refer to [the Nobel prizewinner] and her followers as axehandles of imperialists and claim she is a puppet of neocolonialists such as the U[S] and Great Britain. Only the military Government can prevent Burma from again being colonised by these countries, they say. Burma was a British colony from 1824 until 1947, when [the Nobel prizewinner]'s father, General Aung San, won the country's independence. Aung San, who was assassinated in 1947, began his career as a student leader, and students have been carrying his portrait in the recent protests... [Speaking of countries that gained independence from Britain in 1947, m]ore than 100,000 people in Bombay, India's commercial hub, have been made homeless by city authorities razing their shanty towns. "We have demolished 27,206 illegal structures," the deputy municipal commissioner... announced. The demolitions, the largest in recent times, were ordered to counter "criticism that we are soft on illegal structures. So we began a week-long intensive drive just before the monsoon rains hit the city." Welfare workers and activists said the demolitions were an attack on the rights of the urban poor, who were being marginalised after the country embraced pro-market policies in 1991. "This is a plan to throw out the poor from Bombay. Nobody likes to live in squalor. These people have no choice – they work here, but cannot afford apartments," said the activist. Bulldozers and armed policemen led each demolition crew as the slums were cleared often at night, residents said. Weekend papers featured stories of uprooted families left without food, water or work, stubbornly clinging to a patch of sidewalk they call home. "We have nowhere to go. We work here. I was born in a Bombay slum and cannot afford anything else," said one resident, a plumber. About 7.2 million of Bombay's 12 million citizens live in shanty towns, most of which are more than 30 years old. Promises of more housing have not eventuated. - 1996

With foreign trade under rigorous control... India was, for many years, one of the most solvent of the [Last World] countries. Its foreign debt was 19[%] of its GNP in 1988, and its debt-service payments were a manageable 25[%] of its export income. Since then, policies intended to speed development by giving a larger role to the private sector have increased those percentages closer to 25 and 30[%], respectively, and the country's balance of payments has turned negative... Poverty remains the lot of the overwhelming percentage of the Indian people... In the country's vital statistics, poverty is expressed in a life expectancy still below 60 years and an infant mortality rate of nearly 100 per 1000 live births... Simple long division of the GNP by the 800 million population gives a GNP per capita of \$270, not far below the \$300 of China. Distribution of income and wealth in India places this average income high above the median. That makes for quite different kinds of existence at the top and bottom of the scale. It is not that the distribution is so unfair; India compares favourably with just about all the other [Last World] countries. Not counted in the monetary income, moreover, is the nonmonetized product of labor and land, which constitutes most of the "income" of the very poorest. India is the home of 300 million of the world's poorest people. It can boast, on the other hand, that the number of its very rich exceeds that of France.

A group of frail, stooped figures crouch in the dust in a Delhi slum. One by one, they stand to be examined by a doctor and then wait in line for free medicine... [The group] represent a phenomenon that will soon have serious and far-reaching effects: the ageing of India. Joint pains, failing sight and heart disease are familiar and often treatable complaints in the [First World]. But India is increasingly unable to provide healthcare for this ballooning section of the population. The number of Indians over the age of 60 has increased dramatically to 70 million... from 20 million in 1948. The W[HO] predicts the number will rise to 142 million, or 11[%] of the population, by 2020. The explosion has been fuelled by population growth and a leap in the average life expectancy, which has risen to 63 years from 53 in 1978. "The numbers are absolutely mind-boggling..." says... [the] director of Helpage India, a non-governmental organisation that provides medical care for millions of elderly... "Geriatrics, the medical care of the elderly, is not taught to Indian doctors," says... a specialist in ageing at the WHO centre in New Delhi. "There are only two geriatric training programmes in the entire country." In a country where, on average, 2400 people share one doctor and where there are only 2409 hospital beds to every million people, it is hardly surprising that many elderly turn to n[go]s for medical care. Helpage India runs 27 mobile medical units that provide medical care for just two rupees (9c) a week. "These people live in pathetic circumstances," says... [someone] who helps run Helpage's Delhi unit. "They are very poor, living only because of the medicines that we give them." ...A governmental committee recently set up to look into social security for the elderly said in a report that present pension provisions cover less than 11[%] of India's workers. Of a working population of 314 million, only about 28 million are employed in the so-called organised sector. This means that about 286 million people – the real figure is probably much higher – must make do with the Government pension, which averages 200 rupees... a month. [However, one pensioner], 66, says she has not received her pension for seven months. "I am too weak to spend three days arguing at the Government offices and my son cannot go for me or he will lose his wages and we will have nothing to eat," she says.

...The manager of a tea estate in the northeastern Indian state of Assam allegedly shot dead five workers and injured 20 more yesterday when they demanded... the daily wage of 37.50 rupees... fixed by the Government compared with the 30 rupees they were getting from the Borgora garden management.

At least 60 men, women and children... were massacred in their sleep by feudal landlords in the Indian state of Bihar, officials said yesterday. The killings, the worst such incident in the state, took place on Monday night at the village of Bathe-Lakshmanpur... The United News of India said the victims were shot for being suspected sympathisers of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), or CPI-ML... which organises the rural landless poor to fight for higher wages... A CPI-ML activist from the town of Jehanabad, some 60km from the village... said the attackers belonged to... a group... [called] the Ranbir Sena... "...the Ranbir Sena crossed the Sone river in boats and surrounded the village. They then opened

indiscriminate fire... The... aim is to spread terror among the poor who support our party... The Sena wants the poor to remain servile to the landlords of the region. They are scared of our party's growing influence. There were no police there. Now the police have reached the site."

...A court in Bhopal, India, has charged eight Indian executives of Union Carbide India Ltd with criminal negligence over a 1984 toxic gas leak that killed more than 15,000 people. If convicted they could be jailed for up to two years... [By the way, official estimates say [over] a... million child labourers live on the streets and in the slums... in the east Indian city of Calcutta... and most of them have never been to school. Non-governmental agencies put the total number of child workers in India[– where '30% of people have not heard of the US' –] at about 55 million.

...At sunrise every Friday hundreds of half-clad and sick children assemble at Dhaka's lush Suhrawardy Udyan park – not to play, but to receive the one square meal they are guaranteed each week... None has any regular source of income and finding two meals a day is a full-time occupation... Most of the children sleep rough, but the luckier ones share shacks with their parents or friends in sprawling slums in the Bangladesh capital of nine million people... The food arrives at the park in large containers and is distributed quickly. Many children save a portion of their handout to take home to their families... The meal over, the children return to their daily grind, sometimes to help in menial jobs such as breaking bricks at construction sites, or taking care of younger siblings while parents eke out meagre earnings as porters or rickshaw drivers... "Their parents are too poor to pull them out of the filth and give them a decent life," said a police officer who declined to be named... Bangladesh does not have an official estimate of the number of child workers but independent surveys say children are working in 125 types of jobs... Many children lost their jobs after Bangladesh's garment factories bowed to pressure from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and importers, particularly the U[S], and last year fired boys and girls under 14... [Some of the children] are going to schools funded by ILO and the UN Children's Fund... [A man] who has been feeding the children for two and a half years... wants to start an education programme for the children along the lines of the voluntary Underprivileged Children's Education Programme (UCEP). "I have a dream that the children who come to me will learn to read and write," he said. "Maybe I will not be able to give them food indefinitely, but if they have education they will be able to find food for themselves." UCEP was started in 1972 and has given formal education and vocational training to 18,000 boys and girls. It has set up 30 schools exclusively for working children in a country where, according to the ILO, 6.3 million children work. While [his] education project may be a dream, the statistics are frighteningly real. The ILO says 43 million of Bangladesh's 120 million people are under 15. According to Government figures, the literacy rate is only 30[%]. Annual per capita income is just \$US240.

...[From 1857 the area known as the land of Bengal formed part of India, under British rule, until 1947 when it became (as East Pakistan) one of the two geographical units of Pakistan. In response to serious internal political problems an independent republic was proclaimed in East Pakistan in 1971, taking the name of Bangladesh, which became a member State of the Commonwealth in 1972.

...A Commonwealth State from 1948, the country known as Ceylon became an independent republic in 1972, taking the name of Sri Lanka (= resplendent island). Its political stability has been continually threatened by trouble between the Sinhalese and Tamil parts of the population.]

...Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels have thrown disabled fighters into "suicide attacks" against Government troops in the guerrillas' northern stronghold, a newspaper reported yesterday... The... suicide bombers are known as the "Black Tigers." ...The Tigers are fighting for a homeland for minority Tamils in the north and east of majority Sinhalese Sri Lanka... The north-south highway has been closed for more than 10 years due to fighting. The Tigers have accused the Government of restricting food supplies to the war zone. But the Government has said enough food is being sent to feed tens of thousands of civilians displaced by the fighting... The Defence Ministry said up to 95 guerrillas were killed and more than 200 wounded in heavy fighting the previous day, but the rebels say the military routinely exaggerates Tiger casualties... Independent confirmation... was not possible as international media have not been allowed into the war zone.

...Nearly all the 600 Tamils who "disappeared" after being arrested by Sri Lankan security forces were tortured to death, according to an Amnesty International report released yesterday... [In further news from the Asian bureau,] Vietnam's new leadership, backed by the recently elected national assembly, will face pressing economic issues, including mounting pressure to devalue the currency... The Vietnamese currency has... in recent years... been... gaining some stability at around 11,000/12,000 to the US unit. But in recent weeks the dong has appreciated some 42[%] against the Thai baht, and between 22 to 24[%] against the Philippine peso...

"Free trial period available!" "Pay on instalment!" "Guaranteed disease-free!" These are the kind of guarantees any new owner of a cute puppy would want. But they're not the advertising slogans of a pet shop, they're the proud boasts of a number of Philippines-based introduction agencies. The items on sale are women, and the buyers, all too often, are middle-aged A[US]n men. No longer is it necessary to hop on a plane to meet these women, or even wait for the delivery of a mail-order catalogue. Men can just click on and connect to their potential partner, because these women are now available on the Internet. Their ages, height, measurements and faces are there for all the world to see... [M]en can purchase their names and addresses as well... For... \$10 you can purchase the "Sweet Sixteen List" of 16 names of teenage girls from 15 to 18 years old; while \$15 will get you names of 38 "YOUNG girls 18 to 23 who are seeking older men"... They used to be called "Mail-order brides", and women from the Philippines still make up the largest proportion of women brought into A[US] as sponsored fiancées or wives – around three quarters of the 50,000 Filipino women here were sponsored by A[US]n men. While not every relationship is a sham, thousands of these women find that their... new life in A[US] turns into a nightmare of isolation, loneliness, and worse – beatings, forced sex, and even murder... A report by... the Institute of Criminology at the University of Sydney, *Violence Against Filipino Women*, has found that the murder rate of Filipino women in A[US] is six times higher than the national average, and they suffer worrying levels of sexual, emotional and physical abuse. So who *are* the men who abuse them? Researchers into the problems of Filipino women in A[US] have discovered that there is a "typical" sponsor – men who are likely to have characteristics which limit their success with A[US]n women: physical or mental disabilities; social and geographical isolation; or advanced age. The typical sponsor is 10 to 20 years older than the woman, not as well educated and often originally from a non-English speaking background. Of 20 Filipino women seeking help from South A[US]'s Riverland Women's Shelter, 19 of their partners were on disability pensions. There is also a concentration of Filipino wives in isolated A[US]n mining communities. But of more concern is the attitude prevalent among these men. According to researchers at the Centre for the Study of A[US]n-Asian Relations at Griffith University, many are seeking docile, sexually submissive women who will cook, clean and have sex with them on command. A majority of sponsors in one survey stated... that they wanted "undemanding wives"; and they listed qualities such as "being quiet" and "not being materialistic" as desirable in their wives... At the extreme end of this is the men who seek a sex slave. A 1992 report into "serial sponsors" – men who sponsor one Filipino woman after another – for the Centre of Multicultural Studies at Wollongong University, reports that some of these men have been heard to boast about obtaining a "housekeeper, cleaner, cook and sex partner for three months with the only cost being a one-way airfare"; or that obtaining a woman from the Philippines by sponsorship was "cheaper than seeing a prostitute"... The women advertised through[Philippines-based] introduction agencies are not always prostitutes, but in many cases they are prepared to use their sexuality to secure their future. Although many Filipino women are well educated and speak at least two languages, including English, their prospects are dim. Asia's economic growth spurt... bypassed the Philippines; unemployment is high and the strict Catholic society rejects divorce or single motherhood as acceptable options for women. Many Filipino women are forced to work abroad, often as domestic servants, and see marriage to a western man as their ticket out of poverty.

...In a lifetime of toil... in the sugar fields of Negros in the central Philippines[a]... 54-year-old woman... has seen the industry go from boom to bust. But her life never changed. She was poor when the sugar barons she worked for were among the wealthiest in the land. She is just as poor now when the big sugar companies are virtually on their knees... Once a top export, sugar funded the lavish lifestyles of sugar barons in the 1970s

when Ferdinand Marcos ran the country. "They lived in profligacy. They bought shiny cars and spent like there was no tomorrow," said one resident of Negros... The world changed for the barons after Mr Marcos was ousted in a popular revolt in 1986 and the new President... launched a land redistribution programme that broke up large sugar plantations. Of the 100,000 planters now cultivating the country's 370,000ha of sugar cane, 80... to 90[%] are farmers who own 10ha or less. However, this revolution has failed to uplift the lot of the poor farmers because banks do not want to finance fragmented farms, which are mostly under the control of illiterate farmers. "I know of some farms covered by the agrarian reform [programme] that have dropped production by 10[%] of what these were potentially good for," said the Governor of Negros... [Dropped production means] the country's biggest sugar mill is now almost deserted, except for guards and some workers doing off-season repair. The chief financial officer... said: "This is the first time that Victorias Milling Corp declared an off-season. In the past, it was always a 12-month operation." ...Recently, Victorias and its sugar-trading arm have sought a moratorium on debts of more than seven billion pesos. Victorias officials say the company's financial troubles are exacerbated by a slump in the sugar industry because of rising competition from imports. Analysts say they expect the local sugar industry to recover as the Government plans to provide financial support to help them develop better plant varieties, buy farm machinery and modernise the mills and refineries. The Government also temporarily shielded the industry from cheaper imports by freezing tariffs on South-east Asian sugar at 65[%] starting on July 1. It had earlier committed itself to dropping sugar tariffs to a lower rate... But while the industry may have hopes of a rebound... [the woman], her 13 children and their spouses, and 156 grandchildren[, do]... not expect... conditions to change much. She says she receives 35 pesos (\$NZ1.84) a day as well as a free room provided by the owner of the 13ha farm... Home is a rundown shack sub-divided into rooms shared with three other families. Half of the shack is used as a warehouse. After years of living in poverty, nothing seems to matter. "I have no more hope. It's enough that I can buy a meal."

...FOR a convicted felon facing 24 years in prison... the widow of Ferdinand Marcos... seemed to not have a care in the world. Dressed like a queen... still bejewelled... she laughed and chatted... [though] her name has been sullied, her fortune confiscated and her freedom gained only by... \$3000 bail... [She] is convinced that rehabilitation and vindication are within reach, if only people would embrace the same history she does... Indeed, history has the whole 21 years [of her husband's rule] wrong, she believes. Marcos wasn't a dictator but one of the world's great democrats. He wasn't a thief; he was an astute trader in precious metals... He declared martial law not to perpetuate his own rule but to prevent the Philippines from slipping into political instability and economic ruin. As for her role, she had none, other than as loving supporter... The world... [remembers] her primarily as the woman with a lavish lifestyle and 1200 pairs of shoes... In 1986, Ferdinand Marcos and his wife... fled to Hawaii [after] a "People Power" revolution... [The new] President... set up a commission to reclaim the billions of dollars... [the couple] are said to have stolen, he as president, she as an unelected quasi chief executive... Marcos died in Hawaii in 1989. After a long legal battle, [she] was allowed to return to the Philippines in 1991... [Claims] against the family estate now stand at \$70 billion. Still unresolved are the whereabouts and ownership of more than five tonnes of gold... A U[S] federal appeals court... [is currently considering] a lawsuit by human rights activists seeking hundreds of millions of dollars deposited in Swiss banks by... Marcos.

...SEVERAL Swiss bank accounts may contain... [money] hidden in trust for the widow and children of [the] former Philippine president... [A] US District Judge... has ordered eight accounts in the Union Bank of Switzerland be frozen despite vigorous objections of bank lawyers, who claim documents presented by Philippine human rights victims were forgeries. Bank officials said the accounts contained less than \$6 million and that none of the money could be linked to the family of Marcos... But... [one] of the key documents introduced by... the lawyer for nearly 10,000 Filipinos who won a \$1.9 billion judgment against Marcos' estate in 1994, says that as of June 30, 1997, there was \$12.9 billion in an account in the Union Bank... in the name of the Sandy Foundation. Soon after the Marcos family fled into exile, Philippine investigators said the Sandy Foundation, based in Vaduz, Lichtenstein, was one of several sham foundations set up to hide Marcos assets. Another document... was a letter purportedly signed by [a] Swiss lawyer... stating he had been for many years the trustee of the Sandy Foundation, which "was established in 1970 by... Ferdinand E. Marcos." The letter also says that after going into exile, Marcos signed power of attorney giving his son... and his daughter... authority over precious metal accounts at Union Bank... [The Swiss lawyer has recently] contended his signature was forged... However, [the] Judge... refused to accept any of the affidavits offered by the bank lawyers. He said [the] bank... had to first come to a US court and subject themselves to cross-examination. Bank lawyers said they will appeal the judge's rulings. - 1997

...the Philippines' President... says he is close to reaching a deal with the family to recover the late dictator's illegally hoarded billions... Since Ferdinand Marcos and his family were forced to flee the country... in February 1986, successive Administrations have tried and failed to recover the fortune... stolen during his 20-year rule... The previous two Governments filed scores of criminal and civil suits against the Marcoses but so far the only money that has been traced is \$US750 million deposited in a Swiss bank account. That money is now held in an escrow account until an agreement can be reached between the Government, the Marcos family and the 9539 Filipinos who won a class action against Marcos for human rights abuses. [The incumbent President], a Marcos loyalist during his days as a Manila mayor, has said he favoured a negotiated settlement rather than protracted legal battles so that the money could be released to support his pro-poor policies... [However, the] fortunes of the flamboyant 69-year-old former first lady have been on the rise and she has said that she would prefer to let the courts decide all her cases. Last year her corruption conviction was overturned and the present Administration has been steadily dropping cases filed against her husband's cronies... In the past, [Mrs] Marcos has pleaded poverty but she claimed last month that her family were the rightful owners of most of the country's blue-chip companies and that they could be worth 500 billion pesos...

[The f]ormer Philippine first lady... said yesterday that it was possible her late husband had accumulated billions of dollars, but it was not looted money and she was willing to share some of it with the... Government for projects to aid the poor, [although she] refused to talk about a sharing formula. "Let it come from us voluntarily... It will come from the generosity of our hearts without the spirit of guilt," she said.

...9500 plaintiffs who said they were either victims of torture or the heirs of people executed under Marcos' regime... will receive \$US150 million... under a settlement reached after 13 years of legal wrangling, say lawyers. The settlement is less than 10[%] of the \$US1.9 billion originally awarded by the US District Court in Honolulu... [Incidentally, a] fire in a Philippines orphanage yesterday killed at least 27 people, including children screaming for help from windows and babies abandoned in a nursery... Orphanage workers said some of those killed could not get out of the blazing, three-storey wooden building because exit doors were locked... Faulty electrical wiring was suspected to be the cause... [The mayor has] ordered an investigation into reports that the first fire engine did not arrive at the scene until an hour after the blaze started - although the orphanage is only 500m from the nearest fire station... The country's worst fire razed a Manila discotheque in March 1996 killing 160 people...

Ghosts hold no fear for Manila's children of the graves, who survive by living alongside the dead... Twice a week, [workers] and friends from Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) head to the Calocan cemetery in Manila to treat the visible wounds of about 50 abandoned children, aged between 5 and 8, who have turned the graveyard into a sprawling playground... [An MSF] nurse... said these "children of street children" represent the hard core of about 75,000 abandoned children living on Manila's streets. Most have no family. They beg in a nearby market for food and wander the streets looking for sex... Nearly every child presents with some type of STD. No testing for HIV has been done but it is presumed rampant... The Philippines... is a Catholic nation and contraception is frowned upon... Most customers... also... pay more for unprotected sex with the smaller children - who are in no position to negotiate... They let adults have sex with them for as little as 30 pesos... to support their glue habit... which will starve off the pain of hunger and abandonment every day for one month. "All of them are drugs-needs first... They use drugs to

forget they need food.” ...MSF (Doctors Without Borders) does not bring food to the cemetery, which it considers an unhealthy place. Instead, MSF workers take the children out to eat on days off work with local groups to encourage the children to leave the graveyard and go to shelters. But these children do not do well in shelters: they struggle with any discipline after the freedom of life on the streets... Treating the STD problem is a priority for MSF, but it has posed an unprecedented challenge for a n[go] dedicated to treating the victims of war. This war is one of poverty, not guns... “This has socio-economic roots. So these are problems we cannot address. These problems will have to be addressed by the Government and it needs long-term plans.” ...Meanwhile, the... Philippine President... has been... f[indin]g himself mentioned in the same breath as [the]US President... rather a lot these days... Sadly for the gaffe-prone leader, it is nothing to do with his tough talk on the country’s communist and Muslim rebels – but rather a sex scandal which has had the local press frothing at the mouth. The latest twist in the saga has seen the bequipped leader, who often boasts of his past infidelities, refusing to take a DNA test to determine paternity of a 17-year-old beauty queen who claims to be his daughter. [The President], a former matinee idol, has already acknowledged having at least 11 children with five different women – but has dug in his heels over this latest case, saying it could open the floodgates to dozens of other claims. “I might run out of blood,” he said on his radio programme... But while the National Bureau of Investigation has had a DNA testing kit at its offices for almost a year, it has not been given the necessary chemicals costing 80,000 pesos... When the scandal first broke, [the President] at first... said: “If she’s my daughter, that’s okay, because, after all, many women want to have my baby” – but said it was up to [the 17-year-old] and her mother to come up with the proof. While the President vacillates, his three legitimate children... have said they are willing to recognise [her] as part of the family. Their... long-suffering... mother... has typically maintained a dignified silence. She never comments on her husband’s flings, and did not flinch when he joked, while presenting a prize to a young beauty queen, that he would have his wife shot. [Ironically, the President] has drawn links with [his US counterpart] and the sex scandals surrounding him in the past... “He [[the US President]] gets all the scandal – and I get all the sex.” But now the tide may have turned. While most Filipinos regard infidelity as normal, if regrettable, [he] may find they are less forgiving if he fails to do the right thing...

[The o]usted Philippines President... faces a barrage of charges, including an offence punishable by death, but experts say that a weak judicial system and legal loopholes could see him stay free and even attempt a political comeback. Once at the pinnacle of stardom and power, [he] was forced to resign at the weekend, leaving behind a poignant tale of power, undying friendship, betrayal and downfall more dramatic than any of his films. Hundreds of thousands of Filipinos rose in the second “people power” uprising in [recent years, forcing the President] to grudgingly step down over corruption charges and to abandon the presidential palace through a back door to avoid angry protesters. State prosecutors are now under pressure to file criminal charges against [the ousted President], who was undergoing an impeachment trial in the Senate when the suppression of vital evidence against him triggered a five-day bloodless uprising. Aides of[the] newly installed President... [–] the former Vice-President[–] said one of the cases to be pursued against the fallen leader would be “economic plunder.” ...Under a law that has never been applied, anyone found guilty of embezzling at least 50 million pesos... can be sentenced to death... [He] allegedly amassed more than \$US60 million... in secret bank accounts... The manner in which [he] was ousted has already begun to stir legal debate. Under the constitution, the President can serve only one six-year term and is expressly barred from re-election. But the fact that [he] completed less than half of his term and never resigned was seen as a potential loophole that would allow him to run again for high office – perhaps including the presidency – unless he is convicted of corruption charges and barred from public office... The largely peaceful transition in the Philippines today raised hopes of a fresh start, and won praise elsewhere in Asia. But newspapers in Taiwan, which had its own brush with a constitutional crisis when opposition parties banded together to threaten the President with dismissal, warned against toppling leaders without holding elections.

...The death toll in the runup to today’s elections in the Philippines... [– during which m]ore than 36 million eligible voters... [will] troop to polling stations... to elect members of the Senate, the House of Representatives and thousands of local posts... [–] has risen to 64, making the campaign the bloodiest in recent years... In the 1995 elections, 42 people were killed... [An o]utgoing House of Representatives member... and an aide were gunned down... in his hometown of Taiong... [He was a member of the incumbent President]’s ruling People Power Coalition, which is competing with... [the ex-President]’s opposition party for control of Congress... A grenade ripped through a crowd of 2000 in the southern town of Sultan sa Barongis on Saturday, killing four supporters of[an] opposition mayoral candidate... In Pangutaran town, in southern Sulu province, five people were killed in fighting between armed supporters of rival mayoral candidates at the weekend. Police said the Army sent in troops and helicopter gunships to quell[the] fighting... The town centre was razed when soldiers burned thatched houses where the armed men were hiding... [In related news,] Muslim rebels who kidnapped about two dozen hostages, including three Americans... from a beach resort in the southwestern Philippines... about a month ago... dumped the beheaded bodies of two of their Filipino captives near a highway on a remote island... at the weekend... In another part of the island, police said they had found two other headless Filipino bodies on Friday... But they were unable to identify the bodies or say whether they had been held hostage. The discoveries brought to at least eight the number of decapitated bodies that have been found on Basilan island since 5000 troops started chasing several hundred members of the Abu Sayyaf rebel group and the hostages...

Muslim rebels still holding... [Western hostages] in the Philippines have been spooked by a deadly internal clash that will probably hamper early efforts to free the captives. The... leader of the Abu Sayyaf rebels... yesterday warned hostage negotiators to stay away from their jungle camp, saying it was too dangerous after a clash between rival guerrilla factions... [in which] at least one bodyguard was killed and eight others... injured.

...Philippine troops rescued 13 hostages yesterday after a gunbattle with Muslim guerrillas on the... island of Basilan. But the rebels are still holding at least 20 Americans and 19 other Filipinos. The... guerrillas[have so far] beheaded 10 of their captives...

“Manila’s finest” – the self-styled image of policemen in the Philippines sprawling capital is looking increasingly tarnished after five officers were charged with carrying out summary executions of suspects. The officers have been accused of “salvaging”... suspected thieves... because they failed to hand over protection money. The controversy came at the end of a very bad week for the Philippine National Police... Earlier this week, the country’s... Chief Superintendent... was charged with being an accessory to murder in a similar rub-out case of robbery gang members in Manila four years ago[], and follows the case of ‘a senior police officer who shot dead a fellow motorist after their cars nearly collided during one of Manila’s frequent traffic jams (the colonel claimed the businessman hurled insults at him and appeared to reach inside his car for what he thought was a gun – at that point, he shot the man twice’)]. Figures show that more than 1000 officers were reported to be involved in crimes ranging from theft to homicide [last year] and officers from the country’s “best-performing station” were implicated in the murder of a fellow officer... Prosecutions of police officers are largely unheard of. This may not be the case for the five officers, according to[the Philippine] President... “Salvaging,” while not widespread, is generally thought to have been practiced for decades. It sends a warning to other criminals that their actions will not be tolerated, said one retired officer who refused to be named. “[99%] of those salvaged were hardened criminals. No one will sue you even if you kill them. On the other hand the public will rejoice because the criminal will not bother them any more,”... [Speaking of criminals,] private detectives... ha[ve been hired] to search for the... billions of dollars stashed overseas by... the... [Indonesian President] during his... years in power[(he became leader of ‘the world’s 4th most populous country after a group of pro-communist generals assassinated and kidnapped several other top officers; himself a general, he put down the rebellion and nudged aside the charismatic nationalist president, then consolidated his power as the military swept through the country, killing an estimated 500,000 suspected communists’)]... Last month... a report in *Time* magazine... alleged [the President] and his family were sitting on a fortune worth \$US15 billion... The money was said to include a transfer under [his] name of \$US9 b... from a bank in Switzerland to a bank in Austria... last year.

...Indonesia's ailing... President... will not travel abroad for treatment, according to diplomats, because he is afraid of being arrested for crimes against humanity... In 1996, [the President] underwent treatment for high blood pressure and kidney problems at a private clinic in Germany.

Indonesia's President... has ordered[that] military-based riot alert centres[be] set up across the nation after serious outbreaks of violence... [which included t]housands of... students... attacking and burning police stations... [during protests over] police brutality... in the city of Kendari... The "Control Centres for Social Unrest" would... monitor incidents and rumours which could spark fresh trouble, [the President] said. Many observers have predicted more civil unrest is likely ahead of general elections due on May 29. The past four months have seen three major outbreaks of rioting sparked by religious and ethnic tensions with underlying anger over the wide gap between rich and poor.

...Indonesia experienced its worst riots in decades last weekend... [A] political scientist... compares Indonesia's discontent to the upheaval in the Philippines before the dictator Ferdinand Marcos was overthrown... [As a consequence of the Asian economic crisis, which has 'hit Indonesia worst', 'prices for basic foods have more than tripled, while incomes are being slashed more than 60%.' M]ost Indonesians... make the equivalent of less than \$A2.60... a day. They live in zinc-roofed shanties without running water while businessmen in [the President's] inner circle have become some of the world's richest billionaires... [The] President puts himself up for re-election every five years by an assembly filled with members either picked or approved by his ruling Golkar party. He runs unopposed each time, although in 1993 the Army nominated a general who withdrew only under intense Government pressure... [But] the former general who seized power in 1966 is... still widely regarded as the only leader capable of holding together this factious country of 13,000 islands and[204 million people from] 300 ethnic groups. In recent years, however, he has squandered his public goodwill by tolerating rampant corruption. No one... got rich faster than his children, who have become millionaires from monopolies and state contracts... [The President's] indulgence of his children reached new heights in February when officials announced that... [h]is youngest son... would get huge tax breaks to start his own car company. Underscoring their isolation, the very rich... are moving into walled, guarded suburban enclaves surrounded by the sprawling shanty towns of the millions who labour in their fields or factories.

...Indonesia's minimum legal wage will be increased by 10[%] in April – but the Government admits the new wage will still not be enough to live on... [It] would meet an average of 95.32[%] of "minimum physical requirements." ...Labour issues are seen as having the potential to explode into major unrest... Anger is simmering over the increasingly visible wealth of the beneficiaries of Indonesia's rapid economic development, many of whom have close links to the 30-year-old... regime... The lowest minimum wage was still found in... central Java, where the wage had increased from 96,000 rupiah a month (about \$NZ58) to 106,500 rupiah a month. The top wage was in the industrial zone of Batam where the minimum wage had increased from 220,500... to 235,000...

As part of national day celebrations [the]President... granted freedom to several hundred prisoners, but not to Indonesia's most famous inmate[who]... was jailed for 20 years in 1993 for commanding pro-independence guerrillas in East Timor, a former Portuguese colony invaded by Indonesia on [the President's] orders in 1975. [Another former famous inmate, the]South African President... wrote to[the Indonesian] President... last month calling for [the rebel leader's] release as the first step towards negotiating peace for the troubled territory.

...Indonesia might well consider itself an accident-prone country. Here, a Cave Creek-type disaster happens every week... Part of the problem is safety standards. Indonesia has very few. Seat belts are not worn in cars, boats are overloaded and planes are not maintained. Even basic precautions... are ignored. For example, [recently]... 123 people died in a shopping mall fire... The fire was politically motivated – clashes erupted between supporters of rival political parties and the mall was torched. But the tragedy was that fire exits were blocked and sprinkler systems didn't work properly, trapping shoppers inside the inferno. Another problem is that in Indonesia life is cheap. Its accident rate is probably average considering its population of more than 200 million. But from my own experiences of riding fully-laden public buses in central Java, I know that overtaking equally fully-laden articulated trucks on downhill blind corners is not in the best interests of passengers. But when accidents happen nobody demands an investigation. The media takes little notice as well... Disasters fail to make headlines... When the Lake Toba ferry disaster story was breaking, few newspapers had the story on Page One. Why? That spot belonged to[the country's] President... who was hosting a visit by[the] South African President...

Two grisly episodes of infanticide last week have brought the official infanticide toll in Indonesia to 48 this year... [I]n 1996... the death toll reached... 24... The incidents highlight the pressure on poor, uneducated women struggling for survival in... Jakarta[a]... city of more than 10 million inhabitants... where the gap between the haves and the have nots is continuing to grow. Cases of infanticide usually involve women from slum areas who have themselves been abandoned by their partner or rejected by their families... While more wealthy women can afford an abortion to avoid the shame attached to an unwanted or illegitimate pregnancy, women from slums have few options... Many of the women come from impoverished villages around the archipelago hoping to carve out a living in the capital, only to find they are unemployable. Cultural norms in Indonesia make it difficult for women to raise children out of wedlock... Nearly all babies are either strangled to death or simply abandoned in rubbish dumps or roadsides shortly after birth... Many of the women who resort to infanticide slip through the social welfare system because they have no permanent address... A forensic scientist at the... State Hospital... said cases of infanticide were difficult to solve because babies were found in areas far away from where their mothers probably lived. "If the baby is just born and dumped immediately, it is most likely the mother panicked and was confused." ...The latest incidents have drawn a strong reaction from city officials who have labelled the crime of infanticide a "cruel and immoral act," the *Jakarta Post* reported... However... a councillor who heads the city's commission for welfare affairs... did admit that some people were probably not prepared for the harsh realities of Jakarta. Life in the city has become tougher in recent months with a prolonged El Nino drought that is putting a strain on the water supply. The leafy suburbs in the south, home to expatriates and wealthy business people, have ample water. Further north water is becoming scarce, especially in slum areas... Residents... have begun washing in the sea, for lack of fresh water.

...A leading Indonesian Government-sponsored think-tank has recommended that the nation's armed forces (ABRI) reduce their political role to make way for greater democracy... Under Indonesia's electoral system, ABRI currently has 100 appointed seats in the 500-member House of Representatives. That figure is to be reduced to 75 seats at the general elections on May 29...

Poverty and corruption have been singled out as key issues in Indonesia's general elections... As the official election campaign entered its fourth day, the chair of the ruling Golkar party... vowed to reduce the number of Indonesians still regarded as living in poverty, a figure currently around 22 million... Meanwhile, the... Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) also pointed to poverty and corruption as related social ills prevalent across the archipelago... [A] PDI official... told a rally that "Indonesia's high level of poverty is caused entirely by corruption and collusion which must be removed from all levels of society,"... In a recent international survey, Indonesia was rated the most corrupt nation in Asia. However, the finding was strongly rejected by the Government... Golkar is virtually certain to win an overwhelming majority of votes for 425 seats in the largely ceremonial House of Representatives. Another 75 MPs are appointed to represent the armed forces, whose members do not vote... Many observers believed a growing gap between rich and poor has been a key factor in a wave of rioting across the archipelago, especially in densely populated Java, in recent months[– 'Indonesia hasn't got rule by democracy, it's got mob rule' – although another factor could be that the]... best-known opposition leader... [i]s barred from participating in the poll and she[has] asked her supporters to boycott the campaign.

...Indonesia's President... said at the weekend that the country's election campaign rules must be altered to prevent the recurrence of violence... after an election campaign that was regarded as the most violent during the 30 years of... [his] rule. - 1997

Thai nationals... spoke of the “living hell” they had left behind as they arrived home... [from holidays in a] Jakarta turned into madness amid an orgy of looting. Adding to the stress and desperation were claims that Indonesian immigration officials extorted cash from them as they prepared to flee the country... The escape from Jakarta’s smoke-filled and vehicle-littered streets brought back dark memories of both Thailand’s own troubled past[, such as the]... October 1973 protests – when about 400 people were said to have been killed – [that] brought an end to a military dictatorship, [which]... was reversed three years later by a further bloody coup d’état... and the flight into Thailand of Cambodians escaping... their capital, Phnom Penh...

POL POT will never face a war-crimes tribunal. Richard Nixon didn’t live long enough either. That was my gut reaction as I concentrated on the Lao-accented English of... [our] hotelier and tour guide, bounty hunter, citizen – and survivor. “Sit down and I’ll tell you a story[.]” he says before proceeding to explain that]... Cambodia’s rice paddies and forests were not the only killing fields of the undeclared war in Indochina. The pockmarked, denuded hills around the Plain of Jars... [–] where you can wander among the mysterious stone jars bequeathed to us by a culture which flowered around the time of Christ... [–] also witnessed the slaughter of uncomprehending civilians. Half the people who once lived in this province, Xieng Khouang, died or fled... [I]n... Phonsavan, a dusty two-street, three-dog town... that grew up to replace the provincial capital bombed off the map by 1975... [I]ocal people are still being traumatised by chance encounters with unexploded ordnance, particularly the harmless-looking cluster bombs... [and v]enerable Volga sedans weave between potholes the size of bomb craters (which some of them are).

Pol Pot, the elusive leader of Cambodia’s Khmer Rouge guerrilla army, is still alive and playing a leading role in running the radical... group, Khmer Rouge officials said... [T]hey were amused to hear press reports that their leader was dead... Rumours that the 68-year-old... has died of malaria in a jungle guerrilla zone began circulating in Phnom Penh and along the Thai-Cambodian border this month. He has not been seen by an independent observer for more than 15 years... More than a million Cambodians are estimated to have died from execution, over-work and disease during... the Khmer Rouge... “killing fields” rule of Cambodia from April 1975 until a Vietnamese invasion in December 1978. Through the 1980s the fiercely nationalistic Khmer Rouge led a guerrilla alliance battling the Vietnamese army of occupation and the Cambodian government which Hanoi installed. The guerrillas boycotted a 1993 election and have waged a low-level war against the new coalition Government.

...Extermination was the principal industry of Pol Pot’s era according to a team of investigators studying documents in Phnom Penh... “Extermination... rivalled rice production in the intensity with which it was pursued and the attention it received from the leadership.” ...In yet another paradox the Khmer Rouge were exterminating the ethnic Chinese at home while Beijing provided the Maoist fanatics weapons, training and supplies until 1991... By the end of Khmer Rouge rule, 50[% of the]... Thai and Chinese communities... had been killed. - 1996

In the mid-1970s, Pol Pot... became a name synonymous with unspeakable atrocities... [U]p to one-quarter of Cambodia’s population[was] eliminated during his four-year reign of terror... Even[the] King... lost 14 of his children and grandchildren... But... nearly two decades after the fall of... Pol Pot’s... Government, it is still difficult to determine the exact number of people who were summarily executed, or who succumbed to forced labour, illness, torture or hunger... Once judged as excessive, the death toll of 3,314,768 people put forward in 1983 by the pro-Vietnamese Government... could prove to be close to the truth, especially after the recent discovery of thousands of new mass graves by American researchers in the country’s east. When they took over, the Khmer Rouge preached an agrarian utopia and forced two million residents in the capital – the old, infirm and children among them – to leave the city. No urban area was spared the forced exodus... Intellectuals... were slain in large numbers. “I personally participated in the executions of 5000 people,” said... a former Khmer Rouge who sought refuge in France in 1976... Another young Khmer Rouge... said he had participated in the June 1978 executions of 10,000 people who had been convicted of being pro-Vietnamese. “I drank a large glass of liquor mixed with human liver, and afterwards I fired [a gun] for the entire day,” he declared a year later. One of the more macabre relics... is the Tuol Seng prison in Phnom Penh where some... 20,000 “counter-revolutionaries” were interrogated and tortured before being put to death on a neighbouring field. Only seven prisoners survived “Interrogation Centre S-21,” the official name of Tuol Seng, which was once a school. Today, the prison is a “genocide museum” and the instruments of torture are displayed in all their horror... Unbearable photographs attest to the pain and atrocities that can be inflicted on human flesh. According to the museum guides... [victims] suffered suffocation, electrocution, amputations and were even stung by venomous insects – the last method was specially reserved for women who first underwent sexual mutilations. These abuses remain unpunished... But the final chapter of this story has yet to be written.

...Born Saloth Sar on May 19, 1928, Pol Pot led a Cambodian peasant army to victory against the U[S]-backed Lon Nol republic in 1975, or Year Zero, as the Khmer Rouge called it... Shortly after he was ousted from Phnom Penh, a smiling and healthy-looking Pol Pot told journalists that several thousand Cambodians had died “due to some mistakes” in implementing his policies, but he denied committing crimes against humanity. That was the last time Pol Pot, known to his subordinates as Brother Number One, was seen in public, but no one doubted that he remained the movement’s helmsman. He was born to a reasonably prosperous rural family... and spent part of his youth as a novice monk and student at a pagoda in Phnom Penh, where relatives worked in the royal household. As a student between 1940 and 1948 he developed nationalist ideas. Awarded a scholarship to study in France, Pol Pot became so involved in radical student politics that he returned home without completing his studies. He joined an underground movement opposed to the French colonialists and went on to teach history and geography in a private school in Phnom Penh from 1954 to 1963. Fearful that police suspected him, he fled the capital for the countryside that year. Pol Pot became party secretary in 1963 and in 1968 his guerrillas... launched their first attacks against army and police posts. They thrived on the bitterness engendered by massive U[S] bombing of the countryside. During the war, the Cambodian communists were uneasy allies of their Vietnamese comrades... Vietnamese-trained Khmer Rouge cadres, and in many cases their families, were tortured to death... [when] Pol Pot unleashed a purge of his ranks in 1977... Pol Pot still poses a threat to Cambodia’s political stability, even if news that ...he... has surrendered turns out to be true.

...Cambodians yesterday called for justice against... Pol Pot after the country’s co-prime ministers announced his capture by guerrillas who had rebelled against him... Pol Pot was being held in Anlong Veng, and moves were under way to bring him before an international tribunal for the crimes he committed... Pol Pot was sentenced to death in absentia by a Phnom Penh court soon after his overthrow... in 1979. Now 69, he is said to be very sick, having long suffered from malaria... He is (one hopes) the last of those awful 20th-century dictators whose fantastic bloodshed was inspired by the teachings of Karl Marx. Lenin – Stalin – Mao – Pol Pot. With luck, the line ends here.

...The capture of Pol Pot, announced by the co-leaders of Cambodia in a rare moment of unity, has been greeted as the end of the nation’s problems[. However, a news report from Cambodia last year said that ‘domestic violence is becoming a huge problem for this country and most of the offenders are young adults’ (i.e., people who, as children, lived through the horrors of the mid-seventies)]...

Cambodians were invited yesterday to take part in one of the world’s most unusual commemorations – National Hate Day – an outlet for people to vent their anger at Khmer Rouge atrocities... College students read poems describing the horrors of the regime and incense was burned in remembrance of the dead... May 20 is believed by many to be the birthday of[the] notorious Khmer Rouge leader... Hate Day is no longer observed as an official national holiday but during the 1980s... it was a countrywide event.

...As part of a 24-day, 340-km *peace march*, some 200 Cambodian Buddhist monks and nuns arrived in... Pailin[, the]... former stronghold of the Khmer Rouge. The pilgrims were greeted by local residents and by the leader of a splinter faction of the Khmer Rouge, which allied itself with the

Government last August. In the past, the Khmer Rouge routinely executed monks and destroyed Buddhist shrines. Approximately 3,000... Maoist guerrillas still battle Cambodian authorities.

...*War in Cambodia has created an army of lost children...* As many as 200,000 Cambodian children are fending for themselves after being orphaned or abandoned by their parents and guardians. Begging for a living or picking through piles of rubbish for anything which might bring a few cents from recycling merchants, they often fall victim to unscrupulous adults keen to make a quick profit in Cambodia's vigorous flesh trade. Recent investigations by child welfare organisations have revealed a thriving domestic and international trade in children. Cambodian children are being trafficked to the paedophiles of Europe or sold into servitude in their own country and throughout the region. "This is a tragedy of enormous proportions with profound implications for the future of this country," said [a member] of the local human rights group Licahdo. "And the problem is getting worse. More and more children are being dumped on the streets or sold into prostitution." Licahdo and other rights groups calculate that as many as 40[%] of the country's estimated 60,000 prostitutes are aged between 12 and 18. Many take to selling their bodies as a last resort while others are sold into prostitution after being tricked by intermediaries promising paid jobs... A recent seminar organised by the Norwegian children's welfare group, Red Barna, to raise awareness of the rights of children concluded that the present problem was a direct result of more than two decades of civil war. "The war has destroyed our moral and social fabric," one participant said. "We've lost the idea that children need to be cared for and protected. Often now children are seen as just another tool to ensure our own prosperity." However, she said Cambodia's mind-numbing poverty would make it difficult to change the situation and that economic necessity would continue to undermine the rights of children for years to come. Statistics from the Ministry of Planning reveal that even children who stay with their families are unlikely to have an opportunity to fully develop their potential. Those statistics show that 50[%] of Cambodian children aged between 10 and 15 are working to support their families, often as unpaid help to parents who are struggling to keep those families together... [U]nder such circumstances parents themselves were vulnerable and easily conned into entrusting custody of their children to someone else... then the children are sold... into prostitution...

Cambodia declares war on prostitution... Police have arrested 16 brothel owners in a clampdown on the sex industry and several face prison terms of up to 20 years for involvement in the sex slave trade, says the Deputy Governor of Phnom Penh... A number of Vietnamese women, many of whom have entered Cambodia illegally to work as prostitutes, face deportation... The industry is characterised by the large number of underage girls working in the industry against their will and an HIV infection rate of about 40[%]. In Phnom Penh alone there were an estimated 244 brothels before the present crackdown, and of the 60,000 commercial sex workers in Cambodia, 30[%] are believed to have been coerced or tricked into prostitution. "It is alarmingly common for young girls to be held in brothels against their will. If they try to escape they are beaten and chained to their beds," said... a Phnom Penh-based human rights group. "Intermediaries, usually friends or relatives of the family, will go to a village and say they have work for the family's daughter... They tempt the parents by offering a couple of hundred dollars as a down payment on her promised salary, but the girls are then sold into the sex industry. A virgin can be sold for as much as \$US700... but after a week or so she will be sold to a brothel for about \$US150 where she becomes a sex slave... After that they are usually too ashamed to return home and have no option but to stay with the brothel in order to eat..." Several welfare groups have criticised the crackdown as unsustainable. "It's the same old story. Crackdowns just drive the industry underground which means we can no longer monitor the girls' health and welfare... Besides, we have seen this sort of thing before – a crackdown followed by a re-emergence a few months later as police are bribed to turn a blind eye..."

A Cambodian woman was arrested yesterday... after she and [an accomplice, who] escaped... were seen slipping a drug to a 15-year-old student... Interior Ministry police said that... the woman confessed to blinding five young people in 1996 by gouging out... the[ir] eyes after they'd... been drugged... and selling them for \$US400... a pair. It was unclear if any of the victims had been killed... [P]olice said they were baffled by the case and had no idea to whom the eyes were being sold.

...*Crime syndicates descend on Cambodia...* Organised crime is having a field day in Cambodia, a country too poor to cope with it... Underfunded and overworked Cambodian police are hard-pressed to combat a growing number of international crime syndicates taking advantage of the country's lawlessness and laxity. "We have a lot of criminals wanted by Interpol here – for trafficking of weapons, humans, drugs. But our budget is very limited, we have nothing," said [the] Police General... whose work also includes overseeing the Interior Ministry's anti-drug work, [and] is paid about \$US30... per month in salary, plus less than \$US2 a day for travel allowances. The 63 other staff at the Cambodian Interpol make even less, and the dilapidated complex offices have only folding chairs for furnishings, with no phones in sight. That presents a dangerous situation given Cambodia's growing reputation as a haven for international criminals. Last year, Cambodia made the U[S]'s list of leading nations for drug trafficking... The appeal is Cambodia's inability to effectively fight crime. "This is big money, big finance, and a big organisation we are facing now... We need to join an international operation because our capability is very limited." He appealed to other nations to help Cambodia combat the problem. "I hope 1997 will be a good year to co-operate with other countries... We haven't even been able to pay our Interpol dues for three years," he said.

...[yesterday, hundreds of soldiers donned protective suits sent from neighbouring Vietnam and Singapore to clear thousands of tonnes of industrial waste from Cambodia's main port. Military officers supervising the clean-up said the soldiers would shovel the waste into plastic sacks then seal it in drums. Cambodia's Health Minister said the deaths of at least two residents and five cases of dizziness appeared linked to their involvement in earlier unprotected movements of the waste. Last weekend, protesters sacked the offices in Sihanoukville of officials blamed for allowing the waste to be imported from Taiwanese petrochemical giant Formosa Plastics. Local officials say more than 10,000 people have fled the Sihanoukville area, fearing chemical contamination. Four people died and 13 were hurt in car crashes during the exodus on Monday. Cambodian officials believe the waste, which was contained in sacks bearing skull-and-crossbones danger signs, contains hazardous materials such as lead and mercury. Formosa Plastics has said the waste has mercury traces, but had been certified by Taiwan's Environmental Protection Administration as not hazardous. Clearing the 3000 tonnes of waste could take 10 days. The clean-up supervisors said the waste would be left at the dump site, about 10km from the port, until the authorities decided whether it was possible to ship it back to Taiwan'...

Three Cambodian Government officials have been charged over the dumping of nearly 3000 tonnes of toxic waste, a newspaper reported yesterday. Two customs officials and a port inspector were accused of causing damage to life, property and the environment. They are the first Government officials to be charged over the waste. The manager of a Cambodian firm which imported the mercury-laced waste had already been charged in the case. Tests have shown that much of the waste contains very high levels of mercury. Formosa Plastics, which sent the waste to Cambodia, said two weeks ago that it would clear all of the waste within 60 days and send it to a third country or back to Taiwan. Formosa initially said the concrete-like rubble was safe for land-fill, but later acknowledged some of it might exceed safety standards. News of the dumping sparked riots in Sihanoukville in which one person was killed. A prosecutor said last month that a total of nine Government officials were expected to face charges over the waste.'

...Already heightened political tensions in Cambodia jumped a notch yesterday following the discovery of an alleged illegal weapons shipment destined for the royalist Funcinpec Party. Funcinpec troops were deployed around the military airbase in [the capital] Phnom Penh while, inside, troops and military police loyal to the rival Cambodian People's Party (CPP) surrounded the hangar housing the... shipment where officials were taking inventory... The weapons, including pistols, assault rifles, anti-tank missiles and thousands of rounds of ammunition, were seized yesterday in the southern port of Sihanoukville... Senior military officials from both sides were seen coming and going from the airfield escorted by heavily armed bodyguards... Military analysts said the situation was putting severe stress on orders for the armed forces to remain neutral in political conflicts. CPP officials claimed the weapons shipment was illegal because the 78 crates were addressed to the Funcinpec president and First Prime

Minister... instead of the Ministry of Defence. Funcinpec officials said the weapons were destined for the prince's personal bodyguard unit and were seized only because of a misunderstanding. The seizure of the arms, believed to have been bought in Poland in February, came as relations between the two parties sank to their lowest point since the 1993 UN-brokered election that brought them to power... The resulting stalemate has left Parliament paralysed and unable to meet and has also prompted widespread fears of violence.

...Cambodia's First Prime Minister... said yesterday that some people... were afraid of what captured Khmer Rouge guerrilla chief Pol Pot might reveal in court... "It appears to me that some Cambodians, and maybe some countries, are not really willing for Pol Pot to be alive and be brought to justice," the Prince said. His co-premier... said on Sunday that he had received an unconfirmed report that Pol Pot was dead... Last week the two P[M]s sent a letter to the U[N] Secretary-General asking for the world body's assistance in bringing to justice those responsible for the crimes committed during the 1975-79 regime... The Prince did not elaborate on which people or countries might be afraid of Pol Pot testifying in court but few political players in Cambodia, including the Prince himself, have not, at one time or another, been allied with Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge.

...Panic broke out in the streets of Phnom Penh yesterday after a series of unidentified explosions that sounded like artillery fire shook the already tense city... Rumours spread quickly through the city that a coup was under way... Radio stations appealed for calm, saying the explosions had come from the detonation of unexploded ordnance and mines by the Cambodian Mines Action Centre about 10km west of the city. However, the announcement came too late, as panic-stricken parents pulled screaming children from schools and anxious shopkeepers fled from their stalls, flooding the streets with motorcycle and bicycle taxis and pedestrian traffic. Traffic police were overwhelmed by the unexpected surge, which blocked main roads and side streets for kilometres. Telephone lines were unusable as a torrent of calls overloaded the networks.

...ABOUT 120 soldiers loyal to Cambodia's royalist Funcinpec party[have] surrendered and turned over their weapons after fighting troops loyal to their main political rivals... about eight kilometres from Phnom Penh's Pochentong International Airport. The US embassy issued an alert to citizens not to travel to the airport or beyond.

...Cambodia's two main political parties traded accusations of assassination attempts following a heated battle between rival bodyguard units in which at least two people were killed... [T]he two-hour battle... in the heart of Phnom Penh... [involved] automatic weapons, grenades and rockets... The... U[S] Ambassador... reported that a rocket had landed in the embassy residence about three blocks south of... the scene of the battle... blowing in the glass doors and windows... Police and soldiers were out in force, and tanks rolled into the city when the clashes died down.

...The residence of Cambodia's First P[M]... and the French Embassy were badly damaged by shelling yesterday as forces under... [the Second P]M... tightened their grip on the city... At least 12 people have been killed and more than 50 wounded since the violence began on Saturday, hospital sources and local news reports said... Thousands of people streamed out of the city yesterday as the fighting raged... near the... [prince's] party headquarters and his residence... Last night a... Funcinpec party... official... said the prince had returned to Cambodia from France... [and is accusing his co-premier] of trying to stage a coup, but a radio station controlled by [the Second PM] denied the accusations... [There were also] conflicting reports of hopes for a peaceful solution to the conflict... An estimated 45 N[Z]ers in Cambodia are reported to be safe but under orders to stay indoors... [The NZ] Embassy in Bangkok was continuing to monitor the situation, but if fighting worsened any evacuation order would come from the British Embassy in Phnom Penh, which has consular responsibility for the N[Z]ers.

...Hundreds of foreigners scrambled aboard Thai military aircraft yesterday to flee Phnom Penh, but scores were trapped by the fighting in Siem Reap, the country's main tourist town. In the capital... a night-time curfew was lifted, but not until after troops rampaged through the streets, robbing shops and homes, unleashing volleys of gunfire into the air and rounding up defeated opponents... A neighbourhood near Phnom Penh University was a wasteland of wrecked tanks, gutted cars, houses holed by rocket fire... spend bullet casings and the bodies of dead royalist troops in the streets... Cambodia, along with Burma and Laos, was scheduled to join the seven-member Asean later this month, but the collapse of the troubled coalition... has thrown this in doubt. Asean foreign ministers plan a special meeting tomorrow in Kuala Lumpur to discuss the situation... From the south of France, [the 1st PM] called on his supporters to resist and warned of widespread war, while looking for outside help bringing peace to Cambodia... He said he was going to New York tomorrow to address the U[N] Security Council... But [the 2nd PM] said yesterday the international community should keep out of Cambodia's internal affairs. "Let Cambodians solve their own problems," he said.

...[an AUS]n Defence Attache... warned that at least 250,000 gun-toting fighters were "out of control" of any command in the arms-flooded country, threatening the prospects for peace... "[A Russian grenade costs \$US5, a US grenade \$20. Handguns sell for \$200. You can buy any weapon you want.] We have a problem here. Unless somebody takes control of the weapons in this society, how can this country come out of the turmoil?"...

A[n AUS]n man released after being kidnapped in the Cambodian capital... said yesterday that he feared he would not survive... [after] he was forced to sit on a live hand grenade... [H]e was held for several hours before being released uninjured on the outskirts of the city... [The man], aged 40, who works for a private company in Phnom Penh... believed his captors were motivated by theft... of his Toyota Landcruiser... Two A[US]ns were murdered in Cambodia after being abducted by Khmer Rouge guerrillas while travelling through the countryside, David Wilson in 1994 and Kellie Wilkinson in 1995.

...[people travelling] to Cambodia will soon have the chance to test their shooting skills with more than 30 types of guns at Phnom Penh's "War Disney," thanks to [a] Taiwanese businessman... "For around \$US40 a day, people can have an exciting time. Shooting an automatic weapon is like having a multiple orgasm," the 46-year-old nightclub owner told the *Phnom Penh Post* newspaper... [H]is new \$US800,000 48-lane Marksmen Club... would cater for "Mom and Pop first-time shooters" as well as seasoned "professionals" keen to keep their skills honed while Cambodia's civil war remains confined to the north-west. Phnom Penh already has one "public" shooting range where expatriates and tourists can fire assault rifles by slipping a few dollars to the military police who run the range. But... the Marksmen Club will be better, offering... the chance to toss a grenade or fire a B-40 rocket launcher... Phnom Penh authorities have recently cracked down on gun ownership, recalling thousands of licensed weapons and setting up illegal weapons checkpoints around the city. But [the businessman] said his contacts in the military and Interior Ministry enabled him to get approval for his range for... just... \$US30,000... Now he boasts a private army of bodyguards he calls the Eagles, who, he claimed, are the best trained and armed of any in Phnom Penh.

...Teenage "boy soldiers" with no military training are being sent into battle with forces loyal to Cambodia's feuding co-prime ministers... Villagers in... Siem Reap have told U[N] human rights investigators of a surge in forced conscription in recent months where platoons of soldiers enter a village and demand either money or cannon-fodder. "Parents will be told they must contribute their son to the war effort or pay a 'war tax' of anything up to the equivalent of \$25. But these people are too poor to pay and so their sons are taken away."

...Hundreds of boys, some reportedly as young as eight years old, are... increasingly being press-ganged into... Cambodia's simmering civil war as older soldiers increasingly refuse to fight. Others, their families too poor to properly provide for them or simply accepting that for Cambodians war is a way of life, don oversized uniforms and head to the shifting front lines where malaria can pose a greater risk than gunfire or landmines... "I joined... because they said I would be looked after and be paid 60,000 riel (\$29) a month. But we are not fed enough... Sometimes I get scared... I have fired guns... but I have never killed anybody,"... said... [a] 13-year-old... [A former AUS]n defence attache who has spent the last three years trying to increase the professionalism of Cambodia's armed forces, is distressed about the growing number of boy combatants. "These are not soldiers... these are lambs to the slaughter." Military commanders reluctantly concede that boys are among the troops faced off against each other

in Cambodia's north... One maintained that most are orphans and that they rarely take part in combat, being assigned instead to support roles as bridge guards or sentries at bases in the rear.

...As politicians manoeuvred for the upper hand in Cambodia, villagers were forced to flee as a series of battles raged around the northern town of Samrong. The town has traded hands several times in the past five days... The royalists have counted on recreating an alliance with former Khmer Rouge guerrillas. They were allied with the Khmer Rouge in the 1980s against a Government led by [the man who is now 2nd PM]... But last week, about 300 former Khmer Rouge troops the royalists had considered allies... switched sides... In Phnom Penh, [the 2nd PM] has terrorised or co-opted remaining opposition members of Parliament after launching bloody purges in the wake of the coup... Warning that the U[N] may be responsible for the "death of democracy" in Cambodia, [the 1st PM]... blamed the international community for having pressured him into accepting [his former enemy] as a co-premier four years ago... In Phnom Penh, reports of political torture persist, foreigners are still leaving and businesses and many aid programmes remain at a virtual halt... The U[S], Germany, Japan and A[US] have frozen aid payments to Cambodia, and... Asean [nations may] follow suit... Many people gather in small groups outside empty Government ministries speaking in whispers of the fate of those loyal to [the 1st PM]... But no one is taking a public stand against the man human rights workers say is behind the intimidation – [the 2nd PM].

...At least 35 supporters of Cambodia's deposed First P[M] have been executed in the custody of troops loyal to the man who toppled him, informed sources said yesterday... [S]ome victims were tortured before being killed and... at least four men – bodyguards of [the 1st PM's] top military commander – had their eyes gouged out... Reports from six provinces also indicated that systematic round-ups of Funcinpec supporters and troops had been going on since the prince's supporters were vanquished last week... [The CPP] has officially confirmed that only one person – Hor Sok, one of [the deposed PM's] security chiefs – had been killed and has expressed regret that it was unable to protect him from people who were "angry with him."

...*Fear stalks Cambodia again...* Anyone who doubts the power of Cambodia's current strongman... should take a look at the country's once notoriously free-wheeling press. There is none... Following [the 2nd PM's] violent coup... earlier this month all 19 newspapers not linked to his victorious... CPP... quickly decided it best to go underground. The muzzling of the opposition press took place virtually without any intimidation from [him] – in fact he is now encouraging them to resurface and print again. But so far they are having none of it... clearly the prudent thing to do.

...[the] King... of Cambodia... said yesterday... from his residence in Beijing... that he had asked... [the person who] overthrew... the King's son... to end violence in Cambodia and work towards national reconciliation... "I am the father of all Cambodian people," the ailing... constitutional monarch... told reporters when asked if he recognised... [the] new Government... A Cambodian military court has since issued a warrant for [his son's] arrest on charges of weapons smuggling.

...Cambodia's royalist forces have pushed back troops loyal to the country's strongman... from the edges of their besieged bastion, Thai military... sources said last night... The troops – supported by tanks, heavy artillery and multiple rocket launchers – met determined resistance and reportedly pulled back to allow Government guns and rocket launchers to further pound O'Smach's system of deep trenches and bunkers... Royalists agreed they were running low on weapons and ammunition but vowed to continue to fight to hold on to O'Smach. Thai Army sources raised their estimate of the number of Cambodian civilians who fled the fighting to Thailand... to 33,500. "The continued fighting should bring more in to Thailand,"... [The strongman] vowed yesterday to seize the Khmer Rouge stronghold of Anlong Veng in December... because that was the month he had received a peace prize last year... The peace prize was awarded by a South Korean group which the South Korean Embassy said it had never heard of.

...The Hong Kong-based weekly current affairs magazine the *Far Eastern Economic Review* said yesterday that it would publish an exclusive interview this week with Cambodia's former Khmer Rouge leader, Pol Pot. The interview was conducted in Cambodia last week by [a] *Review* correspondent... who in August became the first foreign journalist to see Pol Pot in 18 years... The... [correspondent was present when] Pol Pot... was sentenced to life under house arrest at a show trial at... Anlong Veng on July 25... The... Khmer Rouge... said they would hand Pol Pot over to an international tribunal if the Cambodian S[trongman]... was also brought to justice for his alleged crimes.

...Leaders of... [the] Khmer Rouge movement will not escape prosecution for crimes against humanity by blaming the excesses of their 1975-79 Government solely on Pol Pot, according to the director of the Cambodian Genocide Project. [The director's] assertion follows an apparent attempt by the leadership to deflect attention from their role by agreeing to hand over Pol Pot for trial before an international tribunal.

...Pol Pot... is unrepentant for the death and suffering during his maoist-style revolution, according to the *Far Eastern Economic Review*... "I came to carry out the struggle, not to kill people. You can look at me: Am I a savage person? My conscience is clear." ...[However,] Pol Pot admitted to the murders... in June... [of the] Khmer Rouge... defence chief Son Sen and a dozen members of his family... but said he did not order that children be killed... The magazine said Pol Pot... looked "clearly very ill" and "perhaps near death" during the interview...

[*World in Brief*: Notorious Khmer Rouge leader dies of heart attack...]

News in Brief: Report suggests former Cambodian dictator murdered rather than death from heart attack'. *News in Detail*: Continued fighting and uncoordinated Government policy look set to undermine a plan to fight the "rampant" illegal export of timber from Cambodia, according to Government officials... The... claims came after Government troops arrested 13 Thai nationals and impounded 72 logging trucks... The... Thais were working for Thai logging companies despite a ban on the cross-border trade in logs following the signing of a protocol between Phnom Penh and Bangkok last year. "Speaking frankly, the Thais are completely involved in this, the Thais are still behind the Khmer Rouge," [a Cambodian general]... told a local newspaper, adding that the arrested men had since been released. Thailand's Ambassador to Phnom Penh... said his embassy was investigating the incident. "We closed the border last year and we intend to honour that commitment... But this problem involves remote areas where it is very difficult to implement policy made in Bangkok." ..."Forests in many provinces are being destroyed by businessmen who prevent Government inspections by the use of mercenaries,"... said... the [Cambodian] Forestry Department... deputy director... [T]he job of monitoring the loggers had become harder as a result of the Government's decision to close hundreds of checkpoints on the nation's highways... Last week a gang of armed men were intercepted in the dead of night as they attempted to smuggle a "raft" of 70 logs down the Mekong River into Vietnam. According to [a] district police chief... the men – all military policemen – were not arrested because they were acting under orders from a senior official from the province of Kampong Cham.

...[France] will continue to support Cambodia's infamous Military Police – a renegade "private army" implicated in political killings... the intimidation of judges and other senior officials... and drug running – despite a call from a top U[N] Human Rights envoy that the 5000-strong force be disbanded... The... regiment was set up in 1994... in a bid to more effectively apprehend and prosecute members of Cambodia's wayward and ill-disciplined military for crimes and human rights violations. But critics have repeatedly claimed the unit has become a law unto itself... Military Police were seen loading looted valuables from homes and foreign businesses into French-donated vehicles soon after forces loyal to [the] ousted First P[M]... were driven from Phnom Penh. French instructors returned to their duties at the Military Police headquarters and training establishments within a week of the fighting, despite a decision by other foreign Governments to suspend their military aid projects.

...[Khmer Rouge's last top lieutenants have surrendered, ending the group's 2-decade fight against the Government', and now] Cambodia's civil war has ground to a halt, with none of the cash-strapped factions capable of mounting sustained offensives because of a lack of resources... analysts say.

...Cambodia faces the "very real" prospect of economic collapse leading to further political instability... diplomats... say. Figures from the Cambodian Investment Board show foreign investment has dropped by more than 50[% since the 2nd P]M... seized power... Foreign investors had

sunk more than \$US400 million into the Cambodian economy in the first six months of this year, nearly double their commitment for the same period in 1996... Analysts warn that the Cambodian administration, which relies on foreign aid for up to 50[%] of its \$US500 m... annual budget, is essentially broke and may soon cease to function following the withdrawal of support by the World Bank and the [IMF]. The World Bank's decision to allow a subsidised loan programme to lapse at the end of last year was followed by a recent IMF decision to vacate its Phnom Penh office... An IMF official said the decision followed a move last November to suspend a \$US20 m... loan instalment because of the Government's inability to collect revenue... [from] logging... and the ad hoc granting of tax breaks in return for kickbacks to politicians and political parties.

...[the] international community's insistence that Cambodia hold elections next year has failed to recognise political reality and may even perpetuate the country's long history of violence and instability, according to some observers in Phnom Penh... In addition, nearly \$US21 million... in international funding for the election... scheduled... for May next year... hangs on the timely passage of... essential electoral legislation... including amendments setting out the composition and function of an electoral commission... The Minister of the Interior... said he was very concerned the elections would not be held then [i]f the National Assembly delays debate on the draft electoral law... He said the Assembly needed a minimum of eight months to prepare for the election... The Assembly, which has lost more than 50[%] of sitting time in its current session because of absenteeism, will remain closed into next week due to the annual Water Festival holiday.

...The Cambodian Government faces a budget shortfall of... more than 10% of the total budget – prompting the Finance Ministry to slash expenditures by 20[%]... Education and health are to have their budgets trimmed by 10[%] while other ministries have been told to reduce spending by up to 35[%]... But spending on defence, which Government critics say consumes 60[%] of public expenditure... will not be reduced... Analysts said the cuts will not be enough to stave off a financial crisis...

The HIV/Aids epidemic could cost Cambodia as much as \$US3 billion... in lost earnings and welfare costs over the next 10 years... according to the Cambodian Human Development report, a joint initiative between Cambodia's Ministry of Planning and the U[N] Development Program... Already more than 150,000 Cambodians are infected with the HIV virus... [B]y the year 2000, 40,000 Cambodians will have died from Aids-related disease... The report... also found that Cambodia had the highest infant mortality rate – 90 out of every 1000 – of any South-east Asian country, and... [over] half of Cambodian children under five were stunted or malnourished... [WHO] had previously criticised the Cambodian Government for failing to address the country's Aids problem. It said the epidemic would “run out of control,” as it had in some African countries... “In places like Uganda... it's not unusual to see a grandmother looking after as many as 20 grandchildren whose parents have died from the disease,”...

['The former Ugandan dictator IDI AMIN died at the weekend from multiple organ failure. Ugandan officials said he was 80, although others put his age at 78. He had been in a coma in King Faisal Hospital in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, for a month after being admitted with high blood pressure, and then suffering kidney failure. He had ruled Uganda for eight years until being forced from power in 1979 by Tanzanian troops and Ugandan exiles, and was said to be responsible for the deaths of 300,000 people. The figure of 300,000 has never been corroborated. It is certain that many more Ugandans were killed by the regime that lasted from 1982 to 1985, and by the short-lived regime that followed it. What is also true is that Britain created Amin. A corporal in the King's African Rifles, he was rapidly promoted as independence neared. He loved the British and seemed not unhappy with his role as well-trained, faithful beast. In 1976 Palestinians hijacked a plane full of Israeli nationals and Jews and parked it at Entebbe airport. Amin protected the hijackers. One night Israeli commandos flew in and rescued all but one of the hostages. They blew up the airport, killing several hijackers and Ugandan soldiers. The humiliation of the spectacular raid on Entebbe drove Amin to new heights of paranoia and repression. He expelled foreigners. His security organs killed at will. His deadly wrath was limited to key individuals and their families. The dangers to ordinary people were the road blocks where soldiers raped and stole. For most Ugandans the Amin years meant a slow collapse of schools, roads and hospitals. Otherwise life went on until the price of coffee, Uganda's main export, began to fall in 1978. Amin sent his army into northwest Tanzania but its President counter-attacked and invaded Uganda. It took six months for the Tanzanians to get to the capital and even longer to take control of the north. Amin eventually fled to Libya and then Saudi Arabia. Only in 1986 did the country stabilise. The economy has slowly recovered and this year it might just match the wealth Uganda produced in 1971 – the year Amin came to power.']

...Few men have plunged an entire country into such an horrendous nightmare – or created such an astonishing farce – as a former army cook... Up to 250,000 people are believed to have been butchered by his terror squads within three years of him seizing control of Uganda in January 1971. That estimate was given to the U[N] by the International Commission of Jurists. But Amin, the illiterate son of a Nubian prostitute who dabbled in witchcraft, considered his crimes had the personal approval of God. During one of his regular chats with God, he claimed, he was told to start kicking the 50,000 Asians out of Uganda... The Asians who left Uganda at that time, although in a pitiful plight because of... thieving, were the luckier ones. In the filthy dungeons beneath Kampala's police station... others who'd been arrested, simply because their faces were the wrong colour... would never be released. They were destined to have their skulls smashed with sledgehammers. That method of execution was cheaper than using bullets... In addition to holding conversations with God, Amin had a habit of talking to the heads of murdered foes which he kept in a fridge, and he often boasted... of having eaten human flesh. “It is salty,” he would say. “Even more salty than the meat of a leopard.” His family life – five wives and more than 30 mistresses – was also extraordinary. Marriage to Amin, however, brought no guarantee of safety. He gloatingly described on TV how his second wife Kay, the daughter of a clergyman, had been killed and dismembered. And any man linked to a woman fancied by Amin was murdered almost as a matter of routine. Amin was Uganda's heavyweight boxing champion for nine years. This helped speed his climb... after independence from Britain in 1962... until being toppled in 1979... Many made the mistake, particularly in the early days of his reign, as dismissing him as an amusing buffoon. Much of his behaviour, certainly, was just that. But he will more accurately be remembered as one of the most savage and evil tyrants of the 20th century. [By the way, ‘when 150 girls were abducted this month from a school in northern Uganda by the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) – a rebel group that aims to overthrow the Ugandan government, which it has been fighting since 1987, and replace it by rule based on the Biblical Ten Commandments – they were luckier than previous targets of attack. The girls were destined to become soldiers and wives to LRA commanders. Fortunately for the girls, their headmistress tracked the rebels and offered first cash and then her life in exchange for the girls' release. The rebels agreed to free 109 girls, keeping those they considered most attractive to take to Sudan for military training. The LRA has been forcibly recruiting since its inception, but only in the past three years has it focused on children. The pattern of attacks on schools throughout the districts of Gulu and Kitgum in northern Uganda, the LRA's main area of operations, is always the same. The rebels arrive at night, order the students out of bed, tie them at the waist and lead them away. By the time the Ugandan Army (the UPDF) reaches the site, the students have disappeared into the bush. The fact that most primary schools in Gulu district have closed testifies to the fear the rebels have instilled. Thirty teachers have been killed this year alone. The fate of the abductees is grim. Some are killed in confrontations between the UPDF and the rebels. Most are taken to the LRA camp at Kit in southern Sudan and given two weeks military training. They then return to Uganda to kill their own people or take on the southern Sudanese rebel group, the SPLA, which has been fighting a 13-year war against the Sudan government.']

...At a frontier garrison... officers from the Sudan People's Liberation Army train recruits for a planned attack on Juba... the capital of south Sudan... In its first big push on the southern front for several years, the SPLA captured a string of towns... and established a base just 61km south of Juba... Hundreds of retreating Government troops were ambushed and killed south of Yei on March 14... In the process [the SPLA] captured a huge cache of ammunition, tanks and heavy weapons... Juba has never fallen to the SPLA since the modern round of the power struggle between the Arab north and the black African south began in 1983. The conflict covers vast tracts of swampy savannah across what one aid official described as “the world's least-developed piece of real estate.” ...At the start of this month frontlines were static, but the SPLA and... the National

Islamic Front Government... know military gains could easily convert to bargaining chips at peace talks due to start in the Kenyan capital on October 28. Aid officials say Khartoum's agreement to resume talks in Nairobi under the Inter-governmental Authority on Development signals its military weakness – they pulled out of the authority in 1994, refusing to negotiate a declaration that enshrines self-determination for the south. However[... estimates]... put the total number of Government troops at 250,000, with 100,000 under arms in Juba. The SPLA are believed to have up to 25,000 crack troops, with 100,000 more under arms... Khartoum has also rendered an attack on Juba more difficult by placing ethnic south Sudanese troops in the city. Sudan's position on the cusp of the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa, and its many borders mean the civil war is of intense interest to regional powers... [A] northern Muslim... Colonel... said he still supported Khartoum after surviving the Yei ambush... Bored and underfed[... he]... languishes with about 900 other troops at a prisoner-of-war camp in Yei and relives the events leading to his capture... "We were obeying orders and we fought to suppress the rebellion, though I didn't think it was a holy war," he said... SPLA commanders and aid officials say two Iraqi soldiers fighting for Khartoum were captured and shot during the March offensive. On a second front in east Sudan, the National Democratic Alliance based in Eritrea threatens Damazin and the Roseires Dam, Khartoum's main power source. The SPLA is also fighting in Bahr el Ghazal province and in the Nuba mountains. Aid officials say the Eritrean army is training the SPLA to use artillery and SPLA fighters have been trained in Ethiopia... There was no evidence of Eritrean or other foreign troops on the ground, but the... March offensive... started at the Uganda-Sudan border post at Kaya, a series of concrete huts now riddled with bullet holes, hinting strongly of an attack from Uganda... [While SPLA soldiers wait to re-attack, malnourished] children forced to flee... Juba wait for food in a camp for displaced civilians.

...to provoke an uprising... Sudanese rebels say they are advancing on a hydro-electric station that supplies Khartoum with most of its power.

...[Rebels killed 34 northern Sudanese merchants in an attack on a convoy of commercial trucks in the southern town of Renk. The attack, 450km south of Khartoum on the Upper Nile, was the worst since 1983.]

...the 'country of the Blacks' 'has only one seaport – Port Sudan; Halfa is a large river port near the Egyptian border. The White Nile runs the length of the country; the Blue Nile enters from Ethiopia in the East, and the two intersect near the capital of Khartoum. The country's forests and most arable lands are along the rivers. The northern section, ancient Nubia, was exploited, early in the 19th cent., by Egyptian traders, who founded Khartoum. Later English military forces in Egypt's service occupied the land, but were interrupted in 1882 by the Mahdist revolt. Disturbances were ended in 1898 by the Anglo-Egyptian force under Lord Kitchener, and in 1899 an agreement between Great Britain and Egypt was signed, providing for a governor general to be appointed by Egypt with the approval of Britain. In 1953 an agreement was reached providing full home rule for the Sudan, under supervision of a British governor-general, with the provision that on Dec. 31, 1955, a plebiscite would be held to decide whether the country should remain independent or join Egypt. 1953 also saw implementation of the first constitution and the first parliamentary elections. In Dec. 1955, the parliament voted for full independence, and Sudan was proclaimed a sovereign republic, Jan. 1956, headed by a temporary Council of State. The Army took over the government in Nov. 1958, suspending the constitution, dissolving parliament and political parties, and placing supreme authority in a Council of the Armed Forces. In addition to Ethiopia and Egypt, the country is surrounded by Libya, Chad, Central African Republic, Congo, Uganda and Kenya' – where the 'President is poised to win a final five-year term in his country's flawed and chaotic general election as all unofficial counts yesterday showed him comfortably ahead of his four main challengers. The 73-year-old, one of Africa's last "Big Man" leaders, has been in office since 1978. He says he deserves a final term to consolidate national unity and crush corruption. His opponents charge that graft and mismanagement have thrived in recent years and are ruining Kenya.']

...One of the last of Africa's old guard... has ruled... with an iron fist for the past 19 years, making all the decisions himself... He held various portfolios after independence in 1963, and... [was] appointed... Vice-President in 1967. He... [succeeded the] founding President Jomo Kenyatta... when "the Old Man" died in 1978. A section of the Air Force mounted a coup attempt in 1982, declaring [his] regime corrupt, but the Army defeated the mutineers in close combat. By official count 159 people were killed; by unofficial count it was many more... The man whose motto is "peace, love and unity," once threatened to crush opponents "like rats." ...Aid donors forced him to introduce multi-party politics in 1991. He warned it would lead to tribal clashes, which duly occurred: some 2000 people were reportedly killed and 20,000 made homeless in the Rift Valley in the run-up to elections in December 1992. [He] won with 37[%] of the vote against seven opponents... More than 100 people have died in political violence this year[while he] has been active in regional politics, chairing summits trying to resolve neighbouring Sudan's 14-year-long civil war. He declared last month: "On the list of those who are wealthy, I am the last." By popular reputation, however, he is the richest man in Kenya, and his close associates are also believed to have amassed fortunes... On a continent where many leaders experimented with socialism and Marxism, [he] kept his nation with its large community of Asian traders firmly in the capitalist camp... The trademark gap in his bottom teeth is a custom of his small Kalenjin tribe – one tooth is knocked out in childhood to allow drinking through a straw in case of tetanus, which causes the jaw to lock up. [His] first purchase... was a *Bible*, bought with money he earned driving two cows 120km. He is a member of the Protestant African Inland Church.

...The most intellectually intriguing document making the rounds[in Washington] this summer may be the study by the [CIA] of the origins and causes of the collapse of nations... Population pressure, spending on arms... massive government corruption and poor political leadership are said to be leading indicators for such disasters as Somalia, Bosnia, Rwanda and other countries where Governments have evaporated or gone to war against some or all of their citizens... [You] can understand the agency's reluctance to be specific about its advice on how to spot three-star hellholes to come... But the need for more reliable indices of national stability and fragility is clear. This was underscored for me by the recent headlines out of Kenya, where [the]President... faces street protests because of his dictatorial rule, and loan cutoffs internationally because of his Government's flagrant corruption... In a departure from past practice, the [IMF] this month suspended a \$220 million loan... The World Bank has also recently delayed smaller loans... This apparently coordinated squeeze on official corruption in Kenya – and presumably elsewhere – is a welcome innovation. International Organisations have for too long averted their eyes and treated corruption as an internal matter beyond their reach. Flagrant corruption that is tolerated or assisted by national governments... is a cancer on the international system as well as on the national state... When I lived in Kenya in the early 1970s, there were two firm bits of conventional wisdom about that beautiful East African nation. One was that [the President], a politician of limited intellectual ability who hailed from a minor tribe, was a transitional figure who could not survive long... The other was that Kenya's resources, international visibility and dynamic society would enable it to overcome its crippling internal ethnic rivalries and become a great African success story. Neither prediction turned out to be true. [The President's] unshakeable hold on power for nearly 20 years has been accompanied by a steady decline in the nation's stability and prosperity. There can be little doubt now that the two factors are intimately connected. It is a measure of Kenya's intrinsic strength that it has been going downhill every year for two decades in the eyes of many of its citizens, former residents and visitors, but still works as a centre of global tourism and as a regional headquarters for business and international organisations... But [the President's] misrule is now being challenged... in the boardrooms of the world's leading international financial institutions... and... in the streets of Nairobi, where his police killed five demonstrators in one recent protest...

At least nine people were killed in Kenya as police broke up protests and clashed with thousands of demonstrators in the most violent day of protest for seven years. Riot police and elite paramilitary officers fired teargas, rubber bullets and live rounds to break up rallies. Many protesters were severely beaten, even when they surrendered and offered no resistance... Police[also] fired teargas inside Nairobi's All Saints' Cathedral... "We were in the middle of the service when they broke in... This is Kenyan justice for you. Even in God's house they beat innocent protesters," said the... moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa and an organiser of the demonstrations... Police appeared to single out for particularly savage beatings leaders of the opposition-backed groups that called the rallies to press for constitutional reforms... The National

Convention Executive Committee, made up of opposition parties, human rights groups and other bodies, vowed to hold more demonstrations this week. It called for three days of mourning “for the gallant sons and daughters who were killed by the Government.”

...SABA SABA (DOUBLE SEVEN) DAY WAS named by Kenyan reformist groups who were involved in violent clashes with government forces in Nairobi on July 7, 1990. Last week, seven significant years later, Saba Saba Day was again marked not only with blood, but also with an act of sacrilege that highlighted the government’s ruthless reaction to public protests and has further inflamed opposition to the autocratic rule of [the] President... When Saba Saba Day rallies were banned last week under the draconian security laws that defiant reformists are protesting, the result was inevitable. Many rallies went ahead despite the ban... Nairobi again became a battleground between the police and demonstrators... At the day’s end the countrywide death toll was at least seven... Hundreds were wounded and scores arrested. The day was to have one lingering outrage, however... Kenya’s religious community was united in its condemnation of police brutality and the bloody storming of All Saints.[Kenya’s] Anglican Archbishop... said the police had defiled the church by the “shedding of innocent blood.” The Kenya Episcopal Conference asked: “How many Kenyans must die that we may have desperately needed reforms?” ...After three days of disturbances during which the Nairobi and Jomo Kenyatta Universities were closed down, the death count rose to at least 16. The situation prompted strong reaction from the international community including [the] U.S. Secretary of State... who deplored the “extreme response” of the government forces and said the real source of political violence was not just the government’s unacceptable strong-arm tactics but “its failure to take the essential steps to create a free and fair electoral climate.” But there was no evidence last week that... [Kenya’s] President... felt pressured to make changes. He... accused the Western world of having “double standards of democracy.” Still, many Kenyans believe that last week’s violence could be a turning point in their struggle for democracy... [A] 45-year-old opposition Member of Parliament, has... said her rural constituency of some 300,000 people represents all the ravages of [the President’s] neglect. “While my people starve, have no adequate housing, carry water on their backs for 10km, [he] spends \$60 million on a presidential jet. What is power if your people are bleeding?” After the violence, [the Anglican] Archbishop... conducted a symbolic cleansing service of the bloodied floor and pews in All Saints Cathedral. It was a gesture of both defiance and mourning and an indication that Saba Saba Day 1997, and what may flow from it, will not soon be forgotten. - 1997

A KENYAN man suspected of buying young girls as sex slaves from a woman, 70, has been arrested. The girls, bought for \$12 each, and as young as nine, were stripped, shaved and forced to drink blood, before being repeatedly assaulted, [Nairobi] police said.

...A ship carrying up to 250 child slaves... some aged as young as 4... is missing off the coast of West Africa... The children have been at sea for two weeks since leaving the port city of Cotonou, in the Benin Republic... It took its mournful cargo first to the port of Owendo, in Gabon, but the authorities rejected it after they were alerted by Interpol. Next the ship went north to Douala in Cameroon, but it was turned away from there, too. Now no one is sure where it is or how its cargo... is faring... [A]id workers fear Benin Government pledges to punish traffickers of children may put the youngsters at even more risk as the ship’s crew try to escape arrest. It is thought they could be desperate enough to endanger the lives of their young charges... [A] Unicef official in Benin, said... the captain, an unnamed Nigerian national, had “trafficked children” in the past... Despite international efforts to curb the trade, child slavery persists in West and Central Africa, from where European slave traders shipped millions of people to the Americas from the 16th to 19th centuries. Slave traders (usually women) go into the interior of each country and try to woo the poorest parents to allow them to take their youngsters into the towns to offer them “employment.” In countries where \$30 counts as a great deal of money, a down payment weakens the resistance of parents. Usually, the first payment is also the last... Thousands of children aged 9 to 12 are thought to work on plantations in the Ivory Coast, the world’s top cocoa producer. Life there is hard. Anti-child-labour campaigners say youngsters are often forced to work up to 12 hours a day and are sometimes subjected to physical and sexual abuse.

...*Child slaves feared thrown overboard* Authorities in Benin fear the worst after boarding a ship believed to be carrying child slaves to find only a few children with their mothers. “This is very strange. At first sight it is hard to tell what has happened,” said one official after a search of the Nigerian-registered MV Etireno. “There is no sign of unaccompanied children.” ...A coordinator for Unicef... said he was worried about the children... Some aid workers said that in the past, ships’ captains had been known to throw children overboard when they died or became sick. That had raised fears that the captain might try to get rid of the children... The ship was thought to be carrying up to 180 children, sold by poor families to work in oil-rich Gabon... But the captain, [a] 40-year-old Nigerian... said no child slaves had been on the ship. “I have not committed any offence that will warrant my arrest... [T]hey cannot prove... I am... into child slavery...” ...[Benin’s] Social Protection Minister... said the Etireno had been confused with a second ship, whose name and location were unknown. Both vessels had been turned away from Gabon after trying to dock with illegal immigrants on board, she said. Sources in Benin believed the children were either on board the Etireno and had been taken off somewhere else or were on a second ship. But since no one knew the ship’s name, the chances of rescuing the children looked remote...

Nigerian-led West African peacekeepers seem to have taken the old hippie motto about making love not war to heart during their... mission... in Liberia from 1990 to 1997... They left behind about 25,000 children born out of wedlock... Most fathers of these children have gone home, leaving their offspring behind. A charity has been set up to care for the children because the... mothers could not cope without financial assistance.

...WHEN soldiers ordered village men to gather in the local market, residents of Gbeji in Nigeria believed they were finally getting the protection they’d asked for after decades of bloody ethnic strife. What they and at least six other villages got was a hail of bullets that left hundreds killed... according to witnesses and local officials... State officials say the raids were in reprisal for the abduction and killing of 19 soldiers by Tiv tribal fighters this month in Benue state, where villagers have been waging a decade-long feud... But the... troops were under strict orders not to shoot unless fired upon. [Nigeria’s] President... ordered the military operation to continue until those responsible for the soldiers’ deaths were arrested.

A... bus driver set his wife on fire during an argument about her \$3.60 monthly food allowance. A paper in Lagos said the man claimed his wife was using the money for buying cosmetics and got furious when he arrived home and found no food. She was rescued from burning to death by neighbours but is now in critical condition at a hospital in Benin city... [In related news,] life is not much different from death in Nigeria’s prison[s]. The... Minister of Internal Affairs, recently made the unusual admission that there was something appallingly wrong with Nigeria’s judicial and prison system. The wheels of justice turn so slowly that two-thirds of the inmates – more than 35,000 people – are awaiting trial. Some have been held as long as 10 years. Many do not survive the violence, starving rations and disease that have led Nigeria’s Civil Liberties Organisation to call the country’s jails “tombs without tombstones.” ...[the] head of the... Organisation’s prison investigations, estimates that dozens of prisoners die in Nigerian jails each week... [One ex-prisoner], now aged 43 and begging on the streets of Lagos, admits that he was illegally hooking his shack home to overhead power cables when the police descended. He took it in his stride until he was accused not of stealing electricity but of sabotaging the power grid – an offence that carries up to life imprisonment. The police said they needed time to investigate. A judge sent [him] to Kirikiri prison, wh[ere he]... sometimes wondered if it would not have been better to be convicted. He would still have been welcomed... with a pummelling by the other inmates until his ribs cracked. And... forced to sleep with the excrement bucket spilling on him until a new prisoner arrived as the virgin of the cell... Perhaps he would have risen to be the all-powerful cell boss who makes life a kind of hell for others. As it was, [he spent 7]... years in Kirikiri and was never convicted of any crime... [He] walked free last October when a judge finally ruled... the police had no evidence against him.

...An Independence Day display of homage to... Nigeria’s military ruler... yesterday fuelled speculation that [he] will try to legitimise his power through the ballot box. The show by North Korean-trained Nigerian schoolchildren broke the tradition of military marches. Some 1500 danced

and sang [the General's] praises, while thousands more on a podium formed mammoth pictures of him, his wife and ministers... [The] Minister of Information... said... "This is a people-oriented celebration as we move more and more towards democracy." ...Nigerian opposition groups and Western Governments... remain unimpressed with the transition programme... On Monday the electoral commission announced the five parties allowed to participate in the election process, out of 15 that applied. All are from the centre and none oppose the Government... [The General's] Government is treated as a pariah by much of the international community for jailing dozens of opponents and the execution last November of nine minority rights activists... The Commonwealth of Britain and its former colonies, which suspended Nigeria after the November executions, on Sunday decided not to impose sanctions to force the pace of democracy... and human rights... Nigeria insists it will follow its own course... Since independence from Britain in 1960, Nigeria has spent less than 10 years under civilian rule... The last democratic experiment ended when a previous military Government annulled results of 1993 presidential elections. The presumed winner of that election... has been detained since 1994... [The] General... in his Independence Day speech made no mention of freeing political detainees as some had expected. - 1996

Nigeria's military rulers say they have arrested 12 coup plotters... for planning to "violently overthrow the present Administration." ...but [the rulers] have assured Nigerians a transition to civilian rule is still on course... At Nigeria's last coup trial, held in secret in 1995, more than 40 people were sentenced... Death sentences handed out at the time, the usual penalty for treason in Nigeria, were commuted to long prison terms after a wave of international pressure for clemency.

...Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation... was told it had two years to improve its human rights record and prepare for free elections, or... sanctions, which could include expulsion[from the British Commonwealth], would be applied... The only progress to date has been an announcement by Nigeria that elections will be held by October 1998. There has been virtually no improvement in human rights, access to justice or freedom for political opponents. Some nations have expressed frustration at the lack of progress... but it is clear there is a lack of will among Commonwealth members to take harsh action. Experts say only an oil embargo would hurt Nigeria, 80[%] of whose government revenue is comprised of oil receipts... Nigeria's military rulers are understood to have applied pressure to other African Commonwealth nations not to support expulsion or trade sanctions...

Nigeria, having already escaped being expelled from the Commonwealth over human rights abuses, is now set to avoid economic sanctions despite the protests of the son of a Nigerian hanged by its military rulers... along with eight others during the Commonwealth leaders' summit in Auckland two years ago... It is believed... Britain, Canada, N[Z] and Jamaica supported... sanctions... while Zimbabwe, South Africa, Ghana and Malaysia did not... But[the] British Foreign Secretary... said yesterday failure to carry through the threat did not mean the Commonwealth was losing its nerve. Officials said on Friday the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group set up to investigate Nigeria would submit a report advising that the military government be given another year to show it was serious about introducing democracy... Others... say commercial considerations are behind... the action group's decision... [and that there] will be sham presidential elections next year.

...[Nigeria has reinforced] its military presence in the city... of Freetown... [after] Sierra Leone's coupmakers called on the population of the capital... to turn out in force wearing white shirts today as a sign that they oppose foreign intervention to end the crisis... [that began when j]unior officers toppled[the] civilian president... on May 25. [The president's] 1996 election ended four years of Army rule in... one of the world's poorest nations despite mineral wealth including diamonds. The coup has been widely condemned with Nigeria and the rest of the Organisation of African Unity demanding that [the president], who is in neighbouring Guinea, be reinstated. The question is whether by military or diplomatic means. The coup leaders[- who were alleged to have offered to 'step aside and let the elected government return for \$46 million' - officially] said they wanted a peaceful solution but... [dissident] soldiers and rebels, who took up arms in 1991 and who have flooded the city after rallying to the coup, hit back by attacking Nigerian soldiers guarding foreigners at a beach front hotel. The U[S], Britain, France and other nations have begun evacuating their nationals. Freetown was calm yesterday but police sources reported a jump in armed crime, looting and rape.

...[yesterday's] demonstration called by Sierra Leone's coup makers against foreign intervention drew little support... [Meanwhile,] Angolan troops who helped rebels take control of [Congo-Brazzaville, or the People's Republic of West Africa (PRC),] are struggling to pacify the tiny oil-producing nation after suffering heavier casualties than anticipated, military sources said... The Angolans, backing... [a former ruler, had] fanned out into the countryside and Brazzaville, the [PRC] capital, to consolidate the over-throw of[the] democratically elected President. But the sources said imposing total authority is proving to be far more difficult than the Angolans had anticipated and looting by Angolan troops and[the rebel] militia had complicated the security situation... Witnesses said the militia believed looting was part of the reward for their role in the... four-month civil war[which]... opponents say was fuelled by battle for control of oil reserves and regional political interests... Point Noire in the south is [the PRC's] oil centre and was the entry point for a 3500-strong Angolan tank-led column that invaded from the oil-rich Angolan enclave of Cabinda.

...There have been persistent reports that the Angolan Government's former civil war foes, Unita... have rallied to [the President's] cause... The conflict erupted when [the President's] troops tried to retrieve weapons from [the rebel leader's] residence before elections, due to have been held on July 27. Fighting scuttled the poll, and the unrest went on to become even bloodier than political violence in 1993 which killed 2000... [The rebel leader was] the country's military ruler for 12 years until his ousting in 1992 elections... [By the way, a member] of Italian photo bureau Agenzia Contrasto has won the 1996 World Press Photo of the Year award with his emotion-charged image of children traumatised by the Angolan civil war... [He] is the first Italian to win the... award, held for the 40th time.

...For nearly 40 years revolutionary wars, atrocity-studded misuse in the heart of Africa and brutal, reactionary white power at its tip[has] turned a region many colonialists once saw as paradise into a partially devastated and totally dysfunctional purgatory at century's end. The troubled nations of... Congo-Brazzaville, Rwanda... Uganda, Angola... [and] Burundi... at least seem to have touched bottom. - 1997

Burundi's military Government [i]s cut off from its neighbours... [now every] state in the region... ha[s] imposed sanctions following last month's coup. One after another, neighbours in East and Central Africa have shut the gates, saying they will only reopen when civilian rule returns to the landlocked country where the Tutsi-led military ousted the Hutu President on July 25. The new rulers say they seized power to prevent genocide in Burundi, where more than 150,000 people have died in three years of fighting between minority Tutsis and ethnic Hutus, who make up around 85[%] of the population. [However, 'more than 6000 people were reported killed in the first three weeks after the military coup.']

...Hutu rebels killed 22 people including a family of 12 in an attack in the strife-torn north-western province of Cibitoke, Burundi... yesterday.

...Anxious foreigners and Burundians scrambled yesterday for tickets on the last scheduled commercial flights out of the sanctions-hit Central African state... A US embassy official said the ambassador was trying to organise a large military plane to fly in from Nairobi to pick up those unable to leave on Sabena. The Sabena planes stop en route to Brussels in Entebbe, Uganda, for refuelling but airline officials said Uganda refused to allow any passengers to get off there... Burundi has been cut off from its neighbours since Zaire became the last state to impose sanctions...

The U[N] fears a refugee crisis on the scale of Rwanda's two years ago as columns of refugees fleeing violence in east Zaire head for the town of Bukavu... The latest violence is centred on the town of Uvira, 100km from... Bukavu. The... U[N] refugee agency UNHCR... was making contingency plans to receive 75,000 of the refugees in existing camps in the Bukavu area... Eastern Zaire has been gripped by unrest since the 1994 massacres and civil war in Rwanda sent more than a million Hutu refugees streaming in, stoking ethnic rivalry in the area. Fighting has widened in the past six weeks since the Zairean Army got drawn into long-running ethnic clashes between Tutsi immigrants, known as Banyamulenge, and

native Zaireans... The Banyamulenge, who migrated from Rwanda late in the 18th century, accuse Zaireans of trying to force them to leave... The U[N] is worried that the armies of neighbouring Rwanda and Burundi, both dominated by Tutsis, might be drawn in on the side of the Banyamulenge...

The town of Bukavu in east Zaire, tense in the face of a Tutsi rebel advance, spent a second night under curfew after Zairean troops pulled back from positions to the south in confusion... Earlier, [i]n... Brussels, the Zairean P[M]... accused troops from Rwanda's Tutsi-dominated Army of entering Zaire to back their kinsmen among the Banyamulenge rebels. "Rwanda must withdraw from Zaire. Zaire will defend its rights with all means at its disposition," he said. Zaire has appealed to the U[N] Security Council over what it terms "external aggression" in its eastern region. Rwanda and Burundi have denied any link with the fighting... Aid workers reported dozens of people killed.

...UN mounts rescue flight for... aid workers... [A]id workers... trapped by fighting between the Zairean Army and ethnic Tutsi rebels... were spending the night at U[NHCR] premises after an evacuation flight was cancelled and plans to drive in convoy to the Burundian capital were halted. "Right now we have 45 expatriates stuck in an extremely dangerous situation," a senior aid official... said. In Rome, the U[N] World Food Programme said Zairean authorities had cleared its charter plane to fly into Uvira... [R]eports from the U[N] refugee agency in Geneva and humanitarian sources in the region... [estimated] the size of the exodus from 12 refugee camps near Uvira... [was] up to a quarter of a million.

...The little girl's head was jerked back, seeming to stare longingly up the hill towards those who had fled without her. In the town below, young thugs pranced through the streets celebrating her brutal death. One of them had skewered the child through the throat as they hunted down people who had once been their neighbours... The principal victims of the latest pogroms are about 300,000... of Zaire's native Tutsis[who]... have taken to the hills to escape their Government's threat to expel or terminate them... Other Banyamulenge disappear into Zaire's notorious jails, emerging only for burial... Although the Government portrays them as outsiders, Tutsis first arrived in what is now Zaire some time after the 16th century. They established their settlement in the Mulenge hills and became known as the Banyamulenge. Later they fanned out to Uvira and outlying villages. The Banyamulenge, often more prosperous than their neighbours, fell victim to President Mobutu's divide and rule politics in 1981. A new law stripped them of citizenship, and with it rendered them stateless. By the time more than one million Hutu refugees fled Rwanda and Burundi in 1994, on the heels of a similar outpouring from Burundi six months earlier, Zaire's Tutsi population was more vulnerable than it had ever been... In recent weeks... Uvira's district commissioner... drew up a list of all Banyamulenge property and land, ordered Tutsis to stop building homes and told soldiers they could take over the houses of those forced to flee... fuelling a new upsurge of ethnic... fighting in eastern Zaire.

...FIGHTING in eastern Zaire has spread death, fear and misery across a vast stretch of territory in the biggest country in Central Africa. The U[N] Security Council was expected to adopt a resolution yesterday authorising a multinational force to halt what[the] Secretary-General... called "genocide by starvation"... But even if the plan is approved, there is no likelihood of early relief for about 1.2 million Rwandan and Burundian Hutu refugees trapped in some of the most inaccessible terrain... Zaire[recently] hardened its tone, stating it would no longer allow the refugees on its soil... Hundreds of thousands of Zaireans are also on the move... The UN World Food Programme warned the world of mass death in the next three weeks without humanitarian aid corridors... [after Zaire's] Information Minister... reiterated... on state television... Zaire's decision not to allow distribution of food for refugees inside its territory. All relief aid for displaced Zaireans must be landed in the capital Kinshasa... [The] head of Medecins sans Frontieres... estimated in Paris more than 13,600 refugees have died in the last three weeks, not including victims of fighting.

...Cholera has broken out at a hillside settlement of about 250,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees in eastern Zaire and could wipe out many within days, a doctor said yesterday. [The doctor], who works with the U[N]-funded agency Doctors in Catastrophic Situations, said the refugees were trapped in the village of Mwenga, 200km west of rebel-held Bukavu... Cholera killed at least 30,000 refugees within weeks after more than one million Hutus fled Rwanda into eastern Zaire in 1994... Aid workers say thousands of refugees have already died... and even if a U[N] force to bring aid came today, many more would be too sick to save.

...Up to 500 unarmed Rwandan Hutu refugees and displaced Zaireans have been killed in a massacre by Tutsi rebels at a camp in Zaire, international human rights group Amnesty International said yesterday. It called for an "immediate international presence" to investigate the killings... "These arbitrary and deliberate mass killings of defenceless civilians are a callous abuse of human rights and should be condemned by the international community. Governments and organisations which are supporting this armed group should take responsibility to ensure that the perpetrators, including their leaders who ordered these killings, are brought to justice and prevented from carrying out further violations,"...

TO OUTSIDERS, African crises seem to spring from nowhere. But the latest tragedy in central Africa has roots that go back more than 400 years. That was when a cattle-herding people called Tutsis consolidated power in what is now Rwanda and Burundi. They became dominant. The Hutus, who preceded them in the area and were the majority, stayed at the bottom of the social heap. Over the centuries, physical distinctions between the Hutus and the taller Tutsis blurred through intermarriage. But the hierarchy stayed. It was reinforced in the 19th century by Rwabugiri, the last great Tutsi king. When Germans – and after W[W]I, Belgians – colonised the region, they took up where Rwabugiri ended. A 1934 Belgian census arbitrarily classified anyone owning more than 10 cows as a Tutsi. Roman Catholic schools educated Tutsis and ignored Hutus. But after WWII, as decolonisation swept Africa, the Belgians did an abrupt about-face. After Hutu riots in 1959, they ceded Rwanda to the Hutus, who proceeded to massacre Tutsis and thousands of others[fled] into exile. In Burundi, Tutsis eventually took control and massacred Hutus. Ethnic clashes erupted periodically in both countries as governments changed hands, perpetuating a cycle of vengeance and violence. The bloodbath that set in motion present events began in 1994 after a plane crash killed the presidents of Burundi and Rwanda – both Hutus. Rwandan Hutus went on a rampage and massacred up to 1 million Tutsis. The Rwandese Patriotic Front, an exile Tutsi army based in Uganda, struck back and seized control of Rwanda. Two million Hutus, terrified of Tutsi vengeance, fled to Tanzania and Zaire. Temporary relief turned into permanent misery as the exiles refused to go home. Refugee camps became havens for Hutu militiamen, bent on taking back Rwanda and in the meantime killing Tutsis... Rwanda's Tutsi soldiers have prevented aid from crossing the border from Rwanda into Zaire... Without massive international help, and soon, aid officials estimate that as many as a million displaced Hutus face death from hunger and disease. In a worst-case scenario, the very heart of Africa could implode, sucking the 30 million people in the region at the intersection of Zaire, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi into a vortex of violence. In that event, Zaire itself could be ripped apart, setting a dismal precedent on a continent whose borders, largely drawn by Europeans, ignore religious and ethnic divisions that are as indelible as any in the world.

...Rwandan refugees are emerging from the forests of eastern Zaire, saying many more are on their way. But just how many appears to be the critical factor, with the dispatch of a promised international military force to Zaire still hanging in the balance. The U[S] Army, which has been using surveillance aircraft, put the numbers roaming the region at just over 200,000 – a third of the U[N]s' estimate. In Stuttgart, Germany, Western African military leaders struggled to establish how many refugees needed help in Zaire amid signs that interest in the multinational mission was flagging. "It seems now as though more people will favour keeping the status quo and not stepping up the commitment since the situation is starting to take care of itself," one European official there said.

...The trail ran from an obscure north London travel agency, via directors with names leaped for letterheads, to a shady company registered in the Isle of Man... where taxes are modest and the names on the come-and-go register of companies outnumber the 70,000 residents... At the end lay a bus abandoned on a dusty road in Zaire last weekend by fleeing Hutu militia. Inside the bus was paperwork covering \$US5.5 million... worth of arms purchases in 1994 from a British registered company... London newspapers traced [the company] to a man from Kenya who lives in north London and has a travel agency. He apparently left town after the story broke. [Britain's] Government, embarrassed that a British-registered

company apparently brokered millions of dollars of military hardware to perpetrators of genocide, announced an inquiry into arms trafficking by British companies. Documents show the sales continued after Hutu extremists massacred 500,000 fellow Rwandans and the U[N] imposed an arms embargo in April 1994. The... operation apparently consisted of ferrying arms to Rwanda from third countries, including Eastern Europe.

...Zairean rebels surrounded the last town held by Government troops in eastern Zaire, residents and hospital workers said yesterday... Hundreds of troops fighting under the banner of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for Liberation (Congo-Zaire) headed from Beni, near the Ugandan border, to Bunia on Saturday morning. Truckloads of young fighters allied with the rebels also set out toward Bunia singing battle songs and raising clenched fists in the air. The young warriors are called *mayi-mayi* or “powerful water” in Swahili, from the potion they believe will protect them from harm. In six weeks, the rebels have overrun a strip of eastern Zaire north of Lake Tanganyika. Because of the rebel successes, Zaireans and international observers have been taking more seriously rebel leader Mr Laurent Desire Kabila’s vow to topple President Mobutu Sese Seko’s corrupt, 31-year regime. A multinational effort to help Rwandan refugees in eastern Zaire has stalled because at least 640,000 returned home to escape the fighting.

...*World fiddles over U[N] decision while Africa descends into hell...* In Zaire an important African country is disintegrating before the eyes of a disinterested world... [T]he crisis has now reached a turning point – one that would normally trigger a serious American effort to engage the international community and make sure the Zaire crisis does not spin out of control... Instead the U[S] contributed mightily to paralysing the U[N] at this crucial moment by letting its spiteful attempt to oust... the U[N]... Secretary-General... dominate the world organisation while Zaire burned... Petty does not begin to describe this tampering with a continent’s destiny to settle old scores and further personal political ambitions by setting Africans against each other. Divide-and-rule tactics seem not to have ended when colonial rule did... [But] Zaire’s problems are largely of Zaire’s making. The largest responsibility lies with its autocratic, corrupt ruler... The crisis in Zaire became more acute last week [as]... the... rebel forces allied with Rwanda’s Tutsi-led Government continued to advance along a front that now extends more than 300 miles deep into... [eastern Zaire. The rebels met little or no resistance] because... Zaire’s Army units broke and fled town after town... As the fighting eased, people of all ages took part in a looting spree, carting off what the Zairian soldiers left behind on their retreat... Although the disciplined and organised rebels tamed the Zairian Army, they could do little about the looters but occasionally fire into the air to scare them off. Asked about why they fought[, the rebels said]... they joined the Alliance of Democratic Forces for Liberation to oust President Mobutu... The rebels now control enough territory to establish a regional government, and claim they will march all the way to the capital city of Kinshasa. “Zaire confronts two possible futures now,” an African diplomat who knows the country predicts. “The least bad one is that there is de facto partition, with six distinct regions emerging... The other available future is one of a bloody power struggle at the centre and a civil war that will destabilise the entire region.” ...Either scenario – partition or war – will shake the political order of post-colonial Africa and will tempt foreign nations and business interests to resume meddling in internal African conflicts... - 1996

Zaire is a one-party republic, ruled by the Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution (MPR), which is dominated by Mobutu Sese Seko. He selects the Central Committee that makes policy for both the party and the government. Under the constitution adopted in 1978, the president... appoints a National Executive Council to function as a cabinet. There is a National Legislative Council whose 268 members are elected by universal adult suffrage from the MPR’s list of candidates... The only national institutions independent of the MPR are Catholic, Protestant, and Kimbanguist religious organisations. Zaire’s military force, which receives aid from France, Belgium, and the People’s Republic of China, has been used against Cuban-trained guerrillas opposing MPR rule... Zaire’s hydroelectric potential amounts to about one-sixth of the world’s total. Annual production of electricity was about 4,400,000,000 kW-hr in the early 1980s... Manufacturing output is almost wholly for the domestic market and is composed mainly of consumer goods... Dependence on mineral exports at the expense of agricultural products has left Zaire vulnerable to international price fluctuations... Severe malnutrition is prevalent and serious diseases such as malaria, gastroenteritis, tuberculosis, leprosy, sleeping sickness, and schistosomiasis are common. The infant mortality rate is estimated to be about 116 per 1,000 live births; life expectancy, meanwhile, is less than 50 years. Health problems are aggravated by poor sanitary conditions and a shortage of medical personnel in the rural areas.

A visitor coming back to Zaire after 30 years is plunged into a nightmare. In the summer of 1967, the president... was fighting rebels and white mercenaries – and he was winning. Kinshasa had an easy tropical charm. Poor people were merely miserable. Zaire was full of promise, flush with copper and diamond mines, plantations, factories. Elevators worked. You could make a phone call, catch a plane, drive somewhere or float comfortably down the river. Now, after decades of systematic plunder and malignant neglect[, the ailing president’s]... legacy is a moribund non-country that only great skill and fortune can revive. Back then, one zaire note was worth \$US2 dollars, and a carefree traveller could race his Triumph sports car the 240km to the port of Matadi in three hours. Now, \$US2 dollars... would cost 900 trillion original zaires. Matadi would be a three-day drive, if the Triumph could survive the road – and was not stolen at a roadblock. The impact is most dramatic in people’s faces and bodies. A large majority are frail, moving dully as if drugged by misery that defies measure... “The Congolese miracle” was once a humorous term for the myriad means that families used to make ends meet: petty trading, doing odd jobs, growing food, bartering, general hustling. Now there is nothing funny about it. The cooking pot in family compounds still fills, at least part-way, but it takes theft, begging, banditry, prostitution and luck... An outsider strolling... rutted mud streets is followed by every eye, a pocketful of money on the hoof... “I’m a mechanic, but I’ve never seen a pay cheque,” volunteered a man... His eight kids barely eat once a day and cannot afford to go to school... Once the pride of central Africa, Lovanium[University] is an overgrown ruin, kept open by unpaid professors... It seems the whole city is sick. Stinking pools of water breed malarial mosquitoes and dysentery germs. Children are deformed from polio that could have been easily prevented. Even measles kills. Mama Yemo Hospital is its own circle of the Inferno, a filthy complex of wards with many more patients than beds and almost no medicines. People die of Aids not far from the mildly ill. Government doctors, overworked and underpaid, are often bribed for attention. People complain that relatives die because they cannot raise the money to buy priority... In 1967, about 35,000 expatriates worked in Zaire. Now the total is below 4000, and many are die-hard missionaries, retired Belgians, fly-by-night diamond dealers, or hustlers after a dishonest dollar. Zaire’s corruption is unique, one veteran said. Elsewhere in Africa, public projects might cost twice as much because of bribes. Here, all the appropriated funds disappear, and nothing gets built... Senior bureaucrats collect according to the favours they can grant, on down to the lowest rung. If someone wins a court judgment, for instance, he must pay the typist who claims he has to buy a[typewriter] ribbon. Amid the misery and squalor, there are new pockets of opulence. Behind barbed wire and bougainvillea, a new moneyed class – Zairean and foreign – lives in sumptuous villas. The GB Hypermarket sells choice cuts of meat and Dom Perignon champagne, Boutiques at the Intercontinental Hotel offer Italian silk suits and \$US1300 shoes. Whatever happens elsewhere, faithful retainers roll the clay tennis courts and clip the golf greens at the Cercle de Kinshasa. A poshly appointed restaurant there serves a varied haute cuisine. In the old Belgian Quarter downtown, far seedier now with streets pocked and pitted by neglect, other new restaurants offer excellent meals at Paris prices. That is just like the good old days. But the pleasure is gone. Inside, plates are piled high with delicacies flown in that morning from France. Outside, a phalanx of pawing, pleading beggars waits to scramble for a crumpled bill. Three decades... have pushed the poles too far apart, with little left in between. The rich drive navy-blue Jaguars and top-of-the-line Mercedes. The poor cannot afford plastic shoes. Over those three intervening decades, the visitor finds what was once an exciting mix of different ways of life is now a painful abyss between two extremes that may be very hard for anyone to bridge.

...In hilltop seclusion, with an army of dissipating loyalty... President Mobutu... awaits a coming judgment. Will virulent prostate cancer cut him down before his enemy... drives him from power? ...Rebels... daily gain more of the mineral-laced east... Or will the convoluted politics of Zaire deliver some other fate entirely? ...Mr Mobutu's strength is his ability to pit factions against one another in a bitter free-for-all while he hovers above the fray. For this he needs little real power. He only has to stay alive. His rabble of an Army may not be able to defend his capital, but the jungle might. Long neglect of the interior has left Zaire with no roads between Kinshasa and the rebel's widening territory. Now a haggard 66, Mr Mobutu winces when he walks, a stark contrast to the fire-eater who inflamed followers in his early years. CIA operatives were quick to see leadership in the young colonel with hollow cheeks and hungry eyes, a former journalist. With their help, in 1965, he seized control of the chaotic Congo... In a push for authenticity, he renamed the country and its majestic river, illogically replacing the African name Congo with an old Portuguese name: Zaire. Along with everyone else's, he changed his own name... [to one which] translates to "the all-powerful warrior who, because of his endurance and inflexible will to win, will go from conquest to conquest leaving fire in his wake." ...Mr Mobutu imposed his power the old way: he betrayed friends, co-opted enemies, and made pacts he did not keep. He used white mercenaries to crush rebels and then discreet American help to quell a revolt by the mercenaries. Outside help put down repeated assaults on Katanga province (now Shaba), [the rebels'] next target. He excoriated racist South Africans with flaming rhetoric that enhanced his standing at summit meetings, but he accepted their secret support. "We must isolate them," Mr Mobutu thundered to a reporter. "Buy nothing! Sell nothing!" The journalist then noted what the President had offered him to drink: South African grape juice. After the reporter transferred from Kinshasa, he kept tabs through a courageous local editor... but, like many other Zaireans, [the editor] ended up in prison where he mysteriously died. Mobutu pardoned rebel leader Pierre Mulele and embraced him when he came home. Mulele then faced a long secret trial, with regular news bulletins on its progress. In fact, he was shot before it began. Year after year, more opponents were murdered, and the amounts diplomats said Mr Mobutu stole rose towards \$US6 billion... Yet US officials privately insisted that only he could hold together Zaire and prevent bloody madness at the heart of Africa. The answer was similar in Paris. [The French] President... welcomed... Zaire to the club of former French African colonies, even though it had been owned by Belgium. Justified or not, the pragmatism had a purpose. From independence in 1960 until Mr Mobutu ended a string of coups and rebellions – from the short reign of the martyred Patrice Lumumba to [the] Katanga war with the U[N] – Congo was a five-letter synopsis of Africa's worst nightmares. Zaire's 40 million people break down into 250 tribes spread in clusters across an area as big as Europe, with little communication among them. Vast wealth is dispersed in pockets: diamonds in Kasai, copper in Shaba, gold in the east, oil in Kongo territory near the coast. Rather than trying to detribalise Zaire, Mr Mobutu simply made sure that leaders of each power faction had a share of the riches, while he skimmed off the top. He himself is from a tiny minority. Ordinary people have fallen below any measurable poverty line... Kinshasa erupts on occasion. In 1991 and 1993, unpaid soldiers joined tumultuous mobs, and waves of looters picked the city clean. Yet again, France and Belgium sent troops to rescue their own. And, yet again, Mr Mobutu survived. He promoted commanders from different regions, whose foreign bank accounts enforced practical loyalty. He gave opponents a little rope and guarded leeway.

...[the] Zairean leader... amassed a fortune which... came mainly from "looted aid," the *Financial Times* daily said yesterday... The paper said it had been told by officials of the US Treasury and the [IMF that Mobutu's] fortune in the middle of the 1980s had been estimated at \$US4 billion... "Much of the fortune has been spent as the ailing dictator has attempted to prop up his regime," the paper said... Sources close to the President told the paper that Mobutu was continuing to draw money from secret accounts. In 1982, the IMF... was given a detailed report on Mobutu's alleged financial corruption... But in spite of the report, Western countries pressured the IMF into substantially increasing its aid to Zaire...

Switzerland said yesterday that Zairean prosecutors had filed a request for Swiss authorities to freeze the assets of Zaire's embattled President... "As is usual in such cases, this request will be reviewed by the responsible departments [Justice and Foreign Ministries]," a brief Government statement said. The Swiss Foreign Ministry has repeatedly said it would consider freezing Mr Mobutu's funds in the country only if a request came from Zairean authorities. Rebels who are marching on Zaire's capital... have already asked Switzerland to freeze Mr Mobutu's wealth... spread among secret bank accounts in Switzerland... The Federal Banking Commission, the country's top banking watchdog, promised to widen a search for the funds after saying a previous informal check among leading banks had found no trace of any money.

...Swiss banks have found 4.8 million Swiss francs (\$[NZ]4.99 million) in assets held by [the] Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko or his family after a search ordered by the Government. The funds have been frozen.

...Zaire could have been one of the richest countries in the world. Now it's one of the poorest, thanks to President Mobutu... If Mr Mobutu is forced into involuntary retirement by the rebel forces... it will not be into penury. The President and his family own a property portfolio which includes some of the best addresses in Brussels; a Paris flat handily placed for the milliner who makes Mr Mobutu's trademark leopardskin hats; a villa in the South of France; another in Switzerland, hotels in Spain and South Africa. That might seem like a lot to some, but not to Mr Mobutu. In 1991 he told the magazine *Jeune Afrique*: "I have a flat in Paris and some small properties in France which people pompously call chateaux. I have a villa in Geneva and out of my wife's estate we have allowed ourselves to buy four or five houses in Brussels. Because we are thinking of our children's future. It is not a fortune." Fortune or not, the property is only part of the Mobutu riches. He is said to have shares in a string of European companies. There is a coffee plantation in Brazil. Beside his foreign villas, Mr Mobutu maintained a range of residences around Zaire... Eleven palaces including one with an airstrip big enough for a Concorde... One of the Zairean President's more mundane vices is a taste for wine of the same vintage as himself. In his Portuguese holiday home he has insured himself against a wine drought by amassing 14,000 bottles, no mean achievement for the President of a country where there is just one hospital bed for every 700 people. And at \$US150... a bottle the 1930 port is well over a year's salary for many Zaireans... The great unknown, however, is Mr Mobutu's cash stash. The *Financial Times* has quoted a Swiss member of Parliament who alleged that Mr Mobutu has "several billion dollars" invested in Switzerland. If that is the case and if he is forced into exile, the Swiss banking industry is likely to find itself caught up in another wrangle to rank with those of the Marcos deposits and the dormant accounts of Jews murdered during the Holocaust. Mr Mobutu's fortune appears to have been amassed by three main routes... In 1984 a Belgian report claimed that the Zairean President had siphoned off some 60 billion Belgium francs (roughly \$[NZ]2.1 billion) over 10 years from one of the state-owned natural resources concerns. In a paper for an African Studies Association conference, cited in the London-based *Africa Analysis*, Mr Mobutu and his associates are said to have diverted up to 20[%] of the state operating budget and up to half of the capital budget for their personal use. Little wonder critics claim Mr Mobutu treated Zaire "like his private property." A second route to fortune was provided by Western businessmen looking for chances to exploit Zaire's resources. Stories of corruption abound. Anecdote has it that, for example, one Western company seeking a banking licence in the country was simply informed by the President that a relative needed a "soft" loan of some \$US12 million. The company paid the money into a Swiss account but never got its banking licence. Zairean political folklore tells of a Transport Minister who protested that the \$US75 million he pocketed in one year was merely a modest 10[%] of the contracts he had signed. Those contracts include a deal for electronic equipment for more airports than Zaire possesses. A [third] source of funds for the... regime came from foreign aid of which Zaire has received some \$US8.5 billion over the past 25 years. There is little doubt that much of the money never reached the projects for which it was intended. Britain gave up providing even non-governmental aid some years ago for this reason. "Whatever you did, the money disappeared," according to a British official... Despite such institutional avarice Mr Mobutu's fortune is not what it was. His funding was hit by a collapse in copper prices. The diamond money had pretty much dried up to a few million a month even before the rebels seized the mines... Over the past decade the mounting costs of staying in power have put something of a dent in the Mobutu cash mountain but there is still plenty left, some \$US2.5

billion, according to more recent estimates... With the Government's coffers empty, Mr Mobutu has for years coughed up from his own resources to pay his 15,000-strong presidential guard. Mostly they received about \$US48 a month, a magnificent sum compared to the paltry \$US3.20 given the average soldier – if he were paid at all. The presidential guard had the added bonus of real weapons and real uniforms. His money may not have bought efficiency or fighting ability but it did buy loyalty. The Special Presidential Division is the only unit to put up anything like resistance[against the rebel advance]. Perhaps the biggest drain on Mr Mobutu's fortune has been keeping democracy at bay... The greatest cost was the creation of dozens of fake political parties to sow chaos among the opposition. No one is quite sure just how many Mr Mobutu's money backed, but it is a good slice of the 450 parties which have sprung up since 1990. A year ago, before anyone could have imagined rebels at the gates of Kinshasa, Mr Mobutu looked to have every chance of creating enough chaos and division to win a presidential election. Now one of Africa's long reigning dictators looks about to depart. He will leave behind a looted country. According to the most recent figures Zaire's foreign debt amounted to \$US9.6 billion. In recent years there has been little effort at repayment. That raises the question of why Western powers tolerated Mr Mobutu for so long. According to one old Zairean hand, the explanation is straightforward. "He simply happened to be a politically important, or considered important, person in Africa and so he was allowed to get away with it."

...Mobutu... is... one of Africa's most enduring strongmen. Western powers supported him as a Cold War bastion against Soviet communism... while... he was... plundering what is potentially one of Africa's richest countries...

NOT a lot has changed in central Africa. More than 100 years ago, Joseph Conrad came up the Congo River, as the Zaire was then called, before writing *Heart of Darkness*. Horrified by the savagery and brutality of the Belgian King Leopold's theft of colonial ivory and rubber, he described it as "the vilest scramble for loot that ever disfigured the history of human conscience." But he didn't reckon on... Mobutu, the opportunist who began his adult life by robbing a missionary library, then went on to rob an entire nation. In the heart of darkness, it's hard to find a good dentist, never mind a hairdresser. So Mobutu flew to Paris for the first and had the second pop down from New York every fortnight. And before going shopping, he'd ask the central bank to transfer up to \$30 million to his personal account... Zaire... should be one of Africa's most vibrant economies – it has enough hydro-electric and agricultural potential to power and feed all of Africa. In particular, he wrecked one of Africa's most promising mining industries – he skipped with the diamonds, one of his sons pocketed the gold and others in the clan got the cobalt. Services for his people caved in as Mobutu pushed a nation of 45 million backwards to a twilight zone. The sick don't get to hospital unless they pay up-front and schools are without teachers or books. Life expectancy is only 52 years, compared to 63 in South Africa... average earnings have gone backwards from \$275 a year in 1990 to \$156 today – which is reckoned to be the equivalent of only 6[%] of what they were getting when the Belgian colonists packed up in 1960. Inflation is berserk – 10 years ago \$1 was worth about the same as one zaire; today it is worth more than 155,000 zaires. The jungles have reclaimed 85[%] of the 136,000km of road existing when the Belgians left. Mobutu so punished the nation that a European diplomat declared: "Zaire does not exist as a State entity any more." Despot and survivor, [Mobutu] enshrined only one State institution – corruption. And he instilled only two values – greed and cynicism. Mobutu made the national treasury his own piggy bank and he boasted about his ranking as the world's fifth wealthiest man... At one stage Mobutu was having banknotes printed in Germany and airfreighted to Kinshasa's Ndjili International Airport from where they were delivered by helicopter to his luxury yacht on the Zaire River (to which he had confined himself for two years after a witchdoctor's warning that he should not set a foot on dry land). While the rest of the country went without, he drunkenly indulged his birthplace, Gbadolite, where, in the year he took control of Zaire, only 1700 people lived. Today there are 37,000, which hardly warrants an international airport. But they have one – to take the Air France Concorde when Mobutu chartered it for family outings and for the daily Boeing 737 service to Kinshasa. There is a luxury 100-room guesthouse and the best facilities for which a village could wish – water, electricity, telephones, hospitals. When a lone junior diplomat carrying one overnight bag arrived recently at Gbadolite he was met on the tarmac by eight stretch limousines... In the first 10 years of Mobutu's regime, only 41 of 212 senior officials held high office for more than five years and there were enough executions to stifle complaints. In time, all 14 officers who helped stage his 1965 coup were killed, jailed or sent into exile... If the Mobutu mix of strokes and pokes didn't get the desired result, the dictator president had brutal security agencies with names such as SNIP and SARM to terrorise the nation as they enforced his will. And, like the military, when he didn't have liquid cash to pay them, they were sent out to pillage whole towns at a time. ZAIREANS looking for somewhere to blame for the Mobutu excesses could try Washington. Paris, too. At age 25, Mobutu quit the army with the rank of sergeant-major. As a journalist he went to Europe where, in 1959, he befriended... [a CIA] operative... who would make him king... These were dangerous times. Washington and Moscow were dug in for the Cold War... Certain that Zaire was ripe for an East-West stoush, the CIA assigned [the operative] to Kinshasa. One of his early cables was alarmist: "Embassy and [CIA] station believe... anti-West forces rapidly increasing power in Congo... may be little time left... to avoid another Cuba." Washington fell for it – it made... [the operative's advice that the incumbent president,] Patrice Lumumba... be replaced an "urgent and prime objective" and [the operative] was given a \$100,000 cheque to see that it happened. Mobutu rejoined the army, from where he consolidated the power base he needed to overthrow and murder Lumumba. And so the Cold War came to Zaire where 70[%] of the non-Communist world's cobalt and a stash of other minerals were locked in the ground. Though he styled his leadership on Nicolae Ceausescu in Romania and Kim II Sung in North Korea, Mobutu became the West's main man in post-colonial Africa, which meant there was no international criticism of his excesses; ridiculous amounts of aid money were thrown at him.

...In Zaire international mining companies have begun negotiating with the rebel leadership instead of... [the Government. O]ne mining company has already signed three major agreements with the rebel force. "The rebel takeover of Zaire knows no boundaries. International businessmen are the latest targets. Deals are being done for huge sums of money. Contracts to exploit Zaire's rich mineral and metal reserves mean a stake in the emerging market for businessmen, and, for the rebels, new opportunities for the Zaireans who've welcomed their offensive... The deals being struck here aim to open up some of the richest resources in the world. Vast amounts of money will change hands but mining consortiums are confident of a return on their investments." "Any project in Africa basically is a risk. However, you've got[to] balance up the scale of the projects that we're talking... about against the extent of the risk... [W]e feel the risk is worth taking[," said a spokesperson for American Mineral Fields.] "Zaire's mining infrastructure has been eaten away by state-run corruption and neglect. Copper, zinc and highly-valued cobalt used to be extracted... in Kipushi. Production all but stopped four years ago. So much profit had been looted by the Government, the mine and its 3000 workers couldn't function. Now there's hope that things can change for the better." "In the future I hope that... guys who... come into money in Kipushi... improve this area... in order... for people... to get a good life in our town[," said the Kipushi Mine Manager.] "...It will take years to restore this mine to proper working order. Only then will one of Zaire's, and one of the world's, greatest assets begin yielding its treasure... Copper, cobalt and zinc are all around... here in Zaire's rich soil. This disused mine could soon begin producing valuable metals again if the funds promised by new investors to Zairean rebels are forthcoming..."

...Although declining in importance, Zaire remains one of the world's top 10 diamond producers... The diamond group De Beers is holding talks with the rebel forces controlling most of eastern Zaire. The company[is] heavily involved in the country's gemstone industry... The bulk of Zaire's diamond fields are now either in rebel hands or within striking range of rebel forces. A De Beers source said this week that looting by retreating members of President Mobutu's... Army was of greater concern than any possible plundering by the rebels... De Beers has an agreement to buy and market the output of the country's biggest mine, Miba... which fell to the... [rebels,] now known as the Alliance... last week. It also has an indirect 4[%] stake in the mine, which is 80[%] owned by the Zaire Government. Security personnel are thought to have fought off looters at the mine in the past week, but De Beers remains concerned for the security of all its Zairean facilities. Aside from buying Miba's production – which

accounts for about a quarter, by value, of Zaire's \$80 million-odd annual diamond earnings – its offices buy up production from independent miners, who range from “bucket and spade” operators to more professional outfits. There is also widespread illicit diamond-related activity, as there is in neighbouring Angola... [Speaking of Zaire's neighbours.] Zambia has taken another major step in the privatisation of its copper mining industry by selling two key mines representing more than half of the... country's metal output. The state mining company Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines announced it had sold its Nkana/Nchanga mining metallurgical complex... to the Kafue Consortium led by Avmin Ltd of South Africa, and]... its Chambishi mine to Ivanhoe Capital Corp.

...Zambia's opposition, angered after police were reported to have shot and wounded[their] former President... urged supporters yesterday to remain calm while they planned their next move. [The former President], aged 73, told BBC radio he was slightly wounded when riot police used teargas and then fired live ammunition at his car in the central Zambian city of Kabwe where he had planned to hold a rally... [The 73-year-old], one of Africa's elder statesmen, led what had been the former British colony of Northern Rhodesia from independence in 1964 until multi-party elections in 1991 that were won by [the current President. The current] President... a former labour union leader, barred [the statesman] from challenging him in elections last year in which he was re-elected... [The statesman]'s United National Independent Party (UNIP)... led a boycott of the poll and has embarked on a programme of civil disobedience. The campaign erupted into violence two weeks ago when UNIP supporters clashed with police in Lusaka. Both sides accused the other of starting the trouble... [Incidentally,] the Zaire Government... [- which is r]eeling from a series of battlefield losses... [-] has accepted a U[N] ceasefire proposal. But rebels, on the verge of capturing the provincial capital of Kisangani after weeks of fighting, may not be ready to put down their arms right away... In New York, U[N] diplomats who spoke on condition of anonymity said the consensus was that Zaire was desperate to stop the fighting, while the rebels would likely take Kisangani first and then decide whether there was anything to talk about... Refugees fleeing the rebel advance reported that scores of people were killed at the weekend when rebels took over... Zaire's largest refugee camp... in Tingi Tingi... Aid workers fled last week, leaving only rebel fighters to help[with the distribution] of food.

...Rebel leaders appeared determined to block a massive U[N] airlift of Rwandan refugees in Zaire, insisting yesterday that impassable Zairean roads be fixed and used instead. The U[N] refugee agency had hoped to begin Africa's biggest airlift over a week ago by starting to fly some of the 100,000 refugees from squalid camps near eastern Kisangani to the Rwandan border and then on to their homes by truck. But Zairean rebels have repeatedly delayed the effort... “You shouldn't link repatriation with rehabilitation of roads,” said a U[NHCR] spokesman... “To link the two means to postpone the repatriation for many, many months.” The rebels first complained that an airlift would spread cholera. They then commandeered U[N] jet fuel and may have sparked a food riot... on Saturday... [T]he rebels want the U[N] to airlift only the sick and exhausted, and send the majority of the refugees by road to Rwanda, more than 480km east of the camps outside Kisangani. Torrential rains have turned the narrow, dusty road from Kisangani to the border town of Bukavu into a quagmire. Before trucks could pass through, the roads would require extensive repairs, a benefit to rebel-held areas. “It's simply not feasible,” said [the UNHCR spokesman], adding that it would probably cost more than the \$US50 million airlift. He said refugees were already dying at the rate of 60 a day from malaria, dysentery, pneumonia, cholera and malnutrition... Yesterday, international aid agencies resumed food supplies to the refugees trapped by the standoff. The effort was called off on Saturday, after hundreds of Zaireans stoned three foreign aid vehicles, and held six employees for 90 minutes. None of them was injured. The 100,000 Rwandans... were among one million who fled their country in 1994... The mainly Hutu refugees had feared retribution from the new Tutsi-run Government if they returned. Exhausted by illness and worn out by a five-month march of up to 600km as they fled rebel advances, they now appear willing to go.

...The U[N] airlift of... refugees... from Zaire has passed the 30,000 mark but refugees are still dying in their dozens both in Zaire and Rwanda, aid officials said... Over 40 supposedly fit people have died at the Runda transit camp in the past five days, even though severe medical cases are flown to a hospital in Gisenyi, 70km west, where the charity Medecins Sans Frontieres... is operating... Concern remains for tens of thousands[of refugees who allegedly have disappeared] in eastern Zaire... Meanwhile, the rebels flexed their muscles before planned talks with President Mobutu Sese Seko's shaky government, grabbing another town in mineral-rich Shaba province... Rebel leader Laurent Kabila[now] controls about a quarter of Zaire... and his supporters already call him “president”. On Thursday, Kabila and Mobutu aides agreed at an African summit in Togo to hold their first negotiations in the next few days. Both sides accepted the principles of a ceasefire and negotiations, a summit statement said. But the rebels have clearly laid down their agenda: No prior ceasefire and the negotiations must be about ending Mr Mobutu's 32-year-reign.

...The U[N] was to mount another aerial search yesterday for 85,000 Rwandan refugees, missing in rebel-held Zairean territory... [The] Zairean rebel leader... arrived in Kisangani yesterday, saying he intended to resolve what he called the “little problem” of the missing Rwandans... Questioned about accusations by [the] JUN Secretary-General... that the rebels had adopted a “slow extermination” policy against wandering Rwandan refugees, opting to let them starve to death, Mr Kabila said the charges were “gratuitous.”

...A U[N] team yesterday found up to 55,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees missing from a camp in the jungle of eastern Zaire and was blocked by rebels from a wider search. Not a single Rwandan refugee – dead or alive – was to be seen at Kasese camp, 25km south of Kisangani city... Tutsi-dominated rebels sealed off the Kasese and Biaro camps... from aid workers and journalists earlier in the week, saying they were conducting a military operation. Rebels agreed to allow the U[N] mission to inspect[the camps only after [the] JUN Secretary-General... said he was “shocked and appalled by the inhumanity” of their action which, he said, was killing refugees by starvation. Aid workers had feared that many of the 80,000 Rwandan refugees south of Kisangani had fled because of fighting in the area on Wednesday between rebels, local villagers and refugees. Zairean villagers said on Thursday that[the] rebels had killed hundreds of Rwandan... refugees at Kasese and a battle between rebels and refugees accompanied the slaughter... “They killed many, many refugees – hundreds. There was lots of shooting all morning. They used a mechanical digger to bury the bodies,” a Zairean farmer told Reuter... The Hutus arrived at Kasese and Biaro in mid-March after six months trekking over volcanic rock and through thick bush and jungle in a vain attempt to flee the Tutsi-dominated rebels.

...Aid officials and journalists[say they] saw hundreds... of Rwandan Hutu refugees... with gruesome wounds at Biaro camp... after rebel soldiers and local Zaireans attacked it... [However, the rebel] leader... dismissed the reports as “total nonsense,” saying Rwandan Hutu militiamen among the refugees attacked villagers and rebels intervened to stop the fighting.

...rebels have been killing Rwandan refugees... the relief agency ...MSF... said in a report... “Large-scale killings of refugees have been taking place in the Bukavu-Shabunda region during the recent past,”... adding that the killing was continuing... “These killings do not take place in the context of combat. All refugees are considered to be enemies and therefore targeted, including women and children.” ...According to statistics of the U[N], which has also accused the rebels of massacring refugees near... Kisangani, more than 300,000 refugees from both Rwanda and Burundi are roaming Zaire or have died. But the Nairobi-based Rwandan refugee advocacy organisation said yesterday that as many as 600,000 refugees had “disappeared” in eastern Zaire, charging that widespread genocide had occurred there “to the international community's total indifference.”

...SURVIVORS of an attack on a camp in northwestern Rwanda in which 271 people were killed said Hutu rebels came at night and started chopping up their victims... 227 were wounded... mostly women and children and most bearing horrific wounds... with limbs almost severed and fingers missing, suggesting they had tried to protect their heads... One survivor, whose son was hacked to death, said: “They came very quietly while we were sleeping and we had no chance to escape...” ...The ethnic Tutsi refugees from the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo were killed at Mudende camp, about 120km northwest of Kigali... The camp, set in the grounds of an abandoned university, was home to around 6000 Tutsis... The UN refugee chief... strongly condemned the attack... and a spokeswoman called the attackers merciless... Mudende's residents

had fled the former Zaire after hundreds of thousands of Rwandan Hutus arrived in the area. "The people in the camp are not Rwandans... They were chased out of the Congo because they were Tutsis. They were killed here because they were Tutsis." ... "There were also some Hutus in the camp, but they were not attacked." ... About 80 Rwandan soldiers guarding the camp were unable to do much... The insurgents had kidnapped more than 50 camp residents to use as protection as they fled back towards the Congo, said survivors... It was the second attack on Mudende since the killing of 148 people... by suspected Hutu rebels in August... [Last week, more] than 300 people were killed when a gang of Hutu rebels attacked a jail in north-western Rwanda in a bid to free hundreds of their colleagues...

Rwanda put on trial yesterday a former policeman and businessman accused of being one of the ringleaders in the 1994 genocide of the Tutsi minority masterminded by Hutu extremists... [Ironically, the policeman] was born a Tutsi but using a Rwandan custom he converted to become a member of the Hutu tribe... Rwanda has started eight trials so far, of which six have been adjourned or postponed. In Kibungo on January 3 two defendants were sentenced to death.

...[the young man] knows precisely why he is being held in a foul, densely packed room with no beds or lights deep inside the prison at Gitarama. "They say I was in a gang that was killing children," he said... "It is not true," he declared. "I stayed at home." Wherever he was, [h]e... was 15 at the time. But like the 47 other boys crammed on the floor in the dismal juvenile ward at the... prison and about 2200 youths incarcerated in other hellish jails across Rwanda, he is being charged with committing acts of genocide. Rwanda's agony as it grapples with the legacy of the 1994 ethnic slaughter and civil war thus has a new horror: For the first time in known history, children are being held accountable for mass murder. "You're not talking about small infractions," said... an official with the... UNICEF. "You're talking about children who killed 10 or more people. No child has ever been charged with crimes against humanity." ...UNICEF has built separate wards for juveniles in nine prisons to protect them from rapes, beatings and other abuses. It is a bitter first for humanitarian groups known for feeding and schooling children... But after fierce internal debate, UNICEF officials decided they had no legal or moral grounds to seek blanket amnesty for minors... [However, c]hildren who were younger than 14 during the genocide will not be held legally responsible for their crimes... UNICEF will train several dozen judges, prosecutors and investigators in juvenile justice and children's rights. It will also train and pay for defence lawyers for accused youths, as well as lawyers to represent their victims... For many youths, the choice was to kill or be killed. Some youngsters followed their parents in frenzied machete attacks on former friends and neighbours. But others led some of the savagery, hunting Tutsis in deadly packs... The young defendants invariably deny culpability or insist they forgot what happened. Countless others, the survivors of genocide, can't forget the atrocities. They are tormented day and night by searing images of pain and loss. "[98% of Rwandan children say they'] saw their parents tortured, their mothers raped, their fathers hacked to death, their sisters nailed to trees," said... [the] head of the National Trauma Centre...

Unicef officials said they would... pull out their staff[from Zaire] after... armed men wearing rebel uniforms... attacked... [f]ive aid workers at a house in Goma close to the headquarters of [the] rebel leader... leaving one hospitalised... It was unclear who was responsible for the "vicious" attack... However, the U[N and the] rebel forces, who control most of Zaire and are advancing on the capital, Kinshasa, have disagreed frequently and fiercely over the treatment of tens of thousands of Rwandan Hutu refugees... Aid agencies... fear rebels are hunting down and killing the refugees to spare the risk, expense and trouble of repatriating them to Rwanda.

...THE WEEKS OF DENIAL FOR Africa's most durable dictator... finally came to an end on Thursday, when his three top generals asked for an urgent meeting. The trio was uncharacteristically blunt. They told Mobutu they could no longer protect him or the capital from the approaching rebel army... and that if Mobutu valued his life he should flee. A commander had driven to the front east of Kinshasa that morning and concluded that government soldiers would not fight to save Mobutu's crumbling regime... [Furthermore,] U.S. intelligence sources said that throughout last week top army commanders were calling [the] rebel leader... to pledge their allegiance... After a few... hours of procrastination, Mobutu... accepted the harsh but just verdict of history... The stiffest resistance... [to the Alliance] came not from the Zairian army but from the Angolan rebel group UNITA, led by... a cold war ally of the U.S.'s and a great friend of Mobutu's... But on Friday they too bowed to the inevitable and headed home.

...As [the rebel leader] arrived... in Kinshasa to take charge after his guerrillas toppled [the] veteran dictator... gunmen in uniform killed two Frenchmen, a French diplomat said. The identities of the attackers and their motive were not clear. [However,]France was a close friend of [Mobutu, and r]esidents say there has been an undercurrent of anti-French feeling in Kinshasa in the final days of his... rule. Rebel spokesmen had sounded warnings of a plot by diehard [presidential] loyalists to start killing foreigners to provoke intervention by their Governments.

...Across Kinshasa, slowly regaining a semblance of normality after... rebels marched in at the weekend, the pattern is... a... mix of innocent celebration and more sinister score-settling. In the main market place, a suspected member of [the] once-feared Presidential Guard is beaten to death... In another corner of town, a mob strips and beats a woman accused of working for the man who dominated Africa's third largest nation for three decades. Passing rebels intervene. Elsewhere, groups of sullen young men face an uncertain fate... [R]ebel soldiers bring in one group of up to 20 Rwandan males in their 20s – from Kinshasa's main Mama Yemo hospital. They include amputees, though none has fresh wounds. They are suspected members of Rwanda's former Hutu Army, which fought alongside Mr Mobutu's soldiers. In one incident, young rebels [who 'seem barely 16'] club suspects with rifle butts and threaten them with execution. Older brothers in arms intervene and restrain them – for the time being. But for many in the city, impoverished by three decades of Mr Mobutu rule, things can only get better.

...Beaten bloody, prodded by kicks and lashes with an ammunition belt, the man closed his eyes, spread out his arms and cried, "They're going to shoot me." Seconds later, a rebel fighter pulled the trigger of his AK-47, blasting four or five bullets through the man's back and out his chest. The summary execution – quick and brutal – showed that [Zaire's] rebels are willing to set their own laws when it suits them. In addition to the execution witnessed by four journalists, another man was shot to death in a similar manner at the same time, and a stray bullet killed a boy looking on, witnesses said. Accusations of... atrocities have dogged [the] rebel... forces throughout their seven-month drive across Zaire... Confronted with yesterday's summary execution, a senior official of the rebel alliance dismissed it as propaganda at first... Told that western reporters had eyewitnessed the execution, he became defensive. "Our policy is an economy of violence. We've said it from the start and we say it again today... [90%] of the country was liberated without violence."

...THERE is a fire in the heart of darkness. And it's burning a man alive – you can see his shrivelling organs, smell his frying flesh. At the edges of the bonfire are the stones that broke his bones... [One stone-thrower says,] "We beat him and we threw stones but he wouldn't die – so we put him on the fire. These people must be punished. I'm very glad to take part in this because it's an example to the people... it's a good way to change their mentality." Liberated Kinshasa jars the senses. Plumes of acrid smoke rise from the burning car tyres that fuel the incineration of a hundred or more soldiers loyal to the runaway dictator... Only gunshots halt the mindless looting of the luxury homes of the Mobutu clique and its hangers-on. People are starving but broken jars of honey and jam dribble down the steps of the ransacked home of the army chief of staff... Around him were families who could afford neither milk nor bread, but rolling in the general's gutter are bottles of Moët & Chandon, Laurent Perrier and Chivas Regal. Like all who had their snout in Mobutu's trough, the general fled long before the rebel army... made its spectacular march into the city... Kinshasa welcomed the rebels with jubilation and relief... [The rebel leader] now is ensconced in the P[M]'s residence and dozens of his staff have taken over the Hotel Inter-Continental, which is half-owned by the Zairean Government. They are talking lots but saying little. Kinshasa loves its liberators. For now, jubilation blinds the people to any notion that there might be a dark side to the rebel force that has tramped from the jungles of far-away eastern Zaire, chanting a shallow mix of Marxism and the free market, and bringing an almost puritanical zeal to a downtrodden, lackadaisical city in which many know only corruption as the way to get ahead.

...[the] Zairean rebel leader and newly proclaimed head of state... may look like an affable family man, but his easy-going manner hides a steely determination and an unbending will to power. The stocky 56-year-old with... a perpetual smile needed only seven months to push one of Africa's mightiest dictators to the edge... His 50,000 man Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL) form a highly motivated and disciplined army, and he is extremely popular in the "liberated areas" where he is hailed as a hero... [His] key role could hardly have been foreseen in the 1960s when he fought the then Lieutenant-Colonel Mobutu as a guerrilla leader. The Latin American revolutionary leader Che Guevara, who visited... [the guerrilla leader at the time,] described his men as "idiots" who were only interested in getting rich... However[, the rebel government has]... inherited... a \$US14 billion... external debt...

The... ideology of the [rebel alliance]... is sensible enough – anti-corruption and replacing existing... state agencies – until the alliance reveals its plans for a Chinese-style spy network across all levels of the community. A spokesman for the rebel Information Ministry... told the *Washington Post* last month that rebel groups would be installed in all areas of life: work, community, education, sport and the like. At least one person in each group would be responsible for security, that is identifying the "enemies of change" who he describes as the corrupt and the corruptible. Agents would also seek to "discover enemies within groups, survey the conduct of visitors to the group and report suspicious activity." [The rebel leader] is a charismatic – if shallow – speaker who appealed easily to the anger of Zaireans towards Mobutu... In the 1960s, he studied in France and in East Germany, and campaigned against the Mobutu regime. As a leftist militant in the 1970s, he successfully funded his operations by having a ransom paid for a group of American students he and his followers kidnapped and held for more than 60 days... He claims to have abandoned his Marxist past, but, as he won control of great swathes of Zaire on his way to Kinshasa, he banned all political activity and tightly controlled radio and newspapers. He has also argued vehemently that he will not share political power. And when a young man attending one of the Alliance re-education seminars asked why other political parties were being outlawed, the rebel answer was blunt: "We don't think these parties are working for the population." ...[a] respected Ghanaian commentator on African affairs... [says]: "The record of rebel movements shooting their way to power is deplorable. Look at Sudan, Somalia, Liberia and even Uganda. Rebel movements simply split into factions... Within six months, people... start to complain and then the rebel leaders... feel that it's unfair to be criticised and then they... start repressive measures." ['Ghana was once hailed by the World Bank as a show-case for its plans, but now Ghana's residents are worse off than ever before.'])... The Argentinian revolutionary[who] went to Africa in 1965... says: "...Nothing leads me to believe that [this rebel leader] is the man of the hour. He allows the days to go by without worrying about anything other than political in-fighting and is too addicted to drink and women..." ...So, into the heart of darkness [the rebel leader] steps... He says he has a light. Time will tell if it's a candle or a blowtorch... Detail of the conduct of [the rebel leader's] war is not known because, unlike all sides in the Gulf crisis and the recent Balkan wars, [he] steadfastly blocked news coverage. The U[N] is attempting to investigate allegations of horrendous atrocities but, so far, [he] has blocked it, too.

...An U[N] human rights investigator received information on about 134 massacres of Rwandan refugees in the former Zaire carried out by forces loyal to [the new] President... according to a report released yesterday... It also said serious human rights violations and killings continued in the new Democratic Republic of the Congo... [(DRC). By the way,] Switzerland has frozen more bank accounts belonging to... Mobutu... months after its banking watchdog declared the matter closed.

...a Johannesburg Sunday newspaper has claimed... [that] South African secret service agents helped... Mobutu... smuggle diamonds and \$58 million in cash into South Africa, and recruited mercenaries for a counter-coup against the man who toppled him.

...Mobutu Sese Seko... died in Rabat yesterday after a long battle with prostate cancer... A diplomatic source said Mobutu... a Catholic, was expected to be buried in Rabat's Christian cemetery. But a minister in... [the DRC] Government did not rule out his burial in his home country... [The Moroccan king had] allowed him into Morocco on humanitarian grounds after Mobutu quickly found after being ousted... that an ex-President with a dictator's reputation rapidly lost friends. - 1997

[A new] rebel army... composed of 19 battalions, with about 15,000 soldiers... [is] heading towards Kinshasa... The Rwanda News Agency said yesterday that the rebel leaders had repeated their demand that President Laurent Kabila stand down. "Kabila should quit, or we will capture him alive,"... a... commander... of the... Congolese Movement for Democracy... told a rally... in the eastern town of Bukavu...

President Laurent Kabila struck an uncompromising note on the eve of moves to end Congolese conflict, urging his people to prepare for a military solution against... [the] rebels... "We must prepare for a long war which should end where it started." ...The capital Kinshasa was meanwhile on the brink of a food catastrophe, with supplies for its over five million residents blocked at port and international efforts for a food airlift delayed by fears the planes might be shot down. Returning to the capital yesterday after an absence of about two weeks, Mr Kabila played down regional... efforts... to pursue... peace... with [the] rebels, who are backed by... Rwanda and Uganda... Defence ministers from seven African nations are due to meet today in the Ethiopian capital to discuss the conflict[, although]... Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia have[already] sent troops to prop up Mr Kabila's beleaguered Army... [Mr Kabila] accuses former allies Rwanda and Uganda, who helped him to topple... Mobutu Sese Seko last year, of turning against him and invading to back rebellious ethnic Tutsis. Rwanda denies involvement this time but insists it reserves the right to intervene in the interests of its security. Uganda admits having troops in its neighbour but only in pursuit of Ugandan rebels.

...Five tourists have been killed after rebels snatched 15 from a group of gorilla watchers... The deaths occurred during an apparent rescue attempt by Ugandan armed forces, a police spokesman said... Six or seven people were rescued but at least three are feared still in rebel hands. They had been part of an international tour party of more than 30 people whose camp near Uganda's troubled border with Congo was over-run by about 100 Rwandan Hutu rebels early yesterday... A N[Z]er was rescued but it was not known early this morning if the other two Kiwis in the group were dead or alive... [O]ne of the dead is believed to be an American. As well as two other Americans and the N[Z]ers, the party was known to have included five Britons, one Canadian and an A[US]n... Just hours before news of the deaths, Uganda had pledged to begin a massive hunt in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park in the remote south-west.

...The jungle haven of the rare Ugandan mountain gorilla took on the shape of a horror movie when tourists captured by Hutu rebels were marched through the tranquillity to their deaths. During the terrifying single-file trek towards the Congo border the... women who were having trouble keeping up with the group... including... N[Z]ers Michelle Strathern, aged 26, and Rhonda Avis, 27, were... picked off and murdered. Their bodies, mutilated by machetes and clubs, were later found by survivors... "...It looked like one had been raped before being killed." ...Rhonda Avis' husband, also 27, survived the nine-hour ordeal that began when as many as 150... rebels streamed down the hillside and into campsites... on Monday. A Ugandan game warden and three rangers were shot dead when they fought to stop the rebels, who were armed with automatic rifles, machetes and spears. Despite earlier reports, there was no battle with Government troops... Messages left on the bodies by the killers read, "Americans and British, we don't want you on our land. You support our enemy." ...The survivors were freed at the Congo border and given a letter containing a chilling warning – next time no one would be left alive... As Mr Avis, who worked at a London bank, prepares to bring his wife's body home, international pressure is mounting to bring the killers to justice.

...To [a] former Aucklander... his wife Rhonda was not just a best friend and partner, but a dedicated travel companion who shared his passion for seeing the world. The couple... [who] met at the age of 16 and wed seven years ago... will fly together one last time when... [he] brings his vivacious young wife's body home... The Deputy British High Commissioner in Kampala... told the N[Z] *Herald* last night that... [the] former Glenfield man... was extremely distraught after a horrific ordeal, but was holding up well... The British High Commission was looking after him

and treating him as a British citizen. Back home the families of... the... N[Zers] killed... are trying to come to terms with the brutal murders... Rhonda's... mother... [r]ecently... asked her, 'Aren't you sick of travelling?' Her answer was, 'Never'...

Ever since Hamiltonian Doug Kear disappeared in the D[RC] in August, travellers have been told to avoid the southern and western border region of Uganda. But the trip to see the mountain gorillas in Bwindi Park was still thought safe... [The NZ] Ministry of Foreign Affairs keeps two lists of countries to warn travellers about. [However, a s]pokesman... said... travellers did not make extensive use of Foreign Affairs advice, because they did not think of it, or because so many headed for places like Africa from a base in London.

...Why do people risk their lives to go into the remote African bush in the hope of seeing gorillas? ...The jungle-clad African volcanoes on which two N[Z] women lost their lives this week are among the most difficult places in the world for western tourists to reach. My husband and I made the journey from the Kenyan border by a slow, bullet-ridden train, and by hitching rides on the back of laden trucks and utes over pot-holed dirt roads. The guards at the borders and checkpoints were often young with thong sandals on their feet but powerful weapons slung over their shoulders. Some were helpful, others were bullies who helped themselves to whatever produce vehicles were carrying. We were amazed that no one tried to rob us and tip us over the side of the road, for we would never have been found, but at the time we carried a sense of invincibility or we would never have continued towards our goal. That goal, to sit with a family of mountain gorillas, is one of the most romantic and challenging for any traveller. Only a few hundred of these breath-taking creatures remain in the Virunga rainforest, which covers a few hundred square kilometres straddling the borders of Uganda, the D[RC]... and Rwanda... but only four families will allow humans near them. Visiting times are restricted... [and i]t takes an average 30 to 45 minutes to track down one of the families. (Most of the others charge into the bush screaming upon seeing humans.) ...We spent an hour and a half with the gorillas. That might not seem long considering all the effort and expense it took to get there – and then back to civilisation... – but it was an experience that will stay with us the rest of our lives. In that short time we could see how humans are only one step away from gorillas in evolution. They are more human than... us...

People who have seen the apes speak in awe about the experience. Given this demand, there is no incentive for the Ugandan tourist industry, which charges around \$180 a person, to put people off with stories of danger... The region... is a fault line of conflict. Guerrilla groups, like the Interahamwe who are accused of carrying out this week's killings, roam its length intent on destabilising the Governments of Uganda and Rwanda... Two weeks ago... one senior military officer I met... said... "We have chased these people deep into the Congo." The "chasing" was in reality an invasion deep into neighbouring Congo launched last August by the Ugandan and Rwandan Armies. The move has set off a chain of events that had brought seven other African countries into the fight... The possibility that... the Ugandan and Rwandan [Armies]... might topple Congo's President Laurent Kabila... prompted Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia to send military forces to Kabila's aid. Suddenly a war that was being fought over guerrillas in the border region has escalated into... the biggest in the history of Africa. The bulk of the Interahamwe and others were driven further away. But it has been almost impossible to eradicate them all... The rule of thumb is that it takes at least 10 regular soldiers to effectively control one guerrilla fighter. The Ugandan Army is too stretched to commit that number of troops... The name... Interahamwe... originally means "those who work together" – a euphemism that has come to mean kill rather than work. In 1994 the Interahamwe was behind the slaughter of around 800,000 people... in Rwanda. Its organisation of the genocide had been meticulous: killing that number in just over three months meant they needed to slaughter about 10,000 a day... An international court has been established to try those implicated. But most of the ringleaders are still at large, they show no remorse and are busy organising the next round of killings... But why target foreigners...? Simply the death of foreigners attracts the attention of the world.

...Two of the rare Rwandan gorillas have been killed by militiamen. [Our correspondent] looks at what the future holds for the endangered apes and tourism... We are at an impromptu tourism seminar at the foot of the magnificent Virunga chain of volcanoes on the border between Rwanda, Uganda and the Congo... "...I'm telling you, you have to go ape," [a]Johannesburg businessman... exclaims... I cringe and want to bury my head... Going ape is how many describe what happened... in 1994... It's a faux pas, but it's the kind of adrenalin-fuelled enthusiasm some feel after tracking a family of gorillas in the bamboo forest[, and]... it carries a clear message as well – the gorillas could save this war-torn country. But there is a lot of competition for this eco-tourist treasure... If not for the civil war, Rwanda would now be one of the world's prime tourist destinations. When the Rwandan Government drew up its Vision 2020 in 1997 for the transformation of Rwanda into a modern player in the world economy, tourism did not even feature, although this was quickly rectified with a redraft... A tourism promotion campaign should start with the gorillas, that is plain. And, in our globalised world, simple slogans are the way to go when it comes to marketing. Which is why [the businessman] might just have a point when he shouted: Go Ape!

...Ugandan troops have killed 15 Rwandan militiamen believed to be part of a rebel band which murdered eight foreign tourists... following a tipoff by local residents... The... [killing]s are just the latest bloody incident in a conflict that... has spawned a genocide in Rwanda and two wars in the neighbouring D[RC], formerly Zaire.

...An obscure mineral that looks like worthless black mud is emerging as one of the most essential ingredients in modern living – and in African warfare. After diamonds, gold and oil, "col-tan," short for columbite-tantalite – a rare ore containing tantalum, a crucial element in the manufacture of cellphones, PlayStations or any item in which a capacitor is needed to maintain the electric charge of a computer microchip – has now joined the rogue's gallery of African subsoil resources fuelling wars. Col-tan is extracted by peasants scrambling on hillsides in the eastern part of the D[RC] with shovels and plastic bags... The ore got its name 200 years ago because finding it is tantalising. But it is this ore rather than diamonds or gold, it is now becoming clear, that has kept the Rwandan war machine ticking over... Its price has rocketed in recent months as a result of rising industrial demand for tantalum... Since the Rwandan-led Rally for Congolese Democracy launched its challenge against... Laurent Kabila... tantalum's value has doubled – again and again and again. Its price stood at \$US30/lb... for years, then soared to \$US210 in December... Along with Western A[US], the eastern part of the republic has some of the richest col-tan deposits in the world, so the rebels have declared a monopoly on exports. Tantalum is only the latest treasure to come out of the former Zaire – source of the uranium that was used in the Hiroshima bomb and of "Incomparable," a 400-carat diamond that in 1988 attracted the highest price ever bid for a single gem. It is the fabled riches of the republic that explain why six foreign countries are currently engaged in war there. For their support for the Government in Kinshasa, the Kabila camp's aides – Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia – have been granted offshore oil concessions, as well as diamond mines, cobalt and rare timber. The rebels' supporters – Rwanda and Uganda – also want... pay[ment for their services. Incidentally, at]... least 399 people drowned when an overloaded Senegalese ferryboat capsized in stormy seas off the Gambian coast. Many more were feared dead... [796] people were listed on board the ferry...

Yesterday, authorities said 1034 people were on board the ferry, including 52 crew members... Officials in Dakar tried to douse mounting anger as distressed relatives asked why the boat, designed to carry 550 passengers, was so overloaded... [The] ferry... was built for lakes, not the open sea.

...THE 100 people trapped in a capsized ferry... from the... lakeside town of Goma... in the Congo have been given up for dead... The victims were caught aboard the ferry Musaka when it capsized in Lake Kiva... Lack of oxygen in diving tanks was partly blamed for the botched rescue... [On a positive note, "n]ormal life," with its repressive realities of fear, brutality and hardship, has returned to the capital of the D[RC], stifling hopes that the assassination of President Laurent-Desire Kabila could lead to freedom, peace, safety and food on people's tables. "This is not some family empire, this is my country, Congo," said a frustrated citizen, dismayed that the killing... by an off-duty bodyguard... merely resulted in the appointment of Kabila's 32-year-old son... The Minister of Communication... confirmed that the Government would continue the "tireless pursuit

of peace and upliftment in our country,” begun by the “peace-loving” late President Kabila. The former President’s body will be laid to rest in the capital tomorrow after lying in state in Kinshasa yesterday and today. The body was displayed yesterday to invited mourners, including Kabila’s key ally, Zimbabwe[’s] President... in an elaborate gold and white coffin at a military barracks... [The minister] said the assassin’s motive was not known... The bodyguard, who had been with the President since he came to office on May 17, 1997, was killed as he fled the Marble Palace.

...Enter the offices of an African big man and look around. The first security guard you meet is a wiry fellow with suspicious eyes and a... frayed... shirt collar... The hallways are gloomy, the stairwells musty. Two giant glass partitions, shot up during the Liberian civil war, are still pocked and shattered. Yet the building maintains a perverse sense of tradition. Along the way, you pass a portrait of former Liberian President William Tolbert, who was disembowelled in this very building during a military coup in 1980. You also encounter a portrait of Tolbert’s executioner; former President Samuel K. Doe, whose ears were hacked off before he was executed by drunken rebels in 1990. The guards get a lot bigger and better dressed as you proceed. Still, you’ve got to wonder: do these tyrants ever learn? Africa is littered with Big Men who fell hard. Some were assassinated, like Laurent Kabila of Congo, who was shot in the head in January by a bodyguard pretending to whisper something in his ear. Others died in mysterious circumstances, like Nigeria’s Sani Abacha, who reportedly expired during a Viagra-fuelled orgy with prostitutes. Others were chased into ignominious exile, or cling to power against a growing clamour of criticism, like Zimbabwe’s [President]... But they still come, with their superegoes, their entourage of sycophants, their penchant for violence. They plunder the continent’s natural resources and leave little in their wake but ruin. [The current President of Liberia] is sitting at his desk, absorbed in paperwork, keeping everyone standing. When he emerges, he... answers questions in great gusts of American-accented English, his arguments peppered with familiar idioms – “Oh no, don’t... go down that road!” – and liberal references to God. [He] wants you to believe that his crazed militiamen didn’t commit atrocities during the 1990s civil war... Finally, he wants you to believe that all the current accusations against him are false. No, he hasn’t harassed and intimidated political opponents in Liberia. No, he hasn’t been trading guns to the Revolutionary United Front rebels in Sierra Leone, a force infamous for chopping the limbs off children. No, he’s never had anything to do with diamond smuggling... [However], according to a recent Amnesty International report... members of his notorious Anti-Terrorist Unit have routinely tortured and raped people suspected of aiding his opponents... So history grimly repeats itself: another traumatic round of bloodletting is under way in sub-Saharan Africa, and, at the centre of it all, another African strongman is clinging to power. If [the President was] a monstrous buffoon, he’d be easier to assess. But he’s not. He’s well educated... Bentley College is not the sort of place you’d expect a West African warlord to have received his education. Yet it was at this campus... 20 minutes outside Boston, that [he] earned his undergraduate economics degree in 1977. Still, it was during a decade in the US in the 1970s that [he] became active in exile politics. Many Liberian students were agitating against political domination by a class of people known as Americo-Liberians, freed American slaves who had founded the Republic of Liberia in 1847. The Americo-Liberians had long regarded themselves as a cut above indigenous, “uncivilised” Liberians. Although [his] father was Americo-Liberian, his mother was from the Gola tribe. Associates say that [he] has always emphasised one or the other aspect of his background, depending on which one worked to his political advantage. [His] first flirtation with national politics came with the Liberian coup of 1980, and ended in disgrace. A semiliterate master sergeant[–] Samuel K. Doe, from the Krahn tribe[–] overthrew the Americo-Liberian order and installed a repressive and corrupt regime. Through [hi]s connections with one of the coup leaders, [the current President] became head of the General Services Agency, which gave him control over lucrative government contracts. But he had a falling out with [Doe] and fled to the US, where he had allegedly stashed \$US900,000... in embezzled funds. Doe requested his extradition; FBI agents arrested [him] and put him in the Plymouth House of Corrections in Massachusetts. Sixteen months later [he] and some fellow inmates... escaped – at least that’s what’s been reported. In any event, he eventually resurfaced in Africa. [He] gathered exiles with military experience, and invited others to Libya for training. On Christmas Eve 1989, he crossed into Liberia from the Ivory Coast with about 100 fighters. The rebellion might have been easily snuffed out then. But Government troops from Doe’s Krahn tribe attacked civilians suspected of supporting the rebels. The abuses helped to swell the ranks of [the current President]’s National Patriotic Front of Liberia, and the rebels in turn hunted Krahn civilians. Fighters on all sides killed innocent people – out of ethnic hatred, or to settle personal scores, or just because they didn’t like the look of somebody. The war never really ended. It was fought to several ceasefires and stalemates, but it seemed to re-ignite every two years or so. International organisations prompted free elections in 1997, but no country was willing to properly disarm fighters ahead of the vote. [The current President] won an overwhelming majority, in part because Liberians feared that he would return to fighting if he lost. Since then, security services and other goons have intimidated critics and human rights activists, many of whom have fled the country. Many Liberians would like [him] to pay for the past. So as he considers his own fate, [the current President] has got to be... motivated by fear. Only days after Kabila was assassinated... [Liberia’s President] changed his personal security detail. “Well, one must be very careful,” [he] allows, when asked if he has security concerns... [He] supports the RUF rebels in Sierra Leone partly because of this fear. Beyond giving his associates access to diamonds, the alliance also helps to establish a “friendly” buffer along that deeply unstable border. Likewise, he may be helping rebels in Guinea because he wants to keep Liberian dissident forces based there on the defensive... “There is always someone who wants the power – that’s the trouble,” says a Monrovia newspaper editor. “Here, you don’t have a middle class. Everything is too extreme: either you’re in the Government, or you’re nowhere. We talk about change of leadership [by force]. But we’ve tried that.” Liberia[’s] Archbishop... agrees. “Doe came to redeem us and what did we get? [This President] became our redeemer – to get Doe off our backs... What did... [m]ore redeemers... get us?” Africa is mangled by war, disease, poverty. In many countries, towns have no electricity, schools lack books, hospitals have few medicines. Millions of children have been killed by malaria and orphaned by Aids in recent years. Sanctions alone won’t solve that. Nor will neglect. Nor will bursts of enthusiasm for “new” African leaders, or even fresh elections. Those countries that have moved towards greater democracy – like Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal – have a long way to go. Should strongmen like [the current Liberian President] be judged by a different, “African standard” of human rights and democracy and accepted as the only stand-in for order on a chaotic continent? Or should the international community declare [African presidents] to be outcasts if they don’t live up to more stringent norms? ...In [the current President]’s world view, the weak are devoured. To remind himself of that, all he has to do is walk the corridors of his executive mansion and examine the portraits of his predecessors. What [he] and his countrymen need is a new vision of Africa – and a belief that there is another way.

Are we applying a lower moral standard to African leaders? WHEN Black Africa sought freedom from white colonial rule, it did not expect that black neocolonialists would slaughter its people, but that is what has happened. Africa, plagued by starvation, social disintegration and debt, spends billions of dollars a year on armed forces. The weapons are used not so much to establish peace and stability as to terrorize and butcher black Africans. Many in the West feel uncomfortable about the mere mention of such tyranny. It might provide a dangerous justification for apartheid, and divert attention from the noble cause of South African blacks. This attitude suggests that they apply a lower moral standard to black African leaders than to white South Africans. Black Africans vehemently object to such thinking. To their dead compatriots, it made little difference that the finger that pulled the trigger was black. In Uganda... Nigeria... Angola, Mozambique, Somalia, the Sudan and other countries, carnage and hideous tyranny reign. One does not argue with empty-headed soldiers over civil liberties and private property rights. In 1972 in Burundi, more than 200,000 Hutus... were slaughtered in barely two months, their homes and schools destroyed by the government run by the Tutsi... August 1988 witnessed a repeat of the massacre, with some 10,000 Hutus slain, some reportedly machine-gunned from army helicopters. So far as I know, not a whiff of protest or condemnation came from the U[N] or public officials in the West. Had that many whales or African zebras

been slaughtered, the outrage and world condemnation would have been deafening... Is it morally acceptable for black tyrants to butcher black people? A [black] candidate for the US Democratic presidential nomination... lifted the hopes and aspirations of many blacks worldwide. He could not have run in South Africa – and he also could not have run in 39 of the 41 black African nations. Only... Botswana and Senegal, allow their people the right to choose their leaders. Twenty-four countries are military dictatorships. The rest are farcical “democracies” in which only one candidate, under a one-party system, runs for president, wins almost all the votes and then declares himself president for life. The principle of political power-sharing being extolled by black African leaders to South Africa is yet to be established in black Africa itself. Since 1957, there have been more than 150 African heads of state, but only six voluntarily relinquished power; the rest were assassinated or booted out in military coups... If the world won't help, perhaps it had better stay out of Africa. Application of a standard that recognizes only white-on-black tyranny is bound to aggravate the plight of all black Africans, including those in South Africa. - 1989

ANC leaders embrace free-market ideology... Some of [South Africa's] leading politicians have transformed themselves from adherents of state socialism and nationalisation to mouthpieces for the ideology of the free market... The ANC's ambitious plans to reverse the bulk of the population from poverty are most visible in a big-budget Reconstruction and Development programme of public works and housing. But to retain business and international investor confidence, the party has to reconcile a new economic orthodoxy of deregulation, competition and controlling Government spending with the wishes of trade unions which made it so strong. Going swiftly but somewhat uncertainly where others have gone before was the reason the N[Z P]M... was interviewed at length on a leading current affairs television programme on Wednesday night about the N[Z] experience... Both he and [the South African President] talk the same language; wealth must be created before it can be distributed. The question is whether enough can be created in short order so the ANC can satisfy the high expectations of its millions of patient but desperately poor supporters... [The] Premier of the country's richest province... says it is not possible to convince everyone that economic reforms are necessary... “...The trick of government is not really to share the successes with people, but to share the difficulties.” ...Things might briefly get worse before they get better. Even to make headway with South Africa's crippling unemployment rate – more than 40[%] among blacks – the economy must grow at 6[%]. That is because some 400,000 school-leavers enter the workforce each year. After two years in power, the [ANC] Government has turned around a stagnant economy to one which is now growing at 4[%]. Inflation has been tamed and now runs at 5.9[%]. But interest rates – nudged up to stabilise a struggling currency – now top 15[%]. The bottom line is that there are simply not enough new jobs. The threat that poses is as obvious as the barbed wire which tops the walls surrounding the houses on the road into Johannesburg...

Outside a war zone, South Africa is the most violent place on earth. There's a carjacking every nine minutes, an armed robbery every 11 minutes, a murder every 27 minutes and a rape every 29 minutes... South Africans go to elaborate lengths to protect themselves in their vehicles. Doors are locked all the time, windows are never down, red lights are a muggers' delight so you don't stop for them... The large houses on large sections (which once made [Johannesburg's] suburbia the envy of the western world) are liabilities in the post-apartheid era. They're hard to defend against incursion. Those houses are still there but they're protected by armed response squads, house and grounds alarms, guns, high walls, razor wire, electric fencing and bars... The fastest-growing realty area is cluster housing. Hundreds of families live cheek-by-jowl behind guarded walls, much like a more fortified version of a... retirement village... One incredible statistic is that last year, there were 28,000 more crimes committed in the commercial centres of Gauteng (Johannesburg and Pretoria) than in 1994. That's roughly an increase of 80 crimes per day. - 1996

South Africa is a country of great promise and great peril. Political killings have dropped dramatically from the thousands in 1994 to next to nothing, but criminal violence has burgeoned. In recent years, up to 52 people have been killed each day. There were 36,000 reported rapes last year, 34,000 robberies from January to August, and a car hijack, not infrequently with the killing of the driver, every three minutes... [S]ome is apartheid's legacy... One of the great fears for South Africa was that the black majority would seek bloody revenge. That hasn't happened, but there are black aspirations for a more equal share of the future and a flourishing of the old African ways as people search for wholeness after the brutality of apartheid.

...[The issue of police brutality, lingering after the end of apartheid in 1994, emerged again this year, when the BBC released videos showing white police beating handcuffed black suspects. One of the suspects later died, but it was not clear if the beating or injuries suffered during an accident caused the death. In a separate incident, a star soccer player was attacked and shot in the shoulder after police signalled him to stop his car. Police say they are under extreme pressure to combat an exploding crime wave and need to use force to protect themselves. But a total of 1472 people died from police action or in police custody in South Africa over the past two years. The person who heads the Independent Complaints Directorate, a government agency, released the figures at a seminar on a new law (that police oppose the implementation of) intended to combat excessive police violence'. ●] Motorists on one of South Africa's busiest highways were pelted with showers of stones thrown by a troop of rampaging baboons. Officials said three attacks had been reported between Cape Town and Johannesburg, where the N1 passes through the spectacular Du Toit's Kloof Pass. The *Cape Argus* newspaper reported no injuries or crashes had resulted from the sneak attacks, and police had engaged the primates in “running battles” in an attempt to drive them off.

...Like South Africans and N[Z]ers, the Welsh lived and breathed their rugby and the psyche of the whole country was affected by the way their heroes went on the footie field. But during the 80s terrible times came on both Wales, the country, and Wales, the rugby team. Once, they had coal mines, rugby, and singing. The mines closed, the rugby team collapsed and there are statistics that show even the male choir numbers are down. It's a spiral that you can see happening in South Africa today. The great strength of South African rugby was the rock solid belief of the white population that they were the best, biggest, meanest men to ever pull on a rugby jersey. They also believed they lived in a paradise that only troublemakers and communists would fail to recognise otherwise. On the back of cheap black labour the whites prospered and their rugby teams reflected that arrogance... Yes, South African rugby players were often unpleasant; yes, they were unbearable in victory; yes, they pursued racial policies that were morally repugnant, but by God, they were incredibly hard to beat. Now everything has changed, in their country and in their football. Their coach... was actually smiling after the humiliation at Eden Park... [and] last year... I saw a white woman begging on the streets of Johannesburg. With the dismantling of apartheid a white underclass is growing.

...THE thought of travelling around South Africa is a foreign concept to many N[Z]ers but a backpack, an open mind and \$17 a day may be exactly what many of us need... Backpacking in South Africa expands your perception of your own country. You simply can't avoid the squatter camps, the poverty and people trying to survive where a bunch of bananas for 33c is expensive. Nonetheless, each area has something exciting to offer and is best savoured if you aren't in a hurry... It also helps to look as inconspicuous as possible... Johannesburg is considered a city to avoid...

Johannesburg has three unenviable world records: for murder, rape and cop-killing. A lions' den was a haven of tranquillity compared with a [Johannesburg] township, I was assured on every side, by black as well as white. Violence punctuates the daily life of the thousands without jobs, without much hope... Bad news, good news. Far too much of one, tragic lack of the other... The bad news is all around, in the headlines and on the streets. Horror upon horror... Badness, madness, frustration, rage – call it what you will – prevail today.

...Three years after being raped, and forced into silence by her publicity team, Miss Soweto decided on International Women's Day on Saturday to speak out against a crime that is now rampant in South Africa. “I am a role-model for some girls and I hope they can listen to me and fight against the culture of silence,” said... [the] 20-year-old beauty queen... South Africa has more rapes per head of population than any other country

in the world, with 73.6 reported for every 100,000 people. One rape is committed every 83 seconds, according to official figures, which women's groups say under-estimate the problem. "Rape has become second nature in South Africa, if not a new national sport," one magistrate said recently at the sentencing of a father charged with raping a seven-year-old girl. "What really bothers me is that men think they can do anything they want," says [a victim]. She... occasionally runs into the man who raped her and he greets her normally. He "doesn't think he has done anything wrong." In one telling sign, a 21-year-old man accused of repeatedly raping a 17-year-old with two friends justified himself to the court by claiming he had a "three-year relationship" with the young woman... [M]any analysts believe the violent behaviour that is a legacy of past turmoil will take years to eradicate. However, in a positive sign, awareness campaigns have led to an increase in the number of rapes reported... At the same time, however, rampant crime has radicalised public attitudes to rape: women's groups are calling for rapists to be castrated and demands for the restoration of the death penalty are on the increase. Above all, police passivity has prompted ordinary citizens to take matters into their own hands. Last month a group of mothers furious at police inaction castrated a suspected rapist. In response to this growing anger, the justice ministry held an information day on women's rights yesterday at which they announced a toughening in sentences against those guilty of serious crimes, including rape.

...South African police record 36,000 rapes a year, but the real toll is closer to 1.3 million – or one in 10 of the female population, a UN Human Rights report published in Geneva said yesterday. Most of the victims are... too afraid to lodge statements with the police they associate with the former apartheid regime, said the report's female Sri Lankan author... "Gang-rapes are very often considered to be a pastime like playing cards or drinking alcohol," [she added]... In cases handled by the court of Winberg in Cape Town, 70[%] of the victims were under 18 and 40[%] of the sentenced rapists were convicted criminals younger than 20 years old. Only 5[%] of the victims were white... While urban white-dominated zones often had good rape-prevention programmes, the lack of interest and personnel to set up similar operations in black suburbs was "very disturbing," [the report's author] said. The Government was, however, preparing a new "women's affairs" office which would raise public and legislative awareness of this and other issues.

...Aids is surging in South Africa, where people end up having sex because they have no money to go to the movies or to the swimming pool, the country's Minister of Health said. "Sex is entertainment for the poor if you have nothing else to do..." ...UNAids... said 2.2 million people in South Africa, including an estimated 13[%] of its pregnant women, had the HIV virus... [O]ne of the worst-affected areas was the violence-hit KwaZulu-Natal province, where infection rates among pregnant women had reached 18[%]. "When people face death today, the risk of death from Aids in 10 years' time is a remote possibility for them," [the minister] said. UNAids said infection levels registered at South African health clinics were now higher than 20[%] compared with less than 1[%] in 1988. In related news, the US... is objecting to a South African plan to legalise the import of cheap foreign drugs in apparent breach of international patent laws, threatening to undermine millions of dollars worth of sales of US propriety medicines... The law is part of the [South African G]overnment's effort to make health care more affordable and accessible.

...The owner of a... shebeen [unlicensed liquor premises] has sliced the ears off two boys he suspected of stealing money. The boys, aged eight and nine, are making good progress in the Red Cross Children's Hospital in Cape Town after a plastic surgeon performed "reconstructive surgery." The incident happened in the Cape Flats, a vast area of shantytowns and townships... which are among the most violent places in South Africa.

...South Africa's housing crisis has turned violent as homeless squatters come up against cash-strapped local authorities... [One woman] had spent eight years in a tiny shack in the backyard of a house in Randfontein's black township, Mohlakeng... on the outskirts of Johannesburg... The local council estimates there are 8000 shacks... in the township with five or six people in each. After long negotiations with the council to find a suitable piece of land... [for the shack-dwellers broke down, they] swarmed on to... an open field... They hastily erected[new] shacks and then sat for 15 days without water and sanitation, hoping the council would provide basic services. It was an illegal invasion and the squatters knew it... It was early morning when the eviction squad came to tear down [the woman's] shack and 800 others... As the men, wearing helmets and carrying riot shields and crowbars, smashed the tin and cardboard structures and threw them on to trucks, a pitched battle broke out. Shots were fired as a shack owner slumped to the ground, dead. "I just ran away when they started to break the shacks and hit people and shoot..." said [the woman]. "I was very, very scared because I didn't think it could happen like that." Now she sits forlornly in an over-crowded tent in a council transit camp. Evicted two weeks ago, she has no idea what happened to her shack or most of her belongings. The camp is home to hundreds of evicted squatters. Those who cannot fit into the tents live outside amid their heaped belongings. In the past month Johannesburg has seen three large-scale land invasions as a flood of homeless people pour in from impoverished rural areas desperate for work and housing. Increasingly, they are being met by determined local government officials trying to impose orderly development on their fast disappearing tracts of land. "If you allow uncontrolled squatting this area will be swamped – totally and completely overrun by squatters," said... Randfontein's deputy town clerk... But why the violent eviction? "I don't know[if] you can do this with a soft touch. We gave them court orders, to remove the shacks, so they brought in 720 more," he said... The statistics of this human tide are staggering. In Gauteng province alone... an estimated 3 million people live in overcrowded squatter camps, known officially as "informal settlements." Government officials say another 20,000 people arrive each month, making urban planning a nightmare and placing an unbearable strain on public resources. There is a national housing backlog of between two and three million homes, of which 750,000 are needed in Gauteng. "If you sit down and think soberly about the problem, you won't even start to tackle it," conceded... the Minister for Housing and Land Affairs in Gauteng. The national Government, in cooperation with provincial administrations, has promised to build one million houses by 1999 but few believe that target will be reached. Government pledges do not mean much... To date the council's attempts to deal with the housing problems are a tale of woe – one which echoes the difficulties faced nationally. A private developer has not delivered the volume of houses required in Mohlakeng, other housing initiatives have been vandalised and the council is locked in seemingly endless debates with various community groups about what to do next... The homeless of Mohlakeng are part of apartheid's cruellest legacy – a vast, poor and largely illiterate black under-class. They seemingly have no chance of affordable housing. But to evict the Mohlakeng squatters and then provide them with temporary accommodation and basic services has cost the council approximately one million rand (\$[NZ]333,000). According to [the deputy town clerk], money is fast running out. As evening settles on the council camp, [the woman] sits eating a small bowl of rice flavoured with tomato sauce – the only meal available. She has no idea what the future holds.

...IT HAD BEEN a perfect summer's day in Port Elizabeth... Alison* had spent the afternoon on the beach and the evening with friends playing a board game. They had laughed and joked, Alison's carefree smile and sparkling blue-green eyes lighting up her face. When the 27-year-old insurance broker parked her yellow Renault on the street outside her block of flats it was after one in the morning of December 18, 1994. She was just about to get out when the door was wrenched open. "Move over!" snapped a man, waving a knife at her. The scruffy stranger... drove towards the city centre, speaking as if he were having an everyday conversation. "What's your name?" he asked amicably. "Susan," she replied, instinctively trying to protect herself. She thought about trying to jump out, but was afraid of injuring herself or making him turn violent. In any event, the streets were empty so there would be no-one to help her. They drew up in a seedy nightclub area, notorious for gang violence. There were many people on the footpath, but to Alison they looked more menacing than the man in her car. Suddenly, a short, stocky man... climbed into the back of the car. "I'd like you to meet my friend Susan," the abductor said. The newcomer nodded and said hello, but he was stony-faced... THE MAN behind the wheel was... [t]wenty-six years old... married and had a two-year-old son. But this hadn't stopped him from embarking on a trail of violence. Just ten months before, he had kidnapped and raped a 19-year-old student. When he was done with her, he threatened to set his friends on her if she reported the incident. Arrested shortly afterwards, he'd been released on bail. Despite an impending trial, he had teamed up with [the short man], 19, on December 4 and intercepted a 21-year-old mother as she was returning from a cafe. The men callously ignored her pleas that she

was pregnant, taking turns to rape her. They warned her that they would kill her and her child if she reported them. They were arrested hours after the attack, but the prosecutor was not aware of [the 26-year-old]'s previous record. As a result, they were both out on bail the next day. Freed to strike again. Alison was their chosen victim. At a quiet part of Noordhoek, a dangerous stretch of coastline frequented by unsavoury characters, they turned down a narrow sandy track. [The driver] stopped the car about 70 metres into the bush and politely asked Alison to help him turn off the lights. She found the switch, then asked, "Now what?" "Now for some sex," [the driver] replied matter of factly, instructing her to remove her clothes. "Are you going to fight?" "No," she replied, as calmly as she could... [The 19-year-old] got out of the car, leaving [the 26-year-old] to rape Alison in her seat... When he finished, he called [the 19-year-old] over and watched while he raped her... [When the 19-year-old was finished, he] got out of the car and sat on the bonnet. Then he took out a large hunting knife. [The 26-year-old] asked Alison if she would go to the police. "No," she lied. "I wouldn't want my parents to find out what happened." "I don't believe you," he said... "What do you think Old Nick would want us to do?" he asked [his mate]... "He'd want us to kill her." Alison realised they were talking about the devil. Still, she was shocked when [the 26-year-old] straddled her, put his hands around her throat and squeezed. "Please, don't kill me," Alison pleaded. "Sorry," [the rapist] replied, squeezing harder. Finally, she went limp. The men dragged her from the car and dumped her naked body on the dirt... Then [the 19-year-old] asked whether she was dead and [the 26-year-old] went berserk, stabbing her repeatedly in the stomach with his stiletto. When one of her legs started to twitch, [the 19-year-old] slit her throat with his hunting knife, setting off a new frenzy. Together they slashed her neck from shoulder to shoulder, again and again. Ironically, this inhuman assault saved Alison from suffocating. The strangulation had closed her windpipe, but now that her throat was open she was able to suck air into her lungs. She regained consciousness and counted the cuts, feeling no pain. When the attack was finished, she put her hand to her throat. It went inside her neck. *I won't give them the satisfaction of seeing me die*, she thought. *I must hang on until they have gone*. Alison heard them... agreeing that no-one could live through such an experience. Then they drove off. As soon as they had gone, she... [became] filled with an extraordinary sense of... determin[ation] to try to make it to the road... As she pushed herself onto her knees, her intestines came out of the gaping stomach wound. She reached for a shirt that had been flung out of the car, pressed it to her stomach with one hand, and, using the other, began to crawl. Her head flopped forward uselessly, the severed neck muscles unable to keep it upright... She crawled 15 metres towards the road before she collapsed, despairing of going any further. Lying on the path, she thought how much more terrible it would be for her mother if she were found dead there... *I'm not going to let that happen*, she thought grimly. Summoning all her energy, she staggered to her feet... Many times she blacked out and collapsed over the next 50 metres or so, but she always picked herself up again. When she eventually reached the road, she lay right across it, holding up her hand to be seen... She'd done all she could to save herself. Now she needed a good Samaritan... AT SHARK Rock Pier, seven kilometres back along the road... a 20-year-old student, was celebrating with friends at a disco. This was the last night of their holiday. [The student] had needed the break to try to sort out what he wanted out of life. An animal lover, he had just finished his first year of a veterinary science course at the Pretoria Technical College. But he had dropped out, and now was not sure what he wanted to do. At about 2.30 a.m., he rounded up his friends. "Come on, guys," he told them. "We've got a long drive ahead..." The cheerful group piled into two cars and took the road south to the resort where they were staying... [The 20-year-old tried to get] some sleep... But ...he... was... jerked forward in the backseat as the car suddenly slowed to a stop. Up ahead, he saw his friends in the lead car pull to the side of the road. Then one of them ran back to [his] car. "There's someone on the road," [the friend shouted. The 20-year-old] leapt out and ran over to the figure stretched out in the headlights. He saw immediately that the woman was terribly injured. *She can't possibly be alive!* he thought. Then he took her wrist and felt a pulse. "Were you struck by a car?" he asked. She managed a slight shake of the head and [he] realised with horror that someone must have attacked her. Acting instinctively, he put his hand inside her neck to block the bleeding. "You're going to be all right," he told her. Then he urged a friend with a mobile phone to call an ambulance... *Last October, Alison and [her Samaritan] received awards from the Rotary Foundation, hers for courage, his for humanity. [The Samaritan], now determined to help injured people instead of animals, is studying nursing. Alison is suing the government for negligence for letting her attackers out on bail. She continues to live life to the full, despite battling to cope with huge medical and legal expenses.* - 1997

Crowds of South Africans enraged by the gang rape and murder of a 14-year-old girl have demolished the house where she was attacked and protested at a heavily guarded courthouse where two suspects appeared. In a country with one of the world's highest rates of murder and rape, Valencia Farmer has come to symbolise the victim as heroine... With 42 stab wounds and her throat slashed, Valencia crawled to the door of the house where she had been left for dead on Sunday, summoning help by waving her arm. Before dying in a hospital 20 hours later, she whispered the names of two of her assailants. Her killing was so brutal and her efforts to cling to life so remarkable that it pushed her neighbours to direct action, as so many others have done in a country where police seem incapable of providing protection... Vigilante groups... have sprung up across South Africa... Police are not immune to the growing crime wave. They are 10 times more likely to be killed than police in the U[S]. Amid the police impotence in fighting crime, the Government... announced on Tuesday it was creating a criminal investigation unit similar to the FBI... An Army spokesman said yesterday that the South African Defence Force was also preparing for a role in tackling the country's crime.

...South Africa has become a magnet for international criminals... Thousands of disgruntled men, pushed out of the apartheid security forces or the former liberation armies, are idle. Millions of citizens are poor and miserable. That stew provides potential criminal recruits, drug couriers and consumers. Throw in a modern banking system, good air connections to Asia, Europe and the Americas, a long, porous border... 138,000... underpaid, underfunded, under-trained and unmotivated... police... officers... and you have a gangster's paradise... During apartheid, South Africa was too isolated and authoritarian to suit international organised crime. But since the country became free in the years before [the first black President's] election in 1994, the... new criminal presence [has had] a dramatic effect... The signs are everywhere, from a flowering of escort services and massage parlours (often run by Russian mafia) to the sudden appearance of crack cocaine in black townships... [In related news,] *BBC Reports: On The Rio Beat on...* TV at 9.35pm, Thursday, tells of [the] Major... who... has to persuade policemen who have been brought up to believe their job is to protect the elite from the masses that the masses themselves are worthy of protection. And he has to persuade them that taking a cut from drug traffickers is not the way for city employees to supplement their income... Rio de Janeiro is, after Johannesburg, the most violent city in the world. On average seven civilians and two officers are killed every week.

...A Brazilian baby girl born 15 days ago survived one week on her own in a shack after her parents were murdered... "I thought she was dead too, but then I had the big surprise of seeing that little hand move," said an aunt.

RIO DE JANEIRO – A newborn baby boy abandoned by his 15-year-old mother was found alive after spending three days without food or shelter, police said... Doctors said... [t]he baby... was in good condition in intensive care.

...Thirty-two babies died during a 20-day period in a Brazilian hospital as a result of poor hygiene, officials said. The mother of a premature baby said she was told it was normal when she complained about finding an ant in an incubator.

...[the] Brazilian Health Ministry has confirmed that bacteria caused the deaths of 34 babies in the past 24 days at a state-run maternity hospital... "Our mistake was to trust the doctors and hospital director," said [a] father of triplets born on Thursday. Two have died and the other is in critical condition. "Doctors told us everything was fine, then the next thing I knew was that two had died," he said. "Doctors lied to us."

...Brazil's annual murder toll has nearly tripled... from 11,194 in 1979 to 32,350 in 1994. Urbanisation, drug trafficking and gangs [are blamed].

...a taxi driver] feared the worst when his daughter... went missing in Rio de Janeiro last week. He had given the lanky 14-year-old money to buy a hot dog from a store near their home but she did not return when night fell. The taxi driver feared she may have been kidnapped by two men in a car seen cruising where she had walked in the working-class neighbourhood. Instead he found her lying dead – the victim of a vampire style slaying – on the pavement just two blocks from their home. Her throat had been neatly cut and according to a youth worker... her body had been carefully drained of blood. “Nothing shocks me any more – these people will do anything,” she said. Andrea Oliveyra was a casualty of Brazil’s monstrous cities, where 52 girls aged between 9 and 12 have disappeared from the streets over the past four years. Typically they are seen getting into or being dragged into a car with two men... Even younger children – the children aged 4 or 5 who beg or sell useless pieces of plastic at the city’s traffic lights – are at risk from gangs specialising in adoption to order... While young girls fall victim to paedophile or pornography rings, boys are more likely to become casualties of drug wars in the favelas or slums. They are made up of ramshackle structures which tumble down the hillsides of Rio and Sao Paulo. Of an estimated 19 million who live in Sao Paulo, the biggest city in the southern hemisphere, up to four million live in the favelas or similar substandard housing. An even higher proportion of Rio’s 10 million live in shanty towns, where sanitation is poor or absent and heavily armed cocaine lords rule... The... boys... are often used as human shields by their adult employers during drug raids in the favelas... In July... an anonymous fax detail[ed] the death of an 8-year-old boy shot in the head by a military policeman during one raid on the Myneyra slum. Tens of thousands of cases of violence, including murder, lie uninvestigated. The country’s Brasilia-based Government human rights division acknowledges the shooting of children of the favelas still occurs in spite of the indictment of four policemen and an 89-year prison sentence for one officer involved in executions in the Rio slums. “It still happens but the important thing is that the Government is taking action,”... - 1996

The number of children murdered in Rio de Janeiro increased by more than 10% to 659 in 1996, says the juvenile court. A third of those killed were under 11... [Incidentally, e]nforcers for a private bus company shot dead five impoverished youths who hadn’t paid their 50c... bus tickets... [T]wo men... forced the... boys, aged between 15 and 17... off the bus. The men told the passengers not to look out of the window, then gunshots were heard. This kind of summary execution is typical of the “death squads” hired by local businesses to rid the city of juvenile delinquents... the leading investigator on the case said yesterday.

...Right-wing gunmen dragged seven passengers, including a local Communist party chief, from a bus, shot them and tossed the corpses into a nearby river in north-west Colombia yesterday, police said. The attack in a rural area near the town of Urrao, in trouble-torn Antioquia province, came on the same day that relatives buried 12 of the 13 peasants massacred by a right-wing death squad on Saturday in a hamlet less than 60km from Bogota... Colombia’s two leading newspapers reacted angrily to the upsurge in right-wing paramilitary attacks against civilians and accused the state of complicity... Despite the Government’s publicly stated commitment to combating political violence on the left and right, the Army is rarely involved in armed confrontation with paramilitary forces... Human rights groups have accused the [Army] of organising and funding illegal paramilitary forces to wage “scorched earth” offensives against the country’s Marxist rebels and their suspected sympathisers.

...[‘Colombia was the most dangerous nation for union members again last year, with 201 killed or missing – 90% of the worldwide total, and more than 30% higher than the 153 recorded in the previous year. While the Colombian Government denies responsibility, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions says most of the killings were “carried out by paramilitary groups which enjoy the tacit complicity of the security forces.”’]

...Colombia faced a new round of... terror yesterday after a group called The Extraditables said they kidnapped [the President’s] press secretary and a reporter... In brief remarks to reporters... the... presidential palace... said: “Whatever group it is, kidnapping isn’t the best way of making any sort of petition.” ...The Extraditables was the name of a private army formed by... [a] cartel drug lord... to wage a campaign of terror – including high-profile car bombings, assassinations and kidnappings – against extradition in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Seeking to end the violence, which took hundreds of lives, Colombia’s Constituent Assembly clamped a constitutional ban on extradition in 1991. Acting under intense pressure from Washington, Congress voted last week to lift the ban.

...Marxist rebels stormed into one of Colombia’s largest hydroelectric power stations yesterday and took at least 23 hostages. Army sources said... the hostage-takers were thought to be fighters of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, Latin America’s oldest and largest rebel army. The smaller Cuban-inspired National Liberation Army is also known to operate in the zone... of north-west Antioquia province... Colombia’s guerrilla forces regularly attack key oil facilities but rarely target hydroelectric power. About 80[%] of Colombia’s energy comes from hydroelectric plants. “We’re extremely worried because this is one of the most important power generating plants in the country. We don’t know exactly how the subversives gained entry,” said... [the] manager of the Empresas Publicas de Medellin public utility company. - 1997

Marxist rebels have stormed a hydroelectric plant in western Colombia and were holding up to 100 people in an operation to back the first day of a general strike. In all of Colombia’s main cities, demonstrators threw rocks at police wielding truncheons and firing tear gas in running battles that led to hundreds of arrests in the capital, Bogota, alone. At least 1.5 million union workers, joined by thousands of members of peasant and grass-roots social organisations, heeded the call for a nationwide strike to protest against Government austerity measures and free-market economic policies. The strike fast threatened to become the most serious labour stoppage since [‘hundreds of soldiers and riot police backed by light tanks had to patrol the town of Facatativa, 30km west of Bogota, after violent protests against public service price hikes’ in 1996]. It comes amid one of Colombia’s worst recessions, which has sent urban unemployment soaring to a record 20[%], the highest in Latin America. In Bogota, public transport came to a virtual standstill and most downtown shops and businesses remained closed. Protesters clashed repeatedly with riot police in working-class neighbourhoods in the south of the capital. Demonstrators blocked several major highways across Colombia, including a main route through the central coffee-growing region. In a nationally televised speech, [the President who]... took office a year ago... appealed to workers to call off the strike, which could complicate talks with the I[MF] over a \$US3 billion... loan agreement. Cabinet ministers have put the cost of the strike at \$US130 million a day. The economic woes have come against the backdrop of a surge in the long-running guerrilla war, in which 35,000 people have died in the past 10 years.

...[a] Kiwi tourist feared he was going to die when a crazed South American bandit put a gun to the back of his head and made him kneel at the roadside. “I thought he was going to shoot me... I actually smiled into the gravel so that would be the way I was found.” ...The[27-year-old] Auckland graphic artist was with a group of tourists travelling through Ecuador when the bandits highjacked their bus in the night. The armed thugs terrorised the travellers – robbing them of their clothes, cash and passports... [The Kiwi] suspects the robbers could be drug gangsters forced out of neighbouring Colombia by a crackdown on the narcotics trade... [Hi]s parents... were shocked to learn of their son’s ordeal. “We hear all these stories about Kiwis being killed overseas. It could have been us having to bring [our son’s body] back...,”...

A young N[Z] woman escaped being murdered by Honduran bandits by playing dead as she lay beside her dying... Israeli... boyfriend... She was... [robbed of] about \$US500... shot four times in the stomach and left for dead, but she managed to crawl through the jungle and reach help. Her [father]... a former N[Z] bowling champion, and his wife... fly to Honduras today... Her family face a hospital bill of over \$3000... [because their daughter], who has been travelling the world for about six years, had no travel insurance... The Honduran Government has expressed condolences... and... “profoundly laments” the incident... Honduras is reported to be in the grip of a crime wave with frequent robberies and kidnappings.

EVERY day the busy port at Guayaquil unloads about \$[US]22 million in imports, such a tempting target for tax evasion and other organised hustling, that the Ecuadorian government assumes it loses 30% of the \$4 million it should be collecting in revenue by day's end. Under the disgraced and short-lived administration of [the previous president] – “the most corrupt government in history”, [a]former presidential candidate... called it – the \$7.8 billion-a-year port became an enormous cash cow for corrupt officials... [An earlier president] – known as “El Loco” (the mad one) – and his sister were mayors of the coastal city... Importers were subject to a special 15% “party tax,” which was collected at the port by members of [the previous president]’s Roldosista Party of Ecuador... With [the previous president] chased from office... Ecuadorans are discussing the legacy of his six months as president... The chambers of commerce in Guayaquil have amassed folders detailing the corruption charges, including accounts from the private companies who ran inspections and were targets of the [previous] government within days of it taking office in August. What is not known is how much may have been siphoned from Ecuador’s real gold mine, the petroleum sector. Some estimate that the level of corruption known to have existed in customs was matched in the energy sector, which was run by a close friend of [the previous president]... Ecuadorans now fear what the promised investigation into the [previous] administration will uncover. [● ‘Ecuador and Peru have called off talks because of a hostage crisis, says Ecuador’s Deputy Foreign Minister. Peruvian and Ecuadorian officials planned to meet in Brazil’s capital to resume negotiations in a longstanding border dispute that led their countries to a jungle war in 1995. The peace talks are being monitored by the US, Chile, Argentina and Brazil. In Tokyo, Japan’s PM said it may be a long time before the hostages in the Japanese ambassador’s residence in Lima were released.’]

...Diplomats spoke optimistically yesterday about a peaceful end to Peru’s two-month-old hostage crisis after long-stalled talks restarted between the Government and Tupac Amaru rebels. [The] meeting between... the... rebel leader... and... the... Government[’s] negotiator... was seen as a significant step towards the release of the 72 men held hostage in the Japanese ambassador’s mansion... In Tokyo, [the]Japanese Prime Minister... told reporters he felt relief that communication has resumed after six weeks. Many of the captives are Japanese.

...Courage, unity, pride and perseverance were the keys to survival for the Lima hostages, according to the Japanese ambassador who was host of the December cocktail party at which they were seized. [The a]mbassador... said yesterday that he was ashamed that the guests at his elegant cocktail reception in honour of the Emperor’s birthday had been put through such a nightmare. “I... want to apologise to the Japanese Government, to the Peruvian Government and the Peruvian people...,” [he] said... only hours after Peruvian security forces ended the drama... When the explosions and gunfire first shook the elegant building in the leafy San Isidro neighbourhood yesterday, [the ambassador] said he was convinced he was going to die... “But moments later I realised that many people could survive this...” ...He suffered slight injuries to his legs and hips as he escaped the house. Although the guerrillas released most of their more than 500 hostages within weeks of the start of the siege, they held those they considered their best bargaining chips to pressure [the Peruvian] President... to release more than 450 jailed guerrillas... The marxist Tupac Amaru rebels say they plan to attack military and economic targets in revenge for the storming of the Lima residence.

...Crack Peruvian commandos timed their attack on the rebel-held Japanese ambassador’s residence to coincide with an indoor soccer game and took just 36 minutes to end Latin America’s longest hostage siege. In a “surgical” operation, they freed 72 hostages amid the chaos of explosions, gunfire and smoke. But it was always too much to expect that the siege would end without loss of life. By the end, one hostage – a Supreme Court judge – two soldiers and all 14 guerrillas died in the fierce battle that ended the four-month standoff... There were early suggestions from the rebels’ camp that some guerrillas were “executed” when prepared to give up peacefully after the raid began. But that was strongly rejected by Peruvian authorities.

...Peruvian commandos executed a rebel who had just surrendered in front of some of the country’s top judges, a top-ranked hostage says... Military sources said that at least three rebels were killed as they were surrendering or just afterwards. A teenage girl was shot to death despite yelling to give herself up, according to an intelligence agent who monitored the raid through listening devices... The commando units were under orders to take no prisoners, the sources said. Each rebel was given a final “coup de grace” shot to the forehead.

...Peru’s dramatic hostage rescue has dealt a devastating blow to the Tupac Amaru guerrillas, a fading rebel group whose attempt to resuscitate itself backfired disastrously, say Peruvian analysts. But they warned the Marxist Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement[, or]... MRTA, whose armed members are estimated to number fewer than 200... would not vanish... Even Peru’s triumphant President[, while]... basking in the victorious end to the toughest crisis of his career, was careful to avoid appearing over-confident. “It could be that it [terrorism] is not defeated,” he said, adding that the armed forces, which had tightened security and diplomatic sites around Lima, were prepared to counter any reprisal attacks.

...A triumphant Peruvian President... yesterday displayed a replica of the Japanese ambassador’s home used by commandos to train for their assault on marxist hostage-takers this year... It even included replica MRTA flags and banners and a network of five tunnels like those constructed by Peruvian miners and used by commandos to burst into the residence when the attack began 126 days... after [the] Cuban-inspired... rebels [‘dressed as waiters bearing champagne and hors d’oeuvres’] stormed the... ambassador’s home and seized hundreds of VIPs[, minus ‘the American ambassador who left just before the attack’]. The rescue... raid, whose pinpoint accuracy and timing were compared with Israel’s famous 1976 hostage rescue at Entebbe in Uganda, won worldwide acclaim for [the President] and his military... More than 30,000 people have died in guerrilla-related violence in Peru since 1980, and damage to the nation’s economy has been estimated at \$US25 billion...

The Peruvian military is hunting a Cuban woman suspected of planning attacks by rebels marking the first anniversary of the Tupac Amaru hostage siege in Lima... Peru’s guerrilla wars unleashed by Tupac Amaru and the larger Shining Path have cost 25,000 lives and \$US30 billion... in damage in the past 17 years.

...IN *The Autumn of the Patriarch*, [a]... novel about a seemingly immortal Latin American dictator, the fictional tyrant shelters deposed military rulers from other countries in a house by the sea. The gnarled general visits his disgraced cronies to “look at himself in the instructive mirror of their misery”. As the autumn of Chile’s real-life patriarch slips into winter, [the g]eneral... sees a former dictator in the mirror who has been neither deposed nor disgraced [– even though ‘new Reconciliation and Compensation Corporation figures, which were being presented to the Government yesterday, took the number of victims of political repression under the general’s rule to 3197, of whom 2095 died and 1102 disappeared (most were left-wing opponents of the general and many were killed and tortured by the regime’s security services’)]. His recent 82nd birthday marked a landmark moment in Chile’s political evolution. It was his last as army commander-in-chief, a post he retained in 1990 after ending 17 years as a dictator to make way for an elected president. - 1997

*The arrest of [a] former Chilean President... in Britain has highlighted diplomatic immunity... Immunity given to accredited foreign representatives, in line with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, is written into [NZ] law, which means protection from all criminal prosecutions, including murder. But in reality – and it is hard to find any international precedents – the diplomat is unlikely to escape completely. The Government of the country employing the person accused of such wrong-doing would come under great pressure, including potential trade and other sanctions, to waive immunity. If not, the diplomatic agent is almost certain to be recalled, sacked or face other penalties – possibly even criminal charges – at home. N[Z] would also invoke a convention clause declaring the accused representative *persona non grata*, forcing the foreign Government to call the envoy back or dismiss him or her. Drink-driving and the occasional sex scandal have sporadically led to immunity being claimed by diplomats in N[Z], but in most cases it has resulted in their recall, rather than their countries’ waiving immunity... The Colombian Government last year ended the posting of its Wellington ambassador who was at the centre of two indecent assault complaints... [I]n several drink-driving cases, even though the countries concerned refused to waive immunity, the diplomats involved felt morally obliged to pay a court-*

equivalent penalty, which was given to a local charity... There has been nothing on the scale of the London arrest of [the] former Chilean President... on an international Spanish warrant for crimes against humanity. Chile argues that [the g]eneral... a senator for life, was travelling on a diplomatic passport and therefore had immunity from prosecution. The British say the former dictator's passport does not convey immunity, nor is his visit to a London clinic for surgery an official visit covered by immunity. N[Z]'s Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade said that, as a rule, visiting politicians were not protected. That would be the case only if the Minister... granted immunity in a gazetted notice to specific representatives – as for... [the] Apec summit in Auckland. The Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Auckland in 1995 saw... [f]ull immunity... given to 500 delegates, with 400 support staff given lower-level immunity covering offences committed while carrying out conference duties. That same year, confusion about the diplomatic immunity of the Indonesian Minister of Tourism... meant he left the country before police had a chance to talk to him about allegations of sexual assault on a male hotel employee. [The Indonesian] did not have immunity while attending the Auckland tourism conference where the alleged assault took place.

...[the f]ormer Chilean dictator... was to be told early today, his 83rd birthday, whether he enjoys immunity from arrest or faces extradition to Spain on charges of murder, torture and genocide. The House of Lords, the highest court in Britain, was to rule... this morning (NZ time) on an appeal against a High Court decision that [the general]'s arrest in a London hospital last month at the request of a Spanish judge was wrong because the charges he faces took place while he was head of state. As the countdown to the ruling entered its final hours... [m]ore than 100... Chilean exiles gathered... in a central London church... to demand that the former head of state be forced to face the murder charges... On the walls, they hung pictures of some of the victims of [the general]'s 17-year regime... Some of the victims were Spanish citizens and this is the reason the Spanish judiciary is dealing with the case... "The ruling is extremely important not only for Chile but for all of humanity," [the]... president of the main victims' group in Chile, told Reuters... [The g]eneral... was arrested... while he was recovering from surgery to his back. He has since been moved to a secluded clinic in the suburbs. Lawyers for the Spanish authorities have pressed ahead with the extradition process in case the Law Lords ruled in their favour. A lawyer representing the Spanish Government has said the general is "fit to be discharged" from hospital. Three Chilean senators who visited [the g]eneral... last weekend said he was confident he would not face extradition... Chile itself, deeply divided by feelings for the former head of state, was to have live television coverage of the decision. The British Government, keen to minimise the embarrassment of having a former head of state in detention, has been at pains to stress that [the general]'s extradition is a matter for the courts and not the Government.

...Chile is wooing "friendly countries" to lobby Britain to release[its] ex-dictator... and block a bid to extradite him to Spain... The US Government, in its most weighty comment yet on the... case, said Chile's opposition to a trial in Spain deserved "respect." The US is eyeing lucrative defence contracts in Chile, not least a possible \$US600 million... deal to renovate Chile's ageing jet fighter fleet.

...BRITAIN has closed its consulate in Chile's second largest city and cancelled a British warship visit as tensions rise over London's arrest of [Chile's] ex-dictator... The British Embassy in Chile announced the moves yesterday, citing the strained political and diplomatic climate between the two countries during [the general]'s legal battles to avoid extradition to Spain... [The general]'s arrest, which enraged Chilean rightists and the military, has cost military orders for London. Chile is the second biggest Latin American buyer of British defence goods after Brazil. Chile's navy has been contemplating buying six second-hand British frigates for \$285.8 million. To show their anger... navy commanders cancelled trips to Britain and Spain. The air force also cancelled a trip to Britain.

...Following the decision by the Law Lords... that [the g]eneral... is not immune from prosecution, [the]... Chilean Foreign Minister... has been sent to London and Madrid to try to stop the former dictator's extradition to Spain. His entreaties may be varied but are unlikely to include the word that [the g]eneral... added to the dictionary of horror. Los desaparecidos – the disappeared – still haunt the surviving victims... [T]here were about 3000 murders after th[e] day in 1973 when [the g]eneral... with brutal force brought to an end the democratically elected Salvador Allende's chaotic 3-year dash to socialism... The world watched it start on television. British-made Hawker Hunters bombed the presidential palace. Inside President Allende died. It was said he took his own life; others believe he was murdered. Thousands were herded at gunpoint into the National Stadium in Santiago and detained for weeks. Hooded informers identified "subversives." In cubicles people were tortured and murdered. Firing squads executed hundreds... Others were buried in mine shafts, in unmarked graves, in places still to be found... Tens of thousands of other Chileans fled into exile... [However, the general]'s influence did not stop at the Chilean border. Exiles were tracked down to foreign capitals and assassinated. His feared secret police, the Dina, struck in Washington on September 1976 when Orlando Letelier, former Chilean Chancellor under President Allende, and Ronni Karpen Moffitt, a U[S] citizen, were killed by a bomb planted in their car.

...A Chilean Government report says... some 125 Government critics... were... killed abroad, mostly in neighbouring Argentina... during [the general]'s 17-year rule... Meanwhile, many remain sceptical about Chilean claims that the former... dictator might be tried at home if Britain frees him. "He would rather kill himself or be killed by his guards than face the humiliation and indignity of being sent to face trial...," [the general]'s nephew... told the *Mirror*... Fourteen lawsuits brought by families of those who disappeared or were tortured during [the general]'s reign are pending in Chile.

...Today, almost 100 widows and relatives of Chilean policemen and soldiers killed in Chile in 1973 will deliver a petition to... the... British P[M]... The petition, signed by 200,000 Chileans, "asks the British Government to help protect the process of peace and reconciliation in Chile" by freeing [the general. A] Chilean member of Parliament... who helped to organise the widows' visit, said: "Every man, woman and child in Chile today wants to forgive the past and protect our democracy."

...Chile has stepped up its campaign to have [the general] returned home, suspending all official visits with Britain and Spain... and asking airlines to halt flights from Chile to the British-held Falkland (Malvinas) Islands... [In another development, the f]ormer Chilean dictator... has... described [the British P]M... as untrustworthy. Speaking to the *Sunday Mirror*, [the general]... said he was the victim of "treason" and had been invited to Britain by the Government. "Now I know all the time they were plotting behind my back to arrest me in an illegal action under international law... They have kidnapped me and are holding me illegally against my will." On Friday, the general was forced to appear at a London magistrate's court – the first step in extradition proceedings...

Chile[']s former] dictator... is resigned to dying in Britain during interminable legal arguments over whether he can be extradited to Spain... the *Sunday Telegraph* newspaper reported. Seven of Britain's most senior judges will today begin rehearing [the general]'s claim that he is immune outside Chile from prosecution on charges of murder, torture and kidnap. If they rule in his favour, a quick return to Chile looks likely. But if they rule against him, a flurry of appeals will undoubtedly follow and the 83-year-old could find himself an unwilling guest in Britain for many months to come... He is now renting a luxurious mansion for around £10,000... a month. Five judges of Britain's House of Lords ruled by three to two in November that [the general] had no immunity as a former head of state. But that decision was set aside in December after [the general]'s lawyers protested that one member of the panel... had failed to declare his connections with human rights group Amnesty International.

...A newly declassified cable has revealed that[a former US] Secretary of State... deliberately covered up atrocities in Chile and gave American support to the [general's] regime... It is among files being declassified for the Spanish prosecutor... The *Observer* newspaper reported that [the secretary assured the general that the 38th US] Administration would not punish him for violations of human rights. Instead, [the secretary] told the dictator he was a victim of communist propaganda and should not pay too much attention to US critics... "In the U[S], as you know, we are sympathetic with what you are trying to do...," said [the secretary's]... cable... "I think that the previous Government was headed towards

communism. We wish your Government well.” ...[the secretary]’s complicity in the... coup which overthrew the democratically elected President... in 1973 has always been widely suspected.

...[the] Pope... has urged Britain to block [the] former Chilean dictator[’s] extradition to Spain. The *Daily Telegraph* said the Pope has appealed in a letter to the British Government for leniency for humanitarian reasons and in the interests of national reconciliation in Chile. But he also backed the argument that [the general] should be immune from prosecution as a former head of state. The newspaper said it understood that similar representations had been made to the Spanish authorities on [the general]’s behalf.

...[the] British Home Secretary... [has] decided to allow extradition proceedings to go ahead against... [the f]ormer Chilean dictator... The decision was welcomed by human rights groups but disappointed the general’s supporters, who had hoped a dramatic reduction of Spain’s case by Britain’s top court would have allowed [the general] to go free... Britain’s Law Lords... ruled on March 24 that [the general] could face extradition proceedings only on charges of torture carried out after 1988, when Britain incorporated the UN Torture Convention into law.

...[the f]ormer Chilean dictator[’s]... chances of winning freedom grew yesterday as time and arguments began running out for opponents trying to stop him escaping a torture trial. Many lawyers believed the 15-month legal-battle over whether the 84-year-old general should be extradited to Spain was probably finished following Britain’s announcement that doctors had ruled him unfit to stand trial... Britain said it was giving Spain, Chile and other interested parties seven days to lodge representations against the doctors’ ruling before making a final decision on his fate.

...Britain has decided not to ask [the] former Chilean dictator... to undergo a second medical examination, signalling that it was ready to set him free, says the *Daily Telegraph*. The Home Office declined comment on the report, saying [the] Home Secretary... was still studying representations from Spain, Belgium, France and Switzerland... The four European countries say they disagree with a medical report drawn up by a panel of independent British doctors which found that the 84-year-old general was... brain-damaged and... unfit to stand trial.

...[the general] has duped British doctors. That’s the claim by opponents of the former Chilean dictator, who left Britain on Friday after 16 months of house arrest. Televised pictures of [the general] showed him anything but frail, walking briskly but with a cane across the tarmac after arriving in Chile. This was in stark contrast to the general’s last appearance when he arrived at a London hospital, too frail to leave his wheelchair.

...Britain faces costs of millions of dollars and bruising political, diplomatic and legal fallouts after 16 months of wrangling over whether [the general] should face a torture trial. British newspapers splashed reports that taxpayers would have to foot a bill of about £15 million... for legal costs and the around-the-clock police guard during his house arrest near London... [Britain]’s Labour Government insisted after freeing the 84-year-old general on Thursday that it had all been worthwhile as a signal to others accused of crimes against humanity that Britain was not a safe haven. But the opposition... seized on the high costs to accuse [the British PM] of wasting public money... The... Conservative leader[’s]... verdict was that it had been a “story of moral posturing, gross incompetence and international humiliation.” ...The decision to free [the general] sparked celebrations among his allies in Chile but the general’s opponents in Santiago vowed to continue their fight to have him tried... “We are going to demand justice. We do not want impunity. He is going to be put on trial in Chile...”... said... [the] president of the protest group Families of the Detained-Disappeared... A Chilean judge is probing 59 civil lawsuits alleging human rights abuses against [the general] in Chile and human rights lawyers hope the cases evolve into concrete charges.

...[the general]’s return to Chile has underlined the divisions between those who see him as a tyrant who had leftist opponents tortured and killed and those who see him as a saviour who halted a likely slide into communism... The retired general returned to a hero’s welcome from supporters... [while a]bout 1500 human rights activists demonstrated in front of the Moneda, the presidential palace [the general] bombed in his 1973 coup to oust socialist president Salvador Allende. They unravelled banners of victims of the rightist dictatorship and plan... a larger march on Santiago’s main boulevard. Chile’s government, a centre-left alliance which took over when [the general] handed the country back to democracy in 1990, condemned the... celebrations. [The current] President... who hands over the country to [a] socialist... in eight days, slipped out of Santiago... before [the general]’s arrival... to inaugurate a dam in northern Chile...

As in the rest of South America, the divide between rich and poor was huge when Allende was elected in 1971. His reforms included nationalisation of the copper mines, Chile’s most important generator of foreign currency at the time. American interests owned most of the mines and the U[S] Government set out on a deliberate destabilisation campaign of the Chilean economy. The U[S] stopped buying copper from Chile, blocked shipments of spare parts for the mining industry and began working actively to promote a military coup. Newly declassified CIA documents show that they played a pivotal role in coup preparations. The Chilean economy suffered enormously. Rationing was introduced. People were complaining. The day after the coup the shops were full. People could buy bread, meat, soap, tea. The army had stockpiled goods in their barracks for months before the coup. In 1988, the people voted “no” to [the dictator] and “yes” to democracy. [The dictator] wrote the new constitution, giving himself a permanent seat in the Senate and providing the armed forces with immunity for anything that had happened during military rule... A significant minority of Chileans... [still] revere the general for his] military coup in 1973, which they believe laid the foundation for a massive increase in prosperity.

The region of 500 million[people] stretching from the Rio Grande to Tierra de Fuego, prone to boom and bust, is now quietly consolidating on the sometimes painful and still delicate economic reforms of the last five years... Chile, where... tough economic reforms were imposed under 16 years of military rule, has during the past decade mainly prospered by opening its economy, cutting state spending and encouraging a high rate of domestic savings. Partly because of Chile’s success and the rise of a new breed of U[S]-trained economists, an economic and political sea of change across the rest of Latin America... has resulted... In Brazil, a graveyard for failed stabilisation plans, recovery is based on Plano Real, introduced in July 1994... A privatisation programme is in full swing... Foreign reserves have in the past six years leapt from \$10 billion to nearly \$100 billion... Growth is, however, predicted to fall from 4.5[%] last year to 2.5[%] this year and, in accord with Latin American tradition, the recovery of this decade is precarious. Public debt has rocketed from \$65 billion in 1990 to \$170 billion, strong sectional interests, including some of the 600 multinational companies in Brazil stymie reform, privatisation costs jobs and the country continues to be blighted by appalling disparity of income and a poor education system. Corruption in 1994 cost the public sector nearly \$50 billion, although it is slowly declining as the public sector shrinks and tax break-encouraged newspapers expose some of the worst cases. Argentina... was in 1960 among the dozen richest[nations] in the world but slipped back to 34th place in the economic chaos that followed the ousting of Argentina’s military rulers in 1983... [It], too, has... implemented profound economic reform and thrown itself open to the world trading community... But it has faltered after several years of Asian-style growth [ended with]... the Mexican crisis in 1994. A badly handled devaluation resulted in a run on the Mexican currency which spread throughout Latin America in the “tequila effect” and resulted in sudden capital flight of \$10 billion from Argentina. In spite of a privatisation binge in which around 150 enterprises – worth one-third of the total value of the economy – have been sold, the Government is still having to hike taxes to fund this year’s estimated \$9.3 billion internal deficit. Unemployment in Buenos Aires has tipped 17[%] of the workforce... And on top of 100,000 state servants who have already lost their jobs since 1990 another 45,000 will go in the next three years... while the country’s biggest-ever general strike last month showed how rich and poor continue to suffer...

Argentine police yesterday fired tear gas and rubber bullets at stone-throwing protesters in... Cordoba, where state workers demonstrated over unpaid salaries and privatisation plans... [A]t least four police officers and four demonstrators were hurt... [S]peaking in Brazil on a business trip... Cordoba’s Radical Party provincial governor... condemned the violence which he said “will not resolve our social or economic problems.” - 1996

[Yesterday the American] President... launched the last leg of his South American tour to promote... plans for freer trade between North and South America and urged nations not to be tempted to follow protectionist policies... but Argentina complained the United States had erected its own trade barriers... [The] Argentine Industry and Trade Secretary... cited as examples quotas for Argentine beef sales to the United States and high tariffs on citrus fruit imports... He... told a news conference US investments account for 34[%] of “new investments” under way or under study for 1997-2000. But he complained that the relation between imports and exports was worse for Argentina with the United States than with any other trading partner. Last year, the United States accounted for one fifth of all imports into Argentina but bought only 8[%] of Argentine exports... [The secretary also pointed out that earnings] overseas account for roughly 25[%] of the United States’ GDP. This is where the hidden strength of US corporate earnings has been... [Similarly critical were t]he Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, the human rights group of relatives of victims of Argentina’s “Dirty War” of the 1970s[(when political opponents were disposed of by various methods, including via so-called ‘death flights – that flew prisoners out to sea before they were pushed out of the aircraft minus parachutes’), which] said it was “ashamed” at [the US President’s visit] because he represented a power that oppressed the [Last World.

...the US President’s] visit to Argentina was met with violent protest yesterday when an anti-U[S] rally was hijacked by a small group of rioters throwing molotov cocktails and smashing up banks... [The riot came as the President] sought to calm regional fears that Washington’s decision to lift a two-decade ban on high-technology arms sales to Latin America could spark a local arms race. “There is nothing here designed to upset the military balance in South America,” he said... The largely symbolic decision, which could still be derailed by the Congress, would allow Argentina... access to surplus US military equipment like trucks, jeeps, boots and uniforms, but not advanced fighter planes.

...We should indeed “cry for Argentina,” in fact for all of Latin America, when the news... announce[s that the US] Administration has decided to remove long-standing restrictions on selling high-tech weapons to South American countries. Just at the moment that South America, after years of slithering and sliding, has finally got itself out of the mud of economic malaise, its spendthrift generals supposedly relegated to the outer fringes of decision making, this change in American policy could throw the balance of power between civilian and military in exactly the wrong direction. The last thing the generals need to be tempted by are expensive items of once forbidden fruit... The last time western arms salesmen were regularly satisfying every whim of South American generals... Argentina... picked a quite unnecessary fight with Britain over ownership of the off-shore Falkland/Malvinas Islands. Never mind that it was, as one astute observer of the time noted, “two bald men fighting over a comb,” it was a high-tech war, only surpassed, quite a few years later, by the Gulf War... [The Falklands] was a futile war that won Argentina nothing but shame. Its only virtue was to totally discredit Argentina’s military junta whose bloated military budget was out of proportion to other Government spending, way out of line with the country’s economic resources and one of the major contributors to rapid inflation and Government mismanagement that had been Argentina’s lot since the days of Juan and Evita Peron... The Latin American world has changed beyond all recognition the last few years. Military regimes have fallen by the wayside, although in Peru, Colombia and Chile they still wield a disproportionate influence and hold on to a dangerous degree of autonomy. Democracy is now widespread, if in many cases the institutions of government remain imperfectly formed. Economic self-discipline, after years of painful adjustment, is today producing dividends that offer the continent the chance of doing what it had long promised itself, of being as successful as east Asia. (Chile already is and it shouldn’t be forgotten that until a decade ago Brazil held number one spot as the fastest growing economy of the century, even ahead of Taiwan.) One important sign – both facilitator and consequence – of the maturing of Latin America has been the fall in military budgets. South Americans this century have more talked about war than actually practised it – Brazil, its largest country, hasn’t been to war since 1870. Now... even the need to posture is being shelved. Thus, one assumes, [the US] President must have very good reasons, outside the need to make money for the American arms industry, to upset this apple-cart. But what are they? The guerrilla insurgencies that during the Cold War provided a national security rationale for a military dominance have in the majority of cases ended. One kidnapping in Peru by a marginal group does not a mighty insurrection make. The rapid dismantling of tariff barriers and the pace of economic growth is making “hard” political boundaries rather “soft.” So why then should South America be hungry for new arms? ...[the US President] needs to ask himself on which side in the struggle between civilian sobriety and military profligacy is he actually on?

...US soldiers, supposed to be doing infrastructure and humanitarian work in Haiti, were on the streets... of the Haitian capital yesterday... with UN peacekeepers and Haitian National Police... as student demonstrations flared into a second day of general rioting... Five people were seriously injured in the previous day’s riots. Overnight, a police officer was shot six times and killed. A police employee also died, although it was not known if [the second death] could be attributed to the general rioting. The rioting was triggered late last week by student protests that began after teachers went on strike, closing schools just before final exams, because they have not been paid for 14 months... [Speaking of riots, 29 prisoners have been] hacked and stabbed to death at a remote Venezuelan maximum-security jail in a savage battle for power between rival gangs... The r[iot] followed fierce rivalry between local prisoners and a group moved from the La Sabaneta jail in western Venezuela, far from their families, as a punishment. All of the dead were from La Sabaneta... Officials said about 50 of the... El Dorado... jail’s 380 inmates took part in the fight... and order was restored by about 20 National Guardsmen... No journalists were allowed to enter the prison as authorities moved to avoid the publication of gory images from another violent episode in a Venezuelan prison. Incidents are common in the country’s overcrowded and decaying prisons, viewed as among the worst in South America by human rights groups. Drugs and guns are easily smuggled in, often by prison guards for a fee... An average of four prisoners were killed and 20 injured each week in the country’s 33 jails last year. Painfully slow legal processes mean that fewer than one in four of the 24,000 prisoners in Venezuela has been convicted.

...A gang fight in a remote Venezuelan jail in which 29 inmates were hacked to death could not have been prevented and could happen again, say prison officials and human rights groups. Seeking revenge for the murder of one of their leaders, a gang of dangerous criminals in the crumbling jungle prison broke out of their cells on Friday and launched a bloody raid on rival inmates transferred from a different prison... The killings were the worst in Venezuela’s overcrowded and decaying prisons since more than 100 inmates were hacked and burned to death at Maracaibo’s La Sabaneta prison in 1994. - 1997

The charred bodies of 30 prisoners were removed from a tense Venezuelan jail yesterday after a fire apparently caused by tear-gas canisters fired by guards, prison officers said... It was feared the death toll could be as high as 40... A photographer who entered the cramped and blackened area counted more than 20 bodies, many of them burned beyond recognition. Several prisoners had tried to escape the flames by hiding under beds. Others were fused together, clinging to one another as they died. Prison inmates insisted that the guards started the fire without cause and the Defence Minister... said he had ordered the arrest of six guards involved in the incident... [Incidentally, the] winner of Nicaragua’s presidential election will face the monumental task of rebuilding the economy of one of Latin America’s poorest countries, where more than half the population lacks a job... A U[N] study labelled Nicaragua the most underdeveloped country in Latin America after Haiti... Nicaragua was once known as the “breadbasket of Latin America” for its abundant farmland but it has fallen on hard times after a bloody left-right civil war in the 1980s, a U[S] blockade and a failed socialist economic policy... [As a consequence of these and other factors, ‘the standard of living has plummeted during the past six years.’ A recent] poll showed 77% of Nicaraguans think poverty is the most important... election issue – who can create the jobs to put food on the table of Nicaragua’s poor... Children crowd Managua’s street corners begging for change, crime and prostitution are soaring and the suicide rate is up 20% compared with 1995, police statistics show... The buying power of salaries has fallen 60[%] since 1990... Wages are miserable for those

Nicaraguans who have jobs. A doctor in a state hospital makes about \$142 a month, a nurse \$70 to \$80 a month and prostitutes get as little as \$7 a trick.

...With his presidential election win in the bag... jubilant businessmen rushed to congratulate the burly former Managua mayor, trading soared on Nicaragua's tiny stock market and prominent bankers danced at his Liberal Alliance headquarters... [The new President] has promised to make Nicaragua Central America's bread basket once again through a free-market economic policy that emphasises agriculture... and attracting foreign investment... But the business community's joy that [his main opponent], who headed Nicaragua's 1979-1990 Marxist Government, will not come back to power may be short-lived as the reality of Nicaragua's deep economic problems sink in... Nicaragua carries one of the heaviest debt burdens in relation to the size of its economy, totalling more the \$US10 billion, five times its entire gdp], according to Central Bank figures... 75[%] of the population has unsatisfied basic needs, per capita annual income is \$US454...

[*When Nicaraguan guerrilla leader General Augusto Cesar Sandino was tricked into a fatal ambush by dictator Anastasio Somoza's troops on February 21, 1934, a legend was born. Sandino is regarded as a founder of guerrilla warfare in Latin America as he and his army attacked first the invading US Marines and then the first of three Somoza family dictators in the 1920s and 1930s. The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) took his name when it was founded in 1961 and, on July 19, 1979, it finally toppled the third Somoza dictator, marching triumphantly into Managua. The Sandinistas ruled for 10 years with Soviet and Cuban support, fighting off the Contra rebel army that was funded and trained by the US until the Sandinistas were themselves defeated in a 1990 election. In a rare interview to mark the anniversary of the revolution that took his name, Sandino's daughter recalled how her famous name posed a threat to her life. She was only a baby when her father was killed on Somoza's orders – Sandino believed he was about to sign a peace accord. Fearing that the little girl would be killed by Somoza, two uncles spirited her away to the mountains north of Nicaragua. "The Guardia were sent to kill me when I was eight months old," she said. "They thought I was a boy, you see." Under direct orders from Somoza, the National Guard killed the surviving members of Sandino's family, her paternal uncles and cousins. In 1961, she left for Cuba, a haven for guerrillas and refugees from right-wing purges in Latin America. There she remained for the next 18 years, bringing up her three sons and working as a telegraphist while hoping that the Somoza dynasty would one day come to an end. As the FSLN gained strength in the next decade, she was courted by its leader, Carlos Fonseca, who was aware of the powerful symbol General Sandino's only heir could bring to the movement. The two met in Honduras but she declined an open role in the insurgency. Fonseca was killed in 1976 at the age of 40 and remains another of the revolutionary icons in Nicaragua, with an eternal flame in his memory in the Revolution Plaza where the Sandinistas will celebrate on July 19. She regards the current Sandinista leadership as far removed from the roots of the Sandinista movement. But she is unequivocal about her reaction to the overthrow of Somoza by the Sandinistas. "The 19th of July, 1979, was the happiest day of my life."*]

...Gangs rule streets now the war is over... [L]ike the capital cities of its violent... neighbours, the streets of Managua are no longer safe. Nicaragua's crime rate has soared 11.4% this year over 1995 and the number of crimes committed in Managua has doubled since 1989, according to police statistics. A crime is committed every 10 seconds in Nicaragua, population 4.2 million. One of the main reasons for the growing crime rate is a boom in youth-gang activity... Managua[']s Police Chief... said. "They've increased at a frightening rate. One year ago there were 12 such groups, now we have 66 groups on record,"... Groups such as the Salineros, the Corpse-eaters, the Medicine Men, the Russians, the Gandys, the Skinheads and the Minibrakers have graduated from petty theft to murder, armed robbery, rape, extortion and drug use... Managuans grew accustomed to political violence after a bloody eight-year civil war between US-backed Contra rebels and the left-wing Sandinista government in the 1980s left at least 30,000 dead. But until recently Nicaragua had been spared the common crime and gang violence that plagued other Latin American capitals. The civil war, military conscription and Sandinista Party control of the [suburb]s kept young people off the streets... But in the 1990s, the civil war ended and military conscription was abolished, creating a tinderbox of idle young people waiting to explode. Thousands of youths trained for war returned to their homes only to find unemployment and poverty... According to government statistics, 55% of Nicaraguans between the ages of 14 and 24 do not work or go to school. Another factor was the return of deported gang members from the U[S], a problem that has also haunted El Salvador.

...[16 'years ago this week, three American nuns and a religious volunteer were murdered in El Salvador. In 1980, the country was a Cold War battleground and by the closing months of that year, no one was immune from the slaughter. Not even Americans. Five common soldiers were eventually convicted of the murders, but the families of Ita Ford, Maura Clarke, Dorothy Kazel and Jean Donovan always suspected that the killing was ordered by higher-ranking officers. A lawyer of the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights in New York says successive US Administrations "pursued every lead except the leads that went up the chain of command." No officer with authority over the convicted soldiers was ever interrogated by Salvadorean prosecutors, or American investigators. Last March, the lawyer and a colleague interviewed four of the five convicted killers then in prison. Only the squad leader refused to talk. The other four said their sergeant had told them he was acting on higher authority when he ordered them to kill the nuns. Then the lawyers discovered two key Salvadorean generals now living in Florida. In 1980, one was commander of the Guardia Nacional, El Salvador's rural police force. All five of the convicted soldiers served under him, as did the officers who directed the initial coverup of the crime – a coverup documented in US Embassy cables. The commander has denied any responsibility whatsoever for the crime or attempts to conceal it. The other Florida exile was El Salvador's Defence Minister when the nuns were killed. He, too, has denied any responsibility. But he told the lawyers something he had once said to the US Ambassador: "When it became clear that the women had been murdered I thought immediately of the commander's first cousin." The cousin was the regional commander of the Zacatecoluca garrison, with jurisdiction over the Guardia at the international airport. Last month, the cousin met the American lawyers. He said the sergeant and his men did not report to him. There was, he said, a "Special Defence Command" in charge of the international airport. The lawyers were not convinced. The sergeant had set up a roadblock on the airport road. Eight of his men held up traffic and let only the nuns' minibus pass. The sergeant and his squad, wearing civilian clothes, then intercepted the nuns. If the cousin is telling the truth, then in a small command in rural El Salvador a lowly sergeant must have been able to deploy 14 men, disrupt traffic out of the airport, target, kidnap, rape and murder four American women, and leave behind their unburied bodies and the burned-out vehicle – all with nobody the wiser at HQ. In 1984, the sergeant and his men were convicted. At that point, US and Salvadorean officials might have started a more intense effort to discover any involvement by higher-ranking officers. For example, about an hour after the abduction, the sergeant had made at least one and possibly more phone calls from a little Guardia outpost. Who did the sergeant phone? The families' search for justice continues.']*]

...A grave containing the bodies of up to 300 Guatemalans killed in the early eighties has been found in the central Guatemalan department of Chimaltenango... Forensic doctors disinterred 25 bodies on Thursday from the grave near San Martin Jilotepeque, a 90-minute drive north-west of the capital... [T]he prosecutor... said bodies in the grave... [had] their hands tied, and... also showed signs of possible gunshot wounds. Human rights groups say thousands of Guatemalans, mostly indigenous peasants, were killed during the Army's counter-insurgency sweeps... at the height of the nation's 36-year civil war. More than 100,000 Guatemalans were killed during the war and... a further 40,000 disappeared. - 1996

SIXTEEN people were formerly charged yesterday in connection with the massacre of... 21 women, nine men, 14 children and an infant... in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas... [The] Attorney-General... said earlier in the week the conflict was solely between feuding indigenous villagers, but local accounts disagreed... Witnesses have claimed last week's massacre... which also left 25 people wounded... was carried out by paramilitary sympathisers... of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI)... Government-supported paramilitaries have waged a campaign of violence against people suspected of sympathising with the Zapatistas... The Zapatistas rose up on New Year's day, 1994, to demand better living conditions

for the state's impoverished Maya majority, and to fight for democratic reform. Talks with the government broke off in September 1996... [The] leader of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN), said the government had used negotiations and peace talks as a ploy while it trained villagers to fight the rebels... "This is the logic of a low-intensity war, with the army and the government against the indigenous people," said [the] co-ordinator of the... Centre for Human Rights in... Chiapas... [Supporting their comments is the fact that the] Mexican press reported... [a] Roman Catholic priest... [had called the Chiapas governor's office] with warnings as the carnage unfolded... [The governor] told reporters his office alerted police... after the first call and received assurances nothing was wrong. The slaughter, carried out with... AK-47 rifles normally supplied only to the army... went on for five hours... [In response to the press reports, the governor] said he would not step down, adding it was time to work towards reconciliation... Last week's massacre was Mexico's worst loss of life in a single act of violence since at least 140 people died in the 1994 uprising... The Mexican government yesterday defended its policies in Chiapas... [after p]rotesters held a vigil at the Angel of Independence monument in Mexico City, chanting "Killer government massacres peasants." ...[the] Interior Minister... said: "The (federal) government has taken measures toward disarming these paramilitaries and stopping conflicts in the state." ...[the deputy] chief public prosecutor... said the... [16 suspects] could face up to 80 years in prison... [A]nother 23 people were being held but no charges had been brought against them. Those held include members... of the PRI... In addition, two minors were being held in juvenile detention...

[15] heavily armed men attacked a prison on the remote border of southern Mexico yesterday, freeing 32 of the 106 prisoners. Most of the freed inmates were in jail for crimes such as murder and kidnapping.

...[hundreds of Mexican children and infants have disappeared without a trace, and the number of stolen children is on the rise. Babies are sold for adoption, some children are kidnapped to smuggle drugs across the US border and others are used for pornography, sexual abuse, or for begging and selling on the streets (there are mafias of child robbers that force younger children to beg, and even cases of youngsters being mutilated to provoke pity so they can fetch more money'). By the way, f]ive days after Hurricane Pauline whipped through the Mexican resort of Acapulco, rich tourists jet-ski... around the bay while poor residents scramble... for food and water. Wealthy visitors were soaking up the sun yesterday at the luxury high-rise hotels facing the bay, practising aerobics in freshly scrubbed swimming pools and sipping frosted margaritas. A few blocks away... from the hotel towers, which block the view of the bay for many local residents, Pauline's destruction was all too visible. Entire neighbourhoods were still covered with mud and debris, only a handful of homes had clean drinking water and the thousands of homeless people... were mourning their scores of dead, salvaging what little they could from their ruined homes... [and complaining] that they were getting little help... [while, o]n the beachfront... avenue, crews of streetsweepers and army troops were scooping up the remaining mud that had invaded the tree-lined street from the slum-filled mountains above... As the hotel guests enjoyed lavish buffets, the poor... [grabbed] rotten muddy food thrown into the street by crews clearing up the wrecked central market. "It's always the same here. The rich get taken care of first and the poor are always last," said... a 32-year-old... who lost his home... Like other locals, he... recognised the importance of cleaning up the beach-front to keep tourists happy – and badly needed dollars coming in. "But if we all starve or die of disease, who will work for the tourists?" he asked... The Government's death toll from the storm has risen to 173 dead and more than 200 missing... [In addition, t]hree cases of cholera were diagnosed yesterday... [Teams] of Government health workers[have] set up makeshift vaccine centres across the city and in smaller villages to prevent the possible spread of typhoid fever, hepatitis and cholera, which thrive in the tropics... In the hotels themselves, life was back to normal except for a warning to tourists to limit their use of water so other parts of the city could get what was left over... "When you ride in from the airport, you see the mud and ruin, then when you are in the confines of your hotel, you [don't]... It's like two worlds in one here," said... a 42-year-old executive for a mining company...

AROUND 1545 the Spanish colonists found, literally, a mountain of silver in the south of what is now Bolivia. The town was named Potosi and over the next 300 years an estimated eight million Indians died digging out the treasure which kept the kings of Spain in royal style. The Spaniards no longer rule the country, but... miners continue to work themselves to an often early death. The local Indians called Potosi the "mouth of hell" after they were hideously exploited to extract the mountain's extraordinary wealth... The mines are now run by co-operatives which extract tin and other industrial metals. People are drawn by curiosity and compassion for the incredibly primitive conditions in which the mainly Indian miners [still] work and a constant flow of tourists support several tour companies and guides. One of the most popular of these is Koala Tours, whose guide... was once a miner. First stop on the tour is at the market, where coca leaves and dynamite can be bought by miners, who earn around \$NZ10 a day... [The] miners chew vast quantities of coca leaf, which is legally cultivated in Bolivia, although the cocaine industry derived from it is not legal. The leaf, when chewed with "roca negra", a black alkali, numbs miners from hunger, thirst and pain, enabling them to work for hours without eating... Particularly popular are bottles of 95 proof white alcohol named Fiesta, of which the miners enjoy a seriously fiery tippie on Friday afternoons, in a cosy underground corner... Their union has always actively opposed the military, which looms large in Bolivian politics... Politics are generally inescapable in Latin America, and the miners are heroes to fans of Che Guevara, as in 1967 many miners were allegedly massacred by the army after helping Che's guerillas... The coppery soil of the hill which houses the mines is dusted by icy dry snow, and the black entrance of the... mine gapes menacingly in the hillside. Stooped over, about to enter... we are roughly shoved against the wall as a wagon piled with "completo" – ore containing zinc, tin and lead – shoots out, pushed on rails at speed by two boys who could not have been more than 14. As we venture further into the dark tunnel, relying on old-fashioned carbide lamps, the air becomes thicker and warmer. Later it gets hotter still, as the only fresh air comes in at the door, although the mine is four levels deep. Lack of oxygen or carbon monoxide poisoning causes several deaths a year. As we descend to the second level it becomes clear the law, which states miners must be over 18 years old, does not apply here. Kids as young as 12 are "helpers", carrying... 30kg... sacks of rocks on their backs up the steep shafts to the wagons on the first level... These carriers are known as "apiris" and are the lowliest of the hierarchy, which extends up to the "perforistas", the expert miners who decide, using... experience rather than detectors, where to drill... Deep inside the bowels of the mine lurks the devil himself – a satanic statue the outwardly Catholic miners worship... Hopeful miners ask their Lucifer for luck, mineral and protection... Today they and their sons struggle on, hoping they will strike it rich in this impoverished country. Even after... years of exploitation, the mines occasionally relinquish a rich cache of silver. As recently as five years ago[a] local miner... struck a good vein in an abandoned mine, and now runs... his own transport company. According to [the Koala Tours guide], "he drinks only Johnnie Walker." - 1997

If we as [First Worlder]s tried to imagine what an underdeveloped area looks like, we would probably conjure up a town like Potosi, Bolivia. At an altitude of 15,000 feet above sea level, Potosi is difficult to reach. The roads leading to it are bad. The native Indian people who live there eke out a meagre living from the poor soil. The only other major source of employment is a tin mine in the mountain which overlooks the town. Housing is poor, and running water and electricity are a luxury in the area. At first glance, it might seem that this town needs to be drawn out of its isolation and backwardness into the mainstream of "modern" economic development. It might seem that the town needs an injection of foreign capital and technical "know-how" to pull it out of this state of underdevelopment. However, a closer look at Potosi reveals to the traveller that it was once a part of the great Inca empire and later, a cornerstone of economic growth and political power in the Spanish empire. The ruins of this once thriving centre of development are still visible. Baroque church facades carved in stone show eroded but discernible images of splendor and abundance. In the 1600s, in the heyday of Potosi, they say that even the horses were shod with silver. At the height of its boom, the town had a population equal to that of London and larger than that of European centres like Madrid, Rome, or Paris. Potosi attracted silks and fabrics from Canada and Flanders, the latest fashions from Paris and London, diamonds from India, crystal from Venice, and perfumes from Arabia.

Something really valuable in the 17th Century was referred to commonly as being “worth a Potosi.” ...The entire economic and social life of Potosi was based on wealth from a single commodity – silver. This silver was mined by the native Indian population and shipped directly to Spain. Potosi silver financed, in large measure, the development of the Spanish empire... “Between 1503 and 1660, 185,000 kilograms of gold and 16,000,000 of silver arrived at the Spanish port of Sanlúcar de Barrameda. Silver shipped to Spain in little more than a century and a half exceeded three times the total European reserves – and it must be remembered that these official figures are not complete.” (...*The Open Veins of Latin America*) The wealth which was extracted from Potosi’s Cerro Rico – the “Rich Hill” – was shipped to the mother country rather than being accumulated in the area. Thus, the development generated by the valuable mineral occurred in Europe, rather than in Bolivia. When the silver ran out, Potosi’s boom ended and the area was left to “underdevelop.” ...The underdevelopment of Potosi, then, began with the abuse of its people and resources through the European colonial system. The Latin American economy was geared by the Europeans to meet their own needs, not those of the local people. The underdevelopment which is characteristic of this “ghost” town today, has its roots in the history of military conquests. Underdeveloped countries are full of... towns like Potosi, and nearly all were European colonies at one time. The arrival of the Europeans in Asia, Africa, and Latin America – what is known today as the [Last] World – fundamentally altered the processes of development which were taking place at the time. In some cases, these societies were more advanced than others; and all, of course, had problems to surmount. But the people in these areas were constructing societies which, although not industrialized, were often highly sophisticated and complex. They were able to meet their physical and psychological needs through their own institutions. The military conquest of [Last] World people led to the plunder and destruction of some of the world’s greatest civilizations. The reasons the Europeans ventured across the seas were largely trade and profit. They needed spices, gold, silver, land, and markets to sell their processed goods. In this relentless quest, the Europeans disrupted the development processes which were going on in the societies they conquered. It was military force – not innate superiority – which enabled the invaders to subdue the native people and destroy the basic social units of entire peoples, i.e., families, culture, and religious institutions... The example of Potosi indicates how development in Europe generated underdevelopment in the colonies... Development and underdevelopment, then, are both integral parts of the same process. The development of some areas was accomplished at the expense of others. Wealth in some areas was accumulated because it was drained from others, in the form of human, natural, and financial services. - Development and Underdevelopment: Two Sides of the Same Coin

The vast disparity of income and wealth *within* the poor countries contributes to their problem. Virtually all of the developing countries are characterized by what is called a dual economy – two populations in the same nation with entirely different patterns of living. In the Latin American countries the wealthiest 5[%] of the population garner about 30[%] of the income, whereas the poorest 20[%] receive only 3 to 4[%] of the total. In the poor countries of Asia and Africa the situation is even more extreme – the wealthiest 5[%] receive as much as 50[%] of the total income. [‘India illustrates the dilemma which so many Last World states face. Even if the poorest 60% of its population were to receive 40% of all available income, their average annual wage would remain less than \$100 per person.’] In these nations a small portion of the society is urban, industrial, and modern; the remainder of the population is either rural, existing according to traditional agricultural patterns, or urban poor, subsisting on scraps from the industrial and commercial segment. Attempts to modernize a nation’s economy usually widen the internal gap between the rich and poor.

From the widening gulf between the two worlds[– First and Last –] there came, in the early 1970s, cries for a “new international economic order.” In 1974, in the midst of the first “oil shock,” a caucus of 77 preindustrial countries secured a proclamation of the new order by the UN General Assembly. The old order, characterized by “inequity, domination, dependence, narrow self-interest and segmentation,” was to be replaced by an order based upon “equity, equality of sovereign nations, interdependence, common interest and cooperation.” The industrial countries were enjoined to cooperate in translating these protestations into “negotiable issues.” The resolution drew no interest from the industrial countries... The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the “poor man’s club” organized in 1964 at the behest of the preindustrial countries, remained the monitor of the facts and figures of that inequity with no power to redress it... Now the governments and the banks of the industrial countries and the international banking institutions are attempting to negotiate a reverse flow of aid from the poor to the rich countries – that is, payment of the \$1200 billion debt that burdens the preindustrial countries. In exchange for the rescheduling of interest and amortization payments, the creditors urge and compel their debtors to adopt “stabilization” and “structural adjustment” measures designed to improve their credit ratings and to make them more attractive to private investors... About one-quarter of the debt is owed by the newly industrializing countries of Latin America. It is they that went so improvidently into the private credit market at floating interest rates. They did so at the invitation of the U.S. banks, burdened with petrodollars... If this debt is ever repaid, it will not be... by the people who negated the inflow of the borrowed money by sending their capital out of the country. It will be repaid by people who can least afford to repay it – and at interest rates that have floated upward on the mounting national debt incurred by the same U.S. government that presses deflationary austerity on their countries... The excess interest paid in that flow of funds was set by the profligate mismanagement of the U.S. economy... The countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the world’s poorest, owe \$270 billion in official debt... The official status of their debt – it being owed to public rather [than] private creditors – has not spared the African countries the deflationary counsel to balance budgets, reduce consumption, devalue currencies, and the rest of the agenda of austerity. In their state of poverty, this counsel reduces not only their present but their future growth. That is true especially of cuts in expenditures for health, nutrition, and education, which subtract from tomorrow’s human capital. The effect must be to widen the gap that has opened [between the First and Last Worlds]... Economic development requires investments that cannot meet the terms of debt financing. They cannot compete with abounding opportunities in industrial countries that set those terms... The prospects of the most deprived people... have darkened... At the end of the fourth century of industrial revolution it must be admitted that one quarter of the world population, principally in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, lives in such poverty that they cannot be sure of the survival of their children... About half of the world population, principally in Asia, has seen measurable and more or less continuous improvement in their material circumstances over the past four decades... From the lives of the remaining quarter of the world population, industrial revolution has eliminated toil and want... [The ability to eliminate *toil and want* from] all humankind... in the next half century depends in many ways upon what these fortunate people may feel disposed to do about it.

While world bankers bicker, a little girl waits... [The] nine-year-old girl... is... living in the Kabale district of southern Uganda, one of the poorest regions in one of the world’s poorest countries. She has something in common with over two million children in her country, and many millions more across the [Last World: she] is not going to primary school. In Uganda, as in much of the [Last World], shrinking Government education budgets mean that families must meet the costs of schooling out of their own pockets, and [her] mother is too poor to pay. Until last year prospects for change looked bleak. Then the Ugandan Government announced an ambitious plan to provide school places for up to four children in each family. The plan, an important element of the Government’s strategy for tackling poverty, was to be part financed by transferring funds from debt repayments to education. A large chunk of debt repayments were to be written off by a debt reduction framework agreed last September by the I[MF] and the World Bank. Along with some 30 other children in her village [the girl] was registered for a free place in primary school. Her hope for an education and a better future soared. Now they have crashed. Having promised early debt relief for Uganda, some of the world’s most powerful countries – Japan, Germany, Italy and the U[S], ably supported by the IMF mandarins – have used their influence to delay action for at

least one year... A year ago the debt reduction framework was heralded as a breakthrough in a crisis which has afflicted many of the world's highly indebted poor countries. Uganda was seen as a test case. It had met all the criteria for debt reduction. It had carried out 10 years of stringent economic reform. Its level of debt was an enormous drain on the country's finance with nearly \$293 million haemorrhaging from the country each year – a large chunk of it going directly back to the IMF. In the debt queue behind Uganda are countries which are synonymous with abject poverty and distress. The list includes Bolivia, where 90[%] of its highland population lives in poverty and where only 16[%] of the rural population has access to safe water. Debt repayments for 1997 account for three times the spending allocated for rural poverty reduction. Bolivia, like Uganda, is being made to wait at least another year for debt reduction, despite over a decade of reforms. This could cost it \$353 million – double its national health budget. In Mozambique a quarter of all children die before the age of five, many from easily preventable diseases such as malaria, diarrhoea and respiratory infection. It is a country whose debt repayments are double the combined health and education budgets. Similar appalling indicators occur in many other highly indebted poor countries. On average children born in them are 30[%] less likely to reach their first birthday than the average for all developing countries, and a mother is three times more likely to die in childbirth. It was these stark facts, and the final realisation that highly indebted poor countries could never pay their debts, that caused the IMF, World Bank and the creditor countries to come up with the debt-repayment framework. The initiative was welcomed when it was introduced a year ago, mainly because it accepted that ability to pay outweighed creditor demands... This week in Washington, when the IMF and the World Bank delayed debt relief for Uganda for a year, they kept the initiative alive. But only just. Under the plan trumpeted by the World Bank president... a year ago five or six countries should have qualified for relief by now. Instead, high-level horse-trading between the richest countries is in danger of derailing the plan. Failure to resolve this crisis, which has been festering for the past 15 years, has been tolerated for too long. Nothing surely can justify debt destroying the growing minds and bodies of young children and undermining a whole swathe of humanity.

...[a US] Nobel prize-winn[er] says the IMF... and World Bank should have been abolished years ago. The father of the Chicago School of monetary theory said both... do... more harm than good to developing nations' economies by strengthening government projects against private business.

...[the] winner of the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize[...], who is still... largely confined to her Rangoon home... [by t]he Government has... sent a message to South-east Asian leaders as they gathered for the Asean summit that their interests would be best served by an end to military rule in her country. "Without political change, I do not think there will be stability in Burma nor will there be sustainable economic development."... Asean earlier this year ignored Western objections to the poor human rights record of Burma's military Government and admitted it as a member, saying Burma could progress faster inside the group than outside... Hundreds of thousands of Burmese have crossed the border to wealthier Thailand because of poverty and human rights violations, including widespread forced labour camps and forced removal of villagers from zones where the Army is fighting ethnic rebel groups... [A]ccording to a report by Human Rights Watch/Asia... Burmese children were frequently used as unpaid porters by the Army and "all are subject to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment,"... Forced to carry supplies for entire days, youngsters regularly died from beatings, a lack of medical care and exhaustion... Student unions were prohibited and the SLORC's policy of promoting Buddhism had led to discrimination against children of other religions.

...Over the past six weeks Burma's military Government has changed its name, abolished the former ruling council, fired some ministers and reshuffled others in an effort to clean up its image and try to revitalise the ailing economy... The State Peace and Development Council (SPDC)... was formed... in the surprise move that abolished... the State Law and Order Restoration Council... Burma, one of the world's least developed nations, is struggling to control spiralling inflation estimated at between 30 and 40[%] a year, a plunging currency and rising budget deficits caused mainly by high military spending... [Incidentally, yesterday, while s]peaking to a gathering of his South-east Asian neighbours, [the Malaysian P]M... questioned whether the new world of open markets would benefit developing nations or lead to more exploitation... "It is wonderful to know that all the huge markets of the developed countries will be open to us in exchange for our opening up of our tiny markets... But can we really gain access to these markets, or will the removal of borders cause a flow in one direction?" ...His strong comments followed the theme that South-east Asia is at the mercy of huge multinational companies that use the media, business monopolies and trade blocs to dominate the world economy.

...Last week... at the annual forum of the Association of South-east Asian Nations... the Malaysian P[M]... called for a review and possible rewrite of the U[N] Declaration on Human Rights. The declaration... "was formulated by superpowers which did not understand the needs of poor countries." ...It was a tragedy in the making, only averted by the relentless efforts of the human rights lobby... It's only a mere four years since the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna fought off an attempt by Malaysia, Singapore, China, Syria, Iran and Iraq to water down drastically the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, approved in 1948. The spectacular thing about the Vienna conference was that at one time, early on, they seemed to have as many as 50 nations on their side. But, one by one, they all had second thoughts and by the end of the conference there was a unanimous vote in favor of the new text that was in many ways stronger than the original... version. In 1948 the vote in favor was 57. This time it was 171, almost every country in the world. If the final tally itself was remarkable so too were some of the explanations given by countries for their vote. The Russian foreign minister observed that "when violations of individual rights and freedom are involved Russia no longer accepts that the world community does not have the right to interfere in another country's sovereignty." ...Neither [the Malaysian PM] nor any of the other Asian backwoodsmen, not least China... the country which... [went] from rags to riches in a single generation... can, if they are honest, any longer argue in their barefaced way that the precepts of human rights are a Western invention imposed upon them. They are now accepted as universal values... Unfortunately, the... vulnerabilities and uncertainties of office make... authoritarian leaders... cling to as many tools of government as they can lay their hands on. The autocrats of South Korea, the Philippines or Thailand were not shifted except after an immense popular struggle. Neither were those in Argentina and Mexico nor Rhodesia and South Africa. But the reason that autocrats do bite the dust in the end is because a powerful segment of the educated middle class and many leaders of the working class and peasant movements have realised one simple but telling point: all the world's richest countries are[politically] free, and nearly all the poorest are not.

...Imagine you own a company that manufactures trainers – a little like Nike or Adidas. It is the early 1980s and your labour costs (in America and Europe) are simply too high to earn a decent profit. Like any good capitalist you shift to Asia where labour costs are a fraction of that in the West... [such as] the equivalent of about \$3 a day. And you hop between Malaysia, Thailand, South Korea or Indonesia as markets "emerge", shamelessly exploiting the cheapest labour on Earth. The workers, freed from the rice paddies and pleased to have a little cash, start to consume, to buy Coke, razorblades, cars and, er, trainers. Then they demand more money. The nice western trainer and razorblade makers offer them \$5 a day, and soon the unit cost of labour meets the unit cost of production, and western manufacturers flee to another Pacific Rim country. But the taste of prosperity engenders a demand for western capital and produce, and the little dragon moves up the economic scale. It exploits its own low-cost labour, and sells goods abroad.

...Fiji's export policy has come under attack with allegations it is being driven by labour rights abuses... sexual discrimination and child labour... The attack is contained in a report by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions lodged with the [WTO] on Wednesday... The report analysed Fiji's policy of massive expansion of export processing zones which employ 13[%] of the country's workforce, mostly in clothing manufacturing. The report said workers in the export zones were often forced to work long hours in poorly ventilated factories and received no overtime pay... In many cases women were paid less than men for the same work... "Management carry out random strip searches of the women, who receive just over one-third of the official poverty level of wages for a family of four... Those who try to organise for better conditions can be

dismissed and unions are excluded by companies with the help of the Government... The policies... are having very bad social consequences.” ...Fiji’s garment... sweatshops, came under trade union attack in February when it was revealed they employed at least 800 expatriate Asian workers. This week’s report said that in 1994 nearly all contract workers in the clothing industries came from China and had half their wages deducted and transferred to China as “employment agency fees.” Multinationals had shifted production from other developing countries such as the Cook Islands to Fiji to take advantage of the low wages... Although work for children under-12 was illegal, the report said there could be as many as 20,000 to 30,000 children at work, due to poverty... [P]rimary schools had a total annual dropout rate of nearly 25[%]. Motivated by the fact that Fiji ‘has about 80% unemployment among the young and no dole’, some of those dropouts will eventually become employed as sea cucumber divers. These workers earn ‘\$50 per day – five times more than most other Fijian workers. Many villages are reliant on the income from a product collected to satisfy the appetite of exotic eaters. Unfortunately, there is a lack of legislation for the industry and a lack of proper training in the handling of the air compressors used to help divers breath underwater. Many divers get the bends, which can cripple or kill them. 13 divers had been killed in the last year. However, there is no compensation, and the bosses – who are making big profits – couldn’t care less.’]

...Young Fijians diving for sea cucumbers... are suffering long-term health defects... or even death experts in Fiji say. At the same time, the trade itself is under threat as fisheries officials fear indiscriminate harvesting of “beche de mer” is seriously damaging stocks. “If current rates of harvesting are maintained, serious depletion will occur in four years,” an official from the Fisheries Department warned... In the past three years, exports of beche de mer from Fiji have more than doubled from 288,547kg... at a value of \$F2.4 million, to 630,179kg exported last year valued at \$F6.3 million... with prices paid ranging from \$F30 a kg for the premium species to \$F3 a kg for the cheaper species... Diving for beche de mer is one of the few sources of income for indigenous Fijians in the small outlying islands... The trade in... certain species of sea cucumber... is perhaps Fiji’s oldest industry, dating to the South Pacific island nation’s first contact with the outside world in the early 1800s. But it is only since the late 1980s when stocks became scarce elsewhere that the trade regained momentum in Fiji and operators began to use compressors for deep-sea diving to collect the precious commodity. Most of the operators are companies owned by locally based or overseas Chinese and supplying mainly Asian markets, predominantly in and around China... The health dangers associated with the use of compressors by villagers diving for the slugs has prompted [the] Fiji Diving Association president... to brand the trade as a criminal operation... [He] said people untrained in diving were being put in a situation where they could make high profits for risks that were too high... Unaware of the danger to their health, divers had “constantly gone to depths of 20m to 27m for up to an hour at a time... This is right off the scale.” ...The problem results from divers untrained in the use of the equipment allowing excessive amounts of nitrogen from the water to enter the body causing bubbles in the blood system – commonly known as decompression sickness, or the bends. Once the bubbles enter the brain or the spine, they can cause paralysis. “There are a whole lot of people out in the villages who are affected but can still walk. There are also a number of people in the villages who can’t stand any more.” ...Largely due to a campaign by the diving association, the Fiji Government in March put a ban on compressed air fisheries, but not before 14 men had died and hundreds were injured or maimed for life, according to official figures which critics say are conservative.

...A quarter of the world’s people still live in severe poverty, including 1.3 billion who must try to survive on less than a dollar a day, according to a [U]N... report... The U[N] designed its 1997 Human Development report as a reminder to world leaders of their responsibilities and their promise – made at the 1995 World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen attended by 185 governments – to work towards the goal of eradicating poverty... Although South Asia is the area with the most poor people, sub-Saharan Africa has the highest proportion of poor in its population, and the fastest growth in poverty. Latin America and the Caribbean has 110 million people affected by poverty, while Eastern Europe and the former Soviet states show the human cost of the difficult transition to democracy and market economies. The report stresses that some people suffered more than others – notably children, women and the aged, in a world that still has one billion illiterate people... and 110 million children deprived of schooling... Half of the world’s people do not have access to decent toilets, increasing the likelihood of epidemics of cholera or other illnesses that kill 2.2 million children each year... The number of people lacking decent sanitation has grown from 2.6 billion in 1990 to 2.9 billion, driven by population growth, urban crowding and budget pressures in developing countries... The ratio between the richest and the poorest people on the planet has gone from 30 to one in 1960 to 78 to one in 1994... The report blames the situation on “shameful inequities and inexcusable failures of national and international policy.” ...It adds that world poverty could be effectively reduced for less than the combined wealth of the world’s seven richest people or 10[%] of the world military expenditures for 1995. “No longer inevitable, poverty should be relegated to history... along with... nuclear warfare... slavery... and... colonialism...,” ... - 1997

colonization, settlement and control by a state of an area, usually distant, that has inferior material culture or military power... has been done since ancient times, *e.g.* by the Phoenicians and Romans... The greatest era of colonization was that associated with modern imperialism... following the commercial expansion of Europe, 15th-16th cent. The Portuguese and Spanish established in Africa, the New World, India, and the East colonies which were primarily commercial and did not involve large migrations from the mother country. In the 17th and 18th cent. the English, French and Dutch established colonies in the same areas, the English colonies attracting large numbers of immigrants. Colonies were usually organized into empires and were administered for the commercial benefit of the mother country. During the 19th and 20th cent. Germany and Japan, as well as... other nations, colonized in Africa, the East, and the Pacific. The U.S., occupying a strategic geographic position, being relatively self-sufficient, and lacking excessive population, has done little colonization. With the example of Britain’s original Thirteen Colonies in America before them, colonies of other nations... have sought independence... *e.g.* India...

By 1948, with India free, other Asians... were fighting armed struggles for their own independence, but the Europeans were most determined to keep Africa. They saw no conflict between paternalism and profit. After the heavy cost of... W[W2] their African colonies seemed more valuable than ever. Europe’s needs came first. The best land was used to grow the crops they wanted for export, not food for Africans. In the Portuguese colonies 98% of Africans remained illiterate. Farmers were forced to be labourers on the big plantations for low cash wages... “We didn’t even have time to work on our own farms to grow fruit or vegetables. We were each given a plot of land to cultivate, wide and long... but they still expected us to finish working it in a day. Whoever didn’t would be whipped to speed up the work.” In British West Africa the Gold Coast produced one third of the world’s cocoa beans. African’s still ran their own farms but British companies like Cadbury’s held the real power... To keep costs low for British buyers the government fixed the cocoa price... “There were a lot of British companies in the cocoa business. They sent their agents out to buy cocoa from the villages. We didn’t have our own scales so we were really cheated by the agents. We had to accept the prices they gave us. The prices were set by the British and we had no say...” The Europeans needed the Africans for the work they could do. They were in no hurry to give them full political rights. At best the British and French thought Africans might one day run their own internal affairs but it might take 50 years. The Belgians and Portuguese couldn’t conceive of this ever. The aspirations of Africans themselves changed after the end of... W[W2], which altered everything. Colonial troops had fought alongside the British to defend other parts of the Empire. They became more aware of the world... “...Indians... were very political. We had conversations with some of them. They said why are we fighting for Britain? We said we are fighting for white freedom. So they ask us are you yourself free? We said no. They said well fight for your freedom first...” The African struggle for self-rule, which would soon spread to other parts of the continent, began in the British colony of the Gold Coast, where only 5000 Britons, mostly traders, lived alongside two million Africans. Trouble began when demonstrations led by army veterans turned into violent riots...

The protests were turned into a mass movement. In 1951 the Gold Coast voted for the first time ever for their own local Assembly... To Africans in the British colonies in East Africa there appeared to be little prospect of any sort of self-government. What made the difference was settlers... In the most fertile parts of Kenya several thousand Europeans had arrived between the wars, taking over African land. They used Africans as servants and labourers. In a healthier climate than West Africa they moved in for good, leading a life they could never afford at home. Four million acres of land were taken from the largest tribe... who led a popular movement to demand their land back and negotiate self-rule. When the British refused to give way... a secret organisation... called[the] Land and Freedom Army[was formed]. "I joined the Mau Mau because of the hardship. The main problem was that our land had been taken by the white man. Then there was education. The schools we used to go to were closed down and destroyed..." The British used the police and army to round up suspects... Planes dropped 50,000 tonnes of bombs to try and destroy the[Mau Mau] camps... In West Africa the nationalists had been allowed to take part in an election. In Kenya the Mau Mau concluded there was no alternative to violence. They used home-made weapons to terrorise European settlers, attacking isolated farmhouses and police stations... "We were a bit isolated... but we used to have our guns with us all the time..." [says one settler. Her] neighbours... two women living alone... were among the few to survive an attack... "There was a bang on the door and they opened it and this gang came rushing in and [the women] shot at these people and killed two of them, and they shot quite a number of bullets – one... [bullet] killed their dog, which, of course, was heart-breaking for them because they were devoted to it." ...80,000 suspects were detained... The Mau Mau had been defeated by 1956 but by the end the Kenyan settlers had lost, too. British officials saw they couldn't go on protecting a white minority – 1% of the population – in the face of African demands. They knew they'd have to make concessions or risk another rebellion... Europeans could no longer control the pace of change in Africa... their retreat began. The people of the Gold Coast had had their own Assembly under the British but not independence. In 1957 they became the first black Africans to get complete freedom... Leaders from East and West came... to see the hand-over. [The]Vice-President... represented the U[S]. He arrived with a delegation that included civil rights leader Martin Luther King[, who declared]... "A new order is coming into being and a old order is passing away. It seems to me that this is fit testimony to the fact that eventually the forces of justice triumph in the universe and somehow the universe itself is on the side of freedom and justice." ...Africans now got what they'd been asking for faster than anyone had expected. As the British, French and Belgians scrambled out, 25 countries celebrated their independence in three years... But the new leaders knew the real problems they faced. Unity was difficult in new countries whose borders had been drawn up to suit European commerce, enclosing different tribes and languages... Few of the nations had enough trained administrators... Once they'd achieved political freedom all Africans expected tangible improvements to their lives. They wanted economic freedom as well. In Ghana[– the former Gold Coast –] hopes were high... Like most of the new African governments, Ghana adopted a socialist system and believed central planning would bring the fastest improvement for the mass of the population... but in the rush for development mistakes were made. Ghanaians soon became victims of bad advice and greed... [Ghana's PM] was now gathering all political power into his own hands and building a cult around himself. He was the Saviour, Messiah, Redeemer. His picture was seen on shirts, dresses, coins and stamps. Streets were renamed after him... Ghana became the first of many one-party states in Africa... The economic promises weren't delivered and... socialism soon turned into autocracy. "People were afraid to speak their minds. You were spied on. Anything you said against [the PM] could be written down and they'd come and arrest you. If they arrested you they didn't ask you about what you'd said, they just sent you to prison..." ...In 1966 [the PM] was deposed by his own army. The same Ghanaians who... [once] worshipped him now turned on him. World cocoa prices had slumped; the state schemes had cost too much; foreign loans had stopped and the country was bankrupt. The hopes his people had put in him lay shattered only 10 years after independence. In some countries the hopes were shattered in far less than 10 years. In the former Belgian Congo the passage from empire into chaos was almost instant... The Belgians had hoped th[at Congo's independence] day would never come. They'd made no preparations for the hand-over[, after which all]... the expertise that had run the country departed for Brussels... Few Congolese had higher education. There were no black doctors, no engineers, no senior administrators... The army mutinied and long-suppressed tribal hatred broke out again... Ordinary Congolese had been led to believe that with independence they'd share the riches that had previously gone to Belgium. In fact, after a few months of civil war the capacity to generate wealth was destroyed... At the same speed that independence days had followed one another[across Africa] in the early '60s, military strongmen took over, usually backed by one of the superpowers... Africa's military officers claimed they were the only ones who could bring stability. Take-over followed take-over... Ghana had 14 coups, or attempted coups, in 14 years... Most of the new dictators were cruel and corrupt. For Africans, one kind of repression was replaced by another... [In the meantime,] the Portuguese clung on in a colonial timewarp. Portuguese governors still had absolute power in Mozambique and Angola. Africans still worked the farms and plantations for Portuguese owners. But even here the days when the profits of the colonies could subsidise the home country were about to end. In each of the Portuguese colonies guerrilla armies were now engaged in a violent struggle to end white rule... By 1975 the struggle had paid off. Both Angola and Mozambique had their moment of triumph. The Portuguese will to stay had collapsed. Marxist regimes took power in both countries but there was to be no relief for the people. The new states were thrown into immediate chaos as the marxists faced rebel groups backed by the West. The symbols of empire were easily removed but it would be freedom now civil war tomorrow. With the departure of the last remaining European power the imperial chapter was almost over, 20 years after the first independence. Soon... the white settlers' hold was ended in Rhodesia to form independent Zimbabwe. For most Africans the colonial legacy was a bitter one. They still had to turn freedom from colonial rule into other freedoms they'd hoped for but not yet gained: freedom from hunger, poverty and oppression.

...got to give us what we need... less freedom of death... - *Do The Right Thing*

Bill of Rights... the first 10 amendments to the constitution of the USA... spelling out individual rights that...

...guarantee freedom of worship, speech, press, and assembly; the right to petition the government to redress wrongs...

To act for the good for congress... [mean]s... making... money The right to get rich is in the constitution... We're consumed by competition... The poor are told to be contented But in this life they've no choice at all... Did you say "I've had enough... It's all so familiar... I'd like to see something new..." - *SONGS OF THE FREE*

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of God's Nature entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation – We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. – That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, – That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundations on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness... We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People

of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States... and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do – And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honour.

...scattered rebellions and discontent... [within] the 13 American colonies... fused into open revolution by 1776, [when] many of the conservative colonists joined the militant dissenters in demanding outright independence from Great Britain. The... *Declaration of Independence*... was drawn up and adopted by the Second Continental Congress at Philadelphia and officially passed on July 4, 1776 (Independence Day). The... document... [was drafted by] a committee consisting of Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Robert R. Livingston, and Roger Sherman... The writing was done by Jefferson...

I am for free commerce with all nations - Thomas Jefferson

[The] seminal *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*... establishing theories of labour, distribution, wages, prices, and money, and putting forward a theory of the natural liberty of trade and commerce... appeared on the actual date of the Declaration of Independence of the American rebels, and contained the prophecy 'They will be one of the foremost nations of the world'... [Its author was Adam] Smith... (1723 – 90), [the] Scottish... founder of modern political economy, whose work marks a highly significant turning-point in the breakdown of mercantilist orthodoxy and the spread of *laissez-faire* [‘a French phrase meaning “let (people) do” and designating a policy of non-interference by government; the doctrine holds that public good is best served when individual initiative has free play and the economic order is left to regulate itself’)] ideas...

One vision has been admirably formulated by [the person] who introduced the phrase of ‘Weltinnenpolitik’: world domestic policy. Important elements of such a policy were pursued by... the first President of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community, and by... [the] Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission of Latin America, who was also the founding father and first Secretary-General of... U[NCTAD]. In what fields is the need for wider frameworks already understood, at least in part, by present generations of policymakers...? ...A very old field... is international trade. And we do observe a movement – albeit irritatingly slow and threatened increasingly by lobbies of weak industries – from free trade within Western Europe to free trade among Western countries, and from there to the wider area of West and South. The recent recession has threatened this wider framework with a return to protectionism being advocated by both employers’ and employees’ organizations in activities which cannot compete on the world market. Short-sightedness prevails in large sections of the general public. They see the problems of these weak industries – the relatively simple and labour-intensive ones, such as textiles, clothing, leather, shoe-making and woodworking industries. They fail to see that protecting weak industries harms the strong industries. Unless the countries of the [Last] World can export such simple products to us, they cannot buy advanced products from our strong industries... Protectionism provides a striking example of the fact that we ignore at our peril the interdependent character of our world economy. It is well established that because of prevailing linkages protectionism forfeits many more jobs than it secures; that emerging out of the fight against inflation it in the end fuels inflation itself. Few governments would dissent from this; for most, ‘free-trade’ is quintessential doctrine. Yet protectionism is on the march. Half a century after the events of the thirties it should have been self-evident that at the end of that road lies damnation; that there must be an international dimension to the battle against inflation. The World Economic Conference in 1933 – chaired in London... and attended... by sixty-four countries – came too late to arrest economic disorder. Must that history of myopia and tardiness be repeated...?

Free trade... entails a self-regulating, world-wide economy, in which one country’s output in food, raw materials, and industrial products supplements the output of the other country instead of threatening by competition that country’s economic position.

It is theoretically possible that a *self-regulating, world-wide* free trade zone could eventually remove the imbalance between the First and Last Worlds, thereby fulfilling the proclamations of some people who lobby for it. However, while the purchasing power of respective countries is unequal (e.g., due to the relative value of their currencies), it might only make the differences between the two worlds more distinct – with countries eventually being labelled as either Producers or Consumers. The Producer World would have all the factories and the majority of its workers will still manufacture products which they can’t afford to own, while the Consumer World would have no factories and the majority of its workers will either be employed as importers, shop assistants or as providers of other types of services (also at a price that the majority of Producer World workers won’t be able to afford – which means such services won’t need to be provided in the Producer World!)

In ‘free trade,’ who gets the freedom? ...Henry Ford recognised that if he did not pay his workers enough they would not be able to afford to buy his cars. Free trade separates the workforce from the market... There is growing international opposition to free trade as it is now from luminaries such as... the American consumer advocate; ...a much-published economist until recently with the World Bank; and... an Indian campaigner for the rights of indigenous peoples and their local food production and culture. Their arguments cannot be dismissed lightly. Free trade is no longer about buying from your neighbour those things you cannot make efficiently for yourself. Taken to its logical absurdity, it leads to the two ships which pass in the Pacific ocean, each loaded with thin slivers of wood. One is a Japanese ship, carrying toothpicks for the American market, made from the rainforests of Asia in the factories of Japan. It passes an American ship carrying chopsticks to the Japanese market, made from American timber in American factories. Both countries see this as a success for their export sector. Free trade is supposed to create maximum competition which will lead to greater efficiencies and so lower prices and produce a higher standard of living for everyone. That has not happened in N[Z]; a substantial proportion of our people now have a lower standard of living than before the free market reforms. The share of GDP received as wages and salaries has declined and the share received as returns on capital has increased... Deregulation of coastal shipping made it possible for firms producing in N[Z] to get the benefits of overseas low wages in their freight rates. Action on major environmental problems, especially carbon dioxide emissions, is stalled by demanding that we do not move faster than countries which might attract investment away from us. This is not just a demand to move with the mob, but a demand to be last. Europe and Japan already have much higher energy prices than N[Z], but until A[US] and the U[S] have joined them our Government is not prepared to take any action to reduce fossil fuel use. Once this starts there is no end. Governments compete with each other to see how far they can screw down living conditions for most of their citizens in order... to reduce costs for corporations... to attract capital investment without which they believe there can be no wealth and no jobs. This is why no party can retain the “open economy” and improve health and education spending and slightly raise taxes on higher incomes. The government’s investor clients simply will not let them. Not surprisingly, governments that compete to lower costs get trouble from their citizens. They need someone to blame, whose commands cannot be ignored. So they have set up the worst sort of world government – an unelected, unaccountable [WTO] (son of Gatt) through which they can force each other to do things their citizens would never allow. Under the [WTO] rules, environmental legislation can be challenged if it seems to discriminate against imports... There is no appeal unless all members of the [WTO], including the member which brought the case in

the first place, agree to overturn the decision. It has been estimated that 80[%] of all American environmental legislation is open to challenge as a non-tariff barrier, and much of it is being challenged by the European Union. At the same time the U[S] is challenging Union energy efficiency standards, safe drinking water and toxics enforcement legislation... and anti-drift net measures... World trade itself has significant environmental effects. Shipping uses as much energy as the combined economies of Brazil and Turkey... The E[U] single market is expected to increase air pollution from cross-border traffic by 30 to 50[%]... Ports destroy coastal wetlands and fish breeding areas and increase the chances of coastal oil spills. These are not arguments against trade – just against totally unnecessary trade. It is no accident that the four largest companies in the world all have as their core business oil or motor vehicles. So do 13 of the top 18, and 25 of the top 50. Maximising global transport, where shiploads of toothpicks and chopsticks pass each other... is in the interests of those who control the free trade agenda. Ultimately, free trade means getting rid of environmental, safety, worker rights and consumer protection regulations. Some of the overseas conditions we are aiming to compete with include sweatshops in South-east Asia where workers are locked in with no fire escapes... There are many groups around the world working for fair, rather than free, trade. We should be with them to make trade work for all the world's citizens, rather than a corporate elite.

...[it] may be some comfort that Freedom House records that 79 of the world's 191 countries qualify as totally free, the highest number recorded since an annual survey was launched in 1972. - 1996

N[Z] scored eight out of 10 and an A grade on an economic freedom index released last week, which ranked the country's economy the third freest in the world. N[Z] was behind Hong Kong and Singapore in a report entitled *Economic Freedom of the World 1997*, published by an international consortium of policy institutes which includes N[Z]'s Business Roundtable. The report[...], which placed the US] fourth... covers up until 1995... N[Z] was the only country in the industrialised category to rate A in the report... N[Z] also topped a "role honour" of the most improved between 1985 and 1995, rising from 60th in 1985... The index has 17 components... that measure levels of basic economic freedoms, such as freedom of exchange, freedom to keep one's earnings and freedom to own private property. Two other organisations, the Heritage Foundation and Freedom House, also publish measures of economic freedom which the report argued were poorly structured and misleading.

...Do you ever get the feeling that the people who have been running (or, rather, ruining) this country's economy long ago lost the plot? That Rogernomics... has become a very painful and expensive joke? Does it not occur to those in control of both state and private enterprise that... the time has come to concede that... this economic experiment... hasn't worked and that no matter how much longer they persist with it, it isn't ever going to work? It would seem not. Even in the face of incontrovertible evidence that it has gone glaringly wrong, things even the most economically illiterate of us can see – a "free market" so free it is spinning totally out of control – the economic ideologues are still pushing their already discredited theories... Back at the beginning we were told that Rogernomics would soon fix our overseas debt. But we still have a vast overseas debt, even though much of it has been transferred to you and me in the form of reduced benefits and pensions, educational fees, student loans, part-charges and scores of other user-pays devices which rob us blind... We were told we would have a level playing field. The trouble is that once it was flattened to suit the tactics of the Business Roundtable team and their running dogs, someone or other is always moving the goalposts.

...WHEN a politician tries to bamboozle you about level playing fields and the market... laugh... says... a campaigner against the religion of the free market who wants the citizenry to steal back the language of political debate... If we all laugh every time it happens, "one day they'll stop doing it." ...He flew into N[Z] last week – ironically, his visit coincided with the]... 16-member South Pacific [Forum's]... inaugural summit in Cairns... [where] South Pacific nations... agreed to work strongly towards free trade in the region[(t)hey plan to slash tariffs, increase budget transparency and implement sweeping reforms to boost economic growth and reduce aid dependence[] ...and suggested, cheerfully, that Western civilisation was in crisis. It has been... since the oil shock of 1973, he says – and it has utterly failed to solve it. The political crisis is linked: Our business and government elites, together with their acolytes in the universities, are in thrall to the... prevailing form of this religion [which] holds that the free market is both necessary and a virtue, and that governments must not meddle with it. Instead of a democracy of individual citizens... ours is a corporatist society, where the interlocking... bureaucrats, businesspeople and other professionals call the shots... [However, his] mission is to open our eyes rather than offer solutions...

The emerging global market has brought many benefits, but it... also raise[s] a host of questions about who helps the losers and who is in charge...

To the critics of neo-liberalism, the policies of wealthy industrial powers are called "free trade" for doctrinal reasons, but they might more accurately be described as a system of world governance with parameters defined by unregulated markets and rules administered by supranational banks and corporations... In 1994, when[the] Gatt director-general... insisted that there would be no losers from the Uruguay round, only winners, he could be confident that his words would appear in the financial sections of the [First W]orld's newspapers without serious challenge: such is[the] extent of the commitment to free trade among journalists and economic commentators. Free trade specifically, and market capitalism more generally, have... become more than simply a transient economic orthodoxy or dogma – we are talking here of a fundamentalist state religion where commitment and virtue are measured by an unquestioning "faith" in "market forces" and dissent is demonised when on rare occasions it is allowed entry into the discussion, but more often simply censored or suppressed. Among such a deafening and repetitive chorus of celebration for the virtues of free trade the recently published U[nctad] report must have struck a discordant note. The report argues that rising inequality and widening disparities of income between [First and Last World] countries... are becoming a permanent feature of the world economy and are now so stark they could "unleash a backlash against global free trade" with "menacing consequences." The Unctad report confirms earlier OECD-World Bank research which identified five countries or regions (mainly African, Caribbean and Pacific countries) which were expected to suffer real income losses from the Uruguay round and eight which could lose from full free trade, mainly as a result of a deterioration in their terms of trade. So much for [the director-general's] non-existent losers. Free trade advocates are always reluctant to speak about the negative effects of their ideas on community life and class relations. As [one commentator] points out: "The theory of free trade admits there will be sharp income-distribution changes within each participating country. Average incomes will go up with free trade, but there may be millions of losers in each country. The theory assumes that the winners will compensate the losers, so that everyone in each country has an incentive to move towards free trade, but in fact such compensation is almost never paid..." Free market policies tend to exacerbate social and economic inequalities, both within and between states... Those who advocate free trade and free capital mobility do so in the knowledge that they are simultaneously advocating the equalisation of wages, known in inter-governmental circles as the "harmonisation of standards," which invariably becomes a downward thrust... "Free trade" is highly regarded by those who expect to win the competition, having first established a "level playing field" to their incontestable advantage... In contemporary international politics the principles of "free trade" serve several useful functions for the dominant players. They prevent economic nationalism and independent economic development, particularly in subordinate societies. They can be selectively invoked to restrict social spending... They can be used to undercut commercial competitors. They will open up [Last] World societies to more efficient exploitation... By locking peripheral states into agreements which force them to lower their protective barriers, Nafta and Gatt, for example, prevent [Last] World nations from developing trade profiles which diverge from the model dictated by their so-called "comparative advantage." The IMF and World Bank on the other hand make the provision of finance (or more accurately "debt") to develop societies conditional on their unilateral acceptance of free market rules for their economies... Needless to say these conditions are rarely, if ever, applied to the [First World]. - 1997

Food is important in the exports of most African states. For the 25 poorest, it is the only source of foreign exchange. The state buys cheap from the farmer and attempts to sell dear to the world market, most of the time against a declining trend in prices. Austerity measures, imposed by creditors holding the debt that burdens every country, squeeze the farmer's price still lower. Low technology and low prices drive farming to more extensive and destructive cultivation of marginal land. The worst harmed is the land of states that have borders on the Sahara. There, drought in recent years joined economics in obliterating the boundary between the Sahara and the arid-land farming region known as the Sahal.

The Eco-Trade Program was created to make positive changes in the lives of the farmers that we trade with... Simply put, most farmers are ruled by a pricing system that they don't control: It's called the World market price. When this price is low, farmers work to produce more so that they can make a living. Of course, more production lowers the price. And it's not unusual for farmers of cacao beans (cocoa) to receive only one-fourth of the market price, while a commercial trader takes the rest. Because we pay a price premium to them... about twice the World market price... Eco-Trade Program farmers can focus on protecting the environment instead of how they'll survive day-to-day... and their families benefit from increased investment in education, health programs, and agriculture. These ideas make sense to us because they're the same kind of goals we have – and why should farmers in a rain forest be any different?

...this nation ha[s] been plagued with farm surpluses which had been bought by the Government for tens of billions of dollars, in order to support prices for the benefit of farmers, so we could pay more for our food. (That last sentence doesn't make sense, but that's the Government's fault, not mine, so I'll leave it the way it is.) - *Famine and Survival in America*

Famine in Africa The case of Africa is more ironic still. Before the famine of 1983-86, the continent had a large food surplus, yet it remained the most undernourished region in the world.

Although grain stocks were partially rebuilt in the late seventies, the global balance between the supply and demand for food remains delicate. The precariousness of this balance is illustrated by the extreme sensitivity of commodity prices to weather reports. The forecast of rain in western Kansas can send wheat-futures prices down the daily limit on the Chicago Board of Trade. A report that the Indian monsoon has started three weeks later than usual can send wheat prices up the limit. When the balance of supply and demand is so delicate, a crop shortfall in a key producing country can set off a wave of global inflation. In poor countries... rising food prices can push death rates upward...

The relation of supply and demand, so important in a free economy where supply caters to and tries to anticipate demand, is expressed in the so-called law of supply and demand, which maintains that prices vary inversely with supply and directly with demand. Monopolies and government price controls are the principal factors that interfere with normal operation of this law... Supply in the economic sense is the amount of goods offered for sale at a specific time, and demand is the market's capacity to buy those goods at the prices asked.

The free market says that productivity is what can be bought and sold – this can include such things as oil, minerals, fish and land which are not made by anybody, but merely exploited. It also includes services which someone has to pay for cooking and serving food in restaurants, teaching skills, mending machinery and so on. Organisations like the Mafia which sell “protection” understand the market very well... The market does not care about society or creating jobs... The market does not count the things people do just because they are human – bringing up children, caring for elderly, sick or handicapped people, helping friends, caring for animals... The market does not pay any attention to whether a commodity is renewable or not, whether making it damages the environment or social systems, or even whether it is actually harmful to people – the criterion for the market is whether a thing can be sold for a profit... The trouble is that the theories are not working... As long as some people have money to buy goods, [the market] can operate just as well at zero employment as at 100% because it has no social conscience... It is also obvious that the manipulators of money and the buyers and sellers of future markets can make huge profits and produce nothing useful. As long as they play by the rules of the market, they continue to be rewarded... The unemployed, the badly-paid, the badly-housed, the badly-educated, the perpetrators and the victims of violence and the starving millions are the pawns in the international game of finance.

Removing barriers to free trade might be good for N[Z] but not for the world's starving says a group of non-government organisations, which says the World Food Summit in Rome will do nothing to stop the economic forces that are hurting the world's poor. The... assumption that liberalising trade will help food security has to be re-examined, says [a spokesperson for] the Latin American Solidarity Committee... The... [LASC] and Trade Aid believe free trade will bolster inequalities and increase poverty... “All the evidence suggests it will increase misappropriation of resources and bring about more suffering and malnutrition.” The world has enough to feed itself, but an estimated 40 million people die each year from starvation or malnutrition. The U[N] Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) estimates that 800 million are chronically undernourished[, including]... 190 million children[who] were underweight, 230 million stunted and 50 million emaciated... [The LASC spokesperson] says structural economic reforms foisted on debt-ridden nations by the World Bank and IMF are forcing millions of people off their land, which is increasingly being used to grow crops for the developed world. Land reform has been halted in the interests of large-scale agribusiness. In Peru, the number of people living below the poverty line jumped from six million to 11 million in the wake of economic reforms in 1990... In Mexico, 1.8 million peasants were forced into cities because they could no longer survive. Their land is now used to supply foreign markets. In Brazil, people are starving while land is used to grow soya beans to feed animals in Europe... [Much] of Africa is no longer self-sufficient in food while subsidised U[S] corn dumped in Mexico has undermined communities which have grown the crop for centuries. Structural reforms disadvantage the poor even in the world's richest countries, [the LASC spokesperson] says... citing the growth of foodbanks in N[Z]. In the U[S] – the world's richest nation – 30 million people need food aid. [Furthermore, he] says that those attending the World Food Summit, including those from the poorest countries, represent a world elite who will not plead the peasants' case.

...Summit must provide the impetus in finding food for world's hungry... [H]ow much progress has been made in “feeding the hungry” over the past 25 years[? The forthcoming] World Food Summit in Rome is a marker. The last one, in 1974, was held at a time of great crisis when failed harvests in the Soviet Union, China, India and A[US], combined with a sharply diminished anchovy catch off the Peruvian coast, pushed up grain prices four fold. The future seemed exceedingly bleak. The world was in danger of running out of food and, in alarm... the U[S] Secretary of State, pushed for the food conference and came himself to Rome to pledge that “within a decade no child will go to bed hungry.” In one sense it was an empty pledge. Time and again the well-fed nations of the world are invariably slow off the mark when famine strikes. At the time of the great Ethiopian famine in 1984, it took a pop star... to shake everyone up. But an enormous amount of progress has been made in the span of a generation to feed reasonably and adequately the overwhelming majority of an exploding world population. Two decades ago, one in three people in the [Last] World, totalling about 920 million people, had inadequate access to food. Now it has been reduced to one in five. There are still about 840 million people undernourished but given that in the interim the world's population has jumped from around 4 billion to nearer 6 billion, one can see how remarkable is the progress made... The signs of success... shouldn't make us complacent. Rather, it should spur us to finish the job of

ensuring that no child will go to bed hungry... [That] pledge could be realised, later than... suggested, but certainly by the end of the first decade of the next century. If this summit fails to generate the energy, direction and resources required it will be a historic opportunity badly missed.

...next week... heads of state and government gather in Rome for a... [summit] called to shine the spot-light on the fight to end hunger. The five-day summit, over-shadowed by the immediate threat of starvation and death facing one million war refugees in Zaire, is being staged by the... [FAO]. The organisation's director-general... said... "It will be the first time in history that so many [leaders] meet in one place to talk about food security,"... [However, of] the world's richest nations, the Group of Seven... none except the host nation Italy appear to be sending their highest-profile leaders, according to government officials and diplomatic sources. The U[S] will be represented by the Agriculture Secretary...

The chief organiser of... [the] food summit has welcomed U[S] involvement in an aid mission to Zaire while reminding ordinary [USer]s that they threw food away while millions were starving... [He also] said the situation in Zaire... should never have been allowed to happen. "We should not have to wait until people are dying... to have a Robin Hood policy," he declared. "The world is not Sherwood Forest." Asked if there were three things he would like to tell ordinary [USer]s about the world food situation... [he] painted a picture of [USer]s waking up, enjoying a hearty breakfast and driving to work on a full stomach. "Then maybe they stop for pizza or get two or three hamburgers during the day then stop on the way home to get some slimming products... They should know that there are 840 million people in the world who have no access to food... This is the first thing they should know, the second thing and the third." ...The passion and bluntness of... appeals showed how much the Zaire crisis has given urgency to the... gathering. But it also served as a harsh reminder of how increasingly volatile and crowded the world has become since a bold declaration issued at a similar conference in Rome 22 years ago: eliminate world hunger. "The pessimists among us say that we've passed the point of no return," said the U[S] Agriculture Secretary... "The optimists, if you can call them that, say we've hit the fork in the road." ...The conference is not expected to produce any pledges of additional money for hunger-fighting initiatives, adding to criticism of the summit as costly and ineffective. U[N] logistic and personnel costs amount to about \$US2.1 million... for the summit. National governments paid for their delegates.

...The Italian Government is reported to have set aside 1.63 billion lire (\$[NZ]1.42 million) to help pay for staging the summit... More than 10,000 delegates, officials from n[go]s and... some 4000... journalists... are expected for the event... 10,000 police and paramilitary Carabinieri will be on duty... Around 170 VIPs will be staying in more than 70 hotels.

...The Pope yesterday called on world leaders to bridge the gulf between rich and poor... "We have to search together for solutions so that there are no longer hungry people living side by side with people living in opulence," he... [said] at the opening of the summit. "This contrast... is intolerable for humanity." The... Pope also took a swipe at those who say population control is the key to food security. "Demography alone does not explain the inadequate distribution of food resources. We must put aside the sophist view that when there are many, one is condemned to be poor." The real reasons behind food insecurity were often political instability, wars, and developing countries mired in debt.

...Pledging relief... to halve the number of undernourished people worldwide from the present figure... by the year 2015... world leaders have ended... the... World Food Summit in Rome... The... FAO... had promised that more than 100... leaders would attend the meeting. In the end, only 86 turned up – less than half the... 174 member states... of the U[N]. The summit declaration... is not legally binding but lays out suggested policies which Governments say they will follow. It says everyone has the right to food and to be free from hunger, and promises urgent international action to tackle the problem.

...World leaders unanimously decried hunger last week but... [the] food summit ended as it began – deeply divided over whether free trade is the best way to offer hope to... [the] undernourished. Like virtually all gatherings where rural incomes are at stake, the world's first food summit left images of wealthy nations at odds with developing countries and squabbling with each other over trade.

...Well over \$US10 million... was spent in connection with last week's World Food Summit... billed as a no-frills conference, according to figures from... the FAO... [In related news, riots] over... the doubling of... bread prices have spread from the south of Jordan to the teeming centre of the capital despite [the King's] threat of an "iron-fist" response... He has already dissolved the lower house of Parliament, where the [IMF]-sanctioned price rise had found little support... The King was shown on television telling soldiers in the south that the country faced a choice of order or anarchy. But clashes continued... Residents in... Amman fired shots at police who used teargas to try to disperse them... One crowd burned offices of the Education Ministry, which recently raised school fees. Banks... were again targets... It was the worst violence in Jordan since riots in 1989, also triggered by Government price rises, led to the replacement of the P[M] and the start of democratic reform.

...T[he British] Government has announced a major food safety campaign after an outbreak of bacterial infection in Scotland hit almost 200 people and left five dead. [The] Scottish Secretary... said \$[NZ]1.2 million had been put aside for... advertising... aimed at warning[consumers] of the dangers of the bacteria responsible for... the worst such crisis recorded in Britain... The move comes after he announced that a top-level inquiry... has been launched... The infection has been linked to cooked meat and pies supplied by [a butcher] who a few months ago won the accolade of Scottish Butcher of the Year. It is caused by the bacteria E. coli 0157, which is found in animal intestines and transmitted through milk, cheese and raw meat.

...A fatal strain of the E. coli bacteria blamed for food-poisoning deaths in... Scotland has surfaced in Hong Kong. The strain was found in a consignment of raw minced beef on sale in a supermarket.

...Hong Kong's maximum-security prison has been hit by an outbreak of suspected food poisoning, with six inmates in hospital and up to 100 requiring medical treatment, a Government spokesman said yesterday... "We've asked food inspectors to conduct tests... to determine whether food preparation or the food itself was responsible, and we're awaiting the results..." he said. The outbreak follows an epidemic sweeping Japan of the 0-157 colon bacillus bacteria.

...The Japanese Government warned the public yesterday not to eat raw meat as the toll grew from a summer food poisoning epidemic sweeping the nation. The Ministry of Health said more than 8000 people had been stricken with the disease since the start of summer... 6000 of them in the past 10 days in the town of Sakai.

...Shocked by two more deaths from a food poisoning epidemic, Japan yesterday accepted an offer of help from the U[S] Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. The P[M]... said he felt helpless in the face of the deaths from the... bacteria, which has killed seven people since it broke out in May... More than 6400 people, mostly schoolchildren, have come down with the germ in Sakai alone. The two-week-old outbreak there was traced to school lunches prepared by city-run kitchens, but the food carrying the bacteria has yet to be identified... 96 children are in... hospitals in Sakai... Twenty-eight are critical, including three in comas.

...Auckland is in the grip of a baffling food-poisoning epidemic which experts fear could worsen with a long, hot summer. They are staggered at the numbers of people falling ill to the stomach-cramping illness campylobacteriosis... [-] since September 24, 339 people have gone down with the illness, compared with 92 for the same period last year[-] ...and are mystified about the reason for the outbreak... Outbreaks can usually be traced to a particular venue... But this time investigators are perplexed by the lack of apparent geographical clusters of cases. Now food experts are looking for more offbeat reasons... The Auckland Healthcare food programme manager... says that in Britain an outbreak was traced to birds pecking holes in milk bottles and a salmonella outbreak in A[US] was traced to peanut butter.

...Based on numbers who visited doctors, an estimated 120,000 N[Z]ers have suffered from food poisoning this year. The Nutrition Foundation said the real figures were probably nearer 300,000 because so many people did not go to the doctor or report the illness to health authorities. In the past week there had been four major outbreaks of food poisoning, and 13 cases of campylobacter, affecting more than 100 people... Soaring

numbers of food poisoning cases have prompted new rules which mean restaurant and cafe staff will have to be trained to ensure food is safe... [T]he changes to the Food Act would place the obligation on food handlers to identify and control hazards, instead of health inspectors visiting. Independent auditors, approved by the Ministry of Health, would check businesses were meeting their approved plan... The Nutrition Foundation said a lack of knowledge about food was contributing to the rise... The chief executive... [of the] foundation... said it was believed up to 50[%] of all cases originated from home... [She] feared this would worsen because of schools not teaching about food. [Meanwhile, 'consumer confidence is hardly enhanced by warnings such as one issued yesterday that a tin of pineapple may make you ill after unacceptable levels of tin were found in some samples. Or one last month that your peanut butter may contain shards of glass. For companies, putting such matters right can take a huge effort, such as the nationwide recall by Eta of 100,000 jars of peanut butter. The coordinated campaign – which has involved about a 1000 people – has been run under the watchful eye of the Ministry of Health. How the glass got into containers took a back seat at first, as Eta hunted down the problem batches, which included those under its own label, along with Foodtown and Pam's brands. Stores were warned late on Thursday, November 19. Shelves were initially cleared of all the company's peanut butter, not just affected batches. The public warning came next, on Friday morning. That meant having 50 phone operators at the ready, with another 50 as backup, on an 0800 information line. At one stage 750 calls were taken in just one hour, with a total of 5000 calls received on the Saturday. An 0800 number with a doctor giving advice was also established. The calls are now drying up, but the 0800 number will remain for another month. An Eta spokesman is confident the majority of the problem jars have been recovered. They will be destroyed. This latest recall takes this year's product recall tally to 12. Four have been caused by the discovery of foreign material, such as glass. In 1994, Cerebos Greggs was the company at the centre of what is believed to be the country's biggest food recall. After six customers complained that they had found shards of glass – some up to 5cm long – in Cerebos Greggs' pickle, the company ordered a recall of 500,000 jars. Production was stopped for two weeks and the cost of collecting recalled product, modifying machinery and writing off stock was put at \$1.1 million. This figure did not include lost sales. The company drew praise for the up-front manner in which it handled the problem, but the company's managing director says it took a year before sales got back to former levels.']

...Eat, drink and be wary... MY daughter didn't like the crystals in her ice cream and spat them out. That was fortunate because they turned out to be particles of glass. I rang the health authorities (not as easy as it sounds: to complain about food contamination or food poisoning look up "public health services," listed under "community health services" in the "hospitals" section of the phone book). The official I talked to acted swiftly. He went straight to the Remuera dairy, found shards of glass (from a window broken by a burglar) in the bulk ice cream, and ordered the freezers emptied. For [the] health protection officer... this was another case of food spoilage. Spoilage is when bacterial, chemical or physical contamination causes noticeable deterioration in food. Glass is regularly found in food and drink – over the past two years it has been reported in fruit, mineral water, Coca-Cola and pickles and chutneys. Also reported were maggots in dried figs, shreds of plastic in animal biscuits, a pin in an Easter egg, metal threads in Vitamin C pills, and rubber particles in peanut butter. Distasteful as these incidents are, they don't represent the health hazard that food poisoning does. Last year 9457 cases were notified nationally... [and] the incidence has nearly doubled since 1990... Over summer a Papakura supermarket deli sold salmonella-contaminated luncheon sausage. Whether salmonella-positive food handlers were responsible or cross contamination from raw chicken did the damage, 11 confirmed cases of salmonella poisoning resulted. One person was admitted to hospital. The deli was closed for 10 days for a clean-up and the store now has a food-safety plan. In March a pizza bar and cafe sickened six customers with salmonella-infected tiramisu (a raw-egg dessert) and chicken pizza... Neither of these food premises was taken to court – probably because the maximum they could be fined is \$1000. But once the Food Act is amended (expected this year) anyone in breach of it will become liable to [pay] a \$100,000 fine. "That," says [the health protection officer], "will send a message to the food industry to be very careful."

...The cooked chicken comes off the supermarket shelf. In less than a minute it is eaten and the bones deposited behind the yoghurt. A brazen case of grazing – supermarket-speak for customers eating in the aisles and not paying. It is a true story, caught on video and told to staff by a trainer for the Pak 'N Save-New World Group... High-risk items for the try-but-don't-buy brigade include grapes, nuts, chocolate bars, bananas and chips. Grazers are a problem, Auckland supermarkets say, echoing reports that a Kapiti Coast supermarket may take such shoppers to court. Locally they are more likely to be combated with common sense... Most supermarkets say that asking customers to pay for food they are eating is enough, and some put signs on high risk items... "...If you say, 'Can I help you,' and they are spitting out a pile of nuts... they get really embarrassed... If a customer takes a grape or two, staff don't do anything. But... [it] comes to a lot of money... if half the customers take just one grape..." Another supermarket manager said it was not so easy to deal with teenage girls who used spray deodorant and then put it back on the shelves. And what to do with the family who brought back the chicken bones – and complained the meat was off? Grazing was just one of a number of questionable habits of shoppers reported by supermarkets, though they were quick to say they were not complaining – it was the nature of the business.

...ONE of the characteristics of real food enthusiasts is their delight not just in eating but in talking about it. As they ladle in steaming forkfuls the immediate pleasure is interrupted by golden reminiscences of previous great meals. Engaged recently in this entertaining, if slightly gross, pastime I was struck by how often people remember restaurants less by the food than by the service. The most spectacular tastes do not, for most people, transcend shonky service whereas a warm and skilled welcome will see people prepared to forgive minor deficiencies in the food. The curious thing about good service is that it is so easy and cheap to provide that you wonder how any restaurant can fail... So it was with some interest we noticed the [statistic that 'one-in-five restaurants fail within a year in Auckland'] and the announcement that the Georgie Pie chain of family restaurants has been sold to McDonald's NZ...

'DID you know the now-defunct Georgie Pie was the inspiration behind the name of a Tokyo-based band? The founder and guitarist of Georgie Pie (the band), spent a year knocking around NZ, and became addicted to the \$1 minced-meat pies. "Georgie Pie, the restaurant, has been squashed under the greasy clownshow of McDonald's, but the name lives on in Tokyo's premier blues band, a homegrown alternative to fastfood music," says the band's website.'

...McDonald's Corp said that earnings rose 10[%] in the third quarter, as profit growth at restaurants outside the U[S] more than offset weak domestic results... Outside the U[S], operating earnings grew 11[%] in the quarter as revenue rose 13[%], while... operating earnings fell 5.0[%] in the U[S]... but revenue rose... 1.0[%]... The world's largest restaurant chain said that net income rose to... \$NZ630 million... Revenues grew 8.0[%] to \$US2.77 billion... McDonald's had 11,852 restaurants, including smaller outlets, in the U[S] at September 30 – up 8.0[%] from a year earlier and 8139 in other countries – a rise of 26[%]. - 1996

Though the company continues to report record profits year-on-year – last year it posted net income of \$NZ2.3 billion... – growth has depended on an aggressive expansion programme rather than attracting new customers with tastier products... The situation is causing comment overseas where American tourists visiting N[Z] remark there seem to be more McDonald's in Auckland than in comparable American cities.

...On May 24, McDonald's opened its first outlet in the Ukrainian capital, Kiev. Exactly one week later, after five years of squabbling and six official postponements, [the] Russian President... finally came to Kiev and signed a Russian-Ukrainian friendship treaty. Mere coincidence? Not according to the Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention. Serious students of international affairs have noted – tongue only partially in cheek – that no two countries with a McDonald's restaurant have ever gone to war against each other. The basis for the theory is that the presence of McDonald's means a country has achieved a level of economic maturity and consumer comfort that it would be unwilling to jeopardise by engaging in armed conflict with a neighbour. Moscow has hosted McDonald's for more than a decade. Now Kiev has two stores. Thanks to the Illinois-based fast-food giant, the world is a safer place. With stores and franchises in 102 countries, [and 'a new McDonald's opening somewhere in the world every

eight hours,']McDonald's Corp is a superpower in its own right. Recently it surpassed Coca-Cola as the planet's most recognisable brand, according to the Interbrand Group, an international consulting firm. So all-encompassing is McDonald's global clout that the *Economist* magazine produces an annual Big Mac Index pegged to the price of a Big Mac in 33 selected countries. The magazine's editors tout their index as an uncannily accurate guide to whether various currencies are overvalued or undervalued. At home, however, the company has experienced some difficulties: a US\$5c burger promotion that flopped, stiff competition from rivals Burger King and Wendy's, and marketing reports that suggest American consumers don't think the McDonald's burger tastes as good as it once did. But these problems are more than offset by gains overseas. This is powerfully evident in Ukraine, a barely tapped market of 52 million people where McDonald's is poised to launch one of the most ambitious expansion campaigns in the company's history. Ukraine's... local real estate market, the tax-system... inflation... rampant corruption and red tape have kept many Western investors at bay... From the consumers' side of the counter, manufacturing a Big Mac may look pretty simple. It isn't. And it is even tougher... in an environment like Ukraine. McDonald's understands that its success lies in delivering consistency. And in Ukraine, consistency is a scarce commodity. McDonald's attempts to buy all of its products locally. But to do this in Ukraine, it has had to build a supplier network from the ground up – literally. Soil samples were taken and tested – radioactive fallout from Chernobyl is still a concern in the Ukraine – before the company settled on a salad supplier from the Crimea and a beef herd from the distant reaches of eastern Ukraine... Plans call for seven stores to be up and running by the end of this year... "If you look at Ukraine on a 10-year pattern, you could fit 200 to 250 restaurants here," said... an Austrian who was finance director for McDonald's Central Europe before taking over the Ukrainian project... McDonald's pays... nearly four times the average... Ukraine... wage... A Big Mac at \$NZ2.35 is one of the better bargains on the continent, according to the *Economist*[, but with]... such meager disposable incomes, the question arises whether Ukraine has a consumer base that can support[so many] fast-food outlets.

...McDonald's is blaming increased costs for a decision to increase the prices of some of its burgers for the first time in more than five years. The burger chain, which has more than 130 outlets throughout N[Z] has denied the move is intended to close the gap between itself and its more expensive competitors... McDonald's managing director... described the move as an "internal matter" which was not related to the tough times McDonald's was facing in the American market... However, Kiwi consumers can console themselves with the fact that at \$3.40, a Big Mac still costs less in N[Z] than it does in the U[S, where the]... average price of a Big Mac... is... the equivalent of \$NZ4.17 based on current exchange rates.

...McDonald's, [which is]famous for putting a Scottish "Mc" in front of all its products, is putting staff in Britain into tartan. Nothing wrong with that, except the chosen tartan is... the burgundy, green and navy... of... Clan Macdonald's... lowland rival Clan Lindsay.

...[Police raided a NZ couple's home as part of a Scotland Yard investigation into threats of terrorism and blackmail against the Bank of Scotland and Coca-Cola. The Yard's organised crime group launched an inquiry into the couple's activities after copies of a 3-hour video were sent to scores of people, including the British PM, and media and commercial companies. The presenter, identified as Heather Bell, says that if the bank doesn't cease trading or halve its charges "we will sabotage it." Next, she attacks Coca-Cola. "We've informed Coca-Cola and the public that Coca-Cola will be contaminated. Only when they cut their retail price in half will we stop tainting Coke." Bell predicts hundreds of Coke drinkers will become "very sick, but not dead."

...As Coca-Cola executives lobbied to get their products back on Europe's store shelves, the EU pushed for further investigations into what caused 200 people to become ill after drinking the company's soft drinks. Atlanta-based Coca-Cola has blamed defective CO₂, used to put fizz in its drinks, for problems at its Antwerp manufacturing plant in Belgium (the Belgian Health Ministry banned all Coca-Cola products two weeks ago). The company also said the outside of cans made in Dunkirk, France, were contaminated with a wood preservative during shipping. The company said these two unrelated problems had led to similar symptoms of nausea and vomiting. A company-commissioned study suggested the health problems were in the victims' heads.')

...Coca-Cola Corporation said that profits rose 18[%] in the fourth quarter... from \$[US]648 million in the 1995 quarter... and set a record for the full year as sales of its soft drinks posted solid growth worldwide... Coca-Cola said it sold more than 13.7 billion cases of soft drinks in 1996, more than 1 billion cases more than in 1995... For all of 1996, profits rose 17[%] to \$3.49 billion... Revenues rose to \$18.55 billion.

...[the] daredevil entrepreneur, who turned Virgin Group into Britain's biggest private company, will introduce his Virgin Cola in the U[S] early next year, taking on Coca-Cola in its home territory... Leaving aside the sheer size of Coke and PepsiCo, which together control... three-quarters of the \$53 billion U[S] soft-drink market[-] ...Pepsi... sells... 32[% and Coca-Cola 43%] of all US soft drinks... [-] analysts question whether the Virgin brand can play as well in America as it has elsewhere... So far Virgin Cola has not made more than a dent against Coke and Pepsi in Britain.

...Soft drinks giant Coca-Cola... after encountering some criticism for staying in South Africa during the apartheid years... is driving deep into Africa in a move expected to entice other U[S] companies into the region... The corporation and its seven bottlers announced early this year that it was investing \$US275 million... in South Africa, Africa's economic bulwark, to strengthen its market share. Coca-Cola said it intended to double its business in South Africa as a result of the investment. Its sales there are running at around 4.8 billion rand (\$NZ1.70 billion) a year at retail value. Its aggressive investment drive in the country forced its arch-rival Pepsi to beat a hasty retreat after re-entering the market three years ago. From South Africa, Coca-Cola is striding north to Zimbabwe – the region's second-largest economy – where it is to invest \$US60 million over the next four years. Tanzania and Uganda are next in line, drawing investments of \$30 million each. The company also sees prospects for expansion in Portuguese-speaking Angola and Mozambique, which are slowly recovering from almost two decades of civil war. It is already in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. "We're very positive on Africa as a whole," [the]Coca-Cola president and chief operating officer... said during a visit to southern Africa. That vote of confidence in the continent's potential is seeping through to other American corporations. Industry sources in Zimbabwe say... Coca-Cola... might soon be washed down with... McDonald's... McDonald's is already in South Africa.

...one of the world's most admired companies is in a mess. Last week the... McDONALD'S... group announced a big shake-up of its American operations and the removal of its chief executive after acknowledging the failure of a series of costly sales promotions... Although it continues to expand rapidly outside America... its share of the domestic market has shrunk to 42%. This compares with Burger King's 19%... and... Wendy's... 11%... Competition has become so fierce that some of McDonald's... American stores are said to be cannibalising each other's business. The intense competition has forced McDonald's to break away from its traditional recipes, and experiment with new menus. A low-fat sandwich, called McLean, was a disaster. An expensive Arch Delux sandwich – a cheese burger with lettuce, tomato and sauteed onion – has been only slightly more popular. In an effort to make its food tastier, McDonald's recently instructed its stores to stop microwaving lettuce and tomatoes on sandwiches, and to toast buns, instead of using a baking technique analysts say makes them soggy than the... buns of Burger King and Wendy's... McDonald's won a promotional victory last year when it persuaded Walt Disney to allow it to license its film characters and break off ties with Burger King, which chalked up record sales two years earlier when it offered toy characters based on *Toy Story*, a hit Disney film. McDonald's claims it distributed 100 million toy dogs in December in a tie-in with Disney's film *101 Dalmatians*. But the impact of such gimmicks on food sales has been limited by the fact that its rivals have also turned to movie productions. Taco Bell, for instance, has tied up with Twentieth Century Fox and just launched a *Batman* sweepstake, with a Batmobile as first prize. The new management team at McDonald's is not guaranteed success... [However, its] global 1996 sales were almost \$US32billion, compared with Burger King's \$US9billion.

...[The FBI has arrested eight people allegedly involved in a scheme that fraudulently netted more than \$US13 million worth of McDonald's game prizes. Authorities said yesterday that the criminal ring involved a company responsible for McDonald's game security. Authorities said no McDonald's employees were involved and the fast-food chain assisted the investigation. Those arrested were charged with conspiracy to commit mail fraud after fixing

the outcome of McDonald's Monopoly, Who Wants to Be a Millionaire and other McDonald's promotional games. The FBI said the scheme began as early as 1995.]

...McDonald's Corp reported a 4.2[%] rise in second-quarter profit... slightly less than expected, and said it was scaling back expansion plans for its struggling U[S] business. However, its chairman and new... chief executive... said the company could boost its earnings per share by 10%-15% a year for the next five years, assuming a stable US dollar.

...McDonald's third-quarter earnings rose just 1.9[%] as sales remained sluggish and the strong U[S] dollar hurt results overseas... The... [company] is cutting back on new restaurants[at home] as it focuses on overseas markets.

...The[NZ] burger market became a tad more competitive last week as [Kentucky Fried Chicken] positioned itself to move into more direct competition with McDonald's. The move follows N[Z]ers strengthening love affair with burgers and chips, which are now our favourite takeaway foods providing the fast food industry [(that encompasses '800 outlets in Auckland' alone)] with its highest level of growth and profitability... KFC was going to chase that growth, launching a new burger, called the Big Colonel Burger, which it hopes will pinch market share from... McDonald's... KFC has offered burgers since 1989... [and they] now accounted for about 20% of KFC's sales... which would mean it was selling about \$36.6 million worth... against the company's forecast total sales of \$183 million for this year... More than \$2.4 billion was spent on['an estimated 720 million'] restaurant and takeaway meals last year... N[Z]ers spend an average of about 24% of their total food budget on takeaways or in restaurants. The figure is rising, but it still has a long way to go to catch up to A[US], where it is 33%[, or 'the US (48%)']. However, 'Wellington – the smallest capital in the developed world – has more restaurants per head of capita than New York.'

...The US Ambassador to NZ still tips – but not on the same scale he would at home, where it can be many workers' main income. A spokesman said those lucky enough to receive a little extra from the Ambassador should expect the 15-20% of the total bill customary in the US. An Auckland waitress would be thrilled with such a gesture. The fulltime cafe worker said that on the whole tipping by NZers was pretty terrible. Waiters in NZ on average collect \$33 a week in tips, rising to \$53 in Auckland. A survey on attitudes towards tipping for service reveals 46% of people do it only for excellent service, while 44% utterly oppose the practice. Only 1.1% always tip. The chief executive of the Hospitality Association said that five years ago the number opposed would have been much higher. "That shift in culture by Kiwis is a result of travel overseas, where tipping is part of the culture, and tourists coming here are tipping." The chief executive said the industry did not encourage tipping as a matter of course – he would not like tipping to become a substitute for wages, as it is in some countries – but it was accepted as a reward for excellent service.'

...*'R.I.P Silver Service (elder sister of Fine Dining)* DINERS are swapping heavy silverware and starched linen tablecloths for lightweight crockery and tables on the sidewalk. Dead posh restaurants in main centres close while rows of cafes and brasseries casually march up every main road. Could this be the death of fine dining? Absolutely, says the AUSn-based NZer who has bought and renovated Auckland restaurant and bar Tuatara. He is also owner of Morris Corporation in AUS, a company most famous for its catering contracts in war-torn Cambodia and Somalia. The business covers everything from cafes to quality hotel restaurants to staff cafeterias and industrial catering units. "We just won a contract to do the food and beverage for a 167-room Brisbane hotel. We had the option to provide a fine dining restaurant or a cafe-style service. We chose to put in a brasserie. And really we had no choice. Why? Because otherwise we would have been limiting our market. There will always be a market for fine dining. It's just that it's much smaller in comparison." And it's economic. Customers' perceptions of good value have changed. "To have linen tablecloths and your waiters in fancy outfits costs money and diners know that. They think if they can go to a cafe, have nice food and great service, it's not necessary to pay for all the trimmings. And as a restaurateur it gives you the ability to get the food out faster and turn the tables over quickly." However, an old Auckland favourite in fine dining, Number Five, recently reopened and renamed 5 City Road, is doing very well, thank you, reports its owner, who also runs the successful Forty One restaurant in Sydney. Which is why he doesn't believe fine dining is dead. "What has died is the pretentious aspect of fine dining. What has gone are the restaurants which used to claim they were fine dining but effectively all they had were waiters dressed in tuxedos. NZers are now more aware of what makes a quality product. They want fine dining. They don't mind paying for good food and service – they just don't want to be ripped off.'"]

...The boom time for Auckland's restaurants and cafes appear to be over... Statistics N[Z] data shows consumer spending on cafes, restaurants and takeaways throughout the country increased by just 2.6[%] in the first ten months of this year compared to the same period in 96. In most months last year, the food service industry experienced double digit growth... According to the Food Service Association... increased costs and more competition will mean many in the industry will be struggling to make a profit this year... [F]ood costs have gone up by an average of 2[%] over the past year, labour costs 6[%], rents 2[%] and other operational costs 4[% – plus]... at least 50 new restaurants are included in developers' plans for the city centre over the next two years... A survey of 400 of [the association's] members shows the average profit over the past year was 3.7[%] of turnover, before tax. The figure compares to last year's average of 7.9[%]... While some restaurateurs were obviously doing well, the survey showed a lot must be losing money... Increased reluctance by diners to drink and drive also meant fewer patrons were running up large drinks bills...

It was a quiet dinner for three... city businessmen... [at an] exclusive eatery... in London... used to diners spending upwards of £100... each... but the bill came to \$35,800... While big-spending businessmen could easily splash out similar amounts at N[Z]'s top restaurants, such extravagance is rare... N[Z]'s egalitarian streak meant that such expenditure was viewed as "disgusting," said [the proprietor of an Auckland restaurant. Incidentally, 'Swansea Prison in Wales has won an award for the quality of the food it serves its inmates – at a cost of just \$4.40 a day. A council health officer said the prison had clean kitchens and a staff training programme. It provided for 10 types of diet, including selections for vegetarians']...

Burger King... a unit of United Kingdom-based Grand Metropolitan... is... escalating the fast-food wars... [by introducing] a new hamburger called Big King... [(which) will have 75[%] more beef and less bread than the Big Mac], and... putting a meat-free burger on its menu – but it may have limited appeal for vegetarians... [because the] new bean burger patties are fried in a mix of animal fat and vegetable oil, the blend used to cook its chips. The director of marketing... said the chain had no plans to stop cooking in beef shortening because it was not trying to woo vegetarians... health conscious[customers] wanting less fat in their diets were demanding an alternative to meat... When the chain was launched... it cooked its chips in vegetable oil, but soon added animal fat after market research revealed customers preferred fries cooked in beef tallow. McDonald's also reported a strong demand for beef-fat flavoured fries and its extra-thin chips are cooked totally in animal fat. Wendy's and KFC cook their fries in vegetable oil, although chicken-flavoured salt is added to the KFC product.

...[Put down those chips – while you can still see them! Doctors have long known that some fats can cause heart disease, but a study in Boston – the largest so far to look at the connection between dietary fat and eye disease – has found that fat in your diet can also lead to age-related retina macular degeneration (the leading cause of blindness in people aged 65 and over). Just as dietary fat can accumulate in the blood vessels and lead to heart disease, it can clog up the vessels going to the eyes, leading to loss of vision.' ● 'Cholesterol might be bad for arteries but a study has found it is good for learning and memory.'

...Would you like a side order of stupidity with your burger? Two Canadian scientists have found that hamburgers and cream cakes do not just clog the arteries, they clog the brain as well. The researchers claim that too much fat – from fatty foods including takeaways – during childhood and adolescence can impair memory and concentration. The fat appears to prevent the brain taking the glucose it needs for healthy performance.'

...KIWI kids are among the world's worst Teletubbies. New research shows only America and Britain are worse for childhood weight problems. NZ will be a nation of fatties in a decade due to increasing numbers of couch potato kids, dietitians warn. Almost a third of all children aged between 7 and 15 are overweight and community paediatric dietitians are fully booked. Factors blamed for the weighty crisis include: ■ The competitive fast food industry

increasing the size and quantity of high-fat products ■ Busy families relying on takeaway meals ■ Parents fearful of letting kids play in parks or walk to school ■ Passive activities like playing computer games, watching videos and TV'.] It's not just TV but all those ads that pose a health risk... At 15 minutes an hour, N[Z] has one of the highest rates in the world. We endure about twice as much advertising as British viewers... The ad breaks provide eating opportunities, especially when they feature food that tickles the taste buds... says[a] visiting American paediatrician... Back home, the... Tuft's University School of Medicine in Boston, Professor... is "still struggling to make our population aware that obesity is a problem."

...The fight against flab is to begin with hot chips, a fat-laden favourite which N[Z]ers are eating in huge amounts. The National Heart Foundation is working... on cooking guidelines in the hope of stopping soggy, oil-soaked fries getting near our stomachs.

...First the good news – hot chips may not be that bad for you after all. Well-cooked, traditional chips can have as little as 6[%] fat content, say health officials. That makes them only twice as fatty as blue-top milk... The bad news is that only chips cooked at the right temperature (180-185 degrees C) and in clean oil make the grade... Only 10[%] of the chips surveyed... [by] Auckland Healthcare... passed the temperature test. Thermostats in more than half the takeaways were not correctly set, and 17[%] used old cooking oil. But... thin chips were more unhealthy than fat chips because there was more potato surface area in each serving to hold the fat... The modern shoestring-style chips sold at most fast-food chains are at the top of the fat range, with a 16.8[%] rating for McDonald's french fries. And if you have fish in batter with your old-fashioned chips, the fat content goes right up again.

...There is ample reason for the food police targeting "greasies": a study in the latest *Consumer* magazine shows that fish and chips have the highest fat out of 13 different takeaway meals. [The 'energy from fat percentage for the sampled fish and chip meals in the study was 49 to 54%. Next highest were McDonald's Big Mac and fries plus Burger King's Whopper and fries, both on 47%, then a Wendy's burger and fries at 45%. KFC's 2-piece pack with chips measured 41%']... The figure recommended by experts is 30-33% of your overall daily diet... Another Auckland Healthcare survey, of mincemeat sold at butchers and a supermarket chain, disproved the theory that you get what you pay for... [T]he fat content ranged from 3 to 18[%], which was good. But the dearer butchers often did not provide the leanest meat – one of the highest fat-content levels came from a top-of-the-range shop in Remuera.

...The fat content of ETA Slims has come under the spotlight in a battle of the crisps in the Auckland District Court. The Commerce Commission alleges that Griffins Foods has breached the Fair Trading Act because... 27[%] of survey respondents... have the impression that Slims are healthier than other potato chips... [The commission says it will] call five witnesses... to prove that some customers believed the Slims had less fat and were better for them. The commission did not have to prove the crisps were less healthy... It did not have to prove people were misled, only that people could be misled through the company's marketing. A commission investigator... told the court that Griffins representatives said to her in an interview that Slims had been named because they were a thinly cut, flat crisp. The name did not reflect any health claims... [The] Judge... adjourned the hearing at 3pm to consider whether a Commerce Commission survey of 600 people's perception of the health value of Slims was admissible... [The] percentage of fat in Slims per 100g was between 35 and 37[%]. ETA Ripples contained the same amount, Kettle Fries were higher at 39[%] and Natural were the lowest with less than 20[%]. By the way, the commission has also been... investigating the implications of a... deal which could leave N[Z] with effectively only one sugar supplier... The upshot... is for 50[%] of... Chelsea Investments... to be acquired by the same people who own... Refined Sugars N[Z]. Chelsea owns the only sugar refinery... [in NZ while Refined] distributes sugar imported from A[US]...

Underweight pottles of potato and gravy, coleslaw and bean salad from outlets meant consumers were being overcharged \$1,634,640 a year, according to a Ministry of Consumer Affairs estimate presented in court yesterday. KFC was ordered to pay \$23,735 in fines and court costs after pleading guilty in[the] Wellington District Court to 23 charges... A lawyer for the ministry... said inspectors found 224 short-weight pottles at 10 stores between Whangarei and Christchurch in February and March. One 500g container was 22[%] underweight and those subject to prosecution were an average of 14[%] underweight. The KFC lawyer... said staff had not followed the correct weighing procedures and were not adequately monitored... The KFC chief executive[, when]... asked outside court what plans the company had to compensate customers, said that in future customers could expect KFC to err on the side of over-filling.

...A 60-year-old Japanese man taking part in a sushi-eating contest choked to death after rapidly downing the rolls of rice wrapped in seaweed... The... police spokesman... said the man began to choke after he swallowed three vinegared pieces... one after another. Each roll was 20cm in length and 2cm thick... About 50 people took part in the contest, sponsored by the[local] town and a farmers' group to promote rice consumption.

...The meat pie, arguably N[Z]'s defining cuisine, has been laid before 15 experts in the inaugural, nationwide Supreme Pie Contest. [One j]udge... of Christchurch chose to fine-tune his palate on reject offerings before judging began in Auckland yesterday. Forty years in the business attest to... [hi]s staying power – the judges face 1460 pies between them. [In related news, the '3000 cakes that were baked days ago for the NZ Bakers Trophy will be destroyed' today.]

...Hundreds of people in a poor district of Kenya's capital scrambled up a mountain of dumped maize yesterday, ignoring warnings that the... food was contaminated. Oblivious to the health risk, slum residents pulled up their trousers or skirts and waded through mud and sewage to scoop the... maize into sacks... The scramble began on Monday as news spread that lorries had dumped about 800 tonnes of spoiled maize at a quarry... Kenyan newspapers reported that the maize was from a food relief consignment and was supposed to have been burned... The maize appeared to have been partly destroyed by pests and was turning reddish from its original yellow colour. Maize is the staple food for Kenyans but its price has risen because of drought earlier this year. Nearly half of Kenya's 29 million people live below the poverty line and at least 11 million... are unemployed... Health inspectors from the Nairobi City Council visited the quarry but did not interfere with the maize collection. They also offered no comments to the media. "Go tell them that we need beans so that we can cook it together with the maize and have a complete meal," a young man joked... [Another] said he had drunk alcohol made from some of the maize and saw no immediate health risk.

...Spain's Supreme Court has blamed the state for a 1981 food poisoning disaster that killed hundreds and crippled thousands in a long-awaited ruling... The court ordered the Government to pay compensation to all victims, saying it was ultimately responsible for the toxic syndrome produced when contaminated industrial oil was sold as cooking oil. [In local news, 'West Auckland bakeries are being warned against buying unmarked cheese considered unfit for human consumption. Auckland Healthcare warns that the cheese is a scam that first surfaced 2 years ago. The man convicted last month on 14 charges under the Food Act was fined more than \$13,000. Another man earlier pleaded guilty to 14 charges under the Food Act and was fined \$7900. The investigation was sparked by a cheese processor who became suspicious when wholesale cheese was offered well below the market price. It was found the cheese was being transported in vehicles used to carry pigs and was being grated in a butcher shop, running a high risk of contamination.'

...Butchers have been warned to stop handing out free pre-cooked saveloys as treats for children. The advice comes after a Christchurch butcher's shop inadvertently infected 2 children and 6 adults with salmonella poisoning'. In international news, 'almost 1400 people, including 1000 children, are suffering from dysentery in hospitals across southern Russia, apparently after having consumed milk, cream or yoghurt from a factory in the town of Kropotkin, in the southern Krasnodar region. Production at the factory was halted.' And 'dodgy ice cream has put 150 people in hospital with food poisoning in Sri Lanka.'

...A ration of mung bean porridge provided by a state elementary school in the Indonesian province of Lampung as part of a nutrition programme has killed two pupils and poisoned 152 other children and teachers... [While on the topic of food poisoning, a] Scottish butcher has pleaded not guilty to "culpably, wilfully and recklessly" supplying... contaminated... cooked meat.

...A 17th person has died in Scotland[from] food poisoning... caused by the E. coli bacteria.

...A report on an outbreak of food poisoning in Scotland... in which 18 people died... and 500 were affected... has severely criticised the Government for failing to implement reforms to improve hygiene in the food industry because of the high costs involved.

...An elderly woman in a Scottish nursing home yesterday became the 22nd victim of a food poisoning epidemic that has ravaged parts of Scotland and England... There's also a health scare in the U[S] over a contaminated batch of frozen Mexican strawberries. Thousands of schoolchildren are lining up for a hepatitis A jab after tainted strawberries were sent to schools in 17 states. Two hundred children are ill in Michigan after eating the strawberries in a frozen dessert... [And] Melbourne's reputation for fine food and dining has been hit by another outbreak of food poisoning... the fourth... in two weeks... Authorities blame the hot weather but others blame government deregulation and the breakdown of health services.

...The number of people suffering... food poisoning after eating pork rolls from a bakery in Melbourne rose yesterday to more than 200. All suffered severe gastroenteritis with 16 hospitalised.

...Arnotts Ltd says it may be forced to lay off up to 1000 full-time workers across A[US], starting this week, in the wake of extortion threats to poison its products. [The firm's m]anaging director... said... at a press conference in Melbourne yesterday... [that] about 100 casual workers had already been laid off with fears of profit losses of up to \$A5 million... Last Friday the company ordered its products off the shelves of shops along the heavily populated east coast after [a] blackmailer threatened to plant poisoned biscuits in stores from today. Authorities have received samples of poisoned biscuits and have warned that just one could kill a child. The extortionist has demanded that police involved in a 1991 murder case take a lie detector test in an attempt to prove the innocence of a man jailed for life for the execution-style murder of a bookmaker and his girlfriend... [T]he mother of the man being sought for questioning in the blackmail bid said her son loved children and would never do anything that could hurt them... There is a long-standing warrant for [her son] over the 1991 killings, but police would not say officially if he was a suspect in the extortion... Meanwhile... Melbourne's... [latest] food poisoning... outbreak, confirmed as Salmonella typhimurium, has made 370 people sick... Health officials say poor food refrigeration is the most likely cause... with rat and mouse waste other possibilities.

...['RATS and roaches are an unwanted addition to the menu at some fast-food outlets. Pest control contractors say they are horrified at the number of food stores infested with rodents and creepy crawlies. "Some food outlets are bad and should get pest control in every three months. But they don't," an Auckland Bugs or Us contractor said. "There are outlets that don't even know they have a problem until it's too late. There are one's I wouldn't eat at.'"]

...Forget about bugging the waiter about those flies in your soup. Sticking plasters are the emerging new and unexpected taste sensation. It seems that plasters are doing everything but sticking to the hands of highly influential people: those who cook or prepare our food. At the shake of a finger, they can have you swallowing more than you bargained on. That extra chewy mouthful is unlikely to do you good. Chances are the misplaced plaster is crawling with nasties which will lump you with the food contamination blues... A dozen angry eaters got the unwanted ingredient last year – up from seven complaints the year before. There have been five complaints so far this year. Restaurants were guilty of a third of last year's tally, while bakeries and takeaway bars made up a quarter each. Butchers – the ones who still have fingers to put plasters on – made up the final 17[%]. Auckland Healthcare's food programme manager... said food staff should wear gloves over sticking plasters as a precaution. Large food-processing companies kept logs of plasters issued to staff and proof of the plaster was needed at the end of the day. Some factories even used plasters with a thin metal strip that could be picked up by a metal detector.

...['Hundreds of Aucklanders may have been exposed to hepatitis A after a staff member at a Mission Bay restaurant contracted the disease. Almost 350 diners who ate at Bluefins Restaurant and Bar on six nights in the past three weeks are being sought by the Auckland Public Health Office. Customers on the 15th or 16th would still be able to prevent the disease from taking hold if they had an injection of immune globulin before Wednesday. It was too late for the injection to have any effect on earlier patrons, but they should still contact the public health unit. Bluefins co-owner was distraught at the health scare.'

...['Chinese authorities held the boss of a fast-food restaurant for questioning last night as they investigated a food poisoning outbreak that state media said killed 41 people and put hundreds more in hospital. Locals in Tangshan, a small industrial town near Nanjing, estimated more than 100 people had died']...

'The next time you fall ill with food poisoning after eating at a restaurant, don't rush to blame dodgy hygiene in the kitchen – the culprit could be a fellow diner. A single diner who vomits can infect an entire restaurant, say British scientists, who found that vomit is astonishingly effective at spreading viruses. Public health officials were asked to probe an outbreak of food poisoning in the town of Derby where 126 people sat down to dinner at six tables in a local hotel. During the meal, a diner was sick. Hotel staff swiftly cleaned up and the meal continued. But three days later, other diners started falling ill. In all, 52 people came down with fever, nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea. A rigorous inspection of the kitchen found nothing wrong, but the real source of the infection began to emerge when the scientists looked at the seating arrangements. More than 90% of the people at the same table as the sick woman later reported food poisoning. More than 70% of the diners at an adjacent table became ill, and at a table on the other side of the restaurant, the rate was still 25%.'

...['Grim toll of food poisoning Food poisoning causes more than 23 million lost working days a year in Britain, a new report claims. Twice as many cases are being reported now than 10 years ago, says the survey by two health officers. It is of the utmost importance that everyone who handles food, or who works in a place where food is handled, should know the Food Hygiene Regulations. *Food poisoning can be prevented by:* 1 High standards of personal hygiene. 2 Attention to physical fitness. 3 Maintaining good working conditions. 4 Maintaining equipment in good repair and in clean condition. 5 Adequate provision of cleaning facilities and cleaning equipment. 6 Correct storage of foodstuffs at the right temperature.']

...Rice may be nice, but too many people are risking food poisoning by leaving it on the bench overnight, according to an Auckland Healthcare survey. The Public Health Protection survey of 1000 Aucklanders responsible for preparing household meals revealed "significant gaps" in food safety knowledge, with people in their 20s, and Pacific Islanders, scoring worst... More than half of those surveyed believed it was all right to eat rice which had cooled overnight at room temperature, confirming the perception that rice was seen as a low-risk food for food poisoning. It was, in fact, responsible for around 20[%] of 24 solved food poisoning outbreaks in Auckland. The survey also showed that just 76[%] of respondents thought the fridge was the best place to store fresh eggs, a problem blamed partly on supermarkets, which stored them unrefrigerated.

...Countdown and Foodtown supermarket chains have recalled their own brands of sorbet and gelato because they may contain fragments of glass. The recall covers all flavours... Customers[who haven't yet consumed their purchase] will receive a full refund...

Nutritionists often advocate the benefits of eating fresh green salads but a survey of... 22 major... Auckland supermarkets is making them eat their words. *Consumer* magazine reports that 40[%] of supermarket salads sold at Woolworths, Big Fresh and New World contained too much bacteria... Nearly 13[%]... contained listeria bacteria, which is a danger to pregnant women, and 8[%] had unacceptable levels of faecal coliform bacteria... an indication of poor food-handling practices... *Consumer* magazine... [also found salads] put on sale after their "best before" dates had expired[, misleading]... labelling on some salads which suggested the food was fresher than it actually was[, and]... salads displayed at too high a temperature... Staff at some supermarkets had little or no food safety training... Since the survey, Foodtown has closed its self-service salad bars.

...['the owner of a US sausage factory is charged with murdering 3 health inspectors. Their bodies, which had gunshot wounds, were found in his factory. The owner – who faces the death penalty if convicted – claimed inspectors wanted to close him down after complaints over sausage cooking temperatures.'

...‘a bun fight has erupted in Onehunga after a lunch bar owner refused to let an Auckland City Council food inspector check her premises. The owner says she took a stand because the council is putting people’s health at risk by letting bun runners get away with “blue murder”. Bun runners deliver food door-to-door instead of serving people from one location. Each year the owner pays the council \$280 so food inspectors can check her lunch bar twice a year to see she is following food and hygiene regulations. If she passes the checks she gets a food licence. If she refuses to let a food inspector back in her lunch bar, the council could revoke her licence. She says the council is not monitoring bun runners and inspectors have told her the problem is “out of control”. But the council’s environment health spokesman says the problem is not out of control, but is “difficult to control”. He says it is not easy to monitor bun runners, but there had been no reported cases of food poisoning. However, the council wants to amend the food bylaw to include bun runners’. Incidentally, the] **Queen Mother is to receive her first dinner from Meals-on-Wheels... one of 24 million delivered... each year... to help publicise Meals-on-Wheels Day.**

...[‘While Mother’s Day is usually dismissed as a commercial exercise, historians claim its origins stretch back to “Mothering Sunday” in 17th Century Britain, the fourth Sunday in Lent. Classicists prefer the ancient Greek celebration in honour of mothers in a tribute to Rhea, the Mother of the Gods. The modern version took off when Julia Ward Howe, who wrote the words to the American Battle Hymn of the Republic, pushed for a Mother’s Day in the US in 1872. In 1910, West Virginia marked the day and the rest of America followed suit until President Woodrow Wilson declared it a national day for the second Sunday of May. Flowers and breakfast in bed may be the traditional Mother’s Day gift but figures from a market research firm, which records national supermarket sales each week, indicate that many of us rely on the tried and true box of chocolates with a card. Last year in the week leading up to Mother’s Day, NZers spent \$250,000 on chocolates – compared with the average weekly spend of \$100,000. Discounted gold jewellery, makeup and perfume are perennial favourites.’

...‘Britons have become physically addicted to curries, according to research published this week. An increasing love affair with Indian food over the past 50 years has permanently changed the English palate, claimed the author of the research. The senior research fellow at Nottingham Trent University found that the mere thought of a chicken tikka masala or lamb korma could set hearts racing and blood pressure soaring. He monitored the reactions of more than 100 people to different foods. The thought of traditional British food, such as steak and kidney pie, increased people’s blood pressure by an average of 1.8 points, while the anticipation of a tikka masala raised their blood pressure by 4.9 points. A rise in heart and blood pressure are associated with arousal and natural highs – and the fact that people get excited at the mere anticipation of a curry indicates that the combination of ingredients may be addictive.’]

...IT IS meant to be the ideal social occasion. A chance to break bread with close friends in the comfort of your own home. But a new British survey has found that bread may not be the only thing broken on such occasions – a quarter of hostesses become so stressed by entertaining they resort to hurling objects around the kitchen[, or else]... the supposedly genial hosts end up rowing with their partners in front of guests. Tension over who should do the cooking accounted for 29% of all rows, with 74% of women feeling aggrieved by bearing the brunt of the work. Criticising the cooking was a major bone of contention (34%) and male partners flirting with female guests led to arguments for 35%.

...A British medical specialist... said studies showed that... [healthy] food tended to be more expensive and was out of reach for many in low socio-economic groups... A better diet was a key factor in why rich people had superior health to the poor.

...[‘THE average Kiwi family isn’t spending enough on food to stay healthy. A Christchurch health promoter and member of the Network Against Food Poverty said the average two-parent family with two pre-school kids needs to spend \$134 on food a week to have a healthy diet. “For many low-income families this is a lot more than what’s left over at the end of the week to buy food after paying other household costs.” She said fresh or frozen fruit and vegetables should make up a large part of a family’s weekly shopping. “But high-fat foods are a cheaper source of energy than fruit and vegetables,”...]

HUNGRY Kiwis are tucking into fast food because it’s better value for money. Pizzas and burgers are high in fat but they give more energy than the same amount of fresh fruit and veges – and they’re cheaper. One kilogram of apples – that’s about 5 or 6 – costs about \$2 at the supermarket and will give 1506 kilojoules of energy. One kg of hot chips costs \$3 and gives 8300kj. A McDonald’s chicken burger costs \$1.95 and has 1584kj. A fresh lettuce costs \$2.49 and has just 315kj of energy. “Apples and tomatoes are good for us but they are mostly water...”]

‘WATER. It’s the real thing. Coca-Cola Co will begin selling bottled water in the US next year. It will be called Dasani, which doesn’t mean anything in particular but is meant to convey “a clean, fresh taste”. “Suffice it to say, we think this is the right time for us to get into this market,” Coke’s spokesman said. Bottled water is hot these days with numerous brands stocking the shelves. It is outstripping soft drinks in sales growth. Pepsi-Cola Co started selling bottled water five years ago, but although the maker of the most popular soft drink sells a brand of bottled water called BonAqua overseas it has been reluctant to get into the business in the US. It has preferred instead to encourage USers to drink Coke, Sprite and other sodas. To meet increased demand among health and weight-conscious USers, Coke has begun offering sports drinks and juices. Furthermore, as recently as last month, its chairman and chief executive said Coke was leery of water. “There’s an awful lot of water sold in the world. There’s not an awful lot of money made selling water.”’

...‘It might be time to lose your bottle – a new study says drinkers of bottled water may be pouring money down the drain. Tap water in most developed countries may be of the same standard as bottled mineral water, says a report issued this week by the conservationist World Wildlife Fund International. Globally, the bottled water industry is reportedly worth \$US22 billion a year, yet the study says in many cases the only difference is that the water comes in a fancy bottle rather than through a pipe. The NZ bottled-water industry is worth about \$NZ12 million a year. The secretary of the NZ Bottled Water Association, who is also the marketing manager for Frucor Beverages, which makes NZ Natural and H2Go bottled water, rejected the report as “nonsense.”’

...‘Food costs have rocketed, right? Wrong. According to Otago University, basic food costs for an average family have increased by just \$1 a week, on a yearly basis. The Department of Human Nutrition has surveyed family food costs regularly since 1972. Adolescent boys in Auckland came in with the highest basic food cost of \$59 a week, compared with \$58 last year. To feed an adolescent girl in Auckland costs \$49 a week; a man needs \$46 and a woman \$44. A 10-year-old needs \$39; a 5-year-old, \$26; a preschooler, \$24; and a 1-year-old, \$21. Prices in the other centres are slightly lower’...

‘NEXT time your supermarket bill leaves you shaking your head in disbelief, take comfort from the fact the groceries are among the cheapest in the developed world. A “shopping basket” study of the 24 OECD countries found only Turkey and Portugal were cheaper places to shop than NZ. Shoppers here pay almost a third less for groceries than northern Europeans – the basket came to \$370 for the same products in Denmark and Norway. Those countries were followed by Switzerland and Japan, the only non-European country in the top eight. Britain was eighth on the list and the US 14th.’ In related news,] **H.J. Heinz Co yesterday reported earnings of \$US243 million... in its first quarter, up 9.9[%] from a year earlier. Heinz said the profits, equal to 65USc a share, came on sales of \$2.2 billion.**

...Watties owner HJ Heinz Co says its profits rose 6[%] to almost \$US190 million... for its second fiscal... quarter, despite one-time restructuring costs... of \$12.4 million... and lower sales. [Speaking of Watties, its ‘asparagus growers are being driven spare by green-fingered thieves. Some Hawke’s Bay producers have resorted to camping in their paddocks overnight to catch the asparagus crop rustlers. Last year, several tonnes of spears – worth up to \$15 per kg – were stolen from fields. One grower said he had been “nailed three or four times” last year. He joked that he had asked police not to arrest the thieves if they were ever caught. “I told the police I’d want to hire them as they work quicker than the pickies to get about 400 kilos in a couple of hours.”’]

...‘The “Jafa” label sticks for some out-of-Aucklanders. No wonder. Latest evidence comes from Kerikeri – my weekend base these days. A neighbour there – not surprisingly – has an orchard. He normally sells two types of oranges, but this season he’s marketing only one. Problems began when a group called to inquire about possible work picking. They were from Auckland. Told the next work in the orchard was a few weeks off, they left. A few days later, after the owners had been away, truck tyre marks were plain between the trees, and a lot more fruit than normal was on the ground. When the owners went away the next weekend, they put heavy rocks across the drive – so heavy they needed a front-end loader to move them. And they put down a board

containing more than 100 nails, points up. When they got back, the rocks had been moved, the board had disappeared and so had thousands of dollars worth of oranges. The local theory, supported by police, is that the fruit was taken for sale at south Auckland markets. Raiders also cleaned out a full crop of tomatoes from a Waimauku greenhouse a few months ago while the owners slept – 1.5 tonnes worth \$3500. Another Kumeu raid involved 40 cases of cabbages freshly picked and stored overnight in a shed with a tractor barring the doorway. Others steal empty fruit and produce crates by the hundreds. The crates involve refunds of around \$11 a crate if the raider can find a grower willing to use his account to put the crates back into circulation. Maybe some were used to carry those stolen oranges. This is not like something out of “Huckleberry Finn”, youngsters raiding neighbour’s orchards for a few apples. This is crime, robbing hardworking people of the product of their toil, their only livelihood. As one Waimauku grower said: “It’s hard enough making a living out of fruit and vegetables without parasites stealing the stuff from you.” Parasites. Sounds exactly right.’ By the way, a] **court in Seattle has ruled that a supermarket chain must pay \$US750,000... in compensation to a woman wrongly accused of shoplifting. A security guard handcuffed the woman... then emptied her handbag on the floor of the store before escorting her to the check-out. The court also sentenced the over-zealous guard, an off-duty policeman, to an additional payment of \$US2500.**

...Firebombs exploded in two Sainsbury supermarkets in London at the weekend. One person was injured...

[Terrorism isn’t a problem for NZ supermarkets, but t]erritorialism is alive and lurking in the aisles... It raised its ugly head during what would normally have been a mundane trip to a North Shore food barn. Standing in the queue reading a magazine I realised I had forgotten... [to buy] a packet of gingernuts. I sprinted from my trolley, abandoning it for all of a minute. No harm in that. The woman being served in front of me was obviously there for the long haul. However, when I returned my half-empty trolley had been shoved away from the queue. Struggling to contain myself, I approached a small woman who was standing in my place with double the amount of groceries I had. “What’s the story?” I asked. The expletives that followed could hardly be described as pleasant. The diminutive shopper was adamant she had a right to push in. After all I had broken shopping etiquette by leaving the queue... She even elicited support from fellow queuers who appeared equally staunch in their views... The more I eyeballed my tiny enemy the more I thought her face was familiar. I felt slightly sick when I realised that last time I spoke to her was several weekends before when she coaxed me into buying a lounge suite from her business in Wairau Park... Her language at the time had been sickly sweet, I recall. Utterly defeated, I moved to the back of the long queue. No longer able to concentrate on the magazine in my trolley, I moved forward to put it back. “Yeah that’s right, muck up the magazine rack,” she said.

...While it’s all the rage in Britain and A[US], frustrated shoppers have yet to go off their trolleys in N[Z] supermarkets. Across the Tasman dawdling browsers, runaway children and checkout delays have already sent some shoppers into a fury. A Sydney woman needed hospital treatment after a recent punch-up. And[the] English-born... deputy manager of the Glenfield branch of Big Fresh in Auckland, experienced regular outbursts in his homeland. “There was quite a lot of it over there. I’ve had lots of cases where people deliberately hit others with troll[ey]s. NZ]ers seem to enjoy shopping... there’s a more laidback attitude... here...,” he said. [Editor’s note: When it comes to trolleys, the main worry for NZ supermarkets is having customers remove them from their car parks. The ‘Foodtown/Countdown supermarkets marketing manager says his chain loses about 200 trolleys annually, at a cost of around \$350 each. A Foodtown supermarket on Auckland’s North Shore and one in south Auckland are likely to be the first to test a new system whereby customers pay \$2 for a trolley and are refunded when they return it. New World, Pak ’n Save, Four Square, Woolworths and Big Fresh supermarkets said they were always reviewing trolley systems but at this stage had no plans for a bond.]

...‘A SUPERMARKET chain is looking at hi-tech locking devices in a bid to stop thieves taking its shopping trolleys. Foodstuffs, the operator of Pak’N’Save and New World, plans to trial a device that automatically locks the wheels of trolleys once they leave the supermarket carpark.’ By the way, ‘6000 new food products are offered to NZ supermarkets each year; 600 make it onto the shelf, but only six remain five years later’]...

Progressive Enterprises’ \$35 million outlay on information technology during the next three years is setting the scene for a showdown between chain stores and independent supermarkets. The owners of 74 Foodtown, Countdown and 3 Guys supermarkets, plus 16... Wholesale warehouses, believe the ambitious project will produce huge cost savings and advantages for the group and for customers... The grand aim is to gain control of the entire supply chain and manage delivery of goods according to “the demand experience” at each store. Bar code information from each sale in any of Progressive’s supermarkets will be piped to a central host, which then organises the raw data by product type and manufacturer. The process enables more accurate restocking of the stores because it is based on actual movements of goods. It should also mean less “out-of-stocks,” which are estimated to cost supermarkets between 5 and 10[%] a year in lost sales. The ultimate goal, however – not yet worked out in the Progressive scheme – is to open, possibly via the Internet, parts of the host system to manufacturers. They would be able to check in periodically to see when their shelf space was emptying and move to meet demand... [W]hile such a feedback loop would be unlikely to achieve a “sell one, make one” goal, it might, for example, enable two, rather than one, fresh bread deliveries to stores each day.

...[‘Cancer scare for Asian sauces The Health Ministry is testing oyster and soy sauces produced by Amoy and Lee Kum Kee after British authorities last month condemned their use claiming they contained the cancer-causing contaminant 3-MCPD. The contaminant is produced by a chemical reaction from a food flavouring in the sauces, hydrolysed vegetable protein. Amoy sauces are available from most Asian supermarkets and used in many Asian restaurants here. Lee Kum Kee products have been sold in NZ for more than 20 years and are widely distributed and available in supermarkets. Spokesmen for both brands said their products did contain 3-MCPD but the ingredient was not harmful. Products are not being removed from shelves and they are confident health authorities will rule the products hazard-free. Lee Kum Kee’s marketing manager said the company’s products had not been banned anywhere in the world but the company was working towards reducing the levels of 3-MCPD in some products to allay customer fears.’

...‘Cancer fear stalls anti-fat drug The anti-obesity medicine Xenical is available in Britain, Europe and NZ for prescription use but not the US because the all-powerful FDA is stalling its introduction there. In the meantime, should the 3500 or so NZ women taking Xenical be concerned at the FDA’s demand for more information? Certainly not, according to the manufacturer, which produced studies showing Xenical had not caused cancer in animals. Substances that cause cancer in humans invariably do so in rats and mice. As the FDA has already noticed, 12 older women taking mostly a higher dose of the active drug developed breast tumours, compared with three taking the placebo. (A placebo is used as a control in testing new drugs.) However, re-analysis showed, among other things, that 9 of the 12 tumours had been present in early stages before the women entered the Xenical trials. That left three breast cancer cases in the active drug group that had arisen during the trial, compared with two in the placebo group. But still the FDA was not happy. It issued Xenical a “letter of approvability” which means, according to an FDA spokeswoman: “That we need more information before a drug is finally approved for marketing.” Confidentiality rules prevent her revealing what information the FDA is waiting for. Although AUS’s regulator, the Therapeutic Goods Association (TGA), will not comment on pending drug applications, Xenical’s manufacturer has confirmed that the agency has also asked more questions. The TGA takes considerable notice of the FDA. Xenical’s manufacturer says it does not expect to know until mid-1999 if it can make Xenical available to AUSns.’

...‘unsubsidised drug Xenical rang-up \$882,057 of sales in its first full month in NZ. Now, 5000 seriously overweight NZers are paying about \$6 a day for their course’ – ‘the cheapest price in the world’. NZ is also ‘the only country allowed to advertise Xenical on TV, although the US is about to become the second’]...

AS IF IT WEREN’T ALREADY HARD ENOUGH to get Americans to eat less and exercise more, an advisory panel to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration last week gave the green light to yet another weight-loss shortcut, recommending approval of a new drug, called orlistat, that prevents the body from absorbing as much as 30% of the fat it takes in. The... diet-in-a-pill... marketed as Xenical, works by disabling pancreatic enzymes that help the intestines absorb the fat in foods. The drug produces “a kind of intestinal aversion” to fat, explains... an FDA adviser...

[from] Rockefeller University... “Patients learn there are consequences to eating more.” Consequences, indeed. Fat that isn’t absorbed has to go somewhere, and orlistat users find out in a hurry just where. Among the drug’s less elegant side effects are loose stools and oily intestinal leakage. Moreover, about 20% of those who take orlistat absorb not only less fat but also fewer nutrients – particularly vitamins D and E and beta carotene... Last year the FDA approved Redux, a drug that controls appetite by boosting levels of the neurotransmitter serotonin, producing a sort of chemically induced illusion of being full. A similar medication, sibutramine, is expected to be approved soon. Both... have side effects... including fatigue and insomnia. Doctors are quick to point out that the new diet pills are intended for only the truly obese. That caveat notwithstanding... [the diet pill manufacturing] companies... can be forgiven for feeling that they have hit the pharmaceutical jackpot. About 58 million Americans already spend \$30 billion annually battling the scale. Even if the new drug doesn’t slim waist-lines, it will surely fatten someone’s bottom line.

...Acknowledging the oversized has been profitable for some time. The U[S] now has at least half a dozen speciality magazines... Behind the burgeoning power of the “fat dollar” are lobby groups like the National Association for the Advancement of Fat Americans...

More than 100 overweight [NZers] a year... think they haven’t got a job because of their body size or weight... [then] tell the Human Rights Commission they are being discriminated against... However, [the HRC]... media officer... said it was not within the commission’s jurisdiction to deal with discrimination based on weight, unless it was caused by a medical condition. “Then it could possibly come under grounds of disability... If you define the person for the job as having the right skills and qualifications, it is easy to exclude the right person because of irrelevant characteristics such as weight, or for that matter race, sex, age.” The secretary of the Council of Trade Unions... said discrimination on the basis of appearance was not unusual, considering society’s “fixation with youth and beauty.” A labour relations officer for the Employers Association... said that such discrimination was not covered by legislation, but they would advise employers to act within the spirit of the law.

...WHEN [a NZer] announced she would run for the mayoralty of Lower Hutt her weight was the last thing on her mind despite a fleeting worry that the mayoral robes might not fit. However, it soon became clear that her size 24 figure was an issue to some. She was amazed when several supporters advised her to diet to improve her mayoral chances. Last week’s... revelation that ...o[ve]r... 100 overweight people a year complain they have missed out on a job because of their size was no surprise to her. While... she doesn’t dwell on such discrimination... [she] said it’s something she’s had to deal with for most of her life and she gets tired of it. A regional councillor, she... is annoyed at the assumption that fat people are unfit and lacking energy. She recalls one job interview where she was asked if she had had a medical, which she felt meant “are you about to have a heart attack?” Her doctor has assured her she has nothing to worry about... [She] said big is both beautiful and powerful, but adds that fear about potential discrimination in jobs, was probably responsible for her being a freelance journalist, for many years. [● ‘The Government is prepared to pay an invalid’s benefit to people who are too fat to work but won’t pay for operations such’ as ‘stomach stapling – which costs \$20,000 in NZ.’]

...A DOCTOR who performs controversial new surgery that effectively removes the patient’s stomach so that it becomes unable to hold more than a few mouthfuls of food has thousands of overweight Americans queuing at his surgery door... to spend more than \$75,000 for the operation.

...[‘a controversial North Shore liposuction doctor is free to practice without disciplinary conditions after his appeals outlasted a 3-year time limit for their being imposed. The conditions were set by the former medical practitioners’ disciplinary committee in 1994 after it found the Dr guilty of professional misconduct following complaints from patients. He was also ordered to pay fines and costs of over \$64,000. The Dr appealed unsuccessfully to the High Court and the Court of Appeal. He also appealed to the Medical Council, which upheld most of the committee’s findings and found a “serious level of professional misconduct.” It said the Dr failed in some cases to do any pre-operative assessment, didn’t adequately consult patients about the procedures and failed to ensure adequate post-operative care. The Dr appealed again last year but, 3 days before the hearing was due to begin, abandoned the action. Meanwhile, Auckland’s High Court was asked to reapply the conditions for another 3 years. But in a just-released decision, a judge said the Medical Council had the power to extend the time limit, and it’d be wrong for the court to rule on it now. The Dr said that a condition preventing him from calling himself a surgeon was garbage, and resulted from a campaign against him by plastic surgeons. His insurance would cover outstanding fines and costs.’]

...More than 90[%] of women, regardless of weight, suffer from the cottage cheese thigh affliction... In part, cellulite is caused by women’s hormones – which is why men don’t get it. The female sex hormone, oestrogen, encourages our bodies to store fat and tucks it out of the way of major organs; in other words, on the thighs. But cellulite cells are no ordinary fat cells. Not only do they lock excess toxins away but they also encase the unexpelled waste in fluid... then bind the whole slimy bubble together in hardened connective tissue. Regular exercise alone will not rid your body of cellulite. Some exercise can even make the problem worse. If you want to wash the toxic sludge from your thighs, tackle your lymphatic system. This is the body’s cleaning system and the presence of cellulite is a warning that it is not working properly, leaving you drained of energy and weakening your immune system. Adjusting your diet is the first step to cleaning out our lymphatics... [E]at plenty of fruit and vegetables... drink at least two litres of water a day and cut down on tea and coffee. As diuretics, these beverages pass through the system without your body being able to make use of their water content. And, at the same time, they deposit nasty substances into your fat cells. You also need to start brushing your skin. It sounds mad, but it really helps. Brushing provides an essential stimulus to the lymph system and helps it drain the cellular waste from tissues... The cosmetics industry is always trying to cash in on cellulite and constantly devises new tortures... [In one example, the affected area is] lathered with a thermoactive gel, wrapped in clingfilm, covered with a blanket and set to roast for half an hour... The eighties saw an explosion of interest in liposuction – an invasive and gruesome method which actually damages thighs – but Nineties women want a quick-fix answer. [■ Gaining weight can be due to an underactive thyroid gland – a condition that afflicts 20% of older women, and 1-in-12 under the age of 50.]

...‘The pills are tiny, but they are being touted as bigger than Viagra – and store-owners are bracing for a stampede from eager women when the product is released in NZ next month. Cellasene is promoted as a solution to a curse that has dogged women for centuries – cellulite (the dimply, cottage-cheese-textured deposits of fat that gather on the hips, thighs and buttocks of women past their 30s). The fat-busting herbal treatment has caused mayhem in AUS, where women stripped store shelves of the latest batch from Italy. The product boasts it can dissolve cellulite within weeks. 40 tablets cost \$64. The maker recommends an 8 week course “of 2 tablets a day”. However, some women have walked away with hundreds of boxes. The woman handling the NZ launch said: “We are anticipating a similar stampede in NZ. The Italian scientists claim a 78% success rate. We just hope we have stocks to meet demand.”’

...‘A US lingerie firm says it has devised pantyhose tights that can treat cellulite. Victoria’s Secret has filed a European patent. The tights are treated with theophylline acetate, which is bonded to the nylon using an organic polymer and then “doped” with silantriol, a silica-based compound. The application says the tights were worn by 12 volunteers for 30 days, and at the end of the tests, ultrasound showed their thighs were 2 to 5cm thinner.’ Meanwhile, ‘Cellasene arrived in US drugstores last week and got lots of TV news attention. The pills’ 15 minutes of fame provides a lesson in the power and perils of hype. During Cellasene’s US debut, its promoters emphasized that drugstores in AUS sold out a limited supply of the herbal remedy. Yet experts say there’s no solid evidence that it has any effect on cellulite. But its inventor says three studies resulted in 85% of patients showing significant reductions in cellulite.’

...‘The Italian inventor – who had the brainwave for an anti-cellulite formula while judging a Miss Italy contest (its exact ingredients are a “closely guarded secret”) – is visiting NZ to dispel some of the myths that have been written about Cellasene.’

...‘Women feel cellulite pill loss only in wallets Nearly 64% of women who took a pill that claims to get rid of cellulite actually ended up putting on weight, a British survey has found. Appetites soared when women took the herbal remedy Cellasene and only about a quarter saw any reduction in the “orange peel skin” on their bottoms and thighs. The findings are set to disappoint thousands of women who bought Cellasene when it went on sale here.

An Auckland University researcher and GP said: "Unfortunately, most people who buy this kind of miracle pill do so because they are tired of taking regular exercise. These products come in waves and don't hang around for long because people soon discover the manufacturers' claims don't stack up."

...a British slimming guru... told... 300 women... that her special diet was helping them to shed kilos. But she had rigged the scales. The women were really gaining weight, one gained 7kg. After a suspicious customer caught her out... [she] was fined £11,000... in a West Midlands court for knowingly making false statements... [Incidentally, people] taking two appetite-suppressing products could be risking heart problems and should stop taking the medication, the Ministry of Health said yesterday. Fenfluramine (sold as Ponderax) and dexfenfluramine (Adifax) had been withdrawn from the world market by their distributors... Several new case reports had confirmed a significant rise in the risk of heart-valve abnormalities in patients taking either... [drug] in combination with another diet medication called phentermine for more than six months... "These medications are indicated for short-term use only and it is thought that only a small number of patients in N[Z] have been prescribed these agents,"... said the Director-General of Health... The drugs are supposed to be used only by people who are clinically obese and never in combination, but the "fen-phen" diet fad has spread rapidly in the past few years.

... "Fad diets don't work" according to a booklet launched by the Nutrition Foundation yesterday. The booklet aims to get people off diet "treadmills" and promotes healthy lifestyles.

...Cases of malnutrition similar to those seen in [Last] World countries are occurring in N[Z] because of... diet-conscious parents. Researchers have dubbed the problem the muesli syndrome... In these cases, parents had fed their infants low-fat, high-fibre diets with low energy intakes, in "a misguided effort to prevent chronic disease." The parents did not realise that strategies like limiting fat intake by feeding skimmed milk, or not allowing children to eat snacks... were inappropriate for growing children... A Massey University human nutrition lecturer... said the lack of consensus on the right age to reduce dietary fat had added to the "confusion and paranoia" surrounding diet and health.

...The Government should be teaching parents how to care for their children, instead of[relying on] free doctors' visits, says a Lower Hutt GP... [who] often saw children suffering illnesses caused by poor nutrition. She believed the standard of children's health was falling dramatically... [C]hildren were eating more junk food and fast food than before, and too much sweet food. "There is a generation of younger mothers who have not seen their own mothers preparing foods at home or buying fresh fruit and vegetables. There are a lot of very poor nutritional habits out there, particularly among pre-schoolers and pre-adolescents."

...N[Z] children are getting plumper but are missing out on vital vitamins, iron and fibre... There is little hard evidence on child nutrition, but... observations were supported by a survey of 216 children aged between 6 and 8, which found that one in three ate virtually no fruit and vegetables, and one in five ate takeaways three times a week.

...N[Z] is sitting on a "time bomb" of obesity-related health problems, says the medical director of the National Heart Foundation... [The percentage] of Aucklanders found to be obese... [went from '8.2% in 1982 to 13.9% in 1994 for males and from 9.8% to 13.0% for females'. Because NZ] was relatively small, it was easier for it than other countries to start a national action plan.

...['NZers' hip-pockets could be hit as hard as their waistlines if policymakers swallow a "fat-tax" proposal from doctors. The GPs want a tax slapped on foods containing saturated fats, to reduce the country's high death rate from heart disease – one of the worst of Western countries. British research suggests that the scheme could save an estimated 50 lives a year here. In China, a 10% rise in the price of pork led to daily fat intake falling by 11% among the poor and 5% among the rich. The Health Minister, farmers and meat processors yesterday gave the idea, floated in the *Medical Journal*, a cool reception.'

... 'Despite official exhortations to eat less and exercise more, Britons are getting fatter and fatter. The Government's annual health survey shows Britons today weigh, on average, 4.1kg more than they did in 1980. The results will be a great disappointment to the pencil-slim Minister of Health. Only recently she declared that good progress was being made in improving the nation's diet. In fact, health officials accept that there is not the slenderest hope of meeting the target set in the *Health of the Nation* strategy document published in 1992 – which was to trim the nation's waistline back to what it was in 1980. In the past 15 years, the proportion of people in England and Wales who are overweight has risen by more than one-sixth, to 54% of men and 45% of women. The number of those who are dangerously fat has doubled: 13% of men and 16% of women are now regarded as obese. People who are obese are six times more likely to suffer from high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol and heart disease, according to estimates by the WHO. Britain continues to have one of the highest rates of deaths due to heart disease in western Europe. Ministers say they are concerned, but they are no less anxious, one suspects, to avoid offending the manufacturers of processed food. A report on obesity by the Nutrition Task Force (a committee set up by the Government as part of its new health strategy) was initially suppressed by the Department of Health. The Nutrition Task Force has now been wound up. The real reason for its demise, according to the scientists who served on the task force, was the refusal of food manufacturers to co-operate. It asked 16 trade associations representing parts of the food industry to help identify ways of reducing the fat in their products. One replied with the information.'

... 'British magazine *Autocar* says authorities in Greece have decided that seriously obese people should not be issued driving licences. They say fat people's reflexes are slower, thus making them a danger to other motorists.'

... 'TWO THOUSAND airline passengers will be weighed before they fly as aviation officials crack down on safety concerns that some airlines were not taking account of heavier people. "It's a fundamental part of aviation. You need to know how much load you are carrying. You can't exceed design parameters," said a Civil Aviation Authority spokesman. Airlines theoretically apply a standard weight of 77kg to each person – a figure which originated from surveys 40 years ago. However, Air NZ already applies a standard weight of 82kg to each person, including cabin bags.'

... 'Overweight girls are more likely to experience social and economic problems in adulthood than their slimmer peers. A study of obesity in adolescents, published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, found that overweight girls were less likely to get married, tended to live below the poverty line, have lower education levels and lower incomes in later life.'

... 'The girl from Ipanema is too fat, just like many of her Latin American neighbours. Delegates at the first Latin American Conference on Health Weight in Rio de Janeiro say rising income in developing nations such as Brazil is leading to poorer eating habits and increased obesity – although, ironically, prosperous Brazilians are generally leaner than the less affluent. The president of the Brazilian Association for the Study of Obesity said about 10% of Brazil's 165 million people were obese – 6% of the men and 13.3% of the women. The conference spokeswoman said obesity was a factor in about 200,000 deaths in Latin America every year.'

...Overweight people in Brazil's capital city will soon have the right to a bit more comfort in buses and theatres... A new law, scheduled to be ratified tomorrow, obliges theatres in Brasilia to earmark 3[%] of their seats for overweight people. Buses will have to have at least one seat that is twice the size of the one now in use... [In local news, a] South Island man has been sentenced to house arrest because he is too big to be sent to prison... [A]t 305kg (48 stone)... [the man] was so big he would not have fitted into prison clothing or a prison bed.

...['A 51-year-old Swedish woman has escaped a jail term for home brewing illegal alcohol because she is too fat. The woman and her husband were sentenced to 2 1/2 months each for making and selling moonshine from their flat in Norrland. But the woman argued in a court of appeal that she should not go to prison because her weight of 158kg meant she needed help with personal hygiene and dressing. The court agreed and instead fined her 15,000 crowns'.

... 'Heaviest man: In 1978, a US citizen weighed more than 635kg (100st). ■ 'In the late sixties, an American who weighed 590kg was considered the fattest man on Earth. After one failed attempt at losing weight, he tried to commit suicide by eating himself to death' – but also failed to achieve that!]

...A Californian woman who police say allowed her 309kg daughter to eat herself to death was charged yesterday with criminal child abuse. [The daughter] was 13 when she died last November... in her mother's apartment... A medical examiner determined the cause of death to be congestive

heart failure due to morbid obesity. Police say the girl's mother... did nothing to curb [her] weight since abandoning visits to a nutritionist when the girl was seven... [The mother] said she would plead no contest to the abuse charge, even though she insisted she did not intentionally harm her child. The charge carries a maximum penalty of six years in prison. [The mother] discovered that her daughter was not breathing when she returned from the supermarket on the afternoon of November 19. Firefighters responded to a 911 call but were unable to revive the child... Police were called after firefighters reported finding... bed sores on the girl's body. [She] was lying on a dirty... carpet in the living room. The 1.6m body was unclothed... One of her thighs had a circumference of 1.37m, as big as the waist of a very heavy man. One of her calves measured 1.2m. The floor was littered with discarded food and drink containers, books and videotapes, and human waste. Her mother and brother later told police that [the girl] basically lived on the living room floor in front of the television... Her brother said he had not seen his sister stand up for a couple of months. The girl's body would not fit on the coroner's stretcher, so two coroner's deputies – with the help of four firefighters – rolled the body on to a large canvas and dragged it into the coroner's wagon. [● In recent years 'America's child obesity rates have doubled' and, today, '55% of Americans are classified as being overweight' while 'one-in-four are obese. In Britain, it's one in seven.' 'People who weigh over 10 to 20% more than they should for their height, age, and body build are obese. Obesity is an imbalance of metabolism (body chemistry). It may be caused by overeating, by malfunction of body glands, or by breakdown of the body tissues.']

...Two youngsters have provided the first direct evidence of a genetic component to human obesity, sparking hope that drugs might be able to correct the genetic flaw in grossly overweight people, say British scientists. ['If you have one fat parent, your chances of being a fat adult are 40%, and 80% if you have two fat parents' but, until now, the only clues to a link between genes and fat came from mice, bred to be obese. The rodents had a genetic defect which prevented them from producing leptin, a substance which controls appetite and the ability to burn fat. Now, a team of researchers... [at] Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge, has discovered a similar defect in the two children, who are cousins... The elder child, a girl aged 8, had a normal birth weight of 3.46kg but gained weight rapidly. Now, the 137cm-tall girl weighs 86kg and has 57[%] body fat (the normal range for children is 15 to 25[%]). The girl's obesity was so serious that she developed abnormalities in the growth of her legs and underwent liposuction in her lower limbs to help to improve her mobility. Her 2-year-old cousin also was born with normal weight but gained rapidly. The 89cm-tall youngster now weighs 29kg and has 54[%] body fat... The team reports in the journal *Nature Genetics* that... the children clearly show the importance of leptin in the control of the human energy balance, the way the body matches food intake and metabolism... Earlier studies of leptin had shown that the hormone acts in the brain to blunt appetite. Rats with high levels of leptin were found to eat about half the food of normal rats... [A doctor at] the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Centre at Dallas, said laboratory rats that were genetically altered to have high levels of leptin lost all the fat in their bodies within days... An artificial form of leptin was being tested as a weight-control drug in humans, he said... In the same issue of *Nature Genetics*, the researchers also report that they have identified another genetic defect which they claim is linked to human obesity. That defect is a mutation in the gene that tells the body to produce a hormone-processing substance called PCI, or prohormone convertase, which affects the processing of insulin and other hormones which have been linked to weight control.

...*New gene link to obesity*... Scientists have discovered a gene that might help people to shed kilograms in exchange for a slightly higher body temperature. The gene appears to make people... burn off more calories rather than storing them as fat... and it might explain why some people are prone to getting fat. The hope is that researchers could find a drug to make the gene work harder... A person might be able to lose 2.3kg a year with about five one-hundreds of a degree Celsius increase in body temperature, estimated [a] researcher... of the University of California. It would take further study to see how much of a temperature increase people could safely stand, he said... Scientists had not known how people's bodies regulated their weight, steering them toward a given weight despite dieting or bingeing, [the researcher] said... Researchers already knew of another gene that prompted energy theft, and drug companies were studying drugs to make it more active. But that gene, called UCP1, was active only in brown fat, which was sparse in adults. In contrast, the newfound gene UCP2 was at work in every human tissue [the researcher] had checked... Some people could be prone to getting fat because their UCP2 was not active enough.

...[existing] diet pills that make you lose your appetite so you eat less... can have some pretty nasty side effects, like lung disease and memory loss, so scientists are trying to come up with a new generation of diet pills... [that work by boosting] your metabolism so you would burn the calories... about 10% more efficiently, and that's how you lose the weight. Efforts by drug companies and universities to develop metabolism pills are under way but in the early stages. They're testing them on animals now so it could be another 5 or 10 years before they're available, and there are concerns... One challenge is how to raise metabolism without creating side effects, like making your heart-rate go up or making you shake. If the research comes through the pills would only be recommended for truly obese people and everyone, right now, without science, without research, can still boost their metabolism – it's called exercise. [■ 'A report released this year by Washington-based research group Worldwatch Institute said that for the first time the number of overweight people in the world matched the total of its underfed – about 1.1 billion.'

... 'More and more people in the world are dying prematurely of complications from being overweight and NZ is no exception. Recently the World Health Organisation made an announcement which, a few years ago, might have sounded ridiculous – that the world's No.1 health problem is no longer starvation'...

'*World hunger far from beaten* Hunger is in steady decline, due mainly to the success in combating it in Asia, but it remains widespread in Africa and persists in the US, where an estimated 30 million people, including 12 million children, cannot afford to buy enough food to maintain good health, according to the Bread for the World Institute in its fifth annual report. The president of the organisation said that in the US hunger was a problem that could be solved, "but because of a failure of political and moral will, solutions have not been implemented." Internationally, violence and warfare inevitably led to hunger, as evidenced by the conflict in Bosnia – where nearly 3 million people are at risk of hunger – Somalia and Rwanda, the report said. Although both their number and proportion have been steadily decreasing over the past 20 years, 70% of the world's hungry still live in Asia and the Pacific region'...

The FAO launched the first global telethon yesterday to appeal for cash to help make food for all a reality. The nine-hour event, dubbed "TeleFood" and beamed live to 60 countries, featured... pleas for aid from stars of sport and entertainment... The highlight of the event was a gala concert at the Vatican... "Having enough to eat is the most basic of human rights... The fight against hunger is not an issue of charity, it is an issue of justice..." [the] FAO director-general... said[while opening] the appeal... FAO is planning a second food appeal concert, to take place simultaneously at Rome's ancient Coliseum and in the centre of Havana...

[While] launching an overall appeal for \$US200 million... to finance worldwide relief programmes... [t]he global Red Cross organisation IFRC said food rations across North Korea have dropped to a level four times lower than is normally considered essential to maintain a healthy population. An IFRC official concerned with disaster response... said there was no indication yet of famine but reduction of the ration to 100g a day would weaken resistance to disease throughout the country. "This... is quite a dramatic figure in a country where people are totally reliant on the public distribution system for their food,"... The new level had been set by the North Korean Government... earlier this month.

...A North Korean fisherman compelled by hunger crept into South Korea at the weekend across the heavily armed demilitarised zone dividing the two Koreas[crawling past]... guard posts and border barriers in a dramatic four-hour defection... The... South's Yonhap News Agency... said... that his first statement was about the dire food situation in North Korea... The last defection by land came on February 27, when a barefoot 25-year-old woman crossed the... zone... [also] complaining of hunger.

...[‘North Korean defectors find life in the South is not all it’s cracked up to be and they want something done about it’ The 37-year-old doctor of oriental medicine smiles at the memory of his arrival at Seoul’s Kimpoo International Airport after defecting from North Korea. “Our minders told us to wave and look happy for the big crowd,” he recalls. It seemed a dream start to his new life in the freedom-loving South. Those dreams were shattered when they left the airport. “The agents accompanying us suddenly turned brutal.” He says he was taken to a building and ordered to strip for a physical exam during which his minders joked about the size of his genitals. Worse was to come. “They forced me to kneel, and said, ‘You are human rubbish. You betrayed your own country.’ I could hear screams all around me. My fellow defectors were being tortured. It was like a slaughterhouse.” Nearly five years later, he finds himself in the same sorry predicament as many North Koreans in the free-wheeling capitalist South. Some defectors get so depressed they try to re-defect back home. He would never return to the North, but his high hopes for life in South Korea have not been met. Though dazed by the glitz, many defectors are too embittered by their brutal introduction to democracy to enjoy it. Also, they have trouble adjusting to a more superficial, money-based society, and cannot find jobs (unemployment is about 60% among the 950 defectors living in the South, according to human rights groups). They are tempted by the lure of money, but nonetheless find South Korea’s highly commercialised society crass and its people lacking warmth. “South Koreans aren’t genuine. They smile at you but that doesn’t reflect their true feelings. If you don’t have money you’re nothing. In North Korea everyone is poor, so money isn’t so important.” The defectors say they were promised much by South Korea’s propaganda machine, which floated balloons over North Korea packed with messages from happy defectors and promises of houses, 50 million won rewards, cars and good jobs. The balloons, laden with cigarettes, soaps, pantyhose and even photos of semi-naked women, are rigged to explode in mid-air, sending to the ground a shower of propaganda. “But it wasn’t true. South Korea is sending over false incentives.” The doctor is fighting back. From his modest unit on Seoul’s outskirts, he is masterminding a headline-grabbing court case against the South’s notorious National Intelligence Service, accusing it of needless savagery in its pursuit of spies. While the defectors acknowledge the need for vigilance against spies, they question the methods used. Unlike their homeland, there is justice in South Korea and they intend to win it. “In North Korea they would have killed us or beaten us like dogs. But we fight for our rights now because we have freedom. South Koreans have total freedom. We want it too.”]

...South Korean Army troops and police were on alert yesterday in and around Seoul after a top-level defector was shot and left brain-dead by suspected North Korean agents... Police also tightened security around key Government facilities nationwide, saying “this is a sensitive security situation.” In the South Korean capital... [t]he Government called an urgent meeting of top security officials to discuss the shooting of... a 37-year-old nephew of [the] North Korean leader[’s]... ex-wife... He defected to the South in 1982... Police said the gunmen had escaped and that the shooting was in apparent retaliation for the defection of the North’s top ideologue[(r:p172, ln10)]...

Famine has killed more than a ‘million people in North Korea, says the highest-ranked official to defect from the Stalinist state. The North’s former chief ideologue and architect of its *juche* (self-reliance) philosophy, spoke to the French daily *Le Monde* in South Korea, where he now lives after defecting through Beijing in February. The total, based partly on the Communist Party central committee’s own figures, estimated that 500,000 people died in 1995, plus about a million in 1996’]

Watching a people’s hunger being played against political ambitions is particularly distressing. And that seems to be what is happening with North Korea... So, are North Korea’s straitened conditions not being taken seriously? Or, in some quarters, is it payback time for a 44-year-old war? Just how serious is it in the North? Early last month, World Food Programme officials reported that recent inspections had found the potential for starvation “on a massive scale.” The North Korean Government told aid agencies that 134 children had died of malnutrition... However, more detailed reports are emerging from another quarter. A Los Angeles Times Service report from Tumen in far north-eastern China records the evidence of Chinese visitors returning from North Korea horrified by what they have seen, describing effects of starvation far more harrowing than western aid workers have been allowed to observe. And a Korean visitor, calling the Government’s admission of 134 children dead a “total lie,” told of passing corpses of children dead in the streets... She said North Koreans believed at least 100,000 people had died since 1995 of malnutrition, cold and lack of medicine. From Dandong, at the other end of the Chinese border with North Korea, the Washington Post Service reported that Chinese truck drivers delivering food and other aid across the Yalu River had seen dead children and people so weak they could not plant crops. The difference between this border and that in the south is that ordinary people from outside the North, many with relatives on the other side, can move back and forth, getting a far clearer impression of North Korea’s disintegration. Beyond the effect of the famine, they report factories left idle by a lack of raw materials, fuel and equipment, collapsing agriculture collectives, corruption and political disillusionment.

...A EUROPEAN diplomat has warned of an explosive situation in North Korea, blaming the Stalinist government for mass starvation... There was a “crying need for help for the elderly, and many hospitals had been forced to close as healthcare workers focused on their own survival...,” said... the European Commission’s top envoy to Seoul... On Friday, the European Union said it was sending 155,000 tonnes of food worth \$77.63 million to North Korea. The U[S] is sending \$36.48m of aid and South Korea has pledged \$16m. The European Union on Thursday agreed to join an international consortium working to dismantle North Korea’s nuclear weapons programme by supplying the country with relatively safe nuclear reactors and interim fuel supplies.

...The... executive director of the... W[F]P... said the... agency has become increasingly alarmed in recent weeks at the food shortages, caused by two years of flooding that ruined farmland in the country of 23 million people. The damage was particularly severe because trees had been cleared for firewood and agriculture... The... Pyongyang representative of the I[FRC], said last month that... [more] than 5 million North Koreans were near starvation[, including an estimated]... 800,000 children under five years of age, or 37[%] of that age group.

...The[NZ] Government is giving \$200,000 to North Korea for flood relief. The Associate Foreign Minister... said yesterday the floods had left half a million people homeless and destroyed 400,000ha of cropland.

...NORTH KOREA, battered by two years of devastating floods, has been hit by the worst heatwave in 92 years, wiping out crops and driving the Stalinist state closer to starvation.

...Famine-ravaged North Korea has missed out on 20,000 tonnes of wheat from N[Z] because the industry has no idea where the crop is stored. Poor information systems in the industry have been blamed for the collapse of a deal organised by the W[FP]. The chairman of Federated Farmers’ grain section... said the price offered would have been equivalent to that for a fair international purchase. It also would have helped N[Z] wheat growers by cutting the surplus of poor-quality grain on the market, which had contributed to falling market price... It was not possible for the federation to step in and organise the wheat shipment itself and another exporter could not be found who would carry the risk of the necessary quantity of wheat being made available for sale... Meanwhile, Japan yesterday resumed food aid... after a 15-month halt, announcing \$US27 million... worth of humanitarian aid...

Famine-stricken North Korea has just exported more than 1000 tonnes of corn to Japan, customs officials said... The Japanese Government was investigating the case even though it was a transaction between private firms... The Japanese newspaper *Sankei Shimbun* said a poultry farmer in Yokohama... ordered the grain as chicken feed... The daily said it was the first such export of unprocessed live-stock feed from North Korea since 1988... Japanese officials said they were surprised at how North Korea was able to export grain when it was receiving food aid from international organisations and various countries... On Tuesday the U[S] pledged an additional \$US27 million in food aid... bringing to \$US52 million its contribution for the year... Washington has sent more than \$US115 million in food and economic aid... since... an October 1994 framework agreement with North Korea... Under the \$US4.5 billion... deal, Washington promised the state two light-water reactors if Pyongyang would freeze and ultimately dismantle its nuclear programme.

...The Senate... unanimously voted to halt additional... economic aid... if the country again violated its armistice agreement with South Korea... North Korea on Wednesday fired artillery shells at a Southern guard post in one of the worst border clashes in recent years... “We should be outraged at North Korea’s continued belligerent actions that are clearly designed to intimidate,”... a... [senator] said. “If the North Koreans want economic assistance from the U[S] they are going to have to learn that their troops and their munitions ought to stay on their side of the border.”

...THE soldier found a grip on the limp infant’s tattered red T-shirt and carried him at arm’s length. The boy’s arms and legs dangled and swung in a carefree rhythm known only to the dead or dying. With a jerk of his arm, the soldier flipped the tiny body into the undergrowth by the side of the rusted tracks before turning away. A group of people stood nearby, listless and blank-eyed, hardly seeming to notice. As the train pulled away from the station towards sacred Mt Myohyang the group receded... In the twilight world of famine, emotion for others is a luxury. Who can spare a tear for a nameless child? ...But this is unlike any famine seen in the world... “The difference is that when we saw famine in Ethiopia and Somalia it tended to be just in pockets. We believe hunger in North Korea is spread evenly across the whole rural population,” says[the] president of the Canadian branch of the Christian relief agency World Vision... In the southern city of Kaesong... only 20[%] of the children in the local nursery were of normal height and weight for their age. All had scabies. A nutritionist from World Vision visited five of 12 provincial children’s centres and assessed... children under six. He found 85[%] had some form of malnourishment, 30[%] of whom were severe cases... International aid now provides survival care for all children under seven... But these are the photogenic sufferers, whose pinched young faces can tease dollars out of western pockets... IN Pyongyang, families receive only 350g of corn and rice a person a day, far short of the average intake of 800g relief agencies say an adult needs each day. Outside the capital, farmers are receiving just 100g a day. But even that is not guaranteed. Civil servants mutter they have to hoard scraps because some days they receive nothing. Others take to the streets to barter what few possessions they have... hoping to swap their pathetic treasures for corn or rice. The food shortages began in 1995, triggered by heavy flooding, which recurred the following year, mocking the nationwide mobilisation in the fields for which North Korea is notorious. This year it is drought, which has prevailed throughout the growing season for corn, the country’s summer crop. Last week the fields were turned an emerald green by a burst of rain. But... [the] rain came too late... the stunted plants, just 90cm or so high instead of the usual 1.8m, will yield at most a fifth of their expected bounty... There is likely to be shortfall of more than 700,000 tonnes of food grain, according to the... W[FP]. All eyes – and prayers, if they are uttered in this atheist nation – are now focused on the rice crop, due for harvesting in October before the onset of the country’s bitter five-month winter, in which nothing grows. Yet even if the rice yield is miraculously good, the problem lies with harvesting, storing and distributing it. Many railway locomotives stand rusting for lack of spare parts, trucks of the Cold War era lie abandoned by the side of the road, and in the empty warehouses the antique machines are silent, abandoned by workers too weak to tend them... “[80%] of the industry is sitting idle and the remaining 20[%] is very simple and very basic.” ...[the] economy itself is breaking down, burdened by the Stalinist system; by the end of support from China and the Soviet Union which gave some two million tonnes of subsidised food each year during the Cold War; and by the lack of currency to buy essentials abroad... Against this backdrop of need, North Korea has embarked on a game of diplomatic poker with... the U[S]... and... South Korea... with whom it remains at war despite the end of the Korean War 44 years ago... It called for a... withdrawal of the 37,000 U[S] troops stationed in... the Korean peninsula and for the South to provide food aid even before... peace negotiations proper could begin. Pyongyang has some strong cards in its hand. Even as the famine bites, it is clearly able to look after the party’s elite and the Army, the only forces that matter in North Korea.[Indeed, the North Korean leader is reported to have said that he ‘didn’t care if 70% of the population died because he believed 30% was enough to win the war.’ Luckily for him, many North Korean people say they ‘don’t mind dying for the war against capitalism’!] The sole trucks on the road belong to the military, and the only private cars – second-hand models imported from Japan – are driven by party cadres and men in uniform. At the... creche... reserved for off-spring of the party elite, the children looked healthy and well-fed and were smartly clothed. They performed rituals for visitors to celebrate the birth[s of their] “Great Leader”... “Dear Leader”... and the mother of the “Great Leader” before performing to a ditty, “Let’s Be Strong Children for the Country.” The source of the money to keep the top people happy is something of a mystery. There are suspicions of skulduggery, involving heroin production and export of top-quality counterfeit dollar bills. A western banker in Pyongyang says he can never admit the true amount of cash deposited by Government departments in his office safe... [However, that] very day, he said, an official deposited \$US500,000... in bills with his investment house. Despite the North’s slide into suffering, there seems no risk of insurrection. The population is quiescent and seems to have faith in the party... “The level of expectation is not high. These people have trust and confidence in the leadership. They think they just need two years of normal weather and this will be OK, but it’s not true. What you see right now is an unravelling of the whole system,”... The pain will worsen but, unlike previous famine alerts around, the world’s patience with North Korea is already short. There is little goodwill towards a repressive regime that has been a trouble-maker for decades... North Koreans need a permit to move out of their home district and police have set up roadblocks on roads leading out of each town and city, preventing the public from fleeing stricken areas... North Korea’s paranoia means it will not open the country up to scrutiny, a vital component of longer-term aid, which requires monitoring to ensure that food and medicines are fairly distributed... Some analysts predict the aid will dry up after the winter, possibly prompting the beleaguered regime to attack the South in a last desperate throw of the dice. That scenario is ruled out by... a Hong Kong-based expert on North Korea, who says the North’s generals know their ancient warplanes and tanks would be annihilated by South Korea and its U[S] ally. “...There is almost certainly going to be a palace coup behind the scenes and somebody or other will take charge,” he said, sounding an optimistic note for an end to Korea’s five decades of division. “They may well be able to sell unification with the South in a particular way, if it is being shown that the rest of the world is being bountiful and giving in to the North Korean people.”

...Despite the country’s Orwellian tinge, the people, including our “guides,” were remarkably friendly and, in a Korean sort of way, remarkably helpful... The International Friendship Exhibition at Mount Myohang is North Korea’s Disneyland: a 120-room fantasy world of friendship and cooperation between the Hermit Kingdom and some of the nastiest regimes in recent history. In this cavernous hall, dug out of the bowels of a sacred mountain and lined with ferro-concrete, the 61,000 gifts to the Great and Dear Leaders from dictators and sympathisers around the world are on show. It is a sublime display of Cold War kitsch... Here is a model bronze tank from the Soviet forces in East Germany, bearing the date of June 10, 1953, just a week before those same troops crushed a workers’ uprising in East Berlin. There, a tableau of Tower Bridge, its arms raised, of course, in salute to the two [leaders], from Stalinist admirers in Britain. And over there, a stuffed crocodile given by Nicaragua’s Sandinistas. The reptile is perched on its hind legs, while its forelimbs clutch a tray with wooden cocktail goblets: the perfect party ice-breaker. In the middle of the air-conditioned cavern is a life-size statue of [the Great Leader] himself... a present... from China... All visitors must bow solemnly to the wax effigy... and they are required to write up their thoughts in a commemorative book afterwards. This strange building freezes time in the 1950s, [the Great Leader’s] halcyon years, when the world was an uncomplex place full of promise... The future was a propaganda poster – a permanent golden dawn of chubby babies, rosy-cheeked girls and happy peasants hauling in the cornucopia. The future has now arrived...

60 days without rain... [cost North Korea almost 70%], or 1.5 million tonnes... of maize on which it had been relying to feed its starving people.

...Desperate North Koreans are tearing their devastated maize crop from the fields and digging trenches around rice paddies to prevent that crop from being destroyed by late summer rains, a Red Cross representative said yesterday... South Korea will provide... North Korea with additional aid worth \$US10 million... through the U[N] to help food shortages.

...It is known as the Black Hole: the forbidden mountain region of North Korea’s far north-east where, human rights experts say, the regime hides its brutal slave labour camps... where an estimated 150,000 political prisoners are held... Now a worse tragedy is unfolding as the Black Hole

takes the brunt of the famine gripping North Korea... The first outsiders to pass through the Black Hole returned last week with stories of a region barely hanging on to life: whole villages surviving on a diet of straw, grass and weeds; deprived of even the minuscule rice ration handed out to more fortunate provinces. The unheated hospitals are almost deserted. Without food and drugs they cannot function, so the starving stay at home. Elsewhere, families are afraid to bury their dead, fearful their neighbours will exhume the corpses to supplement their diet.

...Starving North Koreans are turning to cannibalism to survive and authorities... have executed people for selling human flesh... [the] *South China Morning Post* yesterday quoted a North Korean military officer who fled across the China-North Korea border with his family... "People are going insane with hunger. They even kill and eat their own infants. This kind of thing is happening in many places,"... Another ethnic Korean who frequently visits North Korea on business was also quoted by the newspaper as saying she had heard that a woman was executed in August for murdering 18 children in the western port of Hamhung.

...A typhoon-fuelled tidal wave... struck North Korea's western coast early on August 21, destroying an estimated 700,000 tonnes of corn and leaving 28,000 people homeless, said... the I[FRC]... A combination of high tides and the effects of Typhoon Winnie, which lashed eastern China the same night, appeared to have caused the tidal wave, which washed over and smashed the sea dykes designed for coastal protection. Around 20 counties had been affected... Early warnings had meant there were few immediate casualties from the tidal wave, which submerged fields in salt water, killed large numbers of livestock and washed away the kitchen gardens on which many North Koreans depend. As soon as the waters receded, authorities ordered the military to lead relief efforts.

...[the US] has told North Korea that it will not attend another round of preparatory peace talks unless Pyongyang drops demands for food aid and negotiations on the withdrawal of American troops from South Korea... Tensions are running so high on the Korean peninsula that war could break out "at any moment" the North Korean vice foreign minister said yesterday.

...North Korea has told the U[S] and South Korea it will respond next week to a proposal for peace talks amid expectations that ...famine will push it to accept the offer... But in a reminder that tension still runs high on the world's last Cold War flashpoint, a top North Korean Army official said that military buildups by South Korea and the U[S] had pushed the Korean peninsula to the "brink of war." ...North Korea has frequently issued similar warnings in the past and defence officials in Seoul said there have been no extraordinary military movements on either side. The U[S] has 37,000 troops in South Korea and... [the] US Defence Secretary... who arrived in Seoul yesterday... caused a stir this week when he said they would remain in Korea indefinitely even if the two Koreas made peace and united[– although it appears that unification isn't on the South Korean Government's agenda (last year, 'South Korean police detained about 700 radical students over illegal protests calling for reunification'; 'the world's most educated and brazen rioters claimed that while they just wanted unification their Government just wants the destruction of North Korea'). The US Defence Secretary] repeated Washington's fears that the food crisis could prompt North Korea's 1.1 million-strong military to revolt against its Government or strike out against the South in a last desperate Cold War gambit.

...North Korea has banned contraception and is encouraging women, even those over 45, to give birth in order to maintain its huge army, [Seoul] newspapers yesterday quoted a North Korean defector as saying... A South Korean Defence White Paper issued this month said North Korea's troop strength had increased 9[%] to 1,147,000 over the past year despite... widespread food shortages.

...[a] US congressman... said he saw soldiers... [in] North Korea... whose uniforms hung off their bodies, showing that even the military is not immune from the hell of severe famine... North Korea... will need more than one million metric tons of food aid in the coming year, according to the U[N because a]... series of natural disasters... [meant crops] grown this year will provide only enough food for seven months.

...The U[S] said yesterday it hoped [the Dear Leader's] election as general secretary of North Korea's ruling party would spur Korean peninsula peace talks... although one title he has had from the beginning is supreme commander of the armed forces... [The] son of North Korea's founding father, "Great Leader"... has run the Stalinist state without the formal trappings of power since his father's death in July 1994... [He] was elected... on Wednesday, completing the communist world's first dynastic succession... [His] investiture means the North has an official leader for the first time since massive food shortages began... What sort of ruler he will be... is a mystery... [He] was groomed by his late father... A propaganda barrage from North Korea's ever-loyal media over the last several weeks has depicted him as a... "Wild Bill" Hickok... The Korea Central News Agency reported that... [he] showed Army officers recently how to shoot pistols with both hands... Over the past year, he has promoted 120 younger officers to the position of general, replacing an older cadre with ones thought to be more loyal to him... His sensitive side is portrayed by the operas and poetry he has written, and from an early age he showed a bent towards scientific inquiry. "When he was a child, he found out why chickens raise their bills when they drink water and why there is no black flower," KCNA said. If North Korea's had any doubt that [his] time had come, the auspicious blooming of apricot, cherry and pear trees and other "mysterious phenomena" this autumn proved he had received "heaven's mandate" to lead the country, state media said... To the outside world, [he] has a reputation as an unstable playboy who ordered several violent attacks on South Korean targets.

...North Korea is undergoing long-awaited political change and cannot expect to resume total state control once famine abates, a U[N] official said yesterday... Aid workers, once mistrusted by the authorities, are now given wider access to one of the world's most closed societies and allowed entry in greater numbers, reflecting a growing openness... Political change was evidently afoot and state control over daily life had already diminished... [as] the authorities were turning a blind eye to the new survival tactics of the people... Bartering was now allowed in a nation that once deemed free markets to be invidious. [The UN official] said police chose not to notice when North Koreans, who need permission to travel, opted to hop on trains in pursuit of food or aid.

...A North Korean diplomat and his wife have been arrested for allegedly trying to smuggle into Nepal 100kg of gold with a market value of 62.3 million rupees (\$[NZ]1.86 million).

...N[Z] is helping to upgrade North Korean border controls as the crumbling communist stronghold prepares to embrace world trade. A Wellington-based senior customs training officer... will spend the next month in... Pyongyang, helping[local] customs officials to set up a free economic and trade zone in the north-eastern province of Rajin-Sonbong... [The officer] was looking forward to working with his North Korean counterparts... [He] will be accompanied during his visit by a "national expert" who will act as an interpreter, although the training will be in English... "It's a first for N[Z] Customs and probably for N[Z] as well. It will be a good learning experience[," he said]... Part of the assignment will include looking at possible opportunities for N[Z] business in the region... The visit follows a request by the World Customs Organisation and the U[N] Industrial Development Organisation for N[Z] specialists to help reform North Korean customs work... The posting is seen... as an indication of this country's growing reputation as a world leader in border management. N[Z] customs staff have been requested by several countries seeking to upgrade their customs procedures. They include China, which has expressed interest in a bilateral training programme... [Incidentally, a] North Korean think-tank head visiting N[Z] this week says he has never seen the body of anyone in his country who has died of hunger. The... acting director of the Institute for Disarmament and Peace in Pyongyang, easily reels off statistics about the damage done to the maize and rice harvests... But when asked about the human cost he says that he "cannot be quite accurate about exact numbers"... Technically [the acting director] is not a North Korean representative, but those behind his trip say his Institute... is "closely associated" with the Government. The visit... [by the acting director] and two of his colleagues... was arranged by the Centre for Strategic Studies in Wellington. It is an example of what is known in the trade as "track two" diplomacy, contact between academics and others outside government which can help to build bridges between countries with awkward (or in the case of N[Z] and North Korea, non-existent) official relations... Only once before, some six years ago, has there been similar

contact, when a Jakarta-based diplomat came here on an unofficial visit... [The acting director said] that the peninsula remained prone to renewed war at any time, and that only demilitarisation including the removal of American forces from the South could reduce the tension. He called for reunification of the two Koreas, pointing out that since neither the North or the South was willing to give up its own system in favour of the other, two systems would have to be preserved within the one state. Discussion at... a seminar organised by the [Centre for Strategic Studies] became focused on these ideas and somehow the central question was left to one side: can North Korea survive at all given its anachronistic political system, its isolation and its crippling economic woes? Afterwards, [the acting director] answered the missing question firmly. He said the North Korean people strongly believed in the socialist system they had chosen for themselves, and were united around their leader. "For this reason it is our clear conviction and confidence that our system will never collapse." Observers outside North Korea are less certain of this... But some acknowledge the Korean capacity to endure suffering and concede that the present regime might limp on indefinitely.

...[The great majority of Kiwi Koreans love this country and are doing their best to settle into the NZ lifestyle. But we know that no matter how much we integrate, a part of each of us is forever Korean and the troubles in our homeland produce a constant and insistent tug that we cannot escape. But if the history of Korea presents any lesson, it is that we are a proud nation and have overcome huge hurdles. Until recently, Korea was occupied territory. Japan annexed its neighbour in 1910 and for the next 36 years, dubbed the "Years of Hell," the country was a conquered nation, subservient to Japanese masters, its people forbidden to speak their language or practise their culture. The Japanese surrender brought only a brief respite before the country was divided again by grander powers.]

...[Korea had been part of the Japanese Empire for 35 years but liberation from Japanese rule in 1945 didn't bring the better life Koreans were hoping for. The country had been split into two – a communist regime in the North and an American-backed Government in the South. An isolated agricultural people, they lacked Japan's industrial inheritance and trained manpower. Then in 1950 they were swept into a civil war between North and South. While the Japanese had made money from their neighbour's war the Koreans suffered on a massive scale. 3 million were killed. As fighting raged up and down the peninsula, millions more became refugees. At the end of the war the two sides were left almost precisely where they began and much of the country had been destroyed. After the war, South Korea was one of the poorest countries in the world and the prospects for South Koreans looked worse than ever. They still faced a threat from the North and were propped up by American aid. Business and politics were corrupt, and the country lurched from crisis to crisis. In 1961 a group of military officers seized power in a coup led by General Park Chung Hee. Korea's new dictator promised a period of tough authoritarian rule which would strengthen the country against the North and restore national pride. The Black Market was closed down, profiteers and corrupt businessmen arrested, and smuggled foreign goods seized and burnt. From now on the national priority was to be high-speed economic development on the Japanese model with General Park giving the orders. But South Koreans were about to be thrown into changes far more rapid and convulsive than anything Japan had lived through. Park took close control of a series of big projects designed to give South Korea the base for a modern economy. Even more than in Japan the Government told businessmen what kind of factories were to be built and where. The pride of the new Korea was to be a huge steel works. A workforce of tens of thousands was commanded by a former general with a can do military approach. If the workmanship fell below standard he had it blown up. As part of reparations for her colonial rule Japan supplied much of the money and machinery, and sent technicians. "The Japanese were impressed. They were surprised that we could get things done so much faster (although we worked so fast that accidents were frequent) and shorten the work period. They said that we Koreans had the human qualities to create a miracle." In one leap the Koreans had gone from making no steel at all to having one of the most modern plants anywhere with a huge capacity. They used their steel to start a new ship-building industry to challenge Japan's and then to make their own cars. New schools were opened. President Park's leadership became a cult and his reforms were put through with ruthless efficiency. Koreans were exhorted to go on making sacrifices while huge sums were invested in industry for the future. Wages were kept down. Free trade unions couldn't operate. In thousands of noisy, ill-ventilated sweat-shops Korean workers toiled long hours a day making shoes, textiles or wigs for export. Park's political opponents were imprisoned and sometimes killed. He was widely hated and survived several assassination attempts. Park was finally killed by his own security chief in 1979. Though another general took over it was increasingly hard to maintain the same dictatorial grip with which the miracle had begun. Industrial workers mounted strikes, demanding huge pay rises. Students fought with police. The continuing violation of human rights brought condemnation of the South Korean Government from abroad. In 1987 military rule ended and free elections were granted. In the late 1980s South Korean workers finally got a bigger share of the nation's new wealth in their own pockets. Wages began to catch up with European levels. Real earnings doubled over 10 years. 99% of households had a television, over 50% now had washing machines. From being one of the poorest countries in the world, South Korea had now risen to be the 18th largest economy. It would go on climbing to take 12th place by 1996. The South Koreans knew the high price that had been paid for their success but their own achievements still amazed them. "It was a 180° change, from one extreme to another. I don't think there's a country in the world that has gone through such an extraordinary development in such a short time." But there was no monopoly on miracles. Others had started to experience the same explosive growth and rapid social change. They were called the Tiger Economies. The Asians themselves began to boast of Asian values. They claimed their growing success was due to discipline and hard work, their schools and strong authoritarian control.]

...[An 'article entitled "A time to reflect on human rights laws" created for me, a deep sense of foreboding, not least because the author is chief commissioner of the Human Rights Commission. It is the width of her brush, sweeping all before her, that causes me my deepest concern. Her boat carries contraband of badly stowed packages of anti-discriminatory legislation. The old tightly packaged and well-tried universal human rights of conscience, of religion, of free speech, rights of association and rights over one's own person and property have been left behind on the wharf. The commissioner wants a world in which we are all equal, and all equally free to choose from the same smorgasbord of options. She wants to create a world where all this is possible and she wants to use anti-discriminatory legislation to do it. However, a society that puts equality – in the sense of equality of outcome – ahead of freedom will end up with neither equality nor freedom. The use of force to achieve equality will destroy freedom, and the force, introduced for good purposes, will end up in the hands of people who use it to promote their own interests. Freedom is a natural result of people knowing and being able to do what they should do. It is a commonplace now in NZ in some circles to say that our legal system worries too much about rights and not enough about responsibilities. That is probably true and is good as far as it goes. But the problem is not that we are getting too many rights, without responsibilities, although we probably are, but that we are starting to have the wrong kind. The commissioner wants to use human rights legislation to actually change our perception of the good life. Socialists call it "social justice" and an American economist gives it an even better name, "cosmic justice." The capacity to contribute to production includes everybody and wealth will be distributed by means of human rights legislation. The commissioner has, it seems, discovered the socialist utopia at last. By a simple act of legislation along with its enforcing agent, the Human Rights Commission, we have a society in which human difference disappears. When the commissioner says that we must have "human right principles which accord to every human the same rights, privileges and access to resources, which underpin our economic development or it will not be sustainable," she raises choice to an absolute in a politicised conflation. And in doing so she passes over to the state that power which was once vested in human rights for our protection. For most of our history rights were concerned with the protection of the citizen from the power of the state. We used to talk about rights, morals, virtue and obligation together because they sustained an agreed and consistent social ethic. Today they do not always fit. Rights used not to trump common law standards. Rights ensured that there was something that the Government could not take away from you or could not make you do. The focus was on a limiting of Government power not increasing it. It is arrogant to assume that there is some kind of State-sponsored universal formula to solve every cultural injustice. On the one hand the commissioner demands cosmic justice and yet we also have, deep-seated in NZ society, the recognition of human autonomy sustained by the belief in the absolute of choice. The quest for cosmic justice is not about changing the minds and hearts of individuals so that we might learn to live peacefully with each other. It is about control. It is about making us do what we are told'. By the way,] yesterday... Amnesty International... issued its 35th annual

worldwide report on human rights which says serious violations were committed in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea during 1996[, while]... Burma saw the worst year for human rights since 1990... with 2000 protesters arrested and members of the opposition attacked by mobs apparently encouraged by the Government. Journalists had been attacked and abducted in India, Pakistan and Cambodia[(‘each year about 55 photo-journalists lose their lives trying to tell a story’)]... Taking as its main theme the global refugee crisis, the report accused the international community of failing to provide solutions for massive human rights violations by refusing to protect the millions of refugees who had been forced to flee their native countries. It criticised A[US]n, European and North American policies of automatic detention of asylum-seekers who arrive without permission to enter... It also criticises A[US] for the high number of Aboriginal deaths in custody... Amnesty noted that although Aborigines made up [2% of AUS]’s population, they accounted for more than 20[%] of all deaths in custody during 1996... China came under attack for a number of different reasons...

A tit-for-tat war of words over human rights between the U[S] and China continued this week with the Chinese accusing the Americans of turning a blind eye to their own problems while distorting the facts about China... In a lengthy riposte... Beijing described the U[S] as a land of guns, terrorist bomb attacks and racial discrimination. China’s angry attack... also said American-style political democracy was a game of the rich and faulted the U[S] Constitution for providing inadequate guarantees... The U[S] replied by declaring itself the world’s human rights “champion” and said it did not appreciate being lectured by “authoritarian regimes” that were “major rights violators.” The comments came from [a]State Department spokesman... [who] suggested “the best way to understand... is that we have millions of people who want to come and live here [while]... in most authoritarian countries around the world, you don’t have millions of people trying to get in. You probably have millions of people trying to get out.” [He] acknowledged that the U[S] is “an imperfect country. We do have our own problems... We have racial problems. We have problems of crime and terrorism.” But he said “we are very open about it”... The public Chinese defence comes as the U[S] and Europe are planning to co-sponsor a resolution criticising China’s record at the UN Human Rights Commission meeting that begins in Geneva later this month.

...[the US] President... and Chinese President... yesterday wrapped up a day of tough words and billion-dollar deals by reaffirming their commitment to dialogue and mutual respect between their countries[, thereby completing ‘the first summit in Washington between the US and China’]... since the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown... “We have begun to plan together for a future not of problems but of progress, for America, for China, for the world,” [the US President] said at a state dinner in the White House. [The Chinese President], in response... said China and the U[S] shared broad common interests and a weighty responsibility for “the future of the world.” The lavish dinner climaxed a day which included agreement on a lucrative nuclear cooperation deal... “This agreement is a win, win, win. It serves America’s national security, environmental and economic interests,” [the US President said. However, the presidents agreed]... to disagree over... human rights... [The Chinese President] did not appear to be irked by repeated raising of the human rights issue but he repeated the party line that different countries have different values. About Tiananmen... he said the Government “had to take necessary measures according to law to ensure that our country enjoys stability and that our reform and opening up could proceed smoothly.” [In reply, the US President]... said “fundamental differences over human rights and religious freedom” should not interfere with cooperation in other areas, like combating crime and protecting the environment. The U[S] recognises that on so many issues China is on the right side of history, and we welcome that, but on this[human rights] issue we believe the policy of the[Chinese] Government is on the wrong side of history.” ...[In local news, civil] libertarians say people’s basic human rights are threatened after a city council took the law into its own hands and widened police powers. The Minister of Justice... also says he is uneasy about a local body bestowing powers on police which are normally granted by Parliament... Auckland City Council passed an amendment giving police the right to demand the name and address of anyone suspected of breaching a bylaw. People refusing to comply risk arrest... Civil libertarians, local authority leaders and law academics have condemned the move... and questioned its legality. With other councils already saying they would consider adopting similar moves to control rowdy teenagers, skateboarders and glue sniffers, those opposed to the decision believed such an ad hoc extension of police powers could see innocent citizens stopped, questioned and arrested... [The minister] said that if police needed the powers they should approach the Government. “Powers to hold or detain people or inquire personal information about people are better dealt with by Parliament, not local bodies. I would be concerned if bylaws were as invasive as that.” ...An Auckland University constitutional law expert... said that under present law a person walking down the street did not have to give his or her name and address to a police officer just because they were asked. The police were not employed by councils to enforce local bylaws and it was unlikely that the move was legal. The police said it would be used only in specific situations... [and] people who believed police would abuse their extra powers “need to keep their feet on the ground. We are overwhelmed with work now, we don’t have the luxury or the time or the inclination to go off and wander down the road of the bylaws to see what powers we can use to tidy up the city.”

...a... Civil Liberties lawyer... is aghast at the [Auckland City C]ouncil’s action. “N[Z] is a free country,” he says, “in which no one is obliged to supply their names and addresses to anyone, even the police.” There are only a handful of exceptions. Anyone in a car flagged down on a road must give his or her name and address and details regarding ownership of the vehicle, under the Transport Act of 1962. A passenger may also be required to give any information they have regarding the identity of the driver. Those found drinking liquor in licensed premises after hours must provide police with their name and address and the same applies to drinkers suspected of being under-age. Suspected trespassers must provide their name and address under section 9 of the Trespass Act of 1980. And inspectors and rangers covered by the Reserves Act of 1977, the Fisheries Act of 1983 and the Historic Places Act of 1980, who carry appropriate identification, can also demand the name and address of people they suspect are committing an offence against those Acts. Refusal in all these cases, may be a punishable offence. [In international news, ‘local authorities seeking to boost their budgets resulted in Turkey counting at least 3.65 million non-existent people for the last census, said the Chief Statistician.’]

...Statistics New Zealand says 1.2[%] of the population, or 43,000 people were not counted on census night last year. This compared favourably with censuses in other countries[– ‘the last US census missed an estimated 4 million people’ –] said the Acting Government Statistician... Statistics NZ interviewed a random sample of 25,000 people in its first such survey. It estimated the under-count for the Maori population was 2.9[%]...

In last year’s census 523,374 people ticked Maori when asked their ethnic group, an increase of 20.4[%] on the... figure five years earlier. Maori now make up 14.5[%] of the population... The number who... had Maori ancestry – but did not identify with Maori as an ethnic group – dropped by 24.6[%]. A member[... of the Waipareira Trust, said it was “not cool and sexy to be a native” in the 1970s but... a “cultural renaissance”... m[ean]t more Maori were now embracing their roots. He rejected suggestions that they only wanted a slice of the Treaty of Waitangi settlement money.

...[three] members of a... group working for Maori self-determination... who refused to fill out last year’s census form are... facing prosecution by Statistics N[Z]. They... had ignored the census in protest against the racist wording of some questions... Group members had taken their concerns to the Race Relations Office, the Human Rights Commission and the Ombudsman... About 2000 N[Z]ers failed to fill census forms... but only 42 were being prosecuted... [because not] all could be identified... Five people had already been fined between \$50 and \$200 and six more had since agreed to fill out the census form... Fines could go as high as \$500.

...An Auckland radio broadcaster who gave Statistics N[Z] a “Sieg Heil Award” on air has been fined \$350 for dodging last year’s census... [The] leader of the Libertarianz Party, said he copped a fine after refusing to answer census questions for philosophical reasons. “It’s outrageous that someone from the Government can come around and demand information from you. It’s not like they’re asking nicely for it, it’s more like ‘give it or else.’ Those things happen in totalitarian states,” he said. Despite 30-odd Libertarianz members refusing to complete forms and one furnishing

“obvious absurdities,” [the broadcaster] said that he alone was prosecuted... But a veteran anti-census campaigner who took to the skies in a hot air balloon on census night was yesterday boasting of beating the bureaucrats. The McGillicuddy Serious Party leader and Laird of Hamilton... said the cut-off date for bringing a prosecution had passed and he was “off Scot-free. It’s really heart-warming to see that... you can still beat the state clobbering machine at its own game.”

...[“TO HELL with privacy,” the man announced to his startled colleagues, brandishing a document he had just picked up from his local Post Office. For months he had been pursuing several thousand dollars worth of debt through the small claims tribunal. The tribunal agreed he was owed the money but the debtor consistently failed to pay up. So, exercising his rights, our man called in the bailiff. But first he needed to be sure the car he had seen his debtor driving was indeed his and could be legally seized. Armed with nothing more than a car registration number and \$2.25, he went to the Post Office, accessed the registration files and found the name and address, satisfied his right to be paid was more important than his debtor’s right to privacy. Set that against the case of the woman who was stalked by a man who similarly got her name and address from the same database, and you have the tension between privacy and public interest. Privacy may have been declared by American scriptwriters to be “*the human rights issue of the next century,*” but we have only enjoyed private lives in the short time between urbanisation and the rise of the electronic media. In the cave and the village everyone knew everyone’s business.]

...*‘A Weekend Herald investigation shows how easy it is to uncover confidential information about ordinary people* The right to a private life is one of our most treasured freedoms. We believe that if you are not breaking the law or interfering with others, you are at liberty to run your life as you please – it is nobody else’s business. We even have an official body to protect that privacy. But there is an increasing fear that in the age of information technology those rights are being taken away from us. Details of your private life are being collected, kept and made available in more ways than ever before. Details about you that you wouldn’t dream of telling your neighbours may be held by at least 20 Government departments or agencies. You may also appear on 43 public registers. Some of that information is for sale and is passed on to commercial agencies. But that’s just the start. While central Government builds up its databases so do your local council and big businesses who buy personal information and collect huge amounts of details themselves. The *Weekend Herald* investigation was mounted to test the limits of privacy; we concluded they could be very limited indeed. With her permission, our reporters followed one NZer’s trail through databases and private files, through phone books and official records. In just a few days we discovered hundreds of details, covering pages of notes, about one remarkable, ordinary woman. We found things she did not know herself. Public officials gave us information that should have been kept private. We found people who quoted the Privacy Act then gossiped. We encountered some Government agencies and private companies that never bothered to check us when we asked for information. The ACC gave out some details of her medical conditions, the University of Otago sent us her academic record, Inland Revenue gave details of her tax. Video stores faxed records of what she had viewed, her gym confirmed her membership and gave her home address. We found her e-mail and discovered how to open it. We didn’t find everything about our volunteer. Some databases remained secure. On the whole, her bank records eluded us. But we found enough to shock the woman. “You expect there to be public information about you. But I was shocked the way people just gave out information – almost gossip – over the phone. There were times I thought ‘My God, how could they give out that?’” But people did. And they could do the same about you.

...AS YOU read this, information about you and your property garnered from a Government list is for sale for 30c on an AUSn website. Soon your tax records and benefit information could be available to foreign governments, beginning with the Dutch. And you will be tracked down through official records to make sure you do not escape from the electoral role. All of this is perfectly legal. Make no mistake: if Big Brother exists, he lives in Wellington. The biggest collection of personal information about NZers is controlled within a few square kilometres of the Beehive. Through numerous laws, and for many sound reasons, Government bureaucrats are empowered to demand, retain and pass on information about you, where you live and what you do. Some of the information is even for sale in bulk: two state-owned businesses make money by selling details of your private life to commercial companies. Departments maintain strict policies about data control to ensure it should not fall into the wrong hands, but senior officials admit that a “probability” of confidential information being misused exists. At least one major investigation into the corrupt selling of client details by employees of a Government department is under way. When it comes to selling data, though, the odd unscrupulous civil servant slipping names to rogue debt collectors is small-fry. Infinitely more information about you changes hands through legal transactions. The crown-owned company Quotable Value (QV) is able to sell the national property database information – details about property owners, previous owners, purchase price and valuation – because it is a public register and therefore publicly available. With 42 other registers available to the public through the Government and local councils the Privacy Commissioner has campaigned for access to be tightened. He wants the bulk release of public registers banned. Debate flared three years ago when the Office of the Ombudsmen ruled that QV’s predecessor, Valuation NZ, had to comply with an Official Information Act request from an AUSn direct-marketing firm. Laws controlling each of the public registers specify the extent to which they should be available.’ ● ‘ODDLY enough the only way to speak to someone at the Office of the Privacy Commissioner is to leave a message on the office answer phone – not particularly private is it?’]

...Police officers should take their names off public electoral rolls to stop violent criminals tracking them down, says the Police Association... “Criminals and their associates have in the past used the rolls to find out where police are living... With the increase in violent behaviour by criminals the association believes enrolling on the unpublished roll is a sensible option.” Applicants for the unpublished roll have to satisfy the Registrar of Electors that their safety could be prejudiced by the publication of names, addresses and occupations. Officers who want their families off the public roll would have to make a separate application for each member... [In related news, a]n Auckland company has set up shop to delve into the[NZ Police’s] Wanganui Computer for details on the... background of job-seekers. The company, Hire-Rite, has started touting for business to act as employers’ agents in checking the criminal records of people chasing jobs... as well as vet references, previous employment and provide a full credit history. Employers must provide the company with a request form signed by the job applicant authorising the release of personal information. The form also discharges Hire-Rite from any claims or liabilities arising from the release of the information... But employers who use the service are on shaky legal ground, say employment experts. The Auckland District Law Society... spokesman on employment... said employers or Hire-Rite could face legal action under the Privacy Act over the way they seek permission to obtain the Wanganui Computer information... Because employers could threaten applicants by withholding a job if they did not sign the release form, it could be argued that consent was being gained under duress... The law on the issue was a grey area and would remain so until tested in court, he said. A Department for Courts spokeswoman... said insurance companies, individuals and some employers applied for Wanganui Computer information[(during the ‘past 4 years, inquiries to the database have jumped from 13,000 to 36,500’)]. Any individual or authorised third party can apply free of charge but... companies have no private access... Neither the Human Rights Commission nor the Privacy Commissioner... would comment on the development. However, it is understood they are likely to receive a complaint about the practice and cannot be seen to hold a view before investigating a grievance.

...Privacy complaints[in NZ] are being held up for about eight months before investigation, and any further delays could eventually discredit the complaints resolution system, says the Privacy Commissioner... The delay was causing considerable dissatisfaction to complainants and respondent agencies... The delay created difficulties in investigation, extra administrative costs in managing the queue, and deprived some complainants of effective use of the Privacy Act... The office received 1200 new complaints in the 12 months to June 30, in addition to 604 still pending at the start of that period. But fewer than half of the complaints – 870 – were resolved during the period... [The commissioner] warned that if the office’s resources were not increased to match the rise in the number of complaints, he would consider declining more complaints... Apart from dealing with formal complaints, [the commissioner’s] office employed three staff who handled an average of 753 written and telephone inquiries a month. He said there were 43,000 hits on the office’s website during the 12 months.

...[the man's] problems started so innocuously – his wallet was stolen. The contents: \$4 and a couple of pieces of ID. He reported the theft to police and thought nothing more of it. But soon after he was laid off from his temporary sales job and found himself virtually unemployable. Despite... an exemplary work record, he was turned away from every job he applied for over the next four years. He heard a litany of excuses over that time but, as it turns out, he was told everything but the truth. The real reason was that the thief who stole [his] wallet in May 1990 later used the stolen ID when he was arrested for other crimes so that, in effect, [the wallet's owner] got the rap. Not only did [he] wrongfully end up with a criminal record, but the black mark spread like wildfire across the background investigation databases that employers use to check out potential employees. Now, despite his receiving a letter clearing him of any crimes from the Los Angeles Police Department (a letter police say he will have to carry with him indefinitely), [his] name continues to turn up as a convicted felon on background investigation databases around the country. His case illustrates the growing threat to privacy posed by background databases. Sensitive personal information (genuine or false) is sold over the Internet to anyone who wants[it]. The databases use increasingly sophisticated software to pull together scattered pieces of information allowing ever-more-detailed personal profiles... Several privacy bills have recently been introduced in Congress to attack the problem. Last June, the Federal Trade Commission held hearings into data collection business and the industry, hoping to avoid regulation, pledged to set guidelines to police itself. The guidelines would leave many databases off-limits to all but specified users including insurance agents, private eyes, bill collectors and journalists. But they would not carry the weight of law and companies could simply choose to defy them.

...A requirement in [NZ's] Companies Act 1993 that companies publish details of executives earning more than \$100,000 is detrimental to individual privacy, says [the] Privacy Commissioner... Section 221 says every company annual report must state the number of employees or former employees, not company directors, who received remuneration and other benefits in excess of \$100,000 for that year... In a report released yesterday, [the commissioner] said he believed section 211 of the act ought to be repealed or amended to better preserve privacy. Many [NZ]ers wished to keep their income private... But the honorary secretary of the Commonwealth Press Union... defended section 221... "I disagree totally with what [the commissioner] is saying. As an investor, I invest money in these companies and I place trust in those executives to look after my money effectively... I think it's sensible, I think it's reasonable to know what they are being paid to do that." [He] said that section 221 worked, in that media reporting of executive salaries had linked pay packages to company performance.

...He lives in the city. He is between 20 and 40 years old. He earns above the average wage – \$702 a week before tax. And he is the person most likely to owe a fine to the Department of Courts, given that 60[%] of the non-payers who owe \$158 million of outstanding penalties fit this profile. Now district court registrars want access to his bank account. If the Summary Proceedings Amendment Bill (No 3) is passed into law, the department will have the power to instruct banks to deduct unpaid fines directly from the offender's account. They will also have the power to attach court orders to property titles of people owing more than \$10,000 in fines and take the money from the proceeds of any sale. Already courts can instruct employers to deduct unpaid fines from the offender's salary... But... [the] new bill... includes safeguards so that court registrars will not be cold-heartedly snatching food from the mouths of starving children whose parents owe fines. Instead they will have the power to investigate an individual's financial situation to ensure the fine deductions do not rob them of life's necessities. Obviously this level of state intrusion into people's pay packets and bank accounts, and looking into where their money goes each week, raises privacy and civil liberty issues... The... Privacy Commissioner... had not seen the bill in its final form and declined to comment... One group guaranteed to have its say when the select committee calls for submissions is the Bankers Association. [The association's executive] director... said he[also] had not seen the bill so could not comment on its detail. But he counted 28 pieces of existing legislation allowing banks to divulge a customer's affairs to a third party. The majority of those allow statutory recovery of money from the account holder. He has noticed the list growing over the past decade, especially with the liable parent legislation and student loan scheme. In general he said banks were happy to fulfil their good corporate citizen role and assist the Crown to recover fines. But he wanted to know who would pay the estimated \$60 an hour it will cost to run the programmes necessary to comply with the court registrar's demands for money from individual accounts. If the Government didn't pay, bank customers would. The other problem was if the courts provided inaccurate information, leading the bank to debit the wrong customer. Then... the bank took the flak.

...[an] Auckland lawyer... is in hot water for taping telephone calls from the former partner of a client without her knowledge... so "her exact words and inflections" could be reproduced in full... The Privacy Commissioner... has written to [the lawyer] telling him he breached the woman's privacy... He said it was acceptable for professionals to take notes of conversations, but tape recordings were "significantly more intrusive"[, while adding that]... there were occasions when it would be desirable to have an incontrovertible record of what was said in a conversation, but... that could still be achieved with a prior warning... However, [the lawyer disagrees with the commissioner's] interpretation of the Privacy Act and the matter has been referred to the Human Rights Commission for possible legal action before the Complaints Review Tribunal... [H]e did not "collect" the information as defined under the act because the complainant initiated the contact with two unsolicited telephone calls in July 1996. He said the woman offered to withdraw a telephone harassment complaint against her former partner if he agreed to pay her a lump sum related to previous charges against him. She rang five days later seeking a response and was told that the accused had declined her offer. The woman complained to the Privacy Commissioner after [the lawyer] mentioned the tapes in court. The... [lawyer] said the Law Society's rules of professional conduct stated only that lawyers should not tape other lawyers without obtaining their specific consent. News gathering organisations are exempt from the principles of the act.

...TELEPHONE conversations between companies and customers are increasingly being recorded with [NZ's] largest health insurer recently joining the surveillance trend. Southern Cross[s] general manager... said the company had been recording conversations since October last year "for customer security"... Southern Cross had advised customers of the new recording policy in newsletters and other correspondence and he... was confident the recordings were secure. "We have very strict protocols as to what it can be used for... We use it purely to verify what was said in the instance of a disagreement..." ...He said there had been no response from the public about the recordings but staff had welcomed it... [The] Insurance Council chief executive... said he did not know how many insurance companies were recording phone calls but he believed it was widespread, particularly among firms selling policies over the phone... [T]he council was working on a code of practice on phone recordings, to be released as part of the Fair Insurance Code to companies later this year... Major banking institutions said last week they were not recording calls with individual customers, but many recorded conversations with large money dealers... [The] Privacy Commissioner... has noted a rise in verbal complaints to the commission's helpline over the recording of phone calls. He said a protocol on the practice was still months away but there seemed to be a need to warn more firms of risks in recording customers' conversations without informing them thoroughly beforehand. "I would certainly advocate a policy of openness. Sooner or later they will be found out."

...Harrod's, London's famous department store, secretly bugged unions and staff under orders from its chairman... The *Observer* newspaper has obtained access to hundreds of confidential tapes which are evidence of the store's... use of covert recordings against employees. Scores of individuals were targeted over at least six years because the chairman questioned their loyalty or actions. They include former senior directors, a solicitor, sales staff and secretaries as well as an existing executive... Conversations with customers, lawyers, family and partners were all intercepted and noted by Harrods security staff. The tapes even include conversations between the store and members of the royal household... Many tapes contain intimate conversations which were transcribed by the store's security staff and relayed to their superiors. Information gleaned from the tapes sometimes led to sackings or redundancies... Civil liberties campaigners are calling the taping a gross infringement of privacy. The revelations are certain to embarrass the Harrod's chairman, who is anxious to obtain British citizenship. The extent of the eavesdropping has been

revealed by the store's former director of security... a former major in the Royal Military Police, who left the store last year. [The former director of security] says that all bugging had to be first approved by the chairman. "...If anything of a sexual nature came up, he would ask me to play the tape to him." ...the unions were taped regularly and offices were searched at night by security staff. "I was once confronted by the union convenor and asked if their phones were being tapped. I lied and told him we didn't have the time or expertise to carry out such an operation." ...former employees who confirmed the bugging was done without their knowledge... expressed outrage that Harrods listened to their personal calls... In Britain it is legal for employers to bug their own phones, but it is frowned upon in Europe. [By the way, last year NZ's police department was 'given huge licence to secretly tape conversations while gathering evidence following Court of Appeal decisions. The rulings gave clear directions on how far the police can go in secret taping. The decisions also indicated the right to remain silent to police is not absolute. An Auckland University lecturer in evidence and criminal procedure who studied the judgments said the Court of Appeal ruled police use of a friend to tape a suspect or an accused person did not constitute a search or seizure. Earlier Court of Appeal rulings said under the Bill of Rights, the term "search" could encompass a violation of an individual's "reasonable expectation of privacy," the lecturer said. The decision removed any judicial check on police using "participant electronic monitoring" – secret taping using a friend or associate as bait. In Canada, police must apply for a search warrant to use this method of gathering evidence. On the right to remain silent the lecturer said the argument was the secret taping was a de facto interrogation by the police – "could they do through the back door what they couldn't do through the front door?" "My own belief is that the police should not be able to do this – once someone has been arrested and wanted to remain silent, this right should be respected." The sole dissenting Court of Appeal judge had said: "By putting questions to a man who had clearly indicated to the police his wish to exercise his right to silence and by having police questions put by the man's friend without disclosing that he was acting as a police agent, they were denying his right to silence. The action of the police elicited statements which would not otherwise have been made."]

... 'A law change to allow the bugging of all prisoners' phone calls will be sought next year in a bid to stop crimes being organised from behind bars. The Corrections Minister, who at the weekend visited AUSn prisons using telephone tapping technology, said criminals here were making a joke of the justice system by continuing their activities from prison. "Inmates are organising bank robberies, ordering drugs, arranging death contracts and leading gangs through misuse of the phone system," he said from Melbourne yesterday. This year four dangerous inmates used Auckland Prison's phone system to organise their escape. Prisoners are issued with a phone card that allows them to dial a maximum of 10 approved numbers. Some have been beating the system, however, by using telephone technology to get friends and family to divert their calls to other numbers. The High Court can give police the power to listen into phone conversations if there is evidence that crimes are being planned. But continuous tapping of inmates' conversations breaches the Bill of Rights, which the minister plans to change with legislation. "The irony is that removing prison phones does not breach any laws, but tapping inmates' phone calls does," he said. Importing the AUSn technology – which has prevented "hundreds of serious crimes being committed" in AUS – would see recordings kept of all prisoners' calls for six months and allow authorities to get a printout of what phone numbers had been dialled. Phone privileges would be cancelled if calls were being made for a criminal purpose. The only calls that would not be monitored would be those to the prison inspectorate, the Ombudsmen's office, or lawyers. The lawyer who heads the Howard League for Penal Reform said the minister was promoting "draconian, Big Brother" laws.]

...Beware: Big Brother is watching... and listening, and reading, and following. Fuelling the fears of paranoid people, a secret squirrel yesterday shattered any illusions that we lead private lives. Phone bugs, thumb nail-sized cameras... combined with... infrared lighting... and computer hackers are an everyday reality for every one of us, [the]Professor... told the Privacy Issues Forum in Auckland. That digital cellphone conversation you think cannot be intercepted? Bad news. "The code's been cracked." ...Carrying a cellphone was a simple way of ensuring that you could be tracked. Every few minutes, the phone sends out a pulse indicating where it is. "Those movements are being recorded and a history of those movements can be made available to whoever is willing to pay as well as law enforcement." ...Okay, but we can rely on the Internet for private chit-chat, can't we? Wrong. "It's like sending a postcard." ...Be careful with nasty notes, written and then deleted from a computer. They can easily be obtained in back-up systems... Espionage of this type was usually motivated by commercial reasons, he said. But no one was safe. "Anyone can be bugged. It does happen here in N[Z]... Moreover, it is virtually impossible to detect certain bugging devices."

...Anonymity will soon be a thing of the past, as advancing technology plants people's electronic fingerprints everywhere they go. Privacy watchdogs say people are less able to go about their business without divulging personal information. And as phone systems and business transactions embrace technology, people's privacy is increasingly eroded... Coin phones... allowed someone to make a call without leaving any traces on the phone system. But these were being overtaken by calling cards and credit-card phones... The Privacy Commission, in its review of the Privacy Act... said... "The calling card leaves a data trail through the telephone company, whereas the credit-card call also leaves a trail through the financial system. While there is presently a choice of anonymity, at some future point this option might be dropped." The commission's paper asked whether the act needed adjusting to protect the right of people to conduct their business in secret... Guardians of civil liberties have been reported as saying that the day is not far off when virtually everything we do is scrutinised and recorded by various corporations and agencies.

...The boom in wireless communications has led to a corresponding boom in wireless snooping. The community of listeners – as people who use scanning equipment to eavesdrop on various wireless devices call themselves – is startlingly large... [(up) to 20 million [in the US alone)]... Whether all their activities are ethical or even legal is highly questionable. To be sure, most scanners are harmless hobbyists hooked on the drama of raw, radio-transmitted reality; some anonymous guy who happens to like listening to plumbers and electricians, for instance, surely poses little threat to the community. Then there are the true fanatics... [who spend] hours a day monitoring police, private security and rescue squads... And a lot of folks want to... At any rate, the burden of protecting privacy... lies with [the victims]. "Is everybody entitled to a reasonable expectation of privacy?" asks... [the] publisher of the scanner journal *Monitoring Times*... "Absolutely." But that right, he says, doesn't extend to those who haven't bothered to get scrambling equipment... [Incidentally, t]he Privacy Commissioner... wants to shine more light on the shadowy secrets of the spy world. The cloak-and-dagger brigade, which enjoys statutory exemption under the Privacy Act, is under pressure to conform with codes guarding people's privacy. Watchdogs want the exemptions written into the act peeled back, forcing the Security Intelligence Service and the Government Communications Security Bureau to follow regulatory control of who they spy on and what they do with the information... Spies have only limited obligations under the act. They must give people the right to access and correct personal information... "The commissioner has... suggested that the need is made more urgent by the recent expansion of the mandate of the SIS into new areas concerning the security of N[Z]'s economic wellbeing."

...To combat theft, a bar-owner installed a hidden security camera and caught a bartender taking food without paying for it and leaving the till open between transactions. Both actions broke the bar's rules and the bartender was sacked. The ex-employee took a case to the Employment Tribunal and won a small sum of money. Another blow against employers fighting dishonesty in the workplace? As it turns out, no. According to [an]employment lawyer... in a review of the case, the Employment Court considered that the employee was entirely at fault and the employer would have won an appeal. However, the case raises the issue of the tense relationship between the increasing incidence of video surveillance and the privacy regulations. There is no law covering video surveillance. But certain principles apply, notably that of the trust inherent between employer and employee, human rights, and privacy... [H]ere are some guidelines to light the way through what looks very much like a legal minefield: • ...Employees should be told about surveillance cameras. • Covert surveillance is allowable when the employer suspects unlawful behaviour but should limit the range of cameras to the suspected area. Cameras in washrooms and toilets would almost certainly contravene these principles. • Employees should be allowed to see the tapes when they are made.

...[“THE next time you think about slipping out for an extra long lunch, watch out. You might be busted on the job. American-made *Busted on the Job 3* which screens on television tonight, features three Kiwi businesses where dishonest staff have been caught on camera. Wellington’s Morley Security & Investigation Group supplied the footage after it was approached by an American film company. “More and more companies are approaching us to install cameras so that they can detect dishonesty,” said MSIG’s managing director. “We put cameras as small as Biro tips in for a few days at a time and leave our clients to catch their staff in the act.” The Privacy Act restricts investigation companies to setting up cameras for a limited time. The director said some wires were left so the cameras could be installed again should the need arise. “In one place a company suspected a staff member who started work at 3 o’clock. By 3.20, he had his hand in the till. That’s all it took. On another tape, we caught a group of security guards playing video games for an hour when they were meant to be walking around. In a service station we caught a staff member stealing cigarettes. Then his wife came in and helped herself to a few packets, too, before she started picking her nose.” The director said *Busted on the Job 3* did not identify where the clips were filmed so it was up to viewers to pick those filmed in NZ. “I’m hoping to get my own NZ version under way shortly.”

...“TWO men were evicted from a flat after a mini surveillance video camera used to spy on their female flatmates was found hidden in a bathroom. The camera was found in a wall heater of the Christchurch flat last month, after one of the women complained the heater wasn’t working properly. Police were informed by the real estate company looking after the flat on behalf of the owner but the two women decided not to take the matter further. A security expert said the incident was part of a growing trend of hi-tech surveillance equipment abuse worrying the security industry. The problem lay in the availability of cheaper camera equipment, making it attractive for people who wanted to use it for “unprofessional” purposes, he said. However, little could be done to stop the sale of surveillance equipment to unscrupulous people. The only way was to regulate so it could be sold only to licensed security people.”]

...No one noticed [the voyeur] wandering with his video camera around shopping malls, boat shows and race meetings. Passers-by could not have known that a wire to his hand-held camera was letting him take video footage spying up the skirts... of women and girls. [The voyeur], aged 36, scanned the images into his computer and traded them around the world by e-mail, Internet and VHS tape, the Otahuhu District Court heard yesterday. In seized e-mails, he boasted he was the “numero uno hidden cam jockey in N[Z]” and had filmed under the skirts of between 2000 and 4000 girls and women, mostly since 1995. A conviction that year for offensive behaviour after he was nabbed filming did not discourage the Hamilton free-lance writer. He was caught in October last year when Internal Affairs busted an international Internet ring trading “objectionable material” and traced [the voyeur] under the nickname “New Zealand Overdrive.” ...On his Web site... he describes himself as of slim build, blue eyes, clean shaven, and tells surfers of his love of the Internet, his dislike of sport, drugs, drink and coffee. On the personal front he says he is considerate, affectionate, hates violence and knows how to “treat a lady the way she deserves.” ...On his home page he says... “I am incontrovertibly heterosexual,” and “variety is without a doubt the spice of a good sex life.” He invites surfers to view 40 “Famous Cam Girls... Some are really hot stuff while others are plain show-offs,” he says... In February a search of his business premises in Napier netted hundreds of files on his computer, 8mm film, magazines and VHS videos, including not only what he called his “up-skirt footage” but bestiality, urination, defecation, torture, snuff movies, autopsy footage and sex with children. [The voyeur], wearing thick glasses and dressed in a grey suit, pink shirt and pink tie, yesterday pleaded guilty to nine charges under the Films, Videos and Publications Classification Act 1993. He was remanded in custody for a month for sentencing and will be examined by a psychiatrist. The court heard how he perfected his covert operation by trailing a wire from his “shu-cam” up his trouser leg and along his sleeve to a video camera. The hand-held camera allowed him to blend into crowds, power the pin hole camera and view the footage as he recorded it... At one stage he varied his technique by sewing his pin hole camera into a bath mat at a youth hostel and hiding it in his female flatmate’s bedroom. A summary of facts read to the court... said that [the voyeur] launched his operation using an 8mm video camera hidden in a hand-held bag with the straps fully extended. The camera was at ground-level and angled upwards. “However, this method was found by the defendant to be less than ideal because he was not able to tell if his victims were wearing underwear.”

...The “highlights” were edited on to VHS video and sent to a friend in Florida, where it was combined with other footage and sold internationally for \$US49 per tape. Of the intended run of 200 tapes, 92 had been sold by March this year... [The judge has remanded the voyeur] in custody to “take the safe course.” There was little sentencing history of this type of offending in N[Z], he said. It carried only a \$20,000 fine or one year in prison... Prison authorities have been asked to provide protection for the self-described voyeur... from other inmates while on remand.

...A judge has recommended that... a voyeur diagnosed as a sexual deviant, be denied access to computers or cameras when he is paroled from prison... [The voyeur]’s 20-year-history as a sexual offender was discovered in October last year after Internal Affairs monitored an Internet chat line on which he was trading his “shucam” pictures. But yesterday... the... Judge... said that this offending paled into insignificance compared with the downloading of pictures from the Internet of women “who were clearly being tortured and/or killed.” She sentenced [the voyeur] to 21 months in prison... She also fined him \$7000, with court costs of \$570. The judge recommended he receive psychiatric help while in prison...

AFTER nine months of pleading for more patient privacy at Timaru Hospital’s psychiatric unit, the Mental Health Commission has finally got its foot in the door. The commission, whose brief includes reducing discrimination against psychiatric patients, urged Health South Canterbury to install a door on the unit’s public phone booth following concerns staff were listening in on conversations... “It may sound trivial but this is an example of people not listening to what patients want.”

...A Gisborne woman says her mentally ill daughter is living close to death on Hamilton streets because of civil liberty laws. The 32-year-old... profoundly deaf... and disabled woman, who has bipolar disorder (manic depressive), refuses to take her medication... [but has] an 18-year history of violent and abusive behaviour... The... daughter had been arrested in Gisborne on vagrancy charges this year, after leaving home and sleeping in toilet blocks. She was sent to Tokanui psychiatric hospital for assessment. Despite the hospital recommendation that she be kept there, she was freed by a judge... Her despairing mother said she had tried in vain to get mental health services to help, but was told her daughter had freedom of choice under the Bill of Rights and the Privacy Act. “The law is an ass when it protects people who are past making a rational choice for themselves,” the mother said... The Bill of Rights Act[also] stopped Customs detaining Japanese cars suspected of having been clocked, according to the Comptroller of Customs... [in] a memo to the former minister of customs... on May 28... In releasing the memo, [the former minister] said Customs had used the Bill of Rights as an excuse to do nothing.

...WE’VE GOT ourselves in a bind with[the] Privacy Act... Everybody who wants to keep the public from finding out something embarrassing, something awkward or insensitive, possibly actionable or criminal, now automatically intones the mantra: “Oh, no, we can’t tell you that because of the privacy legislation.” They’ve fooled themselves – they believe, wrongly – that there is a statute which gives everyone in an official or semi-official position the right to withhold information from the public arbitrarily and without giving a proper explanation. It doesn’t... The public, the voters, are the poorer for it. How can we make informed decisions at the next election if we have no idea what’s been going on...? Reporters are often criticised for prying, for intruding on private grief, for sticking their noses in. But if reporters don’t do it, if their editors don’t insist they do it, if they just sit on their backsides and wait for some flunkey, some spin doctor, some public relations wallah, some professional liar to emerge from the corridors with a piece of paper between finger and thumb containing a cunningly worded “press release”, then believe me, the public suffers in the long run. Instances of unwarranted withholding of information, against the public interest, occur almost every day. We have the census people cheerfully admitting that the forms from the 1996 census won’t be kept because they can’t risk adverse reaction by raising on the forms the issue of retention “at a time of heightened awareness of privacy issues.” We have the aeroplane drivers’ union objecting violently to police gaining access to cockpit voice recorders to establish whether a crime has been committed by crew involved in a fatal crash. It is members of

the public who fly in the aeroplanes these jumped-up drivers take off, fly and land. And it is members of the public who are entitled to know that the full weight of the law will thump down on anyone who endangers their lives. It is wrong for the pilots, through their union, to insist that possible evidence of criminal action must be kept secret, kept away from the police, from the press, from the public, but the existence of that damnable Privacy Act lends weight to their efforts to keep facts hidden, to dismiss reminders that pilots who have done nothing wrong have nothing to fear. We've got hospital administrators refusing to tell reporters how they propose to bring their skyrocketing overspending under control... We've got the Department of Social Welfare, entrusted with countless billions of mine and your tax dollars, flailing about like a wounded crocodile, trying to stop its staff talking to reporters. There have been "leaks of sensitive information" about the way our money is spent, and the DSW can't abide it. The public must not be told, the cry goes up. In no time at all the security service, the trained anti-espionage experts who heroically risk life and fingernails to keep our implacable enemies from finding out how many of our toy tanks are still serviceable, are called in to sweep the DSW offices for suspected electronic bugs, presumably planted by reporters trying to find out what's happening. With our money! An 18th Century Irish judge... once observed that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance, and servitude follows if you break the condition. It's not a bad sort of slogan to remember when some smooth-tongued lizard smiles smugly and says you're not entitled to know because of the Privacy Act.

...The Government plans to limit the reach of its privacy laws, regarded as among the most extensive in the world, as a compromise with A[US], criticised worldwide as lagging behind in privacy protection. The provision is in the transtasman Mutual Recognition Bill and is the price many N[Z]ers... will pay as the Government moves to expand the CER market in goods and services [after a] recent u-turn by the A[US]n Government on privacy protection... Misgivings about the situation were[voiced] yesterday by the Privacy Commissioner... [Incidentally,] a magistrate said yesterday... "A[US]n society would be a lot duller if people weren't allowed to say what they think." [The comment made me think of what Soren Kierkegaard wrote in *The Journals*: 'People hardly ever make use of the freedom which they have, for example, freedom of thought; instead they demand freedom of speech as compensation.']

...In 1990 Parliament explicitly gave the people of N[Z] a right they had long exercised and valued, the right to freedom of expression. This law... recognised a long tradition of free speech shared by all democratic nations... Unfortunately, the act contained no enforcement mechanism, with the result that rather than safeguarding and expanding liberties, it may have produced a climate in which those liberties... have begun to be eroded... In the U[S], Canada and A[US], judges play an important role in protection of freedom of speech. That oversight role is denied N[Z] judges under the... Act of 1990. There may be good reason to suspect judges are inappropriate protectors of civil rights, especially the right to free speech in N[Z], for there is here a tradition of judicial suppression of speech through injunctions. Judicial injunctions against the press in N[Z] are commonplace... In defamation cases in N[Z], there is no free speech defence such as exists in the U[S]... To avoid being sued for defamation in N[Z] a newspaper must not only have published a true story, it must prove that truth under the method of proofs normally applied in courts of law. It would be nice if truth, in some absolute sense, were knowable. In fact, each discipline has its own particular truth. Most of the data on which a reporter relies is hearsay and therefore not admissible in a court of law.

...A High Court judge has banned a students' meeting scheduled for this week, branding it undemocratic. [The judge] issued an injunction on Friday preventing the... Auckland University Students' Association executive... from holding a special general meeting at the university's Maidment Theatre this Thursday [after a former] student president... sought the ruling... claiming the executive chose the theatre knowing there would not be a quorum and that the motions for discussion would fail... In banning the association from holding the meeting in the Maidment, [the judge] said universities of the free world had for centuries been at the forefront of promoting freedom of expression. He found it "disappointing" the association had chosen a venue which had a history of failed meetings. He was left with the overall impression that the executive was not enthusiastic about the matters for debate... Last night the association president... said the Maidment was chosen because it was easier to count votes there... He said they had obtained legal advice that they were acting within the rules of the constitution, and denied that the decision to use the theatre was undemocratic... [In related news, the] stormy student protest outside Parliament [(r:p331, ln47), which resulted] in 74 arrests, may lead to test cases in the courts involving the rights of demonstration, a lawyer said... yesterday... [The] Wellington barrister... who was called in by the Victoria University Students Association, said the students could argue that the Bill of Rights protected their ability to assemble peacefully. Protests were a long-held democratic tradition at Parliament, [he] said. The test would be whether there was some threat to public safety from the protest which overrode those rights. The manager of parliamentary security... invoked trespass notice warnings after some of the 300 protesting students started pushing wire-mesh barriers they had been warned to stay behind. Four further trespass warnings were given before a 2pm deadline, when some of the 60 police on stand-by moved in... For the next 90 minutes there was an occasionally rowdy but non-violent procession of arrests as students were led away, photographed and put into wagons on a shuttle service to the central police station...

[The 'students arrested outside Parliament have had the charges against them thrown out after a judge said that "the police had no right to invoke trespass orders".' The students had been] **demonstrating against the Government's discussion paper on tertiary education options.**

...[the 'University of Auckland's 1600 staff have been told by the Vice-Chancellor that they will be instantly fired if caught criticising colleagues or other campus schools, prompting fears that their academic freedom is being threatened. The tough line is in response to friction between academic staff and the university's science and medicine schools and criticism of other institutions over the allocation of millions of dollars of research money.']

...The Government has muzzled school heads following strong criticism from one principals' organisation which it funds, secret papers reveal. Documents obtained by Labour show three principals' organisations had to agree to communications restrictions as part of funding contracts last year. A memorandum to the P[M] last February said the president of one group was "more outspoken on policy issues" than the contract with the Government allowed. Four months later "communications protocols" were added to annual contracts for policy advice signed with the three principals' organisations... The Labour education spokesman... said the protocols were an "obvious attempt" to gag principals and stifle criticism of the Government. The Minister of Education... said last night that the restrictions were necessary to keep incomplete policy confidential... [However, he] said there would be no need for the protocols shortly because he was "uncomfortable" with the contracts and would probably not renew them... The president of the Principals' Federation... said last night that the restrictions had "absolutely not" affected her public comments... [The] president of the Secondary Principals' Association, also strongly denied that the protocols had restricted the organisation. The Intermediate Schools Principals' Association could not be reached for comment... [By the way, v]iolent and pornographic computer games could be slipping into the hands of children because censors haven't got the technology or time to view them properly. Software manufacturers and distributors are losing patience with the Office of Film and Literature Classification and are refusing to submit contentious material because of the time it is taking the censors to classify it.

...[NZ censors] are allowing companies to sell violent adult computer and video games... apparently with the tacit approval of the Office of Film and Literature Classification... About 100 games rated adults only by overseas censors are on sale without classification... The deputy censor... says the problem is "we can't censor quick enough. It's embarrassing for us." ...The Film, Video and Publications Classification Act requires the office to view and rate any game which is subject to an age restriction overseas. Carmageddon... the road-rage video game... which rewards players who run down pedestrians... was referred to the office in July but several months later is still waiting for a classification... [T]he office does not have the people or the equipment to cope... Most video and computer games are so complex, usually having a running time in excess of 40 hours, that would-be censors can spend weeks playing without viewing all the footage. Industry sources say the people best qualified to quickly master a game are 13 and 14-year-olds, an inappropriate age for people to be viewing adult material... [T]he office sympathises with the industry, which is trying to

comply with legislation. However, [according to the deputy censor,] technology has outstripped the intentions of legislators and an amendment to the act is needed... [Unfortunately, an amendment might not be enough.] One of the biggest-selling games in the U[S], Postal, was not officially released[in NZ] because it was considered too hard-core. Instead, it has been picked up and sold by pirates... [● The] controversial computer game which awards points to players who “steal” cars could be on sale early next year. Grand Theft Auto, which can be played on Playstations or personal computers, has been released in A[US] with an MA15 restriction and is soon to be assessed by N[Z] censors. The game... caused controversy on its release in Britain because it was claimed it could encourage children to commit crimes. The game is not as explicit as others such as Carmageddon... but involves players joining a crime family... Police... will wait for the censor’s decision before independently assessing the game.

...Free-speech activists and those seeking to protect children against smut in cyberspace clashed yesterday at the U[S] Supreme Court in what was billed as “the first free-speech case of the 21st century.” The nine justices heard arguments on the constitutionality of the Communications Decency Act 1996, which makes it a crime to distribute indecent sexual material over the internet to persons under 18... The law did not target obscenity or child pornography, which already were illegal... A federal appeals court in Philadelphia... last year struck down the[new] law as unconstitutional, saying it was unenforceable... because half of the pornographic content on the internet came from sources outside the U[S]... and adding that parents should do more to screen what their children see on the internet. [However, a]Justice Department lawyer... said parents could not rely on existing screening software to guard against inappropriate material being accessed by children. But... a lawyer arguing on behalf of a coalition of libraries, publishers, the recording industry and a wide array of internet users and service providers, said the vague definition of “indecent” could hurt artistic expression.

...The U[S] Supreme Court extended free-speech rights to cyberspace in a historic ruling on Thursday... [B]y a 7-2 vote, [it]ruled that all key parts of the Communications Decency Act violate free-speech rights, amounting to illegal Government censorship... The... [US President will] study the decision... “...the right technology and rating systems... can... ensure that our children don’t end up in the red light districts of cyberspace,”...

In its first foray into cyberspace, the Supreme Court says the First Amendment applies there too ONE OF THE KEY IDEAS BEHIND the Internet was to build a computer network that could withstand a nuclear holocaust. Last week the Net proved its resilience in the face of another sort of attack. The Communications Decency Act, signed into law by[the US] President... last year, was designed to protect children by prohibiting “indecent” speech or images from being sent through cyberspace. But even before Congress passed the legislation, free-speech advocates were blasting it as an unacceptable infringement on the... First Amendment to the Constitution, which guarantees freedom of expression. Now the Supreme Court has agreed that the CDA is precisely that... It was a decisive – though not unexpected – victory for civil libertarians. Opponents of the CDA... argued that the statute was so vaguely worded and ill defined that discussions in online chat rooms about abortion or contraception could have attracted the vice squad. Says... [the] executive director of the... American Civil Liberties Union...: “It would have criminalised all sorts of speech that would never have been criminalised before.” And that, said the court, could have crippled the Internet... “Let today be the first day of a new American Revolution – a digital American Revolution!” said... [the] attorney for the Electronic Frontier Foundation, addressing a crowd of revellers in San Francisco. CDA proponents were every bit as vociferous in defeat as their counterparts were in victory. Members of the anti-porn group Enough Is Enough... demonstrated outside the Supreme Court with signs that read HONK IF YOU HATE PORN and CHILD MOLESTERS ARE LOOKING FOR VICTIMS ON THE INTERNET. Legislators seized the moment as well... [The] co-author of the CDA... said... “The court has ignored the clear will of the Executive Branch and the Congress and the clear will of the American people.” In fact, though, the court did not rule that government cannot regulate the Internet. Nor did it alter the long-standing legal prohibition against obscenity, which remains unprotected speech, both on and off the Net. It simply said that the CDA as written was fatally flawed because in trying to protect children it would also keep adults from getting material they had a legal right to see. That gives CDA forces hope that they’ll be able to revisit the issue... Vows... the recently installed president of the Christian Coalition: “We won’t accept this as the last word.”[In further news from the US, ‘the Justice Department is under gag by the court’]...

Freedom of speech and communication as an absolute right can only occur in a society that has very little sense of community.[This sentiment was clearly understood by Tolstoy, who wrote last century that: ‘The more telegraphs, telephones, books, papers and periodicals men have, the more means will there be of spreading contradictory lies and hypocrisies, and the more disunited and consequently unhappy will they become, as indeed occurs now.’] Originally “freedom of speech” was intended to enhance the governance of a community; its function was political. The extension of this provision to include material with an educational effect – having the potential to shape the character of citizens – has generally been misunderstood or intentionally confused. The issue has come to the point where, as *Time* [– ‘Only Select NZers Get It Free!’ –]magazine noted on the cover of a July issue in 1995, we must consider whether we can protect our children and our current interpretation of free speech. The latest target for the “free speakers” is the Internet... *Time* tells the story of a U[S] senator who wanted to extend the Communications Decency Act to Internet providers knowingly making hard-core pornography available to children under 18. It was finally passed 84 to 16 after senators were shown the type of material children could access. Then the Speaker of the House of Representatives... denounced the amendment as a clear violation of free speech. Refreshingly, at least one country, Germany, has not succumbed. According to a news snippet, Germany has become the first country to ban pornography, violence and neo-nazi material on the Internet and Websites. Analysis shows that “freedom of speech” within a society is always within boundaries. If this were not true libel laws would not exist and anarchy would be desirable. Free rein to the individual is always going to kill a community... Ultimately, a safe community must make more sense as a standard to be upheld than an individual’s right to freedom of expression. Just as schools often have to make decisions in which, quite properly, the rights of all pupils to an undisturbed education are placed ahead of the perceived rights of the individual, so must the community take issue with those who neglect the common good for personal gain... Unless the parents of N[Z] children decide they value their children enough to scream against the civil libertarians who feel they have a right to pollute young minds with incest, bestiality, torture and child sex, we can only ponder the society they will inherit... While freedom of speech sounds noble, speech that produces freedom is truly noble. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* asks the question: “Cannot it be said that only they are truly free who know what they are doing and who choose to do what is right? All others are, in varying degrees, prisoners of illusions and appetites, however much they may believe themselves to be freely expressing themselves.” How much longer will we suffer the self-servers speaking...? - 1997

It’s a free country. We can all have our say, or so we’re led to believe.

McCarthyism... anti-Communist persecution, verging on public hysteria, prevalent in the USA in the decade following... W[W2. This]... witch-hunt for people suspected of Communist beliefs... resulted in the ruin of many careers and a nationwide suspicion of communism which is still apparent in the USA today.

...supporters justified [Senator McCarthy] by several cases of Communist influence that he exposed... in the State Dept. and other Federal agencies... His critics, including some Republicans, charged him with doing more damage to freedom of speech and of the press than to Communism.

speech, freedom of, right to speak one’s opinions on political, religious, economic, or social affairs, without risk of punishment or reprisal... [I]t existed with limitations in the past, as in ancient Greece and Rome... [F]reedom of speech may be limited, particularly in times of local or national

crisis. Traditionally, in modern democracies the right has been restrained only by the laws of libel, slander, obscenity, and treason or sedition. In the U.S. it is guaranteed by the Bill of Rights of the Constitution, in the 1st Amendment, and by the various state constitutions. Supreme Court interpretations of the constitutional guarantees have varied with the temper of the times and the make-up of the Court Membership... Freedom of the press, like other freedoms, has required constant defence, not only against political interference but also against all those who, for moral or other reasons, wish to control information, opinion, or entertainment offered to the public. Freedom of the press is an institution peculiar to nations in which government is subject to the will of the people.

In a surrender to Israeli diplomatic pressure, BBC officials in London have banned their staff in Britain and the Middle East from referring to Israel's policy of killing its guerrilla opponents as "assassination". BBC reporters have been told to use Israel's own euphemism, "targeted killings"... [after] Israeli diplomats... lunching with BBC officials... complain[ed] that coverage was anti-Israeli and pro-Palestinian... The Palestinian killing of Israelis, however, is[still] referred to as "murder" or "assassination"... The Israeli campaign is, in fact, far from "targeted". In the first such killings, two middle-aged Palestinian women died. After its initial report, the BBC dropped all reference to the female victims.

...a cot-death campaigner... has forced the N[Z] *Medical Journal* to delete part of a paper after threatening legal action... [The campaigner] said a defamatory paragraph had been added after he... reviewed the cot-death paper by a child health advocate... The journal's editorial board said the deletion raised concerns that freedom of scientific debate had been compromised, and set an unfortunate precedent. [The campaigner] did not accept that his actions had compromised free debate, which he said could not be stifled in a country such as N[Z]. However, he said, defamatory statements "cannot be published with impunity."

...The owners of *Truth* say a record \$675,000 defamation award to[a] musician... will not threaten the paper's future. [The musician], whose hits included *She's a Mod* in 1964, sued the weekly tabloid over an article it printed... [that claimed the musician] had billed the Auckland Rugby Football Union \$70,000 to organise 45 minutes of entertainment for a test between the All Blacks and the Springboks at Eden Park. [The musician], who was made an OBE in 1974, told the jury that the \$70,000 budget was approved by the union before the event. He delivered the event under budget at \$69,040, and his fee was just \$5000. His lawyers... argued that the story, headlined "[Musician] slugs rugby for \$70,000," implied that he was unprofessional, greedy and had ripped off the Auckland Rugby Union and would do the same to future clients... [The musician], who organised sporting and entertainment functions, told the jury that after the article appeared, the phone simply "stopped ringing" and business turnover dropped from \$350,000 a year to \$50,000... If the \$675,000 awarded... stands, it will surpass the \$650,000 awarded to... the former president of the Auckland Trotting Club, against TVNZ over two... programmes which effectively said he was doping horses and involved in financial irregularities.

...The name – and it's his real name too, he'll have you know, not some show business affectation – is synonymous with entertainment. It's also synonymous with honesty and integrity. It was, in short, the name of one of the biz's straightest dealers and most genuine guys. Then came the Tuesday... 2 1/2 years... [ago] when the billboards for the weekly scandal sheet *Truth* hit the streets... The man who had a hit with *She's a Mod* in 1964 and who, backed by his band the Invaders, played support a year later to a bunch of young Englishmen called the Rolling Stones... trembles at the memory... "That billboard was all over the country, outside every petrol station and dairy," he says. "People didn't have to buy the paper to read the story. The damage that did was huge." A jury in the High Court at Auckland agreed... and awarded the entertainer and event manager a record \$675,000. When... Independent Newspapers Ltd... announced... that it would not appeal, the judgment became the largest defamation award made here against a news organisation... The record payout is greater than his actual losses, [the musician] concedes. But what's left over will be spent developing ...h[is] business and lessening his dependence on performing. In any case, more than money was at stake.

... "The libel law here," says [NZ's] Opposition leader... "while not as tough as it used to be, is certainly stricter than in... America, [where] public figures are fair game." The American news media can run the wildest and flimsiest stories about [their president] and never get sued... [However, a US judge has] ordered *Los Angeles Magazine* to pay[an] actor... a further \$US1.5 million... for running computer-generated photos of the actor in a dress and high heels. The decision brings the total damages bill over the incident to \$US3 million... A lawyer for the magazine, owned by Capital Cities ABC and its parent, The Walt Disney Company, said the ruling would be appealed... The magazine did a computer composite without [the actor]'s permission, using a still photo of him from his 1982 role of *Tootsie*, in which he played an out of work actor who gets a job disguised as a woman. The magazine pasted [hi]s face complete with makeup from that still photo on the body of a model... as part of a... fashion layout...

A British libel court has awarded "substantial" damages over "hurtful" allegations that a US millionaire actor and his wife were gay and that their marriage was a sham. The *Express on Sunday's* barrister said it unreservedly withdrew all the allegations and accepted they were "entirely false." The paper will also meet the legal costs, estimated at £150,000. The couple said they would give the libel damages to charity.

...Given the UK's draconian libel laws, it seemed... strange... for England's *Daily Mirror* to run a story with the headline "Rent-a-Liz – it's a bargain". The story, published in June 1996, alleged that the... Estee Lauder cover-girl... would go home with any man willing to pay out US\$40,000. Of course, the story was a complete sham, and... [the victim] successfully sued the tabloid for undisclosed damages and legal costs.

...A STUDY that claims oggling at breasts is good for the health is a put-up job. A worldwide media release falsely claims the study has been reported in the New England Journal of Medicine. The fictitious five-year study of 200 men – by a supposedly German scientist... – claims men live longer if they stare at busty beauties for 10 minutes a day... [Incidentally, t]wo-person television crews for NBC and CBS and a photographer for Agence France-Presse hid in bushes and snapped pictures of... [the US President and his wife] in swimsuits at a beach... on holiday in the Virgin Islands... The pictures were plastered across the front pages of [US] newspapers yesterday... When asked... if the pictures... violated his privacy, "and where should the press draw the line?" [the President said:] "The answer to the first question is yes... The answer to the second question is that's why we have a First Amendment" to the Constitution to protect the free press. "You get to decide the answer to the second question,"...

Four months after nearly losing his job in the fallout over CNN's retracted story about nerve gas use in Vietnam, [a NZ reporter]... is returning to the air. The Pulitzer Prize-winning correspondent... has not been on CNN since a follow-up report in June on Operation Tailwind. He narrated the original Tailwind story in May that alleged the deadly gas sarin was used by U[S] troops in a 1970 mission to hunt down American defectors during the Vietnam War. The story infuriated the military, and CNN concluded after an investigation that it could not be proved. [The correspondent] successfully fought for his job after arguing that his role in reporting the story was minimal. Since then, CNN has not exactly rushed to put [him] back on the air... [He] spent about a month working with lawyers preparing to defend slander cases relating to Tailwind. Then he was sent to Algeria... He spend nearly six weeks there reporting and doing work for the Committee to Protect Journalists. His hiatus was not particularly unusual, since he typically covers three or four big stories a year.

...Georgia legislators [are currently debating a] proposed law which will tax newspapers and radio and tv stations for stories on crime...

Page 24 suggests you shoot right between the eyes to guarantee an instant kill. Chapter 2 recommends firing at least a metre away from your victim so no tell-tale blood splatters your clothes. Page 90 offers advice on how much you should be paid, with an absolute minimum of \$30,000... "Any amount less would be amateurish." The book... is a step-by-step guide for the would-be professional killer... [One man] certainly made good use of the book. He studied it closely enough to follow 24 of its best ideas when he blew the brains out of [his client's wife], her disabled eight-year-old son... and the boy's nurse... [The owner of the book's publishing company] says... "I unfortunately would not – cannot – accept responsibility for

the actions of [readers].” Last week a Maryland judge agreed with him... ruling that books do not kill, people do. The First Amendment still applies, he said, even when the words used create a danger. But [an opponent] says books such as *Hit Man* should not be sheltered by the Constitution. They should be classified as criminal speech. “The framers of the First Amendment did not intend it to be a suicide pact between the people and the Government...” ...[looking at the issue from a purely fictional aspect, should] public interest abridge the freedom to create characters like... [the ones] in *Natural Born Killers*? ...[consider also the] Atlanta security guard[who] was hailed as a hero for spotting the pipe-bomb planted at Centennial Park during the Olympic Games, and then smeared as a villain when the FBI announced he was the chief suspect... His mother has tearfully asked [the]President... to clear her son’s name. She cannot take action against all the U[S] newspapers and television stations which ran “Portrait of a Killer” items about her son – that was their right under the First Amendment. [The President] is grappling with the same problem.

...The [Atlanta bombing] exposed the incompetence and banality of the American way... THREE days after the Atlanta bombing, CBS News was running a montage of the carnage as a promotional trailer, concluding with the words: “To be continued...” It was as if the unfolding events in Georgia were no different from the network’s moronic daytime soap operas. In modern America the line between soap and life is an increasingly fine one... [I]n the aftermath of the blast, the security guard... designated by the media as the hero of the “senseless tragedy” lapsed easily into cop-show clichés: “I did the job I was trained to do,” he told reporters solemnly. Ah, but that was Monday. By Tuesday, in the soapy shorthand of CBS, [the security guard] had been switched from hero to villain – the guy who found the bomb only because he’d put it there in the first place. And by Friday, to the frustration of the CBS casting director, [the security guard] seemed to have junked the script entirely: neither hero nor villain, but something murky and undefined in between... Atlanta was a peculiarly repellent Olympics. Incredibly fit people on steroids were cheered by incredibly fat people on cheeseburgers... The ads for Nike and other products offer[ed] obnoxious aggressive sportsmen opining, for example, that there’s no such thing as “winning silver”: Which simply means that you lost gold, you wimp. Indeed, in their advocacy of total war, winning at any price, the end justifying the means, the philosophy of the commercials is virtually indistinguishable from your average terrorist group’s credo. The Games organisers boasted that “for the next two weeks, Atlanta will be the safest city in the world”. Instead, the city dispatchers who answered the emergency call lost 10 crucial minutes because they didn’t know where Centennial Park was and therefore couldn’t enter the address on their computers. Atlanta contracted out just about everything to do with the Games: TV crews reporting the explosion were even prevented from filming news footage showing the Olympic flame in the background because NBC apparently ha[d] exclusive rights over that. With hindsight, it might have been an idea to contract out the security, too. Twenty years ago the Olympics were in Montreal, which, lacking the corporate assistance of Coke and co, wound up virtually bankrupt as a result. But they had real terrorist threats to deal with: Middle East groups were planning a repeat of their 1972 assault on the Israeli team; local factions from Quebec had promised to take a pop at the Queen. In the event, the Mounties, operating with a fraction of the resources of the US Federal agencies[–] ...the use of more than 30,000 police and private security guards, 10,000 military personnel, and more than 2500 FBI and Secret Service officials... reportedly[cost] Atlanta \$A227 million... [–] managed to protect both their sovereign and the visiting athletes. And they did it discreetly: They didn’t swank around boasting of their impenetrable security, thereby ensuring that someone would try to prove them wrong. [The security guard] was jailed in 1990 for impersonating a police officer and attempting to arrest a couple sharing a hot tub at an apartment complex where he worked. At the Olympics he came under suspicion because he is a white male loser security guard hung up on law enforcement. In other words, the fellows most likely to breach the police line are the ones who’d most like to be in it... After Atlanta and TWA, [the]President... is giving Federal agents more money and more powers. The evidence suggests they have more than enough of both, but that they don’t know how to use them. Forget the militia[and] the ayatollahs... the only conspiracy that fits is a conspiracy of dunces, of boneheads and losers and no-hopers... all the way back to that prototype bozo in the Dallas Book Depository three decades ago. Conspiracy theories are comforting, a form of what Americans call “denial”, a way of avoiding unpleasant truths about basic competence. That’s the humiliation of Atlanta: In front of the Russians and Chinese, the Cubans and Bosnians, they blew it, and they blew it not to professionals, but to some two-bit punk with a homemade pipe-bomb.

...The bloody attack on Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta was the latest example of an explosive Georgia tradition – the nail-laced pipe bomb. It has a long and murderous history as a low-tech tool of mayhem favoured by white supremacists and other political extremists. The bomb is easy to build, requiring little more than gunpowder, a length of piping, an ignition device and nails or screws to cause scrapnel damage. Georgia’s most famous pipe-bomb incident before the games blast... was in 1989... [when f]our nail-studded bombs were sent through the mail. Two were detected and removed. The others killed a federal appellate judge... and a Georgia civil rights leader...

More than four months after the bombing at Atlanta’s Olympic Park, [by which]... many people... we[re injured and two] people died... the FBI has posted a \$US500,000... reward to tape of a telephone call warning of the blast in the hope that someone might recognise the man’s deep, slow voice. [The o]ne-time suspect... meanwhile, reached an undisclosed cash settlement with the NBC television network...

Chequebook journalism is here to stay, says the outgoing editor of the N[Z] *Women’s Weekly*... The 34-year-old, who... said yesterday that she was resigning[also]... said there was a market for paying for stories and it was not going to die. “It’s happening whether we want it or not. But it’s a bit of a non-issue for us because if you don’t want to pay for a story you don’t pay for it and you don’t get it. If you do really want a story you have to pay for it. It’s supply and demand really.” ...before *Women’s Day*, owned by A[US]n Consolidated Press, entered the N[Z] market in 1987 the *Women’s Weekly* had paid for only two stories in almost 60 years... [However, she] refused to discuss how much money [was involved]... The issue made headlines last month when convicted drug traffickers... signed a deal with *Women’s Day* to tell their story... - 1996

Chequebook journalism: the horrifying truth about us and, well, almost everyone else... It has been observed that the moral high ground, while easily taken, is famously difficult to maintain. This is especially so of the fractured debate on Journalists Who Come Bearing Cheques. How nice it would be, for example, to take TV3’s... cheerfully proclaimed word: “We don’t buy stories.” ...So they won’t pay for stories, but they will use stories that have been paid for... Even commentators appear to have trouble with the high ground. [A journalism lecturer who is] reliably scathing about money-for-talk deals, was reported in *North & South* last year as being the first local news executive to “facilitate the exchange of substantial amounts of cash for a story”. Confusingly, *North & South* also reported [the lecturer] to be at the time studying for an MA in media ethics... Now, before the *Listener* goes about putting all its competitors and betters to the sword, just to prove what good sports we are in this fraught arena, we shall fall very publicly on our own. Back in 1989, the *Listener* paid \$9000 for the exclusive rights to the *Rose-Noelle* story. [Our w]riter... recalls that the four castaways, having spent 119 days holed up in the capsized trimaran, were broke. They wanted to write a book. [The writer] wouldn’t oblige; he didn’t have the time. The idea of a payment was then mooted, with [the writer] negotiating on behalf of the magazine. The crew asked for \$20,000... and the haggling proceeded... [The writer] now says that he regrets the \$9000 paid to [the four castaways]... “I knew that the then-editor was willing to go a couple of grand higher, but I got them to go as low as they could. I don’t know why I did that – they were the ones on the bones of their arses.” Speaking of having been on the bones of their arses, let us return to TV3. Since nabbing [a NZ First MP] in flagrante negotio, the channel has steadfastly denied that it pays for stories, a stance that irritates [the person who is] now a field producer on the *Assignment* programme. During his three years at TV3 (he left three years ago) two instances occurred in which payments were made during stories. One was... \$10,000... for the rights to tapes of European soccer games that [he] still considers “unimportant” to the programme. On the second occasion, the channel paid... “not a large sum” towards the air ticket of a man who was pursuing legal action overseas. That seems to fit with anecdotal suggestions that TV3, although not paying in cash, is prepared to extend the confines of television’s green (or hospitality) room, supplying airfares, fridges and, in one

case, a headstone, in return for exclusivity. “No we don’t,” respond TV3[’s] director of news and[its] current affairs... and 20/20 producer... “The bottom line is that we haven’t done it.”

...Nowhere is the argument over chequebook journalism more bitter at present than between rival Sunday night current affairs shows, TVNZ’s *60 Minutes* and TV3’s *20/20*. The executive producer of *60 Minutes* says he doesn’t pay but *20/20* does. “It leads to people inflating their stories to get some money, so getting to the truth is much harder.” The *20/20* executive producer says he doesn’t pay either and has considered suing *60 Minutes* for saying so. [● *60 Minutes* is linked to the US broadcasting company CBS, which was ‘duped by an ex-heroin addict murderer into believing he was an ex-Vietnam hero. They would’ve know he wasn’t if they’d just bothered to look for his Vietnam record’!]

...the man initially questioned on the Atlanta Olympics bomb blast[has yet to reach an agreement with CBS, but NBC has confirmed that it paid the]... security guard... more than \$[NZ]715,000... to avoid a defamation lawsuit.

...LAWYERS for 17 people injured in last year’s Olympic Park bombing have filed a \$155 million lawsuit against Olympic organisers, claiming the attack, which killed one [person], could have been prevented... [because] the committee and security firms were warned a bomb was likely to be detonated. “That bomb should never have been in the park,” said[one] lawyer... “It was just a tragedy of errors.”

...a year after he was cleared as a suspect in the Atlanta Olympic bombing... the... former security guard started this week as a police officer in Luthersville, a small town about 64km south-west of Atlanta... [He had] worked for six years as a security guard and five years as a jailer before taking a job as a security guard at the Olympics... [He then] spent 88 days... under the microscope of the FBI and the world media after... the... bombing... that killed one woman and injured more than 100... “Of course we are going to have some attention, but... [anyone] that will risk their life to be a police officer for \$US8... an hour, have got to want to be a police officer,”... said... [his new boss. In local news, a NZ First MP]’s lawyer... was unfairly treated by TV3 when he tried to sell an exclusive interview, the Broadcasting Standards Authority has ruled. The Criminal Bar Association had complained that by broadcasting a confidential discussion with [the lawyer], TV3 was in “blatant and flagrant breach” of common law to increase ratings. The authority has ordered TV3 to pay \$500 costs. [The lawyer rang a] TV3 reporter to discuss an exclusive interview with [the MP] about his involvement in Aotearoa Television, in return for at least \$20,000. During the conversation, [the lawyer] said: “And you and I, I trust, are talking confidentially”. “Yeah,” the reporter said. The authority said after that assurance, [the lawyer] had reason to be less guarded than he might otherwise have been “and thus a degree of entrapment was involved”... TV3[’s] director of news and current affairs... said he[’d] asked the reporter to ring the lawyer[back and tape the conversation because he thought the offer was a hoax. If the tape had not been used “[the MP] to this day would have denied it”. TV3 had been deluged with supportive calls from the public over the decision... The station is considering an appeal.

...Journalists may have reason to be grateful for... [a] former MP’s dressing gown. It was... [his] appearance on TV3’s *National News* clad only in his night clothes which sparked a Broadcasting Standards Authority decision which is being hailed as a significant victory for the media. The regulatory body’s judgment, that public figures – particularly politicians involved in issues of public interest – are less entitled to privacy protection than other people, is a landmark decision that has struck a blow for freedom of speech, say lawyers and media commentators. Placed in context with another recent High Court decision[which]... ruled that qualified privilege applied to political commentary, some say that the tide has turned for news organisations previously under siege from litigious politicians and personalities... “Politicians have used the defamation law for so long to intimidate the media and prevent matters of public interest being fairly covered. This is really important and it’s a breakthrough for us, but it’s limited until tested in the High Court.” ...However, [the] Auckland Law Society media law spokesman... warns that a court of law will not “take much notice” of Broadcasting Standards Authority decisions. In defamation cases, what is important is what a jury thinks is relevant, he said... [There have been] a series of defamation decisions against news organisations in the 90s... In 1992, a jury awarded... a gossip columnist, \$375,000 in damages following a... magazine article. The record award was quickly eclipsed by the \$1.5 million awarded to[the] Auckland Trotting Club president... after allegations aired on... [a TV1 news] programme. Although both amounts were reduced on appeal, more recently the *Truth* and the *Independent* newspapers have fallen foul of defamation law... [The] *Independent* editor... has seen more than a few defamation suits cross his desk, and he recently opined in an editorial that the defamation laws “prevent the press from playing its role as democratic watchdog.”

...A television film crew has been censured for invasion of privacy after approaching a man in a public car park. In a decision which is seen as a blow to media rights, the Broadcasting Standards Authority has upheld a complaint against the TVNZ consumer programme *Fair Go*... The *Fair Go* crew tried to speak to... a builder... about customer dissatisfaction with a house he built, but he eventually drove off without talking about the issue. [The builder] complained to the authority that the programme’s tactics amounted to door-stepping... He was angry about the way the film crew had caught him unaware and unprepared... [The] editor and producer of *Fair Go*... said... “This is not a case where a camera crew climbed through a bedroom window or used hidden microphones. We most certainly believe we acted in the public interest.” [He] said reporters had tried to contact [the builder] three or four times before the approach in the car park, a claim [the builder] denied yesterday... In its ruling the authority said *Fair Go* had breached the Television Code of Broadcasting Practice rule dealing with treating subjects justly and fairly. Complaints about the accuracy of the programme were thrown out... Industry executives are stunned with the decision and are worried about its implications... TVNZ executives are understood to be seeking a clarification of the ruling, which producers fear will restrict their news-gathering ability.

...Newspaper industry leaders have called for balance between the rights to privacy and those to freedom of information... The wide powers of definition that Parliament has given the Privacy Commissioner are partly responsible for confusion over privacy issues, says the chairman of the Press Council... The N[Z] section chairman of the... Commonwealth Press Union... said newspaper criticism of the act often stemmed from ridiculous situations where the act had been “misused, abused, or simply misunderstood by those with control over personal information.” He cited the case of a Porirua psychiatric patient who gave birth to a baby on the street five weeks after discharging herself from hospital. [The] editor of the *Dominion*, said Television NZ reported the woman as having been “just released” from hospital, based on a family source. “The image was of a heartless health service discharging a patient to give birth on the street.” The crown health enterprise involved had refused comment to the television reporter. Only after the P[M] said the woman had left the hospital voluntarily... did the CHE confirm the details. TVNZ had done its best to get the facts, but the CHE had claimed it was complying with privacy law... [In another development, the] Newspaper Publishers Association has condemned an attempt by the Privacy Commission... to get a newspaper to reveal its sources.

...A Privacy Commission investigator wrote to the *Sunday Star-Times* last week asking it to reveal its off-the-record sources in a story revealing \$900-a-day pay rates for... a ministerial consultant. The commission is investigating a complaint by [the consultant and a NZ First MP] that bureaucrats had breached his privacy by leaking information. In an article... the... *Sunday Star-Times*... editor... said the [commission] had no right to try to interfere with the free press, and the Newspaper Publishers’ Association... said the commission’s request nullified a centuries-old tradition for the press to protect its sources. But... [the] Privacy Commissioner... says there is no way of knowing if journalists’ sources are confidential without asking... A Journalists’ Union spokesman... had recently said that confidentiality was to protect sources. “It’s in the public interest that people with information on wrongdoing or any other matters which the public ought to know about must have confidence they can reveal these matters without being exposed.” A Press Council decision on the story said consultancy fees were “squarely within the province of a free press to investigate.” ...Under the Privacy Act the Privacy Commissioner has the power to require people to give him information he thinks is relevant to an investigation[including]... the power to summons a witness and examine him or her on oath. Anyone who obstructs, hinders, resists or fails to comply with a request for information without a reasonable excuse is liable to a fine of up to \$2000. While the news media is exempt from being the subject of any complaint under the Privacy Act, it is not exempted from being called in to give evidence in relation to a complaint.

...In Britain in the early 1960s two journalists were jailed for six months for refusing to disclose their sources to a commission of inquiry investigating a spy scandal. The case... is included in media law textbooks, and makes for dramatic reading. But the fact it is so widely cited signals how rarely this happens. In N[Z], as far as experts can say, no journalist has ever been jailed for refusing to disclose a source. [However, 'in 1992 a Wellington courier and his company were threatened with jail after refusing to say who hired him to deliver a leaked Parliamentary paper. Eventually his punishment was that he has never been allowed back inside Parliament.']But recent tension between[the] Privacy Commissioner... and the *Sunday Star-Times* newspaper... highlights an undercurrent of concern, on both sides of the issue... [The] Journalists' union spokesman... said there would always be a tension between the interests of privacy and the interests of public knowledge. "There will never be an entirely right answer. There never is when two rights and interests come into conflict like that..." But [the commissioner]... believes the reaction is over the top, and while he says he understands the importance of journalists' confidential sources, he says there has to be some accountability... "One of the difficulties is knowing whether there is a source. It's all very well for journalists to say there is a source but we have to establish the facts... otherwise journalists could be interviewing their typewriters." ...He... said he had no policy which ruled out requiring journalists to reveal such sources. However, in 3000 cases he had not invoked such powers of compulsion... The law offers no direct protection for journalists' sources. But under section 35 of the Evidence Amendment Act (No. 2) 1980, the court has the discretion to excuse witnesses from answering questions where the answers would breach a special confidence. However, if a N[Z] court insists on a source being revealed and a journalist refuses, a court has the power to jail that journalist for contempt of court... [The] special projects manager for the *N[Z] Herald*... does not favour giving journalists the same legal privilege not to reveal sources as some other professionals have. "If the source had broken the law, how far should you go to protect them? That's what witness protection is all about." ...[In related news,] *Independent Newspapers*... the... Dublin-based owner of *N[Z] Herald* publisher Wilson and Horton[, has]... posted a 41[%] increase in... first half... profit... to... \$NZ67.64 million... - 1997

...in the time before Man... [an] INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER... CONFRONTS HIS EDITOR... ['EXCUSE ME... BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO MY EXPOSE ON THIS TRUMPED-UP ENERGY CRISIS?'] 'THE PUBLISHER "ASKED" ME TO HOLD OFF ON IT FOR A WHILE.' 'BUT THIS IS AN IMPORTANT STORY! HOW LONG IS "A WHILE"?' 'HMMM, LET'S SEE... THAT WOULD BE WHEN THE NEWS DIVISION IS NO LONGER CONTROLLED BY THE BEAN COUNTERS WHO ANSWER TO THE CORPORATE BOARD THAT IS OWNED BY THE CONGLOMERATE WHO HAS A VESTED INTEREST IN THE ADMINISTRATION YOU'RE INVESTIGATING.' 'WHAT HAPPENED TO FREEDOM OF THE PRESS?!']

Recall that in 1996 79 of the world's countries qualified as [being] totally free. Collectively, these countries are known as the FREE WORLD. In reality, however, no country is totally free. To begin with, there isn't much that people living in these countries can actually do for FREE – and the list is growing shorter all the time! When commentators describe countries as being FREE they generally mean that their citizens have political and economic freedom (and when politicians speak of increasing the freedom of their citizens, it generally means they intend to free up the economy – i.e., they'll make it easier for people to earn and spend money). Yet, the right to become rich is a contradiction in a world where the supply of money isn't infinite, and where one person can exercise its freedom to earn more than the average income – which effectively forces at least one other person to earn below the average.

The more money, the more freedom... [H]owever... greed for money and power is the cause of people seeking to dominate and manipulate others and, thus, to deny them their freedom.

Another reason why no so-called FREE WORLD country can be considered totally free is because they all have laws that are designed to somehow curb freedom (be it for honourable or dubious reasons). These laws aren't consistent throughout the FREE WORLD (i.e., some activities are illegal in one or more of the 79 countries but not others), and what is considered illegal can even be inconsistent within countries – be it between districts or time periods.

...a Hokitika labourer... was jailed for seven days for playing a Lotto-like game in a public bar. The judge told him it was a 'nasty game of chance' dedicated to illegal and unfair winning of other people's money. - 1878

Gambling and betting have always been pastimes of N[Z]ers. Even aboard ship[s] bound for N[Z], early immigrants ran sweepstakes on the distance their ship would travel in a day, raffled anything they could fish aboard, spun the roulette wheel, threw dice and gambled at cards; and once ashore there were opportunities aplenty. Gambling was a fashionable amusement of the times and also a distraction... in the young country. But a backlash against gaming occurred in 1907, and for most of this century N[Z]ers' choices have been limited to traditional stables such as the... Totalisator Agency Board (TAB)... lotteries and Housie. Change arrived in 1987 when Lotto was introduced. A year later, the operation of gaming machines (of which large numbers were already present) became legal under a set of regulations within the... Gaming and Lotteries Act 1977... The same year a committee of inquiry recommended the introduction of casinos... Larger games and lotteries need to be licensed, smaller ones [less 'than \$500' in prize-money] are exempt providing they meet the requirements of the... Act[, which] distinguishes between five forms of gambling: games of chance (including housie and gaming machines); bookmaking and betting (other than betting on horse racing and greyhound racing... [– these are] controlled through the Racing Act 1971 and [the TAB]...); prize competitions (pick the score competitions); lotteries (raffles); and instant games ('scratch' tickets[– introduced in 1989])... Under the... Act... gambling may only be run to benefit charities and the community.

GAMBLING in N[Z] has historically been controlled by the basic government policy that it should not be conducted for the private gain of organisers. The country's cultural roots, apart from its Polynesian base, are deeply implanted in a Protestant/Puritan past. [However, in] the pioneering days, there were many rebellious spirits who were here because of the unacceptable restraints of that ethic in Britain, and reckless gambling and excessive drinking were common... Until the 1960s, gambling in the workplace where large numbers of men were employed – especially miners, waterside workers and freezing-workers – was endemic. They all had their crown and anchor board and two-up operators and regular high-stakes card games, especially on pay days. All cities and major towns also had clandestine, high-stakes card schools. Police response would follow complaints by the families of men who had lost large sums of family support money. Many people gambled in small ways at home, mostly with "penny poker"... The original national lottery[, begun]... in 1929... was called the Art Union... [Its profits were] distributed by the Department of Internal Affairs... The art unions were drawn once a month for 30 years for a regular prize which had escalated to 10,000 pounds by 1961, when the art union was succeeded by the present, more flexible lotteries system of Golden Kiwi... [T]he government... considered the prospect of allowing legal casinos to open but... [t]wice... decided against it despite the spread of casinos in A[US]. However, a] floating casino on board a ship... operating off the coast, near Whangarei, in April 1986, [exploited] the right to ignore in international waters N[Z]'s fairly rigid laws relating to [this form of gambling – which was finally legalised 'through the Casino Control Act 1990. Initially the Act allows two casinos to be built, one in the North Island and one in the South. No other casino licenses may be granted until at least two years after the first two have opened (and not within five years if a new casino is to be built within a 100km radius of either). In November 1994, NZ's first casino opened in Christchurch. A second, larger casino, is scheduled to open in Auckland in January 1996']... Stern opposition to new forms of gambling comes from the supporters of horse racing

with its increasing expenses and declining support. Horse racing has long supported a major breeding industry which earns substantial overseas earnings.

[The] government-controlled betting agency... ([or]TAB)... was established by the Gaming Amendment Act of 1949, following a national referendum on the question of whether off-course betting on horse races should be allowed. The referendum was substantially in favour [and the TAB – ‘your chance to compete’; ‘you know the odds now beat them’ (although, unlike in most countries – where punters receive winnings plus their stake money – in NZ it is possible to win less than you bet) – ‘commenced operations in 1951’]... For many years before the establishment of the TAB, legal betting on horse races could be done only on the course, where the totalisator was run by the racing club under the auspices of the Internal Affairs Department. Private bookmaking on or off the course is illegal. However, every town in NZ had at least one illegal bookmaker. The TAB now has agencies throughout the country, takes bets on some overseas races and some other events within NZ.

[Sport]’s more exciting if you’ve got something on it - TAB

The TAB and the Lotteries Commission could be given a run for their money by other operators under a gambling shake-up proposed yesterday. Competition for race and sports betting and lotto – at present legally protected monopolies – could result from a plan to open up gaming in N[Z] to allcomers provided they meet entry tests which have not yet been specified. The proposal is part of a major gaming review by the Department of Internal Affairs which wants to replace a “mish-mash” of gaming laws with a single policy framework. The department’s proposals are far from being Government policy, let alone law, but the Minister of Internal Affairs... yesterday welcomed a single gaming framework as a positive step. The Secretary of Internal Affairs... said the general principle of opening all forms of gaming to all operators would also give N[Z] operators the chance to diversify. For example, the Lotteries Commission could move into such areas as gaming machines to expand its income base... [The] Government had the final say and could decide to restrict competition in specific areas... The department also proposes to allow all forms of gaming to operate for commercial gain. At present funds from gaming machines and housie have to go to authorised community and charitable purposes. To balance that, the department proposes a requirement for all forms of gaming to contribute to community purposes in an equitable manner. An economic study released yesterday by the department showed that the gaming industry – everything from housie to casinos – produced a \$3 billion turnover in 1995, projected to rise to \$5 billion next year. Of that total at least \$190 million was available for community distribution... The department’s proposals also argue that a more flexible and consistent regulatory environment would help N[Z] operators compete with the new technology being used overseas. Without such flexibility significant amounts of money could be lost to overseas-based gambling, for example, through “virtual” casinos already operating on the Internet.

...N[Z]ers and Cook Islanders will be banned from gambling on an “Internet casino” soon to be launched in Rarotonga, says the casino company’s lawyer... Bets would be accepted only from countries where it was legally permissible to do so... [He] declined to say how the technology would work against Cook Islanders and N[Z]ers trying to lodge bets over international computer networks... [The] opening of the casino was still a few months away... The *Cook Island News* yesterday reported that the company gained conditional Government approval to operate as far back as... October [1995] – the main condition being that Cook Island residents could not place bets or wagers of any kind with the casino... Legal technicalities are also reported to be behind the ban on N[Z]ers. Betting... was expected to come from Asia and Europe... Cook Islanders are expected to take jobs as computer technicians and staff processing bets. Other benefits will be increased revenue through the offshore financial centre. Odds for many sporting events televised in N[Z] are available from the Internet sites of British bookmakers. Credit card bets are placed by telephone but... an American bank had made significant progress in making secure payments possible directly over the Internet. Several trials have already been run in the U[S] by entrepreneurs who are hoping to bring the thrill of casino gambling to the Internet. A N[Z] Government report last week warned that punters using the Internet and other technologies to gamble overseas could eventually cost it hundreds of millions of dollars a year in lost duties, taxes and community handouts.

...Community groups... [which] risk... losing \$80 million... of... funding because Treasury could snap up lottery profits stand to lose at least a further \$25 million. The Chartered Clubs chief executive... said that at present about \$25 million a year of poker machine proceeds went to the community. But under proposed law changes licensees would be able to keep the money.

...A proposed shake-up in gambling... belonged in the rubbish bin... [because it] would leave charities and other non-profit organisations the losers, says Labour’s deputy leader... Income would be generated for commercial operators, and they would have little concern for the effects of problem gambling... “It would mean that large areas of fundraising by charities would be opened up to full commercial competition... There is no way that the large range of small organisations which, for example, run housie evenings... would be able to compete with the power of the British company... which is already investigating potential venues for use as commercial housie sites in this country.”

...The Government’s rake-off from lotto and Instant Kiwi will benefit charitable causes by \$140.6 million in the coming year. That is an increase of more than \$10 million on last year’s allocation... Of every dollar spent on lotto and Instant Kiwi the Lotteries Commission gives 20c to the Lotteries Grants Board. (Additional costs are 10c for taxes; 7c for the retailer’s commission; 7c on operational costs; and 56c on prizes)... [A total of \$1.065 billion in community grants] have been distributed since 1987 – ‘making a positive difference in our communities’. The LGB allocates money to its own committees and other bodies. They then allocate it to groups and individuals in each field. The board’s largest allocation is to an outside body – \$27 million to partly fund the... Commission for Sport, Leisure and Fitness. A further \$3.66 million will fund future Olympics athletes in the Sports 2000 fund; \$1 million for professional artists to attend a cultural olympiad, a festival to be held in each of the next four years as a build-up to the 2000 Sydney Olympics; and it has allocated \$2 million for community initiatives to celebrate the millennium. No allocations will be made for millennium grants until the Government has received a special report on the year 2000 celebrations. Creative N[Z], formerly the Arts Council, gets \$20.25 million and the Film Commission, \$8.77 million. The lottery general fund[of ‘\$20.75m’] supports outdoor safety programmes and drug and alcohol education. It has also given about \$500,000 for each of the past two years towards the treatment and prevention of compulsive gambling... [The] Minister of Internal Affairs... said he wanted the [LGB] to develop “a more strategic approach” to its allocations of profits in future[(from the remainder of the \$140.6m, ‘Welfare received \$17.6m – \$14.4m to organisations and \$3.2m to individuals; Community facilities received \$12.1m; Youth \$6.8m; Aged \$3.7m; Environment and heritage \$10.71m; Health research \$4m; Science research \$2m; and the Minister’s discretionary fund \$0.27m’)]. The 1997-1998 allocations would be based around two themes: building strong communities and strengthening national identity.

...[a] 16-year-old... Auckland... student [with] muscular dystrophy... has outgrown the family van so much that a bump in the road means a bump on the head for him... He has grown taller and moved into a bigger wheelchair in the five years since his family bought the van... Just when relief was in sight from the [LGB] the rules on grant applications changed... The... family have applied twice this year to the [LGB] for funds to buy a bigger and heavier van, but they have been turned down and told that they could not reapply until September 1997... In the past families could apply for... money every four years to allow them to upgrade vehicles to suit the changing needs of growing children. Now the stand-down period is six years... [The] family needed \$12,000 plus a good trade-in deal to cover the costs of a new van and for modifications, but the one-income family could not raise the money themselves. “I just can’t think what we are going to do now... Look for a fairy godmother?” A lottery board spokesman... said the rule change was forced by limited funds. Only 421 of 1117 applications last year could be approved by the individuals with disabilities

subcommittee within its budget of \$3.2 million. The board could help only about 30[%] of applicants now whereas four years ago that figure was closer to 50[%]. But the Muscular Dystrophy Association director... said... "Families should receive the money as an entitlement instead of having to go cap in hand begging for charity."

...IF ONLY... h[e']d come forward... earlier, he could[']ve claimed an \$8.4 m... fortune. The [23-year-old] from... Connecticut, bought the winning ticket to the state lottery on Friday, October 13, 1995, but showed up at a lottery office on... October 16, 1996 – [3] days too late to claim the prize.

...[*LATE LOTTO CLAIM* A Vancouver man has gone to court to have an 11-year-old winning lottery ticket dusted for fingerprints, hoping forensic tests will prove he is due the C\$10 million prize that was awarded to his neighbour more than a decade ago. The man filed a petition asking B.C. Lotteries to hand over the ticket to determine whether his fingerprints were still on it to allow him to claim the prize. He said he bought the ticket at a local 7-Eleven, placed it in his wallet along with C\$200 in cash, but lost the wallet soon afterwards. The wallet was found by a nearby gas station attendant and returned to him after the draw but the cash and the ticket were missing. A few days later, news reports identified his former neighbours – who have since moved and could not be found to comment – as the prize winners.' By the way, 'America's biggest lottery prize has been won by a millionaire']...

A \$A1.10 lotto ticket... bought in[a] Melbourne suburb... has won the buyer \$A11 million... the biggest single lottery prize ever won in A[US]...

'A small syndicate of friends from a NSW country town are the richest lottery winners in AUS's history after claiming a record \$A17.53 million powerball jackpot yesterday. One of the winners said their magnificent luck began when, while holidaying in Sydney, they were just about to board a Manly ferry and were handed a pamphlet promoting the powerball jackpot. When the ferry got to Manly, the friends rushed to Humphreys Newsagency and bought a \$A6.30 Powerball 12 ticket – which scored the winning numbers. "We are totally flabbergasted and haven't a clue how to spend it," he said.'

...a 'record jackpot of \$US295.7 million for the Indiana Powerball lottery – the biggest lotto in the history of the world – was shared by a \$130 syndicate called "the Lucky 13",' while 'the store that sold the winning ticket got a \$100,000 bonus.'

...The Consumers' Institute has fielded calls from people sent subscriptions... by mail order... inviting them to take part in El Gordo... which translates into The Fat One... [and is] promoted as "the biggest lottery in the world, with a huge billion US dollar prize pool, the best odds of winning and biggest cash prize jackpot payout of them all." For \$US149.90, gamblers buy a "gold medal" subscription claiming to offer 83,352 chances of winning \$US1.2 billion in prizes, the \$US99.90 "silver medal" subscription offers 41,676 chances to win, and the \$US69.90 "bronze medal" subscription offers 20,838 chances to win... N[Z] punters tempted to buy tickets... are taking a big risk, says[the] industry watchdog... The [Institute's] chief executive... advised anyone who received a subscription... to not "touch it with a barge-pole." ...It was... illegal for the lottery to be sold in N[Z] because it did not have approval from the Minister of Internal Affairs... Even if the lottery were subject to the same regulations as those in N[Z], there was no guarantee that the ticket or subscription agents were legitimate. Internal Affairs did not have sufficient knowledge of the Spanish lottery to comment on its reputation or integrity.

...['A Dunedin man, convinced he'd won an overseas lottery, started spending freely. When he found out the lottery was a scam he committed suicide.'

...an American] may be the unluckiest man alive, living proof that money cannot buy happiness. In 1988, he won \$US16.2 million... in the Pennsylvania Lottery. Since then, he has been convicted of assault, his sixth wife has left him, his brother was convicted of trying to kill him and his land-lady successfully sued him for one-third of the jackpot... [after claiming] she shared the ticket with him... The crumbling mansion he bought with his winnings is half-filled with paperwork from bankruptcy proceedings... The gas was shut off, and he feels lucky to have electricity and a telephone. "Money didn't change me. It changed people around me that I knew, that I thought cared a little bit about me. But they only cared about the money," says... [the] 58-year-old former carnival worker and cook... He hopes to rid himself of the lottery albatross by selling the 17 remaining instalments on his winnings, worth nearly \$5 million... He... hopes to make enough from the sale to pay off his house and... \$500,000 in debts, not counting taxes and legal fees and... have about \$700,000 left... But bad luck still dogs him. The Pennsylvania Lottery is trying to block the sale because, it says, winners are not allowed to sell future payments under state law... He... plans to spend his life as an ex-winner pursuing the lawsuits that he has filed against police, judges and lawyers who he says conspired to take his money.

...['The winners of a \$US197 million lotto jackpot in Boston last week should talk to a former winner before they do much celebrating. Just a year ago, he was the sole winner of a \$195 million Powerball jackpot. After taxes and a lump-sum-payout deduction, he took home \$67 million – a lot of clams for a retired electrician in Streamwood, Illinois. End of story, happily ever after? Flash forward to the present: some of his closest pals no longer talk to him. He's not welcome at his neighbourhood pub, and his former bartender buddies are muttering "lawsuit." The story starts at Bill's Pizza Pub on May 20, when, with the Powerball jackpot overflowing, two bartenders collected \$5 bills from several pub regulars and drove one hour to Wisconsin for tickets. The next day, they handed out sealed envelopes – one of which contained the winning ticket. Unable to read it without his glasses, the ticket-holder handed it to one of the bartenders to read. "My hands were shaking. I took a step backwards and almost fell," she remembers. "That was the first time he told us, 'I'm going to take care of you, too'." The winner quickly dashed off cheques to the bartenders for \$10,000 each. But pub regulars say that he'd promised the bartenders far more. (One bartender asked for \$3 million, and says he offered \$500,000 for them to split.) Maybe the regulars at the bar he used to call "my place" wouldn't be so hard on him if they thought he'd handled himself better. In the weeks after his win, regulars say, he often turned the pub into the court of the lotto king. He would order a round of drinks for the house, then lean over to the bartender and say, "Except him!" while pointing at someone he didn't like. Other times he would complain, "You don't know the problems that that money has brought me" – infuriating people who were struggling to pay their bills.'

... 'The road to riches for the Maine couple who won a \$US41.5 million Powerball jackpot became littered with legal papers yesterday when four people filed a lawsuit seeking a share. The four worked with one of the lottery winners and claim the winning ticket was one of 190 she bought for 19 people in an office pool. However, a lawyer for the winners said he had records of the Friday night purchase of the tickets at a Cumberland Farms convenience store just across the border in Rollinsford, New Jersey (Maine is not part of the Powerball lottery that is sold in 21 states and the District of Columbia), which show 190 tickets were bought at 7.47 pm. Two minutes later, an additional 20 tickets were bought for the buyer's family.' ■ 'A ticket-holder or syndicate in southern Italy is wisely keeping quiet. The lucky holder of the winning ticket in Super Enalotto has won \$NZ91.5 million.'

...THERE is no chance of [an Italian] becoming hooked on gambling. After picking up \$132,000 in the Scratch and Win state lottery, he splashed out on a red Ferrari and dutifully paid to redecorate his elderly mother's house. His good fortune proved jinxed. Six months later – recovering from a nervous breakdown, the Ferrari repossessed[and] his mama's new furniture at risk from angry creditors[– he] is one of hundreds of irate gamblers taking the Italian government to the European Court of Justice for refusing to pay out \$44 million in winnings. The government claims... a possible "administration error" led to a freak number of winning tickets... At first the ministry promised that "citizens who bought the tickets in good faith must be protected", raising hopes among the "winners" that their cash would be forthcoming. The ministry has now asked for legal advice from the attorney-general's office about its liability, heightening fears that it is trying to avoid paying. The mood is turning angry. More than 200 people with winning tickets have formed a pressure group and were refusing to pay their taxes until the money was paid.

...[NZ Post]'s newest promotion[is] a scratch-and-win ticket and stamp combination designed to promote the centenary of cinema in N[Z]. The company says the product is a world first... About 57,000 prizes are available, ranging from cinema tickets to a trip to Hollywood. [Incidentally, 'a woman faces child abandonment charges after leaving her 7-week-old daughter in the Sky City casino carpark to spend 3 1/2 hours gambling away \$100. The baby was seriously dehydrated when security officers found her locked inside a car at 1.20 pm yesterday. It hadn't been fed or given a drink since 8 o'clock. She was kept in the Starship hospital overnight for treatment. Child, Youth and Family Services staff will be involved once the baby is discharged.'

...‘a 19-month-old AUSn toddler remains in a critical condition in Melbourne after he suffered severe internal injuries from being left in a baking hot car on Wednesday. Police said when the boy was found in the carpark of a Ferntree Gully hotel, in Melbourne’s east, the temperature inside the car was up to 65deg. His mother was allegedly playing gaming machines in the hotel for more than two hours.’]

...*Children are tragic victims of pachinko passion...* MESMERISED by the noise, lights and motion of the pinball machines, [a woman] had forgotten her two young children playing outside. Then her five-year-old daughter staggered, bleeding, into the gambling arcade to die in her mother’s arms. She had been hit by a car. The death... has highlighted a problem largely ignored until now. [The girl] was just one of about 30 small children killed so far this year after their parents abandoned them in carparks while they indulged in the national craze for pachinko – a Japanese version of pinball. Pachinko is a \$180 billion a year industry in Japan, played in thousands of cavernous “parlours” up and down the country. Aficionados say the hypnotic motion of the balls makes them forget the drudgery of working lives. A campaign to attract more women to the game has had tragic results. Millions of mothers have flocked to the parlours. Two months ago, a woman left two sons inside a car parked on a Tokyo side street while she played pachinko a dozen metres away. The brothers, aged one and two, sat strapped in their seats as the sun beat down on the metal roof and turned the car into a furnace in which they died. One 18-month-old child drowned in a ditch outside a parlour. Another was run over by a train. A five-year-old girl, left to wander around a pachinko parlour, met a stranger. She has not been seen since. Public prosecutors are considering charges of criminal negligence against the mother of the boys left to die in the car. This could make legal history in a country where police rarely interfere in cases of child neglect. “In Japan, children are generally regarded as private property, not members of society with human rights,” said... a sociology professor. Dismayed at the bad publicity, pachinko parlours have launched an offensive to cut down on child neglect. Some have put up posters reminding parents of their responsibility.

...Target \$1 billion could be the slogan for TAB administration and staff this season. “Our goal is a billion dollar turnover and we believe it’s achievable,” the TAB’s business analyst... said. “We finished the 1995-96 season with \$921 million, a 10[%] increase from the previous year. Considering the tough competition out there, we are really pleased. It’s a brilliant result... One growth area we can see this season is in Sunday betting. We have a greater number of Sunday racedays, 41 compared with 26...” In meeting its responsibilities to discourage compulsive gambling the TAB is now displaying in all its 500-odd outlets a graphic poster about the dangers of uncontrolled betting.

...*I’m so very proud of TAB, says chief executive...* “We’re on a roll. N[Z]ers are coming back to racing.” ...[the] TAB... announced a record... turnover... while... racing... clubs who face crippling funding reductions have aimed... salvos at the TAB for not distributing more profit... But... the investment in sports betting continued... Further changes were also ahead in targeting young Kiwis – the first of a network of new-look TAB Express centres is being tested in a bookshop in Palmerston North and within the next 12 months they will spring up in malls, cinema complex centres and video parlours... [Meanwhile,] TAB phonebet workers have voted against a pay offer which would have given half of them a 30[%] rise. Their union wanted the casual workers made permanent. Management agreed to this and a big rise for about half of the 500 staff, but offered the rest only a small rise.

...The number of[NZ] women getting hooked on... gambling is rising... About 30[%] of the... people who sought help from the... Compulsive Gamblers Society... were women... Most... had lost everything.

...The number of addicted gamblers needing urgent help is rapidly rising, a confidential report reveals. The hard-hitting report, written for a Government-initiated committee on problem gambling by the northern regional health authority... has been kept strictly out of public hands. The report... was purposely being guarded because the Government and betting industry wanted to keep a lid on the problem... said... [a] *Herald* source... The report... suggests it would be fairer if the betting industry paid for treatment and prevention services – possibly through a problem gambling services tax – rather than the taxpayer or innocent family members. Alternatively, the Government could commit some of \$125 million collected in gaming duties to treatment services, rather than have it go into general coffers. “However, this approach may find less favour with the Government in that it could reduce the tax revenue available for other purposes and may be seen as acknowledging Government responsibility for funding of treatment and preventive services,” the analysis says.

...*Government playing roulette with gambling* IT HAS long been a contention of mine that governments cynically extend gambling facilities as a sop to the populace, a diversion from the realities of life where the social gaps between rich and poor seem to be opening up like a lanced boil. Once the poor turned to cheap gin as their solace. Today it seems to be the weekly Lotto draw, poker machines and scratch cards, and a flutter on the TAB or at a casino. Now we have sports betting on a growth pattern, with TV chiming in with its own weekly programme aimed at making your losses a subject of entertainment... [In] an effort really to stymie the cries of hypocrisy which might echo around my ears, I should admit I have been known to back a horse or two, even owned a couple in palmier days... Notwithstanding this, I have grave reservations about the proposals of our public servants, that gambling here should be thrown open to competition... Gambling is here, and efforts to outlaw it, or even to reduce its obese growth would tend merely to force it underground. So, it has to be controlled and the profits should not go into private pockets, but be returned to the community in various forms... In 1985, gambling turnover was less than \$1 billion, but more than doubled in the next five years following the introduction of Lotto, poker machines, [and since then] the Christchurch casino... and the Auckland one [have opened for business]. Turnover has now topped \$3 billion and is expected to reach \$5 billion by 1997. Is that inflation or simply stupidity? There is one certainly to bet on – addictive gambling problems will grow with the turnover.

...Yesterday, in Hamilton[a]... man... unemotionally and with a terrible forthrightness unwrapped the sickness in society that is compulsive gambling. For more than a decade, back in the 1970s, he was one of Hamilton’s most notorious crooks. And what he says is potent. “If compulsive gamblers don’t recognise they have a disease... there are just three options – prison, insanity or death.” He’s been there, and looked all three options in the face. “Gambling is insidious because it’s socially acceptable, not like alcoholism or drug addiction. It’s not seen as a problem. But there are thousands of compulsive gamblers in this country, men and women, young and old, right across the spectrum of society... Every bit of money I got as a teenager, legally or illegally, was spent on gambling... Like every other gambler, I was looking to the next race meeting or card game, hoping my luck would change... At 3pm every Friday I’d get a real rush of endorphins, knowing the races were about to start. One day I lost \$17,000 on two race meetings, and at the end of the day I was really depressed, not because I’d lost but because there was no more racing that day.” He turned to robbery, sold hard drugs, became involved in pornography, committed fraud, received and sold stolen goods. All the money went on gambling... He has a raft of horror stories about others at least as bad as he was. “They’re not criminals. They’re sick... and sending them to jail won’t help...”

...Promotional material for Harrah’s Sky City Casino urges punters to “come out and play” – but it has turned out to be a much wider playground than expected... [because along] with the gamblers and spectators have come sex workers, drunks, street kids, vagrants and crooks – all attracted to the glittering lights, bulging wallets and opportunities... The Auckland police commander... confirms that the casino has boosted workloads for his troops[, although]... the casino had concentrated crime in one particular area... In recent weeks police have dealt with an “erratic” punter falling to his death, cheats, assaults, abandoned children, a person carrying a pistol, drug deals, loan sharking and drunken behaviour. On top of this, the fraud squad has been landed with more than 60 cases to investigate, largely through dud cheques and stolen credit cards, totalling over \$50,000. Since the opening... central police have been called to... [make] about one arrest every second or third day... “We had to go to the site six times in one evening. Quite frankly we could do without that amount of work,”... [A d]etective... from the Asian Crime Squad, said... “The impact from the Asian crime point of view is that illegal gambling houses have closed and they are all down there at the casino.” He

said the... biggest... problem... within Harrah's walls... [was] loan sharking. A 38-year-old Thai woman was banned from Harrah's for two years after being caught loan-sharking last month. [The d]etective... said previous cases had seen gamblers borrowing money at exorbitant interest rates and getting into financial trouble. He had not heard of any serious cases at the casino, although it was early days.

...MPs at a finance select committee yesterday were shocked by evidence of escalating gambling addiction rates since the introduction of casinos. Members indicated they had doubts about the wisdom of the Wellington casino going ahead, and about the law change that made casinos possible, when they were presented with an estimate by the Compulsive Gambling Society that up to 100,000 N[Z]ers could have severe gambling problems... based on international calculations that only 2[%] of problem cases were likely to come forward. In its first year, 1993, the society's hotline had logged more than 7000 calls... During that period, more than 1000 people had sought help and, of gamblers, almost 90[%] had been rated as being highly suicidal, requiring immediate intervention. About 70[%] were involved in organised criminal activity to sustain their habit... [C]alls for help had increased 250[%] since 1993... Trends during 1996 indicated the hotline would have received about 25,000 calls, with about 2500 callers requiring direct assistance. "It is our view that problem gambling is a rapidly escalating social, economic and health problem, both in terms of treatment availability and substantial... ongoing funding to sustain those people... with advanced gambling addiction," the society's submission said... [Furthermore,] if funding provisions of the Gaming and Lotteries Amendment Bill were not passed this parliamentary session, the society would be out of money by next month... Although gambling machines remained the biggest means of addiction, the introduction of the Auckland casino alone had brought a 50[%] rise in calls... Of first-time callers to the society, 52[%] had problems with gaming machines, 27[%] with racing, and 20[%] with casinos. - 1996

The cabinet minister with responsibility for gambling says it is the most insidious form of addiction... The Auckland casino attracted a huge number of people, he said. "You'd have to be a fool not to think that at least some of them may not be in a financial position to spend that sort of money... I see hundreds and hundreds of people sitting playing on poker machines and... goodness me... I just hope the family is being fed this week." ...He was not a "wowser" and did not want to stop people from enjoying casinos. "But at the same time you can't help feeling that we really need to be sure of what the impact is from an economic point of view, from a social point of view." ...[in response,] the casino's chief executive, said... "If the Minister of Internal Affairs feels further social impact research is necessary that is his prerogative, but he should be aware that... the... casino had a positive economic impact and had... substantial community support..." [An addiction] specialist... said another social impact report was pointless. "It's really just stalling tactics. It's a bureaucratic way of not doing anything... If the casino is getting 15,000 clients a day... you are looking at 300 people a day with serious problems... It's like an epidemic at the moment."

...On Sunday, the Minister of Internal Affairs... said proposals for more casinos suggested there should be a social impact report on all gambling. Yesterday, both the Labour health spokeswoman... and the Christchurch Casino chief executive... voiced support for such a report...

The law prevents casinos banning problem gamblers from their premises, the chief executive of the Christchurch Casino... said yesterday. His company had asked the Government to give the Casino Control Authority power to ban problem gamblers, but had been told this would not happen... [He also] said the Government took 4[%] in gambling tax from casinos. It had collected \$22 million since November 1994. The money was meant to be earmarked to deal with the negative effects and problems with casinos. Not a cent had been given to address those concerns. "The Government must decide whether it is indulging in a tax-collecting exercise or is worried about gambling,"... His casino had a self-barring scheme for problem gamblers and it paid for the first consultation of anyone wanting to take part... [Last week, an] Auckland psychologist... said problem gambling was one of the country's fastest growing but most ignored social ills. Conservative estimates suggested there were at least 12,000 pathological gamblers... in N[Z].

...N[Z] has a ballooning problem of addict gamblers, many of whom are driven to suicide... The options for punters grew during 1996 with... an increase in gambling machine licences from 8000 to 15,000. Sports gambling began and the first \$5 million lotto draw was made.

...each week, hundreds of thousands of... [N]Zers gamble with Lotto], spending an average \$8.2m on what has rivalled rugby as the biggest game of the decade. When Lotto celebrates its 10th birthday... [with] a \$5 million superdraw... 119 Kiwi millionaires (as at June 28) and more than 1900 first division winners will reflect on the past 520 draws... And Lotto looks set to grow into the millennium. Although the odds of winning[the first division] are just one in 3.8 million, N[Z]ers are hooked. Producing a \$1m prize pool... and 27,650 first night winners [from the five prize divisions on its first night in] 1987, Lotto was always going to be popular – and N[Z]ers have continued to splash out on it ever since. In 1989, Instant Kiwi or "scratchies" were launched, followed by Lotto Strike in 1993, Daily Keno in 1994 and Telebingo last year. Market research conducted by the Lotteries Commission shows 70% of the adult population are regular Lotto punters[(up from '66% in 1996')], spending an average of \$7 each week. Most are women and 50% of them wait until Saturdays to buy their tickets. An average of 500,000 viewers tune in to watch each live draw [at 8pm on Saturday evenings]... Those who make big profits... are issued with a winners booklet when they pick up their cheques. It advises winners what to do with their winnings immediately and then offers a checklist for the future... It also advises on investment, paying off debt and whether to do what everyone expects you to – quit your job. ['■ Got a burning question? Write to What's Your Question, Sunday News, PO Box 1327 Auckland, and we'll try to answer it for you. Because of the large number of letters we receive we cannot promise to answer them all.' Instead, we'll try to find the question which seems most relevant. For example, this week's question was chosen because it asked: 'As I have never heard of anyone winning any major prizes in Keno, I was wondering if you could tell me how often major prizes are made?' According to the Lotteries Commission, which runs Keno, no one has won the top prize of \$1 million since the game was started in October 1994. To do that, you need to buy a \$10 ticket with 10 numbers on it and all 10 numbers need to be drawn. The biggest prize won so far has been \$500,000. To date nearly 300 people have won a prize worth more than \$10,000.']

...SUDDEN wealth and insane happiness[will] clutch the imagination today as the Lotteries Commission hypes us up for... a birthday draw. It tells us... that "all N[Z]ers have shared \$1 billion." Work that out if you can. The policy of razzle-dazzle advertising, a few big splashy prizes and chickenfeed for other lucky punters, seems to be working... Past observation says... some... bloke from the backblocks, who thought he was buying a ticket in a chook raffle, is about to be buried in banknotes. The rest of us will be feebly grateful to get anything at all.

...A sickness beneficiary who stole a man's lotto winnings has been remanded in custody... [The man, aged] 25, admitted stealing \$593 from a 53-year-old man he struck up a conversation with in a supermarket. The police prosecutor... said the [elder man told the younger man] he had just had a big lotto win. [The younger man] saw a plastic money bag in the man's pocket, grabbed it and ran off... When police spoke to [him], he said he stole the money on the spur of the moment to buy drugs.

...[A lotto millionaire wishes she had never set eyes on the money after her husband banked the winnings and offered to give his mother \$500,000. The winner, a 48-year-old mother of four, with one grandchild, did not want her mother-in-law to have the money. The Rarotongan woman, who lives in South Auckland, scooped the \$1.3 million first-division prize a week ago, but friends said she was now devastated. The family are not well off, with the winner working at the airport and her husband a sickness beneficiary. They have been married 30 years and the woman says she still loves her husband. But she has told him if he gives his mother the money he can go back and live with her. The winner went back to work last Wednesday, but was so stressed that her employer took her to a lawyer, who said a family meeting was planned to discuss the issue. A spokeswoman for the Lotteries Commission confirmed that she had received a telephone call from the woman's employer. He had asked the commission to cancel the cheque, but it could not do that. Lotto was a "bearer's ticket game," which meant anyone turning up to a Lotto outlet with a winning ticket must be paid, she said. Disputes over ticket ownership were rare and tighter regulations were unrealistic, she added. "What are we going to do? Ask everyone presenting a fifth division-winning ticket for their

driver's licence or passport?" This year, a \$1 million donation from a Lotto winner to her Mt Roskill church split the congregation. A mother-of-five won \$2 million and gave half to rebuild her local Samoan church. A police armed offenders squad was called to the church when the dispute turned nasty.'

...a 'Samoan Methodist church youth club ran an unlicensed raffle with a \$25,000 prize for the ticket number matching the last 4 of the 7 lotto numbers drawn that week from the 40 available. However, the club refused to pay out to the winner because the ticket-seller didn't pass the \$20 on to the club.' In related news, a]n Invercargill man had a sleepless night on Saturday after his winning... scratchy ticket was ripped... in an excited tussle with his flatmate... [after he'd] announced... that he had just scratched \$100,000, but didn't let go when his disbelieving flatmate grabbed for it. However, excitement turned to anxiety as the ticket was torn into three pieces. The nervous winner[, who]... also collected about \$30 in smaller prizes off other scratch tickets on the raffle board he won in a fund-raiser for the Southland under-13 soccer team... did an urgent repair job with sticky tape, and then waited until first thing yesterday when the Lotto shop reopened. "Luckily enough... we could validate the ticket," said the owner of the... Lotto agency.

...Lotto sales have fallen for the first time since the game began a decade ago, prompting fears that N[Z]ers are turning to harder forms of gambling. Gambling experts are concerned that N[Z]ers want more than just a weekly thrill on Saturday nights and are regularly playing the pokies at clubs and casinos. In the second half of last year, N[Z]ers spent \$4 million less on lotto than expected, buying \$234 million of tickets – \$63.24 for every man, woman and child here. Sales dropped \$1.3 million from the same period in 1995, the Lotteries Commission half-yearly report revealed yesterday. Instant Kiwi sales also dropped, from an expected \$60.6 million to \$57.2 million... The commission blamed "a sluggish economy" for the drop in interest in its two most popular games. This will impact on community groups bidding for grants... Lotto [i]s facing increased competition... It now had to compete with a surging number of poker machines... Last year, N[Z]ers pushed \$1.1 billion through slot machines and spent almost a billion dollars at the TAB. Auckland's casino won \$290 a day from each of its 1050 machines in the second half of the year – up from \$250 in the first six months... But the Lotteries Commission chief executive... said lotto was competing for business with the retail industry rather than the TAB and poker machines. Only 17[%] of the 1.2 million people who bought tickets each week had gone into a TAB and 4[%] – about 50,000 – went once a week. "We are targeting completely different markets. We are in the gaming industry, unlike the casinos and TABs who are in the gambling industry." ...An addiction psychologist at the Auckland School of Medicine... said N[Z]ers were getting addicted to "electronic gambling," which was more dangerous than a weekly flutter on lotto. "You get quick returns. You can make 10 bets a minute," he said. "It's a buzz and it's... difficult to stop." ...the Compulsive Gambling society, said lotto had "normalised" gambling in N[Z].

...N[Z] may be struggling through a retail downturn, but it seems there is plenty of money around for a flutter. Latest statistics show that gamblers lost \$849 million last year... Gaming machines in pubs and clubs, lotto, keno and other Lotteries Commission tickets, casinos and race horses cost the N[Z] punter dearly. What they actually invested to produce the huge deficit is anyone's guess, but the loss they took was \$174 million higher than 1995's \$675 million tally and equivalent to \$235 from the pocket of every, man, woman and child in N[Z]. The big new player in the odds game was Auckland's Sky City Casino... About 13,000 people have visited the casino each day since it opened... walking out lighter by an average of \$45... Despite being a relatively new form of gambling the casinos' income rivalled that of older forms of gambling such as the pokies and TAB betting. The high losses by casino gamblers were linked to a 66[%] increase in the number of callers to a problem gamblers' hotline.

...The Compulsive Gambling Society says the... \$849 million... figure shows gambling is a booming industry – and a ballooning social problem which must be looked at immediately. "It's now taking on juggernaut proportions. We can no longer pretend we do not have a serious gambling problem... Do we wait till it reaches the billion-dollar mark before we admit we have a serious social issue on our hands?" ...A[US]n punters lost \$9.47 billion on all gambling in the year to March 1996 – a per capita loss more than double ours. N[Z]ers aged over 18 lost the equivalent of \$326 each while A[US]n adults lost \$707 based on 1994 adult population figures in both countries... [A recent AUS]n study showed that only a quarter of the money spent on gambling in Victoria came from disposable income; half used money meant for household needs such as food, rent and power and a quarter came from savings. The situation is similar here... More people are gambling, they are spending a lot more and punters are likely to be those who can least afford to gamble – beneficiaries and the lower-paid. And problem gamblers are getting younger. Five years ago the average age of people going to the society for help was 52; now it's just 29. And women in their mid-20s, particularly Maori women, now make up 36[%] of its clients... [R]estricting advertising, tightening age restrictions and stopping addictive gambling operations would help stem the increase of addictive gamblers... In Christchurch, 107 people have barred themselves from the country's first casino because of their gambling problems – up 235[%] since September 1995 when 32 people took out self-barring orders for a specified time. "But there are many others who have not recognised their problems and will beg, borrow and steal to continue their habit,"... N[Z] has... more... poker machines... per capita than any western country, according to the Compulsive Gambling Society... Higher stakes and the "chance of that big payout" motivated gamblers on losing streaks to continue. "Gambling creates a buzz, it helps you forget other things happening elsewhere. Anything that can do that has the possibility of creating dependency. You come to rely on that effect... Gamblers remember that first win and their memory of that can be highly motivating especially if they are in a difficult and stressful home environment."

...Compulsive Gambling Society officials have gone to church in a bid to stop more Pacific Island families being "totally ruined" through gambling. The society said yesterday that more and more Pacific Island people were being forced to sell their homes and other property to meet debts incurred through gambling... "Most of them have taken out loans in order to keep gambling. The loans have become so huge that there is no other way out of it." ...A recent report on gambling prepared by North Health found that Pacific Islanders were six times more likely than Pakeha, and three times more than Maori, to become gambling addicts... The society, along with the Pacific Islands Drugs and Alcohol Services, have met Pacific Island church leaders to address the problem.

...Operators of a hotline for problem gamblers say they have been ditched for criticising the gambling industry... The Compulsive Gambling Society says it has been axed as part of a "sweetheart deal" with the industry, which wants a complacent company that will not oppose the expansion of gambling... The hotline may now be run by a private A[US]n company... The society director... said it was a nonsense to have a private company running the service and that Government was doing nothing about the victims of gambling. [He claimed the NZ] hotline was larger than anything similar in the world... and... had academic standing...

THE agency that distributes profits from Lotto... will cut a \$1m fund for science research, because more government money is now available for scientists... [T]he money had[already] fallen from \$2m... Universities will be worst hit by the scrapping of... [the] fund for science and research... [S]taff said the fund would be missed because it was the only money available for expensive equipment. Other bodies gave mainly to specific research projects... The L[GB]... is... also... cutting a... fund that hundreds of disabled people rely on to pay for their special equipment... It... spent \$3.7 million last year on vehicles, scooters and other mobility aids for 413 people who did not qualify for government assistance. It also bought fax machines and other aids to... increase independence. But with growing requests for help and stagnant Lotto profits partly due to increased competition from casinos and sports betting, the board has decided to drop the fund... The board said it had been put under extraordinary pressure by the number of disabled people seeking help. Last year it received requests for a total \$11.8m from 1149 people.

...An organisation for people with disabilities wants the Government to pick up the slack after an announcement from the L[GB] that it will no longer fund individuals with disabilities... The cuts resulted from "increased pressure" on lottery profits. But the president of the Disabled Persons Assembly... said tight Ministry of Health criteria meant grants board money was the only way some people could afford essentials, such as a

scooter. People should not miss out because they did not have the money. "This is another blow to disabled people and shows the failure of resources to meet their needs. Someone has to accept responsibility for these people."

...Diagnosed with muscular dystrophy two years ago, [a five-year-old] West Harbour boy is one of thousands of disabled people who will never receive funding from the... L[GB] for a specially modified car to get round Auckland... Now [he] will have to wait until he is 18 to apply to the regional health authority... Even then he would get the money only if he was working or in training. But [his] disease means he will probably never work[, and he]... may die before he has the chance to apply... [because] the life expectancy for people with muscular dystrophy is the late teens. Meanwhile, [his] mother... has been left wondering who will help to pay for a larger car with a wheelchair hoist, which will be needed within the next two years... Disability groups say the board's decision is annoying but understandable because the lottery money was filling an essential need that should be paid for by the Government. Government ministers are cagey about who – if anyone – will pick up the tab. The Minister of Health... says disability support services money is already fully committed... The top man at the... L[GB] yearns for the halcyon days of the late 1980s, when the board had more money to give away than it knew what to do with... [He] knows more than most how hard cuts in grants... will hit people with disabilities. [He] broke his back in a Navy accident 28 years ago and has been in a wheelchair since... [He] admitted yesterday that he did not know how the 700-odd people still demanding mobility equipment will survive... The board's own subcommittee is concerned about lack of assistance... A report written before the cuts announcement and released under the Official Information Act says many disabled people have no way of achieving mobility and independence... "These people are trapped in their homes," the report said.

...READERS of this column will know that I don't get angry very often. But I could barely contain my rage, my disgust, at news that the L[GB] has decided to whip the funding out from under disabled people... The board's priorities are staggering... when you look at the list of things it is spending money on this year. It's required to provide money for "worthy community causes", but within that brief it has a pretty free hand... What are these "worthy community causes" that are so much more important than helping the disabled? For a start, there's \$6m for what is blandly described as "marae restoration and development". This is almost double the sum stolen from the disabled, but there's no plan to whip the marae money away just because profits aren't increasing. What on earth is the justification for providing \$6m for making maraes look nice? Why can't the people who use maraes pay for prettifying them? Then there's \$27m to the... Commission for Sport, Fitness and Leisure, plus a further \$3.7m for the Sports 2000 Fund. This is money for fit, healthy, uncrippled people... who can't be bothered raising money themselves for their own recreation, for their fun times at weekends. Looked at another way, it's \$30m to help people such as footballers... run the risk of turning themselves into cripples by breaking their legs, necks and backs. That's their lookout, of course, and I wouldn't be making a fuss about \$30m being wasted on sport, or all the other more or less harmless idiocies, if the disabled were still going to get their measly \$3m.

...Criticism by members of Parliament over the \$6 million allocated for marae from the L[GB], should be ignored, says a Mana Maori Movement spokesman. [The spokesman] said the remarks... showed how little they understood the plight of Maori. He doubted there would be so much criticism if the money was going to churches or community halls.

...A controversial decision to cut lottery cash for disabled people was made to spark public debate, says the Minister of Internal Affairs... [The minister] reversed the decision yesterday...

The Federation of N[Z] Youth Organisations has condemned a \$1.8 million cut in L[GB] youth funding. The federation says the cut – from \$6.8 million... to \$5 million... – is a "kick in the teeth" for young people.

...The Government has come to the rescue of services for elderly people suffering from abuse and neglect, with \$340,000 funding for Age Concern. Funding... previously came from the L[GB], which announced earlier this year that it would no longer... support the seven programmes.

...The Lotteries Commission yesterday announced a record profit of \$134 million, achieved in what it said was a tough year.

...New Government rules governing lotto came into effect yesterday, allowing the Lotteries Commission to now award prizes to losers. The chief executive... said that under the 1986 rules, [additional]prizes could only be awarded to people who had already won a prize. Now, for example, a draw could be held from everyone who didn't win any money in the weekly draw... Instead of cash, lotto punters could now win cars, holidays or other prizes... "It is a way of dragging lotto into the second decade."

...Lotto holds its first mid-week draw tomorrow night with a \$2 million prize draw... A two-hour TV special includes... [additional prizes such as] Queensland holidays and giveaway cars.

...[A VW car, \$2000/week for a year, and a night at Auckland's Sheraton Hotel plus \$250 spending money await 6 punters who don't know how lucky they are. The bonus prizes from recent Lotto draws haven't been claimed, prompting a Lotteries Commission call for players to check ticket serial #s.]

...Someone out west is missing out on over \$100,000 in uncollected Lotto prize money. The bonus ticket entitles the person to \$2000 a month for the rest of the year. The ticket was sold at Swanson Lotto, where the co-owner says she's got all her regular customers to check their tickets so now suspects the ticket buyers could have been visiting the area. She says the shop has sold 24 second division tickets but this is the first time a major prize winner hasn't picked up a prize. However, one other Lotto incident does stick in her mind, from when the couple owned an outlet in the city. "A fellow rushed in and said he hadn't had a chance to check his tickets. He pulled out these crumpled up tickets and my husband put them through the machine." He was extremely happy to find one ticket had \$750 on it. "No, look at it again, mate," we said. The man had actually won \$750,000, and had had the ticket crumpled up in his pocket for many weeks.' □ 'Over \$6 million is unclaimed' but this weekend's Lotto draw will feature a bonus draw for 'every ticket to be in with a chance to win \$1.5m after someone failed to claim their prize within 12 months.'

...A 40-year-old man from Passaic, New Jersey, claimed a \$US23.7 million lottery win just before the ticket expired, saying he fished it out of a drawer after hearing reports about the jackpot. The winner astonished lottery officials by sending his ticket through the mail. "It wasn't even certified or insured mail," said a lottery spokeswoman. "It's amazing." By the way, a] 30-year-old Finn won 1.4 million markka (\$450,000) on the lottery – with the wrong number. A television announcer, reading out the result in a live broadcast last week, got wrong one of the 10 numbers in the winning sequence... The state-run lottery only noticed the error the following day and decided to honour... [t]he wrong sequence... Asked if he was planning to reward the announcer... the... jubilant... [winner] said: "If she ever drops by, I'll buy her a beer."

...An inquiry into a fiasco in Italy's richest lottery has recommended that a punter's contested... \$1.9 million... win should stand. During the live draw four out of 10 numbered balls got stuck in one of the machines used to select the winning tickets. Organisers pressed on regardless after failing to dislodge the balls with a primitive shove and announced that ticket U-527423 had won... Later they changed their minds and decided to give the prize to someone else. However, three magistrates... [said] the prize should go to the original winner... [In further news from Europe, a] West Yorkshire man who won almost £1 million in Britain's National Lottery from a ticket bought with his last pound said yesterday it had brought him only bad luck. The court where... the 36-year-old... former dole claimant... appeared on a drink driving charge heard the pressure of the win had forced... [him] to separate from his partner and four children.

...A jealous boss who... had refused to pay a £26 subscription to his office lottery syndicate just two weeks before the 33-member group won... a £10 million Lottery jackpot has been sacked for gross misconduct following allegations of fraud. The staff's good fortune turned... the £35,000 manager of Camden Council's homeless persons department, into a compulsive gambler, a disciplinary hearing heard. He was accused of ordering £3,000 of computer equipment without approval, then trying to sell it and pocket the cash.

...The British Government attacked the national lottery operator Camelot Group Plc on Wednesday after the consortium announced a 40[%] rise in its executive salary bill while the sums it raised for good causes fell... to £1.27 billion... in the year... from £1.42 billion 12 months earlier... Total

sales... fell 10[%] to £4.7 billion. The company's profit before tax declined [8%] to £70.8 million... The pay package of the chief executive... increased by 53[%] to £590,000. To add to the company's embarrassment, Camelot[, which is]... owned by a consortium of five British and foreign companies... was forced to release the results several days early after they were leaked to a trade magazine. The Government repeated its intention to hand the lottery over to a non-profit-making organisation when Camelot's seven-year license expires in 2001[, and]... promised legislation later this year to reform the lottery... Launched in November 1994, the lottery is played regularly by 30 million Britons who dream of getting rich quick with jackpots that can top £10 million. A winner of the jackpot this week... aged 30, has gone into hiding after collecting his cheque for £12.3 million... Neighbours... in Mossley Hill, Liverpool... were still reeling from the shock of having a multi-millionaire in their midst. Curtains in the street twitched when a 19-year-old model posed topless holding lottery tickets for press photographers outside the empty house.

...[the head of the former National Party president may be the next to roll in the Lotteries Commission pay row. Its chief executive resigned yesterday with a swipe at the PM for criticising his \$400,000-plus salary. But Opposition MPs continued to call for the resignation of the board chairman who authorised the salary package without official approval from the State Services Commission. The *NZ Herald* understands that the chairman, who is with the chief executive at a lotteries conference in Norway, is under Government pressure to quit and save National more embarrassment. Senior Government officials were last night searching for the Minister of State Services, who is also in Norway, to pass on this message.]

... 'Lotto sales for the first half of the current financial year were \$10 million down on the same period last year, while sales were 2.3% below budget – and the Lotteries Commission blames public outrage over the \$400,000-plus salary of its former boss. Added to this was criticism of commission members taking their partners on a \$95,000 taxpayer-paid trip to a lottery conference in Norway.'

... 'ACCORDING to the TV adverts Lotto is the name of our game. But for tens of thousands of Kiwis the weekly flutter is losing its attraction. Annual ticket sales have dropped by \$30m from a high of \$484m in 1994. And that decline has seen the prize pool shrink. In one recent game getting 4 winning numbers and the bonus ball netted a meagre \$20. And last week's division 1 was split 9 ways with each winner receiving just \$144,697. The Lotteries Commission is working on new strategies for the game.' It has already introduced 'LOTTO DIPS – here for just 1 reason, to make things easier for you and me'.

... 'Lotto punters are being offered the chance to win up to \$15 million in a new game. Lotto Powerball will be on sale from next Monday. It is designed to have a bigger prize that is more likely to be won by one person and not shared among many. The Lotteries Commission is trying to keep Lotto's market share from shrinking as it faces more competition. To play the new game, customers buy a Lotto ticket in the normal way but pay 50c more for another line and choose a Powerball number from 1 to 8. Lotto winners in any prize division who have also picked the correct Powerball number – a single ball drawn after the main Lotto draw – will then win the bigger prize. If Powerball is not won after nine draws, the division one jackpot will, on the tenth draw, cascade down through the divisions. The commission's new chief executive said the game was introduced after Lotto players said they wanted to have bigger prizes. Powerball lotteries are hugely popular around the world, particularly in the US. Large jackpots have prompted people to travel across the continent to buy tickets in the state-run lotteries. One of the biggest winners was a Kentucky man who won \$146.63 million.'

... 'Once upon a time a yellow ticket holder had a \$4 million Lotto win, but that's almost small change compared with what's up for grabs tonight. After nine weeks with no Powerball first division winner, the prize money has jackpotted to a guaranteed \$8 million. This weekend's Lotto Superdraw has also jackpotted, to \$4 million. The two combined prizes could give one Powerball ticket holder winnings of more than \$12 million, the largest Lotto prize to go on offer in NZ. There is one chance in 30 million of winning Powerball'...

'Someone has an \$8.2 million secret burning a hole in his or her pocket. The richest lottery prize to be won in this country – Lotto Powerball division one – went on Saturday to a ticket bought at a suburban service station in Whangarei. Speculation was rife in the neighbourhood of the lucky Lotto outlet about whether the winner lived locally. The Lotteries Commission marketing manager said the total prize – the Lotto first-division prize of \$163,044, plus the Powerball jackpot of \$8,073,917 – was easily twice the biggest single amount handed out by the commission. The winner can claim the prize by filling out a form at any Lotto outlet or going straight to the commission's office in Wellington.' Incidentally, 'the NZ Racing Industry Board has approved a recommendation by the TAB to dramatically increase the deductions from exotic bet types of trifecta, treble, Pick 6 and 6 Pack. Between \$2.5 million and \$3 million will be plucked from punters' pockets. Some of the shortfall will be offset by decreasing the deductions for win, place, quinella and doubles betting from 15.797 to 15.5 cents in the dollar. The RIB chief executive does not see the new rate of 25 cents in the dollar (up from 21.797c) for trifecta and treble betting as extreme by world standards. The NSW tote takes only 17% but "there are racing countries which take out 30 cents on exotic bet types." No one is saying where the increased take will be spent, but there is strong pressure, particularly from the likes of the NZ Trainers' Association in the galloping code, for an additional take from the betting dollar.'

...After years of many... TAB... agencies spending half their time closed... next week... agencies start opening every day... The move is partly to meet the needs of the growing number of sports bettors who want to be able to collect their winnings the day after any event, rather than waiting for agencies to open on Wednesdays... But the TAB will also give racing punters what they want – a race meeting every day of the week. On days when no N[Z] meeting is programmed the TAB plans to take betting on races from A[US. Furthermore, punters]... will be able to place bets at any time of the day or night from outlets such as garages, cinemas and supermarkets when the TAB's \$25 million Jetbet II computer system is completed... The TAB may be growing up but don't expect everybody... to be happy about it.

...THE TAB is facing a \$1 million lawsuit... over the gambling habits of a man who stole from his company to bet on horses... [He] was jailed last year for stealing \$2.9m through false GST claims. He had spent most of the money at an Invercargill TAB agency... Because of his big spending he became a preferential customer, with his own phone betting line into the TAB... Lawyers acting for South Wood Exports Ltd are preparing to go to the High Court after the TAB refused an out-of-court settlement. It will be the first time the TAB has been sued for taking bets from a punter using stolen money... [I]f successful, the case could set a precedent... [A gambling] researcher... has welcomed the court action, saying success would be a major victory in the campaign to help problem gamblers. It would put the TAB and other gambling outlets such as casinos on notice to stop gamblers letting their habits get out of control... [A] TAB spokesman... said the organisation had not settled out of court because it was confident it would successfully defend the lawsuit... "Their claim is that we should have questioned where the money was coming from and therefore were negligent in accepting it. His money was accepted in good faith. There was never anything to suggest there was anything untoward." [But the man had] spent up to \$10,000 a week over six years. During a racing carnival... he[']d spend up to \$30,000... Last year the TAB chief executive... said the board's legal advice was that the Privacy Act prevented it from reporting [him] to the police. But the Privacy Commissioner... later said the act had a section specifically allowing the disclosure of personal information where criminal activities were suspected... [In international news, 4] lucky punters were counting their winnings after one of the biggest payouts in... horse racing history... Hong Kong Jockey Club said it will pay \$HK63.6 m... to the holder of a \$HK10 ticket of a Triple Trio wager... [3] other punters will take home half that amount for their \$HK5 minimum bets.

...['CHARITY begins at home – and nowhere more so than at Hong Kong's Sha Tin and Happy Valley racecourses. They annually fund 170 charities to the tune of \$250m from the Hong Kong Jockey Club's profits. The last decade has seen Hong Kong emerge as the most genuine international racing stage, and forms the final leg of the prestigious Emirates World Series. Hong Kong has been made home by a number of the world's most famous trainers and jockeys'.

...a professional Kiwi punter, who was] one of the most successful gamblers in racing-mad Hong Kong, has died, apparently by committing suicide... The former Auckland... who had to borrow \$HK3000 from a girlfriend seven years ago because he was broke, reportedly won \$HK40 million on a single race at the Sha Tin racecourse last year. He lived in luxury and was known not to take clothes with him as luggage on holiday.

He bought them instead. He fought a high-profile battle with the... Hong Kong Jockey Club... after further phenomenal coups led to his being temporarily barred from gambling – a move unheard of in a betting-mad society that wagered \$HK92 billion on horses last year. [The Auckland] threatened to sue the club, accusing it of infringing his rights... In February the jockey club froze his telephone betting account after it reached a \$HK21 million limit... Telephone betting was introduced to Hong Kong 10 years ago and a \$HK21 million limit was written into its software. The dispute was settled when the club allowed [him] to open more than one account, another unprecedented move. He dropped another bombshell... when he announced he was quitting gambling and offered his secret winning formula to the highest bidder... [The Auckland], aged 44... used a high-tech computerised betting system to defeat the all-powerful... jockey club... [He] was found dead in his exclusive apartment overlooking Happy Valley racetrack on Hong Kong Island... by his 33-year-old wife... from whom he had recently separated... They had been married less than a year... Police said there were no suspicious circumstances. The *South China Sunday Morning Post* reported that [the Auckland] had attempted suicide three days earlier. A police spokesman said [the Auckland] had told his wife on Friday that he was depressed... No suicide note was found.

...[a 'Wanganui trainer known to his friends in the racing world as Dummy lived up to his moniker before his horse lined up for the Waikato Hurdles at Te Rapa last week. Dummy told a *Trackside* television interviewer the conditions did not suit his horse. Translation: Punters, put your money elsewhere. What happened? His horse won by 7 1/2 lengths, whereupon Dummy owned up to the interviewer that he had not been entirely forthcoming with his pre-race comments. The track conditions weren't a problem – the horse's owner liked to bet now and again and after Dummy's comments, surprise, surprise, the horse's odds lengthened at the TAB. NZ racing authorities have launched an inquiry, expressing their concern at "the publicity that has arisen" over Dummy's dose of foot-in-the-mouth. It is possible Dummy could face heavy fines, or even loss of his training licence. To make matters worse, there is now the suggestion that this was not the first time Dummy had been doozy in front of the camera, with a couple of races earlier this month now under scrutiny.]

...[A Te Rapa trainer feels like giving racing away after two of his horses started in the wrong races at Wairoa. A member of his stable staff got Emily Jean and Minefield mixed, and inadvertently ran them under the wrong names. Tragically, Emily Jean, accepted to run in the 1850m maiden, ran in the 1100m maiden and won, paying \$34.75 for a win and \$7.25 for a place. The real Minefield, who had not previously raced beyond 1100m, stopped quickly in the 1850m race finishing last. The trainer was having his first day off in two years with his family and watched in horror from the TAB in Mt Maunganui as Emily Jean won the wrong race. He immediately phoned the stipendiary steward, who checked the brands and made an official report. All of which was too late to alter the placings on the day. Under the Rules of Racing once official dividends have been declared and payouts started, it is not possible to amend the results. The only certainty is that both horses will be disqualified from their respective races following a hearing before Waikato's racecourse inspector.]

...[RIVAL trainers and owners conceded yesterday's Classic at Matamata to classy mare Butterscotch long before she sprinted clear to win by one and three-quarter lengths. Trainers were so incensed at the lenient weighting of the crack 3-year-old that they queried the Matamata club, complained to the handicapper and lodged "please explain" calls and letters to Thoroughbred Racing NZ in the days leading up to the race. The upshot was a 5-horse procession in the \$15,000 fillies' and mares' race and a betting disaster, with No 1 rival Ete Pins – who on 53kg was just half a kilo below Butterscotch, despite having won only 5 races and \$79,475, compared to Butterscotch's 8 wins and \$157,400 – pulled out in protest and classy mare One Under mothballed for another day. The TRNZ chief executive said Hong Kong's senior handicapper had spoken about ratings-based handicapping at this year's annual conference of clubs in Wellington and TRNZ had been checking out the British system, where ratings are published regularly for every horse. The chief executive said it was important to ensure consistency between regions and to consider the implications such a system might have on Kiwi horses competing in AUS.] Editor's note: instead of adding more weight, at the trots – which have mobile starts – horses are handicapped by starting further back.

...[In a country which prides itself on its manners, trotting invokes passion that borders on hooliganism. And nowhere do those passions run deeper than at Solvalla on Elitlopp Day, which just happens to be this Sunday. To understand why one raceday turns normally conservative Swedes into raving lunatics, you have to understand how big trotting is in Sweden. It has become such a part of the national fabric that every day at lunchtime a trotting track somewhere in Sweden will open for just one race, which is always run at 12.48 pm so Swedes who need a trotting fix during their lunch breaks can have a bet. Every day that sole race turns over the equivalent of more than \$1 million. But Saturday is when the Swedes really open their wallets in support of their standardbred heroes. In NZ we are thrilled to get \$100,000 in the pool for Thursday and Friday night Pick Six. Sweden has the V75, in which punters have to pick the winners of the last seven races at a designated meeting. It attracts \$15 million in turnover every Saturday, even though the betting unit can be as small as 10c. Trotting has not one but two television channels. On Sunday, more than 300 journalists will flood the Solvalla press room, which is roughly the size of a small grandstand. That sort of interest creates real money. Trotting rules in Sweden, where thoroughbred racing is a novelty. There are 26 trotting tracks and one galloping track. Trotting accounts for 93.8% of racing turnover. Nobody knows why trotting is so huge in Sweden. It is like trying to explain why rugby is so huge in NZ. Trotting in Sweden is almost as important as soccer and actually has a higher average attendance.]

...[Gambling in Singapore will take one more step out of the seamy underground next month when the island republic becomes the first country in Asia to legalise soccer betting. When the Singapore S-league kicks off, soccer will join the legal gambling club alongside horseracing and number-guessing games 4-D and Toto. "We hope the legalisation of soccer betting will combat illegal bookies and wipe out match-fixing," said the head of corporate communications at Singapore Pools. Match-rigging has marred the game in recent years. A major bribery scandal erupted five years ago when Singapore police arrested a striker and a referee for fixing six matches in the 16-team Malaysian league. The row led to the banning of a fifth of the league's players and the withdrawal of Singapore from the league. "If you can't fight the gamblers, join them." Many punters agree with the head of corporate communications. "In society, there is a need to satisfy the human nature: prostitution for lust and gambling for greed," said a middle-aged man, while queuing to try his luck at Toto. Soccer fans will be able to pick a winner or a draw, and predict the number of goals scored.]

...[The TAB will tackle the N[Z] Rugby Football Union about early finishes in... matches after criticism from punters that... two All Black tests this season have ended before the normal 80 minutes. Investors say that they may be being short-changed in betting options such as last try, combined points total and winning spread. [The]TAB sports betting manager... said: "Like the players, we have to abide by the rule that the referee is the sole judge of time, but we will be talking to the rugby union to ensure the matches run their full duration."

...[In the space of 12 months N[Z] has become the rugby world's gambling capital. Kiwis have shown they're not scared to put their money where their mouths are to back the All Blacks, punting \$800,000 on last week's Bledisloe Cup match against A[US]. The TAB's turnover on big games is frequently boosted by pro-gamblers laying huge amounts from overseas... [The] TAB sports betting controller... says... [he's] not aware of anyone making a living from sports betting here but says "we've certainly got some good customers." The agency doesn't have an upper betting limit, but will occasionally refuse part of a large bet... Despite the attention of overseas pros and the expertise of N[Z]ers in their national game sports betting is turning a healthy profit. [The controller, who is] one of those who sets the odds... won't say how much – "commercially sensitive" – but the amount bet on sport is climbing exponentially and has topped \$35 million... The sports bettors bring new business to the TAB, [the controller] says. On average they're younger and most are not[horse] racing punters... More than 2000 people collected an \$80 payout for \$5 put on [the player] to score the first try in last Saturday's whitewash of the Aussies. The bookies have reacted to the runaway win by slashing the Blacks' odds to take the tri-series to \$1.15, with South Africa at \$6 and A[US] at \$10.

...[A string of large bets at small odds has proved a bonanza for a South Island punter, who invested a total of \$310,000 for a return of \$336,500... The largest investment was \$47,182 on Northland to beat King Country at \$1.02 for a profit of \$943. His average return is \$5300 a week, tax free... His favourite team... [for] winning bets... is... Auckland...

In what is thought to be the largest wager since sports betting became legal[in NZ], a North Island punter stands to gain about \$55,000 if the Blues win. The TAB has been offering scant odds of about \$1.08 for a Blues victory.

...[*Beating the odds* The 28-year-old has a job many men might want. He's paid to watch sport. As one of five TAB risk managers – bookies in street parlance – his brief is to set odds on cricket matches, rugby league games and the gallops. So this BA graduate from Victoria University spends his days watching television, reading sports pages, scanning the Internet for results and bookies' odds. "It's very time-consuming. And I've noticed sport annoys me more than it used to. I find myself getting irate with the tv when we've staked an opinion one team is going to win, and the other is playing well. I used to just watch sport and enjoy it. It cuts more deeply these days." He enjoys the occasional flutter, but only on the Tote. Risk managers are not allowed to bet on fixed odds because they might be in a position to influence the outcome, although "the boys doing fixed-odds have accounts with AUSn bookmakers, so they go offshore." The TAB system here is transparent and tightly audited, and risk managers paid well. All of which discourages any temptation to work the system to their advantage, he says. He and his colleagues are the subject of a Monday night documentary, *Odds Fellows* (TV1, 8.30 pm), an insight into a multi-million-dollar business at the intersection of mathematics, instinct, information and luck.' Incidentally, the punter who bet over \$50,000 last weekend 'made about \$5000' when the Auckland Blues scrapped home by one point after scoring a 3-point goal in the last seconds of the game!]

...More racing and the introduction of sports betting has resulted in the TAB reporting a record profit of \$38.7 million... Turnover for the year topped \$1 billion for the first time... The TAB's success is good news for the country's racing clubs, who share all the organisation's profits, with the Government enjoying a tax take. The trouble is, ownership of the TAB has never been legally defined, and the bigger the profits, the more urgent is a resolution of the issue.

...PUNTERS, stand by your mouses... as the first totalisator in the world embraces cyberspace... The N[SW] TAB exploded out of the barriers this week, opening betting on the Internet – and the N[Z] TAB won't be far behind, with an expected start in October... Say goodbye to the frustrations of busy telephone operators – iBet allows you to bet directly from your home computer... with no chance of being shut out... NSW TAB has had an informational web site for the last 12 months, and has been fielding 90,000 hits a week. "But people, in places from Saudi Arabia to San Francisco, were saying: 'When can I get a bet on?' And we had a lot of queries from people in Asia who own horses here, who wanted to listen to replays." ...[the NSW TAB] marketing manager... says the service has been such a "hit" with Internet users since its Monday launch, the TAB has been swamped with inquiries and e-mail from people wanting to open accounts... It took four months to develop the system, the major breakthrough coming with the discovery of how to encrypt betting transactions. "We couldn't have hackers placing hundred dollar bets and the major factor was to ensure punters had complete confidence in the security of their bets. But the beauty of iBet is you (the punter) are in control. You can set up the bet, and pop the submit button five seconds from the jump. The days of little old ladies holding everyone up putting on seven 50c bets, are gone." ...[the] NZ TAB Internet project leader... said... "At this stage we don't plan to have any audio or video replays, but we'll have the advantage over N[SW] of fixed odds betting on racing and sports, which will open up the global market." ...punters here would also have the convenience of being able to electronically transfer money between their bank and TAB accounts... [NZ TAB's] chief executive... said he appreciated how important it was for the TAB to set up its site as quickly as possible... That meant the government's cut of betting here would be eroded, as it had no means of collecting tax from on-line gambling. In the U[S], gambling through unauthorised Internet sites has been banned, but while it is now illegal to gamble over a telephone line, it has not stopped a huge flow of money going out of the country.

...[The US Government's efforts to stem illegal Internet betting activity outside its borders were boosted yesterday when a federal jury for the first time convicted a man for running an off-shore online sports gambling operation. The 33-year-old co-owner of World Sports Exchange based in Antigua was convicted by a Manhattan jury. He was the first of 22 defendants to stand trial in the Government's initial prosecutions under the federal Wire Wager Act. Ten of the defendants previously pleaded guilty in the case and seven are still fugitives. That law makes it a crime to use telephone lines in interstate or foreign commerce to place sports bets. It also outlaws the transmission of information that helps gamblers bet on sporting events and contests. The 33-year-old faces a possible maximum prison term of five years on one count of conspiracy to violate the Wire Wager Act and two years on each of seven related charges. Among those who have refused to return to the US is his business partner who said last year that the company did not believe what it was doing was illegal and that the US Government did not have jurisdiction. He said the operation took annual bets of between \$US100 million and \$200 million'...

The NZ] Red Cross has temporarily stopped promoting a form of lotto on the Internet after being warned by Internal Affairs that the game is illegal here – but, in effect, the department's action is a bluff. There's no way it can stop N[Z]ers gambling via the Internet just as there is no way to stop individuals tapping into pornography, or any other information or activity which some may consider undesirable... Until pulled up by the department, the... Red Cross... management hadn't realised it was doing anything illegal... The game... is reached by... a computer web site... in the tiny European state of Liechtenstein... and in the two months since opening has become very popular in Scandinavian and Continental countries, reaping in and paying out millions of dollars. Here, the Red Cross was hoping to earn a commission of between 18 and 23[%] on the turnover of N[Z]ers' punts. The]... Internal Affairs national licensing manager... says all games of chance are required to be authorised under the Gaming and Lotteries Act. This was to protect the public from ripoffs – not that the department is suggesting [the Red Cross game] falls into that category. But... [he] agreed there is no way to stop people doing as they pleased on the Internet – "control of it is a problem for all Governments" – and arguing over the legitimacy of what people may do is a legal nicety.

...A crackdown on illegal housie games has cost three Auckland groups their licenses. One group raising money for intellectually handicapped Samoans has had its license cancelled... after allegedly paying out prizes higher than those legally allowed, selling too many tickets and failing to keep proper records. The Te Atatu Congregational Church of Samoa and the South Auckland Seipui Trust have been suspended from running housie for the next three months for similar offences... A search warrant was used to close an Otahuhu housie game where the organisers had previously had their license cancelled by Internal Affairs. Charges will be laid. Housie is the most regulated type of gaming in N[Z]... Only 1000 tickets could be sold for each game, at 10c each, and only one big game – at \$1 a ticket – could be held each session. Prizes were limited to 70[%] of the total takings of a session... [and the] legal limit for housie prizes under the Gaming and Lotteries Act (1977) was \$100... An individual convicted of running housie without a license can be sent to prison for three months or fined \$4000. A body corporate can be fined up to \$12,000. Housie is estimated to have an annual turnover of \$45 million... [In related news, g]ambling on the Internet could decimate the local gaming industry and reduce the amount of money available to charity says the Lotteries Commission. The chief executive... writing in the commission's annual report, said yesterday that overseas operators should not be licensed to offer games in N[Z]... The commission now ranks fourth in the gambling market, behind casinos... racing... and... gaming machines...

[Millions of dollars of leaks from gambling machine profits are fuelling a Lotteries Commission call for all non-casino pokies to be tracked electronically. The commission estimates that \$20.4 million was lost last year from "missed bankings." In its statement of corporate intent it said Parliament should not turn a blind eye to this theft, which had cheated the Government out of \$6.4m in taxes and community groups of \$6.8m in payouts to authorised causes.]

...Government changes to the way gaming machines operate will cost community groups \$10 million, says the Gaming Industry of N[Z]... The Government is investigating linking N[Z]'s 12,000 non-casino poker machines to a central computer system, in a bid to crack down on fraud. [By the way, 'a Whangarei woman's delight at winning \$788 at the RSA turned to despair when she was denied the cash for not signing the club's visitors' book. Large signs sited near the pokie machines stated: "These premises are for the use of members only with the exception of affiliates and invited guests

correctly signed in. No jackpots will be paid out apart from the above people.” There was also a sign at reception. The woman, who went to the club with her partner, a member, said she knew of the notices requesting visitors to sign in. She always signed in but on this occasion they were distracted.’

...‘Many North Island publicans are breaking the conditions of their poker machine licences by pressuring groups to patronise their hotels in return for grants from the pokies. This week, the Te Kuiti Hotel’s gambling machine licence was suspended for three months because of alleged advantages derived from poker machine grants. The hotel is appealing. The Internal Affairs Department’s gambling compliance manager warned gambling machine trusts in a meeting in Wellington on Thursday that he would suspend their licences automatically in future if they had to be given more than a fixed number of warnings. He said the department issued 240 warnings about non-compliance with licence conditions after auditing 180 trusts in the 10 months to the end of June. He was “surprised” at the high number of warnings required, with many trusts getting warned for two or three breaches.’]

...THE Department of Internal Affairs... estimates N[Zers wagered a total of] \$6.5 billion in... [the past year – up] from \$1.1 billion in 1987... [-] and lost \$957 million, although the turnover figure is complicated in that “the same dollar can go through the turnstiles... [many times.” The official figure of the total wagered should be known shortly. Meanwhile, the department] has launched a national investigation into gaming machines after revelations some publicans may be treating gaming machine profits as their own. The investigation comes after raids on two Christchurch premises last month which saw the Bishopdale and Parklands Taverns lose their gaming licenses. The Papanui Working Men’s Club also came under scrutiny after a three-month-long investigation by Internal Affairs... [claimed] the club had siphoned more than \$1m from its gaming machine profits into a general account. Gaming regulations stipulate gaming machines are to be run by societies and... [at least 33% of the] proceeds be made available to charitable, sporting and community groups within their area... [The] Senior Gaming Inspector... who follows up such cases, says the scale of corruption in the gaming industry could be huge... [L]icensed gaming machines... are... operated by more than 1200 societies at more than 2000 sites. Gaming machines arrived in N[Z] in the early 1980s. They collectively turnover \$1 billion a year, generating more than \$30 million in duty and \$70m in community grants... Internal Affairs wants a national distribution regime for gaming... put in place... Funds collected from gaming machines do not go to a distribution body like... the R[IB] which distributes TAB money...

Everyone wants a piece of the pokies action – meaning the appearance of machines in shopping malls should not be ruled out. In a year when revenue is tipped to rocket... players in the industry are keen to put their money on gaming machines. The TAB and the Lotteries Commission are lobbying the Government to get a slice of the action. The profitable poker machines are one way the agencies are hoping to expand to cash in on N[Zers’ increasing appetite for gambling, a trend which worries social agencies... In A[US], the Victorian TAB runs betting and poker machines in outlets separate to its betting shops... A[NZ TAB] spokeswoman... said the organisation wanted to convince the Government that it should not be blocked from moving into that sector of the gambling game... Another organisation to make a submission, the Compulsive Gambling Association, says it is alarmed at anything which makes it easier for people to bet. “Gambling is bringing an unwanted crisis into our country... As a community now, we turn people on to gambling wholesale and then major problems manifest themselves.”

...The Victorian coroner’s office may launch a retrospective investigation into suicides linked to gambling... The figures showed the number... had increased steadily... with four in 1993 and 1994, and eight in 1995, 13 last year and up to five so far this year... compared to just one in 1992, the year poker machines were introduced...

[‘It was my son’s 18th birthday and I wanted to get him something special. A present he’d want more than any other present in the world. So I did. “A car!” my son cried, with a grin like a slice of watermelon. “It’s only second-hand,” I said, but he didn’t care. It had wheels and an engine – and that was all that mattered. A few months later, I was in bed when I heard knocking at the window and a voice cry out, “Your son’s been in a crash!” I went straight to the hospital. “Your son’s damaged his spine,” the doctor told me. “I’m afraid he’s a quadriplegic.” Months passed. I spent every day at the hospital, helping to lift and bathe him and to assist with his physio. “When he gets out he’ll need 24-hour care,” the doctor said. “It’ll probably be better for him in a nursing home.” I looked the doctor in the eye. “I’m his mother,” I said firmly. “He’s coming home with me.” My son was awarded \$338,000 compensation from the Transport Accident Tribunal and we used some of the money to build a special unit for him at the back of the house. He was glad to be home and I was glad to have him, but I can’t say it was easy. He couldn’t do anything for himself and I had to give up my job to care for him. My husband kept his job as a printer and helped out when he got home. But a few months later, he was sick, too, so I insisted he went to the doctor. The news couldn’t have been worse. He had liver cancer. They had to start chemotherapy straightaway. After my husband returned home, I didn’t have a second’s respite. I began to understand why torturers have such spectacular results with sleep deprivation. My husband noticed my heavy eyes. “I’ll soon be right,” he’d tell me, but my eyes weren’t so heavy that I couldn’t see the truth. He was getting weaker, and when he got pneumonia there was nothing more anyone could do. I held his hand as he slipped away. Everything seemed 10 times more difficult without my husband. There was no-one to make me laugh any more, and though I had my son, I felt totally alone and isolated. “Try to cheer up, Mum,” my son begged with concern, but I could barely force a smile. “Here,” he said one day. “Take this.” And then he thrust \$20 into my hand. “Why don’t you get yourself out and play the pokies?” I stared at the cash. I couldn’t remember the last time I’d left the house to do something frivolous. “Well, maybe just for half an hour,” I said. At the hotel, people were chatting and laughing. It was a great sound. I sat at the pokie machine and for the first time in months, I didn’t grieve for my husband or worry about my son. When he saw how much more cheerful I was, my son encouraged another visit – and this time I won \$1000. It felt so good to have people around me – people who were clapping and cheering instead of sympathising with me and looking glum. After that, I was at the pokies every day, trying to repeat that feeling of elation. My son said he liked the space so I didn’t feel bad about it until one night I looked at the clock and realised I’d been sitting in front of the machine for three hours. Worse, I’d spent every cent of the grocery money. I had to win it back. But even though I spent all my savings as well as my carer’s allowance in trying, I never did. And then one day, I didn’t have another cent to spend – unless I took the cash card for my son’s compensation and went to the ATM. “It’s only \$100,” I reasoned. “I’ll pay him back. He’ll never even know.” An hour later I’d spent the lot. “I’ll win it back tomorrow” became my mantra every day as I ran to the bank with my son’s cash card. But of course I never did. I didn’t even know how much I’d actually withdrawn. Not until the day my son decided to check his bank balance. I stood there, frozen to the spot and watched his face as the figures were read out to him. “Can you check that again, please?” he said slowly. And then he turned to me. “How could you?” he said. “That bloody money was for my future. What did you do with \$200,000?” \$200,000. I flinched at how much I’d spent. “The pokies,” I whispered. “I couldn’t stop. I’m so sorry.” But my son didn’t want to hear my apologies. “Just get out,” he said. The next few weeks were absolute hell. Friends ignored me and most of my family disowned me. My son slammed the phone down the minute he heard my voice. He even took an injunction out against me, forbidding me to go near him or my home. I felt like a criminal – and the police confirmed that, indeed, I was one. “Your son has made a formal complaint that you’ve stolen from him,” the arresting officer told me. At Melbourne County Court, I pleaded guilty to stealing \$130,000 of my son’s accident compensation. I was given a 10-month jail sentence, with six months suspended. You might think that I deserve all my problems – and more. But I’ve been to prison, lost the trust of friends and family and destroyed my son’s love for me. Isn’t that punishment enough?]

...A man who swindled 33 people in A[US and NZ] out of more than \$3 million was a pathological gambler who dwelt in a fantasy world, a judge said yesterday. [The man], aged 31, of suburban Melbourne, told victims, including family and friends, that he was entitled to a \$250 million inheritance. Instead, he got a jail term of six years and eight months. [While on the topic of gambling crimes, in the US ‘2 Mohawks have been killed during an anti-gaming war’...

Although ‘10 US states do not have lotteries, income from lotteries in 1990 was \$US53.9 billion.’ USers ‘lose more money through gambling each year than they spend on food – \$US100 billion’, and ‘it is estimated that there are approximately eight million compulsive gamblers in the US’]...

Gambling options were expanding, and the amount of money bet each year was increasing in N[Z] and around the world... says a visiting expert... He has helped some of the best-known addicts in the U[S, including a] former First Lady... and... the brother of[a] former President... to confront their compulsions[, and was himself]... a former compulsive gambler... [who] began gambling at age six, tossing pennies against a wall... Scratch and win cards given away as store promotions were preparing young people to be the next generation of gamblers... he said. [● A 'survey of 68 first-year psychology students at Massey University in Albany in 1996, published in the *NZ Journal of Psychology* last month, found that 18% of the students were either "problem gamblers" or "probable pathological gamblers" before the age of 20. In contrast, problem and probable pathological gamblers made up between 2.1 and 3.9% of a sample of 6452 adults aged 18 and over interviewed by Statistics NZ. However, whereas adults said they gambled mainly for money, 46% of the teenagers said they gambled for fun, only 30% to win or to get rich, and 21% as a social activity. All three "probable pathological gamblers" in the teenage sample said they gambled as a social activity with relatives or friends. Those three teenagers gambled about \$40 a month on Instant Scratch tickets. Overall, 82% of the teenagers had bought Scratchies']...

A controversial new scratch and win phone card has been cleared to go on sale next week. Sales of scratch and win cards are restricted to over 16-year-olds but the new TELEPHOTO MAGIC phone cards are available to everyone... Internal Affairs has investigated the card and says it conforms to the gambling laws... [With] the magic pre-paid call card... you've got a 1-in-4 chance to win a prize... up to \$100,000...

BP is willing to introduce an age limit on the scratch-and-win phone cards that will be launched nationally next month... But imposing an age limit on the sale of phone cards was illegal, said the chief executive of the Lotteries Commission... "[They] will find some six-year-old with a lawyer will sue..." The Minister of Internal Affairs... has called for a report on whether the game is illegal following a complaint from... [the United MP. He] wants the game halted because of fears it will turn... children under 16 who were barred by law from buying Instant Kiwi scratch cards... into gamblers... The law apparently does not apply to the new game because people have to buy a product... to win... [The MP] said... Parliament had agreed that scratch-and-win games of this type should not be played by under-16-year-olds... "If it doesn't breach legislation, then it breaches the spirit of the legislation." [The minister] said a law change might have to be considered to halt a proliferation of such games.

...A Lotteries Commission spokeswoman... said the 16-year age limit for [scratch and win cards] applied only to their sale. It was illegal for anyone under that age to be sold a ticket, but they were allowed to have a ticket in their possession, or claim a prize. Many Instant Kiwi tickets were bought by parents for their children or sent as presents. [The spokeswoman] was not aware of the age of a winner ever being an issue and winners would always receive any prize won, regardless of age... [However, underage] gamblers striking it lucky at the Sky City Casino... will not be able to claim their winnings. An 18-year-old youth who won about \$30,000 in a jackpot at the Christchurch Casino was denied his money... The youth is challenging the wording of the Casino Controls Act, which makes it an offence for anyone under the age of 20 to be in a gaming area of a casino, but not to game. [The] marketing and communications manager for Sky City... was not sure, if the court ruled in the Christchurch casino's favour, whether the youth could turn the tables on the casino and claim back the money he had lost... Although there were not large numbers of people under 20 trying to get into the casino, the problem was constant.

...[Auckland's Sky City Casino, which 'hangs photographs of winners on its walls', tried to refuse to honour a prize after a gaming machine 'mistakenly repeated its jackpot of an expensive car – awarding a second car to the person who had won the first time. He had gone home and later returned to play on the same machine'! If the casino hadn't made a '\$15.5 million profit in its first 5 months of operation', perhaps people would've been more sympathetic?]

...A year after gambling \$475 million on building the Auckland casino, Harrah's Sky City is raking in better than expected profits... Much of the front-page publicity for the casino hasn't been good – drunks, children left in cars, problem gamblers... and claims of triad loan-sharking. But those incidents have been few and far between, the gambling business seems to have settled comfortably into the city, and far bigger numbers stack up in its favour. Retailers report a trading spin-off. Nearby bars are happy that the 2500 casino workers choose to spend some of their \$1.3 million weekly wage to drink and eat off the premises after their shifts. Around 1500 Auckland businesses supply about \$2 million worth of food, drink, other goods and services to the casino/hotel/theatre complex each week. At the end of this 12-month financial period the Government and local body take in taxes is expected to top \$45 million. Shareholders, and there are more than 100,000 N[Z] residents who hold stakes in the business, will also do well this year; [the casino's]managing director... expects the company to exceed its tax-paid profit forecast of \$36 million. Even the casino's God-fearing neighbours at St Matthew's in the City and the Auckland City Mission have grown to accept life in the shadow of Auckland's biggest building... The casino operators present the business as a good corporate citizen; it's put \$400,000 in cash and kind into the restoration of St Matts, sponsored the Special Olympics team with a long-term deal, and provided Christmas dinner for the city's lost and lonely through the City Mission... But there's growing concern about those spending their money on gambling tables and, more particularly, on slot machines. Can they afford to lose? ...Churches say 52[%] of regular casino-goers are unemployed...

Fate can play an inordinate part in our fortunes. It seems to me that only fate's flip of a coin has allowed some of us to be born in countries and circumstances where we might have some chance of lifting ourselves out of the thick mire of poverty... During my few visits to the Auckland casino I have felt a sense of wonder that here perhaps like few other places we have a completely unconscious mingling of the races – all paying homage to a common goddess... An occasional evening's entertainment at the casino should be fun... Yet so few there are smiling, for their deity is very much concerned with the serious business of winning and losing money. Among these worshippers are those already feeling lost and afraid at the bottom of the socio-economic heap and unable to use initiative, now beseeching Lady Luck to lift them from their morass. She is unlikely to do so. They tempt fate because they have a dream of one day rising above the poverty line and perhaps having a late model car and house of their own, which many of us have been able to take for granted or obtain through our ability to find regular work... I have no idea where the people who each day flood the casino get their money but in my heart I know that many of them should not be risking what little they have on the tables and slot machines... People, of course, have the right to spend their spare money in any way they choose... But... a dollar going down the throat of a one-armed bandit is a dollar less going towards food in some deprived household. We should also consider whether... relax[ing]... the... dress code at the casino has more to do with luring people with only a few dollars to spend than any honourable observance of egalitarian principles.

...From tomorrow... Sky City is relaxing the dress code in its... [newest] gaming room... opened in February... which was originally intended... to attract people to the... casino who were reluctant to mix with other punters on the main floor... [Previously called the Harrah's Club, the room] will be renamed Alto Casino and Bar, as part of a rebranding the company hopes will quash any impression that the room is for members only, or just for high-rollers. Although jackets and ties will be "recommended" for men, they will no longer be essential. Jeans, shorts and active sportswear will still not be permitted... Lower revenues from tables in the Harrah's Club reduced average daily revenue from \$2800 a table to \$2700.

...[responding to recent criticism, the] managing director of Auckland's... casino... said it was bizarre to suggest that people were forgoing buying a lottery ticket so they could have a night out at the casino. His comments came as Sky City announced a bottom-line profit of \$36.1 million... Sky City... had paid out more than \$1 million over the past year through a community trust.

...The Sky City Community Trust was set up last year to give out grants twice yearly to community groups. It is funded by a 2.5[%] share of the net profits of the Sky City casino and complex. The trust secretary... said recipients would be named shortly. More than 600 groups applied for a share of... \$430,000... Thirty-three were successful. The trust is now inviting applicants for the mid-year round of grants.

...The Sky City casino is sponsoring the Symphony Under the Stars extravaganza in the Domain next month. The outdoor event had looked to be in danger of cancellation without a principal sponsor. The Auckland City Mission is to be the main beneficiary of the event, which will be renamed the Sky City Starlight Symphony.

...[the Aucklander 'was over 80 when a friend took her to the casino for the first time. Within weeks she was going every day, playing the pokies until she had lost more than \$70,000 in savings. Although she had always enjoyed a few bets on the horses or a Golden Kiwi over the years, she had never indulged in more than a mild flutter. But complicated by the early stages of Alzheimer's, gambling addiction took over her life. It stripped her of financial security and has caused irreparable damage to her family relations. She often has no recollection of being at the Auckland casino and denies to family that she has lost money gambling. Despite their best efforts to have her barred from the casino, present legislation does not sanction banning unless the gambler agrees. Sky City says it wants greater powers to exclude problem gamblers and hopes the Gaming Law Reform Bill before Parliament will provide those. But for the 80-year-old's family it will be too late. Her four children have watched her go from a doting grandmother and frugal budgeter to a woman who has no interests other than where her next bet is coming from. The family have now taken control of her finances and are supplementing her income and allocating her weekly spending money. Although she can no longer drive, her son has no doubts she is intent on finding a way back in to town to play the pokies. "It just never entered my head when they built that casino in Auckland that it would affect my family." The Compulsive Gambling Society says elderly people are vulnerable to problem gambling because they have time on their hands and are often lonely. Once they lose their savings, superannuation and homes, they have no way of earning the money to start over, because of their age.'

... 'In the year to June, we gambled an average of \$48 a week for everyone aged 18 and over. We *lost* an average of \$8.10 a week for every adult. Even after adjusting for inflation, we gambled 3.5 times as much as in 1979, and lost 2.8 times as much in real terms. Last month, the Government announced a major review of gambling policy which is expected to examine both the human and economic costs of the exploding gambling industry and the way its revenue is distributed. Some countries are already taking action. In 1994, the Netherlands cut the number of poker machines from 75,000 to 45,000 and restricted them to dedicated gambling venues where alcohol could not be sold. Spain, which has more than 450,000 gambling machines, has recently brought in legislation to reduce the number. In England, gambling by commoners was banned in the 17th century, flourished again in the 18th century and was suppressed again during the Industrial Revolution when the Protestant work ethic took hold. In the last years of the 20th century, restrictions have been removed suddenly and dramatically throughout the world, in line with the dismantling of other economic controls. As recently as 1988, casinos were illegal in every American state except Nevada and New Jersey. By 1994, they had been authorised in 23 states. In the past decade, casinos and gambling machines have spread through Europe, South America and AUS, where the machines have gradually been legalised in every state except WA. AUSns now gamble more than anyone in the world – an average loss by every adult of \$A819 a year. Hong Kong is just behind, and then there is a big gap before the next batch of gambling nations, which include the US and NZ.' 'NZ has the highest ratio of high-intensity gambling machines to people in the world after AUS – one for every 220 people.'

... 'Fancy a flutter at the casino? Odds are your visit will cost \$64. That's the average amount gamblers lose each time they step onto Sky City's gaming floor, according to company figures released yesterday. The previous figure was \$54. The company said the extra money won from each punter could be attributed to better gaming floor layout, the introduction of new 5c pokie machines, and initiatives to attract more high-rollers. The Compulsive Gambling Society's research director said the jump in average gambling loss was concerning, given that it had happened during a time of general economic stagnation. He advocated a Government-backed TV campaign similar to drink-driving advertisements as a way of warning about the "downside" of gambling.'

... 'When the stakes get too high Angela Han was the first to die. Then came her two small children, Christina and Nicholas. Six months later, they were followed by Khamphet Vong Phak Dy and Jian Huang. Three Asian women and two children brutally murdered in their Auckland homes, with their husbands and fathers now serving life terms in prison for the crimes. The killers had one thing in common – severe gambling problems that devastated their lives and relationships. In a letter to his wife, one called himself "human rubbish" and implied that he was going to kill himself to end the family's woes. Last month a jury rejected his defence of insanity. He and another of the murderers had voluntarily barred themselves from the Sky City Casino in failed bids to beat their addiction. Sky City makes people who agree to bar themselves sign a document that prohibits them from entering for a minimum of two years. If they break that, they face being arrested and charged with trespass. Photographs of each barred gambler are distributed to staff. A casino spokeswoman says: "Unfortunately we only have a couple of security guards with photographic memories. If people decide they want to get back in, we can only do our best to stop them." The five murders have highlighted the problem of Asian gambling. A counsellor with the Compulsive Gambling Society who has spent two years helping mainly Asian men with gambling problems, says it is often a symptom of other problems in their lives. "For many Asians, when they come to a new country they feel depressed, they have cultural shock. Some have no language skills and can't find a job. They have lots of time and are very unhappy. So that is why they go to casinos – to escape their problems. Obviously, afterwards their problems become worse. Normally in their own countries, access to gambling isn't so easy. There's no casino in Hong Kong, for instance. They have horseracing, but those activities aren't open 24 hours.'"

... 'The killing of Jian Huang began well before her jealous estranged husband butchered her with a kitchen knife. The young mother's soul began to die soon after her arrival in NZ from China, when she made the ultimate sacrifice for her family. Jian had worked as a doctor in a hospital after studying at a Shanghai university for six years – but her qualifications were not recognised here. So the intelligent, attractive young woman, who had arrived in NZ looking for a better life, began working as a prostitute to support her husband and their small boy. She called it her blood money. It was the start of a spiral into darkness that would end with her murder at the age of 34, her former husband serving a life sentence, and her boy, the love of her life, effectively orphaned. Jian's life and violent death opened a window on the rarely seen struggle of some immigrant families and the dark shadow domestic violence casts on some women and children. Jian left her husband in December last year because he was beating her and gambling away the money she had sold her soul to earn. She seemed to have blind faith in NZ's system of law and order, believing stoically that a protection order and the police would protect her from her increasingly erratic former husband. "I have a protection order," she proclaimed in an emotional, revealing letter to her husband sent soon after she plucked up the courage to leave him. "If you try to find your son and use him to achieve your aim of threatening me, you will have broken the law. I will call the police. You know the consequence," it read in translation. But the system did not protect Jian. The protection order was not worth the paper it was written on – and the police were unable to save her, although two officers were with her minutes before she died. On Saturday, February 26, her estranged husband had their son for the day. As they were driving along, they spotted Jian in a car with her new lover – a married Hong Kong man who had been one of her clients. This enraged her son's father. He called Jian on her cellphone and threatened to kill the boy if he did not get \$30,000 – his estimate of his share of their townhouse. He went back to the townhouse and used the boy to break in. He took a hammer with him, and lay in wait. Jian fetched the police, who followed her home to get her protection order. Instead of waiting outside as the officers had instructed, Jian entered the townhouse. With disastrous timing, her cellphone rang just as she was walking up the stairs and about to encounter her husband. It was her lover calling. Her husband exploded in a jealous rage. Jian tried to run off, and he stabbed her in the back and shoulder. When he caught up with her, he stabbed her repeatedly in the face, arms and chest. The knife sliced through her heart and lung before the police arrived. Later their son appeared at the top of the stairs and sat staring at his mother with a bewildered look. (He still lives in the same house with his uncle, aunt and grandmother, who have come from China to care for him.)'

... 'From rags to riches: but it's still a scandal At first glance, Campione d'Italia appears to be just another small Italian town, albeit one found a few kilometres across the Swiss border. It is only when its 2300 inhabitants receive their monthly salaries and pensions that it becomes clear why this lakeside community is resented and envied throughout the rest of Italy. It is the richest and most bizarre community in the country, subsidised unwillingly by the Italian taxpayer. Bulging bank balances reveal that every state employee in Campione, from the most junior council employee to the middle-ranking teacher, earns at least three times as much as his counterpart in Florence, Milan or Turin. While Italy suffers cutbacks in public spending, the Campione town council has more money than it knows what to do with. The astonishing wealth that prompted a parliamentary delegate to describe Campione as the

"Italian Kuwait" is the result of a special status for the enclave that was granted in 1933. Then Campione was an impoverished fishing village on prosperous Swiss territory. Facing the Lake of Lugano, the enclave was a historical anomaly. Its extreme poverty was a national embarrassment. With the agreement of dictator Benito Mussolini, King Vittorio Emanuele III decreed that for reasons of patriotic pride the Italian outpost should become as rich as the Swiss canton which encircled it. A profitable casino was built, taxation kept to a minimum and a special system of subsidies established. The casino made a profit of £36 million last year, £20 million of which went directly to Campione town council, which passed the money on to its employees. All salaries are paid in Swiss francs. Tax, paid in lira, is calculated using a hugely favourable exchange rate which is fixed by law. A state pension in Campione provides a retired civil servant with up to £40,000 a year. This remains untaxed, giving the pensioner an income well above the average wage in the rest of Italy. Salaries and pensions provide more than enough incentive to work in Campione. Nevertheless, the Italian state is obliged by law to offer a further sweetener. Each month, every state employee in Campione is paid between £1500 and £2500 for living there – another relic of the town's impecunious days. "It's a ridiculous situation," said the MP for nearby Como. "Campione's special status was given in a historical context which is no longer relevant." The Mayor of Campione is indifferent to criticism. "The money that we spend in Campione is our money and we are entitled to spend it as we see fit." Last year he was given a six-month suspended sentence for criminal misuse of casino takings. There is also an investigation into possible money-laundering at the gambling centre.

...Nevada's premier poker machine cheat, who has raked in millions of dollars over the past 22 years, has promised to tell gambling regulators how he and his counterparts rip off the state's casinos. Now aged 57, he was convicted in 1986 of defrauding Las Vegas casinos of \$US10 million by rigging poker machines between 1976 and 1979. He was released on parole in January 1991. He was arrested again in June this year, along with three others, in a \$US6 million poker-machine scheme. He pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy, racketeering and money laundering. In the 1970s, he and other cheats dealt with mechanical poker machines. They adopted more sophisticated methods as the machines entered the computer age. Beginning in 1996, he could enter poker machines and use a computer-generated device that allowed him to beat the machines in just minutes. A dozen people were recruited to play the rigged machines. The crew hit six major Las Vegas casinos a total of 10 times, winning cash jackpots or cars. The ring-leader was trying to hit a \$US17 million Megabucks slot jackpot and move to France when he was arrested. Sentencing is set for March 5' next year.

... 'A high-rolling gambler convicted of cheating the Auckland casino out of more than \$100,000 has been fined \$27,000. The Tongan businessman, once considered one of Sky City's top 10 customers, plans to sell his \$400,000 Auckland home to pay the fine and a \$271,000 mortgage, then quit NZ, his lawyer told the Auckland District Court yesterday. A jury last month found the 40-year-old and his accomplice – a 31-year-old casino dealer – guilty of three counts of cheating on a baccarat table in the casino's VIP lounge last year. Sentencing the croupier to four months' periodic detention, the judge said her offending was a gross breach of her employer's trust.'

...Ten staff at Auckland's... casino have been sacked after an internal investigation revealed a scam that allegedly sucked up to \$500,000[of] bar takings... from the computerised cash register system over several months... and at least three were facing criminal charges... The... staff... siphoned off the cash by ringing up drinks under the actual value of those being served, and then pocketing the difference as tips... The investigation centred on a casino bar closely monitored by security cameras... A source said casino management would have been able to match video footage from the cameras with the sales registered on the cash register... "So they could see someone ringing up a soft drink for \$1 at 10pm, but a beer worth \$5 would be recorded on the video at the same time,"... The scam, the biggest since the casino opened... comes after... a "double-dipping" scam, involving staff who continued to claim Social Welfare benefits while they worked at the casino.

...Auckland's Sky City casino company has sacked one of its ground attendants for using the wrong toilet. [The former employee] said yesterday that he was dismayed and embarrassed by the dismissal after he tried to save time when nature called by dashing inside to a toilet on a conference room floor that was not in use... [H]e knew he was supposed to use one of the toilets reserved for staff but he was "busting," the toilet he went to was three to four minutes closer, and no members of the public were around... A Sky City spokeswoman... said a staff toilet was closer than the one [the former employee] used but "he chose to ride" four floors up to use the public toilet... The Service Workers Union intended challenging the dismissal... [A union organiser said the former employee] had had a previous warning over another matter but Sky City was too inclined to sack staff or discipline them over petty problems and minor breaches of procedure.

...Auckland's... casino has suspended four staff responsible for cash counting after they objected to working regular overtime... [The cashiers, who] were not given advance notice on their rosters of overtime as provided for in their employment contracts... were among six who had sought an urgent hearing before the Employment Tribunal to apply for a compliance order to stop the company from demanding that they work unrostered overtime. The issue came to a head on Thursday night when staff went home at midnight after being threatened with suspension if they did not work overtime... Yesterday the Service Workers Union... said the cash counters were working up to 12 hours a day... in a sealed environment that was hot, dusty and noisy... [A] union organiser... said Sky City's actions amounted to "outrageous bullying" and were a reflection of an "arrogant management style"... A Sky City spokeswoman... said the company was not prepared to discuss individual employee matters and hoped to have the cashiers' suspension resolved through mediation... The company has also threatened to sack any staff who develop claustrophobia or fear of heights while working in the soon-to-be-opened Sky Tower.

...The final 4 1/2 tonnes of concrete for the Auckland Sky Tower is due to head skywards today, bringing to an end more than two years of work... Firth Concrete says more than 12,000 truckloads or 20,000 tonnes of concrete have been delivered...

An upended sewer pipe – or a unique structure blending well with the cityscape? Every Auckland and visitor to the city has an opinion on the Sky Tower... and the decision not to paint or clad the concrete shaft has drawn mixed reactions from city architects and designers. Critics say the concrete colour makes it look dull, boring and older than it really is. It will also present a new haven for graffiti artists. Those in favour say concrete blends in well with the blue sky. It will also give the whole... complex a sense of age in the years to come... [The] project architect... said a special additive was mixed with the concrete to make the shaft harder and harder as it got older, protect it from fungus growth and... change... its... colour slightly making a dramatic landmark... [The person] who designed the tower, said a lot of research was done before the decision was made not to give the tower colour. "All the pros and cons were taken into consideration... Once you paint it, you've got on-going maintenance..." [Speaking of which, the tower (that can 'sway by a few metres' at the top) has a '150-year lifetime – but no one has yet worked out how it'll be dismantled!']

...Since the one which fell down at Babel, towers have been a rich source of fearful metaphor. Depending on where you stand in relation to them, they either inspire or threaten. They define the landscape on which they rise or crudely impose themselves on it. It is hard, it seems, to be indifferent to towers... It has been quite an experience to watch this tower emerge amongst the general brutality of the CBD skyline... Like the citizens of Paris, we are likely to have an extended honeymoon with our tower. Some of us are clearly out of love with the beast already or have allowed other considerations to conceal the reality of it... Not that there has been much in the way of criticism: A Wellington comedian in the TV3 arts programme and a page 2 column in the *Herald*... seem to be about it. The former seemed seriously disturbed by the fact the tower could be seen from a great distance off; and the latter made a negative comparison, in terms of elegance and style, with the Eiffel Tower. It's an odd choice, that last. Mr Eiffel's effort got a very bad press in 1896 and was, as a result, scheduled for demolition 10 years after. Happily public opinion changed, and 110 years later the idea of Paris without its tower is unthinkable. There is a tale, no doubt apocryphal, about a Parisian businessman who lunched every day in the tower, since it was the one spot from which he could not see it. No doubt, [the page 2 columnist] has already booked his table at the Sky City Brasserie. In fact, the Eiffel Tower is not so easy to spot around central Paris. Given the density of buildings and its site, it

emerges into view only occasionally. [By the way, another 'of Europe's most loved landmarks, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, has been brought back from the brink of collapse after a delicate programme to partially straighten its famous tilt. The 14,500-tonne, 60m tower was closed to tourists in 1992, amid dire predictions that its tilt was so pronounced it would collapse within 20 years or so. It leaned 6 degrees, or 4m, off the perpendicular on its south side. The correction has put it back 40cm towards the vertical – not enough to be seen by the naked eye but sufficient, the engineers say, to bring it back to the lean of 300 years ago. The architect of the plan was a professor of soil mechanics at London's Imperial College, who had to deal with the aftermath of many previous botched plans and soothe Italian fears about handing the fate of a national treasure to a foreigner. It was once widely believed that the unknown architect had designed the tower to lean, but this assumption has been proved false. Part of the building's site was on soft, silty soil of a former river course and subsidence began during construction. In 1838, engineers excavated at the tower's base to expose a layer of columns that had sunk far underground. That accelerated the lean and the process was brought near to disaster by the pumping of groundwater in the plain of Pisa in the 1970s, which caused the soil to dry out. The Leaning Tower, a wedding cake of seven tiers, is officially the bell tower of the cathedral of Pisa. Its construction began in 1173 and continued, with two long interruptions, over the next two centuries.']

...It's opening two weeks later than originally planned, and has ended up costing slightly more than[the] expected... \$75 million to build... but Sky City Ltd is delighted with the public's fascination with the Sky Tower. The Sparkplug, as it has become known, finally opens for business this weekend... The 180-seat revolving restaurant, called Orbit, opens on August 9 and had already received "many thousands" of bookings... Sky City is expecting more than 900,000 people to visit the tower during the next year – an average of 2500 visitors a day. Adults will pay \$15 for the privilege – children \$7.50. Restaurant guests will not have to pay the fee but there will be a minimum charge, probably around \$25... In its listing profile, the company said it expected the tower to generate revenue of \$16.3 million in its first year... Within two or three years, however, Sky City expects about half its tower net income to come from rent paid by broadcasters and telecommunications companies. About a third of the room available for such equipment has already been snapped up.

...A big clean-up yesterday followed the big bang of the Sky Tower's official opening in Auckland on Sunday night... About 6700kg of gunpowder [was] exploded... Clean-up crews scoured one of the main sites from which the fireworks were detonated, searching for unexploded gunpowder... [A] spokesman... said he was confident no dangerous debris remained there. It was extremely rare for any unexploded gunpowder to be left over after a display. However, he did not want the site revealed to prevent children from carrying out their own search... [Incidentally, t]he... casino... is considering scraping its round-the-clock nursing cover and leaving emergency care to security guards. The proposed abolition of the four full-time nursing jobs has angered the Service Workers Union, which claims the casino will not be safe for staff and customers. A union organiser... said... "The company is talking about training more people in first aid but that's not a substitute for qualified nurses." ...the casino handled frequent emergencies, from epileptic fits to heart attacks.

...Like a Christmas tree, the Sky Tower [is currently twinkling] with red and green lights in support of a fundraising campaign for a children's heart centre at the Starship hospital.

...Sky Tower, the most imposing feature of the Auckland skyline, is engaged in a... battle for hearts, minds and wallets. The odds should be stacked in favour of the soaring structure... Its spin doctors have worked hard to link the concrete and steel totem with good works and blur the reason it exists: to pull punters to [the] vast gaming halls[beneath it]. The dazzling... nightly wrap-around show is meant to help a Starship appeal... But the casino chiefs know a threat when it comes in the form of the in-your-face advertising on billboards out West. The image of Sky Tower as a junk needle causing misery for problem gamblers is as striking as the recent television campaign against drinking and driving. Predictably Sky City turned to its lawyers to blunt the attacks... because the man behind the[billboard] campaign... is rapidly assuming the mantle of a superhero... He also is a lawyer and intends fighting writ with writ, rejecting Sky City's application to[protect] the mighty tower under the Trade Marks Act.

...A group of ketchup aficionados turned their noses up when handed a bottle of Heinz Ketchup to pour on their chips at the Sky Tower's revolving restaurant... They detected plain old tomato sauce, not authentic ketchup. A disagreement ensued between the restaurant manager and the diners, lawyers were consulted and grievances aired. Subsequent inquiries revealed that a staff member mistakenly poured ordinary tomato sauce into the ketchup bottles. The storm in a ketchup bottle on Monday resulted in a visit to the restaurant yesterday from Heinz-Wattie's food service business manager... He said ketchup was made to a specific recipe and was spicier, thicker and darker than plain tomato sauce... The restaurant has agreed to reimburse the diners for their meal. Its manager... said the matter had been an oversight, not an attempt to mislead.

...[a group of Aucklanders who were trapped in a Sky Tower lift for an hour and 40 minutes are furious that the only contact they had in the first 75 minutes was a recorded message telling them that help was on the way. 14 of the 18-member group were given a free meal the same night they were trapped. The general manager said it was not possible to guarantee that all elevators would be faultless. The lift problem experienced had never happened before and it took longer than expected for a technician to fix it.]

...An Auckland firefighter eased the tension of a hair-raising rescue from the southern hemisphere's tallest building yesterday by talking about the spectacular view... [He was one of two firefighters who] received a hero's welcome after carrying out their... rescue. They were called into action after two maintenance workers became stuck in a window washing cage[on] Auckland's Sky Tower – 185m above the city. The Engineering Services workers had been outside the observation deck all afternoon carrying out routine maintenance on the computer-driven cage when a malfunction left it stuck about 5pm. It... [was] another three hours before the pair... were back on terra firma. When they finally got down the pair... were whisked away by casino security officers... Initially, the plan was to remove a pane of glass... to reach the men, but it soon became obvious that would not be possible and more extreme measures were required. [The two firefighters], who helped set up the high-angle rescue team about six months ago and who had spent a lot of time training on the tower, decided an abseil rescue would be the best way. From the tower's restaurant level they were able to lean out over safety netting and throw a line to the trapped workers. Then... [one of the rescuers] eased over the edge and dangled precariously before the workers used the line to pull him into the cage. A harness was fitted and the first worker was lowered to the ground, followed about an hour later by... the second... [The firefighter] played down the achievement. "It was just a rescue... six floors or 60 floors – it's just the same thing, isn't it?"

...[Winds gusting to over 200km/h blew roofs off houses, overturned cars and smashed windows as a storm buffeted the central North Island yesterday. The highest winds, at 212km/h, were recorded at Wairarapa Electricity's Hau Nui wind farm. The farm was in no danger of creating an electrical storm as power automatically shuts off when winds reached 120km/h. The highest speed at the site, one of the windiest spots in NZ, was 220km/h, recorded earlier this year. Yesterday's gales closed two highways near Wellington because of slips and flooding. In Dannevirke, firefighters said a glass conservatory "exploded" and they struggled to keep the roof of the Public Trust Building from disappearing. Those fearful of wind causing the country's highest building to topple can rest easy. Sky City Casino said the Sky Tower was designed to withstand winds of between 250-300km/h, and 200km/h winds could be sustained for hours. The only damage would be the loss of cladding'. The tower is also] designed to withstand... an earthquake measuring up to seven on the Richter scale.

...WEEKS of blazing sun in Britain have expanded the metalwork of Blackpool's famous tower and increased its height by an inch. So Auckland's Sky Tower could be higher than its present 328m after summer.

...the 328m Auckland landmark, has become a member of the World Federation of Great Towers. The organisation, which represents 22 towers around the world, includes... the 443m Empire State Building [in New York, which 'annually draws 3.6 million visitors (the world's most popular paying attraction – the Eiffel Tower – drew a record 5.7 million tourists in 1992')]... and... the CN Tower in Toronto – at 553m the world's tallest...

Auckland's Sky Tower may be tall, but Indonesia plans to build a tower in central Jakarta to dwarf it at a cost of \$US560 million. At 558m, the... [tower] will be the world's highest, higher than the... Moscow tower at 553.5m. The structure[... which]... would be 70[%] funded by foreign loans... will house restaurants, television stations and telecommunications operations below a 148m mast. But what is interesting about this tower is that it... will be a monument to symbolise the success of [the President's] New Order Government... The tower, designed by the East China Architecture Design Institute, is expected to open in 2001... But one wonders which will be finished first: the... tower or... [the President's] 30-year-old reign.

...The casino is not the only part of Sky City... where visitors come away with more than they brought in. About \$21,000 worth of multilingual audio guides... worth \$300 each... have been stolen from the observation deck of the Sky Tower since it opened... sources say. The infrared guides, about the size of a cellphone, give information on city sites in six languages. The... communications manager for the tower... said the guides were "redundant" away from the main observation deck. Staff said people seemed to be taking the guides as souvenirs.

...[the] Sky Tower was the biggest winner in this year's Tourism Auckland awards with the venue picking up two prizes... It won the Telecom Yellow Pages supreme award and the prize for new project development... [In related news,] Sky City... and... [t]wo churches... will battle against a proposed Hamilton casino after being given party status by the Casino Control Authority. The authority rejected claims by 14 other individuals and groups... Sky City was made a party because of the likely commercial harm to its Auckland casino should the Hamilton venture go ahead.

...Tainui... will take a quarter stake in [Hamilton's] \$46 m... casino... The move, which follows that of Rotorua tribe Ngati Whakaue to apply for a casino license... [in] partnership with a North American Indian company, Dreamcatcher Gaming Group Inc... has appalled[a prominent] Maori activist... She said it would be disastrous... "Our people are gamblers... A casino is only going to harm the Maori race for generations to come."

...[a NZ] First MP... wants to stop more casinos being built, even though his tribal trust board is promoting a 25[%] holding in a casino in Hamilton... "Generation after generation of Maori children have suffered the effects of parental drinking, smoking and drug use. Tomorrow's Maori children will be the victims of addictive gambling parents if casino growth in this country is not stopped."

...*The experiences of indigenous people overseas shows casinos can bring big economic and social benefits...* Like Maori, the Indian nations... in the U[S]... were colonised and their lands and resources taken. Their cultural and economic health has suffered similarly. Their social indicators have been – and many still are today – considerably lower than national and even local or regional averages. However, some Indian nations have succeeded with economic development projects and have turned around not only these social indicator statistics but also their pride and identity as indigenous peoples. Two prime examples are the Oneida Indian Nation (in New York state) and the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe (in Connecticut)... Fifteen years ago both people had little land and little money, were dependent on Government handouts and had low social statistics. The Oneida land base was only 13ha and their sole source of income brought in \$150 a month... The Mashantucket Pequot were, according to law, officially extinct as a tribe and in 1974 were in danger of losing their 87ha tribal reservation on the death of the last tribal member living there. Both nations... have based their economic development strategies on gambling... Both started with a bingo hall then decided to expand and invest in large casinos based on their reservations. (The Mashantucket Pequot had since also gained federal recognition as a tribe.) Both casinos now earn millions of dollars for the two nations – indeed, the Mashantucket Pequot earn an estimated \$US800 million... a year from their Foxwoods casino (not including income from the hotel and other businesses). This success has made both nations completely economically self-sufficient... Both nations have been able to establish self-government structures and facilities; infrastructure, education, health, housing and recreation programmes and facilities; and various social programmes. The Oneida have notably developed programmes to battle alcohol and drug addiction (and, incidentally, run an alcohol-free casino). The Mashantucket Pequot, because of the vast sums of money flowing in, have been able to guarantee every member free education to doctoral level and a salary of \$50,000 to \$60,000 for jobs, including those that do not usually attract such high salaries, such as cleaning. They also pay parents who care for their children at home... Importantly, the successes of both nations have enabled them to rediscover and revitalise their cultures and distinct identities... The surrounding communities have also benefited, with both nations providing valuable employment for the regions... providing taxes to the governments and making various philanthropic donations (totalling millions of dollars). The point of telling stories such as these is not to suggest that gambling provides the only path to salvation. The point is first that indigenous peoples can invest in gambling and both receive the benefits and remedy the disadvantages from it. Secondly, it illustrates that – despite various legal, political and social differences between countries – there is much overseas that is relevant to developments in N[Z].

...International corporations are eyeing N[Z] as a potential gateway for lucrative Internet casinos... Both the Auckland and Christchurch casinos confirmed last night that they had received approaches from overseas operators. So did the Casino Control Authority, which indicated enthusiasm for milking international gambling dollars, subject to finding ways of keeping local computer buffs out of temptation's way... The casino authority's chairman... acknowledged it would be difficult trying to control the activities of N[Z]ers on the Internet... If a feasible way of retaining local control could be found, he believed basing Internet casinos in N[Z] could be a hugely lucrative source of tax dollars... A possible market is... China and other Asian countries, whose gamblers might... perhaps be tempted to visit this country once exposed to casino promotions on the Internet. The Christchurch casino's chief executive... said he... would "certainly be interested" if Internet gambling could fit within N[Z] regulations. Some "second rate" gambling games were available on the Internet, usually based in obscure countries, giving punters little confidence of getting any money back... Internet operators were keen on gaining credibility through the backing of a country such as N[Z], which was seen as free of corruption and having a strong yet uncomplicated regulatory regime.

...Legislation imposing a retrospective moratorium on casino applications progressed yesterday despite concerns that it breaches people's rights. The bill, introduced last week by the Minister of Internal Affairs, blocks new casino licences for three years... [However, the] unpopular plan to build a casino... [in] Hamilton... is a done deal, the Mayor... said yesterday. A council-organised survey showed most Hamilton people did not want the \$30 million casino. Council staff recommended... that the council spend \$40,000 on independent social and economic impact reports but [the Mayor] said there was no point... as it was likely the casino would be built regardless.

...All bets are off on[casino] plans for Hamilton and Wellington, after a Government moratorium on casinos. A bill putting a three-year moratorium on casino licence applications... was passed 56 votes to 49 in a conscience decision in Parliament yesterday... Opposition MPs failed in a bid to allow businesses to recover costs... The hefty costs of seeking casino licences include \$450,000 for a site licence and \$350,000 for an operation licence... The Minister of Internal Affairs... said the costs were "a fact of life. People who invest in the gaming industry are themselves undertaking a bit of a gamble and I don't have a great deal of sympathy with those who think they should be recompensed." ...The Labour Deputy Leader... [noted that] the bill gave a free, three-year licence to existing casinos to print their own money without competition.

...Disgruntled staff of Auckland's... casino are eyeing better pay across the Tasman. Melbourne's new Crown Casino is recruiting in N[Z], offering up to 53[%] higher pay to experienced croupiers. Staff sources inside Sky City... say there is strong interest because of management turmoil, low morale and failure to boost pay rates... A spokesman for the... Service Workers' Union... said many casino staff were promised a pay review after three months, others were told four months. All were told pay would be reviewed after a year. But staff of just one department, the cashiers, were given the earlier review. Their pay went up to \$12.81 an hour. [When t]he company marked its anniversary... again only the cashiers' pay [went]... up, this time between 4 and 6[%]... Other staff were angry at the delay. Their pay rate was flat, regardless of weekend work, overtime or night shifts. Croupiers (dealers) are paid \$12.79 an hour... Crown... will [soon open AUS]'s biggest casino, employing 8000 staff[... and]... is offering between \$18.52 and \$19.66... [T]hey plan to interview applicants here next month... Crown... management in Melbourne yesterday confirmed they had about 60 N[Z] calls so far registering interest... [Sky City already has a problem with] high staff turnover. Within five

months of opening more than 600... staff had quit. The... union... estimates that figure would now be at least 1000, with turnover rates in some departments ranging from 50 to 100[%]. And it is not confined to the wage workers. Three of Sky City's top managers have left or are leaving. They came from the U[S] with the casino operator, Harrah's, which is in partnership with B[IL], the building owner.

...The share price of Auckland casino operator Sky City shot up 25c to close at \$7.20 yesterday following B[IL]'s decision to buy Harrah's... stake in the company. B[IL] said it had agreed to pay \$6.75 a share for all Harrah's 12.5 million shares. The sale, if approved by the Overseas Investment Commission and the Casino Control Authority, will leave B[IL] with a 63[%] holding and see Harrah's walk away with around \$84 million in cash. The deal follows Sky City's decision to buy-out Harrah's management contract for around \$20 million before tax. The Sky City managing director... said the company had decided it no longer wanted to pay Harrah's around \$9.5 million a year after tax in management fees. Under the terms of the contract, Harrah's will continue to oversee the casino complex... until June next year... Harrah's name will be dropped immediately from the casino's title... Harrah's originally agreed to run the Auckland casino for 15 years with the right to renew its contract for a further 10 years. It noted the casino had been a good investment. It originally invested around \$37 million as a 20[%] minority owner. It later sold down its interest to 12.5[%] for around \$30 million. It is understood to have received around \$NZ24 million in management fees and around \$NZ3.6 million in dividends since the casino opened...

Casino stocks are expected to receive a shot in the arm after Harrah's Entertainment's announcement that it will buy rival Showboat in a deal worth \$US1.2 billion... Harrah's said the deal would create the world's largest gambling company... Industry experts say... that more deals were likely... the companies most likely to be on the hunt are the powerhouse players in Las Vegas, such as MGM Grand and Mirage Resorts.

...Mirage Resorts is a year away from opening the most expensive hotel casino in Las Vegas, the \$US1.5 billion... Bellagio[, which also]... promises to be the most luxurious hotel in Las Vegas. Its design, based on an Italian village, includes a man-made lake with over a thousand fountains. Each will shoot water as high as 50m in the air during a "ballet" of synchronised lights and music... [Mirage Resorts began] with the Golden Nugget downtown, and later the Mirage, which opened in 1989, and Treasure Island on the city's famed "strip." ...opening the Mirage was a huge risk for the company because it was deep in debt and operated only two small hotels. Some investors have voiced concern about debt this time, too, because the company will borrow about \$1.6 billion to finish Bellagio and a sister hotel in Mississippi. [□ 'Modern Las Vegas was created when a gangster built the Flamingo Hotel in '46. Sadly, his employers did not let him live to witness the astonishing boom he triggered. Now, 22 million people come here every year and spend \$10 billion in the pursuit of pleasure. 90% of visitors leave as losers. The only reason this capital of polyester decadence is here is because it occurred to someone they could make lots of money, and that's exactly what they did.']

...Everyone who has been to Las Vegas knows the axiom, the bigger the better, is what makes the gambling mecca so successful. Glittering pyramids, circuses and other gimmicks have been constructed to ensure that casinos continue to coin it as people seek an escape to an adult Fantasyland. Such is the model for Melbourne. Crown, as the glitzy palace on the south bank of the Yarra is known, stretches endlessly down the river bank as hectares of gaming halls, restaurants, theatres and boutiques offer hedonistic pleasures to a town otherwise called Bleak City. It was [one man's] dream to bring a bit of Las Vegas down under. The energetic property developer and trilby-hatted racegoer wanted the best, so after outlaying \$A2 billion he has got it. But the big question is, has it cost too much? ...Expectations were that revenues in 1996-97 would come in at around \$850 million and profits at around \$80 million. If only. Revenues were \$200 million short, resulting in earnings of just \$24 million... On top of this came abnormal charges of \$187 million, comprising mostly established cost write-offs which had not been expected... Now the company is sitting on an accumulated loss of \$78 million, which will take at least a year to bring back into the black and will delay the payment of dividends by at least that time... From a peak of \$2.95 in September last year, Crown shares have fallen to the stage last week where they hit a low of just \$1.46. The plunge has wiped more than \$1 billion from the company's market capitalisation, and forced it to forego plans to raise additional equity with which to fund the casino's continued development... [P]lans for a \$25 million lyric theatre... [have just been] scrapped... also put off[is the] development of a second hotel tower block... What has befallen [the dreamer's] baby is a textbook example of how investors expect promises to be delivered upon. Sure, they can become enthused with a vision, but at the end of the day they want to see a return for their bucks. When it comes to buying casino shares, they do not want to gamble... So, Melbourne has the largest and most glamorous casino which money can buy, but the acres of marble and plush-pile carpet are yet to prove their worth for the owners... Crown has succeeded remarkably well in bringing into A[US] plenty of high-rollers from Asia... Whether this can continue is another matter. [Crown's dreamer] says that no impact has been felt from the various currency and stockmarket collapses around the Asian region, so he expects his customers still to come and spend... But he knows that once Crown's novelty wears off it will be harder to keep them returning. In just three month's time Sydney's own['\$970 million'] Star City casino opens the doors on its permanent facility and it will be competing for deep-pocketed gamblers, especially if the state Government grants long-awaited concessions on the high rollers' tax. But [Crown's dreamer] is not being put off. He is pressing into the Chinese market, urging his commission agents to seek out the many who have become fabulously wealthy under... open-market policies and who cannot resist the lure of the roulette wheel.

...RENOWNED for gambling, entertainment and nightlife, Macau was once called the Las Vegas of the East. Now the peninsula and islands of this... 9.6ha colony... have been dubbed the "Chicago of the Orient" by the press, recalling an era when gangsters... ruled [Chicago]... Triads are shooting it out for control of Macau's lucrative gambling business before the territory reverts to Chinese control in 1999... after 442 years as a Portuguese territory... China's growing business influence is one thing. But nothing has residents as worried as the gangland-style murders, bombings and arson attacks rocking the territory's quiet cobblestone streets... "Crime is getting worse by the day... People are scared for their lives," said... a Portuguese banker... Two rival triads, the 14K and the smaller Soi Fong, are competing for turf... [before the] 35-year monopoly over Macau's gambling... [by a] Hong Kong tycoon... ends. Both gangs are desperate... In the battle for supremacy, 16 people... [were] killed in the first six months of this year, compared with 21 in 1996. Macau police, despite help from Chinese law enforcement officials, have had little success curbing the violence... "The triads have made us prisoners in our own country," said... a commodities trader who carries a gun and wears a bulletproof vest. "No one can stop them, not even the Chinese government."

...Currency turmoil in South-east Asia and fears of an economic downturn for the region are harming A[US]'s big casinos as Asia's big gamblers tighten their belts. Two of A[US]'s largest casinos, the Crown... in Melbourne and Burswood... in Perth, both rely on South-east Asia's heaviest gamblers for about half their revenue... Analysts said the profit margin on Asian gamblers was thinner than for domestic customers because of the high commissions paid to agents who entice the high rollers to A[US]. The casinos also refund a percentage of high-rollers' turnover to make betting at their tables more attractive.

...A[US]n casino operator Casinos Austria International cut its first-half loss by 30[%] to \$A1.86 million... It said the outlook for the rest of the year was gloomy. Sales fell 24[%]... after some high-stakes gambling programmes at the Reef Casino were stopped after bankers cut credit to its owners, the Reef Casino Trust. Casinos Austria holds the management contract for the casino... and also owns 13[%] of the units in the trust... [In local news, s]hares in casino operator Sky City Ltd dived 30c to close at 730c yesterday after the company admitted it was unlikely to meet its profit forecast for 1998... While revenue from its gaming operations in the[past] year... was well up on the figures in the listing profile, revenue from its other operations was much lower... [T]he Sky Theatre, in particular, had been a "disaster." It lost \$3.5 million over the year, largely because the expensive shows imported from the U[S] had not caught on... Sky City is now planning to hire out the theatre to local organisations... Meanwhile, the annual report has revealed... Sky City's managing director... was paid \$350,000... However[last]... year's annual report showed he received \$175,000 for the casino's first five months of operation... 17 staff at the casino were on salaries of more than \$100,000 a year compared with

seven... last year. Staff brought from the U[S] by Harrah's are not included in the figures... [In other figures,] punters guzzled more than \$12 million worth of free food, booze and car parking in its first financial year... which equated to 5[%] of revenue... In America, casinos were used to allocating around 10[%] of their revenue to... "complimentaries"... However, N[Z] was less competitive and therefore less was spent [- although 'the Christchurch Casino puts on free buses to bring pensioners from out of town each week.'

... 'Christchurch Casino is a shareholder in the Dunedin Casino, which will go ahead following the Casino Control Authority's decision to grant a licence. Those involved with the project say it will create around 180 jobs and boost tourism to the southern city. "Dunedin lacks things for people out of town in the evenings. It will help the city in that regard," said the project's director. But opponents believe more gambling will only worsen poverty in Dunedin, and the mayor said the casino could potentially take away business going to existing cafes and bars. "I don't think you can say it will be good for the local economy." A \$5 million upgrade of the old Grand Hotel started last week and the casino is due to open in 10 months. Described as a boutique casino, it will be about a third of the size of Christchurch Casino.' By the way, 'after a public meeting with our Foreign Affairs Minister, an occasional punter thought he would stop for a quick punt on the pokies at Sky City Casino. Ten minutes later the Fijian sat back from the machine in a daze, not knowing what to do next - he had just won a little under \$2 million. The "Sky High" jackpot, from 22 linked poker machines, had just reached \$1,995,026, and the Fijian's \$3 investment was enough to get the lot, on only his third push of the button. The general manager of gaming machines at the casino said the jackpot had been building for eight months. And half of eight months' worth of punters' money that has gone into the machines will be going to a very good cause. "I told myself that I would give half of anything I won to charity," the Fijian said. So he is now setting up an education trust that will help students from Fiji come to study in NZ, using the \$1 million share and the interest it earns. The previous record win on the casino's machines was when an Auckland man won \$787,250.'

...a woman] says she "just had a feeling" about a Las Vegas poker machine which, for major prizes, is linked to 746 others. That's why she waited more than an hour to play it. And then she scooped a world record jackpot of \$18.3 million.

...[an AUSn media mogul (r:p605, ln65)]... was reported yesterday to have helped a British gaming group realise a half-year profit by losing... \$25 million... The Times said... A[US]'s richest man and the chief of Singapore City Developments... between them had lost... \$37.5 million... at the group's Crockfords casino. - 1997

[Aussie mogul] wins big and loses big because he can and he's bored... The revelation this week that... A[US]'s richest man... took a \$US20 million... bath in a Las Vegas casino only adds to... [his legend. H]is losses were accumulated in just three days of baccarat at the Bellagio hotel, which had accepted the billionaire at its tables after he was banned by a less fortunate rival. [The AUSn], worth \$A8.2 billion... through his holdings in media, financial services, telecommunications and IT, is one of... [the] "whales," the 200 or so fabulously rich high-rollers courted by casinos around the world with all-expenses-paid visits, multimillion-dollar credit lines and house rebates. But [the AUSn] is in a league almost of his own, reputedly matched only by the Sultan of Brunei and[a] Saudi arms dealer... and is believed to have closed the doors of... Aspinall's club... one of London's most exclusive casinos with a killer winning streak. He has shrugged off the theft of several million dollars worth of bullion from a company safe... and... barely winced when other international high-rollers creamed millions of dollars from his recently acquired Crown Casino in Melbourne... With his wealth growing by \$A1.8 billion last year - equal to his total worth 10 years ago - the discovery this year of a fortune in rubies on his property in the Hunter Valley was just another drop in the bucket. Even so, the marathon card session at the Bellagio was a vast lost, equivalent to 4[%] of combined baccarat earnings of about \$US500 million of all Las Vegas casinos last year. According to... a reporter with the *Las Vegas Review Journal*, [the AUSn]'s usual hit-and-run tactic of playing for several hours and leaving failed badly... The play-win-run attack also collapsed disastrously in London late last year, when [he] reportedly lost £11 million... at Crockford's casino - the biggest single loss in British gambling history. But losses that would cripple a decent-sized company have never fazed [him. His b]iographer... noted: "As one of his executives puts it, he gambles when he's bored and he gambles often because he's often bored." As far back as the late 1960s [he] was one of Sydney's biggest race-bettors, gambling \$A10,000 or so on a single race at the Harold Park trots. His bankers were cautioned in the mid-1970s against extending an overdraft because of \$A360,000 he owed to bookmakers... According to [the biographer, when the mogul] was confronted by an accountant worried by the effect on the company of his gambling losses and furious at the latest losing streak in London, the billionaire replied: "You shouldn't have left me in London over the weekend." [The mogul]'s losses over the years have been enormous, including up to \$A4 million to a single Sydney bookie in 1980-81, \$A7 million on the day of the 1987 Golden Slipper at Rosehill, \$A3 million two days later at Randwick, \$A9 million at the London Ritz later the same year, and \$US20 million at two sessions in Las Vegas in 1987 and 1991. But his wins have also been prodigious. He picked up \$US7 million when he stopped over at the Las Vegas Hilton with his polo team in 1991, won \$US10 million after catching a... concert in the Nevada gambling capital in 1995, and collected more than \$A3 million [- 'the single biggest betting plunge in AUSn racing history' - Jon Might and Power in the 1997 Melbourne Cup... And in 1995, he won a record \$US20 million at the Las Vegas MGM Grand's Monte Carlo casino by playing baccarat above house limits, betting more than \$US260,000 a hand on six hands at once... [A f]ormer MGM chairman... flew to England to tell [the AUSn] the casino wanted to reassess the terms on which he gambled there - a polite way of saying he was no longer welcome at MGM or associated casinos. One Las Vegas casino boss told the *Los Angeles Times*: "If you let him dictate the terms you're gambling like any other sucker, but for millions invested by your stockholders against a billionaire's pocket money." However, [the AUSn] has remained larger than life, handing croupiers tips of \$US25,000 in chips after winning streaks, and once cleared a waitress' mortgage with a tip of \$US125,000. In a much-retold anecdote, [he] was once accosted by a Texan oilman boasting of his wealth. "Are you really worth \$US150 million?" he asked. "Tell you what, I'll toss you for it."

...[the AUSn media mogul... [has blown] more than \$NZ70 million in Las Vegas... The... *Las Vegas Review Journal* and a British tabloid... said the 63-year-old had passed... time playing baccarat at \$US150,000... a hand at the Bellagio Casino... A[US]'s richest man[then] reportedly enraged the Bellagio dealers when he refused to tip them as a protest at leaks to the media over his previous losses at the gaming tables. The usually generous billionaire once tipped a Vegas casino cigarette girl \$US75,000... [H]is high-rolling is well documented. He once lost \$NZ40.1 million playing blackjack at the exclusive London casino Crockford's, almost wiping out an earlier \$NZ47.7 million win at the MGM Grand Casino in Vegas... [In local news, n]ew \$2 coins are being rejected by thousands of electronic gaming machines, vending machines, video games and parking meters. Coins in a new batch of three million... are slightly different from the old ones made seven... years ago. Many machines do not recognise them and will have to be modified. The Reserve Bank said yesterday that it would not consider withdrawing the South African-made coins. One million are in circulation and the rest are waiting to go out. The batch is the first since 1990... when the bank had 40 million each of \$2 and \$1 coins made by the Royal Mint in Britain... [T]he South African Mint had been chosen because it tendered the best price for the job - about 9c a coin... The manager of policy and supply in the bank's currency department... was not sure why machines were rejecting them... [He] acknowledged slight differences in the new coins but said they met specifications for weight, size and metal content[while adding that]... one noticeable variation might be a slightly thinner rim... The Auckland [casino]... had notified the bank of problems when the new coins went into circulation... [in] December... A casino spokeswoman... said more than 1000 slot machines were having to be adjusted - a job expected to take until the end of the month... [I]t could cost up to \$60 per machine to programme them to accept the new coins.

...Businesses want compensation from the Reserve Bank for expensive modifications to coin machines that reject a new batch of \$2 coins... The coins were rushed into circulation to cater for increased demand when the Auckland [casino]... changed its gaming machines to take \$2 coins only...

The Reserve Bank will decide next week whether to request a re-minting of [the] three million \$2 coins... [Incidentally, a] 7-year-old Rotorua boy who tried to steal a can of Coca-Cola from a soft-drink machine had to be freed by firefighters. The boy's arm became stuck at Rotorua Hospital Accident and Emergency, and staff tried for about 40 minutes to release him... Although the boy was not injured, his pride certainly was... [Hospital] staff tried to boost the boy's flagging spirits when he was released: they gave him a can of Coke – free.

...Hugh Wright announced its closure last week after 98 years of business. It had 19 stores nationwide... Its Queen St store was the largest menswear store in the country... Its closure has been put down to changing consumer tastes and the average male's increasingly sophisticated dress sense... West Auckland shoppers are among those surprised by the sudden closure... [– t]he company had a store at Henderson... [– b]ut few people are as shocked as [a] 101-year-old... tailor... who worked for the... “fashion Mecca” for the discerning... when she was 18... until she married at 27.

...“Oh my god, that's me!” exclaims... a 27-year-old retail worker and solo mum... [while] reading about our newest social class: the could-not-care-less “Young Pleasure Seekers.” The group is young, spends money it does not have, loves to... eat fast food – and makes up 13.5[% of NZ]ers. It could include anyone at Santos on Ponsonby Rd, a cafe popular with 20-something, casual creative types with a lot of down time to drink coffee and read specialist magazines like *Chick* (surfing for girls). “I spend money before I ever get it. I live in a very unrealistic world financially. I like nice things and I just have to have them,” says [the 27-year-old]... Her friend... backs up research by Otago University academics in their new “Consumer Lifestyle Study,” which says that these young cynical hedonists reject public transport. “I'm in love with my car,” says the 28-year-old nanny-cum-writer-cum-mother who would not dream of catching a bus... One characteristic that comes through strongly among Young Pleasure Seekers is reckless shopping habits, more often using credit, on new products and trendy labels. [Some parents could be encouraging the development of such a characteristic.]Take... a 16-year-old Sacred Hearts Girls' college pupil... who... has two cellphones, which cost about \$200 a month. Yesterday she bought a purple faceplate for \$35 on a shopping spree... in Henderson. She also spent \$25 on make-up, \$29.95 on a swede belt and \$40 on a pair of purple pants – all financed by her parents. Her friend... aged 15, bought a \$20 pre-paid phone card to top up her cellphone, which, [less than four months into] this year, has cost \$400. She also bought a new pair of jeans for \$70 and a \$30 top. [The girls] and three other Sacred Heart six formers agree they fit the characteristics [that identify them as potential] Young Pleasure Seekers. They come from households with more than one television set, do not use public transport, spend little time with their families, and do not take an interest in social issues. Their lives revolve around... text messaging, magazines, music, parties... cheap alcohol... make-up... and clothes...

This average life of supposed suburban bliss seems to be costing a packet. What's more, the latest... Statistics N[Z]... Household Economic Survey has just officially reconfirmed the only way to pay for [the] thoroughly normal family lifestyle is for both parents to work, preferably full-time. [The 'average total net weekly spend (including rent or mortgage) for a young-single person is \$478 (including \$56 for food); older-single – \$343 (\$52); young-couple – \$921 (\$120); older-couple – \$608 (\$105); sole parent with children – \$510 (\$84); couple with 1-2 children – \$864 (\$150); with 3+ children – \$920 (\$174)'. Interestingly, 'NZers spend only 1% of their household budget on furniture, whereas Europeans spend 8%'.]For the insights which it offers into the way we live, the survey is even capable of stoking the war between the sexes. For example, it proves conclusively that... women spend more on clothes than men – almost twice as much... For the record, the average household spends \$4.10 a week on mens' clothes, and \$8.10 on womens' clothes. [Editor's note: During the '1993-94 financial year, the total expenditure by households in NZ was \$48.387 billion – of which \$2.364b was spent on clothing and footwear' (when it comes to clothing, 'the British annually spend twice as much as AUSns, and Americans spend \$US9b on lingerie' alone!]

...*Shop till you drop* Retail therapy is a major stress release for the modern man and woman... Shopping is now a favourite pastime for many N[Z]ers and – since 'Saturday retail trading was legalised in 1980', followed by Sunday ('1990') – it's popularity continues to grow... [T]he sun always shines when you're shopping. But a recent British study suggests that... binge shopping may make you feel worse... “For significant numbers, dissatisfaction is now part of the shopping process,” says [one of the] analysts... that... carried out the Britain-wide study. “It's adding to the dissatisfaction that caused many people to go shopping in the first place. Shopping is offering a short-term buzz, but as a society we now recognise that and we're getting fed up with short-term emotions.” And N[Z] shrinks agree... Experts estimate about 38,000 Kiwis are compulsive shoppers.

...many [readers will know the feeling: shopping can be a nightmare... As the pressure to buy mounts, with increased consumer choice and intensive advertising, more and more people are finding the purchasing drug overpowering. One compulsive shopper describes it as “better than sex, because it lasts longer and you can take it home with you.” It is estimated that 750,000 people – 90[%] of them women – in the UK suffer an addiction to shopping. Their spending spirals out of control and many take drastic efforts to curb the compulsion. The shopaholics aren't necessarily big spenders. Shoplifting is a huge problem and there is a constant war between security staff and the light-fingered ones.

...*SCREEN stealers!* ...Celebrities are often given huge discounts at stores but for some it's not enough... [They] opt... for a... bargain at a walk away price... Just days after [an actress] was convicted of using a five-finger discount at Saks Fifth Avenue, court transcripts revealed the actress was suspected of stealing from two other ritzy stores. Even old stories have re-emerged of [her] cleaning out posh hotel rooms, packing every towel, robe, soap and ashtray into her suitcase... Of course [she']s not alone, there are many stars who have sticky fingers... ■ It's ironic – celebs have money to burn but still get huge discounts at their favourite stores. Meanwhile, the rest of us earn peanuts and usually end up paying full price.

...*Watch out, shoppers, Britain is the capital of fake*... Controls in Britain are so weak that it has become Europe's centre of counterfeiting, with a thriving black market in clothes, sneakers... and cosmetics... The Anti-Counterfeiting Group in Britain estimates the trade is costing legitimate European manufacturers, brand-owners and taxmen as much as \$200 billion a year, \$26 billion of that in Britain. By contrast, it is an offence even to possess fake goods in France, reflecting the value of haute couture to the French economy... The world's most powerful industrial nations, the G8, have convened a team, based in the US Department of Justice, to research the scope of counterfeiting. It is called the Senior Experts Group of Transitional Organised Crime – a clear indication of the kind of gangs the G8 thinks it is dealing with. Comparisons are being made with the international fight against drug barons. “Privately, every law-enforcement agency will admit it believes there are a number of Mr Bigs,” says... the Anti-Counterfeiting Group. “But it is as difficult to prove that in court as it was to prove Al Capone was a Mafia godfather.” ...British... [o]fficials say the counterfeiters are so well organised they are generally a step ahead of the law. “The question is, are we fighting ‘organised crime’ or just crime well organised,” says... [the] British representative of the European anti-counterfeiting group React... Britain introduced laws to seize proceeds of crime three years ago but they have been used only once in a trademark case. Enforcement of trademarks rests mostly with trading standards officers. This was sensible when the crooks were small-time chancers, but local government officials are unlikely to scare a criminal who smuggles fake designer gear as a lucrative and low-risk equivalent to drugs-running... The problem facing Britain was underscored by the break-up of a huge criminal gang last month in Liverpool. Its members imported up to 1.5 million fake perfume bottles from Croatia and Slovenia. They were filled with essence from Germany and labelled as brands by Chanel, Armani, Dior and Estee Lauder, to be sold at \$40 rather than \$100 to \$140 for the real thing.

Selling counterfeit goods under – or even over – the price of originals is against the law, but it isn't illegal for individuals and companies who own brands or patents to charge whatever they want (assuming the prices they decide upon are correctly entered into their computer systems)!

...I love this land, where I have the freedom to say and to think and to charge whatever I want.

Producers and merchants (be they wholesalers or retailers) may have a legal right to *charge whatever they want*, but whether anyone will pay their price is another matter. Most sellers have to compete for customers because they are offering identical products to other sellers. One method of gaining customers is to offer the lowest price. However, instead of using pricing to attract customers – or the traditional alternative of attempting to provide customers with the best service – companies are increasingly resorting to gimmicks and incentives such as: offering a specified free or discounted product with each purchase, or purchases over a certain value; entering into a prize draw everyone who purchases during a stated period of days; refunding in full the price of any product purchased on an unspecified day during the month; giving customers credits for purchases made over a period of time that can be redeemed in-store or at other retail outlets (e.g., ‘receive a credit of \$20.00 when your purchases of \$200.00 have been recorded on this card’; *Fly Buys*).

Now you can fly through your shopping... Become a Fly Buys member today and become part of N[Z]’s most exciting customer loyalty program... You’ll find hundreds of places throughout N[Z] where you can collect Fly Buys points. [Participating companies predominantly offer ‘1 point for every \$20 spent with them (for every \$15, or every \$25’, being other common deals).] **Because Fly Buys companies are some of N[Z]’s largest companies, you’re probably a customer of many of them already... In the future we hope to announce other companies joining Fly Buys, giving you even more opportunities... The sooner you join, the sooner you’ll start collecting points... Imagine how excited you’ll feel when you check in for your first free flight... Call the Fly Buys Service Centre for everything you’d like to know about Fly Buys. How many points do you need to fly between the North and South Islands or to enjoy a relaxing hotel getaway? ...Note: Your Fly Buys points have a life of three years from the time you collect each of them. After that they will be removed from your points table progressively at the end of each month. - 1996**

To celebrate its first year... Fly Buys... offered double points for all September, a promotion which inspired a burst of consumer spending... Soon after the scheme started *Consumer* magazine ran an article cautioning people against making purchases on the basis of points not price. They feared people would be lured to pay more for purchases thus losing the discount benefit of the points... [The] chief executive of Conventions and Incentives N[Z] echoes concerns of the]... Consumers Institute... After a highly successful introduction he says his information, which he adds is purely anecdotal, is that “there’s a little bit of disillusionment.” ...So far almost a million N[Z]ers have Fly Buy[s] cards, with 450,000 households tied into the programme. That’s 37[%] of all households in the country. Each week between 1500 and 2000 people join the scheme. But of those 450,000 households, only 58,000 have enough points to get a reward... [The] top third of householder members... use the card regularly[and] the nation’s top Fly Buys earner has more than 11,000 points. Of the remaining 300,000... [households,] half use their card when they remember but have not changed their buying habits significantly and the other half have either forgotten they have a card or given up altogether. At least 110,000 householders have less than 100 points. So one year on has Fly Buys been a fizzer or a winner? According to the general manager of the company which manages the programme, it depends who you are talking to... He says the scheme’s only critics are those not involved... Fly Buys was the brainchild of four companies – Foodstuffs, the Bank of New Zealand, State Insurance and Shell... The scheme was modelled on the A[US]n version, also called Fly Buys, which was launched in 1994... [I]nitially the A[US]n programme received a lot of bad publicity. Some of this was later proved to come from a company which was not in the programme... And by comparison with its A[US]n cousin, NZ]’s Fly Buys has been hugely successful. After its first year only 1500 people in A[US] had redeemed points for rewards... After three years of operation the A[US]n Fly Buys has... taken off and now gets more than 3000 redemptions a day... At the end of [the] first year, 3300 N[Z]ers had made claims. Most schemes depend on the majority of] participants] never claiming their free air-miles. In the U[S about 80%] of air-miles have yet to be redeemed... N[Z]ers have a relatively high redemption rate with only 70[%] of air-miles going astray.

...There was a time when you would hear the word “incentive” used only in the context of sales people, who needed the encouragement to meet targets. Everyone else, however, simply did “a fair day’s work for a fair day’s salary.” With competition as tough as it is nowadays, that maxim could well see you go bankrupt. The whole sales process has become so complex that everyone down the chain needs to be motivated[, which means]... “more companies than ever[are] redirecting their marketing and human resources budgets towards incentive programmes.” ...Several companies specialising in this area have sprung up in N[Z], with most of them providing some sort of travel incentive... The Fly Buy promotion is a well-known incentive involving consumers but manufacturers are also running aggressive schemes aimed at distributors.

...THE B[NZ] has made travel and rampant consumerism more attractive to its top credit card holders. Air N[Z] has joined forces with the Bank... to offer frequent flyer points to BNZ Visa Gold and MasterCard Gold holders... [-] about 60,000 people... [or] half the Visa Gold and MasterCard Gold market in N[Z] (‘100 points = \$1 travel’). Incidentally, ‘the amount of Fly Buys points required to qualify for free air travel will be increased at the end of the year, causing some shoppers to wonder if they’ll ever get free air tickets’.]

...IF THE 18th century was the Age of Enlightenment, then the 20th century will have to be the Age of Consumption. On all sides we are exhorted to buy, to choose from an imagination-numbing array of products and services. The cityscape is disfigured by signs, billboards and hoardings, competing with each other in size and garishness. Big bold red signs vie to out-Warehouse the Warehouse. Browse on the Internet and unwanted exhortations to buy sunglasses cruise across the top of the computer screen... Pick up a magazine or newspaper and an avalanche of leaflets, flyers and brochures disgorge at your feet... At home, the letterbox is packed with similar material... Settle comfortably into a chair at the end of the working day and a phone call will drag you up to take part in a fake contest aimed at selling you a timeshare...

[‘Shopping is the number one leisure activity in the country and there’s no reason for one in five NZers to miss out. More than 636,000 NZers are limited in their daily activities because of the long-term effects of disability. Now shopping will be a much easier experience at Lynnmall with the opening of its Shop Mobility service, a free customer service which provides powered scooters and wheelchairs, a special reception room and car parks. “We would like Lynnmall to be accessible for everyone to enjoy our new facilities and friendly environment,” says the mall’s marketing manager. The other big shopping mall in the west, West City, provides free wheelchairs for disabled customers but is yet to rise to Lynnmall’s challenge with a room for disabled customers.’]

...In response to increased competition due to the ‘\$40-million-dollar’ expansion of Lynnmall and the opening of Westgate, West City has announced its own multi-million-dollar expansion. However, t]he future of the \$400 million Quay Park Mall on the Auckland waterfront may be in doubt now that A[US]n mega-retailer David Jones has pulled out of the project... The planned Auckland store would have been its first overseas operation and the linchpin for the mall... The upmarket department store chain yesterday cited difficult trading conditions in A[US] as the reason for the move... The company said it was still interested in N[Z], but its immediate priority was to improve the performance of its existing stores... [Several] retailers... said they would be surprised if the mall went ahead without David Jones... The Quay Park Mall has been promoted as N[Z]’s largest shopping centre – nearly double the size of St Lukes Mall... [at] 60,000 sq m... There were to be three other major tenants and 175 specialty shops... A spokesman for the Retail Merchants Association... said he believed Auckland already had more than enough shops for its population[– with ‘over 1000 shops’ in the Downtown area alone]... One prominent Queen St retailer agreed... “Quite frankly I think there’s going to be a sigh of relief from a lot of retailers in the traditional part of Queen St.” ...he expected the decision would provide a boost to the Britomart project, as it was likely to compete with Quay Park.

...Orewa and Whangaparaoa business people and property owners are set to fight a proposed new commercial centre on their doorstep... The 6ha centre, including a supermarket, is part of [a] growth area for 9000 people planned for 400ha of farmland just north of the existing Silverdale shops... A council report says a new business centre providing 20,000 sq m of space... is needed... to cater for the expected population by 2005...

However, the retailers' group Mainstreet Orewa, Business Whangaparaoa Inc and the Orewa Ratepayers and Residents Association say a new centre is unnecessary. The Mainstreet Orewa chairman... says the Orewa and Whangaparaoa shopping centres have yet to reach half their potential... [T]he last thing the Hibiscus Coast community needs is a new retail complex which would starve traditional shopping centres.

...Store owners are resorting to science to help relieve us of our money... The \$2.6 million fit-out of Farmers St Lukes has lifted it into another dimension... Cluttered departments, jam-packed with stock, have gone. Broad cream avenues now flow around the shop. Instead of departments, the store is divided into a series of "worlds" – Womensworld, Mensworld, Childrensworld, Accessoryworld... Retailers are amazingly keen to spend big money making things easy and convenient for their increasingly fickle, and sometimes irascible, customers... An experienced band of retailers from across the Tasman is also forcing N[Z] retailers to smarten their act. Mall landlords are demanding it, too. If their tenants start looking tired and drab shoppers go elsewhere. Landlords insist on shop refits every five years – when leases come up for renewal. And that's an expensive exercise. "We wouldn't get many fit-outs for less than \$70,000..." says... an award-winning... retail... designer... "The average fit-out would cost up to \$200,000..." [That figure is chicken-feed compared to overseas ('Selfridges, one of London's most prestigious department stores, recently underwent a \$99 million upgrade').] One of the first chores for a retail design consultant is determining who a shop's customers are. Their socio-economic group... age, sex and marital status. Some facts never change. For instance, 80[%] of shoppers are women... Today's shoppers are always in a hurry. They know what they want and where to get it... "because they are more sophisticated. They know more. They've experienced more. They've seen it all on telly and trips overseas." ...They are frequently destination shoppers. And to get their attention, merchandise must be very inviting and strategically placed... Some retailers turn themselves inside out trying to provide a visual spectacle for shoppers. "The wow factor... will become more and more common." In America, where['two-thirds of the economy is a consumer economy' and] too many shops have wooed shoppers for far too long, a new kind of scientist has been invented to scrutinise shopping behaviour. Retail anthropologists complete with clipboards and video cameras trail around shops carrying out detailed investigations of shoppers' movements and body language. These boffins have reached a number of interesting conclusions. A shop entrance, for instance, is like a decompression zone. Here shoppers slow down, adjust to the lighting and refocus their eyes. The decompression zone lasts for 5 to 15 paces. Retailers should never put anything of value in this zone – because no one is going to see it... The scientists also observed that shoppers like touching, petting and fondling clothes before buying them. For this reason, some stores now place their merchandise on tables – making it easier for shoppers to go through this very necessary pre-purchase routine... [However, women] shoppers evidently bolt from the shop if their backsides are inadvertently touched while they examine the merchandise [because of crowded] aisles and insufficient space around displays... Another phenomenon is the tendency for American shoppers to turn right when they enter a shop. Some say this is because most people are right handed. Other consultants are not so sure about it. [One] believes that Kiwi shoppers actually turn left, because we drive on the left side of the road... The trick for many retailers these days is to persuade shoppers to buy more than they bargained for. Get them buying add-ons... Destination shopping items are often put at the back of a shop, forcing shoppers to pass through the entire retail space... One thing is sure. Retail designers now recognise that shoppers won't buy unless conditions are absolutely perfect... "The more comfortable and easy it is to shop the more likely they are to spend money." ...Shoppers have retailers exactly where they want them – falling over themselves to cater to every whim.

...Increased rentals from a clutch of prime shopping malls have helped boost the bottom-line profit of mall owner St Lukes Group to a record \$31.1 million for the year... The company, which either owns or part owns 10 regional shopping malls, has increased its income from the centres by 13[%]... despite only slight increases in turnover at most of the centres... A[US]'s Westfield Holdings took over commercial management of the St Lukes property portfolio earlier this year. Westfield is known as an aggressive operator in the A[US]n market and was widely predicted to crank up rents. St Lukes' new chief executive... defended the rent increases yesterday, saying many tenants had benefited from higher sales over the past few years, but had not paid corresponding rents. On average, rentals had increased by less than 10[%], he said... Increased borrowing has pushed its debt up to \$250 million (33[%] of total assets), and... it has announced plans to raise further equity through a rights issue. Existing shareholders are being offered one share and two convertible notes for every 18 shares and/or notes held... The issue is expected to raise about \$90 million and will be used to repay debt, as well as further development. The company is remaining coy about its development plans. However, it has confirmed it expects to begin redeveloping the Glenfield Mall in Auckland sometime next year. Its original plans for a \$90 million redevelopment are understood to have been scaled back by Westfield... Its attempts to sell the Downtown Shopping Centre were unsuccessful and it has since been taken off the market... [T]he company intended to keep the centre until the future of the Britomart development became clear.

...Shopping mall owner St Lukes Group is poised to sell the Downtown Shopping Centre in central Auckland... St Lukes has been trying to sell the centre for some time. Earlier this year, it said it was taking the leasehold property off the market... However, it recently bought the land from the Auckland City Council to make a potential deal more attractive. The 25-year-old centre includes 69 specialty shops and was most recently valued at \$37 million... [I]t is expected that... the sale proceeds... will help pay for redevelopment of its Glenfield mall on the Auckland North Shore... A potential buyer was now undertaking due diligence and the contract was expected to become unconditional within the next few weeks...

['This week Westfield successfully swallowed one of NZ's top-40 companies, shopping mall owner St Lukes Group, even though small shareholders made clear their disapproval. The move sees St Lukes wiped off the stock exchange and ownership of 11 prime shopping malls move across the Tasman in a \$570 million deal that creates the single largest AUSn property company, while Westfield Holdings, which manages Westfield Trust, is the world's fourth-largest retail-mall manager and developer. Controlled by a Hungarian Holocaust survivor and his three sons, Westfield is an immigrant's success story. The survivor, who has become one of the 200 richest men in the world, emigrated from Hungary to Israel in 1946, fleeing the Nazis and his home town of Filakovo. In 1952, he left Israel for AUS, where he joined another Hungarian Jewish Holocaust survivor. They formed Westfield – "west" a reference to Sydney's western suburbs where they started their development business, "field" reflecting that they were turning paddocks into residential subdivisions.'

...NZ] shopping malls will need to become much larger before retail rents begin to fall, according to the man being blamed... for pushing them up. [He is the] executive director of Westfield NZ Ltd... Complaints from retailers about rent were not new, but they have been brought into focus by the retail environment. Overall growth in retail sales was low and competition intense, putting pressure on profit margins... This placed retailers under particular pressure to control costs, and rent was one of their most significant. However when it came to shopping malls, the environment was, to put it bluntly, a land-lord's market. Shopping malls in this country have followed overseas trends and were capturing an increasing share of the household shopping budget, to the detriment of main street strips... To maximise profits, retailers had to get the maximum sales volumes per square metre of floor space, which meant concentrating activities in one location with high foot traffic, rather than spreading it around several stores with fewer customers... Mainstream retailers had to follow their customers, which meant they either took space in the big malls, or died. So much so, that demand for space now exceeded supply, even though many of the successful malls had undergone substantial expansions in recent years. And as in any business, when demand exceeded supply, the price goes up... [By the way,] Cornerstone Group... plan[s] to build a new style of storage unit... [T]he company's... director... said an extension from pure storage was the provision of packaging, including document storage boxes... The need for external storage seem[s] fairly universal. When [the director] looked at developing in this area, his accountant told him he had a whole room of documents waiting to be moved out of a high-rent office. "We've got stuff in our office that should go into storage after one year," [the director] said of the company's own premises... The company plans to install 500 boxes at first, rising to 1000... Self-storage units have

mushroomed alongside major traffic arterials, but [the director] said Cornerstone's plans for a "stage two" design increased security and put the units fully under cover.

...Stage two of National Trading Co's Botany Downs land goes on the market today, targeted at buyers willing to develop a 100,000 sq m regional shopping centre. It would dwarf the nearby Manukau City Centre and St Lukes, the country's largest shopping centres, which are both about 35,000 sq m. National Trading's property manager... said the development on 17.5ha could be worth \$700 million on completion... "Botany Downs will... impact... over a wide area. There are a number of centres of about 20,000 sq m which will have to expand or become a different type of centre..." ...Smaller centres, with up to 30 shops, would remain as local convenience centres. But centres with 30 to 45 shops were harder to get the right retail mix in, "too big for one of each and too small to be a comparative centre." ...Botany Downs... was a greenfields location in 1992, when National Trading... [-] the property-owning arm of Foodstuffs Auckland... [-] started the 17,000 sq m first stage... That stage contains a Pak 'N Save supermarket – largest in the chain at 6500 sq m until completion of its 8000 sq m store at Albany next year – ...The Warehouse... and... [a] Farmers Home Centre... The site is a key location, in the heart of a fast-growing south and east Auckland area... 540,000 people were within 20 minutes' drive... and access was improving. Botany Rd, parallel to East Tamaki Drive, is being developed into a major arterial road linking to Cavendish Drive in Manukau City... and space will be allowed for light rail... Manukau City Council land across the road from National Trading's has been zoned for bulk retail and will be linked to it... The city council has intensive housing planned for an adjoining area... and part of the National Trading land will be used for intensive housing later... 60,000 more people would be living in the slim East Tamaki corridor within 15 years.

...[Botany was put to the test this week. Getting half a month's rainfall in one afternoon might have created chaos across the city, but all was fine at the new centre in East Tamaki. "Not one leak," boasted Botany Town Centre's retail manager "even if the people at Westfield were hoping it was going to happen on opening day." She was referring to the rivalry between two AUSn financial giants who are slugging it out on the retail front here. Although they are competing for our shopping dollar, Westfield and AMP Henderson Global Investors – which also owns Lynnmall – agree on one key element: build to the max. For example, Botany's new Farmers store is 1 1/2 times the size of Eden Park. Rival Westfield has \$1 billion earmarked for the expansion of its 11 malls in NZ, as well as plans to build its 12th in Newmarket'...

'TWELVE cinemas, two supermarkets, 3000 carparks, 260 shops and eight bulk retailers in a building which will span the North Island main trunk railway line: that's the plan for Newmarket. At a whopping 65,000 sq m, the mega-mall will be twice the size of St Lukes Shopping Centre, the successful mall in Mt Albert that pulls in a customer count of more than eight million annually. At \$300 million, the building project in Newmarket will be the second-largest construction contract in NZ, and the single largest overseas commitment by a multinational corporate to NZ, according to Westfield's boss here. Construction is not due to start until 2002, when Westfield says a 3000-strong workforce will be employed on the site. A similar number of fulltime and part-time retail workers will be needed for the mall, which is so big that it will run from near the corner of Broadway and Remuera Rd up to the boundaries of the Southern Motorway.'

...DRIVING along the Southern Motorway, a spectacular view flashes past of a glittering harbour: depending on the direction you're heading, it's either hello or goodbye to Auckland. Even on a dull day the sight is breathtaking, with Rangitoto's perfect cone the focal point of the view, which includes Hobson Bay, Orakei and the Waitemata. But you can say goodbye to parts of that view if Westfield is allowed to build its mega-mall. The Auckland City Council recognises the importance of the panorama, protecting it in the Auckland City Operative Isthmus District Plan. And Westfield itself acknowledges that its mall will block the frame. Westfield is offering the council a carrot, however. In its planning application to the council, Westfield says: "The visual effects are unlikely to be adverse as long as sufficient attention to the architectural style and streetscape edge of the proposed development is made." Westfield wants to build an 11-level mall on a 4.3ha site. The mall breaks the height rules by 4.6m at the southern end. It will shade much of Broadway, casting a 9 am winter shadow over both sides of the strip and even up as far as Mortimer Pass, according to the shading assessment. The \$450 million mall will rank as the largest single construction job in NZ. Westfield, it should be noted, has not yet got planning permission for the mall. It has only applied for a private plan change, which the Auckland City Council is still considering. The public will have a right to have their say on the development when the council processes Westfield's application. Obscured views from the Newmarket Viaduct and shading are only two of many drawbacks the council will have to take into account. Traffic problems, increased noise levels and the impact on established Newmarket businesses are all issues that the council has to consider.'

...Westfield 'has gone back to the drawing board after a public outcry against the original 11-level, \$450 million mega-mall design', 'the scope of which put most other shopping centres off the radar'...

Its owners call it the eighth wonder of the world, the most comprehensive indoor recreation complex on earth, the world's only self-contained indoor city – "the mall with it all". There is the... world's biggest indoor amusement park, the world's largest water park, a controversial dolphinarium, an ice rink... what the mall claims is the world's only indoor bungee jump... a casino and bingo hall that give profits to charity... a non-miniature, miniature golf course, 110 restaurants, a chapel and four submarines (the Canadian Navy has only three) to accommodate visitors who want to dive in the... world's largest indoor lake... [or just escape the latest snow storm ('Montreal has some underground shopping centres so its businesses aren't shut down by blizzards' – the 'city has 30km of underground shops, soon to be 35km').] Shops? I nearly forgot them... There are more than 800... The entire enterprise flourishes beneath one roof. Patrons can luxuriate in a constant temperature of 22°C even when it is minus 4... outside... [F]atigue is a major hazard in a place like this.

...If you don't want to shop until you drop, hi-tech retailing is for you... THE big British grocery retailer Tesco is testing a database that knows when its customers like to shop, what's on the list and how much they are likely to spend. It also knows that three-quarters of a store's total profits comes from its top 10% of customers. Data mining – intensive analysis of statistics – is being combined with micro-marketing – targeting small groups of consumers – to cause big changes in the way we spend. In another development, the giant US retailer Wal-Mart now mails out to customers personalised weekly shopping lists with prices, together with a list of little temptations for their tastes, budget and stage of life... [The] head of computer studies at University College London said that in about six months customers would be able to arrive at supermarkets, pick up a barcode reader and wander about the shop clicking on to whatever they wanted to buy... "A member of staff will... use it to deliver the goods from the warehouse, while the customers go off for a coffee or to have their hair done,"... His most impressive news was on the subject of scanners... A customer who stands partially clothed in a small room for about 10 seconds, can have his or her physical stature mapped... with a prototype of a 3D body scanner['which measures 300,000 points all over your body with perfect precision']... The real impact[of this 'virtual changing room'] will be seen within a few years, when we are sitting at home armed with a television remote control device, flicking through the latest catalogue of offerings from a retailer. Fancy that outfit for yourself? A click of the button, and there you are, on the television screen, wearing it. Like to see it in another colour? Click. Just got to have it? Another click to call up the Internet banking connection, and you have bought and paid for it, and a courier will deliver it tomorrow... Then there are the home appliances that might be playing up. "One manufacturer – Whirlpool – already is building them with an Internet connection, so if anything goes wrong, you don't call a repairman. You plug the washing machine into the Internet connection, so the retailers can do a diagnosis from a distance." ...Tying together a personal electronic organiser and a video camera would provide almost endless possibilities. Imagine being at an airport lounge somewhere and considering a duty-free purchase of jewellery for a loved one. Jewellery is highly personal and usually a difficult sell if the intended wearer is not on hand to help make the selection. No problem. Call home on the Internet, display the jewellery on the monitor and ask the recipient which piece she likes.

...Not only are people... on the Net, many of them are already buying online. According to a recent *Business Week* poll, 42[%] of people 65-plus in the U[S] who have Internet access have bought something online, followed closely by 39[%] among people 50 to 64... It is not surprising that older folks are taking to information age technology. After all, this generation has adapted to more changes in technology than any in history. The launch of a new technology which will make it much simpler to use the Web promises to attract even more... people to the Internet. In the coming months, consumer-electronics heavyweights such as Philips Magnavox, Sega and Sony will spend millions promoting their new, inexpensive TV Web set-top box products. These are expected to bring the Web to millions of consumers, moving the Internet revolution out of its infancy. The set-top box makes the Net easier to access... The consumer is never exposed to the complexity associated with a personal computer; there is no installation process, no file systems to worry about and no settings to adjust... As online commerce grows, the budding 50-plus market segment will increasingly become the Net's most important consumer market group. The fact that this group buys more than 50[%] of new luxury cars indicates their immense buying power. Once seniors get connected, there will be no stopping them. As one man observed: "how are you going to keep them on the Home Shopping Channel after they've seen the World Wide Web?"

...*Worldwide window shopping* THERE had been enough talk about how the Internet will revolutionise shopping – it was time... I set out to do a little virtual shopping [myself]... But I almost immediately run into problems... My pursuit... makes me realise there are a lot of logistical problems with fashion shopping on the Net... Quick inspection reveals websites by Bloomingdales of New York... Levis, Esprit and a huge Nike store, among others... Finding anything specific among the hundreds of thousands of web sites is every Net surfer's lament... [Furthermore, having] previously invested an unfeasibly large portion of my weekly wage in glamorous outfits that were only ever worn in my imagination I have developed a new policy: People who delude themselves shouldn't buy until they try. Obviously this is impossible on the Internet. Most garments are described and many are pictured... But how exactly do you know whether your computer's version[of colour, for example,] is the same as the real thing? How do you judge the fabric or the quality of the manufacture? And would you buy something based on a picture in a fashion magazine? ...Several sites try to address this. If you want to try clothes on in a cyber dressing room, The Gap has an interactive dress-up doll. But this perfectly proportioned mannequin is not exactly a normal woman. Jantzen swimwear also has a Personal Fit section where you tell them what figure flaws you're worried about. Legs need lengthening? Your personal fitter suggests a range of swimsuits. It's constructive advice that might encourage you to shop with Jantzen in the real world, but unlikely to sell any virtual bikinis... By now I've spent just under four hours on the computer. My fingers hurt, my wrist feels sprained, my eyes are red and I haven't felt any of the vicarious pleasure I usually feel when I go window shopping. In fact, I'm frustrated. I've found some nice things but haven't been willing to spend any money on them, whereas if I'd seen them in the real world at least some of them would have been in my hot little hands by now... What I find at Bloomingdales' ordering department makes me cackle maniacally. The screen says: "Our electronic order form is not yet ready for use. To order, please phone this toll-free number or fax your order."

...['Here's an urban legend for our time – though in this case I happen to know that it isn't legendary, since it was told to me with chortling ruefulness by a friend. He had been checking his credit card statements one day when he saw a payment he didn't recognise. Further checks showed that the same amount had gone out the previous month. A call to the company established that the payee was located in the US and that this payment was due to continue until further notice. Then a glimmer of realisation dawned. A couple of months previously he had been browsing through pornography sites on the internet and had entered his credit card details to get to the hard stuff. And, since it wasn't tedious passages of legalistic prose he was after, he also clicked on the agreement box without reading its contents. As a result of his actions he had become a subscriber to a site he could no longer find in order to terminate the agreement. At first he was told that he would have to live with the consequences of his stupidity until death or bankruptcy intervened, no fraud being involved; in fact after a couple more payments he managed to persuade the company to suspend the monthly order, though only after the humiliation of having to explain his predicament to the young woman in customer service. It's a story that neatly feeds contemporary anxieties about the internet as a dangerous place for the unwary to venture, though in one crucial respect it isn't typical at all. This wasn't an unauthorised use of his credit card, after all, just an unwise one – and above all it is the dread of insecurity, rather than momentary folly, that afflicts most potential internet customers. Those who want to get the e-commerce juggernaut rolling desperately need to find some way to release this handbrake of consumer timidity. Last year the US Federal Trade Commission chairman claimed that 61% of people who surf the internet don't buy anything because they are frightened about the security of their private information. The truth is, though, that these anxieties tell us more about a primal fear of novelty than they do about e-commerce itself, because internet purchases are probably safer than a good many of the real-world transactions we conduct without a second thought. People who happily hand over their credit cards to a barman to guarantee the tab on a night's drinking, or read the details out over the telephone to buy a theatre ticket, decline to use systems that employ powerful cryptography. What's more, the retailers are far more vulnerable than we are.]

...The Internet's commercial future lies in its merchants being able to transact business with customers they've never met before. They already do, and credit cards have become the most popular form of facilitating trade. The problem is that neither side of the transaction has a cast-iron guarantee of the other's bona fides, or that an unscrupulous outsider won't hack into their computers and make illicit use of the credit card details... However... [e]ncryption developments making transactions on the Internet secure are on the brink of removing the greatest obstacle to the development of Internet commerce.

...*Shopping by Internet becomes more secure* The first online authorisation of credit card transactions – in a matter of seconds – via the Internet has arrived in N[Z]... The BNZ's Buy Line service built by Advantage Group[was] recently implemented at www.tickets.co.nz for ticket purchases... The BNZ's system removes the server risk because much of the transaction occurs behind the bank's firewall security and is immediately authorised and processed online – effectively removing the need for any storage of credit card information by the merchant. Such systems (BNZ is first to market but expect other banks, including ASB Bank and Countrywide, to soon have similar offerings) are about to get a whole lot safer too. Thanks to some clever server software from Microsoft called Server Gated Crypto banks, and potential buyers, will soon have 128-bit encryption. The technology manages to bypass the draconian export controls imposed by the US government on high level encryption. The advantage of 128-bit encryption is that even with a \$US100,000 array of specialised encryption-breaking hardware, it's estimated to take 2-17 years to crack just one key. The same hardware does 40-bit encryption in 2-3 seconds... But the real potential of Server Gated Crypto for N[Z] Net shoppers is yet to be realised. Although merchants can't legally use the technology themselves they could 'triangulate' with a bank (in much the same way as BNZ Buylines) to process credit card transactions entirely in 128-bit mode. Which leaves one remaining piece in the 'safe' Net shopping jigsaw to be found – SET (secure electronic transaction) – the much vaunted online solution from Visa and Mastercard. The SET protocol takes security one step further than BNZ's Buylines. It aims to bring authentication to the Net buying process – in much the same way as one signs a credit card slip or enters a personal identification number... at an eftpos terminal. To do this however requires Net shoppers to have something called a digital certificate – essential[ly] a unique digital signature which confirms who is making the purchase. The problem with the scheme is that it requires an independent third party – a certification authority (someone like NZ Post) – to issue the certificates and then a way to get the things in the hand of millions of Net shoppers. It's a daunting task. Most estimates say SET in any viable form is at least 18 months away. Meanwhile, Net shopping will continue to grow at an alarming rate.

...['Move over kids. Mum needs the computer to go shopping. Home delivery is being tried out in Auckland from a shopping list sent via the Internet to a supermarket. The service should be available publicly in February, and shoppers will also be able to purchase by "mouse" from chemists, home appliance stores and travel agents. The computer shopping mall is for all busy people who can do without the weekly supermarket visit. Instead, they will merely go to a computer mall, choose their shop, click on the department and click on the product – even choosing between firm and ripe tomatoes. By the time the

system starts, about 500 shoppers will have tested it from home. Costs have not been revealed, but there will be no membership fee. Telecom's Internet connection is based on time spent connected to the shopping mall; packing by the supermarket is likely to be about 5% of the shopping bill and the delivery about \$7.']

...Woolworths has been piloting Net shopping since August 1996 and... last week... I... tackled a weekly supermarket shop... Let me explain[that] I am no advocate for Woolworths. I shop there only because two years ago they built a store close to my home... and... yes, [Net shopping] does cost extra. But... [this] form of shopping has several advantages... When you connect... you are faced with... icons for the various departments – frozen food, deli, and so on... If I can't find what I'm looking for I type the word... in the "find" box... If I want apples... a long list of all the apples in the store appears, with prices per kilo... I hit on the apples I want and scales appear so I can alter the number of kilos I want... As each item is added, I get a running total. If cost is running away, I go back and prune the amount of each item, or delete items altogether... With my shopping list complete, I hit "checkout" and up comes the till. I specify the day I want groceries delivered (every day except Sunday), and the time, store a copy of my shopping list to use as the basis for next week and send the order... While compiling my first Net shopping list I excitedly told my wife that shopping this way you saw all the prices in front of you. They show prices in the supermarket too, she replied scornfully. Do they? I asked in disbelief. It took another visit down the road to convince me that indeed they do.

...[*How to put more weekend into your weekend* Time is precious. Particularly the time you set aside to do the things you want to do for yourself. And it may be that you have more important things to do than spend an hour or more at the supermarket. Enter Woolworths Home Shopping Service. For the first time ever you can buy all your groceries from home, using your computer and the Internet. Now you can do your shopping whenever you like. First thing in the morning, last thing at night, seven days a week – and you push a mouse around, instead of that heavy trolley.']

...NO MORE furtive weekend mornings sneaking around the local supermarket in a daggy tracksuit, praying you don't bump into someone you know. Or prowling for car space, slow queues, kiddy tantrums, dithering aisle blockers, bickering flatmates, and cheque writers... After a nine-month trial with 580 customers... [Auckland] Internet users... a[re a]ble to shop on-line for their groceries... [T]he developer of the ground-breaking technology in N[Z], Ad Pasifica... has formed an agreement with Courier Post to deliver orders from Woolworths in the Auckland area. Plans are afoot to extend coverage to Wellington and Christchurch... and also to Sydney... The contract with Woolworths is exclusive. However, Ad Pasifica is in talks with a number of retailing groups including a pharmacy chain and an appliance retail [chain]... Ad Pasifica is[also] likely to use its relationship with the multinational owner of Woolworths, Dairy Farm International, to take it further afield... Ad Pasifica clips a commission on the fee for packing and delivering the groceries. A customer will pay \$12.50 for a \$100 shop, and \$17.50 for a \$200 shop... The company's managing director[, who owns 80%]... of the company... said that the average shop time among the sample group was about 15 minutes. That compared to 86 minutes under normal circumstances... The Great N[Z] Shopping Mall, as it is to be called, offers everything on Woolworths shelves. It is also in real time, so prices change. If stock runs out it is taken off the electronic store... - 1997

Whatever the state of their health, the institutions and values devised to distribute goods in short supply fail to secure distribution of the goods that the industrial revolution produces in such generous actual or potential supply. The problem is, of course, a new one; the success at production is recent. On the topic of distribution, the science of economics has never had much to say... [I]t talks of capital and labor, but it does not mention Park Avenue and the Bronx.

Malnutrition is still rife, and every day during 1982 40,000 children died from a combination of malnutrition and infection. The Executive Director of the UN Children's Fund... has stern things to say about that.

More than 30,000 children under five die each day because they don't have good food, clean water, clean houses and the medicine they need... THEY DON'T HAVE TO DIE - World Vision

In many countries in Africa virtually one in four children will die of starvation or diseases like measles, dysentery or cholera. The real tragedy is that many of these deaths can be prevented with just a little bit of help from the outside world... [H]elp make the world a better place... you can sponsor a child... It costs... just \$1 a day to ensure that [a child] gets the proper food, education and medical attention that we take for granted... You'll not only save a child you'll help transform a whole community because World Vision introduces better farming methods, builds water wells and teaches health care to mothers[, which]... helps break the cycle of poverty so these people can become self-sufficient and give[these] children... the bright new future they never had before... So why not call now and grow your family... A child living in poverty in Africa, Asia or Latin America is simply a family member you don't know yet.

Those photographs of smiling, mostly brown or black children, those slender letters sent and received and the occasional visits to remote places by beneficent N[Z]ers – child sponsorship is still considered by some aid organisations as a meaningful way of the better-off helping the poor. But 50 years after the Save the Children Fund's first N[Z] branch was established in Canterbury, the organisation is phasing sponsorship out. The decision was made by the British office – through whom many N[Z] sponsorships were arranged – because '[sponsorship of single children led to sibling jealousy' and some people fail to maintain their sponsorship – which, 'under some programmes, can continue until the child reaches 21 (if a sponsor abandons a child, that child returns to the pool until another sponsor can be found for it)'. Another motive for the decision was] the disproportionately high administrative and translation costs involved in arranging personal contact between sponsors and their children. Instead SCF N[Z] has launched what... [it describes] as "a better use of the sponsorship dollar." - 1997

More than 2000 kind-hearted N[Z]ers are helping nearly 19,000 underprivileged children around the world through CCF.

...*The cheque's in the mail* A KIWI stamp collection has posted \$1.4 million at a British auction... The collection belonged to [a]WW2 veteran... who started ...[i]t... as a schoolboy... An envelope sent from Auckland to Yorkshire, in October 1855[,] fetched \$45,000 alone...

1855 ...Postage stamps, printed in Britain, were first issued in Auckland... 1858... The Post Office Act rationalised administration and regulations and established revised rates for prepaid and postpaid inland letters at two pence for the first half ounce. Overseas mail, all prepaid, carried a basic rate of six pence per half ounce... [(the previous British] regulations stipulated postage rates of four pence for a half ounce letter, one penny a newspaper and two pence gratuity to ships' captains for each loose letter[)]... 1891 NZ joined the Universal Postal Union, established in 1875, and accepted that organisation's lower (2 1/2 pence an ounce) overseas postage rate. 1901 [The]Postmaster-General... introduced universal one-penny postage to NZ. The British Empire, except A[US], accepted letters posted from NZ at the one-penny rate. But some countries did not accept this initially and imposed a surcharge on NZ mail. A[US] accepted the rate later... 1905... NZ's first stamp-vending machine, invented by a General Post Office's foreign mail clerk, R J Dickie, and a Wellington photographer, J H Brown, was set up outside the post office in Customhouse Quay, Wellington. Dickie held worldwide patents on the machine and these were bought by the NZ Government in 1918. Until his death in 1958, Dickie was retained by the Post Office as Stamp Vending Machine Expert... 1977... The standard letter rate was now 10 cents.

Postage stamps represent 'legal tender because they can be used to buy a service' (i.e., the labour of workers who ensure letters and parcels reach their destinations). Unfranked – or unused – stamps are worth what their face value states. Once they have been franked, however, stamps are essentially useless – yet, to many First Worlders, a used stamp is worth more than the life of a Last World child! Ironically, since the 1930s 'health stamps have been sold by the NZ Post Office in the spring of each year to raise money to support summer health camps for schoolchildren who were inadequately nourished and unfit.'

A 40c health stamp issued by mistake last month is selling for up to \$500 and is... destined to become one of the most famous rarities in modern philately. N[Z] Post withdrew the stamp – showing a teddy bear in a car with a toddler in a child restraint facing the wrong, unsafe, way – before it was due to go on sale, and replaced it with a stamp minus a bear and with the restraint the right way. But... 2000 of the stamps went out to two post shops. Nearly 500 were recovered before sale, leaving 1561 in buyers' hands. A[n A]uckland stamp dealer... obtained 24 from an ASB Bank employee who had unwittingly used on letters most of the ones the bank bought, and has sold them... The ASB Bank found it still had 88 of the errant stamps and... forwarded them to Wellington for auction... The proceeds will go to the Starship children's hospital. [A dealer] is offering five lots of single stamps, which the company estimates are worth \$250 each; three lots of blocks of four; and one lot of 70 valued at about \$16,000... About the same number of 1906 Christchurch Exhibition 1d stamps were printed in the wrong claret colour. They sell for about \$10,000 each now.

...A wrongly designed 40c health stamp, accidentally issued... is now changing hands for as much as \$3000.

...THE bigger the mistake the better for stamp collectors. And thanks to a bungle by NZ Post, more than \$60,000 has been earned for children's health[after e]lghty-seven... health stamps... were put under the hammer in Wellington yesterday... [In related news, the] world's most valuable postage stamp... a flimsy 1857 Swedish issue, has been sold at public auction in Zurich... for a record \$3.2 million. - 1996

POSTAGE stamps are one of the most fundamental staples of the collecting world, but that doesn't exempt them from the whims of fashion. With young collectors, stamps have to slug it out in the coolness stakes with the likes of phone and confectionery cards... However, stamp collecting is refusing to be relegated to nerd city. "It's been one of our aims in the last four years to improve the profile of stamps and make them more fashionable," said... N[Z] Post's general manager for stamps. "But competitive products come and go. Stamps are here for the long term." ...N[Z] Post has around 80,000 collectors on its database, with a... [1/4] of those residing overseas. Of its total [annual] sales, about \$13 m... worth are sold to collectors... And that's just new stamps. The market in old and rare stamps is... helping to push up the price of good-quality collectible stamps.

...STAMP collectors[in America (where you 'can turn tasteful photos into official personalised stamps')] are scrambling to obtain a scarce printing of one version of the Bugs Bunny stamp issued this year by the U[S] Postal Service... Collectors were offered two versions – a regular one containing 10 stamps and a die-cut variety of nine peelable stamps and one without perforations. Both sold for \$US3.20. The die-cut version was withdrawn... [after] only 118,000 copies were sold, considered a minuscule number to collectors. When word filtered through the stamp community of the small quantity printed, prices soared. At one point, \$US210... was paid... at a stamp auction on the Internet... Prices are down to about \$US100 now... [Incidentally,] in recent months... [total online] auction... revenues have swelled to an estimated \$US100 million a year.

...The founder of Personalised Plates Ltd... has been called a marketing genius. And he would have to be because... the concept on which his business is based is quite bizarre. Here is a company that sells a bit of aluminium worth \$1.50, with the letter T stamped on it, for \$525,000. And no one blinks. No one that is, except for the country's investment advisers, who tend to have a collective heart attack every time they read of the high prices being fetched... To an investment adviser, you see, the investment plate market makes no sense at all. It defies any classification, not falling into the category of an income earning investment (like bank deposits), or a capital growth investment (like shares and property) or even a collectible, like art and antiques, which are assessed by experts for their aesthetic and historical value, and a price determined by those values as well as scarcity. Personalised and investment plates are most often referred to as collectibles. However, a work of art they are not, unless you deem the act of a metal press bashing the letter T into a piece of aluminium to be an awe inspiring thing, requiring extraordinary talent. Despite all this, investment plates can claim to have provided the hottest capital gains since their inception in 1987, beating all other forms of investment. Over the past three years to the end of January 1997, their annual resale price growth rate has varied from 17[%] a year (for a four character plate...) to 49[%] a year for a plate with the number 7, which was valued at \$655,000 [in] January 1997, up from \$200,000 in January 1994. [■ 'Investment plate 1 sold for a record price of \$630,000' in 1995.

...While some people collect money, others collect stamps, bottles, campaign buttons, paperweights or any of a thousand other things. And, like saving money, collecting can be an enriching pastime or become an obsession. The difference between normal and obsessive collecting is the intensity of the desire to obtain a collectible item, the lengths one will go to in order to add to a collection, and the extent to which collecting dominates the collector's life. Fanatic collectors turn from people as a potential source of affection and security and seek gratification instead through possessing things. They are also inclined to be very competitive – at least in their struggle to have the best collection of whatever they collect. By building the world's largest collection of, say, beer cans, the competitive collector can achieve a feeling of superiority and power. Their egos are likely to become invested in the superiority of their collections and any threat to the status of their collections is perceived as a threat to their self-worth. Some things people collect, like gold coins, have an intrinsic value. Others, like matchbook covers, do not. People who collect as a hobby find a sense of satisfaction in their search and in their acquisitions. Obsessed collectors, however, are driven. Their obsession overrules every other aspect of their lives and they devote almost every waking minute to thinking and planning how to obtain the next object for their collection or how to display it. Objects ultimately become more important than people, and fanatic collectors tend to withdraw from interpersonal relationships and often do not concern themselves with everyday problems like paying bills or getting the car serviced.']

...IT WAS a long way from Tipperary for a hurling team which kept losing its way... because of the absence of road signs, which thieves are selling for as much as \$250 a time to foreign-based Irish theme pubs.

...A pocket watch that belonged to one of Britain's most notorious murderers... was sold for £10,350... yesterday, seven times its estimated price...

Watch value increasing as time goes by... Like most collectibles, the value of old clocks depended on their rarity and condition... Many people mistakenly assumed that because a clock no longer worked, it was worthless...

[A 1935 British-made HMV chrome-plated, pressed steel electric fan heater would fetch \$1000 today says an Auckland collectibles shop owner. While fire has provided warmth to man for thousands of years, it wasn't until this century that a flick of a switch could bring immediate comfort without the chore of chopping wood and lighting the flame. The first electric heaters looked like the precursors of Daleks, and you had to huddle closely to feel the rays, but an exhibition at the Otago Settlers' Museum in Dunedin shows a range of heaters which would have been state-of-the-art appliances in their day. *Hothouse* is a telling display of what was hot and what was not in the history of heating']...

Collecting antiquities – items from classical Greek, Roman and Egyptian times... before the end of the Roman Empire in the 5th century – is often assumed to be the preserve of museums or the very wealthy. Yet such objects... are surprisingly readily available and comparatively inexpensive. A... 5000-year-old pottery bowl could be bought for less than \$1000, while a... particularly nice statuette could sell for \$20,000.

...As with most collectibles, there is an active trade in... antique and porcelain dolls... with prices for older ones rarely falling below \$1000... [Last year, 'one of the world's most important collections of rare dolls sold at auction for a total of £3 million'. While on the topic of dolls, a] Los Angeles

lawyer has filed a \$36 million lawsuit against Mattel Inc... on behalf of [a girl], aged 9, whose hair was allegedly chewed to her scalp by a Cabbage Patch doll. The battery-operated doll is designed to chew plastic food.

...AFTER 30 years in the business, [our interviewee] still feels a pang of childish anticipation whenever he crosses the smog-stained broadwalk linking Manhattan's 205th street and Broadway. It's understandable. He's walking towards the New York toy fair, the biggest and brightest showcase for every infantile distraction invented since batteries were first not included. As managing director of Lincoln Playcorp – the Australasian company battling multi-nationals Mattel and Hasbro for a laser-sized slice of N[Z]'s \$140-million-a-year toy retail market [(‘worldwide the toy business is worth \$20 billion’) – he]... knows the bites he takes in the Big Apple could make or break the company. “It becomes quite frantic. You can be relaxing at a function when the whisper spreads that some company's just released a hot new line, and there'll be an instant scattering as buyers move to locate it. As far as trends go, most people don't realise this is probably a faster moving business than the clothing industry. Thousands of toy inventors around the world are constantly taking new ideas and schemes to manufacturers... In order to get the right toys, [buyers] have to make some sort of commitment to the manufacturer – put up[a] letter of credit, bring the stock in and market it. Suppliers also usually want minimum guarantees of purchases and advance payments. It can be very risky... For every winner, there's probably 10 failures... The yo-yo has been big, but it's dying now. You're lucky if a trend like that lasts a year. You've got your traditional toys, then your fad toys – some of which come and go very quickly – but the staples will always be there. Barbie just continues to grow and the Cabbage Patch Babies are a great... range. It's those toys, plus your Matchbox and Hot Wheels ranges that just keep coming up with good solid sales.”

...WATCHING bewildered parents being scolded by their children for buying the wrong toy is one of the stranger sights to be found in the shopping mall of modern life. A quick chat to... a senior lecturer in psychology at Auckland University who specialises in human lifespan development and child behaviour... may help explain why such dust-ups outside Dekka occur at all... “These days, fads and trends seem to be taking a greater effect on younger children. Labels used to be more of an adolescent phenomenon – a time when a feeling of belonging is traditionally very important – but now children are beginning to compare themselves with one another in primary school, if not before that.” The quickest way to the top of the jungle gym these days... is owning the latest toy. “Absolutely. The rewards associated with that are of a psychological kind: Feeling good about yourself, feeling as though you're part of a group. Subsequently, kids' discrimination skills as consumers have obviously sharpened. It used to be any yo-yo was okay, but now you've got to have the right sort of yo-yo. This is a major change, it seems to me, from the days when you and I were young during a fad.”

...*New toys out this season* ACTION Man has come a long way. After starting life as a lone plastic figure, whose voice and adventures were left to the imagination of his owner, he now comes with props ranging from fighter planes to speed boats. The latest model even appears to talk on its own... Action Man – Street Commander... comes with a separate transmitter into which kids can voice a message, which the doll will repeat three seconds later. It can also make six different sounds, including a burp. Parents may be grateful that Barbie is still silent, although the latest model, Work'n Out Barbie, comes with an exercise tape to which children can put her specially articulated limbs through an aerobics workout. She even has suckers on her feet to keep her in one spot. For a bit of glamour there is Blossom Barbie and Hula Hair Barbie and there's a new foldaway Barbie house. And of course, there's a full range of up-to-date fashions from Barbie's own team of fashion designers – it's not hard to believe she generates the most clothes of any doll in the world... Barbie... accounts for \$10 million of business in N[Z] alone. The... slim, blond one doesn't have a monopoly on the doll market, however. Cabbage Patch Kids will be back, although not the “eating” variety which made headlines in the States for gobbling their owners' hair... More grisly dolls come in the form of figures from the TV3 series *Beast Wars*. Touted as the new generation of transformers, the sharks, cheetahs, wolves and other creatures can be rotated and clicked into models of robots. For speed enthusiasts, there are the Hot Wheels XV Racers, which are battery-charged to whizz around at a scale speed of “800 km/h.” They come complete with their own racetracks... Despite the infuriatingly distracting electronic pets being banned by many schools, a new model is [going to be released] for Christmas.

...*Before you can recover from Christmas 96, toy stores are preparing for Christmas 97, and... they already know what kids will be clamouring to get...* Just when your bank balance shows signs of recovery from the toy purchases of last December... [m]arketing managers... return... from the annual New York toy fair armed with what's hot for kids this year... Whatever gifts parents choose to buy their kids this [year], they probably won't spend any less than they did last year, or the year before... [The] marketing manager for toy wholesaler Hasbro, says... that while segments of the toy market fluctuate in popularity, its overall worth has continued to climb steadily with inflation. “In tight times parents become more discriminating about which toys they buy and want true value for money, but they still put their kids first and don't... spend any less on them.” ...[the marketing manager also confirmed that ‘Hasbro is recalling the bungi harness accessory for its Action Man doll. The worldwide voluntary recall was sparked by children hurting themselves with a plastic grappling hook attached to an elastic string.’]

...THE joy of a new toy can quickly evaporate if it injures its young owner. An ACC booklet on toy safety says that children... aged 5 months to 7 months are... at risk of choking accidents... caused by small parts of toys. Here are some guidelines to bring youngsters only happiness, not pain: • Check package labelling to make sure a toy is suitable for your child's age group. • Check toys for loose nuts, bolts, rough edges, broken plastic or splintered wood... • For children aged under 6 months, any string on toys must not be more than 15cm... in length otherwise it could twist around a baby's neck... • Projectiles should have protective tips such as soft cork or suction cups firmly attached.

...[a doctor has defended] war toys, saying a heavy body of international research supports the view that these toys do not condition children to violence. “What I believe is... that having a variety of play, particularly for boys who like a more active type of play, is wholesome,”... [She] said parents needed to watch their children play. If games became rough or violent, or if children became obsessive about violence, they needed to talk about it. But war toys themselves were not a problem: “If you took those toys away they could still use their fingers or sticks as pretend guns...” [Meanwhile, ‘a senior health science lecturer at Massey University is urging people not to buy noisy toys for kids. He says children's ears are sensitive and any toy making a noise louder than the average voice can damage youngsters' hearing for life when used for long periods. Clackers, whistles, toy musical instruments and cap pistols are offenders’. Speaking of noisy toys, chatter rings are now selling for ‘\$4.99’ – or 75% less than this time last year]... - 1997

PARENTS can't stand it, teachers are banning it. No wonder kids love it. It's the chatter ring, the biggest craze to hit N[Z] since the Rubik's cube transfixed the youth psyche 10 years ago. Quite why chatter rings have taken a grip on seemingly everyone under 20 becomes obvious when you see an expert in action. Although the toy itself looks innocuous – a plain loop supporting five hexagonal nuts – working it takes co-ordination and skill. The aim is to get all five nuts spinning around the loop as the loop itself spins through the hands. As you improve, you can incorporate tricks into your routine. Herein lies the toy's real attraction: it's the classroom equivalent of the skateboard... “I take it everywhere with me,” says a nine-year-old. “I play it for hours.” Virtually all his friends have the toy and they practise madly to perfect throws, spins and rolls like Rollercoaster, Round the World, Walk the Dog, and Supersonic. Enthusiasm borders on the insane... [S]ince it arrived in Auckland from Hamilton and Rotorua, the chatter ring market has ballooned. Everyone seems to be stocking it. Even sports shops have jumped on the bandwagon yet demand still exceeds supply. The Warehouse chain alone... sold an incredible 45,000 chatter rings at \$19.95 each in five weeks... And there's no sign of a let-up in sales. This wouldn't be a big deal if it weren't for one factor. Noise. They're called chatter rings for a reason, after all... [T]he biggest (of several) chatter ring manufacturers in the country, can't bear them. “Our 14-year-old son... isn't allowed to wander around with them,” jokes [his mother]... Even so, the [family] must be thanking their lucky stars that [the teenager] asked his dad to try to make him one. [Dad] obliged and was suddenly swept off his feet by orders... “The way I see it... at least you know that when your kids are playing with it they're not doing anything

else. I think there's something to be said for that." ...The [manufacturers] are the first to admit they're sitting pretty on an idea that's not even their own. So whose idea was it? Curiously, no one really knows. The best theory seems to be that the chatter ring is an offshoot of the larger, more cumbersome educational toy the gyro ring, which has plastic coverings on the washers. A child picked off the plastic – and the rest is history. Now with teenagers finding the original chatter ring too easy, the race is on to entice second-time buyers.

...Chatterings Tired of old cheap designs which cut and dirty your hands? We have N[Z]'s 3 newest models... [for] \$16.90... Save \$3.05...

Chatter rings are all the rage in N[Z], and can be seen – and heard – almost wherever you go. Now, the Gyro-Ring has been introduced with its bright, multi-coloured tops that will make your child the talk of the street... We have 48 Gyro-Rings to give away, each worth \$24.95.

...K'NEX is the new kit on the block... a construction toy kitset that swept the U[S] in 1993... and which arrived in N[Z] last week with all the hype you'd expect from a new product launch... A hands-on K'nex exhibition at Auckland's Museum of Transport and Technology... [features] a six metre model of the city's Sky Tower... K'nex has grabbed huge chunks of the lucrative construction toy market, mainly at the expense of market leader Lego. If the newcomer does the same in N[Z] – where consumers... spend around \$15 million a year on construction toys, with Lego holding an estimated 75% of that market... [–] that will be one more reason for Lego to rue the day it passed up the opportunity to add K'nex to its own... stable. Described as a cross between Lego and Meccano, the toy is the brainchild of [a US] plastic moulding manufacturer... who sat out the dances at a wedding reception in 1988, and fiddled with the plastic straws in his drinking glass. With ideas in place for a... construction toy that used colour-coded components of rods and connectors, pulleys, cogs and tyres that snap together to create static or moving objects, he tried to sell his dream to the world's biggest toymakers... Hasbro, Mattel, Tyco and Lego. But, one by one, they turned him down. So [the manufacturer] and his brother invested \$US15 million in developing K'nex themselves, and it became an instant success. Now part of the Hasbro toy empire (Hasbro Inc owns 50% of K'nex International)... 1994 sales [in the US] topped \$US50 million. Launched in Britain that year, it quickly took 16% of the construction toy market there, and 28% of Lego's market share.

...[a collector] paid £34,000... for "Teddy Edward" ...the star of BBC Television's classic *Watch With Mother* series, at a British auction yesterday. [The collector also] paid a record £110,000 for "Teddy Girl," a rare 1904 cinnamon... teddy bear, in 1994.

...The steering wheel of a Grand Prix racing car... has sold for \$52,000 at an auction of motor racing memorabilia in Britain[, and some]... race overalls... sold for \$68,000... The highest price paid was \$79,000 for a white race helmet...

A mystery buyer paid \$4970 for a telegram sent by Queen Alexandra in 1913 to a Derby jockey... after he was badly injured when the King's horse... collided with and killed suffragette Emily Wilding Davison... a "brutal lunatic woman"...

A seal used to ratify the Treaty of Perth between Scotland and Norway in 1266 has been sold at auction for £19,320... - 1996

The 16th century velvet purse in which Queen Elizabeth's Great Seal of State was kept has been found stored in a trunk. The sumptuously embroidered purse that contained the symbol of the monarch's legal power is expected to fetch up to £30,000... The elderly woman whose family had owned the purse for decades had no idea of its value before she died in November... [In related news, a] 70-year-old teddy bear in pristine condition sold for... \$183,000... – just short of the world record – at auction yesterday.

...15,000... miniature soldiers... from the world's biggest... toy... army... have been sold... in New York for nearly \$US592,000... The remaining soldiers in the army of more than 60,000 will be auctioned on Thursday... [By the way, US] truck-maker... GMC... has done a deal with [a] giant toy chain... to sell its four-wheel-drive Envoy sports utility. The envoy will be touted as the "official big kid's toy" at... [the chain's] stores in the U[S].

...see try admire and buy at Big Boys Toys... Some say the only difference between men and boys is the price of their toys. With that in mind there will be some very expensive toys on show at N[Z]'s first exhibition of toys for big boys to be held in Auckland... [T]he two-day show would present products aimed at males with high discretionary income [– it 'has everything the rich would want']... More than 70 organisations had already signed up or expressed an interest... The... managing director... who has licensed the... exhibition... said there had been some opposition to the A[US]n shows from feminists who claimed they were sexist, but research showed about half the visitors... there were women... N[Z] exhibitions had struggled recently... [–] there did not seem to be enough interest here [– but he]... hoped to make the N[Z] show an annual event... "The Big Boys' Toys concept is a fresh approach, combining several shows into one..."

...Ask a male to shell out \$10 [– 'under 14 free of charge' –]to window shop in a... stuffy, hellish... warehouse fighting a million other guys to get a look at a bunch of roped-off stuff, and you will get the reverse of the sorry signal. But call the event Big Boys' Toys Expo and men will flex their muscles and flock along... Men hate shopping, and I challenge any man to say he's never made a martyr of himself on that chair in the mall. So it was not a shock to see the self-styled Big Boys of Auckland adopt the same glum look after a turn about the Expo centre's adult toytown. Not their fault though. With all the hype the boys could have been forgiven for expecting the most luxurious array of goods ever gathered in one place outside the United Arab Emirates... But what cool stuff there was on show, you couldn't touch, either because some pleb with a velcro wallet already had his mitts on it, or there was a cage around it... Men shop like they used to hunt – in for the kill, then drag the prize home. Skip the shopping, go straight to the buying. And if you're not buying, or trying, there has to be something to do instead. So some boys congregated in front of a TV vendor with enough smarts to screen the All Black match. Morale peaked when word spread that girls wearing Lycra were out there waving pom poms, and others wearing cowboy hats were dispensing whisky in plastic thimbles... And another thing. It was never expressly stated that women weren't welcome... I'd pay \$10 to see some big boys in action, or even better, have a tu-tu with some...

[The] evening gown worn by Marilyn Monroe in *How to Marry a Millionaire*... [sold for] \$83,500... at Christie's in Los Angeles, a record for any gown sold at the auction house.

...The fashion house... is associated with mannered gentility and refinement... [J]ust 2000 ladies in the world... pay a minimum of \$25,600 for an outfit... And no one mocks the frills and the tantrums, the compromises and the sophistry of the fashion industry more than... the [house's] hottest designer... himself... Famine, slavery, rape, you name it – our man's been inspired by it... "It's completely ridiculous. At the end of the day, it's just clothes – know what I mean?" ...He has a tattoo on his chest, a Japanese fish symbol... because he is a Pisces and is partial to water. As a schoolboy he... even did synchronised swimming, the only boy with 40 girls, until his mother stopped him because she was embarrassed on his behalf... He is homosexual (which is not an unusual thing to be if you're a fashion designer) and fairly unpretentious (which is). He will say for instance, that: "I hate the circles I mix in now; I really hate them. The wankers you meet; the insular people you meet. I'm a great believer in honesty and I don't think you get that in fashion."

...clients pay up to \$100,000 for a Versace gown... [even though] he once said... I don't believe in good taste... [H]is most famous quote: "Beauty will save the world." But beauty did not save Versace.

...The ultimate fashion victim GIANNI VERSACE, an Italian dressmaker's son, grew up to be founder and chief designer of a half-billion-dollar fashion empire with hundreds of outlets around the world, [plus] a line of fragrances... But can that Milan-based company continue to thrive without the 50-year-old flamboyant designer, who was shot dead last week on the streets of Miami's South Beach, which he helped make fashionable and trendy? "The Versace company... will continue to be as influential and as trend-setting as it has been..." In saying a fashion company could survive such a loss, industry analysts cited... famous fashion executive... Perry Ellis... But there was also Laura Ashley, a company where problems – and millions of dollars in losses – grew for years after the founder fell down a flight of stairs and died in 1985... And... at Perry Ellis there have been dramatic changes, as the line has become mass market and less couture since Ellis died of an Aid's-related illness in 1986.

...[the] 50-year-old singer... [appears to have been inspired by the phrase: 'Clothes are your own personal theatre.' Now the] star... whose flamboyant sense of style is almost as famous as his music, has cleared out his closets to sell a few spare threads for... his... Aids Foundation... Eager fans lined up outside the London shop that is selling 10,000 items of... clothing[– including]... Versace shirts for £25... [– which the star] said he spent £2.5 million to buy... He hopes the sale will raise one-tenth of that amount.

...Looking after \$1 million of designer dresses is stressful enough... but finding models slim enough to fit them for a charity fashion show... [to] raise money for a new heart unit at [Auckland's] Starship hospital... proved a tall order too. Even the slimmest N[Z] models have curves top European designers did not allow for... Eventually, 15 boyish-hipped figures were found...

[A disaster hangs over High St and it will be worse than the winter of 1979, an event scorched into memory – I was a child then, dressed in a plastic padded jacket with zip-out sleeves, arms chilled pink, drawn to the heater like a moth to flame – because this spring/summer the halfway houses of fashion and chain-gang have recycled a look reminiscent of gauze bandages and mosquito nets. See-through, barely-there stuff. It's the cyclic nature of fashion that what has been will, eventually, come round to being hot again. It is human nature that we don't always learn from our mistakes.]

...The fur is flying in Auckland's hippest rag-trade precinct... Several designers within a stone's throw of... a recent arrival in the High St scene... said the new kids on the block had broken an unwritten rule by making "blatant copies" of their designs. World, the most vocal critic and one of the closest neighbours, said it had been badly hit by the new arrival and copies of its window-display outfits appeared in Ricochet's window barely two weeks later... But Ricochet says the main reason the needles have been sharpened is that its clothes are half the price of other designers' in the street... "If our garments were selling for \$400 on the rack they would not care." ...copies did not affect strong businesses. "The copy is not the problem. It's the company's insecurity in the market that's the problem." However, businesses with financial clout are occasionally irked enough to take legal action. This year Barkers went to court accusing Hallensteins of ripping off a trackpants design, and... Just Jeans, which was selling copycat anoraks through its Underground Fashion stores... settled out of court with... Hero Sportswear...

The medals of a Scotsman who won the Victoria Cross during the Maori Wars have been sold for £78,000... at auction in London. [The]Major-General... won the VC after rescuing a colleague from a war party.

...IT will be the party of the... decade. The July 17 bash at the [heir to the British throne's] home... to mark [his girlfriend's] 50th birthday... "...will cost him about \$100,000, but what is being provided would cost most people more." ...After the feast... [the Prince of Wales] will declare his love... and give her a stunning [gift]...

WITH its pricetag of around \$350,000, [the]brand new Mercedes is a car fit for a queen...

[America's 'Queen of talk' 'began life in a poor shack in Mississippi. "Now, I have a really wonderful, blessed life and I have surrounded myself with beautiful things – antiques and so forth – so I do enjoy it. I'm having a good time with my money. I'm not one of those people who feels guilty about it, like I don't deserve it. I think I do."'] Always on the lookout for more outrageously extravagant ways to spend her oceans of loot, [the talkshow host – who]... is set to realise \$US14 million... from the sale of shares in King World, the distributor of her show... [–] has surpassed all her efforts so far by splashing out a cool \$100,000 on wall-to-wall white cashmere carpeting in her Chicago apartment... Just to keep [her lover's interest blooming, she also] spent an amazing \$10,000 filling her house with exotic flowers.

...[Florists' fingers are worked to a standstill on Valentine's Day, but for most of them it's worth it. Consider this: a dozen red roses can double in price on the special day, and cost a starry-eyed lover up to \$120.] Incidentally, the 'Melbourne flower market does around \$350 million of sales annually'...

'In Amsterdam, the world's largest flower market – which is housed in the largest commercial building in the world at 600,000 sq m – handles 4 billion flowers each year'. In local news, the industry aims to increase demand with an advertising campaign featuring the catch-phrase: 'Be a Man Give Flowers'...

'From \$35: Bright, bold, brilliant sunflowers, to put a shine in someone's day.' By the way, including flowers, a US entertainer's 'wedding cost \$7m'.

...a] 27-year-old... whose father owns the American Banana Co... left her teaching job... and devoted much of her time to making her wedding day perfect... [But] she waited at the church for a groom who never showed... The ritzy reception room was set up for 250 guests... [so she] went ahead... with the reception, estimated to have cost more than \$US65,000... anyway... The crowd exploded with cheers when [she] showed up alone...

\$26,000 UP IN SMOKE: An Asian buyer paid 23,000 Swiss francs (\$[NZ]26,136) for a box of 25 rare Cuban... cigars at an auction in Geneva on Sunday... The... price of ...\$1113... per cigar set a new world record.

...An Auckland winery is claiming a world record price for a N[Z] wine. A large bottle... (equal to eight 750ml bottles)... of cabernet sauvignon merlot 1990 has sold for \$NZ6000 at an auction in New York... A[US]'s Grange Hermitage is regularly the highest-priced wine in the Southern Hemisphere – a 750ml bottle of the 1951 vintage has sold for \$NZ8000. - 1997

A single chateau wine collection... [of] 127 bottles... sold yesterday for a record £618,000...

SOLD: For \$55,000, a poster for *Casablanca*, the 1942 cinema classic... BOUGHT: ...at auction in Los Angeles... for \$1.1 million, the Oscar won... for best actor in the 1934 movie *It Happened One Night*... RAISED: ...\$6400 at a London auction.

...The big spenders came out yesterday to vie for... the former first lady[s]... worldly goods, pushing the midway total of the four-day sale to \$US20.8 million... The standing crowd cheered throughout the day as the most modest of baubles fetched 100, 200, even 300 times their estimates. A European museum paid \$US1.4 million... for the 18th-century desk which President John F. Kennedy used to sign the 1963 nuclear test ban treaty outlawing all nuclear tests "in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water." - 1996

In one of [last] year's most... poignant stories, members of the international social, arts and business elite gathered for several days and – in a moving tribute to the passing of one of America's most beloved and respected women[, President John F. Kennedy's widow – gave 'US\$34.4 million to her family,' including bidding] as much as \$20,000 for individual strands of... used dental floss. Speaking of class...

I said on t[v] that I thought the whole idea of taste was something invented by the upper end of the Middle Class to keep the Working Class in their place. So you invented this concept of taste, and what was in and what was out, knowing that a whole other group of people couldn't afford it...

"...the rich... they've always had ways of displaying their wealth... Some people buy paintings, some people buy Rolls Royces, some people buy titles." ..."All titles are in fact acquired, bought, purchased, use whatever adjective you like. Aristocracy really means that you[or your family] bought a title, or acquired a title, a long time ago..." ..."One of the great drawbacks of our culture is that people... begin to view themselves as licenced fools and at that point they start to accept titles and at that point they're essentially... useless..." - Class

...in December 1982[a p]lain, hardworking Kiwi farmer... then 43 and managing a 1200ha Lands and Survey Department sheep and cattle station near Kawerau... [– w]ithin sight of Mt Edgumbe... [–] woke one day to become the eighth Earl of Edgumbe. The death of an elderly uncle in England meant he inherited a 300-year-old title, his unpretentious wife... aged 41, was suddenly a countess and their five no-frills, country-bred daughters were titled ladies. From not owning their own home, the[y]... faced the prospect of living in a huge, stone, stately home built in the 16th century, complete with valuable antiques, paintings and furnishings. It was the stuff of legends – or maybe winning Lotto... [T]he bubble soon

burst for the innocents abroad. The naive N[Z]ers found themselves hounded by the British tabloids. Making headlines here too were the stories of the Countess running off with the village odd-job-man and the Earl taking up with the local barmaid... [T]he daughters have produced nine grandchildren for the Earl. However, on his death his title will go to a nephew. It rankles a little with [one] Lady... that, as the eldest[daughter], she cannot inherit because she is female. But most of the time her noble standing is immaterial... Friends sometimes tease her about her title...

It might just be the perfect accessory for that up-and-comer who has everything... To some, purchasing an ancient pedigree is the ultimate sign of success while to others, any attempt at buying into nobility reeks of tackiness and the nouveau riche. But for 26 people who splashed out a total of nearly £400,000... at an auction of manorial titles in London, it means they may now call themselves lords and ladies, whatever anyone might think. The Manorial Society of Great Britain holds three to four such auctions a year where down-and-out aristocrats or those simply tired of carrying so many lordships as a birthright can sell some of their ancient titles... "These things have always been bought and sold, dating back as far as William the Conqueror and the Domesday Book in 1086." ...Many... are sold by aristocrats facing enormous death duties or other bills for maintaining family estates... While Britain still has hereditary peers who sit in the House of Lords... purchased titles do not include any such ancient privilege nor do they convey noble status... The manorships and baronies have long since had any feudal powers associated with them stripped away by legislation... [along with] any accompanying estate or castle... The buyers must now content themselves with nothing more than an elaborate sheet of paper... "But it might well help us to get a dinner reservation somewhere," said the new Lord of Chuderleigh... He and his wife... purchased a manorship in their home county of Devonshire for £7500. "It's all in good fun. We won't use it too often." ...Last year, Princess Diana's brother sold the Lordship of Wimbledon for £188,000 to get the plumbing fixed at his stately home.

...*TOP SALE:* The tennis trophies and memorabilia won by... the 1934 Wimbledon... champion... [have] fetched \$704,194 at auction – twice the amount expected... Bidders and spectators at Christie's gasped when the... International Tennis Hall of Fame at Newport, Rhode Island, paid \$77,600 for a US Lawn Tennis Association Challenge Cup given to [the Englishman] for keeps after he won the title... in 1933, 1934 and 1936.

...*A guide to born losers* PEOPLE who stagger through their lives making the wrong decisions at every turn may have "losers' lobes" – brains that lack the parts needed to make good choices. The defect was discovered by neuroscientists in America. It could add a whole new dimension to staff recruitment. Management trainees and professionals could soon be asked to undergo brain scans so potential employers can be sure a candidate has the right type of brains before giving them the job. It also explains other research that shows some people really are luckier than others: Their brains might just be particularly good at making the right decisions in life. The existence of lose[r]'s lobes emerged during a study of patients who had subtle brain defects. Although they did perfectly well in IQ and memory tests, they seemed to have an uncanny knack of always making the wrong decision. A team of scientists... set up an experiment involving both the patients and people without brain defects. Each group was given four packs of cards, all of which contained cards awarding money. Two of the packs also contained cards that carried huge penalties. After being clobbered by a few of the penalty cards, the ordinary people started to sense what was happening and chose more cards from the other packs. But the patients took longer to work out there was a difference between the packs. Even when they did discover the difference, they still chose from the bad packs... and lost more and more money. Reporting their findings in the current issue of *Science*, [the scientists]... conclude that the patients lack vital circuitry in the brain needed to have hunches about the best decisions to make. They suspect that the part of the brain required to make good decisions lies right between the eyes. All the patients had damage in this area, which is thought to hold information about past rewards and punishment... [B]ecause the patients could not access the information about previous experiences, they could not have reliable hunches... When it comes to making wrong decisions, there are few to beat Captain Robert Falcon Scott, whose 1910 expedition to the South Pole has become the stuff of legend... He may be Scotland's premier poet, but many of [Robbie] Burns' personal decisions made as much sense as his lines... The original master of the macabre, [Edgar Allan] Poe's life was dogged by decisions every bit as horrific as his tales... Even glimmerings of success could not counter Poe's drink and drug-powered demise. He died, aged 39, after being bitten by a rabid dog... Living proof of Winston Churchill's dictum that tyrants contain the seeds of their own destruction, Adolf Hitler's apparent gift for political leadership was ultimately eclipsed by a catalogue of appalling military decisions. - 1997

Adolf Hitler's name will live in infamy. But how good was he at military matters? ...a... 34-year-old... [historian's] mission for the next three years is to look past feelings of revulsion... and delve deep into the German arch-dictator's military mind. He is painfully aware of the... Third Reich, having devoted his master's degree to the Holocaust... Now the Massey University lecturer has been commissioned by leading publishing house Macmillan Press UK to fill a literary void... Although countless volumes have been written about Hitler's ascension in the 1930s, he says only three serious books have ever focused on his military command, and the most recent of these was published 27 years ago... Some of his victories before 1941, such as his assault with paratroopers and gliders on a seemingly impenetrable Belgian fortress, were "stunningly successful" and rivalled anything in Germany's long military tradition. Hitler was an avid student of his Prussian military forbears, arming himself with the ability to defy advice from his own generals, who were amazed by the audacity of some of his strategies. But... he was no military genius, despite the innovative and pre-emptive tactics with which he swept through Europe, and he ultimately lost his war because of a succession of his own mistakes. His three big fatal mistakes, in [the historian's] eyes, were: • Letting a third of a million British and French troops escape to sea from the Dunkirk beaches. • Failing to reach peace terms with the allies after seizing all Europe by 1941. • And rushing to declare war with the U[S] after Japan bombed Pearl Harbour, in the mistaken belief that this might coax Tokyo into opening a second front against his own arch-enemy, the Soviet Union... [Hitler's] inability to delegate responsibilities reached the point where field commanders were afraid to move a single military division without his involvement[, and]... an inability to resist playing individual generals and services off against each other seemingly "undid all his good work." ...Hitler's failure to manage an effective coalition of Axis powers will also be scrutinised. His coalition of nationalities such as Italians, Finns, Romanians and Hungarians came unstuck amid language difficulties and racism, with Hitler routinely using his non-Aryan partners as cannon fodder. [But the historian] rejects any notion that Hitler was insane, a diagnosis which would reduce the dictator's responsibility for the devastation he caused. He points out that Hitler's poor health meant he was under constant medical examination throughout the... War, yet no doctors' records unearthed since his death point to insanity. "They show a person who was certainly a bit erratic but not insane... I think the reason for the German people's fascination for Hitler is that he seemed to offer a way out of their difficulties. Instead, he led them to destruction and barbarism."

...A small gun with a very large asking price is on sale in Melbourne. The seller, an anonymous gun dealer in the U[S], hopes to get between \$A2 million... and \$A5 million for the Walther PPK 7.56[– even though]... it could not be taken into the U[S]... The reason the price is so high is that the seller claims it is the very gun that Adolf Hitler used to commit suicide.

...Two pieces of Hitler memorabilia will be sold in Adelaide next month... [The] hand-painted porcelain vases[were] presented to the Nazi leader in 1937 by... [the] Regent of the Hungarian Empire. Hitler prized the vases and kept them at... his resort in the Bavarian Alps. On May 4, 1945,[a] US Lieutenant... overran Hitler's mountain retreat at Berchtesgaden with the infantry, and souvenired the vases. [H]e gave the vases to his sister... as a wedding present, moved to Hollywood, failed to break into movies, and died alone in near-poverty. The vases remained on his sister's cabinet shelf for 40 years until, after her death, the family found the German eagle and swastika and the Hungarian coat of arms. They will be sold... over the Internet... [by] Bruce's Auction Gallery... with bidding starting at \$285,000.

...Winston Churchill, who outdid Adolf Hitler both on and off the canvas, was celebrated yesterday with the largest exhibition of his paintings ever staged... Both Churchill and Hitler were keen painters. The difference was that Hitler, thwarted as an artist, went into politics while Churchill, triumphant in war, turned to painting to relax. "If it weren't for painting, I couldn't live, I couldn't bear the strain of things," confessed Churchill, whose self-styled "little daubs" now sell for as much as £150,000... each. In stark contrast, a Hitler water-colour of Vienna, whose Art Academy repeatedly rejected him, fetched just £3000 last October. The auctioneer said it was definitely a Hitler work because the quality was so poor... Churchill, who won the 1953 Nobel literature prize for his writing, had no delusions of grandeur about his painting... When one of his canvasses sold handsomely at a 1949 charity auction, he said the price was "all humbug, made up with 70[% notoriety, 20%] charity and, I hope, 10[%] the actual performance."

The market for contemporary art skyrocketed this week when... a 1949 painting... sold for a record \$US15.6 million... to an anonymous bidder...

[A] pen and ink drawing of Winnie the Pooh and Piglet was yesterday auctioned for a world record £80,500... The picture, expected to sell for about £15,000, was bought by an anonymous European collector.

...[a] drawing by Raphael, titled *Study for The Head And Hand Of An Apostle*, was sold for £5.3... million... yesterday, a record price for a work by the Italian artist... "It is a magnificent price for a magnificent drawing," a spokesman for Christie's said.

...Plain old stocks and bonds are not the only investments making people dizzy these days. Keen to add pictures to their portfolios, investors are spending more of their money on famous works of art... Many Japanese corporations, especially banks, joined the fray, spending freely on whatever treasures were put on the block... But a work of art cannot be priced with financial formulas. It is ultimately worth only what some other collector is willing to pay. To shell out millions now, in the hope that someone else will shell out even more in the future, is risky indeed. As an investment, art's main virtue is purely non-financial. Canvas millions are prettier to look at than paper ones... [In related news, t]he art collection of a Wellington accountant jailed for stealing \$1.09 million while in charge of the books of... art auctioneers... has realised \$790,000 at auction. - 1996

A fine art dealer has pleaded guilty in New York to... five charges... of selling valuable works belonging to his celebrity clients and keeping the proceeds... [He obtained ove]r... \$US2 m... [By the way, t]he world's smallest Rembrandt painting [- 105mm x 65mm -] ...has... sold... for \$4.24 m...

A newspaper reporter has had a furtive, middle-of-the-night glimpse of what appeared to be a Rembrandt masterpiece stolen in one of the biggest art thefts in history... *Storm on the Galilee* was unfurled from an oversized heavy-duty poster tube. The Rembrandt, along with 11 other works of art stolen... in 1990, are valued at about \$US300 million... Ever since the... heist, the missing works... have been a top priority of the FBI's violent crimes unit... [An antiques dealer and an] imprisoned art thief... were trying to broker a deal with federal authorities for... a \$US5 million... reward... and freedom from prosecution in exchange for help in returning the art to the Boston museum. Placards now mark the spots in the four-storey stone building where the paintings once hung... The... [museum] had no insurance on its collection... The *Boston Herald* said the reporter was taken by a circuitous route to a barren warehouse somewhere in the northeast... [T]he secret... viewing... was to be proof that the paintings were [still] in the U[S]... According to the newspaper, the guide told the reporter that five men took part in the theft... The guide also said the theft was commissioned by an international organised crime figure, and that the men were paid \$US100,000... each for... [their] work... They subdued and handcuffed the two guards on duty and spent 90 minutes... removing art from the walls...

['The French masterpiece *Still on Top* by James Tissot is back on public show at the Auckland Art Gallery, having been restored following the daring shotgun raid that saw it stolen three years ago. The restored work will be on show until October 14 along with other Tissot works. The exhibition includes photographs of the two-year restoration project, which cost \$140,000. Experts from the major auction house of Sotheby's and a leading Tissot scholar from the US have estimated damage to the 88cm by 54cm painting had resulted in a \$4 million loss in its value. The 1874 oil painting was valued at \$8 million before being badly torn when the thief jemmied it from its frame, rolled it up and fled on a motorcycle on a quiet Sunday morning. He later demanded a \$500,000 ransom for the return of the Tissot, which police found eight days after the robbery hidden under a bed at the home he rented. He was sentenced to nearly 17 years jail for that robbery and others'. In international news, 'an extraordinary 7-year thieving spree by a kleptomaniac art connoisseur has ended with the destruction of Old Master paintings worth an estimated \$NZ3 billion. What made his crimes difficult to detect was that, unlike most art thieves, he felt no need to advertise his success. Instead, with his mother's connivance, he kept the contraband in a kind of private museum at her apartment. It was there, after his arrest, that the mother exacted her revenge on a son whom she regarded as having ruined her life with his kleptomaniac urges. She told police that she took a knife to the canvasses. Having cut them to shreds she put them out with the rubbish. More than 100 other pieces were dumped into a French canal. "It is a shattering loss to the art world," said a spokesperson from the Art Loss Register in London, which co-ordinates information on stolen art.']

...A Russian artist, citing "artistic reasons," hurled green paint at a canvas said to be worth \$20 million in the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam on Saturday. [The Russian], aged 39, said he did it because he thought he could improve upon the work which was done in the 1920s by a compatriot... The painting, titled "Supremacy" consists of a large grey splash and a white cross. "It's instant art," said a museum spokesman "but it's an inadmissible form of art." [The Russian] was arrested as museum specialists dashed to clean up the mess.

...A British artist sold six of his 10 limited edition prints for £200... each at an exhibition at London's Royal Academy - despite show staff hanging the pictures the wrong way up... [Meanwhile, a] May 1939 comic book featuring the first appearance of Batman [has] fetched \$US68,500... at auction in New York. Detective Comics No 27, considered the finest unrestored copy ever offered for public sale, brought the highest bid at a sale of comic art that totalled \$US1.7 million...

One of the world's last great art collections still in private hands fetched \$US92.7 million... at auction yesterday... The 29 works... became the highest total for a single-owner sale... - topping the previous record of \$US85 million - since the art market hit its peak before tanking in 1989. Art experts said it was a sign of a new vitality in the market. The highest price of the night was \$US23.1 million for a Cezanne... The record for a Cezanne remained at the \$US28.6 million set in 1993.

...A collection of modern art which ranks as one of the world's greatest private collection of Picassos is to be sold in New York... The *Daily Telegraph* said it would include the 1932 Picasso *Dream*... which the... paper said... would sell for at least \$US35 million... putting it among the 10 most expensive paintings[ever] sold...

A collection of 20th-century art... shattered the record for a single-owner sale, going for just over \$US206 million... at Christie's yesterday. The auction house described the single-session sale... as "enormously in excess of anything we had hoped for." A record crowd of 2000 prospective bidders packed four salesrooms. Highlights of the sale included the \$US48,402,500... paid for... *Le Reve (The Dream)*... bought... for \$US7000 in 1941... It was the second highest price ever paid for a Picasso, about \$US4 million short of the price of *Les noces de Pierrette*...

['For many years Pablo Picasso was an ardent supporter of communism, an economic system which advocates equal distribution of wealth. Yet Picasso accumulated more wealth in his lifetime than any other artist. After his death his estate was valued at something over \$250 million, including two large estates in France and an extensive art collection. When his paintings began selling for very high prices, he was able to fulfill one of his earlier stated dreams: "I should like to live like a poor man, with a great deal of money." J. Paul Getty during his lifetime was considered the world's richest man. He was also known to be one of the stingiest. While on vacation at the Imperial Hotel in Vienna he gave the concierge the equivalent of twenty-five cents to

pay for a stamp and then asked for change. Getty also had pay telephones installed in his seventy-two-room mansion, presumably so guests would not run up his phone bill. On the other hand, he would freely spend hundreds of thousands of dollars for a piece of art to add to his extensive collection.']

...The most expensive and extravagant... home for art riches... in the U[S] threw its doors open to the public yesterday... The Getty Centre in Los Angeles was built at a cost of \$NZ1.75 billion and named after its... late... benefactor...

[The] investment banking arm of the Swiss Bank Corporation, is understood to be bidding to buy art auction house Christie's for \$1400 million... [Incidentally, more than 100 paintings and drawings said to be by Impressionist genius Vincent Van Gogh may be fakes. The *Daily Telegraph* reported yesterday that among the alleged fakes is the famous *Sunflowers* – one of a series of seven works with the same name – which was bought for £24.75 million... in 1987 [the same year that 'Van Gogh's *Irises* was sold for a then record of \$US53.9 million']... The report also claimed that a *Portrait of Dr Gachet*, hanging in Paris' Musée d'Orsay, was a counterfeit. A similar portrait of the doctor, who cared for Van Gogh before he killed himself, set a world record price for a picture in 1990 when it was sold to Japan for £48.8 million...

In the art world things are not always what they appear to be and, with tens of millions of dollars hanging on the truth, sellers as well as buyers need to beware. Take a cash-strapped baker in the southern French city of Montpellier, who sold what she thought was a decent imitation of an August Rodin bronze in 1988. It fetched \$US6700 and she thought it a good deal until she found out it was... the real thing, which was valued at \$US24.2 million... The baker wanted the buyers to return the 70cm bronze... of Rodin's one-time muse... in a position of supplication. They refused so she took them to court, where she has won the latest round in a long battle. Montpellier's appeal court has ordered the buyers to hand over \$US24.2 million to the baker. It might not be the end of the case, since the buyers are likely to appeal to France's highest court. Exactly the opposite problem may be facing Japan's Yasuda Fire and Marine Insurance Company...

A spokesman for Yasuda Fire & Marine Insurance Co Ltd... – [t]he Japanese owner... of... *Sunflowers* [–] yesterday rejected claims the famed painting might be a fake... The costly acquisition of... one of van Gogh's best-known works, earned a rebuke at the time from the Japanese Financial Ministry, which described the purchase as "an excessive demonstration of wealth." The painting is on public display at Yasuda's art gallery in its headquarters in central Tokyo. A spokesman for Tokyo's National Museum of Western Art said there was nothing to substantiate the counterfeit claim. "There have been several reports of van Gogh fakes but so far there has been no concrete proof... The majority of experts believe in the authenticity of *Sunflowers*."

...Amsterdam's Van Gogh Museum, London's National Gallery and Japan's Yasuda Fire and Marine Insurance... have begun an investigation to determine the authenticity of [their] Van Gogh's... All own... paintings... showing 14 sunflowers set against a pale green background.

...[*Gauguin case shows how hard it is to spot a forgery* A NZer owns a beautiful Gauguin painting that he absolutely adores. It's exactly the same as the \$10 million Gauguin held in New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, but his Gauguin only cost a few bob. The former Rotorua Museum curator loves fakes; he collects forgeries as a hobby, a practice he calls "perverse pleasure." "I almost bought a *Mona Lisa*. I have a number of *Mona Lisas* but this one was an oil painting of approximately the original size." He is also thinking of buying a signed C.F. Goldie that is on sale for a song. It's not a "real" Goldie, of course, it's the work of a notorious art forger who changed his name by deed poll to Carl Feodor Goldie following his conviction for painting facsimiles of the master's work. The former curator believes this forger is behind the mysterious Rangitoto painting attributed to Gauguin (the forger has since denied responsibility) that was unveiled and for sale last weekend at an Auckland gallery. The Rangitoto painting's authenticity (or otherwise) has yet to be resolved but since NZ art is so "young," the country does not have a long history of art forgery. "You don't see a lot but they are out there. People are confused about what constitutes an original work of art. A poor chap in Te Aroha thought he had a Monet when in fact it was a good-quality textured print." Indeed, families who discover a family heirloom gathering dust in the attic often make that mistake. Each year, the Auckland City Art Gallery receives about a half dozen paintings by anyone from Constable to Goldie from individuals seeking authentication. A local auctioneer has only had to reimburse buyers on a couple of occasions during his 40 years in the business but turns away fakes every year. Buyers who unwittingly buy fakes would be protected under the Fair Trading Act, he says. The Auckland Art Gallery's principal conservator says a searching examination is needed to uncover quality forgery. Experts look at the cross-section of the paint, the materials used and the method of construction, and x-rays can reveal the presence of the titanium dioxide used by early masters. Contemporary forgeries are more problematic as there are fewer physical clues to betray dubious origins. Probably history's most successful forger, and certainly the most romantic, was Dutchman van Meegeren (1880-1947) who foisted a number of fake Dutch master Johannes Vermeer's works on an unsuspecting art world. His subterfuge was only uncovered in 1946 when he was put on trial for collaborating with the Nazis after he swapped a fake Vermeer for the return of 200 Dutch originals from Hermann Goering. He cleared himself of the collaboration charge by creating, in court, an "original" Vermeer. However, he was convicted of fraud as a result and sentenced to imprisonment but died before serving his sentence.')

...A year ago Eric Hebborn was found drink-sodden and dying from a head wound in a Rome square. No one knows if he simply hit his head on falling, or if there was something more sinister in the death of this flawed genius who made a monkey of the art establishment with his brilliant forgeries. One theory is that he was murdered to prevent his publication of the ultimate in do-it-yourself manuals, *The Art Forger's Handbook*. If that was the intent, it did not work. An Italian edition was already on its way and this week... the English edition... [was] published... Hebborn, although a superb draughtsman with enormous technical expertise, lacked the "spark of originality" genius needs... At any rate, the market now recognises infamy as well as fame and Hebborns themselves fetch a fair price.

...[the Londoner] 'put down the receiver and sat in silence. He was, he says, a man in shock. An abandoned husband with two babies to bring up, his career as an artist becalmed, he had just been offered £12,500 for a faked painting which he had knocked up in a few hours with old brushes and Dulux emulsion. "I couldn't believe it," he recalls. "I was broke. I used to get £150 for my fakes, but now the price had gone up. The art world was fooled. Hell, what could I do? I took the money." It was 1987 and the start of what critics accept as the greatest art-forgery caper of the 20th Century; a scam that would last eight years and take in the world's biggest auction houses; a tale of deception and chicanery that would see almost 200 fakes passed off as works by great artists. On the other end of the phone that day had been a 38-year-old confidence trickster, a man of such charm and intelligence that he had managed to worm his way into the affections of the art world and – crucially – into the archives of London's Victoria & Albert Museum and Tate Gallery, where buyers went to establish the authenticity of works of art. The scam finally came to an end in 1995 when the trickster's estranged wife found some incriminating papers and reported them to the police. The trickster maintained his innocence but he was jailed for six years. The forger admitted everything and was jailed for 12 months, serving four. He still spends his days painting in the style of contemporary masters, but now he signs his own name on the back. The latest chapter of the saga is that a Hollywood production company was in the early stages of producing a film about art fraud, "loosely based" on the pair's story. "It should be a good platform for my work," the forger jokes. "My fakes might genuinely be worth a few bob one day."')

...Aborigines protested in Perth yesterday about a window display of fake Aboriginal art, calling it "cultural and spiritual theft." ...A Dumbartung Aboriginal Corporation spokesman... said the works... under the name of "Eddie Burrup," were a misappropriation of Aboriginal culture, in the art itself and in the way it was described.

...[an] Aboriginal artist... has admitted that she did not paint many of the works which... earned her hundreds of thousands of dollars... and... won her a prestigious art prize... last year's \$A18,000... National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award... The *Australian* reports that [her] former... Welsh-born... de facto husband... devised and painted most of the work... "[He] started with the white cross [the foundation structure...] and did all the white dots. I just followed with the yellow infill,"... [She] told the paper she feared she would go to jail if she [had] told the truth when [his] claims were revealed last month... The... case is the second controversial incident recently involving Aboriginal art. An artist... aged 82...

from[a] famous... West A[US]n pioneering family... prompted a national outcry in March when she revealed... that paintings by a Kimberley Aborigine called Eddie Burrup, were in fact her own.

...An Aboriginal painter whose work this week fetched... \$A206,000... – more than twice the previous record price for A[US]n indigenous art... [–] was revealed to be a down-and-out welfare recipient who often sleeps in a river bed... He... had unsuccessfully asked for 4[%] of the proceeds from the painting's recent sale, arguing that as an Aboriginal the painting would always belong to him. He sold the painting for \$A150 in 1972[. □ A movement in Europe has 'called to allow artists to receive "a small levy" each time a painting of theirs is sold']...

Let be, let be... painted... [by] Colin McCahon... in 1959 as part of a series... has been sold in Sydney for \$1.14 million – a record price for a post-1910 A[US]n or NZ artwork. It... was sold to a private A[US]n collector by the gallery that... had bought the painting for \$712,000 at auction in Auckland in March 1995, which was then the record price for a N[Z] painting. Friday's sale... eclipsed prices of up to \$900,000 paid for A[US]n post-1910 paintings... "It clearly shows [McCahon] is regarded as the pre-eminent modern Australasian painter,"... [the gallery's owner said, while adding that the theft of the artist's] *Urewera Mural* from the Department of Conservation Visitor Centre at Lake Waikaremoana in... Hawke's Bay last month created a lot of interest in A[US]n media and art circles... [Some early A[US]n colonial paintings had sold for around \$2m... - 1997

One of the finest Maori artefacts offered at auction overseas will go under the hammer in New York today. The carving, expected to fetch more than \$2 million, will be sold by Sotheby's... The 1.2m male figurine... was held in a private European collection for more than 20 years. It was taken to England between 1880 and 1890 by A.H.W. Williams, whose... grandfather, William Williams... translated the *New Testament* into Maori and wrote a Maori dictionary... [An] Auckland ethnologist... has said the figure was made by a Ngati Kahungunu carver about 1850. It had been gifted to the Williams family but some Ngati Kahungunu people might be upset at its being auctioned. "It is a figure of an ancestor of somebody, and descendants of that ancestor might not feel happy about it being traded, and quite rightly so,"... Members of the East Coast Ngati Kahungunu iwi want the Taonga (treasure) repatriated but say they cannot afford to bid against art dealers from around the world.

...The record \$US1.1 million... paid for a Maori carving at an auction in New York yesterday could lead to more carvings being taken out of the country... "What's to stop people from smuggling out more of our taonga? The type of money just paid out in New York could encourage people to start stripping carvings and taonga from anywhere, including urupa [cemeteries],"... said... a master carver... [from] the Maori Arts and Crafts Institute in Rotorua... A Ngati Kahungunu senior elder... said the tribe was saddened over the sale... "Our pain... is deep. How can one not be affected by the sale of one of our ancestors? It's totally foreign to us that money has passed hands for our ancestor... A very strong protest should be made by our Maori leaders to those who sell our heritage." ...[a Maori] MP... said Sotheby's had played its part in the selling of taonga. "They have made a healthy profit exploiting Maori ties to their treasures, and the practice has to stop. It is cultural blackmail what these people do."

...[a Hollywood-based a]ctress... wrote to... a Virginian businessman to spare the life of a rare black rhinoceros to be sold for use in a hunt outside Johannesburg... which is her hometown. The owner... will be paid \$60,000 for the animal by a big-game hunter and the beautiful star... appealed to... him, "If you agree to release the rhino to a sanctuary, I will agree to meet you in South Africa to celebrate her freedom." ...so far her offer hasn't swayed [the owner]. "She's a wonderful animal but I can't afford to give her away," he responded. "Yet the last thing I want is to have her blown away..."

...white rhinos... at Christchurch's [Safari] Park have a peaceful existence compared to their cousins, the black rhino of Africa. The black rhino is under threat... slaughtered by poachers for their highly-prized horns[which are predominantly used to make 'dagger handles and Asian medicines']... Rhinos are... fighting a losing battle against total extinction... [In] Africa military-style operations defend them against poachers... - Our World

In the late 1960s, there were 65 thousand black rhino in Africa. After three decades of poaching... fewer than 2 1/2 thousand remain[. There are also only '7562 white rhino left in Africa (of which 7095 populate South Africa')].... Conservationists are constantly thinking of new ways to protect the rhino. In recent years they've been filing down their horns. In theory, it makes a less attractive target for poachers[– who often cut horns off at the flesh (leaving the animal to painfully bleed to death) in order to maximise their haul]. But the scheme hasn't worked... because even the stump of the horn will fetch a high price in Asia. - HUMAN NATURE

There is now a total ban on the sale of rhino horn, but this action has probably come too late to save the species.

A complaint about an advertisement selling rhino horn, that appeared in the Chinese edition of the N[Z] *Herald*, has not been upheld by the Advertising Standards Complaints Board. The advertisement... read in part... "Good Investment Opportunity in Rhino Horn... Absolutely pure Rare Species... Export documentation can be obtained... Only genuine offers over \$NZ150,000 considered." The complainant... said rhino horn was from an endangered species and its commercial use banned. The *Herald* said it had contacted the Department of Conservation before publishing the advertisement and found there was no restriction trading rhino horn already in N[Z]. In related news... Tanzanian police have impounded... elephant tusks worth \$195,000 at Dar es Salaam airport that were to be flown to Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa disguised as diplomatic cargo belonging to the US. - 1996

A Hawkes Bay woman has had a fine... increased to \$1000 for returning from Africa with elephant hide... [The 48-year-old] had been fined \$250 in the Otahuhu District Court. But the D[oC] appealed and the fine was quadrupled by... the High Court at Auckland yesterday. [The woman] had admitted having a rifle case, belt and wallet made of elephant skin along with five pairs of ivory earrings without a permit, in contravention of the Trade in Endangered Species Act. She also admitted producing a false invoice to a Customs officer at Auckland Airport on her return from a month-long trip to Zimbabwe... When stopped at the airport she maintained that the earrings were bone, not ivory[, while]... the gun belt and case [was] buffalo rather than elephant... According to the summary of facts presented to the court... "The culling of African elephant herds in Zimbabwe is not undertaken in accordance with any approved species or herd management programme..." [Incidentally, 'when an elephant dies in an African rainforest, no creature can eat its tough hide. The body just rots and leaks toxins which kill the adjacent plant life, clearing a space around it. While alive, elephants also create space in the rainforest for all of the smaller creatures. If elephants disappear, many smaller creatures will go with them.' Furthermore, 'when an older, large-tusked elephant is killed, a herd loses a lot of knowledge necessary for its survival']...

Sri Lankan elephants face grim battle for survival... In the past 70 years, more than 60[% of Sri Lanka]'s jungle has been turned into farmland... Pushed back into ever smaller pockets of jungle, elephants are in daily conflict with farmers and... rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. The... elephants are driven out of the forest periodically by the movement of the guerrillas and by the sound of gunfire and explosions. Squeezed between the rebels on one side and subsistence farmers on the other, elephant numbers are dwindling... The country now has only 2500 to 3000 wild elephants, down from an estimated 12,000 at the turn of the century. The director of Sri Lanka's Wildlife Conservation service... said 110 elephants died in 1995 and 100 or so in 1996. This year at least 50 have been killed[, sometimes because]... wildlife was forgotten... when the farmers... cut down and burnt the forest[, but also in retaliation to]... the trail of destruction[an] elephant has left... The damage to farms is enormous. "Elephants find cultivated land easy pickings... A four tonne elephant can destroy six months' work on the farm in one night,"... said... a

conservationist... But... villagers are... [also afraid of] elephants. The number of people killed in attacks has risen sharply, with at least 59 deaths reported in 1996, up from 29 in 1993. Over 250 people have been killed by elephants in the past five years. [Editor's note: 'More humans are killed by hippos in Africa each year than by any other wild animal.']

...French Customs have seized 1738 hippopotamus teeth... and four wart-hog teeth at Paris' Only Airport en route from Uganda to Hong Kong. "The persistence of demand for ivory in the Far East is leading traffickers to find species other than elephants... to satisfy this demand," the Customs service said.

...*Demand for ivory has not disappeared despite ban since 1989* [African elephant numbers – which fell from '5 million in 1970 to 1.3 million in 1979' – have continued to decrease. Now 'there are about 600,000 African elephants, and between 30,000 and 50,000 Asian elephants left.']

...*Battle looms over plan to resume killing elephants*... Plans by three African countries to take their elephant populations off the list of endangered species, and thereby pave the way for a resumption in the ivory trade, look set to trigger a major international row next week... The U[S and AUS] are both opposed to the move[, but]... Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe argue that their burgeoning elephant populations are trampling crops and crowding people off the land... While the U[S] recognised the successful efforts of the three countries to manage their herds, easing trade restrictions would pose "unacceptable risks to elephant populations." ...Environmental groups are split over the request... Officials from African elephant range countries are meeting in Harare this week to decide their position on the proposal... The three countries need support from two-thirds of convention members... which they have been trying to do since 1990... [It] was unclear whether they would be able to secure enough votes now that the U[S] has said it would oppose them.

...Two leading wildlife groups... the U[S]-based International Fund for Animal Welfare and Amsterdam-based Greenpeace... yesterday backed a proposal to write off the debts of some African countries in exchange for existing ivory stocks. But they strongly rejected... [bringing an] end to the world ban on the ivory trade.

...[the] Environment Minister said in an interview published yesterday that Zimbabwe would defy a world ban on ivory trade if it fails in its bid this week to be allowed to sell ivory from its "excess" elephant population.

...The 10-day Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) has attracted more than 2000 delegates, including some of the world's leading environmental groups. Many have already declared their position on the ivory dispute and media focus has mainly been on the issue... The three countries and their supporters, notably Japan, say they must be allowed some limited but strictly supervised trade because their elephant herd... is rising steadily and... [is] now estimated at around 150,000... Since the ban was imposed they have accumulated nearly 100 tonnes of ivory from annual culls and from legally hunted trophies. They say trade in ivory is vital to stabilise the elephant herd, which they say is now over twice the land's carrying capacity... The 138-member CITES will vote on the issue towards the end of the conference... But the proposal is strongly opposed by... the U[S] and French Governments. They argue lifting the ban will leave elephants at the mercy of poachers... CITES officials said the conference could also see intense debate on a proposal by Japan and Norway to open up whale hunting... The meeting will also debate ways to preserve the Indian tiger, the black rhino, the sturgeon fish [(whose 'eggs are used for caviar' –)] ...but the fish must be killed first to get them)... and the Cuban sea turtle – all threatened by poachers. The convention estimates the illegal global trade in endangered species is worth up to \$10 billion a year. [■ 'More than 12 million exotic animals a year are illegally trapped in Brazil's Amazon rainforest, according to the WWF. Of those captured, only 10% make it to the black market and stores alive, where they are sold.']

...A global forum's easing of an ivory trade ban could be a "blessing in disguise" that will help preserve elephants, says the W[WF]... "...the money from this renewed trade will be used for their conservation... I don't think it will open the floodgates... It will be subject to international scrutiny. It must only concern stockpiles. No elephants will be killed to provide ivory,"... said the fund's Hong Kong representative...

Millions of elephants once roamed free across the African continent. This century people have taken over much of their natural habitat through clearing the land for farms and settlements. Elephant numbers rapidly declined in the 1970s as poachers killed these large beasts for their tusks. Ivory fetched such high prices it was called "white gold"... Today many elephants are restricted to national parks and reserves where they can be managed... [However, 'even in parks, the elephants are not safe. Another conservationist alternative is to rebuild public opinion. "More than anybody, I blame those who buy ivory," says a Scottish zoologist. He and many allies hope to change people's attitudes to ivory and discourage its use, as was done with leopard and tiger skins. Only then will the slaughter stop.' Ivory is made] into... signature seals... jewellery, figurines, piano keys... - 1997

"Dad, how would you like to be sold to an ivory dealer?" "I'd like it fine." "Even if he killed you and made your teeth into piano keys?" "Yes, of course I would. Who wouldn't like that, to be part of the music scene?"

The harmless, gentle DIGIT had been slain for his head and hands, sold to a trader for the equivalent of \$20... to be made into ashtrays... [O]ther members of the study group[were also] found dead at poachers' hands... Although the park is protected under laws, illegal hunting goes on... and a greedy trader can still find a market for an impressive silverback skull... Often gorillas are accidentally caught in traps set for antelope, a favourite source of meat for the local Europeans...

Poverty-stricken islanders are pushing one of the world's biggest turtle populations to the brink of extinction by selling their eggs to Malaysian Muslims hungry for exotic delicacies... This prehistoric species already faces well-documented perils, with birds of prey, dynamite and cyanide fishing, monitor lizards, sharks and driftnets ensuring that only a tiny fraction of eggs laid will make it to adulthood. But these are insignificant compared with the effects of long-term egg plundering on the six Philippine islands... [among the] nine tiny islands... where... 80[%] of South-east Asia's green turtles... lay their eggs... [P]ermits are still issued in five of the Philippine islands allowing locals to collect almost 70[%] of them. These are then smuggled to markets in... Borneo... where it is illegal to collect or sell turtle eggs. In five days of collection a permit-holder can earn about 10,000 pesos... – a fortune in this poor, often-forgotten part of the country. Although the islands form the world's only transnational wildlife heritage area and won last year's coveted John Paul Getty wildlife award, egg production has plummeted almost 90[%] since the 1950s... [T]he director of the Philippines Department of the Environment and Natural Resources' turtle project, recognises "the irony of basically giving people permission to go and break the law in Malaysia." "On our side, egg collection is part of the local people's traditional livelihood. If we ban egg collection they will just resort to poaching, so it's better to regulate it." Regulation is in the hands of local wardens, but several have been caught protecting their friends' poaching activities rather than the turtles... However, [the director] remains quietly optimistic, even though his project's budget has been slashed from 7.9 million pesos... to 5.3 million... He hopes carefully managing eco-tourism will bring in money and employment to the locals within the next few years. A successful luxury resort on the Malaysian side already has a waiting list of up to three years for tourists eager to sample a turtle experience. The local... WWF... team is far less convinced, however. It set up a turtle protection project on Taganak Island in 1996, and plans to introduce alternative livelihoods such as live food fishing for the restaurant trade. But... their good intentions are in tatters. "Unfortunately, we found it impossible to keep a cooperative together. Right now we're... just trying to gain the trust of the people, especially the community leaders, who have always creamed off profits from the egg collection,"... said... [a] WWF marine programme officer... [He also] warned that tourism could be a big mistake, citing the problems of introducing rich tourists into a very poor... community where few people have ever seen a foreigner.

...IT'S GETTING close to 9.30 am on an already swelteringly day and the tourists at Sepilok orang-utan sanctuary... are growing restless. Many of the group – a mix of Germans, Japanese, Britons, A[US]ns and Malaysians – have been up since 5 am to catch flights to... the island of Borneo... [However, at] the first rustle of jungle leaves as the orang-utans – literally “men of the forest” – arrive for their morning feed of bananas and milk... the heat, weariness and the journey are forgotten. Delight and wonder spread among the humans as 10 or so of the gentle red apes gradually emerge... Then an excited buzz runs through the tourists as a giant ape, which has been watching from high in the trees, slides down a rope in a single, swift movement. Suddenly we remember the tour guide's warnings: “Be very careful around the orang-utans. They might seem friendly but they may try to steal things from you.” A tattered newspaper clipping in the sanctuary's information centre recounts the story of an embarrassed French tourist who was stripped naked by a mischievous orang-utan... The orang-utans' intelligence have led to a lucrative poaching trade, with a baby ape worth close to \$NZ12,000 on the black market.

Some... orang utan... mothers were killed so that the youngsters could be taken and sold as pets.

The biggest threat, however, to the orang's survival is, sad to say, the zoo trade. Every zoo wants a young ape to display to its visitors, and oranges are the easiest to obtain. Many unscrupulous private zoos, especially in the U[S], have paid high prices for baby oranges, and there has been quite a lucrative trade in them in Southeast Asia... The dealer does not make much effort to ensure the captive's welfare as he probably bought it from the hunter at a low fee, so many youngsters die. For every one orang that reaches a zoo alive, ten oranges – mothers and other babies – have quite probably perished... In 1963 [it was] estimated that only 2000 wild oranges remained in Sabah, 1000 in Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo), 700 in Sarawak and 1000 in Sumatra. Of these, only the Sabah population seems to be anything like adequately protected. In 1964 another estimate put the Sumatra population at only 100.

A tiger has killed a couple as they worked on their plantation in West Sumatra... Villagers said the tiger was probably driven to make the attack because logging had cut the size of its natural habitat. - 1996

The... London-based Environmental Investigation Agency... says endangered animal trafficking is second only to the multimillion-dollar illegal drugs trade in cash terms... Tigers will be all but extinct in five years if major Governments do nothing to halt an illegal trade in medicines based on tiger body parts, [the] wildlife lobby group has warned... The agency has uncovered proof of a thriving trade in tiger medicines in New York, Tokyo and Amsterdam... Using hidden cameras, investigators found tiger bone products... on display at chemists... According to environmentalists, poachers seeking tiger bones used in Chinese medicine and sold around the world are killing at least one Bengal tiger a day. Tigers are slaughtered to feed an ancient belief [that the ‘animal's powers can be transferred to people’, and a]... growing demand for “alternative” Chinese remedies in the West was making matters worse... As stockpiles of tiger bones and other body parts have dried up in China... in the past decade... traders have turned to India... to replenish their supplies. Campaigners estimate that the tiger population in India – the last stronghold of the species – is fewer than 3000... Of the main industrialised countries... Japan... [was] singled out... as guilty of showing “no political will to do anything about banning tiger products.” “We are seriously pointing the finger at Japan... for allowing a massive loophole to exist so that tiger medicines are legally on sale there,” said... the agency's director... International trade in tiger parts has been outlawed since 1987... The agency says China remains the main destination for tiger bones used in medicines, tiger skins for rugs and even penises, which are cooked to create \$100-a-bowl soups.

...Available from your pharmacy... Tiger balm is an effective external analgesic that provides relief from aches and pains. Made from only the finest natural ingredients... Distributed by... Pharmaceuticals (NZ) Ltd Auckland...

[‘In tonight's final episode of the wildlife documentary PREDATORS, we discover which predators are natural born killers – like the sand tiger who has a grisly start in the womb, with only one of a dozen offspring being born, while the others are eaten by the survivor – and which must learn to kill’]...

Despite almost 40 years of study of wild tigers, estimates of their numbers are still poor, says... the Wildlife Conservation Society. The WCS announced last week it will spend \$1 million over the next three years counting tigers in... Indochina... and... India...

[‘Indian officials are worried that the US President might not spot a tiger when he visits one of their sanctuaries this week in western India on his five-day trip to the country. Nervous game wardens at Ranthambore National Park, 400km west of New Delhi, are sending teams of experienced trackers armed with walkie-talkies to vantage points around water holes to spot tigers for the visiting dignitary. The national park was placed on the President's itinerary after the US Ambassador sighted seven tigers on a recent visit to the sanctuary. But wildlife officials said frenetic activity centred around building eight helipads and repairing roads inside the sanctuary had sent the tigers into hiding.’ In another development, the ‘WWF is paying compensation to Indian farmers for cattle killed by tigers – rather than have farmers poison the’ tigers.

...‘Big city battle to save tigers A 55-year-old is on a crusade to save the tiger from extinction. But his battleground is not south China or India or Sumatra, the tiger's home. It is New York, where the lack of a strategy to stop imports of elixirs made from tiger parts is an obstacle to saving the animal from disappearing from the wild. “New York is the only major city in North America where tiger bones are openly sold in spite of the existing law,” said the leader of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee that helped force the Canadian Government to strengthen laws to stop people importing and selling tiger products. He expected US legislators to strengthen the penalties and provide money to enforce present laws to stop the traffic. Under the Rhino and Tiger Product Labelling Act, which bars importation or sale of products containing tiger parts, people caught with these products face a fine of \$US5000. Business owners pay \$US10,000 and can spend six months in jail. In comparison, fines for seal penises, also used in Chinese medicine, are, respectively, \$US100,000 and \$US200,000 and/or one year in jail. The Interior Department's Deficient Wildlife Agency is in charge of enforcing the law and monitoring imports. While acknowledging illegal tiger products were being sold in the US, it argued it did not have enough manpower or money to police the illegal imports. The US market is the largest for wildlife products in the world but the country has only 93 wildlife inspectors to cover 30 ports of entry.’]

...A CUSTOMS agent at Los Angeles International Airport eyes a Chinese businessman who fiddles nervously as he declares the contents of his personal luggage. The agent asks the man, who manages an import-export company, to take his bags to the secondary inspection table... Inside, they discover the complete, disarticulated skeleton of a rare Siberian tiger along with photographs documenting the kill as a warranty for potential buyers. The tiger skeleton, once it is pulverised into a highly prized medicinal powder, is worth more than \$500,000. The man was sentenced to 21 months' jail but his punishment has not deterred others from going after the money that can be made in illicit trade of tiger bone or products made with tiger parts... According to trade records, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Japan and the USA imported at least 24 tonnes of tiger bone from China – derived from about 1000 tigers – between 1970 and 1993... In 1990, with increasing demand, poaching became rampant... [because] the pre-1997 boom of Asian economies provided consumers with more money to buy expensive tiger products. The collapse of the Soviet Union also played a role. Soon afterwards, large numbers of Siberian tigers... were killed and sold on the black market. And in 1992, poachers killed most of the tigers living on India's Ranthambore Tiger Reserve... “In the last quarter century, we've seen the disappearance of 95% of the world's wild tigers,”... At the beginning of the 20th century, an estimated 100,000 tigers roamed... as far west as Turkey and as far east as the Russian and Chinese coasts. But today 5000 to 7000 tigers from five subspecies remain in the wild worldwide. Three subspecies, the Caspian, Bali and Javan, are believed to have become extinct since the 1930s... A new problem, however, involves domesticated tigers in the USA, which probably

outnumber tigers in the wild... As more wild tigers disappear and the demand for medicines continues to increase... “our fear is we will see some of these captive animals finding their way into illegal markets.” ...Practitioners use nearly every part of the tiger for some purpose. Whiskers are used for toothaches, eyeballs for epilepsy, the bile for convulsions in children, the brains for laziness and pimples, and the tail for skin diseases... Demand for... penises, which are ingested as aphrodisiacs, is higher than ever.

...A retired Turkish worker... aged 52... who sought to cure his impotence by having a penis transplant from a donkey so irritated his family that his son shot him in the leg, according to Turkish media... [He had] twice bought donkeys and amputated their sexual organs in the hope of having a transplant even though doctors refused to co-operate... “For a long time now I have had sexual problems and I have spent all my pension funds to overcome them,” said [the ‘father-of-six’] who is waiting to recover from his wound before he goes out and buys a fourth donkey. [● ‘A Californian plastic surgeon says that over 30 men have come to him with deformities resulting from penis enlargement surgery.’

...a plastic surgeon said he had] extended a patient’s penis by a world record 14.5cm. The operation in Copenhagen which was a combination of surgery and post-surgical stretching... lengthened a 42-year-old patient’s flaccid member... to 19cm. [Incidentally ‘in the past 10 years the confiscation of such things as pickled seal penises, elephant leg footstalls, turtle shells and bottles of murky lizard and ginseng wine has skyrocketed a whopping 670%. Boxes upon boxes of precious coral taken from Pacific island reefs and beaches cram shelf after shelf of warehouse space. Giant spiders and beautiful butterflies in glass cases, snake belts, stuffed baby crocodiles and intricately carved ivory also fight for space. NZers overseas often unwittingly contribute to the depletion of species and plunder of nature, says a DoC worker who is also a technical support officer for CITES. Because tourists see souvenirs on sale in crowded markets they believe it is legal to bring them home. On the other hand – and incredibly so in some ways – it is at certain times of the year legal to hunt and kill members of some endangered species. But not without proper documentation and a CITES permit. She says a hard-core of NZ hunters go to huge expense to travel to the US during the legal bear-shooting season, designed to keep numbers under control. But some hunters do not get the correct permit and get angry and abusive when their trophy is taken off them. Fully stuffed and mounted bears are not as common as bear pelts and rugs – where the head is still attached to the skinned and flayed body. In the past two weeks alone, between 15 and 20 pelts have turned up. The DoC worker has yet to cry on the job but some days she really struggles to fight back the tears. The attempted import of a North American bear still bleeding in its partly gutted carcass was one such day. “In some countries they are still milking the bears. They put a tube in and milk the bile. It’s very painful and the bears die.”]

...“The sun bear’s gall bladder and bile is... reputed to boost sexual performance. A gall bladder will sell for anything up to \$US300, while bile is worth \$US100 a gram,”... an American with the A[US]n-based Save the Bears Fund... said. “When poor people are confronted with such high returns, it’s hard to convince them of the virtues of wildlife conservation.” ...Cambodia’s stocks of wildlife have plunged by about 60[%] since the early 1990s... as a result of deforestation, corruption and the illegal animal trade... Cambodia’s long-term isolation had made it a sanctuary until the early 1990s... “Now wildlife traders from throughout the region are looking to Cambodia to keep their trade going and make no mistake, there is a lot of money involved.” Environment Ministry officials and foreign experts say... the “out of control” trade in wild animals, particularly from the north-eastern provinces to Vietnam, involves Government officials and gangs of heavily armed men... “As Government salaries are so low, the potential for high returns make it very tempting for wildlife protection officials to become involved in the trade,”... A three to four-year old tiger will fetch between \$US5000 and \$US7000 locally, but in the markets of Vietnam an adult tiger is worth anything up to \$US30,000.” ...such high prices could result in tigers becoming extinct in Cambodia, and the sun bear... is likely to share its fate... The... Environmental Ministry... had so far received only a third of its promised \$US500,000 annual budget and many of its staff had not been paid for months. Meanwhile, a Cambodian newspaper reports that six elephants are to be exported to China... The report... said the Cambodian Council of Ministers had approved the shipment for research and crossbreeding purposes. But the paper quoted an unidentified Phnom Penh businessman who claimed the elephants were really destined for the restaurants of Beijing... where dishes such as elephant tongue... fetch up to \$US1300 a plate... The paper said the council had recently approved the export of a further 24 elephants.

...On a remote island in the South China Sea a bizarre and almost forgotten experiment launched by the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos is decaying into a violent territorial dispute between landless poachers and African animals... [In] recent years... the secluded 3,760ha Calauit Island... has become the scene of a mini-revolution, bloodshed and one of the longest-running legal wrangles in the Philippines. Calauit’s controversial history began in 1976 when the prestige-hungry Marcos answered an appeal by the Kenyan government to provide a temporary shelter for its wildlife, which was under threat from uncontrolled poaching by soldiers during a civil war. A team of government experts chose Calauit – known as the Philippines’ “Last Frontier” – as a suitable isolated site for the project. But the seeds of future conflict were sown with the eviction, some claimed at gunpoint, of Calauit’s 256 tenant families, numbering more than 1000 people. They were given small payoffs and resettled in purpose-built sites on nearby Cullion Island. In March 1977 a consignment of... giraffe, eland, topi, zebra, bushbuck, impala, gazelle and waterbuck arrived at the island after a 15-day sea crossing from Mombasa... Numerous problems arose, partly because animals used to the dry savannah were unsuited to the Philippines’ tropical monsoon climate. Zebras suffered from pneumonia and terrified giraffes broke legs after running blindly into mangrove swamps during lightning storms. Highly territorial zebras[– whose numbers back in Africa were ‘threatened by poaching for skins to hang on collectors’ walls’ –] almost wiped out the topi population by attacking the young, while the last gazelle died six years ago following violent mating season fights. Among the remaining population, in-breeding led to poor disease resistance, and young animals were picked off by Calauit’s native giant pythons and wild boar... [Furthermore,] “The original Calauit inhabitants didn’t like their resettlement areas, and when Marcos was overthrown, they thought they would be allowed back. When that didn’t happen, they... landed their boats[and] refused to leave.” The... illegal residents, numbering around 600... have taken over at least 200 hectares of the island’s lowland areas for farming – the only areas which provide sufficient grazing for the animals in summer. The government has been trying to evict them through court actions since 1987, but after a series of lengthy appeals, the squatters are still in place. And after travelling halfway around the world, the animals are now once again under serious threat from poaching. Meat from impala, eland and the endangered Philippine Calamian deer has been found on sale in local markets. Poachers may earn around 700 pesos (about \$[NZ]35) for the flesh of these animals – and a further 1000 pesos... by selling the valuable horns and antlers to collectors... The Calauit administrative officer... said: “We understand why some of the people have resorted to poaching – they are poor and they see these animals as instant cash... co-existence is impossible, and this is why [the squatters] must leave the island if this conservation project is to survive.” One of the squatters... said: “...This island was our home for years, but the government threw us out – it thought we were less important than animals. Millions of pesos are being spent to look after giraffes and antelope, but we get nothing.” Although a permanent presence of five marines has been stationed on the island since the 1986 uprising – and last year a poacher was shot dead by a marine – ...many see their anti-poaching posting “as a holiday.” The island’s 15 wardens are unable to control poaching themselves – largely through lack of funding... [The administrative officer] says the project’s five million pesos... annual budget needs to be at least doubled in order to buy medicines, food and fuel, and to replace dilapidated equipment and rusting corrals which are as old as the project itself. But... he... fears this funding will not be forthcoming, as what was once the country’s foremost wildlife showcase is now widely viewed as one of many embarrassing reminders of Marcos’ profligacy. Unsurprisingly, [the] post-revolution President... slashed the budget for such luxury projects – which resulted in the Calauit workers being unpaid for six months in 1991... Funding has increased slightly under[the current] President... who also donated a new safari truck after discovering during[a] visit to Calauit that tourists were being ferried around in a 1933 Isuzu truck with no brakes. Probably the best way to raise the necessary funding would be by luring more tourists... This seems unlikely, however[because]... Calauit is inaccessible to all but the

hardest of travellers... [In related news, policemen] in Srinagar, capital of the Indian state of Kashmir, yesterday displayed the skins of wild cats, jackals and leopards seized from a gang dealing in the hides of animals hunted and killed in the Himalayas. Indian wildlife experts claim the black-market value of the skins is \$14.5 million. - 1997

The staggering decline of the Indian cheetah was... due to the trade in coats, rugs and trophies... Apart from unconfirmed reports, the last record seems to be of three males being shot in the same place at night using artificial light. This is a sad state of affairs when one considers that the 16th-century emperor Akbar kept 1000 cheetahs in captivity for hunting[(in Namibia 'cheetahs are a pest – farmers shoot or capture and sell them to game parks for \$70 so overseas hunters can shoot them')].... Cheetahs can make good, but expensive pets, being affectionate and playful... However, [an]... animal weighing a hundred pounds or more, with non-retractable claws, can inflict injury without meaning to do so, and there is always the fear that a cheetah may revert to its normal hunting habits of chasing animals that are moving away from it... Unlike other cats, who tend to lie in wait for their prey and pounce with a single leap or a short rush when they are close enough, cheetahs will stalk their prey and then race after them... In a short sprint they can easily overtake their prey...

['Komodo dragons can outrun a cheetah during a short sprint', but some couldn't outrun a 42-year-old Malaysian. However, he couldn't outrun 'federal prosecutors investigating the international trade of endangered wildlife. After two years spent fighting extradition, the man accused of acting as the kingpin of an international rare-animal empire was turned over to US authorities by the Mexican Government in August to answer 40 charges of smuggling, conspiracy, money-laundering and violating US wildlife protection laws. Of the some 300 animals allegedly smuggled into the US, 38 are from species considered endangered, including the Komodo dragon and the rarest tortoise species on earth, the Madagascan spurred tortoise']...

Tortoises are well known for their slowness of movement and for their long life span. They live longer than any other animal today [– the]... longest authentic record we have is for one of the giant tortoises... [that] was... at least 152 years old, and probably 180 years or even more [–] ...and... are about the most heavily armoured... The greatest danger today is the trade in tortoises for pets. Once a tortoise has been bought and installed in a garden it will be treated with the greatest care. The method of packing them for transport has meant, however, that in recent years there has been a hideously high mortality rate between their being collected, mainly in North Africa, and their reaching the dealers.

Because of high profits smugglers were prepared to accept high mortality rates for smuggled birds... although the worldwide size of the illegal trade was impossible to measure...

Kiwi and kea beware – a new strain of economist wants endangered species hawked on the open market. A bio-economist... is pushing for a lively trade in taboo native birds, which he says would be good for them and us... [He] admitted that increasing the supply to world markets would drive down the kea's \$8000 price tag, but he said the bird would still be worth more than sheep to a high-country farmer... [M]ortified conservationists slammed the idea last night...

The Minister of Conservation... has condemned a suggestion to hawk endangered native birds on the open market... Putting a value on the prized birds was the only way to make people appreciate them... said... [a] bio-economist from Massey University's Albany campus... Private collectors around the world were willing to pay thousands of dollars for an exotic bird, he said. However, [the minister] said the suggestion was "commercialism gone mad. I don't believe that allowing free trade in such species will encourage their protection. The experience in Africa and Asia in threatened species... [has] shown that the higher the price, the higher the poaching." ...The Royal Forest and Bird [Protection Society (RFBPS)] has also condemned[the] suggestion. A spokesman... said N[Z] wildlife should not end up in cages overseas... "The kea is a bird that has evolved to fly the Southern Alps..." [The spokesman] said developing markets for endangered species encouraged poaching because the illegal sales could be masked more easily by robust legal activity[, whereas stifling markets was a proven method – 'if New Guinea had not banned the export of birds of paradise in the 1920s, most would now be extinct (before the ban, as many as two million dead birds had been imported by European hatmakers')]. □ *'The 43 species of birds of paradise – the most colourful and ornate assemblage of all birds – have a restricted distribution, being found only in the forests of New Guinea and neighbouring small islands, with the exception of four which live in the mountain forests of north-eastern AUS'*.

...More than 600 birds, mainly native A[US]n parrots, some declining in the wild, were being exported from N[Z] each year to markets in Europe, the U[S] and, increasingly, Japan where they fetched high prices... Exports of Cites-listed birds from N[Z] have escalated rapidly since 1989 following a 1988 ruling by the High Court that neither the Wildlife Act nor the Conservation Act prohibited the export of the birds.

...N[Z] has been used as a staging-post by international bird-egg smugglers, putting native species at risk, the High Court at Auckland heard yesterday... The case... is the first trial involving bird eggs and reptiles since the introduction of the Bio-Security Act in 1993... [The eggs of AUS]n species, in particular, have been brought into the country for "laundering" before being shipped on – on the face of it legally – to customers in other countries... With documentation issued by the M[AF] and the D[oC], breeders can legitimately export the birds... Once the eggs had hatched there was no way, short of using DNA tests, of proving that the birds were smuggled and had not been legitimately bred in captivity... Before the court are an exotic bird-breeder... and... [an unemployed man] of no fixed address... They are jointly accused of acquiring and possessing about 50 eggs of the long-billed corella and the galah species in September 1994. In addition, [the bird-breeder] is accused of acquiring and possessing 20 assorted bird eggs in October 1994 and attempting to possess 13 tortoises and four chameleons... brought in from the U[S] but... stopped by customs officials at Auckland Airport... in August 1995... The eggs were brought in by couriers in special vests and the tortoises and chameleons were hidden under a courier's clothing and in a camera case... The reptile importation... was very much a sideline after a plan to bring in a batch of threatened military macaw eggs from the U[S] failed. Tortoises have a market value up to \$2000 and chameleons, which are not normally available in N[Z], are a lucrative commodity for illegal dealers. There was also evidence... of a run in 1991 involving 16 bird eggs imported from the U[S], although they were not the subject of any charge... [The prosecutor] said smuggling was a high bio-security risk to the poultry industry and to native birdlife. Reptiles... carry various diseases, including salmonella. One of the tortoises had a strain of salmonella never before encountered in N[Z], which posed a risk to both wildlife and humans. It was destroyed and the rest went to zoos in this country and overseas.

...A witness in an exotic bird trial told the jury that she received... \$11,000... [worth of] financial help from the M[AF] to protect her animals and her... property after threats and intimidation [from the defendants]... Last week her former partner... who admitted acting as a courier... told the jury that he received almost \$6000 from the ministry to help with legal expenses after [the bird-breeder] mounted a civil action against him and [the woman] over two pairs of parrots which are in dispute... It is claimed [the bird-breeder] lent them nine pairs of birds, and they were to split the progeny with him but only seven pairs were returned. There is also an unspecified claim relating to his share of the off-spring... [The courier and girlfriend] have been granted immunity from prosecution in return for giving evidence for the crown... The trial... continues today.

...After... [a] three-week trial... [and 18 hours of deliberation, the]... High Court jury... found... [the unemployed man] not guilty of acquiring and possessing about 50 A[US]n parrot eggs in September 1994. [The]Mangonui bird-breeder... was found not guilty of a similar charge. However, he was found guilty of [two related charges]... He has been remanded on bail for sentencing[. By the way, 'DNA testing will be introduced to help stop NZ being used as a staging post for international wildlife smugglers. An amendment to the Trade in Endangered Species Act would allow officials to DNA-test birds that dealers in NZ want to export so that a DNA comparison can be made with the parent birds. Other measures against wildlife offending have involved scanning the Internet for NZ species being offered for sale abroad. Traders in the US have offered protected green forest geckos, believed smuggled out of NZ, with price tags of \$7500' ...

'All geckos except for a few species in NZ, which bear live young, lay eggs. In some species the sides of the pupils are lobed or notched in four places, and when the pupils contract they leave four apertures, the size of pin-holes each one of which will focus the image onto the retina.

...the third or pineal eye – which has the vestiges of a lens and retina but no iris – is shared with many other species of lizards but it is better developed in the adult tuatara than in any other animal. Nothing is known of the courtship habits of the tuatara. Pairing occurs during January but the sperm are stored in the female's body until the following September or October when 5 to 15 white, oval, hard-shelled eggs are laid in a shallow depression in the ground which has been scooped out by the female, and covered over with earth. The eggs receive no attention from either parent and do not hatch out until 12 to 15 months later, the longest incubation period known for any reptile. The tuatara's diet consists largely of spiders, crickets, beetles and other insects, although tuatara sometimes eat petrel eggs and chicks, even an occasional adult bird']...

Four hungry tuatara found in a box on a South Canterbury roadside were in D[oC] care last night as investigations began into their removal from the wild. The adult tuatara were... discovered by accident by a member of the public... Tuatara do not exist in natural habitats on the mainland and are found only on a few offshore islands some of which also contain predators... The D[oC] suspects they were taken from Stephens Island in the northern Marlborough Sounds, one of the last strongholds of the native N[Z reptile, where]... it is estimated there are about 40,000 of the creatures... [The four] would be returned to the island after checks that it was their home... The deputy executive director of the W[WF in N]Z... said the discovery was sinister. "It indicates the illegal trade in tuatara is still alive and well." He said he could only wonder if people were trying to ship as many of the animals as possible out of the country before a loophole in the Trade in Endangered Species Act was closed by a private members bill introduced into Parliament this week... [The loophole meant] animals such as tuatara could be exported under the act if somebody declared they had been bred in captivity. There was no means of challenging the declaration under present legislation... Tuatara, which... can be kept legally only with a permit, can fetch up to \$US6000 on the black market overseas. A man was jailed for the theft of some tuatara from the Southland Museum and Art Gallery in 1991 and an attempt to send a tuatara thought to be from Stephens Island to the U[S] in 1992 was linked to an international tuatara smuggling operation out of Christchurch. - 1997

TUATARA... is NZ's most distinctive creature, a living relic which has survived its fellow beak-headed reptiles, Rhynchocephalia, by about 100 million years... The Rhynchocephalia thrived throughout the major land masses about 200 million years ago... All other living reptiles belong to one of the three other reptile orders... It closely resembles lizards outwardly, but there are certain anatomical differences. The Tuatara once lived on the mainland... but now survives mainly on two groups of islands – one off the north-east of the North Island and the other in Cook Strait. It grows very slowly, maturing sexually after about 20 years, and achieving its maximum size of about 60cm and up to one kg for males after about 60 years.

The beak-heads flourished during the Age of Reptiles, along with the earliest turtles and long before the great dinosaurs trod the earth... [The] tuatara... was first named by... the British Museum, from a specimen received there in 1831, [and thought to be] merely a new species of lizard. It was not until 1867 that... the Museum... realised... from fossils found in many parts of the world... that the animal was no ordinary lizard but was... truly a living fossil.

OVER 3m long and looking deceptively docile, the Komodo dragon lay sunning itself on a patch of bare ground. It could have been a scene straight out of *Jurassic Park*... "Don't get too close," said our Indonesian guide and park ranger on the island of Komodo. "These dragons can be dangerous. Not long ago they killed a child." ...With a smile he reached into his shoulder bag and pulled out a large fish. Holding it by its tail, he threw it to a spot some 15m... from the dragon. Before we even had time to focus the camera, those ridiculously placed feet had been repositioned and the dragon had taken off like a rocket... [Although fully-grown komodos] weigh more than 150kg... they are still faster on their feet than the fastest human. They often down their prey by biting through the Achilles tendon, then eviscerate their victims[(although 'there is so much bacteria in a Komodo dragon's mouth that – like the extinct Tyrannosaurus-Rex – when it bites its prey they are poisoned')]. The gastric juices of the dragon can dissolve the bones and hooves of deer, boar and buffalo. Their jaws are also hinged in the same way as those of large snakes, and they will think nothing of swallowing a 60kg boar in one mouthful... There are about 3000... on Komodo, about 1500 on neighbouring Rinca, and hundreds on Eastern Flores... Technically, they are the largest lizard on Earth, a giant species of the monitor lizard linked to the dinosaur...

Who's a pretty baby then? Then, was about 70 million years ago in a remote valley in Argentina, where researchers made the discovery last year of eggs with dinosaur embryos[–] ...the first... found in the Southern Hemisphere... The find was described yesterday as representing a number of [other firsts, including]: the first dinosaur embryo skin impressions discovered... and... the first known embryos of the familiar giant plant-eating dinosaurs called sauropods...

A dinosaur's 65 million-year journey reached another milestone at a New York auction yesterday when the most complete skeleton of a Tyrannosaurus Rex ever found was sold for \$US7.6 million... It was the highest price ever paid in public auction for a fossil... The total price... after the auction house's fee was \$US8,362,500... The fossilised bones of the Cretaceous-era carnivore, dubbed "Sue"... were acquired by The Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago... Corporate sponsors backing The Field Museum included... the California State University System... Walt Disney... McDonald's... and... Ronald McDonald House Charities... "We see this as McDonald's gift to the world for the millennium," said McDonald's chairman... The T-rex... was excavated in 1990 and is nearly complete by paleontological standards. The specimen is missing only its left arm, left foot, a few vertebrae and a few dorsal fins... One of its leg bones shows signs of healing after a break – a life-threatening injury for a predator. A tooth fragment from a rival Tyrannosaurus is stuck in a rib and it has bite marks on its skull from what may have been its last struggle. The auction... caused vigorous debate about the wisdom of selling large, rare fossil specimens. Scientists argue while it would be nearly impossible to stop the sale of all fossils – [because the dinosaur 'bone business is booming'] – there are dangers to scientific inquiry when specimens like "Sue" are sold... "Sue"... was auctioned for... a native American from the Sioux nation who... [wasn't her 'discoverer' but] will receive most of the proceeds... [Incidentally, a]irport customs in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou have uncovered an attempt to smuggle 16 boxes of mammoth fossils, said to be three million years old, out of the country.

...IT'S ONE OF THE OLDEST PRINCIPLES OF trade: the rarer the commodity, the higher the price. For the seahorse, the market may provide the hardest evidence yet that numbers of the unusual fish are declining. In Hong Kong, the finest seahorses – large, pale and smooth – can fetch \$1,200 per kg. That's more, by weight, than silver. Seahorses have long been used in traditional Asian medicines, but in recent years demand has increased to the point where some researchers fear the creature faces extinction... [G]lobal demand for seahorse-derived products is rising by up to 10% per year... Globally, the catching and selling of the little fish add up to more than 20 million seahorses a year across nearly 40 countries and territories... Many subsistence fishing communities in Thailand, India, the Philippines and Vietnam... depend on seahorse sales for survival. [Filipino fishermen 'can get the equivalent of 40p for 7 seahorses – but by the time the 7 get to Hong Kong they are worth £50' (5000p).]Although a complete ban on seahorse fishing would protect the species... it would be "pure and simple cultural imperialism." The attractions of seahorse fishing are obvious. Apart from the price – even seahorses considered to be of low quality are worth \$300 to \$400 per kg in Hong Kong – the creatures are easily collected from the mangrove swamps, sea grass and coral reefs they inhabit... "To be a major taker of seahorses doesn't require a lot of equipment." ...Believed among Chinese communities to be a cure for asthma, impotence, infertility, lethargy, baldness, rabies, throat

infections and skin diseases, powder or extract of seahorse is increasingly available in commercially produced pills... [A] monitoring group of the W[WF] and the World Conservation Union, met recently in Hong Kong with 500 practitioners of traditional medicine to warn them that “if we lose seahorses in the wild, they lose them from their pharmacopeia...” ...Much of the current seahorse research by prospective farmers and keepers is the first, though as far back as 342 B.C. classical writers had credited seahorses with curative powers.

...The tiny sea horse may seem an unlikely candidate for farming. But a Marlborough company is about to become the first in N[Z]... The new venture... which is waiting for a Ministry of Fisheries permit, could have far-reaching... benefits. Sea horses are in huge demand in Asia, where they are used to treat a whole range of medical conditions... The first stage... would be to acquire breeding stock, which would mean going out into the Sounds and catching about half a dozen wild sea horses... The sea horse has an extraordinary birth pattern. The... female lays eggs in a pouch in the abdomen of the male where they grow until the male gives birth to... anything from 150 to 600... tiny fully formed sea horses... They have the potential to grow rapidly to maturity in three months, provided conditions are right. “They are very difficult to raise...” ...the challenge would be to put structures in place with a small enough mesh to keep in the juvenile sea horses but allow a free flow of water. - 1997

The National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research is promoting the development of seahorse farming to satisfy keen Asian demand. But... N[Z] needs to know how many seahorses it has before their farming is developed, conservationists say... [The] conservationists fear farming could lead to poaching of wild seahorses... There are seven species in our waters and four are endemic to N[Z] – one of which ‘is the world’s 2nd-largest species’. Although there... had been no commercial exports of seahorses from N[Z] and there were no customs regulations in place... a special permit was needed to take seahorses from the wild and this had so far been given only for educational and scientific purposes... The Island Bay Marine Education Centre, in Wellington, which has had a high success rate in breeding seahorses for educational purposes, supports a survey. Its director... said the centre returned all surplus seahorses to the sea and was not interested in exports. “We are interested in going to countries where there is exploitation and educating them about breeding and farming techniques.”

Seahorses live in shallow inshore waters among seaweeds or in beds of eelgrass in estuaries. They swim in a vertical position, propelling themselves by rapid waves of the dorsal fin. When swimming at full speed this fin may oscillate at a rate of 35 times a second – which makes it look like a revolving propeller. The pectoral fins oscillate at the same rate, and the head is used for steering, the fish turning its head in the direction it wants to go... If the fins are damaged they can be regenerated relatively quickly... The seahorse eats any kind of swimming animal small enough to enter its tiny mouth. Prey is located by sight and quickly snapped up, or is sucked in from as much as 1 1/2 in. away. It is mainly tiny crustaceans such as copepods, but baby fishes are also eaten... [B]aby seahorses are... about 1/2 in. long at birth, perfect miniatures of their parents and the first thing they do is to swim to the surface to gulp air to fill their swimbladders. They feed ravenously... and grow rapidly. In the Steinhart Aquarium in the U[S] young seahorses *Hippocampus hudsonius* were found to grow from 3/8 in. at birth to 2 1/2 in. in 2 months... In aquaria the males often die after delivering their brood but this does not happen in a natural state, because the male soon looks around for another female to fill his pouch with eggs. Seahorses have been described as having the head of a horse, the tail of a monkey, the pouch of a kangaroo, the hard outer skeleton of an insect and the independently moving eyes of a chameleon... *The colours vary widely but are mostly light to medium brown...*

Goldfish are, in fact, a domesticated form of a wild carp native to China. The wild ancestral form is a very ordinary fish, sometimes used as food, green and brown in colour but occasionally throwing up red or red-gold individuals. These were collected and cultivated by the Chinese as far back as 960 AD and by the period 1173-1240 goldfish were being kept as pets in earthenware bowls and ornamental ponds... [L]ife for the wild form is... precarious... but... [p]et goldfish can be long-lived, up to 25 years having been recorded...

Tish, the world’s oldest known captive goldfish, has died at the age of (at least) 43. First won by[a] seven-year-old... at a fairground in 1956, Tish outlived all [hi]s other pets.

GOLD FISH 95c

The high seas were the nautical equivalent of a jungle, where fishing fleets operated with a “gold rush” mentality, cleaning out stocks before other fleets could do so... the Minister of Fisheries... said yesterday... [‘The world’s oceans are the last place on Earth where man remains a hunter-gatherer, but they are now being fished beyond their limits and as the fish get scarcer fishermen from different countries clash over what is left.’ The minister believes] Northern Hemisphere fishing fleets will increasingly breach N[Z]’s exclusive economic zone as fish stocks are wiped out in international waters... “There is no concept of sustainability. There will be dire consequences for the future.” [The minister] told the Pacific Economic Co-operation Council fishing task force symposium in Wellington that “displaced fleets” from Europe, America and Asia were plundering the Southern Ocean and breaching exclusive economic zone boundaries “as if the age of imperialism and colonial exploitation was suddenly let loose anew.” ...he believed the answer lay in extending jurisdiction[, although he]... said after the speech that he did not have a figure in mind for how far... “I think the core principle is that unless someone takes responsibility, there will be nothing for anyone to take responsibility for.” N[Z] should seek to push out the 200-mile zone as far as it and other like-minded nations were “bold enough to assert and stand ready to defend on behalf of the future of the planet.” ...However, official advice appears to be that extending the... zone would be against international law, which sets it at 200 nautical miles[, and]... Defence Force sources said extra costs would be incurred patrolling the zone, depending on how much more had to be covered. At present \$37 million a year is budgeted to pay for patrols... by Air Force Orion planes.

...Greenpeace’s campaign against overfishing has a new target – the world’s super trawlers. The environmental organisation’s flagship, the Rainbow Warrior II, is in Auckland preparing to take on[a] giant Norwegian trawler... in the waters off Chile. The Rainbow Warrior skipper,[a] former commercial fisherman... said the 98m American Monarch was being sent to fish the largely untouched hake fishery south-west of Chile. The ship used two-mile-long nets big enough to hold a dozen jumbo jets. The owner of the American Monarch, Resource Group International through its subsidiary American Sea Food Co, had paid the Chilean Government \$US10 million... for the right to fish within Chile’s 200-mile limit. They stood to make up to \$US35 million... a year from the deal. Greenpeace hoped to convince the Chilean Government to ban super factory trawlers from its waters to allow its own small fishing vessels to catch sustainable numbers... “Traditionally when factory trawlers come in the fishery collapses... In some Argentine fisheries where 50 factory trawlers are fishing fish numbers have been reduced by 80[%] in the last 10 years.”

...The fishing industry was under threat from environmental groups and would have to fight for its survival over the next decade... the Fishing Industry Guild’s annual tuna conference in Nelson... [was told. The managing director from one of NZ’s fish suppliers] said the formation of the Department of Conservation was a political mistake... The world could not afford to sustain the environmental view that fish had an equal right to live on the planet... The fishing industry had been criticised for ignoring the rights of marine animals, for overfishing and burning fossil fuels, he said, but the world population explosion meant there was increasing demand for protein from meat and fish... “Government policies are spied on, are fiddled with, redrafted and shaped to ensure that the funding base for DOC is kept at a level that ensures the continued employment of 1600 ‘greenies,’ and to ensure that they always have an ample supply of four-wheel-drive vehicles.” [He] also criticised Greenpeace and the R[FBPS] for being hijacked by radicals and “eco-Nazis,” as well as providing a handy refuge for dole-bludgers and alternative lifestyles.

...[a] past president of the Fishing Industry Association... reacted yesterday to suggestions that not enough money was being spent on studying commercial fish stocks. "The[state scientists ha]ve had \$150 million in the last decade and they haven't done enough with it," he said. This year the Government has cut fisheries research funding by nearly \$2 million, a move criticised in some scientific quarters as putting at risk the future of sustainable fishing in N[Z]. A report of a parliamentary select committee which considered the fisheries budget last month quotes the Minister of Fisheries... as saying he was not happy with the quality of research produced in the past 10 years. A spokeswoman for [the minister] said yesterday that the minister was not criticising the standard of work done by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries over those years. What he had meant to say, the spokeswoman said, was that science had been unable to provide the information he wanted, but a new method of using sophisticated acoustic technology was being developed... [However, the past president] said that the acoustic technology [the minister] talked about had been around for more than 10 years. The problem lay not in a lack of scientific advances but in the methods ministry scientists chose to use... The fishing industry had a vested interest in the issue because it now paid for the research through levies... Last year the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries was split in two. The Ministry of Fisheries now advises the minister on what research needs to be done. Most is commissioned from the state-owned institute Niwa, which employs many former MAF scientists, but the institute is about to face competition from the private sector.

...Shellfish farmers face losing their livelihood if they fail to test for biotoxins, says the Minister of Fisheries. He announced that following the breakdown of a joint monitoring programme with the commercial shellfish industry, the Ministry of Health would carry out its own biotoxin checks for public safety... Shellfish delivery centres would have direct responsibility for toxin monitoring and if the industry failed to support the testing marine farmers would lose their authority to harvest... The move means that... [shellfish] farms... will have to pick up the tab for testing. Biotoxin tests have become standard in the past few years following shellfish poisoning scares and blanket closures of harvesting areas. The shut-downs have cost the industry millions of dollars.

...From last Friday the shellfish industry, overseen by the Ministry of [Fisheries], is funding a separate programme to monitor the safety of commercial shellfish. The Ministry of Health said it would continue to monitor areas that had shown repeated toxicity.

...['Suva's harbour has become infested with giant sharks and is no longer safe, Fijian fishermen say. Six sharks were caught in the harbour this week.' In related news, AUS's federal government has failed to vote in a bill to protect great white sharks – whose 'jaws can collect \$100,000'...

'For millions of years sharks roamed oceans unchallenged. Now their domain has been invaded – by those who would destroy them and those fighting to save them.')

...After a 55-minute battle, the 921-kilo white pointer... is drawn, exhausted, up to the boat... The champagne corks pop as the boat heads back to shore. Towed backwards, the shark drowns. What of it? Another monster gone. Sharks are not renowned for exciting public sympathy. After all, it was only in September last year that a six-metre "monster" killed[a] 29-year-old abalone diver... off Hopetoun... This was the 512th known shark attack in A[US]n waters since European settlement and the 185th fatality... Today, however, 21 years after... [the] movie, *Jaws*, first terrified cinema audiences, and more than 400 million years since these predators began gliding through the oceans, sharks are in trouble. Their numbers are in such serious decline that the Species Survival Commission of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has set up a specialist group to study the problem... [N]obody is suggesting that sharks are in danger of extinction – yet – "the oceans are so big, so unknown, that we could pass the critical moment of no return without ever realising it,"... But the anecdotal evidence of their decline is compelling. In the late 1930s, when shark nets were first positioned off Sydney's beaches, more than 1000 sharks were trapped every year; these days fewer than 200 are caught along the entire N[SW] coastline... Humans have long been fascinated by sharks. To the ancient Polynesians they were gods... Today we see them as a metaphor for evil – killers without conscience... It hardly matters that perhaps only five of the world's 350 or so species are considered potentially dangerous to humans... As[a] Harvard biologist... puts it: "We are not merely afraid of our monsters; we are transfixed by them. In a deeply tribal sense, we love our monsters." If we love them, we have a strange way of showing it. The spectacular trophy catches represent the tiniest fraction of the estimated 100 million sharks killed by humans every year... Unlike most other fish, which spawn thousands of eggs at one time, sharks may turn out only a few dozen or less a year. "Sharks breed more like mammals than fish,"... Sharks also grow more slowly and mature later... The spiny dogfish shark, for example, doesn't reach sexual maturity until the age of 20 but then may live another 50 years. Few get the opportunity to live anything like that long. Demand for shark products has never been greater. Shark livers are refined into a smooth translucent oil for cosmetics. Dried cartilage, used in cancer treatments and to make artificial skin for burns victims, fetches up to \$216,000 a tonne. Shark gall bladder extracts show promise in acne treatments and corneas from shark eyes have been used in human transplants. And... their teeth[make] popular jewellery items. A silver-mounted bronze whaler tooth can fetch \$360, while a... full set of jaws from a five-metre white pointer can command more than \$24,000 from collectors. Then there is humanity's feeding frenzy... In recent years, authorities in... A[US]n waters... have... [imposed] a six-week moratorium on the commercial shark-catching season. But fisheries experts say that A[US]n's annual harvest of... 3000 tonnes... needs to be slashed by another 30[%] to keep the... school sharks... fishery viable. Few nations share these concerns. "Most of the world's shark fisheries are totally unregulated and the huge catches, in excess of 30,000 tonnes a year, taken in India, Thailand, Japan and Indonesia are certainly unsustainable,"... Millions more sharks are taken accidentally, tangled in trawler nets or snagged on longlines set for tuna... "Japanese longliners targeting southern bluefin tuna take about 34,000 blue sharks off Tasmania every year,"... Until recently, the toll was even higher in the North Pacific squid-fishing grounds, where drift nets caught some 1.8 million blue sharks a year. They are shown scant mercy by fishermen, who regard them the way farmers regard mice in a grain silo. The burgeoning market for... [shark parts] only adds to the incentive to kill them. Perhaps most disturbing for conservationists is the practice of "finning." It is a simple and brutally efficient process: catch a shark, cut off its fins and hang them out to dry in the sun. Often the shark is dumped, still alive, into the sea to save space on deck... "Prices for top-grade fin are now around \$150 a kilo,"... But because the market is so informal and unregulated, nobody has any idea how many sharks are [involved]... "The sea bed around Costa Rica is just covered with the bodies of finless sharks,"... Similar sights have been reported off Indonesia and northern A[US]. What effect this has on the ocean ecosystem is anybody's guess. Sharks fill a crucial role: culling the weak or poorly adapted from fish populations... A clue to what happens when apex predators are removed can be seen in a study in which wolves and mountain lions were removed from a region of Colorado. "The deer population boomed, exhausted its food supply and then died of starvation,"... The hard data... suggest that sharks have been victims of bad press and overactive imaginations. Around the world there are fewer than 100 attacks a year, about 30 of which are fatal... Bees and wasps kill more A[US]ns than sharks do. Most shark attack incidents are single, inquisitive bites... Although sharks will never rival koalas, dolphins or whales for sheer lovability, there are signs that they are gaining a constituency. South African authorities declared the white pointer a protected species in 1991. California followed suit in 1994 and Tasmania this year. The shark is currently being considered for protection in N[SW, where]... the grey nurse... is already protected. Not surprisingly, some of the new-found concern for sharks is based firmly in economics. A study in the Maldives found that a living grey reef shark was worth \$3960 in tourism income, compared with \$38 to a local fisherman... At Ningaloo Maritime Park, near the West Australian town of Exmouth, scores of divers already pay up to \$360 a day to swim beside the gentle plankton-eating whale sharks, at 14 metres long and 14 tonnes the biggest fish in the sea. And at Port Lincoln, South Australian dive operators are scrambling to meet the demand from adventurous divers wanting a face-to-Plexiglas encounter with a white pointer... for... \$480[. By the way, 'monster hunters might soon be banned from Loch Ness after fears that they are wrecking the environment. Environmental agency Scottish National Heritage is worried people hunting the Loch Ness monster may be scooping up otters and seals in their attempts to snare Nessie. They want to set up a voluntary fisherman's code after a veteran Swedish monster hunter was allowed to trawl Loch Ness with a giant net. The Swede – who has been

looking for Nessie for 25 years – has also searched lakes in his home country for a similar beastie – Selma – but has drawn a blank. The legend of the Loch Ness monster dates back to 565 AD when St Columba apparently spotted the beast in the lake. Since then there have been thousands of sightings of creatures.'

...*'Ban on caviar advocated to save sturgeon* The sturgeon that produce "black gold" are rapidly approaching extinction because they are being over-fished. The annual catch in the Caspian Sea, where 90% of the world's sturgeon live, has slumped 97% because the fish have become so rare. Early next year, an international conference will try to decide on emergency measures to protect them before they disappear, and the WWF says a global ban on caviar may be imposed within six months. Caviar from the roe of the sturgeon has been a luxury for centuries. A spokesman for one importing firm said good quality caviar should be eaten only from a mother-of-pearl spoon – a silver or metal one spoils the taste – and should be accompanied by nothing apart from "a good Brut champagne." Peter the Great employed 50 fishermen to keep the royal tables stocked with the "food of kings." One of the first Bolshevik acts after the Russian Revolution was to make it a state monopoly and strictly control its trade. The communists took care to conserve the supreme symbol of capitalist indulgence. The Soviet Union had a treaty with Iran, the only other country then bordering the Caspian, to regulate sturgeon catches and conserve the stocks. But this collapsed with the breakup of the Soviet Union. The new nations of Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, which appeared around the world's largest inland sea, see the sturgeon as "hard currency with fins," conservationists say. The price of a pound of high-quality caviar can range from £300 to £2000. Sturgeon, the world's largest freshwater fish – they can grow to weigh more than a tonne (although catching one weighing more than 45kg is rare today) – can live for 100 years, but take 18 years to reach sexual maturity. As well, the females spawn only three times in their lives, making the species extremely vulnerable to over-fishing. The new states have resisted all control on catches, and 90% of the fish are caught before they have spawned. The fish are also threatened by dams, which stop them migrating up rivers to spawn, by pollution, by plans to exploit oil from the sea and even by radioactive debris from the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. Russia has tried to save the fish by releasing 80 million fry every year and banning catching them in the sea. But the rapid decline of the species, which has survived since the age of the dinosaurs 250 million years ago, continues.'

...*'Russia may impose a ban on catching sturgeon next year to prevent the species dying out.* "Sturgeon are being ruthlessly exterminated," the PM said during a visit to Astrakhan, a region on the Caspian Sea. Russia's annual sturgeon harvest in the Caspian has fallen from nearly 12,000 tonnes a few years ago to just 470t last year. Caviar exports, which in the past exceeded 100t a year, have likewise fallen. The ITAR-Tass news agency quoted the PM as saying that official caviar exports equalled only 25t last year. But poachers are extremely active in the Caspian and the true catch and exports are much larger.'

...*'Under pressure from world trade regulators, three caviar-producing countries – Russia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan – have agreed to stop fishing sturgeon for the rest of this year.* It is part of an attempt to save the fish that produce the briny delicacy from dying out.'

...*Caviar's deadly legacy...* FOR centuries caviar has been regarded as the ultimate luxury – the world's most expensive food, eaten off silver spoons by kings, queens and millionaires. In the violent lawlessness of post-communist Russia, however, the precious black pearls have become a commodity to kill for. A massive explosion occurred last month in a block of flats in the town of Kaspiysk, on the Caspian coast, in the autonomous republic of Dagestan. Officials investigating the explosion, which claimed 67 lives – including 21 children – now believe the blast was not caused, as they originally thought, by terrorists from nearby Chechnya. They believe organised crime gangs were behind the grotesque murders and their motive was control of the illegal caviar trade... [The] deputy head of the economic crimes division of police in the regional capital of Makhachkala, has no doubt it was the "caviar mafia" who blew up the building which was home to dozens of Russian border guards and their families. The gangs were apparently out for revenge after guards made a number of seizures of illicit caviar at the local airport... He readily admitted that the poachers face few obstacles from the law. "The trade is conducted in the open... They... are better armed than we are. They have access to funds that we don't, and the laws we have are useless." It was Edward II who declared the sturgeon a "royal fish" when the dinosaur-age creature... still swam in English waters. Today its ripened eggs are more in demand than ever as London and other capitals are gripped by a caviar craze that has restaurants competing to provide their customers with beluga and sevruga... Desperate fishing authorities from the five Caspian countries recently signed an agreement to ban sturgeon fishing in the Caspian starting from January 1997. But the accord has no official diplomatic backing and is unlikely to be enforced... [In local news, d]rastic cuts to the commercial snapper catch are expected to be announced tomorrow, prompting the fishing industry to accuse the Government of fishing for votes. Last night, the industry repeated its call for recreational fishing licences, saying that it was only political expediency which was stopping the Government from bringing them in. Last year the Minister of Fisheries... tried to cut the annual commercial catch in Northland, the Hauraki Gulf and Bay of Plenty from 4900 tonnes to 3000 tonnes. The industry won a court order against the cut but sources say that the commercial catch for next year is likely to be 3000 tonnes. Industry leaders last night said they would fight any cut to their catches if similar cuts were not imposed on recreational anglers[– who express their views via slogans such as 'a million kiwis fish, hunt and vote' and 'secure your right to fish free forever'].

...*Snapper squabble hits snag on quota...* The northern snapper harvest has been subject to strict controls since the advent of the quota management system in 1986. The concept of giving all commercial fishers a guaranteed share of the annual catch has been hailed at home and abroad as almost visionary. The arguments start when catches are set. The commercial snapper business is worth more than \$28 million a year. Nearly three-quarters of the fish are caught in the waters between North Cape and East Cape, known as Snapper One. The area is also home to more than one million people and host to hundreds of thousands of visitors – many of whom want to catch fish. In 1986 the total catch for Snapper One was set at 4700 tonnes. Commercial fishers were given a share of that catch based on their previous catch rates. The total catch crept up to 6100 tonnes in 1991 but was held at around 4900 tonnes for the last few years. Sustainability is the fundamental idea behind the quota management system. Complicated formulae are used to calculate how many fish are needed – and therefore how many can be caught – for the fishery to be kept in a healthy state. The fishery is considered by officials to be below the level needed for "maximum sustainable yield" but by how much, and for what reason, has been hotly debated. Last year the... fishing industry went to court and won an interim injunction... The full argument of the case has still not been heard. - 1996

The Ministry of Fisheries has set up a Wellington-based serious offences unit to catch fisheries quota fraudsters... The unit will have a manager, four investigators, an analyst and a senior prosecutor... The national operations compliance manager... said... fraud turned up in different ways but it came down to taking fish commercially without quota, or in excess of quota and hiding the fact... [Fishermen often work in collusion with] the... fish processor... to... report lower quantities than actually caught... Serious fishing offences tied district staff to time-consuming investigations and left them little time for routine patrols and surveillance work...

The ministry is recruiting and training investigators, surveillance officers and volunteer honorary fisheries officers as it gears up to enforce the quota cut, and to tackle the existing black-market... [T]hey will use overt and covert aerial and sea patrols, hidden video and any other means available to make busts. [The ministry] accepts that plenty of illegally-taken snapper is on sale in Auckland, and has heard of disappearing paper trails – fish is landed and accounted for by the catcher, wholesaler and retailer, as required by law, but the paperwork is systematically disposed of once the fish is sold. Poaching runs across the board... from pseudo-amateurs who have been caught with 400 tiny snapper to \$3 million vessels exceeding quota. Commercial fishers face a \$250,000 fine, amateurs \$10,000. Those involved in conspiracy to defeat the quota system can be charged with offences under the Crimes Act, which carry jail terms. But perhaps the most effective penalty is that conviction usually means forfeiture of boats, gear, vehicles and other equipment used to perpetrate the crime.

...Five men quietly haul on handlines. It has been a good morning; in their boat are 476 snapper – 447 of them undersized. Legally, they should not have more than 75 but the chances of getting caught are slim, while the potential profits are high. Their 5.5m runabout noses on to the ramp at Takapuna at 10.30 am. For once a fisheries officer is there. They show him a bucket with a few fish in it but he is not happy. He searches the boat and finds two chilly-bins full of fish. The boat is impounded and rangers cleaning it the next day find 56 more fish under squabs in the cabin. The men are prosecuted and each fined \$1500. They never get the boat back; the Ministry of Fisheries... orders the boat be sold. The Crown keeps the proceeds. The men were unlucky to get caught. With a huge coastline to police and only one enforcement squad in Auckland the Ministry of Fisheries has lost the battle to stop snapper poaching – until now. Two squads are about to be added to the ranks as the ministry goes all-out against the lucrative snapper black market in Auckland. The Government has put up \$657,000 this year and promises \$862,000 next year for an attack on poaching in the area known as snapper one... At a time when the Government is not giving out extra money for even the most worthy causes, Ministry of Fisheries officials had to make a good case. Their claim that between 800... and 1800 tonnes of snapper a year were being poached clinched the debate. Tension has been building for years over who has the right to catch snapper. The Government is under constant pressure from environmentalists and recreational fishers to protect their “birth-right” while the fishing industry is taking the Minister of Fisheries to court over his bid to cut their catch. The problem is compounded by Aucklanders’ love affair with snapper. For decades it was almost the only fish they ate and they resent not being able to buy it as easily – or cheaply – as they used to. With snapper selling at up to \$25 a kilogram there is a ready market for cheaper fish in hotels and carparks. Commercial vendors, such as fish and chip shops, restaurants and fishmongers, can also be willing buyers when they cannot get enough through legitimate channels.

...Widespread job losses are expected in the fishing industry following a... decision allowing a 40[%] cut in snapper quota in the northern region... [T]he High Court at Wellington... ruled against the fishing industry and Maori interests who sought a review of Government plans to reduce the annual commercial snapper catch... to 3000 tonnes... The chief executive of the Federation of Commercial Fishermen... was... disappointed with the court ruling... [He] said the only group to benefit would be recreational fishers, who would be “rubbing their hands in glee.” The snapper limit for recreational anglers was reduced from 15 to nine fish a day on October 13, 1995, the day after the High Court granted an injunction stalling the cut in the commercial catch... The industry says the [latest] decision, which it will appeal, will cost it about \$300 million annually...

Celebrations by east coast fishermen claiming victory in the Court of Appeal over the Government snapper quota cuts might be short lived. The court yesterday tossed out the 40[%] quota cut imposed in 1995 and again last year for the area between North Cape and East Cape... The... decisions to cut the total commercial snapper catch from 4938 tonnes a year to 3000 tonnes were upheld in April by the High Court, prompting predictions of bankruptcies and job losses in coastal towns like Leigh... [However,] in a unanimous decision released yesterday, the Court of Appeal said the Government had not given enough consideration to buying up quota as a way of reducing the catch. Neither had it fully considered the “economic harshness” of cutting the... catch so heavily... But the Minister of Fisheries... last night signalled that he intended cutting next year’s commercial catch... He believed the conditions which prompted his predecessor... to impose the cut had not improved. “If anything, I suspect they have got worse...” [The minister] said the Government would consider buying up quota only in exceptional circumstances. “In this case the circumstances did not warrant it. It’s not a precedent we would like to set.” A fishing industry spokesman... said the... court action had cost nearly \$500,000 but an important issue had been settled. He hoped the Government would not try to impose a similar cut next year. The industry was prepared to go back to court if necessary, he said... The... Recreation Fishing Council... was... not happy with the decision... [Its] president... said the industry had had its catch restored through a legal loophole which politicians would be asked to plug... [In another development, a] \$10 million payout which the Government has agreed to make to compensate members of the fishing industry may end up going back to the Government. This peculiar result would be because the computer error – which the payment is meant to compensate for – may have caused such a mess that it is not economically feasible to find out who the compensation should go to. The Government offered the \$10 million package as a “positive” response to the computer bungle which has potentially short-changed thousands of fish quota holders. However, since the problem has been occurring for 10 years, the extent of its impact is buried in a mass of figures. One industry leader said he had been told it would take 10 full-time staff three years to unravel the thousands of incorrect quota transactions and establish the impacts of the glitch... The cost of identifying the problem had to be weighed against the cost of the problem itself. It is not clear how much money members of the fishing industry lost through the glitch. Estimates range from zero to \$50 million, but they are guesswork... The glitch that led to the retrospective legislation affected a fisheries management system known as “unders and overs” which gave quota owners a 10[%] leeway on catches. The problem occurred when the ministry’s computer system failed to recognise when quota lessees – who were not entitled to unders and overs – subsequently bought the quota and became eligible. For example, Fisherman B leases 10 tonnes of quota. During the term of the lease Fisherman B decides to purchase the quota. He catches only eight tonnes in the first year which by law as a quota owner entitles him to 11 tonnes... the following year. However, because the computer did not recognise his new owner status, Fisherman B effectively lost his right to the extra tonne. That loss could have been compounded over successive years. The system also works the other way allowing fishing operators to exceed their quota by up to 10[%] one year and for the excess to be taken off the next year. In Parliament, Labour’s fishing spokesman... said the mistake would have also affected the market value of quota traded. He said those who sold up their quotas had lost money because the quota was not valued to its full extent... [and] the error could have contributed to or even caused the bankruptcy of some operators – a possibility... [t]he chief executive of the Federation of Commercial Fishermen... believed was unlikely.

...N[Z]ers are ignoring warnings about the depletion of snapper in the Hauraki Gulf and Bay of Plenty... says the... 400-member Marine Sciences Society... The Court of Appeal’s decision overturning the Government’s 40[%] cut to commercial catches is disastrous for the fishery... [because] continued overfishing of the waters was adding to problems caused by climate change and ecology... The amount of legal-sized snapper in the [two adjoining regions] has fallen to just 36,700 tonnes and will drop to 34,300 tonnes next year, according to estimates. Government officials say that at least 57,650 tonnes are needed to maintain maximum fishing levels.

...The snapper quota will be cut by close to 9[%] in the... snapper 1 fishery area... The Minister of Fisheries... yesterday announced that the quota would be reduced to 4500 tonnes a year... Ministry of Fisheries data showed that snapper levels in Northland were not too bad, but in the Hauraki Gulf and Bay of Plenty stocks were only at 60[%] of what was sustainable... A Manganui commercial snapper fisher... welcomed the decision. “People can live with that – at least we won’t be put out of work.” Not so happy was a Whangarei fisher... who said the quota should be increased. “I’m miserable. Today I’ve lost \$300,000.” ...[he said the minister] should have looked at the number of amateur fishers who curtailed the commercial operators. Recreational fishers... [– who a]re thought to account for about 6[%] of the snapper take... [–] were not happy either...

Commercial fishermen say they will happily pull their snapper lines out of parts of the Hauraki Gulf as long as those fishing for pleasure take their share of the pain. A major fishing-industry player called for the amateur fishers’ catch limit to be cut to two snapper in parts of the gulf if the Government went ahead with further commercial fishing bans in the popular fishing ground... The area south of... Whangaparaoa Peninsula... was closed to commercial fin-fishing last October. [He] supported extending the ban to areas north of the peninsula... [but] there was no point banning commercial fishing boats from the area... without cutting back the number of snapper that could be taken by recreational fishers... “They... catch as many or more than we do in this area,”... But the proposal drew a sharp response yesterday from recreational fishers, who said it was nothing more than a “pipe dream.” ...Commercial fishers [also] want an annual limit on the number of fish caught from charter boats running fishing trips for the public. The Ministry of Fisheries has persuaded about 100 charter operators to record their catches as part of a year-long survey it plans.

...Thousands of... snapper washed ashore this week on a stretch of Coromandel coast, but the free feed for local people was soured... Residents... who gathered as much fish as they could while it was still fresh... were disgusted by the waste... The good-sized snapper were ready to spawn... The Ministry of Fisheries district compliance manager... hoped... that a net had split or that a vessel had got into trouble and had let go a load... Fisheries officers fear the mounds of fish littering 6km of beach... may be the start of a deliberate dumping campaign by commercial fishermen seeking higher grade catches... One resident, who declined to be named, said the consistent size of the fish supported the dumping theory.

...Fisheries officers seeking the source of thousands of snapper washed ashore between Papaaroa and Waitete Bay, Coromandel, believe it was unlikely to have been a case of deliberate dumping.

...A fishing trawler which netted more than it could handle spilled the thousands of snapper... last week, says a fisheries officer... The skipper of the trawler said he was working in rough conditions... when he picked up a big load. A seam on the net had burst, letting fish escape... The owner-operator of the vessel at fault will not be prosecuted... The Ministry of Fisheries district compliance officer... said it was an accident and not an attempt to keep the best and discard the rest... "There is nothing to gain from prosecution; it wouldn't change what happened." ...but pressure from an industry angry at the bad publicity his action brought it will force [the owner-operator] out of the Hauraki Gulf... No one had the power over where the man fished but "he has to sell his fish. A bit of peer pressure will come into play,"... said... [the] managing director of [a] Whitianga fish processing company... Snapper were gathering in large numbers ready to spawn and fishers knew to keep away from the "hot spots" if they could not handle the volume they were likely to net.

...['Experienced anglers know they can get some great fishing if they locate a school of spawning snapper. It seems contradictory to the conservation ethic to catch and kill animals which are in the process of reproducing, but when the numbers are studied the harvest of adult fish has little influence on the resulting population gain. What does affect the success of the season's spawning is the water conditions the tiny snapper encounter after they hatch.']

... 'little is known of their breeding habits. In tropical waters the temperature varies very little. Off East Africa, for example, temperatures vary from 24 to 29°C, and snappers spawn throughout the year. In Indian waters breeding seems to coincide with the cold season. Off tropical America there seem to be two breeding seasons for snappers. They live mostly in coastal waters, especially around coral reefs, at depths of 24 to 90ft. Most snappers move about in groups of less than a dozen. Snappers feed mainly at night. Their hunting method is to stalk living prey until a few feet from it, then to make a sudden dash, seize the prey and swim leisurely back to the starting point. *The name is derived from the way the landed fish suddenly and very forcibly opens and shuts its jaws as it is dying, which sometimes causes bad wounds to the hands of an unwary fisherman sorting his catch. They are up to 2 ft or more long*']...

Four men in a runabout have been caught with nearly 300 snapper, many of them undersized, as the Ministry of Fisheries continues its crackdown on the... Auckland black market... The men's runabout was impounded... The Ministry... has not yet decided whether to prosecute the four South Auckland men caught last Friday... [The ministry's] Auckland compliance manager... said yesterday that seven new officers had just joined the unit. They would be used to keep a closer eye on commercial fishers. The blitz on recreational fishers, which saw 35 people prosecuted over the summer for illegal possession of fish, shellfish and crayfish, would also continue, he said.

...more than 30 illegal crayfish pots and nets had been seized in Coromandel waters this week. There was concern that amateur fishers were cashing in on the high numbers of crayfish and selling them. A bigger catch by amateurs... prompted the ministry to boost patrols in the area.

...Crayfish selling for as little as \$10 on the black market are being snapped up, fisheries officers say. Legal prices are more than \$30.

...['NZ exports over 400 tonnes of lobster each year.' • 'The common lobster of Europe is very like the crayfish but it differs in being larger. Another difference is in the pincers. The many kinds of lobster include, in European waters, the smaller Norway lobster or "Dublin prawn", a source of scampi']...

'Fishing companies' scampi catch records of 1990-92 will be used as the basis for allocating \$100m of scampi quota when the species is brought into NZ's quota management system by the parliamentary select committee conducting an inquiry into the scampi fishery. The inquiry was prompted by allegations that the Ministry of Fisheries favoured certain companies when issuing scampi fishing permits during 1990-92.' Incidentally, a] **fish whose flesh is worth more per kilogram than just about any other is threatening to prove that an Antarctica marine life convention is little more than a Maginot Line...**

[The 'elaborate defensive barrier in northeast France was named after its principal creator, Andre Maginot, who was France's minister of war in 1929-31. The fact that certain modern fortresses had held out against German artillery during WWI, as well as the admitted saving in manpower, induced France to build the celebrated Maginot Line as a permanent defense against German attacks. This ultra-modern defensive fortification showed traces of the old circular system of fortifications, but its dominant feature was linear. The Maginot Line was, from the standpoint of the troops, a tremendous advance over previous fortifications. Its concrete was thicker than anything theretofore known and its guns heavier. In addition, there were air-conditioned areas for the troops. There were recreational areas, living quarters, supply storehouses, and underground rail lines connecting various portions of the line. Unfortunately, the line covered the French-German frontier, but not the French-Belgian. Thus the Germans in May 1940 outflanked the line, making it useless.' ■]

French commandos have abseiled on to a fishing boat in Southern Ocean waters... after it infringed the French exclusive economic zone around Kerguelen Island... as a confrontation loomed over lucrative new fishing grounds... The French embassy in Canberra could not confirm the action. Sources said at least 40 mainly Spanish and Norwegian fishing boats were operating south of the... islands of Kerguelen and Crozet, which [also was a French territory, and AUS]'s Heard Island. They were chasing toothfish which fetched up to \$10,200 a tonne... "More than 40 vessels are reported as having caught over 30,000 tonnes of the... toothfish." ...The Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs... said earlier that the Government was worried the "illegal fishing" was spreading to N[Z]'s polar waters... Fishing in these waters was subject to regulation by the Hobart-based Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources[(CCAMLR)], which, for the first time, has agreed to let N[Z] fish for toothfish in the Ross Sea this year. N[Z] would be bound by strict limitations...

A N[Z] fisheries vessel will head for Antarctic waters soon... N[Z] has permission to fish... for 3960 tonnes of toothfish... The Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade... said that although N[Z] was playing by the book and observing the 23-nation convention, the extent of illegal fishing was of great concern. No illegal fishing had been reported in the Ross Sea, but the threat existed. [He] said an Air Force flight to the Ross Sea three weeks ago had checked the technical parameters for surveillance in the area. Once N[Z] began fishing, surveillance flights would be an option to spot illegal vessels... This week French authorities boarded an Argentine fishing boat... for illegal fishing.

...N[Z] is seeking the co-operation of other Antarctic Treaty nations to protect its potentially lucrative Patagonian toothfish grounds... [after] the... Sealord factory trawler Pakura was apparently threatened with ramming by an Argentinian-flagged ship allegedly fishing illegally for... toothfish near Heard Island... [However, the] Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade... [said] that it would be inappropriate for the Government to protest to Argentina, because the Pakura had been leased to an A[US]n company... A[US] has been pushing the idea of a joint surveillance and enforcement programme with countries with an interest in the region, such as N[Z] and South Africa... Pirate vessels have been spotted around Heard Island six times in the past two months, the A[US]n Fisheries Management Authority reported.

...The head of an A[US]n fishing group has called for warships to patrol the Southern Ocean after poachers threatened to ram one of his trawlers... Although the crew were in A[US]n sovereign territory, they were a long way from help and only a "bit of bluff" stopped the situation escalating, he said. "They actually firstly threatened to ram us, which wasn't a very nice thing to do, then they realised we were bigger than they were..." The foreign poachers... were frightened off for the moment but were waiting on the edge of A[US]n waters, ready to resume plundering toothfish stocks when no other vessels were around.

...IN EARLY JUNE, THE *AUSTRAL LEADER* arrived off Heard Island... in search of... toothfish. As one of only two ships licensed to deep trawl for the... fish in A[US]n waters, the *Leader* might have expected a quiet time. Instead, it found six other vessels illegally hauling toothfish from the sea. When[her] Captain... radioed an order that the ships leave, they didn't respond, except for one that swung towards the *Leader* as if to ram her. Says[the] general manager of Austral Fisheries, the ship's owner: "These guys pay no attention to any of the rules at all." ...South Africa and France recently sent aircraft and naval ships to the region to protect their sovereign waters against pirate fishing boats. A[US and NZ]... are contemplating similar action. "If you declare war, what do you do?" asks [an AUS]n Antarctic Division policy officer... "You go into another person's territory. Well that's what it is. It's war without the declaration." ...[the toothfish's] widespread presence in southern waters was only recognized in the early 1990s; thus far, there is no detailed information on their numbers, range or life cycle[although AUS]... has just announced a \$2.9 million, three-year research project on the Marquarie Island toothfish stocks... What is known is their fine flavor. In the U.S., where it is sold as Chilean sea bass, toothfish is becoming increasingly popular – [the then NZ]Fisheries Minister... last year claimed it was "pushing our orange roughly off the menus of the eastern seaboard" – but it is Japan that leads demand. Most of the estimated \$300 million worth of toothfish caught illegally in the past year – more than 10 times the amount taken by legal vessels – ended up on Japanese tables as *mero*... More than money may be at stake: environmentalists, already concerned over legal capture of toothfish, fear large-scale poaching may wipe out the creature... Says Greenpeace N[Z]'s ocean ecology campaigner... "They're like the whale of the fish world: slow to reach reproductive age, slow growers. If they are hammered hard, other species may fill their niche in the food chain before they have a chance to recover."

...China is building a fishing fleet of around 200 boats specifically aimed at catching the lucrative... toothfish, diplomatic and environmental sources said yesterday. One high-level N[Z] official said a resources gold rush around Antarctica... would make environmental controls there worthless. China has not signed the 1980 Convention... which controls the region... The reports on the future Chinese presence is adding to the alarm over a rapidly expanding fleet, now estimated to be... 60 ships, in the area south of the Indian Ocean. The nationality of all the ships was not immediately known, but... the illegals were mainly Spanish and Norwegian ships flying flags of convenience... However, the rapidly growing fleet is depressing the toothfish price and much of the catch is being stored... The fisheries were only recently revealed when the U[S] declassified satellite photos originally taken to help its submarines hide in the cold waters... The rush to catch toothfish is expected to dominate the headlines at the Antarctic Treaty consultative meeting in Christchurch later this month.

...N[Z] will this month meet other nations with Antarctic fishing interests to further plan how to tackle "pirate" vessels plundering the lucrative toothfish. Up to 60 vessels flying flags of convenience have taken an estimated 30,000 to 60,000 tonnes of the deepwater cod-like fish... - 1997

Cod survival still in doubt as ban ends The 10-week ban on cod fishing in the North Sea has ended with barely disguised relief from the beleaguered fishing industry and a sense of foreboding from conservationists concerned about dwindling stocks. The E[U] imposed the emergency ban in January to cover 40,000 square miles of cod-spawning grounds off north and east Scotland, East Anglia and the coasts of Norway and Denmark... The ban[– which] covered just 25[%] of the North Sea for about a fifth of the year, [and]represented a reduction of fishing of just 5[%] over a year... [–] was a desperate attempt to prevent the total collapse of cod stocks. Because of the ban, hard-pressed cod fishermen in Scotland have had to resort to landing immature haddock, many of which were discarded as they were too small to be sold[while]... Dutch vessels blockaded the port of Ijmuiden in March, demanding compensation for the cod ban... Cod and other white fish have declined drastically in recent years. Annual cod catches in the late 1960s reached more than 350,000 tons, whereas last year the industry had difficulty finding enough fish to meet its quota of 132,000 tons. The E[U] estimated there are 65,000 tons of breeding cod left in the North Sea fishing grounds, which is less than half the numbers estimated to be needed to sustain a viable population. In addition to overfishing and pollution, cod and other fish have been affected by rising sea temperatures. [■ 'Arbrath haddock smokers no longer get haddock from Arbrath because the area is all fished out.'

... 'In February 1967 four haddock were caught with a handline off the Isle of Skye and taken to the Torry Marine Station at Aberdeen where they were put into a large glass-fronted aquarium. One was a female, and she spawned in April. Before she did so the males became very aggressive towards each other. They faced each other or swam broadside on to each other with their fins spread to the full. At the same time they made knocking sounds. From these encounters one of them emerged as the dominant, or boss fish, and it was he who finally mated with the female. They swim upwards together the female laying her eggs, the male shedding his milt to fertilise them. She lays about 12 000 eggs and then swims away. About 30 hours later she swims back to the male and they pair again, and she lays another 12 000 eggs. There may be a dozen spawnings over the next 2 weeks, and an average of 12 000 eggs laid each time. The number of eggs laid is larger with the older and bigger females, and the total laid in one season may be as many as 200 000 or more.'

...Hong Kong's Aberdeen typhoon shelter is packed but the storm on the horizon is man-made. China has imposed a fishing ban on... part of the South China Sea so fish stocks can be replenished. [But] the long-term view is not appreciated by some fishermen, who are demanding welfare help.

...*The Perfect Storm* isn't just another disaster movie, it's... based on terrifyingly real events that took place in October 1991. Three cyclone systems collided in the North Atlantic and the resulting "perfect storm" – because it could not have been worse – created 30m waves driven by 190km/h winds. Into this maelstrom steamed the *Andrea Gail*, a 22m swordfishing boat from Gloucester with six men aboard. [A]journalist... wrote a bestselling account of events leading to this encounter and *The Perfect Storm* became the film-makers' *Bible*. No one knows what happened to the *Andrea Gail*, but [the journalist] presented various scenarios of what had happened on other boats in similar conditions. The film selects some of these incidents and sets them on the *Andrea Gail*, going one step further than the book by taking audiences on board and into the eye of the storm... [The] special-effects house... says it made a technological breakthrough in the computer rendering of water which enabled it to create *The Perfect Storm*'s photo-realistic ocean with mountainous seas. But computer technology didn't shield[the] cast from the elements. Three weeks were spent in Gloucester, a small fishing port with a population of 28,000, 75km north of Boston. Eight days were spent at sea and during that time Hurricane Floyd blew in... [One of the stars, who also] went out for a couple of days and nights fishing on a longliner similar to the *Andrea Gail*, says, "It was the most backbreaking work I've ever done in my life. I take my hat off to these guys. If you work on a construction si[t]e operating a jackhammer all day, you know you'll be paid. For these guys there is no guarantee because fishermen's pay is determined by the catch." ...□ *The Perfect Storm* starts at cinemas on Monday.

...The release of *The Perfect Storm* in cinemas this week is a reminder of just how wild a fisherman's life is – both on and off the water – and just how important the sea and its bounty remain for us on this cluster of islands in the world's fourth-largest exclusive economic zone, covering 1.2 million square nautical miles. "It's the last frontier," says... a 48-year-old who has been fishing since he was 12. "It can be really unforgiving or really serene. Either way, it can kill you as quick as look at you. If 1[%] of society are outlaws, then fishermen would be the 1[%] of the 1 per centers. Fishermen are outside society 99[%] of the time because they're at sea." N[Z]'s deep-sea fishermen are hunting... places unknown to the land-bound – Chatham Rise, Louisville Ridge, Colville Sea Mount... Trips can last between one and eight weeks... In season... on a good trip... 100 tonnes can be caught in one five-minute shot. A bad trip – for whatever reason – leaves everyone out of pocket. Fishermen are all share-fishing, taking their cut after expenses. "No fish, no pay" is their lot. It's made N[Z] fishermen a canny lot, with a reputation as masters of fishing in "rough country" – the sea mountains where orange roughly and oreo dory gather and where foreign skippers refuse to go. "Nobody knows how dangerous it is really," says... one of four fishing brothers. "The ones who survive are the ones who realise it's dangerous. The guys that don't understand that lose..." "We lose people every year," says... [the] president of the Federation of Commercial Fishermen, whose members trawl our fourth-largest export earner... worth \$1.34 billion last year... "It's a fact of life." The sea, the gear and the life are not abstract threats. Danger is

always close and awaiting a slip. If they're trawling, the nets can be 100m long, held open by two-tonne trawl doors and hauled in by gigantic winches... [A fisherman], aged 28... remembers how one deckhand, known as Lucky, lost his arm regathering the trawl doors. "You may do it 10 to 15 times a day, 1000 times a year. One day you go to clip it on, all of a sudden a wave comes over, the boat rolls... wham, bam, gone. Just like that. If you're hauling the gear in and your foot gets caught, you can go half-way round the winch before anyone notices." Maritime Safety Authority figures mark it down in black and white. N[Z] has an estimated 6300 commercial vessels, and for every 2000 there is, on average, a fatality every three months. In the[past] year eight fishermen were lost at sea and 75 accidents reported. Many accidents go unreported. The ACC recognises the seriousness of fishing injuries by charging marine fishing operators a premium of \$4.69 every \$100 – one of their highest. While most injuries occur because of breakages or human error, around a quarter are labelled "environmental." As [the brother fisherman] points out: "The sea rules. You've got to realise you're in somebody else's territory." In that realm, a storm can be the sea's executioner, a hired gun. There's only so much a crew can do when one hits – lash everything down, check safety procedures and get below... Every fisherman remembers his worst storm. [The brother fisherman's] was in the Southern Ocean south-west of N[Z] in the mid-1980s, when he was hove to for 22 days in a "29-metre, skinny" former North Sea trawler. "There were 30 to 40-metre seas, 80-90 knots of wind and breaking swells, which are the ones you have to watch. I lost my liferafts, all the gear, everything on deck." ...fishing... has always attracted tough men drawn by the elemental existence the sea offers... For all the raw romanticism, they go, too, for the most practical of reasons – even the most unskilled positions of a boat can pay well. A 16-year-old straight out of school can earn \$40,000 processing fish on a factory boat for 300 days in the year. By the time he's 19 he could be hauling in \$70,000. It's a life spent in the hold of a ship working eight hours on, eight hours off continuously... "That's hard work, so when they come home they play the same way,"... A year's worth of partying is packed into a few crazy weeks... "You have your most wild adventures on land, not when you're at sea," says [the brother fisherman]. At least, you used to. "Everything's been tamed," he sighs. "The outlaws have gone... Those days have gone." Just as in the Old West, the wagons are rolling in and the ranchers are putting up fences. Since the quota system was introduced in 1986, the... industry is better regulated, poaching has diminished... and... the companies pay their taxes...

Russian authorities have seized a... Vanuatu-registered trawler, owned by a Seattle-based company Pacific Marine run by two Russian businessmen... that skipped N[Z] last month owing more than \$600,000. The Ascold, which unexpectedly sailed out of N[Z] waters with a 70-tonne catch of hoki... and failed to answer radio calls, was detained this week at the Russian port of Vanino, north of Vladivostok... [The] Ministry of Fisheries... said [i]t... could seek to take action against the Ascold for... landing its catch... and... leaving N[Z] waters illegally...

Dozens of Russian fishermen who had been drifting for hours on an ice-floe in the Gulf of Finland were taken off by helicopter yesterday. A total of 67 people had been in danger after the floe broke off from the main sheet of ice. Moscow Echo radio said the floe was floating off St Petersburg and risked breaking up as a result of strong winds... [In related news, two] Samoans who drifted more than 4000km across the Pacific for nearly five months have been rescued off Papua New Guinea. But two of their companions died of thirst and starvation and their bodies were thrown overboard from the frail, 7m aluminium dinghy. The survivors... aged 36, and... 27... caught birds... that landed on the vessel... and fish... with their hands... and drank rainwater... [One of the survivors], who is married with six children, was "very happy" to be alive... [– though he criticised t]he Samoan Government... for not searching for... [them –] and could not wait to be reunited with his family. The runabout had drifted close to dozens of islands, including those in the Fijian chain, and the men saw large ships, but no one responded to their flares... The survivors were finally rescued last week by a Normanby Island villager who paddled out to them after they fired off their last flare... The men were fishing off Samoa... when a huge load of fish dragged their boat underwater. They righted the boat by cutting away the fishing lines and two outboard motors...

A school of herring caught in a trawler's nets refused to give up without a fight. The fish swam for their lives and sank the boat. The 19m trawler Steinholm was fishing off the northern coast of Norway when it made a huge catch... When the crew tried to haul in the net, the entire school headed for the bottom and capsized the boat... The crew tried to cut loose the net, but was forced to abandon the capsized boat, which sank in 10 minutes... The 49-year-old skipper... told the Oslo newspaper *Dagbladet*: "I have been fishing since I was 14 and I have never seen anything like it." ...No one was hurt and the six-member crew was rescued by another trawler. It was not clear whether the fish escaped the net.

...*One that got away*... A GIANT snapper contest got even fishier when the biggest catch turned out to be a fortnight old. Police are now considering laying fraud charges against an Auckland angler who tried to claim \$20,000 first prize in the annual Kilwell competition, at Matamata, earlier this month... "This is the first time I've ever heard of anything like this happening..."... said... [a] Morrinsville detective... The \$20,000 was on offer for the heaviest snapper over 13.6kg and lured 300 fishermen. But officials... thought there was something strange about the 14kg snapper angling for top prize... It had sunken eyes and soggy flesh and the scales were falling off. Organisers locked up the fish and sent it to Auckland for testing. Experts said it was 17 to 19 days old, and it was disqualified... The \$20,000 went to the runner-up, [a]Matamata school-boy... Th[e Aucklander] may yet retrieve ...h[is] winnings through... court action.

...*Sweet smell of success had fishy odour*... [An Aucklander] had caught a huge snapper, one that put him in line for a \$20,000 fishing contest prize... But... when the weighmaster told scores of other contestants that the fish tipped the scales at 14.5kg... muttering started... The story of the snapper unfolded in a court yesterday when [the Aucklander] and his fishing mates that day... pleaded not guilty to charges of attempting false pretences. The men are accused of conspiring to win the money with a fish caught before they had even entered. It was allegedly stuffed with kawahai head and a mullet fresher than the snapper itself, and had freezer burn on its tail. At the Morrinsville District Court depositions hearing, their lawyer... conceded that they had a case to answer and said: "This case is all about an old fish dressed up as a new fish."

...THE men at the centre of a fishing contest furore won't be able to claim the winning prize despite being cleared of criminal charges of cheating, say[s the]... Matamata Fishing Club president... "What they don't realise is when you enter a fishing competition, you enter under a set of rules and they are that the committee has solo judgement of the fish at the weigh-in. If they chose to disqualify the fish, that is their right." The men... plan to mount a legal challenge to get the prize... "We'll continue the fight... We'll go as high as we have to go. There was never a case."

...N[Z]'s marlin record has been smashed by a Gisborne man after a 7 1/2 hour battle with a 473.2kg black marlin... using 37kg breaking strain line and "stand-up" tackle... The monster fish, which beat the previous record of 430kg, propelled [the Gisborne man] into the "Grander" club for catches over 1000lbs (453.6kg). He was competing in a four-day tuna tournament for the Tapatouri Sports Fishing Club. Three marlin, one of each type... [(the other two catches were a] 84.75kg striped marlin... [and] a 224.95kg blue marlin[)]... were weighed in – a first in a club tournament.

...on Sunday, a... Huia fisherman... hooked the biggest southern bluefin tuna that he – or possibly any other angler – has ever caught. It was 7.30 pm... [a]nd the lads on the 7m launch Pleco had just settled in for a spot of fishing in gentle swell 70km off the mouth of Kaipara Harbour. [The fisherman] had no idea what he had caught, but... [hi]s 37kg line ran with relentless torque in relatively short runs. After a two-hour fight, [the boat's] skipper... peered over the side and saw a fish big enough to be "a bloody whale." The hard bit was yet to come – hauling the leviathan on board... Back on shore yesterday, the Manukau Sport Fishing members were astonished to find that their catch weighed 198kg – smashing the southern bluefin record by 60kg. But the weight and tuna variety are yet to be confirmed by the N[Z] Big Game Fishing Council and, in turn, the International Game Fishing Association in Florida. That could take four months... So how will the lads pay homage to their monster catch? Smoke some, they say, and chuck the rest on the barbie.

...I was disgusted by your article yesterday celebrating the catch of a large bluefin tuna. It was highly insensitive to the serious issue of declining tuna populations as explored in an article in your newspaper the day before. Both articles refer to the recent \$187,000 price a tuna fetched in

Japan. Monday's article, however, connected high prices with the fact that "the species itself is destined for extinction." The article further stated that "the first species to disappear will be the bluefin..."

...The southern bluefin tuna has been called the cheetah of the seas, and like the cheetah it faces the threat of extinction... A[US]n scientists believe the species, now estimated to exist at about 8[%] of its 1960 population size, could collapse in 20 years... After early exploitation – the catch peaked in 1961 at nearly 82,000 tonnes – the global catch is[currently] about 16,650 tonnes a year... [But] Japanese demand for its flesh in sashimi, even at a price of \$20,000 for a 40-year-old 2m, 150kg fish is[rejuvenating] the pace of fishing... Now the Japanese want to catch a further 1400 tonnes "experimentally" on top of their allowable catch... But as the fish are caught so, too, are albatrosses and petrels... which dive on the tuna longline baits... [I]n the past 20 years about 54,000 albatrosses and petrels are estimated to have been killed in N[Z] waters by longliners. In the Southern Ocean it is estimated that tens of thousands more are drowned each year after being hooked... [The RFBPS] has asked the N[Z] Government to take action to protect the fish and the birds but there had been "total inaction." ...Like albatrosses, which have to grow into their teens before they breed, southern bluefin tuna are also thought to take many years to reach maturity...

Japan has given an assurance it will comply with an international court order limiting its catch of southern bluefin tuna. [The PM]... said the assurance was given at a 40-minute meeting... this week with Japan[']s... Fisheries and Agriculture Minister... While N[Z] for now did not intend dropping legal action against Japan, both [the PM] and the Japanese minister had agreed officials should start talks over management of the fishery... The U[N] International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea last Friday granted an injunction sought by N[Z] and AUS], ordering Japan to abide by agreed quotas for southern bluefin tuna to protect dwindling stocks. The injunction bars Japan from raising its annual 6065-tonne quota... [L]ast year... Tokyo... tried to overstep its quota by 30[%].

...This month a large frozen fish fetched \$187,628 wholesale at a Japanese fish market. Ten years ago it would have fetched \$80 – and probably gone into a tin of catfood... Coupled with an increase in popularity for fresh tuna – once found only in the Far East – world tuna catches have doubled in the past 10 years[, and now the]... "chicken of the sea" outsells all other canned fish or meat, at 3.3 billion cans worldwide... The... catch... is likely to top 4 million[tonnes] this year... In the South Pacific, the world's largest tuna fishery, catches have risen seven fold since 1972... Five tuna species – bluefin, albacore, yellowfin, bigeye and skipjack – are the most sought after... The... bluefin... is among the top five on the Wildlife Fund's Endangered Seas Campaign list of fish breeds needing immediate action to prevent extinction... But now that the Japanese, the world's biggest consumer of the most endangered tuna species, have refused to curtail fishing, conservation efforts are unlikely to succeed... Illegal and unregulated "pirate" fishing fleets are... taking advantage of the spiralling prices to be had for tuna in Japan... [A]n informal survey of sushi restaurants... revealed that bluefin was on most menus as toro – the fatty underbelly of the fish which has become Japan's caviar – commanding prices of \$170 a plate. "I wouldn't dream of eating tuna, especially bluefin tuna. It would be like eating a rhinoceros – it's just as endangered," says... [the] oceans campaigner for Greenpeace International. "There comes a time when consumers are going to have to cut the amount of fish they eat, and this may well be that time."

Although the name 'tunny' was first used in England – from the Latin thunnus – at least as early as the 15th century, and the Spanish word tuna did not come into general use until the beginning of this century, tuna is rapidly becoming the accepted name for this large fish. The tunny or bluefin tuna of the Mediterranean is said to reach 14 ft long and weigh 1 800 lb, but few exceed 8 ft in length... The many references to the tunny in classical literature show it to have been as important to the Mediterranean peoples as the herring was to the people of northwest Europe. The fisheries have continued through the centuries. Many methods have been used for catching the fish, [which]... are believed to reach speeds of up to 50 mph... The most spectacular are the net fisheries; very long nets are used to intercept migrating shoals and guide them into a final compartment or 'death chamber'. When this is filled with jostling fish the net floor is raised, the surrounding boats close in and the massed fish are clubbed, speared and dragged into the boats. Tuna fishing... has become a popular sport during the last half century. A large fish has been described as 'the tiger of the seas'... that strikes like a whirlwind and, played with a rod, will give a man the contest of his life, perhaps towing his boat for hours over a distance of several miles before becoming exhausted... The actual identification of species is difficult because tuna, like many of the large fishes, seldom reach museums, where they can be effectively studied... Nevertheless, the tendency now is to... [say that o]ne species ranges across the tropical and subtropical Atlantic and another ranges across the Pacific...

Delegates from across the Pacific gather in the Marshall Islands this week for talks with the major "distant water fishing nations" to iron out differences on how to manage and preserve tuna stocks.

...Pacific Island suppliers of half the world's canned tuna want a bigger share of the profits from the catch and a widening of the regulated ocean fishing grounds to cut down on renegade over-fishing. Their mouthpiece, the Solomon Islands-based Forum Fisheries Agency... says last year's South Pacific catch of about one million metric tons of tuna by the U[S] and four Asian fishing nations was worth \$US1.7 billion... Revenue for South Pacific member nations, many of them small, poor, and virtually without resources except fish, was only \$US60 million in fishing fees, about 3.5[%] of total revenues, plus \$US25 million to \$35 million more in spending on shore by foreign fishing fleets... [A]nother vital issue is to widen fishing controls over the entire ocean from Indonesia to French Polynesia to achieve measured and regulated harvesting of tuna. The agency says latest surveys indicate the stocks of skipjack, albacore and yellowfin tuna are healthy, and skipjack and yellowfin quotas could be raised 30[%]. But bigeye tuna, highly prized by Japan for sashimi, is under stress.

...Empty nets, high prices... The Cook Islands has two million square miles of ocean, but fishermen are not catching enough to supply the capital Rarotonga and the country is now having to import from N[Z] and Tahiti. Fishermen and restaurateurs agree that the past six months has been the country's worst fishing season... A meteorologist... said the problem was caused by the drift of warm currents from east to west, with the higher sea temperatures killing off nutrients on which fish survive. He said fish were moving further south to colder climates with plenty of nutrients. The Met Office has predicted that the fishless situation could last up to 12 months. And that is bad news for Rarotonga where visitors expect fresh, locally caught fish at reasonable prices. A 25[%] import levy and 12[%] Value Added Tax are making imported supplies very expensive and this was being reflected in the price of fish dishes being served in Rarotonga... The levy was introduced to protect local fishermen, but the reality is "local fishermen can't supply their regular clients," according to... a fisherman-turned-importer... Now restaurants and importers want the 25[%] levy temporarily lifted until fishermen can again meet the demand.

...Living in an island nation does make it rather difficult to envisage what it is like to share a common border. But it does make it easier to see just how illogical some borders are. During the recent Northern summer it has taken a fish to show how North American borders defy reality – in this case the mighty salmon. The U[S] and Canada used to have a treaty. It took 15 years to negotiate, it came into effect in 1985, it expired in 1992 and its basic aim was to take into account the simple fact that salmon do not acknowledge national borders. The treaty said each country's fishing boats were entitled to a catch proportionate to the numbers of salmon spawning in its rivers. Which would be fine except British Columbia rivers produce fish in abundance; Americans, in contrast, have inflicted dams and industrial development on their rivers. Result: American boats have over-fished for years, supposedly 35 million salmon since the treaty came into effect. Last year N[Z] supplied a mediator who called for American restraint. In July, Canadian fishers set out to reap the benefits of an expected record 18 million sockeye salmon returning to the Fraser River, but American boats got in first. The Canadians were not pleased. In retaliation their boats blockaded an Alaskan ferry in British Columbia's Prince

Rupert Harbour for three days. Last month, Alaskan officials said the ferry service would not operate next summer... Meanwhile, Canadian fishers have been scooping up as much fish as possible from around Vancouver Island, normally available to nearby Washington state boats. The Americans have already accused the Canadians of excessively fishing coho and chinook salmon off British Columbia. In the political arena, the British Columbia premier... advised the federal Government that the province would cancel the lease of a torpedo-testing range near Vancouver that just happens to be used by the U[S] Navy. On the other side of the border, a Republican senator from Alaska suggested a Navy or Coastguard escort for American fishing boats. Now the premier [of British Columbia] has filed a lawsuit contending that American fishers had broken an international treaty and seeking damages of \$US300 million. And the general public are not sitting idly by. Toss in a bit of American flag burning during the ferry blockade and such headlines as this one in a Seattle newspaper, "Let's take Canada, eh?" and it is clear the neighbours are restless... Put aside all artificial trappings, the jingoism, the flags, the anthems, and one day common sense will prevail... Like the salmon, the peoples who call their region Cascadia will redefine their borders... The regional nature of Canadian politics only confirms the crazy nature of the borders along the North American north-west Pacific coast... While the Liberal Party managed to scrape back into power in the June general election, the divide between its Ontario power base and the Opposition Reform Party's dominance of British Columbia and Alberta in the west became more clearly defined. [■ The 'World Trade Court has told AUS to lift its 24-year-old ban on certain salmon imports.']

...BATTLE lines have been drawn on some of [NZ's] premier salmon fishing rivers over whether anglers should be allowed to fish from boats. Some anglers in South Canterbury want fishing from boats banned and will decide this week if they will ask the Central South Island Fish and Game Council to endorse the move. They believe people fishing from boats have an unfair advantage of catching salmon... Two weeks ago a group of shore anglers were unsuccessful in getting a ban. The fish and game council's operations committee recommended the ban but it was defeated 7-4 at a full meeting. It had been proposed by [a] council member... Under the rules he can try again at this month's meeting... [B]oat owners say there is enough fish for everyone and believe their presence on the rivers... is vital for safety. Often they are first on the scene to rescue shore anglers who slip into the river and other boaties who get into trouble... [By the way, f]ive people were missing yesterday after a Russian helicopter crashed into the Black Sea off Sochi as it tried to rescue a group of amateur fishermen who had got into difficulties.

...The fate of at least 400 fishermen is unknown after tidal waves... [that] measured more than 3m... lashed the coastal districts of the Indian state of West Bengal. Forty fishing trawlers... left the shores last week but were yet to return...

Dozens of fishing boats anchored near Sri Lanka's southern coastal town of Hikkaduwa rock gently in the waves, a picture of tranquillity, but in the water below the scene is one of devastation. The keels of the boats dipping into the water chip away at the delicate coral reefs, wreaking havoc on what has been declared a marine sanctuary... [Damage] caused by... anchors... coral-mining, over-fishing... and... pollution... [is also] ruining the reefs... For centuries, Sri Lankans have depended on harvesting fish and other resources from the reefs... The country has reaped the profits in foreign exchange earnings from the export of spiny lobsters, sea cucumbers and ornamental reef fish that abound among the corals. Tourists have provided another source of income, attracted by the beauty of the corals. But at the same time, the reefs have been exploited to extract lime for Sri Lanka's... construction industry. Now the danger signs are showing – the reefs are fast depleting... A warning written on a wooden board telling people that damaging the coral reef is a crime has faded away... Reef depletion is a global problem. The coordinator of the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network... said about 10[%] of coral reefs worldwide had disappeared. "[30%] of the world's coral reefs are in critical shape and may die within the next 10 to 20 years... unless we start doing something now." Besides being beautiful structures admired by divers, the strong ramparts of coral reefs serve as storm barriers that protect shorelines and provide ships with safe harbour... [Incidentally, s]tocks of deep-water fish have been wiped out across the North Atlantic – only a few years after trawling for them began... Fishermen turned to grenadiers, roughies, black scabbards and the rest because stocks of shallow-water fish, such as cod and herring, are... seriously depleted... Scientists are saying it could take... 100 years for orange roughy stocks to be restored in the North Atlantic... "The roughy is a classic deep-water fish," said... the director of... the Dunstaffnage Marine Research Station, Oban, west Scotland... "It used to be plentiful in the North Atlantic. Today you can hardly find a single one between Britain and Newfoundland. They are fished out because there are no quotas and no protection." ...Neither is the problem confined to the Atlantic... Similar disturbing patterns of depletion are found in... the Pacific... In N[Z], stocks are now 10[%] of their original volume.

...[NZ has a well-established process for assessing fish stocks as the basis for an annual review of the catch limits for quota species. There are 31 fish species or species groups currently managed under the Quota Management System. These groups consist of 179 different fish stocks and the Total Allowable Commercial Catches (TACCs) for these stocks are reviewed each year. The process begins with 13 working groups convened by the Ministry of Fisheries. Eight of these groups assess individual species or groups of species, and the other five deal with more general issues (marine recreational fishing, the impact of fishing on non-fish species such as marine mammals and seabirds, interactions between fish species, fisheries data and stock assessment methods). Each group consists of ministry staff and representatives from the commercial fishing industry, Maori, recreational fishing groups and environmental or conservation organisations. The main job of the eight species working groups is to estimate the sustainable yield that can be taken from each fish stock, and to determine whether current TACCs and recent catch levels are sustainable. When new information results in substantial changes to previous assessments of stocks, this is referred to the Fishery Assessment Plenary for further consideration. The plenary, which is open to all members of all the working parties, reviews the assessments for the stocks referred to it by the working groups. The outcome is a substantial document which summarises the state of each stock. This largely completes the scientific stock assessment process, and the involvement of the ministry, but the process of setting or adjusting TACCs is far from over. A range of considerations – economic, social and environmental – are added to the scientific assessments to determine whether the TACCs should be adjusted and, if so, how quickly. A series of meetings and consultations takes place before the TACCs are finally adjusted. Within a few months, the whole process begins again for the next fishing year. NZ's offshore fisheries are amongst the deepest in the world. Species such as orange roughy, which live at depths of up to 1,500 metres, present special challenges to the ministry's scientists. To study these deepwater fish, and assess the size and productivity of the fish stocks, the ministry's staff have adapted existing research techniques and developed new ones.]

...*'Quota slashing reflects depletion of fisheries* Moves by the NZ Government to close the Challenger Plateau orange roughy fishery will be the first time a deep-water fishery has been shut down because of depleted resources. The plateau in the Tasman Sea west of the lower North Island has had its quota cut from 1425 tonnes to one tonne. The Fisheries Minister says the stocks in the area are now at only 3% of their original size. It is one of three orange roughy fisheries affected by cuts as the Government tries to improve protection of the fish stock. The other two are the East Cape, where the quota is cut from 2500 tonnes to 200, and the mid-east coast, down from 2100 tonnes to 1500, and reducing to 800 tonnes the following year. The cuts take effect from the beginning of the new fishing year on October 1. The rapid "fishing down" of stocks and inadequate investment in research are being blamed.]

...The head of the country's second biggest scientist institute has hit out at the Government's user-pays approach to fish research... [The] director of the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric research (Niwa), said that making the fishing industry pay for all research into commercial stocks was simply not working. He wants more public money spent on studying commercial fisheries... Fisheries research has been slashed from \$17.3 million to just over \$14 million in less than two years, he said on board the deepsea research vessel Tangaroa yesterday. That meant there was little chance of critical work being done into the state of many commercial fish stocks... His argument is likely to win support from the fishing industry and environmentalists. Fishing people believe the Government's research levy is too high... Environmentalists oppose the industry's gaining too much say over research and would welcome more research.

...The Government has again slashed fisheries research... The Minister of Fisheries... has not yet announced the funding, but documents sent to a list of "approved parties" show a research budget of \$13.3 million for the 1997-1998 financial year. That is a drop of either \$500,000 or \$1.2

million, depending on how the sums are done. [The minister] acknowledged last night that either way it was a cut. He blamed falling fish profits, saying the fishing industry could not afford to pay more than the \$10.4 million it would be levied for research. The Government was not prepared to contribute more than \$2.89 million... Environmental groups said the decision was an aboutface on a promise last year by the then Minister of Fisheries... to increase research to \$18 million this year. A spokesman for the R[FBPS]... said fisheries research had fallen from \$22 million six years ago... A third of N[Z]'s commercial fish species were depleted, yet not enough research was being done to determine whether they could survive, he said. The eco-marine coordinator... said scientists were reluctant to speak out against the industry in case their... funding was cut off.

...Auckland Museum scientists have imitated a classic 1930s survey of organisms on the floor of the Waitemata Harbour and found that 60 years on it is still inhabited by an abundance of marine life. But the research work giving a picture of the state of the harbour's health will go unfinished because of the cost-cutting closure of the museum's marine department. [In related news, 'middle-aged men who eat a weekly meal of "fatty" fish such as tuna, salmon, mackerel or shellfish cut in half their risk of suffering a sudden, deadly heart attack, according to an American study. A Dutch researcher wrote an accompanying editorial: "Therefore fish should be a component of a healthy diet." However, the report also says the health benefits enjoyed by consumers of fish (the researchers studied 11 years of data on the dietary habits and health of 20,551 male physicians, aged 40 to 84 years) may partly be attributed to their healthier habits in general, as they were more likely to exercise regularly and take more antioxidant vitamins.'

... 'Fish is as useful a source of animal protein as meat. The oily fish, such as sardines, mackerel and salmon, contain vitamins A and D in their flesh, but in white fish, such as halibut and cod, these vitamins are present in the liver. The bones, when eaten, of sardines, whitebait and tinned salmon provide the body with calcium and phosphorus. Since all fish contains protein it is a good body-building food and the oily fish is useful for energy and as a protective food because of its vitamins (but, owing to its fat content, oily fish is not so digestible as white fish and is not so suitable for invalid cooking). Fish have formed a large portion of man's food because of their abundance and relative ease of harvesting. Fish are valuable, not only because they are a good source of protein, but because they are suitable to all types of menus and can be cooked and presented in a wide variety of ways. In addition to providing fresh and processed food for human consumption, other valuable products such as oil and isinglass as well as fertiliser come from fish. Unfortunately fish are not in unlimited supply and due to overfishing it is now necessary to have fish farms to supplement the natural resources.'

...while 'experiments in restocking with fish raised in hatcheries are carried on, maintenance and conservation of sources of supply remain problems under both federal and state jurisdiction. International disputes and treaties have resulted from controversy over fishing rights. Since pre-historic times fish, as food, have been important to the economic stability of many areas. The search for fishing grounds in pre-Columbian times brought Europeans to the Atlantic Coast of America, and led to much exploration. The total annual catch of fish in the world grew rapidly after WW2 to about 75 billion pounds annually by the mid-60s. North American fisheries (which employ more than 150,000 fishermen) account for about 12% of the total and Asia accounts for nearly half, with Japan being the largest single producing nation.'

... 'It seems so simple – Japan eats lots of fish, we have plenty to sell. But politics keeps getting in the way. At the recent Apec trade ministers' meeting, it was the US decision to slap tariffs on our lamb that attracted most attention. But the hypocrisy of that move overshadowed an issue which, for those committed to liberalising trade, has lingered for too long: access to the Japanese market for more of our fish. "The NZ fishing industry has been lobbying for 15 years – the Japanese stonewall every approach," says one industry spokesperson. The Japanese have cited quality, packaging, delivery – just about anything to block access or any advance on the tariff question. Each of those issues has been countered by involving Japanese in packaging and quality control – and still no progress. "It is an indictment of our politicians," says the spokesperson. On paper the issue looks simple. At a time when Apec countries have agreed to dismantle the tariff regime by the end of 2005, the Japanese – among others – have been intransigent, largely because Japanese law makers count on votes from vocal and well organised industries such as fisheries. Last September, Apec ministers could not reach consensus on removing tariffs affecting fishing and forestry, and passed the issue over to the WTO. Ironically, at the time Japan was desperately looking at ways of stimulating domestic spending, even to the point of giving all households a one-off injection of cash to spend. (Economists pointed out that most Japanese would simply bank the money so the idea was dropped.) Lowering or removing tariffs on fish would have had exactly that effect. High price, good quality fish, such as crayfish, had dropped off the menus at top class restaurants because it was too expensive. Remove the tariff, the argument goes, the price would drop and people would buy the stuff again. That simple. Japan's unwillingness to move on the tariff issue makes fishing a major philosophical discussion point on the Apec agenda when the meeting comes to Auckland. The reason it is such an important issue, however, has more to do with money than philosophy. Japan, being an enormous consumer of fish, is a lucrative market. But its fishing industry is subsidised by over \$US500m. The EU's fishing subsidies are a little less and the US supports its industry to the tune of \$US30m. Fishing in NZ – which employs about 10,000 in harvesting and processing – enjoys no subsidies. But the Japanese fishing industry, although small, is a powerful lobby. The introduction of the single-seat constituency system in Japan's Lower House has made its votes important – and it has insisted its government maintain tariffs which currently run at between 2 to 10% on frozen and fresh fish']...

Asia's status-symbol appetite for live fish has spawned a highly lucrative trade... But it is devastating the coral reefs of the Indo-Pacific and driving a goldrush-style boom on the Great Barrier Reef. A SNORKELLER ducks under crystal waters, descends about 3m and crouches outside a coral cavern on one of the 3000 reefs off Queensland. Following the instructions of the dive master, he holds out a prawn at arm's length, waving it gently. A large fish looms up, getting bigger and bigger. The giant maori wrasse is nearly 2m long and looks almost that high. The snorkeller's courage fades at the last moment and he lets go of the prawn and pulls his hand away. The jade green fish doesn't open his mouth. Its lips just suck in the prawn as it passes majestically by. It's an unforgettable experience. But though still common on the World Heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef, this fish is threatened with extinction on the once-spectacular coral reefs of Indonesia and the Philippines. The maori wrasse is the premium product of another huge, but far less environmentally friendly, industry... fetching up to the equivalent of \$318 a plate... The live reef fish trade is driven by a prestige dining tradition, centred on Hong Kong but also active in almost any city with a large Chinese population... "...among the Cantonese in particular, seafood is the food of foods,"... says [an AUS]n-based... international expert whose report to the U[S]-based Nature Conservancy 18 months ago exposed widespread Indo-Pacific reef devastation caused by disastrous fishing practices... [He] concentrates his work outside A[US] in regions where the use of cyanide to stun and catch fish for the live fish trade has killed huge areas of reef in what were the world's most ecologically rich coral reefs. But when the *Sydney Morning Herald* quoted him figures on the rapid growth of the \$NZ11 million-plus trade in A[US], he was alarmed. From nothing four years ago, 50 tonnes of live fish were exported in 1994, 100 tonnes in 1995 and 409 tonnes – meaning hundreds of thousands of fish – last year. Cyanide is outlawed in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park... But [the expert] is also especially concerned about the targeting of spawning areas... using high-technology sonar and positioning devices. Because fish are worth far more alive than dead, the trade is changing the economics of the reef fishing industry at breakneck pace, while scientific knowledge lags behind... By chance, an opportunity has been provided to draw breath and reassess A[US]'s role in the live fish trade. Until last year, booming exports from Queensland were going by air in large containers with their own supply of compressed oxygen. But an air crash in America has led to an international aviation safety ban on carrying compressed oxygen and, despite loud protests from Queensland, the ban looks as if it will stick.

...[there have been calls for a ban on 'trawling, because it is allegedly wiping out a tiny barnacle which could be the key to a medical miracle.'

... 'The Auckland Regional Council's approval of a 30-hectare South Kaipara mussel farm application could trigger a marine farm "gold rush", say opponents. Three other applications for the same area – totalling 306ha – have been waiting for the outcome of the 30ha Biomarine Ltd application at Te Kawanu Pt. The RFBPS wants a moratorium on all new marine farming resource consent applications and suggests suitable aquaculture areas could be identified, zoned and appropriate provisions developed in regional coastal plans. A moratorium already applies in the Hauraki Gulf.' ● 'Kaipara Harbour

is NZ's largest, the largest inland waterway in the southern hemisphere, and the second largest harbour in the world with its 3,200 kilometres of coastline between Helensville and Dargaville. It is on Auckland's doorway but to many in the Auckland Region it is either a forgotten place or a great unknown.')

...A special quota has been called for to prevent the "rape" of the Kaipara Harbour and defuse growing tension... Police have reported a recent wave of anonymous threats to Auckland commercial fishers and vandalism of their vehicles... Another 18km to the west, Ngati Whatua residents at Tinopai have proposed a rahui (ban) on commercial fishing on part of the harbour and the northern rivers which feed it. The chairman of the Kaipara District Council's fishing committee... said yesterday... [that while] he did not condone violence or vandalism, he understood why locals were angry at the harbour exploitation... Helensville locals last year counted 34 dories on the harbour in just one night... "We believe man's greed is going to destroy the harbour." ..."Hordes" of fishers... were legally allowed access to the harbour, which was a breeding ground for mullet... Up to 1005 tonnes of mullet a year could be harvested from around the top of the North Island, and the Kaipara was targeted. "The fishers can go to the harbour and get all their quota there..." ...A rahui would not be necessary if the ministry did its job and controlled the harbour take.

...There were strong feelings of *deja vu* for [a]commercial fisherman... as three shots rang out on the Kaipara Harbour last week... [He had] armed himself with an automatic assault rifle in 1991 after being threatened by a Maori who fired a shotgun into the air, and warned to "bring his guns" if he wanted to fish the area again... Police are now trying to avoid a repeat, as they attempt to control a tense situation... [The commercial fisherman is not surprised that] the person rocking the boat in the Kaipara Harbour... once again... is... the man convicted for being on the other end of the shotgun six years ago. [This time the gunman has also] called for a rahui...

Commercial fishermen plan to defy a traditional Maori ban around Tinopai... The rahui... was put in place by... a public ceremony... on Saturday. The ban does not cover recreational fishing. Although some local commercial fishermen have indicated they would respect the ban, the chairman of the Auckland Inshore Fishermen's Association... said yesterday that... "A rahui is not recognised in any statute of N[Z] law and some members have no intention of changing the way they operate when they have a legal right to fish there."

...Police will meet Kaipara Harbour fishermen on Monday in a bid to calm the choppy water created by... a ban on commercial fishing in the area... A Tinopai Maori spokesman... has warned commercial fishermen they run the risk of having their equipment seized if they ignore the rahui. [A]Senior Constable... of Ruawai, 30km south-east of Dargaville, said yesterday that... [h]e did not want to see fishermen arming themselves, as happened in 1992 when a Ruawai man took an assault rifle out on the water after being intimidated by a Maori... [By the way,] Nelson fishermen are threatening to blockade Wellington Harbour in anger over Government moves to change rules governing the size of inshore fishing boats.

...Commercial fishing interests are uniting with recreational groups to fight a move by the Minister of Fisheries... to allow factory trawlers as close as 12 nautical miles from shore... [The] plans... sparked warnings that... these vessels... will plunder inshore fish, which will be caught as a byproduct of target catches... [A spokesman for the commercial fishing interests] said last night that the minister's proposal was a recipe for turmoil in the industry and would pit large and small boats against each other. Recreational fishers say the minister risks political suicide if he allows large trawlers on the country's "back lawn." ...Fishing groups in the South Island are also weighing into the battle, starting up fighting funds to keep the big boats away... At the moment... vessels 43m and longer... cannot come closer than 25 nautical miles... from much of the North Island west coast and to the full extent of the 200-mile exclusive economic zone down the eastern side [of the North Island, and around the Kermadec Islands. They can, however, come as close as the '12 nautical miles territorial zone around the lower-half and upper-north-west areas of the South Island']... A 30-year veteran of the fishing industry[, who is now the]... manager of Tainui-owned... Seafoods of Raglan, feared the impact on inshore species including gurnard, tarakihi, trevally and John Dory if the big vessels were allowed closer... But [the minister's] proposal was good news for... [another] company, also owned by Tainui, [which]contracts big Korean, Russian and Chinese deepwater trawlers to catch 20,000 tonnes of mostly squid and hoki a year. Allowing it closer to shore would... allow the company to harvest fish on a more cost-effective basis... said[its] general manager... The Auckland-based president of the Recreational Fishing Council... suggested the minister was trying to cover a botch-up... by his officials... after Independent Fisheries, of Lyttelton, built a \$20 million vessel too long for use in territorial waters. [He] said the company thought the boat would be small enough to fish close to shore, but discovered that it had been given wrong specifications by officials... [and] that shrinking the exclusive zone was one way of avoiding payment of damages. [The minister] admitted earlier yesterday that a change to the way vessels were measured was needed "because there has been some confusion with the interpretation of overall vessel length as prescribed by regulation."

...Forty centimetres is all that separates Auckland's Skaga Trawling Company from being able to send its \$5 million trawler... into fishing grounds restricted to ships under 43m. A Skaga director... said yesterday that the company sought advice from the Ministry of Fisheries in November 1995 before it bought the Norwegian-built [trawler] and was told it would comply. Measured... along the deck-line it is well inside the limit. It has fished inside the... restricted... areas... since being commissioned in early 1996 but now the company fears it is at risk of being prosecuted because of the new way of measuring. [The director] believes the small company's competitors were jealous of the [trawler], which was able to stay at sea for two months at a time with full refrigeration gear and storage for several hundred tonnes of fish... He said the Government should recognise the 1992 Ship Regulation Act's definition of "overall length" rather than the 1986 Fisheries (Commercial Fishing) Regulations... "We don't want to cut the nose off a \$5 million ship."

...[the director of a fishing company] found a simple solution when he thought the company's new trawler... was too long for the Government's 43m limit – cut the nose off. "It looked as ugly as sin but its seakeeping was okay," [he] said yesterday. He interpreted the regulations the way the ministry and courts are now interpreting them: that 43m meant overall length, from tip to tail... [A] few years later another company bought a similar... fishing ship, which it operated inside one of the restricted areas. It was more than 43m long but that company challenged the ministry's interpretation of the regulation and got agreement that anything above a closed deck did not form part of the hull of a ship and should not be included in the measurement... He then asked the ministry to confirm in writing that a hull was the area below the closed deck, which it did, saying that was its interpretation. "So I welded the nose back on our ship, which made it longer than 43m overall. It took a few days but the ship looks better like that." It... is used in fishing grounds where its length is not an issue. Should it be needed back in the restricted areas, [he] would simply cut the nose off... [again] if he had to.

...Fishing company Seafresh N[Z] is considering taking another of its boats to foreign waters in an effort to combat low profits from local catches. "We are looking at increasing returns for shareholders and if that means going elsewhere to fish then we will do that," [the]Seafresh chief financial officer... said yesterday... Seafresh has a fleet of four trawlers, of which three operate mainly in N[Z] and a fourth services Fiji and Malaysian waters. It also operates chartered squid boats... [The chief financial officer] was commenting after Seafresh reported pre-tax profits fell 75[%] to \$251,000 in its financial year... The drop in earnings was despite a 36[%] rise in sales to \$28.7 million... The company's overall result was eroded by a \$3.72 million write-off of goodwill[, but the]... company was able to book a tax credit of \$378,000 in the latest year... That took after-tax earnings to \$629,000 compared with \$659,000 a year earlier... [The company also] spent \$1.5 million up-grading its fleet in the latest financial year... Earnings a share were steady at 1c.

...A tuna boat belonging to the bankrupt American Z fleet fetched just over \$US6 million... yesterday in the first auction of its kind in N[Z]... The Big Z was ironically bought by its mortgagee, the U[S] National Marine Fisheries Service, which provided long-term finance to help to float the country's fishing fleet. The service's attorney... said the ship was bought to "protect the U[S] interest" by ensuring the best price was paid.

...A push by the West A[US]n Aboriginal Legal Service for hunting rights for all Aborigines, including a right to take undersize fish, has run into opposition. The state's Fisheries Ministry and Fishing Industry Council yesterday came out against the ALS campaign... [The council's] executive

officer... said his professional fishing association was[already] concerned about... the more than 20 native title claims over vast tracts of West A[US]n fishing waters. He said the worst case scenario[was] professional fishermen being denied access to such areas... A professional rock lobster fisherman had recently been barred from the Dampier archipelago when recreational fishermen successfully lobbied against him. "We're having to come to terms with the aspirations of the recreational sector and running into difficulties with the sheer weight of their numbers... Our desire with the Aboriginal people as well as recreational fishermen is to achieve mutual use of the fish stock with the bottom line being the sustainability of that stock." ...[the association would have to reconsider] the sustainability of stocks if there were any exemptions to conservation protections such as minimum sizes and bag limits... [The] ALS president... was convicted recently of poaching undersized freshwater crustaceans known as marron. The group planned to use an appeal against his conviction to launch its bid... for Aboriginal access to traditional foods in sea and on land other than private property... [The ALS's] chief executive... said the move would not threaten food stocks because Aborigines had traditional conservation methods... However, the... Fisheries executive director... said the appeal would be opposed. He said Aborigines were eligible for free recreational fishing licences that allowed for non-commercial, traditional fishing. [In local news, the Minister of 'Fisheries is telling recreational anglers that a controversial plan to make them buy licences is unlikely to proceed. More than 76,000 people rallied against the licensing proposal that appeared in a Ministry of Fisheries discussion paper. But yesterday the minister distanced himself from the concept, saying he did not like it, few NZers did, and it was unlikely to be introduced by the current Government. However, he said recreational fishing could no longer be taken for granted because too many fish were being taken. Options included a law to make the recreational catch a set percentage of the commercial take, or changes to the way fishing areas were managed. Under present law the minister sets an initial quota for each type of fish. An allowance is then made for Maori fishing and the rest is split between recreational and commercial fishers. The minister said he opposed the idea of the minister setting quotas because the rule was too weak, then added that recreational fishing was a birthright that should exist forever. "Dangling a line off a rock, wharf or boat is part of what it means to be a NZer," he said.]

...In the Wanganui District Court this week [a j]udge... dismissed a charge brought by the Fish and Game Council against [a Maori] for fishing without a licence. The decision is interpreted as a landmark allowing Maori to fish for trout in their tribal areas without a licence... [It has] caused dismay in the national fish and game body whose director... said the council was "almost certain" to appeal... The Auckland-Waikato Fish and Game Council and its North Canterbury counterpart said yesterday that they would prosecute anyone fishing without a licence in their regions, regardless of his or her race... The Minister of Conservation... yesterday indicated that he[also] would not tolerate a situation where Maori alone were excluded from paying for the right to catch trout, salmon and perch... [He] has called for an officials' report on the ruling... There is concern that if Maori are not required to have licences they will not be bound by restrictions on fishing seasons, times, equipment and daily catch limits. The Freshwater Anglers' Federation... president... said he had calls yesterday from anglers who were adamant they would not pay for licences if Maori were exempt. A Rotorua-based fishing guide... said: "That's going to kill the fishery and, as a commercial operator, it'll drive me out of business." But[the] policy and operations manager for the Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission, said there was no need for alarm. The case appeared to be the freshwater equivalent of a 1986 landmark decision on marine fisheries, where the courts ruled that [a Maori], fishing at Kaikoura, had not exceeded the recreational bag limit but had exercised a customary right. In the 10 years since, marine fisheries had not been destroyed... Fishing licences cost \$46.50 a year for Lake Taupo and \$62 for all other N[Z] waterways... Licence fees earned the Fish and Game Council \$5 million a year, which was used to fund hatcheries to restock rivers with salmon and trout. "It's a user-pays system which works very well but it appears some now will be using without paying. It is going to create a lot of racial disharmony,"...

Recreational fishers have vowed to fight a landmark court decision that gives Maori the right to fish territorial waters without licences... It was not clear whether Maori would still be subject to quota and other fishing restrictions following the ruling by a Wanganui District Court judge that Maori fishing rights under the Treaty of Waitangi should be construed expansively and generously... The case was brought when the... Fish and Game Council... sought to prosecute [a Maori], of Okoto Pa, near Wanganui, after a ranger stopped him on the river in January 1995. In dismissing the charge and ordering the return of... [the Maori's] fishing gear... the... Judge... said his decision was not a charter for Maori to fish without a licence anywhere in N[Z]. "Nor does it declare open season on trout." Maori from a hapu or iwi with traditional territory authority over a river fishery... must... fish for trout... according to the terms and conditions of the local kawa (protocol) and be able to prove they were properly authorised to do so. Fishing was to be for personal or family consumption, or for a hui or tangi[(mourning ceremony)]. It must not impinge on the conservation of the resource... [T]he council's director... was puzzled that such a decision could be made when trout was an introduced fish... "Basically it sets up a situation where two fishermen can be standing on a river bank. One will need a licence and one won't[, and the 2nd one will be]... gaining access to a... resource which is funded by the person standing next to them... There is going to be obvious tension on the river bank."

...Maori are not indigenous people and should not be entitled to fish trout in their tribal area without a licence, says Act. The party's health spokesman... said yesterday that he had asked for an urgent debate in Parliament on last week's court ruling... [He] said the Minister for Treaty Negotiations... had signalled the Government was unlikely to change the law to overturn the decision because Maori customary fishing rights were recognised under international law as the rights of indigenous people. "This is incorrect... Some N[Z]ers (who happen to be Maori) arrived early, some came later and some are still to come. We have too many cultures living in this country not to have one law applying to everyone."

...The Government has decided not to join an appeal against a district court ruling allowing Maori to fish locally without a licence... Most National MPs are believed to have pressed the Government to join the appeal but NZ First MPs successfully opposed this... The appeal... will go ahead in the High Court at Wellington next month.

...Maori have never had a traditional right to fish for trout without a licence... the High Court at Wellington... [was] told... yesterday... The High Court has been asked to decide if Maori have traditional fishing rights that include trout and if they did, whether they have been legally extinguished. At the end of yesterday's hearing, the court reserved its decision and said it would not issue a judgment until next year. [While on the topic of trout, 'the Government has extended for three years the importation ban which was put in place to protect a domestic ban on buying and selling trout. People can eat trout they catch but it cannot be sold. The domestic ban did not apply to imported trout, so the import ban was necessary to avoid confusion.]

...Under the Sealord deal the regulations governing customary rights were to be made in consultation with Maori. At the same time, the Amateur Fishing Regulations were amended so that "traditional non-commercial fishing as approved by the Director-General" joined hui and tangi as lawful customary Maori fishing. However, so far no regulations have been made under the Fisheries Act or any conditions laid down under the Amateur Fishing Regulations. At a recent court case it was claimed that Maori and the Crown had been unable to agree on customary fishing regulations. A major stumbling block appears to be that different tribal areas honour different protocols for gathering food.]

...The Confederation of Chiefs of the United Tribes is seeking a restraining order against the Ministry of Fisheries to stop it "harassing" Maori customary fishers... [It] is seeking a date early next year in the High Court at Auckland in a bid to get an order to restrain the ministry... and to sue it for the loss of livelihood of [some customary fishers]... The legal action follows a case where... the nephew of Labour's associate fisheries spokesman... had his boat confiscated last November. [The nephew] was charged with obstructing a ministry inquiry by refusing to answer questions about his fishing practices... off the Northland east coast. The charge was later dismissed in the Kaikohe District Court... No further charges were laid and the 12m steel longliner fishing boat is to be returned to [the nephew] once repairs are completed. The confederation's legal adviser... said this week that [the nephew] had, for about a month, been giving his catch to the confederation for distribution around marae in

Northland and Auckland. In return the marae gave koha (gifts), which could include money, but which were not considered payment for sale... [T]he arrangement was allowed under customary Maori law, which was acknowledged by the Fisheries Act 1983. [The adviser] said the ministry wanted to regulate customary fishing but that it was beyond its powers to do so as the confederation was not a signatory to the Sealords deal.

...[4 tonnes of snapper, landed at Whangaroa Harbour in Northland last month, has been claimed for traditional Maori use. The Ministry of Fisheries confirmed that it was investigating claims that the haul had been landed without a commercial fishing quota and then delivered to commercial fishing premises in Auckland. Ministry officers who inspected the warehouse found more than 100 bins, each containing up to 35kg of snapper. The officers didn't seize the snapper. "We are satisfied at this stage that the fish was taken for legitimate purposes," the ministry's Northland district compliance officer said, "but because of the quantity of fish involved, we have to make further inquiries." The ministry expects its investigation to be completed by the end of this week. Commercial fishers, angered at the size of the catch, say the Government should sort out the issue of customary rights soon. The Auckland Inshore Commercial Fishermen's Association said: "If this situation is allowed to continue with Maori taking as much fish as they want, then the quota management system no longer has any integrity." It added that allowing one race to take fish without controls and guidelines was apartheid. Labour's associate fisheries spokesman agreed yesterday that customary rights needed urgent definition at Government level. "It should not be some sort of de facto excuse by people that are involved in commercial fishing," he said, especially if those people were using customary rights as an excuse for a "black-market organisation." He pointed out that 4t of snapper seemed like a "heck of a lot of fish" to be taking for hui. "I get very angry when people use and abuse the whole customary rights concept that has been negotiated between Maori and the Crown. It brings the whole kaupapa into disrepute." Speaking of negotiations between Maori and the Crown, last year 'about 30 iwi went to the Privy Council in London – at a cost of more than \$1m – to overturn a Court of Appeal decision recognising the rights of urban Maori. Urban Maori had successfully appealed a High Court decision that stopped the Waitangi Tribunal hearing their claims.'

...The Privy Council... [has] quashed a Court of Appeal decision that allowed urban Maori with no tribal ties to benefit from fisheries allocation.

...Deepening rifts between Maori [are developing as o]nce more the[y try to answer the] question of how valuable fishing assets are divided up... Tribes like... Ngai Tahu, with ties to the country's biggest fisheries, [have] argued that more coast[means] more money. Others, with no coastline, argued the asset should be divided by population. The commission's recommendation is a 60/40 compromise... But urban authorities say... [that] under today's recommendation they'll get nothing.

...It is estimated by Ngai Tahu Fisheries that for every 100 tonnes of local deep-sea quota, some \$1.2 million of cashflow is generated into the South Island economy... With few domestic or wild animals (except birds) on New Zealand's soil before European arrivals, fish resources assumed a very significant role in Maori life. They were jealously-guarded property rights which an iwi owned. It had Kaitiaki (guardianship) responsibilities over this property as well, ensuring its exploitation was controlled... Some northern tribes believe population should be the basis for [divid]ing... fish assets. If this population-only model applied, most of Ngai Tahu's fisheries asset would disappear north of the Bombay Hills. Conversely, if the coastline-only model ruled, Ngai Tahu would be looking at receiving about 90 per cent of the allocation. Neither is fully fair but Ngai Tahu is losing out under the proposed... division of assets... on the basis of 60 per cent tribal coastline and 40 per cent Maori population.

...Urban Maori challenging the allocation of fisheries assets... [say that in] the commission's proposed split... Ngai Tahu, would benefit the most... receiv[ing 28.6%] of the quota (by weight), plus cash and shares, while it had only 4.8[%] of the Maori population... [L]ast year's census revealed that 19[%] of those who identified themselves as Maori could not identify their iwi, and about 70[%] lived in areas distant from their ancestral base.

...Urban Maori have laid a complaint with the Race Relations Office in the first round of their fight against the latest model for allocation of [Maori] fishing assets... valued at between \$250[million] and \$350 million... Te Whanau o Waipareira Trust and the Manukau Urban Maori Association say the Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission is indulging in ethnic purefying by telling urban Maori th[at] they are not Maori until they register with their iwi. In a letter to the chief commissioner of the Human Rights Commission they said the Fisheries Commission and its associated companies... also... refused to employ urban Maori... The Fisheries Commission has dismissed the allegations as "utterly preposterous." The commission announced on Thursday the formulae for the distribution of the fishing assets, which include directing urban Maori authorities to negotiate with iwi for a share. Deepwater fishing quota would be allocated 60[%] on the basis of iwi coastline and 40[%] on the basis of iwi population, based on last year's census results. Inshore quota would be allocated on the basis of iwi coastlines, with shares and cash to follow in proportion to the quota each iwi received. The Minister of Maori Affairs... said he was... concerned that urban Maori did not have "a foot in" following the announcement on Thursday. "But maybe we can use this process now to modify the... allocation model," he said on National Radio. Another equation will be brought into the argument today with the release of Maori iwi affiliation data from the census, in which more than half a million people said they had some Maori ancestry but not all could necessarily identify their iwi... [However, t]he chairman of the fisheries commission... disputes the number of urban Maori, estimated at 100,000 in the greater Auckland area... The urban organisations have set up a Maori register to prove they have the mandate to represent urban Maori in their Treaty of Waitangi rights.

...Auckland Maori representatives believe their efforts to sign up those who say they have no iwi may have given rise to a decision to exclude them from sharing fishing assets... "Maybe the... Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission... is afraid we will get the numbers to prove that we do represent a large number of Maori,"... said... [a] Manukau Urban Maori Authority spokesman... The Waipareira Trust chief executive... said the decision... that up to \$350 million of fisheries assets should be shared between iwi on the basis of their territories and populations... was a step backwards and one of the worst made in recent Maori history[, while the]... Alliance co-deputy leader... said: "The Sealord deed of settlement says the beneficiaries are all Maori. This formula does not meet that definition." The commission chairman and Ngai Tahu leader... strongly rejected suggestions that the commission was disenfranchising and disowning a sector of Maori living in cities who could not identify their iwi[, and]... said he hoped the decision would not face more court action.

...Urban Maori are prepared to fight in court the... Commission's proposed allocation model for Maori fishing assets... following its rejection earlier this week by Far North Maori... At a hui[('meeting of tribes for discussion')] with commissioners in Glen Eden yesterday, urban Maori representatives claimed their offer to take 20[%] of the cash assets was generous – given that almost 80[%] of all Maori lived in cities.

...Urban Maori have been pitted against their rural cousins in a decision they say has dispossessed them of up to \$350 million worth of future fisheries settlements. They plan legal action to overturn recommendations made... by the Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission... Maori without tribal ties fear... miss[ing] out on the job creation and health and education schemes iwi groups are planning from the asset divvy up... condemn[ing] them to state dependency. "Why should they go back to their tribal areas when there's nothing for them? Some of the greatest poverty is in the rural areas. There's no work and very little opportunity there," says the chief executive of West Auckland's Waipareira Trust... He wants the allocations to recognise that many Maori have lost their traditional tribal links and look to urban authorities to provide opportunity. "...Even at war Maori traditionally never left their dead behind, but that's what's happening to... urban Maori..."... A... veteran fishing rights campaigner... said the commission's decision was just plain wrong. It penalised someone born in Otara and not on the coast, suggesting that the distribution could[']ve been made instead through the Maori seats[in Parliament]... The assets at stake include cash, quota and shares in the Moana Pacific Fishing company, handed over by the Crown as part of an interim treaty settlement, but not including the assets of the 1992 Sealord deal.

...The new model for the allocation of... Maori fisheries assets... may still face a rough voyage, but those who launched it are glad it is at least off the drawing board. The chairman of the Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission... almost embraced the stormy seaworthiness test ahead

yesterday, saying the model “will make everyone, we hope, almost equally uphappy.” ...The Sealord deal was trumpeted as settling once and for all commercial Treaty of Fisheries claims on fish[, but since it]... was signed in 1992, not a year has passed without at least one organisation taking the commission to court... From the start there was conflict over how the distribution of the multi-million dollar quota and assets should be made by the... [c]ommission. And it went all the way to the Privy Council... The council of law lords quashed... an appeal court decision... allow[ing] urban Maori with no tribal ties to individually benefit from Maori fisheries assets... and referred the case back to the High Court. At the time of the legal battle, Maori were upset at the thought that a group of people in England could decide who was Maori and who wasn't... Maori have a tradition of sharing, a tradition of welcoming. When Maori go onto a marae outside their area, the hosts have an obligation to ensure their visitors are well cared for, including meals and a place to sleep, to uphold the mana of their tribe. However, it seems that when it comes to distribution of wealth, all of a sudden urban Maori don't exist, don't have the right to share in the benefits and do not have iwi links... The words of Matiu Rata in the build-up to the signing of the Sealord deal... have grown prophetic. “We may have landed the fish... but our troubles will begin when we cut it up.”

...[The Court of Appeal decision to allow urban and tribal Maori to argue the allocation of fisheries assets before the Privy Council again is contrary to the will of most Maori, says the Tainui iwi. A Tainui spokesman said the decision was frustrating. “It's got to stop at some point. More than 70% of iwi have accepted the model. It's not a perfect model but the commission has gone as far as it could and it's time to allocate.”] In another development, [t]he Chatham Islands iwi have been promised a separate Maori fisheries quota deal. The Treaty Tribes Coalition chairman... said the deal would deliver inshore and deep-sea quota to the[Chatham's 4] Maori iwi... and establish a special Chatham's fishery for the exclusive use of local Maori.

...Three North Island Maori tribes have united to rock the waka at a meeting tomorrow to approve a model for carving up... fisheries assets... saying the model will entrench inequality between northern and southern Maori. A Maori rights campaigner... said the commission model would give the 30,000-member Ngai Tahu tribe of the South Island 31[%] of fisheries assets while a larger northern tribe would get just 2.1[%]. The commission already faces a court bid by urban Maori to receive benefits from fisheries without having to establish iwi roots. Now, the Tainui and neighbouring Maniapoto and Raukawa tribes have... shun[ned] the carve-up proposal... But the commission chairman and Ngai Tahu negotiator... said the northern tribes overlooked two large sea areas not adjoining coastal fisheries which would be allocated based on population.

...The division between urban and iwi Maori came no closer to being healed at a national urban Maori rights hui in Mangere... over the weekend.

...at a hui held at Parliament yesterday... Maori groups fighting over distribution of fisheries quota... agreed to give the Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission [more] [time to develop a]n alternative... model for distribution...

The chairman of the Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission... might try to broker a deal between Maori tribes and urban authorities in the wrangle over fisheries assets allocation. The urban authorities were a “political reality” that had to be dealt with, he said... [while adding] that Maori could not afford further legal delays that have soaked up money and time since the commission was established in 1992... The commission is dealing with about 70 iwi[, but]... urban authorities... want a slice of the assets, arguing that they are more relevant than the traditional iwi. The commission's view is that the settlement is in exchange for fishing rights that belonged to iwi, therefore... can go only to iwi. It is then up to iwi how to distribute the benefits of assets to its people, including those who live in urban areas... [Meanwhile, about] a thousand Maori have identified their tribe through a helpline set up by the [commission. • ‘Exclusive fishing zones allowing Maori communities to harvest and protect their customary quota are expected to be created around South Island and probably North Island coasts’ in 1998. But ‘a new High Court ruling will help to block Maori from arbitrarily hauling in large catches of fish claimed as a customary right. Definitions of the gatherings for which fish can be caught have also been clarified’ ...

‘NZ has one of the best managed and most sustainable fisheries resources in the world. It is a renewable resource that works for us, our children and their children too. It earns a valuable \$1.4 billion in overseas exchange and employs over 20,000 Kiwis. When the taxpayers of NZ gave Maori \$150 million to purchase its half share of Sealord, BIL purchased the other 50%. We – *Sealord Consortium Ltd* – believe that BIL's 50% share in Sealord, NZ's largest fishing company, is about to be sold to foreigners. Selling access to our fisheries is akin to selling our heritage and must be opposed. Surely the government has a duty to make sure ownership stays in NZ for the benefit of all NZers. Other countries including the UK, USA, Canada, Japan and Korea are far more protective of their fisheries and would not allow foreigners to own over 24.9% of their resources.’

...[NZ] fishing company Sealord has lost all its Korean orders in the past month. Korea takes 8[%] of the company's sales... [In related news, a] Maori commercial fisherman found with more than a tonne of scallops over quota has escaped criminal charges through his “birthright.” Customary Maori rights to seafood saved him from the law after he harvested three times his commercial limit of 600kg in one day... [He] had charges of exceeding the maximum number of shellfish and the taking of shellfish without a licence dismissed. The court decision opens the way for Maori to gather as many shellfish as they like in certain parts of the country. But the judge said the decision did not mean it was open slather for Maori.

...yesterday[Labour's associate fishing spokesperson]... condemned a court decision which allowed a Maori commercial fisherman... to take more than a tonne of scallops over... quota at Matauri Bay on the last day of the scallop season. “The whole process is a farce – total and utter humbug,” said... [the] list MP... “It's an open door to abuse and occurs when we get judges who are afraid to make decisions in case they offend somebody. People who live in the community and know those involved see it as a joke and a blatant abuse of Maori customary right.” ...[but the fisherman, who] had argued in court that he was not planning to sell the scallops, said [the MP] knew there was a deeper issue behind the case. He said he was one of many Maori who had lost their commercial fishing quota rights, and customary rights were all they had left to carry on working. “...You've got Japanese that own quota, you've got Yugoslavs that own quota. I'm a Maori... I've been a fisherman all my life... and I've got nothing.”

...A fisherman acquitted on charges of unlawfully taking... more than a tonne of scallops over... the legal... quota is welcoming calls for a High Court review of his case... The decision... to dismiss charges of exceeding the maximum number of shellfish and taking shellfish without a licence has sparked criticism from politicians, who say Pakeha judges are scared to come down hard on Maori exceeding limits. In court [the fisherman] denied he had planned to sell the seafood, saying that it was for two hui. He had also claimed it was his birthright to take scallops and under tikanga Maori (Maori customs) he did not have to consult anyone to fish in ancestral waters... “The issue is not about my 40 bins of scallops. All the scallops I took were to be eaten by N[Z]ers. What about the 100,000 tonnes of scallops that are exported overseas every year... As far as I am concerned the judge has made his decision. The prosecution gave its case and I gave mine. Therefore, I have no problem with an appeal.”

...Maori are demanding the Crown recognise hapu and iwi sovereignty before any regulations on Maori customary fishing rights are established... Maori say the furore ensuing from the... recent court decision dismissing charges of exceeding the number of shellfish and the taking of shellfish without a licence against a Far North fisherman... highlights the need to establish a set of rules regulating the practice... A Te Arawa kaumatua... said that in the old days, Maori went to war over a breach of fishing law. “There is no way a member from another tribe can come into our tribal area... and do what they want. They would soon be dealt with.” A Tauranga elder... said... “...Our harbour has been raped... Nowadays... [y]ou have to be lucky to get enough... for a good feed.”

...Dwindling shellfish stocks are worrying Maori, who want their traditional food sources better protected. Some... like Tainui, want their application to take over the management of their traditional fishing grounds fast-tracked... Auckland's urban sprawl meant growing pressure on those fisheries. Sewage, stormwater and industrial pollutants had also taken their toll... Experts agree that pollution and harvesting contribute to falling shellfish numbers. In response, the Ministry of Fisheries has stepped up its shellfish monitoring programme and tightened daily bag limits. Enforcement measures will be bolstered by extra money this year. But[the] general manager of the Huakina Development Trust (the

environmental arm of the Tainui Trust Board), said that was not enough. The Manukau Harbour was once a plentiful “food basket” for the Tainui tribes but shellfish was now “one-tenth the quantity it was in the 1950s. Education is not enough. You can tell people all you like but some of them are still going to overdo it. We need to monitor the jetties and come down hard on them. But the ministry doesn’t have the resources. Why look a gift horse in the mouth? There are 23 marae willing to participate in the monitoring.” ...[a] resource management co-ordinator for Ngati Whatua, said the iwi traditionally gathered food from Mahurangi, Kaipara and the Waitemata harbours... “The depletion has escalated in the past 15 to 20 years. Ngati Whatua has been hardest hit in a sense because of the sheer number of people in Auckland and the pressure is spreading to Mahurangi and Kaipara,”... The iwi feared the introduction of “no-take” marine reserves... to protect fish and shellfish populations... could shut them out, denying them their traditional right to gather kaimoana for ceremonial purposes...

An unlikely alliance of environmentalists and commercial fishers is demanding officials get tough with shellfish poachers. Two and a half thousand scallops were seized at Clarks Beach in Auckland at the weekend after extremely low tides left the shellfish exposed to gatherers from the shore... The Ministry of Fisheries is still deciding whether to prosecute the 110 people caught... with more than the allowed 20 scallops each, but angry commercial fishers and environmentalists say poachers have got off too lightly for too long. [A member of the RFBPS] said that more money should be put into protecting fishing regulations. The rules were there to protect fish stocks and should be enforced, he said. “People think that if they can get away with it, do it... We have to get the message across that they can’t.” [An Auckland fishing] industry executive... said people had been given ample warning of bag limits and what breaking the rules could mean. Rogue members of the commercial sector faced stiff penalties for flouting regulations and recreational harvesters should be treated the same way... The maximum fine for exceeding catch levels is \$10,000. Equipment such as boats is usually forfeited.

...Auckland fisheries officers say enough is enough... and... [they] would get tough with people found with too many shellfish... Extremely low tides have provided a bonanza for shellfish gatherers, not all of whom are prepared to obey the rules. The Ministry of Fisheries’ Auckland regional compliance manager... said fisheries officers had been run off their feet dealing with people taking more than their fair share of mussels, whelks, scallops, oysters and other marine delicacies. In one case, two people at Piha had nearly 700 mussels, when the law said they could take no more than 50 each. While holidaymakers from other countries might justifiably plead ignorance of fisheries regulations, in most cases that excuse did not wash... “People usually say they didn’t know about the limit, but often they are people we have spoken to before.”

...Piha residents are moving to ban shellfish gathering before thousands of summer visitors arrive to pick the shoreline clean. Many locals at the popular West Auckland surf beach are fed up with watching carloads of people strip the rocks of mussels, whelks, cats eyes and sea lettuce...

Piha residents... have decided to impose their own voluntary ban on shellfish-gathering from the... beach after learning that statutory restrictions could not be adopted in time for this summer. Although the ban will lack legal clout, residents hope the public will respect their wishes and leave the shellfish beds alone... Locals... were worried that shellfish stocks could not survive the onslaught of an ever-increasing number of summer visitors... They lobbied the Ministry of Fisheries and other authorities for a temporary ban on harvesting but were unable to secure any immediate action. It is understood that extensive consultation and the adoption of specific regulatory powers are required before a statutory ban can be instituted... Such powers can be invoked where there is a disease outbreak, a serious decline in abundance or reproductive potential of species, or a significant adverse change in the aquatic environment... A community action group... spokesman... said he had collected data and photographs showing how depleted Piha shellfish stocks were compared with neighbouring reefs.

...Enforcement of shellfish bag limits at Piha will be toughened to combat unscrupulous seafood gatherers who have devastated marine life on the... beach. The Minister of Fisheries... yesterday met Piha residents who are angry about the plunder. He said he was concerned at the evidence they presented... However, he said a ban on gathering marine life at Piha could not be put in place before... next year. He said lowered shellfish bag limits was a long-term management option[to prevent beds becoming ‘extinct, as has occurred with cockles at east Auckland’s Cockle Bay’]...

Fisheries officials are turning to ethnic media services... to publicise daily bag limits... to help stamp out illegal shellfish gathering... [by the] rising number of non-English speaking immigrants... But... the... Auckland district compliance officer... was quick to point out that immigrants were not the only offenders and they copped some unfair criticism.

...Multilingual signs... installed by the... Ministry of Fisheries... spelling out shellfish bag limits are encouraging people to take more seafood from Piha, says a lobbyist... “It may be a coincidence, I can’t prove it was the signs, but there was a massive increase in harvesting after they went up,”... A Ministry of Fisheries compliance officer... said the ministry had a responsibility to inform people of their legal entitlement. But he conceded the education process could be a double-edged sword. People who usually took only a dozen mussels for dinner might take more once they realised they were allowed 50 a day... Piha was the only beach with multilingual signs on permanent display and the ministry had no plans to install any elsewhere. A policy analyst... said the ministry was considering smaller bag limits for heavily populated regions like Auckland.

...[a shellfish lobbyist] looked at the pouring rain at Piha yesterday and declared: “What a beautiful day. As far as I’m concerned it’s been a cracker.” He was pleased because the rain discouraged harvesting of marine life at the west coast beach where residents have put up a voluntary ban on shellfish gathering... But even in the rain, [he]... and other Piha volunteers had to “encourage” about 100 people against harvesting from the rocks where cats’ eyes, whelks, limpets, barnacles, sea lettuce... starfish... and adult crabs were once common. “We cannot enforce it but we can beg, plead and encourage people not to take them,”... The... Ministry of Fisheries... supports the ban, and its compliance officers will inform the gatherers of its existence. But they will also advise people of their legal entitlement to take 50 mussels per person per day and a mixed bag of 50 other species... For that reason [the lobbyist] wishes the officers would stay away.

...[‘Shellfish gatherers have declared war on plans to cut daily bag limits in the upper North Island. The Ministry of Fisheries said yesterday that it aimed to slash bag limits by up to two-thirds to stop overfishing. But the Recreational Fishing Council said the problem was a result of harsh bag limits imposed in Auckland, which had caused busloads of city people to plunder stocks further afield. The president of the council said limits should be imposed on parties of people rather than individuals to discourage the busloads from Auckland. Present bag limits outside Auckland are 250 for oysters, 150 for cockles, pipi and tuatua, and 50 for green-lipped mussels.’ Ironically, ‘the ministry has announced plans to cut the number of honorary fisheries officers’...

‘Lawlessness on beaches is putting fishery officers at increasing risk of attack as they try to enforce amateur bag limits, bringing in undersize fish or catching fish in marine reserves. Some places have become virtual no-go areas for honorary fishery officers without back-up from Ministry of Fisheries staff and police. As well as facing frequent verbal abuse and generally obstructive behaviour, fishery officers have been assaulted, threatened with death or had their vehicles vandalised, while beachfront signs telling the public what the rules and regulations are have been cut down. Tough amateur fishing rules, with instant fines of up to \$3000 for first-time offenders while anyone taking more than three times the daily bag limit will be presumed a commercial poacher and face court action, will take effect in just over three weeks, and fishery officers hope then to be taken more seriously by people who object to having their bags or boats inspected. But there are worries that the threat of fines, which are expected to start at around \$250, will make some people more aggressive. However, honorary fishery officers will not be expected to issue the infringement notices.’ Editor’s note: commercial and recreational fishers are allowed to dredge for scallops, etc., without their quotas taking into account the number of fatally injured shellfish that aren’t collected or other seabed damage.]

...A study into the impact of vehicles on shellfish beds along Ninety Mile Beach will start early next year. A scientist will establish the number of beds along the beach and track vehicle routes to see if and how they cause shellfish depletion. The study is expected to take between three and... [six

months. In the meantime, a [l]gal bloom is once again making its presence felt in Northland, prompting a warning not to eat shellfish from Whangarei Harbour. The plankton responsible for neurotoxic shellfish poisoning has been found at the entrance to the harbour, although the area is not yet closed to shellfish harvesting... Northland Health[']s shellfish coordinator... said the public should... be cautious in taking shellfish from any area of the coastline if the[y] appeared sluggish in closing their shells, or if there were many recently dead or dying shellfish in a bed or rocky area.

...[']People are warned not to take or eat any shellfish from the Manukau Harbour. Auckland's Public Health Protection Service closed the area to shellfish collecting after testing found higher than acceptable levels of shellfish poison. The closure includes scallops, tuatua, cockles, pipi, pupu, kina and oysters'...

'28 Warkworth oyster farms have been forced to close for two months after raw sewage was pumped into the local river from the town's sewerage plant when 200 litres of oil destroyed its ability to treat the sewage. The farmers stand to lose about \$100,000 after Auckland Public Health and the Ministry of Fisheries imposed the temporary ban on farming oysters 7km downstream in the Mahurangi Harbour.' On a positive note, 'the first produce of the Bluff oyster season is about to be air-freighted to Christchurch supermarkets. They will sell for about \$1 each (pre-shelled per dozen) until more supplies arrive.'

...*Let the 'whitebait wars' begin* 'They call it pleasure. As a biting sou'wester howls up the Waikato River and rain pelts its dirty banks, diehard whitebaiters try their luck on the opening day of the season. But if there are any whitebait out there, they mostly kept to themselves. Yesterday marked the start of the season for most of the country, but West Coasters – who claim their bait is the best – will have to wait another two weeks. In the Waikato, whitebait numbers have declined significantly over the years as their habitat is destroyed and degraded by runoff from dairy farms, human effluent and competition from exotic weeds and fish. The DoC ranger for the Waikato says overfishing – there is no quota – contributed to the problem. In the 1950s about 120 tonnes would be caught in the river. Now only about 5 tonnes are caught each season. Pollution in South Island rivers has led to a warning from the Southland Recreational Whitebaiters' Association that bait should be washed three times, frozen and then washed again before cooking, to kill any bacteria. Although whitebaiters do not need a licence – but you must have one to build a whitebaiting stand – they can be fined up to \$5000 for using oversized nets or fishing too close to confluences (where rivers meet). Many baiters fish from the same stand year after year and do not take kindly to others snaking in on their turf – "riots" happen from time to time. For those who do not fancy braving the elements whitebait comes at a cost – up to \$110 a kg in Auckland last season.'

...*'a six-month operation by the Ministry of Fisheries has smashed a paua (abalone) poaching ring which had been operating in the Wellington area for at least a year. An estimated 4000 paua, believed to be worth \$30,000, were seized in the culmination of Operation Iceblock. A ministry spokeswoman said it was suspected that Asian restaurants in Auckland were the destination for the paua. The maximum fine for buying illegally obtained paua is \$250,000. The paua seized this week would be sent to a cannery where it would be processed for export and the proceeds collected by the Crown.'*

...*'Hard-core groups of criminals are plundering Wellington's paua stocks, with up to six separate groups of poachers still active, says the Ministry of Fisheries. It says groups are armed with spears and knives and considered dangerous. Although the legal daily limit is 10, provided the shell is longer than 125mm, the gangs are often taking between 600 and 700 a day. Paua meat normally retails at up to \$90 a kg but is available on the black market for as low as \$20 a kg.'* By the way, 'Southland paua pearls are selling for up to \$1200 each'...

'The Love Pearl – the ultimate gift for the special person who has everything! Throughout ancient history, pearls have been recognised as a precious gift. A love pearl is a fascinating cultured pearl that takes a minimum of 3 to 5 years to develop. Every oyster is guaranteed to contain at least one pearl – and every colour has a different meaning (*White* – Wisdom; *Cream* – Success; *Peach* – Health; *Gold* – Wealth; *Lavender* – Love). You never know what you're going to get until you open the beautifully presented gift box. *Only \$49.95'...*

'A pearl is a gem made by certain animals that live within shells called *mollusks*. A pearl is formed when a grain of sand or other small object gets between the hard outer shell and the inner coat, called the *mantle*. The mollusk surrounds the irritation with *nacre* (or *mother-of-pearl*), a secretion from the mantle. The result is a sore spot for the oyster but a beautiful jewel for man. Some may be pink, bluish, grey or black. Many mollusks produce pearls, but only two types produce precious pearls. These are the genera *Meleagrina* of the tropical seas and *Unio* of fresh water streams. Unfortunately, pearls are perishable. Sunlight and skin acids are injurious to them. Pearls should be kept clean and wrapped in moist coverings when not in use. With care, they last over a hundred years. The average pearl takes about seven years for its development. Its value is determined by size and lustre. The largest pearl found was about two inches in diameter. The biggest pearl oysters are found in the South Seas. The coasts of AUS, Venezuela, Malaya, Mexico and lower California are other important sources of pearls. *Cultured* pearls are real pearls but the original nucleus was inserted by man.'

...*'Japan supplies 99% of the world's cultured pearls, known to the Japanese as the "tears of the moon".'*

...*'A tiny black-striped mussel found in a Darwin marina last week was one of the greatest threats ever to face AUS's \$A350 million a year pearling industry, Paspaley Pearls said yesterday. The company, which started in the 1930s and now provided about 80% of the pearls AUS exported, had begun a massive programme to monitor all its pearl farms stretching 1500km along AUS's north-west coast once every three weeks. A Paspaley research officer said the saltwater zebra mussel "can form layers several inches thick. They will smother our shells. All our lines will sink under their weight. The boats will become fouled and the heating systems and water intake pipes clogged. The worst case would be if they ever reached the 80 Mile Beach near Broome in Western AUS. The wild oyster beds down there are the most valuable pearl oyster beds in the world."* Darwin's luxury Cullen Bay marina has been quarantined since Wednesday last week. Boats are not able to enter or leave. Darwin's two other marinas were also quarantined when small numbers of the mussels were found in them. Over 100 tonnes of chlorine have been poured into Cullen Bay and today about 2.5 tonnes of copper sulphate was added. The Northern Territory's Primary Industry and Fisheries Minister said he hoped the treatment would kill all the mussels in a few days. However, all other marine life in the 600 million litre marina would probably also die as a consequence.' Editor's note: 'mussel exports are worth \$118m per year to NZ'...

'The Government should expect a Treaty of Waitangi claim laid against it if it removes the moratorium on permits for commercial harvesting of seaweed.'

...*A controversial new marine crop... could become a multimillion-dollar industry[for NZ]. But conservationists say the "alien" undaria seaweed could damage the native marine environment... The seaweed... worth \$295.46 million each year to Japan as a foodstuff... was carried into N[Z] on overseas shipping in the early 1980s and became established in Wellington before spreading to other ports... and the Marlborough Sounds... The R[FBPS] is appealing against two applications to the Marlborough District Council to farm undaria... A D[oC] senior conservation officer... said the department would not oppose undaria farming where the seaweed was established, but would seek to protect areas it has not yet colonised... "As far as what it will do to the native ecology of the Sounds, only time will tell..."*

...*The R[FBPS] has[] called for tougher measures to protect the environment, branding... the 1980 Convention on Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources... as toothless. "The major problem with CCAMLR is it can only enforce its measures through the goodwill of its member states..." CCAMLR has no powers of enforcing its quota system and there is no uniform inspection and surveillance programme for members to adhere to. It has no police force and no influence over the countries that are not part of CCAMLR – the commission can only urge countries to join. The annual CCAMLR summit in Hobart... will investigate how it can toughen its stance. [A RFBPS spokesperson] said expanding fisheries in the Southern Ocean was the greatest threat to the integrity of protection in the Antarctic region since mining was taken off the agenda seven years ago. Toothfish... is the latest major fishery to develop... Meanwhile, an environmental agreement made in Spain six years ago is expected to be rubber-stamped at the treaty meeting... The Madrid Protocol covers waste disposal, marine pollution and the conservation of plants and wildlife and will protect the frozen wilderness before technology makes digging it up commercially viable. It will limit the dumping of raw sewage into the sea, fuel spills, and emissions into ultra-clean air from rubbish burning, as well as ban mining on the continent for 50 years.*

...The 21st Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting started in Christchurch yesterday with 260 delegates preparing to lay the foundations for tough environmental measures. N[Z] officials hosting the... conference had hoped a new agreement... would come into force at the meeting... Russia and the U[S] last month joined 23 other treaty member countries in ratifying the deal in their own legislation. But... Japan has yet to pass the new frozen continent protocol... The 26 Antarctic Treaty member countries will have to wait until the end of the year when Japan is likely to have ratified the agreement made in Madrid... [Meanwhile, tensions] rose between long-standing rivals Greece and Turkey yesterday as each country accused the other of being at fault over a near-collision between naval ships in the Aegean Sea. Defence Ministry officials in Athens said a Greek navy minesweeper brushed against a Turkish patrol boat on Wednesday in international waters between the two Greek islands of Chios and Lesbos... [The] Turkish Defence Minister... described the incident as “street bullying” by Greece... A statement by the Turkish Foreign Ministry said the Greek minesweeper hit the Turkish patrol boat that had come to prevent the Greek ship from “harassing” a Turkish submarine... No injuries were reported on either side. - 1997

Seven-tenths of the world's surface is covered by sea, and most of the important trade routes, carrying raw materials or manufactured goods from country to country, cross the major oceans. Because they are used by everyone with access to the sea (all but about 30 of the countries of the world), such routes have traditionally been regarded as “international”, with no one enjoying exclusive rights... [I]n normal times merchant ships have the right of free passage... More recently, two problems have emerged. First, as mineral resources such as oil or manganese run out on land, countries have looked increasingly to the oceans for replacement stocks. In... the waters of Antarctica, mineral deposits are known to exist, apparently waiting to be exploited. However, if such deposits are situated in international waters, an obvious difficulty arises, for no one has the right to take them. If the minerals lie in such waters, they should belong to the world as a whole, but since only a few countries have the expertise to exploit the minerals, the only ones to profit would be those countries or their companies. This, in turn, would make the division between “rich” and “poor” worse, because poor countries could not afford minerals... One solution... [is] to divide the oceans into Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) – an idea put forward by the Law of the Sea Conference in 1982 – but this leads to the second of the major problems... EEZs overlapped (an inevitable consequence of 167 countries competing for access to the riches of the sea). Problems... also arise if the EEZs include... so-called “choke-points”... There are many such choke-points – areas of narrow or man-made “canals”... Since 1948, Israel has been to war with Egypt on at least two occasions (October 1956 and June 1967) to ensure free access to the Suez Canal and its port at Elat; Britain and Spain have failed to reach agreement over the Strait of Gibraltar... Argentina and Chile have nearly gone to war over the Beagle Channel... [and] EEZs belonging to Indonesia and Malaysia threatened free passage of the Strait of Malacca, vital to trade and communications between the South China Sea and Indian Ocean... In the Aegean... many of the small islands are part of Greece and, if the Greeks insist on the right to impose territorial waters... the Turks would be excluded from any mineral exploration or exploitation arrangements. This has, in fact, led to a crisis between the two countries which has gone on for some time: occasionally, as in March 1987, the Turks “test the waters” by sending out exploration vessels, supported by warships – something which the Greeks respond to with threats and naval manoeuvres. A crisis is always on the cards, requiring international diplomacy – exercised through the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), to which both countries belong, or the U[N]. Similar disputes exist... in the Barents Sea... in the Okhotsk Sea... and... between Britain and Iceland in the waters of the North Atlantic. The latter led to the so-called “Cod Wars” of the 1970s as Icelandic fishery protection vessels tried to prevent British fishing boats from operating within 320 km (200 miles) of Iceland... All this makes the sea a potential source of conflict and adds weight to the need for workable international laws. The 1982 Law of the Sea Conference... did little to solve the problems and, with the future of Antarctica in the balance, something more is clearly needed. At the moment, Antarctica is divided into a number of “zones” of influence, administered by A[US], Britain, Norway, N[Z] and France, but as the mineral resources of the area become more and more vital, other countries are going to demand a share. Both Argentina and Chile have claims in the area. The 1961 Antarctic Treaty did not settle these.

A LEADING Antarctic scientist is urging caution over allowing increasing numbers of tourists to visit the continent until studies show what impact they are having on the environment. Nearly 10,000 tourists went to Antarctica last year, about the same number planned for this coming season, compared with 3000 five years ago. In Britain, a book, *Antarctica: The Travellers Guide*, is about to be published. But [a NZ] geo-chemist... says... “There are signs the current activity of scientific parties down there is having a noticeable impact. What is going to be the impact of lots of tourists?” Tourists pay big money, up to \$5000, to go to the ice on cruise ships. The majority come from the U[S], Germany, Britain and A[US]... While large numbers of tourists who go to Antarctica don't set foot on the ice – many stay on ships – those that do, go to the same locations... “The problem is you can see where people have been on the ice. There's no vegetation to cover where they've been. The ecosystem down there doesn't recover quickly. Footprints last for decades.” ...There are no laws governing the conduct of tour operators, but each country which administers pieces of the continent has agreed to a set of guidelines under the Antarctic Treaty environment protocol. Tour operators visiting the N[Z]-administered Ross Island are accompanied by a representative from the D[oC] or Antarctic N[Z]. However, the geo-chemist... said Antarctic N[Z] was in a difficult position because he believed it didn't have the resources to manage controls over tourists... Accidents do occur. The tourist and supply ship *Bahai Paraiso* spilled oil when it was grounded on the Antarctic Peninsula, and other large cruise ships have also run aground, requiring expensive rescue and repair operations... Meanwhile, three FBI agents are due at the U[S] Antarctic base at McMurdo Sound to investigate an assault case. A fight broke out between two cooks in the galley on Wednesday, in which one attacked another with the claw end of a hammer. A third cook who tried to break up the fight was also injured. Winter stress has been a factor in Antarctic exploration since the first expeditions. In the 1950s, a violently deranged staff member at A[US]'s Mawson base had to be locked in a storage room for the winter months. Only the base doctor could safely approach him. The doctor at Argentina's *Almirante Brown* station couldn't stand the isolation as winter closed in during 1983. He forced his own evacuation, and that of his colleagues, in the only way he could – he burned the station down... [In addition to the current problems at McMurdo, AUS]'s Casey base is embroiled in staff conflict. The A[US]n Antarctic Division confirmed yesterday it had taken the unusual step of sending a mediator to Casey to deal with an “interpersonal dispute” among the 15 winter-over staffers.

...The... N[Z]... Government ratified the U[N] Convention on the Law of the Sea earlier this year... For some years it has been thought that the convention allowing nations to exploit rights to resources beyond their 200-mile zones could set N[Z] and AUS] against each other in a dispute over ownership of the Tasman Sea seabed. Seabed disputes have been settled in the past with A[US] and Indonesia signing the Timor Gap Zone of Co-operation Treaty in 1989 after both countries had overlapping claims to part of the Timor Sea. N[Z], like AUS], is one of the few countries in the world able to take advantage of the complex formula in the convention to claim rights to the edge of its continental shelf... A[US]n sovereignty over its mid-Tasman islands is not affected by the convention which applies only to the seabed. - 1996

N[Z] is about to get a say in defining countries' undersea frontiers... A[n A]uckland... is spearheading a... N[Z] drive to claim... more territory. With one of the world's largest continental shelves, this country has much to gain if it wins international agreement to extend its underwater frontier beyond the 200-mile exclusive economic zone. Potentially lucrative oil and mineral rights are at stake... [The Auckland], a maritime boundaries expert who helped to draw up boundaries between Iraq and Kuwait after the Gulf War, will be N[Z]'s representative on a U[N] panel juggling countries' claims to the seabed. He will not be allowed to vote when N[Z]'s claim is considered. His job is to put our case and correct any

errors made in assessing it. By winning a coveted seat on the 21-member UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, N[Z] is in a good position to argue its case. Since ratifying the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea last July, N[Z] has 10 years to lodge any claims. The Government expects to spend up to \$40 million on extensive surveys to support its claim, and late last year began joint seismic fieldwork with A[US] in the Lord Howe Rise and Fiji Basin. Negotiations will have to take place between Canberra and Wellington if competing claims are made later over Lord Howe Rise and the Three Kings Ridge, out from Norfolk Island. Initial evidence from satellite and hydrographic surveys shows N[Z]'s shelf extending north-[we]st across the Tasman Sea, beyond the Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands towards New Caledonia. It also extends north-east from the Kermadec Islands almost to Fiji and reaches beyond the sub-Antarctic Auckland and Campbell Islands, giving a total claimant zone about 18 times larger than N[Z]'s land mass. [The Auckland, a] civilian head of the Navy hydrographic office's nautical information division, will also represent A[US] and the Pacific Islands at the UN. He says his job is dealing with technical data, and he does not want to "get into the politics" of claims. Past disinterest in deepwater mineral exploration will change as states compete for dwindling resources, he says.

...A summit of Pacific leaders in Tokyo is expected to see Japan reveal how it has taken a strategic lead in exploiting the billions of dollars worth of minerals on the region's seabed, ocean experts said yesterday. "This should be a wake-up call to... A[US, N]Z... and... the U[S,] a)... Bank of Hawaii economist... said. [The] head of the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission, said international strategists "should be concerned." [He] said that while the world had lost interest in old mines on land, the Japanese "have been looking for their minerals off shore, and have taken a huge lead in the technology to do it." ...He understood Japan was about to pilot its technology to mine manganese nodules on the seabed which nobody is doing now[, and that]... over the past 12 years Japan had spent \$US100 million... mapping the Pacific seabed and surveying its minerals. "No other country has done this..." ...Japan "knows better than anyone," the wealth contained on the seabed. "The Cook Islands could be the richest spot of all with enormous deposits of mineral wealth within miles of Rarotonga."

...The Cook Islands, one of the world's smallest states, is planning a radical underwater mining operation... 5km deep in the Pacific Ocean... which could see a Norwegian joint venture dredging millions of dollars worth of manganese nodules from the sea-bed... The cobalt in the nodules has been estimated by [a U]S... engineering consultancy[company] to be worth \$US170 billion... The [PM]'s office said the Cooks had obtained a huge grant from the U[S] Trade and Development Agency to hire [the company] to undertake a pre-feasibility study of commercial nodule mining... The Cook's P[M]... said that for years the plan to mine the sea-floor had been dismissed as a fantasy. "Those who have rubbished the plan will get a surprise," he said. The influential South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) is opposed to the Norwegian scheme, believing it will not work. It says Japan has the only proven technology... The Cooks has quietly moved ahead with Norway and made no public statement about their memorandum of understanding... until asked... [The consultancy company is] proposing to build bulk carriers to take the nodules all year round to a new smelter and refinery it suggests be built in [NZ] near the Marsden Point oil refinery. Sources say the smelter is dependent on cheap electricity and might be built instead in Indonesia... "The basic criterion for the Cook Islands operation is the production of 2652 tons of cobalt per year, which represents approximately 10[%] of the current world consumption of the metal," [the consultancy company] says. "In order to produce such quantity, 1,097,360 tons of wet nodules must be harvested and processed annually." The... plan would cost around \$600 million.

...Leading Pacific scientists have cast doubt on the future of a multi-billion dollar undersea mining operation planned by the Cook Islands... The idea of bottom trawling at such depths involved "monstrous draglines" with major engineering implications. It was not known – because it had not been done – whether such lines would even work... The other difficulty with the Cooks proposal was the price of cobalt and nickel. "There is about to be a flood of cobalt on the market with Canada opening huge new mines,"... These alone would quadruple world cobalt production. If it proved possible to bring up the Cooks nodules this would suppress cobalt prices further. Land-based miners could be expected to vigorously defend their prices and contracts. The environmental impact of bottom dredging was also uncertain.

...The Ministry of Commerce is considering a partnership with the mining sector to attract further foreign investment. The ministry believes the local industry undersells itself and needs to work on both its public profile and corporate investment pitch to win new supporters. The minerals industry, including precious metals, coal and petroleum, is already a \$1 billion a year sector that generates export income of \$250 million. But it suffers from a public-image backlash because of perceived environmental unfriendliness. The ministry is concerned mining is seen to be contrary to N[Z]'s clean and green image when in fact the industry here sets international best-practice for safe and responsible performance. The Minister of Energy... who is responsible for minerals licensing, has suggested the mining industry get into the business of persuasion... "...the mining industry... must... begin to effect widespread change in public perception, achieving a more positive public opinion, thereby improving public policy,"... - 1997

Newly released cabinet papers show that A[US] was reluctant to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty[(r:p150, lns14-17)] partly because it wanted the right to use atomic explosives in mining... Yet at the same time, the Government worried that if it refused to ratify the treaty... it could be diplomatically cold-shouldered by the U[S], and denied knowledge and equipment for its... nuclear power station at Jervis Bay, on the south coast of N[SW – the]... Jervis Bay atomic power plans were[eventually] dropped in favour of the still-controversial research reactor at Lucas Heights in Sydney[–] and... the development of other nuclear technology... The dilemma produced the diplomatic sidestep of deciding to sign, but holding back on ratification and hedging the signature with qualifications in the hope of gaining better terms before the pact became final... [The use] of nuclear explosives for excavation in major mining and civil engineering projects[w]as advocated by the mining magnate Lang Hancock, who in 1952 discovered the world's richest iron ore deposit in Pilbara... [In local news,] Dunedin company Silicon Metal Industries has launched a feasibility study for a \$180 million silicon metal manufacturing operation in Southland. The proposed project is a quarry and smelter for processing silica gravel into 45,000 tonnes a year of solid silicon... Most of the product will be exported through Bluff, with a small portion being consumed locally, the company said. The operation is considered viable because N[Z] has a unique combination of vast high-quality resources of the raw material and some of the cheapest power in the world. Silicon Metals Industries... is 70[%] owned by Commonwealth Resources, which in turn is majority-owned by Commonwealth Gold of London. Commonwealth Resources was set up 5 years ago to look for gold and platinum in N[Z]. Silicon metal can be used in both high and low technology applications, including resins, medical implants, cosmetics, motor vehicles, and in the manufacture of semi-conductors for the electronics industry.

Western economies have become more dependent on mineral imports in recent years as a result of the "second industrial revolution". High technology industries, for example, require a growing amount of special steels and alloys. Cobalt is essential for computers. The American space shuttle programme uses 20 critical minerals, most of which have to be imported... In the U[S], domestic production has declined because it is no longer cost effective. Sixteen of the country's 27 copper mines have been closed because they are no longer internationally competitive... with half the industry's workforce unemployed since 1981... Environmental pressures and the wish to conserve the country's national parks have also forced the closure of all but one plant that is capable of processing chrome. In these circumstances it is not surprising that the U[S] has expressed serious concern about its dependence on imported minerals... The... Western powers appear to face the threat of a resource war... We should not leap to the immediate conclusion, of course, that every mineral is "strategically" important, or that its immediate or long term cut-off would be economically disastrous. Strategic importance differs from mineral to mineral and even the industry concerned... We can only determine whether one mineral is more or less important if we have a clear understanding of what each is used for.

Elements such as plutonium and uranium have been considered 'economically important' during the last half of the 20th century because of their use by the nuclear industry and relative scarcity. However, both are potentially dangerous to handle because of their radioactive properties. The elements that have been considered economically important for the longest time, and are also *potentially dangerous to handle* – because many people have been willing to harm or kill others in order to obtain them – are silver and gold.

Life is cheaper than what [they're] digging for.

Put bluntly, the Arawaks... the earliest inhabitants of Jamaica for whom there are historical records... were exterminated by the Spaniards... By the time Christopher Columbus "discovered" Jamaica in 1494, the island appears to have been one of the most thickly populated in the Antilles. The Arawaks were a peaceful people who cultivated maize, sweet potato and arrowroot, and brewed an intoxicating drink from fermented cassava. Above all, the Arawak loved to smoke; the word tobacco comes from their term for their pipes, which were made of Y-shaped tubes inserted into the nostrils... Just before the European discovery of the West Indies, the Arawaks' generally peaceful existence was shattered by the invasion of migrating Carib Indians... The Caribs were fierce and warlike, and were much feared by the Arawak for their nasty habit of eating their victims... But [worse was to come]... Spanish colonists gradually began to settle Jamaica, prodded by vast royal land grants providing for the enslavement of the native population. The accounts of the Spaniards' treatment of the Arawak are truly horrifying, almost pornographic in their description of the violence and genocide visited upon this population. To satisfy the Spanish greed for gold, Indians were forced into mines that proved worthless... [T]housands were worked to death... thousands more committed suicide... Also, the Spanish and the animals they brought with them carried new strains of disease, and a general pestilence among the Indians in 1520 wiped out a large number. In 1598, the Spanish governor took notice that the Arawak were dying off, and proposed setting up a reservation where they could live and cultivate in peace. The colonists objected, saying this plan would deprive them of the Indian labor they needed to survive. By 1655, when the English captured the island, the Arawak had been destroyed.

gold... [is the] most malleable and ductile of all the metals, and one of the most precious... Held in high regard since the dawn of human culture, it was one of the first metals to be worked by prehistoric artisans, and the search for it has helped to shape the course of history, luring whole nations to amazing feats of adventure, exploration of distant lands, ruthlessness, and even national disaster.

...*Black Friday*, in U.S. history, the day (Sept. 24, 1869) when attempts by Jay Gould and James Fisk, aided by officials in Pres. Grant's administration, to corner the U.S. gold market led to panic. Their scheme was thwarted by the government's release of gold.

"Gold," he proclaimed, "is the instrument of gamblers and speculators, and the idol of the miser and the thief... No people in a great emergency ever found a faithful ally in gold. It is the most cowardly and treacherous of all metals. It makes no treaty it does not break. It has no friend whom it does not sooner or later betray."

IT'S DOWN-TO-EARTH. IT'S GLAMOROUS... IT'S A TEASE. IT'S A PROMISE. IT'S WITTY. IT'S PROFOUND. IT'S HOT... It's regal. It's ravishing... It's radiant. It's riveting. It's sensational... It's unique. It's unparalleled... Nothing Makes You Feel As Good As Gold. - 1994, World Gold Council

Investment demand for newly mined gold and gold coins accounts for, respectively, 45% and 20% of gold output. Industrial uses in dentistry and electronics, and of course its use in jewellery, account for most of the remainder... The principle applications of silver and silver compounds are industrial: they are mainly used in monochrome photography, in the electric industry and for the manufacture of silverware.

Of all metals, silver is the best conductor of electricity, and, next to gold, of heat... Silver is best known for its use in tableware, ornaments, and coinage... More gold is used in jewelry and watch-making than in industry... Diamonds are mined in deposits of gravel. Rough diamonds look like pebbles. They were formed from the element CARBON under great heat and pressure... It is the only gem that is composed of a single element. It has perfect cleavage. That means that if the stone is fractured by a sharp blow in a cleavage direction, it comes apart smoothly... No chemical can affect it, but temperatures of 900° C... cause damage to it. Since the diamond is the hardest substance known to man... diamonds can be cut only by other diamonds... [N]owadays the search for diamonds is only one phase of a highly-organized industry... Recently, a crude grade of synthetic diamond has been made in special high-pressure machines. These... industrial grade diamonds... serve as watch BEARINGS and as cutting tools.

Nowadays 'even experts have problems identifying between real and the latest imitation diamonds. They also fool most electronic scanners'. Advances in the production of imitation diamonds is likely to mean that real diamonds will increasingly be used only as an investment and to make jewellery.

"I would say diamonds are a sign of power and success..." ...never has so much been spent by so many on so little.

Glittering prizes on offer for rich... PRECIOUS jewellery is something many people admire, but by its nature, few can afford to collect... [A] jewellery consultant for auctioneers... said a true collector was about as rare as some of the gems they coveted... Needless to say, draping yourself in diamonds is not a cheap hobby... [Incidentally, a] con man posing as a millionaire stole jewel[le]ry worth £2 million... from two Americans in London after persuading them to fly from California to show him a suitcase full of gems. The con man told... [them] that he was a relative of the Sultan of Brunei and wanted to buy a wedding present for one of the sultan's sons.

...Three hungry war orphans who found a 100 carat diamond worth an estimated \$US500,000 in Sierra Leone have swapped it for bicycles, personal stereo players and food, according to a report from the town of Bo. The report said that a Lebanese diamond trader had given them the goods in return for the diamond... Meanwhile, the Government has suspended... mining in a southern district where the diamond was found. It gave no reason but sources close to the mineral resources ministry said the aim was to curb illegal diamond digging. [■] 'Raw diamonds worth \$US11 million lay unnoticed for two hours in a freight container thought to be empty in a Swissair freight room at Zurich airport. Swissair said a cargo handler discovered the shipment, from Zaire and bound for London. The sacks went unnoticed because a telex message alerting the Zurich cargo service about the incoming shipment had never arrived. The honest cargo worker was rewarded with 50 Swiss francs from his boss'...

'Little man who won battle of big diamond The one he's rolling around in his fingers is nice – 5.23 carats, nearly the size of a marble. But the diamond that he is talking about is the big one – the one that got taken away. He pinches a gap the size of a golf ball. And looks at the empty space, hard. Nearly 266 carats, the biggest diamond found in Congo in years, the stone had people across the country wearing T-shirts with its likeness and marching to defend his right to it. It forced the 38-year-old diamond dealer to stand up to the ruler of one of Africa's largest countries and win it back. The story began a year ago when awed villagers found the gem at a muddy dig in south-central Congo. They were frightened and hid. Word spread quickly up the rutted dirt roads to the open-air diamond markets of Mbuji-Mayi. Crowds formed in town, waiting for a glimpse. The dealer quickly assembled his own crowd, fellow diamond dealers. Unable to buy the stone individually, they pooled resources – selling cars and mortgaging homes, reportedly – to buy it. Within days, the

group had acquired the stone – for \$US4 million, he says – and he flew to Congo's capital to sell it. He left behind an abruptly enriched village, where an unprecedented Land Cruiser-and-motorbike-buying spree was about to begin. Rejecting the first offer in Kinshasa, the dealer picked up the stone and headed to another office but the President's security agents arrested him before he got there. A stone that big, that valuable, the government figured, must have been found on government land. Security guards took the Big Diamond away, and the dealer went to jail. The government released him a month later. It kept the stone. For investigation, it said. Mbuji-Mayi's people took to the streets, marching, chanting, demanding the stone's return. Smaller protests hit the capital. The government, meanwhile, was hawking the diamond but had no bites. There was talk the dealer had threatened to sue anyone who took his stone. It went on for four months, with traditional chiefs pressuring the government all the while. Eventually the President summoned the dealer. For hours the jowly Congo leader quizzed the dealer on how he got the stone. The President finally said, according to the dealer: "I think it's right to give back the stone." But there were no buyers. After the dealer's experience, no one believed the stone, once bought, would stay bought. After months of trying to sell the rock, the dealer gave up and flew to Tel Aviv to International Diamond Industries, the firm to which the cash-hungry President had sold the right to handle all Congo's diamond exports. Diamond industry press reports had estimated the stone's worth at \$13m to \$20m. International Diamond won't say how much it went for, or who bought it. "We were more than satisfied," a spokesperson says by phone, chuckling. The dealer flew home with \$6 million, he says. He reflects now, reclining on a sofa in a home where safes hold baggies stuffed to the Zip-Loc with diamonds. He smiles, tucks the marble-sized gem in his pocket, and stands to go. Congo is a big country. There are lots of diamonds left to buy.']

...THE smallest diamonds in existence may well be those scattered around the streets of the medieval town of Nordlingen near Munich. Scientists last year announced 70,000 tonnes of gems may litter the area as a result of a meteor strike 14.7 million years ago, but the largest individual gem measured just 200 microns across – a fraction of a pinprick... ['The most famous diamonds came from India until the diamond rush of Africa began in 1867 with the discovery that a pebble being played with by children was a rough crystal. The farmer exchanged all his worldly goods, including 500 sheep, for another stone used by a witchdoctor and sold it the same day for \$56,000. This stone became the Star of South Africa.'] THE highest-quality diamonds in the world are classified "D flawless." Pink diamonds are among the rarest stones, buyers of which are invited to make sealed bids... THE largest high-quality diamond ever found weighed 3106 carats – almost 5kg – and was discovered near Pretoria, South Africa, in January, 1905... [I]t was cut into 106 polished pieces. The second largest... was found in June, 1893... in South Africa. It was cut into 10 pieces in Amsterdam, one of which was sold last year for \$US2.63 million... THE highest price known to be paid for a cut diamond was \$US12.8 million... in 1990 for a mixed-cut diamond of 101.84 carats. The previous year \$US8.7 million, the highest known price[... was]... paid for a rough diamond, weighing 255.1 carats... LAST year saw the largest loan of diamonds in history, when De Beers lent the Tower of London 12,532 stones... for use in an exhibition of Royal crowns. The stones matched in size and number the diamonds used in the Coronation crown of George IV in 1821, the most lavish crown ever commissioned by a British monarch... ● ['Japan and the US account for more than half of the world's annual diamond sales' that] amount to about \$US6 billion, of which as much as \$US1 billion is accounted for by smuggling and other unauthorised trading...

[An operation that 'used pigeons to smuggle gems out of South Africa's diamond region' has been uncovered...

'2 1/2 tonnes of earth must be moved to get each carat of diamond.' However, the volume of earth moved depends on the accessibility of the diamonds, the method of extraction used and the grade of the ore. 'In the Kimberley Province of Western AUS, grades of up to 13.62 carats of diamonds per 100 tonnes of material treated have been recorded from lamproite intrusions', according to *THE AUSTRALIAN ENCYCLOPEDIA*...

THE WORLD BOOK ENCYCLOPEDIA says: 'Even in the richest deposits, tons of rock must be mined and crushed to produce 1 small diamond. By the late 1980s, the world's diamond mines produced 90 million carats each year. AUS outranks all other countries in annual production of natural diamonds.']

...BHP and its partners in the Big A[US]n's first diamond project are under pressure to market through the Central Selling Organisation the gems to be won from their mine site just below the Arctic Circle... De Beers is pushing to control the marketing... of the entire output from Canada's first diamond mine... The North-west Territories mine is expected to produce about four million carats a year – equal to 4[%] of the world's diamond production... The CSO remains attractive to BHP and its partners in terms of extracting the best prices... but allowing the cartel to market the entire output is likely to put them in breach of anti-trust laws. "The Canadian anti-trust laws have an effect on our partners while BHP itself has a very significant asset base in the U[S] which needs to be protected,"... [the] project's manager... said. For this reason, BHP has little choice but to sell at least part of the Canadian project's output independently... BHP has 51[%] of the project and is the operator... At this stage, the project is on time and on budget despite the enormous logistic difficulties confronting the development of a mining operation in the pristine and delicate region which hosts some of the world's rarest species. Caribou herds migrate through the tundra and grizzly bears inhabit the hills. The mine has at least a 25-year life but it could be much longer as the current feasibility plans involve only five of the 82 kimberlite pipes so far identified in the project area. The first three pipes... contain... high-quality gems at an average grade of just over one carat or 0.5 grams per tonne... The nature of the diamonds business means BHP has been reluctant to release details of production costs but industry analysts believe the project has the potential to generate about \$400 million in annual profit... [In related news, a] wave of friendly takeovers is expected in the A[US]n gold mining industry in the wake of a deal between the industry's two leading characters last month... More than \$US14 billion... was spent [internationally o]n mergers and acquisitions in the mining industry over the past year... Who owns Who in Mining... said the spate of mergers that started in 1995 was checked only by the Busang/Bre-X Minerals Ltd gold scandal earlier in 1997.

...an employee[was ordered] to salt worthless samples of barren rock in December 1993 in a desperate attempt to keep Bre-X Minerals from shutting its Indonesian exploration project, an investigator hired by the company claims. Bre-X has released a report by Forensic Investigative Associates saying... the Canadian firm's former chief geologist, made millions from the scheme... It is the first time Bre-X has officially laid blame in the scandal that saw investors lose billions of dollars when the gold find was exposed as a fraud. [The geologist] fell to his death from a helicopter on March 19 of this year, shortly before... [the] hoax... was revealed... Bre-X, which said it had discovered as much as 200 million ounces, and which grew to have a market capital of... \$NZ6.9 billion... just seven months ago, is now delisted from stock exchanges, near-bankrupt and facing a number of shareholder lawsuits... [An Alberta judge has] granted a request from a lawyer representing nearly 900 shareholders... to remove a ban on legal action while... Bre-X was under Canadian bankruptcy protection... [The lawyer] said his lawsuit... would seek to recover as much as possible for shareholders, including about \$157 million in stock sale profits made by... [the] Bre-X president... and other insiders... [A] Bre-X lawyer... argued a lawsuit should not be allowed because shareholders were trying to get their money back, and not necessarily acting in the best interest of the company... [He also] said most shareholders bought stock from other investors and not from Bre-X...

A dark chapter in Canada's mining industry closed at the weekend when [Bre-X's president] and his lieutenant... resigned as officers and directors of the now-bankrupt gold explorer... The accounting firm... appointed trustee of Bre-X's assets... [estimated] the disgraced firm could have more than 50,000 creditors worldwide.

...The Busang gold bonanza may have been the mining swindle of the century, but there is still plenty of money to be made from the saga... With a marketing zeal that rivals the wildest mining stock promoter, entrepreneurs are making a buck on everything from Busang ballads and T-shirts to worthless Bre-X stock certificates, which have become sought-after collectors' items. The first of several tell-all books on the... scam will hit Canadian bookshelves soon, while a Bre-X movie may also be in the works.

...Those who watched the A[US]n gold miner Helix go from 30c to 499c will know the allure of such stocks... Big companies were keen to invest in small miners... "A reason for this is that big companies do not explore very well and there is too much bureaucracy to get success." ...But today Helix is trading at 130c – fine for investors who got in early but not that flash for those who did not. This point is not lost on... the managing

director of a soon-to-be-listed... resources investment company... "There is nothing like small mining companies, because if you pick the wrong one you lose all your money," he said... However, the other side was that the rewards could be great.

...[Mineral explorer Max Resources has increased the size of its gold resource in the Mount Henry area of WA to 9.53 million tonnes graded 1.5 grams gold per tonne following recent drilling. This was up from 3.22 million tonnes graded 2 g/t and 1.95 million tonnes at 1.2 g/t shown in its annual report. Its interest in the resource reduced to 10% in 1995 after it entered into a joint-venture agreement with Perth-based Australasian Gold Mines. A feasibility study was underway to decide if the resource would support a stand alone mining facility with a capacity to treat at least 1.5 million tonnes of ore annually.] In local news, 'Environment Waikato has backed down on claims that a toxic waste dam near Waihi is just 300mm short of overflowing. The Environment Waikato programme manager said yesterday that if there was a "huge storm" and the waste diversions and emergency procedures failed, there "might be a chance" of it overflowing, but otherwise it was not a great concern. A report from the Environment Waikato independent engineering expert last week said that the controversial Coeur Gold tailings dam should be built up to provide a better safety margin. The report said there was a risk of the cyanide-laden waste spilling over a low point on the dam's crest if another 300mm of rain was to fall within a week. The dam has already been in the public eye because of its instability, caused by earth movement.'

...NZ's] biggest goldmine has turned into a multi-million-dollar headache and looming environmental disaster... AMERICAN mining giant Coeur... is coming under increasing pressure to move 4 million tonnes to toxic mine waste stored on unstable ground at its Golden Cross mine near Waihi. Environmentalists believe the company... has no intention of shifting its mine waste and will wind down mining next year and leave... [NZ. A] Coromandel Watchdog spokesman... says Coeur is closing the mine four years early because of the huge costs of remedial work... He says while Coeur Gold NZ Ltd signed environmental bonds totalling \$12.1 million, Coeur Gold NZ is only a shelf company, and that the parent company, Idaho-based Coeur d'Alene Mines Corporation, has no liability for future clean-up costs... and will, if allowed, abandon the site and leave a huge clean-up bill for future generations [of NZers]... Repairs have so far cost Coeur more than \$20 million and could cost more than \$100 million if it is forced to transfer mining tailings from one dam to another... The company has... [been] trying to drain and secure land under its toxic-waste dam... tunnelling under the dam and drilling into the slope to drain excess water but has had only limited success, slowing rather than stopping movement. Other work has also been unsuccessful... Both Coeur Gold and the Waikato Regional Council concede land under the dam is still unstable. The slide threatens the long-term stability of the dam and could, in a worst case scenario, rupture or crack leading to cyanide and heavy metal contamination of Coromandel waterways. Environmentalists say... the main risk is not that the dam will collapse, although that remains a possibility, but that the landslide under it will cause cracks in the base of the dam leading to a perpetual pollution process known as acid mine drainage... "Once mining pollution starts it is self-perpetuating and almost impossible to stop. The tailings dam was built on the premise that the toxins would be permanently sealed from oxygen and water. But with a landslide moving one block of land over another, and in different directions, the clay liner under the dam is subject to cracking and tearing. This must lead to the escape of toxins in waterways. Already there is evidence of cyanide in a stream which Coeur say has leaked due to the landslide." ...IN February Coeur Gold said 500,000 tonnes of "buttressing rock" designed to weigh down the slide had been put in the wrong place and may have in fact sped it up... Engineers say 3 million tonnes of rock may now need to be placed in the bed of Waitekauri River... [T]his would involve a major river diversion and consents under the Resource Management Act, a lengthy and costly procedure Coeur would rather avoid... IN July last year Coeur Gold wrote off the entire \$78 million value of the mine because of the slide and the remedial costs incurred attempting to secure the site. The company is already embroiled in legal action overseas and is being sued by the [US] Government for its share of an estimated \$US980 million clean-up of mining pollution in Idaho. Discovery of the... Golden Cross... slip has had wide implications for its [NZ] operations and has led to an \$80 million lawsuit against the mine's previous American owner... Coeur alleges that Cyprus Amax Minerals and its [NZ] affiliates failed to disclose geological problems with the site when it sold the mine in 1993 and is demanding Cyprus refund the purchase price... [A] test of Coeur's commitment[to Golden Cross] will come when a \$5 million trust-fund payment falls due later in the year. The payment was negotiated as an ongoing condition of the company's water rights. The money is to be held in trust and invested to meet unforeseen environmental contingencies.

...The owners of the Golden Cross mine... have been paid about \$US10 million... from insurers for interruption to business and property damage related to ground movement... The tailings problem prompted a sharp reduction in mine production over the past 18 months... Coeur will decide by late this month whether to continue operating the gold and silver mine beyond this year.

...Closure... will badly affect... [local towns. The] mine generated "about \$10 million a year" in salaries and other expenses... said... [the] Hauraki District mayor... [Yesterday the mine's] general manager... said the company had a commitment to ensure that its tailings dam "remains safe in the long-term." If the mine closed the tailings dump, covering some hectares, would be capped off with an impervious layer and all water drained from the area... then probably be covered with topsoil and planted. [The general manager] said the company was still working on the final plan.

...The mine general manager and Coeur vice-president... said yesterday a crucial issue was that Golden Cross... would run out of tailings capacity towards the end of 1998... However, [he] said production over the next three quarters should rise substantially, enabling Golden Cross to achieve a production target of 100,000oz of gold for 1997... compared with... 64,365oz for the whole of 1996... Cash costs showed a sharp improvement, from \$US323.41... an oz in the first quarter of 1996 to \$299.50, making Golden Cross more expensive than Yilgarn Star in A[US], but cheaper to run than Coeur's American gold mines. Cash costs at Golden Cross before the remedial work began were \$240.05 an oz... The ore grade in the open pit averaged 2.02g a tonne in the latest quarter, compared with 2.89g a tonne in 1995, while the underground grade was 6.47g a tonne, compared with 7.13g a tonne two years ago... Silver production for the quarter rose... to 71,930oz.

...an American mining corporation... has... sought \$85,836 from the group... Coromandel Watchdog... over a legal challenge against Golden Cross seeking to vary the conditions of a water right at its Waihi mine. [Previously, a]Planning Tribunal Judge... [had] ordered Watchdog to pay the company \$20,000 because its opposition "lacked substance." Watchdog immediately lodged an appeal, to be heard at the end of this month... [However,] Coeur Gold "had suddenly demanded[the] \$20,000 be paid within seven days and threatened to take legal action to appoint a liquidator of the society... This is bully-boy intimidation, and totally at odds with the N[Z] concept of voluntary organisations acting in good faith to protect the environment." Payment of the \$20,000 would effectively ruin Watchdog... A spokesman for the [RFBPS]... said the awarding of such court costs against a voluntary organisation "creates barriers for the community to take part in caring for its environment. That is not a criticism of the Environment Court - it's the process, which doesn't provide a level playing field and the Government of the time not allowing for environmental legal aid...,"... Coeur [has commented that large-scale]... gold mining in N[Z] is doomed unless authorities take a more realistic approach to environmental and resource compliance... [Meanwhile, the] creeping landslide... has stopped for the first time in more than a year. The Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences... reported that the company's measures to stop the movement were working. [However, the] author of the report to the Waikato Regional Council... said it remained to be seen whether the slippage would resume after heavy rain... [Incidentally, t]he Waihi Gold Company applied this week to Environment Waikato and the Hauraki District Council to extend the life of its Martha Hill open-cast mine... in the heart of Waihi... until 2007... to extract hundreds of millions of dollars more... The resource amounted to 7.5 million tonnes of ore, equivalent to 800,000 ounces of gold and 6.4 million ounces of silver. Current production is 75,000 ounces of gold and 650,000 ounces of silver a year.

...[Waihi, built over a honeycomb of old mine shafts and workings, is no stranger to subsidence Miners toiled deep under the centre of Waihi for more than 60 years. Martha's Hill housed one of the world's richest gold veins, but getting the precious metal out meant digging deep and moving hundreds of thousands of tonnes of spoil. Old mining methods were based on a simple concept: dig vertical shafts and branch off with horizontal tunnels to chase the

rich veins. The legacy for the town on the southern end of the Coromandel Peninsula is 150km of mine workings, now thought to be the reason for the latest land collapse. Shortly after midnight yesterday, a hole 50m wide by 15m deep developed in the middle of the town. It took one house, a caravan, van and car with it, and threatened several others. Two years ago, a 30m-deep hole appeared in the middle of the town metres from where another opened up in the 1960s. The 30m-deep hole was filled in and smoothed over, causing a ripple in a town well-used to rumblings and shakings from heavy earthworks. The issue of liability is unclear. The council isn't responsible or liable but has agreed to foot the bill for a lawyer to assist residents affected by yesterday's collapse as a "humanitarian" gesture. Martha's Hill, which closed in 1952 (the opencast pit was revived in 1988 to extract an estimated \$700 million worth of gold still underground), was a highly successful mine for the company, financed from London. But life was hard for the miners who worked over 300m underground.'

... 'mining relics, including the power pylons that brought electricity to the Martha Mine in 1913, 500kg rock stampers and intricate working models of gold stamping batteries are all very well, but it's the pickled thumbs that everyone remembers, like some kind of 1920s ACC ripoff. Two ghostly white thumbs are preserved in little bottles on a shelf at the Waihi Art Centre and Mining Museum. There were plenty of genuine accident cases, but cutting off a digit was also a nice little earner during tough times, and a severed thumb would fetch £400 in compensation. But the museum's patron would rather not dwell on the grisly display. He prefers to point out that the little museum is dedicated to the gold-mining operations that have kept the Hauraki District town thriving since 1882. A miniature train speeds around a scale model of gold mining operations in the Karangahake Gorge'...

'There were political battles aplenty back in the 1870s, when 15 different rail routes were mooted to link Dunedin's banks with Central Otago's goldfields. Finally they chose the route through Middelmarsh, along the foot of the Rock and Pillar Range, over the Maniototo and through Manuhirikia Valley to Alexandria. Work began in 1879 but it was prodigiously slow even for pick, adze, shovel and cart technology. 42 years later, NZ Railway's longest branch line was complete. By then, of course, the gold rush it was built for was over.'

...Last century gold drew people with high hopes from around the world to Otago. Today an AUSn company is back with high hopes... A BEARISH gold market... is failing to dampen the enthusiasm of the main player in a gold boom in N[Z] which, if maintained, should see]... exports exceed the value of present apple exports... Most of the expansion is because of the discovery of a gold bonanza at Macraes Flat... by... [t]he Perth-based company... The next few years could see the production of the precious metal equal that of the peak years of gold rushes last century... ■ ['NZ gold exports peaked at 735,000oz in 1866'. 'In 1992, NZ produced 10 tonnes of gold (total metallic & non-metallic mineral production was 22,322,176 tonnes']...

THE goldminer of yesteryear was, in the main, a fossicker looking for the big strike with largish lumps of gold. Today's goldseeker has swapped the pan or cradle for heavy machinery and science... [I]nvestment in discovery, prospecting and proving a patch is enormous, costing millions of dollars before a sod is turned. But the return can be equally handsome because scientific advances enable the corporate miner to win gold which the eye cannot see in the ore body. This is the basis of... a new era of goldmining in Otago. It has been a welcome economic relief for the province... Macraes[Mine is described as] the Big One, the showpiece soon to enter the big leagues not just as N[Z]'s most productive producer, but as the fifth largest mine in Australasia when a \$120 million upgrade and expansion will enable the operation to return between 320,000 and 350,000 oz a year. In 1996 [the mining company] was cock-a-hoop with an annual production of 139,464 oz... The "identified source" of the operation (gold in the ground) grew by 600,000 oz to 3.5 million in the past three years, and the profit before tax doubled to \$23 million. A golden future? Well, the old partnership between[the] mining company and the Macraes people is not what it used to be. There is new management, a new culture with bottom line returns writ large, and there are community questions now where few were voiced previously. Some regard the mine as akin to "Big Brother", largely because it is seeking to triple the size of the operation and maintain it for up to a decade with a new stand-alone processing plant capable of handling 6[million] tonnes of ore annually – double the capacity of the present plant – which will continue in operation. Perhaps the extent of the change of climate for Macraes Mining is that... Otago Regional Council staff are recommending the rejection of all 43 [resource] consents sought because of concern over a 300ha lake to be created along with a concern about the stability of pit walls, and... "an environmental eyesore"... two huge rock stacks... [to] be built in the clear view of the township. One stack, covering 173ha, would... [be] 2km long, 1.4km wide, and up to 100m above the ground. The second, to the same height, would cover 30ha, and run 750m by 500m... The... company claims economies limit the amount of site rehabilitation it can carry out! ...There is, of course, a division of opinion both in Macraes and the wider Otago region about all this. Some farmers have done "very nicely, thank you" by selling their farms, though a requirement of sale is that they will not subsequently oppose the mine's applications nor speak out against it. Some Macraes residents, perhaps a minority as most of the town's properties are now owned by the mine, are concerned about what happens to the hamlet in a decade or so when the miners move on. What will be left, and in what state will it be? ...Short-term, most see advantage for Otago [– where 'about 64% of people earned less than \$20,000 in the year to March 1996' –]from wages, supply, engineering work and so on. But the local authorities responsible for granting resource consents have a larger task in setting the rules not just for the next decade, but for the years afterwards when East Otago will not have millions of dollars pouring into the economy, but which might require large sums to remedy any omission and commission today.

...Landmark legislation protecting 3 million hectares of N[Z] from mining was passed by Parliament yesterday. All national parks are included. The Crown Minerals Amendment Bill (No 3) began life as a bill put up by Labour's then conservation minister... in the late 1980s... [Conservationists] welcomed the passage of the bill... although the specified area was not as large as[they had] wanted...

There was a time when mining was our most glamorous and expansive industry. Granted, that was nearly 150 years ago when gold fever pulled thousands of migrants into the prospects of... Coromandel... Otago[and] the West Coast... Those early miners laid much of the foundation for... [NZ]'s economy. It was gold-mining companies, for example, that first traded on our stock exchanges. But those early mining people also left another legacy... the failure to provide for rehabilitation of shafts and dumps. The old mine sites... are interesting tourist attractions, but mainly they help reinforce claims the industry takes an opportunistic and irresponsible approach to its activities. Such views are widely held by the public. Research on perception of industries shows the mining sector behind... tobacco barons and credit-card issuers as the least-liked industry in N[Z].

... 'What's up DoC, ask frustrated miners The mining industry fears it may be locked out of access to Timberlands resources if the DoC takes control. There are no commercial gold mines working on the 1.2 million hectares of DoC land on the West Coast, compared with 14 active on the much smaller Timberlands estate. The Government has frozen any new access arrangements on the state-owned enterprise land while it considers future criteria. Why should the rest of NZ care? A recent study by the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences values metallic mineral resources at more than \$85.5 billion. The Minerals Association has developed a national strategy where NZ's mineral production could double from the present \$1 billion annually by 2010. Such a move would boost the country's GDP and double employment to 24,000, concentrated in regions lacking jobs such as the West Coast and Otago. Gold mining accounts for around one-third of the minerals produced in NZ. Much of the gold is concentrated on the West Coast. But what was a \$100 million industry on the West Coast in 1990 is now just \$30 million. The gold price is obviously a factor.'

...A prolonged slump in the price of gold could knock plans for expansion in N[Z]'s gold mining industry. "There wouldn't be a gold miner in the world that isn't re-evaluating its rate of growth," [the] chief executive of... Macraes Mining Company, said yesterday. Macraes produces about 60[% of NZ]'s gold output and plans to double production... Other companies... in [NZ] that might re-access their strategies are Otter Gold, operator of the Martha Hill mine... and Idaho-based Coeur... The need to rethink costings is because gold prices have sunk nearly 5[%] to \$US319 an ounce in the past week. This came after the Reserve Bank of A[US (RBA)] revealed it had been selling gold over the past six months. A[US] is the world's third-largest producer [behind South Africa and the US in the 'amount of gold produced in a year – 614,000, 329,000 and 240,000kg in

1992' – [and the sellout ignited fears other governments might follow suit. Gold prices are now down nearly 10[%] so far in 1997 and are 20[%] down on a year ago. Most N[Z] gold miners traditionally have relatively-low extraction costs of about \$300 an ounce, though Macraes' cash-cost per ounce was \$341 in the first quarter of this year and costs at Martha Hill are about \$350 an ounce. Cashflow is not a problem for those mines because they have sold their production in advance. Otter has sales tied up for up to two years at about \$400 an ounce, while Macraes has pre-sold for up to six years at \$380-\$403 an ounce. "Companies that have forward cover, cash, and no debt will do well in the current environment,"... The price slump is expected to most affect companies considering opening up new prospects, like Summit Gold which is evaluating a new discovery at Carrick in Central Otago. It cannot get forward cover because it does not yet have confirmed reserves to hedge against... [By the way, the] toxic legacy of the Tui mine and tailings, poised above Te Aroha... may be tackled next year. A mining company says it is willing to put the tailings in its dam, and a resource management consultancy expects a plan... will be completed by late next month. The move comes 24 years after the mine closed and its owner... went into receivership, leaving behind about 100,000 cu m of toxic sludge and seeping mine workings which poisoned the town's water supply.

...The Golden Cross mine... closes today but its general manager... said miners could return when the price of gold picked up... 35 staff[will remain] to manage the rehabilitation of the area... Macraes Mining... [decided] last week... to postpone a planned \$120 million expansion of its gold mine... [and] reported a reduced operating profit after tax for the half year... of \$2.48 million, [down]from \$7.05 million for the 1996 period... [Across the Tasman, n]ervous investors continued to sell out of gold stocks and major resource companies with gold components, dragging the A[US]n sharemarket to a lower close... The gold index dived 6.44[%]... to end the day at 1193.3. One dealer described the sell-off as the "lemming factor," while dealers agreed that if the gold sector was isolated, the all-ordinates would have been steady... "Nothing has changed in the past four days that should have changed the price overall than a small country has sold its gold holdings," a dealer said.

...The A[US]n gold industry appears on the verge of a major shakedown as sharemarkets yesterday continued to shred producers and speculation grew of mine closures... [The] Association of Mining and Exploration executive director... said... "In W[A], for example, there are 80 projects. The bottom 10[%] of the industry is usually pretty suspect, so you've got eight mines right there. Nationwide, 25 mines wouldn't be an overstatement." ...Since the R[BA] made its shattering announcement of the sale of two-thirds of its gold reserves more than \$A2 billion has been wiped from the value of producers' stocks, and plummeting gold prices have placed enormous pressure on an industry already battling high production costs... and... falling grades of gold in more marginal reserves... A[US]n production was[previously] predicted by the A[US]n Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics... to increase by 6[%] in 1997-98, to more than 320 tonnes... ABARE... analysis estimates that costs for 9[% of AUS]n gold production last year rose above the average A[US]n price of \$480 an ounce, which... would have squeezed margins... even without the R[BA]... scramble to dump gold... Gold production costs in A[US] are the world's highest, according to Gold Fields Mineral Services, a London-based research group... [However,] an estimated 30[%] of 1996-97 mine production was sold forward at an average price of about \$638 an ounce, well above an expected spot price of \$479 for the year. About half of A[US]'s forecast 1997-98 production is estimated to have been sold forward at an average price of about \$610, compared with the predicted spot average of \$493. But... [the Association of Mining and Exploration executive director], like a number of other analysts, believes there is worse to come... Analysts are further concerned at the longer-term signals the A[US]n sell-off has sent to the global market... Other central bank disposals have not generated shockwaves of similar scale largely because they do not represent major gold-producing countries, and because most have been central European institutions whose selling was curtailed by warnings that deficit reduction by gold sale would not be a ticket into the European Community. Gold has also softened because it has lost its role as the fulcrum of the international monetary system, and its appeal has been lowered further by a low-inflation world.

...Gold – once worshipped by the Incas as "the sweat of the sun" – seems to have lost much of its mythic value... Last week... the gold industry, from Outback dealers to international mining companies, awoke to find that[the price of] gold had fallen... [yet again. P]redictions of a price drop to \$[US]250, once unthinkable, now seem plausible... [U]p to half of the 36 A[US]n Stock Exchange-listed gold miners face possible closure if gold prices do not pick up... [S]ell-offs by several central banks in the past five years... add... strength to the argument that gold is losing its significance as a store and measure of wealth... Now... the [RBA has] sold... more than 13,000 gold bars... The A[US]n government says the sale is a wise investment decision: gold producers and dealers say it's a cold-hearted blow to an important national industry... "The R[BA] got the money... but the gold industry got slaughtered." ...The Federal Government is unrepentant, blaming the gold slump on the industry's own futures trading... [A] professor of economics at the University of Melbourne and director of the Asian Economic Centre, agrees that the sale was a sound move. "It's tough for the gold mining companies, but I'm afraid the writing's on the wall..." The world gold market was fragile long before the [RBA sale]...

MEN suffocated in deep shafts for gold. They died of dysentery or riotous living to procure the yellow metal that now lives in bank vaults around the world. But the often murderous scramble for the glistening metal that underwrote global financial transactions and the monetary system for a century from the 1870s has now taken a fresh turn. The fever that long infected gold bugs and helped to ramp up the price of gold from a heavily regulated \$US35 an ounce in 1970 to a spot market figure of \$US850 within a decade of deregulation has become a hot sweat as markets have been forced to confront an unwelcome new reality. The gold price reached its peak in January 1980, when raging inflation and the crisis in Iran drove investors to demand the metal as a hedge against surging prices and economic uncertainty. But gold is no longer the asset of last resort and central banks are unloading or threatening to unload at least part of their holdings on to a market unwilling to accept that fact... The abuse heaped on the... R[BA]'s announcement two weeks ago that it has shifted two-thirds of its 247 tonnes of gold into interest-bearing government securities over the past six months... is a measure of the industry's failure to come to grips with the changes in attitudes towards gold that have been under way for almost a decade... [T]he RBA's move brought that into sharp focus, revealing the worst excesses of gold hysteria. As one close observer unkindly put it: "There are quite a lot of nuts involved in the gold market." The background is simply told. In the 1870s, gold took over from silver the role of backing the world's currencies, and until W[WI] money] was directly convertible into gold and central banks had to maintain gold reserves large enough to make that conversion on demand. Gold's price was fixed, except in wartime... In the early 1930s, the US lifted the price of an ounce of gold to \$US35, which prevailed for almost the next 40 years. It survived the Bretton Woods international agreement which, after W[WI], underpinned a regime of fixed exchange rates for converting one currency into another. But in the 1960s inflation... put the gold standard under pressure, when the US's pursuit of its war in Vietnam – funded not from higher taxes but by government borrowings – unleashed a flood of dollars on the market. In 1968, US authorities agreed to allow a free market to develop for gold, while still accepting that central banks must be able to convert currencies at fixed exchange rates backed by gold in a still controlled gold market. The dual markets for gold, one where prices were set by regulation, another where they were determined through supply and demand – were unsustainable... In the past, gold was the asset you lusted after in times of crisis. It was sound; it could be guaranteed to defy inflation and hold or increase its value. That particular fantasy was pricked in the Gulf War of 1991. Despite the impact of that conflict on the oil market... gold... continued unhindered on its downward path, and still the penny failed to drop. It was not until the old generation of central bankers had died out, or at least its influence had died out, that national bankers were prepared to alter their policies to take account of the change in the role of gold... Switzerland still uses gold to back its currency and holds a larger gold stock – 2590 tonnes – than any country other than the US, Germany, France and Italy. If even a small proportion of the Swiss official gold holdings was sold on to the world market, its impact would overshadow A[US]'s off-loading of 167 tonnes... Defenders of the RBA's decision have noted that even the US Federal Reserve was now testing the water. And if the Fed does make a move, with more than 8000 tonnes under heavily armed guard in Fort Knox, the world gold market faces an even more unsettling time... [Also facing an unsettling time is the copper

market after copper prices... [e]ll... faster than anticipated in response to looming oversupply, although the low-point might be near... [(but it will come too late for the 'former copper trader arrested in Tokyo in connection with \$3.7 billion trading losses, who says he didn't act alone – "Sumitomo's management was involved in the loss")]. T]here was common agreement a market surplus would continue for several years and that prices would eventually find a floor of about 70USc a pound... [I]nvestment funds had already driven the price down to... 78USc a pound – the lowest price since January 1994.

...yesterday... [as the AUS]n-owned Emperor Gold Mining Company... [announced] it will cut its 2000 strong workforce by 350... [t]he gold index was down... [to] 900.7... slipping below the psychologically important \$US300 mark... T[he] recent slide in the price of gold may have brought tears to the eyes of people with large holdings of the precious metal, but it is creating bargains for buyers of... bullion coins... and... jewellery...

[A Hong Kong jeweller has built two solid gold toilets in a bathroom gilded with 24-carat gold and encrusted with gems. The jeweller has dreamed since his youth in China of having enough wealth to build toilets of gold – which Lenin in 1921 said were a useful reminder of the waste of capitalism. For the privilege of using the \$US4.9 million gilded bathroom, customers must spend the very capitalist fee of \$US138 on jewellery.' In related news, 'South Koreans and Indonesians have been selling gold jewellery to their governments so it can be melted down and sold on the international market to raise money, but there are concerns that a flood of gold could further decrease its value'...

'The Thai military plans a nationwide campaign to collect gold, jewellery and other donations from people who want to help tackle the country's economic crisis. A Government minister has been assigned to oversee the so-called Thais help Thais campaign. The PM said yesterday that people in his hometown had given him gold necklaces weighing half a kilogram'. He didn't discuss the fate of the unfinished 'gold city' project]...

Electricity is out again in the City of Gold, a dusty mining town... with no water and a ramshackle strip of zinc-roofed houses along the pot-holed main street. El Dorado, the dream of limitless riches that first drew... adventurers to the New World, runs into the real world here... "El Dorado is not in Venezuela," one frustrated mining executive said. "It's in Nevada." ...[the] City of Gold, lies some 500km south of the Caribbean coast, at the place marked with a treasure hunter's "X" in the yellowing maps of 16th century English explorer Sir Walter Raleigh[, who]... took no equipment, not even a pick, on his failed quests up the Orinoco River for El Dorado 400 years ago. In his imagination, the gold lay in ingots on the streets of a fabulous city, not in the ground at an average rate of one gram in a tonne of dirt... But the idea lived on as a folk memory, with its dream of riches, luxury and exotic obsessions... For a few years at the end of the 19th century, Venezuela was the world's premier gold producer, mining upwards of 17 tonnes per year... Now it ranks around 17th with just 12 tonnes of officially registered production. Local miners say the rest goes into the black market or other illegal channels such as laundering drug money... [Many] illegal gold strikes... cut... through[the] eastern forests and high savanna... Some are taken from concessions granted to foreign companies, the miners later evicted by the National Guard. - 1997

A N[Z] scientist has discovered how vegetables and other common plants can be used to "mine" gold. [The scientist from] Massey University is attracting international attention for finding a chemical that makes gold soluble, allowing plants to "grab" the precious metal as they grow. Scientists had already discovered "phyto-mining" of other minerals such as nickel. But nobody had been able to get plants to take gold up until [the NZer] found that ammonium thiocyanate could dissolve gold. [The scientist]'s experiments involved planting a range of plants, including carrots and chicory, in soil containing traces of gold from the Martha Mine in Waihi. Once the plants had grown, he added a solution including the ammonium thiocyanate to the soil... After about 10 days of soaking up the solution, the plants were harvested, dried and burned, leaving the gold... [T]rials showed that an average yield of 100g of gold from a tonne of dried plant material was enough to make the process economic, when carried out over treated mine tailings[(mustard plants have also been used to extract the mineral from surrounding soil, but it takes 'enough plants to fill a rugby field to produce 3oz of gold'). The scientist]... said the chemical used in the process sounded "nasty," but existed naturally in a lot of soils and did not harm the environment. "In parts of Brazil, people are trying to extract gold using mercury[, which] is dangerous to human health and leaves the soil contaminated. It's a huge problem in developing countries, where people are poor and try to get gold at any cost." ...The Brazilian Government is sending a doctoral student to Massey this year to help to investigate the development... The research has[also] attracted the interest of Dutch chemicals company Akzo Nobel, one of the world's biggest producers of ammonium thiocyanate, which has funded a \$100,000 research contract based on the project.

...Dutch banks made hundreds of millions of dollars from trading property stolen by Nazis from Jews during... W[W2], a historian estimates in a book to be released today... The book asserts that a group of 140 stock and bond traders from over half-a-dozen banks sold[Jewish] property including gold, silver, foreign currency, stocks and bonds... and made 1 billion guilders in the deals... Much of the property was obtained by the Nazis in exchange for documentation which claimed to exempt Jews from deportation... [T]he papers, which cost the equivalent of 300,000 guilders at the time, were worthless and... the Jews who bought them were deported to concentration camps. More than 75[%] of Dutch Jews... perished in the Holocaust... The... findings might be taken into account in a Government investigation into the role of banks during the war.

Fifty years on the Swiss are finally acknowledging their role as bankers to the nazis... Switzerland, the land of high mountains and uncompromising neutrality. But in... W[W2], "neutrality" was not quite what the unwary might assume... It now seems clear that the Swiss made a bundle out of the war – far more than other neutral countries like Sweden, Spain and Portugal. Precisely how much the Swiss made, or who among them made it, will never be fully known. But for the first time in five decades, a concerted effort is being made to find out. At the heart of this new attempt to confront the past is a dispute about the lost assets of Jewish Holocaust victims that are alleged to be languishing in Swiss accounts... The old Swiss way of doing business is changing rapidly under international pressure... And some Swiss are eager to help flush out the truth about a past too little examined. Some of that truth... can be found in hundreds of thousands of Allied documents declassified in recent months... In particular, the papers flesh out one of the lesser-known dimensions of the nazi horror – how it was financed with billions in blood money pilfered from its own victims. They weren't just Jews but occupied countries and citizens stripped of gold, jewellery and property. Many of the documents are embarrassing to Swiss banks that have since become world-class institutions, renowned for their integrity and, more and more, their clean reputations... Swiss bank secrecy is based on a 1934 law that threatens bankers with jail for revealing depositors' names. But in an era of greater financial transparency and international rules, the Swiss can no longer afford the rumours that have long swirled about their accounts... "A lot of Swiss are starting to ask themselves, 'Are all these myths true? Are we a pirates' harbour?'" says... a Basel law professor... "The anxiety is that this is a systematic part of the banking system rather than a matter of occasional black sheep." ...Since 1989, the banking-secrecy laws have been curtailed by reforms that make it illegal for Swiss banks to hide laundered or mafia money (though the law is proving tough to enforce). And where the Swiss once hid profits in the books of their subsidiaries, they have begun to accept U[S]-style consolidated accounting. Until recently, the banks denied that any Holocaust assets remained. But in February the banks turned up \$50 million in 775 accounts in a search of non-Swiss account names. "Basically they said: 'Sorry, we lied'," says... an Israeli business paper that broke the story about Holocaust victims' assets in April 1995. In subsequent interviews... Swiss bankers insisted that little money was coming into Switzerland during the war... Yet records show that deposits rose by 35[%] during the supposed decade of disaster from 1936 to 1946. SOME bankers, rather than simply deny the problem, have begun to blame Swiss fiduciaries... [-] accountants or lawyers... [One] contends the fiduciaries and insurance companies were greater profiteers than the banks... In the end, nothing close to a full accounting will likely emerge. Most of the depositors and bankers are dead, as are their Nazi oppressors.

Even the Allied intelligence agents who tracked the loot are gone. But there may yet be a moral accounting. Today even Switzerland has recognised that it can no longer be in the world but not of it.

...Switzerland, increasingly hounded by claims it hoards Nazi booty, is paying the price for not coming to grips earlier with its W[W2] history as a willing banker for any side, historians say. British allegations this week that Swiss vaults may hold [N]azi German gold are just the latest in a wave of allegations the Alpine state may be hiding wartime wealth left by both [N]azis and their victims. Swiss bankers and politicians argue they are now launching serious efforts to uncover lost accounts left by Jews murdered in the Holocaust and trace the murky movements of [N]azi loot. But critics say the fact that Switzerland waited until 50 years after the war ended has hurt credibility, leaving it vulnerable to accusations of hiding [N]azi-era wealth behind a curtain of neutrality and bank secrecy laws. The... bankers and Berne only acted under mounting pressure from world Jewish groups and U[S] and British politicians. Switzerland never forced a broad public debate about the dark side of its past as a neutral state with strong wartime pro-German elements. Instead, official Switzerland has preferred to toast the memory of its military-style army for defending the borders and keeping Switzerland out of the fighting that raged outside. However, most historians say it was not the Swiss Army alone that prevented occupation by Germany, but rather Swiss willingness to finance the Nazi war economy, export technology and allow Hitler to transport war materials through the Alps. The Swiss Government only got around to apologising last year for turning back German Jewish refugees from 1938 to 1945 to face death in Nazi camps. Swiss banks had also opened accounts for European Jews hoping to hide their wealth from the Nazis after Hitler gained power in 1933. With six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust, there were few survivors left to claim old accounts and few heirs with the kind of documents needed to find and claim accounts. [Family members who tried to trace the accounts have said that 'bank staff would ask them for a death certificate – which Auschwitz, etc., didn't produce! Even if the bank accepted the account holder was dead, staff would then ask for proof that the family member was the only heir – another impossible task in post-WW2 Europe' ...

A [NZ]29.6 billion class action suit has been filed in New York on behalf of Holocaust survivors against Swiss banks for allegedly refusing to return victims' money, jewellery and other valuables... [A] Republican Senator... last month called for the State Department to investigate what he called "50 years of deception" by Switzerland on the amount deposited by the Nazis... [He] has urged the US to reopen negotiations with the Swiss on a treaty in which Switzerland gave the Allies \$90 million in compensation for accepting Nazi gold. He said archive documents show the Swiss had up to \$900 million in Nazi gold. - 1996

A long-awaited U[S] Government report... will show that the Swiss took in \$US425 million in looted gold – worth more than \$US4.25 billion by today's prices... Jewish groups said they were pleased with the study, which took seven months to complete. "I think the report makes it clear that Switzerland and other countries, neutral and others, are now obligated to deal with the challenges of moral and material restitution," said[the] director of the World Jewish Congress [WJC]... "It is an outrage for more than 50 years that this information has been undetected, and what do we find, that the Swiss have kept the money,"... said... [the] Republican Senator... of New York, who has led efforts to discover what happened to the assets of Holocaust victims...

A conspiracy by Swiss bankers to hide Nazi loot, steal deposits from European Jews and prevent Holocaust victims from receiving adequate compensation is finally being brought into the open... "Switzerland, since the war, has been paraded as a small humanitarian country, and nobody has ever exposed that its wealth is based on profiting from crime... The Swiss dishonestly profited from the misery of Europe,"... Holocaust survivors last year gave heartbreaking testimony of the banks' refusal to acknowledge their murdered parents' bank accounts. There were sordid and terrible revelations... There were allegations of extensive collaboration between the Swiss banks and Nazis hiding wartime loot, with the Swiss operating a black market for Nazi gold. [The WJ]C... has alleged the Swiss banks were sitting on up to \$15 billion in Jewish assets either in accounts untouched since W[W]II or in Nazi loot often taken from those who died in the Holocaust... Then two weeks ago[while admitting]... wartime moral lapses, [the] Swiss President... announced that by revaluing Swiss gold reserves a fund worth just under \$10 billion would be set up to compensate victims of all human catastrophes, including the Holocaust... "Our task is to make sure history doesn't repeat." ...Earlier... several of the biggest Swiss banks... concerned... by mounting accusations and evidence of Nazi business dealings, a[tempted]... to salvage their tarnished reputations... [by announcing] they too were setting up their own fund to compensate Holocaust victims... [M]aterial from the US, British, French and Swiss national archives... traces how Swiss banks and the Swiss government exploited W[W]II for financial advantage. The Nazis had painstakingly minuted details of their crimes in correspondence, memos and the minutes of their conferences. Similarly, Swiss collaborators and profiteers recorded their decisions on paper, and although the most germane of those files remain hidden, sufficient government records had been deposited in Berne's national archives to make out a compelling case against a previous generation. The... declared deposits in Swiss banks rocketed from \$47 million Swiss francs in 1941 to \$1244 million in 1946, and its gold reserves doubled from \$US740 million to \$US1.47 billion... As a further sign of the sensitivity created in Switzerland by the revelations... the Swiss Federal Railways recently announced it had decided against marking the 150th anniversary of rail service in Switzerland with a "golden" locomotive, concerned that the plan could offend Holocaust victims. Last month the Swiss ambassador to Washington... resigned after it was revealed he had urged his government to "wage war" against Jewish groups calling for compensation for Holocaust victims. There are some people still unhappy with the Swiss Government's latest announcement of a fund to help Holocaust survivors. They point out that an inquiry accompanying the establishment of the fund will have a leisurely five years to make its way through all of the country's dealings with the Third Reich.

...The evening of... January 8, should have been just another tedious shift for... a student at business school in Zurich, who for the past three years had been supporting his wife and two children by working as a nightwatchman. His security firm... had assigned him to the offices of the Union Bank of Switzerland in Bahnhofstrasse – a maze of wealth and secrets above and below ground. In an average night he would walk 35km on his rounds. The timid 29-year-old, who until recently never had ambitions beyond collecting a regular salary as a salesman, is now in America. Tall, slim and apt to blush, he is now being whisked from one television studio to another. The talk is of rewards from Jewish organisations, a tree being planted in his honour on the Avenue of the Righteous, a new life in the U[S] and a green card. [The man] is the flesh-and-blood hero in the scandal over Switzerland's role in laundering nazi wealth and embezzling Jewish savings while officially remaining a neutral country during... W[W2]. Until he] smuggled some yellowing ledgers at UBS... the wartime role of Swiss banks had[only] been a subject of discussions... "I was on my round, which included the shredding room... Usually the wheelie bins by the shredder contain computer print-outs, or modern papers anyway. But this time, two of them were full of old-looking documents and ledgers written in fountain pen. I looked more closely and saw that some of the material was from Eidgenossische Bank which was strange. It was a state bank which went out of business after the war, yet its records were in the shredding room of a private bank. I also saw two thick black-bound books... which had debit and credit columns. The entries started in February 1945. I thought only very briefly about what I was seeing, and decided to take some of the documents away with me. I do not know if, in that moment, I had a clear idea that the material would relate to the nazi money or whether I just thought it could be valuable historical information, but I just knew I had to do something." [He] left the room with 59 yellowing pages stuffed under his uniform jacket. The next morning... he... decided that a Jewish person should see them, and took them to the Jewish Community in Zurich. The following night on his rounds, [he] found that the remaining documents... had been shredded, and thought he would not hear anymore[about it]. "Then a policeman telephoned and said the documents had been handed in. I was asked to go to the police station where I was questioned for five hours. The police were insistent that I should not go to the press. But fortunately, the Jewish Community had already arranged a press conference for 4 pm the

following day. The police and the bank called the media in at 11 am to say these were unimportant documents. Luckily, by that time, the media was much more interested in the 4 pm press conference.” ...a Swiss journalist who has written four books about the country’s secretive banks... says... [the] discovery is significant... “Certainly, none of those documents should have been in the shredding room.” By now the world of the unassuming nightwatchman-cum-student had been turned upside down. The security company, which had paid him a salary of 5000 Swiss francs... a month – sacked him for breach of confidence. Hate mail began arriving at the [man’s] house in the Zurich suburbs. “As soon as the newspapers reported what I had done, the letters started arriving,” he says. “There were... letters praising me and... threatening me. We also received telephone death threats and we were told our children would be killed.” He and his wife, who hardly speak any English, have now placed their future, and that of their children, in the hands of Jewish leaders in the U[S]. “We had never even dreamed of a life away from our parents and brothers and sisters,” says [his wife]. “But we are too frightened to go back to Switzerland.” ...The [US Government] Report – which involved the declassification of nearly one million pages of documents – ...paints a picture of cynical neutral countries profiting from the war and being spared U[S] scrutiny after 1945 because they remained strategically important in, for example, the Cold War. They include Switzerland, Sweden, Portugal and Turkey. The report criticises the U[S] for making only a “fitful effort” after the war to ensure that looted assets be returned to their owners... And it says that up to \$US400 million in German-looted gold remained in the Swiss National Bank at the end of the war. No more than \$US58 million was returned... After pressure from Jewish organisations including a threat of a worldwide boycott of Swiss banks, the country’s Government had admitted it had a debt to pay... Some Holocaust survivors believe Swiss banks are hoarding up to US\$7 billion... in unclaimed assets from the war, although the banks claim the figure is much smaller.

...Investigators... have been told that several hundred additional accounts belonging to Holocaust victims have been found in Swiss banks and thousands more are being examined for clues to their owners... [In another development, WJC researchers have released] a 1945 document from the top secret Ultra project that cracked Germany’s Enigma code machine... [which proves] Switzerland continued receiving tonnes of looted... gold after promising the Allies it would stop... [In a belated sign of remorse, a commentary on] Swiss Television... said: “Let us not forget that Switzerland [has been] reproached... over nazi gold... for letting its economic interests take precedence over morals. Switzerland would like to turn the tide.”

...[‘the WJC is to extend its battle for Holocaust reparations. “There are questions remaining on the billions of dollars with the French banks and the French Government,” said its executive director. The move follows a decision by leading German companies to set up a fund for victims of Nazi concentration camps and their heirs. Under pressure from the congress and other groups, 12 German firms yesterday agreed to set up the fund (reportedly over \$NZ3 billion), which also aims to fend off multibillion-dollar class-action suits against German companies that allegedly profited from Nazi camps.’ Incidentally, the spot price for] gold fell about 5[%]... on Friday... Gold is now at its lowest value in more than 12 years... The drop was triggered by news that the Swiss reserve bank was to sell half its gold stocks, about 1400 tonnes, equal to 2 1/2 years’ output by South African mines.

...[“We want to get out,” was the desperate message from nine surviving miners at African Rainbow Mines No 2 early yesterday after rescuers had dug to within 3m of them. Fifteen miners were trapped 2100m underground on Monday afternoon by a rockfall, caused by a tremor measuring 2.9 on the Richter scale. The gold mine is about 170km southwest of Johannesburg. Four of the miners are confirmed dead and there has been no recent contact with two who were critically injured. Expectations were high early today that the trapped miners would be brought to the surface by daybreak but underground conditions were said to be extremely difficult. The rescue was proceeding painstakingly slow, with rescuers crawling through an area just 40cm high, removing rocks by hand and passing them down the line. The survivors were using their hands and any equipment that survived the rockfall, to reach their rescuers.’ Editor’s note: ‘from 58 to 51 BC Julius Caesar was engaged in the wars which completed the Roman conquest of Gaul’. There were a number of motivations behind Rome’s wars with the Gauls, but probably the main one was ‘to gain control of their gold mines; and that was the only motivation for Rome’s invasion of Dacia’ – ‘what is now the northern and western part of Romania.’ ‘Romany – of the gypsies or their language.’]

...gypsies who survived the Holocaust are finally emerging from the shadows to press their case for compensation. An estimated 200,000 gypsies died at the hands of the Germans... during... W[W2]... said... a paper to an international conference on Nazi gold. The gypsy leaders say they want £80 million in compensation for the... property... stolen from their people. [By the way, ‘the Los Angeles Times reports that an international commission created to resolve Holocaust-era insurance disputes has spent more than \$US30 million on salaries and hotel bills while giving only \$US3 million to claimants’]...

Jewish leaders meeting in New York and Jerusalem yesterday authorised the allocation of nearly \$US200 million... in the fund set up by Swiss banks and businesses earlier this year.

...[a 65-year-old], who works as an accountant with Jewish Community Services in Sydney, is believed to be the first person in the world to successfully claim his family’s financial assets, which lay dormant in a Swiss bank account for half a century... About ten years ago, [an] aunt died in Tel Aviv and [his] cousin discovered among the woman’s belongings a bank statement believed to be with the Union Bank... She went to the bank’s headquarters in Zurich but was told to go away... [The 65-year-old] would not disclose the settled amount. But last week it was reported to be around \$A200,000... A[US] has the largest community of [Holocaust] survivors... per capita in the world outside of Israel... The N[Z] Jewish Council said that some... families here... [are] trying to obtain information about their family assets.

...N[Z]’s next big gold strike may well be found on the ocean floor. Scientists from the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Science in Lower Hutt are on the trail of a mineral discovery made by chance in 1996 by the Government research ship Tangaroa. It dredged up mineral samples containing 18[%] zinc (by weight), 15[%] copper, and six parts per million of gold – a higher concentration than some on-shore goldmining areas... A... mineral geologist... said the gold strike almost certainly came from a “black smoker” – an undersea vent where hydrothermal plumes gush from the ocean floor. They... belch hot water and dark clouds rich in particles... Scores of black smokers are believed to be in a belt running several hundred kilometres north-east of White Island... in the Bay of Plenty... [The geologist], who has secured \$1.3 million in state funding over the next three years to map the vents, said hydrothermal mineral deposits had been recorded in about 25 places worldwide. What make the N[Z] sites unusual was the presence of gold and the shallow depth at which the vents occurred. Most other black smokers were at depths of about 2.5km in mid-ocean ridges... [The geologist] rated the discovery of black smokers as one of the “sexier discoveries” in earth science in the past 20 years. Before that scientists were not sure how to account for the iron and manganese dissolved in the oceans. - 1997

Another resource that NZ scientists are searching the ocean floor for is *black gold*.

Government scientists say they have identified areas of potential undersea oil reserves extending hundreds of kilometres farther than previously known. The... Tasman Sea... areas could be claimed by N[Z] under the U[N] Law of the Sea Convention... [T]he crown-owned Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences Ltd[’s]... marketing manager... said black shale, dredged 50km beyond the 200-mile [EEZ], had indicated signs of oil, but a lot of work was needed before drilling could be considered.

...AN UNORTHODOX oil exploration company formed by three friends... has struck a deal with two joint-venture companies – Asia Pacific Oil and Niko Resources Ltd[. a]nd... plans to redrill an on-shore well in Gisborne that Niko abandoned last year but experts predict could contain 14.5 million barrels of oil worth \$400 million. If New Plymouth-based Eastern Petroleum is successful, it will be the first company to strike oil in Gisborne since 1874, when pioneers found a well that gushed 50 barrels a day before the rig caught fire and burned to the ground. Since then, numerous companies have abandoned attempts on wells in the city because of difficult drilling conditions... but... Eastern Petroleum... believes it

can... strike it lucky with the latest technology[– including]... a purpose-built Taranaki rig... [–] and the right approach... U[S] chemists, who tested the oil from several seepages in 1890, claimed Gisborne oil was some of the best they had seen... [T]he deal with Asia Pacific and Niko gives Eastern Petroleum: • 45% of production from the... well, [which]... is about 12km northwest of Gisborne... • 45% of oil found in any of the other onshore wells in the licence that the two companies drill. • And a 15% share in the companies' offshore licence.

...The rapid growth in oil consumption in Asia, outside of Japan, over the past decade highlights the region's rapid economic growth... The 1996 BP review of World Energy shows that oil consumption in Asia more than doubled from 262.9 million tonnes in 1985 to 538.5 million tonnes in 1995. Its share of world consumption increased from 9.3... to 16.6[%]. The region's demand rose 7.2[%] in 1995, compared with total world growth of 1.2[%] to 3.22 billion tonnes. The rapidly growing Chinese market, up 5.7[%] to 157.5 million tonnes last year, overtook the shrinking Russian market to become third-largest oil consumer. South Korea using 94.8 million tonnes, after passing Britain in 1994, overtook France last year and looks set to challenge Italy for the sixth-largest consumer spot this year. The average Brent spot price rose 7.5[%] in 1995 to \$US17.18 a barrel of oil, [while the]... world's oil reserves to production ratio eased slightly to 42.8 years, down from 43 years. In 1979, it was less than 27 years.

...The race for oil to power the Asia-Pacific region's economies in the next century risks sparking tensions... experts warned yesterday. [A f]ormer Japanese foreign minister... cautioned against the region's growing dependence on Middle East oil during a symposium in Manila... Most of the oil imported to East Asian ports from the Middle East would pass through the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean, he said, forcing countries like China, South Korea, Taiwan and even Japan to strengthen their navies. "We are right now in the middle of an intra-regional arms race initially provoked by energy insecurities among our bigger northern neighbours..."... He said that by 2000, China's needs alone are expected to increase to 900,000 barrels a day and by 2010 to 2.8 billion barrels a day... [He] proposed the formation of a joint Asian energy organisation to develop Siberia's potentially vast oil and natural gas deposits... [Currently, the Asian] region provides "a little more than a 10th of global production and less than a 20th of world reserves,"... - 1996

Prior ages in the evolution of the biosphere had laid down more than 60[%] of the world's petroleum in what is now the [Last W]orld, most of it in the region of the Persian Gulf... [Russia has] its own supply of oil. Japan on its volcanic islands, lifted not long ago from within the Earth's crust... [is] almost totally dependent upon imported fuel. By 1970, the countries of Western Europe, with abundant coal, were deriving as much as two-thirds of their energy from imported oil. The [US], formerly the world's principal producer and exporter of oil, had passed the peak of its production. The country was now the largest importer, suddenly dependent upon overseas suppliers for more than 40[%] of its... oil... The daily flow of oil from the [Last World] countries into ports of the [First World] countries mounted from 2 million barrels (one barrel = '35 imperial or 42 US gallons') in 1950 to 18 million barrels in 1985. Into U.S. ports, the flow increased from 250,000 barrels to 3.2 million barrels a day. Along with the expansion of the world tanker fleet from around 2500 vessels in service in 1950 to more than 5000 came inflation of the size of tankers. Naval architects, in Japan especially, stretched the limits of steel structure to build 300,000-ton wallowing lakes of oil, too big to make passage through the Suez Canal but big enough to pay dividends on the journey made 15,000 kilometres longer by the detour around Cape Horn... The 600 to 750 million barrels of oil at sea at all times presents a new hazard to the global environment. A score of tankers are lost on the reefs and at sea each year... [T]hey account for – they spill – more than half the tonnage lost. Tankers afloat take their toll as well. They make their deadhead voyages ballasted with sea water, and they pump this oil-polluted water out at sea as they approach the loading ports... In addition to fouling the beaches and tarring the seabirds, it appears that the traffic in oil is polluting the ocean itself. To sample the microscopic "neuston," the biota of the ocean's top millimeter, research vessels tow arrays of fine-meshed nets. They have found no stretch of ocean where the crucial... site of the all-important exchanges of oxygen and carbon dioxide between hydrosphere and atmosphere and window to the 70[%] of the solar radiation that drives one-third of the energy turnover in the biosphere – is not veiled by microbits of tar. In some waters, this tar has seeped from near-surface oilfields in the continental shelves. There is no doubt about the origin of most of it... In the case of diamonds, the surcharge for scarcity over and above the cost of production is imposed by monopoly, in abrogation of the market process. In the case of oil... there was also some distortion of the market process by the oligopoly of the half dozen companies that set the price paid to oil producers before 1973. It was a distortion, however, that concealed the scarcity of oil and understated its true value in use. The [First W]orld thereby blinded itself to the fact that the commitment of its energy consumption to liquid fuels had made it dependent upon the [Last W]orld for supply of the very essence of what makes the difference between the two kinds of human existence in the two worlds... With steady increase in the footage of drilling required to bring in a well and with lower yield per well, the [US] became the highest-cost producer for the world market. Its costs ran more than 10 times that... which brought a barrel of oil up from the sands of the Arabian Peninsula. On the U.S. cost, the oil companies set the world price... To keep the lion's share of that 'phantom cost' in the price they paid for Arabian oil on their side of the transaction, the companies presented a solid front to the oil princes. At the outset, in 1948, the oil companies secured an 82/18 split in their favor. In 1960, the oil-producing countries organized their famous cartel, the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries... With that solid phalanx at the table, the parties were more evenly matched. The split... went to 50/50 and, in 1970, to 30/70 in favor of the OPEC members. To the OPEC members it was then apparent that the world market price set by their customers bore no relation to the true scarcity value of petroleum and not even to its present value to those customers. At the pump... the consumer in the [US] was paying in taxes more than 3.5 times the producer's share of the price of a barrel of oil and, in Europe, as much as more than twice that markup. The oil-exporting countries of the [Last W]orld were rendering an entirely unintentional economic subsidy to the [First World] countries that had promised to come to their assistance... In 1973, seizing the crisis mounted by the Arab embargo on the shipment of oil to the [US] and other countries siding with Israel in the Yom Kippur war, OPEC took over the pricing of oil to the world market. The first OPEC price, at \$17 a barrel, made a fivefold improvement on the consumers' price. For the first time, oil appeared to its ultimate consumers as possibly a scarce resource... In 1973, a chastened [US] was ready to be lectured to by spokesmen for the oil-producing countries. [The] chief of the Iranian economic mission in Washington, D.C., wrote in the quarterly *Foreign Affairs* in July of that year: By keeping the Mideast oil price deliberately below its true scarcity value... the [First W]orld inadvertently perpetrated four hoaxes on itself and on its unborn generations... [It] (a) discouraged oil producers from searching for new sources of supply; (b) helped hold down prices of substitutes (e.g., coal gas and hydroelectricity) and likewise dampened their development prospects despite their huge reserves; (c) stifled and/or delayed research in the development of more efficient technology for the economical use of energy; and, above all, (d) contributed to an inexcusably reckless waste and inefficient use of world premium fuels.

Although it is generally conceded that there is a limit to the amount of oil beneath the burning sands of the Near East, some Arab oil magnates act as if it will last forever. And they appear to spend money as fast as the oil pours out of the ground... The biggest spender of all... is the Emir of Kuwait... The Sheikh hires eighty people who have nothing else to do but help him spend money.

Probably more geologists are currently employed in the hunt for petroleum than in all the other professional branches of science put together. Conversely, the petroleum geologist is only one of many specialists, ranging from economists to engineers, who are involved in the exploration and production of petroleum... Man's quest for petroleum began when God told Noah to coat the ark with pitch. In prehistoric and early historic times, petroleum from natural seepages on the surface of the Earth was used for many purposes, military as well as nautical. But it was only when petroleum products were required in large quantities, first paraffin for lamps, then petrol for cars, that Man's search became scientific instead of

haphazard... Petroleum is the name given to solid, plastic (i.e., pliable) and liquid hydrocarbons which occur naturally within the Earth... Petroleum is found in rocks of all types, igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary, of all ages ranging from the Precambrian to sands less than a million years old. The majority of petroleum geologists believe, however, that regardless of where it now occurs most oil was generated from marine muds of Cambrian or younger age... In the ordinary course of events, oil will migrate up through permeable rocks to the surface of the Earth, where it is dissipated, oxidized and destroyed. But, in certain favourable circumstances, upward-migrating oil may be trapped beneath impermeable strata, through which no fluid can flow. In this way... a petroleum reservoir... is... formed... Petroleum is generally drawn from the reservoir through perforations in the steel casing lining the sides of the borehole. Where the reservoir pressure is sufficiently high, petroleum flows naturally to the surface, where it is fed through a system of valves... to a pipeline. In low-pressure reservoirs it may be necessary to pump oil to the surface... Petroleum gas is far less important in economic terms than the liquid petroleum with which it is generally associated. For this reason, where there are difficulties in getting the gas from the source region to the consumer, it is not uncommon for unwanted gas to be burned off...

Fires believed to be the result of sabotage on oil pipelines killed hundreds of poor people on two continents yesterday... In South America, at least 45 people were burned to death and 70 others were hurt when leftist rebels bombed the largest oil pipeline in Colombia and blazing crude engulfed two entire villages before dawn... In Africa, at least 500 people scavenging for fuel from a burst petrol pipeline near the southern Nigerian oil town of Warri are believed to have died when a fire ripped through the area.

...Drawn by rumours that a huge pool of gasoline was free for the taking, hundreds of people converged on [a] small Nigerian town over the weekend. Yesterday, however, it was their relatives who converged... [on] Jesse... searching out the charred remains of their brothers, sisters, fathers and mothers, killed as the fountain of fuel burst into a fireball... With dozens of... unidentified bodies littering the town and flames still occasionally flaring up to 20m high, authorities began the grim task... of burying the dead. Firefighters had stopped battling the flames and waited for the blaze, which spread thick black smoke for kilometres, to burn itself out.

...Emergency medical teams are battling to save survivors of Nigeria's petrol pipeline inferno as the death toll exceeds 700... [T]he Red Cross... Unicef... and the W[HO] yesterday sent... teams to help overstretched hospitals that were filled with an estimated 1000 injured. "In cases of burns like this, the main danger to the injured is from secondary infections. That is one thing we'll try to prevent,"... [However, in] some hospitals, patients were being withdrawn by relatives fearful of prosecution by the authorities for seeking to collect... the spilled fuel... The independent *Guardian* newspaper said in one hospital where 18 people were admitted with severe burns only four remained... Oil provides more than 90[%] of the export income of the nation... but in recent years it has relied on fuel imports because the state-owned refineries failed to meet demand.

...Oil still spewed like a geyser from the transalaska oil pipeline yesterday more than 24 hours after a man shot a hole in the line... [that] carries about one million barrels of oil a day, or 17[%] of domestic oil production... Cleanup crews dug ditches and deep holes to capture... more than 984,000 litres of... oil, which was being vacuumed into trucks and transferred to storage tanks. The... man suspected of shooting the pipeline with a .338-calibre rifle... has been arraigned on charges of criminal mischief, driving while intoxicated, weapons misconduct and felony assault. [In related news, 'a Russian river is spreading burning oil – that had spilled from a ruptured pipeline – through the wilderness']

...An apparent dynamite attack has ruptured Ecuador's main oil pipeline, spilling between 5000 and 10,000 barrels of oil into an Andean river... [T]he president of Ecuador's state oil company Petroecuador, said the incident was similar to bombing attacks against the pipeline last month in Ecuador's remote Amazon jungle region. Authorities have not determined who was behind those blasts. Oil industry sources suspect that kidnappers who have been holding eight foreign oil workers hostage... used the bombings as pressure tactics in ransom negotiations.

...The discovery of the body of a US citizen who was one of 10 foreign oil workers... kidnapped last October in Ecuador is a matter of grave concern, says [NZ's] Foreign Minister... The body of Ron Sander, who had been shot, was found yesterday close to the Colombian border... Mr Sander was working for [a] Tulsa, Oklahoma-based oil company... when he was kidnapped by an unknown group along with [a] 52-year-old N[Z] helicopter pilot... and eight other oil workers... The kidnappers got away in a helicopter stolen from the oil field. Two Frenchmen in the group escaped two days later. The US State Department said it abhorred "the senseless death" and called for the immediate release of the remaining hostages... "In these situations Governments do not get involved in the negotiating. The employer of the kidnapped people and the employer's insurers are the negotiators."

...The Spanish-Argentine oil company Repsol has paid a \$US13 million... ransom for the release of a N[Z]er and six other oil workers held hostage in northern Ecuador... The money was handed over at an agreed location on the shores of the Bermejo River... near the border with Colombia... just before the February deadline set by the bandits to kill another hostage. The bullet-riddled body of... Ronald Sander, aged 54, was found on a jungle road on January 31. He had been... covered in a sheet scrawled with the Spanish words: "I am a gringo. For non-payment of ransom." ...The hostages... walked out of the jungle after their employers paid the ransom last week. The... Ecuadorean military, who had been hunting the suspected Colombian bandits, picked up the exhausted hostages.

...officials said yesterday... [that m]ore than 650,000 litres of fuel had escaped from a... tanker that washed up on... [t]he Galapagos Islands, [which]... are famous for their giant tortoises and rare species of birds and plants that have evolved for thousands of years in isolation and with little human intervention. British naturalist Charles Darwin visited the islands in 1835 and developed his theory of evolution by studying wildlife there... "The environmental damage is extremely grave," said Ecuador's Environmental Minister... adding that the spill had spread about 300 sq km... A team of US experts were expected to arrive today with specialised oil spill equipment such as high-capacity pumps and inflatable oil containment barges. The global conservation body WWF called yesterday for limits to shipping in the area... The... Ecuadorean... tanker ship Jessica, carrying 1 million litres of fuel, ran aground in a bay on San Cristobal Island... Officials believe the accident was caused by navigational error. Police said that no charges had been filed against the ship's captain... or against his company...

THE captain of the tanker that spewed oil into the sea around the Galapagos Islands says the damage to the environment isn't his fault... While he admits he's responsible for the crash... – ...[t]he tanker ran aground after [he] turned off his radar and mistook a signal buoy for a lighthouse... – ...he says damage... could have been reduced if the area's park officials got help sooner... [He] will face at least three criminal charges.

...because of rough seas... Ecuadorean Naval officers struggled yesterday to right a wrecked ship near the Galapagos Islands in a bid to prevent more fuel leaking... More than 700,000 litres have already spilled into the Pacific Ocean. Dead fish and other sea creatures are washing up on beaches of the famed islands... [T]he Mayor of San Cristobal... said the good news was that the brisk winds were dispersing the fuel quicker than expected, pushing it from the shores... But officials at the Galapagos National Park said the same currents that pushed the spill away from the port... had floated the oily film to other islands... The cleanup has cost \$US2 million... so far but the final bill is expected to be quadruple that.

...A crippled... ship is threatening the Galapagos Islands – and not just their famed... wildlife. The archipelago's humans... say the tanker has destroyed their fishing and... livelihood... In recent years, the... Galapagos Islands... have become the focus of a struggle between [the islanders] and conservationists as... [increased tourism and] migration from Ecuador's mainland poses a major threat to the islands' fragile ecosystem... [Ironically, the tanker was 'delivering fuel for tourist boats'. On a positive note, a]uthorities... say the spill hasn't been as bad as expected. Only one pelican and two seagulls are known to have died but... [a] statement from the... [WWF] warned the spill could have a deep and lasting impact...

In the wake of the Galapagos spill, [a NZ Herald correspondent reports] on how the thirst for oil threatens more wildlife... [The US] President... is... preparing to open up a priceless Arctic refuge to oil exploration... "Moving quickly on a national energy policy is important,"... the new White

House spokesman, said this week. "We'll push ahead to develop 8[%] of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge." ...most Alaskans who pay no tax because of the oil boom and instead receive an annual oil dividend from the Government, worth \$US1963[... are]... fiercely supportive of... drilling in the refuge... Opponents of the plan are certain to point to Prudhoe Bay, to the west of the refuge. What was envisioned three decades ago as a very concentrated area of oil and gas exploration by the bay has spread like a rash in every direction and even into the Arctic Ocean. When astronauts see North America from the Space Shuttle, the blotch of light that is... Prudhoe, where emissions of nitrogen oxides now exceed 56,000 tonnes annually... is as bright and big as New York City... The experts have plenty to look at aside from air pollution. What are the risks associated with injecting toxic wastes from drilling deep into the Earth's crust, for instance? Or, what kind of imbalances have been wrought in the wildlife chain by the increase in the numbers of foxes and grizzly bears which scavenge daily for food overflowing skips outside the oil worker's homes? ...Hanging over the debate are memories of the Exxon Valdez[, which]... struck Bligh Reef and spilled more than 11 million gallons of crude oil over the pristine coastline of... Alaska's Prince William Sound in 1989.

...OIL from the Exxon Valdez, some of it nearly as fresh as when it spilled in 1989, still lingers on the once pristine beaches of Prince William Sound... Of the 42 million litres spilled... about 38,000 remain... [-] twice as much... as had been predicted eight years earlier... It is spread over 7km of shoreline, and is vanishing at a rate of 26% a year... according to... preliminary estimates... by the National Marine Fisheries Service...

Studies of the Exxon Valdez disaster... have shown that oil pollution of less than one part per billion is sufficient to kill marine life. Salmon and herring with half-formed tails, twisted spines and grossly distended stomachs are still being caught in... Prince William Sound... The discovery has serious implications for coastal regions affected by other major oil spills – such as the Shetland Isles off Scotland, hit by the Braer disaster, and the beaches around Milford Haven in Wales which were polluted by the Sea Empress. However, the findings of the Alaska study suggest that the problems are more wide ranging... Swilling out a tank of diesel fuel or an outboard engine will have deadly consequences... Meanwhile, N[Z] scientists were searching for oil spills in Wellington Harbour and Cook Strait over the weekend. Landcare Research said it would use satellite images and computers to detect spills from marine accidents over a 100 sq km. "The images can be used to track the drift and spread of a spill, so we'd have advance warning if a coastline was in danger,"... said ...a... spokeswoman[...]. • 'Auckland Regional Council staff battled a major oil spill in Drury yesterday but could not stop most of the slick from reaching the Manukau Harbour. The spill was reported at 6.30 pm on Thursday but responding ARC staff had trouble dealing with the oil streaming away quickly in a tidal creek in the dark. Early yesterday they were back with hired labour, containment booms and absorbent material. The ARC oil spill response team was put on standby but was not required.'

...this week the Maritime Safety Authority delivered to Auckland more than 1400km of boom, a recovery system, including skimmers and recovery tanks, and large quantities of chemical dispersants for use in oil spills of up to 20 tonnes. "Until now, we have only had in-house capability to deal with spills up to two tonnes." The authority is spending about \$9 million on oil-spill equipment 'that is to be deployed at 16 ports by 1999.

...Three truckloads of new equipment for handling oil spills were yesterday delivered to the country's busiest oil port, at Marsden Pt. Until now equipment to clean up any significant spills in the port approaches or Whangarei harbour has had to be trucked from Auckland, even though as the site of NZ's only oil refinery, Marsden Pt has had a high oil spill risk rating. The \$800,000 of new equipment is the second instalment of a \$9m MSA upgrade'...

'New oil pollution equipment only recently delivered to the Port of Tauranga was used to clean up a heavy spill in Tauranga Harbour on Monday night. Environment Bay of Plenty will try to match the oil with samples taken from each ship in port, so it can prosecute.'

...An oil spill into an ecologically sensitive estuary in the Manukau Harbour resulted in a company being ordered to pay a fine and costs totalling more than \$31,000. Cleaning up the 9000-litre spill took more than 20 people from the ARC, the Auckland Coastguard, the Papakura Volunteer Coastguard and the Fire Service. Analysis of the oil traced it to the Wiri premises of Salters Cartage Ltd, which yesterday pleaded guilty in the Auckland District Court to discharging a contaminant on to land in circumstances resulting in the contaminant reaching water.'

...*The growing threat of oil spills around our coasts has led to the establishment of a clear safety strategy* The new strategy launched by the MSA sets up a three-tiered system of response and provides 16 regional councils around the country with specialised equipment. Small oil spills are to be dealt with, where possible, by the companies or industries responsible for the spill, with regional councils stepping in when needed to handle spills inside 12 nautical miles up to the mean high tide mark in their areas. Any oil spills outside the 12 nautical mile zone are dealt with directly by the MSA, which will also take over when spills are too large for the regional councils. Half the councils have already been supplied with the oil-spill equipment, the cost of which is being covered by annual levies on the offshore petroleum industry, oil tankers, and the shipping and fishing industries. Every year, regional councils deal with around 100 small oil spills, ranging from a few litres to several tonnes. Most of the small spills are caused by careless recreational boaters, who get off lightly because it would be too difficult to levy them. The Auckland region deals with 40 incidents a year, says the on-scene oil-spill commander. "We now have 27 trained responders, and we can be ready and on the way within 10 or 15 minutes." Bigger booms, skimmers and an inflatable barge which can hold up to 100 tonnes of oil are stored at the National Oil Spill Service Centre in Te Atatu. The only two medium-sized spills have occurred when the Wahine went down in the Cook Strait in 1968 and when the Mikhail Lermontov sank in the Marlborough Sounds in 1986.'

...Penguins and other sea birds are the first wildlife victims of the worst oil spill to pollute N[Z] waters. The oil comes from a sunken trawler on the rocky east coast of Stewart Island... Fog played havoc with the... clean-up... operation yesterday, preventing aerial spraying of a chemical dispersant, although several boats including tugs used the detergent-like liquid to break up patches of the spill... The wrecked Korean fishing boat Dong Won 529 apparently stopped spewing marine diesel into the sea last night. It had run aground in the early hours of Tuesday. Up to 300 tonnes of the fuel, in a slick spreading north about 10km from the Breaksea Islands wreck site... is threatening the ecologically delicate Paterson Inlet and the feeding sites of several rare bird species... Only time, the weather and the tides will tell if a big wildlife disaster occurs. If so, N[Z]'s planning for responding to such an event will be put to the test. Critics have called the planning woeful... [An ornithologist] said the planning was based on "a fingers crossed" mentality of containment and clean-up. "The wildlife comes later." The director of the M[SA]... defended the lack of action to take the fuel off the ship in the three days it was aground, saying the sinking was inexplicable. The trawler hit the rocks at "full tilt" and was almost high and dry, unable to be shifted one centimetre by two tugs and a fishing boat. Salvage experts from United Salvage A[US] had been on the ship only minutes before it slipped off. "If they had been on board [when it went down] they wouldn't be with us now."

...Compensation claims for financial loss... are in the hands of [the boat's NZ] charterer... Fishermen have complained the spill... has stopped them from working in the area. Under maritime law, liability for such claims lies with the polluter or the ship's owner... By last night, although a gale stopped work in the late afternoon, the M[SA] was claiming success in cleaning up the diesel... but shags had been seen swimming through a slick... A... D[oC spokesperson said an] old public swimming pool in Invercargill was being converted into a bird rescue centre in readiness to care for up to hundreds of birds... Wildlife teams had seen fewer birds than normal. "We hope it's because they are avoiding the area."

...Bad weather yesterday hampered the search for wildlife caught in the oil spill... as the cost of the clean-up operation... headed towards \$1 million. Wildlife experts believe birds and other marine life will be starting to show symptoms of oil poisoning as the diesel harms the animals' respiratory and digestive systems... [U]nlike heavy oil, marine diesel was light and did not[immediately] immobilise birds. It would take days before they were overcome... The Korean owners of the ship would meet their liabilities under... N[Z law, an MSA spokesperson] said. Meanwhile, the newly elected Mayor of Invercargill... has lent his support to a \$22.6 million compensation claim by fishermen... By late yesterday evening no... signs of any oil were seen in the region from Paterson Inlet to the south of Stewart Island. Neither had diesel spread to the coastline. The air exclusion zone over the site was lifted and the shipping exclusion zone reduced from the original 10 nautical miles to half a nautical mile off the

Breaksea Island site... It is understood that almost one-quarter of the country's store of dispersant for oil spills was used in the clean-up operation, although the authority could not confirm this.

...The owner of the Korean fishing trawler Dong Won 529... has been fined \$20,000...

A MAN, 39, has been fined \$2000 for tipping five litres of used engine oil into a Timaru stormwater drain and ordered to pay \$3000 in clean-up costs. [● 'NZ dumps 30 million litres of oil every year' according to a 1990 advertisement for recycled oil...

In 1990 'the Lower Hutt City Council chose to dump 80,000 litres of oil in its Silverstream tip because it would cost nothing. This was despite an Auckland oil refining company offering to take it – provided the council paid transport costs. The council claims the oil will not find its way into the groundwater because oil and water do not mix.' By the way, wind has saved the Poor Knights Islands marine reserve from the worst consequences of Thursday's oil spill... A major operation was launched on Friday and Saturday to clean up thick clumps of the oil... smothering a number of seabirds and fouling water on the western side of the islands. Suspicions are focused on two ships, which will be asked to provide samples of bilge oil for comparison... A voluntary code has existed since 1994 for oil tankers allowing captains to choose whether to go... round the Poor Knights or cut between the islands and... mainland – a distance of 9 nautical miles. Many skippers take the easier, direct route... "We should push these guys to go the few extra miles around the Knights," said... [a] Northland-based diver, marine conservationist and author[, who also complained about the]... cleanup method... "I'm not knocking the guys working out there cleaning up. They've been doing their best but it's a matter of finding the best methodology to handle this sort of thing. From what I saw out there on Friday, what was happening is open to criticism. If nets and buckets are effective [in scooping up spilled oil] then it would be more effective to have more than just one or two boats doing it..."

...Two boats transporting three cleanup crews were expected to reach the area today... as... pollution... [from] an oil tanker that broke up off the Brittany coast... threat[ens to]... hit... French beaches... A British salvage vessel and two Norwegian ships were also expected to reach the area in coming days. Maritime officials said that contrary to initial assessments that the... 10,000 tonnes of heavy oil... would not pose a major threat to the coast, there was now a growing risk of pollution as the oil was mixing with water and emulsifying. Following the breakup of the... Maltese-registered Erika... French ships had tried to tow its oil-laden bow and stern sections away from the coast, but both sank by Monday. Port officials at St-Nazaire said the captain of the ship had sought permission to call in at the port on Saturday but was denied access because of safety concerns. Authorities said the ship's agent told them the Erika had a crack, was losing part of its oil and was listing... Police have detained the captain...

Troops battle oil slicks on French coast... [The P]M... yesterday ordered hundreds of troops to France's pollution-hit Brittany coast as European environmental groups lashed out at his Government's response to the oil spill. Surveying the pollution caused by the wreck of the tanker Erika, [the PM] vowed to push forward regulations on preventing oil spills when France takes over the E[U] presidency... The... German branch of Greenpeace... has demanded a system of strict surveillance of oil tankers. [A s]pokesman... said simple methods of keeping a watch on tankers during the whole of their coastal voyage should be used in the same way as planes are followed with air traffic control systems. There was fresh embarrassment for France when the British RSPCA threatened to withdraw aid to its overworked French counterparts. It is furious at the condition of oiled birds sent to Britain for treatment. "Seventy-seven were dead on arrival, 170 were in such poor condition that they had to be put to sleep... [W]e don't know if the... other ones[']... survive the night. We offered to help [the French League for the Protection of Animals] on the condition that the birds would be fit to resist the journey and that they would receive an initial treatment. That doesn't appear to have been done."

...Motley brigades of bird lovers, city kids and the unemployed have mobilised on France's north-west Atlantic coast to fight an oil spill that has caused the country's worst birdlife disaster and threatened the local shellfish industry. The wreck of the tanker Erika... on a coastline prized for its wildlife and scenery, has triggered a rare sense of national solidarity... The Bird Protection League says that so far nearly 22,000 dead birds have been washed up, but perhaps five times more have drowned at sea. A further 12,200 have been picked up alive, but only two-thirds of these are expected to survive. The toll compares strangely with the tally of 6000 dead birds caused by a massive oil spill in 1978, when the Amoco Cadiz was wrecked off northern Brittany, spilling 220,000 tonnes of crude – 22 times more oil than the Erika.

...All eyes on the Breton coast have turned to the sky in supplication, hoping that the weather gods will smile on a perilous operation to salvage oil from the remains of a shipwrecked tanker. The elderly, ill-starred Erika foundered in strong storms... spewing... tonnes of fuel oil into the sea, fouling 450km of coastline, including some of France's finest holiday beaches. Now an unprecedented \$160 million operation has been launched to recover up to 15,000 tonnes of oil holed up in the fore and stern sections of the ship. [Editor's note: Supertankers, which are 'double-hulled', have subdivisions that can be used to 'separate different grades of oil and, by reducing the effect of liquid moving about, help to stabilize the vessels at sea'.

...the Exxon Valdez ploughed into a reef and coated some 2000 kilometres of coastline with oil. In spite of an extensive cleanup, aftereffects continue to harm wildlife and commercial fisheries, critics charge. On some beaches, oil remains buried deep among pebbles and boulders. But a new weapon called PES-51 is helping to remove subsurface residual hydrocarbons. An environmental geologist who oversaw the first test of the chemical says PES-51 may keep future oil spills from adhering to beaches. Sprayed on before a slick hits, it would create a nonstick film, allowing the oil to slide back into the sea.'

...a 'child has invented a way of cleaning up oil spills using tiny polystyrene balls that soak the oil up.' Incidentally, Queensland's] Government will oppose any... moves to allow a seismic survey for oil exploration on the Great Barrier Reef. The Federal Government is considering an application for a survey 190km from Hook Island in the Whitsundays area. Queensland[']s Environment Minister... said the... Reef was not "up for grabs"...

As... the... U[S] President... advocates drilling in Alaska, A[U]Sns are furiously debating the future of one of their greatest natural treasures. Federal officials are preparing recommendations on an application by an oil explorer to conduct seismic testing as close as 50km to the... coral wonderland running 2100km down the Queensland coast. The testing involves the use of underwater air blasts in waters populated by whales, green turtles, whale sharks and other vulnerable marine life. Last November, when the grounded Malaysian freighter Bunga Teratai Satu was freed by explosives from Sudbury Reef off Cairns, researchers scooped nets full of dead fish from the area... The... world's biggest continuous coral reef, is protected by the federal Great Barrier Marine Park Act but administered by both federal and state Governments: Brisbane controls the islands of the reef and its internal waters, while Canberra oversees the waters beyond. But Canberra has additional powers through the World Heritage listing, which covers the reef from the low tide mark on Queensland beaches to the outlying islands... Balancing the protection of the reef with the exploitation of its commercial and economic potential has become an increasing nightmare, marked by an increasing frequency of battles between Brisbane and Canberra. The grounding of the Bunga Teratai Satu, with its 1200 tonnes of fuel oil and cargo of toxic chemicals, set new alarm bells clanging. But it was far from an isolated incident: in the past 15 years there have been 40 reported incidents, including other groundings and collisions between ships negotiating the waters of the reef... If the tests do confirm viable oil fields, opponents say, the reef would be at constant risk of accidents and environmental devastation.

...Gamblers go for the deep oil... Deepwater drilling is the buzz of the global oil industry. Drilling as deep as 4000m, explorers off the coasts of Angola, Nigeria and Algeria have in the past two years uncovered some of the world's biggest recent finds – with as many as 12 successful drills off Angola. N[Z]'s turn could come if the... deepwater survey now being conducted off Taranaki... gives the right indicators. The Ministry of Economic Development will hold a bidding round for deepwater permits next year... N[Z] is an unusual oil prospect. Sitting in an active seismic region, it does not look like the best place in the world to make oil and gas discoveries... The ministry has its... theories on why small- and medium-sized oil companies are being attracted to N[Z] in increasing numbers. Good permitting terms, lifestyle and, of course, political stability are drawcards, it says... "You're not at risk of being kidnapped on the side of the road like you are in some other countries." ...many A[U]S companies are looking to N[Z], where exploration spending alone put \$172 million into Government coffers last year. Royalties claimed from production could extend into

billions of dollars. But while oil opportunities are undoubtedly there, the industry continues to face negative images of the environmental effects of its exploration. [The ministry] counters the public image of the industry by saying: "Our view is that if it adds value to the local and national economies, it's a good thing. Why not explore for oil and gas here where we can control any impacts, if there are any adverse impacts?"

...[When we remove oil from the Earth, the Earth frequently retaliates. Sometimes it quietly sinks: in 1989 Phillips Petroleum had to build a 106m-high concrete wall around a giant North Sea oil and gas processing complex because the sea floor underneath it had dropped over 3m in the previous 19 years. But sinking is a relatively mild response to oil extraction. Around many oil fields Earth signals its displeasure by rumbling with low-level quakes. These tremors rarely exceed 4 on the Richter scale, but can still buckle pipelines and shear off wells. Such effects are well documented at drill sites around the world. But extracting oil from rock should make the rock less likely to move, not more. Indeed, experiments have shown that pumping water into drill holes near shallow faults increases the frequency of small earthquakes; removing the water locks the faults up again. After analysing several quake-prone drill sites in the US and Canada, the US Geological Survey has come up with a theory to explain the apparent paradox (that may help limit the consequences): it's not the rock that once held the oil that is set quaking by the extraction, but the rock immediately surrounding it. As the oil is sucked out, the porous rock in the reservoir contracts like a drying sponge. That contraction pulls on the less porous surrounding rock, adding stress that increases the likelihood it will spring loose along existing faults. Contraction in the reservoir rock can also pull down on the rock lying above, causing the surface to sink.]

...A New Plymouth family forced to flee their home after a long-abandoned oil well sprang back to life do not want to return... so the Bayly Rd house, overlooking Port Taranaki, seems likely to be demolished. The family, who do not want to be named, are living in rented accommodation while authorities decided what to do. The oil well, drilled in the Moturoa field in 1913, is gushing 6000 litres a day of oily water and natural gas... The New Plymouth District Council is trying to find dozens of other potentially dangerous abandoned oil wells in the... area. The precise locations of many of the more than 40 wells drilled in the oil field... since 1865 are not recorded... [In international news, a c]rusader... and her boss... have filed a lawsuit in the Los Angeles superior court seeking unspecified damages for former students of Beverly Hills High School... [The students all attended] between 1978 and 1992, and were later diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease – some have since died. The ex-students believe they contracted cancer from chemicals released by drilling at the campus... The case began when two former... students met coincidentally in a doctor's office where both were being treated for cancer... [O]ver 10 years, 170 graduates and staff developed three types of cancer. The lawsuit names several oil and gas companies. But... one of the companies, says tests were conducted by two... agencies and no evidence was found to support the claims.

WITH THE MASSIVE INCREASE in activities in Antarctica it had to happen sooner or later, and this year it has happened twice. On January 28th the Argentine support ship *Bahia Paraíso* ran onto rocks off Anvers Island, and a month later the Peruvian ship *Humboldt* did likewise at... the South Shetland Islands – both locations within the Antarctic Treaty Area. Both ships released substantial quantities of fuel and other oils into the sea and although some sort of international "clean-up" appears to be underway, reports so far indicate a substantial impact on the wildlife.

A wrecked Argentine navy ship is leaking diesel fuel into one of Antarctica's prime wildlife areas eight years after it struck rocks and capsized. The *Bahia Paraíso* lies belly-up on rocks near the US scientific base Palmer Station on the Antarctic Peninsula. Populations of... the imperial cormorant and the kelp gull, have been decimated.

...At least 3000 sea lions at a nature reserve off the Uruguayan coast have died from a massive oil spill that occurred... [last month]. The Argentine daily newspaper *Clarín* reported that at least 200 tonnes of oil spilled into the Atlantic when the Panamanian-registered tanker *San Jorge* ran aground near the island of Lobos... Greenpeace has accused the Uruguayan Government of downplaying the disaster.

...A Japanese cargo vessel that grounded last week near Dutch Harbour, Alaska, has spilled about 910,000 litres of fuel oil, about twice the amount estimated earlier. Roughly 570,000 litres of fuel oil is believed to be still on the ship and workers are attempting to remove it... [In related news,] Singapore yesterday charged the captains of two ships involved in a collision which caused a 25,000 tonne oil spill with reckless navigation and endangering lives. A Thai supertanker and a Cyprus-registered oil carrier collided [over a week ago] and a major operation is still under way to clean up one of the worst spills to hit South-east Asia.

...Two tankers collided in thick fog in the North Sea and one was leaking unleaded petrol, British coast guards said yesterday. No one was injured in the collision... and neither ship is in danger of sinking, but the French maritime authority said the spilled petrol might explode.

...A 66-year-old fireman was killed and nine people were injured... after two petrol tanker wagons exploded at an east German railway station. Police said the blaze, which started at dawn, engulfed the station... and destroyed the building. Fifteen motor vehicles outside were also set ablaze. The explosions happened after 15 tanker wagons in a freight train derailed and toppled over as the train arrived at the station... More than 240 police and 140 firefighters were involved in the operation to put out the blaze and to seal off the danger area... [Elsewhere, 'an explosion and fire has damaged an oil refinery in India'. Incidentally, the] biggest oil tank to be shifted in [NZ will soon] be railed from [Northland's] Marsden Pt power station site and on to a barge headed for Fiji... The giant tank, which weighs nearly 400 tonnes... would be welded to [the] 47m barge and towed by tug to Suva, where it would be used to store bitumen. The other three super-tanks lined up behind it at Marsden Pt will eventually also be shifted. However, for commercial reasons... Technical Bitumen... a New Plymouth road construction company... [that bought the] four tanks... during the decommissioning of the Marsden A power station this year... would not disclose what was planned for them... [T]he tank to be barged... had been checked by a naval architect, and was expected to be very stable when afloat as most of its weight was low in the structure. "The only possible problem will be wind. It's like a big sail – with a tail wind it will be in Fiji in six days, but if the wind's head-on it [could] take... 15 days."

...A consortium with an exploration licence off the Northland coast has committed itself to drilling two wells after seismic surveys identified potential hydrocarbon accumulations. The consortium, which includes Todd Petroleum Mining, had planned one well... [While on the topic o]f oil exploration, [about]... 4000 members of the U-wa tribe in Colombia have threatened to commit mass suicide [if any]... takes place on their ancestral lands. The indigenous community considers drilling for oil inflicts wounds on Mother Earth and could have deadly consequences not only for the tribe, but for the whole of humanity.

...Before [the US President's] arrival a Venezuelan environmental group said the U[S] gas-guzzling culture was destroying the delicate tropical habitat of Venezuela, which has become the largest supplier of oil to the U[S]... Venezuela has embarked on a massive 10-year plan to double oil production to six million barrels a day... Leading U[S] oil companies, including... Texaco, Exxon and Mobil have snapped up prime slices of Venezuelan oil country, including the environmentally delicate Orinoco river delta, which is home to the threatened Warao Indian group.

...Opec, the geriatric oil cartel, meets this week to mourn a slide in petroleum prices which it appears to have little power to resist... Only a core of... producers within Opec... now stick to the allocations... designed to buoy oil prices... Analysts say the flawed quota system will survive the week unscathed, because any attempt to renegotiate new allocations would only provoke a row guaranteed to send markets into a tailspin... Cash-pinched [Last] World producers like Venezuela... already prefer to maximise revenues by running supplies at full tilt, ignoring the consequences.

...There was a time the world awaited with trepidation the outcome of a meeting of... OPEC... But in recent years OPEC's power has diminished. Few... would have pencilled in their diary the fact that OPEC's oil ministers are gathering in Jakarta today. The decline in interest in the oil producers' discussions is in part due to the discovery and development of oil in non-OPEC countries like Norway. But largely, the weakening of OPEC's muscle is self-inflicted. Its members used to announce the amount of oil they would produce and strictly adhere to those quotas. Now greed

rules. Many OPEC members are producing at full pelt and are ignoring the self-imposed production limits designed to prop up oil prices. The OPEC output ceiling has been just over 25 million barrels a day for more than four years, but actual production has been 2 million barrels a day above that ceiling for most of this year. Even with that production rise, OPEC's total share of world oil production has slipped to less than 40[%]... Without doubt the public face of this week's OPEC meeting will be one of partnership, cooperation and commitment to production targets. But private discussions are likely to be heated and the end result could speed up the disintegration of an outdated cartel. And any shift that strengthens competitive market forces and likely reduces world energy costs must be good.

...Opec said it will pump more oil next year as Saudi Arabia and other big Persian Gulf exporters bet global consumption[, currently]... at a record high and rising... will rise enough to prevent a big drop in oil prices.

...Rapid demand increases – fired by economic growth and oilfield hiccups – ha[ve] helped to keep the lid on crude inventories. London September futures for North Sea Brent blend closed almost unchanged on Friday at \$US18.95 a barrel. Prices had recorded a robust recovery from the year's low of \$US17.32 in early June after a slump from slightly below \$US25 a barrel in six months. [Incidentally, 'British Petroleum unveiled profits of £9.7 billion on Tuesday – the biggest profit ever made by a UK company'.]

...Royal Dutch/Shell Group, the world's biggest oil company, says improved refining results have boosted its third-quarter profit by 5[%] despite lower oil prices. Profits after tax rose to £1.173 billion... in the three months to September... The result was slightly below average market forecasts.

...World oil prices rose on Friday amid signs that the U[S] is losing patience in a confrontation over weapons inspections with Iraq. London futures for the benchmark, Brent blend crude, settled 32USc higher at \$19.79 a barrel. Dealers said concerns that the row might escalate were countering the effects of ample world oil supplies and... Opec[']s decision to] raise its output ceiling. Oil traders said they were also worried about the possible effect of the standoff on the future of Iraqi oil exports running around 800,000 barrels a day. ['Iraq has threatened to cut its supply (5% of the world's total) if it is ordered to pay \$billions in compensation to Kuwait for setting fire to its oil wells'...

'The petroleum industry was a steady business achiever throughout last year. Locally, a broad exploration development programme dug up several good prospects and firmed up previous discoveries for commercial production. But the big story of the year came from overseas: the enormous upswing in the cost of crude oil. Opec put the squeeze on international oil supplies to reverse a world glut that had sent crude prices spiralling to a 10-year-low. The price of a barrel of crude rose to more than \$US25 – the highest level since the 1991 Gulf War.'

...the 'US President has sent a clear message to the oil giants that America has had enough. He has authorised a "limited drawdown" of the American emergency oil stockpile. The move has been seen as a message to oil companies and oil producing countries that America will not be held to ransom over petrol prices. The strategic petroleum reserve stockpiles oil at huge storage depots in Texas and Louisiana. The stockpile has not been touched for a national emergency since the 1991 Gulf War. The energy secretary said 30 million barrels of oil a day would be released over 30 days from the 571 million-barrel reserve, created after the 1973 Arab oil embargo choked world growth. The secretary warned the US was prepared to go further if necessary.'

...France's second-largest oil company Total and Russian and Malaysian companies have signed a \$US2 billion... contract to develop Iranian offshore gas reserves, challenging a U[S] law seeking to stamp out investment there.

...China has signed a contract worth \$US9.5 billion... to extract an estimated eight million tonnes of oil a year from one of Kazakhstan's vast Caspian Sea oil fields... [In local news, r]esource consents are being sought for oil and gas exploration drilling to start near Wairoa, on the east coast of the North Island in March. The Enerco and US-based Westech Energy joint venture said they had lodged applications for drilling at Kauhauroa, Awatere and Makareao as part of a programme expected to cost between \$12[million] and \$16 million. Applications for a further three sites in the same area would be made shortly.

...A small A[US]n-listed energy exploration company is aiming to drill for oil near Canterbury... But first it has to strike a rich deposit of cash. Pacrim Energy will list on the NZ stock exchange today... Although its present assets are... a market capitalisation of just \$6.5 million... the company believes its main resource is permits to drill for oil around N[Z]. In particular, it has 75[%] of two licences to drill 32,000 sq km of the Canterbury Basin. [The company's c]hief executive... said the Canterbury area... had been only lightly explored in the past. He said that a well called Galleon, drilled by British Petroleum in the area in the 1970s, had struck flows of 2200 barrels a day. The well was plugged and abandoned because BP thought the rock off Canterbury was not capable of a big reservoir... [However,] his company had reinterpreted surveys of the area using modern technology, and it believed BP was mistaken... But with an offshore well likely to give little change from \$19.5 million, Pacrim cannot afford to search on its own... Pacrim also has a 37[%] share of a permit to explore for oil off Westland. The operator of that permit is N[Z] Oil and Gas[, which 'is confident there is oil in its West Maui prospect off the Taranaki coast after finding samples of the black gold in seabed sediment. Seismic tests on one area show it could potentially contain 150 million barrels of oil in each of two levels'...

NZOG[] and its partners plan to drill two further wells at Taranaki's Ngatoro oil field this financial year. Increased oil production from Ngatoro boosted NZOG's earnings significantly in its June financial and it wants to build on that success... Production at the onshore field more than doubled to 1373 barrels a day over the 12 months as three new wells were brought onstream. The field is one of the lowest-cost producers in Australasia, with a cash operating cost of about \$3 per barrel... [Expect NZOG's earnings to be boosted even further in future because] production from its Chervil field off W[A] has increased tenfold since Chervil-6 came on stream... [T]he field was[now] producing 5900 barrels of oil a day, of which NZOG's share was 1367 barrels... [In international news, a] suit by six oil companies to prevent Unocal Corporation from collecting millions of dollars for its patent on a clean-burning petrol is set to go to trial next week in Los Angeles... California adopted stricter air quality standards than the federal government's because air pollution in the state is worse than most other places in the world... According to the suit... filed two years ago in the U[S] District Court by Atlantic Richfield, Exxon, Chevron, Texaco, Mobil and Royal Dutch Petroleum's Shell Oil Products unit... the oil companies had agreed to co-operate in developing ways to meet the higher specifications set by the state. Unocal "surreptitiously engaged in a scheme designed to appropriate to itself invalid patent rights to gasoline fuels meeting those specifications," the suit claims. Unocal claims its gasoline was developed independently... While the cleaner-burning gasoline is currently sold only in California[, where about]... 37 million gallons of... [it] are sold every day... the market for cleaner fuel may expand if tougher standards are adopted in other parts...

Two companies that have had run-ins with Canadian stock exchange officials because of overly promotional comments now contend that an oil-exploration area they have in Canterbury could hold a Californian-style oil dream. Trans-Orient Petroleum and Indo-Pacific Energy suggest the geology of the Canterbury Basin bears an uncanny resemblance to Southern California, which is one of the world's great oil regions... To add weight to the contention that Canterbury is a great oil prospect, Indo-Pacific notes that the Canterbury Basin also had a similar geological evolution to the Taranaki Basin, which is N[Z]'s only oil and gas-production area[(between 1886 and '1972, Taranaki's wells produced nearly 30 million litres')]. Indo-Pacific and Trans-Orient each have a 35[%] stake in a permit covering nearly all of the exploration prospects within the... 1.1 million hectares... [of the] onshore... area. The licence was awarded to them by the Ministry of Commerce earlier this month. A local unit of the companies, Trans N[Z] Oil Company, holds 20[%], while Gondwana Energy has 10[%]. There is no record of Gondwana as a registered company.

...Ravenous oil explorers Trans-Orient... and Indo-Pacific... continue to eat up the N[Z] countryside, yesterday taking an 8800ha bite out of Taranaki. The companies have been granted a five-year permit to explore for oil onshore in the province, with half the permit renewable for a further five years... [S]andstone formations within the Mt Messenger area of their new tract offered the major exploration chance... Indo-Pacific

and Trans-Orient are managed in N[Z] by a former N[ZOG] exploration manager... The companies are controlled by Iremco, a private company mostly owned by a U[S] businessman... In another exploration area in Taranaki, Indo-Pacific is involved in a joint venture with... Challenge.

...[Challenge] Energy is the company that... Challenge's... Group CEO... suggested "the stars all came into alignment for" in its latest financial year. The company's net earnings rose fourfold to \$308 million, cashflow from operations doubled... and oil production increased a fifth to 50 million barrels... [T]he company has boosted earnings in recent times mainly by extracting more value out of existing prospects – rather than finding new oil and gas sites. In particular... production from Maui rose [2/3]rds last year, mainly because of new technology. About \$200 m... was spent developing a floating platform... able to move around the vast field. Since commissioning the platform, [Challenge] has been able to increase proven reserves at Maui by 15 million barrels of oil... This... was a main factor in... [Challenge] replacing its production with new reserves by a factor of one-and-a-half last year. This is a high proportion of replacement... So far, the company has budgeted to spend at least \$70 m... this year to drill and electronically test its prospects to confirm the amount of oil in the ground. Most of that will be spent in [NZ] but it will allocate \$15 m... to test its Perdana oil prospect in Brunei in association with the Bruneian Government and its [US] partner in the prospect, UNOCAL. [Challenge] already plans to develop the Maharaja Lela oil fields in Brunei. Production is due to begin from early 1999... Challenge Energy has[also] launched an assault on the W[A]n energy industry with a \$50 m... investment in a planned power generation plant near Perth... The... 120-megawatt cogeneration plant... is part of a \$800 m... expansion of the Worsley alumina refinery... [Meanwhile,] sibling rivalry has surfaced... [amongst the corporate quads that their Group CEO] gave birth to... The four chief executives of... Energy, Forest, Paper and Building Products were given scope to express their corporate ego in the 1997 collected annual report folder... Three played the game with identically sized missives. But [the chief executive of]... Paper turned out to be the cuckoo in the nest with a brochure 24[%] taller than his colleagues. The corporate affairs department had to design an over-sized folder for the reports and shareholders will get a bigger envelope through the letter box. But then [he] did outdo his colleagues in other respects. Paper racked up a \$385 m... loss... [compared to 'Building's profit of \$146m, Forest's profit of \$101m' and Energy's profit.] Energy's share price rose 20 cents to a record \$6.25 yesterday... following encouraging results from development wells at... Mangaheva...

Some of the mystery surrounding [Challenge] Energy's Mangaheva gas and oil discovery will be unravelled next year when the company undertakes a full appraisal programme of the prospect. [Challenge] will drill at least two more wells to give it a feel for the size of the strike. Encouraging results from the only well tested so far... are a significant reason for a sharp rise in [Challenge] Energy's share price in recent months... The initial Mangaheva test well has flowed a maximum of 17.9 million cubic feet of gas a day, along with 236 barrels of associated oil. The well[, which has an estimated total of]... 223 million barrels of associated oil... flowed at high pressure rates, which is a major reason for the market's excitement... [Challenge] has already announced plans to pipe gas from the field to Taranaki production facilities of the synthetic-fuels producer Methanex.

...Methanex N[Z]'s methanol plant at Waitara was been saved from closure... Waitara uses gas from [Challenge's] Maui and Kapuni fields but the supply contracts expire from next year... [Yesterday] Challenge... agreed it would supply gas to Waitara and Methanex's nearby synthetic petrol plant at Motunui until well into the next century. The agreement staves off the real threat that the Waitara facility would be closed from the end of this year... Under the new agreement, [Challenge] guarantees to supply gas from a combination of [the existing 2] fields and a recently tapped source... Mangaheva has proved to be the lifeline for the Waitara plant. Mangaheva is known to be a large gas field, but the fuel is trapped in impervious rock and sands. [Challenge] has been trying to free the gas by pumping fluid and small beads of sand into the structure at high pressure. The new approach... is proving... successful... Methanex is a major export earner, with fuel sales in its latest financial year earning more than \$400 m... [In related news,] Natural Gas Corporation has sold 25 petajoules of Maui gas to... Methanex. No price for the deal... was disclosed.

...Companies that are significant buyers of gas are being advised not to sign long-term supply contracts until new providers of the fuel enter the market from early next year. Shell and Todd Petroleum Mining will soon be selling substantial amounts of gas, following the settlement yesterday of what has been a tortuous battle over ownership of gas at... Kapuni... in Taranaki[, which was NZ's]... first natural gas field. It was discovered by the Government in the 1960s and eventually sold to... [Challenge] and... Natural Gas Corporation... In 1967 Shell and Todd signed a contract with the Government to help develop the field. The High Court ruled this year that the contract, which restricted Shell and Todd selling their share of the field's gas independently, was illegal under section 27 of the Commerce Act... [Challenge] and NGC... have agreed not to pursue an appeal on [the] High Court judgment that... the remaining reserves at Kapuni... [be] divided... equally between Shell/Todd and... [Challenge]/NGC. The... field still has enough gas to supply a third of the nation's needs for perhaps 10 more years... an estimated 300 million gigajoules... The final agreement means Shell and Todd will soon compete with [Challenge] and NGC in the natural gas market. Their entry... is expected to have a significant impact on prices. Initially the main beneficiaries will be bulk industrial users like [CHH] and the NZ Sugar Company, which use large amounts of gas for heating and drying their products. Power companies like Mercury Energy, which use gas to fire electricity plants, are also expected to negotiate lower prices, as are residential suppliers... Shell's petroleum mining manager, described the out of court settlement as "a big relief." ...The first task for Shell and Todd will be to come to an arrangement with NGC to get their gas to the market. NGC owns a processing plant at the Kapuni field and also owns the network of pipelines that make up the national gas grid. NGC, which is one-third owned by [Challenge], cannot stop Shell and Todd using the network because that would be anti-competitive behaviour. But there could be disagreements over pricing methods.

...An attempt by the Commerce Commission to force [Challenge] Energy to sell its controlling \$30 million stake in the Kupe gas field has parties involved in the deal baffled. The commission contends [Challenge's] purchase of a 37[%] stake in the undeveloped Kupe field earlier this year contravened the Commerce Act, because it will result in [Challenge] further dominating the gas industry... Challenge... has ownership control of 90[%] of producing gas fields. This includes a 69[%] share of the Maui field, which accounts for more than 80[%] of the 210 petajoules of gas currently produced in [NZ each year and] also owns all of the McKee oil and gas field... [with a] production of 8 petajoules a year... and 97[%] of the smaller Tariki, Ahura and Waihapa fields... The commission has... lodged High Court action... Court documents also assert [Challenge] and the Electricity Corporation have further contravened the act by signing contracts that will lessen competition in the gas industry. The commission action relates to [Challenge's] purchase in March of a 63[%] stake in the Kupe field from overseas oil companies, and subsequent on-sale of 26[%] to the corporation. The commission alleges the arrangement included a gas supply contract and agreement on aspects of how and when the field will be developed. The field, which is estimated to hold gas equivalent to 20 million barrels of oil, cannot be integrated into [Challenge's] operations pending the court case... The court action, if it proceeds, is expected to take the best part of a year to get before a judge...

[Oil companies must be breaking out the bubbly this summer. Not only are energy consumers gobbling up more oil and gas than ever, but several promising oil and gas prospects popped up around NZ during the year. Houston-based Swift Energy struck black gold in south Taranaki last month when it discovered oil and gas at the wildcat Rimu-A1 prospect. US-owned Westech and Christchurch-based Orion continued testing on the East Coast during the year, following a gas discovery 10km northeast of Wairoa. The site has the potential to prop up NZ's fast-depleting gas reserves, as does Maari, a Taranaki oil and gas prospect developed by Cultus, Todd Energy and Shell. Challenge Energy had a disappointing result from an exploration well south of the offshore Maui gas field early in the year, with no significant reserves found. However, the company has big expectations of its Pohokura gas prospect, which will be drilled next month off Taranaki. Surprisingly few exploration wells have been drilled in NZ – only 300 since the first in 1865. Few dispute NZ's petroleum potential, but high exploration costs and difficult weather in the promising Great South Basin off the South Island have counted against development in the past.]

... 'Enerco says its Tuhara 1 exploratory well off Wairoa, which reached a depth of 2218m, has been abandoned as a dry well. Enerco and its joint venture partner, Westech, have moved the rig and begun drilling at Kauhauroa 2.' By the way, NZ] Petroleum... which fizzled as an oil explorer... is to diversify into the forestry business... Company executives yesterday said that it plans to spend up to \$8.3 million on 8693ha of natural forest estates near Wanganui and Wairoa. The forests comprise mainly beech, rimu and matai. The company has Ministry of Forestry and D[OC] approval to harvest up to 18,000 cubic metres of timber a year from the forests. The harvesting is expected to generate \$3 million a year turn-over for NZ Petroleum and the forestry operations are forecast to be profitable immediately... The purchase requires shareholder approval. It will also mean the private owners of the forests will take around a one-third stake in NZ Petroleum. The forestry operations will be managed by... a... former... director of the Forestry Corporation.

...Forestry is the division of the... Challenge group that has the most potential to add value to its earnings over the next few years... [Challenge] Forests owns or manages 285,000 hectares of forest estate. That makes it second only to ['CHH's 333,000ha'] in terms of trees under its control. Nearly 60[% of Challenge's] estate is held through an international consortium that bought the Forestry Corporation assets[, which]... included four processing plants, and [Challenge] is examining the future for those, as well as six of its own processing facilities... One of the main issues for [Challenge] will be to exploit the potential market for high-value radiata pine products... That will involve convincing overseas customers pine can be as structurally strong and as pleasing to the eye as expensive hardwood timbers. It is a big task. While that process is being worked through, [Challenge] Forests will continue to be heavily reliant on export log markets... [A]bout a third of the company's revenues... come from log exports... That means short-term investors in [Challenge] Forests need to closely assess the outlook for international log prices. In the past couple of years log prices... have been at cyclical lows.

...The forestry industry will soon face a wall of wood, and forest owners are concerned this will cause prices to slump... 24 million cubic metres of extra wood... will be harvested during the next five years. Finding a market for that 30[%] increase in production is what worries growers... [NZ] remains perhaps the best place in the world for sustainable tree growing, especially of softwood varieties such as radiata pine. But this is expected to be of only limited benefit unless markets for the product are developed. "There is no customer in the world that needs radiata pine," said the... Challenge Forests chief executive... The... president of the Forest Owners Association... noted the competitive gap between the[NZ] forestry industry and its counterparts overseas, especially in the processing of products. "The international market grows more competitive by the day, and if we want to remain a serious player we... [have] to make some fairly radical decisions – the sooner the better," he said... At their annual meeting in Auckland this week, members of the [association] agreed they needed to become more sophisticated... The... association represents around 80[%] of all owners in [NZ]. It works closely with the Forest Industries Council... The council can use its collective might to lobby for trade, research and political moves that will benefit growers[– who include people who have bought shares in forests as a retirement investment...]

'The year "Pinetree" retired (1971) a tree was planted. Back then it was a 3 cent seedling. Now it's a towering tree worth about \$146. That's real growth. Regardless of what's happening in the world, your trees keep growing. That's what makes forestry different from most other investments.'

...The government is not going to be able to support N[Z]'s increasingly aged population. It's up to each of us to invest to support ourselves and our families... The problem for most people is how to invest, and what to invest in. One investment option that does make sense is forestry... As the world supply of timber runs out, demand for timber is increasing... World wood consumption is forecast to increase from 3.4 to 5.1 billion cubic metres by 2010. That is over 170 times N[Z]'s forecast harvest in 2010... The future crisis in world timber markets is expected to push timber prices higher[, which]... will mean higher returns to forest owners... You can easily afford to own a forest for as little as \$35 per week... From an investment today of \$3,250, paid in easy interest free instalments, plus a \$50 annual administration fee, you could be looking at a return of \$97,582 if historic trends continue... *Want to know more?* For a free Greenplan Investor Kit, including the latest prospectus for the Cattlestop Forest Partnership No. 35... Call 0800 800 154... Greenplan is an established leader in forestry investments, with over 30 forests already growing for thousands of investors.

...[Small wood lots are likely to supply most new forestry plantings in the foreseeable future, says a forestry consultant. While forest land is generally replanted after the trees have been harvested, few major new developments are taking place, the former Challenge Forests Ltd manager of forest resources says. The big forestry companies have reached a level of investment they are happy with. However, farmers – particularly with areas that are difficult to farm – see forestry as an alternative. This is where the major growth in new plantings is happening and these smaller growers will become increasingly important in providing wood flows. NZ harvests about 18 million cubic metres of wood a year, but in five years that will increase to some 30 million cubic metres. "That's a pretty dramatic increase and a lot of it will occur in rural areas such as Northland. Handling it will certainly put pressure on the industry. Some of the skilled harvesting operators and the specialist equipment needed, especially for use in steep country, will be in short supply. It will also put pressure on regional infrastructures such as roading and port facilities." □] Northland firefighters were last night battling a large forest fire north of Kaitia which they feared might destroy more than \$70 million worth of timber trees.

...A Far North timber mill has been dealt a double blow with a fierce fire adding to its financial woes... [T]he 24-hour blaze consumed nearly 200ha of semi-mature pine in the Aupouri Forest... About 200 people spent the night fighting the fire, which was being fanned by strong winds... Rain helped the dampening-down effects... The... Japanese company with cutting rights to the 26,000ha forest, expects the damage to run to several million dollars. Its Kaitia-based triboard mill only recently resumed production following an eight-week strike, and company officials were still evaluating the industrial action's full financial impact. The company said the fire was a further blow and, although the forest was insured, it was too early to say whether full costs would be covered... Police and fire safety officers are investigating the fire.

...Police are searching for four teenagers believed to be responsible for the... fire that destroyed... 260ha... of semi-mature pine last week. The fire... started after a... deliberately torched... abandoned car... ignited scrub... Juken Nissho, the Japanese company that owns the commercial forest block... estimated... the damage and costs of fighting the fire... to be in excess of \$8 m... Forestry staff were still... dampening down... hotspots.

...Challenge plans to make redundant a third of the workers at its Waipa timber mill near Rotorua – only a couple of weeks after failing to negotiate a new employment contract with them. [Challenge] contends rising losses have forced it to take the sudden action. The Waipa mill lost more than \$8 million in its latest financial year and has lost \$25 million over the past three years... The mill is one of the assets bought from the... Forestry Corporation last year. [Challenge] has a 37.5[%] share of the assets, with a Chinese Government subsidiary owning 37.5[%] and BIL] the remaining 25[%]. At the time of the sale there was much speculation [Challenge] would close the mill, which was established in the 40s... It produces more than 200,000cu m a year, but that will drop by 40,000cu m... [Challenge] is to concentrate on just one shift at the mill, compared with the current two. The change will allow the mill to concentrate on certain products... Most of the output is framing timber for the domestic market and low-grade building material for South Korea. The Korean product will no longer be made... [■ Last month, Challenge] Canada said it would take an after-tax charge of \$16 million in ...t[hi]s... fiscal quarter... to cover costs of... plans to eliminate... about 40% of its salaried workforce...

...Challenge Paper will save nearly \$30 million a year by cutting workers from its Canadian operations... part of a major guillotining of expenses within... [the] division, which is struggling to combat weaker international pulp prices... So far, nearly two-thirds of 300 staff redundancies... have been finalised and the remaining jobs will disappear in the current financial year. The cuts come at an awkward time for [Challenge] because its Canadian workers are currently on strike over wages and working conditions... [Challenge is also] trying to get out of... [its money-losing] fine-papers operations in Britain... so it can concentrate on newsprint and publications paper manufacturing... The company recently bought the 50[%

of AUS]n Newsprint Mills it did not already own and was expected to use that company to capture Pacific Rim markets. [Challenge] Paper has also taken a 20[%] share in Malaysian Newsprint Industries and a 250,000 tonne-a-year newsprint machine being built by that company will be commissioned this year. [Incidentally, 'staff at Norske Skog pulp mill in Kawerau will be paid \$10,000 each for the stress of transferring their employment to CHH. CHH bought the pulp mill from the Norwegian-based company for \$311 million and it will officially change hands on Monday (the buyout makes CHH the only supplier of kraft pulp in NZ and the owner of two of the cheapest six pulp-producing mills in the world). After mediation both companies agreed to share the cost of the \$1.3 million "transfer fee" for stress to the 135 pulp mill staff. But about 150 staff have missed out on the deal after agreeing to new employment contracts.'

... 'Kinleith mill workers are stunned at what they see as management "treachery" after their union confirmed CHH has given two months' notice of its withdrawal from the mill's existing heads of agreement over a cooperative reduction of the mill's workforce, and plans to introduce individual contracts and change employees' wages to salaries. Workers agreed almost unanimously at a meeting in Tokoroa to boycott company meetings to explain the management position. Missing from the vote in Tokoroa were three workers who politely handed out leaflets to shareholders at CHH's annual meeting at the Ellerslie Convention Centre in Auckland. Inside the centre, the irony went unappreciated as shareholders walked past a display trumpeting the company's commitment to employee relations "based on involvement and two-way communication." Many mill workers regarded the restructuring as a union-busting plot inspired by CHH's American parent, International Paper.'

...International Paper's chairman... [said yesterday that annual] earnings had been hurt by a "free fall" in prices for all grades of paper. Prices for uncoated free-sheet, used in photocopy machines, fell by almost 50%. Slower global demand for paper also hurt earnings.

...Chilean forestry exports fell 1.3[%] in the first five months of 1997 from a year ago because of slumping wood pulp prices. Chile's largest forestry exporter... this year [i]s... Copec, with \$US154.3 m... or 20[%] of total exports. Copec is... a joint venture between [CHH and a local family]...

A Chilean arbitrator presiding over a case between one of Chile's richest families and N[Z] timber products company... CHH... sees no possibility of reconciliation in the dispute over the control of the Copec conglomerate... "Both positions are absolutely at loggerheads. Each of them wants to buy the other's stake, and on this they won't budge," [the arbitrator] was quoted as saying. CHH joined the[Chilean] family in 1986, buying half of investment company Los Andes, which owns 60[%] of Copec's stock. Under their agreement, the Chileans would run the company on their own until 2007. However, a few years later control of CHH was taken over by U[S] giant International Paper Co, which sought to have a bigger say in how Copec was run... Chile has no specific legislation on joint ventures...

[CHH] yesterday reported a 45[%] drop in net earnings to \$251 million in the year ended March 31. The result was [CHH's] lowest profit in four years and was down on its record earnings of \$453 million last year. The decline mainly reflected falls in the global prices for most of the products traded by [CHH]... Overall sales by value fell 4[%] to \$3.08 billion... But... [CHH] booked around \$32 million in dividends and around a \$69 million share of profits from Copec in the latest fiscal year.

...[CHH] plans further cost cuts and productivity increases to help offset the continued bite of depressed forest-product prices... The savings... would be in addition to a previously announced plan to generate savings of \$50 million in the current financial year... [CHH] reported first quarter earnings before interest and tax slipped 2[%] to \$60 million... The drop in operating earnings came despite total sales rising 3[%] to \$751 million... One expense of concern to the company was electricity. The power bill for[its] Kinleith pulp and paper mill rose \$1.5 million in the... quarter... [T]he company was looking to a new cogeneration plant at Kinleith to generate savings. A \$313 million modernisation of the Kinleith plant was one of the main projects for... next year. It would increase production by 30[%] while cutting staff by around a third. Currently, around 40[%] of Kinleith's production is exported, but that will rise to 60[%] when the modernisation is complete... [CHH] generates around \$1.5 billion in annual sales overseas... [The company's] biggest investment is its \$1.5 billion stake in... Copec[which]... plans to invest \$170 million in new lumber mills and new board plants to reduce the company's exposure to volatile prices for its prime product... [Copec is] Chile's biggest pulp maker... [W]orld prices for pulp... have... plunged 40[%] in the past two years to about \$544 per tonne... [and that] may force a further delay in a \$1 billion pulp plant planned near the southern Chilean city of Valdivia... Environmental concerns have[already] delayed plans to have the plant built by 2000. CelArauco, which is owned by... Copec SA, hopes to widen the company's revenue base by expanding existing operations in Argentina... The... Argentine pulp plant will undergo a \$40 million upgrade to boost production to 275,000 tonnes annually, from 235,000 tonnes now... \$80 million [will also be invested] in a plant in Argentina that would make medium-density fibreboard for the construction industry.

...A fall in prices for forestry... is forcing [CHH] to screw down costs to combat a 60[%] slide in operating earnings for its financial first half. Net profit fell to \$102 million from \$118 million.

...[CHH's] Chilean investment... lifted nine month net profit by 11.5[%] to 91.21 billion pesos (\$NZ351.5 million)... [Incidentally,] Swedish forestry company Stora Kopparbergs Bergslags and Brazil's Oderbrecht plan to invest \$US1.5 billion... in a pulp joint venture... The pulp factory... will have an annual capacity of 750,000 tonnes of short-fibre pulp... which is... used to make paper for books and magazines... Nordic forestry companies are increasingly looking at emerging markets to expand their operations after suffering from a collapse in pulp prices last year. Last... year, pulp prices halved to \$US500 per tonne from \$1000 in 1995. So far this year, prices have recovered to just below \$600 a tonne... [T]he head of information at Stora... said... "We have to be active in the emerging markets to be competitive."

...A biologist from the Wildlife Conservation Society has revealed that logging of the tropical forests in Gabon has triggered savage territorial wars among the native chimpanzee population... [T]he running battles have left four out of five chimps dead in some areas. Logging has been tightly controlled in an effort to minimise the effect on wildlife. No more than 10[%] of trees in any given tract are allow[ed] to be harvested. Still, the presence of humans and their extremely loud logging equipment is frightening troupes of monkeys into the territory of others. [The biologist] estimates that the number of chimps in the central African country has dropped from 50,000 to 30,000 since the logging began.

...A tiny load of timber that landed on an Auckland wharf this week is the first modest blow in a battle by the village people of the Solomon Islands to harvest and manage their forests themselves. The 20 cu m of timber is a drop in the ocean compared with the colossal 800,000 to 900,000 cu m that logging companies ship out of the Solomons each year to be made into chopsticks... furniture... decking... and plywood[(much of which is destined to be 'used by the Japanese construction industry for concrete moulds, after which it is burnt or thrown away; the Japanese Government has considered legislating against this wasteful practice, but the construction industry is complaining')]. The contrast between what happens at... the nine... communities on different islands... producing what is called eco-timber, and in the majority of forests where logging companies have negotiated rights, is profound. Five people with chainsaws can produce at most one cubic metre of planks in a day compared with the truckloads of whole logs that pile up at what is known as the "log pond" to await transport on company boats. But unlike industrial production, the forest remains virtually intact: no bulldozers have cleared roads, no siltation of rivers occurs, the soil loses no fertility. And the profits to the communities are greater than the royalties paid by the multinationals. Some estimates put them at 40 times greater, although comparing a one-off royalty payment with a smaller, sustainable sum is tricky... The shipment has been imported by... Kumeu timber merchants... It will be identified as eco-timber by a specific logo, developed by the N[Z] Imported Tropical Timber Group, which will be stamped on each plank... On it will be stated the country the wood came from and whether it was from forest or plantation trees... At present most of the 7000-odd cu m of tropical hardwood imported into N[Z] comes from Indonesia, some of it from commercial plantations and some from tropical forests.

...A battle is brewing for control of Auckland's \$22 million forestry assets. The tug-of-war involves the Auckland Regional Council – which has nominal ownership of 2200ha of plantation forests in the Hunua Ranges – and the Auckland Regional Services Trust. The trust manages the forests through a subsidiary, Regional Forests Ltd, and has been waiting for the Government to complete a promised transfer of valuable cutting rights from the council[... which]... has called for the transfer to be set aside. It wants the Government to leave control of the forests with the [ARC], saying it is necessary to safeguard environmental and recreational values in the Hunua... [The ARC] chairman... was concerned the trust would sell cutting rights to private interests... His views ran into opposition from the trust's chief executive... He noted that the trees were within five years of harvest and could not be left to rot... And he suggested that the trust was better suited to manage an asset that would return money to the region.

...A fight to block the sale of trees worth millions of dollars was signalled last night after Auckland's wealthiest local authority finally secured control of pine forests in the Hunua Ranges... Within hours of the Minister of Local Government... confirming that the forest would go to the... [ARST] its chief executive... flagged a sale of cutting rights in the next two to three months... "Selling the cutting rights now will ensure the people of the region get the maximum benefit from this asset." But the plan came under attack from the... [ARC] chairman... His council has eyed the forests as a source of cash to fund park purchases... Established in 1961 by the Auckland City Council, the forest was transferred to the Auckland Regional Authority in 1967. Land under the forests will remain regional park, with trees replanted for a second rotation.

...The [ARC] still has its sights on the Hunua forests as a means of generating income for parkland purchases. The council chairman... said he was still not ruling out legal action over the issue... [Meanwhile,] Challenge Forests and Taupo Maori are heading back to the Environment Court over a dispute about the legality of felling operations in the Waimihia forest, south-east of Taupo. The regional council, Environment Waikato, has ordered [Challenge] Forests to stop logging trees in some compartments of the 18,000ha forest, following a complaint from the Ngati Tutetawha hapu that the company did not have resource consents for the work. The company, which stopped logging in the disputed areas before the abatement notice was issued last week, has lodged an appeal... and says it has not breached the Resource Management Act... The resource group manager for Environment Waikato... said he hoped the issue could be resolved after talks over the hapu's concerns about possible damage to wahi tapu (sacred sites)...

['Trees played an important part in Maori customs associated with birth and death. Some northern tribes planted a tree in a ceremony akin to baptism, to mark the birth of a child. The growth of the tree was an omen as the child's future. The use of trees for containing the bones of the dead was not unusual. At times bodies would be placed on a platform in the branches of a large tree. More common was the exhumation of bodies after the process of decay had concluded and the removal of the bones to a large and hollow sacred tree. Take Takerau, a giant piriri near the town of Opotiki, concealed the bones of 200 people in its hollow trunk. It was by way of a tree that the soul of a dead Maori was said to depart the land of the living and begin its long journey back to the ancestral home of Hawaiki. At the very tip of the North Island was Te Reinga, the underworld, and here for centuries a huge pohutukawa perched above the cliffs, its branches hanging above the waves and seaweed which covered the entrance to the underworld. Although weatherbeaten pohutukawa are to be seen today on the cliffsides of Cape Reinga, as it is now known, the venerable old tree of the spirits died late last century. The use of simple medicines was highly developed by the Maori, and trees provided the source of many very effective herbal remedies. The sap of the matai provided one form of antiseptic'...

'Thieves have ripped an ancient matai tree from DoC land where it stood untouched for nearly 700 years. The 20m tree was hacked down with a chainsaw and carted away in a large truck from the Pureora Forest Park in the central North Island. Descendants of the land's original Maori occupants, the Poakani people, are angry about the theft. A spokesman said: "We are shocked by the sheer audacity of the attack. All of the trees here are treasures to us, a reminder of the ways things used to be." The Pureora Field Centre manager said native trees had been stolen before from the 68,000ha park. Tree thieves had been responsible for a recent spate of ponga being stolen for fencing, and they often mutilated trunks to get burl – a large tree's "warts" – for sale to craftspeople. "These are people who used to log for a living until it became illegal. Now they are just carrying on with that illegally." But this was the first time a living tree of this size had been taken. "And now it will be milled into saleable timber, or at worst, chopped into firewood." The 1m-diameter trunk would be worth several thousand dollars on the black market. The area has been renowned as a cornerstone of NZ's environmental history since a barefoot ecologist led a dramatic treetop sit-in to stop the logging of 1000-year-old totara in 1978. The ecologist was "dumbfounded" yesterday. "This is just another setback, thanks to some idiots with no conscience." Last week, a man was jailed 'for stealing rimu from a State forest,' an act which left a trail of destruction...

'A legal anomaly has left the DOC powerless to stop a businessman logging huge rimu in a pristine native forest on conservation land near Wanganui. Last week, about 100 mature trees were felled, provoking accusations of environmental terrorism and a stand-off with local iwi, who prevented the logs leaving the district. The businessman bought the forest six months ago'. On a positive note, **the Government intends to stop clearfelling ancient rimu on the West Coast of the South Island, says the Minister of Conservation...** [However, the minister] could not say when the rimu logging would stop. Nor could he put to rest conservationists' concerns over the fate of West Coast beech trees in native forests eyed for the chop...

It is a joy to see a new generation of West Coast tree-sitters scoring a first victory over Timberlands West Coast Ltd. The past decade has seen too much slipping back from the... [time when] there was a decent consensus against any more logging of native forests, public or private... The Government will claim it a sufficient victory if it can move Timberlands or private owners from clear-felling to sustained yield... [However, f]or sustained management to work the amount of wood cut at any time – together with the losses from wind-throw – should not exceed the increment by growth and regeneration. No one has yet come up with the proper calculations for a "sustainable" cutting regime. Even then, there could be no survival of the magnificent forest profile we have known. The giant canopy trees would be soon gone, more of them lost with each logging... Replacement of the lost giants that were the glory of the forest would take an immense time – far longer than human planning or political memory could envisage or economic policy care about.

...[the] emeritus professor of zoology at Auckland University... made an impassioned plea on this page... for the cessation of any harvesting of indigenous trees, claiming that even sustainable use of these forests was not possible and an anathema to modern NZ. "When you cut down a 1000-year-old-tree," he said, "you must remember that it will take 1000 years to grow a[nother]." The difference between his example and practice in the forests of... Westland is that while it may well take 1000 years for a forest giant to grow (500 to 700 being the more normal and correct figure he later uses), these days there will be the 499 or 699-year-old tree growing nearby. [The professor]'s article provided a graphic example of the gap yet to be closed between attractive simplistic concepts of sustainability (preserving forests as static objects) and using resources sustainably. Sustainability is not about zero change, even nature doesn't believe that. The greatest error in [the professor]'s argument is his failure to understand the philosophical and conceptual changes of the past 10 years. Sustainable management of the rimu forests of... Westland today recognises the need to retain old trees. (They are most often defective so that compromise is easy.) The harvest is spread widely across the age classes and only a small proportion of the stems (one tree in four hectares each year) are removed at any age... Good information on growth rates, regeneration and tree death can be modelled and the forest structure protected over cycles of 500 years. The whole objective is to maintain the status quo of the period. If the forest changes naturally yields will be readjusted, which should be quite simple given the long periods of forest adjustment in relation to those of human and commercial activity... The dilemma then is whether communities such as Auckland have a moral right to demand that there be no sustainable production of native timbers in a manner that is almost unassailable in its low-impact land use when compared to the impact of resource consumption in cities. Do they have a moral right to prevent a sustainable activity occurring on less than 4[%] of the region's land area which can add an economic advantage to a region where 78[%] of the land is protected mountains or forests and 57[%] at

least of all available lowland is under protection? ...Fortunately some conservation groups and individual members of others are able to look... for constructive relationships as the sustainable way forward for ecosystems and the human communities who share them.

...Native Forest Action[(NFA)], the group protesting in a Buller forest against logging of native trees, has been served notice that Timberlands West Coast intends to sue. The state-owned company says it will suffer civil loss if it cannot log timber because of the protest action.

...West Coast rimu logging protesters said yesterday that Timberlands had carried out a spiteful act of retaliation against them by sawing down a prized old rimu containing the largest of the tree-sitters' platforms. Police detained five protesters on Wednesday as Timberlands recovered 600 tonnes of rimu logs from Charleston forest, south of Westport. The N[FA] group, which has been protesting in the forest for 10 weeks... said they were sickened by the Timberlands action.

...Police have described the planting of a bomb... as an action "bordering on terrorism." ...police... disarmed the explosive device, which had been attached to a Russian Mil-8 heavy-lifting helicopter contracted by logging company Timberlands to take rimu logs out of the Buller area... [T]he helicopter crew had found the bomb... during a pre-flight check... A spokeswoman... said the company was "completely shocked and appalled" at the incident... "It goes past protesting as we know it in N[Z]." The... bomb contained an explosive called Power Gel, which was commonly used in construction and farming... It is illegal to possess the explosive without a proper purpose... Police were... talking to people who had stocks of Power Gel... Anti-logging protesters... have been camped in forest... [nearby] since February, occupying trees and disrupting logging operations. A [NFA] spokeswoman... said the forest occupation was both peaceful and non-violent and had widespread public support... [T]he group was angry about the bomb and saw it as an "escalation of dirty tactics against the campaign." The incident was a mirror image of tactics used by logging interests overseas, she said... [A former] Tasmanian Green MP... said yesterday that there were "staggering similarities" between the West Coast incident and a campaign to discredit A[US]n environmentalists... the most infamous example of "dirty tricks" across the Tasman was the planting of a hoax bomb on a railway line at Black River in Tasmania, two days before the 1993 federal election. Police later cleared environmentalists of blame.

...Westport police yesterday arrested two people protesting against the logging of native trees by Timberlands... The arrests were for trespass in the Charleston forest and not linked to the discovery of explosives on a logging helicopter... But a [NFA] spokeswoman... claimed the timing of the arrests so close to the bomb scare was no coincidence. Timberlands was using "unfounded allegations as an excuse to get heavy-handed with our peaceful protest." The company announced it was ending the retrieval of rimu logs from the Buller forests from last night... [● The] Government is considering a deal offered by West Coast forestry interests to end clear-felling of native timber in return for a \$55 million settlement.

...The status of the 1986 West Coast native forests accord is again under legal scrutiny... A \$425 million damages claim against the Crown, and the livelihoods of many on the Coast will depend on how the Court of Appeal views the arguments. The accord aimed to produce a strategy for the West Coast state forests that would see destructive practices, such as clear felling of the native rimu, phased out. At the same time the aim was to protect the local forestry industry in the transition to a sustainable future based on exotic plantations, with reserves protecting the native forests. Reading the document today it is not hard to see why it came to mean different things to different people... It begins inauspiciously. The first page... reads: "...the strategy also provides for the allocation of sufficient indigenous production forest areas to make possible the maintenance... of the sawmilling industry on the West Coast at its current allowable level of cut until exotic species become available... in adequate quantity planned to be 2006 in Buller and between 1990 and 1995 in North Westland..." The sentence is critical. It is the basis for... Timberlands continuing to log the rimu forest at Charleston... [NFA] says it is not necessary for Timberlands to continue harvesting rimu until 2006 when sufficient radiata pine is now available – a claim Timberlands disputes. Sawmillers in Buller have been shut down after Timberlands, in 1994, put the cutting rights for the rimu up for tender for the next five years and a Hokitika company won the milling rights. Locals believe the accord guaranteed that timber cut in Buller would be milled in Buller. The High Court, however, did not see it that way... Having already spent \$1 million on the case, the... Buller... local bodies and industry groups feared they could not afford an appeal. Their last-minute bid for an out-of-court settlement[of \$55 million] before this week's hearing was not accepted by the Crown.

...A... verdict in the next few days may decide whether Transit N[Z] is spending \$22 million on a bridge to nowhere. The plan to build a 400m viaduct to provide secure access to the West Coast... shows at least that someone other than Coasters themselves have faith in the region... Undoubtedly the Otira viaduct will contribute to tourism on the West Coast, but whether there are many people left there to offer the region's typically warm hospitality may be in the hands of the Court of Appeal. Representatives of West Coast ratepayers and the timber industry have asked the court to get the Government to face up to what they say is its obligations under the 1986 forest accord [or pay their damages claim]... The resolve of the Coasters through more than a century of... earthquakes, floods, industry closures and notorious weather... has never been doubted, and is reinforced by the willingness of their 18,000 ratepayers to shoulder a \$2.5 million legal bill in defence of a substantial part of their economy... The accord locked up most of the huge native forest resources of the West Coast... as world heritage parks... [It] allowed just 4[%] to be "sustainably harvested"... Since 1992, however, the Government has been giving way to environmental pressure to halt all milling of the ancient native beech (podocarp) forests, and less and less timber has been made available... "The Government never had any intention of honouring the accord," the chairman of the Westland Regional Council... said yesterday. "The result has been that logging and sawmill jobs have fallen from 730 to 460... We have borne the cost of being the conscience of N[Z] in environmental matters." ...There had been continuous and strenuous attempts over the past 10 years to negotiate "to preserve our rights under the accord" but these had met with blank refusal by the Government... Added to that has been Government action which has locked up 87[%] of the land under D[OC] control. That means the cost of West Coast infrastructure is spread over a very small area of rateable land, leading to some of the highest rural rates in the nation – eight times as much as in Northland, for instance.

...A West Coast local body[and] timber industry group has lost its battle with the Crown over interpretation of the 1986 West Coast Forests Accord. The Court of Appeal... said that while the accord was a contract, its terms were not as extensive as claimed by the resource interests. The group wanted the equivalent of 166,000 cu m a year of podocarp available... The West Coast community would, however, recognise political realities... [An NFA spokesperson] said: "The... way is now clear... to cease all logging of the threatened rainforest areas."

...[a] regional field officer for the R[FBPS] said some of the forests... on the West Coast were exceptional wildlife habitats. The Okarito forest was close to the Westland National Park which housed a unique white heron colony. The removal of native trees destroyed dozens of species of perching plants and decimated food and nesting for larger birds. "The tiny production of timber from the area does not even begin to match its ecological, scientific, scenic and tourism values." [However, the] chief executive of the Maruia Society... one of the signatories to the West Coast Accord... said the general desire for some native lumber for furniture or feature panels meant selective logging of a small area was acceptable... [In another development, the] Timberlands... managing director... [says he] expects his... company to be sold by the Government. "That is a natural progression for all state-owned enterprises,"... But before any sale can be contemplated, it appears the company's financial position will have to strengthen... The Government yesterday denied it planned to sell Timberlands...

A plan to be presented to the Government by the end of this year will seek approval to fell an average of one beech tree for every hectare of... 98,000ha of forests... Timberlands[which]... was established as a state-owned enterprise in 1990 to manage... forests owned by the Government on the West Coast... estimates 2500 jobs could be created from processing native beech if officials allow the trees to be harvested... Timberlands contends that the beech logging will be sustainable... "Without the native logging Timberlands isn't sustainable in the short term,"... said... Timberland[']s... manager of planning[while its]... chief executive... pointed out that two-thirds of the native forest areas to be selectively logged

were decimated by clear-felling earlier this century... “The taxpayer... [could] reap a really good reward from these forests,”... Timberlands pays the Government a royalty of just \$5 a cubic metre on the native trees it logs... [The NFA] claims a private forest owner would have to pay... market prices... of around \$230 a cubic metre... for a similar right. The protesters suggest Timberlands is therefore being hugely subsidised... The company’s profit projections... for its financial year to the end of March 1998... is based on a net profit before interest and tax of \$3.9 million... after allowing for... around 40[%] of revenue... from rimu sales of \$8.7 million and beech sales of \$2.5 million... Timberlands estimates that... [by] processing the native timbers... nearly \$600 million is generated throughout the country annually in areas like furniture manufacturing...

Bay of Plenty furniture makers appear to have lost tens of thousands of dollars in a timber supply scam... [A] New Plymouth man... has been offering cheap native timber to firms and asking for half payment in advance... [T]he wood never arrived and requests for refunds went unheeded... [In related news, t]he export of unsustainably harvested native timber and woodchips has been banned... The Forests Act w[il]l... be amended to implement the plan, which would end exports... by December 31, 1999. The ban... affect[s] Maori-owned forests in Otago and Southland and state-owned forests on the West Coast... The Minister of Forestry... said these forests were exempted from export controls introduced in 1993...

The Forest Amendment Act of 1993 prevents felling and milling of any Kauri tree after July 1, 1996, without a government approved sustainable management plan. The stock piles of native timber built up before the deadline are rapidly disappearing causing manufacturers of “new kauri” furniture and boatbuilders to switch to re-cycled kauri. This is causing shortages and price escalation in a very limited market. The Chairman is in the fortunate position of having 40 tonnes of prime heart recycled kauri from giants felled 100 years ago. The striking grain, colour and depth of this timber is magnificent compared to the soft, pale nature of newly felled young trees and imported kauri... Their designs recreate... furniture which features elegant beauty, comfort and strength... Due to their bulk purchase of the right materials, original production techniques and low overheads, The Chairman offers very attractive prices: 7-piece colonial suites for under \$2000... [or] \$2500 plus upholstery... approximately half the equivalent retail price... Kauri coffee and hall tables are... \$195 to \$495... This will be the last production run at those prices due to the scarcity of “primo” kauri... Now is your chance to invest in these magnificent quality heirloom pieces... before they become an expensive luxury. - 1997

Kauri (*Agathis australis*) is regarded worldwide as a truly noble tree and the name will forever be linked with the early days of European settlement in northern N[Z]. The kauri timber, kauri gum and associated ship building industries, provided work for numerous pioneer families and were the economic backbone of Northland and Auckland. When Europeans first arrived in N[Z], the northern parts of the North Island were covered in vast stands of kauri forest. Kauri did not grow south of a line joining Tauranga and Kawhai, but north of this was 1,200 000 hectares of kauri forest. Today only 4 000 hectares (0.3%) of this original forest remains. The vast bulk of it was felled by the kauri timber industry or burned to [‘access gum deposits’ or] clear land for farming. - KAURI TIMBER DAYS

It is difficult to accurately estimate the age of... the largest living Kauri tree in N[Z] and ‘the largest rainforest tree in the world’ (J... Total height: 51.5m... Trunk height: 17.7m... Trunk girth: 13.8m... Volume 244.5[cu m] but)... it may be that Tane Mahuta... [– which means] God of the Forest... [–] sprang from seed... during the lifetime of Christ.

For some extraordinary reason, which no one has been able to establish, [James]COOK and the men on his first voyage in 1769 made no detailed observations on the kauri, even though it dominated the forests of the north. The first written records come from Marion DU FRESNE in 1772, when his men felled a kauri at Manawaraora Bay and shaped it into a ship’s foremast... KAURI is, on maturity, one of the largest trees found anywhere in the world, and one of the most commercially attractive, with a long straight, branchless trunk producing durable straight-grained timber, and a resin once greatly prized for the manufacture of high quality paints, varnishes and polishes. As a result, it was the basis of the first export trade from NZ (cargo of spars to China 1798) and was cut and milled with a voracity hard to believe considering the technology of 19th-century NZ. The largest ever recorded kauri when measured in 1850 had a girth of 23.43 m... soared 21.8 m to the first branch... and [had a ‘volume of 736.1 cu. m. “Kairaru”’ is believed to have been ‘destroyed during 1890 in a fire started by gumdiggers’]. A tree still growing has a girth of 20.12 m and the first branch is 30.8 m from the ground. One that has a 17.2 m girth is estimated to be just 2000 years old... Although it attains such great age and grows so large, it actually regenerates easily and grows quite quickly through the seedling and... juvenile conifer, or ‘rickier’ stage... Seedlings grow tall and slender as they probe for an opening in the canopy of scrub... At about 100 years of age, the tree’s upper branches start to form the huge ‘spray’ of foliage on the crown of the tree, with all the lower branches of the tree having been shed by an efficient self-pruning system. From then on... the tree will grow tall and stout, possibly alone... or perhaps in cathedral-like groves. As the tree grows, it sheds its bark in large flakes and these form a mound up to two m deep at its base which is ideal humus and through which the tree’s feeding roots twist and turn. The tree will grow, if tended, almost anywhere in NZ and there has been no adequate explanation of why it was confined for so long to the northern region of the country... Land left after the cutting or burning of kauri is for a long time useless for agriculture because of a souring of the soil. But during the long life of a kauri, large amounts of resin are exuded and collect among the debris on the forest floor... Pre-European Maoris used the gum as fuel (often carrying it along as torches)... The value of the gum was established in the 1830s, with Maoris selling to American ships, and from then on, for a century, it was a substantial export commodity... The largest amount exported in any one year was 11116 tons... in 1899.

The value of NZ’s kauri forests was recognised from the earliest days of European contact. In 1770, James Cook assessed that NZ could supply “such masts as no country in Europe can provide”. Two years later, the French navigator Marion du Fresne was cutting trees for spars in the Bay of Islands when he and his party were attacked and killed by Maoris.

MAORI and conservationists are angry at the extraction of hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of ancient kauri logs from underneath four Northland farms caught up in a land claim. The Government bought the farms near Aranga, north of Dargaville, because the unresolved Te Roroa land claim had decimated the farmers’ equity. It’s negotiating for a fifth. As part of the sale agreement the farmers have until settlement date to remove the logs, which have lain in the ground for up to 30,000 years. Some of the trees were up to 1000 years old and metres across when they crashed into the swamps which preserved them. [A c]onservationist... who lives on the edge of the nearby Waipoua kauri forest, said the chance to learn valuable information about N[Z]’s prehistory and climate is disappearing on the back of logging trucks. “It’s like knocking down Stonehenge and turning it into road rubble because you have a market for rubble,”... Popular analysis of a large swamp sample such as the one at Aranga could answer one of the big questions of N[Z] prehistory – whether the forests were bowled by a cataclysmic event such as a cyclone[or the ‘tsunami that felled a Far North kauri forest thousands of years ago’], or whether the trees fell individually over time... Te Roroa claimants say the swamp kauri extraction is just one more theft of their tribal estate by the Crown. The land was in Maori ownership until the 1970s, when the Lands and Survey Department managed to extract the remaining shares. It was broken into five farms, which were balloted to pakeha farmers on generous development lease terms... [T]he claimants were never paid for the timber on the land, let alone what was underneath the land. “The[farmers]’re being given the logs as redress for their loss of equity, at our expense,”...

[‘Unlike the Maori, who had lived in harmony with the land for centuries and conserved majestic trees by means of tapu, European settlers had no qualms about clearing the land. Barely penetrable virgin forests clothed much of the country, and the trees were considered the greatest hindrance to man’s livelihood. Intent on carving farms from dense bush, they felled and fired vast areas of forest, and grass seed by the ton was sown on the cooling ashes. Some farmers had the foresight to preserve pockets of native bush on their land, and in some cases steep hillsides were thankfully allowed to retain their protective covering of trees. Where hill country was stripped of its stabilising forest cover and exposed to the ravages of heavy rainfall disastrous erosion of the land occurred. More than a century later farmers and catchment boards are still battling the problem, something which the pioneers were unable to envisage for they had no such problems in their homeland. European species of trees were later planted both to complement farm homesteads and to provide shelter from the fierce winds which swept over the countryside after native forests were cleared.’ ‘The extent of forest before human settlement commenced is now impossible to determine, but it is thought that at about the time white settlement began, at least two-thirds of the country was forest clad.’]

...Approximately three-quarters of our forest was burnt by pre-European and European immigrants before any significant harvesting took place. Harvesting of the virgin forests was under way in the 1870s and grew to a peak at about two million cubic metres in 1907[(when ‘about 20% of the country remained forested’)]. From then to the late 1960s the annual harvest of indigenous timber was at about 1.2 million cubic metres[– mostly ‘miro (sometimes called brown pine)’ and ‘rimu (also known as red pine)’]. ‘The *pinus radiata* species, or radiata pine, was introduced to NZ in the 1850s and was found to be well suited to the environment, maturing up to three times more quickly than similar trees in their native California’, ‘where it is now hardly known. Despite about 100,000 ha of pine plantation throughout NZ being destroyed by 1950 due to a wood wasp which had come from the US in the 1920s, the multi-purpose tree which reaches saw-log size within 25 years in NZ has become NZ’s most-widely grown commercial forest tree.’] There will be 16 million cubic metres of *pinus radiata* cut this year and more to cut next year. N[Z] could produce a greater volume of indigenous timber than the 1996 radiata cut. Forestry with indigenous trees would have a value in excess of the combined current value of forestry and hill-country farming products. N[Z] forests grow in a more favourable climate and with trees that have better growth rates than those of Europe. N[Z] foresters in the 1870s... recommended the management of indigenous forests for timber production. Instead... [the] settler preferred to own an impoverished land with grass and a cash income than a land rich in trees but difficult to work profitably. Cows and sheep can be walked to market but the cost of transporting timber took away its profitability. But for whatever reason the forests were destroyed, the notions that they were slow growing or that they could not regenerate were a way of covering the tracks of those who had made mistakes. Mistakes continue to be made. Since the 1960s regenerating kauri forests, virgin podocarp and beech forests have been burned in order to plant pines... Today pines are still displacing indigenous trees... Kauri in the long term would return more dollars per hectare than radiata. Landowners would benefit from paying some silvicultural attention to their “bit of native” rather than ignoring it or destroying it. There has been, with few exceptions, no careful management of indigenous trees in N[Z].

...A Rotorua timber contractor has been fined \$9000 and ordered to pay almost \$12,000 in costs and expenses for the unauthorised felling of 6.7ha of native bush near Thames. The contractor... has also been ordered to carry out weed and noxious animal control in the area for the next five years, with a bond to Environment Waikato of \$29,340, which reduces each year. Half of the fine is to be paid to Environment Waikato and the other half to the Thames-Coromandel District Council... [T]he Thames District Court... Judge... said he was satisfied council staff had fully explained what areas of the Kereta bush were to be cleared and which areas required consent, including a no-go area where consent was unlikely to be granted. Staff also showed... aerial photographs of the area... After the conviction, the solicitors for Environment Waikato... issued a statement saying they expected the fine to have been significantly higher, as the \$9000 was not enough to deter others...

[‘Brazil has slapped a record-high fine of US\$360,000 on a logging firm for illegally felling endangered trees in the Amazon rainforest. The government’s Environment Agency, Ibama, said it was the first significant sentence imposed since the Government released last month the small print of an environmental law calling for fines of up to US\$50 million and jail terms. Environmentalists had been clamouring for the details since the law was unveiled in February last year. Without this step, regulatory bodies such as Ibama are powerless to act. Brazilian-owned Cilla Industria e Comercio will have to pay out for illegally felling, storing and transporting 1300cu m of protected tree species including mahogany in the northern Amazon state of Para. The company had permission from Ibama to log in a limited area but ignored the terms of the authorisation, said the head of Ibama’s inspection department – which has 70 inspectors to survey an area the size of Mexico.’ ● Last year, ‘the Brazilian Geological and Statistics Institute announced that about 50 million hectares of the massive Amazon jungle had been destroyed by humans in the past 25 years. The worst damage occurred between 1977 and 1987.’ The ‘rate of deforestation has increased by 34% over the last three years. Conservationists doubt the Brazilian Government will stop it.’

...‘though environmentalists have championed tropical forests as priceless assets for the planet – touted as the leading weapon against global warming – their local value for inhabitants is pathetically low. The result is that villagers are tempted to chop down trees and plant crops which carry a higher value.’]

...Almost 40 countries producing – or using – tropical timber, have agreed that a controversial pact to sustain forests – negotiated in 1994 – would go into effect from the beginning of next year. The... pact, the international tropical timber agreement – Itta – was originally set to be in force from February last year but the timetable was scrapped when not enough countries came on board in time. Brazil, a strong critic of the accord and who had not signed it, announced that it would now do so but indicated that it still felt the deal should be extended to cover temperate forests in [First World] countries. As the world’s third-largest producer, its participation was considered key to the pact’s success. The U[S] – a top consumer of such tropical wood products as plywood and veneer sheets – had signed but not yet ratified – apparently because of opposition in Congress to such accords... Consumer states who have ratified are A[US]... Norway, South Korea, Spain, Sweden... Switzerland... Belgium, Britain, Canada, China, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Japan, Luxemburg, Netherlands... and... N[Z]...

‘WHILE NZERS in their thousands protest at the logging of rainforests, and internationally the plea is heard for extensive reforestation to combat the greenhouse effect, calling for the felling of trees may sound like a cry from the wilderness. And indeed in a sense it is, because scattered throughout the country are forests that pose a significant threat to wilderness areas and to native plant communities. The spread of self-sown, or wilding, exotic trees affects something like 10,000 hectares in the South Island and 30,000 hectares in the North Island. In places it may be only the odd pine that has seeded from a shelter belt or roadside planting, but in others it involves thousands of wilding trees at densities of over 100 trees per hectare gradually advancing over areas of protected native vegetation or productive grazing land – costing the country money in lost agricultural production. In 1979 Corsican pine was declared a Class B noxious weed in the Amuri Range area and fire was used to remove stands of unwanted trees. This was only effective when followed by pasture improvement and grazing. Where oversowing with pasture species did not occur, and where stock pressure was light, re-establishment of seedlings was prolific, with densities of 8,575 per hectare recorded – seven times that of a plantation forest. Now Corsican pine covers about 6,000 hectares of the Amuri Range and six other species of wilding trees are also present. Another source of wilding tree spread is the research plots established by the former NZ Forest Service to determine which species were most suitable for high country revegetation. In the Branch and Leatham Catchments of inland Marlborough over 700,000 conifer seedlings were hand planted on steep country and, as if that were not enough, steeper more inaccessible country was covered by sowing 2 tonnes of conifer seed from the air. Today sparse but healthy pines emerge from regenerating manuka and beech while at higher altitudes stunted twisted pine grow from precipitous rock bluffs and scree slopes. When questioned about wilding spread from trial plots at lower altitudes in Marlborough the Forest Service promised to de-cone the trees to prevent seeding! The success of these introduced trees rests on their ability to shed large quantities of wind-borne seed and to grow in harsh conditions that our woody native species are less able to tolerate. The hardier of the pines thrive in dry cold conditions, growing faster than natives and producing seed at an early age, a mere 5 years in the case of *Pinus contorta*.’]

...Wellington shops selling furniture made of native timber can expect some rowdy visitors. Students from the Victoria Environmental Group, part of the nationwide Student Environmental Action Network, plan to demonstrate outside furniture retailers in a bid to end logging of native forests. A spokeswoman... said it was a common misconception that only recycled rimu was used to make furniture. In fact, South Island forests were still being logged to supply the furniture industry. "Most N[Z]ers do not realise that large tracts of pristine natural forest are still being chopped down by timber companies." ...Timberlands West Coast Ltd, which had plans for a massive new beech-logging scheme, was one. - 1996

Conservationists labelled yesterday an environmental day of shame as the Government gave conditional approval to logging of pristine native beech forests on the West Coast. The proposal involves the annual felling of tens of thousands of trees in about 100,000ha of forests, most containing ecosystems of medium to high conservation values. Activists promised a summer of protests. N[FA] said it would "fight them on the beeches." The Government had received more than 10,000 public submissions on the issue, most believed to be anti-logging. The state-owned company at the centre of the row, Timberlands... was delighted by the beech decision. But it appeared less pleased by Government plans to halt the company's unsustainable felling of ancient rimu in the Buller region by the end of next year – six years earlier than planned. This will affect the company's ability to get the beech scheme under way. The Government said the beech logging would satisfy the need for high-quality timber... and... potentially provide work... Labour said the decision rode roughshod over public opinion. The Alliance said it offered a false promise of jobs...

THE Government is vowing to end peppercorn royalties which give Timberlands... access to native rimu at more than 30 times below the going market rate. The move comes as Timberlands prepares a business plan to support its sustainable beech logging scheme, approved last week by the Government, and which private forest owners fear will undercut them and flood the local market with native beech. Final approval for the new scheme depends on proof of its commercial viability.

...Landcare Research has questioned whether ancient West Coast native beech forests... can be logged sustainably... Timberlands... claims it can sustainably manage the forests by using helicopters to pluck 15 trees a hectare out of areas that would not be visited again for 15 years. The Government has given conditional approval to the scheme, which attracted 12,354 public submissions but only 2038 in support. Aucklanders sent in the most submissions from any one area: 2624 against and only 10 in support... In other developments, the R[FBPS] has lost its Environment Court case challenging whether Timberlands had resource consent to log the 6450ha Orikaka Forest. Timberlands has recently moved into the forest, home to threatened native birds and fish, to carry out unsustainable logging as part of a Buller overcut that must stop by December 31 next year. The deadline for public submissions on the Forest Amendment Bill has also passed. The legislation, which includes provisions to allow the wood chipping of native forests for export, is being passed through Parliament under urgency. Conservation groups say the bill raises doubts over how committed the Government is to halting N[Z]'s biodiversity decline.

...Despite his lost fight to keep the Coast's logging industry, [the]... West Coast MP... is a fan of making the best use of the \$120 million compensation he once called a sellout... [T]he \$120 million package handed to the coast[by the Government is] to help boost development and ease the pain of an end to logging. He still has the bumper sticker on his office wall: "Stick your package – our jobs are not for sale." But now he is an enthusiastic advocate of the opportunities the cash injection offers. He says the trust money has huge potential to help the region, but Coasters must not bicker over where new ventures should go. Rivalries going back 150 years between Westport, Hokitika and Greymouth must be set aside.

...Part of a \$120 million compensation package given to the West Coast when the Government ended native logging in Crown forests has been used to finance the same activity on private land... \$400,000 has gone to Forever Timber, a company set up by three former Timberlands executives, including [the one] who resigned in January... after his e-mail attacking the Government's no-logging policy... became public. The... revelation that compensation money was used to set up the private timber company is potentially embarrassing for the Government... "West Coasters must be laughing their heads off," said... the... environment spokesman... [for the Opposition – though it's unlikely to make them feel any better about the news that 'several million dollars has disappeared following the collapse of a manufacturing company given the money to set up a factory on the West Coast.' In international news, a] Californian... who spent two years perched on top of a giant redwood in a personal protest against logging returned to the ground yesterday after the local timber company agreed to preserve the... ancient tree she dubbed Luna... Over the past two years, she has endured everything from fierce winter storms to dry summer heat on a bed-sized perch about 55m above the ground. Her feat marked one of the most remarkable protests against timber cutting in California's ancient redwood territory, where environmentalists and loggers have battled for more than a decade over the dwindling stands of trees... Pacific Lumber... voiced the hope that it could proceed with the "viable harvesting programme" in this year's Headwaters Agreement, under which it agreed to sell several thousand hectares of northern California redwoods for \$US450 million... The company... said it had agreed to... "[the]dirty tree-hugging hippy[']s]"... terms to end a public relations nightmare and prevent other "copycat" protests... [She] became a celebrity, speaking to journalists via cellphone, writing newspaper commentaries and even serving as an "in-tree" correspondent for a television show on the environment... [from] her 1.8m-by-2.5m treetop lookout... [The] preacher's daughter from Garberville... said she was forced to act by the prospect of chainsaws felling the tree, estimated to be between 600 and 1000 years old.

Botanists believe they have discovered the world's oldest living plant in the Tasmanian wilderness. [The]Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service[']s chief botanist... said tests indicated the *Lomatia tasmania*, commonly known as King's Holly, was 43,000 years old. The plant, found in a 1 sq km patch of rainforest in the World Heritage Park, was discovered in the 1930s but its age had never been suspected. Botanists previously thought the oldest living plant was a 13,000-year-old U[S] huckleberry... The... Tasmanian plant did not produce seeds but shed "cuttings" of itself which grew into identical clones... meaning they were essentially the same plant. "When people think of a 43,000-year-old plant they probably visualise something gnarled and twisted. This just looks like an undershrub in the forest." [In local news, our 'timber is getting weaker – resulting in bouncy floors, or sagging roof lines – because the country has been breeding fast-growing trees. Standards NZ said yesterday that new standards were being developed because it was no longer possible to tell the strength of timber by looking at it. Until now, builders had assessed the strength of timber by looking for splits, loose knots or other visual signs. The Master Builders' Federation president said stress-graded timber should be used for structural purposes.'

...Over 1 million cubic metres of timber, including roundwood, is preservative treated in NZ each year. Factors which have encouraged growth in the timber preservation industry include: the versatility, availability and high permeability of non-durable exotic softwood species such as radiata pine; regulations requiring timber to be preservative treated; high levels of quality control; and a research programme carried out by the Forest Research Institute.

...The pulp and paper industry is mainly concentrated near the big planted production forests on the volcanic plateau of the North Island. Of the eight plants in NZ, seven are in the North Island. There are four main pulp and paper companies – CHH, NZ Forest Products, Pan Pacific and Challenge. The Tasman Pulp and Paper Company Limited, part of the Challenge Corporation, has its plant at Kawerau, Bay of Plenty, where wood from Kaingaroa State Forest is utilised.'

...Challenge subsidiary Tasman Pulp and Paper will soon close the chlorine gas plant at its Kawerau mill after 40 years of chlorine bleaching. But instead of leap-frogging to a new oxygen-based technology, as successful mills have done overseas, Tasman insists on investing millions in a polluting chlorine dioxide process which will still discharge tens of millions of litres of effluent containing toxic organo-chlorides daily into the Tarawera River'.]

...The debate over the future of the Tarawera... went behind closed doors yesterday as deliberations began over bids by two mills and the... crown-owned Works Geothermal... to continue discharging... 160,000 cu m of treated effluent... each day... into... the river, known locally as the Black Drain.

...Blackened waste discharged into the Tarawera River from Tasman Pulp and Paper's Kawerau mill has been flowing into the Bay of Plenty for more than 40 years. Now the company thinks its... exceptional circumstances... should allow the discharges to continue for 35 years. Over the years the discolouration has been significantly improved by the company but this week it has told Environment BOP... that it will not be able to meet new colour standards beyond 2005... The company wants separate treatment... granted under a provision of the Resource Management Act... on the basis of the mill being established by an act of Parliament, its size and contribution to the economy and the lack of cost-effective technology to remove discolouration from the waste... Yesterday, [Tasman] opened its submissions... saying the company had evidence that the river was "presently in reasonable health." ...effects on the environment such as colour and toxicity... were "of little consequence." ...[however, the] regional council manager of environmental investigation... called the colour issue the greatest problem facing the river. It completely obliterated life on the bottom because light could not get through... Another... campaigner against Tarawera River pollution... accused Tasman of benefiting under its "exceptional circumstances" for most of its life. He referred to the Tasman Pulp and Paper Enabling Act introduced to Parliament in 1954 by the Minister of Industry and Commerce[, who]... was aware of fears for the river, but foresaw "no immediate likelihood of pollution."

...Greenpeace is confident a Resource Management Act amendment passed last week will trip up Tasman Pulp and Paper Co and its request to keep discharging... about 200,000 tonnes of industrial effluent a day into the... Tarawera River... Last week's amendment substituted new words, which Greenpeace claims strengthen its case that any discharge must be consistent with the purposes of the act... Tasman... believes the amendment has no bearing on the case... The general manager of the [BOP regional] council... said the hearing commissioners had already made their decision which would be released next year... [In related news, t]housands of tonnes of rubble that could be contaminated with toxic PCBs... or polychlorinated biphenyl... have been dumped throughout the upper North Island. The spread of the potentially deadly material has sparked an alert among authorities from Northland to the Waikato... [A] Mangere contamination was discovered by chance in June... Since then officials have discovered... suspect material including the waste or flock mud from scrap processing has gone to the Waipu landfill in Northland, Auckland's Redvale landfill and Hamilton's Horotiu landfill, parts of which are widely believed to leak into the Waikato River. About 4000 tonnes of soil contaminated with low levels of PCBs was also taken from Pacific Steel by the Slag Reduction Company to the BHP N[Z] Steel Glenbrook mill where it is stored under cover. The Slag Reduction Company produces the soil conditioner which was applied to farms where 90 cows died recently but no link to PCB poisoning has been established... [I]nvestigations into PCB... contamination at the Pacific Steel site on the Mangere inlet of the Manukau Harbour [are continuing]... Toxic PCBs used in electrical transformers are known to cause liver damage and respiratory problems in humans. They belong to the family of persistent manmade organochlorines such as dioxins, a potential cause of cancer and other health problems.

...After taking expert advice, the Northland Regional Council wants waste material tainted by a cancer-causing chemical removed from a Waipu landfill... [By the way, yesterday workers] in protective clothing began excavating the site... [of the former] central Hamilton... city gas works[, which]... is contaminated with creosote, or tar oil... [The contaminated soil will be loaded into] sealed trucks for removal to a landfill... A well on the site also contains 100,000 litres of creosote.

...The former... gasworks site, recently cleaned of pollution at a cost of more than \$1 m... is being offered for sale as a prime retail property. The... 6000 sq m of land... excavated in some places to depths of 5.5m to remove creosote and rubbish... then refilled, is expected to fetch about \$2 million.

...They thought their 287ha sheep farm at Mossburn, Southland, was "the ultimate" when they bought it from the Government under an assisted scheme in 1982. But there was no warning of what was to unfold a decade later... [They] have seen their prized farm turn from the investment of a lifetime to a worthless toxic waste dump that no one will buy... Investigations by the Southland Regional Council found the ex-Lands and Survey Department farm was once used as a dump for truckloads of the banned insecticide dieldrin in the 1960s. The organochlorine pesticide was used to kill grass grubs, black beetle and crickets, but caused a major scare when high levels were found in a shipment of meat exported to the U[S]. Residues were traced back to another widespread use of dieldrin – sheep dipping. Following the ban, dieldrin was collected throughout the country by Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries officers, who then had the problem of disposing of it. New-development farm blocks like the [287ha] one... were seen as convenient, out-of-the way places to dispose of the supply. Holes were dug and unknown quantities of the insecticide were dumped in glass and steel containers, or even bags... An Environment Ministry spokesman said two Southland dumps were potentially hazardous. They are Flaxy Creek, near Te Anau, where nine deformed juvenile trout were found last month, and Mokoreta Forest... which was reportedly leaking when samples were taken in October 1995 and... August[1996]. Land Information, the government department responsible for monitoring toxic sites, is also investigating two Northland areas contaminated with dieldrin and DDT. One is a storage site in a semi-industrial area of Whangarei, where the chemicals were kept after collection. The other more seriously contaminated site is just south of Cape Reinga. [A]Northland Regional Council waste management officer... said the Government's past attempts to dispose of the chemicals was a comedy of errors... But what bothers landowners like [the couple in Mossburn] is the fact that although the problem is widely known, no one is claiming responsibility for the costly clean-up. They have spent the past 4 1/2 years battling to get the Government to accept liability for the contamination. Despite their dealings with the Environment Ministry, Conservation Department and now Land Information, they were no closer to an answer. "It's a farmer's worst nightmare... The liability issue still rests with the Ministry of Environment. Land Information is taking responsibility for monitoring the site, but that is as far as it goes." Suffering heart and hip problems[, he] wants to quit the farm and move to a smaller block that is easier to manage. But because of the cloud hanging over the farm, nobody is interested in buying, even when the price dropped to \$150,000 below the government valuation of \$600,000. Technically, the Resource Management Act [(RMA) holds the current owners] legally responsible as occupiers – even though their land was contaminated when owned by the Crown... But there is hope in the future that the issue will be resolved once and for all. The Environment Ministry is developing new policy which will clear up the confusion about liability for chemical dumps on private land.

...CABINET is expected to decide within six weeks who should pay to clean up properties contaminated by the banned pesticide dieldrin.[The] Environment Minister... has confirmed the Government will look at liability... [I]t had come as a shock that a... dieldrin dump at the Mokoreta Forest in eastern Southland was leaking and the council had not been informed by Land Information.

...SEARCHES of properties thought to be contaminated by... dieldrin have confirmed two former dump sites in Southland... However, extensive searches have failed to show any trace of a suspected dump on a 287ha sheep farm at Mossburn... If no dieldrin is found in further digs, [the farm's owner] hopes the authorities will "clear" his property's name so he can sell up and retire.

...[T]HREE Southland farmers whose land was devastated by secret dumps of truck loads of DDT and other pesticides will be paid compensation by the government worth more than \$1 million. The settlement packages were believed to have been set by the true market value of the properties if they were chemical-free.' Editor's note: 'When DDT and similar chemicals were first introduced, governments ran advertising campaigns to reassure the public they were safe, and the manufacturers tried to discredit any scientists who expressed concerns' that they weren't.

...the 'boy was always keen on playing soccer. So when his parents bought their first home in April 1991, they chose one with a huge backyard. They paid about \$90,000 for the 677 sq m property and felt as though they'd acquired their very own castle. Mum planted a vegetable garden; Dad took pride in keeping the lawns well manicured; and the boy took full advantage of the big backyard, kicking the ball around with the family's pet dog, Max, an 88kg Rottweiler. But in 1995, this domestic bliss was destroyed. Backing on to the property was a timber treatment plant operated by Timpro International Ltd

and, after 1993, by Hamilton Timber Treatments. Between June and August 1995, hazardous chemicals leaked on to the property, contaminating the backyard and house. The chemicals – arsenic, copper, sodium pentachlorophenate and chromium – leaked because stormwater outlets were inadequate and holding pads did not contain all chemicals during treatment processes. The family started feeling sick. Their dog died. By the time they left their home to move into a rental unit, the backyard was a barren wasteland devoid of any signs of life. After the spill, the Waikato Regional Council had tried to force the plant owner to remove all hazardous chemicals under the RMA. But the plant went into receivership and nothing was done. The family filed a lawsuit against the regional council and Hamilton City Council, alleging they had known since 1991 that toxins were contaminating the property. The claim was settled out of court when the two councils jointly paid the family \$115,000 in compensation. However, the family say the money was not enough and they're suing again – this time under the 12-year-old's name (making him possibly the youngest person in NZ to sue) and for \$500,000 – because they want all of NZ to take notice. Just about all of the money has gone on medical bills, but the family are still plagued by daily headaches, fatigue and stomach pains while their limbs and torsos are riddled with scars from recurring festering sores which just won't heal. As long as the medical bills continue to roll in, the parents believe it will be years before they can save the money to buy another home.'

...she 'used to jog past the old Ivon Watkins-Dow chemical plant on her daily run to the nearby surf beach. But now the one-time fitness fanatic can barely hobble to the front gates of the New Plymouth factory – a few hundred metres away. At just 38, she is riddled with arthritis. She is furious her disability may have been caused by dioxin discharged by the chemical plant. She and about 100 of her neighbours in the suburb of Paritutu are being given blood tests (each costing \$2500), to see if they have been poisoned. The Paritutu dioxin investigation group has appealed to the government to establish a commission of inquiry into the level of contamination from the plant, where the herbicide 245-T was manufactured from the early 1960s to 1987. Dioxin, a by-product of 245-T, can cause cancer and has been linked to birth defects. The group's spokesman said they had found girls in the suburb as young as 14 suffering from cervical cancer. It also found 23 people who had lived within a 1km radius of the plant over the past 25 years who had multiple sclerosis – eight times the normal incidence. But the general manager for Dow Agro-Sciences says some of the research results obtained by the campaigners were inaccurate.'

... 'From the top of Paritutu Rock, 10 minutes south of downtown New Plymouth, natural beauty mixes with ugly industry. It is a modern planner's nightmare, but in the 1960s and 1970s when the land was subdivided for homes, local authorities apparently had few concerns about people and hazardous industries living side by side. A former resident can recall standing as a youngster on the lawn of his parents' home, inhaling a strong chemical smell. "I can remember taking a deep breath, and saying, 'Mum, that Ivon Watkins smells good tonight.' That little tacker never envisaged what would happen further down the track." What has happened is 19 years of illness, which has had him near death, paralysed for months and diagnosed with the nerve disease Guillain-Barre Syndrome. Like all of the Paritutu residents who claim a link between their illnesses and exposure to dioxin from the 2,4,5-T manufacturing process at the Dow plant, he cannot prove it. As a long-time worker in the fertiliser industry, including a spell mixing up another Dow-manufactured herbicide, 2,4-D, he accepts that could be a cause in combination with his childhood exposure. Now 48, he has recently moved to Whangarei but made the trip back to New Plymouth this week to join a growing band of present and former Paritutu residents demanding answers. The Dioxin Investigation Action Group says it has surveyed 183 families in the area and more than 100 had reported "serious illnesses." Residents spoke of residents dying of cancer in their 50s, out-of-the-ordinary rates of diabetes and other diseases. The health concerns have been around for years, fuelled by a 1972 explosion when residents say a shaft of orange flame rose nearly as high as Paritutu Rock, by leaks at a company dump near the foreshore a few kilometres south in 1982 and by a chemical leak at the plant in 1986. But previous inquiries have not established any links between the manufacture of 2,4,5-T and illnesses suffered by nearby residents. A ministerial inquiry in 1986 and follow-up studies in 1987 found measurable levels of 2,4,5-T in Ivon Watkins-Dow employees and farmers, but said they did not represent a threat to human health. Since then, the WHO has found that dioxins are far more toxic than previously thought, particularly a compound known as TCDD, and has greatly reduced its acceptable daily exposure levels. For its part, the company has repeatedly denied that any discharges from the plant, mainly through incineration, have posed a public health or environmental threat. In 1987, the Dow chemical plant became the last factory in the world to stop making 2,4,5-T after increasing concerns about the health impacts of its dioxin by-products. Today, no manufacturing takes place there, leaving only blending and packaging operations.'

... 'The dark side of NZ's clean green image is coming back to haunt us. In the past fortnight, health officials have announced blood tests for residents living next to the former Ivon Watkins-Dow chemical plant in New Plymouth, and further moves towards an inquiry into timber workers' health problems from exposure to PCP (from 1960-88, contaminants from the formerly state-owned Forestry Corporation's Waipa Mill – NZ's biggest user of PCP for timber treatment – seeped into waterways and left Lake Rotorua heavily polluted with dioxin). And this week, an Environment Ministry report showed NZers were exposed to unacceptable levels of cancer-causing dioxins. "Illegal dumping has probably been a way of life for NZers," says the ministry's senior policy analyst. "As a country, we've been incredibly naive about the whole thing." The environmental clean-up machinery is creaking into action, but awareness of sometimes decades-old pollution in our green land is still dim. Your home may be sitting on a site contaminated by toxic chemicals without your knowledge and you may be forced to pay for the clean-up. Yet councils and the Government are deliberately obstructing the public release of details of thousands of locations known to be – or suspected of being – poisoned (even though taxpayers' and ratepayers' money was spent gathering the information; the ministry defends itself, saying councils would be open to "frivolous and incredibly expensive" inquiries if blanket regional lists were given out). Cleaning up the toxic errors of the past is one of the biggest bills NZers face (a 1992 report estimated the cost of cleaning up 1580 high-risk sites alone would top \$500 million). Every old gasworks, petrol station and drycleaning company has been tagged as a potential contaminated site – yet for hundreds, possibly thousands, more there are no records because of illegal dumping of hazardous substances.'

... 'Early results of an intensive health survey in the wake of the recent dioxin scare in New Plymouth have uncovered no increases in cancers, multiple sclerosis or deaths from birth defects.' However, 'legal charges may follow the discovery of thousands of tonnes of deadly asbestos drying in the sun at an unauthorised dump site in Auckland. Auckland City Council has given landowners Southpark Corporation until Monday to bury the 7m stockpile on Hugo Johnston Drive, Penrose, under at least 600mm of clean soil. It has also ordered an immediate end to dumping and the construction of a fence with warning signs around the site. Auckland City's manager of compliance monitoring said Southpark did not have a resource consent to dump asbestos. The asbestos has been accumulated from building sites on Hugo Johnston Drive.'

... 'A fresh asbestos scare has again raised fears that parts of Auckland are dangerously contaminated by old industrial dumps. The discovery this week of asbestos at Southdown Reserve, off Hugo Johnston Drive, comes 10 years after concerns were first raised about widespread asbestos contamination in the area. Auckland City Council has shut the reserve indefinitely, after council workers found asbestos material in the park while doing routine mowing. Waste was dumped at Southdown by the area's asbestos manufacturer, James Hardie and Co, until 1983. In 1988, the Auckland Area Health Board ordered developers of a Southdown industrial site to seal a trench that was riddled with hundreds of asbestos bags. Yesterday, as contractors began clearing asbestos material from the reserve, Auckland Healthcare was investigating the possible public health implications of the find. The Labour Department's Occupational Safety and Health service is also investigating the consequences for the workers involved.' ■ 'A report published in the *NZ Medical Journal* last month predicted that 12,000 NZers, mostly building workers, will die from cancers caused by inhaling asbestos dust. The authors suggested that the asbestos epidemic will peak in the next 10 to 15 years.'

... 'THE legacy of industrial poisoning in America is a grim one. But for sheer human misery, there rarely has been anything like Libby. At least 200 people have died because they worked at the Zonolite Mountain vermiculite mine, or had a husband who worked there, or jumped as children from ropes into fluffy piles of vermiculite, or played on the high school running track or the primary school ice rink, both filled with mine tailings. At the grocery store, you're likely to run into one or two Libby residents with oxygen boosters slung over their shoulders, connected to plastic tubes running into their

noses. The ones who can't get to the store sit at home next to their oxygen tanks. They struggle to get a breath of air in lungs that can't expand anymore, they cough until they vomit, and they wait for their children to show signs of the disease. Many already do. Asbestos – the invisible, deadly fibre that laces the vermiculite at Libby – seems a problem from the past. Many people assume it has been banned. Wrong on both counts. And the fact that asbestos lurks in the lungs for up to 40 years before sickening and killing means that mortality rates are expanding decades after the world first realised asbestos could kill. Libby is the latest asbestos crisis to come to light, but the small northwest Montana town's 2700 residents have the distinction, according to an Environmental Protection Agency toxicologist, of experiencing "the most severe residential exposure to a hazardous material this country has ever seen". Death rates from asbestos in Libby are 40 to 60 times the national average. And Libby has stunned toxicologists with evidence for the first time that asbestos, long known as an occupational hazard, has affected large numbers of people who never worked with asbestos – or lived with anyone who did. With cleanup costs estimated at \$US50 million for the town alone – not counting the massive contamination at the old mine itself (which could take the rest of next century to fix) – the EPA will decide over the next few months whether to add Libby to the federal Superfund programme, which provides aid for the nation's most polluted industrial sites. As an alternative, W R Grace & Co, which operated the mine from 1963 until it closed in 1990, has offered to do the cleanup itself. Grace, a \$1.6 billion chemical and building materials company, has already paid \$20 million in individual claims and spent more than \$2 million cleaning up its plants in Libby. The company has pledged to pay medical bills for anyone in Libby diagnosed with an asbestos-related illness and \$250,000 a year to the hospital for health screenings. The EPA's administrator will take on the difficult question of whether Superfund cleanup money can be used in Libby to remove Zonolite home insulation, which was installed in anywhere from 800,000 to 10 million attics across America.'

...*'Anger boils over in asbestos country* Fifteen angry Flat Bush homeowners plan to sue the Manukau City Council over its handling of an asbestos investigation. The group say they have lost tens of thousands of dollars from their property values as a result of being within a council-identified asbestos zone. They also say the council knew the area was contaminated at least 18 months before it tagged their properties. One resident said she and her husband would not have bought their \$250,000 house last year if they had known of the asbestos. They had intended to retire to a place by the seaside, but were now stuck. A land agent had told her he "wouldn't touch her house with a barge-pole." She said hundreds of Flat Bush home-owners were in a similar situation, and urged them to join the group in a class action.'

...*'House sections in some of Auckland's wealthiest suburbs may be riddled with asbestos material.* A man who delivered asbestos pipes and sheeting throughout the Manukau suburb of Flat Bush says he also delivered truckloads to the suburbs of Remuera, St John's Park, Ellerslie and Mt Wellington. The Auckland City Council manager of environmental health and licensing said the council would contact the driver to find out exactly what he knew and whether the information could help with its database of contaminated sites. The council knew of just one site with asbestos-contaminated soil – the Southdown Reserve. Unfortunately, the driver said he could not remember specific addresses because most deliveries took place from the 1930s to the late 1970s, and the landscape had changed dramatically since. But he remembers delivering loads of asbestos offcuts from James Hardie's Penrose factory to farms throughout South Auckland. "I used to get 30 shillings a truckload from the farmers. They used it for tanker tracks and to make driveways." At one stage he employed 20 people, and his asbestos was used to fill vast gullies, make dams and improve drainage. "In the end I was delivering 6 or 8 truckloads every day, six days a week." He also delivered up to 15 bags of pure blue asbestos to farmers every month. He had no idea of the potential dangers of the material. He said he had never been affected by asbestos, and believed the problem in Flat Bush had been blown out of proportion.' Incidentally, a] **legal hearing began yesterday over whether a West Auckland man illegally used his 24ha property as a dumping ground for... around 300 wrecked cars and... about 7000 cu m of fill and rubbish... The dispute centres on how the fill relates to a section-clearing business run by... [the] resident... and whether he has existing use rights for several activities on his property... A neighbour appearing as a witness for the... Waitakere City Council... said lingering fires and other "eye-sores" on [the] property had been a nuisance... since the 1950s... A firefighter... said he had attended four fires at [the] property. All but the most recent were large and contained rubbish, car parts, adhesives and vegetation... [A] recent site inspection revealed that most of the fill had been removed but... [the] council is seeking enforcement orders for [the resident] to remove the[remaining] fill and prohibit him from bringing any more on to his land... The extent of the earthworks was far greater than permitted under the relevant district plan and required specific consent... [The resident's lawyer said his] client had understood that the consent the city council granted last year to establish... a macadamia orchard... gave him the right to bring in the material... [to] spread across the orchard bed and trees planted in it... [The resident] is seeking permission from the court to provide facilities for housetruckers, to dismantle cars and to run a composting business on his land.**

...*A Northland family bought an 80ha run-off some years ago while they were share-milking. It was half in pasture and half in gorse and manuka. They recently decided to sell the land and buy a place in town. However, the actions of their local district council could ensure that this family ends up bankrupt. The problem has arisen because... the new district plan... puts in place mechanisms to protect land that planners considered to be "ecologically significant." It gives the powers to employees of the local councils effectively to take away the private property rights of landowners without consultation, and without prior knowledge... In effect... [it] provides for legalised land theft... By some bizarre twist of fate the Northland couple had... the... gorse and manuka... half of their farm... designated as a "significant natural area," or SNA. This means that not only do they have to fence the 40ha to keep stock... away from the area but they must seek resource consent from the council to do anything at all with the area – even spray their gorse. Each application costs at least \$450 and can take months to be processed. The effect of all this is that... two prospective sales of their land [have fallen] through. The value of their farm has plummeted and the couple are now in a desperate financial position... The... couple objected to the SNA on their farm. The council reviewed the designation and admitted it had made a mistake. It has now made a submission to itself to withdraw the SNA from their title. Council officers say that there will be a hearing around March 1998... The... couple, in danger of losing everything because of the R[MA], have been subjected to what must surely be the worst district plan in [NZ]. The recently released... draft annual district plan has attracted 60,000 submissions. With only 25,000 ratepayers, these submissions highlight the serious problems faced by people in the Far North. So far the plan has cost the people of Northland almost \$1 million. It is expected to cost close to another \$1 million before the process is complete. By the time these submissions are heard, the hearings organised, court actions and appeals gone through it is estimated that it will be 2003. In the meantime the draft plan[, which is]... already in effect, is destroying lives, destroying opportunity and halting progress in the north. The plan makes it illegal to have a... television receiver on the roof of a house if it can be seen from the road... prevents anyone from building on a skyline... restricts the number of motor vehicle movements in and out of a property to 30 a day... demands that hens not be kept closer than 150m from a boundary... pigs 650m... and... insists that all sources of water are fenced to keep stock at least 20m away. Since that ruling covers water troughs farmers are in for some serious costs as they seek resource consent to allow their animals to drink. These ridiculous restrictions suggest that those who drafted the plan had little common sense. They did, however, have a strong desire to control the future...*

[Four] councillors have asked the Minister for the Environment... to make the Far North District Council withdraw its "unintelligible" proposed district plan... which they claim is contrary to the spirit and intention of the R[MA because it]... sought to deny the rights of property-owners... and... the community... had not been properly consulted before its release...

MP attacks resource act... The Government should rethink the R[MA] provisions covering areas of conservation value on private property, says [an] Act MP... The Whangarei MP is planning a private member's bill to protect property owners from having their land "basically confiscated without compensation." The Far North District Council has been criticised in recent weeks for incorporating in its proposed district plan the act's suggestion that significant natural areas be protected... "The most depressing thing about the R[MA]] is that when someone decides a piece of land is ecologically significant, they basically put that designation on the whole property, and then if you want to do anything at all on the land you have to go and get resource consent and consult... every man and his dog,"... She said many farmers who had been protecting beautiful areas of land for

generations were now being told they were no longer trusted... [She can expect to count on support for her bill from] the Minister of Agriculture, [who yesterday described some]... of the regulations being proposed in district council plans a[s] “just madness,”... and... said there was concern throughout the community about the R[MA] and its interpretation by local bodies.

...Suppose Parliament amended the traffic regulations to remove all specified speed restrictions and at the same time included new clauses giving the police power to levy “instant fines” for undefined “excessive” speeding... The officer would be empowered to make a discretionary decision based on a situation as he sees it. While that is unthinkable it has now become a reality in [NZ’s] environmental law through the R[MA]. The Ministry for the Environment has recently introduced “instant fines” for alleged environmental infringement offences on a scale from \$300 to \$1000. Authority to levy these fines has been placed in the rapacious hands of regional and local councils. An enforcement officer from a council has power... to give you an infringement notice if he “has reasonable cause to believe such an offence is being or has been committed.” It is to be hoped that this official highwayman is having a reasonable day when he has to make one of these “reasonable” decisions, otherwise an alleged environmental offender may find himself on the rough edge of an unreasonable discretion. The act also states that “...it is not necessary [for the council] to prove that the defendant [in any prosecution] intended to commit the offence.” This means you can be fined for an environmental offence of which you have not been forewarned. In your innocence you may be a law-breaker... It is significant that there are provisions through which a person can challenge an infringement notice through the issuing council and the District Court[, but there]... will... be a strong incentive to pay the instant fine because the cost of seeking justice in most cases will be out of all proportion to the alleged offence. [‘□ Council officers can enter private property to check for compliance with the RMA – but not if they know there is a breach. To inspect a known breach of the act they need a search warrant, a High Court judge ruled. The ruling means failure to obtain a warrant may result in charges against the property owner being thrown out of court.’]

...If you use resources there will be costs in doing so... The R[MA] is an *environmental* statute. It replaced a raft of *planning* laws. The distinction is not well understood six years after the act was passed – not even by many of the people who administer it. It is the attitude and mindset of resource users (you and me), regulators (our local councils), lawyers and judges that will determine how successful the act is in achieving the “sustainable management of natural and physical resources.” ...The R[MA] was the result of intense bipartisan work over four years. It aimed to secure better environmental outcomes, improved public participation and a more flexible, less bureaucratic approach to problem-solving. The act allows for all of those things... The act can be a vehicle for raising the quality of environmental outcomes while letting people get on with their lives; or it can be a swamp in which citizens and businesses flounder without any discernible improvement in the quality of the environment. In other words, it is the policies and practices implemented in the name of the act that count... Central Government can regulate to establish national standards, which it has just done for marine pollution[, but] most resource use issues are local or regional and that is where the scrutiny is required... All sorts of schemes are promoted by people who are really seeking to protect commercial interests which have nothing to do with sustainable management... [The] act is not especially prescriptive [but it] provides a framework within which communities... can decide how they wish to “avoid, remedy or mitigate” the adverse effects of resource use. How far they wish to go is up to them... This places real power and responsibility in the hands of councillors. The policies that govern air and water pollution, amenity and landscape values and all the minor rules needed to keep neighbours from going to war with one another are in their hands... The... [a]ct... is not the answer for every environmental ill... it inevitably runs up against the rights of property owners... [However, people] who rail against the act as though there was once a rule-free paradise should take a careful look at the thicket of common law rules and doctrines that the English courts developed over several centuries to regulate the rights of adjoining landowners... There is not, and never has been, an absolute and undiluted right to do whatever you like on your own property. One property owner’s actions will often affect neighbours or properties further afield... But we do live in a property-owning democracy. And councillors need to think carefully before they extinguish valuable rights that property owners have paid for.

...[‘Residents living along the road opposite Christchurch’s Brighton Beach are pressuring the local council to obtain resource consents to remove sand dunes blocking their views of the sea (currently they can only smell and hear the ocean) so their house values will rise by an estimated \$20,000.’]

...[an] Auckland businessman... has the go-ahead to blast a 35m tunnel through a Bay of Islands headland to gain access to a boat jetty from his private bay... [T]he founder and major shareholder of Sky TV, owns a 6ha property with riparian rights at Opunga Bay on Moturua Island... where he is building a holiday house. With his island neighbour, [he]... applied to the Far North District Council and Northland Regional Council for resource consent to build a tunnel and pathways to link the two properties. The Bay of Islands Watchdog Group opposed the application, claiming the tunnel was unnecessary, inappropriate and harmful to the natural habitat... [22] submitters had opposed some or all of the resource consent applications, which included a dinghy pull and boat ramp... The joint-hearings committee this week granted the tunnel and boat-ramp consents, but declined the dinghy pull on the grounds that it would be visually obtrusive and hazardous. A condition of the tunnel consent is that Te Rawhiti Maori Committee will be on site to ensure there is no disturbance to any human remains. In 1772 French officers killed many Maori at the nearby Paeroa Pa in retaliation for the mainland massacre of the navigator Marion du Fresne and a boatload of his men who had infringed a tapu.

...The Environment Court has rejected a bid to remove an illegal reclamation on Waiheke Island... because of delays in bringing the court action... [and a lack of] agreement about fixing the reclamation and erosion problem... The owner of a neighbouring property had sought a R[MA] order to force the proprietor of the reclamation to remove it, a retaining wall and the remains of a jetty at Waikopou Bay. The action had the support of the D[oC] and other authorities. The reclamation was done in 1986... [The proprietor] was later fined \$4000 in the Auckland District Court. The [DoC], which prosecuted him, did not seek removal of the reclamation as it was considered established and tidy and the move might cause further environmental damage. In 1995 someone cut down the jetty and parts of the reclamation’s wooden retaining wall... [A]s a result of that... and the destructive effect of tides... and cyclones, the remaining wall and the leading edge of the reclamation had collapsed in a number of places. “After spring tides and rough weather the bay is awash with water discoloured by suspended clay.”

...The Environment Court has a backlog of almost 1800 appeal cases, it was revealed yesterday, although officials suggest that only 20[%] of them will come to court. But in some cases the backlog is costing big money while appellants wait for hearings. The court, until recently known as the Planning Tribunal, has six District Court judges sitting virtually continuously. Each judge has two commissioners to assist in the hearings. A spokeswoman for the Minister of Justice said another judge would be appointed soon.

...[‘More than 3100 cases are before the Environment Court, many of them already delayed for over a year. A report from the Courts Minister shows that in places like Timaru and Oamaru no cases were heard in the past year. In Christchurch, 402 cases are pending, 242 of which were lodged a year ago. The minister released the figures in response to a parliamentary question from a Northland-based Act MP, who said yesterday that the delays were unacceptable. “It’s a Government failure which costs individual NZers via the loss of productivity and jobs, the holding costs, interest rates and ongoing legal costs.” An Auckland barrister, who specialises in environmental law, said it was well known that the court was under-resourced. A delay of a year had become standard but in some cases people were waiting two and three years for their appeals to be heard, he said. The local government and environment select committee had previously heard submissions from people facing delays but nothing had been done. “There is certainly no sign of any response or any extra resources.” But local authorities had to take some of the blame for the delays as they often took a long time to sort out their district plans. Developers and conservationists sometimes appeal against district plans and councils can even appeal against each other. Meanwhile, the Environment Court has a new principal judge. She will be based in Wellington but preside at sittings throughout the country.’]

...yesterday, a] lawyer appearing in the Environment Court was challenged to a duel by a landowner... and operator of an allegedly illegal dump at Waimapu... [in the] Bay of Plenty... [The] Judge... eventually took an early adjournment to see counsel in chambers. When the hearing resumed, no mention was made of the duel. [Incidentally, 'conservation groups say the Waitakere Ranges have never been under greater threat from development than now, leaving a thinning green line between city and sea. Concerns over the ranges' future have been raised because the new centre-right local body party Go Waitakere's campaign talk centres on dumping "the extreme eco-environmentalists, fringe lunatics and fanatics" from the Waitakere City Council and restoring the rights of private property owners who have been entangled in planning rules over what they could do with their land.'

... 'Pakatoa Island in the Hauraki Gulf is likely to be turned into an exclusive playground for the rich and famous at a cost of \$60m. That's what the owner believes it would cost to redevelop Pakatoa into a resort which fulfills its potential. The owner, who's received offers from interested buyers almost from the day he bought it in 1994, has put Pakatoa on the market after receiving a substantial offer from a group of developers. The hardest part is likely to be settling on a price. It will almost certainly be much more than the \$4.25m he paid and higher than its \$6.5m government valuation. While coastal islands in private ownership come on to the market from time to time and are often sold to wealthy buyers as personal retreats, Pakatoa's location makes it unique and potentially more valuable. Just 32km from downtown Auckland, the 24ha island is tucked behind the eastern end of Waiheke Island, where property prices have skyrocketed. The owner – worth \$14m according to the *NBR Rich List* – made his money in forestry. He bought Pakatoa after it had been at the centre of a highly publicised scandal involving a German conman. The German hatched a sensational plan to purchase the island for \$8.5m and turn it into an international resort, but it fell to pieces when the scheme was exposed as a sham designed to fleece investors. The conman was eventually jailed in Germany after fleeing to Thailand. The conman was just one of several colourful characters and events in Pakatoa's history. At the turn of the century it was owned by the Salvation Army, which operated it as a treatment centre for female alcoholics. But it seems the Salvation Army's plans to rehabilitate the women did not always run to plan. Pakatoa became well known to passing sailors, who would call at the island on the way in or out of Auckland and supply inmates with alcohol and tobacco in return for sexual favours. In 1954 Pakatoa was bought by Kerridge Odeon, the cinema chain founded by an Auckland businessman']...

A Rotorua businessman may pursue his vision of turning Matakana Island into a Gold Coast-style residential development... [with] a causeway link to Tauranga, marinas and golf courses... following a ruling in the High Court at Auckland... Matakana... has 28km of white, north-facing beaches curving like a smile towards the mouth of the Port of Tauranga. The tan-junkies who cram Mt Maunganui over summer – only several hundred metres away at the closest point – can look across and see the empty, white strip below a dark bank of forest. But the peacefulness of this paradisiacal prize belies the fierce litigation hovering over it... [The businessman] wanted to buy the island... when it was put up for sale by receivers in 1991. Instead, the island was sold to merchant bank Finance and Resources Group (FAR) and forestry companies... [However, the businessman] claimed the sale was arranged by FAR using confidential information supplied by his company... and sued its directors in what is cited as N[Z]'s largest intellectual property rights claim. In a judgment yesterday, [the judge]... said: "The defendants pinched the plaintiffs' information and knowledge, used it for themselves and walked away with a pocketful of money, leaving the plaintiffs lamenting." ...[the businessman's] company... sought advice from FAR in June 1992 about raising \$5 million. Three FAR directors... met the chief executive of the Economic Development Office... [-] who had been helping [the businessman -] ...at Mt Maunganui... FAR learned at that meeting of [the businessman's] scheme, namely that the sale of forest and assets on the island would cover the purchase price of \$20 million, leaving it ready for development at almost no cost. "The directors of the FAR group saw a good prospect of a much better profit from dealing with the receivers than they would gain if they acted on behalf of the plaintiffs,"... [despite] a specific request for confidentiality...

Owning your own island isn't an automatic ticket to paradise on Earth, but it's a step in the right direction. Sure, exclusive access to an idyllic piece of offshore real estate featuring secluded sandy bays dotted with pohutukawa trees is many people's dream. But, like any property, there are rates bills to pay and a return on investment to consider... 210ha... Slipper Island, off the Coromandel Peninsula, is one of only a handful of private islands in N[Z]. A farmer... bought it 35 years ago. Since his death in 1995... [the] family have fended off numerous offers to sell... but... the island, which has a valuation of \$2.5 million... "is priceless, really,"...

Fort Tamaki – priceless land that's ours and not for sale... whatever the twisted logic of Treasury might come up with. The idea of selling it off for luxury housing so the military can buy a few missiles to kill Kaimanawa horses or pay for ward room silver on the new frigates is totally unacceptable. It seems both the D[oc] and originally the Crown Law Office, agreed it should become a public park once Defence moved out. But following pressure from the Treasury and Defence, the Crown's lawyers had a sudden change of heart and reversed their opinion. As for the politicians, they have been a dead loss... Indeed... the Minister of Conservation... has been downright belligerent. "It's not for central Government to go giving... [the people of North Shore]... land because their... forefathers didn't have the foresight to provide open spaces." You would have expected a Minister of Conservation to be focusing rather less on punishing Aucklanders for the sins of their fathers and rather more on how to preserve intact this unique publicly owned urban open space. Instead, he and... [the] local North Shore MP... are preparing to toss us a coastal strip and sell the rest off. That's not good enough. This is a national treasure... In its way it is every bit as worthy of preservation as a remote West Coast forest. Certainly it will bring a lot more taxpayers a lot more pleasure[– like Rangitoto Island ('bought by the Crown in 1890 from its Maori owners for £15, and subsequently opened to the public')].

...That magnificent 5.5 ha block of land along the cliff edge... overlooking the Rangitoto Channel... [has] a fascinating story. In 1885, the land was owned by an English civil engineer... During June... Mr Stark, evidently keen to return to England, put his... estate... on the market for £3000... The local people were aghast at the price and were not surprised that there was little buyer interest in it. However in January 1886, they were even more aghast when it was announced that the Government of N[Z] had purchased the "...estate, for Defence purposes" on behalf of Queen Victoria for £17,100... Rumours circulated alleging that the purchase price was far in excess of the value of the property, and that there were 'certain irregularities' in the mode of its purchase. These rumours were confirmed when, the authorities set up a public hearing... It transpired that in November 1885, Mr Stark was staying at the exclusive Waiwera Hot Springs Hotel... [while] the Premier of N[Z], Sir Julius Vogel, was also in residence. Over dinner one night Sir Julius told Mr Stark that the Government must purchase his property for "defence purposes" to build a fort to defend the port of Auckland from enemy invasion, presumably the Russians. On returning to Devonport, Mr Stark happened to meet the Government Valuer, who was coincidentally making a valuation of the Devonport District, at the time, on the cross-harbour ferry. During the conversation Mr Stark told the valuer he had received an offer of £17,100... for his property, and could produce a letter from a leading firm of city land agents confirming that. The valuer, being conscientious, noted the information and officially increased the previous valuation of £2,800... to £17,000... When the Government, only two months later, took over the property, it did so at its own valuation, and Mr Stark was a happy man as he made preparations to return to England... On March 30, 1886... Stark and his wife boarded the SS "Alameda" bound for San Francisco, never to return to N[Z]. On arrival in San Francisco, Stark was quoted in the press of the day, "that he was sorry that he had not asked £20,000... as the... Government would have paid that sum for it." ...But... the purchase has proved a good investment for the Crown... The valuation today... is \$15 million... The value of the land would be far less under a reserve zoning.

...A private member's bill designed to turn a disputed piece of Devonport defence land into a national reserve was thrown out of Parliament yesterday... by 59 votes to 61... The... Ministry of Defence wants compensation if it gives up \$15 million worth of excess land, and Government MPs argued Parliament should not try to circumvent how a government department uses publicly-owned assets.

...The Minister of Conservation... last night challenged local body leaders to take him to court over disputed defence land in Devonport... “I would welcome them taking me to court, albeit a waste of taxpayers’ money,”...

A group of... 300... North Shore residents is taking the Government to court over disputed Defence land... The Tamaki Reserve Protection Trust... will join forces with the North Shore City Council, which has already filed proceedings in the High Court.

...yesterday in Parliament the Minister of Defence... in response to a question from [an] Alliance list MP... indicated that the entire 11.2ha block might be sold[, meaning the]... 5.5ha section of surplus Navy land at Takapuna Head... [plus] the... 5.7ha, which housed officer training premises and a rugby field... “because if we find later that the second half is not required for defence purposes, surely it makes more sense to quit it in one block.” ...the Ministry of Defence wants about \$26 million... Referring to the Multilateral Agreement on Investment... [the Alliance list MP] asked the minister for an assurance that the land would not be sold to foreigners. The minister replied that the agreement would not open the door for foreigners to buy “all our land” and requests would be referred through the Overseas Investment Commission.

...For the first time since 1990 the Overseas Investment Commission has declined an application. The consent withheld related to a lifestyle block... The policy guideline on lifestyle blocks was the would-be overseas buyer had to demonstrate some sort of commitment to N[Z]. In 1996 the commission approved 85,945ha of land sales... That included the sale of 30,000ha of Hikurangi forest by... Challenge to Malaysian interests... [but excluded] sales between overseas parties, transactions where the applicants were becoming N[Z] residents and N[Z]ers’ share of joint venture transactions... [T]he commission has approved the sale of 285,000ha to overseas buyers, or 1.33[% of NZ]’s farm and forested land[, since 1990].

...Since 1828 the windswept Scottish island of Eigg has been owned by private landlords, most of them absentees who cared little about anything other than collecting rent... The 7,400-acre island, reachable by ferry from Scotland’s west coast, has been neglected... Now, thanks to an effort launched by the island’s 68 residents and the aid of a site on the Internet, the Hebridean isle is owned by those who live there. Eigg’s last landlord – “a German who called himself an artist,”... put the island up for sale in 1996. The residents formed a partnership with the Scottish Wildlife Trust and the local governing council, creating a fund-raising Web page that “sent the message further than it would have gone otherwise,”... A “mystery person” who read about the effort donated more than half the successful bid of 2.4 million dollars. On June 12 the islanders took ownership... The partnership hopes to stock farms, fix up homes and barns, establish a forest-management system, and... other programs to lure tourists to Eigg and keep the community alive... [In related news, ‘for 24 years it was a source of inspiration for Boris Pasternak. From his first-floor study in the house where he wrote his Nobel prize-winning novel *Dr Zhivago*, the Russian poet gazed out on a rich landscape of birch trees and pines. Beyond it was a field and then a gold-domed church. Now, though, the Soviet writers’ village where Pasternak lived from 1936 until his death in 1960 has been transformed. A housing estate for Moscow’s super-rich is being built on the meadow, just 50m from Pasternak’s historic wooden dacha. The new mansions are on sale for around US\$1.5 million to US\$4 million. So who can afford them? “People with criminal money,” a local novelist said. The colony is still home to about 100 novelists and philosophers, who pay token rent to a literary fund. They have protested against the new estate, but to no avail. The field used to belong to a collective farm. According to Pasternak’s daughter-in-law, the two heads of the farm who opposed the sale of the land were mysteriously shot dead.’]

...A 2.558ha section... on the north-eastern edge of Hong Kong Island, [has] fetched \$NZ2.317 billion at auction[, or]... more than \$90,000 per sq m... It was sold by the Government for residential and commercial development. Prices per sq m in Auckland for residential land are about \$1000 on large sections on the city fringe[and] up to \$2000 for smaller coastal sections. For commercial land, they range from \$800... on the fringe to \$4000 in the central business district.

...[‘In the past 140 years, the Coromandel has been invaded for its gold and kauri. Today, most Coromandel gold and kauri has gone and it’s the land that is now sought. Beachfront land is being cut up for housing, and on the eastern side of the peninsula near Whangapoua, about 20km across from Coromandel township, two brothers and a sister are selling 538ha of their near-1300ha farm as they approach retirement. One of the trio says civilisation is making inroads gradually, but it took until 1963 for electricity from the national grid to reach them and the last district council tried to slow down the modern invasion. Less than 100 years ago, the land the trio own and the surrounding countryside was kauri forest. Captain Cook had noted the tall trees in 1769, and in the early 1890s the Kauri Timber Co bought more than 1000ha around Whangapoua from Maori and the logs were made into rafts and towed by tug to Auckland. The trio’s ancestor bought the block from the timber company in 1907 and his nephew bought neighbouring blocks in 1944 from a woman said to have been a god-daughter of King Edward VII. She spent the summer here, breeding polo ponies for the British Army in India and Siamese cats, and the remainder of the time back in England. In 1929 she started building a homestead. It eventually had 18 rooms and was nearly 40m long – big enough for her grand parties and balls. The land for sale includes the homestead. Also included are two baches, three shearers’ quarters, a garage, implement shed, a four-stand 1930s woolshed, two sheep and cattle yards. There is an airstrip and an income-producing quarry. Three of the seven titles front on to more than 1km of beach – two to high-water mark. The proposed district scheme intended increasing the minimum 20ha subdivision right to 60ha. The new council is believed to be more liberal than its predecessor. The property’s year-old government valuation is \$3.18 million. Section prices are likely to be \$130,000 to \$150,000.’]

...Concern that land in many coastal areas is being sold too cheaply by... Maori people has been expressed by members of the Tai Tokerau District Maori Council. At a meeting at Otiria in Northland on Saturday, the fact that 294 acres at Takou Bay was... sold for \$20,000 was deplored.

...Tumbling agricultural returns are forcing down farm values... Land valuers in some areas have cut the worth of farms by as much as 30[%] in two years, a move which will probably lead some farmers to their bank manager’s office... Most farmers would withstand the downturn, though there would be a need for belt-buckling... A Ministry of Agriculture outlook report shows average farm prices tracking up to a peak of \$13,400 a hectare in 1995 before beginning a gradual decline last year, to \$13,187... The Real Estate Institute is predicting prices to fall even further.

...An Oamaru residential section was offered for sale with a \$1 price tag – and it sold almost immediately. [The real] estate agent... advertised the Eden St section in Friday’s *Oamaru Mail*. “A woman walked in and put one dollar on the counter. She bought the section sight unseen,”... [The agent] said her telephone rang red hot over the weekend... The 1012 sq m section has a fire-damaged house on it and a value of \$8500... [T]he previous owners were insured and chose to rebuild elsewhere. It was their idea to offer the section at a nominal price for a quick sale. - 1997

Our World on Sale

...it’s a small world and it smells funny I’d buy another if it wasn’t for the money...

...the man who sold the world... must have died... a long long time ago...

A fairly recent concept, or fantasy, in the history of the human species is the private ownership of land (‘most economists use the term *land* in a much wider sense as including all of the earth’s natural resources such as mineral deposits, lumber, supply of energy, and wildlife; land, especially agricultural – which has had a certain amount of capital put into it – must offer a return in the shape of profits’). If anyone ever had *sold the world*, that person was unlikely to have been ABORIGINAL (‘inhabiting a land from an early period, especially before the arrival of colonists’).

The Mungo National Park Visitors’ Centre provides a wealth of information on... history... It is hard to believe that here is living testimony to a civilisation that was already old when the Pyramids were new... Here you learn that the region was formerly inhabited by two tribes – the Paarintji

in the north and the Paakantji in the south. They settled here when Lake Mungo was full, and fish and wildlife were in abundance. For more than 20,000 years, the two tribes lived peacefully by the lakeshore, until the lakes started to dry out around 10,000 to 12,000 years ago.

The Tasmanians... the extinct Australoid population of Tasmania... were an isolated population... who were cut off from the mainland when a general rise in the sea level flooded the Bass Strait about 10,000 years ago. Their population upon the arrival of European explorers... has been estimated at about 4,000. They were a relatively short people... [who] spoke languages that were unintelligible to mainland Aborigines... The first permanent white settlement was made in Tasmania in 1803; in 1804 an unprovoked attack by whites on a group of Tasmanians was the first episode in the Black War. The whites treated the Tasmanians as subhumans, seizing their hunting grounds, depleting their food supply, attacking the women, and killing the men. Tasmanian attempts to resist were met with superior weaponry and force by the Europeans... In 1820 [it was estimated that Tasmania's human] population was 5468, of whom 2588 had come as convicts[as part of 'an improperly planned experiment unique in history']... Between 1831 and 1835, in a final effort at conciliation and to prevent the extermination of the approximately 200 remaining Tasmanians[, they]... were removed to Flinders Island... [S]ubjected to alien disease... they soon died... [Editor's note: A movie about 'an aboriginal group's first encounter with Europeans starts when two escaped convicts are washed up on the shore. The Aborigines nurse the men back to health then ask them to return to their own people. For obvious reasons, the convicts weren't too keen to rejoin their own people and, because they didn't want to fend for themselves in a wild and unfamiliar country, they talk the Aborigines into letting them stay. This they were allowed to do under the condition that they abided by the rules of the group. One convict made friends with the Aborigines, learnt their language and taught English to some of them. The other convict had nothing to do with the Aborigines, who consequently found him to be a source of amusement. He was eventually accused of the rape (or attempted rape) of a maiden, for which he was executed. Eventually, more Europeans arrived and, upon meeting the group and their European friend, asked if they could buy some land to settle on. The Aborigines' response was that this was absurd! They didn't view land as a commodity that can be sold (compounded by their lack of a monetary system). All of the Europeans went away. Some time later the European friend returned with two new men. The three Europeans proclaimed that their rulers had given them the land. After a misunderstanding one of the sagely Aborigine elders was killed and then a European. The two remaining Europeans escaped. The film ends with a group of Europeans slaughtering the village in retaliation.']

...The Tasmanian wolf... was widely hunted... by... Europeans because it was considered a threat to domestic sheep. Rare in 1914, the... largest marsupial of recent times... is now thought to be extinct... The Tasmanian devil... [is] extinct on the A[US] mainland, but] survives in Tasmania...

Tasmania was discovered in 1642 by... Abel Tasman, who... took possession of the island for Holland... "Aborigines" is a term generally used for the Australoid race which inhabited A[US], including Tasmania, at the time of its discovery by Europeans, who originally called them Indians. Present archaeological evidence establishes that their arrival in A[US] occurred at least 40 000 years ago... It is estimated that there were about 300 000... in 1788, although recent research indicates that the number may have been considerably higher, particularly in the south-east... Before European settlement, the economy of the entire continent was based upon hunting, gathering and fishing... Large congregations of people occurred only periodically for purposes of ceremonial and social obligation, after which groups dispersed widely. Despite the conventional use of the term "tribe" ...the key units of social and economic organisation were much smaller... estimated at 50 people... and more highly integrated. The term used for the basic economic unit is *band* (or horde), that is, the local land-using group... "Tribe" has become a shorthand term for the sum of the constituent land-owning groups (clan estates) with a language or dialect in common... Aborigines spoke... [over] 200 distinct languages, with numerous dialects.

The ancient law has never been written down but it is passed on by word of mouth. The elders hold the law, much of which is sacred and secret... but with no one to pass it on to the knowledge is in danger of disappearing... The... traditional life... is giving way to the modern world... and for the young people, it's harder to see the relevance of the law... [One elder says,] "I feel sorry for those who are living in other places and are not connected to their land and their place as I am. I'm[also] very sad for... [all the] people whose land has been taken away by others. A long time ago [our]... land... was stolen... [by Europeans who didn't] know how to care for that land, how to respond to it, because they've lost their story and their way." Sydney was the site of the first European settlement in AUS and the tribes from the East Coast were the first to be moved out of the way as the new settlers spread out looking for land... Isolated in this ancient wilderness some... [Aborigines] were still living their traditional nomadic lifestyle up until the '60s. They remember how white men came to the western desert regions to clear the area for rocket testing. They found the last of these desert people and moved them to the nearest mission towns. The [people] lived in the mission towns until the early '80s then started to move back to their country... but... [they've] never been granted legal title to their land by the government... [However,] in 1992 the whole issue of native title changed... in... a landmark... High Court... decision in [which one group of Aboriginal] people were granted legal title to their islands as the original inhabitants of that area. Historically, property title in A[US] was based upon the... legal premise that the country was uninhabited at the time of European settlement. In effect, [the law had denied] the very existence of the original inhabitants. The[High Court] decision polarised national opinion. One of the strongest opponents to the Court's decision has been the mining companies who want development rights to remote areas. The W[A]n State Government has also challenged the... Court's decision unsuccessfully, and yet the land [taken] from the... seven sisters... people is still in dispute... The... seven sisters... community... sits on a uranium deposit... The women of... the seven sisters dream... are fighting for title to land that their people walked on long before the beginning of any Western civilisation.

Aborigines win back their land... Court ruling a dream come true says tribal council... A Sydney court yesterday ruled for the first time under the Native Title Act that a small parcel of A[US] had always belonged to the... Dunghutti Aboriginal community of Crescent Head, on the N[SW] mid-north coast... Members... [of the community] packed a federal courtroom to witness white man's law... [give] formal ratification to the... 12.4ha... native title... Under the agreement reached by all parties during negotiations, the Government will pay compensation for the part of the native title that has already been sold in blocks. A Government spokesman said the final compensation figure would be \$A778,000... The Dunghutti Elders Council is to be the trustee for the title and the compensation money... [T]he Dunghutti woman under whom the native title claim was made... said outside the court... "It should have happened well over 209 years ago,"... [T]he decision was a great step in the reconciliation between white and Aboriginal A[US]ns. Asked if the non-Aboriginal people in his shire were as pleased about the decision as the Aborigines[, the]... Kempsey Mayor... said, "I don't think they have any reason not to be. It's reconciliation, that's what it's all about. It's certainly solved the problem for those people who bought the land out there. They can get on with their lives now. So can the Aboriginal people. We can all live together." However, in Canberra the National Farmers Federation yesterday threatened to launch compensation claims if the Federal Government failed to act on its demands for legislation to wipe out native title on pastoral leases.

...A[US]'s top farming group said yesterday that... polling in response to a television advertising campaign... found 62[%] of those surveyed... supported its push for farmers to be protected against Aboriginal land claims... and 58[%] believed their plight was genuine or believable... Farmers are pressing the Government to legislate to give pastoral leases – ...granted to farmers and graziers since white settlement began more than 200 years ago – supremacy over Aboriginal land rights claims... The conservative Liberal-National Government is due to announce soon its response to a December High Court ruling, known as the Wik decision, that... a 1994 law passed by the Labour Government gave Aborigines rights

to land leased to farmers... Its genesis lies in the 1992 High Court Mabo ruling, which held that indigenous people able to demonstrate continuous association with traditional land since European settlement could claim native title, provided that title had not been “extinguished” – or erased – by the creation of freehold title. The question of leasehold crown land remained uncertain... It had been thought the long-term leases overrode native claims... Farm groups say the Wik ruling created uncertainty about what they can do with their land and jeopardised rural industry... The decision opened up about 80% of AUS’s land mass to potential native claims... The P[M]... said no decision has been made, but he pledged to look after farmers and the rural industry, worth an estimated \$A34 billion... a year. The farmers’ federation... television... ads aroused Aboriginal anger because they featured white and black children playing complicated games – which the black children always won.

...leaders... [representing] 65,000 Aborigines... from northern and central A[US]... vowed yesterday to fight a “political war” with... [the PM] over his 10-point plan for native title... [They rejected outright his] plan saying it threatened their most fundamental rights and reconciliation for the benefit of a handful of rich landowners... The plan does not extinguish native title but significantly reduces Aboriginal ability to negotiate over mining and other rights and confirms the primacy of agricultural pursuits. [The] chairman of the Northern Land Council... said the 10-point plan set Aboriginal people’s rights back 50 years and they would now have to fight for their future... “I think it is a declaration of war,”... a “final drive” to destroy Aboriginal people... But in Brisbane, the deputy chairman of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission... vowed to press ahead with the proposal... [He] said Aborigines would be prepared to give up native title claims “for all small family farms and small pastoral holdings held by A[US]n battling farming families,” in a effort to end the impasse created by the High Court’s Wik judgment. “But we will not support financial benefits and gains being given away to huge multinational companies from overseas, and to large trust companies being used as tax schemes by those who are wealthy enough to pay the proper value for the land they are using.”

...a fragile off-shore environment is at stake in a legal battle over A[US]’s Great Barrier Reef. The world-famous tourist spot is the subject of an Aboriginal land-rights claim but tourism chiefs don’t want Aboriginal groups to control the billion dollar reef industry. “It’s something that is going to drag people into A[US] and if we can’t sell that competitively then we are going to lose a substantial amount of that trade.” But [the Aborigines] say they want to regulate not close access to the reef... In Darwin, Aborigines yesterday revealed multiple land claims over significant areas of the Northern Territory, including national parks, coastland to the low-tide mark and riverbeds, in a move leaders conceded was a “grab.” The claims come en masse before a June 5 deadline for new claims set... by a sunset clause... in the historic and controversial Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act...

The A[US]n Aboriginal Affairs Minister... yesterday handed over the deeds of two huge properties in the Northern Territory to their traditional Aboriginal owners. The Malgnin and Nyinin people were granted native title... more than a year ago but the handover was delayed because land trusts had to be established... But for all the jubilation that accompanied the handover, the future of relations between black and white A[US] remains in serious doubt. The Federal Government has yet to determine its response to last year’s High Court ruling that overrode the Native Title Act’s exclusion of pastoral leases from Aboriginal land claims, now the centre of a furious storm over land rights. The dispute has become so bitter Aborigines and pastoralists will no longer sit at the same negotiating table, and Aboriginal mistrust over the Government’s commitment to reconciliation has deepened with a series of policy decisions since the Coalition took office in March last year. And... as the... people celebrated the return of their traditional land, more evidence emerged of the scale of the problem A[US] faces in reversing the impact of racial policies extended over two centuries... Only 16% of indigenous A[US]ns are in fulltime jobs outside Employment Department and community service projects... [Un]employment for Aborigines is forecast to... lift[from] the... present 39% to 47... by 2006 – 40% at best... The consequences are immediately apparent: overall average income for indigenous adults in 1994 was \$14,000, almost a third below national levels. The... cost is heavy for the nation. Indigenous income support at present costs \$1.1 billion a year, and is expected to rise to almost double within a decade.

...yesterday[. at]... a major conference on Aboriginal reconciliation... [the AUSn P]M... made an unexpected personal apology... to... Aborigines forcibly removed from their parents... a practice labelled genocidal by a human rights report which was tabled in Parliament last night... The 700-page report contained a litany of physical and sexual abuse... [The PM] received loud applause for his apology, but jeers when he said A[US]n history since white settlement in 1788 was not a history of “imperialism and exploitation and racism.” Many of the 1500 Aboriginal and political leaders turned their back on the P[M] as he continued his speech. Before his speech, [the PM] was abused by an angry Aboriginal woman who jumped on stage... Despite its stormy beginning... the convention satisfied most of its aims. Delegates said they had set in place “the most solid foundation” Aboriginal people have had since the momentous 1967 referendum which gave them full citizen rights... [However, delegates] were told by[the] conference leader... that black and white A[US] were at a crossroads... as the nation debates two extremely important issues – native title and the ‘Stolen Generation’... or “People of the Bleaching.” ...[an] estimated 60,000... Aboriginal children were... taken... under a Government policy of assimilation from the 1880s to the 1960s... The federal... Government has rejected calls for financial compensation, saying modern A[US] could not take legal responsibility for the sins of past generations.

...Last night the P[M]... went directly to the people of A[US] in a televised address to the nation urging support for legislation that without major compromise on all sides will turn the... Aboriginal Reconciliation... council’s hopes to ashes. Unless there is compromise on the Wik amendments... [the PM] may be forced to make good a threat to dissolve both Houses of Parliament and seek a new mandate for Government in an election in which race would inevitably play a large and potentially nasty role... Dinner-table conversations provide overwhelming anecdotal evidence that the prospect of a racially inspired election causes... shudders across the nation. Nor is there any clear indication of broad public opinion on an issue many A[US]ns do not... consider important to their own immediate concerns... And for most, Wik is not a simple issue to follow... The language of the debate has deteriorated steadily, plunging to new depths as the bill went before the Senate last week in a welter of bitter claim and counter-claim... [The P]M... used his... nine-minute speech... to plead for a speedy end to the... debate... and called on the Senate to pass it as soon as possible – or threaten jobs, fairness and certainty... [However,] in the end, the future of the Government’s bill will rest with one man – [the] Tasmanian Independent... who now holds the balance of power in the Senate.

...A[US] was last night facing the near certainty of an early election because the Senate made sweeping changes to Government legislation on Aboriginal land rights... These included rejection of a proposed six-year sunset clause for lodging native title claims, inclusion of a provision allowing spiritual connection to the land in claims, ensuring the bill would be subject to[the] Racial Discrimination Act, and the extension of Aborigines’ right to negotiate on mineral exploration on pastoral leases. The right to negotiate, passed early yesterday morning, was the final straw for the Government, which was backed in its stand by powerful mining and farming interests... The man who decided the outcome of the Senate vote... appealed for calm as the nation headed toward political crisis... - 1997

Lost people, lost cause in ‘rush to buy votes’... Two months ago A[US] stood on the brink of a bitter and divisive election based on race and the rights of indigenous people to claim what traditional land remained available to them. The nation is now just two days from the election, but it has buried race so deeply beneath the opposing banners of tax reform and jobs that Aborigine A[US] is scrambling for a last-minute inclusion... The battle lines are... clearly marked... But the problems afflicting A[US]’s 390,000 Aborigines, many of them living in [Last] World conditions in rural and remote areas, remain as entrenched and severe as ever... [However, the incumbent AUS]n Government believes reconciliation with disadvantaged Aboriginal people can still be achieved despite condemnation of its handling of indigenous issues.

...Aborigines have launched legal action against the South A[US]n Government to assert their native title rights over the world's largest ancient burial site at Lake Victoria... The lake manager... is considering raising the water level nearly 3m to 27m – a move Aborigines say would desecrate the site... [where] at least 10,000 Aborigines[are] buried... The lawsuit could evolve into a landmark native title case, raising questions for the first time about native title rights over a pastoral lease outside Queensland.

...IT'S A spine-tingling moment – standing on a candle-lit hilltop in the middle of the night in the middle of a game park listening to the new South African national anthem. The singers are the mainly black staff of Bongani Lodge but there are white voices too... Not so very long ago *Nkosi Sikelel'i Afrika* was a symbol of protest, a song of resistance, a plea – God save Africa. Now the beautiful hymn is official... The undeniable beauty of the country – its scale and variety – remains the top... tourist... attraction, followed by wildlife and stunningly good weather. But lots of people also list the political changes and African culture as their reasons for visiting... A highlight of our visit was to be a trip to... Cape Town[']s)... Robben Island, where [the African National Congress's most famous leader] was jailed for 18 years... [The island was] declared a national monument and museum late in 1996. But you need to book well in advance to avoid my disappointment of not being able to get a ticket on one of the six daily tours. The District Six Museum helped to fill the gap. Located in the central city in an old Methodist church, the developing museum records the forced removal of 60,000 people from their homes when the area on the slopes of Table Mountain was declared "whites only." A cosmopolitan mix of people were relocated to strictly separate racial areas, mainly in the poverty-stricken Cape Flats area.

After three centuries of abuse, the descendants of the tribes first exploited by the British who colonised Cape Town are to sue the Queen... "The Griqua people... hold the present British Government responsible for damages; for the loss of life and property, bodily harm and physical and verbal abuse incurred when they seized our ancestral land in the Northern Cape and Orange Free State," said... a tribesman involved in the action, which is claiming \$2.2 billion in damages. From the beginning of the 18th century the Griqua people, who now number 20,000, were pushed from the Cape into virgin lands to the north and east. The British used the tough indigenous people to clear the land before moving in to steal it for themselves. Over nearly 200 years they forced the Griqua through the Free State, with its diamond wealth, across some of the finest farming land in the nation and finally into Kwazulu Natal. When the British moved out, the Boers moved in with their racial policies... Around the world, indigenous peoples have begun to receive large payments for land stolen during the colonial era. But this is the first initiative in South Africa. While the Griqua hold the British responsible for stealing their land, they hold the mining conglomerate De Beers responsible for stealing their diamonds. They plan to sue the company for \$1.87 billion in lost royalties. According to one of the group's leaders, they have found contracts that offered them 6[%] of all the profits made from the minefields around Kimberley. He pointed out that it was they who found the first of the big diamonds – the Star of South Africa – at Hopetown. So far the British Government and De Beers have responded cautiously. The British High Commission said it had informed Buckingham Palace, while De Beers said it was waiting for further clarification. "We would like to stress... De Beers acquired its properties and mineral rights holdings from the previous lawful holders," the company said... The South African Government is unhappy about the vast land claims being made... It says that because the Griqua's grievances are before 1913, the year of the infamous land acts, they do not apply under the new constitution. "If we went all the way back there could be eight or nine groups all with completely legitimate claims," an official said. - 1996

"I'm ready to fulfill a dream... [This territory is] ruled over by one naked old savage... all I want is a piece of paper, an agreement for exclusive mineral rights in all of [his] domains... an area bigger than France, Germany, Belgium and Holland combined... [F]urthermore, De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd is empowered to control and manage railways, tramways, roads, telegraphs, canals, harbours, to acquire [secret services...]"

"[S]ecret services! And... [you want my support? W]e're gonna take on the whole bleedin' world. We're gonna run countries, raise armies, wage wars, paid for by De Beers..." "[F]or heavens sake, calm down man..." "Let me get this straight. I'm the largest shareholder with [this company] and no one is going to play Julius bleedin' Caesar or... Napoleon with my money, is that clear? I'm a businessman... not a bloody emperor!"

"Alright... let's talk as businessmen. Kimberley, [with] virtually all the world's diamonds [is here, and over there is] the greatest gold fields known to man, and a mere 300 miles between them. Now, it would be contrary to nature, wouldn't it, to suggest that in all this vast emptiness there... [isn't] another hundred Kimberleys. Where's our precious monopoly then?" "Look, I'm not here to talk bloody ifs and maybes." "...nor I... we have it on the authority of the Bible that somewhere here lies the... site of King Solomon's mines, the source of the Queen of Sheba's riches... Listen to me... all across [this land] wandering hunters have found ancient mines, groves of lemon trees, pomegranates, things unseen in Africa, and each new discovery supports the legend. [This land] is in my firm opinion the lost kingdom..." "So, we just gets ourselves an army and ups and takes it, [yes? What about the million-or-so people]... dotted about in there. No problem sorting that lot out!" "We don't have to sort them out, it's already been done for us. A generation ago a huge Zulu army... swept through this territory and established their headquarters at [this place]... I shall make a legal arrangement... [with their] King... for all the mineral rights throughout his domains." "You ain't got [the right]." "...look at this... the Queen's stamp... it's an official letter from the Governor of the Cape commending our mission to... [this King, and in] the north... the legal arrangement for all the mineral rights throughout [these] domains... our agents will cover Africa with scraps of paper till [our company] has the balance of the map..." "Are you seriously going to send blokes into [the] blue yonder with nothing but a letter from 'umpty Dumpty to cover their arses? You're talking about thousands and thousands of bleedin' miles! Places where no white man's ever been!" "...you're wrong... There's a whole network of white men in every kaffir capital. Men who are trusted by the blacks, men who are desperately short of funds... the missionaries! Our standard bearers! ...the London Missionary Society, the Scottish, the Jesuits." "Alright, supposing you pulls it off. It's all signed and delivered between [you] and his dusky majesty. You're happy, they're happy. So what's all this I'm supposed to sign about armies and secret services... What do you need them for if it's gonna be sweet and legal?" "...power, the power to protect those... mineral rights..." "You can't take on whole countries, that's a job for the blummin' British Government." "...I've tried the British Government, they won't touch it. I've tried the Cape Government, they're too poor to do it." "[Then] how are we supposed to be able to bloody-well do it?" "We must do it! Otherwise it'll be taken away from us. [Look, Germans are] all down this coast, almost to the Cape border. The Portuguese here, here the French, Belgian's... the Transvaal Boers[are] ready to sweep in from the South." "So this lot just sit on their arses while we ups and takes it?" "...don't forget the scraps of paper. We will have the legal rights. All we have to do is register those rights with the British Government. With the authority of Britain behind us who is going to stop us?"

"Pie in the sky! You do this, he does that, he does something else. You don't know, do you, [cause] no one's ever done anything like [that before]." "Yes they have! They've done it right here in Kimberley. Think of it as you think of the amalgamation of the mines. London is the claim exchange... and everybody wants this... block of claims right here, but the legal owners sell it to us. We register with the claim exchange and it's ours. It's... so simple!" "Tell me [if] I've got this right. His dusky majesty signs on the dotted line, up we go, do[a] spot of digging, when his back's turned we clips him on the side of the head with a shovel and steals his bloody country. [Now is] that about the size of it?" "It's fate... can't stand in the way of fate. All that vast emptiness given over to savagery with its waste of nature and contempt for human life, it is inevitable that that should change. All I ask is that we should be the instruments of fate." - RHODES

With the help of a local missionary, Rhodes eventually brokered a treaty between 'the Black King and the Great White Queen' (Victoria). That treaty was less formal than the one signed on behalf of the same monarch to bring NZ under her control.

HER MAJESTY VICTORIA Queen of the United Kingdom... regarding with Her Royal Favour the Native Chiefs and Tribes of N[Z] and anxious to protect their just Rights and Property and to secure to them the enjoyment of Peace and Good Order... confirms and guarantees to the Chiefs and Tribes of N[Z] and to the respective families and individuals thereof the full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates Forests Fisheries and other properties which they may collectively or individually possess so long as it is their wish and desire to retain the same in their possession; but the Chiefs of the United Tribes and the individual Chiefs yield to Her Majesty the exclusive right of Preemption over such lands... to alienate at such prices as may be agreed upon between the respective Proprietors and persons appointed by Her Majesty... THE TREATY OF WAITANGI, [which was] for many years regarded as a symbol of enlightened, humane and generous respect for the rights of an indigenous population by a colonising government, has been increasingly condemned in recent years as a 'fraud' by a growing number of Maoris and Pakehas. It was signed at Waitangi in the Bay of Islands on 6 February 1840, by some Maori leaders present at [the] meeting... and by Lieutenant-Governor HOBSON on behalf of the British government... Kawiti... was the first name on the main sheet... although he was not the first chief to sign... [Hone Heke] was the first to sign... It was later signed by other chiefs in other districts... but many Maori leaders never signed it, either because they refused to do so or did not have the opportunity. It seems certain that Maoris and Europeans had mixed feelings about the Treaty at the time it was made, but Maoris who signed put their trust in missionary advice. They were told that the Treaty was a solemn contract between the two races, under which NZ sovereignty had been vested in the British Crown in return for guarantees of certain Maori rights. Many Europeans genuinely believed this and for some years the British government upheld the agreement and were reluctant to allow it to be broken. Within a decade, however, the Chief Justice... ruled that the Treaty had no validity in law since it was not incorporated in NZ's statutory law. As Pakeha settlers took up the Maori land for settlement throughout the 19th century, they tended to regard the Treaty, if they thought of it at all, first as a nuisance and later as irrelevant... The text of the treaty was written in English and then fairly loosely translated into Maori. The text was apparently amended by Hobson after it was first explained to assembled Maori leaders... Because the English and Maori versions suggest different meanings, and, as a result, a different understanding, it is not surprising that the Treaty has been the cause of much confusion over the years.

[Due to] the difficulties of translation it is hardly possible that... Maoris had the same understanding of the Treaty as the Europeans. One example is the use of the missionary-manufactured word "kawana-tanga" meaning governorship for sovereignty. Many Maoris... regard[ed] the Governor simply as the governor of the Pakehas, especially those people whose principal chiefs had refused to sign the Treaty... To avoid racial conflict over transactions, the Treaty... stated that the Maori chiefs yielded to the Crown the exclusive right of pre-emption over the sale of land. This meant... land could be sold only to the Crown, which then sold portions to European settlers at a higher price. The differential was seen as revenue which would provide the Government with funds to open up the country and build roads and bridges. Neither Maoris nor settlers were satisfied with the system... Maoris interpreted pre-emption as offering only the right of first refusal to the Government: they wanted the full market value. Settlers wanted to deal privately with the Maoris, believing... they would pay a lower price than that demanded by the Government... Checks on fraud and abuses in land transactions... were introduced by legislation but were largely ineffective as loopholes existed in the law... A Commission of Inquiry into land alienation revealed that... 4 million acres... of pastoral land in Hawke's Bay was in the hands of fewer than 50 Europeans[, while] Crown grants totalling 569,220 acres... had been issued to about 300 Maoris when the land properly belonged to 3,773 Maoris... [T]he individualisation of Maori land was exacerbated by the Native Land Act laid down that every man, woman and child with interest in a block of land had to be registered as an owner. Interests in blocks were to pass to all natural heirs unless otherwise designated by will. This led to the fragmentation of title with individual shares becoming smaller with each generation. This made it easier for the unscrupulous to buy into Maori blocks.

Subsequent encroachment on the lands set aside for them[, and]... the enforced sale of Maori lands to Europeans... led eventually to the Maori Wars of 1860-72 in which Maori independence was finally destroyed.

The wars – variously called the N[Z] Wars, the Land Wars and, less accurately, the Maori Wars – ...first broke out in the north, when Hone HEKE and his followers cut down the Russell flagstaff on several occasions between July 1844 and March 1845 as a gesture of Maori independence. British troops were called in to quell these disturbances which were followed by other outbreaks of violence in the Hutt Valley and at Wanganui.

[General Sir Trevor Chute] succeeded Sir Duncan Cameron as the commander of the British Imperial forces in N[Z] at the end of 1865. He intervened with a swift and efficient campaign in the war between Maori and settler in... Wanganui, marching his men 260 miles in six weeks, losing nine killed and 26 wounded, capturing seven fortified pa and 20 villages, and demonstrating that the troops could follow Maoris into the bush. He came to believe, as Cameron had before him, that the colonists in demanding the continuance of war were motivated by land greed, and accordingly he became involved in disputes between the British government and the local authorities on the control of local militia and regular troops. - ENCYCLOPEDIA OF NEW ZEALAND

[Governor] Grey made allegations of Maori plots to attack Auckland and some were... convincing... but we now know that all were almost certainly false. London did not know that they were false. It sent Grey enough ships and troops to transform N[Z] history. Troops came... from the four corners of the Earth. By 1864 the number of Imperial soldiers approached 12,000. The settler Government also provided its own army to supplement the Imperials, and some 5000 men, half of them from A[US], were recruited for the Waikato militia. In Auckland, 3000 more military were called up for active service... [T]hese thousands of soldiers and the hundreds of thousands of pounds flowing in to pay and supply them, transformed Auckland[('how many people know Great South Rd was the military route Grey built to invade the Waikato?')]. A small, ramshackle settlement of about 8000 people became a bustling town. The population doubled, shipping tripled, imports quadrupled. Business boomed, and so did crime, drinking and prostitution. Like other N[Z] towns, Auckland discovered that the troops were heroes on duty but villains on their time off.

Maori... ['the brown aboriginal people of NZ.' The word 'means "usual, ordinary". The Maoris used the word to describe themselves, as opposed to the "different", European settlers, during the 19th century, and the Europeans in turn adopted it. Before the time of the arrival of Europeans, Maoris had no names for themselves as a nation, only a number of tribal names.' H]istory describes their origins in terms of waves of migration beginning about AD 1150 and culminating in the arrival of a "great fleet" in the 14th century from Hawaiki, a mythical land usually identified as Tahiti. Although this tradition has largely been discounted by archaeological discoveries... it still provided the basis for traditional Maori social organization. Members of each tribe (*iwi*) recognized a common ancestry... and common allegiance to a chief or chiefs (*ariki*)... [T]he most important social groups were the *hapuu* (subtribe), the primary landholding group and the one within which marriage was preferred, and the extended family (*whaanau*). This social order was in force when Abel Tasman... arrived... [For centuries, European navigators had searched for a southern hemisphere continent they called Terra Australis Incognita which, according to legend, would yield even greater wealth than the rich East Indies. Seeking a route to South America, Abel Tasman came upon the West Coast of NZ which he believed was the Great South Land.] He did battle with a group of Maori on the South Island and left the area largely unexplored[due to a 'lack of evidence of gold and spices.' In the following century, James Cook] circumnavigated the two

major islands and wrote about the intelligence of the Maori and the suitability of N[Z] for colonization. Whalers, sealers, and other Europeans seeking profit were initially welcomed by the Maori. With the introduction of muskets, disease, Western agricultural methods, and missionaries, Maori culture and social structure began to disintegrate. By the late 1830s N[Z] had been joined to Europe, and European settlers landed by the score. After the British assumed formal control of N[Z] in 1840, European settlement and government began to alarm the Maori... The so-called King Movement was a response to the increasing threat to the Maori land. In 1857 several tribes of the Waikato area... elected as king Te Wherowhero, who reigned as Potatau 1. In addition to electing a king, they established a council of state, a judicial system, and a police organization, all of which were intended to support Maori resolve to retain their land and to stop the intertribal warfare over the issue. Not all Maori accepted the authority of the king, but the majority shared... the resolve not to sell the land. Until 1860 the Maori still owned most of the land in the North Island, but a large increase in the number of immigrants in the 1850s led to demands for greatly increased land purchase by the government... In 1859 Te Teira, a Maori of the Taranaki area, sold his Waitara River land, without the consent of his tribe, to the colonial government, precipitating the First Taranaki War of 1860-61. The war consisted essentially of a series of generally successful sieges of Maori *pas* (fortified villages) by British troops and militia employing a sap trench procedure. The British were defeated during an attack... on Putetakaure *pa* when the Maori executed a surprise counterattack... Maori also began to employ guerrilla tactics... The British government wanted to conclude peace in 1864, but the colonial government, wishing to acquire more land, continued the war and assumed an increasing share of the fighting... The main Maori combatants in the mid-60s were the fanatical Hauhau... warriors... From 1868 to 1872 the Hauhau were supplemented by a new warrior cult, Ringatu, founded and led by a guerrilla leader, Te Kooti. All fighting ended in 1872. Great tracts of Maori land had been confiscated and Maori society permanently disrupted. The supporters of the King Movement retreated to King Country, in the west-central North Island. This area was closed to Europeans and remained under Maori control until 1881...

TE WHITI-O-RONGOMAI (c. 1830-1907) was a leader of passive resistance against European confiscation of Maori land, and a Maori perhaps more unfairly treated by Pakeha settlers than any other. He was born in Taranaki, a member of the Te Ati Awa tribe, and educated at a mission school, where he was noted for his aptitude for Bible studies. After he left school he set up a flour mill at a place called Warea, about 35 km south-west of New Plymouth, and he was living peacefully in the area when, according to one historian, colonial troops burned his village in 1865. He moved his settlement to Parihaka, 42 km south-west of New Plymouth, where he granted haven to disaffected Maoris, but he would not allow any of his followers to fight... Te Whiti was opposed to any land being sold to Europeans, and claimed that land, which had already been confiscated in south Taranaki but not developed, should be returned to them. He believed that the Maoris should be left alone to work out their own destiny and that, because both fighting and direct negotiation with the Pakehas had not solved their land problems, they should resort to passive resistance or civil disobedience... Government surveyors moved on to the confiscated land in south Taranaki in 1879, and Te Whiti launched his campaign... [of] ploughing up roads and settlers' pastures, and removing surveyors pegs. At first the government tried to temper the anger of the colonists and some of their own members by advocating restraint, and the Native Minister of the time, BRYCE, resigned when his colleagues refused to accept his advice to take forceful action against Te Whiti. By the end of 1881, however, the government was forced into a position of taking action or admitting that the confiscation of the land was illegal. Bryce was reinstated in the Ministry, and in November 1881 led 1600 Armed Constabulary and militia men to Parihaka to arrest Te Whiti and his associate, Tohu. A constitutional crisis developed when the Governor, Sir Arthur GORDON, claimed that the Ministry was taking unwarranted action against the Maori leaders, and was illegally holding them without trial. Te Whiti was released after a year... However, he soon built up his following again and, when a government investigation was under way into the land question, he renewed his policy of passive resistance. In 1886 he [was] jailed for several months, and the back of the civil disobedience campaign was finally broken. Te Whiti was a man of great character, intelligence and commanding appearance. He taught his people to be sober, to work hard and to face their situation with courage and calm. - BATEMAN NEW ZEALAND ENCYCLOPEDIA

This encyclopedia reference didn't mention that '20 of the men who were arrested [in 1881] died due to the harsh conditions of the prison', or that it 'took three weeks of raping, looting and pillaging to displace the largest and most prosperous Maori settlement' ('when the Pakehas assembled a cannon the day before the assault on the pa, a black dog came up the road and lifted his leg on the cannon: a sign from heaven – even the animals despised warfare').

When the cavalry approached... there were only two lines of defence: the first a chorus of 200 boys, the second, a chanting of girls. On Te Whiti's clear orders, there was to be no recourse to arms despite the rape of women, theft of heirlooms and household property, burning of homes and crops, taking of stock and the forced transportations that followed... A section of the dispersed people began... marching throughout Taranaki so that a home might be found. "The invasion and sacking of Parihaka," the Waitangi Tribunal would state – and later be widely criticised for exaggeration – "must rank with the most heinous action of any government, in any country, in the last century. For decades, even to this day, it has had devastating effects on race relations. There was not a tribe in the country that did not learn of it, for Parihaka had been open to them all." ... (It should be noted here that Parihaka was affording refuge to Wiremu Hiroki who, it was alleged, had killed a surveyor in South Taranaki in 1878.)... Earlier this year I talked to the P[M]... about his early life in Taranaki. A Maori family took him to school where Maori made up 30[%] of the roll. He grew up on a rough farm... almost within shouting distance of Parihaka Pa... Did he know the history? "We knew there was a prophet Te Whiti... But, really, we were more interested in Jock Te Whiti who played rugby." ... [NZers] of my generation... knew... only that, undeniably, we enjoyed the best race relations in the world. At secondary school, in an age when youths were encouraged to take the "real" subjects of maths and sciences, we were taught precious little about the history of Aotearoa... I learned in school certificate and university entrance history about the Tolpuddle Martyrs and the English Corn Laws, Bismarck and the unification of Germany, about Cecil Rhodes, the Statute of Westminster and the American Civil War, but not so much about the land where I was born. It wasn't that "N[Z]" history was ignored, it wasn't. We learned about... the N[Z] Company, plucky pioneers, "rebel" Maoris and the Maori Wars... Vogel and Richard John Seddon. But it wasn't our *own* story, it was largely the British colonial story, one which a later historian would describe as "Anglo-centric and empire-worshipping". Sure, there had been a treaty signed at Waitangi in 1840... but we weren't told much about it... To the west of the *maunga*, the mountain, are the lands of the Taranaki people. All these people refused to sign the Treaty of Waitangi... On the ring plane around Mt Egmont[(Taranaki)], with its fertile volcanic soils and regular year-round rain-fall, these lands would make up a sizeable chunk of what was to become the first specialised dairying area in N[Z]. And they would become the subject of the nation's longest land conflict, "the never-ending war"... In 1841, from Devon and Cornwall, came the first organised settlers of the Plymouth Company, a subsidiary of the N[Z] Company, colonists who, in spite of a British government ban on private purchases of native land, had been sold tracts of it before they had set sail from England. And that was the beginning of the land conflict in Taranaki which, the Waitangi Tribunal was to note, "has continued with little amelioration for 155 years" as sometimes unscrupulous, sometimes ignorant, but always acquisitive Pakeha bought land from Maori who on occasions sold that which was not always theirs to sell. There was always Maori resistance... In 1854, hapu from central and south Taranaki met and resolved to stop further sales. Some settlers charged that Maori had thus formed a "land league" to restrain trade illegally – pledging... Maori soil could be taken by the Pakeha only over Maori bodies. Wiremu Kingi Te Rangitake was regularly described as the mastermind of the league, but there is, scholars have ascertained, no record of his involvement. Nonetheless, the image of Kingi as the leading figure in a murderous league determined to stop honest persons exercising their right to buy and sell

was conveyed to a new governor fresh from Britain, Colonel Thomas Gore Browne, and is said to have influenced his decision to launch an attack on Kingi's pa at Waitara in 1860. Thus began the full-scale fighting of the Taranaki Land Wars... *AFTER THE VICTORY*... [there] was land aplenty for Pakeha – the government saw to that. *IN 1863 ALL OF TARANAKI* except the uninhabited hinterland was declared a confiscated area on the suggestion of Governor Sir George Grey who urged that the government should punish “rebels” from the war by taking their lands. In 1865 and 1866, Grey issued proclamations confiscating 503,000 hectares... “The... [government] seized upon the idea [of confiscation] with a greedy enthusiasm and produced a grandiose scheme whereby several million pounds were to be borrowed in England on the security of the profits expected from the sale of the confiscated land to new immigrants.” ...The proclamations provided for compensation for “friendly natives”. However, none of the land specified for “loyal” Maori was set aside and made available to them... [Furthermore, the] acreage involved... was often estimated on the basis of rough sketch maps: “The Maori probably believed these initial boundaries to be final and accepted peace on this basis, reconciling themselves to the loss of a limited acreage.” But as the risk of resistance seemed to diminish, the government would proceed to survey and occupy more land. This process of creeping confiscation – Maori saw it as renewed aggression – was the cause of what became known as Titokowaru's War of 1868, the passive resistance of the prophet Te Whiti and the events that would take place at Parihaka in 1881. - North & South

A bureaucratic battle to win back Maori tribal land in the Tarawera Forest, Bay of Plenty, has reached a stalemate. - 1982

[A] Maori Land March began at Te Hapua settlement in the far north on Sept 14, 1975, and arrived at Parliament Buildings in Wellington on Oct 13. Here, its leader Mrs Whina (later Dame Whina) Cooper... presented a Memorial of Rights signed by 60,000 people to Prime Minister Rowling, Maori Affairs Minister Matiu Rata and other parliamentarians. One of the aims of the march was to obtain a guarantee that “not one more acre” of Maori land would be alienated. The Government made no specific promises... but... [a] tribunal was set up to hear Maori grievances against contraventions of the provisions of the Treaty of Waitangi...

The Government is on the brink of settling its largest-ever deal with Maori... Negotiations to settle the Ngai Tahu claim have intensified over the past 10 weeks... Both parties are reluctant to comment... because negotiations are at a sensitive stage... but the Government is keen to get the deal signed and sealed... [A] major stumbling block is the Crown's attempt to extinguish Ngai Tahu's customary fishing rights as part of the package.

...THE heads of agreement signed with Ngai Tahu yesterday is a non-binding deal. It will now go before the tribe's governing body... in the next two weeks. If it approves, the deal will be voted on by the Ngai Tahu beneficiaries. Its \$170 million value is mainly in assets and the only cash will be interest accrued until the deal is finally signed in Parliament. More negotiations will be needed to finalise just what Ngai Tahu will receive. It involves 1.38 million hectares of land, about a 10th of the land the tribe originally sold to the Government... Ngai Tahu can select properties to the total market value of no more than \$200 million, less the value of other properties transferred to the tribe under the deed of settlement. That means Ngai Tahu can... spend... \$30 million of non-settlement money... Apart from two surplus Telecom sites with memorials on them, no private land is being returned... Aside from three pastoral leases, purchased by the Government three years ago, no high country property is affected... Apart from Crown Titi Islands, only 630ha of... five million hectares of conservation estate is being returned... Conservation land affected will still be free and open to the public... Negotiations will continue about the tribe's relationship with its sacred mountain, Mt Cook. The settlement ends some 150 years of grievances with the Crown and five years of negotiation... The grievances arose from 10 land purchases by the Crown between 1844 and 1864, which covered most of the South Island. The Crown acquired some 15 million hectares for £14,750. The Crown also failed to honour part of the deal by not providing promised schools and hospitals, which had been an inducement in several of the purchases. As a result of the original deals, Ngai Tahu was reduced from owning about half of the N[Z] land mass to barely 15,000ha... THE NGAI TAHU agreement brings the amount committed to settling Maori claims to more than half a billion dollars in the past four years... A total of 618 claims have been registered with the Waitangi Tribunal, 70 of those within the past year... [L]ast year... the... Treaty Negotiations Minister... proposed a fiscal envelope, with a... limit of \$1 billion, to settle all outstanding grievances. But the plan stalled in the face of determined opposition from Maori at a series of meetings on marae around the country. But the Tainui claim was settled soon afterwards for a then-record \$170 million, which could increase by a further \$70 million after caveats to the deal are finalised. Last Tuesday, a \$40 million settlement was reached with the Whakatohea tribe over a claim relating to the confiscation of about 70,000ha of land from 1865. The deal involves the iwi becoming owners of the Opotiki police station and four police properties, courthouse and a local quarry.

...after negotiating for more than five years... the... Government and Ngai Tahu have... settle[d] the South Island tribe's Treaty of Waitangi claim for \$170 million in land and cash... The Government has also agreed to change 78 place names to provide for joint Maori and English names. Among them is Mt Cook, which will also be called Mt Aoraki. The... Minister for Treaty Negotiations... was particularly pleased the settlement preserved and enhanced public access rights and did away with the anxieties of private land owners.

...Northland farmers locked in a bitter valuation dispute with the Government have been told to keep quiet while their lawyer attempts to negotiate a satisfactory settlement. But the Northland division of Federated Farmers... has called for a retired judge to be appointed to mediate... on Waitangi Tribunal recommendations that part of their properties should be returned under a Te Roroa Maori land claim. - 1996

A search by a Northland... subtribe... for a... fabled 137-year-old treaty... is proving a mystery. The... Ngati Whata... hapu... believes the treaty... was signed between it and Governor Thomas Gore Browne on the back of a sheepskin in 1860, creating a direct link to the Crown. But it says the treaty was dishonoured when Queen Victoria ignored petitions by the hapu asking that it be exempted from policies disadvantageous to Maori. The hapu is now seeking compensation from the Crown through a 20,000ha land claim. It is also eager to locate the sheepskin – but continues to draw a blank... The treaty was kept at Arapaoa Marae, 20km south-west of Maungaturoto, along with a Union Jack and a Queen Victoria bust[, until a]... politician, Puraire Paikeu... kept the treaty early this century. According to some rumours, he passed the sheepskin to the Ratana Church near Wanganui just before he died in 1943. The... treaty may have been buried in a vault under the church building for safe-keeping. The church was rebuilt in the late 1970s, and people can remember seeing a sheepskin taken out along with other documents. “The problem is that the treasures were reburied under 16 tonnes of concrete when the new building went up.” The treaty may also have been lost when a boat – no longer identifiable – carrying items belonging to politicians sank on a journey between Auckland and Wellington. “There is also hope that it is being kept in the National Archives in Wellington or in some government vault,”... said a Te Uri o Hau spokesman...

In 1840... the Te Uri O Hau people... controlled almost 500,000 acres of resource-rich land in northern Kaipara and were poised to reap the benefits of the new Pakeha world of trade. Today they own a fraction of that area, and in many instances their rights as landowners are little more than nominal. The land was wrested from them in an insidious, incremental process... [As a result,] Te Uri O Hau... have suffered serious social and economic deprivation. It is notable that they have always remained loyal to their treaty partner – in contrast to the Crown, which has failed to honour its side... Compared with some Waitangi Tribunal claims, the submissions of the... [Te Uri O Hau], to be heard this week, are modest.

...THE Waitangi Tribunal's first report on the Muriwhenua treaty action – Northland's biggest land claim – is likely to have... significant ramifications for future claims. It will be particularly significant for other northern tribes... The report is understood to back arguments that much

of the land under question was leased and not sold to the Crown. Muriwhenua tribes will meet in Kaitia on Wednesday to hear the Tribunal's report on the land claim. The state-owned – but Japanese-leased – Te Aupouri Forest, 90 Mile Beach, DoC-owned Maungataniwha Forest and Tepaki Farm Park are some of the most significant pieces of land in the claim... If the tribunal agreed with claimants on this issue – which focused on the concept of *tuku whenua* (most closely translated as leasing or allocating) – a major precedent would be established... Other inquiries addressed by the tribunal so far have not used the same argument. Tainui's \$170 million claim... was based primarily on issues of *raupatu* (confiscation). The Ngai Tahu claim, still in the process of being settled, was largely based on the Crown's failure to set aside reserves... [I]n the case of the Muriwhenua tribes, however, land loss had occurred mainly through what the Crown argued were sales. Muriwhenua tribes had lost the vast majority of their land much earlier than other iwi around the country – 75% of it lost by 1865. The tribes had presented evidence showing that “sale” documents, written in Maori and normally by missionaries, referred to the arrangements as ones of *tuku whenua*... The argument had been hotly contested by the Crown, “which claimed tribes had willingly and knowingly sold their lands... Given that all the transactions were conducted in Maori, however, the Crown has had a very hard time proving this.” ...the weight of evidence lodged meant it would be hard for the tribunal not to find in the tribe's favour on this matter. Such a decision would “bring into question the whole nature of land transactions last century, when a good 50% to 60% of land (nationwide) went. This is why the Crown has vehemently opposed it from the word go.” ...A favourable decision would enable the re-establishment of the economic base that had been taken away at a very early date from the Muriwhenua people... [thereby allowing them to once again] become contributors to the Northland economy – a right long denied them... [A] Waitangi Tribunal director... said he couldn't pre-empt the release of the report, the subject of hearings since 1990, but said the different concepts of land transactions meant the tribes “were trapped by a paradigm they knew nothing about.”

...academic specialists... in the fields of linguistics, Maori studies and anthropology... who appeared before the... Waitangi Tribunal... [during] the Muriwhenua Land Report... gave evidence which demonstrated quite clearly that the land transactions conducted between 1830 and 1865 were conducted according to Maori custom law. Maori studies... noted that throughout N[Z] and Polynesia (and possibly well beyond that), the practice of transferring use rights for particular areas of land to non-tribal members is well known and at least many centuries old. The main aim of the transaction was to bind outsiders to the tribe's social structure for the period that they were resident there and to hence be assured of them contributing their knowledge, skills and support to the overall well-being of the tribe. It was also well understood that the land would ultimately return to the tribe... The... evidence also showed that the Maori who participated in the land transactions with Europeans were doing so, not surprisingly, within the context of their own language and culture. The values and assumptions which underpinned that culture at that time made no allowance for land being treated as a commodity which could be bought and sold. Rather the land was viewed as an integral and inseparable part of the tribe's... existence... [Hence,] no tribe could willingly and knowingly sever all its ties to its lands through the transactions it carried out with Europeans. For in terms of the custom law, this could only be done through battle and driving the tribe off their lands permanently.

...the Hawkes Bay claim of Ngati Pahauwera showed that lands bought from the tribe in the 1860s wrongly included 466ha... which local Maori had wished to retain. When a... chief pointed out the error at the time... officials investigated and concluded that a mistake had been made. This was never publicly acknowledged, and the land simply remained in crown ownership until it was sold to a European settler.

...Opponents of one of the largest Treaty of Waitangi claims are warning the negotiation team that it could face legal and “political” action if the deal is advanced at a meeting in Ootiki today... Whakatohea, was on the verge of settling its claim, but some beneficiaries unhappy with the... \$40 million... deal have slowed the process down... A... Whakatohea... spokesman... said... the negotiating committee... had gone beyond its mandate... and... the negotiators should cease all contact with the Crown... until the Government made a decent offer to settle the claim... “The deed of settlement... is a global offer that... proposes to settle all Whakatohea claims prior to September 21, 1992...” At risk if the deal is accepted is the separate claim by the Mokomoko whanau, whose ancestor was pardoned of murder 126 years after he was hanged. As punishment for the crime he did not commit, the Government confiscated 70,000ha. The Mokomoko whanau... finds it hard to understand how the committee can negotiate on its behalf... The latest argument is part of a long and at times bitter row. To date, the negotiations have cost nearly \$890,000.

...Lack of money is complicating the delicate consultation process with tribes following the Muriwhenua Land Report. Explaining what the Waitangi Tribunal report meant to claimant tribes in the Far North was a huge job... The cost... was mounting and funds were quickly running out. “If we don't get help soon we will be broke...,”... a Ngati Kahu spokeswoman... said. Division among the five claimants... makes it unlikely they can put up a united front to settle the \$500 million-plus claim. A Ngati Kuri spokesman... said that before any settlement could be made tribal boundaries had to be determined so each tribe knew what crown assets were in its area.

...Opposing factions in the huge Muriwhenua land claim are set to patch up their differences after a breakthrough in the long-running grievance. The claimants, split over who should represent the Muriwhenua people in negotiations with the Government, have agreed to a mediation process...

Muriwhenua iwi... say they need more than \$1 million to properly assess, then negotiate, the Crown's offer to settle their huge claim... [Ironically, rent on the Te Aupouri Forest] land of just under \$300,000 a year... which... is paid to the Crown Forest Rental Trust[(CFRT), has accrued to]... just over \$2 million... Cutting rights to the... forest were sold to[a] Japanese firm... for \$42 million in 1990. The deal covers two rotations of tree growth... Muriwhenua could be entitled to compensation for the value of the land, the accrued rent, further rental and up to 90% of the value of the money the cutting rights were sold for.

...Eight claimants awaiting decisions on Treaty of Waitangi issues are getting a \$20,000... payment from the C[FRT]. A number of claimants are living on borrowed money or mortgaging and selling land bequeathed by their ancestors in order to keep their claims alive, the trust says.

...The... C[FRT]... is to be reviewed. Terms of reference for scrutiny of the... trust... – which... handed out \$26 m... during the past 10 years – have been released by the Deputy P[M]... and the Minister of Finance... The review was part of the coalition agreement... [But the] Act leader... said... “When... the trust... [was established] the thinking was it would have a life of five years... 10 years on and not one forestry claim has been settled.” ...The tax uncertainty faced by the trust is also under review. Earlier this year an \$11 m... tax bill from the Inland Revenue was handed to the trust, after an earlier decision exempting the trust from tax. The trust was set up after the Maori Council and the federation of Maori authorities successfully challenged the Government's intended sale of 90 state forests in 1988. They negotiated an agreement whereby the Crown could sell the trees, but not the land. The land was put in trust and rentals used to assist... Treaty... claimants to prepare claims involving crown forestry...

An \$11 m... tax bill from I[RD] could change the face of Treaty... settlements, says the... C[FRT] chairman. Future... treaty negotiations may have to include a clause in the settlement to cover tax bills... [His comments came] as the signing of the Waitutu Settlement Act was[being] celebrated...

Years of controversy were absorbed by tranquil podocarp forest in western Southland yesterday... [when] the Minister of Conservation... formally presented the act to representatives of the Waitutu Maori Land Incorporation... [He] said the deal was unique because the forest would remain privately owned, by the incorporation, but be managed as part of Fiordland National Park. “This ends... 21 years of negotiations... The ancient, virgin lowland forest is of international significance and is home to N[Z]'s most dense rimu forest. It would have been a national tragedy for it to be logged.” ...Last year the Government agreed to pay the incorporation... about \$13 million cash... to manage the Maori-owned 2171ha forest... and [give them] cutting rights to 11,600ha of cutover beech... The incorporation chairman... said the settlement was a distant destiny finally reached... [They] had been unable to do anything with their land for 91 years.

...[‘a group of Maori landowners is threatening to log prime rimu in the middle of the 2300ha Waitutu Forest signed over to the DoC for \$13.5 million in cash. The 16 freehold owners of the 135ha block say they've been left out of the deal, despite having asked the Government for compensation.’

Meanwhile, a] tribe from the West Coast of the North Island has become the first Maori incorporation to buy out the Government's interest in a Maori lease forest. The deal involves... a 1000ha radiata pine forest... Tainui Kawhai will pay the Government \$9 million... [with help from a forestry company, which is gaining] in return... rights to the first harvest of trees... The novel arrangement is seen as a precedent for Maori interests... Several forestry companies had looked at the possibility of putting together the deal. They are now looking at how the Crown can be bought out of... the other 19 Maori-Crown leasehold forests around the country... involving a further 52,500ha... [In related news, t]he Waikato Raupatu Lands Trust has posted a \$9.8 million profit two years after Tainui... settled their \$170 million Treaty of Waikato land claim. The trust, administered by the Tainui Maori Trust Board, was established to receive, hold and manage assets returned to the tribe and to determine distribution of assets.

...Waikato Tainui people saw some of the benefits of their Treaty of Waitangi land claim settlement yesterday when educational grants and marae dividends worth more than \$2 million were handed out... double that of last year's payout... The grants were announced during celebrations to mark the 31st anniversary of the crowning of the Maori Queen... The chairman of the Tainui Maori Trust Board... said the money was going to ordinary, everyday people who were able to see tangible evidence of the settlement.

...□ PRESENTED: By the Tainui Maori Trust Board to celebrate its 50th birthday, a \$230,000 Mercedes-Benz S500 to the Maori Queen... □ [PRE-EMP]TED: ...Waitangi Tribunal hearings will continue despite a \$400,000 budget blowout... The Department for Courts said... the... blowout... resulted in tribunal officials being asked to find ways of saving money before the June 30 end of the financial year... [T]ribunal officials had "pre-empted" the process by sending out letters last week advising that hearings would have to be deferred... from April 24 until July 1... [T]he tribunal had resorted to deferring hearings because of Government underfunding, despite the coalition agreement promise to give it adequate resources... The Department for Courts said the tribunal's budget overrun would be absorbed through other savings in the department... In Parliament, the Minister of Justice... would not say how much extra funding the Government was proposing for the tribunal in this year's budget.

...[a] former Speaker and Labour MP... has attacked the return of Maori to tribalism, calling it his greatest disappointment in Parliament... "The old tribal boundaries are now of historic interest only. We need a new sense of nationalism if we are to deal with... the major problems of our time – employment, education and health..." H[owever, h]e said a large number of Maori were now funded in one way or another by tribal organisations, and they could not be expected to relinquish that willingly. "Any compensation payments under the Treaty of Waitangi will remain for some time a strong incentive to tribalism." Tribes that had received large compensation payments appeared to be doing well, [he]... said. "But I fear that a lack of business expertise, together with an inherent Maori nepotism, will bring growing dissension." He... had no doubt that regional Maori bodies were inevitable, "but without some governmental leadership they will take much longer to come out."

...a[n a]rticle... mentioned... that iwi organisations are from a bygone era and have no role in modern society... Our... [response is that w]hat makes Maori unique in [NZ] is not their skin colour but their tribal identity. If iwi identity is removed from Maori then, by definition, they[just] become... brown N[Z]ers – devoid of history... Through identification with... iwi M[a]ori... become part of a much larger family and feel greatly enriched by access to a heritage which has been denied them. Central to this sense of heritage and cultural well-being is descent from common ancestors. At its basic level, that is what an iwi or tribal organisation is about... The cultural aspect of iwi identity is an essential foundation for political and economic development... Iwi organisations have a responsibility to their... members. They have to prove that they are capable of delivering benefits to them. But there is only so much benefit that will be distributed to Maori through treaty settlements. Tribal organisations must also be given a fair chance to show what they can do. It must be remembered that[most] tribes don't as yet have the assets under their control.

...U[rban] Maori leaders yesterday threw down a challenge to their traditional leadership to ignore the cities at their peril... Central to the urban-tribal debate is how resources from... Treaty... settlements will be divided up... A[n A]uckland University education lecturer... said the Government was pouring money into the tribes when 85% of Maori lived in cities... Maori had spent \$11 m... in four years fighting over treaty settlements...

[The '24 Waitangi Treaty Fisheries commissioners have been paid \$11m in fees since 1990 (the former chairman received over \$2m), and 'the Waitangi Treaty Tribunal has been taking so long to hear cases that 5 tribunal members have died before reporting on their cases (another 6 are still involved in hearings years after their official warrants expired'). 'A member of the tribunal believes it's getting out of hand, "with an awful lot of thoroughly undeserving people making lots of money"' ('500 people have careers vested in the process – it isn't in their best interests for the process to move quickly').]

...The Associate Treasurer... has laid into lawyers with a stinging attack on their ethics and greed at the expense of Maori... Some tribes... were paying lawyers over \$1 million for advice for Treaty of Waitangi claims and "to date are no further down the road than when they started. The law fraternity have benefited enormously from treaty claims and Maori have seen precious little." [He]... has described lawyers, including some Maori lawyers, as "legal parasites who have been able to sponge up the potential benefits Maori may have been able to get..." The former Treaty of Waitangi claim negotiator said he knew of one lawyer who was charging for 36 hours a day. "When I went to school I was taught there were 24 hours in a day... The bulk of them haven't been worth a single dollar. They have ridden on the back of... ignorance by many Maori claimants of the process and at times misrepresented their own ability. They take their money and run and don't achieve anything. Most of the tribes who have made progress have done it notwithstanding the inadequacy of some of the legal representation." However, [he] said not all lawyers involved in treaty claims were parasites, saying some did "very good work for very fair fees." [He] also laid part of the blame for costly legal bills at the hands of Government. "Treaty settlement claims are not a matter of the law but what the Government is willing to do." He said that when he was negotiating the Whakatohea claim last year, his tribe... "...expended much more than we really needed to because of the attitude of the crown officials doing their absolute damndest to try and deny Whakatohea any sort of settlement redress whatsoever."

...Lawyers have fought back at allegations they were parasites... The... Auckland District Law Society... had the power to revise lawyers' bills if clients considered them excessive... A former Minister of Maori Affairs... said... "Most claimants have little money, and lawyers realise they must win before they get paid. Many wait months or years for their bills to be paid." ...Several prominent lawyers who had worked for treaty claim clients but did not wish to be named told... [that] they had put in hours of work free... Another said the problem was exacerbated by the Crown's demand for "an incredibly high standard of proof... more than what you would be seeking in terms of gaining a criminal conviction." ...[Incidentally, the] Ngati Awa tribe wants the Government to stop defence staff... using sacred rocks – part of a Treaty of Waitangi claim – for target practice.

...it is not the first time the Navy has upset people over its choice of target range. Last year environmentalists and Aborigines were angry over target practice by HMNZS Canterbury on an area south of Sydney that was listed on the Register of the A[US]n National Estate for its natural and cultural value... During the controversy... a spokeswoman for the A[US]n Conservation Foundation said she was sure N[Z] would not be stupid enough to use a Maori sacred area for a weapons range.

...Navy frigates and Air Force bombers have been ordered to hold their fire against rocks held sacred by... Ngati Awa[, whose]... customary title to the... Volkner Rocks (Paepae-Aotea)... was confirmed this week by the Maori Land Court after 36 years of military use... Pressure is also mounting to stop N[Z] forces bombarding a peninsula south of Sydney...

The A[US]n Government has agreed to stop bombing certain sites... [on] the Beecroft Peninsula... but... the A[US]n Conservation Foundation... said the entire peninsula was sacred to Aborigines. It was the birthplace of 13 south-coast tribes and had been under a land claim since 1988.

...Wairarapa Maori will lodge a Treaty of Waitangi claim to the foreshore of much of the North Island's southeast coast. The claim will include parts of the 50,000ha Glenburn Station, which will be auctioned today.

...‘No entry’ beach causes row... Kerikeri residents are rallying to reopen private access to a popular beach... [after] an electronic metal gate... installed at the start of the 2km private road access... was locked for the first time last Tuesday... The Maori incorporation which owns the land to the high-water mark at Tapuaetahi beach, about 15km north of Kerikeri, this year agreed to restrict access following complaints by leaseholders of having to clean up after... daytrippers... [due to] the lack of public facilities... [at] the beach, which is known for its safe swimming and good fishing... About 670 residents have signed a petition... The petition organiser... said people... who had used the beach since they were children... were “starting to spin out” about the beach closure as summer approached.

...History is repeating itself in an iwi push to reclaim... beaches... They call themselves Te Tau Ihu o Te Waka a Maui, meaning the tribes of the prow of the canoe of Maui. And they want their beaches back. According to a... Judge... they may have a chance. Eight iwi from the Marlborough Sounds joined forces... driven by a July 1996 decision by the Minister of Conservation to put a moratorium on marine-farm applications and introduce a coastal tendering system. [The eight] iwi decided that the Government could not privatise what it did not own. Granting Maori title to the foreshore and the seabed is certainly not new. It happened first in 1870 when the Maori Land Court, then just five years old, granted Maori title to significant areas of the Thames mudflats. The court recognised then that those areas provided Maori with their largest source of animal protein and that if any area was capable of being customary land... it was the foreshore and seabeds. Maori argue that when coastal land was sold – or confiscated – it did not include the foreshore unless clearly stated. The Crown strenuously argues this is simply not so. After the Harbours Act was passed in 1878, the Maori Land Court was forbidden to consider ownership of foreshore. That changed when the act was repealed in 1991.

...Public ownership of some beaches and seabeds could be thrown into question by an interim decision of the Maori Land Court setting out the criteria under which Maori can claim customary title... The interim decision confirms there has been no general extinguishment of Maori customary title to the foreshore. It continues to exist unless the sale of the adjoining land was done through the Maori Land Court... or the foreshore was expressly included in the sale, or the rights have since been extinguished by a specific statute. Once those criteria have been satisfied the local Maori still have to prove that title can be claimed in accordance with their own tribal tradition... The decision has no immediate effects. But the case is bound to cause debate within the coalition – particularly with the Maori MPs, who successfully argued for the Crown to keep out of the controversial trout-fishing decision... The Attorney-General... said that even if Maori proved ownership to beaches, “there are a lot of obligations that go with owning things... Parliament would have to decide what was the appropriate thing to do in the interests of all N[Z]ers.”

...[a] Rotorua lawyer... said even if Maori were successful in their claim for beaches and seabeds... there would be no need for panic... The interim decision by the Maori Land Court giving the go-ahead for Maori to claim customary title... could mean only a change of landlord... “What you would... be looking at is... money... would go to Maori... instead of... the Government...,”... Ngati Toa is looking at challenging Port of Wellington’s rights to the harbour. Port Marlborough Ltd and the Marine Fishing Association were cautious in their reaction to the interim decision.

...An official stamp of authenticity may be introduced to prevent cultural rip-offs. The Rotorua-based Aotearoa Maori Tourism Federation is developing an accreditation system... The aim is to stop imitations of Maori culture being passed off to tourists as the real thing, whether they be souvenirs, tour commentaries or cultural shows... such as the haka...

Conservation groups and businesses using native plants are nervous about a wide-ranging claim... from six tribes... before the Waitangi Tribunal seeking... “the protection, control, conservation, management, treatment, propagation, sale, dispersal, utilisation, and restriction on the use of and transmission of the knowledge of N[Z] indigenous flora and fauna and the genetic resource contained therein.” Specific claims are made over kumara, pohutukawa... tuatara, and kereru (native pigeon), as well as indigenous export timbers of various species. The claimants appear to be challenging laws and regulations protecting species and areas, including scientific and other reserves, and protected species legislation... They fear that traditional remedies accessible through their knowledge of the environment could be commercially exploited by overseas companies under international agreements... The Forest and Bird conservation director... said it was hard to get a grip on just how far-reaching the claim... lodged... in 1991... was. “We don’t see property rights existing in indigenous plants and animals.” [In another development, ‘Maori may soon be able to charge anglers and hydro-electric power stations for using the country’s rivers.’]

...Maori tribes are considering ways to take a controlling stake in the country’s rivers and streams so they can manage fisheries and prevent water pollution. If successful, the move could have major implications for agriculture and industries that pollute waterways, but it is expected to have less impact on recreational anglers. A working party of Maori has given its recommendations to the tribes after considering a paper... written last year by the Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission... [that] said the management of freshwater fisheries was ripe for change, and Maori should be at the forefront... One of the key issues was how Maori would manage waterways without costly duplication. Waterways are currently administered by the D[OC], while the Fish and Game Council administers laws relating to fishing permits and how much anglers can catch...

The Tainui tribe, claimants to the Waikato River, want power station owners to pay resource rentals for using the water... Rentals would be based on the output of the stations... Nine hydro stations with a total capacity of 851mW are fuelled by the Waikato and the 1000mW gas and coal station, Huntly, uses the river water for cooling. At present, all are owned by the Electricity Corporation... If the Waitangi Tribunal accepts the claim and the Government agrees, it will set a precedent that would interest other tribes with claims on waterways. The introduction of resource rentals nationally would potentially add \$1 billion a year to the cost of electricity generation... The tribe with the most to gain from such rental... has not decided whether it wants them... Ngai Tahu was close to settling its land claim... but water was another issue.

...The Minister for Treaty Negotiations... laid it on the line to Pakeha N[Z]ers yesterday that it was time to accept there would be one law for them and another for Maori. The minister made the comment while revealing that exclusive riverside and lake campsites being negotiated with Ngai Tahu are expected to extend to... settlements with other tribes.

...Ngai Tahu will soon get \$170m from the Crown as a “full and final” pay-off for their multi-billion-dollar loss. Where, ask the critics, is the justice in that? “When you settle for 2% or 3% of what you lost,” says [a] claimant lawyer... “you can’t also say ‘This is full and final and there will be no comeback’. That seems to me to be a perversion of justice.” The Waitangi Tribunal appears to agree... “Maori should not be required to sign a full and final release for compensation...” Previous “full and final” treaty settlements have often turned out to be neither. A later generation has found them wanting, and replaced them... [I]n 1944... the Labour Government... passed a law giving £5000 a year to [a group of] Taranaki tribes for its claim... In 1946... it... signed a £6000-a-year “full and final settlement” with Tainui. In the same year, it imposed a settlement of the Ngai Tahu claim with an annual grant of £10,000 for the next 30 years... The deals in the 1940s made no allowance for inflation. In 1977, the Taranaki payment was increased... to \$15,000 a year. But economists said a proper inflation adjustment would have put it at nearly \$57,000... Maori leaders are asking why today’s deals should prove any different... By signing up to far bigger deals today, the Crown acknowledges the early deals were inadequate. But [the] Treaty Negotiations Minister... says *his* deals are fair, full and final... [● About] 12,000 voting papers on whether to accept... [the] settlement offer are expected to be delivered to Ngai Tahu tribal members next week.

...Ngai Tahu will receive a non-refundable \$10 million crown advance this month if its leaders accept the Government’s \$170 million offer and the deed of settlement is signed. This follows the Crown’s \$10 million goodwill advance in June 1996, when negotiations resumed after breaking down for two years. The \$20 million advance would be taken off the \$170 million total once the settlement legislation is passed... Tribal beneficiaries have until Monday to vote on whether to accept the deal.

...Ngai Tahu’s \$170m... deal... is in doubt after factions within the [‘31,000-member (12,000 of whom are of voting age’)]tribe confirmed... they will seek a High Court injunction to stop the offer being accepted. [16] of the tribe’s 18 runanga voted to accept the deal at a meeting... yesterday,

but... [two] groups... believe their interests are not served well enough. However, [the]chairman of Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu... said the injunction would be contested... Just over half the... Ngai Tahu beneficiaries registered with the tribe voted and 93.8% of those 5735 people voted to accept the offer.

...Don't blame me if Ngai Tahu were ripped off when they sold their land to the Crown 150 years ago... A staggering feature was that Ngai Tahu signed away their land, nearly half the area of N[Z], without reading the fine print. Now it is Pakeha who are not reading the fine print. A settlement proposal worked out by Crown and Ngai Tahu negotiators was announced on September 23, but... [y]ou cannot buy a copy in Auckland; the Auckland Public Library has still not ordered one; almost no letters have been written to the *Herald* on the subject. I eventually read a copy on the Internet. Meanwhile, Ngai Tahu people polled on the subject have given it 94[%] support and their governing body... voted last Saturday to accept it. A signing ceremony is planned for Friday. The good thing about the proposal is that it is intended to be final. Legislation would be passed to make sure these issues could not be raised in court again. The bad thing about it is the sell-out of legitimate concerns of Pakeha and other Maori, who also lose out... Ngai Tahu have scored a magnificent settlement package that goes beyond that achieved by Tainui, forging new ground in conservation and mineral rights... It breaks a Government promise that it would not give away conservation land in such settlements... It is proposed to get Parliament to rubberstamp the deal without public discussion – a deal that would entrench the view that Maori can do no wrong, Pakeha can do no right, and the Crown apologetically grovels.

...The Treaty Negotiations Minister... gets sick of the treaty business... [He] has spent seven years... on the claims – and... there is no obvious end in sight. Maori leaders, some of them treaty claimants, also suffer from Waitangi fatigue. "Some... claims are ridiculous," says... [the man] who won \$170 million for his Tainui people... "I don't blame pakeha for being hosed off. We... feel embarrassed." ...Five maps in a downtown Wellington office give a deliriously graphic picture of the problem... 670 claims have been registered... The whole country, in fact, is under claim, and many areas under more than one... Claim boundary lines throw a scrambled skein across the land, and small circles with claim numbers cluster over mountains, lakes, cities and farms: A crazy quilt littered with doubloons. There is no claim number 666. "We thought it was probably not appropriate to issue that number," says [the]Waitangi Tribunal director... The claim process is now, surprisingly, nearly 22 years old. [The]Maori Affairs Minister in the third Labour government, set up the tribunal... In those days it had little punch. It could only examine contemporary claims... breaches which occurred after October 10, 1975. In 1985, another Labour government opened the floodgates: It gave the tribunal the power to investigate claims dating back to 1840... The... tribunal... has[to date] dealt with about 100... claims... Will it ever end? [The director] says it will, in about five years.

...Maori Treaty of Waitangi claimants have sent a strong message to [the P]M... that the Minister of Treaty Negotiations... should not be touched in a cabinet reshuffle... "[The current minister] is vital to treaty negotiations. We have absolute confidence in him. He is a real person and does not play silly games,"... [t]he Whakatohea claims manager... said... The Ngai Tahu chief negotiator... said he could not see [the PM removing the minister]... "First off, I don't think anyone wants the job, and secondly no one else can do it. [The current minister] has an understanding command of the issues and it is imperative he stay there." ...Ngai Tahu completed its \$170 million claim when it signed the deed of settlement yesterday.

...The... 1800-page... Ngai Tahu settlement... includes... a full apology from the Crown... and... the return of the pounamu (greenstone) resource to the tribe... [currently situated on] 930ha of... D[oC] estate... but it is likely to be used for cultural rather than commercial purposes in future... In the past, the Crown has been adamant that no conservation land would be used to settle any treaty claims... [The settlement also includes some C]rown reserve land being set aside for the exclusive camping rights of the southern iwi on certain days of the year... The exact days, thought to be about 200, will be set out in the legislation that will enact the agreement the... tribe reached with the Crown last year... [The] Minister for Treaty Negotiations... said last night that some groups were concerned by the developments "but I do not think there is much merit in their concerns." ...also created[are] "topuni" reserves. They acknowledge the special significance of a site to Ngai Tahu but do not affect the public's access to it, such as Mt Aoraki... [Furthermore,] Ngai Tahu will have first right of refusal for Crown shares in Christchurch, Milford, Dunedin and Invercargill airports... Ngai Tahu earned \$9.2 million this financial year on interest from its \$170 million settlement. The interest will go to the tribe but will not be paid until the deed of settlement is passed in legislation. The... Whakatohea... settlement worth \$40 million... has earned \$1.2 million in interest... But again, that will not be paid unless the settlement is sanctioned by law... Waikato-Tainui was paid \$11.5 million in interest on the outstanding balance of its \$173 million settlement, which has been sanctioned.

...Maori need to move out of an inter-generational "siege warfare" mindset if they are to take full advantage of Treaty of Waitangi settlements, says the Ngai Tahu negotiator... Labelling himself an "unrepentant corporatist," [the negotiator] said some Maori had to get over their contempt for big business. Ngai Tahu, and other tribes, needed to plan for continuous growth of their assets and it was important they did not simply become "a privatised Department of Social Welfare." ...tribes which settled treaty grievance claims with the Crown faced fresh challenges when it came to managing their wealth... One option being considered by Ngai Tahu was the establishment of a bond market so tribal members could swap iwi shares for cash among themselves... [The negotiator] was speaking to 150 Maori leaders, academics, politicians and officials at a conference organised by the Waikato University's School of Maori and Pacific Development yesterday.

...The Hauraki Maori... will... today... present the Waitangi Tribunal with 20,000 pages of evidence gathered over four years... A feature of the claim, thought to be worth about \$170 million, is a bid for the return of natural resources, including the... gold and silver mineral... rights, and geothermal resources such as hot springs... Hauraki Maori... were taking a leaf out of the Ngai Tahu settlement, where... greenstone licences continue until expiry but royalties are paid to Ngai Tahu.

...A High Court case over land near Taupo that is subject to a Treaty of Waitangi claim will play a key part in determining whether the Government can privatise... the \$500 million of assets it has tied up in... Landcorp. More significantly, it will resolve the issue of whether state-owned enterprises... can sell land even though it might be involved in a treaty claim... In its latest financial year Landcorp's operating profit before interest and tax of \$6.2 million represented... [an] anaemic return on... average total assets of just 1.2[%]... Landcorp has nearly 120 farms spread the length of the country... At present 53 of the 54 farms Landcorp owns in the South Island are subject to Ngai Tahu claims... But under the deferred settlement process it will be 15 to 18 months before it knows if Ngai Tahu will buy any of them.

...The Maori Land Court ruled this year that the Wairoa District Council should return some land to its original owners because it had not been turned into the road for which it was taken... It is the first time an order has been made to return "private" land to Maori[, making the]... matter... an important jurisdictional issue... [The] decision is being appealed... [in] the High Court... by... the... Council... the Crown Law Office... and... Local Government N[Z], whose policy analyst... said local authorities were taking the matter seriously. If the powers of the [Maori Land C]ourt were interpreted widely, sizeable chunks of... land... taken by, or given to, the Crown for facilities which it then didn't build – such as schools, roads and hospitals – would be subject to the law, as would land no longer being used for the original purpose... [Previously, only] Crown land subject to memorials... [could] be ordered back to Maori claimants and only by the Waitangi Tribunal – an as yet unused power feared by the Government because it upsets its ability to control settlements... The... Maori Land Court register... said... the court had a number of similar cases pending.

...A LONG-OVERDUE revamp of the Maori Land Court will see urban Maori reunited with land... More than a quarter of a billion dollars of Maori land now lies unmanaged because tens of thousands of Maori are unaware of, or have faced major barriers trying to prove, their titles to it... [M]any... owners registered on titles are... also... deceased and... people didn't realise they had inherited titles... Much of the problem lies with the...

court's antiquated record-keeping system... A \$6 million national database of those records... is... in the process of being established... which will eventually result in 12 million pages of records being imaged electronically... The land is contained in some 25,000 titles with an average size of 59ha. Almost all of it is under multiple ownership... There is an average of 81 owners per title, but some titles had thousands of owners or potentially owners... Maori freehold land titles, comprise about 1,515,017ha or 5.6% of land in N[Z]... Currently about 20% of that land is under no form of management and is covered in bush or gorse. While some of it is unusable, much of it is believed to have forestry or farming potential.

...Maori landowners look likely to pay lower rates than other N[Z]ers after a landmark decision by the Court of Appeal. The court ruled that multiple-owned Maori land should be valued differently, and commentators say the decision will have a huge impact... Many councils will have to go back to the drawing-board in setting rates once Valuation N[Z] amends its assessments... [VNZ] has been ordered by the court to revalue the land on a case-by-case basis... Other landowners, including Maori with individual title to their land, would have to pay the extra money the [councils] lost... The national president of Federated Farmers... said it was unfair for people to pay different rates depending on the ownership of the property... A Rotorua accountant and Maori trustee... said the decision was good and bad news for Maori landowners. "Obviously... their rates could be cheaper[, but]... if they lease their land out they cannot justify charging market rents..." ...Maori Land Court figures show the total assessed value of the land... [under] Maori... control is \$40.259 million... Because of the structure of Maori ownership, the land was worth less than land owned under the European Torrens system... Maori owners could not sell their land and often were unable to borrow money from the bank because payment could not be enforced with a mortgage sale.

...Act's sole Maori MP... is voting for a controversial Maori land bill her Act colleagues have promised to fight to the bitter end. [The Maori MP] has permission to buck the party line on the Maori Reserved Land Amendment Bill, which will end perpetual leasehold titles on Maori reserved land in return for \$56 million in compensation. Th[e Maori MP]... said she parted company with her colleagues' view that the bill broke a promise by the Crown under which the Maori settlement process would not affect private property rights. She said the bill had nothing to do with the Treaty of Waitangi but was a matter of restoring natural justice for Maori landowners. She also disagreed with the view of Act's justice spokeswoman... that the bill prevented lessees suing the Government for any compensation. "If the lessees are able to sue the Crown for compensation, then Maori will be able to sue the Crown for compensation and that is something which has been prevented by legislation for many years..." The bill affects large numbers of Taranaki farmers, some areas in the South Island and Athletic Park in Wellington, and would move the land from perpetual lease arrangements to market rentals and more regular rent reviews. The bill was reported back to Parliament this week by the justice and law reform select committee with a recommendation that compensation terms be pushed out from 21 to 50 years – \$21 million for the Maori landowners and \$35 million to lessees. It is due to be debated again next week.

...Maori owners of leased land were losing between \$5 million and \$7 million a year because of the 21-year "oppressive" rent regime on their land, the Maori Affairs Minister... said yesterday... [while] defending... the Maori Reserved Land Amendment Bill... Later, the minister said changes to the original bill meant that tax-free compensation to lessors and lessees had increased... to \$66 million and would be paid out within three months of the implementation date of the legislation. Meanwhile, last night Federated Farmers said that it was against the rushed enactment of the bill. "This bill, if passed... will bankrupt some property-holders..." said its president...

Taranaki farmers desperate to get a better compensation deal from the Government over... leases will drive their tractors to Parliament to protest against a bill which they say could ruin many. The... Maori Reserved Land Amendment Bill... contains a clause stopping lessees from suing the Crown for financial loss... The row is over 2300 perpetual leases covering 30,000ha of reserved land... The leases are seen as unfair to Maori who own the reserved lands but effectively lost control of them when the land was leased out in perpetuity by the Government last century. A 1955 law set the rent at 4[%] of the unimproved value... for urban land and 5[%] for rural... reviewed every 21 years... [Farmers] have always believed that... perpetual lease titles were as good as freehold... Proposals to change the law had caused the value of farms on reserve land to drop by half... Taranaki lessees... [who] have 343 leases on 20,000ha... estimated their losses at \$50 million... But a spokesman for the Minister of Maori Affairs... said the bill contained adequate compensation... for lease-holders... The... P[M]... himself a former Taranaki leaseholder, said of the tractor convoy that "protests very seldom achieve anything."

...The Government succumbed to pressure last night and agreed to a late compromise to better protect leaseholders of Maori land... The proposal... will allow lessees who believe the value of their properties has been significantly eroded to test that in the Land Valuation Tribunal... Their tractor convoy is... due to descend on Parliament today...

Those lucky Taranaki farmers! How do they find time to climb on their tractors and drive to Wellington to protest about a proposed new law? I don't know... But I do know they can afford the trip. It's because generations of them have had an easy ride. They have the advantages of freehold possession of their farms without ever having bought the land... By law the owners have been forced to lease out their land forever. They may not live on it... farm it... sell it. They cannot choose their tenants; bureaucrats do that. They cannot kick out bad tenants; they are stuck with them – and their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren... They cannot even say what rent they want... If the same law applied to the rest of us there would be a revolution: Parliament Buildings would be littered with bloody corpses. At last the patient owners are being offered a fairer deal... Bit by bit they will be allowed to raise rents. They will be allowed to sell. They will be compensated for lost earnings forced on them by the Government... [T]he new law... will give owners and tenants the rights and duties that the rest of us have to make do with. But listen to the whining tenants. Hear their teardrops fall. They are... being singled out to bear the cost of yet another Maori grievance. Bollocks... To ease the shock of having to pay market rents, tenants will be offered taxpayers' money. If owners want to sell, tenants will be offered first refusal. If the land goes to an outsider, tenants will get money for houses, sheds and fences they built...

King Country residents, many of them... pensioners... [and] Maori, who live on leased Maori land, say their plight is being overlooked... They were grateful Taranaki farmers had mounted the fight against the Maori Reserved Land Amendment Bill. Like the farmers, the Kawhia and Otorohanga residents would... face rising rentals... - 1997

In consequence of the passing of the Native Land Laws Amendment Act, it is stated that something like a land boom will arise in the King Country... I am informed that a committee has been appointed by the native owners and this committee has appointed... legal advisers... to proceed to Auckland and enter upon the preliminary steps for leasing a large area of native land that will be offered. The natives are sanguine that the results of this departure will enrich the tribes and attract a large number of Europeans. It is affirmed that a very small proportion of the good land in the Waikato and King Country remains unsold. The natives, however, say that they have sold the bad land to the government agents. - 1897

In 1840 the Ngati Ruapani people had an area of more than 250,000 acres... around the shore of Lake Waikaremoana. Today, with the exception of a few tiny reserves, they are a landless people. Ngati Ruapani never willingly parted with their lands and this goes a long way towards explaining the sense of frustration and anger which many young Maori of the area feel at their predicament today. When Government troops invaded the Waikato in 1863 some Ngati Ruapani saw a direct threat and rushed to the aid of their Tainui kin. Two years later Waikaremoana Maori were attacked by Government forces in punishment for adopting the allegedly "fanatical" new Pai Marire faith. Several so-called "Hauhau" prisoners were subsequently executed by Government-allied troops from other tribes. Worse was to follow in the late 1860s when Waikaremoana Maori provided shelter to the prophet and commander Te Kooti. Crown forces engaged in a systematic scorched-earth policy around the shores of Lake

Waikaremoana, burning all homes and crops in the area. Hundreds of Maori throughout the Urewera district were said to have died of starvation as a result. Hungry and homeless, the remainder had put down their arms by the early 1870s, encouraged by promises that the Crown would allow them to continue to control their lands and other affairs through institutions of their own choosing. Despite such promises, 172,000 acres of Ruapani land on the southern shores of Waikaremoana was in 1875 awarded to “loyalists” of the lower Wairoa district. From the 1880s Ngati Ruapani were forced to participate in Native Land Court hearings about their Waipaoa lands, or again lose all. By early this century their interests in Waipaoa had been extinguished... The Urewera District Land Reserve Act of 1896 had promised Urewera Maori continuing tribal control and ownership of their remaining lands. From 1900 onwards, however, a series of legislative enactments weakened the provisions of this original legislation to the point that, by 1916, the Crown could embark on a policy of full-scale acquisition of individual interests from as many Maori as could be persuaded to sell. And with poverty now rife in the region, and tribal leadership deliberately marginalised and undermined, this was not hard to do. Despite their plight, Ngati Ruapani had held out against any alienation of their remaining tribal patrimony. But since the lake’s hydro-potential was recognised, the Crown was determined to acquire the Waikaremoana block... In 1918 the Native Land Court had awarded the title of the lake bed to Maori, at a hearing which the Crown had failed even to attend. Despite this, the Crown disputed the ruling, arguing against overwhelming evidence that the lake belonged to the Crown... The Depression in the early 1930s struck an already impoverished... people harder than most. Their plight was made worse by the refusal of the Native Trust Office to pay them money owing on the debentures used in payment for Waikaremoana, and by the unilateral decision of two cabinet ministers to reinvest this capital sum on maturity... The few remaining reserves dotted around the lake were loaded with so many restrictions on their use that they were all but a liability. The owners might be charged rates, but could not build on their reserves – and could not even hunt on their own land without winning a special licence by ballot... After a staggering 26-year delay the Crown’s case[for ownership of the lake] was heard in 1944 and dismissed. Meanwhile the Crown had proceeded to build a hydro dam at Waikaremoana (drastically reducing the water level and depleting fish stock in the lake), as well as exercising numerous rights of ownership... The establishment of a national park in the area in the 1950s may have been a boon for visiting trampers and hunters but for the tangata whenua it has often been difficult to reconcile with their traditional uses of the land. Continuing desecration of Ngati Ruapani wahi tapu in the park only adds to the tribe’s anguish... [I]n 1954, the Crown reluctantly acknowledged Maori ownership of the lake bed but persistently tried to persuade the owners to sell... In 1971 it secured a 50-year lease of the lake bed (with a perpetual right of renewal) at 5.5[%] of valuation. From the Ngati Ruapani viewpoint this agreement was seriously flawed. No compensation was payable for the considerable hydro-electric revenue the Crown generated from the lake. Effectively the Crown had trespassed on the lake for 50 years and got away with it... Moreover, the Lake Waikaremoana Act of 1971 transferred legal title over the lake bed to... two Maori Trust Boards – neither of which was seen by many Ngati Ruapani as representing them.

...Ngati Whatua have... become joint venture business partners in a \$50 million retirement development... on the hallowed ground of Bastion Pt... A display home is open for inspection at 61 Te Arawa St. Units in the first stage are selling for between \$167,000 and \$295,000. However, the second, larger stage will bring upmarket apartments, selling for between \$550,000 and \$600,000... If it sounds like sacrilege to build on whenua rangatira, think again. The million-dollar income stream from the development is planned to bring substantial benefits to Ngati Whatua. No other retirement village[overlooks ‘the entrance to Waitemata Harbour’ and] has such affluence at its back door: the wealthy blue-rinse set from St Heliers, Mission Bay, Kohimarama and Remuera... It would be a vast understatement to say that Eastcliff on Orakei has a marketing edge. It is being promoted as “only parkland, which can never be developed, between you and the sea. No other facility will ever be able to enjoy the same breath-taking sea views or cityscapes.” ...But the tribe was not united in thinking the development was a good idea[– particularly the ones who had spent years fighting to regain ownership of the land ‘because of the government’s decision to make the land available for high-cost private housing.’ The] Labour MP and Bastion Pt occupation leader[’s]... grandmother, Te Mihiata Te Mamae, died during the relocations of Ngati Whatua from its Orakei land. Homes and buildings were pulled down and burnt by the Crown during the final eviction – a crusade prompted by the visit of the Queen in 1950 and the royal tour passing by Orakei. “The victims of one of the worst cases of cultural genocide in this country,” is how the Waitangi Tribunal’s Orakei report referred to the tribe.

...The long-running dispute over Moutoa Gardens has been resolved by an agreement between the Crown, the Wanganui District Council and local iwi. Last night, [the P]M... was welcomed onto the land, site of a 79-day occupation almost six years ago... The deal... gives the Crown, the council and the iwi Atihaunui-a-Paparangi joint management of the gardens. Ownership of the land goes to the Crown, and the gardens keep their historic reserve status... [The PM] said the Moutoa agreement could be used as a model for settling other issues... [By the way, m]ore than half the country believe Treaty of Waitangi settlements have been too generous, judging by... polls. Following multimillion-dollar settlements with several tribes, including the \$170 million deal with Ngai Tahu signed in November, the Government has been told it is giving away too much... [F]ewer than 30[% of NZ]ers believe the settlements have been “about right.” ...6.4[%] thought them “not generous at all” and 10.5[%] were not sure... The results indicate a ground-swell of unease about the amount of land and cash being handled over as the Government attempts to settle Maori grievances. They back up concerns expressed by the Race Relations Conciliator... who said he could see a backlash against Maori emerging...

Maoridom’s big leap forward... Last year was probably Maoridom’s best yet. The number of Maori MPs in Parliament was higher than ever – and they attracted a lot of attention... [T]he voice of an emerging group of leaders – urban Maori – grew stronger, often challenging accepted “tikanga” and questioning their role in the “tribal revival”. The historic Ngai Tahu settlement was signed, the Whakotohea deal now stands on shaky ground and Muriwhenua is making progress on its mandate issues. Various claimants have sought settlements and the courts – especially the Maori Land Court – have set several precedents which have wide ramifications.

...*Maori reverses in health, wealth...* The Minister of Maori Affairs... has promised Government action after the release of a report showing the... gap between Maori and non-Maori in health, life expectancy, educational achievements, employment and incomes... has widened in the past 10 years... [The minister] said he would expect action from the Government, although some initiatives could take several years to have an effect.

The proposed reservation for the Treaty of Waitangi in the Multilateral Agreement on Investment... is not strong enough, says the Minister of Maori Affairs. “You need to have an entrenched protection clause of the treaty to say something like ‘nothing in this international agreement shall impinge upon the Treaty of Waitangi and the settlements thereof between the Crown and Maori’,”... [The minister] said it was not a matter of Maori getting favourable treatment. A special relationship was guaranteed under the treaty between Maori and the Crown... The MP for Te Tai Hauauru... said the MAI was “fundamentally critical to every aspect of Maori development on land, trade, fisheries, flora and fauna, and forestry. If there is one issue this year that Maori must organise themselves around, the MAI is it.” ...Asked about Maori consultation, [the Deputy PM] told Parliament that “all N[Z]ers” would be consulted. “...A decision on signing the MAI will be made only after the consultation process is completed.”

...The \$200,000 Government funding for Waitangi Day celebrations is under threat unless more “non-Maori” activities are included. The [Deputy PM]... has threatened to reduce funding unless he receives assurances of more non-Maori participation in celebrations next February. He has told the organising committee that one-sided participation at this year’s event made a mockery of the spirit and purpose of the Treaty of Waitangi. “I am not prepared to condone a repeat of the situation that pertained this year, where our treaty partner was so poorly treated,” he said in a letter. The... Waitangi Day celebrations were the focus for Maori protest in 1995, when the Governor-General at the time... was spat on and a[Waikaremoana] activist spat at the feet of dignitaries. Official Waitangi Day celebrations were moved to Wellington last year in response. At this

year's celebration, [the Deputy PM] complained about too much Maori being spoken at the Waitangi Day church service... The Labour leader... said that... "The only reason [the Deputy PM] complained was because he cannot understand Maori, which is rich coming from [the leader of] a party that purports to represent Maori. This year's celebrations were perfectly appropriate and should not be changed."

...the Minister of Maori Affairs... has hit back at comments by [his party leader,] who has threatened to withdraw funding from Waitangi Day celebrations... [The minister] said control of controversial Waitangi Day celebrations should be handed to the people of Ngapuhi, and the Government should play an assisting role only... [He then] said some of the past events that had tarred the celebrations were part and parcel of the annual event, but it should not deter members of the Crown from participating. "It's the one day of the year that Maori truly get to debate in open dialogue with the Crown the meaning, spirit and intent of the Treaty of Waitangi, and that should not be feared..."

A group hoping to revive a Maori parliament to solve Maori social ills is short of details of how it will achieve its goal. Members of Te Runanga Ko Huiarau, who yesterday welcomed their new Tiaopuru or head... in a ceremony at Alexandra Park, refuse to talk about where the money is coming from or give information about the head of their organisation. A spokeswoman... said... "We are here to celebrate the revival of... the Maori parliament established in 1808, not to talk to individuals." About 700 attended the celebrations, although some said they were there to see what the group was all about. Earlier, about 40 members of Ko Huiarau gathered at Auckland's Mayoral Towers for the opening of their parliament. But they could not enter the building because the doors were locked.

...The Maori Council Chairman... says Maoridom is ready for a parliament of its own, but he does not know how much support there is for the self-styled parliament announced this week. "I would support any efforts to bring in a Maori parliament," he said yesterday, "but I'm not aware of them." ...He said there were many Maori organisations that represented Maori but Ko Huiarau had not approached any of them... [H]e had first heard of the group about five years ago when "they said some chap was the newborn king." It was strange that the group came from the Waikato because the area already had the Kingitanga movement, he said... However... an Auckland ethnologist... said... [the head of the organisation] had been chosen when was aged 6. "His elders installed him in 1936[after they] recognised him as the descendant of all Maoridom's chiefly lines." ...the "Maori parliament" was made up of the descendants of the... chiefs who signed the Treaty of Waitangi...

A Maori group says it will open its own Parliament in Queen St, Auckland, next week... Te Runanga Ko Huiarau will crown a new Maori king at a dawn ceremony on Tuesday. It has invited representatives from 60 countries with which, it says, it has had trading treaties since last century... Ko Huiarau has based its legitimacy on a document made from dogskin, written in Maori and signed with the seal of Queen Victoria and the group's Maori king... But a Tainui kuia, Eva Rickard, plans to confront the group, which she says has no credibility.

...Maori are to blame for most of their problems, says the veteran Maori activist Eva Rickard. "Why are our children in strife? ...I blame our own people. It's our fault now." ...[In related news,] Sir Hepi te Heuheu, paramount chief of the Tuwharetoa people and one of N[Z]'s great Maori leaders, died in Taupo Hospital last night. He was 78... Last night... the P[M]... paid a personal tribute to Sir Hepi, describing him as a pre-eminent N[Z]er known for his wisdom and humility. "His loss is N[Z]'s loss." ...Sir Hepi, a sheep and cattle farmer known as "the mountain," was one of the few figures within Maoridom who could transcend tribal boundaries. He was respected by his people, Pakeha and the Government. His influence was such that when he called a pan-tribal hui in 1995 to discuss the fiscal envelope policy for settling Treaty of Waitangi claims, 1000 representatives from every iwi answered the call. What followed was a rejection of the policy by Maori at all 14 consultation hui held around the country. The... only person who could stand with Sir Hepi on the same level in Maoridom was the Maori Queen... They both had their personal and hereditary mana... Sir Hepi was descended from a long line of paramount chiefs. Probably the most famous was his great-grandfather, te Heuheu Tukino IV, who with other Tuwharetoa kaumatua gave N[Z] the mountains and land that formed the Tongariro National Park. He succeeded his father as paramount chief in 1942. Kua hinga te totara niu o te wao a Tane ("The giant totara has fallen in the world of Tane").

...Maoridom has been devastated at the loss of Sir Hepi te Heuheu, so soon after the death of Matiu Rata[, whose]... lifelong battle for Maori causes and rights cost him a great deal and in the end... his life. The 63-year-old Maori leader died... from kidney failure[, but he had also] suffered serious head, chest and leg injuries in a head-on crash on July 17 as he drove home from Auckland after yet another meeting over Far North land claims. Mr Rata quit a cosy, well-paid MP's job in 1980 to form the Mana Motuhake Maori political party. He stood unsuccessfully for the party several times yet never stopped working for his race and he gave it everything he had... [A] former Labour P[M]... said Mr Rata, a former parliamentary colleague, was the catalyst behind the modern Maori renaissance. "The setting up of the Waitangi Tribunal, which was his work, has been an enduring contribution to the constitutional position of Maori in this country," he said. The present Mana Motuhake leader... described Mr Rata as a rare political person. "He was a true visionary and we should all consider as N[Z]ers what the landscape would be like if we did not have the legislation he brought in," she said... Mr Rata's son... said his father would have wanted N[Z]ers to carry on the process of bringing together all the people of the land.

...[*Computerising land titles is a big challenge* Standing among shelves of land title and conveyancing documents, we are informed that there are around 30km of these in the country and that shelf space is growing at the rate of 1.5km a year. We are in the Wellington region office for Land Information NZ (Linz) – so we can see first hand what the department is up against. Yes, there is an awful lot of paper here. We are taken through the process of finding a land title. Look up the certificate of title number on the computer. Fill in a form and hand it across the counter with the \$7 fee. In a few minutes, the staff member returns with a copy. It is a similar process for getting a copy of a survey plan. Find the deposited plan number on the computer. Get the microfilm, view it, then get a print costing \$10. Asked how long user-pays charges have been in effect, one of the office staffers can remember a time when getting land title information was free. No one mentions that the fees have been further increased since July to help pay for NZ's most expensive Government computer system – Landonline, which will handle land titles and survey plans electronically – or that the public will have to pay extra (between \$13m and \$17m a year until June 2003) because the \$150m project is a year behind schedule. What will the public get for the money? At the end of stage one, not a lot. True, the system should deliver much greater efficiencies, improving turnaround of lodgements from the present 10 to 15 days to something much less. With stage two – enabling surveyors and lawyers to lodge plans and title documents electronically – the aim is for a turnaround time of 24 hours. Landonline will also mean faster searching and accessing of information by lawyers and surveyors, who will pay annual software licence fees to link to Landonline via a virtual private network. While it can be argued that there will be considerable time savings for lawyers and surveyors, they will also have to carry the cost of connecting their offices to Landonline. Whether the service will produce the promised savings – resulting in lower conveyancing and surveying bills for property buyers – remains to be seen. Members of the public, however, will still have to visit Linz offices if they want to search titles or plans themselves. And there will be fewer of those to visit. The intention is to close seven of the 12 regional Linz offices and shed 200 of the 510 operational staff in the process. The question no one has yet considered is: with such a state-of-the-art computer system, why not make it accessible to everyone via a web browser over the internet?

... 'A new mapping system to be used next year in NZ and AUS will move coordinates, says Linz. The two countries will shift the reference point for their surveying 200m to the northeast because satellite technology has revealed discrepancies in their maps. A Geodetic Survey adviser says there could be some confusion if old maps are compared with coordinates from the global positioning system. An AUSn lecturer in surveying says the system will throw emergency rescues at sea and in the bush into confusion. NZ maps are based on 50-year-old information, but new technology shows how the Earth has changed since then. The datum will be able to accommodate any future changes, especially resulting from natural disasters.' Speaking of disasters, 'the Buller District Council is furious that the Cave Creek inquiry cost it \$45,793 – equivalent to 1.5% of its rates take – when other parties to the inquiry, such

as the DoC, had their costs met by the Government. The total bill for the inquiry was \$2.2 million, of which more than \$1 million was to cover DoC's costs. The DoC has refused to pay the council's costs, saying it is not legally liable for them.']

...The Government says it will pay \$2.675 million to the families of those affected by the Cave Creek tragedy. The compensation award was decided by [the]mediator-arbitrator... a former privy councillor and Conservation Authority chairman... Had it gone before the courts, he believed it could have taken several years to resolve and even gone to the Privy Council... The Attorney-General... said last night that the Government would implement the settlement promptly... It is understood that around \$1.7 million will be awarded to the families of the victims and about \$950,000 to the families of the injured and the survivors. Thirteen Tai Poutini Polytechnic students and a D[oC] field centre manager were killed when the overhanging department-built viewing platform collapsed['and fell 14m into a rocky chasm'] in the Paparoa National Park... north of Greymouth, on April 28, 1995. Four students survived the fall. Five other people in the party were not on the platform at the time... The Government has not yet decided whether to exempt its departments from prosecution under building and safety laws, as recommended in the Cave Creek commission of inquiry. One of the families said yesterday that they were keen for the exemption from prosecution law to be removed, so the lives lost would not be in vain. [The] commission of inquiry found in November 1995 that the... platform was poorly built. ['The platform was nailed to its foundations instead of being bolted.'] ...It said the department had acted incompetently and inappropriately and a lack of a proper project management system had caused the platform, which did not comply with the building standards, to fall with such tragic circumstances. [The Attorney-General] gave assurances a year ago that the exemption issue would be dealt with before the closure of Parliament leading up to the elections.

...STATE sector chief executives will in future be expected to resign if something goes badly wrong in their department. [The]State Services Commissioner... said that in the wake of the Cave Creek tragedy, an accountability review being carried out by his office would lead to much clearer expectations on chief executives as to their responsibilities... The review was commissioned by[the] former State Services Minister[, who is now the Attorney-General]... After the Cave Creek disaster there were repeated calls from some victims' families and others that [the DoC] boss... should resign like several other DoC staff. [The chief executive] rejected such calls, saying he wanted to see his contract through and leave his department in good condition. Late last year, there were reports[that the] new Conservation Minister... wanted [the chief executive] out. The minister denied it, but in January [the chief executive] announced he would be stepping down.

...Life is getting tougher for Government department heads – they can now be sacked even where no personal blame or liability can be established... But the new State Services Commissioner... indicated yesterday that this would occur only under extreme circumstances. He would not speculate on whether the provision would have applied to... the Director-General of Conservation at the time of the Cave Creek tragedy...

['A man who was the highest paid general manager in the DoC, earning \$136,000 a year, has been convicted of stealing more than \$180,000. The man who ran the department's business management unit until last August, had his sentencing deferred in Wellington District Court yesterday to ensure any reparation order could be met. The court heard that the manager set up two companies and sent invoices to himself at DoC from those companies. He also sent a quote, which he accepted and signed off at DoC. Of the money he obtained, \$104,783 was paid into a joint account of the manager and his wife. By last September, just under \$13,000 was all that was left in the accounts. The Serious Fraud Office prosecutor told the court that as the defendant was in a senior position and the amounts involved were large, a starting point for sentencing should be 3 1/2 to 4 1/2 years jail.']

...The Business Roundtable has commissioned a private report on the D[oC], sparking fears of privatisation of conservation land and services... [T]he chief executive of the big business think tank, acknowledged this week the report was under way, saying... privatisation of DoC land and/or services was "not the focus of the report but there are parts that could be put into private enterprise... We would hope there are no public concerns about our interest or intentions,"... But... [an] environmental economist and former chairwoman of the environmental group ECO, said... the Roundtable was ignoring basic ecological values in favour of market values... There is a clash of philosophies between the Roundtable and core interests of the department... She said that if private trusts were set up to handle public lands and services there would be little accountability... [T]he conservation director of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, said he was aware of the move and that he was "extremely disappointed" by it... "It is clear from the terms of the review they have a predetermined outcome – they clearly want to privatise the functions and/or the estates of the department. It seems they now want a share of the spoils for private enterprise." [He] said several major corporations, which are involved with conservation work, were "hoping to make capital out of their good works, and by a large leap try to devolve the works of DoC into private trusts... If privatisation were to happen we could see many of our pristine areas used exclusively by wealthy tourists." ...[Speaking of wealthy tourists, the Indian P]M... says when the Queen visits... in October, she should not visit Amritsar, the scene of a bloody massacre by British forces in 1919. "It is a goodwill visit and we would not like to add anything historically that would cause bitterness,"... Troops... opened fire on a peaceful protest meeting... banned by the colonial authorities. The incident proved a watershed in galvanising opposition to British rule.

...The Indian P[M]... has been blasted for advising the Queen against visiting the site of a bloody massacre... A Sikh leader... said [the PM's] request... was "unfortunate" and that Sikhs wanted her to come. Amritsar, in the Punjab, is home to the Golden Temple, the holiest Sikh shrine. It is also the site where British soldiers gunned down 379... unarmed... civilians and wounded more than 1300 at a political meeting... Several Indians have demanded that the Queen apologise... during her trip... However, [the Sikh leader], who heads a national Sikh temple committee... distanced himself from the demands. "The demand for an apology is a conspiracy by those forces who did not want her to visit... It is time to forget the bitter memories of the past and look towards a bright future," he said... The British High Commissioner in New Delhi earlier confirmed that [the massacre site] was being considered as a possible part of the Queen's itinerary... The Queen's visit has stirred up a second controversy among the Sikhs. Some of their leaders have called for the return of the Koh-i-noor diamond, now part of the British Crown jewels and which Queen Victoria acquired from a Sikh prince last century.

...Ceremonial cannons boomed in salute to welcome the Queen yesterday on a visit marked by undiplomatic controversies before it began... [Then the Queen accepted] a pot from... an 'untouchable', a member of a caste who have now chosen to call themselves "dalits", a sanskrit word meaning crushed and downtrodden. What was remarkable about the gift was that under the norms of traditional Indian society, low-caste women would not be able to give a cooking utensil or a drinking pot they had touched to someone of a high caste, or an important person such as the Queen... At the... end of the... ceremonies... a British spokeswoman read a statement by[the] Foreign Secretary... replying to an angry denunciation of Britain by India's P[M] for what he saw as unwarranted meddling in India's dispute with Pakistan over Kashmir. "A third-rate power has presumed to say that they have a historical responsibility to solve the Kashmir issue," [the PM] was quoted in Indian newspapers as saying in a private meeting on Saturday with Egyptian intellectuals [during] a visit to Cairo. [The PM] allegedly said Britain was responsible for the Kashmir dispute in the first place, as a fallout of the partition of India when it ended its colonial rule in 1947... [The day began] with... further controversy... [when] what should have been a dignified [event]... degenerated into near-farce just minutes before the Queen arrived, with a British diplomat and a senior Indian police officer involved in a shouting match over media access... Tempers had flared when British photographers demanded the same access to the tarmac near the Queen's aircraft as was granted to their Indian colleagues. Scuffles broke out... Among those caught up in the melee was the Queen's press secretary... Today another controversy awaits the Queen when she visits Amritsar... On Sunday police used water cannons to break up a demonstration in New Delhi of Sikhs demanding an apology. Britain has indicated the Queen will not express verbal regret, but will lay a wreath in what should be seen as a gesture of reconciliation.

...It was meant to be a magnanimous and royal gesture. For the Queen and her husband... it was a good will tour to mark the golden jubilee of India's independence... Instead, old wounds between the erstwhile imperial masters and their colonial subjects have reopened. Simply put, it has been a week of diplomatic nightmares for both the British and the Indians... The royal couple... fuelled controversy thanks to some of their actions – or rather lack of them – in the second half of the tour... At the Jallianwala Bagh memorial... [at] Amritsar... the Duke of Edinburgh... told his official escort that... based on information he had gathered from... [the son of the man who ordered the massacre,] the massacre account as inscribed on the monument by the Indian trust was “vastly exaggerated.” ...These remarks and the refusal of the royal couple to leave any impression of their visit at the memorial site – they merely signed the visitors' book – raised the hackles of the Indian press. As if in retaliation the Government cancelled a speech the Queen was to deliver in Madras. The Indian official line was that the speech was never scheduled. Several explanations have been offered for the diplomatic disaster this trip has been. More than one British commentator has said it was India's way of showing the world it could now take on its one-time colonial master. Indians would see it as their country's way of showing it could no longer be treated like a colony... but it would be fair to say that it was all sparked off by a verbal duel between the British Foreign Secretary... and the Indian P[M].

...For someone who takes pride in describing himself as a diplomat who got into politics by accident, the performance of [India's P]M... on the matter of the Queen's apology for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre has been a total disaster. What is worse – and more worrying – is that the... P[M] created a controversy where none existed. He first advised the Queen against visiting Amritsar and Jallianwala Bagh... The result was an outcry in the media, contradictory statements by Sikh leaders in Punjab and red faces in the Indian Foreign Office. In less than a week the P[M] had changed his tune, saying... that the Queen was an honoured guest of India and there was no question of putting any restrictions on her itinerary. This time there was no mention of an apology or the need to soothe feelings as he staged another of his now familiar about-turns when caught on the back foot... The P[M]... tries to use the media for making grandiose announcements which can give him his moment of glory, however brief. The irony is that he ends up making only faux pas... [He] would do well to remember that leaders much more powerful, popular and possibly wiser than he have occupied the office of P[M] of India. And they seldom spoke out of turn.

...[i]n school Martin Luther King studied the work of Mahatma Gandhi, who was leading India's fight for freedom from Great Britain. Gandhi knew that armed insurrection would justify British attacks. His solution was non-violent passive resistance, in which vast numbers of Indians boycotted British goods and disobeyed what they felt were unjust laws. Relentless non-violent mass confrontation eventually forced the British to abandon their claim to India.]

...Ten years after the military coups, the impending expiry of land leases threatens to derail Fiji's economic and racial progress... Fiji's population of 750,000 is almost equally split between Fijians and... citizens descended from Indian workers brought to Fiji by British imperialists and A[US]'s Colonial Sugar Refining Co... [over] 100 years ago to work the land... [F]or generations... the... [Indians] have grown... sugarcane... on [leased land]... Most of Fiji's native landowners are determined to claim the land back by refusing to renew leases, leaving thousands of Indian growers facing the loss of homes and businesses... Indian lessees have seen the land they work fenced off by Fijian owners, fights have broken out... and more violence seems likely, even between the landowners themselves. If the leases are not renewed, [the Indians] do... not believe [they] will receive compensation, not even for [their houses]. “Who can pay? The landowners have no money. The Native Land Trust has no money. The Government has no money. If the landowners take the land back... [they w]on't do anything... and... Fiji will go down.” ...About 18,000 of Fiji's... 23,000... sugar leases... cover land owned by native Fijians. Only 45 leases expire this year, but over the next two years thousands will reach the end of their 30-year terms.

...A Fijian Government document leaked yesterday has revealed that the majority of agricultural land leases... will not be renewed, creating panic among the country's cane farmers. Fiji's land problem is a potentially explosive racial issue stemming from the fact that almost 90[%] of the land is owned by indigenous Fijians but most commercial farming is done by the Indian community under lease... [L]and authorities say 24... of... 45... leases due for renewal this year... will definitely not be renewed... 14,000... leases... are due for renewal over the next five years and signs that native landowners want most of the land back for their own use has left tenant farmers anxious about their future... In an interview in the *Fiji Times*, the P[M]... called on the farmers not to panic, saying those evicted from present land leases would be resettled on state land.

...Thousands of ethnic Indian farmers in Fiji anxiously awaiting a Government decision on their expiring... 30 year... land leases will have to wait until next year for a resolution to the crisis... The Government has avoided making a decision on the issue since it took office in June 1992.

...[Fijian police] have made several arrests after being fired on in long-running attempts to evict villagers from... land... earmarked by the Government as a sports venue... [but] used by villagers for their crops... [A] group of armed men have sworn to defend the block with their lives. [Speaking of land issues, 'NZ treaty negotiations are small and easy compared with those in Canada. The Minister for Treaty Negotiations aims to have all the big claims completed by the year 2000 on a budget of \$NZ1 billion. Compare that with Canada, where the minister estimated the cost of entering into new treaties and resolving about 2000 claims for breaches of existing treaties will be \$360b. Where treaties exist in Canada, aboriginal title has gone but where they do not it remains and the Canadian Government is trying to buy them out. To sell the exercise to the public, millions were spent on propaganda. The minister, back from visiting North America, says NZ has an advantage of just one treaty. In Canada, the minister hosted dinners for judges involved in decisions on customary rights and aboriginal title claims for Indians, so-called First Nation bands. He also met tribal leaders and politicians.']

...Canada's Supreme Court... issued a landmark decision establishing the principle that native Indian rights to resource-rich land were not invalidated by European settlement. The case involve[d] claims to 58,000 sq km in the west coast province of British Columbia but ha[d] implications for... other parts of Canada. The ruling [wil]l... bring large compensation settlements for Indians, with ramifications for lumber and mining companies and the ability of non-Indians to develop land... The Gitksan... a group of about 5000 Indians... along with the 1500 Wet'suwet'en people, [originally] launched a four-year legal battle over land rights in 1987 but lost in a lower court. They appealed to Canada's highest court, arguing that they retained rights to the land because they never signed treaties relinquishing those claims with British officials who colonised the area. British authorities in Canada signed no land treaties for most of British Columbia... Nor did they sign treaties for the vast tracts of land in the Northwest Territories and other scattered areas in Canada. The Supreme Court ruled in a unanimous decision by six judges that... it would be preferable for the federal and British Columbia Governments to negotiate a settlement with the native Indians. - 1997

In a time so long ago that nearly all traces of it are lost in the prairie dust, an ancient people were a part of the land that we love and call America. Living here for thousands of years, their children became the great Indian civilizations... Then white settlers... began a bloody war against the Indians, and in the span of a single lifetime claimed all the Indians' land for themselves, allowing [the Indians] only small tracts of land to live on.

[“]Grampa took up the land... he had to kill the Indians and drive them away. And Pa was born here, and he killed weeds and snakes. Then a bad year came and he had to borrow a little money... but it's our land. We measured it and broke it up... Even if it's no good, it's still ours. That's what makes it ours – being born on it, working it, dying on it. That makes ownership, not a paper with numbers on it...” [“]No. The bank, the monster owns it. You'll have to go.” [“]We'll get our guns, like Grandpa... What then?” [“]Well – first the sheriff, and then the troops. You'll be stealing if you try to stay, you'll be murderers if you kill to stay. The monster isn't men, but it can make men do what it wants.”] - The Grapes of Wrath

In 1867 the U.S., urged by William H. Seward, purchased Alaska from Russia for \$7.2 million. For many years the value of the purchase was not recognized, and Alaska... [– p]opularly called “the Last Frontier” –] ...was referred to as “Seward's folly.”

...Settled by the Dutch, the... 22 sq mi... island was named for the Manhattan tribe of Algonquian Indians; it was purchased by Peter Minuit from the Indians, 1626, for goods worth \$24. The first settlement, New Amsterdam, was rechristened New York when the English acquired it, 1644.

...The impact of European culture and the ceaseless impingement of white settlements were fatal to all North American Indian cultures. The relatively successful adaptation to their environment was disrupted when their hunting, fishing, and growing grounds were disturbed and seized. They were driven to compete for what remained, first among themselves, later with the settlers... Their resistance is known in American history as the Indian Wars... In the end, some tribes were exterminated, others driven from one exile to another, and survivors were either herded into reservations... or assimilated as individuals... Reservations developed from treaty arrangements between the government and the tribes, whereby the latter were assured inviolable territory for their own use in exchange for lands desired by the former. Few of the early reservations in the East remained in Indian possession; most tribes were eventually compelled to accept revised treaties and move West of the Mississippi. More than half of U.S. Indians now live on reservations in the former Indian Territory... now Oklahoma, and in Arizona, New Mexico, and South Dakota. There are about 185 reservations in the U.S.; the largest, that of the Navaho, covers over 24,000 sq mi.

Although feeble attempts were made to preserve the land and culture of North America's Indian tribes during the latter half of the 19th century, the plight of many South American Indian tribes remained unrecognised (or was ignored) well into the latter half of the 20th century!

On 23rd February 1969, the *Sunday Times Colour Magazine* published an article... called 'Genocide', which dealt with the destruction of the Brazilian Indians. Among the many appalling examples of systematic extermination discussed... and ranging from the sixteenth century to the present day was one which involved the slaughter of large numbers of the Cintas Largas tribe... on the river Juruena in the early sixties... It was seen as essential... to produce the maximum number of casualties in one single devastating attack, at a time when as many Indians as possible would be present in the village, and an expert was found to advise that this could best be done at the annual feast of the "Quarup" ...The "Quarup" is a theatrical representation of the legends of creation interwoven with those of the tribe itself... to testify that not even death can disrupt the unity of the tribe. 'A Cessna light 'plane used for ordinary commercial services was hired for the attack, and its normal pilot replaced by an adventurer of mixed Italian-Japanese birth. It was loaded with sticks of dynamite... On the first run packets of sugar were dropped to calm the fears of those who had scattered and run for shelter at the sight of the 'plane. They had opened the packets and were tasting the sugar ten minutes later when it returned to carry out the attack. No-one has ever been able to find out how many Indians were killed, because the bodies were buried in the bank of the river and the village deserted.' ...[']I can only go by what I've seen myself. I mean, I was in the Xingu only a couple of months ago, 25th May 1970... and they flew in the remnants of the Beicos-de-Pau tribe... They lived up by the river Arinos, and as far as we know, that's to say at the beginning of the year, there were about 400 of them left. There had, of course, been far more than that, but a few years ago, an expedition came up the river and left them a few sacks of food mixed with arsenic. Anyhow, after a great deal of red tape and nonsense it was decided to fly them into the Xingu, as it was obvious they didn't stand a chance of surviving where they were. So then it began. The rescue operation. Phase one was the measles epidemic, because as chance would have it, one of the rescue party was carrying measles. Only 109 of them survived it, but there we are. Phase two was the publicity stunt, in which four of the Indians were flown to Rio to meet the press. Unfortunately that didn't work out well either, because three of them died in Rio. Phase three was transferring them to the transit camp. Now that hadn't been thought out too thoroughly, because what they did was drive them down overnight in open trucks, not altogether taking into account the fact that the Indians were naked and it was the middle of the winter. As a result of which another 65 of them died. This made the logistics of phase four, which was actually flying them into the Xingu, a good deal easier, but even so they weren't as careful as they might have been, and the 41 survivors were bundled into an unpressurised cargo 'plane and set off on the last stage of their great adventure. I was there when the plane landed at dawn at Posto Leonardo. We lifted them all out and laid them on the ground, the corpses to one side and the living to another, although it was by no means easy to distinguish. In the end we found that 24 of them were what you might technically call alive. It was quite cold. They lay on the ground without moving, they didn't move at all even when the ants began crawling up their nostrils and into their eyes. I tried passing my hand in front of their eyes, but they didn't blink... they gave no indication of seeing... It just so happens I witnessed that, but I could have told you about any one of a dozen tribes, same story, same details. It's strange, when I was in England, I didn't seem to be able to turn on the television without seeing some impassioned programme about some threatened animal species. I mean, I've got nothing against that, it's just that everyone knows the blue whale and the white rhino are in trouble. But who's ever heard of the Beicos-de-Pau or the Pacaas Novas or the Trumai? ...I'd be the first to admit they show as much aggression, greed, superstition and cowardice as the next man. It's just that in their own terms they've provided themselves with solutions to all their immediate problems, and that makes them very well balanced, very relaxed and very happy... [' ']'You make me laugh. All this crap about the Indians, it's just romantic bourgeois sentimentality. Listen, there are ninety million people in this country, and there aren't enough Indians left to fill up Maracana football stadium. So you say, look after the Indians, after all, poor things, it used to be their country, didn't it, and they'll never cause much trouble, because there are hardly any of them left, and they're not interested anyway... but for Christ's sake don't look after the ninety million, or you never know what they might start wanting. All your liberal hearts bleed at the thought of those poor naked savages fading away, but it never begins to dribble across your apology for a mind that half a million children under five starved to death in Brazil last year... There are children of eight on the streets of Rio offering themselves to anyone in a suit, you think they're going to turn into good Democrats? ...I remember when I was much younger, I was posted in Venice... Used to hear a lot about capitalism in those days, and I used to think this is where it started and this is what it is: a lot of sinking palaces... If you want a city that really tells you what capitalism is all about, look at Brasilia. Designed by a Marxist architect as a city for the people and a city without slums. Then the property speculators get going, and before you know where you are the workers can't afford to live in the apartment blocks they're building. Well, they don't want to dirty up that sparkling white city, so the answer is, build slums in a big circle twenty miles outside the city and bus the workers in every day and watch a city for the people turn into a city where the workers have to construct the class barriers with their own hands... You know as well as I do the Americans were behind the coup in 1964, and they were behind it because their profits were being threatened, and now they bribe the ruling classes to make sure their profits aren't threatened again. The American public knows their government gives aid to underdeveloped countries, unless they're communist of course, in which case they prefer to ship over a few tonnes of napalm, but what they don't know is that nearly all the aid has strings attached, and what they also don't know is that twice as much money comes out in profit as goes in as aid. Why do you think the corporations make two, three, sometimes ten times as much profit in Latin America as they do in their home markets? You may think all's fair in love and commerce, but some of us take it personally when our children starve to death so that somebody in Detroit or Pittsburgh can buy themselves a third car... [' ']'That's a ludicrously oversimplified way of putting it... [' ']'Well, as it so happens, it's a ludicrously oversimplified process, starving. You don't get enough food to eat and, by an absurdly oversimplified foible of nature, it makes you die. And it can be aggravating when you think to yourself that the excess profits which ought to have been ploughed back into your country so you might have stood a chance of getting a bite to eat have gone towards installing a telex in the interests of business efficiency. It can be a terrible setback to your notions of international brotherhood... [' ']'Well, these things develop slowly... [' ']'We haven't got time for slowly. We need fast... [' ']'But a lot of these things just can't be done fast... [' ']'They can't be done at all, as long as the Americans have their teeth in our neck. Don't think I'm so stupid as to be against them just because they're Americans. If it wasn't them, it'd be someone else. It's just that they're the most powerful at the moment. Before them it was you... [' ']'Me?' ']'...You. England. You bled us empty all

through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Or rather Portugal bled us and you bled Portugal... [] 'I thought Portugal was supposed to be our oldest ally... [] 'Of course. If I had you round the throat squeezing you dry for hundreds of years, you'd be my oldest ally... [] 'Well, it's hardly my fault... [] 'That's it. Nothing's ever anyone's fault. Millions of dollars flow out of the country, quite spontaneously, to the amazement of all. By some freak statistical whim, 3[%] of the population of an underdeveloped country find themselves controlling most of the wealth and look on bewildered as it slips from their nerveless fingers and fortuitously lands in a numbered Swiss bank account. How can it be anyone's fault? [] '... None of it ever lands in my numbered Swiss bank account... [] 'Think what you're missing, you silly man. My father has three... [] 'That's very interesting... [] 'For you, maybe. Not for me. I don't get on very cordially with my father, he being well to the right of Caligula. Apart from counting his money, he has only two enthusiasms: Vasco da Gama football club and the Death Squad... The military dictatorship has lined its pockets by selling our country to the interests of U.S. capitalism, which it has allowed to exploit our resources and steal our land, while poor people starve and suffer all the miseries of poverty and unemployment. Meanwhile, anyone who utters the merest whisper of protest risks joining the 12,000 political prisoners, including university professors, doctors, writers, students, priests and nuns, at present suffering detention and brutal torture in the regime's jails and concentration camps... I'll tell you what happened to a friend of mine, a girl of seventeen... a philosophy student, who had only the very remotest connection with us. She was a very quiet, thoughtful girl and she lived with her grandmother in Urca. Last September, they arrived in the middle of the night, and since it was a political offence she was suspected of, they naturally started off by raping her, right there in front of the old woman. Then they hauled her off for a few days on the Ilha das Flores and gave her all the usual treatment, more rape, electric shock, hanging her upside-down on the parrot perch and beating her, all that. She hasn't recovered from it and I don't think she ever will... She sent a message to us saying she never wanted to see any of us again. Mind you, it wouldn't do us much good if we did go to see her, because they gave her another piece of standard treatment, humorously referred to as the telephone, which consists of punching the ears of the victims as they hang upside-down. They broke her eardrums. She's completely deaf... You see, countries like ours operate their own version of the Welfare State. Instead of wasting a lot of money trying to reform and rehabilitate psychopaths, sex maniacs, thugs and sadists, we give them a uniform and a good salary and a title like the Death Squad, or the C.C.C., or the Metros, or the C.R.S. and let them use their skills for society's benefit... Don't think there aren't hundreds of people in every country who'd jump at the chance to belong to that kind of organisation, who'd love to spend an evening throwing beggars in the river or ramming a broken-off bottleneck up any pretty middle-class girl with a few vague ideas about improving the lot of the workers. And the unity those people have, the unity of hatred, the wonderfully simple level of their ideas! Whereas we, my God, we poor old nit-picking intellectuals, I sometimes think we spend all our strengths and all our energy bickering over points of doctrine like a gaggle of old nuns discussing the Immaculate Conception in a brothel... The rich believe in money, the intelligent believe in intelligence, the powerful believe in power, the Army believes in strength, the Church believes in morality. But you really mustn't expect that to apply to everyone. You really shouldn't expect the oppressed to believe in misery and the starving to believe in hunger. - Savages

And if there is no need to imprison, beat, or kill men when the landowners collect rent, or a man in need of corn pays triple price to a swindling dealer, or a factory-hand puts up with pay that is proportionately only half what his employer takes, or when a poor man pays his last ruble in customs-dues and taxes – this is only because so many men have been beaten and killed for trying to resist what was demanded of them, that the others firmly remember it. A trained tiger in a cage who does not eat the meat put under his nose and who jumps over a stick at the word of command, does this not because he wishes to, but because he remembers the red-hot irons or the hunger from which he suffered every time he did not obey. And in the same way men who submit to what is disadvantageous and even ruinous to them and that they consider unjust, do so because they remember what happened to them when they resisted. But those who profit by the privileges resulting from previous violence often forget, and are pleased to forget, how those advantages were obtained. Yet we need only think of history – not the history of the triumphs of various dynasties and rulers – but real history, the history of the oppression of the majority by a small minority – to see that the advantages of the rich over the poor have originated from nothing but rods, prisons, convict-settlements, and murder. One need but consider the unceasing and persistent struggle to increase material prosperity that guides everybody in our times, to be convinced that the advantages of the rich over the poor could not and cannot be maintained by anything but violence. There may be cases where oppressions, beatings, prisons, and executions, are not inflicted to secure the advantages of the propertied classes (though such cases are rare). But one may confidently say that in our society (where for every well-to-do man living in comfort there are ten who are exhausted by labour, envious, covetous, and whose whole families are often suffering) all the advantages of the rich, all their luxuries and superfluities, all that is beyond what an average workman possesses, is obtained and maintained by tortures, imprisonments, and executions... The society lady does not deliberately argue that if there were no capitalists and no army to defend them, her husband would have no money and she consequently would have no *salon* and no wonderful gowns; and the artist does not reflect that capitalists defended by armies are necessary for him in order that there be buyers for his pictures. But instinct, which in this case takes the place of reason, guides them unerringly.

Inequality in Latin America begins with the most unequal land-distribution system in the world. Typically, except in the unstable small countries of Central America, fewer than 10[%] of the landowners own 98[%] of the land... [T]he remaining 2[%] of land... is the soil that was left over.

Peasants have marched on the Brazilian capital to demand speedier land reforms. Thousands of supporters joined in as the protesters walked into the city. The peasants are demanding jobs and distribution of land to the landless. The peasants also want justice for 19 colleagues shot dead by police in a land protest a year ago.

...A Brazilian judge has ordered 153 police officers, including nine senior officers, to stand trial for the 1996 killing of landless peasants who were protesting on an Amazonian highway... [In related news,] Mexican authorities have captured a fruit vendor they allege was a hired gun who murdered up to 200 activists on behalf of rural landowners... [He] received from 20,000 to 100,000 pesos (about \$[NZ]4020 to \$20,120) per hit... His arrest exposed a murky Mexican underworld in which some major land owners routinely bump off pesky political activists and squatters. "Cacique" means Indian chief, but has been used as a nickname for men controlling vast stretches of land who operate outside the law. Reminiscent of the American Old West, many exist today on rich lands far from major cities.

...Two hundred mourning family members and friends huddled in a southern Mexican village yesterday holding a vigil with candles... awaiting the delivery of the bodies of 45 massacred Tzotzil Indians – among them 21 women and 14 children – who died in a five-hour bloodbath... [by] some 25 masked killers... this week. Survivors... and local people believe the killers were paramilitaries backed by local branches of [the President's] Institutional Revolutionary Party... The massacre... sparked world outrage as the U[N] condemned the killings...

The men arrested [for] the massacre... look much like their victims. They speak the same Maya Indian language. They live in the same highlands municipality. They farm the same subsistence plots. That has left many Mexicans struggling to understand how political differences among them could have led those men to form a death squad and gun down their neighbours with chilling brutality... One answer may be land. In this largely agricultural state, thousands of people of different political affiliations have been run off their farms by gunshots in the night... The Attorney-General... said... the dispute in the county goes back to the 1930s and centres on three families competing for economic and political power. A prominent member of one of the families... the ruling-party municipal president, was among those arrested. Some... witnesses say local police knew

of the... massacre as it started and refused to enter the town. State government officials said local police told them halfway into the massacre that the town was peaceful. And... state officials tried to cover up the massacre when it ended by piling the bodies into a truck and speeding them away to the state capital.

...[in Mexico, large estates and private holdings were confiscated by the government and redistributed among the native villages for purposes of farming – to make the importation of food unnecessary – and to correct the abuses of peonage. It was a communal system, title to all land being held by the state for the village, and the fertile portions, usually worked collectively, being distributed equally among family heads. The *ejido* system, stipulated by the constitution of 1917, was not energetically enforced until the presidency of Lazaro Cardenas – 1934-40; by 1945, 65,000,000 acres had been redistributed.]

...[In 1932, an Afrikaner adventurer persuaded a local villager to take him to the ancestral burial site of Mapungubwe. He was about to uncover some of the last remaining royal treasure in all of southern Africa – the few precious links to a long forgotten past. Though rescued, these treasures remain hidden from public view. To this day, the University of Pretoria has allowed only a few archaeologists access to these remarkable finds. All this secrecy has its roots in Apartheid. Dutch settlers maintained that blacks and whites had arrived in the area at roughly the same time, giving them equal claim to the territory. When carbon-dating placed Mapungubwe as early as 1200AD, white South Africans refused to believe blacks had arrived in the region over 400 years earlier than the first whites – and only 100 years later, founded one of the greatest African empires. While Europe was in the Middle Ages, southern Africa was dominated by the kingdom of Great Zimbabwe (House of Stone). In its heyday, Great Zimbabwe was a thriving metropolis, unique in all of Africa – as big as London at the time. It's not obvious why, but by the end of the 1500s the empire's buildings would lie forgotten. Their cultural legacy would suffer an even worse fate. Until recently, Zimbabwe's real history was denied by whites convinced that blacks couldn't have created such monumental structures.]

...Rhodesia's former P[M... who once said black rule would not come to Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in 1000 years, is among farmers whose land will be seized for redistribution to black peasants... The Zimbabwean Government on Friday gazetted 1503 farms, owned mostly by white commercial farmers, that it plans to take over to resettle peasants... The list... also includes farms owned by some companies, and prominent people such as the... family of South Africa's gold mining group Anglo American Corporation... - 1997

Zimbabwe war veterans say they will ignore a court order to vacate hundreds of white-owned farms they have invaded in the past month... [A] spokesman for veterans in Harare province, told a rally in the capital at the weekend that, if anything, more farms would be occupied. "We fought for land, and we are getting this land now. Anyone who wants to deny us the land of our forefathers will have to fight us, and we are ready for that fight." On Friday, the High Court gave the veterans 24 hours to leave the farms... saying police would evict those who did not comply. The Commercial Farmers Union, grouping 4500 mostly white members who were targeted in the invasions of more than 600 farms, had appealed to the court to declare the invasions illegal. [The]Home Affairs Minister... said the former guerrillas from Zimbabwe's 1970s war against white minority rule had gone beyond the peaceful demonstrations they had promised Government officials by interfering with farming operations, destroying property and threatening farmers and their workers. The veterans, who say their actions are meant to bolster [the President]'s plans to forcibly acquire white farms for landless blacks, have defied the minister's orders and the police have not acted, arguing it is a "political problem." A week ago [the President contradicted his minister]'s directive by saying the former fighters could stay on the farms provided they were peaceful. An opinion poll published last week showed that very few people supported [hi]s land seizure programme, with many preferring a reform plan that could attract international support. [The President] said Zimbabwe's former colonial master, Britain, had to assume responsibility for compensation because whites inherited the land from British ancestors who "stole" it when the country was colonised in the 1890s. He said it was immoral for 4500 white farmers to own 70[%] of the most fertile farming land while majority blacks are crammed in unproductive districts. His critics say [he] has allocated most of the land the Government has acquired for resettlement in the past 20 years to Government officials and their cronies.

...Hundreds of stone-throwing supporters of [the]President attacked a peaceful demonstration... [- protesting] at the takeover of... white-owned farms... [-] in Harare at the weekend, singling out whites for particular brutality... 50 riot police... made no attempt to disperse the mob.

...Zimbabwe[']s President... aims to intensify his land reform plans, involving the redistribution of white-owned land, after general elections this month. He... dismissed accusations by his critics that he deployed the veterans on to the farms as part of a campaign strategy... [The President], whose 20-year-old Government is fighting its biggest electoral challenge yet from the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in the face of a severe economic crisis, said... his ruling party... Zanu-PF would win the election fairly... At least 27 people, mostly MDC activists and five farmers, have been killed in a wave of violence that has swept the country... [The President] denies his Zanu-PF is sponsoring political violence, and instead accuses the MDC of provoking his supporters as part of a campaign to tarnish his image abroad.

...Zimbabwe's former state President... was found guilty yesterday of 11 charges of sodomy, attempted sodomy and indecent assault.[The] High Court... also issued a warrant for the arrest of the former President... - [who]... was alleged to have used his position as head of state between 1980 and 1987 to force... aides, bodyguards and a gardener... into submitting to sex with him... - after the state prosecutor said [he']d skipped the country and was seeking asylum... from the Anglican church... in neighbouring Botswana... [The] 62-year-old cleric, has been on bail since September 1997 when he... first... face[d] the charges. His trial proceeded in June this year only after the Supreme Court rejected his appeal that adverse pre-trial publicity had prejudiced his right to a fair hearing. [His] trial has been embarrassing for[the incumbent] President... who has outlawed gays and repeatedly described them as "lower than pigs and dogs." ...Meanwhile, the Commonwealth observer mission to Zimbabwe [has begun] work ahead of the elections, saying it expected[the] Government to give it full access to all areas during the poll. [The delegation's] leader and former Nigerian military leader... said in Harare that his group – including [two N]Z... members – was fully independent of[the new, NZ-born.] Commonwealth Secretary-General... [● L]ast night... Zimbabwe police said... they had arrested at least 133 white farmers for seizing orders to vacate their farms under [the President's]... controversial land reform programme... [And the] President... is threatening to seize the assets of foreign mining companies, dealing a further blow to investor confidence in a country already suffering political and economic turmoil.

...A white farmer was... killed at the weekend in Zimbabwe... [as the] land crisis... deepened, with banks halting new loans to embattled white farmers, raising fears that depleted harvests will result in food shortages. The violent occupations of white-owned farms and the uncertainty over a Government programme to nationalise thousands of the farms... without payment... have prevented many farmers from repaying existing loans, said the Commercial Farmers Union and the Zimbabwe Bankers Association... In addition, many farmers delayed investing in future harvests after the Government announced it would hand back 3000 properties to landless blacks... White farmers produce nearly half the country's 2.2 million tonnes of corn, the staple food, and most of its capital-intensive soy and wheat crops... In what theoretically amounts to one of the biggest population movements carried out in any country, the 76-year-old President... - [whose]... Zanu-PF only narrowly won... the... election... - ...says... an estimated 3 million people... will be moved on to 4.9 million hectares of land before the start of the rainy season in October.

...Tough legislation likened to the worst excesses of the apartheid era in South Africa... and stif[ing] free speech... will be pushed through Parliament in Harare this week... Whites may live in Zimbabwe but will never have a voice equal to that of blacks, says [the]President... On the economic front, the Government said the embattled economy had broken through the 100[%] inflation barrier for the first time.

...FARM invasions... are increasing in contravention of an international agreement signed three weeks ago. Under the Abuja accord, signed at a Commonwealth meeting in the Nigerian capital, the Zimbabwean authorities pledged to abide by the rule of law. In return, Britain agreed to

provide funding for orderly land reform. The deal was hailed as a victory for diplomacy, but opposition leaders have reported that it has been repeatedly flouted by [the Zanu-PF] government. There is evidence of a growing campaign to try to intimidate white farmers into leaving their properties, even though the agreement stated there were to be no more forced seizures of white-owned farms by self-styled war veterans of Zimbabwe's independence struggle... Meanwhile, the collapse of the farming industry is having a dire effect on poor rural communities in the south. The World Food Programme has warned of a growing danger of deaths from starvation and says at least 600,000 tons of grain is needed. In the cities, food is still available, but rampant inflation has pushed numerous items beyond the reach of many.

...BRITS are being offered a real estate deal which is out of this world. For \$35 they can buy a piece of the moon through MoonEstates.com.

...Internet users have been urged to report dodgy e-mail investment opportunities... to the A[US] Securities and Investments Commission... after a Sydney man was offered a block of land on Mars... The Mars Land Authority offered cash-only land packages of 100ha to 1000ha... for between \$A10 and \$A45... Worldwide Web browsers... could even win... a \$A50 prize as part of Asic's monthly "Gull Award – tales of the truly gullible."

...[THE ultimate risky property deal: Buy part of the Moon, or Mars, or any other planet in our solar system for that matter. Direct from – you guessed it – the US of A, an entrepreneur is selling 728ha blocks of the moon for \$25. The 39th and 40th Presidents have bought their stary plots, along with a host of other celebs. So too have 11,000 other "investors" since the entrepreneur's unreal estate business, Lunar Embassy in California, has been on the Internet. He hit on the idea of selling chunks of the solar system one day when, short of the readies, he looked skyward for inspiration. He drew up a title deed, declared ownership and filed his claim with his local council, the US and Russian governments and the UN. It sounds crazy, but an expert on space law says the entrepreneur is doing nothing illegal. Technically, there's no law saying people can't own the moon – not to say that the entrepreneur does. And, as no reasonable person could actually believe they were buying a piece of the moon for \$25, it's unlikely to be classed as fraud.' Editor's note: If an alien was to come to Earth with a *scrap of paper* which said a league of Milky Way planets acknowledges its claim to own the Solar System, would *the US and Russian governments and the UN* accept that the claim is valid?]

...Like most people I don't believe everything I'm told. I don't believe... aliens landed at Roswell... that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone that fateful day in Dallas... and I certainly don't believe my uncle... when he says he was just trying to help a neighbour get a wasp out of her blouse... But ask me to believe that we never landed on the moon, that [an astronaut] never took that giant leap for mankind and that it was all a \$40 billion Nasa hoax and frankly I'm struggling. Some of the arguments put forward in *Conspiracy Theory: Did We Land On The Moon?* are pretty convincing – they'd have to be, otherwise there wouldn't be a programme. But who is really willing to believe that the Eagle never landed and that billions world-wide were tricked into mistaking film shot in the Nevada desert for a lunar landscape? Well quite a few it seems and this programme really is a conspiracy theorists' paradise... • The American flag is filmed waving on the moon – even though there is no air. • The lunar module landed with 10,000lb of thrust but no blast crater is evident on any pictures. • The American public was terrified at the prospect of the Russians winning the space race. Many thought they wanted to put a missile base on the Moon. To allay fears America adopted an 'if you can't make it, fake it' approach to the Apollo programme. • Between 1964 and 1967, 10 astronauts lost their lives in freak accidents. Did they die because they wouldn't buy into the conspiracy? ...the poor old Nasa spokesman landed with the job of trying to prove the zealots wrong... says 'we went'. End of story. But even a sceptic like me has to do a double take when faced with some of the so-called photographic evidence of lunar landings. For reference purposes cross hairs were etched onto the lunar camera so they would appear on top of every image. In some cases they are behind in the image. Other pictures show shadows going in more than one direction, hard to explain when the only source of light is the sun. But doesn't all this sound just like a little too paranoid? A little too like the plot for the 1978 movie *Capricorn One* which faked a mission to Mars. (Incidentally, it starred [someone who is] himself the centre of many conspiracy theories.) Who knows? In [a fe]w years Japan will send a space craft to take close-up pictures of the Moon's surface. For Nasa's sake, let's hope they find evidence of lunar landings...

[The 41st President] reaches for the sky... [He] has set his sights on the moon, Mars and beyond in a sweeping space programme but his plans could fall victim to congressional criticism and a budget squeeze. Some Congress members called his plan mere daydreaming at a time of conflicting financial priorities, deficits of more than \$US100 billion... annually and his refusal to back any tax increases. Congressional critics estimated the price tag for [the] moon-Mars programme at \$400 billion. "I guess the bottom line is you can't go to Mars on a credit card," said the House budget committee chairman... On the 20th anniversary of the first manned lunar landing [the President] outlined the most far-reaching space plan since 1961 when President John F. Kennedy called for Americans to be the first to step on the moon. Unlike Mr Kennedy, who wanted a moon walk in the 1960s, [the incumbent President] refused to target a specific date and instead called for a "long range, continuing commitment" to space travel. He said the programme should be three-phased, starting with a "Space Station Freedom" in orbit in the 1990s. "And next – for the new century – back to the moon. Back to the future. And this time, back to stay," he said. - 1989

...he can't get out of his bed he ain't got no hair on his head and he makes me think what's going on... cause when you think about... the money that they send to the Moon... well it might as well be going to the Sun[to] burn it all up cause Jacky's dying and there's millions like him...

In a remote part of Siberia, residents are suffering from unusual diseases... Doctors in the village... about 3300km east of Moscow, have reported patients complaining of unexpected seizures, high fevers, breathing problems and anaemia... Some newborns have yellow skin and only live five or six months. The area around Ust-Ulagan and other parts of the small Altai republic have been used since the 1960s as a missile testing ground. The area also lies in the path of spacecraft launched from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in neighbouring Kazakhstan. The spacecraft drop fuel tanks as they soar into space. Surrounding woodlands, including the Altai forest reserve, are littered with... fuel tanks... The tanks can contain up to a tonne of highly toxic unburnt fuel, and no one knows how many have been dropped over the years except the military, which is not telling... [More forthcoming are a] team of American scientists[who] said yesterday that they have discovered evidence of ancient, single-cell life on Mars in remains from a meteorite... A consortium of Nasa and university scientists said microfossil remains in the meteorite indicate that a primitive form of life may have existed on Mars billions of years ago... Scientists cautioned against people envisioning Hollywood-inspired creatures from outer space.

...Fear not – the alien invasion signalled by the discovery of life on Mars may be some way off... The potato-sized piece of rock that Nasa believes came from Mars may have drifted in space for 16 million years before crashing down... to Earth 13,000 years... ago. The meteorite, found in Antarctica in 1984, has scientists in paroxysms of excitement... But [the]... president of the Waitomo branch of the Unexplained Phenomena Research Society... [said m]uch of the scientific information the public received was not particularly trustworthy, which made it difficult to adequately discuss the finding... [An] astronomy professor... at the University of Cardiff... hoped the Nasa claims could be verified[, but also]... had reservations. "Considering Nasa is absolutely avid to get funding from Congress, one has to be a bit suspicious." ...However, an internationally known space scientist... of Napier – whose achievements include having an asteroid named after him – said the discovery was extraordinary... [The d]irector of the Max Planck Institute in Germany and the 1995 N[Z]er of the Year... had no doubts that the discovery was genuine and not manufactured to bolster space exploration funding. "Science doesn't work like that..." It was only within the past 10 to 15 years that scientists had known that meteorites came from Mars. Before that they assumed they came from the asteroid belt... As a result of the find the pressure to visit Mars would increase. There had been only one successful mission to Mars in the early 1970s when the Americans landed two Viking spacecraft.

...Evidence of primitive life on Mars is expected to accelerate space exploration... [The US President has already] pledged to commit more Nasa resources... "I am determined... the... space programme will put its full intellectual power and technological prowess behind the search for further evidence of life on Mars,"... "There are over 10 spacecraft on the books right now," said a Nasa administrator... That armada will begin blasting off late this year when Nasa launches Mars Pathfinder, which will deliver a robotic lander to the surface of the planet on July 4, 1997... The lander will be followed by Mars Global Surveyor, a mapping satellite that will begin orbiting Mars in March 1998... [The cost of] the two probes... [is e]stimated at \$US300 million... each... [■] A British gambler [has] won £1000... with a bet he placed last August that alien life would be discovered within a year... Little expecting yesterday's announcement from Nasa that it had found evidence[, a British]... bookmaker... gave odds of 10-to-one on the bet... [Last night the bookmaker] said it had cut its odds on the discovery within a year of intelligent alien life to 25-to-one from 500-to-one.

...China poured scorn yesterday on the American announcement of fossilised evidence of life on Mars, saying... [that a]fter the "fake research findings" in discovering cold fusion were laid bare a few years ago... an increasing number of scientists have stopped believing America's "sensational discoveries." ... "Geologists from all over the world" at the 30th International Geological Congress in Beijing doubt [Nasa's] reports... the official Xinhua news agency said... The dispute over the potato-sized rock is only the latest in claims and counterclaims that have made the congress a hotbed of scientific discussion. Earlier yesterday... a Beijing University biologist, presented what might be "the only reliable evidence" that sexual differentiation occurred as early as 620 million years ago – preparing the world for sex 50 million years later... [S]ex joined the list of things "first discovered" by China's busy scientists, along with "evidence" that evolution was carried forward by giant meteorites...

In their first appearance before a major audience of professional astronomers, Nasa scientists vigorously defended their theory that a meteorite... thought to have been jolted away from Mars... showed evidence of ancient life on the red planet. Though they got respectful applause from researchers at a meeting of the American Astronomical Society's planetary division, the N[asa] team also got blunt scepticism and an outline of what they must prove to satisfy critics. "This is not bad for a new theory. It is much better than cold fusion," said [a researcher from]... the University of Arizona... But he said that few astronomers were ready... to accept the... theory... [S]everal times the [team] admitted they had yet to develop enough evidence to settle some controversial issues.

...A Nasa scientist has discovered what may be signs of life in a second meteorite... [that] could have been knocked away... from Mars... 600,000 years ago... The newest sign of life was found in a rock billions of years younger than the first, [the scientist] said, noting that "most of the lifetime of Mars is in this range between the two meteorites." Scientists said the first meteorite with signs of... polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons... was thought to have formed on Mars 4.5 billion years ago, a time when the solar system was forming... [By the way, a] Russian space probe launched yesterday on a mission to Mars ran into problems after liftoff and officials say it will probably re-enter the Earth's atmosphere and burn up. "We've got a problem. The probe had been due to leave the Earth's orbit last night but it is still there," said... a spokesman for the Russian Space Agency... The probe could spend a maximum of 30 days orbiting Earth and another official said the team, which had lost contact with the craft, would continue trying to trace it... The six-tonne probe, which lifted off from Baikonur space centre... at 11.48 pm on Saturday Moscow time... had been due to reach Mars on September 12 next year. Mars-96 was launched two years behind schedule due to cash shortages in [Russia's] hard-pressed space sector. The... \$US64 million... probe is carrying 1.1 tonnes of scientific equipment from 20 European countries and the U[S]... Participating countries are not saying exactly how much money they contributed to the Mars-96 project, but a total of about \$US1 billion... is said to have been invested over the last two years... The... mission is the second of three planned trips from Earth to Mars in just over a month. The U[S] launched one craft two weeks ago and a second mission will blast off on December 2. [One of those craft can be expected to have problems because '2/3rds of 29 missions to Mars have failed.']

...□ CRASHED: Into the Pacific Ocean near Easter Island, the remains of Russia's Mars-96 \$260 million mission.

...The Russians couldn't get it up; the Americans couldn't pin it down, but either way the doomed Mars space probe got this part of the planet in a bit of a spin yesterday. The final frontier was the furthest thing from the disabled probe's expensive sensors as it hurtled back towards Earth... at the end of its 26-hour voyage... In its final erratic path the 2.3m-long probe, travelling at 27,400 km/h, spurred early-morning presidential calls, an A[US]n defence alert, and informal betting on where it would land. N[Z] had its time in the spotlight when a U[S] National Security Council official told... CNN that the probe was expected to plunge into the ocean 800km south-east of [NZ] "within minutes." In fact it passed about 100km above Southland. Hamilton wasted no time in putting its residents on full alert that a satellite... could be heading their way. In a statement headed: "Don't touch spacecraft," the city's civil defence officer... said people should not touch any debris, but immediately inform the police... The probe carried two tiny plutonium batteries about the size of 35mm film canisters containing a total of 200g of the radioactive material, but Russian officials said they were designed to survive the intense heat of re-entry and the impact of a crash.

...[Chile has] demanded that Russia provide more information on the exact trajectory... the doomed Mars probe took as it plunged toward earth on November 16... Russian scientists say... the probe... powered by 200g of deadly plutonium... splashed into the Pacific between Easter Island and the Chilean mainland. U[S] space experts believe it may have crashed in Chile's northern Atacama Desert, and eyewitnesses in the port of Antofagasta say they saw the spacecraft disintegrating over land.

...The Russian probe that fell to Earth this week is one of several spacecraft that have crashed through the atmosphere in recent years... The largest... to plunge from orbit was the Space Agency's 77-tonne Skylab space station, which in 1979 flung... 15,000 pieces of wreckage along a 4400km sparsely populated swath of Western A[US]. One of the biggest pieces to survive was an 80kg lump of aluminium. Parts of Russia's Salyut 7 space station are thought to have survived re-entry when it tumbled out of orbit in 1991. Most of the 39-tonne space laboratory fell into the Atlantic... but some pieces reportedly crashed in Argentina. The worst nuclear space accident was in 1978 when a Soviet Cosmos spy satellite burnt up over... Canada, scattering radioactive debris from its nuclear reactor over a wide area. The Soviet authorities were forced to pay for a huge clean-up. Very little of the tens of thousands of pieces of space debris orbiting Earth reaches the ground. Most wreckage that survives the fiery plunge through the atmosphere falls in uninhabited regions or into the oceans... No one had ever been injured or killed by space debris, nor had there been any property damage, [a]... Space Command... spokeswoman... said. The chances of being hit by falling space junk were "very... slim."

...[a 'woman in the US has been hit by space junk.' Don't laugh – you could be next: 'metal balls from a Soviet craft have fallen onto the South Island' in the past! By the way, Nasa] is working on plans to send six astronauts to Mars within eight years of getting the political go-ahead for a manned mission, says the scientist who is running the project. [The scientist] told the BBC he was put in charge of the work after Nasa announced earlier this year that evidence of traces of primitive life had been found in a meteorite from Mars... "We don't have strong enough evidence to conclude that there was ever life on Mars," [he now admits]... Nasa is due to launch a... mission tomorrow designed to take a Mars Rover to the planet. - 1996

To find out if life once existed on Mars, a prominent scientist says Nasa should launch a 15-year effort to retrieve and analyse rocks from the red planet – looking for three key ingredients... • *Chemicals*. There are certain types of carbon-containing molecules that could be produced only by living organisms... • *Isotopes*. Life prefers to absorb some types... of carbon atoms from the environment. So those preferred types of carbon should be more prevalent in places where life has been than in barren rocks... • *Fossils*... "The combination of those three would win over most sceptics, I think,"... [H]e recommended sending a series of probes to Mars... The first probes would scout out promising places to look for rock samples, and later missions would collect the specimens and return them to Earth. Using such a strategy... we could have the right Mars rock in our hands by 2010. He notes that Nasa already has two probes on the way to the red planet. "Looking for evidence of life on Mars really makes a whole lot of

sense.” ...[the] geochemist at the University of California-San Diego, is an outspoken sceptic of the theory that traces of ancient microbes were present in a... 1.8kg... meteorite from Mars.

...Scientists have cast more doubt on whether an ancient meteorite found in Antarctica contains fossils of life on Mars... [A] group... at the University of Hawaii on Wednesday said their analysis indicated that carbonates in the rock – taken as evidence of life – were formed as part of a high-impact shock... [While on the topic of Mars, t]he last earthly craft to touch [the red planet] were Nasa’s twin Viking landers which set down in 1976, scooping up sand yet finding no trace of living things. Four US and Russian Mars-bound missions have flopped in the past decade, including America’s \$US1 billion... Mars Observer that was lost in space in 1993... But given Pathfinder’s excellent performance since it was launched last December[... its]... deputy project manager... foresees “an outstanding chance of pulling this thing off.” ...After its airbag-cushioned touchdown, Pathfinder will release Sojourner... for at least a week... It should provide what scientists call “ground truth” for more distant observations by the Mars Global Surveyor, which was launched in November 1996... Nasa plans to launch pairs of orbiters and landers every 26 months... Human travel could come in 2011, depending on the will of taxpayers and the advancement of technology... Scientists are devising schemes to create fuel from raw materials... to propel returns from Mars.

...a spaniel-sized robot is scheduled to begin trundling over the red sands of Mars... in... a day or two... At a cost of... \$US267.5 million... the Mini Moke might seem costly. Yet [to] most scientists... the likely scientific returns – testing technology that may one day reveal life on Mars – justify the cost... Certainly, the little robot looks cheap compared with other recent ventures. Just getting [one] Nasa astronaut... to space station Mir... to keep [it] on its gloomy, rudderless wobbles... soaked up twice the Mars mission’s budget. And that was before he and his colleagues trashed their orbiting rustbucket with a bungled parking practice... [Most of Nasa’s] funds are now being diverted to space station work... Newspapers are urging that Mir be abandoned.[‘Mir was built before CDs. By today’s standards it’s a museum piece.’] It is just not the hardware that is out of date but the very concept of a space station. We simply don’t need to keep men in space for long periods. That is the mentality of the Dan Dare age of space colonisation. Instead we should survey our solar system cheaply, safely – and robotically... The... Sojourner robot rover... project is the first of a series of Mars missions, due to end, next century, with the return of soil and rock samples to Earth. These may provide final proof that life once existed there, or still does – an issue of major importance. The total cost of these missions is unlikely to exceed a few billion dollars. By contrast, the... Mir... successor, the International Space Station... will cost 30 times that figure.[‘The station’s latest incarnation has already surpassed Nasa’s “guaranteed” maximum budget of \$US17 billion by between \$4 billion and \$7 billion. By the time the last of 700-plus rocket and shuttle launches have lofted the ISS’s components into orbit 350km above Earth, the final cost of the single biggest project in world space history could be \$40 billion.’] Yet its prospects of producing ground-breaking research are remote. So why pour endless cash into a scientific black hole? ...The motivation has nothing to do with science and everything to do with politics. The space station was originally conceived by [the 40th] President... as a symbol of U[S] technological might. With the demise of the Soviet Union it became a symbol of “a new era of scientific cooperation.”

...RUSSIA, the once proud superpower, has seen its economy collapse and its armed forces disintegrate. Now the country that pioneered space exploration, faces a future without a space programme of its own. With the weary crew of Mir struggling to maintain power on the crippled spaceship, American officials are considering pulling the plug on Russia’s once-mighty space programme... Four decades ago, the Soviet Union established its lead in space... by launching the first satellite, Sputnik 1, followed soon after by the first live space flight, by Laika, a dog. The greatest Soviet triumph came on April 12, 1961, when [a cosmonaut] became the first man in space. After that flight, President Kennedy set America the task of putting a man on the moon... Losing the race to the moon did little to slow Soviet advance... In 1971 the Soviet Union launched the first of seven Salyut space stations. Mir has been permanently occupied ever since its launch... Even before last month’s orbital collision, which wiped out almost half the station’s power supply, US politicians and space agency officials had expressed doubt about safety aboard the complex... Since the station entered service in 1986, there have been almost 1500 minor breakdowns, 60 of which have been left unrepaired. In recent months accidents have included the breakdown of the cooling system, the air-processing system, and... a small fire... [In addition, it was discovered that the station’s ‘electrics had been affected by microbes that ate metal and glass.’ The station is still in service because it] remains the sole prestige project where Russia can claim world leadership. [However, t]hat is only possible with American money. [‘The Russian space budget has shrivelled from \$3.2 billion in 1988 to a paltry \$530 million for 1998’ while Nasa] pumps \$755 million a year into the Mir programme... If Nasa pulls out, it would seem very unlikely that other participating countries would continue to pay... Without these funds, Mir would have to be put out of its misery.

...Life on the orbiting Russian Mir space station can be distinctly unglamorous, with chores that include cleaning the toilet and scrubbing fluff from air filters, says [an] astronaut... aged 41, [who recently] joined the... station... Since arriving... [the] medical doctor and researcher, has taken part in experiments and repairs to the station... The astronaut lost his bedroom after a leak developed in the hatch next to his cabin. He now sleeps near a crammed storage area, where he found himself disoriented after waking up on the ceiling one morning... He has also written a series of e-mail letters home... In some of his letters he marvels at Mir’s life support systems...

While some of Mir’s systems require complex computer commands and high-tech wizardry, the ship’s air and water systems need the fuel of just urine and sweat... The crew of two Russians and one American have recently worked to restore the main Elektron oxygen-generating system... The chemistry is straightforward, recycling urine into water and then stripping out the hydrogen from the water... With the cosmonaut’s daily output of 1.2 litres of urine, the Elektron makes 0.86kg of oxygen – the exact amount needed daily... For drinking water, the cosmonauts rely mostly on their sweat, which floats weightlessly round the station before gathering into a... water purifier. “A person produces a litre and a half of sweat a day... From this we produce distilled water, but this water is not tasty, so we add salts...” Over the... 11 years while Mir has been in orbit, scientists have learned that a cosmonaut needs 2.7 litres of water a day. Of that... 0.6 comes... from moisture in food, and [an equal amount]t from fresh supplies sent up from Earth. Other human waste products are not recycled. Solid waste is gathered and eventually carted away on the Progress cargo ship. Another on-board filter strips out harmful elements from human gases, dumping them into space.

...Filthy conditions on board Russia’s space station... have given its occupants food poisoning and other infections, according to [an] Italian microbiologist... who has been monitoring hygiene on the ageing craft... His research [also] shows that people living in confined, dirty, sweaty conditions, like those seen on board Mir, can shed up to 50,000 micro-organisms a minute. Under normal conditions, the figure is just under 3000.

...Life on the space station Mir may not be comfortable, but it is profitable for the Russian cosmonauts who undertake missions averaging about six months in orbit. Cosmonauts typically make \$US400 to \$600 a day when various bonuses such as hardship pay are added [– and those bonuses may have increased since the ‘cosmonauts started doing TV ads promoting US products from Mir as a way to raise additional funds for the station’].

...CNN is considering a new reporting beat... A CNN spokesman... yesterday... said that he had heard [of] prices for a Mir visit ranging from \$US5 m... to \$US15 m... The Tokyo Broadcasting System paid \$US12 m... to send [a] news director... on an [8]-day Mir mission in December 1990.

...[‘If all goes according to plan, if the conditions on the steppes of south central Kazakhstan are deemed correct, and if a last-minute computer hitch is overcome, a U[S]er will tomorrow become the world’s first space tourist. The 60-year-old Ferrari-driving tycoon has received permission from Nasa to join a team that will be rocketed to the space station orbiting above Earth. Nasa is not happy. It has opposed the plan – whereby the U[S]er paid \$US20 million to the Russians to take part in the 10-day mission aboard a Soyuz spacecraft – claiming that a “civilian” would be a severe safety risk. In the end, Nasa agreed.’]

...‘The world’s first space tourist was in orbit last night on board a Russian rocket. The tycoon’s 26-year-old son watched the launch. “Wow, what an adrenalin rush. If I had the chance, I’d definitely do this.” Nasa had wanted the tycoon’s ride postponed until another flight, insisting he didn’t have

enough training and could jeopardise the work of the station's crew. But Russian officials said the former rocket engineer had received the equivalent of a cosmonaut's training. The Soyuz craft will not reach the station for at least 2 days, and the crew are expected to be at the station for 6 days. They'll replace its escape craft, whose service lifetime expires this month. The Soyuz capsule will serve as the new lifeboat, and the 3 men will return on the older ship.'

...at least one 'university student can already picture an engineering career exploring the mechanics of catapulting legions of tourists into outer space, while a marketing major dreams of enticing businesses to invest in orbiting science laboratories, and a hotel and resort management student is pondering ways to make food taste better in a space hotel. All three have been through the New York Rochester Institute of Technology's trailblazing course in space tourism development. It is an exercise in big dreams and small practicalities. An oft-repeated sentiment is that space tourism is closer to reality than most people imagine. One entrepreneur who visited the class hopes to open a ring-shaped, 500-person resort from discarded space-shuttle fuel rockets by 2007. "The first stations will be filled with actor-types willing to pay \$US1 million or \$5 million to be the first 10,000 guests up there," said the entrepreneur, whose Space Island Group wants to raise \$500 million this year for development.' Another 'private company is hoping to turn Mir into a space hotel'...

A 'BRITISH entrepreneur is planning a hotel in space and has registered a company called Virgin Galactic Airways to ferry guests into orbit. Britain's Times newspaper said last month that the entrepreneur was talking to a Californian rocket company about planned space jaunts for tourists for a fare of around \$183,621. "We're looking at various things that could enable people to go to space for a reasonable price," the Virgin boss told internet users on an online discussion group on Wednesday night. He said he would set up a hotel somewhere in space. "I hope in five years a reusable rocket will have been developed, which can take up to 10 people at a time to stay at the Virgin Hotel for two weeks. I'd love to do it and I hope the dream will become a reality," he said.' Speaking of dreaming, two] **Yemeni men claiming ownership of Mars have filed a lawsuit against the US space agency Nasa for trespassing during its current mission to the red planet. The...** [Yemeni men] had presented documents to the country's prosecutor-general which they said proved... "..."they received the planet as an inheritance from ancient ancestors..."...

The Mars Pathfinder has yielded the strongest evidence yet that Mars, like Earth, has a crust, a mantle and an iron core and therefore may have once hosted life forms... Scientists at Nasa's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California say they do not yet know whether the iron core is solid, or molten like Earth's... So far the orbiting Mars Global Surveyor has found evidence of a weak magnetic field, but scientists are unsure whether it was generated from the core... Both rover and lander have out-lived their primary missions – seven days for the rover and 30 for the lander – but scientists said both could function for months more... The[scientists] are... still far from finding another component of life on Mars – water. But they have detected signs that the surface once teemed with streams and canyons that moved rocks around. [□ Nasa has announced plans to send a 'water-seeking robot probe to the Moon in the first week of 1998 for a budget price tag of \$US63 million. Scientists hope there is enough ice to support a colony of humans. It could also help them to identify the cheapest method of mining lunar rock.'

...'A lump of 3.9 billion-year-old moon rock brought to Earth by the crew of Apollo 17 and given to the Government of Honduras as a gift has been seized because it was smuggled into the US. The rock was being offered for sale for \$US5 million, US officials said. Although there is a vigorous black market in phoney space memorabilia it is the first time a genuine moon rock being offered for sale has been seized by US authorities. The sale of moon rock is not illegal. The pebble was seized because it was not declared to Customs, but officials were uncertain who had smuggled it.'

...The last humans to walk on the moon... said yesterday that it was time to turn from space exploration to exploitation. "The moon is a player in the energy scenario of the future." ...Helium-3, a lunar gas not found on Earth, constitutes "an ideal fuel for fusion reactor[s]." Incidentally, it has been alleged that uranium 'only comes from outer space']...

The world has almost... become used to nuclear-powered ships (except in our backyard) and we know there are some nukes in space. After October, when Nasa launches its Cassini space probe, another 32.9kg of radioactive material... will be floating in infinity. This is not the first time a probe has used plutonium to fuel its nuclear reactors but previous amounts have been much smaller... The risks involved in the project were several, said [a NZ lawyer]. He dotted in to his Tauranga home this month on leave from his job in New York as executive director of the International Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy. The lawyers' group is one of those whose hard work resulted in the landmark decision exactly a year ago by the International Court of Justice in the Hague on the illegality of the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons... "...Now the onus is on states to prove that what they are doing is not damaging." The anti-nuclear lobby in the U[S] has picked up this aspect of the ruling to urge Nasa to postpone the Cassini project until safer fuels can be used. It says the Titan IV rocket which will launch the probe has malfunctioned on several occasions, the last time being in 1993 when one exploded in California, destroying a \$NZ1.5 billion spy satellite system. If the rocket carrying the Cassini probe explodes plutonium would be scattered over parts of Florida. According to Nasa's "final environmental impact statement on the Cassini mission" any miscalculation, however, slight, could cause the craft to re-enter the Earth's atmosphere when it circles the planet before heading for Saturn. If it did so, half the population could be exposed to radiation... Nasa estimates the chance of the rocket exploding on launch and releasing plutonium into the air at one in 1500. The plutonium is in the form of super-hardened ceramic chunks that can't be inhaled. Moreover, say safety officials, Cassini will ride atop an unmanned rocket, unlike the Galileo and Ulysses mission which rode on shuttles.

...It is an interplanetary explorer with a noble purpose but a controversial load: 32.6kg of highly radioactive plutonium. This nuclear power source has Nasa preparing for the upcoming launch of its... 5715kg... Cassini spacecraft... and the unmanned Titan 4B rocket that will carry it from Earth... amid stepped-up security and secrecy[among the '5000 scientists and engineers who have worked on the project']. The fear is sabotage. Antinuclear activists are threatening to use all non-violent means possible to stop, or at least disrupt, the... launch... They worry that if an accident does occur, deadly plutonium could be showered on Earth, despite Nasa's insistence otherwise. The protesters are planning, among other things, to try to enter the launch area sometime between now and October 6 and to sit on the pad.

...The Cassini mission is expected to be launched in mid-October, but will not reach Saturn – 1.3 billion kilometres away at its nearest orbit – until 2004. When it reaches its goal, it will send a small probe on to the huge moon, Titan, which scientists hope to use as a model planet for experiments in the study of meteorology and the Earth's evolution... The largest and heaviest interplanetary probe yet launched by the US, Cassini and its technical back-up are costing \$5.16 billion... Italy has provided extra funding of \$250 million... [The] probe has been designed, developed and manufactured by the European Space Agency... Such international collaboration is generally welcomed by scientists. It enables smaller countries to participate in projects they could not possibly afford alone. Moreover, competing missions need no longer bid in the same area.

...Twenty-seven anti-nuclear activists were arrested yesterday at the Cape Canaveral Air Station during a protest...

Nearly all the protesters left town: They didn't want to be around if the rocket carrying Nasa's Cassini spacecraft blew up and 33kg of highly radioactive, highly carcinogenic plutonium rained down. However, their fears proved groundless. The moment of truth – lift-off of the mammoth Titan 4-B rocket... – was called off just before the... launch because of last-minute technical glitches and high upper level winds. The launch is now not expected until tomorrow... [T]he engineers and scientists who devoted years to the project, had brought their families to witness what they believed would be an historic, and safe, event: launch of the first spacecraft designed to orbit the ringed planet... Cassini will swoop within 800km of Earth in August 1999, after having swung past Venus twice for gravity-assisted speed. The... plutonium... is needed to power all the instruments so far from the sun. Earlier, officials from Nasa and the Department of Energy, which made Cassini's three plutonium-powered batteries, said they had no qualms about the safety of the electrical generators... "There is no risk to the public, even if there is an accident." Cassini... is the last of Nasa's multi-billion-dollar planetary explorers. Future missions to the planets will have more modest objectives and price tags...

['NASA wants to launch and fly a robot plane on Mars in 2003, a project costing \$US80m. The plan, included in Nasa's \$27b budget request to the US Congress, has a good chance of approval. Nasa planners hope the drone would be launched on a French Ariane 5 commercial rocket inside a container

about the size of a computer terminal. Once in Earth orbit, the container's small thruster would fire, pushing it on a looping course toward the Moon where it could pick up enough speed to slingshot to Mars. A heat-resistant shell would protect the plane on its way through the Martian atmosphere, then the shell would drop off and the airplane's wings would unfold so it could robotically fly – either powered or gliding – to a landing on the surface. The plane's flight would be programmed before its launch. Scientists could not operate it by remote-control once it reached Mars because signals sent from Earth would take at least eight minutes to reach it.' Nasa has also confirmed plans to 'send a spacecraft the size of a small car to search for water on the Red Planet' in 2001...

'SCIENTISTS who found microbes thriving in the South Pole say the discovery will help the search for life on Mars.' It could also help with the 'Rosetta comet probe – which is planned to land on the comet in 2011' – but is too late for] **Nasa's nuclear-powered Cassini mission[that] lifted off yesterday...**

With its destination beckoning in a moonlit sky, Nasa's plutonium-powered Cassini spacecraft rocketed flawlessly toward Saturn on a mission activists had tried to stop for fear an accident would shower Earth with radioactive fallout... After a two-day delay caused by high wind and computer problems, the... monstrous Titan 4-B rocket[']s... launch was perfect. [However, 'a Titan 4 rocket carrying a \$2 billion satellite blew up a few seconds after being launched today.']

...An Earth-observing satellite, hailed by Nasa as an example of its new "faster, cheaper, better" philosophy, is likely to burn up in the atmosphere this week. It spun out of control last month, days after blasting off from California, and attempts to re-contact it have failed... [In related news,] **Russia's Mir space station will fall back to Earth and disintegrate in the lower atmosphere towards the end of 1999... [T]he operation would be controlled to ensure there was no danger to people on the ground.**

...['a Russian Progress cargo ship commanded by ground controllers will steadily lower the low end of Mir's orbit. At the same time, the atmosphere will drag down the station even more. After a month of this, ground controllers will fire the Progress ship's main engine one last time. The braking will slow Mir enough for gravity to catch the 120-tonne station and send it crashing down, it is hoped, over an unpopulated swath of the Pacific south of Alaska but north of Hawaii. Most of the station should burn up on the way down. Sturdy pieces like fuel tanks may survive, however, thus the remote Pacific locale. By planning for all this now, Nasa hopes to avoid the hype and haphazardness of Skylab's 1979 fall, which was largely uncontrolled.' By the way, the] **Russian space agency... says the AsiaSat 3 communications satellite, which spun out of control following an unsuccessful launch in Kazakhstan last week, will take four to five years to fall back to Earth...**

China has successfully fired a Philippine communications satellite into orbit on board a Long March 3B rocket... China had been banking on a successful launch... to restore confidence in its space industry after a series of disasters... since the first 3B exploded shortly after take-off, killing at least six people on the ground. That... followed the loss of a Long March 2E in January 1995 in which a family of six was killed by a rain of fiery debris and the August 1996 failure of a Long March 3 to put its Chinasat-7 into the proper orbit... The launch centre, nestled in a green, tree-lined valley... [- where water] buffalo still stroll... and poor peasant farmers eke an existence from small fields scattered around its perimeter fence... [while] a souvenir stand sells plastic model rockets to tourists for eight yuan (\$1) each... [-] has launched more than 20 satellites since the mid-1980s[. Meanwhile, 'the US, South Korea and Japan are scrambling for answers about whether North Korea has really launched a satellite – that is said to be transmitting revolutionary hymns in praise of its late leader and his son – as it claims. No country has been able to officially deny or verify the claim, although Russia's Itar-Tass news agency reported that Moscow's space observation centre had spotted the satellite.'

...the Russians have 'converted an oil rig into a rocket launcher for \$500 million.' No word yet on how much Brazil spent on its launch pad, but the country]'s first attempt to put a satellite in orbit failed at the weekend when one of four engines on its rocket failed to ignite and it had to be destroyed by remote control 65 seconds after liftoff.

...['a Russian rocket carrying 12 US satellites for the future Globalstar telecommunications network has plunged to earth after 4 min 32 sec. due to an unexplained failure of one of its engines.' On a positive note, 'plans for a truly mobile communications system that spans the globe have gone from the drawing board and into orbit. Following 11 years of design, development and implementation, Iridium is offering the service free of charge to a limited number of customers to do final testing and fine-tune the system, which has a network of 66 satellites. Including backups, the company has launched 79 satellites aboard 17 launch vehicles in 16 months. Seven have been declared nonfunctioning and one is experiencing communications difficulties but may be able to be fixed. Another satellite will be launched next month. The system has cost \$5 billion to date. Its mobile phones are expected to cost about \$5600.']

...AN unmanned Delta II rocket carrying a \$60 million... Navstar Block IIR satellite, a new generation of U[S] Air Force... G[PS satellites, has]... exploded about 10 seconds after blast off from Cape Canaveral. Photographers and reporters about 1.5km from the launch pad had to dive for cover when the blast occurred. The... air force said parts of the rocket had fallen into a safety area in the Atlantic Ocean and on to the air station.

...['the \$US225 million Boeing-built Delta III rocket, which was carrying a communications satellite, vanished in a mystery blast on its inaugural flight from Cape Canaveral yesterday.' Incidentally, today is the 8th anniversary of when the 'US Secretary of State and the Soviet Foreign Minister signed six agreements on arms control and other matters. One concession concerned a disputed Soviet radar installation. The US demanded the radar be torn down before a Start treaty could be signed. Somewhat hypocritically, the US had hoped the Soviets would sign a strategic arms treaty without insisting that a treaty limiting the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI or "Star Wars") programme of space defences also be enacted – although Congress had already put the brakes on the programme with budget cuts.'

...['In the fall of 1990, Congress, in its defence appropriations, cut the administration's proposed funding for SDI by one half. By this time, the US had spent nearly \$US20 billion on the system since 1984.'

...["'Star Wars" was a plan, announced in 1983, to "make nuclear weapons obsolete" by building a shield of lasers (or particle beams or, later, "smart rocks" or "brilliant pebbles"). Study after study suggested that SDI shielding would hardly work at all because of the technical difficulties involved, and because effective counters could be developed much less expensively. Note that US efforts to develop defensive beams have not been entirely abandoned. The Air Force has awarded contracts for the design of a laser able to destroy missiles hundreds of kms away, yet capable of being carried by an aircraft.'

...the US] Army may try out one of the world's most powerful lasers to see if it can hit a military satellite, the Pentagon said yesterday. The unprecedented experiment... would show how vulnerable [US] satellites are to attack[– 'the more military hardware the US puts in space, the more she has to protect it' –] and how easy it would be for the [US] to hit enemy satellites... The \$US60 million... [target] satellite is run by the air force, which plans to shut it down because it was no longer needed. But the maker of the satellite, Spectrum Astro... said it still had a useful life [left]... The laser... produces a beam of light two metres across using millions of watts from burning fuel. The New York Times said it destroys targets by burning them up... [It has already been] fired... at ground targets, speeding drones and rockets in space... [N]o treaties or domestic legislation banned such tests... [T]he Army also had a project to destroy satellites with what [it] called a "kinetic energy vehicle." ...The Times quoted arms control advocates as saying the test would probably set off a race for better space weapons. - 1997

The wars of the future will not be fought on a battlefield or at sea – they will be fought in space...

The tiny Republic of the Marshall Islands has sent Washington a wake-up call. The islands' leaders want a much better deal in exchange for continued U[S] access to Kwajalein, an atoll in the central Pacific vital to Washington's drive to build a shield against ballistic missiles... Critical

aspects of US... space and intelligence-gathering programmes hinge on a \$US4 billion complex on Kwajalein... Raising the rent, variously estimated at \$US10 million... a year, to an unspecified “fair market value” will be the top priority in coming lease-renewal negotiations with the U[S], said the republic’s Foreign Minister... Pointedly, he left open the David v Goliath possibility that Marshallese clan leaders, if they perceive they are being short-changed, could seek to disrupt US operations as they did repeatedly... before the current military operating pact took effect in 1986. The current President... who is also Kwajalein’s largest landowner, was clubbed by a US-employed guard during one such protest he led in July 1979. The Marshall Islands has a complex relationship with the U[S under the] 1986 Compact of Free Association... A key provision of the compact gave the US continued use of[the] US Army missile test range on Kwajalein... for 15 years with an option to renew automatically at a fixed rate for another 15. In exchange, the islands received economic grants, access to many federal programmes and, with neighbouring island states, more US funding per head than any other nation... The Marshalls’ economy is[also] heavily dependent on revenue generated by the missile range, including an estimated \$US14 million in annual salaries to nearly 1300 Marshallese workers... Kwajalein is being used to develop a fixed, land-based system to shield all 50 US states from long-range missiles such as those North Korea and Iran are apparently developing... A decision on whether to deploy a limited national defence system, due in June next year, depends largely on four performance tests of interceptors cued by early-warning satellites and fired from Kwajalein, US officials said last month. Kwajalein is the only spot on Earth suitable both for full-scale testing of long-range missiles and for testing ballistic missile intercepts outside the atmosphere, the Pentagon said.

...U[S] astronomers believe they have discovered a blue-green diamond the size of a planet 17 light years from earth in the constellation of Centaurus. It has a diameter of 12,800km...

Gold and platinum are valued in large measure because they are rare. But when you look at the spectrum of the Sun and the stars, or examine a meteorite newly fallen to Earth, you find that there is relatively much more of these precious metals up in the sky.

...buy the sky and sell the sky...

How can you buy the sky? - Chief Seattle

The existence of laws which recognise private ownership of land – plus everything in and on it – suggests that individuals and groups should also be able to sell or *buy the sky* (‘the region of the clouds, atmosphere, and outer space seen from the earth’)! While people seemingly can’t to do so at the moment, it is already possible for governments – excluding Iraq’s, perhaps? – to claim ownership of the *airspace* above their land (excluding the immediate ‘airspace above buildings’, which belongs to each building’s owner), and they can sell *airwaves* to radio and TV broadcasting channels.

...in 1950... [resources] were abundant, and air and water were still widely regarded as free goods.

The gases and particulates of air pollution are most obvious in cities; in some, sufferers can now buy oxygen from slot machines.

How about a shot of clean air? For Southern Californians repulsed by smoggy air, plans are in the works to open three oxygen bars where they can relax, inhale and pay through the nose: 20-minute doses of oxygen will cost \$US16... - 1997

For \$US2 more, the oxygen can be spiked with lemon, lime or orange. Proponents of recreational oxygen blasts claim it eases headaches, boosts alertness, fights fatigue and reduces stress. “It[also] gives you a little buzz,”...

Information is easy to trade, because, unlike goods, you can give it away without losing it.

Although individuals and organisations *can give it away without losing it*, information is seldom GIVEN AWAY these days.

copyright, exclusive right to print, reprint, publish, copy, and vend... books, directories... newspapers; lectures and sermons[(thereby meaning that people can literally own *hot-air*)]; plays, music... motion pictures; works of art... maps; technical drawings and models; photographs and illustrations; and labels for merchandise... [‘Copyright owners are entitled to take legal action against persons who infringe their copyright.’ ‘Protection of rights was made necessary by the invention of printing (15th c.). At first the only protection available to the author was against publication of his work without his permission; once published it was out of his control. The first English statute recognizing the author’s rights was passed in 1710’.] **The first copyright law, passed by Congress in 1790, has been revised several times... The term of copyright is 28 years plus an optional renewal term of 28 years... In Britain, Canada, and other parts of the British Commonwealth... copyright holds during the lifetime of the author and for 50 years thereafter**[, ‘or until 50 years after publication or 75 years after death whichever is the shorter if published posthumously. Copyright is complex. A major problem which is spreading around the world since the 1980s is that of piracy of video and television material for private playing on cassette machines. They are clearly covered by law, but detection and prosecution are difficult’]... **Copyright differs from patent**[– the]... **exclusive right to manufacture, sell, or use an invention, process, or design.**

...totally natural and specially patented.

Who should profit from... natural remedies? ...In 1992, N[Z] became a signatory to the International Convention on Biological Diversity. Biodiversity is, more or less, everything in nature... The convention contains, besides an obligation to conserve, a mandate to ensure that the benefits of biodiversity are shared equitably. This is deemed necessary because the communities in which the jewels of nature are often identified are not adequately rewarded for the knowledge that led to these discoveries. The mandate was woven into international law because “bioprospectors” began to comb the planet in search of biodiversity which might have huge economic benefits. Already, one quarter of all pharmaceutical products are derived from natural products or processes. Accordingly, it is possible that “cures” for all sorts of ailments may be found in nature... [T]he “262” claim... before the Waitangi Tribunal... implies that the biodiversity broadly within[Maori] possession was, and remains, theirs. This claim may seem somewhat unusual to many Europeans because 2000 years of Western legal discourse has tended not to recognise biodiversity in its wild and free forms as being owned by anyone other than the state. The exception has been when biodiversity was taken out of its natural order by being either captured or modified. Only then could it become the property of a distinct person or group.

Anger over plan to patent living things... Non-governmental organisations are continuing their fight against a... European Parliament... directive... approving the patenting of genetic material... – aimed at harmonising the EU’s patenting rules with the U[S] and Japan... “Allowing patents on living organisms is a violation of the tenets of democracy, human dignity and respect for living creatures,” said[the] director of the London-based

Gaia Foundation... Patents were originally designed for industrial processes but under Europe's new directive, inventions will be patentable "even if they concern a product consisting of or containing biological material." Biological material "may be the subject of an invention even if it has already occurred in nature." ... "In other words... you can patent plants and animals as long as you don't call your end product a variety." ...the A[US]n organisation, Global 2000, said: "It is like saying you cannot patent a pig, but you can patent all mammals, including the pig." It could also open the way for companies to apply for patents on an entire crop... [A] farmer who used wheat seed which had been genetically modified, could have to pay royalties to the company holding the patent. This would have a huge impact on the food market... Legislation to patent genes was rejected by the European Parliament in March 1995. But pressure from the agrochemical and pharmaceutical industries led to its reintroduction... [There are potentially positive outcomes – in order 'to prevent others from ever using the technology', someone is attempting to get a patent on genetically engineered creatures that could be created by combining human genes with chimps. Unfortunately, according to a] Greenpeace campaigner... the European directive is sloppily drafted with contradictory provisions that will create legal confusion and thousands of billable hours for lawyers.

...[a professional basketballer] is bringing his 2.4m hulk and size-20 shoes down on the Otago Basketball team's mascot. Lawyers acting on behalf of the LA Lakers... multimillionaire... superstar... [and] Mine O' Mine Inc... yesterday demanded the Nuggets stop calling their mascot... 'Shaq the Cat'... and using the number 32 on its uniform... alleging breach of naming rights... But the Nuggets are not ready to give up their mascot's identity without a fight. An application to patent the name... and the number... in N[Z] was lodged by the Nuggets just before a similar application from Mine O' Mine... the general manager of the team... said... [Incidentally, t]he Ministry of Commerce is to slash jobs at the Patent Office in Lower Hutt as part of major restructuring... It is proposed that about half the 137 staff will lose their jobs over the next three months.

...A restructuring of the Patent Office resulting in wholesale job cuts has raised concerns that it could lead to a more litigious environment. About 35... staff were handed their redundancy notices last week and the once 150-strong office in Lower Hutt is now below a target full-time staff of 80. Attorneys are worried that a drop in examination staff numbers from around 60 to little more than 20 will compromise the office's ability to vet applications, resulting in an increasing number of High Court appeals against potential invalid approvals... However... the Deputy Secretary of Commerce... who has spearheaded a review of the office... said the office was now the most efficient in the world and would become more so over the next 12 months... The chairman of[a] patent firm... said the prospect of additional litigation was tempered by... the likelihood that disputes relating to international patents would be contested overseas. - 1997

...intellectual property and copyright is a knotty area, especially in the world of music, where it is possible to receive ideas almost unconsciously... [George Harrison] defended his "unconscious plagiarism" of the chords from *He's So Fine*, which were the basis of his hit *My Sweet Lord* back in the early 70s... [By the way, when rights to The Beatles songs went up for sale recently, the surviving co-writer (r:p30, ln32) of most of them was outbid at '\$US50 million' by a North American songwriter (r:p90, ln53) – who, it is worth noting, was sued earlier in the 90s by] a South American songwriter... over a song he claimed to have written... The word copyright alone "is a bit like calculus – people glaze over when [others] mention it." Essentially, for something to attract copyright it simply needs to be reduced to a material form... This means written, recorded, put on videotape and so on. Once that happens it automatically attracts copyright, which is "a collection of rights that the owner is entitled to use to the exclusion of all others, for example in broadcast, reproduction, publication and so forth." ...You can license your copyright for a defined period, or into specific territories, or sell it entirely... N[Z] does not require a system of registration, unlike the U[S].

...a three-member arbitration panel[has ruled the US] Government must pay heirs of the late Abraham Zapruder \$30 million for his 26-second film of *President John F Kennedy's* 1963 assassination in Dallas... [In related news, Alberto Korda, the] Cuban photographer... whose 1960 shot of Latin American guerrilla legend Che Guevara became an icon for would-be revolutionaries... has died aged 72. Korda, a leading visual chronicler of C[uba]'s Government after the 1959 revolution... took the picture at a funeral rally for 136 people killed in a boat explosion, a disaster that Havana blamed on the U[S]. "I took it without him [Guevara] realising," he said. Korda gave away the picture and never received royalties for the image that... was reproduced on millions of T-shirts, posters and banners around the world.

...A handwritten note... discovered in [a] basement a year ago could be the answer to one of the world's best-kept culinary secrets – Colonel Harland B. Sanders' recipe for fried chicken. The couple [who found the recipe] bought their white Kentucky mansion from Sanders and his wife... in the early 1970s. About a year ago, the [couple] were digging through a box of books from the basement and found a leather-bound diary from 1964. Among appointments and other notes was a recipe for fried chicken that called for 11 herbs and spices... The recipe is known by only a handful of people, all of whom have signed confidentiality contracts... A week ago, KFC filed a lawsuit in Shelby County Circuit Court asking that the piece of paper... be given to the company... The [couple] were considering selling the book through an auction house, but first contacted KFC to see whether the company could verify that the recipe was authentic. "They didn't say anything at the time. They just sent this court document to us,"... Sanders came up with the... recipe in the late 1930s for Sanders Court and Cafe, his roadside... motel and restaurant business[that] seated 142 people. [Nowadays, there are] more than 10,300 KFC stores[which together annually] generate... about \$US20.6 billion... [While on the topic of recipes.] Champagne, for centuries regarded as the quintessence of French sophistication, is in fact a British invention... A spokeswoman for... Christie's... auction house said the book... *A World Encyclopaedia of Champagne and Sparkling Wine*, which [it] is to publish this month... included a copy of a historical document "proving beyond any doubt" that Christopher Merret, a Briton, presented a paper on making sparkling wine to Britain's Royal Society in 1662. This was some 20 years before the legendary blind French monk Dom Perignon reputedly perfected his method of making... the world's most exclusive sparkling wine.

...Take a deep breath, N[Z]. When it comes to the origins of the Kiwiana icon Buzzy Bee, the Yanks almost certainly got there first. The Aussies created a buzz when they tried to claim our pavlova, and now Kiwis have been stung with the news that the clackety bee was an American concept. Hec Ramsey and his brother John, who are credited with inventing the... Buzzy Bee... started production in 1948... [A former worker] at Hec Ramsey's toy factory for 40 years... well remembers his cobbler... bringing a toy bee into the old Grey Lynn factory. "[My cobbler]'s sister brought one back from the States... Hec looked at it and decided to make his own version. Within three months we were making batches of 5000 to 10,000." ...the American bee "was flat, a[nd]... had coloured paper stuck to its body instead of paint." A[n a]ntique toy collector... said sticking printed paper on wooden toys was a 19th-century practice. The prototype... could easily have been from that period. However... the U[S] company Fisher Price produced its version of the toy for only a short time, in the 1950s. N[Z]ers have canonised Buzzy Bee as a national icon. Sentimentally, he is ours.

...A very sweet lump sum will replace the twice-yearly royalty cheques that Walt Disney has been paying since 1961 to exploit the honey-loving English storybook character Winnie the Pooh. The *Sunday Times* reports that the £240 million... honeypot made the deal Britain's biggest literary contract. The contract will last until the Pooh copyright expires in 2026... Sales of Pooh products have doubled over the past five years, while Disney's own stable of characters, including Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, has managed just 20[%] growth... The biggest single beneficiary will be the Royal Literary Society, to whom Christopher Robin Milne, son of Pooh creator A.A. Milne, sold half of his quarter share of the royalty rights before his death five years ago. Christopher Robin's daughter, who was born with cerebral palsy and benefits from a trust fund set up with the other half of the quarter share, will receive a one-off cheque of £30 million. Christopher Robin's widow will receive nothing from the Disney deal but will continue to earn royalties from the original Pooh books. "Christopher was very anti-Disney," she said. "He hated what they had done with the books and the characters."

...Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of the great fictional detective... stole the idea for one of his best-known Sherlock Holmes novels, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, from his friend Bertram Fletcher Robinson and later poisoned him with the help of Robinson's wife, Gladys, with whom he was having an affair... [A]fter an 11-year investigation into letters, wills and other circumstantial evidence[, the author of a]... book titled *The House of the Baskervilles*... said much of the detail for the story of the giant, ghostly hound... had come from a manuscript entitled *Adventure on Dartmoor* written by Robinson a year before... Conan Doyle even borrowed the name of Robinson's coachman and gardener, Harry Baskerville, for his book's title... But the Sherlock Holmes Society dismissed the claims... "The whole thing is a complete fabrication," a spokeswoman told the *Independent*.

...A railway that was the inspiration for the *Thomas the Tank Engine* character is defying the threat of legal action after encountering a commercial equivalent of the Fat Controller, the autocratic station master in the children's stories. The Talylyn Railway in Gwynedd, North Wales, was adored by the Rev Wilbert Awdry, the creator of Thomas. Awdry was one of its first volunteers before writing his stories and based at least four characters on locomotives there. The 1921 locomotive on which Awdry's Peter Sam character is based has been running on the line as an attraction under his fictional name for more than 10 years... [T]he volunteer-run Talylyn [Railway]... bought... the locomotive... for £25 in 1951 – for... public duties... But... [t]he... company, which [recently] bought the Thomas copyright... for £13.5 million... is demanding that Talylyn Railway pay it the same licence fee to continue using the name as other steam railways pay to run Thomas the Tank Engine events... Thomas remains remarkably big business... A £9 million film... is expected mid-year, a theme park is planned for the US and [the new owner] is securing about 5.5 million hits a month on its Thomas Website, on which a copyright warning is featured.

...an attempt to tell [a] tale in Auckland yesterday brought despair for [a] three-year-old. An hour before her performance in an amateur production of a play called *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, she suddenly was not allowed to act as an Oompa-Loompa any more. Instead, [sh]e was asked to learn a new set of lines, which did not mention Willy Wonka... or any of the characters in Roald Dahl's famous book... of a little boy's joy in winning entry to ...a... chocolate factory... The hasty changes were made by the play's director after [a] threat of legal action by the Roald Dahl estate for breach of copyright... The play's director... who has been directing stage shows for 30 years, received a phone call 15 minutes before the third performance of the play, being performed by... about 60... West Auckland children at Green Bay High School. It told her to cancel the show or risk being sued. New Plymouth company Play Bureau also warned her to cancel the four remaining performances... She had written an original script for the play, believing she could use the title, as long as the words and story were her own. But the managing director of Play Bureau... said stage productions of Dahl's books required a royalty payment... [of] about \$120 a performance... in exchange for approved scripts. Adaptations were banned... The Play Bureau had contacted... a London company which collects royalties on behalf of the Dahl estate, after reading about the production... Welsh-born... Dahl became world-famous thanks to the children's fiction he wrote during the last three decades of his life. [However, 'naivety meant he accepted a one-off payment for his best known work and missed out on royalties that would have continued until 1990' – the year h]e died... aged 74. A recent biographer described him as a devoted father dedicated to charity causes, but also manipulative, petty and jealous of other writers. It said he was a bully, too – just like characters featured in his books.

...The... cast went ahead with the performance... [after the director renamed her play] *Oomp and Loomp and the Fun Factory*, removed the original posters, reprinted the programmes and changed the names of the characters... But The Play Bureau isn't satisfied. "Our concern in this matter is with what is right and fair, and also the bad example [the director] is setting with the children involved..." [The director] says The Play Bureau is "cruel", but... "I... agree... I've made a mistake and I'm prepared to pay for the rights of the idea,"...

Happy Birthday to You might be the most famous four-line ditty in history... [W]ritten in 1893 as a classroom greeting by two Louisville, Kentucky, teachers[, it]... was copyrighted in 1935 after a lawsuit was fought over it a year earlier... In 1996 the greeting brought in about \$US2m a year.

"Principal Skinner, *THE HAPPIEST PLACE ON EARTH* is a registered Disneyland copyright." "Gentlemen, it's just a small school carnival." "And it's heading for a great big lawsuit. You made a big mistake..."

The giant Walt Disney company has blown the whistle on the creator of a children's tank engine for an alleged breach of copyright... [The creator] received a letter last week saying the paint job on his train, featuring Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and other Disney characters, must go. Walt Disney's news monitoring service spotted a photograph of the train in a Timaru newspaper six weeks ago. And on Monday, a registered letter arrived from the Walt Disney Company Asia Pacific Ltd, Hong Kong. "We sure didn't expect this. We thought it was going to be good news and my wife asked if I had ordered any parts from Hong Kong," said [the creator]. The letter warned that only authorised licensees could use Disney characters and to do so without permission was against the law. It accepted the breach was "innocent to date" but asked [the creator] to remove the characters. He will... [The] train, which he hires to galas and children's parties, is a tinpot weekends-only venture. A Walt Disney official said the company did not comment on individual infringements of copyright, especially when the case was ongoing. In most cases, Walt Disney got voluntarily co-operation without taking the matter further, he said. [The creator] built the blue train to look like Thomas the Tank Engine but, fearing a breach of copyright, called it Ernie the Engine. He planned to decorate it with fairground scenes but the retired signwriter doing the painting said that would be too complicated. Instead, they opted for Disney characters, chosen by... [the creator's children. The family] are not the first in N[Z] to be stung by Walt Disney's lawyers. Five years ago, the U[S]-based company targeted the Featherston public toilets, saying it was not a fit place for Disney cartoons. The South Wairarapa District Council was told to repaint the wall. In other David and Goliath battles, three N[Z] Hiltons were threatened with legal action by their international namesake in 1992. One of them, at Blackball, near Greymouth, got around the problem with its new name – Formerly the Blackball Hilton. In 1990, a Palmerston North motel, owned by [a couple with the surname of Harrod], was ordered to stop trading as Harrods after a four-year dispute with the famous British department store. Dunedin's Christies Antiques is fighting Christie's of London for the right to continue using its name of 25 years. And this year, a Southland cafe had to switch its name from Planet Hollyford to Hollyford Boulevard after legal threats from international food chain Planet Hollywood. It cost the cafe owners about \$5000 in legal fees, changes to its signs and menus and an undisclosed amount given to Planet Hollywood.

...As more companies enter the world of cyberspace, they all too often find themselves victims of a new scam: internet hijacking. The victims are companies that have failed to register their names, or product brand names, as internet addresses, and then find that a third party has appropriated their name for a web site. In such cases, companies either must pay the third company for the use of their own name or take legal action. High-profile victims have included Harrods... which last month went to court to reclaim the internet address <http://www.harrods.com>, fast-food chain operator McDonald's Corp and music television station MTV. Those cases and others have prompted internet experts to warn companies to register brand names on the internet as automatically as they register new trademarks... [R]egistries, typically trade organisations funded by members... have sprung up in the last couple of years around the world to act as clearing houses for internet addresses. [Incidentally, at an auction house yesterday, someone paid \$NZ2 million for a single page from a 16th century Persian book.]

...A "pile of rubbish" found in a chest of drawers contained documents by Rudyard Kipling which fetched \$24,217 at auction yesterday. The previously unpublished documents were stolen from the [writer and poet, born in Bombay,] by a disgruntled employee...

An auction of a collection of letters written by the father of Indian independence, Mahatma Gandhi, is to be postponed at the request of the Indian Government... "The Government says speculators will make money out of it and research scholars will be deprived of the material,"... but the vendor expects compensation for the letters, which are estimated to be worth about 55 million rupees (\$[NZ]2.17 million).

...Love letters written... to the woman who was [the] inspiration for... the heroine of [the] book *Dr Zhivago*, will be auctioned in London on November 27... [The letters,] described by an expert... as "absolutely beautiful," are expected to fetch around \$[NZ]1,167,000.

...The private letters of Albert Einstein, including 400 to his first wife... will be auctioned in November. The sale... is expected to generate about \$US2 million... The letters, which were found in 1986 in a safety deposit box in a San Francisco bank, were placed on sale by the foundation that manages Einstein's estate... They were being sold to try to settle a legal feud among his heirs... - 1996

For years there were whispers that Albert Einstein plagiarised a key part of the general theory of relativity from another scientist... Einstein submitted his conclusive paper... on November 25, 1915... [Although the other scientist's] paper was published the next year... the date on [his paper was]... five days before... [Einstein's, which] suggested... Einstein... had cribbed the results... But now researchers... from the Max Planck Institute in Berlin, Tel Aviv University and Boston University say... page proofs of the [other scientist's] paper, dated December 6, 1915, show his work was only an incomplete version of the theory and lacked key equations included in Einstein's work. The historians conclude that [the other scientist] saw Einstein's paper after that date and put the equations into his paper before publication.

...[9 letters written by the father of modern physics reveal that he had a love affair during WW2 with a purported Soviet spy. Sotheby's auction house said the letters, to be auctioned in New York on June 26, were written in elegant German to Russian emigre Margarita Konenkova, the wife of eminent Russian sculptor Sergei Konenkov, with whom she lived in the US for more than 20 years from the early 1920s. A 1995 memoir by a former Soviet spy master said Konenkova's job was to influence scientists that she met at Princeton University. Research by Sotheby's experts found that Einstein had met the Konenkovs by 1935 when Sergei was commissioned to prepare a bronze bust of Einstein now in the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. The senior vice-president for Sotheby's books and manuscripts department said that in "the broader sense" Konenkova's job was to recruit Einstein, but more than anything, Moscow probably wanted the scientist's endorsement of their system. The letters, which show that the lovers had their own vocabulary, indicate that Einstein was very careful not to grant that approval.' In further news from the US, t]hree screenwriters have sued the makers of the new James Bond film *Tomorrow Never Dies*, claiming the idea for the movie was stolen from a script they wrote... titled *Currency of Fear*, which was]... submitted... to several people in the movie industry... The lawsuit comes on the heels of... [a] \$US10 million... copyright infringement suit against DreamWorks...

THE MAN who could do no wrong may be about to lose his title... [The] acclaimed director of *ET*[: *The Extraterrestrial*], *Schindler's List*, *Indiana Jones* and *Star Wars*... has been accused of exploiting black slavery and stealing the script of his latest movie from a black author... *Amistad*... is about an "historical" black revolt aboard a Spanish slave ship in 1839... In a saga that *Time* is calling "Stealberg?", [the black author is accusing the director] of blatant plagiarism from her own fiction account of the forgotten slave mutiny... called *Echo of Lions*... [At] the behest of her friend Jacqueline Kennedy... [her] manuscript... was read by [the director's] production company Amblin back in 1988... Amblin decided to pass on developing *Echo of Lions*, saying it was more suited to a mini-series. But when, after the founding of the new production company Dreamworks, it was announced [that the] first film would be called *Amistad*, and that the... screenwriter would be [someone] who had once been hired by [another production company] to develop *Echo of Lions* as a screenplay[, the black author] contacted her lawyers... The case... is convincing. Dreamworks seems to have fallen into the trap of copying some altered historical "errors". In her book, [the black author] alters fact to describe a scene in which Queen Victoria writes a letter to[the] pro-slavery President... asking that the Africans be set free. In fact, the letter was sent by one of Queen Victoria's ministers to the US Secretary of State; in *Amistad* this... is presented as history. But what is perhaps most baffling about the controversy is the extent of Dreamworks' own denial about the existence or even knowledge of the *Echo of Lions* novel. The book was published in 1989 to considerable acclaim, translated into five languages and sold over 500,000 copies, but[the] screenwriter... claims never to have read it – despite having previously been hired to write a screenplay of *Echo of Lions*! Even his own lawyer... blurted to *The New Yorker* that in fact, [the screenwriter] was "hired precisely because of his *Amistad* experience". But this ugly shadow hasn't stopped the American media launching into a solemn debate about the troubled memory of slavery and crowning [the director as] the patron saint of racial victimhood... Part of the reason [the director] is tackling African-American slavery is to teach the world a PC history lesson. And, being [a director], he is making history mean whatever he wants it to mean. Forget for a moment that the *Amistad* incident is not even mentioned in the definitive *Penguin History of the U[S]* and merits only a paragraph in... [a] recent 908-page book, *The Slave Trade*; according to the [director's] theory of popular history, the *Amistad* rebellion was America's first "Civil Rights" case and directly led to the Civil War... Making movies, of course, has never been "education[al]". 'Hollywood never lets its historical dramas get bogged down in history. Accuracy is not the point of a movie' – they are about entertainment and more importantly, making money... America's leading black film makers... turned down the *Amistad* Project, not because of lack of resources, but because slavery was too complicated, painful and hateful a subject to deal with. Jewish non-profit museums such as the "virtual reality" Holocaust museum in Washington and the new controversial \$60 million Jewish Museum in San Francisco are thriving... No comparable African-American slave museums exist... [M]ost blacks in America simply don't want to know... Last month, there was a public out-cry when it was revealed that Christie's in New York were auctioning off some slave memorabilia – including a reward notice for run-away slaves and a slave auction poster. Angry blacks flooded Christie's with protest calls, accusing the auction house of a double standard since it had an existing policy of not selling items relating to the Holocaust... Overhanging the *Amistad* media hype lurks the question of [the director's] credentials... Not wanting what he called "blood money", [the]... computer-game-obsessed billionaire... refused to take any salary for directing *Schindler's List*. All the money he earned from the film was donated... to Jewish organisations... When I twice asked Dreamworks publicity department whether similar measures were planned for *Amistad*, they failed to call back.

...An American judge has refused to block the release of the... film, *Amistad*, saying in a court order that the movie did not appear to misappropriate another writer's novel... [The judge] cited the \$75 million investment made by DreamWorks to make and distribute the picture as an over-riding reason for it to open as planned... "No one likes to be called a thief," said... a lawyer for DreamWorks... The dispute has turned increasingly personal and vitriolic... DreamWorks' lawyers say... [the black author] herself is a plagiarist, arguing there are at least 88 similarities between *Echos of Lions* and *Black Mutiny*. They also have circulated a passage from [her] 1994 book, *The President's Daughter*, that appears almost verbatim in... [a] 1929 book, *Passing*. [The author] said she did not plagiarise *Black Mutiny* and that any similarities are merely historical facts.

...Herodotus, the "Father of History," is enjoying a new popularity 2500 years after he wrote his great work – all thanks to the film *The English Patient*. It's another example of the trendsetting power of the celluloid dream industry... The film has been smothered with Oscar nominations and done huge international box office business. So, in a more modest way, has *The Histories*, a book which has always been used in ancient history and classical Greek courses, but has never threatened the best-seller lists. British publisher Everyman, with a smart eye for a niche, shipped 10,000 copies of its edition to New York... and sold them all. Now Everyman is persuading British bookshops to display it beside [the] Booker Prize-winning novel on which the film was based. "It could become an essential accessory for every Hampstead [a literary-trendy London suburb] dinner-party," said [a] Newcastle University classicist... It all comes a little late in the day for Herodotus, who's seriously out of copyright.

...The fresh young things just embarking on the[musical] treadmill have learned from their elders' mistakes as well as their music. They pay tribute to their forebears in true rock'n'roll fashion, by plundering their albums... only the current chart-toppers, the Verve, haven't got away with it. They quoted the[Rolling] Stones' old hit *The Last Time* on a recent tune – and found themselves up against the... [person] who holds the copyright. He now gets all the royalties from the Verve's aptly named *Bitter Sweet Symphony*... When the history of rock is finally written, it may be realised that Kiss were the smartest band of all, hip to the value of their brand name, royalties and merchandising. [■ A company has developed an 'internet checker for essay plagiarism. Aimed primarily at university tutors, "Turn It In" scans the internet for any 8-word sequences that match those used in an essay which weren't acknowledged by the essay-writer as a quote.'

... 'a new computer programme makes it possible to read books as if they are real pages' (i.e., the reader sees two pages on the screen, and the pages turn from right to left). Most computer documents read like the first books humanity produced – scrolls. By the way, NZ[booksellers have been under the thumb of dictatorial overseas publishers for decades. But our steep book prices could tumble as chinks appear in this cosy copyright arrangement... that maintains N[Z] as a closed market. The arrangement is a hangover from the old British Empire. Under the Traditional Markets Agreement, British territory was off limits to American publishers. Despite several bitter skirmishes to try to end this territorial carve-up, the agreement is still binding on N[Z] booksellers, and retailers must order through the local agent of the British publishing house. But many booksellers complain this is often slower than going through the American publisher... [and some] stores admit to ordering from the US publisher if a title is not immediately available from the UK publisher, even though this practice is "not strictly legal." ...Unity Books... in Auckland... has been threatened with legal action several times for importing books from the US. Exasperated, [Unity's manager] says: "Delays are hurting my sales. I'm embarrassed to tell my customers that a book they have seen reviewed in an overseas magazine won't be available here for five months..." ...A[US]n book sellers, after years of battling foreign publishers, have recently won a concession that requires books to be available no later than 30 days after publication... But it is not just the delays that irritate [Unity's manager]. "Some British publishers are living in the Dark Ages. They haven't a clue how to market books. Covers frequently have nothing to do with the story, and the blurb on the back is pretentious waffle." She says American cover designs are more likely to be eye-catching... N[Z] is a nice earner for book distributors. We have one of the highest literacy rates in the world and the highest number of book stores per capita. Publishers are keen to protect this business, worth more than \$200 million a year... [They] claim delays don't happen often, and argue the cost of warehousing justifies higher prices in N[Z]... The copyright issue is more complex than just territorial rights, counters[the] sales and marketing director of Random House. "It helps protect authors' rights. A segmented market works well for us. There are clear lines of supply." He says booksellers don't understand life would be more difficult without a clear infrastructure... According to [Unity's manager, however], the UK price is usually multiplied three to six times for N[Z]. "NZers)... are paying a premium for their books. I have ordered a hardback from the US that retailed here for \$49.95. The same book from the British publisher would have had to sell for \$66... They know a certain market segment has more money and so they hike the price..." ...Another threat to the foreign publisher monopoly looms as the Internet neatly circumvents regional restrictions. Several sites offer impressive catalogues of popular and hard-to-get publications. One of the busiest Internet book sites[which is billing]... itself as the "world's biggest bookstore" – with more than 2.5 million titles – [is undercutting prices by] up to 40%... "The book trade is Dickensian in many respects," says[the] chief executive of the Consumers' Institute. "With increased retail and Internet competition, they can no longer rely on the usual reasons to explain the high cost of books."

...A Wellington-born computer whiz... is expected to reap \$A20 million... when he floats 20[%] of his Sausage Software company on the A[US]n Stock Exchange next month. The 23-year-old has made a phenomenal leap from unemployment to multimillionaire in a year thanks to a computer programme he wrote in five days... Hot Dog... makes it easy to publish information on the Internet's world wide web... and... is said to be the third most frequently downloaded software on the web... ha[ving] sold more than 100,000 copies worldwide... It is used by such global giants as Microsoft, Coca-Cola, NASA and... Telstra. "It's been my plan since age six to start a small business... I know it sounds like a cliché, but my advice to anyone who wants to achieve is to never stop believing in your dream..."

...In 1989, [an] Auckland printer... had a really bright idea. He devised a new type of logbook for taxi drivers which he hoped might prove a money-spinner for his small publishing company. Aware that such logbooks had to be approved by the then-Ministry of Transport, he spent months talking to officials about his idea. He even included their detailed suggestions in the finished product. So he was stunned when he soon found himself competing with a similar but cheaper version produced by the ministry. Seven years on, the Birkenhead businessman has won the first round of a bitter copyright battle over the books... [A] judgment from the High Court at Wellington this week... agreed that he does, indeed, have copyright... He... has a word for anyone contemplating suing the Crown: "Make sure you have endless patience and very deep pockets." ...He estimates he has already spent around \$20,000 in legal fees... [and] has yet to fight for damages in the case... Several years ago, he offered to settle the case out of court with the Crown for \$30,000 and his then legal bill of \$6000. The offer was declined. Since then, he says, the Crown has "thrown money at it like you wouldn't believe." ...he is also wary of the fact that the Crown could yet appeal. "If they do," he sighs, "I will counter-appeal." A spokeswoman for the Crown Law Office said the office did not want to comment on the case... [In related news, o]ne of N[Z]'s most successful educational publishers, Shortland Publications, has been sold to... Tribune Education, part of the American-based Tribune Company, for an undisclosed price.

...SOFTWARE companies are waging a battle of the brain as they fight for a share of the booming educational software market. As more PCs make their way into homes and schools, the demand for educational titles has created a multi-billion dollar market. The versatility and storage capacity of CD-Roms is opening a huge range of material to... users. Whereas previous generations struggled to afford a set of encyclopaedias, the average middle-income family can now afford entire electronic libraries. For less than \$100 they can buy what once would have cost 10 or 20 times more in printed form. It has also seen a changing of the guard... Where *Britannica* once ruled the reference world, Generation X has grown up with... Microsoft... and... *Encarta*... Although *Encarta* never pretended to contain as much information as *Britannica*, it changed the face of encyclopaedias by first introducing annual editions and monthly online updates. Suddenly, Generation X had access to electronic reference books that not only recorded history, but reported it almost as it happened... Recently, Microsoft combined *Encarta Encyclopedia* and *Encarta World Atlas* for \$99.95... When the *Encarta 98* series is released at Christmas, the two are expected to revert to their normal price of around \$160 for both. That makes *Collier's Encyclopedia 1998* even better value in the long run. It offers a three-CD package for \$129.95 and it throws the gauntlet down to *Encarta*. It has 45,000 articles, almost 50% more than its Microsoft rival... It also offers a big library of Internet links... Collier's stiffest competition comes from the *IBM World Book Multimedia Encyclopedia*... At \$109.95 it offers as much information as Collier's in an easier to access manner... [It also] offers free online updates and comes with a library of 3000 Internet links. *Britannica Encyclopedias* were considered the doyens of reference books, and Britannica made sure it kept that reputation by charging more than \$2000 a set. The company has failed to keep up with the times. Although *Britannica* is now on CD and the company operates a major Internet site, it has failed to compete on today's terms... At first the company attempted to trade on its name and charge almost as much for a single CD as... for its entire printed and bound collection. But at... \$1500 the CD was just about laughed out of the market place... Britannica has been forced to drop the price to around \$359, but is still struggling... Britannica has the most comprehensive text database, although much of it is two years out of date. Updates are available online – if you pay for them.

...Between hard covers, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* has always been the Rolls-Royce of information storage systems, but... [for most NZ] families' purposes Microsoft's *Encarta* – standard issue with PC sales – has been the beginning and end of a computer-based home library. And for a while

Britannica helped Microsoft to gain control of the market here with a pretty confused sales and marketing operation. My first inquiry in April in response to one of its newspaper advertisements was answered by a man who told me *Britannica* had sacked all its staff and was pulling out of N[Z] but if I met him at a warehouse in Kingsland he could let me have a copy on CD-ROM at significantly less than the advertised price. That now seems to have been cleaned up and, from a base in Sydney, *Britannica* is servicing N[Z] with some coherence... The encyclopaedia is dramatically different from Encarta in its presentation and intended audience. *Britannica* is aimed at the senior secondary school student and above...

DON'T assume the graphic you downloaded for the class project or that chunk of corporate wisdom retrieved to weave into your shareholders' pep talk is up for grabs. Copyright issues are working up steam on the internet as authors agitate for stricter controls over the use of their work in a digital environment... Everybody assumes material on the Net is freely available for use. But some people have crossed the copyright line... "They have tried to pass off work from the Net as their own or attempted to make money from downloaded material. This is considered commercialising someone else's property." Cautious legal experts admitted copyright on the internet was a can of worms... Trademarks are also causing headaches... Representatives from 150 nations recently met to thrash out up-grades to copyright protection and the rights of authors, musicians and film makers. The meeting, at the headquarters of the World Intellectual Property Organisation... in Geneva, agreed that authors had ultimate right of distribution of their works on the internet. But the new WIPO copyright treaties require 30 signatures to come into force. So far only 15 countries have signed. N[Z]'s representative at WIPO... was confident of the numbers once individual countries tied in local legislation. "But there are still plenty of grey areas... At the end of the day it is the author's job to enforce their copyright." Attribution (acknowledging the original author) would usually keep you out of court... Internet Service Providers... are increasingly becoming the meat in the Web copyright sandwich... [S]ome US courts have ruled that the buck stops with ISPs when it comes to publishing material on the Net on behalf of their clients. Several ISPs have been sued... for infringement of copyright and defamation. There have been no test cases in N[Z], yet.

...Schools may have to fork out an extra \$1.3 million a year when tighter copyright laws come into force next year. The amount that schools can legally photocopy will drop from five pages – or 5[%] of a book or article – to three pages or 3[%]. To copy more – up to 10[%] or one chapter of a book – schools can buy a licence from the copyright watchdog Copyright Licensing Ltd. That costs \$3 per secondary pupil per year and \$1.50 for each primary student. Most tertiary institutions now pay \$4 per student for the same right... The president of the N[Z] Principals' Federation... said cash-strapped schools could not afford a further \$400 or \$500 a year. "Often schools can't afford multiple copies of library books. They can't afford to buy books at all, so photocopying is the only way." ...she feared teachers would be discouraged from using up-to-date material.

...*Software sleuths on war path*... SOUNDS too good to be true. A \$5000 bounty for dobbing in the boss. The Business Software Alliance... has cranked up its campaign to nab users of ripped-off software... The media campaign, aggressively headlined "Nail Your Boss", resulted in several prosecutions when first launched in New York last year... "We are getting good leads from our phone hotline in N[Z]," said the alliance... vice president South-East Asia... Calls had increased from 20 to 60 a week in the past six months... Police search warrants were executed at three Christchurch companies last week. And it is not only business small fry feeling the... heat. BMW head office in A[US] is preparing to defend alleged end-user infringement civil proceedings brought about by the alliance. The tip-off came from a BMW employee.

...Interpol [– which has 'more than 150 of its 177 members linked by computer' (and hopes 'all members will be connected by the end of 1998 to the world's first qualified, fully equipped international communications network') –] will make inquiries in Singapore in an effort to trace the source of... more than 100 counterfeit CD-Rom discs containing... computer software worth more than \$1 million seized in Auckland this week [when police] swooped on a Queen St novelty shop... after a... private investigator... [for] an umbrella group of software companies which enforces copyrights... was tipped off... The investigator went into the store[last week] and bought four CD-Roms containing software programs worth more than \$[NZ]25,000 for just \$116. The software included the Office '97 program that has just been released on the market... The shop owner admitted importing the software from a friend in Singapore for \$10 each... People who bought... counterfeit CDs from the Auckland shop, which is still trading, have not committed an offence... The officer in charge of the case... said he believed it was the first time N[Z] police had cracked an overseas-based computer pirating operation... [The case] was carried out in conjunction with the Business Software Alliance... The alliance says the software seized this week is just the tip of the iceberg... Software piracy in N[Z] is rampant, with as much as 55[%] of all software used in this country illegally copied... [F]or many companies... pirates were their biggest competitors... Nabbing them is just a shade easier than nailing jelly to a tree... [The alliance] estimates the software industry in N[Z] lost \$US26 million in 1995 and the worldwide figure is put at \$US13.1 billion... Countries with lower... piracy... rates than N[Z] were Britain (38[%]), AUS (35) and the U[S] (26)... In the Asia Pacific region the worst offenders were Vietnam (99[%]), Indonesia (98), China (96) and the Philippines (91)... Since its formation in 1988 the [alliance] has filed more than 600 lawsuits against suspected copyright infringements throughout the world. In... N[Z] cases... are rare... [and] most... have been treated as civil infringements under the Copyright Act and settled out of court. Under the act a criminal offence is punishable by a fine of \$5000 for each illegal copy offered for sale (up to a maximum of \$50,000 in respect of the same transaction) or three months' jail. [The music industry also has 'a flourishing pirate trade based mainly in Asia and eastern Europe – accounting for more than \$NZ8.6 billion in world sales in 1996 alone, which represented 14% of all sales – or 1.5 billion music tapes and 350 million CDs.']

...A computer piracy watchdog group plans to take civil action against a Tokoroa man after a police prosecution for breaching copyright laws was thrown out of court on a technicality. [The Tokoroa man] was charged under the Copyright Act with possessing for sale two pirated computer CDs, and... a CD duplicating machine. Last month[a] Judge... dismissed the charges in the Tokoroa District Court, saying it could not be proved that... discs seized from [the Tokoroa man's] home were the same discs sent to Auckland for analysis. Police arrested [the Tokoroa man] after a tip-off on the Business Software Alliance anti-piracy hotline... Earlier... an Auckland retailer... pleaded guilty... [to] importing counterfeit software... and was fined \$15,000... The... [alliance] expected to reach out-of-court settlements in three other cases shortly.

...*Falling baht gives pirates ammunition*... The slide in the baht is spurring a rise in sales of illegal software in Thailand, reversing recent inroads into copyright piracy... [L]egal software prices have soared by 30[%] or more, causing computer owners to risk computer viruses and poor performance. Bangkok, with a myriad of computer and software retailers, is reported to be a major centre for pirated software sales... Industry representatives had estimated that software piracy in Thailand cost U[S] companies about \$US290 million... in lost sales in 1996... [S]uspected violators of intellectual property rights in Thailand [have] been arrested at the rate of more than three a day in 1997. In the first seven months nearly 300,000 individual items of counterfeit and pirated goods were seized... Despite police raids... and moves to set up a new... Intellectual Property Rights court... staffed with 30 judges and other specialists... breaches continue to flourish... The U[S] identified Thailand as a "priority foreign country"... in 1993. The move... triggered an active response by the Thai Government to avoid sanctions being imposed against it. This... brought improvements until the recession hit... [Incidentally,] Microsoft has reported an 88[%] rise in fiscal fourth quarter profit... The world's largest software maker earned \$US1.05 billion... in the three months... Revenues rose 41[%] to \$3.18 billion... While Microsoft's growth is expected to slow sharply from the torrid pace – 38[%] in sales and 54[%] in profit – of the past two years, analysts say the industry's most dominant company remains unfettered in its ability to turn bits of code into mountains of money. On a calendar year basis, Microsoft is expected to generate revenues of about \$US13.8 billion... in 1998...

Pop stars worry about "paradise syndrome:" the problems that arise from a surfeit of success and happiness. Superstar companies, seem to suffer the same complaint. Witness Microsoft. Tragically, it makes too much money. The Seattle-based software house is sitting on nearly \$US9 billion... in cash and short-term investments that earn a meagre 5.2[%] return – about a third of what even an average firm would hope for as a return on

capital. Sadder still, without some creative efforts to spend it, that pile grows by \$18m a day. Microsoft's problem is peculiar. Many cash-rich firms are in cyclical industries, where they may need the money for a rainy day. Others have big capital-spending programmes. For instance, Intel, a giant chip-maker that makes even more money than Microsoft, needs its cash to build new multi-billion-dollar manufacturing plants. But Microsoft is just a bunch of office buildings full of programmers, with no factories or capital investments to speak of... Cash represents 72[%] of its balance-sheet assets... So what to do? One option – buying other companies – is complicated by Microsoft's constant battle with the anti-trust police. A bid for any big software company would almost certainly be challenged (Microsoft was warned off buying Intuit, a financial-software firm in 1994). Buying small companies, even lots of them, does not use up enough cash. In the past three years, Microsoft has bought 45 firms, and its cash pile has still tripled in size. This suggests that financial engineering is the only answer. One option is buying back yet more of its own shares. The trouble is that Microsoft already does this on a grand scale to cover share options it has granted its employees. Since 1990, the company has bought \$6.2 billion of its own shares on the open market to reissue to its employees... But the company's skyrocketing shares are making this an expensive luxury: indeed... Microsoft employees are sitting on no less than \$35 billion of out-standing options... The other financial-engineering solution would be to shed the loot in the form of dividends. Microsoft pays no dividends on its 1.2 billion shares of common stock, partly because the stock market has considered dividends unnecessary for a firm growing so quickly. [Microsoft's chairman], so the reasoning goes, should be able to make better use of my money than me. But for the odd investors who felt otherwise, Microsoft last year issued 125 million shares of a special preferred stock that pays a dividend of 2.75[%] of the market price of the shares. But this costs the firm only about \$27m a year... Microsoft keeps its cash in low-paying short-term investments partly because that gives it the option to swoop on any big targets that present themselves. In a recent report... an investment bank, semi-seriously suggested that Microsoft solve its cash problem by buying Nokia, a Finnish mobile telephone equipment firm, for \$26 billion. That particular example would probably offend too many of Microsoft's other telecoms customers. But investments of nearly that size are becoming increasingly likely... Microsoft is also... spending more than \$2 billion a year on research and development... However Microsoft's share-holders might remind themselves of the recent history of Sony – a company that was once as widely admired as Microsoft. It has blown around \$7 billion in Hollywood in pursuit of another fashionable vision... Its belated lesson: it is generally better to have money burning a hole in your own pocket than in somebody else's.

...Apple Computer Inc stunned its shareholders yesterday with news that its nemesis Microsoft Corp would invest \$US150 million... in it to keep the money-losing computer-maker alive. The deal shows the depth of Apple's desperation to reverse years of sliding market share, mounting losses and management defections... News of the alliance sent Apple's shares up \$6.50 on the... Nasdaq exchange to \$26.25 at midday, as investors bet that Microsoft would keep the company afloat by writing software for its Macintosh line... Microsoft, meanwhile, was up 31.25c at \$143.62. As part of the alliance, Apple will receive an undisclosed payment from Microsoft to settle a long-running dispute over whether it infringed on Apple's patents when it created its top-selling Windows operating system. Microsoft has... [also] agreed not to sell the... Apple shares – which would not carry voting rights – for at least three years... For its part, Apple will make Microsoft's Internet Explorer the default Internet browser on its computers... While the patent agreement would allow both companies to share each other's underlying technology[, giving]... Microsoft features of Apple's easy-to-use operating system which it hasn't been able to duplicate in Windows... Apple executives said they would keep Mac and Windows distinct. Microsoft and Apple[have already] agreed to work together to develop software written in Java, a computer language that enables software to work on different operating systems... Lawyers said the deal was unlikely to raise anti-trust objections and might even help competition. By helping keep a flagging competitor alive, analysts said the investment could deflect criticism that Microsoft has been unfairly dominating the computer industry... [The US] President... said he was waiting to hear from the Justice Department on whether the plan had antitrust implications. "We will treat them in the same way as we would anyone else..." [he]... said. On Friday, the Justice Department approved Microsoft's proposed \$420 million acquisition of Web TV Networks Inc... after a thorough investigation into the deal's potential antitrust impact.

...Microsoft appears ready to invest up to \$US1 billion to acquire more than 6[%] of the cable TV operations of US West as part of a strategy to make cable the primary delivery mechanism for high-speed Internet... US West is a major shareholder in... the Time Warner cable empire... [Meanwhile, the] ousted... chairman and chief executive of... ailing computer maker... Apple... [has] received a \$6.74 million severance package... Separate from his exit pay, [he] received \$2.65 million for his services to Apple in the fiscal year... Apple lost \$1 billion in the year ended in September and \$816 million the year before.

...Microsoft Corp's billionaire chairman... got a modest 5[%] raise in the latest fiscal year, earning \$US591,352... in salary and bonuses... [He also] held 270.8 million shares, or a 22.3[%] stake... as of June 30, indicating he sold 11.4 million shares over the fiscal year[, which]... would have raised about \$1 billion... [A] statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission says Microsoft's highest-paid executive is[the] vice-president... who earned slightly more than \$1.2 million...

[When a 24-year-old Silicon Valley wunderkid launched the first commercial Web-browser in 1995, the world hailed him as the person most likely to dethrone Microsoft's chairman. Overnight his newly floated company, Netscape, which had yet to make a profit, was valued at \$US3.8 billion, and his paper fortune put at \$77.4 million. That left him way behind Microsoft's chairman, then worth \$22.5 billion. But Microsoft's chairman was 39, so the wunderkid had plenty of time to catch up – or so it seemed. Today, an increasing number of experts are declaring the would-be giant-slayer finished. As the "battle of the browsers" gets progressively fiercer, each company has tried to outdo the other with free offers. Explorer was launched with a free online subscription to the *Wall Street Journal* and ESPN sports news. Netscape responded by bundling its browser with free subscriptions to the online *New York Times* and *US News and World Report*. Several weeks ago, it said that it was adding 16 more online newspaper services from Europe. But Microsoft's prodigious wealth is hurting Netscape. While Microsoft is giving away Explorer free, and expects to lose money on the browser for three years, Netscape, which started by giving away its browser, is now charging \$49. A Netscape executive says: "You cannot compete with a company that throws money away like that. They can fund their costs with profits from other parts of their empire until they have driven the competition out of business." Netscape expects to make a small profit on sales of \$300 million this year. But its shares have fallen to less than half their peak. While the wunderkid's fortune dwindles, the Microsoft chairman is adding to his worth by \$10 million every day. Microsoft's first quarter profit showed earnings climbing 23% on the back of strong sales of Windows 95'...

Microsoft NZ's managing director... said... [yesterday that during] fiscal 97 some 200,000 PCs were sold in N[Z], most with Windows 95 preinstalled... [He] also reported good growth in the Internet market, claiming a 40[%] market share for its browser software, Internet Explorer... The sprinkling of N[Z]ers with Web access in 1993 has grown to 543,000 today. Around 212,000 people are regular users.

...MIDDLE age women are becoming addicted to the Internet... Many are spending almost 40-hours-a-week on the Net and suffer severe withdrawal symptoms when they attempt to break away. Even cancelling their Internet accounts, throwing out their modem and dismantling their computer failed to cure some addicts... [A] series of international studies... show Internet addicts suffer social problems, often lie to their loved ones and can suffer serious physical problems resulting from repetitive strain injury and sleep deprivation. Ironically, most of the addiction support groups and the Internet equivalent of alcoholics anonymous fail because they can only be accessed through the Internet... Addicts predominantly used the Net to meet, socialise and exchange ideas, mostly through chat channels, while ordinary users... [- people] who spent less than five hours[- a-week on the Net -] ...preferred to gather information.

...Oh Internet, how great thou art... aren't thou? IN John Lennon's day, the ultimate boast was to say that you (or your pop group) were more popular than Jesus. [One member] of the British group Oasis has matched that and said his group is going to be even bigger than the Beatles. To

really blow your own trumpet today, you need to compare yourself to the Internet. That level of hype has now been reached in a news release from Sony which boasts that sales of the PlayStation mean its popularity is bigger than the Net. Coming down to earth, figures show N[Z] lies fifth in the level of market penetration of the PlayStation in the top 13 markets. But how do you equate that to the Web? It is extremely difficult to get even the slightest handle on how big the Internet has become. The Internet is hard to feel and touch, let alone measure. Every time you log on, you can find new sites while some old favourites may now bring up "error" messages which mean that the people running them have lost interest, not paid the bills, gone bust or are having technical problems. As you surf around, you find more and more links to places you had never seen but there is no overall programming guide to tell you whether it is an infinite universe or whether there are only thousands, millions or billions of places to visit. If this much-hyped highway has the answer to every question, then surely the answer to its size must be on the Net – so Logged On went in search... The appropriately-named "Irresponsible Internet Statistics Generator"... says that in February 1995, there were 27,000 Web sites and that the number was doubling every 53 days. It may be plausible but hardly a scientific guess when the wording that follows says: "I read this statistic in somebody's e-mail signature... They had gotten the figure from *Business Week* which in turn was quoting someone at Sun Microsystems." ...If you use [t]his third-hand calculation, it would mean there are around 700 million Web pages or one Web site for every nine people in the world... A... new survey claims that of 220 Americans and Canadians over the age of 16, 23[%] use the Net... Another recent survey... claims that more than 20 million Americans now view the Net as an indispensable part of their daily life – especially replacing time spent watching TV... [However, t]he survey revealed... [that m]ore than nine million Americans have tried the Net but cancelled their online subscription... So at the moment, you could pluck a figure out of the air, double it, make it sound impressive and use it to justify your argument. There is no doubt the Net is growing fast. How big it is or may become are facts we may never know... It is hard for new users to grasp that no one controls the Net. Anyone can put up a Web site and it doesn't have to be registered with any global company.

...Microsoft Corp illegally requires computer manufacturers to install its Internet Explorer browser software, the[US] Justice Department charged in a lawsuit that seeks fines of \$US1 million... a day unless Microsoft changes its marketing tactics... Justice Department... documents show... Microsoft threatened to pull Compac Computer's licence to use the Windows 95 operating system unless it featured Microsoft's... browser... Two other major computer makers... sought permission from Microsoft to change the way the Internet Explorer program was installed on their computers, but were turned down... A June 10, 1994, message quotes a Microsoft executive saying that "we do not currently plan on any other client software [being in Windows 95], especially something like Mosaic." Mosaic was the name of the original World Wide Web browser, which Microsoft later licensed from Spyglass in developing its Internet products... Microsoft vowed to "vigorously defend" [itself. Its chairman said the company 'operates according to the finest traditions of American business']...

The... Justice Department's charge this week that... Microsoft's business practices are stifling competition is a big call – the sort that could change high-tech history... The Justice Department worries Microsoft is foisting its Internet Explorer onto consumers by bundling it with its operating system when it licenses it to PC manufacturers. Thus, Microsoft is rendering the existence of alternative browsers largely irrelevant – and is using an unlawful advantage to beat back an important competitive challenge to its Windows monopoly... Windows software runs on 90% of new PCs... Microsoft is no stranger to Justice Department investigations, which go back to 1990. The company has shown an uncanny ability to work through complex legal arguments and win... Then there's the lamentable performance of the lone... competitor Netscape...

COMPUTER and telephone companies say Microsoft is using extortion in its battle with Netscape Communications Corp for dominance in selling Web browsers... supporting the Justice Department's claim that the company is abusing its monopoly...

A federal judge has ordered Microsoft Corp to temporarily stop requiring computer makers to license and pre-install its Internet Explorer... So far, he has... refused the Justice Department's request to have the software giant held in contempt of court for violating a 1995 antitrust settlement. The judge... appointed a special master to gather more evidence while the court considers whether to make the preliminary injunction permanent... The judge's ruling... apparently affects not only... current licenses for Windows 95, but could hamstring plans for next year's release of a new operating system, Windows 98... that more formally combines the functions of Windows 95 and the Internet Explorer browser. [■ NZ companies 'are free to ignore the US court ruling']

...PC makers... say they will not stop including Microsoft's Internet Explorer with their products, despite the... maker being forbidden to require them to use it. However, Compac... [– whose latest]-quarter earnings rose to \$US561.7 million... a surge of 54[% –] ...and IBM said they would also include rival Netscape Communications' browser on some PCs, in order to offer consumers choice and to avoid taking sides in the "browser war"... [By the way,] Intel, Microsoft and Compac have... [united] to try to win support for a universal standard for Internet modems.

...In the fast moving world of the Internet where people say there are only 56 days to the year, new technology is in danger of becoming surpassed before it reaches the shops. But for the moment, modem technology seems set to settle down around the new 56kbps speeds according to... the... managing director of Insite Technologies, the N[Z] distributor of US Robotics modems... The new 56kbps modem protocols are currently the subject of an intense wrangle between US Robotics (who control more than 26[%] of the world modem market) and Lucent Technologies, who have developed a similar but incompatible protocol with [US] chipset manufacturer, Rockwell. The meeting for the establishment of the new worldwide standard is now set down for January... In the meantime, US Robotics has undertaken to provide a free upgrade to the new standard, whatever it is, when finally ratified next year... With the new modems... [– which] can make the Internet almost twice as fast... [–] now on sale... at \$350 each, they compare very well with the estimated \$1500 cost for hardware and installation faced currently by... home and small business... ISDN users.

...Determining the cost of owning PCs, particularly if you have a fleet of them, has been an elusive process. But Microsoft claims it has a proven cost of ownership formula worked out – and a strategy to keep the NC (network computer) out of PC (personal computer) territory. "We are lowering the cost of software deployment, maintenance and support. We think we will be able to provide a very flexible business architecture and choice in how people manage and deploy business software," said... Microsoft's vice-president of intercontinental operations... [Q]uoting an IDC-based survey, [he] said by the year 2001, 81[%] of PCs will be Windows-based, 5[%] will be DOS-based... and only 2[%] will be NCs. "That's a compelling reason not to buy an NC,"... But the battle is really for the mindshare of businesses as they consider the issues of futureproofing their technology for the new millennium. It is no longer a salesperson's game. Business knows what it wants and cost verses benefit is the big equation many are struggling with. Research... suggests the cost of each workstation in a business environment is \$US2000 to \$US3000 a year above the purchase price. [The vice-president] said he was surprised at the lack of companies in N[Z] implementing total cost of ownership (TCO) projects but was quick to point out Microsoft... now had a Zero Administration Initiative for Windows... Essentially, the TCO push from Microsoft is a direct response to the NC – the lower cost alternative to the PC workstation being pushed by Oracle Corporation, Sun Microsystems and others. Seeing their dominance of the PC-centric world challenged, Microsoft, Intel and Compac came up with an "industry standard" alternative – the NetPC – a cut down version of the PC with a lot of RAM, but no floppy disc and optional hard disc. Now in a further step to compete head-on with the under-\$500 NC, Microsoft has announced the WinTerminal, designed to run Microsoft applications from a Windows NT server... Combined with the newly announced Hydra Server... you would have an environment where not only NetPCs, but also legacy PCs and even MS-DOS terminals, Unix boxes and Macintoshes could be included on the network. "We would use a common set of APIs (application programming interfaces) and common architecture which will allow us to deploy this in volume and at low cost,"...

The PC price war, which has seen... cuts of about 20[%]... to entry-level home computers, has escalated to more highly specified systems using Intel's latest generation Pentium II processor.

...Intel and Advanced Micro Devices have slashed prices on their best-selling computer chips, stepping up their ongoing battle for market share. Intel, the world's largest maker of computer chips, cut prices on its popular Pentium chips by up to 57[%], prompting... Micro to trim prices on... its new and more powerful... K6 chip by as much as 55[%]... Analysts said the cuts would help lower personal computer prices later this year... Meanwhile, Intel has agreed to buy specialty semi-conductor maker Chips and Technologies. The \$402 million purchase would expand Intel's presence in the market for graphics accelerator chips.

...Philips N[Z] has closed its personal computer division and will no longer sell them in this country... The Philip's closure is the latest casualty of a market shakeout that began earlier this year with IBM withdrawing its Aptiva range. More recently Intel's largest distributor, NJS Technology, closed its doors...

The second largest N[Z] assembler and retailer of personal computers, PC General, has shut. Repeated calls to the two Auckland branches and its Christchurch head office yesterday went unanswered... Staff totalled about 50... Founded in 1990, PC General was one of the pioneers of direct sales of PCs in N[Z]. It assembled its own... brand from components sourced from local suppliers, including Tech Pacific... and from makers in Taiwan, Singapore and the U[S]... It grew to include seven shops... It recently closed the Wellington store... The... general manager of research company IDC N[Z], said the company "was playing at the price sensitive part of the market, where margins were very slim." ...IDC... ranked PC General as the seventh-largest supplier of PCs in N[Z] in 1996, selling 11,230 PC units. The largest local assembler, PC Direct, sold 16,845 units last year... [T]he Consumers' Institute, said a survey of computer companies about a year ago found more complaints from the public about PC General than any other company. The complaints were mainly about slow performance in warranty matters and slow delivery... It was not clear if any buyers are out of pocket for PCs they had yet to receive... Tech Pacific... received a fax... on Tuesday... [saying] the company had ceased trading because "trading conditions made it imprudent to continue." ...Tech[Pacific's] managing director... said his firm was owed a significant sum.

...Customers with computers under repair at PC General... may be in for a wait for the return of the machines... [The receiver] had been swamped with claims from landlords, suppliers and customers... PC General is the third computer retailer to shut its doors this year. Mt Wellington retailer Best Buy went into receivership on July 2 owing \$904,000, including \$377,612 to buyers who had paid cash up front. And Auckland retailer PC Power went into receivership on August 8 with \$1.3 million of claims by unsecured creditors – although some of those were by its former directors.

...A string of local PC retail collapses... reflects the sudden change in the nature of the PC market... The latest casualty is[a] Christchurch-based PC retailer... which went into receivership on Wednesday owing an estimated \$500,000... Meanwhile, customers who have PCs at PC General for repair may have to pay the freight costs from Christchurch to get their machines back... PC General... [folded] owing an estimated \$1.5 million... Usually in the PC business, no sooner does one company fall over, another quickly steps in. Perhaps in the current market, that space is already full.

...Information technology (IT) is the original, and still most potent, management fad. Worldwide spending on computer and telecommunications hardware and software has already overtaken investment in production equipment and plant – and the gap is growing. Worth well over \$NZ900 billion last year, the IT industry is replacing cars and housing as the driving force of the global economy. The latest frenzy has been caused by the internet and its internal company equivalent, intranets. International Data Corporation... says spending on net products and services will total \$133 billion by 2000, displacing the personal computer as the engine of IT market growth. Except for those who make them, computers do not have a point in themselves. They are sold to make other businesses more productive, customers happier and companies more profitable. But IT is notoriously difficult to manage. Disasters such as the London Ambulance computers and the Stock Exchange's Taurus make headlines. But a study by... Sheffield University, shows 80 to 90[%] of IT investments do not meet their performance goals; 80[%] are delivered late and over budget; 40[%] fail or are abandoned; fewer than 25[%] properly combine business and technology objectives; and just 10 to 20[%] meet all their criteria. The main reasons projects fail are that investments are technology-led, focus too narrowly on cutting costs and pay too little attention to human factors. These difficulties are compounded by the treadmill nature of IT investment, and the difficulty of measuring its costs and benefits. "Companies are driving down a one-way street, propelled by their past IT investments," says... a... research fellow at Imperial College's IC Parc. "Investment in IT isn't an event; it's a never-ending process." And with salesmen dangling the prospect of more computer power at ever lower cost, it is also seductive... [Unfortunately, m]easuring individual projects means little when they are add-ons to a larger and older system... and there are big problems in judging infrastructure projects – rewiring a whole company, say – whose effects are indirect and spread out over time. Banks have been trying – and failing – to come to grips with this issue for 30 years. In many industries, IT has rapidly turned from a novelty into part of the cost of doing business, offering no special edge over the competition.

...Widely accessible and increasingly affordable technology has broken the monopoly of governments over the collection, management and interpretation of information... Large international single-issue groups such as Greenpeace, Amnesty International and World Watch command knowledge, ideas and information that equals, indeed surpasses, that of governments. The tightly closed world of inter-government negotiations in areas such as trade, environment and the like are thus being changed forever... We are still in the midst of this profound revolution. It is difficult to explain, let alone forecast with confidence, its complete effects... [T]he revolution spreads power among more people and groups, at the expense of governments. Networks are emerging that decentralise communication, consultation and coordination. Governments are no longer "in control" especially of their own borders in ways that they used to be, or liked to think they once were. This has produced both a sense of opportunity among entrepreneurs, and a sense of anxiety at the level of the citizen, about individual security. I[T] has the potential to divide society, between those with the wealth and education to command the power of technology, and those without such endowment. Technology, communication and multinational elites are emerging who have more in common with their counterparts in other countries, than with their fellow citizens. The impacts of technology are therefore contradictory. They are both global, in the sense that they connect peoples across borders, and fragmenting in the sense that they divide people inside nations; and indeed they can divide nations. Levels of education, and scientific competence will determine which countries move quickest to exploit the advantages of the... revolution.

...[The microchip that spawned the personal computer revolution is 26 years old tomorrow. The world changed forever on November 15, 1971. And hardly anyone noticed. Watergate was still seven months away. The biggest news of that day was the readmission of China to the UN. Yet on that same morning, a small start-up company in California known as Intel, barely three years old, put out a press release that signalled the dawn of the Digital Age. The product launched was the Intel 4004, the first general-purpose "microprocessor" and the world's first computer chip. It was an innocuous sliver of silicon in a dark metal casing with fat metal electrodes for legs, looking for all the world like a headless electronic cockroach. With 2300 transistors, it could process what must have seemed like an astounding 60,000 instructions a second. In today's tech-talk, it was a 4-bit microprocessor with an operating speed of 100,000 cycles, or 1.0 mega-hertz. It cost \$US200. That modest chip represented a revolution so powerful it would sweep the world. In 1971, offices were filled with paper: order books and invoice folders, carbon copies and suspender files, forms in triplicate, memos, rubber stamps and typewriter ribbons. Today, the army of clerks has been replaced by a platoon of skilled IT workers, while that little-known company has 42,000 employees and annual revenue of \$US16.2 billion. Intel's latest chips, the Pentium and Pentium Pro, all trace their lineage back to the 4004. Intel had arrived at the 4004 chip by accident. At the time, logic controllers for machines had to be custom-made and task-specific. In 1969, Intel received an order from Japan's Busicom to manufacture 12 chips for a new line of desktop, spool-paper electric calculators. An Intel engineer had an idea: rather than making 12 separate chips, maybe he could design a single general purpose chip – a logic device that could retrieve the specifics of each application from a silicon memory. Nine

months later, he and a fellow engineer had created a working CPU, or central processing unit – the heart of today's PCs. Both engineers quickly realised the chip's potential and tried to convince Intel to buy the chip back from the Japanese. Intel's founder also saw its potential, as did a fellow founder. Others in the small company were not so sure: Intel was in the business of building silicon memory – CPUs might get in the way. Finally, the four men won the doubters over, and in 1971 Intel offered to return Busicom's \$60,000 investment. It may well have been the deal of the century. But it was not until 1979, with the launch of an accounting spreadsheet program called VisiCalc for the Apple II, that the world really took notice. For the first time, everyone could see what computers might do: instant calculations. By 1980, the PC industry was becoming too big to ignore. IBM created a crack unit of engineers in August 1980 to develop its own PC, a project codenamed "Acorn." With no time to develop a chip, Big Blue went to Intel. IBM also contracted a fledgling Seattle computer company, Microsoft, to write an operating system. In a piece of bravado that is now a part of computer industry mythology, Microsoft's chairman confidently detailed the idea of DOS to IBM, and agreed to license it – before Microsoft even owned it. After closing the IBM deal, Microsoft's chairman bought rights to the system and renamed it MS-DOS. When the IBM PC was launched in August 1981, it single-handedly legitimised the PC as a serious tool.'

...IBM has developed the world's fastest computer, which can perform enough complex calculations to maintain reliability of the USs' nuclear weapons without conducting actual bomb tests. "This is a computer that will make Deep Blue green with envy," said the Vice-President, referring to the current supercomputer. Pacific Blue runs 15,000 times faster and has 80,000 times more memory space than the average desktop PC, officials said. Complex calculations that would normally consume months of time, even on advanced computers, can be completed in just days with the new machine. Many recent major advances in drug development for health care have been driven by high-performance computers because speedy calculations can be used to identify compounds likely to succeed in clinical tests, freeing scientists from trying unnecessary combinations in the lab.')

...IBM ships Web-ready DB2 in database war ...to recoup ground lost last year to rival database powerhouse Oracle. The product... allows users to manage and organise vast amounts of information stored on computer networks... For the first time last year Oracle nudged out IBM for the largest share of the database market, something Oracle is keen to crow about. At a recent A[US]n conference Oracle produced figures showing it had 29.6[%] of the market, with IBM not far behind on 26.5[%]. IBM... is looking to win back the No 1 position... The database market was estimated to be worth about \$5 billion last year and is expected to increase to about \$9.6 billion by 2001. The broader data management market will expand to about \$25 billion...

The Internet poses massive implications for the management of global businesses. With... users in 159 countries... already... the Internet will rapidly build a \$US100 billion market by 2000," IBM's managing director in A[US] and N[Z]... predicted... As the Internet expanded exponentially, it would create havoc as well as opportunity.

...the Internet is a threat to N[Z]'s economic and cultural life. That is not the sort of warning you expect from someone whose company supplies the backbone for 12 of Australasia's biggest Internet sites and three of its biggest Internet service providers. But... Digital's Internet business manager for the South Pacific, said N[Z]ers and AUS]ns must wake up to the growing imbalances arising from the [USs'] domination of the Internet. "...Now many sites are moving from a straight brochure to commerce... [T]hat's going to lead to a fiscal trade imbalance."

...The art of flogging products and services has infiltrated what was supposed to be an advertising-free zone... the Internet... [S]ites now incorporate hard sell and blurred commercialism. Of course, everyone except a few diehard Web purists knew it had to happen. The Internet was relentlessly non-commercial until interest in online communications network[s] caught fire three years ago... The hitch is the Net itself... Traditional media placement is fairly straightforward, as you buy space or screen time from the medium that matches your target audience... But the Net is not so conveniently skewed. Onliners are typically... trawling through dozens of unrelated sites... This makes it tough for advertisers to get seen, let alone noticed... Because there is no rate card for the Internet, advertisers and their agencies are feeling their way with payment. How much is it worth to hang out their sign in cyberspace? "It's a bit like the Wild West at the moment,"... Advertisers were haggling with site owners, most of whom favoured a fee of around \$100 for every 1000 people who visit the site. But advertisers preferred payment for each time a visitor "clicked" on their promotion. Data extracted by Internet service providers or the advertiser's own server kept track of site "hits". Banner advertisements were "clicked" by 1%-4% of site visitors... which was consistent with direct mail response. Animated banners out-pulled the stationary version four-to-one, and advertisements needed to be refreshed, or updated, every two weeks... The benefits of using e-mail are too many to expand upon... For example, one company sent an e-mail message to 40,000 prospects in less than an hour – for \$5. What can beat that? ...It is somewhat ironic that the amount of advertising expenditure on the Internet is dwarfed by money spent offline to promote Web sites... "Web advertising can be effective for branding, but it is more cost-effective to stick with traditional advertising choices... The Internet is not yet a mass medium." [However, there]... are now more than 50 million users worldwide... serious numbers for enterprises eager to turn a profit. Factor in that most Internet users are reasonably well fed and it is no wonder advertisers are lying awake at night figuring how to grab the attention of this vast, affluent population of potential customers... There's a mind-blowing 150 million web pages, expected to multiply to more than a billion when we clock year 2000.

...Year 2000 a giant computer headache... THE computer systems which gave the business world its first real quantum leap into the space age could destroy many organisations... Many double-digit computer systems are likely to throw a major wobbly en mass on January 1, year 2000, if a lot of time and money is not invested in upgrading or completely replacing software and in some cases, older hardware. It's a universal problem affecting employers and the safety of staff and customers the world over. The cause of the problem is simple. Vendors still produce software to cope with the last two digits of any year. This means many computer systems, especially older ones, store the year 1997, for example, as a two-digit year, 97. But when 1999 moves to year 2000 the transition may be mishandled as the year will appear to move backwards from 99 to 00. If not fixed, organisations, relying on time-critical or process-controlled operations will see their dates either revert back to year 1900, miscalculate or malfunction completely... Known by the [IT] industry as the "Y2K issue", Year 2000 compliance is essentially a software and operations problem.

...['programmers have known about the problem since 1964 – they just "didn't think about it". To save space on the early computers, programmers used 2 digits instead of 4. Because the computer system is so interconnected, one computer with a bug can affect those that are otherwise OK.')

...The world's financial institutions must prepare their computer systems to reflect the Year 2000 date change to ensure their operations aren't disrupted, [the]president of the[US] Federal Reserve Bank... said recently... So[US] regulators want banks to create strategic plans by... about mid-1998... to make any changes needed... The F[RB]... plans to oversee how both [US banks and US] branches and agencies of foreign banks cope with the issue...

Financial regulators from around the globe plan to meet... to discuss efforts to prepare computers worldwide for the widely-feared year 2000,[the] Federal Reserve Governor... said on Monday.

...Directors are being warned shareholders could bite if their companies do not adequately address Year 2000 problems. Director liability will be one of the issues addressed at an Institute for International Research seminar, called IT 2000 Conversion – A Practical Guide, in the Wellington Town Hall... [D]irectors must be aware of their legally enforceable obligations. These include making sure their organisation keeps functioning, doing due diligence whenever new assets are acquired, making sure all audit, financial and regulatory obligations are complied with, knowing what their company is doing and taking any necessary defensive measures and contingency arrangement[s] to keep the show going. That means Year 2000 problems can be laid squarely at their door.

...Companies and organisations must stop thinking of the Year 2000 bug as an [IT] problem. That was the consensus from an Institute for International Research conference on the issue held in Wellington last week... Businesses which cannot ensure all their functions work after 2000 are a risk to other businesses as well as themselves. Directors should seek assurances or warranties from suppliers to ensure compliance.

...Telecom could have to spend more than \$50 million to ensure its managers sleep easily on the eve of the new millennium. Some analysts pick the company will have to pay that much to alter memory storage, so that what seems like a minor computer glitch is overcome and the year 2000 is accounted for... At the moment, the only solution appeared to be a wholesale replacement of computer hardware, one analyst said. That would be expensive. Telecom is not the only listed company affected by the year 2000 problem... But Telecom will be most exposed to the problem, according to analysts, because it has the largest customer base in the country, with around 1.4 million lines and about 400,000 cellular customers... Telecom is unwilling to put a dollar figure on what it will cost to diffuse the millennium bomb. But a spokesperson indicated that it could be in the tens of millions. I[t has]... engaged computer company Unisys to manage its programme to deal with the problem... [By the way, a] computer glitch at the Tiwai Pt aluminium smelter at midnight on New Year's Eve[1996.] ...left a repair bill of more than \$1 million.

...APART from misgivings about missing out on New Year parties as the last seconds of 1996 ticked away, it was much like any other night for the staff at the Tiwai Pt aluminium smelter in Southland. Midnight and crisis struck in the same moment. Each of the 660 process control computers that run the smelter's potlines... ground to a halt... their digital chips frozen. Five pot cells were ruined, leaving N[Z] Aluminium Smelters with a repair bill estimated at more than \$1 million, though the company will not confirm the final cost. What happened? It became clear only when Comalco's Bell Bay smelter in Tasmania shut down precisely two hours later... N[Z] time is two hours ahead of Tasmania. Both smelters use the same programme, which was written by Comalco computer staff... The general manager... said... [the] computer software programme... failed to account for 1996 being a leap year... Unable to cope with an extra day, the computers at Tiwai Pt and Tasmania stalled with expensive consequences. The incident has those who work with computers saying, "I told you so." ...[the] chief executive of the Information Technology Association of N[Z], says the Tiwai Pt glitch [wa]s hard evidence that the so-called Millennium Bomb is no high-tech bogeyman.

...WHENEVER my personal computer crashes, I thank God I'm typing a newspaper article and not flying a plane. Desktop PCs do not, of course, control flight systems... [C]omputers, known as safety critical systems (SCS), are used with planes, rockets, medical gear and other potentially hazardous equipment. [They are much] more expensive and extensively tested – but not crash-proof. Losing a document or even an entire hard drive of data after a computer crash can be upsetting. But when [SCS] fail, people die... By 1992, 1100 people had been killed by something which did not compute, says... [a professor from] the University of Edinburgh, who in 1994 published the first scientific study of computer-related accidental death. Yet despite 10 years of work by the International Electrotechnical Commission, a global standard for a level of acceptable risk in SCS has yet to be ratified. The most thoroughly documented digital fatalities include: ...A software malfunction which caused Therac-25 radiation machines to issue up to 100 times the recommended dosage to... patients... in the U[S] and Canada between 1985 and 1987[, and a]... faulty radio-therapy computer... in Britain[that] "under-dosed" patients from 1982 to 1991... [T]he London Ambulance Service computer system... fail[ed for]... three days in 1992... [and, in] 1982, during the Falklands War, the HMS Sheffield sank after its defensive computer system failed to intercept an Argentinian Exocet missile... Interference from the ship's satellite communications transmitter was blamed. During the Gulf War, 28 American soldiers were killed at Dhahran when a programming error caused a Patriot air defence system to malfunction during an Iraqi Scud missile attack. The computer bug was a known problem; a software fix was expected to arrive the next day. It was the biggest single Allied loss of the campaign... Robot malfunctions have led to maintenance workers being squashed... However, human stupidity or sheer bad luck seem likely to have contributed to such deaths... The crash of an Airbus A320 in France in 1992... [was] attributed to software failure or an inadequate computer interface. Wayward bits and bytes have also caused billions of dollars in damage – \$NZ140 billion in Britain and America alone, according to a journalist... who will next month publish a compendium of computer disasters... In one instance last year a \$500 million payload blew up with the Ariane-5 rocket after a software error... The software bug of the minute, of course, is the much-publicised millennium or 2000 defect... Although it has been over-hyped, even the chief executive officer of Hewlett-Packard recently said he would not fly in a plane on... New Year's Eve 1999, when many computer systems will reset, instead of ticking over to 2000.

...[A] GREEK inventor... is making fat profits out of the "millennium bug" which threatens to sabotage computers after midnight on December 31, 1999. He's selling a CD-ROM game... about a war sparked when the Turkish High Command's main computer switches back to 1919 – right in the middle of the Greek-Turkish war.

...There are plenty of horror stories about the impact of the millennium bug... It's Wednesday January 5, 2000, and you're heading to the office for the first working day of the new millennium. All the parking spaces outside are taken, but that's all right, you have your own spot in the basement. But what's this, the car park door is closed. Some chip in the system thinks it's a weekend in 1900, and won't open that door for anyone. The offices though are open. They've been open all weekend, and have been ransacked by technologically-savvy burglars... No time to look around though. The phone's ringing. Your widget assembly line has run out of o-rings. Your favoured o-ring supplier can't get his computer system to work. Their competitor just put the price up, and you have to wait in line until their regular customers (your competitors) are served. Now your customers are ringing. Their accounting software is causing grief, and the... back-up had a stroke. Can you wait a couple of weeks for payment. That means extending your overdraft... Your banker says no. She's had 50 similar calls already this morning, and the bank doesn't have the funds to cover it... Scary stuff. But is it true... will computers really run amok... or... are these... stories... just hype from people wanting to sell you services or software?

...How could computer vendors have made such a disastrous mistake...? Unfortunately, it is true and while the bug can be fixed, it's going to take considerable time and money. The problem is widespread – affecting not only older mainframe computers, but also many PCs and a range of everyday "date aware" microprocessor-controlled equipment found in a variety of machinery, including lifts, air conditioning and security systems... While hoards of people worldwide are currently working on fixing the problems, inevitably, come the millennium dawn some systems will fail. Some failures will be nuisances, others will cost companies millions of dollars and some could be life threatening... [– like] when the screens freeze at a computerised phone dispatcher for an ambulance service, or a navigation computer on an airliner will not reboot[, and many]... dialysis units... use... time-dependent... electronics to monitor cycles and blood flow... Common sense tells us that the vendors who sold these defective goods should fix them at their expense. But in the computer industry, it's never that simple...

Based on the experience of the U[S] and Britain... the cost of defusing the Millennium Bomb in N[Z] will amount to about 2.75[%] a year of the \$5.4 billion annual cost of the country's information technology... WHETHER the fix becomes public or private, it will take time. [One] report figures on 1000 person hours to solve the problem as the average company cost... One certainty is that N[Z] will need COBOL programmers to supply the fix. The outdated language for large computer systems lies in the bedrock of code on which later software was built... [T]he longer the delay, the more expensive the problem will become. COBOL programmers are predicted to be in short supply worldwide as the millennium approaches. THE British edition of *Esquire* magazine reports that there are 90,000 COBOL programmers worldwide, while the estimated number needed to defuse the Millennium Bomb in the world's computers is 3 million. Clearly, COBOL programmers will soon command top fees as countries compete for their expertise. At this point a final irony presents itself. In the [Last] World, India may well prove a market leader in defusing the First World's Millennium Bomb. India's solid education system has produced thousands of well-qualified software programmers proficient in COBOL and other outmoded computer languages. In N[Z], Indian companies and joint ventures are already exploring a new market.

...Less than 10[% of N]Z... organisations are likely to have completed an audit of their computer systems and date-aware equipment – the first step necessary to assess the potential impact of the Year 2000 problem on their business. That is the view of[a] PA Consulting Group managing consultant... who bases his opinion on his company's experience assessing the problem in N[Z] organisations, and the results of a survey the group conducted in Britain in November last year. The survey found that only 9[%] of organisations in Britain had completed an audit and that the anticipated costs of achieving compliance had risen, with 69[%] believing it would cost more than £500,000... to fix the problems. A third of the organisations polled had yet to begin an audit. "Defusing the Millennium Bomb" is... likely to provide significant revenue to help achieve the group's goal of doubling the size of its business by 2002... PA Consulting's... approach is to... develop a costed "millennium programme plan." Implementation of the plan is followed by testing, for which PA Consulting has formed a partnership with Infosys India.

...Tomorrow could be too late for businesses to begin inoculating themselves against the Year 2000 bug[. a] Year 2000 preacher... told a seminar in Auckland last week... "If you have 3000 sites to convert and 24 staff to do it, and you have to do the work on the weekend, there's not much time[." H]e... said almost a quarter of the companies in a recent... survey expected to buy help from major accounting and professional services organisations. They may be out of luck. Telecom – budgeting \$87 million – and the BNZ – \$37 million – for Year 2000 fixes would need to hire several hundred programmers. "There's not enough resources to satisfy Telecom's needs. The top 300 companies will exhaust all resources in N[Z]." A further 800 or so companies with more than 100 staff had no access to professional outside help. "It's a time problem – if you leave it, someone else will take [what's available] from you." ...Some chief executive and information officers had already found a personal solution to Year 2000 problems. A trend was emerging in the U[S] for executives to migrate to other companies... "They leave the problem behind and it's not their problem where they go to."

...A new users' group to link people working on year 2000 projects is finding employer confidentiality agreements are inhibiting membership. The group was set up after a seminar in Wellington earlier this year... But... many potential members feel there's no point joining if they can't discuss their own experiences... [In related news, a] Detroit grocer is suing a cash-register maker in what is believed to be the world's first... 2000 bug-related law suit... [S]imilar cases... can be expected in N[Z] soon...

Computer retailers who fail to tell customers about the year 2000 "bug" could land themselves in court. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs has warned traders about the risk of prosecution if they deliberately mislead buyers about the capacity of computer systems to handle the switch to the new millennium... Computer retailers who deliberately misheld... information from customers could be prosecuted by the Commerce Commission under the Fair Trading Act. Individual consumers could also claim their money back through the Consumer Guarantees Act if they bought computer systems or software from a trader who failed to disclose that the equipment had the millennium problem... Consumers should[especially] be wary when buying secondhand or imported hardware and software... The... [ministry's] general manager... said buyers... should get written confirmation from retailers that the products are year 2000 compliant, or a time-frame and cost to update them... He urged people with personal computers to be informed on the issue so they were not pressured into unnecessary or ineffective computer upgrades.

...Compac Computer, the world's largest seller of personal computers, says machines it has supplied since October 7 can cope with dates in the next century. About half the personal computers sold this year cannot tell the difference between 1900 and 2000... Some 93[%] of... pre-1997... computers fail a Year 2000 compliance test... Most of the attention paid to the Year 2000 bug has centred on the billions of dollars in losses that some consultants say could potentially result from shutdowns of large computer systems. PC owners may run into problems too, if they use their computer to perform date-related tasks such as calculating interest... Owners of older Compac PCs could test their computers by running a... programme available from Compac's Web site... Free [Y]ear 2000 upgrades were available from the site... Compac's fix teaches a computers' binary input-output software, or BIOS, to look at a separate data field on the clock chip that counts the century... Most PCs would not lock up if users neglected to fix them...

Leadership in alerting the country to the dangers of the millennium bug must come right from the top, says... *A Survivor's Guide to the Year 2000 Problem – a Non-Technical Handbook For All N[Z]ers*... Most boards of directors are paying lip service to their company's Year 2000 plight – foolishly believing management has the situation under control and failing to recognise their potential liability... The Insurance Council public affairs manager... said there was still too much complacency... She said insurance companies around the world were assessing their exposure to the millennium bug and taking action, including changing the wording of policies... [T]he "drop dead" date... when policies to take effect from January 1999 and extend to January 2000 will be drafted... is only 10 months away... A Commerce Ministry survey... claims 76[%] of small and medium-sized[NZ] businesses are confident they can deal with it[, but only 7% of respondents have]... completed their information systems work on the Year 2000... [NZ] businesses and organisations[also] get low marks for preventing security breaches... Nearly two-thirds... acknowledge they have suffered financial losses or disruptions to their business related to information security in the last two years. Viruses (80[%]) are the number one nuisance followed by inadvertent errors (47[%]) and information systems going down or being unavailable (45[%])... We're on a par with the rest of the world in respect to these and other causes such as malicious insider (28[%]) or outsider acts (23[%]), natural disaster (23[%]) and industrial espionage (22[%]). On a brighter side[NZ] organisations show up as the highest users (84[%]) of desktops and laptop PCs, are the fourth most extensive users of mid-range systems and one of the top five users of telecommunications... While the use of the Internet by businesses is widespread in [NZ], only one in five are using it to transfer important information. Alarming, only 25[% of NZ] users have Internet firewalls in place and less than 50[%] of organisations monitor their Internet usage.

...A[US]'s largest telecommunications company, Telstra, has put aside a further \$A500 million... to beat the Year 2000 bug. The company initially put aside \$100 million, about the same as Telecom N[Z].

...NZ's] Information Technology Minister... said businesses would receive in their next tax pack a warning notice, telling them what the year 2000 problem is and what their obligations will be... Alarming trends had already emerged. "When you have two businesses side by side, offering similar services and running similar software, and one says it needs resources to address the problem, while the other says they don't have a problem, they can't both be right." ...While stories about miracle fixes created false optimism, manufacturers were still producing non-compliant machines and software developers were writing bad code... said... [the] chief executive of British-based year-2000 solution company Greenwich Mean Time... "We tested 500 PC configurations in laboratory operation. Of the... 1997 machines, 47[%] failed."

...The Minister for Information Technology... believes market forces mean the Year 2000 bug will cause a series of minor hiccups rather than a catastrophic collapse of the economic system... [He] told a conference on Year 2000 issues in Wellington... that the Government's role should be limited to increasing awareness of the issue... His dry approach contrasts with that of the A[US]n Government, which is taking a more hands-on approach... [The] Year 2000 coordinator for the Office of Government Information Technology... said... A[US]ns saw the issue as one of national safety as much as economic survival. The dawn of the new millennium coincided with the bushfire... and... cyclone season...

A Sydney-based research company [has joined] the rapidly swelling ranks of claims to have developed a cure for the "millennium bug"... The bug is big business worldwide, inspiring a boom in computer jobs as businesses and governments alike set aside hefty chunks of their budgets to tackle the problem... [T]he repair cost for N[Z] will be \$1.9 billion. That's not a lot compared with the global bill of around \$400 billion... [T]he Year 2000 issue[is] a plague rather than a bug.

...A leading expert in solving year 2000 computer problems has poured cold water on claims a Christchurch schoolboy has licked the millennium bug. A story in a Canterbury business monthly about[the] 14-year-old... [boy]'s software patch for [PC]s sparked worldwide media attention,

including a story on the CNN news network. But [the schoolboy] said people had blown his achievement out of proportion. "They've been too excited to listen that it's not a solution to the whole year 2000 problem,"... [H]is programme, designed to run when a computer starts up, will[only] diagnose whether the computer's BIOS... will handle the switch from December 31, 1999 to January 1, 2000... [Incidentally,] Microsoft has posted a bug fix[for] its Internet Explorer 4.0 Web browser on its Web site (www.microsoft.com/ie). The bug, known as the Freiburg text-viewing issue, allows text, HTML or image files to be copied from victims' hard discs. It does not allow data to be destroyed. Users can disable "Active Scripting" to protect their hard disks until they download the patch.

...Prevailing opinion on the Internet is that a newly-discovered bug that crashes Intel Pentium processors could be serious... The bug was first reported by CNet (www.news.com) last Friday. Intel engineers were meeting immediately, according to sources... The "Pentium FO" bug can freeze up Pentium MMX and "classic" Pentium PCs and could be used as a weapon for sabotage...

Some security systems are akin to "putting a steel door on a wooden house," according to a visiting... [computer] security expert, who says the "human factor" is leaving plenty of scope for skilled hackers... He said middle management needed to be more committed to understanding and enforcing security... Over the past six months in the U[S], the FBI has set up a special task force to investigate more than \$US40 million in payments to computer criminals. "That's only the tip of the iceberg because the majority of these crimes go unreported,"... Two security systems, one developed by Sun and the other by Cisco, are competing for acceptance as Internet industry standards[, but]... standards authorities such as the Internet Engineering Task Force were a few years away from ruling on security issues... Sun computers has a number of firewall and security products which run on both their range of Sparc workstations and Microsoft NT, including a unique product which does not use an... Internet protocol... address[, thereby] making it invisible to attackers. [The expert] said the present ban on most strong encryption exports by the U[S] Government was hurting the development of encryption and security standards – as well as the American software community as other countries such as Israel were taking the lead in that area.

...An Internet crime-fighting agreement reached by Russia and the G7 group... provides for a 24 hour commitment to tracking and prosecuting cyber-criminals. Governments will be expected to prosecute even if the crime did not originate within their territory.

...Big Brother staged a raid on the Internet yesterday looking for scams, get-rich-quick schemes and anything else illegal... [as] part of an international crackdown... Statistics will be released once they are gathered from the 30 countries that took part in the operation. [The] general manager of the[NZ] Ministry of Consumer Affairs, said it was the first time this country had joined international enforcement agencies in the battle to clean up the Internet... "There's no magic about the Internet. They are just the old scams done electronically," [he] said... More than 1000 Web sites... were targeted... The ministry would warn illegal users of Web sites by e-mail and follow up later to ensure the information had been removed.

...Of 658... sites re-examined in a follow-up, 174 had either disappeared or changed... Most were American based, and although 50 sites were found to be operating in N[Z], they were not actually located here... The Internal Affairs Department sought co-operation from... Internet Service Providers... last year, resulting in a heap of trashy sites and more blatant newsgroups being shut down... However... [the] Ministry of Consumer Affairs general manager... said... the Internet was still a free-for-all. "There's a reluctance to regulate because it's so hard[to] get any one piece of law that applies everywhere..."

...You might not know it but... indiscriminate... electronic mail – more commonly known as e-mail – ...could land you in court or even get you fired... What started out as a blessing in electronic communication is slowly becoming a psychological and political war zone... [A] case involving forged e-mail... in the... U[S] began three years ago when... [a billionaire's] former girlfriend, also his employee, sued him for wrongful termination. An e-mail regarding the girlfriend's sacking was pivotal to the prosecution... The missive seemed to imply... [that the billionaire] (who, ironically, made his fortune with Oracle, a software manufacturer) fired the woman after a date when she refused to have sex with him. [The billionaire's] company eventually settled out of court for \$145,000. But without security devices, anyone can send an e-mail and pretend it's coming from a third party. And this year it was discovered the ex-girlfriend forged and sent that e-mail herself, using another employee's password... In altogether different circumstances in Christchurch, a Customs broker was charged with threatening to kill in an e-mail message... The 41-year-old man, who was eventually found guilty of illegally possessing an anti-tank rocket launcher and several other weapons, had sent the following message to several workmates: "I'm sure you will join me in celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Kalashnikov rifle... Guess who's got them and is going to use them one day." ...the accused man told the judge his e-mail should have been taken light-heartedly and he was... cleared of the first charge. This year three men were sacked from the N[Z] Employment Service for sending hundreds of offensive messages to each other... Their dismissals came after management examined back-up records and discovered the "derogatory" material. The three men had also referred to one of their managers in an abusive way. Now while you can call your boss all the names under the sun and get away with it in everyday conversation, legally any such message sent on computer is defamatory. E-mail is different from a private conversation... because company property has been used and the record was permanent. The wider the e-mail has been circulated and the more defamatory the message the higher the damages sought. For instance, in Britain, insurance company Norwich Union had to pay \$1.6 million in damages after staff sent[an] in-house e-mail suggesting a business rival was in financial trouble and the message reached brokers and clients. Forgery, defamation and sexual harassment are just some of the serious issues emerging as more people use e-mail from home and office. It is estimated there are now more than 40 million e-mail addresses worldwide... As well as the unresolved legal implications, social, psychological and just plain irritating e-mail issues are up for debate. There is the junk mail problem; laws governing direct marketing tactics don't cover e-mail. Cyber-slang for e-mail junk is "spamming". It is a little like programming your fax machine to send one message to several different fax machines; with the push of one button you can e-mail 40 or more people, or even every computer in your office system. The recent e-mail war between rival internet providers, Telecom and Voyager, annoyed many of their customers. Apparently the pair got hold of each other's client lists and started sending advertising messages to thousands of computers around the country... Eventually both companies put in place software that prevented the other from e-mailing anyone who was not a client. Then there are the behavioural problems e-mail creates. It can warp corporate... bosses who would rather terrorise their underlings with admonitory computer messages than confront them in real life... [Another] problem... is with personal use of the messaging system. "We had one e-mail sent to everyone in the company – someone looking for a flatmate. The sender might not have thought it was much, but... it takes up too much memory." ...Even a quick perusal of office messages reveals a lot of computer-borne text is personal. Embarking on an affair with a new boyfriend, one Wellington lawyer tells... "At one stage I think I was spending about half the day writing love letters... It was ridiculous." How [do you] regulate this kind of time-wasting e-mail abuse? Canny businesses have codes of conduct regarding security, access and transmission of inappropriate material (like pornography or bomb design), but most managers accept private use is unavoidable. It's much like employees chatting on the phone: Impossible to regulate... [although] it is possible to pick any old message out of the worldwide stream of data... The only real way to prevent others from accessing your e-mails is by using a special computer program that encrypts, or codes, messages, making them inaccessible to anyone except yourself. There are also programs that monitor e-mail... a little like putting a sign saying "No Junk Mail" on your letterbox.

...[Internet users worldwide are unwittingly paying an estimated \$NZ21.37 billion a year in connection costs to receive "junk" e-mail, or "spam," the European Commission says. "The exponential growth of junk e-mail in recent years is a fact of life," said the EU's Internal Market Commissioner.' Speaking of e-mails, a company has developed a new version 'that self-destruct, leaving no trace in the system']...

Online technology, it's often said, is liberty's natural ally – a claim reinforced by the elegant, anarchic structure of the Internet... As[one] cyberlibertarian... famously put it, “The Internet treats censorship as damage, and routes around it.” ...however, the case for the Net's innate freedom-fighting tendencies has lacked the sort of rousing historical example that might clinch it. Sure, the Beijing students who survived the crackdown at Tiananmen Square have since used E-mail to keep information moving between them and the rest of the world... And Mexico's still-defiant Zapatistas were wired from Day One of their quixotic rebellion, broadcasting manifestos from the jungle via a jury-rigged foot-messenger-to-fax-to-E-mail pipeline (these days they've even got a Web page of their own)... The Net's decentralization makes it easy for... [activist]s to tap in anywhere and reach a worldwide audience of millions – but equally hard to censor. Designed to withstand nuclear attack, the Net hardly blinks at lesser attempts to block the information flowing through it.

...WE TEND TO THINK OF THE WORLD'S great discoveries in terms of the people who made them: Thomas Edison and the electric light bulb, Marie Curie and radium, Einstein and relativity. But, in fact, discoveries are never the work of single individuals toiling alone. They are always the result of a group effort, with each individual building on the achievements of colleagues and predecessors... [For example, t]he creation of the Internet in the early 1980s... [followed t]he Arpanet data network established by the U.S. Department of Defense... in 1969. - 1997

He who serves the world... could have been richer than [the chairman of Microsoft,] but he chose instead to work for the common good... TYPE [his name into]... the AltaVista search-engine on your computer and it will come back with about 10,000 pages containing references to him. It ought to stand to attention and play *Hail to the Chief* as well, because without this modest, understated Englishman the Web would not exist and the Internet would still be a playground for geeks... The inventor of the Web ought not, on the face of it, to be a charismatic figure... Yet an aura clings to him, generated not just by what he has achieved but by what he has chosen not to do. For this is the man who invented the future, who created something which one day will be bigger than all the other industries on earth... And yet he has turned his back on... the... intellectual property rights... [However, we] sometimes forget that the Net is a pretty ancient system whose foundations were laid nearly 30 years ago... In computing circles, the idea goes back to 1945 when... the MIT engineer who masterminded the American scientific war effort, published an article outlining his vision of a system for creating “associative trails” through complex mazes of documentation... The explosive growth of the Internet dates from January 1992, when the fruits of [the Englishman's] labours were released on to the Net. It went really ballistic in 1993, when... [an associate] wrote Mosaic, the first of the big browsers and the precursor of Netscape and Microsoft's Internet Explorer. The most significant innovation [Mosaic] made was to make it easy to put pictures on Web pages. This was critical because it meant that the Web could now be used for entertainment (not to mention pornography) as well as pure information, but it infuriated [the Englishman. Mosaic's inventor] recalls being “bawled out” by him in the summer of 93. The frivolity that the visual Web offered worried its inventor because it “was supposed to be a serious medium...” The use of the Web for entertainment opened up the possibility of making money from it. The image tag, in other words, was the gateway to the commercialisation of the Net. At that point, the two men went their separate ways. [Mosaic's inventor] went on to found Netscape and become a multi-multi-millionaire. And [the Englishman] went to MIT and the World Wide Web Consortium to try to ensure that the Web would remain governed by non-proprietary technical standards and not fall into the clutches of computing or multimedia conglomerates. As the parent of this prodigious off-spring, he is possibly the only person alive who can keep the Web on the rails.

...It started out... as a rocky, unpaved road full of potholes and ended up as the information superhighway... The Internet celebrates its 30th today with a special conference of its proponents at the University of California at Los Angeles, especially those pioneers who can remember its first days, when... users logged in rather than logged on. While “WWW” now stands for World Wide Web, during those infant days the acronym might better have meant wild, wacky and who-knows-what's-going-to-happen-next. Indeed, the forerunner of modern e-mail went wrong the first time around when there was a system failure during the first attempt to link two computers, according to [a]UCLA professor... aged 65, the man largely credited as being the “Father of the Internet.” ...Although the UCLA conference honours... [today] as the birthday of the Internet, some people think the date should be October 20, the first time one computer had actually talked to another. [The professor] himself is not sure... In retrospect, he does not think he and his colleagues created a monster... [They had] looked at creating the Arpanet as a technological challenge, not an ethical one. “Were we thinking about the impact and the ethics? No. Did we try to lay down some codification of how this thing should be used? No. Did we abrogate our responsibility to think about that? Yes. We did not think about the potential dangers... We did not talk about, ‘Will little Charlie do his homework on it or will he look at pornography?’” But [the American] has no regrets. “Would I do it again? You bet.”

...Oxford University is to create the world's first institute dedicated to studying the internet. The Oxford Internet Institute, set up at a cost of £15 million... will carry out research and make policy recommendations about what effects the internet has on society... The university said it hoped to put Oxford and Britain at the centre of the debate about how the internet could and should develop.

...Local thirst for the Internet has led Telecom to invest in a \$2 billion telecommunications cable – the biggest investment made by a N[Z] firm in any project... A Telecom spokesman... said rising demand for the Internet meant existing capacity would run out before the originally expected 2003. When the project is finished in August next year it will increase telecommunications capacity between N[Z, AUS], Fiji and the U[S]. Telecom expects it to give 40 times more carrying capacity for telecommunications out of N[Z] – meaning that if every man, woman and child in the country logged on to the Internet there would be no problem. The cost of the project is shared among Telecom, which has a 50[%] shareholding, Optus in A[U], and World Xchange in the U[S]. The... 4cm... cable... will stretch... along the seabed and across land in each country... Divers will ensure the cable is lying flat on the seabed... Such attention is not possible across the 28,000km the cable will stretch... [- i]n parts of the Pacific Ocean the cable will reach 5km under water... [-] but contractors who work with Telecom and the other firms will have special cable ships ensuring that any breakdown is fixed quickly... The cable is also a self-healing loop, which means that the smaller cables run in both directions so that if one set of cables breaks down the other will pick up the usage... Yesterday the first section of the fibre-optic cable, known as the Southern Cross Cable Network, was supposed to be laid in the upper Waitemata Harbour. But strong winds and a rising tide[meant the work had to be] delayed...

The cost of surfing the Internet[in NZ] could skyrocket if Telecom goes ahead with a proposal to charge for residential data services. At the moment all local calls are free. Under the proposal, data calls would be separated from voice calls and... [one] Internet provider suggested the charge could cost users an extra... \$50 a month. However, any attempt to introduce the charges is likely to run head-on into the consumer protection provisions of the Kiwi Share and strong opposition from... providers and users... [A]ttempts to separate services to introduce higher data charges had been well canvassed and rejected in the U[S].

...the] US House of Representatives approved legislation yesterday to allow the US computer industry to bring in more than 300,000 high-tech foreign workers over the next three years to meet a shortage of skilled employees... H-1B visas[will] allow... noncitizen computer programmers and other professionals to work in the [US] for up to six years... [An influx of skilled employees is urgently needed for new projects like the] \$1 billion technology agreement... Nintendo of America... [made] with IBM to support Nintendo's next home video game console[, and to correct the Y2K bug]...

Americans should prepare for the year 2000 computer bug like they would a hurricane, by stocking up on canned food and bottled water in case vital services are cut off, senators leading a congressional study of the problem said yesterday. Global trade could also be disrupted because major U[S] trading partners, including Japan and oil producers Venezuela and Saudi Arabia, may not be able to address the computer glitch in time... “This will not be the end of the world as we know it. But we have to stay on top of... [t]his problem...,”... said ...t[he] chairman of the Senate's

special committee... There was no need for people to buy electricity generators or stockpile propane because a prolonged nationwide blackout was unlikely, [the chairman] said. The committee's draft report added that due to limited resources and a lack of awareness, rural and inner-city hospitals across the U[S] would be at high risk. It said more than 90[%] of doctors' offices had yet to address the problem... [In local news, a]rrangements aimed at comforting bank customers in the transition to the new millennium are expected to be outlined by the Reserve Bank this week. They are likely to include holding an extra \$1000 a week in cash for every man, woman and child, or an extra \$4 billion... While the banks are confident they have done all the work necessary to ensure information systems and equipment are secure against millennium problems, concern remains that customers will hedge their bets with a run on cash on the eve of the new millennium.

...Fear of a possible rush on banks by people worried that millennium computer bugs might leave them cashless is prompting the Reserve Bank to stash extra money. It will keep old banknotes due to be replaced next year by flexible plastic ones in vaults instead of destroying them... [The US FRB] will boost the amount of cash bills in its system by 25[%] to \$US200 billion... Many economists are working off predictions by... the chief economist for[a] European-based investment banker... that the year 2000 bug now has a 70[%] chance of causing a global recession...

In many parts of Asia plugs will be pulled out seconds before the dawn of 2000... as a means of protection against the millennium computer bug... Fingers crossed, they will turn everything back on minutes into the new millennium. If things do not work Asia should still be prepared – just. In Malaysia, for example, transport bureaucrats have already been equipped with a Contingency Plan Recovery Kit, containing a candle and rubber stamps for counter staff. In South Korea, officials are sweating over the possibility of an accidental launch by North Korea's ageing Soviet-built weapons systems. They have asked Russia for clarification. Thailand will shut down its missile computers to avoid such a possibility... Because Vietnamese computers will not be ready in time, the country's two national airlines have been ordered to train pilots to fly without radar... In India, because some state power suppliers have failed to address the problem, the lights could go out in a domino manner... China will not say how it is coping. "There will definitely be precautions," was all one official would say. Japan, the world's second-biggest economy, admits preparations are sketchy, with hospitals a major headache and lingering concerns over power and water. Central banks around the region are also stashing away large reserves of cash – \$US330 billion... for the Bank of Japan alone – in case of a systems breakdown, or a public run on reserves. But the biggest stock exchanges have said they will be ready.

...[the 'NZ stock exchange is planning to turn clocks back until sure its computers are safe from "ELECTRONIC ARMAGEDDON". Even though some commentators are declaring that the level of risk has been exaggerated by people who have a commercial interest – the same people, perhaps, who say we need to "start thinking about the year 3000" – the traders and other NZ companies are unable to get insurance against the Y2K bug. In the US, a law firm has set up a department of 50 people to study the legal implications in preparation for compensation claims.]

...AUS's P]M... may spend New Year's Eve on a plane to prove the millennium bug will not cause in-flight mayhem.[AUS's] Communications Minister... is so confident the computer bug will be zapped by the... [time] clocks tick over from 1999 to 2000... that he has invited [the PM] to join him on a plane trip [to coincide with the event]... Asked if he was taking up the invitation, [the PM said: "If my minister] deems that necessary, well, I'll give it serious consideration." [The minister]'s confidence mirrors the optimism of British Airways officials booked on... flights, so they will be mid-flight if the bug kicks in[(although Britain's Government appears less confident – 'BA's chiefs have been ordered to be in the air' at that time)]. A law has been passed in Canberra to protect people and businesses making Y2K disclosure statements from civil liability.

...The countdown may be on as the new millennium approaches. But that hardly seems to have consumers rushing to upgrade their computers. Far from getting vaccinations against the millennium bug, retailers say people are taking their time to check on whether their home computer will suffer from the year 2000 disease... Next month the Ministry of Consumer Affairs will release a guide on how people's homes may be hit by the problem and how consumers can ensure their rights are protected... The national service manager for [a major electronics retailer]... said that his stores had not received many calls from... worried... householders... Like most people... he had not yet bothered to check if his computer is one that needs an upgrade. But... [the company] has spent... 18 months assessing which of the products it sells will need to be looked at. The firm has just started selling software packages which people can use to ensure their computer is compliant. The packages sell for about \$150... □... Telecom has confirmed to telephone card dealers that its pay phone network is not Year 2000 compliant and will be replaced. The overhaul, expected to cost \$6 million, has prompted telephone card dealers to warn collectors that many cards will become worthless unless Telecom offers an exchange deal.

...A massive sewage-system failure faces N[Z] in the event of a year 2000-induced power collapse – and officials say some towns and cities are not safeguarding residents. Much of the North Island, including its biggest cities, could have trouble flushing away sewage within four hours of an electricity failure caused by computer problems as the new millennium dawns. Water supplies would generally last longer, according to a Local Government NZ survey out yesterday, but Hamilton could run dry in two hours given its total reliance on power. Although the... report says that most of the country's 86 territorial authorities expect to be ready for the millennium, its authors are worried that 14[%] will not be until the last quarter of [the year, while s]ome councils claiming to be 100[% ready were found to be] seriously lacking on closer scrutiny.

...A[US]ns thinking of going abroad at the end of the... millennium... have been warned of a scary range of potential... disasters. In a list... that suggested travellers may be better off staying at home around the turn of the century, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade yesterday raised the spectre of power blackouts, travel chaos, strained emergency services and disease outbreaks. Travellers could be left without cash or credit by the failure of international financial services. They may not be able to phone home for help – and A[US]'s ability to aid its stricken citizens through embassies and consulates may be sluggish by the bug. While noting that problems caused by computer failures are hard to predict and may cause little disruption in some countries, the department... said[in others] the millennium bug could place... security services under severe strain.

...Russia faces huge problems ensuring its missile systems will not be affected by the millennium bug... says... [the] head of the State Committee for Communications and Information... [F]ixing the computer problem could cost Russia \$US1.5 billion to \$US3 billion, up to six times his original estimate. "Entities such as the Defence Ministry face great difficulties from the viewpoint of all types of missiles... The technologies they have are 20 years old," he said, adding that... Government departments were due shortly to report on progress in updating their systems.

...Midnight, December 31... Across Russia, screens monitoring the nation's air defences freeze; in neighbouring China, early warning systems go crazy. Panicked generals in both countries order their nuclear strike forces to red alert... Chaos mounts everywhere as... [t]he countdown to holocaust has begun... This, [the US President]'s chief adviser on the Year 2000... Bug warned this week, may not be the stuff of a [horror writer's] novel. The adviser] is head of the council charged with coordinating the campaign to protect critical information systems from collapse... The scale of his job... [is daunting]: 180 billion lines of software code worldwide, and millions of embedded chips requiring replacement or scrapping... The US Defence Department has 1.5 million computers and 25,000 systems running its early warning satellites, radars, communications systems, missiles, planes and ships. With the job on present estimates unlikely to be completed by 2012, entire systems are being discarded. With defence systems such as the Tomahawk cruise missile being vulnerable to the bug, and fears of a sharp rise in cyber-attacks on critical defence information systems, defence planners are becoming increasingly anxious... [US] concerns were increased by the revelation that Russian defence computers are clones of European and [US] systems and that until an alert was issued by the Kremlin in May, few organisations had even heard of the bug. "Strapped for cash" says a CSIS paper[.]Russia's Atomic Energy Ministry announced on June 19 that it will wait to see what happens as the date approaches to fix any Y2K problems." ...The US has now offered Russia and China a new joint early warning system... "We are reaching out to the former Soviet Union... and trying to encourage it to understand what serious problems they face."

...Millennium bug-induced failures in communications systems and early warning radar might set off a nuclear exchange within hours of clocks striking midnight at the end of this year, say experts. Nothing will happen at midnight on December 31 – but disaster may strike soon after, they say... [The] US Secretary of Defence... has acknowledged “some nervousness” in Washington about potential computer problems in Russia. “They don’t seem to have the same level of urgency that we have had over it,”... The man leading Russia’s efforts to tackle the problem... finally responded yesterday by asking Nato and the US for advice and cash to help secure Russia’s nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, a survey of China’s most critical enterprises showed that more than half did not even know how to detect the computer glitch in their systems. Chinese officials doubt that Government ministries can meet an October deadline for fixing their systems. Little help is being given to agencies and enterprises outside the crucial finance, aviation, telecommunications and transport sectors. Still, many analysts say Russia and China have less to worry about than countries such as the U[S], because they have far fewer computers and a lower overall level of technology. [Some e]xperts believe that the risk of an accidental firing of nuclear weapons as clocks tick into 2000 is more or less zero... “Warheads won’t explode in their silos due to computer error. They won’t launch by mistake [at midnight,]” said... [the] author of a report published by an independent research group, the British American Security Information Council... That is very good news considering that the US has just over 12,000 nuclear weapons and Russia 25,000.

...*Low-tech saves the day in Moscow*... While the rest of the world scrambles to make computers Year 2000 compatible, most Russians are wondering what the fuss is about. Russians have inadvertently isolated themselves from the threat of the millennium bug by maintaining a low-tech lifestyle. As other countries dashed to digitise everything from bank accounts to elevators, Soviet society remained virtually computer-free... Russia has just one computer for every 42 people, compared with one for every two in the US, according to International Data Corporation. Water lines and telephones still run on analogue systems, and officials of all ranks continue to work for the endless pursuit of paper. Most computers they do use are for writing reports, which are in turn printed off and added to the stacks. So it is no surprise that Russians don’t know or care much about the bug; a recent survey of Moscow businesses reported that 85[%] had not even heard of it... While the Pentagon and corporations worldwide poured billions of dollars last year into reprogramming their computers, [last]... August... Russia’s Defence Ministry... ordered its soldiers to pick berries and mushrooms and to hunt wild game in order to feed themselves. The Government too is guilty of underestimating the problem’s scope; just two months ago the head of Russia’s strategic missile forces... maintained the nuclear forces had “solved” their bug problems. Now, officials say Russia needs up to \$3 billion to avoid disruption in military, nuclear and telecommunications computers.

...In what experts fear could be a portent of the chaos to come, the Wanganui computer is failing to recognise the year 2000 when police try to set court dates for people arrested for traffic offences. The glitch has been around since the New Year and is believed to be the first instance of the bug in N[Z]. The computer’s traffic programme automatically tries to find another date [a] year... on from the court hearing as a “failsafe” to check that police have not slipped up. But when it tries to search for a date, it hits a blank and spits out the file... The... court files... [affected have been] processed manually. The glitch would be fixed today... The computer stores information on criminal records, vehicles, drivers’ licences, stolen property and other personal material. It is used by police, Justice staff and the Land Transport Safety Authority. [The] Assistant Commissioner... said the traffic section of the Wanganui computer, built in 1978, was not programmed to recognise 2000. “We didn’t imagine at the time that we would build something which would last until the turn of the century,”... The new multimillion-dollar police computer, Incis, due to be finished by [the end of the] year, was being built to cope with the year 2000.

...Police are having to spend... \$800,000... upgrading the near-obsolete Wanganui computer to make it Year 2000 compliant even though they do not plan to use it beyond December [when] Incis... is supposed to take over... from the Wanganui computer, which houses records on every citizen. But continued Incis delays have forced police to fall back on a contingency plan...

The bill for the... Incis computer system may blow out to \$170 million – \$72 million more than planned. The cost of the project has been put publicly at \$119 million. But it was revealed yesterday that the... company contracted to complete the system has picked up another \$50 million in overrun expenses. A N[Z] First MP... claimed in Parliament that IBM would take the \$50 million hit to avoid more bad publicity for the police... In another development yesterday, the... Y2K Readiness Commission... warn[ed] people to protect themselves from “cyber-terrorists” producing computer viruses disguised as Y2K bugs. [The commission’s] special adviser... said computer hackers and virus freaks saw the new millennium as a historic opportunity to undermine information technology systems around the globe... On one Dutch hacker site, a hacker calling himself “The Might” invited virus writers to submit samples for his... page of new viruses. “It would be nice if your virus would have something related to the millennium bug or anything with the year 2000,” The Might wrote. They were warned not to release viruses in any other way “to prevent the AV [anti-virus] guys detecting all the codes.” The contest winner would be the last virus detected from this “Y2K infection fest.”

...fewer than 30 computer experts... strategically located around the... world, with a budget of less than \$US10 million... could bring the U[S] to its knees, a panel examining information warfare reported yesterday. “Attacks on information systems are as serious a threat as this country faces,” [a] Senator... said when endorsing a report released by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies... “Bytes, not bullets, are the real ammo,” the report said.

...Seven of the top computer hackers in the U[S] yesterday told a Senate committee they could cripple the Internet in a half-hour. Given more time and money, they could interrupt satellite transmissions or electricity grids – and snoop on the movements of [the US] President... While Internet security experts said such claims might be hyperbole, testimony before the Senate governmental affairs committee raised troubling questions for some about security of the nation’s public and private computer networks... “If you look at this, in some ways it is a whole new way of making warfare,” [one senator] said... The General Accounting Office, an arm of Congress, released two studies at the hearing critical of computer security at the State Department and the Federal Aviation Administration... It found weaknesses in the physical security of FAA computer systems... [and t]he State Department’s unclassified automated information systems “are very susceptible to hackers and terrorists,”...

FORGET the old police posters warning of masked men with crowbars breaking into your unguarded house. Cyberspace burglars are busting into Kiwi homes and businesses from as far away as the other side of the world through your PC. Internet criminals are hacking into computer files throughout N[Z], in acts of industrial espionage and even pornography peddling. Viruses sent from as far away as America can wipe out business or personal records in PCs here... [Yesterday,] internet hackers tried to shut down Ihug, one of N[Z]’s most popular internet companies.

...A hacker has wiped out more than 4500 N[Z] Web sites... – [including]... about 500 commercial sites... – ...in what is believed to be the worst case of computer vandalism to hit the country... There was no backup facility and, unless the owners had made their own copies, the Web pages were permanently lost... An e-mail apologising to those affected says: “Unfortunately three days ago, a malicious hacker managed to get into our Homepages server in the USA.” ...the hacker accessed the system via a “security hole” in a... small program on a Web page – and then damaged the disk drive and emergency backup on the computer server... The sites are hosted by the Auckland-based... provider the Internet Group, also known as Ihug... The company provides Internet access to about 45,000 subscribers throughout N[Z] and AUS]. It allows subscribers to create up to five free megabytes of Web pages, which can be accessed by anyone using the Internet... N[Z] did not have specific laws relating to electronic trespass. But if it could be shown there was intent to do wilful damage, a 1991 British case relating to hacking might support action under the Crimes Act.

...The Internet Group wants to extradite an Auckland teenager to the U[S] and charge him there with hacking into the Ihug computer on Monday and destroying 4500 Web sites... [The] Internet service provider[’s]... director... said yesterday that his company was considering the extraordinary move because its Web server is in San Francisco and N[Z] law is inadequate to deal with cyber vandalism. Legal experts doubt such a move would succeed and a Mt Albert youth who said he was the hacker... Sharkdog... told the *Weekend Herald* last night that he was too young to

be charged. The youth... claim[ed]... on TV One... he was 15 years old... But the *Herald* understands he is older, about 19, which would mean he could be charged in an adult court... The youth said he had friends who worked for Ihug but had not worked there himself. Ihug management said they had suspended one of those friends while they checked whether he was involved in the hacking... Sharkdog said he felt sorry for the Internet users who had lost files. "I was targeting the ISP... itself. They've abused a lot of my friends and cut accounts for no apparent reason and I'm just making a statement here that, yes, you guys are hackable and you should follow the rules and be nice."

...The country's largest I[SP] was working early today to set up safeguards against hackers who have compromised the security of Xtra customer accounts. The Telecom company, which has 300,000 clients, has learned that a hacker has acquired the passwords of hundreds of its customers. Clear Net, Ihug and Voyager services are also vulnerable to the practice, whereby a hacker uses other people's passwords to surf the Net at their expense... Password-hacking is common overseas, but the scale of the latest sniffing – on top of the sabotage of 4500 Ihug Websites by another hacker last week – shows N[Z]'s half-million-plus Internet users are exposed to local attack. Clear Net is advising its 40,000 customers to change their passwords regularly[, and]... recommends they check their Internet bills as carefully as they would a credit-card account.

...A computer hacker tapping away on a keyboard in Finland wiped out the archives and records of the student newspaper at the University of California in Berkeley. "We lost everything," said... [the] electronic editor at the university newspaper, the *Daily Californian*. "It was disheartening." ...Copies are stored digitally but the paper will have to upload the data and get new software to get its site running again... [In further news from the US,] Microsoft has vowed to fight the... Government's plan to break the company into two separate parts... Last week, the Justice Department and 17 of the 19 states that filed antitrust complaints against Microsoft submitted a plan... to break the company into two new businesses... to a federal judge... One company would retain the popular Windows operating system, which runs the majority of the world's computers, while the other would consist of Microsoft's applications and internet products, such as Microsoft Office and the Microsoft Network group of websites. The plan must be approved by[a] US District Judge... who will also receive a written response from... Microsoft, which reorganised itself along similar lines last year... and is expected to hold hearings on what, if any, remedies are necessary to counter Microsoft's violations of antitrust law... The court battle comes at a critical time for the company, which is facing increased competition on a number of fronts. The Linux operating system, developed by computer enthusiasts via the internet, has become a cheap and effective alternative to Windows for large corporate computer users. America Online, set to merge with Time Warner next year, is also planning several new consumer computing devices in partnership with Gateway. "I think there's a general sense of vulnerability over at Microsoft," said... [the] executive director of the Berkman Centre for Internet and Society at Harvard Law School. "Windows is starting to show its age... They'll be forced to reinvent themselves again while, at the same time, handling this case." Indeed, Microsoft[']s chairman... is already trying to steer the company in a new direction, hoping to put Windows operating systems not only on new computers, but on handhelds, cellular phones and home electronics.

...Microsoft officials are living in fear as the company's uncertain legal future could spark an exodus of its most productive employees. Just days after [a US District Court judge]'s ruling that the company be broken in two, Microsoft has admitted it is concerned it will lose top staff... "The company has always felt that it's a brains trust and its No 1 asset is those brains and it wants to hang on to them. There are a lot of extremely competent people in the company. If you lose a number of people who have been here a long time you lose continuity – and that's a danger... to the company," said... a Microsoft program manager... Microsoft has warned that the court order will snuff out innovation and progress, and has vowed to appeal all aspects of the ruling.

...SOFTWARE giant Microsoft Corporation has settled its long-running antitrust case with the US Government. [Yesterday its c]hairman... said the settlement, which involved restrictions on the company for five years, was fair and reasonable and, "most important, is in the best interests of consumers and the economy". The... pact, which must be approved by a federal judge and is not yet endorsed by the states that joined the antitrust case, is a far cry from splitting the company in two, a remedy sought by the[President's] administration... If approved, the pact will bring to an end a three-year-old legal battle in which Microsoft was found to have illegally maintained its monopoly in personal computer operating systems... [In the meantime, all eyes] will be... on the stock market tomorrow (NZ time). That is when traders return to Wall St, where the company's stock will be under the microscope offering a key test of consumers' confidence in the company.

...N[Z] share prices are expected to fall sharply this morning as stock markets around the world begin a second week under heavy selling pressure. Following on from Wall St's big losses on Friday, the NZSE-40 capital index might drop as much as... 3.5[%], some analysts estimate. "It's not going to be a very happy Monday," said... [a] senior investment analyst... The global share rout was triggered last week by a collapse in prices of high-technology stocks in the US. After years of rises – peaking with a 35[%] gain in the past six months – investors started to believe that such high values were no longer realistic... The news looked all bad on Wall St on Friday. High-tech stocks, measured by the Nasdaq Composite index, fell 9.67[%], taking their loss in the week to 25.3[%]... It all compounded Microsoft's year from hell; so far... its stock is down 43[%]. Microsoft's chairman has... suffered a loss of nearly \$NZ19 billion in his personal fortune... and c[o]me dangerously close to losing his ranking as the richest man on Earth to another technology supremo... The value of [the chairman's] 742 million shares in the software firm ha[s] plunged... to \$99.8 billion... At the same time as his personal worth sank, [his] rival... the... chairman of database software maker Oracle, drew near... when his... 663 million shares in Oracle[grew] to \$96.97 billion.

...Managers of [NZ's] Government Superannuation Fund will face a grilling at a parliamentary select committee this week after it was revealed they have lost another \$138 million in the overseas sharemarket. Figures released to the Green Party by [the]Finance Minister... show the seven-member authority that manages the... \$3.5 billion... fund racked up sharemarket losses totalling about \$380 million in the [past]14 months.

Although I [– the billionaire financier (r:p303, ln70) –]have made a fortune in the financial markets, I now fear... the spread of market values into all areas of life is endangering our open... society. The main enemy of the open society, I believe, is no longer the communist but the capitalist... - 1997

Evidently Capitalism has hidden within it a tendency to self-destruct.

Evidence is strong that the nervous breakdown is under way. The institutions and values that scarcity and want imposed – work, thrift, property – have begun to lose their sanction.

To even state the possibility of the collapse of the American economy, or monetary system, sounds paranoid on the face of it... Unfortunately[, this]... has become so real, that some of our most respected orthodox economists are beginning to seriously consider the possibility.

A new discourse is just beginning to emerge in the holy of holies of modern academia: economics. Factors of established economic analysis such as labor, capital, profit, marginal utility, and comparative advantage, and the unexamined companion assumption that human beings correspond to the model of acquisitive, self-maximizing individuals: these tried and true pillars of economic theory are having to give way a little to ecological and anthropological evidence... [M]ore and more... the virtual absence and distortion of the factor of land, or nature, in established economics... [is] questioning the prevailing ignorance of mainstream scholars of the fact that most cultures of the world integrate cooperative and competitive modes of behaviour and that this is a more natural way to understand human motivation than a one-sided emphasis on individual greed.

Money is clearly associated with envy, greed, crime, bitterness, social injustice and misunderstanding between nations. But we must be clear about one thing. Money does not *cause* them. In itself it is neither good nor bad. It is just a tool.

Much can be done to treat those characteristics which cause people to reject or be rejected by the modern industrial society... The limiting factor is not a lack of knowledge... Overwhelmingly, it is a shortage of money.

Plainly, the social order equal to the task of securing to all its members the benefits of industrial technology remains to be invented. The market is imperfect. The state is incomplete.

Growing numbers of people in the industrialized nations... [are] disillusioned with the once-accepted belief that ever-increasing material growth and ever-expanding technology and industrialization w[ill] overcome world poverty and help mankind to achieve a more meaningful existence... The world has always known poverty, but its contemporary form, co-existing with abundance, appears to be inherent to the industrialization process. The dilemma appears to be unresolvable without fundamental changes in the world economic system... - An Incomplete Guide to the Future

This economic system, by its nature, requires a large educational and scientific establishment. Will these people long be content with the rather mundane goal of ever-increasing affluence which the system espouses as the highest aim of man? Might there not one day be discontent with a society in which there is single-minded concentration on the goal of economic success? Might there not one day be suspicion of leadership... associated with economic achievement? Might not one wish for such a revolt?

A society has a higher task than to consider its goals... It must also, so far as this may be possible, ensure its own survival.

If there is no effective counter-challenge to monetarism, the result will be catastrophic for both the [First and Last World] countries alike.

Today the question is not just one of emancipation in economics, but a perspective at least of emancipation from economics...

Whereas freedom buyers seek money to purchase their independence... freedom fighters reject money and all it stands for. Money and the materialistic society that worships it are seen as the cause of enslavement of the majority of people... [Freedom fighters] believe in the elimination of money altogether and think of it as... not at all suitable to a time of high technology and social enlightenment... and that by abolishing money or distributing it more evenly, the quality of life could be improved... WITH ALL OF THE ABUSES AND PROBLEMS THAT MONEY SEEMS to generate, and with all of the self-destructive and crazy things it motivates people to do, [it]... makes... sense... to... question whether money has any legitimate place in a sane society.

It is... clear that the kind of political economy that now exists in... the... industrialised democracies is inherently unstable. - The Sane Alternative

...[the] English historian... Arnold Joseph [Toynbee] (1889-1975)... held various university posts and became Director of Studies at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (1925-55). His greatest work is his twelve volume *Study of History* (1934-61) in which he surveys the history of 21 civilisations, tracing a pattern of growth, maturity, and decay in them all and concluding that the present Western civilisation is in the last of these stages. His suggestion that its fragmentation and waning could be saved by a new universal religion, with one spiritually oriented world society, was not well received.

...the only way to fix it is to flush it all away...

...when the whole thing comes crashing down... when the whole thing washes away don't run to me... don't ask me why...

G O D

...we cannot sleep Turning over turning round twisting in our sweat They say there is no rest for the wicked ones Dear God what... is this evil that we must have done... is it the times that we've been out fighting... or is it that we were eating while other people were starving... - New Model Army

...just thought you'd like to know... when times are hard I think about you... I don't think you're listening I think I'll tell you again... - THE COMSAT ANGELS

Dear God, hope you got the letter and... I pray you can make it better down here. I don't mean a big reduction in the price of beer but all the people that you made in your image, see them starving on their feet 'cause they don't get enough to eat... [S]orry to disturb you but... I feel that I should be heard loud and clear. We all need a big reduction in amount of tears and all the people that you made in your image, see them fighting in the street 'cause they can't make opinions meet about God... and it's the same the whole world 'round. - XTC

There is only one (true) religion, but there can be faiths of several kinds. It is therefore more fitting to say, 'This man is of this or that faith... than he is of this or that religion.'

Join us tomorrow when our topic will be: Religion, which is the one true faith?

Each side confidently called upon the One True God, and publicly proclaimed the inevitability of victory.

The two *opposing* values "good and bad," [or] "good and evil" have been engaged in a fearful struggle on earth for thousands of years; and though the latter value has certainly been on top for a long time, there are still places where the struggle is as yet undecided. One might even say that it has risen ever higher and thus become more and more profound and spiritual: so that today there is perhaps no more decisive mark of a "*higher nature*," a more spiritual nature, than that of being divided in this sense and a genuine battleground of these opposing values.

All of the physical characteristics of man show... he is animal. He has gone through many stages of growth and development as other animals have... The animals most like man are... apes. But even these... do not have what... is often called the "spirit" of man... abilities to think, reason, believe...

Religion – belief in a superhuman controlling power, especially in a personal God or gods entitled to obedience and worship.

Religion is a nearly-universal phenomenon, extending as far back in history as we can trace human activity, and manifested among people in every part of the world. - THE NATURE OF RELIGION

Every people in the world has its own myths; but it is very obvious that many of these myths are strikingly familiar. These similarities may be accounted for by assuming a common racial origin at a very remote period... But sometimes these similarities are found in the stories of peoples who can have had no geographical or racial connections with each other. Human beings it would seem, while unlike each other in many ways, have always still more in common, and their imagination, when confronted with similar events, will react to them in much the same way... It was not till the 19th century of our era that scholars proclaimed that all myths were unhistorical, that the Trojan War never took place and that 'Homer', who did not exist either, supplied us with nothing but something in the nature of a 'solar myth'. Then, to the fury of the scholars, Schliemann actually dug up Troy and more recent archeologists have confirmed as basically true very many of the 'myths' of Homer and others... Today it is generally admitted that myth and legend can and often do have a basis in historical fact. Of course there is also very much mythical material which cannot be regarded as historical, except in a very loose sense. Many myths of all countries are attempts to explain the world which to primitive man was even more unpredictable and alarming than it is to us. - Encyclopedia of World Mythology

A larger-brained hominid called *Homo habilis*... evolved in Africa about 2 million years ago... *Homo habilis* is classified as the first species of true humans and appears to mark a transition between apelike and humanlike hominids... Around 1.8 million years ago *Homo habilis* disappeared from Africa and was replaced by *Homo erectus*. This species is widely accepted as human and appears to have evolved from *Homo habilis* in Africa, although it might have evolved in Asia independently of *Homo habilis* and subsequently migrated to Africa... About 1 million years ago, *homo erectus* occupied southern and eastern Asia... These people developed an elaborate culture, inhabiting caves and hunting game. They were probably the first people to develop an advanced form of communication, which enabled them to organize hunting parties and to pass tool-making skills to the next generation... [*Homo erectus* is also accredited with 'taming fire about 500,000BC.'] Many other types of *Homo erectus* were scattered over the world. It therefore appears that anatomically modern humans might have evolved from *Homo erectus* not just in Africa but in several places, possibly accounting for differences in races among modern humans. The Neanderthals, a species of *Homo sapiens*, first appeared about 300,000 years ago... [T]hey appear to have buried their dead, placing offerings such as ibex horns and flowers in the graves...

In this act is something which generally distinguishes people from animals: animals leave their dead; humans appear always to have felt a need to dispose of their dead with care and dignity, suggesting not only a lingering affection for the person who has died but also probably a feeling... that death may not be the end, and that provision for or protection against the dead is therefore appropriate... [E]arly man, or pre-man, buried his dead... and placed within reach of the body implements, such as stone weapons, which might have been thought useful for some future existence or might simply have been a memorial of an aspect of the person's daily work.

In view of the self-conscious nature of humankind, it is scarcely surprising that the formulation of abstract ideas about the relation of man to his environment has emerged from the everyday reality of getting a living. So far as the archaeological record permits, we can see evidence of such

abstractions from the very early days of human cultural development... We may surmise that there have been, through the millennia, various reasons for such abstractions. For a first example, there is the long-standing urge to explore and account for the origins of our universe and our species... Then there is the desire to understand people's relationships with nature and with some kind of Absolute. This is exemplified in the way in which some hunters found a need to propitiate either the spirit of the actual animal they killed or a tutelary deity of all animal spirits in order to avoid 'blame' for their act and to ensure the future supply of food. The right type of relationship with natural phenomena (and their Superiors if they have them), will also bring prosperity and fertility to the human communities.

The sudden disappearance of the Neanderthals after over 100,000 years of prosperity might have resulted from their assimilation by a more advanced species of homo sapiens known as Cro-Magnon. The... evolutionary line... [of these] early modern humans... can be traced back to Africa, perhaps 250,000 years ago. However, evidence also suggests that they arose in several parts of the world, as long ago as 1 million years, possibly evolving from *Homo erectus*. Neanderthals and modern humans... coexisted in Eurasia for at least 60,000 years and shared many of the same cultural advancements, although with probably little or no interbreeding... [N]either species appears to have been more intelligent than the other.

During the coldest part of the last ice age... humans were nearly an extinct species, until a population explosion brought on by extensive migration... set the stage for the emergence of fully modern humans. - THE HUMAN VOLCANO

It seems undisputed that Africa was the place of emergence of the earliest *Homo* stock... These Australopithecines and early men lived in a fairly wide range of environments within the belt of tropical and near-tropical country bounded by Ethiopia to the north and the Republic of South Africa in the south.

The tools that started the journey to the moon... [A N]Z... anthropologist... and his colleagues... [are] rewriting history with his discovery of the world's oldest stone tools, which date back 2.5 million years. The find, in... Gona... Ethiopia... may push the threshold for the hominid that became man back almost half a million years... The tools... known as cobbles, lumps of volcanic basalt split by hitting them with another rock, leaving sharp cutting edges... set one group of African primates apart from their cousins... [and] are evidence of the evolutionary trajectory that led to *Homo sapiens*... Anthropologists have identified three major classes of human-like ape... likely to have fashioned the tools found at Gona... "We... only have the tools so far, no primate fossils." ...There was *Australopithecus robustus*[, which]... had massive teeth, the grinding molars of a vegetarian... another smaller, gracile type of *Australopithecus*, and the forerunners of the species named... *Homo habilis* (*habilis* means handyman) – the toolmaker of... Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania[, where]... 1.8 million-year-old tools[were] discovered... in the late 1960s... It was *Homo habilis* that had a bigger brain case... [T]he tools at Gona... were fashioned by a creature that had a precision grip. Before the advent of the Gona toolmakers, the primates that inhabited the area were probably plant-eaters who foraged. The arrival of tool technology gave one group an advantage. They could become scavengers, using the tools to pierce the hides of dead animals and slice off flesh. "It was a major dietary shift... These early humans might have behaved like cheetahs, moving rapidly on to a carcass, cutting off meat and then retreating to more sheltered parts of the landscape." The Gona tools raise yet more questions... Their age and similarity to the tools found at Olduvai... imply that early technology remained frozen for almost a million years. Evolutionary theorists... say [the] find is evidence... that evolution progresses in great bursts, followed by periods of stasis, rather than the gradual progress envisaged by Charles Darwin.

...scientists... have found perfectly preserved 400,000-year-old wooden spears, strong evidence that early humans were more sophisticated hunters than previously thought. The... oldest wooden hunting weapons ever found... and other tools... [were] scooped out... ahead of a high-speed excavator at an open-cast brown-coal mine at Schoeningen... [T]he spears would have been used by *Homo erectus*[, and]... indicate they hunted big game for a living... Each took careful advantage of the hardest wood in the 30-year-old spruce trees from which they were made. "We see considerable depth of planning, sophistication of design, and patience in carving the wood, all of which have been attributed only to modern humans." The spears could also explain how people colonised northern Europe at the end of the last Ice Age... Before this, the oldest spear found was about 125,000 years old[. By the way, 'flutes appeared 32,000 years ago; sewing needles 23,000 years ago; bows and arrows 12,000' years ago]...

A set of Ugandan fossils may be the oldest known ancestors of humans and apes... [T]he remains... discovered from two sites... [i]n the 1960s... [have been dated] to at least 20.6 million years ago... [In related news,] *Homo erectus*... was thought to have become extinct 250,000 years ago. But... [a] geologist at the Berkeley Geochronology Centre[, who]... was re-evaluating *Homo erectus* skulls found in Java in the 1930s... kept making the same startling find: the bones were 53,000 years old at the most and possibly no more than 27,000 years. This would have made them contemporaneous with modern humans... "It looks like today is unique in that there is only one single species of humans." ...If he is right – and many dispute this – then human evolution was much less direct than previously suspected... It's already known that... *Homo sapiens*... walked the Earth at the same time as[their] heavy-browed cousins, the Neanderthals, who became extinct about 30,000 years ago... Only a few decades ago... inconsistencies in... fossil records led scientists to form two competing theories... The "multi-regional" hypothesis holds that *erectus* left Africa about a million years ago... then spread across the world and evolved into *Homo sapiens* at different times on different continents... "Out of Africa," argues that modern man evolved in one small area of Africa and then spread, possibly killing off *erectus* tribes along the way... [The geologist's] findings bolster the... [second] theory. It is "no longer chronologically plausible" to argue that *Homo sapiens* evolved from *Homo erectus*, he wrote... Actually, the multi-regionalists have already countered by suggesting that... he mistook early sapiens for *erectus*. For one thing, these Java skulls have a cranial capacity much larger than the average sapiens.

...theories... that all modern humans are Africans under the skin and... [o]ur ancestors... simply replaced the Neanderthals... [were] ignored a decade ago[, but]... have now been confirmed by German and American DNA research... It was... thought that... *Homo erectus*... left[their] savanna homeland about a million years ago to settle in the Old World, evolving into Neanderthals in Europe, Java Man in the Far East and Peking Man in China. The theory was that this process continued until Europeans, Asians and Chinese emerged, suggesting racial differences were deep and significant... But... these are not our ancestors. Instead, a second wave of humans – *Homo sapiens* – emerged from Africa 100,000 years ago, and replaced all the rest. In other words, all modern humans come from a recent tight grouping of people, implying that our modern racial differences are slight and superficial... [A] team at Berkeley University... studied DNA of different races and found that we all have had a common ancestor, an African Eve, a mere 200,000 years ago[, while the Germans]... cloned DNA from... Neander Valley... and... showed it was markedly dissimilar to modern humans... Using a technique known as DNA amplification... [they] created a... Neanderthal DNA... snippet 379 base pairs in length, compared with a modern human's total DNA complement about 3 billion base pairs long... There are 27 differences between *Homo sapiens* and Neanderthal DNA along this 379 base pair section... Only a species that began evolving separately from our lineage 600,000 years ago could produce such a wide variation... Humans and chimps diverged at least 4 million years earlier... [T]here are... 55 differences between modern humans and chimp[s]... Contemporary humans differ from one another by an average of eight variations in that sequence... [Want more] evidence? Scots, Japanese and Tamils live 10,000km apart but... are closer genetically than some African groups who live... a few hundred kilometres apart. -

The continent of Africa contains some 6,000 different tribes. So complex are African languages, races, cultures and religions that anthropologists cannot yet agree about many of the facts that are available to them. It follows that where there are so many sorts of men, there are many gods, or concepts of god, and many religious sects with their peculiar rites, magical practices and traditional myths... But there are certain basic concepts which underlay all African religions; and these concepts, far from being the mumbo-jumbo popularly associated with medicine-men, witch-doctors, black magic, fetishes, ju-jus and the rest of it, are still a powerful spiritual and social force. To most Africans, God in one of his many manifestations... is an ever-present being; and his priests (medicine-men and witch-doctors) are recognized leaders of the tribal community... The African pagan (like the pagan everywhere for that matter) believes in a polytheistic system in which a chief god presides over lesser deities, rather as a king ruled over his domain in ancient times. Nearly all African cults had their Supreme Being, called by a hundred names which vary from tribe to tribe. But no matter what the chief god is called, he is invariably conceived of as the Maker of the World, the Master of Human Destiny, an omnipotent and omnipresent 'king of kings' and 'lord of lords'. And under the rule of the Supreme Being are all the lesser godlings, each with his special function. The question that has puzzled observers since white men first arrived in Africa is whether this Supreme Being, whatever his name, is an abstract idea – a sort of creative energy which animates and pervades the universe, but has no direct relationship with man; or whether this god is a personal being... It is, perhaps, typical of the difficulties inherent in a study of African religion that no native has come forward to clarify the question; and that white men can only make their observations from the outside, with no help at all from written scriptures, texts or recorded ecclesiastical history... It is also clear that the worship of this Supreme Being is, on the whole, a lackadaisical affair. The Creator of the Universe is, after all, bound to be somewhat indifferent to a mere human and his problems. On the other hand, the lesser gods – the spirits of the earth and the ghosts of departed heroes – are thought to be much more sympathetic. They can be flattered, wheedled and even threatened. A not unusual African prayer will go as follows: 'You are useless, you gods! You give us only trouble! You are a bunch of so-and-so's! What do we get from you? Nothing!' ...Together with all religions, paganism has a collection of myths to explain the Creation of the World and the Fall of Man. While each tribe has its own account, the basic theme is nearly always the same... To the Ashanti the universe is the work of a Creator, Odomankoma. It is he who created the heaven and the earth, men and all creatures of the earth, trees and rivers. As they say on their drums, things that owe their origin to the Creator must be clearly distinguished from the works of man who draws on Nature for his own benefit. When Odomankoma... created the world, he also created life and death. According to an Ashanti myth, Death became so powerful that he was able to kill the Creator himself. But when the Creator died, the universe continued to be controlled by a Supreme Being, called Nyame. At first this Supreme Being lived very close to earth and was within easy reach of man but he was obliged to move far out into the heavens because women hit the earth continually as they pounded grain in mortars. From his abode on high Nyame is able to see everything, for he sees even with his eyes turned away. He seems to be everywhere, for the Ashanti say, 'If you have something to say to the Supreme Being, say it to the wind'... The Supreme Being is the source of morality. He does not like men to cheat one another. Man's destiny is in his hands: 'If the Supreme Being does not want you to die and a human being tries to kill you, you will not die.' Men can depend on him, for he is someone on whom one leans and does not fall... The underlying notion of nearly all African creation myths seems to be that God and man once lived on earth and conversed together. Then man – or more frequently woman – erred, and the unhappy Fall resulted. Ever since then, men have tried to climb back into heaven and have even built towers and ladders for that purpose, but without success... since no African myth explained how man was to ascend into Paradise.

It is interesting to consider how the idea that the world had a beginning or had been created arose in the first place. Although the idea is a familiar one to us, it is not self-evident. The earliest members of our race obviously could not have witnessed the creation of the world – indeed, to them in their brief lives, their physical environment must have seemed eternal, supposing that their minds were sufficiently developed to have reflected on the fact... The emergence of the child from the womb of its mother must surely have been a most impressive demonstration of the beginning of a new creature, whether human or animal. The earliest creation myths, indeed, instinctively used the imagery of biological birth.

How life began on Earth remains a mystery but each birth forges a miraculous chain that spans nearly 4 billion years... The puzzle of our origin... [is] how a humble cousin to the apes became the only species with the curiosity to fathom the world and all that is in it... Tool user, fire tamer, creator of language, cave-painter, myth-maker, weaver of dreams... a creature whose descendants would evolve a new sense of self and leave their mark upon the world in profound ways.

Different anthropologists had different theories of the origin of religion. For [one] it was magic, for [a second] it was animism, for [a third] it was fetishism, for [a fourth] it was pre-animism, for [a fifth] it was original monotheism, and for others it was polytheism. It has now become clear that reliable historical evidence of the origin of religion cannot be obtained, and that theories must remain unproven. Evidence from prehistory such as ritually treated skulls, burial sites, cave paintings and megalithic stones reveals nothing about the origin of religion; neither does research into present-day Eskimos, Bushmen, Pygmies, or Aborigines, and nor do myths about the creation of the world. However... anthropological theories and creation myths have been shown to be of relevance to rich foundation myths such as that of the Garden of Eden.▷ ...neolithic religion...

neolithic religion... refers to the religious ideas and practices connected with the neolithic civilizations that flourished in the world between 8000 and 3000BCE. The neolithic revolution was centred upon the rise of agriculture, the domestication of animals and plants, the invention of pottery, and the growth of settled communities, and included a focus upon the sanctity of nature, the cycle of the seasons, and mother goddesses.

For several thousand years our neolithic ancestors lived in agricultural settlements. The archaeology of such settlements in Old Europe has revealed sophisticated art and religious symbols reflecting reverence of Mother Earth, the elements, and animals; egalitarian graves; and *no fortifications or evidence of warfare* before the invasions of the barbarian Indo-European tribes from the Eurasian steppes.

...the 'Neolithic Revolution'[turned] man from being dependent on nature to controlling it at least partially and indirectly. The change led to the establishment of settled communities, accumulation of food and wealth, and heavier growth of population... [A]n ancient city north of the Dead Sea... [is] one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. Little remains of the late Bronze Age period, the probable date of its destruction by Joshua...

What may well have been the world's first town: Jericho... was settled between 10,000 and 7000 B.C.E. It seems to have covered eight to ten acres and to have housed as many as three thousand inhabitants. Though this places it before the making of pottery, it was not a nomadic community's temporary settlement, for the houses the people built were substantial (made of bricks and sun-baked clay). They were laid out in lines both utilitarian and aesthetic, with such conveniences as a central courtyard for cooking, plastered walls and floors for easy washing, rush mats, storage bins, and utensils of limestone and flint. What appear to be temple remains indicate a cultic use of stone and also a fertility orientation toward the Mother Goddess. The people of Jericho must have revered their dead, for they preserved skulls in a finely moulded plaster that gave them a delicate, lifelike appearance. The walls of this town were built many times, a fact that suggests both a high level of community cooperation and the presence of external enemies. [In addition, 'early in the 2d millennium Jericho was destroyed by some catastrophe, perhaps an earthquake.']All in all,

then, Jericho resembles a prosperous little medieval town, with rich fields outside and numerous amenities inside. By comparison with the wandering life that prehistoric peoples led before the rise of towns, the new settled existence must have possessed many advantages. Most likely it afforded the chance to develop better food supplies, health care, and traditional customs, all of which would have tended to increase the people's life span and sense of security. Women's roles in the early towns seem to have been important: in addition to their involvement with farming, women probably also worked at the domestication of animals, the development of weaving, and the perfecting of pottery making. Remains from Jarmo (near the border of Iran and Iraq) that date to about 6750 B.C.E. show both a strong Mother Goddess religion and a considerable domestication of animals (90 percent of the animal bones found there are from domesticated species, such as sheep, pigs, and goats)... The link between a Mother Goddess religion and the nurture of animals also suggests that women's economic-religious roles were significant. None of the great advances that occurred at this time – discovery of most plant species, use of fertilizer (largely the waste of domestic animals), and food grains – needed great physical strength, while the pig and the snake, both of which served new domestic purposes, became symbols of the Goddess (when patriarchal religions overthrew the Goddess cult, the pig and snake came into the disfavour they have retained to the present time)... Thus the period of early town life probably was a good one for women... Some scholars conjecture that both shepherds and chieftain-kings continued the hunting line. In the best situations shepherds cooperated with farmers, providing them fertilizer, early warning against approach of enemies, and so forth. On the other hand, the chieftain-king was an ambiguous figure. The very qualities that made him valuable as a military leader could also make him overbearing. It is likely that the decisive turn to male rule (there are some suggestions that early towns had a council of elders of both sexes...) came when hunters assumed first protective, and then kingly, positions... - The Oldest God

When pottery was invented in Neolithic times, further stimulus was given to the conception of creativity. In several myths the creator-god is imagined as a divine potter who fashions men out of clay. It is accordingly not surprising that in the earliest written cosmogonies, or creation myths, we find a mixture of thought and imagery about the beginnings of things which derives both from the new needs of civilized society, and from the cruder concepts of the pre-literary past. Egypt and Sumer provide our earliest examples of creation myths, the texts concerned dating in each instance from about the middle of the 3rd millennium BC.

Around 3200 B.C.E. in southern Mesopotamia ([‘later known as Babylonia’ and]present-day Iraq) the first true civilisation arose... Sumer lay between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers... and it developed a rich culture to parallel its rich farmland. The farmland provided agricultural surpluses, which could support a population large enough not only to work the fields but also to drain swamps, develop irrigation systems, and generally expand and upgrade the Sumerian's holdings. This process produced a buzz of economic activity sufficient to stimulate an efficient way of keeping records – first by pictographic writing, then by cuneiform writing... [Sumerians are also accredited with inventing ‘the sexagesimal system of mathematics, and the socio-political institution of the city-state with bureaucracies, legal codes, division of labour and a money economy.’] Moreover, the bustling prosperity of Sumer attracted artisans of all sorts – metal workers, jewelers, carpenters, and more. It was in Sumer that the wheel was invented, and probably also the plow and the chariot. We can glimpse something of the Sumerian cultural style and the skill and frugality of its carpenters from records that archaeologists have found: three old table tops and four fir boxes were remade into one table, two beds, and one small box. The physical core of the Sumerian cities was religious: the temple that housed the local god or goddess. Indeed, some historians speculate that cities may have arisen basically as ceremonial centres – aggregations of worship. The temples were major landlords, and therefore tied directly to the economy. For example, records show that the temple of the goddess Bau around 2400 B.C.E. controlled serf-run estates whose grain, fruit, fish and herbs were sufficient to support about twelve hundred temple employees. Temples provided their own farm equipment, breeding stock, bakers, brewers, wool workers, spinners, weavers, and administrators; they were small-scale corporations. The priests and priestesses who controlled the temple affairs therefore tended to be educated for business administration as well as ritual performance. In effect they were an elite minority – the upper class of the first class-divided society. The king, who probably was elected in earliest times, owed his position to the gods. Most profoundly he was conceived to be a son of the gods, for his coronation had the motif that he was being born again of the god and goddess of the city, and each New Year festival reaffirmed his divine status. Specifically, each Sumerian New Year involved a sacred marriage, in which the king had intercourse with a priestess who represented the goddess Inanna. Since the king himself represented Dumuzi, Inanna's consort, the intent of the sacred intercourse was to ensure fertility and prosperity through the coming year... Sumerian kings overlapped priests, and the kings' identification with Dumuzi made him somewhat divine. Thus persons who prayed to a dead king considered his body a source of blessing, while the live king's basic function was to meditate between the divine realm and the human. As the king mediated divinity to the political order, so did the temple mediate divinity geographically. The white temple of Uruk, for example, was elevated on a terraced platform to dominate the surrounding landscape. Other temples had staired towers (ziggurats) that apparently were symbolic links to heaven. Because the Sumerians seem to have thought their primary reason for being was to serve the gods, they offered sacrifices and libations in the temple each day... [Gods] were organized into a bureaucracy to reflect the bureaucracies of the temple and the city government. At the top were four chief deities: the rulers of sky, earth, air, and sea. An, the sky god, was the oldest and highest of all the gods, but he was too remote to have much popular effect. Ninursag, the earth, was a great goddess, a mother from whom issued all living things. Enlil was the god of air and storm and the source of kingly authority. Enki was the god of the waters and also of wisdom. The Myths about these gods explained the Sumerian world (and were background for much biblical mythology) – ‘Sumerian art, literature, and theology had a profound cultural and religious influence on the rest of Mesopotamia and beyond, which continued long after their demise c.2000 BC, as the prototype of Akkadian, Hurrian, Canaanite, Hittite and Jewish literature’)... Whereas fertility continued to be of great importance, enough institutionalization or culture had developed to make religion also go hand in glove with politics. As people became more conscious of their group identity their religion became more civil and less natural.

Primitive man believed that many natural objects, e.g. wind, fire or stones, possess supernatural powers and could be controlled by some form of worship – prayers and sacrifices; later these objects were believed to have a spirit or soul, and still later some of them were endowed with personal attributes. These forms of religion are known as animatism or animism... [W]hen the attributes of the objects worshipped resemble those of humans, the religion is called anthropomorphic. In further development, the spirits are believed to have a separate entity or existence, and eventually assume the form of deities or gods; such a religion is a form of polytheism... The great monotheistic religions represent a decisive development in... that a single God is recognized; anthropomorphism is diminished before the majesty, eternity, omniscience, and ineffable goodness of God; and ethical elements are introduced. Ethics is conceivable without religion, but no important religion has survived without ethical content... In most polytheistic religions, e.g. the Egyptian... relationships among the gods are established in a pantheon, and communication between gods and men is provided for through prayer and sacrifice on the one hand, through oracles and miracles on the other hand... The recorded history of Egypt dates from c.3200 B.C., although traces of earlier culture have been found, dating perhaps to 6000 B.C. The calendar was introduced as early as 4241 B.C... *Egyptian religion* – ‘the oldest religion of which we have substantial and decipherable documentary evidence’ –] appears to have been based on two main principles: the existence of an omnipotent Being, whose various attributes, being deified, formed a series of divinities; and the deification of the sun and moon. Each group of divinities formed a triad composed of a chief male deity, with a wife or sister and a son... Egypt's first king... Ra, the sun[– who was self-created]... and fashioned man from his own blood... [– is] usually represented as a hawk-

headed man. Mentu and Atmu are merely two phases of Ra, the rising and the setting sun... Besides these deities, the Egyptians worshipped beasts, reptiles and even vegetables, probably as symbols. The Egyptians believed in the transmigration of souls and in the existence of a future state, in which mankind would be rewarded or punished according to their actions on earth. They also believed in ka, the vital spirit within man. A man was said at his death to have joined his ka.

The concept of fate or destiny in Ancient Egypt[is called *Shay*], a term meaning ‘that which is decreed’, and personified as a deity... [which] was attached to each man from the moment of his birth, determining the length of his life and manner of death, and appearing after death in the hall of judgement. Shay could also determine good and bad fortune during his life, but was not unalterable; a man’s destiny could be changed by his own actions or the influence of a deity.

[‘In Egypt the manufacture of papyrus was a government monopoly, a kind of nationalized industry’, and t]he earliest evidence of ancient Egyptian thought... occurs... in the Pyramid Texts... The priests of Heliopolis[(‘city of the sun’)] who composed the texts about 2480 [to] 2137 BC, drew upon traditions about their god Atum, whose temple at Heliopolis was one of the oldest cult-centres in the land. Atum was a mysterious deity, whose name could mean ‘the not-yet-Completed One, who will attain (completion)’... identified with the sun god Re, under the composite title of Atum-Re. Various passages... reveal... the priests of Heliopolis believed that originally there had been only a primordial waste of water, without shape or order, called Nun. The ‘first time’ started when Atum emerged from this primeval deep and began the work of creation. In order to commence this work, Atum needed a firm place on which to stand, and reference is made in the texts to a primeval hill which also emerged with Atum out of Nun. This primeval hill was identified with the site of Atum’s temple at Heliopolis, thus making it the most ancient and sacred place in Egypt, since it was there that the creation of the world began. The idea of a waste of waters... doubtless reflects the conditions of the Nile Valley. Each year the Egyptians witnessed the inundation of their land by the mysterious rising of the... Nile; then, as the flood subsided, the higher points of land began to emerge from the water. Beyond the delta of the Nile lay the Mediterranean Sea, the ‘Great Green’, which seemed a limitless expanse of water.

When the political capital was moved to Thebes in Upper Egypt, during the Middle Kingdom, Re was associated with the local god of Thebes, Amun... The great pharaohs of the New Kingdom were zealously devoted to Amun, building at Thebes for his worship huge temples, richly endowed, so that Amun became in effect the sole state god... It would seem that the priests of Heliopolis... attempted to combat the exultation of Amun by promoting the worship of Re untrammelled by association with another god. Accordingly they proclaimed the Aten, the sun’s disc, as the symbol of supreme deity.

According to legend, King Menes united Egypt politically about 3100 B.C.E. That action seems to have been the catalyst Egyptians needed to adopt many of Sumer’s achievements... Nevertheless Egypt remained a largely rural culture, a condition that probably preserved it from the neuroses that Sumerian life developed. At any rate, Egypt appears to us more self-confident and calm, less anxiety ridden and class conscious. Egyptian children learned from childhood that hard work, virtue, and a little luck could make them a good life. It was possible for a... common labourer to rise to be royal constructor or royal attache... Good fortune with equanimity – that summarizes much of the Egyptian ideal. Nonetheless, the vaunted stability of Egypt, which maintained itself for over two thousand years, rested on deeper, more explicitly religious foundations. Among the most important were a belief in the consubstantiality of all reality, a belief in divine kingship, and a belief in fulfillment after death. Consubstantiality means the view that all creation, from mice to men, partakes of a single stuff. The world is a sort of giant organism whose energy or vital force all beings participate in. Egyptians did not speculate about notions like these (their temper was rather practical), but they did intuit or feel them. Thus they felt considerable kinship with animals, as with forces of nature. They also felt considerable kinship with their gods, who were not of a totally different order. By contrast with the Sumerians, they were less craven and self-abasing, for they were not so much the slaves of the gods as lesser participants with them in one integral cosmos – one sacral flow. Much of this mentality comes out indirectly through diverse, even contradictory, myths. That their myths often contradicted one another does not seem to have bothered the Egyptians at all. Perhaps they sensed that life was so rich or mysterious that all explanations were bound to conflict at some point... If one extends this tendency over millennia and adds the need of new capital cities to have their gods dominate the creation account, Egyptian mythology becomes downright confusing. Consubstantiality was malleable indeed.

Because the pharaoh... was so essential to the well-being of the land, he came to be regarded as divine. According to a tradition that arose in the Old Kingdom, he was believed to be the son of the sun god, and therefore the deity’s representative upon earth. The pharaoh was accordingly regarded as the owner of Egypt... and the mediator between the people and the sun god... When he died, or rather ascended to the sky to join his divine father, his body had to be enshrined in a great tomb, served by a mortuary temple. The pyramids were the distinctive tombs of the pharaohs of the Old Kingdom.

The Great Pyramid at Gizeh, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, was built... [for] *Khufu*... one of the great monarchs of the Old Kingdom.

The New Kingdom (c.1550-1070 BC, 18th-20th Dynasty), the ‘empire’ period[began]... with the expulsion of the Hyksos... a people of mixed Semitic-Asiatic stock who settled in the Nile delta c.1640 BC... [then] formed the 15th and 16th Dynasties[but were described as oppressors. Their name is]... interpreted... as ‘shepherd kings’ or ‘captive shepherds’... [or] rulers of foreign lands... Egyptian claims in Syria and Palestine became definitive and involved direct confrontation with her principal rivals, Mitanni and the Hittites; Nubia was administered directly from Egypt. These foreign interests brought Egypt considerable wealth as well as technological and cultural innovations, but by the end of the period a decline in the power of the pharaohs and an increase in that of the priests resulted in a weakening of the central government. Egypt fell successively to Libyans, Ethiopians, Assyrians, and Persians, and indigenous rule was finally ended by Alexander the Great, who took Egypt in 332 BC. From then until AD 1922 someone other than Egyptians ruled Egypt... The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 made Egypt strategically important, and when the Turks became allies of Germany in... W[W1] the British (who had installed themselves following an Egyptian nationalist revolt in 1882) declared the country a British protectorate. Independence was granted... and a kingdom was established, becoming a republic after the overthrow of the monarchy in 1953.

Throughout most of Egyptian history the mythology that actually supplied Egypt’s cultural and political cement was that of divine kingship. Interpretations of this belief vary, but there seems to be fair agreement that for the popular mind the pharaoh was not so much a god as a manifestation of the divine. In other words, there was no popular doubt that pharaoh was a human being. Equally, however, there was a solid consensus that through pharaoh coursed the sacral order of the cosmos, in such wise that his realm and people received order only through his meditation. Therefore over the many centuries kingship became the marvel of the human species’ stability, much like the stability of animal species, which Egyptians found divine because of their constancy from generation to generation... As the pyramids demonstrate physically, and texts from

many periods show literarily, *death* was never far from the Egyptian consciousness. Apparently this awareness of mortality did not make the average Egyptian morbid... but it did make providing for death – perhaps more exactly, for afterlife – a societal preoccupation. Moreover, in death as in life the rulers functioned for the whole people... The prevailing notion seems to have been that through death the pharaoh would join the family of gods (to which he already somewhat belonged). His identification with Osiris, god of the under-realm and of vegetative rebirth, did not prevent the rise of mythologies that had him ascend to the heavenly realm of the sun – a fact that simply shows again that conflicting symbolizations did not trouble the Egyptians very much. We know that in later periods the average person fitted his projected destiny to the frame of the ruler's, expecting to descend to the realm of Osiris, undergo a scrutiny and judgement of his worldly life, and then gain a satisfying (if usually vague) continuance of a life like that on earth... [T]he Osiris symbolism... shows one peculiarity: the earth to which Osiris descends, under which he rules as a god of the dead, is masculine. For other agricultural peoples... the earth was feminine. She was *Mother Earth*, the primordial womb. Why Egypt broke this pattern is hard to determine. Generally speaking, neither Egyptian government nor Egyptian theology stressed the feminine, but that is not unusual. There were a few female rulers, and several significant goddesses, but they were never equal to males. In later periods Isis was Osiris's strong partner, and in early periods the Queen Mother had important functions. Thus Egypt did grant nature's polarity of male and female. When it came to envisioning the earth, however, some predilection for the masculine pushed nature's polarity to the background.

...Ramses II... reigned... for over 60 years when Egypt's empire was at its greatest... So long did he rule... that for most he was timeless... [Visit] the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings... [and he is] a constant presence... As a young man he singlehandedly turned the tide of the Battle of Kadesh... He had nearly 100 sons and daughters and outlived many of them... And as was the custom he married at least one of his daughters. Today he lies in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo... There you can gaze upon... the face of a man who knew all believed him to be God, essential to the well being of Egypt... Ramses... may have been the most powerful man in the Mediterranean world in the 13th century BC but his life was a misery of toothache and dental abscesses... [H]e had appallingly decayed teeth. At 97 years of age that is scarcely surprising. But it wasn't old age which ravaged his teeth. Bad teeth were endemic in ancient Egypt... Mummy after mummy... demonstrate appalling dentition... The primary cause... [was sand] and grit... everywhere, even in the food... And the Egyptians made matters worse for themselves by using sand and ground-up brick to help in the grinding of cereals to make flour... [Sand and grit] acts as an abrasive, eroding the enamel and exposing the inner pulp of the teeth... With an average lifespan less than 30 years, the general population were probably not hugely inconvenienced by the problem... As for poor old Ramses, he would have been urged to chew natron (hydrous sodium carbonate) each morning to purify his mouth. He may also have been prescribed a mixture of cumin, colocynth (bitter apple) and terebinth (turpentine) to provide a little pain relief and act as a mild antiseptic... [P]alaeontologists believe that the Egyptians did not... resort to extracting teeth... even... in the worst cases...

Seventy-five years ago today... a crusty English archaeologist... uncovered a seal at the base of a door to a tomb in Egypt's Valley of Kings... Two days later, with lashings of fanfare and official pomp, the sealed door was prised open... Tutmania was unleashed... and... [the archaeologist] inadvertently introduced whole nations to the notion of nosying around in other people's houses. Seventy-five years later it's a trick still employed by the makers of telly programmes who set out to persuade minor celebrities (Tutankhamun was a mere boy-king who happened to have a collection of rather nice toys) to throwing open the doors in the interest of low-level voyeurism.

...An exhibition of... more than 350 artefacts... [from] ancient Egypt... opens at the Auckland Museum next month... The super superstitious should note that the exhibition contains a torso from a statue thought to be of young King Tut... [A]nywhere between 11 and 63 (depending on who's stretching the yarn) of those associated with the archaeological exploration – including [the expedition's] long-suffering patron, the Earl of Carnarvon... – died of mysterious causes in the years following the discovery... [‘Carnarvon was bitten on the face by a mosquito upon exiting the tomb, which he later cut while shaving, leading to blood poisoning and then – via other complications – death. However, at the time of his death, Cairo's four power stations simultaneously ceased to function.’] According to legend, when... archaeologist Howard Carter broke open the tomb... he destroyed a clay tablet bearing the ominous inscription: “Death shall come on swift wings to whoever disturbs the tomb of the pharaoh.” ...There had been omens. An occultist had written to the English peer warning him not to go to Egypt. A cobra, mythical defender of the pharaohs, had gone to Carter's house and killed a pet song-bird at the moment the tomb was entered. A group of impressionable foreigners, acting out a ritual drama in the Valley of the Kings, stirred up thunder and lightning and the performance was rained out... Sunday's *Our World* sets out to get to the bottom of the legend of the curse but finds, instead, the loopiness continues... Local tomb robbers, pragmatic folk with no time for curses, have led, long healthy lives. But logic has no appeal for many Westerners visiting the sites today... “Some people still behave as if Egypt is the source of all the hermetic wisdom of the world,” sighs a weary academic. The programme then hives off to Salt Lake City, Utah, where the Summun sect is catering to... [an] accountant's deepest desire to be mummified after death (complete with bronze mask) as the “ultimate memorialisation.” In the land of modern democracy anybody can be Tut – for around \$US32,000.

...A ticket to immortality... A collection of artefacts from ancient Egypt go on show at Auckland Museum this week... [T]hey not only reveal the refinement of that civilisation, but are fine ambassadors for a nation too often defined by acts of terrorism... Spanning 3500BC to 450AD, the exhibition will demonstrate that [ancient] Egyptian society revolved around life rather than death... Such a fervent lust for life... explains the apparent perfection of every human figure in the exhibition. “They were trying to recall the ideal form of the world, when it was created by the gods. Nature was therefore represented in the most ideal manner possible, because that was the way they wanted to transfer it to the hereafter. So a human being is represented in the blossom of life...” In ancient Egypt, then, your first priority would have been to secure your ticket to the afterworld – by piety, through identification with Osiris, the god of resurrection, and by commissioning a flattering po[r]trait of yourself... - 1997

Everyone in ancient Egypt, rich or poor, wanted to be immortal... and the more you could afford, the better... your body... [was] preserved... The poor man couldn't put much money into it. He was merely wrapped, placed... in a mass... burial... pit... and just hoped for the best... They really wanted a continuation of this world; they wanted to resurrect; they wanted the body to reunite with the soul and get up and go again – and that was the reason for preserving it... The Ramses' mummy tells us just how good the Egyptian embalmers were. His hair was dyed... his fingernails were painted, everything was done for him so he would look young forever... Hollywood got the ancient mummies up and walking again but not in the way the ancient Egyptians ever envisioned. For them the body was to be treated with great reverence and care. When a king died he was ferried across to the west bank of the Nile. The Egyptians lived on the east bank... The Sun dies in the west, so they associated the west with death. And they called the people who died westerners – they didn't want to call them dead... After the body was dropped off... the embalmers had to work on it for 70 days. The first thing they did was to take out the moist internal organs. This is to prevent decay... Each organ was... ritually placed in a special vessel... [‘The remainder of the body was then covered in salt to remove any remaining moisture.’] If you were wealthy enough you'd have a priest... [to] say certain rituals over the body as it was being wrapped... to anoint... the head... with frankincense... and say a final blessing to give the mummy new life... Frankincense and myrrh probably came from... Yemen... [or] the Sudan. It would have been very expensive... - Mummy

MUMMY, a dead body preserved by embalming. The name arose because the skin and bones of corpses embalmed by the ancient Egyptians are often found to be blackened, an effect mistakenly attributed to the use of bitumen (Arabic, *mumiya*)... For many centuries only the wealthy could afford mummification. Eventually cheaper methods allowed the practice to spread, but for the most part it was confined to the wealthy and to

animals sacred to certain gods, such as bulls, cats, and ibises... The earliest indisputable evidence of attempts to preserve the body by artificial means dates from about 2600 B.C. The remarkable state of preservation of many bodies from earlier times is the result of the natural drying effect of the hot sand in which the bodies were interred.

At first, mummification was accomplished through natural means. The hot dry sands of the desert in which bodies were placed slowed down decomposition, especially when sodium nitrate was present in the soil. The natural preservation of the body was apparently responsible for the development of the mummification later practiced by the Egyptians beginning with the Dynastic period. The earlier mummies were usually treated with crude natron (sodium carbonate) and wrapped in linen... The full development of mummification did not occur until the Fifth Dynasty... Practically all mummies from Lower Egypt have perished. From Upper Egypt, where the climate was drier, a large number have survived...

“The ancient Egyptians mummified millions of people but they never wrote down how they did it. It was a secret.” ...with so many secrets buried in time, [an Egyptologist] realised that the only way to solve the mystery was to do it himself... In May of 1994 at the University of Maryland, [he]... began a process that hadn’t been done in 2000 years... He started by collecting the drying salts used by the Egyptians... He trucked out 600lbs of natron salt and then ventured to one of the world’s oldest markets for the remaining essentials. “The Egyptians also used spices[to], I think... help with the smells. They used frankincense and myrrh.”

According to Egyptian hieroglyphic texts... pharaohs sent fleets of ships... [to an early Ethiopian] civilization (known to the Egyptians as Punt)... to buy precious goods such as spices, incense, and myrrh... The northern and central parts of Ethiopia are said to have been occupied... by the Cushites, a group of Hamito-Semitic-speaking peoples. The Cushites drove out the various tribes speaking Nilotic or Sudanese languages in the southern and western zones of the Ethiopic plateau. These peoples may have been the aboriginal inhabitants of the area, rather than immigrants from the lowlands of the Nile River basin.

That life is of great antiquity in Ethiopia is indicated by the Hadar remains, a group of skeletal fragments found in the lower Awash river valley... Sometime between the 8th and 6th millennia BC... an ancient tongue spoken in this region fissured into the modern languages of the Afro-Asiatic, or Hamito-Semitic family.

Akkad, north of Sumer, was settled by a Semitic people; its chief cities were Akkad or Agade, Borsippa, and later Babylon. Sargon, ruler of Akkad, united the city-states of all Sumer and Akkad, c.2275 B.C.; he and his descendant... conquered or controlled neighbouring lands before the rudimentary empire, first in history, disintegrated c.2150... Sumer was settled by a people of unknown origin... They founded and maintained independent and rival city-states, most noted of which[was] Ur... Excavations have revealed the city’s importance as a centre of moon-worship. It was conquered first by Elam, later by Babylonia... Ur... is the place from which Abraham began his journey to Canaan...

Abraham (c.2000 – 1650BCE) Revered in the Old Testament as the father of the Hebrew people. According to Genesis he came from the Sumerian town of Ur... and migrated with his family and flocks via Haran... to the ‘Promised Land’ of Canaan... After a sojourn in Egypt, he lived to be 175 years old and was buried with his first wife Sarah in the cave of Machpelah in Hebron. By Sarah he was the father of Isaac (whom he was prepared to sacrifice at the behest of the Lord) and grandfather to Jacob... [B]y his second wife Hagar (Sarah’s Egyptian handmaiden) he was the father of Ishmael, the ancestor of 12 clans; by this third wife Keturah he had six sons who became the ancestors of the Arab tribes. - LAROUSSE Dictionary of BELIEFS & RELIGIONS

Although Abraham is *revered as the father of the Hebrew people*, he only has a minor role *in the Old Testament*. One of his alleged descendants is the central character in four of its first five books – collectively known as the *Torah* (or, alternatively, *Pentateuch*) – and all five are called ‘the books of Moses’.

...the first five books of the Old Testament[were] traditionally ascribed to Moses but[are] now held by scholars to have been compiled from documents dating from 9th to 5th c. BC incorporating material from oral traditions of varying dates... Although there is a strong and fervent tradition about the events... relating[to] the departure of the Israelites under Moses from their bondage in Egypt... ascribed by scholars to any of various dates within the limits of c.1580-c.1200 BC... the variety of sources and purposes of the narrative make it impossible to treat this as a straightforward historical account, though such considerations have never inhibited speculation about the date and the route involved.

...the children of Israel... came into Egypt; every man and his household came with Jacob... And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly... and the land was filled with them. Now there arose up a new king over Egypt... And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel *are* more and mightier than we: Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and *so* get them up out of the land. Therefore they... set over them taskmasters to afflict them with... burdens. And... the Egyptians... made their lives bitter with hard bondage... [The Hebrews] built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more [the Egyptians] afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew... [So] the King of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives... When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see... it *be* a son, then ye shall kill him; but if it *be* a daughter, then she shall live. But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king... commanded them... Therefore... Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every[Hebrew] son that is born ye shall cast into the river... [During this time] a man of the house of Levi... took to *wife* a daughter of Levi... [T]he woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw... that he *was* a goodly *child*, she hid him three months. And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and pitch, and put the child therein... And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him... [T]he daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash *herself* at the river; and... when she saw the ark... she sent her maid to fetch it... [Pharaoh’s daughter] saw the child: and, behold, the baby wept[so] she had compassion on him... Then said his sister to Pharaoh’s daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a... Hebrew[woman], that she may nurse the child for thee? ...Pharaoh’s daughter said unto her, Go... [T]he child’s mother... [was] called... Pharaoh’s daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give *thee* thy wages... And the child grew, and... became... [the son of] Pharaoh’s daughter... And it came to pass... when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew... [Moses] slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand... Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian... [T]he priest of Midian had seven daughters... [who came to a well] and... filled the troughs to water their father’s flock... [Some shepherds came to drive] them away: but Moses... helped them, and watered their flock. And when they came to... their father... he said unto his daughters... *where is he?* *why is it that ye have left the man?* call him, that he may eat bread. And Moses was content to dwell with... the priest... [who] gave Moses Zipporah his daughter. And she bare *him* a son... called... Gershom... [I]t came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of

Israel sighed by reason of their bondage, and they cried, and... God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob... Now Moses kept the flock of... his father in law... and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to... Horeb... the mountain of God... And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and... said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which *are* in Egypt... I am come now to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians... therefore... I will send thee unto[the new] Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people... out of... Egypt... unto a... land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites... I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go[, so]... I will stretch out my mighty hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders... [A]fter that he will let you go. And... this people... shall not go empty: But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour... jewels of silver... gold, and raiment: and ye shall put *them* upon your sons, and upon your daughters... Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee... [T]he LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD? Now therefore go, and I will be thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say... And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I... multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt... [B]ehold... the waters which *are* in the river... shall be turned to blood... for seven days... And the fish that *is* in the river shall die, and the river shall stink; and the Egyptians shall loathe to drink of the water of the river... And the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly... [Furthermore,] all the dust of... the land of Egypt... [will become] lice... the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of *flies*... all the cattle... horses... asses camels... oxen, and... sheep... of Egypt... shall... [die;] but... there shall nothing die of all *that is* the children's of Israel... [There] shall be a boil breaking forth *with* blains upon... all the Egyptians... [So] there was hail... such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation... [T]he hail smote every herb... and brake every tree of the field. Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel *were*, was there no hail... [Then] the east wind brought the locusts... [to] eat every herb of the land, *even* all that the hail had left... Pharaoh sent... for Moses... and said... I and my people *are* wicked. Intreat the LORD... that there be no *more* mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let... the Hebrews... go... Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more... In the third month[after] the children of Israel were gone forth out... of Egypt... came they *into* the wilderness of Sinai... Now... the LORD called Moses *up* to the top of... mount Sinai... And the LORD said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people... [with my Ten Commandments – t]hou shalt have no other gods before me[; t]hou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of *any thing that is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth below, or that *is* in the water under the earth[, and] shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them... [; t]hou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain... [; thou shalt r]emember the sabbath day, to keep it holy... [; thou shalt h]onour thy father and thy mother... [; t]hou shalt not commit adultery[; t]hou shalt not steal[; t]hou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour[; t]hou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that *is* thy neighbour's[; a]nd... thou... shalt not kill... [However,] if *any* mischief follow then thou shalt give life for life, Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. - Exodus

AND the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai... saying, Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel... twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war... And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses... and... said... Would... that we had died in the land of Egypt! or... died in this wilderness! ...[why] hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? ...the LORD spake unto Moses [again]... Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give to the children of Israel... [T]hey returned from searching... the land after forty days... [W]hen king Arad the Canaanite... heard... of the spies... he fought against Israel, and took *some* of them prisoners. [So the children of] Israel vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into [our hand, then we] will utterly destroy their cities. And the LORD hearkened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities... Then... [Moses] sent messengers unto Sihon king of the Amorites, saying, Let me pass through thy land... Sihon would not suffer Israel to pass through his border... Sihon gathered his people together... and fought against Israel... Israel smote him with the edge of the sword, and possessed his land... Moses sent[men] to spy out Jaazer, and they took the villages thereof, and drove out the Amorites that *were* there... [After that the Israelites] turned and went by the way of Bashan: and Og the king of Bashan went out against them... at Edrei... So [the Israelites] smote him, and his sons, and all his people, until there was none left... alive: and they possessed his land... [T]he children of Israel set forward, and pitched in the plains of Moab... *by* Jericho. And... Moab was distressed because of[what] the children of Israel... had done to the Amorites... Balak... *was* king of the Moabites at that time. He sent messengers... to Pethor... and... Midian... saying, Behold, there is a people come out of Egypt... [to] cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me: Come now therefore, I pray thee... *that* we may smite them... [together]; for they *are* too mighty for me... Moses spake unto the people, saying, Arm some of yourselves unto the war, and let them go against the Midianites... And they warred against the Midianites... and they slew all the males. And they slew the kings of Midian... And the children of Israel took *all* the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods... [But] Moses was wroth with the officers of the host... [He] said to them, Have ye saved all the women alive? ...Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves... THESE *are* the journeys of the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt with their armies under the hand of Moses... And Moses wrote... [about] their journeys... in the book of the wars of the LORD... - Numbers

...the LORD thy God... have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers... to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildest not, And houses full of good *things*, which thou fillest not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not... Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee... from the house of bondage. - Deuteronomy 6

...the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land... and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them. Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God *is* not among us? - Deuteronomy 31

THEN said the Lord... Though Moses... stood before me, *yet* my mind *could not be* towards this people: cast *them* out of my sight, and let them go forth. And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD; Such *as are* for death, to death; and such *as are* for the sword, to the sword; and such *as are* for the famine, to the famine; and such *as are* for the captivity, to the captivity. And I will... cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth... And... who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall go aside to ask how thou doest? Thou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting. - Jeremiah 15:1-6

...powerful stories still renew our hope... [A] Bible study group... were working through Genesis, trying to apply its insights to their own experience. Among the questions they had confronted were: why did God create human beings in his image and allow them freedom of choice if he knew they

would sin? ...Can you trust a God who asks a father to put the knife to his son? ...Why was the sin of Adam and Eve so terrible as to bring about such a long fall from grace? ...What do we make of the God so disaffected with humanity that even innocent children would perish in the mighty flood? ...The stories of Genesis have been familiar to me since childhood... As our Sunday-school teachers expounded on the Bible stories again and again, they sanitised them to protect our fragile sensibilities from the less spiritual qualities of the patriarchs. Over time I formed heroic profiles in my youthful mind. So it was not until much later that I noticed just how imperfect were the human instruments God had chosen – Abraham, quivering before the Pharaoh's officials and shamelessly offering them his wife, Sarah, to save his own neck; Jacob, cowardly and cloying as he makes off with the stolen birthright; Noah, disembarking from the ark to build an altar – then drinking himself into a stupor while cursing his own grandson... Genesis confronts and confounds us. It also comforts... These stories live. Their themes of forgiveness and redemption are as powerful as they were in the beginning. They tell of life in the making, of falling and starting over – of second chances. - 1996

“Leave the faucets there,” urges a bumper sticker distributed as part of a new campaign that aims to refine the sometimes embarrassing behaviour of Israelis abroad... A survey of Norwegian hoteliers found Israelis to be the least liked of tourists because they “steal everything possible...”

...[‘The forces of light and darkness gathered in Jerusalem yesterday in an epic near-confrontation that marked a dangerous divide in Israeli society. 2000 police separated simultaneous rallies by ultra-orthodox Jews attacking the Supreme Court and secular Jews defending it. Both camps assailed their opponents as purveyors of spiritual darkness while portraying themselves as upholders of the light. The demonstrations, only 500m apart, passed peacefully but the polarisation they represented caused widespread concern about where similar faceoffs in the future may lead. In one of the largest rallies in Israel’s history, 250,000 ultra-orthodox Jews – known as *haredim*, or God-fearers – gathered from around the country to accuse the court of attempting to legitimise non-Orthodox strains of Judaism, and undermining the implementation of Jewish religious law in various aspects of public life, such as Sabbath laws.’]

...Orthodox Jews must respect... their Sabbath. Banned activities... include operating electric switches[, which means television is forbidden!] ...A solution... has been devised at Jerusalem’s Institute of Science and Halacha. Scientists have patented a light-sensitive electric switch... It’s left on before the Sabbath but can’t work because a tiny pulsating light interrupts it every six seconds. If a shutter is drawn over the light, however, the circuit is completed and the power flows. “Separating the person from the final action makes him not legally responsible,”... Critics protest this “amounts to pulling the wool over God’s eyes”. But... “There are loopholes in the law... and they are God-given loopholes.” - 1997

Originally all first-born sons were to be dedicated to God’s service, but God exempted these by taking instead the tribe of Levi. In turn, all firstlings, whether of men, animals, or produce, were to belong to the priests. Human children, however, and animals unfit for sacrifice were to be redeemed from the priests for the sum of five shekels (Num. xviii:13-17). The... *pidyon ha-ben*... ceremony is still observed by Orthodox Jews, other than priests and Levites, when a male child who is the first-born of his mother is thirty days old. A *cohen* (a member of the priestly caste) is called in, and... the child is redeemed from him. In the United States five... dollars are often used to represent the shekels. - Collier’s Encyclopedia

...[a] Semitic people of Palestinian origin... called themselves “children of Israel,” as descendants of Jacob, also called Israel. Together with non-Israelite groups they were apparently called Hebrews by neighbouring peoples... [S]ome tribes found their way to Egypt... and under Moses’ leadership... wandered... [back] into Canaan (Palestine). Allotment of the land was followed by its conquest, over a period of three centuries, against the persistent opposition of its hostile inhabitants, notably the Philistines. During this period the 12 tribes... stemming from Jacob, were autonomous under local leaders... Finally Saul... became king of Israel, a united state, c.11th cent. B.C... David... continued to build the nation, which emerged as a prosperous and powerful empire under Solomon... At his death (early 10th cent.) Israel was divided by a revolt of 10 northern tribes, who appropriated the name of Israel, while the kingdom of Judah was formed in the south around the tribe of that name. The two states were alternatively hostile and friendly to each other and to the neighbouring peoples until the rise of Assyria, which ended the existence of Israel, 722 B.C., and exiled its people (thence known as the Lost Tribes). Judah was conquered by the Babylonians, 586 B.C. The people of Judah were deported to Mesopotamia, and their descendants became known as the Jews... When Persia eclipsed Babylonia, which had already eclipsed Assyria, the Jews were allowed to return to Palestine as Persian subjects... Finally the revolt of the Maccabees... restored the Jewish state, 142 B.C... In pagan antiquity... Jews preserved their communities, with minimum admixture of outside influence, by adhering to their Law, although after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, A.D. 70, no authority replaced that of the Sanhedrin... [– which was the] council and court of the Jews[, consisting]... of 71 members[(who were mostly] learned men, including priests and scribes[) –] ...nor was any pan-Jewish organization ever established; each synagogue ruled itself, and lay rabbis took the place of the ancient priesthood. The rise of reformed Judaism, 18th cent., was the first important break from this tradition. The reformers, originating in Germany and later... the U.S., rejected and modified certain practices such as the strict sanitary rules, the Saturday sabbath, and traditional forms of service... The reformers felt that many of these ancient rituals were inconsistent with modern ways of life and tended to isolate the Jews. [There is also another modern Jewish movement who call themselves *Liberals*. Incidentally, although the various Jewish sects practice their faith in different ways, they are linked by the Egyptian belief that humans are judged by God – be it immediately after their death or at some future time (when the ‘living and dead’ will be judged simultaneously). However, the Jewish ‘Day of Judgment (probably of Persian origin’) introduces the concept of an ‘expected deliverer and ruler of the Jewish people’. The reformist, liberal, and lesser – but usually more radical – Jewish movements predominantly evolved because this event is still awaited (although at least one non-Jewish faith disputes that point). Fortunately for them, Jews also expect to be forewarned – thus enabling them time to prepare (or cleanse) themselves prior to God’s ‘final’ judgment.

...Elijah was a] 9th cent. B.C... Hebrew prophet... [who] was taken to heaven in a fiery chariot. His second coming[is] expected to herald the arrival of the Messiah.

...*Isaiah*[was a] Hebrew prophet who lived in Judah, late 8th cent. B.C. He was the reputed author of the... *Book of Isaiah*, probably composed from traditional material by several writers much later. This book, notable for its grandeur of style and ethical concepts, predicts the doom and redemption of Judah, describes the fate of many people and the judgment of God, and foretells the coming of the Messiah.

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. - Isaiah 7:14

Although... [the] Lithuanian Hasidic Rabbi... Nahman... (1772 – 1810)... had messianic pretensions, both for himself and his son, he attributed his rejection by his contemporaries to their unpreparedness for the messianic age.

...*Kook, Abraham Isaac Hacohen* (1865 – 1935)... Although staunchly Orthodox and no advocate of pluralism within Judaism, he supported the return of secular Jews to the Holy Land. He saw this as part of the divine plan prior to the advent of the Messiah; even if such non-religious Zionists were unaware of their role, the coming of the Messiah required a material basis in the land of Israel which they were preparing.

...[‘Some Jews support the State of Israel, arguing that it paves the way for the messianic era, whilst others take a neutral position. The most traditional do not acknowledge the largely secular State as valid since its establishment should be left to God and his Messiah.’]

...Traditional Judaism allows considerable diversity in conceptions of the afterlife, since speculations about it belong to Aggadah not Halakhah. Thus whilst rabbis of early talmudic literature equated the Olam haBa... normally translated as 'the world to come'... with the Messianic Era, later writers viewed... [it] as an intermediate stage between this and the world to come.

cabbala... a pretended tradition of mystical interpretation of the Old Testament, using esoteric methods (including ciphers)...

Much of the Jewish faith depends on messages from God, and most of these messages were interpreted via dreams (although only 'God can understand a dream to interpret it' – Genesis 41:15-16).

...in my life and in my dreams I've got a message...

...Joseph dreamed a dream, and he... said unto... his brethren... Hear, I pray you, this dream... behold, we *were* binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and... stood up-right; and... your sheaves stood round about, and made obedience to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? ...And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. - Genesis 37

In Gideon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: And God said, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said... Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord... God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies... I have... given thee a wise and understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days. And Solomon awoke; and behold, *it was* a dream. And he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt offerings, and peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants... Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, which provided victuals for the king and his household: each man... made provision... [during] his month in a year... Judah and Israel *were* many, as the sand which *is* by the sea in multitude... And Solomon ruled over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life... And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men... and his fame was in all nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that *is* in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came... to hear the wisdom of Solomon... all kings of the earth... - I Kings

The Queen of Sheba, 'visiting the court of Solomon (1 Kings x), was impressed by his wisdom'. 'The purpose of her visit was to test Solomon's wisdom by asking him a number of riddles (according to Jewish tradition, she was ruler of the Kingdom of Saba – or Sheba – in southwestern Arabia; the story also appears among the Persians, where she is considered the daughter of a Chinese king'). However, were 'all her questions' difficult to answer, and – assuming she actually existed – is her opinion worthy of consideration (after all, inbreeding was rampant amongst royalty during those times)? Furthermore, like all kings Solomon would have had a court full of 'learned men and scribes' to whom he could turn for advice or information – yet no one but the king is likely to have received credit for their replies! The most popular biblical evidence of Solomon's alleged wisdom is his common sense solution to an argument over a baby (1 Kings 3) – but, if the real mother hadn't forsaken her claim to the baby in order to save its life, would it have been wise to obey his suggestion that the baby be cut in half ('Solomon became king despite the claim of his older half-brother Adonijah, whom he ordered killed'; 'his grandiose schemes, including the building of the Temple with which his name is associated, and the fortifying of strategic cities, led to a system of levies and enforced labour, and the resulting discontent culminated in the secession of the northern tribes')? In addition, it is often stated that 'wisdom comes with age.' If this is true, the level of wisdom exhibited by Solomon in old age should serve as an indicator to how wise he truly was when younger.

And it came to pass... [that] the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time... And the LORD said unto him... if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, *and* wilt keep my statutes and my judgments: Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel. *But...* Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, *and* Hittites; Of the nations *concerning* which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: *for* surely they will turn away your heart after their gods... [And] it came to pass, when Solomon was old, *that* his... seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines... turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God... Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that *is* before Jerusalem... And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods. And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. - I Kings

Ecclesiastes [is] a book of the Old Testament traditionally ascribed to Solomon but no longer seriously held to be his work. Its... author exhorts to wisdom, industry, and the fear of God, but the general tone is pessimistic, with observations on the futility of human life.

A man has been living in a cashew tree for the past seven years... "It is my fate," [he] said... His eldest son said his father climbed up the tree after he had a dream and has not come down since. - 1996

An A[US]n court has upheld the right of an Aboriginal couple to refuse a postmortem examination of their 12-day-old baby because it contradicted their... spiritual and cultural beliefs. The parents said their son's spirit would not enter the "Dreamtime" if his body was cut up. - 1997

The Aboriginal worldview centred on the... "Dreamtime," a complex and comprehensive concept embodying the past, present and future, as well as virtually every aspect of life... Spirit beings were used as messengers to communicate with the living and to introduce new knowledge into human society. Through dreams... the living could come into contact with the spiritual realm and gain strength from it.

It is said a long time ago in the beginning there was darkness over the land... Aboriginal people had no light or heat. Many of the Dreamtime ancestors were living then... [They] not only created the world but gave each tribe its moral and social law. The Dreamtime and the law exist in the

present, sustaining and energising all plants, animals and human beings. Every person is directly related to one of the ancestors by family and birthplace... [O]ne of the biggest ceremonies happens when someone dies. Death is celebrated more than birth. It involves the whole community... Out of respect for the dead [person's spirit its] name will no longer be spoken by anyone. The ceremony itself may continue for months. Before burial the... body lies inside the house so... family and friends can dance [the dead person's] spirit onwards...

What the aborigines believe about their own origin and their birth from generation to generation, they also believe about animals and birds, reptiles and fish, insects and plants, and indeed also about inanimate things such as rain, wind and fire... The cycles of the heavenly bodies and the seasons must have contributed to the aboriginal idea of time as a continuing cycle... Time does not go on and on in serial order, but returns on itself. So too, human souls do not arise one from the other in a biological line but appear and reappear from the spirit-homes.

...[‘Genetically Aborigines show considerable diversity but are quite distinct from groups outside AUS. They came originally from somewhere in Asia’... ‘Because of their Negrito characteristics, the *Dravidians* – an ancient people who inhabited India before the Aryans came – are sometimes believed related to the aborigines of AUS.’ Speaking of whom, ‘there has been controversy about whether Aboriginal people recognized a high God in the sky over all; it seems clear that several AUSn peoples did, though the sky father was not the focus of religious activity.’

...[the] ancient Aryan religion was based upon sky worship, and the early gods were *devas* or ‘the shining ones’, the father god being known as *Dyaus*... But when the Aryans reached India this remote Almighty had faded into the background and survived principally as the parent of a more real and active brood.

Between 2500 and 1700BCE, before the incursion of Aryan tribes into India, an urban civilization flourished in the Indus Valley... This culture was perhaps akin to Mesopotamian civilizations with which there may have been trade links... Little is known of the religion or social structures of these people and their language and script has not been deciphered. There are, however, hints which suggest that... features of their religion continued...

The Aryans... [were tribes] of Indo-European pastoral nomads who... subjugated what remained of the Indus Valley civilization and moved slowly east across northern India, finally settling in the Ganges plain... [They] introduced into India a tripartite social structure which became the basis of the Hindu caste system, of priests (*brahmanas*), warriors or nobles (*kshatriyas*), and commoners (*vaishyas*). The indigenous populations of India were placed at the bottom of this scale as the serfs (*shudras*). Hinduism developed from... Aryan religion, absorbing into it non-Aryan religious ideas and practices as it developed.

...the ancient religion of the Aryan tribes who entered NW India c.1500BC... was a religion of ritual sacrifice to many gods... [A]nimal, vegetable, and human sacrifice are described... The increasing complexity of Vedic ritual led to the dominance of the specialist priesthood... The transition to classical Hinduism began in about the 5th c. BC.

Common to most forms of Hinduism is the idea of reincarnation or transmigration.

Starting as a stone a jiva [(soul)] will move to such things as plants and animals quite automatically until it reaches a human being. From then on reincarnation occurs, that is to say it is reborn in people. The new human body a jiva gets into depends on the life it led in its previous human body. The law of karma (works) applies, and this maintains that you get a position in life according to how good or bad you were in a past life. So karma is a moral or behaviour law and it works because human beings are self-conscious and can know if they are doing right things or not. Your present position... happiness and status are directly the product of your previous life. Consequently you are wholly responsible for your present condition and your future. Notice that God does not judge you for your behaviour as the karma law is an automatic one. No god fixes your future; you do so yourself. You decide your own fate. Luck plays no part in life at all[(unless you pray to ‘*Lakshmi* – the Hindu goddess of prosperity and good luck’)]... The Laws of Manu list punishments for wrong-doing. The man who kills a priest will be reborn as a dog, ass or bull; a man who steals from a priest will be born a thousand times as a spider or snake. Sometimes it is possible for a jiva to find temporary rest in the heaven of one of the gods before returning to earth. Each god has his own heaven, and, to qualify for such a rest, a jiva must have done a pilgrimage, built a temple or some such good deed. The Upanishads claim that a jiva can spend time in one of the numerous heavens or hells between its incarnations... Although your jiva will go up and down in a zigzag way with transmigration, in the end it will find its atman (real self). Then it will become part of the Godhead and so obtain moksha (release) from the round of transmigration. Until then it can revert to a lower status in life or progress according to its karma. The world is a jiva's gymnasium, its training ground, midway between Heaven and Hell; a mixture of pleasure and pain, good and evil. No social progress, no cleaning up of the world or the bringing of the kingdom of heaven to earth is possible according to Hindus. - Religions of Man

In the end, liberation... (moksha)... is a matter of seeing clearly – of understanding. Good actions are only part of the way in which the aim of liberation is worked for. If you are not ‘good’ you can not begin to move along the way.

The law of karma leads to the classification of humans into strict classes and castes...

The caste system is a unique feature of... Hindu religion. The account of its origin is... Brahma created Manu, the first man. From Manu came four different types of people, as the creator Brahma determined... Brahmins are honoured by all the people, including the royal family. Their job as priests and philosophers are subsidized by the state and involve the study of their sacred books... Kshatriyas are the upper middle class involved in the government and professional life, but they are lower in status than the Brahmins... Vaisyas are the merchants and farmers below the [Kshatriyas] but above the rest of the population in... status and religious privileges... Sudas are the lowest caste whose duty is to serve the upper castes as labourers and servants. They are excluded from many... religious rituals and are not allowed to study the vedas[– ‘the original scriptures of Hinduism’]. The... system became more complicated as time went on, with literally thousands of subcastes coming into existence. Today... caste... is still an integral part of the social order of India, even though it has been outlawed by the Indian government. - Handbook of *Today's Religions*

Termites, often called *white ants*, are not really ants... They are, however, social insects like ANTS... Thousands of termites live in a single nest. Different groups of them are specialized to do different kinds of work for the colony. A group of insects specialized for a particular job is called a *caste*. There are [3] important castes – ...*reproductive*... *worker*... *soldier*. Unlike other social insects, there are both males and females in each caste.

The true origin of caste may be the early trade and professional guilds listed in later Vedic literature.

Hinduism does not trace its origins to a particular founder, has no prophets, no set creed, and no particular institutional structure. It emphasizes the right way of living (dharma) rather than a set of doctrines, and thus embraces diverse religious beliefs and practices. There are significant variations between different regions of India, and even from village to village. There are differences in the deities worshipped, the scriptures used, and the festivals observed. Hindus may be theists or non-theists, revere one or more gods or goddesses, or no god at all, and represent the ultimate in personal (eg Brahma) or impersonal (eg *Brahman*) terms.

Brahman is described as the 'ultimate, holy power', the one great spirit God, the supreme soul of the universe. Brahman is present everywhere and is like a powerhouse 'lighting up' all the other gods and goddesses... Brahman is not a person and should be referred to as It... Because Brahman is so mysterious and impersonal It has made Itself manifest (clear to people on earth) in the forms of different gods and goddesses in a much more personal way... Brahmins are nearest to finding their atmans as they are the top class. A Hindu welcomes death as a step to final union with Brahman. Some say that when a jiva passes into the Godhead it loses every trace of its separateness and so it cannot be identified in any way. Others say that some slight differences remain so that a jiva can be identified... [A further Hindu belief is] that God is always creating... whatever is created eventually fades away or is destroyed and new creations are necessary.

[The founder] of the Hindu reform movement, the Arya Samaj... became disillusioned with image-worship when he saw mice running over the... sacred symbol of Shiva... at an all-night vigil in the temple during the Shivaratri festival. If the image were truly the 'body' of God, then, Dayananda thought, he would not allow it to be defiled in this way.

The cow for centuries has been looked upon as a tangible symbol of life and fertility by nomadic and pastoral peoples, who depend on this uncomplaining beast for nourishment and prosperity... The cow is thought of as a symbol of the divine bounty of the earth, and as the 'mother' of gods and men... It is in India and Hinduism that the cow plays the most striking role, both in mythology and the day-to-day practice of religion. In practice, Indian cow worship is restricted to one species of the animal, the East Indian humped zebu.

A Hindu religious group has put cows up for adoption on the Internet... [T]he Bombay-based International Society for Krishna Consciousness (Iskcon) [- alternatively known as the *Hare Krishna* movement -] ...said the West Virginia-based... Adopt-a-Cow programme fitted in with the group's philosophy of "cow protection." Cows are sacred to Hindus and roam the streets of most Indian cities often lying down in the middle of streets as the traffic weaves around them. The programme asks people to sponsor "one of Lord Krishna's cows" for \$US30... a month. For \$4000 the cow can be adopted for life. Prospective sponsors can choose an animal from photographs.

...Yogis in the northern region of India have increased foreign tourism in some towns by as much as 300[%], due mainly to the photo opportunities they present... as they bury their heads in holes in the sidewalk. As they practise this form of meditation, their bodies achieve a state of suspended animation, where breathing ceases and their pulse drops to just two beats per minute... Yogis[also] regularly perform acts of self-inflicted torture... The followers of the belief are convinced that ongoing pain in this life will lead to eternal enlightenment in the afterlife.

...Hindus believe they can wash away their sins - reducing their number of reincarnations and achieving nirvana - if they bathe in the confluence of three sacred rivers at the auspicious time of the Kumbh Mela that occurs every dozen years... The Ganges and the Yamuna, bringing melted snow from the Himalayas, converge at Allahabad, the "city of God." According to Hindu belief, the mythical Saraswati River also converges at that spot... About 65 million people are expected at the Kumbh Mela before it ends on February 21.

...It may become the biggest gathering of human beings assembled for a single purpose in history... It is the Kumbh Mela... and organisers believe that 70 million pilgrims - 10 times the size of London - will arrive over the next 40 days, with... millions bathing together at one time... Hundreds of thousands of tents have sprung up over a 30km radius along the sandy banks of the Ganges, 575km southeast of New Delhi. Nearly 300 special trains, 4000 Government-owned buses and hundreds of flights have begun ferrying in the devotees. To handle the numbers, the... state Government has built 15 new pontoon bridges, 80km of new roads, 20,000 new streetlights, thousands of water faucets and portable toilets. There are... 35 police stations... and... 12 temporary hospitals... In 1984, during a smaller festival in the town of Hardwar, 200 people were killed in a stampede.

...Thousands of pilgrims jostling for space atop a holy mountain... yesterday... to watch what [they] believe is the celestial light, visible deep in a forest facing the... Sabarimala shrine... near... Pamba... in southern India... caused part of a hill to collapse, triggering a stampede which killed 51 people and injured 56 others.

Indian Army and paramilitary forces are battling to rescue thousands of Hindu pilgrims stranded along a rugged Himalayan mountain path after at least 116 died from cold. Around 70,000 devotees were last night strung along the 50km route to the holy Amarnath cave, which is 3880m high... Officials said about 112,000 Hindus had arrived in Kashmir this year to visit the cave, where devotees worship an ice stalagmite believed to be a manifestation of the "lingam," or phallus, of the Hindu god Shiva. There are many naked "sadhus," or Hindu holy men, smeared only in ash, among the dead, relief officials said. "The main reason for the deaths is that the pilgrims had no warm clothing. Many were old people. The holy men were trekking naked," said a doctor at a pilgrim camp in Anantnag, 50km south of Srinagar... Officials said prospects for a successful, full-scale relief operation had brightened with an improvement in the weather, which had hampered earlier rescue attempts... [Local] villagers have also come forward to help the stranded pilgrims. They had taken them into their homes and given them food and warm clothing, officials said.

...Military helicopters plucked 2000 pilgrims from the mountainside yesterday after the weather cleared for the first time in four days... "121 people have so far died but the number of deaths may increase as we are searching for bodies buried under the snow along pony tracks." - 1996

Indian authorities have begun the mass cremation of unidentified victims of an inferno that killed at least 200 worshippers at a Hindu gathering... The inferno erupted on the last day of a convention... in Baripada... The flames, fanned by winds, scorched the shelters for men devotees but spared a separate section for women and children. The cause of the fire was thought to be an electric spark. The P[M]... announced federal payments of 50,000 rupees... to the victims' families and 25,000... to the injured. The aid came on top of state payments of 25,000... and 10,000 rupees.

...At least 39 Hindu worshippers were killed and 90 injured when fire tore through an 11th century temple in southern India on the eve of a major religious ceremony... Kumbabhishekam, which has been postponed... It started when holy fire used for prayer set alight a temporary tent of coconut leaves inside the famous Brihadeeswara temple... [T]he death toll was expected to rise... Witnesses said there was only one exit and many devotees, including women and children, were prevented from leaving by barricades set up to control the crowd. Many were trampled to death after tripping on bamboo sticks or urns, while others suffocated in the rush... It was not immediately known how much damage the... "Big Temple," suffered. It... [is] classified as a world architectural monument by the U[N] Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. The temple houses the biggest lingam, or symbol of a Hindu god's regenerative power, in India, and its tower is 66m high... [By the way, a glacier] in the lower Himalayas that is the source of the holy Ganges River is said to be threatened... Construction of hotels and restaurants to accommodate the half a million people who visit the area every year has led to the destruction of forests, contributing to the erosion. And environmental warming... in part[from] campers' cooking fires, is melting the glacier... "Massive cracks have developed in the lower reaches..." said... the Government-

funded Himalayan Glaciers Project... Visitors see a 4225m-high ridge of ice, partly covered with earth and vegetation that is nearly 24km long and 2 to 4km wide... [T]he mouth of the glacier... [resembles] the mouth of a cow... Calls to ban tourism in the area would likely meet resistance. Hindus, who make up 82[%] of India's 930 million people, believe that a dip in the Ganges... absolves them of sins, and many see a trip to the river's source as the ultimate pilgrimage. Its holy status has not stopped Indians from polluting not just the source... but the entire 2525km course of the river. There are 692 towns and cities whose sewerage systems flow into the river... [estimated at] 1200 million litres of waste every day.

...[Thirty-four lower-caste Hindus, including 20 women and four children, were massacred at Miapur village in Aurangabad district, 150km south of the capital Patna, in the eastern Indian state of Bihar, at the weekend. The state's police chief said 19 others were injured in the second outbreak of caste violence in a week. He said about 150 armed men ringed the village, forced members of the lower-caste Yadav community to line up and gunned them down. Witnesses said the attackers shouted "Long Live the Ranvir Sena," a banned private army used by feudal landlords to terrorise poor peasants and lower-caste Hindus. The villagers said the Ranvir Sena made it clear the massacre was in revenge for the earlier murder of 12 feudal landlords by about 150 armed men, believed to be landless farmers, in Bihar's Nawada district. The first killing itself was apparently aimed at avenging the murder of five poor farm workers on June 3. Four days later, two landlords were slain by local farm tenants in the ongoing caste war. Extreme left-wing Maoist groups have conscripted poor farmers into their private armies, which often clash with powerful landlords in the eastern state, which borders Nepal. With an annual average of 5000 reported homicides, 12,000 incidents of rioting and hundreds of abductions, Bihar is India's most lawless state.']

...Indian police say a couple sacrificed a neighbour's six-year-old daughter to the goddess Kali in the hope it would give them a child of their own.

...Four men and a woman have been arrested in western India for allegedly sacrificing a five-year-old girl in a bid to find hidden treasure... The girl's body was found after villagers saw a dog carrying a human limb.

...A Welsh local council has been asked to dig up great hunks of the Gower Peninsula. A local man claims that in an earlier existence – discovered by him under hypnosis – he buried a casket of treasure. This is reminiscent of a 19th-Century Englishman who stipulated in his will: "In view of my firm belief in reincarnation, I leave my money and chattels to myself in whatever form I may return." Which could be why an albino wild rabbit in Bedfordshire... is eager to establish its rights to a fortune. [In local news, 'a new \$7m Hindu temple and cultural centre in Avondale is expected to be completed next month. Six craftsmen from India are putting the final touches to intricate carvings on temple pillars and domes. Hundreds of carvings have been brought in from India. Many pieces were damaged during transportation, requiring repairs from skilled craftsmen. Their design knowledge and skills, passed down through generations, is highly sought after at temple building projects throughout the world. A "labour of love" is how the craftsmen describe their work. The Swaminarayan fellowship co-ordinator says fundraising and a loan from the religious organisation's US branch made building possible.']

...This weekend... Auckland's Downtown Centre... will overflow with a predominantly pakeha middle-class audience prepared to pay \$400 a head for two days of spiritual guidance, known as an Intensive... A high point for many will be the ceremony known as darshan. The audience, one by one, approach the woman they have come to see... [- a]n Indian... in her early 40s[... who the]... magazine *Hinduism Today* has called... one of the 10 most influential Hindu leaders of the last decade. As spiritual head of the Siddha Yoga Dham... of America Foundation, otherwise known as SYDA, [she] heads a major spiritual organisation with more than 550 meditation centres, 10 ashrams and tens of thousands of followers worldwide. LIKE the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi before her, [she] can count among her admirers a coterie of [Hollywood] celebrities... Such is the sway that [she] holds over her devotees that they are said to vie to sit in her dirty bath water. When... last in N[Z] in 1992, her arrival was accompanied by a veritable media blizzard. The guru's handlers were only too happy to accommodate journalists and photographers. Articles duly appeared, lauding the sense of spiritual peace apparently provided by mere proximity to [the guru], who sat cross-legged [o]n a transparent perspex chair, giving the illusion that she was levitating. THIS week it was different... From a public relations perspective, there could be good reason for a low profile... [T]here have... surfaced disturbing and well-documented reports of a darker side to [the guru] and the SYDA... These first surfaced as long ago as 1983 in an article... in the *CoEvolution Quarterly*... detailing sexual activities that [her] predecessor, Swami Muktananda Paramahansa, engaged in with young female disciples on a table in the sect's Catskills ashram in New York state... Muktananda had earlier decreed that residents of the Siddha ashrams were to remain celibate... Perhaps the most comprehensive account of the recent trouble SYDA has faced appears in a 1994 *New Yorker* article... [which] describes what appears to be a power struggle between [the incumbent guru] and her brother... Originally the siblings were jointly anointed successors by Muktananda... [After his] death in 1982... the conflict began... Devotees were commanded to turn in videos and photographs of the younger brother and cut any reference to him in SYDA publications. Later that year SYDA said that [the brother] had broken his vow of celibacy and this was the reason he was stepping down as co-leader. For his part, [the brother] has claimed in the *Illustrated Weekly of India* that he was abducted and forced to retire... While captured he alleged that he was [also] forced to give up access to a SYDA Swiss bank account that had been set up in both their names...

Indian cities are dotted with parks and schools named in honour of the nation's freedom leader, Mohandas Gandhi, revered by Indians as Bapu (Father) and Mahatma (Great Soul). But many look at India's growing consumerism and the Government's pursuit of nuclear [weapons] and wonder whether the teachings of the peaceful philosopher have been forgotten... "The politician and social philosopher who articulated an alternative model of society... [has been], by a curious sleight of memory and imagination, transformed into the presiding deity of a system that negates every conviction he stood for," wrote... a columnist for the *Pioneer* daily... Leaders of the Congress Party, which Gandhi once led, stand accused in numerous cases of bribery and fraud involving several billion dollars. Religious and caste violence convulses the nation Gandhi wanted to see as an example of tolerance... ['In almost any village at almost any time, issues incomprehensible to outsiders will bring on arson, mayhem, murder and massacre.' But Gandhi, who 'was assassinated by a Hindu who blamed him for the division of the subcontinent'.] need not be an empty icon remembered only in portraits and statues... "He has become a worldwide symbol of meaningful moral dissent,"... This week marked the 49th anniversary of Gandhi's assassination. In commemoration, the last of his ashes were spread over the Ganges... After his death... Gandhi's ashes were sent across India to be scattered in rivers. Why some ashes were kept... in a government bank in Orissa... is not known... [but when news] of their existence surfaced in 1995, [it sparked] a legal battle by the family to gain custody of them.

...A quick check of biographies of Gandhi published in the last two decades reveals... most are hagiographic... "worshipful or idealised..." ...The Gandhi who emerges... [from *Rediscovering Gandhi*] is human enough to deflate any saintly misconception. Writing from South Africa, Gandhi looks down his nose at "kaffirs," who spend their lives in "indolence and nakedness." During the Boer War, he overtly supports the British but privately admires Boer resistance. He argues publicly that the Jews of Nazi Germany should submit to their persecutors virtuously, for their "cult" will be ultimately redeemed by such voluntary sacrifice. He dies estranged from his eldest son... who believes Gandhi's obsession with shaking off British colonialism has caused him to abandon his family. He... regrets much of his treatment of... his wife Ba... including his authoritarian manner, his frequent absences and his mistaken charges that she was adulterous. Yet... the simple power of Gandhi's life and work shines through... - 1997

He studied law in London, and in 1893 he gave up a Bombay legal practice worth £5000 a year to live on £1 a week in South Africa, where he spent 21 years opposing discriminatory legislation...

"It's sad that people... say... Mahatma Gandhi... was a super calloused fragile mystic hexed by halitosis. He was a great man with a strong will who freed India from the clutches of the British snakes... When a person has a great goal in life, he doesn't bother about looks or clothes or bad breath."

...Another reader found the remarks about... Gandhi extremely offensive. "Given the current situation where there is so much violence, terrorism and war chants all around the world, we have all the more reasons to remember this great leader and his preaching of non-violence."

I do believe that where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence I would advise violence. Thus... it was that I took part in the Boer War... [by leading] an ambulance corps for the British... Hence also do I advocate training in arms for those who believe in the method of violence. I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour... There should therefore be no yielding to bullying, bluff or worse, even though it may mean the loss of a few precious lives... [But] I cannot think of permanent enmity between man and man, and believing as I do in the theory of rebirth, I live in the hope that if not in this birth, in some other birth I shall be able to hug all humanity in friendly embrace. - *The Words of Gandhi*

REMEMBER Like Water for Chocolate? Well, [in [the author's unlikely latest[it] is the 23rd century and reincarnation rules the world. Where hatred has existed between two people they will be born again to live in proximity as often as is necessary for them to learn to love one another. It could take as many as 14,000 rebirths until they qualify for earth's ultimate reward – fusion with one's twin soul.

...just because the calendar which arrived as part of the promo pack for the Bad Girls N[Z] tour titillates with the promise of "A[US]'s hottest women nude for your visual pleasure," this doesn't mean you can call the six-pack strippers... [A] former Miss Personality A[US], gave up hairdressing to play a blond geisha. [Another] used to be an air hostess... while [a third] describes herself as a dancer and a model... The women have practised their pat phrases. They're professionals. The s-word, sleazy, is not part of the vocabulary... for what it is like to dance butt-naked for a living... As... [the] 1996 *People* magazine covergirl of the year says, "I was born nude so I feel very comfortable with it." ...Backstage at the Powerstation, in between applying lashings of stage make-up, [the fifth Bad Girl] is telling me that in another life she used to be a kindergarten teacher. Nothing much has changed, according to the former *Penthouse* Pet. She may have exchanged hyperactive rug-rats for... around 700 primed to get visually excited through a fug of booze and galloping testosterone... punters, but, "they're all kids." ...The only time they become at all agitated is when they think the photographer is taking shots that might show flashes of flesh. Such are the paradoxes of life in a game which involves strutting your stuff on a stage nightly – sometimes wearing only the trademark Bad Girls calendar smile. - 1997

In the Hindu religion there is a legend in which the banana was the fruit forbidden to Adam and Eve in the terrestrial paradise, which... was on the island of Ceylon, where the parents of the human race covered their nakedness with banana leaves.

In addition to sharing an *Adam and Eve legend*, Hinduism and Judaism both declare a person is punished or rewarded according to the deeds of its lifetime. What happens immediately after death shows how they diverge – Jews bury their dead so each body remains intact enough to eventually be reunited with its soul; Hindus cremate their dead so souls can be released to enter a new body (although it is likely that burying the dead was originally introduced to prevent scavenger animals from eating them; whereas cremation evolved from the notion that a soul *will rise to the gods* [or to heaven] with the smoke).

Pilgrims from all over India visit Banaras to... bathe in the purifying waters of the Ganges and so expiate bad karma. Alongside the bathing gnats... are the burning gnats where the dead are cremated. To die in Banaras is to ensure liberation... and many elderly Hindus undertake the journey or are taken to the city to die.

...denying reincarnation... made it difficult... to understand evil in the world. If there is no transmigration of souls, where is Divine Justice? How can we account for fortune and misfortune? Why... on the basis of one finite lifetime, is one man... pious, knowledgeable, beautiful, or opulent, and another... impious, ignorant, deformed, or poor? Why... is God so arbitrary, so unmerciful?

...why is one man intelligent and another man ignorant? This is due to continuity... Since we are always acquiring experience, we cannot say that [someone] was self-taught. Rather, in his previous lives he cultivated knowledge, and his knowledge is continuing. That is a fact.

Gradually, logically, reasonably, she builds up the story of how she was brought against her will to believe in reincarnation. She quotes authorities from the... East and from the West, who have given it as their considered opinion that reincarnation is an actual occurrence. To them she adds a frank record of a number of her own personal lives... In addition to acquiring knowledge of one's self – the vital underlying principle – from the lives of the past, she postulates an interesting theory, based on her own practical experience, that many phobias and fears may have their roots in a past that was active thousands of years ago and that by finding the causes the effects may be very much alleviated if not cured.

U.S. auto magnate Henry Ford once told a newspaper interviewer, "I adopted the theory of reincarnation when I was twenty-six... Genius is experience. Some seem to think that it is a gift or talent, but it is the fruit of long experience in many lives." In a similar fashion, U.S. general George S. Patton believed that he had acquired his military skills on ancient battlefields.

...King Bharata was a wise and experienced *maharaja* who one might have thought would rule for hundreds of years. But in the prime of his life, he renounced everything – his queen, family and his vast empire – and went to the forest. In so doing, he was following the advice of the great sages of ancient India, who recommend that one devote the latter part of one's life to self-realization... One day while Bharata was meditating near the bank of the river, a doe came there to drink. While she drank, a lion in the forest nearby roared loudly. The doe was pregnant, and as she jumped in great fear and ran from the river, a baby deer fell from her womb into the swiftly flowing waters. The doe, shivering in fright and weak from the miscarriage, entered a cave, where she soon died... As the sage observed the fawn floating down the river, he felt great compassion. Bharata lifted the animal from the water and, knowing it to be motherless, brought it to his *asrama*... One day, as Bharata was meditating, he began... to think of the deer instead of the Lord. Breaking his concentration, he glanced around to see where the deer was, and when he could not discover it, his mind became agitated, like that of a miser who has lost his money... While frantically searching for the lost deer along the dangerous forest paths, Bharata suddenly fell and was fatally injured. Lying there at the point of death, he saw that his deer had suddenly appeared and was sitting at his side, watching over him just like a loving son. Thus, at the moment of his death, the King's mind was focused completely on the deer. In *Bhagavad-gita* we learn, "Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, that state he will attain without fail." In his next life, King Bharata entered the body of a deer.

...As we live through thousands of dreams in our present life, so is our present life only one of many thousands of such lives... Our life is but one of the dreams... and so it is endlessly, until the very last one, the very real life, – the life of God. - COMING BACK The Science of Reincarnation

Do you have any idea how many lives we must have gone through before we even got the first idea that there is more to life than eating, or fighting, or power in the Flock? A thousand lives, Jon, ten thousand! ...we choose our next world through what we learn in this one... But you, Jon... learned so much at one time that you didn't have to go through a thousand lives to reach this one. - Jonathan Livingston Seagull

The last quote on the previous page implies that every human has the potential to learn what is required to reach *the life of God* in one lifetime, while it follows from line 64 of the same page that you will also reach your goal – *without fail* (i.e., even if you have brought any bad karma upon yourself during your present lifetime) – if you manage to be thinking about God at the moment you *quit your body* (therefore, if you want to enhance your chances of gaining liberation, in addition to having good karma you must be thinking about God at all times – which necessitates employing other people to do all your menial tasks like cooking, cleaning, etc.). Another unfortunate consequence of the theory of reincarnation is that it gives people an opportunity to believe they were someone famous in a past life. How many people currently believe they were Cleopatra? No more than one could have been!

At least one political leader of the '90s is said to have 'been Krishna in a past life' (Krishna is regarded as being an *incarnation* of God – i.e., 'the embodiment of God in human form'). This may be based on him thinking and behaving like Krishna – but it is possible that he thinks and behaves like Krishna because he studied him in a past life (or is a descendant of Krishna's)! A further point to consider is that if *the karma law is an automatic one*, what keeps check of each jiva's behaviour (and when the *thousand [life]times as a spider*, for example, are complete) to ensure that billions of jivas automatically get their deserved position in their next life – which will be linked to the lives of at least two other people (their parents) who may have been born before the jivas' previous bodies died – if it isn't God (r:p838, ln40)?

"I'm selling only the concept of Karmic realignment." "You can't sell that. Karma can only be portioned out by the cosmos... No offence Apu, but when they were handing out religions you must've been out taking a wizz."

If your next life is determined by what you do in this one, and this life was determined by what you did in the last, and the last was determined by the previous life and so on, then each past life has been predetermined, or predestined and, therefore, each future life must also be predestined – which necessarily implies that you can't *decide your own fate*, and everyone is being punished or rewarded for past actions that they had absolutely no control over!

Karma... the principle of cause and effect, governing not only the present life, but also future lives... in... Brahmanism... and... Buddhism...

The *upanishads* are a collection of speculative[Hindu] treatises. They were composed during the period 800 to 600 B.C., and 108 of them are still in existence... The upanishads reportedly had an influence upon Guatama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, as can be observed in some basic similarities between the upanishads and the teachings of Mahayana Buddhism.

A... term meaning the perfection of wisdom... is used for a set of Mahayana Buddhist scriptures known as the *Prajnaparamita sutras*... Their basic message is that reality transcends all existing forms, and concepts of the mind, and can only be known by intuitive wisdom (*prajna*).

Buddhism teaches that the world passes away, and is not real in the end. It is 'impermanent'. While Buddhists take life seriously, they think that we should not be trying so hard to change it. - ETHICS & RELIGIONS

The moral code of the Buddhist tradition is known as *sila*, and the *pancasila* are the five moral precepts that are central to Buddhist ethical practice. Morality is the first of three stages on the Buddhist way, and therefore following the five moral precepts is the beginning of the Buddhist path. They are: not harming other living things; not stealing what belongs to others; avoiding undue sensuality; desisting from wrong or harmful speech; and abjuring drugs, alcohol and other substances that hinder consciousness.

Born a Kshatriya prince in the Nepalese Terai c. 563 BC, [Gautama] renounced kingdom, wife, and child to become an ascetic. After taking religious instruction from various teachers, he attained enlightenment ([provisional] nirvana) c. 525 BC through meditation beneath a bo-tree in the village of Buddh Gaya in NE India. He then taught all who wanted to learn, regardless of sex, class, or caste, until his death in c. 480 BC.

...which gave him his final nirvana (*parinirvana*). Early Buddhism did not speculate too much upon the meaning of nirvana after death, and felt that the question was unhelpful if not unanswerable, albeit it did not signify heaven or annihilation... Buddha...

...did not oppose the gods, he acknowledged them as realities in the workings of the world. But without repudiating them, he reduced them to unimportance... [W]hat is characteristic of Buddha is that he cared for not only men but all living things... According to Buddha's teachings, it is not prayer, not grace, and not sacrifice that brings redemption, but only knowledge.

It is important to realize that the Buddhist road [– or 'noble eightfold path' –]does not lead to a Being in the sense of a creator God which other religions believe in. For them life is not a preparation for eternity, but a way of living... until you reach the highest good. Buddha's teaching (dharma) works because it offers a solution to this life's problems and not because it taps into supernatural resources to aid you. Freedom is your quest. Your aim is to develop yourself from an ordinary person into an extraordinary or enlightened person – the superior species.

Buddha appears as a type, not as a personality. H[is]... is a personality which owes its existence to the extinction of all individual traits.

Buddha has been described as one of the greatest personalities of all times... He made things seem very simple. His teaching was about how to solve the problems of this life until you could eventually reach the truth after a series of lives on earth. He said the Hindus were wrong in thinking there were immortal gods, and so there was no need for sacrifices, rituals and prayers to them. So there was also no need for priests. Man had no immortal soul; instead his personality consisted of ever-changing components that would die with him... [Since Gautama's death, Buddhism has developed separate components. *Theravada* (or Southern) Buddhism teaches that] Buddha was simply a human who had pioneered the way to nirvana so showing others how it could be done. Individuals must work their way across the sea of life on a 'small raft' (Hinayana) and achieve nirvana for themselves aided only by Buddha's teachings... [*Mahayana* (Northern) Buddhism teaches that there] is a big raft capable of holding many people who had put their trust in the eternal Buddha who had come to earth to help them find the way across the sea of life. This implies that Buddha can be worshipped as a god because he is eternal and comes down to earth[. *Zen* Buddhism teaches that] you should concentrate on living life rather than reading and thinking about it... [In addition, some Buddhists believe in the existence of *Dhyani* (or meditation) Buddhas, who live] in nirvana but will share their happiness and help anyone who prays to them... [Nirvana is described as being *nothingness* –] neither being nor non-being, it is oblivion, spiritual freedom, freedom from space and time, from illusion, from passion and from all passing things of this world... [After 'attaining provisional nirvana, nirvana in life, Buddha'] sat... for 49 days in rapture[because] now he knew the cause of suffering or dissatisfaction and how to cure it.

NOBODY WILL BE FOREVER HAPPY IN PAR-adise or suffer forever in hell. Thus... followers of Buddha do not aim for any form of paradise but seek Nirvana – emptiness, nonexistence. Of the three ways to acquire knowledge – studying, contemplating and practice – Nirvana can only be known through practice... [Followers of Buddha might *not aim for any form of paradise but*] **Buddhists in Thailand are making a desperate bid to save the country's northern forests from illegal logging... The *Bangkok Post* report[s] that an alliance of lowland Thai villagers and northern hill tribes... plan... to ordain 50 million trees during a two-day celebration on February 8-9. To deter the loggers, the trees will be wrapped in orange robes usually worn by Buddhist monks. "It is a ritual to connect people's minds with nature," said... a... monk...**

[*'Forever watchful AS IF being beheaded wasn't unjust enough, a stone Buddha is forced to stare at the ghostly scene of his execution two centuries ago. His future lies in the roots of a tree, which cradle his head as if in comfort from the horrors of a siege that destroyed the glittering Thai city of Ayutthaya and ungraciously knocked him from his pedestal. Ayutthaya, according to one of many conflicting stories, means undefeatable. In its heyday Ayutthaya was the most powerful and one of the wealthiest military empires in the East. Its 33 kings were worshipped as gods and were famed for courage and arrogance. Armadas from China, France, England, and Japan sailed down its waterways to sell their wares, and the city was said at one time to be larger than London or Paris. In 1682 a foreigner counted 1700 temples, 30,000 priests and more than 4000 gold and gilt Buddhas. He marvelled that the reflected light from the buildings caught the eye miles away. A golden age of art and architecture ensued as the city turned its attention on itself, but the military was neglected and it became insular and vulnerable. In the latter half of the 18th century the Burmese began a series of invasions. The Siamese defended themselves valiantly for decades, but on April 17, 1767, after a long siege that brought famine, disease and fire to Ayutthaya, the Burmese stormed the city. All but 10,000 of its one million inhabitants were massacred or marched to Myanmar as slaves, including the royal family. More than 400 years of history was erased. So vicious was the assault that tears were said to have run down the chest of one of the Buddha statues, and the heart of another broke and fell into its lap.'*]

...Not even the world's largest Buddha statues have escaped the ravages of the Afghan war. One of the 1800-year-old statues now serves as an anti-aircraft gun platform... The poor and the displaced live in caves around what was once one of the world's archaeological treasure troves. It may still be for some. Holes in the ground bear witness to the poor who scavenge for artefacts to sell for cash, the scarcest commodity of all in Afghanistan, apart from peace... The last archaeological and repair work was carried out... [on the] colossal Buddhas of Bamiyan, some 55m and 38m high respectively... in the late 1970s but most of the drains for protecting... [them] from floods, rain and snow are damaged. "[They] are a cultural heritage which belongs to the world... and if the UN and international community do not help in their preservation then this heritage... will be destroyed by warlords and civilians."

...The United Nations cultural body Unesco yesterday announced 46 new world heritage sites, including... the birthplace of Buddha... [Incidentally, t]wo Buddhist nuns told a Senate committee yesterday that they destroyed and altered documents relating to [the US Vice-President's] visit to their temple, which raised \$US100,000 in apparently illegal donations... to spare the temple embarrassment... The Justice Department is conducting a criminal investigation of their activities.

...[Cambodian and Thai authorities have two suspects for the theft of dozens of priceless artefacts from a 10th-century temple in northwest Cambodia. News of the thefts drew international outrage and prompted Cambodia's king to request his government to take sterner measures to protect the country's national treasures. It also highlighted the continuing problem of looting and pillaging of Cambodia's Angkor-era temples, which conservationists say is increasing. Cambodian military officials and Thai businessmen have long been suspected of dealing in stolen Angkor-era artefacts, which are sold around the world.']

...Promoters of N[Z]'s biggest Buddhist temple have to convince... local residents that the Manukau City complex will not house a crematorium and pose health risks to neighbours. The proposed \$10 million, 4ha development... will include... meditation rooms, accommodation for those on overnight retreats and a stupa... "Some Kiwis mistake the stupa for a crematorium," says... [the] Buddha's Light International Association... which... has... 100 branches around the world... The complex[, which has been]... planned... for three years... would take three years to complete.

...Buddhist followers searching for a resting place can now book a space for the hereafter in a religious monument in Auckland. A Buddhist centre in Avondale is financing the building of a stupa – a shrine for inspiring a virtuous life – by selling storage space for believers' ashes. Twelve overseas followers due to immigrate from... [Southeast Asia] have paid \$3000 each for their ashes to rest in the monument[, which one]... of the builders... described... as a type of spiritual advertising. "It's like a billboard..."

...When Buddhists wanted to build a concrete structure in the hills near Thames, the first problem... was to explain what it was... Finally approved as an "accessory building for community use," the completed stupa was yesterday dedicated by the visiting founder of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order... The two-day celebration must have attracted more cars up the unsealed road through "poor man's Kaueranga Valley" than have travelled it in the past decade... Over a year in the planning and 10 weeks in construction, the stupa has cost \$50,000... "We have lots to spend money on – and I have been asking for funds to put a lump of concrete on top of a hill," says the]... acting caretaker... Four members of the international order (originally established in London in 1967) donated the money for it, and the... 80ha... retreat centre is run as a charitable trust... To outsiders it may seem a crazy gesture, especially given that the property still lacks electricity, proper roads and weatherproof buildings... But there is... a growing Western Buddhist tradition here, just as... in Europe... Stupas are commonplace in... South-east Asia, but the Tararu one is only the fourth completed in N[Z] – although five more are underway. There are an estimated... 50,000 Buddhists in N[Z], and 25 Buddhist groups within the Auckland area... In the 1970s Westerners attracted to Buddhism tended to be young and "some could be described as hippies,"... Today they are more likely to be in their... 40s, often well educated and established in careers. "They have started looking for greater meaning in their lives... Some turn up because of their stressful lives. They learn to meditate to relieve that stress and discover Buddhism in the process."

...A major insurance company in the US gives lower premiums to people who meditate. In Germany, another insurance company refuses to cover heart patients who don't. - 1997

There are many exercises to help "heal" your mind. The first thing to do is "still" the mind, getting rid of the clutter to allow new thought patterns to emerge. We all have thoughts firing through our heads all day, randomly firing off ideas in all sorts of directions. This can create stress, and to combat stress you need calmness and stillness. Meditation is the ultimate technique for this. It may lower blood pressure, increase blood flow to the brain and help ease insomnia and migraines. If practised daily it can create self-confidence and clarity, which helps you see your goals and teaches you to go about setting them without negative thoughts interfering. Other great tools to help you think positively are hypnosis, visualisation techniques, cognitive behaviour therapy and good old positive thinking. Go to any local bookstore and you will find tons of books with great advice...

The... story broke last week that a [Dept. of Social Welfare] case worker offered yogic breathing workshops to sickness beneficiaries... [Y]ogic breathing was something I'd never heard of... For that matter, I didn't know much about yogis... As far as I could tell, yogis are those bearded guys who sit on the top of mountains, doing not much. It doesn't seem a stretch for them to be able to advise people on unemployment... Seven sickness beneficiaries each spent \$50 (of our money) to attend the... workshops... If it worked for depression, maybe it could work for my laziness. I looked through the *Yellow Pages* and found a yoga place... The woman who taught me had skin which shone with health... "Your thoughts are not your reality," she said... I was to clear my mind till all I was focused on was my breath... I did so well clearing my mind, I wound up sleeping for most of the session. This, the instructor said, was because I was stressed out. True relaxation came from being able to clear the mind yet stay focused.

While relaxation exercises are very beneficial for the practice of meditation, they are only a starting point. Similarly, peace of mind is only one of the many benefits of meditation. Meditation leads us to deeper self-awareness, in the broadest sense of the word. Sometimes self-awareness is painful and disturbing... Whatever is inside us, we must eventually come to accept. This self-awareness is the first step towards self-transformation. Then we can continue to delve into the deeper layers of our mind... But we must remember that meditation because it makes us more aware, also opens us to the pain which exists... around us. That is why meditation also helps us to develop our compassion. One of the goals of meditation is to give every individual an experience of the spiritual reality that all religions speak of. Indeed, meditation will bring you closer to the essence of any religious creed. Meditation is unique because it is a science of our inner realms – an intuitive science. This intuitive science is so astute that western physics is only now coming to understand aspects of the ultimate nature of reality in the universe which were grasped by meditators thousands of years ago. Instead of calling meditation unscientific we need to expand our notion of what is science... The paradox of meditation is that you can receive the basic teaching in minutes and then spend the rest of your life uncovering all the wisdom that is hidden in that teaching. True meditation accepts no limited conception of our Self. It leads us toward the Infinite which is ultimately beyond technique.

To Socrates – *who has meditated more than anybody else* – MEDITATION was the process of thinking deeply about any subject, or ‘planning in one’s mind.’ Buddhists generally relate meditation with emptying the mind completely of all thoughts (i.e., trying to think about *nothing*) in the hope that some novel thoughts might enter it, or to achieve *self-awareness*; while, in Hinduism, meditation is associated with repetitive chanting and yoga – with the latter sometimes being linked to ‘mind-over-matter exercises’ where people attempt to prove they can ignore pain (e.g., by walking on hot ashes, mutilating their own bodies) or test their bodies in other unorthodox ways (e.g., r:p839, lns30-1). The difference between the Socratic interpretation, and Buddhist or Hindu interpretations, may explain why 2500 years of Eastern meditation contributed little to humanity’s technological, philosophical and sociological progress!

Zen Buddhist groups ‘can meditate for up to 12 hours [at a time] – and in some the meditators are “whipped” [by senior monks] if they fall asleep. And just what is the Zen reply to the question: “Will this help me?” – “That is for you to decide.”’

For two years he “lost the plot”, finally regaining some inner peace through the study of... Zen. “I read many books on this. I am not a practicing Buddhist, but I like some of their ideas...” He is not into meditation, “but before I go to sleep at night I always spend maybe 30 minutes thinking about what I did during the day – the right and the wrong.”

...It’s a regimented lifestyle... But five Buddhist monks living at Kelston still find time for life’s little pleasures... [They] all love chocolate, a small vice they have picked up since arriving in N[Z] just over two weeks ago. They live in a house that doubles as a temple, along with the “Abbot”... and one other. They are six of only 10 Thai monks living in N[Z]. But the monks are already picking up N[Z]’s language and culture, an amazing feat considering the strict rules of their religion... “They can’t buy food. They can’t make food. They couldn’t take an apple off a tree. They’re not allowed to drive. They can’t touch women. They can’t sit next to women. They can’t run and they can’t swim.” The monks... like to “think about N[Z]’s beaches”. They’re not allowed to go to the beach, just in case they see a bikini clad woman, a big no-no for any Buddhist monk.

...[‘Thousands of devotees crowd Kathmandu’s Durbar Square for the Indrajaatra Festival. Spilling from balconies, pressing forward with anticipation, they eagerly await a glimpse of the living virgin goddess Kumari – for this is her night, and her festival. From the moment she is swept up into the priest’s arms and placed inside her three-tiered chariot, the life of this child goddess, barely two years old, will never be the same again. “I am so proud of her,” says her mother. Her father says, “She was screened by the royal astrologer, many priests and the King’s religious adviser.” She was also inspected for the necessary “32 perfections” of a goddess by female attendants. These include clear skin with small pores, even teeth, black hair and eyes, soft hands, a moist tongue, no bad body odours and “small and well-recessed sexual organs”. Most importantly, she must show no signs of ever having bled, for blood signifies the end of her reign as a living goddess. In Nepal, as in remote areas of India, mystic tantric priests have worshipped virgin girls for centuries, believing it helps the priests achieve spiritual perfection. There are seven other living goddesses in Kathmandu but their lives are less restricted than that of the Royal Kumari, who is thought to be the incarnation of the goddess Taleju. It is not possible for just any girl to become a Kumari. Although Taleju is a Hindu deity, the Royal Kumari is always chosen from the Buddhist caste of goldsmiths and silversmiths. Once chosen, she is separated from her family and must live in isolation in the Kumari house. The Royal Kumari’s only companions are the priests. She cannot use her real name while living as a goddess, and no reference is made to her former family life. She has to wake early every morning to spend hours at her devotions. She isn’t taught to read or write, and has to live on a strict diet. She is told that now she is a deity in human form, beyond experiencing feelings of joy and sorrow – if she weeps or laughs, the deity will leave her. Her feet must never touch the ground; she can only walk on specific cloths in the house and is forbidden to go outside in sunlight. A girl cannot stay a Kumari forever. With the first shedding of menstrual blood, the deity Taleju is said to leave the child’s body, returning her once more to the everyday world. Two years ago, just days before the big Desain Festival, loudspeakers declared the incumbent 12-year-old Royal Kumari would be replaced by a new goddess. “When I began to menstruate, I didn’t know what was happening,” the previous Royal Kumari explains shyly. After four days in isolation in a dark room, she was stripped of all her ornamentation and led by the head priest, plus 20 guardians, to the family home she barely knew. For her family, the sense of prestige associated with having a virgin goddess for a daughter has been tempered by feelings of bitterness. Her mother says, “If I knew what I know now, I would never have let my daughter become the Royal Kumari. It’s been so hard for her to adjust. She can’t read or write. She barely smiles. When we joke and laugh, she sits quietly, withdrawn. We, her family, are strangers to her.” In the old days, a bleak future awaited living goddesses after they left the Kumari house. Few Nepalese men wanted to marry a dethroned goddess. Many still believe an ex-goddess retains enough of her power to kill a weak husband while making love. Snakes are said to issue from her vagina and devour him. Many cite the seven recent ex-Kumaris whose husbands all died within the first year of marriage. Material rewards are also few and far between. The government provides a paltry pension (just over \$9 a month) for the goddess once she leaves office. This does not even begin to cover school fees, let alone the tutor’s fees necessary for her to catch up with lost schooling. In this rapidly changing world, how many families will continue to choose the life of a goddess over a modern-day future for their daughter?’ In related news, yesterday] **South Korean police... storm[ed] Chogye Temple, the headquarters of Korean Buddhism, which has been split by bickering among adherents... It took five hours for the police to evict the occupants in the raid, after mobilising 4500 riot police troops including 80 police commandos... About 47 occupants were taken into custody.**

...The Chogye Temple is normally an oasis of calm in noisy downtown Seoul but for the past two months it has been a battleground between two factions of monks belonging to the 1600-year old Chogye Order, South Korea’s largest. The two sides are embroiled in a squabble over who should lead the order. The dispute boiled over on November 30 in a battle between monks which sickened their followers. Television footage showed these “men of peace” brandishing clubs, empty bottles and banners, dodging furniture and rocks as they stormed enemy monks holed up inside the order’s administration building. The defending monks occupied the temple grounds... in protest at the order’s secretary-general... seeking a third term. They say it is illegal under laws passed in 1994, and accuse the head monk of incompetence. [The head monk]’s faction... argues that his terms have been interrupted... Observers... say... the bottom line is money. Chogye is very wealthy and has a history of corruption... While many... Korean Buddhists... monks live dignified, meditative lives in the mountains, some care deeply about money and power... [The] order gets 40[%] of all entry fees to national parks as there are usually temples nearby. “Those temples are the goose that lays the golden egg.” The order also earns a pretty penny from large donations by the faithful and profits from shops selling religious paraphernalia... [A]ll of this is tax-free. “In this

particular case, there are no good guys[," says]... a US expert on Buddhism who has lived in Seoul for 12 years... The monks themselves insist they fight a just war, carrying on the tradition started by their predecessors who fought off Japanese invaders centuries ago.

...As part of its campaign to clean up its image, the cult accused in the 1995 nerve-gas attack on Tokyo subways has offered to pay 120 million yen... a year as compensation to the victims. "I don't intend to deny that I bear a heavy responsibility," said... one of the cult's top leaders, who was released from prison last month... [T]he Aum Shinri Kyo cult['s former guru was]... replaced... this month...

It could only happen in Japan... Robot[s are replacing priests] to compensate for the current shortfall of Buddhists available to perform traditional funeral rites[. A] robot guru can chant up to 10 different Buddhist sutras, blink, and move his mouth. Enough to fool a dead person, anyway.

A HIGH PERCENTAGE of new cars sold in Japan have their first "service" at a temple or shrine rather than at a garage workshop. In a form of religious insurance taken out by an increasing number of Japanese motorists, drivers go with their new car to the temple gate for the blessing ceremony[performed by a] Buddhist or Shinto priest...

The indigenous religion of Japan[was] so named in the 8th century to distinguish it from Buddhism, from which it subsequently incorporated many features... By the 8th century divine origins were ascribed to the imperial family, the emperor believed to be descended from the sun god, and in time became the basis for State Shintoism and its loyalty and obedience to the emperor. In the 19th century it was divided into Shrine (*jinga*) Shinto and Sectarian (*kyoto*) Shinto...

The [word] *Shinto* comes from a Japanese term meaning "the way of the gods." Basically a primitive religion, it originated as animism and developed... a system based on mythology and traditional prayers... In modern times the divinity of the emperor became the crux of a state religion that served as a powerful integrating force for nationalism, and during [WW2] state Shinto substantially strengthened the militarist program. State Shinto ended with Japan's defeat... and was officially disavowed by the emperor, 1946, by his denial of his divine descent. Sectarian Shinto, however, continues to flourish.

...Nichiren Shoshu is intended to be the national religion of Japan and ultimately of the world... [I]t currently has one of the largest memberships in the world among new religious movements outside the major world religions... Nichiren Shoshu stresses three main teachings: that the hidden truth of the *Lotus Sutra* affirming that the Buddha exists from all eternity is superior to the truth of any other sect or religion; that the *Lotus Sutra* is the only relevant scripture in the later period of Buddhist history and the repetition of a mantra stressing the *Lotus Sutra* can bring salvation; and that the teaching of Nichiren is the final truth...

Buddhism reached its maximum strength in India during the reign of Asoka (3d cent. B.C.), who made it the state religion. By the end of the 10th cent., however, Buddhism had almost disappeared from India, while Brahmanism had reinvigorated itself greatly by borrowing from Buddhist doctrines. Thereafter Buddhism survived in countries outside the land of its birth. The two main schools of Buddhism are the... more orthodox... Hinayana... and the Mahayana[which]... is important in Japan, where one of its forms is the distinctive Zen sect, and in China and Korea. In Tibet the Mahayana doctrine has developed into the state religion known as Lamaism...

During the 7th and 8th cents. A.D., the original Tibetan religion called Bon... was replaced by Mahayana Buddhism imported from India. At first... Mahayana incorporated much of the demonology, necromancy, animism, and phallicism of the indigenous Bon, but the Indian monk Atisa in the 11th cent. purged it of its corruption, establishing... Lamaism... An extensive hierarchy of Lamas (priests), residing primarily in Lamaseries, characterized this mystical system of "secrets," which emphasized confession, worship of images... and use of magic formulae. In the 14th cent., following a second period of corruption, Lamaism split into two main sects, the older "red hats," and the reform group or "yellow hats,"... In the 15th cent. Lamaism was divided between the authority of two Grand Lamas, the Dalai Lama, the temporal head residing in the Potala at Lhasa, and the Panchen, or Tashi Lama, the spiritual head... Traditionally... both... have been worshipped as "living Buddhas."

"I have the same emotions and desires as everyone else. Perhaps, as a monk, I find more contentment, but, at the same time, I like my Rolex watch"... So he does not see himself as a god-king, as he is so often described in the Western press? "God-king?" he exclaims. "...I am just a simple Buddhist monk." ...His mission, as always when he travels, is to draw attention to the plight of Tibet under Chinese occupation. I ask him whether he feels more optimistic than in 1992, when he was last in London. "No," he says bluntly. "As far as the immediate is concerned, there is no hope. I think it is even worse than before. The Chinese repression is now increased and also the Chinese are now making accusations against me. But in the long run, of course, I am, as always, optimistic." ...What has really been happening is attempted genocide. More than a million Tibetans have died since the Chinese instituted their "democratic reforms" in this formerly peaceful "Land of Snows" – the only society on earth ruled by consecutively reincarnated saints. Now, Tibetans are fined if they carry pictures of their exiled ruler, and eight million Chinese have been moved into the country, outnumbering the six million Tibetans, who are discriminated against in jobs, housing and education. All but 13 of the country's more than 6000 monasteries and temples have been destroyed. The cruelty and humiliations have been staggering – as well as torture and murder, nuns and monks were forced to have sex in public and use sacred texts as lavatory paper. Political arrests are on the increase and even a six-year-old boy, recently identified as the next Panchen Lama (the[Dalai] Lama's number two), was abducted last year by the Chinese authorities.

...[the flight of a 14-year-old Tibetan lama to India has thrown China's policies on Tibet into disarray and threatened a diplomatic tangle, say analysts. Last week's escape of the Karmapa Lama, one of Tibet's top religious figures, illustrated China's failure to win over the Buddhist hierarchy in the Himalayan region. And both Beijing and New Delhi could face further embarrassment if the boy applies for political asylum in India, which recognises Chinese rule over Tibet but has provided a home for the Dalai Lama and his government-in-exile since 1959. The Karmapa Lama, the only senior lama recognised both by Beijing and the Dalai Lama, has switched allegiances, despite years of grooming as a "patriotic" lama. China courted more controversy yesterday in announcing plans to ordain a 2-year-old boy as the reincarnation of the Sixth Reting Lama, who died in February. The Reting is one of the few Tibetan lamas who can act as regent in the absence of the Dalai Lama. Last year, China installed a new Panchen Lama, who had been studying near Beijing. But many Tibetans regard him as a fake and revere another boy who was picked by the Dalai Lama and has since disappeared. China has left the door open for the Karmapa's return, but has shown no sign of softening its stance on Tibet, or on the Dalai Lama, whom it accuses of seeking independence.]

...'China says its doors have always been open to the Dalai Lama, but Tibet's exiled god-king must renounce dreams of independence for his homeland.'

...'The Dalai Lama is willing to settle for genuine autonomy for Tibet within China at present and to negotiate with China if Beijing is ready, his chief representative said yesterday. But added that the Dalai Lama would not be able to give up his demand for full independence for Tibet without the approval of the majority of the Tibetan community of 6 million. "His holiness is not harping on independence. But just one person cannot make that decision." ● 'The Dalai Lama's forthcoming visit to NZ sparks interest in many Aucklanders concerned for Tibet, or seeking spiritual enlightenment. But members of an Avondale Buddhism centre anticipate the holy man and Tibetan peace campaigner's visit with particular enthusiasm. One member, a monk for more

than 25 years, has met the Dalai Lama several times. "His Holiness is so kind and humble, like a lot of people, but has this incredible wisdom." He is offering an introductory class on Saturday for people wanting to learn more about the Dalai Lama and his philosophies. A Buddhist scholar began learning more about the Dalai Lama last year after reading his book, *Art of Happiness*. The scholar, who has never met the Dalai Lama before, will listen to him closely. "He is respected worldwide as a man of peace and a scholar. He is the embodiment of wisdom, compassion and patience – all the qualities we aspire to.""]

...China has vowed to curb the influence of Buddhism and the Dalai Lama, Tibet's god-king, saying religion must conform to socialism instead of the other way round... Chinese agents have[even] threatened to call off a deal with a Nelson fish exporter if the Dalai Lama's... five-day visit... to N[Z] goes ahead... In September... At a dinner to raise funds for the Dalai Lama's visit... the Tasman MP... said N[Z] must ignore the Chinese "bully tactics" and "commercial blackmail." "The Government has made the right decision to reject calls from the Chinese to deny a visa and should now go one step further and agree to meet him at the highest levels."

...The 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet will give a public talk from a specially designed stage (complete with giant video screen) on September 14 at the Ellerslie Racecourse as a finale to his four day... tour. Entry is free, but donations ensure a preferential seat. An art auction to raise funds for his visit is being held at the Carlton Hotel.

...Many [NZers], Buddhist or not, will offer a warm "Haere mai" to His Excellency, the 14th Dalai Lama, especially in light of the Chinese Government's heavy-handed attempts to prevent this visit. To its great credit, the[NZ] Government has refused to be intimidated. That said, the Dalai Lama's visit represents more than an itinerant pastor ministering to his flock. He... comes at a time of great stress for his people. The responsibility must, in large measure, be laid at the door of the Chinese Government which has tried to stifle Tibetan dissent at home and abroad. While the office of the Dalai Lama has deep historical roots in Tibetan history, it is a very checkered history at best... [T]his Dalai Lama recognised this when he recently said that he is ready to give up his office should he return to Tibet. He described the office as "outdated." It can be argued that his office has been outdated since it was first established in the 15th century, because the secular power historically exercised by those in his office was an arrangement originally imposed upon the Tibetan people by successive Mongol rulers. Over the centuries, Mongol armies repeatedly intervened in Tibet on behalf of their theocratic proteges (thereby protecting their own economic and political interests). With those origins, it is not surprising that by the sixth Dalai Lama, the office was occupied by a Buddhist monk in name only – a monk who spent most of his time drinking and chasing women. Eventually, he was deposed, Mongol armies invaded again, killing the interim regent and leaving death and destruction in their wake. A semblance of normality did not return until 1720 when the Chinese army arrived in Lhasa to drive the Mongols out. The Chinese were widely welcomed, not least because their armies brought with them a new Dalai Lama. Until the end of the 19th century, successors to the office of the Dalai Lama were careful to safeguard Chinese interests while retaining almost total control over domestic affairs... In Tibet theocracy lasted into modern time. As late as 1950 the vast majority of Tibetans eked out a living as serfs cultivating land owned either by more than 2500 monastic complexes or their close allies, the hereditary nobility. Before the Chinese [reoccupation] in 1951 Tibet had no wheeled vehicles, modern roads, railways or means of communication and almost no secular schools or modern hospitals, let alone an army capable of defending the country. In the monasteries, such as the Dalai Lama's 1000-room Potala palace in Lhasa, it was quite common for high ranking and politically powerful monks to be waited on hand and foot by the children of the serfs who were encouraged to enter the monastic order as young as seven or eight. Because it remained a feudal society in a modern world, it is hardly surprising that rapacious powers looked on Tibet as "ripe for picking." The British invaded in 1903, exploring the possibility of yet another colony in Asia. The Dalai Lama fled to China for protection. One is left to wonder just how welcome the Dalai Lama would have been in [NZ] in 1903 if he had come here as a refugee from British imperialism... From everything I have read, [the current Dalai Lama] seems to be genuinely learned and spiritual. In these stressful times such people are a welcome and needed asset to our collective religious life. Theocracies, however, are not. - 1996

The second highest ranking guru of Tibetan Buddhism is visiting Auckland today for the first time... During his five-day-visit, the religious leader will speak on "the three paths to world peace"... He has previously visited A[US, the US], Europe and much of Asia.

...The people of Tibet are suffering "boot-level subjugation" by their Chinese rulers and are yearning for help from the West, a U[S] congressman who visited Tibet in the guise of a tourist said yesterday... "There is no freedom in Tibet, period,"... [However, China's President rejected the] criticism... saying jailed religious leaders were lawbreakers and the people of Tibet lived in "happiness and contentment."

...[FAR be it for me to accuse Martin the Infallible director of delivering his first dog, but woof, I think they say. In Tibetan, naturally, although the beautiful, maybe too beautiful, scenic vistas look sort of Hollywoodish (Morocco, actually). The youngest of our several young lamas even has a pet dog that didn't look at all Tibetan. It looked incongruous. I suppose that like the rather wonderful ceremonial hats, this detail has been checked carefully against the big fat book of obstinate facts. In the face of a blushless outbreak of hyperbolic sycophancy on the part of a wide range of the film-world's serious press – it has to be said, *Kundun* ain't a flawed masterpiece, it's just plain flawed. Unfortunately, the problem is that we've got big-feature style trying to deliver large events of very ordinary big-power imperialism, at a pace that retains some of the appeal of action-based period costume drama, with the sedate dignity decorous to our holy hero, through the point-of-view of a very young monk who is having most of the facts of life concealed from him.]

...a US actor] is embroiled in a... row over his swashbuckling role in the new adventure movie, *Seven Years In Tibet*. The red-faced star must be wishing he had researched the life and times of [the film's] "hero"... a little more closely before agreeing to play him on screen... In his book, [the hero] told how he found refuge... during W[W]II... in the forbidden kingdom of Tibet, became tutor to the Dalai Lama and helped save him from the invading Chinese back in 1950. But the former mountaineer forgot to mention that he was also a Nazi – sent to the Himalayas by SS chief Heinrich Himmler to recruit local tribesmen.

...oops! ...Hollywood has egg on its face... IT'S always good to see Hollywood making an expensive fool of itself. A \$US70 million Oscar wannabe epic called *Seven Years in Tibet*... just opened, somewhat nervously, in cinemas across America... In 1938... its protagonist... now 85... and three other climbing maniacs became the first men to ever scale the North Face "Murder Wall" of the Eiger peak in Switzerland. The following year... he... was part of another climbing expedition to... the Himalayas. After war broke out, his team was captured by the British in India. He and his compatriot... escaped from their PoW camp in 1944. With no food or maps, they trekked alone for 21 months over 2500km, crossing some of the most inaccessible passes of the Himalayas, until they crawled into Lhasa, the forbidden holy city of Tibet. [The protagonist] lived there for five years, becoming a tutor to the young Dalai Lama. [The protagonist's] seven-year true life "action adventure" has all the required elements of a Hollywood hit, including the \$14 million services of the blond-haired [lead actor], who travelled to Austria to have a meet-the-legend lunch... in a pub near his home in Huttenberg... The old man was given a souvenir poster of the movie. All that was left was for [the protagonist] and his wife to receive first-class... air tickets to attend the Hollywood premier. But the tickets were never issued – thanks to... a resourceful 33-year-old radio reporter for the Austrian National Broadcasting Corporation. Earlier this year, he took the trouble to look up [the protagonist's] name in German military records held in the National Archives in Washington. Inside a thick 80-page file was a CV in [the protagonist's] hand-writing stating that he had joined the SS in 1938. A vast budget had been spent shooting a "chic Tibet" film arguably glorifying [a Nazi]... To Hollywood's acute embarrassment, [the reporter] teamed up with *Stern* magazine to expose [the protagonist's] SS past in damning detail. A photograph was published of him smiling proudly beside Hitler. [His] "Nazi dream couple" marriage to the daughter of a renowned German polar scientist had been hurriedly approved by Heinrich Himmler himself, head of the SS... "I am a climber – nothing to do with this silly war," says [the protagonist's]

character] of the... Himalayan expedition... in the film. In reality, however, it was a Nazi reconnaissance and propaganda mission (climbing impossible peaks was an expression of Nazi triumphalism)... Nazis... became obsessed by Central Asia, going so far as to film and measure Tibetans and plundering the swastika symbol from Tiger and ancient India. Because of Tibet's isolation, with no foreigners polluting their "purity", Himmler and his SS Nazi ethnic scientists regarded Tibetans as "racial relatives of the Aryans"... *Stern* pointed out that although [the protagonist] had only been recruited into the SS as an athletics coach, he had signed up as a member of the ...Storm Troops... back in 1933. It reminded readers that this was the organisation that had popularised the 1935 slogan, "Wenn die Olympischen Spiele vorber, schlagen wir die Juden zu Brie" ("Once the Olympic Games are over, we will beat the Jews to a pulp")... To placate Los Angeles' militant rabbi faction, a would-be diplomatic photo-opportunity meeting was set up in Vienna between [a]Nazi-hunter... and [the protagonist. However, the Nazi-hunter] was left unimpressed by [the protagonist's] efforts to explain why he had kept his past hidden for 50 years... Meanwhile, how do you change a completed... [film] when you awkwardly find yourself with a diehard Nazi hero on your hands? The Mandalay production team answer is the addition of two last-minute voice-over dialogues that cure [the protagonist] of... amnesia... Next, Mandalay redrafted their marketing campaign. In the 1952 introduction to the English edition of *Seven Years in Tibet*, the '30s British travel writer Peter Fleming attested to [the protagonist's] "integrity of character"... [T]he ingenious line now cranked out by... Mandalay's head of marketing, is that [the protagonist] was so egotistical and self-centred in his early life – until his supposed "spiritual enlightenment" through the young Dalai Lama – that it is obvious he must have been a Nazi... These days, marketing a sexy controversy ([Mandalay's head of marketing] also masterminded the tumult over the... film *JFK*) is simply a smart way of turning a very costly film into a media event. And if that involves stringing up the occasional old European legend, so much the better... The record of history, of course, will always be what Hollywood wants it to be. It will come as no surprise to learn that the movie's phoney ending, with [the protagonist] proudly placing a Tibetan flag on a mountain peak he has climbed with his teenage son... never happened... [He] and his son, whom he abandoned in 1939, never got on.

...HOLLYWOOD may have to rethink its relationship with the Dalai Lama – the living embodiment of... the trendiest political and religious cause in California. It turns out that the celibate monk is not quite as sexually liberated as his supporters imagined. On a fundraising trip to California last week, the red-robed Nobel Peace Prize winner catapulted himself into a storm of controversy by telling crowds of faithful in the gay mecca of San Francisco that "from the Buddhist point of view, men-to-men and women-to-women is generally considered sexual misconduct"... The Dalai Lama's spiritual guidance did not go down well with his listeners. Decades of doing battle with the Chinese regime... had not prepared the 62-year-old leader for the fury of the offended Americans... Many American homosexuals embraced Buddhism because they thought it was sexually non-judgemental... Gay and lesbian Buddhists insisted on a private meeting with the Dalai Lama to resolve the conflict. After the meeting the Tibetan leader... issued a statement looking forward to "further study and discussion on human sexuality". His followers acknowledged the Dalai Lama may have had other things on his mind. "As the head of state of an occupied country and as a celibate religious leader, I think he has not spent much time considering issues of sexuality, gay rights and homophobia," said [one of the people] who organised the meeting. But the Dalai Lama then proceeded to provoke another storm with his heterosexual followers in Hollywood, a presumed nest of sexual deviancy. "Sexual misconduct for men and women consists of oral and anal sex... Even with your wife... Using one's hand, that is[also] sexual misconduct." Oddly enough[he]... said that Buddhism does not condemn using the services of prostitutes. "To have sexual relations with a prostitute paid by you and not by a third person does not constitute improper behaviour;"...

The trial of [an]eccentric millionaire... charged with the shooting death of[a former US] Olympic wrestling champion... opened yesterday in Pennsylvania. The 58-year-old was arrested a year ago after a two-day stand-off with police. His lawyers said [their client], who has repeatedly claimed he is the Dalai Lama, would plead insanity. - 1997

Dalai Lama[is the] title of the hierarch of the Gelugpa tradition of Tibetan Buddhism and political ruler of Tibet from the 17th century to 1959[when]... the present Dalai Lama fled from Chinese persecution after... Tibet became a province of... China. Each successive Dalai Lama is believed to be a reincarnation of the previous one. They are also thought to be manifestations of the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara... the name given to the most popular bodhisattva... ('enlightened existence')... within the Mahayana Buddhist tradition, who is seen as the embodiment of compassion.

When he died, the lamas professed to search for a child who gave evidence that the soul of the deceased had entered into him[(the lamas themselves are selected in a similar fashion – 'a NZ-born boy of Asian descent was recently declared a "high lama"')]; when found, the child succeeded to the office.

While [the child] is still learning, his contact with outsiders... [or] ordinary people... is carefully monitored so that he cannot pick up any bad habits... Instead he is surrounded by... a "family" of twelve teachers, attendants, cooks, housecleaners and caretakers... In the Tibetan tradition, the most important teachings are always passed directly from teacher to student through the spoken word[although every person also]... has the seed of knowledge and spirituality inside his or her own mind. It is up to each individual to develop that potential. - The Little Lama of Tibet

The intermediate state between death and rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism[is called *bardo*]. At death an individual's consciousness... enters the bardo which lasts for up to 49 days... until attracted by a copulating couple. The consciousness will then enter the woman's womb and the process of birth will begin again... [By the way, a] Tibetan... layman... learned Sanskrit... at Myung-lung monastery... then travelled to India where he studied... the teachings of the six yogas... for 16 years[and]... also received Mahamudra meditation teachings... before returning to Tibet[where he]... took up the life of a married householder, passing on the teachings he had received for a substantial sum.

...the barbarian rulers from the Wei dynasty onwards who had invaded and captured north China... espoused Buddhism but their people knew little about it, and the Lung Men Caves offered visible teaching about the Buddhist tradition that told an immediate story to even the most illiterate peasant who came upon them... [The] set of caves near Loyang in China... contains around 100000 wall paintings and statues of Buddhas and other Buddhist figures, ranging from minute figures to ones over 18 metres high. It is the third and most impressive set of Buddhist cave-temples in China. The earliest set had been started around 400CE at Tun-haing in northwest China, and the second one is at Datong, north of Loyang...

Modern humans... moved into south China some 60,000 years ago... according to new genetic studies. The research supports the idea modern humans evolved in Africa and then moved from that continent to Europe, Asia and... following the Indian Ocean coastline across India, to South-East Asia. Later they moved to south China. Descendants of these original Chinese then migrated... north-west, [finally]populating... the Americas.

Best to head north-west of the inner city – as the Imperial court once did to escape the worst of the August heat – to... the Summer Palace... Nestled against the coolness of Kunming Lake, this 291ha of sumptuous chocolate-box gardens, courtyards, and 3000 palaces, pavilions, towers and halls make for more than a day trip... To early European traders like Marco Polo, this site was... the Mongol... Xanadu... But to the modern tourist... the most beautiful... palace... lies in the heart of Beijing's 16,800 sq km – the Forbidden City, the Imperial Palace of China's emperors, the Sons of Heaven and the Lords of Ten Thousand Years. To... 24 emperors and their minions... it was the centre of China and therefore the Universe... But

it's the centre of this centre of the universe, the Hall of Supreme Harmony, with its ornate throne and vast courtyard, the Sea of Flagstones, that really whips you through a time-warp. It was here that the most important ceremonial occasions were carried out in front of a cast of thousands, including pretenders, concubines, eunuchs and ministers of the state.

Religion in China has always been deeply embedded in the social system, and it is not possible to consider one without the other... Intermingled with the strands of... ancestor worship... and... folk religion... is a deep concern with the fate of society. From this complex background three major interests emerge. One interest was in man, in his individual relationship to the universe: Taoism has been its important representative. The second was in man as a being important in the future of the world, and has been represented by Buddhism. The third concern was with society rather than with man as an individual or the world at large. This 'social religion', was represented by a set of ideas which had no name of its own (although some of its parts had names) and is of central importance for understanding China. What one might call the blueprint for social relations in the traditional Chinese system was provided by a group of ideas which has been loosely and popularly termed 'Confucianism', from its connection with the teachings of Kung Fu-tze (550 – 480 BC). There have been many different interpretations of its precise nature. Some writers have stressed its concern with the things of this world and with ethics. Others, seeking to align it with the 'higher religions', have stressed the semi-personal nature of its concept of heaven. There has been much controversy among scholars over definitions and functions but in outline the theory is as follows. Originally, there was a single cosmic cell containing 'ether' (*Ch'i*) which was made to pulsate by a creative force known as *Tao*. Tension set up by this activity eventually rent the cell into opposite and complementary halves; twin ethers which encompassed the universe and which are known as *Yin* and *Yang*. The *Yin* ether is of the earth, dark, female, heavy; while that of *Yang* is of heaven, bright, male, light. The continuous operation of *Tao*, which is a sort of natural law, causes these entities to alternate, and by this process five 'elements' are produced: water, fire, wood, metal, and earth. By various combinations of these elements, the multitude of things in this world comes into existence. The *Yin* and *Yang* and the elements were the basis of traditional classifications in China. Colours, parts of the empire, parts of the body, numbers and many other things, were grouped and defined in terms of them. They were thought to determine the natural forces, even the process of history and the fate of dynasties. By their continuous motion all things are formed. Death and decay is the process by which they separate into their original cosmic components.

The words of Confucius are thought to be contained in a collection of conversations called *Lun Yu*.

The Master said, I once spent a... day without food and a... night without sleep, in order to meditate. It was no use. It is better to learn. - Book XV

A native of Shantung, of poor parentage... *Confucius*... rose to prominence as prime minister of his state. His life, as well as his writings, are the finest example of wisdom and moderation produced by Chinese civilization... In the 1st cent. A.D... Confucius came to be worshipped as a god... [Lao-tse's (or Lao-tzu's)] original name was Li Ehr. Few reliable facts[are] known about his life... He might have met Confucius, whose more worldly wisdom he matched by greater religious power. To Lao-tse is attributed the *Tao-te-king* [(or *Tao Te Ching*)].

Not exalting the gifted prevents quarreling. Not collecting treasures prevents stealing. Not seeing desirable things prevents confusion of the heart... The wise therefore rule by emptying hearts and stuffing bellies, by weakening ambitions and strengthening bones. If people lack knowledge and desire, then intellectuals will not try to interfere. If nothing is done, then all will be well. - *Tao Te Ching*

Lao Tzu, an older contemporary of Confucius, was keeper of the imperial archives at Loyang in the province of Honan... All his life he taught that "The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao"; but, according to ancient legend, as he was riding off into the desert to die – sick at heart at the ways of men – he was persuaded by a gatekeeper in northwestern China to write down his teaching for posterity. The essence of Taoism is contained in the eighty-one chapters of the book – roughly 5,000 words – which have for 2,500 years provided one of the major underlying influences in Chinese thought and culture, emerging also in proverbs and folklore.

neo-Confucianism... emerged during the Sung dynasty in China (960 – 1126CE). After the collapse of the Han dynasty... which had been a Confucian empire, the Taoist and Buddhist traditions grew much stronger. Neo-Confucianism was a reinterpretation and a reassertion of Confucian values which also assimilated some elements from Taoism and Buddhism. Its influence was strongest in China from the Sung dynasty to the beginning of this century. According to this, everything in the world, including human characteristics, is generated from the Supreme Ultimate (*Tai Chi*) or Ultimate Non-Being (*Wu-Chi*); by living in harmony with them inward harmony and outward peace can be achieved... Confucian and Taoist traditions... [also influenced an] indigenous Korean religion founded in 1860... *Chondogyo*... stresses the immanence of God in the whole of life, and sees human beings as 'bearing divinity' and as being called to treat other humans 'as God'. It emphasizes the need for a co-operative kingdom of God on earth based on faith, sincerity, steadfastness, and simplicity.

His concept of *twin ethers* (*Yin* and *Yang*) suggests that Confucius could have been influenced by ZOROASTRIANISM:

...a monotheistic religion of ancient Iran founded by Zoroaster (or Zarathustra[– 'c.628-551 BC, or perhaps considerably earlier'])... According to Zoroastrian mythology the supreme god, Ahura Mazda, created twin spirits, one of which chose truth and light, the other untruth and darkness. Later formulations pit Ahura Mazda (now called Ormazd) against his own evil twin (Ahriman). Zoroastrianism survives today in isolated areas of Iran and in India, where followers are known as Parsees.

In later Zoroastrianism Ormazd was depicted with attending angels, while a host of demons administered to Ahriman. The sacred writings of the religion... called in combination the *Zend-Avesta*, have been partially preserved by the Parsis... [and use a] language... more like that of ancient Sanskrit than any other preserved.

It is not possible to assign a precise date and place to the great Iranian prophet Zarathustra, but evidence from his own hymns – the Gathas – makes it probable that he lived between 1200 and 1000 BCE.

[He] believed that the world and history exhibit the struggle between... the creator or good spirit, and the evil principle, the devil... in which finally evil will be banished and the good reign supreme.

...*Saoshyant*[is an] Avestan word meaning 'One who will bring Benefit' or 'Saviour'. Passages in the Gathas where Zoroaster himself refers to this concept suggest a sense of immediacy. Many scholars therefore believe that, initially at least, Zoroaster used the word for a person or group of people who would restore the world to a pristine state of purity within or shortly after his lifetime. In post-Gathic... Zoroastrianism, however, expectations of the appearance of a Saviour came to be projected into the remoter future. The Saoshyant, who would appear just before the end of

time and bring about the final battle between good and evil, was probably thought to be in some way connected with Zoroaster himself. A legend thus evolved that he would be born from a virgin who had bathed in Lake Kansaoya, where Zoroaster's semen is held to be preserved. In the later Zoroastrian tradition legends about the Saoshyant became more complex, postulating three such figures, each born from the prophet's seed, who would appear at the end of each of the three millennia of the period of Mixture, at a time when the world was entirely dominated by evil. The last of these, the Saoshyant proper, would usher in Frashokereti... the moment when evil has been eliminated from the world, ie the beginning of the final, ideal state, when the sun will stand still in mid-heaven and the dead will be resurrected... The dead will rise up and the final judgement will take place. A stream of molten metal will flow like a river over the world; all people must pass through this stream, which will burn away any remaining sins, causing great distress to those who still have unexpiated sins, but none to the righteous. After this, all people will live in perfect peace and harmony in the world, together with Ahura Mazda and the divinities.

...*Parsi religious reforms*... began in the... 19th century, owing in part to the greater economic prosperity of the Parsis and to the spread of Western education, but especially to the confrontation of the traditional Parsi community with western religious concepts and values. The attack on Zoroastrian doctrine made by the Scottish missionary, John Wilson, affected the Parsis very strongly. In his writings Wilson stated that Parsi doctrine was dualist in character and that, as it fell short of his ideal of monotheism, it was 'monstrous and supremely unreasonable'. The Parsis naturally rejected these arguments. However, they had long understood their religion as one that preached simple, practical goodness, and in the ensuing discussion it became clear that their knowledge of the more theoretical aspects of their faith had eroded over the centuries, so that even learned priests were no longer able effectively to rebut attacks made by Western theologians. As a result the priestly classes suffered a significant loss of prestige and authority... [T]he Parsi community came to be divided between the 'traditionalists', who held fast to the form of Zoroastrianism adhered to by their ancestors, and various groups of 'reformists', who wished to return to what they believed to be a purer form of their faith.

...*Mani* (216 – c. 277)... founder of the Manichaean religion, born in northern Babylonia to parents of Iranian descent... Tradition has it that he received his first revelation as a boy... from a spirit he describes as 'the Twin'. Around 240 the Twin appeared to him again, urging him to preach what he had learned. Mani first preached his faith to his immediate family, and then set out on a journey to the north-western part of the Indian subcontinent, where he apparently made many converts... ['Mani's ideas also gradually spread along trade routes to Europe, especially Italy and France']. 'He opposed the prevailing Zoroastrian religion and claimed to be the last of the prophets of God'.] From the time of his return to Iran in the 240s, Mani's great adversary... [was] the Zoroastrian high priest Kirdar, who eventually had Mani put in prison, where he died.

America's largest Indian tribe today, the Navaho live on a sizeable reservation that sprawls across the Arizona-New Mexico border. It is poor, eroded, infertile land but like so much of the south-west of the United States it is an area of spectacular natural beauty – magnificently coloured sand and stone, wind-sculpted rock formations, towering hills and high rocky tableland. This visual splendour might be economically useless to an agricultural people but it is fundamentally important to the Navaho. Their religion and their ordinary way of life, which are in any case interrelated, are remarkably attuned to Nature, to the environment. It is hardly surprising that their religious belief and practice should contain much that is extremely beautiful: the poetry and music of the great ritual chants, the glorious 'sand paintings', the eternal, renewable beauty of Changing Woman, their chief deity. Changing Woman is an Earth Mother figure, ageing with the seasons, who is restored to girlhood each spring. From her union with the sun, also a major deity, sprang the Twins, hero figures and models of virile warriors... [In comparison, traditional] Maori religion... believed in a pantheon of numerous gods, which some scholars have divided into four groups. It is still sometimes claimed that at the head was a Supreme Being, Io, but the evidence is not very convincing. On the other hand, there were a number of less esoteric gods, the children of Rangi (sky) and Papa (earth), the original parents.

The Maori are a Polynesian people who, because of long isolation, developed their own civilization while retaining the general features of an East Polynesian world view. This includes a power-packed universe, in which all, or at least all the well-born, shared in *mana* – 'the Maori word which has found the firmest place in NZ English, possibly because there is no English equivalent of it and seems to have come into common usage from 1860 onwards, with the original meaning being respect and consequent authority but, nowadays, mana means power and influence gained by a person through a personal respect that others have for him' –] the most powerful chiefs and leaders partaking of it in high degree. This mana was fenced round with a system of *tapu* (*tabu*) or ritual prohibitions, which regulated daily life. But mana extends beyond human relations into a universe of spiritual beings. This universe has two spheres. Te Rangi is the sphere of sky, heaven, day and light; Te Po the sphere of night, dark, the underworld. The two spheres are always in tension, but they are complementary rather than opposed, and creative forces arise from their relationship.

The time frame of the Maori is diametrically opposed to that of metropolitan society – which is future oriented. For the Maori, social reality is perceived as looking back in time from the present to the past. Only the past is known, so it is defined as *mua* (being in front); the future is termed *muri* (behind) because it cannot be seen. The past is defined in a tripartite sequence of myth, tradition and history whereby gods, ancestors and living people are linked through genealogical descent. The cosmogenic myths recognised three states of existence: Te Kore (the void), Te Po (the dark) and Te Aomarama (the world of light). The first state... signified the vastness of space and time in which there was nothing. It was the realm of potential between non-being and being when the universe came into existence. The subdivisions of Te Kore are subsequently tabulated in the manner of a genealogy, each with its own qualifying adjective. In this period Ranginui the sky-father and Papatuanuku the earth-mother materialised, out of primeval matter of the universe, to cause the second state... [during which t]here was no light in the world because of the physical unions between earth and sky. This was the era of gods, demi-gods and legendary heroes. The sons of Rangi and Papa separated earth and sky to establish the third state of existence... in which men live. Tane the procreator breathed life into Hineahuone (earth-formed maid), thus combining *ira atua* (divine principle) with *ira tangata* (human life). Tane co-habited with Hineahuone and with his daughter Hinetiitama as well. Because of this incestuous relationship Hinetiitama fled to Rarohenga (hades), there to become Hinenuitepo (goddess of death). The myth sequence then relates the adventures of Maui the demi-god – fishing up the land, discovering the secret of fire, and jousting with death itself in an unequal contest with Hinenuitepo. Since Maui the culture hero of Maori mythology could not defeat death, all other humans must accept its inevitability. Subsequent myths concerning legendary heroes such as Tawhaki, Rata and others provide charters for human institutions such as whanau (family), mana (power), tapu (sanctity), utu (revenge, warfare) and makutu (sorcery). All these are concerned with social control and regulation of human conduct. The cosmogenic myths and stories of legendary heroes are located in a remote time in the fabled Hawaiki homeland.

God is rarely prominent in accounts of Melanesian religion, though the great power in the universe is often identified with the sky... A common theme in cosmology is that of the release of the sea, a primal catastrophe (often provoked by an act of human greed or folly) that has separated people ever since. Another is the story of two brothers. At first co-operating, they become estranged. One was cleverer than the other, or one cheated the other; eventually they separated and one brother left for the underworld.

Jainism – a non-theistic religion founded in India in the 6th c. BC by Vardhamana Mahavira as a reaction against the teachings of orthodox Brahminism... There are two major sects: the white-robed Svetambaras and the naked Digambaras.

Springing from a reaction against the elitism of the Hindu caste system and the Hindu practice of sacrificing animals, Jainism bears some resemblance to Buddhist thinking. Jains do not believe in a creator god... [and] have their own distinctive view of karma... One of the central tenets of Jainism... [is] no living creature ought ever to be harmed... [T]his policy grew from the belief that... a person might come back in the form of an animal or insect... To prevent even accidental damage to creatures, Jains... wear[cloth] masks to prevent inhalation of insects, and sweep clear the ground ahead of [their feet]. Some do not wash for fear of killing body lice or other parasites... [A]bsolute non-violence and starvation were features of the life of... a number of Jain saints... Mahavira [is the]... title given by the Jain tradition to its effective founder. It means 'great hero' and was added to his own name of Vardhamana in the same way that... the title Buddha [was added to the]... name of... his contemporary... Gautama... Mahavira, like... Buddha, was from the warrior caste; also like him he lived in the lower Ganges area... He is seen by Jains as the 24th and last in a succession of spiritual leaders known as *tirthankaras* ('ford-makers'[or 'jinas'])... Apart from him the others are lost to history. They are not viewed as divine, but are outstanding persons who have obtained liberation in life and passed on its meaning and possibility to others.

Jains – presumably those not starving themselves – also 'strain all beverages to avoid swallowing invisible organisms.' But wouldn't a soul that has *come back in the form of an animal, insect* or organism welcome death – because it presents a chance to enter a new body (hopefully that of a human) – and, if the death is accidental, can the human offender be considered blameworthy (i.e., should it justify increasing 'the weight of karma that lies upon' the human)?

...“axial period”[has been used] to designate the time around 500 B.C.E. when the great thinkers who still influence our lives flourished.

...a significant epoch in human history... centred on the 6th century BCE when religious factors were vital in new developments in world history. Great religious teachers arose simultaneously in four different areas of the world... and... [on] the basis of[their] work... over the next 2000 years four great civilizations were to rise that would be roughly equal, parallel, and separate... The balance of civilizations established by the Axial Age would only be disturbed by the rise of the West in the 16th century... In the Middle East the Hebrew prophets were active, and there was the elaboration of Zoroaster's earlier work in Persia. In India the great Hindus Upanishads... emerged, the Buddhist tradition arose out of the life of Buddha, and the Jain tradition arose out of the life of the Mahavira. In China Confucius[and Lao-tzu were] active... In Greece the rise of the Ionian philosophers prefigured the glory of Greek philosophy... [initially associated with people like] Pythagoras...

In short, Porphyry and Iamblichus convey in their *Vitae* of Pythagoras a portrait of the ideal philosopher that compels us to recognize him as a holy man, just as he himself recognizes that all human knowledge and thought is the gift of the gods, and incomprehensible without their help. - Pagan Philosophers in late Antique Society

Pythagoras is said to have discovered the numerical ratios determining the principal intervals of the musical scale, whence he was led to interpret the world as a whole through numbers, the systematic study of which he thus originated. He is the probable discoverer (though not in its Euclidean form) of the geometrical theorem named after him... No writings by him survive, his achievements were early confused with those of his followers, and his life is obscured by legend. The Pythagoreans held that the soul is condemned to a cycle of reincarnation, from which it may escape by attaining a state of purity... [– which is similar to *Orphism*.] a mystic religion of ancient Greece, originating in the 7th or 6th c. BC... emphasizing the mixture of good (or divine) and evil in human nature and the necessity that the individual should rid himself of the evil part by ritual and moral purification throughout a series of reincarnations... In astronomy, [Pythagoras'] analysis of the courses of the sun, moon, and stars into circular motion was not set aside until the 17th c[– although *Aristichus*, a 3rd c. BC astronomer who, like Pythagoras, was born in]... Samos... was aware of the rotation of the Earth... that the sun must be larger than Earth... [(*Eratosthenes* – c.275-194 BC – a] Hellenistic scholar and geographer, pupil of Callimachus and head of the library at Alexandria[had already]... calculated the circumference of the earth to a high degree of accuracy and... with much less accuracy... the magnitude and distance of the sun and moon[)]... and that the stars must be very distant... and, by placing the sun at the centre of the universe, was able to account for the seasons. Many of his theories were more accurate than those of Ptolemy which replaced them... [*Heraclitus*, a contemporary of Pythagoras,] regarded the universe as a ceaselessly changing conflict of opposites, all things being in a state of flux, coming into being and passing away, and... that fire, the type of this constant change, is their origin... [whereas *Xenophanes* (570-490BC), in] ruthless criticism of Homer and Hesiod... denied that the gods resemble men in conduct, shape, or understanding, and argued that there is a single eternal self-sufficient Consciousness which sways the universe (with which it is identical) through thought.

Religious belief and ritual action in Minoan Crete (3000 – 1000 BCE) w[as] aimed at the protection, continuance and increase in the human and animal populations and the usable products of the whole environment.

The abiding mystical concepts derived from Cretan religion are significantly marked by the influence of a mother goddess and a dying god, associated with the bull, who later became worshipped as 'Cretan-born Zeus'. This Zeus, who died and was born again, was different from the Olympian Zeus of the familiar Greek pantheon. He was much more comparable with the Greek Dionysus, also a bull god and a dying god... The most dramatic form of this process was a struggle, never quite resolved, between the old concept of a mother goddess and the newer concept of a dominating male god, Zeus... The mother goddess of Crete held sway over mountain and earth, sea and sky, life and death...

The ancient Greeks... deified the Earth, revering her as Gaia, the Earth Goddess. She was responsible for the well-being of her domain and would reward care for her bounties – the forests, rivers and creatures that inhabited the world – with good harvests and game to eat. But abuse her, destroy her forests, erode her hills, kill her creatures or pollute her rivers and lakes, and she would avenge herself through the agency of natural catastrophes – through drought, famine, earthquakes, violent storms and disease.

In contrast to the concept of *Gaia*, however, is the ancient Greek myth of the FATES:

...the goddesses who presided over the birth and life of men. The gods were thought of as spinning, with a thread, the great realities – death, trouble, riches, homecoming – around a man, as if he were a spindle. From this image came the 'harsh spinners', usually three: Clotho who presided over the moment of a man's birth and held a distaff, Lachesis who with her spindle spun out the events and actions of his life, and Atropos who cut the thread of human life with her shears.

Socrates of Athens, who flourished in the last half of the 5th century BC, was the first of the great trio of ancient Greeks – Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle – who laid the philosophical foundations of western culture.

Philosophers before Socrates speculated – naively, though interestingly – about the composition and workings of the natural universe, but Socrates made others conscious of the absence of any agreed standard of truth in such matters... The reorientation he accomplished is reflected in the standard practice of referring collectively to his predecessors as “pre-Socratics,” and in the view, common in later antiquity, that, except for Epicurus and his followers [– who promoted ‘the theory of a materialist universe, unregulated by divine Providence, composed of indestructible atoms moving in a void (which follows *Democritus*’ atomic theory, according to which all things in an infinite universe are composed of the random groupings of atoms moving in a void, plus Epicurus’ own moral theory – later misrepresented as licence for indulgence of appetites – of seeking the minimization of pain by avoidance of unnecessary fears and desires in private and public life’) –]all subsequent Greek philosophical schools were his more or less direct intellectual heirs... [T]hough there is no record of his having rejected the traditional gods, Socrates did claim supernatural guidance through a “divine sign,” a kind of voice that he sometimes heard warning him against a course of action, and this was doubtless part of the basis for the charge... “Socrates is guilty of... not believing in the gods recognized by the city but other supernatural beings of his own invention.”

Socrates was clearly a man of deep piety with the temperament of a mystic. He regarded mythology, with its foolish and immoral tales about gods, as a mere invention of the poets... God’s existence is shown, he held, not only in the providential order of nature and the universality of belief in him but also by warnings and revelations given in dreams, signs, and oracles... But... Socrates believed in the soul’s immortality.

[Plato also believed] that the soul is immortal; this is elaborately argued in the *Phaedo*.

After Socrates’ death... Plato... traveled widely and visited Egypt. About 387 B.C. he founded the Academy... for the study of philosophy...

The Greeks had three words for ‘love’... The first is ‘eros’ from which [the] word ‘erotic’ is derived... [E]rotic love is closely linked to desire or, more narrowly, to sexual desire... A second word... used for love was ‘agape’. This could mean anything from tenderness and affection to deep love... The third word... used was ‘philia’... the most general word for love[which] can cover peace-like relations between nations, [or] [the love parent and child may feel for one another... It occurs in... words such as ‘philosophy’ [‘love of wisdom’]... Finally there is the notion of Platonic love – a love between two people that is purely spiritual and devoid of sexual intimacy... How the phrase came into existence is not known... [because there] is no Platonic love discussed as such in any dialogue written by Plato.

Plato thought that the sky was a kind of dome that turned around the earth.

Plato (c. 428 – c. 348BCE) Greek philosopher, indisputably one of the most important philosophers of all time and so enormously influential that... the subsequent history of Western philosophy... was able to [be characterised] as a series of ‘footnotes to Plato’. He was the pupil (or at least the associate) of Socrates and the teacher of Aristotle...

...[who] marshalled reasons why the Planet Earth must be round; and much later, in the fifteenth century A.D., Magellan proved Aristotle’s hypothesis when members of his expedition (he himself died en route) circumnavigated the globe.

The ruins of the Lyceum, where Aristotle taught... have been unearthed in modern-day downtown Athens... on the building site of Athens’ new modern art museum... In its day the Lyceum was one of the three great schools of philosophy in ancient Greece, together with Plato’s Academy and the school created by the Cynics after the death of Socrates... - 1997

Neither Socrates nor Plato ever mentions service to God, though they speak of the contemplation of God’s reality, or the supreme splendor, or good... For Plato, perfect happiness lies in attempting to become godly. Insofar as man is godly, he is ethical. Evil forces within man combat his efforts to attain this ultimate goal. But Plato was not a determinist; he emphasized freedom of the will, and insisted that evil acts are due to man’s failure to meet his responsibilities. Evil does not come from God, who is all good... Aristotle sees a hierarchy of forms extending from minerals, vegetables, animals, to human beings, and ultimately god, who is pure form and pure act. Aristotle’s God is the unmoved mover. He is perfect, and He wants nothing... For Aristotle, the goal of action is to realize our potential and attain the greatest happiness or pleasure. Since God created man for self-realization, it is realization that will bring him satisfaction.

In metaphysics, [Aristotle]... (384-322BC)... reacted against the mystical speculation of Plato, whose Theory of Forms he rejects; for him form and matter were the inseparable constituents of all existing things... His influence in all fields has been immense... [T]utor to Alexander the Great, in 335 BC he founded a school and library (the Lyceum) just outside Athens... [After the death of his murdered father, Philip II in 336BC (Philip had) unified Macedonia and fostered its economic growth, and introduced the phalanx formation in the army[] Alexander]... immediately set about the invasion of the Persian empire... Undoubtedly the greatest general of his country, and probably of antiquity, his... plans for the empire were grand and original but perhaps impossible of execution. Regarded as a god in his lifetime[– some people ‘proclaimed Zeus was his father’ –] he... died of fever at Babylon, and his empire quickly fell apart... On Alexander’s death the Macedonian Ptolemy I acquired Egypt, and for three centuries the country was the centre of Hellenistic culture because of the considerable role played by Alexandria, home of a cosmopolitan Greek-speaking population who cultivated the arts and sciences, until on the death of Cleopatra it became a Roman province.

YOU’VE read the headlines: “Superpower smashes small eastern nation. Thousands of civilian casualties. ‘We’ll fight on,’ vows toppled leader.” These headlines, though, come from 2300 years ago. The toppled leader did fight back... And, in less than 10 years, he literally ruled the world. Unfortunately he also hit the goblet, became a megalomaniac who murdered his mates, and died from a mosquito bite when he was only 32. The story of Alexander the Great is an epic journey of war and conquest carving a 32,000km trail from the hero’s homeland to India and back... The warrior-king of Macedonia set out in 334 BC to avenge the defeat of his country by superpower Persia, inspiring his thousands of soldiers to follow him to places they imagined to be the ends of the Earth. [Now a]British documentary-maker... [has] retraced this pivotal event in European and Asian history. In his four-part series, *In The Footsteps Of Alexander The Great*, [the documentary-maker]... sets out from northern Greece, travelling by bus, Jeep and mule through the Near and Middle East... He traces Alexander’s track across Egypt to the desert oasis of Siwah and the ruins of Persepolis, capital of the Persian empire, in modern Iran. Further east, he crosses the Hindu-Kush mountains on foot, hitches a lift with a warlord in Afghanistan and travels by steam train through the Khyber Pass. In the last leg he sails down the Indus river in modern Pakistan and goes by camel train through Iran’s forbidding Makran Desert, where many of Alexander’s army perished.

Fifty years ago a shepherd searching the desert near Jerusalem for a stray goat stumbled upon a cave and uncovered one of the greatest finds of all time. Now, aided by... DNA... technology and luck, scholars are still unlocking the mysteries of the treasure – complete documents and scraps known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. Scholars cite the scrolls as both inspiring for Jewish continuity and a source of knowledge... about the Essenes, the devout Jews who numbered 200... and, living in isolation, wrote the manuscripts at a time 2000 years ago when Judaism was in turmoil... The Essenes – who scorned as too lax their fellow Jews in the Jerusalem Temple established 40km away – lived... beside the Dead Sea for 200 years until the Romans destroyed their settlement in AD 68. Faced with defeat, the sect hid its sacred works...

When ancient scrolls were discovered in caves near the ruins of Qumran... they carried with them a delicious sense of mystery. In Jerusalem this week, at the largest congress on the Dead Sea Scrolls ever held, it was apparent that after half a century of research the mystery has deepened... [–] we know less today about who wrote the scrolls than we thought we knew when they first came to light... Some... speakers at the international congress... believed that most of the scrolls were written at Qumran. Others maintained that all were brought from Jerusalem. It had all seemed so clear at the beginning. The thesis set forth in the 1950s by the Dominican priest archaeologist who evacuated Qumran... was that... an ascetic Jewish sect... wrote the scrolls over the course of 200 years and hid them in the surrounding caves at the approach of the Roman army... There was convincing historical and archaeological evidence for this scenario and it was, for a while, universally accepted. Over the years, however, new possibilities were advanced... leaving lay listeners more puzzled than ever... [A professor at] the University of Chicago said that handwriting analysis of the 800 Dead Sea Scrolls showed that they had been written by at least 500 different scribes. This was far too many, he said, to have worked at such a small site, even over the course of a few generations. He contended that the scrolls belonged to the libraries of Jerusalem... The Qumran “monastery,” he said, was in fact a Jewish fortress... [Another professor, this time from] the University of Sydney... contended that Qumran had been a trading post and there was probably a wharf to serve vessels plying the waters of the Dead Sea... [He] said that Qumran probably served also as a quarantine station for travellers suspected of having... plague. The cemetery with its 1100 graves would have accommodated those who didn’t recover. Meanwhile, the authors of the scrolls remain... in the shadows, whispering secrets still unknown.

...An American scholar says he has broken some of the... codes used... in writing... 10... of the 800 documents found in 11 caves along the Dead Sea shore... He said the... celibate sect of men who referred to themselves as the “Sons of Light,” used the coded scripts to “keep teachings from the Sons of Darkness.” ...he broke two... codes that were based on symbols relating to the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, and was working on a third... Among the revelations... covered in the codes is how to tackle mildew. The Essenes... were obsessed with cleanliness... - 1997

If... [an archaeologist from the] Hebrew University, in Jerusalem... has his way, the ancient Essenes, generally believed to have... [included] John the Baptist in their midst, will be changing their address and abandoning claims on authorship of the scrolls... If his thesis were upheld it would strengthen the hand of those scholars who argue that the Essene settlement known to have existed on the Dead Sea coast was not at Qumran and that the scrolls found at Qumran had no connection to the sect... [His] contention... hangs mainly on a single, literary thread – a... Roman historian... in describing the Dead Sea area in the first century AD, wrote about a strange sect that dwelt alongside the inland sea. “Out of range of the noxious exhalations of the coast is the solitary tribe of the Essenes, which is remarkable beyond all the other tribes in the whole world... [having] no money, and... only palm trees for company... as it has no women...” ...[the Essenes also practiced ‘complete community of goods.’ What the Hebrew University professor] found on the slopes 200m above Ein Gedi, a Jewish farming village in antiquity and today the site of a kibbutz, was a cluster of 22 small stone “cells”... each large enough to house only one man... However[, in]... antiquity, the terraced slopes of Ein Gedi were planted with balsam which produced an expensive perfume highly valued in the Roman world. Balsam was grown only at Ein Gedi and Jericho... Asked whether the stone cells might not have simply been seasonal shelters used by villagers from Ein Gedi during the harvest to spare themselves the trek up and down the hills, [the professor] acknowledged that it was a possibility... The reclusive Essenes, who attempted in antiquity to detach themselves from a fractious world, have proven once again their ability for stirring scholarly conflict centuries later.

...*Dead Sea faces death by tourism* When a spa was built in the sultry oasis of Ein Gedi 13 years ago, it stood on the shore of the Dead Sea. Today, tourists who come to the lowest point on earth to cake themselves in Dead Sea mud and float in the warm, oily water have to take a shuttle ride down some 400m of asphalt to get from spa to seashore. The Dead Sea... has dropped by 40m in the last 50 years... Environmentalists fear further damage from a flurry of uncoordinated plans by Israelis, Palestinians and Jordanians to exploit the inland basin’s economic potential... The plans, if implemented, would add 50,000 new hotel rooms as well as roads and more industry, further shrinking the sea and polluting its shores... From the heights of Masada, the fortress where a group of besieged Jews in the year 73 committed suicide, visitors can see the... result of water diversion upstream... [from] the River Jordan... by Israel and Jordan and the impact of the potash industry in the south. The drop in the sea’s level threatens unique species which live in its estuaries and causes sinkholes by changing the equilibrium between fresh water and salt water underground... “Tourism depends on the environment and if we cannot stabilise or improve the Dead Sea surroundings there is no future [for it] ...here,”...

Dead Sea scrolls... are important for the evidence they provide on the history of the Old Testament text, scripts of the period, and the life and doctrines of a Jewish sect at the time when Christianity was born... [However, t]he suggestion that St John the Baptist and even Christ himself were Essenes is highly improbable.

...a group of writings fancifully attributed to the Biblical patriarch Enoch, the father of Methuselah... are important works of Jewish literature but are not part of the Old Testament. The principal Book of Enoch [(I Enoch)]is the one known from an Ethiopic version, but there are also books in Slavonic and Hebrew... The Ethiopic Book consists of an introduction and five distinct works, including apocalyptic, prophetic, exhortatory, and astronomical materials. The introduction (chapters 1 to 5) consists of The Blessing of Enoch, addressed to “the elect and righteous” in the future “day of tribulation,” and of predictions of impending judgment. It is usually dated between 100 and 80 B.C., though the precise dates of all sections are in dispute... Chapters 83 – 90... [predict] the eventual repulse of the heathen and the establishment of the New Jerusalem... as well as the conversion of the surviving Gentiles and the advent of the Messiah. This section is dated from about 163 to 130 B.C... The Apocalypse of Weeks (chapters 93, 91:12 – 17, and 94:1 – 5) gives a summary of world history in ten unequal “weeks,” culminating in the rout of oppressors... the doom of the world, and the eventual New Creation. It has been dated about 170 to 163 B.C.

I Enoch may have originated with or been influenced by the Essene community of Jews at Qumran. No fragments of the longest portion of the work (chapters 37 – 71), however, were found among the Qumran writings[– ‘whereas all the others are’]. This has led scholars to theorize that this section was perhaps written in the 2nd century AD... and added... to four older apocryphal Enoch writings.

From Herod’s demonstrated character, we may be sure that he had little sympathy with the moral principles and Messianic hopes of the Essenic group a few miles from his palace at Jericho. Their strict discipline and high standards of conduct must have been a constant rebuke to his ungovernable passion and sensuality. Then, too, it must be remembered that Herod the Great was no Jew. His love for Greek culture and his disdain for Jewish laws and regulations made him especially hated among the Pharisees, the “straitest sect of our religion”... So insanely jealous a man, who lived in constant fear of court revolt or popular uprising, would hardly allow at Qumran, on his very doorstep, a community of believers

who held that the Messiah from Aaron and Israel was to come through them. They believed that through their Covenant community the ideals of the Messianic age were to be realised. In view of what this same Herod did when he heard about Him "that is born King of the Jews"... we may well understand feelings that would prompt him to banish from his realm a community with such extreme apocalyptic views... The two principal rites of the Qumran community were baptism and the communal meal... They believed that they were living in the last days, when the kingdom of Belial was about to be destroyed and God's kingdom of righteousness and truth would be set up.

Egyptian archaeologists have unearthed a well which Jesus Christ was said to have blessed during the Holy Family's flight into Egypt... They came upon it by chance while looking for the remains of the temple of Tell Basta near Zagazig... in the Sharqiya region of northern Egypt's fertile delta... Jesus, Mary and Joseph fled to Egypt to escape persecution after Christ's birth when King Herod ordered the massacre of boys under the age of two in the Bethlehem area. They lived in Egypt for two years and made stops in many areas of the country. The stops on their route are now being compiled into a special Holy Family tourist map... The temple where the well was found dates to the Roman period. Before entering... Bubastis which, according to legend, was the first Egyptian city the Holy Family visited[, they]... rested under a tree and the Virgin Mary, carrying her son in her arms, went to ask villagers for water. It is believed that after the villagers refused to give her water, Mary cried, prompting Christ to wipe her tears and then trace a circle on the ground, out of which the water flowed.

...A rock on which, by ancient tradition, the Virgin Mary rested on her way to give birth to Jesus has been uncovered by archaeologists just off the Jerusalem-Bethlehem road. Described... as one of the most significant Christian sites to be excavated in the Holy Land, it is expected to become a prime draw for pilgrims and to figure prominently in the Year 2000 festivities when masses of Christian visitors are anticipated from around the world... Measuring 2m by 4m, the rock was the centrepiece of an enormous octagonal Byzantine church built in the 5th century. The church and adjacent monastery were destroyed in unknown circumstances in the 8th century... The remains were subsequently covered over and the location forgotten. Scholars, however, knew from ancient documents of the church's existence and of the holy rock known as "kathisma" – the seat, in Greek. The rock is not mentioned in the *New Testament* but it is known from Christian documents dating from as early as the 4th century. Mary and her husband Joseph were travelling from Nazareth to Bethlehem, Joseph's birthplace, to participate in a census. Tradition holds that the pregnant Mary rested on the large, flat rock just off the Bethlehem road, which followed the same alignment then as today. It was, in fact, a plan to widen the existing road that led archaeologists to carry out an emergency dig... The road widening plans were subsequently changed. - 1997

The course of Jesus' life and the geographical setting of his ministry can only be given in... outline. The details are surrounded by... uncertainties.

Jesus is a figure of late antiquity, living on the margin of the Hellenistic-Roman world. In a period of luminous history, he spent his life in obscurity, barely noticed by the outside world. What part could this man who did not calculate at all have in a calculating, realistic, rationalized world where nothing mattered but power? From the standpoint of all material reality, his life was a mistake and could only end in failure... Some have tried to explain Jesus as one of the many religious or political fanatics of his time. He has been identified with the apocalyptic movement that was widespread in the Near East... Jesus may have something in common with all these types. Certain aspects of their lives and modes of thought provide a possible framework for his existence. But once this is recognized, the reality of Jesus shatters the framework, for it is utterly different in meaning, origin, and dignity. He reveals breadths and depths unknown to the others. All those who came forward as Messiahs were executed and forgotten; when they had failed, their followers ceased to believe in them. The religious fanatics lost themselves in particulars and externals. If so many heterogeneous types can cast a light on Jesus, it only goes to show that he belongs to none of them... Jesus grew up in Nazareth in Galilee with his mother Mary, four brothers, and several sisters. He learned a trade. He must have received rabbinical instruction in the Old Testament. Grown to manhood, he heard of John the Baptist, the anchorite of the Jordan country, who proclaimed the coming of the kingdom and God's last judgement, and preached repentance, baptism, and the remission of sins. Jesus sought out John and having been baptized went into the desert. On his return he preached to the people. When he was about thirty, he spoke in the synagogues, was addressed as Rabbi, wandered from place to place in Galilee, gathered disciples around him, preached the end of the world and the coming of [God's] kingdom... His friends regarded him as a madman... Jesus' view of himself is by no means clear. In his preaching he must have become aware of the discrepancy between what he himself was, saw, and strove for, and what others understood. The people followed him eagerly; in their way they needed him. He could not prevent them from attaching themselves to him and raising him more and more above himself. But the development of his picture of himself is not clear. The contradictions in his utterances only show that there was such a development and that perhaps it was never completed... When among those who had long known him he encountered an indifference of contempt that offended his sense of his own worth, he said: "No prophet is accepted in his own country." He was surprised at their lack of faith and at his inability to perform miracles among them. He surely believed in his calling to preach... Jesus learned to his sorrow how paltry and unreliable the results of preaching could be. The seed falls on fertile and on barren soil. Many receive the message with joy, but they are children of the moment. The cares of the world, the delusion of riches, carnal desires stifle the word... Jesus utters his disappointment. "I stood in the midst of the world... and found all men drunken, and none did I find thirsting among them, and my soul is afflicted for the sons of men, because they are blind..."

During his lifetime Palestine was experiencing great distress under the rule of three sons of Herod and oppressive Roman procurators... Jesus preached a message of religious reform and divine love. He was received with enthusiasm by common people because of his extraordinary healing powers, his effective teaching by parables, and his message of the redeeming love of God for every person... His teaching was strongly opposed by the Pharisees (a Jewish society of scholars and pietists) and by the privileged classes because of his attacks on hypocrisy and his interest in the poor... His growing influence alarmed Jewish and Roman authorities alike; regarded by some of his followers as the long-expected messiah, he was suspected by the... authorities of having revolutionary aims. After a brief ministry in Galilee, Jesus went with his disciples to Jerusalem to observe the Passover. There he taught in the Temple... arousing the ire of the priestly class... Under Roman law he was crucified at Golgotha as a political rebel and was buried in [a] tomb... Belief in his Resurrection from the dead became the focus of the religion that developed around his teachings.

In his lifetime his influence made itself felt only on small groups and among the nondescript multitude. The Pharisees, the Roman centurion, a few friends and adversaries were deeply affected... But at the same time he was disappointed in the results of his preaching. To whom did Jesus speak? Essentially to every man who came his way... But he leaned chiefly toward the poor, the outcasts, the sinners, because their souls are shaken and therefore ready for the new faith. "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." "The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." Furtherest from him were the men who feel sheltered and secure, those fettered to possessions in this world... [T]he smug Pharisee who prays: "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican," will[not] find peace in God, but rather the publican who dared not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying: "God, be merciful to me, a sinner"... Jesus rejects legalism, not for the sake of lawlessness, but in order to seek the source whence the law flows and whereby it is fulfilled beyond all legality. He accepts the traditional law of the Old Testament as self-evident. He does not oppose it in principle as St. Paul was to do... It has been said, rightly perhaps, that there was nothing new in the teachings of

Jesus. He accepted the knowledge of those around him, worked with traditional ideas. The God that he loved so intensely was the Jewish God. It never occurred to him to break with the Jewish faith. Like the ancient Prophets, he lived in it, while opposing the congealed forms and dogmas of the priests. Historically, he is the last of the Jewish Prophets. He cites them often and explicitly. But if only because of the changed world, there was a difference between Jesus and the ancient Prophets. They had lived in an independent Jewish state and witnessed its decline and end. Jesus lived in a long-stabilized and politically dependent Jewish theocracy... The Jewish theocracy cast him out, as the priests in the days of the Kings had attempted to cast out the Prophets... Jesus' faith in God is one of the great creations of Jewish Biblical religion. The God of Jesus... is the living God who speaks directly to each man. Jesus... fulfilled the old Prophetic religion. Like Jeremiah, he was... pure of heart, freed from all bonds of law, ritual, and cult. He did not reject all these forms, but subordinated them to the present will of God... Jesus embodied the Prophetic faith, which sustained him as it had sustained men for centuries... He sent [the disciples] forth by two and two... "Go not into the way of the Gentiles... but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." For the world would end even before they had "gone over the cities of Israel." ...He regarded himself as a prophet and perhaps in the end as the Messiah... The thought and action of Jesus presuppose the forthcoming end of the world... It is seen as a catastrophe. "For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of creation... neither shall be;" "...the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall." Here Jesus merely accepted the prevailing apocalyptic conceptions. But he was in utter earnest. The end of the world was imminent. "Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done." "Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom"... Unlike most of the apocalyptic preachers of his time, Jesus has little to say of the terrors of the end. But because for him this event, usually regarded as far off, was imminent, he believed it to be the inexorable concern of every living man. In the face of it, everything else paled into insignificance... The acts of Jesus, which are those of all wonder workers, his behaviour toward sinners, social outcasts, harlots, his words that stir the souls of his listeners: all these serve as signs and examples. His purpose is not to improve the world, not to reform men and their institutions, but to show all those who hear and see him that the kingdom of God is at hand. He lives the brief moment "between eras," between the existence of the world and the kingdom of God... The kingdom does not mean beatitude for all. Each individual is faced with the question of what will become of him in the catastrophe. For the end of the world is also a judgment, in which man is either accepted or rejected by God. "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left"... This prophecy of world's end and kingdom of heaven relates to a cosmic event. But it is not an event in the world, such as might give rise to a new world; rather, it is the event by which the world ceases to be, an intervention of history, whereby history is broken off. The kingdom of God is neither world nor history, nor is it this world's hereafter. It is something entirely different. But the tidings of the kingdom carry a strange ambiguity. The kingdom will come and it is already here. What the future will fulfill is already at work in the world... "For behold, the kingdom of God is within you." ...Jesus the man reveals himself in the purity of his soul and in his struggle with unexpected realities. The struggle culminates in no finished self-awareness or dogma. In the face of unexpected terrors, in the face of his mounting disappointment, all that was left him was his prayer: Thy will be done... His actions in Jerusalem were perfectly open... He purified the Temple on the strength of the position he claimed in the Jewish community. To the Sanhedrin[(Jewish council of elders)] he was a rebel against the Jewish theocracy and a blasphemer. The Romans suspected him of political insurrection. Jesus himself avoided any statement of what he took himself to be. According to the Gospel, he makes such a statement only at the end. When the high priest asks him if he is the Christ, he replies: "I am," and to Pilate's question: "Art thou the King of the Jews?" he answers: "Thou sayest." According to the inscription on the cross, he was condemned to death as a pretender to the crown... [D]isappointed that the world was taking so long to end and identifying himself with the servant of God in Deutero-Isaiah, Jesus had come to believe that God demanded his martyrdom at the hand of the worldly powers and that with this event He would usher in the kingdom of heaven. It has been suggested that Jesus on the cross expected the kingdom to dawn at the last moment and gave vent to his final disillusionment by crying: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Jesus of Nazareth, the founder of Christianity... was born in Judea about 6 BC and died by crucifixion about AD 30... The history of the life of, work, and death of Jesus of Nazareth reveals nothing of the worldwide movement to which he gave rise. He lived and taught in a remote area on the periphery of the Roman Empire. His life was of short duration, and knowledge of it remained hidden from most of his contemporary world. None of the sources of his life and work can be traced to Jesus himself; he did not leave a single known written word. Also, there are no contemporary accounts written of his life and death. What can be established about the historical Jesus depends almost without exception on Christian traditions, especially on the material used in the composition of the Gospels of Mark, Matthew, and Luke, which reflect the outlook of the later church and its faith in Jesus... The Gospel according to John... assumes a special position. Though it offers some parallels to the other three, and though the independent traditions in it may in individual cases have historical kernels, the tradition in John shows that the gospel has reached an advanced theological state. Because a theological conception has been incorporated in the account to such an extent, this Gospel cannot be directly used as a historical source. It is also the latest of the Gospels, written about AD 100... The Synoptic Gospels were originally anonymous. According to questionable 2nd-century tradition, they were written by the immediate disciples of Jesus or companions of the oldest Apostles. Most probably the Gospels were composed between AD 70 and 100. That they were written at such a relatively late time does not detract from their historical significance, however, because an older, oral tradition is collected in them and has left its traces everywhere.

...knowledge of [Jesus'] life... is derived from the Gospels of the New Testament, the earliest of which, viz. Mark, dates from a period at least three decades after Christ's death, and gives no information about him prior to his public ministry. Matthew and Luke... written... between 70... A.D. and the close of the first century, though incorporating earlier material, do give stories about his miraculous birth and his infancy; these, however, do not represent duly ascertained facts; they rather elucidate the beliefs which had grown up in the Christian Church subsequent to his death.

Specialists had long assumed that the Magdalen Papyrus was written sometime in the mid-to-late 2nd century A.D. Now, however, [a]German papyrologist... has startled the rarefied world of biblical scholarship by arguing that the papyri are actually the oldest... fragments of the New Testament, dating from about A.D. 70. [His] thesis, if correct, means St. Matthew's Gospel, as well as Mark's (on which it is based, in part), is not the secondhand account of Evangelists who were separated by decades from the Jesus of history. Instead, it reflects eyewitness testimony by near contemporaries of the carpenter from Nazareth. Inevitably, [the German's] thesis has been sharply criticized by other experts who question both his credentials as a papyrologist and his methodology... There are, after all, four Gospels, whose actual writing, most scholars have come to acknowledge, was done not by the Apostles but by their anonymous followers (or their followers' followers). Each represented a somewhat different picture of Jesus' life. The earliest appeared to have been written some 40 years after his Crucifixion. Which was most accurate? ...[furthermore, there was a fifth gospel –] Thomas'... For hundreds of years, most Christians would have found the idea of distinguishing between the Jesus one prays to and the Jesus of history a ludicrous one. Well into our half of the millennium, it was assumed (as it still is in America's expanding Fundamentalist and Evangelical congregations) that the Gospels, the *Acts of the Apostles* and Paul's Epistles were the best history of all... Might faith have caused the writers... to embellish on actual fact? Did the politics of the early church cause them to edit or add to Jesus' story? Which parts of the New Testament were likely to be straight reportage rather than pious mythmaking? Depressingly few... There are only two or three references to Jesus in six pagan or Jewish sources, providing precious little corroborating data... Seminarians circulated papers

among themselves and met twice a year to vote on more than 2,000 separate pieces of scripture. They conceived a mediagenic means of voting: for each Gospel verse, each voter dropped a plastic bead in a bucket. The bead's colour signified the scholar's opinion... "Red: That's Jesus! Pink: Sure sounds like Jesus. Gray: Well, maybe. Black: There's been a mistake." ...positive and negative criteria[were identified] before taking up the colored beads. The voters favoured passages attested to by two or more sources. Since Jesus' culture was oral, not written, they assumed that shorter, punchier passages were more likely to be accurate... [T]hey... eliminated... language used to contextualize or connect; borrowings from the Old Testament (including most of what Jesus said on the Cross)... Also taboo were monologues by Jesus to which there could have been no witness, verses expressing foreknowledge of events after his death and any claims on his part to be the Messiah. And one final admonition: "When in sufficient doubt, leave it out." And leave it out they did. According to the *The Five Gospels*, only 18% of the words ascribed to Jesus in the Gospels may have actually been spoken by him. *John* was eliminated completely; only one sentence in *Mark* met muster.

...*Uncertainty*[is] *essential to faith*... For the great majority of non-practising Christians... the news that the church does not have an infallible set of... [scriptures] simply confirms something which they have always suspected... Dogmatic authoritative declarations are now seen as abortive attempts to cover up the cracks. Christians must learn to live with uncertainty, which is surely the pilgrimage of faith... the walk without sight.

...*The whole intellectual foundations of the world have changed dramatically in the past generation and... [there] is no turning back*... [A woman once] would not have thought of entering a church with her head uncovered... because... St Paul, writing 2000 years ago, had decreed that women wear hats in church so therefore it must always be so... There was no questioning of the tradition. That was how... [people] behaved and that was the end of the matter... But... [the] whole structure of "divine law" fell apart as we grasped the processes which led to the formation of the scriptures... Whatever it means to be a Christian in today's world, it does not entail the acceptance of a legislating God... The decline in social acknowledgment of the legislating God and the power of tradition have been a process going on over more than two centuries, coming to fruition in the last generation. But what marks the last generation as the defining moment in a global cultural movement has been the collapse of confidence in the power of reason to penetrate ultimate reality and universal moral principles... We look with longing back to the sense of sure faith and moral rectitude which characterised our forebears... That world is gone. No amount of questioning... will bring it back... [according to the Anglican priest who] is administrator at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Auckland.

...By his confused, meandering attempts to formulate a philosophy that denies the authority of God, [the]Anglican priest... only goes to prove the truth of God's word: "Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image..." No human philosophy can ever meet the deep needs of the heart. That is why the world is so messed up, and why people such as [the Anglican priest] have no answers... [I]f he cannot do so what point is there in his being a priest?

...After reading [his] article I wonder why he goes on... being an Anglican priest when, to all intents, he believes God is dead. Where is the spiritual leadership he should be providing in his chosen profession? - 1996

Given the scandals which surround him, perhaps it is not surprising that [the US President] sought divine guidance yesterday. As he was formally [resworn] in... symbols of religion were all around. There was a morning service at a gospel church where he occupied the front row... [as the preacher led prayers by] remarking pointedly: "Where there has been failure, forgive us." En route to the Capitol building, [the President] clutched a *Bible*. There was a gospel choir before his speech and two more after... It was hard to escape the conclusion that [he] is in desperate need of spiritual inspiration... [B]attered by everything from funding scandals to the... sexual harassment case, it was a subdued [President] who spelt out his vision... "May those generations whose faces we cannot yet see... say of us here that we led our beloved land into a new century with the American Dream alive for all her children... with America's bright flame of freedom spreading throughout the world... Guided by the ancient vision of a promised land, let us set our sights upon a land of New Promise,"... Why was [the President] so low key? Perhaps it was in the knowledge that next time he may be swearing to tell the truth in a courtroom. And what role will there be for [his] wife? She smiled, trying to convey an image of togetherness. But perhaps the truth about their relationship had been more accurately revealed earlier... As they emerged from the church service, her hands were thrust into her pockets. [He] was clearly keen to hold her hand, but there were several seconds of fumbling before she complied... Then [the President], who is 50... led his inaugural parade back down Pennsylvania Ave past throngs gathered to savour history and have some fun on a cold but partly sunny day... [which] was also a national holiday marking... [the birth of] slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King jun, who gave his famous "I have a dream" speech in 1963 from a spot... on the horizon from where... [the President] took his second-term oath from [the]Supreme Court Chief Justice... and... [in] a speech of about 25 minutes... cited [King] as a source of inspiration [before offering] grand visionary words appropriate to the occasion and the special place he occupies "on the edge of a new... millennium."

...*American pie made with rotten apples*... BY ANY outward measure, the U[S] is enjoying immense success as a nation. Its economy has adapted superbly to the technologies of the post-industrial age, confounding the prophets of decline who once predicted that mastery of the global economy was passing to Germany and Japan. But America is prey to a wasting disease of the spirit. As I covered the last inauguration... I found myself doubting whether this great country – which has managed the affairs of the world with so much altruism for half a century – still has the moral strength and sense of purpose that once marked it out. In fact, I would hesitate to describe America as a nation at all in 1997, because it is becoming something very different: A polyethnic federation administered by a single ruling class... The crime figures are down, but that is what one would expect after 15 years of punishment which has increased in severity to the point where a man caught shop-lifting in California can be sentenced to life in prison... Sadly, I am forced to conclude that the accumulated rot in America has now reached a point where the pillars of society itself are failing. This was brought home yet again this month when a bomb went off at an abortion clinic in Atlanta, followed by a... booby-trap device that wounded the rescue workers. Anybody with a cause thinks himself morally licensed to engage in terrorism in the US, whether it is saving unborn babies, or animals, or trees, or for that matter the Aryan race. An organisation called the Aryan Republican Army has threatened to use chemical and biological weapons to pursue its goals. One of its suspected members... is already c[onvicted for] blowing up the Oklahoma federal building, murdering 168 people in the most deadly act of domestic terrorism in the history of the country. What lies behind it all is a loss of respect for the rule of law, no[small] matter in a country that depends on statute rather than shared ancestral culture to fashion a workable society. It was the Left, of course, that made it a chic pastime in the 1960s to disobey the law and rubbish cherished institutions. Flags were burned. Sacred memories... defiled. But it is no good harping on about the radical Left forever. It is the ruling establishment itself that has tarnished its authority by behaving dishonourably. The culture of cover-up and mendacity at the US Justice Department, the FBI and other agencies of coercion appears to be pervasive. "Unspeakable acts of cold-blooded murder and fabricated evidence now routinely characterise everyday acts of law enforcement..." writes... [a] former assistant treasury secretary. It is an exaggeration, but a great many people feel the same way... It is disappointment that helps explain why frustration is now erupting into sedition. A group of respected Christian intellectuals... held a symposium last year in which they concluded that the US judiciary had "usurped" power and asked whether it was time for "morally justified revolution... There is a growing alienation of millions of Americans from a government they do not recognise as theirs..."... A war of sorts is being conducted by the elites against cultural and religious outsiders. The low point (so far) in this war, was the paramilitary assault in 1993, in Waco, Texas, on a religious sect that was minding its own business. Nobody has ever been held to account for the death of 80 people, most of them women and children, and it is the refusal of the Justice Department to admit any fault that ignited a movement of "Christian patriot militias"... On the other hand, the campaign to reshape the US armed forces into a unisex institution... is still under way. Accusations of sexual harassment are flying. If this

continues for another five years, the US military will be reduced to a gelded parody of itself... Another worrying feature is the way that yuppiedom is amassing wealth and segregating itself into a discrete culture, while the lower classes are falling out of the bottom of the economy. As a marker of the new inequality, it is worth noting that in 1960, the average chief executive of a *Fortune 500* company earned 41 times as much as his workers. Now he, or she, earns 157 times as much. America is remarkably resilient, however. The fund of Calvinism [(‘the theology of the 16th-century reformer, John Calvin’)] is not entirely exhausted, and it may be possible to restore the legitimacy of the government institutions – provided there is a cathartic exposure of sin, starting at the White House. But once a cultural cancer has metastasised, it is exceedingly hard to reverse.

...For many... 16th-century... [reformers,] the whore of Babylon[seemed] to have matured into a respected maiden aunt... By those who took part in it, the Reformation was recognised within a few years as a reform of unprecedented power to change the Church, the world and the soul of the worshipper. It helped transform... a monolithic church into a fiery, cloudy pillar from which sparks floated away to form the bewilderingly numerous Christian churches and sects today... [Incidentally, a] Western Samoan man who escaped being burned at the stake had defied banishment, a common punishment for going against the village council... The council had banished [the 33-year-old] for criticising its petition to the Lands and Titles Court trying to stop him setting up a Mormon church in the village.

...[‘missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have long devoted particular attention to Polynesia, perhaps because some Mormon scholars believe that a lost tribe of Israel settled there. Tonga is now roughly 45% Mormon; Samoa, about a third. As a result, many emigrants from the islands have settled in the capital of Mormonism, Salt Lake City. But acculturation has not been easy in a state that is 93% white, and some young people have reacted by joining the likes of the Tongan Crips or the Sons of Samoa. A police study estimates that more than 10% of gang members in the area are Pacific Islanders. Many Polynesian gang members are Mormon, which puzzles and disturbs Church leaders. Some say the Mormon policy of organising Tongan “wards,” rather than absorbing the immigrants into established congregations, has added to the alienation that makes gangs appealing. Church leaders deny responsibility for the sins of their Polynesian flock but have begun an outreach programme. “This is Zion,” says a Samoan policeman. If only the promised land was more like heaven.’ Editor’s note: Mormons also ‘believe that American Indians are descended from the ten lost tribes of the kingdom of Israel – who were deported by the Assyrians, 722 BC, after which no more is known about them.’ Coincidentally, ‘the foundation of the Mormon Church is enshrined in a series of gold plates, or tablets, given to Joseph Smith by an angel in the 1820s which, unfortunately, have been mislaid.’]

...There’s no shortage of assistance available to prepare me to meet... the world leader of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints... [T]he man running the PR machine for [the leader’s] first visit in 22 years... is... not looking for propaganda, he insists, but adds that the church has been “ambushed” by journalists in the past. He laughs off the suggestion that he is vetting me, but ends the... 30-minute... phone[call] from Australia... with an apology for “the vetting,” and I must have passed because he announces in triumphant tones that “the interview is on” – and I hadn’t even realised it was off... 87 next month, [the leader is in NZ] as part of a tour to mark the 150th anniversary of the westward migration which culminated in the establishment of Salt Lake City. The church’s first prophet, Joseph Smith, led his followers across the country in a 3000km flight from persecution which gave birth... [to what is] popularly, though incorrectly, known as Mormonism... [Its incumbent leader] is regarded by church members as possessing the same authority as the *Bible*’s seers and the early apostles. But to those raised on traditional images of holiness he seems an unlikely prophet... and with... his wife of 57 years, beaming from a respectful distance... he answers questions with an ease so practised that it can sound like recitation... A question about the church’s now abandoned practice of polygamy quickly turns into an answer about the purpose “of any church – to teach people to honour and obey and sustain the law.” The suggestion that the cycling pairs of missionaries may be an image problem draws the response that “we have a job to do: to preach the gospel, to build the kingdom.” ...By any standards, the growth of the church has been phenomenal... [T]he church says its adherents, 1.5 million worldwide in 1958, will number 10 million by mid-year... Its congregation in this country grew by 30[%] between 1986 and 1991 – faster than any other Christian faith.

...Bigger attendances at... [NZ] churches are not surprising to [church] leaders... However, the religious studies lecturer at Massey University... said the [figures] could be discouraging to Christians who committed themselves to a decade of evangelism in the 1990s. Survey results showed... a rise of just 2.4[%]... in overall attendance or membership of... churches... in the 10 years to 1996... when the country’s population grew 10[%]. ■ In order to attract members, some churches have resorted to advertising themselves in newspapers...

‘Old church too big for its flock An old Auckland landmark church is being sold by its congregation because they find the building too bulky for the number of worshippers using it. But members of the Christian Science Church – who study the *Bible* for practical guidance to spiritual wellbeing and healing – are pragmatic. “We don’t worship a church building. Let’s put it that way,” the chairman of the church board said yesterday. He said if there was a wrench to leaving it was because of all the effort, time and money the early congregation members had put into the building from about 1916 to 1933. He added that until its sale, the public were welcome to pop in to view the church or attend its services, which revolved around the writings of Mary Baker Eddy in the late 1800s. The church has a category B heritage listing with the Auckland City Council, meaning it is a significant building protected from major exterior modification. The interior contains a reading room, Sunday School premises and a cavernous wood-panelled auditorium with seating in pews for 300’]...

Empty pews give Church hollow ring... There’s no denying that times are getting tough for God Inc[in NZ]. Last year’s census figures... show the number of people professing Christian belief continues to decline – down from 2.3 million to 2.1 million[(or from 68% of the population to 61%)] in the five years since the previous census. A couple of hundred thousand empty pews may not sound like a lot but it looks worse when you consider the increase in the population as a whole. Some 72[%] of us said we were Christian in 1986... And the numbers of professed faithful may overstate the case anyway. Some will be what one churchman called “weddings and funerals Christians,” or people who wrote on the census form the church their parents went to... [T]he number who described themselves as Anglicans fell... 17[% to 631,761 (during the ‘1920s the Anglican Church – at that time the denomination with the most Maori adherents – threatened to excommunicate any Anglican who joined the Ratana Church; but the influence of Bill Ratana – known as Te Mangai, a mouthpiece of God – amongst Maori of all religious persuasions increased’; today the Ratana Church is ‘NZ’s 7th-largest with a membership of 36,450’)]. It’s not quite as bad for the Catholics and the Presbyterians (down 13[% to 473,112 and 470,442 respectively]) or the Methodists (down 12) but it is bad news for the Mormons, whose world leader told me in May that business had never been better: the numbers are down... 14[%]... to 41,000. Unsurprisingly, the numbers of Hindu... and Buddhist faithful have risen sharply[to 25,551 and 28,131 respectively], but so have the... non-believers – now at least 25[%] of us... And while the number of people objecting to answering has stayed pretty steady, the number who simply ignore the question has more than trebled. What it adds up to is a country where Christianity is in the process of becoming a minority. And that causes some to wonder whether Christian belief should infuse the national debate quite as strongly as it does.

...Is religion in N[Z] alive or dead? ...Those who declare themselves as having no religion were the largest category of the religion question in last year’s census. More than 890,000 people said they had no religion, up more than 34[%]... It was the first time this category had headed the field... In 1991, Anglicans had the largest number... And the holy war was not confined to those in the religion and no-religion camps. Traditional churches were having to fight to hang on to their flocks who were drifting to the Pentacostal movement[, which is ‘characterized by a literal interpretation of the Bible’]... In response, the... mainstream churches were... finding ways to adapt to the changes in society... Non-believers were philosophical about the declining church numbers... The phenomenon was simply an evolutionary process by which religion was losing its position in society. “People are tuning out...,” said... the Association of Free Thinkers and Atheists... Churches would not disappear overnight, however. “Religion has been going for 6000 years. It is going to take a lot of people a long time to wean off superstition,”... - 1997

In a largely secularised culture such as our own, it is always possible to write off the Christian movement in all its form[s] as having at last had its day. True, in most western countries and cultures Churches as institutions are in the course of being downsized as fewer citizens find a place for formal religion in their busy lives. Yet the view that the movement which began with Jesus has finally run its course simply does not square with the facts, even in N[Z]... In world terms, the claim that Christianity is finished could hardly be further astray. The latest figures I can lay my hands on are from the 1980s, and must be very approximate, but are far from negligible. Research then showed that 1433 million of the world's people would call themselves Christian. They are distributed between 1.5 million congregations, served by 3.75 million clergy and other workers; 43 million *Bibles* were distributed each year, as well as 20,000 Christian periodicals and an equal number of book titles... If "an institution is but the lengthened shadow of a single man," the shadow cast by Jesus of Nazareth shows no sign of fading away, although the institution's fortunes will continue to fluctuate, country by country and century by century.

In 1990, church-affiliated Christians made up slightly less than one-half of the [US] population at 49.3%... Roman Catholics made up the largest single denomination... with a membership roll of 57 million... In 1990, the total number of pastors, priests, and other religious leaders was estimated at 340,094, serving 350,337 churches.

Preaching to more than 10,000 people... [means] the pastor-teacher of the interdominational Grace Community Church in Sun Valley – the largest church in Los Angeles – might be tempted to speak out on all manner of social issues. So thought the editor of the *Los Angeles Times*... when the men met over lunch recently. Society does not need to hear another opinion, [he] said in Auckland this week. "It needs to hear the voice of God." ...rather than be known as a social commentator or a crusader for justice... [the] broadcaster and author of dozens of Scriptural resources which are distributed worldwide... [but] for which he draws no royalties... says he has devoted his 27 years in ministry... to giving God a voice through preaching. Sunday by Sunday he feeds his all-age multi-cultural flock a steady diet of the *Bible* – verse by verse... The Church does not need more entertainment... American culture[, which displays the]... inability of people to take responsibility for their actions in a society which he said bordered on no-fault crime... is over-indulged in entertainment... [He's in NZ] for three weeks to speak at conferences in the North and South Islands about church growth... [In related news, the] wages of sin are supposed to be death but in the interim, the... Christian Coalition has totted the annual cost of sin in N[Z] and arrived at the astonishing figure of \$8.4 billion... A co-leader of the coalition... said... "It is... appalling that we are having to pay out from the public purse vast sums to cover over the cracks of a valueless society." In all, the direct cost to the taxpayer has been put at \$1.9 billion, while the[remainder is the] cost to the wider economy... The coalition admits the numbers are a "loose figure," but still plans to use them... to illustrate the costs of dishonesty and neglected morality, integrity and upright lifestyles.

...Candidates on the Christian Coalition party list have been measured against the *Bible* to make sure they stack up... 41 candidates... had passed a rigorous "integrity" test. An unspecified number of potential candidates failed...

The Christians' bottom-line coalition terms are still being worked out... [On one side] is... the harder-line Christian Heritage[, while]... the Christian Democrat half... does not insist on Biblical dictum... [However, there] is a strong thread of fundamentalism through both parties... [– although there is going to be] nothing about making religious or Christian education compulsory in schools... [Indeed,] the Bible is not explicitly advanced as the fundament of any curriculum. Equally, the coalition does not have a shopping list of the favourite bogey bills. Repeal or even amendment of the Homosexual Law Reform Act, the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act and Human Rights Act are not seen as attainable coalition goals in the next Parliament, nor even bargaining chips. The coalition will also disappoint its foes by failing to campaign for the death penalty or the restoration of capital punishment. It is silent, even, on the right to discipline children by hitting them. This is a more generic brand of Christianity. No one doubts both coalition parties have longer-term ambitions in these controversial directions. But... they are[simply] trying to take a more realistic approach. "We are always saying at our public meetings that it is no use just having policies for Christians. They have to be policies for everyone."

...*"I need 500 supporters to establish the True Christian Party."* ...I am standing for parliament in the Tamaki electorate as an independent under the banner True Christian, because other "Christian" parties misrepresent *Jesus Christ*... True Christianity has almost ceased to exist having been supplanted by pseudo-Christian "Judeo-Christianity" and business managers, while a massive accumulation of myths, legends and tales of the supernatural is obscuring the truth about *Jesus*... He was a politician who fearlessly sought to change human systems... the supreme visionary[who] taught that moderate free enterprise democracy with heavy lashings of personal freedom is the supreme social and political system[, and]... that such a system will evolve on our planet... Nearly two thousand years after physical death his intentions have not been realised. Religious and political hierarchies are mainly male dominated, with some religious leaders clinging precariously to the notion that god is a masculine entity so only men can speak to god. - 1996

Hundreds of thousands of men held hands, prayed and prostrated themselves on the Washington Mall yesterday in a dramatic show of Christian fervour... Organised by Promise Keepers, the fastest-growing Christian evangelical movement in America in recent years, the male-only gathering may have been the largest religious event ever held in the U[S]. But there would be no official attendance figure issued. The National Park Service, which used to count crowds in Washington, has stopped doing so since its estimates became sources of controversy. [However, the]Promise Keeper's founder... said that numbers were irrelevant. "Success is not going to be measured numerically. There's only one audience member as far as we're concerned, and that's Jesus Christ,"... Forty-four speakers addressed the gathering, urging men to... unite and convert the nation... [by spreading] the gospel... to... work for church unity, end racism, aspire to sexual purity and take back family leadership... "Don't apologise. Don't say you're sorry. God tells you you are responsible to spiritually lead your family..."... said... a preacher from Dallas... [The US] President... praised the rally in his weekly radio address to the nation.

...Not Only in America. In fact, it's coming to a city near you: the men-only evangelical Christian movement which attracted hundreds of thousands to the streets of Washington. Promise Keepers, a cross-denominational group founded by a former football coach... plans events in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch next month. Women's rights campaigners are already alarmed. As the participants in... Washington filtered back to their homes charged with inspiration, feminists were decrying Promise Keepers as an attempt to reintroduce authoritarian control of women... "I do not think an authoritarian reassessment of the right to rule is going to do anything other than make things worse," said... the Alliance spokeswoman on women's affairs...

'The guys' on a mission to take back what 'feminists' have grabbed... Promise Keepers say they're not chauvinists: they're just misunderstood... The group's director in this country... went on the front foot in defence of his "guys" soon after returning from the Washington rally. It's all about interpretation, he says. Take the chapter "Reclaiming Your Manhood" from the Promise Keepers' manual, for instance... [The group's leader] writes: "Sit down with your wife and say something like his: 'Honey, I've made a terrible mistake. I've given you my role. I gave up leading this family, and I forced you to take my place. Now I must reclaim my role'... I'm not suggesting you ask for your role back, I'm urging you to take it back... There can be no compromise here." [The NZ director] is unfailing in his support of the sentiment in that chapter. "I've got no problem, but the word leadership seems to be confused with domination. Most of what he is talking about is spiritual leadership." Promise Keepers talk about

encouraging men to take a Christ-like leadership role. They use the image of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples. But the beginnings of the Promise Keepers has more to do with football than foot-baths... "There is a need for men to take responsibility for themselves..." said... a former women's studies lecturer, [who] is wary of the Promise Keepers... "But when it is linked to the kind of statements they are making, it has the absolute opposite impact, which is about the assertion of power and control."

...Listening to... [him] speak, you get the impression he was always this good. As he held 1000 people spellbound at yesterday morning's mayoral prayer breakfast in the newly refurbished town hall, the former lawyer... [delivered] an address which was dense, textured and sublimely paced. No doubt [this man] – dubbed the "hatchet man" of the... White House in the dark days of the Watergate coverup – has honed his skills as an orator in the quarter century since his well-publicised conversion to Christianity. [This man], whose official title was Special Counsel to the President, does not shy from talking about his publicly recorded sins. The first member of the... Administration jailed on Watergate-related charges, he served seven months of a one-to-three years sentence in an Alabama prison. And he is happy to tell yesterday's assembly how it came about. "I went to the prosecutors and said that I hadn't done what they charged me with but I'd done something they didn't know about and if they wanted to charge me with that I'd plead guilty... In situations like that you usually find that prosecutors are extraordinarily obliging." For the record... "I gave damaging information to the press... and that was obstruction of justice..." ...He allows that it is in the nature of the political process "to bring out the worst in us." ...Of course... these days... [he] is more interested... in talking about his redemption than his sinning. His 1973 conversion prompted the *Boston Globe* to comment that "if [he] can repent, there has to be hope for just about everybody." And it is as a globetrotting evangelist that he is to be found these days... "...we live in an age that is aggressively secularist and is trying to remove Christian values from popular discourse." I suggest to [him] that the events of the previous evening, in the very building where we're talking, have rather demonstrated the opposite: the success of a largely Christian lobby in persuading the council to deny public funds to the [Auckland gay and lesbian] Hero Parade tended to suggest that the tide was turning. "If it is," he says, "then in N[Z] you are unique because I don't find that tide turning any place else. People resent those who bring the Christian viewpoint into public debate..." [His] visit was organised by the local branch of the Prison Fellowship, the organisation he launched on his release from jail in 1975. Its guiding principle: that "prison is very expensive and it's counter-productive. There are alternatives. They just take a little bit of effort and creativity and resistance to the public pressure which says we should lock 'em up and throw away the key." ...[By the way], a little known Catholic priest was last night poised to kill off the high political aspirations of [a] former Papua New Guinea prime minister... In a David and Goliath struggle... [the priest], who risked the Vatican's wrath to take on the financial and political might of... one of the wealthiest men in P[NG]... had virtually sealed victory for the Western Highlands regional seat... [The priest who campaigned strongly throughout the province... "...spoke about social services and how they were run down, and tired politicians who were doing nothing for the country... I think he touched a nerve that ran through the... [people]."]...

IF EVER the myth of the journalist as observer needed to be exploded... *The Lost Tribe*... would make powerful gunpowder. The British journalist and broadcaster first read about the discovery of a hitherto unknown Stone Age tribe in P[NG] in 1993... and when asked why... he's in P[NG] on the trail of the Liawep himself... he says he wants to record the moment of change as an observer. This doesn't mean a lot to most people he meets on the way and the experts are downright scornful. "Lost?" exclaims one anthropologist. "Who says they are lost? Do they feel lost?" Another warns him about the rigours of finding the Liawep. "It's tough, buddy, and excuse me for saying so but you don't look too tough to me." But the wisest comment comes from the chairman of the local research committee, who refuses [the journalist] permission to visit the tribe. "It is possible you will be dangerous to them. Or they to you." Nevertheless, [the journalist] decides to go – without permission... Although the tribe were "discovered" by a local government officer and already had a local missionary living with them, [the journalist] is the first white person they have seen. The 79-strong group live deep in the jungle of the far north-west of P[NG] where they worship a mountain and dress in leaves. Until recently they had been using stone axes. In a sense [the journalist] is already too late. The moment of change has already begun... The missionary is fighting to stamp out their mountain worship. The government officer has already destroyed the community's traditional hierarchy [by] replacing the former chief with the young man he first encountered. And the tribe, once the region's fiercest and most feared warriors, are becoming timid as they learn about the modern world... Apparently, [PNG] has more missionaries a head than anywhere else – one for every 2000 people. [● 'The chief suspect in last year's gruesome murder of an AUSn Christian missionary was arrested yesterday during a night raid on his Indian forest hideout. The suspect had been on the run since a mob of Hindu zealots burnt missionary Graham Staines, aged 58, and his two young sons to death while they slept in a jeep'...

'The chief minister of India's Orissa state resigned yesterday, accepting moral responsibility for attacks on Christians, including the burning to death of an AUSn missionary and his young sons on January 22 last year. Last week, a Catholic nun in Orissa was allegedly raped after two men offered her a ride in a taxi. Later, two young Christian tribal people were murdered, although police were quick to deny any sectarian motive for the killings. The latest Orissa incidents followed a wave of arsons at churches and missionary schools in the western state of Gujarat. Church leaders have complained of an organised campaign of violence against their tiny community in India and accused the ruling Hindu nationalists of appeasing militants behind the attacks.'

...*Spurning Marx and Mao, millions of Chinese are turning to Christianity. But the state is intent on crushing their belief* The Chinese Communist Party began to suppress religion after it took over the country in 1949. Thousands of Protestants and Catholics, refusing to repudiate their faith, were sent to prison. After the fall of the hard-line Maoists in the late 1970s, foreign companies, teachers and even ideas began to be cautiously welcomed in China. Some churches and temples were gradually returned to state-controlled religious organizations. A few monasteries and seminaries reopened, though only under rigid government supervision. Tens of thousands of political prisoners were released. However, the return to power of communist hardliners after the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre led to a new wave of repression. Heavy fines have been levied for preaching outside the state-controlled church or for possessing foreign Christian literature. Christians are often locked up without formal charges. One April morning in 1989, 1500 Catholics of the village of Youtong in Hebei Province stood in frightened silence as 270 vehicles filled with soldiers snaked towards them. The villagers had gathered for prayer in a school playground where their destroyed church had once stood. For years they had petitioned authorities to return the land so that they could rebuild their church. Now they saw the government's reply. More than 4000 police and soldiers piled out of the trucks, armed with clubs, electric stun batons and bricks. The police broke through the villagers' frail line and beat them as they ran. By the end of that bloody day, two young people had been killed and more than 300 others wounded. 32 people were arrested. No-one has heard anything of them since. Hardly a month now passes without arrests of Catholic and Protestant leaders, evangelists and lay people. Officially, the government estimates that of China's one billion citizens, five million are Protestants and four million are Catholic. Outside observers, however, estimate there are eight to ten million active Catholics and an even larger number of Protestants. Last year, a European priest made a pilgrimage to a remote corner of South China where a famous missionary had died. When hiking past two elderly women, the priest wished them "Good day." "You are a Catholic!" one of the women declared. The women led the priest to their village, which was entirely Catholic. "When was the last time you saw a priest?" the European asked. "In 1951," they replied. He had died in a communist labour camp.'

...SOME missionaries do God's work in China, others in Africa or India. Until now, though, none set their sights on cyberspace. [However,] that's where souls will be lost in the 21st century, says... [the] soft-spoken monk... known on line and in religious circles for turning a group of financially strapped Benedictines into... designers... producing spiritually oriented Web sites compelling enough to compete with the likes of Microsoft and Disney... But his new project is the most ambitious yet: Founding a religious community whose mission will be in a virtual country inhabited by a new generation. Christian ideas "have been almost completely lost" in secular society, he says, but he hopes the Scribes of St Peter can use the far-reaching Internet to bring them back.

...“Why don’t they get on with their own miserable lives and let us live ours?” wails [a *NZ Herald* columnist]... It’s a cry that has echoed frequently down the past couple of millennia... When it comes to getting up people’s noses, religious Christianity is without peer in history... [But] one of the many wondrous things about the life of Christ was that it was devoid of condemnation – except of the religious leaders of the day... Other than that he condemned no one... not Judas who betrayed him; nor Peter who denied him. St Paul told the early Christians in Rome: “There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” And if our Lord does not condemn us, who are we to condemn others? Christianity has been held back ever since the apostles were still warm in their graves by religionists who have sought to impose their beliefs and opinions on others...

[‘Professor gained notoriety in the 1960s when he challenged some fundamental precepts of Christian belief Today, the Rangiora-born 82-year-old emeritus professor of religious studies at Victoria University is considered one of NZ’s foremost academics in the field of religious studies. But in 1967, while principal of Knox Theological Hall in Dunedin, the centre of Presbyterian teaching in NZ, he questioned the Resurrection and the fundamental Christian belief of the immortal soul. Comments such as: “Anyone who thinks of God as a Santa Claus in the sky to whom one prays in order to fulfil one’s own personal wants must be prepared to let that image die, for it is a travesty of the truth,” led to hate mail and his trial for heresy by the Presbyterian Church. The charges were unproven. “Many of the ideas I was simply putting forward then are widely accepted these days and don’t cause problems, although they still do within the conservative rumps of the churches.”]

...‘the leader of the world’s 70 million Anglican faithful, the Archbishop of Canterbury, has triggered a religious storm after questioning the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the *Mail on Sunday* reports. The archbishop undermined the central tenet of Christian belief by stating: “I can tell you frankly that while we can be absolutely sure that Jesus lived and that he was certainly crucified on the cross, we cannot with the same certainty say that we know he was raised by God from the dead.” While the archbishop firmly believes in the resurrection, “it goes against human experience and our first instinct is incredulity.”]

...JESUS Christ was not a Christian and had no intention of founding a religion. The faith that bears his name was “invented” by St Paul, according to a controversial new biography. The claims... have caused such alarm in the Church of England that one of the country’s leading authorities on Paul has rushed into print to “put the record straight... Many ordinary church-goers could have their faith significantly shaken by the idea that Christianity is really based on a muddle when it is not...,” says the... Pauline scholar at Oxford and Cambridge... [The biography of Paul follows its author’s] equally controversial biography of Jesus and his own departure from the Church after many years as a high-profile Anglican. In his latest salvo... [the biographer] argues that Paul was Christianity’s creative director who came up with the idea of Jesus being divine. However, Paul, like Jesus, never envisaged starting a new religion. Jesus’ family, says [the biographer,] believed he was neither a divine being nor born of a virgin; to them he was simply an observant Jew who wanted his followers to become even purer Jews. Even his closest friends made no effort to break from Judaism. Paul had little interest in the historic life of Jesus of Nazareth, and it was after his mystical “apocalypse” experience on the road to Damascus that he developed a romantic religious vision with a crucified Jew at its heart – a notion that would have come as a surprise to Jesus. Paul transformed him into the focus of a new religion. History, [the biographer] concludes, would have remembered Jesus only briefly as a minor “Galilean exorcist” had it not been for Paul...

This is not the first time this claim has been made. Many have seen Paul as the villain... Before accepting [the biographer’s] claim, it would be wise to look briefly at Paul. Because Jesus’ brief and turbulent life and ministry had been lived within the narrow confines of Palestine, his followers at first saw themselves as a purifying sect within the Jewish covenant and establishment. Even the first disciples were not quite sure what Paul was up to. They had taken the whole Jewish tradition with its inbuilt exclusiveness for granted, then super-imposed on it the Christ event. Paul (Saul as he then was) had been an unhappy but totally convinced Jew, ablaze with indignation towards those he saw as schismatics and heretics, followers of a false Messiah. Then, against all expectation, he had an encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus... Paul then, according to [the biographer], transformed this Galilean peasant into a cosmic figure... We will never know exactly what did happen that morning, but we do know that to his dying day this tough, intelligent, dedicated man believed that the one he had been so busy persecuting was indeed the living revelation of God. His powerful personality accepted that fact and after long contemplation he began to see that Jesus... had far broader implications for the wider world than his early followers had discovered. With enormous courage he leaped the gap between Jew and Gentile, Asia and Europe, and began universalising the faith... yet Paul remained to his dying day a Jew whose life and character had been shaped by the matrix within which he was born... Why has Paul been so influential not only in individual lives, but also in the unfolding drama of history? To begin with, he was the most prolific contributor to the New Testament, his epistles making up a quarter of the text – letters written by a missionary to Churches he had founded, long before the gospels themselves were finally plucked from human memories and written down... Paul was a man of action as well as of thought, constantly on the move and often in danger... The letters, written in haste and sometimes under stress, are more like the log-book of an explorer moving through unknown territory than the theological discourse of a university don... So much of his writing has stood the test of time... Augustine and Luther, Wesley and Barth... found in... his writings... the inspiration for great new movements of thought and action including the reformation. Yet contradictions remain... He could give us the great hymn on love in 1st Corinthians 13 and a hundred other passages of inspired scripture, but... he could also pen opaque and turgid passages, logic-chopping and argumentative... He displays attitudes to women which today we would challenge. Slavery was to him a natural institution, though his writings would, centuries later, inspire its abolition... We sometimes overlook that Paul was not the only apostle or thinker of the early Church. Many others whose thoughts and works never made their way into the New Testament were even then actively working out and sharing the implications of the basic Christian encounter, taking it to lands Paul never visited... For them also the coming of Christ had been decisive... Delusions and hoaxes may for a time lead people down strange paths to follow false visions, but sooner or later reality catches up. The Christian experience persists. Is it possible that the tent-maker... was indeed on to something? - 1997

It is a delusion to make Christianity begin with Jesus... [as it] was Paul who first led Christianity into the sphere of history.

His efforts and his vision of a world church were responsible for the rapid spread of Christianity and for the speed with which it became a universal religion. None of the followers of Jesus did more than he to establish the patterns of Christian thought and practice... For Paul’s life there are no reliable sources outside the New Testament. The primary source is his own correspondence... The letters alone, however, provide no connected story. For that it is necessary to rely on Acts, written some 30 years after Paul’s death. Because its evidence sometimes conflicts with that of the letters, some scholars question the historicity of Acts. The general belief is, however, that Acts was written by Paul’s companion the evangelist Luke, who drew on his own diary for much of the story... Paul’s birthplace, Tarsus in Cilicia, a district of Asia Minor lying on the main trade route between East and West, was a cosmopolitan university city, which had been the home of famous Stoic philosophers. Paul was proud of his native city and manifested his debt to its Greek culture in his command of idiomatic Greek, in the occasional use of philosophical terms, and in a wealth of metaphors drawn from city life. He was proud, too, of his Roman citizenship inherited from his father; he used his Roman name Paulus in preference to his Jewish name Saul, and he found in the world empire of Rome a model for his later faith in a universal Christian commonwealth... According to Acts, Paul was trained as a rabbi under... a renowned teacher of the Law... Like most rabbis he also learned a trade – tent making – by which throughout his missionary career he was regularly to earn his own living. It is unlikely that he ever met Jesus. In Jerusalem, however, he learned enough about Jesus to regard him as a menace to Pharisaic Judaism, for Paul first appears on the scene of history as a persecutor of the Christian Church. In the judgment of Paul the Pharisee, Jesus had broken the Law and taught others to break it and had

been justly condemned under the curse that the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy pronounces on lawbreakers... Through a vision on the road to Damascus, Paul became convinced that... the curse of crucifixion had been real enough, but it had been borne vicariously. Out of love for men Christ had identified himself with them and now invited them to be identified with him in his new life... Immediately after this experience, Paul withdrew into solitude in Arabia, no doubt to think over the implications of what had happened to him... Three years later Paul spent two weeks in Jerusalem visiting Peter and James... From Jerusalem Paul returned to his native Cilicia... 14 years later (or possibly 14 years from his conversion)... the missionary Barnabas finds him and takes him to Antioch... Thus far, Christianity had been disseminated beyond Palestine without plan or direction from its leaders. Christians had been scattered by persecution and had carried the gospel with them, preaching at first to fellow Jews but finding a growing response also among Gentiles. The idea of a planned mission first arose at Antioch. The missionaries Barnabas and Paul, before setting out on their travels, went to Jerusalem, accompanied by Titus. They had a private consultation with the leaders of the Christians there – James, Peter, and John – and reached agreement on future missionary policy... Shortly after this Peter visited Antioch. One question that had not been discussed at Jerusalem was the relationship between Jewish and Gentile Christians in the new community. Jews were forbidden by their Law to eat with Gentiles. The church at Antioch had been disregarding this rule... until a protest came from James that this practice... was making things difficult and even dangerous for the church in Jerusalem. The Jewish members, including Peter and Barnabas, accordingly abandoned their liberalism for fear of Jewish reprisals against the mother church. According to Galatians, it was left for Paul to show his mettle by insisting that not only church unity but the very truth of the gospel was at stake.

Jesus is one element in the Biblical religion, an element of paramount importance for those who believe him to be the Christ. Yet though Jesus... is the beginning and centre of this creed, Jesus himself even in the Christian world is only a component of Christianity; he was not its founder and through him alone it would not have come into being. The reality of Jesus was overlaid by ideas that were alien to him. He was made into something different... [Jesus] was not a philosopher who reflects methodically and systematically orders his ideas. He was not a social reformer who makes plans; for he left the world as it was, it was about to end anyway.

The difficulty began when the world failed to end. In the new situation, thought and action had to be revised. In practice, the place of the expected kingdom was taken by the Church, Jesus, the herald of the end, became the institutor of the sacrament. But once the kingdom of God that would end history was drawn into history, its whole character was inevitably changed... The articles of faith: Christ's sacrificial death; the redemption of all believers through this death, wherein Christ took their sins upon himself; justification by faith; Christ as the second Person in the Trinity; Christ as Logos (world reason), participating in the creation of the world and guiding the people of Israel through the desert; the Church as Christ's *corpus mysticum*; Christ as the second Adam, historical beginning of a new mankind; all these tenets and many more that mark the rich history of Christian dogma have nothing to do with Jesus. Christ was a new reality that was to produce the most overwhelming effects in history... Without the churches, Christianity could not have developed through the centuries. If Jesus kept a place amid the innumerable motifs that entered into this development, it was thanks to the canon of the Christian Scriptures. While even so early a Christian as Paul had no interest in Jesus the man, the Gospels remained a part of the New Testament. The Christian canon, including the books of the Old Testament, is so rich in contradictory themes that there is no justification for trying to find anywhere in it the key to the Gospel, to the message of Jesus, to the Biblical religion. Even Jesus is not the key. But it was his reality that gave the impetus wherever the idea of the imitation of Jesus has arisen.

A Council of the Church... agreed that Jesus Christ is truly God and truly man, two natures in one person (the 'Chalcedonian definition'). The definition is generally accepted by the Churches, though from the beginning there was uneasiness about its interpretation, and recently it has come under sustained criticism... The Coptic Church[... a]... Christian tradition mainly present in the... lands of Egypt and the Sudan... separated from the Orthodox Church after the Council of Chalcedon in 451. The Copts were Monophysites who believed that Jesus Christ had a divine nature only, rather than a human and divine nature which was the orthodox belief.

...[Docetism is the] belief... that the natural body of Jesus Christ was only apparent... and not real, thereby stressing the divinity of Christ and denying any real physical suffering on his part... Gnosticism was considered a heresy by the early Church Fathers, particularly for its... docetic view of Christ (ie that Christ had only 'assumed' human form, and that his supposed crucifixion was merely a deception to fool the evil powers).

...Origen (c.185 – c.254) Christian scholar and teacher, the most learned and original of the early Church fathers, born probably in Alexandria, the son of a Christian martyr... In the last 20 years of his life he travelled widely. In the persecution under Decius in Tyre he was cruelly tortured and there he died.

...we no longer take sword against a nation, nor do we learn any more to make war, having become sons of peace for the sake of Jesus who is our leader. - Origen

...Moses, and the prophets, taught that he who kills, maims, or injures his neighbours, does evil. To resist such evil and destroy it, the doer of evil is to be punished by death or maiming or some personal injury. Injury must be met by injury, murder by murder, torture by torture, evil by evil... But Christ rejects this... Do not resist an insult with an insult, but rather bear the repeated insult from the doer of evil. What was authorized is prohibited. If we understand what kind of resistance is taught, we must clearly see what we are taught by Christ's non-resistance... A Christian has not the right under any condition to deprive of life or to subject to insult him who does evil to his neighbour... May a man kill or maim another in self-defence? ...No... May he enter a court with a complaint, to have his injurer punished? ...No, for what he does through others he really does himself... May he fight in an army against enemies, or against domestic rebels? ...Of course not. He cannot take any part in war or warlike preparations. He cannot use death-dealing arms. He cannot resist injury with injury, no matter whether he be alone or with others, through himself or through others... May he voluntarily choose or fit out military men for the government? ...He can do nothing of the kind, if he wishes to be true to Christ's law... May he voluntarily give money to aid the government, which is supported by military forces, capital punishment, or violence in general? ...No, unless the money is intended for some special object, just in itself, where the aim and means are good... May he pay taxes to such a government? ...No, he must not voluntarily pay the taxes, but he must also not resist their collection. The taxes imposed by the government are collected independently of the will of the subjects. It is impossible to resist the collection without having to recourse to violence; but a Christian must not use violence, and so he must give up his property to the violence which is exercised by the powers... May a Christian vote at elections and take part in a court or in the government? ...No, participation in elections, in the law-court, or the government, is participation in governmental violence... In what does the chief significance of the doctrine of non-resistance consist? ...In that it alone makes it possible to tear out evil by the root, both out of our own hearts and those of our neighbours. The teaching forbids the doing of that by which evil is multiplied in the world. He who attacks another and insults him, engenders in him the sentiment of hatred, the root of all evil. To offend another because he has offended us, on the specious pretext of removing an evil, is really to repeat an evil deed, both against him and against ourselves – to beget, or at least to free and to encourage, the very demon we wish to expel. Satan cannot be driven out by Satan, untruth cannot be cleansed by untruth, and evil cannot be vanquished by evil. True non-resistance is the one true resistance to evil. It crushes the serpent's head. It kills and finally destroys

the evil sentiment... But even if the idea of the doctrine be right, is it practicable? ...It is as practicable as any good prescribed by the Law of God. The good cannot under all circumstances be executed without self-renunciation, privation, suffering, and in extreme cases the loss of life itself. But he who values life more than the fulfilment of God's will is already dead to the one true life. Such a man, in trying to save his life, shall lose it. And in general, where non-resistance demands the sacrifice of one life, or the sacrifice of some essential good of life, resistance demands thousands of such sacrifices. Non-resistance preserves; resistance destroys. It is incomparably safer to act justly than to act unjustly; to bear insult than to resist it by violence... If no man resisted evil by evil, our world would be blessed... If only one man acted thus, and all the others agreed to crucify him, would it not be more glorious for him to die in the triumph of non-resisting love, praying for his enemies, than to live wearing the crown of Caesar, bespattered with the blood of the slain? But one man or a thousand who have firmly determined not to resist evil with evil – whether among enlightened people or savage neighbours – are much safer from violence than those who rely on violence. The robber, murderer, or deceiver, will more quickly leave them alone than those who resist with weapons. They who take the sword perish with the sword, and those who seek peace, who act in a friendly manner, inoffensively, who forget and forgive offences, for the most part enjoy peace, or, if they die, die blessed... And, if, in the very worst case, a few members of the minority should be persecuted to death, these men, dying for the truth, would leave behind them their teaching, sanctified by their martyr's death. - THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU

...when he had called unto *him* his twelve disciples, he gave them power *against* unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness... These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them... to... go, preach, saying... Heal the sick... raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor script for *your* journey... take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it... is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you... And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved... Fear not... therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed: and hid, that shall not be known... And fear not them which kill the body, but... rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell... Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father... Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law. - St Matthew 10

...he sat down... with... the twelve apostles... And he said unto them... he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one... And they said, Lord, behold, here *are* two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough. - St Luke 22

In the Gospel, Jesus appears as an elemental power, by turns unbendingly aggressive and infinitely gentle. “He looked on them with anger”, “he assailed him”, “he rebuked him”, “he menaced him”. Finding no fruit on a fig tree, he withers it with his curse... Violently, with a whip, he drives the money changers from the temple. Jesus can simply not be interpreted as passive, mild, moved always and only by love...

[Jesus is portrayed] as the ideal of trust. Yet Jesus... sets Judas up to betray him and prevents anyone interfering with the outcome so that the Scripture might be fulfilled. Jesus knew Judas would afterwards become a scapegoat. Thus, he betrayed Judas. - 1996

In *The Dead Sea Scrolls Deception*, [the authors give the] material additional drama when they explain that it signifies a considerable threat to the Christian faith. “It had hitherto been believed,”... that “Jesus’ teachings were unique... ‘good news’ which had never been enunciated in the world before.” ...Paul reaches back to... [practices] that we know only from the Qumran texts, but... almost all apocalyptic groups characteristically required nonviolence and relied on God's monopoly on force. All... of[the] early... Christians and the Essenes... belonged to such representatives of nonviolence. - Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls

The early Church was noted for ‘the constancy of the Christian martyrs under persecution’. However, some Christian communities eventually decided that it was acceptable for them to use violence. This modification might've been due to the mixed messages from Jesus; could've been a response to violence against Christians; or may've been related to the fact that Paul – the most famous Roman Christian – was apparently honoured by God despite his earlier acts of violence (‘Paul, who was himself martyred at Rome c. AD 64, had assisted at the martyrdom of St Stephen’). Regardless of why this modification occurred, it made the faith more palatable to the citizens and rulers of Rome!

Because they effectively ruled the known world like only God was supposed to be able to do, most of the Caesars lived out the Egyptian fantasy that they actually were gods. Consequently, they thought nothing of killing other humans for trivial reasons – even as a means of entertainment!

gladiator... a professional who fought, usually to the death, for public entertainment. The practice, arising from Etruscan funerals where it replaced human sacrifices... became an official diversion... The fighters were usually slaves or Christians trained for the purpose.

...gladiators originally performed... with the intent to give the dead man armed attendants in the next world; hence the fights were usually to the death. At shows in Rome these exhibitions became wildly popular and increased in size from three pairs at the first known exhibition in 264 BC (at the funeral of a Brutus) to 300 pairs in the time of Julius Caesar (d. 44 BC). Hence the shows extended from one day to as many as a hundred, under the emperor Titus; while the emperor Trajan in his triumph (AD 107) had 5,000 pairs of gladiators... The shows were announced several days before they took place by bills affixed to the walls of houses and public buildings; copies were also sold in the streets. These bills gave the names of the chief pairs of competitors, the date of the show, the name of the giver[(sponsor)], and the different types of combats. The spectacle began with a procession of the gladiators through the arena, and the proceedings opened with a sham fight... with wooden swords and javelins. The signal for real fighting was given by the sound of the trumpet, those who showed fear being driven on the arena with whips and red-hot irons. When a gladiator was wounded, the spectators shouted “*Habet*” (“He is wounded”); if he was at the mercy of his adversary, he lifted up his forefinger to implore the clemency of the people, to whom (in the later times of the Republic) the giver left the decision as to his life or death... The reward for victory consisted of branches of palm, sometimes of money. If a gladiator survived a number of combats he might be discharged from further service; he could, however, reengage after discharge. On occasion gladiators became politically important, because many of the more turbulent public men had bodyguards composed of them. This of course led to occasional clashes with bloodshed on both sides. Gladiators acting on their own initiative, as in the rising led by Spartacus... in 73 – 71 BC, were considered still more of a menace. Gladiators were drawn from various sources but were chiefly slaves and criminals. Discipline was strict, but a successful gladiator not only was famous but, according to the satires of Juvenal, enjoyed the favours of society women... To be head of a school (*ludus*) of gladiators was a well-known but disgraceful occupation. To own gladiators and hire them out was, however, a regular and legitimate branch of commerce. With the coming of Christianity, gladiatorial shows began to fall into disfavour. The emperor Constantine I actually abolished gladiatorial games in AD 325, but apparently without much effect since they were again abolished by the emperor Honorius (393 – 423) and may perhaps even have continued for a century after that.

Constantine... Roman emperor from 306, who in his youth... learned the new Byzantine ideas of absolute sovereignty. In 312 he defeated his rival Maxentius at a battle near Rome, adopting the *labarum*... consisting of a spear converted by a transverse bar into a cross and surmounted by a wreath enclosing the Christian monogram of the first two letters (chi rho) of *Christos*... as a standard (reportedly after a vision of the Cross; probably because a Christian symbol secured the loyalty of the army, which was largely Christian). Shortly afterwards toleration and imperial favour were given to the Christian faith. His policy was to unite the Church to the secular State by the closest possible ties... After 324 he fixed his capital at Byzantine (rebuilt and inaugurated as Constantinople in 330), a move which led to an increasing imperial control of the Eastern Church and incidentally left the Bishop of Rome as the most prominent figure in the West; the secular importance of the papacy in the Middle Ages... [–] the period in Europe after the Dark Ages... [(a term denoting the obscurity or barbarity of the period [following] the fall of the Roman Empire) –] ...dates from this time...

Charlemagne... military and political colossus of the Dark Ages... who ruled the Franks... Had he not conquered the Saxons, whom he severely Christianized, and the Bavarians, Germany could hardly have come into existence... His coronation [as ‘emperor of the Romans – after providing Pope Leo III with military aid and protection’ –] on Christmas Day, 800, is taken to have inaugurated the Holy Roman Empire... He gave to government new moral drive and religious responsibility.

The first years of his reign were spent in strenuous campaigns to subdue and Christianize neighbouring kingdoms, particularly the Saxons... In 782 the Saxons rose again in rebellion and destroyed a Frankish army at Sunteberg, which Charlemagne avenged by beheading 4500 Saxons... The remaining years of his reign were spent in consolidating his vast empire which reached from the Ebro in northern Spain to the Elbe.

...Encouraged by a spirit of toleration, Jewish culture and religion flourished in Spain during the 13th and 14th centuries; but when, in the 1390s, Jews supported the losing side in a civil war, anti-Jewish violence flared up. As a result, large numbers of Jews, including many of their leaders, became Christians through fear... However, despite initial acceptance many Christians began to suspect that conversos were remaining secret Jews. Thus anti-converso violence broke out in the mid 1400s, and the converts were dubbed *marranos* from the Spanish word for ‘swine’. When the Spanish Inquisition was established (1480) to investigate all forms of heresy... *marranos* accused of remaining Jewish did not fear well; many thousands were burned alive in subsequent decades. Hatred also continued to be directed towards those who had remained faithful to Judaism, and in 1492 a decree was issued expelling all such Jews from Spain. That summer some 100000 [to] 150000 Jews left Spain to settle in other parts of Europe and North Africa.

...The term... *Inquisition*... comes from the Latin *inquirere* to ‘inquire into’, and signifies the idea that inquisitors were actively to hunt heresy. Pope Gregory IX (13th century) gave special responsibility to papal inquisitors to counter the threat to political and religious unity from heretical groups. The activities of the inquisitors were later characterized by extremes of torture and punishment, most notoriously in the case of the Spanish Inquisition, which survived until the 19th century.

In 1252 Pope Innocent IV authorized the use of torture to encourage extravagant and satisfactory confessions and valuable denouncements of others from the accused. Peter II of Aragon enhanced the effectiveness and novelty of the public trial-plus-sentence procedure known as the *auto-da-fe* (act of the faith) when he introduced public execution by burning alive at the stake. That process was referred to in official documents of the ecclesiastical courts as “relaxation.” It was witnessed by high church dignitaries and noble personages, who applied long in advance for passes to attend such events. Executions were frequently delayed so that prominent guests might be accommodated. Coming into full and terrible effect with the appointment of Thomas Torquemada as Inquisitor General of the Spanish arm of the Inquisition in 1483, his Holy Office became arguably one of the most horrid inventions of our species, and was not likely to ever be matched until the blind, mindless mass slaughter of the Holocaust... The Spanish Inquisition claimed an estimated three hundred thousand victims... In the Spanish version of the process, the accused went through a macabre trial which they seldom survived. In 1827, Juan Antonio Llorente, former Secretary of the Inquisition in Spain, revealed the horrid truth of the judicial process that was used to place the accused on the bonfire: Never has a prisoner of the Inquisition seen either the accusation against himself, or any other. No one was ever permitted to know more of his own cause than he could learn of it by the interrogations and accusations to which he was obliged to reply, and from the extracts of the declarations of the witnesses, which were communicated to him, while not only their names were carefully concealed, and every circumstance relating to time, place, and person, by which he might obtain a clue to discover his denouncers, but even if the depositions contained anything favourable to the defence of the prisoner. Llorente went on to explain that there were several options open to those who had been convicted and sentenced. To escape the torture which was usually used to extract a final confession – which was felt necessary to justify the execution – miscreants could admit sins they had never even countenanced and win immediate death. The spectacle was made less entertaining for the witnesses when convicted heretics opted for this fireside confession. In some cases, if they wished to escape the horror of being burned alive, they could confess and then submit to strangulation before their bodies were consumed in the bonfire. In only one manner could death be avoided, and it was a fiendish method whereby the Inquisition perpetuated its own existence and obtained fresh fuel for its fires. By choosing to implicate other innocents and condemning them to the authorities, a victim could, under some circumstances, earn a communication of his sentence to a long prison term, loss of property and final expatriation – if he survived the prison dungeon...

The [Armada] operation was planned by Philip II, king of Spain, to help realize his dynastic ambitions and his desire to reconvert Protestant Europe. He was repeatedly exhorted by Popes Gregory XIII... and Sixtus V as well as the English Catholics in exile to extend the Counter Reformation to England. The stringent policies of Elizabeth I toward her Catholic subjects, her moral leadership of Protestants abroad, and particularly the encouragement which she gave to Philip’s estranged subjects in the United Provinces of the Netherlands infuriated the Spanish king. As widower of Elizabeth’s immediate predecessor, Mary I, Philip contended that his claim to the English throne was superior to that of Elizabeth, who he claimed was illegitimate. Events of 1587 roused Philip into action. In February Mary Stuart, a Catholic who also claimed the English crown (through her descent from Henry VII), was executed for treason against England. (Since her exile in 1567 her Protestant son, James VI, had ruled Scotland.)

Covenanters... resisted the theory of ‘Divine Right of Kings’ and the imposition of an episcopal system on the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. When declared rebels, they resorted to open-air preaching. Until Presbyterianism was restored in 1690, they were savagely persecuted, with imprisonment, execution without trial, and banishment... In 1543 [George Wishart had] accompanied a commission sent to Scotland... to negotiate a marriage contract between... Prince Edward... and Mary, Queen of Scots; and he preached the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith... At Cardinal David Beaton’s insistence he was arrested... incurred a charge of heresy... and burned... [Hugh Latimer] devoted himself to preaching and practical works of Benevolence. Under Mary I he was examined... and committed to jail. In September 1555... he was burned with... [Nicholas Ridley, the] Bishop of London... [The] Archbishop of Canterbury, [Thomas Cranmer, who]... compiled Edward VI’s First Prayer Book... and... composed the 42 articles of religion... later called the Thirty-nine Articles... witnessed Latimer’s and Ridley’s martyrdom... In rapid succession he signed seven increasingly submissive recantations... When the time came for him to read his recantation, he retracted all that he had written. Taken to the stake, he thrust his right hand into the flame... crying: ‘This hath offended! Oh this unworthy hand!’ ...In 1532... Henry VIII... was declared

head of the English Church; and[Thomas] More's steadfast refusal to recognize any other head of the Church than the pope led to his sentence for high treason... By his Latin *Utopia*... More takes his place with the most eminent humanists of the Renaissance.

As a reaction to the unreasonable polity of Christian-Europe, divided by self-interest and greed for power and riches, Thomas More... wrote about a fictional island where the institutions and policies were entirely governed by reason.

UTOPIA consists of two books... The first book is critical. It presents a picture of English social life at the beginning of the sixteenth century, on the eve of the Reformation. Tyranny and corruption are everywhere... The concentration of riches, especially of land, in the hands of a few powerful corporations, e.g. the Church, had led to the dispossession of the poor, and that in turn to unemployment and want with its resulting wave of crime and the savage laws with which society retaliated. In the second book... a social satire... we are shown the opposite picture... in an imaginary island. Here tyranny and luxury have been abolished, private property is unknown, and manual labour is looked upon as the sole occupation profitable to the state. Superficially considered, *Utopia* appears to be based upon the *Republic* of Plato and early Christian practices, and it shows the influence of St Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*. The work is, however, no mere adaptation. For not only does More confront all the serious evils of his day, religious, social, and political, but he considers philosophically their remedy, and that in a manner far in advance of the period at which he wrote. He saw... the evolutionary truth that the ascent of man has been marked by the triumph of altruistic over egoistic sentiments... Thus he has been claimed as a forerunner of Karl Marx on the strength of his advocacy of communal property. It must, however, be remembered that More expressly rejects... what we now term Socialism and Communism... [– u]nderlying these proposals there is always one radical fallacy, namely, that they not only invent ideal institutions for mankind, but invent an ideal mankind for their institutions[–] ...and he believes that the abolition of private property will lead to bloodshed and plunder. He was opposed not to private property as such, but to its misuse... Moreover... it has been pointed out that More attends too much to the material property of his citizens at the expense of their liberty: slavery is an essential feature of Utopia. This slavery, however, is rather of a penal nature, for specified crimes, and not irrevocable. It is administered by wise and beneficent rulers, and preserves the essential dignity of human nature. Christianity has never taught that freedom is the liberty to follow every whim... Tribulation, indeed, is but a means to draw man closer to God... [W]hilst in the Tower awaiting martyrdom... Thomas... [wrote that the] highest motive and the strongest incentive to perseverance is the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ... THE DIALOGUE OF COMFORT... affords us a vision of More's own soul beset with doubts and fears, yet full of tranquillity, gentleness, and his... 'sober mirth' in the dark night before his[own] supreme sacrifice.

...to find citizens ruled by good and wholesome laws, that is an exceeding rare and hard thing... The forefronts or frontiers of the... island of Utopia... what with fords... shelves and... rocks, be very jeopardous and dangerous. In the middle... [of its main harbour entrance] standeth up above the water a great rock, which therefore is nothing perilous because it is in sight. [However, upon] the top of this rock is a fair and strong tower builded, which they hold with a garrison of men. Other rocks there be lying hid under the water... and therefore it seldom chanceth that any stranger, unless... guided by an Utopian, can come into this haven, insomuch that they themselves could scarcely enter without jeopardy, but that their way is directed and ruled by certain landmarks standing on the shore. By turning, translating, and removing these marks into other places they may destroy their enemies' navies... The outside or utter circuit of the land is also full of havens, but the landing is so surely fenced, what by nature and... by workmanship of man's hand, that a few defenders may drive back many armies... King Utopus, whose name as conqueror the island beareth[, who]... also brought the rude and wild people to that excellent perfection in all good fashions, humanity, and civil gentleness, wherein they now go beyond all the people of the world... set to... work not only the inhabitants of the island... but also all his own soldiers. Thus the work, being divided into so great a number of workmen, was with exceeding marvellous speed dispatched... I think that this nation took their beginning[from] the Greeks, because their speech, which in all other points is not much unlike the Persian tongue, keepeth divers signs and tokens of the Greek language in the names of their cities... There be in the island fifty-four large and fair cities, or shire towns, agreeing all together in one tongue, in like manners, institutions, and laws. Of these cities... there is none of them distant from the next above one day's journey afoot... The precincts and bounds of the shires be so commodiously appointed out and set forth... that none of them all hath of any side less than twenty miles of ground... None of the cities desire to enlarge the bounds and limits of their shires, for they count themselves rather the good husbands than the owners of their lands... [Each] city is compassed about with a high and thick stone wall full of turrets and bulwarks... overgrown with bushes, briars, and thorns... The houses be of fair and gorgeous building, and on the street side they stand joined together in a row through the whole street without any partition or separation... On the back side of the houses... lie large... enclosed... gardens... Every house hath two doors, one[opens] into the street, and... [the other] into the garden. These doors... [are] never locked or bolted... Whoso will may go in, for there is nothing within the houses that is private or any man's own. And every tenth year they change their houses by lot... [V]ery seldom chanceth that they choose a new plot to build an house upon... [T]heir houses continue and last very long with little labour and small reparations; insomuch that this kind of workmen sometimes have almost nothing to do, but that they be commanded to hue timber... and to square and trim up stones, to the intent that if any work chance it may the speedier rise... Every thirty families or farms choose them yearly an officer which... is called... the Philarch. Every ten [Philarchs], with all their thirty families, be under an officer... called... the chief Philarch. Moreover... all the... [Philarchs] choose... out of the four quarters of the city... four... [candidates] whom they think most... expedient. Then by a secret election they name prince one of those four... The prince's office continueth all his lifetime, unless he be deposed or put down for suspicion of tyranny... [In addition, there] come... out of every city... yearly to Amaurote... because it standeth... in the midst of the island... three old wise men and well experienced, there to entreat and debate... common matters of the land... Husbandry is a science common to... all[Utopians] in general, both men and women... Besides husbandry... every one of them learneth one or... several... particular science as his own proper craft... For their garments, which throughout all the island be of one fashion (saving that there is a difference between the man's garment and the woman's, between the married and the unmarried)... [are] seemly and comely to the eye... let to the moving and wielding of the body, also fit both for winter and summer... [W]omen, when they be married at a lawful age[, which]... is not... before[they] be eighteen years old... go into their husbands' houses, [whereas] [the male children... [who are] four years older before [they] marry... continue still[with] their own family... Furthermore, in choosing wives and husbands they observe earnestly... a custom which seemed to us very fond and foolish. For... an honest matron sheweth the woman, be she maid or widow, naked to the wooer. And likewise a discreet man exhibiteth the wooer naked to the woman. At this custom we laughed... But they, on the other part, do greatly wonder at the folly of all other nations which, in buying a colt... be so chary and circumspect, that though he be almost bare... they will not buy him unless the saddle and all the harnesses be taken off, lest under those coverings be hid some gall or sore... [In order that] the prescript number of the citizens should neither decrease nor... increase, it is ordained that no family, which in every city be six thousand... shall at once have fewer children... than ten or more than sixteen... This measure or number is easily observed and kept by putting them that in fuller families be above the number into families of smaller increase... [I]f chance be that in the whole city the store increase above the just number, therewith they fill up the lack of other cities... [I]f so be that the multitude throughout the whole island pass and exceed the due number, then they choose out of every city certain citizens, and build up a town... where... [there is] much waste and unoccupied ground... [F]irst and chiefly of all, respect is had to the sick that be cured in the hospitals. For in the circuit of [each] city... they have four hospitals, so big... and... ample... that... the sick, [even if]... they... be... many in number, should... [be accommodated. It is punishable by] death to have any consultation [relating to] the commonwealth out of the council or the place of the

common election. This statute... was made to the intent that the prince and [chief Philarchs] might not easily conspire together to oppress the people... If... any be desirous to visit either their friends dwelling in another city or to see the place itself, they easily obtain licence... But... if... any man, of his own head and without leave, walk out of his precinct and bounds... without the prince's letters he is brought [back like] a fugitive or a runaway with great shame and rebuke, and is sharply punished... Observing this law and condition, he may go whither he will within the bounds of his own city... Breakers of wedlock [are] punished with most grievous bondage... Finally whosoever for any offence be infamed, by their ears... upon their fingers... and about their necks... they wear... diamonds... gold and silver... And these metals, which other nations do as grievously and sorrowfully forgo, as in a manner their own lives, if they should altogether at once be taken from the Utopians, no man there would think that he had lost the worth of one farthing... perceiving that none but children do wear such toys and trifles... For they marvel that any men be so foolish as to have delight and pleasure in the doubtful glistening of a little... stone... Or that any man is so mad as to count himself the nobler for the... finer thread of wool[he wears], which... a sheep did once wear, and yet was she all that time no other thing than a sheep... These and suchlike opinions have they conceived, partly by education... and partly by good literature... For though there be not many in every city which is exempt and discharged of all other labours and appointed only to learning... all in their childhood be instruct in learning. And the better part of the people, both men and women, throughout all their whole life do bestow in learning those spare hours which... they have vacant from bodily labours... There be neither wine-taverns, nor ale-houses, nor... any occasion of vice... no lurking corners, no places of wicked councils or unlawful assemblies... Now you see how little liberty they have to loiter, how they have no cloak or pretence to idleness... This fashion and trade of life... cannot be chosen but that they must of necessity have store and plenty of all things. And seeing they be all thereof partners equally, therefore can no man... be poor or needy... [A]s soon as it is perfectly known of what things there is in every place plenty, and again what things be scant in any place... the lack of the one is performed and filled up with the abundance of the other. And this they do freely without any benefit, taking nothing[in return] of them to whom the things is given... So the whole island is as it were one family or household. But when they have made sufficient provision... then of those things whereof they have abundance they carry forth into other countries... grain, honey, wool, flax, wood, madder, purple-dyed fells, wax, tallow, leather, and living beasts. And the seventh part of all these things they give frankly and freely to the poor of that country. The residue they sell at a reasonable and mean price. By this trade of traffic or merchandise they bring into their own country... such things as they lack at home, which is almost nothing but iron... Now... they care not whether they sell for ready money... But... [they] putteth it into the common box, and so long hath the use and profit of it until the Utopians... demand it. The most part of it they never ask... But if the case stand that they must lend part of that money to another people, then they require their debt, or... they have war. For the which purpose only they keep at home all the treasure which they have, to be... [used] either in extreme jeopardies, or in sudden dangers, but especially and chiefly to hire... for unreasonable great wages, strange soldiers. For they... rather put strangers in jeopardy than their own countrymen, knowing that for money enough their enemies themselves many times may be bought and sold, or else through treason be set together by the ears among themselves. For this cause they keep an inestimable treasure... This custom of buying and selling adversaries among other people is[regarded] as a cruel act of a base and cowardly mind. But they... think themselves much praiseworthy, as... by this means [the Utopians] dispatch great wars without any battle or skirmish... War or battle[is] a... beastly... thing... And, contrary to the custom... of... almost... all other nations, they count nothing so much against glory as glory gotten in war. And therefore, though they do daily practice and exercise themselves in the discipline of war, and not only the men, but also the women upon certain appointed days... they never go to battle... either in the defence of their own country or to drive out of their friends' land the enemies that have invaded it, or... to deliver from the yoke and bondage of tyranny some people that be therewith oppressed... Thus... must I needs confess and grant that many things be in the Utopian weal-public which in our cities I may rather wish for than hope for. - UTOPIA

Although religious freedom was a feature of More's perfect society, as Henry VIII's lord chancellor he persecuted heretics. Later he upheld the pope's denial of the validity of Henry VIII's divorce from Katharine of Aragon, was dismissed by Henry, and was beheaded for treason.

...*Savonarola, Girolamo*, 1452-98, Italian religious leader. He became a Dominican, 1474, and vicar general of the order, 1493. He agitated against the... rulers of Florence, and after... [being f]orbidden by the pope to continue preaching, he disobeyed... was excommunicated... charged with heresy... then... burned at the stake.

...[*Girolamo Savonarola*] was hailed as an inspired prophet... But... his preaching began to point plainly to a political revolution as the divinely-ordained means for the regeneration of religion and morality, and he... welcomed... Charles VIII... to Florence. However, the French were shortly compelled to leave Florence, and a republic was established, of which Savonarola became the guiding spirit, his party ('the weepers') being completely in the ascendant. At this point 'the puritan of Catholicism' displayed his... genius and the extravagance of his theories. The Republic of Florence was to be a Christian commonwealth, of which God was the sole sovereign, and His gospel the law; the most stringent enactments were made for the repression of vice and frivolity; gambling was prohibited; the vanities of dress were restrained... Even the vainest flocked to the public square to fling down their costliest ornaments, and Savonarola's followers made a huge 'bonfire of vanities'. Meanwhile his rigorism and his claim to the gift of prophecy led to his being cited... to answer a charge of heresy in Rome, and on his failing to appear he was forbidden to preach. Savonarola disregarded the order, but... [the] new system proved impracticable and although the conspiracy for the recall of the Medici failed, and five of the conspirators were executed, this very rigour hastened the reaction... [Next] came a sentence of excommunication from Rome; and thus precluded from administering the sacred offices, Savonarola zealously tended the sick monks during the plague. A second 'bonfire of vanities'... led to riots; and at the new elections the Medici party came into power. Savonarola was... brought to trial for falsely claiming to have seen visions and uttered prophecies, for religious error, and for sedition. Under torture he made avowals which he afterwards withdrew. He was declared guilty... the sentence was confirmed by Rome... and... this extraordinary man and two Dominican disciples were hanged and burned, still professing their adherence to the Catholic Church. In morals and religion, not in theology, Savonarola may be regarded as a forerunner of the Reformation.

...[a] Spanish theologian and physician... [called *Michael Servetus*] denied the Trinity and the divinity of Jesus; he escaped the Inquisition but was burnt by Calvin in Geneva... [At the time of Servetus' death, *Giordano Bruno* was about 5 years old. He eventually] propounded an extreme pantheistic philosophy whereby God animated the whole of creation as 'world-soul', and his enthusiastic championship of Copernicus and his [own] 'insistence that the stars were simply very distant suns'] brought him into conflict with the Inquisition. He was arrested in 1592 in Venice and after a seven-year trial was burned at the stake in Rome.

...[the] socialism and mystical doctrines[of the German *Thomas Munzer*] soon brought him into collision with the authorities. After preaching widely... his communistic ideas soon aroused the whole country. He joined the Peasants' Revolt... but was defeated at Frankenhausen, and executed a few days later.

Peasants' War... Its causes lay in the economic decline of Germany following the transfer of trade routes from the Alps to the Atlantic, 15th cent. Restless under their deteriorating economic and social position, the German... farmers... peasants and artisans took part in numerous uprisings before Luther's revolt... prompted them to a major attack on the inequities of German feudalism... Their radicalism quickly increased under the leadership of Thomas Munzer, an Anabaptist preacher. Rebuffed by Luther, who appealed to the German princes against them, they were

suppressed... and their leaders executed. So ended a major crisis in German history, which prompted Luther to depend more closely on terrified rulers, to whom he delegated wide powers of religious control... Lutheranism is the state religion of the Scandinavian countries and the major Protestant faith of Germany.

...*The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*[, written by Max Weber, a]... German economist... put forward the theory that there was a direct relationship between Calvinist work ethic and the rise of Western capitalism.

...Unlike Luther, Calvin envisaged a complete restructuring of society in accordance with Christian principles, an ideal which in practice proved inhumanly austere. The private morality of citizens was monitored, the power of excommunication readily used, and Calvin did not shrink from [using] torture and persecution, most notoriously in the case of Servetus...

Ulfilas... a Christian of Cappadocian origin, who became bishop of the Arian Visigoths... translated the Bible... into Gothic, inventing (it is said) an alphabet for the purpose and omitting the Books of Kings as their warlike deeds might have a bad influence upon a nation so fond of war...

Faced with ecclesiastical opposition to his project for translating the Bible, [William] Tyndale went abroad, never to return to his own country... His vigorous translations from the Greek and Hebrew... published in Germany... became widely popular[back] in England and were the basis of both the Authorized and the Revised Version... [Tyndale was eventually] arrested on a charge of heresy, and later strangled and burnt at the stake.

...[Oliver Cromwell] was an English general and statesman. A['member of the more extreme English Protestants', the] Puritan squire... was among the Parliamentary opponents of Charles I, but only became a national figure as a soldier during the English Civil War, playing a decisive part in the... formation of the New Model Army. His rise to pre-eminence continued with his subjugation of Ireland... [Christianity] reached Ireland, probably in the 4th c... and after the break-up of the Roman Empire the country became for a time a leading cultural centre, with the monasteries fostering learning and missionary work. English invasions began in the 12th c., under Henry II, but the authority that he established was never secure... until the Tudors succeeded in extending it over the whole of the island. Revolts against English rule, and against the imposition of Protestantism (which met with unexpectedly stubborn resistance), resulted in the 'plantation' of Ireland by English (and later Scottish) families on confiscated land in an attempt to anglicize the country and secure its allegiance... After an unsuccessful rebellion in 1798, union of Britain and Ireland followed in 1801. In spite of genuine efforts towards its success Ireland sank deeper into destitution. A share of Britain's industrial prosperity reached Protestant Ulster, but the rest of the island found its agricultural produce and assets dropping in value, and at the failure of the potato crop (Ireland's staple) in the 1840s thousands died in the famine, thousands more fled abroad. [In all, more than 750,000 Irish men, women and children died from the effects of the famine, and by 1855 more than a million had emigrated. The Irish diaspora of the famine years created a "Greater Ireland" overseas. In the 1870s the perennial question of tenants' rights and the act of union became fused with the revolutionary zeal of Greater Ireland, thereby transforming both Irish politics and Anglo-Irish relations. The reawakening of Irish nationalism was made possible by the presence of new leaders and the emergence of an Irish party at Westminster with a new battle cry of "home rule". Home rule meant a federal parliament and executive for Ireland, subordinate to Westminster.] The Home Rule movement... failed to achieve its aims in the 19th c. and implementation of a bill passed in 1910 was delayed by the outbreak of... W[WI]. An Act of 1920 divided Ireland into two parts: Southern Ireland, later recognized as an independent State ([originally] called the Irish Free State... [then Eire and, finally], the Republic of Ireland...), and Northern Ireland [(NIr)]... At first a self-governing province with its parliament meeting at Stormont Castle in Belfast, it was dominated by the Ulster Unionist Party, opposed by an increasing Roman Catholic [(RC)] minority favouring union with the Irish Republic. Discrimination against the latter group in local government, employment, and housing led to violent conflicts and (from 1969) the presence of British army units to keep the peace. Continuing terrorist activities resulted in the suspension of the Stormont assembly and imposition of direct rule from Westminster. Attempts to organize an agreed and permanent system of government have so far met with failure.

Since 1971, when the IRA campaign on mainland Britain began, Special Branch and the Anti-terrorist Branch have led the police response... Special Branch has its own armoury[, although] the weapons are seldom used... "If there was no other option then... we would shoot to kill... that's what we've been trained for anyway." One of the responsibilities of Special Branch is to protect people who are under high threat from terrorism... [A] Detective Chief Inspector... leads [the Iron Lady's] protection team. "Once... we just had a... three man close team, but you could use more and we do... depending on the situation... [We] have an outer circle and that's done... with... local police..." [The Iron Lady is unaffected:] "I've lived with it now for so long it's just part of my life. I know that every effort will have been made to see that things are safe and I'm afraid it slows down the signing [of autographs. But]... I accept their advice and you have to because they have a job to do; they're in danger as well." ...Although Londoners have carried on with their lives as usual, the need for security has caused serious disruption... Security at government buildings has caused much inconvenience. Larger gatherings are subject to intense security operations, and the arriving traveller at Heathrow is hardly greeted by a picture of peaceful Britain. Last year in London there were 52 terrorist incidents but explosives officers from the Anti-terrorist Branch were called out over two thousand times to investigate suspect packages... [They] wear protective clothing but it... [is] of little use at close quarters... In recent years two explosives officers have been killed... Since[it was] formed in 1883 to fight the... forerunners of today's IRA, the work of the Special Branch has been cloaked in secrecy. Even other police officers have little idea of what they do... "What's happening as we speak is a live surveillance operation... which is, I have to say, speculative, like many of our operations are... There is a target on the streets of London right now, and what we're doing is looking at where [the target is] going... doing, who they're meeting, and frankly, what the outcome of it will be we don't actually know. What... if our target goes into some premises that we've not previously identified... and comes out with a bag. Now what's going to be in that bag. It could just be that it's some shopping... Do you... see where he goes with this bag and risk losing him, risk a bomb going off somewhere, risk people being killed, or do you step in and stop him, only to find that it contains some cornflakes and... milk, and in fact you've then blown what would have been a very promising operation. Hard decisions... The fact is that the initiative is always with the terrorists, and if a terrorist is brave or bold enough to try something such as the mortar attack on Downing St there is virtually nothing you can do to stop that. You can do a lot of things to prevent people parking in particular areas, you can have big spaces around particularly vulnerable places, you can give people personal protection, but the fact is that unless you take an individual and lock him up in a castle and don't allow him any contact with the outside world you cannot guarantee to keep him safe... Politics in a free society couldn't carry on without [the Special Branch], that is the importance of the work they do." The price of protecting public figures is high. [The former PM's] book signing tour cost £300,000. IRA terrorism has cost billions of pounds.

The All Blacks were on their way early today to a Belfast shaken by bomb blasts as it nervously greeted the British P[M]... They are to play Ulster in Belfast at a ground not considered to be in the danger area. - 1972

1846 Aug 28 NZ's first representative Constitution... was passed by the British Parliament. The Act provided for the division of NZ into separate provinces... The main provinces were to have been New Ulster and New Munster, as the North and South Islands respectively were then known. Steward Island was to have been New Leinster... 1868 Apr 3 Loyalist Irish goldminers returning from Westport, where they had been celebrating the survival of the Duke of Edinburgh from an assassination attempt in Sydney, were attacked by Irishmen who opposed British rule. Anticipating retaliation by government forces, Fenian (anti-British) Irishmen from surrounding districts rallied at Addisons Flat. An armed clash was averted

by the moderating influence of a local warden, but the incident became known as the “Battle of Addisons Flat”... The hostility between Irish religious factions flared [on Dec 26, 1879,] when Irish Catholics opposed a march Protestant Orangemen planned to hold in Timaru. Police reinforcements were called from Christchurch but could not prevent the Orangemen from being besieged in the Foresters Hall. The Riot Act was read, but the Catholics would not disperse until the Orangemen agreed to cancel the march.

Where hate thy neighbour is their creed... SHE shivers in her tiny living room but it isn't cold... [- it's because N[Ir]'s peace process has been shattered... “...It's all right during the day but at night – I don't know what to do at night...” ...They came at night, smashed the windows... [of the house she moved into] only three weeks ago... and left a spoor of white-painted hate on the front door and back fence: “UVF” (Ulster Volunteer Force – a Protestant paramilitary organisation) and “Toreens says no more taigs.” They came because [she is a RC or “taig”] in the Torrens triangle which is a Protestant enclave in the [RC] Ardoyne area of north Belfast. They came to commit ethnic cleansing. Two families left that night... leaving [her as the last RC] living on the street... but [she is] trying to ride out the hate. “I'm stuck between two thorns... My boyfriend is a Protestant. I came from a Republican family. I've had a real bad time – they don't want me. I have nowhere else to go... I mean no harm to anyone. I just want a home of my own...” The broken windows have been fixed but her front door is still broken. And she can't forget the noise of the mob and the telephone call warning her to get out... The front door opens and in walks her boyfriend... a former soldier in the Royal Scots... He... recalls the cease-fire: “The peace was great... Catholics and Protestants were all [going] in and out of each other's doors. Nobody mentioned religion. We all lived happy... It's a shock to go back to how it was before... We don't know who smashed in our windows. Maybe the Catholics did the front one and the Protestants did the back one?” He laughs, then sighs. “It's a hell of a country...” A march by the Portadown Orangemen at Drumcree two weeks ago was blocked by police, causing a chain reaction and turning N[Ir]'s reactor critical. At Old Park a gang of loyalists protested outside the... Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC)... station. A few yards away on the edge of the Torrens triangle... a[n RC]... neighbour of [the couple] was celebrating her 30th birthday. As the party was breaking up, the nationalist revellers were confronted by loyalist demonstrators. Both sides had been drinking. According to [the boyfriend], “the party-goers gave the demonstrators the finger” and the abuse turned nasty... “They just kept calling us Fenian bastards and said they were going to burn us out... I can't believe it. A crowd of men and women all shouting at us... My kids play with their kids,” [another neighbour] told reporters... I... walk down the Old Park area towards the centre of Belfast. Round a sharp bend a cohort of dirty grey RUC armoured Land-Rovers are doing wheelies. One of the motorised armadillos takes the corner so fast it almost tips over. The RUC are chasing a mob of kids throwing rocks who have taken over a stretch of waste ground. The armadillos screech to a stop and a knot of officers in full riot gear dismounts. The kids vaporize. More Land-Rovers block the road ahead forming a makeshift barrier between nationalist homes and loyalists in Shankill Road... Members of the Shankill Protestant Boys Band... lead... an Orange Lodge [march]... directly up to another RUC road block... The crowd roars, half-disintegrating into a mob... A flurry of people run my way, then stop and run back... A woman built like a brick out-house with a face to match... starts removing the rockery beneath my feet. A few stones fly... Then, as weirdly as the riotette begins, it stops and the band reverses back up the Shankill. Late that night, rumours start to seep through that the Chief Constable... is going to [back] down and let the Orangemen march down the Garvaghy Road past the nationalist houses to Portadown. Suddenly the Orangemen are the upholders of the law and the nationalists are back to being the outlaws... Later that night, the sky above Old Park RUC station is lit up... [as the] nationalists of Garvaghy Road, furious that the Orangemen have been let through, erupt with violence... At the top of the hill, just short of the RUC station, stands a gaggle of police and soldiers. A teenage girl is teasing them. “What's that fire?” she asks. “It's hot and it's orange,” says a blond copper. I laugh at his joke. A few hours later three policemen standing at this spot are shot by a nationalist gunman. No one is killed – not this time... With all the racket, the one noise you can't hear is the sound of big money getting out of N[Ir]. And so the cycle of unemployment and despair is reinforced by the bigotry that fuels it... The following day, I... try to call on [the RC woman]. Her front window has been smashed again... I knock on the door but no one is in... [In the street the] next generation plays with a burned-out car...

The village of Bellaghy staged a piece of sectarian street theatre with all the potential for violence that has scarred N[Ir] recently, but... the day ended without violence... [which] boded well for the future... There had been widespread fears that the three days of traditional parades and rallies could lead to disturbances, especially after rioting last month over a Protestant march in the town of Drumcree. But negotiations made it possible for nationalists to hold rallies and Protestants to hold traditional marches without serious incident, notably in Londonderry...

A... weekend of rival marches in N[Ir]'s second city got off to a calm start after [RC]s changed their parade route to avoid a Protestant neighbourhood... Nonetheless, an air of uncertainty hung over the marchers... as they later listened to speakers at the city centre... protesting against a scheduled march... by the fervently pro-British Apprentice Boys... [P]olice stood by in case of trouble later when Protestant ceremonies marking a 17th century battle victory over [RC]s were due to start... The summer marching season is always tense in N[Ir]... Trouble erupted during the Apprentice Boys' march in Londonderry in 1969, sparking a quarter-century of guerrilla conflict in which 3200 people were killed.

...since a majority in N[Ir] wish their statelet to remain in the U[K], “what in the name of democracy is there to stop them?” In 1918 there was no “Northern Ireland.” There was just Ireland, a British colony. In the general elections of that year Sinn Féin, campaigning for independence, won 73 of Ireland's 105 Westminster seats. Sinn Féin took this as a mandate for self-rule... In 1921 the British agreed to cede a large part of Ireland but, threatening “a terrible and bloody war,” refused to relinquish Belfast, a significant centre of British capital. To secure Belfast, the British drew an artificial border around six counties of Ulster, where a loyal settler majority could be mustered... [N]ationalists who remained in the north proved a problem but were secured by introducing a property-holding franchise and gerrymandering electoral boundaries, by creating an armed loyalist police force backed with a loyalist militia and by a Special Powers Act that was the public envy of apartheid legislators in South Africa.

...A detective shot dead in a bungled raid on a post office van was murdered by members of the IRA in contravention of IRA policy, the terrorist group admitted yesterday. The organisation had previously denied responsibility for the shooting last Friday. Detective Garda Jerry McCabe, aged 52, the father of five, was shot dead while escorting a van carrying \$230,786.98 in the village of Adare, County Limerick. His partner, [also]... aged 52, was injured... [□ Yesterday t]he Queen led the way... in condemning a bomb blast blamed on the I[RA] in which more than 200 people were injured... She said in a statement... that she was “shocked and deeply saddened to be told of the terrible bomb attack in Manchester,”... The U[S] President... was “deeply outraged” by the bomb explosion. “I join [the] British... and... Irish[PMs]... in utterly condemning this brutal and cowardly act of terrorism,”... His condemnation echoed that of the Irish President... who ended a state visit to the U[S] yesterday and said at the Irish embassy earlier that she was “shocked, saddened and numbed” by news of the blast. The explosion is the seventh in Britain since the I[RA] ended its 17-month ceasefire. Three people have been killed in the resumed campaign – but until [now] all the attacks had been in London. - 1996

After the US bombed Iraq in 1996 a NZ TV station ended a primetime news article about anticipated retaliatory strikes on civilian aircraft by implying that the IRA might adopt similar tactics. When a viewer rang the station to point out that “the IRA has never targeted civilian aircraft,” he was told the story had come from a source in AUS (unsubstantiated NZ TV news reports have also accused the IRA ‘of supplying the detonator for the Oklahoma bombing’)! Furthermore, the US's Christian President said of the bombing raids: ‘When you abuse your people or attack your neighbours you pay the price.’ Backing him up was NZ's PM (a ‘good churchgoing’ RC): ‘It's an appropriate response to show [the Iraqi President] that such action will not be tolerated.’ By the way, when the then US President declared war on Iraq in 1991 he said: ‘we pray that God will bless America’. This ‘believing and practicing Fundamentalist Christian’ was the leader of a country that sings ‘Long may our land be bright with freedom's holy light; Protect us by Thy might, great

God, our King!' (*America*); plus 'And this is our motto: In God is our trust' (*The Star-Spangled Banner*). Obviously USers don't trust God to protect them in a literal sense – otherwise they wouldn't have nuclear weapons, etc. (or are such things needed in case God proves to be untrustworthy; or in case the US has to eventually fight God?). However, Christian's shouldn't care about their country or fear what happens to themselves while alive (rp861, ln20).

God of nations, at Thy feet, In the bonds of love we meet, Hear our voices we entreat... defend our free land... From the shafts of strife and war... Men of every creed and race, Gather here before Thy face, Asking Thee to bless this place... From dissension, envy, hate, And corruption guard our state, Make our country good and great... May our mountains ever be, Freedom's ramparts on the sea, Make us faithful unto Thee... Preaching love and truth to man, Working out Thy glorious plan... Peace not war shall be our boast... Let our love for Thee increase, May Thy blessings never cease... From dishonour and from shame, Guard our country's spotless name, Crown her with immortal fame, God defend New Zealand.

Absolutely nobody is totally certain what Irish-born poet Thomas Bracken meant when he penned it in the 1870s... The poet's great-grandson... feels that N[Z] is failing to live up to the anthem, and refers to its principles as "still very valid." Not everyone agrees with him. Thomas Bracken's words seems to picture N[Z]ers as lying back and expecting someone else to come to our aid for everything. A contemporary cynic describes this as an endemic plague in N[Z] thinking. "For Bracken's 'God'," says the cynic, "replace the word 'Government' and you have an image of the Welfare State person, confident from cradle to grave that someone will take care of him." The harsh reality of recent decades seems to be that nobody is going to "take care" of anybody... Most of the things Thomas Bracken asked God to do for N[Z] have not actually come true, and they show little sign of doing so. People just do not have any faith in the song anymore... In short, the prayer has not worked. To many, the song seems valueless as a result... That it has not come true is obvious. Nevertheless, a huge amount of commercial media advertising is still pushing us to believe a fantasy image of N[Z] that is the same as that of Thomas Bracken... [In 1972 'a public opinion poll on the adoption of a distinctive NZ anthem showed 53% of NZers favoured *God Defend New Zealand*, 31% preferred *God Save the Queen* and the rest didn't care'.] At present, 23[%] of people polled think N[Z] should create a new national anthem to replace *God Defend*. But there is still a great blankness about what it could be replaced with.

...*God must hate listening to our national tune* [When I first heard *God Defend N[Z]*... I was thrilled to discover that I had emigrated from a country with a bad anthem to a country with a worse anthem... I am no musician but the tune that represents this young and vigorous country has all the youth and vigour of a pauper's funeral... But it is in the nonsensical lyrics that this song excels. Typical of that nonsense is the line addressed to the God of Nations... presumably the God who will sit in judgment on the nations of the world and "shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from his goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand..." Implicit in the song is the assumption that we are a virtuous sheep country and not one of the smelly left-hand goats. The trouble... is that every other country also sees itself as a virtuous sheep. A vigorous survey of the national anthems of the world has revealed that... every country claims to have God on its side. This is particularly evident in times of war. During the Gulf War, for example, [the US President] came over all religious... [and the US] God, with the help of a few Stealth bombers, won... My point is that calling on God to defend us is a pointless piece of rhetoric from another age. *God Defend N[Z]* should go. Replacing it, however, will prove difficult. Few anthems exist that are worth imitating. The French have got a cracking tune, but archaic and bloodthirsty lyrics; *Advance A[US] Fair* starts well but goes on too long; and if you want a giggle, study the text of *The Star-Spangled Banner*.

The American Founding Fathers were up-front in their acknowledgement of God in the establishment of their democracy... The national Thanksgiving Day in the U[SS'] public holiday schedule reflects... that... belief... American Presidents today still frequently invoke God in the public arena... [NZers] are not so up-front in their acknowledgement of God in our national lives... It is interesting to note that as N[Z] society has become more overtly secular in the past generation our Parliament has seen fit to pass more and more laws spelling out, specifically, what constitutes appropriate moral behaviour in a range of settings. This has become necessary in the light of so many people not knowing what appropriate behaviour is or, alternatively, not being prepared to follow acceptable norms of behaviour based on long-standing religious moral precepts and traditions... It is becoming very apparent that no present-day democracy can operate successfully without the strong rule of law. Religious influence, however, seems essential for democracy to flourish for practical reasons. Our history teaches us that the greater the religious restraints on people, the less need there is for a range of secular laws to bring about moral behaviour. The *Bible* says that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Without some prudent fear of the Lord, the alternative is unnecessary fear of the law, which means huge police forces, large numbers of prisons and plenty of constraining regulations and strictures[. The *Bible* also says: 'Wisdom is better than weapons of war']...

An Irishman who received mysterious official permission to live in N[Z] bought weapons for a Protestant paramilitary organisation... the [UVF]... an MP claimed yesterday... [-] an allegation the Belfast-born man denies[although, when]... interviewed by the *Herald*, he said he... [had bought] firearms for two[unidentified] men. "I did a stupid thing..." [The man], aged 56, was granted residency after unexplained top-level consideration in 1987. Before coming to N[Z], he was sentenced to jail for two years in N[Ir] for possession of[the] two semi-automatic pistols. The final approval for his case is believed to have come from the office of the Governor-General. And an Immigration Service source revealed [the 56-year-old] was not the only one to receive vice-regal help to stay in this country... [U]p to eight cases that he knew of were approved by the Governor-General in the 10 years before the Immigration Act was rewritten in 1987. Under the 1964 act, the Governor-General was empowered to grant his prerogative of mercy to allow anyone to stay... The Minister of Immigration... has asked for an urgent report... following questions from other MPs concerned that the... [approvals involved] deals with British authorities... [● Yesterday, h]undreds of thousands of motorists endured traffic chaos on the M6 and on the main north-south artery, the M1... after two bomb alerts blamed on the IRA crippled the road system in central England... On the M6, two bombs were found attached to roadway supports. The cost to... industry was estimated at more than \$NZ4.5 million.

...THE IRA said yesterday it planted two bombs which closed a vital British highway for more than 30 hours... Police also evacuated King's Cross subway station, a connecting station and four subway lines... after another bomb threat... A tactic of the IRA... is to cause disarray and economic losses by planting bombs and then giving coded warnings.

...Britain's railway operator Railtrack said last night that there had been a small explosion at Leeds railway station in northern England. The blast followed suspected IRA telephoned bomb warnings... Doncaster, Crewe and Stoke-on-Trent railway stations were evacuated... This cut off the main north/south rail lines on both the east and west sides of Britain... [T]he M6 motorway[was also] closed off near the city of Manchester... causing traffic chaos... [on] one of the two main highways linking the north and south of the country.

...Central London was at a virtual standstill last night after suspected IRA bomb warnings closed five major railway stations in the capital as well as Heathrow, Gatwick and Luton airports... The bomb threats coincided with the Queen's 71st birthday and followed two IRA explosions and a series of hoax calls on Friday night which paralysed road and rail links in northern England.

...Fears are rising that next Sunday's London marathon may be the IRA's next target. The wrecking of the Grand National last Saturday appears to confirm a new strategy by the terrorists – maximum disruption at minimum risk to life.

...Commuter trains, London subways, key highways, and now Britain's premier horseracing event: the I[RA] can stop them all with a phone call. The outlawed group's renewed sabotage campaign in England is putting the IRA and its Sinn Féin allies back in the spotlight – as a thorn in England's side, but with no dead civilians to explain why... On Saturday the IRA forced around 70,000 people to evacuate minutes before the

Grand National steeplechase at Aintree... an event being televised live to millions in Britain and Ireland. Undaunted, organisers planned to run the race... today... amid a security “ring of steel.”

...Liverpool police confirmed yesterday that they received an IRA-coded bomb warning on the day of the Grand National re-run on April 7, but allowed the race to go ahead. Their decision not to evacuate 20,000 spectators was the first time a major public event was allowed to go ahead in the face of a recognised coded bomb threat... [Incidentally, yesterday N[Ir] marked the first anniversary of the... IRA bomb at London’s Canary Wharf which ended a 17-month truce... [W]ith peace talks at a standstill, violence on the increase and the gulf between... [the 60%] Protestant majority... and minority R[C]s widening... the Ulster Unionists (UUP), accused the IRA militants and their political wing, Sinn Féin, of trying to turn the province into another Bosnia... [The UUP] security spokesman... said... the... IRA and Sinn Féin strategy is to render N[Ir] ungovernable... so that the U[N] is called in, bypassing British insistence that the IRA end violence for good to earn a place at the peace talks table... [T]he Sinn Féin president, insisted at the weekend that Sinn Féin wanted to take part in Belfast peace talks which have done little but mark time since last June, but sidestepped questions about a new IRA truce... [However, the] IRA said last week it... would not accept any preconditions for Sinn Féin involvement... at the talks... Communal tension was vividly illustrated at the weekend when up to 1000 Protestants chanting anti-R[C] abuse marched on a R[C] church at Harryville... The Harryville demonstration effectively kicked off the yearly “marching season” by Protestants, which last year caused the worst civil unrest in decades when police banned one of its parades... and then allowed it...

[T]he powerful Orange Order... handed a letter accusing Britain of breaching their human rights to a senior policeman on Sunday. The letter of protest was prompted by about 500... police separating rival... demonstrators earlier in the day during marches in the flashpoint town of Bellaghy. Police... had feared... a re-run of last year’s violence... which... cause[d millions]... of pounds of damage... Mediators have tried to get Loyalists and... nationalists to negotiate over this year’s marches, but Orange Order leaders refuse to hold talks with... [RCs. In another development, a relation of the first RC US President, John F. Kennedy,] filed a resolution in the[US] House of Representatives yesterday urging the British Government to ban marches by a Protestant group through [RC areas]...

*T]he gulf between Protestant and [RC in N[Ir] is] so wide that it can be bridged only in people’s dreams... Drumcree is a tiny enclave perched at one end of Portadown... Last July it achieved infamy as the scene of violent confrontations... Next month a repeat performance is expected. Loyalists plan to march to Drumcree church along the mainly nationalist Garvaghy Rd. The local residents have decreed the Protestants shall not pass and to stop them are organising a fair. In the centre of the road along which the Orange bands intend to parade will be a bouncy castle of the sort familiar to anyone with children under five. The [RCs] insist it is the right of their kiddies to bounce in peace; the Protestants proclaim their constitutional right to parade wherever they wish. Neither will back down. The fear is that this time round the violence will be far worse than sticks, stones and petrol bombs. Talk of war was precipitated by the IRA shooting two Ulster police officers in Lurgan, a town 10 minutes by train from Portadown. Before the killings tension in Portadown was high; now it is boiling. [One girl, aged] 16, lives in... Lower Garvaghy Rd. She is a [RC]. In the rest of Britain, address can be a sign of social status. In Ulster it defines your brand of Christianity. So much so that [she] lies about it. She is about to leave school and is job-seeking. “I give a false address. If they know I’m a [R]C... I have no chance of a job.” On Friday, sitting in the safety of Drumcree High, the all-[RC] local school, she is wearing a school uniform of the type any self-respecting teenager gets rid of the moment they are outside the school gates. But she doesn’t change to make a fashion statement: “You have to get out of the uniform before going to town. It wouldn’t be safe not to.” At her school are... sisters of Robert Hamill whose fate gives horrible credence to her fears. Robert was set upon earlier this year by a gang of loyalists as he walked from the centre of Portadown on his way home. Eye-witnesses report that the loyalists chanted “Fenian die” as they danced on his body. A police patrol was at hand, but they felt unable to intervene. Hamill died. Next month his wife is due to give birth to their third child... [P]upils at Drumcree High have just made a video which has won first prize in the Limerick film festival. It is called *Caoimhe Loves Philip* and is a remake of *Romeo and Juliet*. Caoimhe is a [RC] and Philip a Protestant. It is set in Drumcree during last year’s riots and uses film footage of the police beating up protesters and of Orangemen giving clenched fist salutes. It is very arty, but also a statement about the Troubles. “Love can conquer all” is the message, and it has moved some parents to tears. But making a video is one thing, living in Portadown another. When asked if they would marry a Protestant, all the pupils said no. Not because they are bigots but because, they claim, there is no chance of the situation arising. In Portadown the two do not mix. Most pupils will not be around in a fortnight’s time because their parents are shipping them off to relatives in safer parts of the country... 300 schoolchildren[are to catch] a charter flight to New York where they planned to stay for six weeks with sponsor families as part of a peace programme called Project Children... [The 16-year-old’s parents] think she is going to Dublin but they have a surprise coming. “I’m not going. This is my home and I won’t be driven out. I don’t see why I should be blamed for the killings. I couldn’t help being born a [RC].” Later that evening, in a pub in a part of Portadown that [she]’d never dream of entering, sat another young girl of great courage. [This girl] is 18 and in appearance very like [the 16-year-old]. Both are... pretty... short and slight and, although of similar age and living close to each other, have never met, for the reason which should by now be depressingly obvious. Since the age of [9 she]’s played the accordion and next month will line up with... other members of the Orange Order Star of David Accordion Band. She says she will play her accordion down Garvaghy Rd come hell or high water, because that is her right as a loyal subject of Her Majesty the Queen. She marched last year and was stoned. She does not like to think what might happen this time. “Why should anyone be offended? We will be playing hymns. They are Christians, aren’t they? If they don’t like it, stay indoors.” [She] says it’s tough to be a Protestant in Portadown: “We are discriminated against all the time. At school we are not allowed to bring in sectarian literature and now they are trying to stop us marching, which is something we have always done. It’s not safe to walk in town because [RC] gangs with nailed sticks chase you. And the police always side with the[m]...” ...the... two very brave girls... in different ways are victims. But so far they have escaped injury. Not so... a 21-year-old [RC] from Belfast who made the mistake of walking down the wrong street. On Saturday night, after one drink too many, he took a stroll down Crumlin Rd. Five middle-aged men surrounded him and asked for a light. [The 21-year-old]... has a distinct accent. Identified as a [RC], he had no chance. The men tried to cut his throat, opening a seven-inch gash under his chin. They sliced into his head in two places, cut his fingers and broke his skull... He should have died, but miraculously survived... [But] he was once handsome... now his face, skull and neck are disfigured... A couple of nights after that attack... [one of Robert Hamill’s sisters –] the star of the *Caoimhe Loves Philip* video[–] had a dream: “There were all these people, [RC]s and Protestants walking together down the Garvaghy Rd in memory of all those who have died.” She pauses and smiles ruefully: “Yeah, well it was only a dream.”*

...[RC residents have] lost the bitter battle to stop a controversial Protestant march through their community... marking the Battle of Boyne, the 1690 defeat of Britain’s last [RC] king. The annual march has become a trial of strength. [RC]s say the practice smacks of triumphalism and intimidation, while the Orange Order says the march is a birthright and that the road belongs to the Queen, not to those who live beside it... Police seized control of Garvaghy Rd... before dawn. This led to clashes with [RCs] who suspected that the Drumcree Orange parade would be allowed... Several hundred protesters eventually marched, protected by one of the biggest security operations in the history of the... [N[Ir] conflict. T]he Protestants were not permitted to march behind their bands, in a concession to... [RC feeling. However,] about 400 residents kept up a din of jeers and whistles... banged dustbin lids[, and]... threw rocks and petrol bombs at security forces[, who replied with]... plastic bullets... Foreign politicians monitoring the event expressed shock at what they described as police brutality.

...Police and [RC] rioters clashed across N[Ir] yesterday in a wave of violence prompted by a Protestant... march in... Portadown... Security forces and rioters traded gunfire... [near Garvaghy Rd as a] traffic jam caused by 100... departing armoured cars... gave rioters a chance at point-blank attack for several minutes... The[widespread] display of firepower by the [IRA]... was the biggest in years and the outpouring of nationalist fury

appeared to mark the end of the honeymoon with Britain's new Labour Government... While the violence continued on the streets, the British N[Ir] Secretary... was embroiled in a controversy over leaked documents purporting to show that a decision to allow the... march down Garvaghy Rd was taken weeks before it was announced. A report in the *Independent* quoted a confidential Government document as saying the decision was the "least worst option" and contradicted [the secretary's] public version that the move was a last-minute decision after mediation attempts failed... [T]he... chairman of Sinn Fein... said the document showed Britain was guilty of "an outrageous example of double speak."

...The British N[Ir] Secretary... has said that she failed in the way that she handled negotiations for the Garvaghy Rd march last weekend... [S]he was trying to negotiate an agreement on two parades planned for this weekend which police fear may repeat the pattern of last weekend... But... it would be difficult to make progress... [RC] residents groups in the Lower Ormeau Rd are refusing contact with [the secretary] because of her failure to get the Portadown parade rerouted or to tell Garvaghy Rd residents personally of the decision to allow it... Nationalist areas were calmer yesterday, with only isolated incidents of shooting and petrol bombing... According to police figures... [arsonists] set fire to three buildings belonging to the... Orange Order... over the weekend... [while hundreds] of cars, trucks and buses were hijacked and some torched... In the border town of Newry alone 221 vehicles were hijacked [during a] 36 hour... orgy of violence that included the looting of the town's biggest supermarket... [Amongst the hijacked cars was one belonging to a 17-year-old Protestant who was] forced... to parade around an Irish nationalist estate playing hymns on his accordion while... [RC] youths bent on revenge... pelted him with bricks and stones. The youth said he believed he was saved from further punishment because an Army helicopter spotted the incident.

...They're both 14 years old, ardent soccer players and lying in hospital beds... [The RC boy] is in a coma after being struck on the back of the head... by a plastic bullet during rioting between youths and police in Lenadoon, a grim public-housing project on the edge of... west Belfast... [The Protestant boy] may have his left arm amputated after a bullet struck his shoulder and punctured a lung about the same time as he stood atop a fence that separates... Protestant and... [RC] sections of west Belfast. Protestant youths had been trading rocks with [RC] youths on the other side, and both groups were watching adult [RCs] assault a police station with gasoline bombs further up the road... His family are demanding an investigation into why he was hit by a... hard cylinder 10cm long and 2cm thick that leaves the barrel at more than 200km/h. British-style plastic bullets are supposed to be fired below the waist to knock down rioters, but only if they're in the act of launching an assault. Seventeen people, many of them teenagers, have been killed by plastic bullets since their introduction in 1973... Loyalists[were] not... involved in any of the weekend violence, security sources said... [However, in] south Belfast the body of a Protestant youth was found yesterday near the site of a small explosion. Police... did not believe anyone else was involved in the death[, but]... they could not confirm that the youth was killed by a bomb he was handling.

...The moderate... leader... of the... nationalist... Social Democratic and Labour Party... hailed the "moral courage" of the Orange Order for calling off four controversial marches... after a week of... tumult... culminated at the weekend in tense but peaceful parades by pro-British Protestants... Ireland... Britain... and... the U[S] also... praised the... Orange Order... The British [PM]... signalled that Sinn Fein could enter... peace talks six weeks after an unequivocal end to IRA violence.

...I READ – in these pages – that... the new British [PM] goes to Mass regularly with his wife. Mrs [PM is a RC while Mr PM] is an Anglican... The very fact such journalistic asides are no longer news, is an indication of the distance we have travelled on the road to religious toleration. Unfortunately, there are many in N[Ir] or in the former Yugoslavia who have yet to start the journey.

...[IRA] supporters and the British Government were expected to relaunch negotiations today... The new British [PM]... authorised the negotiations on his first visit to Belfast in expectation that a new cease fire might be on offer... But the leader of Sinn Fein... emphasised that a new cease fire would only be on offer if the British promised "with absolute clarity" that his party... would be admitted immediately to negotiations... In that event, leaders of the province's... Loyalist groups... responsible for killing about 900 [RCs] since the 1960s, and... blamed for a string of recent... bomb attempts... and... shootings of... [RCs,] would be certain to walk out... Outlawed Protestant "loyalist" guerrillas have also urged Britain not to dilute its demand for an unequivocal IRA ceasefire... Meanwhile, the two Sinn Fein leaders, who won seats in the general election have failed to overturn a ruling by the Speaker... barring their use of offices at Parliament unless they swear allegiance to[the] Queen... Sinn Fein officials said the party would now consider what legal avenues were open to it.

...Dublin and London have agreed a joint stance on guerrilla disarmament that could pave the way for progress in dead-locked[N[Ir]] peace talks. The Irish [PM]... said Sinn Fein now had to choose between the political path and the dual approach of political action and violence that it had been pursuing. Sinn Fein is barred from the multi-party discussions because the IRA refuses to restore a truce it broke in... 1996. Earlier Sinn Fein's chief negotiator... had said the disarmament issue remained a major stumbling block in peace efforts. He said Sinn Fein wanted an end to violence... [but] Republicans opposed to British rule have always maintained that the IRA will not call a ceasefire if they suspect the negotiations will be turned into a "decommissioning conference." Meanwhile, Britain has said it would not permit Sinn Fein and the IRA to hold the peace process to ransom... The IRA's murder of two police patrolmen last week, which was followed by two suspected Protestant bomb attacks on [RCs], has clouded hopes of political progress.

...Unionist politicians... yesterday appeared philosophical about proposals from the British [PM and outgoing Irish PM]... to revive the Irish peace process... They are proposing that the IRA and its rival Protestant guerrillas should give up their arms in stages while the talks proceeded. The idea – known as parallel decommissioning – was rejected last year by [the British PM's] predecessor... who was under pressure from unionist and loyalist politicians... whose support he needed in Parliament. With [the Labour leader's] landslide election in May, the loyalists have lost much of their influence... [The] leader of the... [UUP] said parallel decommissioning was not his party's "first preference" but it was prepared to accept it... [The] Sinn Fein leader... pledged to study the... proposal carefully. But [a reverend who is the] hard-line Democratic Unionist Party leader... accused London and Dublin of having "given in to the IRA" and said his party might quit the all-party talks... [In further news from Britain, the] Labour Government yesterday fulfilled its election promise to ban arms sales to countries with poor human rights records that might use them for internal repression. Britain, one of the world's leading defence exporters, would also turn down licence applications if there is a clear risk that the arms will be used aggressively against another country, the Foreign Secretary... told the British Parliament. However, he disappointed arms campaigners by refusing to withdraw more than 21,000 existing defence licences, including one for the controversial sale of 16 Hawk jets and armoured vehicles to Indonesia. Human rights activists... contend that the jets have been used against opponents in the breakaway East Timor region... The[British] Government said it had no firm evidence Jakarta had used Hawk jets in East Timor. Moreover, its lawyers advised it was not realistic to revoke licences issued by the previous Conservative administration... In a related move, [the Foreign Secretary] said that Britain was also banning the export in any circumstances of electro-shock batons, stun guns, leg-irons or similar instruments of torture.

...[the IRA] used the liner Queen Elizabeth 2 during the 1970s to ship arms... The... *Sunday Times* said... "tonnes of weapons provided by Irish-American sympathisers" had been brought over from New York to Southampton... [after] IRA operatives... infiltrated the crew.

...The... IRA... called a ceasefire at the weekend to its 28-year war against British rule... [Unfortunately,] Anglo-Irish proposals that [N[Ir]] guerrillas should disarm while taking part in peace talks were defeated yesterday in a setback for attempts... to end... [the] conflict. "...All three unionist parties voted against," said [a spokesperson for] the Ulster Democratic Party.

...Leaders of the... Sinn Fein party are finally to take their seats around a huge square table – but who... among nine other parties... that began... the talks... in June 1996... will be there to meet them? That's the big question as Belfast's on-again, off-again negotiations resumed yesterday... The... [UUP] are internally divided over whether to confront Sinn Fein directly or to withdraw from a process many fear will give concessions to

their enemies. The... [UUP] is expected to remain officially in the process but refuse to sit down opposite Sinn Fein in the main conference chamber, where parties have been allocated five or six chairs each. That likely policy of staying under one roof, but not in the same room, would be followed by representatives of [NIR's] two main pro-British paramilitary groups. It would hamper the prospects for early progress without scuttling the talks entirely... Two harder-line Protestant parties... [the] Democratic Unionists and... [the] United Kingdom Unionists[(UKU)], have vowed not to show up at all and say the [UUP] would be playing with fire if they stay.

...[one] of Britain's most popular television soap operas has provoked hundreds of messages from angry viewers complaining that recent episodes have portrayed the... Irish as drunken and backward... [M]any Irish... are[already] the butt of bad jokes portraying them as backward and slow-witted... Newspapers in Ireland united to condemn the episodes. The *Irish Independent* newspaper's television critic... said he was so "gobsmacked" that he forgot to take notes... A spokeswoman for the BBC, which has apologised for upsetting the Irish people, [confirmed] the broadcaster had received hundreds of complaints since the first two Irish episodes of *Eastenders* were screened this week. But she said there were no plans to withdraw the third episode, to be shown early today... [In related news,] British and Irish Government officials tried again last night to coax reluctant unionist leaders to join their arch-foes Sinn Fein at historic... peace talks.

...A... bomb which exploded outside a border market town... yesterday blew the... peace process off course. Protestant politicians extended [their] talks boycott... The estimated... 170kg van bomb, which went off as police were evacuating the area... followed a telephone warning to the BBC in Belfast. The bomb caused extensive damage to a police station and the surrounding area but no human injuries. Several people suffered shock and up to 400 cattle in a nearby market suffered blast wounds. Senior security sources blamed the attack on the republican splinter group the Continuity Army Council, which failed to sign up to an [IRA] ceasefire declared on July 20. But... [the] leader of the... [UUP] openly accused the IRA, despite denials from the... group... He later said the unionists would join the peace talks "to expose their [the IRA's] fascist character," but would not say when... The timing of the blast, on the second day of peace talks was interpreted by all sides as an attack on the negotiations... The paramilitary Loyalist Volunteer Force threatened to "step up attacks" in response to what it called "a final push by the republicans to bring people of Ulster into a united Ireland." ...The next session in the talks has been postponed... to find more time to persuade the unionists into full talks.

...[the British PM has] pledged his commitment to securing an agreement on [NIR's] future by May[1998 as] long-time foes finally agreed to full-scale peace talks... Britain and Ireland hailed the breakthrough... after... seven hours of tense talks... [and] 16 months of squabbling... as an unprecedented opportunity to cement peace.

...The first full-scale political talks on [NIR] began yesterday... Officials from eight political parties... sat down together for substantive negotiations for the first time since 1921... "Too many generations have grown up in an environment of violence and political stalemate, and only the middle aged and the elderly can now remember a time before 'the Troubles'," said the Irish justice minister... "We can set N[IR] on the way to a fundamentally better, happier and more stable peaceful future... I believe agreements can be reached,"... said... [the] British secretary of state for the province... But... [the] Democratic Unionists and the U[KU]... are boycotting the talks saying they are part of a secret agenda to end British rule and merge[NIR] with the Republic of Ireland... And unionist suspicions that the IRA ceasefire is a mere tactic rather than a genuine commitment to negotiations provide an additional complication... "The only solution for dealing with the IRA is to kill 600 people in one night – let the UN and [US] make a scene and it is over...," ... a former defence minister... [who is] still a member of Parliament, told a meeting... Sinn Fein [confirmed] they are joining in with the aim of smashing the union between Britain and... [NIR. Its] leader... said... British rule... had manifestly failed.

...Ireland is prepared to renounce its historic claim to sovereignty over... [NIR, the new Irish PM] said yesterday... A settlement is likely to hand the province a substantive devolution of power from Britain, while it remains within the U[K. The]... settlement is also likely to see the setting up of a cross-border authority promoting co-operation with Ireland in areas such as agriculture, energy, health and education.

...[lawyers begin questioning a former Irish PM, aged 74, today about financial gifts he received during his political career. The accused is a former leader of the country's biggest political party, the centrist Fianna Fail, and was PM three times, in the early 1980s and early 1990s. He resigned in 1992 and the party is now led by the new PM. Since the Irish Parliament set up the latest tribunal, he's mounted several legal challenges against its investigation of his finances. He is also facing criminal charges of hindering and obstructing the first tribunal – which established that he received 8.5 million punts, including 1.3 million from a businessman. Revelations about the scale of the money he received from top businessmen in Ireland and abroad has shocked the country.]

...people across the US are in shock after 'police recently had to break up a fight between two Bible salesmen in Lincoln County, Nebraska. The argument began with the two salesmen fighting a turf war over the best sales pitcher, and culminated in their duelling with baseball bats. The Bishop of Nebraska later offered to "nut" journalists pushing him for comment on the incident'. By the way,] **Texans need not feel naked in church anymore. A new state law allows individual churches to decide whether worshippers can attend... services with a revolver at their hip.**

...[from the state of Arkansas comes 'news that ministers of religion might be permitted by their church to carry weapons to defend their flocks (and their donations). In a country where overt piety and wanton murder co-exist in a symbiotic relationship, it is entirely logical that the Christian pulpit should become a citadel. Flak jackets and steel helmets will follow, no doubt. But when the last taboo is removed from men and women of God, turning the other cheek becomes an option less easy than loosing off a few rounds. Then, presumably, the dog-collared gunslinger is supposed to dash to give spiritual succour to the afflicted one, or at least to pray over the corpse of what might well have been a tragic loser driven to desperation by a greedy society. I am not sure whether saving souls fits into this scenario. "Smite the heathen!" is an inspiring war-cry. But in these violent times, the heathen is only too likely to smite back, what's more with assault rifles and grenades. And since, in the Land of the Free, the criminals greatly outnumber the clergy, the cynical military observation will be widely quoted: "God is on the side of the big battalions." However, the notion of pistol-packing parsons is not as grimly farcical as it might seem, and indeed in the present state of America there is much to be said for the argument in favour of the right of clergy people to bear arms. Oliver Cromwell's ranting Ironsides emphasised their sermonising at swordpoint as did, and do, zealots of other faiths.]

...on this day in 1649] **Oliver Cromwell, the leader of the victorious parliamentarians in the English Civil War, besiege[d] Drogheda in Ireland and massacred its inhabitants...** [This year, the anniversary] came a day after the UUP leader... accused the U[S] Administration... of "naivety" following its decision to drop the IRA from a list of terrorist organisations barred from raising funds in or entering the U[S].

...In a major show of unrelenting grief and anger, more than 20,000 [RC]s marched peacefully on Sunday in memory of 13 demonstrators shot dead by British troops... Those killings at the end of a civil rights march... galvanised [RC] support for the outlawed I[RA], which launched its violent campaign against British rule of N[IR] in 1970... IRA-allied Sinn Fein party... leaders... and [RC] moderates jointly called for a new international investigation into Bloody Sunday to refute the original British inquiry, which concluded that soldiers fired with justification and should not face charges because some victims could have been armed – a claim bitterly disputed by locals, who say the troops fired first...

EVERYONE who was in Londonderry on that day remembers the bullets. Terrified civilians... at a rally protesting at Britain's internment of several hundred [RC]s opposed to rule from London... crouched and crawled spider-like, nostrils in the gutter, as... members of Britain's crack Parachute Regiment, sent to keep the peace... fire[d] 108 shots in less than 15 minutes, killing 13... and wounding 17, one fatally... Bloody Sunday was a defining moment in the present era of conflict over British rule in N[IR]. Security analysts and politicians concede that it marked the end of a sort of phoney war and the start of all-out violence. Disaffected [RC] youths swelled the ranks of the... IRA... because of the incident and joined its hit-and-run campaign to drive Britain from Ireland... Britain called in its Lord Chief Justice, [who]... exonerated the soldiers... Silver-haired, urbane, courteous and commanding, it was soon evident he spoke a different language from the local [RC]s, who saw themselves as fighting a civil

rights struggle as just as that of American blacks. [RC]s were unanimous in calling the shooting unprovoked murder and ridiculed the Army version that troops themselves had come under heavy fire... To relatives and the people of Londonderry, Bloody Sunday is an open wound which will not be healed until Britain admits that its troops were culpable... "I think it is imperative that the British Government quite unequivocally admits what happened,"... says... [a] respected Irish churchman... [who] tended... amateur boxer Jackie Duddy... the youngest to die that day... "In other words that paratroopers deliberately killed innocent civilians – picking them out and targeting them individually – and apologise for it."

...The British Government yesterday rejected a call for a formal apology for the shooting of unarmed civilians in Londonderry... 25 years ago...

[RC] petrol bombers ambushed police in Londonderry... yesterday in a fresh flare-up of violence triggered by a march... The annual Lundy's Day demonstration by the Protestant Apprentice Boys organisation marks the shutting of the city's gates in the face of [RC] forces in 1688. It led to a siege the next year that cost thousands of Protestant lives and which Protestants have regarded as one of the defining moments in their history in the northern sector of the island. As dusk falls on this day each year, they burn a 20ft-high effigy of Colonel Lundy, the Governor of the besieged city who has gone down in Protestant lore as a traitor.

...Protestant demonstrators yelling "traitor" jostled and jeered [the British P]M... after his historic hand-shake with [the] Sinn Fein president... the first meeting in more than 70 years between a British P[M] and an Irish republican leader. Women donned rubber gloves and thrust their hands at [the PM while he]... went on a Belfast shopping centre walkabout... "You are contaminated. You have shaken hands with a murderer[," they screamed at him. He]... also met leaders of seven other parties involved in [the] peace talks... British officials said [the PM] had told Sinn Fein leaders that they and [the] other parties... had a once-in-a-lifetime chance to shape history. "If we don't seize the opportunity now, we may not see it again in my lifetime,"... [Tomorrow the Sinn Fein president will visit] 10 Downing St, [the] traditional home of British [PMs].

...Punching the air in triumph and declaring it a "moment in history," [the] Sinn Fein leader... became the first IRA sympathiser to meet a British [PM] in London in 76 years. Protesters shouted "murderer" through the railing gates at the end of Downing St... [while, just] metres away, supporters waved the... Irish flag... The meeting... was heavy with symbolism... [but] appeared to have made no substantive difference to the talks in Belfast... Meanwhile, an IRA convicted double murderer who escaped from [NIr's] Maze prison on Wednesday remained on the run. [The IRA leader publicly wished the fugitive] "good luck" before meeting [the British PM] – a remark British officials said "had not been helpful."

...In the wake of weekend rioting a leading Protestant in [NIr] has agreed that he may meet [the] Sinn Fein leader... It was a major shift for... [the] head of the... [UUP]. A day earlier he had rejected [the Sinn Fein leader's] offer of a meeting as a "silly little stunt." However... the weekend violence in Londonderry which left six people injured... was the worst... seen since the [IRA] declared a ceasefire in July, and gave a clear warning that the peace process would not be quick and trouble-free.

...[NIr's] chief... Protestant leader... yesterday scotched speculation that he might hold talks with the leader of the IRA's political arm... "I have no intention this week, next week, next month, so far as one can see into the future of having a private meeting," [he said. The UUP]... leader... had seemed to raise the possibility of an encounter... in a weekend interview with Irish television but [he] told reporters he had been misinterpreted.

...[NIr's] political parties have failed to agree on a crucial mechanism that would break an impasse and enable peace talks to move forward... [After] hours of wrangling, Protestant and [RC] leaders could not settle on a list of key issues to be tackled but... said they would resume broadly based talks next month... Earlier [in the day] a man arrested in N[Ir] last week was flown to London for questioning by the police about the bombing... in London's Docklands business district on February 9 last year...

Three IRA guerrillas have been sentenced to a total of 62 years in prison after being found guilty by a British jury of plotting a... massive bomb attack in London's Docklands area... [By the way, a Protestant] guerrilla chief... shot inside N[Ir's] top security jail... was a maverick who was hated by the Irish republicans who killed him and regarded with both fear and awe by fellow pro-British extremists. Security forces said he was shot five times in the back... by two inmates of the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA)... as he waited for a minibus to take him to a visitor's area. The prison holds some 500 inmates who are members of paramilitary groups, both loyalist and nationalist, making it the largest detention centre for convicted terrorists in Western Europe. The killing caused rioting in Belfast and in an apparent reprisal shooting attack suspected Protestant extremists killed a man and wounded three others... [including] a 14-year-old boy... outside a [RC] owned hotel in Dungannon... [K]nown as "King Rat", the assassinated guerrilla chief was head off [the] 100-strong... Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF)[, which has been opposed to ceasefires]... since October 1994. He was sentenced by a court last March to eight years in prison for making death threats... Both the INLA and the [IRA were after him]... He survived six assassination attempts. But it was his own ideological colleagues, the... UVF... who "sentenced" him to death and ordered him out of N[Ir] in 1996... "His group was responsible for between a dozen and 20 sectarian murders," said... the *Irish Times*. "The... [RC] victims range from young women to elderly people... Almost none of them had any connection with republicanism... His sole role was to create tension,"... Hooded gunmen from the... [LVF] guarded his coffin... as British and Irish politicians embarked on a damage control exercise... Three members of... the outlawed... INLA... were last night... charged with the murder... An investigation has been launched at the Maze prison... - 1997

[No-one has claimed responsibility yet for the 'firebombing of a house that resulted in the deaths of three RC children,' but] Pro-British extremists yesterday said they were behind a New Year's Eve pub shooting in N[Ir] in which one man was killed and five others injured. Members of the... LVF... said they were avenging the assassination of their leader... and warned: "This is not the end." ...the minister responsible for the province... [said Britain] will reinstate daytime army patrols in Belfast... [after] a negotiator for the... Ulster Democratic Party who spent 18 years in prison for butchering a [RC] politician and his Protestant girlfriend with knives, said... that the group was considering "a return to war." ...young children from Belfast are used to seeing soldiers with guns on the streets...

For the first time in the history of N[Ir], eight parties from across the political divide [have come] together to sign a peace deal... The... Good Friday peace agreement... [that] will be put to a referendum in N[Ir] and the Irish Republic on May 22... still needs a lot of work... The agreement provides a return to self-government in N[Ir] after... years of direct rule from London, a sharing of power by Protestants and [RCs], an end to the violence by the IRA and Protestant paramilitary groups and new links between [NIr] and the Irish Republic... Ireland's history of bitterness goes back... [to at least] 1541 – when Henry VIII [declared] himself King of Ireland... People left their homes in mixed areas of... [NIr when the] present-day... Troubles began. Whole streets were engulfed in flames as families fled... for the safety of one-religion ghettos. It was often innocent victims who got caught in the violence. For example, in one IRA raid, the target – a bus driver who was also a member of the Ulster Defence Force – escaped unharmed, but a 14 year old schoolgirl died when his bus was blown up... Girls and adolescents are often daubed with paint or have their heads shaved... Children aged 12 and less are often victims of punishment attacks which used to be carried out with guns but are now administered with nail-studded baseball bats... What effect do you think this random violence would have on childhood? ...A whole generation has been raised in a climate of hatred, anger, fear and bloodshed. More than 20[%] of children in N[Ir] have lost a family member or friend in the conflict.

...A 13-year-old boy was beaten with baseball bats by suspected guerrillas in the latest of N[Ir]'s so-called punishment beatings... "Nothing would justify this type of assault, particularly on a child. It has all the hallmarks of a paramilitary-style assault,"... a police spokeswoman said.

...Nearly 200 children have ended up in hospital after being beaten by guerilla groups in N[Ir] since... April last year. The N[Ir] Civil Rights Bureau said 4000 children under the age of 18 had been victims of I[RA] and loyalist violence in that time. [However, children aren't the only victims. "Our father lost both his legs after being mistakenly blamed for passing on information," says one family. His perpetrators, who remain free

because the family is too scared to testify, regularly walk past him and his wheelchair. One analyst says: "In peace, the IRA is turning on its own people in an attempt to terrorise the population into staying under its control, while also getting into the drug industry by taking protection money from the leaders of drug rings.""]

...No group claimed responsibility for the latest... punishment attack... on a 23-year-old... Police said [the RC]'s attackers battered his legs and impaled his hands onto a fence with nails. Firefighters took him to the hospital with the fencing still hammered to his hands... The... peace agreement... obligated rival armed groups to fade away, a moderate [R]C... leader declared as the outlaws' latest victim recovered from h[is] h[or]rific wounds... The... [leader] yesterday joined calls from Britain and Protestants for the I[RA] and other illegal groups to disarm and shut down. He was addressing the weekend conference of his Social Democratic and Labour Party, the moderate... rival to the IRA-linked Sinn Féin...

[The British PM] urged extremists to "hear the voice of reason," but left N[Ir] yesterday] with Protestant marchers and [RC] protesters still on a stubborn collision course. The Orange Order... is threatening to defy an official ban on its annual... Garvaghy Rd... parade this Sunday... Anti-Orange protesters there have sat down on the road for the past three summers, forcing authorities to decide whose rights should prevail. The confrontation has triggered widespread violence each year, and appears to be doing so again... In 1995... the protesters agreed to wave placards from the curb as the parade passed. In 1996 police blocked the parade but caved in after... Protestants rioted elsewhere for four nights. Last year authorities opted to permit the parade and saturate Garvaghy Rd with riot police and soldiers, which sparked four nights of widespread [RC] rioting. In all cases the... [RUC] has prevented direct clashes between Orangemen and Garvaghy Rd [RCs]. Orange leaders vow this time to rally for weeks at Drumcree if necessary to wear down police resolve. They refuse to enter direct negotiations with the protesters... The... conflict [threatens] to torpedo a hard-won accord...

British authorities in [N]Ir held firm under Protestant pressure yesterday after a ban on a controversial parade passing through a [RC] district triggered widespread street violence... Portadown itself was calm... a day after thousands of Orangemen... named for their allegiance to William of Orange, a Protestant king who... [lived] in 1690... were prevented from marching down Garvaghy Rd by a massive metal barrier, a moat and lines of barbed wire fences erected by British troops.

...The Drumcree siege... may be over, but the bitter legacy... lives on in Kilkeel, a thriving fishing port in South Down. Throughout the marching season, the centre of Kilkeel has seen scores of Orange and loyalist marches... [but] on August 15 – two nationalist bands, along with the... Ancient Order of Hibernians, will take their traditional route through the mainly Protestant town. Even those unionists who support the right of the [RC] order to march through Kilkeel are worried that extreme loyalists will cause disruption, in retaliation for the Government's insistence that Orangemen could not march down... Garvaghy Rd... Twelve local Protestants[, including four children, were]... killed by the IRA during the Troubles.

...Residents of a county in the front line of the Troubles have yet to see a peace dividend a year after an acclaimed deal... Soldiers call it bandit country. Locals call it God's country. Strangers shudder at road signs warning of IRA snipers and stare at the British Army helicopters buzzing over South Armagh. Rarely is the symbolism of and sympathy with the I[RA]'s fight against British rule more evident than in County Armagh, whose wriggly border marks the end of N[Ir] and the beginning of the 26-county Republic... The snipers went off duty when the IRA called a ceasefire... in 1997, easing the path to peace. But constant British surveillance continues, with roadside cameras and a network of 33 watchtowers to aid the Army and R[UC]... "It seems as if the Army and RUC want to rattle cages until something happens,"... But relentless IRA attacks which won South Armagh its reputation will take a long time to be forgotten – most notoriously, the Kingsmills massacre of 1976, when 10 local Protestants were dragged from a mini-bus and gunned to death... [T]he official view[is] that the checks help control dissidents – like the Real IRA...

At least 28 people were killed... when a car bomb tore apart the... Omagh... town centre... Many of those slain... were unwittingly evacuated closer to the bomb by police acting on a misleading phone warning... The streets surrounding the bomb site were strewn with glass and rubble and streaked with blood... "There were limbs lying about that had been blown off people," [a witness] said, noting that one young pregnant woman had lost her legs... The dead included both Protestants and [RCs], nine of them children – including a toddler and a Spanish pupil... No group claimed responsibility for planting the 220kg bomb in Omagh, which was crowded with weekend shoppers and families attending a festival.

...The momentum for peace in N[Ir] is gathering pace with key Unionist and Republican leaders setting a date for an historic meeting... tomorrow... and the so-called Real IRA... [-] the organisation that... [planted] a bomb in the town of Omagh last month... [-] declaring a ceasefire... The Real IRA... broke away from the mainstream [IRA] in opposition to its July 1997 ceasefire... The *Irish Times*... reported last week that the mainstream IRA had visited individually members of the Real IRA and told them to give up their terror campaign... [The Irish PM] said the Real IRA... ceasefire announcement... was important and positive... But he made clear the British and Irish Governments remained determined to track down the Omagh bombers.

...Police hunting... the Real IRA... bombers... [responsible for] the deadliest attack in three decades of conflict... arrested 10 people yesterday in dawn raids north and south of the Irish border... The suspects were held under tough new laws rushed through the British and Irish Parliaments to crush splinter groups opposed to the... peace deal... [□ The] pregnant woman who survived... the... explosion... [in] Omagh... which left 29 people dead and more than 250 injured... has given birth to a healthy baby girl.

...NEVER have the Troubles in N[Ir] seemed more hopeless. We have become used to seeing terrible images from Belfast. But the sight of terrified little girls shrinking from missiles and filthy verbal abuse as they make their way to school is one I won't forget... A group of Belfast protestants say [RC] mums and dads take their girls through their enclave to the Holy Cross primary school to provoke them. They say the kids should go the long way round – where they won't offend protestant sensibilities. The army was called in to protect the kids. Just as well – a pipe bomb thrown into the crowd of children mercifully missed them but injured a soldier. What's odd is that the protestant men and women generating this terror are parents. They don't fit the stereotype of radical extremists. I used to think the trouble came from minorities on both sides – young men desperate to prove themselves. But the hatred is so ingrained that ordinary people think nothing of killing little girls because they're [RC]. And it won't stop. Can you imagine these girls ever seeing protestants as decent?

...N[Ir]'s rival communities will be symbolically united tomorrow when [their] Protestant First Minister... and [a leading RC] statesman... receive the Nobel Peace Prize... [for] "their efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict..." But back home, the honeymoon is over for an agreement they helped broker. The hard-won peace process is bogged down in wrangling and acrimony. Pro-British and pro-Irish militias operate truces, and hundreds of imprisoned extremists have been freed under the landmark agreement. But political momentum has slowed amid suspicion and squabbling... People are heartened that the guns are silent, but accord supporters are weary of the bickering. "...Agreement?" snapped a... waitress... "I call it the Disagreement." ...[two] leaders of a N[Ir] peace movement that later ran out of steam, were awarded the prize in 1976.

...Milestone on long road to Ulster peace... N[Ir] is heading for a new era of self-government... following the weekend decision by the U[UP], the largest Protestant party, to join a government that will include Sinn Féin... Each party in the assembly will nominate ministers to the first devolved government for N[Ir] since 1974. The next step will be for the British Parliament to transfer home rule power to Belfast... But unionist leaders warned that the deal would collapse if the IRA did not start to hand over its weapons soon... The Belfast government should be fully operational by Thursday. At that point the IRA is expected to name a representative to discuss with a "decommissioning" commission the practicalities of getting rid of its weapons. The following week this commission... will report on its talks with paramilitaries... [then] set out a timetable for disarming.

...N[Ir]'s First Minister... says he believes that a key report to the British and Irish Government has dashed hopes of an early handover of arms by I[RA] guerrillas. The minister, who has threatened to resign over the arms impasse, was last night waiting to hear whether Britain would intervene by suspending the province's... two month[old]... coalition Government... But Sinn Fein has warned any collapse in the assembly was likely to lead to the IRA breaking off talks with the arms commission... The IRA has always equated disarmament with surrender.

...Protestant and [RC] politicians have thrown down gauntlets to each other to save peace in N[Ir]. Majority Protestants say IRA refusal to give a clear timetable for disarmament is to blame. [RC]s blame what they say is Britain's premature suspension on Saturday of the province's power-sharing Government. But with the tussle of wills over the latest crisis... just starting, both sides have... made clear nothing is going to be picked up for weeks at least. The result is that the[peace] agreement has descended into limbo... The new institutions which have been placed in cold storage had seemed to offer the chance of a new beginning. Now they have gone, and no one knows for sure whether they can ever be brought back.

...The I[RA] was smuggling guns and heavy weapons into Ireland and N[Ir] while also negotiating peace, the *Sunday Times* alleges. The newspaper says Irish police and the... [FBI] are investigating claims that the paramilitary organisation shipped in part of a 20-tonne cache of weapons last year... The report came amid crisis in the N[Ir] peace process – after London suspended a... power-sharing Government... because of a lack of IRA disarmament. The IRA responded by breaking off talks with an international disarmament commission... The reports will fuel... unionist... anger...

The discovery of two murdered young men by a country roadside has again raised the spectre of violence in N[Ir]. Their wounds were so extensive that police could not immediately confirm the cause of death... [A]nalysts say instability will increase if the... killings are confirmed as part of a loyalist feud... Richard Jameson, a reputed leader of the Ulster Volunteer Force, was killed last month... The rival L[VF] denied widespread rumours that it was behind his murder, but Jameson's relatives, while denying he was in the UVF, insisted the LVF was to blame.

...A human rights group[has] accused members of the Belgian [RC] clergy of protecting two Rwandan nuns allegedly responsible for... the deaths of up to 6000 Tutsis... during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. London-based African Rights... called on the Belgian judicial system to prosecute the two nuns[who]... have been living at the Benedictine order in Maredret... since August 1994. The order declined to comment...

The... Pontiff, who... le[ads] the world's one billion [RC]s... is expected to officially ask forgiveness for past... [sins of the RC] Church... next year...

Pope John Paul is a great man, possibly a saint, certainly one of the most effective popes in history. But he is also a puzzle and a problem. His papacy, which began 20 years ago, falls into two halves. In the first, the focus was the communist adversary. Exactly what part the Polish Pope played in bringing about the collapse of the Soviet empire with hardly a shot fired will be variously estimated by historians. "Everything that happened in Eastern Europe would have been impossible without the presence of this Pope," [the last Soviet leader] has written. In the second phase, the adversary has been the permissive capitalism of the Western democracies, and here the Pope has been less successful. He has been rapturously received almost wherever he has gone, and his message respected and admired – but from a distance. This discrepancy between the reception of the singer and that of the song is part of the puzzle... No one has done more to mount an ethical critique of global capitalism... and during his papacy the[RC] Church has everywhere confirmed its concern for the poor. He has tirelessly promoted the religious liberty which a previous Pope rejected as "madness," while the doctrine of human rights, which the[RC] Church used to spurn as the bastard offspring of the French Revolution, has become the platform of his preaching to the world. Far from being always a conservative, in important ways he is an innovator: his international journeys are one example and his determination that the Church should apologise for the sins of its history, despite the misgivings of some of the cardinals, is another. Why then are there such reservations about this papacy on the part of a significant number of [RCs], who look to a different future from the one John Paul presents? That is the problem. Perhaps the Pope has been almost too confident in his role. He presided over a huge reassertion of centralised papal authority. His advocates hailed it a "restoration," and they were right. It was achieved through the choice of handpicked archbishops and bishops and the muzzling of progressive theologians. The disciplining of progressive theologians began in his very first year, when... [licences to teach were withdrawn and priests were] excommunicated. The theologians were put on notice that they were not the teachers. How can a Pope whose humanity and acceptance of suffering inspire many to love him, who forgave his would-be assassin, who has been an evangelist to the ends of the Earth, show such inflexibility in the exercise of his papacy? ...The cardinals who elected... [him] 20 years ago wanted a strong Pope. They got one, but cannot have foreseen the rest. They did not guess that riding on the back of a centralised papal authority, the papal service would sometimes treat them, in the words of one American cardinal, "like altar boys." Twenty years later, it would seem that strength alone is not enough. One highly successful papal journey was to Britain in 1982, but that has not prevented Mass-goers in England and Wales declining by 50[%]. Latin America has been one target area for papal journeys, but the[RC] Church has suffered there one of its greatest defeats since the Reformation. Lacking the priests to celebrate the Mass, the heart of [RC] life and worship, many [RCs] have deserted to the evangelists and sects. Because of the lack of priests, the bishops of Brazil have been among those who have asked to be able to ordain mature married men – in vain. It can be dangerous to raise these matters with the Pope. At one meeting, it is reported, a Spanish cardinal told the Pope that "as a bishop I feel forced to make you aware that there are many problems concerning the question of celibacy and the shortage of priests." John Paul II replied: "And as a Pope I feel forced to dismiss you." Such inflexible leadership produces unreliable consensus. The Second Vatican Council, called by Pope John XXIII to update the[RC] Church, did not envisage bishops being treated in this way. According to the council doctrine, they govern the Church with and under the Pope. The council did not say that the bishops could join the team only if they said the same things as the captain... But any harm can be repaired by his successors, who will need to govern in a less monarchical style.

...Putting perhaps one of his final stamps on the group that will elect his successor, Pope John Paul created 22 new cardinals yesterday and asked them to help him guide the[RC] Church into the next millennium. Under clear skies in St Peter's Square, the 77-year-old Pope gave... the new cardinals... their red hats in a solemn ceremony known as a consistory.

...The Pope, in a highly unusual move, has named a further five new cardinals, following the appointment of 37 last week, and also disclosed the names of two cardinals he appointed secretly [three years ago]... to protect the prelate or the local church... Since all... of the men named yesterday are under 80, the number of "cardinal-electors" rises to an unprecedented 135, and the College of Cardinals membership to 185... Addressing pilgrims and tourists in St Peter's Square, Pope John Paul said he was again making an exception to a rule that no more than 120 cardinals – and only those under the age of 80 – should enter the conclave to elect his successor after his death.

...IMAGINE this! Pope John Paul II, finally overcome by age and illness, is dead. Mourning is for later in the busy corridors of the Vatican, even if business is being done surrounded by a respectful hush... A great old man has died and gone to his God, but the church on earth must be as eternal as John Paul's soul. They are playing politics with a viciousness that would put almost every other assembly on earth into holy dread and fear. From all over the world, the red hats of the princes of the church have flown to the meeting of the College of Cardinals that will elect the successor, gazing for inspiration from time to time at Michelangelo's dazzling allegory on the ceiling above them in the Sistine Chapel. On and on they sit – it took three votes and endless intrigues before... [electing] Pope John Paul II – until finally, having decided, the paper is lit to create white smoke from the chimney and the new pope has been examined by the youngest cardinal present through the chair with a hole in it, to make sure he is, indeed, a male... The world is then told that the new pope, who will supply his chosen name, was... born in Ezioelle, Onitsha, on November 1, 1932, a black Nigerian... [and] the direct descendant of St Peter the Apostle, Holy Father of the Church and Bishop of Rome. It is a scenario many modern [RCs] long for when Pope John Paul II dies. Until recently... it was a romantic outside chance. Lately, it is starting to look less outside than before as this stubborn old pontiff declines to die and throws the options of succession more... open with each passing year of his

reign. "The First Black Pope" is the cry surrounding the campaign for [the Nigerian] Cardinal... to succeed John Paul. [But] Gelassius I, Pope from 492... to 496AD, was a black African, and it depends what you mean by "black". St Peter himself, a fisherman from the Sea of Galilee, was as dark-skinned as the present-day Semitics who haul... fish from that inland lake, or carpenters from Nazareth. Still, it... would represent an astonishing breakthrough if [the Nigerian] were to become... Pope... [But] according to Vatican insiders, it probably will not happen. Yet. Instead, the favourite for the post remains [the] Cardinal... of Milan. The trouble is, [this] Cardinal... is a Jesuit; and while there has been at least one black pope, there has never been a Jesuit pope. Why this sudden rush of discussion about the succession? Realists in the Vatican see John Paul's health declining weekly. His left hand shakes uncontrollably from Parkinson's Disease that has afflicted him for... five years. Recently, it took him minutes to gather himself together for a simple message[– but a 'pope can't be removed if he becomes senile (he has to remove himself before senility occurs')]... Many in the Vatican believe this... frail old man, with a 9mm bullet hole in him since the 1981 assassination attempt, is determined to live until the millennium, when his private stated intention is to climb Mount Sinai... He hopes to be there with the... Jewish [leader]s as well as other Christian leaders.

...Pope John Paul II celebrates his 78th birthday today, only three days away from breaking the record for the longest papacy of the century... [T]he robust sportsman and newcomer to the vast bureaucracy of the Holy See succeeded John Paul I, who was Pope for only 33 days... As of today, John Paul[II] will have headed the church for 7149 days, compared with the 7152 days of Pius XII... who reigned during... W[W2]... In all of history, there have been only 12 Popes, out of 264, who reigned longer... The absolute record goes to St Peter... who had 34 or 37 years as head of the first community of Christians... [The incumbent] pontiff has probably broken other church records, notably for travel. He has made 210 papal voyages, 128 inside Italy. He has also canonised more saints – 279 – and beatified more church figures – 796 – than any other Pope. He also holds the dubious record for being hospitalised more than any other pontiff... Today's celebrations will be quiet and for most of the day it will be work as usual, since by Church tradition it is his saint's day, November 4, and not his secular birthday, that is celebrated at the Vatican.

...Live recordings of the Pope delivering prayers, homilies and chants in five languages are to feature on a CD going on sale ...[ext] March... *Abba Pater*, released by Sony Classical, will combine original compositions of contemporary music with the Pope's broadcasts... [(but don't expect to hear the Pope referring to *the Second Commandment*, which] has been left out... [of *the General Catholic Catechism*... [– while the First Commandment was changed by Rome to become:] Thou shalt not have strange gods before me; at]... the Council of Toulouse, the church leaders ruled: "We prohibit laymen possessing copies of the Old and New Testament... [and n]o one may possess the books... in the Romance language[)]... The album took two years to complete... [Y]esterday... the... 78-year-old[, who]... last week suffered a light bout of influenza, celebrated midnight Mass in St Peter's Basilica, the largest church in Christendom... During the Mass, televised to 40 countries, prayers were said in French, German... and... Swahili...

A Pacific Islands delegation notched up a historic first in St Peter's Basilica in Rome yesterday. Their traditional costumes left their chests bare, something the Vatican has never before tolerated. The group was marking the inauguration of a special assembly of bishops from Oceania.

...The boatbuilder who cobbled together the 8m-long fishing boat on the shore of the Sea of Galilee 2000 years ago would have been proud of, or at least amused by, the furore his rough handiwork would create two millennia down the line. Dubbed "The Jesus Boat," the vessel was uncovered by archaeologists in 1986 during a severe drought that lowered the level of Lake Kinneret, as the biblical Sea of Galilee is now called... Since it may have plied the lake during the time of Jesus... the boat has become a minor pilgrimage site for Christian tourists. The vessel, however, may not have made its last voyage. The Israel Antiquities Authority revealed this week that it had agreed to lend the boat to the Vatican for three months at the request of church officials as part of a millennial exhibition. The announcement touched off protests in Israel from Government officials and some conservationists, who expressed fear that the fragile boat might be damaged by the journey... There were also objections that Israel's own drawing power as a site for millennial pilgrimage would be diminished by the absence of the boat for three months... However, [in]... explaining why he agreed to its loan[, the]... chairman of the authority... said... "It will be good for the Vatican and good for us... The [Yigal Allon] museum has only been drawing about 70,000 visitors a year. In the Vatican, during those three months, millions of people will see it. It will... [also be blessed by] the Pope..." ...If the Israeli Government so decides, the resurrected junk boat will fly... first class luxury to Rome and return, perhaps, a holy relic.

As the [RC] Church travels through troubled waters... Pope John Paul II... [is supporting] a range of vast and fast-growing... fundamentalist movements. Among the largest and most powerful are the strangely named Focolare, Communion and Liberation and Neocatechumenate, the last the subject of an ecclesiastical inquiry in... England. Many [RCs] are puzzled by the Pope's enthusiasm for these extraordinary organisations which have been favoured in this pontificate over the traditional religious orders. They certainly present a frightening vision of the Church. Each is sect-like in character, secretive and elitist, with a personality cult around the founders who claim direct illumination from God. Although the Vatican views these movements as a group, they are in fact incompatible; each preaches its unique role not only as the sole salvation of the [RC] Church but also of the entire world. [However, these] movements share the Pope's bleak view of the modern world and the futility of human endeavour. In contrast with the lack of enthusiasm shown by much of the [RC] laity, they campaign vigorously on behalf of the causes that have characterised John Paul's [crusade] against birth control, premarital sex, sterilisation, homosexuality, divorce and liberation theology... Proselytising takes precedence over justice and peace issues; social problems will be resolved, they believe, once the whole world joins the movement. The Neocatechumenates' zeal is such that they are already planning evangelising aliens in "distant galaxies." These movements are the embodiment of the Pope's "new evangelisation." They share his backward-looking vision of a Europe reunited by Catholicism. They are his bulwark against future reform, the best guarantee that the agenda of his reign will be perpetuated. If this were not alarming enough, reports have recently issued from Vatican sources that only influence from a[n] arch-conservative Cardinal... has managed to restrain John Paul from declaring all his encyclicals infallible[('the claim that statements on matters of faith or morals, made by a pope speaking *ex cathedra* – from the throne – are guaranteed the assistance of the Holy Spirit'; since being 'promulgated in 1870, a pope has only once so spoken – when, during the 1950 holy year, the then pope announced the dogma of the Assumption of Mary'). The] Cardinal... is no doubt aware that such a move would push the notion of infallibility into the realms of the absurd, and papal authority would be irretrievably damaged. Such quixotic attempts to defend a tottering Church from the enemy within – as though the entire edifice depended on the efforts of one man – verge on Pelagianism (believing you can do things on your own without God's grace).

...The Pope has been dropped as a customer by a small Scottish smoked salmon company which says he has not paid his bill... About 200kg of smoked salmon, with a market value of nearly \$6000, was supplied each fortnight. But the firm became increasingly frustrated as the Vatican took its time to pay its bills. It finally acted to cut off supplies when the outstanding debt ran into thousands of pounds... "Getting paid from the Vatican proved as much a miracle as feeding the 5000," said the company's chairman...

Pope John Paul steps into a historical controversy on Sunday when he honours a fifth-century king seen by some as the founder of Christian France but by others as a Dark Ages war criminal. The pontiff will upset many merely by attending celebrations in the city of Reims of the 1500 anniversary of the baptism of Clovis, a pagan king who was the first west European monarch to convert to Roman Catholicism... Clovis promised his [RC] wife... he would convert if her God helped him win the battle of Tolbiac against the Visigoths in 496... To traditionalists, Clovis' conversion was France's baptism as a nation, making it the "eldest daughter of the Church." ...Clovis... inspired myths about a divine link between French monarchs and God... French monarchs before the 1789 Revolution regarded him as their spiritual forefather – the 16 kings called Louis

were using a modern version of Clovis' name... Yet to some historians, Clovis was a brutal Frankish warlord devoid of religious convictions who converted merely to enlist Church backing against rival tribes like the Visigoths... He continued to slaughter his relatives to eliminate potential rivals even after his conversion. Pre-revolutionary Church and royal apologists explained away the massacres as a way of uniting a nascent France.

...[Sir William Wallace, one of Scotland's greatest national heroes, has already received Hollywood sanctification in the film *Braveheart* and now Scottish RCs and historians want him made a saint. Wallace led the struggle which ultimately freed Scotland from English rule, heavily defeating the English Army in the Battle of Stirling Bridge in 1297. Despite Wallace's violent life, which culminated in his execution for treason in London in 1305, Scottish RCs are urging the Church to pursue the cause of his canonisation. They argue that his personal faith and martyrdom have parallels with Joan of Arc, the French warrior who was canonised in 1920. Wallace remained loyal to Pope Boniface VIII during his turbulent life and read the psalms as he was disembowelled.]

...[In the past 900 years, the RC Church has found only three Popes worthy of veneration as saints. However, as part of the Church's millennial celebrations, John Paul II would like to beatify three 20th-century Pontiffs, the last step before canonisation. The candidates are Pius XII, who guided the Church throughout WW2 and into the Cold War; John XXIII, the smiling Pope who charmed the world with his wit and convened the Second Vatican Council, the first Church council in 100 years; and Paul IV, who brought the council to a close and reaffirmed the Church's ban on contraception.]

...[the original ideal of the saint in Christianity was the martyr. The cessation of persecution in the 4th c. led to the transformation of this ideal: the monk tended to take the place of the martyr. A saint in this sense is one who is close to God and can therefore intercede with God on behalf of other Christians, and one through whom divine power is therefore manifest. The persecution of Christians in some countries in the 20th c. has to an extent restored the primitive ideal of the saint'. Editor's note: in addition to teaching followers about its 'cult of saints', the RC Church teaches the concept that sins can be forgiven if they are absolved by a priest immediately before death. This could explain why members of the Mafia aren't scared to exploit, steal, kill, etc.!

...[prize] for Idiot of the Year in 1996 must surely go to[the] New York mugger... who snatched the purse of... a 94-year-old out walking with one of her sons, [a RC] priest. While the priest might forgive... his sin, the old lady's other son... Godfather of the New York Mob, is unlikely to do so.

...[AN artwork of a life-size sculpture of Pope John Paul felled by a black meteorite, has fetched \$2 million at Christie's auction in New York.]

...a famous 1984 essay... argued that a biography creates, rather than documents, its subject. In that sense, biography is a form of fiction. A biography instructs the public how to interpret and evaluate the life it purports to detail, opening up specific understandings, but closing off most others. Two prize-winning journalists, an American Jew and an Italian [RC], have collaborated to write [a] study of the current Pope. The portrait they paint... is of a politician out of touch with his constituency, a once-powerful man who has sadly outlived the creative authority potentially due to the spiritual head of one billion[people]. In this sense, their biography shuts down the continuing viability of the present "Vicar of Rome." ...Drawing on hundreds of interviews with key players in Rome, Washington, Moscow, and Warsaw... [we] learn what he eats for breakfast, his adulation of and bitter disappointment with his mother, his personal opinions on sexual intimacy, and how he holds together a humble simplicity with his sense of calling to a messianic destiny. [The Pope] appears to believe that through his suffering of both unpopularity and ill health, he can redeem the world for Christ. The authors present [his] career as a play in three acts. The First Act is one of "proud vindication for his Christian message," as the first non-Italian Pope in more than 500 years... The Second Act, in the 1980s, is marked by the Pope's influence in international politics... The authors document the Pope's influence with[US] Presidents... and... the... Solidarity movement... The Third Act leaves [the Pope] isolated and angry. The fall of "godless" communism in the Eastern bloc has left him without the "enemy" around which his mission was traditionally structured. The Church is wracked by dissension, and women remain unconvinced that their rightful role in creation is limited to child-bearing and submissiveness. [The authors] close their book with the image of an ailing Pope, sailing toward the millennium "like Osiris on his boat heading into the sunset," a reference to the Egyptian god who preferred to leave this world to dwell among the dead in the afterlife.

...[Unholy alliance... Pope John Paul II and[the 40th US] President... established an informal "secret alliance" to bring about the fall of communism, according to a new book... The book, which is being published this week, also says that the [US] Administration secretly spent \$US50 million... to keep Solidarity, Poland's independent trade union organisation, alive from 1982 to 1989. The Pope was kept informed, although he was careful not to learn too many of the details... The book... added that the Pope received "some of America's most carefully guarded secrets and sophisticated political analysis: information from satellites, from intelligence agents, from electronic eavesdropping, from political discussions at the White House, State Department and CIA. And the [US] received information from the Pope." ...Other presidents had waited anxiously at their desks for bombers to return from their missions: [the 40th President] waited for reports from the Pope... "[The President] had a deep and steadfast conviction that this pope would help change the world," [his]... National Security Adviser, noted... [Interestingly,] on the single most important arms control issue of the era – the introduction by NATO of a new generation of cruise missiles into Western Europe – the Pope, through his silence, appeared to support US policy. He did so, despite the public opposition of his American bishops... The book also said that during this period of Vatican-[US] collaboration, the... Administration reinforced the Pope's opposition to abortion by blocking funds for family planning programmes around the world... The cut-off continued during the [41st President's] administration.

...John Paul said yesterday that artificial birth control was ruining people's moral sense by giving a false idea of sexual freedom... He criticised public health campaigns that promote contraception... "The 'Gospel of Life' must be maintained by educating children to recognise their vocation as carriers of life, in responsible collaboration with... the creator," he said...

A leading U[N] official yesterday contested Pope John Paul's... reject[ion of] population control as the answer to food shortages... The issue of "reproductive rights" was the minefield at... a stormy U[N] population conference in Cairo in 1994... because the Vatican felt the phrase was a backdoor way of supporting abortion[. However, much like the issue of divorce – in '1970 divorce law went into effect in Italy despite RC Church opposition' – 'most Italians ignore the church's rules on contraception (the average family now has 1.2 children').

...IN 1989 a NZ[writer... contributed a satirical short story called *The Visitation to Kiwi* anthology, *New Women's Fiction 3*. Set in the 1960s, it describes how two young girls from a huge (but still expanding) [RC] family see a vision of the Madonna in the backyard of their Carterton home. The Virgin Mary gives them a letter instructing the Pope to change his attitudes about contraception. Alas, however, there are many obstacles, including not only the girls' father but the entire [RC] church, to preventing the message from circulating... [The author] has not been a practicing [RC] since her teenage years. "I didn't leave the church lightly... but I couldn't continue with an institution that appeared to value women so little..." [she] says... She doubts if the church has really changed much in recent times. "The Pope hasn't changed his stance on contraception and abortion and there are still no women priests..."

...[A nun has quit the religious community she entered when she was 17 after the Vatican allegedly bullied her over her support for women priests. Dr Nun, aged 52, is well-known in Britain as a religious contributor on BBC radio. She has asked to be dispensed from her vows so she can leave the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The provincial superior of the order was "desperately sorry that it has come to this." Dr Nun has accused the Vatican of a campaign of intimidation and behaving like the Inquisition. The Vatican's demands followed the publication seven years ago of Dr Nun's book *Women at the Altar*, which set out the arguments in support of women priests. The book was later banned and the Vatican confiscated 1300 copies with a suggestion that they might be burned. "Religious women do most of the work in the Church," she said, but it was their fate to be "an invisible subspecies."

...[a RC priest has been reprimanded after having a sexual relationship with a nun. A panel set up last December is reported to have upheld a charge of pastoral sexual abuse brought by the Sister against the Father. But the nun, aged 56, remains dissatisfied with the hearing and has instructed lawyers to sue

the Church and the Father, who has remained within the Church. The nun has written a letter to the Pope to resign her vocation, and has agreed to be named in a bid to highlight the “hypocrisy” of the Church in regards to the issue of celibacy.’

...she] spent much of her time helping out at a Franciscan retreat called La Verna, in Kew, Victoria. All the priests and brothers seemed very friendly but one, in particular, made her uneasy. He seemed to creep around and [she] was grateful she had little to do with him... [“Then one day] he suggested we go for a drive... I thought nothing of it. He was a priest. But when we... parked in [a] dark street, he suddenly grabbed my hair.”] [She] claims the priest, who is in his 60s and almost 30 years older than her, forced her to perform oral sex, before finally pushing her from the car and driving off. “I just stood there gazing after his tail-lights in shock,” she says... The Vicar-General of the... Archdiocese of Melbourne... stresses that, although familiar with... the case... the Archbishop could not be responsible for the behaviour of his priests... [However, the RC] Church in A[US] has apologised for its part in the assimilation policy aimed at breaking the spiritual and cultural identity of Aborigines, by removing tens of thousands of black children from their parents... The statement is the first formal apology by the Church for taking part... Some elderly Aborigines... blame their present psychological problems, which have resulted in alcoholism and drug addiction, on the separation and sexual and physical abuse they suffered in institutions... [Speaking of separation, RC] belief that the Pope is superior to all other church leaders is the main obstacle to church unity, the... Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople... [-] the first Orthodox Church head to visit... [NZ -] says... and the ordination of women would pose problems for Anglicans... Negotiations were taking place between [RCs], Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists and Baptists over theological differences.

...The head of the Church of England... has called during a visit to the Vatican for a coming together of the Anglican and [RC] churches... The... trip was aimed at reviving links between the two churches which were frozen after the [CofE] decided to allow women priests. - 1996

THE DESIRE for the next pope to allow women and marriage in the priesthood is strong in the once staunchly conservative nations of Spain and Ireland, according to final results of a five-nation poll.

...And *MARY makes four...* A GROWING movement in the [RC] Church wants the Pope to proclaim a new, controversial dogma: that Mary is a co-redeemer... Such a move would elevate Mary’s status dramatically beyond what most Christians profess. But in the last four years the Pope has received 4,340,429 signatures from 157 countries... supporting the proposed dogma. Among the notable supporters are Mother Teresa of Calcutta, nearly 500 bishops and 42 cardinals, including... half a dozen cardinals at the Vatican itself. Nothing like this organised petition drive has ever been seen in Rome. But then, it isn’t often that [RCs] beg a pope to make an infallible pronouncement. If the drive succeeds, [RCs] would be obliged as a matter of faith to accept... that Mary participates in the redemption achieved by her son, that all graces that flow from the suffering and death of Jesus Christ are granted only through Mary’s intercession with her son, and that all prayers and petitions from the faithful on earth must likewise flow through Mary, who then brings them to the attention of Jesus. This is what theologians call... Mariology... In place of the Holy Trinity... there would be a kind of Quartet, with Mary playing the multiple roles of daughter of the Father, mother of the Son and spouse of the Holy Spirit. “Personally, I’m confident that there will be this recognition of Marian truth before the year 2000,” says... the leader of the petition drive and a lay theologian at Franciscan University in... Ohio... [T]he Virgin Mary is no ordinary religious figure, nor just another pretty face. For nearly two millennia, she has been the dominant female figure in Western culture. For her, men have erected many of the most beautiful churches in the world... The Annunciation... may well be the most painted scene in the history of Western art. In many ways the 20th century has belonged to Mary. From almost every continent, visionaries have reported more than 400 “apparitions” of the Virgin – more than the previous three centuries combined... Taken together, these visions point to what the Marian movement believes is a millennial “Age of Mary,” which will produce a final dogma that confirms her ongoing maternal mediation between God and humankind... Not all of it, however, is driven by Marian apparitions. Feminists who 20 years ago dismissed Mary as the oppressive Virgin-Mother created by a clerical patriarchy now celebrate her as a “free woman” who chose to say yes to God at the Annunciation, whereas Eve said “no” in the Garden of Eden – and thus made salvation history possible... Once asceticism became the privileged road to Christian holiness, [Mary] became the perpetual virgin, the model of chastity and self-denial. In 431, the Council of Ephesus issued the first dogmatic statement on Mary: she was to be honoured as Theotokos, the Mother of God... No less a theologian than Thomas Aquinas argued vehemently against the popular conviction that the merciful Madonna was born without the taint of original sin. But in the 19th century, long after many Protestant reformers had rejected the cult of the Virgin as popish nonsense, Pius IX proclaimed the Immaculate Conception... [to be RC dogma. Therefore, Marians] have precedent on their side... Moreover... John Paul... is known for his devotion to the Virgin who he believes intervened to save him from an assassination attempt... and... [he’s] declared a jubilee celebration for the millennium – a perfect occasion for defining a new dogma. The only time that papal infallibility has been exercised since 1874 – the year Vatican Council I made papal infallibility itself a [RC] dogma – was another jubilee year, 1950, when Pius XII defined the dogma of Mary’s immediate Assumption into heaven, meaning that her body was spared decay... With that single act, Mary became forever identified, in the eyes of the Church’s harshest critics, with papal arrogance... Rumours of the potential new dogma have triggered blistering criticism from other Christian denominations and ignited a battle within the [RC] Church itself. “Calling Mary a co-redeemer is a heresy in the simplest sense,” says the... chancellor of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

...A Nobel Peace laureate... was among 250,000 [RCs who yesterday] packed the shrine of Fatima, in Portugal, to mark the 80th anniversary of the “apparition” of the Virgin Mary to three peasant children... the first of five monthly apparitions during which she delivered three prophecies... Fatima... is one of the most revered [RC] sites and the annual celebrations... draw thousands of pilgrims from... far afield... According to the writings of... the sole surviving visionary, two of the... prophecies concerned the end of... W[W1] and the collapse of communism. The so-called “Third Secret of Fatima” has never been revealed by the [RC] hierarchy, stirring speculation that it alluded to some future catastrophe. But a senior Vatican official said... last year that it contained nothing alarming... [The surviving visionary], who recently celebrated her 90th birthday, hardly ever leaves the Carmelite convent in central Portugal which she entered in 1929.

...[“The 1917 “Secret of Fatima,” long feared as apocalyptic, predicted the attempt to kill Pope John Paul II and the communist persecution of Christianity. The secret, which has intrigued the world for 80 years, was revealed at the weekend by the Pope’s Secretary of State. Over the years, the Vatican’s refusal to make it public has inspired books, doomsday cults convinced that it predicted the end of the world and even a hijacking by a man who demanded that the Vatican reveal the secret. Speaking to hundreds of thousands of people at a Mass where the Pope beatified two of the three shepherd children said to have seen the Madonna, the cardinal said the “vision of Fatima” concerned the “immense suffering” of Christians and the Popes in the last century of the Second millennium. The third part involved a vision including a “bishop clothed in white” who “makes his way with great effort towards the Cross amid the corpses of those who were martyred. He too falls to the ground, apparently dead, under a burst of gunfire.” The cardinal said that after the assassination attempt on the Pope in St Peter’s Square in May 1981, “it appeared evident to His Holiness that it was a motherly hand which guided the bullet’s path, enabling the dying Pope to halt at the threshold of death.”] In related news, hymns will not become Hers at the [RC] Church, but “the brotherhood of man,” “sons,” “men” and “he” are... on the way out. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are not... Women worshippers... felt [excluded] by male words, so the Church [has] published a guide to “gender inclusive” words, said [a NZ RC] Communications spokesman... “The use of male imagery for God will not change... [- although] God is neither male, nor female, but spirit...” ...The guide covers approved Bible translations, church services, gender language within prayer services and hymns, and personal prayer... [However, RCs] are asked to tolerate the male slant of older traditional hymns because of copyright and the need to respect church traditions. But hymnists have been urged to show preference to

gender-inclusive music. Erasing sexist language comes soon after instances of [RC] political correctness overseas. Last week the Vatican said homosexuals could achieve holiness – if they abstained from sexual activity. In March the Vatican went high-tech, unveiling an internet site powered by three computers named after angels. But there is still some resistance to the 90s world – in February priests were banned from performing marriage ceremonies at Disney World in Florida.

...four international regional meetings[have been] called by the Pope to study the position of the church as it approaches the new millennium. In the South Pacific, the most pressing problems are seen as including... the numbers of people turning to other religions, challenges to traditional [RC] teachings and the declining numbers of priests... In [NZ], the number... training to be priests has dropped dramatically... The... rector of the national seminary at Mosgiel, said yesterday that 25 men were[currently] training... “Back in the 60s, there would have been 90 in the place,”...

Like many employers, [the]... Most Rev... has found himself in charge of a shrinking workforce. But the down-sizing is not his fault: there is no sinking-lid policy or redundancies on his factory floor. In fact, the... [RC] Bishop of Auckland, is in the position of not having enough applicants for the vacancies. A chronic shortage of priests has hit Auckland. This year alone, three senior priests have left. Only one ordination is on the books for the diocese next year. Fewer young men are signing up to be priests, and the average age of the present crop of men of the cloth creeps ever upwards. In the early 1980s the average... was 48 – now it is 62. [The]Bishop... is well aware of the harsh reality that priests are dying off and there is not enough young blood to replace them, let alone fill the gaps that already exist. But he is not so sure the wider [RC] community is aware of the gravity of the problem. “Everyone knows, but it is not until it hits their parish that people become very alarmed,” [the]Bishop... said yesterday... H[owever, h]e... has his eyes on a property in Ponsonby as the long-term answer to his prayers about priests. From next year, the Vermont St site will become the country’s new centre for the training of priests. The priests’ school, which has been in Mosgiel... for nearly 100 years, is set to move to the site... While there are many in the Church who feel it is time to ask if celibacy should be optional rather than mandatory, nobody is under any illusion that the Vatican will chance the policy soon. In the meantime, the... Bishop... hopes that the move to Auckland will spark more interest in the priesthood. He is encouraging parish communities to become involved in the recruitment drive.

...WANTED: *Clean living individual with good interpersonal skills to swap worldly pleasures for meaningful spiritual activity, to work as counsellor, caretaker, philosopher, community leader and within charities; to organise and officiate at social functions. On call 24 hours, and every weekend. Below-average salary (guaranteed to remain the same for the rest of your career). Work from home, accommodation supplied. Few prospects for promotion and eternally answerable to a higher authority. No homosexuals, no women, no sex, no children...* So it’s hardly surprising that few 20-somethings, when faced with a career choice... choose... [training] for at least five years... [to juggle] social dilemmas for the rest of their earthly lives... [In addition, unlike] swapping accounting for economics, being a minister has never been the kind of career you can easily drop out of... [As a consequence, the] image of the earnest, young do-gooding clergyman may soon be history as all major religious denominations in the industrialised world note a big decline in the number of ministers in training... To turn this ecclesiastical low-tide, the... [RC Church in] Britain... has taken the unprecedented step of preparing a recruitment video promoting the joys of becoming a priest... [which] will be sent to 4000 British secondary schools this month... The average age of trainees... in [NZ is] 32... The... spokeswoman for the [RC] Church in Auckland... can understand why... younger men... may not be as happy to join the clergy. “Being a priest today is very much counter-cultural... It’s not a career in which you can make money or succeed in a material way.” ...Of the major denominations in [NZ, the RC] Church is probably the most pro-active when it comes to recruitment. But this might change if a planned Anglican-inspired tertiary course goes ahead next year... To make ministry more attractive, the Auckland bishop is proposing a degree that is half theology and half marketing or management studies... [The] principal of the theological hall at Knox College in Otago where Presbyterian ministers are trained... says... “The television stereotype of the clergy often presents a gormless, ineffective, bumbling kind of person. That’s not real at all – it’s actually a job for self-directed people who can get things done,”... For this reason he believes it might be worth fostering a more realistic image via video or other forms of marketing. At present, the Presbyterian Church recruits only in a very low-key way with would-be ordinands approaching ministers rather than the other way around... “I would have worries about too vigorous recruiting where you lure people into something they are not suited for...”

...[the RC] Church has big expansion plans for its school system in Auckland because of rising demand for religious-based education. The growth could see the Government finance new [RC] schools... At present, the church paid for school land and buildings while the state covered ongoing costs... [‘The NZ RC school system, which had demanded large numbers of unpaid workers (most of whom were nuns), was integrated with the state school system in the 1980s.’ In international news, the ground radar used to unearth the victims of Britain’s infamous “House of Horrors” serial... [killers –] who... tortured and killed at least 12 women and girls... [–] may be used to test the truth of allegations of secret child burials in a former [RC] orphanage in Queensland... [C]laims, made by former residents of the... Neerkol orphanage... allege the bodies of children who died in infancy were buried by nuns in concealed graves... The orphanage, and others run by the Sisters of Mercy across A[US], have been the focus of numerous and detailed allegations of cruelty against children in their care, ranging from public humiliation, floggings and solitary confinement to a girl being tied across a bull ants’ nest... [On a positive note, o]ne million young [RCs]... from around the world... gathered at a racecourse outside Paris yesterday for a vast open-air Mass by Pope John Paul to mark the climax of a six-day evangelical festival... The... Pontiff... went among the faithful in his trademark Popemobile. The World Youth Days event is held in a different city every two years and the Pope announced Rome... as the next venue... The Pope took the opportunity to try to defuse a row which has dogged the festival: that its climax coincides with the 425th anniversary of a 16th-century massacre of Protestants by [RCs] in the French wars of religion. Specifically, he conceded the Church’s role in the St Bartholomew’s Day Massacre on August 24, 1572, and said religious authorities could not hide from the truth if they were to achieve reconciliation. “Acknowledging the weaknesses of the past is an act of honesty and courage which helps us to strengthen our faith,” he told the congregation. The Pope arrived in Paris on Thursday and was feted in a welcome ceremony in the shadows of the Eiffel Tower...

Pope John Paul’s visit to the World Youth Days in Paris was an unexpected crowd success but left the Church with a deficit of up to \$7.5 million, the organisers say... [M]any of the young pilgrims left without paying their \$35 a day for food and lodging. Four fifths of those who attended the Pope’s final mass on Sunday dodged the loosely-enforced \$27 admission fee. The... faithful gave a meagre 50c each on average at Sunday’s collection... [T]he organisers had not wanted to charge those who could not afford it and many people had taken advantage of this. Also, the number of young people from impoverished countries allowed to come free-of-charge had been higher than expected, at 107,000. Organisers had hoped that contributions from the pilgrims and sales of souvenirs would pay for the \$65 million cost.

...[an] unusual encounter between the... head of the [RC] Church and a hero of the 1960s drug-smoking, anti-war protest scene took place at a youth rally in the... city of Bologna. The Pope listened as... [the folk]-rock idol... sang two of his most famous anthems, *A Hard Rain’s Gonna Fall* and *Knocking on Heaven’s Door* in front of an enthusiastic crowd of 300,000... The Pope earlier quoted lines from what is perhaps [the singer’s] most famous song, *Blowing in the Wind*... The Pope, looking well and happy, told a rapturous crowd... that the answer was indeed “in the wind” – but not in the wind that would blow things away, rather “in the wind of the spirit” that would lead them to Christ. He was surrounded on the podium by a group of young people, who in turn read out the lyrics... One says: “How many roads must a man walk down before you can call him a man?” The Pope responded: “...Only one. And that is the road of... Christ... He is the road of truth and the road of life.”

...23 anti-tank devices [were found under a] Sarajevo bridge hours before [the pontiff was] due to arrive... Police stepped up security in the city... The entire route from the airport was closed to traffic. Apartments were being checked and cars towed away. Streets were empty. Although the Pope’s visit highlights his desire to heal Bosnia’s war wounds, there were no Serb officials on hand to welcome him.

...IT IS a tale to warm the heart of the Pope: Speculation that [the leader] who erased Christmas from the calendar and expelled hundreds of priests from Cuba, may be looking for help from on high to tackle economic hardship and discontent threatening his 38-year rule. Since [the comandante] emerged misty-eyed from a chat with the Pope in Rome last year, his voice has softened and he has stopped haranguing his people. Even sceptical Cuban exiles in America are debating whether he is undergoing a “spiritual re-evaluation” – and it is whispered in Havana the comandante is turning to God... [He] was educated by Jesuits before he became a lawyer, a guerrilla fighter and then a revolutionary leader. Later, he was said to have become an adherent of Santería – a Cuban form of African voodoo involving animal sacrifice. His tenacious pursuit of communist ideals ruled out any notion he had time to be communing secretly with God. Since 1991, however, he has eased restrictions on religious gatherings and [RC]s are again practising their faith openly. To cap it all, the Pope will visit Havana for the first time in January... Whether or not the comandante reaches for his rosary in January, Havana will feel the benefit. Such is the importance of the Pope’s visit that, for its duration, [the comandante] has decreed there must be light. Cubans will be guaranteed a respite from the power cuts that blight their lives.

...[the] faithful turned out[in their thousands] to welcome Pope John Paul to Brazil at the start of a four-day visit... to the world’s biggest... [RC country. W]aving pale blue flags with the Pope’s image printed on them, [people] lined the streets of Rio de Janeiro and hailed the... Pontiff when he drove by in his white “Popemobile.” As he approached the site... where in 1993 eight street children were gunned down by a police-led death squad, a young boy freed a white dove in... [their memory. T]he Pope said the unfair distribution of income and the sad fate of street children in big cities were among the greatest challenges faced by modern government... [During] his visit... he is... expected to... [promote] the church’s traditional views on birth control... and... abortion... what he [calls] an abominable crime and the shame of humanity... Brazil is in the throes of a debate over whether abortion should be made more readily available. The [RC] Church... is opposed to a bill that would make it easier for women to obtain abortions in cases of rape or if their health is in danger... [Incidentally, yesterday stunned] churchgoers in the Basilica of Guadalupe in Mexico City listened as a priest told them top drug kingpins were... generous donors to religious good works campaigns... [The priest] made the surprise announcement... during services marking the 12th anniversary of an earthquake that devastated Mexico City. Another official in [the priest’s] religious order said he did not know whether the revelations were true, adding that his congregation never received money from drug traffickers.

...Thousands of Italians afraid to return to their earthquake zone homes camped out for a second night after twin tremors... in which 11 people died... rocked central Italy... Scores of aftershocks rippled through... the... region... on Saturday, the day after[the] two quakes caused serious damage to the Basilica of St Francis... Miraculously, however, the most famous frescos, painted... on the side walls in the early 14th century and depicting scenes from St Francis’ life, were cracked but mostly intact... [O]ne of the top three officials of the 20,000-strong worldwide Franciscan order, said celebrations for the nine-day feast of St Francis... would continue but would be quieter this year. He mourned the loss of two Franciscan brothers... who were killed along with two structural experts who had gone into the basilica to access the damage of the first quake when the second tremor struck. “They died next to St Francis... We trust the Saint of Assisi will lead them in the peace and beatitude of God.”

...The Italian Government[has] approved emergency measures to grant a total of 856 billion lire... in state aid to the regions worst hit... 56 billion lire would be made available immediately and the rest by the end of the year... “Unfortunately, I fear it won’t be enough.” Asked if more cash would be available if needed, [the PM] said: “Yes, I think so.” ...In the Marche, at least 27 mountain towns were... [affected. N]early 1500 buildings across the region had been damaged and thousands of residents were still sleeping in “tent cities,” caravans or cars, many too afraid to return to areas still quivering with after-tremors... Four days after the tragedy, the order founded by the gentle patron of Italy who cherished the natural world was still coming to terms with the act of God that killed two friars and ravaged their 13th-century pink stone church... [The] superintendent for cultural affairs in Florence, visited the basilica yesterday and declared the damage akin to the devastation wreaked by W[W]II bombs...

A leading Italian art critic has blamed poor restoration work done in the 1950s for weakening the structure of the world-renowned Basilica of St Francis... [He] said the original wooden beams supporting the roof of the edifice had been replaced by reinforced concrete which had made the building heavier and more rigid. He called the decision to use the concrete “pure folly,” noting that the old wooden structure had... enabled the building to withstand many previous quakes over the centuries. Other specialists backed his view... Two earthquakes which shook central Italy on Friday caused part of the dome of the basilica to collapse, damaging several frescoes... A fresco by Florentine painter Cimabue was badly damaged. The 28 frescoes depicting the life of St Francis, painted between 1294 and 1304 and attributed to Giotto, were also damaged but less seriously.

...Frescoes in the earthquake-damaged Basilica... suffered a fresh mishap when water poured on to them... from a waste pipe... A spokesman for the Franciscan order... told reporters the incident was probably caused by human error... “It obviously hasn’t done them a lot of good...,” ... Part of [the] Basilica... was opened on Sunday... [to worshippers] and tourists... for the first time since[the] earthquakes... The friars have said they hope to reopen the whole building in the year 2000... [■ A]t the Vatican’s request, a Sao Paulo artist is giving Jesus Christ a facelift for the third millennium, concentrating on a more dynamic look... [Jesus’ new] image would be made public in 1999.

...[‘ON A GREY DAY in 1988, a cardinal stood before a packed hall in the north Italian city of Turin and made an announcement that sent tremors throughout the RC Church: one of Christianity’s most cherished relics, the Holy Shroud of Jesus, was actually a medieval artefact. The news hit millions of believers like a bombshell. The simple cloth had been venerated for centuries as the shroud in which Jesus had been wrapped after dying on the Cross, and RCs loved it as a palpable connection to the risen Christ. But for the Vatican, a larger issue was at stake: dissociating the Church from the legends, myths and bits of folklore that sometimes threaten to obscure the sound historic roots of Christianity. Yet, today, as many devotees kneel in the limpid shadows of the Chapel of the Shroud as there were before the painful verdict. Behind them stands an understanding clergy. “The Church,” the cardinal added in his formal statement, “reaffirms its respect and reverence for this venerable image of Christ.”]

...Experts have discovered how the Turin shroud... was faked to give the impression of the human form it bears... The *Sunday Times* said[a] Chicago-based microchemist... calculated that a man had been sprinkled with red ochre, a pigment widely used in Italy in the Middle Ages, then wrapped in the shroud. Vermilion paint made from sulphate of mercury was then applied to various parts of the shroud to simulate blood... The shroud... was venerated as a holy relic by the [RC] faithful for centuries. But... 410 years after it arrived in Turin, three teams of experts used carbon-dating on a tiny fragment of the cloth to fix the approximate era of its weaving at between 1260 and 1390.

...A Swiss archaeologist said yesterday she had proved beyond all doubt that the Turin Shroud... was not a medieval fake... [The archaeologist], who has studied the shroud for 16 years, said the carbon-14 tests were wrong for one simple reason – the fragment tested was a corner of the cloth repaired five times since 1400. The proof, she said, was that the samples taken weighed 42mg a square centimetre, whereas the whole Shroud had a average weight of 20-23mg... She said new research in Paris had also shown that what appear to be the words “Jesus Nazareth” were written on the cloth shortly after the body was wrapped in it. “This is the only document on earth that proves the material presence of Christ 2000 years ago,” [she] told a news conference in Rome to present her book, *Shroud... The... Shroud...* [– ‘which remains enclosed in its locked silver casket’, only occasionally (i.e., whenever the coffers run low) being made available for public viewing –] was saved from a fire in Turin Cathedral last April... - 1997

Under circumstances that to this very day remain shrouded in mystery[, during the era of]... the Byzantine emperor Justinian... numerous Church writings were... purged from the scriptures... and... destroyed...

However, Justinian also carried ‘out an active building programme throughout the Roman Empire, erecting fortresses, churches and other public buildings.’

...during... Nicholas V[’s reign]... a group of buildings next to St Peter’s... in Rome... [were] unified into one great... papal palace...

The Vatican City, established in 1929 by the Lateran Treaty between the Holy See and the kingdom of Italy, is the world’s smallest sovereign state. Its territory, an enclave within the city of Rome... broken by the vast expanse of Saint Peter’s Square... covers only 44 hectares... Vatican citizenship, unlike that of other states, is not normally acquired by right of birth. It is granted to church dignitaries and others who, by reason of their office, because they are employed there, or by a special concession from the pope, reside in the Vatican... There are also a number of residents – employees [(the Vatican ‘has its own police force, diplomatic service, postal service, coinage, and radio station’)] and their wives and children – who are not citizens. In 1932... the population... was 1,025. It has declined since then: today there are about... 500 residents. - THE VATICAN

The vast and complex organization of the [RC] Church is controlled by the Vatican, an independent state in Rome which, under the direction of the pope, implements Church policy, and administers property and finance... The title ‘pope’ (...Greek[for] ‘father’), originally given to any bishop, became restricted to the Bishop of Rome with the rise of that see’s importance... his authority deriving from the belief that he represents Christ in direct apostolic succession from... Peter...

The R[C] Church includes, in addition to those [RC]s who use the Latin ritual, those Eastern [RC]s who accept the authority of the... successor of St. Peter... but adhere to one of the five Eastern rituals: Byzantine... Alexandrian... Antiochan, Armenian, and Chaldean... The clergy of the west are bound by a vow of celibacy, while those of the eastern churches... may receive orders if married... In the West, the Church shared in the unity of Europe which accompanied the development of the Holy Roman Empire... [L]ater encroachments upon its authority by the successors of Charlemagne were vigorously opposed by Pope Gregory VII, who set the relationship of the Church to secular authority. The... High Middle Ages saw the... veneration of the Virgin Mary... in the ennobled role of women and the general refinement of manners seen in medieval literature and in the code of chivalry. The same period, however, gave rise to feudal monarchies which sought to limit the authority of the Church within their individual realms; the Council of Basle (1431-49) recognized the weakened authority of the Church north of the Alps. This factor... was responsible for the movement which began with the protest of Martin Luther in 1517. The long and sanguinary religious wars which followed were ended by the Treaty of Westphalia, 1648, which assigned to each realm the religion of its monarch... R[C]s believe that the Mass is the mystical sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ... They also believe in purgatory, that the Virgin Mary and the saints are to be honored and invoked, and that honor and veneration are to be given to their images.

Christianity developed beyond a Jewish sect when it was determined... largely through the influence of St Paul, that non-Jews were to be included in its communion. For some 3 centuries it was either illicit, since Christians could not acknowledge the pagan gods of Rome, or tolerated in competition with other religions. Christians suffered periodic and brutal persecutions until the reign of the emperor Constantine... who granted them a large measure of toleration and protection. Finally, under Theodosius the Great... Christianity, on the basis of the creed drawn up at the Council of Nicaea (325), was made the established church of the Roman Empire... The major centres of the... Christian faith – Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem – were the seats of bishops designated as patriarchs. The questions of the primacy of the Roman bishop... and of certain doctrinal interpretations of the nature of Christ, combined with political considerations to divide the eastern and western branches of Christendom, culminating in the schism of 1054... Immediate cause of the Reformation was the sale of indulgences, which Luther attacked... From this period of change... many historians date the opening of the modern era... The name Protestant was first given to the followers of Luther... Eventually, the term was extended to... Calvinists... Anglicans... Anabaptists and Moravians. While these groups differed among themselves, all originated in attempts to reform Catholicism. Most developed the view that the Bible is the highest authority for Christians, and they diminished the role of the priest as intermediary between man and God.

indulgences In Roman Catholicism, grants of remission of sin to the living, following repentance and forgiveness; also, to the dead in purgatory. They were based on the Church’s treasury of merit, accumulated through the good works of Jesus Christ and the saints. Abuses in the Middle Ages, leading to the ‘buying and selling’ of places in heaven, finally occasioned Martin Luther’s ‘95 Theses’, which launched the Reformation.

Surviving the fall of Rome in the 5th century, the Church was the only effective agency of civilization in Europe, and after the... schism with the... Eastern Church[, the Roman Church] was the dominant force in the Western world... The Protestant Reformation of the 16th century inspired revival, and the need to restate doctrine in an unambiguous form and to purge the church and clergy of abuses and corruption was recognized.

The Protestant Revolution fell upon the established church like a pestilence. It was in part a reaction to the obvious corruption of the Papacy under quite worldly leaders more concerned with fleshly and mundane pleasures than the old, comfortable standards of spirituality, faith and simplicity that the medieval church had supplied. That revolution brought the Inquisition into full force and installed an atmosphere of dread on every level of society, thereby furthering the cause of the reformists... by providing further examples of orthodox excesses... The proscription of specific divination in... Rome was absolute, but generalized prophecy was allowed... Permission was available if the church coffers were sufficiently improved by the applicant, a system not unlike a regular modern licensing procedure.

...[‘In 1900, *Alfred Loisy*, the lecturer at the Sorbonne, resigned after his works on biblical criticism were condemned by Pope Pius X as too advanced.’]

...In A.D. 496, the last year of his reign, Pope Gelasius I issued the first list of both recommended and prohibited books, the precursor of the Index. The list was meant at that point as a general guide [for the] faithful... though special exemptions were made whereby high-ranking scholars could read specified texts for very specified purposes. It was not until 1559 that the first official *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* was printed by Pope Paul IV... The new Index was ardently enforced when, in the bull of January 5, 1559, *all* permissions for reading prohibited books were revoked, and officials of the Inquisition were instructed to prosecute all who read or possessed such material. Under the new rules, confessors in every church were instructed to ask their penitents if they knew or had heard of any persons possessing, reading or dispersing writings which appeared on the Index, and in particular anything dealing with Lutheran doctrine, which was the major focus of the bull. The confessors were required, on pain of excommunication, to inform the Holy Office directly of any information thus obtained... No one was exempt. Church officials, bishops, archbishops, patriarchs, cardinals, kings and emperors came under this order, and accusations poured in from all quarters when it was announced that a 1505 edict was not only still in effect, but was now renewed. That edict awarded to the accuser one-fourth of the confiscated property of any convicted sinner. The bonfires of the Inquisition blazed regularly, fuelled by new candidates identified by ambitious informers. Simultaneously, church coffers swelled dramatically... The church did not abandon the Index until 1966.

In 1967, Pope Paul VI... reformed the practice of indulgences when he ordered the number of plenary, or full, indulgences reduced... The... Council of Trent... [had] called for moderation in the number of indulgences and suppressed most indulgences granted for an alms, thus removing the main

cause of scandal... [T]he Fourth Lateran Council criticized some bishops for excessive grants of indulgences[, after] theologians developed the idea of the “treasury of the church,”...

The change in our monetary system to decimal currency finds [NZers] concerned wholly and solely with the new method as such. Nothing is heard of the ethics of money, whether[under] the old system or the new – or for that matter under any other system... [-] can any God-fearing man fail to see the searching truth in the... Commandment, “Thou shalt not covet.” ...Our regard for the Ten Commandments will continue to have a lot to do with our right or wrong use of money. We may employ it in the fulfilment of each Commandment or in the transgression of all. - 1967

[Jesus said], Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. - St Luke 12

Pope John Paul took delivery of a sleek black convertible limousine yesterday and joked to reporters that it was about time he had a new car. The Mercedes S500, fitted with two telephones and white leather upholstery, took a year to fit out. Among personal touches are a single rear seat and an image of the Madonna. The normal version of the car costs \$126,000. [Meanwhile, some 'Polish priests have been indicted for importing German cars as religious donations between 1993-96 then selling them for profit.'

...18 priests and monks have been charged with illegally importing dozens of duty-free cars into Poland by saying they were for charity. The scam cost the Government \$US66,000 in unpaid duty. Polish import tax on cars is close to 90% of the factory price.' Speaking of ex-factory cars, Ford is using a priest and church as props to sell the latest model of its *Escort* range in Britain!]

...Ten clerics will next week model multi-coloured designer cassocks, stoles and capes at Britain's first fashion show for the clergy. The outfits by leading fashion designers reinterpret traditional symbolism and colours in a range of modern styles.

...POPE John Paul II can be accused of traditionalism in many areas, but fashion isn't one of them. At least not since last January, when... a French cardinal, approached[a] Paris designer... on behalf of the Vatican and asked him to create a line of couture vestments for the Pope, 500 bishops and 5000 priests. The vestments are to be worn at the 12th Festival of Youth which takes place in Rome this August... The man most famous for his tandem poncho and teddy-bear coats... says he had been given certain guidelines: the vestments were to be based on a Byzantine theme (as opposed to a Mickey Mouse theme...); and they had to be simple. “Christ was a simple man... so it makes sense that the clothes [of his disciples] should be too.” In ready-to-wear terms this translates as (for the acolytes) simple wool robes and (for the Pope) ultra-fine silk... What... this sartorial revolution means for the [RC] Church as it moves into the new millennium is hard to say, but [the designer]... has an idea. “Fashion,” he preaches, “is now the only true language of the world; the bridge to all people. It is the way to bring the Liturgy into the 21st century.”

...THE Archbishop of Canterbury is studying plans for a \$25 million theme park featuring an animated, talking figure of Christ and a “time ride” through the Bible... The Disney-style scheme is certain to be treated warily by some churchmen... But Lambeth Palace said that the proposal was “interesting”, and that the Archbishop had asked to be “kept informed of its progress”. Criticism came from the... Rector of Pitsford with Boughton... a leading traditionalist. He denounced the project as being “more *Life of Brian* than C[ofE]”... Describing himself as “an evangelical Christian”, [the architect] said the idea came in a “still, small voice” in the night three years ago. “But I really didn't do anything about it until one night, last October, when I was literally woken up and told to get[on] with it. I was compelled to drop all work I was doing for an entire week. The message was very clear that this had to be at Canterbury, because that was where St Augustine came (1400 years ago this year) to reconvert Britain to Christianity.” ...[he] was aware that the project would be at risk of being labelled tacky... [but] had an answer for those who might label the idea sensationalist. “Being there in Jesus' time was the most sensational few years people ever had,” he said... [The architect], whose work includes the highly-praised Hayes Galleria shopping centre, and a yet-to-be-staged audio-visual history of London Bridge, is... seeking a site close to St Augustine's Abbey in Canterbury... and... hoping for private funding through donations and sponsorship...

Church leaders at St Paul's Cathedral were under pressure yesterday to hand back £15,000... in sponsorship money they received from an arms company. The decision to accept cash to provide corporate hospitality to other defence firms at a concert was met with outrage from within the [CofE]. The Campaign Against Arms Trade said: “It seems to us that the Church has rewritten the Sixth Commandment to ‘Thou shalt not kill – unless we get a wracking great profit’.” ...The Rev Canon... who chaired the concert committee meeting approving the sponsorship, defended the decision. “The matter was really never debated. If a firm offered money it really did not occur to us to inquire where it came from.” Insisting the Church would accept the cash from Lockheed Martin again, he added: “They are not involved in selling arms to revolutionary governments... but to countries which need to defend themselves.”

...British church officials have leapt to the defence of priests who cannot rattle off all Ten Commandments, saying it is substance not words that count. A poll... found only 34[%] of 200 Anglican priests could recite all 10 without help. “When people are put on the spot like this of course they can't remember,” a [CofE] spokesman said... The survey also found 31[%] of vicars polled did not believe in the virgin birth, 21[%] did not believe in the devil, 12[%] did not accept the second coming of Christ and 5[%] did not believe he performed miracles.

...[an Anglican] priest has advocated shoplifting from supermarkets to avenge the damage he believes they do to communities... “I don't regard it as stealing. I regard it as a badly needed reallocation of economic resources.” The 75-year-old cleric made his comments in front of police at a community committee discussing local crime. Supermarkets were “evil” and “places of temptation” which had “[f]orced more traditional local shops out of business,” he said.

...British shoppers flocking to supermarkets yesterday... heard the word of God as the Archbishop of Canterbury's... [voice] boomed over... loudspeakers... “Jesus is for everyone – shoppers as well as worshippers,” the archbishop told his unusual congregation. “If we all work to show God's glory and love in the High Street, our society will be a better place,”... Customers jostling in the aisles... were asked to raise their voices in song as [the archbishop] broadcast his... service from a branch of the... Asda... chain in Essex.

...[a g]rammy-winning gospel singer... aged 27... is suing for \$3.63 million over a head-first fall into an orchestra pit in Memphis last year... His suit claims he fell in a dimly lit area as he walked to his dressing room from a stage... [H]e was forced to cancel tour and TV appearances for about a month after the fall on November 1, 1996, depriving him of income.

...[After fighting a legal battle for nearly 30 years, an American is going straight to the top. He's suing God for losing his job with a US steel company in 1968. His suit argues that God did not stop his life from being ruined. He wants God to return his youth, enable him to play the guitar like the world's best, and resurrect his mother and his pet pigeon. But don't expect God to be receiving a subpoena anytime soon. A district judge threw the case out after deeming it “frivolous”. In local news, a RC] priest with a disfigured nose and impaired sense of smell and taste after a series of operations... to correct a bone obstruction in 1969 and... during the early 1980s... has won a five-year battle for compensation... The amount has yet to be determined... [but] an otolaryngologist... said... he should be awarded the maximum[amount] allowable... One surgeon told the [ACC] Appeal Authority that [the priest's] nose now went slightly to the right and had a “slightly piggy appearance” which caused him considerable embarrassment... [A]fter winning his case, [the priest] thanked God and his lawyer for helping him.

...[A MINISTER was asking for contributions to the church fund to buy food for the needy. The town gambler, who also owned the tavern and several other shady operations, offered the minister \$500. “You can't take that,” said a scandalized deacon. “That's the devil's money.” “Well,” said the minister, cheerfully accepting the gift, “in that case, the devil has had his hands on it long enough. Now let's see what the Lord can do with it.”]

...Churches are now] at the left hand of Government, not God... The British [RC] newspaper the *Tablet* has upbraided... [the new PM] for his pledge not to increase taxes. More taxes, it says, are needed for more spending to “solve” poverty. The [NZ] Churches are constantly signing letters to the Government urging the spending of another few billion for the same reason... In the 1970s well-meaning liberals stormed into bureaucracy and Parliament determined to wage social justice on a large scale. The Churches were ripe for a complete abnegation of their pastoral role. With their new friends they signed to the view that poverty was the business of the Government. For it seemed the solution to poverty had been found. Keynes had provided governments with a perpetual motion machine that ground out endless public money. This, allocated by the wisdom of the politicians, and administered by a caring bureaucracy, had the power to solve conclusively every social ill. This was reinforced by the fact that the welfare state and reforms of the 1930s had answered the injustices of the previous 100 years... [- until the] flaws in Keynes theory surfaced. The welfare state... had the unintended consequence of destroying those who relied on it. Government bankruptcy, inflation, the drug wars and the plain refusal of some problems to answer to massive injections of money jerked some sections of the community back into reality. By then the Churches were paid-up members of the “chatterati” – those who talk, report, address, lobby, study, exhort *about* such problems; who demand that the Government *do* something about them, but who never ever themselves *do* anything. The Churches... are not outside the pubs preaching sobriety. They no longer appear among the poor, arguing the virtues of postponed gratification, saving, abstinence from vice. They just hand out food parcels to supplement the spending of the state. They shifted from active organisations with agendas of their own to become mere petitioners of Government. They gave up recruiting new members. They stopped preaching to the convertible and demanded more taxes from the dwindling converted. They ceased believing that their message had any power... [T]he Churches are locked into post-modern groupism and find any alternative heresy. Any change, they say, can only be a return to dreary Dickensian workhouse charity. It may be only generations from now, when it is proved beyond a shadow of doubt that the Government offers the poor only total devastation, that the search for real solutions will begin. For the Churches to remain relevant in the quest for real solutions they need to disengage themselves from pleading at the public trough. They need again to preach the message of their founder... to the population at large... For today’s poor the only sign of Christianity is another whinging, hand-wringing cleric interrupting the flow of violence on Government television...

I... [- the] vicar of St Matthews-in-the-City... [-] was shown on television blessing the... building of the facilities for the America’s Cup in the Viaduct Basin. I was honoured to be invited... to share in this ceremony of turning the soil... Not reported were the words I said before the blessing... In wishing the project well and being full of warm sentiments for the yachting to come and the success of Team N[Z], I acknowledged that a huge sum of money was to be spent. For this to be just, the facilities need to benefit all Aucklanders and be a fine recreational development on the waterfront for all of us well into the next century, whether we be rich or poor. For so much is happening in our land which is deepening the divide between rich and poor. The poverty trap is all too real for too many of our citizens and decisions appear to be made in Government by people who simply will not listen to those who are most affected and to those working in social and community services.

...St-Matthew-in-the-City, the church that offers spiritual care for the Auckland business community, is about to provide something more worldly. It is opening 131 long-term car parks on a site beside the church. The operation is another venture by a church which makes no bones about its links to city enterprise... The vicar... said the five-storey, \$1.6 million project was an investment to pay for the church’s social services. “We are trying to be good stewards with this asset.” ...St Matthew’s is being restored at a cost of \$2.8 million, with its neighbour Sky City Casino a “significant” donor... [By the way, a] Sicilian archbishop has gone on trial on charges of taking a... four million lire... kickback for renovation work to his cathedral... in 1979 after termites weakened its wooden interior. Prosecutors also allege [the archbishop] inflated the size of vineyards on church property in receiving a 750 million lire... EU improvement subsidy... He did not attend the opening session... [of court, although defendants] in Italy are not required to attend their trials... Vatican officials said they could not recall a criminal case of such proportions being brought against... such a high-ranking [RC prelate].

...Wellington Cathedral is in its final stages of enlargement, which began in 1954... The cathedral still needed about \$750,000 to complete the building included in the original plans in 1935... [● Auckland’s] St Matthew’s-in-the-City is shedding its construction cloak... Scaffolding has been removed from the north side, revealing clean sharp stonework. All that remains to be finished are the east and south sides – and the problem of payment. Estimated to cost \$970,000, the restoration job has taken longer and cost more than expected. The [vicar]... said it would be a tragedy if the work was unfinished for lack of funding and was desperately door-knocking to find the \$250,000 needed.

...Guardians of St Matthew-in-the-City... are selling time capsules... which cost \$250 for individuals, \$500 for a family and \$1000 for corporates... to raise the final \$250,000... The capsules... sealed[in] lengths of plastic spouting... [will be] locked away until St Matthew’s Day 2097.

...[‘Would it were that the restoration of St Matthew-in-the-City was nearing an end as reported by the *NZ Herald*. And if only we had most of the funds required. So far we have raised and had promised \$2.1 million. We need a further \$800,000 to complete the exterior and save a unique part of Auckland’s architectural heritage – a responsibility we invite all to share in.’]

...Join the dogs and donkeys and ducks at noon tomorrow at St Matthew-in-the-City for the annual animal blessing service. [Last year, ‘a black Labrador sang the loudest, and before the minister blessed the animals a goat blessed the floor of the church.’]

...‘Everything is available over the internet, and that includes a blessing. Called A Gateway to God – Online, the blessing is part of a vicar’s master plan to “globalise” the Anglican Church, starting with his parish of St Matthew-in-the-City. The website would cater for people who could not always make it into church buildings and the anonymity factor could appeal to those who didn’t want to “join the club.” His venture into cyberspace has not drawn any complaints from the parish – yet. But the Methodist Church president said she had real difficulties with the website, as it was “marketing” something that was quite profound. “I think it is commercialising something that is deeply sacred. It trivialises the depth of Christianity.”’

...‘St-Matthew-in-the-City is again appealing for funds – this time to restore stained-glass windows and the pipe organ. The vicar said work on the church had so far cost about \$3m, and a further \$1m was needed.’ Incidentally, a] **valuable Anglican Church-owned chunk of Parnell is to be deconsecrated...** a ceremony to show respect for the past use of the land... before it is sold to the highest bidder. The 2048 sq m... property was the site of St Mary’s Church until 1982, when the wooden building was moved across the road to become part of the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity... [T]he property... could... sell for \$2 m... The church is putting the land on the market after the Auckland City Council refused to buy it for use as a reserve because it was too close to the Domain. Sale proceeds will be put into the cathedral project, which needs about \$3.5 m... for completion.

...The Anglican Church is again asking ratepayers to dig into their pockets to keep the cathedral revamp afloat. The Auckland Cathedral completion project in Parnell is facing a short-term cashflow crisis and supporters have asked the Auckland City Council to bail them out... In 1994 the council provided a \$600,000 loan for the project and donated \$250,000. The church has repaid nearly \$200,000 and is now asking the council to write off a further \$205,700, leaving a debt of \$200,000. It has also asked the council for an interest-free loan of \$400,000 to help complete the final stages... which include the nave, car park and ancillary buildings... The project, which began in 1990, has so far cost \$18.2 million and a further \$3 million is needed... Further grants of \$750,000 have been promised from various organisations, leaving a deficit of about \$2.25 million, which the organisers hope to meet through the sale of the old St Mary’s site... [A] report questions whether the council should be contributing more funds given its contribution to date and uncertain benefits in the future... The council originally supported the project as the nave would provide a performing arts venue for the city and much-needed parking in Parnell... But nearly half of the groups that used it have not rebooked, citing a lack of adequate parking and accessible toilets, acoustic problems and external noise.

...A plea by the Anglican Church for more ratepayers' money to help the revamp of Auckland Cathedral has been turned down... The financial controller of the project... said... he was disappointed that the city felt it was not able to assist what was a worthy development. But he said the project was not about to go belly up.

...the de facto wife of... the late... millionaire Letraset king... has been ordered to leave by today the 248ha property... on Waiheke Island... which the couple shared for nearly 20 years. The Melanesian Mission Trust, fronted by the Anglican Church, is believed to have made a \$3.5 million profit selling the land just two years after buying it from [the Letraset king's] estate. The trust will not disclose the identity of the buyer or the sale price. However, sources say it was bought for more than \$7 million by the managing director of Mainfreight...

Ask... [him for] his view of the Anglican Diocese of Auckland and he will say it is "pretty unchristian." ...the retired farmer's history is intertwined with the tiny St Martin's Anglican Church, Waimauku. The family farm provided kauri for the church altar when it was built in 1921. [As a baby he] was baptised the same year and later confirmed and married before the kauri altar... Anglican parishioners[have now] agreed to sell the church to the Presbyterians after they voted to amalgamate with a new Anglican church to be built in Huapai. Local parishioners were happy with the price tag of \$100,000. But the Anglican Diocese has said the church must be sold for its market value of \$210,000. The diocesan secretary... said the church was owned by the diocese's General Trust Board which meant it must comply with the 1988 Trust Board Amendment Act. "The trustees are bound by that act and it says you can't sell property for half of what it's worth." ...[However, an] option was... to give a paper mortgage, whereby the church would be sold for \$100,000 on the proviso that if the Presbyterians sold it, the Anglican diocese would get a percentage of the profit.

...Karangahape Rd retailers say the Methodist Church is a greedy landlord forcing tenants out and stifling growth in the inner-city shopping precinct... The church charges twice what an independent valuer said the property rental was worth.

...[a Methodist reverend who was] forced to take... retirement... seven months before [it] was due... has taken legal action against his church... B[ut] before his personal grievance can be heard, the Employment Court has to determine whether a minister of the church is in fact an employee... The Methodist Church argued that ministers are called by God, and are not employees in the normal sense. Each earns about \$32,000 a year... (no matter where you rank in Church hierarchy this never changes apart from[annual] adjustments for inflation)... which is regarded as a stipend, or living allowance, rather than a salary, said the president of the N[Z] Methodist Conference... Anglican and Presbyterian Churches[also] made submissions at the hearing. The [RC] Church had input into the Presbyterian submission... If he wins his case, employment contracts are likely to become a part of religious life... [However,] similar cases had been heard in Britain and Canada, where each had failed... [In related news, Greek] monks looking to stash their cash have had their prayers answered. For the first time since... W[W2], the all-male monastic community of Mt Athos... will be graced with the convenience of a bank branch... [However, women] and all female animals except hens and cats are[still] banned from the rocky peninsula, which contains 20 monasteries.

...[the founder of Western monasticism was born in Nursia near Spoteto. Educated at Rome, *Benedict* became convinced that the only way of escaping evil in the world was in seclusion and ascetic religious exercise; so as a boy of 14 he withdrew to a cavern or grotto near Subiaco, where he lived for three years. He ultimately established a monastery on Monte Cassino, near Naples, afterwards one of the richest and most famous in Italy.' Incidentally, 'leaders of the World Council of Churches, which links more than 400 million Christians in over 100 countries, have been told the council is in deep financial crisis and would have to scale back. With a decline in revenue of nearly 50% since 1991, income was no longer enough to maintain the present level of activities.'

...yesterday, 'Ghana's churches faced tax gatherers demanding they "render unto Caesar". The Internal Revenue Service has decided to tax church-run businesses after church leaders' wealthy lifestyles were criticised.' In further news from Africa, a]eroplanes sent to Zaire by... [a] US televangelist's... humanitarian organisation were used almost exclusively for his diamond mining business, say two pilots who flew them. Three aeroplanes were flown... in September 1994 on missions code-named Operation Blessing[but]... the chief pilot... said only one or two of... his... 40 flights... in the country could be considered humanitarian... However... Operation Blessing reported no income in fiscal 1995 that was unrelated to its charitable purpose... The [televangelist]... has refused to comment... [His] company, African Development Company... ended up losing millions of dollars, and is at the centre of a lawsuit in which [the televangelist] is trying to recoup some of his losses from a mining equipment manufacturer. - 1997

PLASTIC buckets have gone around the crowd. There are white envelopes for those preferring to use Mastercard or American Express... [The] American televangelist... tells people to fill in their card numbers carefully. Obviously there's been trouble before. "Fill in the expiration date," he says. "Write clearly... Do not write in tongues." Everyone laughs... [The televangelist] stands in a white double-breasted suit... Outstretched, he holds a *Bible*. In the other hand is a microphone. Two symbols of power. The third is his hair, a space-age creation in silver... Verily, his hair moves in mysterious ways. The newspaper ad came straight to the point. "Experience the presence of the Holy Spirit. Come expecting to receive your Miracle!" And almost presciently... it... [answers] your first question... "No admission charge!" Well, count me in! Who can argue with a miracle? Who can argue with no admission charge? Why, I'd pay for a miracle! I'd pay lots! ...Perhaps you sense some cynicism. And you'd be right. Which raises the legitimate question: why go along if you don't believe? ...If you believe, you see... miracles... everywhere... You bandy the word about. Everything's a miracle: trees, clouds, mountains. Finding a parking space... Your own existence... yes... *You* are a miracle! The odds against being conceived were astronomical! What were the odds against winning that great sperm marathon? And that's only the tip of the iceberg! What were the odds against your parents meeting? Getting along? Getting drunk? All that makes you *special*. Those who don't believe, cannot see miracles at all. By definition. Everything has a logical explanation. If you see a cripple rise from a wheelchair, your reaction isn't: *praise the Lord!* You would ask for x-rays, before and after, and a complete medical history... [The televangelist] is under the Supertop at Ericsson Stadium, home field for the Auckland Warriors. The Warriors haven't been playing well, so [the televangelist] will fit in fine. People are used to going to Ericsson expecting miracles... Every seat is full and then some - the entire perimeter is surrounded... I'd say a third of the turn-out is Polynesian. On stage is a huge choir, all dressed in white. Above the stage is a giant video screen, and there's another one outside for those who can't get in. It's better technology than you'd expect at N[Z]'s actual religion, rugby... [The televangelist is] impressed by the turnout. He asks how many came to the service the night before. Half raise their hands emphatically. Greedy! I guess they came back for seconds on the miracles. He asks how many came from overseas. A handful. He wants to know what countries. One says American Samoa. The next says Western Samoa. The crowd goes wild... How many people are from Western Samoa? The hands go up. Nearly half... Incredible. You can see [his] mind tick over. Hmm. Samoa. Obviously a Christian stronghold he has somehow overlooked. [He] suggests he should take a crusade there. Big cheer! Boy, was that the right thing to say! I'm sure [he] will look into the Western Samoan economy before he commits to a trip. Ahem. Perhaps God is doing well enough there already... Out comes - a child. [The televangelist] cannot be serious. It's [his] seven-year-old son... [who] sings a song about Jesus... [The son] is cute. Too cute... I'm about to be unwell... He closes on a song about spaghetti. Not religious, but that just adds to his charm... The audience loves him... I dislike [the televangelist] more and more. This is loathsome. He's exploiting his own son! *God so loved the earth, he sent his only son to sing karaoke?* Next [the televangelist] brings out two of this three daughters... [He] sure did beget. What now? ...Thankfully... [the] daughters, vaguely teenagers, are monosyllabic and uncooperative. He asks if they like N[Z]. Their reply has the tone of: like, we asked to come here? One says, we've only been to the mall... He asks... what they bought at the mall. Nothing, replies the daughter. The daughter[said the shops] didn't take American money... Horror! ...The one true money... Proof surely that she is in a Godless land. To be honest, it surprises me the people in the mall didn't accept it. I would have... *You want to*

pay with US dollars? Sure! It's worth exactly the same... The children are dismissed. I'm not sure what the point was. To win our trust? If I was in a doctor's office, and the doctor brought out his family, I don't think I'd be more at ease. Especially if the kids began singing... It's not just the currency that's different here. The congregation is not as boisterous as [the televangelist is] used to. They're attentive... But these preachers need to hear the crowd. "The Devil cannot read your mind! He can only hear your words!" ...When he says something stirring, expecting the audience to shout agreement, he eggs them on. "And the people said amen!" ...The people say amen... All the way through, there's an us and them mentality. Like a Warriors game. This time, it's us versus Satan. Bad things are Satan's fault. If you're poor... [or] sick... Satan did it... If you're in a wheelchair, forget about being differently-abled, special, or even handicapped. No, you are possessed by Satan. And once you give yourself to the will of God – which plainly, by your inability to walk, you have not yet done – once you *believe*, you will be released... At the moment... Satan has scored from a set piece. Once you believe, God will equalise from deep in His own half, and score the winner as well... If I was in a wheelchair, I'd be thinking: I wish God had played better defence early in the game... I think it's dreadful to link physical ailments to morals... Being sick is unpleasant enough. It literally adds insult, to say it's their fault as well. It's not their fault, necessarily. Frankly, I'd find it hard to look up to a deity who punishes people with illness. Or rather, who has the power to heal illness, yet allows it to continue. I wouldn't do that, and I'm only human. I'm quite selfish, and I think I'd heal first, and ask questions later... I don't think I'd even ask for much begging... The hymns I could do without. I would, however, continue to make the priests dress up in funny clothes, but only because I have a sense of humour... [The televangelist] was raised by [RC] sisters in Israel, who told him poverty meant sanctification. But [he] knows better. He has met the Pope. "I met him privately, in New York City,"... The Pope doesn't believe in poverty. "The Vatican is very rich." Did [he mention he has also gone to] the Vatican? That was the other time he met the Pope. Privately. The Pope was pleased to meet him. Again. [He] says one Leonardo painting from the walls of the Vatican would support his ministry for a year. Only *one year*? ...How much does this ministry cost? Good grief. The point is well made. Follow the interests of God, and the paintings will come. [The televangelist] announces a special offer... They are chartering four jumbo jets from the US to Israel. That's 2000 people. He wants to fill one jumbo jet from A[US and NZ]. It costs only \$7295, but for an extra \$1000, they throw in Jordan. But wait, there's more. [The televangelist] will baptise you himself... His hands, laying on the holy water of the River Jordan! ..."Quit asking for little things," [the televangelist] bellows at his... audience. "He's a big God." ...REMEMBER, to the believer, "wealth and riches shall be in his house." [This televangelist] must be one hell of a believer. He must believe like... a barn door in a storm. He must believe all the way to the bank. And every time he looks at his bank balance, his belief is confirmed... WE ARE to feed the poor, says [the televangelist]. "But how] can we feed the poor if we're poor ourselves...?" This makes sense. So let's get rich. But don't seek riches. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God. If you put God's interests first, all these things will be added." ...After two hours in the cold, I leave. The miracles haven't begun yet, but I can't see the point of staying... I trudge through the rain and get back to my car... I turn the wipers on rapid – but there's still rain on my glasses. I'm sure any half-poetic preacher could find a sermon in that. Which of us has our wipers on? Yet has not wiped our glasses? Surely that man does not see!

...God is working hard tonight. He tells [the televangelist] things. "There are three people here involved in witchcraft – Jesus just set them free." That's the first miracle in a series delivered with breakneck speed. "Someone's cured of deafness, a tumour, stomach cancer, skin disease." ...[the televangelist] blows into his microphone and a section of the audience tumbles over. He calls the pastors in the audience to the stage where he waves at them with his hand and they all fall down... [T]he crusade's N[Z] coordinator, careers backwards into a row of chairs and has to be helped to her feet. Later she says she had her eyes shut and didn't know [the televangelist] was standing in front of her. But the next day the sore back, which means she has to take morphine to function, is no better. It's in God's hands, she says. Then begins the parade of those who have been healed... A 79-year-old woman is moving without her walking frame for the first time in years. [He] takes her hand and runs with her across the stage. Then he does that Holy-Spirit-dispensing thing and knocks her down. A young woman with a prolapsed disc manages to walk up the stairs and across the stage unaided. [The televangelist] has her touch her toes, then she... has to be carried off the stage. Strangely, the enduring image of the crusade is not the startling sight of the faithful being felled by the breath of a mortal. It's the last, sad picture of two, still wheelchair-bound, crusaders slowly wheeling their way up the rise, away from the razzmatazz, through the drizzle and out the stadium gates. It would have been easy to catch up to them and ask whether they'd hoped to be walking home through those grey mesh gates tonight. I didn't have the heart... [The televangelist's] "incredible spiritual journey" began when he attended a service by Kathryn Kuhlman... in the 1970s... [He]'s the consummate showman. His on-stage antics were the inspiration for... [the] faith healer in the 1992 film *Leap of Faith*... On the Saturday night, according to organisers... 10,000 had to be turned away. Impressive figures. Let's talk a few more. The pastor himself won't talk figures or indeed anything else. A spokeswoman for the crusade says [the televangelist] doesn't give interviews. He's not here to promote the glory of [himself] but the glory of God. This is not strictly true. [He] has given interviews in the past; that he does so no longer may be a consequence of investigations by the broadcaster CNN, an American-based group called Personal Freedom Outreach, and accusations from former followers that his healing is unsubstantiated... His ministry brings in an estimated \$NZ100 million a year. [He] won't say how much he pays himself, some estimates put it at around \$1 million a year. His half-hour television show, *This is Your Day*, screens on 95 stations across America and in 65 other countries including N[Z]. He has what you might say is a novel approach to interpreting the *Bible*... "Prayerfully ask the Lord what he would have you give," he exhorts on his Website. "There are those who will know immediately that they are to give \$1500. Others will feel led to give... perhaps... \$10,000 or even more. Simply respond as the Spirit leads you." Perhaps unwisely, given the sex and financial scandals of earlier televangelists, the fundraising plea is signed: "Everlastingly at it..."

... "It was a grave error," said the fallen American icon last week. "...I apologise to everyone. Everywhere I go there are people who still hate me. Until the last few weeks I've had a hard time forgiving myself." As acts of contrition go, the... [reverend's] was nowhere near as mealy-mouthed or calculated as other public figures. But [he] has nothing to protect any more, nothing to lose. His "inappropriate" behaviour with a 24-year-old church secretary scandalised Christian America a decade ago, igniting the collapse of his [TV] empire in a squalid quagmire of sex and fraud. He was jailed for 45 years. [However, last week the] shamed TV preacher turned up unannounced at a Christian leaders' meeting at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield... England, and apologised for disgracing the name of Christ... Ten years ago the baby-faced preacher owned and ran PTL Ministries – which, depending on your perspective, stood for Praise the Lord or Pass the Loot. [He] and his wife... were the most popular of America's prosperity-preaching tele-evangelists, with... homes that included an apartment in Palm Beach with floor-to-ceiling mirrors, three Cadillacs and plastic surgery for his face and her breasts. Broadcast on 200 cable TV stations to millions of viewers, they used tax-free donations to build an 800ha religious Disneyland complex called Heritage USA... which became the third most popular attraction in America. But, inexplicably, God wasn't picking up the tab. Sobbing before cameras... on [their] knees... they begged for donations, claiming their organisation was on the verge of bankruptcy. It was as close to telling the truth as they came... The empire... [fell] around his ears when it emerged – allegedly thanks to the ministrations of a rival man of God – that [the tele-evangelist] and another preacher had been given a tour of the sins of the flesh in a motel room... and paid [their hostess] \$265,000 to hush it up. She did, until *Playboy* magazine made a better offer... [The tele-evangelist eventually] was convicted on 24 counts of corruption involving more than \$US160 m... "I... felt God abandoned me." Inmate 07407-058 discovered that in jail preachers are not particularly welcome. "It was a cesspool... A man twice tried to rape me, but God protected me..." There were other men of cloth, too. "There was a nice little group of us, including a... cocaine fiend." Why would a pastor take cocaine? "Because we're in show business instead of God's business. We gotta perform like trained monkeys." ...He is not planning a return to tele-evangelism and lives in a one-bedroom apartment in a Los Angeles ghetto where he does voluntary work. [His wife] divorced him and married his best friend. When... [he] left jail – the sentence reduced on

appeal on the grounds of the trial judge's religious prejudices – he had only the clothes he stood up in. Last week he [re]married... and is in Britain on... honeymoon. He is taking the chance to... announce the end of the world. In prison, he said, Jesus picked a sliver from the divine eye and put it in his own. With this unique device, [he] can see the world much better – but things are not looking good. He now has the vision of a contemporary economist. “God has given me a message for the last days... The four horsemen of the Apocalypse are about to enter the world stage...”

...scandal can often be a perfect little morality play... [T]ake... the... TV preacher who kept telling us God wanted our money – now! ...[he] ran a 150 million-dollar-a-year religious empire. Then he got caught with a hooker and turned on the tears. “I have sinned against you my Lord...” But he went and sinned some more! In California for a prayer-meeting, he sneaked out at dawn and bought porn mags, he picked up a street-walker, then he saw a police car and the guilty preacher began hiding the porn mags. That made the car weave and he was pulled over... [T]hat's when the faithful stopped sending him wages for sin... [B]ut... he was an angel compared to the undisputed king and queen of hallelujah hanky-panky... Ah, what a sweet couple, and what power they had over the faithful millions who tuned in for [her songs and his] preaching. They tugged at... heart-strings and hauled in the dollars but then... [he] was jailed for fleecing his flock... What doomed his Praise the Lord empire? ...an unholy laying on of hands with... [a] church secretary... Then [a man] went public and admitted [the preacher had blackmailed him] to become his gay lover[, promoting]... him from gardener to producer of the TV show in exchange for gay sex... [And, although the preacher's wife] was never prosecuted, she was no innocent. While [her husband] was facing charges she played the faithful wife for news cameras, sobbing rivers of mascara... [B]ut they were crocodile tears. [The pious wife] was actually having a sexual affair with... [her husband's] very married... best buddy... In the final days before [the preacher's] conviction, friends who visited his hotel room revealed that he was consoling himself with vodka and porn films.

...How much money have I got to send you preacher...[?] “G]ive what you have... I take donations from all denominations in any currency big or small... The spirit of the Lord shows me that somebody is being impressed by the Holy Ghost to write a cheque for \$5000...[?] “I worked hard for my money Now you say you want to save me Is this for your church or your pocket... - Stealing In The Name Of The Lord

One of the cultural forces that has helped shape the American character is the Puritan ethic, also known as the Protestant ethic... The Puritan ethic, with its emphasis on hard work, thrift... and... overcoming adversity... has helped to make America the prosperous industrial nation it is. It has also contributed to the confusing and paradoxical views of money that most Americans have. The ethic teaches that people should work hard and sacrifice to earn money but should not enjoy it once they have it; that a lot of money made too easily is the “work of the devil,” but that a lot of money accumulated over a period of time and as a result of hard work proves that one is “favored by God”; that both money and lack of money produce feelings of guilt; and that money can both protect and destroy one's virtue... Affluence implies a *superabundance* of money, [and] a limitless supply of what is necessary for the most satisfactory life possible. In contrast, the Puritan perception of the world includes *limits to everything*. Therefore it is necessary to conserve things... Some people are not content to purchase human friendships, they also try to buy the love of God. By paying heavy tithes and making large contributions to the church, they hope to ingratiate themselves with God... Most of the great religions of the world preach the virtues of poverty and self-denial. Foregoing personal and material pleasure is believed to enhance holiness, righteousness and spiritual development. One of the most frequently quoted passages in the Bible is Christ's proclamation that, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.” Yet it is obvious even to the most confirmed believer that some... religious leaders apparently do not practice what they preach. The late Kathryn Kuhlman, the well-known evangelist, reportedly left a very sizeable estate... [‘Brigham Young, a leader of the Mormon's – a denomination that has been known to require its followers to hand over 10% of their earnings – died leaving \$2500000 to 17 wives and 56 children.’] While church leaders stress the value of sacrifice and penury to their congregations, many churches, cathedrals, and temples of even the most traditional denominations are impressive architectural masterpieces, richly adorned with gold and silver, and housing some of the most valuable art collections in the world. Despite their stated beliefs, it would seem that most church leaders and churchgoers prefer to worship in attractive and expensive surroundings. The “success” of the ministry is too often measured less by the “spiritual impact” on the congregation than by the amount of money donated by the congregation to erect an imposing house of worship. Occasionally, a religious leader comes along who preaches that it is better to receive than to give, rather than the other way around. Such a person was Russell Herman Conwell, a Baptist minister... He went about the country giving a speech called “Acres of Diamonds,” in which he proclaimed that acquiring wealth was an honourable ambition... Conwell followed his own advice. By the time he had given his speech to some six thousand audiences, he had accumulated approximately \$8 million, which was certainly a lot of money in the 1890s. The modern counterpart to Reverend Conwell is the... head of the United Christian Evangelistic Association[, who]... has sixteen Rolls Royces at his disposal, as well as six residences in the [US] and others throughout the world. His wardrobe costs approximately \$50,000 a year and he has enough jewelry to start a small store. He is a self-proclaimed hedonist and admits to being a multimillionaire. Addressing his huge congregation, [the head of the UCEA] says... “Now repeat after me! ...I have a wonderful relationship with money... Money loves me... I see a mountain of money piling into my arms... I see myself on shopping sprees... taking fabulous vacations several times a year... Oh bless you, money, you're wonderful stuff!”

But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. - The Acts 8:20

...Jesus... said unto him... sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven... And when he heard this he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich... [W]hen Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God... woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation... So likewise, whosoever... forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. - St Luke

“...a number of cities have rejuvenated their economies with legalized gambling... What do you think Reverend?” “Once something has been approved by the government it's no longer immoral.”

IT can easily be claimed that the single most divisive issue in Christianity today is homosexuality. Is there a difference between homosexual orientation and homosexual behaviour? Are homosexual relationships theologically moral? Should same-sex partnerships be blessed in some way? Are gay men and women suitable candidates for ordination? In N[Z], the Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist and Anglican Churches often find themselves at loggerheads over these questions. One might claim that the R[C] Church is more generous, in that in 1986 the Bishops of N[Z] declared that “the homosexual condition is morally neutral.” ...however... all is not well, even in Rome... THE Vatican conundrum is symbolised by the tension between official documents. According to the catechism, homosexuality is not a choice and every form of discrimination against homosexuals is to be resisted. Yet according to the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, even an inclination toward homosexuality “must be seen as an objective disorder.” This latter opinion assumes that gay men and women are unable to control their lust, and so mandates celibacy for all homosexuals... [– something the] argument suggests that gay[s]... are by nature incapable of... Behind both positions lies the basic [RC] doctrine that the primary purpose of all sexual activity is the begetting of children. That the vast majority of sexual activity in marriage, not

to mention the world, is undertaken for increased intimacy or for a couple's recreational pleasure seems to escape Vatican comprehension... Many gay men and women have already left the[RC] Church, hearing too loudly the irony of that old hymn, *They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love*.

...[over 'the weekend thousands gathered for a parade to the Colosseum that amounted to a victorious coming-out for Italy's gay community. The parade marked the end of an international event that took place in the face of staunch opposition from the Vatican and neo-fascists. The opposition boomeranged. Instead of stopping the festival, it turned attention to discrimination against gays. Only a few dissident priests took part in the World Pride roundtables and conferences. The Vatican newspaper, meanwhile, made a point of reiterating that homosexual acts are a sin. The Church, wrote the pope's personal theologian, can't accept the "public and legal recognition of homosexuals." ■ 'Cyprus' Orthodox church is to try a bishop on gay sex charges next month.']

...The first openly-gay[NZ] Methodist priest has been accepted as a full practicing minister. However, the vote... was not unanimous.

...Presbyterians are about to vote... in a referendum that has caused damaging divisions within the church. Opposing factions have been campaigning to win votes from church members on the issue of whether gays and lesbians should be ordained as ministers or church elders... with an unholy war of words setting the scene for the debate... More than 80,000 ballot papers will be sent out next week.

...THE Presbyterian Church will announce from the pulpit next week whether gay people should be ordained as church ministers. Its decision follows a ground-breaking move by the Methodist Church... which decided a gay man, who was already a minister, could be made a church superintendent. Some 54,000 church members have voted in the Presbyterian referendum organised to determine whether members support their Council of Assembly ruling, made last year, that practising gays should not be licensed or ordained as ministers. The ruling didn't apply to gay people who were already ministers or who were in training. The referendum is non-binding but will be taken into consideration by the assembly when it will decide whether to uphold the ruling at its meeting next year... [I]t was only the third referendum held by the Presbyterian Church in [NZ]. When a lesbian was licensed this year, several South Island presbyteries disassociated themselves from the Wellington presbytery that licensed her. She has yet to be ordained by the church... Meanwhile, [the NZ] Methodist Church President... said the decision to accept an openly gay person to the position of superintendent had been a major and difficult decision for the church... Homosexuality was not an issue in the[RC C]hurch, because all priests took a vow of celibacy, a[RC C]hurch spokesman said. The Anglican Church has no fixed position on the issue, although it is the subject of research, a spokeswoman said.

...[an] Anglican Bishop... from New Jersey... America... is determined to drag the Church into the 21st century[, although his]... views... have won him enemy status with conservative Christians everywhere. Here's why: On homosexuality in the clergy: "We have had homosexual priests for 2000 years..." On... the future of Christianity: "...we have got to deal with... that imperialistic claim that we and we alone have the right to God... I have travelled in China and... met Buddhist monks who are truly holy." Religions had to recognise that... God worked through others... By expressing his opinions, he has earned death threats, public protests and accusations that he does not believe in the resurrection of Christ... He may not be brandishing insurance policies, but the 65-year-old is keen to sell his brand of Christianity during his month-long stay in [NZ], his third visit... [H]e is not afraid to reveal his past. "Hell, yes, I was a chauvinist, homophobic, fundamentalist, racist." Huh? A peek into his past explains all. Brought up in North Carolina... his father was an alcoholic who abused his mother. Around him, blacks were segregated and homosexuals were targeted in bitter attacks... His career as a man of the cloth has... broken down his prejudices. It was his appointment to his present position in the Newark diocese which exposed him to the issue of homosexuality. During the first days of his new job, gay clergy from parishes under his orders came to him and divulged their sexuality[, so he]... headed off to university to talk to scientists. "I became convinced that homosexuality was not a choice." [The bishop] believes that neuro-chemical factors lead people to being homosexual or heterosexual. Accepting gay clergy is a logical step... His latest book (he has written 15)... [deals with another belief of his] that the gospel writers harboured a deep anti-Jewish bias. Therefore, he questions the literal translation of the Good Book... "A literal Bible presents me with far more problems than assets. It offers me a God I cannot respect, much less worship, a deity whose needs and prejudices are at least as large as my own."

...['Priesthood haven for homosexuals The RC priesthood in Britain is fast becoming a gay profession. Proportionately, those training to be priests include significantly more homosexuals than there are in the general population. And now a forthcoming British Channel 4 documentary, *Queer and Catholic*, is to allege that, while many of the gay men remain celibate, others do not. The programme claims that seminarians at the English College in Rome, where elite candidates for the priesthood are sent, have cruised Rome's gay bars and parks. Student priests in the college frequently referred to one another by girls' names and the culture in parts of some seminaries is one of "high camp." Taken together, all this suggests that a gay subculture is emerging in some seminaries, similar to that which has developed in the US, where it has been suggested that as many as a quarter of American priests are gay. However, the rector of one of the leading US seminaries, St Mary's in Cleveland, Ohio, suggested that among priests under the age of 40 it could go as high as 60%. It was reported last year that the number of priests who had died of Aids was proportionally four times that of the general population. American seminaries now demand an Aids test before ordination.']

... 'A FORMER gay stripper claims God has miraculously cured him of AIDS. The American pastor is touring NZ churches and schools telling how he is sure he was healed of HIV after putting his faith in God. The NZ Aids Foundation says it doesn't know of any cases of people being cured of HIV. The foundation's executive director said: "Once you've got AIDS, you've got it. But when AIDS first came to public awareness, there were a lot of false positive readings." However, the 30-year-old – who told *Sunday News* that "by the time I was 18, I'd had over 500 sexual encounters with boys and men" – claims he had numerous documented tests confirming he was HIV positive. He was hospitalised in 1993 with full-blown AIDS. He said he was so sick, doctors told him he would not live through the night. "But I had a revelation. I was unconscious and God came to me and said he had healed me of AIDS." The next morning he said he astounded the doctors by waking up feeling normal. "I've already had many medical tests showing I no longer have AIDS." Incidentally, the [NZ] Methodist Church is teetering on the brink of a break-up with its leadership conceding that a split is looming. Factions... have become so polarised over the appointment of a gay minister to a key position that leaders are calling a crisis meeting in an effort to hold the fragmented Methodist conference together.

...['A row over gay clergy has left 300 members of a Methodist congregation holding their service yesterday under a makeshift marquee. While regular worshippers attended the Tongan Methodist Church in Otahuhu, the rebels – the bulk of the congregation, who were locked out of the church in February – assembled in front of a house around the corner. The group members are now demanding that the church let them back in and have taken their fight to the High Court at Auckland. The group has requested keys to the church as well as \$200,000 in damages for being excluded from the building. Tension within the congregation stems from a vote to leave the Methodist Church of NZ because of the appointment of a homosexual minister to a key leadership position in Christchurch. The bulk of the congregation was disgusted with the church's gay-friendly attitudes.' ●] Presbyterians have rejected the idea of gays and lesbians taking up leadership roles... Results from the month-long postal ballot showed that 75[%] agreed with the assembly. Only about 35,000 of 81,000 ballot papers sent out were returned.

...In May the... Auckland City [Council]... gave... \$140,000 for... the "city's total contribution to the cost of the 1997 and 1998 Auckland Santa parades." ...The city promotion committee vote was split, but underlined the council's view that some parades are more deserving than others. It was the same committee that rejected a recommendation to back the Hero Parade with \$15,000... Th[e] philosophy... that homosexual and lesbian celebrations are not activities deserving of ratepayer support... extends to other gay events. Money for an art show and a gathering of young people was rejected by councillors after its endorsement by officers. Council staff have been slow to accept that most of their political masters do not want

a bar of the city's homosexual community, despite the council conceding that residents want projects "that encourage community involvement and identity." Few public events have electrified Auckland in recent years as much as the Hero parade, which will proceed without ratepayer backing.

...It must be very confusing being a fundamentalist Christian. At home you know you can beat your child for being naughty, safe in the knowledge that it's all part of God's work... It's all for the child's good, they tell themselves. Part of growing up in a loving, caring, God-fearing, family environment. Step outside the front gate, however, and a philosophical flip-flop occurs. This sort of behaviour suddenly becomes sexually deviant. Wave a sandshoe within a mile of a bottom in Ponsonby Rd during the Gay Hero Parade and it's the devil's work. Indeed it's so evil that keeping the children inside at home in bed with the blankets over their heads for the night is not protection enough. They could, we're told, turn on the television and risk exposure via a news broadcast... [The] Mayor... and... fellow opponents... – [including a councillor whose]... famous actress daughter... [is] an icon of the gay world – ...say they're not anti-gay. How else, then, do they explain their obstruction of this hugely popular event? The \$15,000 requested is only needed as a result of \$40,000 in charges the council has imposed because of the very popularity of past parades.

...A groundswell of support has emerged for the... Hero parade in the wake of the Auckland City Council decision to refuse it funding. *Metro* magazine yesterday announced it would contribute \$15,000 towards crowd control and Auckland city youth councillors pledged their support for a float in the parade. The *New Truth* and *TV Times* has already donated \$5000 and set up a nationwide 0900 donation line to help fund the... event.

...If it was trial by media, then the... [c]ouncil would be dead and the street parade of homosexuals... would be very much alive. If it was trial by expressed public opinion, then exactly the opposite would be true. The... parade has a history of floats depicting simulated sex and alternative sexual practices, with... whips and chains in evidence. Such practices, whether homosexual or heterosexual, simply do not have a place on our city streets. As many citizens have noted in letters to me: "If I did that, or appeared topless, in the streets, I would be arrested." True. Finally... I maintain that sexuality – and that includes sexual preference – is a private matter. To openly and publicly flaunt that sexuality, is to strip it of any deeper meaning... I, and others, have been labelled "homophobic" and "gay basher" by those who label themselves as "gay." I am no such thing. I... have [n]ever bashed verbally or physically, homosexual men and women. It is ironic that the reverse is not the case. Let *Metro* magazine spend its readers' money on the parade. The council has more pressing issues to deal with and far more needy causes to spend ratepayers' money on.

...About 56[%] of Aucklanders do not want their rates helping to fund Hero parades, but... [52%] of people aged between 18 and 29 favoured the idea... The results did not impress the Deputy Mayor... who said last night: "All I know is there is a heap of people who don't want to fund it."

...Community boards planning to channel public funds into the Hero parade are defying public opinion, says the Deputy Mayor... The Hobson Community Board has pledged \$2200 for portable toilets at the event and the Western and Eastern Bays boards are likely to offer similar support... The editor of *Metro* magazine... last week announced a \$15,000 donation for crowd control at the parade.

...[next 'year the Sydney Lesbian and Gay Mardi Gras is celebrating its 20th year of jubilant existence. In that time it has gone from a small protest march which ended in a mini-riot to one of the greatest celebrations in the world. The city of Sydney acknowledges this by giving \$120,000 to the Mardi Gras, which brings in more foreign currency than any other single event in AUS. I mention this, by way of contrast with Auckland's Hero Festival. We are in our fifth year and, as every man and his poodle knows, the hillbillies who happen to run the city decided the parade – the great climax of the festival – was too far beneath their notice to award it a relatively small sum of \$15,000. To make their contempt clear, the council awarded extra money to clean up after the Santa Parade, which encourages small people to believe in a fat old man dressed in red who everybody above the age of five knows doesn't exist. Someone somewhere might be able to explain the logic. Fortunately, the people of Auckland have shown they can rise above the minds of its elected leaders.]

...[What would Jesus Christ have thought of the Hero festival if he was around today? I have a sneaking suspicion that Jesus, while perhaps not leading the parade in a pair of pink hot pants, would have been among the spectators, enjoying the spectacle immensely. And I'd be prepared to take bets that he would not be at all pleased with the so-called "Christians" who handed out hate mail. While I have never read the whole *Bible*, classic movies and musicals and the odd (begrudged) scripture class have given me a pretty good understanding of what Jesus was all about. He wanted people to love and respect one another. So judging by the open show of love, friendship and respect displayed at the Hero parade, I'd say most of the 100,000-odd participants will get passes to heaven, validated by The Boss himself. The fringe "Christians" who chose not to enjoy a good boogie along Ponsonby Rd but instead tried their damndest to spoil everyone's fun are another story. They could find their exploits backfiring on them when Judgment Day arrives. Next year, I hope the extremists give up their hopeless task of trying to persuade right-thinking NZers that there is something unholy in celebrating your sexuality.]

...The Archbishop of Canterbury... laid down the law on homosexuality... during the only interview scheduled for his six-day tour of [NZ]... "Human sexuality must be expressed within marriage, and... the lifestyle expected of clergy is either marriage or celibacy,"... But gay Anglican clergy have opposed the archbishop's stance. "The archbishop does not have a monopoly on God's wisdom," an openly gay priest... who is the associate priest at St Matthews-in-the-City... said last night.

...The Church has always maintained the primacy of scripture in dealing with matters of a moral nature. It will seriously compromise its credibility if it attempts to depart from the view it has always held... that the intention of God... is that human sexuality is essentially expressed between male and female within marriage. An argument which is frequently advanced is that the recorded words of Jesus Christ nowhere include any statement concerning those who are possessed of an orientation towards homosexual relationships. Of course that is true but it has to be qualified by the fact that the words of Jesus on heterosexual marriage are sufficiently clear and unmistakable as to exclude any other possibility. In a democratic and pluralistic society we have become much used to our long tradition of exercising our right (if not always our responsibility) of expressing many differing opinions on many subjects. In recent years it often seems that personal opinions are pushed to the point where some trade on a personal charisma to become leaders or gurus. The prominent leader of an Auckland [religious] community who holds strong opinions on matters sexual is now completing a long prison sentence because this country (for the moment at any rate) still holds that sexual acts between adults and children are morally wrong. It is alleged that he remains unrepentant, holding to his creed that it is only the unenlightened members of our society who fail to see that his beliefs are not only reasonable but desirable. He is not alone, either in this country or overseas. In a society which has become inured to violence in many forms and expressions of sexuality of every and any sort, it is probably inconvenient to remember that the Church expects all its members but particularly the clergy, by virtue of their pastoral role, to abide by the standards of Scripture they are expected to follow... It should be recalled that one of the early proponents of a change to the law regarding homosexuality in Britain was a former Archbishop of Canterbury... It was his contention that the offence of homosexual acts between consenting adults should be decriminalised. The fact that he was very careful in continuing to describe such actions as remaining outside the will of God and thus a sin has been conveniently ignored... [P]riests who deliberately flout the discipline of vows freely taken invite... condemnation. Sadly the whole emphasis on homosexuality tends by comparison to trivialise those situations in which heterosexual priests live, for example, an adulterous lifestyle... [By the way, a] two-year British study has unveiled shocking evidence of domestic violence by clergymen... many clergymen's wives had suffered mental, physical and sexual abuse.

...A 76-year-old retired [RC] priest has been convicted of rape by a judge in Providence, Rhode Island, who labelled him a sexual predator... [In related news,] almost half of the estimated 100,000 priests disrobed worldwide since the early '60s left the order to marry. A survey in the [US] found that at any time, 30% of American priests are likely to be heterosexually active and 10% homosexually active. Recent church scandals have centred on the [heterosexually active, like the] Scottish ex-bishop... who eloped with a divorcee in a blaze of tabloid publicity. - 1997

Britain's leading cardinal said yesterday that the [RC] Church could relax its centuries-old insistence on the celibacy of priests... [R]eacting to the resignation of a Scottish bishop linked with a divorcee, [the cardinal] said the church was losing many excellent candidates for the priesthood

because they wanted to be free to marry. "It is not divine law. It is church law, so any Pope or general council could change it,"... [The stance of the] head of the church in England and Wales... was in sharp contrast to the unbending line taken by the Archbishop of Glasgow... after the resignation of the Bishop of Argyll... He said [the Bishop of Argyll], who disappeared from his home last weekend... had been guilty of a major lapse. If a bishop had admitted an affair or it were proven, the Vatican would probably "urgently request" him to resign under church canon (law) 401, which applies when a priest is unable to fulfil his office because of ill health or "another serious reason."

...A woman has revealed that a practising priest fathered two children by her and in a television interview she implied that the scandal over[a] runaway bishop... could be but the tip of the iceberg for the[RC] Church... Her revelation came as the church was reeling from the news that [the Bishop of Argyll] had fathered a son more than 15 years ago... [Furthermore,] he refused to acknowledge being the father and threatened to go to Peru to avoid the scandal... While the Church was supportive and helped the couple "work through" their problems [the mistress] was left to bring up the child alone, she claimed.

...[the d]isgraced ex-Bishop... claims that so far he and[a] divorced mother-of-three... have not had sex... "We have... not even shared the same bed..." ...Speaking to the *News Of The World*, the... former Bishop of Argyll and the Isle in Scotland... also denied claims that he had had affairs other than those with [a woman] aged 41, and with [another woman], with whom he had a son... now 15. He said he felt guilty about the way he had treated [his son]... Reports of the amount paid... for the story range from a five-figure sum to £500,000... The interview, which includes the first picture of the couple together, was given after they were tracked down to a Lake District hideaway... The couple moved into a cottage in the quiet Cumbrian town of Kendal about a week ago after asking neighbours to help them carry new twin beds into the house. Meanwhile, a[n]... underground support group for British women in secret relationships with Catholic priests, named 7-11 after the date it was set up on November 7, 1993, said it had almost 80 members and had heard rumours of possibly hundreds more such liaisons in Britain.

...[In Christian teaching marriage is the place for sex, as a unique expression of love between a man and a woman committed to each other for life. But marriage is not the greatest human good; it may have to be foregone in order to do the will of God. Many Christians, including RCs', however, believe c]elibacy should be an option for priests... A spokeswoman for the... Diocese of Auckland... said... priests... [already] chose a... lifestyle which included... vows of poverty...

The clergy of Britain are to submit their first pay demand to the cash-strapped Church of England. They want their stipend increased by up to 27[%] a year, a rise which would cost the Church more than £178 million. The priests claim it can afford £160 million of the total and say worshippers could make up the difference by putting an extra 76p a week in the collection plate...

At Sweet Haven Holy Church of God in Virginia, you can put some money in the collection plate and get some back. The pastor passes out green play money. Find a bill with his initials on the back and you can win between \$US10... and \$US100. There's a catch: parishioners must be at church for the entire service, which often lasts more than two hours... [However, if you're pressed for time, you might prefer to attend a 'drive-thru church. On its first day, one in AUS provided taped sermons to 60 drivers on their way to work.' In another development, w]orshippers at the church of San Claudio in the Spanish city of Leon can now make their traditional offerings through a credit card terminal that has replaced the traditional collection box... [A]mong other advantages the terminal gave donors a receipt, enabling them to claim tax exemptions.

...In Thivers, France, two men attacked and tied up a parish priest... and helped themselves to 5000 francs... from the collection plate. - 1996

[When a collection basket is passed around at church, the point is to give money, not take it. But thieves continue to target churches, particularly in Auckland's inner-city, where parishioners are frequently warned to keep an eye on their belongings. A Detective Sergeant said churches were "easy pickings because the doors are always open. People can quite comfortably wander in and instead of seeking solace, so to speak, they can get up to no good." St Patrick's Cathedral's business manager said: "The general public wouldn't expect thefts in churches. But obviously some people are desperate." The Auckland Baptist Tabernacle associate pastor said: "I think thieves think church is a really good place because people are gullible." Two men were sentenced last week to five years' jail after a North Island crime spree in which they went into churches and convents and took credit cards from wallets while people prayed. Last month an unemployed 39-year-old man received an 18-month suspended sentence after breaking into numerous central-city churches, stealing cash, wine and gifts that had been donated for children.'

...[Salvation Army staff are devastated after thieves stole \$2500 in hard-earned funds from their Henderson headquarters. "Who would steal from the Salvation Army? Everything we get we give back to the community," says the West Auckland community and family services manager. "Times are hard and the giving to us is down." Most of the cash was going to be spent on toys for the child care centre and the youth group. Insurance will cover most of the losses and damages but the policy excesses mean the organisation will be out of pocket. This is the second time in 14 months that burglars have targeted the Salvation Army's View Rd home.' In international news, a CofE] vicar has called for the thieves who stole 100-year-old figurines from his church to have their hands cut off... [The British vicar] said it would "act as a deterrent" and would prevent them from further hindering their progress to heaven. The state should be responsible for carrying out the dismembering...

A Bay of Plenty pastor got his congregation praying aloud and singing while two masked and armed youths rampaged around them. Having tried to reason with the pair who had gatecrashed a meeting in the Kawerau Assembly of God church, the... [reverend] started singing *In the Name of Jesus We Have the Victory*. "It was the first thing that came into my head... I believe there is a lot of power in praise... If we had not all called on the help of God, there might have been a lot more violence." ...the 55-year-old felt as if he was taking part in a scene from an American movie. The intruders burst in "shouting obscenities" and threatened to blow his brains out if he did not hand over "60 bucks." While... another stood guard at the door... the pair went around demanding money and jewellery... "I told them, 'Jesus loves you guys. Why don't you go now and we'll forget the whole thing. If it goes on, you'll be in serious trouble.' Then they went ballistic," he said yesterday at his Lake Rotoma home where he was nursing cuts, bruises and stitches to his scalp... After about 20 minutes, during which one offender threatened to douse [the reverend] with fuel and set him alight, "a great calm came over me." Refusing to lie on the floor, he said, "I am now going to leave this building. Shoot me if you are going to, but I am leaving." He walked outside where the pair... "karate kicked" [him] in the head... [then] beat him around the head with the gun and slashed his arm with a knife before running off... Two 15-year-olds and a 17-year-old... appeared briefly in the Whakatane Youth Court and were remanded in custody to face a judge today. The 17-year-old will go to the district court.

...Practising martial arts puts some punch into preaching the *Bible*, according to [a] self-defence expert, maker of low-budget action-pictures and recently retired... Methodist minister... Running karate classes for children attracted more interest than conventional *Bible* study... Between sermons... [he] has also graced the silver screen himself - his biggest success being a 1984 low-budget film *Killpoint*... After a stint starring in martial arts movies in the Philippines he returned to his... Californian... church and set up his own production company. Some members of his parish have even taken roles and found the action not all that different from a good church service. "It's still the good guy against the forces of evil." [Incidentally, a group of 'British clergy - called the Kung Fu Vicars - have taken up martial arts to defend themselves.']

...Sunday prayers at the Soul Winning Salvation Church in Nairobi ended in chaos when the congregation beat up their pastor in a row over church funds... He was rescued by police officers and taken to hospital...

[On Sunday, about 70 heavily armed men, allegedly members of the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia, swept into the village of Playou de Orozco, where residents had packed the church for a baptismal Mass. The gunmen, carrying lists with the names of their intended victims, selectively dragged them outside the church and shot them dead while other villagers and a parish priest watched in horror. At least 27 people, including several

children, had been confirmed killed. Meanwhile, the Indian PM has visited the violence-hit tribal area in the western state of Gujarat and urged stiff punishment for Hindus behind a series of attacks on Christian churches and prayer halls.' In local news, 'arsonists set fire to two New Plymouth churches early on Saturday, and only good fortune saved both buildings from destruction. A driver of a passing taxi noticed flames in the Knox Presbyterian Church shortly after 2am. He and his passengers used a garden hose to slow the spread of the blaze until the Fire Service arrived. The Apostolic Church's Park City Centre escaped ruin only because the fire started in the basement and its concrete ceiling prevented the flames from rising to the rest of the building.'

...BERENGER Sauniere was a typical 19th-century village parish priest, with the meagre income you would expect of a rural clergyman in southwest France... But [there is nothing typical about] Sauniere's church... – an edifice that psychically repels some visitors to such an extent that they find it impossible to step inside. From outside, square-towered and solid, it appear[s] reassuringly normal, were it not for the strange Latin inscription carved above the door: *Terribilis est locus iste* – "This place is terrible." Just inside, crouched to support a font, his face a rictus of hate, his fingers splayed like claws, a carved black devil glared at me... Did Sauniere make a deal... with Satan? Are unseen forces at work here? - 1997

Master Four went to church for the first time. When I asked how it went, he replied: "I looked for God but he wasn't there."

The New Testament describes the church by several images, including 'people of God' and 'body of Christ'.

And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple... - Revelation 21:22 (also see I Corinthians 3:16)

We heard him say, I will destroy this temple... made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. - St Mark 14:58

...she is everywhere and no place the church not made with hands...

It was stated on line 36 of the previous page that church *doors are always open*. However, the 'Church of the Holy Sepulture in Jerusalem has long been locked at the end of the day' and, nowadays, it isn't uncommon for churches in NZ, for example, to be locked when left unattended – to protect them from theft and vandalism. Would such acts be allowed to occur in churches if these edifices were important or sacred to God?

Two priests at New York's City's famous St Patrick's Cathedral were robbed of \$US175... by two men, one with a pistol, inside the foyer of the cathedral rectory in midtown Manhattan on Christmas [(X)mas] night...

"Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace, goodwill towards men." So sang the heavenly host as the birth of Jesus Christ was announced in the early hours of the first [X]mas morning. It's been the theme of the [X]mas season ever since – the second part of it anyway. Again this year we read it in the newspapers, heard it on the radio and on television, saw it in the shops. But as usual there wasn't much peace to be seen... There are individuals, organisations, even Governments which devote vast amounts of their time to promoting peace. But there is no peace... [By the way, letters] addressed to Mr S. Claus, c/- North Pole, flood... mail centres across... [NZ each year. T]his year kids... [covered] all their bases to make sure the bearded one [brought] them just what they want[ed on X]mas Day... Teams of Santa's little elves at mail centres around the country... [handled the] deluge of... 75,000 letters ...while[at] Telecom elves... registered more than one million calls from kids nationwide and more than 600 letters on e-mail... • T[he letters of the word SANTA can be rearranged to spell the word SATAN! Coincidentally, 'St Nicholas is the patron saint of Russia and the guardian of virgins, children, sailors, scholars and robbers. In France, Pere Noel (Father Christmas) leaves presents on the hearth on St Nicholas' Eve.'

... Father X]mas, alias Santa Claus, is a religious figure and was around a lot earlier than those who have in recent times hijacked his image... The linkage was corrupted in America some time after the arrival of settlers from Europe who had taken with them the custom of giving gifts to children on December 6 [- St Nicholas Day – each year. Nicholas, a bishop, lived in the latter part of the third century and the beginning of the fourth. Stories about his care of children, the elderly and the poor were legendary but only came out after his death... Parents and the Church emulated St Nicholas even to the point of preserving their own anonymity to help children experience love and trust for themselves and to learn to know that the world values them as people. Now the myth has been changed to serve the needs of a consumer society.

...Surely, with a new millennium approaching, it[is] time for an entirely new image for Santa... Coca-Cola gave him his current look in the 1930s, when the company's advertising executives adapted the image of the European and rather dour St Nicholas to make their soft drink appealing to Americans in winter. They did away with the traditional, pale, all-in-one robe, dressed him in Coke's corporate colours, fattened him up and gave him a jolly demeanour, and featured him in magazine ads enjoying a Coke at the end of a night's gift delivery. - 1996

It's a battle of the Santas, a clash of cultures between two [figures who are] both descended from St Nicholas... The Dutch are torn between the American-style Santa Claus – with his crass commercial trappings – and their traditional Sinterklaas... Anti-Santa sentiment is so strong in some Dutch villages that signs posted on streets... warn... against any Santa invasion until Sinterklaas has left town. But some say Sinterklaas isn't exactly as pure as driven snow. The legendary character, who lives not in the North Pole but in Spain, is under attack [ove]r his servants... known as Black Petes[, who]... carry toy-filled sacks slung over their shoulders, but strike fear in the hearts of children. After the gifts have been handed out, they are said to stuff their sacks with naughty boys and girls and take them back to Spain. "Some people complain that Black Pete is a stereotype of a black person..." says... the Anti-Discrimination Forum... Amsterdam's official Sinterklaas for nine years... says it's the grown-ups who are creating the problems. "Children don't think like that. All they want is to... receive candy... Black Petes are just part of the story... We shouldn't tamper with tradition." Bah, humbug, say some residents in Bijlmer, an Amsterdam suburb with a high population of minorities. Many there have sought to ban Black Petes[, who]... usually are portrayed by whites in blackface... from visiting their schools.

...RETAILERS are upset by a Christian anti-shopping campaign which could bring a silent night for shop tills in the build-up to [X]mas. Wellington's Youth for Christ group is promoting Friday, November 28, as Buy Nothing Day, when people boycott shops... [Observed] overseas for six years[, the boycott]... is meant to curb the shop-till-you-drop mentality of a consumer-driven society, at the start of the annual [X]mas frenzy... But[the] Retail Merchants Association... is unimpressed. "What people have to realise is that in total there are 300,000 staff employed in the retail industry. You are talking about the livelihoods of a lot of people,"... [It] hopes the campaign won't take off and people keep on spending.

...[WHAT do Christians and shopkeepers have in common? They both sit down on December 25 and thank God for Xmas. Ever since the Three Wise Men showed up with precious metal and pungent spices, the inviolable link between Xmas and presents has been the salvation of the retail sector. That's why it can be such a nail-biting time in the retail trade. Fail to pick the trends when you start ordering the stock mid-year and you could end up as retail's equivalent of the Xmas turkey. Pity, for instance, the toyshops that missed the Monopoly craze of 1935, the Sooty rage of 1954, hula hoops in 1958 and Barbie dolls the year after, or Rubik's cubes in 1980 and Transformers in 1985. This year, pundits tell us, there is no single must-have toy, meaning retailers have to work much harder to satisfy an uncertain demand. Statistics NZ says that we spend about \$400 more in the December quarter than the other quarters. And our Xmas spending has been increasing each year, with last year's spending up 6.3% on the year before. This year's shopping pattern is still anyone's guess, but will undoubtedly be affected by the US dollar. □ 'The glitzy Neiman Marcus department store in New York has an equally glitzy Xmas catalogue. This year it offers an exclusive motoring deal – a Mercedes-Benz G-Wagon for a staggering \$380,000. The store imported 15 from

Germany. Mercedes-Benz' parent Daimler-Chrysler doesn't sell the four-wheel-drive G-Wagon in America. If it did it would probably cost \$80,000. But it wouldn't be exclusive then, would it? And well-healed Americans wouldn't be able to boast about buying it from Neiman's, would they?"

... 'THERE is a new niche toy market growing in size and popularity throughout the US: Christian toys. From board games to biblical action figures, conservative Christians are fuelling this emerging industry from its roots in the Bible Belt over to the East and West Coasts. Mass retailers, once sceptical, are taking note of popular toys in religious stores and giving them a try, and mainline toy manufacturers are also entering the act. 20% of the toys Cadaco makes have a Christian theme, including games like WWJD (What would Jesus do?), Bible Trivia and Bible Pictionary. Other Christian board games on the market include Bibleopoly (build churches as you move around the board); Missionary Conquest (learn to finance your missionary trips); City of Bondage (biblical heroes try to rescue the Lost Souls held by the Evil Hordes who have overthrown the desolate city).' ● 'A British child psychologist says the belief that Santa "knows if you've been bad or good" helps to teach children the difference between right and wrong and is a "useful ace up a parent's sleeve".']

...So your child's wish list to Santa is as long as your arm and includes every toy fad on the market, including ones you know you'll be infuriated by. Don't worry. According to [a] child psychologist... you won't be the world's worst parent if you don't meet their every request – in fact, you shouldn't. "Kids have to learn that they don't get everything they want,"... [H]e suggests that parents presented with over-the-top lists to mail off to Santa should gently suggest that the big man might not be able to get all those gifts in his bag or down the chimney...

SANTA Claus would be happier to enter by the front door rather than the fireplace this year, judging by the size of toys at Jack's Toy Co of Remuera. Little girls will be searching for the country collection of stand-alone kitchens, \$495, with built-in cupboards, stoves and twiddly knobs... Little boys will look for a Poseidon-version Porsche, \$795, or jeeps at \$850 and tractors at \$350 for indoor or outdoor play. Less expensive are hideous-looking Glow Power insects and creepers at \$7.50 each...

THE REPUTATION of the Scots as mean and penny-pinching is shattered by a report which reveals they splash out... an average of \$1520... on gifts, food and drink at... [Xmas. I]t is people in the south-west of England who come out bottom of the... table... [at] \$1340... Last December, N[Z]ers spent around \$1020 a head]. ■ 'Every man, woman and child in NZ uses 6 or 7 rolls of wrapping paper. Last Xmas, we ripped to shreds about 600 tonnes of festive paper. That so-quickly discarded paper cost us \$15 million. Most of the ribbon tied around the presents came from AUS and China'...

'30 million Xmas trees are sold annually in the US', but if] you want to know what all the best-dressed [X]mas trees are wearing this year, step into Nature's Alternative... This year decorations are from the 75c items to... \$399 a piece... the array of lights, from \$24.95 to \$69.95... Replica... trees... are from \$12.95 for a 30cm... to \$600 for a 2.75m floor-to-ceiling mixed pistol of fine proportion... Ribbons, and "angel hair" of spun gold and silver set the finishing touch to the trees – and yes, you can buy aromatic pine oil, to sprinkle on the boughs. The ensuing smell is better, in fact, than the real McCoy... Some people choose an all-gold, or all-silver theme... Some prefer a glorious kaleidoscope of colours, adding just a few baubles at a time... All you need is imagination, or inspiration... Garlands for doors and mantelshelf are from \$28.95; and a fireplace swag (to welcome Santa) is \$48... [X]mas carousels, which twinkle with activity and merry tunes... range from \$99 to \$350 for Santa's musical workshop. Patchwork sampler wallhangings, with a charming representation of *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, are... \$37.95... [Speaking of things to hang on the wall,] we're buying and sending more... [X]mas cards... "It's a lucrative, multi-million dollar market." ...Hallmark employs 700[Xmas card] designers...

A postal price war has emerged over overseas [X]mas mail between N[Z] Post and a postal franchise group new to the country. [NZ Post] has dropped its charge for sending [X]mas cards to Britain and Northern Ireland by 33[%] to \$1.20. This follows the move by Mail Boxes Etc, which cut its price to all overseas destinations to \$1.10.

...Hundreds of West Auckland residents may be short of [X]mas mail after two teenagers stole two mail bags from a Titirangi shop... The bags were dropped off... for a postie to pick up and deliver but the thieves... ran off with them... People expecting mail are advised to contact N[Z] Post...

THESE days, the ghost of [X]mas past is far more likely to visit its victims covered in credit card statements rather than chains – they make less noise arriving in the mail, but you can guarantee they'll bring plenty of yuletide shoppers sleepless nights in the New Year. Scrooge would no doubt have approved of Eftpos' ability to instantly separate people from their hard-earned cash. "Retailers go into an advertising frenzy," says... [the] director of Otago University's retail studies group. "Looking at it from the shop-keeper's point of view, a lot of companies and stores will be expecting to do 70% of their annual turnover within the next six weeks, some of those probably in the last three weeks before [X]mas. It's quite staggering... many stores will have committed themselves maybe eight or nine months ago to large stocks which [they] will be hoping to shift from here on in." Did anyone mention Levene? ...despite the threat of liquidation that a barren [X]mas could bring retailers[he]... agrees the real Santa sandtrap is the one waiting for consumers. "There's an awful lot of pressure on people to 'give', and we're all bombarded with junk mail and plenty of pretty pictures..." ...Whether you pay first or later, the bottom line in consumerland this [X]mas is that companies want you paying one way or another – but are they concerned about selling you into debt in the process? "The short answer to that is no," [he] says... A lot of... people wake up next to (metaphorically speaking)... [the] managing director of Auckland's Debt Recovery Company. After 17 years in the game, [the managing director] is well aware of the post-December-25 trauma an overdose on overdrafts can inflict on shoppers. "Just before and just after [X]mas is when most individuals incur their debt. You've got the Farmers card and Warehouse card run up to the max... and the majority of people who have those cards are from low-income families... Peer pressure goes on as well – my mate got this, my girlfriend got that – the Star Wars toys have all come back and they're not cheap... In my experience, even a cheap [X]mas costs the average family nearly \$1000... an awful lot of money... to contend with." ...if a decade researching retail has taught [the Otago University director] anything, it's that, ultimately, sound financial planning runs a close second to surfboards when it comes to escaping mistletoe madness.

...We all know how it ends – with a bearded fat guy in a red suit. But how many Aucklanders realise who and what is behind the city's largest annual event? Synonymous for years with the Farmers' Trading Company, the Santa Parade, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, is no longer run by Farmers and survives thanks to a clutch of corporate sponsors... Early advertisements for the Santa Parade, which terminated at Farmers' flagship store in Hobson St, made no secret of its ulterior motive: Farmers, it reminded Aucklanders, was the ideal place to buy [X]mas presents... By the late 80s, however, Farmers was in trouble. It had been bought by... Chase Corporation and at one stage was being run at the mercy of its bankers. In 1990, it gifted the expensive-to-run parade to the city of Auckland, to be run by a trust. The parade's manager for the past decade... estimates the total cost of the parade this year is likely to be around \$400,000, including storage costs ['storing the floats in a warehouse uses 1/5th of the total parade cost'] and donated services... TrustBank (now WestpacTrust) ends its three-year contract for naming-rights this year... [Other sponsorship] opportunities range from the \$15,000 splash-your-name-all-over-a-float-and-get-heaps-of-other-benefits package, to the \$3000 sponsor-a-character package... Other major sponsors who have stuck with the parade include the *NZ Herald*... the Auckland Regional Council and The Warehouse... Around a quarter of a million people are expected to watch this year's parade. That's a sizeable audience by anyone's standards. However, many sponsors are still undoubtedly attracted by the parade's wholesome, family-focused image... The original parade included bus loads of orphans and children from the Sunrise Blind Babies' Home, all of whom were guests of Farmers for the afternoon. The tradition continues, with disabled children given their own special area to watch the parade. Terminally ill children are brought in by ambulance. Research carried out by TrustBank last year showed around a third of those who watched the parade had attended the event at least half a dozen times. Many were able to name the main sponsors. While satisfaction with the quality of the parade was high, 32[%] of those surveyed wanted a better Santa and a better Santa float this year... One year he was brought in by plane – to his obvious discomfort. The spectacle was

outdone the following year when a parachutist agreed to play Santa – and accidentally landed in the lily pond at the Winter Gardens in the Auckland Domain. Six weeks later the parachutist was killed in another jump and Santa has been grounded ever since. However, no-one can accuse the parade of not moving with the times. In the early days, other main attractions included Jack and the Beanstalk, a huge Noah's Ark, Humpty Dumpty and the Three Little Pigs. This year's parade... will be led by... television's Xena Warrior Princess. Those concerned about family values should note that Barney the purple dinosaur will also be present... It will be interesting to see who gets the biggest cheers – [Xena], Barney or Santa.

...[the Maori Affairs Minister lifted his arms and declared himself king of the world yesterday as he walked away from Kaikohe's Santa Parade unscathed. Last year the Santa needed laser treatment to his eye after being pelted with waterbombs and in previous years Santas have been assaulted for running out of sweets. Running alongside this year's float clad in a tight yellow elf's suit was the government whip with a more conservatively dressed Labour MP in tow. The three MPs tamed the crowd with 120kg of sweets. Local sportspeople had done their bit to ensure the parade's success, visiting schools and urging children to leave their water bombs at home.]

...Santa has been a big hit in the business world in London... [T]he word Santa, or some form of it, has been registered as a trademark by seven different companies in the past seven years. The name covers toiletries, greeting cards, ornaments, animal playthings and even plum puddings. Names registered include Young Santa, Son of Santa, Santa's Son, Santa Babes and Santa Claws.

...Move over, elves – Santa Claus' new helpers are the telecommunications giants. Santa, always an "international gentleman," is coming from everywhere... [including Cuba! The Cuban] President... has declared [X]mas Day 1997 a holiday as a gesture to the country's Christians and Pope John Paul II... [following the latter's] landmark first visit... But [the President] stressed that the holiday was a one-off.

...[It comes around once a year, and always at the same time, yet for some reason, some people still never quite prepare for Xmas. But while you're waiting in line with the hundreds of other grumpy, tired, last minute shoppers, spare a thought for those NZers who manage to avoid the festivities. If you are of Vietnamese descent, chances are you will be a Buddhist who does not recognise Christian iconology in your cultural practices. However, Vietnamese living in NZ still celebrate Xmas and attend celebrations, such as the Christmas in the Park concert held at Auckland City's Domain.]

...more] than 200,000 people packed into Auckland Domain for the annual Christmas in the Park last night. Police reported few behavioural problems but said the bumper crowd – the biggest in three years – created traffic congestion on the Southern Motorway.

...The Auckland Domain burst at the seams as crowds packed in for the city's latest serving of Christmas in the Park... Picnic-packing families soaked up the mild evening air, tempered only by an outbreak of "snow" – flakes of fake snow showered over the crowd to the delight of children and parents alike. Television star... "Xena"... wooed fans with several carols... Not everyone entered into the [X]mas spirit, however. Police arrested 11 people, including several youths who hurled glass bottles at them... Organisers... said the event was the country's largest gathering of people.

...It is on these Sundays leading to [X]mas that congregations swell. This may not be entirely due to an onrush of piety, rather the parental duty of seeing Belinda in the nativity play or... Uncle Fred... read one of the nine lessons in the carol service. For... [most] of the year I have little use for the extravagances of sentimentality... But [X]mas is different. The shepherds, the wise men, the baby in the cradle and the choir of angels may all be of doubtful historicity, but I rejoice in it all and lament its absence from television schedules. They are far too busy of course urging us to spend. They have forgotten – if they ever knew – that the most important gifts we can give at this time of the year cannot be bought: Love, friendship, understanding, consideration, a helping hand... a smile.

...The Auckland City Mission hopes to jolt the community into giving to poor families this [X]mas with a poster showing the Virgin Mary without baby Jesus in her arms. Produced by local advertising agencies, the image is intended to symbolise that joy is absent from the lives of thousands who have to get by on very little... On [Xmas Day, the mission] will hold its usual large dinner for 1500 low-income people who would otherwise go without what most people regard as the usual festive [X]mas fare. It also hopes to give presents to 7000 poor children and teenagers likely to miss out on treats. The city missionary... is spending his last year in this role before going into retirement. [The reverend said X]mas would be a sad time this year for a growing number of Auckland families. "Christ the child brings joy and hope but what we are finding is that for many people, there is no joy and no hope... The welfare system is not working and a radical rethink is needed..." ...The Christchurch City Mission will cater for around 700 people... Around 300 people will attend the Wellington City Mission... and[more] than 100 people will gather in Dunedin for a [X]mas lunch... hosted by the Church of Christ. [Its] minister... said the lunch was primarily for those who would spend [X]mas on their own, but families who couldn't afford a [X]mas meal were welcome.

...an enterprising 7-year-old, is determined to have [X]mas despite her family's tight financial situation. After being told they could not afford to celebrate [Xmas, the girl] and her brother decided to set up a "kids' sale" outside their home... [They didn't offer their other two siblings but] made \$4.10 from selling goods including her only doll and broken cutlery. Her mother, who declined to be named, was amazed to wake up to see the stall.

...[a ten-year-old from Howick, upon hearing that a girl] had sold her only doll to help the family finances, has asked her mother to send [to the 7-year-old] her own prized talking doll... The *Evening Standard* in Palmerston North has been inundated with offers of gifts for the needy family but donors are being told their gifts will be passed on to the Salvation Army. When the gifts are distributed the family will be among those who benefit.

...I know [X]mas is a time for giving, because it said so in all the four-colour junk mail that poured into my letterbox... And in case it slipped my mind, my teenagers kept reminding me... by ostentatiously mentioning the name of designer fashion accessories, each of which cost as much as I was planning to spend on wine between now and the end of the tax year. I used to know about the [X]mas spirit. I remember the joy of watching the children's tiny faces crease into smiles of delight as they opened packages containing two-dollar items... They were pre-schoolers; life was simple. These days... [anything] I think they will like is almost certain to make them roll their eyes heavenward and wonder how they could have been born to a father who is – and I believe I quote them verbatim here – "such a loser." Thus [X]mas becomes a time not so much of giving gifts as of filling orders... for young people whose retail appetites have been whetted by American sitcoms, simply because I would look churlish if I maintained the same monosyllabic resistance that I get away with for the other 364 days of the year.

...THE exchange of gifts at [X]mas time goes back beyond Christianity. In ancient Rome it was customary for wealthy men to give money or clothing to their poorer neighbours and to receive garlands or incense in return. During the calends of January, beginning on the first day, the Romans exchanged gifts between relatives, friends and the children. The gifts were looked upon as omens for the future. Sweets or honey were given for a year of sweetness and peace... gold and silver for prosperity... and... lamps to bring light... Devout Christians left all this exchange to the pagans[although burning]... candles... is a Christian custom that symbolises the birth of Christ, the Light of the World... THE scene of the [X]mas crib – the Holy Family in the stable at Bethlehem, with animals and shepherd kneeling in adoration – was probably started by St Francis of Assisi in 1224... It is difficult to put a date to his first appearance but... Father [X]mas has called bearing gifts on... [Xmas Eve for] centuries... he is referred to in a carol dating from the 15th century... [Incidentally,] three children, all under the age of 13... could face manslaughter charges after they admitted mugging an elderly woman... of \$13.85 after they sang [X]mas carols on her doorstep... [T]he 79-year-old... later died.

...We had a wonderful time singing [X]mas carols on the forecourt of the cathedral in Parnell last Friday evening... But I confess that after singing all three verses of *We Wish You a Merry Christmas* I began to have nagging doubt whether this was what [X]mas was all about. What had this splendidly happy time to do with the story of Bethlehem? ...The ingredients of the story of Bethlehem include taxation... a homeless family (no room at the inn), refugees (they fled to Egypt), social outcasts (unmarried parenthood), political intrigue (Herod fearful for his throne), child abuse

(the murder of all boys under the age of two) – and even foreign tourists (but at least they had no bother with Customs and MAF). These hardly constitute a merry tale. Yet they have a contemporary ring about them. They are issues that fill the pages of the *Herald* day after day... We miss the point of [X]mas entirely if we think that it is a time for forgetting the ordinary problems of ordinary life... [X]mas is not about escapism... Rather it is about involvement, particularly about God becoming involved and getting stuck in at the sharp end of life in human society. The story of Bethlehem is an account of God's commitment to his creation... In the city of the Sky Tower we surely ought to be able to recognise a gamble when we see one, and in Bethlehem we see God gambling everything... A gambler who risks that much is either stupid – or totally dedicated.

...Christmas at the Park [wa]s captioned "Full as a Bethlehem inn"... New flesh is thus put by the secular media on the old bones of religious myth... Glad tidings come curiously gift-wrapped this year. Secular writers reach for religious terms to make their [X]mas point. The Churches move another way. The media offer to the public a kind of show window through which to view the community as it struggles towards... [X]mas, whereas in the] City Mission's advertisement... [we] end up with a poor Mary with no gift baby to offer to her family or her world... Surely this is a publicity stunt gone blasphemously overboard, taking Christ even further out of [X]mas? ...Since the 1960s the Church has been trying to get closer to "the world" which for centuries it had condemned... The Church and the world, the holy and the secular, moving each away from their previous bastions, have drawn curiously close to one another over these... [past] decades... Offensive to some, the media's use of religious references recovers central truths of the gospel. Fireworks and lasers in the park are not far... from replicating the... single great Bethlehem pyrotechnic.

...[Almost 2000 years ago Three Wise Men (or Kings – the jury is still out on that one) trekked across the desert, guided by a bright star that they had been told signified something special. What magnitude of spectacle 2000 years ago was it that drew the Three Wise Men towards Bethlehem? Was it a brilliant new star? Based on interpretations of ancient writings, precise Chinese astronomical records, and analysis of the various calendars, astronomers now believe it wasn't any single star, comet or supernova, but more likely a rare conjunction of celestial bodies. The only astronomical event of note closest to the time of Jesus' birth was a conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn. We don't put much significance today on conjunctions of planets, but in astrology there is great significance to it, and if you look back into Jewish folklore to see what that meant you find that Jupiter always represents the king. Saturn represented the wisdom, Messiah. And this conjunction occurred in Pisces, which was associated with Israel. So you could make the interpretation that "stars" coming together like this meant that there was going to be a king who would be a Messiah in Israel.]

...THE night of the first [X]mas, three wise men came to visit baby Jesus bearing gifts[after 'the star, which they saw in the east, went before them and stood over where the young child was' (St Matthew 3:9)]... What the *Bible* conveniently forgets to mention is a) they weren't invited, b) they didn't bring exchange cards with their gifts and c) one of the[m]... absolutely trashed the place. Two thousand odd years later (and let's face it, they have been rather strange), [X]mas is still the season to be driven completely insane rather than jolly. Even if you survive the annual blitz of advertising, shopping queues and over-friendly Santas, you still have the 25th itself to contend with. Laugh if you like, but somewhere out there lurk members of a species known only as *extended familius* – salivating predators who have spent the entire year locked in their rooms, thinking about nothing but how much pleasure they're going to get from annoying you in a couple of days... Nowhere else are family feuds more likely to be reignited than at the dinner table... If you feel daunted by the prospect of entertaining and feeding your meagre kin, spare a thought for... an ex-merchant navy cook... [who] is the man at the heart of Auckland City Mission's efforts to dish up [X]mas dinner to an estimated 1800 people this Thursday.

...Do they know it's Christmas? ...[X]mas should be a time of unalloyed joy... The memories parents treasure are of excited children racing into their bedroom to show what Santa left... under the tree. It's an image coopted by advertising and the media, but at its heart lies what [X]mas should be... The year he turned six he and his sister were dropped off at his auntie's in Otara on [X]mas Eve. "Mum said she had to go away and didn't know when she'd be back," he remembers. "There were six kids and my auntie living in this two-bedroom flat so we had to sleep on the floor. On [X]mas morning I don't think anyone had presents. I was a sad and confused six-year-old, being around all these cousins that I'd only met a few times before. Then a policewoman came round, picked us up and took us to my father's house on the North Shore. That was [X]mas Day... It turned out that my mother had met a guy... and she just took off. I don't know whether she or my auntie rang the police." ...It isn't clear whether[the] father was expecting his children (who he hadn't seen for three years). And although he had presents and rooms ready by the time they arrived, it didn't make up for the trauma. [The next] story is similar if from another perspective. [The mother] faced the "meaning dropping out of her life" when her children left earlier this week to spend [X]mas in Queensland with their father... [The children], aged 11, and... 13, will be away for a month... "It's a funny feeling [watching them go] because every time they've been over there it's taken three months of counselling to get their heads together again." For all that [she] is happy that her children are getting the opportunity to spend some time with their father... who spends half his time at sea... She brightens, "And financially it'll be great – a real burden off my back!" [However, without the kids X]mas threatens to become just another day for [her]. Last time they went she tried to postpone [X]mas and have it when they got back but it didn't work out... This year she organised a pre-[X]mas gift-giving party... before they left... "Next year, if I've got the kids with me, we're going to do some voluntary work at [X]mas – go to the City Mission and see the reality of other people's lives." Then there's [the man] who will wake up on [X]mas morning without the whoops of excitement from [his] children's room for the first time... Separated[nearly] a year, with daughters aged six and three... [he will spend X]mas on his own... [until he] picks the girls up from their mother at 3 o'clock... The pain of a broken marriage at [X]mas doesn't stop when children are adult. Take [the 57-year-old] who parted, reasonably amicably, from his wife nearly two years ago. She was 55... their children all over 30. "The first [X]mas it was all quite friendly... However, this year it's a shambles." What's the difference? Simply that [he] now has a new partner and his children don't approve. "The kids refuse to meet her. The one who's organising the [X]mas do told me not to bring her... [T]he ironic thing is, my ex-wife and I get on OK – she'd like to meet my partner... it's the kids who can't cope." [A family] counsellor... says... "[X]mas is supposed to be a family time[but often]... there are only fragments of the family left... loyalties are split, the family has formed alliances and taken sides and that makes it impossible to have a joint family holiday or festivities. Basically you're trying to have fun in the middle of a war zone." ...[the counsellor's] most important tip is for parents to get their [X]mas custody arrangements organised well before [X]mas itself... "My whole front lawn is littered with people who've left it until [X]mas Eve." She's not joking. At the Auckland Family Court in Albert St, where the saddest cases end up, the six weeks leading up to [X]mas is the busiest period of the year... [Most cases involve] the various court orders that can be made to safeguard at-risk children – orders preventing removal of children from the country, protection orders, custody and access agreements.

...It is a case of "let the buyer beware" when it comes to supermarket [X]mas hampers. Contents of a... hamper, which customers of... New World supermarkets can pay off at \$2 a week for 35 weeks, have been valued at under the \$70 total... [T]he value... was closer to \$55... The manager of New World Group... said savings could... be made if customers chose to "cash and carry" and buy specials, but the hamper offered convenience.

...Dreaming of a white Christmas has taken on new meaning for some Nebraska residents... A car dealer in Omaha is offering anyone who bought a vehicle between November and last Thursday night... \$17,000... in cash if it snows 10cm on [X]mas Day. The company has taken out a \$2.85 million insurance policy with Lloyd's of London just in case... [In local news,] Ashburton has introduced a fire ban from noon today until January 5 and fire officers are rescinding permits for... [X]mas Day because of the] South Island drought.

...Faulty [X]mas tree lights may have started a fire that destroyed a house in Nelson. During the blaze two firefighters were burned...

[The man known as Mister Christmas can expect a whopping electric bill. He has lit his annual Christmas Wonderland in Killingly, Connecticut, turning on a display featuring more than 380 holiday animations and 108,900 lights – his biggest show in the 32 years he has been decking his 12ha property' ...

'Churches are all hustle and bustle transformed with coloured lights, tinsel-covered fir trees and ornate nativity scenes. The best silver is on display. The clergy and choir wear resplendent robes. The music is awesome for a change, replacing the dirge of canticle, psalm and hymn. It is the time to be merry – in a sober and proper way. The soft, gentle, intimate words of the birth stories fan generous and warm fuzzies in the hearts of young and old. A baby is born, all is well in the universe. The truth? Honesty? Forget it! It's Xmas. It has magic all of its own and, God help us, the world needs that magic for a night and, as a bonus, for a few hours next day. The world is desperate for a gripping fairy tale to keep it from falling over a cosmic cliff into the bottomless abyss of chaos. But that's the problem. Xmas is just that – a dramatic fairy story – at least the way it is celebrated today. That's not the way it was in the first century and for quite a time thereafter. The early Christians did not have birth stories for their hero until around AD90. Birth stories in the Gospel of Matthew were put there by Jewish Christians, to let us know that Jesus was greater than all the great heroes of Jewish faith and history. The stories were scripted in because there were points to score. The writer of the Gospel of Luke (AD95), without any knowledge of Matthew, used a similar technique to tell Greeks and Romans that Jesus was of greater rank and significance than the emperors. Both sets of birth stories are incompatible and point in very different directions. The accounts are not about events that really happened: they are fiction in the best sense of the word. Neither Mark, the first gospel to appear (around AD75), nor John, the last gospel in the New Testament (AD100-120), contain birth stories, an omission which suggests that the actual circumstances of the birth of Jesus are missing. It was in the sixth century that Dionysius Exiguus, now famous for creating the Christian millennium, turned the Church's attention away from gazing at the crucifixion to pondering the birth of its victim. The Church then lost its way and allowed the story of Jesus to be increasingly corrupted and distorted. Isn't it time to tell the truth?

...the Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Victoria University' 'calls the stories of Xmas "fairy tales," to be tossed aside with other stories of little people, extraordinary happenings and happy endings. The birth narratives of Matthew and Luke are not to be categorised as "fairy stories" at all. They are classic forms of literature in their own right and need to be taken more seriously than the professor's contemptuous dismissal. The professor is correct in pointing out that they are late additions to the tradition. They are post-Resurrection narratives whose purpose is to develop a full answer to the question: Who is Jesus? Their whole purpose is to emphasise that Jesus is uniquely "God's person" and from the beginning has always been so. Both birth narratives are radically subversive documents. Matthew recites Jesus' genealogy. He is son of David by adoption not by birth. The legal requirements of premarital births is set aside by the word of the angel. The Church celebrates at Xmas, in awe and wonder, that Jesus born of Mary is the Saviour of the world, God's promised gift of life. The stories of Xmas convey this good news with splendid and dramatic power'...

'There is certainly no shortage of targets for those who are bent on trying to discredit traditional Christianity. All the attacks of these would-be iconoclasts have this in common – they assume that the four gospels are merely pious frauds, an uneasy mix of fact and fiction, unreliable records of the life and teaching of Jesus. But nothing could be further from the truth. When we read them, we are in the realm of rock-solid history, not of fairy tale magic. For example, when Luke introduces us to John the Baptist, the predecessor of Jesus, he enables us to date the beginning of John's ministry with precision – that is, John began to preach in AD 28 and Jesus shortly thereafter. Of course, to have dates is not to have proof that this or that event actually occurred but it does show a writer's concern for historical accuracy. Again and again Luke's reliability as an ancient historian of the highest order has been shown by inscriptional evidence throughout the Roman Empire that has been uncovered by archaeologists. Before 1961 sceptics sometimes declared that Pontius Pilate, the Roman ruler in Judaea mentioned in all four gospels, was a figment of the writers' imagination. But in that year an inscription was found at Caesarea that establishes that Pilate was indeed the prefect or procurator of Judaea at the time of Jesus' trial. We now have multitudes of similar examples that illustrate the reliability of the four gospels. But there is a real sense in which Jesus does not need to be "rescued" by anyone or from anything. He is well able to care for himself, as he has done for 2000 years. Sceptics come and go but he goes on for ever. At present they grapple with his living Spirit but they don't face him in person – yet.'

...doctrines regarding X]mas are axiomatic: Humankind is not inherently good, but fundamentally flawed; human beings will always disobey God because they want to be their own gods, not the faithful and obedient servants that their Creator wants them to be; no amount of human striving can make us worthy of God's approval because no one can break through the circle of self-centredness that imprisons us... The miracle of [X]mas is that, by sending Jesus into our world, the Creator has done all of the work for us, that we merely have to believe that Christ is our Lord and Saviour to gain forgiveness for our sins and to receive eternal life... God sent Jesus to save us from the utter despair of living permanently in the prisons of our own making...

More than 300 prisoners have been given the best kind of [X]mas present – a "get out of jail free" card. Inmates due to be released between December 15 and January 5... [were] let out... under the... early [X]mas release programme... However, 315 other prisoners[were also] sent home early... to allow [them] to organise accommodation, look for jobs and register for benefits before organisations closed over [X]mas.

...in the past fortnight... [more] than 1000 workers... have received [X]mas presents they did not want – redundancy packages... [They] face an uncertain and stressful festive season... The announcements continued yesterday with Bendon Hickory, N[Z]'s largest lingerie manufacturer, closing its factory in... Whangarei, resulting in the loss of 86 jobs... and... Trans Power... putting off 85 staff... The Employers Federation chief executive... said the timing of layoffs was coincidental. It was an international trend... It was important people realised the industry they now worked in might not be "relevant and prosperous" in the future. The Building Trades Union national secretary... said the layoffs showed a disregard for workers and their families at a time of financial and emotional pressure. "It... means [employers] couldn't care less about whether a family can survive in comfort during the holiday period." ...[Xmas 1997 also] won't be one that many Cook Islands public servants will remember fondly. An unidentified number are to lose their jobs because the Government... has been forced to slash its budget by \$3.5 million. The cuts are the result of the Government's over-inflated estimate of \$42 million from income and company taxes... [Furthermore, the NZ] Overseas Development Assistance is to stop funding Transition Services – the agency set up to handle all jobless public servants – at the end of this year... [By the way, e]ach day, up to 7000 letters and [X]mas cards from around the world are sent to... Bethlehem, a small Bay of Plenty town... of 2000 people... The [two] post outlet staff... said last night that they were jolly but just a little weary because all the mail had been flanked by hand, a rarity nowadays.

...Although Christian pilgrims will be pouring into Bethlehem at [X]mas, Palestinian Christians... often feel like strangers these days in Christ's birthplace... Christians now make up 35[%] of Bethlehem's 50,000 people – 50 years ago, they were 80[%]. Since... Israel captured the West Bank in 1967, thousands of Christians have emigrated, mainly to... America, in search of better economic opportunities... [T]he economy is faltering... and... [this year] Bethlehem was under Israeli Army siege twice... Christians say the Palestinian Authority, which has run the town since December 1995, has treated them with respect... however... [But X]mas-time celebrations have become rowdier under the Palestinian Authority, which does not screen visitors as Israeli officials did. Many of the revellers now are young... men looking for a chance to cut loose... said... a... [local] Christian. "It's like a street party in the square, especially when they get drunk and hit on the women... It does[n']t feel like [Xmas. I']d rather stay home."

...Stray bullets killed a 12-year-old schoolgirl... and a 13-year-old boy... and at least 68... people were... maimed, blinded or burned... in the Philippines as [X]mas Day revellers fired guns in the air and set off firecrackers... [In Romania, p]lainclothes policemen kicked and punched... a group of nuns at a [X]mas Mass in Bucharest's Orthodox cathedral... for shouting slogans criticising the head of the church... for collaborating with the regime of former dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. - 1997

Political correctness puts Santa on run... According to two Jewish families in the Virginian town of Kensington, just outside Washington, Old Saint Nick is a symbol of religious intolerance, a sinister presence whose yearly visits make them feel "deeply uncomfortable". That was enough for Kensington's city fathers, who banished the jolly man from the annual tree-lighting ceremony outside City Hall. Nor is Santa welcome in state

Government offices in Arizona, where an official edict banned all workplace displays of Yuletide sentiment. No... cards... nativity scenes, not even tinsel is being tolerated. According to [the] assistant attorney-general... those traditional trappings of the season exhibit a callous indifference to the feelings of minority religions... In Silverton, Oregon, and Sarasota Springs, New York, high school teachers voted to ban their students' [X]mas-themed artwork, one enlightened educator even going so far as to liken sleighs, elves and red-nosed reindeers to the fiery crosses of the Ku Klux Klan. Absurd? Indeed it is, but things are even worse in Minnesota, where one high school suspended two students for wearing red and green scarves and a second prohibited flame-hued poinsettias in the mistaken belief that they, too, were a sacred Christian symbol... Meanwhile, at the Pentagon, helicopter crews are warned against flying Santa to carol concerts and tree-lightings – something the military had done for years as a public relations exercise. Any pilots who disobeyed the order, the generals warned, would find disciplinary charges in their stockings. To be fair, Santa should have seen it coming. He was, after all, but a secular substitute for the Christ Child, who was long ago driven from public view. Blame the US Constitution for that, since it demands a total and absolute separation of church and state... This is, we are told, the age of tolerance and inclusion, an enlightened period in mankind's history when minority views, beliefs and cultural norms must not be judged by the yardstick of an intolerant and oppressive majority. Yet here is a revered tradition... being dismantled without apparent right of appeal by those for whom [Xmas] means more than an opportunity to brandish credit cards in a binge of conspicuous consumption. "In plain English," writes [a] US *News and World Report* columnist... "the term inclusion has come to mean exclusion". In America, he continues, it is now the unassailable right of "the most sensitive person in town to set policy". All it takes is but a couple of dissident voices. So here is a possible solution, one that comes by way of Japan... A decade or so ago, in an arresting display of cultural cross-pollination, a Tokyo department store marked [X]mas by taking a life-size Santa, nailing him to a cross and then giving the grotesque collage of confused Christianity pride of place in the toy department. Perhaps America should follow suit. If you plan to crucify [X]mas, might as well make a thorough job of it.

...A[n]... incensed... primary school principal in Wales has banned a [X]mas disco after the... angelic-looking youngsters, aged 11 and under, belted out a course version of the... Jingle Bells ditty to a visiting Santa... But parents have accused [the principal] of overreacting...

Teacher violates Santa clause... Telling a class of 6-year-olds that Santa isn't real has turned an A[US]n teacher into a national pariah. [The r]elief teacher... on her first day in class... was reading a [X]mas story to her wide-eyed pupils last week when she interrupted the tale to announce: "You do know, kids, he's not real." There was more to come – apparently it is parents who deliver all those presents. When all those wide eyes arrived home brimming with tears, the parents were up to Corowa Public School faster than you can say, "Ho, ho, ho". The school just as swiftly passed the Santagate issue on to the state Education Department. A department spokesman said [the teacher] would not be returning to the school and was receiving counselling. The department has no formal position on the reality of Santa, he added.

...A new book uses quantum physics and computer technology to establish what every child already knows – Santa Claus does exist... *Can Reindeer Fly: The Science of Christmas...* takes up the sticky problem of how Santa manages to deliver presents to the world's 2.1 billion children... [B]y starting at the International Date Line and flying counter to the Earth's rotation, Santa actually has 48 hours to complete rounds. Time also slows down for the man in red because he moves so quickly... [The] American author... says Nasa has speculated that [Santa] picks up electromagnetic signals from children's brains. Scientists believe the sleigh is built of materials still beyond our comprehension and is powered by fuels yet to be discovered... [When people start talking about Santa, you can at least be sure of one thing – the season of the X]mas bash is here. All that is left to do is raise the glass and get merry at the boss' expense. That's if the company is still forking out. These days, big and flash is out of kilter with some corporates, which have scaled back to lower-key celebrations and stay-home venues. The [X]mas bash hasn't exactly crashed but for some the holly has gone limp under the heat of economic recession. Where once the spirit of [X]mas was top shelf, it is now more likely to run to beer and wine specials at the wholesalers – if you're lucky. TV3 forged ahead with its annual knees up for advertising and media contacts but the number invited this year was chopped in half. Despite the cutback, the "sales party" flew in the face of recession. Decadence of the Greek and Roman variety was the theme and togas abounded... No depravity, however, for the staff and their families. Parties are held in marquees at Christmas in the Park concerts in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Tellyland rival TVNZ was also somewhat muted... But some bosses are steadfastly ignoring gloom-mongering and partying up large.

...A Merrill Lynch worker whose Hawaiian fancy dress costume caught fire... is fighting for his life in Middlemore Hospital... [T]he 24-year-old's condition [i]s critical. The man's synthetic grass skirt caught fire at the sharebroking firm's [X]mas Party at Quay West Hotel just after midnight on Friday. It is understood that a cigarette lighter caused the fire. A woman at the party was also burned... Her condition is not... life-threatening...

• A 26-year-old man appeared in the Auckland District Court on Saturday charged with assault. He was granted name suppression.

...About 40 family, friends and colleagues packed the Auckland District Court yesterday when a young investment banker was charged with manslaughter... [He] was also charged with causing disfigurement. Gareth MacFadyen... died on Monday night from burns to 70[%] of his body. His synthetic Hawaiian grass skirt caught fire in the men's toilets of the Quay West Hotel during the Merrill Lynch [X]mas party the previous Friday... [The] 26-year-old[']s... lawyer... told... the... Judge... that the incident had been a practical joke "gone terribly, terribly wrong. One can describe it as an act of stupidity committed in the atmosphere of a [X]mas party where alcohol had been consumed."

...*One thoughtless moment and three lives irrevocably changed...* If their lives had continued on course... Gareth MacFadyen would be a highly paid futures trader in Sydney or Tokyo. [His former colleague], 29, would be living, unscathed, in blissful anonymity, without women's magazines pounding the door for her story, and [their friend], 26, would be mapping out the rest of his career as a financial analyst, fulfilling his early promise as one of the best mathematicians in the country. But one Friday night... all that changed. Three days later... MacFadyen[']s parents] were taking their son's charred body home for a funeral in Invercargill. [The 29-year-old] – lying in a hospital bed with a tube for food, a pump for morphine and about to face a series of skin grafts – was the subject of nationwide tittering about what she had been doing with him in a men's toilet. And [the 26-year-old] was left living a life in which there must surely be times when he envies the dead... [F]or Merrill Lynch this was clearly a public relations disaster. After all, it is a company with a prescribed set of values, among them, "respect for the individual..." and "no one's bottom line is more important than the reputation of the company." Had this happened in America, the multimillion-dollar lawsuits would have already been filed. Certainly Occupational Safety and Health considered charging Merrill Lynch. But the law did not fit the circumstances.

...[an investment banker] is to challenge his two-year prison sentence for... manslaughter and... injuring by an unlawful act... [He] was also ordered to pay \$37,000 reparation for the "practical joke" that went wrong... at the... Merrill Lynch... [X]mas party. On a positive note, a] 13-year-old South Auckland cancer sufferer... will have a merry [X]mas after all, with a room full of gifts replacing those stolen... The thieves struck during daytime on Wednesday, walking away with their haul and leaving behind a bare [X]mas tree... The... [boy]'s mother... had worked overtime to buy her family and friends presents. Some of the gifts stolen had also been given by the Child Cancer Foundation... News of the... family's plight galvanised hundreds of people across Auckland and N[Z]. Manurewa police arriving at work were immediately bombarded with gifts and offers of help. The... [boy] was diagnosed with lung cancer when he was six months old, and when he was 4, doctors found three brain tumors.

...PLANS to recreate the birth of Jesus on a Kiwi website have been stopped by a court order. Calendargirls.co.nz – a Christchurch-based, adults-only website... [that] was criticised in October when it became N[Z]'s first live-sex site... – wanted to broadcast a live birth on [X]mas day. A former dancer... was to have got a percentage of the money web subscribers paid to watch her give birth. The baby would have been induced tomorrow if it didn't occur naturally. But the stunt... outraged Christians... The... Christian Heritage Party leader... said the live-birth plan was a "con-job in the name of Jesus Christ." ...[In related news, the US] Federal Aviation Administration has issued an official statement saying it has

cleared Santa Claus for his annual flight. The FAA said it had certified the reindeer-powered red sleigh “Kringles One” for all-weather operations. “The entire agency stands ready with its international partners to make sure Santa’s flight is as safe and efficient as possible,” said [an] administrator... She said the sleigh was equipped with features such as an in-flight de-icing system, a Terrain Avoidance Warning System required for low-altitude flying, and a special seatbelt extension for the craft’s rotund occupant. The FAA also announced that it had coordinated with air-traffic controllers around the world to... waive... landing... fees... for the vehicle.

...[Palestinian labourers are adding the finishing touches to] a fountain in the market near the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem... It will be ready for [X]mas festivities... The star-shaped fountain... symbolises the star which the *Bible* says led the Three Wise men to... where Jesus was born.

...Seasonal celebrations in Bethlehem were but a ghost of Christmases past yesterday, as few pilgrims braved warfare in the Holy Land to visit the biblical birthplace of Jesus... Only about 200 people stood in a windswept and rainy Manger Square for the arrival from Jerusalem of an annual [X]mas Eve procession headed by... [the] Latin Patriarch of the Holy Land, to celebrate Midnight Mass. Meanwhile, gunshots echoed in the West Bank... overnight, setting a sombre [X]mas Day backdrop...

The festival of Christ’s birth has been celebrated in the Western Church on 25 Dec. from about the end of the 4th c., and in the East formerly on 6 Jan. in conjunction with the Epiphany. There is no biblical or other direct evidence of the season of Christ’s nativity, and the date may have been chosen to oppose the pagan celebration of the rebirth of the sun after the winter solstice.

The fact is, December 25 is not the date of Jesus’ birth. It could not have been, since the Bible shows that at the time of his birth shepherds were still in the fields at night. They would not have been there in the cold, rainy season of winter... Actually December 25 was chosen... because, as *The World Book Encyclopedia* explains: “The people of Rome already observed it as the Feast of Saturn, celebrating the birthday of the sun.

Overwhelming historical evidence shows that about 300 years after Jesus, church leaders decided to hijack a popular pagan Roman feast day and rename it as “Christ’s Mass” to win more pagans into the fold. *US Catholic* says “the Romans’ favourite festival was Saturnalia, which ended with the ‘birthday of the unconquered sun’ ...on December 25. Somewhere in the second quarter of the fourth century, savvy officials of the church of Rome decided December 25 would make a dandy day to celebrate the birthday of the ‘sun of righteousness.’ Thus Christmas was born.” Just three days before Christmas [(‘the word for Christ in Greek is Xristos and, according to *Did You Ever Wonder*, the use of the shortened form Xmas became popular in Europe in the 1500s’)] 1993, Pope John Paul II acknowledged in a Vatican press release that the celebration of Jesus’ birth on December 25 had no Biblical basis and that the celebration of [X]mas occurred for the first time in 354BC. He explained that “on this day, in pagan antiquity, the birthday of the ‘Invincible Sun’ was celebrated to coincide with the winter solstice (in the northern hemisphere)... It seemed logical and natural to Christians to replace that feast with the celebration of the only and true Sun, Jesus Christ”... The fact is nobody knows when the founder of Christianity was born because Jews of that period didn’t celebrate birthdays. They considered it a practice of heathen star worshippers who needed to remember the time of their birth to consult their horoscopes. This Jewish view was carried over by Jesus’ disciples. “The early Christians did not celebrate his birth, because they considered the celebration to be a pagan custom,” says *The World Book Encyclopedia*. The gospel writers also reflected this belief by omitting Jesus’ birth date from their writings... It wasn’t in December, and the favoured months now are October or September... A further factor... is the journey by his parents, Joseph and Mary, to their home town to register in a census decreed by Caesar Augustus. Many historians point out the pragmatic Romans would not have provoked the rebellious Jews by ordering them to travel on muddy roads in mid-winter when travel would be arduous and even hazardous. They would have chosen summer – or the autumn at the latest.

...Astronomers may have solved the mystery of the biblical Star of Bethlehem. A powerful computer programmed to replay “the history of the universe” has shown how the paths of planets in our solar system crossed to create a bright celestial body at about the time Christ is thought to have been born. According to the programme, the “star” appeared in June of the year 2BC and, far from being a miracle, was actually the result of the “conjunction” of Jupiter and Venus which would have created one of the brightest objects in the unpolluted skies 2,000 years ago. The findings may finally resolve the debate over the exact date of Christ’s birth, which has raged for centuries.

...The carols we sing on [X]mas Day tell us that Christ was born in a manger in Bethlehem. What you may not know, as I didn’t know, is that the manger was actually part of a cave... “Conventionally we think of Jesus born in a stable, and the stable as a building, but for the most part the people actually lived in caves and if they had animals you’d keep them in a cave, and so the place where Mary and Joseph would have stayed would not have been a grand building but a cave.” That same cave is visited today by people from all walks of life. They come from many different countries and speak many different languages... “People like myself have gone to that cave constantly for two thousand years. It is a very deep, holy, spot on this earth.” ...Now even for those who haven’t been to the Holy Land it is possible to have a connection with this sacred place. How? Through... the Cross of the Nativity, a beautiful and unique cross... [E]very Nativity Cross has in its centre a stone from the Cave of the Nativity... We have the[se]... stones... thanks to the dedicated efforts of one man. [He] has spent most of his life as a successful businessman and lay archaeologist. Now at ninety years of age he still has a passion for Biblical history. In 1964 [he] was invited by his good friend... the Mayor of Bethlehem to the Cave of the Nativity. When they arrived [he] saw that they were carving rock from the wall of the sacred place because of a much needed renovation. “There were stones all over the place from the wall being changed and I asked the Mayor... if he would ship them to me and I [also] [said] people won’t believe it unless you give me a letter.” [The mayor] did send a letter confirming the shipment of the stones and in addition these Nativity stones have been documented and verified by the Geological Survey of Israel and by the Israel Museum in Jerusalem... These Nativity stones can help us focus on Christ and the good news that he brings to us... “It’s a symbol. It’s where God touched down on earth and I have a little piece of this rock to say he came, he was Immanuel, God with us.” ...“[When] I hold this cross... I feel like I’ve got a grip holding God’s hand.” ...“It’s so amazing that a little stone could do so much but it has... I feel more Christian I guess you could put it... It brings such warmth to my heart because I have him right here... on my neck, you know. It’s just so nice.” ...I cherish my Nativity Cross for helping me to feel closer to him. It is my true hope that it will do the same for you. The Bible says that when Jesus was born into the world the angels sang, and shepherds and wise men bowed down in that sacred place where Christ was born... The stone in the centre... [of your] Nativity Cross... was there on that holy night... This beautiful cross is lovingly crafted and finished in brilliant 22 carat gold, yet it is so much more than jewellery. This timeless symbol of his sacrifice and resurrection now also reminds us of his birth and his life... Look at the fine fastening. You’ll treasure the rich and intricate detail... How wonderful to finally have a beautiful piece of jewellery with meaning that can be worn by both men and women or elegantly displayed in your home, and what a cherished gift; birthdays, holidays, or maybe someone you love yearns to feel closer to Jesus. Call now and you’ll also receive [a] beautiful 18 inch... chain finished in 22 carat gold, [an] elegant inscribed display box and your Collectors Certificate, individually numbered and registered... and because of the Nativity stone inside, this cross may become, for you, priceless... This unique symbol of faith is destined to become a family heirloom. But this offer is limited. When these Nativity Crosses are gone they are gone forever... The Nativity Cross is now available in... [NZ] for only \$128.00... A contribution from each purchase will go to the upkeep of the Cave of the Nativity... In Luke’s account Jesus cautioned those to whom he was speaking that if they kept silent about him the very stones would cry out. Well, the stones of the Nativity Cross may not audibly cry out but they certainly will testify to your faith and commitment to our Lord Jesus Christ.

...at Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity... a centuries-old painting of Jesus has begun to weep just above the grotto where tradition holds that Christ was born... Bethlehem['s] representative of Jerusalem's Greek Orthodox Archbishop... dismissed sceptics' belief that the weeping Jesus was a ploy to bring pilgrims and holiday cheer to Bethlehem this [X]mas... "I don't know what this means for tourism, this is a religious matter," [the] Father... insisted... "I saw him closing and opening his eyes... This is a miracle and a sign that Jesus sent us to strengthen our belief,"... - 1996

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When... his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child... Then Joseph... being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. - St Matthew 1

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin... whose... name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed *art* thou among women. And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son... He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. - St Luke 1

...in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east of Jerusalem. Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod... heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said... [i]n Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet... Then Herod, when he had privately called the wise men, enquired of them... what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found *him*, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star... went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was... And when they... saw the young child with Mary his mother, [they] fell down, and worshipped him: and... being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him... Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in the coasts thereof, from two years old and under... But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life... And [Jesus' family] came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene. - St Matthew 2

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old... Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem... And when... Joseph and his mother... found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him... [A]fter three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions... And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? ...And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. - St Luke 2

St Luke 2 implies that stories of Jesus' divine conception are either false, or both Mary and Joseph somehow forgot he was *the Son of God*. While it seems impossible that they could've both forgotten such a thing, it is easy to understand why some early Christians would've said Jesus was sired by the Holy Spirit – it's more appropriate for a Son of God than the alternative: that Jesus was a bastard child and Mary wasn't a virgin (i.e., Mary and Joseph had pre-marital sex, or Mary willingly had sex with someone other than Joseph, or Mary was raped – perhaps by a drunk Roman soldier). The stories of Jesus' divine birth would be more believable if Mary and Joseph had named him *Emmanuel*!

The tradition of Bethlehem as the place of Jesus' birth has its source in all probability in the Old Testament conception of the Messiah as a descendant of David. Early Christianity took this view from the beginning. "Son of David" is found in many texts (e.g., Mark 10:48) alongside other titles of Jesus... The theological motif of Jesus' Davidic descent, however, did not necessarily involve the idea that he was born in Bethlehem, David's hometown. That is the case only in Matthew 2 and Luke 2. The accounts differ in that, in Matthew, Bethlehem is thought of as the parents' original place of residence, which they soon change to Nazareth because of the dangers threatening their child (e.g., the flight to Egypt), whereas, in the Lucan story, Jesus' parents really live in Nazareth but stay temporarily because they are obliged to register at the Davidic family's place of origin. Both traditions are to be judged as legendary variations of the theological theme of Jesus' messiahship, even though each in its own way assigns to his birth a place in history... The two texts, however, cannot be harmonized. They show that originally a unified tradition about Jesus' ancestors did not exist and that attempts to portray his messiahship genealogically were first undertaken in Jewish Christian circles with use of the Septuagint (Greek translation) text of the Old Testament. Both texts have to be eliminated as historical sources. They are nevertheless important for the development of Christology (doctrines on the nature of Christ), because they reveal the difficulty of reconciling the genealogical proof of Jesus' Davidic descent with the relatively late idea of his virgin birth. This last tradition, too, is recorded in only two stories – in Luke 1 and Matthew 1 – and was originally quite unconnected with the frequently found motif of Jesus' divine Sonship. Paul, John, and the rest of the New Testament writers are not acquainted with the idea. Also, it has left no traces in the rest of the Synoptic tradition, not even in the story of Jesus' birth (Luke 2:1-10), where Joseph and Mary appear as his natural parents... What underlies this tradition is, rather, the concept of the creative power of God and his Spirit, which is known from Hellenistic Judaism. This theological, not biological, motif has been applied to Jesus and, with the greatest probability, only secondarily combined with the Greek version of the messianic promise of Isa. 7:14 (in the Septuagint, the Hebrew word *'alma* – i.e., "young woman" – is translated as 'virgin'), and in this way the Christian story came about... His mother, brothers, and sisters did not join his movement at first but, rather, disapproved of his behaviour (Mark 3:31-35). Mary is, however, mentioned as a member of the Christian Church after his death (Acts 1:14).

...belief in the Christ was not inaugurated by Jesus but sprang up after his death. The first step was belief in the resurrection, based on the visions of Mary Magdalene and several of the apostles. Next, the shameful death on the cross was transformed into an act of sacrifice. Finally, with the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, the meaning of the company of believers was actualized and became the Church... While Jesus lived, the disciples shared his belief in God, in the kingdom of heaven, and the end of the world. *When he died*, they dispersed. But soon they regathered and a revolutionary event had occurred. They had seen Jesus risen from the dead. Now they no longer believed with Jesus in God, but without Jesus in Christ arisen. The step had been taken from the religion proclaimed by Jesus the man, a prophet of the Jewish religion, to the Christian religion. While Jesus lived, there was no such thing... His disciples took a first step when they began to believe not only in his message but also in him. Subsequently, they came to believe in him as the Messiah, as the Son of God, as God Himself. With this the human reality became irrelevant, except for two points: that he had actually lived in the flesh and that he had been crucified. It is characteristic that in the Credo the human reality of Jesus disappears. Its second article is a profession of faith in God's only begotten Son, our Lord, conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary. After this transcendent introduction nothing is said of his life except that he suffered under Pontius Pilate, that he was crucified, died, and was buried. After that, we return to the transcendent: he descends to hell, rises from the dead on the third day, ascends to heaven, sits at God's right hand, whence he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Easter, festival celebrating the resurrection of Jesus. It occurs on a Sunday between Mar. 22 and Apr. 25, inclusive, and has been observed annually since the 2d cent. Its date has been determined by various methods, which have been disputed; even today the celebrations of the Eastern and Western churches rarely coincide... The name of the feast is derived from the Saxon goddess Eastre... Her rites were celebrated at the beginning of spring... and much of the symbolism associated with her, *e.g.* the egg and the rabbit, has been absorbed into Easter tradition.

In a time-honoured collecting tradition, th[e] heirloom... plate... "The Life of Christ" by [an] internationally renowned religious artist... [depict]s the greatest story ever told. His birth... the Last Supper... the Crucifixion... the Resurrection... Priced at just \$55, the edition is limited... [E]ach imported plate... is... bordered in 24 carat gold... hand-numbered and... bears the artist's signature on its reverse side.

...Male models, fast cars, hip-hop music, nightclubs and basketball are among the images used to sell Christianity in the first television advertisement commissioned by the Church of England. But the advertisement, to be shown next week in central England, will not be able to proclaim that God exists because broadcasting guidelines prohibit the use of "unsubstantiated claims." The 30-second commercial shows a variety of people, all Christians, doing everyday activities... A voice-over says: "These people are doing something which has never been done in a television commercial. They're praying. If you want to know more about Christianity, why not try going to church this Easter?"

...[*What is Easter all about anyway?* This weekend, in churches throughout NZ, a familiar story will be told, exactly as it has been told for nearly 2000 years. It is a gripping story, commemorated graphically day by day in some churches during the week. Yet from Palm Sunday, marking Jerusalem's welcome to Jesus of Nazareth, to Thursday, when he held a last supper with his 12 closest followers, the story is scant. The written accounts of his life and death leave more questions than answers and, in a way, that enhances their credibility. It would have been easy to fill the gaps in the narrative with some creative licence. The Gospels were written by and for those who believed Jesus to be the Messiah. The pretext for his execution was of less interest to them than the belief that it was divinely determined. It was the sacrifice he had to make to fulfill his worldly mission. Easter is the most sacred of Christian feasts.'

...NZers are likely to chomp through nearly \$15 million of chocolate around Easter – one of the biggest chocolate-eating binges of the year. But NZers still favour Xmas over Easter as a time for chocolate. In the weeks around Xmas, supermarkets last year sold \$28m worth of chocolate confectionery (figures show supermarkets sold \$95m worth of chocolate confectionery last year, amounting to around 6.7m kg). In the US, Easter is the second biggest candy-eating feast of the year behind Hallowe'en. Americans spent nearly \$US1.9 billion on Easter candy last year, compared to an estimated \$2b at Hallowe'en, \$1.4b at Xmas and just over \$1b around Valentines Day. The custom of offering Easter eggs, chocolate or hard boiled and coloured, dates well beyond the early years of Christianity. Both the hare and the egg were the symbols of the Norse Goddess Ostara, and represented fertility. In the Northern Hemisphere, Easter comes in spring, a time of new life – hence the idea of eggs.' By the way, 'on Good Friday, members of the Filipino Catholic community will gather on a hill overlooking Auckland in Winstone Park, Mt Roskill, to re-enact Christ's walk to Calvary. They will carry a heavy wooden cross up to the summit'...

'POPE John Paul carried a wooden cross at the ruins of the Colosseum in Italy as part of Easter celebrations. The Pope has not carried the cross for this service since 1994 when he broke his leg in a fall. Meanwhile, in Mexico, RCs flailed their backs with nail studded ropes in an ages-old Easter ceremony.'

...Even those who have only a passing acquaintance with Christianity know that the Easter festival celebrates the triumph of life over death... Living out our faith in a way that affirms and promotes the life-giving message of Easter in a world of so much pain and negativity is a huge challenge for all who follow Christ... The Easter message of a man who had died and then was seen alive is so astounding and so extraordinary that it has always been a test of faith. When St Paul's own community at Corinth began to entertain doubts about the literal truth of the Resurrection, Paul reminded them... of the message that he himself had received... *If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.* Those who follow Christ accept that we are either "most to be pitied," or that we are justified in our faith. - 1997

...Paul defines the basic access to God as "faith alone." Whoever sees a different access sets it in strict opposition to the path of faith... The first beatitude, in Matthew 5:3, reads: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." ...Many have puzzled over the meaning of "poor in spirit." A favorite popular interpretation understands it to refer to "stupid" persons...

Jesus preached not knowledge but faith... The strange duality of gentleness and uncompromising militancy is evident in the words with which Jesus demands faith. He can say: "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light," but he can also command men to follow him at once, without hesitation, and without reservation. To the young man who wishes first to bury his father, he cries imperiously: "Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead." He curses the unbelievers in the words of Isaiah: "Ye shall hear, and shall not understand; for this people's heart was waxed gross." He gives thanks that God should have hidden the truth from the wise and prudent, and revealed it to babes.

...subterfuge is very artful, and men who wish to be deceived are easily deceived by it... [N]othing has contributed so much to obscure Christian truth in the eyes of the heathen, or has so hindered the spread of Christianity in the world, as the sanctioning and practice of war and violence by Christians. - Tolstoy

A house divided against itself cannot stand, and the truth of [Tolstoy's] statement that no society can permanently endure half militarist and half Christian [seems to have been] recognized by Stalin and Hitler, who... realized that teachings such as those of Jesus are dangerous to a dictatorship relying on physical force... In England, and in western Europe generally, Christianity is not as yet officially denounced or derided, but it seemed to Tolstoy to have been sterilized by the Church Creeds which divert men's attention from those teachings of Jesus which conflict with the tendencies of patriotic governments. Tolstoy held that it is this intrusion of dogmas, elaborated by angry theologians at the time when the Church was first

submitting to State control, that renders it wellnigh impossible for educated and intelligent Hindus, Chinese, [and followers of other faiths to regard Christianity as anything] other than a grossly superstitious and irrational religion.

...Tolstoy: "I know that most men, including those at ease with problems of the greatest complexity, can seldom accept even the simplest and most obvious truth if it be such as would oblige them to admit the falsity of conclusions which they have delighted in explaining to colleagues, which they have proudly taught to others, and which they have woven, thread by thread, into the fabric of their lives."

Born of a noble family, he... served in the Russian army... during the Crimean War. After marrying... he settled on his estate... devoting himself to the interests of the peasantry and the enjoyment of nature. Here he wrote two of the greatest of all novels – *War and Peace*... embodying Tolstoy's fatalistic view of history; and *Anna Karenina*... Tolstoy's conversion to religion[occurred] in this period... So fervent were his belief in the practice of nonviolence and extreme simplicity in living that a Tolstoyan cult developed... By the time of his death he had given away almost all of his possessions in his effort to achieve complete Christian charity...

Reading official teachings of piety and moral theology would actually have made him an atheist, he said, if he had not independently found his way to faith – a naive faith – in Christ's actual message... Tolstoy's conversion had occurred when he realized that Christ's declaration "Resist not Evil" (Matt. 5:39) meant what it said. This was a revelation to him because he had always been taught that Christ's laws were not practical, and so must be interpreted – in effect, silently circumvented... Tolstoy [believed]... that the ruling class everywhere and at all times is hostile to Christianity, and tends to suppress it, even in the books they write. That is why these truths have been lost so many times... The contradiction is concealed by social hypnosis, which modern methods of communication extend into private life. And the great example of such hypnosis is in the preparation of whole peoples for war. (He cites the effect of military parades – so dear to Russian czars – and the selling of toy soldiers for middle-class children to play with.) ...The German kaiser, "this miserable sick man who has lost his mind from the exercise of power," is the *enfant terrible* of European politics who reveals the mania that others discreetly conceal. And yet men today pride themselves on "that high degree of culture on which European civilization now stands, with its Krupp guns, smokeless powder, the colonization of Africa, the government [subjection] of Ireland, parliament, journalism, strikes, and the Eiffel Tower." Tolstoy contests the American Colonel Ingersoll, who said that Christ's teaching is no good today, since it does not harmonize with our industrial age. Tolstoy reverses the proposition: since Christianity is the abiding measure of our lives, it is industrial civilization we should get rid of, together with its attendants, science, art, and theology. Unbelievers are deceived by science, as believers are deceived by the churches... [T]he fifteenth-century Bohemian Chalicky... denounced the adoption and adaptation of Christianity for state purposes by... using the metaphor of fishing: The[re]... larger fish, like emperors, tore their way out of Christ's dragnet, and through the holes they made lesser folks followed. - PROPHETS OF A NEW AGE

In... *The Net of Faith*... Chelcicky some four centuries ago had put forward the... [notion of] true and false Christianity... A Christian, according to Chelcicky, not only cannot be... a soldier... a ruler or... take any part in the government... he[also] cannot... be a merchant, or even a landowner... This book is one of the few exposing official Christianity that have survived the *autos-da-fe*. All such books, which were pronounced heretical, were burnt, together with their authors, so that ancient works exposing the errors of official Christianity are very rare.

Around my town you see 4WDs with bumper stickers saying "Take My Gun Lose My Vote." There is also a ute with a bumper sticker saying rude things about barcodes. I know the man who owns that ute. He says the barcode on the Weetbix packet is a sign that the Devil is coming because it says so in the *Bible*. Revelations chapter 13, verses 16 and 17. "Read it for yourself," he told me. [Then he asked.] "What did you read last?" "Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – the bits where Matthew says one woman found Christ's tomb empty with one angel outside saying: 'He is risen,' and Mark where he says three women found one angel inside the tomb, and Luke who says two men were in the tomb and John who says one woman found two angels outside and then Jesus came and said: "I am not yet ascended." - 1997

Actually, in St Matthew, 'Mary Magdelene and the other Mary' found Christ's tomb empty. However, who has erred the most – the columnist who failed to check his facts before publishing an article (although different translations of the New Testament may say different things), or the people who have based their system of belief on four stories that can't agree on the facts? In addition to the points already mentioned, St Luke contains the passage 'remember how he spake unto you when he was in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered'; whereas St John says 'For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.'

dying and rising gods The... deities who, according to myths associated with them, are said to have died and subsequently been resurrected. Such deities are invariably male and alleged to be found in agrarian societies around the Mediterranean, examples being Adonis... and... Osiris... In recent years, considerable doubt has been cast on the legitimacy of the category of 'dying and rising deities', evidence for such deities being based on late Greek, Roman and Christian texts, which in themselves are ambiguous. It has been suggested that interest in this category has been sustained by biblical scholars, concerned with the background to the Old and New Testaments and interested in the category of 'resurrection'.

The New Testament – or at least, and significantly, the book of St Luke – was 'written originally in Greek' (and 'the name *Bible* is derived from the Greek word for "book"). The ancient Greek gods allegedly came down to Earth to have sex with human women and, as a consequence, half-god-half-human children were often created – a concept that wasn't foreign to the Old Testament!

AND it came to pass, when... the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they *were* fair... they took them wives of all they chose... [A]fter... the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men... they bare *children* to them... [who] *became* mighty men... of renown. - Genesis 6

The Unity of God is so clearly laid down as the basis of the religion of all prophets in the Old Testament that if the allegorical nature of certain prophecies had been kept in mind, the blunder of Church Christianity, the Divinity of Christ, would have been impossible. But the gravest mistake in human history was made only by disregarding the right principle of interpretation... The epithet "son of God" was freely used in Israelite literature, and was always taken allegorically... Even in John, where the Divinity of Christ is looked upon as finding a bolder expression than in the synoptics, Jesus Christ is reported as saying in answer to those who accused him of blasphemy for speaking of himself as the son of God: "Is it not written in your law, I said, ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken, say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the son of God" (John 10:34-36). It is thus clear that even in the mouth of Jesus the term "son of God" was a metaphorical expression, and by taking it literally the Church has destroyed the very foundations of religion.

...what makes Christians distinctive from what Jews... believe is their acceptance of Jesus as the Son of God, and not just another prophet... Jesus is unique in being both God and Man.

Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God... Jesus saith... I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also... Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works... If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. And... the Father... shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever... [T]he Comforter, *which is the Holy Ghost*, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things... [T]he prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. - St John

But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. - St Matthew 24:36

Comprehension of the nature of the Holy Ghost and of His procession from the Father and the Son is a mystery of the Christian Church and beyond the powers of discovery or the grasp of human reason.

In New Testament teaching, God is the holy God of the Old Testament, yet Jesus calls him 'Father' and, in the Lord's Prayer, teaches his disciples to do the same. Jesus also promises that when he leaves them he will send the Holy Spirit to confirm his teaching, continue making them holy and be with them permanently... [T]he doctrine of the Trinity makes biblical statements such as 'God is love' more appropriate than some of the classical doctrinal statements that God is infinite, immutable (cannot be forced to change), impassible (cannot be made to suffer), omni-present (all-present), omnipotent (all-powerful) and omniscient (all-knowing)... Christianity holds that men and women are made in the image or spiritual likeness of God... This image has been marred by sin, yet it can be remade through Christ... This potential, however, will be completely realized only in the heavenly kingdom of God, when evil and all the limitations of creaturely existence will be overcome. Meanwhile, the Church, faulty as it is because its members are still in the process of being made holy, by its display of the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit, gives some glimpses of the future reign of God.

The history of Christianity is not yet complete... This common element forms a bond between the many Christian churches that have fought each other to the death... Enormous intellectual efforts have been made to confine the contradictory flows of... [Jesus'] life and thought in a systematic whole. In their drive toward worldly order, the churches have tried, often with considerable success, to muffle his explosive power, to limit and direct the flame. But from time to time it has broken loose, bringing new hopes and fears of the catastrophe that would usher in the kingdom of heaven... His message... forbids complacency; it reminds men of the existence of a higher authority.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God... - II Timothy 3:16

Truly, You, only You are the All-Knower of all that is hidden and unseen... Jesus, son of Mary said: 'O children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah unto you confirming the Torah (which came) before me and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me whose name shall be Ahmed (i.e., the second name of Prophet Muhammad and literally means one who praises Allah more than others)... I wish to remind the reader here that Jesus, son of Mary will be returning to this world before the Day of Resurrection. He will return to become a leader of the Muslim nation... and all mankind will be required to embrace Islam with no alternative... as has been revealed in the Qur'an...

The monotheistic religion founded by the Prophet Muhammad in the Arabian Peninsula in the 7th c. AD is... regarded by its adherents as the last of the revealed religions...

It teaches that Allah has already predestined the fate... of all [(e.g., God 'knows what is before and behind men.' – Qur'an 2:225) and]communicated with mankind through numerous prophets, of whom Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus were important, but Mohammed by far the greatest.

Muslims consider Muhammad to be 'seal of the Prophets', the final messenger sent by God to warn mankind against the consequences of rebelliousness against the divinely ordered way.

That God speaks, or has spoken, to man has long been a joyous proclamation or quiet assumption of religious faith... Is the Qur'an the word of God? ...The question after all is not a minor one. If a problem were peripheral to men's serious concerns, then there would be no harm, and little cause for comment, if it went unresolved even for centuries, as this one has. But... this question is manifestly a radically important one. Those who have answered it 'yes' have taken the answer passionately. They have been willing to die for it; and what is more important, if one remarks that people may be stirred to die for many roseate causes, they have been willing to live for it too, to order their lives in accord with it, day after day, year in, year out, generation after generation, patterning their behaviour and controlling their choices and selecting their goals, and to persist, firmly but quietly – against both opposition and distraction, against both attack and indifference – in taking it seriously... It is no small band of eccentrics that holds this book to be God's word; nor is the idea a passing fashion among some volatile crowd. Those who have held it are to be numbered in the many hundreds of millions... The other group, whose answer has been "no,"... [and who also] are numbered in the hundreds or thousands of millions... have in one sense shown no corresponding passion or fanfare. Yet their persistence has been hardly less steady; and the seriousness of their rejection, not really less. Their conviction has been just as firmly held that the answer is not only "no," but is... so obviously "no" that the matter is not worth bothering about. The West's very indifference to the question is a measure of the profundity of its assurance. Westerners allowed centuries to pass without going around busily asking themselves whether the Qur'an is the word of God, not because they did not have the time or were unconcerned, not because they thought that such issues did not matter (what could matter more?), but because at heart they took for granted that they knew very well what the answer was. - Questions of Religious Truth

...born... c.570... in Mecca... [and orphaned] at six... *Muhammad* or Mohammed... was brought up by his grandfather and uncle... who trained him to be a merchant. At the age of 24 he entered the service of a rich widow... whom he eventually married... Soon after... he began to receive revelations of the word of Allah, the one and only God. This Quran (Koran), or 'reading', commanded that the numerous idols of the shrine should be destroyed and that the rich should give to the poor. This simple message attracted some support but provoked a great deal of hostility from those who felt their interests threatened. When his wife and uncle died, Muhammad was reduced to poverty, but began making a few converts amongst pilgrims to Mecca from the town of Yathrib, an agricultural community to the north. By 622 the position of Muhammad and his small band of devoted followers had become untenable, but they were saved by an invitation from the people of Yathrib, who wanted Muhammad to

come and arbitrate in the feuds that raked their community. He migrated there, and his migration, the Hegira, marks the beginning of the Muslim era. The name of the town was changed to Medina, 'the city of the prophet'. The most important act in the first year of the Hegira was Muhammad's permission to go to war with the enemies of Islam – especially the Meccans – in the name of God... ['Fight against them until idolatry is no more and Allah's religion reigns supreme. But if they mend their ways, fight none except the evil-doers' (Koran 2:193); 'Prophet, make war on the unbelievers and the hypocrites and deal vigorously with them' (9:73). Without this permission, verses such as 'if they give no heed to you, bear in mind that your mission is only to give plain warning' (16:82) and 'Had your Lord pleased, all the people of the earth would have believed in Him. Would you then force faith upon men?' (10:99), would've meant Muhammad was contradicting himself!] By 629 he was able to take control of Mecca, which recognized him as chief and prophet. By 630 he had control of all Arabia. In March 632 he undertook his last pilgrimage to Mecca... He fell ill soon after his return and died... in the home of the favourite of his nine wives... ['His only surviving child was Fatima, wife of his cousin Ali.'] His tomb in the mosque at Medina is venerated throughout Islam.

Islam The Arabic word for 'submission' to the will of God... Followers of Islam... believe that... the revelation to Muhammad of the perfect Word of God... [provides] the guidance necessary for the attainment of eternal reward...

Islam spread rapidly throughout Arabia in Mohammed's time. By 12 years after his death... it had conquered the Zoroastrianism of Persia and the Christian sects of Egypt, Palestine, and Syria.

1095 – Pope Urban urges the Christian faithful to wrest the Holy Land from the Muslims, heralding start of Crusades.

The Turks were nomadic warriors from central Asia newly converted to Islam. They invaded the Middle-east and part of the [Byzantium Empire]. Twenty years later... the Turks... established their capital only a hundred miles from Constantinople... [By 1095 the emperor of Constantinople and ruler of] the Byzantium Church... was ready to kick them out, but he needed more soldiers... The emperor... decided... [to seek] help from his brother Christians in the West so he... [sent] a letter to the pope... On the face of it, [it was] a perfectly reasonable proposition. Actually, [the emperor cannot have imagined]... the effect this letter [would] have. This letter was going to blow the world apart... [The emperor] assumed the pope would act like a Byzantium official [by] organising the recruitment of a few paid professional soldiers. This was a mistake... [T]he pope was... an ambitious politician building a super power... What was happening in the Western Church was that the pope was becoming the head of the state... In 1073... Pope Gregory [VII began creating] a... revolutionary movement that was struggling to take control of the whole world and make it truly Christian... Gregory's successor, Urban, was carrying on the good work, and then the emperor's letter, as it were, fell into his lap. The pope decided to use [the] letter as an excuse for creating his own army and conquering the East... There had been holy wars before but this was new – a fighting pilgrimage... "When the pope talked about liberating the Holy Land, what he meant was bringing them under the power of the... Western Church. Now you could well say that this is not a very religious exercise. After all, Jesus told his followers to love their enemies not to exterminate them." Jesus' words were, of course, a problem for all Christian knights in any case... "Whereas in 1066 the soldiers who fought at Hastings had to do penance for their slaughter... what the pope was proposing was war as a penance... war which assisted a man towards salvation... This was a completely... radical idea which seems to have come from the mind of the pope because... I can think of no precedent in Christian history for that... and what is[more] amazing is the way people responded to it." ...One thing is obvious. The Church had a power over people that it didn't really understand... [The unofficial First Crusade was the *Pilgrims Crusade*.] Each pilgrim was to wear a cross to show that they had taken the vow to reach Jerusalem. They would be excommunicated if they turned back... [Upon reaching Turkey] they made a base camp... and from there they set about their God-given mission to torture and massacre the locals... The only snag was that most of the local inhabitants in those days were actually Christians – though I don't suppose the crusaders could be expected to tell the difference. Unfortunately, few members of the Pilgrim's Crusade were adept in the art of warfare and, apparently, they were themselves 'slaughtered by the first Muslim army they encountered.' The next crusade, officially the First, was better organised and more blood-thirsty... In mid-winter of the year 1098 [a] small town... 300 miles north of Jerusalem... was invaded by cannibals. Men who had marched two thousand miles[in two years] to do good in the name of Christ. "...our troops boiled pagan adults in cooking pots. They impaled children on spits and devoured them grilled." ...This was holy slaughter. This was what the crusade was about. After two years of hell they had become, in their own eyes, the instruments of the Last Judgment, and if they killed Christians as well as Muslims, so be it... [Previously,] the crusade had arrived at the... important enemy stronghold... Antioch. It had a tremendous symbolic resonance. It was the place where the word Christian had been invented. By the time of the crusade, however, the city had fallen under Turkish rule [and the crusaders] were locked out. The sight of Antioch must have been staggering to the crusaders. Its walls stretched... 25 miles round the city... [G]uarded by 400 towers[it was]... regarded as virtually impregnable. However, the crusaders decided to surround the city and starve it out. But how do you surround 25 miles of wall and... starve out a city when there's actually more food being grown inside than out? ...The siege of Antioch dragged on interminably... The besiegers... [began] dying in large numbers from disease and starvation, and many of them were now beginning to desert... But... it so happened that... the captain of one of [the] towers... an Armenian Christian who'd converted to Islam... was not a happy man... [H]is commanding officer had fined him particularly heavily for hoarding grain and also, according to some reports, had seduced [his] wife. So as you can imagine [the captain] was pretty pissed off... [H]e started carrying out negotiations secretly with [the crusaders] through a window in the tower... [and] was finally persuaded to open the window and let in a crack squad... That night 60 knights slipped in... 60 was quite enough to open the gate... It was the greatest victory yet for the crusaders but their celebrations were short lived. The streets were still wet with blood when a great Turkish army surrounded the walls. The Turkish emirs of the Middle-east had finally combined forces. The besiegers became the besieged... [and also] found what a thorough job they had done in starving the city out... Their only hope was a rescue army from Byzantium, but [one deserter] on his way home told the emperor the crusaders were already dead, so the rescue army never came... They were cut off, dying alone with their God. The ecstasy of slaughter was replaced by the delirium of... despair... [T]hen the miracles began to happen. Some... crusaders entered a trance world in which visions and strange lights filled the space around them. Reality became translucent... [One] vision... revealed... that the holy lance that pierced Christ was buried in the Cathedral floor. Morale soared. With the holy lance on their side they could break out of the city and take on any number of Turks. Weakened by starvation... and outnumbered they opened the gates of the city and stumbled across the plain of Antioch towards the enemy. It should have been a suicide mission but the miracles kept happening. When the dust settled the invincible Turkish army had vanished. God was indisputably on the side of the [crusaders]. According to some historians, the Turks 'rode mares into battle, due to their speed, and this caused them problems because the crusaders all rode stallions'. But in fact the Turkish collapse had a more down-to-earth explanation. "There was much jealousy between the[Turkish] commanders..." The Christian leaders were just as likely to fall out as the Turks... [However, for] some crusaders there was no need for earthly leaders. There was now a core of savage fanatics convinced that they were marching under the direct command of heaven with a sacred mission of butchery... [The crusaders] were spared any real insight into just how primitive they appeared to the sophisticated Arabs around them. The red-blooded knights of Europe were illiterate and superstitious. An Arab gentleman was expected to be a poet and philosopher as well as a warrior... Damascus, which the crusaders never saw, was a centre of learning and literature. One... [Damascan Arab] had already correctly calculated the distance from the Earth to the Moon, while another had suggested that if you could divide the atom you

would release enough power to destroy a city the size of Baghdad... Doctors were already teaching anatomy, preventive medicine, hygiene, surgery, the circulation of blood, centuries before... [any Europeans. B]aths in Damascus... were open to the public before most English churches were built. What's more, they're still in use to this day, which is more than you can say for most English churches... Finally, on Tuesday the 7th of June, 1099, after three years of unimaginable hardship and suffering, [the crusaders] reached their goal – Jerusalem... They'd set off in the first place to expel the Turks and rescue the Holy City for Christianity, but they'd taken so long to get there that things had changed. The Turks had already been expelled by the Egyptians, and the Egyptians got on fine with the Christian world. The truth is Jerusalem was, and always had been, a multi-cultural city, sacred not just to Christians but to Jews and Muslims alike... [A]ll venerated the city, and respected each other's right to do so... [All but the crusaders, that is! 20,000] crusaders... laid siege to the Holy City... [When] they finally breached... [its defences, the] new Children of Israel slaughtered everyone they found. They set fire to the great synagogue where the Jews had gathered and burned them alive... It was a Friday, just after midday. Thousands of Muslims had gathered... for... prayers. They fled into the... mosque. In return for a high ransom [one of the crusaders] guaranteed their safety and sealed them in. The next day they were all slaughtered. It was here that the blood was said to run so deep that it [reached] up to the ankles of the knights...

POOR KNIGHTS OF CHRIST AND OF THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON... also called **KNIGHT [TEMPLARS,** were members of a]... religious military order... established at the time of the Crusades... when the crusaders controlled only a few strongholds in the Holy Land, and pilgrims to the holy places were often endangered by marauding Muslim bands. Pitying the plight of such pilgrims, eight or nine French knights... vowed in late 1119... to devote themselves to their protection... Baldwin II, king of Jerusalem, gave them quarters in a wing of the royal palace in the area of the former Jewish Temple... The Templars[– who 'were both monks and soldiers, and took vows of chastity and poverty' –] performed courageous service... and their numbers increased rapidly, partly because of the propaganda writing of St Bernard of Clairvaux... The Templars had originally vowed obedience to the patriarch of Jerusalem, but Pope Innocent II in 1139 placed the Templars directly under the pope's authority: the Templars thus were exempted from the jurisdiction of any bishop in whose diocese they might hold property. Thenceforth the Templars rapidly diversified their activities. They soon became a vital element in the Christian defence of the... Holy Land, and they garrisoned every town of any size there... The Templars also came to acquire considerable wealth... The Templars' military strength enabled them to safely collect, store, and transport bullion to and from Europe and the Holy Land, and their network of treasure storehouses and their efficient transport organization caused the Templars to be used as bankers both by kings and by pilgrims[. 'Some scholars speculate that treasures amassed by the Templars ended up in Rosslyn chapel in Scotland. Others have hinted at locations in Ethiopia, Spain and Canada. The Holy Grail (most widely thought to be the chalice that Jesus drank from at the Last Supper) and the Ark of the Covenant (believed to be a box-like container that held the stone tablets inscribed with the Ten Commandments God gave Moses) may have been hidden on the Baltic Sea island of Bornholm 830 years ago, according to a new book. The authors point to a find of nearly 3000 tiny, intricately carved golden figures unearthed in a 1985-86 excavation of a Bornholm field as lending credibility to their claim. The figures have been dated to AD400-600 when the Merovingians – a clan of Frankish kings who claimed to be of the house and lineage of the *Bible*'s King David – were at the height of their power (descendants of the Merovingians later settled in Burgundy, but the book quotes an AD417 work by Spanish historian Orosius which says the Burgundians came from Bornholm). The Templars viewed the Holy Grail and the Ark of the Covenant as their rightful possessions because of their bloodline to the House of David']... **The Templars were not without enemies, however. They had long engaged in a bitter rivalry with the other great military order of Europe, the Hospitalers[– or the 'Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem' –] and in the late 13th century proposals were being made to merge the two contentious orders into one[(there were other orders of European knights – e.g., the Teutonic Knights: 'founded 1190 as a fraternity of German knights of the Third Crusade, which was eventually abolished by Napoleon in 1809, but then restored in 1834 as a religious order of charity in Austria')]. The fall to the Muslims in 1291 of Arce, the last remaining crusader stronghold in the Holy Land, removed much of the Templars' reason for being. Moreover, by 1304 rumours... of irreligious practices and blasphemies committed by the Templars during their secret rites of initiation had begun to circulate through Europe. At this juncture, King Philip IV the Fair of France had every Templar in France arrested... and sequestered all the Templars' property in France. The reasons why Philip sought to destroy the Templars are unclear... At any rate, Philip accused the Templars of heresy and immorality and had many of them tortured to secure false confessions to these charges... Philip eventually succeeded in having... Pope Clement V... suppress the order... and the Templars' property throughout Europe was transferred to the Hospitalers or confiscated by the state. Many Templars were executed or imprisoned, and in 1314 the order's last grand master... was burned at the stake. The question of the guilt of the Templars has been a matter of fierce controversy for centuries, but modern opinion inclines to the idea that the Templars were victims of a highly unjust and opportunistic persecution.**

...the second... Crusade... (1147-9) failed to stop a Muslim resurgence, and Jerusalem fell to Saladin in 1187. The third (1189-92) recaptured some lost ground but not Jerusalem, while the fourth (1202-04) was diverted against the Byzantine Empire, which was fatally weakened by the resultant sack of Constantinople. [Next came the *Children's Crusade* of 1212 – when 'thousands of children (some as young as six) from Germany and France aimed to reach the Holy Land and recapture it from the Turks. Some reached Genoa, Italy, but did not embark; some reached Marseilles, whence they were shipped to North Africa and sold into slavery.']The fifth (1217-21) was side-tracked to Egypt, where it accomplished nothing, and although the sixth (1228-9) resulted in the return of Jerusalem to Christian hands the city was lost to the Turks in 1244. The seventh (1248-54) ended in disaster in Egypt, while the eighth and last (1270-1) petered out when its leader Louis IX... died on his way east, and the Holy Land was left in Muslim hands...

Crusaders committed themselves with solemn vows, and by the 13th century were granted the full Indulgence; ie remission of all punishment due for sin and an assurance of direct entry into heaven. Papal authorizations of war against Islam continued to be made until the 18th century... In contrast to the effects of the Crusades on Europe – where trade was stimulated, the power of the Italian city-states was increased, military orders such as the Templars... were established... the church was strengthened, and chivalry renewed – the effect upon Islam was relatively small... However[, one]... result was that ill-feeling increased between Muslims and Christians...

By late in the [17]th century, Turkey, ruled by the Ottoman dynasty, was a mighty world power whose sway stretched from Mesopotamia to Morocco. To its capital at Istanbul, endless caravans brought tribute from three continents. The empire had taken Crete from the Venetians a few years earlier, and now enjoyed complete mastery of the eastern Mediterranean. Where would it go next? The question was being asked anxiously by every government in Western Europe. For the Turks, there was no doubt: their eyes were on the glittering prize of Vienna... The Golden Apple, the Turks called it, perhaps because of the gilded domes of the myriad churches they had glimpsed when they first attacked the city a century and a half before. It was a bitter memory for them. For the first time they had found an enemy in the west... who could break their tide of conquest. The city's strategic importance was immense. Its fall would be regarded as a catastrophe for the Western world, and the Turk who conquered it might well push on in any direction. The warrior who pledged himself to this task was Kara Mustafa Pasha... As grand vizier, or prime minister, he ruled the Ottoman empire in the name of the weak and ineffectual Sultan Mehmed IV. For months, Kara... collected troops and supplies, and on March 31, 1683, his expedition of 250,000 men set forth, ceremonially led by the sultan. It took two months to follow the imperial highway to Belgrade...

There the sultan handed over the prophet Mohammed's own black banner, and commanded Kara... to fight a *jihad*, a holy war, against the Holy Roman emperor, Leopold I... Then the sultan rode back to Istanbul... In Vienna, all was fear and confusion. On July 7, a bloody horseman galloped in to report that the imperial army had been wiped out in a major battle down the Danube. It was a false report, but it sufficed to create general panic. Leopold I, a man who had been bred for the church rather than for war or statecraft, fled to Passau, 270km to the west, followed by his court and some 60,000 citizens – more than half the city's inhabitants... [The] commander of the town garrison... had barely 15,000 professional soldiers under his command... [O]n July 14, the Turkish horde came in view and spread itself majestically round the city walls... Kara... was serenely confident of success. Like a good Muslim, he sent a herald to offer the unbelievers a choice: "Islam or tribute." Vienna would accede to neither... The great siege had begun... Every day at dawn... shells... [from] 300 heavy bronze cannons... began falling on the city, and went on falling till late at night. Every day... the... [a]ttackers and defenders e[ngaged]... in a perpetual round of charges and counter-charges... [B]y early September, two enormous holes had been blown in the city wall, the last line of defence... [T]he garrison was now down to fewer than 5000 men... Nothing could save Vienna... unless an outside force came to the rescue. Until then... it was hard to get together an efficient force[in Western Europe]. Money was lacking. Princes who... promised thousands of men [would arrive] with but a few hundred, and then squabbled about putting their troops under the command of foreign generals. But... [the] appearance of a clear and present danger in Vienna galvanised a feeling of European unity, a willingness to forget old quarrels and look to the greater menace. There was a crusading Pope Innocent XI in Rome, who pleaded with the princes of the West to close ranks against the common enemy of Christendom. And he unlocked the treasure chests of the church to help meet the soldiers' pay... On September 7, a council of war at the Austrian village of Stetteldorf divided the... 70,000-strong... army into three units... Two days later, armed with a papal blessing, the... army started the laborious march to Vienna. The plan was simple: seize the forested ridge... north of the city, then swoop down on to the plain and hammer the Turks. Luckily, the allies got some assistance from Kara... who in his blind confidence had not bothered to occupy the heights. The few scouts he had sent there were easily disposed of, and by the morning of September 12 the allied contingents had occupied the crest. It was not a moment too soon. From the spire of St Stephen's the defenders set off rockets to signal that their last lines of defence were crumbling. One after another the columns came... as the whole allied army threw itself forward in an irresistible charge... Camels and horses stampeded, and the Turks soon joined them in a panic flight. Kara... had vowed to die fighting rather than flee, but in the vain hope of rallying his troops, he joined the rout. He did not stop until he got to Belgrade, over 600 kilometres away. He did not have long to taste the bitterness of defeat. Emissaries from the sultan came to Belgrade... and strangled him. After Vienna, the Ottoman Empire was increasingly on the defensive, withering... until it collapsed entirely in W[W]I, routed in the deserts of Arabia after its stubborn defence of Gallipoli against the Anzacs. Vienna is a peaceful city today. Fear of the Ottomans is a thing of the past. In fact, [in 1988 there were] 25,000 Turks in Vienna. But in... the... defence of Vienna was a triumph of international cooperation and a lesson for generations to come.

...Built between 447 and 405 BC, the... Parthenon... was blown apart by the besieging Venetians in 1687... In the early 1970s, Greeks were stunned to learn that this national treasure was in imminent danger of collapse... Moreover, it was discovered that less than three decades of air pollution and acid rain had done more damage to the Parthenon's few surviving sculptures than had the previous 25 centuries of war and pillage. In 1975, the Committee for the Preservation of Acropolis Monuments... was formed to oversee a major preservation effort... For more than 2000 years, the Acropolis was almost constantly changing. The Romans remodelled most of its monuments... In the third century, the Acropolis was used as a fortress to fend off barbarian attacks... Later, the... Parthenon... was converted into a... Christian cathedral... In the thirteenth century, Frankish crusaders occupied the fortress, followed by Florentine dukes, who surrendered... to the Turks in 1458. - Reader's Digest

A new movement is emerging in Europe aimed at diffusing the bitter legacy of the Crusades... a series of expeditions in which thousands of Jews and Muslims were slaughtered... The Reconciliation Walk is calling on Christians to retrace the old Crusaders' routes to meet Muslims and Jews face to face and to offer an apology on behalf of their forebears. The regional director of Youth With A Mission in Europe, a former Aucklander... said the... walk... was not an evangelistic effort... "It is recognising that awful things were done in the name of Jesus Christ..." ...The walk was officially launched with a day of prayer in Clermont-Ferrand in France... on November 27 last year – the 900th anniversary of Pope Urban II's call to Christendom to retrieve the holy places from infidels... The[walkers will] take in much of Europe leading south toward Istanbul, Turkey...

An inmate died on the 63rd day of a hunger strike yesterday, the first fatality among 1500 leftist and Kurdish prisoners fasting... to protest against prison conditions... The death came two weeks after Turkey's new Islamic-inspired Government cancelled strict new prison policies in a bid to end the hunger strikes... Police... detained about 200 people protesting [about the] death...

Hundreds of Turkish prisoners agreed... yesterday... to end a wave of politically damaging hunger strikes after the Government partly accepted their demands... Word of the deal came hours after three more prisoners had died, bringing to 11 the death toll... [during] the 69-day fast... The hunger protest provoked concern from Western allies who have in the past criticised Turkey's human rights record.

...Earlier this month the[ir country's leading] English-language newspaper the *Jakarta Post* questioned whether Indonesians may have misjudged the seriousness of the East Timor [(ET)] question. "Could it be true that there is still much room left for improvement with regard to the protection of human rights?" the paper said... Two decades of consistent international condemnation and the refusal of the U[N] to recognise E[T] as part of Indonesia may be taking its toll... Even [the] President... who ordered the 1975 invasion of the former Portuguese colony, has given indications that he is uncomfortable with the E[T] problem.

...[NZ]'s handling of the East Timor situation has been marked by political gutlessness... There has always been a school of thought which coldly argues that moral considerations have no place in foreign policy. Such arguments are promoted in this country about Indonesia although that country has inflicted on E[T] the worst slaughter in proportional terms since the Jewish Holocaust... We have chosen to bow our heads in silence before a powerful neighbour. Disregarding the evidence of history we have chosen appeasement over courage, the market over morality... Nowhere is disregard for public opinion more clearly seen than in the shaping of N[Z] policy on the Indonesian military takeover of E[T]... When five Timorese men sought refuge in the N[Z] Embassy in January this year they were told by embassy officials that N[Z] did not accept asylum requests resulting from embassy occupations. This policy has never been discussed in Parliament and conflicts with N[Z]'s role under the U[N] Convention on Refugees... When protest groups burned the Indonesian flag, the N[Z] Government was quick to apologise. However, when the Indonesian Tourism Minister... fled... [NZ] after a complaint of indecent assault against him by a hotel waiter, our Government sought no apology. N[Z] has always wanted to stay on side with... [Indonesia]. In December 1975 this country abstained from the U[N] General Assembly resolution condemning the... invasion... As the situation has deteriorated so the Government support for Indonesia has strengthened. By 1978 deaths in E[T] were already estimated at 100,000. Strong Timorese resistance led to a military stalemate until Indonesia was able to obtain large supplies of military equipment from Britain, the U[S] and AUS (the country which 'not only recognised Indonesian sovereignty but signed' 'a joint resource exploration and exploitation deal with it for large oil deposits off the ET coast'), thereby] allowing whole villages to be systematically wiped out and people forcibly resettled in military-controlled hamlets – little more than concentration camps[where] deaths from disease and starvation followed... Despite strong and sustained pressure on the N[Z] Government, shocked and critical comments from the five MPs who visited E[T] in 1994, and even a petition calling for East Timorese self-determination signed by the majority of MPs... no substantial policy changes... [have been produced. NZ] continues to carry out defence exercises with the Indonesian military. This is a military that commits atrocities not only in E[T] but across the Indonesian nation. These have been well documented. Such stubbornness also resulted in the shameful refusal of the National Government to advocate forcefully the

case of [aid worker] Kamal Bamadhaj, the son of [a NZ woman, who was] murdered by an Indonesian soldier at the time of the 1991 Dili massacre. Such was the outcry that the Indonesians sent the officer in overall command... to the U[S]. There a District Court judge awarded [Kamal's mother] \$US14 million in damages against the general. There are no legal means of enforcing the awards and the Indonesian Government refuses to pay. The [NZ Foreign Affairs] Minister... was approached by a delegation of four Auckland community groups... He promised... to consider raising the Bamadhaj issue with the Indonesian Foreign Minister... "I made him aware that a number of N[Z]ers have expressed their concern that the U[S] Court's decision should be followed up appropriately." When [the Indonesian minister later] responded that he was not aware of this issue[, the NZ minister told Kamal's mother he had]... let the matter drop.

...[In 1975, Indonesian soldiers in ET murdered five AUSn television newsmen. One of them was a NZer, cameraman Greg Cunningham. Days later, the editor of an AUSn weekly, the *National Times*, questioned muted AUSn Government reaction and why AUS's PM privately asked NZ's PM to try to keep protests at the death of Cunningham to a diplomatic level. The editor answered his own questions: Indonesia was vital to Asia and Pacific defence interests – Russia was still a bully then – and the US President was about to visit Asia to fly the ANZUS flag. A ruckus from the governments of AUS and NZ over the murders might jeopardise Indonesian cooperation.]

...Since Indonesia invaded... [ET] its Government has been hoping that time and the world's forgetfulness would gradually erase opposition to Indonesian rule. But the... [Government of Indonesia – 'the world's most populous Islamic country' – seems] closer neither to winning the loyalty of the territory's [Catholic-dominated] population nor to winning other countries' acceptance of their right to rule there. Instead, they have had to squirm as the world watched the Nobel Peace Prize being awarded to two of the staunchest critics of their occupation. International diplomacy over the fate of the territory has reached a dead end. There is now only one way out: a referendum must be held to settle who should rule this unhappy demi-island. Indonesia will have many objections to the idea... It fears that if the [ET]ese were allowed to vote for independence, the rest of the Indonesian empire might begin to unravel, from Aceh in the far west to Irian Jaya in the remote east. That is certainly possible; but such concerns do not negate the right of the [ET]ese to justice and self-determination... [However, the Indonesian] Government's deepest worry must be that allowing the outside world in to supervise a referendum would expose, once and for all, the full terrible story of what has happened in E[T]. The Indonesians vehemently deny the figure... of 200,000 dead... But in unguarded moments... officials have admitted to over 100,000 deaths... It has also often been reported – and on one occasion corroborated on film – that Indonesian troops have killed unarmed civilians. That most of the killing took place over a decade ago will not dispel Indonesia's fear of further revelations. Yet, in the long run, allowing E[T] to decide its own future may be the only way to begin to clean up Indonesia's reputation abroad... With a population still under 900,000 and few educated people, an independent E[T] would undoubtedly struggle. But... [there] are plenty of other small states dotted around the Pacific Ocean which manage to survive.

...[after two ET] human rights campaigners... received their Nobel Peace Prizes[, they] immediately called on Jakarta to open talks on a peace settlement... "It is high time that the guns of war are silenced in E[T], once and forever..." said [one of the recipients, a RC bishop]. The Nobel Committee chairman... called E[T]... "the forgotten conflict... There have been so many other [international] interests and regards to attend to, and E[T] is so small. Rarely has the cynicism of world politics been more clearly demonstrated. Of a population of between 600,000 and 700,000, nearly 200,000 have died as the direct or indirect result of the Indonesian occupation." ...the Indonesian Foreign Minister... said... [their] statements... were "full of misrepresentations, half-truths and even lies."

...The Bishop of E[T]... has denied controversial anti-Indonesian comments attributed to him in a German magazine. As he made his denial at a news conference in his office about 500 [ET]ese youths staged a brief protest outside. They waved banners and shouted "Free E[T]." ...Inside the office, [the] Bishop... said that an article which quoted him as saying that Indonesian soldiers treated E[T]ese like "scabby dogs" and "slaves" was distorted. "I hereby state that my interview has been heavily manipulated..." ...But one of the protesters outside said: "The soldiers treat us badly. Everything the bishop said in *Der Spiegel* is true." On Sunday [the] Bishop... blessed the giant statue of Jesus Christ that the Indonesian Government built with money from the national airline, Garuda. The... statue, the largest of Christ outside Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, has angered some of the E[T]ese. Many residents say it was conceived as a tourist attraction rather than a religious monument. - 1996

SINCE last year [the bishop] has been made to confront a calculated Indonesian insult every morning. As he says Mass in the tiny chapel, he faces the east and a window that naturally takes his gaze to a giant statue of Christ the King on a headland a few kilometres out of town... Built... [for] \$2.3 million... the... statue was Jakarta's response to claims that E[T] was being Islamised. And, in a calculated act of political symbolism, it is precisely 27 metres tall, one metre for each of the 27 provinces of Indonesia, with E[T] being the 27th. But already the new road around the headland is collapsing into the sea and sections of the huge plinth on which the statue stands appear to be giving way... [By the way, as the bishop] left Dili on Tuesday on a trip to the Vatican and the [US, 'the former Governor of ET confirmed earlier reports of the execution of wounded prisoners from the Santa Cruz incident.']

...the RC bishop and co-Nobel Peace Prize recipient] has witnessed hell on earth... Screams and bursts of automatic gunfire drew him from his home into the thick of the Santa Cruz massacre in November 1991. That day the Indonesian military gunned down up to 400 young [ET]ese who had been protesting at the death in detention of a young student activist. There is no precise death toll: [the bishop] says he has a list of 271 names... An official Indonesian inquiry found that only 50 had died... When [he] was appointed apostolic administrator of Dili in 1983 the Vatican congratulated itself on a "safe" appointment and Jakarta was grateful... The man [he] replaced had been sacked by the Vatican because of his close ties to the resistance... But the local clergy were disgusted and dealt [their new bishop] a snub rarely matched in modern church history – not one of the 39 priests in the diocese would attend the ceremony to mark his appointment... [– even though] the church had become hugely relevant to the people. Pre-invasion, E[T] was about 33[% RC]; today it is about 90[%].

...You get the sense that the elegant, bespectacled figure of [ET's co-Nobel Peace Prize recipient] is glimpsing some light at the end of a very long tunnel... [B]rought to N[Z] by aid agency Oxfam, ...his twelfth overseas trip in three months, [he]... is better placed than anyone to sense the global warming to his occupied home country... A trained journalist who became Minister for External Relations in the short-lived East Timorese Government, [the Fretilin leader] fled before the 1975 Indonesian invasion and annexation, and has spent the past 21 years prodding an indifferent world into action... [He] said human rights abuses had escalated again in recent months, including the November [1996] killing of up to 20 teenagers involved in a demonstration. However, he remains optimistic... "The Nobel Prize has... given the greatest hopes and determination to our people, and in the end it is the will of the people on the ground that will determine [the outcome]... and nowadays in this global village you can't go on killing people with impunity."

...[ET's co-]Nobel Prize winner... reacted with rage yesterday when he saw a news release from the [NZ] Minister of Foreign Affairs... on their half-hour talk. [The minister] said that ...[his] Government no longer viewed the Indonesian occupation of E[T] as irreversible. But he included a reference to efforts to encourage "reconciliation among the E[T]ese factions." Speaking in Christchurch, [the Fretilin leader] said it was a myth that E[T]ese seeking freedom... were divided... "If I keep reading this kind of communique, N[Z] should drop dead. I will not set foot here again..."

...N[Z]'s decision to no longer treat Indonesia's annexation of E[T] as "irreversible" has angered A[US], according to leaked cables between Canberra and the A[US]n High Commission in Wellington. A[US]'s anger, revealed as [its PM] prepares for his first visit as P[M to NZ] this

weekend, was fuelled both by the potential diplomatic difficulties it posed for Canberra and the fact that it became public without transtasman consultation... [T]he cable said: "...Please approach the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade at a senior level to seek a read-out on current N[Z] policy on E[T]. If the thrust of the press reports is confirmed, we would like you to register our displeasure at the failure of the N[Z]ers to keep us abreast of their thinking on what they know is an important issue for us." ...A[US]n policy continues to accept the irreversibility of the annexation and the de jure recognition it gave to Indonesian occupation in 1979... [In addition, the two countries have maintained a 'security treaty since December 1995'. The UN], however, still considers Portugal the administering power of the half-island territory...

Of all the numerous myths about E[T, writes the]... first secretary and head of information at the Embassy of Indonesia, Wellington... none is more malicious and misleading... [than calling it] the worst "genocide" since the Jewish Holocaust. The inclination by some to rewrite history will certainly not end the turmoil that started when Portugal abandoned its former colony to civil war in 1975... Indonesia's detractors often fail to recognise the fact that many E[T]ese died as a result of the Fretilin reign of terror and many also forget that the chaotic situation caused by civil war forced many people to leave the area and flee across the border to West Timor. The hunger and disease caused by the civil war, combined with acts of Fretilin aggression, were the major direct cause of loss of life... There is no question that life in E[T] is not perfect; Indonesia very much regrets the loss of so many lives. The record shows, however, that more has already been done by the Government of Indonesia to improve the quality of life in the past 20 years than was done in over 400 years during Portuguese colonisation.

...WHEN E[T]'s leading human rights activists... shared the Nobel Peace Prize in December, it might have been expected to ease the pressure on the guerrillas fighting in the mountains. But if anything, the conflict has worsened... In early January, the Indonesians were still deploying fresh troops... to flush out the guerrillas... A wave of arrests of suspected resistance sympathisers was taking place... and another unidentified corpse was found... in Dili on January 7... [after] three headless corpses[were] found in a Dili suburb on Boxing Day... [One guerrilla] leader... believes that the Indonesian security forces are taking revenge for the events of December 24, when... an E[T]ese corporal in the Indonesian Army, was beaten to death by the crowd who had gathered to welcome [the RC bishop] back from the Nobel Prize ceremony in Oslo. The crowd believed he was there to assassinate [the bishop]... In October last year, Major Julio Fraga was killed in Baukau by Red Beret (Kopassus) troops because he refused an order to assassinate [the bishop]... THE people of E[T]... immediately report... all arrests, assaults and killings by the Indonesians... [to] the guerrillas... and often... wait... for orders as to how to respond... The grim commitment of the Commandante – they will die fighting the Indonesians until they withdraw their troops – ensures there will be no peace in the immediate future... "My experience living in the village was so traumatic," says [a man] who joined the guerrillas in 1983 when he was 17. "Most of my relatives have been arrested, tortured, killed. My three sisters were sexually violated before they were killed." ...[another guerrilla] watched Indonesian soldiers rape and murder his sister when he was seven years old... He is under no illusions about his future. "We know that we are going to die – at least we will die fighting to achieve freedom, peace and justice for our people." ...E[T] is barely 500km northwest of Darwin and ABC radio broadcasts, clearly received, are a primary source of information in the mountains. [The guerrilla leader, who] heard last year's coverage of the... report into the deaths of the six A[US]n-based journalists killed by the invading Indonesians in 1975... cite[d AUS]'s moral debt from... W[W2] when thousands of Timorese died helping A[US]n soldiers fight the Japanese... [when he] issued a heartfelt appeal to the A[US]n Government to cancel the agreement which provides military training to the Indonesians... [■ Yesterday,] Indonesian police said they had arrested 109 youths in E[T] for taking part in brawls between young [RCs] and members of... the military-backed... Gada Paksi[, otherwise known as] the Youth Guard of Integration Upholders, [which] was set up in 1995... [I]ts members receive military training in Java.

...In January of 1995 three A[US]n tourists witnessed the beating of... [a guerrilla] as he was arrested at a demonstration at Dili University. One of the tourists later said that "they were beating him so hard the police van was rocking wildly like a washing machine." For his part in the demonstration [the guerrilla] was sentenced to 18 months' jail... He was then beaten... [some more,] cigarettes were extinguished on his chest and arms and electric shocks were administered to his genitals... He was released in May last year on the promise that he would leave E[T] and attend University in Jakarta[, where t]he harassment by the Indonesian authorities continued as he was constantly detained, questioned and beaten.

...An Indonesian doctor working in... Ermera... said... that... [t]he mood among the [ET]ese in... the town... was such that any Indonesian, whatever their attitude or past treatment of the local population, was in danger – especially at night. The killing, in the town of Los Palos, of an E[T]ese couple who had openly collaborated with the Indonesians is a signal that some old scores are being settled on both sides.

...Rioting in an E[T]ese enclave was a sign that tensions had reached "boiling point"... [an ETese] Nobel laureate... said yesterday... [from New York. T]he latest unrest... erupted when about 6000 people went on the rampage after a migrant Muslim insulted a local R[C] priest, and left one person dead and scores of buildings destroyed. [□ Last night, 'in Jakarta, at least six people were killed, some of them mutilated, when Muslim rioters set fire to a Protestant church. Mobs also ransacked a RC church during a wedding.']

...A mob... burned and wrecked churches and temples east of Jakarta yesterday after reports that a Christian had insulted Muslims... "The rampage was sparked by an [ethnic] Chinese woman who scolded a number of youths for being too noisy,"... the youths were beating drums to wake Muslims in the neighbourhood early... so they could eat before fasting through the day... Witnesses said a number of shops were damaged and looted... There were no reports of serious injuries... Some members of the mob had scrawled graffiti on walls saying "Muslim power," "Long live Islam," and "Destroy the Chinese." Ethnic Chinese, a number of whom are Christians and are regarded as more wealthy in their neighbourhoods, are frequently targets of mob violence in Indonesia... Last month, four people died when a... Muslim... mob went on a rampage in the town of Tasikmalaya in West Java, setting fire to shops, buildings and churches... As well as economic factors, observers have blamed religious tensions for the wave of unrest, with almost all the violence perpetrated by Muslims. One of Indonesia's most influential Muslim leaders... said[Indonesian] Muslims... had become more "aggressive" as a result of increased contacts with their Middle Eastern counterparts. "Subsequently, Muslims here have developed a fear of other faiths... This fear has materialised in... aggression towards people of other faiths." [In related news, officials]... in Jakarta have banned parties this New Year's Eve so as not to clash with... Islam's holy month of fasting.

...[Ramadan observes 'the month in which Muslims believe the Koran was revealed to the Prophet Mohammad' – and 'is one of the five "Pillars of the Faith" or basic ritual duties. Emphasis is on Allah's forgiveness and the atonement of sins. The fast (which entails abstinence from food, water, tobacco and sexual intercourse) is from dawn to sundown every day. Muslims are also expected to live in especial simplicity during the month and to provide more than usual for the needy members of the community.']

...50 Buddhist monks desecrated a Muslim mosque in... the Burmese capital yesterday... [I]n Burma's second city, Mandalay... a curfew has been in force for a week... [because of rioting by] Buddhist monks... after a report that a Muslim had raped a Buddhist girl.

...Several hundred residents have fled from the town of Tangkal in the southern Philippines where Muslim gunmen are holding a [RC priest] hostage. Meanwhile, 'about 500 Muslims brandishing weapons gathered yesterday at Indonesia's Parliament in Jakarta demanding permission to go to the Moluccas, or Spice Islands, and fight a holy war against Christians. Horrific massacres have been carried out by both sides in the islands.']

...Riots erupted in the Indonesian city of Ujungpandang yesterday with mobs attacking shops and cars owned by ethnic Chinese after a nine-year-old girl was hacked to death. The Muslim girl's attacker, an ethnic Chinese... known to be mentally disturbed, had slashed the girl, her mother and another passer-by with a machete in front of his house... [He] was reported to have died later... In[cidentally, In]donesia will send nearly 200,000 of its Muslim citizens to Saudi Arabia for the... haj pilgrimage. The Government is charging each pilgrim 7.5 million rupiah... for the trip...

[Although 'Muslims with sufficient financial means are required to make a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their lifetimes, Iraq accused Saudi Arabia yesterday of surrounding thousands of its pilgrims with tanks and armoured vehicles, forcing Baghdad to decide they should be called home. Baghdad television quoted a senior Iraqi official accompanying the pilgrims on their annual haj as saying the Saudis had turned down an Iraqi demand that the pilgrims' expenses be withdrawn from Iraq's assets frozen in Arab and foreign banks (last year the frozen assets were worth more than \$US1.5 billion)']...

Muslim pilgrims were killed yesterday when a fire, triggered by a cooking gas cylinder and fanned by high winds, swept through a vast sea of tents near the holy city of Mecca... [where] some two million Muslims from 100 countries[have been] gathering for the annual haj pilgrimage, which reaches its climax today. Saudi Arabia's state television reported the official toll as... 343... dead and 1290 injured... 70,000 tents were destroyed... The fatal blaze is the latest tragedy to strike Muslims on pilgrimage to Mecca[a]... journey... every able-bodied Islamic believer is required to make at least once... The worst of recent Mecca tragedies was a stampede in 1990 in which 1426 pilgrims were crushed to death in a tunnel. In 1994, 270 pilgrims were also killed during a stampede. Saudi Arabia said three people were killed in 1995 when a fire swept through the tent camps in Mena. Saudi Arabia, custodian of Islam's two holiest shrines, has spent \$US18.6... billion... in the last decade on expanding pilgrimage sites... Most of [this year's] victims were from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh [- the country created 'when East Pakistan seceded from the exploitative West Pakistan in 1971' (24 years after Pakistan itself was created 'by dividing the Indian subcontinent into its Hindu and Muslim communities')].

...A tornado levelled a huge camp of Muslim devotees near the Bangladesh capital... killing at least 22 people. Officials said last night that the death count could go up as many of the 500 or so injured were in a critical condition and more bodies would be dug up as the clearing of rubble continued. Witnesses said a powerful whirlwind sucked up all the makeshift tin-roofed temporary camps in a 1 sq km area on Sunday night... [By the way, Saudi Arabia has announced] plans to provide Muslim pilgrims to Mecca with fireproof tents...

30,000 Muslim rioters rampaged through a central Pakistan town yesterday, setting fire to two Christian churches.

...The Pakistan Muslim League party... won a landslide victory in general elections this month[, and already one woman has been executed by family]... members... after tribal clerics sentenced her to death in Pakistan's North-west... for marrying her son-in-law... Her son-in-law, who she had married four years earlier, also was sentenced to death and then executed by members of his family... who disagreed with their union. They had two children... The council ruled that marriage between a mother-in-law and son-in-law was against Islamic laws. [Editor's note: 'traditional Islamic law is dispensed in a shariah court by a Muslim judge (*qadi*) - who should be a male (women aren't eligible) of fine character and sound learning.'

... 'When a Pakistani tribal jury ordered on June 22 that a teenager be gang-raped and forced to walk home naked as a punishment, stunned villagers watched without a whisper. Two weeks later, the medieval justice system is itself on public trial. The sexual assault on the 18-year-old as punishment for her 11-year-old brother's alleged indecencies with a 30-year-old woman of a higher tribe outraged the country and prompted a Supreme Court inquiry. The victim's mother said yesterday the family had been threatened by relatives of the alleged rapists for reporting the crime. Pakistan's President offered the rape victim US\$8300 in compensation. She declined the money for herself and diverted it to set up a village school for girls.'

... 'A Pakistani woman gang-raped by 4 men on the orders of a traditional village jury says she is satisfied with the 6 death sentences handed down for the crime. A special anti-terrorism court in the town of Dera Ghazi Khan in Punjab province sentenced 4 rapists and 2 jurors early yesterday for the June 22 attack on the 30-year-old divorcee. 8 other men who had sat on the jury that authorised the crime were released. The victim approached the traditional jury, or panchayat, to settle a dispute with the more powerful Mastoi clan after her 12-year-old brother was kidnapped and sodomised by members of the Mastoi family as a punishment for having an illicit affair with one of their female relatives. The jury ruled that to save Mastoi honour, the boy should marry the woman with whom he was linked. The sister was to be given away in marriage to a Mastoi man. When she rejected the decision, she was gang raped. Yesterday, police sent extra staff to Meerawali and cordoned off her house to prevent a revenge attack.' In related news, a) Sri Lankan housemaid and her Bangladeshi lover in the Gulf state of Abu Dhabi are to receive more than 100 lashes for having an illicit affair which resulted in her pregnancy.

...At least nine people were killed and several others injured at the weekend in Hindu-Muslim rioting in the[Indian] state of Tamil Nadu.

...['Killings in India's worst Hindu-Muslim bloodshed in a decade eased last night, but the death toll jumped to almost 500. In the bloodiest incident overnight, a mob burned 2 people alive. Police opened fire to disperse the attackers, killing one. Many of the dead were burned alive when mobs attacked Muslim residential areas and shops. Police shot dead 80 in trying to control the crowds. A Government official said the toll from the rioting across Gujarat state had risen to 478, including 58 Hindus burned alive last week when a suspected Muslim mob torched a train, triggering the wave of revenge killings.'

... 'Indian forensic experts have cast doubt on police statements that an arson on a train was carried out by a Muslim mob hurling petrol. A report said the sleeping car in which 59 Hindus were burned alive was set on fire inside. The pendulum of blame has swung wildly since the torching of the coach set off a wave of reprisal killings in which officials say at least 1000 people, mostly Muslims, lost their lives. Human rights groups put the death toll at over 2500.'

...the 80km front line of the Siachen Glacier, an all-too-real place along the border between India and Pakistan... is proof that even in an age when famines and massacres are instantly beamed to your living room, there are still some war zones you'll probably never glimpse... Which is not to say that these obscure wars aren't worth paying attention to. Beside the singular appeal of exotic locations, their stakes often are anything but trivial. A flare-up of fighting on the Siachen [- where both sides 'fire on each other on virtually a daily basis (both sides say they are only retaliating), annually resulting in about 200 civilian deaths on each side' -] ...for instance, could trigger the world's first nuclear attack since... Nagasaki. - 1997

Stinging diplomatic fallout rained down on India yesterday for conducting... three... underground nuclear tests... A[US] State Department spokesman... called the tests a "very negative development" and said Washington was exploring likely sanctions... Tokyo was[also] considering... sanctions... yen loans and aid grants could be frozen. Japan is India's largest foreign aid donor. Pakistan... pilloried the tests but vowed to rise to India's latest challenge, saying it "reserves the right to take all appropriate measures for its security." The... father of Pakistan's nuclear research programme... said yesterday that a bomb could be assembled within a week... "We are like a cook waiting for the orders." India had for years endorsed peaceful use of nuclear energy but the Hindu Nationalist-led Government which took office in March had hinted that it was leaving its options open, alarming Islamabad. Temperatures were further raised last month when Muslim Pakistan tested its medium-range "Ghauri" missile. But analysts said India's tests may have been intended more as a message to northern neighbour China. China was silent on the tests and analysts said... [this] raised the question of whether it was planning to resume its own testing... Meanwhile[, domestic]... squabbles and economic woes were forgotten as... Indian newspapers sounded a chorus of jubilation over what they saw as an expression of national pride and security. "Explosion of Self-esteem," rang [one] headline...

Pakistan's cabinet met yesterday amid reports it had already decided to carry out its first nuclear test... Meanwhile, India woke up yesterday[to] the first full day of biting U[S] sanctions... estimated by the White House at more than \$US20 billion... Governments around the world condemned India's actions... In Beijing, the Foreign Ministry said: "The Chinese Government is shocked and strongly condemns" India's two nuclear tests on Wednesday and three others on Monday... But the Indian Government... remained unmoved... and... Russia, long India's main arms supplier, remained in New Delhi's corner, working behind the scenes at the U[N] to soften the proposed language of a U[N] slap at New Delhi.

...India moved yesterday to allay global concern over the motives for its recent nuclear tests while taking steps to minimise economic damage from the... sanctions imposed as punishment. "Whatever we have done is for our self-defence," [the P]M... told supporters... "We have no intention of attacking, we want to live and let live but we want our sovereignty to remain intact, our borders to be secure... so that we can focus on

development at home.” ...[his comments came as Pakistan was denying] reports... that it had conducted its first nuclear test. It was responding to claims by[the] German Chancellor... at the Group of Eight industrial nations summit in Birmingham... The Pakistani Government says it is in no rush to retaliate with its own... trial blast but says that its security is paramount... G8 leaders declined to impose joint sanctions on India at their weekend summit.

...The Indian Minister of Defence... says India will arm itself with nuclear weapons. “Weaponisation is necessary and I believe... inevitable,”...

India yesterday demanded entry to the exclusive club of nuclear weapons powers and insisted it would not buckle under the weight of condemnation... “We are a nuclear weapons state and the international community should address us on these terms,” said the defence minister.

...the hardline Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP)... organisation vowed yesterday to celebrate India’s nuclear blasts by spreading dust from the test zone round the country and building a temple... for... Shakti Peeth (The Goddess of strength)... at... the Buddha test site... The VHP... was blamed for the razing of a 16th-century mosque in the northern city of Ayodhya in 1992 which sparked bloody Hindu-Muslim violence.

...Before the Pakistan nuclear tests... early this morning... the U[S] was still giving credence to assurances from senior Pakistani officials that a decision to carry out a test had not been made... The U[S] was... ready to offer incentives for Pakistan not to go ahead with the tests... The concern is that the Pakistani blasts will inflame tensions with India... Pakistan said before its test blasts that it feared an attack from India on its nuclear facilities... The tests themselves were announced by the Pakistani P[M]... in a televised address. He said five successful nuclear explosions were carried out in response to the same number of tests by arch-rival India.

...India wants all nuclear-weapon states to join it for early negotiations on a nuclear-arms convention... [The Indian PM said] that New Delhi will observe a voluntary moratorium and refrain from conducting further tests. Pakistan announced on Saturday that it had carried out one test, bringing to six the number it said it has conducted since Thursday... The Indian Foreign Ministry reiterated [the PM]’s commitment to... peaceful and constructive dialogue... Meanwhile, Pakistan said last night that it had recalled missiles from forward positions... [T]he missiles were deployed after... reports of a possible attack by India last Wednesday on Pakistan’s nuclear enrichment plant... News of the ending of the alert was seen as a further sign of decreasing tension...

Airstrikes increase tension... India’s sudden airstrikes against Pakistan-backed mercenaries in the snow-capped mountains of Kashmir have raised the stakes in the long-running battle for the disputed region. Pakistan yesterday called for restraint but vowed to defend itself if its positions were attacked. However, Indian defence officials said the operations would continue until the Indian Army re-occupied outposts in the remote Dras-Kargil sector... The Pakistani[mercenarie]s caught the Indian Army off-guard when they occupied a series of early warning posts along the inhospitable line of control abandoned by both sides during the harsh winter... An Indian patrol discovered them earlier this month but the Pakistanis were well entrenched and their artillery began bombarding Kargil, forcing the town’s 25,000 residents to flee to refugee camps... 17 [Indian]soldiers had been killed and 70 injured in fierce fighting. Another 14 Indian soldiers were missing... The operation spokesman... said more than 100 of the infiltrators had been killed and many more wounded... [T]he world’s newest nuclear states, routinely exchange fire across the 720km ceasefire line dividing Kashmir...

Three children were killed yesterday when Indian mortars hit a school in the disputed Kashmir region, the second school Pakistani authorities say has been hit in two days... 10 children were killed when Indian troops bombed a boys school in Neelum Valley... on Tuesday... India denied the accusations, saying the charges were vicious propaganda. A defence official said... “Are we[such] fools that we... keep hitting their schools... [instead of] military targets...?” India began a second week of airstrikes yesterday on what it says are infiltrators holed up in northern Kashmir.

...India has begun a huge military exercise... involving more than 65,000 members of the Army and Air Force in the western desert region of Rajasthan. The two services are simulating a land and air battle during the 11-day [exercise] codenamed Shiv Shakti (Destruction) that will concentrate on practising offensive manoeuvres against neighbouring Pakistan... The exercise also includes new weapon systems operating in a simulated nuclear... environment. Among the weapons is the locally developed, surface-to-surface Prithvi missile capable of hitting targets... 565km away, and capable of carrying a nuclear warhead... Meanwhile, in Washington yesterday... [the US President] said he planned to brief... [the Pakistani PM on US] efforts to compensate Islamabad for the \$US658 million it paid for 28 F-16 fighter aircraft... in 1990... but never received... He declined to say whether the U[S] would endorse N[Z]’s agreement to pay \$US105 million over 10 years to lease the fighters, providing money that could be used to refund Pakistan in part... Any trouble between the U[S] and Pakistan over... [the] jets has nothing to do with us, [our Government says]...

NZ’s] Minister of Defence... may have lost his battle to get a third Anzac frigate but he is claiming “the deal of the century” for... persuading his Government colleagues to [pay the US] \$325 million – \$200 million for spare parts now, plus \$125 million over 10 years – ...[to] lease... 28 F16... jet fighters, which last about 30 years, from 2001... then have an option to buy them for about \$280 million... Indonesia, which... operates 11 F-16As... was to have paid... \$311 million... for [9] of the... aircraft... originally sold to Pakistan... [The minister] says the F16 package will save the country \$431 million compared with running [the]19 ageing Skyhawk aircraft until 2007 and then replacing them with new fighters... [The minister] has consistently argued that [NZ] needs a third Anzac frigate... [Indeed, just days earlier he had declared on TV that ‘NZ will buy a third frigate!’] He... now... acknowledged that it was unlikely N[Z] would buy another new Anzac frigate. (● According to one commentator ‘the irony is that the US, which punished NZ in the ‘80s because of its anti-nuclear stance, is now helping NZ at the expense of Pakistan, which is being punished by the US because of its nuclear stance’...

[The] Government’s decision to lease 28 Lockheed Martin F-16s... will place it among the region’s largest users of one of the world’s most successful modern multi-use fighters. Although the capabilities of the... jets are a quantum leap above the present A4 Skyhawks, the aircraft the [US is] offering are early versions that have been stored for almost a decade... [T]hey need significant avionics and weapons upgrades to make them effective in the 21st century... But questions remained about how and when they would be used operationally... The... former head of strategic policy with the A[US]n Defence Department, now policy analyst with the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the A[US]n National University... said... “N[Z] needs the most bang for the available bucks, but beyond that there doesn’t seem to be any strategy against which these decisions have been made.” ...There are also doubts over whether the RNZAF can find pilots and other resources to operate the entire fleet. Any shortfall would be likely to see a number placed [back into] storage.

...When the citizens see those babies... greasing across... [NZ’s skyline] in tight formation... you’ll hear... cries of... pride... [over] the... gorgeous... weapons of death. We’ll see why every tinpot dictator gets himself... the same aircraft Israel used to take out the Iraqi nuclear power station in the early 80s... But... the politicians have... [exposed the NZ] military mind-set... which believes our defence forces are for engagement overseas.

...Up on East Point, looking across Fannie Bay towards Port Darwin, is an ancient cannon used in the defence of... Timor several centuries ago. Beyond the cannon is the vast concrete bulk of a... W[W2] 9.2-inch gun emplacement, silent now but for the squeal of a bat colony in its cavernous basement. Around Darwin are the scars of battle... and... memorials to air-raid victims... Economic crisis, bloody turmoil in Indonesia and the fraying of Malaysia’s political and social fabric have heightened a sense of vulnerability in [AUS]... The lessons of Darwin have never been forgotten, and are being applied now in a vast shift of military power to northern A[US] and the building of an electronic web reaching out to seas to make sure that the continent will not be surprised again. It is here, where A[US] juts into Asia, that Canberra’s perception of N[Z]’s defence policy moves into sharp focus... While the defence relationship with N[Z] is listed alongside the U[S] alliance as “among [AUS]’s most important strategic assets” and political leaders continue to affirm its importance, there is a belief among many in the A[US]n defence Establishment that

N[Z] increasingly does not represent value for money. At its strongest, this view holds that N[Z] is becoming a liability... And there is undeniable pique that Wellington opted for[US] F-16 fighter aircraft rather than another Anzac frigate... The decision not to buy a third Anzac frigate[, which would've meant]... more business for A[US]n shipyards, and an effective addition to an Australasian fleet should an emergency arise... has hardened anger and resignation: some argue that we should simply be cast adrift, others that we will be anyway as the technological and logistical gap between the two defence forces widens.

...when[the] ousted politician... was being tried for corruption, the courtroom resounded with so much graphic sexual detail that it shocked many Malaysians. Now that the former Deputy P[M] is going to be tried for... sodomising his family driver in 1992... many Malaysians shudder at how sordid this trial could get... Despite Malaysia's Western influences and booming development, the society remains conservative, and sodomy is a crime. Among Muslims, promiscuity is taboo, and open discussions of sex are rare... No movie is screened until censors have snipped out even hints of nudity [or] sexual language... and... [there's no] sex education in schools... But since November, Malaysian newspapers have published page after page of lurid testimony about how... Malaysia's second most powerful man... performed the alleged homosexual acts. Malaysians were probably even more shocked about this than Americans were by vivid details they read about... [their President]'s affair... during his impeachment debate.

...Operation Desert Fox... [- the third US offensive against Iraq -] is drawing growing international flak... [However, the US has] vowed to bomb on, saying their strikes are "surgical" and aimed at Iraqi military facilities. The death toll after a second-round of night-time shelling of the Iraqi capital has risen to at least 25, with about 75 injured. No Americans, or the British who have joined in the attack, have been killed... US defence officials said it would take several days to work through their target list... [The US President], who faces his delayed impeachment vote today, rejected Republican claims that the attacks were a bid to avoid his day of reckoning over the... sex-and-lies scandal. The attacks were "absolutely the right thing to do" to punish Iraq for ending cooperation with U[nscom] weapons inspectors, he said... [But] a former member of... Unsc... also accused the [US] Administration... of a *Wag The Dog* approach, referring to a [recently released] fictional film depicting the artificial creation of a war with Albania to deflect attention from the president's personal problems... The bombings have bitterly divided the five permanent members of the [UN] Security Council, leaving them unable to reach any conclusions as long as the attacks continue. Russia... which has recalled its ambassadors to Washington and London... called on the [UN] - already bypassed in the leadup to the air strikes - to call a halt to the bombing of Baghdad. It says it is reconsidering its links with the Western defence alliance... China called for an immediate halt to the raids... France disapproves of the attacks but has also criticised Iraq for its actions.

...a senior lecturer in chemical engineering at the University of Auckland... ate his breakfast yesterday morning while he and his wife... watched the city they once called home go up in flames... [T]he images of Baghdad being pounded by cruise missiles from [US] and British aircraft are terrifying, even though they now live half a world away from the war zone. [He still] has a widowed mother and three siblings in Baghdad; [she] a large extended family. They hunger for news of their loved ones, but have not been able to get through to them since the bombardment began on Thursday morning... The telephone lines, they suspect, have been cut by a Government that wants no communications to reach the outside world... There [may be no phone] contact but, thanks to CNN close-ups, the... [couple, who] were still in Baghdad... [during] the worst of Allied attacks in 1991... [can re-]witness the carnage... "I don't think a human being can have immunity when he comes under pressure of war," [the lecturer] said... "...I feel very sad, not only because of my beloved family and friends there, but in addition to that I just cannot find the justice in this shelling. I suspect this is a lot more for show than anything else." ...[he] said news that a stray missile landed in south-western Iran did little for the family's confidence in the precision of the US attack... "I called my mother last week," said [his wife]. "She has a heart problem and if something were to happen to her it would be impossible... to get her to a hospital."

...[the] head of... Medical City - the biggest hospital in Iraq - said three patients had died from heart attack because of the shocks of the explosions... [H]e had instructed his patients to stay in the basement of the hospital because of the damage caused to the building and the fear of more strikes. Reporters were taken around the basement where... patients were lying on the ground without beds. One of the injured men had his leg cut off after being hit by a bomb shell. [The amputee] told reporters the blast took place as he was walking in the street... [T]wo hospitals in Baghdad were damaged as a result of massive bombings on Thursday night... [M]ost of the equipment had been damaged... [at] Medical City... "There is another maternity hospital which was damaged tonight,"... said... [the] Iraqi Health Minister. He[also] said hospitals in the sanctions-hit city were suffering from severe shortages of medical supplies and would hardly be able to cope with a growing number of casualties... [■] Iran has protested to the [US] and Britain about the stray missile which crashed into a south-western Iranian border city, causing damage but no casualties.

...Iranians [will get to] vote... in the first local elections in the country's 2500-year history as part of a package of reforms to create a civil society within the existing Islamic system... The contests feature almost 300,000 hopefuls contending for 197,000 seats in city, town and village councils.

...*Revealed: CIA's coup bungling*... A secret CIA document shows that the U[S] intelligence agency "stumbled into success" in its covert 1953 operation to oust an ultranationalist Iranian P[M] and bolster a "vacillating" young Shah... [T]he Government report, written in 1954, showed that the... CIA "had almost complete contempt for the man it was empowering[.]" ...The *New York Times*... said the study of the CIA's first successful overthrow of a foreign Government had been provided by a former official who kept a copy... CIA officers sent a stream of envoys to bolster the Shah's courage, directed a campaign of bombings by Iranians posing as members of the Communist Party, and planted articles and cartoons in the press. But almost nothing went according to plan... and the Shah fled to Baghdad. A second coup based on popular support was successful four days later, but only when several Tehran newspapers published the Shah's decrees. Two days after that, CIA officials moved \$US5 m... into Iran to help consolidate the Government they had put into power... The CIA operation was designed to maintain the West's control over Iranian oil.

...Pentagon leaders... [announced yesterday] that more than 50[Iraqi targets have been] attacked by well over 200 [missiles and]... that damage assessment... showed good results... [They] produced enlarged... aerial pictures [of] intact buildings before the raids and rubble afterwards... [The] US Defence Secretary... said an oil refinery at the port city of Basra had[also] been bombed because it had been a conduit for oil smuggling.

...[U]S warplanes blasted strategic Iraqi installations yesterday in one of the biggest strikes this year as Baghdad fought to restore oil supplies after a raid on Monday... Iraq... said repairs to a repeater station on the oil pipeline to Turkey... could take four weeks.

...The U[N] is concerned that U[S] strikes on Iraq, which Baghdad says damaged its oil pipeline, will frustrate UN efforts to get food and medicine to Iraqis... Prospects that... the flow of oil... might soon resume have faded with reports that a second facility was damaged the following day, said... the executive director of the UN oil-for-food programme. ["The US has admitted that an attack on Iraq may have damaged a UN-authorized oil-for-food link to Turkey. The US had targeted a communications facility but hit the oil-line in error. One man was killed."]

...military strikes against Iraq have heightened tensions in Cape Town, where a young... member of the militant... Muslim... group Pagad... has died of injuries he suffered while protesting... At his funeral... Pagad... declared war on the forces of law and order and said they could go to hell.

...as bombing raids on Iraq continue... UN humanitarian staff evacuated from Baghdad... told stories of terror... when an explosion... less than 1000m... [away] rocked their headquarters... Meanwhile... US air force commanders said... the B-1 bomber, once derided as a colossal waste of money and a Cold War relic, has proved its worth... Two B-1s, which have never been used against a real target, flew from a base in the Gulf region in the second wave of attacks against Iraq on Friday... The sleek, slate-grey aircraft... costing \$280 million each... [were] originally designed to carry nuclear weapons deep into the heart of the Soviet Union, [but] [suffered a number of embarrassing setbacks, including two crashes in 1988.

...US fighter jets pummelled Iraq's air defence system for the second consecutive day yesterday in a renewed effort to crush... [the Iraqi President]'s defiant stand in the Western-enforced no-fly zones.

...Allied aircraft have not attacked Iraqi targets outside a no-fly zone and they do not intend "at this point" to do so, says the chairman of the U[S] Joint Chiefs of Staff. [The]General... reinforced denials by Pentagon officials of Iraq's claims that US aircraft attacked civilian targets near Baghdad yesterday, killing one person and wounding others... "Anything coming out of Baghdad should be questioned in terms of its veracity since we have seen very little of the truth coming out of Iraq in recent years."

...*Tyrant lying in wait...* When[an] Egyptian journalist... visited Iraq during the early years of [its incumbent President]'s rule, he met the Minister for Industry. [The journalist] was impressed by the intense, hard-working, intellectual man running Iraq's dynamic industrial output. So on his next visit, [the journalist] asked to meet him again. Officials explained that they had no information about the minister and all inquiries should be addressed to His Excellency the President. When [the journalist] turned up for his interview with the dictator of Iraq, he asked about the Minister for Industry... "We scissored his neck – he was suspected of being a traitor." But was there any evidence of this, the appalled [journalist] asked... "In Iraq, we don't need proof," [the dictator] replied. "Suspicion is enough." ...In the days when [the dictator] clawed his way to power, personally shot members of his own cabinet, or used gas for the first time on his recalcitrant Kurds, the West loved him. When he invaded Iran in 1980, we gave him... Mirage jets... from France... poison gas... from Germany... and U[S] satellite reconnaissance pictures of the Iranian front lines... [H]ow did he do it? How come the man who defied [the US President in 1991] is still there to defy [the current US President]? ...and... years after U[N] sanctions that have killed at least a million Iraqis, [how come the dictator] is still enjoying his palaces and cigars?

...Israel planned to assassinate Iraq[']s leader... last month, but cancelled the operation because it clashed with US-British air attacks on Iraq. [The President] was to be killed with guided missiles during a visit to his mistress...

House of Representatives prosecutors opened their case against [their]President... yesterday, charging that he repeatedly put himself above the law and betrayed his oath of office in trying to hide his affair with [a White House intern]. Laying out their arguments in the first presidential impeachment trial since 1868, prosecutors said the Senate's failure to remove [the President] from office for lying and obstructing justice would "cause a cancer to be present in our society for generations."

...Andrew Johnson is an obscure figure in America's past, a President who by most accounts did a pretty poor job during a crucial moment in history. In 1865, when Abraham Lincoln was shot dead at the end of the Civil War, Johnson became the first Vice-President ever to take over as President because of an assassination... But in the end he... would be remembered for little except one thing – he was the first President impeached by the House of Representatives. That singular place in history has changed now that he has been joined by [the incumbent President]... An early attempt to impeach Johnson failed in December 1867, with every Democrat and a majority of Republicans in the House voting against impeachment. Then in 1868 Mr Johnson fired... the Radicals' informant inside the White House. The Republican-controlled Congress had passed a law saying that... the Senate also had to vote to remove anyone from the cabinet... The House... with every Republican voting in favour, sent 11 articles of impeachment to the Senate for trial... But in the final vote... seven Republican senators broke ranks and voted against impeachment. Thirty-five voted for impeachment... [T]he Radicals needed 36. Johnson's presidency was saved by one vote.

...A smiling [US President] strode out onto the White House lawn yesterday and vowed he would stay in office until the last hour of his term, despite the two articles of impeachment voted against him... for perjury... and for obstruction of justice... Two other articles of impeachment... were defeated. [The President] now faces a trial in the Senate before the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court with the 100 senators sitting as jurors... [The President] appealed for a fair, prompt punishment short of being removed... Conventional wisdom holds that the Republicans will be under pressure to compromise because they are unlikely to muster the two-thirds majority... required for a conviction, which would remove him from office... A snap poll by NBC News after the votes showed that 55[% of USers] disagreed with the House action, while 43[%] said lawmakers had done the right thing. [The President's] job approval rating remained high at 72[%]. Incidentally, today the President... will ask Congress for an additional \$US12 billion[, which he hopes will]... be the downpayment on a six-year, \$US100 billion increase in defence spending. That represents the largest real increase... since the Cold War build-up in the mid-1980s... US military commanders have complained to the President about the state of defence preparedness... [T]he increase would pay for the next generation of ships, planes and weapons systems and enable the military to play its part in meeting emerging threats to America's security... [Nearly 250,000 USers] on active military service... are overseas... [The President will also] ask for a 4.4[%] military pay rise... US commanders have told [him] that it is increasingly difficult to retain... top military pilots and other key personnel because of pay and housing. Pilots are easily lured away to commercial flying positions...

[The US President] has ended the air attacks on Iraq, declaring the operation a success but vowing to strike again if necessary... [He] broadcast a... message to the Arab world last night, saying the... air strikes against Iraq were in the interests of the Middle East... "...I hope all Muslims will consider America's sincere desire to work with all people in the Middle East to build peace. We have the most profound admiration for Islam..."... [The Iraqi President] had... called on Arabs to resist what he called the agents of Satan... [I]n a taped television address... the 61-year-old leader... thundered... "We stand against the barbaric ways of those who have used our airspace to launch an aggression against our people." A Gulf television station said yesterday more than 50 people had been killed in Baghdad and 200 wounded[during Operation Desert Fox]...

The West still bombs[Iraq] and slowly, the Arabs, dismayed by the bloodshed in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, are warming once more to the man who never gave in. Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Emirates, Egypt, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia – almost all of them American allies in 1991 – are breaking the air embargo by flying into Baghdad.

...Palestinians poured out their joy at the inauguration of their first airport yesterday, hailing it as a symbol of statehood. Crowds... cheered, danced and sang as nine aircraft flew in from Arab states and Europe to a red-carpet welcome... [T]he opening of the airport... built with \$US250 million... in deferred loans, was stalled for 20 months in the freeze that had beset Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking.

...A US-led conference... raised pledges of more than \$US3 billion... to help... Palestinians to build their economy and... bolster the peace process.

...More than 1500 senior Army and police officers urged Israel[']s P[M]... in a letter published yesterday to choose peace with Arab neighbours over Jewish settlements. The letter they signed was almost identical to one sent... to the[then PM]... when peace talks with Egypt reached a fragile stage. The 1978 letter launched Israel's mainstream Peace Now group whose leaders are also behind the new initiative. "A Government that prefers maintaining settlements beyond the Green Line to solving the historic conflict and establishing normal relations in our region will cause us to question the righteousness of our path," the letter said. The "Green Line" is Israel's pre-1967 border.

...*Why Israeli Army has failed to keep peace...* Those old enough to remember Britain's League of Nations Mandate over Palestine (1920-48) may feel a depressing sense of familiarity at the unrolling of events in the Holy Land. As in interwar years, and in the brief continuation of the mandate after 1945, Zionist Jews and Palestinian Arabs have become locked in combat over the issue of which community is entitled to enjoy rights over what portion of historically sanctioned territory. Palestinian Arabs are prepared to die for a national heritage that extends at least as far as the pre-1967 western border of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan... Zionist Jews are equally ready to die for Eretz Israel, the biblical land that embraces not only the state of Israel but... much of what is today Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon. Arabs and Jews killed each other over their rival claims in outbreaks of organised violence between 1920 and 1948. In fairness, it must be recognised that the Arabs took the lead, though their attacks were less efficient than the Jewish response... The task... [of] restraining, let alone containing, well-organised mobs of rioters, reinforced by gunmen... was handed to the[Israeli] Army, in retrospect, a lamentable decision... [T]he Israeli Army... excels at large-scale armoured operations. [But a]t the sort of small-scale... street-by-street enforcement of local control that is at the heart of urban peacekeeping... it... was not very good...

Israeli agents married Muslim women and raised families to hide their identities during a secret operation in the 1950s to spy on Arabs... [I]n an atmosphere of suspicion about their loyalty to the state... Arab communities were subject to military government for several years following Israel's creation... Despite full citizenship... Arabs[– who] now account for... [15%] of the population in Israel... [–] complain of continued discrimination.

...ON MAY 14, 1948... the State of Israel formally came into being. Peace and prosperity were promised for all – including the majority Arab population, who could look forward to enjoying “full and equal citizenship” in their own country... [T]hat dream of a “blooming” desert has withered into ongoing conflict and hostility... After 1948... “hundreds of thousands of Arabs... fled from Palestine and hundreds of thousands of Jews... [moved in] from Arab lands... [O]n this basis, it seemed that what had taken place... was a legitimate exchange of population.” This “legitimate exchange” – referred to in Arabic as *Al-Nakba*, or “The Catastrophe” – still continues. Today, roughly five million Palestinians live in exile, 1.2 million of those in refugee camps set up half a century ago by the United Nations.

The problem began with the independence of Palestine and the U[Ss'] refusal to accept the U[N] General Assembly's 1947 plan for the country's partition into separate Jewish and Arab states. The U[S] objected to the... role of a peace-keeping force which might include Soviet soldiers and was conscious of domestic pressure from a strong Jewish political “lobby”... The Palestine debacle highlighted two lessons which have remained central [to UN peace-keeping operations] ever since. First, the U[N] can only prevent the outbreak of war if the Security Council is prepared to act. Second, the failure to agree on the causes of conflict because of deep-seated ideological differences between the Council's Western members and the Soviet Union [made] it inevitable that, even if the U[N] succeeds in keeping the peace, it can not possibly hope to create it. At best violence might be contained, but conflict as such can only be postponed, not pre-empted... Unable to agree on a peace plan, the U[N] found itself unable either to prevent the state of Israel from coming into being on 15 May 1948 or from being attacked on the same day by its Arab neighbours. Once war had broken out, it was reduced to imposing a ceasefire agreement, monitoring demilitarised zones and supervising the eventual truce. The problem itself persisted... When war between Israel and Egypt flared up again in 1956, the U[N] set out to divide the two forces by maintaining a semi-permanent mission in the two principal areas of tension: the Gaza Strip and the Sinai desert. Eleven years later, when the Egyptians decided to test the issue again by massing forces in Sinai, they asked the U[Ns'] monitoring team to withdraw from the area, a request with which the U[N] had no option but to comply: after all, like all UN forces, it could only be deployed at the “invitation” of the host country, in this case Egypt. Concluding that the Egyptians had resolved to press home their advantage, the Israeli government chose attack as the best means of defence.

For 12 years, [the]... chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organization... used Lebanon as a springboard for terrorist attacks against Israel. Then... in 1982, [the]... Israelis invaded, pounding over 10,000... [PLO] guerrillas with artillery and air strikes. To halt the bloodshed, the U[S] negotiated a cease-fire allowing [the chairman] and his men to leave. Today the 60-year-old guerrilla is stronger than ever. His forces have reinfiltated Lebanon. He is the guiding hand behind the *intifada*, the uprising of young Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. And he has made striking political gains. More than 90 countries have either extended diplomatic recognition to the PLO or acknowledge the non-existent state of Palestine. Last December, [the chairman] declared publicly that he accepted Israel's right to exist and that he repudiated terrorism. With that, he bagged the biggest diplomatic trophy of all – US dialogue with the PLO. Israeli officials protested that [the chairman]'s move was a trick, but [the US] Secretary of State... took the PLO leader's words at face value. In the blink of an eye, [the secretary transformed the chairman] from outlaw terrorist to diplomatic partner... With Tunis as his base, [the man who]... lives under constant threat of assassination and rarely sleeps in the same place twice in a row... barnstorms the world in private jets, soliciting support for the Palestinian cause... He has been welcomed by Pope John Paul II, [the] French President... the... King... of Spain and others in the West. He confidently predicts an independent Palestine within “two to three years.” For that to happen, [the chairman] believes, the two-year-old *intifada* must continue. “You have to remember the story of David and Goliath in your Bible and our Koran,” he said. “The new David is a small Palestinian child facing the Israeli Goliath.” But that simple tale bears little resemblance to the complex confrontation in the Holy Land... Meanwhile, Israel's [PM]... vows his government will never relinquish the West Bank and Gaza and never agree to a Palestinian state on its borders. - 1989

The... Israeli [PM has tried] to allay fears about the direction of his hawkish Government [by calling] on the Jewish state's Arab neighbours to “join the circle of peace.” ...He said... his Government... would strengthen the peaceful relations that exist with Jordan and Egypt and continue negotiations with the “Palestinians.” ...Unfortunately... the... P[LO], Israel's peace partner, accused [the PM] of deliberately omitting reference to... [it. The PM] has opposed the Israel-PLO peace deals that led to Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza and ruled out giving the Golan Heights to Syria, its price for peace... [Israel's former PM] said in his first speech since... narrowly... losing Israel's election that the Jewish state must honour its peace deals with the PLO even if it did not like [the PLO leader's] dreams... “We must... find a compromise... a solution.” [However, the]... militant Islamic resistance movement Hamas vowed yesterday to go on resisting Israel... as long as it occupied Palestinian land.

...[the] Jerusalem deputy mayor... [whose] Torah Judaism party received a boost in last week's election... said yesterday that he wanted to force... McDonald's... to stop serving cheeseburgers and close on the Jewish Sabbath... “[K]ashrut” dietary laws... bar mixing milk and meat products. McDonald's has opened 25 restaurants in Israel since 1993 including four kosher branches... [In a more serious development, the PLO leader and Palestinian Authority] President... said yesterday that Israel's decision to place almost 300 mobile homes in Jewish settlements on occupied Arab land was a violation of their peace deals... The move was the first on settlements since the new hardline Government... lifted restrictions imposed by its predecessor on Jewish settlement in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

...Four Israeli phone company workers repairing a phone line near a West Bank village were slightly wounded yesterday in an explosion apparently set off by Palestinian guerrillas...

[Today is the 7th anniversary of when ‘two messianic Jews confessed to desecrating 300 Jewish graves in Haifa, Israel, in hopes Arabs would be blamed.’]

...yesterday... Israel... created an office to co-ordinate the fight against terror... Israel has been on high alert for fear of a possible attack by Palestinian militants of Islamic Jihad marking the one-year anniversary of their leader's assassination.

...The constant threat of terrorism has made Israel one of the most security-conscious countries... Handbags are searched in grocery stores. guards frisk patrons at cinemas. Bomb pits are dug outside schools in case explosives are found. Passengers are asked to show up at the airport three hours in advance... Nobody can prove that such measures work. Suicide attacks by Islamic militants have claimed the lives of 63 people this year and hardly a week goes by without a drive-by shooting... an infiltration attempt or a bomb threat. But Israelis believe the efforts are effective, and they pay a lot for the extra precautions, even though the result is often tantamount to security mania... Israeli police responded to 49,979 reports of suspicious objects last year, and safely diffused 51 bombs. In... Jerusalem alone, police investigate about 20 suspicious cars a day, which means a lot of motorists return to find their trunks popped open and a note saying their car was searched... The broad mandate Israelis have given their security forces, however, has sometimes led to abuse, including unauthorised wiretapping and interrogation techniques that human rights groups have described as inhumane. The Association for Civil Rights in Israel recently asked the Supreme Court to order Shin Bet interrogators to stop using torture, especially a practice called “shaking” which has been blamed for the death of one detainee.

...Amnesty International yesterday accused the Israeli armed forces of deliberately killing civilians "in clear breach" of the rules of war during raids against Islamic Hizbollah guerrillas in Lebanon... [after a UN] report into the killing of more than 100 civilians at a U[N] compound in southern Lebanon on April 18 had concluded that it was "unlikely" the shelling had been a mistake. The... report... pointed out that Hizbollah had attacked civilian targets, saying that "many Israeli civilians" had been wounded by Hizbollah rockets during the Grapes of Wrath operation... Amnesty... [also] criticised what it called a worrying increase in human rights abuses by the Palestinian Authority over the past two years... [In related news, a] Jerusalem court has ordered six Israeli border guards to face trial for brutality... Two policemen were caught on video berating and humiliating Palestinian workers.

...The name of the [Jews'] holiest city... Jerusalem, means God's city of peace... Jews do not need to be convinced by well-wishers of the virtues of peace. Yet a majority of Israeli Jews – 55[%] – overthrew a Government... [that]d pursued peace... No referendum was offered by the previous Administration... [E]ssentially a coalition between the left and Arab parties, [it didn't] observe the basic democratic right of letting people voice their opinion... The majority of voters... are not religious zealots but secular, middle or working-class... nationalists who had been disenfranchised and totally alienated during the so-called "peace process." ...The constant pressures of world leaders and the media on Israel to concede to Arab demands actually feeds Israeli anxiety that the world has once again given up on them. In many respects Israel is more isolated today than ever. The memory of the Holocaust is fading... There are clear anti-Semitic sentiments behind criticism of Israel's policy. France... has the most ardent bias against Israel, officially beginning with Charles de Gaulle's reference to the Jews as "this arrogant and elitist people" in the wake of the Six-Day War... Upon the Syrian-Egyptian attack on Israel in 1973 [a] normally calm and rational... [Israeli General – who] may have been ready to retaliate with means of last resort, had he had it[(n)ow Israel does possess weapons of mass destruction] –] ...cried in despair to [the then P]M... that the Third Temple was being destroyed (the destruction of the biblical First and Second Temples led to the expulsion of the Jews from Judea).

...Israeli security forces were braced last night to prevent violence in Jerusalem after Palestinians called for protests against the opening of a tourist tunnel near the Temple Mount, a site holy to Jews and Muslims... [During] a day of unrest reminiscent of the Palestinian uprising that ended with the 1993 interim... peace deal reached under Israel's previous government... youths throwing stones... [clashed with police firing] rubber bullets... No injuries were reported... The Higher Islamic Council has... called for a commercial strike in Jerusalem today and demonstrations after noon prayers... Israel[has] hailed the tunnel as an important archaeological site... it... runs along the Western Wall, the retaining wall below the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa mosques. It comes out on the Via Dolorosa, the traditional route travelled by Jesus before his crucifixion.

...A Sudanese court has ordered six men hanged and three crucified for armed robbery... [I]n Egypt... a... Muslim woman facing divorce because a court found that her husband's writings insulted Islam, said yesterday the ruling was a blow to freedom... Muslim fundamentalist lawyers... [had demanded that the writer] divorce his wife because his scholarly writings showed he was no longer... Muslim and thus could not be married to a Muslim... In 1992, Muslim extremists murdered a secular writer... after... [a] sheik declared that his work violated Islamic tenets. The[divorce] case... which has been in the courts for... three years, has been seen as a key challenge by Muslim fundamentalist lawyers who want to replace secular law in Egypt with Sharia, or Islamic law... The ruling had "no effect" on the couple because they intend to remain together... [in Holland, where they both] teach at the University of Leiden. She wouldn't say if they[']ll return to Egypt, noting that their contract was for three more years.

...[Libya's leader has surrounded] himself with a corps of women bodyguards... For his five-day trip to Egypt last week, he brought 12 "revolutionary virgin guards" rather than his usual one or two... [In 1981 the leader first] called for "10,000 girls to join the Revolutionary Nuns movement..." But the call raised protests from parents[, while religious]... figures insisted that the concept of "nuns" does not exist in Islam and that the religion in fact frowns on women not marrying... [However, one of the nuns' slogans is]: "Despite our uncles and fathers, we give ourselves to you, dear colonel." ...Egypt's *Rose al-Yusef* magazine... said Libyan girls who join the force[also] take the vow: "I give myself to the revolution and refuse marriage to protest against Arab manhood which lost Palestine and wasted Arab rights and to goad the defeated Arab male." ...[Incidentally,] Palestinian police battled Israeli troops in the West Bank and Gaza Strip yesterday, and thousands of Palestinian stone-throwers attacked isolated Jewish settlements, the clearest sign yet of a breakdown in the Middle East peace process. Ten Palestinians, including a 12-year-old girl, were killed and at least 70 wounded in... the... worst... clashes... in recent memory... [The day before], Israeli soldiers shot dead five Palestinians in the town of Ramallah... [S]kies... blackened with smoke from burning tyres... marked the third day of Palestinian rioting set off by Israel's decision this week to open up an archaeological tunnel that runs along the... compound[of] Islam's third holiest site... [I]t was not clear whether [the PLO] leader was in full control, especially over all of his 30,000 armed policemen... The Israeli Army[has] imposed a blanket closure on the West Bank and Gaza, barring thousands of Palestinians from jobs inside Israel. In Germany, [the Israeli PM]... cut short by several hours his three-day visit to Europe, and was expected back in Israel to attend to the crisis... The violence sparked concerns that a new Palestinian uprising was developing and confronted Israelis with the unsettling possibility of a hostile armed neighbour just beyond their capital's borders: the sound of gunshots from Bethlehem could be heard in downtown Jerusalem, 8km away.

...At the heart of the controversy is the Temple Mount, a magnificent 480metre-long structure built 2000 years ago by Herod... as a platform for the holy Jewish temple. The temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70AD. Following the Arab conquest six centuries later, a mosque was built on the Mount which became the... holiest site in Islam, after Mecca and Medina. The Mount remained the holiest site in Judaism but Jews could pray only at a small section of the outer wall of the platform which became known as the Western or Wailing Wall. Arab structures were built up against the remainder of the outer Temple Mount wall, blocking it from view. After the 1967 Six-Day War, Israeli authorities began excavating a tunnel... Because of the issue's sensitivity, the Israeli authorities refrained over the years from opening an exit at the northern end... into the Muslim Quarter. Instead, visitors entering the narrow, 380m-long tunnel at the Western Wall have been obliged to double back in order to leave. The decision by the present Government to permit an exit to be opened – [by]... punching a doorway through a concrete wall – means... hundreds of people can visit the tunnel every hour, instead of dozens... [The tunnel] opening... should have been applauded by Jerusalem's Arabs, since it also reveals some of the glories of the Islamic past in the city and will bring streams of tourists to shopping streets in the heart of the Muslim Quarter.

...Israeli security forces late last night stormed Jerusalem's Temple Mount... killing at least two Palestinians... after five Israelis were injured by stone-throwing protesters... Arab-Israeli clashes have now claimed 66 lives in recent days... [including] 11 Israeli soldiers... The Israeli cabinet secretary... said... that police had now closed the tunnel temporarily for security reasons but it would not be permanently shut... The... city of Hebron was a virtual ghost town, its... Palestinian residents confined to their homes after the Israeli Army imposed a total curfew.

...[our conversation went like this: "You live in a place where you think your neighbours want to kill you?" "Yes." "Why do you live here?" "God gave us this land." "Could God have given it to both people?" "No.""] Arab and Jew in Hebron share at least one thing: each is sure the other wants him dead. The fear leads to a hair-trigger tension that has made the West Bank town... one of the toughest problems for Middle East peace negotiators... Some 400 Jews... [who] see themselves in direct line with the... 60 Jews slaughtered by Arabs in Hebron in 1929... live amidst 100,000 Arabs in Hebron[, which is]... sacred to Muslims and Jews as the burial place of the biblical Abraham... [Although 'Jews and Arabs, for the most part, have lived together here peacefully for centuries', one] Palestinian... said there was only one solution: the Jews must be moved from Hebron to nearby Kiryat Arba Jewish settlement – though she'd prefer the Jews weren't around at all. "Gathering them in... Kiryat Arba, is not the best but it's better,"... "They want to kill us... to throw us out of here. And the Jewish tradition says that if someone comes to kill you, you kill him first," said... [the] leader of the outlawed anti-Arab Kach movement, [who] lives in a heavily fortified enclave of seven Jewish families in the heart of Hebron... Meanwhile, Israel's chief-of-staff is planning to quit in anger at [the PM's] handling of this week's crisis, a London newspaper reported yesterday...

"The tunnel has been around for 2000 years... It will always be open," [the PM had told cheering supporters. The chief-of-staff]... actually opposed opening the tunnel, the *Sunday Times* reported, and also blamed [the PM] for not heeding his warnings that Palestinian anger was rising. The Palestinian economy has all but collapsed under a seven-month sealing of Palestinian lands after a deadly series of bus bombings in Israel carried out by Islamic militants. Anger has also mounted... [because the PM] has stalled on commitments made by his predecessors... Both the [US and the UN] were trying to arrange a meeting between [the Israeli PM] and Palestinian President... to avert more bloodshed.

...Israel and the PLO, moving back from the brink, [have] agreed at a U[S]-mediated meeting to hold intensive talks on how to implement a long-delayed troop redeployment from the... town of Hebron... [T]he Hebron committee would meet at the Erez crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip. Other committees on civilian, economic and security matters would also be activated, negotiators said... Meanwhile, a leading Israeli human rights group yesterday issued a scathing indictment of systematic Israeli violence towards Palestinians. B'Tselem levelled its attack against the backdrop of recent police beatings of Arabs, a symbolic fine imposed on soldiers who violated "open-fire" orders in killing a Palestinian and High Court rulings allowing the use of force in interrogations... [The] group said that Israeli soldiers "humiliated" Palestinian women by forcing them to strip naked during raids on their homes in... Hebron last month... In one case... [two] pregnant women were beaten as they stripped. One, seven months pregnant, was beaten in the stomach...

Lieutenant-Colonel Rabin's orders were explicit: "The inhabitants of Lydda must be expelled quickly without attention to age." The previous day more than 250 of these inhabitants had died at the hands of the soldiers to whom the orders were issued. Nearly 50 years later our television screens showed the descendants of these... soldiers firing into crowds of rioting Palestinians from the comfort of helicopter gunships. The expulsion orders were issued on July 12, 1948, some six months after the U[N] had voted for the partition of Palestine, then under a British mandate. As a result of the order 50,000 to 60,000 Palestinians were forced to leave their homes in Lydda and the neighbouring town of Ramle. Many civilians died as the Haganah, which would soon become the Israeli Defence force, stamped out all resistance to their occupation of the town[s].

...Thousands of Islamic activists, some of them masked and brandishing rifles, rallied in Nablus yesterday to commemorate militants killed... and to reaffirm their opposition to peace accords with the Jewish state. - 1996

An Israeli human rights group says that 1479 Palestinians have been killed by Israelis... since the outbreak of the intifadeh... All but 133 were killed by the Army, said the B'Tselem... Most soldiers who killed Palestinians were not punished by the Army... "In most of the instances in which Palestinians were killed by Israeli Army fire, Israeli soldiers' lives were not in danger, although the Army... has not admitted this. Despite this, up to now, soldiers had been brought before the law in only 55 cases and only 19 were convicted." ...B'Tselem also said the Army had destroyed 1800 Palestinian homes built without the proper permits and another 447 as punishment for crimes... The intifadeh... marked its 10th anniversary this week. In that time 256 Israeli civilians and 127 Israeli soldiers had been killed by Palestinians...

Palestinian police are holding several suspects in the *death by torture* of a man in Palestinian custody, said to be the eleventh Palestinian to die after being tortured in detention. His death sparked a new debate over the human rights record of the Palestinian Authority... [■ NZ] is considering inviting [the authority's President] for an official visit. But the Palestinian leader's insistence on being surrounded by pistol-packing bodyguards could jeopardise the visit. The A[US]n deputy leader... issued an invitation to [the President] last week.

...Israel and the Palestinians are preparing to pull up chairs at the peace table, but an uninvited guest is casting a long shadow – the radical Islamic group Hamas. Even as the peace talks moved towards resumption following a bitter six-month breakdown, one of Hamas' founding members dismissed any hope for their success. "There is no future for us in negotiations... They will lead to nothing." The hard-line rhetoric... underlines the intractability of the conflict not only between Hamas and Israel, but between Hamas and Palestinians who seek peace... Hamas – the Arabic acronym for Islamic Resistance Movement – came into being in 1987, as fierce but scattered clashes were coalescing into the Intifadeh... In those tumultuous years, the group's radical agenda and street-fighting style swiftly found a following... In response, [the]... Palestinian Authority launched a crackdown on Hamas, rounding up activists and shutting down more than a dozen Hamas-affiliated institutions in the West Bank and Gaza. That move was cited by the Israeli P[M]... as a preliminary but crucial step in restarting the peace talks.

...[the Israeli PM's] closest political adviser... resigned yesterday... As chief of staff, he was widely viewed as the right-wing leader's political point man within the Likud[Party] and coalition Government... He was[also] widely seen as the moving force behind... a party mutiny over the perceived attempt by [their leader] to grab more power... Earlier yesterday... [the PM, guarded] by 1000 police, including sharpshooters stationed on... roof tops... paid a defiant solidarity visit to right-wing Jewish settlers in east Jerusalem's Old City... [He] stopped briefly in the alleyway where Gabriel Hirshberg, aged 26, was killed by automatic rifle fire last week in an ambush by suspected Palestinian militants. Police ordered all shops closed and kept Arab residents in their homes during the tour. [The PM] then addressed the right-wing seminary where Mr Hirshberg studied... declaring: "We intend to continue expanding our sovereignty in all parts of Jerusalem and to let Jews live everywhere." ...His fervent show of support for the settlers flew in the face of rising US frustration over his refusal to accept... a final peace agreement...

The snare drums began rolling this week as [the Israeli PM] stepped out on to the high wire for another of his breathtaking acts... Holding up one end of the wire were moderate ministers, principally[the] Foreign Minister... who wanted [the PM] to inform the Americans... waiting in Paris for him... that Israel would pull back from... 12[%] of the West Bank to meet Washington's demands. Holding up the other end were hardline ministers backing[the] Infrastructure Minister... who wanted [the PM] to offer... no figure at all on the grounds that the cabinet was still discussing its parameters for a final settlement with the Palestinians... Both hardliners and moderates hinted that if [the PM] sided with the other camp they would drop their end of the pole – that is, pull out of the coalition and bring down the Government. As if that wasn't enough, the cabinet was also sharply divided over... proposals for a final settlement... On the eve of [the PM's] departure for Paris, he let it be known that he favoured the more moderate approach... However[the] Infrastructure Minister warned the PM... in a private meeting... [against committing] himself in his meeting with... [the] US Secretary of State[– who recently said that 'the young people of Israel may have more wisdom than the older people' –] to any specific pullback. He received [the PM's] acquiescence but demanded it in writing. Even as a beaming [Infrastructure Minister] was telling reporters about [the PM's] retreat, the latter's aides were telling other reporters on the way to the airport that the note he had signed was just a draft, not an agreement. [Although the PM] escaped from Jerusalem still intact politically[it]... is clear that in the end [he] will have to betray someone – either the settlers and their supporters who elected him in the certainty that he would preserve Israeli rule over the West Bank or those who voted for him because of his pledge that he would bring peace. No one [knows] where he intends to go. It is not... certain that he knows. But he has gained some time.

...[he] became chairman of the Likud party in 1993... Prior to Likud's victory... in May 1996... Yitzhak Rabin[the Labour Party PM.] had been pursuing a "land for peace" programme, turning over portions of the West Bank and Gaza... to Palestinian self-rule. Then Rabin was killed by a religious fanatic who opposed this programme. The Israeli left blamed [Likud's leader] for abetting an atmosphere of hate, which they say led to Rabin's assassination.

...The murder of... Yitzhak Rabin two years ago may have stemmed more from frustrated love than from ideological extremism. According to an agent who had worked for the Israeli security services, Rabin's murderer... was motivated in large part by a desire to impress young women friends whose favour he was otherwise unable to win... [B]ecause of his Yemenite origin[h]e... had difficulty making headway with Ashkenazi girls of European extraction active in right-wing circles. A budding romance with one girl ended abruptly when her parents objected to her going out

with a non-Ashkenazi boy. Other relationships did not even get that far... Someone whom [the assassin] particularly wanted to impress was... a beautiful fellow student... The two held frequent ideological discussions. "He loved her," said [the agent]. "She didn't love him."

...[Israel's PM] loves a daring feat. As a deputy Foreign Minister a decade ago, he suggested in a meeting to blow up an Israeli hotel rather than hand it to Egypt. At the time, his idea was dismissed with embarrassed silence. But now he is [the PM] and often acts on his impulses without seeking expert advice. His latest venture – ordering the assassination of a Hamas leader in Jordan to avenge suicide bombings in Israel... without consulting his cabinet... – is still reverberating across the Middle East in ways [he] never anticipated... The bungled job has strengthened the very Islamic militants he sought to contain; soured ties with his only friend in the Arab world; chilled relations with Canada... and... weakened Israel's Mossad spy agency... Israel's secret services[also] suffered a crippling blow to their prestige with the charge that... a... Mossad agent fabricated spy reports on arch-foe Syria... Several major scandals in [the PM's] 16 months of power have been attributed to his habit of not seeking advice. Among those were opening a tourist tunnel along Muslim holy sites – which triggered Palestinian riots that cost 80 lives – and appointing a political crony as attorney-general... Still, the[latest] scandal is unlikely to bring [him] down now... He has broad support in his right-wing coalition that only increased by his having targeted Hamas; under Israel's new electoral system Parliament needs to muster an absolute majority to oust the [PM]; he is very skilled in influencing public opinion; and many Israelis have become indifferent. "Israelis have become accustomed to very strange ways of Government," said [a lecturer from] the Hebrew University. "You would expect we would all take to the streets, me included."

...My first close-up glimpse of [Israel's PM] shortly before last year's elections fixed parameters for all that has followed... [He] is one of the most persuasive public speakers Israel has ever known and at the same time the least credible national figure it has ever known. To many, including people close to him politically, nothing he says can be taken at face value. He is a man of transparent artifice, a spinmeister masterful at manipulating tomorrow morning's headline under the impression that he is shaping history. He is a man who... acts as if he can make peace by bullying the Palestinians into accepting his terms... Yet he is intimidated by peace, and the concessions it demands, and he clings to the terrorism issue like a lifesaver... Instead of offering vision or hope to his own people, instead of seeking creative solutions, he is constantly blaming others... At a time when a deeply divided nation cries out for leadership and direction, it has a [PM] without the moral weight needed to offer solace. The joylessness with which the nation's 50th anniversary celebrations next year are being anticipated reflects the stewardship of a public relations slickster with an empty bag of slogans. [He] ridicules the notion of a New Middle East conjured up by [a former PM]... even though it touched a powerful longing in the hearts of Jews and Arabs alike... He is impervious to the notion that partnerships are built on respect from which grows trust, and not by one side manipulating the other. Respect is something he has never shown the Palestinians. He refused for months after his election to talk to... [the] Palestinian leader... leaving that task to underlings... There is an immaturity about the man, an inappropriate swagger. What can one make of someone who brags "I always get what I want," as he said in a newspaper interview last week? ...His ordering of an assassination in Jordan, a critical partner in the peace process, is another skid mark marking his perilous passage through history.

...*Lack of political wisdom [is the PM's] weak spot...* On September 25, [the Israeli PM]... arrived at the headquarters of the Mossad as part of a round of visits to Government agencies to toast the Jewish new year which would start in a few days. The faces of the officials forming the reception committee bore the polite smiles suitable for the occasion. There was, however, one notable exception. "Can I talk to you in private for a moment?" asked... the Mossad chief... [The general led the PM] aside and broke the stunning news. Just an hour before he had been informed that the planned assassination in Amman of a senior Hamas leader... had ended in a fiasco. A deadly poison had been successfully injected into [the target] but the two agents involved had been caught. Four other agents on the periphery of the operation had fled into the Israeli embassy... observed by Jordanian security personnel. "[The victim] has another eight hours to live," said... [the general. The PM] was aghast. None of the scenarios presented to him before he approved the operation had envisioned such a debacle, he would later tell associates. From [the general's office, the PM telephoned the King of Jordan]. The Jordanian monarch had no way of knowing that Israeli agents had just carried out an assassination attempt on his soil. For one thing, [the target] did not yet feel the delayed effect of the poison injected into his blood stream through his ear. For another, the two men taken into custody after an unexplained street brawl with [the target's] bodyguard held Canadian passports... [The PM asked the king to receive the general] for an urgent talk that afternoon. The king agreed, even though [the PM] said he could not explain on the phone what the subject was. As[the] General... headed out to the car that would take him to the airport, one of [the PM's] aides ran after him. "The P[M] wants you to take the antidote to the poison with you." That, at least, is one decision by [the PM] that nobody faults... The Hamas leader was a guest in [the king's] country and under his protection. In a worst-case scenario, [the] King... would have been implicated by the Palestinians as a partner, silent or otherwise, in the killing, with consequent danger to himself and the stability of his regime. This explains [the king's fury when the general]... revealed to him the Mossad's involvement... As the Mossad chief was being escorted back to his plane, one of the king's aides told him he was henceforth persona non grata in Jordan. [The PM] secretly flew to Amman three days later but[the] King... refused to meet him. The Israeli leader met instead with the king's brother... [The PM], on the advice of an ex-Mossad veteran highly respected by[the] King... offered to release[a] Hamas spiritual leader... as a gesture of Israeli contrition. [The] King... demanded, and got, the release of some 50 other Arab prisoners from Israeli jails as well. He also demanded, and got, not only the antidote to the poison but also the formula for the antidote... An official inquiry committee began hearings this week into the episode, one of the most embarrassing security blunders in Israel's history... [Yet,] Israel has repeatedly proven its ability to plan and execute complex military operations... with great precision. The long-distance rescue of hostages at Entebbe in Uganda in 1976 and the slaying of a PLO war chief in Tunis by a large commando force operating 1000km from home are but two examples... Yitzhak Rabin, a grizzled battle veteran, would consult before deciding on such matters not only with the formal chain of command but with outside people whose experience and wisdom he respected. He would consider both the ramifications as well as the minute operational details, sometimes sending the Mossad officers back to the drawing boards to replan... [Another former PM] likewise consulted extensively, even though he was himself a Mossad veteran with extensive operational experience, including involvement in hit teams. However, [the current PM], whose previous security experience was limited to a relatively brief stint as a young commando officer, reportedly did not discuss the planned operation beforehand even with central figures such as the Defence Minister, the armed forces chief of staff or the head of the internal security service – the Shin Bet... [The Foreign Minister, who also was] not consulted, has publicly attacked [the PM's] decision and declared that he... would have blocked the operation, had he known about it... The decision to attack a senior Hamas official came after a suicide bombing on July 30 in a crowded Jerusalem marketplace in which 16 Israelis were killed and 200 wounded. There was another suicide bombing on a... pedestrian mall a month earlier. On that occasion, [the PM] declared publicly: "We cannot continue this way. From this moment on, we will take a different way."

...The agreement on Hebron puts the hard-line Israeli leader... firmly behind the peace process for the first time. But it... [is] planting the seeds of future disagreements... Jewish settlers in Hebron yesterday accused the... [PM] of selling them out by agreeing to hand the... city over to Palestinian rule... [A] spokesman for the... settlers, said: "This is a dark day for Jews in the land of Israel. The agreement... will lead to a massacre of Jews in Hebron." But he said the Jews would "stay in Hebron, and will fight to stay here forever." ...a chief ideologue of the Israeli right and son of the late... [PM] Menachem Begin, the guerrilla-turned-peacemaker[who] made history when... he traded the Sinai peninsula for peace with Egypt in a 1979 deal... resigned from his cabinet post because of his refusal to compromise his belief that the entire West Bank, heartland of the biblical Land of Israel, must stay in Israeli hands... "I thought it was correct to no longer be a part of a Government... I don't believe in,"...

IT HAS TAKEN DECADES OF BLOODSHED and years of negotiation to reconcile most Israelis and Palestinians to the idea of partitioning the Holy Land into two states, one Jewish, one Arab. Now, a group of angry Israelis is demanding that it be divided further into three states: one for

the Palestinians, one for secular Jews and one for ultra-religious Jews. Far-fetched as it seems, the idea is attracting serious debate. There is even a biblical precedent. In 993 B.C., when the heirs of David and Solomon could not agree on a single realm, they created the Jewish kingdoms of Israel and Judah and shared the Holy Land with the Philistines on the coast. The call now comes not from religious romantics yearning for a long-lost past, but from secular Israelis who are fed up with the violence and intolerance of their Orthodox brethren... The issue has become more urgent recently as the religionists have grown dangerously militant... In a rally last month... [the] spiritual leader of the ultra-Orthodox Shas party, a member of the governing coalition, declared that Jews who desecrate the Sabbath – for example, by driving a car [because ‘there is no public transport from Friday afternoon until Saturday evening’] – “will be killed.” Support for such views is disconcertingly broad. The grave of Baruch Goldstein, the gunman who was clubbed to death after... [his] 1994 massacre of 29 worshippers in a Hebron mosque... is now a shrine visited weekly by scores of sympathizers. Informal fan clubs dedicated to Goldstein and to... Rabin’s assassin, have cropped up in religious high schools. A teacher in one such school called his pupils together after... the wounding of six Arabs in a Hebron market earlier this month... to condemn the act, explaining that man was created in the image of God and that “man” included Arabs. Nearly half the class walked out in protest. Secularists are annoyed by their religious compatriots in many smaller ways as well. Some [Orthodox rabbis recently said that]... 150,000 Israelis who claim to be Jewish aren’t Jewish enough to marry... Still, not all secular Jews agree that extremism is on the rise... [An] increasing number of businesses open on Saturday, including cinemas, bars and suburban shopping malls, [while civil] marriages and funerals are tolerated by the state... “I don’t know who’s winning,” [one secular Jew] retorts. “I do know it’s a war.” While that might sound extreme, a recent poll found that 35[%] of Israeli Jews believe that the religious-secular divide will lead to a civil war... The last time the Jews were divided into [separate] kingdoms... 10 of their 12 tribes vanished into eternity.

...[an Orthodox rabbi says the word God may be erased from a computer screen or disk because the pixels do not constitute real letters. In Jewish law, printed matter containing the word “Elohim” or God must be stored rather than buried.] In further news from Israel, its P]M... said yesterday that [he] was cracking down on Jewish extremists, a day after police revealed a suspected plot to throw a pig’s head into a Muslim shrine. “The Israeli Government... will fight with determination against anyone who attempts to incite a religious war,”...

An unrepentant right-wing extremist giggled, smirked and laughed at prosecution witnesses as she went on trial for putting up posters in Hebron depicting the Prophet Mohammed as a pig... [which] triggered several days of clashes... between Palestinians and Israeli troops in [Hebron]... Israeli leaders condemned [her] actions and apologised but Muslim outrage spread as far as Bangladesh and Kenya while Muslim clerics ruled that insulting the prophet should be punishable with death... Jewish settlers in the past have received light sentences for serious offences against Palestinians... however... [the] unemployed art school dropout... aged 26... faces a... maximum of 26 years in prison because the prosecution has added incitement to racism to the original charge of offending religious feelings... She told investigators the Middle East was on the brink of a holy war that would put an end to its current chaos... [P]sychiatrists have ruled that, in spite of personality disorders, she is fit to stand trial.

...HE THOUGHT he was Samson. Not only that, he was convinced a stone at Jerusalem’s Wailing Wall was in the wrong place. Like any right-thinking strongman, he tried to move it. Police wrestled with the deluded young Canadian... then took him to... the psychiatric hospital on the city’s outskirts. He was recognised as a sufferer from the “Jerusalem Syndrome”, a condition which makes some... [people] believe they are figures from biblical prophecy... [T]he Israeli soldier from a township outside Jerusalem who emptied his M-16 automatic rifle into a crowd of Palestinians in Hebron [last] December seems to be a sufferer. According to his friends, a Rabbi once told him he was the Messiah... “Jerusalem can send people mad,” said... a psychiatrist who has treated some 5000 cases of people, usually tourists, who suddenly discover they are the Virgin Mary or King David when they visit... One morning a British woman disappeared from her group. She was found later near the Wailing Wall telling all who would listen that she was the reincarnation of Mary and was about to deliver the second Jesus Christ... Recently he encountered three Virgin Marys the same day... Most victims arrive totally sane, are overcome within a matter of hours, and then leave days later, normal again.

...[a 43-year-old American from North Carolina moved to Jerusalem nearly six years ago in the belief that God selected him to recite words from the Old Testament book of Ezekiel when the time comes to raise the ancient Hebrew people from the dead. With the Year 2000 approaching, he believes their resurrection is close at hand and that it will start a 1000-year reign of peace when he will sit at God’s side as a high priest. Convinced of his calling – and his sanity – the 43-year-old no longer leaves the confines of Jerusalem’s walled Old City, fearful that he might miss his mission. Upwards of three million foreign pilgrims are expected to flock to the Holy Land for the coming millennium, the vast majority of them mainstream Christians marking the anniversary of the birth of Jesus. A minority, however, will arrive convinced that the end of the world is nigh and eager for “front-row seats” at the Second Coming on the Mount of Olives. The prospect that zealots with apocalyptic visions may use violence to try to hasten the final showdown has galvanised Israel’s security forces. Their greatest fear is of attempts to destroy Muslim shrines on Jerusalem’s Temple Mount to make way for the building of a Jewish Third Temple as a prelude to the end of the world. Israeli police last month traced 14 members of an American doomsday cult to two rented properties near Jerusalem and swiftly deported them on the grounds that they were plotting violence and mass suicide to mark the millennium. The 14, six of them children, were part of a larger group of followers of the Concerned Christians cult who disappeared from Colorado several months before. Their leader has promised that he will die in Jerusalem in 1999 and be resurrected three days later. The leader remains at large.] □ Israel has] released 30 women... from the Sharon and Neve Tirza prisons under agreements with the PLO after the High Court rejected a last-minute petition to keep nine of them behind bars... [27] were convicted of security offences... [including two] killers... and three were jailed for criminal activity unrelated to the Israeli-Arab conflict... [T]he promise to free the women had been made originally by the previous Labour Government... [A] PLO official... said that after the release... around 5000 Palestinians remain in Israeli jails... [but only one was] female... a 15-year-old arrested two weeks ago for trying to stab an Israeli soldier.

...On Sunday, Israel said it would return half of the Palestinian revenues it had been withholding as a “goodwill gesture” in response to Palestinian moves to fight terror. The Army also announced it would lift the “internal closure” that confines Palestinians to their individual communities... even though the general closure that keeps Palestinians out of Israel will remain... But... [a] new confrontation loomed in Jerusalem yesterday after a group of 11 Jewish settlers took over three buildings in the middle of an Arab neighbourhood in the city’s disputed eastern sector. The settlers’ action seemed to take both the Israeli and Palestinian authorities by surprise. Palestinian stonethrowers gathered at the site and smashed settlers’ cars before they were driven away by... Israeli border police who surrounded the compound to protect the settlers through the night... In July, a Jerusalem planning committee approved [a Miami millionaire’s] plan to build up to 70 Jewish homes on the site... [However, although the PM] has... vowed building... will continue... [at] the 6500-unit Har Homa settlement on Arab East Jerusalem’s outskirts... that plunged peacemaking into crisis... [when] launched in March[, the PM]... suggested... that he would prevent the construction[of the millionaire’s homes]...

The] King... of Jordan warned yesterday against any new construction... “We are always in principle against any change in the status quo that might adversely affect any final outcome of the... negotiations over Jerusalem,” the monarch said after arriving in Amman... from a tour of Germany, Britain, Morocco and Ireland... On Thursday, [the] Palestinian President... described as “completely illegal” Israeli plans to build in the eastern half of the city which he wants for the capital of a future Palestinian state.

...Israel yesterday approved the building of new Jewish housing... between Jerusalem and Bethlehem... despite warnings that the project could unleash a wave of Palestinian violence... more costly... [in lives than when a tunnel was] opened... last year... The homes will be built... [on] a tree-covered hill taken by Israel in... 1967... In a move not recognised internationally, it later annexed East Jerusalem, declaring it part of an indivisible capital... [● Last night, Israeli soldiers and Palestinians clashed] over the opening of a road for Jewish settlers on the West Bank.

...Israel and the Palestinians have set themselves on a collision course... only days before the next deadline is reached in their interim peace accords. The Palestinian Legislative Council[has] called a general strike... to protest an Israeli building project... [The] Palestinian President... who is to meet [the US President] in Washington today, has tried to keep a lid on Palestinian rage... Nonetheless... on Sunday he[said he] might declare a Palestinian state in reaction to the... building project... In New York, the[UN] General Assembly began a debate expected to end in over-whelming support for a demand that Israel abandon its plans.

...[a top] Palestinian peace negotiator... has resigned from heading[PLO] talks with Israel over what a key aide said... was the Jewish state's intransigence... "[The negotiator] is tired of... one-sided Israeli decisions... ['Israel wanted to dictate not negotiate']," the aide... told Israel's Army radio... Israel angered Palestinians last week with its decision to hand over 9[%] of the West Bank... [-] of which only 2% was not already under shared... authority... [-] in the first of three withdrawals outlined in a peace agreement. Palestinians say they were expecting 30[%]... The decision came on the heels of... the approval to build a new Jewish neighbourhood in Arab East Jerusalem and the decision to shut down four PLO offices there... Meanwhile, an Israeli official said yesterday that Israel would not go ahead with its planned withdrawal as long as the Palestinian Authority refused to co-operate. The latest snags... came as... [the Israeli PM] prepared to leave for a visit to Russia... And late last night, Israel Radio reported that a Jordanian fired into Israel near Naharayim, killing an estimated seven people...

[A 14]-year-old... lay next to her twin sister in hospital yesterday and relived how a "bad guy with a big eyes" shot them on a field trip to a Jordan border site nicknamed "The Island of Peace." Seven Israeli teenagers were killed and at least six wounded by a Jordanian soldier who sprayed automatic weapons fire at the school group... Jordanian authorities were briefing Israeli teachers in the group when the uniformed Jordanian standing on a hill above them took aim... [A witness] said the carnage could have been heavier... [but] Jordanian soldiers overpowered the gunman... Western officials said the shooting would temporarily take the diplomatic heat off [the Israeli PM], who would be able to point to Arab violence as the greatest threat to peace-making... [While delivering] the main eulogy at the funeral of four of the dead girls[, the Israeli PM]... said the killings only reaffirmed Israel's commitment to tighten its hold on all of Jerusalem despite Arab warnings of violence... "If anyone thinks the murder of little girls will bring this people to its knees... or that we will relinquish our birthright, holy land and eternal capital, he does not know the strength that exists in each person standing here around me today..."... After the attack several Israeli cabinet ministers... [suggested comments by Jordan's monarch that the Israeli PM] was pushing the Middle East... towards an abyss of bloodshed... possibly influenced the soldier... But [the king], who cut short a visit to Spain to return to Jordan, rejected the suggestion. The soldier's mother said her son was insane. Jordan said he had been arrested and would be prosecuted... [On a positive note, yesterday some] 9 and 10-year-old... Palestinian school children... [went] on their own peace mission to see children of the same age at an Israeli school in Jerusalem. The idea was to change both sides' perceptions. It seemed to work; some of the Israeli's had never met Palestinians.

...I was driving my family's 15-year-old babysitter home... [in] Jerusalem's Beit Hakaram district... one day recently when I told her I was going to the Old City afterwards. "The Old City?" she said... "Can I go?" Sure I said... I brought her into my favourite Old City shop... [The antique-seller] served mint tea. We talked politics... The 15-year-old... seemed stunned... "I just had tea with an Arab." That gave me pause, and made me understand a little more about Jerusalem as it reaches its 3000th year... [Jerusalem 'was a Canaanite stronghold, captured by David (c.1000 BC), who made it the capital of the national state'. Today, however], despite all the Israeli politicians' calls for a unified eternal city... Jerusalem... is decidedly split... Three great religions consider Jerusalem as a spiritual centre, and[their] shrines... are bundled together within a 10-minute walk of each other inside the Old City... where 35,000 Jews, Christians, Muslims and Armenians somehow coexist... [In addition, about 400,000 Jews live in the Israeli west and 155,000 Arabs in] the Palestinian east... Jerusalem actually can[be] split into a few dozen... neighbourhoods, each of which has extremely distinctive characters. A few neighbourhoods are so distinct that they are insulated from the modern world... Jews from all over the world come to the... Western Wall, to pray, meditate and simply touch the boulders... The wall is full of cracks, and those are stuffed with notes to God... Beyond the wall stands the Dome of the Rock... It is here, atop the ruins of Solomon's Temple, that the Prophet Mohammad is said to have ascended to heaven. [The]King... of Jordan, paying homage, spent millions of dollars in recent years to lay gold leaf over the dome... According to Muslim tradition, on the floor of the cave in the Dome is a marble slab with a black star. There is a pit beneath; the Muslims believe this is the opening of the underworld and that the souls of the dead are buried under the slab. I found a similarly ghoulisish spot at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, first built by the Crusaders in the 12th century over the spot where Jesus was buried... Descending worn staircases... I stopped in a darkened dead-end room called St Anne's Chapel... There, on the near wall, was a big window. Legend says it's the Window to Hell. But I was taken with the window for its ancient lore and for the reality that it portrays... Jerusalem, according to one count, has been conquered 37 times. The city is visibly scarred. The face of City Hall... was blistered with Jordanian sniper fire from 1948 to 1967, the bullets shot from inside the Old City's New Gate... This city is[supposedly] next to godliness, yet there is evil, there is bloodshed, there is hate, there is even... an opening... to hell...

In December 1987, Gaza was a powder keg waiting for the spark. Poor, gritty and angry, the crowded strip, home to about half of the territories' two million Palestinians, was a landscape of tumbledown towns and tin-shack refugee camps where the streets ran with raw sewage. The explosion was sparked by a traffic accident between a truck driven by an Israeli and a car carrying Palestinian workers, four of whom were killed. In Jebaliya the next day, ugly rumours flew in the crowded confines of the camp that the crash had been a deliberate attack, one that would go unpunished. Mourning turned to anger, and hundreds of residents took to the streets with bottles, firebombs and stones. On the camp's dusty main street, rioters converged, confronting a small contingent of Israeli soldiers, who opened fire on the crowd...

Black days come all too often in Israel, and Friday was another... As costumed merrymakers paraded down[Tel Aviv's] streets to celebrate Purim, which commemorates the deliverance of the Jews in ancient Persia from a plot to slaughter them, a... [member] of the extremist group Hamas... entered one of the cafes and detonated himself, killing three Israelis and injuring at least 47 more. A six-month-old girl, her tiny, blood-soaked body cradled in a policewoman's arms added one more horrific image to the Holy Land's chronicle of tragedies... Now history will decide whether... the empty hillside on the southern reaches of Jerusalem... [was] a necessary, legitimate addition to Israel's housing stock or a flaming branch tossed on the pyre of Palestinian impatience and despair... For... Israel's... [PM.] the deaths in Tel Aviv cannot help raising questions about whether his way is working. When reporters standing amid the cafe wreckage suggested Har Homa had contributed to the bloodshed, [the PM] bristled, "Nothing justifies terrorism." He is surely right about that, and there is an incalculable moral difference between building on disputed land and setting off a bomb in a cafe. But violence is the only real lever the Palestinians have in their conflict with the Israelis, so scenes like that in Tel Aviv are certain to be repeated. Indeed, many Israelis fear this is only the beginning of a new terror offensive like the one last year that drove [the Labour PM from office]... A committed Zionist, [the new PM is, however,] opposed to the welfare-statism traditionally favoured by mainline Israeli Zionists.... [He] was born in 1949, just months after Israel had fought its war of independence with invading armies from Arab nations. His family moved to the U[S] in 1962, and the boy became Americanised quickly... [- although he] kept in touch with events back home through a beloved elder brother... who was serving in the Israel Defence Forces. In May 1967, as fellow high-school students were planning graduation parties, [the future PM] took his final exams early so that he could be in his homeland as war clouds were gathering. On June 5 he stood on the roof of an apartment building in Jerusalem, watching Jordanian artillery shells explode in the streets. It was the start of the... joint Arab effort to "exterminate the State of Israel for all time." But in less than a week, Israel shattered the forces of Syria, Jordan and Egypt. A triumphant Israel now completely controlled its ancient capital of Jerusalem (previously partitioned with Jordan), as well as the West Bank of the Jordan River, the Golan Heights on the Syrian border and the entire Sinai desert to the south. At the height of national euphoria, however, [his] father made a

prediction. Within a generation... [he] told his son, the Israelis would be ready to give the captured land back in an attempt to appease the Arabs. This prediction provides a clue to understanding... [the] son... Just a few weeks after the 1967 war, [the son] joined the armed forces and was accepted into Sayeret Matcal, an elite commando unit. He rose to captain... In 1972 four PLO terrorists hijacked a Belgian airliner with 100 passengers. They forced it to land at Israel's Ben-Gurion Airport, and threatened to blow it up unless PLO prisoners were freed... [I]n mechanic's overalls, [the son] led a "maintenance crew" to the plane. He burst through the door, grabbed one of the terrorists and... all passengers were freed unharmed. In 1973, on Yom Kippur, the most significant Jewish holy day, Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack... Over the next 19 days... 2552 Israeli soldiers died – a staggering loss in a population that was then about three million. The Yom Kippur War imprinted a lesson in [the son's] mind. Israel had barely escaped annihilation because the land it had gained in the 1967 war gave it the space to absorb initial Arab blows... In 1976 [he] was working as a management consultant in Boston when his younger brother... was killed during the Sayeret Matcal's rescue of 98 Jews held hostage... in Uganda. The daring foray electrified the world, but it profoundly altered [the future PM's] life. The two brothers [had been] extraordinarily close... In [the dead brother's] honour, the family founded the Jonathan Institute, dedicated to combating terrorism. In 1982 [the future PM] was appointed deputy chief of mission to the U[S]. In 1984 he became Israel's ambassador to the U[N]. Now as PM, he [wants] two very old-fashioned things for Israel: peace and prosperity... A secular Jew who has been divorced twice and has weathered an adultery scandal, he has maintained close relationships with the ultrareligious parties that wield an influence way beyond their numbers... [and] has always kept open the option of sending Israeli troops back into the areas now under Palestinian control. Even worse, he might decide to use the bombing as a pretext to abandon, once and for all, the talks he has always opposed. The carnage in Tel Aviv was only the latest, some would say inevitable, result of the troubles that have piled up during [his]... months in power. One difficulty was plain old inexperience... The youngest [PM] in Israel's history... came into office almost wholly without practice in the real business of government. His energies in public life were spent... making arguments for and against policies, but not formulating them. He never mastered strategy, only shifting tactics. In command of a telegenic appearance and glib tongue, he figured his rhetoric could explain away his mistakes... After an early interview, a *Jerusalem Post* reporter wrote that it was clear [the new PM] hadn't actually read the details of the Oslo accords... But he is... eager to succeed – to... stay in power, to earn history's regard – and he... [accepts] there is no going back. Peace is what a majority of Israel's voters want, and a [PM] wishing to stay in office had better deliver.

...Jewish settlers turned on Israeli soldiers... in... Hebron... [yesterday], pelting them with stones, eggs, tomatoes then soaking them with a water hose as Palestinians... watched in wonder... [T]he soldiers were stringing chicken wire above a gate... to block stones... [after] nearly a month of stone-throwing riots by Palestinians... [but the] settlers said more fencing at the tightly guarded compound made it feel like a ghetto. One settler tried to stab a policeman... Two settlers were arrested. "This is good for us," said an Arab bystander... "Now the police will see the settlers as provocateurs, too." ...in recent days there have been signs of mending. Israeli media reported yesterday that the [ir PM]... told his Italian counterpart that actual construction on the [Har Homa] housing project would not begin until 2000, providing time to reach a final peace agreement... [However, one newspaper quoted the PM] as saying work would continue to level the ground and pave roads. The contractor... told Israel radio that his crews were working "at a murderous pace."

...Living in an area less than a quarter the size of [NZ's] North Island, Israel's nearly six million people are surrounded by 150 million Arabs... Most mainstream Zionists were socialists who envisioned a utopian brotherhood with the Arabs once the state of Israel was established... and developed a far-reaching and costly socialism, in which the government owns over 90[%] of the land. But the utopian brotherhood with the Arabs never emerged. The result has been a precarious existence for Israel, despite its economic potential, military power and \$3.9 billion in annual aid and guarantees from the [US]. Incidentally, possibly... the strangest operation the Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem had ever seen [was recently] performed in a parking lot on a dead man by police sappers wearing helmets and protective clothing. The victim was a soldier who had been hit in the stomach... by an anti-tank missile... [He] was a sentry in an arms depot and had toyed with the missile, setting it off. He was flown by helicopter to hospital where doctors declared him dead, but were astounded, when examining x-rays, to see the... live 50cm missile... was... [still] in his body. After hasty consultations... it was decided that... [the] police... would remove... [the missile by] following directions given [to] them... by surgeons – with whom they remained in radio contact during the [successful] operation...

Israeli planes attacked suspected guerrilla bases in South Lebanon yesterday, hours after eight Lebanese civilians were killed in guerrilla attacks against Israeli posts inside the South Lebanon occupation zone... [In related news, the PLO leader] has said that at the end of the five-year autonomy period, in May 1999, the Palestinians would declare statehood, regardless of whether there was a peace settlement... [and despite] warnings by Israel that it would annex parts of the West Bank if the Palestinians declared independence unilaterally. Keeping open the annexation option is reportedly a key reason for... [the Israeli PM's] reluctance to hand over more of the West Bank now... The Palestinians control, in full or in part, 27[%] of the West Bank.

...Palestinian... role models are sorely needed. The handful of Arab writers and journalists who reject self-censorship face... isolated lives... on blacklists... For those based in the Middle East, it can also mean the occasional spell in jail. Speak the truth in the Arab press and you will be deemed "unreliable" and will never be published or invited again. Those who... succumb to such pressure are rewarded with murmured confidences and leaks, the very stuff of journalism, and end up recognised as... "experts" who have special insights and contacts at the top. There is also the... endless freebies in five-star hotels around the Middle East. The net result of decades of such blacklists and inducements is that Arabs are simply unable to discuss their lives and problems in their own media. This stifling of debate has been compounded by a total absence of democracy and spawned a militancy that threatens the very Arab liberal tradition the West claims it wants to preserve... In the Arab Gulf, the defence salesmen's dream, not a single state subscribes to the International Bill of Human Rights... [T]his gap between the people and its rulers has been ignored since... [WWI] by all Western Governments... Western acceptance of this lack of democracy had left the region's dialogue with the West in the hands of an exclusive and unrepresentative elite... Ironically, it has been the most brutal Arab regimes that have been the beneficiaries of... short-sighted Western policies. Iraq, Syria and Libya are all boycotted by the West and their Governments have proved the most oppressive of all the Arab regimes. Yet their leaders are admired by more ordinary Arabs for their continued refusal to succumb to... pressure... [from the US], home of the world's largest Jewish community... Nowhere is this... tragedy in Western policy more apparent than in the current... Middle East peace process. Arab liberals who signed the imperfect peace in the hope of a final settlement have been abandoned by the West, left to face the inevitable retribution that will come from the militants.

...Israeli troops took revenge on the family of a Palestinian suicide bomber... who killed himself and three Israeli women in Tel Aviv... [by having bulldozers demolish his] home... Israel believes this will deter other suicide attempts. Human rights groups condemned the demolition as an unjust collective punishment because it leaves [his] widow and 4 children homeless...

Two suicide bombers blew themselves apart in Mahane Yehuda market on Wednesday, killing 13 people and wounding 170. A leaflet issued in the name of the Islamic Hamas movement claimed responsibility for the attack. It gave Israel until 5am on Monday (NZ time) to free all Palestinian prisoners. As a result of the blasts a furious Israel has halted peace talks and [the] US special Middle East envoy... postponed a planned mission to salvage peacemaking during a period of national mourning... But the... [cessation of peace] negotiations is likely to create even greater despair within the Palestinian camp and therefore greater prospects of terror.

...Israel yesterday freed the jailed founder of the... militant movement Hamas... Palestinian sources said the freeing of the Sheikh [who has] been imprisoned since 1989, was in exchange for two Mossad agents captured by Jordanian security forces... after an attempted assassination on the

leading Hamas representative in Jordan... [T]he wheelchair-bound Sheikh... was serving a life sentence for ordering attacks by Hamas guerrillas... His movement[']s... uncompromising opposition to the Israeli-Palestinian peace deals... is behind the[recent] series of suicide bombings.

...did... Israel... barter for the... freedom... [of the agents who botched] a bid to assassinate a leader of... Hamas in Jordan... by releasing the long-held spiritual leader of Hamas? ...It's a tangled cloak-and-dagger tale, a fast-brewing diplomatic fracas – and likely to become a big embarrassment for... [Israel's PM and it]s spy establishment... If what has been reported by Israeli media is true, no one involved is going to come out looking good... The much-mythologised Mossad has had its shares of ups and downs over the years. In one notable failure, agents in July 1973 gunned down a Moroccan waiter in Lillehammer, Norway, after mistaking him for a Palestinian terrorist behind the 1972 attack on Israel's... team[at the Munich Olympic village].

...in the wake of [last week's] twin suicide attacks in Jerusalem... Israeli security forces[have] raided several West Bank villages... to seize "terrorists"... [PLO officials] called the moves a "declaration of war"... [By the way, the] parents of a Palestinian child... aged 9... who... died from severe brain damage after he was shot... with a rubber-coated bullet by an Israeli soldier... near an anti-Israeli demonstration... in... Bethlehem... have donated his... heart, liver, one lung and one kidney... [to be] transplanted into two 12-year-old Israeli boys.

...the 15-year-old... who spoke four languages... and... emigrated to Israel... [from Russia with his family in 1995, only to be] killed in last week's terrorist bombing... was turned away from cemetery after cemetery before finally being buried in a [non-Jewish plot. Grisha, whose body was]... so badly mutilated that it had to be identified through DNA testing... could not be buried in a Jewish cemetery because his maternal grandmother was not Jewish, making... both... him and his mother... non-Jews according to Jewish religious law... [The Israeli Immigration Minister had] stepped in with a concession: Grisha would be buried in a section of a Jewish cemetery set aside for those whose Jewishness is "under doubt." But even that agreement fell apart... "I did not... know they were not fully Jewish," said a family friend... "What difference does it make? He was a sweet, funny boy and his mother's only son." ...The addition of indignity to the... family's tragedy underscored... [the] problems facing... the almost 800,000... part-Jewish... immigrants who have arrived since 1990.

...After nearly 50 years of dramatic airlifts, daring rescues and covert diplomacy to bring Jews to Israel, the Jewish state is taking on a potentially tougher job: ...trying to attract young... Jews in the U[S and AUS]... to migrate. Israel has been built on waves of... new arrivals typically from dangerous and impoverished areas. Now... the pool of "distressed" Jewry is running dry...

For... [over] 10 millenniums... travellers have stopped at [Jericho's] tiny watering hole... Ein es-Sultan... to quench parched throats and to rest... Jericho is at once... the... most ancient of cities and the newest of political states. The village of 5000 is the quasi-official capital of the Palestinian self-rule territory... For now, Jericho is merely a quick stopover on the way to the Petra ruins in Jordan... Dead Sea resorts and the Monastery of John the Baptist near Qumran. But Palestinians hope the city will become the jewel in their efforts to bring visitors into their old, new-born land.

...Israel handed over Bethlehem to Palestinian self-rule... four days before [X]mas in 1995. The mood in the town of 35,000 Muslim and Christian Arabs has since turned from hope to one of gloom as the peace process has stalled and expectations of a tourism boom have soured... [The mayor estimates] that more than 50% of Bethlehem's workforce is unemployed. He said the erection by Israel of a fortified checkpoint between Bethlehem and Jerusalem and security closures imposed by Israel in the wake of Islamic militant suicide bombings were strangling the town's economy.

...Israel has allocated a quarter of a billion shekels (\$[NZ]109.26 million) for celebrations to mark its 50th birthday. Israel turns 50 on May 15 next year, but celebrations will begin at the end of this year... [Meanwhile, Malaysia's PM] has taken his attack against foreign currency speculators a step further... Speaking to supporters... he said the government suspected Jews who don't want to see Muslims progress may be behind the foreign currency speculators. More than 60% of Malaysia's 21 million people are Muslims.

...[the Malaysian PM] will face a confidence vote in Parliament to allow lawmakers to reaffirm their support after his reported anti-Jewish statements, his deputy announced yesterday... [The PM] is expected to easily win the vote since his National Front coalition of 14 parties controls 153 seats in the 177-seat powerful Lower House... The decision to call the vote came after his supporters decided to respond to demands in the US Congress that [the PM] resign or apologise for his comments... This week [the PM] reiterated that he never meant to offend Jews when he spoke of a Jewish conspiracy against Muslims... He... was merely citing the perception of some people – a perception that he did not endorse. - 1997

ON DECEMBER 17, 1986, the central Asian city of Alma-Ata, capital of the sprawling Soviet republic of Kazakhstan, erupted in massive rioting... The fighting was a clear sign that after generations of smouldering resentment, the Soviet Union's Muslim population was beginning to stand up to the Russians... According to Marxist-Leninist theory, of course, there should be no Muslims in the Soviet Union at all. Beginning in 1923, Stalin's purges wiped out virtually the entire Muslim intellectual class... Islamic schools were shut, and Muslim clerics were liquidated or sent to labour camps. Of the 47,000 Muslim clerics who officiated before the Russian Revolution, only some 2000 survived. The more than 30,000 pre-revolutionary mosques have dwindled to just 365 officially authorized places of worship... Preaching or teaching Islam outside the mosque remains punishable by jail, and it is illegal to hold group prayers or give religious instruction at home. Marriage and funeral ceremonies are also the exclusive domain of the state, [which means] it is a criminal offence for Muslim clerics to perform their religious duties even at these occasions... [However, in spite of the Kremlin's efforts, today more] than 50 million Muslims live in the USSR, and they will probably outnumber the Russians by the middle of the next century. Fired by deep religious and nationalistic fervour and spurred by radio programmes from abroad, they are displaying a rising militancy that is ringing alarm bells in the Kremlin... At the same time, however, Moscow is engaged in an extraordinarily successful courtship of Muslim nations – particularly the conservative states of the Gulf and the Middle East... Presenting itself as a major Islamic nation, the Soviet Union skilfully exploits the public-relations potential of its... Muslim establishment... The result has been spectacular. Soviet embassies are sprouting in the Arab world. One after another, international Islamic conferences attended or hosted by the Soviets pass resolutions against [US] imperialism, Zionism... and other Soviet propaganda targets. These same conferences collectively are averting their eyes from the tragedy of Afghanistan, whose Muslim population the Red Army has been killing for over eight years.

...In [1987]... the news from Afghanistan was bad. Soviet troops displayed no stomach for combat... Demoralised... conscripts were bartering weapons, clothes and petrol for opium and hashish. The Soviets had suffered crushing defeats and, for the first time since their 1979 invasion, the tide of war was turning against them. The Soviet generals attributed their troubles to [US] weapons... But the real strength of the... fierce Afghan... *mujahedin* [was derived] from an indomitable will to be free... [I]n the south-east, *mujahedin* were battling thousands of Soviet troops sent to break the three-and-a-half-year siege of Kandahar. By the end of July, the Soviets... [had] lost nine helicopters, eight jets, 54 tanks and personnel carriers, and at least 600 dead. Most of those belonged to the elite Twenty-second Spetsnaz Battalion... Another battle raged at the same time around Ali-Khel... south of Silk Gorge... The fabled Silk Route, which for centuries has linked Europe with India and China, runs through the gorge... There[... during]... three weeks of ferocious combat, the *mujahedin* crushed the best units the Red Army could field, inflicting... 900 casualties, and destroying more than 100 tanks and vehicles... "At Silk Gorge and elsewhere, the *mujahedin* in effect said to the Russians: 'We know where you are, and we're going to get you.'" Battlefield defeats... finally made Soviet leaders weary of this war. In February[1988], they announced a tentative timetable for an Afghan pullout... An American authority on the Afghan War... says: "The... Soviets... also must worry about whether the *mujahedin* spirit of rebellion and freedom may infect their own Muslim population."

The mighty momentum that swept the... Taliban movement from nothing to power in Kabul in just two years may have stalled with the capture of the Afghan capital and its problems are only just beginning... [O]ne veteran western Afghan watcher... said: "The mullahs [priests] are in control as they have been in the countryside for centuries, but... they have no idea how to run a Government. How can you run an efficient administration when you order men to go to the mosque five times a day to pray? Where is the money to run Government going to come from? We hear the previous Government took most of the assets from the central bank and we don't know of any significant revenues." Kabul is in bad shape after more than five years of fighting for it, although many ordinary people are delighted at the Taliban's arrival because they now have peace even though they frequently admit to being afraid of the Taliban fighters. Electricity supplies are occasional and reach only parts of the city... with an estimated population of 1.2 million... On top of the problems of running the civil side of life, there is the military problem of trying to take the Panjsher Valley and dealing with[the] Uzbek General... who controls six northern provinces... [Furthermore,] the "Lion of Panjsher"[, the veteran *mojahedin*]... guerrilla general who was military chief of the Government that the Taliban drove out of Kabul last month, has retreated to the Panjsher Valley. Black-turbaned Taliban warriors have been attacking it since Saturday... The Taliban movement... which... means "seekers" or "students," was... born... in religious schools in refugee camps in Pakistan. It comprises mainly ethnic Pushtun, a collection of frequently quarrelling tribes. [The Lion of Panjsher] is a minority Tajik, [while the Uzbeks are] descendants of the Mongols of Genghis Khan... Uzbeks and the Taliban have widely diverging views on Islam. Many Uzbeks drink, an abhorrence to the strictly Islamic Taliban, who banned television, music and alcohol immediately after taking Kabul. They ordered women to stay at home until a way could be found for them to work without coming into contact with men. They ordered men to... forgo Western dress.

...T[V]... pictures coming out of Kabul in past weeks only strengthen our impression that the world is dissolving into... chaos... [F]ormer President Najibullah is beaten, dragged behind a jeep, and shot in the head... The youthful new rulers of the city announce that henceforth all girls' schools will be closed, all women must quit their jobs, all men in Government employment must grow long beards. Clearly, the barbarians are at the gates.

...For many... in Kabul, it has been a difficult month under the rule of the... Taliban, but not for everyone... Sales of burqas – the all-embracing cloak with a mesh over the eyes that all women must wear in public [despite 'being difficult to see out of' and causing health problems (e.g., they restrict the body's production of vitamin D)] – have blossomed... and... their price[has] risen about 70[%] to 550,000 Afghanis (\$[NZ]50.53), beyond the means of most... Few are willing to be drawn on whether they want the Taliban gone. But[a] shoe-seller... is dismissive of the Taliban policies. "Anyone can bring peace to this city. But I call on the Taliban to allow women to go out of their homes. This city is full of widows whose households have no bread-winners..." Before the Taliban arrived, he sold up to 300 pairs[of shoes] a month. So far this month he has sold 10... Others are critical of the continuing war, blaming all factions for failing to down their weapons and the U[N] for what they say is its failure to impose a solution.

...the [U]N... special envoy... [has] held more talks with the new Taliban rulers... [He] refused to give details about his talks, but he had been expected to convey... dismay over the Taliban's human rights record... Punishments are quick and harsh, with death the penalty for murder, drug dealing and adultery... "God says that those committing adultery should be stoned to death,"... said... Kabul Radio... "Anybody who drinks and says that it is not against the Koran, you have to kill him and hang his body for three days until people say this is the body of the drinker who did not obey the Koran and Allah's order." ...Amputation is the penalty for theft... Men would face Islamic punishment unless they grew their beards within the next month and a half... Some orthodox Muslim scholars say growing a beard is a must for a Muslim to follow the Sunnah, or tradition of the Prophet Mohammed, but many others say it is not necessary and Taliban's insistence on beards seemed highly unusual.[However, the] Taliban... announced yesterday that all women Government employees in Kabul who were ordered to stay at home would get their salaries without working... pending a further decision on the issue. The announcement follows strong criticism abroad... The Taliban... did not say whether Kabul's working women would eventually be allowed to return to work. In... [another] announcement yesterday the Taliban... said no religious funeral could be held for the former President... who was summarily executed with his brother... and two aides... The four men were dragged from a U[N] compound where they had sheltered since Najibullah was ousted in a palace coup in April 1992. The bloodied bodies... were hanged from a concrete traffic post outside Kabul's presidential palace for two days.

...[2 days ago, Afghanistan's] Foreign Minister... said the... Taliban... wanted international recognition and financial aid to help rebuild their country... [Today] Pakistan appeared to signal the first recognition of the new regime by announcing it would dispatch officials for talks in Kabul.

...Here's an odd twist: Islamic militants come to power in Afghanistan. Iran is critical, while the U[S] says it's ready and willing to work with the hard-line... movement. How can this be? Almost 20 years of warfare have left Afghanistan a confusing and chaotic land and... the Taliban... takeover... may have only made it more of an enigma. For the U[S], Afghanistan was one of the Cold War battlefields in the 1980s. It largely fell off Washington's radar screen when the Soviet Union withdrew its Army in 1989... Now, America's limited interests focus on drugs – Afghanistan is one of the world's biggest opium producers – and Afghanistan's role as a safe haven for a variety of Muslim extremists who have gravitated there over the years... [The US] Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, has met in the past with Taliban leaders. [A] State Department spokesman... said this week that... diplomats are prepared to resume travelling to Afghanistan if their safety can be assured. A... source in Washington said the U[S] does not see the Taliban as trying to export Islamic revolution... As a poor country devastated by war, Afghanistan is in no position to enforce its will on other nations... Iran, a neighbouring country run by Muslim clergymen, has been consistently... [anti-]Taliban. "The Taliban top brass is sick in the mind," said an editorial in the semi-official *Kayhan International*. The newspaper also criticised the group's interpretation of Islam, calling it "more akin to the Stone Age." ...[the] Iranian President... was more diplomatic, but he said last week that "the events in Afghanistan are quite regrettable." There appear to be multiple reasons for Iran's stance. Iran is fed up with the Afghan conflict and wants to rid itself of the 1.5 million Afghan refugees it continues to shelter with increasing impatience. It fears the Afghan militants could ignite a fresh upheaval, sending more refugees streaming toward Iran. Also... the... Taliban are from Islam's Sunni wing; Iran is ruled by Shi'ite Muslims... [and] the Afghan Shi'ites... that accounted for about 10[%] of the population... suffered greatly during the long years of war. In addition, Iran seems to have lost out to Pakistan, the country that has tried hardest to control events in Afghanistan in recent years.

...[the Pakistani PM], grieving for her slain... [though] estranged brother Murtaza... faced the task yesterday of halting sectarian unrest... Tension is running high over the death of Murtaza... who had led a splinter faction of the ruling Pakistan People's Party... [but] died in a clash with police in Karachi on Friday... The Government must try to prevent further outbreaks of violence after attackers killed 24 worshippers... and... injured... another 50... at a Sunni mosque in the Punjab provincial city of Multan on Monday. Troops in armoured vehicles patrolled Multan after angry crowds stoned Shi'ite neighbourhoods and attacked police. Gunmen killed a hardline Shi'ite leader in the town of Bahawalpur, 95km south of Multan, on Monday morning and... another just hours after the mosque attack... Apart from her brother's death and religious tension, [the PM] must also cope with a newly assertive President... [and the new rulers of her northern neighbour. Speaking of whom, although 'the Taliban says girls don't need to be educated past the age of eight,'] Kabul's... caretaker Deputy Foreign Minister... said yesterday that women were allowed to go to school and could eventually return to work in Government offices. But... they would have to stay away from schools and Government offices until officials decided how girls should be educated and until preparations had been made for men and women to work in the same premises... About 30,000 Kabuli women are the sole breadwinners in their families, while tens of thousands work to help boost their husband's meagre incomes... [A]

European humanitarian aid commissioner... attacked the [U]N... yesterday for... [its] silence over the fate of Afghanistan's women... [and] failing to censure Afghanistan for slipping back into what she said was the barbarianism of the Dark Ages.

...[the 55-year-old] never went to school but was determined her daughters would have the same opportunity in education as her son, now working in Germany. She was well on the way to success. [One], aged 26, is a lawyer. [Another], 19, was studying language and literature at Kabul University and [the] 13-year-old was doing well at school... [A cousin], aged 21, was in the second year of her medical studies and wanted to be a doctor. Her sister... 23, was studying pharmacology and [their] friend from down the street... aged 22, won a technical diploma and was working as a telephone engineer. None of them expects to study or work again, even though the Taleban say they favour women's education and will find a way... for women to work in complete separation from men... "They're lying... They always say that, but they've been in control of places like Kandahar and Herat for a long time now and girls there don't go to school and women don't work," [the 26-year-old] said... Women... could go out only if wearing the head-to-foot covering called a burqa... and only if accompanied by a very close male relative like a father or a brother. [The 55-year-old and her three daughters] have no such close male relative living with them. They have not been outside the house since September 27, when the... Taleban warriors swept into the city after a lightning attack... The... women rely on... nephews to go to the bazaar to buy food.

...Paper bags have been banned... "We respect paper, whether it is written on or not. We have announced that people should not use paper for bags or put paper on the rubbish tip," said... [the] information minister of the Taleban administration. Paper bags are used in preference to more expensive plastic bags in most of Kabul's markets. [However, one] trader explained: "The Taleban said there might be words from the Holy Koran on the paper, which might then be thrown away and that would be an insult to the Koran." Since the edict there has been a rush to buy toilet paper by people unsure how wide the ban would be... [■] C]easefire talks between warring Afghan factions appeared last night to be nearing collapse, making a new push on Kabul by anti-Taleban forces increasingly likely... An... Afghan watcher with a military background said all the signs on the ground were that a major battle was likely on the plain north of Kabul, where [the Uzbek] General... sent tanks, artillery and men to join [the Lion of Panjsher's] front line last week.

...[a] ceasefire announced by Algeria's Islamic Salvation Army while stunned citizens buried the dead from a second savage massacre brings a faint glimmer of hope for an end to the killings, diplomats and analysts said yesterday... But... others saw [no] hope of a quick end to the bloodshed which Algerian officials and media as well as foreign analysts blame not on... [the] AIS but on its ruthless rival, the Armed Islamic Group (GIA). Algeria has been immersed in violence since early 1992 when the authorities scrapped a general election dominated by the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). The AIS emerged from the FIS... Foreign analysts largely accept AIS denials of involvement in killing civilians – a phenomenon that started last [year] and in which thousands have died – and blame the GIA for massacre's like Tuesday's on the edge of the capital Algiers. Officials said 85 people died. Survivors said 200. There was no claim of responsibility for that slaughter, nor for the massacre in late August in which 98 people died according to the official toll – and 300 according to residents... [– or for the massacre on August 17, when] 100 militants set up a false roadblock... between Messila and Batneh south-east of Algiers... stopped two buses [then] asked passengers for their identity cards before "cutting the throats of... 63... passengers from Batneh, including women, the elderly and children..." The... London-based... Arab daily *Al-Hayat*... quoted Algerian sources as saying th[at] massacre was to target inhabitants from a specific region in order to provoke unrest between various tribes... Complicating the issue is what political analysts say is the power struggle in Algeria's military-dominated leadership, divided on how best to end the slaughter. The failure of security forces to respond rapidly to massacres carried out near military bases has raised questions in Algeria and abroad. It has brought blunt charges of military involvement... - 1996

The Algerian military is killing and torturing its way to victory... In the basement of the Chateau Neuf police station in Algiers, they use blowtorches... [P]art of Algeria's secret gulag... Chateau Neuf and its sister torture centre, Bourouba, on the outskirts of Algiers, provoke fear even in this country, which has the worst human rights record on earth... More than 60,000 people... [including] 58 journalists... have now died in Algeria's civil war, after the coup by the military junta – le pouvoir (the power) – in early 1992 blocked the democratic elections which would have seen the FIS, come to power. The regime... has been backed by the West, worried about the rise of Islam in the Maghreb and concerned to safeguard its cut in Algeria's oil and gas exports, worth \$13.5 billion a year... The scale of the atrocities, particularly in the Mitidja plain south of Algiers, is grotesque... The Algerian press... puts down all the killings to the "terrorists" who wish to establish an Islamic fundamentalist state. The papers do not touch on what goes on in Algeria's gulag, or the disappearances. They concentrate on the killings in the countryside – all blamed on fringe Islamic armed groups... An Algerian human rights lawyer – who did not wish to be named for obvious reasons – gave his opinion as to who was behind the killings. Of the atrocities, how many are caused by le pouvoir and how many by the Islamists? "About 70[%] by le pouvoir." There is no doubt that armed fundamentalist Muslim groups have also killed thousands of people in Algeria's nightmarish civil war. But that the regime kills innocent people is plain... Algeria's PM... from 1984 to 1988, sa[ys]: "The Algerian junta is killing Islamists and blaming it on them. It's machiavellian... But everything happens in secret. You cannot find any official information, only that there is a reign of terror." [The former PM i]s especially critical of France's support of the junta [and his opinion is backed up by at least o]ne... Western... political analyst... "Le pouvoir has the French Government in particular by the balls. They have made secret donations to French parties and politicians so that they can blackmail them. At one time, five French cabinet ministers had mistresses controlled by the Algerians. And if the French won't play ball, they can bomb Paris..." This extraordinary claim is supported by an influential Rand Corporation report written by a former CIA operative... "Suspicion had arisen, including among French analysts, that the Algerian intelligence services had infiltrated and were manipulating several Algerian terrorist groups both to sow disinformation and support terrorist acts in a desire to bring the West – especially France – around to the conviction that the Islamists represented an unacceptably violent movement."

...Algerian soldiers may have dressed up as Muslim rebels to carry out atrocities in the country, according to a former soldier. The 23-year-old army conscript told the *Independent* that he had found a false beard amid the clothing of soldiers who had returned from a raid on a village where 28 civilians were later found beheaded... [He then] spoke of watching army officers torture... prisoners by boring holes in their legs – and in one case, stomach – with electric drills in a dungeon called the "killing room." Two former Algerian police officers also... accused the Algerian police and army of involvement in acts of mass torture and executions... [T]he officer in charge of the armoury at Dar al-Baida police station in Algiers, told of how his colleagues... raped... prisoners... with bottles [then]... killed... them... in cold blood... with acid-soaked rags... And an Algiers policewoman... [who,] like her colleague is seeking asylum in Britain... told how... she saw "innocent young people tortured like wild animals." ...she watched prisoners, at the rate of 12 a day, tied to ladders while salt water was poured into their stomachs until they agreed... to sign confessions.

...[unknown assailants have] cut the throats of six foreigners, apparently Asians, and dumped their bodies in the... Algiers... sewage system...

Algeria has denied that six foreigners had been killed in the capital... as reported... by Algerian newspapers. The security services, in a statement on the official news agency APS, said: "The information is without foundation." ...More than 100 foreigners... have been killed in Algeria since September 1993... Most foreign residents fled Algeria after radical Muslim rebels told them to leave the country... or risk being killed without warning... Most of the remaining foreigners... [are] working in the south... [at] the oil and gas facilities.

...ISLAMIC extremists hacked 15 people to death... with knives, axes and spades... including 10 women and a toddler... as [the] Algerian President... gave a TV address to a nation traumatised by savage violence... [The President] accused unnamed foreigners of being behind "terror

and fear” in Algeria... In a 20-minute nationwide broadcast... he... said Algeria would pursue its course of elections, pluralism and democracy but gave no date for a general election promised for the first half of this year... Added to a separate attack on Wednesday[, when]... 19 people had... their throats slit... in the Baba Ali region just south of Algiers... the death toll from Islamic radical attacks has risen to more than 200 since the... holy month of Ramadan began on January 10.

...A total of 42 people have been slain in a village in... Algeria. The massacre came just 24 hours after 93 people... including women and children... were killed in Bougara... in the bloodiest such attack since the start of an Islamic insurgency five years ago.

...Eighty-five people[have been] killed and 67 wounded by “terrorists”... The massacre, in the Baraki district on the outskirts of the Algerian capital, was the second worst single slaughter in nearly six years of violence.

...Muslim “terrorists” killed 31 people... in Medea, 80km south of... Algiers... the newspaper *El Watan* said yesterday... “A dwarf... cut the heads from the bodies... [Luckily,] a... passing... [security] patrol... prevented the whole district being massacred.” ...[Incidentally,] Algeria... votes in a new Parliament on June 5. Everyone knows the vote will be fixed.

...The first election campaign in Algeria after five years of nightmarish violence began drenched in the blood of 30 villagers massacred in a village south-west of the capital... Near midnight on Wednesday, a group of 40 armed men... entered the undefended farm and set about cutting throats, hacking away with blades, and burning the villagers alive. Those slain... included seven women and 17 children... [F]our other inhabitants had been wounded, and two women and a child were missing. One elderly villager... pulled out a hidden hunting rifle and fired on the marauders trying to break into his home, killing one... The gunshots were heard by civil militia in the neighbouring... village, who arrived to chase off the marauders... Undeterred, [the Algerian President] is pressing ahead with the elections, in which 7747 candidates from more than 40 political parties are vying for 300 seats in the National People’s Assembly. The election will be overseen by about 2000 foreign monitors.

...Algeria’s opposition parties cried foul after allies of[the] President... emerged victorious from[the] elections... All but one of the main parties... protested to the Constitutional Council about the integrity of the vote... The alleged irregularities ranged from direct vote-rigging by the authorities in favour of the... National Democratic Party (RND)[– which]... won 155 seats in the 380-member lower house, way ahead of the second-placed Movement of a Peaceful Society... with 69 seats... [–] and missing voter lists, to bans on party officials from supervising voting and vote counting... [T]he RND... hailed the election result and said it was a decisive blow to the Islamic rebels.

...More than 200 people were massacred yesterday in... Rais... in the Sidi Moussa region... the heart of what Algerians call the “triangle of death”... The government, which rarely comments on specific attacks and often seeks to minimise the death toll, gave an official count of 98 killed and 120 wounded. But hospital workers and villagers... said the death toll surpassed 300... Journalists arriving before the village was sealed saw at least 100 bodies in the streets, some badly burned... About 1500 people have been killed in attacks... since early June, when the military-backed government swept Algeria’s first multi-party elections with promises to crush the bloody insurgency... Besides frequent massacres, there have been bombings. On Thursday, bombs in the port city of Oran and in Algiers took 18 lives. Though it is never clear precisely why specific villages are targeted, the militants often want to take revenge on residents who have joined government-armed self-defence groups.

...Survivors of Algeria’s single most bloody massacre told in harrowing reports... how “terrorists” blasted their way into the village houses to hack to death children and women begging for their lives. Some pregnant women were disembowelled. Those fleeing were shot or axed and their bodies burned... Adding to the horror... scores of... Sidi Rais[’s]... youngest and most beautiful women were dragged off for “temporary marriages” – forced sex... [with] the attackers... before being abandoned and killed... “We cried with all our force but no one came to rescue us,” one traumatised young man told *El Watan* newspaper... Some of the victims were guests who had come to celebrate a boy’s circumcision.

...Sidi Rais, Ben Ali, Souhane... village names wrenched from Algerian obscurity on a wave of bloodshed... [that] commentators, diplomats and foreign analysts see no end in sight to... Political analysts say one reason rebels carry out the mass killings is to force the authorities, because of the sheer size and savagery of the carnage, to allow press coverage of rebel acts. In Sidi Rais, this aim was realised... After weeks of silence on individual massacres, this slaughter propelled... [the PM] on to state television. He vowed the state would... take measures to protect those living in lonely spots in the country... In terms of butchery Sidi Rais... surpassed all other massacres... Algeria’s Medical Union testified: “Even foetuses have been taken from their disembowelled mothers to be mutilated...”

...11 primary teachers, all women, had their throats cut in front of their pupils as they left a school at Ain Adden... [during] barbarous weekend violence attributed to Islamic extremists in Algeria.

...Despite international hand-wringing at a chain of blood-curdling massacres in Algeria, the world will not lift a finger to promote a political settlement... Violence in Algeria, however harrowing, does not threaten wider stability or impinge on Western nations’ oil and gas interests... “The oil and gas keeps flowing...” ...[but even the hand-wringers should be pleased that the Algerian] Army has essentially won the civil war against Islamic guerrillas for now, as this week’s unilateral declaration of a ceasefire by the largest guerrilla group... the [FIS]... shows.

...Algeria’s bloody insurgency shows no sign of stopping despite one militant group’s ceasefire, with witnesses reporting 105 people killed in a 48-hour spree of massacres and bombings... [T]he rival Armed Islamic Group targeted schools, apartment buildings and even a wedding... [In addition,] a candidate for an Islamic-leaning party running in Algeria’s local elections... [was] gunned down... yesterday... [T]hree supporters of the Movement of a Peaceful Society... also died in the shooting inside a mosque... The slain MPS politician is the ninth local elections candidate to be assassinated. No group has claimed responsibility... About 15 million... of [Algeria’s] 29 million people... are eligible to vote in tomorrow’s polls to choose members of 1500 local and 48 provincial councils. Nearly 80,000 candidates are running.

...the President’s supporters[took] most seats in the first local elections in seven years. Several legal opposition parties cried foul and said the result of the elections was fraudulent... [T]he first instance of a Government supporter being killed by a legal party member... [occurred] during a showdown over the outcome... During polling television footage showed... many voting centres... in Algiers, where the turnout was put officially at nearly 46[%], had]... more election officials than voters...

Thousands of people marched through Algiers yesterday as pro-Government and opposition parties protested at... widespread fraud in last week’s local and regional elections. Leading parties urged that the results be revised or scrapped... Police used batons to beat [the protesters]...

As [t]housands of French and Algerians[were marching] through Paris yesterday, their “Day for Algeria,” to call for an international probe into massacres of civilians[, the]... French... newspaper *L’Humanite Dimanche* released... what it said was a police account of a massacre of Algerian protesters by security forces in Paris in 1961... It said protesters were caught between two police forces on the Neuilly bridge... “All those caught in this immense trap were bludgeoned and thrown into the Seine river. At least 100 suffered that treatment... Among thousands of Algerians taken to a fairground in western Paris, “dozens were killed with rifle butts and pickhandles...”... [A]n inner yard at police headquarters was turned into “a killing field.” ...the account... was sent a few days after the crackdown to Paris newspapers who did not use it for fear of censorship... Although the official death toll stands at three Algerians killed, historians say more than 200 died... The Government earlier this month decided to open state archives a quarter of a century earlier than normal to shed light, and the daily *Liberation* said it had found a first list of 70 people killed... The... Paris police chief in 1961[, who is currently on]... trial for crimes against humanity in Nazi-occupied France... has admitted... that up to 30 Algerians may have died, but he blamed the killings on fights between rival Algerian nationalists.

...Assailants cut the throats of 29 people in a massacre in an Algerian village 400km southwest of Algiers at the weekend.

...[28] civilians were killed... in Algeria at the weekend... Four men were tied up, locked inside their truck and burned alive by... extremists in Algeria last week...

[Suspected] Muslim rebels... have killed at least 79 civilians in three massacres, a roadblock attack and a bombing in Algeria in a flare-up of violence before elections this week.

...As Algeria took another step yesterday towards completing a parliamentary election, details emerged of grisly massacres of more than 90 civilians, mostly children and women. As expected, most of the representatives chosen by local councils to sit in the new... 144-seat upper house, known as the Council of the Nation... were followers of the President.

...At least 74 people have been massacred in Algeria since Saturday... according to independent press reports. The latest mass killings were concentrated in the west of the country... More than 30 people were murdered in Algeria every day last week... Amnesty International estimates that some 80,000 people have been killed... since the outbreak of... Islamic insurgency in 1992.

...“We are fighting the government because the government is against God.” [That is the claim of the]... terrorists who are seeking to convert... Algeria... into a radical Islamic state... The rest of the world has paid little attention to this nation’s troubles. Yet Algeria represents one of revolutionary Islam’s most crucial battlegrounds. Modern Algerian history begins in 1962, when nationalists threw off France’s 132-year-long colonial rule after a bloody eight-year war. The new leaders converted prosperous farms into Soviet-style cooperatives and invested the country’s oil wealth in inefficient state-run industries. To boost Arab consciousness, they hired thousands of teachers who quietly indoctrinated a generation of Algerian youth with Islamic ideology. That decision would come back to haunt the nation. When oil prices crashed in the 1980s, the socialist economy nose-dived... Reports of corruption among the country’s leaders were widespread. Meanwhile, Algeria began borrowing heavily, and a ballooning foreign debt fed anti-Western feeling. Into this vacuum stepped religious extremists preaching Islam as the solution... In late 1991 radical Islamic groups began to attack police and the military... The most militant formed the... GIA... with a core of battle-hardened veterans who had fought the Russians in Afghanistan. The terrorists total about 5000, in bands of a few dozen each, supported by outside sympathisers. They believe they have a sacred mission... Unfortunately, the Algerian government’s determination to defeat the extremists has led to cruelties that, in some cases, rival those of the terrorists. The US State Department reports “security forces carried out extrajudicial killings... and... were responsible for ‘numerous cases of disappearance,’...” Every day, men in skullcaps and women in drab robes gather in the cramped Algiers office of [a] human-rights lawyer hoping for news of missing relatives... [The lawyer] shows me a thick binder filled with 309 photos... [of people. He] has many such folders. The one thing they have in common is that all the people... vanished without a trace. “It’s no mystery... They were arrested by the security forces.” ...If it is to escape the clutches of radical Islam, Algeria must solve its own problems, but... [a] militant Islamic takeover would threaten secular and pro-Western regimes in the Middle East and give Islamic terrorists a base on the doorstep of Europe... On the other hand, if Algeria’s Islamists are defeated, says a senior US State Department official, “it will strengthen the backbone of democrats in the Muslim world. They will see that radical Islam is not the wave of the future.”

...Iran’s moderate President-elect... was swept into office on a tide of desire for change after 18 years of revolution... [He is] Iran’s fifth President since Shi’ite Muslim fundamentalists toppled the Shah in 1979... [However, the] Ayatollah... tacitly backed the loser... [and his word as] spiritual successor to the revolution’s founder... remains sacrosanct and unchallengeable in all affairs of state including foreign policy.

...the crown jewel of the... [Shah’s] car collection – a rare 1971 Lamborghini Miura SVJ – [has been bought] for... \$NZ690,000... The car was one of 10 put up for auction in Geneva... Islamic revolutionaries separated the 10 cars from... the [Shah’s]... collection of 3000 after they overthrew him.

...TEHRAN – Closing a three-day summit, leaders of the world’s Muslim nations have strongly condemned religious-inspired terrorism, declaring... “the killing of innocent people is forbidden in Islam.” But the joint declaration of the 55-member Organisation of the Islamic Conference made no mention of the Middle East peace process or sanctions against Iraq, underscoring differences among nations bound by faith but divided by politics.

...[an] Iraqi refugee says [a NZ] Employment Service official threatened to cut his dole because he refused to clean toilets. Even[the] Iraqi President... had not treated him like that, [he said, before adding that, as] a Muslim... it was against his religious beliefs to clean toilets... [– although he] was happy to do [other forms of cleaning. He didn’t say whether it was against his religious beliefs to use toilets!

...it was the senior engineer’s bad luck that the head of the Iraqi Olympics Committee’s personal elevator broke down. He wasn’t the maintenance man for the lift but the President’s son insisted he mend it. A few hours later it broke down again and the engineer was dispatched to the Olympics Committee Detention Centre. “I was stripped, beaten with cables until I bled and made to carry concrete blocks on my chest. Then they made myself and 23 other prisoners jump into a sewage pit. Can you imagine this? All of us – doctors, engineers, veterinary surgeons, even government bodyguards – all ordered to smear our heads and bodies with sewage and dirt.” The purpose, he now believes, was not to humiliate the prisoners. It was to infect their wounds. “When someone persuaded the son to release me after four days, I returned to my office and one of the girls there fainted when she saw me. I couldn’t even get doctors to treat my wounds – they were too frightened of the Government.” Today, in the safety of Lebanon and with his resettlement papers for the US in his possession, the engineer gives an account of his former master. “He was crazy, he wasn’t mad. He loved money and power and he loved women very much. He had a secretary who hunted girls for him – in the universities, in the ministries. Usually, they agreed to sleep with him. They could do nothing else.” The engineer had to attend to the son’s cassette player. “He would listen to Beethoven and Arabic songs and say ‘play cassette three’ and listen to the Koran. But he also watched videos of his prisoners being tortured. I don’t know if he got a kick out of this but, of course, by having the tortures taped he was making sure that his orders were being carried out. There was a manservant of the son whom I met. His job was to bring the son his nargila (hubble-bubble pipe) and one day the charcoal fell to the ground. So the son forced the manservant to hold a red-hot charcoal until it had burned a hole right through his hand.” There are stories aplenty of the son’s cruelty, and of the equally tormented spirit of his younger brother’]...

Syria, Iraq face trouble with rising sons... The immediate future of... [two] of the Arab world’s most powerful clans... will be shaped by how internal tribal differences can be settled... over whether the eldest sons should be allowed to succeed their fathers... It is an open secret that the two dictators have been grooming their sons as future rulers, but this has provoked rumblings of dissatisfaction within the ruling establishments of both countries. Modern Iraq and Syria were created by the British and French mandates that replaced Ottoman rule after... [WW1]. But the monarchies in Baghdad and Damascus were soon forced to give way to republican systems of government that have never recognised dynastic succession. Yet[the two] Presidents... believe their sons have qualities of leadership that give them the right one day to step into their fathers’ shoes. But parental pride and hopes of preserving the families’ political heritage will not be enough to ensure an easy transition. In Baghdad,[the President’s] security forces have traced the guns used in the failed attempt to assassinate the dictator’s son... to the secret police – one of the pillars of [the President’s] regime. The four bullets still lodged in [the son’s] spine have left the 33-year-old partially paralysed but have not diminished his father’s hopes. [The son], a convicted murderer and rapist, [who] retains the rank of lieutenant-general, heads the Iraqi Olympic Committee and operates two newspapers and a television station. For the persecuted Iraqis, he is the mirror image of [his father]. One quality he has inherited is the penchant for killing his critics. Like his father, [the son] never hesitates to assume the role of executioner. His own sisters... will never forgive him for beheading their husbands. [The son] never graduated beyond elementary school but this was no obstacle to being awarded a first-class degree by Baghdad’s engineering college. At the degree ceremony, his nominal professor said... “I gave him 99[%] because he did not attend any classes. If he had attended, I would have given him 100[%].” If Iraq’s future seems bleak, the people of Syria have reason to be thankful that their President’s heir-apparent is at least better educated and more civilised.

...Soccer's world government body Fifa is investigating reports that [the Iraqi President's] son had the Iraqi team beaten after it lost to Kazakhstan and was eliminated from next year's World Cup contest... The English newspaper the *Sunday Times* reported at the weekend that [the son] ordered the Iraqi team to be taken to a military base and to be caned on the soles of their feet and beaten on their backs. Earlier this month, Iraqi dissidents also claimed that [the] son ordered the team to be imprisoned and tortured and to have hair and moustaches shaved off on their return to Iraq following their June 29 defeat. Yesterday, the London-based Iraqi National Congress, an umbrella group representing several Iraqi opposition groups, said [the son] killed a woman this month... [B]odyguards took her to his palace after he spotted her walking in a Baghdad street. "He tried to have sex with her but failed and in a fit of anger he shot her. As compensation, her family received \$US700... a car and a promise of \$US50 monthly..." The son... remained impotent despite several operations following the assassination bid... on December 12[. 1996, when he] was hit by 14 bullets... The report could not be independently verified... Meanwhile, Jordan yesterday expelled seven Iraqi diplomats to show its outrage over Iraq's execution of four Jordanians accused to smuggling \$US850... worth of car parts.

...Until last year, the daughters of Iraq[']s President... were virtually unknown to the public. The last photograph of them, in 1988, shows attractive women, standing close to their husbands (all senior officials in their father's government), smiling nervously... The sisters have lived their lives largely in seclusion and, unlike many dictators' families, do not entertain palace hangers-on. "They were simply too dangerous to get to know," says a former Iraqi general... Last February, their husbands... were slaughtered in a shoot-out ordered by [their father. The husbands]... paid the price of disloyalty to the man who has ruled Iraq for 18 years... [An] estimated 1.6 million Iraqis [ha]ve lost their lives since he came to power.

...A scale model of... [a grand mosque] in Baghdad has been given the once-over by the man after whom it is named – [Iraq's President. When]... the mosque is finished it will hold 30,000 worshippers... [While on the topic of mosques, a] Belgian company has developed an alarm clock that calls its users to Islamic prayer no matter where they are in the world... [[T]he clock] calculates prayer times as determined by the *Koran* and relays the clear voice of a muezzin calling the faithful to prayer for 2 minutes and 40 seconds...

The Army chief of staff in the Comoro Islands warned local women and girls yesterday that any of them caught wearing mini-skirts or tight-fitting dresses would be imprisoned... [He] also warned men not to sport... necklaces... earrings... or dreadlocks... on the islands with their mainly Muslim population... [By the way, Afghanistan's] Taliban... has announced an Islamic code for sportsmen... The code... banning the wearing of shorts... also ordered sportsmen and spectators not to use tobacco products... and... not to clap... [S]pectators applauding sportsmen must shout the slogan "All[ah]-o-Akbar" (God is great) instead... All games, training and spectators must stop when the muezzin calls for prayers... [However, the] prolonged civil war has destroyed many of the sports facilities in Afghanistan and hundreds of athletes have fled abroad.

...[yesterday, cricketers became] the first sports people to test the new... Taliban... sports code... [P]layers and spectators stopped for prayers... instead of stopping for tea... [Meanwhile,] Taliban patrols promoting virtue and suppressing vice took over barbershops in Kabul, [then] gave 120 males forced haircuts and charged them 5000 afghanis... each. According to the... [fundamentalists,] long hair gets in the way during prayer.

...700 Afghan men have been punished according to Islamic law for trimming their beards, following intensive Taliban anti-vice checks along Kabul's southbound highway... [In another development, the] Taliban's religious police have issued new regulations restricting Afghan women's access to aid... [outlawing] make-up, jewellery... and ordering them to avoid making noise when they walk... A large proportion of aid programmes are aimed at women... many of whom have been driven to destitution by the... ban on women working.

...A Taliban food blockade on opposition-held central Afghanistan and the looting of U[N] wheat by their own leaders has placed thousands of Afghans at risk of starvation, aid workers warned yesterday.

...*Desperate Afghans in barter war*... The people of Kabul are selling their possessions to survive another winter at war... The U[N] estimates that as many as half of Kabul's houses [have been] destroyed or severely damaged... Many have no glass in their windows and plastic sheeting does not provide any insulation... when night temperatures are 20 deg below zero... an aid worker said. Half the city lacks electricity... Having a job does not necessarily make much difference... [S]ince... September last year... [civil] servants... have seen the Afghan currency depreciate to the point where its buying power is equivalent to about \$5 a month... Dealers said the Afghani had lost at least 10[%] in a week because of an influx of new banknotes with old serial numbers imported to Kabul from an unknown destination... Food prices are soaring as the... currency drops... [Kabul has] more than 10,000 invalids and disabled and some 60,000 street children... [□ The] Taliban have changed the name of Afghanistan from the Islamic State of Afghanistan to the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. The... leader of the Taliban... is known as Emir al-Momineen (Leader of the Faithful).

...THE Commander of the Faithful squats on a simple bed in a narrow room inside the governor's mansion in Kandahar... The paintings adorning the governor's residence have been ripped down; it is forbidden to depict Allah's creations. The... Faithful... is an imposing figure. One of his eyes was blown away in a gunfight with Russian troops, and his eyelid is stitched shut... To challenge him is akin to a sin... These days, most of... [his] visitors are military commanders who want their spiritual leader's blessing before launching the next... battle in the Taliban militia's conquest of Afghanistan... In his first interview with a western publication, the stocky, 37-year-old Taliban leader says, "The time for a negotiated settlement is running out fast. We feel a military solution has better prospects now." [His] divine mission, he says, is to rid Afghanistan of its bandit warlords and restore a truly Islamic government. In Kandahar, this means collecting all the guns as well as stringing up confiscated TV sets and VCRs from lampposts... [Afghanistan's spiritual leader] concedes he is no great Islamic theologian – his studies were interrupted by the jihad... against the Soviets in which he was wounded four times – but he and his followers are convinced that Allah is on their side. "Only if we deviate from Islam will we start losing," [he] says... The interview stops as a Taliban fighter comes forwards bowing to him. The leader listens impassively to the man's whispered pleas, then reaches into a metal strongbox beside his bed. Using both hands, he scoops up a heap of banknotes for the soldier... This is how... one of the most improbable characters in Afghanistan's tortured history... rules... The devout son of a poor farmer... he returned home after the Russian retreat to resume his studies in [his] village's mud-walled Koranic school. But after the Moscow-backed regime of Najibullah fell in April 1992, the country slid into lawlessness... One outrage that finally provoked [the Faithful's] wrath was a deadly tank battle in Kandahar between two militia commanders who fancied the same handsome boy. In 1994, [the Faithful] launched the Taliban to restore order... During the holy war against the Russians, [his] favourite weapon was the rocket-propelled grenade. Today, it is faith. Shortly before the attack on Kabul, [the Faithful] entered Kandahar's grand mosque and emerged with a holy cloth from the Prophet Mohammed, which he waved from the rooftop... This sacred relic had been only displayed a few times this century... Kabul fell effortlessly, and [the Faithful's] belief in his God-guided destiny swelled. He may have to haul out the object again: the Taliban are preparing an offensive against their northern enemies... When all of Afghanistan falls... he'll move to Kabul. After that? "We have no intention of... [poking] our noses elsewhere." Even then, few westerners are likely to see his face; he refuses to be photographed or filmed.

...[the] Taliban have told[Afghan] news agencies... they cannot photograph... [or] film... living bodies... and[. after dubbing a]... famous cliff carving "un-Islamic"... Taliban fighters... warned they will demolish[the] massive... ancient statue of Buddha if they advance into enemy territory.

...The snows are melting in the passes of Afghanistan, and the fundamentalist Taliban militia... will soon be moving north to complete their conquest of the country. Another chapter of the Great Game is closing – which means that the next is beginning. The struggle to control the strategic crossroads of Afghanistan was first called the Great Game in the 19th century, when the British in India played it against Russians encroaching from the north. Now the British are gone, but the same patterns of intervention and alliances continue. The next round of the game involves a realignment of the alliances that came together after the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979: the U[S], Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia on

one side, India, Russia and Iran on the other. But this time, the fragile new countries of Central Asia may be dragged into the chaos as well. All this is far beyond the ken of the ragged soldiers of the Taliban, a force of only ten thousand mostly illiterate young men... All they know is that they obey [the Commander of the Faithful] (now known as “King of the Believers”)... All the rest of the world notices is that they are religious fanatics of the most radically conservative kind. In areas captured by the Taliban trees are festooned with smashed television sets strung together with miles of magnetic tape torn from audio and video cassettes... The blind extremism of the Taliban has provoked strong criticism in Iran, where [the] Ayatollah... accused them last year of “defaming Islam”... But [the Taliban] know no better. What they are actually doing is re-creating the harsh life they knew in the refugee camps of north-west Pakistan, which is where most of them grew up. In the camps there was no entertainment, and no education even for boys except the rote learning of large parts of the Koran in Arabic, a language none of them understand[‘the Koran is held by Muslims to be untranslatable, although versions or interpretations in many other languages are available’ – but not including Pashto, apparently)]. So it makes perfect sense to them... to [educate the next generation of boys by having them also rote learn *large parts of the Koran*]... In the same way, the Taliban attitude towards women is driven not so much by Islam but by the traditions of the villages... of southern, Pashto-speaking Afghanistan, where women are little more than house-slaves... There is virtually no chance that the Taliban can be stopped from rolling over the nine northern provinces... that they do not already control in the next month or so... Between the money the Taliban get from their foreign supporters... Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the U[S]... and the money they earn from exporting heroin (the Afghan opium crop has tripled in the past four years, and now accounts for half the global production), they hardly ever have to fight as they advance. They just bribe the opposition commanders into quitting... That is why... [the] Uzbek General... did the unthinkable in January and blew the bridges south of the Salang tunnel, for 30 years the only link between Kabul and the northern provinces in wintertime... The question is what happens next... There is little likelihood that the fighting will stop when the Taliban close up to the northern frontier with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. Even if they do not try to push any further, their brand of Islam and their language make them unwelcome interlopers in the north, and their intolerance will soon stimulate local resistance... For Pakistan, the reason to back the Taliban is strategic... For Washington and Riyadh, the logic in backing the Taliban is even simpler. Anything that is bad for Iran, they reason, is good for the U[S] and Saudi Arabia [a Muslim country whose government believes the internet is bad – and, therefore, ‘forbids ordinary citizens from using’ it; the country also ‘imposes segregation of the sexes in schools, universities and work places’]... The line-up on the other side is even simpler to explain. Iran fears the victimisation of Afghanistan’s Shia minority and the extension of Pakistan’s power to its own frontier. Russia fears the destabilisation of Central Asia. India fears that bored Taliban, after victory in Afghanistan, will find a new cause to fight for in the predominantly Muslim Indian state of Kashmir... In these circumstances the best that can be expected is a continuing low-level conflict across Afghanistan’s northern border. The worst is a great deal worse: the toppling of all Central Asia into the kind of chaos that has swept both the Caucasus and the Balkans in the past five years. It’s hard to see how that can benefit either the U[S] or Pakistan].

...Villagers buried... bodies near the... Afghan opposition stronghold of Mazar-i-Sharif yesterday after the... Taliban militia retreated... The Shi’ite... Hezb-i-Wahdat militia has accused the Taliban of massacring 70 civilians[mostly]... women and children... in the village at the weekend and the Iranian foreign ministry has issued a condemnation. A Taliban spokesman... had no information about the reported incident, but denied... the Taliban could have been responsible for what he called an anti-Islamic act. “Our leader... has ordered us to protect the people. We began our struggle to stop these kinds of actions,”... The Taliban are not known to have carried out mass killings in the past... Aid workers said they could not confirm that a massacre had taken place. They had been unable to see the bodies before they were buried and could not say... how they died.

...[the UN] secretary-general... is deeply concerned about reports of the discovery of mass graves of Taliban soldiers in northern Afghanistan and has asked his special mission there to find out more about “this sad situation.”

...A UN team[has] spent the past two days in northern Afghanistan investigating... what was apparently mass slaughter on both sides of the conflict... [T]hey... found evidence of mass killings of ethnic Uzbeks by Taliban troops... Some of the bodies were stuffed into deep wells... They said it was possible some of the victims were thrown into the wells while still alive. There was... evidence that grenades had been tossed into the wells and that machine-guns had blasted away at those trapped inside... Other corpses showed signs of torture... The UN team... also... found dozens of skeletons, their heads wrapped in the black turbans worn by Taliban soldiers, in nine different wells... “It appears that everybody was butchering everybody up there,” said one UN official... the death toll could be as high as 4000... [In related news, g]unmen killed about 30 foreign tourists in an attack on an ancient temple in Egypt’s southern town of Luxor yesterday, security sources said. It was the bloodiest assault since Muslim militants took up arms in 1992 to set up a purist Islamic state... No N[Z]ers are believed to be among those who died or were injured...

A terrified 21-year-old Dargaville woman hid... [for] three hours... in an Egyptian tomb with her boyfriend... aged 26, of Pukekohe... as gunshots rang out around them during the terrorist attack on... Luxor (formerly Thebes)... [The couple] were one week into their Egyptian holiday and visited the Hatshepsut temple on Monday shortly before the attack by the Islamic group in which 67 were killed... 57 tourists died. [Her mother] said she was trying to convince the pair to leave... but they had not been able to get flights out[due to ‘a mass exodus of tourists leaving Egypt’]...

Britain is flying its citizens home after the massacre but the N[Z] Government is taking a more relaxed approach to the safety of Kiwis in Egypt... [The NZ] Ministry of Foreign Affairs says it has not issued a warning for people not to go to Egypt because it would deny them their rights to travel. It... is not clear how many are holidaying in the popular tourist destination, which draws up to 10,000 N[Z]ers a year. Hundreds of Britons will fly home today on seven special flights out of Luxor after the slaughter left six of their countrymen dead and two missing... Travel insurance companies are reconsidering cover for Egypt but any insurance confirmed before yesterday will remain.

...Police say the main Islamic militant group in Egypt... [-] the... Al-Gama’a al-Islamiya (Islamic Group)... [-] has admitted it mounted the terror attack on Luxor. A witness at the scene said he saw a note which read “No to tourists in Egypt – [the blind cleric]’s Squadron of Havoc and Destruction.” ...[the] blind cleric... is... serving a life sentence in the U[S] for conspiring to blow up the U[N] building and other New York landmarks... [However, a] spokesman for... the... [blind cleric] said yesterday that the... Islamic Group... aimed to damage... [Egypt’s] \$4.83 billion a year tourism industry... not tourists... “If they claim responsibility for [the latest] violence, then it is a major change in their policy.”

...The massacre at the Egyptian temple on Monday was an attempt to take hostages which went horribly wrong, according to the militant group behind the attack. Al-Gama’a al-Islamiya... sent a message to Reuters saying it had planned to take hostage as many tourists as possible to force the U[S] to release its leader... “But the rash behaviour and irresponsibility of Government security forces with regard to tourist and civilian lives led to the high number of fatalities.”

...An Egyptian... militant group which had claimed responsibility for... [t]he bloodiest attack in Egypt’s five-year Islamic insurgency... said it would stop targeting tourists as a tactic in its war with the Government... [which has killed] more than 1150 police, Muslim militants and civilians...

Egyptian... militants have targeted Egypt’s lucrative tourism industry... kill[ing] 34 foreign tourists in the past five years... [excluding Luxor. O]n September 18... two brothers shot at and petrol-bombed a tour bus in central Cairo, killing nine German tourists and an Egyptian driver...

Egyptian security officials have arrested four mental health officials for allegedly taking bribes and aiding the escape of the man who attacked a tour bus at the Egyptian Museum... [on September 18. Incidentally, a]n Egyptian lawyer... has filed a lawsuit against[the] British... government over the Luxor massacre and is demanding \$8.5 billion compensation... [He] claims Britain is to blame because it provides a haven to terrorists.

...British officials have vehemently rejected accusations... that Britain was harbouring Islamic “terrorists”... According to the Egyptian press, several leaders of the fundamentalist groups Jihad and Tala-eh al-Fatah benefit from political asylum in Britain. Cairo has sentenced some of them to death or prison sentences, or has issued arrest warrants against them, for ordering or financing attacks in Egypt.

...Egyptian police have detained 42 suspected members of the Gama'a al-Islamiya... for killing 58 foreign tourists and four Egyptians at Luxor... "My father's death would have been easier to bear than this," lamented[an] Egyptian tour bus driver... He was contemplating the aftermath of... last month[s]... carnage at the Queen Hatshepsut temple... The attack, the first in Luxor, has wiped the smiles off the faces of residents who make their living from the 2 million tourists who flock each year to the area's dazzling monuments... Their glum faces belied the "Smile, you are in Luxor" signs dotting the town. "People look as if they are at a funeral, everybody is pessimistic,"... The attack coincided with the start of the winter tourist season... The town, with its mild sunny weather, is a popular winter holiday destination. But... yesterday... there were hardly any foreigners milling about the ruins, where bloodstains had been scrubbed from walls and paving stones. And few foreign faces were to be seen in Luxor town... Many countries have issued travel warnings about Egypt and analysts say tourism will take a while to recover... "People want to go on holiday and not into a war zone," said... the director of Bonn's Phoenix travel agency, which[has already] had 182 customers cancel holidays to Egypt. - 1997

Egypt has launched an armed attack on lost tourism... Hotel and tour operators say business is a mere 10-15% of what it was before what they refer to as "the accident" at Luxor in November. In response, the country has strikingly militarised to protect its second-largest industry... [However, the] extra security... can be a double-edged sword... It... would seem to sap a tour to Egypt of any spontaneity and remind tourists and Egyptians that the place isn't entirely safe.

...THE... chairman of the National Transportation and Safety Board, said... [yesterday that the] engines on EgyptAir Flight 990 were shut down manually as the Boeing 767 plunged toward the Atlantic at near supersonic speed... [T]his had been gleaned from the flight data recorder of the plane which crashed [a fortnight ago], killing all 217 people aboard... He said the information raised many questions. "Further investigation, including information on the cockpit voice recorder, might shed some light,"... The Navy resumed its search on Friday for the recording device.

...Egyptian airline pilots welcomed a statement by U[S] investigators yesterday that cast doubt on reports that the co-pilot of EgyptAir Flight 990 downed the plane deliberately. The... director of the US National Transportation Safety Board... had denounced speculative reports about conversations taped by the cockpit's voice recorder, saying some were "flat wrong." Speculation on the cause of the crash heightened last week when anonymous officials were quoted as saying that the voice of co-pilot Gameel al-Battouti was heard on the cockpit recorder saying: "I made my decision now. I put my faith in God's hands." ...yesterday, a Government official said the first phrase about the decision had not been taped at all and was the result of confusion among investigators... But investigators have not excluded the possibility the plane was crashed intentionally... Meanwhile, Egypt's Economy Minister... said relatives of the crash victims would receive compensation after submitting death certificates and proof of relationship. The amount has not been disclosed... In... news... from... the... [other side of the Middle East,] press reports yesterday cited [a]... former head of [Iran's] Supreme Court, as referring to several students as "martyrs." The term is customarily used in Iran for those who have died in the name of Islam or the Islamic Republic... Five Iranian students were killed in a bloody raid by police on a Tehran university dormitory and dozens more who were wounded have disappeared at the hands of the secret police... Iran's top security body, chaired by[Iran's] President... yesterday... vowed to dismiss the police official who gave the order for the attack[, which]... has sparked a wave of campus unrest... [- t]he chancellor of Tehran university and 18 faculty department heads have resigned over the incident... [-] and thrown the nation into political turmoil.

...IRAN'S first local election in 20 years drew a heavy turnout yesterday... Polling stations in some provincial towns ran out of ballots and voting hours in larger cities had to be extended. The crush of voters in Tehran and other big cities was a sign of strong interest in a contest that could give supporters of[the] President... the upper hand in a power struggle against hardliners in the Islamic government. The election could turn out to be a replay of the May 1997 presidential polls... At that time, many Iranians said they were voting for [the President] only to show their opposition to the hardline clerics... Though council elections are mandated by the constitution, they have not been held since the Islamic revolution in 1979.

...[nearly 2 decades 'have passed since the Ayatollah Khomeini and his Shiite extremists overthrew the shah, but the Islamic revolution has brought only pain and poverty to the people of Iran. A generation of young Iranians lost their lives in a futile eight-year war with Iraq. And in place of foreign policy, the Ayatollah launched a campaign of assassination and hostage-taking. Corrupt mullahs (members of the Muslim clergy), a shattered economy and a dispirited populace are the fruits of fundamentalist rule. BUT THERE ARE strong indications now that the mullahs and their radical followers are losing the struggle for Iran's soul. One day a taxi driver asked me whether Americans had liked Ayatollah Khomeini. "Not very much," I confessed, expecting an angry reaction. "Neither did we!" he shot back. Much dissatisfaction stems from the revolution's failure to deliver on the economy. Khomeini promised to transform the lives of the poor, but unemployment now stands at roughly 30%. Many industries nationalized by the mullahs operate at under two-thirds of their 1979 capacity. Oil production is down by more than a third. Galloping inflation has multiplied the price of rice ten times and meat almost 15 times.']

... "Horses have always enjoyed a privileged status... in Oman,"... said my guide... "In olden times, they were the Sultan's prized possession - so they were kept on the rooftop of the castle and watered by buckets drawn up from underground irrigation channels." ...Being a horse in Oman would certainly have been better than being a human on the wrong end of the Sultan's wrath. Enemies who ventured too close... were liable to be drenched with boiling honey, poured from special openings in the castle tower. Fortification has been a specialty of Oman's rulers for more[than] a thousand years. Throughout this starkly beautiful country... can be found more than 500 old castles, forts, walled cities and defence towers. Mudbrick houses were the first structures in Oman, [but] with the... need to defend the country against invasion, the... largest and most detailed... were soon converted into intricate fortresses. The Portuguese, who invaded and ravaged the country from the early 1500s, refined the concept of fortification, and this pattern was enthusiastically adopted and further refined by the Omanis, who built ever bigger and better forts. Nizwa fort, which became a virtual prototype for fortress construction, was converted over 12 years... a task completed in 1649. This remarkable structure, with its interconnecting tunnels, escape routes and secret passages, was fully restored between 1988-91. Today, visitors can roam freely through the fortress. Oman was for many centuries one of the world's most closed countries. The fortress mentality was shown by the xenophobic Sultan... who ruled with an iron fist from 1938 through to his overthrow by his son, the present Sultan... in 1970. Before 1970, there were no schools, no newspapers, and no radio or television in the capital, Muscat, and Oman had just 10km of paved roads. Coastal dwellers were prohibited from visiting the inland, and vice versa. Even the one motor car in the country, owned by the Sultan for appearances, was pushed by servants, petrol being a prohibited import. Despite this isolationist heritage, Oman has made greater strides in the last 28 years than probably any other nation on earth. It is socially one of the most liberal countries in the Arab world, with its Ibadhi sect of Islam being renowned for tolerance. Israelis are welcome to visit the country, most hotels have well-stocked bars... women wear superbly coloured outfits, covering their heads to the bare minimum. [However, although the country's 'GNP in the early 1990s was equal to Saudi Arabia's at \$US8000, Saudi Arabia's infant mortality rate of 54 per 1000 live births was much lower than Oman's 100, which was comparable to the 120 rate of its southern neighbour Yemen - the country that is both at the foot of the Arabian peninsula and the 17 nation Arab world's GNP scale (\$US400)']...

10 US[intelligence officers who have flown to Yemen to investigate last week's hostage shootout... believe that the 16 tourists... were kidnapped as direct retribution for last month's air strikes on Iraq. The kidnapping was not to force the release of local Islamic militants, as Yemeni authorities originally claimed... US and British officials remain unhappy about the Yemen authorities' lack of cooperation following the chaotic raid by security forces to free the hostages. Yemeni authorities insist that the rescue bid only began after the kidnappers started executing the hostages, but six survivors say all the hostages were alive when the gun battle started. Analysts in both Sanaa and Aden say the tour group was kidnapped because of a dispute between the Yemeni Government and... the Islamic Jihad... over the terms of its disbandment and... integration into

the Yemeni armed forces. They say the group was one of five or six militant organisations formed about 1993 with Government backing to sow dissent in the more liberal and secular south. A Yemeni journalist said: "The problem is the Government created a monster they could not control."

...The climbers were faced with a stark choice. Having risked their lives on some of the most challenging mountains in the world, where only their skill and courage had kept them going, the four-strong American group seized by kidnappers during an expedition in a remote part of former Soviet-controlled Asia contemplated the ultimate dilemma: kill their guard or face being killed themselves. In an epic real-life adventure story that has prompted a frenzied bidding war between Hollywood film studios and New York publishers, the real story of the mountaineers and the guard they pushed off a cliff to certain death is only now beginning to emerge... [However, s]ince returning to the US... the climbers have[also] been criticised for going to such a[n] unstable area. The US State Department has been warning Americans to stay away from the region for more than a year... [M]embers of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan... [are] fighting for the creation of an independent Muslim state where the borders of Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan converge. The group regularly kidnaps Westerners and has plunged the area into political chaos.

...Russian police say Islamic terrorists are behind a wave of Moscow bombings that have killed almost 300 people... [Russia's] Deputy Interior Minister... said police were examining reports that \$US20 million... was recently transferred from a Middle Eastern terrorist network to the rebel Russian republic of Chechnya to finance the bombing campaign... "It is time to recognise that terrorism has become Russia's national problem," said [Russia's P]M... "It is obvious to us that in Dagestan and in Moscow we are dealing not with independent fighters, but rather with well-trained international saboteurs." ...the leaders... belong to the fundamentalist Wahhabi sect and see their actions as part of an international holy war. The campaign began in the 1980s when... militants went to Afghanistan to fight Soviet forces, and has since moved on to wars [around the Middle East]...

The Taliban... warned yesterday of a regional "fireball" if Iran turned a huge military border buildup into an invasion... Tension between the two neighbours follows the disappearance of 11 Iranian diplomats and one journalist during a Taliban takeover of [an] opposition stronghold... last month, and charges of Taliban massacres in the area... The opponents of Afghanistan's hard-line Taliban... say[its] troops massacred at least 600 civilians... [T]he killings occurred on January 1 and 2... [after the] Taliban captured the... north-western Qaisar district... and began a campaign of terror... The Taliban's ambassador to Pakistan... dismissed the accusations as "absolutely untrue." ...[However, UN officials] in Islamabad... said they had received some security reports suggesting mass killings had taken place in Qaisar district, followed by a mass exodus...

Afghanistan's worst disaster since the Soviet invasion of 1979 is unfolding as drought, famine and renewed civil war drive 300 families a day into refugee camps. The crisis has gathered pace with fresh fighting between the Northern Alliance and the ruling Taliban majority, which rejected U[N] calls for a ceasefire to help the country's 800,000 displaced people living in extreme squalor. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees... said the situation was desperate. He was speaking after a four-day mission to Afghanistan had failed to persuade the Taliban to accept a truce on humanitarian grounds. Last week, Taliban forces launched a major assault in the central province of Bamiyan...

Defying protests from around the world, the radical Taliban... have begun destroying all "icons" – including two huge, 2000-year-old Buddha statues – because they are un-Islamic... The... Buddhas... are... in the central A[f]ghan city of Bamiyan[, which]... has changed hands three times in the past 18 months during fighting between the Taliban and opposition forces. The figures, one of them the world's tallest standing Buddha, soar 55m over an exquisite valley... The... U[N] World Heritage List[ed]... figures are now likely to be blasted by tank shells... The UN, which does not recognise the Taliban, recently imposed sanctions because of its refusal to hand over... the wealthy Saudi living in exile in Afghanistan, who is accused of being a terrorist mastermind... The Taliban had previously held off from destroying the Bamiyan Buddhas, but as the movement has become more isolated, it has decided to follow its principles which, it claims, follow the word of the Prophet Mohammad to the letter.

...Afghanistan's ruling Taliban movement yesterday banned the import of 30 items it said were un-Islamic, including playing cards, neckties, lipsticks, nail polish and chessboards... Other items banned for being "against the Sharia,"... include fireworks, statues, fashion catalogues... greeting cards featuring pictures of people, musical instruments and cassettes. Also banned were computer disks, movies, satellite TV dishes, pig-fat products and anything made of human hair.

...though... just 18 years old, [she]'s already seen more horror and suffered more humiliation than most people will ever see in a lifetime... Now that she is safely out of Afghanistan, [she] no longer faces the risk of mutilation for wearing nail polish, but she fears for her friends... Women... cannot visit a male doctor, and as female doctors are prevented from working, the mortality rate among newborn babies and women in general is one of the highest in the world... According to the Taliban: "*It is biologically, religiously and prophetically proven that women are inferior to men.*"

...Refugees arriving in northern Afghanistan tell of a fresh wave of terror at home... The Taliban ordered the population of the war-ravaged northern town of Taleqan into its main square and began parading three dogs. Each had a shaved head stencilled with the names of the men the movement most despised – [the] ousted Afghan President[, the]... exiled King... and the U[S] President... Then they poured petrol on the dogs and set fire to them... The burning of the dogs 10 days ago was meant to serve as a warning.

...Civilians are burned alive, whipped with electric cable and mutilated with... bayonets... political opponents disappear; adulterers are lashed in public or stoned to death; homosexuals are executed by having a wall topple on them; and those who cannot recite their prayers or who trim their beards to less than fist-length are beaten by the thuggish foot-soldiers of the Ministry for the Prevention of Vice and the Promotion of Virtue... The Afghans are victims of a legal system that has few basic rights and little forensic skills. Instead, it functions on knee-jerk findings of guilt and the irreversible punishments of stoning, flogging, amputation and execution. This is a country in which a barely educated band of schoolyard bullies is in control and the only book they have read is the Koran. They have been described... as "perhaps the most fiercely anti-modernist movement in any Asian country since the Boxer Rebellion"... Academic and press freedom do not exist. The Taliban this year threatened to make members of the minority Hindu community identify themselves by wearing a piece of yellow cloth (sound familiar?) and the Taliban incurred the wrath of the world when it destroyed the ancient Buddha statues at Bamiyan... The violence of war, the privations of drought and the outright ugliness of life under the Taliban have destroyed any sense of a normal upbringing or future for children in a country in which about half the population is teenage or younger. With no sign of a break in the drought and the fighting at a stalemate, a deep sense of hopelessness grips the land...

Algeria has denied charges by... [a former PM] that security forces were behind a wave of massacres which have claimed more than 1200 lives this year... [On] the first day of Ramadan... 412... people, including many women and children[, were killed]... by unidentified attackers... [who also] abducted about a dozen girls... in... [what] is believed to be the worst massacre in Algeria since the start of civil strife... Survivors who fled in terror into the darkness yesterday described how the attackers threw babies against walls to kill them... Several hundred civilians were burned alive and 117 had their throats cut... One wounded survivor, whose daughter was raped, then had her throat slit, cried out: "Why? Islam is not like this."

The Muslim believes that everything comes from Allah, and that Allah leads astray whom he wills and guides rightly whom he wills. A favourite expression of Muslims is "if Allah wills."

...whom Allah willeth, He leaveth to wander; Whom He willeth, He placeth On the Way that is Straight. - Koran 6:39

If Allah so willed, He Could make you all one People: But He leaves straying Whom he pleases... - Koran 6:93

...when they went wrong, Allah let their hearts go wrong: For Allah guides not those Who are rebellious transgressors. - Koran 61:5

And no protectors have they To help them, Other than Allah: And for any whom Allah leaves to stray, there is No way (to the Goal). - Koran 42:46

He created life and death that He might put you to the proof and find out which of you acquitted himself best. - Koran 67:2

The *Goal* of Islam is to gain everlasting life in heaven. However, if you wanted people to prove themselves worthy of such an 'eternal reward', would you bother guiding any of them beforehand?

Every chapter of the Koran begins with the declaration that Allah is 'Most Gracious (or Beneficent), Most Merciful', but would a merciful entity be responsible for creating *unbelievers* and *evil-doers* – by either deliberately leading them astray or allowing them to go astray – then punish them?

...Who has revealed the Book to thee; some of its verses are decisive – they are the basis of the Book – and others are allegorical. Then those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking to mislead, and seeking to give it (their own) interpretation... [N]one knows its interpretation save Allah, and those firmly rooted in knowledge. - Koran 3:6

I do not tell you that I possess the treasures of Allah or know what is hidden, nor do I claim to be an angel. I follow only that which is revealed to me. - Koran 6:50

Never did a prophet talk in plainer language and with greater modesty to his people. Appearing among a superstitious and ignorant people, he could have claimed any supernatural powers for himself, and the people would willingly have accepted him. But he told them plainly that he was but a man... [N]or did he lay claim... to know the secrets of the future, nor did he profess to be any more than a mortal. What distinguished him from the rest of mankind was that Allah revealed his will to him, and he faithfully followed and translated everything that he received from on High. And as he himself was, so he wanted others to be. It was not his object to make his followers possessors of treasures, or wonder-workers, or fortune-tellers, but *men* first and last – men true to themselves and true followers of the high principles of life which had been revealed to him. He plainly told the people what was wanted of them, and it is for his plain speaking that he is frequently called... *a plain warner*.

Do not split up your religion into sects, each exulting in its own beliefs. - Koran 30:32

After the prophet Muhammad's death, his religious community splintered into various groups, divided over the issue of leadership. The Sunni Muslims followed their religious leaders known as caliphs and muftis. ['After the first four caliphs the office became hereditary'.]The Shi'ite Muslims looked to their... ayatollahs... and... imams [(a Muslim term meaning "model" or "example")]. There were to be twelve imams. However, the twelfth imam disappeared in the ninth century AD, and according to Shi'ite teachings he will return at some future time to deliver Muslims from the clutches of evil and restore to them an existence of righteousness and justice.

Sunnis look forward to a time before the Last Day when a Mahdi will appear and establish a reign of justice on earth. Shiites identify the Mahdi with the expected reappearance of the Hidden Imam. Many Muslim leaders have claimed the title... An Islamic religious movement[was] founded in 1889 in India by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad... who was believed to be the Messiah Mahdi prophesied in the Quran. In 1914 the sect split into two... neither having any dealings with the other, but both spreading the movement across the world. The sect is rejected by orthodox Islam, which cannot accept Ghulam Ahmad's claim to be a prophet following Muhammad, since the traditional belief is that Muhammad was the last manifestation of God... In 1974, after several years of vicious demonstrations against the sect, its followers were declared to be heretical and were officially banned from the orthodox Islam community.

Sunni and Shi'ite are 'the two major groups in Islam' – but there are lesser groups (e.g., Sufis) and subsects (e.g., Shi'ite Ismailis; Sufic Dervishes), some of which have been further divided into 'orders' (e.g., the dervish Bektashis). In addition to undergoing SEGREGATION, Islam has also been SYNCRETISED.

...a medieval mystic poet and religious synthesist... Kabir (1440-1518)... was the link between Hindu Bhakti and... Sufism... Sufis... welcomed non-Muslims in their hospices. Sikhism drew inspiration from both Bhaktas and Sufis.

Sikhism... [was] founded by... Nanak (1469 – 1539) in the Punjab area of North India[by] combining elements from Hinduism and Islam. Nanak believed that in both these religions the truth about God was obscured by ritual. He believed that one would come close to God through meditation and devotion rather than by ceremonies and religious ritual... Nanak taught... [that a person's] inner guiding voice... represents the... presence of God... [He 'raised the first Sikh temple in present-day Pakistan'. His friendship of *Mardana*, a] 'low-caste' Muslim[whose] skills lay in providing music at festivals and ritual occasions... symbolized the guru's desire to bridge the gap between different religions and social classes... Throughout Sikh history there have been a number of reform movements. In modern times... those who have been initiated into the Sikh *Khalsa* but have fallen from their vows, for example by cutting their hair or smoking, and... therefore... [have] seriously offended against the Sikh Code of Discipline (*Rahit Maryada*)... [are labelled *Patit* ('fallen') and then] expelled... from the faith.

The Guru is the most important single idea in Sikhism. The true Guru is God. He has spoken to humankind through ten historical leaders, each called a Guru. The sacred scriptures eventually replaced human leaders... [Sikhs] believe that there can be no understanding of truth apart from righteous behaviour.

Originating as a religion, Sikhism became a militant political movement within the Punjab.

Govind Singh (1666-1708), ['the son of the ninth guru – Guru Tegh Bahadur, who was executed by the Mughals (1675)' – and]last of the 10 gurus, developed the Sikh military power to resist the Moslems and other religious groups. Caste[, samsara (the doctrine of 'rebirth') and polytheistic principles of Hinduism were adopted... Ranjit Singh (1780-1839)... united most of the Punjab into a single Sikh kingdom. The area was brought under British control after the Sikh Wars, 1845-46, 49. Many Sikhs were recruited for the British Indian army. The Sikhs began in the late 1950s to campaign for formation of a separate Sikh-dominated state and demonstrated with increasing vigor to achieve this end.

Sikhism has always been regarded by Hindus as a movement within Hinduism, although it has resisted pressure to be reabsorbed from early times... In 1526, centuries of intermittent invasions and dynastic rivalries... in the Punjab were finally replaced by settled government when the latest invader, Babur, established... the Mughal Empire. Early Mughals, especially Akbar... permitted a considerable degree of religious freedom, even if preference was given to Muslim subjects. During Akbar's reign the Sikhs prospered and perhaps aspired towards their faith's becoming the third accepted religion – the one which the Emperor could use to reconcile his Hindu and Muslim subjects. Interpretations of Sikhism as a synthesis of Hinduism and Islam are thought possibly to have been purposively formed for the first time during this period, and from a modern viewpoint, many Sikhs now regard the Gurus as precursors of [Mohandas] Gandhi, bringing a message of brotherhood to Hindus and Muslims, trying to weld them together in a united India.

When the subcontinent was partitioned into India and Pakistan... the Sikh population was divided equally on both sides of the boundary line. Since the partition had been preceded by savage Sikh-Muslim riots, some 2,500,000 Sikhs were compelled to leave Pakistan... [Those who crossed the border found that the] government of... India[had] abolished privileges previously extended by the British to religious minorities... The decline in... Sikh... fortunes nurtured a sense of grievance and gave birth to agitation... [until increased] wheat production during the 1970s brought unprecedented prosperity to Sikh farmers. [However, material] improvement was accompanied by the growth of Sikh fundamentalism... Tension increased between Sikhs and Hindus as the Akali Religious Party (...SAD), the predominant Sikh political party, began demanding more political and economic advantages for Sikhs. By the early 1980s the demands of the SAD had become strongly militant, and there was an escalation in sectarian violence. The Indian government responded by arresting and imprisoning thousands of Sikhs. Armed bands, under the direction of Bhindranwale, spread a reign of terror throughout the Punjab region. Matters came to a head in 1984, when Bhindranwale and his followers entrenched themselves in the compound of the Harimandir (Golden Temple). In June the Indian Army launched an assault on the temple that killed several hundred Sikhs (including Bhindranwale) and resulted in heavy damage to the temple buildings. In October India's PM Indira Gandhi was assassinated by two Sikh members of her bodyguard, touching off widespread Hindu violence against Sikhs. These... events... fuelled the movement demanding the establishment of a separate Sikh state.

An Indian court has sentenced three men to be hanged for participating in the 1984 massacre of hundreds of Sikhs following the assassination of Indira Gandhi, a report said yesterday. About 3000 Sikhs were killed in frenzied rioting. A further 2000 were killed across India.

...An obscure Sikh militant group, the Shaheed Khalsa Force... has claimed responsibility for three bombs which killed an 18-month-old child and injured 16 people in the Indian capital... during an annual Hindu religious festival... The same group had claimed responsibility for three bomb blasts which... ripped through a train near the Indian capital, killing two people and injuring 38, including two Japanese and five A[US]ns.

...Two bombs exploding within minutes... near a Sikh temple in the... district of New Delhi... killed two people and injured 58... More than 20,000 people[have] died in Punjab during the... insurrection... [by Sikhs demanding] their own state, Khalistan, or The Land of the Pure. - 1997

...the... president of the International Sikh Federation (NZ)... said the... group aimed to promote an independent Sikh homeland of Khalistan by peaceful means, and sent only humanitarian aid home to families of those killed or detained by police. The group's 1995 protest at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting prompted a letter from the Auckland police commander praising its demonstration. [The president]... who held office in the moderate All India Sikhs Student Federation in the Punjab... said he made the hard decision to leave his country in 1990 after several of his friends had been killed in police custody... [He] is matter-of-fact about his torture at the hands of Indian police... [before terrorist] charges laid against him were dismissed... He describes one of the usual methods: the victim is bound in a chair with his head pulled back while a heavy wooden roller is placed across his legs. Two men then lean their full weight on each end of the roller, pressing it back and forth across his thighs to cause excruciating pain. At the Sikh temple in South Auckland, [he] still feels the pain from his permanently damaged quadriceps. But he feels a different pain these days. After seven years in N[Z], he will not be granted permanent residency by the Government because of undisclosed Security Intelligence Service information alleging he has helped Sikh terrorist groups... But he said he never used weapons or supported groups which did. For more than four years... his lawyers have been trying to obtain evidence for the allegations, but the SIS refuses to release its information "for reasons of national security." ...proposed law changes would widen SIS powers to declare someone a threat to national security and have that person detained... [and] the Immigration Service has been told to seek a third country which would accept him... his wife and their 13-month-old N[Z]-born son... permanently... [However, he] still hopes he can stay... The Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security... has agreed to look into his case... [after appeals] to successive Ministers of Immigration... and the Privacy Commissioner... failed...

Trying to create a separate *homeland* or state for themselves has diverted modern Sikhs from the original ambition of their faith – to create religious unity! That aim has now largely been left to another Islamic offshoot:

Babism is a religious movement which originated in nineteenth century Iran as a powerful expression of messianic Shi'ism. Its founder was Sayyid 'Ali Muhammad Shirazi... a young merchant who in 1844 laid claim to be the Bab [– a title meaning 'The Gate' –]the traditional intermediary between the Shi'i Hidden Imam and his faithful followers. Later he made the higher claims of being the Imam Mahdi and the 'point' (*nūqta*) of a new divine revelation. Under the Bab's direction, his chief disciples... undertook an intensive missionary campaign which soon led to the widespread diffusion of the movement throughout Iran... [D]uring this early period the Babi movement remained strongly Shi'i in orientation and, despite its pronounced messianism, its followers conformed strictly to the requirements of Shi'i law. Nevertheless, its doctrines were evidently heterodox, and its rapid expansion alarmed the Shi'i ulama, and they began to oppose and persecute its missionaries. In response, some Babis tended towards militancy and, in 1848, fighting broke out between Babis and orthodox Shi'is in the northern city of Barfurush... The Babis' separation from civil society was underlined by events at Barfurush.

...when they seceded from Islam... [further] persecution... followed, and the Bab was finally executed by the Iranian rulers. His followers split into two groups. One, known as the Azali Babis, followed his designated successor Subhi Azal; the other, a larger and more successful movement, followed Subhi Azal's half-brother, ['Husayn Ali, or Bahaullah ("The Glory of God"), who gave the next of the progressive revelations (none are final)']... at Ridvan Garden in Baghdad in 1863... Bahaullah... declared that he was the manifestation of God foreseen by the Bab, and they became known as the Bahais... Bahaism teaches the oneness of God, the unity of all faiths, the inevitable unification of humankind, the harmony of all people...

A garden situated on the outskirts of Baghdad... was... original[ly named]... the Najibiyya garden, but it was changed to the Garden of Ridvan, meaning "Paradise", because of the importance attached to the 12 days spent there by Bahaullah... It was here... that he forbade jihad, holy war, as well as announcing that no further manifestation of God would appear for another thousand years. Ridvan Garden is... the place where Bahaullah first claimed that he was the promised one of all religions, that his message was for all humans, and that a new time in human history had begun...

Since W[W]II, and especially in recent years, [Bahaism] has expanded significantly into the [Last] World, where it now has its main strength, and for this reason it is fair to call Bahaism a world religion in its own right... A number of Amerindians have become Bahais in countries such as Bolivia, Ecuador and Panama. In India the results have been even more impressive... [– possibly because] Bahais... portray... Bahauallah as the tenth and final avatar of Vishnu... In the Malva area of Madhya Pradesh in central India from 1961 Bahai teachers used visual aids, music, local training centres and social networks to convey their teaching...

All prejudice, economic extremes, asceticism, slavery, monasticism, and mendicancy are condemned. Equality of the sexes, an auxiliary universal language, and compulsory education are advocated.

In many respects, Bahaism is like FREEMASONRY – a ‘non-political, international fraternity open to members of any religion, based on brotherly love, belief in a supreme being and obedience to the law of the land’ (which probably accounts for its popularity amongst police officers and solicitors – ‘only 14 out of 52 Chief Constables in Britain are non-Masons, around 60% of all policemen in the UK are Masons, as are 90% of the male staff of the governing body of the [British] Law Society’) – although, unlike Freemasonry, Bahaism doesn’t ‘regularly come under attack for the secrecy with which it carries out its activities.’ However, Bahaism can be attacked for trying to unify all faiths by creating a system of beliefs that was compatible with the teachings of the major faiths but incompatible with the pre- and post-1844 discoveries of science.

...religion... doesn’t have any real value as a science but... it may be used by the state to pacify the people or to keep them confused.

Religion is *far* closer to magic than to science... The recognition of science involves acceptance of the... fact that Nature does not care about Man... and that events are brought about by the operation of discoverable and quite beautiful laws. That beauty may... be terrifying and difficult to accept, but we enjoy no choice in the matter.

[Science’s] purpose is to establish workable laws o[n]... the behaviour of matter and thus achieve greater control over it. Among primitive peoples science is rudimentary, often being an aspect of religion and magic, which also represent efforts at control of the... environment, though lacking the experimental method. In ancient... Greek... civilization... science was mainly classificatory – concerned with the naming and arrangement of known facts. It was otherwise indistinguishable from speculative philosophy. Modern science[was] originally called natural philosophy...

...philosophy... has taken... a position between science and religion.

Philosophy differs from science, in that its questions cannot be answered empirically or by experiment, and from religion, in that its purpose is entirely intellectual, and allows no role for faith or revelation... With the scientific revolution of the 16th and 17th centuries... philosophers... began to assess the philosophical implications of the new scientific results.

The way[was then] opened up for the insights of science and religion to be seen as complementary.

The idea that science and religion are combatants, or even divided explorers – friendly but separate – doesn’t wash with... two of this country’s leading... academics... The sum total of human learning and insight did not, and could not, lead to either the realm of science or of religion. “No, we end up in the realm of truth, which is a word that is hardly ever used now in our culture, and some people, when they do use it, put it in quotes. So-called ‘truths.’ Yet it’s the only thing that matters,”... sa[ys] the 90-year-old academic. The 77-year-old academic nods:] “I’d go along totally with that. It’s the unity we’re looking for... science and religion blended produce one unity.” Such insistence that science and religion are meshed puts the pair at odds with thinkers such as [the author who, i]n his latest book, *Rocks of Ages*... described science and religion as two pictures, side by side in a gallery... “I do not see how science and religion could be unified, or even synthesised, under any common scheme of explanation or analysis...,” he wrote. “Science tries to document the factual character of the natural world, and to develop theories that coordinate and explain these facts. Religion, on the other hand, operates on the equally important, but utterly different, realm of human purposes, meanings and values.” In other words, the two are separate apples – one relying on reason and testable hypotheses, while the other, no matter how much you study and test it, ultimately requires a statement of faith. [The 77-year-old] disagrees. “It’s a cop-out... This disjunction between faith and reason is quite wrong... [The author]’s division is just old-fashioned Greek dualism. I’m saying the universe is a unity, our minds are one mind, everything is interlocked with everything else.” ...The clear message is that science and religion are entirely compatible: they are teammates in a three-legged race rather than competitors in a marathon. Indeed, [the 77-year-old], in contrast to those who argue that the Genesis story and science are poles apart, takes the radical stance that the Hebrew world-view laid the ground in which science took root. It’s an extreme departure from the widely accepted view that science was a gift from the Greeks first and foremost... While acknowledging the Greeks’ laws and philosophies, Arabic numbers and the many other fertilisers that made the growth of science possible, [the 77-year-old] said the Hebrew world-view, as spread through Judeo-Christian religion, was “the greatest cultural revolution in the whole of human history. With this new natural philosophy the world was cleared of gods and spirits, and declared to be the good creation of the one rational God; the foundations had been laid for the study... that we know as science.”

Francis Bacon [(1561-1626)] is generally acknowledged as the founding father of modern science in England, and although he did not work in a modern laboratory like today’s scientists, he inspired what has become known as the scientific method. He believed that science could give man a mastery over nature that would improve his life on this earth. For Bacon, science was not simply an intellectual or academic undertaking, but a utilitarian one... Bacon did not conceive of science as being a disunifying factor as far as religion or God is concerned. Rather, he believed that science could enable civilization to progress. It could be a binding force between man and God... [Bacon – who rose ‘to become Lord Chancellor under James I before falling from favour after impeachment on charges of ‘having taken bribes, for which he was imprisoned after pleading guilty’ – was a ‘principal protagonist of *empiricism*, a philosophical theory which holds that sensory experience or sense perception is the sole source of our knowledge, at least of the external world.’ For Descartes (1596-1650), who is ‘often called the father of modern philosophy’], all truth can be derived from reason, which is superior to and independent of sense experience. Knowledge is deductible from self-evident concepts, or innate, necessary ideas... When Descartes meditated on the first philosophy, he concluded, *cogito ergo sum*, “I think; therefore I exist.” He felt that everything was subject to doubt with the exception of the act of doubting itself. Since doubting is a part of thinking, the act of thinking is an undeniable experience... He accepts doubt as the only real fact... I can doubt that... everything perceived... exists, it may be a hallucination, a dream... but the fact that I am doubting cannot be doubted... His point is that truth cannot be doubted, but that to discover the truth, we have to doubt everything. When we come to the truth, the truth will be undoubtable... He says that even though I am imperfect, there exists perfect knowledge, or a self-conscious awareness of perfect ideas within myself. Knowledge of the perfect is innate within me, and I can know it through meditation... The power of forming a good judgement and of distinguishing the true from the false, which is called good sense or reason, is by nature equal in all men... Descartes considers

five basic ideas to be inherent within every man, ideas which every man knows without having to verify. One is that God is innate to us as our own soul... Secondly, it is impossible for something to originate out of nothing; every effect must have a cause, and therefore there is a cause of everything... Thirdly, it is impossible for a thing to exist and not exist at the same time... Descartes's fourth innate idea is that whatever is done can never be undone... Descartes's fifth principle is that we cannot be nonexistent as long as we are thinking... When Descartes inspects reality, he concludes that reality consists of substances. He defines substance as "a thing which exists in such a way as to stand in need of nothing beyond itself." He says that there is only one absolutely independent substance – God. All other substances are created by [God]. There are also two types of substances – ...spirit... and... matter[(the 'theory according to which the ultimate reality in the universe is matter, called *materialism*, a philosophy usually regarded as antagonistic to all religious systems, was taught among the Greeks and has had powerful advocates in modern times, particularly as an explanatory frame of reference for science – in ethics it takes the position that there is no life after death; hence one should make maximum use of the present life')... Descartes considers God a substance that is infinite... [and believed] an innate idea of an infinite being necessitates the existence of that infinite being because a finite being could not possibly create such an idea. In other words, because I can think of the infinite, the infinite must exist. The infinite must have put that thought in my head. [It does not matter that I do not grasp the infinite, or that there are countless additional attributes of God which I cannot in my way grasp, and perhaps cannot even reach in my thought; for it is in the nature of the infinite not to be grasped by a finite being like myself.] Being 'a cautious man, Descartes suppressed his heretical doctrines of the Earth's rotation and the infinity of the universe', 'mindful no doubt of Galileo Galilei's condemnation by the Inquisition'...

Galileo (1564-1642) – who 'at college became known as "the wrangler" because he dared to question the teaching of ARISTOTLE – had explored the Copernican theory that the Sun, not Earth, was the centre of the universe. Ever since PTOLEMY – ruler of Egypt between A.D. 127 and 157 – had pronounced that the Earth was the immovable centre of the universe around which revolved the planets, the Sun, and the stars, people had held rigidly to this point of view. Galileo's lectures were so popular that the church began to be uneasy about the excitement he was creating. Four times Galileo was called before the Inquisition. Finally Galileo denied the truth of his discoveries. He was imprisoned in his own villa and denied any visitors. Five years before he died, Galileo became blind. No longer could he study the heavens and speculate with mathematical formulae.'

...Blaise Pascal (1623-62) was a mystic [– which means he 'relied on intuition rather than intellectual reflection' (much like '*theosophy*, the religious system based on intuitive knowledge of God') –]who believed very deeply in God... [H]e was also a skeptic in the sense that he believed that we cannot prove the existence of God by our reason or any other way. Therefore he emphasized that... it is impossible for man to understand the universe or his position in it. We cannot look for certainty or stability in the material world because our reasoning powers are always being deceived... Pascal [had been 'a mathematical child prodigy: before the age of 16 he had proved one of the most important theorems in the projective geometry of conics (which Descartes refused to believe was the work of a teenager), and at 19 constructed an arithmetic calculating machine – the first mechanical calculator to be offered for sale, of which seven still exist' – 'latter simplified by Gottfried Leibniz' (1646-1716)]... a German mathematician and philosopher who maintained that in the universe, every act has a purpose, and the purpose of the universe is to realize the goal set forth by God.

In his philosophical writings he argued that... the world... is composed of single units (monads) which are simple yet each in its own way mirrors the whole universe; each is self-contained, but works in harmony with every other, and they form a continuously ascending series from the lowest (which is next to nothing) to the highest (which is God...). Their pre-established harmony is ordained by God who, Leibniz argued, never acted except for a reason that required it, and so the world that [God] had created was the best of all possible worlds (a view satirized in Voltaire's *Candide*)... A man of wide-ranging expertise... he worked on the problem of the continuum and the laws of motion, and discovered the infinitesimal calculus independently of Newton, which made his disputes with Newton's followers acrimonious... Throughout his life Leibniz was ardently devoted to the cause of international peace.

...[Baruch Spinoza (1632-77), was a] Dutch rationalist philosopher... [Maligned by many, Spinoza is regarded by others as one of the saintliest of philosophers, and his influence – particularly on Leibniz – has been considerable, although he died in poverty due to tuberculosis, which was aggravated by the glass-dust in his lungs from] his living by grinding and polishing lenses. Rejecting the Cartesian dualism of spirit and matter [Spinoza] saw only one infinite substance, of which finite existences are modes or limitations... [A]mong his conclusions are determinism and a denial of personal immortality. Spinoza's *Ethics*, published posthumously, founded morality on the 'intellectual love of God'... virtue is its own reward.

Spinoza defines the supreme virtue to be understanding God... [W]e can appreciate God by intellectually appreciating all of [God's] creation and therefore understanding that God is the perfect principle behind everything... He states that the infinite universe is like a machine, yet... Spinoza does not believe that God has a body because "by body we understand a certain quantity possessing length, breadth, and depth, limited by some fixed form; and that to attribute these to God, a being absolutely infinite, is the greatest absurdity... [God also 'has an infinite number of attributes, which together make up the universe, but man is acquainted with only two of them, thought and extension'. P]roperly speaking, God loves no one and hates no one; for God is not affected with any emotion of joy or sorrow..." ...For Spinoza, evil is due to ignorance, an inability to see reality in its entirety... [In comparison, David Hume (1711-76)] says that if we like, we can attribute the order and design of the world to an architect, but... he... feels that... such an architect... must be responsible for evil in nature... According to Hume, we really know nothing of God; at the most we can only know of people's ideas of God, and these are but perceptions... He rejected revealed religion, which he considered dogmatic, and accepted "natural religion" instead, a religion wherein the existence of God can be proved or even shown to be probable by argument and reason... Hume writes: "All the new discoveries in astronomy, which prove the immense grandeur and magnificence of the works of nature, are so many additional arguments for a Deity, according to the true system of theism... Let those go further who are wiser or more enterprising." ...He states that it is not the being of God that is in question, but God's nature, which cannot be ascertained through study of the universe itself... [I]f the universe can only be studied by imperfect senses, what is the value of our conclusion? ...For him, the only certainty is found in mathematical proofs[. 'In 1748 he published *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*; its translation was said to wake Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) from his "dogmatic slumbers"']...

"Absolutely no human reason... can hope to understand the production of even a blade of grass by mere mechanical causes. That crude matter... originally formed itself according to mechanical laws, that life... spr[an]g from the nature of what is lifeless, that matter should have been able to dispose itself into the form of a self-maintaining purpose – is contradictory to reason[." Kant]... acknowledges... there is a design in nature but... [the] design, as man sees it, does not necessarily prove the existence of the designer... He claims... it is impossible to arrive at the ultimate reality by pure reason alone because phenomena are endless... Kant is simply saying that whenever we begin to speculate about the Absolute, we run into contradictions... Kant suggests that certain knowledge of God's existence would destroy a man's freedom and reduce human experience to a show of puppets... Kant also writes: "It does not enter men's heads that when they fulfill their duty to men (themselves and others), they are, by these very acts, performing God's commands and are therefore in all their actions and abstentions, so far as these concern morality, perpetually in the service of God, and that it is absolutely impossible to serve God directly in any other way..." ...What Kant means by morality is rather vague... [but, according] to his categorical imperative, man should act in such a way that the maxim of his actions might become the principle for universal law... The goal of Kant's personal ethics is twofold: it is a person's duty to attain his own perfection and also to seek the happiness of others.

If Kant's *categorical imperative* and *personal ethics* are combined, they resemble UTILITARIANISM – 'a teleological ethical theory which maintains that one ought always to act so as to maximise welfare; choosing that action, of the available alternatives, which will produce the most welfare on balance for all people affected' (i.e., 'the guiding principle of conduct should be to achieve the greatest happiness of the greatest number; the usefulness of an action is the criterion of whether it is right or wrong'). Incidentally, the book *Democracy in America* (vol. II) states: 'We may naturally believe that it is not the singular prosperity of the few, but the greater well-being of all that is most pleasing in the sight of the Creator and Preserver of men.'

Kant... express[ed] strong sympathies for the American and French anti-monarchal revolutions. He complained more than once that the state spent too much on war and too little on education.

...in his work *Perpetual Peace* he advocated a federation of free States, bound by a covenant forbidding war... [Kant] never travelled more than 40 miles from his native town, Königsberg[('now Kaliningrad')], where he was a professor at the university...

He lived a quiet, orderly life and local people were said to set their watches by the time of his daily walk. His early publications were in the natural sciences... [H]e... predicted the existence of the planet Uranus before its actual discovery by William Herschel... Kant... exerted an enormous influence on subsequent philosophy, especially the idealism of... Hegel...

Kant's philosophy had left an essential dualism: nature opposed to spirit, object to subject, the outer world composed of isolated unrelated substances. Hegel sought to bridge this gulf, to reduce duality to unity... [He] states his view of the direction and destination of human history as 'the development of the idea of freedom'... [He influenced] political thinkers of both right and left (Marx, in his youth, was a disciple of Hegel)...

[Georg Hegel], 1770-1831... taught that the world of objects is not only related to an intelligence, but can be nothing more than the manifestation or revelation of that intelligence... which he saw[as] the incarnation of the "world spirit." ...The material world could not exist of itself. Matter is... the necessary counterpart of spirit and in it spirit reveals and realizes itself.

Hegel believes that everything has a purpose, that the whole universe is rational, and that it is unfolding under the direction of reason, the spirit of the Absolute... For Hegel, the highest form in which the Absolute manifests itself is philosophy, which is the synthesis of art and religion... Of all the arts, Hegel says, music and poetry are the highest... Hegel believes that when the dialectic is exhausted, it reveals the whole, unified Absolute Truth... Hegel sought to synthesize other philosophies to arrive at the truth... But since nature is constantly unfolding, guided by the World Spirit, the dialectic process continues indefinitely. Hegel saw the Absolute Truth unfolding itself in history, biology, sociology, and other sciences... Hegel considered history and theology to be intrinsic. History is "a justification of God," and tells the story of man's elevation to God... Since God is not transcendental but is manifest in the world, [God] depends on human history... Without the history of man, God would be alone and lifeless... [Furthermore,] history shows that thought is dynamic and progressive, and the great... souls are not content to accept something simply because it is handed down by tradition. Indeed, tradition has often proved untrustworthy, for in the course of time, and influenced by common men, its purity is lost... Absolute Truth... was thus received through the chain of disciplic succession... But in course of time, the succession was broken... Therefore perfect knowledge must be accepted from a perfect source... [By the way, the first person to describe *the history of man* by 'proposing a complete theory of man's evolution' 'from a hairy quadrumanous animal belonging to the anthropoid group,' and to 'postulate that those type of animals and plants which are better fitted to their environment tend to be perpetuated while the more poorly fitted species tend in time to disappear' – was Charles Darwin (1809-82).] At first Darwin was a Christian, but his faith in the existence of a personal God eventually faded. - Dialectic Spiritualism

Many persons seem to make themselves quite easy about immortality and the existence of a personal God, by intuition... I do not feel any innate conviction on any such points... The safest conclusion seems to me to be that the whole subject is beyond the scope of man's intellect. - More letters of Charles Darwin (vol. II)

Grandson to the eminent physician Erasmus Darwin and son of a... doctor... he failed to complete his medical training at Edinburgh and just scrapped a degree at Cambridge in vague preparation for a life in the Church. ['Whilst still a student at Edinburgh he was a member of the local Plinian Society; he took part in its natural history excursions. His biology studies seriously began at Cambridge, where the botanist John Henslow encouraged his interest in zoology and geology. He was recommended by Henslow as naturalist to HMS *Beagle*, then about to start']... on her circumnavigation of the globe... [S]eizing his one great opportunity... [at the age of] twenty-two... he set out as an untried amateur and returned five years later to take his place amongst the elite of the learned sciences... [As a consequence of his observations while travelling the world, Darwin] propounded the theory of evolution by natural selection, to the consternation of certain theologians at this threat to the beliefs that they found comfortable... [Despite their best efforts,] *On the Origin of Species*... and *The Descent of Man*... changed our concept of nature and man's place in it.

...evolutionary theory has... pried open the neatly-arrayed toolbox that is our mind... Our minds and brains, just like our bodies, have been honed by natural selection to solve the problems faced by our ancestors over the past two million years... This mind-and-body-building is orchestrated by genes... The Darwinian exploration is still a fledgling science. But already it is yielding answers that we didn't even know had questions... New though this science is, researchers are already pretty confident about some things. Fortunately, one of them is sex. Consider a familiar sex difference that emerged in a study of [US] college students. Asked by a stranger for a date, 50% of both women and men agreed. But asked "Have sex with me tonight?" not one woman agreed – whereas men shot up to 75%. And when students were asked "How long would you have to know someone before having sex?" the questionnaire had to be rescaled for males requiring only minutes or seconds. Not only are men willing to have sex with a perfect stranger; they're more than willing with an imperfect one too. Another [US] study found that, for brief encounters men, (but not women) were willing to drop their standards as low as their trousers, ready to dispense with intelligence, humour, charm, honesty and emotional stability. Why this difference between men and women? When natural selection shaped male-female differences, it didn't stop at muscles and [reproductive organ]s. It also shaped differences in our psychologies... Why? Think of it this way. Give a man 50 wives and he could have children galore. But a woman with 50 husbands? ...[for generation] after generation... natural selection favored the men who strove most mightily for mates – the most competitive, risk-taking, opportunistic. We are all the descendants of those winners. Females, meanwhile, faced nine months hard labour, breast feeding, rearing. A woman had to be far more picky about whose genes ended up partnering hers. Faced with the prospect of highly dependent offspring, she'd be on the lookout for someone who was not only fit and healthy but also had access to resources. Nowadays a Rolex or designer trainers provide clues. But for our hunter-gatherer ancestors roving the Pleistocene plains, what mattered were social resources – status, reputation, respect. Genes that built brains with tools for making these shrewd decisions were the ones that got themselves replicated. Of course, natural selection doesn't download its strategic plans straight into our consciousness. Its instruments are[the] emotions, priorities, desires... [that

were] millions of years in the making... Evolution... created males and females so unlike that the differences don't stop at how fast you'll jump into bed; they pervade our... interests, our values, our ambitions, our skills. It's often said, for example, that men lack social skills. Don't believe it. It's just that their skills are, all too understandably, not what we call sociable. They are... more disposed to... showing off... Men outstrip women in deaths from... homicide and accidents. Social scientists view these causes of death as "life-style" as opposed to "biology." But, in the light of evolutionary theory, speeding to death in a flashy car is enmeshed in men's biology.

Though not the sole originator of the evolution hypothesis... Darwin was the first thinker to gain for that concept a wide acceptance among biological experts. By adding to the crude evolutionism of Erasmus Darwin... and others his own specific notion of natural selection, he supplied to the idea a sufficient cause, which raised it at once from a hypothesis to a verifiable theory. ['Perhaps the most significant contribution to evolutionary ideas was made by Linnaeus (1707-78), who published *Systema Naturae* – which erected a hierarchical scheme of all living things that suggested certain groups owed their similarities to descent from common ancestors.' The 'Greek philosopher and astronomer *Anaximander* (c.610-c.545 BC) – reputed to have drawn the earliest map of the inhabited world and to have introduced the gnomon sundial into Greece – taught a primitive form of evolutionary theory, in that he argued that life began in water and that man originated from fish.' 'The Greek philosopher Empedocles (493-435BC) believed that new forms are generated spontaneously. The first modern theorist of evolution, Leibniz, introduced the notion that environment causes the changes in form. Jean Lamarck (1744-1829), carrying this notion further, argued that an acquired structural characteristic can be inherited by succeeding generations, use or disuse of the characteristic being an important factor.' 'George Cuvier (1769-1832), the first person to classify the lower invertebrate animals, originally rejected all ideas of changes in animal form and stated that life had been repeatedly wiped out and replaced by new species, but later realised that invertebrate species could be derived from another by small changes in their structure, an observation which proved crucial in the emergence of the theory of evolution – though he himself believed resolutely in the conventional Biblical ("special creation") view and quarrelled publicly with the early proponents of evolutionary ideas' ...

'Fundamentalism, ultra-conservative movement in certain US Protestant churches, from c.1920. Its tenets, based on a booklet series, *The Fundamentals*, 1910-2, include the literal interpretation of the Bible and belief in an impending messianic advent and in bodily resurrection. It cut across church lines, dividing Baptists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians into two general groups, those opposing Fundamentalism being termed Modernists. One result was legislation in some states forbidding teaching contrary to the Bible, primarily aimed against the teaching of evolution.'

... 'The Kansas Board of Education has rejected evolution as a scientific principle, approving a new curriculum that eliminates the teaching of evolution as a way to describe the emergence of new species – including the descent of humans from ape-like creatures. However, nearly a dozen federal court rulings have struck down similar attempts in other states to force schools to teach that a god created the world, and all its animals and plants. Debate began soon after Charles Darwin made the theory of natural selection and evolution famous in the 19th century. It culminated in the US in the "Monkey Trial" of 1925, when Tennessee teacher John Thomas Scopes went to trial for breaking a state law banning the teaching of evolution. Scopes was convicted and fined the minimum \$100, but the verdict was reversed on a technicality by the state Supreme Court. More recently, federal and state courts have defended evolution against creationism, ruling that creationism constitutes religion and cannot be required teaching in public schools. In 1968, the US Supreme Court ruled that an Arkansas law prohibiting the teaching of evolution was unconstitutional under the First Amendment, saying teaching must not be tailored to the principles of any particular religious sect. In 1981, a California Superior Court ruled against a man who sued the state Board of Education, saying teaching evolution prohibited the right of his children to exercise their religion. Arkansas lawmakers passed a law requiring schools to give "balanced" treatment to "creation-science" and "evolution-science," but in 1982 a federal court struck down the law, saying creation science is not science at all. Assaults against the teaching of evolution continue. In 1995, Alabama passed a law mandating that all biology books used in public schools bear a sticker describing evolution as a "controversial theory." The Institute of Creation Science supports research aimed at showing that Earth and life on it are much younger than scientists say.'

...Henri Bergson (1859-1941) said that t[he] *elan vital*, or 'creative impulse', not a deterministic natural selection, is at the heart of evolution.

For Bergson... evolution had become God's "undertaking to create creators."

Bergson sees the life impulse moving through the universe and creating new forms and varieties, just as an artist creates different paintings. The creations progressively improve... Bergson saw change as maturation... "We are seeking only the precise meaning that our consciousness gives to this word, 'exist,' and we find that, for a conscious being, to exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly." ...Bergson spoke of the world as "a machine for the making of gods."

...[according to Samuel Alexander (1859-1938),] the philosopher of emergent evolution... external objects have an existence independent of consciousness. Unlike many other philosophies, Alexander's neo-realism contends that something may exist even though it is not perceived... Alexander sees God's body as neither spaceless nor timeless, for it is space-time itself... Alexander believes that man may evolve to the demigod platform in the future, that he may have super consciousness.

Space-time... produced matter, and matter in turn gave rise to mind (or "awareness") as a further, higher, qualitative synthesis. "Deity" signifies the upper goal, the next higher level toward which the cosmic order spontaneously tends. In this hierarchy of change, the higher synthesis emerges from below but possesses genuinely new characteristics; hence in each instance the new synthesis is unpredictable. Alexander did not attempt to give an ultimate explanation for the world's existence; he tried merely to explain the world in terms of spontaneous creative tendencies... For Alexander, the mind never creates anything new, but rearranges things. Since everything already exists, there is no question of creating anything.

Philosophy displaces the belief in Divine Incarnations by belief in divinely inspired men. Although it refuses to deify any man into being fully representative of the Infinite Consciousness, it affirms that any man may approach nearer to and be uplifted by that Consciousness... The tendency to assume that the spiritual man was perfect in his youth and never made a mistake in his maturity, is common among his followers and passed on by them to the public – with the result that the latter stares at him with great awe as a rare phenomenon but does not dream that it is possible to follow in his footsteps to the same achievement. The truth is that he had his share of struggles and failures... was born with his own particular imperfections, and... had to make the character and expand the consciousness which adorned his later years. - Enlightened Mind, Divine Mind

...research showed that many people who might have no contact with institutional religion knew the reality of religious experience, and that the capacity for religious experience was an integral part of human nature... [Central to Emile Durkheim's (1858-1917)] work is the idea that societies are held together by means of a 'conscious collective', powerful beliefs and sentiments that are shared in common by members of the society, and that exert a strong influence on individuals' behaviour... [H]e regarded... religion... as having been created by society as a means of expressing its ideals and unifying itself... [Carl Jung] (1875-1961)... introduced the concepts of 'introvert' and 'extrovert' personalities, and developed the theory of the 'collective unconscious' – 'that part of the unconscious mind which derives from the ancestral experiences of a group, or is shared by all human beings, and is additional to the personal unconscious' –] with its archetypes of man's basic psychic nature... His early [studies]... led to his meeting

Sigmund Freud [(1856-1939)]... He became Freud's leading collaborator... [However, his] independent researches, making him increasingly critical of Freud's insistence on the psychosexual origins of the neuroses, which [Jung] published in *The Psychology of the Unconscious*... caused a break in 1913... Undeterred, Freud... [went on to elaborate] his theories of the division of the unconscious mind into the 'Id' ['a person's psychological impulses'), the 'Ego' ('the part of the mind that reacts to reality and has a sense of individuality'), and the 'Super-Ego' ['a person's ideals of itself which direct its behaviour'). Freud published many books, including]... *Why War?*, written in collaboration with Albert Einstein... and... a controversial view of religion, *The Future of an Illusion*.

Christ pointed out that unless one becomes as a little child, he shall not enter into the kingdom of God, but Freud advocates "growing up" and setting this illusion aside... ['In fact, so peripheral a role do they play in the twentieth century that Freud insisted that Judeo-Christian tradition "keeps people stupid" because it hands them everything and denies them the individual quest that results in true growth and wisdom.'] Freud admits that without religion man will "find himself in a difficult situation. He will have to confess his utter helplessness and his insignificant part in the working of the universe." Yet he goes on to say that without religion, man will venture at last into the hostile world, and this venture is his "education to reality."

...Writing in the early part of this century, [John Dewey (1859-1952)] felt that it was high time to set aside all superstitious religions. According to him, logic "demands that in imagination we wipe the slate clean and start afresh by asking what would be the idea of the unseen." In other words, we must define God and religion anew... For Dewey, we can never attain absolute certainty or perfection. We can only attain higher levels of moral progress... "The good man is the man who no matter how morally worthy he has been, is moving to become better. Growth itself is the only moral end." ...For Dewey, truth must satisfy human needs and improve social conditions... He felt that the greatest good is the elimination of the greatest evil. It is the fulfillment of man's greatest needs... Dewey sees God emerging out of man's striving for perfection... [In comparison, Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-80)] sees man as being overwhelmed by his responsibility... the freedom to change himself and the world... Sartre believes that the fate of the world depends on man's decisions. Obviously, if man decides properly, the world would be a better place... ['Sartre sought optimistic individual resolutions in a threatening and oppressive world, and developed a somewhat altered existential approach to Soren Kierkegaard (1813-55), the precursor of existentialism' – a movement 'that emphasises the existence of the individual' but whose 'most salient theses are that there is no ultimate purpose to the world; and that truths about the world and our situation are revealed most clearly in moments of unfocused psychological anxiety or dread.' Most notably, Sartre 'presented an atheistic philosophy, whereas Kierkegaard upheld a pessimistic personal form of Christianity.' Kierkegaard wrote]: "The true relation in prayer is not when God hears what is prayed for, but when the person praying continues to pray until he is the one who hears what God wills." ...Kierkegaard[, who] believed that a man should live as if he were to die at any moment[, also wrote: 'It is perfectly true, as philosophers say, that life must be understood backwards. But they forget the other proposition, that it must be lived forwards.' According to Sartre]... "Existentialism isn't so atheistic that it wears itself out showing God doesn't exist... Rather, it declares that even if God did exist, that would change nothing. There you've got our point of view. Not that we believe that God exists, but that we think that the problem of [God's] existence is not the issue."

atheism... includes both the rejection of any specific belief in God or gods, and the view that the only rational approach to claims about divine existence is one of scepticism. [It 'is frequently confused with agnosticism, which is not denial of deity, but merely a profession of uncertainty concerning the existence and nature of God'.]Justification of atheism is often made on the grounds that some branch of science or psychology has rendered belief in God or gods superfluous, or that experiential verification of religious belief is lacking.

Atheism is a subject that the psychologist and the student of religion have hitherto regarded as scarcely worth careful investigation. Much has been written and argued about it, and very roundly, by the free-thought martyr on the one hand and the religious zealot on the other. But no one has had anything to say about the *species* of atheism; or has treated it analytically as an *individual and definite* phenomenon, positive and necessary and intensely symbolic; or has realized how it is limited in time. Atheism, rightly understood, is the necessary expression of a spirituality that has... exhausted its religious possibilities, and is declining into the inorganic. It is entirely compatible with... Romanticism, which likewise would recall that which has irrevocably gone, namely, the Culture... Atheism comes not with the evening of the Culture but with the dawn of Civilization... [T]his late form of world-feeling and world-image... preludes our "second religiousness"... There is no religiousness that is without an atheistic opposition belonging uniquely to itself and directed uniquely against itself... There are atheisms of Classical, Arabian and Western kinds and these differ from one another in meaning and in matter. Nietzsche formulated the dynamic atheism on the basis that "God is dead," [whereas] a Classical philosopher would have... [said] that boundless space... [and] countless bodies have, become godless.

[Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) was the] son of a Protestant pastor and a studious and brilliant scholar... until his mind failed 11 years before his death... He proclaimed a new religion in his *Thus Spake Zarathustra*... a somewhat rhapsodically written gospel of the superman, of whom he was the prophet... Equality, charity, and submission were anathema to him; he glorified the "will to power," a heroic ethic of masters, whose right it was to conquer the weak... [However,] he abhorred nationalism and racial theories.

Roused by Darwin he argued forcefully that since human life has no meaning bestowed on it supernaturally it must create meaning... The principal features of his doctrine are contempt for Christianity with its compassion for the weak... [In Nietzsche's writings, which] are often obscure and open to different interpretations[, he]... divided mankind into a small dominant 'master-class' and a large dominated 'herd'...

His reputation suffered when his views were taken up in a simple-minded and perverted form by the... Nazis...

Nietzsche may also have influenced the Russian proletariat because their country's link to atheistic beliefs, expressed by people such as Stalin and the last Soviet General Secretary, can hardly be attributed to Marx (who, incidentally, was 'born of Jewish parents' and 'felt revolution would come to Russia last').

Marx succeeded in giving the dogmas of social science the power of a religion. And the... International Working Men's Association, which he founded, properly christened his monumental *Das Kapital*, with no intended irony, as "The Bible of the working class."

Marx believed that the state should eventually assume the role of Christ[, although he also]... believed that if man persists in worshipping God, he should do so privately and not communally.

When we become members of a political party, or a professional organisation, or trade union, or followers of Christ or Marx or some other... guru, we become opponents to people who are marching in the same direction under another banner. Much of our energy and theirs is then siphoned off into secondary activities directed to the maintenance of our particular club or clique and to the propagation of its proprietary doctrines.

The experiments of [a] social psychologist... showed that people arbitrarily assigned to rival groups will act, quite predictably, to favour their own group, however meaningless it may be... [His research] illuminates all religion and politics. Different people believe contradictory religious tales with equal conviction, and often detest those with other views enough to kill them... The [research] helps to explain why people with quite different opinions can belong to the same political party, and why scientists and scholars who care about ideas can't abide public politics. At the same time the academic world is notorious for its infighting, and for intellectual prejudices... Most important of all, [the research] tells us that the great confrontation in the world is not between capitalism and communism, or between the US and the Soviet Union, but between nice ordinary Americans and Russians who just like to be told who to hate this year.

The greater the things are in which a man believes, the more fiercely he despises those who do not believe in them.

There are 1200 kinds of 'primary religious bodies' in the United States.

...freedom of religion is a crucial part of a good society. It offers people... an opportunity to find the life of spirit through their own ritual, doctrine and priesthood.

[Conversely, Percy Shelley – an 'English poet who was expelled from Oxford, 1811, for publishing the pamphlet *The Necessity of Atheism*' – has been recorded as] saying that the overthrow of the idea of God would bring about the supreme good on earth.

At the start of 1917 the Russian Empire is still governed by an autocratic Tzar. From his palace in St Petersburg, one man rules over 170 million people, answerable only to God. Nicolas II holds more power than any other monarch in Europe. He has resisted political change but the Tzar's days are numbered... In February, a first revolution takes place. A provisional government takes over. The Tzar abdicates and is arrested... Russians believe they've won their freedom at last... Most people expect elections and an Assembly to decide the future. Lenin, leader of the small Bolshevik Party, wanted more revolutionary change and his own type of Marxist socialism. First he built up popular support by promising to end [WWI], give land to the peasants and power to the workers. In October the Bolsheviks decided they were ready to seize power... [T]here was little resistance... Lenin... told... the workers' revolutionary councils... [that] Russia had turned a new page... From now on, he said, the oppressed masses would themselves form the government... [M]any were frightened by what the Bolsheviks might do but the early believers were excited by Lenin's message and full of hope... "What I liked was the promise of a classless society in... which everyone would enjoy all the good created by society." "I was attracted by the idea of justice[and] equality between people acting in the name of humanity." The Bolsheviks moved the capital... to Moscow soon after the revolution. They took Russia out of the war, the Tzar and his family were shot, and from Moscow they planned to extend the revolution to the rest of the world. A forceful message was sent to workers everywhere: If the proletariat in other countries followed the [Russian] way they could kick out kings and capitalists and achieve a world with no more war... In the ferment after [WWI others did try] to follow the Bolshevik example. In Berlin, Bolsheviks tried to seize power. In Munich they succeeded briefly. In Hungary, a Soviet Republic lasted several months... Every communist uprising was crushed, and back in Russia itself the Bolsheviks had to fight for their own survival in a vicious civil war with supporters of the old regime who were helped by Western governments. By 1921 the [Russian] Bolsheviks were victorious but the [Communist] Party, who claimed to speak for the people, had never had majority support. Lenin had created a large secret police force to kill and terrorise his opponents. After the civil war the Bolsheviks... tried to win over the mass of people. They became masters of modern propaganda... Posters put across the central ideas of communism as conceived by... Marx, and adapted by Lenin... Thanks to the revolution, many... peasants... now farmed land taken from the land-owners, but their standards of living were well behind the rest of Europe. Few were literate. In 1920 the new government [had] decreed that all... citizens were to be taught to read... To provide the engineers and technicians the new society needed, training was expanded, and the communists said women should have equality with men... But despite all the talk of equality, the Russian masses did have a conductor, who directed everything, and it was Lenin. By the time he'd died, he'd created a one party, one ideology state, and an elaborate system of control. But under Lenin the aim of socialism had not yet been achieved. His successor, Joseph Stalin, inherited a society in which large parts of the old Russia still survived. Peasants were still able to sell the produce they farmed themselves in the markets. Stalin was determined to complete the building of socialism, so he launched the first five-year plan to modernise the economy... [and] to create the heavy industries the Soviet Union needed to defend itself in a hostile world... With so much to build so quickly... thousands of... workers... [and] forced labourers... were sent all over the country to fulfil the plan... [A]ll lived in terrible conditions. "...I think that we... were united by the difficulties we all faced. We... felt that the whole economy was ours, that we were... working for ourselves." The burst of construction and spending in the Soviet Union came at the time of the Great Depression in the West. Many of the jobless liked what they heard about communism. It sounded like a worker's paradise. "I became communist in short because of what I saw around me here in the U[S]... There was misery, children were going to bed hungry, there was poverty, and there was no reason for it. We were the richest country in the world and I saw communists out on the street demonstrating and trying to do something about it..." [Irish playwright *George Bernard Shaw* – an active member of the Fabian Society, an English socialist society founded in 1884 and advocating social change through gradual reform rather than by violent revolutionary action' – visited Russia and gushed]... "We have rebuked her ungodliness and now the Sun shines on Russia, as on a country with which God is well pleased, whilst [God's] wrath is heavy on us and we don't know where to turn for comfort or approval." ...Soviet newsreels showed Stalin as a genial figure... but he was ruthless with anyone who challenged him. He demanded cooperation at all levels. For millions of Russians the [Russian Orthodox] Church was still a source of strength and offered the only alternative system of beliefs. The communists saw the Church as a challenge and intensified their attacks on it. Village priests were ridiculed... harassed and forced to renounce their beliefs... [One peasant recalled a local incident:] "The priest came in... They called the barber and he cut off his hair and the priest announced, 'There is no God. I've lied to you.'" ...The greatest threat to the life of the peasants came when Stalin decided to end private farming. He thought their methods were too inefficient to raise the food the country now needed. A campaign was organised against the richer peasants, the so-called Kulaks... Stalin said the Kulaks should be liquidated as a class. Over three million were shot or died in... the [forced labour] camps. The state... took over all the land, which was now to be farmed collectively in large units. But the peasants didn't want collectivisation. They killed their livestock rather than give it up, and the state took the grain. The result was famine. Over five years, seven million people died of starvation... The price was not mentioned when Stalin listed socialism's achievements in 1937... [Ironically, the] leader of the first workers' state lived in reclusive comfort. [However, he] felt insecure, even about those closest to him. One by one the most senior communists, who had planned the social and political transformation of the country, became his victims... Stalin's morbid paranoia grew. Nobody at any level... regardless of whether they were in the Party or not, was safe. From his desk the great terror was controlled and conducted. Secret police orders gave every region an arbitrary quota for the purges. Category 1 meant death; category 2 meant the prison camps... The purges struck many of the earliest enthusiasts for communism... On the surface, for those of its people it had not devoured, the great communist experiment could claim to have achieved some of its aims by the end of the 1930s. The vast majority were able to read. Great construction projects, like the Moscow Metro, had been completed whatever the cost [in human lives], and many Soviet citizens had opportunities of work they'd never had before... But twenty years... [after] a small minority... [had] imposed their idea on their fellow countrymen, hoping to persuade them with the results... even the earliest

believers knew the promise that the oppressed masses would themselves form the government had not been delivered... “There was no socialism of any kind under Stalin[... but if he hadn’t]... destroyed... socialism... someone else... would have... because, probably, the time had not yet come for such a society.” ...ordinary men and women toiled and died as a result of a political system whose rhetoric and utopian promise became one of the most powerful forces affecting the [20th] century. And far from dying[itself], the communist system would go on to dominate the lives of many more people after the end of [WWII], bringing the same popular hopes and the same vicious realities.

The Bolsheviks ruthlessly broke the grip of both tsar and the church in the Russian people. When Stalin[... a]... lapsed seminarian turned militant atheist... looked out over Moscow and saw church domes and steeples dominating the city’s skyline, he saw not beauty and sanctity but ignorance and superstition... By the time of the purges of the late 1930s, nearly every church in Moscow was closed. Only about 100 still functioned officially in the entire Soviet Union. But in 1941, as German armies attacked, Stalin was so desperate to rally the country against the Nazi invasion that he shamelessly appealed to the people’s religious faith. He approved the re-opening of 20,000 new churches. By 1959, however, Nikita Khrushchev had redeclared the communist war on religion, and the number of open churches in the Soviet Union soon decreased... It was not until[the last General Secretary]’s annunciation of *glasnost* and *perestroika* that the Soviet state... [began] remaking the graceful old capital as a showcase...

MOSCOW’S new spacious Kallinin Prospekt supermarket was supposed to be a communist showcase. But the long queues at the counters immediately told me this was just another Soviet store. In Russia, shoppers don’t help themselves to food stacked on shelves. First they pay. Then they queue with their receipts at separate counters... On this day, the store had beef, but it looked spoiled. And sausage, the popular substitute, was quickly running out. “Sausage is finishing...,” announced the loud-speaker. A wave of muttering swept the meat queue. Scores of shoppers, some having waited half an hour, returned for refunds before joining yet another queue in the hope of buying potatoes or milk. The Soviet food crisis is worse than it has been in decades, and this year the country seems headed for another grain-harvest disaster. Last year’s shortfall, 40 million tonnes, helped bring about sharply higher grain imports and shortages of everything from meat to standard consumer goods. “For my entire life, the food situation has done nothing but deteriorate,” one shopper told me. “But under [the current General Secretary], the decline is accelerating.” The massive failure of Soviet agriculture is much more than an inconvenience for the consumer. It threatens to derail [the Secretary General’s] whole economic reform programme. The reforms require the people to work harder, but the workers have made clear they won’t do so if there is nothing to buy... Why is Russia, a net exporter of food under the tsars, chronically dependent on food imports? Why, with more land devoted to cereal production than any other country, has Russia become the world’s largest importer of grains? And how – with roughly 25[%] of its labour force working in agriculture, compared with just [3%] in the U[S] – can Russia average little more than half the US output per hectare? ...Today’s rural devastation has its roots in political decisions made in the late 1920s, when a still-free agricultural market was considered a threat to the Communist Party’s control. Given a choice between total power and feeding the nation... Stalin chose power. He exiled millions of farmers to the Arctic and Siberia, and herded the remaining farm workers into massive collective farms. Then he demanded more grain than they could produce. During 1932 and 1933, seven million Soviet farmers died of starvation. Those who survived began to work in a completely different way – not as independent farmers but as rural slaves. The result was the death of initiative and the sundering of the farmers’ natural ties to the land. For years, Soviet authorities blamed agricultural failure on the country’s severe climate. Under the [reformist General Secretary], they began to blame the excesses of Stalin. Only now are some beginning to acknowledge that the problem is not Stalin but the communist system... In private agriculture, the rhythm of work is determined by sunshine, rainfall and the requirements of the land. In the Soviet Union, what matters is the plan. Regional officials tell the chairman of each collective what to plant and how much. He, in turn, issues precise orders to his foremen who instruct those who actually work the land. In this way, every operation is directed, rigidly and inflexibly, like military manoeuvres, without the individual farmer making a single decision. To ensure that commands are carried out, there... [is] one... supervisor... for every ten farmers. The farmers have to fill in forms to move animals, haul loads of produce... even[to] pull weeds. In a single year, a 4000-hectare collective farm may produce half a tonne of paper... Besides forcing farmers to plant inappropriate crops, the plan dictates deadlines... Thus, if the plan decrees it is time to plough, the fields will be ploughed even if the ground is so wet the tractors sink to their axles. If the plan says it is time to reap the crops, they will be cut, ready or not. Not only does the system not work, but the people don’t work either. “Someone who tried to get the maximum return from the land would be a misfit... The general pattern is that of a perpetual strike.” To improve efficiency, the government tried pouring in money. Between 1971 and 1985, it invested nearly \$US1000 billion in agriculture, but got no increase in production. Every place I visited, farmers were doing the absolute minimum... The crops that do get harvested are subject to a bewildering array of barriers before they can reach consumers. There are only four trucks for each 400 hectares of ploughed land... far less than the number necessary to avoid delays. Once trucks are loaded, they have to brave primitive roads. Only 20[%] of roads in rural areas are sealed. For much of the year the others are a mass of mud. As a result, milk turns sour on the way to the processing plant and is dumped... What makes the chaos complete... is the absence of warehouses. Only 40[%] of Soviet collectives have storage facilities. On average, Soviet farmers lose 20 to 30[%] of the harvested grain – about the amount Russia imports. They also lose over a third of the fresh fruit... and... vegetables... In an effort to deal with a worsening food situation, the Kremlin is offering farmers the opportunity to work tracts of land on their own. They are permitted to lease plots for 50 years or longer, pass the leases on to their descendants, and earn money based on what they produce. The problem is that the scheme operates within the existing collective-farm system. It is the collective that sets the terms of the lease and controls access to equipment, feed, fertilizer and seed. Furthermore, the would-be renter has to contend with a society that has been brainwashed for decades to think that profit is profiteering and personal ambition is greed... [In addition, a] continuing exodus from the countryside is expected to create a shortage of some 14 million trained agricultural specialists by 1990. If urgent steps are not taken, the food crisis could become catastrophic... To a stranger, the most frightening scenes take place on payday... [F]armers gather round and begin a drinking binge. Almost everyone pitches in to buy vodka. By midday, virtually the entire village is drunk. According to a recent study by the state-run Academy of Sciences, “...To meet a sober male in a Siberian village after dark is like meeting a Martian.” ...BACK IN MOSCOW, in the long queues at the... supermarket, there is[another] shortage... “How long can this go on?” asks an angry shopper, after being informed that there is no more cheese. “For as long as there’s socialism,” says a woman who has been waiting patiently with her empty paper bags. - October 1989

November 8... 1989. Winds of freedom are gusting. The nations of Eastern Europe are tearing loose from the bondage of decades... The situation is spinning out of control. The GDR Politburo, in a desperate gamble that people will stay if given the right to leave, announces that, from midnight on Thursday the ninth, the wall [– that an ‘estimated 860 had been killed trying to cross’ –] will be open, and citizens will be allowed to come and go.

Berlin on the night of November the 9th, 1989: East Germans mob the frontier posts that divide... [them] from the West, scarcely believing what they’ve heard – that for the first time in 30 years they may be free to travel to the other side... [B]ut the spokesman failed to announce that the visas needed would only be issued the next morning... East German border [guards were] faced with a momentous decision. “We had no orders from our superiors... suddenly we saw how hopeless we were when faced by the will of the population. When the will of the people is stronger than the power of the state, something is wrong. All [we] could do was open the barrier and let the people go.” The breach of the [‘fortified wall erected in 1961 to curb the flow of refugees to the West’ (prior to ‘its collapse, over 5000 people had successfully crossed over the Wall’)] marks the final failure of

the communist ideals so many had once believed in... The conquest of the Berlin Wall brings liberation. All over the communist world, after years of resigned acceptance, millions of people had finally stood up. Back in the 1970s the Soviet system was at the height of its power. Each year, on the anniversary of the October Revolution, they celebrated an idea still expected to transform the world... "Each factory displayed their achievements. We were so proud our country was so powerful..." The communist world stretched from the Pacific in the East to the heart of Europe. Poles, Czechs, Romanians and East Germans were all seen as part of the same great family... creating a better world, all in the name of Lenin. The... vision inspired thousands... of schoolchildren. "We... [believed that the communists] had the best tractors, the best schools. Everything was the best here. We never had any doubts." The state planned for everything. Peoples lives were mapped out for them in a system that claimed to provide the care and stability that capitalism never could. "Our state was an example for all the world... Everything was organised for everyone, down to the youngest child. It was all planned in advance, even how many bearings would be sent to which factory." ...by the 1970s the central planners were attempting to produce everything a modern consumer might demand... [However, the Communist Party had] control of all newspapers and television, and the people heard only the good news – the propaganda of success... "Decisions were made for you somewhere else; the Party newspaper told you what to think..." It was a world of mass illusion... When Romania's President Ceausescu was shown[on TV] visiting markets... the displays of food had little to do with real life. "The truth is that the shops didn't even have one-hundredth of what we used to see on TV..." Across the Soviet block, communist economic planning wasn't delivering. Queuing became a way of life... People spent up to five hours a day in line. The wait for a flat was 15 years. But the Party still tried to persuade them that life was far worse in the capitalist West... "I remember the films we saw, like *Oliver*. That was exploitation. I was so shocked... I cried... What a nightmare his life was. I thought they still lived like that in the West." ...In the East they were told that the Iron Curtain – that divided the continent – was there to protect socialism from the evil influence of the West. But by the late 1970s, barb wire and dogs could no longer shield them from the... din of Western culture. "I got to know... [the West's] music, though I didn't understand a word. I imagined these people dancing and smiling. You couldn't hide the feeling in that music." Anything from the West – records... clothing – became a prized item on the black market. "I wanted blue jeans. I'd seen them on someone. All I had to do was find the money – two months salary..." ...But whatever people might want and think, it was dangerous to speak up. The state's tentacles reached into every area of life. Telephones were bugged, hotel rooms were filmed, idle talk could lead to arrest on the street. Though the worst days of the Stalinist terror were over, fear – not ideology – still kept people in check. The secret police held millions of files on ordinary citizens, full of information supplied by a huge network of paid informers. "I travelled by train a lot. People were always grumbling about... living conditions but I preferred to stand in the corridor or pretend that I was sleeping. I was scared. Why should I take the risk? Nobody knew who might be an informer." ...The penalties were high for individuals who challenged the system... [However, in] one country in the Eastern Bloc the opposition to Soviet domination, and the socialist idea, was more widespread and deeply rooted than anywhere else. In Poland people still clung to another set of beliefs. The election of a Polish pope... gave the Poles a new confidence in their Christian faith and in themselves... Poles were told they lived in a workers' state, but the workers felt ignored and exploited, and any attempt to improve conditions was ruthlessly put down. [In addition, many Poles remembered 'one of the most abominable episodes of WW2: the execution of all but 448 of 15,570 Polish military officers and "upper class" men held in three Soviet prisoner-of-war camps – a tragedy that continues to send shockwaves through Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. The wrongly dated Katyn memorial reading: "Polish officers shot by the Nazis in 1941" was a further insult. ('The Soviet Union finally admitted to being responsible for the massacre in 1990, announcing it as "one of the worst Stalinist crimes," on Moscow Radio.')]The discontent was greatest in the port of Gdansk. In 1980, a year after the pope's visit, the shipyard went on strike... [T]he strikers gathered in the shipyard and issued 21 demands. Many were a direct challenge to the Communist Party's claim to represent the workers... The strikers and their supporters prayed that the army wouldn't be sent in... With strikes spreading all over Poland, a government minister arrived in the shipyard for talks... [N]egotiators could now confront the Party leaders face-to-face... The Party caved in. The workers were allowed to form the first independent, non-communist trade union in the Soviet Empire. Led by[a] shipyard electrician... they had taken on the full might of the communist state and won... Within weeks, 10 million Poles had joined the new union. Terrified that Solidarity was a dangerous virus that would spread to their own people, other communist governments tried to discredit it... Soviet workers accused their Polish brothers... [of wanting] to restore capitalism... The pressure on the Poles was turned up when the Soviets held[military] manoeuvres just a few miles from Gdansk. The clear message to the watching Polish[Communist] Party leader... was that the Red Army would intervene if the Poles failed to put their own house in order... In December 1981, just 16 months after the Gdansk agreement, the General banned Solidarity and declared martial law. Faced with the full might of[the] army and police, the unarmed trade union kept up resistance for as long as it could. Thousands of Solidarity leaders were rounded up and arrested... "I knew they'd come for me. I was so afraid. Four of them burst in and started to kick me around like a ball because I resisted. When one of them saw I was pregnant it made no difference... They left me bleeding on the floor." [She] lost her baby and any chance of having children. The Soviet leaders still held ultimate control... but their grasp was faltering. Three General Secretaries[of the USSR] were buried in quick succession. A leader from a new generation took over, and [he] seemed to understand the frustrations of the people on the street... He was a leader... who declared the socialist world could only be transformed with the full participation of the people... A new policy of openness, or 'Glasnost', allowed Soviets to read books and see films that had previously been censored... Television viewers were transfixed by programmes which told, for the first time, how people really lived... [Economic] reforms began... But in many places political freedom was the major goal. All across the Soviet Union, long suppressed nationalism burst into the open. Soon [the General Secretary's] revolution was running out of control. In Eastern Europe the Party had been kept in power by Moscow's past willingness to send in the tanks. When [the General Secretary] removed that threat... the cracks appeared. In Hungary, new leaders began to dismantle the old political system – even allowing people to take down sections of the Iron Curtain. In Poland, Solidarity, whose popular support had never been destroyed, forced the government to hold free elections. They swept to power. But a swathe of old-style regimes, from Romania to East Germany, still seemed firmly in charge. In Berlin the... leadership celebrated 40 years of communism as if nothing had changed. Most East Germans... knew it had. "People were quieter. Previously you would always celebrate the 7th of October and you'd be forced to be cheerful. But that day there was something in the air." The crowds chanted for the visiting [Soviet General Secretary], not for their own diehard leaders... Just a couple of streets from the official pageantry, a counter demonstration was broken up by the police... "...Plainclothes police took truncheons out of their pockets and beat up those youngsters..." Despite the police tactics that night, the demonstrations spread. People, who for years had passively accepted the status quo, felt brave enough to take a stand. And with the opposition swelling, the Party was driven into making hurried concessions... The Party decided to allow people to travel to the West... Both East and West Berlin exploded in joy... Poles, Hungarians and East Germans had broken free. Now the Czechs tried to join them... [H]uge crowds took over the capital every evening... The Czech[Communist] Party leadership, without the threat of the Red Army to back them up, was floundering... In two weeks, 40 years of communist rule[in Czechoslovakia] was swept away... It was called the Velvet Revolution. But in Romania nothing had changed... In the same week as the revolution in Prague, Nicolae Ceausescu held a Party congress. The faithful greeted him as they always did, and he rewarded them with a six hour speech... They responded with 67 standing ovations. No mention was made of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Romanian press had never even reported it. "There was no information about what was going on in Eastern Europe, but... in Timisoara [some people] had a trump card. Through [being able to pick up Yugoslav TV they] had news about the outside world." Emboldened by what they knew had happened in Berlin and Prague, the people of Timisoara... were the first[Romanians] to dare to protest... Thousands gathered [for a rally]... As the march approached the bridge into the centre of town it became clear Ceausescu was not going to bow to the inevitable, like his German and Czech comrades. "There were troops with their

weapons aimed at us. When the group approached, they opened fire without any warning. They shot with real bullets. People screamed in pain. My wife... was hit by one bullet... straight through the heart..." The slaughter went on as the troops surrounded the city, but the defiance continued... In the capital... stories of the Timisoara risings spread quickly. A rally was organised for [the President] to reassert control... That night Bucharest dissolved into chaos. Hundreds were killed. The people kept coming, and when the army deserted their leader it was the turn of Ceausescu and his wife to flee... When... [they] were caught, there was no mercy. With the executions of Ceausescu and his wife, seen on television, an era of repression in Eastern Europe had come to an end. In the country where it had all begun, the Communist Party still held power, but [the General Secretary's] reforms had shaken the old certainties... Loyal Party members... were bewildered by the changes at home and abroad. "I felt the ground slipping from under my feet. I cried tears of despair. How could this be happening? Maybe we communists did make mistakes... but did they need to ruin everything?..." ...With [the General Secretary] threatening everything they believed in, communist hardliners in the army and KGB mounted a pre-emptive strike [in August 1991. The General Secretary] was held prisoner as they sought to reimpose the old order... But the leaders of the coup had miscalculated. One of a new breed of radical politicians... called on the people to fight back... The White House, where [the radical] presided over the Russian Parliament, became the centre of resistance... "People began... asking the soldiers, 'Have you come to kill us?'" ...The troops were uncertain what to do... Unwilling to turn their guns on their own people, the young soldiers were the first to disobey their commanders. The coup began to crumble... For two nights the defenders waited for an attack that never came. The hardliners who'd led the coup had failed, and as they were swept away they took [the General Secretary] and the whole Communist Party with them. Russia had a new hero... [who became their new president,] and for the first time in 70 years the Russian national flag was unfurled at the Kremlin. All over the Soviet Union people tore down the symbols of an ideology that had shaped so much of the 20th century. The[y]... were asked to put their faith in new gods – democracy and capitalism.

An early-1990s publication stated that the 'Commonwealth of Independent States population was 35% Protestant, 2% RC, 12% Muslim, 1% Jewish and the remaining 50% were Non-religious belief'. Next below the CIS for *Non-religious belief* was 'South Korea (36%), while above it were Cuba (55%), Bulgaria (65%), North Korea (68%), China (71%) and Albania (74%).'

[Yesterday], the manager of an Albanian pyramid scheme... [told] thousands of angry investors that... their money is gone. Pyramid schemes... have sprung up across the impoverished Balkan state since the fall of communism...

Protests against Albania's crumbling network of get-rich-quick... schemes spread beyond Tirana yesterday... [I]n Vlore, 150km west of Tirana, protesters hurled stones at the city hall in fury that a local firm called Gjallica had postponed resuming payments to depositors... A strong police presence in the Albanian capital itself was intended to prevent a repeat of clashes on Thursday when thousands of angry savers took to the streets to demand money back from Sude, once one of the most popular of the schemes.

...The collapse of... investment schemes, which has sparked violence in Albania, has plunged the country into its most serious crisis for years. The schemes started to appear in the early 1990s... Europe's poorest people soon embarked on a frenzied investment drive when word got out that big money was to be made... and quickly. Undeterred by the failure of similar schemes in Russia, Romania and Bulgaria, many Albanians sold their houses, sheep, cattle and other possessions to jump on the bandwagon... Businesses and shops, even food retailers, reported a plunge in earnings as people stopped spending to invest in[the pyramid] schemes... But for most, the good times are over. At least five of the top 10 Albanian pyramid schemes have either declared bankruptcy or had their bank assets seized by the Government... First signs of trouble surfaced last October when [the]Finance Minister... voiced concern at a meeting of the I[MF]. Economists estimate more than \$US1 billion... might have been sunk into the funds... Albania was ruled... by one of Europe's harshest communist regimes which banned private bank accounts and private property. After the communists fell, many Albanians, unused to the ways of the free market, felt their cash was safe in pyramid schemes. There was no small print warning them they could lose money as well as make it. Protests erupted two weeks ago when a scheme run by... a 32-year-old former shoe factory worker known as Sude, collapsed, owing 100,000 creditors \$US100 million. Sude, who was once heard mistaking the IMF for an FM radio station... offered 170[% returns] over five months. Around 2000 people a day crammed into her offices from dawn to dusk. In November she stopped paying out. Two other firms, Xhaferri and Populli, registered as charitable foundations, offered 100[%] a month for three months... Authorities have frozen \$US300 million placed in state banks by the two scheme operators... [However, the PM has] pledged to pay Albanians all the money they have put in failed schemes with bank interest starting from February 5... But the... schemes have also influenced the value of the Albanian currency. In November, the lek gained strongly on the dollar and German mark because Xhaferri accepted only leks from its numerous depositors. But the lek weakened... when Xhaferri investors rushed to turn profits into hard currency... [In related news,] Bulgarians... are struggling to make ends meet as hyper-inflation destroys the value of the lev and sends prices soaring... The lev has fallen below 1000 to the dollar for the first time – it was 70 to the dollar a year ago – and monthly inflation in January is forecast at 50[%]. Economists say annual inflation could top 3600[%] this year... With inflation devastating the lev's value, some Bulgarians[have] bought electric appliances as a way to "invest" money... before it becomes worthless.

...Albanians who lost their life savings in... pyramid schemes can expect no help from the Government even though it was partly to blame... [The] President... sternly told the people, who emerged from 45 years of isolation and stalinism in 1990, that they had learned a hard lesson in free market economics and would get no cash from the Government. "...No democratic government would do this. It would... creat[e hyperinflation]."

...as t[housands of people rallied yesterday in south-western Macedonia to demand that the Government reimburse them for money lost in failed investment schemes], the]... founder of the biggest investment holding firm in Albania... Vefa... said... angry investors should "roll up their sleeves and get back to work" instead of protesting and burning down buildings... [He] said that his... 80,000 investors... had nothing to fear and would get back their deposits in three or four months after a climate of insecurity had passed... Albanians had become used to a soft life over the past five years... "Have they forgotten already when they received a kilo of meat a month and... getting a... television took three years and meant asking a manager 1000 times?" he asked.

...the 36-year-old unemployed civil servant who... has a university degree in economics, sunk his life savings of equivalent to nearly \$NZ900 into a... scheme that promised to triple his money in three months. Sure enough, three months later, scheme operators showed him some official-looking coupons and assured him his investment was worth the equivalent of \$NZ2680. Would he like to reinvest for another three months? Like nearly everyone else in [his] desperately forgettable town, [he] could not resist... But a month later, as pyramid schemes throughout Albania began collapsing like a house of cards, the Government belatedly stepped in and began arresting the operators and freezing their bank accounts... Last week, riots erupted across the country as angry investors blamed the Government for their losses. In Lushnje, local residents burned city hall and trashed several other Government buildings... The national epidemic of pyramid schemes has plunged Albania into its gravest crisis since 1990... [I]n terms of sheer breadth and lunacy, it is hard to top what... [happened. The] amount of money poured into various pyramid schemes... represents a staggering 43[%] of the nation's [GDP]. At least 800,000 Albanians have put money into one or more of these schemes, which, out of a population of 3.8 million, means virtually every family was in. "It became a national mania..." said one Western diplomat... "We thought this was how capitalism works," lamented... [a] Tirana taxi driver for 36 years... [who had] sold his taxi and put the money into a pyramid scheme. His daughter and son-in-law sold their house and moved into a tiny apartment so they too could get in on the easy money. So did the son-in-law's

parents, who sold their small shoe factory and made plans to retire on the anticipated interest payments... [■ One] of the most spectacular [economic frauds of recent history] was the MMM fund in Russia, which claimed to have 10 million investors before going belly-up in 1994. MMM's mastermind... evaded a prison sentence by winning a seat in... Russia's Parliament.

...More violence and shooting broke out in Albania, Parliament declared a state of emergency and the [PM] said even a new government could not save... [the] country from its descent into chaos. [The Albanian] President... said he would "employ all measures under the law... against this rebellion." He gave no further details in his televised speech... [but on Saturday he had] ordered his Cabinet to resign... The state of emergency allows the army to be deployed to quell public unrest and protect public buildings and key roads. Albania has been convulsed by weeks of riots and protests... In the capital, several foreign journalists were attacked outside Parliament by men the reporters believed were secret police.

...Violence flared again in Albania's capital as popular protests against the... Government... entered their sixth week. Riot police prevented about 1000 opposition supporters from marching to central Tirana yesterday... Truckloads of police, supported by plain-clothes security men, moved in with truncheons and hit several protesters... [T]hree protesters were killed during pitched street battles with riot police last week... [in] the... town of Vlore... About 60 students in Vlore [have begun] a hunger strike to demand the Government's resignation and full compensation for investors...

Pyramids just the tip of Albanian frustration... Protests that rose from the ashes of Albania's get-rich-quick schemes... have exposed a deep north-south divide in this impoverished Balkan land. Not only are north and south inhabited by distinct ethnic groups, but their economies have been determined by differences in geography, and when their inhabitants look abroad they look in different directions. The collapse... of the harsh communist rule that isolated Albania from the outside world and minutely regulated the lives of its citizens has brought the two regions into greater contact – and conflict. [The] President... is from the mountainous far north, where the Geg ethnic group predominates. He has surrounded himself with people from his region... Southern Albania – where the Tosk ethnic group and ethnic Greeks live – was home to [the last Albanian] communist dictator... and has remained a stronghold of the Socialist Party, successors to the communists. Many southerners lost out in the political power struggle after the fall of communism, but they also profited from... economic ties with Greece to the south and Italy to the west... In addition to legitimate trade in food and consumer products, drug-running, illegal migration and smuggling have brought money in. The north, in contrast, suffered from sanctions imposed on the neighbouring former Yugoslavia in 1993; its foreign trade was limited for several years to smuggling petrol in violation of the economic embargo. The seeds of Albania's current troubles lay within that greater wealth gathered in the south.

...After weeks of unrest... beleaguered Government... officials [have] issued orders to shoot armed rioters on sight... and... imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew... At least 12 people were reported killed at the weekend after crowds in several southern towns raided weapons depots and went on a rampage of burning and looting.

...Albania's police and Army are seen by western military experts as unknown quantities in a volatile equation, capable of brutally suppressing demonstrators, or just as easily siding with them... "The police and the Army are unable, it seems, to react in a measured way," said... [the] former editor of *Jane's* defence publications. "They just either run, or get their batons or guns out. The police were trained in how to put down a riot, rather than to help police a demonstration." ...the International Institute for Strategic Studies, said: "There is an obvious lack of discipline and training..." And... a University of Warwick historian specialising in the Balkans, said: "Policemen and soldiers have also been badly hit by financial difficulties and are therefore quite likely to join with the rebels." ...soldiers on numerous occasions have willingly opened fire on crowds, sometimes from helicopters as, the opposition claims, happened in Delvino... [But some have also] stood back and allowed mass looting of security arsenals... Looters even grabbed antiquated Kronshdat and Shanghai patrol boats from the port of Sarada... The 54,000 troops enforcing the state of emergency, with orders to shoot when necessary, constitute one of the most obsolete, rag-tag armed forces ever to be coughed up by the Eastern Bloc... Its arsenal is an antiquated patch-work of hand-me-downs from... China and the former Soviet Union. Add to that some 155,000 reservists, 13,500 paramilitaries, 3500 neighbourhood militia and 5000 border guards, none equipped with anything approaching modern-day crowd control gear. Riot shields, helmets, tear-gas and other non-lethal weapons are either totally lacking or in such small supply as to be negligible.

...It seems that every man in... the southern town of... Vlore... has an AK-47 and fires it with abandon. At nightfall the constant crack of machine guns and the booming of explosives... are deafening... "Ten days ago the sound of that shooting was music in my ears. Now I'm sick of it. Everything is in the hands of the mafia,"... [says a man who is slumped] in the twilight of a waterfront... hotel bar, nursing an Italian beer and musing aloud on the "time of the pyramids." ...Suspicious at first[, he had]... finally succumbed two months ago and invested \$US9000... in Vlore's local pyramid plan, known as "Gjallica." The money represented not only his savings from two years of work as a labourer and waiter in Greece, but most of the proceeds from the sale of his parents' home as well. "With the money we had left over my parents and brother and sister and I moved from our little village... to Vlore where we rented a house. None of us had a job but that wasn't a worry since we were going to be rich. Then one day all the members of the Albanian Parliament showed up in town and wanted their money back from Gjallica, and of course they got it. The next day Gjallica closed its doors and that was the end for us... I worry for my family. There is no future here... But... [in] my home village the chief of police is a convict, a man who just escaped from jail. It's horrible. These people are criminals and they are destroying everything." ...Suddenly a muffled explosion breaks his narrative. The bar's plate glass windows buckle visibly and rattle in their frames. Residents... are fishing Albanian-style by tossing grenades into the harbour. [The man], who works at the hotel, complains that the kitchen freezer is full of fish forced on him by hooligans who have too much to carry away... Since last week 20 people have been killed and more than 100 wounded by gunfire, and a nurse at the Vlore hospital says perhaps half of the shootings are accidental.

...For the past five years, Albanians and the international community have lived under the illusion that communism was dead. But it did not end when the [communist] regime... ceded its monopoly on power. [The incumbent President, a former] communist... has been just as good as his predecessors in using violence against his opponents... [His] regime has jailed and beaten up opposition leaders, independent journalists, businessmen and ethnic minorities as well as ideological adversaries within his Democratic Party. This man still considers power an inherited right rather than a responsibility to which he has been appointed. He masterly deceived the West, saying he was using its sponsorship in his battle against communism. After five years of democracy, Albania has an even weaker state than the one inherited from the communist regime... The international media have written much about his peace proposals. The people understand the President had no choice. About 70[%] of the Army had deserted and joined the protesters. Let the West be in no doubt: [the President] was prepared to crush the revolt with tanks. Only when the kalashnikovs were pointed at the capital was he obliged to relinquish the power he had wielded with an iron hand. The cost of his power games has been exorbitant: in three months, Albanians lost \$US2 billion, about 200 were killed and 200,000 took up arms. The population is now more heavily armed than ever before. All this could have been avoided if the President had accepted the resignation of his Government a month ago and called new elections. Only when a new army emerged, an army controlled by no one, was he forced to bow to these demands. A... new Government will have its work cut out to persuade people to surrender weapons... The West, whose Albanian policy is bankrupt, would be well advised to increase its aid. The only possible way of retrieving the arms is to buy them back. Especially in the south, where a food crisis is emerging, the state may exchange guns for food... Albania's neighbours should have an interest in disarming the country... Across the borders, in Kosovo and Macedonia, Albanians may grow hopeful of unification with their mother country... So far, the overthrow of the ruling regime is the only aim of the armed protest, but this will not necessarily be the case a month from now when the military officers leading the revolt enter into negotiations.

...[over the weekend, f]ighters in the south repeated vows that they would not give up their weapons... They brought no new towns under their control but raided military bases for arms, including one... 55km from Tirana. In some parts of the south the rebellion visibly deteriorated into

lawlessness. Armed gangs roamed at will through rebel-held towns, robbing motorists, terrorising women, shooting at travellers from Greece and ignoring warnings of stern punishment issued by insurgent “defence councils.”

...Albanian authorities, buoyed by a new all-party Government, appealed for calm amid fresh reports of looting of arms... Unrest reached Tirana late last night as the military academy was looted of weapons.

...Tanks moved on to the streets of Tirana yesterday in an attempt to stem virtual anarchy gripping Albania... The crackle of small-arms fire interspersed with tracer rounds as insurgents discharged their weapons into the air could be heard... against a backdrop of the roar of tank engines, but the level of firing appeared to diminish as the tanks patrolled up and down the... main Boulevard of the Martyrs of the Nation... In the clearest sign yet that [the President] and the new coalition Government were no longer in control, all political parties urged Nato's European members to use their military to end the turmoil[... which]... has spread to the north of the country in the past 48 hours... In the northern city of Shkoder... local residents reported that five people had been killed... But the German Chancellor... said after talks with the Dutch [PM]... that the crisis was largely an internal affair and it was not clear what Western troops would do in Albania if sent there to help restore order.

...Italy[... which]... fears a continuing crisis in the small Balkan country could lead to a new exodus of Albanians across the Adriatic... is calling for a[n urgent] European Union meeting on Albania.

...prompted by what it said was deteriorating security, [the US Administration has] ordered 160 Government employees to leave the country... by regular or charter flights... along with their families... Another 2000 [USers] were urged to... join... an international exodus from Albania... [However, staff] of international airlines reported that Tirana Airport was closed, hampering the evacuation...

[Yesterday, the US] sent four Chinook military helicopters into Tirana to pull out its citizens. About 50 [USers] had already been ferried out of the country to[US naval] ships standing offshore. Italy[also] used helicopters to rescue 400 foreign nationals and ferried them to Italian warships in the Adriatic... A few Albanians tried to join in, with one family running toward the open door of an Italian helicopter. As the chopper took off without them, the father sobbed in panic and despair, holding his ill six-year-old daughter in his arms. Moments later, a British helicopter landed to unload paratroopers. The family... climbed aboard.

...After two US Cobra gunships came under fire – with one of them firing back – the U[S] suspended its evacuation. US aircraft rescued 408 people, but dozens of [USer]s were stranded at a diplomatic compound under US marines protection... A bullet hole was later discovered in one of six German choppers taking evacuees to Podgorica, the capital of neighbouring Montenegro. Gunfire also hit an Italian helicopter, the Defence Ministry said in Rome... The unrest threatens to swamp neighbouring countries with refugees. Albanian military ships crossed the Adriatic yesterday, carrying 100 Albanian seamen and 300 civilians seeking asylum in Italy. Most of Albania's borders with Yugoslavia, Greece and Macedonia have been closed... [Meanwhile,] a European mediator has called for an international force to halt Albania's anarchy... [However,] Britain firmly ruled out military intervention in statements issued in London, and in Washington, [the]US State Department spokesman... said: “I don't believe there's an outside force anywhere in the world that could impose order... in Albania.” Albania's armed forces mounted a show of might yesterday with a procession that roared through Tirana's ramshackle streets. Armoured personnel carriers filled with soldiers and armed civilians were followed by... vans stacked with guns. After the procession, soldiers handed out leaflets decorated with a picture of shaking hands, which urged people to calm down, “love each other” and pray for Albania's salvation.

...[yesterday, a] former Chancellor of Austria, [who is now an]... envoy for the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe... went to the southern port of Vlore to talk with rebel leaders. But it seemed doubtful whether his rounds would produce anything more effective than the prayer from Mother Teresa, who from Calcutta said of her fellow Albanians, “May God bring them joy, prosperity, peace and unity.” First of all, Albania [i]s in need of sanity... Europe gazed at its southwest last week to find civilization vanishing down a sinkhole. Albania suddenly was no longer an organized society but metastasizing chaos, a malignancy that armed forces of other countries were struggling to keep at bay. In one week, what had begun as spontaneous revolts in a few southern cities turned all of Albania into a collection of scenes reminiscent of Mad Max movies: children brandishing grenades and AK-47s, looting and gunfire on an epidemic scale, an utter collapse of civil authority. Foreigners were fleeing the country en masse, many by helicopter airlifts to warships in the Adriatic. All at once, it seemed, small, sun-washed Albania had become the state of Anarchia. Europe has experienced nothing quite like this within living memory, perhaps for ages. The uprisings that spread north to overtake Tirana, were outbursts of sheer lawlessness more than any kind of movement, since the insurrection had no command. In one sense, it was a bit like the French Revolution, complete with a latter-day Bastille: Tirana's central prison, from which all 600 inmates escaped, including[a] former Socialist Party chief... and Albania's last communist ruler.

...Albanians fired... weapons... into the air... to celebrate the election of [a]Socialist... as their [new President. By the way, their]... last communist President[... who was]... charged with crimes against humanity... [but] was among 130 inmates who escaped from Albania's jails during an armed uprising last March... is still on the run. [3] senior ex-communists were... [also] charged with crimes against humanity for ordering the deportation of anti-communist dissidents... [and] sentenced to death last year... An appeals court revoked the sentence and imposed jail sentences instead.

...East Germany's last hardline communist leader... was jailed for six and a half years this week for the deaths of citizens who tried to flee to the West. The following is a guide to the fate of Europe's other communist leaders since the collapse of the Iron Curtain... [The last East German leader's] Stalinist predecessor... who ordered the building of the Berlin Wall... briefly went on trial but the case was dismissed in 1993 because of his ill health. He died in exile in 1994. The former head of East Germany's notorious state security (Stasi)... was released in 1995 having served two-thirds of a six-year sentence for killing two policemen. In May, a German court handed [an]East German spymaster... a two-year suspended sentence for kidnapping, coercion and bodily harm for supervising Cold War snatches. The former East German Defence Minister... and his deputy... were jailed last year for seven and a half years and five and a half years respectively for the killing of East Germans trying to flee the country. [The recent ‘cracking of the Stasi secret code is opening files that could lead to more arrests for Cold War activities.’]*Czech Republic* – The most serious cases concern three former Politburo members accused of treason for their part in the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia. They are... the Communist Party chief overthrown during the 1989 “Velvet Revolution,” [a one-time PM]... and... a former central committee member. Only one top communist, [the]Prague Party boss... has been jailed since 1989. He was sentenced to four years for “abuse of power” but paroled on appeal. *Romania* – ...[after] Ceausescu was summarily tried by a military court and executed by firing squad with his wife... over controversial “genocide” charges... [post]-communist authorities abolished the death penalty and brought to trial 87 top communists and senior secret policemen on charges linked to the repression of the 1989 uprising in which more than 1000 people were killed. All 87 were freed on health grounds, paroled or pardoned... *Hungary* – ...had the most liberal of all the communist regimes... Consequently there was less demand for trials of former communists than a desire to set the record straight. *Bulgaria* – A one-time associate of the late Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev and... Ceausescu, [Bulgaria's]... communist leader... was convicted in 1992 of embezzling about \$37.5 million of public funds... The Supreme Court overturned the sentence in January, but he remains under house arrest on separate charges for his assimilation policy against ethnic Turks in the 1980s. *Poland* – No former senior communist official has ended up behind bars. A trial of[a] former military strongman... for the shootings of protesters by security forces in [the 1970s] has been indefinitely postponed because of his poor health. Seven senior officials still face a trial that has been repeatedly delayed... *Russia* – The only prominent Russian ex-communists sent to prison were a group of hardline pro-communists who led a coup against the [last General Secretary]... in August 1991... The plotters were granted an amnesty by a sympathetic Parliament in 1994. [Incidentally, ‘after Stalin died his successor went to East Berlin, which he intended to hand over to the West. However, the puppet rulers of East Germany

wanted to remain in power and, after the Soviet ruler left, staged a riot, then requested Soviet help to quell it. Stalin's successor was executed on return to Moscow.']

...An explosion yesterday blew apart the year-old, 10-metre bronze statue... of... Nicholas II... Moscow's only monument to Russia's last tsar... who abdicated 80 years ago. Now, with communism swept away, the resurgent Orthodox Church may make him a saint.

...[NICHOLAS II and his family officially became saints this week after a concerted campaign of films, lectures, icons and exhibitions extolling the ruler executed by the Bolsheviks. The Russian Orthodox Church's Council of Bishops, meeting in Moscow, praised Nicholas and his family for their meekness, patience and humility, and hailed "the light of all-conquering Christian faith". Efforts to sanctify the Romanovs at the last Council of Bishops four years ago collapsed, but this time extensive lobbying by supporters of their canonisation made approval almost inevitable. The council emphasised that the Tsar was being honoured for his conduct after giving up the throne and the way he met his death, not for his rule while emperor. He was called Bloody Nicholas for authorising the city's governor's troops to open fire on striking workers in 1905, killing 4600 demonstrators in St Petersburg.]

...Two Orthodox priests, a handful of fervently religious pensioners and some local monarchists have begun the macabre task of excavating the ruins of the house where Russia's last Tsar was murdered with his family, in an attempt to carve out the precise boundaries of the windowless cellar where they were shot in July 1918. Once the room has been located, the construction of a huge church in honour of the Romanov family will begin. Highlighting the project's gruesome origins, the building will be consecrated as the "Church on the Blood." For most of the century, Soviet governments feared that the Romanov execution site could become a shrine for repressed monarchists and a pilgrimage point for Orthodox Christians. Officials swiftly converted the modest two-storey house into a museum of the revolution. In 1977, they demolished it altogether, covered the ruins with a thick layer of asphalt and built a five-lane road next to the spot. But a large pile of bricks and stone fragments from the walls of the cellar has been gathered and will be used in construction of the Russo-Byzantine style church, which is expected to cost at least \$US7.5 million. No state funding is forthcoming, so the bulk will come from private donations and sponsors. The extravagance of the project has shocked many, particularly given the manifold problems troubling the local community. However, none of the volunteers seemed unduly concerned by the expense. One volunteer, who received a monthly pension of 706 roubles (\$48), agreed that the price tag was irrelevant. "Before I started going to church, I was always short of money. But then I started praying and God began to help me."

...if you take your rubbish out after midnight you risk losing all your money. Superstitions play a major role in Russian daily life, particularly in rural areas, where people prefer to observe irrational traditional beliefs rather than accept the arguments of a more scientific approach and tempt fate. Even in cities, superstitions govern the lives of many. Many of their superstitions are known in other parts of the world but in Russia they are very popular and part of the social game. Recently, when a former PM was welcomed in the provinces, he was offered a cutting instrument as a present. He immediately took a few roubles from his wallet "so that friendship would not be cut." □ 'When Russia's President showed up for work last week for the first time this year, government and Opposition leaders alike were nervous that he might trigger a major new political crisis – the last thing this depression-mired country needs. Their nervousness increased when the respected daily *Kommersant* wrote: "The tradition is that firings will follow." This time, he ousted several Kremlin aides. Rumours are rife that the Finance Minister, Agriculture Minister and First Deputy Premier and perhaps even the PM will be next.'

...yesterday, Russia's President 'rocked financial markets by sacking the PM and appointing his ally as acting PM'...

'The world has, by turns, respected Russian's President, feared him, laughed at him. But last week may go down in history as when the world finally came to share the feeling of so many Russians towards this sick, self-obsessed, man – a feeling of contempt, mingled with alarm and shame that a well-educated, nuclear-armed European country should be under his control. What made the President dump his third government in 14 months – a stodgy but well-liked team that had staved off economic disaster and brought the country a measure of political peace? Envy? Unquenched ambition? Habit? Fear? Or madness?'

...Russia's President sacked yet another PM last night, leaving analysts worried that the country could be slipping into anarchy. The President signed a decree discharging the acting PM, who had served less than three months, and his entire Government. No reason for the move was given. The head of the Federal Security Service – the former KGB – was named as acting PM. The decree ordered all present cabinet ministers to continue in their posts until a new Government is formed. In a television address, hours after the sacking, the President also said he'd decided the new acting PM should succeed him next year. The President has not said so clearly before whom he would prefer to succeed him, although he has alluded to others in the past. According to the Centre for Political Technologies in Moscow's deputy director: "The President has a special talent for taking all of our problems and making them worse."

...The] President... has signed a controversial law on religious freedoms, sparking concern Russia was taking a step back towards the religious repression of the Soviet era... [In related news], an atheist group has been given permission to put its sign next to the official... [Xmas tree] in Madison, capital of the US state of Wisconsin... [It will say]: "In this season of the Winter Solstice, may reason prevail. There are no gods, no devils, no angels, no heaven or hell. There is only our natural world. Religion is but a myth and superstition that hardens hearts and enslaves minds."

...Chesterton is often quoted, "Whoever doesn't believe in God will believe in something worse"... The worst thing that happened to humans as they evolved from their ancestor apes was acquiring superstition as soon as it dawned on them that they could not explain their environment... [I]nstead of accepting natural hazards the way the other animals did they made up tales to explain them in terms they could understand. Without belief there would have been no Christians fed to the lions, no Crusades, no Inquisition, no... mad claims of "satanic abuse" of children, no Taleban, no Muslims massacring villagers in Algeria... no Bosnian "ethnic cleansing"... When it comes to belief, we have not progressed a single step beyond the cave-dwellers... People are only truly free when they can say, and mean it, that there is nothing they believe in.

...[the Yugoslav President does not, apparently, believe in anything. Almost everyone who has done business with him has come away convinced he is devoid of any ideology beyond the maintenance of his hold on power.]

...analysts believe... that the... [Yugoslav President] can probably hang on only until republican elections at the end of the year... The decline and almost inevitable fall of [this President] will surely become required reading for dictators everywhere. In a matter of weeks, he has slipped in the public eye from invincible supremo to vulnerable lame duck... As the President hesitated behind closed doors in recent weeks, the political cost... grew inexorably. Nervousness about the future hit the dinar. In the space of a month, it lost a fifth of its value against the German mark. This depreciation is already having an inflationary impact, which will be exacerbated if the Socialist regime continues to print unbacked money... The pundits in Belgrade's smoky bars are already thinking of [their President] in the future perfect tense. "When he is gone," they are beginning to wonder aloud, "what next?" It is a question few, even among the opposition, have given much thought to. Most Serbs had grown accustomed to [their President]'s domed head and widow's peak as permanent fixtures on the throne. As in most states dominated by one party, the opposition has little experience. Of the two main leaders, [one]... is a philosophy graduate, and [the other] is a novelist. But as [a] Serbian economist... argues in his book *The Economics of Destruction*, the ruling elite has become expert only in plundering the nation's assets and producing a system in which "stupidity and insanity is heavily promoted." Could it possibly be worse? A more serious concern about [the President]'s would-be successors is their fixation with nationalism. [The novelist] ran a Serb paramilitary group before the Croatian war although he subsequently renounced violence. And throughout the Bosnian conflict, [the graduate] openly backed... the Serb leader charged with genocide by the U[N] war crimes tribunal. The opposition's potential supporters in the Orthodox church, the Army and the Academy of Sciences all have blood on their hands, as promoters of militant Serb nationalism. Might the fall of [the President] unleash untapped reserves of xenophobia and trigger another war?

...[a 'US envoy met the ethnic Albanian's leader yesterday after failing to move the Yugoslav President on the question of independence for Kosovo. Even the threat of new Western sanctions inflicting fresh damage on his crippled economy didn't budge the President from his refusal of foreign mediation

of Kosovo's independence demands. Serbs voted overwhelmingly against foreign mediation in a referendum last month. The Albanian leader, with Western support, has refused direct talks with the Belgrade government without the participation of a mediator'...

'The Yugoslav Army pounded ethnic Albanian strongholds in the province of Kosovo at the weekend after the Kosovo Liberation Army captured eight Yugoslav Army soldiers. Reuters correspondents saw several tanks rapid firing in the direction of the KLA-controlled villages of Lapastica and Gorna Lapastica, nestling in forest-covered mountains in the region of Podujevo, north of the capital Pristina.' In further news from the Balkan Peninsula, 'the man killed by French peacekeeping troops in Bosnia at the weekend was the first person to be charged with rape as a war crime. The French troops shot dead Dragan Gagovic after he tried to run them down in his car during an attempt to arrest him in the eastern Bosnian town of Foca. Gagovic was local police chief in Foca, where Serb paramilitary forces expelled or killed Muslims. The tribunal charged that on at least one occasion he responded to complaints about sexual assaults by raping women who protested. No other international court, including the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials after WW2, dealt with sexual crimes against women. The female tribunal judge said at the time of Gagovic's indictment: "After this tribunal, no single war criminal can say, 'I did not know that rape was not allowed in war'." Foca is known for allegedly harbouring several indicted Bosnian Serb war criminals. The fatal shooting sparked an angry protest, involving about 100 people, outside the office of the UN policing mission in Foca, during which two staff members were injured'...

'Unarmed international monitors of the Kosovo Verification Mission are struggling to control an extremely tense region and Nato has warned the Serbs not to launch a new offensive before peace talks resume next month. The warning came as the US said the Yugoslav Army had moved 4500 troops, more than 60 tanks and other heavy equipment to the border of Kosovo, backing up forces already inside the conflict-racked province, where around 2000 people have died in the past year. Nato threatened air strikes against Yugoslav military targets if the Serbs blocked an autonomy deal, but the alliance's hands were tied when the ethnic Albanian negotiators did not sign up either. International pressure for a deal appeared to have caused a new split in ethnic Albanian ranks too, pitting the negotiating team against KLA hardliners wanting full independence. In Kosovo itself tank, machine gun, mortar and small arms fire broke out in the north after the security forces deployed their full range of heavy armour in what they called a winter training exercise.'

...'Serbian security forces blocked two major roads in new fighting in Kosovo yesterday and ethnic Albanians reported that armed, masked Serbs had ejected thousands of people from their homes. Civilians fled the town of Srbica with only the clothes on their backs as violence intensified in a dangerous vacuum caused by the withdrawal of truce monitors following the Serbs' rejection of a Kosovo autonomy plan at peace talks in Paris. Serbia is now under threat of Nato air strikes to force acceptance of the peace deal already signed by representatives of Kosovo's restive 90% Albanian majority. All 1380 monitors crossed into nearby Macedonia to avoid the risk of being taken hostage or used as human shields by angry Serbs should Nato bombs rain down.'

...'Hollow threats and fake deadlines are Nato's trademark in the Balkans, but this time it will not be able to run away. Letting the Serbs call Nato's bluff over Kosovo yet again, as they did over Bosnia so many times in the past, would leave the alliance's remaining credibility in shreds. So you can hear Nato's leaders talking out loud, trying to work up the nerve to drop a few cruise missiles on the Yugoslav President. "The military clock is ticking," says Nato's Secretary-General. "The threshold has been crossed," says the US President. "The Serbs absolutely must move. There is no other alternative except war," says a spokeswoman for the French Foreign Minister. "I wouldn't look at this as a one or two-bomb affair," says the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe. But the Serbian dictator says nothing at all – and in St Petersburg, a website contains instructions on how to make a device for less than \$200 that will jam the signals from global positioning system satellites that make cruise missiles so accurate. It also contains an appeal to "the mothers of Nato pilots and soldiers" not to bomb Belgrade. The problem with cruise missiles is that they are good for everybody except the real victims of this confrontation, the Albanian Kosovars who are being shelled and burned out of their villages by Serbian forces even as you read this. They are good for Nato because they let it act on its threat to punish Serbia without annoying the "mothers of Nato pilots and soldiers," who would get very upset if their offspring were killed or captured in a Balkan war. The thought of taking casualties, and paying the price in domestic support paralyses the will of political "leaders" throughout the West. Cruise missiles are good for the Serbian dictator, too, because he needs a few bombs to be dropped on Serbia right now. Not too many, you understand, but just enough to unite Serbian nationalists behind him if he decides to tough it out. And "not too many" is what he is likely to get. When your bluff has been called this many times, it is stupid and irresponsible to start bluffing again. The main victims will be the people you are trying to protect.'

...'A fresh Serbian anti-guerrilla offensive and the ambush murder of four policemen pitched Kosovo deeper into a vortex of violence as a US envoy swung into a last-ditch peace mission. The architect of Bosnia's 1995 peace treaty, and the broker of an October ceasefire in Kosovo that later collapsed, is due to see the Yugoslav President today. The envoy will deliver a final warning to the dictator to call off new offensives in Kosovo, from which 70,000 civilians have fled in the past six weeks, and accept a plan granting wide autonomy to the province's ethnic Albanian majority. If the dictator spurns the message, Nato says it will be poised for air strikes to cripple Belgrade's war machine and avert a looming new refugee disaster. As the likelihood of Nato intervention increased, both warring parties in Kosovo appeared to have gone on the offensive. The British Liberal Democrat chief, a specialist in Balkan affairs, said last night that the situation in Kosovo was putting Europe closer to a major ground war than it had been for 50 years.'

...'Nato forces were this morning poised to launch airstrikes against Yugoslavia aimed at ending its scorched-earth policy in Kosovo. Eight US B-52 bombers, based in western England, took off late last night, but it was not clear early today if they would join the first wave of airstrikes. Stealth bombers in Italy are ready to scramble and Nato's permanent fleet in the Mediterranean is steaming towards the Adriatic. Fears that the Kosovo crisis could spill across borders and bog down Europe in a Vietnam-style conflict are already haunting Nato's call to arms. The strikes were called after the US special envoy failed to persuade the Yugoslav President to halt his offensive against Kosovo's rebels and allow a 28,000-strong peacekeeping force into the area.'

...'Kosovo is the rock on which the Yugoslav President founded his rise to power and its unresolved conflict between Serbs and ethnic Albanians still holds him in thrall a decade later. The land strewn with ancient battlefields and Orthodox monasteries belongs to Serbs, most of whom refuse to live there although they accord the southern province almost mystical status as a pantheon of their national identity. Serbs and Albanians have competed for centuries in Kosovo, the seat of Serbia's medieval kings, and their rivalry has been riven with outbursts of bloodshed and foreign interference. An Albanian leader says: "Albanians, who are descended from the ancient Illyrians, have lived in Kosovo for 2000 years. Slavic tribes, ancestors of the modern Serbs, entered the region 1500 years ago." A Serbian historian wrote that more than 500,000 Serbs fled Ottoman persecution in Kosovo between 1690 – when Serbs say they first became a minority – and the start of the 20th century. An Albanian legislator says: "The Serbs ethnically cleansed 650 Albanian villages in central Serbia in 1877-1878. Some 50,000 Albanians were killed during Yugoslav military rule over Kosovo in 1945." Albanian historians blame the Great Powers for dividing the nation when they drew Albania's present-day borders. "Half the Albanian nation lives in the territory of former Yugoslavia and the other in Albania created at the London Ambassadorial Conference in 1913 and the Paris Peace Conference in 1919." In 1989, Kosovo lost the autonomous status it had enjoyed since 1945 when the Yugoslav President imposed direct rule from Belgrade to contain what he said was secessionist agitation. Albanians retaliated with a campaign of civil disobedience, creating their own parallel government and public services.' ● 'A squadron of US B-52 bombers armed with cruise missiles was en route to Yugoslavia early today for what was expected to be fresh airstrikes in defence of the Kosovo Albanians. And both Britain and the US warned the Yugoslavs that the bombing would continue until they stopped the horror in the province. Early yesterday (NZ time) Nato forces attacked Yugoslavia with missiles and bombs for a second night. The second wave of attacks occurred in the face of growing protests'...

'As Nato forces stepped up air strikes against Yugoslavia, a sign posted in a downtown Moscow building implored: "Russia, Save Serbia and God will save You!" And as bombs rained down on the Balkans, missiles of a different kind were being launched in Moscow. Eggs, bottles, ink, and rocks pelted the US Embassy, where some 500 people gathered to protest against the US-led military intervention in the Kosovo conflict. In the foreground, however, a

separate group of Russians looked somewhat nervous. They were waiting to receive their US visas, much to the disgust of their compatriots. Buses, courtyards and newspapers are buzzing with debate about exactly what Russia's policy towards Yugoslavia and Nato's military intervention should be. Russia has fought to defend Serbia, which shares a language, religion and culture similar to its own, at least half a dozen times in the past 150 years. In the great Russian author Leo Tolstoy's novel *Anna Karenina*, hundreds of young Russian volunteers, singing patriotic songs, pack into railroad cars bound for Serbia to fight in the Balkans.' While the protests in Moscow were largely peaceful, 'police fired teargas and chased hundreds of demonstrators through the Macedonian capital yesterday after crowds attacked the US, British and German Embassies and other sites in protest at the Nato attacks.' ■ Last night 'the Albanian news agency quoted their Information Minister as saying that 176 Kosovo refugees who crossed into northeastern Albania told of a massacre in the border village of Dobruna. "The Kosovo refugees, among them 96 children, were eyewitnesses of this massacre, in which the Serb military and police forces executed 20 teachers and the director of a school in the presence of their pupils." The agency also said Serb forces had attacked and set Goden on fire.'

...yesterday, as KLA sources said Serb paramilitary gangs had slaughtered several hundred Albanians in the southern city of Djakovica overnight after Nato bombed a local barracks, Nato launched its third air raid against Serb military positions, and its first in daylight, and followed it up with a fourth wave from bases in Italy. There were also unconfirmed reports 30 civilians were executed and their houses burned down in Suva Reka on Thursday and Friday.'

...CLOUDS of toxic gas drifted near Belgrade after Nato warplanes hit a nearby pharmaceuticals plant. Residents in the village of Batajnica, northwest of Belgrade, complained of sore eyes and a metallic taste. The Belgrade civil defence crisis centre said a second cloud of toxic material had been reported in Sremcica, also near the capital. The centre advised people to wear wet towels around their faces to avoid inhaling fumes. □ THE Pilots who flew the B-2 Stealth bombers in Yugoslavia – their first use in combat – were happy with the jets' performance after travelling for 31 hours to deliver their payload. A senior US defence official said the B-2 was selected because of its ability to attack many targets. Each bat-winged, radar-evading plane carried 16 one-tonne weapons. The F-117 Stealth bomber, also used in the fighting, carries only two bombs. With only a pilot and co-pilot aboard, the B-2 also puts fewer crewmen at risk than the B-52, which unleashed cruise missiles from launch points outside Yugoslavia.'

...Yugoslavia's plans to bring three captured US soldiers before a military court today have ratcheted up tension in the ugly Kosovo crisis. The prospect of the three Army cavalry scouts being paraded into a courtroom a day after being shown, bruised and exhausted, on Yugoslav state television had the US Administration fuming. After a US Defence Department spokesperson said 12 more F-117 Stealth fighters like the one that came down in Serb territory last weekend will be deployed to boost the 10-day-old campaign, the US President said Washington would hold the Yugoslav President personally responsible for the safety of the men, who were seized on patrol along the Macedonia-Yugoslav border.'

...Scenes the world swore it should never see again are playing out at the borders of Kosovo, where thousands of dispossessed refugees are being forcibly transported. Robbed of identity papers and the deeds to their homes, the province's ethnic Albanians are being driven out by Serb security forces. The forced deportations have now stepped up, with 10,000 people herded into two trains in the capital, Pristina, and abandoned with their marching orders near the Macedonian border. "People were crammed on to the trains like sardines," said the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. "Two people died in the crush." As chilling as the border scenes are – likened by an aid official to the Nazi persecution of the Jews – the real fear is that the picture inside Kosovo is much worse. "I do feel that something horrible is happening inside," said the EU's official in charge of aid. "Otherwise there is no reason media and humanitarian personnel are not allowed in." More than half a million of Kosovo's mainly ethnic Albanian population of 1.8 million has trickled out in the past year, but since Nato launched its airstrikes the exodus has escalated. More than 180,000 refugees have left in the past week.'

...Yugoslavia's President and a moderate Albanian political leader have agreed at a surprise meeting to seek a peaceful solution in Kosovo, according to reports in the Serbian state media. It was not immediately clear what practical effect such a pledge would have. Commitments to peaceful solutions have been made by both sides before but fighting went on regardless. Government leaders in Albania were sceptical the meeting had really occurred, while KLA guerrillas said the moderate would be guilty of treason if he had seen the President. But Kosovo Albanians contacted from abroad said the moderate could not have met the President willingly. "He was forced to go there after being threatened by police," said one Pristina man in a typical comment.'

...NATO fired cruise missiles into the heart of Yugoslavia's capital yesterday. The strikes signalled a promised escalation of the air campaign. Three loud explosions shook a government district near residential areas and the city's main medical complex shortly after midnight. Flames engulfed the Yugoslav interior ministry and the Serbian interior ministry, which is the republic's police headquarters. Serbian TV also reported Nato missiles hit the slopes of Fruska Gora hill northwest of the city, where three villages were hit, and 'missiles destroyed a major bridge over the Danube River at Novi Sad, in northern Serbia. Shipping on Europe's longest waterway to and from the Black Sea was blocked as a result, and trains between Vienna-Belgrade were suspended.'

...The first indication that Nato was bombing a capital city in Europe came with three gentle thuds at 12.40 am exactly. What was left of the buildings that housed the Serbian and Yugoslav Interior Ministries faced each other across Kneza Milosa Boulevard, shattered and smouldering. The air was filled with the smell of burning plastic. A woman was in labour in the city's maternity hospital, 300m away from the blazing buildings. Her 1085gm son was Belgrade's first bomb baby since May 15, 1944, when US, British and French planes bombed the city to drive out the Germans. "They wanted to rescue us then because they were our allies – but they chose the wrong way, just like they are choosing the wrong way now," said a student reading Chinese.'

...WHEN it became clear that Nato was about to launch airstrikes against Serb-led Yugoslavia, a popular Belgrade TV station immediately changed its programming. Out went a much-advertised Hollywood comedy named *Twins*. In came an epic Serbian movie, *The Battle for Kosovo*, depicting 14th-century Serbian knights in heavy chain mail being slaughtered by Ottoman hordes on horseback. To most outsiders, a film about the most crushing defeat in Serbian history might seem a strange way of boosting the morale of the population on the eve of an attack by a combined air force of the US, Britain, France and Germany. But that way of thinking fails to take into account the historically charged mind-set of many Serbs – one in which defeat can mean victory, and the fact that the rest of the world is against you is merely further proof you are right and everybody else is wrong. As they prepared for their bombing campaign against Yugoslavia – the first time in Nato's history that the alliance has attacked a sovereign country – Nato military leaders have been able to draw on exhaustive intelligence data about Yugoslav troop concentrations and anti-aircraft defences. Such information is obviously essential for waging the kind of high-tech war in which Nato is now engaged. But equally important to the success or failure of the strategy, including the key question of what will happen after the bombing stops, is intelligence about the collective psyche of the Serbian nation. Here satellite photos are of little use. The Serbian empire was effectively annihilated on June 28, 1389, a day as important to Serbs as July 4, 1776, is to Americans or Bastille Day is to the French. After the battle, the Serbian leader, Prince Lazar, was captured by the Turks, brought before the sultan and ceremonially beheaded. To the Serbian mind, the parallels between past and present are clear. Turkish Ottoman Empire was the superpower of the 14th century, militarily and technologically superior to the Serbs. Just as Prince Lazar's knights were no match for the Turkish cavalry, the Yugoslav army has only a fraction of the military power available to Nato. But this may not matter if the Serbs are able to resurrect their tradition of national defiance. The Yugoslav administration attempted to tap into this tradition by declaring, even before a shot had been fired, that Serbia had already won a "moral victory". Although the battle of Kosovo led to the extinction of the Serbian state, memories of the heroic last stand by Prince Lazar and his knights sustained the Serbian popular imagination during five centuries of Ottoman rule. Every Serbian soldier "knows what he is fighting for", reported an American journalist at the outset of WWI. "When he was a baby, his mother greeted him, 'Hail, little avenger of Kosovo!'" The legend of Prince Lazar and Kosovo became a potent political force in Serbia as the old Yugoslavia broke apart in the years following Tito's death in 1980 and the collapse of communism. In 1988, a coffin purported to contain Lazar's mummified remains was taken on a triumphal tour around Serbia and displayed in front of huge crowds of wailing, black-clad mourners. The then leader of the Serbian Communist Party and now Yugoslav President, used this outpouring of emotion to repackage himself as a national leader. On the 600th

anniversary of Lazar's death, in June 1989, the President was hailed as the reincarnation of the fallen prince at a rally on Kosovo Field attended by more than 1 million Serbs but boycotted by Albanians'...

'Nato jet aircraft pounded into armoured vehicle columns in Kosovo for the first time yesterday. The attack was a fiery verdict on Yugoslavia's unilateral ceasefire declaration in Kosovo, which Russia alone welcomed, saying the chance for peace should not be missed. Earlier, Nato missiles destroyed another bridge over the Danube in Yugoslavia's second city, Novi Sad, over which civilian traffic was crossing. Seven people were reported injured. But the main success for Nato lies in being able to strike at Yugoslav ground forces in Kosovo as opposed to static targets such as buildings and bridges. Nato believes yesterday's raids will demonstrate to an increasingly sceptical Western public that Nato aircraft are able to do something about the units carrying out actions against ethnic Albanians. Meanwhile, France's President urged on national TV that a European Council meeting on April 14 consider an emergency plan to help Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro deal with the 430,000 refugees the UN says have fled Kosovo since strikes began on March 24.'

... 'the EU had previously allocated 2.4 million euros to Macedonia in humanitarian aid before the refugee crisis. Another 15 million euros, to be shared with Albania, is earmarked for budget support to help organise the administration and between 20 and 30 million euros will come as balance-of-payment support. Another 10 million euros in humanitarian aid will be available to the whole region affected by the crisis.' 'German politicians have cited the flood of refugees from Kosovo as a major justification for Western intervention. Germany will accept temporarily some tens of thousands of refugees and is urging other EU countries to take in some as well. Germany took in more than 350,000 refugees from the Bosnian War – more than any other EU country (some 100,000 have yet to go home) – and spent billions of marks caring for them.'

... 'US military action in Kosovo has already cost \$US500 million and extended intervention could cost the US billions more, according to US reports. Last year's four-day Desert Fox strike against Iraq – which Congress has yet to pay – was \$US260 million over the Pentagon's budget, while the 1990-91 Desert Shield and Desert Storm operations cost \$US61 billion, of which the US paid \$US7 billion, with the remainder picked up by other countries.'

... 'Vaso Cubrilovic, one of the young men who took part in the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914, later became a distinguished historian and member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. In 1937, turning his mind to Kosovo, he wrote that Yugoslavia should expel as many Albanians from the region as possible – or it would pay a heavy price later on. A 1986 memorandum on the future of Serbia, written by leading Yugoslav academics, declared in a section on Kosovo that: "It is not just that the last remnants of the Serbian population are leaving their homes at an unabated rate, but according to all evidence, faced with a physical, moral and psychological reign of terror, they seem to be preparing for their final exodus." Kosovo's Serbs were, it went on, being subjected to a "physical genocide". This was nonsense, but the memorandum changed the political landscape.'

... 'Britain's PM stepped up the pressure on the Yugoslav President yesterday by appearing to warn Belgrade that Nato objectives in the campaign against Yugoslavia may be widened to give Kosovo its independence, which the West has so far ruled out. "I think it's more and more difficult to foresee autonomy within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia," he told the BBC. Nato warplanes continued to hit targets across Yugoslavia yesterday. More than 100 workers were badly hurt when bombs damaged the Zastava factory in central Yugoslavia which makes cars and small arms. The Pentagon said Yugoslavia's two oil refineries had been knocked out, and Nato air attacks had curbed Belgrade's ability to supply fuel to its troops in Kosovo by at least 20%.'

... 'Serb soldiers crossed into the remote Tropoje district of northern Albania last night and heavy shelling could be heard, said peace monitors in the nearby town of Bajran Curri. Albania has accused Yugoslavia of trying to draw it into the war in Kosovo by launching attacks against its territory.'

... 'The first of 24 US "Apache" attack helicopters could arrive in Albania this week to join a Nato force striking Yugoslavia. The low-flying, lethal Apaches will increase the alliance's ability to smash Serb tanks and troops sweeping Kosovo.'

... 'Serb military forces in Kosovo are forcing ethnic Albanian refugees to march alongside tanks and other armoured vehicles in an attempt to shield them from Nato air attacks, a top US official said yesterday.' In local news, 'the cabinet has decided to offer permanent residency to up to 200 refugee families, under a programme uniting them with relatives already in this country. Members of NZ's Albanian community have prepared a list of families to whom they are related and who are believed to have fled Kosovo. This will be handed to the high commissioner, to see whether the families can be traced. The UN has not yet decided whether to accept the offer and the international aid effort is giving priority to temporary resettlement in countries closer to their homeland.'

... 'Every day the people of Belgrade turn out in large numbers to vent their anger against Nato. Some have been standing on strategic bridges to act as human shields and defy the bombs and missiles.' However, the human shields may feel less defiant today because 'at least 10 people died yesterday when Nato jets bombed a bridge in southeast Serbia as a train was crossing it. A further 16 passengers were injured in the daytime attack'...

'*Misfortunes of war* A picture transmitted from a Nato missile moments before striking the Gdelica Bridge over the South Morava river clearly showed a passenger train crossing it. Yugoslav officials say 50 people were killed while Nato expressed its regrets and said the train was not the intended target.'

... 'A man's body remained seated at the wheel of his tractor. On the trailer behind were two dismembered legs. On the grass nearby lay a man's head and around a dozen bodies, clearly mutilated by explosions. This was the scene foreign reporters witnessed as they were taken to Kosovo on a conducted tour to see what Serb officials called a "first-class criminal act." The reporters also saw damage Serbs say was wrought by Nato planes which bombed a long column of ethnic Albanian refugees on Thursday morning. "There were four attacks, one after another. 72 people were killed and dozens wounded." Nato has admitted it mistakenly bombed a civilian vehicle in a convoy in Kosovo in what it called "one tragic accident." However, yesterday it denied a Yugoslav news agency report that its missiles hit a refugee centre in the Serbian town of Paracin overnight.'

... 'Nato planes targeted a hydroelectric plant, bridges and command centres in overnight raids on Yugoslavia as Germany unveiled details of a plan it is working on to end the conflict in Kosovo. Germany's deputy foreign minister said the plan involved Yugoslav troops leaving Kosovo, the return of all refugees and the installation of an international peace-keeping force, which would have a UN mandate but be under Nato leadership. Under the plan, Nato would suspend its bombing as soon as Yugoslav troops started withdrawing from Kosovo and officially halt it once the withdrawal had been completed.'

... 'Nato leaders vowed yesterday to launch a naval campaign to halt oil shipments to Serb forces in Kosovo despite French concerns that stopping a ship on the high seas would be an act of war. The 19 allied leaders attending the anniversary summit of the "world's most successful military alliance," as it likes to bill itself, also adopted a new strategic mission that lays out Nato's broader job of intervening beyond its borders to halt regional crises or to meet other threats to its members' security. Their agreement stressed the "primary responsibility" of the UN Security Council for world peace without giving it an explicit veto on Nato action. France claimed victory for the wording, saying it meant Nato could not act without UN authorisation. But Nato's Secretary-General, asked whether the alliance would need a Security Council resolution each time it intervened outside its members' territory, said bluntly "no." With evidence that the Serb military was growing short of gasoline to the point of siphoning fuel from cars of ethnic Albanian refugees, Nato leaders said they wanted a "visit and search" regime to stop oil shipments to Yugoslavia. But they admitted the plan might have legal problems, and it could antagonise Russia, Yugoslavia's main oil supplier, at a time when Nato leaders are counting on Moscow to help to mediate a settlement with Belgrade and contribute troops to an international security force for Kosovo.' In another development, 'three US soldiers celebrated their release from 32 days in Yugoslav captivity last night. Their release came despite air raids in which a Nato plane crashed and at least 34 people, including 15 children, were killed when a bus full of civilians was hit on a bridge in Kosovo. Nato acknowledged it had hit the bus, which was sliced in half by the impact. The bridge remained standing.'

...‘At the end of last week, Nato warplanes were conducting 600 sorties a day, several times the intensity of bombing at the start of the campaign. As the rhythm has stepped up, punishing damage has been inflicted on the machinery of the Yugoslav regime, as well as the country’s infrastructure and economy. But the risk of tragic blunders has escalated too, as evidenced by the weekend bombing of a bus on a bridge at Luzane. Despite such horrors, morale and unity within the alliance remain remarkably strong, with high public support for the air offensive – which seems likely to carry on for the coming weeks.’

‘“For them on the ground it must seem like they’re fighting God,” declared one Nato commander.’

...‘Nato missiles slammed into China’s embassy in Belgrade yesterday, killing at least 3 people and injuring 21. An outraged China, which said 3 missiles hit the mission in a “barbarian act”, strongly condemned the attacks and the UN Security Council met in private session at Beijing’s request to discuss the issue. Nato admitted its planes fired on the wrong building by mistake. “This was a terrible accident,” a spokesman said. But air strikes would continue.’

...‘Plans for a ground force of up to a 100,000 strong are being drawn up for Kosovo, defence and diplomatic sources say. The huge scale of the peacekeeping commitment is two to three times more than originally expected and is bound to cause further disquiet among Nato allies, rocked by the weekend’s mistaken bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. With Beijing protesting about the attack to the UN, Nato’s hopes of utterly isolating Yugoslavia over Kosovo look shaky. Although Russia and Nato have agreed to a joint approach on peacekeeping, China’s anger may jeopardise Nato leaders’ hopes of ensuring the mission can be quickly mounted under a UN flag. Amid cries of “Kill Americans” and “get out American pigs,” students broke into the US Embassy compound in Beijing yesterday. Chunks of concrete rained against walls as tens of thousands massed for a 2nd day of protests. A report from Chenghu, the southwest provincial capital, said foreigners might have to be evacuated after the US Consul-General’s house was razed.’

...‘About 200 anti-Nato bombing protesters marched from Queen Elizabeth Sq to the US consulate in Shortland St at the weekend. Anti-war groups meet in the square each Saturday. Meanwhile, a 3-person refugee selection team from the Immigration Service left Auckland at the weekend for refugee camps in Macedonia to find relatives of Kosovar families already living in NZ. The Government has agreed to accept up to 600 refugees with family ties to NZ.’

...‘Authorities in Belgrade have banned fishing in the Danube River because of pollution caused by Nato’s bombing of nearby chemical plants. Yugoslav officials have deemed the situation an “ecological disaster.” There is no word on what effect the military action is having on the region’s other wildlife.’

...‘Serbian pensioners received a nasty surprise yesterday when a newspaper said their monthly payments would be halved. Students received a lesser blow when they learned their graduation parties would be cancelled. People in Belgrade have not lost everything like those fleeing Kosovo, but the side-effects of Nato’s seven-week bombardment are multiplying by the day. Prices of many imported goods have gone up, soap by half as much again’...

‘Nato swung into its 54th day of air strikes against Yugoslavia vowing that Serbian forces in Kosovo could not protect themselves by putting civilians in harm’s way. Refusing to flinch at Yugoslav reports that 87 ethnic Albanian refugees were killed by Nato in the southern Kosovo village of Korisa at the weekend, Nato defended the air strikes by saying the target area had been used as a Serb military camp and the civilians reported killed there must have been put at risk by the Yugoslav authorities. “This accident at Korisa did not shake Nato’s resolve in any way,” a Pentagon spokesman said in Washington.’

...‘The strain of the Nato bombing campaign is starting to show among the people of Yugoslavia with claims that attempts are being made to cover up war crimes in Kosovo and reports of anti-Government protests. Some 1500 protesters in the southern Serbian town of Krusevac had smashed windows at the local radio and television station. “Kosovo Is No Use To The Dead” said one of their banners. An anti-war rally in the central Serbian town of Cacak was said to have heard demands that Nato halt the bombing – but also calls for “an end to the Yugoslav President’s adventurist policies.” Montenegrin television said mothers of soldiers had gathered in the nearby town of Aleksandrovac to demand peace and the return of their sons.’

...‘A NATO missile reduced a Belgrade hospital ward almost to rubble early yesterday and medical staff said it killed three patients and a guard and injured a number of people. “Nato probably thought soldiers were being treated in the maternity ward,” said one Serbian. In Brussels, Nato said one of seven laser-guided bombs went astray and struck the base of a building 500 metres from the centre of the target area, a military barracks. A Nato spokesman said he had no details about the type of building hit but denied media reports that the alliance had intentionally hit a civilian target as “completely false”.

...today, the US President is expected to ‘deny the Nato campaign is a war so the alliance can’t be accused of breaking the US War Crimes Act’...

The ‘UN human rights chief has accused the Yugoslav army and police of committing gross violations in Kosovo. In a major report, she called on Belgrade’s forces to withdraw immediately from the blood-soaked province. But she also criticised Nato’s use of cluster bombs in its air campaign against Yugoslavia and destruction of schools and hospitals. She urged the US-led alliance to respect humanitarian law, including the “principle of proportionality.” Earlier, Amnesty International said Serb forces seized hundreds of women and children from a southern Kosovo village and subjected them to 3 days of terror, including gang rapes. Amnesty did not name the village for fear of reprisals. Nato warplanes pounded Serbia again yesterday, and Belgrade reported more civilian deaths. At least 10 people died at a sanatorium in Surdulica, the scene of one of Nato’s previous high-profile blunders. On April 27, 20 people, mainly women and children, were killed when a laser-guided bomb went astray and hit a residential area. The sanatorium strike came after a devastating daylight Nato attack on a bridge crowded with pedestrians in the central Serbian town of Varvarin that killed 9 people and wounded at least 17. Meanwhile, EU foreign ministers are meeting in Brussels to plot strategy for ending the Kosovo crisis. Britain’s *Financial Times* newspaper reported yesterday that the Yugoslav President had significantly shifted his position by agreeing for the first time to the principle of allowing some Nato troops into Kosovo.’

...‘peace has been agreed to after 72 days. Nato troops could move into Kosovo within a couple of days, although no one knows how long it will be before they can come back out. BBC TV declared: “The Serb people can’t help realising that every time their president has got them into trouble, they’ve emerged with a worse deal than they could have got at the start.”

...‘It was the kind of scene that foreign-aid workers in Macedonia’s hot and angry camps have dreaded. On Saturday night, hundreds of Albanians, armed with clubs and faces distorted with fury, set on a family of gypsies in the camp at Stenkovec 1 and almost tore them limb from limb. The family were attacked because, in the eyes of their assailants, they were quislings – agents and also beneficiaries of the Serbian campaign of ethnic cleansing of Kosovo. Rightly or wrongly, they were thought to belong to the teams of marauders who have swept through villages in the wake of the Serbian Army and paramilitaries, looting deserted houses and stacking the booty in their wagons. Aid workers managed to get the family to safety but gangs of Kosovar Albanians began hunting other gypsies in the camp. The savagery at Stenkovec 1 is an example of the climate of hatred and retribution created by the recent history of Kosovo and it gives a disturbing glimpse of what Nato troops may confront when they go into the province and escort hundreds of thousands of Albanians back to their ruined villages. Nato may offer guarantees to Kosovo’s Serbs and gypsies. But the fact is that scores are going to be settled whatever the alliance says and there is no way that Nato troops can sit on every doorstep and prevent them. The likely outcome is either the mass migration of Kosovo’s Serbs and gypsies – 10% and 2% respectively of the pre-conflict population – in the next few weeks or a rash of murders in outlying villages.’

...‘The deeper Nato pushes into Kosovo on the heels of the retreating Yugoslav Army, the more evidence they find to back up numerous reports of atrocities committed against ethnic Albanians. A British war crimes investigator says the evidence suggests that the atrocities were far worse than anyone thought. In the south, the British have found mass graves near the town of Kacanik. Italian troops in Pec and Djakovica have reported finding 3 mass graves. Bodies were found yesterday in 4 wells in a village near the provincial capital, Pristina. And in the village of Velika Krusa, Dutch troops found the charred remains of 20 people at a Kosovo farm. Despite the lack of hard evidence or witnesses, it seemed clear these were ethnic Albanians slain by Serbs.’

...‘On a cold and sunny morning, an 11-year-old girl called Merita Shabiu was playing in the snow outside her family home in the Kosovan town of Vitina when a smiling man in uniform offered her some chocolates. Having gained her trust, the man led her by the hand to the block of flats standing

opposite. There, in a dank basement, he sodomised her before crushing her neck on the concrete floor with his steel-capped boot. It was a savage death, but Kosovo has in recent years been a savage country. What made the murder of Merita different was that it took place *after* Nato's "liberation" of the former Yugoslav province, rather than during the murderous chaos that preceded it. And Merita's killer was not Serb or Albanian, but a Nato "peace-keeper": a staff sergeant with the elite 82nd Airborne Division of the US Army. Astonishingly, he had boasted to fellow soldiers of raping three girls while on another mission in Haiti.'

... 'Even as peacekeepers began building the foundations of peace in Kosovo, they could not escape the remains of war. Two British servicemen were killed while preparing to detonate piles of unexploded Nato cluster bombs, the first deaths among the alliance's K-For peacekeeping force. Earlier, the bodies of four Serbian brothers, all in their fifties, were found in the village of Gracanica, near Pristina. British forces are investigating. A Lieutenant said: "They were not mutilated but they had been stabbed in the heart or in other organs. There is not a lot we can do now. We're just trying to keep the peace." The villagers are not convinced. Murders such as these are exactly what the Serbs of Kosovo have been afraid of ever since Nato took control of the province.'

... 'Despite a pledge by the KLA to demilitarise, rebel leaders have no intention of disappearing now they have won their struggle against the Serbs for control of Kosovo. Relations with the Americans and the rest of Nato will depend on whether the guerrillas believe the peacekeepers are helping them to achieve their goals of self-rule in the province or standing in their way. For now, the picture is all smiles. The KLA leader has signed an agreement with Nato under which the rebels will hand over most of their weapons, dismantle their military structure and stop wearing uniforms over 90 days. Before Nato launched its 78-day bombing campaign and forced the Serbs to leave Kosovo, the KLA leader, known by his codename "the Snake," was a wanted man, indicted by Yugoslav authorities for murdering police officers. In the past, the KLA has used whatever means are necessary to achieve goals. Last year, the defence minister of a rival guerrilla group close to the twice-elected "president" of an unrecognised Republic of Kosovo was murdered, and the "president's" closest aide was wounded in an assassination bid. Both attacks were widely attributed to the KLA.'

... 'British paratroopers may face murder charges in Kosovo for riddling a carload of men from the KLA with gunfire over a week ago. The incident, which left two KLA fighters dead and two Albanian civilians seriously wounded, has caused anger in the capital, Pristina, and undermined goodwill towards Nato forces. The official version says a patrol from 1st Battalion opened fire because they believed their lives were being endangered by celebratory firing into the air by a man on the car roof. The Paras were said to have been protecting frightened Serbian civilians sheltering in a nearby building.'

... 'The Pentagon says Russian mercenaries fought in Kosovo alongside Serb forces, and their role is likely to be examined as part of an international investigation of war crimes against ethnic Albanians. The matter of Russia's role is sensitive. Nato has arranged for 3600 Russian troops to join K-For.' By the way, 'Yugoslav troops forced out of Kosovo by Nato are said to be pouring into Montenegro at an alarming rate, raising fears that Serbia's tiny neighbour will become the Serbian dictator's next victim. The number of troops in Montenegro has risen to 40,000 – one for every 20 people. The founder of the independent magazine *Monitor*, who faces a possible 10-year jail sentence by a Yugoslav military court for criticising the Yugoslav Army, argues that the rest of the world fails to appreciate the dangers facing the republic. "We're so small that we're not interesting for anybody among the great powers."

... 'Nato's high-tech air war resulted in the deaths of about 500 civilians, far more than Nato Governments claim, a report by Human Rights Watch alleged yesterday. The group accused Nato of failing to do more to protect civilians as it dropped bombs and missiles on Yugoslavia.'

... 'It was acclaimed as the most successful air campaign ever. "A turning point in the history of warfare," wrote one noted military historian, proof positive that "a war can be won on air power alone." An antiseptic war, fought by pilots flying safely 15,000ft high. It seems almost too good to be true – and it was. In fact – as some critics suspected at the time – the air campaign against the Serb military in Kosovo was largely ineffective. Nato bombs hit some fields, blew up hundreds of cars, trucks and decoys, and barely dented Serb artillery and armour. According to a suppressed US Air Force report obtained by *Newsweek*, the number of targets verifiably destroyed was a tiny fraction of those claimed: 14 tanks, not 120; 18 armoured personnel carriers, not 220; 20 artillery pieces, not 450. Out of the 744 "confirmed" strikes by Nato pilots during the war, the USAF investigators, who spent weeks combing Kosovo by helicopter and by foot, found evidence of just 58. The damage report has been buried by top military officers and Pentagon officials, who in interviews with *Newsweek* over the past few three weeks were still glossing over or denying its significance.'

... 'More than \$US1 billion in public funds and international aid may have been stolen by top Muslim, Croat and Serbian officials in Bosnia, international officials say. The corruption report is a painful one for international efforts to rebuild Bosnia. Donor nations have poured in \$US5.1 billion since the end of the war in 1995 to reconstruct infrastructure and try to stitch together a viable government on all levels. In Kosovo, Russia is blaming its Nato peacekeeping partners for continuing attacks against Kosovo Serbs as the rapidly dwindling ethnic group buried their latest victims – killed in a mortar attack in an area where US troops are supposed to be keeping order. Russia called for "energetic actions" to stop "terrorism, separatism and ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo'...

'The CIA said yesterday that one employee had been fired and several others disciplined because of errors that led to the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade.' 'China has received \$US28 million in compensation from the US for the bombing.'

... 'Thousands of Kosovo pupils will return to class today for the first time since school was suspended after Nato began bombing Yugoslavia on March 23 (some rural schools have been shut since February last year, when the Yugoslav President launched a bloody crackdown on ethnic Albanian separatists), although the UN estimates nearly half the schools were damaged or destroyed during the 18-month ethnic war. UN officials were uncertain how many pupils – ethnic Albanians and Serbs – would show up for class. Most Albanian children have not officially attended school since 1989'. In related news, a **study finds 40[%] of responding scientists say they believe in a God who actively communicates with humans and responds to prayer, 15[%] claim to be agnostic and about 45[%]... do not believe in God as specified in the questionnaire**. The findings, which... closely mirror those of [a] 1916 survey on which [the] study was based[... test the] hypothesis of... the... author of [the] earlier study, that disbelief in God would grow as education spread...

The older we get, the more we believe... [R]esults show that... [nearly 70% of NZers] **polled said they did believe in a god, with just 25[%] rejecting the contention entirely** [– up from '16% in 1990' (when, in comparison, the US figure was '7%'). About 17%]... **of women said they were non-believers, compared with 32[%] of men. Age seemed to have a lot to do with... belief... Just over half of the people in the 18-30 age group said they believed in a god. That figure jumped to 72[%] in the 31-50 age bracket. Nearly 80[%] of those aged over 51 said, "I believe."**

... '[while older people may be more liable to believe in a god, it doesn't follow that their beliefs increase with age. Indeed, research shows that the older a person and the better the education the less likely a belief, hence the dramatic growth of non-religious funerals.' Incidentally, the] **spoor in the great media hunt for... the... atheist once tagged "the most hated woman in America," are thin on the ground in Auckland** [despite claims]... **in the March edition of *Vanity Fair* that... the large, loud and unruly [atheist had been]... found in Auckland... Interpol is not looking for her, so the [NZ] police have not been notified that she is missing... She would be hard to miss. If you dismiss dumb fate, then it takes a particularly potent or obnoxious personality to rise to national prominence... where notoriety so easily translates to celebrity. That she did says as much about the bedrock of conservative U[S] Christianity as it does about [her] sense of mission: to ensure the ship of American state is firmly separated from religious belief. [She] rose to prominence in 1963 when the U[S] Supreme Court removed prayer from public schools. The legal challenge was brought by a Philadelphia Unitarian... but it was... the second litigant, who drew the media attention... The Cold War was at its chilliest, and in the U[S] Godless and Communism were synonyms. In [her] case there was some truth. Born during the Depression, she was a member of socialist groups in 1960**

when she tried to defect to the Soviet Union... but [the]... Soviets did not want her... Throughout the 60s... her movement, the American Atheists, were a vocal if small pressure group, pressing on with a succession of lawsuits. To NASA... she was their nemesis and public relations nightmare. During the Apollo programme [she] took the space agency's chief executive... to court. Under cross-examination, [he] revealed that Apollo 8's flight had been delayed so the first circling of the moon could be televised on [X]mas Eve. In an 1982... interview, [she claimed that NASA's chief executive had] conceded the flight was a Christian mission. "The astronauts were under military orders to have a 'spontaneous manifestation of religious awe at 7.31 plus 10 seconds, at which time they would recite the first 10 verses of *Genesis* from memory.' [The chief executive] said this would emphasise who led the space race. Not the Hindus or the Moslems or the Communists..." she said. STUNG by the experience, NASA was cautious when Apollo 11 finally did land on the moon. The first thing[one] astronaut... an elder in the Presbyterian Church, did was take communion. He had carried a tiny chalice, host and vial of wine to the moon. [He also carried a Freemasons's ring which was left on the lunar surface.] [His] ritual was deliberately not televised because of legal pressure brought by [the atheist]... She joined in the court and public battles fought by[the] *Hustler* magazine publisher... to continue to publish his brand of pornography, and worked as his speech writer for the porn king's 1984 bid for the presidency. Interviewed by *Hustler*, [she] came out in favour of legalised prostitution, bestiality and pornography. "Whoever does not like porn should not purchase it..." she said... The latest headlines... focus on her disappearance from her home in Austin, Texas... [in] August 1995... Missing also was \$NZ900,000 of... American Atheists... funds. A former employee claimed to the *Houston Chronicle* that he had seen bank statements from the Bank of N[Z] showing more than \$1.2 million in an account. Other atheists claim that a trust fund had been established with the N[Z] Guardian Trust. Neither financial institution would confirm these details. So for journalists, the trail led to [NZ], where it peters out with no confirmed sightings and little evidence that... [she is] in Auckland. What is certain is that... at 77 [she will still be a] committed atheist... - 1997

Claims that[an] infamous US atheist... fled to N[Z] have suffered a blow with the discovery of what could be her burned body parts at a Texas ranch. Federal agents have unearthed a leg bone, which seems to be cut off at one end, finger bones and part of a hand on a 2000ha ranch where, some investigators believe... the most-hated woman in America... her son and granddaughter were killed and dismembered [in 1995]... Past searches of the property had failed to find any bones... [An] FBI officer... would not comment on whether the main suspect in the case participated in the... [latest search. The atheist]'s former office manager, faced kidnapping and extortion charges but some media reports say prosecutors agreed to strike a deal if he led them to the bodies... [The atheist], aged 77... had been involved in successful court battles in the 1960s to ban... Bible-reading, [X]mas carols and songs from public schools. She was also involved in a petition to ban any reference to Jesus on radio or television.

...A California court was yesterday asked to let homosexuals, atheists and agnostics join the Scouts. The challenges... hinged on whether the Scouts should be considered a business or a charitable organisation... If the court rules the Scouts are a business, the organisation could[also] be forced to admit... women... The court's judgment could have national implications... [Someone] was fired from [a] Scout troupe in Berkeley... 16 years ago... when the movement discovered he was gay... At yesterday's hearing... a lawyer[was] representing his own two... 16-year-old... sons... The twins, who are declared agnostics, were booted out of their Orange County Cub Scout pack in 1991 when it was discovered they were lip-synching part of the Scouts' oath that mentioned "duty to God" and omitting the words "under God" when reciting the... Pledge of Allegiance.

...A MOTHER'S story of her teenage daughter, murdered with 11 other pupils and a teacher for declaring her faith in God during the Columbine school massacre at Littleton, near Denver, Colorado, is set to become one of the year's publishing sensations... *She Said Yes...* tells the story of her daughter's transformation from a troubled teen to committed Christian. It is believed to disclose at one time she plotted with friends to murder her parents. The title refers to the last seconds of her life in the library at Columbine, where she was studying when the attack took place in April. One of the killers held her at gunpoint and demanded to know if she believed in God. When the 17-year-old replied she did, the attacker... asked: "Why?" He then shot her through the head... Cassie's death appears to have inspired thousands of young Christians across America and she has been hailed by evangelical leaders as an authentic martyr – someone prepared to die rather than renounce their beliefs. At her funeral, friends wore T-shirts emblazoned with the word "Yes"... She [had beco]me part of a group... who carried Bibles around the school and held prayer meetings – activities that made them the focus of the gunmen, who proclaimed their atheism through a cult known as the Trenchcoat Mafia.

...“...religious people... ask... important questions. They want to know why we exist and why the world exists, and they don't want to know who's going to win Wimbledon and what's for dinner. And to that extent I have great respect... for [them]... But I get irritated at the way those deep and fundamental and mysterious questions are hijacked – because I think that science can answer most... if not all of them.” The “if not all” is not a revised bid for comprehensive explanation, but a concession that some mysteries will always remain. The “why?” question that is often thrown at... the... Professor in the Public Understanding of Science at Oxford University... in public lectures (“everyone who asks it, asks it in the tone that suggests that no one has ever asked it before”) is, to his mind, irrelevant. “The mere fact that a question is put... doesn't mean that it's a legitimate question.” Darwinians ask meaningful “why” questions, he says. Those who ask “Why is this leaf this particular shape?” or “Why does this animal walk like this?” What about, “Why are people so credulous?” I ask. So happy to pay through the nose for an aura massage or crystal healing. Mustn't gullibility have an evolutionary explanation, too? “I would put it back to childhood and say that there's a Darwinian survival value in children's believing what their elders tell them, because the world is too dangerous a place and it takes too long to learn what you need to learn to survive... You've got to have a rule of thumb that's built into the nervous system that says, ‘Believe what you're told.’ ...whether it's beneficial or not.” The vulnerability of children to such parental downloads is one source of... the... atheist['s]... fierce opposition to religious schools (he recently described Government plans to encourage the spread of single-faith schools as “evil”)... “I can't bear the religious labelling of children. Like four-year-old Islamic... or... Catholic children... If anything makes me see red, that does, because these children are too young to know what they are... Would you ever talk about a four-year-old neo-Keynesian monetarist[o]r... Gramscian Marxist? Of course you wouldn't. Religion is the one place where opinions about society, about philosophy, about cosmology are grafted on to labels tied round the necks of children.” ...His confidence in evolution as an all-encompassing explanatory framework... allows for doubt. “I've sometimes thought about this. Would I be discomfited if, say, Darwinism turned out to be wrong and the truth about the guiding force of evolution, why things are so beautiful and so – apparently – well-designed, turned out to be something else? ...Obviously, I can't imagine what that alternative might be, and I'm sure there isn't one... but I would be totally fascinated if there was one.” ...In the meantime, though, he continues to fight the good fight against the enemies of reason...

What a shame the world couldn't have a moratorium on God... Earlier in the week, I read that Muslim bodies littered a street somewhere, slaughtered by Christians who outnumbered them; and in Northern Ireland Catholics and Protestants dipped again into the bottomless well of religious hatred. On the Indian subcontinent, Hindus kill Muslims and vice versa, and Sikhs kill and are killed by them both as a side dish. Earlier this year, we were treated to a story about some elderly Hindu men murdering young women who, they felt, were breaching their religion's moral code by dressing in a provocative manner. Iran is still ruled by bigots, but slightly less savage now than a few years ago when dissent was a capital offence. If you don't believe in their version of the next world, they sent you off to it early to be convinced. And that's something that interests me: that so many religions speak piously of the ultimate judgment of God but insist on intercession on Earth for their own vindictive punishments... And the latest scourge is the Taleban... If all these people are right about God and they are all monotheists – then one can assume that, if we could identify and catch [God, God] would have to be tried for crimes against humanity. As a writer I try to imagine myself in the minds and hearts of other people in an effort to understand their impulses and motives... Do they sit around and say they have struck a blow for humanity... for their race... for their political party[o]r just for king and country? No, they could only justify [terrorist act]s to themselves and others by invoking the

will of God... People's gods and their theology are reflections of themselves. Decent, kind, compassionate people see God that way. Brutal, pitiless, psychotic people may share a vengeful, ruthless God of the same name who justifies their inhumanity. One of the things almost every religion traditionally has in common is exclusivity. We have contact with the deity and, therefore, we know we are right and you are wrong. You will be shut out of heaven, or Valhalla, or wherever, because ours is the one true God, not yours. Religions traditionally focus on differences whereas all the humanists... agnostics and most of the atheists I know think inclusively and concentrate on the shared humanity we all possess. So what a shame we couldn't get all people to put God on hold for a while, and rebuff visions of the next world in a bid to put this one right. Then the psychopaths and... exclusivists would... not be able to cite an invisible higher power as vindication for their violence and thus... hide behind the image of their God... * The recent *Star Wars* fan campaign urging people to list 'Jedi' as their religion on the N[Z] census... didn't have much effect... but the idea apparently took off in the UK, where newly revised statistics give Jedi official religion status! It comes in at 174 out of 177 religious choices, just above Heathen, Atheist and None.

...[as the RC] Bishop of Auckland... I was astounded to read that 24.7[% of NZ]ers believe there is no God[(r:p942, ln58)]... The great astronomers and mathematicians... calculated from their work on... molecular structure... that the mathematical probability of a single enzyme occurring by chance was one in 10 to the power of 20[, or]... "insensibly different from zero" – which I understand is a mathematician's way of saying that the odds are unbelievable. But 24.7[% of NZ]ers presumably think... the evolution of life... [to] "the most complex mechanism on Earth"[– which, after]... the fertilisation of an egg... [becomes] six trillion cells working in concert... [-] all "just happened." What faith!

...the physicist... proclaimed: 'God is a pure mathematician!' The point... is that the 'cosmic code' is written in mathematical language. When we unveil nature in this mathematical way we see that there is an underlying simplicity, elegance and unity to the laws of the cosmos...

[Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) 'says, "Human life must be some kind of mistake." The greatest crime of man was that he was ever born. He concludes that because the world is mad or irrational, it could not possibly have an author. If there were a God, it would have set the world in order'.] According to... his... pessimistic... adaptation of Kant's... philosophy... the will, of which we have direct intuition, is the only reality and the means by which all other things are understood; what is real is one vast will, appearing in the whole natural world, animate and inanimate alike. This 'cosmic will' is a malignant thing, which inveigles us into reproducing and perpetuating life... [I]n his ethical doctrines he was influenced by Buddhism... Asceticism[– which]... he made no attempt to put into practice... [-] and chastity are the duty of man, with a view to terminating evil. As a stage towards this goal he found a transient place of rest in the realms of poetry, art, and above all music.

...you can analyse the frequencies of Bach's B Minor Mass until you are blue in the face, but this will not get you any closer to it *as music*... [Likewise,] a... chemist can analyse[a painting's] pigments, describe their pi electrons, and list the frequencies at which they absorb light. But this scientific approach is not an alternative to the fact that the painting is a work of art, a thing of aesthetic beauty, a creation with a purpose... It is the same in the natural world... ['Theories developed in the science of cosmology show the universe to be an orderly system', b]ut... some people... would have us believe that the... insights of evolutionary biology allow one to rule out purpose and meaning as realities in the world... The... "bleak[and nihilistic] message" is that living organisms... [only] pass on their DNA[, and]... that natural selection and genetics rule out purpose in nature. - 1996

[Whereas the theology of the Swiss Protestant Karl Barth (1868-1968) 'begins with the realization of human wickedness, the principal sin being humans' endeavour to make themselves rather than God the centre of the world (Barth therefore re-emphasized the finiteness of humanity and made God's grace once again the goal of our life').] the dominant scientific paradigm since the time of Newton has been against teleology and any hint of a goal-oriented or progressive aspect to nature. And it is from this paradigm that so many scientists have drawn their bleak and depressing conclusions about our place in the universe... [A French biologist who] believes that DNA is a 'frozen accident' and so is unlikely to occur anywhere else in the universe... writes: *The ancient covenant is in pieces: man at last knows that he is alone in the unfeeling immensity of the universe, out of which he has emerged only by chance. Neither his destiny nor his duty have been written down.* It is a stark sentiment echoed by... the words: *The more the universe seems comprehensible, the more it also seems pointless.* These scientists base their images on the belief that the processes of nature are essentially... without meaning or purpose... It is predicated on the assumption, made almost universally by biologists, that the course of evolution does not follow any law-like trend but is purely random... If the hypothesis is correct, then a feature of life such as intelligence is a purely chance phenomenon... [A]lthough it is clear from the fossil record that life began with very simple and primitive organisms and has evolved to a state of staggering organized complexity[– with modern man being 'the only living thing known to have the capacity to create a culture' –] talk of evolutionary *advance* is anathema to biologists... Having long ago cast God out of the Garden of Eden, biologists are reluctant to concede any suggestion of a guiding hand, even in the guise of a law of nature. 'There is nothing inherently progressive about evolution,'... 'Progress is a noxious, culturally embedded, untestable, nonoperational, intractable idea that must be replaced if we wish to understand the patterns of history.' ...Nature simply cobbles together contraptions at random, and a few flourish. Evolution stumbles onward, blindly and haphazardly, to wherever contingency takes it. It may give the impression of directed ingenuity, but beneath it all is simple chaos. The problem is that chaos is *not* simple, as scientists have recently discovered. The investigation of chaotic systems in physics, chemistry and astronomy reveals a deep linkage between apparently random behaviour and the spontaneous appearance of order. To use the catchphrase, there is order in chaos.

Nearly all organisms are composed of cells (the simplest consist of a single cell), which are microscopic structures bounded by a membrane and capable of metabolism, self-repair, and reproduction... Cells arise most commonly by the division of other cells, but sometimes by fusion (as of gametes in sexual reproduction). There are two basic types of cell: those of bacteria, lacking nuclei and other complex structures, and animal and plant cells, which are larger and more complex and possess a nucleus. This nucleus contains the genetic information (DNA)... necessary for the organization and functioning of most living cells and... DNA molecules... control inheritance of characteristics... The structure of a DNA molecule... consists of two strands coiled round each other to form a... structure like a spiral ladder; it is the 'rungs' of the ladder that carry the information. Each rung consists of a pair of chemical groups called bases (of which there are four types). The different rungs function rather like different letters of the alphabet, which are without meaning in themselves but in sequences produce meaningful words... These control the manufacture of proteins needed by the cell; genes are 'copied' in the nucleus into the similar RNA, which then passes out into the cytoplasm and forms a template for the synthesis of particular proteins, especially enzymes. The DNA... strands separate and each provides a template for the synthesis of a new complementary strand with which it recombines, thus producing two identical copies of the original... In large organisms such as humans there are many specialized types of cell lacking some of the features described above; for example, red cells have no nuclei, and nerve cells in adults, although nucleated, are unable to reproduce... In some viruses it is RNA (not DNA) that carries the genetic information... The brain... a structure... found in many invertebrates... directs an animal's activities and exerts control over internal physiological processes; in humans and perhaps some other animals it is the seat of consciousness... Its wrinkled surface or cortex is coated with nerve-cells, which appear grey... The functions of most of the cerebral cortex, the nature of the physical embodiment of memory and of consciousness itself, remain unknown.

Something known, however, is that whereas brains are made up of lots of cells, cells don't have brains – and, therefore, they can't think. Because cells can't think, they can't decide to divide. Therefore, in order to question God's existence, an atheist must either believe that absolutely nothing motivates a cell to divide itself, or that DNA alone makes a zygote – 'formed by the fusion of male and female gametes' – 'undergo cell division' until the two original 'germ cells' ('the sperm and egg cells in higher organisms – in simple plants or animals the gametes are quite similar') have become a complex body consisting of a myriad of different looking 'somatic cells' (including unique combinations of cells – e.g., 'no two people have exactly the same pattern of ridges and marks on' their fingers), 'occupying different environments' (e.g., 'inner cells are cut off from the outer cells, leading to internal cellular differences in such factors as temperature, oxygen content, or acidity') while performing different tasks *in concert*, until they decide to stop growing or reproducing themselves and, eventually, certain cells stop working, causing every other cell to die (assuming death hasn't occurred prematurely due to external interference).

Over the... 280 day... period of... prenatal development, the new organism shows many varieties of change. Changes in the kinds, number, position, size and shapes of cells, tissues, and somatic systems occur. Systems and structures usually increase in size and complexity. However, some prenatal structures actually decrease in size or disappear. For example, at the end of the third week gill arches appear, but by the middle of the second month they have been transformed into parts of the inner ear and neck and the cartilages of the larynx. Another example is the emergence and gradual disappearance of an external tail between the second and fourth months. Prenatal development includes three periods: the period of the zygote, the period of the embryo, and the period of the fetus. These periods should be thought of as continuous phases of development, for from the moment the sperm penetrates the ovum, the development of the organism involves a systematic series of sequential changes by which the organism becomes increasingly complex and differentiated... [A]lthough many of the organ systems are present in the first three months of prenatal development, many also continue to evolve. The nervous system and brain continue to develop and differentiate even after birth.

Modern man has used his brain to develop a complex culture. Evolution has not stopped, and there are, in general, two directions which further development of man can take. He can be lost as earlier men were lost, perhaps destroying himself, or[undergo] further refinement of his brain... A human... uses the wisdom of the past to enable him to live in the present and plan for the future.

At the pinnacle of complicated dynamics are processes of biological evolution, or thought processes... Intuitively there seems a clear sense in which these ultimately complicated systems are generating information. Billions of years ago there were just blobs of protoplasm; now... here we are. So information has been created and stored in our structure. In the development of one person's mind from childhood, information is clearly not just accumulated but also generated – created from connections that were not there before. - CHAOS

It's been said that 'sometimes the finger-print of God is a paw-print', and dogs are apparently able to sense some things that humanoids can't (or before they can – e.g., illnesses, bad weather), but there is no evidence to suggest that dogs – or any other of Earth's non-humanoid species – have ever believed, or have the capacity to believe, in a supernatural controller of nature. Therefore, the brain of the first person to ever contemplate God's existence had apparently created something *from connections that were not there before*. Furthermore, until that event occurred, this planet was, technically, 100% atheistic. Hence, when it comes to spirituality, human atheists have more in common with other species than their own! Atheists assume that if God really existed, everyone would know about it (not just the descendants of the first person). However, while it might seem unlikely that God would make some people believe in itself and others disbelieve, logic declares that something (the Universe, for instance) can't be created out of nothing.

It is true, that a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion. - Francis Bacon

If God is *all-knowing*, then the more a person knows, the more god-like it must be (and, if the Devil exists and is the opposite of God, that makes it the most ignorant entity in the Universe – i.e., it has the brain of an amoeba or, more accurately, a *stone*!).

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil... - Genesis

God didn't want him *to know good and evil* while the man lived in the fictional Garden of Eden – banning him from eating the tree of knowledge's fruit (Genesis 2:17) – but as soon as the man learnt the difference, he was sent away (Genesis 3:23)! Therefore, it can be assumed that knowing what constitutes good ('morally correct') or evil ('morally bad, wicked: tending to harm') is only necessary for life outside of the Garden of Eden. This makes sense if it is accepted that everything was provided for the man inside the garden, but outside of it he had to provide for himself – and that a person who doesn't know the difference could, while attempting to provide for himself, accidentally cause evil; whereas someone who does know the difference will only cause evil deliberately. Unfortunately, the early chapters of the Bible don't clarify whether or not a god-like person only uses its knowledge to do good.

The Bible is rather vague about what God actually is – a fact which is often used by atheists to justify their beliefs. However, how can a species be expected to fully explain or understand God – undoubtedly the greatest entity in the Universe – while its knowledge of the Universe remains incomplete?

The study of the origin of the universe, or cosmos, is known as cosmogony, and that of its structure and evolution, COSMOLOGY.

cosmology, field of study that brings together the natural sciences, particularly astronomy and physics, in a joint effort to understand the physical universe as a unified whole... Three great ages of scientific cosmology can be distinguished. The first began in Greece in the 6th century BC when the Pythagoreans introduced the concept of a spherical Earth and... postulated a universe in which the motions of heavenly bodies were governed by the harmonious relations of natural laws. The infinite atomist universe of Leucippus and Democritus followed, wherein countless worlds, teeming with life, were the result of chance aggregations of atoms... The Copernican revolution ushered in the second great age... The third... began in the early years of the 20th century, with the discovery of special relativity and its development into general relativity by... Einstein. These years also saw momentous developments in astronomy: extragalactic redshifts were detected... and... extragalactic nebulae were shown to be galaxies comparable with the Milky Way... Such discoveries and the application of general relativity to cosmology... gave rise to the view that the universe is expanding. The basic premise of modern cosmology is the principle... that the laws of physics are everywhere the same. The principle is plausible because of the observed isotropy of the universe (on the average, all directions are alike). The essence of general relativity, when applied to cosmology, is that space has dynamic properties and may be uniformly curved. If the curvature is negative (hyperbolic) or zero (flat), the universe is open and space is infinite; if the curvature is positive (spherical) the universe is closed and space is finite. Space itself expands, and the galaxies, stationary in space, recede from one another... at speeds increasing with distance... [W]hile propagating through expanding space... light... rays... emitted by a distant galaxy... have their wavelengths progressively stretched... and this is the origin of cosmological redshifts. Expansion indicates... the universe originated in a congested state (i.e., the big bang) some 10,000,000,000 years ago. The steady-state theory – an attempt to eliminate the big bang – has been disproved by the existence of microwave background radiation that is believed to be the afterglow of the big bang... Since then

considerable progress has been made in the study of the early universe that lasted for a period of... 100,000 years... Immediately after the big bang, the universe consisted primarily of radiation, but as it expanded matter came to dominate – roughly 1,000 years after the explosive beginning.

If the universe had a beginning, what was it like? For most of human history... scientists considered it a question so impossible of resolution that even to pose it was irresponsible. Only with the advent of radio astronomy and nuclear physics did science have the tools to gather the evidence and interpret it. The result was two conflicting theories – the ‘steady state’ and the ‘big bang’. Within the last decade the debate has been resolved, in most scientists’ minds, in favour of the ‘big bang.’ ...the... theory... has become so widely accepted that astronomers often call it “the standard model.” ...In the beginning there was an explosion. Not an explosion like those familiar on earth, starting from a definite center and spreading out to engulf more and more of the circumambient air, but an explosion which occurred simultaneously everywhere, filling all space from the beginning, with every particle of matter rushing apart from every other particle. “All space” in this context may mean either all of an infinite universe, or all of a finite universe which curves back on itself like the surface of a sphere. Neither possibility is easy to comprehend, but this [does] not get in our way; it matters hardly at all in the early universe whether space is finite or infinite. At about one-hundredth of a second... the temperature of the universe was about a hundred thousand million... degrees Centigrade. This is much hotter than in the centre of even the hottest star, so hot, in fact, that none of the components of ordinary matter, molecules, or atoms, or even the nuclei of atoms, could have held together. Instead, the matter rushing apart in this explosion consisted of various types of the so-called elementary particles... One type of particle that was present in large numbers is the electron[, which]... makes up the outer parts of all atoms and molecules in the present universe. Another... was... the positron[, which has]... precisely the same mass as the electron. In the present universe positrons are only found in high-energy laboratories, in some kinds of radioactivity, and in violent astronomical phenomena like cosmic rays and supernovas, but in the early universe the number of positrons was almost exactly equal to the number of electrons. In addition... there were roughly similar numbers of various kinds of neutrinos, ghostly particles with no mass or electric charge whatever. Finally, the universe was filled with light. This does not have to be treated separately from the particles – the quantum theory tells us that light consists of particles of zero mass and zero electrical charge known as photons. (Each time an atom in the filament of a light bulb changes from a state of higher energy to one of lower energy, one photon is emitted. There are so many photons coming out of a light bulb that they seem to blend together in a continuous stream of light...) Every photon carries a definite amount of energy and momentum depending on the wavelength of the light... [All of these] particles... were continually being created out of pure energy, and then after short lives being annihilated again. Their number therefore was not preordained, but fixed instead by a balance between processes of creation and annihilation. From this balance we can infer that the density of this cosmic soup... was about four thousand million... times that of water. There was also a small contamination of heavier particles, protons and neutrons, which in the present world form the constituents of atomic nuclei... The proportions were roughly one proton and one neutron for every thousand million electrons or positrons or neutrinos... This... is the crucial quantity that had to be taken from observation in order to work out the standard model... As the explosion continued the temperature dropped, reaching thirty thousand million... [°C]... after about one-tenth of a second; ten thousand million [°C] after about one second; and three thousand million [°C] after about fourteen seconds. This was cool enough so that the electrons and positrons began to annihilate faster than they could be recreated out of the photons and neutrinos. The energy released in this annihilation of matter temporarily slowed the rate at which the universe cooled, but... [it reached] one thousand million [°C] at the end of the first three minutes. It was then cool enough for the photons and neutrons to begin to form into complex nuclei, starting with the nucleus of heavy hydrogen... The standard model sketched above is not the most satisfying theory imaginable... We would prefer a greater sense of logical inevitability in the theory. For example, one alternative theory that seems philosophically far more attractive is the so-called steady-state model. In this theory... the universe has always been just about the same as it is now. As it expands, new matter is continually created to fill the gaps between the galaxies. Potentially, all questions about why the universe is the way it is can be answered in this theory by showing that it is the way it is because that is the only way it can stay the same. The problem of the early universe is banished; there was no early universe. How then did we come to the “standard model”? ...by the pressure of empirical data... Can we really be sure of the standard model? Will new discoveries overthrow it and replace... [it] with some other cosmogony, or even revive the steady-state model? Perhaps... I [will] now say a bit about the future of the universe. It may go on expanding... at speeds approaching the speed of light... forever, getting colder, emptier, and deader. Alternatively, it may recontract, breaking up the galaxies and stars and atoms and atomic nuclei back into their constituents. All the problems we face in understanding the first three minutes would then arise again in predicting the course of events in the last three minutes... Looking further back, we can imagine an endless cycle of expansion and contraction stretching into the infinite past, with no beginning whatsoever. Some cosmologists are philosophically attracted to the oscillating model... It does, however, face one severe theoretical difficulty. In each cycle the ratio of photons to nuclear particles... is slightly increased by a kind of friction (known as “bulk viscosity”) as the universe expands and contracts... Right now this ratio is large, but not infinite, so it is hard to see how the universe could have previously experienced an infinite number of cycles... Our knowledge of the expansion of the universe rests entirely on the fact that astronomers are able to measure the motion of a luminous body in a direction directly *along* the line of sight much more accurately than they can measure its motion at right angles to the line of sight. The technique makes use of a familiar property of any sort of wave motion, known as the Doppler effect... The measurement of velocities by the observation of Doppler shifts is an intrinsically accurate technique... provided only that there is enough light to pick out spectral lines against the radiation of the night sky... [A]side from a few close neighbours like the Andromeda Nebula[, which]... was found to be moving toward the earth at about 300 kilometers per second... the other galaxies are generally rushing away from our own... [However,] it is not easy to determine the relation between velocity and distance at really large distances... The earth is going around the sun at a speed of 30 kilometers per second, and the solar system is being carried along by the rotation of our galaxy at a speed of about 250 kilometres per second. No one knows precisely what velocity our galaxy has relative to the cosmic distribution of typical galaxies, but presumably it moves at a few hundred kilometers per second in some direction... Thus... the present cosmological theory and astronomical observation have not yet revealed the extent or the future of the universe... It is natural to ask how large the universe was at very early times. Unfortunately we do not know, and we are not even sure that this question has any meaning... Fortunately, it is not necessary to come to a definite decision about the large-scale geometry of the universe in order to draw conclusions about its beginning... True, we are not absolutely certain... but it is exciting that we are now able to speak of such things with any confidence at all... However, it must always be admitted that our simple cosmological models may only describe a small part of the universe, or a limited portion of its history... [Furthermore,] we simply do not yet know enough about the physics of the elementary particles[, or]... enough about the quantum nature of gravitation even to speculate intelligently about the history of the universe... [O]ur ignorance of microscopic physics stands as a veil, obscuring our view of the very beginning... [and, naturally,] we want to know what there was before this moment... although... it is at least logically possible that... time itself has no meaning before that moment. We are all used to the idea of an absolute zero of temperature. It is impossible to cool anything below -273.16 °C, not because it is too hard or because no one has thought of a sufficiently clever refrigerator, but because temperatures lower than absolute zero just have no meaning – we cannot have less heat than no heat at all. In the same way, we may have to get used to the idea of an absolute zero of time – a moment in the past beyond which it is in principle impossible to trace any chain of cause and effect... [W]hichever cosmological model proves correct, there is not much comfort in any of this... The more the universe seems comprehensible, the more it also seems pointless. But if there is no solace in the fruits of our research, there is at least some consolation in the

research itself. Men and women are not content to... confine their thoughts to the daily affairs of life... The effort to understand the universe is one of the very few things that lifts human life a little above the level of farce... - THE FIRST THREE MINUTES

Recently [a] cosmologist... pointed out the following intriguing fact. In any sufficiently gigantic universe, a few observers could exist without any evolutionary preliminaries. They might have no ancestor whatever. Why? ...[because b]lack holes aren't entirely black... [They] radiate particles of all kinds, randomly. Sooner or later, therefore, in any large enough collection of black holes, some black hole or other would emit particles which just chanced to form a book, for example... This is just a variant on the point that a monkey typing in a fully random fashion would sooner or later type a sonnet. Well, another thing which might conceivably be emitted by a black hole... would be a monkey, a rather primitive observer... Regardless, however, of how many black holes there are in our universe, *no observer should at all expect to find that he or she or it had come into existence in this curious way... The Mysterious Universe...* [tells] a story about worms which felt sure that raindrops sprang into existence at random. Moving only over the Earth's surface, the worms knew nothing of the weather's three-dimensional machinery. Mightn't we be like them, ignorant of some important dimensions of the real? Physicists speculate about 'hidden variables' which determine precisely how events happen at the quantum level... Even when quite far separated in space and in time, particles can have properties correlated in ways which cannot be explained by supposing that each particle had been carrying some record of a decision about how to behave, a record formed when they were last in contact and consultable... when the time came for the decision to be carried out... According to such theories, far separated events can have a connectedness permitting them to influence one another deterministically and instantaneously... '[S]tochastic electrodynamics' takes classical physics and adds a background of ever-fluctuating zero-point fields... This refers to a jittering which particles would have (according to quantum physics) at temperatures right down to zero. [The theory] suggests that zero-point fields drive the motions of particles throughout the universe, these motions in turn giving rise to the fields 'in a self-generating feedback cycle'. Calculations based on such an approach are in good agreement with experimental findings... Whether the world is radically indeterministic is therefore very much an open question. True enough, we are sadly ignorant of what individual particles are about to do, and our ignorance cannot be explained in any straightforward fashion... no matter how greatly it is magnified by doomsday-argument considerations... For up to a few weeks, a supernova can radiate as brightly as a hundred billion suns, much of the energy taking particularly damaging forms – X-rays, gamma rays and high-energy 'cosmic ray' particles... [Thus] it seems that... dangerously close ones could... [destroy] Earth's normal electromagnetic shielding against cosmic rays... Alternatively, a... neutron star or black hole might emit energy able to damage... the ozone layer... from a great range... because of being concentrated into narrow jets... One might also need to consider large solar flares. If the sun were to enter a period of convective mixing, as may already have occurred at intervals, then an immense flare, up to a thousand times more energetic than any yet observed, might destroy the ozone layer about as effectively as a nearby supernova, especially if Earth's magnetic field had fallen to a low level during one of its reversals: there have been ten of these in the past two and a half million years, with the field dropping to near zero for up to twenty thousand years at a time. However, all such matters could seem to pose little immediate threat. After all, Earth hasn't been troubled by events of this sort for many millions of years... [It has been] calculated that supernovae inside thirty-three light years of Earth, attacking the upper atmosphere with cosmic rays sufficient to destroy perhaps 90[%] of the ozone for perhaps three hundred years, would occur no more often than around once every 240 million years. We would therefore appear to be safe for quite a while, particularly since the nearest potential supernova revealed by our searches is Alpha Crucis at a seemingly very adequate distance of four hundred million light years.

Apart from the sun, the star nearest to Earth is Proxima Centuri, at a distance of some four light-years... The Galaxy in which the Earth is located... has two main components: the halo, 100,000 light years in diameter... and the disc, a few thousand light-years thick... where the spiral arms denote regions of most recent star formation. Our sun is located slightly above the mid-plane of the disc, and about two-thirds of the way out from the centre. The... central few light-years of the Galaxy contain energetic radio and infra-red sources, associated apparently with disturbed complexes of ionized hydrogen. These streaming gas-clouds behave as if ejected explosively from something not yet understood, perhaps a massive black hole, at the precise centre... The known Universe is believed to be at least ten thousand million light-years in diameter... [I]n 1929... Edwin [Hubble]... demonstrated the statement (known as Hubble's law) that the distance to a distant galaxy is directly proportional to its observed velocity of recession from us. Such a result is a natural consequence of a uniformly expanding universe, as predicted by the 'big bang' theory... and implies that the age of the universe is inversely proportional to the constant of proportionality in the mathematical expression of the law. This constant (Hubble's constant) is uncertain to a factor of two, suggesting an age for the universe of between ten and twenty thousand million years.

...the big bang coughed out mainly hydrogen and helium[, which]... the stars... turned into heavy elements like carbon and oxygen and iron, and even uranium... Carbon nuclei form in the cores of stars from the triple encounter of three helium nuclei. Now the collision of helium nuclei within stars is a common enough process, but the simultaneous collision of three such nuclei is very rare, so rare, in fact, that there would be little prospect of significant carbon production were it not for a remarkable coincidence. Nuclear reactions vary rather a lot as a function of energy. Occasionally you get... [what] is called a 'resonance' – a sharp peak in the reaction rate. It turns out that nature has obligingly provided just such a resonance in the triple-helium reaction at precisely the thermal energy corresponding to the core of a star. As a result... laws of physics, and the structure of stars, felicitously conspire to ensure that carbon production... is prolific... [O]ccasionally stars explode. It sounds like bad news... but if they didn't... we wouldn't be here because these explosions are the principal means whereby the carbon and other important elements become disseminated around the universe. The dispersed material gets caught up in the next generation of stars and planets... [I]f, in the first few minutes of the universe... all the hydrogen had been processed into helium... the universe today would have no hydrogen. It turns out that about 90[%] of the nuclei in the universe are hydrogen, and this serves two very useful purposes... Without hydrogen there would not exist stable stars like the Sun. The second vital use for hydrogen is water (H₂O), crucial for life as we know it... One of the depressing things about the last three hundred years of science is the way it has tended to marginalize, even trivialize, human beings and thus alienate them from the universe in which they live... It is a sobering thought how delicately our existence is weighed in nature's balance of forces. There are several ways of interpreting these rather amazing facts. One is to say: 'I knew it all along! God designed the universe... and it's all put together in a very satisfactory way.' Not many scientists would be happy with that. Another response is to say: 'So what? If it wasn't like that, we wouldn't be here to worry about these things... It may be amazing, but why not just accept it as a brute fact?' A third point of view is to invoke the so-called 'many universes' hypothesis. The idea here is... that ours is not the only universe, but that there exist many others, and each universe is slightly different... There could be an infinity of these other universes with all possible combinations of things, all possible laws and so on... but only a tiny fraction of them is actually cognizable... [If there is an infinity of other universes, every event could be unique or be repeated an infinite number of times.] At present the astronomical evidence is probably consistent with a spatially finite (closed) universe, although it favours infinite (open) models.

According to Einstein's theory of relativity, light travels in a curved path, eventually returning to its starting point, and in this sense the universe may be considered finite though boundless.

The general theory of relativity opened an extremely fascinating possibility... On the other hand... [this] theory is also... dangerous because it came into the hands of mathematicians and cosmologists, who had very little contact with empirical reality. Furthermore, they applied it to regions which are very distant, and counting dimensions far away is not very easy. Many of these scientists had never visited a laboratory or looked through a telescope... They looked down on the experimental physicist whose only job was to confirm the high-brow conclusions they had reached, and those who were not able to confirm them were thought to be incompetent... The... general belief... is... that long ago the state of the Universe must have been much simpler, much more regular than today, indeed so simple that it could be represented by a mathematical model which could be derived from some fundamental principles through very ingenious thinking... [However,] if a scientist makes a guess about the state of the Universe some billion years ago, the chance that this guess is realistic is negligible. If he takes this guess as the starting point for a theory, this is unlikely to be a scientific theory but very likely will be a myth. - Cosmology, History, and Theology

The special theory of relativity is largely the outcome of experimental and theoretical efforts late last century to produce a coherent theory of electromagnetism... Although mathematically the theory is surprisingly uncomplicated its results are far-reaching, changing the basis of physics and undermining intuitive common-sense notions. Among its consequences are th[at]... nothing can go faster than the speed of light in a vacuum; the mass of a body increases and its length (in the direction of motion) shortens as its speed increases; the time interval between two events occurring in a moving body appears (to a stationary observer) to increase; ...mass and energy are equivalent and interconvertible. All of these are well attested by experiment. Their explanation, however, quite eludes modern physics and they tend to be regarded as the basic datum of nature.

THANKS [largely to a succession of] extraordinary scientific discoveries made over the past century or so, we now possess some extremely deep theories about the nature and structure of reality... Our best theories are[n't] only truer than common sense, they make far more sense than common sense. But taking these theories – and the experiments that corroborate them – seriously means discarding old beliefs and accepting explanations that are so counter-intuitive that at first sight they often seem ludicrous. One such explanation is that the universe we see around us is only one of a vast number that exist – some very similar to ours, some very different. Curiously, what compels us to adopt this grand “parallel universes” theory of reality is a deceptively simple laboratory experiment with light and shadow. Indeed, many of the most jarring discoveries of modern physics have emerged from the study of light, for almost nothing about light is as it seems... [T]he first clue to the existence of parallel universes [is] that light... tends to bend and fray... In everyday experience, light travels only in straight lines and therefore casts shadows that are silhouettes, similar in shape to the obstacle in the light's path. But... when directed at a narrow slit in a screen, the beam... of a flashlight... does not form a silhouette of the slit but instead disperses into an intricate pattern of brightness and shadow... When a second, identical slit is opened up in the same screen, the resulting pattern of shadows is radically different from – instead of merely a doubled image of – the single-slit pattern. There are places that are illuminated in the single-slit pattern but actually go dark when the second slit is opened... [T]o 19th century physics... the prevailing explanation was that light coming through the new slit interfered with the light from the original slit, deflecting both into the new pattern. But this... was ruled out by an astonishing experimental result: if the experiment is performed with only a single photon at a time, the interference still occurs... Something is still deflecting that solitary photon from its path in a way that depends on what other slits, of what shapes, are open. Moreover, further experiments with mirrors and lenses show that the entities... doing the interfering behave exactly like photons – except that they are invisible. So it appears that photons come in two sorts: tangible photons – the ones we can see or detect with instruments – and “shadow” photons, which are far more numerous but detectable only indirectly through their interference effect on tangible photons... Quantum theory – the fundamental theory of microscopic physics – predicts, and experiment confirms, that... every neutron... must be accompanied by an invisible retinue of shadow neutrons; every electron by shadow electrons, and so on... The world of shadow particles [– ‘virtual particles come and go so quickly that you can't see them’ –]could be called a parallel universe... Everything in the tangible universe has its shadowy counterparts in other universes... [But parallel] universes differ from each other in that the particles they contain are in slightly different positions... As you read these words now, your counterparts in some parallel universes are reading them too. Some have moved on to the next paragraph; others... have paused for a cup of tea; a few have thrown the article down in disbelief. Each version of you is not directly aware of the others, but can deduce the others' existence phenomena that link the different universes. If there are identical copies of you in other universes, you may ask, which one is the real you? The answer is that all of them are equally real and equally you... We do not feel the presence of our counterparts in other universes. Nor did the Inquisitors feel the earth moving beneath their feet when they prosecuted Galileo for saying that it did... In 1963, the U[S] co-signed the partial Test-Ban Treaty... The Senate ratified [i]t... with the stipulation that the U.S. must create a monitoring system capable of detecting violations... Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory... got the job of detecting clandestine bomb-tests in space. To do this, a group of scientists... built detectors (code-named Vela Hotel) that were launched into orbits roughly half-way between Earth and the moon. They were sensitive enough to detect the pulse of prompt nuclear radiation from any bomb of interesting size exploding within a million miles of Earth. But they never detected a bomb... [However, occasionally] they saw bursts of nuclear radiation that lasted for a few seconds, much too slow for a bomb and much too fast for any known astronomical source. They called these explosions gamma-ray bursts. They obviously had nothing to do with bombs. They also appeared to have nothing to do with our solar system or... galaxy... They were reluctant to publish, not because their data was secret, but because it was too weird to be credible. They wanted to wait until they had some plausible explanation for what they were seeing... 2,000 gamma-ray bursts have now been detected. We still have not the faintest idea what the[y]... are... how they are or why they are. All we know is that they are the most violent events in the universe... a[nd a]re immensely far away, half-way back to the beginning of time and half-way across the universe. Now that we know... gamma-ray bursts are far away, the mystery of their nature and origin becomes even deeper. To be detectable half-way across the universe, a single burst must contain far more energy than our sun will generate in its entire lifetime... It seems likely that the true explanation of gamma-ray bursts must involve new science... Newtonian physics was superseded early in this century by several theories, including Einstein's theory of relativity, the quantum theory of the atom and the Big Bang. Since then, physicists and cosmologists have attempted to meld these... into a “theory of everything” that answers some fundamental questions about the universe... [S]tring theory posits the existence of loops of energy in space, and claims that all forces and particles are aspects of these strings... suggesting that the universe is a vast tapestry, and all its patterns are combinations of individual threads of energy. String theory is a promising candidate for a unified theory of everything but it presently faces two problems. [1:] it describes strings moving in space but fails to follow relativity in demonstrating that space itself is made of relationships among the things that move within it. [2:] string theory comes in a great many versions, which describe many different possible worlds. One potential solution is that the different string theories actually describe different realizations of the same basic stuff, just as ice, liquid water and steam are all just different phases of the same water molecules. But this leads to another question: Why do we see a particular phase in the universe at any given time? It may be that the universe chooses a phase depending on its history. This, in turn, raises a final question: Did the universe have a choice in the laws of nature and, if so, how was that choice made? If a choice was made about the fundamental laws of physics, it seems to have been made so that we and the world around us would be possible. Reflecting on this has made many scientists turn to mysticism or religion. But I prefer to search for a rational, scientific understanding of this puzzle[, in which]... the universe can be understood as having constructed itself... by means of something operating in physics and cosmology just as natural selection does in biology... If this theory... called cosmological natural selection... is true, it means... we live in a benign universe, one that is hospitable to life because it shares some characteristics with living things. It also means...

principles of justice, law and equal rights are not imposed from outside; they are made by us as part of an evolving system called human society. And human society, like space and time, is not absolute or eternal... Since our universe turns out to be only one among many... a new word has been coined to denote the whole of physical reality: the multiverse... It follows that reality is much bigger than it seems... The part we call the universe – all the objects and events that we and our instruments can directly observe – is the merest tip of the iceberg... We forget that [our own] world is always... stranger than we... can guess. Instead, we search for... simple laws of nature, in a sleight of mind that makes us uniquely human. Just as we're addicted to rules, home-truths and slogans, we're addicted to certain ways of explaining things. There's bound to be a simple answer to everything, we insist... Maybe complexity frightens us. Maybe we fear becoming as plural as all we survey. Maybe we still tacitly believe that the universe was created for our pleasure, that we pint-sized demigods are its sole audience and goal. Then something like *pandora* turns up, a minute being with a sex life even stranger than our own... (it will try anything)... a creature that breaks all the rules and gives biologists a jolt... With a mouth like a hairy wheel, and other anatomical oddities... *pandora* is... so outlandish that a special phylum was created for it – Cyclophora... I must admit, I get a devilish delight when the miraculous appears right under... one's... nose... I don't[even] worry about the mites that live among my eyelashes... Because we have swarmed across the world with our curious and agile minds, we sometimes think that nature has been fully explored. But that's far from true. Plants and animals are going extinct at an appalling rate – some estimates are as high as 300 species a day – and many... are vanishing mysteries. The riches of the natural world are slipping through our fingers before we can even call them by name. Hanging on by a suction cup, and reaching around to vacuum up fallen morsels from a dining lobster's lips, *pandora* reminds us that we share our planet with unseen hordes, and it hints at the uniqueness of our own complex niche in the natural world. Recently a graduate student... happened upon a fungus... sprouting behind the head of a beetle grub. Intrigued, she took it to a laboratory... and soon realized that she had made an astounding discovery: the sexual form of... a mould that produces closporin, an immunosuppressant used to combat organ rejection. We know the tropics contain a rich pharmacopoeia, but there are many organisms still to be found in our unexplored backyards... The word "discovery" literally means: uncovering something that's hidden from view. But what really happens is a change in the viewer. The familiar offers a comfort few can resist, and fewer still want to disturb. But as relatively recent inventions such as the telescope and microscope have taught us, the unknown has many layers. Every truth has geological strata, and you can't have an orthodoxy without a heresy... And then there are those awkward psychological mysteries. I suspect human nature will always be like mercury, a puzzle to grasp. No matter how much of the physical universe we fathom, what makes us quintessentially human eludes us to some degree, because it's impossible for a system to observe itself with much objectivity... I[n one of the least noted ironies], modern Western man's enlightened grasp of history – with his belief in progress, in the rise of civilization and in laws for all humanity – led to the abdication of man's sense of control over his own future and to the discovery of historic forces that mastered him. The result in this century was a new word with a new meaning – historicism, expressing a belief that historical change occurs according to fixed laws. According to this view, the course of history may be predicted but cannot be altered by human will. The social sciences have taken on the role of the ancient prophets... [Yet no] matter how hard or where we look, even under... a lobster's nose, surprise awaits us. There will always be plenty of nature's secrets waiting to be told.

Up until this century, the most mysterious thing about the sun was its lifetime. Anything that radiates energy must eventually deplete its source, and [our] sun is no exception. We know now, through radioactive dating, that the oldest meteorites are about 4.6 billion years old, so that the sun's lifetime must be at least this long... At the beginning of nuclear burning... the sun was only about 75[%] of its current luminosity... The helium "ash" produced by hydrogen burning in the sun remains where it was produced – at the center. The material seen at the surface of the sun, for the most part, is the material out of which the sun formed... About 5 billion years from now the hydrogen will be exhausted at the solar centre. Nuclear burning will continue in a shell surrounding the now-inert helium core. Lacking an energy source to keep it hot, the core yields to gravity and collapses... As the core collapses the hydrogen-burning shell will be drawn in and heated up, greatly increasing its nuclear burning rate. The resulting increased energy flow passing through the outer layers of the sun will cause it to expand and cool. In a [further] few hundred million years, the sun's luminosity will increase to a few thousand times its present value, and its radius will be more than 100 times greater than it is now. Venus will be consumed inside the sun, and the earth burned to a crisp. The photospheric temperature will drop and the sun will be red – a red giant. During... [this] phase, the helium core will grow in mass but not in radius. When it reaches about one-half of the solar mass, the temperature will be high enough for helium to fuse into carbon... and oxygen... During the burning of helium, the sun will decrease somewhat in luminosity and radius. Eventually, the helium will be exhausted at the center, and the sun will begin a second red-giant phase, with a degenerate C and O core surrounded by a region of helium burning and, still further out, hydrogen burning... [S]olar wind will eat inward, as the hydrogen- and helium-burning shells eat outward. As the helium shell nears the surface, it will become unstable and flash on and off with increasing intensity. Eventually these flashes will become large enough to expel the outer part of the sun, which will expand into space as a spherical shell... At an age of about 10 billion years, the sun will have ended its life as an energy producer. It will not be capable of fusing [C and O]. Its remaining hydrogen and helium fuel ejected into space, the initially very hot core will cool forever... Such a star is called a white dwarf. The final ejection of mass produces a planetary nebula, the result of a relatively mild (as these things go) stellar explosion... The material that the sun returns to the interstellar medium via the solar wind and planetary nebula has not undergone nuclear processing. But that is not the case for all stars... The spectra of the oldest stars... show that they are essentially pure hydrogen and helium... If the oldest stars contain no heavy elements, then these must have been synthesized after the birth of the universe... It seems clear now that they are produced in massive short-lived stars, or super-giants... The very oldest stars deficient in heavy elements are now extremely rare... The sun... has about 2[%] heavy elements. Some new stars have as much as 4[%]... Birth is perhaps the least understood aspect of the life of a star. Observation has shown that stars are formed in large, interstellar clouds of gas and dust... It is now generally agreed that a large dust cloud will not collapse to form stars all on its own, but that some sort of external stimulus is needed to get the process going. For most clouds, this stimulus comes from the structure of the galaxy itself... A few million years after the Big Bang, our galaxy... started to form. This was about 15 billion years ago... It turns out that if the stars were scattered uniformly throughout the Milky Way disk, the galaxy would not be stable. The stars would tend to bunch together into long, spiral-shaped arms of the type seen in other galaxies. These arms rotate with a speed different from the speed of individual stars and clouds, so that a given cloud "catches up" with one of the spiral arms during the normal course of affairs. When this happens, the gravitational forces of the stars that are bunched together will compress the cloud... As the cloud collapses... it fragments and forms smaller clouds, which continue to collapse. Ultimately a group of stars is formed... and, in the one case we can adequately observe, a system of planets was formed as well... 99[%] of the angular momentum of the solar system is carried by the planets (primarily Jupiter)... Even when the sun was formed, it carried at most only half of the total angular momentum of the system... Our bodies are about 92[%] star dust (and 8[%] hydrogen, surviving from the beginning of the universe...).

...the original fireball which began all of creation... is literally present in our brains when photons go off, and in the process of photosynthesis...

...the possible discovery of life forms elsewhere in space, and the vast age of the Earth turn out to be largely irrelevant when it comes to addressing that most fundamental question: is there a Creator? There is ample evidence... in our own backyard... Observe how the green leaves of plants have grown towards the sun. A thoroughly insignificant observation it might appear. In fact, such plant behaviour is loaded with significance... The

plant actually wants to organise its ability to extract energy from the sun's rays so as to grow... The microscopic bit of the leaf that performs this task is called the chloroplast and is crudely analogous to the function of the modern combustion engine – fuel in one end, useful work out the other. But don't be fooled. The chloroplast is infinitely more sophisticated in its work than even the latest high-tech car engine with its on-board computer. Molecular biology has made a superb job of describing the chemical and physical processes that are harnessed in the operation of the chloroplast. Nobel prizes have been won by some of the scientists who have unravelled these. But this same science is powerless to explain why there is such a purposeful biological entity called the chloroplast... To pretend that science has "explained" plant photosynthesis without acknowledging the crucial role of a higher cause is about as silly as claiming that the modern internal combustion engine can be fully accounted for by ignoring completely the evolution of human ideas and insights that led to its design and eventual construction.

The Sun is a member of a class of stars numbering in the hundreds of millions among the several billion stars in our galaxy[, which is among]... the several billion galaxies in the observable universe... At the face of the Earth... the Sun beams radiant energy with a power of 173 trillion watts, and a solar wind blusters high energy particles... [T]he atmosphere absorbs and scatters high energy particles from the solar wind and from more distant starting places in the universe... The oldest known... sample of sedimentary rock, 3.5 billion years old and located in A[US]... holds evidence of the presence of living cells. That early start argues for the inevitability of life in the circumstances afforded by the Earth. The planet is the right distance from the Sun, not too close nor too distant to be either too hot or too cold. It is the right size – that is, it has sufficient mass – to keep its iron-nickel core in the molten state. That, too, keeps the planet at the right temperature... Whatever the composition of the atmosphere[when life on Earth began], it had no oxygen... From various considerations, including what is known about... thick (Venus) and thin (Mars) atmospheres... it is thought that the Earth's atmosphere at this early time was composed of methane... and ammonia... plus carbon dioxide... in much higher concentration than now. This apparently thin atmosphere offered little insulation from the ultraviolet radiation and the x rays and gamma rays in the solar radiation, or even from the solar wind. In laboratory glassware, the exposure of such a mixture of water vapor and gases to such fierce radiation has brought about the synthesis of small organic molecules. Their essential ingredients are carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen, and often nitrogen as well... Organic chemists soon learned... to synthesize them. The subsequent discovery of these components in carbon-laden meteorites has led some workers to speculate that life on Earth was seeded by such meteorites. Be that as it may, among the small organic molecules synthesized from models of the ancient atmosphere, investigators have identified the simple piece-parts, the "monomers," that link together repetitively in the long-chain molecules, "polymers," that conduct life processes in the living cell... Proteins have similarly wide recognition... in... life processes... What they do is supply energy to speed up chemical reactions between atom and atom, atom and molecule, and molecule and molecule that would without them proceed much too slowly. Proteins... also give the cell structure. How the monomers... got lined up in these remarkable polymers breaks down into questions that keep a great many clever biochemists busy. One alluring possibility is that highly ordered crystals of silicon in compound with aluminium and other metals and with oxygen and hydrogen, forming the clays on the bottom of the early seas, provided templates on which the monomers lined up and linked into polymers. The sequences that had the right properties took off from there. How such molecules came to assemble in the living cell presents another whole class of dazzling questions... [However, isolated] from the living cell, protein and DNA molecules exhibit spontaneously the chemical reactions that, orchestrated in the cell, make the cell a living organism.

The story of the amoeba illustrates not only the advances made in the last few decades in the techniques of microscopy but also the difficulties involved. Years ago microscopists could watch amoeba only from above in the usual manner of looking at very small objects. From this angle one could see the pseudopodia advancing over the surface of the microscope slide and apparently in contact with it. Recently, however, a technique has been devised for watching it from the side and a new detail has come to light. In fact, when each pseudopodium moves forward it is supported by an extremely small peg of protoplasm which remains attached to the ground at one spot while the rest of the animal, raised just above the ground, advances over it. Finally, the pseudopodium is withdrawn and reincorporated into the body of the amoeba. A number of theories of 'amoeboid movement' have been proposed over the last 20 years but its mechanism is still not thoroughly understood. One can see... the protoplasm streaming forwards along the centre of the pseudopodium and moving out to the sides at the tip in what has been descriptively named the 'fountain zone', and there acquiring a firmer consistency. At the same time the reverse change occurs at the 'tail', where the protoplasm resumes its forward flow. What is still in doubt is whether the advancing protoplasm is being pushed forward from behind, like toothpaste in its tube, or pulled by changes in the proteins in the fountain zone. The problem is by no means trivial, for some of our own cells move in an amoeboid manner and its solution in terms of the behaviour of protein molecules could cast light on one of the basic properties of protoplasm. - Pushing or pulling?

It so happens that physicists are quite certain that no physical object possessing mass can move at a speed equal to or greater than that of light... In 1911 the Austrian American physicist Victor Francis Hess... was able to show that certain very energetic forms of radiation reach Earth from space, and they were therefore called *cosmic rays*... Because... cosmic-ray particles are electrically charged... they curve in their paths in response to the various magnetic fields associated with stars... They end up reaching us from all directions, and there is no way we can tell from what specific direction a specific cosmic-ray particle began its travels... In 1931 the American radio engineer Karl Guthe Jansky... discovered that there are *microwaves* reaching out from the sky. Microwaves are lightlike radiations without electric charge, so they travel in straight lines, unaffected by magnetic fields. Microwaves... are about a million times as long as lightwaves are. Despite this... [it] was... much harder to work out the point of origin of microwaves than light... In 1939, when Oppenheimer was working out the theoretical implications of the neutron star, he... saw that... [when] the nuclear force fails, there is nothing left to withstand gravitation, that weakest of all forces, which when added to and added to by the endless piling together of mass finally becomes the strongest... The inward-pulling gravitation is... however... essentially changeless, but the outer push of temperature at the... center, which balances that pull, depends on nuclear reactions that consume hydrogen and produce helium... Fortunately... the various galaxies do exert a gravitational force on one another. This may not be sufficient to prevent the[universe's] expansion, but it will tend to slow it... [Unfortunately, we] are not sure by exactly how much the gravitational force in the universe is slowing the rate of expansion. It depends on... the average density of matter in the universe... If the density is high enough, then the slowing effect is great enough to bring the rate of expansion to zero eventually... Once that happens, the universe under the pull of its own gravitational forces will begin to contract, till the cosmic egg is formed and explodes again. This... [is] an *oscillating universe*. A[n A]merican astronomer... has suggested that a cosmic egg forms and explodes every 80 billion years... Actually astronomers are not yet certain just how dense the matter of the universe is, on the average, so that we can't be sure exactly... whether the universe is oscillating or not... Consider the Earth, for instance. It tends to lose some of its mass as its atmosphere leaks very slowly away. It also tends to gain some mass as it collides with and retains meteoric matter[, which]... is considerably greater than the amount of mass lost by Earth each day... [T]herefore... the Earth is very slowly, but steadily, growing more massive. In the same way the Sun is constantly losing mass... The Sun remains what it is only at the expense of steadily converting 600,000,000,000 kilograms of hydrogen into 595,800,000,000 kilograms of helium *every second*... The missing 4,200,000,000 kilograms is converted into... radiation... Nevertheless, it can easily be argued that the general tendency in the universe is for large objects to grow at the expense of small. - THE COLLAPSING UNIVERSE

...the question of entropy in an oscillating universe... is... a major... difficulty... Expansion means work to be done and so does contraction. Why is it then to be assumed that the enormous work implied in pushing apart the galaxies and pulling them again together is free of the dissipation of energy? Should it not rather be assumed that due to this dissipation of energy the oscillating Universe represents an oscillator with a vibration of ever-diminishing amplitude? Would not, therefore, an oscillating Universe tend toward a state of complete quiescence in close resemblance to the heat-death of the Universe[– ‘where the temperature is even throughout the whole Universe’ –] as proclaimed by Helmholtz and others a century ago?

[Is] *the Universe... destined ultimately to collapse...* and, perhaps, “bounce” to repeat the cycle indefinitely[, or]... *expand forever into infinity, ending “not with a bang but with a whimper”?* ...our best answer to the question of how the Universe will end is still “we do not know”... Cosmologists do not claim to know exactly what made the Universe explode into existence from a state of zero volume and infinite density – a space-time singularity – but they do claim, by and large, to be able to describe in detail how a hot fireball of matter and radiation has evolved... to produce the cool, dark spread of empty space, dotted with galaxies... that we see about us now... The idea that the Universe ought to look the same, in broad outline, in all directions and to all observers in it is so important to cosmology that it is called the cosmological principle – and without this uniformity, there could be no successful science of cosmology, as everything we see would be special to our own location, and could not easily be interpreted in general terms... After the first thousand million years or so, with matter firmly established and radiation playing only a minor and decreasing role, the story of the Universe can be taken up in terms of gravity, left as a dominating force because of its long range and its independence of electric charge. Curiously, though, the standard picture now becomes much more vague, and the precision of saying just what photons were doing so many seconds after the big bang is replaced by generalisations... [The] greatest intellectual contribution to man’s understanding of the Universe and his place in it was the general theory of relativity, from which the whole of the modern science of mathematical cosmology derives... Einstein’s... theory... is[, however,] almost *too* complete... with some problems beyond the skill of today’s mathematicians... Einstein’s revolutionary vision of the Universe saw the inseparability of both... space-time and matter; it was not just *matter* that was created in the big bang, but space-time as well. There was nothing “outside” for the big bang to explode into – and this... means not even empty space, which on the Einsteinian picture is far from being “nothing”... Einstein’s equations describe the geometry of space-time, and naturally he wanted to apply them to the geometry of *all* space-time – the Universe itself... But he failed... In order to make the equations fit in with the way astronomers then believed the Universe to be... [–] isotropic... homogeneous... and static... [– he] had to introduce an extra factor, called the “cosmical constant”. Quite frankly, he fiddled the equations. And in later life Einstein commented that this fiddle was the biggest scientific mistake he ever made. - Cosmology Today

We think we can work out a theory of the structure and evolution of the universe... [even though our] observational basis is necessarily so limited – we cannot poke a star, or look at the universe from another place... [Cosmology’s] inferences are therefore indirect and often controversial. - ORIGIN and EVOLUTION of the UNIVERSE

The expanding universe is now a cornerstone of cosmology, but... [there] is no astronomical evidence that the universe has a centre or an edge, as the idea of an exploding lump would imply... The expanding universe is not, therefore, the motion of galaxies *through* space, away from some centre, but is the steady expansion of space... Around each galaxy, every day, no less than a hundred billion billion billion billion billion cubic kilometres of new space appears from nowhere, as it were. - The Edge of Infinity

The total rate of creation for the observable universe is about 100,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 tons of matter per second. And it is the appearance of this matter which drives the universe: the new material produces an outward pressure that leads to the observed expansion... It would appear, then, that the past of the universe has been as brilliant as the present, that the future will be as the past, and that the present is of no more importance than any other time. It would also appear that life is not an accidental, meaningless and extremely fleeting episode in the history of matter. On the evidence of recent theories of origin, it is possible to say that *life is the purpose of the universe*.

It is now the prevailing view about the nature of matter that all of it, living and otherwise, is descended from neutrons... [and] that the entire visible universe once consisted of one or several balls of neutrons endowed with such energy and mass that it collapsed or blew up... Where the ball (or balls) of neutrons and the accompanying radiation may have come from is a question that transcends the bounds of science... [because] there is as yet no apparent way to deal with this question scientifically... It is... [a] question... belonging to metaphysics and theology... Perhaps the “big bang,”... was simply an initiating event in the most recent of a continuing succession of pulsating expansions and contractions... Each new generation of stars and planets builds from the ashes of the last. The abundance and range of the heavy elements and isotopes found on Earth implies that... [our] sun... is... a second- or third-generation star... To earlier generations [of humans] Earth seemed awesome and illimitable in its capabilities... Now that the entire earth has been photographed from afar in a single field of view from a variety of spaceships, it is hard to defend such a view. At last our planet can be seen by all as it really is: a relatively tiny habitable sphere, suspended in... a... captive and delicately balanced orbit around the life-giving but potentially lethal sun... [T]he term *infinite* is... however... still commonly but incorrectly used, even by highly intelligent people, to refer to the life-supporting capabilities of our planet. - COSMOS, EARTH, AND MAN

If there is a single quantity that appears to us limitless, unplumbable, infinite, then that quantity is time. Yet modern scientific investigations assure us that, although there is a great deal of it, time is of strictly finite extent. In a more restricted sense we talk of “geological time”, meaning the timespan encompassing all matters connected with the origin, evolution and structure of... Earth... Only within the last few decades has it become possible to measure the absolute age of rocks... of almost any geological age with a high degree of precision... The radius of... Earth is determined by astronomical measurements to be 6371km (3950mi), and... from the value of gravity at the surface... the mass can be determined... To study the internal structure of... Earth in detail, indirect methods must be used since only the upper few kilometres are accessible to direct examination... Earth’s deep interior is studied primarily by seismic methods... In addition to determining density, seismic-wave velocity places important constraints on the chemical composition of each zone... Earth is divided into... the crust, the mantle and the core... Most of [Earth’s] volume and mass... – approximately 83% and 67% respectively – are contained within the mantle. It is not simply because it makes up so large a part of our planet that study of the mantle is important: the processes that operate within it are responsible for crustal plate movements... The core is in two parts. The outer core does not transmit shear waves and so must be liquid; the inner core, having a radius of 1220km... is solid and... thought to be composed of an iron-nickel alloy similar to that found in meteorites... [O]ur knowledge of temperatures within... Earth, particularly in the deep interior, is meagre. It is an area of study in which much more information is needed if we are to fully understand the present structure of... Earth and how this structure may have evolved through time... A rare and problematical class of natural objects, tektites are much studied and little understood. They are small pieces of glass, varying in colour from light green to black and having... distinct and characteristic shapes – spheres, buttons, dumbbells, etc. They have been found in only four areas of... Earth’s surface, known as “strewn fields”: southern A[US] and southeast Asia, the Ivory Coast, Czechoslovakia, and Texas and Georgia, USA. Each group has its own distinctive age, but all are geographically very young... [Tektites older than] 34,000,000 years... are unknown. Any theory which seeks to explain the origin of these mysterious objects must take

account of their restriction in both space and time, and... that they bear no discoverable relation to their surroundings. Other highly significant features which must be explained are the presence ...in some tektites of minute grains of meteoritic minerals... [A]mong all natural objects available for [laboratory] study... meteorites are the closest relatives to the inaccessible matter that forms [Earth's] bulk... - PLANET EARTH

The shape of this planet is not a perfect sphere... The diameter through the poles is approximately twenty-seven miles shorter than the diameter at the equator. The bulge at the equator and flattening (or oblateness) at the poles is caused by the CENTRIFUGAL FORCE produced by the rotation of Earth... Earth consists of several layers. The *centrosphere* makes up the vast interior while the *lithosphere* is the crust of the earth. All of the water bodies (oceans, lakes, rivers, etc.) make up the *hydrosphere*. Earth is surrounded by an ocean of air that is termed *atmosphere*. Man lives at the bottom of this sphere... The... land is very unequally distributed on the globe, and occupies only 30[%] of the surface... The surface... is continually undergoing deformation. All coastlines show evidence of repeated rise and fall patterns of the land relative to the sea... While the exact nature of the origin of the earth is not known[, the]... crust... is operated on by thermal, gravitational, and other forces. These factors... contributed to the distribution of the surface features... Earth moves around the sun in an elliptical... orbit which takes one year to travel. During this time, it... has rotated on its own axis 365.2422 times... Earth spins around its own axis at a fairly constant speed. It takes 23 hours, 56 minutes, and 4.095 seconds... to make one complete rotation relative to the stars... The axis of the earth is tilted... about $23\frac{1}{2}^\circ$ from the perpendicular to the plane of revolution. This accounts for the changes of SEASONS and change in the length of DAY AND NIGHT. At times, the North Pole is inclined toward the sun and the South Pole is inclined away... causing summer in the Northern Hemisphere and winter in the southern... Actually, Earth is closer to the sun in winter than in summer. Midway between summer and winter, both poles are at the same distance from the sun... Earth's revolution and rotation are its two main movements. However, the tilt of Earth's axis causes... *precession of the equinoxes*... Every spinning body is subject to precession or gyroscopic pull whenever any outside force tends to tip its axis out of line. Instead of tipping, the spinning body merely wobbles around its centre of gravity in such a way that the ends of its axes describe circles. The gravitational pull of the sun and moon are forces that are constantly trying to straighten up the axis. Because this "righting effect" of the sun's pull is very slight in comparison with the earth's mass, the pole's motion is so slow that one circle is made in a little over 25,800 years... The earth's velocity in its orbit... has a maximum velocity... when it is closest to the sun[, and]... its rate... of rotation[is] sometimes speeding up, sometimes slowing down... The cause of these changes seems to be related to changes in the distribution of mass within the earth and the friction produced by ocean tides... The moon moves about Earth in an elliptical orbit... [attracted by] earth's mass... Earth's pulling or gravitational force also supports its atmosphere, as well as pulling objects... to the ground rather than floating off into space... The tidal forces, which result from the attraction of both moon and sun, have an effect on GRAVITY. Tidal motions of the earth's crust exist also, but are much smaller than the ocean tides because the earth and its interior are more rigid. The elasticity of the crust does allow tidal deformation, however... Earth is one huge magnet... The magnetic poles are changing location ever so slightly. It is believed that the magnetic axis rotates about the geographic axis once in approximately every 1000 years... Since 1790 scholars have tried to explain the origin of the solar system... The nebular hypothesis of LAPLACE explained quite well the high speed of rotation of the planets and that all the planets except URANUS rotate and revolve in the same direction. It does not, however, account for the very slow period of rotation of the sun. The sun rotates in 26 days, but it should rotate in about one-half day according to the principle of conservation of angular momentum... Since ancient times men have... wondered, and still wonder, how the universe began and how... [or] if it will end... If a person could look at the whole known universe, he would probably notice the Milky Way. But he might not even single out the sun, much less... Earth[, which] would be less significant than a guppy swimming in the Pacific Ocean... From the earth a comet looks like a shining tadpole in the sky... [T]he gigantic tail... always points away from the sun... because the pressure of the sun's rays seems to repel the gaseous material... Comets are members of the solar family... The orbits of comets, however, are not like the planets' orbits.

Comets are commonly distinguished from other components in the solar system by their... [tails] and extremely elongated orbits... When furthest away from the Sun... comets can literally be halfway to the nearest stars... On nearing the Sun, a... solar wind of high-speed protons and electrons [sweeps] cometary ions in a direction away from the Sun, producing a straight plasma tail... A second tail consisting of dust particles... may appear. This dust tail has a greater curvature than the plasma tail and is usually shorter. It also points away from the Sun because of the repulsive force exerted by solar radiation pressure on the micron-sized particles. Larger particles released from the nucleus simply take up orbits that have nearly the same parameters as the parent comet. This is known as a *meteor stream* [like meteors, 'some asteroids have elliptical orbits that intersect the orbits of the inner planets (most asteroids circle the Sun with orbits that lie within the asteroid belt) – Icarus and Adonis are the best known such asteroids; Hidalgo, the asteroid with the most eccentric orbit of all, approaches the orbit of Saturn at one extreme and that of Mars at the other']... On average five new comets are discovered per year. Unfortunately most of these are faint and can only be observed with the aid of a telescope.

Before the Earth was formed, there were comets here. Afterwards, and for all subsequent eons, comets have graced our skies. But until very recently, the comets performed without an audience; there was, as yet, no consciousness to wonder at their beauty. This all changed a few million years ago, but it was not until the last ten millennia or so that we began to make permanent records of our thoughts and feelings. Ever since, comets have... trailed images, poetry [and] questions... in their wakes... Comets must once have been a kind of psychological projective test – something wholly unfamiliar that... must [be described] in familiar language... To the Chinese, comets were 'broom stars', and much else. In other cultures, they are 'tail stars'... Scientists today still describe comets as having 'tails'... [In] Tonga, comets are 'stars of dust', which is much closer to the truth... We are told that Democritus believed comets to be produced when one planet passed near to another... he was on the right track: comets... arise by natural processes. So far as we know, no one had ever proposed this outlandish idea before... Our knowledge of Democritus comes mostly from Aristotle... who held him in high regard and disagreed with virtually everything he had to say... Aristotle believed he could disprove [Democritus' theory] by noting that Jupiter had, in his time, come close to a star in the constellation Gemini, and had not produced a comet. But Aristotle did not know that the star was light years behind the planet... In this matter, as in most others, Democritus was the better astronomer. But Aristotle's argument appealed to observation, not myth or conventional wisdom... Aristotle was forced to concoct a terrestrial source for the comets, since he had locked them out of his changeless skies, in which, for quasi-religious reasons, he had decreed that no new celestial bodies may be born and no old ones die. His insistence on the immutability of the heavens was the most influential error in the history of astronomy, contributing to a detour from reality that lasted nearly two millennia... All knowledgeable experts agreed with Aristotle. The first real doubts were raised on a night in 1572, when Tycho[Brahe] looked up at the constellation Cassiopeia and saw a star 'brighter than Venus', where no star had been before... Evidently, and to nearly everyone's surprise, the heavens were not immutable. Aristotle and the Church had been wrong. The supernova... was a reveille for the astronomers of Europe and, soon, for the culture of the world... It was hard not to take the comets personally... [The] tendency to construe each apparition as a telegram to the locals from the gods permeates virtually every cometary record until the sixteenth century. Rarely have so many diverse cultures, all over the world, agreed so well... Everywhere on Earth, with only a few exceptions, comets were harbingers of unwanted change, ill-fortune and evil... ['The word "disaster" itself comes from Latin for "bad star".'] This connection of comets and misfortune is made in the earliest surviving reference to a comet, a single Chinese sentence from the fifteenth century BC: *When Chieh executed his faithful counsellors, a comet appeared*... A survey of the early history of cometary observation gives the impression that for almost a thousand years

everybody, except the Chinese, went to bed early. The Chinese logged at least 338 separate apparitions from roughly 1400 BC to 1600 AD. Since 240 BC they have missed a return of Halley's Comet only once, in 164 BC... In the West, nothing approaching systematic observation of comets was in evidence until the fifteenth century [AD]... Western cometary astronomy prior to the Renaissance was a chronicle of occasional episodes of lucidity – especially in Ionia, Athens and Rome – punctuating a far longer and more widespread gloom of ignorance, superstition and delusion. The earliest unambiguous references to comets in the West come from what is today Iraq... and... are favourable: *When a star shines and its brilliance is as bright as the light of day, [when] in its shining it takes a tail like a scorpion, it is a fortunate omen... for the whole land.* A comet that rivalled the Sun in brightness must have come very close to the Earth... When we think of Edmond Halley, if we think of him at all, it tends to be only in connection with his namesake – humanity's favourite comet. The comet becomes a kind of mnemonic device, operating at roughly seventy-five year intervals, that chides us into remembering him... The date of his birth is uncertain; Halley believed it to be 29 October 1656. He began life in the Borough of Hackney, then a rural community outside London, but long since subsumed by the spread of the city. We have not a single anecdote, even apocryphal, that indicates the texture of his childhood. We do know that it was then that he first dreamt what he would later become. 'From my tenderest years I gave myself over to the consideration of Astronomy,' he recalled... In his boyhood, two great comets were seen – one, in 1664, popularly associated with the Great Plague of London, the other in 1665, associated with the subsequent Great Fire... His father, also named Edmond, was a businessman, a soap boiler and salter who owned lucrative properties in London. In 1666, the Great Fire devoured his real estate holdings, but his other business flourished. The recent horrors of the bubonic plague had given Londoners a new respect for personal hygiene. The manufacturing of soap became a growth industry. Moreover, the expanding British Navy had a chronic need for salted meat to sustain its sailors on long voyages... [Incidentally, the] first expedition of Captain James Cook in HMS *Endeavour* was intended specifically to respond to [the junior] Halley's plea to measure a transit of Venus from Tahiti on June 3 1769... The elder Halley... was happy to use his recent wealth to see his son's evident promise realized. He sent him to St Paul's, one of the best schools in England, where Edmond did brilliantly. In 1671, he was elected Captain of St Paul's, which indicates that he was that rare thing – an excellent student who is popular with his classmates. We know nothing of Halley's mother, other than that her name was Anne Robinson and that she died on 24 October 1672, nine months before Halley's departure for Queen's College, Oxford. Additional evidence of his father's largesse is provided by... a twenty-four foot long telescope... that Halley took along to college... which he immediately put to good use. We know this because on 10 March 1675, the eighteen-year-old... had the audacity to write to John Flamsteed... England's first Astronomer Royal, informing him that the authoritative published tables on the positions of Jupiter and Saturn were in error. The young man had also found some errors in the star positions published by the incomparable Tycho Brahe... We do not know exactly what Flamsteed's response was, but it must have been positive, because the next year he helped Halley publish his first scientific report, or 'paper'... *A Direct and Geometrical Method of finding the Aphelia, Eccentricities, and Proportions of the Primary Planets, without supposing equality in angular motion*... Newton... had demonstrated that... comets... have the same kinds of orbits (conic sections...) as the planets... Since the work of Tycho's student, Johannes Kepler, it had been known that each planet moves along a path called an ellipse... The eccentricity is a measure of how stretched out the ellipse is: an ellipse with zero eccentricity is a circle, and an ellipse with an eccentricity of one or greater is... a parabola or hyperbola. The eccentricity of the Earth's orbit is 0.017, indistinguishable to the naked eye from a circle. Mercury's orbital eccentricity, by contrast, is 0.21 – perceptibly elongated. It would, many years later, be one of Halley's triumphs to determine that comets move in elliptical paths and to determine the eccentricity of cometary orbits, one of the keys to their origin... He [also undertook] investigations into the age of the Earth... using the salinity of seawater as a kind of clock that had been ticking at the time the oceans were formed. He thought that... the ocean would reveal increasing salinity as time went on. Rivers carry salt into the oceans at a rate that Halley crudely calculated. Extrapolating back to a time when seawater was fresh, Halley found that the world is much older than the Bible implies – not 6,000 years, but at least a hundred million years... Halley's method[, however,] cannot be used to determine the exact age of the Earth because seawater is saturated with salt. But it is a... brilliant anticipation of a range of modern techniques for dating rocks... and gave heart to geologists and biologists of the next century... Halley then compared the orbital characteristics, or elements, of the comets of 1531, 1607, and 1682, and found many striking similarities... These similarities were... enough to suggest that the same comet was being seen in three different apparitions. When Halley compared the dates... he found something like a periodic return – just as Newtonian theory had promised... Halley[also] concluded that... a comet... would be perturbed by even moderately distant approaches to... giant planets[, thereby causing]... the slight differences in the orbital elements of the [three apparitions]... For millennia, comets had been the almost exclusive property of the mystics, people who considered comets as portents, symbols, wraiths – but not *things*. Halley shattered their monopoly by beating them at their own game, a game that no scientist had ever played before: prophecy. He predicted that the comet seen in... 1682 would return... in the future. And he did not hedge his bet. It would return, he stated flatly, at Christmas time in 1758 – from a particular part of the sky, with specific orbital elements. There is hardly a prophecy of the mystics that even strikes for comparable precision... In contrast to Edmond Halley's father, [Thomas] Wright's father apparently attempted to influence his course of study by burning his books... With this promising start, he taught himself surveying and navigation, became a tutor to the children of the aristocracy, turned down a professorship at the Russian Imperial Academy at St Petersburg, and began writing books on astronomy. The most extraordinary of them, called *An Original Theory of the Universe*, was just that. Published in 1750, it is the first known statement of the true nature and geometry of the Milky Way – not a road of the gods, not divine milk splashed across the heavens, not an architectural support holding up the sky, but a flat disc of stars each like the Sun, all suspended in the ocean of space... [By that] time, it was possible for a poet to describe the Milky Way as a galaxy, 'powder'd with stars'. But the idea of the Milky Way as a flattened concentration of stars in which the Sun is embedded was first proposed by Wright. He even imagined that the stars revolved about some centre of the galaxy 'as do the planets around the Sun'. While there are mystical elements in Wright's writings, and certainly not all that he proposed... has stood the test of time, his vision of the Milky Way is a landmark in the history of astronomy. The work is the more remarkable since its author had never acquired a formal education... Wright's book probably influenced the perspective of astronomers and the future of astronomy in ways that can no longer be traced, but its most significant known influence occurred because of a review that appeared... the following year... in a German magazine... One of its readers... was... a twenty-seven-year-old graduate student... Four years later, aroused by Wright's vision of the universe, but still having read only the review of his book, Kant published the *General Natural History and Theory of the Heavens*... Kant was the first person to consider the origin and evolution of the galaxy, a central topic of modern astrophysics. And he made a daring leap – he supposed that the Milky Way was one of innumerable other galaxies, each filled with stars and, it may be, planets and life, a cosmic perspective not fully demonstrated until the 1920s. Wright had reached for such a vision, but had not grasped it... There are many other delights to be gathered from the pages of the *Theory of the Heavens*, including the first statement that the solar system had been formed from a cloud of diffuse interstellar matter... [Kant] imagined that, unlike the planets, the comets formed at all inclinations, a situation he described as 'lawless freedom'. 'Hence,' he said, 'the comets will come to us without restriction from all quarters.' ...The triumphant return of Halley's Comet in 1758 powerfully supported, in the minds of people all over the world, the Newtonian view that we live in a clockwork universe. In the predictable motion of the planets, and in the periodic apparitions of Comet Halley... many people saw the hand of God... In the time of the American and French revolutions, optimistically proclaimed The Age of Reason, the regular motions of the comets represented a continuing reminder of the gradual emergence of the human species from rank superstition, while at the same time the majesty and elegance of a Divine Purpose was considered evident in every cometary orbit. As a large sample of comets was examined, however, some odd idiosyncrasies, and a disquieting departure from Newtonian regularity, were uncovered. A class of short-period comets was found. They circuit the Sun once every few

years... Comet Encke, discovered in 1786, comes closer to the Sun than does the innermost planet, Mercury... In 1819, J. F. Encke was studying the repeated returns of the comet that... [has a period of] only 3.3 years... Encke found, to his considerable surprise, that in every perihelion passage the comet was arriving a couple of hours early – even after perturbations by Jupiter and the other planets were properly taken into account. Here was a substantial mystery, which Encke was destined never to solve. It put the new astronomy in an awkward position: comets had been touted as the proof of a precise and universal law of gravitation, but at least one comet chose not to play along... The phrase ‘defying the laws of gravity’ goes back to these times. Most scientists believed that Newtonian gravitation was valid, but that here some other, additional force was at play. But what? ...There was something chaotic, slightly unsettling about the motions of comets... But by and large, comets were considered well-understood... [In addition, the] subject was considered respectable and mature. Nevertheless, the central fact about comets – their composition, and the nature of the spectacular variations in the appearance of comets – was at best only dimly glimpsed. In reading the literature of the time, we are struck by how rarely it was even acknowledged that these were important matters awaiting future discovery... An elliptical cometary orbit has a certain size. Its near point to the Sun is called its perihelion, and its far point its aphelion. The distance from perihelion to aphelion... is the major axis of the ellipse, and half the major axis is called the semi-major axis... Comets with small semi-major axes never leave the planetary part of the solar system, and comprise the kingdom of short-period comets. Such comets are tightly bound to the Sun’s gravity; it would take a very major influence to perturb their motion significantly. But comets with large semi-major axes spend most of their time far beyond the region of the planets, and less than once in a human lifetime do they make a brief foray into the inner solar system... Comet Kohoutek, which passed by the Earth in 1973... will not return for another ten million years... Such long-period comets are much more loosely bound to the Sun, and are more easily perturbed... The short-term comets tend to orbit the Sun in the same plane as the planets... They also tend to go around the Sun in the same direction as the other planets. The long-period comets, on the other hand, show a chaotic mix of every orbital inclination, and are as likely to be going around the Sun clockwise as counter-clockwise. Newton thought that the chaos of the long-period comets was to be expected in a universe in which only gravity was calling the shots, while the orderly regularity of the short-period comets was a sign of divine intervention... As late as 1835, a lecturer at The Royal Institute was able to conclude that the orbital inclination and eccentricity of comets ‘does not depend upon physical laws, but upon the will of the Creator’. However... [Pierre] Laplace showed that the orbital characteristics of long-period comets could be transformed into those of short-period comets during gravitational capture by Jupiter, and religious opinion changed... Laplace once imagined the Sun... [as being] surrounded by a vast population of randomly moving interstellar comets. Some would... be attracted by [the Sun’s] gravity, and... fall into the inner solar system... Laplace had also calculated that the short-period comets were being destroyed – by gravitational ejection from the solar system... or... by running into a planet now and then... If there were a vast cloud of interstellar comets, then the population of short-term comets could be resupplied by the cascade from interstellar comet to long-period comet to short-period comet... By the late nineteenth century, Laplace’s concept of a cloud of interstellar comets had been rejected... But if the Sun is not sweeping up interstellar comets, what resupplies those comets in the inner solar system that are being destroyed? There are only two possibilities: either comets are being made today somewhere in the solar system, or there is a vast repository of hidden comets which supplies a steady trickle of samples. All suggestions about how comets might be manufactured lately, in anything like sufficient numbers, have failed. That leaves only the possibility that the comets are sequestered. If they were stored nearby, we would have some sign of them. It follows that they must be a great distance from the Earth (and the Sun)... That might account for the nearly random orbital inclinations of the long-period comets; we can imagine them as decoupled from whatever influence confines the planets and the short-period comets to the ecliptic plane... Among... contributions... [to astronomy by] the dean of the... [University of Leiden in the Netherlands] are the first correct estimate of the distance of the Sun from the centre of the Milky Way, the first use of radio astronomy to map the spiral structure of the Milky Way, and the discovery of massive episodic explosions at the hub of the Milky Way – which may indicate the presence of a vast black hole at the exact centre of our galaxy... [S]hortly after the end of... [WW2 the dean] proposed the existence of a distant cloud of comets loosely bound to the Sun... He found a smattering of long-period comets with semi-major axes of a few thousand... astronomical [units (AU) – the]... semi-major axis of the Earth’s orbit is... one AU [–] ...and even a few tens of thousands of AU. These are already immense distances from the Sun, hundreds of times further away than Pluto is. But the bulk of the comets... [that he] studied... seemed to be clustered in the vicinity of 100,000 AU... [The dean] proposed that a vast cloud of unseen comets surrounds the Sun at immense distances, and that all the comets we see are the leakage from that distant assemblage. Most of these comets are on nearly circular orbits with negligible eccentricity... But, occasionally, a cometary nucleus leaves its fellows and plunges into the inner solar system, where it may come close enough to the Sun for us to designate it as a long-period comet; or else, it might make a close pass by one or more of the major planets and have its orbit progressively altered, so that eventually we describe it as a short-period comet. But what induces this occasional comet, weakly held by the Sun’s gravity, to enter the inner solar system? [The dean] calculated that the Sun, in its motion about the centre of the Milky Way galaxy, would sometimes come close enough to other stars to make a kind of gravitational flurry in the comet cloud – spilling numbers of them in all directions, including into the vicinity of the Sun... No single gravitational impulse from a passing star causes the comets to flutter about. Rather, the accumulation of a few dozen close stellar passages has produced a jittery population of faster moving comets, and the latest stellar encounter provides the small increment needed to drive some of them towards the Sun or out into the interstellar medium. It’s the straw that breaks the camel’s back... In addition to nearby stars, we also know today that large clouds of interstellar molecules – many of them organic – exist in the vicinity of the Sun, and the solar system should plough through a few of them an eon. Each time this happens, there will be an additional gravitational stirring within the circumsolar cometary halo... Like everything else of which we have evidence, comets are born, live for a time, and then die – or at least disappear... Each time the comet passes through the inner solar system, it runs a gauntlet of risks. Eventually the odds catch up... Typically, the amount of water ice that disappears in a single perihelion passage is a few metres... Each time the comet passes by the Sun, it shrinks. Of course, the comet is not pure ice, but an intimate mix of ice and dust. Huge quantities of dust are blown off... and dust is also lifted more sedately by evaporating ice... until the comet is altogether gone, and nothing is left but a powdery contribution to the zodiacal cloud... [M]eteors are the debris and sometimes the shrouds of dead and dying comets... [Sometimes] not all... of the dust... [is] carried away by the evaporating ice... The next time the comet approaches the Sun, the dust serves as an insulation for the underlying icy dirt. It is now harder for it to heat up. And if it does heat up, it is harder for the underlying ice to escape... After a number of perihelion passages, so large a lag deposit may be created that no further ice can be lost to space. No longer does the comet form a coma or a tail. It shuts down... becoming just another small, dark lump of matter in the inner solar system... indistinguishable from asteroids... Other comets collide with something in their path, [either transmogrifying] themselves into a different world, or [setting] out for the interstellar void... Tewfik’s Comet (1882) came fairly near to hitting the Sun; it is called... a sungrazer. It was discovered only when near the Sun during a total solar eclipse. Before perihelion passage, it showed a single nucleus. Afterwards, as it headed out past the planets, it revealed itself to have split into four separate nuclei, which gradually drew away from one another. The Sun tugs on the near side of the comet a little more strongly than on the far side, and for a very fragile structure and a close passage this might be enough to break it into two or more pieces. The computed periods for the return of these... four fragments – each of considerable size – ...are all between 500 and 900 years in the future... [P]ouring out of the same small region of the sky and heading for the Sun... but separated by intervals of about a century... they might be fragments of a still larger ancestral comet that, in another age, came too close to the Sun and was [also] torn apart by solar gravity. The closer a comet passes to the Sun, the stronger is this disruptive tidal force. Comet Ikeya-Seki 1965 VIII was... a... sungrazer, but did not fragment. The Great Comet of December 1680... was also a sungrazer, passing within 200,000 kilometres of the Sun’s surface – closer than the Moon is to the Earth. It too, did not split during perihelion

passage. On the other hand, Comet West 1976 VI, despite coming no closer than thirty million kilometres from the sun, split into four fragments which slowly receded from each other at more than their mutual escape velocity. Thus, the gravitational tides of the sun cannot be the sole cause of the splitting. Except for the sungrazers, we still do not know why comets split... Eighty percent of comets that split do so when they are far from the Sun in the vicinity of the asteroid belt... Such splitting is probably due to the vapourization of exotic ices... [Comets move] *very slowly when... far from the Sun and much more quickly when... close to the Sun...* Occasionally, comets approach the Sun, are lost in its glare, and are never seen again... However, through an entirely chance discovery, we can now be sure that comets do sometimes hit the Sun... All told, about ten tons of interplanetary particles spiral into the Sun every second – 300 million tons a year... Like the Sun, the moons and planets collect their share of cometary impacts... [– although the] Sun, being made of gas, can retain no impact craters... On Mars... there are craters with splash marks around them, indicating the presence of sub-surface water ice that has been momentarily liquefied in the collision... The impact of a large comet might even bring water or an atmosphere to worlds that are almost airless... They remind us of a time... when the solar system was made of nothing but comets and their rocky equivalents, hundreds of trillions of them or more, swarms of bodies merging and smashing, careening from one district of the solar system to another, a whirlwind of small worlds that eventually led, after the impetuosities of youth had subsided, to the present staid machinery of the solar system... After the Earth was fully formed, more cosmic matter, chiefly from comets, glued itself to the Earth's surface... The comets... are a part of our planet and ourselves... We are surrounded by cosmic particles in our everyday life. We eat them and breathe them. And we are made of them. Some of these extraterrestrial atoms are incorporated into sperm and egg cells, and are carried down to future human generations... Life on our planet is built entirely around a handful of molecular types, the most important of which are the nucleic acids and the proteins. If we could understand the large-scale production of these molecules on the early Earth, we would have made significant progress towards understanding the origin of life. The conventional scientific wisdom today... is that the key molecular building blocks were spontaneously formed on the early Earth in obedience to well-established laws of physics and chemistry. Molecules in the hydrogen-rich early atmosphere were broken apart by ultraviolet light from the Sun, from lightning, or even from the shock waves produced when meteors entered the atmosphere at high speed. The fragments are known spontaneously to recombine... to form the stuff of life. It happens in the laboratory... Paradoxically, cyanides, the deadly poisons that produced the great comet scare of 1910... seem to be an essential intermediary in the origin of life... So could comets have contributed to the origin of life – not by carrying life to the Earth, but by conveying the building blocks out of which life arose? ...The close-up examination of comets from space [would be] the fulfilment of an astronomer's dream, because we are still painfully ignorant about the most fundamental aspects of comets... It seems likely that we are on the verge of a revolution in our understanding of the nature of comets. But if the past history of space exploration is any guide, the most interesting findings will provide answers to questions we have not yet asked. - COMET

ASTRONOMERS... have used the Hubble space telescope to observe a cosmic equivalent of a giant taxi rank. They glimpsed a disc containing at least 300 million frozen, comet-size bodies just beyond Neptune and stretching for more than 60 billion kilometres. The most crowded region of the solar system, it appears to be the long-theorised Kuiper Belt, filled with icy chunks that are sometimes kicked out of orbit by the gravity of Uranus, Neptune, Saturn or Jupiter, and sent hurtling towards the sun in orbits lasting 20 years or less. Comet Shoemaker-Levy, which bombarded Jupiter so spectacularly in 1994, is one of these short-period comets. Long-period comets like Halley's come from a belt called the Oort Cloud, much further away. If [the astronomers are] right, the solar system is many times bigger than anyone knew – and there are enough comets-in-waiting to put on sky shows like the Jupiter pelting until long after the sun flickers out.

...When[a] supernova... died in a titanic cosmic explosion 10 billion years ago, the universe was in its infancy. Now the brilliant flash from this dying star is providing more evidence that mysterious “repulsive dark energy” is accelerating the expansion of the cosmos. The supernova, which is the furthest exploding star ever seen from Earth, was discovered by the Hubble Space Telescope, launched in 1990... [A] former director of the Auckland Observatory and Stardome Planetarium, who now works at the Hubble Space Telescope Science Institute in the U[S], said the discovery of the supernova was like opening a new door in... the cosmos... Astronomers involved in the discovery... say the latest findings put “a stake through the heart” of other theories. One of those was that dust in the universe caused objects to appear brighter or dimmer... But... the only thing scientists had successfully done with dark energy was to give it a name. It may take decades of further study to understand it.

...EINSTEIN called it the biggest blunder of his life. But now astronomers believe the great physicist may have been right when he said the universe was pervaded by a mysterious force that acted against the effects of gravity. Researchers have discovered that a group of distant... supernovae are flying apart at a speed which cannot be explained by present cosmological theories. The team of British and American astronomers says this shows that empty space must be filled by a force that counteracts gravity, pushing objects away from each other. If they are right, the group will have found the holy grail of modern physics: anti-gravity... Anti-gravity was proposed by Einstein after 1910 while working on his ideas about relativity. At that time, it was thought... that stars and galaxies simply hung in space, but Einstein realised their gravitational fields would pull them together. The universe would then collapse on itself. So he added a fudge factor to his equations and called it the cosmological constant or lambda. This represented a... repulsive force which would stop the universe from imploding – although Einstein had no evidence for its existence. A few years later, astronomers discovered that galaxies were flying apart, a consequence – we now know – of the Big Bang 15 billion years ago... But even when he was in apparent error, Einstein may still have had a unique insight into the cosmos. As scientists studied the universe's birth, they realised its initial constituents must have been very finely balanced to produce a cosmos filled with stars and galaxies that we see today. “Too much mass, and the universe would have simply collapsed shortly after the Big Bang,” said... the British National Space Centre. “Too little, and it would have dissipated in a spray of sub-atomic particles.” But no matter how hard astronomers look, they cannot see the matter they need to balance the universe's books. Galaxies are simply not heavy enough. Some scientists have begun to suspect this “missing mass” may be locked up as an invisible form of energy that pervades space. This is vacuum energy, the exact equivalent of Einstein's lambda – though detecting that force has proved extraordinarily difficult. Now, using the Hubble space telescope and ground-based observatories... they have begun a detailed analysis of distant supernovae to discover if the lambda force exists... The discovery would not have immediate practical consequences, because the lambda force must be extremely weak. “It would have no effect on our solar system, or even our galaxy, and would only have a large-scale effect on clusters of galaxies... However, a repulsive force would have an impact on our universe. It would cause the universe to fly apart at faster and faster speeds as stars died out and the cosmos got ever colder. The end would be quicker than we ever thought – though not for the [next] few billion years.”

...There should be antimatter galaxies filled with antimatter worlds where antimatter people live in antihomes, but... scientists can find no antitrace of any of them... Theory says there should be no difference between antimatter and matter except for the fact that their atoms are made with the electric properties reversed... But no matter where they look, scientists cannot detect a single whiff of the stuff. For some reason, our universe seems to be entirely constructed out of normal matter, even though theory says antimatter and matter should have been created in exactly equal amounts in the Big Bang... [Because they've failed to detect antimatter in nature, scientists] are preparing to build the world's first antimatter factory. In a few months, they will start churning out atoms of antihydrogen... “Our antimatter will be created at a temperature of about ten billion billion deg C. That's much hotter than the Sun's surface... Then it will be cooled to one degree above absolute zero...” Having created and harvested the antimatter atoms, scientists will then face the problem of containing them. An atom of antimatter and an atom of normal matter would destroy each other in bursts of pure energy if one touched the other... The aim is to understand some of the universe's most baffling mysteries, but the project could also lead to the development of the perfect fuel. An estimated 20kg of antimatter could power a spaceship to boldly go across the

galaxy[. Some] scientists... warn that antimatter could be used to make bombs more devastating than the most powerful nuclear device... [In related news,] experiments at CERN... will... re-create[the] Big Bang by colliding lead atoms to show[the] state of matter when... the... Universe began...

[An] experiment measuring radiation at Antarctica left over from [the Big Bang has revealed the universe's] origins... and show[ed that the] geometry of space is "flat"... [By the way, a new theory states] that there are regions of[the] universe where time runs backwards...

SCIENTISTS have recorded the music of creation in an experiment using the astronomical equivalent of a time machine to go back to the origin of the Universe. A telescope suspended from a high-altitude balloon circling the South Pole has detected harmonic "notes," which rang out like a bell in the first fractions of a second after the Big Bang. Cosmologists believe these minute ripples of sound became the "seeds" of matter... "Not only are we finding out the right notes of the Universe, we're finding what key it's in," says... the British team leader of the international Boomerang project to investigate the cosmic background radiation – known to be the "echo" of the Big Bang... The Boomerang experiment[, which] involves 36 scientists... is important because if the background microwave radiation was perfectly "smooth" and unperturbed, then it would be difficult for existing cosmological theories to explain how matter could coalesce under the influence of gravity into larger structures... The findings are doubly important because they relate to the first fractions of a second after the Big Bang, when the Universe expanded from a minute point in space to something billions of times bigger, the so-called inflationary period.

...A spacecraft that looks a bit like a foil-covered umbrella aims to take the "ultimate baby picture"... NASA's \$[US]145 million... Microwave Anisotropy Probe... will swing past the Moon on its way to an orbit around a point 1.6 million km from Earth away from the Sun. From this vantage point, [the probe] will take note of the tiniest fluctuations in temperature... searching for what remains of the explosion that many astronomers believe started the universe... Astronomers have predicted specific scenarios for different theories of the birth of the universe. [The probe]'s findings will capture the actual scenario, and this will be matched with the most likely theoretical version.

...Astronomers say they are mystified by an enormous burst of gamma-ray energy from the far reaches of the universe... [T]he... explosion... far eclipsed a supernova... and was second only to the universe-creating Big Bang in energy... "For about one or two seconds, this burst... [in] a region about 100 miles across... was as luminous as all the rest of the entire universe... Most of the theoretical models proposed to explain these bursts cannot explain this much energy," said... a professor at the California Institute of Technology who worked on the report.

...Astronomers in California... have spotted the oldest and most distant supernova yet seen. The exploding star, dubbed Albinoni, is 18 billion light years away... "This is a very rare type of supernova....," said[the] team leader... They only explode a couple of times in a millennium.

...On average, a star blows up in our galaxy every several decades. But wouldn't you know it, there hasn't been a[local] supernova since 1604. Gravity wave astronomers are particularly keen for a nearby world to go up in smoke because they are in the embarrassing position of having some pretty hot instruments but nothing to measure. There are three trained on the heavens almost full-time waiting for one of these long overdue supernovas and the gravity waves they hope it will produce. Predicted by Einstein, gravity waves are literally ripples in the fabric of space and time. A sufficiently violent cosmic ruskus – like a bursting star – will shake things up so much waves of gravity will propagate out through the universe. Most physicists believe these ghostly vibrations exist although, so far not one has been found. The problem is they are incredibly weak. Detecting one involves measuring ridiculously small changes in length. Today's generation of detectors will register only the strongest swells. Hence the eagerness for a nearby supernova. In a new book, *Ripples on a Cosmic Sea*, [a]University of Western A[US physicist]... outlines in great detail how important it is to find these elusive undulations. Bold new frontiers, a chance to shed a little more light on our cosmic roots and all that. The physicist doesn't just want to detect them he wants to open up a whole new discipline – gravity wave astronomy. The dream is for gravity telescopes to be alongside their optical and radio cousins... Who knows what secrets such a new window on the heavens will reveal. One of the targets will be black holes. It may come as a surprise but, despite their notoriety, it's not known whether these theoretically predicted objects really exist. No one has actually seen one. (They're black after all.) But if a couple of them collided, the commotion would create a profusion of gravity waves. Find these and you've found indisputable evidence these galactic weirdos are indeed real. Finding funding for this quest, however, has been almost as elusive as the waves themselves. But at last a decade of badgering and begging has paid off. A consortium of would-be cosmic surfers has just been granted the best part of \$3 million to get the project off the ground... If the money keeps flowing, and the total cost is probably going to be around \$10 million, the facility... just north of Perth... should come on line early next century. With a bit of luck the Department of Cosmic Events may be about to take pity on us. The black holes could be soon coming to town for their first show ever.

...['Peering deeply into a spot seen from the Earth as a single blur of light, the Hubble Space Telescope has discovered either a black hole in the Earth's galaxy or an equal rarity: thousands of stars rushing towards the core of a globular cluster. "Stars in globular clusters are almost as old as the universe. If any globular cluster in our galaxy is suspected to have a black hole, M15 is the best candidate," said a University of California at Santa Cruz astronomer'...

'Our modern quest to understand gravity, and ultimately black holes, was born on Christmas Day, 1642, at Woolsthorpe Manor. But it was a shaky start. The great Isaac Newton was premature and only just survived his first day of life. Showing little promise as a farmer, the young Newton was sent up to Cambridge University. As an academic, Newton would formulate laws of physics which form the basis of modern science. Fate played its part. In 1665 the plague swept across England. Cambridge was closed to help contain the spread of the contagion. Newton was forced to flee. He sought refuge back at Woolsthorpe Manor. Over the next 18 months he was to discover the mathematics of Calculus, to formulate laws for the motion of the planets, and to unravel the spectral nature of light. And one day a falling apple interrupted his thoughts and led him to ponder gravity itself. Newton reasoned that all matter in the Universe has gravity; that it's a force that reaches out from one body to another and pulls everything inwards. The more mass an object has, the stronger this inwards pull. The first person to combine this notion with knowledge that the speed of light was infinite was John Mitchell. As rector of Thornhill Church in Yorkshire, and one of the 18th century's great forgotten scientists, Mitchell took Newton's view of gravity to its ultimate, dark conclusion. Mitchell's giant leap was to imagine a ray of light leaving a star in the same way we think today of a rocket leaving a planet. Mitchell knew nothing about rockets, but he did know that in theory a massive star could have so much gravity that it would pull back into its clutches rays of light. "John then went on to say that for that reason maybe the most massive object in the Universe might be invisible to us." Mitchell had explained how gravity could turn a star black, but not how it could turn it onto a hole. When our Sun runs out of nuclear fuel, its own gravity will crush it into a tiny ball the size of Earth – but a hundred thousand times more dense. Yet our Sun has too little mass, and therefore too little gravity, to become a black hole. However, when a giant star switches off, it goes with a bang. While we see the outward explosion as a supernova, this masks the implosion going on inside. The core has been given a gravity bearhug so extreme that all the atoms have been squeezed into a ball of superdense, subatomic particles called neutrons. It has become a neutron star – a mere 20km or so in diameter. "We know that there are neutron stars which are just a little bit heavier. And the question is: what do you have beyond that? We believe it's black holes." Theory suggests that when a neutron star is more than three times as heavy as our Sun even the neutrons cannot resist gravity. The collapse is irrevocable. The density of mass becomes so great in the centre that gravity overwhelms space itself, distorting it so horribly that it, and time with it, begins to wrench off from the outside Universe. A darkness forms at the heart of the collapsing star and moves relentlessly outwards as the star's brilliance is sucked in. As the star dies a black hole is born. Speculation that tamed black holes may provide a way of cheating the laws of physics have become a hallmark of science fiction. One physicist likes to speculate on what would happen if you joined two black holes together to make a wormhole – a continuous tube through hyperspace. Whereas a black hole is a one-way street with a deadend at the singularity, a wormhole – if we can develop the technology to tame the ferocious forces at work (the tunnel would be prone to collapse as soon as a traveller attempted to pass through it) – could be a freeway to the stars. "It seems to me that the scientific evidence is that this is not going to happen. It's just not possible," says a professor from Oxford University, who pushes the mathematics of black holes in a different direction. He's formulated a way to extract enormous quantities of energy

from the way that black holes spin at the same time as sending enormous quantities of garbage into oblivion. His energy-extraction process would require building a power station at a safe distance around the spinning hole. But there is a long way to go before observational science catches up with the wider speculations of black hole theory. Seeing them is still beyond us – although astronomers are virtually certain that hidden behind the dust in the centre of our own Milky Way galaxy there is a black hole weighing three million times the mass of our Sun. We will never be able to appreciate the full majesty of the super-massive black hole from Earth. It is one of the great cosmological contradictions that the larger the black hole, the weaker the gravitational forces near the event-horizon. This is where Einstein's laws fail; this is where the laws of quantum mechanics fail. "What really happens is as unknown as what happened before the Big Bang. It's the other side of that story." Everyone has trouble coming to terms with black holes. Just how a black hole can manifest itself so powerfully in the emptiness of space is something that weighs heavily on the mind of a professor who now holds Newton's old job at Cambridge University.'

... 'the world's best-known physicist (r:p947, ln4), now 55, who impressed his peers with a revolutionary 1974 paper on miniature black holes, and also impressed the rest of the world in 1988 with his lucid account of the mysteries of the universe, *A Brief History of Time*, and has outlived early predictions of imminent death due to amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease), which he has had since his 20s', says the] **universe may have started as no bigger than a pea... The... wheelchair-bound mathematician... believes the pea-like universe only existed for a fraction of a second before the big bang. The new theory, called Open Inflation, also postulates that the universe will expand forever to infinity, explains how matter was created and resolves Einstein's equations of gravity...** [His co-author] **and fellow Cambridge mathematical physicist...** [admitted that] **the pair had not yet worked out all the predictions in detail but said the theory had "no obvious flaw."** ...[the co-author] **told the *Sunday Times*... he believed the theory could be accepted by the scientific community. "It's the best answer anyone has come up with so far for how the universe began,"...** The physicists formed their theory by mentally juggling the laws of physics rather than direct observation...

To some he was a towering intellect who dominated the rarefied atmosphere of astronomy for a quarter of a century. To others he was a stubborn iconoclast who consistently chose the wrong scientific shibboleths to shake. Professor Sir Fred Hoyle [- who]... resigned from Cambridge in 1972 and... [has d]ied aged 86[-] ...will be remembered for his pioneering work in cosmology, his books on science fiction and his support of radical and highly speculative theories of how the Earth is being bombarded by microbes from outer space, causing, among other things, outbreaks of flu... and Aids. Hoyle was the original voice of popular science with his BBC radio broadcasts of more than 50 years ago, where he coined the term "Big Bang" to describe the idea that the universe was created in a massive explosion. The catchy alliteration was meant to be tongue-in-cheek – he did not believe in the Big Bang – but the name stuck.

...we need to keep in mind that when the universe came into being it wasn't just matter that was created, but time and space. In this sense, to ask what is beyond the universe is meaningless... [The a]stronomer... of Auckland's Stardome Observatory, says the furthest galaxies that we can observe seem to be receding from us at almost the speed of light. We cannot see further than them, as the light has not had time to reach us. The universe may be infinite, or it may end just outside this light horizon. We cannot tell... Such questions have been asked by philosophers and scientists for thousands of years. ■ Se[veral]... moonstruck travellers criss cross the globe just to capture a couple of minutes of magic – that special moment of "totality" when day turns into instant night and the moon blocks out the sun... [One e]clipse veteran... certainly has no lack of dedication. In 1984, he flew specially to Gabon to catch one total eclipse that lasted just three quarters of a second.

...It was the longest lunar eclipse anyone on the planet will ever see. When the moon disappeared from sight from 1.02 this morning it hid behind the Earth's shadow until 2.49 am – a phenomenon which will be unmatched for 1000 years. Around N[Z], thousands had watched as the moon... slowly slid from sight... While cloud cover in Auckland made the eclipse difficult to see through the naked eye, live images from... the Auckland Observatory... telescope were available to all on a big screen inside... the observatory... Images from Dunedin, and from A[US]... were shown on the screen in the building... At the observatory, one gazer... seemed to sum it up. "This is a unique moment – it just opens your eyes to how big the universe really is." ● Th[e 'Universe is contracting due to the gravitational pull of a dense phenomenon known as cosmic string, called the Attractor']...

A team of A[US]n and British astronomers is less than a year away from unmasking the "Great Attractor", a mysterious object sucking thousands of galaxies including our own towards a point in the southern sky. It is hidden from direct view by the dense cloud of stars that form the heart of our galaxy... It is less than 20 years since astronomers became aware of the presence of the Great Attractor... As astronomers painstakingly built up models of the distribution of the visible universe over the past two decades, they discovered that galaxies not only clumped together, but the clumps tended to line up into filaments or rivers of galaxies hundreds of millions of light years long. In between these filaments are areas so empty they are termed by some cosmologists as the "Great Voids." The voids are also being studied by... scanner to determine if they are really as empty as they seem, or whether, in fact, they hide some of the 90[%] of missing dark matter whose existence is deduced from the strength of gravitational attractions observed in the universe. The speculation about the Great Attractor is that it is a cosmic confluence of several strings of perhaps 100,000 galaxies, all being drawn into cataclysmic collision... at about 600km a second.

...The Milky Way's gravitational pull is ripping apart two smaller neighbouring galaxies, say astronomers in A[US who]... used a new multibeam instrument of the Parkes radio telescope[, which]... usually searches for faint, hidden galaxies that cannot be found any other way. The image of galactic brutality created with this instrument settled a 25-year controversy over the origins of the so-called Magellanic Stream, as the river of hydrogen gas flowing from the two little galaxies is called.

...A[US]n scientists say... recent explorations of PNG's east coast[have] discovered bacteria living in 15-million-year-old rock, as well as the beginnings of a new ocean. The live bacteria... found nearly 1km under the earth's crust... may help to unlock secrets to the origin of life...

Nasa scientists will soon be poring over rock samples from[NZ] hot springs to prove whether life existed on Mars. Fossilised microbes found in rock deposits in Northland may be identical to those from Mars, scientists believe... Nasa is interested in [NZ] samples because this country has one of the best examples of extreme environments captured in rocks of many ages. This is because of the huge number of volcano sites here. "We can look at how the rocks were crystallised through time and each sinter [a hot spring deposit made of silica] captures part of the preservation story... Nasa's space mission is aimed at visiting hot springs formed on the flanks of Mars volcanoes to see if microbes similar to those found in [NZ] were captured in deposits there," said... [an] Auckland University geologist... Nasa scientists received global attention when they announced they had discovered signs of ancient bacterial life on a potato-sized... fragment of Mars rock...

Will the Martians alter our view of God? ...A flurry of excitement surrounded the... announcement that scientists had found evidence of life in a meteorite. One of the first questions that followed... was: "Will this change anything about our view of God?" The initial excitement has subsided, but the question remains... Of course none of this can change God. It can only change the way in which we think about God... For several centuries the early Christian thinkers spent a considerable time defining the nature of Christ. In doing this they also ended up defining the nature of God. In effect, though the Church will steadfastly deny it, they drew boundaries around God and started to pencil in the arms and legs and colour the features... They produced a working model, "God in our own image,"... "God we can understand." ...The ancient wisdom was to prohibit images of God. This meant more than just refraining from carvings or paintings of God; it meant prohibiting trying to define God. It meant resisting the temptation to say that "God is like this"... or... "God is like that." ...One of the interesting facts about the life of Jesus is that he spent no time talking about the nature of God... This might provide the hint as to how important Christ thought [the subject] was – unimportant... knowledge[, however, should] make us more, not less religious. "We can... look outwards, be aware that we are simply a part of that which can be called God..."

...the Melbourne-based... priest and historian who has published a number of books on the... contemporary world, comes to a similar conclusion... though via a different route... “Our biggest problem as late 20th-century people is that we have become so anthropocentric, so focused on ourselves... Many religious people today are more disciples of Freud and Jung than of Jesus. From the devotees of the new age across the spectrum to fundamentalists of all sorts, the religious focus of today is centred on the self, on personal salvation. It takes something like the discovery of new life forms elsewhere to remind us that the transcendent is also out there in the cosmos, that... God’s reality is not exhausted by us...” ...People had to believe that Jesus was “the Son of God,” though what this could possibly mean in reality was utterly incomprehensible. The great problem in using analogies is that after a while people forget that they are using an analogy and the analogy becomes the truth in itself... [□ Nasa’s] space probe Galileo will have its closest encounter with any of Jupiter’s moons this week when it swings within 260km of... Ganymede – the largest moon in the solar system – ...to take three-dimensional pictures of its icy surface.

...New information sent back by... Galileo, which flew within 155,000km of Jupiter’s largest moon last month... indicates there may be water on one of Jupiter’s moons, heightening the possibility that it could support a primitive life form. Scientists said yesterday that they think “warm ice” or even liquid water may have existed and perhaps still exists beneath the moon Europa’s cracked ice crust. - 1996

The U[S] space probe Galileo may have detected microscopic life forms on the surfaces of two of Jupiter’s moons, the British weekly *New Scientist* says... [A] compound including the carbon and nitrogen atoms is of interest, as complex life substances can be formed from such a mix... Galileo was launched in 1989 and has already taken in four of Jupiter’s 16 moons. On the Europa moon, Galileo detected volcanoes and glaciers, reinforcing the theory that microscopic life may exist[there, or that the moon]... may once have harboured primitive life forms. “Almost wherever we look in the solar system today with our space craft it’s almost like going and looking at different restaurants. It seems that there are many places where there’s an interesting kind of organic soup on the menu...” ...[Incidentally, two] new moons named U1 and U2 have been discovered orbiting Uranus, bringing the planet’s total to 17... [B]oth are fairly small – just 80km and 160km in diameter, respectively.

...[‘New data from the Lunar Prospector spacecraft support the theory that the Moon was ripped away from the Earth following a massive interplanetary collision. The data shows that the lunar core contains less than 4% of the Moon’s total mass, a very small ratio compared with Earth, which has about 30% of its mass in its iron core. The theory has been floated since the 1960s, when scientists first began collecting information about Earth’s nearest neighbour.’]

...Frustrated by man-made noise drowning out their efforts to tune in to the universe from radio telescopes on Earth, astronomers are staking out craters on the moon for their observations... Plans to develop the moon were a featured topic last week at the International Astronomical Union’s general assembly, a triennial gathering of... astronomers which closed at the weekend... [E]xperts... outlined a series of parallel projects to send gradually more complex missions to the moon’s surface, culminating in an unmanned radio astronomy outpost Japan hopes to establish by... 2009.

...Nasa has found that payloads can be put into space at a certain chaotic low earth orbit. Two years later the payload reaches the moon... [I]f there is ever a moon colony that needed a regular supply of resources like water or oxygen, this would be the way to deliver it with huge savings in fuel... THE young discipline of chaos theory has become the overhyped buzzword on the lips of everyone from stock market analysts to anarchists. But here’s a paradox... The world is predictable, but also unfathomably complex... The orbits and gravitational forces that keep the planets in their path are well-known and stable enough for sailors to use for navigation for centuries. But it is impossible to measure all the forces with complete accuracy. The small errors astronomers cannot avoid or allow for, escalate inexorably. After a long enough time span, say a billion years, assuming nothing catastrophic happens, the location of the planets in our solar system is impossible to predict... “There are rules but we can’t follow the chain of causality from initial conditions to the future in a sufficiently repeatable way. If those initial conditions are slightly different, the future is very different... It’s not a problem about the universe, it’s a problem for human prediction of the universe... We know there are rules but we accept that we cannot predict what will happen to us when we go out the front door... The first thing chaos theory did for weather prediction was give forecasters an excuse for why they were wrong... after four days...” ...The mathematics behind chaos theory reaches the oddest areas. Designers are at work on pacemakers that can measure the inherently chaotic pattern of the human heartbeat. The hope is... they will use less electricity to keep the heart beating regularly and so last much longer without maintenance. A Japanese dishwasher uses two... spray heads that rotate chaotically. It turns out that this is better than conventional dishwashers at dislodging dirt from dishes. American defence contractors have applied chaos theory to the apparently random pattern of noisy air conditioners. The uneven whining drowned out the conversations that the police and intelligence agencies wanted to bug. With the air conditioner noise pattern analysed, sensitive conversation can now be prised from a clutter of background noise... After an hour’s conversation... the man from chaos... has talked widely about mathematics without resorting to a single formula or equation, a skill which explains his appeal to a general public taught to find maths incomprehensible... [His] lecture... at Auckland University last week... *Does God Play Dice?*, drew mostly respectful questions as well as one from a man who wanted to know where God came into the topic.

...[A ‘Nobel prize-winning American physicist comes to Auckland this month as the University of Auckland’s Robb lecturer. In 1979 the author of the major popular-science book *The First Three Minutes* shared the Nobel prize for physics with a childhood friend for their work explaining how two of the four fundamental forces of the standard model of physics were linked. Einstein devoted the last 30 years of his life to a unified field theory and failed, arguably because he was heading down the wrong track. The four fundamental forces that physicists are struggling to link into a unified theory are gravity, electromagnetism, the weak nuclear force (which is responsible for the change of neutrons and protons into each other, and radioactive processes), and the strong nuclear force (which holds quarks together inside protons and neutrons and holds atomic nuclei together). The final theory would link these forces of the standard model of physics with Einstein’s theory of general relativity. That would be the final theory, once memorably described as a mathematical theory that could be put on a T-shirt that would describe the fundamental forces that mould existence. The discovery of a final theory would not mean the end of physics or philosophy, the Texan contends. The theory of fluid flow has been well-known and proven for more than a century, he says, but scientists still have little idea why strong turbulence, such as the movement of heat from the heart of a star, behaves as it does.’]

...A recent book *The Life of the Cosmos* suggests in essence that whenever matter collapses into a black hole a new universe emerges on the “far side” – and that each new universe has slightly different physical laws... [N]ow imagine... not a single universe but an evolving population of universes whose generations are interconnected by unpassable “wormholes” passing through black holes... Then even if most universes originally were tiny and very short-lived, natural selection... is bound to occur. Selection for what? For universes that are bigger and longer-lasting, since those will produce the most black holes and effectively “out-breed” the others... It is the most ambitious “theory of everything” anybody has yet produced and not even [the author] has figured out how we might set about proving it.

...The keen-eyed Hubble Space Telescope was upgraded yesterday with an instrument so sensitive that it can spot an aircraft flying a continent away by merely tracking the motion of its landing light. The new guidance sensor, a collection of mirrors and lenses that locate a target star and point the huge telescope, replaced one that was nearing the end of its life. Nasa officials were surprised at the extent of damage[due] to the... effects of ageing in the harsh environment of space... Insulation around one compartment door had weblike cracks up to 20cm long. Some insulation was torn loose. And... one rip was about 45cm long... The insulation... [and] the underside of the solar panels... also suffered numerous hits by micrometeoroids as small as a match head... The Hubble has been in space since April 1990. [Its] programmed lifetime... is 15 years.

...[‘orbiting the globe 595km up’] the \$US3 billion [‘Hubble, 13 years in the making, is one of the most complex scientific instruments ever built. Far above the atmosphere, it has an unobstructed view into the deepest reaches of space. Its launch was to help answer the most profound scientific mysteries:

How old is the universe? How long will it last? Do other stars have Earth-like planets – or are we alone? But the unthinkable happened. A tiny fleck of paint had been missing from the tool used to measure the curvature of the primary mirror while it was being shaped. The result was a surface too flat at the edge by just 2 microns – enough to make distant stars fuzzy blobs instead of sharp points of light. To correct this, ‘Hubble was, in effect, fitted with a set of \$80m spectacles. Before the big fix, only about 15% of the available light was concentrated into the cameras. The goal was to catch 75% but it got almost 85%’]...

Scientists... using the... Hubble space telescope... have identified what might be the biggest and brightest star in the universe – 10 million times more powerful than the Sun... Despite its brightness, the... celestial mammoth, named Pistol Star... cannot be seen from Earth with the naked eye because of interstellar dust between Earth and the centre of the Milky Way, where it is located... [The star was] named... after the pistol-shaped nebula... that surrounds it. The nebula is so vast that scientists... [estimate] its diameter at four light years.

...A mini-planet with a big, deep dent could be the mother of thousands of asteroids orbiting the Sun between Mars and Jupiter. Scientists say the new images made by the Hubble space telescope of the mini-planet called Vesta show for the first time a huge crater 459km wide, nearly equal to Vesta’s 531km diameter... The discovery of Vesta is nothing new: German astronomer Wilhelm Olbers first spotted the extremely bright object in 1807. What is exciting astronomers is tracing the source of... some of Vesta’s likely progeny[, which] are strung out in a chaotic part of the asteroid belt where Jupiter’s pull could send them into orbits that intersect with that of Earth... About 6[%] of the meteorites that fall to Earth are composed of the same type of frozen lava as Vesta... Hubble [has also shown stars being]... born... by the thousand... as... the Antennae galaxies (so named because the long tails of new stars resemble an insect’s antennae)... [collide] 63 million light years away in the Corvus constellation... [Nasa] said the discovery would help to explain why some galaxies were spirals and others elliptical – one of the fundamental questions in astronomy.

...[‘evidence from 500 excavation sites suggests that a cataclysmic shower of giant meteors in about 2350BC destroyed the great Bronze Age civilisations in Egypt, Mesopotamia and Greece by provoking a series of natural disasters. Meteors from the same stream struck Earth with less force on a return orbit in AD500’. Further] evidence suggests a comet slammed into Earth 370 million years ago, blasting a huge crater into the sea floor and triggering 300m waves that led to the extinction of many species... The crash[, which]... happened three million years before one of the five greatest extinctions of life in Earth’s history at the end of the Devonian Period, when most organisms lived in the oceans... may[’]ve been the first of a series of comet strikes...

Giant cosmic snowballs are bombarding the upper atmosphere and then breaking up, adding water to Earth’s oceans and possibly nurturing life on the planet. [US] scientists say the snowballs are actually small comets about 12m in diameter, which appear to be streaking towards Earth in a steady stream. According to data provided by Nasa’s Polar satellite, the snowballs are no danger to people on Earth... or planes because they break up at altitudes from 965km to 24,140km... Exposure to sunlight then vapourises the fragments into vast clouds which are dispersed by winds.

...Battle over ‘cosmic snowballs’... A... fight erupted at a scientific meeting this week over a theory that the Earth is bombarded every day by thousands of comets... Some researchers at the American Geophysical Union meeting called the “small comet” theory bunk, saying it was based on instrument interference similar to “static you hear on your hi-fi... the white snow in space is no more than the black ‘snow’ on the television screen.” ...A group of scientists from the University of Arizona said there would be far more evidence... if they really existed. “Earth’s sky would sparkle like a Christmas tree, its air would hold at least 30,000 times more inert gas and its moon would be pocked with millions more bright-spot craters,”... But the theory’s main proponent... said evidence for the snowball comets, called “atmospheric holes,” was conclusive... Nasa has launched an interagency effort to independently verify that the tiny comets exist.

...After a break of 4000 years, Comet Hale-Bopp has returned... [T]he spectacular Hale-Bopp... regarded as one of the brightest comets ever... enters southern hemisphere skies later this month... [I]t... will not be back for more than 2300 years... Nasa is launching a series of sounding rockets to gauge the comet’s composition. Scientists believe it could help confirm a theory that water on Earth came from comets that hit Earth’s surface, their frozen cores melting to form oceans... [In further space news, an] “annihilation fountain” has been discovered spurting up from the centre of the Milky Way... The fountain, which may be evidence of a region of exploding stars or the winds around a black hole, is made up of the hot gas that results when bits of matter and anti-matter meet and destroy each other... Such warring particles were expected on the... galactic plain, where... our solar system [resides], but never before has a huge plume of anti-matter been detected hovering above the galaxy. To detect the fountain, scientists used data gathered by the orbiting Compton Gamma Ray Observatory, launched by Nasa in 1991.

...[‘Beyond the reach of the naked eye, black holes slurp up surrounding matter, churning columns of dust and gas trillions of kms tall erupt in newborn stars, and galaxies cannibalise their smaller neighbours. No wonder it takes more than a pretty supernova to catch astronomers’ attention these days. What is currently scaring astronomers? Well, the largest structure ever observed. More than 6.5 billion light-years away, just south of the constellation Leo, it is about 500 million light-years across and seems to be a cluster of galaxies grouped by gravitational attraction. “Gravity simply wouldn’t have had time to pull a structure together, 500 million light-years across, given the age of the universe back then,” says a spokesperson for the National Optical Astronomy Observatories. Also fascinating astronomers are two newly discovered and “clearly bizarre” planetary systems. One star, 123 light years away in the constellation Serpens, is circled by what seems to be the biggest planet ever found. The XXXL planet is at least 17 times more massive than Jupiter. “We never expected nature would make such gargantuan planets, and indeed maybe they aren’t planets at all,” said a member of the Carnegie Institution. Around another star – Gliese 876, which is only 15 light-years from Earth – astronomers found two planets whose orbits are in almost perfect harmony: one takes 30 days to make the trip and the other takes twice that long. Through mutual gravitation, the planets maintain this synchrony. Although four moons of Jupiter have resonant orbits, these are the first full-fledged planets to earn that honour.’

...‘Astronomers have found two new planets orbiting stars outside Earth’s solar system, bringing the total of known extra-solar planets to at least 17, and more could be discovered within months. The first such planets were identified in 1995. The new planets cannot be seen, but can be inferred by the gravitational pull they exert on the stars they circle. Neither is a place humans would want to call home: they are too big – one is 3.5 times the mass of Jupiter, and the other has 1.3 times Jupiter’s mass – but the scientists who found them believe the discovery of an Earth-like planet is possible.’

...‘Astronomers have found a planet the size of Jupiter close enough to be seen with the naked eye. It is the nearest planet to be found beyond our solar system. Epsilon Eridani, which frequently features in sci-fi stories, is just 10.5 light years away, and the 42nd planet identified to be orbiting a distant star.’

...‘Discussion of recent world events haven’t been drowned out, oddly enough, by the stunning discovery that Upsilon Andromedae’s inner-most planet is not alone. There are 2 others orbiting the star as well, and all 3 orbit their sun as closely as Venus, Earth and Mars orbit our own. It’s understandable that local news will get a bigger play in parochial media like Earth’s than even the biggest events elsewhere. But this news is big. At least 18 relatively nearby stars have been found to have single planets orbiting them, but Upsilon Andromedae is the first multi-planet system ever discovered (apart from ours). And although nobody has yet found planets able to support our kind of life around other stars, the odds that such planets abound – and in our own galactic neighbourhood – has now risen to near-certainty. “With the discovery of the first planetary system beyond our own,” said the head of the San Francisco State University team that shared the discovery, “we are witnessing the emergence of a new era in human exploration.”’ In related news, the] end of the universe as humans know it will occur in about 10 trillion years, scientists have been told at a meeting of the American Astronomical Society... - 1997

In the beginning was the end. That’s how it is in the postmodern, post-Newtonian, post-any-hope-of-everything-turning-out-okay universe. The Copernican clockwork proved fatally flawed: the very force which set it in motion is eroding away... and one day there will be no more days... A

thousand years ago, [w]e... would have inhabited a universe sustained by its Creator with us in mind. And even if that universe were to end, its ending would at least be apocalyptic and purposive, moving through cataclysm to a just eternity. It might not, for some of us, turn out well, but at least it would turn out. No longer. Now, the universe will not turn out but peter out... [We are] stuck in a gently decaying cosmos in which all systems – stars, planets, us – are gradually losing overall energy to the point where they can do no more work, and energy itself is moving towards... absolute zero... The Heat Death of the Universe. It's not as grand as the Revelation of St John the Divine, nor as minatory as the Day of Judgment, but it is the truth. Alas, like so many other truths of this millennium, it's a beast, whose acquaintance we might be happier not to have made.

Since it was first expressed in 1842, the Doppler effect on light from an object that is travelling away from the viewer has held true throughout all scientific tests... This effect indicates that every part of the universe is moving away from earth. Recently, though, studies of distant powerful astronomical features, such as quasars[('any class of point-like sources of light visible in large telescopes, often associated with intense radio emissions, whose spectra show large red-shifts, suggesting great remoteness and high velocities of recession; if they are indeed at such distances, they must be emitting exceptionally large amounts of energy, the nature of which is not fully understood')], have challenged the Doppler effect, causing astronomers to question whether something other than motion could sometimes cause the shift... toward the red end of the... spectrum. If the suspicion that the effect has alternate explanations is true, our entire view of the universe's activities may need to be revised. We may find ourselves in a smaller, more intimate cosmos, or we may discover that the rules of physics as we know them do not apply everywhere in quite the same way... [Soon, a]stronomers will attempt to measure the total amount of hydrogen in the universe and to detect any sources of new matter. Depending upon what they find, we will discover if the universe we live in is eternal, if it will implode on itself one day and then regenerate, or if a final disintegration into nothingness will be the cold fate of everything. - The Omni Future Almanac

People who say the Universe will *disintegrat[e] into nothingness* are commonly known as BUDDHISTS, and the Big Bang theory – which, like atheism, holds that something can *be created out of nothing* – is Buddhism in reverse. Unlike the Big Bang theory, the oscillating model of the Universe does give an explanation for what existed prior to the huge explosion (and would make long-period comet orbits easier to understand), but it doesn't take into account our limited knowledge of the Universe (r:p946, lns61-2 + p949, ln4) and, in particular, that the Universe is infinite. The Universe has to be infinite because, if it isn't, then it must (like Earth) have a boundary – on the other side of which must be something else that either is infinite in size or also has a boundary; in which case, on the other side of this must be another infinite or limited something; and so on, until we eventually come across an infinite body (even if it is filled with nothing). Some people believe that the Universe is limited, and on the other side of its boundary lies the eternal expanse of HEAVEN. However, the concept of heaven was created thousands of years ago to explain the existence of what we now call the UNIVERSE! The *many universes* theory maintains that our Universe can be bounded by one or more others, but it also suggests that somewhere exists a Universe full of cartoon characters. Logic, therefore, declares both that there is only one Universe and it is infinite. It is impossible to draw an infinite Universe, and virtually impossible to picture one mentally, but that isn't important – the numerical series is infinite even though no one will ever be able to physically prove it (or that *pi* is also infinite – computers 'have calculated the sequence to 10 million digits'; 'the world record for memorising the digits, set in 1995, is 42,195').

None of this means that a Big Bang didn't occur, or that the Universe surrounding Earth isn't oscillating, or even that Albert Einstein was completely wrong when he described the Universe as being spherical. If we unite these concepts then take them one step further, we get a model of the Universe in which multiple Big Bang-type explosions occur, but the impact of each upon the entire Universe is limited – and the limiting factor is the existence of multiple Big Bang-type explosions! The model can be constructed in a number of different ways. In the first, the Universe is completely symmetrical. Imagine the forces from a Big Bang-type explosion spreading out from a centre point in a spherical fashion. While the hypothetical sphere increases in size, 6 more identically increasing spheres – created by Big Bang-type explosions in adjacent parts of the Universe – are heading towards it at equal speeds (4 are approaching its sides at right-angles to each other, one is coming directly from above and the other from directly below). The spheres continue to expand until the edges of the first are literally touching the edges of the other 6. However, rather than crash into each other, or blend together in some way, the force of impact makes the edge of each sphere bounce back in the direction from whence it came (i.e., each sphere gradually shrinks until all of its mass is compressed into a minute space, after which it explodes and re-expands – with every trace of its former self having been destroyed prior to, or during, the explosion). This process continues indefinitely. A problem with this model is that it only explains what happens at the 6 points where a force sphere touches its neighbours. There will be areas approximately midway between these 6 points where a sphere's edge hasn't yet touched another sphere. Perhaps these areas contain vacuums that effectively absorb the force of spheres like a rubber ball until their absorption limit is reached, after which they bounce the sphere edges back in the direction from whence they came (at the same time as the spheres' other edges are doing likewise). In a second model the Universe is still completely symmetrical but, instead of having the spheres bounce off each other, as one sphere expands it fills space vacated by 6 adjacent spheres that are retracting (and each retracting sphere is surrounded by 6 expanding spheres). In other words, a sphere's force of expansion causes adjacent spheres to contract until they reach a point at which they can't contract any more, after which they explode, creating an expansion force that then causes the adjacent spheres to contract. This might help to negate the issue of *bulk viscosity* (r:p946, ln46) and the *question of entropy* (r:p951, ln1). According to these models, the Universe is infinite because it is constantly regenerating itself (r:p947, ln19) – and each regeneration is identical to the previous one. In a third model, instead of being completely symmetrical the Universe is chaotic – meaning that force spheres don't always (or ever) meet at right angles, suggesting that the edges of colliding spheres could combine to form energy eddies, which eventually create a new Big Bang-type explosion at an unpredictable location.

We may have already detected evidence that supports the *multiple Big Bang* theory (r:p948, lns53-4 + p956, ln20). If not, it might be impossible for us to measure anything that exists outside of our force sphere of the Universe, which means the theory can never be proved. However, whether or not the theory is true is irrelevant – because it has absolutely zero effect upon us. The lifetime of these spheres is measured in billions (or trillions) of years. In comparison, the recorded history of our species is only measured in thousands of years, the natural history of our closest relatives in tens of thousands of years, and that of the genus *Homo*, millions of years. The death of our Sun is of more relevance to us, but even that won't occur for 5 to 10 billion years. It is estimated that 'Earth will probably not be habitable in another 1 or 2 billion years.' If we assume that only bacteria will be able to survive during the later part of the second billion years, the planet still has the potential to continue supporting mammals for at least a billion years. The onus is on the word POTENTIAL. Probably because they're primarily concerned about what happens to *themselves* after their own death, the majority of people alive today treat the planet with so little reverence it is valid to suggest that the time when Earth becomes inhospitable to mammals will occur a lot sooner. Perhaps because their dogma holds that on an imminent day Earth will literally be destroyed then replaced by the Kingdom of God, Christians are the worst offenders!

Telling about God's arrangement for blessing his people, the apostle Peter wrote: "There are *new heavens* and a *new earth* that we are awaiting according to [God's] promise, and in these *righteousness* is to dwell." – 2 Peter 3:13; Isaiah 65:17; 66:22. What are these "new heavens"? They are not new physical heavens... The "new heavens" refer to a new rulership over the earth. The "heavens" are now made up of man-made governments... [T]hese will pass away... [and] God's heavenly government... will replace them... What, then, is the "new earth"? It is not a new planet. God made this planet Earth just right for humans to live on... The "new earth" refers to a new group or society of people.

In 1967... a professor of history at UCLA, published in *Science* 'The Historical Root of Our Ecologic Crisis', a critical analysis of the attitudes Western religion has encouraged toward our environment. Since then ecologists often point to the injunctions in Genesis that humans should attempt to 'subdue' the Earth and have 'dominion' over all the creatures of the Earth as being bad advice with disastrous results. If fact[, the]... co-author of *Deep Ecology*, spoke for many citizens when he declared in August 1984, 'Unless major changes occur... all those working in ecology movements will feel very uncomfortable sitting in the pews of most U[S] churches.'

The long literary history of cultural attitudes to nature in the West from classical antiquity... has been reviewed in... [the] magisterial opus of 1967, *Traces of the Rhodian Shore* [– which, f]rom a great mass of detail... extracts and presents for our consideration the relatively simple notion that throughout this period three themes have been persistent, although their exact form has had different forms of expression. The first... is the idea of a designed earth: one especially fitted for the human species... The second... is that of environmental influence on culture... and came to be used in interpreting the great array of human cultural and biological differences. It is not totally incompatible with the idea of a designed earth and attracted thinkers such as Thomas Malthus (1760-1834...), who emphasized not only the influence of different environments but also the limitations which the earth imposed on social development... [The] third ancient strand of thought... is the set of views that sees man empirically as the modifier of nature... The evolving western world-view has entrained the notion that nature may be seen as a set of resources to be used to satisfy human demands, and so in the course of centuries there have been many changes in the genetics of species and manifold alterations of ecological systems at all scales. [The opus] traced the descent of the basic idea from its state where God was an artisan who left the creation unfinished and man became the collaborative finisher... through its optimistic development in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries... forecasting a tide which would carry men to ever greater heights of perfectibility, to a nineteenth century pessimism when the deleterious effects of some of the efforts of the finishers became all too obvious. In more recent times, we associate this approach... with... the upsetting of a balance within nature by unwise human action.

One of the major concerns... is that we are pushing natural processes beyond their capacity to maintain an atmosphere fit for higher forms of life. Beyond a certain point, the system may 'flip' to an entirely new state which could be extremely uncomfortable for life as we know it. At present we have no idea whether we are heading for a 'flip' but, once triggered, the change to the new state could occur with extreme rapidity – in perhaps as little as a few decades... For life as we know it to continue, the balance of gases in the atmosphere must remain within certain limits. For the past 250 million years, oxygen levels in the atmosphere have remained remarkably constant. It is fortunate that they have done so. For should levels of oxygen fall to, say, 16[%], then fast metabolizing animals such as humans would be left gasping for breath. Should levels rise to 25[%], the atmosphere would support combustion more easily. The surface of the Earth would be consumed by raging fires, even the wettest tropical forest catching alight with the first lightning strike. We tend to take the Earth's atmosphere for granted. But we would be wrong to do so. As[an] atmospheric chemist... points out, the chemical composition of the Earth's atmosphere is "highly improbable", given the expectations of orthodox chemistry. It contains gases which, left to their own devices, should react with each other at such a rate that only traces of the original gases remain. For example, oxygen is found at the same time as methane, which can mop up oxygen. Certain derivatives of oxygen react with methane in the presence of sunlight to yield carbon dioxide and water. Without new sources of methane and oxygen to compensate for that used up, these gases would rapidly be exhausted. This is indeed the case with Mars and Venus... both of which have atmospheres with minimal traces of oxygen and no methane. The oxygen content of the Earth's atmosphere, by contrast, is just under 21[%] and levels of methane are... 1,000 million trillion trillion times greater than would be expected given such levels of oxygen. The explanation, argues [the atmospheric chemist], is that both the methane and oxygen are being replenished by living organisms. In effect, it is life on Earth which keeps the Earth's atmosphere in the unique state that permits life to survive... [A]ncient, microscopic organisms not only released the first molecules of free oxygen, thereby paving the way for respiring organisms such as ourselves[, t]hey also began the process of depositing [CO₂] as calcium carbonate... or chalk. Since then a host of different organisms, including... corals, have acquired the ability to lay down external chalky shells and skeletons. It is this process... that provided the mechanism whereby the Earth's [CO₂] blanket was reduced. In effect... the Great Barrier Reef and other limestone deposits may be seen as vast natural dumps of [CO₂]... There is evidence, too, that life plays a vital role in regulating the [CO₂] content of the atmosphere and thus, in part, the surface temperature of the Earth. Unlike the Earth, both Venus and Mars have atmospheres that are rich in [CO₂], with concentrations greater than 95[%]. By contrast, the [CO₂] content of the Earth's atmosphere is just 0.03[%]. CO₂ is a powerful greenhouse gas, meaning that it lets through the heat from the Sun but traps some of the heat that is radiated back... How much [CO₂] remains in the atmosphere depends on many factors. For example, it is known that photosynthesizing plants tend to increase their growth as the [CO₂] content of the atmosphere rises. This increased growth, by its very nature, tends to reduce the [CO₂] levels. The cycle therefore regulates itself by a process known as feedback, which in this case controls the amount of [CO₂] in the atmosphere. Sulphur is another essential nutrient which, like the bicarbonate from the soil, tends to run off into the sea, entering a cycle in which living organisms are involved. Here, simple plants such as coccolithophorid algae have evolved an ingenious use of the sulphur, creating a special compound in their cells which prevents salts in the seawater from entering. When this compound eventually decomposes, after the death of the coccolithophorids, it produces the volatile substance, dimethylsulphide. This quickly oxidizes in the atmosphere above the seas to give sulphur dioxide (SO₂)[, which]... has the effect of causing rainclouds to form over the oceans. These clouds then carry rain to the land, and with the rain comes sulphurous acid... produced by the combination of [SO₂] and water... Acid rain is thus a perfectly normal and essential phenomenon. But we, with our highly industrialized society, have added a great deal more [SO₂] to the natural output and begun to overload the natural system, overwhelming its controls. Acid rain has therefore become an acute problem in many parts of the world, turning lakes and rivers in Scandinavia, Scotland and North America into waters that can no longer support even the hardiest species of fish... In Sweden, [this has happened to] at least 18,000 out of a total of 20,000 lakes... In relatively pollution-free areas, such as the more northerly parts of Canada, sulphur fallout is less than 10kg/ha... per year. The average levels in areas afflicted by acid rain, such as southern Sweden, are two to three times higher... Soils too are suffering, and some regions of southern Sweden are showing a tenfold increase in acidity. One of the consequences of this is that toxic minerals such as aluminium, cadmium and mercury have become soluble and therefore available to plants, with disastrous effects. Normally such toxic minerals remain harmlessly bound to the soil. Worldwide some 100 million tonnes of sulphur a year enters the atmosphere as a result of human activities, most of it coming from the burning of fossil fuels. Another source, often overlooked, is untreated sewage discharged into the sea. This helps stimulate the growth of those algae that generate dimethylsulphide. Modern farming, with its heavy inputs of artificial fertilizers, also plays havoc with natural... cycles... In areas of northern Europe where fertilizer use is heavy, the fallout of nitrogenous compounds from the atmosphere has increased twenty-fold or even more. The rain falling through the forests of northern Europe is now so rich in nitrogen compounds that the trunks and branches of many trees have become covered in green slime, as microscopic, single-celled algae flourish on the fertilized bark... The loss of forests to logging, agriculture and urban development has a long history in temperate areas. Today, however, there is a new threat... a syndrome known generically as waldsterben or 'forest death'. Many of the symptoms of waldsterben had never been seen before the early 1970s... Waldsterben has claimed more than 70,000 [sq. km]... of forests in 15 European countries. In West Germany, 52[%] of the country's forests... are affected. In Britain, nearly half the oak and three-quarters of the yew in southern England have lost

over a quarter of their natural foliage. On the other side of the Atlantic, the picture is not much different. Acid rain – just one component of the waldsterben phenomenon – has been devastating, particularly for the conifer forests stretching up the Appalachian Mountains from Georgia to New England. In Vermont, New Hampshire and New York, 60[%] of high-elevation red spruce are reported dead, while, in southern California, 87[%] of the Ponderosa and Jeffrey's pines in the San Bernardino Forest are damaged. In Canada, sugar maples are dying over large areas... Waldsterben is undeniably a new disease of the post-war era. The enormous increase in the use of motor cars and aircraft, the emission of thousands of man-made chemicals, the massive increase in power generation and the industrialization of agriculture have all added dramatically to the number of pollutants in the environment... In 1984, the discovery of a hole in the ozone layer over Antarctica provided dramatic evidence that human activities are causing irreparable damage to the atmospheric systems upon which life depends. Although the size of the hole fluctuates from year to year, in 1987 it was as deep as Mount Everest and covered an area as large as the entire US. Since the early 1970s, scientists have warned that the stratospheric ozone layer could gradually be eroded by chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and other gases, but they had no idea that the damage could occur on such a drastic scale. Indeed, for several years prior to 1984, American satellites had been measuring the appearance of the hole each Antarctic spring, but their computers were programmed not to accept this 'aberrant' data... Ozone is formed and broken down again all the time in the stratosphere, with the two processes cancelling each other out, so that there is usually a constant amount of ozone. But highly reactive substances such as chlorine... and nitric oxide... cause ozone to break down much more quickly. These molecules set off a chain reaction, with a single atom of chlorine capable of breaking down thousands of ozone molecules. Our industrial activities have released numerous compounds containing chlorine into the atmosphere... The stability of CFCs in the troposphere, the layer of the atmosphere up to 15km... from the surface of the Earth, means that over a period of years, CFCs drift up to the stratosphere. Here they are broken down by ultraviolet light into free chlorine atoms and other compounds containing chlorine. Under normal conditions, most of the chlorine in the stratosphere is bound to other molecules, and thus does not damage ozone. However, during the Antarctic winter, the winds of the polar vortex, swirling around the South Pole, create unusually cold conditions. Ice crystals form in the clouds of the stratosphere, providing a surface on which the chlorine-containing compounds begin to break down. With the coming of spring and warmer weather, the damaging chlorine atoms are released as the ice crystals melt. The chlorine is then free to attack ozone. It is not only CFCs that are implicated in the destruction of the ozone layer. Other gases must share the blame, including halons (used in fire-fighting equipment), methyl chloroform (used in cleaning solvents, adhesives and aerosols) and carbon tetrachloride (used for many purposes, including dry cleaning). All these release chlorine or the related bromine and fluorine (known collectively as halogens). Nitrous oxide (N₂O), another culprit, is a naturally occurring gas, but one that is increasingly present in the atmosphere due to human activities. Its concentration is currently rising by 0.4[%] a year. Like CFCs, [N₂O] is stable until it reaches the stratosphere, where it breaks down to form nitric oxide... which attacks ozone in a similar fashion to chlorine... The outlook for the stratospheric ozone is bleak. Although many governments now agree the need to phase out CFC use, stratospheric chlorine levels will continue to rise dramatically in the next few decades... Each molecule of the most commonly used CFC is 10,000 times as effective at trapping infra-red radiation as a molecule of [CO₂]... The main importance of the ozone layer is in protecting life from short-wave ultraviolet-B (UV-B) solar radiation. Most UV-B is absorbed by ozone, but the proportion which does reach the ground is responsible for causing sunburn and skin cancer in fair-skinned people. Excessive UV-B also causes eye cataracts and weakens the immune system. The most harmful consequence of increased UV-B, however, may well be its impact upon food production and ecosystems. Of 200 plant species which have been tested, two-thirds showed sensitivity to UV-B[(including 'cotton and soybeans')]. Plant sensitivity to UV-B appears to be greater if the phosphorus level in the soil is high. Heavily fertilized agricultural areas could therefore be badly affected. The effect on marine life may be equally severe. Phytoplankton are microscopic plants which float in huge numbers near the surface of the ocean and supply all the food on which marine animals depend. It has been found that UV-B affects the phytoplankton and the larvae of some species of fish. Some scientists believe the effect of ozone depletion in the Antarctic's seas will be particularly dramatic, since krill, the tiny shrimps which are essential to the Antarctic food chain... depend on phytoplankton. If the krill decline, the whole ecosystem of the Southern Ocean could collapse... For over a century, scientists and environmentalists have warned that rising levels of [CO₂]... could bring about a catastrophic warming of the Earth's atmosphere... [However, when a] NASA climatologist... claimed in 1988 that "the evidence is pretty strong that the greenhouse effect is here", most of his fellow scientists[still] thought this view extreme. Now it is close to becoming the accepted opinion in the scientific world... Without naturally occurring greenhouse gases, such as... CO₂... water vapour, methane... and... N₂O... the planet would be some 30°C... cooler. These important gases allow short-wave energy from the Sun to pass through them, but trap the longer-wave infra-red or heat radiation which is reflected back from the Earth's surface. Unfortunately, the levels of these greenhouse gases in the atmosphere are now rapidly increasing... The production of synthetic greenhouse gases has greatly worsened the problem. Around 30 [to] 40 trace greenhouse gases are known, and there may be many more – every year hundreds of new gases are produced with little idea of their greenhouse potential... Because it is produced in such quantities the world over, [CO₂] is expected to be responsible for over half of the total predicted global warming. Levels of [CO₂] in the atmosphere have already increased by 25[%] from pre-industrial levels and are now at their highest levels for 160,000 years... Methane... is responsible for around a fifth of global warming and its atmospheric concentration has already doubled from pre-industrial times... This cocktail of greenhouse gases is expected to cause a rise in global temperature of 1.5 [to] 4.5°C... by 2050. Factors such as changing cloud distributions, increasing water vapour in the atmosphere, and shifting snow and ice margins may slow down global warming or speed it up. Other uncertainties in the precise details of climate change are due to the wide range of political, economic and social factors involved in the control of greenhouse gas emissions. Even if these forecasts are accurate, they represent only *average* changes in temperature for the whole planet. Wide regional differences are likely to occur, with much larger warming expected at the poles than in the tropics... Current estimates suggest that global warming could cause a sea level rise of anything between 7cm and 165cm... by 2050, due to the expansion of the oceans as they warm up and the melting of glaciers and the Greenland and Antarctic ice caps. A sea level rise of 1m... could potentially affect all land up to the 5-m... contour line. Worldwide, this would amount to an area of some 5 million [sq. km]... This is only 3[%] of the land area of the globe, but it includes a third of the cropland. [It is estimated that 'a 1m sea-level rise would displace at least 70 million Chinese']... Today Haiti stands stripped of its trees. Forty years ago, forests still covered 80[%] of the country; now, the figure is down to less than 4[%]... Many tropical countries which were heavily forested only a few decades ago are now virtually denuded of trees. ['India has almost no forest left.']Africa has lost almost half of its tropical forests, while the Americas have lost a third of theirs. In Madagascar, whose forests harbour thousands of unique animals, 93[%] of the island's original primary forest has been destroyed in the last 60 years... The UN Food and Agriculture Organization... blames shifting cultivation by landless peasants for causing 50[%] of tropical forest clearance worldwide, and names fuelwood collectors as the second major cause of deforestation. The impression given is that the forests are being cleared by those too poor and hungry to care about protecting the environment. On the face of it, FAO has a case. From Amazonia to Indonesia, it is indeed landless peasants who light fires and operate the chainsaws that annually destroy vast areas of forest. Around the major cities in Africa or India, trees stripped of all but their highest branches bear terrible testimony to the fuelwood crisis. But blaming landless peasants for deforestation is tantamount to blaming conscripted soldiers for causing wars... Firewood shortages, for example, are the consequence, rather than the cause, of deforestation... Thousands of hectares have been cleared for plantations, transformed into pasture, logged or torn apart by mining. Rivers have been dammed, flooding some of the most remote areas of forest in the world, and the products of millions of years of evolution have been bulldozed aside to create necessary 'infrastructure' to support the development process... In the Philippines, the island of Negros – once a carpet of forest – is now little more than a vast sugar estate... In Thailand, many of the most fertile soils have been used to grow

cassava, mainly for export to feed Europe's livestock. In the 10 years between 1973 and 1982, exports of cassava from Thailand to the EC rose from 1.5 million tonnes to 8 million tonnes. Almost all the increased production took place... at the expense of forest... In Latin America, cattle ranching is responsible for the destruction of at least 20,000 [sq. km]... of forest a year. Since 1950, two-thirds of the lowland tropical forests in Central America have been cleared, mostly for pasture, and in several countries cattle now outnumber people. The expansion of cattle rearing has been promoted by the major international development banks and lending agencies – the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank and the UN Development Fund. Governments have also promoted ranching through local fiscal incentives... Large corporate ranches now cover some 8,750 [sq. km]... of Amazonia. In the states of Para and Mato Grosso they have been responsible for 30[%] of clearings. The ecological destruction caused by ranching programmes is long-term and often irreversible. The land is rapidly depleted of nutrients and invaded by toxic weeds. In a few years, it is so degraded that it must be abandoned – a fate that has befallen one in three of the large cattle ranches established in Amazonia... In Central America, most of the beef raised is exported, 80 to 90[%] of the exports going to North America. Cheap beef imports have reduced the price of hamburgers by a few cents. However, the cattle trade has done little to help the poor in the cattle-exporting countries, few of whom can afford to eat beef... Under Brazilian law, anyone who clears an area of forest can lay claim to the land [(and, incidentally, 'if landholders leave forest areas standing as reserves, such areas are classified as "unproductive" by Government agencies, which gives landless people the freedom to move onto the reserve and cut the trees down so they can farm the land')]... It is... no coincidence that those areas where clearance is most vigorous are frequently closest to gold strikes. It is this quest for quick (and easy) profits – rather than a hunger for beef – that provides the key to much of the deforestation in Brazil... Worldwide, the tropical timber industry is held responsible for degrading some 50,000 [sq. km]... of primary rainforest annually. Much of the wood is used to make cheap, throwaway goods... The tropical timber industry is particularly sensitive to accusations of causing deforestation, arguing that it is only responsible for some 10[%] of forest destruction worldwide. However, that global average obscures the fact that logging is the major cause of primary rainforest destruction in much of Southeast Asia, Africa, A[US] and the Pacific islands... The damage caused by logging is extensive. Current logging practices in Sarawak, Malaysia, leave 33 trees damaged for every 26 trees removed as timber. In some areas, up to 70[%] of the remaining trees die from their injuries. The extensive network of roads and skid trails needed to get the logged timber out of the forests adds to the damage. Erosion is a particular problem, increasing the silt load of rivers with consequences that extend far beyond the forests. Two out of every three rivers in Sarawak are now officially classified as 'polluted' due to soil erosion... [(By the way, i)n Idaho, logging has increased erosion rates in some areas 220 times[.]] ...Significantly, there is hardly a single example of sustained industrial timber extraction from tropical rainforests. Indeed, the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)... has itself concluded that successful sustainable tropical timber operations cover less than 0.8[%] of rainforest land and are "on a world scale negligible"... [F]ew could provide the rates of return demanded by commercial companies... The world's tropical forests are known to contain large quantities of minerals and oil. Schemes to exploit these resources are increasingly important as causes of deforestation... The quest for cheap electricity, presumed essential to economic development, has seen river after river being dammed throughout the tropics... The dams planned for Amazonia are expected to flood an area the size of Montana; 68 dams are planned for Brazilian Amazonia alone. The state electricity authorities of many tropical countries insist that consumers will suffer an energy crisis unless new dams are built. Yet studies of the situation in Brazil by the World Bank suggest that sufficient generating capacity already exists to satisfy the expected rise in demand over the medium term, provided that energy is used more efficiently... To environmentalists, the [Carmanah] valley is "a monument [of the] way Canada used to be – lush and green." To... the company that owns the timber rights to the valley, Carmanah is an asset to be cashed in. With each spruce worth up to \$40,000, the entire valley, if logged, would bring in some \$13 million. And, if the company has its way, all but... less than 10[%] of the valley, will indeed be logged... Many of the trees... were saplings when William the Conqueror invaded England in 1066... Every year, over 200,000 ha... of 'old-growth' forest in British Columbia are clear-cut for timber – an area the size of Carmanah being lost every ten days. On Vancouver Island alone, all but 11 of the 67 rainforest watersheds have been clear-cut. Even those forests set aside as parks have not escaped the onslaught... Most of the old-growth forests of Ontario and eastern Canada have long since disappeared. The native hardwood forests of the eastern US are but remnants of their former glory, 80[%] of the valley forests having been cleared for agriculture... In the USSR, where pine, spruce, larch, cedars and birches still cover about half of the country, recent reports suggest that forests are being lost at a rate equal to that in Brazil... In Finland, all but a few patches of old-growth forest have been destroyed. In A[US], whole areas of eucalyptus forest are being converted to wood chips for export, approximately 1 [sq. km]... being chipped every day... Native forest in N[Z] – already reduced to scattered remnants – is attacked with napalm. Once the forest has been burned, it [is] replaced with plantations of non-native trees, which offer little food or shelter to N[Z]'s rare endemic species. The destruction of such forests and their inhabitants, by a relatively wealthy nation for minimal financial gain, shows how little the environment is valued by N[Z]'s politicians and commercial interests... International trade, and the consumer society that feeds it, ensures that we are all parties to the destruction of the rainforests. The beef mountains of Europe have been fed on soyabeans grown in southern Brazil, on land from which peasants have been dispossessed and sent as colonists into the forests. Aluminium cans which end up on our rubbish dumps come from smelters fed with bauxite from Amazonia and powered by dams that have flooded forests... In that respect, saving the tropical forests relies, not just on measures taken in the rainforest countries themselves, but also on the international community adopting policies which reduce its ecological impact... There is now overwhelming evidence to suggest that [the current] climate is going to change, but scientists will never be exactly sure by how much, or at what rate. Likewise with the ozone layer, we know that it is set for greater disruption but any predictions as to how much will be lost, or by what date, are pure speculation. These uncertainties, however, must not be taken as an excuse for inaction in dealing with the problem. On the contrary, they should be seen as a reason to begin reducing our impact on the atmosphere *now* as an insurance policy against the massive disruption of the Earth's natural systems... The risks are too great not to start taking action immediately... By the time corrective measures are taken, it may already be too late. - 5000 DAYS TO SAVE THE PLANET

...extinctions of the past occurred on geologic time scales [instead of being] compressed into a mere century, as in modern times. The number of species disappearing today far exceeds the natural rate of extinction prior to the arrival of humans... The human race came into being during a time of high species diversity – perhaps the greatest diversity in the history of the Earth. Today, however[. our]... uncontrolled population explosion... is inflicting major damage on the Earth, as people encroach into wildlife habitats in a desperate struggle for survival. If present trends of environmental destruction continue to spiral out of control, the planet could tumble into cataclysmic extinction... We thus constitute a major geologic force on the face of the Earth, and it remains to be seen what kind of world will result from our folly. Our species is conducting a dangerous global experiment by cramming as many people as possible onto the planet. We are altering the environment with our waste products, destroying the forests, and pumping pollutants into the air and water, thus unfavourably changing the composition of the biosphere and interfering with the Earth's energy balance... At first, simple organisms lived in an anaerobic (lacking oxygen) environment, in which oxygen was poisonous to life. When photosynthesis first evolved, as early as 3.5 billion years ago, all oxygen that was produced bonded to chemical elements and was permanently locked up in the Earth's crust. About 2 billion years ago, these oxygen sinks held all the oxygen they could contain, and the gas began slowly to build up in the ocean and the atmosphere. As oxygen production reached higher levels, complex organisms began to evolve. When the level was near to where it is today, the ozone screen made it possible for plants and animals to conquer the land. Life appears to maintain oxygen and [CO₂] in a perfect balance, and too much of one in relation to the other could have disastrous consequences... To a great extent, life began because of the greenhouse effect. Large quantities of greenhouse gases in the early atmosphere maintained temperatures within tolerable, life-

sustaining limits, even though the sun's heat output was lower than it is today. Fluctuations in the [CO₂] content of the atmosphere have resulted in major... climate... changes... During the ice ages, when the carbon cycle removed too much [CO₂] from the atmosphere, temperatures plummeted and great ice sheets flowed across the land. When excessive volcanic activity added too much... [CO₂], temperatures soared and the Earth became a hothouse. Only when [CO₂] levels remain fairly constant does the climate maximize benefits for all living things... Humans are... confounding nature's efforts to maintain [that] balance... The industrialization that made modern civilization possible is polluting the environment heavily... The release of cancer-causing chemicals and other hazardous substances into the atmosphere and the ocean is far greater and more widespread than ever before suspected. Dangerous chemicals seep into groundwater supplies... Each year, about 8 million tons of toxic wastes dumped into the ocean could cause irreversible changes in aquatic ecosystems... Improper farming techniques erode topsoil at several times the replacement rate, causing man-made deserts to spread... Strong winds send the sediment aloft, and huge dust storms clog the skies... Motor vehicle exhaust accounts for half the particulates and aerosols injected into the atmosphere... Human industrial activities release 10 times more sulfur into the atmosphere than natural sources like volcanoes... One of the greatest surprises of this century has been the discovery of a huge ozone hole over Antarctica, where half the stratospheric ozone disappears during the southern winter... When the ozone hole breaks up in the spring, ozone-depleted air travels to the mid-latitudes, where ultraviolet levels climb appreciably. A similar ozone hole often hovers over the Arctic... The ozone shield over the U[S] is eroding twice as fast as had been previously predicted. Long-term records show that ozone levels in the high northern latitudes have dropped about 5[%] over the past two decades... In addition, large volcanic eruptions, like Mount Pinatubo's in the Philippines in June 1991, contribute to ozone depletion by emitting sulfuric acid. Unfortunately, even if the chemical emissions ceased entirely, the ozone layer would continue to diminish for at least another century – the amount of time required to cleanse the upper atmosphere of ozone-destroying chemicals... The rise in global temperatures could also cause part of the polar ice caps to melt and raise sea levels, flooding the coastal regions where half the world's population lives. Shifting precipitation patterns could cause serious drought and desertification in some regions and severe flooding in others, thus dramatically reducing agricultural output. Changing atmospheric circulation patterns could significantly affect the weather, resulting in a large number of violent storms, and potentially much death and destruction... The forests of the world have a major effect on the global climate. The loss of forests increases the Earth's surface albedo, allowing more sunlight to be reflected into space. Thus, deforestation could cause global cooling that might counteract greenhouse warming caused by pollution... The harvesting of forests, the extension of agriculture, and the destruction of wetlands speed up the decay of dead organic matter in the soil, releasing massive amounts of [CO₂] into the atmosphere... Moreover, agricultural lands, which also produce [CO₂] during cultivation, do not store nearly as much carbon as the forests they replace. Forests conduct more photosynthesis for a given area than any other form of vegetation... Deforestation accounts for up to a third of the total amount of [CO₂] and up to half the methane released into the atmosphere... Another threat posed by deforestation is the release of [N₂O] into the atmosphere, possibly damaging the stratospheric ozone layer... Forest clear-cutting encourages soil bacteria to produce [N₂O] that escapes into the air... [(‘in 1987 the US had about 4 times Britain's population but its industries emitted 10 times as much N₂O – 21,510,000 tonnes’)]. The number of termites is rapidly rising because of deforestation... Termites ingest as much as two-thirds of all terrestrial carbon, about 1[%] of which is converted into methane, another potent greenhouse gas. Methane production is increasing at a rate of about 1[%] per year, or about twice as fast as [CO₂]. Methane is also about 20 times more efficient as a greenhouse gas. In future years, methane and other trace greenhouse gases might together contribute more to global warming than [CO₂. ‘Roughly half is generated by irrigated land, above all by rice paddies, and much of the rest by burning of forests and grasslands, oilwells, coalmines, landfills, or leaks in natural gas pipelines.’] In addition, large numbers of cattle raised on cleared forested land contribute substantial amounts of atmospheric methane during their digestive process... The coastal seas of the world are among the most fragile and sensitive environments... By far the most damaging of all sources of coastal and river pollution are oil spills... Every year, as much as 25 million barrels of oil spill into the... oceans. Offshore drilling and shipping accidents account for some 20 million tons of dissolved and suspended matter in the ocean.

...the oil floats in a very thin layer, gradually spreading over a wider and wider region. Until the oil layer is removed... it covers the water and inhibits evaporation. Under the oil, the water warms up. (It also becomes oxygen deficient.) Meanwhile, less water vapor reaches the atmosphere, and there is less rainfall... The atmosphere is... an insulating heat blanket for... Earth... As it happens, there is another atmospheric phenomenon which seems to be acting in the reverse direction; that is, to *cool* the surface of... Earth. The amount of dust that is suspended for long periods in the stratosphere determines how much of the incident solar radiation is transmitted downward to the ground level and how much is reflected (or scattered) into outer space... Nobody knows how important man-made dust clouds are in comparison to natural ones. But many industrial processes certainly contribute a share. Cement plants, coke ovens, blast furnaces, electric arc furnaces, and large thermal power plants are particularly potent smoke producers, as are automobiles and aircraft... [(‘commercial jets produce over 600 million tonnes of CO₂/yr’; ‘so many planes are flying over the Atlantic every day that their fumes are affecting cloud levels’). T]he contrary effects of increasing [CO₂] from fossil fuel combustion and small dust or smoke particles in the upper atmosphere – also largely from combustion – may simply cancel each other out. It is also quite possible that the balance is only temporary and that the cooling or warming effect will eventually predominate. - Uncertain Futures: Challenges for Decision-Makers

Gilbert White's *Natural History of Selborne* was published in 1789, and just ten years before that the books and papers of Linnaeus were... brought to England. These two naturalists are usually considered the founding fathers of the ecological movement... As far as the ecological movement goes... the word *ecology* seems not to have been used before 1866, and it was a hundred years more before it became part of the general language.

In the 1960s and 1970s, those concerned about environmental destruction often projected an image of being more concerned about wildlife than human life. Saving whales, whooping cranes, and wilderness areas seemed their major interest, and many citizens refused to take them very seriously. There was a feeling in many quarters that their movement could even be a threat to the economy and to job expansion because the activists were, in many cases, trying to limit industrial expansion. - Forecast 2000

...many of our most thoughtful scholars now believe that this type of industrial society is creating problems faster than it is able to devise cures for them... [A popular slogan is: ‘You cannot do violence to Nature without paying for it as a nation.’ T]he slogan of the Values Party, in N[Z] was: “We do not inherit the world from our parents, we *borrow* it from our children.” ...the social bills[are] now coming due for the past exploitation of the environment, the unconscionable exhausting by four generations of industrial citizens of the planet's 60-million-year endowment of petroleum, not to mention the grim legacy of radioactive wastes. It is our children and grandchildren that will pay these bills, and suffer the... consequences.

...Cyclone Giselle hit Cape Reinga on Apr 10, 1968... [E]xtensive damage... to property and... livestock... was caused in the Bay of Plenty, Hawke's Bay and Wairarapa... It was during this storm[, which]... is believed to be the worst storm since the arrival of Europeans... that the inter-island ferry *Wahine* was wrecked in the Wellington Harbour with the loss of 51 lives... By the time Giselle reached Wellington the winds were gusting at 275 km/h... [During Dec 1976, a] freak storm lasting 12 hours concentrated in the Hutt Valley and Wellington areas[caused] the loss of one life and flood damage estimated at more than \$30 million – the costliest in NZ's history.

As they review the bizarre and unpredictable weather pattern of the past several years, a growing number of scientists are beginning to suspect that many seemingly contradictory meteorological fluctuations are actually part of a global climatic upheaval... The earth's current climate is something of an anomaly. In the past 700,000 years, there have been at least seven major episodes of glaciers spreading over much of the planet. Temperatures have been as high as they are now only about 5% of the time... However widely the weather varies from place to place and time to time, when meteorologists take an average of temperatures around the globe they find that the atmosphere has been growing gradually cooler for the past three decades. The trend shows no sign of reversing... Since the 1940s the mean global temperature has dropped about 2.7° F. Although that figure is at best an estimate, it is supported by other convincing data. When... Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Geological Observatory... analyzed satellite weather data for the Northern Hemisphere, [it] found that the area of the ice and snow cover had suddenly increased by 12% in 1971 and the increase has persisted ever since. Areas... once totally free of any snow in summer[are] now... covered year round. Scientists... [also] found... there has been a noticeable expansion of the great belt of dry, high-altitude polar winds – the so-called circumpolar vortex – that sweep from west to east around the top and bottom of the world... By blocking moisture-bearing equatorial winds and preventing them from bringing rainfall to the parched... region... from Central America to... India, the polar winds have in effect caused the Sahara [(which, '135 million years ago was covered in lush forest')] and other deserts to reach further south. *Paradoxically, the same vortex has created quite different weather quirks in the U.S... As the winds swirl around the globe, their southerly portions undulate like the bottom of a skirt. Cold air is pulled down across the Western U.S. and warm air is swept up to the Northeast. The collision of air masses of widely differing temperatures and humidity can create violent storms – the Midwest's recent rash of disastrous tornadoes, for example.*

In September 1989 British scientists discovered that the Arctic icesheet has thinned by one third in the previous ten years... Scientific reports backed by hard evidence are one thing. The evidence of our eyes is something else... The last few years have seen changes of global weather patterns that twenty years ago we would not have imagined. Britain suffered hurricanes... Gilbert and Hugo... in 1987 and 1990[which both]... caused horrific damage and death[including]... the loss of over 15 million trees... [W]hole towns... had to be rebuilt[. Around the same time], Bangladesh saw its worse flooding in living memory: over 3,000 people died. Citizens died in Greece because of the searing heat, and in December 1987 Arizona experienced snow at Christmas for the first time. In 1989[droughts]... occurred in China and the Soviet Union as well as in Africa. The USA suffered crop failure because of the heat... The problem is that the capitalist economies are quite happy to concern themselves with environmental reform, providing it does not harm their profits... The emphasis will not be on prevention but on limited cure... and profit will remain the goal, though constrained by stricter environmental controls.

A hundred years ago it was thought that all the gas pushed out into the air by factories and coal fires was simply spread out and 'lost' somewhere. To some extent this is true. The earth can absorb a great deal of the [CO₂]... released into the atmosphere... Above a certain level, however, the [CO₂] simply collects in the atmosphere... [It was] calculated in 1971 that the Amazon Basin, through photosynthesis, produces approximately 50% of the oxygen added to the earth's atmosphere annually, and consumes about 10% of the [CO₂] in the atmosphere... Tropical forests are extremely important for the world's climate. In higher latitudes we depend on tropical forests to keep us warmer, through the circulation of water vapour. Also, the enormous quantities of water vapour produced help to cool the tropics on both sides of the equator... The forests are being cleared for immediate economic reasons. The countries concerned are usually poor, and many have high debts to repay. They want to develop their industries and earn more money abroad through timber, beef or mining... Action has been taken without thinking about the longer-term consequences... During the third quarter of this century alone, the area of man-made pastureland in Central America more than doubled, almost all at the expense of tropical forests... Forests retain large quantities of rain water. Rainforests, in particular, protect the poor soil from the ravages of the sun and the force of the rain. When the trees are destroyed, there is frequently massive erosion of the soil and the creation of rock-hard, useless land. In Panama, it has the added effect of washing large quantities of silt into the rivers, and eventually into the Panama Canal. This has caused difficulties in navigation, because the dredging of the canal is unable to keep pace... A most serious effect which many in Bangladesh and elsewhere have already experienced is devastating floods, caused once again by deforestation. There is also a threat to supplies of drinking water. This is because, after forests are felled, water runs off the mountains more rapidly, and little water soaks into the ground to replenish springs...

Like much of N[Z], Poverty Bay has swift rivers running down from the hill country over fertile coastal plains. In pre-European times the bush covered the land down to the coast... The hills "catch" the rain-bearing clouds... but... [the] bush was cleared for farming... By the 1950s, it was already obvious that many such hill country areas were highly erosion-prone and that every year thousands of tonnes of top-soil were being washed out to sea. As well, the water table fell and lack of rain meant real drought... [until,] in a freak reversal of rain patterns... Cyclone Bola... brought the issues to the fore. Now, any prolonged rainfall aggravates the problems.

Ethnobotanical studies conducted by the Institute of Economic Botany at the New York Botanical Garden show that managing the forest for its yield of fruits and other edibles and latex for the manufacture of rubber can produce twice and three times as much value as harvesting it for lumber or clearing it for pasture... [In addition, replacement] of a forest with cultivated fields... increases the rate of erosion (for soluble minerals leach even from the soil of a mature, closed forest) by 100 to 1000 times... As of 1850, extension of arable land had cleared 600 million square kilometers of the world forest. The next century brought the clearing of 850 million [sq. kms] more. Half of the original forest has now... been cleared. That must be acknowledged as a substantial reduction of the biomass... When the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment convened in 1972, 26 nations had established environmental protection agencies. By 1982, 144 nations had done so... [T]he "second Stockholm Conference,"... [will] be held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992... - ONLY ONE WORLD

Over the next few months, delicate negotiations will determine whether the world's largest environmental meeting will produce real progress in saving the planet from man-made ruin. Or whether the session will merely add to global warming with hot-air emissions from about 100,000 parliamentarians, religious leaders, environmentalists and heads of state... For two years, international committees have been hashing out a declaration of principles for the so-called Earth Summit... to be held in Rio de Janeiro next June... But as the final negotiating sessions approach, [the RC Church's insistence that population control be excluded from the range of topics and]U.S. intransigence on[other] key issues means the summit may turn into little more than a biodegradable photo opportunity... The U.S. is resisting pressure from the European Community and Japan to use the Rio conference as a forum to set targets and timetables for the reduction of warming gases, among other things[– although all 'First World leaders insist that their nation's lifestyles are non-negotiable.' The US] has also resisted pressure to commit new funds so that [Last World] economies can grow without destroying precious ecosystems. Washington's posture stands in contrast to the leadership the U.S. exercised in 1972 at the U.N. Conference... in Stockholm... Now, says... [the] president of the Washington-based World Resources Institute, "our government is not accepting the responsibilities that come with the world's largest economy." ...[the] secretary-general of UNCED[said]: "This conference is an opportunity that may not occur again in our lifetime. When, if not at Rio, will we address these problems?" ...[Another] question is whether the

bureaucratic timetable and that of the biosphere will match up... There was more grim news last week about the ozone layer... ozone-deplet[ed air]... now covers almost all of North America, Europe... A[US, NZ] and much of Latin America... Even before last week's report, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency projected that ozone loss would cause 200,000 additional skin-cancer deaths in the U.S. alone over the next 50 years.

...over 3,000,000 by the year 2100 if ozone depletion continues unabated. There will be many more cases of blindness (100,000 more for each 1[%] decline in stratospheric ozone, according to a U[N] panel), a weakening of the human immune system, and premature aging... [C]artoons showing cows wearing baseball caps and sunglasses to defend against blindness and applying sunblock creams to avoid skin cancer... led to the Montreal Protocol of 1987. Signed at first by twenty-seven countries, the protocol called for a 50[%] cut in the manufacture of CFCs and halons... by 1991. Later... the signatories, joined by more than fifty further countries, called for phasing out the use of these chemicals by the end of the century... However... governments have quite often failed to ratify the Protocol, demanding financial aid before doing so, and... companies advertising their commitment to the environment nevertheless quickly unloaded stocks of ozone-destroyers in [Last World] countries which hadn't signed: in India, the tonnage of halons sold in 1990 was eight times greater than in 1987. By 1993 only nine [Last World] countries had cut emission levels... India, where sales of refrigerators are rising rapidly, is said to be trying to move straight into ozone-friendly refrigeration. But... China plans to put CFCs into fifty million new refrigerators before changing to other substances[, while]... far richer... nations have [not set a] good example... In April 1995, the state legislature of Arizona voted to legalize manufacture of CFCs, in contravention of federal law. 'Irresponsible theories about the ozone layer are no excuse to deprive people of necessary technology', the Governor is reported to have said as he signed the legislation... Carcinogens such as many pesticides... PCBs... and the yet more dangerous dioxins are special causes for concern. They can be tremendously concentrated as they move up natural food chains. In the North Sea, PCBs in marine mammals have become concentrated by ten million times... An explosion at a chemical plant in Seveso in 1976 brought dioxins to international attention, but such dramatic incidents form only a small part of the problem. At Bhopal in 1984 a pesticide-manufacturing explosion injured two hundred thousand and killed two thousand – yet accidental pesticide poisonings number a million a year, causing twenty thousand deaths... Lead now enters the environment at eighteen times the natural rate; cadmium at five times... mercury, nickel, arsenic, vanadium at twice the natural rate. Two thousand tons of mercury have joined the Amazon's eco-systems, just from gold prospecting... A possible sign of imminent environmental collapse is that frogs and toads are becoming rare everywhere but in Africa... [T]here is an apparent halving of human sperm counts world wide, and a twofold to fourfold rise in testicular cancer. These may be the effects of pollutants which mimic human estrogens... At Rio in 1992 it was agreed... that efforts would be made to reduce... CO₂... emissions to 1990 levels by the turn of the century, but the U[S], which had insisted that meeting this target should be 'urged' rather than required, almost certainly won't meet it, now that it has abandoned the idea of taxing energy. The Canadian government, giving hundreds of millions of dollars in subsidies to Alberta's oil industry megaprojects, has replaced its election promise of a 20[%] cut... by the year 2005 with plans just to ask its citizens to act responsibly, the predicted outcome being a 13[%] rise by the year 2000. The European Union, too, is delaying energy taxes... [T]axes on emissions have inspired Norway to strip CO₂ from natural gas, compress it, and bury one million tons per year by injecting it into rocks under the North Sea... As for the [Last World] countries, almost all have done little more than talk about the problem. Atmospheric CO₂ levels thus seem likely to keep increasing for quite a while... This relaxed approach was reflected in the... Berlin Mandate of 1995, which committed its signatories merely to continued talks: detailed targets for limiting emissions after the year 2000 would be debated only in 1997... All this gives some plausibility to the title 'Ten years to save the world' which the president of the Worldwatch Institute gave to an article of 1992...

[According to NZ's] Minister for the Environment... the... 1992... framework... to reduce carbon emissions was "doomed to failure." ...this task is so vast and dependent on countries finding cheaper ways to rely less on fossil fuels that there is a danger that a universal sign-up will not get off the ground... He said some countries, such as Britain, which had moved from dirty coal-fired power stations to gas-fired stations, could easily meet their [CO₂] reduction targets. "...Countries like N[Z]... have a more difficult task." Since N[Z] signed up to reducing [CO₂] emissions to their 1990 levels by the year 2000, the country has headed on a path which is projected to see net... emissions rise by 60[%]. NZ currently 'contributes 0.12% of total global greenhouse gas emissions', or 'two tonnes of carbon per person per year, compared to AUS with four tonnes and the US with five tonnes'.

...despite the lurid predictions of our professional eco-Jeremiahs, we have so far not all starved to death, woken up one morning to find the oceans dead, been fried by nuclear weapons... found our industrial society grinding to a halt for lack of resources... succumbed to diseases from pesticides, or been forced to stand on each other's heads as a result of overcrowding. Indeed the exact contrary to most of the predictions has been much closer to the truth. Economic growth continues; people almost the world over are living longer lives; and the natural environment – at least in the rich countries – has been improving... Air pollution has fallen notably in Britain and America, as has water pollution... resource prices continue to fall, a trend that has been going on for centuries if not millennia... The "acid rain" scare has proved unfounded. So has the scare on species extinction. Stab-in-the-dark estimates of 40,000 species becoming extinct annually – upon which we were urged to drop everything and rush out to save them all – have since been modified downwards. The new estimate? Lower by a factor of around 40,000. Whatever species it was that became extinct this year it was probably no oil painting. As for global warming from "greenhouse gases," there are many reasons for maintaining a healthy agnosticism: the crude state of the climatologists' models; the fact that the temperature of the earth fluctuates naturally for many reasons; and the even more inconvenient fact that no net warming has occurred in the last 50 years (the very period of the supposed greenhouse gas emissions). Only the very gullible would be confidently expecting hotter weather. None of this will stop the eco-Jeremiahs from seizing on the next lurid apocalyptic story to come along... and telling us that, unless industrial society repents and goes back to living in caves, we will all be flattened, suffocated, fried, boiled, frozen, starved, poisoned, or bored to death by Greenpeace.

...A mysterious epidemic at an important rest stop on the Pacific Flyway has caused the largest number of pelican deaths in [US] history, and poisoned a staggering number of other birds... [So far] more than 6000 birds, including 846 endangered brown pelicans and 3929 white pelicans at the internationally renowned Salton Sea bird sanctuary [have died]. In local news, 'scientists are scrabbling for theories as millions of pilchards continue to die off the north-eastern coast. Pilchards have been dying in huge numbers in AUSn waters since March 1995, but the first large-scale deaths were not seen here until last week. The deaths began in the Hauraki Gulf and appear to be spreading almost daily. Scientists are reluctant to speculate on what is killing the fish but the fishing industry and Greenpeace are blaming ballast water from ships. The Fishing Industry Association chief executive said the industry had long been concerned about the risk of diseases being brought in ships' ballast to NZ, which has a voluntary code requiring ships to exchange their ballast water at sea. It is claimed that most ships comply. The scientist leading the investigation said it is not known whether the disease killing the fish can affect humans. However, it was unlikely to affect humans immediately because few people ate pilchards. Fish bait was the biggest potential market. It was also not known whether the disease would get into other parts of the food chain. Even if the disease did not spread, the death of the pilchards could cause food shortages for other species. Pilchards are the "meat and potatoes" of the sea – standard fare for all sorts of bigger fish, sea birds and penguins']...

Penguins, seals and albatrosses are dying on Macquarie Island in what scientists fear is alarming new evidence of the onset of the greenhouse effect. The island, 640km south-west of the Auckland Islands and 1294km from the Antarctic continent, is one of the most important measuring points for the ecological health of the globe... In the 1970s there were 6000 rock hoppers scattered around the island but now, say zoologists from

the University of Tasmania, only 3000 survive. Scientists believe that an increase in ocean surface temperature has forced its prey – billions of tiny creatures called euphausiids, a form of krill with a very narrow tolerance range for temperature – to travel further south. The rock hoppers... are unable to expend precious energy reserves to travel far enough south to follow the food... Even more alarming is the discovery that 16[%] of eggs checked by the scientists have been infertile. “We have never before seen infertility in rock hoppers...,” says one... Scientists on... Campbell Island, 500km north of Macquarie, have recorded a decline in rock hopper population of 94[%] since 1940. There were well over one million birds; now there are fewer than 80,000. Scientists say there has been so little food available for the penguins that they have been forced to eat fish, which is less suited for their body needs, rather than krill. Meteorologists on Macquarie have measured an annual average temperature increase twice that of the rest of the world. The average temperature near the island has risen steadily from 4.5 deg... in 1912 to more than 5.4 deg today. “Global change is now a certainty”... Last year’s weather on Macquarie was what the island’s meteorologists describe as “extremely abnormal” – they recorded the island’s sunniest summer and its coldest winter... A one degree increase in temperature may sound insignificant but Macquarie Island scientists fear it is enough to alter completely the ecosystem in the Southern Ocean... Climate change is not the only threat to the subantarctic. Rubbish from every continent swirls around the world in the currents of the Southern Ocean, and it’s beginning to have a major impact on Macquarie Island. Scientists are listing the debris that arrives on one small beach on the island. Every month they are recording around 40 significant pieces of rubbish weighing a total of about 20kg; these include wooden beer kegs, commercial fishing debris... shampoo bottles from Japanese ships... and... soft drink bottles from Argentina...

A vast area of southern Argentina has become part of an expanding desert, mainly because of human activities, according to a recent Government study. Satellite surveillance [confirmed] that more than one-third of Patagonia is affected... [T]he newly arid lands have degraded to the point that “their use to man is practically nil” and the damage economically irreversible... [In further news from South America, a] five-month drought in the Ecuadorian province of Loja has forced more than 3000 people to abandon their parched homeland... The drought, the worst in a decade, is expected to cause further economic and social disruption.

...the enchanted Galapagos Islands... gave... Charles Darwin... the inspiration for his book *The Origin of Species*... But now a much more unnatural process, that of human intervention and disruption, is... changing the face of the Galapagos at a much quicker rate than evolution... As the number of tourists visiting the islands increases, along with associated industries, thousands of starry-eyed immigrants have come, unrestricted, from the Ecuadorian mainland to try to make their fortunes... “...human activity and its consequences have already made some species extinct... One of the biggest threats today is species introduced by man. Pigs and dogs kill baby giant tortoises while... we have a goat crisis on the largest island, Isabella... There is an estimated 100,000 feral goats... and unless their numbers are cut back, their machine-like destruction of the island’s vegetation threatens to leave the tortoises with no food.” Other campaigns have brought the ecologists... at the... Charles Darwin research station... [–] which runs the Galapagos National Park on behalf of the Ecuadorian Government... [–] and villagers into conflict. Last year, marine biologists at the... station called for an urgent ban on fishing for sea cucumbers. The slug-like creature is a sought-after delicacy in the Far East and has been fished almost out of existence in Galapagos waters... Hundreds of fishermen marched on the... station, surrounding it for several days and not allowing the staff to leave. Some threatened to kill animals such as Lonesome George, a giant tortoise from the island of Pinta and the last known surviving member of his subspecies. George, who is thought to be aged about 80, has been locked up for the past 20 years in the station for his own safety. There is strong evidence that giant tortoises and other animals on some islands have been slaughtered by fishermen venting their anger at park authorities... THE ecologists’ arguments for strict, closed seasons to conserve fish stocks, and ensure the long-term survival of the fishing industry, do not convince fishermen whose priority is to make ends meet in the short term... [Furthermore,] Ecuador is a country with severe financial worries and the prospect of greater economic growth in the Galapagos has politicians’ mouths watering. For that reason there is unlikely to be any directive from Quito agreeing to the kind of controls on development that the ecologists are calling for... “But if there’s too much economic activity in the Galapagos, bringing with it more immigration, the wildlife will suffer and the visitors will stop coming, sending the economy and the lives of the locals into decline.”

...scientists are worried about the world’s coral reefs... [E]xperts say 10% of earth’s coral reefs are dead or mortally wounded and another 30% could die in two decades without dramatic action... [97%] of the Galapagos corals are gone because of bleaching. Coral bleaching usually is fatal, because suffocating thick algae normally replaces the simpler forms that corals need to survive. Marine species then flee the barren corals, dooming them... “Is there a crisis? ...Yes. If you’re talking about a resource that is one of the oldest ecosystems in the world that’s been around 50 million years and you see a change in a couple of decades, that’s a crisis.” Reefs are sometimes known as the rain forests of the ocean for their rich biological stores... More than 100 nations have economies that depend in part on reefs for tourism and to feed their people; and... reefs remained “an almost untapped source of chemical compounds” for medicines and other uses... Reefs require clear and relatively nutrient-free water, but coastal development and agricultural runoff are destroying near-shore water quality... Reefs live on the thermal edge. They are extremely sensitive to temperature swings[– ‘higher water temperatures cause bleaching’ –] which are more common as water quality declines... [In related news, scientists] from Britain and Russia have discovered a gigantic freshwater underground lake... up to one million years old... beneath an Antarctic glacier.

...[Yemen has] appealed for international assistance following extensive flooding. Entire villages were underwater... [Elsewhere] this week... dehydration... and... [sunstroke] has claimed at least 250 lives... in... Pakistan, where temperatures have not fallen below 41 deg C for several days. Officials fear an outbreak of disease from drinking water unfit for drinking... [In the meantime,] floods killed at least 12 people in northwestern Pakistan, and... in neighbouring Afghanistan. At least six people were killed during flash floods that swept central Morocco. Others were killed by lightning. Algeria reported major floods in the western province of Tlemcen... but gave few details... [R]ain left 1200 people homeless in the Ghanaian port city of Sekondi-Takoradi. One man was killed when attempting to rescue a duck... Heavy rains across the country helped an international firefighting effort to contain or extinguish most of the blazes... that have ravaged Mongolia for three months... Cool and damp weather[also] helped bring forest fires north of Anchorage... under control. Nearly 350 structures and 30,000ha of forest... on Alaska’s Kenai Peninsula... were destroyed by the fires... Fires covering more than 809,000ha continue to burn in six American states.

...Firefighters battled through the night against wind-driven wildfires that cut a path of destruction from the mountains to the sea and sent thousands of Californians fleeing the celebrity enclave of Malibu... While many residents heeded the call to evacuate, some of the city’s most famous homeowners stayed behind to defend their properties. [One a]ctress... watered down ...he[r roof as]... flames... licked dangerously close by.

...tanker aircraft drop[ped] chemical retardant over... house[s] about to be engulfed in flames in San Diego County as fires[continued to] rage across 14,000ha of southern California[yesterday]. The Santa Ana winds turned dry brush and oil-rich eucalyptus trees into blow-torches, and, by last night, the major fires were less than half contained and some flared up again as the wind shifted and gusted up to 66 km/h. Ninety-five houses had burned and six firefighters battling a flare-up in Malibu were hurt after their truck stalled and flames roared over them in Corral Canyon.

...Lightning-sparked fires[still] burn... in... New Mexico, Utah and Arizona, where 10 Grand Canyon hikers were airlifted to safety... Thousands of people fled up-market homes in the Sierra Nevada after two boys playing with petrol... accident[ally]... started a wind-whipped fire[. Editor’s note: ‘In 1990, there were 2.019 million fires in the US, resulting in property damage of \$8.609 billion. 624,000 structure fires were of suspicious origin’]...

YOUNG arsonists and children who play with fire are costing... [NZ] millions of dollars in property damage. In Auckland alone, children aged three to 16 have lit 319 fires so far this year... Nationally, the total number of fires started by children is more than double that... About half are deliberately lit and these are just the blazes that the Fire Service knows of. Overseas statistics suggest that 90% of such incidents are not reported to the authorities... Now recognised as a national problem, the service is keeping records of the damage done by young hands... [Now for some news from overseas: after leaving] 19 people... dead, 39 missing and[causing] fishery and farming losses... estimated at \$430 million... [i]n Taiwan... Typhoon Herb pounded southeastern China yesterday... Gales[have also] lashed Sri Lanka, killing 10 people and leaving more than 10,000 homeless... [and n]early 300 people are dead after seven days of floods that have ravaged wide areas of India's southern Andhra Pradesh state.

...UP TO 500,000 Indians left homeless by a devastating cyclone... in... Andhra Pradesh... huddled in tent camps yesterday as rescuers searched for bodies, brought in relief supplies and sought to prevent a cholera outbreak. The death toll from the cyclone, which... state administration estimated [caused]... about \$792 million... [in] crop and property losses... exceeded 1000, and up to 1000 people were[still] missing... It was the second major storm in three weeks. The battered... Bay of Bengal... region was still recovering from storms and flooding that had killed 350 people.

...Indian Army helicopters dropped food to thousands of victims after torrential monsoon rains flooded 400 villages in the state of Rajasthan... A storm in the Bay of Bengal sank 18 fishing trawlers, killing at least 16 people and leaving 100 missing... The storm and monsoon floods battering India and Bangladesh, together with disease blamed on the deluge, have now... made millions homeless... Bangladeshi officials said about 58,800ha of rice crops had been destroyed... and 30 million affected... in 37 flood-hit districts... And in Nepal, the death toll from floods and landslides triggered by incessant rain over the last 10 days has reached 45... Floods in Northern Italy and southern Austria killed at least two people and derailed the night train between Rome and Vienna... Floods in the central Mexican city of Puebla left at least 11 people dead and swept away homes and bridges. Authorities expect to find more victims who were trapped in their cars... Hurricane Alma, first of the season, [also] slammed... Mexican ports... with winds up to 195 kph and killed at least three people who were buried as their homes collapsed.

...[the US southwest has so far equalled the record for hurricanes in one season – six.] Over the US's northeastern border, h]eavy flooding in eastern Quebec has left at least 10 people dead and hundreds more stranded... "It's just horrible, horrible," one woman said in Jonquiere... "I never thought I'd see something like this."

...Atmospheric pollution high above the idyllic Polynesian islands is worse than the smog of the bustling Los Angeles Basin, according to initial reports from... NASA... [T]he discovery was made by high-flying aircraft which have begun to survey the region. High concentrations of [CO₂] and methane measured at between 2000 and 10,000 feet are probably caused by bushfires in A[US] and perhaps East Africa. These greenhouse-effect gases from the smoke were transported to the remote and expansive Oceania by high-altitude winds... [Incidentally, textile] and electronic factories are releasing high levels of "gender-bending" chemicals into Britain's rivers.

...A team of Dutch scientists [has confirmed] that chemicals and other human waste dumped into the environment can cause sex changes in wildlife, at least in fish... [By the way, r]adioactivity from dumped Russian nuclear waste could be carried in icebergs to the Atlantic where it would poison fish, according to a Norwegian scientist... [T]he Soviet Union dumped 17 reactors and other radioactive rubbish into the Kara Sea, assuming it would affect only nearby waters which had few fish. But satellite photographs showed that while the local currents flowed eastwards, drift ice was blown in the opposite direction to areas where fish were more plentiful... The *New Scientist* also reported that scientists studying wildlife in contaminated wastes around Chernobyl nuclear power station in the Ukraine had found voles that thrived on radioactive pollution. The small rat-like creatures were producing ever-stronger offspring whereas radioactivity usually triggered lethal mutations in genes.

...[trees close to the Chernobyl reactor died, but further away, they began to grow abnormally, with strange shoots and deformed leaves and, one year after the accident, 500,000 sheep in Britain had to be banned from slaughter because their flesh contained more than 1,000 becquerels per kg.]

...Scientists say that a fresh fallout, possibly from a nuclear reactor abroad, occurred over Scandinavia during January. Above-normal levels of iodine and caesium 137 were detected from Norway's Arctic province of Finnmark to the capital of Oslo in the south. "We have measured nucleides from a reactor between January 8 and 15 which are not found in nature," said... a researcher at the State Radiation Protection Agency. South and south-east winds during the period indicate that the fallout came from Russia or the Balkan states... [■ A] newly disclosed plutonium spill said to have occurred a decade ago when a Soviet nuclear submarine sank in the Atlantic probably contaminated the sea floor but did not endanger marine life, a [US] expert said yesterday. Soviet authorities denied any radioactive contamination after the nuclear-armed submarine caught fire and sank 1000km east of Bermuda in October 1986... But a top Russian nuclear scientist told his [US] counterparts much later that nuclear warheads on the doomed sub broke open, spewing plutonium-239 into the Atlantic... A [US] scientist familiar with the Russian's account... said the amount spilled was "a few kilograms" – 'out of a total amount of 90kg' – which he called the single biggest loss of weapons-grade plutonium into the ocean... H[owever, h]e said it would not have been dangerous because of the site's extreme isolation and the fact it sank in 5500m of water... "Plutonium is extremely heavy... and would have extremely rapidly dropped into the deep ocean." ...four crew members and 32 nuclear warheads sank along with the sub... One warhead was destroyed by an explosion and others were destroyed by high pressure as the sub sank into deep water.

...Researchers in Canada announced that the permafrost, which covers a vast area of the nation's far north, is retreating[– causing]... experienced and knowledgeable... Eskimo hunters[to] fall... through the Arctic ice [–] as... key world powers... pledged to fight global warming... at [the UN] Conference on Climate Change... [in Geneva. AUS] rejected the document, siding with oil-producing Opec countries[but the US] made an about-face... committing itself to binding targets to reduce global warming gases... The U[S] based its new position on a U[N]-commissioned scientific report which said increasing amounts of global warming gases were already changing the climate... N[Z], already committed to reducing emissions[, also]... signed the statement. But... the change in the U[S] stance left N[Z] in an untenable position. "In the past, N[Z] has hidden behind the U[S], calling for more research. Now they are effectively saying we have to deliver. And at the moment we don't have anything to deliver."

...What can we do to cool things down? ...According to the recently published working party report there are three broad policy options... • Subsidise investment in desirable technologies; • Direct investment into desirable technologies by regulations; and • Use an "economic instrument" to give all [CO₂] emitters an equal incentive to reduce emissions in proportion to the quantity of their emissions. The working party recommends... the third option. It rejects the first two options on the basis that they both require a Government agency making a decision on which group of technology options will deliver the greatest emission reductions at the least cost. N[Z] has been down this type of policy road before when, in response to the 1970s oil crisis, the Government invested heavily in... disastrous... "think big" projects... [A]ccording to the working party, an economic instrument leaves these investment decisions to individuals and companies who are the best informed and motivated to make optimal choices.

...The future global climate and the impact of warmer temperatures on N[Z], from its skiing industry to its pastures, were among issues presented at the Meteorological Society Weatherwatch 96 conference yesterday. With[NZ] temperatures warming by about 0.7 deg C so far this century, and with global warming slowing but still on the rise, the weather watchers were told that scientists still could not attribute the observed effects to a specific cause... Global warming, climate change and sea-level rise were regarded as distant issues because there was a perception of climate as a constant or unchangeable element of the environment... [G]lobal warming was very low on the political agenda, little research was carried out, public awareness was dismally low and there was little coverage of the issue in the mass media... "People are not attuned to climate change. We need to have environmental education on a democratic scale or whatever you call it... to convince policy makers of the importance of these issues."

...CLIMATE prediction could prevent[huge economic] losses in N[Z]... says a Ministry of Research, Science and Technology report. The report... says increasing ability to predict extremes such as floods, droughts, storms and cold temperatures could save money for many industries... Unusually heavy snowfalls in Canterbury in 1992 – the coldest year for over 50 years – caused an average stock loss of 13% for sheep farmers, with some losing half their stock. The cost was estimated at \$100 million. Losses during the 1988-89 drought were estimated at \$330 million. The... main industries to benefit would be agriculture, horticulture and energy sectors, and water supply, tourism, transport, fisheries, insurance...

The world insurance industry is about to confront the giant fossil fuel interests head-on over the implications of global warming... The industry has seen claims for weather-related disasters rise from... \$NZ23 billion... for the entire decade of the 1980s to \$NZ68 billion for just the first half of the 1990s. "This dramatic rise cannot yet be definitively linked to global warming," says... an essay published in *Vital Signs 1996*, a widely respected annual business and industrial reference work. Nevertheless, that increase has convinced many insurance executives that the time has come to take the trend very seriously... "The insurance industry's total size is similar to that of the huge fossil fuel industry, which has worked very hard in recent years to discourage governments from taking strong action to slow global warming. These two titans may soon clash head-to-head on the issue of global warming." ...Some analysts believe that another series of bad years, or even just one particularly catastrophic storm, could force major insurance companies out of business... For example, a catastrophe in the U[S] causing between \$US50 billion... and \$100 billion worth of damage could result in one third of U[S]-based insurers failing... The past five years have witnessed unprecedented damage from weather-related disasters. In May 1991, for example, a cyclone with winds of 270km/h hit Bangladesh, flooding vast areas of the coastal plain. An estimated 139,000 people were killed, more than a million homes were damaged or destroyed, and financial losses were put at \$NZ18 billion – more than a tenth of the country's entire annual economic output. Within the following year, at least five devastating tropical storms caused billion-dollar-plus losses from China to Pakistan and Hawaii. After two decades of relative calm, the southern [US] has been struck by several serious hurricanes... Hurricane Andrew... in 1992, cost \$[US]17 billion and resulted in seven companies failing... It flattened an area of 430 square kilometres, destroyed 85,000 homes and left 300,000 people homeless... "If Andrew had happened just 100 km further north, the insured losses were estimated to have been \$US100 billion,"... [The 'US expects to be hit by a "Force 5" hurricane once every 100 years – but during the 1990s it has been hit by 2 in 4 years.'] Last year saw the most active Atlantic hurricane season since the 1930s... [If the trend continues,] the insurance industry would inevitably have to find ways to reduce its losses... In 1988, [NZ's] West Coast town of Greymouth experienced two "100-year floods" within six months. The insurance industry withdrew cover when local authorities failed to implement flood mitigation projects... [After a DoC report said c]lose to \$1 million needs to be spent on protecting Mt Cook village from the ravages of a possible major flood, [the]... Department of Physics at the University of Auckland warned that flood losses would continue to increase until the issue of flood plain management was addressed... [However, while] some environmentalists are ringing alarm bells, there are still plenty of scientists who discount global-warming arguments as part of nature's cycle,"...

THE world is not getting warmer. Sorry about that, everybody. I know it is politically incorrect to doubt global warming. But the masses of sophisticated measuring equipment being used to prove planet warming have failed to find any evidence of it, although plenty of scientists pretend there is in order to keep their research funding... [S]urface readings have lately been indicating a slight long-term temperature trend upwards; but the satellites show there is no trend, upward or downward... In fact the earth's temperature has been fluctuating for thousands of years... In medieval times grapes were grown throughout Britain in temperatures substantially warmer than they are today... The ice at both poles is supposed to be melting... although I can't say I've noticed any change in the high tide marks. Some parts of the world have been recording unusually low high-water marks, and others unusually high ones, and in any case land masses are moving ever so slightly up and down over the long term. But that didn't stop a bunch of Eskimos at the Geneva warming-fest bringing cries of dismay from gaping delegates when they told of their people falling through holes in the Arctic ice... The fact that this outlandish tale was accepted without question shows just what mass gullibility can achieve... [T]he media will never sell advertising around stories saying, The climate is fine, folks! So it all goes from bad to worse... Apart from this, the evidence shows that there have been periods of earth's history when there was far more [CO₂] in the atmosphere than... today.

...The fierce storm that roughed up the country this week[, lifting roofs in Wellington, felling trees and cutting]... power in Auckland, Taupo and Otago... was one out of the meteorological box. The MetService said it was not common for such a deep low to form in the Tasman Sea and cross [NZ]. Usually such troughs developed down in the Southern Ocean and passed well below the South Island... It set a new record low for Christchurch of 972 hectopascals – the measurement of atmospheric pressure... The MetService says this... unruly weather is the likely pattern for the rest of [the year], with above average rainfall and temperatures forecast for Northland and western districts. But the east coasts of the North and South Islands are expected to be drier than usual... Auckland's... second coldest July day since reliable records started, in 1868, was July 4 with 7.6 deg C. The second warmest July day on record was July 16 with 19.8 deg, when the warmer conditions sparked a big thunderstorm... A sodden Auckland region has received double its usual amount of rain since the winter downpours began in earnest a month ago.

...Aucklanders can blame warm seas for the rain which has fallen just about everywhere in the region every day this month. A senior climate scientist with the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research... said yesterday that higher than average temperatures in the Indian Ocean were causing wetter winters and springs. Global warming could be the reason for the higher sea temperatures. "The Indian Ocean has warmed up since the mid 1970s," he said. "If we go back to the pre to mid 1970s the winters were drier. It is a definite trend we are able to detect, so that is significant." The warm air blows the Indian Ocean produced north-westerly cloud bands. "When they get over the Tasman Sea they become reinvigorated and spin into lows flowing across the region, producing grey, showery days,"... Drenching rain yesterday raised the September fall in some parts of Auckland to more than the historical average for the entire month... Henderson has had more rain so far this year, 1384mm, than its average annual rainfall, 1365mm... Flood-stricken farmers at Meremere, south of Auckland, again face thousands of dollars of damage after losing acres of land to the swollen Waikato River for the second winter in a row... [One couple], who have farmed the area for nearly 19 years, lost \$50,000 last year. This year's deluge could cost them up to \$75,000. About a third of their 65ha dairy farm is under water... As well as repairs to fences, races and stopbanks[, they]... are having to fork out for feed... With 130 new calves, the... flooding could not have come at a worse time... They will also have to pay for fertiliser and a helicopter to spray for weeds borne by the floodwaters... "It... will take another two years to get... back to top production,"... They are calling for compensation from Environment Waikato and ECNZ, who manage the flow of the river... [However,] Environment Waikato's manager for the Lower Waikato and Waipa Control Scheme... said there was no question of compensation, and farmers would have to dig deep into their own pockets to remedy the problem... [□ Thousands] of... rubber scandals... thrown away by Indonesian factories... are washing up on remote A[US]n islands and polluting beaches... Indonesia, [a local MP] said, "should find their own rubbish heap."

...Thousands of washed-out holidaymakers remained stranded by floodwaters early today as Cyclone Fergus triggered a state of emergency on the Coromandel Peninsula... Elsewhere in Coromandel and throughout Northland, motels, marae and community halls filled up as rain-swollen rivers kept visitors trapped... [Elsewhere in the world, the] grim search has resumed for the bodies of holidaymakers swept away by a torrent of mud and rocks that engulfed a family campsite in northern Spain, killing at least 76 people... Identification of any foreigners among the victims was hampered by the fact that few of the campers were carrying documents when the freak rains struck... [T]yphoon Sally killed at least 114 people and destroyed more than 200,000 homes when it slammed into China's Guangdong Province... The torrential rains followed devastating floods in nine provinces in central and southern China, which have killed more than 1760 people... left two million homeless... and destroyed more than five million tonnes of grain in recent weeks... A massive search and rescue operation has been launched... in eastern Malaysia... to find... people still

missing after... tropical storm Greg... blew ashore... from the South China Sea... 500 houses in nine villages... were swept away, leaving about 3000 people homeless... It was one of the worst storms to hit Sabah in living memory... The death toll in landslides and floods triggered by torrential rain in northern South Korea has risen to 68 dead or missing... [More] people drowned from flooding... [when] Hurricane Hortense swamped Puerto Rico and other islands... A Caribbean-born hurricane has jumped to the Pacific, leaving at least 35 people dead in its sweep across northern Colombia... Renamed Hurricane Douglas from Hurricane Cesar because of the move, the storm... barrelled across Central America on Monday, with Nicaragua taking the brunt... Nicaragua has declared a state of emergency after... [the] storm left three dead and 10,000 homeless... Damage from Hurricane Fran across the eastern [US] topped \$1.2 billion... [and may eventually reach 'US\$6 billion. Fran killed 24 people in North Carolina and came just two months after Hurricane Bertha hit the same area.'] A large area from the Carolinas to Pennsylvania suffered severe flooding... Hurricane Fausto... caused flooding northward into the Desert Southwest... [Meanwhile, more] people were killed and more than 100,000 homes were left without power by a powerful winterlike storm that raged across the Pacific Northwest[, causing]... several devastating mudslides across western Oregon... [Americans who are confused by the current weather patterns can, at least, take heart that they're not alone – yesterday the] first grey whales of the winter migration season were spotted more than a month early in Magdalena Bay on the Pacific coast of Baja California.

...parts of South Africa... [have seen] the first snowfall... for 35 years. Villagers in the mountainous kingdom of Lesotho, trapped by the heavy snows, were running out of food, water and fuel... At least 15 people in the Great Rift Valley district... of tropical Malawi... were burned to death or asphyxiated by coal heaters placed by villagers in their huts to keep warm... [during the record] wintry conditions... At least 12 people were[also] killed in western Europe when car accidents followed unseasonably early snow-storms and torrential rains. Hardest hit were northern England and Scotland, where blizzards left thousands of people without power, and blocked long stretches of road with up to 2.4m of snow.

...Much of Europe is gripped by one of the coldest periods on record as the number of deaths from the... glacial weather rose to at least 120... [I]n Poland... temperatures dropped to as low as minus 32°C, the lowest... since 1927... Romania was worst hit, where a spokesman for the pathology institute said the cold rooms in the mortuary could no longer cope with the number of bodies since grave-diggers have refused to work because the ground is frozen solid... Around 300 people were still blocked yesterday by avalanche snow after spending five days trapped in a road tunnel in the Russian Caucasus republic of Northern Ossetia... Heavy snow... was blamed for the breakdown of a Paris-bound Eurostar train several kilometres into the Channel tunnel... Many German river transport firms are out of action as waterways in central Europe remained clogged by thick ice... [Record snowfalls also] disrupted transport in southern British Columbia and Vancouver Island... [South] of the Canadian border... National Guard troops were mobilised to contend with the aftermath of huge snowstorms over the weekend in Washington state in which two people died. - 1996

Vast areas of the Northern Hemisphere were plunged into an Arctic deep freeze during the last days of 1996... [Now rapid] snowmelt and torrential rain[is] inundating many areas from Washington and Oregon south to the Californian Wine Country... The rains... [that were caused by surges] of moisture streaming from near Hawaii... unleashed mudslides, which blocked several roadways... [The US] President... has declared a major disaster in California and Idaho as storms... killed at least 20 people and forced 100,000 from their homes... In Reno... the Truckee River burst its banks pouring muddy water through the downtown area and forcing some casinos to close... [In Europe,] Germany's national railway company said it was letting the homeless spend the night in railway stations. More than 30 people, many of them sleeping rough, have died in Germany... A 90-year-old woman, whose frozen body was found curled up on her doorstep on the Isle of Wright by a milk delivery man, became Britain's 13th victim of the cold spell... British bookmakers... [have] shortened their odds on the Thames freezing over between Westminster Bridge and Tower bridge from 200-1 to 20-1 as the river froze further north.

...Skating fever has gripped the Netherlands as freezing temperatures raise hopes of the first Elfstedentocht (Eleven cities tour) skating marathon for 11 years. The day-long 200km race has only been held 14 times since the first competition in 1909 as safety requires a minimum thickness of ice of 15cm along all the canals on the route... [Meanwhile, l]osses from California's... 10 days of storms... have doubled in a day to more than \$US1.5 billion... The severe flooding, which looks set to become the most costly in California's history, has... damaged thousands of homes and inundated tens of thousands of hectares of prime farmland... Receding waters allowed evacuees in some areas to return to their homes, but officials warned that they faced hazards from raw sewage, dead animals and chemicals that may have contaminated the water... The winter storms of 1995, California's most damaging flood disaster, caused \$US1.8 billion in damages... [Elsewhere, at] least 76 people were killed and more than 42,000 left homeless from floods and landslides in eastern Brazil [after storms] raged across the region for more than five days... Heavy rains pounding Bolivia have destroyed the crops and homes of... 100,000 farmers... Some areas have received three times the normal annual rainfall.

...In 1996, for the second year in a row, Auckland was the wettest of N[Z]'s four main centres. But... it was also sunnier than normal and had the most sunshine hours of the four centres... The national average temperature calculated by... N[IWA]... was 12.5 deg C, 0.1 below normal. The highest temperature, 34.7, was recorded at Christchurch Airport on February 7 and the lowest... minus 15.3... at Tapanui in South Otago, on July 4. Milford Sound[– the 'second wettest place in the world' –] was the wettest place with 5917mm of rain; Clyde [– which is only about 125km from Milford –] was the driest with 376mm. It was sunniest in Blenheim with 2564 hours of sun... Auckland... had... 2087... The[end of] year was... marked by some damaging wind events, while several[summertime] hailstorms, all within four weeks, produced damage in horticultural areas... Cyclone Fergus... brought record rain to the Coromandel... The year's rain and cyclones were linked to the La Nina weather pattern... La Nina, which brings moist north-easterlies and easterlies to Auckland, originates in the tropical eastern Pacific Ocean, where a pool of colder than normal ocean water develops.

...Last year was the eighth warmest year since global records began in 1860... 0.23 deg C warmer than the long-term average from 1960 to 1990 of 14.44 deg C... The year was not as warm as 1995, the warmest on record... [at] 0.4 deg C warmer than average... but indicates that the global warming trend which began in the mid 1970s remained consistent in 1996... "A... contribution to less global warming was the weak La Nina conditions in the eastern tropical Pacific. Fluctuations between cold La Nina and warm El Nino waters occur naturally and irregularly every few years," said... [a] senior climate scientist... [His words will be of little comfort to] Coromandel residents and council officials... [who, d]espite their best efforts, [have been]... left with a trail of flooded homes, destroyed roads and other damage in the wake of Cyclone Drena, the second tropical cyclone to hit the area in as many weeks... Aucklanders marvelled at the power of the storm but escaped lightly... Power was restored to most users by early yesterday... The Fullers Ferries services to Waiheke were cancelled from late on Friday night until Saturday afternoon... the first time in eight years[of service] that they had been stopped... The last two Devonport-Auckland ferry crossings were also cancelled on Friday night. At least seven boats broke their moorings, and some were smashed to little more than driftwood against sea walls. Tamaki Drive was closed to traffic at high tide on Saturday and on Friday night as heavy surf crashed on to the road... Auckland beaches lost large amounts of sand and some beachfront properties parts of their front lawns. Long-time residents at the normally calm Cheltenham beach in Devonport said the storm was one of the worst they could remember, with the high tide coming within metres of their homes.

...[the] Auckland man who was electrocuted... when he clutched a live power line which had been felled by high winds during Cyclone Drena... will be remembered as a good Samaritan by residents of the settlement of Kaiaua, in the Firth of Thames, where he met his death... Police said the 35-year-old was collecting seashells at a beach with a friend... when he grabbed the line in an effort to hoist himself up a steep bank... His friend got a shock when he touched Mr Erickson's body. Only hours before, the pair had stopped to offer help to an elderly Kaiaua couple who were trying to

save belongings from their flooding garage... Cyclone Drena was[also] blamed for the death of an elderly Auckland couple when their car slid sideways into an oncoming vehicle on the Kopu-Hikuai road between Thames and Tairua on Saturday.

...The Insurance Council said yesterday that MetService forecasts of Cyclones Drena and Fergus had helped to reduce damage... around the country. Early warnings had allowed holiday-makers, home-owners and local authorities to be better prepared. Last winter's weather had cost the insurance industry about \$8 million, but it was looking at an early estimate of \$1.5 million damage for Thames alone from the two cyclones... Transit N[Z] estimates Cyclone Fergus caused \$1.6 million damage to state highways in the Coromandel and Bay of Plenty areas... As the country mops up, weather forecasters are monitoring a depression north of Western Samoa which has the potential to become another tropical cyclone...

Children made snowballs... yesterday as freak weather frosted the central North Island... Snow fell to low levels in the Kaimanawa Forest and Tongariro National Park, covering Mt Ruapehu... A MetService spokesman... said the Chateau hotel had experienced snow in January only once before – “and that was in 1923.” ...The unseasonal cold snap... was also blamed for a hailstorm that damaged apple crops in the Nelson region...

Hundreds of orchardists have the grim task of surveying damaged crops for the third time this season after hail hit... Hawke's Bay yesterday.

...[The repair bill from the hailstorm that battered Sydney this week is rising as the clean-up continues and the extent of the destruction becomes clearer. The NSW Government yesterday declared the worst-affected areas to be natural disaster zones, making residents able to seek emergency Government help. An estimated 20,000 homes and up to 60,000 cars were damaged on Wednesday night as the storm swept from south to north over metropolitan Sydney, raining down hailstones the size of cricket balls. About 3000 homes were reported to be still without electricity last night. The Insurance Council of AUS said the havoc wrought was likely to be the most expensive on record. Preliminary estimates indicate that insurers face paying out about \$A350 million. State emergency service crews and firefighters were back out again yesterday to help mopping up. Also out in force were glaziers and roofers, who have found themselves rushed off their feet and booked solid for days. There was just one human death, a fisherman struck by lightning. However, lightning also killed Towering Inferno, the horse which played Phar Lap in the 1983 film about the great racehorse. In a curious twist of irony Phar Lap means “lightning” in the Sri Lankan language Sinhalese. Amongst the damaged cars were ‘rows of brand-new Holdens. The hailstones also made hundreds of holes in a Qantas Boeing 737.’ Incidentally, the] bitter chill and harsh wintry weather plaguing many parts of the Northern Hemisphere could usher in a “little ice age” lasting several years, according to a [US] meteorologist... He attributed the cold snaps to unusually warm surface temperatures in the central Pacific. A similar pattern existed from 1976 to 1979 when record low temperatures and snowfall amounts were registered.

...scientists said yesterday... [that the] world may still be experiencing the effects of the “Little Ice Age,” which caused bitter winters and very cool summers from 1400 to 1900... Some of the storms that... [are lashing] Europe may stem from the last gasp of the period, during which the Thames froze over solidly in London – something that never happens now.

...The second winter storm to strike Europe within a week[has] killed eight people... Hurricane-force winds tore across Sweden and Denmark, uprooting trees, bringing down power lines and wreaking havoc on ferry, rail and road traffic... High winds and heavy seas[also] prompted officials to close the Suez Canal and port of Alexandria for three consecutive days... [The] deadly... winter storms... caus[ing] widespread destruction across seven [US states have now]... killed at least 45 people... [– the majority of casualties] were reported dead in the wake of a swarm of tornadoes... tha[t]... tore through Tennessee and Kentucky.

...[much to the delight of ‘tornado chasers’, a] slowly moving storm centred in the heartland of the U[S] triggered swarms of destructive tornadoes for three days... The hardest-hit area was north of Austin, Texas, where the most deadly string of tornadoes in the state in decades wiped out a neighbourhood around the town of Jarrell... Service meteorologists tracking the tornado swarm by radar were able to give residents 35 minutes of warning. But the storm was so severe, and... widespread, that there were few safe places to take shelter. ■ ‘A mini tornado left a trail of destruction in eastern Bay of Plenty yesterday. The twister passed 6km southwest of Whakatane and knocked out power to 10,000 homes. No injuries were reported’...

She ‘was making a cup of tea when she saw a bright flash of light and heard several loud bangs on her roof. Thinking her chimney had been hit by lightning in the thunder storm battering Huntly, she went into the lounge to investigate and found a gaping hole in the ceiling. Her roof had succumbed to a mini-tornado which swept through the town at 7.30 am yesterday. The MetService's weather ambassador says mini-tornadoes are caused by up- and down-drafts within storm clouds, some of which can reach 100 knots. The weather pattern that brought the thunder, lightning and mini-tornadoes from the Tasman Sea was expected to peak at 3 am today’. A tornado also] raked parts of Japan's Okinawa island, tossing cars and critically injuring one passenger.

...[West Auckland firefighters were kept busy on Sunday and Monday dealing with damage caused by bad weather. Falling trees landed on roads and the northwestern motorway and brought down power lines. A Ranui home was badly damaged when a tree crashed through the roof, just missing the occupants.] In international news,] cyclone Grette, the worst to strike... Madagascar[’s east coast] in living memory,[has] killed at least 50 people and left 60,000 homeless. The storm hit... with winds of 195 km/h and torrential rains that caused heavy damage to... coffee crops...

More than 140 bodies have been found in the wake of cyclone Grette... Starvation threatens the 60,000 people sleeping in the open across the south of the country, and French transport planes have brought in emergency relief supplies to the worst-affected areas.

...500 people [a]re missing and 34 confirmed dead on Madagascar in the wake of... cyclone Josie, the second to lash the island within two weeks.

...Cyclone Lisette drenched parts of eastern Mozambique that were inundated less than a month ago by cyclone Josie[and cyclone Grette. Closer to home, cyclone Gillian whipped up gales... produc[ing] minor flooding... on the northern coast of Queensland... and... Cyclone Justin[hit PNG]...

Killer cyclone Justin, which claimed at least 11 lives in P[NG], five in the Coral Sea and two in Queensland's far north, had weakened into a rain depression south-east of Townsville late yesterday. The cyclone left 12,000 homeless in PNG and in far north Queensland caused tens of millions of dollars damage to infrastructure and sugar, fruit and vegetable crops... [The] Federal Finance Minister... said the commonwealth would repay the state Government \$3 for every \$1 spent on emergency relief, even though Queensland had already overspent its disaster funding of \$A27.3 million... by 1.7 times, due to earlier flooding and storm damage.

...An RNZAF Orion's reconnaissance flights will today give Fiji authorities a clear picture of the devastation wrought by Cyclone Gavin. Its mission will include outlying islands where communications have been completely blacked out... A disaster relief co-ordination group, with representatives from N[Z, AUS]... and the European Union, would then decide how to deploy aid... Authorities have confirmed eight deaths so far. Fifteen people are missing, including the crew of the... missing trawler, Wasawasa, which has a N[Z]er among its crew.

...[barricaded towns around NZ's] North Island breathed a sigh of relief late last night as high tides came and went without destroying property. However, thousands of sandbags are still barricading shop doorways around the northern North Island as Cyclone Gavin moves down the country.

...Is NZ on a cyclone highway? ...In Fiji, cyclones come so frequently that entrepreneurs have become accustomed to them and make money from them. Tourists preparing to leave Nadi after Cyclone Gavin were sold T-shirts proudly proclaiming “I survived Cyclone Gavin in Fiji 1997.” Should [NZers] be adopting the same philosophical approach? Gavin is the third cyclone to reach [NZ] this summer... By the time they reached [NZ], none of these cyclones came close to the ferocity which Gavin showed in Fiji, where... at least 19... people were killed and thousands were left homeless... But the mere fact that we have had three of them in a season raises the question – is [NZ] becoming cyclone-prone? [The]MetService... said it's too soon to draw that conclusion... it was largely a “fluke” that Drena, Fergus and Gavin reached here in one year and we may not get three cyclones in one year again for many years... In simple terms, [NZ] is “just too far south and too cold”... Our colder seas and stronger surface winds sap the strength of most tropical cyclones... One of the damaging cyclones to reach [NZ] was Cyclone Bola in March 1988, and we felt only

the edge of it. It swept over the North Island's east coast, causing an estimated \$138 million in damage. Several people lost their lives... But a storm of Bola's intensity happens only about once every 10 years. Other storms still packing a punch... were... in 1968 and Cyclone Bernie in 1982.

...Something will have to be done about [NZ's] summer. It used to kick in about November, hit baking heat in December and January, and ease off in February before gracefully making way for the first hint of autumn in March. Nowadays you can forget about November, and December more often than not is a month of grey skies, wind and rain. Summer only starts getting cranked up around New Year, and the finest weather – that unbroken succession of hot, cloudless days that constitutes true summer – tends to arrive in February, just when the kids have gone back to school and the rest of us back to work. Even March is more summer than autumn now. This dramatically changing weather pattern – dramatic, because it can be measured in decades rather than centuries – has given rise to a serious discombobulation. We are historically a holiday-taking nation and, naturally, we like to take our main holidays when the weather is warmest. Trained from birth to snap into holiday mode by Christmas Day at the latest, we break out the tent-poles, barbecues and chilly-bins in mid-December and head for the beach or motor-camp like automatons. What follows has the awful inevitability of a Greek tragedy: cyclones, gales, roads awash, vast hordes of refugees driven shivering from flooded camps... We have never, as a people, shied from hard decisions regarding the redistribution of time. We introduced daylight saving time when it suited us... and abolished the six o'clock swill... Now we must face the fact that the holiday season and summer are out of kilter, and that the situation is rapidly becoming intolerable. What we need is nothing less than a total rethink of the summer/holiday interface... Why not keep schools going through December, treat Christmas Day and Boxing Day as a short sharp two-day break... and delay the start of the main summer holiday till at least the second week of January, if not later? ...Here is a challenge worthy of the coalition government.

...The highest political office in the land has lent a sympathetic ear to low-lying Far North farmers deluged in last week's torrential rain and flash floods. The Federated Farmers Northland president... said the P[M]'s Office had approved the use of Taskforce Green labour to help to clean up... 17 properties... in the Mangamuka ranges south of Kaitiaki... [T]he Government had not been able to provide... cash relief but labour was what was most needed... to help restore the properties including repairing... 50km of fences washed away, clearing debris, and cleaning silt out of 12 flooded homes... However, finding the 50 workers... through the local employment service could prove difficult... [Summarising news from around the world: d]estructive blizzards... have lashed vast areas of Mongolia in recent weeks... kill[ing] nearly 10,000 cattle and threaten[ing] hundreds of people with starvation; r]esidents in Bangladesh's south-eastern Bandarban Hill district awakened to an unprecedented dusting of snow in the mainly tropical region[– s]cores of people have died of exposure[; snow]... blanketed Damascus... for the first time in five years[; the]... island of Cyprus was... also... blanketed with snow, including the capital, Nicosia, which normally receives almost year-round sunshine[; almost year-round sunshine has caused a severe]... drought... to parch most of eastern and north-eastern Africa, and international relief efforts are being accelerated to help combat starvation from Kenya to Somalia[; o]ngoing drought across southern Argentina's Patagonia region has killed more than 500,000 sheep.

...[the] Greenpeace ship Arctic Sunrise left southern Argentina yesterday on an expedition to document signs of climate change.

...The climate record shows that the whole 8,000-year span of human civilization, from the dawn of cities to space flight, has taken place during a period of extraordinary warmth and stability... The experience has left humanity with the notion that climate is warm and stable. But those who look at the past know different. "Climate is an angry beast... and we are poking it with sticks." ...Entombed in the Antarctic are memories of ice ages, of volcanic eruptions, of epochal changes in winds and rains. These memories are encrypted in dust particles, rare molecules and the properties of the ice itself. The tales they contain of thousands of years of climate changes provide intimations, and warnings, of our fate. That is why people... [are] drilling to the base of the ice sheet and extracting a 1,000-m-long series of ice cores... Four years ago... [when] geophysicists... extracted... an ice core... [from] Greenland, at the opposite end of the earth, [they found] that climate can change dramatically over short periods of time. Roughly 11,500 years ago, Greenland suddenly chilled, and then 1,500 years later, it suddenly warmed. The speed of the last change – a 10° C warming in some places in as little as three years – was fast enough, a meteorologist wryly comments, to capture the attention of politicians. To put a change of this magnitude in perspective, a mere 1.1° C drop in global temperatures during the 13th century started the "Little Ice Age" that wiped out the Vikings' Greenland colony, spurred glaciers to crush villages in Europe and contributed to periodic episodes of starvation and mass migration. A "flickering climate"... would be a biblical disaster in today's crowded world... Since 1968... the University of California at San Diego has studied emperor penguins, beguiling flightless birds that... need 255 days of sea ice in order to complete the cycle from egg laying to the stage when fledglings are hardy enough to begin their wanderings through the southern ocean. Typically, the young birds jump into the water only two weeks or so before the ice breaks up. This[breeding] year... the ice... broke up in mid-December, two weeks before the fledglings were ready to embark, probably dooming the juveniles to an early death. The story is a reminder of the thin margins that sustain life, even for creatures as durable as the emperor penguin, which has thrived for millions of years in the harshest climate on earth.

...On an unusually warm day like this... a balmy 10 deg C... you can almost forget that Antarctica is rightly called "the frozen continent." Heat-stressed penguins are panting and sliding down snowbanks to try to cool off. Elephant seals bask in the sun in tepid pools. There may still be debate about why the Antarctic climate is changing... but there is no doubt that it is changing. The mean temperature on the Antarctic Peninsula has risen by about 1 deg since 1950... Adelie penguins still breed on craggy Cormorant Island, but not in the numbers they used to... Adelie penguins used to crowd this Antarctic island so thickly you would think you had wandered into a headwaiters convention, but global warming has sent many of them searching for colder climes... Penguins are also under siege on other fronts – a chicken virus that predisposes hatchlings to lethal infections has shown up in some emperors and Adelines... Weddell and crabeater seals, which like the Adelie penguin depend on pack ice, are[also] declining, while species such as the elephant seal and especially the fur seal that avoid pack ice are increasing.

...An attempt to drill through the Antarctic sea ice by a six-nation group... has been abandoned[for '12 months']. The drillers were evacuated after the ice cracked and began moving... 50mm... up and down... under the... 50-tonne rig... The aim was to recover and analyse cores from sediment strata beneath the sea floor... Scientists involved in the \$US4.3 million... programme did, however, succeed in taking nearly 150m of core sample from their first drilling... Scientists wanted to discover if there were Antarctica ice sheets which caused fluctuations in worldwide sea levels before the glaciations of the last 36 million years. ['Over 75% of the Earth's fresh water is locked up in glaciers – most of it in Antarctica.']

...[THE] STORY ON WHAT ANTARC-tica's ice layers can tell us... correctly noted that today's average global temperatures are relatively low. For more than three-quarters of geological history, Earth was considerably warmer than it is now. The Antarctic ice cap will certainly melt again, causing world sea levels to rise by up to 18 m... Even before human populations existed, the Earth's climate and sea levels varied widely over hundreds of million of years. [Indeed, 'during the coldest time, about 18,000 years ago, sea levels were up to 200m lower than they are today.'] Clearly, climate change involves vast forces that are quite beyond human control. [● 'ANTARCTICA has been closely associated with NZ ever since Captain COOK, early in the 1770s, sailed south to investigate the existence of a legendary southern continent. He penetrated as low as 71°S without sighting any land. The first known sighting was by Thaddeus von Bellinghausen in 1819. NZer Alexander von Tunzelmann was probably the first person to ever step on to the continent at Cape Adare, on 25 January 1895. NZ has had bases on the continent since 1957, first near Cape Adare and since 1964 at Scott Base, in McMurdo Sound. A treaty "ensuring the use of Antarctica for peaceful purposes only and the continuance of international harmony" was signed in 1959 by 12 nations – NZ, Argentina, AUS, Belgium, Chile, France, Japan, Norway, South Africa, Russia, Britain and the US. Poland joined the treaty in 1977.']

...a delegate to the Antarctic Treaty consultative meeting in Christchurch, said... scientists were distraught... this summer... when they saw... ice shelves... tumble into the sea. "Scientists who have been going to the northernmost part of the Larsen ice shelf for 20 years were upset to find their workplace actually disappear." ...Antarctic[a contains 70%] of the world's fresh water and if it all melted away, sea levels would rise by up to 90m.

...Every summer in Antarctica it happens. Massive chunks of ice – some the size of small Pacific islands – break away from the freshwater ice shelves which fringe the continent and shatter into icebergs which float out to sea. These annual “calving” events have been getting more frequent and a lot more dramatic. And the scientists who have been observing them are increasingly worried... Two years ago this month, a 2600 sq km area of the Larsen Ice Shelf... collapsed and drifted away... Now, the... 12,000 sq km... area of the ice shelf left behind – Larsen B – is under similar threat of collapse... [S]atellite observations of nine ice shelves on the Antarctic Peninsula – south from Argentina – showed that five had “retreated dramatically in the past 50 years.” ...What is most worrying is that warming of the Antarctic environment could have serious implications for the global ecology since the southern ice cover helps regulate global climate, ocean circulation and sea level[, which]... has recently been rising about 2 mm a year... It is no coincidence that... Greenpeace is undertaking a voyage on an ice-strengthened ship... within months of the next major gathering of the parties to the international convention on climate change... in Kyoto, Japan... The crew of around 25 aboard Arctic Sunrise will visit several of the research stations on the peninsula to gather evidence of ice retreat and to “bring this information to the world’s attention in a visual way,” says... [the NZer who is the expedition] co-ordinator... About 140 countries have ratified the 1992 Climate Change Convention... [O]pponents to the strengthening of the climate convention... are likely to find themselves isolated if the Americans get tough in Kyoto. [NZ] has been on the outer in these talks with its controversial proposal to trade off [CO₂] emissions against tree planting.

...There are many... untidy elements to the whole climate change debate. Even if average global temperatures did rise their effects on regional temperatures, global agriculture and human life generally would still be highly uncertain. But one thing is known for certain: at our present state of technology, curbing greenhouse gas emissions – or even restraining their growth – would be economically costly... [And] would have its greatest negative impact on the poor – both the relatively poor in [First World] countries and the absolutely poor in [Last] World countries, whose living standards would be compromised by slower growth in the [First World. NZers]... should be thankful, I suppose, that we have an Environment Minister who understands some economics, even if he takes the global warming threat too seriously... He proposes... that in international negotiations we oppose a uniform national emissions charge and instead promote the idea of international emissions trading. Recognising that the costs of reducing greenhouse gases vary from country to country, [NZ] will propose that countries be allowed effectively to trade their emissions quota with one another... Countries that found it particularly costly to reduce emissions could... pay other countries to take up some of the burden of adjustment. This... seems better than an immediate carbon tax. But... [there] are other ways in which we could prove ourselves a good world citizen on the issue of climate change. First, we could cease our irrational posturing on the subject of everything nuclear. It is one of the ironies of this whole debate that nuclear energy produces no greenhouse gases yet is hated by our eco-Jeremiahs even more than greenhouse gas emissions. Consequently, we could help the world by growing up a little and no longer going into collective convulsions every time a ship carries nuclear waste through the Pacific... Many countries subsidise their energy industries... Subsidies artificially push down energy prices, leading to overproduction and inefficient energy use. They undoubtedly add to greenhouse gas emissions. On one estimate, energy subsidies total around \$NZ\$70 billion worldwide... That is bad economics and usually bad for the environment as well. We need only remember the bad old days in our own country: the Clyde Dam and some of the Think Big energy projects were environmental debacles just as much as they represented money down the drain.

...Opposition parties and environmentalists have accused the[NZ] Government of a cop-out in deferring a carbon tax... from June until... the... world can agree on an all-inclusive plan to stave off global warming... [at] the next international meeting on the subject in Japan in December... A spokesman for the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society... said the Government was avoiding making hard decisions and passing an environmental debt to future generations... But the chairman of the parliamentary commerce select committee... welcomed the deferral, calling it a victory for common sense over political correctness. He said a high carbon tax would only force big industries like aluminium, steel and cement-making to locate overseas where they would not be penalised... [for carrying] on adding to global emissions. The Government promised a low-level carbon tax if voluntary agreements with industry failed to curb[NZ’s rising CO₂] emissions. The voluntary agreements have fallen short of targets.

...Environmentalists are warning that the Boreal forests of the Arctic Circle... which make up a... third of... Earth’s total forest cover, are among the most threatened habitats in the world... The plight of tropical forests has sapped so much public attention over the past decade that loggers have been free to pulp the vast woods of the Arctic Circle while raising barely a whisper of protest... Boreal forests, also known as taiga, form a belt around the freezing upper reaches of the Northern Hemisphere. Mostly, they are made up of conifers... and deciduous trees... But despite the harsh climate in which they exist, Boreal forests support tens of thousands of species of animal, some of which – the brown bear, flying squirrel, Siberian tiger and the longhorn beetle – are now endangered. Their principal enemy is logging. The U[N] has forecast that the world’s consumption of timber products will rise by almost 60[%] between 1990 and 2010, forcing the timber industry to look for new resources to compensate for shrinking supplies in tropical regions... [Yet in] Britain alone – where the average person uses 30 times more timber products than the average Indian – an estimated 500,000 tonnes of wood is buried in rubbish dumps each year... Around 70[%] of Boreal forest grows in Russia, a prime target for exploitation. Logging was blamed for a... 20[%] reduction in Siberian forest tree stock between 1966 and 1988... There are also a few small tracts in northern China, Mongolia and Scotland... The remainder... are in Canada – where the governments in Alberta, Manitoba and Quebec are opening up large areas to logging – Alaska and Scandinavia... Friends of the Earth, which has just launched a campaign to save “snowforests” – a term created in a bid to capture the public imagination – reports that in Sweden less than 5[%] of the old forest remains, and much of this is being logged... Just 3[%] of Sweden’s remaining forest is officially protected; a little less in Finland, and just 1[%] in Norway... “Despite forestry industry claims, the ‘factory forests’ that replace the natural snowforests are not ecologically friendly and do not replace lost habitat for wildlife,”... [T]he number of birds found in plantations can be as little as a third of those in natural forest... In many areas, replacement with plantation is not even an option because the initial removal of vegetation exposes frozen permafrost soils to sunlight. When these soils melt during the summer, they are converted to swampland, making reforestation impossible... The way of life of human inhabitants of the snowforests is threatened, too. The Saami, a group of around 45,000 people in northern Scandinavia and the Kola Peninsula, survive chiefly by herding reindeer, hunting and fishing... But local peoples and wildlife are not the only cause for concern. “Large-scale degradation of Boreal forests could have very serious global consequences, because these areas store huge amounts of carbon...,” says... a researcher at the Washington-based World Resources Institute. “If that carbon is released, it could be a major contributor to global warming.” ...At present, there is no single organisation which tracks the status of the world’s forests, making it hard for environmentalists to estimate the proportion of natural forest in a healthy condition. However, in March, the institute will release the first global study of the status of the world’s large tracts of ecologically intact primary forest – known as “frontier forest.” This assessment... will give the most accurate figures yet on how much forest existed before modern man... and how much remains as frontier forest – as opposed to fragmented or degraded forest... [By the way, a] family in France showed signs of radioactive contamination after eating... wild mushrooms they collected in the forests of the Vosges Mountains. The exposure to cesium 137 was discovered when one family member was tested before being assigned to duty aboard a nuclear-powered sub... The contamination is believed to have come from the 1986 Chernobyl disaster, or from [US] or Russian nuclear testing in the 1960s, according to... France’s Ionizing Rays Protection Bureau.

...Greenpeace announced that radioactivity measured on a beach next to France’s nuclear reprocessing plant at La Hague... was up to 3000 times above acceptable levels. The measurements were taken from a pipe that carries waste water from the plant into the sea. The pipe is usually submerged but has recently been exposed by the lowest... tides in 10 years.

...Greenpeace warned that it has found crabs with twice the maximum European allowed radiation level near... the La Hague plant near Cherbourg, [while] saying the level of radiation in the sea has increased by 100 times since the plant management ordered the cleaning of outlet pipes... [In related news, dozens] of nations pledged an additional \$US37 million... yesterday towards rebuilding the rapidly deteriorating concrete tomb of the Chernobyl nuclear reactor, scene of the world's worst nuclear accident... The explosion... at Chernobyl's number 4 reactor, which killed 31 people, injured hundreds and forced hundreds of thousands out of their homes in the Ukraine... spewed radioactive fallout across the Northern Hemisphere, and the health consequences for much of Eastern Europe are still being felt today. Twelve countries – the... [G7] nations and the other [EU] members – have so far pledged nearly half the estimated \$US760 million... cost of the reconstruction... The Ukraine, which intends to permanently close the Chernobyl plant's remaining operational units by 2000, is contributing \$US150 million... The Ukrainian President... told delegates... at a conference in New York... that Chernobyl remained “a particularly poignant and painful issue” for his country, and he blasted the conduct of the “totalitarian regime” in the former Soviet Union. “The people of Ukraine paid a heavy price for the actions of Soviet authorities, taken without accounting for the opinions or concerns of Ukrainians.” Russia was notably absent from the list of donors. A senior [US] official said Washington was interested to know “why they have no need to share in this common responsibility.”

...[a] study of barn swallows has yielded more evidence that contamination from the 1986 Chernobyl accident caused inherited genetic damage... [R]adiation had caused mutations that were passed on to the swallows' offspring... [Incidentally, a] Chilean ecological group [has] warned residents living around Santiago that two-foot-long “mutant” rats have attacked barnyard animals in a suburb of the capital... [The] president of the Ecological Council of Maipo, said he believes that the rodents have grown so large because they fed on the droppings of hormone-fattened poultry.

...deformities found in frogs in recent years – such as missing or extra limbs – are traceable to something in the waters they inhabit, scientists say... Preliminary results of experiments conducted by... [US] researchers show that frog eggs nurtured in water from two wetland sites in northwest Minnesota, where malformed frogs had been found, produced malformed embryos... In the experiments, frog embryos from a non-native species, the African clawed frog, developed malformations even in half-diluted pond water. Samples taken from areas without deformed frogs produced normal embryos... Frogs' skins are permeable to water and previous research showed the most commonly deformed species to be mink and leopard frogs, which spend the most time in the water. Deformed frogs have [also] been reported in Wisconsin, Iowa, South Dakota, Missouri, California, Texas, Vermont and Quebec... “We now need to determine if people are at risk,”... said... the... director of the environmental toxicology programme at the [US] National Institute of Environmental Health Services... “The causative agent or agents could be chemical contaminants or natural products such as pond plants or algae. Alternatively, ‘the deformities may be due to bird-borne parasites getting into tadpoles’.”

...one team of researchers has reported that a soil fungus evident in every dead frog and toad they collected in AUS and Panama matches the fungus found by another team studying dead frogs in the US. It is not known why the chytridiomycete fungus, which has never affected animals such as frogs before, is killing the creatures. In local news, [l]iver and kidney abnormalities in eels and reproductive problems in trout have been found in a study of fish downstream of the Tarawera River paper mills. The findings were used by the Department of Conservation yesterday to show the need for long-term investigation into the effects of chemical contamination of the river... [while presenting] evidence challenging the discharge applications of Tasman Pulp and Paper and [CHH] Tissue mills as well as the geothermal fluid discharge consent sought by the Crown. A senior conservation officer... said short-finned eels, known for their water-quality tolerance, dominated the lower Tarawera. However, inanga, adult whitebait, were completely absent. In its submissions the [DoC] called for all the applications to be declined unless conditions meeting the Minister of Conservation's concerns were met. It recommended a raft of substantial changes to conditions suggested by staff of Environment Bay of Plenty, some of which had already been described as too tough by [Challenge, the owner of] Tasman.

...A symbol of [NZ's] clean green image, the Hector's dolphin, is probably the most chemically contaminated marine mammal in [NZ], says an environmental scientist... His team of scientists had recorded PCB levels up to 30 times higher in Hector's dolphins than in other marine animals... [He] said whales, seals and dolphins were good subjects because they accumulated persistent chemicals during long lives at the top of the marine food chain. This made them useful indicators of pollution, especially as pollution levels in the sea itself were sometimes too low to measure... Dioxin contamination of the country's coast was originally found when medium to high levels of chlorine were detected in Hector's dolphins. Studies have since shown the widespread presence of other organochlorines in marine mammals around... [NZ. D]ioxins and... PCBs... are probably of the greatest concern among “persistent organic pollutants”... because they can be carried by air currents for long distances. Eventually they condense and are deposited on land and water, especially in cold regions... So far most [NZ] studies, beginning in 1989, had concentrated on the Hector's dolphin because it lived close to shore... Its levels of organochlorines... were minimal compared with those recorded in beluga whales in the Gulf of St Lawrence, which drains North America's Great Lakes. Tumours in those whales had been blamed on PAHs – polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons – but no one knew if PCBs contributed indirectly to the cancers. The chemicals had been shown to affect the immune systems of some mammals.

...A 20-metre, 70-tonne finback whale died on Spain's northern coast after eating 50 kgm of plastic debris. The Spanish daily *El Pais* reported that the whale beached near Santander, and died despite the efforts of 40 rescue workers. An examination of the whale's intestines revealed that the mammal had swallowed about 30 plastic bags, a rubber glove and several hard plastic objects. The plastic had formed into a ball that blocked the whale's digestive tract, causing it to lose more than four tons of weight before dying.

...What do Europeans worry about most when they look at the world? Overall, their prime concern is war, according to... one of the largest [surveys] conducted on European social concerns... [M]ore than 13,000 people... [from 13 different nations were interviewed. 41%] cited war and violence, 27[%] cited famine and 25[%] cited environmental degradation. Poverty was fourth on the list of worries followed by unemployment, drug abuse, Aids and population growth... [However,] the Germans... generally view the environment as a bigger problem... [as do] the Dutch... almost half the Swedes [also] mentioned the environment as a major concern, [but] only about one in 10 Britons, French, Belgians and Spaniards cited it.

...Conservation groups have welcomed a global survey which shows that [NZers] rate environmental protection above economic growth. But their delight has been tempered by claims that the Government has failed to live up to Coalition Agreement promises that the environment would get a better deal. The poll of... 27,000 people in... 24 countries... [from] six continents was... carried out by a Canadian company, Environics International, and shows that... [in NZ 77%] of those surveyed said looking after the environment should take precedence. That compared with 73[%] of respondents in Canada and Switzerland. Only 23[%] of those surveyed in the Ukraine and 27[%] in Nigeria shared this view.

...Niger[s] government announced that about 71,000 villagers [a]re threatened by famine in its drought-afflicted south-eastern areas.

...In honour of Niger's independence in 1960, more than 60 million trees have been planted during the past 12 years... in a massive effort to stave off the encroaching Sahara Desert... which... [covers more] than two-thirds of the country... but only half have survived.

...China's vast Gobi Desert is encroaching into... crop and grazing lands at a rate of 2500 sq km each year... [The] vice-minister of forestry... blames over-grazing of reclaimed lands, the blind search for medicinal herbs... excessive gathering of firewood... and... chaotic digging of mines...

REMEMBER the... chaos of the massive slips that caused \$3 million damage to the Haast highway and extensive flooding around Wanaka, Queenstown and Glenorchy... [in 1994; the] East Coast drought [and the] Auckland water crisis? ...Prepare for more of the same. Those droughts and that rainfall were produced by El Nino... And according to the climate scientists, it looks as if El Nino is on its way back... [L]atest scientific evidence shows a definite change from the last 12 months, when the opposite, La Nina side of the Southern Oscillation delivered five tropical

cyclones... If so, by the end of the winter it'll be cooler and windier than usual throughout [NZ]... and... there'll be a higher risk of spring or summer drought in... Auckland... Northland... and... Hawke's Bay...

Wairoa[']s... Deputy Mayor... said preliminary assessments suggested environmental damage... caused by the storm which battered northern Hawkes Bay for five days could be worse than that caused by Cyclone Bola nine years ago... The state of emergency in the area was lifted... yesterday.

...Wind gusts up to 100 km/h yesterday battered orchards, damaged buildings and caused a road crash in the central North Island. The winds kept emergency services busy from early morning... and reached their peak by early afternoon... [Meanwhile, parts] of north-eastern [US] and northern Europe[have been] plunged into mid-winter conditions again by separate blizzards that paralysed transport and cut power to nearly a million people. The storm in New England was the third worst to ever strike the region, and produced Boston's heaviest April snowfall on record... [However,] Britain remained in the grip of its worst drought for 230 years, and authorities expect to impose water rationing within a few weeks... Pleasure cruises along the Thames west of London have been cancelled because the river has dropped... [Elsewhere, hydroelectric] supplies in Chile were cut to accommodate a severe energy crisis caused by continuing drought in the Andes... Reservoirs have fallen to record low levels... [in] the upper reaches of [China's] Yellow river... and residents are urged to use available water supplies "wisely." ...[but torrential] rains falling for a second week across parts of East Africa provided relief from a severe drought that has parched the region since September... Some rains were so heavy that they unleashed flash floods in Tanzania, killing at least 13 people.

...Flash floods caused by torrential rains following three years of drought have left hundreds of thousands of people homeless in four countries of southern Africa... [Authorities] fear... that disease would spread across the malaria-prone region... Zimbabwe was the hardest hit...

The rainy season is a time for rejoicing in Zimbabwe, where farming is the mainstay of the economy, but the storms take a fearsome toll in human and animal lives. According to experts, an average of two people are killed by lightning each day during the rainy season, which lasts for between 130 and 150 days from mid-November. Official police statistics put [Zimbabwe's] lightning toll at about 150 people each season. But... many deaths go unreported in the remote rural villages which are the most vulnerable to this natural killer... Zimbabwe's 1975 record in the *Guinness Book of Records* as the country where the largest number of people were struck dead by a single bolt remains unbeaten... [at] 21... The... faculty of electrical engineering at the University of Zimbabwe, attributes the high incidence of lightning strikes mainly to the granite outcrops which surround many rural homesteads. The... outcrops... are associated with low-level radiation which results in the ionisation of the air above... As well, the conical point of the mud-huts roofs are capped with galvanised steel cones which can attract lightning... Almost 70[%] of the huts struck by lightning are kitchen huts that contain objects like steel stoves that attract lightning. The carbon from the fire which accumulates on the kitchen walls also helps attract lightning... [The] University... has designed lightning conductors for private homes but poor peasant families cannot afford to buy them... Earth is struck by lightning 100 times every second... [However, Zimbabwe's death figures seem excessive in comparison to the] 40 fatalities in neighbouring South Africa, which not only covers four times the territory but has similar climatic conditions[, and]... an average of 84 deaths a year in the whole of the U[S] - roughly 30 times the size of Zimbabwe. [● A '21-year-old Auckland was running up his driveway to avoid the heavy rain on Saturday morning when he heard a deafening bang followed by a bright flash that seemed to shoot through him. Then he felt a warm sensation in his back and realised he had been struck by lightning, which had burned a hole in his shirt. His only injuries were a graze on his back where the lightning hit and some damage to the retina of his left eye. It is thought the lightning entered his body through his back and exited through his eye. In December 1984, a Te Awamutu man was struck by lightning and died, and in December 1986 lightning struck a man and his horse in Taihape, killing both.]

...A lightning strike in the Auckland suburb of Kohimarama shattered dozens of windows, skinned a 40-year-old Norfolk pine and blew the lid off a toilet cistern. Miraculously, no one was hurt when the lightning struck just after 11.30 am on Saturday in Southern Cross Rd, near Selwyn College. About 20 homes on both sides of the road suffered some damage, most of it to windows and glass doors. The clean-up after the strike is expected to take a week, as glass has showered lawns, pathways and garages as well as homes. It appears the damage is not covered by the Earthquake Commission. Residents plan to contact their insurance companies today. "I was in shock, I didn't know what to do or who to ring," said the 32-year-old whose rented home was at the centre of the blast. "I just heard the loudest boom I've ever heard and then the windows went. I think I'm lucky to be alive." In international news, m]ore than 300 families fled flood waters as... [the US state of] Washington... battled a deluge of rain, mud and melting snow after unseasonably high temperatures.

...A combination of flash spring floods and a snowstorm over the upper Mississippi Valley and Great Plains produced some of the most miserable conditions in memory... [North Dakota's] Red River, overwhelmed by meltdown from a record snowfall, is at its highest level for a century... 54ft[or] twice the flood stage... and floodwaters have turned parts of the city of Fargo into vast lakes... Grand Forks... a city of 50,000, has been abandoned... Then came a new calamity - in the middle of the flood an office block in the business district suddenly caught fire. Unable to get near the blaze at first, the fire brigade could only circle from the air, watching the fire spread... [It] quickly wiped out four blocks of the city... Firemen tried and failed to attach their hoses to fire hydrants submerged in the freezing water. Finally they resorted to bombing the buildings with floodwater. The result looks more like Bosnia than North Dakota... Almost 90,000 cattle died in the flooding. Bloating, rotting animal carcasses were dragged from ponds and creeks before they could foul drinking water[. Compounding the region's problems, 'cold weather has frozen the flood water' still covering fields]... Nearly 200,000 residents in Kentucky were told to boil tap water before drinking it after floodwaters submerged at least 40 residential water systems. Tetanus and diphtheria shots were offered free to those who have not been inoculated recently... Psychologists from surrounding states offered their services free of charge at Red Cross shelters, and warned flood victims to be aware of signs of lingering stress such as recurring nightmares, edginess, depression and memory gaps... The late-season outbreak[that] brought... a hard freeze southward to the Ohio Valley... [also caused the deaths of] 17 people in Kentucky, five in Ohio, five in Tennessee and one in West Virginia... [plus] extensive crop damage.

...Parts of... Canad[a's prairies have] experienced their worst flooding in more than 500 years... After devastating the US town of Grand Forks the Red River spilled across the border... ABOUT 17,000 people headed for high ground as the Red River spread into a 1300sq km lake and soldiers worked around the clock to build a 24km dyke southwest of Winnipeg, a city of 650,000... [A] comparable flood in 1950 forced the evacuation of 100,000 Winnipeg residents... Red River floods in 1979 covered 1000sq km... 2000sq km may be flooded as the Red River crests this year.

...[destruction] of the wetlands in the Red River Valley of North Dakota... this century worsened the damage from the record floods that inundated the region... according to the Sierra Club. The environmental group announced that... the river's watershed had... lost 75[%] of its original wetlands, which can act as river sponges... [T]he group said that if just 6[%] of the basin's wetlands had been restored at an estimated cost of \$NZ\$375 million, it would have stored 20 days of... peak flood flow... [By the way, although many] residents of Canada, the northern [US] and parts of Europe would disagree... scientists say that spring arrived a week earlier than usual in the Northern Hemisphere... [Unfortunately, the] freak Arctic chill was not predicted, and [French winegrowers] were unprepared to protect their crops against temperatures as cold as... -7 deg C. The worst freeze in decades was even more damaging because early spring warmth had caused the vines to flower three weeks earlier than normal... [The] sudden spring frost and freeze... wiped out up to 100[%] of the wine crop in... south-eastern France.

...Jules Verne... was... hailed for his vision and advocacy of science's wonders... The... Parisian lawyer-turned-novelist... predicted the submarine, the aqualung and television in books such as *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* and *Around the World in Eighty*

Days... while in *The Begum's Fortune* he depicted a Hitler-like megalomaniac who used technology to commit genocide... In... *From the Earth to the Moon*... Verne broke with literary tradition, which called for the recounting of such a voyage as only an imaginary undertaking. Instead he used scientific principles to outline a book of startling prophetic quality. His moon rocket was launched from land near Cape Canaveral and had the correct escape velocity, while its capsule even had a splashdown at a site 5km from that of the first real lunar spaceship, Apollo 11. But Verne nurtured deep doubts about technology's impact and, when... his publisher, Pierre-Jules Hetzel... died in 1886, reverted to his true nature, "championing environmentalism, anti-capitalism and social responsibility while questioning the benefits that science and technology could bring to an imperfect world." Before his death in 1905 these ideas were outlined in... *Propeller Island*, in which Verne depicts politicians and missionaries destroying the native cultures of the Polynesian islands; *The Ice Sphinx*, in which he anticipated the extinction of the whale; and *The Will of an Eccentric*, which described global pollution. Most striking of all was *The Purchase of the North Pole*, the finale to a trilogy that began with *From the Earth to the Moon*. By now Verne's bold astronauts have been reduced to ravaging despoilers who attempt to alter Earth's axis so they can melt the poles and expose their underlying mineral wealth, heedless of the millions who would be drowned.

...[The Earth might have tilted toward the sun 600 million years ago far more than it does today, making the polar regions warm and the tropics cold, according to research published in the journal *Nature*. Scientists say this could explain evidence that there once were glaciers in what are now the tropics.]

...NZ's glacier snow lines have shrunk further than ever recorded, raising fears for water supplies and hydro lakes in the South Island. Tourism could also be affected as visitors find it increasingly difficult to reach the 48 glaciers, from the Kaikoura Range through to Fiordland, on sightseeing trips.]

...the Brogg Glacier... Peru's highest snowcap... has receded 766m since the turn of the century... Global warming has been blamed.

...The Bering glacier in south-east Alaska has shrunk by 130 sq km over the last century... The... rate at which the... 191km long... glacier was melting... had increased during the last 20 years, with some areas losing as much as 1km per year since the start of the 1990s... According to Greenpeace, temperatures in the western Arctic have increased by one degree every 10 years over the last 30 years.

...Life expectancy has increased dramatically in most countries, but that does not mean our health is getting better... The Bank of Planet Earth is becoming overdrawn as humans spend... more than [their] fair share of the planet's ecological capital... This[has] left little space for other species, and would eventually rebound against human health... [I]nterference with natural systems... [has already] contributed to an upsurge in climate-related diseases... [Furthermore, a] report in the *New Scientist* magazine suggested that water pollution can cause brain damage that turns ordinary people into violent criminals... Some[US] counties with the highest pollution levels had crime rates triple the national average... [C]rime figures from the... [FBI were] compared... with information on industrial discharges of lead and manganese from the Environmental Pollution Agency.

...pollution is increasing... [f]orests, farmlands and coral reefs are dwindling... oceans are overfished and one billion people are so poor they threaten to use any resource available just to stay alive. Environmentalists are jittery. And so are the organisers of the second Earth Summit, apprehensive that speeches from world leaders will be bereft of concrete action... [After] Rio... at least 1800 communities set up their own environmental programmes. But... "Overall, we haven't made the fundamental change of course promised in Rio," said... [the] secretary-general of that conference... "We should be beyond promises of Rio and into implementation." ...The EU formula calls for a 15[%] reduction in greenhouse gas emissions below the 1990 level by the year 2010. Small island states are fighting for a 20[%] reduction by 2005. To achieve these goals, energy usage has to be more efficient, subsidies for fossil fuels have to be phased out and wind or solar energy alternatives have to be explored... Despite many... innovations[by the US] toward energy efficiency, experts say it still takes 120 workers to produce the energy needs for the average [USer], 60 for each European but only eight for each Chinese and one for each person in Bangladesh.

...Bangladesh announced[yesterday that] it will plant 80 million seedlings along its shoreline in an effort to limit damage from tropical cyclones...

Bangladesh launched a massive rescue and relief operation yesterday in areas devastated by a severe cyclone that local newspapers said had killed more than 350 people... Detailed estimates of losses of lives and property were not available as many areas were still cut off... But... there was enough warning for... 33,000 Red Crescent and other volunteers [to evacuate] about 500,000 people to more than 130,000... cyclone shelters... The fate of the Panamanian flag ship *Esco Argo*, which sent an SOS message during the cyclone saying it was sinking... was still unclear. The Bangladeshi ship the *Pioneer* and survey vessel *Anusandhani* might also have sunk, one port official said. Weather officials said they feared the cyclone could trigger a tidal surge of up to five metres, inundating huge areas. Saint Martin's island near Teknaf was under two metres of water.

...Small island nations issued a cry for help... yesterday, saying they were rapidly becoming the first victims of global warming and could disappear under the sea. "This affects us... in the most profound and dangerous way... The people know things are changing..."... said... Western Samoa's UN ambassador and head of the Alliance of Small Island States... Several island representatives said the damage was already well under way... [The] President... of the Maldives said he had been talking about the issue for 10 years...

[T]he UK Meteorological Office... [says] island and ocean surface temperatures... in... [a large] section of... the south-west Pacific... have risen by 0.6-0.8°C since 1910... "To put that in context, average global temperatures at the peak of the last ice age were only 5°C lower than they are today,"... [While small island nations fret that rising temperatures may cause them to disappear, AUSn] farmers are benefiting... Global warming has helped[the] farmers reap bumper crops of wheat... "The frequency of severe frosts had decreased in eastern A[US] in recent decades,"...

An international group of climate scientists... using data from 5400 observation stations worldwide... has found that nights are warming faster than days... leading to a narrowing of the daily temperature range for most of the world... They are... investigating the effects of increased cloudiness... thought to be one contributing factor... [C]loudiness tended to increase night temperatures and slow down changes in day temperatures... [T]he impact of dust particles might... also... be significant... Meanwhile, scientists are predicting that if the El Nino weather pattern... develop[s]... this... year, and if no volcanoes impact on the weather, [next]... year... could be the world's warmest year recorded... [In related news, economists have warned that AUS] risked long-term economic damage if the Federal Government pursued its greenhouse gas policy, and expressed concern at suggestions A[US] may not sign a [proposed] agreement to extend emission reduction measures.

...The [UN Earth Summit in New York] opened with Europe attacking the U[S] for not doing enough to combat global warming... [- since 1992, carbon] emissions have actually increased[in the US] by more than 13[%] - and with Last World]... nations condemning broken promises by the [First World nations]. The week-long, 173-nation conference is taking stock of what has been done to save the planet since the first Earth Summit... Worldwide carbon emissions from the burning of fossil fuels... climbed to 6.25 billion tonnes in 1996.

...The U[S] is under heavy attack at the UN Earth Summit... but delegates said yesterday they don't believe... [its President, who] addresses the... conference today... will make any concessions... The US is by far the world's largest polluter of greenhouse gases followed by China, Russia, Japan and Germany. The summit ends tomorrow with a document giving guidelines for the environment and development in the 21st century.

...Environmental groups attacked[the US] President... yesterday for refusing to announce specific targets for cutting the greenhouse gases... But a key business group welcomed his cautious approach, saying he had softened his position from several months ago... In his speech, [the President] pledged to cut "significantly" [US] greenhouse gases and promised to spend \$US1 billion... to help [Last World] nations reduce their production of the gases... [However, US] officials said \$750 million... of the \$1 billion... would be shifted from existing foreign aid programmes... [The President] said he would seek specific targets... in Kyoto... at the end of the year. "...with 4[%] of the world's population, we produce 20[%] of its greenhouse gases... we must do better..."... [The] week-long UN Earth Summit ended with its chairman delivering the verdict: "Our words have not been matched by our deeds." ...Delegates made no firm commitments on... emissions... Prospects, however, were good for new agreements on protecting fresh water in separate negotiations after the conference... On protecting forests, the session put off until 2000 a decision on whether to negotiate a

treaty, pushed by Europe, Canada, Malaysia and Russia but opposed by... Brazil... and... the U[S. Furthermore, the]... final summit document... failed to include a political statement of intent because governments could not agree on one. Instead a more general, shorter preamble was attached to the voluminous final document reaffirming the lofty principles set forth in Rio that enshrined the concept of “sustainable development” – economic growth compatible with social justice and ecological safety.

...The beauty of Rio de Janeiro's Guanabara Bay as it curves around world-famous Sugar Loaf mountain and the city's coastline has been immortalised on millions of postcards. But most locals would not swim in its waters despite the city's stifling heat. For many years now the fish have been dying, the mangroves have been wilting and white vultures circle where seagulls used to fly. The stench that drifts across the murky waters in parts of the bay and the dead fish and garbage floating on the oil-patched surface were one reason Rio never even came close to succeeding in its bid to stage the 2004 Olympic Games. As hosts of the 1992 Earth Summit, Rio's authorities promised to clean up the bay, launching in 1994 what they described as Latin America's biggest environmental clean-up programme. But the \$US867 million... effort financed by Rio state, the Interamerican Development Bank (IADB) and Japan's Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) has been marred by delays, controversy and accusations of political opportunism. [And environmentalists] say the project... is using almost 90[%] of its funds to improve sanitation... “The programme does not address all the environmental problems in the bay... Not one penny is being spent to regenerate fishing, to save the mangroves or to stop the silting up of the bay, which is the most serious problem.” ...Twenty years ago as many as 20,000 fishermen made a living fishing the waters of the bay, but today the numbers have dwindled to less than 3000... The pollution of Guanabara Bay goes back... to the arrival of the Portuguese in Brazil 400 years ago. Ever since, the 300 sq km bay has been used as a garbage dump... The roughly eight million people living around Guanabara throw hundreds of tonnes of garbage into the bay every day and enough raw sewage to fill Rio's world famous Maracana soccer stadium. An oil refinery, two commercial ports and some 6000 industrial firms add their share of waste such as... heavy metals to the lethal cocktail... [E]nvironmentalists doubt pollution levels will be cut by more than 30[%] at most... But the vice-governor of Rio de Janeiro state... who is in charge of the project, is confident pollution levels will be cut significantly... “...Our aim to reduce pollution by 50[%] will be achieved by 1999,”... when work agreed to under the financing scheme must be completed. He said the work was proceeding at such a rate that authorities had almost made up for a one-year delay at the start of the programme caused by legal and managerial wrangling, which cost the state Government \$US1.2 million... in fines by the IADB... The programme foresees six new garbage disposal plants, seven new sewage treatment plants and 10 new water reservoirs... [The vice-governor] said the bay would also benefit from related projects including another \$US130 million spent on water treatment plants and \$US300 million being spent to regenerate shantytowns around the bay.

...[meteorologists say Rio recently] experienced its hottest winter day in 75 years with temperatures soaring to 42 deg C.

...[last week.] temperatures over 40 deg C in Washington, DC, and Philadelphia... prompted officials to issue heat warnings. Heat... exceeding 40 deg C... and smog in Athens, Greece, sent more than 700 people to hospitals with pollution-related illnesses... Freak summer snows... struck Spain and southern France... Much of Chile was declared a disaster area after storms killed at least 19 people, left 51,000 homeless and destroyed more than 15,000 homes... A forecast Brazilian cold snap sent coffee prices soaring in London out of fears that the crop might be damaged by heavy frost... [In] Hong Kong... four days of the heaviest rainfall in a century... caused 130 landslips, resulting in traffic chaos... 14 people died... Typhoon Peter... the second typhoon to strike Japan in recent weeks... caused floods and disruption of train and airline services... The country's worst natural disaster of the year occurred when tonnes of mud... swept over the sleeping village of Harihara, killing 21 people.

...One body has been found in the ruins of two A[US]n ski lodges destroyed in a massive landslide. Rescuers working by hand in sub-zero temperatures continued their search early this morning under arc lights... for at least 20 people thought to be buried... at Thredbo, south of Canberra. Police believe a N[Z] woman was among 18 people at the Bimbadeen Lodge at the time of the landslide... [A]side from the N[Z]er and a Californian couple, all were A[US]n. Police said as well as the people feared to have been crushed to death by the lodges, a woman was swept away as she walked along the road that leads into the village. Her body has not been found... [T]he mayor of the Snowy River Shire... says... [o]ther parts of the road that collapsed... have previously fallen away into a river... Several local residents suggested the landslide may be linked to recent minor works on the road above[the lodges]. One resident, who did not want to be named, pointed angrily to a newly built stone culvert which had moved the water flow about 1.5 metres... Later, police suggested seepage from a mountain spring might have caused the earth to give way. Lodges further down the slope escaped the landslide, allowing rescuers easy... access to the scene and for excavations.

...THE voice came out of a dark hole but brought a ray of light into rescuers' hearts. “I can hear you,” the trapped survivor... called. Pulled from the ruins of A[US]'s worst skifield disaster... last night, he is the miracle for which everyone prayed – the triumph of the human spirit over the most awful tragedy. In one of the world's most astounding survival stories, the 27-year-old Thredbo ski instructor lay entombed for more than 64 hours under 10m of rubble... drawing air through a fist-sized hole. He clung to life numbed to the bone by underground water flowing over him, the body of his wife Sally apparently nearby. Rescuers dug by hand for 12 hours to reach him after hearing his muffled cries, despite sirens sounding warnings that the hillside was unstable... Colleagues of Auckland ski instructor Mary Phillips... [– who ‘loved to play; the world was her playground’ –]are refusing to give up their friend for dead... [Her] mother and sister... are maintaining a vigil at the ski resort, hoping for a second miracle.

...Shifting rubble yesterday cost rescuers precious hours in their race against the weather to find eight people... Police have declined to identify the 10 bodies – six male and four female – so far recovered. On Monday, police revised down the number of people initially trapped from 20 to 19 when a woman... thought to have been swept off her feet by the landslide... turned up alive and well.

...[the sole] Thredbo skifield disaster survivor... has signed up with... [a NZ]-born... agent... a day after... [the agent] said it would be inappropriate for the media to pay for the story... [and a NSW] National Party politician... criticised media behaviour at the disaster site, claiming they had disobeyed police instructions, abused rescuers and bugged police transmissions... [In another development, a] former resident of Thredbo... says that nearly 40 years ago she was refused permission to build a chalet on the site where [the] landslide... buried two ski lodges... [She] told ABC Radio she and her husband were warned off in 1959 because of the landslide danger and instead, built on adjoining land... [T]he blocks did not have any trees and you could see there had been a slide there in the past... “Then all of a sudden they started developing the village and that is when all these little clubs started building... underneath... the new road. We thought to ourselves ‘that is strange’...”

...Training was completed in April of a 27-strong team who... have the capability to respond to a disaster of Thredbo dimensions but have yet to gain “a mandate” to do such work... And despite its name – the outfit is known as the N[Z] Urban Heavy Rescue Team... – its goal... “is to be able to respond within three hours and to be anywhere in N[Z] within six.” ...An alpine incident similar to Thredbo is unlikely in N[Z], according to the N[Z] Ski Council... because... there's no commercial ski area or club area that has that sort of infrastructure actually at the bottom of the lifts.”

...The president of the Auckland University Rock and Alpine Club... and the club secretary, died of asphyxiation... under a Mt Ruapehu avalanche despite being “wise and cautious beyond their years.” And while the pair's failure to carry personal transceivers [‘that aid searchers by “peeping”] was not a factor in their deaths, alpine clubs should consider... buying the \$400 items and training their members to use them... [Incidentally, f]ierce wintry weather[has] arrived early in parts of South Africa, producing the first snowfall in 30 years across... Swaziland.

...A fierce late-autumn storm in... Chile killed at least four people and forced more than 2000 others from their homes... [but] ended a year-long drought... Violent storms and flash flooding... also... killed four people... in north-eastern France[, while a]... broad swath of the Philippines was swamped by... tropical storm Levi... At least 53 people were killed... and 77,000 others were forced from their homes.

...The lives of millions of people in China and the mountainous Indian province of Sikkim have been disrupted by heavy rainfall which has sparked landslides and severe flooding in the past week. The death toll rose to nearly 300 yesterday... The fierce onslaught... [destroyed] more than 21,000 houses and [closed] 200 factories in Hubei... said the official *China Daily*... adding that direct economic losses were 400 million yuan.

...floods threaten to sweep away 18 villages in eastern Nepal if further glacial melting pushes a dam to its bursting point... Engineers are... trying to siphon some of the water and divert it to other areas to lessen the threat[but more]... than 7000 residents... have been evacuated to safer ground.

...A dozen... residents were evacuated from their homes and Kaitia was cut off yesterday as heavy rain hit the “winterless north.” In the six hours from 10 am, about 120mm of rain pelted down – more than 50mm of that before lunchtime... “This is the fourth time this year we’ve had weather like this. We’ve only just finished cleaning up from the last storm,” said [one resident]... And the bad news from forecasters last night was that more of the same could be expected today...

[Six people in the] Far North were rescued by helicopter... as heavy rain blocked roads and inundated farms. It is the fifth deluge to swamp the region this year... Northland farmers are wondering how much more they can take... [while the] Far North District Council is unsure where money for flood repairs will come from. It has already spent more than \$1.8 million this [year] and its budget is \$700,000 overdrawn. The council works manager... said... that... the... full impact of the... latest downpour... has yet to be assessed but [he] expects the council damage bill will be about \$300,000... The MetService said the rain band should move slowly south towards Coromandel and the Bay of Plenty...

The Fire Service was flooded with calls as huge downpours caused havoc in Auckland over the weekend... Weatherwise Auckland said 151mm of rain fell at Beachlands and 142mm at Manurewa on Saturday – levels which exceeded the normal monthly totals... Such heavy rainfall occurred once every 50 years or so, said a spokeswoman... By the way, Auckland’s just had its sunniest April... since 1909, the year sunshine records began. Mangere clocked up 203 hours of sunshine, 50 hours more than normal... Although the sunny conditions... helped to lift spirits the month was cool with temperatures 0.5 deg C below average.

...[developing] summertime warmth in the Northern Hemisphere [has] caused... sharp heat waves... Italy sizzled under its hottest May weather in 50 years... [while, in the US, the] San Francisco Bay area... baked under days of record-breaking heat. The hot, dry weather... caused some heat-related illnesses... and... sparked grass fires... About 1000 firefighters... [failed to save] about 80 homes.

...Firemen battling a large bush fire on the outskirts of Noumea for nearly a week were forced back yesterday because of the intensity of the flames. The fire has burned about 1000 hectares but no houses have been threatened... [□ Police] say a fire which caused \$600,000 worth of damage to Heretaunga College’s gymnasium in Upper Hutt last month was started by... children aged between 4 and 9 who had been playing with matches.

...Damage from arson at schools cost \$2 million last year, compared with \$16 million seven years ago, the Government said yesterday. The change had occurred because \$10 million had been spent on fire and security systems at 700 schools, said the Associate Minister of Education. He announced a further \$2 million would be spent installing security systems in 86 schools from Kaitia to Bluff. “It is far better to spend funds on prevention than have to pay out millions on lost buildings after the event. There is also a high cost to educational programmes when schools go up in flames.” Schools to benefit from the latest funding had been identified after risk assessment, but he declined to name them.

...Two more Auckland schools were set alight at the weekend in what could be the... [work of] a serial arsonist. The fires, in Royal Oak and Three Kings, are the latest in a spate of school fires that have caused hundreds of thousands of dollars of damage this year... A dozen fires have been lit at schools... in suburbs between Epsom and Mt Roskill in the past six weeks... Fire safety officers have visited schools and kindergartens in the area to warn them of the danger and urge them to install smoke alarms. At Royal Oak School, [where] the smoke detector was at the opposite end of the classroom block from the fire and a burglar alarm was set off first [the]... board chairman... said... “We can’t turn the school into a fortress.”

...A lonely professional man living on the edge of Mt Roskill and Epsom could be the serial arsonist who is striking at schools and kindergartens on weekends, says a psychiatrist. The Ministry of Education revealed yesterday that it had started random roving patrols of schools and kindergartens in the area after two further schools were set alight early on Sunday morning... The Fire Service yesterday appealed to the ministry to install sprinklers in schools in the area... [The service’s] hazard manager, said sprinklers or smoke detectors would have helped to reduce “the flow of tears” at education facilities over the past month. Schools and kindergartens were traditionally a target for arsonists as they were accessible and unoccupied, he said. But the ministry’s district property manager... said it would cost \$70 million to fit sprinklers nationally.

...A 27-year-old female arsonist has caused about \$1 million of damage to Auckland schools, kindergartens and public toilets... [The judge] told the Auckland District Court that, because of the high cost, he was obliged to seek some form of reparation from the woman... The Mt Roskill bakery assistant stood handcuffed in court after admitting six arson charges on... [schools and kindergartens, including] the Carlson School for Cerebral Palsy... this year. She also pleaded guilty to 10 counts of wilful damage for attacks on... public toilets... between August 10, 1996, and April 27 this year... The police summary of facts read to the court... said [her] strike on public toilets was similar to 27 intentionally lit fires she admitted to in court in 1996... When the police spoke to [the woman]... she said she had lit the fires when she had been drinking. Then she would get angry about what she had done, so she would light another fire.

...The male-dominated world of arson is being challenged... [A]n Auckland forensic psychiatrist and arson expert, says 5[%] of arsonists are female but that group is increasing at a greater rate than any other. International research shows a big correlation between lighting fires and sexual abuse. About 30[% of all] fire-starters have been sexually abused but more than half the women setting fires have been victims... [The expert] says it is essential to treat arsonists [while they are still] children because rehabilitation is “almost impossible” as an adult. He was instrumental in launching a programme with the Fire Service in 1993 to target child and adolescent pyromaniacs. In the past two years he has treated children as young as three... who have a fascination in lighting blazes. A typical profile of a pyromaniac is someone depressed, introverted, and a non-achiever who often feels deep rejection. A dysfunctional family and a dependency on drugs and alcohol abuse are common symptoms... He says fire-starters use flames to get control back in their life or to hit back at places that are personally connected to them, such as schools. Most of the property women attack has a sexual nature, such as toilets. Despite common belief, only a small percentage of arsonists feel sexually aroused by the flame... [■ The] arsonist who caused \$1 million in damage to Auckland schools, kindergartens and toilets has been sent to prison for five years.

...[an] arsonist may be responsible for a string of suspicious fires... in the Nelson district... Hundreds of residents in the Nelson suburb of Atawhai were evacuated on Saturday night when a blaze devoured 250ha of scrub and gorse and came to within 100m of houses. Atawhai was the target in the first fire about a fortnight ago. Then... fire engulfed 300ha of C[HH] forest, destroying as many as 150,000 pine trees... Firefighters considered it lucky that no people... had been injured... [T]he company was not insured against forest fire. “Our insurance is maintaining an effective firefighting force, and so we do not insure our forests and accept that every five or 10 years we are going to lose little bits.” ...the cost of putting out the fire was about \$400,000 and crop loss was in the multimillion-dollar range... [However, about 10% of the damaged] pine trees were salvageable.

...A bush fire near Nelson on Wednesday, the fifth suspicious fire in the region in a month, was arson, say fire officers... [In related news, a] Dunedin man was last night charged with setting fire to a vacant garage yesterday afternoon – one of four... arson attacks in 36 hours in the city.

...[a] 68-year-old widow has become the third victim of arson in one... [Auckland street. She] was woken by her neighbours banging on a window at her... Mt Albert... house. Her garage was on fire and the flames were getting dangerously close to the house. The blaze gutted her double garage and destroyed its contents, including her car... and... her son-in-law’s motorbike... “What a senseless act,” she said. “I cannot believe someone would want to burn down a garage and leave without taking anything. I have been happy living alone but now I am scared they will come back.”

The widow... had installed a burglar alarm and smoke alarm in her house. "Who would have thought I needed them in the garage as well?" ...another Hendon Ave house was set ablaze after three firebombs were thrown into the hall and toilet and a car parked outside... [In the third attack], a car parked outside a house in the avenue was gutted and a second vehicle suffered smoke damage... All the fires have been lit in the early morning and there have been no witnesses... Scientists from the[nearby] Institute of Environment Science and Research are testing samples... An Auckland region fire investigation officer... said... he could not see a link between... the three fires...

['Lack of water and limited access thwarted firefighters as they tried in vain to control Christchurch's largest blaze of the year. The fire at the McLeans Island warehouse was one of several serious blazes tackled by Christchurch firefighters over the weekend. Three are considered suspicious and are being investigated by police. Christchurch's deputy fire chief officer said there were similarities between Saturday's fire and the one that destroyed Crown Relocations in Hornby 10 days ago' (also destroyed were the 'household possessions of the removal firm's clients – many of whom didn't have insurance')...]

'A fire-eater lost a layer of skin from her face and received singed hair when a late-night show went wrong in a Wanganui bar. The 32-year-old Wellington woman, said to be an experienced fire-breather, was burned when the liquid she was using ignited back towards her – a well-known hazard for performers.'

...The Waitakere City Council may prosecute whoever lit a fire in a West Auckland wrecker's yard yesterday after... 11 people from a neighbouring firm... needed treatment for nausea and dizziness... Five ambulances were called... The deputy chief fire officer for the Waitakere district... said the source of the fumes was a burning pile of old cars and car parts, including upholstery and tyres... [I]t took firefighters more than an hour to extinguish the... illegal fire, being lit during a closed fire season apparently without a council permit... [Last night i]n Wellington, a big fire in Titahi Bay... came "dangerously close" to evacuated homes... By 10 pm the fire was under control but just a few hours later a second one began, at South Karori. Two Fire Service engines and three rural firefighters' vehicles attended...

Major fires[are burning] through parts of central Alaska, where summer temperatures neared 32 deg C... Two... fires, one covering more than 67,000ha, and the other, 16,000ha, burned in the Innoko National Wildlife Refuge. At least 39 other blazes burned throughout the state... Several wildfires... including one ignited by an arsonist[have also]... blackened parts of Southern California... destroy[ing] homes and vehicles...

Hurricane-force winds and extremely dry conditions... [have] sparked large wildfires in pine forests and brushland around the[French] port of Marseilles... and... around the Russian city of St. Petersburg[, where the largest of]... more than 75 forest fires... blackened... more than 1000ha...

High heat and drought conditions sparked several large wildfires from Greece and Serbia northward to Russia's Altai region. Blazes blackened 10,000 hectares of pine forest near the northern Greek city of Thessaloniki. It was one of more than 20 major fires across the country.

...[fires continued] in many parts of Greece yesterday, destroying thousands of hectares of trees and fields... Thessaloniki was virtually cut off from access by land by flames... [Firefighters have, however,] extinguished a... forest fire in Inner Mongolia that raged for 10 days... The blaze threatened a repeat of last summer's conflagration that blackened more than 3.2 million ha across [the region] and the neighbouring nation of Mongolia...

At least 40 people have been killed and 100,000 left homeless by ferocious rainstorms wreaking havoc in southern China. The storms caused the worst flooding to hit... Guangdong province in 500 years. About 30,000 people have been cut off and rainfall of up to a metre recorded.

...the second round of severe flooding to strike... Guangdong Province... this summer... [has] killed 21 people and destroyed thousands of homes...

A thunderstorm in central China has killed 20 people, left eight missing, and destroyed more than 66,000 buildings... [By the way, yesterday Colombian authorities said] there has been a sharp decrease in the number of... tuna, mackerel, herring and other species... [of] fish along the Pacific Coast... The National Institute of Fishing and Aquaculture... [believes the fish] have migrated to other areas due to... El Nino ocean warming.

...Ecuador's President... [has] declared a national emergency to give his government special power to cope with the developing El Nino ocean warming phenomenon. Sea-surface temperatures have already reached at least two degrees above normal off the western coast of South America.

...Leading forecasters are predicting the latest El Nino will become the largest climate event of the century... setting off more global disasters than ever before... Further rises in sea-surface temperatures off South America are altering global weather patterns as the above-normal heat from the Pacific is becoming absorbed into the atmosphere. Record high temperatures in Alaska and northern China are probably linked to the phenomenon. China's most severe heat wave this century... [has] killed more than 50 people in areas from Beijing to the port of Tianjin. In Indonesia, farmers are reporting crop losses from a developing drought that was predicted earlier this year as a result of El Nino.

...A severe drought and heatwave in... China's Shandong province has killed 200 people... forced factories to close... left cities with water shortages and caused more than \$US1.2 billion in economic losses... In Hebei province... the water table... has lowered... by over 1.2m since June, drying up wells and destroying 3 million ha of crops[. ■ 'Auckland recorded its coldest June day' this year]...

Invercargill had a frosty night but nowhere near the minus 14.2 deg C ground temperature recorded in July last year, the coldest since records began 92 years ago. One of the lowest temperatures recorded in N[Z] was a ground frost of minus 22 deg C at Ophir in Central Otago two years ago. Motorists faced severe ice problems on shady state highways yesterday morning and police and the Automobile Association appealed for them to take extreme care... Ten flights were cancelled at Wellington Airport... yesterday... after rain and hail flooded the main terminal. The... terminal was closed for most of the morning while hail was cleared from the roof and leaks fixed. An Air N[Z] flight to Sydney was delayed on the ground after the 767 aircraft was struck by lightning while landing... Spectacular lightning strikes on central Wellington blew circuits on computer and telephone systems. Thunderclaps and hail triggered more than 20 fire alarms... [The] MetService... said that the extreme cold had done its dash.

...An El Nino weather pattern due to hit N[Z] during the next few months could be more severe than predicted, according to British scientists... However, N[Z] forecasters reacted cautiously... saying the British sea temperature predictions were much higher than their figures... The exact effect was hard to predict because each... El Nino, or "the child" after the baby Jesus because it tended to peak at Christmas... was different. One in seven... actually bring more rain to Hawkes Bay, one of the sunniest areas in the country... British forecasters said this year's pattern... could reach the record temperatures set in the 1982-1983 El Nino, which caused an estimated... \$US13 billion... of damage worldwide, if present trends continued... A drought... the most severe since European settlement, with estimates of the total cost rising to \$A7 billion... and massive bush fires[, like]... the disastrous Ash Wednesday fires... which killed 72 people, destroying more than 2000 homes – including entire towns – and ravaged hundreds of thousands of hectares of farmland... afflicted A[US] following the 1982-83 El Nino... Already 63[% of NSW] has been declared as drought-affected, and in half of Victoria's 15 weather districts the 10 months to the end of July were the driest on record for the period... [Economists think] that a severe drought could... force down [GDP by 1.5%. The]... Farmers Federation... economic committee... warned that El Nino was likely to strip almost 12[%] from the nation's crop production this year. For wheat, one of A[US]'s major export commodities[, estimates]... in June of a one-third fall from last year's record harvest, to 16.3 million tonnes, have since been reduced again by a further one million tonnes... [El Nino] was blamed in June for the worst flooding in Chile in a decade... The flood... devastat[ing] central Europe was probably not connected.

...SIX DAYS of flooding have killed 23 people in Poland, inundating... about 3500 sq km... including major towns... Graphic pictures of some of the 18,000 suffering evacuees forced to quit their homes eclipsed even a visit by[the] US President... the [Polish Government is hunting] for scarce budget funds to help the victims rebuild.

...[yesterday,] Poles fought to save the historic centre... of Wrocław, a city of 650,000 people... as... [their Government announced] a... \$1 billion... reconstruction plan for the affected areas... Floods... have[also] left two people dead... in Scotland... and led to the evacuation of around 1200 families from their homes.

...[yesterday,] raging river floodwaters drove tens of thousands more people from their homes in Poland and the neighbouring Czech Republic.

...The worst inundations to strike the Czech Republic this century swept away houses, roads and railway tracks... [T]he same summertime storm... swept parts of Ukraine... and... Belarus[, leaving]... at least 25 people dead and hundreds of villages under water... [according to] Russia's Itar-Tass news agency[, which has also] reported that more than 250,000 trees were killed during 1996 alone in metropolitan Moscow [by] various forms of pollution. One of the most deadly influences was said to be the salting of pavements to melt the notorious ice and snow that accumulates during the bitter Russian winters.

...A report [estimates that a]... quarter of all the trees in Europe, and almost half of all oak trees over 60 years old, have suffered extensive damage because of pollution and bad weather... The worst-affected region was Central Europe, particularly the Czech Republic, where 72[%] of the trees were found to be significantly damaged... [The report's authors] made the conclusion after studying 430,000 trees in 29 European countries... [In further news from Europe, e]vacuated villagers in flood-hit regions of southern Poland, waiting with resignation for the waters to recede, said yesterday that rescue and relief operations had been chaotic... [V]illagers complained that food, medicines, clothes and other aid had been distributed unjustly and that the police were not doing enough to stop looting. Some aid provided by the Government, the Church and private organisations had not reached the most needy because of... bureaucracy, they said... By contrast, on the other side of the Oder River, the German Army's largest peacetime mission saw soldiers working round the clock to repair dikes and prevent huge damage to the fertile Oderbruch plain... The Oderbruch plain was drained 250 years ago but plans to celebrate the anniversary this year were shelved as the Army moved in, filling 200,000 sandbags... Their trucks and tents made parts of the region look more like a battlefield than an agrarian community. Yesterday another village was flooded by a 1km breach in the eroded dike... 18,000 [Germans have been forced] from their homes. Throughout Europe, the month-long floods have caused more than \$NZ3 billion in damage... While much of... Europe is in the grip of disastrous flooding, Finns... are sweating out their hottest summer in decades. Temperatures have soared to 30 deg C as far north as Pudasjärvi, near the Arctic Circle. The warm water has sent Finns flocking to packed beaches, and is blamed for thick blooms of toxic blue-green algae in Finland's... coastal waters... and... thousands of lakes.

...floods may cause up to \$21 million in crop damage in Ireland... [according to estimates. Meanwhile, more] than 15,000 people[have been] evacuated... from the Polish town of Slubice on the German border as the surging River Odra (Oder) nearly swamped the... low-lying... area, but floods receded in other regions of south-western Poland.

...[a new] weak point has emerged in dykes holding back the River Oder... "We now have to speak of three crisis points... We can see that this permanent water pressure is slowly making the dyke sodden along the whole stretch of the river,"... said... the environment minister of Brandenburg state. Workers were now felling trees to allow helicopters to fly in and drop sand to reinforce the dyke... The flood waters have already claimed more than 100 lives in Poland and the Czech Republic... While there have been no flood-related deaths in Germany, damage to houses and farms has been extensive... [Thousands of] people have been... warned to be ready to leave at a moment's notice as the likelihood of a dam break grows daily. Many despondent German officials were saying only a miracle could save the... [Oderbruch's] low-lying fertile farmland... [In local news, seven] people died on [our] roads over the weekend as heavy rain and snow swept the country.

...The MetService is telling farmers to take a hard look at their farming practices instead of blaming weather forecasters for the weekend's stock losses... 600 recently shorn sheep had died on two farms and perhaps 10[%] of newborn lambs had also died. Snow had fallen almost to sea level on Friday, yet on Thursday the weather forecast predicted nothing stronger than showers... The chief meteorologist... said it was regrettable that some Hawkes Bay farmers had lost stock... but the... [farmers] had known for months that heavy snows were likely this year and should have considered delaying shearing... [S]nowstorms and freezing temperatures have[also] killed 2500 alpacas... [i]n the Peruvian Andes...

Peru's enigmatic Nazca lines were invocations to the gods from a civilisation facing annihilation by drought, according to a new investigation. The giant drawings of animals and straight lines laid out in the desert were first spotted from the air in 1926... Similar giant... animal figures are found in Ohio and Iowa... But Nazca's spectacular geometric figures – straight lines running for miles and gigantic truncated triangles or trapezoids – are found nowhere else... The absence of any writings from the... people who created them 1400 years ago has left scientists baffled over their purpose, especially as they are too vast for the patterns to be appreciated from the ground. Academics believed until recently that they were part of a giant astronomical calendar. A more controversial theory, advanced... in [the] book *Chariots of the Gods*, argued that they were tracks left by alien spacecraft... [T]he key to the enigma may lie hundreds of miles to the east, high in the Andes, where scientists have used ice-cores to track climate change through the ages. They found a 40-year drought occurred around AD 550 or 600. "The Nazca region has almost no rainfall... people were entirely dependent on water brought down from the Andes in aquifers or... channels. If the water failed, there was no life." So the best explanation for the lines is that ancient inhabitants held ritual processions along them to pray for rain. Many of the trapezoids are aligned to point at sources of water. [A US] archaeologist... thinks the drought triggered a religious crisis among the Nazca. "Perhaps the efficacy of the priests as intermediaries between this world and the other became doubtful... The lines may have been a way of people... trying to attract the attention of their gods... without their priests..." As the drought worsened there was an increase in line-making – as if attempts to draw down the clouds became more desperate. If so, it did the Nazca no good: the drought destroyed their civilisation.

...[PNG] is reported to be in a "desperate situation" as El Nino-inspired droughts and frosts push as many as one million people to the edge of starvation... PNG, a rugged and very wild country in parts... has no national road or rail network. Two of its greatest rivers, the Fly and the Strickland, used to be navigable into the Highlands. "The Fly has a small creek in its middle now; you can walk across it in parts, and the Strickland has dried up,"... the country's director-general of National Disaster and Emergency Services... said. As a consequence of the Fly drying out the enormous BHP-owned Ok Tedi gold and copper mine is being forced to close. The Acting [PM]... said the Government wanted reports urgently from provincial administrators. "The National Government is not fully aware of the situation in some parts of the country due to the failure of some provincial Government administrators to comply with numerous requests for information on the extent of damage and suffering in the provinces over the past couple of weeks,"... He said this failure... was totally unsatisfactory and would not be tolerated... [● NZ will] provide a further \$150,000 for drought relief work in P[NG]. It has already given]... \$250,000... Save the Children Fund is accepting donations for... P[NG].

...AUSn war veterans yesterday launched an appeal for \$A1 million... to send food aid to drought-hit P[NG], saying they owed their hungry neighbours a deep favour. The Returned Services League... said such a sum would represent only a small repayment of the debt... owed to... the "Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels," the highland men who, during Japan's invasion of P[NG], rescued hundreds of A[US]n troops from the jungle battlefields.

...An A[US]n report on the... PNG drought[has] assessed that some 500,000 people... [are now] critically affected by short supplies of food and water. The PNG Government estimates that up to 700,000... may be affected... Almost 100 people are believed to have died, mostly either elderly or children who had succumbed to illnesses... Relief officials and international aid workers said that no one in PNG had starved to death... [However, a] relief coordinator... yesterday called on the Government to immediately release 20 million kina... for drought relief...

[PNG] officials yesterday were preparing to send food aid into the... country's parched highlands... Rivers and dams have... dried up in the resource rich [region]... The huge Ok Tedi copper mine, which uses river barges to move its production to port, has been sealed off from the coast for almost a month... [and the] big Porgera gold mine yesterday... fell victim to the drought, announcing it had closed down... operations because of

a lack of water to treat the ore... Both mines could resume operations quickly if their prayers for rain were answered, though... Ok Tedi would need a week of heavy rain before the Fly River was navigable again. But it may be too late for P[NG]'s two most important export crops – coffee and palm oil. Palm plantations are already starting to suffer and a continuation of drought late into the year could... harm the flowering of coffee shrubs... Farmers in Indonesia are... also... worried about an extended drought... Analysts fear... the Government may need to import the national staple crop, rice... Indonesia reached self-sufficiency in rice in 1984, but was forced to import the crop in 1994 because of drought... Already the Ministry of Agriculture has provided 2 billion rupiah... in aid to farmers whose harvests have been ruined... But some reports claim that in Lampung... up to 20,000 families are short of food and cannot afford to buy rice... One kilogram of rice in Lampung now costs 1000rp... while 1kg of dried cassava goes for a mere 85rp... [N]ear the ancient city of Yogyakarta, many farmers have been forced to share their precious water supply with their cattle. The drought is so severe, say villagers, that chickens are pecking at banana trees for water. At least 262 man-made lakes and deep wells have dried up in seven subdistricts in the... Gunung Kidul... area, reported the official news agency Antara[, which added that the]... drought-related famine... has[already] killed 545 people... [in the] remote Irian Jaya province... Indonesian forest fires, which have caused haze pollution in neighbouring Singapore and Malaysia, are expected to increase as[the] ongoing drought reaches its peak in September.

...Malaysia, which has been rocked by economic woes since July, is facing another crisis: thick haze engulfing the nation, causing poor visibility and health problems. Kuala Lumpur's skyline, and the much talked about panoramic view from the world's tallest Petronas twin-towers, have been blurred by the dense haze... [which] has reduced visibility to as low as two or three kilometres in some major cities... Malaysia's Environment Protection Society adviser... warned that the haze could turn into a smog problem... if... [it] was not tackled soon... In Kuala Lumpur alone, some 1.6 million motorcars are caught in daily bumper-to-bumper crawls, with at least 620 vehicles per kilometre of road... But an environment department official downplayed the seriousness of the situation, saying rainfall would wash away the "layered" haze... "It is not as serious as that in 1994. We are in a much better position to tackle the haze now," he said, requesting anonymity. The Southeast Asian region was hit by serious cross-border pollution three years ago... before improving towards the end of the year. This time around, the crisis has not obscured a need for regional cooperation... [However, the Malaysian PM said] the worsening haze could have been minimised if counter measures were taken earlier.

...Dusk comes an hour early each day in the Sumatran town of Gelumbang as smoke rising from grass and scrub fires covers the region and spreads to neighbouring countries[, 'contributing to Asia's now US-sized brown haze cloud']. Malaysia... has called it a national disaster and has launched cloud-seeding operations over its capital... to induce rain. Both Kuala Lumpur and Singapore had heavy rain overnight... and officials said the pollution levels appeared much lower... Besides the pollution, some Indonesian airports and sea traffic have been affected by low visibility. On Tuesday, Indonesia's President... apologised... [to] South-East Asian environment ministers... for the suffocating [haze and]... banned the use of fire to clear land for cultivation, but that message has apparently not seeped down to southern Sumatra. "It's good for farmers, as burning the scrub makes the land fertile," said a... worker on a water-melon farm near Gelumbang. The Indonesian Environmental Impact Management Agency says people who clear land using fire without permission face a 10-year jail sentence or a 100 million rupiah... fine.

...The Yellow River, cradle of China's civilisation, has run dry in its lower reaches for the first time in September... The growing population has exhausted water supplies from the river, a problem that is compounded by rampant waste, poor water management, and soil erosion. Scientists and engineers are considering some far-fetched methods to feed the river with new sources... One scheme is to build a huge hydroelectric dam to provide electricity to pump water into the river from Tibetan water systems, nearly 2400km away... Meanwhile[, schools]... and private and government offices were shut... in[Malaysia's] eastern Sarawak state yesterday... but essential businesses such as clinics... and pharmacies... were to stay open... Supermarkets, other markets and restaurants were also allowed to stay open... Malaysia Airlines... said all flights to... Sarawak's state capital... had been cancelled... [Kuching's] air pollution index measured 635 at 2.30 pm... API readings from zero to 50 indicate good air quality... A measurement above 500 was considered extremely dangerous, officials said... [T]he government had contacted Indonesia offering the services of its air force to carry out cloud-seeding over the affected forest areas[, and]... would also contact France and Japan to ask for their advice on fighting the pollution... Singaporeans [were advised by their]... Environment Ministry... to avoid vigorous outdoor activity... "Don't use this as a holiday to run around. Stay indoors and take care of your health... If people have to go out, we suggest they wear masks for safety and good health." ...Indonesian officials say they fear for the health of about 20 million people... [M]ore than 10,000 residents of Riau... have[already] sought medical treatment for respiratory and eye complaints because of the smoke... The fires, many of which have been deliberately lit... have been burning out of control for weeks on the drought-affected islands of Sumatra, Borneo, Java[(where a 'large mud lake created by a drilling mishap continues to increase in size' – but it isn't in a position to help douse the flames)] and Sulawesi... As much as 300,000 hectares have been blackened... [In addition], as many as 140 villagers from a remote corner of Indonesian-controlled New Guinea have died from the effects of... drought... [A]ttempts to get supplies... of food and clean drinking water... to isolated areas had been hampered by... [the thick haze, which] may worsen before it gets better as Indonesian timber and plantation companies [are accelerating] slash-and-burn activities before the Government clamps down.

...Greenpeace is urging [NZers] to boycott Indonesian forestry products from 176 companies because of the fires... The blanket of smoke covering much of South-east Asia has forced the cancellation of a joint Malaysia-N[Z] military training exercise... one of two N[Z] planned to join this month. The other, involving 120 infantry, has gone ahead in northern Malaysia, which is not affected by smoke... [Ironically, as] Malaysia bemoans a 30[%] drop off in tourist numbers because of the smog[, it is proving a]... boon to Bali[, which has become a]... popular alternative destination.

...The throat-clutching smog now choking much of South-east Asia shows just how much the environment has been neglected in a quick and dirty dash for[economic] growth... The common argument that the need to provide jobs in a poor and populous region outweighs concerns for the environment is indefensible, the experts say... "What we are up against is inertia and the belief that the free market will always provide the most effective means of production. It's a cop-out and the biggest obstacle." ...the Singapore energy consultancy Super Solutions, blamed the "yin and yang" approach to development in Asia. "If there is a benefit, it is given that there must be a cost, which is the rationalisation for waste and damage." ...Though Asian countries are loathe to criticise each other over what they consider internal affairs, the pollution is so serious that it topped the agenda at a meeting of regional environment ministers in Jakarta last week... Elsewhere in Asia air pollution has set in hard... New Delhi is the fourth most polluted city in the world. [The WHO] estimated that in 1996, 1.2 million of the city's nine million people were treated for, and 7500 died prematurely from, pollution-related diseases... [Acid] rain strips the leaves from trees across much of southern China, while dirty air is blamed for a high incidence of respiratory disease in cities such as Chongqing. South Korea's car industry, one of the miracles of its economic development, has come back to haunt the 12 million people of Seoul[, where]... vehicle exhaust emissions are the overwhelming cause of pollution. At least 6.5 million tonnes of toxic waste are generated each year in and around the Philippine capital, Manila, which has no major facility to treat it... Bangkok is also plagued by exhaust fumes and dust from numerous construction sites. A study by the Thai Ministry for Science, Technology and Environment showed healthcare costs for pollution-related illnesses were about \$US65 per person per month. Treatment of patients with other ailments costs about \$US9 per month... "There is only one way to sell ecology in Asia and that is to dress it up as a profit-making business – which it is," said... the Singapore-based Regional Institute of Environmental Technology... "We can solve this problem with market-based systems, but it requires the game rules to be set by Governments,"... Wiser use of resources, introduction of efficient technology and tough regulation would force business to become more eco-friendly... Taiwan says its pollution problem has improved after years of efforts, including daily fines of up to \$US10,500 for firms breaking environment laws. Japan, which 30 years ago had the problems faced by South-east Asia now, has tough anti-

pollution laws born out of some of the worst cases of industrial pollution... [Incidentally, w]inds near the centre of super typhoon Oliwa reached 240km/h as the storm passed over parts of... Northern Mariana Island. Oliwa [is] expected to weaken before striking [Japan's] southern islands...

Typhoon Oliwa killed a farmer and destroyed homes as it hit Japan's southwestern islands yesterday. On Amami Oshima island, more than 19,000 homes were without electricity after winds cut power lines.

...Typhoon Oliwa slammed into Kyushu Island in southern Japan yesterday, leaving six people dead or missing... [Elsewhere, a]t least 110 people have been killed in flash floods in a remote Himalayan region in northern India... At least 21 people... [also died after heavy] rain... brought chaos... to the... city of Bombay... Typhoon Victor [has so far claimed at]... least 65... lives in China... Damage... was estimated at 480 million yuan... in Meixiang province alone, where some 146 towns were ravaged affecting 1.69 million people...

Typhoon Winnie slammed into China's eastern coastal province of Zhejiang on Monday and brought havoc... for 11 hours, destroying... 100,000... homes, flooding... 667,000ha of farmland and damaging dams and sea dykes... causing direct economic losses of 18 billion yuan... The storm left at least 140 people dead... The death toll would have been higher if authorities... had not evacuated 790,000 people from coastal towns and villages in the path of the typhoon, officials said... In... the Philippines, flooding spawned by the storm killed 16 people and forced 60,000 to abandon their homes... In Burma, the worst floods for decades killed at least 13 people and left thousands homeless, officials said... [T]he death toll stood at 24... [in] Thailand... And in... Taiwan, the typhoon killed 37 people and left six missing when apartment blocks collapsed under the storm's fury... Taipei residents are blaming illegal property developers, shoddy workmanship and the Taiwan Government for the heavy death toll...

Taiwan issued a sea warning for Typhoon Amber yesterday, a week after Typhoon Winnie killed 44 people on the island... [In local news, m]ore than 260mm of rain fell in Whitianga yesterday, a record for a September. It flooded numerous shops and houses, and led to the closure of all roads into Whitianga... A family fled from their wrecked home after a hillside "exploded" on to it and a man had a lucky escape after his car was swept off a bridge... Some residents said... the... damage... was... worse than cyclones Fergus and Drena... Although the rain had eased, residents furiously sandbagged in coastal areas in preparation for the overnight high tide.

...[at least] one person is feared dead after torrential rain and high winds caused havoc in... Wellington... The MetService yesterday warned... [that the] Coromandel Peninsula and western Bay of Plenty could expect... heavy rainfall overnight... [as the] rain band... move[d]... north...

Police recovered a... body, believed to be that of a woman... from a muddy Wellington Harbour yesterday after a car plunged into the flooded Hutt River on Saturday... Lower Hutt police said a helicopter was still searching the harbour... for a man's body... The two main highways out of the capital were blocked by floodwaters on Saturday night... [M]any of the region's waterways overflowed their banks by up to a metre at the peak... [T]he situation had come close to a civil emergency... [● In] September the rain came down and down and down. It drowned the Auckland region, with the wettest September totals since records began. A gauge at [Auckland] airport recorded 637mm for the month, 400[%] above normal. The usually saturated Milford Sound had 164mm... Whitianga had 60mm in one hour on September 24... 300,000 million to 600,000 million cubic metres of rain falls on N[Z] each year. Flood damage costs about \$125 million a year in spite of investment in protection schemes.

...Tuvalu islanders face months of dependence on overseas supplies after... the unseasonal cyclone... that flattened their crops and homes. Relief at the arrival of supplies flown in by an RNZAF Hercules on Sunday has been tempered by the knowledge of months of hard work ahead.

...Devastated Cook Islanders are counting the cost of one of the country's worst tropical storms, after huge seas and high winds swept over three low-lying northern atolls. Three people are confirmed dead and 20 others are missing... Most crops and 90[%] of buildings have been destroyed and the lucrative black pearl industry is in tatters in the wake of Cyclone Martin... Last night it was heading for a cluster of southern French Polynesian islands, some of which are inhabited... The storm first struck Pukapuka Island on Saturday... and then about 24 hours later Rakahanga and Manihiki atolls... A Royal N[Z] Air Force Hercules is on its way to... Manihiki...

[NZ] Government officials will continue talks next week with authorities in the Cook Islands about more assistance... [T]he RNZAF Hercules... will make a fourth trip to Manihiki today... before returning to Auckland...

Cook Islanders contemplated starting over again yesterday after 150 km/h winds devastated much of the island nation's export fruit crops. Cyclone Pam... arrived just... weeks after Cyclone Martin wiped out the... atoll of Manihiki on... the first day of the official hurricane season...

[As] Hurricane Erika weakened over the cooler waters of the North Atlantic after skirting islands of the north-east Caribbean[, the]... strongest eastern Pacific hurricane on record is raging toward southern California. Hurricane Linda tore up the... waters off Mexico with 295km/h winds yesterday and gusts up to 354km/h, but is losing power as it moves towards land and is unlikely to cause serious damage.

...At least 178 people are dead and nearly 1000 reported missing, most of them fishermen... after... Typhoon Linda hit the south coast of Vietnam... About 1800 boats floundered or disappeared... At the port of Con Dao island, where waves up to 15m high were reported, a total of 160 vessels sank. One stricken vessel spilled 80,000 litres of diesel oil. Two naval vessels were sent to the island to rescue fishermen, but one sank on the way... Described as the most severe storm to hit Vietnam for more than 100 years, Linda also left a trail of devastation on land. Figures from various provinces showed that more than 20,000 houses had been destroyed by the... 100km/h winds... and 45,900ha of rice fields had been flooded... Linda also killed two people... along Thailand's southern coast... [plus at] least 20 fishermen... off Cambodia... as it moved towards Bangladesh... Residents of Guam were last night bracing themselves for an onslaught from Super Typhoon Keith which was bearing down on them... with... winds of 265 km/h [and] gusts of up to 320 km/h.

...Asian typhoons will be given Asian names under a proposal to end the use of American names and give the storms a more regional identity... [In related news, the] smouldering wildfires across parts of Indonesia and Malaysia... that... have... razed 1.7 million hectares of trees and vegetation... were reignited by strong winds blowing around the periphery of typhoon Linda. The fresh blazes blew another wave of hazardous smoke into Singapore and Kuala Lumpur only a week after officials had declared the air pollution emergency over... Smoke from... Indonesia and... [from bushfires in PNG also] remained settled over the northern tip of [AUS].

...yesterday, the AUS[n] Embassy said two "Air Tractor" AT-802 water-bombing planes were expected in Indonesia next Tuesday to help fight the fires... Indonesia has been using C-130 planes for cloud seeding to induce rain, but so far with little success... Meanwhile two boys have been killed and six other teenagers are missing after a motor boat collided with a cargo ship in thick haze on the Musi river in South Sumatra... Forty-seven people were on the boat, used regularly by students to get to school... Police said... visibility... at the time was... only 10m.

...The smog... thickened dangerously in... Sarawak yesterday, cutting visibility in... Kuching, to an arms length. The [API] rose to 839 at 11am... Exposure to an index level of even 200-300 for a day would be like smoking 20 cigarettes, officials have said... Levels of pollution in Mexico City, Athens, Cairo and Sao Paulo, considered the most polluted cities in the world, vary but even on a bad day rarely hit 500... The Information Minister... said the state's two million residents may have to be evacuated if the pollution... "worsened further." ...But he said details of any evacuation plan had not been worked out. Preventive and protective measures remained the top priority... [Last Friday the PM] ruled out the possibility of evacuating the state. "To where? You can't go to Indonesia, you can't go to Sabah [the neighbouring state]. It's just as bad..."... Authorities in Jakarta have said at least 20 million Indonesians have been affected with eye, skin and respiratory problems... [I]n the South Kalimantan capital, Banjarmasin... 21 school children had to be hospitalised after attending a flag raising ceremony on Monday morning in the thick haze shrouding the city... 17 hikers were believed to be trapped on the burning slopes of Mt Slamet in central Java... Late on Monday night, flights to... Brunei were cancelled... With visibility reduced to under 800m, Brunei has set up a task force to deal with the problem... Malaysia [has

decided] to send 1200 firefighters and a number of medical and communication experts from the air force to Sumatra to assist... 8500 Indonesians... with fighting the fires, said the Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare...

[As two] Malaysian Navy ships carrying 1040 firefighters arrived at the port of Dumai on Sumatra yesterday... [to] battle fires in the south of the island[, the]... choking smog claimed its first fatalities... The... secretary to Indonesia's Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare... announced the deaths after a meeting... of ministers and other senior officials.... [In another development, WHO experts] in Geneva expressed concern about the smog... but said none of the countries[affected] had yet asked for help... The N[SW Government has] offered to send the NSW Rural Fire Service...

Thousands of people will be killed by the smog... [or] famine... as crops are devastated and livestock choke to death[, a]... Hong Kong University pollution expert... said... "It's an absolute disaster in health terms,"... Smog[has now] spread to the Thai resort of Phuket, 400km north-east of the northern tip of Sumatra... Meanwhile, almost everyone is praying for cleansing rain. "Allah will give us rain," said one of 600 faithful who gathered in Jambi's smoke-draped town square to pray for the monsoons to come.

...Jambi, about 600km northeast of Jakarta, is at the centre of an ecological disaster which... shows no sign of abating... Your eyes sting. Your throat is sore. Wheezing follows coughing. You're lethargic and nauseous. Breathing is something you no longer take for granted. The smell of burning permeates your clothes and your hair. Smoke is everywhere: in your house, the supermarket... and the factory floor... [S]moke detectors in offices have been switched off after days of being triggered by the pollution... There is no sunshine... Visibility is less than 15 metres... Health officials yesterday asked Jambi's only international standard hotel to reserve two floors for dozens of seriously ill respiratory patients and infants. The hotel's air conditioning system means it has the best air quality in town... In Irian Jaya, the remote western half of New Guinea[, officials]... unable to reach some desperate communities, say 265 people have died of famine or from disease after drinking contaminated water.

...A Garuda Indonesia Airbus crashed last night in a mountainous region south of the city of Medan and all 232 passengers and crew on board were feared killed... There was no immediate word on the cause of the crash, but one resident in Medan told Reuters that the city was shrouded in a thick haze... although officials said the airport was open at the time...

The... Antara news agency said yesterday the pilot... of a Garuda Indonesia... plane which crashed... killing all 234 people on board reported low visibility because of a smoky haze... [and] asked air traffic controllers... for guidance in landing... minutes before the aircraft came down... And at least 28 Indian crew of a cargo ship are missing after it collided with another and sank in the Strait of Malacca early yesterday... It was the second recent collision in the strait.

...It took just one minute for a 31,000-tonne ship to sink after it was hit by an oil tanker in the Straits of Malacca, according to survivors... [The dead included] the two-year-old son... and... wife... of [the] Second Engineer... "I lost my son," said [the sobbing engineer] over a television news broadcast... [Incidentally, the] UN is sending an emergency evaluation team to Indonesia and 150,000 face masks for children... In Geneva... [the WWF] director-general... called for international action to halt the conflagration, which he described as a "planetary disaster". Satellite surveys indicated the fires were spreading from scrublands to forests, although there was as yet no sign protected areas or national parks had been burned. In a statement from its Indonesian Programme, the WWF said unique animals... could be under serious threat if tropical forest areas were affected. "The lowland tropical rain forests of Sumatra and Kalimantan... unlike those that grow in drier climates, are not adapted to fire and suffer great damage when burned." ...Tourism has[also] been badly hit as tour groups cancel and travellers... venture elsewhere.

...According to the WWF, villagers are using chainsaws to cut down trees harbouring... frightened... orang-utans fleeing the forest fires... [in] Indonesia's Kalimantan province... then hacking the females to death. Orphaned babies are being sold into the illegal trade. WWF's rescue centre is filled to capacity with 120 orang-utans, some of which are being treated for near-fatal wounds. At least 138 other injured animals are on a waiting list to be admitted... [The WWF – which recently reported that, worldwide,] 17 million ha of tropical forest are now lost each year, compared with 15 million... in the 1980s... [-] has warned of possible floods[in Indonesia] when the rains do arrive because of the loss of forest cover.

...Forest fires and illegal logging in Indonesia are threatening the survival of five of the 150 types of orchids found on the eastern... islands of Maluka, according to the Indonesian Orchid Lovers... [■ A]s weeping relatives threw flowers into a mass grave of 48 bodies mutilated beyond recognition... details... emerged... of the final conversation... between... [the] pilot... and an air traffic controller... before an Indonesian jetliner crashed into a jungle, killing all... aboard in the country's worst air crash... At one point, the... unidentified air traffic controller... emphatically assured Captain Rachmo that... [he] was clear of mountains in the area. Two minutes later, the jetliner slammed into a highland jungle 32km south of the airport. The last minute and a half of the conversation showed repeated misunderstandings about which direction the pilot was turning.

...From my bedroom window in Kuala Lumpur I used to be able to see the Twin Towers building. Well, of course I could. It was only 4km away and it was the tallest building on earth. The other day I rang my family in Malaysia... Can you see the Twin Towers...? Derisive laugh. "Not for... weeks." At one point the family fled to Bangkok, which is supposed to have the foulest air in the world. There they rejoiced at being able to gulp lungfuls of air which by comparison was fresh and pure... So what next? "Back to Christchurch, quick." ...the family now say that Christchurch[, with its]... fuzz of chimney smoke and car exhaust fumes... is like waking up in heaven... I like the theory that southern Borneo and Sumatra would not be on fire today if only the people could afford fertiliser – yes, the fertiliser... that organic zealots condemn. Instead, poverty tied... [local people] to a traditional form of organic farming. Forests, plantations and crops grow there in peat, which is wonderfully fibrous but contains damn-all plant food. By regularly burning forests and crop wastes, the people spread nutrient-rich ash over their peat... Soon, when the monsoon ends the drought – and, with any luck, puts out the fires – the full extent of the tragedy will be seen. Already an unbelievable amount of peaty topsoil must have burned away. Rebuilding it will take centuries... On a cosmic scale, the area is not daunting. Sumatra is only one and a-half times as large as N[Z]. Yet the job could easily turn out to be the biggest challenge the human race has faced – or turned its back on.

...Every morning, [the] three-year-old... puts on her tiny mask and walks to kindergarten. She is a pint-sized example of what is happening to N[Z]ers in Kuala Lumpur, living amid the smoky haze that has enveloped the Malaysian capital for... weeks. [Her] father... said yesterday that she was coping well with the new morning routine. "She... accepts... her little mask... because other kids also have one." ...[her father], who chairs the N[Z] Business Council in Malaysia... said people were getting increasingly frustrated with the haze. A keen runner, he was annoyed at not being able to exercise outdoors frequently... Sharing the frustrations of living in a haze that could last many months is the N[Z] High Commissioner to Malaysia... who said he donned a gas mask for a jog because he was sick of being inside... The High Commission's 20 local staff were taking turns coming into the office... The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade [is giving] its staff the chance to have time out of Malaysia for spells of up to weeks[, although flights]... out of Kuala Lumpur were full... [By the way, tribal] and religious elders in Sarawak... believe the environmental disaster reflects God's anger at humanity's disregard for nature... "To our eyes, it may be due to forest fires but, from the religious perspective, it is the wrath of God." Muslims make up the majority in Sarawak, which grabbed headlines recently with a ban on bodybuilding contests which clerics ruled were against Islam... A week ago, the chief minister of Kelantan state in Malaysia... said... "It has been stated that a time will come when the sky will emit such thick smoke that the people will appeal to God to make it disappear,"...

Peasants are still torching their land... on the Indonesian side of Borneo... The fire-setting... tells the story of... [villages] struggling to survive, regardless of the environmental consequences and heedless of weeks-old Government exhortations to stop. In Singapore, the *Straits Times* newspaper made the point yesterday that the... out of control... fires... could continue for a long time.

...Singapore face[s] an environmental double whammy... – its worst ever oil spill and excessively unhealthy smog. More than 30 vessels [are working] to clean up 25,000 tonnes of oil that spilled into the busy Singapore Strait after two ships collided early on Thursday. Port officials, who

had... used helicopters to disperse the oil and keep it from hitting beaches of Singapore's main island, [have] approached... Japan, A[US and the US] for extra equipment. They all agreed to help... The U[S] is sending experts and three fire-fighting military planes... Separately, the Ministry of Environment warned the public to reduce outdoor activities... 100,000 cases of smog-related illnesses have been reported in Singapore clinics...

Singapore's leading newspaper[has] lashed out at Indonesia... for the dense smog... "The patience of Singaporeans and Malaysians is wearing thin," the *Straits Times* said... [Other] news reports said... Singapore's Taoist leaders have asked devotees to cut down on the use of giant joss sticks in their religious rites... "Bigger joss sticks do not translate into more effective prayers." ...There were concerns that the giant sticks – which burn like ordinary incense but can be up to three storeys high – might worsen the smoke haze... In Singapore, the sun has not been visible for weeks... But overnight rain helped extinguish most of the peat fires in Malaysia's eastern Pahang state.

...Smog that has blotted out the sun across South-east Asia for almost two months is beginning to recede as monsoon rains arrive... Scattered showers have already fallen on Singapore, parts of Malaysia and northern Indonesia, bringing the first glimpses of blue sky. Weather forecasters expect the air to clear from the north over the next month, but say the rains will be intermittent for a while and the fires may not be put out for some time... The monsoon is switching the region's wind direction from A[US] to north-west Asia to a more general southerly path as colder air builds up for the northern hemisphere winter... Meanwhile, emergency teams were searching a haze-covered area on... Sumatra yesterday for a missing police helicopter with three members aboard.

...Technicians drilling for oil in far northern Sumatra unleashed an eruption of natural gas that produced thousands of explosions, forcing 1600 people from their homes... Four homes sank into the muddy craters caused by the blasts, and nearly 200 others were damaged by falling debris. There were no reports of injuries... and workers[have] gained control of the gas jets...

Ribbons of fire along irrigation channels designed to drain a huge peat bog... for a massive rice-planting project... are helping sustain noxious smog across Indonesia's Kalimantan provinces... One source said the fire in the peat was creating a silicon layer impervious to water which could affect future irrigation vital for wet rice planting.

...Jakarta... received its first heavy rainfall for months on Monday night, but the city... was[still] blanketed in thick haze yesterday morning from its perpetual traffic pollution. "...What we now have to pay attention to is the possibility of floods in Jakarta," the fire control bureau... said... [In related news,] wildfires burning in the Amazon River basin... have produced a choking cloud of smoke that covers an area nearly two-thirds the size of the U[S]. Even a lake bed caught fire when dropping water levels exposed vegetation that had been submerged for years.

...one of the world's ecological treasures is going up in flames. This year, man-made fires in the Amazon rainforest pumped more smoke into the atmosphere than all the cars and factories in Europe. A seven-year study shows the rainforest is undergoing dangerous and fundamental changes... "It's a devastating discovery... Brazil's rainforest, which was always lush and wet, is now quickly drying out. This explains why man-made fires blanketing Brazil in smoke are getting much bigger each year. It means many more thousands of species in this biological treasurehouse burned into extinction each year... [R]esearchers... told us water was disappearing from 35ft shafts in the rainforest floor, where a few years ago it was abundant... tree tops are drying out, shedding leaves, letting in more light, which dries the ground even more[, then]... timber companies cut roads into the wilderness. They take the big trees... then cattle ranchers use those roads to come in and burn what's left to create grazing land, which produces less water vapour than trees, which means less rain. Much of this is illegal but Brazil sends only a handful of officers for a million sq miles. As bad as the destruction of the Amazon rainforest is now... it could soon be much worse because timber companies from Asia are... buying their way into the Amazon. And the Asian companies have an appalling record... Even when Brazil denies logging permits, Asian companies... are able to buy into Brazilian companies that have permits to log, and seem not to care about the consequences. The world's leaders at the Earth Summit... in Rio five years ago made a big show of pledging to stop all this with lots of support and money. The thing is, little of it has ever arrived... So, unless international and Brazilian leaders can get their acts together, say goodbye to... much of the life calling from this wilderness."

...[the] number of fires blazing through the Amazon River Basin has increased by 28[%] during the past year... The Washington-based Environmental Defence Fund said the latest satellite data revealed that there were 24,546 fires burning in what is often referred to as the "lungs of the Earth"... The smoke clouds over Brazil's Amazon rain forest are thicker, and cover a much larger area, than the asphyxiating smoke produced from the burning forests in Indonesia.

...[to date, m]ore tropical forest[has been] burned around the world in 1997 than at any other time in recorded history, according to a report by the... [WWF. Incidentally,] Indonesia has reinstated 45 of the 144 timber exploitation permits revoked in the wake of... the... widespread forest fires... after... 21 companies... agreed not to clear land through burning.

...The causes of the... [smoke] in South-east Asia [we]re many but[one of] the biggest is greed. For years giant logging companies have plundered the forests of Indonesia with impunity, swelling their profits and moving on... In their wake came plantation owners and farmers who wanted to clear the brush to grow lucrative palm oil and other crops. They could have bulldozed or burned the debris. They chose to burn, because it was cheaper and faster... The consequences [we]re like something from a futuristic disaster film: hundreds of people reported killed as the fires spread uncontrollably... throwing a deadly blanket of smog over 70 million people in six countries... Psychologists expect a rise in the number of people suffering from depression. "Not seeing the sun and worrying about their health will have[had] a horrendous psychological effect on vulnerable people,"... Satellite pictures show the fires... spread to one million hectares of deep peatlands where they may burn underground for years. The world faces a human and environmental catastrophe that will have a devastating effect on public health and change global climate more than the Mt St Helen's eruption in 1980 or... [the] torching of the Kuwaiti oil fields in 1991... It seems incredible that this ecological nightmare could start in Indonesia where the rainforests are said to be richer than those in the Amazon. But[, like its counterpart in 'Cameroon (which recently sold 99% of the country's forest to companies for export'),] the Indonesian Government has a lot to gain from big logging companies – enough to make them deaf to the pleas of environmental groups. Yet the disaster would not have happened were it not for another crucial factor: El Nino...

THE planet's biggest bathtub, the Pacific Ocean, is brewing up again... and the... world will be forced to endure the wildly varied fare of weather pattern threatening to eclipse its ancestors... It starts with the trade winds. They blow from east to west across the Pacific, scraping an unimaginably vast amount of water to raise the ocean in Asia 60cm higher than along the coast of South America. The winds become laden with moisture; the surface water, spun by the earth's rotation, diverts to the poles. Caught between these flows, cold water wells up from the deep ocean. As the trade winds weaken, the warm water stays in the eastern Pacific of equatorial South America triggering strange climatic events worldwide... The next few months will tell whether the southern oscillation index, a measure of atmospheric pressure used to gauge the extent of the pattern, will reach new depths. It will take even longer to find out whether this El Nino, said to have a flavour all of its own, has the punch to cause dramatic financial fallout... But whatever the future potency, El Nino has arrived and has already shown its hand... El Nino is no rare beast and in the last couple of decades has dominated the weather. The last one continued for four years, from 1991 to 1994... What sets the 1997-98 model apart is... comparisons with the 1982-83 slammer are coming thick and fast. Livestock Improvement Advisory, a subsidiary of the N[Z] Dairy Board, is already working with farmers in a bid to minimise effects of the El Nino, which is expected to reduce milk production... [-although] milk production dropped about 3[%] in the 1982-83 summer compared with a 10[%] drop in the summer of 1986-87 when the El Nino was less severe... [The advisory's liaison officer believes NZ] farmers have learned from history but... [for] many, he says, plan is a four-letter word and people are reluctant to buy into prevention for something that may creep in over months rather than arriving with the sort of rapid-thump-bang reality that an earthquake brings. There is also a credibility problem with weather forecasting. People remember the short-term predictions

that weren't right and forget about the accurate ones. One organisation which will be avidly weather-watching over the summer and into next winter is Watercare Services, responsible for Auckland's water supply... Watercare, despite having more than doubled the capacity at its Onehunga ground water station and pumping water from lower to upper dams for better storage, is, in real terms, no better off than 1994. Countering the savings measures are the 60,000 more people living in Auckland since then. The only advantage Watercare has these days is the advance warning and should next winter prove a dry one, "we would be going to the councils in the Auckland region and we would be seeking to bring in restrictions a little earlier." While drought-prone farmers and water supply planners brace themselves for the worst, the wine industry is cautiously raising its glass. For wine producers the formula is simple – grapes like dry weather... The arid weather brings out an intensity in flavour and 1983... was a very good vintage. For the rest of us pinning for a long, hot summer, unless we live in those areas under drought threat... [-] Gisborne, Hawkes Bay and Marlborough... [where about 85%] of the country's grapes are grown... [-] temperatures will likely be cooler than usual. And don't be surprised if the sea seems colder for swimming – it will probably be at least a degree or two cooler than usual... [W]esterly and south-westerly winds will be more frequent over the... country. The fisheries research director for the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research... says this could affect fishing, simply because high winds could prevent boats getting out. On a positive note, and in contrast to last summer... the... MetService weather ambassador... has some good news: "We don't expect cyclones to be a problem this year." ...[However, according to NIWA, tropical] cyclones will be more frequent in the South Pacific this summer because of the strong El Nino...

Futures blowing in the wind... The most direct impact of this year's El Nino... has been seen in the commodity markets. Coffee, cocoa, grain and soybean prices have all risen. The Chicago Board of Trade, the world's biggest futures market and the leading exchange for agricultural produce, is expecting increased trading as players hedge against climatic risk... The board also sees the possibility of increased activity in its financial futures contracts if inflation picks up and insurance contracts could be boosted as damage looms... [□ Economists] at New York's Columbia University have developed what they... call... the Catastrophe Bundle to help governments and firms reduce financial exposure to crop losses, floods and hurricanes associated with El Nino... Several experts said Columbia's plan could help to spread... El Nino disaster costs among a large pool of investors and take pressure off the property-casualty reinsurance industry, which has been hit hard in recent years by climatic volatility... "Instead of wringing your hands and asking the World Bank for help, countries would be able to take a market position to hedge against El Nino," said... Columbia's Earth Institute... "There probably is room for creative financing during these periods. But it may be a little too late for this [El Nino]."

...Cocoa prices rose[a further] £17... to £1136 a tonne on the London Financial Futures and Options Exchange on Friday amid concern that an El Nino-related drought may damage crops due to be harvested early next year in Indonesia... the world's third-largest producer of cocoa... England [itself is experiencing] the driest weather in years... which... has caused two separate [wildfires, one] in West Cornwall... [which destroyed] 1000 acres of heath-land... [and the other on] the Isle of Wight[, where] a charred wasteland is all that remains of the Brightstone Forest.

...Massive brush fires blazing out of control in remote northwestern A[US] have destroyed vegetation in an area the size of England... Landowners have described the blazes as the worst in living memory.

...[hyenas] competing for dry ground are attacking Somalis marooned by the worst floods in living memory, a relief agency sa[ys]... At least 1000 people have been killed... and 100,000 families... displaced... across much of East Africa... by... nearly constant storms during the past three weeks.

...The worst flooding in recent memory along Kenya's Indian coast resulted in the deaths of at least 16 people... In eastern Ethiopia, at least 57 people were swept away... and... more than 4000... left... homeless... [Fierce] storms and flash flooding[also] struck a wide area of the Middle East, killing at least 10 people from Egypt to... the Palestinian territories[, where]... 74 homes in... Jericho... [were] destroyed... Many of the victims were washed away when torrential rains caused rivers and streams to overflow their banks... in nature reserves and National parks... But heavy rain wasn't the only problem. A hailstorm damaged cars and roofs, and gave the normally dry area a distinctly European look... In Colombia, flash floods killed two people and left 2000 others homeless when rivers burst their banks in the north of the country... The death toll from flash floods in Portugal's mid-Atlantic Azores islands threatened to rise to over 30... as rescue workers continued the search for survivors... [of] a mudslide shortly before dawn... In neighbouring Spain, at least 15 people were killed and many were missing as the violent storms swept eastwards.

...the death toll [i]s expected to rise... in southern Spain... after... [s]ome buildings collapsed in the hard-hit coastal city of Alicante... [Speaking of death tolls, h]undreds of thousands of Alaskan seabirds[– representing]... the biggest bird kill in western Alaska history[– and]... an unusually large number of dead whales... are thought to have starved... because of El Nino... [A]utopsies on carcasses showed the birds had no body fat, wasted muscles and anaemia... because warmer sea temperatures forced their normal food sources – zooplankton and small fish – deeper into the ocean beyond their reach... El Nino has[also] cut the water level in the Panama Canal by 25[%] and draft restrictions are likely to be introduced if levels fall further, a canal official said on Thursday.

...Waves whipped up by... El Nino... are tearing away at Rio de Janeiro's sandy shores, leaving nothing but bare rocks along parts of world-famous Copacabana beach. All of Rio's beaches have shrunk in width by 30 to 50m over the past few months... [In related news,] Peru announced this week that the World Bank and... the... InterAmerican Development Bank... would lend the country \$[NZ]250 million to gear up for... El Nino...

When I disclosed in this column a few weeks ago that El Nino is nothing more than a Peruvian myth that lazy journos drag out and dust off when news gets a little yawny between seasons I had expected, hoped even, that the revelation would stir up a zephyr or two... [And, in] my own modest way, I had hoped that my Ninogate would attract a sprinkling of kudos for the N[Z] Herald. However, despite]... my prognostications to the contrary... after my column appeared [the Herald] ran a long piece in Weekend Magazine not only administering CPR to the idea of El Nino, but interviewing everyone between Cape Reinga and the Bluff on the hypothetical climate and economic effects of its presumed existence. That was humbling enough, but someone apparently sent... my column to the World Bank. After a lull in the storm, the reaction thundered in only the other day – right across the top of page one of this newspaper's world section. You can't have missed it... "Be ready for the worst: World Bank." And that was only the heading. The first sentence was even more alarming. "The powerful weather phenomenon known as El Nino could this year be the mother of all El Ninos, says the World Bank." ...Certainly worrying stuff, bankers sticking their abacuses into the weather forecast. [● 'The people who make a career out of predicting our weather say that while forecasting can never be totally precise, they get it right more than 80% of the time. A NZ Herald-DigiPoll survey shows that 49% of people distrust the weather forecast, against 37.7% who have faith.']

...Retailers get ready for 'Sell Nino'... Can the "mother of all storms" be the mother of all marketing tools? Plenty of California businesses hope it can. They have wasted no time in latching on to the huge publicity wave generated by El Nino[, which]... is being coopted to help... sell brake jobs, roofing and comfy gas fires. It is even being used by the U[S] Government to sell its environmental policies.

...Greenhouse gas plan under fire... Japan, set to host a high-profile climate conference in December, unveiled yesterday its proposal for [First World] nations to cut greenhouse gas emissions by an average of 5[%] from 1990 levels between 2008 and 2012. But the... A[USn PM] rejected the... proposal, which would let some countries including... Japan[, the US and AUS] cut emissions by less than 3[%] based on their industrial conditions... saying A[US] would not sign an international climate change treaty which was unfair and failed to take into account the country's reliance on fossil fuels. Environmentalists also lambasted Japan's plan... Greenpeace... [called] it "ridiculously weak" and accus[ed] the Japanese Government of caving in to its powerful Trade Ministry and to heavy industry... The U[S] has also] been dragging its feet as[its] industry conducts a costly campaign against binding targets and US car-makers insist that [Last World] nations set targets. Japanese media, meanwhile, said that officials from... Japan... Canada... the U[S, AUS and NZ] had agreed over the weekend to urge the... E[U] to alter its... 15[%] cut by 2010... proposal[– AUS]... has estimated its cost of compliance... [with the proposal would be] \$A150... billion by 2020... [-] and to seek targets for... [Last

World countries. The European Coordinator of... W[WF]'s climate change campaign, said... seeking such targets could scuttle the Kyoto conference. "[Last World]... countries want to see a good first step from... [First World] countries. That's how the deal was set up in Berlin in 1995... Trying to get new commitments at this time from [Last World] countries... threatens the negotiating process." ...If [First World] nations slashed energy consumption, they might have to go easy on refrigerators, cars, air-conditioners, washing machines and TVs. If Last World nations did the same, hundreds of millions of people might have to live without even electric lightbulbs. Expect more compelling arguments like that [as December draws nearer...]

AUS's PM has insisted his Government will not budge from its refusal to accept uniform and legally binding targets for greenhouse gas emissions to be proposed at the UN conference in Kyoto... A[US] is under pressure over its stance and [its PM] is likely to wear the wrath of several... South Pacific... island nations... Small island states see the issue of reducing CO2 emissions in terms of survival; A[US] depicts it in terms of threatening its economic wellbeing... [The NZ Government anticipates] some "arm-twisting" from... A[US], but... was unlikely to change its stance, leaving A[US] potentially isolated. The [NZ] Minister for the Environment... made plain 11 weeks ago that N[Z] didn't agree with AUS's position, saying it came "perilously close to special pleading" and each country could make a special case.

...N[Z] has been accused of helping A[US] to bully the leaders of smaller Pacific Island states into submission on the issue of... binding targets for the reduction of [CO2 emissions at the]... 16-member South Pacific Forum... [The Tuvalu PM said AUS] had got its way, despite 14 of the 15 other nations at the forum being united against it. He did not say which other country had held out against the island nations, but Greenpeace last night accused [the NZ PM] of siding with the A[US]n PM. Tuvalu's PM... said he had tried to hold out on the issue but had to give in at the end. "Being small, we depend on N[Z] and AUS so much we had to give in... [I]t was not compromise, it was just no, no, no, no, no, all the way through."

...A[US's PM] said yesterday he did not want to turn his official Sydney residence into an armed garrison... after... [security] was called into question [when] Greenpeace activists stormed Kirribilli House to protest against the [Federal] Government's hardline opposition to greenhouse emission targets... [AUS's] greenhouse gas emissions were set to rise by 18[%] by 2010 despite a \$A180 million... strategy unveiled yesterday to fight global warming, the Federal Government said... [In further news from AUS, a] new fire in the Hunter Valley has worsened problems for... 3000 firefighters... battling to contain... 145... bushfires raging across N[SW]... National Parks in N[SW] were closed yesterday...

Two firefighters died, more than 20 houses were destroyed and 200,000ha of bush were razed as 160 bushfires fanned by strong winds burned out of control across N[SW] and licked at Sydney's outskirts last night... Home owners in Sydney's southern suburbs stood defiantly on the roofs of their houses, their faces masked with water-soaked towels as they fought the fires with slender garden hoses. Others threw buckets of water at walls of fire in a futile attempt to stop flames reaching their homes... Thirty-eight aircraft were in the air and 4500 firefighters [were now] deployed statewide to battle the blazes. In Lucas Heights... a nuclear reactor was shut down after smoke entered the ventilation system... [By the way, China has] announced that it is drilling for oil near its former nuclear test site in the Lop Nur Desert, where radiation levels are said to have returned to normal... China conducted 23 atmospheric nuclear tests at the site from 1964 to 1981, and scores of subsequent underground blasts, until... 1996.

...A coalfield fire burning for... 400 years in China's Xinjiang region was finally extinguished [this week], according to the *Weekly Digest* of the *Sichuan Daily* newspaper. The report said that the fire in the Bailanghe coalfield spontaneously ignited in 1560, and its toxic emissions have caused desertification and ecological deterioration in the area [incidentally, the Saguaro Desert in Mexico, home of the giant Saguaro cacti – although 'cacti grow in DESERTS all over the world today, they first grew only in the Americas' – 'has been threatened by wildfires since foreign plant species were introduced by humans']]. No details were given of how the fires were put out... [In related news, c]ooler temperatures and reduced winds [have] aided firefighters trying to contain blazes in... [NSW. But a] total of 157 fires were still burning across the state affecting 300,000ha and... [the NSW] Rural Fire Service Commissioner... said there was little hope of containing the fire in the Pilliga scrub area in the state's north-west. "To me that is a great pity because it is a unique area and to have lost so much of it is a great tragedy,"... In Victoria, 100 smaller fires have been reported...

The first seeds of disaster were sown as warming equatorial waters gave grim warning of an El Nino summer. When temperatures in parts of N[SW] soared last week to 47.5 deg C, calamity was inevitable. Victoria had already felt the heatwave... It turned forests and grassland to tinder, which was ignited by the electrical storms that raged across the state. But the freak weather patterns that swept across N[SW] over the past two weeks realised all the worst fears of fire officials already alarmed by the... drought... The outbreaks that have razed massive tracts of N[SW] and killed two firefighters were, according to [the] Rural Fire Service Commissioner... "textbook predictable." The only way to stop them, he said, would be to concrete the whole of the state. For A[US] ('the sunburnt land') the pattern is tragically familiar – forests, bush and pasture parched by drought, and a combination of strong winds, high temperatures and low humidity. Since European settlement at least 678 people have died in bushfires – in recent years, at the rate of five a year. Almost a third were killed in just three disastrous days: Victoria's Black Friday of January 13, 1931, when 71 died and more than 1000 homes were lost; in Tasmania on February 7, 1967, when flames swept almost to the heart of Hobart and killed 62; and the Ash Wednesday fires of February 1983, when 71 people died... in... South A[US]... and... Victoria...

Bushfires in Victoria in which three people died were deliberately lit in five places, the police say... "It's possible that one person using a mode of transport could have been at all five places," [a]... Detective Senior Sergeant... said. He appealed to the public for information about anything suspicious they might have seen at the spots where the fires began.

...[Victoria's] Premier... outraged legal groups by proposing mandatory life sentences for firebugs yesterday as police sealed off bushland in Melbourne's eastern hills where deliberately lit bushfires killed three people this week. [The Premier] said he would ask [the] Attorney-General... to examine doubling the existing sentence of 12 and a half years for arson for bushfire culprits, with even longer sentences if lives were lost. The proposal was angrily attacked... as an irresponsible and reckless diversion that would result in fewer arson convictions, while a senior legal figure described it as "ridiculous." "Most arsonists are either people with a psychiatric problem or young children," [the] Opposition legal affairs spokesman... said... [Meanwhile, up] to 10,000 firefighters were last night mobilised throughout N[SW] as authorities braced themselves for some of the toughest conditions in their bid to control blazes... Warm temperatures, strong northwesterly winds and low humidity forecast for today are expected to worsen tomorrow when winds are due to gust up to 50km/h... Yesterday there were further outbreaks in the north of the state and in the northwest near where a giant fire is burning in the Coonabarabran area. There are fears also that two fires burning in the Lithgow and Hawkesbury regions northwest of Sydney could join to form a massive fire front. The state's worst ever fires, in the summer of 1993-94, burnt out 800,000 hectares in 16 days... Since the latest spate of fires began seven days ago already 400,000ha of the state has been burned out... About 70,000 volunteers can be called upon throughout the state. So far, about 4500 have been working each shift, with two shifts around the clock each day.

...In the face of a forecast predicting searing nor'westers, low humidity and temperatures beyond 30deg C, light rain fell yesterday in many of the areas still ablaze [including]... on the huge Coonabarabran blaze, which has burned out... about \$A8 million... worth of timber resources... [B]ut the... fires in Sydney's south and in the Hawkesbury region immediately north-west of the city were untouched by rain... Thunderstorms and more rain are forecast to scatter across the state today, but even then they may provide only a mixed blessing. "With the storms comes the risk of more lightning strikes, which is what started most of the fires last week,"... said a NSW Rural Fire Service spokesman... Light rain was not only insufficient to extinguish fire, but also hampered backburning efforts.

...Back burning, reinforcement of containment lines and maintaining patrols of fires burning under control were the main activities for firefighters yesterday... [after rainfall] overnight dampened blazes around N[SW. However]... Victoria is now in extreme peril... with the number of fires already running above the devastating Ash Wednesday bushfires of 1983, say fire authorities.

...[summer heat has] sparked further wildfires in both the west and east of... [AUS]. Blazes flared up again on the outskirts of Sydney, where another blanket of thick smoke covered the city[, and a]... 75-year-old volunteer firefighter... died in bushfires in Western A[US]... "A neighbour's crop was on fire and the deceased and his son were heading over to assist when the deceased fell out of the back of the ute and into the flames,"... An 18-year-old woman[also] died when she apparently abandoned her car in choking smoke... Police say her body was found by searchers yesterday a few hundred metres from where her car was bogged on the roadside. "Her car was intact, not burnt, so we don't know why she left it," a Pingelly police spokesman said... The worst blaze had razed 25,000ha of farm and scrub land... 150km south-east of Perth.

...Firefighters stayed on standby yesterday in the Porirua suburb of Eidsdal where a fire had swept through a kilometre of scrub and threatened homes. Sixty firefighters battled the blaze, which started... about 9.40 pm on Sunday... Meanwhile, the Nelson City Council is offering a \$1000 reward for information leading to the conviction of anyone found responsible for... suspicious fires around Nelson... A fire ban in the Nelson region until midnight tonight may be extended... A decision on extending it would depend on the weather and long-range forecasts... [One f]ire investigator... said the fire ban meant any fire was illegal and should be reported immediately. Fireworks went on sale on Monday in the leadup to Guy Fawkes celebrations next Wednesday.

...['Hallowe'en and Guy Fawkes celebrations will produce an extravaganza of colour and sound tomorrow night at Ericsson Stadium in Auckland. The Hallowe'en Fireworks Display is being touted as the best chance for families to see a professional pyrotechnics and laser display. Organised by the Howick Lions Club, it will raise money for the Royal NZ Foundation for the Blind, which plans to build a playground in Manurewa for all sight-impaired children. Such family-oriented fireworks shows have become increasingly popular since skyrocket sales to the public were outlawed in 1995. If the weather is bad tomorrow night, the show will be postponed to Sunday night. Admission is \$5, with pre-schoolers free. A public fireworks display will also be held at the Onewa Domain in Northcote tomorrow night. Tickets cost \$10 a family. A spokesperson has warned those planning to attend not to bring any fireworks.']

...The grisly killing of a 12-month-old cat has sparked new calls for a ban on fireworks sales and an end to unlicensed Guy Fawkes celebrations. The Fielding pet's throat was torn open after three bangers were forced into its mouth and lit on Saturday... [The cat's] owner was shocked at the killing. "I just can't believe it. It's sick. Why would someone want to do it?" ...the Auckland SPCA had already dealt with several incidents involving "animals, fireworks and stupidity." ...The Auckland SPCA executive director... called for "an end to this ridiculous celebration[as 'every November 5 hundreds of pets are lost or get run over after fleeing from their homes, frightened by the noise from fireworks. Animals and people are terrorised by irresponsible people and it's not worth it.']Since there has been a ban on skyrockets and crackers, they have been replaced by ones that are often worse." ...The Auckland area fire safety promotions officer... said one of the newer fireworks, Godzilla, was like a skyrocket crossed with a banger and could be a problem if misused. The Godzilla shoots out small cardboard tubes of gunpowder which explode in midair... The Explosives Act[, which] was amended in 1990 and 1994... says fireworks are banned if their sole or principal effect is percussive or aerial.

...['a 13-year-old South Auckland schoolboy was recovering in a burns unit after a horrific fireworks attack. With his face on fire, he cycled 80m and threw himself in a ditch full of water. He suffered burns to his entire face and almost lost his sight when fireworks were thrown at him from a car in Drury on Friday night while he was on a bike ride with his best mate.' • 'Youngsters with fireworks are believed to have started west Auckland's biggest blaze in 7 years over the weekend. The fire destroyed 10 hectares of bush at Signal Hill, Whatipu. About 10 hectares at Anawhata was destroyed by a fire in 1994.']

...A scrub fire believed to have been ignited by young people drinking and setting off fireworks has ravaged more than a third of Mt Maunganui.

...Arsonists are using Guy Fawkes as the fall guy to cover their fire-raising activities... [The] president of the Professional Firefighters Union, said fireworks were being unfairly blamed for many blazes... "There's no doubt a few people come out of the woodwork. It's a great opportunity to set a few fires." ...[every year] blazes around the country... in the first week of November... have led to calls for a total ban on the sale of fireworks. The Fire Service acting chief executive... said he would ask the Labour Department to investigate what types of fireworks were on sale. Other hazardous fireworks may need to be... joining sky rockets and bangers, which were removed from sale after amendments to the Explosives Act in 1990 and 1994. [The acting chief executive] said he favoured selling fireworks in July, when surrounding scrub was less dry. [July 4th is an obvious date (although, ironically, 'fireworks used to be part of US Independence Day celebrations but are now banned as dangerous in many communities except for large public displays').]Guy Fawkes Day could be reserved for public displays[in NZ]... The Minister of Internal Affairs... said he was happy to ask the Fire Commission to investigate further bans. He was concerned, however, that a total ban would prompt people to create dangerous homemade explosions... [He agreed that] the public would not stand for a total ban. "There is a huge tradition there related to Guy Fawkes."

...['Guy Fawkes (1570-1606) was a Roman Catholic soldier who became involved in the Gunpowder Plot, which was a plan to blow up the House of Parliament in revenge for penal laws against RCs. The plot was discovered and Fawkes was arrested, tried, convicted and executed. Nov. 5 is celebrated in England as *Guy Fawkes Day*. Children make effigies of Fawkes, build bonfires and burn "the Guy."'] Nowadays, the date is merely a commercial exercise revolving around the sale of fireworks and fire engine call-outs (last Nov. 5, Auckland's fire service received 'one call-out every two minutes')...

Firefighters were called to more than 130 blazes in three hours last night as Guy Fawkes celebrations went off with a bang in Auckland... The Fire Service estimated 90[%] of calls were linked to fireworks or bonfires... Scrub around Tamaki Drive was set alight regularly.

...SERIOUS scrub fires in Wellington on Friday night have prompted at least one fire chief to call for a total ban on the sale of fireworks. Firefighters were kept busy battling[the] fires... including one that forced 12 Hutt Valley houses to be evacuated... [The Wellington region's c]hief fire officer... said firefighters suspected most of the... fires were the result of wayward fireworks. "There were a lot of fireworks being let off last night. It is about time this sort of nonsense came to an end – we had a wonderful (public) fireworks display in Wellington this week," he said.

...Hutt Valley firefighters battled their 20th bush fire of the season early yesterday in what has already been their busiest summer in years... [A]ll fires are banned... [in] Wellington, Marlborough, Kaikoura, Canterbury...

[Canterbury] farmers have been accused of greed by hiking the price of hay desperately needed by drought-stricken Marlborough farmers... [T]he normal \$30 to \$35 price... for a bale of hay had "surprisingly" gone up by about \$10... It had "saddened" Marlborough farmers... "They know we need feed, so they're capitalising on it accordingly. It's disappointing. When the big snow came to Canterbury in 1992, we trucked hay free to farmers there..." ...[the] North Canterbury Federated Farmers president... said he was disappointed by... [the] comments. "It's quite an unfair statement. A marketplace exists. Canterbury farmers have helped other areas in the past," he said[, adding that] some Canterbury farmers were themselves experiencing a drought.

...IT MIGHT seem like rubbing salt into farmers' wounds, but at least one[other] industry is making hay while the sun shines from Marlborough's drought. Production at N[Z]'s biggest salt lake, Lake Grassmere, is heading for a record... The highest salt harvest... was 117,000 tonnes in 1973. Already this season – which is only a third way through – about 55,000 tonnes have been deposited.

...Marlborough had only 1.3mm of rain last month. It normally averages 50mm. In October there were 24mm (normally 60mm) and in September 33mm (60mm). Because of a harsh winter and cold early spring, hay and other feed have not grown. Fertiliser spread over paddocks still sits on top of the ground. Farmers have been forced to sell lambs and cattle to abattoirs earlier and at lighter weights for lower returns, or move them to properties outside Marlborough. The large movement of stock has meant a bottleneck at Picton. Farmers have been forced on to a waiting list while the backlog of stock booked on the Cook Strait ferries is cleared... Nine thousands lambs are[also] being sent to Christchurch every week... "Everyone wants to get their stock off the land... [or get what they] can for them now because in a few months they might be worth nothing." Low wool prices were compounding the financial plight. "We're only getting \$3 a kilo, whereas normally you'd get \$5. People seem to be going away from carpets. They're into polished floors and that sort of thing, which is no good for the farmer,"... said... [the] Marlborough Federated Farmers

president... While doom and gloom prevails in Marlborough and in parts of Canterbury[, someone who]... has worked his farm near Blenheim for 40-odd years... believes this drought is not as bad as the one in 1958... "After the 1958 drought, we didn't get back on to our feet until 1962..." ...Meanwhile, the Grey River floodwall in Greymouth has held back the river's worst flooding since 1930, but local businesses and farmers are counting the cost. The river rose nearly 7m on Tuesday... The Mayor of Grey District... praised Greymouth's floodwall, built after the Grey River poured into the town in the 1988 flood. "A repeat of 1988 would have... destroyed us. We would have struggled to recover."

...West Coasters are mopping up after floods[, but forecasted]... heavy rain in the northern South Island is unlikely to provide drought-breaking relief for the farmers of Marlborough, says the MetService... Meanwhile, the D[OC] is likely to introduce a fire ban in Hawkes Bay by the end of the week. The move follows an 85ha scrub fire in the Kaweka Ranges last week... and almost two months without significant rain... Napier City Council says it could be forced to impose water restrictions because of high-water usage... [In international news, t]he official wind instrument at Guam's Anderson Air Force base measured a gust of 382 km/h just as it was being knocked down by super typhoon Paka's peak winds... the highest winds recorded from a typhoon or hurricane... The storm generated 13-metre waves... Thousands were made homeless... [in the US] territory... At least four people were killed after heavy rains pounded a wide section of northern and central Texas, flooding streets and prompting evacuations... Four people[also] died and tens of thousands... were left without electricity after... 160 km/h... winds... lashed Britain...

[Every December for the last 50 years, winter moths have been counted in Britain's Whiteham Wood. Since 1981 their numbers have been very low. The effects of global warming may be killing the moth's caterpillars. Global warming will affect when the first oak leaves appear, whether the caterpillars win or lose their race against the trees' defences, how the birds adjust the timing of their nesting and suffer if they get it wrong. Crucial changes like these will show if Whiteham's creatures can respond to the changing climate and, in revealing which of them cope and which can not, this small but extraordinary wood will warn how other lives might change'.]

...the global temperature appears to be warming but the scientists are divided over what or who is causing it. The environmentalists, on the other hand, have a clearer-cut view – we, humankind, should feel guilty. Question that environmental zealotry and, well, you can find yourself being treated like a heretic. "We've now got thousands of lunatics trying to make everything... relate somehow to global warming[," says a geophysics professor from Auckland University who]... believes in the integrity of science over what he sees as the new order, and religious-like zeal, of greenism. "It carries over from religion the guilt that used to keep people honest church-goers... and it does worry me that young children are coming out with[a] huge guilt-load over things which they have no control over." ...[the geophysicist is] something of a lone voice challenging theory taught as fact in schools: that man-made pollution is warming up the planet with all the disaster that implies. "The conventional orthodoxy with respect to global warming is way over the top compared to the reality and yet, if you advance anything other than the conventional orthodoxy you're vilified, so we're in the throws of the new Spanish Inquisition." ...images... [of] Antarctica... just brought back by Greenpeace – images it will use to pressure governments worldwide into severely restricting greenhouse gas emissions – ...[show] that... ice shelves, which have taken thousands of years to evolve, are, within the space of just decades, crumbling... "The fact that the ice is melting there does not, to me, indicate that they've got concrete evidence of global warming... It's always melted around the edge of Antarctica at some rate or other, so you need to be rather careful to access whether this is more than usually happens." Don't undermine a good cause with bad or exaggerated science, he warns. The risk is valid argument being discredited altogether. "...one could argue, I suppose, that Greenpeace exploits science for its own political ends... By and large, they take the scientific literature and... put the most sensational spin on it that they can in order to grab people's attention and persuade them to do something about it... It's important to realise that... when... the ice that's floating in the water now... melts... it... does not contribute significantly to seawater rise..." A simple... high school physics... experiment [– ice placed in a glass of water – shows why. The geophysicist]... relishes his political incorrectness almost as much as he does his left-hand drive MG. Perverse? No, sceptical he says, and why not? If theories are going to become fact they should be argued beyond reasonable doubt... [S]cientific truth... more than environmentalism... is what matters to [the geophysicist]... Greenpeace, of course, argues that it... [is the ice on the land – not the ice already in the water – melting which is] probably going to be serious, [and] we also have... a Climate Convention that says you don't need scientific proof to act... Greenpeace... says... we[can't] afford to gamble with... Earth's ecosystem... [Ironically, while the argument over global warming continues,] the Russian capital[has just] suffered its coldest mid-December night on record... with average temperatures in the city hitting minus 27.3 deg C.

...[while at] least five people in the Russian capital... [were freezing] to death overnight in record temperatures as low as minus 28.8 deg C... [– and, in other] parts of Russia... to 45 deg C below zero... [– the US] President... saying it would be a mistake to ignore global warming, said he was convinced carbon emissions must be curtailed "to avoid leaving our children and grandchildren with a catastrophe." ...opening a White House conference on global warming, [he] said any reduction of heat-trapping pollution should be done through technology changes and rejected any new... measures to make energy more costly, saying this "won't pass muster with the American people." The conference... was designed to gather support for the Administration's global warming policy in advance of[the] international climate talks in Japan...

[The US President's] grand plan to fight global warming[– which]... also offered \$US5 billion... in tax cuts and research to improve[US] energy efficiency, and promised to restructure the electric industry to reduce fuel bills... [–] came under a torrent of criticism as soon as it was announced... Environmentalists said it was too little, too late... but business groups said it was too much, too soon. Lobbyists for [US] industry said it could wreck the economy, send petrol prices soaring and give nations like China an unfair competitive advantage. Japan raised a lonely voice of welcome for the much-maligned plan but even the Japanese urged Washington to try harder...

The city of Kyoto... will soon host a[UN] climate summit that aims to set legally binding targets for reductions in [CO2] emissions. The economic risks are enormous since a decrease... can be achieved only in two ways: by severe rationing of oil, coal and gas (using tradeable emission permits); or by increasing the price of these fuels (carbon taxes) aimed at discouraging their use... The justification for this is the perceived threat of global warming. But is the case for global warming so convincing as to warrant the use of such harsh measures? ...Stirred in with this view are the reports of the[UN] inter-governmental panel on climate change (IPCC). The first publication was in 1990, the most recent in 1996. The dense, 300-page reports have by and large been good compilations of global warming science. But few people read the lengthy publications. Instead they read the politically approved "summaries for policy-makers" which have become notorious for their bias, tendency to overstate certain views and penchant for dramatising scientific speculation.

...The competitive global economy drives industries and their governments to ask: "Will climate change improve my competitive advantage by hurting my competitors more than me?" Or: "If action is costly, can I benefit from acting last and least?" Or: "At the very least I will not act until everyone else acts, too." ...[NZ's government, which] has dithered for a decade... must not join this race to be last.

...The visiting British Deputy P[M has left N]Z... after urging a strong stance... in Japan... The cabinet is due to finalise N[Z]'s stance... next week, but it will be considerably more moderate than that of Britain...

Britain has called climate change the most urgent world problem of next century and warned that too many countries are clinging to short-term national interests in their failure to limit greenhouse gas emissions. The Foreign Office Minister... said yesterday that Britain would take the lead, at... Kyoto... Last week the U[S] President... said his country must take a lead and commit to "realistic and binding goals" on cutting gases, but gave no hint on how far he would go... Last year, the U[S] accounted for... about 23[%] of the world's total of six billion tonnes... of carbon emissions... China now accounts for 12[%], but is expected to surpass the US in 20 years... [Previously,] average global temperatures [increased or decreased] by around 1 deg C every 700 years. Studies suggest that we[now] face a rate of change up to 10 times faster than life on Earth can adapt

[to]... The Third Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP3) will hold official-level talks until next Monday when ministers, including possibly the US Vice-President... take over the final negotiations.

...World leaders... yesterday warned of a doomsday future for planet Earth if global warming was not stopped. But they had no new ideas on how to cut greenhouse gas emissions. The leaders addressed the[UN] summit... at the start of three days of ministerial meetings after a week of official-level talks failed to break deadlocks... “Last week we learned from scientists that this year, 1997... will be the hottest year since records have been kept. Indeed, nine out of the 10 hottest years... have come in the last 10 years. The trend is clear,” [the US Vice-President] said in his speech...

Back in her Pacific atoll home, she says people put their trust in “God the Almighty.” But in Kyoto, in the hardball world of high-stakes diplomacy, [she’s had] to put her faith in people. And her faith is fading. “All we can do is plead,” says the environmental official from remote Kiribati, a delegate to the historic Kyoto climate treaty conference. For some round the world, the meaning of global warming remains unpredictable, even inconsequential. But... [a recent UN] report concludes that in some island nations “migration and resettlement outside national boundaries may have to be considered.” It is a prospect that is preoccupying island leaders. “When our President speaks in Kyoto, you will hear him say he doesn’t want to go home and tell the people to start packing,” said the Marshall Islands diplomat... “We are scared, really and truly.”

...[NZ’s] Minister for the Environment... has defended a controversial proposal by [his country] at the Kyoto conference... “We didn’t go to Kyoto to sit in the back row and mutter platitudes from the stalls,” he said. N[Z] was the only country that had actually put pen to paper and generated some text... N[Z]’s proposal would see [Last World] countries agree in Kyoto that if by 2014 the [First World] countries are meeting their promised reductions, targets to limit growth (not reductions) in [Last World] countries would begin to take effect from that year. Those targets would be set by the year 2002... [The minister] calls it a sort of “double conditionality... If we don’t meet [whatever our targets are], then they don’t have to do anything.”

...The U[S] last night bowed to demands that it do more to stop global warming with an offer to cut its greenhouse gas emissions in the next 15 years. It is the first time the US has offered to cut rather than freeze emissions and it set off a hectic new round of talks[, taking]... key negotiations past a deadline imposed by the [COP3] chairman to come up with draft plans for global cuts... Most of the activity involved environment ministers of the... EU... There were reports... that some EU members wanted to stick to the 15[%] figure, while others were prepared to give ground in the interest of an agreement. Without fanfare but plenty of drama, the US offered cuts on the main three greenhouse gases from 1990 levels and secondary gas cuts from 1995 levels. The cuts were put at more than 2[%]... In a sign of the sensitivity of the issue, the first hint of the figure was leaked to reporters by[the] Danish Environment Minister... rather than announced by US officials in Kyoto... His comments set off a scramble to explain the remarks. A US official lashed out at the comments, saying the remarks were not an accurate account of the proposal, and that a 2[%] reduction was in fact “an understatement.” ...Frustrated by lack of progress in the talks, the meeting’s chairman... yesterday [offered an ultimatum to First World] countries to either present a plan to fight global warming or accept his... At the end of his 19-hour visit... [the] US Vice President... announced that he had given US negotiators more “flexibility” to find an agreement... An official close to the negotiations said discussions on reduction targets were circling between 3... and 7[%] below 1990 levels. Deviations were expected for Iceland, which is expecting a 40[%] rise in emissions due mainly to construction of a new aluminium smelting complex, and for A[US], the world’s largest coal exporter, which has long shunned any discussion of an emissions reduction... [because, apparently, most AUSns] fear... a reduction could harm the economy... [Speaking of AUS, five] years after an assertive geologist and a crusading creationist first confronted each other, a highly charged trial begins in Sydney today. And the costs could wreck one of them financially... Scientists and those fundamental Christians believing in the literal interpretation of the first chapters of the Book of Genesis have battled in court in the U[S] for 70 years over the teaching of evolution in schools. The A[US]n case, however, is the first in the world in which creationists stand accused, in effect, of intellectual and scientific fraud... Creationists claim the world, the universe and all life were formed in seven days some 6000 to 7000 years ago and, therefore, that geological evidence for the evolution of life stretching over thousands of millions of years is not only wrong but anti-Christian... [An AUSn ‘doctor’] came to public prominence in 1991 after returning from Turkey where he reported having been captured by Kurdish rebels while on an expedition to the site of the so-called Ark, a structure shaped like a boat at Akyayla near Mt Ararat in the mountains of Eastern Turkey. Its dimensions are precisely those of Noah’s Ark recorded in the *Bible* – 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide and 30 cubits high. In 1992 he toured A[US] raising funds for an expedition to examine the structure further... Styled as [an] “archaeological research consultant for Ark Search,” [the Dr] sold lectures, publications and tapes, asking in all: “If this is not Noah’s Ark, then what is it?” ...[a professor] of Earth Sciences at the University of Melbourne... says [the Dr’s] claims are “codswallop” and damaging to the good name of science. After a 1994 visit to the Akyayla site he concluded it was a normal fold of rock, covered partly in mud and about 110 million years old... [The professor is charging the Dr before a judge] (there is no jury) in a civil trial which will see the relative authority of science and creationism argued under legislation designed to protect consumers against misleading or deceptive conduct by traders[, and says]... he has been motivated to pursue [the Dr], in part, by surveys of new students coming into the science-based faculties of A[US]n universities showing that the creationist view is sincerely held by up to one in five. A fast-growing sector of A[US]n education comprises private schools run on fundamentalist Christian principles and these have criticised [the professor] for supposedly not supporting “freedom of speech,” expressly the teaching of alternative “theories” of life... The case is peopled with contrasting characters. The white-haired Professor... a researcher on mineral formation and an expert in Turkish geology, is an ebullient activist for science and a skilled user of the media. He has sold his house to finance the case. The white-bearded Dr... styles himself as a profound preacher, philosopher and prophet. His financial sidelines are likely to be examined... [The judge], however, is not being asked to decide between science and creationism or whether the Turkish structure is the Ark. He will adjudicate first on allegations by... [someone] from Oregon, of infringement of copyright by[the] Dr... and his support group, Ark Search Association Incorporated... [Mr Oregon], a nuggetty marine salvager, was[once] a firm believer in the Ark, writing a book in 1988 which is the basis of his copyright claim... [The Dr] and Ark Search deny all the claims and damages. As part of their defence, he and Ark Search claim [Mr Oregon] had “formed an association” with... a white-breaded[self-proclaimed] prophet of... Nashville, Tennessee[, who]... wrote in a 1989 book: “The Turkish Government officially recognised [Mr Tennessee] as the archaeologist who discovered Noah’s Ark.” Documents obtained from Israel show [Mr Tennessee] claiming other discoveries, hotly dismissed by others, including the Ark of the Covenant, chariot wheels in the Red Sea and the blood of Christ... The financial pressure on all parties is intense. The trial is scheduled to last four weeks... [The professor] estimates the case is already costing him \$A500,000... [The] Dr... and associates tried hard to stop the case reaching court. Six days before the trial, Ark Search went into liquidation. Pending the outcome of the current trial is another case, in which[the] Professor... is being sued by[the] Dr... for alleged defamation in public and in the media... [The professor] also challenges... the... [Dr’s] claims to scientific expertise by citing his doctorate in Christian education... from... Freedom University, an unaccredited Bible College which, after a search in 1992, was found to be the mail box of the Maitland Bible Church in Orlando, Florida... [– although he also] has bachelor and master degrees from two A[US]n universities of high repute...

The astonishing Great Noah’s Ark Trial ended in Sydney... as it had begun – with biblical allusions and few observers prepared to bet on the outcome... The Jewish judge noted, to guffaws from the courtroom overfull with reporters, creationists and sceptical scientists that the trial had lasted seven days. In massive publicity generated by [the professor’s] side, the case has been represented as the “Scopes (or Monkey) Trial II,” a sequel to the infamous 1925 trial in Tennessee... Occasional witticisms aside, the trial was deadly serious... [It] may affect... assessment of [each side’s] sharply differing claims and their general credibility.

...*Genes v Genesis: the endless debate*... An A[USn judge has]... intervened in a matter of belief. In the creation versus evolution debate, he took the side of the angels... [A] Melbourne geologist, now faces huge costs for taking creationism to court – and losing. The case seems distant and the subject irrelevant. But they are essential... The Bench's lofty judgment: "Some issues – no matter how great the passions they arouse – are more appropriately dealt with outside the courtroom." Well, fine. Except that the law cannot simply duck the clash between science and belief. Genetic engineering, human cloning, abortion... they all deserve their day in court. Legal edicts on the scientific nature of things go back a long way, and the believers are still trying to affirm their rights. Alabama demands that a note be pasted into textbooks: "This book may discuss evolution... No human was present when life first appeared on earth. Therefore, any statement about life's origins should be considered as theory, not fact." Many biologists are concerned that such determined ignorance is winning... The theory of evolution is simple. It is "descent with modification" – exactly what cloning, descent without modification, is not. Parents produce offspring different from themselves, the differences are inherited and, inevitably, over the generations, life changes... [via] natural selection... Even to creationists, Aids is proof of descent with modification because they can see it happening... What is more, the HIV virus adapts by natural selection to overcome new treatments as they appear. Darwin would have been delighted... [T]he failure of creationism in Britain came because... [British Christians, unlike their counterparts] in America, where humourless literalism holds sway... were happy to define man as becoming human with the emergence of a soul that leaves no fossils and has no genes.

...A Melbourne scientist has failed in his appeal against a creationist's court win... A full bench of the Federal Court dismissed the appeal... against... [the] judgment... that... a... Sydney church elder... was not acting in trade or commerce when he made false representations about the site that many believed contained the... remains of Noah's Ark... [The scientist now plans] to file for bankruptcy... [Ironically, the Dr had] made the first legal move, serving a writ for defamation on [the scientist]... Meanwhile, the public spat between scientists and creationists continues and is now more focused as a result of the trial. [A palaeontologist who was one of the scientist's] witnesses in the original trial, intervened during [the Dr's] press conference last Friday and challenged him over his defence of "free speech." When [the palaeontologist reminded the Dr] of ordering his eviction by security guards from [a] May 1992 lecture because he asked a scientific question on the geological structure of the supposed site of Noah's Ark, [the Dr] declined to respond... terminated the interviews with reporters and walked away.

...Buried somewhat in the media noise was a clear finding of infringement of copyright by [the] Dr... in a drawing of the supposed Ark of Noah by an American... who was... [the professor]'s co-applicant in the case. Speaking from his home in Oregon, [he]... described the judge's award of \$A2500... in damages as "a slap in the face, which wouldn't even pay my hotel bill." [Mr Oregon] cited, as he had in court, two cases he had won in the U[S] for similar breach of copyright for which he was awarded \$US40,000... and \$US42,500.

...Then God told Noah and his sons, "I solemnly promise you and your children and the animals you brought with you... that I will never again send another flood to destroy the Earth... I have placed my rainbow in the clouds as a sign of my promise until the end of time." Genesis ch 9 v 8-12... The Bible is so entrenched in the Pacific that it is hampering the efforts of a new wave of modern scientists. Western scientists warning the island nations of the impending threat of global warming are up against the teachings of the men and women who introduced Christianity... The story of Noah... and God's promise... is one of their biggest obstacles. The people who embraced Christianity and its teachings find it hard to believe the predictions of scientists... [An environmental] scientist... of Auckland University, said he has repeatedly run into religious-based fatalism, a belief by the people that they are either being protected or punished by God. As a Tokelau village elder put it: "When there are no more rainbows I will prepare for sea level rise." ...many of those who do hear the scientists' warnings respond with a feeling of either helplessness in the face of this Western-induced disaster or optimism at the prospect of becoming environmental refugees. "The official Government response... often has the Pacific as the innocent victim. In other words: 'give us money to cope with this problem.' Others say it's the greatest thing to ever occur because it will give them an excuse to migrate to A[US or N]Z..." Intellectual colonialism has not helped smaller Pacific nations to come to grips with the problem, he said. For years the region's universities have been dominated by foreign intellectuals who have no long-term commitment to the islands, and aid money supposedly for environmental research has been siphoned off into other projects – including the development of new technologies in the donor countries. On top of that, Pacific peoples have been seduced by the glamour of Western technology, believing that the Western way of doing things must be better than traditional methods. For example, the boulder banks thrown up by cyclones to form natural seawalls have been taken and crushed for Western-style buildings, leaving the islands exposed to the sea. Western engineers have then advised that concrete seawalls be built in their place. "They don't have cement in the islands so they have to import it at great cost. Then, when there's a cyclone, the concrete blocks move and the islanders haven't got the machinery to put them back in place, so the whole thing is a waste of time and money..." Another natural source of shelter, mangrove forests, has been pulled out to make beaches for tourists, and islanders have left their traditional homes to live in Western-style cities on the big islands. "In the past Pacific Islanders were capable of repairing cyclone damage themselves. They cut down trees to make a new roof and someone from a neighbouring island paddled over with food. But you can't do that with a whole city of people. Now, when there's a cyclone, they need foreign aid to get back on their feet."

...A disaster can be defined as an event such as a fire, flood or drought, which occurs at a magnitude or frequency beyond human expectations. A characteristic of many disasters is that the management practices and procedures designed to deal[with] them fail. A common factor at many fire disasters is the inability of fire managers to predict fire behaviour.

...Floods, droughts, out-of-control fires. The devastating effects of the El Nino weather pattern on both sides of the Pacific Ocean are troubling enough. But when [one] scientist... reached the Pacific atoll of Christmas Island, in Kiribati, he found something more quietly chilling: stretches of dead coral, no sign of fish in the water and few birds in the sky... The water surrounding the sparsely inhabited atoll, the world's largest, is 4 deg C higher than average for this time of year, throwing the environmental system off its axis... "It's an example of a complete ecosystem collapse that's directly linked to El Nino," said... [the] climate expert at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory at Columbia University, New York. While delegates... in Kyoto haggle over greenhouse gases and emission limits, a compelling – and so far unanswered – question has emerged: is global warming fuelling El Nino? Like many of the issues surrounding global warming, nobody is really sure. Scientists say they need much more data than they have today... Right now, experts have accurate data going back only 100 years... Even environmentalists say it is too soon to blame El Nino on car exhaust. But one thing is certain: El Nino is getting stronger and more frequent.

...At the start of the conference the U[Ss'] position was to stabilise emissions at 1990 levels in the next 15 years, while the E[U] wanted to cut them by 15[%]. But both sides gave ground and authoritative sources said last night that a historic deal... was imminent. The figures had narrowed to 8[% for the EU, 7% for the US and 6% for Japan. However a]... group of US senators and congressmen in Kyoto to observe the meeting predicted a major battle to muster Senate support for any agreement that would oblige the US to cut its greenhouse gas emissions.

...The world's first treaty to reduce greenhouse gases finally emerged from weary delegates exhausted by long hours of debate that pitted nations, interest groups and whole regions against each other... At the end of 11 days of non-stop negotiations, which turned chaotic in the last 24 hours, a new front was opened in the battle against global pollution. No nation claimed victory and none ended up completely happy... The big three[– the US, the EU and Japan –] committed themselves to cuts of [7, 8 and 6%] from 1990 emission levels in the next 15 years... But... the... EU Environment Commissioner... [is] worried about the future. "We would have liked the parties to be more ambitious," she said. The way the agreement was reached is likely to become the stuff of international diplomatic legend... At one stage... [the] conference chairman... Argentina's ambassador to China... adjourned the meeting for a 30-minute cooling-off period when he thought it was about to break down irretrievably. The two issues that held up the treaty mainly involved the U[S] and China, which fought to a one-all draw. China's victory was to have a paragraph deleted that would

have committed it and the rest of the [Last W]orld to joining the global warming fight, an expense they said they could not bear while their economies were just growing. The US victory was to keep the right to emissions trading... [T]he target for N[Z – an 8%] cut to emissions... – was achievable but it would not ratify the protocol until key issues were resolved... [said its] Environment Minister...

For the next generation, the Kyoto Protocol is certainly going to be a landmark document. All countries now accept that the increase in greenhouse gas emissions is highly risky. The [First World] countries also accept that they have to act first. The [Last World] countries have agreed that they could benefit if some of the new “clean” technologies are made available to them. Some have been surprised that such a package was possible. Many have been disappointed, because they wanted to see even deeper cuts. Why should we wait until 2010 for the world to stop using the atmosphere as a rubbish dump? Others (like A[US]) want to see the canaries actually drop dead before they get out of the coal mine. N[Z]’s variant is to ensure that there is a deregulated market for dead canaries... [T]here can be no doubt that this Protocol has got teeth. No government will be able to ignore it. More important, no private investor will be able to neglect the cost of generating CO₂ or other greenhouse gases, especially when a market mechanism is established to create financial benefits for those who invest elsewhere... The new focus of the international community is on risk and risk management. There will be a large effort to help the Pacific Islands and other [Last World] countries get the power they need without adding to risks. Globally, there will be exponential growth in the market for proven renewable technology such as solar PV, wind, biomass, and the efficient back-up systems which are now available for small to medium electricity plants.

...China yesterday hailed the damming of the mighty Yangtze River as a major milestone in the world’s biggest hydropower project that would symbolise the nation’s technical prowess. Today an army of construction workers will block the main channel of the Yangtze... which ranks only behind the Amazon and the Congo in terms of water flow... in a high-profile ceremony... celebrating what is arguably the most ambitious engineering project in history... The blocking of the river will allow the building of the gargantuan Three Gorges dam, the core of a \$US30 billion... project aimed at slaking China’s growing thirst for electric power... and taming the flood-prone Yangtze... an unruly waterway that has claimed 300,000 lives this century alone... [C]lean hydro-power will reduce China’s reliance on sulphur-belching coal power plants... [An area covering] more than 56,000 sq km... is being flooded to... [supply the] power station, which will begin generating electricity from 2006... The project[, which]... will include... agricultural initiatives... [and] large infrastructure... ranging from airports to railways... is due to be completed in 2009. But its critics say a series of smaller dams on Yangtze tributaries would be more efficient and that the current blueprint will trap a vast pool of industrial and human waste... [which] Chongqing pumps into the river... creating an environmental nightmare... Silting, they say, will block the river drainage outlets in Chongqing: sewage will bubble up through manholes and slosh through the streets of China’s largest city... They also say it will needlessly force the evacuation of people and submerge priceless archaeological treasures. In... Wanxian a sign shows the water level in the huge reservoir will rise 146m. And high on a hill in the city of Fuling, a big red warning sign says: “177 metres – Three Gorges Water Inundation Line.” Both give ominous notice of the largest peacetime forced migration in history – the relocation of 1.2 million people to make way for... a 600km long lake... The forced eviction of families from their ancestral homes has stirred deep unease in China, where respect for one’s forebears is an overriding virtue. China’s communist rulers fear popular wrath, and are struggling to convey a sense of caring and compassion... Activists opposed to the dam said the relocation was a violation of human rights on a huge scale... [T]he... 1989 book *Yangtze! Yangtze!*, which argues that the project is a monstrous white elephant, has been banned in China. In Sichuan province’s Guihua village, [a] sweet potato farmer... said she was paid 15,000 yuan... for her old... home... [S]he had to borrow more than 40,000 yuan... from family and friends to buy her new home, which cost 60,000 yuan... Farmers uprooted from fertile plots complain about their new holdings on unwelcoming soil. “The newly developed land will be a little bit worse,” conceded... [the] Mayor of Wanxian city, which administers a vast area now home to more than two thirds of all the people doomed to be displaced.

...Environmental debate is still raging over the Three Gorges dam, even as work starts on blocking the Yangtze so that workers can begin pouring the concrete for its towering walls... China’s economic boom of the last two decades has already taken its toll on the river while intensive farming has further muddied the river’s waters by speeding up soil erosion. “When I swam in the river as a child, I could cup the water in my hands and it would look like mineral water,”... said... the captain of a tourist steamer who has plied the Yangtze for 26 years... “Sometimes I look at the river and I want to cry.” Things are likely to get worse. Official estimates say one billion tonnes of sewage will flow into the reservoir each day. Human waste, industrial chemicals and heavy metals will be the main ingredients of this toxic soup. Adding to the problem, the dam will dramatically slow water flow from Chongqing to Yichang, robbing the river of its natural self-cleaning mechanism that now flushes sewage into the East China Sea. While acknowledging the problems, China says the project will be good for the environment... The dam’s 26 turbines... will pump out 18,200 megawatts of electricity, equal to about 10 big coal-fired power stations or 50 million tonnes of coal a year... [Furthermore, metropolitan] Chongqing, which covers dozens of towns and villages and has a total population of 30 million, is to spend 300 million yuan... on environmental clean-up, officials said... [D]oomed factories will be torn down and their sites scrubbed clean of pollutants. Paper and plastic are to be picked out of landfills and burned. Pollution is only one aspect of the ecological problem. Critics say the dam will also threaten many rare plant and animal species along the river and cut fish stocks. Most at risk is the snub-nosed Yangtze River dolphin. Many have been killed or maimed by the propellers of boats, and now only 200 are left... [In addition, some] scientists say the sheer weight of the huge lake could trigger an earthquake that in a worst-case scenario would damage the dam and threaten millions of people downstream. - 1997

Earthquakes, floods, blizzards and other natural disasters killed 3200 people in China last year and caused 197.5 billion yuan... in damage, according to the China Daily... [In addition, t]he population of the most endangered marine mammals on the planet... reached such a low level that Chinese authorities feel that the... number is... too few for the species to survive much longer... Scientists in Beijing told reporters that they found only... 21... of the white flag dolphins in the middle and lower reaches of the polluted Yangtze River... in 1997. The scientists called on the public and Government agencies to increase protection efforts and curb pollution and other human activities pushing the dolphin toward extinction.

...These are good times for the elephants of Yunnan Province, in southern China. Poaching remains a problem... but compensation for trampled crops has forged a reluctant peace with local farmers and numbers have been rising. But in a broad valley sweeping out from Kunming, Yunnan’s ancient capital, a pall of smoke drifting several kilometres downwind from a factory smokestack tells another grim story of modern China: endemic pollution which, by fouling the air alone, will this year cause the deaths of almost 290,000 people. In Beijing... one of the country’s most distinguished environmental scientists, worries at the possible consequences of rising affluence. “When I visit America people ask me if China should have the same living standards as the US,” he says. “I tell them no. At present China’s consumption is one-tenth of America’s, but the population is 10 times greater.” The implications are clear. Between 1952 and 1987, while national income rose 8.6 times, energy consumption rocketed almost 15 times and the use of non-ferrous metals and iron ore about 24 times. At the heart of China’s dilemma is its reliance on coal... Although [coal’s] share is expected to fall to 50[%] by 2050, production will this decade rise by 500,000 tonnes. Across China, the legacy hovers in a permanent, acrid haze that dries the throat and stings the eyes. Urban pollution... is getting worse. Few of China’s 500 cities meet national or world environmental standards: in some the total concentration of suspended particles is more than 12 times the maximum levels set by [the WHO]. Agriculture is suffering. About a third of China’s farmland is scarred by serious soil erosion, 100 million hectares of grassland is degraded – almost one million hectares is lost every year – and overfishing and pollution are increasing in coastal waters. But China... has at least started on its long environmental march... China now has an environmental plan termed Agenda 21... It emphasises sustainable development and agriculture, cleaner

industrial production and environmental protection, clean energy and transport, conservation... Much of the work is already under way. Reafforestation projects have increased forest cover in China from 4... to 12[%]. The Sanbei forest belt is said to be the world's largest ecological project, creating a "Great Green Wall" stretching further across China than the ancient defence works.

...Dykes along the Yangtze River are caving in as the... fight against China's worst flooding in... decades stretches defences... Millions of peasants, officials and volunteers from the city were camping out... on the dykes, watching for leaks, as soldiers frantically sandbagged potential weak spots.

...The Red Cross is appealing for aid to help... victims of devastating floods... which have deluged the southern half of China since March... The floods... [are] the worst in living memory for many areas... Authorities[have] evacuated 132,000 people stranded by swollen waters near the Three Gorges dam... A massive crest of water that rushed down the Yangtze last week caused a scare over the... dam project... Although officials said a temporary dam now in place withstood the swell that passed late on Friday, state media warned the crest was threatening to overwhelm dykes downstream... Meteorologists had said the rains were moving northward, but warned that serious flooding could resume with summer typhoons.

...Rain continued to pound the crucial upper reaches of the Yangtze River in China yesterday. A typhoon, the third of the season, was also due to hit southern Guangdong province, with heavy downpours in the late afternoon... The continued rainfall in Sichuan province renewed fears in the central Wuhan city... The official *China Daily* credited Wuhan's high dykes with protecting seven million residents from the river's fourth flood peak of the season. "The city's 286km of levees along the main stream of the Yangtze stood up to the trial and remained intact, though the water level hit 29.39m," it said. That was the second highest level in 133 years of record-keeping... About 150km upstream, at Shashi in the Hubei province, the river fell slightly to 44.59m... A river diversion is being prepared at nearby Jiujiang to save large cities downstream in case the level rises above 45m. About 500,000 residents were evacuated from the zone last weekend to prepare for the possible dynamiting of big Yangtze dykes...

Three dykes have burst along the Nen River in north-east China, threatening the country's largest oilfield of Daqing. About 200,000 soldiers and civilians have been reinforcing flood defences... [around] most of Daqing's 20,000 oil wells... [However,] waterlogging has closed 355 oil wells and reduced daily output by 807 tonnes... Water control experts forecast that in about one week the water level on the Songhua River flowing past the city would rise to a record 120.3m... China has been battered by more than 60 days of heavy flooding... While the Government has largely blamed the floods on the[El Nino] weather phenomenon, some officials have pointed to widespread deforestation along river systems as a major factor in the severity of this year's disaster. Critics have also blamed the Three Gorges Dam project... for sucking funds from other flood-control works.

...There was a tragic inevitability to the admission by Chinese officials that their own lack of concern for the environment, particularly the wholesale clearing of hillside forests, had added to the toll of the Yangtze floods. In the vast territories radiating out from Beijing, stinging air and toxic rivers are an unrelenting reminder for China to fully embrace the cleansing of five decades of thoughtless industrial development.

...Chinese authorities, bracing for more floods, have declared a state of emergency in two provinces... Water levels on the giant Yangtze River have exceeded the danger marks in eastern Jiangsu and central Anhui... In Anhui, about 200,000 people have been evacuated from villages along the Yangtze... Authorities planned to inundate the villages as a means of diverting water from key industrial cities... About one million civilians and soldiers have been mobilised to reinforce dykes... the country's largest military mobilisation since the Communist revolution in 1949...

Wearied Chinese flood workers, beset by disease, are battling yet another "devastating" surge on the Yangtze River... [I]t was reported from Beijing that the Yangtze's eighth flood crest of the year was rushing towards central Hubei province's Yichang, a city of four million people and construction base for the Three Gorges Dam project... Widespread flooding this year has killed at least 3004 people... and... left millions homeless[most of whom have been]... warned not to expect too much from their cash-strapped Government...

[China's] Ministry of Finance... said this year's natural disasters, especially floods, were "unexpected and unprecedented in their severity" in many areas. In central Hunan province, the water level at Dongting Lake's Chenglingji hydrological station hit 35.48m, breaking the 1996 record of 35.31m... The danger mark for the lake is 32m... [A]bout 280 million people – about one quarter of China's population – have been affected by natural disasters... [which] have... destroyed 3.86 million houses and forced the relocation of 8.65 million people... More than 3.4 million hectares of crops have been destroyed and a further 28.4 million hectares of farmland have been affected, cutting... output by about 30[%], bringing direct]... economic losses from natural disasters... to 153.1 billion yuan... Disaster-hit areas have received 1.6 billion yuan in relief funds... Donations totalling 178 million yuan and relief material worth 224.5 million yuan had been distributed...

[T]he cost of the disastrous summer floods has been put at 300 billion yuan... cutting up to 4[%] from the country's... GDP... While the floods had a major impact on agriculture, they [a]re actually expected to boost the growth of industry and the service sector... [A] Chinese Academy of Sciences economist... predicted that a new wave of construction would boost domestic demand for investment and retail sales...

China is fighting "speculative" price rises as the... floods... affect everything from grain to cement to household appliances. Authorities have slapped price controls on many goods after... prices... doubled... in many areas... The measure followed a call by the Communist Party mouthpiece the *People's Daily* for local governments to combat business activities that "disrupted the market order." As the floods hit prime grain-growing areas, officials ordered the unloading of record grain stockpiles on the market to help bring down prices... Faced with the destruction of 5 million homes... officials were fretting that the effort to rebuild millions of homes and thousands of factories could be hampered by price rises.

...China has started resettling 2 million more people to make way for the giant Three Gorges Dam, bringing the total displaced to 3 million. The resettlement will stop wetland farming and increase the Yangtze River's floodwater capacity to more than 10 billion cu m... China says it will help solve the perennial problem of flooding along the Yangtze... [However, i]nternational and domestic critics have voiced scepticism about the dam's flood-control and questioned its high financial and human costs.

...[a] Booker prize-winning author... led a howl of protests after India's highest court cleared the way for a dam stalled for six years by an environmental lawsuit... [The writer], who donated to the... Save Narmada Movement... the \$US35,000... prizemoney she won in 1997 for her novel *The God of Small Things*, said the court decision was heartbreaking. "The court has crushed the most non-violent peoples' movement in the country. This shows that you can stand in front of the map of India and throw darts anywhere on it without bothering about the environmental or human costs, or analysing the benefits for the people." "...We will certainly go back to the people. People are ready to fight a battle even beyond this verdict," said... the... head of the... [movement], who staged a 26-day hunger strike against the Narmada River hydro-electric project in 1994.

...Floodwaters raged in northern and eastern India yesterday, pushing the death toll to more than 1000... About 500,000 people have been evacuated and 50 million affected... [F]loodwater from upstream India... [has also killed] nearly 1000 people... in... Bangladesh... Hindu women [have been pouring] milk into a river on the outskirts of... Dhaka as part of ritual prayers to end the... flooding.

...In Dhaka, the head of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society... said: "When we made the first appeal for help 10 days after the flooding started... no one imagined it would take on such a huge magnitude... [They] have assumed the level of 1988 floods and might have a much bigger impact on life and economy when waters recede," he said... More than two-thirds of the impoverished country is under water[as a result of this year's floods, which] have... led to epidemics in the past seven weeks... [The UN Secretary-General has] urged the international community to respond generously to an appeal launched by the Bangladesh Government for emergency aid of \$US680 million...

Bangladesh is asking international donors for \$US680 million in emergency aid amid the worst floods in 10 years... 700,000 tonnes of rice... have been destroyed... [The] floods set off by heavy rain have... left over half a million marooned[. • 'The RNZAF's first contribution to a major international relief operation took place in Apr, 1972, when a Hercules airlifted 500,000kg of food throughout Bangladesh. A few weeks later, a second

Hercules distributed 1.5 million kg of food. For its efforts, the RNZAF was awarded the Red Cross Meritorious Service Medallion – the first time it had been awarded’]...

Bangladesh’s already strained economy is suffering a major setback as the country grapples with its worst floods on record. The floods... have shut down operations at nearly 5000 small, medium and large-scale industries... causing losses worth 200 billion taka (about \$[NZ]8 billion), a Bangladesh Chamber of Industries estimate said... Bangladesh has so far received flood aid worth \$37.8 million, mostly from Western countries.

...Triggered by heavy rain and fed by swollen rivers flowing from the Himalayas... including the Ganges shared by India... Bangladesh’s... floods... [caused more] than 150,000 people[to] contract... diarrhoea from polluted water or rotten food. Diseases such as hepatitis, jaundice, malaria and scabies are rampant and increasing... Meanwhile, [the]... Indian Government’s plan to relieve the country’s worst drought for a century has finally – and belatedly – swung into action, even as thousands of people desperate with hunger and thirst are fleeing the worst-affected regions. In Jodhpur, the first relief train has arrived, carrying 200 tankers of drinking water, which will be trucked to Rajasthan’s parched countryside... Every village in western Rajasthan is a potential victim in a drought. The rivers and ponds dry up, rainwater tanks become exhausted, the water table in wells plummets. That is why the Government has built fine concrete water tanks in most villages, hooked up to pipelines. Moklashani has one... But the structure is disintegrating, the tank is bone dry and it has no pipes or taps or troughs connected to it. Built 10 years back, underwater pipes fed it for a few days – then never again. So what do you do? ...The answer... is to dust off the wisdom of the ancients. Hundreds of years ago, when these villages were first established, settlers made a vital hedge against dying in droughts: in the beds of the seasonal ponds they dug wells lined with stones for durability. “In the old days they guarded the pond fiercely... and they went to a lot of trouble to maintain the wells.” When the Government waved its wand and shot pipelines out into the Rajasthan Desert, these careful practices fell into disuse. But for want of other alternatives, the women of Moklashani are rediscovering these wells, or bheri... [However, a]part from being... badly depleted, the water in Moklashani’s bheri is not... potable. It is dirty – due to slack maintenance of the pond – and can be used only for watering the animals and washing. The village’s only way to get drinking water is to buy it from the water barons. Sharp local businessmen sink bores on their land – or use intimidation to plunder common sources – then fill tankers and ply them up and down the gravel roads. Price varies according to need. Close to Jodhpur they charge 150 rupees... for a tanker full. But in Moklashani the price is doubled. To some Indians, that price is a snip. After all, at Bombay Airport the only drinking water available is Evian, imported from France and priced at 70 rupees for a 300ml bottle... [In related news, ‘Canadian researchers have found traces of man-made toxic chemicals in snow at remote mountain locations – and they believe nowhere on Earth is untainted.’ Other ‘scientists warn the world’s oceans are more polluted than first thought.’ One] scientist, who has just completed a review of A[US]’s seagrass resources... says... [it has lost a]bout 45,000ha of... seagrass[, which]... compares to similar losses throughout the industrialised world... The world’s seagrass is vanishing because of urban and industrial pollution, raising fears of underwater deserts that will cause the decline of some fishing industries... When seagrass dies, sand becomes more mobile, creating erosion and gradually ending other forms of life. [■ ‘The U.N. Environmental Programme has described the Caribbean as one of the most polluted and endangered areas in the world. The Sea’s ridges and deep basins prevent natural flow to the open sea, trapping pollutants that are swept in from Mexico, America, Brazil and Venezuela, choking the marine environment.’]

...An estimated 140 dolphins have been washed up along beaches on an island off the coast of Venezuela. The dead and dying dolphins have reddish marks on their abdomens but the cause of their deaths is not known. The mysterious dolphin deaths come as the scientific world focuses on the sickly state of the world’s oceans. In Washington today a group of scientists sounded an alarm over the various threats to marine ecosystems. The problems have now led the U[N] to name 1998 the International Year of the Oceans... The oceans were once thought to be too vast to suffer serious harm but not any longer... “The sea is in real trouble...” Among the signs: diseased and dying coral in more than 90 countries; in South Africa, two million lbs of crayfish killed by algal blooms called red tides; in N[Z], more than a billion fish killed in recent years by a toxic organism[; in]... California, the virtual extinction of white abalone... “We take too much from the sea and we put too much into the sea.” ...The scientists... say government and the public must act now to prevent irreversible damage to the Earth’s largest ecosystem... [They] want a White House conference on the seas, more maritime sanctuaries, and tougher laws on clean water and endangered species.

...KAIKOURA is famous worldwide for the great toothed whales that spout within sight of its pebbly beaches and dive to inky depths in search of the elusive giant squid. But why Kaikoura? What has it got to offer? The answer is as impressive as the whales themselves. Beneath the waters of the broad bay south of Kaikoura Peninsula lies one of the world’s natural wonders: a submarine canyon. It slices more than a kilometre down through the surrounding shallow continental shelf. Importantly for the whales, the canyon funnels deep, dark blue, nutrient-rich oceanic water in close to the shore so that life teems there... including giant squid. But these terrors of Jules Verne’s *20,000 Leagues under the Sea* are only a tasty meal for Kaikoura’s whales. High-tech marine surveys over the past few years by N[Z] and French scientists have revealed that the Kaikoura Canyon has a grandeur and a life independent of its whales. “Swath” sonar images... show huge rockfalls partly blocking the canyon, and a rough textured floor from which beach pebbles, with shells and driftwood, have been dredged. The images show that the chasm cuts to within a stone’s throw of rocky promontories near the tiny settlement of Goose Bay. A river of sand running along shore pours into the chasm and pebbles, torn from beaches by storms, are swept over its rim. Abrasive sand and pebbles gave birth to the canyon and keep it a growing feature of the Earth’s surface. Submarine canyons are not particularly rare but most are comparatively insignificant features far from land. They cut only the outer edge of continental shelves. They are dead, relicts from the ice ages when polar ice caps took so much water out of the oceans that the sea was more than 100m lower than it is now, and rivers carried their loads to beaches at the rims of emergent, windswept continental shelves. But when the ice melted and the sea flooded these shelves, the canyons were left without the sand and pebbles that sustained them. For the marine geologists who study it, Kaikoura Canyon is a rare example of one that survived the flood, perhaps because it could cut back through fault-shattered rocks. To understand it is to understand how the relict canyons worked and how canyons have flushed sand and pebbles from shore to settle in deep-ocean basins through geologic time. Some of these ancient, deep basins have been pushed up high to form the mountain ranges of N[Z]. And there the cycle of the Earth begins again. Sages have long waxed eloquent about mountains being washed to the sea. But the pebbles, sand and mud from N[Z]’s snow-capped Southern Alps have barely begun their journey when they reach the coast. In a dogged “two steps forward and one step back” dance, they are moved inexorably north by large waves and currents from the great Southern Ocean around Antarctica. They move... until the yawning chasm of Kaikoura Canyon appears before them. About 2 million cubic metres each year fall into the canyon head and settle on its steep walls. Like the soft snow that settles quickly on the steep lee slopes of mountains, the pebbles and sand are unstable. Periodically, perhaps when shaken by earthquakes on the nearby plate-boundary faults, they collapse in great avalanches that rush down the canyon... When they reach more gentle slopes they dump their load of pebbles but they don’t stop. Submarine avalanches have a curious way of entraining mud that has rained from above since the last event and metamorphosing it into fluid slurries. These... can travel at motorway speeds along meandering, Mississippi-like channels for enormous distances. Those that begin at Kaikoura have been traced for 1500km... Radiocarbon dating of a piece of driftwood in the lower canyon suggests... the last avalanche... [was] about 170 years... [ago. O]nshore, many rockfalls along the San Andreas-type Hope Fault have been estimated, from the growth of lichens on bare rock faces, also to be about 170 years old... No stories have survived of the spectacular sea “boils” and tsunami waves that would have resulted. But that was a time of great social upheaval in Maori society.

...[the] Captain... aged 75... was harbourmaster at Whitianga when the night-time tsunami from Chile struck the Coromandel Peninsula seaside settlement without warning in May 1960. To this day he remembers the terror of powerful water surges and a panic evacuation of the town... But... a coastal hazard scientist at the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences, says the Whitianga tsunami was small compared with past tsunamis

and what might be expected in the future... Four or five big tsunamis have hit N[Z] in the past 180 years... No coastline around N[Z] has been spared from tsunamis, although some areas, such as the east coast of the North Island, are more susceptible... On the West Coast, it is a case of double jeopardy. Not only is the region at risk from tsunamis generated by local earthquakes, but seismic waves originating from South America passing to the north of N[Z] could bounce back across the Tasman Sea from A[US]. The hazard scientist said: "The parallels between what has happened in P[NG] and what will happen at some point in N[Z] are stunning... We need to learn some significant lessons from th[e PNG tsunami]."

...The... tsunami that gouged the north-western coast of P[NG]... on Friday... came in the dead of night and wiped out whole villages – a huge wall of water that... left total devastation in its wake... "There were three waves that came in... The first was about 10m and then there were two smaller ones..." ...The earth sciences department at Waikato University was yesterday scrambling to get one of its team to the destruction zone, saying it was vital to learn as much as possible about the tsunami... Rescue workers were also racing to the area to help the injured... [T]he official death toll stood at about 700 last night. More than 6000 villagers were homeless... Immediate needs were to get food and shelter to the survivors, many of whom were badly injured, and to help to dispose of corpses. An RNZAF Hercules is on stand-by in Auckland ready to ferry supplies... Damage to airstrips and rugged terrain will make distribution difficult. The tsunami hit... after an earthquake just off the coast which measured 7 on the Richter scale... The district's disaster co-ordinator... said: "We have assumed schools... will be closed because we don't have the children. They're... all dead." ...There were reports of villagers dying in swamps where they lay waiting for help. Other bodies were floating in the Sissano lagoon after two villages housing 2000 people on a spit of land were obliterated. N[Z] scientists fear a similar tsunami could strike without warning here. As recently as this month a huge wave was recorded during a storm in the outer Hauraki Gulf. The 12.3m wave was measured... by a deepwater wave rider buoy... Such waves surging from the sea are not uncommon... It probably flattened before hitting the coast at Leigh, where no damage was reported. But what scientists fear most is an earthquake close to the coast causing an underwater landslide and a huge seismic wave... Cases of huge waves hitting N[Z] have been recorded for centuries... The entire Pacific region faces the risk of tsunamis... Hawaii, Alaska... Russia's west coast and Pacific islands have all suffered tsunamis... this century... with the most deadly triggered by an 8.6 quake off Chile in 1960. As many as 2000 people may have died and damage was estimated at \$100 million... More than 100,000 d[i]ed after a tsunami hit Japan in 1703...

Tsunami waves start as insignificant ripples on the ocean's surface, capable of passing under a ship unnoticed... [and travelling] across the ocean at speeds of up to 1000 km/h... It is when the tidal wave nears shore in shallower waters that it gains its destructive force... For those on shore there is little warning of a tsunami's approach. The first indication is often a sharp swell, not unlike an ordinary storm swell, followed by a sudden outrush of water that often exposes the shore area as the first wave trough approaches... "A tsunami is not a single wave, but a series of waves. As the tsunami enters the shoaling waters of coastlines in its path, the velocity of its waves diminishes and wave height increases..."... said... Hawaii's Tsunami Warning Centre... The highest reported tsunami was one triggered by an underwater landslide. It struck the island of Lanai in Hawaii about 105,000 years ago. The *Guinness Book of Records* says it deposited sediment up to an altitude of 375m. The highest known in more recent times appeared off... Ishigaki Island... near Japan in 1771. It was possibly as high as 85m and tossed a 750-tonne block of coral more than 2.5km inland. The highest wave ever surfed was about 15m – a tsunami which struck Minole, Hawaii, on April 3, 1868. A Hawaiian named Holua rode it to save his life... Probably the most destructive tsunami on record occurred on August 27, 1883, following an eruption of the Krakatoa volcano between the Indonesian islands of Java and Sumatra. Over 36,000 people were killed by the resulting tidal waves, which reached a height of up to 30m and travelled at... 720 km/h. The tsunami's passage was traced as far away as Panama. There has already been scientific speculation that the P[NG] tsunamis might have owed much of their force to an undersea landslide.

...Yesterday, the once-idyllic fishing villages that bore the brunt of the tsunami were eerily silent... As survivors staggered into a small hospital in Vanimo, a local health official asked...: "Where are the little ones? Where are the children?" ...Rescuers fear a generation of children has been wiped out... in some villages... by P[NG]'s terrible tidal wave... "The most saddening thing is that 70[%] of the survivors have been adults... The children may be hiding somewhere; we hope so. But the fear is that they have drowned..."... a... priest... said... Children were too weak to escape the 10m-high wall of water... Officials said yesterday that... about 1000 bodies had been buried... where they lay on beaches... so far and "at least 3000 are still missing." ...many... [of] the injured... remained hard to find after fleeing in terror into the jungle-clad mountains, fearing more waves. Hospital staff said they were running out of medical supplies to treat the injuries... A [RNZAF] Hercules is expected to reach Port Moresby this morning with 28 personnel and... some medical supplies. A second Hercules will leave Whenuapai at midday today. The first of three A[US]n Air Force Hercules arrived at Vanimo yesterday with emergency supplies, including a field hospital and a 100-strong team of doctors, nurses and engineers... Private aid agencies have also set up emergency appeals for funds and sent immediate shipments of clothes, food and shelter to the area... [where up] to 10,000 people were estimated to have lived... "The water in the lagoon is so contaminated with... decomposing... bodies that most of the fish and crabs... are dying," said a provincial rescue official... [M]otorboats... patrolled the sea... towing nets to try to reclaim floating bodies... that big water crocodiles were feeding on...

The horror is far from over... 70 gravediggers were airlifted into Sissano, civilian volunteers equipped with digging implements. But the task is clearly beyond them... They dug the first mass grave in Aitape... [with] the only mechanical digger in the area... but it wasn't for those killed in the tidal wave. It was for 90 survivors who have died since, exhausted by wounds, shock and the infections which prosper in the humid heat... "We are seeing people so devastated they cannot talk; so deeply in shock they are simply unaware," said an emergency co-ordinator... The injured are dying so quickly, the morgue cannot contain them, and the decaying bodies have become a threat to the living... But at least those who died at Aitape were identified and counted, their deaths recorded. In the bush, many more are dying... [after being] washed 2km inland... [by] tonnes of water... Two A[US]n Army teams were helicoptered into the bush yesterday with the unenviable task of grading the survivors – giving priority to those with a chance of living. There is no space or time for those beyond help. "It's a tough call," said a rescue pilot... "You die quickly here." Even as they are rescued, many have about them the unmistakable stench of death, of flesh rotting with gangrene and tropical ulcers, a smell "you can't imagine... The... sea is full of bodies... After three days in the water, if you touch them, they disintegrate. We cannot wait for them to be identified."

...The sound of prayers and hymns have begun to rise from under palm trees across P[NG] as a stunned... [but] deeply religious nation... comes to terms with tidal waves that killed at least 1600 of their brethren... [U]p to 6000 others remain... unaccounted for... The prayer vigils have helped ease the distress of survivors who have been unable to observe traditional mourning rites. "Wantoks" – members of extended families that make up villages – usually keep their dead with them before burial... "They normally have the body in the house, certainly overnight. The whole wider family gather around and they have the telling of stories and the wailing... It's all a very important part of mourning. I don't think they've come to terms with it at all at this stage. They haven't got the bodies to wail over."

...A restricted zone of death may be declared on P[NG]'s tsunami-ravaged north-west coast... The Vice-Finance Minister... said: "I am calling on the Government to seal Sissano... and allow natural decay to destroy the rotting corpses." [As soldiers] yesterday began shooting dogs and pigs that were digging up buried bodies... [a team of US] search and rescue dogs was said to be on the way to help sift through debris for more survivors... Doctors are concerned that disease will spread through contaminated water and food. Sissano lagoon, the centre of the affected area, remains choked with corpses... Food and fresh water were running low and many of the survivors were already suffering tropical malaria. "We will have to monitor to see if typhoid and cholera occur," said... [the minister. NZ] medical staff working desperately to save survivors made do with just a few hours' sleep... "You never know when or where the next case will come from... It's been pretty strange... We worried about getting their T-shirts dirty, because it could be the only piece of clothing they own."

...The true death toll... will never be known. Relief workers have sealed off the most devastated areas, allowing hundreds and perhaps thousands of unrecovered bodies to decompose... After-shocks of last week's earthquakes added to survivors' worries and led seismologists to warn that there was a 50[%] chance of more tremor activity in the area. But they added that it would pose no danger of surges. The effect of the tsunamis has hit aid workers as well as the villagers. Four days after arriving... [one NZ] Army nurse... still does not know what to say to a 6-year-old who has awoken to see that her leg has been amputated or to a man who has lost his whole family. "There's nothing you can say that will make the hurt go away,"... [she] said yesterday as she stood in the post-operative "ward" – a cluster of tents on a sportsfield... She is one of 26 N[Z]ers working 20-hour days in the tropical heat... [S]peaking through translators to the Pidgin-speaking victims[, she]... has been told that villagers thought the noise of the killer waves was the sound of an ocean liner going by. They rushed to the coast and their deaths. The disaster has been a challenge for young military medics, trained for wartime injuries to young healthy soldiers. They have found it hard to cope with treating children, said the leader of the A[US]n contingent... The medical teams work is being hampered by the conditions. X-rays are carried out in an open-air structure with a roof of palm fronds. Those wandering behind a patient as x-rays are being taken are warded off in a manner akin to a golfer's cry of "fore". Surgery – often including amputation – is carried out in a tent. As darkness falls, doctors and nurses work by car headlights or television camera lights... [The NZ nurse begged NZ]ers to keep sending help. "It would benefit so many... People would be so grateful." [Another RNZAF] Hercules loaded mainly with medical supplies and aircraft parts, will leave Whenuapai at 8am today and should reach Port Moresby this evening.

...A "no-go zone" established in the area of P[NG]... devastated by tsunamis has been extended... However[, authorities]... have dropped plans to destroy the lagoon where... hundreds... of... bodies... still lie as it is considered sacred by survivors... Authorities were proposing to clean out the lagoon by blasting through the narrow sandbar... The decision came as an international team of doctors began winding down its operations... Over 800 injured people were still in[local] hospitals... Meanwhile, the controller of the disaster relief operation... confirmed the death toll at 1600. So far, he said, it had been confirmed that 10,073 people had survived... Authorities were now considering where to permanently resettle 6500 people left homeless by the tsunamis... [and, in] an effort to prevent a recurrence of the disaster, A[US]n Geological Survey Organisation seismologists have begun work to install a network of seismographs across the disaster area... [Incidentally, t]sunami experts believe... a tidal wave bomb... secretly tested off the coast of Auckland 50 years ago could be developed to devastating effect. University of Waikato researchers believe a modern approach to the wartime idea... could produce waves up to 30m high... [S]tudies proved that while a single explosion was not necessarily effective, a series of explosions could have a significant impact. "It's a bit like sliding backwards and forwards in a bath – the waves grow higher,"...

Indonesian fishermen from neighbouring Irian Jaya have spotted about 200 floating bodies believed to be victims of the [PNG] tsunami. The frightened fishermen left the bodies... and stopped fishing in the area... [By the way, at] a meeting in Geneva last week the [UN]... agreed on an urgent plan to provide equipment and training for 1000... Indonesian... firefighters.

...Most of the raging forest fires devastating Indonesia's... province of East Kalimantan are out, partly because of rain, partly because there is nothing left to burn. "...about 70[%]... of the fires... have been extinguished," said... the East Kalimantan Environment Impact Management Agency (Bapedal)... According to the Indonesian Meteorology and Geophysics Department, the rainfall is caused by the El Nino phenomenon... "The rains... meant for the rainy season, which did not arrive, have now come during the dry season,"... The fires[, which covered much]... of Southeast Asia... [with] smog for three months late last year... caused billions of dollars in damage to economies... Meanwhile, in Argentina the weather phenomenon is being blamed for flooding millions of hectares... The death toll from two weeks of devastating floods... which... also affected areas of Paraguay and Brazil... has risen to 14, and 87,500 people have had to be evacuated, officials said... Damage is estimated at more than \$NZ2.7 billion, mostly due to loss of crops and livestock. Meteorologists say the flooding could reach historic levels if the intense rains continued falling.

...Floodwaters in Argentina's Rio de la Plata estuary broke through a barrier built to hold back last month's oil spill, spreading the crude up the Atlantic coast. With the water level 2m above normal, the oil spill seeped into the river banks, making it difficult to remove... [In related news, n]ature plagued the world with a record number of disasters [last year] but the death toll fell far short of the worst single catastrophe of the last 1000 years, a Chinese flood that killed 900,000 in 1887... [O]ne of the world's largest reinsurers, said that about 70,000 people were killed in well over 700 disasters last year. Climatic changes... were partly to blame, but it was impossible to say to what extent.

...The skies over England... poured down more rain in the past 12 months than in any year on record, the Government meteorological office said.

...It is the middle of winter, but the hedgehogs can't sleep, insects are still buzzing and our lawns won't stop growing... Even rodents, which normally invade people's homes to escape the winter, are staying outside... But not just the plants and animals are confused about what time of year it is. So are humans, it seems, as scientists struggle to explain the bizarre weather conditions... Hospitals report lower-than-usual levels of flu and bronchiolitis, psychiatrists reckon seasonal depression is down and store-owners are concerned about a slump in sales of traditional winter items such as heaters, pullovers and thermal underwear. The minimum nightfall temperatures on Wednesday and Thursday nights, of 13 or 14, were 8 deg above the... average and matched the average maximum temperatures for the month... While scientists in N[Z] have been left baffled by the weather, Londoners are wondering why their summer is turning out colder than our winter.

...LONDON – The hapless citizen had only one concern: the weather. Why were we having gales and storms, he wanted to know? Could they be due to the impiety of the nation? The questions were of such pressing concern that the poor amateur meteorologist carefully carved them on a lead tablet – then deposited it at a Roman oracle 2400 years ago. The answer, unfortunately, is not recorded... Yet the questions it posed are intriguing, for they suggest humans have always thought the weather is odd, and that we tend to blame its quirks on our behaviour. Two thousand years ago, bungled sacrifices, strange omens and sin among senators took the rap for floods and downpours. Today we have a different scapegoat, the [CO2] that is pouring from our factories and power stations... But not every scientist is convinced of this neat connection between storm and industry. One increasingly vociferous group has started to argue that many climatologists have failed to take proper account of a key aspect of the problem: the behaviour of climate in prehistoric times... Scientists have been able to study past climates by analysing samples of ancient, buried ice.

...Samples taken from a lake high in the Andes show... a continuous geological record of El Nino weather events dating back 15,000 years... Previously, scientists had been able to chart the pesky weather pattern back only 2000 years, even though scattered evidence of much older El Ninos existed... [The new information, which puts] scientists on a path toward better predicting what El Nino will do in the future[, was unveiled at an AUSn]... conference on El Nino... Scientists attending... the El Nino History and Crisis conference... also... announced that the... ocean-warming phenomenon is probably responsible for several historic events from revolutions to plagues. The present El Nino is the same pattern as during the French Revolution, said [a conference spokesperson]... The Black Death, which originated in the rodent populations of Asia and spread across the world, was... associated with El Nino[, as were]... most major influenza pandemics between 1557 and 1900.

...Writing in the journal *Science*, researchers said chemical dating... showed El Ninos have become much more frequent in the past 5000 years, occurring about every two to eight years instead of every 15 to 35 years when the Earth was hotter.

...a heatwave[has been] blamed for at least 117 deaths across the U[S]... The temperature in Dallas hit 38[°] C for the 15th straight day... Other states were struggling to cope with the heat as well. In... Oklahoma[, chickens]... have died by the thousands in the past few weeks, according to unconfirmed reports. No official count is available. "When the temperature reaches 90[°] F (32[°] C) or above in the... poultry... house, the birds begin to stress... When it reaches above 95... they begin to die." In... Iowa, temperatures were... expected to climb above 40[°] C in some spots. "It's

hot here, but I think it's hot everywhere," said... a foreman with Central Asphalt Paving of Des Moines... In... Nebraska... road work was at a standstill because it was too hot to pour concrete. "Productivity is way down. If it's not raining, it's too hot," said... a construction company...

Cloncurry would fight to defend its... record of having the hottest shade temperature ever registered in A[US], locals said... after the town's claim to fame was challenged... [R]ecords show the thermometer in... the... Queensland cattle town... reached a blistering 53.1[°] C... in... 1889, a reading that has never been topped anywhere in A[US]. However, a scientist... of the University of Melbourne, claims the temperature in... Cloncurry... was measured with a "defective" instrument... He believes the thermometer was over-exposed to the sun and an accurate reading would have been about 47[°] C – giving the actual title to Oodnadatta, in... South A[US], which posted 50.7[°] C in... 1960. But the Mayor of Cloncurry... said yesterday: "It's our record and we're keeping it." He challenged [the scientist] to back his claim with substantial fact instead of supposition... [A barmaid] in the town's Central Hotel, said: "Everyone here believes we hold the record. It's a real talking point and it's put Cloncurry on the map."

...in each of the past 18 months... Earth has set new monthly temperature records... since... [they were] first kept in 1860.

...Stop blaming El Nino for the weather – scientists confirmed yesterday that a strong La Nina pattern is developing to shape the global climate... [Temperatures] have been hitting record average highs around the world this year, but La Nina should cause some cooling.

...The world's oceans are likely to rise by 7m to 8m over the next 1000 to 2000 years, according to A[US]'s leading research body into polar influences on climate. The estimates, released by the Hobart-based Antarctic Cooperation Research Centre, contradict popular speculation that there could be a large rise in sea levels over the next century... If the... Antarctic ice sheet melted, ocean levels would rise by about 55m. But warming of 2 to 3 degrees would not melt it because most Antarctic temperatures were well below the melting point of ice. The centre said that over the next century... ocean levels would be determined by thermal expansion and the melting of non-polar glaciers. This could be counteracted by an increase in the volume of Antarctic ice because more snow was falling as a result of higher evaporation from the warmer oceans.

...At least nine people were killed and 32 still missing yesterday after a giant avalanche engulfed an Austrian ski resort... Heavy snow prevented rescuers from evacuating the injured to hospitals from Galtuer, in the Paznaun valley, which has been cut off by heavy snow since last Saturday. Lacking outside help, the people of Galtuer searched for survivors using their bare hands... Maximum avalanche warnings have been in effect for the past few days in the Tryol and Vorarlberg regions, where some 10,000 people have been stranded in ski resorts... Austria has asked the armed forces of Britain, France, Germany, Switzerland and the U[S] to provide helicopters to evacuate the snow-blocked villages... [I]n neighbouring Switzerland the death toll from a chain of snow slips now stands at seven... [S]ome 40,000 people, half of them tourists, are stranded at the ski resorts of Klosters and Davos... where the maximum avalanche alert is in effect. In Romania, two students died in the Carpathian mountains, while authorities in Italy said a 52-year-old woman was killed and three people were injured in an avalanche in the north-western Aosta valley near the French border. Floods are also reported in France, Germany and Hungary, caused by melting snow flowing into river systems.

...Rescuers searched in the glare of floodlights well into the night to find five people still missing and feared dead after avalanches killed at least 33 people in the Austrian Alps this week. The search continued amid the evacuation of some 3600 trapped holidaymakers from ski resorts threatened by more slides, on one of the biggest airlifts in the country's history... There was little hope of finding survivors... [– 'within 30 minutes half the people trapped under the snow will have died; most after 1 hour' – but Tyrol's] provincial governor... said: "We will continue digging until we have recovered the last missing person from the snow." ...Austria's worst post-war avalanche was in 1954 in the Vorarlberg village of Blons, where 56 people were killed... [□ D]elays caused by Japanese police and insurance company holdups have severely reduced the chances of finding alive three N[Z]ers missing in an avalanche in Japan... [A] friend of the missing men, said from Hakuba yesterday that Japanese police would not institute a proper search until they had received faxed confirmation of the trio's insurance cover, resulting in a wasted day.

...The mother of a snowboarder killed in a Japanese avalanche is crusading to make sure others do not meet the same fate... She has visited schools up and down the country, promoting to back-country snowboard enthusiasts the need to carry safety equipment such as shovels, probes and transceivers... "I guess I would have balked at \$700, which is what it costs to get basic equipment, but believe me a funeral costs more. How much are our children's lives worth?" She says... friends who went to seek help after the... avalanche passed within metres of the buried trio. Had her son and his companions been equipped with transceivers, they might have had a chance. The three had ventured past the skifield's boundaries and were boarding outside patrolled areas at the time of the tragedy... [H]er son, who died just a month short of this 19th birthday, was planning to take an avalanche safety course when he returned from working at a ski resort in Japan. [■ '90% of avalanches are triggered by humans.']

...gunshots could have started... [an] avalanche that killed nine people, including five children, in a remote town in the Canadian province of Quebec... [A] wall of snow smashed into a school gymnasium packed with up to 500 revellers in the Inuit village of Kangiqsualujjuaq... Survivors said that gunshots had been fired by rangers shortly before the catastrophe, possibly loosening tonnes of snow on a 200m hillside just above the one-floor building. Police refused to rule out the theory... Canada's CTV broadcasting network suggested the tragedy could have been avoided if authorities had not ignored a report recommending snow fences be built after a smaller avalanche three years ago. [Incidentally, 'avalanches kill more people in the US each year than hurricanes and floods combined'; and, worldwide, 'water kills more people every year than guns.']

...Typhoon Babs has] killed 139 in the Philippines and left hundreds of thousands homeless. Yesterday it brought landslides to Taiwan and in one area 500mm of rain fell in 24 hours... More than 500mm of rainfall in 24 hours was[also] reported in some areas... of Japan[, sending]... rivers spilling over their banks and [setting] off landslides that left[at least] seven people dead... [I]n remote northern Guatemala[, mudslides] landed on three small communities yesterday, leaving at least 17 dead.

...In Guatemala, emergency officials were on alert [again yesterday as]... Hurricane Mitch, already grown into one of the strongest Atlantic storms ever recorded, threatens... [A] rare potentially catastrophic Category Five hurricane, the highest rating on forecasters' Saffir/Simpson scale... Mitch is two days from landfall...

Bodies surfacing from seas of mud... are constantly adding to the death toll in Central America and the Caribbean which yesterday stood at 485 after a week of torrential rain. In Nicaragua, local radio reported that up to 1000 people might have been buried alive in a huge landslide on the slopes of the Casita volcano, near the country's border with Honduras. But Nicaraguan... officials in Chinandega, some 90km north of the capital, Managua, had reported only 70 dead... Tropical depression Mitch, ranked earlier in the week as the fourth most powerful Atlantic hurricane this century... had been dumping 62.5cm of rain per day... sparking flash floods that ripped away shanty towns, buried banana plantations to their tree tops and city streets to the top of telephone poles. Bodies buried in mud littered the flooded streets of Tegucigalpa yesterday as the rains of almost Biblical proportions began to recede and looters took advantage of the chaos to strip supermarket shop shelves bare. As many as a third of the houses in this... capital of 1 million people were badly damaged or simply swept away... Frightened inmates tried to escape a flooding Tegucigalpa prison on Saturday but were held at bay. In... La Ceiba, 200 convicts stampeded out of a prison on Saturday. Guards shot 10 to death and wounded 45 but the rest were roaming the city... Forecasters expect Mitch to swirl parallel to the Honduran coast... then turn north and head for Mexico...

The heaviest rains in a century continued to drench the Mexican capital yesterday, causing... sewage overflows and a rash of intestinal illnesses. At least six people have died in mudslides that engulfed shanty huts on the edge of the sprawling metropolis[, which]... is built over a series of lagoons, making it susceptible to flooding... [In Nicaragua.] Government officials said as many as 1500 people might have been killed, buried under cascading tonnes of mud and rock that... [fell from] the slopes of the 1405m Casita volcano... Flying near the disaster zone, a Reuters correspondent

saw countless bodies poking out from beneath tree branches in a huge sea of mud... [A] Red Cross worker... said at least 610 bodies had been pulled from the mud... A further 1900 were still missing in Posoltega. The first reports of the mudslide began to trickle out of the area only at the weekend because furious floods... had torn away bridges and ripped roads to shreds... Two military helicopters [had plucked]... survivors from treetops or waist-high mud... and... shuttled more than 100 wounded to hospitals... Virtually nude or wearing bloody, tattered rags, survivors packed into Chinandega's Hospital Espana, many with crushed bones, bleeding gashes and eyes sealed shut by infections caused by the muddy waters. Many were covered with lesions like rope burns from grinding rocks and debris... The 150-bed hospital's facilities were stretched beyond capacity. Doctors said they were short of food, medicine, stretchers, surgical masks and gloves.

...Hampered by still more heavy rain, rescue workers yesterday removed a further 769 bodies... from the muck on the south flank of the Casitas volcano... bringing[the] death toll in this country to 2569... The death toll was expected to rise dramatically since only 180 of the 4500 people living in the five towns on the volcano's flank were known to have survived... Pigs, dogs and other predators prowl through the mud, eating bits of exposed rotting flesh as workers battle shifting ground to remove[the] bodies... Each step requires a Herculean effort to extricate a waterlogged leg from the muck, then the horror of squishing it in again and praying it does not fall on one of the hundreds of bodies buried beneath... Nicaraguan civil defence officials – fearing more mudslides – have ordered the evacuation of 2000 people still in the Casitas... [T]he... Nicaraguan President... said 70[%] of the country's crops had been wiped out and called the disaster worse than the 1972 earthquake that flattened Managua and killed 10,000... The risk of disease has been steadily worsening. Drinking water was becoming scarce in many areas as the disaster threatened to set the region's economy back decades. As if things could not get worse in Nicaragua, the Cerro Negro volcano, about 40km from Casitas, erupted late on Wednesday, forcing dozens to be evacuated and yesterday a minor earthquake hit the storm-damaged city of Chinandega. The latest incidents did not, however, add to the death toll... Meanwhile, Mitch[has] regained strength. A tropical storm warning was in effect for... parts of the Florida Peninsula, western Cuba and the north-west Bahamas. Across Central America... 10,001 people [a]re dead, 14,202... missing and 2.78 million people homeless[as a result of the hurricane], according to official figures.

...In Central America they are used to their disasters, natural and man made, but nothing prepared them for the fury of Hurricane Mitch... [Y]esterday the US National Hurricane Centre in Miami did its sums and upgraded Mitch's status from one of the deadliest hurricanes ever to hit the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean to the deadliest... [T]hey reckoned that Mitch had killed 24,000 people in all. More than the Great Hurricane of 1780 in which 22,000 people perished. This falls well short of a tropical cyclone which killed 138,000 people in Bangladesh in 1991, but such figures give only the most superficial idea of the depth of human suffering in a part of the world that has had more than its fair share... In a cruel reminder that nature wreaks destruction from earth as well as from the air, the 675m Cerro Negro volcano... began erupting in the middle of the chaos bringing back memories of 1995 when it spread tons of ash over 240 sq km of rich farming country. "Now we have two emergencies..." said... an expert with the Nicaraguan Institute of Territorial Studies. Soon there was to be a third, and this one could not be blamed on the vagaries of nature. Thousands of landmines planted along the border between Nicaragua and Honduras were washed loose by the hurricane's rain. The mines were planted in the 1970s and 1980s during Nicaragua's back-to-back civil wars – the first to overthrow [a dictatorship – and]... the US-financed campaign to bring down the leftist Sandinista Government that replaced the dictator. "We're making this announcement not to alarm people but so they take precautions," said[a] Honduran armed forces spokesman... But there seemed to be good cause for alarm, by one estimate 75,000 of the 150,000 landmines planted in the region have been displaced... and scattered at random to kill and maim at times and in places that were never intended... Twenty-seven supervisors and 400 demining personnel working along the Honduran-Nicaraguan border suspended operations after their bases were flooded. They have been redeployed to help in the massive regional hurricane assistance effort. It could be several weeks before demining efforts can again get under way... Nicaragua, with 73,000 mines, is the most pressing problem... Fifty bridges in Nicaragua have been damaged by Mitch, but work to restore them cannot begin until the areas around the bridges have been checked for mines... One civilian was killed and another injured by mines near the Blanco River Bridge, which was also damaged in the explosion... In the face of such overwhelming evidence of the power of nature and the immeasurable scope of human folly, there was no arguing with[the] Honduran President... when he surveyed the scene and described it as a "panorama of death, desolation and ruin." ...[whereas the Nicaraguan President] said... "Our people have suffered misfortune and know how to handle adversity." ...But... [such] Churchillian pleas cut little ice with some of Mitch's victims in the back blocks... The lack of food and water and a widespread fear of disease are pre-occupying the survivors at the moment. These immediate problems are daunting enough, but there is the larger problem of rebuilding the shattered economies of Nicaragua and Honduras. Despite [the Nicaraguan President's] faith in heroism[both countries]... are especially short of the one commodity that is likely to make a difference in their present troubles: cash... Given the colossal destruction, Nicaragua and Honduras have called for debt forgiveness, a suggestion backed by[a] former US president... who visited Nicaragua... Over the weekend the U[S] began an airlift as part of its \$US70 million in assistance... More than \$US100 million has been pledged by the international community to ease the suffering... [However, the Honduran President] has said it will take \$US4 billion to rebuild [his] country.

...France has annulled the debts of Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador, the four... countries hit hardest by Hurricane Mitch.

...After three days of devastating, hurricane-force storms, Europe was struck with more weather havoc today as blizzards, avalanches and floods pushed the death toll to at least 138. The new disasters forced rescue workers in many of the countries already hard hit to concentrate on saving lives, leaving the cleanup and repair tasks to later... The first wave of storms had built up over southern Britain, where eight people died in huge winds and floods, before gaining speed and strength and sweeping into northern France, then on to Belgium, Germany, Switzerland and Italy. A second wave hit... southern France, northern Spain, Switzerland and Italy and through the Balkans and northern Turkey... But in both storm fronts, it was France that bore the brunt... French state weather forecasters had clocked windspeeds of 175 km/h near Paris, the highest on record for the French capital, during the first front on Sunday. The second, the next day, brought with it winds of up to 200 km/h in the southwest... Fr[ance's] Interior Minister... said 68... French... people had been killed and eight people were missing since Sunday... France awoke yesterday... to find state electricity firm EDF struggling to restore power to 3 million households. National rail carrier SNCF cancelled all trains in the southwest and services were disrupted across the country by fallen trees and power failures. France's cultural heritage also suffered heavily... [T]he Palace of Versailles lost part of its roof and around 10,000 trees from its grounds, and the Cathedral of Notre Dame was damaged.

...Record floods threatened a string of historic towns yesterday as central European leaders were due to meet to discuss the huge costs of the path of destruction wrought across the region. Flood waters have ravaged vast swathes of central Europe, claiming at least 91 lives in Germany, Russia, Austria and the Czech Republic. Tens of thousands have been evacuated and many have lost their homes. Some of Europe's great museums, including Dresden's Zwinger Palace art gallery, and the city's Semper opera house have been forced to close and may need extensive repairs.

...The British Government has announced emergency measures to cope with severe nationwide flooding as flood waters peaked in the northern city of York at the highest level in nearly four centuries... The Government also approved an extra £51 m... for flood defences... over the next four years... An intense storm front battered Britain early last week, unleashing high winds and torrential rain that plunged road and rail transport into chaos. After the storms passed, rainwater steadily drained into the nation's rivers, causing the worst flooding in more than 50 years. In York... the Emergency Agency... said some improvement was expected overnight... But more heavy rain... was forecast for parts of England today.

...Raindrops keep falling and falling and falling... The suave television reporter, standing knee deep in a fast-flowing river that used to be the main village street, informs his viewers: "Well, as you can see, it's really wet here." Such statements of the obvious have become the norm on

British TV in recent days. In a nation obsessed with the weather at the best of times, the media has been lapping up some of the worst storms and floods in recorded history. For home and business owners it is a different story. As rivers across the country burst their banks, cascading water into heavily populated areas, there were thousands of stories of untold misery. A dozen lives have been lost, homes and businesses destroyed and the transport network crippled in some places. The likely cost to the economy could rise to more than £1 billion... [□ 5] South African helicopters rescued 2100 people from[Mozambique's flooded] Chokwe district yesterday after rescuing 2120 people on Monday.

...Over 100,000 stranded Mozambicans wait for rescue today as aid agencies appealed for more funds and hunted for extra helicopters and boats to pluck people to safety from rooftops and trees... [A]n official at the National Disaster Management Institute... warned that the rescue mission, which has been hampered so far by too few helicopters, could be further constrained by a lack of fuel. Mozambique's water authority... also warned that another wave of fresh water from Botswana and Zimbabwe would hit the already ravaged central and southern regions of Mozambique in a few days. At least 350 people have died, [over]... 650,000 have been made homeless and crops vital for surviving the coming winter have been swept away in Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana in three weeks of flooding. The Commonwealth Secretary-General... has appealed to the organisation's leaders to help the rescue operation... [A UN] World Food Programme official, has said rescue teams were having to make tough choices about who to save because of the lack of resources. "It's heartbreaking. We are leaving people behind we know will not be there tomorrow."

...The outside world is finally waking up to the... flood disaster... that has devastated a country... which was just starting to recover from 16 years of civil war... Lethoso and Zambia, among the poorest of African countries, have committed their only cargo planes to deliver food and medicine to Mozambique, where an estimated one million people have been displaced. Reconnaissance military contingents from Britain, France and the U[S] were arriving today ahead of bigger groups tomorrow. Transport planes from the US and Britain are expected with helicopters, boats and equipment. South African military helicopters have rescued 10,000 people since Sunday but it is estimated that 100,000 remain stranded.

...FLOOD levels in at least one ravaged area of Mozambique have dropped dramatically allowing thousands of people stranded in trees to make their way to dry ground. But the country's nightmare is not over. An estimated 12,000 to 15,000 people remained stranded yesterday in the Save River valley; there was the risk of outbreaks of disease; and a storm over the Indian Ocean threatened to dump yet more rain. The first of two British planes carrying more rescue boats arrived in Maputo yesterday. An American plane with rescue boats from the Miami area was expected to arrive today, a day later than announced... [E]arlier yesterday, tragedy struck rescue efforts along the Limpopo[River] when an inflatable boat carrying 17 refugees capsized. Four toddlers fell into the swift current and drowned, said the boat's South African pilot... The boat's engine had cut out after hitting debris and the boat drifted into a tree and flipped. [The pilot] clambered up a tree along with the remaining survivors and got a taste of what thousands of people have endured since huge areas of central and southern Mozambique were flooded by torrential rains last month. "There are snakes in the trees, stinging ants, wasps and lots of mosquitoes... These people have been sitting in the trees all these days with these things crawling on them and biting them. I didn't realise what they were going through until I got stuck in a tree." Aid officials said people stranded in trees were being driven by hunger and thirst to eat the carcasses of drowned animals and to drink filthy floodwater... Mozambican officials said U[S] troops expected to arrive in the country soon were likely to be based in the central city of Beira. But US Embassy officials declined to say where the 600 troops would be based or when they would arrive, along with helicopters and other rescue gear... M[eanwhile, m]ore than a week after Hurricane Mitch wrought devastation across Central America, more deaths [have been] reported in Honduras as landslides again bury entire villages... [As residents of Comayaguela searched] for canned goods in a river which swept away the Honduran community's main supermarket... looters descended on Posoltega... [in NW] Nicaragua... stripping bodies of anything of value... and... breaking into abandoned homes.

...At least 200,000 people have been forced from their homes by... mudslides, which are reckoned to be the worst natural disaster to hit Venezuela in half a century... [The m]udslides have killed at least 650 people [in Venezuela's] Caribbean coast... state of... Vargas... and 7000 are missing, presumed dead... [Last night Venezuela's] Defence Minister... said: "We might never know how many people died because in some areas they were buried under five or six metres of mud." ...Once-idyllic tourist beaches in the area were strewn with tree trunks and boulders... There was no food, no electricity, no running water and no telephone service. Drains were blocked, causing health risks aggravated by decomposing bodies. Storefronts had been wrenched open and looted. Residents spoke of widespread looting, in particular during the night when gunshots rang out, heightening a sense of insecurity for the few remaining residents unwilling to leave for fear of losing their remaining possessions.

...Troops are ploughing through head-high mud and rubble so rescue teams can dig for up to 30,000 bodies in a Venezuelan coastal area devastated by one of Latin America's worst mudslides... Most of the state's 350,000 inhabitants have been evacuated in a massive rescue operation led by 13,000 troops, 5000 volunteers, about 40 helicopters and 16 warships... [M]any survivors would be moved to new settlements away from the coast... The mudslides and raging rivers swept away shantytowns perched on steep slopes of the lush Avila mountain and left tall apartment blocks with swimming pools marooned in a sea of rock-hard debris. Troops warded off gangs of youths ransacking empty apartments but several people could be seen making off with televisions and other goods strapped to their backs.

...Venezuela has restricted travel to its stricken Caribbean coast to discourage gawking "catastrophe tourists" from adding to the crush of people impeding rescue efforts where up to 50,000 people may have died. "There are too many people in the area who have no business being there..." said[the country's] Education Minister... "It is unacceptable to have youths with cups full of soda taking pleasure trips down there, taking photographs with their girlfriends..." The Government said there was a "critical risk" of epidemics among those left in Vargas.

...Rotting livestock carcasses and floating sewage[have] created a mounting health threat across eastern North Carolina, still flooded days after Hurricane Floyd forced tens of thousands of people from their homes. And still more rain lies ahead. Forecasters said heavy rain from Tropical Storm Harvey, about to hit Florida's Gulf Coast, could cause new flooding... More than 60 people were killed from the Bahamas to New England when Floyd churned up the U[S] east coast. But the aftermath appears the worst in North Carolina[where]... the carcasses of 100,000 pigs, 2.4 million chickens and 500,000 turkeys[are] lying about the state.

...FEMA... made \$80.5 million available to relocate North Carolina residents in areas that had repeatedly flooded in the past decade. Only about half of the money was spent because most people chose to rebuild where they were. The agency, which just underwent a massive streamlining to speed payments following disasters, now plans to ask Congress to re-examine flood policy in order to discourage people who build again... in flood-ravaged areas – either by paying much higher insurance premiums or by eliminating entirely the possibility of [providing] coverage in risky areas.

...A woman who drowned, trapped in an office lift that lost power, was one of two people who died when the remnants of Tropical Storm Allison swamped... southeast Texas and flushed alligators... agitated by the storm's thunder, lightning and heavy rain... into towns in Louisiana...

The death toll in the cyclone which tore through India's impoverished eastern state of Orissa has jumped to more than 9392. Millions have been made homeless after the... cyclone.

...Months after a supercyclone wreaked havoc in Orissa, the effects are still being felt... For many[people] their bodies survived but their minds did not. Unable to cope with the shock of death and destruction, many have suffered mental breakdowns... become mute or attempted suicide. At Cuttack, the only hospital in the Indian state specialising in the treatment of psychiatric disorders has been swamped... More than 2500 cyclone victims have been brought in... "It is only the tip of the iceberg," says... a psychiatrist at the hospital. "...Only the maniac cases where people cannot be kept under control are coming to us... In fact half of the survivors need psychotherapy with counselling... But the state does not have the means

to take care of these people – numbering more than 100,000 throughout the coastal belt.” Countless families have faced total ruin. Most of them had no savings. Inadequate relief from the Government and non-government sources has made life more miserable for survivors. Many have had no aid at all. The storm outside has ebbed. But the... storm... seems to be... still raging in tens of thousands of minds.

...Cyclone John... the strongest cyclone to hit A[US, with winds]... of up to 290 km/h... smashed into the northwest coast... yesterday... [N]o injuries were reported, but about 30 homes... and... [2] pastoral stations... in Port Hedland, Roebourne and Wickham... lost all or part of their roofs or suffered other structural damage. “In some cases whole sections have been blown away,” a... State Emergency Service... spokeswoman said.

...Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey and Rhode Island are... enduring the worst drought since the Dust Bowl days, says[the US] President...

A White House source said the... [US] Administration is about to present to a budget-conscious Congress a \$US7.8 billion... blueprint to restore the fragile Florida Everglades, hoping to protect... wildlife and drinking water for residents... The plan[which will]... flood 109,000ha of land... would[also] revamp flood control and water management systems throughout Central and South Florida... While the... price tag seems large, it is dwarfed by other... projects now under way. Boston is spending \$US10.8 billion for highway improvements and Miami plans to spend about \$US4 billion to build a new airport runway and terminal, say environmental leaders. Conservation groups said the Everglades project was[however]... an important test case to show whether severely damaged ecosystems could be restored... [The] vice-president of the National Audubon Society, said: “It’s the poster child for sustainability.” ...The Everglades encompass 800,000ha of... a flat expanse covered by shallow water that provides home or food for alligators, wading birds, manatees and the endangered Florida panther. The area, nicknamed “a river of grass,” has been polluted by agricultural run-off and urban development during the last half-century... Fires are[another] one of the threats to the Everglades...

A shadowy environmental group... has admitted responsibility for numerous arsons... “If you build it, we[’]ll burn it,” the Earth Liberation Front scrawled in red paint on one of... three luxury homes torched... on Long Island, east of New York City... The fires caused at least \$US30,000 [worth of damage] at each site... In [addition], front members started a blaze at Vail... in Colorado... in protest at a planned expansion of the resort and of its ski area. The front said the project would endanger the lynx. The fire caused \$12 million damage. Members also claimed responsibility for torching a Federal Bureau of Land Management horse stables in... Oregon, as well as setting fire to the Oregon offices of the[paper-making] Boise Cascade Corporation... because it had “ravaged the forests of the Pacific Northwest.” That the group... ha[s] turned its sights on Long Island is not... surprising. Anger has been rising in many quarters at the willy-nilly blanketing of the island with new developments and oversized mansions.

...It is July 12, 1997. Three firefighters are about to burn their careers and singe the integrity of 10,000 colleagues. It has just turned midnight when a car pulls to the side of Lake Rd, Mangakino. A big, red-haired 18-year-old... steps out with the simple tools he needs to make a timebomb. [The local f]ire chief... and his deputy... leave [the 18-year-old] and drive into the night... [They] return... to pick him up and whisk him to safety... [after the 18-year-old has sparked] one of the biggest fires in Mangakino’s history... Why did they do it? ...For more than a year there has been talk that the tiny South Waikato town will lose one of its two trucks to a busier district... [The 18-year-old] said in court this week that [the chief] wanted to generate more work so he could keep his fire trucks... [The] young volunteer hoping to forge a career in the Fire Service, said he feared he would be sacked unless he agreed to the plan. [The deputy] also said it was [the chief]’s idea, and that he simply went along out of loyalty. [The chief] said the other two did it and lied to get him in trouble. [A] Californian arson investigator... has identified two types of firebug – the “true pyromaniac,” who is often thrilled sexually by watching fires, and the vanity pyromaniac, who craves attention and is the most likely type to become a firefighter. [The Californian] should know these things – he was arrested in 1990 after a spate of arsons that killed four people. [However, Mangakino’s fire chief] seems to fit neither of those profiles, and Tokoroa police were initially surprised when the trail led to him... [The trio] were just three of 10 [NZ] firefighters charged with arson last year. Concern about the trend has forced fire chiefs to look at the way they recruit their members. A[n AUS]n arson expert... has urged them to cull the bad eggs during selection. She says enough psychological data is available to construct screening tests.

...[the NZ Fire Service has announced that volunteer] firefighters may under[-]go psychological testing if trials in A[US] are successful... As researchers question the spate of arsons allegedly committed by firemen here... [it seems pertinent to look] at the case of [a] top Californian arson investigator... who loved fires so much he started his own. Before he was eventually caught he had caused at least 75 fires... IT was the third straight summer of drought and in 1990 California was a land where rain seemed a memory of long ago. The dry scrub of the suburban valleys was just a dropped match from catastrophe as afternoon temperatures soared... as high as 40.5°C. At the end of June, that catastrophe happened in Glendale in the north-eastern sprawl of Los Angeles. A fire roared through a hillside housing estate, destroying 67 homes before being brought under control. But there had been nothing inevitable about the disaster – it had been arson. Someone had set this fire for the thrill of it. California’s governor offered a \$50,000 reward to help find the arsonist, and reporters turned to... [the] head of Glendale’s Arson Investigation Unit, in search of an explanation. Who could have done such a thing? There are two possible types, he told them. There was the vanity pyromaniac... And there was the “true” pyromaniac... “Arson,” [he] added helpfully, “is the only crime where the suspect sticks around.” [He] would certainly have known. He had been a fireman for 20 years and had built a formidable reputation not only as an arson investigator, but also as an inspiring trainer of investigators. But he was even better qualified than that. For [he] was the man who had started the fire. The arson investigator... turned arsonist... had been setting brush fires and burning down businesses for a decade. In the end it was chance – a random fingerprint check – that brought him under suspicion. But when it did, the investigators noticed a definite pattern. When [he] left town to train other firemen, suspicious fires seemed to flare near the conferences he attended. The greatest of his crimes is now known to have been a horrifying fire in a big, modern hardware store in Pasadena... in 1984. Four people were killed – one a boy aged three. Last September, a jury convicted [the 48-year-old arsonist] of four counts of capital murder. “[He] was the perpetrator of evil under the guise of the protector of good,” said [the] Assistant District Attorney... But to the fury of his victims, he escaped the California death chamber because the jury that unanimously convicted him of multiple murder deadlocked on the sentence... Instead, [he] was sentenced to life imprisonment plus 20 years. He was already serving a 30-year term, convicted on federal arson charges. [He] was arrested in 1991 and it was only after his first conviction a year later on multiple counts of arson that prosecutors trawled back through the records and discovered evidence he was not only a firebug but also a killer. They had been given a remarkable clue by [the arsonist] himself in a final, shocking twist to the story. He had described his own crimes in fine detail. The fire chief not only turns out to have... [committed] the ultimate breach of professional trust – but to have been writing a thinly disguised book about “his” fires as he was setting them... [H]e describes it as a “novel”. But it is one that proves fact is as strange and as chilling as fiction, for he made his story a real-life version of the hit film *Basic Instinct*, in which the novelist... is also the killer she describes in vivid, meticulous detail. [The arsonist] sent his 350-page manuscript to a literary agent in 1990... The covering letter he included in the package sent [said]... “*Points of Origin* is a fact-based work that follows the pattern of an actual arsonist who has been setting serial fires in California over the past eight years... He has not been identified or apprehended, and probably will not be in the near future. As in the real case, the arsonist in my novel is a real firefighter.” One of those who has now read this manuscript is... [the father of] the... murdered... three-year-old... [who] died with... his... grandmother... And in [the] novel, in chapter 6, [the father] found the story of a three-year-old boy who dies in a fire, in a hardware store, with his grandmother. “You know what he did? ...He used my boy’s name! He... killed Matthew and then he described Matthew dying in his book!” [The arsonist] could hardly offer a more graphic illustration of the banality of evil. A small, tubby, profoundly unprepossessing man, he would never be taken for a fireman, let alone a mass killer. He looks like the stereotypical English bank clerk... Despite all the evidence, he still protests his innocence... Even today, after years of

investigations and two trials, no one is quite sure why [the arson investigator] became an arsonist. Psychiatrists talk of how arsonists are often attracted to the fire brigade. Small towns in America run volunteer fire stations and that can make them particularly vulnerable to the enthusiastic, often knowledgeable, "bug". At first, joining up gives them the opportunity to indulge in the thrill of the blaze, to fight a fire rather than set it. But then lighting their own proves a more reliable way of making sure they get a good fire, and increases their sense of power. There have been dozens of cases of firemen turned arsonists. Five years ago, nine volunteer firemen on a suburban New York brigade were arrested, charged and convicted... Last year, two firemen were arrested in Centreville, Illinois, and charged with setting 16 fires... One of them was injured just before his arrest, fighting the fire he had set before being taken off to jail. But [the investigator], a professional with... years of commendations and promotions, was in a different league. His colleagues were devastated by his arrest, in part because [he] was a man who had commanded such respect... At the fire department where [he worked, the new]... chief... says: "We... feel so naive. You believe you work alongside people who feel the way you do – and it's a shock to realise that can be wrong. It is hard to trust after something like this." ...[● A] 14-year-old Henderson... boy, who cannot be identified for legal reasons... appeared in Waitakere District Court on Wednesday charged with the fire at The Warehouse in New Lynn in April... [The store's o]perations manager... says damage from the fire totalled \$2.5 million... [T]hat figure includes repairs, damaged stock and loss of trade during the... two month... shutdown... Fifteen Waitakere and Auckland fire crews tackled the fire which closed Rata St... for more than three hours.

...FIRES lit by juveniles in west Auckland have increased by 30[%] over the past three years... [Last] year 228 juveniles caused more than \$3 m... worth of fire[damage] across the Auckland region... Some cases were accidental, but... in a growing number aerosols and accelerant were used... West Auckland Fire Service[']s youth liaison officer and investigator... says if young fire-starters are not brought to his attention early the chances of them lighting fires of a serious nature is highly likely... Since counselling started in 1990 a 95[%] rehabilitation success rate has been achieved.

...They were young, from all around the world... They came to Childers, with its market gardens and century-old wooden buildings, to pick fruit and vegetables for cash to see A[US]. But the dreams of a life on the road turned to ashes for at least 15 backpackers who perished in a nightmare of flames and choking black smoke in their Queensland youth hostel. Last night, as the 62 survivors, including seven N[Z]ers, relived their ordeal, police confirmed that they suspect arson. Survivors say the fire in the historic timber Palace hotel could have been lit in three places by a disgruntled ex-resident... The state Government immediately announced a taskforce to examine issues surrounding the tragedy, including the licensing and safety of backpacker hostels, and Queensland[']s Premier... said he was considering a state day of mourning.

...Philippine investigators[, who] have until today to wrap up a probe into a hotel fire in Manila that killed 78 people... said faulty wiring could have caused the fire... Officials said the owner was likely to be charged with homicide. The management of the Manor Hotel was initially found to have committed "many offences of the fire code," including failing to install a sprinkler system, emergency lighting and proper fire exits... Radio reports said the hotel management had bribed officials to turn a blind eye to safety violations... [Incidentally, an AUS]n held for questioning over a fire which killed 15 backpackers, most of them foreign tourists, was yesterday charged with attempted murder of a policeman... [The] 37-year-old itinerant fruitpicker, was shot and wounded on Wednesday by police who had tracked him through bushland near the farming village of Howard, not far from the scene of the fatal fire at Childers... One of two police officers who detained [him]... was stabbed in the chin during the struggle. The policeman's wounds were not serious... No charges have been laid in relation to the Childers fire. Police... have said they regarded [the 37-year-old] as a suspect in the fire after he was seen near a rubbish bin fire in the lounge of... the 94-year-old hostel... on the night of the blaze.

...A[US]n police have arrested 21 people for arson linked to more than 100 bushfires blazing around Sydney and along A[US]'s east coast... While thousands of firefighters battle the blazes across the state, a 35-member police unit named Strike Force Tronto is trying to track down serial arsonists suspected of starting many of the fires. A[US]'s worst fires in seven years have destroyed 300,000ha of bush, twice the size of Greater London, destroyed 150 homes and killed thousands of livestock[, most of whom were trapped by fencing]... There have been no [human deaths. The t]askforce leader... said the operation, helped by the public, had arrested 14 juveniles, some as young as 9... since it was set up six days ago... N[SW's] state Premier... has vowed to impose the full sentence of 14 years' jail on convicted arsonists and... plans to change juvenile laws to force young arsonists to visit hospital burns wards and bushfire victims and to clean up bushfire areas. "I think... juvenile prison is... too good for them."

...Despite [the large number of] arrests so far, arsonists continue to light fires – including four near Appin, south of Sydney, yesterday – sparking calls for penalties harsher than the 14-year maximum jail term for convicted firebugs.

...One firefighter was killed[and 7] others were injured... yesterday... [when] their water tanker... became trapped [by]... bushfires in N[SW, and in]... the Myall Lakes National Park on the mid-north coast up to 2000 holidaymakers were evacuated to escape a fire burning since Wednesday.

...A "LACK of personal discipline" was to blame for a major bushfire in East Gippsland that has swept through 27,000ha of remote national park, says Victoria's Premier... However well trained they are... Victoria's firefighters could not compensate for public negligence, he said. "...This fire seems to have been started from a group of campers who just left a campfire. That anyone could be so irresponsible or thoughtless is beyond me." ...He said the fire had cost more than \$2m to fight, but it was impossible to put a value on the national park that would be temporarily lost to Victorians... After flying over the fire scene, [the Premier] said the government had allocated an extra \$12.9 million to firefighting.

...[']a deerstalker who made a fire to brew his billy which caused a fire that destroyed 75 hectares of forest and took two days to put out, has received a bill for \$260,000 from the NZ Fire Service. People are liable if they cause a fire on Crown land. The deerstalker didn't know this, or that a fire ban was in force, or that for \$48 he could have got insurance cover and a year's membership of the NZ Deerstalkers Association! Now he's got to sell his house. From about 750 cases taken to court in recent years, the Fire Service has received money from less than 90, totalling about \$1.5 million.' In related news, [t]he tinder-dry heartland of drought-ravaged Central Otago exploded in flames yesterday, with two huge scrub and grass fires near Alexandra, one causing a civil emergency and forcing more than 150 people to flee their homes. One man died, apparently from a heart attack, while checking a property near a fire at Springvale, 9km northeast of Alexandra... And, in Dunedin, the fiery Sunday continued with a major blaze near Green Island...

Central Otago had its last real rain in December 1997. Now... the stress on farmers is becoming unbearable... Even parched and dirty brown, Central Otago is stunning. The... air is clear and clean and the landscape vast with a pared-back, spartan beauty. This is tough, uncompromising country – qualities reflected in its inhabitants. Homes are modest here, even where the farm has been in the same family for generations... [The man] who farms the large Shag Valley Station with his son... has rainfall figures stretching back 140 years. He says it's the cruellest drought on record. It is also the longest, now stretching into its fifteenth month. As a result, many farmers have already exhausted their dry feed supplies and are having to buy in hay at prohibitive prices. A survey... found the average cost of the drought over the two seasons was \$108,000 a farm and rising. Few farms can sustain losses of that order... So far the banks... have been supportive. But everyone knows some fore-closures are inevitable.

...Fires sparked by the worst heat wave in 30 years have ravaged a huge area of Brazil's northern Amazon... At least 5000 sq km of forest and savannas had been destroyed since the drought in Roraima state began in mid-January... So far, the drought had killed 12,000 head of cattle. Unless it rained within the next two weeks, another 100,000 cattle – or 15[%] of the state's total herd – would die, the... state Government's press office said... [As Brazil prayed for rain, f]loodwaters carved through central N[Z] yesterday... gouging away chunks of land. Swollen by record rainfall... the rivers of the Kapiti Coast, north of Wellington, raged through buildings and over bridges. It was the second time in eight days that householders lost futile battles to save their homes from floodwaters. One homeowner was drowned... Frustration... turned to heartache for some... Two weeks ago... [a couple] were full of excitement as they moved into their first home. Yesterday, [they] watched floodwaters advance for the

second time. “A good house-warming present for us would have been a dinghy,” she said. The MetService said the destruction was triggered by a deluge in the Tararua Ranges, which had 500mm dumped on them in 24 hours[(the monthly average for the Tararua’s is ‘less than 200mm). One site received 300mm in 3 hours’!] More heavy rain is expected until early today... State Highway 1 at Otaki is expected to be closed for two days, after the Waitohu Stream washed away the bridge. An alternative route through backroads was blocked by slips. Record rain also flooded homes and roads... in Taranaki... In the South Island, the Army will aid flood-stricken West Coasters.

...Rush-hour traffic is expected to face delays on Tamaki Drive this morning after a big slip early today brought down a 20m section of a clay bank... Police and Auckland City Council staff were warning traffic and working to clear the road... Heavy rain caused surface flooding through much of Auckland with areas to the south worst hit... Many telephone lines throughout the region were down because of the weather. Water has been sluicing out of the sodden Waikato River catchment from Taupo to the sea in the central North Island’s biggest flood in 100 years. Still more rain water overnight threatened the protection system which yesterday, like a dripping, over-full sponge, was seeping excess water everywhere authorities turned. First light will have revealed the bad news but because the river takes around 40 hours to flow from Taupo to flood-ravaged Mercer the worst may still be to come. The regional council, Environment Waikato, and ECNZ, which manages the eight dams on the river, spent yesterday trying to make space in some of the lakes to cope with the 40mm of rain it was feared would fall through the night. Lake Taupo, which has the biggest storage capacity, was only 8cm off its maximum level. Water flowing into it at 300 cu m per second was being matched by the deluge tumbling out through the wide-open control gates into the Waikato River. A spokeswoman for ECNZ... said if the corporation was asked to shut the gates it would but that could mean flooding areas around the lake[, and – as we all saw recently when Lake Wakatipu rose a few feet above street level, ‘devastating central Queenstown’ (Queenstownians blamed their third ‘100-year flood in five years on silting of rivers not cleaned by Contact Energy’) – flooded lakes take a long time to return to their normal depth]... A council flood control officer... said a gauge at Mercer yesterday recorded the river’s flow at 1466 cu m a second which was unmatched by previous major floods. There were few control options, he said[, before pointing out that the Waikato River is expected to have ‘a major flood once every 40 years, and the last major flood was in 1958.’]

...A major clean-up is under way... today... through much of... [central NZ, especially in Wanganui, where flooded] sewage systems failed, sending raw sewage into the... Whanganui River[, which] rose slowly but surely, slopping over the stopbanks on to Anzac Parade... The Whanganui peaked at levels last seen in 1990 when a 40-year flood ran through homes. But lessons learned in that disaster helped to avoid a repeat... Meanwhile, [a]... flood-prone Mt Roskill property is at the centre of a scrap between the Auckland City Council and the Building Industry Association. The council is appealing against an authority decision that stops it putting a warning on the title off[the] Melrose Rd property... A section 36 warning under the Building Act is applied to properties with problems such as flooding, erosion, or slips, and recognises development has been allowed, but only in a way that does not worsen the problem. It aims to put responsibility on the developer, warns purchasers, and prevents subsequent owners claiming they were unaware of the problem, and suing the council. The dispute started when the council told a developer that three homes being built would have the warning placed on their titles. The developer appealed to the BIA, a Government body, which reversed the council’s decision, saying a section 36 warning applies only when permission to build has involved a waiver to the usual Building Act conditions – not the case at Melrose Rd. The council is appealing in the High Court, saying the decision sets a precedent that leaves it exposed to claims.

...A voracious grub munching its way through thousands of riverbank willow trees is endangering multimillion-dollar N[Z] flood protection schemes. Damage caused by the willow sawfly has major environmental implications and the race is on to find a way to stop the insect in its tracks. The worst of the destruction is in the Bay of Plenty, Hawkes Bay and Poverty Bay... The sawfly was discovered in Auckland in 1997 but quickly took up residence in the Bay of Plenty. It... has since moved as far south as Central Otago... *World in Brief*[: The AUSn]... city of Wollongong [has been declared a] natural disaster after being cut off by [its ‘worst floods in almost 200 years’].

...Residents... on the Sunshine Coast... in southeast Queensland are bracing for a massive cleanup as authorities yesterday estimated that the cost of the worst floods in the region since 1893 would exceed \$A2.5 million... The death toll had last night risen to seven... The town of Gympie, 180km north of Brisbane, was inundated after the Mary River burst its banks. A... [NZer] who moved to Gympie to live 12 weeks ago, said... “The water down the street from where we are is something like 15 to 16 feet deep in places... I haven’t seen anything like it. The rain began on Saturday. It was torrential then and it just got progressively worse.”

...*Let’s hope we don’t have a big flood! ...a parable for our time...* And the Lord spoke to Noah and said: “In six months I am going to make it rain for 40 days and 40 nights until it floods the whole Earth with water and all mankind and every living thing is destroyed.” But the Lord said to Noah and his three wives and their sons: “I will save a few good people, so build an ark [for] you and your family and two of every living thing on the Earth I have made...” In a great flash of lightning [the Lord] delivered to Noah the specifications of the ark... “Six months and it starts to rain,” thundered the Lord. “Finish the ark or you better learn to swim for a long time.” The six months passed and it clouded up and started to rain heavily. The Lord looked down and saw that Noah was sitting at home, weeping in great anguish. And the Lord saw that there was no ark. “Noah,” shouted the Lord, “where is the ark?” “Lord, please forgive me!” begged Noah. “I did my best but there have been problems. First, I took your plans to the district council to get a building permit and they did not meet the code. There weren’t enough windows, the colour wasn’t compatible with the environment and the engineers wouldn’t sign off on wooden beams under the main floor. When I got the plans redrawn they argued I would need a fire prevention sprinkler system. It took three months to get the approvals and the cost has gone up 50[%]. The council insisted I get a resource management consent since an ark is not a permitted activity. My neighbours objected because of the hammering and the lights at night because we were now running late. Some thought they might be shaded by the height of the ark and others complained that we had no plans for dealing with the smell from the animals. The council staff demanded we have an effluent disposal system and larger doors for safety purposes. Lord, just as I got through all that I had a protest around the site by the greenies complaining that we had chopped down native trees and that our forest management plan was not sustainable... By this time I needed my carpenters to work long hours and some who wouldn’t agree I fired. They went to the Employment Court and got their wages reinstated for the whole period, plus \$50,000 each for my causing them embarrassment. When I started compiling my list of animals the Privacy Commissioner intervened and demanded that I not release the list to my sons who were responsible for loading the ark. At this stage I had a visit from the Human Rights Commission because we had our wives doing the administration and none working as carpenters. They insisted we stop calling it Noah’s Ark and use something gender neutral... The next day the safety and health inspectors arrived and wanted more safety standards. They are taking a case against me for not having a sign up to say it was a place of work. Inland Revenue have been in to try to seize my assets, claiming I might sail any time, leaving the country without paying tax. Just when I thought I was in the clear the regional council heard there was going to be a flood and they demanded that you obtain a resource consent that will have conditions about reinstating the Earth to its natural condition. They are concerned that the environmental and social effects may be adverse and that you must avoid, remedy or mitigate them... As you can see, Lord, it has been one delay after another and I don’t think I can be finished for another two years. This morning the local iwi were here saying that we were building on land that belonged to them and they want half the ark under Article Two of the Treaty of Waitangi... They have set up a tent on the top deck.” Just then... [a] rainbow stretched across the sky. Noah looked up and sighed. “Does this mean you are not going to destroy the Earth, Lord?” he asked hopefully. “No,” said the Lord sadly. “The Government has done it for me.” [■ ‘US geologists claim to have evidence that the biblical flood did take place.’]

...Scientists suggest the Black Sea may have been created by the sudden bursting of a natural dam – a finding that could rewrite the history of agriculture – and may account for the Biblical story of Noah’s flood. It had previously been assumed the Black Sea grew slowly as melting ice caps

raised ocean water levels. Sea water would have poured gradually into the Mediterranean, and then into the Black Sea. But... sediment patterns on the Black Sea would be gradual and layered if this had happened. Researchers have instead found a thin, uniform dusting of sediment, consistent with a geologically instantaneous refilling of the Black Sea. It now appears that a vast plug of sediment held back the rising Mediterranean waters for centuries and then burst. Speaking at the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco the scientists said the flood could[have] forced the spread of agriculture, driving farmers to new pastures across Europe. Farming is thought to have arisen in southwestern Asia around 9,000 years ago, reaching Greece and Turkey 1,000 years later. Then it surged into eastern and central Europe – at the same time as the flood. The coincidence is too much to be chance, said [the scientists]... Not all are convinced. “Farming was such a big idea that it was bound to move across the continent, no matter what happened at the Black Sea,” said [a] Professor... of the Natural History Museum, London.

...In *The Quest For Noah's Flood* on the National Geographic Channel at 8.30 pm, Sunday, [an]... explorer... leads an expedition for artefacts which might support the controversial theory that the Black Sea was hit by a cataclysmic flood. The Black Sea is... the only sea with oxygen-free water – like a bathtub with no drain, just an overflow... “So we’re looking at whether a lot of area went underwater and stayed underwater. Can we prove that? Are there plants there? Can we find the ancient shoreline? And we did. Then their theory says it all happened 7500 years ago. So we found shells and dated them. Bing, bam, okay. So to my mind there’s absolutely no doubt about a flood of biblical proportions.”

The account of the Deluge in the Bible and similar traditional accounts are evidence that there always have been floods large enough to affect man’s struggle to win a living from the earth. The early civilizations that grew along the Nile, Tigris, Euphrates... and... Indus... rivers are examples of the development of civilizations in an environment where a river enforced community action for flood protection... [T]he earliest... flood... recorded... [was] in China in 2297 B.C... [The Yellow River or] Hwang Ho is known as “China’s Sorrow.” Despite... setbacks caused by... repeated floods during 4,000 years... however, the Chinese did not abandon their lands. This generally was true of the other great early civilizations that experienced river floods. For example... explorations at the ancient city of Ur in Mesopotamia in the 1920s... found evidence that sediments deposited by a flood became the site for rebuilding the settlement... Most of the world’s population and property are located on lands subject to the overflow of rivers or seas... [F]lood-prone lands comprise 5% of the area of the U[S], more than 10% of the Hwang Ho basin... almost all of the Netherlands, and nearly all of the southern part of Vietnam... Many cities, including Paris, Rome, Washington and New Orleans [– which, like the Netherlands, is ‘mostly below sea level’ –] occupy land subject to river floods.

In a flood a river can take life as easily as it gives – a testament to the power of water. This force isn’t always apparent. In its natural state a river’s vast watershed acts like a giant organic sponge. The majority of rainwater is absorbed by soil[, then] vegetation aids evaporation. Remove the natural landscape, or pave over it, and the foundation for disaster is laid. In cities all over the world... development centres around rivers... like Labelle in Canada’s Quebec province... Here, as water runs down the rocky hillsides... gravity gives the rivers enormous power. The dams built to harness their power are already stressed by a season of rain in July of 1996 when the most powerful storm in a century strikes – 11 inches, or 3 months worth of rain, falls in just 36 hours... Some dams can’t take the strain... Concrete and asphalt reduce the friction that normally slows water down... As the water picks up velocity its destructive power increases drastically and, when channelled through steep city streets, the flood’s focused power pushes large objects. Turbulence... [loosens] earth and debris, increasing the flood’s destructive mass. People are cut off from rescue as roads wash away. Hundreds of families are forced from their homes. 3000 flood victims must be rescued by helicopter on the first day alone. The Canadian Air Force plays Noah in a disaster of biblical proportions... The Quebec flood causes \$704 million worth of damage and forces the relocation of 15,000 people. It is called the worst natural catastrophe in Canadian history... “Rivers normally flood – it’s their natural way to exist. Every river will start developing an area that it floods... and that’s called a flood plain. These are generally very fertile – they’re very good places for agriculture – but they’re also high hazard areas... Rain comes, rolls off the tops of the hills... the rivers swell and they flow on to the flood plain. These floods have been going on since before man... And when there are really bad floods, they flood beyond their flood plains... erosion takes place and new landscapes are being built.” [However, during the flood in Quebec,] erosion that might have taken eons occurs in one day and one night... “When we, as the human race, decided to move to the river, we challenged nature and we’ve been in this battle ever since... As far back as we can look... there has been this struggle between the people who have wanted to live along the rivers and the river itself.” ...a classic example is Italy’s ancient city of Florence... [Its problems go back to a time] when the hills were cleared for farming. “...deforestation up river... [meant] there was no absorption by the vegetation and that caused more flow to come down into the city.” Floods became so frequent that artist Michelangelo advised his nephew to stay away... The worst flood hit in 1966. “You just had a mass of water coming through a city and the river had no place else to go.” As in Quebec, helicopters provided the only means of rescue for some. The impact of the water increased as it[was] forced through narrow streets. Florentines’ declared the disaster worse than W[W2] as the deluge destroyed everything in its path. Overflowing sewers joined the flood, polluting water supplies and leaving the streets coated in stinking mud. This time the Arno[River] claimed 113 lives. The... region continues to be plagued by floods to this day. In 1996 the Arno’s tributaries gave way. After torrential storms, rivers ran wild through an area just west of Florence, killing 11 people. Yet, after every flood, communities all over the world rebuild – forgetting the unpredictable but relentless timetable of the weather... January 1997... high in the Sierra Mountains three feet of snow melts in an unusually warm spell... It’s already been a wetter than average winter in a region where water is usually scarce. Rivers are swollen to capacity from northern California to Nevada. Downstream the flood plain is protected by levees – raised earthen banks built along large stretches of river. Several generations of Californian farmers built up the levees... “As far back as the gold rush we began to see problems in... the Sacramento and in the San Joaquin areas. Heavy flows out of the mountains would cause damage. The Federal... and... local governments have been active since the 1850s in trying to deal with this particular problem.” ...But when raised banks artificially increase the quantity of water in a channel, and bring the level above the surrounding flood plain, levees can actually increase a river’s destructive potential... A massive system of dams was also built – to control floods and to irrigate this semi-desert region... When another Pacific storm sweeps into the Sierras, a month’s worth of rain falls in just two days. The 150-year-old system of flood control reaches... breaking-point. To relieve pressure on the reservoirs, a dozen dams open their sluice-gates... The massive discharge rampages through the rivers below... [breaking] through the levees in dozens of places, carving out huge chunks of earth and asphalt... Almost 2000 homes are damaged... A mobile home park is swept downstream. The desert city of Reno is submerged when the Truckee River crests at 15ft above flood level. After it recedes, the flood leaves a thick layer of mud and debris. Some victims are angry. “...politicians talk about doing something about the river but it never seems to get done.” ...“People have said to me: ‘Isn’t there anything you guys could have done to prevent this?’ There’s no way. Mother Nature just took back what belongs to her, and there’s no stopping [her]...” ...In Georgia a tropical storm dumps 25in of rain in 24 hours in 1994. The rivers strain to free themselves of their man-made restraints. In one rural community, six old earth dams break simultaneously. A wall of water slams into homes and businesses, killing 16 people and causing panic in the streets... 31 people[eventually] drown in the flood – the worst natural disaster ever to hit Georgia – but no match for a major flood on the Mississippi, [the] sixth largest river in the world. Seen from space it’s a glittering ribbon across America... Over 2000 miles of levees line this mighty... shipping lane... For over a century a massive project has been under way to control floods on this meandering giant... US Army... engineers built a system which has protected the lower Mississippi for 70 years. But in 1993, levees on the upper part of the river, many built by locals, are tested to their utmost. Communities rally to strengthen their levees against the most prolonged heavy rain the U[S] mid-west has ever seen. Over the course of 150 days of floods, volunteers shovel 927 million pounds of sand

into 26 million bags. But their last line of defences is not... enough. Upstream from the town of St Genevieve a levy starts to fail... [T]he force of water proves too strong... Dozens of levees, especially the older, unregulated ones, collapse under the water's weight. A wide swathe of America's heartland is destroyed. More than 6 million acres are flooded. 48 people are killed... "...Right after the flood there were a series of sand-dunes over what was good agricultural land." Sand had streamed from the levy breaks, leaving farmland ruined long after the water receded. This and other flood effects brought damages to \$12 billion. "The other cost that is not often totalled up are the... non-quantifiable costs. What about the trauma to the families that are affected by this? We under-estimate the power of water because most people never have really come into contact with it until it's too late." ...The disaster contributes to a growing realisation about the price of progress[, which only stands to worsen as]... more people live, work and play in flood zones... "['An inch of rain is equivalent to 100 tons of water to the acre', and a] cubic foot of water... weighs 62lbs... Water 12 to 24in deep can spill a pedestrian trying to get through a stream. Not much more water than that in a rapidly moving stream can carry away a vehicle." Cars and trucks are swept away every season on the Los Angeles river system. Some 2500 miles of concrete channels... [- in which] children play... and homeless people live... [-] flow through the city. Those caught in a torrent can be swept to their deaths... "The water that comes through these channels was designed to do one thing... to get... from... one end... of the LA area... to the ocean, as fast as possible... Once you get into these channels there's no way out..." Each year the Swift Water Rescue Team[pulls] at least 10 people from the treacherous currents... [B]ut one-third of swift water victims are would-be rescuers... [LA is] a city that's faced the destructive energy of raging water many times... sometimes with devastating results. For 330 days of the year the 10 million inhabitants of L[A] live in a region as arid as the Sahara, but in the brief rainy season sometimes the problem is too much water... Vicious winter storms saturate the dry, bare mountains surrounding the LA basin, triggering dangerous mudslides. L[A] owes its very existence to a controversial, century-old battle to capture and control seasonal storm water from the Sierra's and beyond. Precious H₂O is diverted from rivers and lakes hundreds of miles away, [then is] transported across deserts, pumped up hills and through mountains, and into LA, where it's stored behind dams high above the... basin. This vast network stands as a testament to an era of confidence that engineering could solve any problem – including building a dam above a crowded subdivision, in an area riddled with fault lines and oil wells. "If you remove oil from the sands and gravel that create the oil reservoir, there's a void created and the weight of the earth is going to cause subsidence or settlement in that area... The reservoir was designed with the knowledge that there would be subsidence, and... that there were certain faults in that area." But on December 14th, 1963, this delicately balanced system springs a terrifying leak. At first the water draining down the streets of the Baldwin Hills neighbourhood is no more than a minor inconvenience, but above this quiet community 300 million gallons of water is waiting to do what all water behind dams... given the chance... would do... It starts with a silty seepage at the base of the dam, then cracks appear on both sides of the earth-filled walls. Water engineers try to empty the reservoir but as the leak increases they realise the dam is close to collapsing[and set off a warning]... "...You are urged to evacuate your homes immediately. Go to higher ground." Once the deluge reaches critical mass it rips through steel and concrete. The final catastrophic breakthrough is as inevitable as it is swift... The result is 5 dead... As residents survey the ruins of their homes, engineers survey the remains of the dam – trying to work out what went wrong. Although they had calculated for subsidence, they hadn't planned for new oil extraction methods... using high pressure water to flush out oil deposits[, which] weakened the land around the reservoir... Although such dramatic failures are rare, L[A] suffers almost annual crises because of its volatile seasonal rainstorms and its... [ill-conceived] attempts at flood control... LA's river system is a classic example of urban intervention gone wrong. "What we've done is to pave over so much of our watersheds that two-thirds of the rainwater that used to soak in now goes directly into the river channel. The second thing that we've done... is to wall... natural river channels... off from their flood plain... it's asking for trouble." To protect people from flood [a new dam] was built, and the flood basin behind it[was] turned into a park. "If you were to ask people that live in L[A what the new] flood basin was they would tell you it's a recreation area... a place where we play golf." ...when the worst storm in 50 years triggers a flash flood[, the] dam protects communities downstream but the basin behind it fills so fast that people in the park are trapped... In the haste to save everyone, mistakes are made... It's a powerful lesson that even small dams, functioning as planned, can be deadly. But when a monster dam fails, the destructive power is unstoppable. ['On May 31, 1889, a dam broke and a wall of water, 75 ft. high and 1/2 mi. wide overwhelmed the city of Johnstown, Pennsylvania. More than 2200 people lost their lives, and', apparently, nothing was learnt from that disaster!]Snake River Falls in Idaho [rushes] down from the mountains of the American west... Harnessing this power, and trying to control the cycle of droughts and floods, became an American obsession... [Consequently,] during an era of great dam construction... man's belief that he could tame the wilderness reached its peak... on the Snake River Valley... Engineers spent 30 years coming up with a way to control the river. The [result was the] Titan Dam, thicker than 5 football fields at its base and 30 storeys high... [No one] who lived below the giant structure... could... conceive of it collapsing... But [they] couldn't have been more wrong. While... being filled the mighty Titan Dam bursts. The water power in the reservoir behind it equals 250,000 tonnes of TNT. 2 million cu ft per second gush out, smashing two towns off the map... As flood waters recede 8 people are found dead. Tens of thousands are forced from their homes... The US Bureau of Reclamation, which built this and many other dams throughout the western states, concluded that faulty construction was to blame. "When the Titan Dam failed people began to look around at what we were doing in dam construction. Many of the projects that have been built over the last century have prevented billions of dollars of damages and saved... thousands of lives. [However, in] other cases they've been unnecessary, and in some cases counter-productive." "We [had] the idea that technology could really solve all our problems. We've learned the hard way that it's really not that simple – that we make trade-offs. We no longer have small floods that happen frequently; we have very big... floods that happen less frequently but in fact cause much more damage. The era of building dams for flood control is over." But this belief is slow to catch on in [Last World] countries, where big dam building projects are increasingly popular... "The dam building industry estimates that about 1% of the new dams being built today will fail catastrophically, and that's a lot of time bombs each year being built around the world." ...China... is building a dam across the mighty Yangtze River... The Chinese believe this technological marvel will generate the electricity needed to compete in the information age, but the construction of the world's largest reservoir has many experts worried. - EARTH'S FURY

On... December 2 1959 the... headlines throughout Europe carried the shattering news of the failure of the Malpasset Dam in southern France and the subsequent loss of over 400 lives in the catastrophic flood wave resulting from the emptying of the reservoir. Less than four years later... an even more massive flood wave was formed when part of Mount Toc, in northern Italy, fell into the Vaoint Reservoir causing considerable destruction downstream and the deaths of over 1500 people. Such events bring sharply to our awareness the hazards inherent in civil-engineering construction, when Man interferes, often unwittingly, with the forces of the natural environment. In both cases the reaction of a rock mass to changed conditions... was not fully appreciated. At Malpasset, a highly stressed arch dam was built on a relatively weak foundation composed of faulted schists; failure occurred in the left foundation as a result of rupture along pre-existing defects within the rock structure. However, at Vaoint, the conditions were different in that flooding by the reservoir of the toe of a very old landslide, forming one side of Mount Toc, resulted in a weakening of the rock mass, followed by movement of... 300 million cubic metres... of rock... [O]n the Indus River in Pakistan... the Tarbela Dam... [is under construction. It was once] destined to be the biggest in the world, but flaws due possibly to poor design have delayed completion... [D]ramatic examples... of [dam collapses]... illustrate the importance of adequate prediction of geological conditions prior to the construction of engineering works... Earthquakes are probably the most dramatic of Man's natural enemies; and for that very reason they are worth our study... 60,000 people died in Lisbon on All Saint's Day, 1755, in what was one of the most violent earthquakes on record. At least two major tremors struck the city, causing enormous structural damage and sending the waters of the River Tagus rushing through the streets. The death toll was

especially high because the churches were packed, and because of the fire that ravaged the city after the tremors had passed... By developing an understanding of both the causes and effects of earthquakes we can hope to reduce the horrifying toll of lives in the future... by selecting suitable building materials and sites...

[NZ]'s Earthquake Commission (formerly Earthquake & War Damage Commission) administers the Earthquake Commission Act 1993. This provides private property owners in NZ, who have purchased fire insurance, with insurance cover for damage to properties... caused by: ☐ Earthquake, natural landslide, volcanic eruption, hydrothermal activity or tsunami. ☐ In the case of residential land, storm or flood. ☐ Fire occasioned by or through or in consequence of any of these. War damage has been removed as an insured peril... Claims for the year ended June 30 1995, totalled 3,903 earthquake claims (\$1,411,408), 239 landslide claims (\$3,590,872) and 876 land claims (\$2,875,751)... The Earthquake Commission [EQC] is a Crown entity... responsible to the Minister of Finance... [which is] controlled by provisions in the Public Finance Act 1989, and a body corporate with perpetual succession, a common seal and capital of \$1.5 billion. - *New Zealand Official Yearbook 1996*

The EQC... has insufficient assets to be regarded as solvent on a long-term basis, [an] independent appraiser... says in the commission's annual report... [T]here was a 60[%] "probability of ruin" in which a major disaster, such as an earthquake in Wellington, would force the commission into a financial position where it would need to call on the Government for funding to cover any subsequent major loss... The EQC general manager... said the commission had \$2.54 billion in assets at June 30, 1996, \$127 million more than the year before [the total has now 'grown to \$2.7 billion']], and \$1.52 billion in reinsurance, as well as the Government's guarantee to meet all the EQC's obligations.

...Treasury raids on the EQC's reserves... replaced \$2 b... with IOUs... A bill... gives... Parliament... power to direct how the money is invested...

Members of Parliament's finance and expenditure select committee were treated last week to the sight of the chairman of the EQC... tearing up its annual report. It was a gesture of frustration at the long-running battle between the commission and the Treasury about how the commission's reserves should be invested... In effect successive governments have taken the commission's funds and annual surpluses, spent them and left IOUs. And not always even that. Between 1988 and 1995 the Government took a third of the commission's surplus each year, in lieu of tax, and then took half of what was left as a "dividend." ...Evidently accepting that the commission's reserves needed building up, the Government agreed in 1995 to exempt it from taxation until it was an unquantified "substantially" larger, and to extract no more dividends until at least the 1997-98 year... But the policy of treating the commission as a captive lender to the Government remains and a bill now before the select committee would put beyond doubt the Minister of Finance's right to continue instructing the commission how to invest its funds... A Works Consultancy Services report last year concluded that in the event of a serious earthquake in Wellington the commission should expect to pay out between \$3.5 billion and \$6.5 billion... The commission only covers the residential sector... Add the cost of damage to commercial and public sector property, infrastructure, and residential property above the ['\$112,500 inc. GST for homes, \$22,500 inc. GST for contents and some cover for sections'] cap, and the total destruction of capital stock in a Wellington earthquake would be between \$10 billion and \$20 billion, the NZ Institute of Economic Research estimates... The total cost of "the big one" would be far greater than that, of course... In the event of a major disaster the first \$700 million of claims on the commission would be met from its reserves. Then... \$1.5 billion of reinsurance kicks in. When that was exhausted the commission's remaining \$2 billion of Government securities would need to be redeemed. Anything beyond \$4.2 billion would fall to the Government, as the reinsurer of last resort. The problem is that the circumstances which required the commission to cash in its Government securities would also create adverse market conditions... When the commission called on those Government IOUs, the Government would have to find the money either from taxation or from borrowing in those hostile conditions... Treasury's view seems to be: We'll cross that bridge when it falls down. Ultimately the taxpayers would pay, for cover they thought they had already bought through a... premium levied with house insurance (currently \$67 a year).

...[P]ayments for repairs to earthquake damaged homes will in future be made directly to builders rather than to the owners of damaged properties. This follows an agreement between the Master Builders Federation and the EQC, which are also joining forces to develop quick methods of rebuilding after a major quake. Property owners in the past have sometimes used the money for purposes other than repairing damage.'

...repeating what it did with 'the \$3.5 billion in the Government Superannuation Fund, the Government has decided to move the \$3 billion national disaster fund which covers the cost of mid-sized earthquakes, from safe but stolid local stocks and bonds on to international sharemarkets. At present, all the disaster fund money is in non-negotiable Government bonds. "We're not making the most of the money. It's plus-plus," said a spokesman for the Finance Minister, "but it's going to depend on overseas markets and interest rates." Incidentally, a seismic study into the earthquake-proofing work needed on the Auckland Harbour Bridge will be completed in September. The study, by international consultants, began in 1995 after a preliminary report found some parts of the bridge were susceptible to damage in a major earthquake. Although the Auckland region historically has a low level of seismic activity, an active fault – the Wairoa North fault – runs beneath the Hunua Ranges, about 40km from downtown Auckland. Part of it has moved in the past 10,000 years – enough for the Auckland Regional Council to identify it as a potential major earthquake hazard.

...eight years after the massive Loma Prieta earthquake ravaged the San Francisco area, the symbol of the temblor's greatest destruction is rising from the rubble. The first leg of the Cypress Freeway... has just reopened and an additional bridge and two offramps will open in the months to come... No smiling dignitaries took the first ride on what has become the most expensive strip of highway in California's history – a \$1 billion project fraught with pain, strife and lawsuits... The new Cypress link arcs sharply north and west of where the old structure stood... The collapse of the 32-year-old Cypress Freeway – the first double-decker roadway of its kind built in the US – claimed nearly two thirds of the quake's 67 victims. When the ground began to shake at 5.04pm on October 17, 1989, the upper deck slammed [o]nto the lower level for more than 1.5km. Motorists... were trapped... in pockets ranging in height from virtually nothing to more than a metre.

...[The Petronas Towers (which have 14 dampeners) and the 800ft tall JRC Central Towers (6) are both steel-cage designs, yet during 1994's Los Angeles quake, the steel-cage structure of sky-scrappers was found to be faulty (the quake caused stress fracture cracks – if the quake had lasted more than 20 seconds, the structure of some could've been compromised).] By the way, 'lead-rubber bearings, invented by a Wellingtonian in 1976, helped save the USC University Teaching Hospital, when the quake hit. While other LA hospitals suffered major damage, nothing fell from university building's shelves.'] - 1997

Scientists say they have found a hidden fault under Los Angeles that probably caused quakes in the past and could cause bigger ones in the future. The fault runs 40km from downtown... to the Coyote Hills in northern Orange County and toward Brea in the east, covering at least 840 sq km...

When... Earth was formed the Southern Hemisphere contained only one enormous super-continent... But 120 million years ago huge geological forces started pulling it apart into the great southern continents of South America, Africa, India, Antarctica and A[US]. As part of that process, one huge piece of land – much of it beneath the sea – slowly separated from A[US] to form the islands of N[Z]. But the very idea that... Earth's crust can shift in this way is very recent... On the 17th of June, 1929, the... Murchison earthquake shook and heaved the earth['almost everywhere in NZ']... 17 people died... but 25 years later the tragedy provided vital information for [a] Kiwi geologist... By taking careful measurements throughout the Murchison area, [he] established that bits of... Earth's surface were constantly sliding and rubbing against each other along what we call fault lines. In other words, [he]... helped prove that... Earth's crust was not static, as scientists then believed... N[Z] straddles two of the

biggest plates – the A[US]n and the Pacific. As they slowly grind past each other, they're stretching our two main islands, making them longer and thinner[('Earth's crust under NZ's North Island is the thinnest in the world – 16km thick'; Earth's 'crust varies from 0-40km thick – it is thinnest under the oceans')]. At the same time the[y]re slowly pushing up... the Southern Alps... The result is a vast alpine fault line running 450km... Its crisp line [is] clearly visible in... Nasa photograph[s] taken from 800km out... [in space. E]arthquakes can bring long-term benefits. Every day Wellingtonians profit from the flat land pushed up by the huge earthquake of 1855... [U]sually it's a pretty slow process, but sometimes things can... happen with a bang... [O]n... February the 3rd, 1931, the Hawkes Bay fault gave in to the strain of thousands of years of compression... and released an earthquake measuring a mighty 7.8 on the Richter scale. 256 people died and hundreds more were injured in N[Z]'s worst natural disaster.

...The Earthquake Society conference in Auckland next week will look back on a quiet year in N[Z] for earthquakes, with about 130 recorded[('in an average year 60-100 record between 4 and 5 on the Richter Scale; 10-20 record 5 or more'). Only 2] were larger than 6 on the... scale... both... so deep they caused little damage. The biggest was one of magnitude 6.3 on October 26 164km under Taupo. It was felt from Auckland to Christchurch.

...[Auckland is heading for Christchurch, and the result will be a major earthquake. Geologists say that over the next 70 years, the northern city will move 4m south. Since 1990, Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences staff have taken thousands of global positioning satellite measurements. By repeating the measurements over several years, parts of the country are shown to be moving up to 5cm a year. A survey adviser for Land Information NZ said relative boundaries would stay the same. "A property-owner is not going to suddenly have land taken away or get some extra land."']

...Auckland... lies on a north-south axis on a narrow isthmus... [of] land susceptible to serious earthquake damage. The result is that a big shake is likely to bring Auckland problems many other cities might escape in a similar-sized earthquake... Nobody knows when the big one will hit Auckland... The last earthquake to cause significant damage occurred in 1891... [A]n earthquake, with a magnitude of 6 on the Richter scale and a shallow epicentre close to central Auckland, would produce widespread instability. Fine sedimentary soils could liquefy, amplifying the shaking on reclaimed land around downtown Auckland, the port and airport. Bridges, motorway viaducts and their approaches would be most vulnerable. They also carry water supplies and communication lines. Motorways would be largely unusable. All normal traffic would cease... It could take up to six months to rebuild the region's bridges. But it would take years to build another port if present wharves were destroyed... Auckland seems to have enough trouble[s]... without worrying about an earthquake. In the capital, where the Wellington fault line passes through the centre of the city and the Ohariu fault is not far away, 200 experts have just met to contemplate the economic fallout of a major earthquake hitting the city. Their... estimate[was] that a big earthquake would destroy 15 to 20[%] of Wellington's commercial property... representing... \$4[billion] to \$5 billion in capital losses to business... [D]amage to the residential sector... [would add a] further \$4 billion[, and during]... the first year[after the earthquake there would be] about \$1 billion[worth] of lost income flowing from the damage. So the bill could be a cool \$10.5 billion, all up... However... [r]eplacing about \$10 billion of buildings and their contents would send a strong "demand pulse" through the economy, offsetting the negative effects of the quake. It would boost [GDP]... for a year or two... In the long run – five to 10 years – the economic effects would be neutral.

...Scientists are discovering geological faults beneath the seabed in the earthquake-prone coastal region of Hawkes Bay and Poverty Bay... The questions are... How big are they? How big might the earthquakes be? When might they happen?

...British geologists have developed a new way of forecasting earthquakes... The technique involves analysing vibrations from stressed fluid-permeated rocks... It can be used to predict the time and magnitude of large quakes, and although it cannot pinpoint where they will occur, it can help geologists with local knowledge to estimate which area is likely to be hit. [A g]eophysicist... from the University of Edinburgh, employed the technique to warn the Icelandic authorities last October that a quake registering 5 on the Richter scale would happen soon... A final warning was issued on November 10. Three days later, a magnitude 5 earthquake was reported within 2km of one of the monitoring stations... [Now that it is possible to answer some of the most important questions concerning earthquakes, we can move on to lesser questions – such as:] Where is the safest place to be when an earthquake strikes? It may well be among the ancient towering pillars of the Parthenon on the Acropolis of Athens. Almost every part of Greece has been battered by earthquakes over the centuries. Yet the columned structures... have withstood earthquakes for 2500 years... [R]easons given for the longevity and stability of the monument [include that i]t was built of hard, strong marble[, and i]ts foundation was on rock...

Seismologists have warned people in the Sydney region to expect more earthquakes over the next few weeks after yesterday's big tremor. Power was cut to more than 2000 homes, mines closed and emergency switchboards jammed in the second quake to hit N[SW] within a week. Yesterday's quake measured 4.7 on the Richter scale and was felt up to 200km from the epicentre... [No one was killed. However, over] 1000 people have died in the earthquake that rocked western Colombia, and rescue workers are so strapped that many bodies remain on the street uncollected... Worst hit were the poor... districts of... [the] provincial capital of Armenia[, a]... city of 300,000 residents, where "few of the homes remain standing."

...Colombia's President... ordered a military crackdown in [the] earthquake-torn city[of Armenia] yesterday after looting and rioting by survivors... 2000 soldiers and 700 policemen would be brought in to stamp out gangs of armed looters still roaming the streets... Frayed tempers [had] boiled over as survivors, tired of waiting for government aid to arrive, took matters into their own hands, smashing their way into scores of downtown stores and businesses to carry off food and water as well as shoes, jewellery and compact discs. What started as an isolated incident quickly degenerated as crowds of hundreds swelled into thousands in a rampage that engulfed the entire downtown area. [The] Interior Minister... was unable to explain why food aid had not been handed out. [● Several] aid appeals have been launched in N[Z]. For details, contact] World Vision... Oxfam... [or phone] 0900 UNICEF (888-55) for an automatic \$25 contribution.

...[on this day in '1995, Japan's deadliest earthquake in 70 years slammed into Kobe and other cities killing 5000 and causing \$85.5 billion in damages.']

...Yesterday was the anniversary of the 1923 Great Kanto earthquake, which killed 140,000 and left millions homeless. Thousands of Japanese practised for a major quake... [Schoolchildren wore] padded hoods to protect them from falling debris... during an earthquake drill... in Tokyo.

...Japanese troops were told yesterday to target foreigners to prevent looting and rioting in the event of a major earthquake... "Atrocious crimes have been committed... by sangokujin and other foreigners,"... [said Tokyo's] Governor... After the Tokyo earthquake of 1923, which killed about 100,000, rumours about riots among Tokyo's Korean residents led to Japanese mobs killing hundreds of Koreans... The... slang term "sangokujin" means "people from [Last] World countries" and was used insultingly for residents from the former Japanese colonies of Korea and Taiwan.

...Thousands of dazed Taiwanese – many wearing only underwear or pyjamas – stumbled into dark, chaotic streets early yesterday, shaken awake by an earthquake that killed at least 1450 people, injured 3750, destroyed thousands of homes and toppled buildings islandwide... The majority of buildings... that collapsed were recently built high-rises... With a magnitude of 7.6 on the Richter scale, it was the strongest to hit Taiwan in a decade... Ironically, in a local newspaper yesterday morning, a news report had quoted seismologists predicting that... Taiwan was in for a potentially devastating earthquake following a relatively calm 30-year cycle. "The next one will be the big one," the report said.

...The Big One merely a matter of waiting N[Z] is in line for an earthquake the same size as the one which has wreaked havoc in Taiwan – but no one can say when... As recently as last year, geologists predicted a huge earthquake for Wellington... The likely size of a quake out of the big Wellington fault is put at 7.6 on the Richter scale... The last time one that big struck[NZ] was the Inangahua quake in 1968. Edgecumbe's 1987 quake was relatively small at 6.5... An eruption out of the Wairarapa fault could be greater than 8... In 1855 Wellington and the Wairarapa were rocked by a gigantic shock of 8.2... On average, such shakes occurred every 600 years on the Wellington fault. [But the previous] one was 350 to 450 years ago... "[However, the next] big... event, Richter 8 or larger, is expected on the Alpine fault."

...The big earthquake expected to strike the South Island within the next two decades could trigger a series of serious shakes throughout the country experts from several fields have concluded. An Alpine fault earthquake measuring eight on the Richter scale was more likely to hit before the feared Wellington tremor. Satellite gear had shown the fault was moving at the rate of 24mm a year... The devastation in Taiwan is a grim reminder of the high toll earthquakes exact. At least 8928 people were killed by earthquakes around the world last year, says the US Geological Survey National Earthquake Information Centre. The number of deaths in 1997 was 2900, and in 1996 it was just 419... But the annual average death toll over the century is 10,000 says the centre's director... [- primarily due to t]his century's worst... earthquake in July 1976 that killed 290,000 in the Tangshan region of northeast China... [O]ver the past two decades the average annual toll has been dropping to about 8000... [The director] told the BBC World Service this was probably because of safer buildings...

More than 500 people were reported killed when a violent earthquake hit heavily populated western Turkey yesterday, flattening buildings in towns and cities and sending thousands rushing into the streets in panic. Rescue workers and distraught survivors grappled with the heaps of concrete and metal rubble, trying to free people trapped beneath... The quake, measuring 6.7 on the Richter scale, was centred near the industrial city of Izmit on the Sea of Marmara, home to about one million people... Firemen extinguished a blaze that broke out at a major oil refinery in Izmit... At least 40 people died in sprawling Istanbul... The city of 10 million was plunged into darkness as the quake cut power... The minarets of dozens of mosques lay on the ground. There was no immediate word of damage to Istanbul's many historical buildings dating from... Roman times.

...early today, the... Mayor of Golcuk, a port town of 75,000 on the Marmara Sea, gave some idea of the possible extent of the disaster when he declared that as many as 10,000 people might be trapped in rubble in his town alone... "...No one is helping us. Neither the city nor the military," [another man from]... Golcuk... said as he continued bashing the concrete that pinned his 21-year-old nephew's feet... Turk[ey's P]M... was close to tears during a visit to the towns of the western Marmara region. "The loss is huge," he said. "May Allah help our state and our people."

...Foreign rescue teams with sniffer dogs and lifting equipment poured into devastated northern Turkey yesterday as the death toll... reached 3480. Firefighter aircraft were expected from France and Germany to tackle a blaze threatening to blow up the country's main oil refinery... [in] Izmit... and spread havoc across a radius of 4km to 5km... Seismologists put the quake at 7.8 on the Richter scale, more powerful than first thought. Newspapers accused building contractors of shoddy work that cost lives as hundreds of apartment buildings crumpled, flattening people in their beds. "Murderers!" screamed a banner headline in the best-selling *Hurriyet* newspaper... The earthquake has put on hold debate of a series of fiscal reforms urged by the I[MF] if Turkey wants a financial support package later this year. Turkey's stock exchange[has] suspended trading...

Turkey declared its quake-devastated northwest a disaster area yesterday, enabling the Government to commandeer private and public resources to provide help... Turkey, criss-crossed by seismic fault lines, suffers frequent earthquakes and tremors. Some... 98[%] of the population are in a "high risk" area. Nearly 33,000 people died in the eastern city of Erzincan in 1939, some 2400 were killed in Varto in 1967 and 653 in Erzincan again in 1992... After the 1992 Erzincan quake, civil servants began a project supported by the World Bank to review construction regulations and recommendations to tighten laws. The "Erzincan Project" is still unfinished. But those familiar with Turkish building laws say it is not the lack of regulations, of which there are many, but their application on the ground which, they say, is patchy at best. "The problem is that we don't have construction supervision," said one Government official. A council inspector is appointed to supervise each building site and his name appears on a sign outside. "But most of the time the inspector approves the building without even visiting it... Also... [w]e don't have any standard for contractors... You could become one tomorrow." As for the professional builders' organisation, they deny responsibility and... [blame] the state.

...in Cinarcik, Turkey, [a 9-year-old has been]... pulled from rubble which trapped her for 100 hours. [Her mother had been] pulled out after 30 hours. The death toll from Tuesday's earthquake has passed 10,000 and is expected to reach 40,000.

...[as g]ravediggers struggle to bury[the] flow of dead... [-] Islamic tradition says the[y]... should be buried within 24 hours... [- Turkey's P]resident... and Pakistan's [PM have]... joined thousands of Muslim faithful throughout Turkey in mass funeral prayers for victims. Turkish newspapers billed the event as the largest show of mass grief in modern Turkey's 75-year history. Heavy rain on Friday plagued teams working to clear the rubble and recover some of the thousands of bodies still buried under collapsed buildings. Yesterday the main crisis centre raised the confirmed death toll to 13,472, with 27,164 injured... The estimated number of homeless is 600,000... and the cost of rebuilding will be \$20 billion.

...RESCUERS toiled through a freezing night in northwestern Turkey to extricate hundreds of people from the rubble of a powerful earthquake. The death toll last night stood at 247 people... The earthquake measured 7.2 on the Richter scale and hit the province of Bolu on Friday, demolishing hundreds of buildings and panicking residents already traumatised by a devastating quake which struck in mid-August... kill[ing] at least 17,000 across the northwest... [In related news, a cat has been] pulled alive from a building that had been damaged by a devastating earthquake in Taiwan nine weeks ago. The cat was discovered by a construction worker... [A v]eterinarian... said the cat may have survived the ordeal by eating another cat that had been killed by the magnitude 7.6 temblor... [which killed m]ore than 2400 people... and... injured... 11,000...

India has mounted the biggest rescue operation in its history to save thousands of earthquake victims trapped under rubble... across the state of Gujarat... The Government has declared that the country is on a "war footing" to cope with the catastrophe... [Over] 200 aftershocks, measuring up to six, have been [felt] since Friday's 7.9 quake... Virtually no houses in India are earthquake proof, although the region is seismically active... Several dams, including the enormous Tehri hydroelectric dam in Uttar Pradesh, [also] haven't been built to withstand earthquakes.

...The... quake that killed 2400 people in Taiwan... measured 7.6 - so was the Indian quake just slightly stronger than the Taiwanese one? The answer is no. As the strength of quakes rises in steps up the Richter scale, each quake releases 31 times more energy than one at the previous notch. Introduced in 1935, the scale is named for American physicist Charles F. Richter, who developed it from patterns he discovered by studying more than 200 earthquakes a year... The Richter scale is a more objective, quantitative basis of measuring quakes than the other widely used standard, the 12-point Mercalli scale... The Richter scale... starts at one and has no upper limit... The most devastating quake in recorded history occurred in China's Shanxi province in 1556. It measured possibly 9 on the scale and killed more than 830,000 people.

...Strongest earthquake: In Chile on May 22, 1960, the world's strongest earthquake shook the country, measuring 9.6 on the Richter scale.

Auckland Star, 29 December 1966. "BIG 'QUAKE IN CHILE". "A prolonged severe earthquake rocked northern Chile yesterday, causing heavy damage and casualties... A strong earthquake also shook the city of Mendoza in Western Argentina... near the... border of Chile." This was the day after China exploded an atom bomb at its Lop Nor test site. According to a Chinese report, this test was "a great victory for the invincible thought of Mao Tse-Tung, and a new rich fruit of the great Proletarian Revolution... as well as an important contribution to the defence of world peace." While they were thus glorifying each other in China, hundreds of unfortunate people in South America were buried alive... Study the records, and you will find that the number of serious earthquakes is on the increase. In recent years this increase has been estimated to be in the vicinity of 400[%]. Perhaps it is only coincidental that this increase has occurred during the same period of extensive atomic testing. [But] I think I have found circumstantial evidence that suggests... the two have a connection... [Consider] the experiments of Michael Faraday. He found that the Earth's atmosphere had magnetic properties. This is due to the oxygen it contains, and variations in temperature... [- such as those caused] by the passage of the Sun... [-] have a direct effect on this property... If the oxygen is lost, then the atmosphere will... lose its magnetic properties... Faraday... stated that the lines of magnetic force which issue from the Earth more or less suddenly, according to the amount of inclination, are held beneath by a force of location; and because of the unchanging action of the Earth in respect to atmospheric effect, are restrained... from alteration beneath during the changing action of the atmosphere. Also, due to the nature of magnetic force, any disturbance of the magnetic lines will have an effect

all over the Earth instantly or at the speed of light... If we can produce a sudden great change of temperature in a large mass of the atmosphere, we can also produce a sudden great change in its magnetic conductivity. This could... cause a certain amount of strain on the Earth's crust in the areas where the biggest disturbance occurs in the magnetic force lines. The magnetic lines will tend to expand or contract in the atmosphere, but where the lines enter the Earth's crust, there will be a definite resistance to the change. A slow change over a large area would probably cause little reaction; an almost instant change of tension over a small area might mean a shifting of the Earth's crust[, which would be]... more pronounced... in... an earth-quake-prone area... A nuclear explosion is the biggest man-made disturber of the atmosphere yet experienced... Everybody these days may be reading Mao Tse-Tung's books of glorious thoughts, but more practical reading would be a book that proves the connection between atom tests and the earthquakes that follow. If this testing does not cease... our tired old world... may... eventually... split at the seams... - HARMONIC 33

Atlantis, [a 'beautiful and prosperous fabled island located west of the Pillars of Hercules']... in the western sea (Atlantic Ocean)... long since submerged by an earthquake because of the wickedness of its inhabitants. Plato and Pliny mentioned it, and it suggested the site of Sir Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis*, the home of an imaginary ideal society.

If climate change were to cause the oceans to rise high enough, lots of cities could be buried (literally creating new – or real – Atlantis'). But, because water covers between 2/3rds and 75% of the planet, being IN FLOOD is Earth's normal condition. An abnormal condition would be if Earth was ever IN LAND.

And I saw a new... earth: for the first... earth [had] passed away; and there was no more sea. - Revelation 21:1

Imagine a world with no oceans, no clean air, no offshore breezes, no big swells, no flora, no fauna... no sea-shells by the sea-shore, no sea-shore. At the current rate of pollution it's not hard to imagine.

Recall that *Earth tends to lose some of its mass as its atmosphere leaks very slowly away*. What if this natural process was to be sped up by, for example, a hole in the atmosphere? Unlike a puncture in a bicycle tyre, it would be impossible to repair such a hole! Furthermore, if such a hole was to grow bigger, could Earth's atmosphere eventually become too flat to support life – or might all of Earth's moisture escape through the same hole as steam?

For the fourth week in a row, scientific monitoring shows the loss of an entire ozone layer in the atmosphere above Antarctica, says the U[N] weather agency... the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO)... The surface area of the loss was about 20 million sq km – twice the size of Europe.

...N[Z]'s incidence of melanoma is among the highest in the world... a new study says... and N[Z] is reported as experiencing the highest death rates from melanoma... [M]elanoma was the leading cancer for men under 50 and for women under 35... Early detection of skin cancer led to a cure in 99[%] of cases. Another report highlighted by the... Cancer Society... warned that N[Z]ers, because their skies are relatively pollution-free, faced a high risk of exposure to cancer-causing UV radiation as ozone levels continued to decline... [O]zone levels would reach their lowest levels around the year 2000... [S]teps had been taken to reduce further damage to the ozone layer, but the ozone would not recover fully until the middle of next century... The... department of preventative and social medicine at the Otago School of Medicine, said that there appeared to be some levelling off in the number of new cases of cancer, but... warned that the figures might not be accurate. Reporting of new cancer cases was voluntary until July 1, 1994, when the Cancer Registry Act, which required laboratories to report new cancers cases, became effective... [U]p to a further 50[%] of cases might not have been reported... "The high rates of skin cancer in N[Z] are due to exposure that occurred before ozone depletion began..."

...N[Z]ers are not at risk during the ozone hole season because they are protected by a band of concentrated ozone, says a... [NIWA chemist. I]t was a fallacy... th[at th]e hole affected N[Z], although it had slightly in 1987... This year's... hole[– currently lying just]... short of N[Z] at 60 deg latitude south... [- bega]n slightly earlier than usual... Now 25 million [sq. km], the hole should be at its biggest this week and be gone by early December.

...A hole in the ozone layer... is already as big as it will ever get over the Antarctic, the W[MO]... said yesterday. But the world should now watch out for potentially more life-threatening depletion over Europe and America, it warned. [A] special adviser on ozone to the... WMO... told a briefing in Geneva that up to 10[%] of the ozone had been depleted over Europe and North America by man-made chemicals in the past 20 years... "Within the next 10 or 15 years, we may expect a stronger ozone depletion,[" said the Bulgarian-born scientist, who is a... world expert on the issue. "We'll always have a little bit of ozone left over our heads but it may not be sufficient to protect biological species." ...Studies show a [1%] drop in ozone levels causes an average 1.3[%] rise in UB-V radiation. - 1996

A study of salamanders in Oregon's Cascade mountains provides new evidence that depletion of the Earth's ozone layer is the cause of an alarming worldwide decline in amphibians. More than 90[%] of long-toed salamander embryos left exposed to the sun's natural ultraviolet rays either failed to hatch or were born with physical deformities... By contrast, 95[%] of embryos protected from UVB radiation survived, and only 0.5[%] of those that hatched were deformed... [I]ncreased levels of ultraviolet radiation caused by ozone depletion also is believed to be responsible for... a loss of plankton in waters surrounding Antarctica, where ozone depletion is most severe.

...The continued depletion of the earth's protective ozone layer appears to be producing its first adverse affects on wildlife around Antarctica... Ultraviolet light shining through the largest hole ever measured in the ozone layer... is causing DNA damage in a species of icefish, according to biologists from Boston's Northeastern University... Researchers... [from the] University of San Francisco... [who have been working at the US] Palmer Station revealed that starfish embryos are now developing ugly deformities due to the radiation, and die before they are born. Some sea urchins have stopped reproducing, and certain plants have started to create their own "sunscreen."

...TOO many people are using sunscreen as an excuse to soak up more of the sun's harmful rays and many still end up burnt, risking possible skin cancer. That's the concern of the Cancer Society in the wake of four complaints to the Consumers Institute from people who maintained they were sunburnt even though they used sunscreen. It is the first time the institute has fielded such complaints and a spokesperson said while all cases had been referred to manufacturers, she was satisfied there were no problems with the sunscreens, which she would not name... The issue has prompted more sunsmart urgings from the Cancer Society's marketing manager... "It is time people stopped worshipping the sun and showed some respect for it. There is a false expectation that sunscreen is the ultimate all-day sun protection, but... [n]o sunscreen can filter out all of the sun's rays – sunscreen should be seen simply as an additional protective measure. We want people to reduce their sun exposure not increase it..."

...Half an hour on a sunbed can bombard tan-seekers with as much damaging... radiation as a day at the beach... Britain's Imperial Cancer Research Fund said in a statement accompanying new guidelines on sunbeds. "We are concerned that people do not understand the risks they are running by getting a tan – whether from sunbathing or a sunbed,"... Sunbeds mostly emit ultraviolet A radiation (UVA) which doctors used to think was safer than the UVB normally associated with sunburns and skin cancer. But they now know it can damage the middle layer of skin, elastin and collagen – which leads to wrinkles and sagging[, and] can cause... skin cancer... [Incidentally, the US] National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration (NOAA)[has] announced that the Concorde supersonic aircraft may be adding to the depletion of the ozone layer by leaving a fog of sulphuric acid in its stratosphere wake... [In addition, a] significant ozone-destroying agent, methyl-bromide, is still used to fumigate soil for crops such as strawberries and tomatoes.

...methyl bromide... will be phased out by 2005... [By the way, the] World Watch Institute said in its annual report that global production of... CFCs... were down 77[%] from a peak in 1988... [However, in] a report to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting in Christchurch the W[MO] said it might be five years before a “statistically significant trend in the weakening of the ozone hole may emerge.” ...[In the meantime,] Earth’s protective ozone layer has now reached record low levels over northern Canada and other parts of the Arctic. The layer was recently measured to be 15 to 25[%] thinner than during the same time last year... [T]he worst affected area stretches from the North Pole to north-central Siberia.

...the British Antarctic Survey and Cambridge University[researchers] have found the ozone hole over Antarctica begins forming earlier in the year than first thought... Spring depletion was more severe but the process began over the winter... “We now have a new perspective on the ozone hole. This is important because ozone-poor air from the edge of the Antarctic ozone hole regularly passes over southern South America, exposing many populations to larger than normal doses of damaging... radiation.” ...[In local news,] the lowest... ozone... level... over... [NZ] since measurements began in 1979 – 35[%] below normal – was recorded... [in] mid-August... at the [NIWA] ozone-monitoring base... in Central Otago.

...The hole in the... ozone layer near the South Pole may be growing bigger, according to early readings from a satellite released last week by the space shuttle Discovery. The German-built satellite, which was threatened when a piece of space junk whizzed to within a couple of kilometres of it on Tuesday, gave scientists monitoring results at the Kennedy Space Centre their first peek at the ozone hole. The co-investigator of atmospheric research at the centre... said yesterday the data suggests a cloud forming around the South Pole is much thicker and larger than anticipated. This type of cloud “plays a real important role in the destruction of ozone” and is an early warning sign of an ozone hole... [T]he clouds... “suck in all the nitrogen compounds and water vapour,” making it easier for other chemicals to eat up the ozone.

...Scientists have discovered that two giant plumes of ozone are appearing over the Atlantic and Pacific every year. Caused by tree and crop burning in Africa, South America and A[US], the plumes are low-lying... Scientists have also found that ozone in the lower atmosphere is reaching intense concentrations every summer across the northern hemisphere, approaching those that would trigger health and smog alarms in cities... At the turn of the century, scientists in Paris measured atmospheric ozone for the first time and found levels of 10 parts a billion. Last summer, in latitudes between 30 and 50 degrees north, levels reached 60 parts a billion, and they continue to rise... [T]he Atlantic and Pacific... plumes of air containing ozone at between 100 and 130 parts a billion... [are more than 1 1/2 kms] thick, dozens of kilometres broad and hundreds of kilometres long... [T]he potential for damage is enormous. People are made sick by ozone and crops get ruined... [O]zone in the upper atmosphere... is good because it protects us from ultra-violet radiation... [but when] ozone appears lower in the atmosphere, near the ground, it is very harmful indeed.

...a study... conducted on mice... by the University of California... concluded that ozone rapidly strips vitamin E from the uppermost layer of skin. This vitamin... a fat-soluble compound found in some plant oils and the leaves of green vegetables... is an important component of healthy skin... and has long been a folk remedy for skin ailments. The Berkeley researchers said the depletion of vitamin E could expose important skin fat molecules, called lipids, to air pollution. Destruction of these lipids, which regulate the movement of materials in and out of the skin, could aggravate skin ailments that commonly afflict people in urban areas.

...[the *Journal of the American Medical Association* has published results of a meticulous study tracking the incidence of skin cancer in over 300,000 people in western USA. Over a period of 27 years, the number of cases of squamous-cell carcinoma – the most dangerous of common skin cancers – had increased 260% in men and 310% in women. Researchers laid the blame for this astounding increase directly on “increased voluntary exposure to the sun.” The study also revealed that the incidence of malignant melanoma of the skin – the deadliest of skin cancers – increased 350% in men and 460% in women during the same period. Malignant melanoma is so dangerous that one-fifth of its victims die within 5 years of diagnosis. The message didn’t stop there. In the same issue of the *Journal*, an editorial recommended physicians tell patients to “avoid sunbathing, which we now recognize as a hazardous activity.” The American Academy of Dermatology agrees. In its 1988 Consensus Conference on Photoaging/Photodamage, 18 of the world’s leading medical experts on skin diseases asked the question “Is there a safe way to tan?” Their answer was a straightforward: “No.” The idea that a suntan was “healthy” started in the 1930s. How mistaken that was! A suntan is not a sign of health. It is a crude defence mechanism; your body’s desperate – and unsuccessful – attempt to protect you from damage that can be irreparable. Your system throws a dark curtain of pigment called melanin over you to keep dangerous UV radiation from doing even more harm. But it is too late. Once a suntan appears, the damage has already taken place. Your chances of getting skin cancer depend in part on your skin type. Medical researchers have divided us into 5 categories. Types I and II usually have blue, green or hazel eyes, and red or blonde hair and freckles. Type I never tans, and Type II tans minimally. Those who have dark skin are type V or VI. These two types tan profusely and rarely burn.’

...‘The more time you spend in the sun the higher your risk of contracting skin cancer, even if you are the type who tans rather than burns. An ability to tan doesn’t especially protect a person, US researchers say. Many studies link sun exposure with skin cancer, but the team at the National Cancer Institute say their research is the first to show that the intensity of sunlight a person receives over a lifetime is directly related to its risk of contracting melanoma.’

...The Cancer Society has rejected a claim by British dermatologists that there is no proof melanoma... is caused by sunlight... [Two] professors of dermatology at Newcastle University... said cancerous growths often occurred on parts of the body that received little sun, such as the soles of feet, and that the disease existed in countries where sunbathing was not fashionable. But a Cancer Society spokeswoman... said all the evidence in N[Z] and AUS] pointed to a strong link... [and that] there was also a genetic link... “It’s very difficult to prove the link absolutely,” she said, but... the epidemiological evidence was “almost overwhelming.”

...A SURVEY to gauge whether a... melanoma warning campaign by the Cancer Society has sunk in has begun as the summer sun continues to tantalise N[Z] with sporadic appearances... [The lack of sunshine is, however, ‘a blessing in disguise’ – the UV risk is decreased during heavy cloud cover. ‘Some 12,000 NZers develop skin cancer each year’ and about] 250... mostly males, die from melanoma and other skin cancers each year... [– which, per head of population, places NZ] just ahead of Queensland... “Most of this illness and most of the deaths could be prevented if there was a reduction in sun exposure and sunburn, especially in children,” says the society’s health promotions manager... The society has invested \$2 million in public awareness... over the past nine years. Most of the money has come from public donations and, in earlier years, sponsorship. The survey will also assess the impact of the Health Sponsorship Council’s “SunSmart” campaign. The society hopes the latest survey will show an improvement o[n] 1994 findings which indicated on a typical sunny weekend three quarters of N[Z]ers were outdoors for at least three hours and about 20% suffered sunburn. The society was also concerned that 41% of respondents said they felt healthier with a suntan. “People will continue to die unless we manage to wean ourselves away from the notion that you have to get a tan to look healthy and attractive.” ...A grandmother watching her two young grandchildren swim... [at] Wellington’s Scorching Bay... believed the public concept of sun-worshipping bronzed bodies has changed. “It’s no longer considered sexy. There is a move back to the Victorian image of delicate skin and that’s great. I’m proud of my lily-white legs,” she said... [Indeed, her grandchildren were wearing swimsuits which, like those from the Victorian age, covered their bodies from] neck-to-knee... However, [recent research in AUS]... revealed teenagers in particular ignored the multi-million dollar sun smart advertising campaigns.

...A new study shows that more[NZ] adults are being sunburned despite publicity... One in four adults... [and 30%] of men... who were outdoors during weekends last summer ended up with sunburn... The sunburn rates in the survey... were 50[%]... higher than for a similar survey in 1994... [A]bout 1600 new cases of melanoma occurred a year, making it the second most common cancer. “Yet it is largely a preventable cancer... Most of

us have the potential to burn during summer weekends because on average we spend 2 1/2 hours outdoors on weekend days and it is possible to be burned in as little as 15 minutes,”... said... the Cancer [Society’s spokesperson]... The society’s melanoma awareness week begins on Monday. - 1997

...the public[has a] general lack of understanding – and often unfounded fears – about radiation. Controversy has raged about the potential dangers of cellphones, nuclear testing and electronic equipment, and all sorts of theories have been thrown around. [Because of this], the... National Radiation Laboratory in Christchurch... has... compiled... a... report[covering] all forms of artificial and natural radiation, such as those found in soil, building materials and gases inhaled daily. People should be most concerned about solar radiation[, which]... has increased by 15[%] since the late 1970s, according to a... new study... Auckland [– where the burn-time for fair skinned people can be as low as 10 minutes at midday on sunny mid-summer days –]has already been dubbed the melanoma capital of the world, with huge rates of skin cancer among a population of sun-worshippers.

...Not getting enough is bad for your health[, but to]o much can be very bad for you. Yet we worship the sun as the ancients did thousands of years ago. If the sun shines through this holiday weekend, we will flock outdoors like lemmings, spirits raised by the warming rays, deep blue skies and the promise of a long, hot summer... But this summer there is searing new evidence of the need to moderate our exposure... Since 1985, ozone over N[Z] at the height of summer has decreased by 10 to 12[%], with UV intensity increasing by about 15[%]... The UV index measures the intensity of UV radiation. The larger the number, the more intense the UV. A UV index of 12 corresponds to a burn time of about 12 minutes; an index of 6 corresponds to a burn time of 24 minutes. Values of 10 or more are considered ‘extreme.’ In N[Z], the summer maximum value is about 12 but it can exceed 13 in the Far North... [The] Cancer Society’s mantra[is] to cover up and seek shade between 11 am and 4 pm... In the southern Chilean port of Punta Arenas, the citizens have been told not to go out in the sun between 11 am and 3 pm. Health authorities last week called an orange alert – the second most dangerous level on a scale of four – in which UV exposure can cause skin burns in seven minutes. A red alert means burn-time is five minutes[(although, if you happen to be allergic to the sun – as at least 2 children in the UK are – your skin will ‘blister after a minute’ in any sunshine)]... After 13 years of ominous warnings, most [NZers] have heeded the slip[(on a shirt), slop (on sunscreen), slap (on a hat)] message... The generation, now in their 40s and 50s, who basted themselves in coconut oil and grilled both sides for 12 hours a day under a blazing sun will surely be the last to do so. Surveys show one in three N[Z]ers still like to offer their bodies to the sun. But now, most at least use sunscreen.

...Sunburn experts are introducing super sunblocks in an effort to reduce the soaring rate of skin cancer. Sun protection factor 15 cream, once regarded as maximum block, will no longer be labelled “total protection,” as scientists advise people to slap on a new range of 30-plus lotions... [A] Cancer Society spokeswoman... said a revised A[USn-NZ] standard had been brought in because people were getting the wrong message about how much protection sunblocks gave, and suffering sunburn... “...we want to correct that impression as no sunscreen can guarantee total protection. People should cover up completely with hats and clothing too.” ...Women are still the worst offenders and are literally dying for a tan, according to research. They are using sunscreens to help them tan without burning, rather than preventing tanning at all... Previously, labelling rules in A[US], where most of the[sunblock] products are made, meant makers were allowed to claim only that they were 15-plus protection. But improved laboratory techniques mean it is now possible to test a sunblock’s effectiveness to ensure it measures up to its SPF factor. New standards were also planned for sunglasses, sun-protective clothing and sunbeds... [An optometrist] said the standard would tackle the growing problem of cheap sunglasses, which caused more eye damage than not wearing sunglasses at all. Sunglasses needed to have 95[%] protection against UV light... Cheap sunglasses fooled the pupil into letting in more UV light than in normal conditions.

...The school’s got the perfect name, the [pupils] did their very best – only the weather refused to play its part. But the showers didn’t dampen the spirits of 450 youngsters at Sunnyvale Primary as they paraded their homemade hats to start the Sunsmart Schools policy. The policy... launch coincided with Sunsmart Week, a campaign to get people to cover up over the summer.

...Schools are finding novel ways to ensure their children are sun-smart this summer. Howick’s Owairoa Primary School is setting up screen stations around the school, providing free sunscreen lotion in child-friendly dispensers. [The school’s p]rincipal... said he believed theirs was the first school in the country to use them... Hats were also compulsory, shade covers had been erected and... tree[s planted]... to create more shade.

...principals fear their pupils risk exposure to skin cancer because of Government reluctance to pay for sunshades. They want the Ministry of Education to include sunshades... – specially designed canvas awnings – ...as part of capital works when they fund schools. Principals say it will take years for some schools to grow trees for protection so sunshades are the best option... The shades also comply with guidelines that require schools to provide a healthy and safe environment for all pupils. If all 2775 schools in the country bought an average-priced sunshade, it would cost \$83 million – [but the principals]... argue that money is better spent preventing cancer than on paying medical bills later... [and] not all schools need them.

...2 out of 3 N[Z]ers get skin cancer[, therefore] 3 out of 3 N[Z]ers should get a MoleMap... MoleMap (or the digital melanogram) is a new way to keep track of which moles are safe, and which ones need immediate attention.

...Computers join the battle against skin cancer Computer technology has been harnessed to detect melanomas by monitoring skin spots... After three years of research and evaluation dermatologists... have initially established five MoleMap scanner centres around Auckland... The 30-40 minute photographic session is non-invasive, painless and does not involve X-rays. It is completely safe for pregnant women. The computer in the scanner... compares the spots with data in its own memory, and goes on-line for comparisons with a database at a leading melanoma research and treatment centre in Vienna... For more information contact your GP or MoleMap at phone 0800 MOLEMAP (0800 665 3627)...

Scientists are monitoring the growth of the largest-ever ozone hole over Antarctica. The hole is covering 27 million [sq. km] of the frozen continent and has developed earlier, faster and up to 25[%] larger than the previous record hole in 1996... Up to this year, scientists had been confident that the ozone layer over Antarctica would recover in 50 years. Now, the recovery could be delayed by 10 to 20 years.

...Atmospheric scientists... [have] calculated that... CFC-based asthma inhalers... made up about 63[% of NZ]’s contribution to global ozone depletion in 1997-98. Doctors from the Thoracic Society... accused the Government drug-buying agency, Pharmac, of dragging its heels over... CFC-free inhalers... Pharmac... recently made a CFC-containing beclomethasone inhaler the “preferred product.” It partially subsidises CFC-free salbutamol inhalers and has delayed providing reimbursement for CFC-free beclomethasone... A[US] officially stopped subsidising CFC-containing salbutamol... inhalers on May 1... Last month, Niwa scientists... estimated that the ozone layer would not fully recover for at least 500 years... [In related news, bickering between First and Last World] countries yesterday again snagged efforts to forge a plan to cut industrial emissions that are blamed for warming the planet. The Group of 77... and China pushed a proposal to encourage [First World] nations to invest in clean technologies in the [Last World] as a way to cut emissions, and to postpone a U[S] plan to let [First World] countries trade allowances. [First World] nations want the programmes to work in tandem... The dispute has stalled action on ways to give [First World] countries more flexibility in meeting their targets under the pact reached last year in Kyoto... [Ironically,] 1998 was officially declared the world’s warmest year yesterday...

...now there’s a hole in the sky and... if the ground’s not cold everything is gonna burn we’ll all take turns... - Doolittle

...the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble... [T]he day that cometh shall burn them up... and... leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and... tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I do *this*, saith the LORD of

hosts... Behold, I will send you... the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. - Malachi 4

I believe... I should warn you I think I should tell what you've been doing makes you go to hell... - THE TRIP #6

They will be in the midst of a fierce blast of fire and in boiling water, and in the shade of black smoke: Nothing will be there to refresh, nor to please: For... they were wont to be indulged, before that, in wealth and luxury, and persisted obstinately in wickedness supreme. - Koran 56:42-5

Russia's breakaway republic of Chechnya is to try a new weapon against Government corruption: the threat of punishment in Hell. [The] Chechen First Vice-Premier... has ordered signs bearing a warning from the prophet Mohammed to be attached to the office doors of all officials: "Hell awaits those who receive bribes." [Editor's note: 'The traditional view of hell as an inferno is still familiar in art, literature and popular usage today.']

...The threat volcanoes pose is nothing new, but popular appreciation of it is. The warning bell this time is being sounded not by scientists but by the entertainment industry. Recently Universal Pictures released its heavily promoted volcano film, *Dante's Peak*... and 20th Century Fox will release its more prosaically named *Volcano* later this year. A[s]... make-believe mountains erupt on movie screens... real peaks continue to smoulder worldwide... There are explosive mountains in every corner of the world. Late last week, Alaska's Okmok volcano coughed a cloud of ash a kilometre and a half into the sky, perhaps presaging a period of increased volcanic activity. Near Mexico, Popocatepetl... has begun to smoke and churn, threatening 500,000 people who live beneath it. In Italy five active volcanoes are being watched, the most menacing of which is the temperamental Vesuvius. In Japan 86 active volcanoes are packed into an archipelago smaller than California... All told, there are more than 1,500 active volcanoes around the globe – 550 or so on land and the rest under water – that could put the lives of 500 million people at risk... Increasingly... scientists can do something about it. They did so most famously in 1991, when they took the pulse of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines, predicted it was about to erupt and persuaded officials to evacuate 35,000 people two days before it did... [As a result, only] 737 died... In 1985 Colombian seismologists warned their government that the Mount Ruiz volcano was smouldering dangerously. Their data was too spotty to convince officials, however, and the government did nothing. One month later, the mountain erupted, claiming 23,000 lives. Even when officials get it right, at least a little luck is involved. The first warning volcanologists got of increased seismic activity within Mount Pinatubo was not from a high-tech instrument but from a local nun who walked into the Philippine Institute of Vulcanology and, begging the scientists' pardon, reported that the mountain, clearly visible from her village, had just blown up... Researchers now have at their disposal an arsenal of newly developed vulcanology hardware, ranging from satellites to acoustical sensors to highly sensitive gas sniffers. Whether the technology is up to the task of monitoring not just one peak but hundreds worldwide, though, is impossible to say, but the question is becoming pressing. "Someday," says... the... chief scientist of the USGS Volcano Hazards Program, "one of these mountains will erupt on a scale many orders of magnitude greater than mankind has ever seen." ...[■ Yesterday, t]housands of people were ready to evacuate the area around the port of Rabaul, in Papua New Guinea, after the Tavurvur volcano began spewing ash and lava 8km into the air... In Indonesia, a trail of lava more than 1.5km long flowed down the slopes of Merapi volcano. Residents around the Central Java mountain were not considered to be in any immediate danger.

...Scientists and civil defence planners have identified the sort of volcano which might erupt in Auckland one day but they have no strategy for dealing with its nightmarish consequences... Auckland is a volcanic field covering 360sq km in which activity has erupted from vents during the past 140,000 years. The field contains 49 identified vents['while the Franklin district further south has 80 (areas people may not recognise as volcanoes include Lake Pupuke, the Domain, the Panmure Basin, Albert Park – created by a volcano located at the junction of Victoria St East and Bowen St; further west, the Waitakere ranges are actually the eroded remains of a huge underwater volcano that millions of years ago grew to be 3000m high and 50km in diameter; down south, the Hunua Falls flow over the remains of an eroded volcano')]. Twenty eruptions have occurred in the past 20,000 years. [T]he largest, formed... Rangitoto[Island]... 600 years ago... Auckland volcanoes are typically single-episode eruptions ending when magma is blocked by solidification from reaching the surface. Subsequent eruptions occur through new subterranean pathways in different and unpredictable places... [However], apart from the potentially serious impact over the region of ash falls to transport, drainage, electricity supplies, agriculture and horticulture, it is thought the principal effects of a[ny future volcanic eruption]... in Auckland... would be limited to within a few kilometres of a vent. "We are not talking about the destruction of the whole Auckland metropolitan area," said... the ARC Civil Defence team leader. But while the events may be small on a world scale and sightseers 10km away might be able to watch the fireworks, the problem faced by the planners is that large numbers of people will have their lives overturned by an eruption. Evacuation may involve 150,000 people before and during an eruption or more if the eruption makes it impossible to live in areas hit by a loss of electricity, water supply or other services. And because of Auckland's shape, with only northern and southern exits, evacuation would be difficult. "We have got to get things right first time and it has got to be a co-ordinated response,"... The aim of Civil Defence would be to not hold any information back from the public and to let people know as soon as possible of any alert... The ARC will install a fifth seismometer monitoring the field within a few months and hopes to add a sixth. - 1997

Scientists predict a 3km radius will be devastated by thick ash falls and lava flows when Auckland's hidden volcanic timebomb goes off... And although the risk of an eruption is low, the Auckland Regional Council and the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences say many Aucklanders are under the false impression that one will never strike... The lack of surface activity gives the impression the field is extinct, yet Auckland sits over a hot spot of molten rock about 100km below ground... The institute's manager of volcano surveillance... said it was difficult to predict when the next eruption would strike and it was unlikely perhaps for centuries, but he added: "That's not to say the next one won't start tomorrow." Experts planning for a disaster say region-wide seismic monitoring [stations] already in place[(each one was installed 'at a cost of about \$20,000')] would give the city early warning, with a likely two weeks' notice of any rumblings before molten lava forced its way through the earth's crust...

At Turakirae Head, 20km east of Wellington, you can see how at certain moments in time, parts of N[Z] have been jolted up out of the ocean... [T]he bits of N[Z] that weren't shoved up by earthquakes were spewed up from the bowels of the Earth... [Y]et, we... have built our busiest and biggest city on a nest of volcanoes... Closest to the centre, Mt Eden, with its classic cone shape, provides the most frightening reminder that the City of Sails floats above one of the world's volcanic hot spots. Queen St was once a lava flow and... experts are saying that in the next 100 years, there's a 3% chance that a new volcano could well break through in this area – and that's better[odds] than your chances of winning Lotto.

...[Scientists seeking the source of voluminous ice streams in West Antarctica have discovered a volcano under nearly 1.6 kms of solid ice near the South Pole – the first time an active volcano has been found under an ice sheet.] Incidentally, t]he secret of Lake Taupo's huge trout may soon be unlocked in a Jacques Cousteau-style exploration. A team of scientists will use a German mini-submarine to gain first close-up footage of the volcano under the lake. Researchers from the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences will... explore and chart the 160m-deep Horomatangi Reefs... "The reefs are at the site of the huge Taupo eruption of AD181, which is acknowledged as the world's most violent eruption in the past 5000 years. It produced about 50 cubic kilometres of ash and pumice and soft sediment." Immediately after the eruption, the vent was plugged by solid rock...

The secrets of a mystery Maori... meeting house in England will be revealed in a book... *The House With the Golden Eyes*, [when it is]... released... next month... Few visitors have any idea what they are seeing when they discover the thatched-roofed wooden building opposite the 4th Earl of

Onslow's former mansion... The carved meeting house, Hinemihi O te Ao Tawhito, is the only Maori whare in England and has been standing in the open at Clondon Park... for 105 years. Part of its fascination is that dozens of people survived the eruption of Mt Tarawera in 1886 by sheltering inside. The meeting house was considered taonga by Rotorua people but was bought for £50 six years after the eruption by the Governor-General of N[Z], Lord Onslow, and shipped to England... Lord Onslow wanted to use the meeting house as a boathouse next to his ornamental lake... It later became a storehouse for garden tools and furniture being restored. It was fully restored[itself] by the National Trust in the 1970s... Over the years there has been pressure for the building's return to N[Z], but the trust has no intention of doing so... [Today,] many Maori people visiting England... seek out the building and make the pilgrimage to Surrey... Maori people believed ancestral spirits still exist in the building and within the carvings... Victorian[-age tourists to NZ] paid one shilling to enter the single room to look at gold sovereigns decorating the eye sockets of many of the carvings, the work of carvers at Te Wairoa, near Rotorua... [A]n elder in Te Wairoa village was unhappy that gold sovereigns had been used. "He said such a display of wealth would bring misfortune to the area. A few days later, scores died in the Tarawera volcanic eruption."

...Congolese who fled Africa's most destructive volcanic eruption in 25 years have begun going home despite the... chance that... more lava will engulf their ruined home town... Aside from destroying vast numbers of houses in Goma, the eruption also destroyed the town's water works, cut its electricity supply and damaged part of the airport runway... The morass of charred rock has consumed more than 1000m of the tarmac strip, stretching its bulk across the horizon like a fossilised sea. Three firefighters stand on the edge of the black tide, spraying a jet of water on to the rocks from a hose. It is a pathetic gesture, dwarfed by the vast expanse of lava that seems, for now, to have taken pity on the town and ground to a merciful halt[in the middle of its main street]... Unconfirmed reports said up to 40 people might have died... Goma has the honour of being Africa's capital of crisis. In the past decade it has been inundated with floods of refugees, many of them murderers. It has also seen disease and starvation on an enormous scale and been home to the rapacious dictator Mobutu Sese Seko as well as the equally rapacious rebels who overthrew him... Its benighted people must have thought there was not much they had not seen until Mt Nyiragongo, 50km to the north, erupted with biblical fury.

They are hell on Earth – mountains of mass destruction that annihilate everything in their path... Volcanic eruptions have produced some of the most terrifying disasters the world has ever known. These natural born killers have buried cities in a single blast and pumped out boiling rivers of lava... that can incinerate an entire countryside... They will stop at nothing, and nothing can stop them... [However, can volcanic] tragedies... be averted? The people of Mexico City are praying the answer is yes... [T]he world's largest city has been built in the shadow of the world's most dangerous volcano... [Because it] had not erupted for more than 50 years[the] people... thought they were safe, but when it rumbled to life in 1994 they realised they were still living next door to a killer. "The biggest eruption... would... maybe kill 10 million people. Mexico City would essentially cease to exist." Scientists realised that if they can predict a catastrophic eruption, they can give millions of people living in and around Mexico City a chance of survival. But even if forewarned, how can a city this congested be evacuated in just a matter of hours? "There aren't facilities to handle that and, actually, there couldn't be... We can't prepare for disaster on that sort of scale." ...Nearly 3000 miles away the residents of a tiny island south of the Caribbean are living a nightmare of their own... Monserrat has already suffered one major eruption... [- a] day... the... citizens... will never forget... [-] and experts fear an even bigger one is possible. This is a 3000ft-high ticking time bomb ready to explode... At the base of the volcano the anxious citizens... live their lives with one eye to the sky. They know that when this time bomb goes off they will find themselves in its path of destruction... [During the last explosion, in] April 1996, black ash[billowed] skywards in a... 30,000ft... column... Earthquakes[struck] every 30 seconds... "...it just got darker and darker, and lightning was flashing across the road. 51 seconds later it was pitch black like midnight... It was absolutely scary. It was like the end of the world." ...Today people are living in churches and hastily built shelters north of the volcano – the areas considered to be the least dangerous... "Some people [have been] living in those [shelters for] 18 months, and those persons can not go back home for the next 5 years or more, maybe not at all." ...Because recent eruptions are becoming increasingly violent, the Government has implemented an extensive evacuation plan... "If this volcano blows... we could get tidal waves, this whole island could sink. The situation is getting... worse, and I think they should take us off the island. I don't think we should be here right now." ...Iceland[is] a vast expanse of frozen wilderness. Magnificent glaciers dominate this serene landscape, but lurking beneath this arctic beauty are some of the most ferocious volcanoes on Earth. This is truly a land of fire and ice... January 1973, a mile-long fissure cracks open the frozen earth[and] an endless stream of lava sprays into the sky, threatening to consume [a] once peaceful village... As the volcano continues to erupt, 5000 people scramble to leave the island... The villagers manage to escape, but their battle with the volcano has only begun. 33 million tonnes of lava and volcanic rock rain down... destroying more than 400 homes... [and] covering everything in sight... The volcano[also] produces a 500ft-high wall of burning lava that marches relentlessly toward the town's harbour. Iceland is in danger of losing its primary fishing port[, so the villagers fight]... back. 43 giant waterpumps are shipped in and 19 miles of pipe are quickly strung together. The [villagers] spray the advancing wall... with 4000 tonnes of seawater per hour and the fiery... lava cools... A brave group of Icelandic fishermen has stopped this seemingly invincible monster dead in its tracks. "It felt like we had been fighting a war, except... we were not fighting each other, we were fighting Mother Nature." ...[a] new neighbourhood has been... built on top of the homes buried below... For the first time in history, man had battled... lava... and won... [However, although Iceland won a battle it hasn't won the war.] Today there is new danger for the people of Iceland... [B]etween 30 and 40 active volcanoes... are submerged under hundreds of feet of solid ice... [One of them erupted] with little warning... [during] October 1996... The intense heat quickly [melted] the glacier above and 3 billion tonnes of water flood[ed] the countryside. "When the river started to flood you could see... the precautions that had been taken were working, but then the water just kept increasing till it got to the point that it took out the bridges as well." The government disaster agency [wa]s quickly mobilised, but they [we]re overwhelmed by the sheer volume of the flooding... Throughout history a huge amount of all the lava produced on this planet has poured from this tiny island. The reason for this is terrifying. Iceland is built on two subterranean plates that move in opposite directions, causing the country to be literally torn apart, inch by inch. This raises fears amongst the people of Iceland that future eruptions will be even more violent... Washington's Mt St Helens finally... [awoke on] May 18, 1980... after sleeping for 123 years[, causing]... the deadliest eruption in U[S] history... In... nine hours the volcano... claimed the lives of 57 people... Scientists... knew an eruption was coming. Just two months earlier seismic activity was at an all-time high – nearly 10,000 earthquakes were recorded near the mountain... "Although it appears to have gone back to sleep, it's a volcano that could reawaken at any minute." But Mt St Helens isn't the only threat... Just 50 miles north stands another menacing monster... Mt Rainier. Although dormant for more than a hundred years, volcanologists now think it could erupt at any moment... An eruption of Mt Rainier could claim more lives than [Mt St Helens]... Most at risk are the people living at the base of the mountain... "I personally would love to live in this beautiful area. However, I would also be very sure that my home site was at a level above the level of the potential mud flows that we have calculated are going to come down these valleys." Unfortunately, most of the houses... are not built at safe elevations[, and the local]... elementary school stands directly in harm's way... The school's evacuation plan calls for the students to be loaded into buses and faculty cars within 15 minutes... this may not be easy. "...I just hope we never have to put those plans into action." ...While only 5% of the world's population live near an active volcano, many experts believe that some day we could all be in danger. The fear is that if a series of volcanic eruptions occur within a short period of time it could trigger global changes of catastrophic proportions... If this disastrous chain of events were to occur, it would likely happen in the countries that form a circle around the Pacific Ocean... "...statistically these things occur twice in every hundred thousand years, so we're just about overdue for another one... The most dangerous volcanoes in the world are the ones around the Ring of Fire, because

these are the ones where the vents get plugged up and, instead of lava oozing out at the top, [they] blow the material out as pumice and ash.” ...Krakatoa sent a shock wave that circled the world 7 times. Dust from the eruption polluted the atmosphere and fell, 10 days later, over 3000 miles away... A similar Indonesian eruption in 1815 was the deadliest volcanic event in modern history – it affected the entire world. “The amount of material put up into the atmosphere... led to the now quite infamous year without a summer – 1816 – when the weather in western Europe and [the US’s northeast] was extremely bad. It snowed in June and July, crops failed widely, there was widespread famine...” Could another eruption of epic proportions wipe out... countries, or even civilisations? It happened before... “74,000 years ago... [an] Indonesian mountain... erupted and... [as a consequence, the worldwide] human population crashed from hundreds of thousands to... less than 10,000...” ...experts say it will happen again... “It’s difficult to say whether it would mean the end of civilisation, but it would be the most drastic natural event that mankind has faced for many thousands of years.”

VOLCANOES touch our lives in many surprising ways. Indeed, scientists say that without them life on Earth as we know it would disappear. To understand, picture the world the way it was...

In the beginning... Earth... was an orb of fire. In time... creation... [forged] molten rock into continents. As the land cooled, gathering clouds burst forth[, beginning] the cycle of water[that] would make this world unique in the Solar System, and perhaps beyond...

In the beginning, Earth was literally hellish, and – in billions of years – it will again resemble a hell-like state. The implication of this is, however, that inbetween those two extremes, Earth must pass through a era when it is heaven-like. That era may be now, or the near future – especially if weather patterns enter a lengthy phase where they are relatively more stable than today or in the past.

An elderly friend’s husband had recently died. She was sitting quietly at her son’s home, one day, naturally feeling sad, when her grandson asked where his grandpa had gone. She replied that he had gone to a lovely place called Heaven, where he would be very happy always. The little fellow thought for a while, then said, “Well, if it is such a lovely place, why didn’t you go with him?”

heaven... is the place where God... and God’s immediate family of angels [(‘a survey has shown that 7 out of 10 Americans believe in the existence of angels, and half think they have a personal guardian angel’) **and spirits... reside[, and]... to which those who obey God will come... also called... Paradise, a Persian word for park land, or the Garden of Eden...** [“Eden” may mean “delight” (Hebrew) or simply and more probably “a plain” (Sumerian).] **In the prevalent Christian view, redeemed souls abide in heaven, in spiritual bliss in the immediate contemplation of God, until they are united on Judgment Day with perfect bodies in a general resurrection...** [I]n Greek mythology, [heaven (or *Elysium*) is] a sunny, flowered land on the banks of the river Oceanus, where heroes, without dying, [are] transported by the gods to spend a joyous eternity[; whereas]... in Norse mythology, [heaven (or *Valhalla*) is] the hall of slain heroes... Each morning the heroes [leave] through Valhalla’s 540 doors, to engage each other in fierce combat; each night they return... wounds healed, to feast and tell stories of the day’s feats... [A] medium... supposedly communicates with spirits of the dead... Claims of[mediums or] spiritualists have been often exposed as frauds but have not been entirely disproved.

Although mediums appear to have access (in varying degrees) to knowledge beyond the ordinary, how it comes to them is still a mystery... Belief that spirits of the dead can and do communicate with the living is very ancient and is an element in most primitive and some higher religions. Saul clandestinely consulted the woman of Endor (I Sam. 28) in order to speak with the dead prophet Samuel, but the Jewish prophets disapproved of the practice and this repugnance was maintained by Christianity. In 1848 three sisters... living in New York State, heard strange rappings in their house and devised a simple code which, they asserted, was answered by rappings in such a way as to prove that they were made by an intelligent being. The news caused a sensation, and from this the modern spiritualistic movement had its origin. Hitherto most Christians had believed that spirits were evil and invoked only to do harm; now it was proclaimed that they dwelt in lands far better than this world... were continually progressing... and... [spiritualists can ‘query whether communicating spirits are who they claim to be by posing questions which could only be answered by the spirit of the deceased and by the person asking the question.’ ‘Princess Diana’s psychic says most children possess psychic abilities because they are “pure-minded”. She also says there are a few tell-tale signs to look out for, such as: Imaginary friends or conversations with themselves – these may not necessarily be figments of their imaginations; they could be communicating with a spirit.’] **The impulse to make psychic communication the basis of a new religion comes from the natural longing (particularly evident after the two World Wars) to know what happens to people after death.**

[An actor] says he has been having ghostly chats with his younger brother, who died of cancer last year. *The Sixth Sense* star reveals that his brother Robert came to life through a renowned psychic... [The grieving actor, who] had been desperate to know whether Robert had been aware that all of his family members were at his bedside during his final hours... was stunned when the female psychic turned to him and, in the voice of his dead brother, said: ‘How could I not hear when you talked so f***ing loudly!’ [The actor] explains: ‘...Until then I had always been up in the air about what happens after we die. Now I know the switch is not turned off, that there is life after death. I don’t know how it works, but I really believe it.’

LORD THOMSON... was one of the great newspapermen of our era. At one time he owned some 285 publications in England, Scotland, Canada and the U[S]. One day he invited me to luncheon in the sumptuous dining-room of *The Times* of London. The table was made up of distinguished editors and writers as well as prominent businessmen. The conversation ranged over many themes: world affairs, politics British and American, the prospects for greater prosperity. Suddenly, in the midst of much good-natured banter, Thomson said... [to me, an] eminent clergyman... “...I am an old man, and one of these days I’m going to die... I want to know: is there an afterlife?” I couldn’t be sure he wasn’t pulling my leg, but then I sensed that the question was indeed serious and weighed on his mind. “Lord Thomson,” I said, “I believe in the promises in the Bible. But beyond the Biblical is the evidence of intelligence and common sense.” Then I told him and the others a parable about a pre-natal baby... “Suppose... someone came to this unborn baby and said, ‘You cannot stay here long. In a few months you will be born, or, as you may think of it, die out of your present state.’ The baby might stubbornly say, ‘I don’t want to leave here. I’m warm, loved, happy...’ But he is born. He does die out of his present life. And what does he find? He feels beneath him strong, loving arms... He is welcomed, cared for, and says, ‘How foolish I was. This is a wonderful place to which I have come.’ ...The years pass... he becomes an old man. His step slows. Someone says, ‘You are going to die, or, as we call it, be born out of this place unto another.’ And he might remonstrate: ‘But I don’t want to die. I have loved ones. I love this world... I don’t want to leave... I don’t want to die.’ But in natural course he does die. What happens then? Is God, the Creator, suddenly going to change His nature? Can we not assume that [the man] will once again feel loving arms beneath him...? Won’t he soon be exclaiming, ‘Why, this is wonderful! Here I want to remain for ever’? Does this not make sense?” I concluded. A deep silence hung over the table... [Eventually,] Lord Thomson sighed, “It does make sense... I will never forget that parable. It has helped me answer a question that has haunted me for years... Do you think I will like it there?” “Of course, for it will be exciting.” “What will I do there?” he asked... “Perhaps buy and sell newspapers!” A laugh went round the

luncheon table. Since then, Lord Thomson has gone into the life beyond. And, judging by the affirmative way this lovable man responded to the power of faith, I think God must be taking good care of him. - *Why I believe there is life after death*

When we die we make our own heaven or hell, which are states of consciousness, conditioned by the way we lived on Earth. Houses and gardens are very like those on Earth. So are clothes. There are cities with colleges, art galleries and concert halls. The flowers are wonderful. There is no money. You can eat what you want but food is no longer necessary. You can travel at will. You can study anything you want. There are lots of animals and birds. You look and feel much as you did on Earth. The only bond uniting people is love. Eventually you progress and move on to higher spheres... "Now I'm able to go into the lower spheres and talk to the people to try to educate them a bit - to make them realize that the situation in which they find themselves is, to a great extent, their own fault." ..."Have you visited any of the higher planes?" asked [the medium]. "Well," he replied, "there are laws which no one can avoid. The point is, you are allowed to go on as far as you have merited within yourself by your life, by your development. But you cannot go into a higher sphere until you are ready to enter into that state... In a sense I suppose it is comparable in your world too. A man can only be happy in an environment to which he is best fitted..." ...Advanced spirits in the really high spheres, it seems, are too far removed to describe them to us directly. Any reports that do reach us are based on rumours or snippets of information which reach the inhabitants of the spheres still in contact with Earth... "It is impossible... for any soul to describe the spheres that are more advanced. The spheres near... [E]arth can be depicted and described. But... souls who have gone into an atmosphere and condition far removed from Earth can never recapture in words to that which they inhabit... You cannot depict something for which there is no language." ...Any number of famous and gifted personalities queued up to talk to us through [mediums]. From Oscar Wilde to Mahatma Gandhi... But they had too much advice to give us on how to run our lives in this world and too much information on their academic progress in the next to tell us how they got there... They left that sort of thing to the earthy, uneducated types... They want to tell everyone in the world how wonderful it is in passing from your world to this. The most natural process. There is no need for all the terrible fear that people have of dying... Don't worry about it. - *Life after death*

Death is a natural force and needs to be respected as a natural force... Each generation is the springboard for the next and if it did not pass away no new generation could evolve. The goal is not longer life as such but the good life... In a well-ordered society, that is a reasonable expectation. Death, then, when it comes, comes in its own good time, hopefully in the fullness of one's time, with dear ones and friends and the fresh faces of coming generations within hand's reach. Death may then be embraced with confidence, curiosity and undiminished hope. For death is also a mystery and opens out to messages yet unknown.

In New Ages, people are especially ready to believe that there are forms of knowledge and power that have been hidden from them by vested interests in the past.

Conversations with dead embarrass White House... [O]fficials rallied behind [the first lady] yesterday after a book revealed that a New Age self-help author and psychic researcher had encouraged her to hold dialogues with the dead. "All I can tell you is that the first lady's a human being. She reaches out, talks to her friends, talks to others, gathers information," said the White House chief of staff... "We have to draw strength from wherever we can in order to make it from day to day." Washington was titillated when the *Washington Post* ran the first of four excerpts from *The Choice...* by... a... Watergate reporter... The... co-director of the Foundation for Mind Research... advised [the first lady] on her childrearing book, *It Takes A Village...* and... got [the first lady] to hold an imaginary talk with Eleanor Roosevelt, who died in 1962, during an April 1995 session in the White House solarium... [The first lady] was also led into a conversation with... Mahatma Gandhi... but drew the line when asked to talk to Jesus Christ, the book said... [The first lady] has often drawn parallels between her own life and that of the wife of President Franklin Roosevelt, a first lady who was as controversial in her time as [the incumbent first lady] is now. In a recently syndicated column, [the incumbent first lady] wrote that she occasionally had "imaginary conversations with Mrs Roosevelt to try to figure out what she would do in my shoes. She usually responds by telling me to buck up or at least grow skin as thick as a rhinoceros." ...The revelations... immediately prompted comparisons between [the incumbent first lady and the 40th President's wife], who consulted an astrologer and used the information to schedule presidential trips and key events... [The co-director, who also] runs the... Mystery School on Port Jervis, New York... holds advanced degrees in psychology and the philosophy of religion. She... reads several ancient languages, including Greek and even Hittite[, and]... was indulging in transcendental psychobabble years before the New Age movement went mainstream... Three decades ago, she studied "altered states" and worked as a student with the early pioneer of LSD research into the nature of human consciousness... She no longer advocates using drugs to find enlightenment... - 1996

WHEN... [he] stayed overnight at the White House, [the]President... paid him a visit in the Lincoln bedroom. After talking for a while the two men got down on their knees and prayed... One of the U[SS]'s most prominent television evangelists... says that as he knelt beside the president, he kept thinking about the history that surrounded him. "I could almost hear the voice of Teddy Roosevelt and the sound of Franklin Roosevelt's wheelchair moving around the corridors." Since that prayer meeting two years ago... [he] has become the president's spiritual guru and an informal clergyman at the White House. [The president has even] adopted one of... [his] favourite lines from the *Bible* - "Thou shalt be called the repairer of the breach" - as his personal mantra and... use[s] it in all his key speeches, even laying his hands on the passage when he was sworn in for his second term... Other sayings... passed on to [the president] include "turn your heart into a halo"... and... "God plus me equals a majority"... The two men talk and write to each other every month and... [he] visits Washington regularly for a reinforcing prayer meeting in the White House. Clearly [the president] is comfortable with this combination of spiritual encouragement, ego massage and admiration from a man who claims a closer connection with God... [He] has 30 million devotees around the world who regularly tune into his *Hour of Power* from the Crystal Cathedral in southern California - a \$28 million monument to his oratory. To many other preachers... [his association with the president] is little short of blasphemous. To them, [the president] is an immoral and amoral adulterer, who has attacked America's spiritual heart... During his first administration, the president socialised with a wide range of self-help specialists trying to understand why he was not liked and why so many of his views appeared to be misunderstood... [While the US president] has found a spiritual guru... [Russia's] leader... prefers the advice of a fortune teller...

To westerners it may seem odd that a president should seek the advice of a fortune-teller. Not in Russia. [Its president] has consulted astrologers before to help make important decisions... [The c]ommander of the Russian far east military region... is, by all accounts, a man of superhuman ability[, and]... he has become one of [the president's] most trusted advisers. But it is not about the army that the leader likes to consult him. [The] General... according to a government figure with knowledge of goings-on in the Kremlin, claims he can see into the future. He has a particular knack for predicting what sort of medical treatment a person might need and believes he can tell at a glance when a person is going to die.

...IN THE world of mediums... [she] is extra-large. [The spirit]-botherer extraordinaire... has gained celebrity status, baffling [a reporter from] 20/20 and amazing [the US Queen of Talk] with her mystic skills. [She] claims she can "see" spirits and communicate clearly with the other side. On

[another TV talk-back show, she] left her host gobsmacked with her accurate description of his deceased parents who appeared to her, hovering behind him. "I would diagnose [the second talk-show host's] condition as terminal gullibility," scoffs... [the] senior lecturer in philosophy at Canterbury University and spokesperson for the Skeptics Society. "[The second talk-show host] is renowned for being fooled by all kinds of people." ...Without any further prompting, he takes a guess at [her] technique. "Does she say 'I see someone having trouble breathing?'" he asks. Yes, I confirm... "Does she have a 2000-year-old Tibetan monk as a guide?"... Err no, actually she relies on an ancient Apache Indian called Grey Eagle. [The lecturer] sighs. "What really depresses me is the lack of originality exhibited by these new English spirit mediums. It's like they're stuck in 1970s' California... I would love to believe in some sign of life after death, would love to think I could contact my dead parents. But the pathetic blatherings of some housewife from Luton isn't evidence of life in the hereafter." ...There is... more than a hint that [she] is as daft as a brush and shouldn't be allowed to operate heavy machinery or be left alone with sharp objects... Still, how do you explain the fact that when [she] was a little girl she was disturbed by "spirit visions", which inspired her to become a mystic. "[5%] of the population have visions... These people experience a condition known as eidetic, if you describe something clearly they will see it vividly in the mind's eye." That doesn't mean they are in contact with the dead, although... practitioners can convince themselves what they see is real. In other words they are charlatans who believe their own hype. Bursting the bubble on [her] techniques however, will probably do no harm at all to her book sales... This week... she is heading Down Under on a tour to promote her new book. *Proud Spirit*... tries to... answer... all the big questions: Is God real? Could Hitler have been stopped? Was Jesus a psychic? (Actually... [the two] get along famously. He has been known to help her occasionally with the laying on of healing hands.)

...German police have arrested a man posing as a spiritual medium who was paid 15,000 marks... by a woman to pay off gambling debts he said her dead husband had contracted in heaven.

...Been... duped, ripped off or cheated? Dreaming of making your tormentor pay, but don't have the guts or imagination to carry it off? For \$250 plus GST and costs, you don't have to – Wellington-based Revenge Incorporated will wreak vengeance on the liars... and low lifes of the world. The company spokesman on the... cellphone was cagey about his identity – "just call me the facilitator. We embarrass, irritate, annoy, humiliate or inflict massive practical jokes. We are nothing like that company in Christchurch that mails dog poo – we are elegantly nasty. We do not engage in any illegal activities – we have got two lawyers who monitor everything we come up with." That means no damage to property, no injuries inflicted... The company had carried out three acts of vengeance so far, but the spokesman would not give details. Wellington police had no concerns about the company, because they had not heard of it... Inspired by the British documentary *Dial V for Vengeance* and the book *Don't Get Mad, Get Even*, the spokesman and friends decided that revenge could be sweet and lucrative. "I think those who believe that the world goes full circle are wrong," said the spokesman. "I'm not sure that the righteous will be rewarded in Heaven, so we are making sure it happens on Earth – and making money."

...*DOES HEAVEN EXIST?* ...[he] likes to think about heaven. He might even be said to revel in it. Oddly enough, he has had to struggle to... find fellow believers and pastors whom his thoughts don't embarrass. And more oddly still, his struggle is not unique... [I]t dawned on him that the same R[C] chaplains who had welcomed him into the fold were reticent about discussing salvation's reward. This was disturbing. "I felt a real lack in my life... There was this hope of heaven I thought we all should have. But the priests didn't like to talk about it... [A]s soon as someone would say, 'Let's do this so we can go to heaven,' someone else would say, 'No, no, no, no. Let's do it because we *should* do good.' It got to the point where I began to think that heaven was too much like an ace in the hole, that it was sort of like cheating. I almost felt guilty thinking too much about heaven." Now there's a peculiar idea. Is it possible for a Christian to think of heaven too much? How can one enjoy robust faith without envisaging faith's ultimate consummation? "Heaven is the greatest good," says... a professor of philosophy at Boston College and author of the 1990 volume *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Heaven... but Never Dreamed of Asking*. "It is the reason that God banged out the Big Bang 18 billion years ago. Next to the idea of God, the idea of heaven is the greatest idea that has ever entered into the heart of man, woman or child." ...practicing Christians... can affirm: heaven is destination and reward, succor and relief from earthly trials. It is reunion with those we love, forever, as we loved them. It is our real home, our permanent address, our own true country. It is the New Jerusalem and Paradise regained, the community of Saints and the eternal Eucharist; everlasting Easter and a million Christmases. It is an end to death's sting... And yet, in a curious way, heaven is AWOL. This is not to say that [USers] think death ends everything or even that they doubt heaven's existence. People still believe in it... [– a recent] poll in the U[S] has found 67% of [USers are] certain that heaven exists... 67%... think of heaven as something that is "up there"... 61%... think... [they will go] directly to heaven... 66% [think only their soul will] live in heaven... 63%... believe in hell... and... 1%... [think they will go to hell –] it's just that their concept of exactly what it is has grown foggy, and they hear about it much less frequently from their pastors. To reverse the words of the old spiritual: Everybody's goin' to heaven, just ain't talkin' 'bout it. The silence is such that it sometimes seems heaven might as well not be there... Marked by an apparent combination of lay ignorance and pastoral skittishness, the minimization of paradise not only creates problems for heaven-hungry believers... it also suggests the marginalization of one of Western civilization's greatest ideas. When heaven comes up in public debate these days, it is often just as [a] metaphor for the concerns of a perfectible secular kingdom of man, as in the debate that started in the *Washington Post* last month and continued online in *Slate* over Jesus' statement that "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." ...[the] policy director for... Empower America, decried the worldliness of Christians who feel they can serve both God and Mammon – resulting in too many people left in poverty... [But a reverend – disregarding St Luke 6:24 –] qualified Christ's admonition as being against only the "unjustly" rich, and accused the [policy director] of trying to win attention by "bashing rich Christians." As aspersions were cast and tax credits argued, heaven fell to the wayside. In the '60s, clerics and scholars pondered the question Is God dead? (the subject of a 1966 TIME cover). Asked what is going on now, they first cite denominational differences and the ongoing religious split between modernists and traditionalists... [A] theology professor at Massachusetts' Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, notes... "I don't think heaven is even a blip on the Christian screen, from one end of the denominational spectrum to the other. The more perplexing question is, What explains this?" What indeed? [A] University of California at Santa Barbara professor... [and] author of the upcoming *A History of Heaven*... says, "I think [clerics] want to stay off the subject because they feel they're going to have to climb a wall of popular skepticism." A spokesman for the United Methodist Publishing House is reluctant to comment at all about heaven, explaining that the subject is "controversial." A brother in faith... whose Foundry Methodist Church is up the street from the White House, explains bluntly, "I'm not interested in speculating on the architecture or the geography. I don't think of heaven as a specified place in the universe to which we could somehow go if we could find the right galaxy. We dig a lot deeper. I preach on trust in God." ...[the] religion editor at *Publishers Weekly*, who has tracked the recent popular vogues for angels and miracles, observes that there is almost no corresponding interest in the place where angels live and from which miracles erupt into our lives. Perhaps the biblical heaven is too big to be marketable. Perhaps it is a victim of its own, centuries-long hype: so much has been claimed for it, much of it contradictory, that our literal-minded age overloads and calls the whole thing a wash. Or perhaps America has finally got heaven just right... The current generic heaven still delivers when people need it most, say some unsentimental observers – at the death of a loved one. Why bother with it any other time? ...Jesus was hardly tentative about proclaiming the world to come... However, most of his famous metaphors for heaven... address humankind's ideal relationship to God's kingdom more than a specific paradise. Regarding heaven's actual "mysteries," he tells the Apostles that it is not given to most people to know them... Paul, too, seems closed-minded. Although he claims to have been "caught up to the third heaven," he is bound to secrecy and offers no travelogue. The first detailed Christian heaven explodes to life in the book of *Revelation*. Its author, John, is as extravagant as Jesus and Paul are reserved... Did John expect his readers to accept his heavenly portrayal – and his subsequent spectacular

descriptions of the Beast, Armageddon, the Last Judgment and Christ's final triumph – as a literal truth? Most scholars today regard his heaven, at least, as symbolic and mystical, its images painstakingly retrieved from the Old Testament and reorganized to frame an allegorical argument rather than an actual detailed reality of the next world. The same applies to hundreds of other heavenly visions generated by various holy men and women in the next two centuries that were eventually excluded from Scripture but some of which nonetheless exerted influence on early Christians. From those visions and their successors in Christianity's first millennium, a colorful, sometimes contradictory mystical vocabulary of heaven emerged. It was a garden, a city... It featured buildings and streets of precious metals and jewels, doves, palm trees... singing stones (a late borrowing from Celtic myth), white clothing, milk, honey, wine, olive oil, harps... and... fountains... But Protestant reformers of the 1500s reinstated a vision severely centered on Christ and his Last Judgment. This became the dominant understanding in America... By the mid-19th century, however, heaven had hit a sort of ornamental bankruptcy. The stark vision of the Puritans had given way to what would later be called the Victorian heaven. Here was the humanistic heaven with a vengeance, calmly convinced of its own literal truth but with a spiritual core seemingly provided by *House & Garden* magazine. Its strongest proponents were not clergy but a new breed of popular novelists like Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, whose 1868 *The Gates Ajar*, set in heaven, was a runaway best seller through the end of the century. Wrote Phelps of one celestial interlude: "We stopped before a small and quiet house built of curiously inlaid woods... There were flowers – not too many; birds; and I noticed a fine dog sunning himself upon the steps." There was dog, but there was very little God. The vision, like the age itself, honoured human progress: it assumed almost all respectable people would reach heaven[(much like 'the doctrine of *universalism* – in which salvation is possible for all)]; if there were problems, they could continue working them out once they got there... The model finessed the doubts about God that were seeping into cultural mainstream by relegating God and even Christ into a nearly invisible role in the background. But it did so at a price. Without a compelling spiritual center, the vision of the future was hostage to the endurance of the society it mirrored. Which meant that the 20th century blew it apart. Some indication of the shift can be had by studying the learning curve of [one] evangelist... In his 1950 Boston revival, [the young evangelist] was ebulliently specific about the world to come. Heaven, he said, was a place "as real as Los Angeles, London, Algiers or Boston." It was 2,600 km long, 2,600 km wide and 2,600 km high. Once there, "we are going to sit around the fireplace and have parties, and the angels will wait on us, and we'll drive down the golden streets in a yellow Cadillac convertible." [The evangelist] went on to a magnificent career, but he dropped the Cadillac, which nonetheless haunted him for years. Late 20th century America had little patience for detailed, literal views of heaven. Two world wars and the prospect of nuclear disaster made the idea of a comfy, progressive afterlife seem suspect. Modernist attacks on God's place in this world made people allergic to bold predictions about his kingdom in the next. By 1988... [a] survey... concluded... with the bleak assessment that "scientific, philosophical and theological skepticism has nullified the modern heaven and replaced it with teachings that are minimalist, meager and dry." Many scholars, especially conservatives, are inclined to agree... "Heaven... is uncomfortable because it's righteous and holy, not just fun." ..."Today the objective is to feel better about ourselves rather than to differentiate people morally. If you reduce salvation to our state of well-being, heaven doesn't make much sense... It's difficult for some people to conceive of anything that is really much better than this life..." ...There are still some churches where one can find a robust heavenly vision in the late 1990s... But most late 20th century... [US] Christians have a better grasp of heaven's clichés than of its allures. "It's this place where you've got wings, you stand on a cloud, and if the concept is more sophisticated, where you see God and you sing hymns. It's a boring place, or a silly myth, or something people invent in order to make themselves feel better, or all of the above." ...[according to the writer of] *A History of Heaven*... the... "space" taken up by heaven is neither the original Eden nor the kingdom of God within us nor a paradise at the end of the world, but all three. The time frame it occupies is not the future or even infinity, but an enveloping eternity... Heaven, he concludes, "is reality itself; what is not heaven is less real." Such a vision, expressed so unabashedly by a bona fide member of the academic elite, stands to make a splash in the upmarket reaches of academia, theology and perhaps even among mainline Protestant preachers... Adding to the plenitude, the New Age is now unrolling its own versions of eternity... "Heaven is not a place; it's a state of awareness. Heaven is where your heart is, where your soul needs to be." Yet every paradise partakes of the same spiritual journey, and even [the New Age ideas] share... attributes outlined in one of Islam's most venerable divine proclamations: "My heaven and my earth do not comprise me, but the heart of my faithful servant comprises me." Islam inherited older traditions of heaven from Judaism and Christianity, including the hierarchy of angels and the seven tiers of paradise. But Muslims have a specific plan of paradise in mind, based on the stories of the Prophet's miraculous night journey to heaven. Rising into the skies on the Buraq, a fantastic creature often described as part woman, part horse, part peacock, Muhammad meets Adam, who resides in the lowest heaven, and Jesus, who is only in the fourth level. Abraham welcomes him in the seventh heaven before the Prophet is ushered into paradise for his encounter with God. It was in heaven, according to one traditional tale, that Muhammad, on Moses' advice, bargained down God's original demand of 50 prayers a day to five, the number of times a day each devout Muslim must face Mecca. - 1997

The Islamic heaven is usually symbolized as Paradise, and this often takes the form of a garden (*al-jannat*). This garden contains beautiful trees and flowers and fruits; it is enclosed and sheltered; and it repeats and extends the earthly Garden of Eden. However, it is also so wonderful that it is beyond the human imagination fully to conceive.

Those who are nearest to Allah, those on his Right Hand side, will live forever in the Gardens of Bliss. They will sit on thrones encrusted with gold and precious stones with companions of equal age in gardens enclosed with grape vines. They will wear garments of silk and recline on carpets whose inner linings will be of rich brocade. They will not be exposed to the day's excessive heat or the night's excessive cold. There will be fruits such as dates and pomegranates that will be near and easy to reach, and the flesh of any fowl they desire. Perpetually fresh youths will serve them a liquid from clearflowing fountains that will neither give them a hang-over nor make them drunk. This liquid, wine mixed with Zanjabil, will be drunk out of crystal-clear goblets made from silver. There will be pavilions in which will be [confined] specially created maidens, who no man... ha[s] previously defiled, for their reward. These maidens will be equal in age, be chaste, fair, good and beautiful, with big lustrous eyes. - Koran

Despite the fact that Muhammad neglected to explain what happens to these 'bashful, high-bosomed, loving companions' after they have presumably been *defiled*, or whether there is a perpetual supply of them, the vision still manages to convince unimaginative Islamic men (especially youths) that, if they die while fighting for their spiritual leaders' cause, they stand to gain more than they have now! However, many Islamic men currently live their lives as if they are already in heaven (e.g., they have wives, daughters and hired help to serve them; they are obsessed, often to the point of paranoia, with finding a virgin bride). Would such men see the irony if, upon reaching heaven, they were to find themselves acting as servants to their mothers and wives?

Theoretically Islam regards men and women as equal before God, and as 'created of a single soul' (Quran 4.1). However, they are not regarded as socially equal, and women are seen as having different roles from men. In law their testimony counted for less than that of men, they needed men to act for them legally, and... had fewer property rights. In theory a woman can perform all Muslim rites, but except in women's mosques this rarely if ever happens in communal situations[('women must worship in a screened-off section of' unisex mosques)]. The Quran called for modesty in female dress and in some Muslim societies this developed into full veiling from head to foot, and even strict seclusion in the home (*purdah*)... The harem is related to the notion of *purdah*... but goes one stage further by forbidding women to be seen at all by... men other than close relations or eunuchs.

UNTO the woman... the LORD God... said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. - Genesis 3

The division of labour between men and women was fundamental in [Aboriginal] religious organisation, just as it was in economic affairs. In nearly all the great ritual constellations women were, and are, active participants where it is traditionally convenient for them to be so. While they rarely enter the men's secret-sacred ground, they are supportive of what goes on there... The secret-sacred rituals of women are focused on puberty, personal welfare and love, healing, fertility, but also on land and on mythical happenings... In many myths and rites, generally speaking, female creative and spirit beings are of particular importance, and in some areas women are regarded as sacred in their own right, if only because of their physiological functions. Some myths claim that women first possessed ritual emblems and the key to all sacred knowledge, and that these were eventually taken from them by men, through force or, more usually, through trickery or theft.

...in... *Gk myth*... Zeus punished mankind in general by creating woman to their confusion. The first woman was called Pandora, because she had 'all gifts' from the gods... Prometheus' simple brother, Epimetheus (= After-thinker) married her despite his brother's warnings, and she let out all the evils from the stone-jar where they were kept; hope alone remained to assuage the lot of mankind.

Goddess, victim, idol, plaything, mother, virgin, harlot, ministering angel, slut, enchantress, hag, 'better half' or 'weaker vessel' – woman plays all these roles in supernatural contexts, partly in reflection of man's frequently professed inability to understand her. Women, in male eyes, are supposed to be contrary and mysterious creatures, bewilderingly combining all sorts of opposite characteristics, as changeable as chameleons, and yet somehow vexingly in touch with reality through intuition, through a secret sympathy with the heart of things. Among the most powerful strands in the web of the mythical female are that she is man's inferior and that she is essentially evil. In the Jewish... and classical traditions, evil came into the world through woman... [who was also thought of as being negative and] passive... male is generally classed with good, positive, active... In many societies... women's bodies are hung about with a miasma of impurity and pollution which does not cling to men[('the periodic discharge of blood from the womb was widely regarded in many cultures as a polluting act second only to contact with a dead person; the result of such beliefs is that menstruating women are often excluded from religious acts, and indeed, in some cases, women as an entire gender may be forbidden to play a role in religious rites')]. In many parts of the world women do not eat with men, they walk a few paces behind their husbands as a sign of their inferiority, and they are often excluded altogether from important activities... It is characteristic that one of the dictionary meanings of the word 'female' is 'epithet of various material and immaterial things denoting simplicity, inferiority, weakness, or the like'. All this has the weight of hundreds of years of tradition and custom behind it: some women welcome it, many accept it, and almost all are brought up to behave in accordance with it and so perpetuate it. But how it began, how hatred, fear and contempt came to be injected into the image of woman – remembering that a child's first love is his mother, that men and women do fall in love and live happily together, and that what may be the oldest known representation of a deity is a figure of a woman – is a question to which there is no certain answer. Psychoanalysts in search of an answer have created new myths of their own, including penis envy and the castration complex. Stated in a very brief and over-simplified way, the theory is that the little girl, lacking a penis, feels a sense of inferiority to males which lasts her the rest of her life: and the little boy fears losing his penis when he sees that little girls have none, and fears that his father will castrate him because he is a rival for the affections of the mother, these fears mingling with desire in his attitude to women, who become both love-objects and hate-objects. It is true that the theme of castration occurs in mythology and religious practice (in the worship of Cybele, for instance), and the motif of woman as castrator has enjoyed some literary popularity in the wake of Freud, but it seems unlikely that fear of castration is really a crucial element in the myth of women's evilness. A simpler approach sees the source of this myth in the difference between the sexes itself. Women are different from men, and tolerance of what is different is not a marked feature of human societies... The fact that it is woman who bears and rears children means that it is first and foremost a child's mother who not only loves and protects him but also thwarts and punishes him. The twin experiences of mother's love and mother's rage seem to implant an ambivalent attitude to women in general, which is reflected in beliefs about the supernatural... The age old assertion that woman is fickle and changeable may have the same root... In the Near East, almost always, mother goddesses and love goddesses were also wrathful war goddesses. Kali, the goddess of terror in Hinduism, significantly presides over undeserved retribution as 'the Mother who nourishes but also punishes'... Orthodox Hindus believe that women cannot attain salvation as women, but only through being reborn as men... [Even the most] virtuous Hindu woman, who must treat her husband as if he was a god, is considered inferior to the worst of men.

The only male is God. Male means enjoyer, and female means enjoyed... According to Vedic civilization, a man should accept a wife for *putra*, for sons... Generally, women are interested in a comfortable home life. That is their nature. They are not spiritually very advanced or interested, but if a man has spiritual interests, and the woman helps the man – either as a mother, wife, or daughter – both can make spiritual progress. However, the woman must remain subordinate, and the man must make spiritual progress. Because the woman helps the man, she shares his spiritual benefits. - A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (founder of the Hare Krishnas)

A new religious movement... [– known as the *Brahma Kumaris* or] *Raja Yoga Movement*... [– arose] out of the Hindu tradition that began in the 1930s through the vivid religious experience... of a diamond merchant... [H]e became the inspirational instrument and channel of the movement and he encouraged leadership to pass into the hands of female leaders, where it still remains... [T]hey believe that we are nearing the end of the present age of decline (*kali-yuga*); a new golden age is at hand... The movement is unique in being led by women and in working eagerly for the world, even though its end is shortly anticipated.

Women's work... was never done, remember? ...Once upon a time men would never have touched any equipment [related to housework]... Women... did the cooking, they did the cleaning, they brought up the youngsters; the men went out to work[, they] were the providers, and the line between the... sexes... was very clear. And then came the war... [T]he men went away to fight and women stayed at home, doing not only the cleaning... cooking... [and] bringing up of the youngsters, but now they were contributing seriously to the economy as well. And things have never been the same since... N[Z] women might have won the vote a century ago but it took [WW2] to really advance the female cause in this country... "No longer [has she got] dainty... lily-fingered... hands and[a] pretty dress... now [she] is... working for war." ...while Hitler was invading Europe... the N[Z] female was invading the workplace... "...The hand that rocks the engine wields the lipstick... They work like men but they're women still when it comes to knocking back a cup of [tea]..." In 1945 the war ended, and so did women's brief taste of power... to look after, well, nearly everything... Government propaganda insisted it was time for women to go back to rocking the cradle again[, and if]... a... girl... did not want to be a housewife [she was] left... with very few career options. "...those few girls who went back to... the upper sixth[form] were taken away by the careers adviser, one by one, and... told to be teachers. Every single one of us." "The options for women then were... either[train] to be a nurse, teacher,[or go to] secretarial school... So I left school shortly after that and joined the bank." And... society had other ways of controlling them. In a man's holy of

holies – the pub – there was no room for women... A woman's greatest concern[supposedly] was how to get... whites whiter, and... brights brighter. And if she could achieve... that she was complete. Such were the expectations on women to stay at home and raise a family that those who didn't raised more than a few disapproving eyebrows... "...my mother used to work in Treasury, and earlier Defence... [S]he was regarded as a bit of a freak. What's more, probably slightly immoral, if not amoral." As well as keeping their families and homes... clean and tidy, women had another public burden – they had to look good. Fashion was feminine, and women were instructed in the arts of attraction. Success was luring the right man[, and]... in the 1950s... [came] exercises to keep a woman looking good for her man. Unsurprisingly, not all women were happy with this role... and the term suburban neurosis was coined to explain the depression that many women were confronting. "My husband has got another woman. I'm obviously not attractive to him any more, and I seem to spend all my time washing... children's clothes." ...the swinging '60s... [changed] much of that, and they changed everybody's attitude to sex. Young women in particular led the way thanks to the pill. But the issue of equality for women spread far beyond the bedroom. Against the backdrop of Vietnam War protests, students adopted righteous causes left, right and centre, and the Women's Movement became formalised... [B]y 1970, sisterhood was here... Men[soon] felt inadequate. They felt they'd been convicted without trial... [F]rom all directions the smothering values of [NZ] men were being challenged... "I don't like the idea of equal pay for women. I feel that the male has to have something left, even if it's [only] a little bit[of] extra money in his pay packet... I think [equal pay will rob each man] of his ego." But a group of angry young women were all too keen to do the robbing... [Men shook] at the very mention of feminism, but it was a word which united all kinds of women... The groundswell of women's liberation began in the universities... and in 1971 the sisterhood held a funeral in Auckland's Albert Park to mourn the lack of progress... since women gained the vote 78 years before... [O]ld prejudices were deeply ingrained [still]... But some of the arguments were very forceful, [and] some of the women of this time[were] strangely aggressive... "You have to keep telling women th[at the part they]... play... as a man's wife and mother of his children are the most important parts [they] can play in this life... because being a wife and a mother is such a stinking role..." ...I was very sympathetic to the cause, actually... and I used to have a group of radical separatist lesbian feminists... come to my flat and[, while]... drinking my booze[, go on]... all night with bitterness [about] the evils of men... [Then] one day I realised I'm the one... washing the glasses... putting the dishes away... and... getting up in the morning... to[go to] work to earn the money to pay for [those all-night parties]... "I took exception to some things about the Women's Movement. The early lunacies, of course, were... very funny, and one of them was that you mustn't wear bras... I have to say that some women my age who didn't wear bras are probably very sorry now gravity has done its thing in a very ruthless way..." During... 1973 the first of four women's conventions was held... "...The feminist movement was amazingly strong in N[Z]. It's like any new wave of something – by the time it comes down... [here] it's distilled like terribly... strong coffee. Have you noticed that? They do everything twice as much... [Y]oung women... refused to shave their legs or wear excessive make-up... [They] were not going with what God gave them in my view." ...in 1984... the Women's Ministry was established. Finally it seemed the[NZ] Government was taking women's issues seriously. "...The ministry will be setting out with a clear goal: to achieve economic and social conditions for equality for men and women in N[Z]." Here was commitment at last that[NZ] women no longer needed to be second-class citizens in their own land, or in business... at home... at school or even in the pubs... [S]cattered... throughout the country... thousands of women were... now... living lives unimaginable to their grandmothers, or even their mothers... The road to equality has been a very long and... torturous one but... these days... a man knowing his way round the kitchen is no longer an embarrassment... [M]en used to run the show. Now not quite so much... - THE WAY WE WERE

Maori women have always been closer to meeting men on equal terms than their Pakeha sisters. They have made significant contributions to Maori history. There is a story about a woman of high rank who is said to have given women the right to speak on the marae... [W]hen the Mataahua canoe landed at Whakatane the rising tide threatened to float the canoe off while the men were exploring inland. Wairaka (or Muriwai) saved the canoe saying, "Me Whakatane au i ahau" (I shall acquit myself like a man).

Unfortunately, the practice of giving *women the right to speak on the marae* is not universal – 'some northern tribes still forbid women to officially voice their opinions.' ('It is a woman who calls visitors on to a marae – and a woman from among the visitors who gives the answering karanga. These women, usually kuia past childbearing age, have the mana and power to negate any evil influences, any makutu or curses, coming with the visitors or harboured by the tangata whenua [the local tribe]. But after that it is the men who sit in the front rows of the paepae, the men who make the speeches.') For this and other reasons, not everyone shared in celebrations to mark the centenary of the 1893 Government Electoral Bill that extended the right to vote to NZ women.

...in... this[centenary] year... religion... has come in for a damning attack by an Auckland District Court Judge, who blames it for impeding the progress of women... The judge's criticism included Judaism and Christianity[, but]... particularly... Islam... the religion most detrimental to females... "Religion has not been kind to women. Ironically, in Christian countries the most devout adherents of the faith are women. Women 'liberated' from religion by Marxism now flock back to the church." They were deprived of power through male interpretations of holy writings, set down in times when practices like slavery – now outlawed – were acceptable... [She] used St Paul's teachings to illustrate the point, quoting from his epistles: "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." She[also] criticised bans on artificial birth control, questioning the Catholic Church's true agenda for enforcing it. "Is it birth control per se or the retention of power and control over women?" (Ironically, the rise of feminism in NZ has been linked to the Catholic Church 'because the nuns did everything in the schools and didn't know about repression by men, so they effectively taught NZ girls how to be feminists.')

The judge asked which should prevail – religion or women's rights – when the teachings of the former encroach on the latter. - 1993

[During] August 1970... 50,000 women [marched down New York's] 5th Avenue... They... [wanted] genuine equality with men, under the law at home and at work... The campaign in the U[S] was another stage in a long fight. Since the start of the century, women have been battling attitudes that hold them back, yet around the world half the people still can't enjoy all the freedoms the other half take for granted. Pioneer campaigners had to struggle to get the most basic political rights. ['Restriction of the franchise to men was attacked vigorously at the first U.S. women's convention at Seneca Falls, N.Y., 1848.' However, it] wasn't until after [WW1] that women in the U[S] and most of Europe finally won the vote. Even then, Britain limited it to those who were over 30 and married. Not until the 1929 election could all women over 21 vote on an equal basis with men... The vote was only the start. For most[British] women... it made no difference to the assumptions that governed their lives. Most were confined to the home as wives and mothers. And the millions who needed to go out to work in the mills and factories were seen as a source of cheap labour and paid less than men. In the rest of the world... women were completely subservient. They worked long hours in the fields, set to the heaviest physical labour and the most repetitive tasks. Their place was defined by tradition and custom as secondary to men. In the Islamic countries, religion was the strongest influence on... women... But... one Islamic country lived through a cathartic change that affected all women. Attempting to modernise Iran and bring it into line with the [First World], the Shah ordered his country's women to take off their veils in 1936... "Above all unveiling gave us a new boldness... We didn't fear anyone any more... It was as if we were in a closed place where a fire was burning, and the smoke was suffocating us, and suddenly the door was opened... We'd all been rescued. This was the feeling." But in a country where religion was a central

part of daily life, others were outraged. Tension between the modernisers and the traditional believers was only suppressed – it didn't disappear. In Britain... [WW2] was a turning point, raising women's awareness of what they were capable of. With so many men called up, women had a chance to work on an equal basis. "The Ministry of Labour... launched a big scheme for training half a million women for arms production..." ...Up till then, large companies had been proud of the way they kept women out. "[Ford]... always made a point of not employing women. They said a man should be paid enough to keep a wife and family in comfort. That's all changed now[because] there's a worthwhile job for women folk at the same basic rate of pay as men... until the men come back." ...When the U[S] joined the war [its companies followed suit]... But the temporary nature of it all was constantly emphasised... After 1945 the soldiers were released from the army in their millions, and came home to assurances that their old jobs were still open to them... In the... '50s, in the country which took so much pride in its progressiveness, there was a return to the idea that women were there to support men... Women were expected to find satisfaction at home bringing up a family... Films and advertisements on both sides of the Atlantic helped to reinforce the stereotype, equating happiness with fulfilment at home. "...it makes no difference if you're rich or poor or if you're smart or are dumb, a women's place in this world is under some man's thumb..." ..."On the first morning of our honeymoon I discovered my beautiful wife didn't know the first thing about coffee, and I love good coffee. 'Wife,' I said, 'this is Maxwell House. So remember, be a good little housewife and this honeymoon could last forever.'" ..."Carol took a general home economics course. Not one which would lead to professional employment, but one which fitted her for that very important career of being Mrs..." ...Even when women's energy was acknowledged, the tone was patronising. "What is that whip-cord resilience that lets the fairer sex play half the night then bob up clear-eyed[and] ready for the next morning's work?" In fact, a third of all [US] women worked outside the home, but in the 1950s most were still restricted to low-paid menial jobs, with no chance of becoming supervisors or managers. At the Southern Bell Telephone Company, the management had a clear policy on what was appropriate for women – they could be operators but go no higher... "...I worked 17 years before I had a half-day for Christmas with my children. I'd watch... the switchmen[doing] work... I felt that I could do... [which] meant so much more pay and better hours..." Whatever education women had, or whatever their interests, the limits were the same. [One woman who] graduated from college in 1950... knew her childhood dream of being a pilot would never be realised. "...It broke my heart, so I settled on being... a stewardess." ...[however, stewardesses were] expected to stop work when [they] turned 32... "The image of a stewardess is of a young, single girl... [and] the airlines wanted to perpetuate... [the idea] that the male[passenger] could get on... and think, 'Maybe I may have a date tonight.' ...It made me angry, it... violated my sense of fair play that... pilots can be fired at age 60 and... we were fired at age 32. Something was wrong there." Even when women did break through to the jobs they wanted, they found new barriers. [One woman] managed to become a journalist but couldn't get[a] promotion. "I would train young man after young man, and... they would step over my head and give me instructions... I just couldn't endure it, so I went to the editor rather nervously and said, 'Why...? Don't I measure up?' 'Oh,' he said, 'there's nothing wrong with your work, but we have to safeguard the succession, and the successor has to be a man.'" By the 1960s, more[First World] women were coming out of higher education than ever before, with new ambitions for themselves. And as prosperity grew, and new appliances went into more homes, some of the old drudgery was removed... As this happened, many [US] women grew dissatisfied and frustrated... In *The Feminine Mystique*... a best-seller in 1963[. a]. New York academic... wrote a devastating critique of the modern woman's situation. 'Women, as well as men, can only find their identity in work that uses their full capacities. A woman cannot find her identity in the dull routine of housework... If a job is to be the way out of the trap for a woman, it must be a job that she can take seriously as part of a life plan; work in which she can grow as part of society.' ...for... housewives... the [book] was a revelation. "[The author] was speaking to me. I was a married woman trapped. It just expanded my life. The first thing I thought of was, instead of blaming my husband or myself... it was the society." In 1963, [US] society was changing fast. The campaign for civil rights for [non-whites] was making real progress. Women's grievances... called for an end to discrimination on grounds of gender too. The great march in Washington that year led to a landmark victory... [The] Civil Rights Act of 1964 guaranteed equal rights for everyone. With the passing of the Act, women started to apply for jobs they'd previously been barred from. [The] telephone operator saw her chance. "I was very excited... I bid on the job for switchman, and my bid was returned stating that 'this was not a job being awarded to women.'" Citing the Civil Rights Act, [she] took her fight to be a telephone engineer to court. But she lost when the company found an obscure law that barred women from lifting more than 30lbs. "It was just foolish to use something like that against women... wet babies weight more than 30lbs." [She] finally got to do the job, but it took five years and an appeal to the Supreme Court... [Before] they tried to get the more demanding jobs, working women in Britain had to fight for a more basic principle. In 1968, women machinists at Ford's Dagenham [factory] were paid 20% less than their male colleagues... Women in the trim shop tried to argue their case to the management. "We'd been getting no where with arguments... [so] I just picked up me bags, switched the machine off... and said, 'Right, I've stopped work. Who's coming?' And 187 women closed the whole plant down... The biggest surprise [of all was] when I found myself on a... protest rally along The Embankment [and then finding] myself in the House of Commons, lobbying MPs." ...The dispute lasted three weeks before the company gave in and agreed new pay rates... As a result... equal pay became a national issue... In 1970... [Britain's] Parliament passed an Equal Pay Act, which made discrimination illegal. But it was a scientific breakthrough, not a change in the law, that made the most difference to women's lives. The birth control pill did more than anything else to give them an entirely new sort of freedom... By preventing ovulation, the pill let women control their fertility as never before. By 1966, 6 million [US] women used the contraceptive pill; by 1968, 11 million. Almost overnight, long-held restraints on sexual behaviour could be thrown aside. Moral attitudes were changing and a sexual revolution was under way... "It was just like a new world had opened up... [which was] telling me... I can do anything I want... We didn't know quite what we were doing in our relationships but they were going to be equal..." ...[however, one woman] was determined to have a small family though she knew her husband wanted a large one. "...Without the pill he would have been able to control me... [With the pill] he didn't even know when I took it. I hid them so well that I could keep on taking them and [say], 'I don't know why I'm not getting pregnant.'" ...Women now expected the pill would make it easier to combine children with a career... [At about this time, US] activists began what soon became a mass movement... They knew the importance of publicity and went all out to court it. They challenged every example of male dominance, including the Church... [They made signs that said:] AND GOD CREATED WOMAN IN HER OWN IMAGE... "...What did we want?"[men asked.] They didn't understand that we wanted to be thinking human beings and take responsibility of running this world equally with men." To the feminists, the annual television beauty pageants seemed a gross offence... Inside[pageants] one set of young women accepted the chauvinist baubles; outside others carried on with... consciousness raising... "We... learned very early on that the press likes crazy things..." The stunts got the coverage they wanted, but at some risk to their reputation. "For those who think that the Women's Liberation Movement is a joke – vaguely connected with burning bras and getting in the men-only bars – may I disillusion you of that notion..." [But feminism turned farcical when attempts by women to join or enter men-only clubs inspired some men to battle rules preventing them from joining or entering women-only clubs!] ...In Iran... the changes for woman had accelerated. When the Shah crowned his wife... in 1968, she became a role model... Whole new possibilities had been opened... Once denied the most basic schooling, they now had full equality and higher education... In the cities, educated women were going into government jobs, becoming lawyers, engineers or scientists. "...Iran had become a part of the big world." It was a world in which, at least in some countries, women had made it to the top. India had a woman P[M], so did Israel, there was another in Sri Lanka and, before the 1970s were out... in Britain too... [Yet despite] what was happening at the top, individual working women had to make their own assaults on each male preserve... "I... wrote off to British Rail saying I wanted to become a train driver... I was called to an interview... [but they hadn't] realised I was female... [T]he whole interview, basically, was designed to put me off the job... [I got on the training course but] people were waiting for me to fall on my behind, and they felt that if I passed it

would denigrate the job... I was the first woman to actually... [become a train driver. Unfortunately, after that it] was open warfare. People wouldn't work with me... my locker was defaced, pornography went up in the mess-room... [But] I knew if I left the railway I would have let these people win..." ...From the 1980s on, commercials told a different story – glamorising a new type of woman who was taking charge... [Meanwhile,] all over Latin America, women were still held back by traditional ideas about their role... But the culture was changing and there were signs that women were starting to assert themselves. Impoverished villagers were pouring into Mexico City from the country, and 20,000 had settled in a shantytown on a barren hillside. It was the women who led a self-help campaign to build proper housing[, who]... dug trenches for sewers and water pipes, and... tried to browbeat the city authorities into providing the basic services they needed... But if some in the [First World] took it for granted that women everywhere shared the same ideas of progress, what happened in Iran in 1979 proved them wrong. With the return of [the] Ayatollah... from exile, and the overthrow of the Shah, an extraordinary turnabout began. Millions of Iranian women went back to the veil... "The veil is not a matter of personal taste, to choose to like or dislike, it's a social question. If I go without a veil it will tempt men and lead to an immoral society..." ...Nevertheless, when the Ayatollah declared it was illegal for women to be seen in public without [a veil], thousands of pro-reform women took the risk of defying the decree openly. "The Shah put the [veil] down by force but these people are putting it up by force." ...[a] demonstration was broken up by the revolutionary police, and from then on Iranian women had to comply with religious decrees... [The limitations First World] women had to contend with seemed a quite different order to the real dangers and exploitations still faced by [Last World] women... In 1995, with much fanfare, a huge Women's Conference was mounted in Beijing by the U[N]. It showed the yawning gap between the concerns of the women in the... [First and Last Worlds]. While one group talked of better childcare and more responsible jobs, others still wanted basic education, better health and protection from violence and exploitation.

A year ago, the largest gathering of women in history took place in Beijing... what has happened since[?] ...after 189 states pledged to make equality of the sexes a reality in the 21st century, many governments are crediting the U[N] conference... for their latest steps to help women... Brazil has promised [them] free cancer-screening examinations... The U[S] is spending \$US1.6 billion... to try to end domestic violence. South Africa[s] President... is setting up a unit in his office to monitor the status of women... Women's groups in Zaire joined forces to try to change laws that bar [wives] from travelling or opening bank accounts without their husbands' permission... At Beijing, [First World] governments and lending institutions fell in love with [the] concept of "micro-credit" – providing small loans to enable poor women to start small businesses... But very few countries have committed new resources to implement the women's agenda. Many are juggling existing funds and some countries, like Argentina and Colombia, have slashed resources for women, according to a 25-nation survey by the New York-based Women's Environment and Development Organisation. South Africa is the only country surveyed that is considering reallocating part of its military budget to support women's economic advancement... [The] director of the U[N] Development Fund for Women, is concerned the partnership between women's groups and governments that helped make the Beijing conference such a success may start to crumble – and a key reason is money. "Many women's organisations are having problems sustaining themselves after Beijing – and yet they are most needed now in the monitoring and implementation of priorities and recommendations that have come out of Beijing," [the director] says. At the heart of the struggle are the raw statistics of inequality: The female gender constitutes... 65[%]... of the world's... illiterate [people and 11% of its] legislators. Women's earnings average 75[%] of men's... The intense debates in Beijing over abortion, sexual rights and inheritance rights illustrated the divisions among women and governments on key issues... [T]he old divide between women from [First and Last] World countries is diminishing – but the divide between feminists and fundamentalists is growing... Many Muslim countries... and some staunchly Catholic nations have been very slow to take on the Beijing agenda.

...In a report for its conference next month on the problems of the world's burgeoning cities, the... UN... Centre for Human Settlements says that of the estimated 1.3 billion people living in poverty, 70[%] are female. They... are also the most rapidly growing group of impoverished, which the report calls "the global feminisation of poverty." Women make up half the world's population, but own just 1[%] of its wealth... Women are relegated to homelessness or squalor status in many parts of the world where they cannot legally own or inherit land, cannot obtain bank loans, receive lower wages than men, and often are abandoned to raise children alone. [Editor's note: It is not the intention of this thesis to promote sexism. Therefore, in an attempt to avoid the use of sexist connotations, for the remaining pages the words *man/woman*, *male/female*, *lady* ('loaf-kneader')/*lord* ('bread-keeper') or *gent*, and *he/she* will be replaced by terms such as *guy/gal*, *him/her*.]

...LISTENING to... *Love Songs To Midnight* on Radio 1... I heard [a guy] ring up, wanting a song to be played for his wonderful, much-loved wife... Aah, said [the DJ. The wife]... was due to have a child, which made it even more sweet and touching. Is it your first? ...It wasn't, this was the second child... [The caller then admitted to loving his job as] a househusband... At this point [the DJ] started to sound doubtful. Do you send her off to work each morning? [the DJ] asked. Yup... I kick her out of the house at 6.30. When is [your wife] going to stop work? ...Two weeks before the birth, [the caller] told us. Well, you make sure [your wife] gets plenty of rest, [the DJ] said slightly sternly... One of the greatest social transformations of the century – the disappearance of the breadwinning father – has occurred with barely a murmur... [T]his is proving more a burden than boon. [Gals] have not only assumed the bread-winning role, alone or jointly with their [guys], but they do the reproductive work as well... Once again I found myself pondering whether this was the liberation feminists had fought for. [Mothers] are back at their workbenches before their episiotomies have healed, sneaking off to express milk in the [gals'] luo so that dad can feed it to bubby the next day. For many [gals] this is not of their choosing... Feminism argued that [gals] should have the choice to work and that the authority which came with being the money earner should be shared with the person doing the unpaid family work. This was not a popular line. Families, we were told, needed clear sex role differences with a mother at home. In the 1990s, opposition to the working mother has evaporated. The New Right – taking over where feminism left off – has welcomed [gals] into the marketplace, applauding their compliance and willingness to work for low wages. Cynically, normalising the two-earner family has allowed [guy] wages to be driven down. More than that, many [gals] are forced out to work because a single income is rarely sufficient to support a family. Workplace deregulation with low wages and fewer tax concessions has diminished [the ability of guys] to establish and support a family. The New Right decries the number of fatherless families but they have created conditions which encourage [guys] to walk away. The market is inherently hostile to the family... irregular working hours, shift work, and weekend work eat into important family time. In the new market family – where both parents work – parents play pass the parcel with the children before hurrying back to the workbench. The much-vaunted flexible labour market has led to the casualisation of work and a huge increase in part-time work. Traditionally this has been [gal work. Gals] have always been the reserve workforce which accommodates employers' needs. They have also predominated in the low-skilled service industries which recently have seen the greatest growth. Many... traditional jobs[for gals] have no career structure, and have been weakly unionised. Ironically, the vulnerable position of... [gal]s has given them an unwelcome kind of advantage in the new marketplace. Employers prefer workers with no clout.

...Indonesian [gal] groups yesterday condemned comments by [the]Vice-President... that a [gal's] place was in the home... [The guy said working gals] should... realise that the "quality" of their household chores was bound to be lower if they had jobs... [Nearly 50% of the gals] of working age... have jobs... according to Government figures. In 1988 only... 33[%] of those of working age, were in employment. [Gal] groups... said the... gender ideology... [was] a way to justify wage disparity between... [guys and gals, and] had been "exploited by industry to use [gals] as cheap labour."

...A group of Jewish [gals] who tried to worship at the Western Wall in Jerusalem yesterday... were attacked by ultra-Orthodox [guys] who hurled insults and folding chairs at them... [Although the gals] were at the section of the wall normally reserved for... [them, they] were removed by police.

...UP TO one in five former [gal police officers] say sexual harassment by [guy] colleagues was a reason for their leaving the force... said[the] Wanganui police district commander... [who] has completed a research paper on [gal experiences as NZ police officers]. It will be presented later this month at a police conference in Sydney... While some successfully complained, [most] were generally unwilling to do so... There was a “deep distrust” whether the system... would help them with their complaint or punish the offender... [The commander] said chauvinism had to be eliminated from the force. One practice which must be stopped was [gals] having to watch confiscated pornographic videos at [guy]-dominated, unauthorised night-shift showings... Police managers were being told they were accountable for behaviour that occurred in their stations and regions. Police sexual harassment contact officers were trained last year and 16 sexual harassment mediators trained last month. The officer in charge at police national personnel... said the force had traditionally been seen as a [guy] bastion. “We’ve always struggled to attract [gals],”... The percentage of [gals] in the force, however, has risen from 2.39% in 1967 to 13.64% in May this year... [In international news, v]irginity tests on would-be nurses in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh... [have] sparked mass strikes by doctors. The... state’s Chief Minister... had told its assembly that the tests, along with a rule that only unmarried, childless, [gals] could become nurses, was being shelved. The controversy began a fortnight ago when two [gal] hospital gynaecologists were suspended for allegedly carrying out the tests at the King George Hospital in Vishakapatnam after suspecting an applicant of having borne children. Their suspension caused a doctors’ walkout, which has since been blamed for the deaths of eight patients at the hospital. The decision to reinstate the two doctors, who denied that they had carried out a specific virginity test, came just hours before doctors across the entire southern state joined the protest. The Chief Minister said earlier that [the Government] would offer cash compensation of about \$US570... to relatives of the eight who died. Andhra Pradesh was the only Indian state where tests were carried out.

...Most Indian feminists and political parties yesterday welcomed a Government proposal to reserve a third of seats in Parliament and state assemblies for [gals], but some remained sceptical, warning that the bill would not necessarily transform the lot of women. [● ‘In India’s capital, a special jail wing for mothers-in-law – arrested for demanding excessive dowry and breaking up marriages – faces overcrowding due to the “pressure” of new entrants. It has 150 inmates, 50 more than it was designed for. A majority of the inmates claimed to have been framed, innocent victims of the “evil machinations” of their wily daughters-in-law who’d successfully duped their guileless sons into conspiring against their mothers. “The increasing number of inmates in Tihar jail’s mother-in-law wing is indicative of how serious dowry demands have become in consumer-hungry middle class Indian families,” said a lawyer. Many parents believed that “squeezing” dowry out of the hapless bride was the quickest way of satisfying their consumer needs and incessantly harassed her to meet their demands. More than 12,612 dowry deaths were recorded across India during the past 2 years – the victims were frequently doused with paraffin and set alight. In the early 1980s such deaths became so common that anti-dowry activists forced the Government to change existing laws. Now, any death by burning within 7 years of marriage is deemed unnatural and a case of murder can be registered against the husband and his parents.’]

...Four sisters have hanged themselves in the Indian town of Agra because they were too poor to offer dowry for their own weddings. The sisters, aged between 12 and 24 years, lived with their widowed, mentally ill mother.

...A Zulu [gal]... lives with her daughter in a Johannesburg township. Three years ago, her husband was shot dead. Because [they were] married according to African traditional law, under which property passes to the nearest [guy] relative, her father-in-law claimed ownership of her house. South Africa’s bill of rights guarantees freedom from discrimination on the grounds of sex, but in [this] case the Supreme Court has ruled that African custom should prevail over the modern concept of... [gal rights, even though] African customary marriages, called “customary unions,” are not recognised in common law... [W]hen such a marriage, polygamous or not, ends in divorce or the husband dies, the [gal also] does not have the common-law right... to receive insurance benefits, or even to custody of children... [Other customs that irk feminists are:] polygamy... and payment of *lobola*, or “bride price.” ...*lobola*... is... paid by the husband to the parents of his bride. Traditionally, this involved handling over, say, six cows in a ritual to mark the union of two families. These days payment is often made in cash or by cheque. Some parents among the new black elite demand up to \$NZ7000 for a well-educated daughter. “It’s degrading,” says one [gal]... “It’s like you’re being bought.” To educated [gals], *lobola* may be just a ritual. But many rural [gals] feel it deprives them of the right to refuse their husband’s demands to have sexual intercourse, for example, or to take a second wife. Many fear being beaten, a punishment sanctioned in many traditional cultures, if they reject their husband’s demands... South Africa is the continent’s most urbanised nation: half its population still lives in the countryside, compared with an African average of 70[%]. However, *lobola*... is still... paid for 98[%] of wives... Feminism in South Africa is a prickly matter. For many years, the campaign for [gal] rights was overshadowed by the bigger struggle for political freedom... Some things that now worry feminists, black and white, are familiar the world over: how to get more [gals] into Parliament, how to give [them] more control over their fertility, how to protect them from domestic violence and rape. In some respects, South Africa fares quite well by [First World] feminist measures. Almost a quarter of MPs are [gals]... Legislation before Parliament would allow abortion on demand up to the 12th week of pregnancy. Contraception means the average number of babies born to each black [mother] seems set to drop from 4.3 today (compared with 6.5 across Africa) to 3.5 by 2000. Some issues are particularly African... Across the country, you see [gals] with babies strapped to their backs walking along dusty roads and balancing hefty stacks of firewood or jerry-cans of water on their heads. A government survey last year, showed rural [gals] spend on average three hours and ten minutes each day fetching water, and 80 minutes fetching firewood. Installing water taps, or connecting villages to electricity, would do much to reduce their workload.

...Divorce is now legal in Ireland, but a pioneering Irish judge... says the Irish constitution still severely limits... [gals. The judge] has a dizzying list of accomplishments, not least her appointment by the Secretary-General of the U[N] to conduct an inquiry into an allegation of sexual harassment within the organisation in New York. More recently... [the judge, who addressed] a symposium of [gal] lawyers in Auckland at the weekend... headed an Irish Government Commission which recommended the holding of a referendum on divorce. The referendum was passed by a slender majority this year but it was a hard-fought campaign by the opponents of divorce, [the judge] told the audience. “Hello divorce, bye bye Daddy” was one of the more effective opposition slogans. “This of course had children asking at home if the referendum was passed would daddy have to leave.” ...[gal] rights in Ireland still have a long way to go. [The judge] says the advances made so far are due to the country’s entry into the European Community... in 1973. Articles in the Treaty of Rome, which established the European Communities, were important in the area of sex equality... However, the Irish constitution, and its interpretations in various court decisions, is still limiting [gals]. For example, it says [a gal] ought not to work unless compelled by economic necessity... [T]he Irish political scene predicated on the notion of the “serviced [guy].” “That is a full-time spouse looking after him, caring for children at home and acting as additional secretary and administrative assistant. What [gal] has that kind of help?” ...Abortion has caused major controversy over the years, especially in 1992 when a 14-year-old rape victim and her parents were prevented from travelling to the [UK] for a termination of her pregnancy. That was successfully appealed and since then the number of Irish [gals] who travel abroad to get legal abortions has grown. In 1994, 4590... had abortions... [in the UK. By the way, a] leading jurist’s proposal that children should carry the surnames of mothers has sparked heated debate in traditionalist Italy, where [fathers] yearn for their sons to carry the family name... [S]ome legislators rejected the proposal out of hand. “Our society is still a patriarchal one and it is still more advantageous for children to carry the name of the father,” said[one] MP... But... the... Equal Opportunities Minister... defended... [the] proposal, saying it was a

“sacrosanct right” that children should be able to take the surname of the mother... It also prompted speculation about how some famous names would have been different had the proposal been law in the past... “I realise that for many fathers this initially can come as a shock, or at least as a problem. But this is a way of recognising through law the primary and privileged role that the mother has with a child. We can’t deny that. I... think that making the father’s surname obligatory is an absurdity, stuff of the Middle Ages,” said... the... granddaughter... [of WW2] dictator... Benito Mussolini...

A [US] judge gave... some free advice [to a suspect] before accepting her guilty plea... for misusing a credit card...: Dump your boyfriend, show your legs and find a doctor to marry. “[Guys] are easy,”... the... Common Pleas Judge... told [her]. “You can go sit in the bus stop, put on a short skirt, cross your legs and pick up 25. Ten of them will give you their money.” Two national organisations yesterday called the remarks sexist and insulting to both [sexes]... The judge later claimed that her remarks were taken out of context... [In local news, a] Justice... of the High Court... says... [that if every guy] throughout history stopped the first time a woman said no, the world would be a much less exciting place... [The judge, who] was summing up in New Plymouth on Tuesday in the trial of a 21-year-old process worker on charges of rape and unlawful sexual connection... also questioned whether the accused’s use of a condom fitted with the act of a [guy] having sex with a [gal] against her will... The jury of [7 gals and 5 guys] took 45 minutes to find the [accused] not guilty on both charges. The judge’s remarks have “incensed and... bloody dismayed” a New Plymouth Sexual Abuse Centre counsellor... a[nd] former detective. “The judge let his position... and... [guys] down... To make a statement like that suggests that there is some excitement to be found in a [gal] being forced. In any context that is unacceptable, and I hope the Crown appeals the verdicts. They should on that statement alone.” However, the New Plymouth crown solicitor... said it was not open to the Crown to take any such action... During the trial... the Crown alleged that on January 9, three days after [the accused met the complainant, they and some of] her friends watched videos and had drinks at his house. When the friends left, the accused offered to give the complainant a back rub... The Crown alleged the accused kneeled on her arms and undressed her, despite her struggles, and committed the offences. [The accused] also allegedly hit her three times.

...I was disheartened to read [the recently published] letter regarding the false allegation of rape against [a guy]. False allegations of rape are no more common than false accusations of other crimes and it was not that long ago that the deck was firmly stacked against the victim in court. Her previous sexual history was taken into account and unless there were outward signs of violence sexual assault was extremely hard to prove – and[until 1986,] rape within marriage was perfectly legal[in NZ. Would the letter writer] prefer to have rape victims treated as they are in some Muslim countries – requiring witnesses ([guys] of course)? ...i[n]cidentally, gals i[n] Lahore, Pakistan, held two separate demonstrations yesterday after the High Court ruled that a [gal] could not marry of her own free will and must have the approval of her guardian. One group said the verdict contradicted the “equality of [guys and gals]” guaranteed in the country’s constitution; the other hailed the judgment and accused progressive feminist organisations of spreading obscenity and promoting un-Islamic Western culture. - 1996

The *New York Times* said in an editorial this week that “Western Governments must make it clear that continued oppression will cost the Taleban aid and harm its bid to win Afghanistan’s seat at the U[N] currently held by the previous Government.” It is doubtful the Taleban heard the message. The only foreign newspapers readily available in Kabul are ones from Pakistan, and they receive strict Taleban attention. Somewhere between Pakistan and the Afghan capital, a censor goes through each copy, blacking out any pictures of [gals] that might lead [guys] astray... The graveyards of Afghanistan, huge urban parks on the fringes of major towns or small plots in every hamlet, are one of the few places where [guys and gals] can be found in... intimate, open proximity... Nothing denotes the sex of the deceased except, perhaps, a headstone if the family was wealthy enough to buy one. Husbands and wives... are buried beside each other... [Under] the purist... Islamic militia... death is an equaliser...

Egyptian [gals] have had a gutsful of [guys]. So they’re killing them... [A] new film, *The [Gal] and the Cleaver*, is based on a true story and reflects growing violence in crimes committed by Egyptian [wives] against their husbands or [guy] partners. Such... violence showed up in more than half the cases in a study of... murders of [guys by gals] from 1983 to 1992... All... were convicted of premeditated murder. Three were sentenced to hang but had their sentences commuted to life because they were judged mentally unstable. Others were given jail terms of five to 25 years... One... crushed her husband’s skull with a metal gas canister as [the husband] took an afternoon nap. [The wife] had been forced to have sex during her menstrual period, a practice condemned by Islam... The... movie is... [about] an Alexandria widow whose second husband turned out to be a conman who squandered her inheritance, repeatedly raped her and sexually assaulted her teenage daughter. The case sparked nationwide sympathy and a dozen lawyers came to the [gal’s] defence. However, the gal] was jailed for 15 years... [M]ost husband-killers are... illiterate or little-educated, from poor families... were abused as children... or... victims of rape and other abuse, often throughout marriage. Others are faced with losing their husbands, who provide their only livelihood, to another [gal]... “Society has not equipped these [gals] to take care of themselves,”... says... [the] professor of sociology and psychology at the American University in Cairo... [Such gals] see murder as their only defence against a life of cruelty in a [guy]-dominated society. “They say, ‘I’m not going to accept this any more, I’m... not going to wait for my brother to come to my help.’” In Egypt’s traditional society, [gals] commonly rely on [guy] relatives to take care of them, including resolving marital disputes or taking revenge against unfaithful husbands... [■ An Egyptian guy] who kills his unfaithful wife can get up to three years in prison.

...[in Jordan, ‘a third of all murders are honour-related. Guys who kill their wives, daughters or sisters for allegedly affecting their family’s honour, get only six months in prison. Many gals are in prison to protect them from harm.’ In some Islamic nations, honour-related murders receive no punishment at all! In related news, ‘Egyptian gals are becoming more interested in marriage than piety. For example, one had worn a headscarf, in line with Egyptian Islamic tradition, since leaving school. However, despairing of finding a husband, the gal plucked up courage four years ago and took it off. Now 28 and engaged, the gal believes God will understand and be merciful. Removing the headscarf, or higab, as it is known in Egypt, is a highly visible personal statement which does not come easily to gals who consider themselves pious, observant Muslims. Yet the urge to marry, often reinforced by intense family and social pressure, prompts some to cast off this symbol of Muslim modesty in an effort to attract a mate. Curiously, some gals with a more secular upbringing who wear Western-style clothes occasionally don the higab for the same, non-religious, reason. One vendor of Islamic garb in the suburb of Heliopolis, who sells headscarves for \$NZ45 each, said his income had tripled in the past five years. A religious scholar conceded that gals were permitted to choose whether or not to wear a higab. More religiously-minded Muslims opt for the niqab, or face-veil’]...

A young Egyptian... fainted on his wedding night... [after lifting] the veil of his bride only to discover... someone other than... [the] young beauty of 18 with whom [it] had fallen in love... [T]he marriage veil concealed a [gal aged] 45... as soon [as the groom] regained his senses, [the groom] dashed to the police to file a complaint against his in-laws for cheating him... [By the way, curious] decisions about alimony... are made regularly in Egypt. The newspaper *Al-Akhbar* reports that one wife had her request for a lump sum payment of nearly \$16,000 rejected... [for neglecting] her appearance and [putting] on too much weight. This was the prime reason, a court accepted, for her husband seeking solace in the arms of his secretary.

...[an] Egyptian industrialist, who married off his divorced wife... as a way to win her back, has run into an unforeseen problem... The romantic nightmare began when the [industrialist]... came home one day to find his pretty young wife out of the house. Madly in love, but also mad with jealousy, [the industrialist] pronounced the “talaq,” a triple renunciation, which legally divorced him from his spouse. [The industrialist] soon regretted his decision, and sought to get her back. But under Muslim law, a husband cannot remarry his wife until [the gal] has first married

someone else, then divorced again. To speed the process, the... industrialist paid one of his poor employees to marry his ex-wife and to divorce her immediately after the wedding night. But the... morning after, the temporary husband – or “substitute goat” – refused to give up his wife... [Incidentally, decisive] action was taken by... [a Kenyan guy] when his girlfriend rejected his proposal. [The guy] kidnapped her aged uncle... and threatened to keep him prisoner until [the girlfriend] relented. The “relenting” took five days. The pair are now spliced.

...[the ‘12-year-old looks like any other schoolgirl while running across the playground with her friends in a green pinafore, white ankle socks and black lace-up shoes. But two years ago, her father – from Kenya’s cattle-raising Masai tribe – decided it was time for her to marry. A suitor was found, and following traditional Masai custom, the suitor handed over the “bride price” to the father – two cows, several crates of beer and some money. They were married. The bride spent two weeks with her husband. “My husband was very old, old enough to be my father,” said the little girl softly, biting her nails while speaking. “I had to start taking care of him straight away. I did all the things a wife is supposed to do.” But luckily, some in the local community did not approve of the marriage, and helped her escape to a girls’ boarding school run on a shoe-string budget by a redoubtable Masai gal who says it is her mission to “rescue” girls like the 12-year-old who are being pushed into marriage at younger and younger ages. “The girls used to get married at about 14 or 15, at the onset of puberty. But now we see the age of marriage getting lower, even to the age of 9 years.” In preparation for marriage, Masai girls must be circumcised, a painful ritual performed at the age of 7 or 8. The reason girls are being pushed into early marriage is unclear. Some say fathers are motivated by the desire to get their hands on the dowries they receive.’]**□ PARENTS in drought-hit central Tanzania have forced five girls below the age of 10 into marriages so they can eat. The daily *Nipashe* quoted one girl as saying her parents would receive a dowry of five goats.**

...[‘it is just after noon in the Ivory Coast village of Korhogo, and in a steamy square room no larger than a prison cell, a girl is covered in a pink-and-white striped blanket. The girl briefly lifts a veil that hides her angular features. Her neighbours are celebrating her wedding day, but the girl is not smiling. The girl is 14-years-old, and in this town and throughout sub-Saharan Africa, such celebrations are common. It does not matter that in many African countries, such early marriages have been illegal for years. Her family will not discuss the tradition, but people in her community eagerly defend it. They say forcing girls to marry early protects them from immorality, strengthens clan relationships and honours Islam. “If a girl doesn’t marry at an early age, that girl will sleep with many guys. Nobody would want to marry her later,” said one 55-year-old guy. Such marriages, the 55-year-old said, keep girls from “adventures”. The 55-year-old married his first wife when the gal was 11. The 55-year-old forced his oldest daughter to marry last year when the daughter was 12. His next daughter, age 7, is scheduled to wed next year. A prominent gal rights activist in the West African country sees only tyranny in the tradition. Her battle to eradicate childhood marriage is a struggle between an oppressive Africa tied blindly to traditions verses one urgently seeking to embrace the modern world. “Paedophilia is a phrase that’s only recently become popular in the First World. But in Africa, it’s been around for a long time.” Islamic law experts say the Koran says a girl can be married as soon as her body can conceive, but add the religion does not condone forcing girls into wedlock. The practice has, however, come under increasing assault since a 12-year-old killed her 30-year-old husband in April 1996. The parents of the girl with a heart-shaped face, a sweet smile, bright, almond-shaped eyes and a tiny voice, had forced their daughter to marry a distant cousin that the daughter had never heard of or seen. The daughter and her husband lived together for 3 weeks. Every night, the daughter said, her husband raped and beat her. Finally, one night the daughter stabbed him. The police held her in the Abidjan prison for nearly a year before gal rights groups prevailed on the president to free her, at least until her trial. The 55-year-old had not heard of the girl’s case until recently, but does not have much sympathy for her. “In Islam, when the girl is married, her husband is just under God. You should obey him, no matter what.” The 55-year-old said that before his 12-year-old daughter’s marriage, the daughter frequently would leave the house and return hours later, and the father would not know where the daughter had been. Once the father tied her up, burned her back with a piece of iron, then locked her in a room for three days without food. The father laughed while telling this story; so did the guys nearby. The father never sent his daughters to school because if girls went to “modern” school, they might meet people who would drive them from their traditions. Educated girls “argue with their parents. They start asking questions. They want to have a say in everything in their life. As soon as I married the 12-year-old off, I got peace of mind. The daughter was no longer my problem.” The daughter became the problem of a 41-year-old who had picked her to be his bride when the gal was 6 years old. The husband has had trouble with her but said the problem was that his wife was very young and “still very childish”. His wife does possess a tender goofiness. It flashes in the way the wife melts into giggles at the slightest thing, and in the embarrassed frozen silences that follow questions about having children. The wife does not recall much about her wedding in February 1996, just that “I wasn’t happy”. The wife spends her days bent over, sweeping the room they rent, preparing meals, washing clothes, scrubbing pots and plates. The wife has one friend, a 12-year-old who wed when aged 9 and has a 6-month-old daughter. Back in Korhogo, the dancing and singing stops. About 50 guys sit and wait to seal the marriage officially. There will be no exchange of vows; the husband, 36, is not even there. His family offers a symbolic bride price (less than \$100). Then, the ceremony over, the families exchange cola nuts and candies. Thirty minutes later the bride sits down in front of her former home, head stooped and still covered, waiting to be taken to her husband’s house. The bride is there 15 minutes. No one seems to notice. Then a white car arrives, scoops her up and drives her into the darkness.’

...upon turning] **13... in Pakistan’s... fiercely conservative [northern] region, a boy gets a gun... [and a] girl gets married and disappears behind a wall of sunbaked mud... Today tribespeople will put their thumb print beside the candidate of their choice for parliamentary elections. The election will end a decades-old tradition that gave a few tribal elders the right to decide for three million people who would represent them in the National Assembly, 300km away in the federal capital... In hundreds of dusty wooden teahouses scattered throughout the region, [guys] – their Kalashnikov rifles slung over their shoulders, bandoleers of bullets hugging their chests – welcomed the news that [they] would have the right to vote. But their happiness was tempered when it became clear that the vote would be extended to [gals], as it is in the rest of Pakistan, where [gals such as the one] who became the country’s first [gal PM] in 1988, have been politically active for some years... Election officials, taking note of the reaction, moved cautiously during voter registration. As a result, in one region of the tribal belt only 360 [gals] were registered compared with 78,377 [guys]. Election commission figures show that overall, 1.6 million [guys and 469,000 gals] have registered... Unlike elsewhere in the country, [gals] in the tribal region will have separate polling stations set up in schools and hospitals away from the prying eyes of [guys. But one]... Islamic cleric... said that’s not enough... It was decided... [at] a meeting of his followers after hearing of the voting announcement last month... that any [gal] who tried to exercise her new right would face swift, harsh punishment: her home would be burned down and [the gal] would be fined 500,000 rupees... a huge sum for this poor area where most people earn less than 4000 rupees... a month.**

...Oman’s election for its next consultative council tomorrow will be a milestone... [Gals] from anywhere in the country are eligible for the first time to put themselves forward as candidates. An electoral college will choose among a field of almost 800... to help the Government select a new 82-member Majlis al-Shura... Among Gulf Arab states, only Kuwait has an elected Parliament but [gals] are not allowed to vote.

...[‘Kuwait men flocked to polling stations at the weekend to elect 50 MPs to a Parliament which will decide whether to open the next election to gals. Despite widespread opposition, Kuwaiti leaders – who do not face election – have called it a done deal. The unelected Government is due to resign after the elections, to be replaced within two weeks when the new Parliament meets. Only 113,000 guys – or 14% of the almost 800,000 Kuwaitis (the electorate is just 5% of the 2.2 million people who live in Kuwait, where foreigners make up 65% of the population) – had the right to vote in the country’s ninth parliamentary elections since 1963. Only Kuwaiti guys born to Kuwaiti fathers can vote. Military and police personnel, Kuwaitis naturalised less than two decades ago and citizens under 21 do not have the vote.’ On a positive note, the] **new Government of... the... moderate Iranian President... has named a [gal]... as vice-president for the first time since the 1979 Islamic revolution.**

...[around] **70,000 flag-waving soccer fans gathered in Tehran stadium to welcome the returning Iranian team after their World Cup qualifying success in Melbourne – among them 3000 young [gals] who defied a ban on [gal] fans attending the event... Once the [gals] were inside police seated**

them in separate stands from the [guys]... “In view of the lack of suitable space and in order to safeguard Islamic dignity, sisters will be strictly prohibited from entering the Azadi stadium and can watch the fervent ceremonies on live television at home,” Tehran radio said beforehand.

...[gals] should not be allowed on TV, unless their appearance is absolutely vital, and must never co-host light entertainment shows with [guys]. These are among the basic rules designed to avoid inflaming [guy] viewers and protect morality in Pakistan. Advertisements for Sunsilk shampoo, with models tossing their hair “provocatively,” have also been banned. So have ones for Close-Up toothpaste because the gleaming white smiles are considered too seductive. Children’s programmes are also vigorously censored. A scene was cut from *Tom and Jerry* because a cartoon dog received a quick kiss from a cartoon cat... [The Pakistan PM] was particularly outraged by the prospect of a [gal] promoting soap by having a shower – although only her face and head would be visible. [The PM protested to the] TV boss... “Just imagine what is down below.”

...one of India’s most senior... [gal bureaucrats has confessed to being] amazed throughout her career by the lack of [gal] toilets in Government offices. It is a reminder that nearly half a century after the Indian constitution declared them equal to [guys, gals] are still waiting for their presence to be acknowledged... It took nearly thirty years after independence... for Indian law to give [gals] the right to equal pay... The average Indian [gal] gets married before... [turning] 21. Only 41[%] use contraceptives, and one in 12 has her first child before the age of 19. A recent U[N] report said up to 50 million girls and [gals] were missing from India’s population, the result of systematic sex discrimination extending to the abortion of [gal] foetuses, which is officially banned. In 1921 there were more than 97 [gals] for every 100 [guys] in India. Seventy years later, the number dropped to 92.7[– and the ratio of guys to gals is likely to increase now that more parents are using modern technology such as ultrasounds to identify the sex of foetuses]. “Why should it be economically feasible to have a girl child when all the laws reflect a gender bias against them?” says [the]Health Minister... “We have couples who want only [guy] children because only [guy] children have legitimate social support. The laws of the land are unequal, and they are made by the 50[%] of the population that... [aren’t gals,” the minister adds. “Gals] are becoming a party to destruction of their own species as they are unable to break out of the vicious cycle of undervaluation by others and by themselves,” said a recent report by a voluntary [gal] group, Tinnari. “They crave for the birth of a son who is seen as their saviour in an environment that is hostile to [daughters].” Experts say many Indian girls remain illiterate not only because they are expected to run the house and raise their siblings while their parents work, but also because working [mothers] have no safe nurseries for their young daughters. Yet when girls do go to school, Government statistics show that they consistently perform better than their [guy] peers. In 1994, more than 75[%] of the girls who took India’s final high school examination passed – fewer than 64[%] of the boys cleared it... “After a girl is nine or 10 years old, the dropout rate increases because her parents would rather take her out of school than leave her alone after school hours...,”... Government figures show that about a quarter of the 12,223 [gals] raped in 1993 were under the age of 16. About 80[%] of the rape cases reported between 1991 and 1993 remained pending for trial for at least [3] years... In 1990, more than 50 widows were burnt alive when their husbands’ bodies were cremated in an archaic ritual known as “sati,” based on the belief that a Hindu [gal] has no existence independent of her husband. [‘Although sati is supposedly a voluntary act, there is little doubt that in some communities the widow was more or less expected to carry it out.’] In 1993, about 16 [gals] were killed every day for dowry by greedy in-laws, although the Government declared accepting dowry illegal in 1961. [Gal] groups say the number of cases reported is a fraction of the real figure.

...In a country still battling dowry deaths a bill which calls for one-third representation for [gals in] Parliament and... legislative assemblies seems a tall order... [P]rogress of the Constitution (81st Amendment) Bill, 1996, has been sluggish... The 13-party coalition Government has so far offered no gift except lip service promising commitment to the cause of... [gals. B]y January this year[, the then PM]... indicated the 33.3[%] quota was unrealistic and proposed 10 to 15[%]. Supporters see cutting the percentage as insulting because it implies there are not enough competent [gals] to fill the quota... Now last week’s defeat, by a vote of no confidence, of... [the then PM’s] Government has put it on the back burner even further... “The survival of the Government is at stake and the bill has taken a back seat...” ...One of the bill’s strongest promoters... said... “I see no chances for the bill in this session... In the past we talked about the trickle-down effect, going from up-down but it hasn’t really worked. So what we are now talking about is the down-up effect. It is already working at the grassroots. One million [gals] have been elected to local bodies in the past five years... This part of the world has always been labelled, by the so-called [First World], as backward. Yet we have produced... [gal PMs in India, Pakistan,] Sri Lanka... Burma... Bangladesh and the Philippines. It will take... another 200 years to have a [gal] President of the U[S], I assure you.”

...[gals] in America have equality, but not equal remuneration... This helped [them] to get positions, as budget-conscious organisations employed them because they did the job as well as [guys] but for less money. For example, there were few [guy] high school principals for this reason.

...[the US and UK’s First Wiv]es and a whole host of the[ir] sisters are unlikely to approve, but in a new and peculiar... version of a political wife, the supporters of one candidate in PNG’s Southern Highlands claim to have boosted his election chances with a gift of two pigs, a [gal] and some food... [The gal] was bestowed on a wifeless would-be MP... before a crowd of 15,000 at an election rally... last week. Her aunt... is reported as saying that her family felt it would look bad if [the candidate] went on the campaign trail without a wife... [H]er niece... is now living with the candidate, who is related to her family. PNG’s daily newspaper, the *Post Courier*... said... [the] candidate was openly happy... but went on to report [her] as having reluctantly whispered: “My people said I should come, so what could I say?” No reference has yet been made to a widely publicised court case earlier this year which reversed a compensation package in which an 18-year-old... had been given to an enemy tribe in the highlands. The [18-year-old]... had already been handed over with 24 pigs and \$20,000 in cash when lawyers had the arrangement declared unconstitutional.

...[in] the second revolution wrought by last week’s... British [Parliamentary elections, the number of gals]... in the 659-seat House of Commons has doubled to 120, 101 of them in the triumphant Labour Party, 78 years after Nancy Astor became Britain’s first [gal MP. The new PM] immediately acknowledged the changed gender balance by including a record five [gals] in his cabinet of 22. Observers believe the “genderquake” will change the Commons, generally regarded as an exclusive... [guy’s club, despite the Iron Maiden’s years as PM. Many gals] believe they will gradually reduce the schoolboy humour, the heavy drinking, perhaps even the confrontational ethos – although [the Iron Maiden] was scarcely a role model for political co-operation... Most of the new [gal MPs] are relatively young; overwhelmingly they are tertiary educated. The youngest... aged 24, is a law graduate and mayor of a town just outside London. [One gal’s] victory meant she joins [her] twin sister... on the Labour benches. They are Parliament’s first twins. Another first was... Parliament’s first mother and son team... The Commons has a shooting range, but not a creche. That’s unlikely to last, because... a 28-year-old Bank of England economist who won a Lancashire seat, is eight months pregnant... [● As if to prove that Britain still has a long way to go before the sexes are treated equally, t]he appointment of a [gal] priest at St Paul’s Cathedral is to be challenged in the High Court. An[] Anglo-Catholic priest... is to seek a judicial review of the... appointment... which [it] blames on “loony liberal” leadership...

Rebel Anglican bishops are planning to leave the Church of England and set up their own independent church with the backing of up to 1000 vicars, according to a report in the *Sunday Times*. The newspaper said the bishops were appalled by what they saw as the liberal drift of the Church of England’s leadership since the decision to ordain... [gals. A spokesperson] for the Archbishop of Canterbury declined to comment.

...Lapsed and would-be Freemasons are invited to a meeting at the Masonic Centre, in... Auckland City... to learn all about the ancient order... “We aren’t going to randomly give out secrets. It’s not a secret society, it’s a society with secrets.” ...While members once did not make a song and dance about their good work in the community, the organisation... is... beginning to promote itself to halt the decline in its ageing membership... In fact, Freemasons are now using a common marketing tool to tout for business. Forget about the secret handshake, modern Freemasons are letter-dropping the neighbourhood... But despite the drop in Freemason numbers, the... society will not change certain requirements – [gals] are still not allowed[, perhaps because]... members must believe in... the universal brotherhood... Politics and religion are[also] banned at lodges...

[Guy] judges are from Mars. [Gal] judges are from Venus. That seems to be the reality for the people charged with judging [NZers] without fear or favour, affection or ill-will... [NZ's] justice system is riddled with sexism – from the benches of top judges down to the lawyers who stand before them. A confidential report on judges' perceptions of gender bias has revealed widespread discrimination against [gals. 90% of gal]... judges... had seen other judges making remarks, gestures or jokes that were demeaning to [gals]... While sexism was endemic in other [guy]-dominated institutions, judges had sworn an oath to exercise their judicial function without discrimination... said... the Auckland [Gal Lawyers Association.

...Maori in Northland and around the country are upset by a judge's decision not to convict a guy charged with assaulting his partner because of the guy's mana. They say mana is no reason for a judge not to convict, and is not a justification for name suppression. The judge had said: "The courts recognise the concept of mana and if named, the loss of this defendant of his mana would affect him and his people significantly." But a Maori elder said the guy had already lost his mana. The Maori Affairs Minister said that to lose mana, someone first had to have it. "If you bash your wife, you don't have any mana."

...16 guys] appeared in Auckland courts yesterday charged with bashing their wives or partners. Police said... lack of finances mixed with alcohol... [had] combined to form an explosive mix in many homes... Wellington [gal] refugees have been overflowing for months[, and]... workers had little time to spend on maint[enance. Gals are also]... taking longer to move out of the houses because of high rents elsewhere... [(not many wives) turn up on the doorstep of... [refuges] claiming their husband has financially assaulted them[, b]ut... money can be used in malevolent ways... – [the]... case of the [wife] who is literally held to ransom with the household spending may be rare... but imbalances in the division of money within the family are common[). This]... year had seen a significant rise in Indian... and... Chinese [gals arriving at]... refugees to escape abusive relationships...

[Gals are] still battling severe discrimination in the workplace in China, with many forbidden from getting married within three years of starting a job, according to a report in the official media. Many... were also forced to sign contracts preventing them from having babies within five years of joining a company... Apartments were often allocated to [guy] staff only, under the theory that [gals] would find a [guy] to provide for them. Statistics from one university in the eastern Zhejiang province supported the discrimination theory. Of 500 [gals] who graduated last July, only 25[%] had found work, while 66[% of guy] graduates had been employed. "...personnel departments of some Government organisations have said very simply that they just do not want... [gal graduates]." In local news, yesterday t]he entire Auckland police dog unit c[a]me... together in one place – Cheltenham Beach on the North Shore... "It was great fun getting everyone off shift and out of bed and in the same place at the same time,"... said... [t]he regional coordinator... The unit has 38 members – 19 of them dogs.

...German shepherds of the fairer sex will be trained for general police work next year, ending the last [guy] bastion in the force. The reasons? [Bitches] are just as good... the demand for dogs is increasing; and the supply of unwanted German shepherds from the public has dried up... Spayed [bitches] were used before 1980, but were phased out because of an oversupply... Before 1980 police had also preferred the bigger [guy] dogs for the sake of uniformity... But the stigma of smaller dogs has gone the way of the height restriction for human members of the police... [Incidentally, just 1.2%] of commissioned police officers are [gals, despite gals comprising 14.6% of NZ's] police force. The... figures showed the police force was "still an overwhelmingly [guy]-dominated bastion with an intolerable record in terms of promoting [gals] to senior positions."

...[gal] bosses are better than their [guy] counterparts because they are prepared to put extra effort into their jobs and their supportive nature fits well with modern work-places, a new survey has found... [A] principal consultant... said the survey helped dispel the myth that [gals] were unsuited to leadership positions and suggested [guys] could have something to learn from the opposite sex... The DDI Asia Pacific survey found [gal] managers inspired workers to achieve higher goals and were more likely to give symbolic rewards such as notes and public praise to employees for a job well done. [Gals] were also more likely to encourage their staff to try different ways of doing things... [Gals] as a group scored better than [guys] in eight of the 11 categories on which respondents were asked to rate their leaders. They were equal in the three others... There was little difference in the findings among the four countries surveyed... There was little in the survey's findings that surprised [the consultant. The consultant said gals]... have had to fight harder to get to the top so it was likely they were going to be better managers than their [guy] peers at a comparable level... [60%] of survey respondents didn't trust their managers, but [gal] managers tended to be trusted more because of their greater ability to listen, respond with empathy and share their feelings... "[Guys] are still operating on the assumption that information is power." ...Meanwhile, a straw poll of staff... at this newspaper found... most couldn't care less whether their boss was [a guy or gal.

...The NZ] Government is failing [gals] in the workforce and letting them fall behind in pay rates, says one of its human rights commissioners... In 1972 [gal pay was 72% of guy pay]. By 1990 it was 82[%]... but since then it had shrunk to just over 80[%]. "I suggest that the free-market model is not suited to redressing existing power imbalances such as socio-economic and gender-related inequality. It actually capitalises on them." ...the... Equal Pay Act 1972... failed to come to terms with the concept of equal pay for work of equal value and it was designed for the days of centralised wage-fixing and national awards. Its inadequacy in a changing industrial environment led to the enactment of the Employment Equity Act in 1990. However, that was repealed when National took office that year... [In related news, complaints to the] Human Rights Commission about sexual harassment increased 45[%] in the year to June...

Sexual harassment complaints are up 9[%] this year compared with last year, according to an Equal Employment Opportunities Trust survey. It also says compensation to the victims... can be as much as \$25,000... Sexual harassment... is most prevalent in traditionally [guy] workplaces – the Fire Service, the Navy and the Prison Service have all hit the headlines recently – and in the pub-club-restaurant area. "No sector or type of organisation has a monopoly on this," says... [the trust's] Executive Director... Young workers are particularly vulnerable... Workers who are desperate to hold on to their jobs for financial reasons will not complain. In some occupations, employers report it is very risky to lay complaints, because they will be identified as troublemakers within their profession. [The director said gal] lawyers, for instance, have a sense that if they lay a complaint in one legal firm this may affect their chances of getting work somewhere else. "This is not necessarily an accurate perception, but it stops [them lodging complaints." The]... Proceedings Commissioner for the Human Rights Commission, said [gals] living in small towns faced the same issue... The... [c]ommission dealt with 858 sexual harassment inquiries in the year ended June 30, and 80 formal complaints were opened.

...A [gal] harassed by two drunk [guy] workmates while at a conference was told by her employer that [the victim] must take some blame because [the victim] did not lock her bedroom door. A Human Rights Commission newsletter reported that the pair woke her at 1 am and interfered with her clothes. [The victim, who] suffered a neck injury in the incident... eventually received an apology and \$9000 compensation.

...A dairy owner who groped and fondled two teenage sisters working in his shop and told them to take their tops off to attract more customers has been ordered to pay nearly \$20,000 by the Complaints Review Tribunal... [for] lost pay, damages for hurt and humiliation, legal... and medical costs... The defendant denied the allegations, and claimed the touching was accidental... [In international news, a KFC] worker in Wisconsin who quit over her manager's explicit remarks – such as the suggestion that [gal] employees get a tattoo on their breasts... referring to [gal] managers as "bitches" and references to oral sex... – was denied unemployment benefits by a judge, who said the talk may have been an attempt to boost morale. "Use of vulgar and obscene language and terms can serve to promote group solidarity," said... an administrative law judge who hears unemployment cases... The ruling has been appealed, and a sexual harassment complaint filed with the state's equal rights division is pending.

...It seems... hard to believe that considerable numbers of... [gals] do not... make a complaint... that they have been sexually assaulted... [bu]t... research... presented... [at] the rape conference in Wellington last year... estimated that only one in 10 rapes are reported to the police. Auckland

Help is the largest sexual assault agency in the country (serving central Auckland and surrounding areas as far north as Orewa) and we know from experience with our 24-hour crisis line that this estimation is about right, although of course it is impossible to be precise. The reasons most [gals] do not report that they have been raped are varied. Fear that they won't be believed by the police is a common one. Others include fear that they won't be believed by anyone – sometimes they aren't – and fear that they will be blamed by family and friends. They usually blame themselves, feel tremendous shame and humiliation that that happened to them, are in shock and they may fear reprisals from their assailant(s) if they report. Of rapes that do get reported to the police, the research shows that the police proceed with investigating three out of 10.

...Nearly one-third of... [guys] aged between 14 and 26 in the southern suburbs of Adelaide... believe it is all right to force [gals] to have sex with them in... at least one of 11 given scenarios. Of that group, nearly two-thirds thought it acceptable if the [gal] had had sex with him before, if they had been going out together for a long time or if [the gal] allowed him to touch her below the waist. Nearly half though it acceptable if [the gal allowed the guy] to touch her above the waist, and 30[%] said it was all right if [the guy] had spent a lot of money on her or [the gal] was wearing revealing clothing... [By the way, gals] pay more than [guys] for goods and services, according to a report released in A[US] yesterday. The... six-month research project [concluded that gals]... were treated differently to [guys].

...‘Concerning the different qualities of the sexes, Comte wrote: “In all kinds of force – physical, intellectual or practical – it is certain that guys surpass gals, in accordance with a general law which prevails throughout the animal kingdom. If there were nothing else to do but to love gals would be supreme.”’

...‘*Guys lie, gals cry* We are all born equal – well, not according to an author and body language expert who was in NZ last week to hold seminars about understanding the differences in behaviours of guys and gals. Guy brains are solution-oriented while gal brains are process-oriented – and while gals use the silent treatment to punish guys, guys actually love the silence! In summary, guys will never understand gals and gals will never understand guys’...

Danish researchers... have [found that on average, guys] have about four billion more brain cells than [gals. But the]... Copenhagen neurologists do not know what [guys] do with the extra brain cells... No such quandary for... [an Auckland comedian – their] egalitarian tendencies impelled [guys] to take up pastimes such as rugby to rectify the brain cell imbalance... “War was good, but I think concussion is... the... better... brain cell leveller.” ...[an] Alliance MP... suggested that the extra cells were connected to sex drive – and [the MP] has a point. British research shows that [guys] fantasise about having sex seven times a day. [A media personality is also bemused about what guys] use the extra brain cells for, but said it certainly was not for “intellectual or creative pursuit or for making themselves better people.” ...Nobody is suggesting [guys] are more intelligent than [gals] as a result of the examination... which showed [guys] had an average of 23 billion brain cells and [gals] 19 billion.

...when a group of Danish researchers announced that [guys] have an average of four billion more brain cells apiece than [gals], a lot of us guys decided to celebrate this affirmation of our superior intelligence by spending a couple of months drinking beer and throwing furniture off the tops of buildings to see what happened to it. But now we return to find that many [gals] have been ridiculing the discovery. They have been saying that maybe [guys] have more brain cells, but it doesn't matter, because [guys] never use their brains to think about anything besides sex. This is not true. [Guys] are perfectly capable of thinking about other topics... but it's [usually] about some issue that [gals] would not understand. For example[, when]... guys are not using their extra brain cells to protect their loved ones by refusing to ask directions, they are thinking up important new ways to advance human society, such as Big Gun Radio-Controlled Warship Combat... This is a hobby wherein guys build large, elaborate models of [WW2]-era fighting ships... equipped with radio-controlled motors and CO2-powered cannons that shoot ball-bearings. The guys then go out to a pond somewhere to manoeuvre their ships around and try to sink their opponents' ships by shooting them; when ships are sunk, they're retrieved from the water, repaired and put back into action. We are not talking about a casual pastime. We are talking about an all-out, totally obsessive guy effort involving clubs, bylaws, an international sanctioning body and many pages of detailed rules and specifications... I'm sure many of you [gals] out there are snickering at this... Not me. I think high heels are insane.

...[*Guys and gals*] both get jealous over unfaithful partners, but there are big differences between the sexes... What would distress you more: • Discovering that [your partner] has formed a deep emotional attachment to [an]other, confiding in that person and seeking comfort there rather than from you? • Discovering that your partner is enjoying daily passionate sex with the other, trying positions rarely seen outside the Kamasutra? ...Researchers have been using such “forced choice” experiments to probe one of the more controversial questions in psychology: Why do more [guys than gals] say sexual betrayal is more upsetting. And why do more [gals than guys] find emotional infidelity more disturbing? [A p]sychologist... of the University of Texas, Austin, first reported this gender gap in 1992. Since then other researchers have found the same pattern. But when it comes to finding reasons for the difference, the battle rages. In 1996 there were claims that genes inherited from our parents make us risk takers or neurotic, happy or sad. In 1997, expect an increasing number of studies on how genes passed down from Neanderthal days make us what we are... The debate shapes up like this: Evolutionary psychologists argue that sex differences in jealousy are a legacy of human-kind's past, a biological imperative that no amount of reason, no veneer of civilisation, can entirely quash. In other words, genes for traits that characterised the earliest humans shape how we think, feel and act, even if we are doing that thinking, feeling and acting in cities rather than in caves... If, at the dawn of humanity, a [guy]'s partner slept around, [the guy] could have wound up inadvertently supporting the child of a rival. [The guy] would also have had fewer chances of impregnating her himself. That would have given him a poor chance of transmitting his genes to the next generation. Put another way, only [guys] who carried the gene that made them livid over a spouse's roaming managed to leave descendants... [while any guy] who didn't do all [it] could to keep his wife from straying sexually would not have become our ancestor. For a [gal] – the evolutionary theory says – the stakes were different. If her partner sired another's child, his infidelity could have been over in minutes. (OK, seconds.) But if [the partner] became emotionally involved with another [gal, the partner] might have abandoned wife No 1. That would have made it harder for her to raise children.

...the Blokes Liberation Front... has been active since 1989, promoting role reversal of the sexes as the answer to our country's many problems. Its main thrust is to get blokes out of the workforce and into the homes, to get them learning the ancient arts of cooking, ironing and having dinner on the table on time, as well as learning and developing the skills of child-minding and child-raising. To lessen the trauma of this monumental change, the BLF does insist that the bloke takes over this role only after the youngest child has started school. Not only will this be less stressful for all concerned, but will give the [blokes] time to make their home-brew, thus saving money for an otherwise much-stretched household budget; [and] to watch cricket and rugby on telly, enabling them to talk to their peers on an informed basis... In the meantime, the newly liberated [gals], or blokettes as they are sometimes referred to, will be out in the workforce, eagerly redesigning the silly schemes that [guys] have used for years while getting the country in such a mess, and employing... common sense and intuition to show that, without a doubt, [girls] can, and will, do anything.

...In the battle of the sexes, the most lethal weapons are a vacuum and feather duster. It's a fact that [gals] do twice the amount of housework that [guys] do... A... new book, *I Love You But... How to stop doing more than your share of housework* (...\$24.95.) ...looks at evening up the odds... - 1997

...a dinkum Aussie bloke... [is] the would-be peace-maker in the battle of the sexes. His new book *Why [Guys] Don't Listen And [Gals] Can't Read Maps* (sub-titled “Beyond leaving the toilet seat up”) has been selling like hotcakes within days of being released in A[US and NZ]. Like the actors in the detergent commercials, [the author] has done the research and the clinical tests show – wait for it – that [guys and gals are different. Gals] turn maps upside down, can't parallel park and go to rugby games for the atmosphere because they're not the finely honed hunting machines that [guys

are. Guys] can't do three things at once or spot a flirtatious look at 100m because they're not the finely honed nest-defenders that [gals] are... "We have a million years of biology running around inside our bodies and we have these irreconcilable differences. Yet we are in a politically correct environment that has no relation to that biology and we are trying to treat everyone the same! ...We tested 50 copies of the book before we published it and... a lot of people [were] saying: 'I finally understand why [my partner] does this'. It doesn't mean that person is going to change doing those particular things, it means because you understand it you accept it." ...[the British resident, who's] best-selling book *Body Language*... is on its zillionth reprint here and has sold two million copies worldwide... has had his own TV show and holds communication seminars all over the world... [However,] like any good preacher, his message starts at home. There'll be no [White House]-style shenanigans going on in [the author's] office late at night because, unlike [the US President's wife], his wife understands him! ...HERE's the one angle you may not have heard on the [President's sex-and-lies] fiasco: it's actually [his wife's] sex life that should be investigated. "Look[, if an intern]... is in there giving it to him, where's [his wife? Why isn't his wife] giving him some?" Crikey... How could [the independent counsel] have been so blind? It's [the wife] who's been guilty of withholding all along! This brings us to one of [the author's] many jokes: how do you stop a [gal] giving you oral sex? Marry her... [The author] bursts into fits of laughter at the mere thought, then [the author is] back on to... jokes [about the President]... The exhausted HarperCollins publicist has warned me to keep him off... jokes [about the President, but the author is] having such a good time, it seems churlish to stop him. And that's the thing about [this author – a person who is] as obnoxious as hell, but... also just so damned likeable. It's only when you think back over what [the author] said that you wonder why you didn't scratch his eyes out instead of giggling along with him. Why [Guys] *Don't Listen*... has already come in for criticism... from the "occasional hardcore feminist who hasn't read the book and says: 'I can read maps.'" But [the author] has news for those types – they're little more than blokes in drag... "We tested [the saliva of] 32 hard-core feminists to show that their average testosterone levels were four to five times higher than the average non-feminist [gal] which means they have a masculinised brain. That's why they can read maps,"... [the author concludes. ■ Gals] may have smaller brains than [guys] but they use them more efficiently... Scientists have discovered that [gal]'s brains are richer in grey matter than the brains of [guys], whose heads are more densely packed with less-efficient white matter. The findings shed new light on the long-established sex differences in intellectual abilities, with [gals] better at verbal skills, including gossiping, and [guys] better at spatial relation tasks, such as darts... The results may... explain why [guy and gals] perform equally well in IQ tests even though [guys], who tend to have larger bodies, also have bigger heads and brains... The grey matter is composed of the central part of brain cells and is involved with information processing, making [gals] formidable intellectual partners. Although [guys] may have just as much grey matter as [gals]...

FROM the greyness of the pre-electronic age comes a most colourful person, Grey by name. Heroic, idealistic, eloquent and described in a new book as "the first great N[Z]er,"... Sir George Grey... was the kind of charismatic leader we now yearn for, to justify the modern marvel of television. Here was a [leader] of "almost irresistible personal charm and kindness." In just another of history's ironies, the [leader with] great vision made his mark without the mass media. And now that we have the mass media, we do not have the [leader. Grey] died 100 years ago today. But... the Good Governor Grey, might equally have been shown up by TV for his conflicting qualities. While he could cleverly talk people around to his own opinion, [Grey] detested opposition... and could not take criticism. [Grey] rationalised his defects into apparent virtues, made his calamities appear like benedictions and gave forgiveness the force of insult, says his 1961 biographer... Now all the conflicting energies of a complex life are released anew in the biography, *To Be A Hero*... (...\$49.95)... which is said to be the fifth full-length study of Grey and the first in 35 years. In particular it gives the fullest details yet of the scandal which wrecked Sir George's marriage and distorted his subsequent life. This was the shipboard flirtation of his wife Eliza with Rear Admiral Henry Keppel, discovery of which drove Grey to the brink of murder or suicide, and led to Lady Grey being put ashore at Rio de Janeiro for return to England. Husband and wife did not see each other again for 36 years... The matter went public and though the Colonial Office refused to take sides, the First Sea Lord eventually transferred Keppel to the Brazil Station. Eliza, not surprisingly, accused Grey of "frequent infidelities" which were also the subject of wider rumour, but [the latest] biographer points out that in an age when people were under little restraint to say what they liked, nobody produced the evidence... [However, f]or one so abnormally sensitive to criticism as Grey, the knowledge that the entire colony was alive with rumours that [its new governor] had been cuckolded was veritable hell...

"Hell is America," the leading French daily *Le Monde* wrote... at the weekend as... a fascinated international community... [regarded] the explicit sexual exploits of the world's most powerful [guy]... In an editorial ringing with stupefaction, *Le Monde* described... the report by[the] independent prosecutor... as a "monster... worthy of the reports of the Inquisition... where deviants and heretics were hunted down to the depths of their souls." ...The report's publication on the Internet also prompted surprise in France, where politicians' sex lives are a private affair.

...Is it smut or a civics lesson? Easy access to the... report online has put parents and teachers in a dilemma, wondering whether it is wise to let [kids] log on to read a graphic description of [the US President]'s sex life... Experts say tell them something – they are going to hear about it anyway.

...Though some had predicted the imminent demise of the Internet from a crush of Web surfers seeking [the] racy report on the presidential sex and perjury scandal, the global network buckled but did not break at the weekend as the... 445-page... document became available on more than a dozen online sites... To longtime Internet watchers, the real news about the release of the... report was the use of the global network as the primary means of distributing unfiltered, primary news to millions of Americans. "This is a historic event," said [one] Internet political consultant... "It shows that the Net is making an impact on our nation's democracy." ...the Internet posting allowed reporters worldwide to develop their own take... To ease the load on its servers, CNN spread the document over many computers... Demand peaked at 340,000 hits per minute, a record.

...You could almost feel the wind whipping through the living-room as [the presenter]'s enormous ego deflated. After reports on his CNN show... that the *New York Times* would carry a salacious new angle on [the President]'s miseries in its next day's issue, [the presenter] promptly had to "unreport" it. The suggestion was... a load of cobblers. And [the presenter] wasn't getting any moral support from his studio guest... Everybody made mistakes, the Watergate warrior offered. "But... sometimes you've got to eat the carpet." [The presenter looked like it'd had it's fill of Axminster... yet another victim of the vagaries of breaking news... [S]ometimes, often even, the first draft of history should be thrown in the bin... [A]nother CNN show... *Insight's* counsel was to weigh carefully each new revelation in Trousersgate, or whatever [the President]'s... indiscretions have been dubbed... You're unlikely to hear such cautions from local [TV] news. They, particularly *One Network News*, treat us like... undiscerning children. Like Moses walking off the mountain with his tablets, *One*... delivers its news as though it was handed to it by God, and carved in stone. And – with every frown and smile from [TVNZ's news presenters] – it tells its viewers just how they should react to these divine words... *3 National News*, while less heavy on the emotive face-pulling, is little different, and much more prone to giving the story a tabloid spin. (There is no defence for starting a story on Zippergate, as *3*... did last week, with a sentence calling [the President's wife the gal] who slept with the President most).

...If you are looking for evidence that power is the ultimate aphrodisiac, you will find all you need to know in the coat closets of the White House. It was there that Warren Harding, President from 1921 to 1923, was caught by his wife having sex with his young mistress... It... was in a closet that Lyndon Johnson was caught by his wife... with one of his "personal secretaries." ...And it... was in a closet that... John F. Kennedy, known to his security guards as The Lancer, hid while smoking joints with, and making love to[, one of his groupies. While it appears that the 42nd President is trying to 'follow the footsteps' (or, perhaps, phallus) of JFK, the 42nd President probably hasn't smoked joints while in office – although the 42nd President claims to have 'experimented with marijuana but didn't inhale' when it was a draft-dodging student (can a guy who admits it has deceived

friends in the past be trusted to not deceive anyone in the future?)... The American political establishment may still be in shock from the latest allegations about [the 42nd President's] prolific sexual activity, but delve deep enough into the history of the American presidency and you will find a trail of lipstick-smeared collars and unzipped flies. It started early. "When once the [gal] has tempted us and we have tasted the forbidden fruit, there is no such thing as checking our appetites," said... the first President[... who] should know... George Washington... is believed to have had an affair with [a gal whom the President] pursued for 11 years... From then on tales of debauchery were never far away from 1600 Pennsylvania Ave... During the 1884 election campaign, one of the dirtiest on record, [guys] in suits marched down streets pushing prams and chanting, "Ma, Ma, Where's my Pa" – ridiculing the future President, Democrat Grover Cleveland, who had... been exposed as having fathered a child out of wedlock. During his... years in office, Franklin D. Roosevelt had several affairs... [One of his mistresses] was with him when [Roosevelt] suffered his fatal stroke in 1945. Lyndon Johnson, whose secretarial pool was known as the "harem," had sex with one employee on a White House table. Once, when [Johnson] overheard an account of Kennedy's affairs, Johnson, irritated at the prospect of being overwhelmed by his predecessor's sexual legacy as well as his political one, thumped the table and shouted: "I had more [gals] by accident than Kennedy had on purpose." This is almost certainly not true. In terms of both the number of [gals Kennedy] had affairs with, and the indiscretion with which [Kennedy] did so, Kennedy was in a league of his own. From Marilyn Monroe to high-society socialites, with a bevy of White House secretaries in between, this was the [president who informed a British P]M... in passing, that [the President] got headaches if [it] went too long without [intercourse]... When... Monroe sang "Happy Birthday, Mr President" for his 45th birthday, in a see-through gown with clusters of rhinestones over her nipples and other strategic spots, Kennedy had reached the pinnacle of impudence. At the other end of the performance scale was Dwight Eisenhower, whose two-year affair... was never consummated because [Eisenhower] was impotent. Whatever their differences, all of these [presidents], from Washington to [the 42nd], have one thing in common. It is not classic good looks – no one could accuse Johnson or Roosevelt of that – and it is not sexual prowess (Kennedy was referred to as a "lousy lay," and [the 42nd President's] approach has been likened to smash-and-grab). The one attribute they all share is their job – the presidency – and the aura of power... Psychologists say the... social status conferred by the presidency, the self-confidence it suggests and the impression that a [guy] at the helm of public affairs will translate his dominance into the bedroom... causes [gals to find presidents attractive]... Whatever it is... it is getting worse. There is an unmistakable trend in the sexual conduct of American Presidents. "Only three of the first 14 Presidents were involved in any sexual scandals, four in the next 14, and eight of the last 14. If this trend continues, many if not all of our next group of 14 Presidents will be philanderers."

...In America, as in most other civilised countries, the average citizen has long been troubled by a nagging suspicion that his elected representatives would be unemployable in any industry which did not require a talent for lies, an affinity for mud and a gift for preposterous posturing. After yesterday's release of [the US President's] videotaped testimony before the jury investigating [his intern affair] scandal, this country now knows there is no truth to that proposition. If Congress were to be abolished tomorrow, the same people who have filled the past nine months with so much ingenuous nonsense would be snapped up in an instant by Hollywood. After all, Tinseltown can always use a few more gifted fabulists to hype its latest turkey... *Just before [the President's announcement about his affair], reporters in a nearby press tent were watching "Wag the Dog," the movie about a crisis staged to divert attention from a president's sex scandal.*

...Whatever his private vices, [the 42nd President] has always made a habit of parading his piety on Sunday mornings. Sporting a *Bible* and a look of photogenic humility, the President can generally be spotted at 10 am ascending the steps of a Methodist church not far from the White House, [dutiful wife] by his side. Today, after the bombshell report on the front page of this morning's *New York Times* that [the 42 President] is the first President ever subpoenaed by a grand jury, the leader of the Free World has every reason to hope the Almighty is more than usually attentive to his prayers. There is ample precedent, of course, for Divine intervention. Time and again over the course of his 20-plus-year career in public life, [this person] has wriggled and squirmed off the sharpest hooks. Counted out of the 1992 presidential race for his dalliance with[a] tattletale lounge singer[, the Democratic candidate] came back from the presidential dead and whipped [his Republican opponent] all the way home to Texas. In Arkansas – where [the Democrat] rose, fell, and rose again – the locals had good reason to dub their young Governor "Slick Willy." But this time, it all looks very, very different. For six tumultuous months, ever since the [intern] scandal broke in late January, the White House has been in overdrive to control the damage – and up until last week the well-oiled spin machine has whirled without a glitch. Constantly attacked by [the President's hatchet guy]... and the President's lawyers (there are now 45 of them on the full-time payroll), [the]hapless Special Counsel... has become one of the most disliked [guys] in America. One recent poll put his approval rating at a meagre 8[%] – three points lower than that of [Iraq's President. Meanwhile, the US President's] own ratings continue to hover at an improbable 70[%]. As a green-eyed Richard Nixon is said to have exclaimed shortly before his death, "How does this guy do it?" This morning's *Times* story demonstrates the shortcomings in the White House approach: [the President's] team has played the [opponent], but the plodding [opponent (the special counsel)] has kept his eye on the ball.

...In the sex-and-impeachment scandal, it hardly seems to matter how you play the game. What's important, as the case limps toward its foregone conclusion, is who wins and who loses. [The]President... wins points for managing to cling to office... [The First Wife] has gained in personal popularity[– although, on]... the minus side, [it] has had to confront [her husband's] infidelities and his lies about them, reportedly learning of the... affair [with an intern] only on the weekend before [her husband] testified about it... [T]he Beverly Hills-bred former White House intern, could be another damaged winner. [The former intern] is likely to be known forever as the President's sexual playmate, and certain symbols of the affair – a cigar, a stained blue dress, thong underwear – are destined to be comedians' punchlines into the next millennium. But a year in the spotlight has made her bloom like a hothouse flower... And the spotlight is still shining: [the former intern] has made a book deal with... Princess Diana's biographer[, perhaps because the former intern]... sees a parallel between her difficulties and the Princess of Wales' problems... *Diana, Her True Story*, revealed the dark side of the Princess' marriage to [the Prince of Wales]... "I'm not a princess in a royal sense, but I was wronged by a [guy who claimed to love] me... I had a lot of pressure on me, and like Diana, I had nowhere to go, no-where to hide." ...[the biography] is to be published on Friday. The... *Mirror*, says it is going to be carrying [the story] this week. However, it has not indicated which day or whether the excerpts will be extensive. The article published yesterday... in... the... *Sunday Mirror*, [which was] a prelude to this week's publication... was by... [a reporter who quoted the biographer as saying the subject] was "a victim at the hands of the most powerful [guy] in the world. There are huge similarities here to the Diana story, where the Princess was trapped in a situation with a [guy] who was at the heart of the most powerful royal family in the world,"...

[Gals] have emerged among the biggest losers from the [White House intern] affair and are more likely to suffer from sexual harassment as a result, claims a right-wing leader. The message from [the US President's] acquittal at his impeachment trial was that "[guys] in the workplace now have one free grope,"... [The guy whose] Christian Coalition... represents the most conservative wing of the Republican party, was[also] critical of US feminists, who are split on whether to condemn [the President] whose record on promoting... [gal issues] won him widespread feminist support.

...When the Republican congress[people who impeached the President] saw their case rejected by the US Senate, several of the President's more zealous foes warned that it was but a matter of time until the next scandal. Yesterday it arrived on nationwide television: [the President] was accused of being not merely a liar and philanderer but a brutal rapist... Once again, America is obsessed with its President's private life. And once again, his supporters are urging the nation to reject [the] story as but one more attack in a vile campaign of false accusations intended to render [the President] politically impotent. This time, however, the allegation of an actual physical attack may be much harder to shrug off... "The... details [the alleged victim] provided mesh totally with the known record,"... said... an award-winning reporter who has covered Washington for more than

two decades... The attack was over in minutes, [the alleged victim] said, bitterly recalling how [the then state attorney-general assured her while walking away that there was no need to]... fear getting pregnant because an adolescent attack of mumps had left him sterile. At the time [the state attorney-general and future president] had been married for three years and [his wife] was almost two years from becoming pregnant...

[The President's] lawyer is denying an Arkansas [gal's charge that his client] sexually assaulted her more than 20 years ago when [his client] was the state's attorney-general... [The Arkansas gal's] name surfaced in the 1992 presidential election campaign when a friend in whom [the Arkansas gal] had confided revealed her allegations, but [the Arkansas gal] never came forward publicly... [The Arkansas gal also said her reason for not reporting] the alleged incident to authorities [at the time was because her attacker] was a rising politician and [his victim] was "young and vulnerable." ...In mid-January, NBC News interviewed [the Arkansas gal] but has not broadcast the story. On Friday, a spokes[person] for the network declined to comment on any plans to air it. [The Arkansas gal] told the... *Washington Post*... [that in her opinion it wasn't a mistake to keep] quiet in 1978, but... [not coming] forward in 1992[may have been]. As for going public now, [the Arkansas gal] said: "I feel like I have gotten the biggest weight off my shoulders..." [The Arkansas gal] was subpoenaed by lawyers in [an earlier] sexual harassment suit against [the President, and was] interviewed by agents for... [the independent counsel, who looked into her] story briefly but dropped it after determining that it did not fit the pattern of obstruction of justice... [being investigated because the alleged victim insisted the President] never tried to coerce her to keep quiet...

Another week, another of the President's [playthings] – another chance to marvel at the numb weariness a year of endless scandal can bring. Last week it was... allegations of rape. Tomorrow it will be [the former intern's] videotaped reminiscences of [her affair with the President]. It is the latest stage in the ingenue intern's blazing trajectory across the public arena. From nonentity to notoriety, [the former intern] has ascended to the high altar of modern celebrity: a comfy chair and a cosy chat with [a current affairs programme] interviewer... whose special talent is drawing sobs of photogenic self-pity from her celebrity subjects. If the projections are right, perhaps 50 million viewers will be watching as [the former intern] assumes her latest incarnation. From innocent to [gal]-devil, victim to vixen, [the former intern] is now a commodity. Permed and primped by... [an AUsn hairstylist, the former intern] and her chic new 'do are ready for their closeup. Her book comes out on Monday, [her face] is all over British media and the bucks are pouring in. Even her father is enjoying the ride, inviting *Hello!* magazine to visit his home and observe a father's pride. For the moment, [his daughter] need not ponder the slippery slope that waits on the far side of celebrity. [The former intern] is said to be "buoyed and positive" about this latest moment in the spotlight. As for the TV interview, it will certainly be less stressful than the 33 times [the former intern] told her story to congress[people], FBI agents and... beaky inquisitors. There will be no oath, no possibility of prosecution for perjury. And the rewards will be substantial – though nowhere near so bountiful as they might have been. When the story broke more than a year ago... HarperCollins put a cool \$4 million on the table. Her handlers rejected it, pressing for more. The price dropped and dropped, and then dropped quite a bit more. By the time her agents finally inked a \$US400,000... deal... [US] publishers were generally of the opinion that [the former intern] had done as well as could be expected – even allowing for the reputed \$US160,000 [the former intern] must pay the Princess of Wales' biographer. The scandal had simply run too long... what more could [the former intern] possibly have to say? So [the former intern] will be free tomorrow to milk what remains from her ribald renown. [The current affairs programme] will not be paying for the interview, but Britain's Channel 4 has handed over \$US640,000 to get all the breathless details... Foreign rights may fetch another million or so, and there is the possibility of endorsing[cigars, thongs,] lipstick, mints or jeans – especially if [the former intern] can lose a little weight. And if [the former intern doesn't? A pornographer]... will pay \$US2 million to expose her generous proportions in *Hustler*. "[The former intern is] famous – and some guys like fat gals," [the pornographer] explained. There will be a European tour, and almost certainly an American one. [A] TV producer... is said to have guaranteed a slot on one of his night-time soaps. All told... [the former intern] could make \$US10 million... And then? What after the tours and the book is discounted to the bargain bin, and the camera crews leave to stake out somebody else? "A husband, children – a normal, happy life," is her father's wish... [The former intern hopes the President's wife and daughter] can forgive her... One of the things in her favour is that after the shocking allegations of rape... [the former intern's] romps in the Oval Office will seem almost like good, clean fun. [The President] has still not bothered to answer [his alleged rape victim's] tearful accusation with anything more than his lawyer's terse denial. The White House strategy has been to hope that it will fade.

...The sound you hear is the collective sigh of relief as the media dance that has filled so many pages and occupied so many minds enters its final steps... By now only Kalahari bush[people] cannot recite the list of signature events that have become neon shorthand for the farce and tragedy that lay so unlovingly at the centre of the most powerful country on the planet. We know the tawdry details: the semen-stained navy blue Gap dress, the inappropriate use of a cigar, the troubled moment on the living room floor as we tried to explain phone sex to the children. [So what can the former intern's biography] add to the millions of words and images? Like any story of a [gal] wronged it has the stock cast: the charismatic main [guy], and his underlings who alternately support then attack the young and plucky heroine... There is the [friend turned] betrayer... and the inquisitor... (a former *Bible* sales[person, as the biographer characterises the independent counsel]) and his henchmen, the stern [guys] from the FBI, flashing badges, guns and handcuffs... [The former intern, now] drama queen, recalls the first time [the President] shakes her hand: "...[the President] undressed me with his eyes." Soon they do more than shake hands... [The President's] own sexual triggers, as depicted by [the former intern], are so strange they can only be true. They met after [the President] hears of the first death of [a US serviceperson in Bosnia. The biographer] writes: "So while [the President and the intern] once more indulged in their favourite form of making out, it was an emotional occasion... for the President, who, as Commander-in-Chief of all US forces, was feeling his heavy responsibilities especially keenly." One way to cope. So what can be left now?

...[the] President... mailed a cheque for \$US850,000... to [an Arkansas gal] yesterday... the President drew about \$US375,000 from the personal funds of him and the First [Wife]... and got the rest of the settlement... from an insurance policy.

...It gives away no deep journalistic secret to state that any reporter writing about [the First Couple] needs to bring a healthy dose of cynicism to the chore. And when the subject is the First Marriage, suspicion must be even more pronounced. Spoken with telegenic sincerity, even the simplest statement from the White House screams for a good parsing. Assertions, denials and apologies inspire press releases that really ought to be written in fine print. Given the years of slick words, how much faith can one put in official attempts to explain why so many presidential intimates are jumping ship? Even more intriguing: Is the long-suffering [First Wife] among those finally turning their backs on the [President] who has broken one too many hearts? It wasn't supposed to be this way, not after the White House did such a sterling job during the impeachment battle. Yet last week, as [the former intern] ascended from scandal to celebrity, a touring President was very much alone. While her husband inspected hurricane damage in Central America, [the First Wife] sat silent in Washington amid swirling rumours of a marital split, even an impending separation. A simple word would have stopped the chatter. It never came... The official explanation for the First [Wife's] absence from Latin American was that [the First Wife] had aggravated an old back injury while skiing ten days earlier in Utah with [her] daughter... Hubby... was on the jaunt as well, but the First Couple were never seen together. They were definitely heard, however, if one accepts the reports that raised voices repeatedly rattled their borrowed lodge. An appearance at a local restaurant was cancelled at the last minute, apparently because the First Couple were feuding, and they flew back to Washington so suddenly that a stranded press corps spent another 24 hours trying to catch up. Then [the First Wife] was off by herself to New York... [stoking] speculation about a Senate bid with two frantic days of photo ops and speeches. If [the First Wife] was in physical pain, reporters failed to notice it. They did notice, however, when the White House announced that [the First Wife] would not be going to Latin America after all. According to breathless reports yesterday, it was because [the First Wife] could no longer bring herself to suffer the company of her husband. An unnamed friend was quoted by Fox News as saying: "They hardly ever speak anymore. There is nothing left. The only thing they

have in common is [their daughter].” Next came word that the First [Wife] would send her husband by himself to the annual Radio and Television Correspondents’ Dinner, the first one [the First Wife] will miss. Her gig at another press bash, the Gridiron Dinner, also has been cancelled, and [the First Wife] is currently packing for a hastily arranged solo trip to North Africa... “[The President] would be a very lonely guy without [his wife,” observed the] former White House pollster... who last year became the first White House insider to turn against his former master. “[The President] would be wandering the hallways of the White House late at night... lost... and... talking to himself...” For [the First Wife], the pain of a ruptured marriage might have its compensations. When the rape allegations against her husband came to light two weeks ago, [the First Wife] was leading the pack to become New York’s next senator. After [the Arkansas gal’s] tearful account of being raped by the future president 21 years ago, [the First Wife] dropped 25 points. “...the advantages of a separation must figure in any calculations [the First Wife] makes about her future... If her husband continues to duck the press, to avoid answering questions that might put [the rape] charges to rest, it is a dark cloud over both of them: [the President] is the sexual monster, and [his wife] is the enabler who stands by him. And if [the President] answers the questions, who can believe what [those answers are? Without her husband, the First Wife] has immense appeal to a large segment of... [gal voters: a divorcee] trying to make it on her own. [The First Wife] is a very smart [gal, who] must realise her husband is a lame-duck, perhaps a fatal threat to her own hopes.” ...And why should [the First Wife] stick around after all those indignities? As a sympathetic [former White House staffer] writes... in *All Too Human*, his new book on the six years... spend as... [the President’s] top aide and adviser... “[The President’s wife] had to pull it together every single day – for him, for [their daughter – and the First Wife] never really knew what was coming next. And all for what? Not just to be First [Wife], but to do big things. Everything [the First Wife had] worked for was imperilled, [yet] no one was there for her.” ...Meanwhile, as[the] once-devoted presidential aide and intimate... was confessing that... his political skills... had[been] put... at the service of an unworthy president, America’s feminist leaders were remaining ominously mute. While the sisterhood stood by [the President throughout the former intern’s] soap opera... allegations of rape are proving to be another matter. “[The President] is so damaged, so worn down by scandal, his ability to deal with any one of the issues plaguing him is minimal at best,” said [the former aide. “The President] has won every battle but the war is going badly.”

...An ice-cold [First Wife] has finally had enough. After months of putting up with her husband’s amorous antics, after countless feuds and reconciliations, the First [Wife] has decided to become... single... Sources say [the First Wife] has had a cast-iron legal contract drawn up, which [her] chastened and shattered [husband] has finally agreed to, and which will ultimately lead to the couple’s divorce. The... agreement spells out that the[y]... will sleep in separate bedrooms, there will be absolutely no sex, and... shortly after the President leaves office, the couple will split. A massive pile of legal bills... amassed in recent years in the face of countless accusations against him, will be [his] sole responsibility... In return for agreeing to all these demands, the First [Wife] has agreed to remain by the President’s side until the end of his term, so [the President] can keep some credibility in office... [However, if the President takes] up with any other... [partner, his wife] will walk out of the White House immediately.

...[The former intern] may no longer be the name on everybody’s lips – but strange goings-on continue in the White House... IN 1997 [the 42nd President]’s “distinguishing characteristics” became the first First Penis in White House history to have a formal statement issued on its behalf in terms of its “size, shape, direction, whatever”, as [the President]’s lawyer... put it – and the first to be photographed by a naval surgeon as Exhibit A in a sexual harassment case. This month the 42nd presidency chalked up another historic first, with the news the First Penis has returned to home base – or, as the First [Wife]’s Chief-of-Staff... puts it: “We’ve slowly seen a physical passion come back into their lives.” In other words, Air Force 1 is back in the hanger... for the first time in seven years... According to [the Chief-of-Staff], the first couple’s dormant sexual relationship was rekindled by their late-night discussions during the Nato strikes against [Serbia]. So, if it’s any consolation to those bombed-out Serb rail commuters, Chinese embassy employees and Kosovo refugee convoys, the earth moved for [the US First Couple], too. One explanation is the President did her a favour by cheating on her. Her ordeal... “has given her a certain glamour, almost a regal look”. Her husband has noticed this, with some surprise... “Doesn’t [my wife] look beautiful?” ...the... [President] has been heard asking friends. Wow! If [the President] put her through the stress of a couple more interns, [the First Wife] could end up a really foxy babe... [Incidentally, an AUS]n feminist... is set to ignite another bout of controversy when her sequel to her groundbreaking book *The [Gal] Eunuch* is published in Britain next month. Despite... [her pledge to] never write a sequel to the bestseller published in 1971, *The Whole [Gal]* was written out of her despair over the pliant attitudes of those [types that the AUS]n calls “lifestyle feminists.” ...“It was not until feminists of my own generation began to assert, with apparent seriousness, that feminism had gone too far, that the fire flared up in my belly.” Much of her fury was sparked by [US] feminists... who claimed[the US] President... had done nothing wrong in having an affair... “...I just thought, can’t anyone see what is going on? And I sat down to write the book straight away.”

...[the US ‘President said in his address beginning his second term that the 20th century was the American century. “And what a century it has been. America became the world’s mightiest industrial power, saved the world from tyranny in two world wars and a long Cold War. Along the way America produced a great middle class and security in old age; built unrivalled centres of learning and opened public schools for all; split the atom and explored the heavens.” Which got right up a NZer’s nose: “I have never heard anything so ridiculous. It’s laughable as far as I’m concerned.” The retired commercial fishperson wants to put the President straight on a few basic facts. The New Plymouth 91-year-old doesn’t want to split hairs but it was his uncle, Sir Ernest Rutherford, who first split the atom and therefore it is NZ, not the US, which deserves the credit. “Uncle certainly put NZ science on the map. Uncle had an outstanding brain which was used to the best of his capacity in the interests of humanity.” A Canterbury University physicist said the President’s remark ignored the NZer’s work, as well as that of British and German scientists. The President’s remarks referred to work carried out by Italian-born physicist Enrico Fermi and others in the 1930s which led to the first self-sustaining chain reaction in Chicago in 1942. Rutherford’s splitting of the atom in Britain in 1917 when the physicist fired a helium nucleus into nitrogen and produced oxygen had required huge amounts of energy whereas Fermi’s created energy, paving the way for nuclear power and the atomic bomb. Fermi’s work owed much to work carried out by German scientists Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassman, who discovered nuclear fission in 1938.’ ‘Researchers under Rutherford’s guidance had developed the first proton accelerator which split the atom in 1932.’ ‘It was this work that made Rutherford the father of nuclear physics and ushered in the atomic age.’ Ironically, perhaps because his initial experiment had required huge amounts of energy, Rutherford believed the act of splitting an atom served ‘no good’ purpose.

...‘An experimental genius with a strategic approach to research, Rutherford (1871-1937) had an unrivalled capacity for isolating a problem until there were only a small number of possible explanations, and then devising a series of simple experiments until all but one possibility has been eliminated. For his considerable services to science Rutherford received many honours, including the Nobel Prize for chemistry in 1908, a knighthood in 1914, and a peerage in 1931. The artificial element rutherfordium is named in his honour.’ Rutherford ‘was interred in Westminster Abbey.’

...‘AFTER years of international haggling and horse-trading, Ernest Rutherford has finally and formally become the only NZer to have a chemical element named in his honour. As far as we know, there are just 92 naturally occurring elements in the universe; with atomic numbers that range from 1 for hydrogen to 92 for uranium. These elements are the components of all the matter in the natural universe and of these only 81 are truly stable. Those with higher atomic numbers are in a state of radioactive decay. Physicists calculated long ago that other elements could exist with higher atomic numbers and that after an atomic number of 112, elements could again be stable. They set out to prove this with the modern-day alchemy of the particle accelerator. To the discoverer went the honour of proposing a name for each new element. Curium (96), einsteinium (99), fermium (100), mendelevium (101) and lawrencium (103) honoured the discoverers’ scientific heroes. In 1964, the Dubna laboratories in Russia claimed to have manufactured one isotope of element 104. They proposed the name kurchatovium in honour of a Soviet nuclear physicist. In November of 1969, the father of the periodic table proposed that element 104 be named rutherfordium because Rutherford was one of his heroes. This person later withdrew his suggested name and accepted that proposed by the Soviets. For nearly two decades, the world lived with three names for element 104. The US and Russia each used their own name but

politically correct periodic tables used an interim name Unnilquadium. To solve the impasse, a Transfermium Working Group – a joint committee of the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics and the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry – was set up in 1985 to determine precedence of discovery for all elements beyond fermium. An August 1994 meeting adopted a new rule that no element could be named after a living person. Since both Albert Einstein and Enrico Fermi had been alive when they had had elements proposed in their honour, this move was a ploy to take a very much alive person's name off element 106 so that that element could then be renamed rutherfordium. This left element 104 open to be renamed dubnium. Confusion reigned. In early September last year, a final compromise was reached and all phases of naming were passed: 104 rutherfordium (Rf), 105 dubnium (Db), 106 seaborgium (Sg). However, there are still arguments. Only a few thousand atoms of rutherfordium have ever been manufactured. Rutherfordium's longest-living confirmed isotope has a half-life (the time it takes to decay) of about 70 seconds. So it doesn't last long, is hard to make, and so is as rare as the honour it confers.']

...Ernest Rutherford's Nobel prize did not come easily. His discoveries of the nature of the atom took years of perseverance, of diligent and repeated experiments. Now, another N[Z] scientist is concerned that a modern lack of discipline may mean that N[Z] will never produce another Rutherford. The newly-appointed dean of graduate studies at Unitec... does not rate our modern Nobel Prize-winning chances as particularly high... [However, the] executive officer of the Association of Science Educators, says... "With the kids today and the teachers some of them have been fortunate enough to have, I'm sure we will have Nobel Prize winners in the future. But it will take a long time."

...There have been two other N[Z]-born winners of the Nobel Prize. □ [NZ]... experts have slammed... the omission of Lord Rutherford from *Time* magazine's series on the most influential people of the 20th century... *Time* includes Dr Enrico Fermi, J Robert Oppenheimer and Edward Teller among the top scientists and thinkers... [A NZer] who worked... with all... th[re]e... on the famed W[W]II Manhattan Project, said... Teller and Oppenheimer were "politically interesting. But if you ranked their scientific achievements they wouldn't come anywhere near those of Rutherford. To omit him is quite extraordinary." ...Another N[Z] scientist, the... author of the biography *Rutherford, Scientist Supreme*, said the scientists named by *Time* "wouldn't be a pimple on Rutherford's bum. *Time* is an American magazine – it has a little trouble seeing over the horizon. Rutherford never worked in America – they tried to get him there on several occasions, but [Ernest] didn't have any interest." ...The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says Rutherford's leadership "inspired two generations of physicists" and his "influence on scientific thought may be compared with that of Faraday and Newton".

...N[Z] hero and international science legend Lord Ernest Rutherford was a... 'sexist thug'... says a book. *E=mc2: A Biography of the World's Most Famous Equation* – which sold out at Whitcoulls in Auckland – briefly charts the personalities of many of the world's top scientists of the day and gives an unflattering account of Rutherford's treatment of [gals] generally, and in particular of Cambridge University student Cecelia Payne, who became one of Britain's early... [gal] astronomers. The book's a]uthor... alleges that Rutherford, a "great booming bear..." was... "....cruel to her [Payne] at lectures, trying to get all the [guy] students to laugh at this one [gal] in their midst. It didn't stop her from going... but even 40 years later, retired from her professorship at Harvard, [Payne] remembered the rows of braying young [guys], nervously trying to do what their teacher expected of them." But the claims are nonsense, says... [the] author of *Rutherford, Scientist Supreme*... Rutherford, who grew up near Nelson, was in fact a champion of [gals] who married the daughter of a suffragette, [and] campaigned to get equal rights for [gals] at Cambridge University... [Rutherford's biographer] was "bloody outraged" that a populist author could malign such a champion of [gals, and said the author] seemingly based his claim solely on Payne's biography. [Payne] had felt offended because Rutherford began his lectures each day with "*Ladies and gentlemen.*" Payne wrote: "All the boys regularly greeted this witticism with thunderous applause, stamping their feet in the traditional manner, and at every lecture I wished I could sink into the earth." [The populist author], speaking from London, was upset to think [his book] might have maligned a N[Z] hero. But [the populist author] stood by his book, saying Rutherford's behaviour was typical of [guys] at the time.

...It was supposed to be an easy job which would help pay off a mountain of debt. But less than four months after [the then 22-year-old] started cleaning cars at an Auckland auto services yard, [the now 25-year-old] was forced to resign – her self-esteem in tatters after constant humiliation from [guy] co-workers left her feeling fat, ugly and a failure. [The victim] was subjected to crude and derogatory remarks on a daily basis from ...he[r first day]... at Fleetcare Auto Services... [The only gal] working at the yard... asked repeatedly for it to stop but, instead, drawings of her naked and obese... with huge private parts covered in sores... were pinned to the company's Penrose yard noticeboard. When [the gal] complained to one of the firm's directors, [the guy]... accused her of "over-reacting"... [The victim] took the company to court and... was awarded \$25,000 in compensation after an Employment Tribunal adjudicator found [the gal] had been sexually harassed, humiliated and constructively dismissed... • According to a Human Rights Commission survey, 31[% of gals] are sexually harassed. Those aged between 18 and 29 are most vulnerable and almost all incidents occur in the workplace. The average payout for damages is almost \$6000 while the highest to date has been \$80,000.

...It is 20 years since discrimination on the grounds of sex became unlawful[in NZ], but... the playing field is still far from level for [gals]... The bulk of sex discrimination complaints continue to arise from the workplace... [Gals] have come a long way, at least in terms of legislation, says... [the person] who in 1993 became the first [gal] judge appointed to the High Court... "I would be hard put to think of a single area where the legislation which allows for equality between [guys and gals] isn't in place." [However, the judge]... thinks there are more insidious battles ahead...

Figures out this week say that... [working gals] are better qualified yet still paid less than [guys. The NZ Herald] finds that the battle of the sexes at home isn't much better... BEWARE the humble dunny. If you haven't worked it out already – and if you haven't you're probably a [guy] – it's ground zero in the gender war. Forget about that old seat-up, seat-down argument, this war of attrition is about who wields the loo brush. And the sad facts are: in the beginning [a guy] created the toilet, but in the end it's almost always [a gal] who cleans it. How far will some [guys] go to avoid cleaning it? ...[consider] Exhibit A in the Great Cleaning Swindle... One Saturday not so long ago [Exhibit A] agreed, after much cajoling from... [his] partner-of-a-year... [to] apply a bit of elbow grease to the bathroom-washhouse combo. This was a glorious victory of sorts. [Exhibit A], a builder who started fulltime university study this year, doesn't hold with cooking, doing the dishes or washing laundry. The 23-year-old definitely doesn't like scrubbing the porcelain throne. None the less, into the bathroom [Exhibit A] went with his rubber gloves, locking the door behind him (...[Exhibit A] didn't want the humiliation of her sneaking a peak...). An hour or so later [Exhibit A] came out. His efforts, [his partner] decided upon viewing them, could best be described by a word often associated with toilets. It wasn't until a month or so later that [Exhibit A] finally (and foolishly, one would have thought) 'fessed that... [nothing had actually been] cleaned... The loathsome truth was [Exhibit A had] spent the hour sitting on the washing machine reading a magazine. Think about what that means... some [guys] will go as far as pretending they're cleaning the dunny so that they don't have to clean the dunny... Says [his gullible partner], a marketing assistant: "[Exhibit A] was in there for as long as it took me to do the rest of the cleaning. As soon [as] it was finished [Exhibit A] came out because [Exhibit A knew there wouldn't be anything left] to do..." ...Who's to blame? Well, [Exhibit A] blames his mother. During his formative years on the family farm near Tauranga, [Exhibit A] never had to worry about that sort of stuff – Mum did all that. In his defence his mother... says [Exhibit A] was at school until... [leaving] home at 17. "Wouldn't most mothers do those things?" [Exhibit A's mother] says. But ask what [Mum thinks of Exhibit A] being a bit slack on the old housework now and [Mum's] emphatic: "It's time [my son] jolly well learnt. I think [my son] picked a good... [partner. But, if my son wants her to stay around, I think my son] should probably do a bit more... his father does." [Exhibit A] does have what the generous might call an excuse when it comes to his loo hoax: "Well... [as] far as I was concerned... the bathroom... wasn't dirty. How do you define filth?" ...A rum sort of a do then, but the young Parnell couple are by no means unique. They are the norm. According to a survey done by Massey University in 1995 (it was part of an international study

of the issue), the laundry was done by [gals 75%] of the time, the grocery shopping 59[%] of the time, and deciding on what to have for dinner 70[%] of the time. Put it this way: for every hour a [guy] spends on domestic chores, [a gal] will spend three. The only category of chore [guys] always or usually did was small repairs around the house. So there you have it. While many [guys] are more than happy to perform traditional... tasks like lawn-mowing, DIY and light-bulb changing, much housework remains [gal] work – and not doing it can sometimes prove disastrous. Last year a 24-year-old Nelson [husband] assaulted his wife after [the wife] refused to clean the bedroom. According to police, the couple's argument about it ended with him dragging her into the bedroom by the hair, throwing her on the bed and then hurling a container full of liquid at her. [The wife] was holding their six-month-old child at the time... [A]fter admitting the charge and being sentenced to six months' supervision, [the husband] was also ordered to do a living-without-violence course. But the judge did note that instead of getting angry [the husband] should have done the job himself. So why... won't [guys] just do their half around the house? It's partly about conditioning and partly about money, says... a sociology professor at the University of Auckland. "In countries like N[Z] there is vast imbalance between paid work as well as unpaid work, with [guys] doing the vast amount of paid work. So you can say... it makes sense for [NZ guys] not to do half the housework if [gals] are only doing a quarter of the earning." Indeed, the short answer to the question is that N[Z] is still very traditional, with a large number of [mothers still staying] at home looking after the kids. [The professor,] a Canadian who has been studying the issue since the 1970s, says things have got better since the rise of feminism, but only slightly. [Guys] now do more housework, and the [guys] most likely to do it, apart from those living alone, are the educated middle-class. "They accept the ideology that housework should be evenly distributed." Even so, the so-called "New [Guy]" – the sort of chap who [experiences womb-envy and] feels guilty because [of his inability to] breast-feed – appears to be a myth... But is it only [guys (and their mothers)] at fault? Perhaps [gals] just expect too much. Indeed, some of the [guys and gals] spoken to in the course of this inquiry agree that [gals] have a more exacting yardstick for measuring dirt... "Basically, [guys] have no idea what clean means," says... an Auckland advertising administrator. "That usually means... [gals] end up doing most of the housework, as the guys reckon if we want it clean to [gal] standards, then we can do it. Basically, [guys] are quite happy living in tidy but unclean houses." What are [gals] doing about it? Well, the obvious thing – if you can afford it – is to pay someone else to do the dirty work. That's surely one... reason for the booming Auckland home-cleaning industry. One of the bigger operations, Green Acres (which offers everything from ironing to dog washing) has jumped from two franchises to 64 in just four years of operation. Its two-person teams now clean at least 2000 homes every week... at a... minimum of \$45 a visit. A cheaper option is... a local guide to winning the chore war... [– the] 1997 book *I Love You, But...* The Auckland contract accountant's idea is to use business methodology to solve the problem. It's simple: you beat them into submission with a business plan, an organisation chart and a position description. [The accountant has] sold about 2500 copies of the book. But while [the accountant] had a "very positive" reaction, [the accountant] knows of fewer than 20 cases of real success from it. [The accountant] admits it's a depressing figure that isn't helped by using five-cent psychology like the British magazine *Company*. It has declared that housework is sexy... For the record, cleaning the dunny will never be sexy. For blokes, it will never even fall into the "has a nice personality" category. That's why, as one [gal] once told me, "most [guys] think God cleans the toilet." I'm sure God does[– after all, God has more in common with gals than guys, who are incapable of creating new life from within their own bodies!] □ Next week: The [guy] who does it all...

MEET... the guy who does everything. Cooking, vacuuming, the laundry and the lawns, the dunny – no problem, the 42-year-old Weymouth wonder does the lot and [i]s happy to do it. [Mr 42] and his 30-year-old partner... a personal assistant, are doing very nicely. His personal circumstances mean [Mr 42] is at home all day – well... at[least] when... not playing golf on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. "Hey, I don't mind doing housework," [Mr 42] says sipping a can of beer. "It's not really that hard... But... [a]s far as I'm concerned, when you're in a relationship it's give and take." ...[unfortunately, many of his gender still say: 'Around the house I never lift a finger, as a husband and father I'm sub-par, I'd rather drink a beer than win Father of the Year, I'm happy with things the way they are'. However, i]t can be argued that, internationally, the N[Z gal] doesn't do too badly in the Chore Wars. According to a 1994 study, fewer N[Z gals (75%)] "always or usually" did the washing and ironing compared to those in Germany (88[%]), Britain (79[%]), the Netherlands (87[%]) or Sweden (80[%]). These figures suggest the Kiwi [guy] is not quite as lazy as the Euro [guy. And NZ gals]... are grateful. So grateful in fact that they have begun exaggerating how much housework their partners do... says... a [gal] sociology professor at the University of Auckland... [By the way, yesterday guys] in Russia's mainly Muslim Ingushetia region were told by a federal court they can no longer marry up to four [wives] each.

...Meet... the first American polygamist brought to trial in 50 years AS proposals go, it wasn't exactly hearts and flowers. 'I called [hi]m and I told him to come and get me because I wanted to marry him,' recalls... one of [hi]s nine wives... H[im] has five wives, four ex-wives and 30 children – the youngest born just weeks ago. [Hi]m must have something – stamina for a start – but [i]s no oil painting. H[im] i]s 52, paunchy, with thick glasses, thin hair and a red beard which is going grey. None of this matters in the slightest to [the 50-year-old wife]. Nor does his unconventional lifestyle. When [the 50-year-old] asked him to marry her, h[im] was already married to one of her sisters – and her 15-year-old daughter. And just for good measure h[im] went on to marry another of [her] daughters, aged only 14. Now [hi]m is facing up to 25 years in jail after being convicted of bigamy and failure to provide child support. H[im] branded the verdict 'lousy' and accused[the] prosecutor... of being 'a hell of a liar'. Amazingly, all but one of [the] wives and ex-wives are on his side... The authorities were finally goaded into action when [hi]m took his wives onto [a TV chat show] to boast about their lifestyle... The w[ives] do not believe in make-up and wear clothes in the style of the mid-1800s pioneers... Technically, only two are still [hi]m's wives, as three divorced him to avoid being charged with bigamy, but they still live with him like the others. And they all call themselves 'sister-wives'. The 'Chief Wife' is [the 50-year-old's 28-year-old] niece... Her most important duty is updating the 'Little Blue Book' – a sex rota that decides who will climb into [hi]m's bed on which night. H[im] sleeps with only one wife at a time... [One of them says the wives] are in control of everything. 'We rotate sex to eliminate any problems or jealousy,'... But what happens if [hi]m gets tired? 'That never happens,' laughs [the 25-year-old]... 'Of course, we sister-wives like to think we're good in bed, so there is some competition among us to please [hi]m more than the others... We are fundamentalist Mormons, and the Book of Mormon says that a husband does not have the right to divorce a wife. But [a wife] can divorce him. [A guy] cannot turn a [gal] down either. If [a gal] wants to be his wife and obey his rules and be in his family, [a guy] cannot say no – no matter how ugly [the gal] might be.' ...Although now frowned upon by Mormon leaders – who excommunicate polygamists – the practice has always been tolerated in Utah. An estimated 30,000 polygamists live in the state, mostly in remote desert communities.

...The conviction of an avowed polygamist who lived... in western Utah may push other polygamists deeper underground, say the [52-year-old]'s lawyers... And that may be just what local leaders want as the state polishes its image before[applying to host] the 2002 Winter Olympics...

BACK in 1911 when... a native of Alsace-Lorraine, stepped ashore on Bathurst Island... the... missionary... could never have imagined one day becoming master of a "harem" of 150 Aboriginal maidens. The story of the bishop's harem is just part of the colourful history of the two Tiwi islands – Bathurst and Melville – 80km from Darwin... The Tiwi are an Aboriginal people whose matriarchal culture evolved in isolation from the mainland over thousands of years. These Aborigines knew no boomerangs, spear-throwers or kangaroos but did develop distinctive art forms, including grave poles prized by museums and collectors worldwide. For many years the missionaries found the going tough, for the Tiwi were deeply enmeshed in a complex web of belief, kinship and custom, including a rigid system of arranged marriage. At puberty a girl was claimed by a [guy] old enough to be her father. Wealth was measured in wives. Father Gsell soldiered on without so much as a single baptism, until at dusk one evening in 1921, [a]10-year-old... ran up to his door. [The girl] was a rebel, fleeing her "hairy old leprous" husband, aged 35, and his other 12

wives, and her plea for sanctuary precipitated a crisis. Armed [Tiwi guys] gathered to demand her return. Father Gsell sought guidance from above and was rewarded with the inspiration that [a missionary], too, could buy a [wife]. Laying out a selection of trade goods – knives, axes, mirrors – [Father Gsell] invited the belligerents to do business. The deal was done. [The girl] was... his bride by Tiwi custom. And so the bishop... began to build his congregation... Once “divorced” by Father Gsell, the girls became free to choose husbands of their own age, within the limits of customary law and blood relationships... [Speaking of customs, imagine having your neck extended by large rings or] having your two lower incisor teeth removed with the tip of a lance at the age of 10 to make way for a decorative lip plate. That’s the practice still common among the Mursi tribe of Ethiopia... Mursi [gals] are famous for their huge lip plates, which are regarded by them as a symbol of beauty and wealth. Before marriage, the... bottom lip is pierced and stretched using different sized plates until the entire length of the lips is slit to accommodate the ceramic disk.

...The practice of “foot-binding” began about 500 years ago in China... [‘clearly marking a fall in the status of gals, but’ feet are no longer bound tightly in a painful attempt to make them smaller – allegedly to make them more attractive (or was it to stop wives running away when husbands wanted sex?). Incidentally, a NZ]-born polygamist who had nine wives and 63 children was refused bail yesterday when... appear[ing] in a Melbourne court charged with 22 child sex offences... includ[ing] two counts of sexual penetration... and... of attempted sexual penetration... of a child under 10...

MELBOURNE [– A guy] who burnt his wife to death after [the wife] refused to have sex with his three mates has been jailed for at least 13 years.

...Nearly one in three sexual assaults are committed by partners or former partners, says Rape Crisis. More than 200 [NZ gals] reported partner rape to the agency last year and this was nearly 30[%] of rapes reported, up from 14.4[%] in 1996. Rape Crisis... is focusing on “Partner rape – the ultimate home invasion.” during Rape Awareness Week which starts today... [A spokesperson] says rape between partners has been a crime since 1986, yet very few [guys] have been charged with or convicted of this offence. “Many of the [guys] who choose to sexually assault their partners have great reputations and might be seen as really caring husbands or boyfriends... This makes it much harder for the [victims] to tell anyone.” ...Some rapists still believe they had consensual sex with their victims even though they are serving jail terms, a leading rape researcher says.

...Italy’s highest appeals court, the Court of Cassation, said [yesterday that] it was impossible to take off tight pants like jeans “without the cooperation of the person wearing them.” ...The ruling came in the appeal of the... conviction of a 45-year-old driving instructor in southern Italy... for raping an 18-year-old student. [The Court of Cassation said the student] must have consented to sex and sent the case back for retrial... A lower court had sentenced [the driving instructor] to two years and eight months in prison... A[USn gal] groups have reacted with disbelief... “Usually [rape victims] are blamed for wearing something too skimpy and now it’s because they’re wearing jeans,” [the AUSn Gals’] Electoral Lobby convener... said... “Nothing will satisfy the Judiciary – and it’s not confined to Italy – it doesn’t matter what you wear, the [victim] will still unfortunately have to shoulder some of the blame for rape,” said... the N[SW] Rape Crisis Centre.

...California’s [gal] lawmakers wore jeans to the capital, Sacramento, yesterday to protest against an Italian judge’s... [rape ruling. They] called on lawmakers throughout the world to join the protest... [(in the US, ‘the horrible rape rate for 100,000 gals over 12 grew from 46.3 in 1970 to 96.6 in 1990’). Meanwhile,] British prison bosses are considering dangling the carrot of sex to make inmates behave... The move is similar to... schemes in Scandinavia and other parts of Europe. In Spain, [prisoners] are given condoms, shower facilities and clean towels in rooms where they... [and their] wives or partners... can spend four hours together. However, victim support groups reacted angrily to the idea. “What next?...” said... the Victims of Crime Trust[. “Supplying prisoners with prostitutes, perhaps?”

...Gal] prisoners in the U[S] are subjected... to rape and being sold as “sex slaves” to [guy] inmates, Amnesty International says. In a wide-ranging report the human rights organisation said [guy] guards often supervised naked [gal] prisoners and searched them in ways involving contact with their breasts and genitalia. The authorities’ response to complaints was inadequate, leaving the victims with “no voice,”... While many... nations follow U[N standards that gal] prisoners should be closely supervised only by [gals, guy] guards in US prisons may watch... [while a gal prisoner] is dressing, showering or using the toilet... Many of the violations described in the report are illegal under US law. But... [gal] prisoners find it difficult to stop unlawful conduct by guards or to have a perpetrator brought to justice, Amnesty said, citing the case of... [the prisoner who] filed a lawsuit against US authorities in 1996... [after being] raped, sodomised and made into a sex slave by guards who “sold” access to her cell to [guy] inmates in a federal prison in Dublin, California. The case, filed with two fellow... prisoners, was settled out of court and the US Bureau of Prisons agreed to institute significant reforms. It paid the [three victims] \$500,000... to partially compensate them for their ordeal... “[Gals] in prison have been sentenced to be deprived of their liberty not to be subjected to sexual abuse,” said... Amnesty’s campaigns director for Britain. “The US is a country that prides itself on its constitution and often draws attention to human rights abuses in other countries...”

[‘No-one knows the exact number of political prisoners in China. Estimates range from hundreds of thousands to 20 million overall. Many are guilty of nothing more than calling for what we take for granted: freedom. Their numbers have swelled with the arrest and imprisonment of students and others who protested for democracy in Tiananmen Square. Many languish in jail, while others are exploited as slave labour. Now, China’s masters want loans and assistance to export products made by political prisoners.’ While on the topic of Chinese slaves, two gals] forced to provide sexual services to the Japanese army... during... [WW2 have appeared in] court... in Tokyo and told of the brutality they experienced as “comfort [gals]”. “All I could do was cry. I had no sexual experience before,”... said [one, who] was 15 when four Japanese soldiers barged into her house and dragged her away in front of her mother to where the soldiers were stationed. Her mother later committed suicide while [her daughter] was confined in a cave for five months, [being] raped by the soldiers day and night. She lost the vision in her right eye and has difficulty walking, disabilities [the gal] said were caused by the soldiers’ violent assaults. [The other gal]... was forced to serve up to 10 Japanese soldiers every day[, and in]... the evening... was raped... by... the... commander... After [her escape] from the brothel, no one in her village wanted to marry her and [the gal] lived the next 50 years in shame, never revealing the truth until recently. The two... are among a group of six Chinese... who filed a lawsuit against the Japanese Government last August, demanding \$270,000 in damages and a public apology. In December 1991, 35 [Koreans]... launched a similar suit... 500 South Korean protesters gathered in Seoul on Saturday to demand that Tokyo pay compensation... Friday’s hearing was the first time any of the [victims] had testified on what they had suffered. The suits challenge the Japanese Government’s contention that the issue of compensation ended with treaties normalising ties with Asian neighbours. Instead, the government set up a “private” Asia [Gal’s] Fund, which is still wrangling over the amount to pay the estimated 300 [survivors]... The fund managers agreed to payments of \$26,000 as one-time compensation, aside from the government’s plan to provide \$9.3 million as medical and welfare aid. But many of the former sex slaves said they will refuse the payments because they want direct compensation from the Japanese Government. They also want a letter from... [Japan’s PM] acknowledging the government’s “moral responsibility”. A report that [the PM] would accept such responsibility could not be confirmed. After decades of denials, the Japanese government acknowledged... that it operated wartime brothels with conscripted... [foreigners] in 1992... Historians say as many as 200,000... sex slaves... were rounded up.

...[‘a Dutch-Indonesian, who was 21 when the Japanese invaded, and was forced to have an abortion after being raped up to 10 times a day for three months – her body was so damaged that after the war the girl who had led a comfortable and secure Catholic life on her parent’s sugar plantation miscarried three times and needed surgery to eventually have two daughters to her husband – and who only went public with her story so that such atrocities may never happen again, pointed out that after the recent overthrow of Indonesia’s Government, Chinese people had been raped by soldiers.’ In related news, h]uman rights activists say thousands of farm workers are trapped in feudal servitude in southern Sind province, despite forced

labour being banned four years ago... Authorities have been raiding landlords' estates and freeing workers, but few prosecutions have been laid. [One worker claims to have been] gang-raped by her landlord and four of his men. [The worker] and her husband, who owed their landlord a small debt, fled when [the landlord] threatened to sell her. They fear for the children they left behind. Another worker... fled after subsisting on a ration of flour in return for labouring in sugarcane fields. The illiterate [other worker] said his master claimed [the other worker] owed him 400,000 rupees... Workers who questioned their debts were beaten, [the other worker claimed.

...the 44-year-old was just an ordinary looking guy the 23-year-old had met at a party. So when the guy offered her a lift home, the gal thought nothing of it. While the gal waited in his garage for him to fetch his car keys, the guy offered her a quick drink to ward off the cold. Moments later, the gal passed out. When the sleeping tablets wore off, the gal woke to find herself in an airless bunker, six metres below ground. The pale faces of four other captives peered at her; two of them bore the tattoo "slave" on their foreheads. They'd been there for two years. The slaves were forced to work day and night, making underwear, housecoats and oven mitts for their captor to sell at the local markets of Vyatskiye Polyany, a small industrial town 1000km east of Moscow. If they failed to fulfil his clothing orders, they were beaten and raped. Within a few months of the 23-year-old's kidnapping, only three of the five slaves were alive, taking the murder toll to four. The first two were guys recruited to help enlarge the bunker then killed for fear they would blab. One was electrocuted, while the other was forced to drink poisonous antifreeze. Their bodies were dumped in nearby wasteland. Police assumed they were alcoholics who had frozen to death. The captor was eventually arrested in July last year. Today, his victims are attempting to piece together their lives, but the process is painful. "No-one can imagine what I've been through," says the 23-year-old. ■ 'In mid-1987 "Sabrina" had accepted a sailor's invitation to join him on board his ship at the Auckland waterfront. A naive teenager, Sabrina thought it was just going to a party and never imagined the ship would leave while a guest was on board. Sabrina remembered being held in a coffin-like box in one of the cabins as the ship rolled through the ocean. Eventually, Sabrina was taken ashore in Ecuador, but her ordeal was only beginning. Sabrina was chained in a basement dungeon with other girls who were held as sex slaves.'

...Police in Los Angeles are looking for a guy who allegedly imprisoned a Guatemalan in his caravan for 14 months and repeatedly raped, beat and tortured her. The 27-year-old victim, who was also forced to cook and clean for the guy, two other gals and five children, told her story after unlocking the chains at night and escaping from the caravan. The ordeal began when the Guatemalan was lured to the caravan by the promise of a job.'

...Slavery is thriving in modern times, according to a report prepared for the U[N]. There are... entire Nepalese families[who've been] held in slavery for generations... An Asian group... said more than 55 million Indian children were kept in servitude although slave labour was officially abolished 20 years ago. In Pakistan there had been 774 cases of employers convicted for exploiting child labour... Another contemporary form of slavery was evident in the living conditions of migrant workers employed in Gulf states such as Kuwait, and also in Britain, the Netherlands and Greece... [T]he principal victims of this kind of slavery were [gals], whose employers demanded that they reimburse the costs of their travel and of immigration formalities. The most frequent abuses consisted in the employer confiscating the employees' passports, lack of payment for months and physical violence. Official statistics quoted included 690,000 immigrant domestic employees in France and 600,000 in Spain.

...Slavery has returned in... Africa's largest country. Behind the cloak of a brutal civil war, tens of thousands of people have been abducted from their homes and sold like chattel... Some are bought by individual owners to serve as field workers, household servants or concubines. Others, confined in camps, work on government farms or are leased to large private landowners. Still others are reportedly exported to Libya and countries in the Persian Gulf. Whoever their "owners," the captives are often treated brutally. They are regularly beaten and sexually abused. They are branded as if they were cattle. Slaves who try to escape are... mutilated or murdered. [But]Sudan's Islamic rulers... flatly deny it. [The]Sudanese Justice Minister... declared to a London newspaper: "Slavery does not exist in Sudan and will not be condoned by the government." On my recent visit to the region, however, scores of escaped slaves told me that the Khartoum regime is lying. What's more, investigations by private human-rights groups and the U[N] confirm that the Sudanese regime condones slavery as a means of subjugating the people of southern Sudan. - 1996

['Christian Solidarity International (CSI) – a Zurich-based human rights group – has bought the freedom of 1050 slaves in Sudan, mainly children, for \$US50 per person with the help of the Confessing Church Movement in Germany and North American financial backers, including the American Anti-Slavery Group and the Canadian-based Slave Redemption Project. It was the largest number of slaves known to have been freed at one time. In all, CSI has liberated some 5066 slaves through its programme since 1995. However, CSI said that Sudanese Government forces were mobilising ahead of a fresh wave of what it called "slave raids" expected next month in the famine-hit southern region of Bahr-El-Ghazal. "The armed forces of the Government of Sudan systematically capture and use Christians and animist black African slaves – particularly child-slaves – as one of the most potent instruments of its declared jihad against the communists that resist its totalitarian policies of forced Islamisation and Arabisation.']

...NINETY children have been rescued from being sold as slaves in the West African country of Benin. A senior officer from Benin's police force said three adults were arrested as the children were about to be loaded on to buses to be taken to... Nigeria's main port city, Lagos. Benin's newspapers carried reports that 42 children were rescued by the police in similar circumstances last week... Trading in children is a common practice in both Benin and Nigeria... Child Rights organisers in Nigeria say... [t]he practice is tolerated and perpetuated by many educated Nigerians who say that some children[do] end up better off than they would in their villages... however, [the]... "house helps" in Nigeria... are not paid and are often poorly fed, even when other children in the house are well looked after... [In addition, they] are often sexually abused, beaten and made to work long hours[. □ Police have also 'rescued 23 youngsters in a raid on a Kathmandu carpet-weaving factory after 2 youths escaped to raise the alarm. Those released were in a shocking condition. The skin on the hands of some of them was "peeling off from long-untreated diseases". Most appeared haggard, unhealthy and feeble – a result of long hours of work in damp and cramped quarters without sunlight. They said they hadn't received their promised 1200 rupees wages in the 2 1/2 years they had worked there. The dirty youngsters had been confined in a room containing only 6 mattresses and 5 blankets. The person whom the youngsters identified as the owner has been arrested, but denied the charges, saying the children had been cared for adequately.'

...the UN] conference on how to stamp out child labour did one good thing at least. It ignored the easy and hurtful campaign to boycott goods made by child workers. One logical outcome of a boycott would be to kill all Indian exports of tea and rice. In turn that would threaten the two great changes India has achieved in 50 years of independence – self-sufficiency in grains and the growth of a prosperous middle class. Those two changes mean an end to the appalling famines that British rule created and a huge increase in the number of people too rich to be trapped by the slave-masters who run the factories that hold child and adult workers in bondage. Not that child labour is caused only by vile and rapacious capitalists. In India alone, 60 million children are reckoned to be working. A fair slab of them made a perfectly rational choice. They faced starvation, prostitution or work, and chose the least disagreeable path... [B]y boycotting goods made by children, am I not also making damn sure that none of my money goes into the kids' ricebowls? In a world of moral uncertainties I say – but without cast-iron conviction – buy and hope. And have a bob each way by... giving another dollar to... Save the Children.

...Beneath Asia's economic miracle lies a darker side – the growing menace of trafficking in [gals] and children, exploited for their... pursuit of better lives... [They] are... used for sex, labour, begging, false marriages, adoptions and... as agents of crime. Now with the economic downturn in many countries of the region, "there is a fear of more opportunities for exploitation... especially... via the sex trade." ...From one Lao province alone, Savanakhet, "more than 15,000 of their youth sought employment in Thailand in 1995." They... [were] forced to work in factories without

pay, or as servants in private homes... [or] in restaurants and night clubs “to repay debts or fees.” ...Many are... doing dangerous work in unhealthy living conditions... [W]hile precise numbers are unavailable, Thai Immigration Bureau data put the number... of... migrant workers... [being] trafficked through Thailand to Malaysia and Singapore... at 500,000. Other studies estimate the numbers at between one and two million.

...[The AUSn] Minister for Justice yesterday flagged tougher laws to curb the burgeoning sex slave trade between Asia and A[US]... “There is state legislation in place that deals with sex slaves... but we want to get at the perpetrators of this crime and make life very difficult for them.” ...[the minister] said there were between 200 and 300 sex slaves in A[US], and there was strong evidence of links between the trade and organised crime. Girls as young as 13... were brought to A[US] under the ruse of paying off a family debt. Once in the country, their passports were taken and they... [find] their contracts... demand that each [slave’s] brothel earnings go directly to the owner until her debt is paid.

...Four people accused of holding dozens of deaf mute Mexicans in servitude have been charged with conspiring to transport and conceal illegal aliens. The ringleaders allegedly forced their victims to live in dire poverty and sell trinkets on the streets and subways of New York City... [A]uthorities estimate... the scheme... earned up to \$US1 million... a year... [Incidentally, the US President] will consider extending a national apology to Black Americans for slavery – but not compensation for their ancestors’ suffering. “It’s been so long and we’re so many generations removed,”... The idea of an apology came from a white Ohio lawmaker who introduced apology legislation in Congress last week, just as [the President] was preparing to unveil his national initiative on race in a speech in San Diego... Last month, [the President] apologised for America to the black [guys] who were unwitting experiment subjects in the... Government’s... 1930s-era Tuskegee Syphilis Study... [(during which the subjects) were told they had bad blood, and were denied syphilis treatment, even for years after penicillin came into use in 1947; b]y the time the study was exposed in 1972, 28... had died, 100 others were dead of related complications, at least 40 wives had been infected and 19 children had contracted the disease at birth[)]... and in January [the President] awarded – 50 years late – the Medal of Honour to seven black soldiers for valour in combat... [(a)lthough 1.7 million blacks served in... W[W2], they did not receive one of the 432 Medals of Honour awarded[; a] special team of military historians who investigated the issue for the Army concluded that racial segregation and prevailing attitudes towards blacks were the reasons[)]... Slavery was a central theme in the consultations that [the President] made with activists, scholars and other experts in drafting his plan for a national dialogue on race. Their advice was... to... first address the lingering wounds of slavery, then try to resolve the array of... problems that stem from it. - 1997

There are now more slaves in the world than at any time in human history, according to research by an adviser to the U[N. The]... professor of sociology at the University of Surrey, has calculated that 27 million people are living as slaves... [(this] figure... did not include the millions of people working in sweat-shops or doing prison labour[), and says]... that although legal ownership of people is no longer claimed, modern slaves were living in worse conditions than when the practice was lawful... “[People] must understand that slavery is a relationship between two people marked by dominance,”... [The professor said] that slavery was becoming common in First World countries such as Britain as human trafficking led to people being tricked into domestic service and prostitution[), but] said the problem was not being taken seriously because modern forms of exploitation did not mirror traditional ideas of slavery... The form of modern slavery which most compares to the common idea of the problem is the increasingly rare chattel slavery, where people are born or sold into the possession of another. Chattel slavery is still found in... Africa and some Arab states. At its height the Roman Empire was said to absorb 500,000 slaves a year, with around 250,000 living in Rome itself – around a quarter of the city’s population. Best estimates of the transatlantic slave trade suggest... 13 million people were taken from Africa over a 350-year period.

...[‘In 1550, the king’s counsellors gathered to listen to two great figures of the age – one speaking for the South and Central American Indians, the other for the mission of Imperial Spain. It was quite a moment in the history of the world – the first time that principles of universal human rights and global justice were worked out. The philosopher concluded by saying human beings are not equal, that some are superior to others, and the inhabitants of the New World were natural slaves because they were barbarous and inhumane. “How can it be doubted that they have been justly conquered by our most humane nation, which excels at every kind of virtue.” The Dominican’s argument was that the conquests of the New World were wrong and had to be stopped, because it is unjust to wage war against our fellow humans. The king listened, but couldn’t stop history – driven, as ever, by the lust for gold.’ ●] THE parents accused of keeping children in slavery receive \$64,000-a-year in state benefits... The married couple – aged 50 and 45 – have had up to 17 children in their care... Their Wellington home was raided by detectives who arrested them on charges of assault, neglect and using children as slaves.

...Slavery charges against a Wellington[ian] and his wife were dropped when they appeared in the Wellington District Court yesterday. But the pair admitted 22 assaults between them, using belts, brooms, a vacuum cleaner pipe and high-heeled shoes to attack up to eight foster and adopted children in their care. The pair also pleaded guilty to neglect and cruelty against the children... Three children were put to work unpaid late into the night last year, cleaning office blocks around Wellington for the step-parents, who were also contract cleaners.

During the 1830s-40s, Maori life was considerably altered... Cannibalism, which had been a significant source of protein as well as a ritual[‘following war as a final humiliation inflicted on the defeated (after a skirmish most captives were killed and eaten although young gals and children were often taken as slaves’)], declined as the supply of pigs increased and Christianity spread. Infanticide, polygamy and slavery gradually diminished.

A widespread institution in ancient times, slavery had died out in England by the 12th c. The transportation of slaves from Africa to the Americans by European traders began on a large scale in the 16th and 17th c., and although slavery became illegal in Britain in 1772, [‘the need for cheap labour in new colonies’ meant that] it remained an important part of the economy of the Empire until the 19th c., the slave trade being abolished in 1807 and slavery itself throughout the Empire in 1833. [Interestingly, ‘William Penn (1644-1718), the English Quaker reformer and founder of Pennsylvania, had done something to mitigate the evils of slavery, but held black slaves himself.’ ‘In 1808 the US Congress banned further importation of slaves but the slave population still rose from 700,000 in 1790 to 2 million by 1830.’] In the American South slavery was an essential part of the cotton-based economy, and the abolition campaign waged during the first half of the 19th c. eventually led to the American Civil War and to final emancipation[in 1865]. In some parts of the world chattel slavery, the ownership of one person by another, continues to exist.

It continued in Moslem countries[– where it is condoned by the Koran (Muslim guys even have absolute sexual rights over their slaves – 23:6; although they ‘shall not force a slave-girl into prostitution in order to make money, if the slave-girl wishes to preserve her chastity’ – 24:33) –] Central Asia, and China through the 19th cent. [Jeremiah 34:9 forbids the enslavement of fellow Jews, but ‘in the Old Testament slavery was taken for granted as part of the social order and a series of laws was developed regulating the treatment of slaves. In the New Testament there is no outright condemnation of slavery, although it can be argued that Christ’s teaching as a whole is an implicit criticism of the institution’ (‘Text for Today Whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave. – Matthew 10:26,27.’). However, n]ear-slavery, in the form of serfdom, prevailed in tsarist Russia until 1861, and forced labour became common in Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany. The League of Nations declared against slavery in 1926. In 1935 the existence of slavery in Ethiopia was cited by Italy as a justification for invasion, but before the year was over the Ethiopian government abolished the institution. Members of the U[N] have formally condemned slavery although some

countries refused to sign the protocol. Saudi Arabia, for example, refused to sign because of... well founded... charges... that slavery still exists there... The unilateral exploitation of one life form by another is called parasitism.

Tapeworms, or cestodes, are... about the most unpleasant of parasites, yet we cannot ignore them... The hydatid worm... is one of the most serious tapeworms that infects [people] since its larval hydatid cysts may be formed in various organs and can be removed only by operation. These cysts are sometimes as large as 10 in. across. Thousands of scoleces may develop in each, as well as secondary cysts which each contain a dozen or more scoleces. Development into the adult occurs only if a larval scolex is eaten by a member of the dog family. The frequency of hydatid cysts in [shepherds] is closely related to the density of sheep in the area, for these infect the sheepdogs and [a shepherd] tends to become infected in turn by the eggs from his dogs... [Other serious ones are the *pork tapeworm*, which] lives as an adult only in the human intestine and... *beef tapeworm*...

[*Beef comes from*] large hollow-horned ruminants, belonging to the family Bovidae... called cattle. The name, from the Latin for 'head' indicates property, and meant originally much the same as 'capital' and 'chattel'... Strictly speaking, cattle must be domesticated, and the two species are the western... and the zebu of southern Asia and Africa. Western cattle were derived from the aurochs... which once lived in the forests of Europe and Asia and became extinct in 1627, the last survivor dying in a Polish park... The date and place of the first domestication are unknown. By 2500 BC several domesticated breeds were already in existence... While prehistoric [humans were still hunters, they] killed the aurochs for its meat and hide. When it was domesticated [they] could get milk from it as well, and as [humans became farmers, they] could use it for pulling the plough... It seems likely that in early days of domestication and, in some countries, persisting even to this day, the primary use of cattle was as draught animals... In parts of Africa they are an index of wealth, a means of purchasing wives – cattle or chattels in the original sense of the word... Cattle... [have an] ability to do well on a wide variety of foods... and... naturally live in groups, or herds, which means they readily form social bonds with others of their kind. They also live readily with... other species, which makes it easy for them to live in association with... [humans. However, the] whole process of domestication is so sophisticated that one is constantly surprised that primitive peoples should have accomplished it. Their knowledge of natural history may have been rule-of-thumb, but it was none the less profound. For example, primitive peoples today dealing with semi-wild cows quickly learn that the sight of a calf, or of a boy dressed in a calf skin, will cause the let-down of milk in an otherwise refractory cow. Moreover, in the absence of these the let-down can be stimulated through inflating the cow's vagina by blowing air into it.

According to the Bible, the first thing God ever said to humans was that they could 'have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth' (Genesis 1:28), while the second thing was: 'Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat' (Genesis 1:29). But God later told Noah: 'Every living thing [– excluding other humans –] shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things' (Genesis 9:3-4). From that, and Noah's act of making 'the first burnt offering on the first altar', evolved the Jewish practice of killing animals according to a set ritual.

According to Jewish law... only certain animals slaughtered in a prescribed way and prepared according to set rules, are considered kosher[– the]... term used to designate food permissible for consumption...

Because such rituals have to be performed by authorised (i.e., trained) people, those people can charge more money for their meat than unauthorised butchers. Another point, and one which has greater relevance to the present, is the notion that when Noah and his family eventually got out of their ark, 'every living substance which was upon the face of the ground was destroyed' (Genesis 7:23) – i.e., there wouldn't initially have been anything in the way of vegetation for them to eat (other than whatever they had stored on board)! It's possible, therefore, that when God gave Noah permission to eat animals (fish and offspring of the animals it had carried in the ark, presumably), God was merely temporarily making a practical detour from its earlier commandment. In that case, people who continue to eat other animals are disobeying God – and, perhaps, challenging God to punish them?

A fourth British cattle farmer has died from the human version of mad cow disease, raising fears that it may be possible to get the disease from simple contact with infected cattle and feed... [In another development, r]elatives of children who died from the human equivalent of mad cow disease after being treated with human growth hormone have won a court case for compensation from the British Government. A London court ruled at the weekend that the Department of Health had been negligent, but only in cases arising from treatment after July 1, 1977, when the risk of catching Creutzfeldt Jakob Disease (CJD) should have become clear... [At least 10] children... died of CJD and two now have the invariably fatal neurological disease. The case has no connection with the new strain of CJD which triggered the mad cow scare and beef crisis in Europe.

...The British Government has put on hold a plan to cull 147,000 cattle because of mad cow disease... "The new scientific evidence available means that further work is needed on appropriate culling strategies," said a spokes[person] for the British P[M]. The PM] acted after reviewing the latest evidence from a group of Oxford University scientists who argued that the disease would die out naturally within five years and that mass culling was unnecessary... [However, the] European Commission President... said that Britain's decision had not [changed] the rest of Europe's view... At a E[U] summit in Florence in June, [the British PM] agreed with other European leaders that Britain would impose a cull and other measures in return for a gradual lifting of the worldwide ban on British beef exports... After the Florence deal, [the British PM] had... expected the E[U] to start lifting the ban within five months but this confident prediction found little backing from other EU countries. After talks with European farm ministers in Brussels this week, British officials said they were once again convinced that the ban was not about to be lifted.

...In the "first comprehensive analysis" of the... mad cow epidemic... in the scientific journal *Nature*, the veterinarians, epidemiologists and other experts said it would be hard to get rid of the epidemic any faster without slaughtering vast numbers of cattle... British scientists predict the... epidemic will die out by 2001 but admit they still do not know how many people will get the human form of the disease... [–] which normally strikes one in a million per year and has an incubation period of up to 30 years... [–] from eating infected meat... [However, researchers led by a] zoologist and epidemiologist... of Oxford used statistical analysis to predict there would be 340 new infections and 14,000 new cases of BSE before 2001. They also gave what they believed to be definitive numbers on the epidemic. About 446,000 infected animals were eaten before the use of infected organs was banned in 1989, and 283,000 more before restrictions were tightened last December... BSE... decimated British cattle herds in the 1980s. Scientists decided it was caused by feeding cows the rendered remains of sheep that had scrapie... They eventually banned this type of feed...

A new health scare over mad cow disease... or bovine spongiform encephalopathy... has broken in Europe after scientists warned that the brain-wasting condition could spread directly to sheep[, and the EU] Farm Commissioner... announced new plans to tighten food chain safety... By introducing the agent which causes the disease in cattle to sheep, scientists had found it could spread more widely in sheep than cattle... A similar condition in sheep is known as scrapie... EU vets will consider the [commissioner's plans] on August 1... [T]he Irish Farm Minister... who is chairing the farm talks, appealed for calm. "We have seen the consequences of BSE on beef. It would be a tragedy... to visit the same thing on lamb..."

The latest twist in the long-running controversy over mad-cow disease, linking the disease with sheep, is causing concern at the N[Z] Meat Board offices in Brussels. Suggestions aired by the E[U] Agriculture Commissioner... could have a direct impact on N[Z]'s multimillion-dollar lamb exports to Europe... The fear is... that even if the scare proves unfounded it could still lead to a slump in lamb sales. Scientists have been unable to prove for certain that humans are in danger from BSE-infected cattle, but that has not stopped a crisis in confidence that is still supporting a beef

ban in Europe, and has caused a drop in sales in Britain... “We are talking about an issue of consumer confidence and it is very difficult to predict the consumer reaction.” ...so far British proposals for a cattle cull and selective slaughter have not succeeded in lifting an export ban... [which has left] Britain’s beef industry... in turmoil... The British Minister of Agriculture, [who was] heavily criticised for his handling of the BSE crisis, reacted quickly yesterday by saying that [the commissioner] was talking about a “theoretical risk.” ...[the minister also] said that scientists had found considerable difficulty in passing BSE on to sheep. A BSE adviser to the British Veterinary Association... said: “We have been living with scrapie for more than 200 years and no scientist has been able to make a connection between scrapie and [humans].”

...NZ ‘farmers want an apology after more than 30 million homes in Europe got a leaflet that claimed NZ sheep have scrapie. The PM also called for a retraction. “We don’t have it here. It’s an outrage.” The leaflet – sent out by a German group called the Central Marketing Agency – could impact on meat sales in Germany, one of our biggest markets.’ By the way, NZ s[heep and beef farmers’ profits before tax fell 15[%] last season, says the Meat and Wool Board... The... estimated average price for a head of beef cattle fell... to \$431, compared with \$529 the previous year. The high of \$716... was reached in the 1992-93 season when the U[S] market was strongest. Cattle numbers are estimated to be 10[%] lower because of fewer calves being reared last spring in response to the poor prices. Wool prices were down 7[%], reflecting the continued lack of demand from overseas customers and the high [SNZ]. But lamb prices rose 10[%] and mutton 4[%] as the size of the national flock fell and prices strengthened, particularly in the British market, following the mad cow disease scare. Gross farm revenue fell 5[%] over the past 12 months to \$148,900 a property, and spending was down 2[%]. Interest payments rose 7[%]. To compensate, spending on fertiliser and maintenance was down 11[% and 8[%] respectively.

...Sale day is a social day and, these days, also a profitable one for sheep farmers. With lamb prices reaching a three-year high this month... of \$83 a head... there is plenty to celebrate down on the farm. For shoppers the news is not so good as butchers issue a warning that lamb prices are on the way up... [In related news,] animal welfare campaigners[have expressed] outrage as 70,000 sheep[were] left to die on[a] blazing Panamanian cargo ship en route from... [AUS to the Middle East (where they were due to be slaughtered according to Islamic ritual). ‘All of the ship’s crew were saved. The AUSn RSPCA has requested that such shipments be ended.’ The still-]blazing abandoned ship [has gone missing near the Seychelles. (NZ has also send shiploads of live sheep to Arab nations, but they were ‘temporarily stopped because 5% were dying before arrival.’)

...yesterday, the search for a] ship with 70,000 sheep on board[was] abandoned after debris... [was discovered. In local news, meat] companies have been chided for not undertaking enough research into consumers’ meat preferences or else not publicising their... marketing... activities sufficiently. The Minister of Agriculture... told a N[Z] Farmer function in Wellington that if companies expected farmers to sign long-term contracts they would have to provide far more information... to build the necessary confidence. But [the minister] also said that if farmers “were not prepared to get into bed with meat companies then it would be better for them to sell their farms now and leave the industry. I don’t believe we have much time to get the message across... We are about to have a significant shortage of stock with the risk of a procurement war. That is precisely the last thing the industry needs right now, particularly beef... [A]s minister I am seeking the information...”... In response to a letter to five meat companies... asking about market investment, [the minister] had received four replies. “There... is some investment in the marketplace, particularly with lamb... But what I haven’t seen much of... is companies going to the next level.” ...this required companies to find values which were important to customers, then develop and position a product which latched into those values. [The minister added that] Parliament was unlikely to pass the Producer Board Acts Reform Bill... The bill was introduced into the House last week... [However, the minister] has confirmed that [his ministry] will encourage the select committee to which it is referred to remove meat grading powers from the Meat Board.

...Lack of consistency in beef quality is holding the industry back, says the Meat Board’s market services manager for Europe and the Middle East... [The manager] told a Ministry of Agriculture seminar in Auckland this week it was recognised that N[Z] lamb was the best quality. “That is giving us an edge... But... you can’t get a premium for a variable product... To survive in the marketplace you’ve got to have a product which is better than anyone else’s. We have got to attempt to be number one.” ...[the manager] said the industry was aware of the problem, which related to how cattle were farmed and handled... Establishing a reputation in Asian markets[, which are experiencing]... enormous growth... was not going to be easy... These markets had concerns in the wake of the mad cow disease crisis, so potential customers needed reassuring that N[Z] did not have the disease or the sheep equivalent... [I]n the U[S] market, where most beef is exported at present, prospects were not good for the next... year or 18 months... But [the manager] said the new season’s outlook for lamb prices was more optimistic than that painted by the industry, which predicts prices from \$33 to \$36 a head. “I think we will do better next year than this for lamb...” ...unlimited access for chilled lamb into Europe was “an open door to get into the top end of the market.” A promotion at 22 Sainsburys supermarkets in Britain was introducing new cuts such as parisienne racks, gourmet fillet and grillade steaks to customers. “We are trying to get them to rethink lamb as an upmarket product... It is going extremely well and buyers are coming back.” ...consumption... [of] lamb... in... Europe... had increased 18[%] over the past 12 years... W[TO] figures showed that over the same time lamb consumption was down 46[%] in Japan and 4.3[%] in the US (where the Federal Government recently announced that it ‘aims to try to save the local sheep industry with at least \$US30 million of taxpayers’ money’). In Canada consumption grew 15.7[%]. Beef consumption was up 78.6[%] in Japan, but down 10[%] in the US, 17[%] in Canada and 10.8[%] in the EU. Poultry showed growth in all markets, climbing 31[%] in the US, 39[%] in Canada, 32[%] in Japan, while pork consumption increased 17[%] in Japan and 32[%] in the EU.

...A Dutch rubber company is offering what it claims to be the ultimate in comfort for... pigs, goats... horses... sheep... and... cows – ...waterbeds... [that] cost around \$250 each... “[Animals such as] cows find it takes a bit of getting used to at first, but after initial hesitation they like it,” says [the company’s sales chief, who]... believes that a happier cow will produce more milk... [Speaking of which, d]airy farmers in the Auckland area will be able to apply twice as much nitrogen fertiliser to their properties as their Waikato counterparts. Environment Waikato sets a limit of 100kg of nitrogen a hectare a year. But the Auckland Regional Council’s dairy shed discharge plan, which was adopted by its environmental management committee this week, sets a limit of 200 kilograms... The council[’s] rural resource quality officer... disagreed with Environment Waikato’s contention that application of more than 150kg of nitrogen a year suppressed clover growth... Under the [ARC] plan, discharge of dairy shed sludge and washwater on to farm land is encouraged by being designated a permitted activity while two-pond treatment systems are a controlled activity. About 30[%] of the Auckland area’s 900 dairy farmers spread or spray sludge on their properties but it is hoped that level can be doubled.

...The 6000 farmer suppliers of [NZ’s] largest dairy company have earned an average of \$30,000 more this year. This follows the announcement yesterday of a payout by the N[Z] Dairy Group of \$4.10 a kilogram of milksolids for the past season. This... payout[, which] was the highest received by... the Hamilton-based company[’s]... suppliers... is 60c up on the previous season’s payment of \$3.50...

Almost a quarter of the wool offered at the first sale of the season, in Christchurch, was passed in because it did not reach growers’ reserve prices. Early in the sale passings were running at 36[%]. While Wools of N[Z] did not report a market indicator price, it said most wools on sale were cheaper than at the final sale last season, except for lower micron cross-bred fleece and second shear... Meanwhile, the Ministry of Agriculture forecasts an average wool price for the new season 70c a kilogram higher than the prediction from W[NZ, which]... predicts an average wool price for the coming season of 500c a kilogram. Prices fell an average 11[%] last year... Fine wool prices were hit worst, falling 36[%] to 787c (in ‘September 1995, fine wool had fetched 1400c/kg’)... This was largely a result of... global demand... for use in apparel... being weaker... and problems in the countries which consumed most N[Z] wool. Incidentally, back in the early 1980s, when annually the ‘NZ Government supported woolgrowers incomes by an amount close to \$100 million, the mountain of unsold wool grew to more than 400,000 bales’...

20% of NZ's] 17,000 meat and wool farmers now hold 51% of the... \$9.2 billion... [farmers] owe rural financiers... [Unfortunately, net] profit before tax for the average sheep and beef farmer was about \$35,000 for the 1995-96 financial year, little more than half the average during the decade to 1984-85... [M]any dairy farmers also are under increasing pressure from rising costs and easing output prices. The Dairy Board has warned that its payout to farmers will be down 10% on the previous year... Their only mechanism to beat the lack of profits is to produce more for less cost... [– even though NZ's pastoral farming already] has a worldwide reputation for its efficiency of production... Two-thirds of farmers or their partners already work off the land to supplement their income. And other sources of revenue... are being tapped.

...Deer farmers are being asked to kill at least 10[%] of their velvetling stags this year to fill orders from markets, which are paying record prices for venison. The Game Industry Board chairman... said demand for N[Z] venison was already 25[%] higher than it could supply. "With the peak chilled venison season closed, the supply situation is very serious and we risk losing our best markets,"... At least 40,000 animals were needed over the next few weeks to fill the shortage between production and market demand. Farmers, buoyed by... prices of... \$9 a kilogram for venison... up at least 30[%]... on the year before... have been holding stock back from slaughter for breeding purposes. The board is recommending, however, that below-average velvet-producing stags should be killed over the next six weeks... [Because] the velvet markets were oversupplied, killing poorer-producing animals should ensure that both the velvet and venison industries had a good future... [T]he average schedule price for AP2 venison in the past year was \$6.50 a kilogram, or \$1.50 a kilogram more than in the previous 12 months... [Prices are] likely to continue to rise... [during the next] three years... to be about \$7 a kilogram. Velvet production also would rise, with 700 tonnes being exported by the year 2000. Prices over the past year had fallen from an average of \$158 a kilogram of A-grade velvet to \$135... They are expected to stay at about \$130... over the next three years. "Prices... are expected to remain up in the high area because of good demand from Asian markets,"... But with Korea's consumption growing from 7000 tonnes to 21,000... in 10 years, and the Taiwanese market jumping from 14,000 tonnes to 28,000 in the same time, N[Z] filled only 4 to 5[%] of sales. The... Ministry of [Agriculture's]... regional policy manager for the north region... said that in 20 years, land use for deer farming in N[Z] had risen from 1000ha to 218,000ha. For a model deer farm of 135ha running 2000 stock units – all deer – there was a substantial cash farm surplus of \$111,892 in the past season. Gross farm revenue was \$191,159... Farm spending increased 12[%]. While on the topic of non-traditional meats, passengers]... on some Air N[Z] flights may soon find ostrich... as a menu choice... Afro Ostrich, will supply the airline with meat from its Queensland properties in the next few weeks for... kitchen trials... as the first stage in deciding whether it could be included in in-flight meals. [● 'For those keen to pay \$36/kg to sample ostrich meat, stir-fry packs are available from the Big Fresh supermarket chain.'

...small]-scale ostrich farmers in N[Z] should be wary of getting involved with an overseas company of considerable size, says the former president of the Auckland Ostrich Association... A close working relationship had existed with the A[US]n Ostrich Association... but it needed to be remembered that the N[Z] industry was still in a breeder phase... "We will have 4000 birds throughout the country shortly...,"...

A[US]'s largest ostrich farm, which expects to be running 200,000 birds by the year 2000, is looking to co-operate with N[Z] farmers in product marketing. The international marketing manager of Afro Ostrich farms... said in Auckland last week that the company hoped to have an annual kill of 100,000 birds in six years. It is negotiating to buy a 20,000ha property in Queensland where the birds will be farmed and slaughtered... [B]ecause the birds got stressed easily, resulting in high pH levels and a dark colour to their meat, on-site killing facilities were important... At present, the unlisted company, which was set up three years ago, owns two breeding properties on the Gold Coast. It runs about 2500 ostriches which are the result of crosses between A[US]n grey ostriches which have survived in the wild since earlier farming ventures were abandoned and imported African black, blue and red bloodlines... "The N[Z] ostrich industry is in its infancy but it's developing on the right track. We have the expertise and opportunity to work with N[Z] ostrich growers and we will make an approach to the industry... [F]arms here are small and little guys find it difficult to operate in Northern Hemisphere markets. We have always wanted to get involved in the whole deal, not just breeding and selling ostriches." ...Smaller farmers in A[US] are already beginning to opt out of the industry and... the company is in a good position to soak up the stock they no longer wanted to carry... [However,] the company would not be looking at running birds on farms in... [NZ. O]striches farmed by the company were robust birds producing large amounts of meat, leather and feathers... The company has just signed a heads of agreement with Italian tanners for production of a range of leather goods using ostrich hide... The company already has interest in low-fat, low-cholesterol meat from up-market restaurants in Britain, Europe, the Middle East, the U[S] and Asia, and recently ostrich meat was served to first-class passengers on British Airways... A cookery book containing ostrich recipes is planned[, and]... there were also good prospects for other ostrich products[– which, according to the manager, means it is] highly unlikely that the whole lot would fail at once... More unusual uses of ostrich products are the incorporation of the birds' toenails in jewellery and decorating their hollow [egg]-shells. Research work is being carried out in the U[S] at present on the possible use of their eyes for corneal transplants and the company is financing research at an Italian university which is trying to find a way to use the contents of infertile eggs as a food supplement. Each bird lays an average 60 eggs a year, every one containing around 1.5kg of high-protein material. About 30[%] of the eggs can be infertile... [They are currently] a waste product.

...A national shortage of[chicken] eggs which is causing stores to run low on some lines has prompted predictions of a price increase over the next six months. Egg producers and marketing bodies have blamed the shortfall on the deregulation of the industry in 1987 which left it open to "boom and bust" cycles... The chair[person] of marketers Eggs Incorporated... said there had been no national collection of data since deregulation and production and consumption could not be accurately predicted... A producer... [from] Paerata, said a surplus last year had driven prices down, causing many farmers to cut back their flocks... [and] about 100 farms – mostly small or "part-time" interests – had closed... [In addition,] an anti-battery hen farming campaign, which had looked as if it might result in a national referendum, had... made investment in the industry less attractive... Now farmers were struggling to get replacement stock from hatcheries, which had also cut breeding numbers.

...A vet has been ordered to pay \$A12,300 for endangering the stud career of a Sydney [resident's] prize macaw parrot... [The] 38-year-old investor... sought \$A250,000... [from the] specialist bird vet... for breaking the bird's... left leg... while trying to carry out an x-ray in 1994... [on] its broken right leg... [The judge was told that] the strenuous mating ritual of macaws put extreme pressure on the legs, and now... [the \$A9500 bird bought] in the knowledge it could father six to 10 offspring a year of equal value... was now unlikely to withstand such vigour.

...One mynah bird would begin shouting "Robbie's Coming Home" when its owner was returning from an overseas trip... Some cats and other pets showed the same psychic bond with their owners... While... proof of pets' intuition will please all animal lovers, the bad news is that Britain's pampered cats and dogs are the fattest in Western Europe... [A] survey had asked hundreds of vets in Britain, France, Italy, Holland and Belgium to weigh pets being treated... About 52[%] of Britain's] dogs and 47[%] of its] cats needed treatment for over-eating... [In further *bad news* for animal lovers, 'Taiji village in Japan is the scene of an annual slaughter in which dolphins are casually butchered then their mercury-laden flesh is sold as whale meat.' ● Japan's] whaling fleet returned home yesterday with 77 minke whales caught... for scientific reasons. Japan has hunted whales for research in a government programme that began in 1987, a year after the International Whaling Commission [IWC] banned commercial whaling. - 1996

...Japanese scientific whaling in the Antarctic [has been wou]nd up for another year. You won't have heard much about it but in the five months or so they've been there the Japanese would have killed... m[any]... minke whales. You[certainly] won't have heard much about how they kill those whales... when the harpoon fails. It's all legal of course, done in the name of science. It also gets around the international ban on commercial whaling... [Now, for] the first time[, it is possible]... to see... what is really happening in our southern oceans... [A] British film-maker... has

exposed... just how the Japanese kill minke whales... [and, although the evidence was collected] during a five month voyage with the Japanese whaling fleet... the Japanese whaling authorities... [are] infuriated... “What pictures, specifically, did they not want released?” “Specifically... [anything that came under their definition] of unsightly practices[, such as]... the electrocutions... and any blood-letting... I kept the blood-letting on screen to a minimum but the electrocutions, of course, couldn’t be disguised... [Amongst all this icy] beauty... there’s all this violence and ugliness... I think I was tremendously lucky in that the chap who was ultimately responsible for giving me permission to go hadn’t actually been to the Antarctic himself to see the electrocutions, so, clearly, [the chap] wasn’t in a position to anticipate what might happen.” ...it was privileged access into a foreign world of ritual brutality... [T]here was no problem with filming... [harpooning] from the catcher boats... [A]fter all, everyone knows harpoons loaded with grenades are used to kill whales... The hunters and the hunted, it’s as primal... as it’s ever been. Inside the animal the harpoon’s barbs claw open... its innards... [T]he pain? That we can only speculate on. What we do know is that it is cruelly inefficient. Less than half the whales hit die this way. The rest meet with an additional but quite different form of torture... electric lances are stabbed into the whale... The lances are wired to a generator [that produces] just 220 volts... [O]nly part of [the electric charge] is likely to reach the brain, the rest is either insulated by blubber or conducted away by the sea... [This procedure lasts for] anything up to 30 minutes. “I don’t believe that a normal human being... from any culture... could sit and watch this and not think that it was wrong... Unfortunately, the Japanese conditioning is so powerful... that for some extraordinary reason... the Japanese don’t seem to share the same respect for the life experience of other sentient beings as we do...” ...the Japanese... bluntly maintain to the I[W]C that the way they kill whales is not inhumane, and they back that up with their own research. But scientists here have recently found quite differently. “One would have to say that during the electrocution the animals must be in absolute agony... Only instant death can be humane.” ...For the job to be done properly at sea, thousands, not hundreds of volts, would be necessary, but that... “...would place the lives of the sailors at risk.” ...The Japanese claim there’s been a campaign of misinformation about the electric lance... [O]n average it takes 44 seconds for a whale to die that way... [and they] say no other way of secondary killing is as effective... You may be wondering why they don’t kill the animal instantly with, say, a shot to the head? Well, Japanese science demands that the head be returned undamaged because that’s where the most important [sample – a tiny ear bone – is] found... The Japanese maintain, as always, [that] [the mission is... about establishing the size of the whale populations rather than harvesting whale meat... “...the Japanese and other countries do use the scientific whaling as a cover for a small-scale commercial catch and... there’s really not much question about that...” ...there are other... more sophisticated methods, like DNA analysis, for gathering the same information and more... without having to kill the animals, let alone kill them Japanese-style. [But] in the name of science the... [slaughter, which is clinical] in its efficiency – there is no wastage [–] ...goes on... Every part of the whale is dissected, sorted and processed... [T]he lucrative spin-off from all that research... [is] hundreds of thousands of kilograms of meat and blubber, worth more than a hundred million dollars; most of it [being] destined for Japanese restaurant tables... [Someone] went undercover to find... evidence... [of] whalemeat samples bought in the markets of Japan... The results made *Time* magazine... [Unfortunately, the film-maker] was forced to pay for his conscience. The Japanese Whaling Commission successfully sued him for revealing unsightly pictures in contravention of the filming agreement. [The film-maker] couldn’t afford to contest it. The court also ruled that his film can not be broadcast in Japan.

...In an effort to pass on Japan’s whale meat-eating tradition to a new generation, education authorities in a southern Japanese city said yesterday that whale would be served as part of a school lunch. The... plan to dish up... a special one-day menu for 25,000 elementary and junior high school students... is designed to inculcate a sense of pride in Shimonoseki’s historical role as a major port for Antarctic whaling ships... said a city official who declined to be named... While schoolchildren throughout Japan were regularly served whale meat for lunch up until the late 1950s, the meat was gradually removed from school menus amid criticism against commercial whaling... [But] Shimonoseki is not the only part of Japan to have whale meat served for school lunch. Arikawa, a small town... on Japan’s southern... island of Kyushu, uses whale meat dishes several times a year, local officials said... Japan plans to permit catches of up to 440 minke whales in the fiscal year ending next March. Minkes generally reach about 9m in length... Meat from the slain whales is often sold at fish markets... Norway, has[also] ignored the IWC ban on commercial whaling.

...Norway’s commercial whale hunting season has opened with a quota of 580 minke whales for the 34 boats heading out to the North Atlantic. Last year, a quota of 425 whales had been set, but only 382 were hunted because of bad weather... In 1995, a quota of 232 whales was set but only 217 were killed. Oslo’s decision in 1993 to resume the hunt has been condemned by many countries and organisations. Environmental groups... have also carried out actions in recent years to try to prevent the whalers from carrying out successful hunts... [A] 46-year-old Canadian citizen... [and] Greenpeace co-founder... is wanted in Norway in connection with a December 1992 collision between his Sea Shepherd Conservation Society boat and a whaler during a protest. A Norwegian court sentenced [the Canadian] in absentia to 120 days’ jail. On April 16, the Norwegian Government demanded his extradition from the Netherlands... under an international warrant... The W[WF] and Greenpeace... are meanwhile urging[the US] President... to use diplomacy or trade sanctions to force Norway to comply with the international ban. Norway has proposed opening commercial trade in minke whale meat with Japan, and the countries are seeking to ease international protection for several species.

...THE annual... IWC... meeting in Monaco looks set to be one of the most heated in years, with pro-whaling nations increasingly vocal after years of retreat. Environmentalists say the meeting, which starts [next week], could be the most crucial since the establishment of the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary in 1994. Opponents to whaling, such as N[Z, AUS, the US]... Britain and... and Ireland, will be pressing... for the moratorium on commercial whaling to be replaced by a permanent ban. “We believe the practice of killing whales is unjustifiable,” said... [the AUSn Environment Minister. However, many analysts] believe, with whale populations possibly on the rise, the pro-whaling nations will arrive at the IWC with their strongest hand in years... The... IWC chair[person]... said Japan and Norway were expected to argue that whale stocks had been replenished to a level that would support commercial whaling... [B]oth countries used this argument to try to have the 138-member Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species... lift its ban on whale meat trade. While the move won half the CITES votes, it fell short of the necessary two-thirds majority... A whaling report to the A[USn] government... said evidence of a replenishment of whale numbers was “not entirely reliable”. It said there were inaccuracies in the estimates of whale stocks and whale catches and warned of the understating of whale catches by the former Soviet Union, and more recently Norway and Japan. According to figures released last year, Soviet fleets killed 88,888 more whales between 1947 and 1972 than originally reported. The fleet killed 48,000 humpback whales, one of the most endangered species, yet reported a catch of less than 3000. In the case of Norway, the report cited a 1993 example of 3.5 tonnes of whale meat destined for Asia being “disguised and labelled as Norwegian prawns”. The report said between 15,000 and 18,000 whales had been killed legally since the 1986 moratorium, but that the illegal catch[– much like the number of stranded whales that die each year –] “can never be known”. A report by Traffic, which monitors trade in endangered species, found whale meat on sale in 13 Asian cites came from protected species... [■ Yesterday, Iceland] announced it will resume whaling after a break of nearly 10 years... Before the halt, Iceland[, which left the IWC] in 1992... exported 95[%] of its catch to Japan...

A rare sighting of two humpback whales feeding and leaping in the Bay of Islands has excited researchers tracking the slow recovery of the species... [I]t was only the second time in four years... [that the] Project Jonah representative... and... skipper of the... Fullers dolphin observation vessel, the Tutunui... had seen the species in N[Z] waters... Humpbacks growing to 30m were once abundant in N[Z] waters... For the past six years... researchers at the University of Auckland School of Biological Sciences... have been observing the whales congregating and calving in Tongan waters. A whale expert... hoped photographs of the two whales in the Bay of Islands would identify the animals if they turned up in Tongan waters next year... [W]hile populations in migratory habitats along eastern A[US] had increased, the N[Z] and Tongan populations had not... since their protection in 1966... [T]here were suspicions that one of the reasons... was illegal Soviet whaling in Antarctic waters from the

1950s to the 1970s. [□ 'Each humpback whale in Tongan waters is calculated to be worth \$30,000 a year in tourist dollars, or \$1.6 million during its lifetime.'

...[The] Ngai Tahu leader... is fed up with hysteria over whales. [The leader] has no intention of hunting them but is tired of being told [it] cannot by people who... have "almost made them a religion." [The leader] caused a stir last year when [it] called for fur seals to be culled. Now the Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission, which [the leader] heads, is calling a hui of tribes to discuss their rights to whales... The commission's official position is that it opposes large-scale commercial whaling and supports the Southern Ocean whale sanctuary. But it also supports the rights of indigenous people to sustainably use their natural resources, including whales. [The leader] said that sustainability was the key to the issue. While whales were endangered they should not be hunted, but neither should they be protected just because environmentalists wanted them to be. Western lobbyists had an emotional attachment to marine mammals and had successfully forced their views on the rest of the world, [the leader] said. "They... kill[ed] lots of native insects in Auckland when they spray[ed] for the tussock moths, but you don't see anyone protesting about that because it's okay to kill insects." The hysteria of the environmentalists had grown so enormous that people now wanted to hold funerals for whales, [the leader added]. "I've never wanted to hunt seals but I do want them culled in places where they are a nuisance. I bet if the beach at Mission Bay was colonised by seals the vote in Auckland would soon change,"... Sustainable use of whales did not necessarily lead to whale hunting... His tribe had a successful whale watching business at Kaikoura and the bones and teeth of whales stranded on beaches could be used for cultural purposes.

...A 12m Bryde's whale died yesterday after stranding itself at Miranda in the Firth of Thames. Department of Conservation staff inspected the whale, which was lying in over a metre of water, and said it probably died of shock. They planned to haul it to the beach. A D[OC] staff member... said... whales[often] swam into the Hauraki Gulf believing it continued south. Their sonar became confused in the shallow waters and they ran aground. The Hauraki Maori Trust Board said it would make a recommendation on the disposal of the whale. [● Mechanical 'sonar is thought to disorientate whales (and dolphins), making them surface too quickly, creating nitrogen bubbles in their blood stream, similar to the bends in humans'; numerous cases 'of strandings have been linked to naval sonar experiments. Sonar can affect whales for a 1000 sq km – whales are able to stay in touch over such distances.'

... 'An increasing volume of underwater noise is threatening the ability of many sea creatures to find mates, seek food, protect their young and escape their predators, according to a study by Californian researchers. A Natural Resources Defense Council report described the effects of the underwater noise like being "in the middle of an acoustics traffic jam." In deep water, where the sea animals rely on their sense of hearing, the noise is especially harmful. International shipping produces the most underwater noise pollution, but there are few regulations in place to control it. Noise from supertankers and military sonar equipment can scramble the communication signals used by dolphins and whales and cause them to abandon traditional breeding grounds.'

...Scientists from the University of St Andrews in Scotland... [have found that i]nstead of hugging the shoreline of the High Arctic... beluga, or white whale[s]... race... to a deep marine trench to eat polar cod. They use previously unsuspected skills to navigate under ice for thousands of kilometres, finding isolated breathing holes, possibly by faint sounds of water swirling around them. Once at the marine trench, the whales dive up to 550m to catch fish... [By the way,] Maori may be able to take whales for cultural reasons under a plan[proposed by] Britain... Britain's indication was that it would back the limited resumption of commercial whaling in coastal waters by countries such as Japan and Norway, in return for their strict observance of an international ban elsewhere. Indigenous peoples in countries including Russia, Canada and N[Z] would be allowed to take whales for subsistence and cultural reasons under strict quotas. The chair[person] of the Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission... was not available to comment yesterday but has said this year that Maori did not want to hunt whales [- they just]wanted customary rights recognised.

...[93% of NZers] oppose commercial whaling, according to... polls. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that there has been lively debate... [since t]he Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission... organis[ed] a hui... so that iwi c[ould] discuss the rights of indigenous people to use whales. Greenpeace sees no valid case for any resumption of whaling by Maori. The [environmental organisation says the] historical record is clear that Maori did not generally hunt whales. While stranded whales were regarded as precious taonga (gifts) from... [their gods], active Maori participation in whaling [only]began when European whalers involved them in their industry. [Greenpeace's] categorical opposition to commercial whaling of any kind includes the trading of carcasses, blubber and bones from either stranded or hunted whales... While very small-scale use of whales and seals may, arguably, be justified in high Arctic indigenous communities which have always subsisted on them and where the whaling is consistent with the whaling commission's guidelines for aboriginal whaling[, it]... is clear that putting indigenous whaling – which Japan also conveniently argues some coastal communities in Japan are entitled to – on the agenda of the IWC is the thin edge of a wedge to expand Japan's own whaling programme.

...The [IWC] came under fire yesterday from environmentalist organisations for failing to halt commercial whaling by two of its members, Japan and Norway. A joint statement by Greenpeace, the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and the... WWF... to the commission's 49th annual meeting said the IWC faced a deteriorating situation. "Whaling is growing rapidly and is out of the IWC's control... Unless firm action is taken to bring the situation under control, unregulated whaling looks set to increase even further." ...Meanwhile, the... week-long[annual IWC] meeting... prepared to debate a contentious proposal to resume whaling on a limited scale for the first time since... 1986... Ireland, which is to chair the commission for the next three years, will propose[the] limited resumption... Though Ireland considers the number of whales being killed as a "major problem," it hopes allowing limited hunting will end abuse in the guise of hunting for research purposes, a concealed form of commercial whaling... Last week Britain said it was prepared to back the limited resumption of commercial whaling... by Japan and Norway...

A proposal to let the U[Ss'] Makah Indians resume whaling after a 70 year break met stiff opposition at [the IWC] conference... yesterday, partly because it affects the needs of other indigenous groups. The joint U[S]-Russian proposal... sought a shared quota of whales for the Inuits of Alaska and the Chukchi of Russia's eastern Siberia out of a stock that roams waters between the two countries. The Makah of Washington state would get four whales annually as part of the deal... The 2000-member Makah tribe, which voluntarily stopped whaling... had sought permission to hunt five grey whales a year... But A[US], Austria and other countries at the conference said the U[S] has failed to prove that the Makah needed the whale meat for food... Opponents... [also] objected to linking the Makah demands to those of the Inuits... and the Chukchi... related tribes that have depended on whales for millennia... [The NZ] delegation, said the Chukchi were among the indigenous groups to fit best the commission requirements, especially during the hard times after the Soviet Union broke up. "The Chukchi are starving," [the delegation's spokesperson] said. By including the Makah in a package deal... "an acceptable proposal has been linked to one that is unacceptable." The U[S] and Russia want the Chukchi to give four grey whales out of their annual quota of 140 to the Makah. In exchange, the Inuits... would give five of their quota of 67 bowhead whales to the Chukchi... [A] long-time member of the commission's scientific committee, said the issue was important because it would set a precedent of aboriginal peoples of two countries sharing one stock of whales... The U[S] opposes commercial whaling, but has pushed hard on behalf of the Makah, which it said were the only tribe to secure the right to hunt whales under an 1855 treaty with the[US] Government... After heated debate, the... proposal was postponed to allow more time to strike a compromise.

...The... IWC... [will end] its annual meeting today with a compromise plan to try to break the deadlock between whalers and their opponents. The plan would allow limited coastal whaling of abundant species but only for local consumption and would ban whaling on the high seas. It would also phase out scientific whaling by Japanese hunters... The response to the compromise proposal has generally been cautious or cool. But its advocates say there must be agreement to bring the whaling nations back under IWC supervision... Despite strong objections from several

government and environmental groups... the IWC approved... the Makah tribe... quota allocation... The controversy pitting aboriginal rights against whales overshadowed the issue[of] whether the IWC can survive an evolution from a regulatory hunting body to a group with a majority of members who think whale-hunting is cruel and unnecessary.

...A Japanese research institute put 298 tonnes of minke whale meat on sale in Tokyo on Friday just as [the IWC] conference... ended... Anti-whaling groups in Japan called the timing insensitive, but officials said it was coincidental.

...The Japanese whaling fleet has left port to conduct its annual slaughter of hundreds of whales in the three-year-old Southern Ocean whale sanctuary... which includes about half of N[Z]'s territorial waters... WWF believed that in recent years the fleet had sailed down the west coast of A[US] rather than through the Tasman Sea but its route this year was unknown. The organisation also had evidence that the fleet's mother ship entered N[Z] waters twice during the... [previous] whaling season to take on supplies to refuel the fleet as well as other Japanese fishing boats in the Southern Ocean. "We believe that N[Z] authorities should not allow it into [their harbours]." - 1997

Japanese plans to slaughter hundreds of minke whales in the Southern Ocean whale sanctuary this summer are in turmoil as the fleet's mother ship... continues to burn in the Coral Sea. A Japanese whaling official said the whale-meat-processing ship could not travel under its own power... [- the] 130m vessel has been drifting for more than four days... - ...and the future of the season's hunt was in jeopardy. "Without the mother ship we cannot conduct such activities," said... [the] head of the Tokyo-based whaling section of the Japan Fisheries Agency. The... Greenpeace vessel Arctic Sunrise found the ship yesterday but its crew signalled by flag that the fire was under control and they were safe. Japan says the Nisshin Maru and its four whalers - one of them on its maiden voyage - are engaged in scientific research. According to... [f]igures from... the I[WC]... in 1996 the "research" made \$[NZ]37 million from meat sales. The Japanese Government subsidises the hunt by \$13.5 million.

...Moves to lift the international ban on commercial whaling are gathering momentum. As Japan and Norway step up their pro-whaling campaign, delegates at the I[WC] annual meeting in Adelaide last week appeared unable to stop them. The Japanese plan to expand their "scientific" whaling to include two new species, Bryde's and sperm whales, in defiance of a whaling commission resolution, while Norway plans to kill 655 minke this year under its official objection to the ban. The other major event... was the defeat of a plan for a whale sanctuary in the South Pacific after N[Z and AUS] failed to get 75[%] of the eligible 35 votes. Its supporters... vowed to press ahead with the plan at the[next] meeting...

Pacific Island countries could follow French Polynesia's example... if a bid for a South Pacific [whale] sanctuary fails, says[NZ's] Conservation Minister... N[Z and AUS] yesterday welcomed French Polynesia's announcement that it would turn its 5 million sq km exclusive economic zone into a sanctuary for whales and other marine mammals... French Polynesia, which is not an I[WC] member, supported the... bid for a South Pacific sanctuary... [at the] last... commission meeting[- when 18]... nations supported it while 11, including six small Caribbean island states, opposed it.

...[NZ's PM] is appalled by the admissions of a senior Japanese fisheries official that Japan has been bribing poorer countries to help overturn a global moratorium against commercial whaling... At the last annual IWC meeting, six Caribbean countries helped Japan defeat a joint N[Z-AUS]n proposal for a South Pacific whale sanctuary... These countries appeared to have no direct interest in whaling, but had their votes bought... "When put alongside Japan's long-standing but spurious assertion that it is taking large numbers of whales for purely 'scientific' and 'research' purposes, this confirmation of Japan's tactics shows the desperate lengths it will go in order to maintain whaling..." [the PM] said.

...The largest animal in the world sank into the icy abyss, a harpoon in her heart. [The Japanese]... gunner, watched from the prow of the whaling boat rolling in the Antarctic swell as the 28m blue whale descended, taking with it all the rope [the gunner] had. Unlike many other whales, the blue sinks when it dies and its immense weight tested the rope... "I thought we were going to lose it," [the gunner] said, recalling his proudest moment. The whale was raised and harvested for its flesh, oil and wax. A gunner for 44 years, [the gunner] has killed 3700 whales, including 20 blues, of which only a few thousand remain of an original population of more than 250,000... It is impossible to tell, from a few sightings or catches, how many whales lie beneath the ocean. The IWC's scientific committee reckons there are between 510,000 and 1.1 million minke in the southern hemisphere... It guesses there are another 150,000 in the North Atlantic, and 25,000 in the North Pacific. The most populous great whale is the sperm, which numbers two million. The moratorium means many whale populations are growing strongly. US scientists believe the number of humpback whales in the North Atlantic has doubled since the 1980s to 10,000, with the population growing at 7[%] a year. The grey whale population is thought to have... grow[n]... to 26,000 in the eastern North Pacific. In 1994, the US removed the grey whale from its endangered species list. Japan insists some whales are so abundant it can take a limited number each year... Using conservative estimates... the IWC's scientific committee... reckons that Japan could take up to 2000 minke a year. Yet the 40 members of the IWC have repeatedly rejected their scientists' advice. With public opinion so opposed to commercial whaling, it is inconceivable the Governments will vote for its resumption... In the face of the Japanese arguments, a former US whaling commissioner said that because [Western Governments] can no longer object on conservation grounds, they will object on ethical grounds. And that's what really angers the Japanese. In the West, whales are regarded as intelligent, beautiful, almost mystical animals. To the Japanese, whales are food... "The West is suffering from double standards. Wildlife is for them to see and admire, and you should only eat animals such as cows and pigs that are reared. But A[US] kills three to four million kangaroos a year, and in the US they catch 5.6 million wild deer..." [the] deputy director of the far-seas fisheries at the Japanese Fisheries Agency said... [The deputy director] asks how Britons would react if Hindus tried to ban the eating of the cows they consider holy. "The West is trying to force their values on us..."

...Having caught their first whale in more than 70 years, Makah Indians are searching the collective memory for ways to cook the monster. But hundreds of tribal members who live on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington State have already sampled a bonus from their controversial catch: blubber. The traditional native American treat is served raw in bite-sized chunks and looked like chewing gum... "I've been chewing this for four hours," said[a] whaler... Their first assault on the whale was made with two harpoons hurled into its back. Contemporary technology stole into the scene as well... [when] a hunter with a high-velocity rifle fired into the mammal. The... grey whale, thought to be three years old, took about 10 minutes to die... The first choice cut from the front of the fin went to [the Indian] who threw the first harpoon. It took the hunters an hour to drag the carcass on to the beach... Over the next three days the meat will be cured as tribes from all over the U[S] and Canada meet for a pow-wow, a traditional festive gathering... The meat can be smoked, barbecued, fried or grilled... "We're going to try it all ways," said [the whaler's mother].

... 'In the Middle Ages whale meat, under the name of *crapois* or Lenten bacon, was sold on meatless days and formed the staple diet of the poor. As whale meat can be kept for quite a long time without going bad, sailors used to store it, to cook as required. However, the flesh is most indigestible and remains tough even after 24 hours of cooking. Whale meat was not generally esteemed by our grandfathers, but they set some store by the tongue of the animal, usually salted. They also much appreciated whale fat which they ate "during Lent, with peas". From the gastronomical point of view, only whale calves are of any interest. The flesh of these is of a reddish colour and somewhat similar to beef in appearance, but not in taste.' Whale meat tastes 'like yellowfin tuna.'

...The not so free willy [The genitalia of a guy whale] has sold for a whopping \$3400. The 1.6m preserved penis - from an unlucky sperm whale - was snapped up by a private collector at a joint auction by Auckland... and Sydney auction house[s]... Whale penises were often used as... wet-weather coats by whalers in the nineteenth century... "The sailor would remove the inside of the penis and cut arm and face holes out of the skin to produce a... top that would last for years[," the]... auction director... said... The whale penis[which]... originally came from western A[US,] ...was one of the more unusual items auctioned off... Other bizarre items up for grabs included inner ear bones from whales... and... whale teeth etched with saucy Victorian nudes...

Whale watching has grown into a \$US1 billion... a year industry... A study from the Cape Cod-based International Fund for Animal Welfare reports that the money whale watching brought in... [has doubled since 1994. Today,] the industry flourished in some 500 communities in at least 87 countries, including some with long histories of hunting whales, compared with only 31 in 1991... Among continents, Africa had the single largest jump, from 46,000 whale watchers in 1991 to more than 1.5 million... The U[S] accounted for almost half of [last year's] 9 million whale watchers...

Scientists and environmentalists were yesterday reassessing plans to free a rare right whale... off the U[S] Cape Cod coast after earlier attempts failed. The North Atlantic right whale, one of 100 to 500 of the endangered species remaining, has green fishing line deeply embedded in its upper jaw. The resulting wound is badly infected and the whale is likely to die unless the line can be removed or falls out on its own.

...A distressed whale entangled in a fishing net in the Great A[US]n Bight has died. Spotter planes reported on Saturday that the whale, which had not been seen for two days, was trying to fend off two marauding sharks. "...the spotter plane went out [again]... When it got back it reported that the whale was dead on its side and sharks were feeding on it." Poor weather in the past week had prevented any attempts to help the whale... The Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society has blamed shark fishing in the area, which is a marine reserve, for the whale's entanglement... [A society spokesperson] said the park was supposed to protect the endangered Southern Right whales that calve and breed at the... Bight...

A[US]n tourism authorities are considering a law change "to protect people too stupid to protect themselves" after sightseers clambered on a floating dead... southern right whale... and patted Great White sharks eating the carcass... The tourists' actions were caught on film this week...

The right whale is so-called because in the early days of whaling it was the right whale to catch... because it swims slowly and when killed it floats, being buoyed up by its very thick blubber... [F]aster whales... could only be hunted with the introduction of bigger and faster boats... [150] years ago the Greenland right whale was called 'the whale' or the common whale, because it was so numerous... Right whales were... virtually wiped out before hunting them was abandoned... Grey whales are very slow, usually swimming at 2-3 knots... As they also come very close inshore this makes them very vulnerable to hunters... In 1840 there were estimated to be around 25 000 grey whales but soon after this there was very intense hunting all along the... west coast of North America. By 1875 it was unusual to see more than 50 migrating whales at a time, although they used to be seen by the thousand... By 1936 the world population was thought to be as low as 100-200. Then the governments of America, Japan and Russia came to an agreement on the future of the grey whale and declared it a protected species. This... together with the animal's high rate of reproduction, has resulted in a gradual build-up of the population... [W]hales... evolved over 100 million years ago from primitive land mammals... Their nearest relatives belong to the ungulates (hoofed mammals)... Their lung capacity is half as much again as that of a land animal and in addition they fill their lungs to capacity. Land animals, including ourselves, use only half the lung capacity to change only 10-15% of the air in the lungs with each breath. A[whale or] dolphin changes up to 90%... The... *Book of Whales* published in 1900... [states that] the false killer... whale... is rarely seen and the little knowledge we have has come from stranded animals... They are probably not so rare as once thought, if only because of the large numbers that have been stranded at different times... in many different parts of the world... Whales are extremely intelligent so it is surprising that they should allow themselves to get into a predicament which is nearly always fatal... It has been shown that some dolphins and presumably many other whales have an extremely efficient echo location system for detecting prey or other objects but apparently cannot use it as an echo-sounder to gauge the depth of water under them, for the system cannot detect objects below a line running horizontally from the jaws. So it would be possible for a whale to come dangerously near the shore in murky waters without realising it... There is another suggestion that mass strandings occur through the herd panicking... Stranded whales have been towed off beaches, but all to no avail as they have promptly swum ashore again. Apparently they react blindly to the distress calls of their stranded companions... *A larger number than usual were stranded on British coasts during the last war... probably due in part... to anti-submarine activities...* For hundreds of years pilot whales have been hunted in the islands to the north of the British Isles. The hunts... depend on a school of pilot whales being sighted near the shore. The alarm is given and a fleet of small boats pulls out to carefully shepherd the school into a bay. The whales panic and rush into the shallows... [where people] waiting on the shore immediately set on the whales with knives and lances... The capture of a school of pilot whales, was an absolute windfall to the islanders, and even now there are wild scenes following the slaughter... *The largest animals that have ever lived... blue whales can grow to 100 ft long and weigh as much as 135 tons, the equivalent of 30 elephants or 1600 [humans]... Only an aquatic animal could achieve such a vast size, where the water can support the body...* Blue whales are usually solitary... but[, like]... many other kinds of whales[, they]... come to the assistance of their fellows in distress. Where whalers sight two blue whales they know that it is best to shoot the [cow] first because the [bull] will not desert her, and so can be caught easily. On the other hand, the [cow] will desert the harpooned [bull] and so be lost to the whalers. Whale dives usually last for seven or eight minutes, but blue whales can stay down longer. Their... power is shown by stories of harpooned whales towing catcher boats even though their engines have been running full speed in reverse... To supply energy to their huge bodies blue whales must be voracious eaters. When cut open in the whaling factories their stomachs are regularly found to be crammed full of krill... How the whales find krill in sufficient quantities is rather a mystery... Even with our advanced electronics... no system has been built sensitive enough to detect krill... [In the late 1930s] there were an estimated 100 000 blue whales at large in the oceans. [By 1969,] no more than 1 000... [K]illing blue whales has been banned. Let us hope this ban came in time, for blue whales breed very slowly and there may not be enough left to keep the species from dying out... [While most whales live by eating krill, another shrimp species,] the whale louse... anchors itself to a whale's skin[, remaining]... in one spot for the rest of its life, eating the surrounding flesh until it is lying in a cavity. The young ones settle down close to their parents and in the end, masses, formed by thousands of whale lice, cover large patches of the[whale's] skin... Eskimos and other people living around the Arctic Sea catch narwhals... for their meat, blubber, hide and tusks. The hide, known as muktuk, is prized for thongs because it remains supple when wet or frozen and is eaten raw as a source of Vitamin C, which is in short supply in the rest of the Eskimo's diet... *The few teeth in the young narwhal are lost in the adults except the left upper canine which is retained by the [bulls] and grows into a long tusk...* ['up to 3m in length'] *Very rarely both upper canines grow into... tusks...* The tusk is unlikely to be a weapon because narwhals are not aggressive... Narwhal tusks were first brought into Europe by the Vikings... Not surprisingly the beautiful, twisted horn became linked with the legendary unicorn... [O]nly in the mid-17th century was the famous 'unicorn horn' reidentified as belonging to the narwhal.

Sailing off the south-east coast of NZ, James Cook saw several whales... [in 1769. In] 1791 Capt Melville of the British whaling ship *Britannia* saw "upwards of 15,000 whales in the first 10 days of his voyage...". Such reports naturally brought attention to the potential of whaling in NZ waters... The British whaling ship, *William and Ann*, probably the first such ship to hunt for whales off northern NZ, visited Doubtless Bay[in 1792]. The visit (and that of the *Britannia* to North Cape in 1793) were in fact unauthorised trials of whaling in NZ waters because they had not been licensed by the East India Co... which had a trading monopoly in the East... [In 1798 the] British Parliament passed an Act opening the waters of A[US] and NZ to British whaling ships by limiting the restrictions the East India Co could enforce. The company fought hard to maintain its long-held rights for fear that the whaling captains would also set up commerce within... [its territory. Between] 1800-06 British whaling ships... operating in NZ waters took home oil worth £200,000[a]... very large figure... for the time. British whaling was crucially important in the foundation of NZ... [In 1816 a] method was developed for making gas from whale oil, increasing the demand for NZ oil... [(‘whale oil is used in cosmetics but its qualities can be mimicked by the use of oil from the jojoba plant’). In 1833 the] British whaling ship *Betsey* used "prussick acid" on her harpoons in an attempt to find a quicker way of killing whales... electricity was tried in 1852... The [US]... ship *Florida* tested a new bomb-lance whaling gun in NZ waters...

[during 1859. S]uch experiments were endeavours to avoid the dangerous practice of lancing whales from boats... The industry's loss of killed whales was heavy and wasteful. A... captain claimed to have lost 200 out of 300 [his ship] had killed in one year... By the 1840s, the depletion of the seal populations had [already made that]... *brutal*... industry uneconomic... In 1845, the seal ship *Three Brothers* returned from NZ's west coast with a meagre cargo of 140 skins... The record voyage was probably in 1806 when the *Favourite* arrived in Sydney with 60,000 skins... By... 1850... the effect of intensive whaling in south-west Pacific waters was[also] being felt. Catches of the right whale had fallen dramatically. In this year, oil worth £28,000 was shipped from Sydney compared with £150,000 every year from 1832 to 1841. Many [US] whaling ships were now using NZ merely as a base to buy provisions and recruit [crews] for fishing the Arctic summer... [During the 1920s to 1930s, whales had been] caught... in big nets held by floating barrels. The nets slowed down the whales and made it easier to kill them... Along with a number of countries with whaling industries, NZ signed an agreement[in 1937] to create a more powerful convention controlling whaling. Among several species, it banned the killing of the right whales which had been the mainstay of the early... NZ industry. For other whales, the agreement provided protection for... [cows with calves. In 1948 the IWC was founded and in] 1964... the last whale [was] killed from a NZ ship in NZ waters... In this year... £27,000 worth of ambergris... which... whalers had discarded... as a useless substance[, was]... sold to France... The Dunedin whaling ship *Splendid*... had... captured a sperm whale containing a lump of ambergris weighing 636 kg... [in 1880. Over the previous 50 years the whole US] whaling fleet... brought back little more than this total. ['Used as a fixative in perfumes', t]he... ambergris ought to have been worth £89,000 but its huge size depressed the limited market and it realised only £25,000... [In] 1818 Samuel Marsden landed the first horses... in NZ... The first thoroughbred horse was landed at Wellington... [during] 1840... New Zealanders took part in the relief of Kimberley[(*Feb 15, 1900*)], apparently the only troops to reach the town without losing a horse – evidence of good march discipline... The South African (Boer) War created a heavy demand for NZ horses as cavalry replacements... The first national sale of yearlings was held at Trentham Racecourse... [during] 1927... - THE NEW ZEALAND BOOK OF EVENTS

HORSE racing will disappear from vast areas of [NZ] under a new funding policy which has sparked the resignation of senior officials[, who]... say... the changes... will see... [c]rippling rises in track and trial fees... [- forcing] more owners and trainers out of racing... [-] and... predict... a complete breakdown of the industry's infrastructure. From August, the Racing Industry Board will starve dozens of venues of the income needed to run... meetings, allocating the money instead to a network of mostly metropolitan tracks which it believes will lead racing into prosperity... Racing clubs lost \$2 million in 1995-96 and, with a similar forecast for this season, [the] RIB... said urgent action was imperative to build up a viable network of strategic venues to maximise returns to shareholders. A survey of owners had shown that there were not enough rewards to aim for – so stakes had to rise at premier meetings. By reallocating available money, the number of premier race meetings would go up from 25 to 35 and the minimum stakes would rise from \$12,000 to \$20,000... "If we'd wanted to wipe out racing in [some] areas we wouldn't have issued licences..." - 1996

There is little money to be made from owning racehorses, judging by figures released by the[NZ] Racing Authority. The authority's study of returns to owners... showed that only 9.6[%] of horses won enough to cover their owner's expenses... 35.5[%]... of trotters and pacers win... nothing... [Interestingly, the study also] found that 38.7[%] of thoroughbred horses won nothing.

...Four legs worth \$US5 million each kept track watchers enthralled in Tokyo yesterday morning. The world's best racehorse, [which was] bought this week by Japanese breeders... was given his final gallop for tomorrow's... \$US4,000,000... Japan Cup... [The trainer of] Oceania's representative... was hoping it stayed fine... Rain is forecast for tomorrow's race and this is the best news the connections of the European horses have had since arriving in Tokyo... [However, a] crowd of... 190,000 is expected[, and more]... than one international horse has had its chance extinguished by becoming worked up by the incredible crowd noise around the parade ring.

...family and friends thought [the Aucklander] was losing his marbles when [it] and his brother-in-law paid \$100,000 for a racehorse in 1995. The normally conservative Rothesay Bay [resident] had never owned a horse before and, like most Aucklanders, went to the races only three or four times a year. Today, however, [the Aucklander] is living the dream of every racehorse owner – [it]'s in Japan with his horse Ebony Grosve, tilting at one of the world's richest races, the \$4.5 million Japan Cup... Knowing nothing about breeding, [it]'d left the choosing [of a horse] up to his partner and[a] Te Awamutu trainer... and they ended up spending their kitty on two Centro yearlings at Karaka... [They] had taken a fancy to another youngster during their two days wandering round the sale yard, however, and insisted on staying to see what [it] went for – the yearling was the very last lot in the 520-horse catalogue... But as the bidding opened the[re]... became potential buyers, deciding they'd have a go for the son of Grosvenor and an A[US]n mare Dusky Rosa if they could get him for \$50,000... With the bids going up by \$10,000 a time, they had to counter at \$100,000 for one last try – they did, and the horse was theirs... "We're not allowed [by our wives] to go to auctions any more,"... The... Centros have since been given away as useless, but the \$100,000 mistake is... already the winner of more than \$1.4 million. "The penny dropped the other day how lucky we are,"...

Napoleon once said: "I don't care how good my generals are, I want them lucky." That's what[a] trainer... desperately wants from[his] jockey... aboard Ebony Grosve in... [the] Japan Cup – a lucky ride. Ebony Grosve is a habitual back runner and Japan Cups are traditionally not won from the back of the field... A rock hard track would not suit Ebony Grosve either. [The horse] could finish only 8th in the Melbourne Cup at his last start, but [the jockey] said the 3200m distance stopped him. "...This 2400m will suit him much better."

...Ebony Grosve... finish[ed] third-last in the Japan Cup yesterday... Rain on Thursday had made the track near-perfect for the... 4-year-old. According to [the trainer], however, the rain made Ebony Grosve's task that much harder. "It really helped the European horses because they need the sting out of the track,"... Ebony Grosve will now return home and be spelled. [Editor's note: travel sickness can sometimes end a horse's racing career (e.g., the NZ horse *Bonecrusher*) – although, for successful racehorses, this merely ushers in a breeding career (which, for horses whose racing careers weren't ended by travel sickness, could mean being a 'shuttle stud' – e.g., a stallion who services mares for half a year in France and the other half in NZ).]

...A \$36 million infertility claim over... stallion Cigar is due to be paid today. Leading underwriters... w[il]l... hand over the money for the dual American Horse of the Year, who was retired to stud but failed to get a single mare in foal... The cheque will be shared by[Cigar's] owner... (\$9 million) and 75% shareholder Coolmore Stud (\$27 million)... Cigar shares the modern day record for 16 consecutive wins with Citation.

...[OBITUARY] Dancing Brave – the horse they thought could walk on water – may've flopped in his first big test (the 1986 English Derby) but it was his run in that year's Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe in Paris which made him a racetrack legend. Syndicated for \$30 million, it produced over 30 stakes winners'...

An 'American jockey broke the career money record for a rider when it won the US\$500,000 Sword Dancer Handicap at Saratoga in New York on Saturday. His mounts during his 29-year career have won US\$264.5 million, eclipsing the US\$263 million won by a rider who retired last month.'

...the leader of the NZ harness] drivers' premiership with 77 wins from 430 drives... [i]s... followed by [the person] with 69 wins from 378 drives.

...with no shoes[, an]... ugly, scrawny... "old miner's pit pony"... from Soweto carried a N[Z] schoolgirl to gold in... the FEI International Children's Jumping Competition in Cape Town... at the weekend... The... Edgecumbe rider... cried... [after eyeing] up her "dud" mount among the other top-quality horses at the... showjumping competition... All 36 horses and rider combinations for the event were drawn from a hat... [H]er

team-mate drew one of the favourites to ride... “[The horse I drew] wasn’t that pretty and I was disappointed at first... When I hopped on[the horse] took off on me, but I just kept working on her.” ...the 14-year-old... has been riding since[the age of] two and is no stranger to working with “dog tucker” horses... [– her] family pony... was bought from the knacker’s yard for \$45... Five days later the unprepossessing mare had stunned the horse world with her performance and helped... [its rider] to become the first N[Z]er to win the title... Since winning... [the NZer, who] is now on safari... has become the darling of the South African press, appearing on television and in newspapers... This was the second time [the NZer] has competed in the competition. Last year, in Colombia, [the NZer] was third in both qualifying rounds but her hopes were dashed by a disastrous ride in the final... [Incidentally, p]olice on the North Shore are the latest to become mobile on horseback. Two horses have been bought with a \$10,000 grant from the Lion Foundation, which distributes hotel gaming-machine profits. The hooved patrol joins mounted units in central and South Auckland. Police say the horses are popular in image-building and play a valuable role at big concerts and sports events. - 1997

Vienna’s council is to pass a law making the city’s hallmark carriage horses wear nappies to stop them soiling the streets... [In local news, t]he country’s newest indoor sporting complex, the Tipapa Equestrian Centre... has quickly won the backing of leading competitors. N[Z]’s 3 leading showjumpers... and[our] teenage dressage sensation... have had a workout in the... \$3 m... arena and declared it superior to any indoor equestrian facility in the Southern Hemisphere. [One of the showjumpers], a former British... representative, said it was better than any indoor facility in Europe... [T]he floor area measures 75m x 55m and includes seating for... 2500 spectators. Tipapa is hosting the Pacific League final of the Volvo Cup from January 29... Meanwhile the death of another eventing rider has prompted [NZ]’s leading equestrian to say it] cannot wait for his career to end. [Hi]s friend Jemima Johnson was killed while competing in a trial in England on Saturday... the fourth rider to die while eventing this year.

...A young jockey was killed in a fall when his mount collapsed during a race at Benalla in north western Victoria yesterday... A TAB source... said the horse involved[, which]... was the favourite, El Branco... also died... [It] had a heart attack during the race, causing... Andrew Gilbert... aged 19... to fall off. [In further news from overseas, ‘three horses had to be destroyed after the annual Grand National steeplechase at Aintree in England.’

...‘up to 100 horses a year die on Dublin’s roads. Whereas children in most cities have dogs, or skateboards, children in Dublin’s housing projects tend to have horses. There’s a constant battle between pound officials responsible for rounding up the horses, which are allowed to roam free by their owners – creating a hazard for motorists – and the owners, who believe they have a right to have horses (yet have no money or private land). Tighter controls are being introduced to protect the horses.’ Speaking of Irish horses, ‘Shergar, the racehorse once regarded as the nearest real-life equivalent to Pegasus, was machine-gunned to death by the IRA after a bungled ransom attempt. ■ ‘It has long been alleged that Phar Lap was murdered in the US, but it is now generally accepted that the champion racehorse died from a bacterial infection which still claims more horses than can be cured.’]

...After all the conjecture of officials and experts, vets and theorists, it was the poet who got it right. In a book released this week titled *Phar Lap*, [the]authors... seem to have answered the mystery of the big chestnut’s death once and for all. Of all the speculation surrounding the sudden death of “the racing phenomenon of the century” – colic, poison, even a gangster hit – the closest and most succinct appears to be[from a NZ] poet... who wrote in his 1991 poem *Phar Lap* that the horse “died of absence.” Big Red, as [the horse] was loyally known in N[Z and AUS], fell at dawn in a foreign field – an Anzac spirit to the last. [Phar Lap] died painfully and prematurely at 5 am on April 5, 1932, in a stable at Menlo Park, 32km south of San Francisco. It was two weeks after [Phar Lap] had beaten America’s best horses in what was then one of the world’s richest races, the \$US50,000 Agua Caliente Handicap in Mexico. Phar Lap was foaled in Timaru... and grew to a gigantic 17.1 hands. Inside an initially awkward frame beat a huge heart. Weighing 14 pounds (6.3kg), compared with the average racehorse’s heart weight of 9-10 pounds, his heart became the symbol of both his athleticism and courage. Named Phar Lap – Thai for lightning – by A[US]ns... who bought him in 1928, [the horse]... was unplaced eight times... [i]n his first nine races... Then it began – from his following 42 starts, [Phar Lap] had 36 wins... [D]espite death threats... [a]fter his win... in Agua Caliente[, Phar Lap]... was moved to Menlo Bay. The news of his death spread around the world... the cause of death... [un]certain... Phar Lap’s vet... said in his post-mortem examination: “The signs present those of acute gastric enteritis brought about, in my opinion, by[a] toxic substance. The... [identity] of which I am unable to say.” The doubt was soon joined by speculation and conspiracy theories, fulfilling public hankering for answers and scandal. [The book’s authors] have refuted every theory in turn. Let us consider... the... poem...: “*Even after [Phar Lap] died in America/ of intestinal typhany... /They say that for five days [the horse] ate/ pasture sprayed with lead arsenate...*” This was long the prime suspect. Trees near the stables had been sprayed a week earlier and lead arsenate was found in Big Red’s organs... As the authors point out: “The search was for a smoking gun, but should have been for a time machine. The veterinary profession in 1932 had not discovered the disease that killed Phar Lap.” So what caused the disease? Stress makes a horse more susceptible to bacterial infection and, in almost all cases, “the horse has travelled significant distances in the preceding weeks.” It seems... [Phar Lap] journeyed too far from home for his own good.

...Contents of a diary kept by the trainer of legendary Phar Lap appear to confirm theories the horse’s poisoning death may have been accidental. There have been various theories, including intentional poisoning, regarding the 1932 death of the... [horse] who won 37 of 51 races... The diary reveals staple ingredients used to treat Phar Lap included arsenic and strychnine, both deadly poisons if used incorrectly. [Phar Lap] also received treatments containing cocaine and caffeine. A popular tonic of the day was Fowler’s Solution, which was arsenic-based and administered to Phar Lap throughout his racing career. Arsenic could build up in the body with repeated use and eventually become deadly... [Y]oung Tom Woodcock, who accompanied Phar Lap to the U[S] and Mexico, was likely to have administered certain medicines to the horse to help him overcome the journey... “What we do know is that Phar Lap made a brilliant recovery from the arduous voyage [from the US to Mexico] and a cut hoof, which probably required further treatment, after [Phar Lap] arrived in Mexico and won the Agua Caliente Handicap on March 20, 1932, at that time the richest race in the world.” Two weeks later, Phar Lap died in Woodcock’s arms after making a 1000km float trip back to California.

...Pick the 12 best horses of the century, said the editor. It’s a bit like naming the 12 bravest on the Titanic – who is there around to pass judgment? But in racing there are icons. Ask the public to come up with the best horse N[Z] has produced in 100 years and it’s a bottle of champers to a wet bus ticket the majority will say Phar Lap. [It] certainly generated the most publicity. And in the middle of a crushing 1930s depression, when the world needed every hero it could generate, artificially or otherwise, Phar Lap earned every accolade. [It] was a superstar... establish[ing] a Melbourne Cup benchmark which will not be broken – [Big Red] won the fabulous race in 1930 with 62kg and no horse has carried more to victory since. The last victory before his tragic and premature death was almost certainly [hi]s best. The Agua Caliente Handicap... was run in New Mexico only because at that time gambling was illegal in the U[S]. Phar Lap was so devastating in winning, despite foot problems, that a recent authoritative U[S] poll rated him the 32nd best horse to race [there]... this century, the only non-American horse to make the list. All that from one appearance. Phar Lap did not race in N[Z]. If... you asked the insiders who was the best... to race in N[Z], there is only one answer – Kindergarten. Only a handful reading this will have seen Kindergarten in his heyday in the early 40s but of those who did, without exception... claim him as invincible. Unstoppable. Simply the best of the best before and since. What a shame travel outside Australasia a[t] that time did not allow the likes of Kindergarten to prove themselves on the world stage. One who did was harness racing’s great Cardigan Bay, who did more for trotting in the 1960s than anyone could ever have dreamed of... When [it] arrived in the U[S] it] was immediately matched against world champion pacer Overtrick in a three-race series. Cardy lost it 2-1, but there was never more than a neck in it and what you need to remember is, Overtrick was at his absolute pinnacle while the old fella had a lot of miles in his legs. It was a moral world championship of sorts. Balmerino, Show Gate, Mainbrace, Bonecrusher, Rising Fast – all great galloping champions of the modern era... The veracity of their talent cannot be questioned, but of

the horses of the early part of the century, was their talent as good? Their records say so, but how good was the opposition? ...There is no doubt there were some great early N[Z] racehorses, but it is nonsensical to compare them with the present horse. One... worthy of mention was Carbine. Okay, [Carbine] didn't fit into the century, [winning it]s Melbourne Cup in 1890, but... was such a champion [it] cannot be dismissed. There is sound argument Carbine will always be the greatest racehorse produced by N[Z. NZ]'s annual foal crop, minuscule compared to many major racing countries, is a major disadvantage in producing a steady stream of top-class horses for the international stage, yet that's exactly what we have been able to do. The secret is the climate. Over the centuries it has produced nutrients in our soil which remain the envy of many nurseries. Couple that with horse[person]ship equal to any in the world and N[Z] is right up there in the production of a sound, well-priced young horse. Racing is like a stage play and, like any play, a powerful closing act is important. And that's where Sunline comes in... What a way to end a century.

...Kiwi mare Sunline confirmed [it] is ready for an American campaign after a runaway win in the all Aged Stakes in Randwick yesterday... [7 days after] Sunline failed by a whisker to set a modern weight-carrying record for a mare in the \$A2.5 million Doncaster Handicap at... [the same track, t]he brilliant mare scored the easiest Gr1 victory of her career when [it] had four lengths to spare... Sunline has now won five Gr1 races...

SUNLINE was being hailed as the world's greatest mare... after completing back-to-back wins in Melbourne's Cox Plate. TV coverage of her seven-length win against the best horses racing in Australasia was beamed to 200 countries... [The] win was her seventh in Gr1 company, equalling Maybe Mahal's record established in 1979[, and]... rocketed her earnings to \$8.2 million[, making her]... Australasia's biggest stakes-earner [ever]...

AUS[us]ns adore a champion and Sunline is their sweetheart... "...Sunline is the greatest horse in the world," said one... on Saturday... There was no argument from the standing-room only crowd that packed Moonie Valley... If you wonder why Sunline is so good, you have to accept the theory that although talent is important, the difference between champions and near champions is attitude. In athletes, human and equine, the last 5[%] comes not from the body, but the mind. And in terms of attitude, Sunline is the world champion. Get in her way and you are going to know about it, probably by losing parts of your body. On this campaign aimed at Melbourne, Sunline has taken the tip off... [her co-trainer]'s finger, broken the face and hand of [her] devoted strapper... and generally bullied anyone else who was looking like getting in her space. [Sunline is also] like that with her equine rivals. [The mare] hates being beaten[and] is so competitive [that it] has to be worked solo on the training track. That sheer bloody mindedness and determination to win are also what can beat her on the track. It makes her race more fiercely than is tactically wise...

Sunline proved last night that... [it] is as good as any of the world's thoroughbred mares by beating the Hong Kong horse of the year, Fairy King Prawn, in the \$2.65 million Hong Kong Mile. Sunline's narrow win earned \$1.35 million and brought her total winnings to \$9.65 million... The only realistic challenge left for Sunline now is the world's richest race day in Dubai on March 24, which features the \$US6 million Dubai World Cup.

...purchase[d for]... \$40,000... Sunline could become the racing world's highest stakes earner in the next 12 months. The... N[Z] racehorse could nearly double her \$10 million earnings by winning her next two main missions, the Dubai World Cup in March and October's Cox Plate... That would put the five-year-old within \$5 million of the record \$25 million earned by T M Opera O from Japan, which has won the world's highest overall stake money. Second highest is the \$22 million banked by American-owned and trained Dubai World Cup winner Cigar, who is retired.

...Sunline is going to Dubai, but not for the Dubai World Cup. In a shock announcement last night, [her trainer] revealed Sunline will miss the... world's richest race and run instead in the \$US2 million Dubai Duty Free. "We simply can't get her ready for the... World Cup... It's 2000m on a dirt track which, the way they race, will be more like a 2400m slog..." The Duty Free is a 1777m race on grass, a turning track inside the dirt track which should suit a front-running horse like Sunline... Part of the problem for the Sunline camp has been a four-hour stopover on the tarmac in Singapore, when it is not possible to maintain air conditioning on aircraft... What Sunline will do after Dubai will depend on how [it] races there. "If [Sunline] performs well we will look at England or America and if [it doesn't it'll] return home[.]" "□ Disgruntled Press Gallery punters have convinced themselves they've found a way round the ludicrously low \$50 limit on the annual Melbourne Cup sweepstake. First prize is \$50 plus \$15 gratuity. (Now that the law is better known, the Finance Minister, who won \$80 in last year's gallery sweepstake, may be required to repay the balance.)'..."

Settling back into his office chair yesterday for his umpteenth interview of the day, the Cambridge Stud owner reflected on the attention [it] has received since... Brew won the Melbourne Cup... The media started calling minutes after Brew... [-] the gelded son of the stud's champion sire, Sir Tristram, and Japan Cup winner Horlicks... [-] crossed the line... [But the owner doesn't] mind the attention – it shows the standing N[Z] horse-breeding commands worldwide. The... Melbourne Cup and the weight-for-age Cox Plate, won by Sunline, were Australasia's two biggest races... "These sort of victories are what the industry here works for every year,"... said [the NZ] Thoroughbred Breeders Association chief executive... It meant buyers would be attracted to N[Z] yearling sales, and it boosted export possibilities... [E]xports in the March year had reached \$110 million and the industry had the potential to do better... When Brew crossed the line on Tuesday, [the owner] went outside and placed two red roses on [Sir Tristram]'s grave. The win provided Sir Tristram with a world-record 45th group one success, and the horse has now sired three Melbourne Cup winners... ● [After our interview, the owner paused]... at the grave of Sir Tristram to remember what the great horse has done for the [NZ] horse-breeding industry. Nearby, Brew's dam... look[ed] after her new foal and perhaps a future champion, sired by Zabeel, a son of Sir Tristram.

...A N[Z] bred colt set a Hong Kong International Sale record when... sold for HK\$3.8 million on Friday night[, one of 6]... colts and geldings from N[Z] that fetched an aggregate HK\$12.9 million... [The] colt had been bought at N[Z] Bloodstock's... Yearling Sale at Karaka... for \$310,000 in February.

...Fusiachi Pegasus is the first favourite since 1979 to win the Kentucky Derby... This is the colt who caused a brief delay at the starting gate at the Wood Memorial, who reared and threw his exercise rider and who has been known to stop and just look around... But [the colt] was all business on this 27deg day and before 153,204 cheering fans – the second largest Derby crowd in history... The time of 2min 1.12sec for the 1 1/4 miles... was tied for the sixth fastest... Derby... So gentle... was the colt, purchased for \$US4 million... as a yearling, that[the] jockey said... the colt... broke like a pony from the starting stalls. Fusiachi Pegasus was the highest priced winner by far in the Derby and his victory came a year after the race was won by Charismatic, who once ran with a \$US62,500 claiming tag. The winner's purse yesterday was \$US700,000. "You never know where a Derby winner is coming from," [one] trainer... said before the race. "Some cost 15,000 dollars, some cost 15 million."

...[the person] who sits on the executive of Thoroughbred Racing N[Z] as the trainers' representative, has been a driving force behind the present investigation into a ratings-based system. Calls for introduction of the ratings method, used extensively overseas, [re]gained momentum last weekend... [His successor] knows first hand the frustrations of having a single handicapper, seemingly accountable to no-one, framing weights... When [the representative] complained to Wellington, [it] was not even granted a reply. "For years, trainers have wanted some avenue of appeal over the handicapper. [90%] of the time the handicapper is right but it's a fundamental part of democracy – even the lowest rapist or murderer has the right of appeal." ...[the representative was] told no other country had appeal bodies[, but] later discovered South Africa and France did have. Earlier this year... the committee reviewing the classes and handicapping responded that... a ratings-based system... wouldn't work in N[Z]. "They said while it worked in some Asian countries, racing was too diverse between the North and South Islands." ...[however,] research of his own... found the ratings system was also used in France, England, South Africa and the U[S]. "The committee didn't tell us that and you couldn't get more diverse than the West and East coasts of the U[S]." ...Apart from being a transparent handicapping system, where horses earn and lose marks for

each run, with their ratings updated the day after every meeting... the Auckland Racing Club chief executive... says it enables horses to be competitive for a lot longer... “...Horses who are no longer competitive in a certain class, because of such things as age, can drop a class and remain competitive. This retains... name horses, which the public follow, and provide[s] additional enjoyment for a longer period for owners.” ...In June last year, the Hong Kong Jockey Club went a step further, removing all mention of horses’ classes. [● Said recently on TV: ‘If someone took away my horses I wouldn’t know what to do. They’re my most important things, my most important friends’! QUESTION: how many friends will happily let you ride on their backs? A more important question might be: If horses are such competitive racers, why do they need jockeys (and why do jockeys need whips)?]

...Only riderless Willie Tee could keep up with Eric the Bee at Riccarton on Saturday... Eric the Bee, at barely 15 hands high the smallest horse to win a Grand National Steeplechase since Aurora Australis in 1930 – and the first Riccarton-trained winner in 66 years – produced an almost perfect racing display for [its]rider... “Our biggest worry over the final stages was that the riderless horse... would do something to upset Eric,”... ■ [Willie Tee did *upset Eric*, by overtaking it at the line. But Willie Tee wasn’t recognised as the winner – so the punters who backed it lost their money!]

...While horse-racing might be the sport of kings, polo has a reputation for being the sport of upper-class twits, mostly found nosh-noshing and gurgling in flash corporate marquees. What’s more, it’s a lark favoured by the charmless [heir to the British throne, plus] that frightful heel... the champagne Charlie who once kissed [the prince’s wife] and told, and the world’s fattest fat cat, the Sultan of Brunei... [Polo is] not the sport for wage slaves... [T]he cost of playing (as just 50 out of 300 do in the Auckland club) is a gasp-inducing equation involving \$1000 for club fees, the acquisition (up to \$700 untrained, \$20,000 trained) and upkeep of six ponies, plus transport (plus champers)... [T]his... is a sport traced back... to ancient Persia. Its warlike tribes[people], so legend has it, used the heads of their fallen enemies for balls.

...[the heir to the British throne’s ‘mistress went fox-hunting at the weekend just hours after Parliament voted overwhelmingly to ban the sport. The mistress was pictured with the Beaufort hunt in Gloucestershire, her favourite hunt and one of Britain’s most affluent. Although MPs voted by 411-151 in favour of a bill to ban hunting with hounds, the Government has refused support so it has no chance of becoming law.]

...*Bloodsport opponents outfoxed* Despite a majority of MPs in the House of Commons being in favour, and overwhelming support for an end to fox hunting throughout the country, the sport has been given a reprieve in Britain after the Government effectively killed off a ban by ruling out giving an anti-hunting bill the necessary parliamentary time. A spokesperson for the Hunt Saboteurs said the decision came as “no surprise to us and gives hunt saboteurs even more reason to exist in future.” Animal rights activists said they would step up their campaign of disruption against hunting. The season began two weeks ago. The bill proposed having maximum 6-month jail sentences and fines of up to £5000 for foxhunters and those who allow hunting on their land.]

...*The Animal Liberation Front stole more than 50 hunting beagles from the grounds of Wye College in Kent last week. And four letterbombs have been sent to potential victims. One, near Congleton, Cheshire, slightly injured [a girl], aged 6. This week, the front claimed responsibility for setting off a car bomb outside the home of a fox hunt supporter near Oxted.* [□ ‘Foxhunting originated at least 700 years ago. Originally organized to kill foxes as pests, it developed into a popular sport among horseriders in England and the U.S., and reached its greatest popularity in the 18th and 19th centuries.’]

...‘British farmers have devised a novel scheme to outsmart hungry foxes – by making their lambs glow in the dark. Researchers discovered that coating lambs with phosphorescent paint laced with a foul-tasting substance discourages hungry predators during the lambing season. “Foxes will quickly come to associate the light with a terrible taste,” said a spokesperson for the manufacturers of the new Repel spray.’ By the way, Princess Diana hates] **hunting** and had hoped her boys would never take up the sport. But the hard-faced look on [her eldest boy]’s face made him look, according to some commentators, a typical cold-blooded upper-class snoot rather than the shy, down-to-earth teenage heartthrob [the prince] usually appears... But while [the]Prince... rode into a royal row... [after being] pictured fox hunting, [royalty can enjoy]... a pheasant shoot... without causing a ripple amongst animal welfare groups. Perhaps that’s because pheasants are bred specifically to be blown to smithereens by the upper class. [At a] recent shooting session... on the Royal Family’s estate at Sandringham in Norfolk... the luckless birds... [were] pursued... all over the farm fields.

...*Bad Will hunting...* It must have seemed like the ideal way to spend a day off from school – an opportunity to escape from family, studies and the media, as well as enjoy some rare freedom and independence. However, for Britain’s anti-bloodsports campaigners, [the young prince]’s decision... provided the excuse for yet another attack on the controversial sport of fox-hunting – and an unprecedented dig at the teenage royal himself. In one tabloid newspaper, under a banner headline which branded the young prince “arrogant”... the head of operations for the League Against Cruel Sports, fumed, “Hunting is a form of animal abuse. We’re very surprised [the prince] has decided to ignore the public outcry of last month, after [the prince] went hunting with his father. The palace can’t have failed to have registered the outcry and they know this issue is a political one. [As second in line to the throne, the young prince] shouldn’t be involved in politics.”

...*The political battle in Britain’s unhappy hunting grounds is as much about class divisions as animal rights...* Britain’s foxhunters are in no mood to go to earth in the face of renewed attempts to ban the sport they love. At the Essex and Suffolk Hunt... all looks much as it has done for years... But the peaceful scene hides the anger and frustration... At stake is one of the most traditional country pastimes – hunt[ers] galloping behind a pack of hounds after a fleeing fox. [Britain’s P]M... took the hunting world by surprise last month when [it sai]d... on national t[v] that his... Government would attempt to ban foxhunting before the next election... Hunt supporters were stunned. They thought the issue had gone away... when a bill to ban hunting with hounds failed in the House of Commons. But it has not disappeared, and the taciturn people of rural Britain who live for hunting are again preparing to take up the fight to preserve a way of life that is hundreds of years old. “We’re hunting Labour,” said... [the master hunter] of the Essex and Suffolk, [whose attitude]... is... typical of... [those] who work... 300 packs of foxhounds, staghounds, bassets, harriers and beagles in Britain... The Countryside Alliance, Britain’s main pro-hunting pressure group, estimates... a ban on hunting would cost the equivalent of 16,000 full-time jobs... Hunt workers believe they are victims of class prejudice – the mistaken belief that hunting is the preserve of the rich... They... [say] smartly dressed hunt[ers] are targets for opposition which Labour would never dare direct at the foxhunts run by former coalminers in... Wales.

...The battle to ban hunting may appear half won. But seasoned anti-hunt protesters, gathering in the Cheshire village of Lache Denis for one of northwest England’s biggest[fox-hunting] meets, were threatened by complacency. As the hunt[ers] thundered off over the village’s wildflower meadow to jeers of “your days are numbered” and “one last time,” activists were privately worried by a turnout of about 40 protesters compared with 150 last year. “Most people think the struggle’s over so they don’t turn out,” said a former member of the League Against Cruel Sports executive committee. Pro-hunting organisations claimed more than 325,000 people demonstrated their support for hunting at the 300 meets, some of which were marked by clashes with protesters. A... free vote on fox-hunting is due to take place within weeks, when MPs will be able to opt for one of three options: an almost total ban, compulsory licensing or self-regulation. The bill is likely to encounter opposition in the House of Lords[, even though opinion]... polls consistently have indicated that a majority of Britons oppose using dogs to hunt down and kill foxes. But many rural Britons say city-dwellers don’t understand the need to control the fox population – or the importance of hunting to rural economies... As a result, the hunting debate has escalated... into a thorny political issue... Cheshire still bears the tensions left when a saboteur died after colliding with a truck carrying beagles several years ago and this week’s event was not without its flashpoints. A [protester] appeared to be hit by the wing mirror of a vehicle minutes after tempers flared when one of the hunt’s 36 hounds was trampled by a horse and injured... Hunt supporters were undaunted... [A] village resident for 30 years, insisted that the hunt had a social role to play. “An hour outside and then into the pub – that’s the way it’s always been here... I don’t see why the fuss. They never catch nowt anyway...” ...There are signs that the Government may be preparing itself some “wobble room” if a ban proves too costly in political terms. But if it does come to a ban, a letter in the *Times* newspaper had a possible

solution. “George Templer (1781-1843), master of the South Devon Hunt, also kept a pack of foxes with which [the master] used to hunt rabbit and hare... Is this the way forward?” ...■ Although hunting has a low profile in N[Z], the sport continues to be well supported here, with 29 clubs spread from Invercargill to Kaitiaki... Clubs hold up to 26 hunt meets a year and protests are unheard of... The prey is hares, rather than foxes.

...Through the dawn mist of a cold English morning, a procession of expensive, high-performance cars wends its way along a country lane en route to a day of “sport”. The... convoy[of]... Jaguars and Mercedes i[s]... flanked by vans which echo to the sound of dogs barking. This is the start of a hunt, but not one in the traditional sense. The quarry isn’t pheasant or partridge, and the well-off passengers won’t be putting on red coats in search of a fox. Instead, they will trespass on farmland, threatening... with violence – in at least two cases with guns – ...anyone who tries to stop them. Then their dogs will spend the day ripping hares to pieces for stake money of up to £20,000... This is modern-day hare coursing, a pastime that used to attract poachers but which is now the sport of criminal gangs... [A]lthough the sport itself is legal... [-] and the British Government appears indifferent to the... [hares’ plight -] the trespass on farmers’ land is not, nor is the unlicensed betting... Tragically, it is a growing trend, which many police forces, armed only with Victorian legislation, feel almost powerless to prevent. And, all the while, it is a trend which is driving Britain’s brown hare population to dangerously low levels... The brown hare gained protection after the Rio Convention on biodiversity in 1992. “But we’re doing nothing to save it. I have written to... [the] Minister of State at the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs... three times asking for action, but I haven’t even had the courtesy of a reply[,” said the chairperson]... of the Mammal Society... In the meantime, [the]... RSPCA is reluctant to distinguish between “legal” hare coursing at events such as the Waterloo Cup at Altcar, staged with the permission of landowners, and the “illegal” events staged without permission... However, it acknowledges that the “illegal” events are causing numbers of brown hares to fall because they are killed not only by the coursers, but also by farmers who cull them to prevent coursers invading their land.

...Thousands of greyhounds are hanged each year in Spain after the end of the hare coursing season, an international animal charity said yesterday... Skeletal remains... of gaigos – the Spanish word for greyhounds – were... commonplace. There was also evidence of hanged dogs being set on fire, with melted nooses hanging above fresh bones and ash on the ground. The... dogs which raced badly were typically hanged low down a tree. The slow death was known as “the piano player” because the animals would frantically scrabble their legs in a vain attempt to touch the ground. Dogs which raced well were hanged higher, resulting in a quicker death. Gaigos unwanted after the... season may also be stoned, tied up and left to starve, staked in a pond to drown or thrown into wells... It is not illegal to kill a dog by hanging in Andalusia and Extremadura, where there are no animal protection laws. In Castilla y Leon, a law threatening a fine of ...\$30,0 to anyone hanging a dog has yet to be enforced... [In local news, a] newborn fawn was found hungry, terrified and dehydrated wandering through central Rotorua after [it] had been kept by the hunter who shot her mother. “[The fawn] was... very, very stressed... crying and looking for mum,” said [a]shocked and sickened SPCA inspector... The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is trying to track the hunter, aged about 20, to lay cruelty charges. The SPCA believes the [hunter]... took the newborn red deer fawn from the wild, carried it around Rotorua in a car, swung it by its legs, kept it in a flat and did not feed it adequately. Rotorua SPCA staff spent hours trying to track down the animal after receiving complaints last week of the tiny deer being forced into the back of a vehicle... Attempts to rescue the animal from the flat where the [hunter] was keeping it failed. The... breakthrough came when it was discovered wandering through the city last Thursday... [T]he fawn must have freed itself and got away... Its damaged right back leg had to be put in a splint... The leg injury was partly nerve damage, causing the hoof to curl backwards. A rope burn had started to heal. The SPCA had taken the fawn to a farm to be reared with another the same age. It will not be returned to the wild. “We’ve saved her once. We don’t want her to be shot.”

STAG hunting was banned on more than 15,000 acres of National Trust land last week – 24 hours after... a £165,000 scientific study it commissioned... branded it cruel. The Trust also called on the... [British] government to commission an urgent review into the suffering of other animals hunted for sport. Its refusal to renew licences for hunting deer with hounds on the land near Exmoor, the Quantock Hills and New Forest from the end of the month was hailed by animal rights groups as a significant step towards outlawing the practice... [Meanwhile, sheep in the] New Forest are using commando tactics to... ram raid lush lawns and gardens. Many residents protect their gardens from the sheep, which graze on common land, with... cattle grids... But the lure of grazing heaven inspired unsuspecting ingenuity in one flock. Mimicking the way soldiers cross barbed wire entanglements, one sheep lay across the grid, allowing the rest to walk across its body. “I couldn’t believe my eyes,” [said a villager.

...‘sheep and pigs are being stamped with postcodes to combat rustling in Yorkshire.’ Incidentally, ‘a US animal rights group wants any would-be gopher hunters to keep their paws off the critters. It wants a ban on bounties paid for gopher feet during the annual Viola Gopher Count this week. “I don’t know how primitive the community is, but the gophers, in my estimation, have some moral rights to not having their feet chopped off in a celebration of the town,” said the president of Friends of Animals. The 126-year-old Gopher Count has grown into a kind of reunion in Viola, Minnesota.’ ● It is during this time of year that large numbers of southern Europeans engage in their annual pastime of trying to shoot down birds migrating between northern Europe and Africa!

...“When a person wantonly destroys one of the works of its own species, we call it a vandal. When it wantonly destroys one of the works of God, we call it a sportsperson. How anyone can profess to find animal life interesting and yet take delight in reducing the wonder of any animal to a bloody mass of fur and feathers is beyond my comprehension.” It seems that each year I write of such things. I do so not in the belief that my writings will change a thing but because it gets it off my chest. I know the arguments that will be mounted in favour of this barbaric practice – the bonding of mates in the mai mai, the thrill of the hunt (and the kill), the service they do in reducing the numbers of ducks who plague the countryside, blah, blah, blah! Those arguments don’t equate, of course, for visually implanted in my mind is the picture painted by another writer: “And one by one, driven to exhaustion, trapped by fence and bewilderment, under an immaculate sky, the creatures died. They died, not in mercy, not in the majesty which was their due, but as the least of life, accursed of nature. They died in the dust of insult and the spittle of lead.” ● ‘The issue for the country’s estimated 50,000 gamebird hunters this season is not numbers but the forced transition from lead shot to non-toxic alternatives. The reason for the change – which follows similar moves in AUS, Britain, Canada, Denmark and Finland – is the effect of lead on waterfowl and the environment. Opponents of change say the incidence of lead-shot poisoning in waterfowl is minute and the transition is simply a political move to placate “green lobbying”. They also believe the new steel shot lacks killing power’]...

Two Otago duck-shooters who wanted to make up for fellow hunters’ low kills have... each admitted one charge of hunting or killing absolutely protected wildlife (grey teal) and two charges of killing in excess of the daily limit. A Fish and Game Council prosecutor... said a ranger who visited a pond on an Ida Valley property... found the [duck-shooters] with 154 mallard ducks, 13 shoveller ducks and three grey teal. The daily limit per hunter was 20 for mallard and five for shoveller... They took responsibility for shooting the three grey teal, accepting that they took insufficient care in distinguishing them from other species. The defendants, both first offenders, had written letters apologising to the... [council,] admitting their breach of the law. They were each fined \$300 on the grey teal charge, and \$250 on each of the two other charges. They were also each to pay a solicitor’s fee amounting to \$600, and court costs of \$285... [Now for some news from the other end of the country, ‘a crowd of 3500 turned out to the Counties Rodeo to watch cowboys compete for titles in bull riding, steer wrestling and calf roping. More than 30 rodeos are held in NZ every year. Bull riding, where the rider must stay on the bull for 8 seconds holding a rope with one hand, is considered the ultimate challenge. A plucky Pukekohe 12-year-old’s introduction to calf riding lasted all of 3 seconds.’ Don’t expect to see him competing at this year’s World Bull Riding Championships...]

The South Island] landscape may not seem quite the place for buffalo to roam but it will be if[a couple of] farmers... have their way. The[y]... have bought a pair of plains bison, the buffalo of Western movies, from a North Island breeder to provide the cornerstone of a business venture. The bull

and heifer join elk and wapiti deer on the [ir farm. They]... hope to import about 50 heifers from Canada to build up their herd. Then it will be a matter of enticing other farmers to breed bison so they can get enough meat for a boutique meat market, supplying restaurants and hotels. A North Island breeder killed a steer last year for a restaurant celebrating Independence Day, and the skull alone fetched \$300 because it was sought as a trophy. Mr [Farmer] said bison were a pleasure to farm. They were very docile in the paddock, and... just like in the movies, they loved to run.

...BENEATH the limestone bluffs of southern Sulawesi, Indonesia, the... half a million Toraja people... still stage their animist ceremonies of life and death, employing a cast of thousands and taking months to prepare... For centuries the Toraja... tended their rice crops, their buffalo and pigs and practised their... religion, unhindered. With Dutch colonial rule in 1906 came missionaries, seeking to establish a bulwark against proselytising Islam. Aluk Todolo, the old... ways of this class-conscious society, lost some influence but were not destroyed. Now... in... the never-ending quest for ethnic authenticity, European tour groups marvel at the ancestral skulls lodged in their cliff-top eyries high above the rice fields. Yet Toraja funerals remain spectacles worthy of... the thousands of solemn, colourfully costumed participants bearing offerings, undaunted by monsoonal downpours... or even the relentless probing of whirring video cameras... Perhaps the producers of... Hollywood epics found inspiration afresh here among the mass sacrificial slaughter of protesting buffalo, which seems necessary to speed the souls of departed Toraja to their resting places... Another day, another village, another funeral. This time the scale is more intimate than the earlier, sombre epic. In bright sun... we witness the clumsy savaging of buffalo after buffalo, blood spurting as the tormented beasts pursue the wielder of the knife until finally collapsing in twitching heaps. [● 'A pet bull that killed its 79-year-old owner near his Kaikohe home on Thursday night will be eaten by guests attending his tangi. The body of retired farmer Hetaraka Aperahama was discovered beside a shed near his home about 7 pm after neighbours noticed that his six pet cattle were behaving strangely. Kaikohe police said the cattle were found standing around Mr Aperahama's body while the only bull in the herd stood over him. A senior sergeant said all evidence indicated that the bull had attacked Mr Aperahama and the beast would be destroyed.']

...BUM STEER: A Colombian banderillero [wa]s gored in the unkindest way after being sent in to help finish off a bull when the matador failed with his 'coup de grace'. [The banderillero] was taken to hospital with, unsurprisingly, internal injuries. Last heard of, [the banderillero] was in a stable condition. [□ '100-150 matadors are gored in Spain every year, and 4 have been killed in the ring over the past 15 years. But the odds are stacked against the bulls. A 25-year-old matador, who earns more than \$1 million annually, has already killed over 700 bulls.']

...attempts by the Spanish Government to ban practices such as shaving their horns and drugging bulls prior to bull-fighting contents, and thrusting swords through the back of their necks – which prevents them from throwing their heads back – during fights, have caused matadors to go on strike.'

...The choice between seats in "sol" or "sombra" was irrelevant at Spain's first bullfight of the season, where the immediate concern was to dodge the winds from the sierra that chilled your fingers in what should be a sun-soaked fiesta. But the burly breeders, managers and matadors' agents huddled to supervise six fighting bulls being unloaded from the lorry into ringside pens were preoccupied by more serious worries. They fear mad-cow (vaca loca) disease will ruin their livelihood. Tiny, unprepossessing Valdemorillo, 30km northwest of Madrid, enjoys a brief burst of fame every year when a make-shift iron bullring is rigged up for the opening event of the bullfighting calendar. It is an important occasion, eagerly awaited, but this year it was steeped in gloom tinged with panic. The organiser of the week's festivities, was devastated to learn, shortly before the first beast of the afternoon was let into the ring, that the health authorities had decided all the bulls must be taken away for incineration after they were killed by the matador's sword. "It's terrible news, couldn't be worse. I've lost all the money from selling the carcasses, and I have to pay the transport and incineration costs. I'm ruined, and they've offered no compensation," the organiser mourned. The entire bullfighting world has been shaken by EU rules dictating that the meat from animals more than 30 months old must be tested for BSE or else be destroyed. Fighting bulls are 6 years old and the industry says it is impossible to test the 39,000 to be fought this season. This was day one, and BSE was already making its contribution to the rich repertoire of taurine insults. "That one's got 'vaca loca'," a spectator shouted. Steam snorted from the bulls' nostrils as they laboured in the wintry air, but there was little excitement, despite squeals of encouragement from small children thrilled at the gore and the howling trumpets. Spain's top bulls commentator, who sat in the high back row of the little ring because the commentator reckons it's the best spot, said: "I always thought the bulls were drugged, but the taurine world is very corrupt and closed and no-one speaks openly. We must analyse the animals to find out what's wrong. But now with incineration we'll never know whether they're drugged, ill, have shaved horns or anything. It's a rotten business." Afterwards we strolled along the hill to the tombola stalls blaring cheesy music in the twilight. A dour Asturian sold grilled blood sausage and cups of arguardiente, and wondered how much longer the corrida, Spain's national festival, would last.'

...There was human blood on the] streets of Spain last week, and plenty of it. Assassins from the Basque separatist group ETA shot dead a judge on a busy thoroughfare in central Madrid, and a Basque business[per]son also received a point-blank bullet in the head as [it] marched in a carnival in the troubled northern region. In Granada, in the south, a car bomb claimed the life of... [someone] who worked as a barber for the air force. But even as this new rash of terrorist murders swept the country, a contingent of Spanish and international media was zooming in on an altogether different victim of violence: a small grey donkey scheduled to play the lead role in a bizarre piece of street theatre staged annually in Villanueva de la Vera, a village in the rugged tobacco-and-olives countryside of Extremadura some 200km southwest of Madrid... Surrounded by dozens of... [villagers], many of them drunk[and]... firing shotguns charged with confetti into the air, the animal was pushed, pulled and wrestled through the narrow streets. An overweight rider, apparently on the verge of an alcoholic coma, lurched precariously on its back... In the end the donkey shed no blood... But in a nation where, at fiesta time, bulls are stampeded through the streets at night with flaming rags attached to their horns, where chickens strung by their legs from wire have their heads ripped off by [people riding horses], and where goats have been thrown from church bell towers, the running of the donkey has come to symbolize the maltreatment of thousands of animals in Spain each year, and the growing local and international campaign to end it. Villanueva's mayor... claims the donkey is not maltreated, defending a fiesta that was celebrated without fuss "for about 500 years" until the sensationalist British press heard about it 10 years ago... The people of Extremadura are known for their hospitality, but so much negative attention from *los Ingleses*, as they tend to dub all the outsiders, caused hackles to rise, and there was some pushing, shoving and kicking. One villager said: "I want to ask the English, what about your mad cows, eh?" ...But tradition cuts no ice with the British-based International Donkey Protection Trust, which has ridden to the donkey's rescue, and there are few animal lovers more militant than the British.

...80 animal rights [campaign]ers and hunt saboteurs were arrested in a weekend of violent protests against farming and blood sports in Britain.

...At least one cuddly, fur-wearing creature won't be receiving much compassion from animal rights campaigners this winter... [Her] crime? Inappropriate evening wear. Three years after appearing in... an "I'd rather go naked than wear fur" ad, [the supermodel] incited howls of outrage... [for sauntering] down a... catwalk earlier this year draped in... sable. "[The supermodel]'s shown... more beauty than brain cells," hissed... [the] campaign director of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, based in Norfolk, Virginia... [PETA] declared the leggy, 27-year-old mannequin a turncoat... In reply the model complained to the press about being too young to fully comprehend the implications when... [signing] up with the rights campaigners. "Well, that's the risk if you deal with celebrities," says... [the] executive director of Citizens to End Animal Suffering and Exploitation. "A celebrity is also a human being. It's nice if you can convince them to support a good cause, but I guess they have to stay in business, too." [The] defection is the latest loose thread in a slowly unravelling celebrity coalition that once fur-ociously battled for animal rights... Why are so many celebrities doing a pirouette on fur? One reason, according to industry watchers, is the recent splintering on the issue of animal testing... Many in the Hollywood community are breaking their promises "because they're such supporters of finding a cure for Aids..." says... the Fur Information Council in Washington, a fur-lobbying organisation. On the runways, the furry stuff is seen in trims, recycled linings: even that throwback to the 50s, the full-length mink coat, as the fashion world returns to the bygone days of glamour and elegance... Having already prowled its way down the runways of Milan and Paris, fur is certain to find its way on to the backs of slinky supermodels during the upcoming fashion

shows in New York. *Vogue* magazine, that benchmark of chic, paraded fur across 16 pages of [a recent] issue: priceless attention for an industry that has earned about \$NZ1.92 billion annually for the past five years... Animal rights groups vow to redouble their focus at the grass-roots level...

Security at scores of Oregon mink farms remained tight yesterday after thousands of mink were released from their cages on a fur ranch, allegedly by animal rights activists. At least half the animals... were expected to die from exposure, fighting with each other or trauma. Many were baby mink that had been separated from their mothers; [some] had been crushed by human feet... At least 2000 of the 6000 to 8000 baby mink released were confirmed dead, said... [a spokesperson] for Fur Commission, USA, which represents mink and fox farmers[, as]... were... 400 of the 1600 adult... mink... Children were warned to avoid the mink because the animals are aggressive when cornered and highly susceptible to rabies... There have been no arrests and no one has claimed responsibility, but the act was similar to animal releases in the past for which the underground Animal Liberation Front have claimed responsibility. The group's web page says "the... [ALF is conducting] a non-violent campaign, activists taking all precautions not to harm any animal." In March, five Michigan residents were arrested for allegedly releasing 1500 minks into the wild from a fur farm in the Canadian province of Ontario. More than 400... died, due to cold, fighting among themselves or being run over by cars.

...[Animal rights activists freed almost 8000 minks at a breeding farm 400km north-west of London. Police said most stayed contained in the farm compound but 2000 had escaped to the countryside. They warned local residents to keep doors and windows closed as the minks would attack pets, and said motorists should avoid the area. In August, owls at a nearby wildlife sanctuary were killed when 2000 mink were "freed" at a fur farm near Ringwood'...

'The House of Commons has banned fur farming in England and Wales, to the applause of animal rights activists.' 'Humane Society International maintains that over 40 million animals worldwide are raised in cages and killed for their fur annually. "Not only are these poor animals killed inhumanely, but they suffer numerous physical and behavioural abnormalities, induced by the stress of caging conditions," says the marketing director for the society.'

...3 animal rights activists have been arrested following an anti-fur protest outside Hartley's fashion store in High St, Auckland. The protesters claimed the store was selling rabbit fur from animals farmed in appallingly cruel conditions in China. Some of the rabbits were skinned alive, the group said.'

...An Auckland butcher who is one of the latest victims of the [ALF's] vandalism attacks is pleading for public help to expose the... gutless... culprits... [His window was] smashed by front members at the weekend. It will cost more than \$1000 to repair. The front also admitted the vandalism of four other businesses in Auckland at the weekend, and now claims to have caused damage totalling \$150,000 in the Auckland region alone this year. The... [ALF,] which targets businesses it claims profits from animal abuse, uses other tactics such as gluing locks and daubing graffiti as a form of "economic sabotage." The National Bureau of Criminal Intelligence is monitoring the groups' activities, and says the members are dangerous because they are motivated by a deep belief in what they are doing.

...The A[LF] is a shadowy group which claims responsibility for a series of recent attacks... [on] butcher's shops and beekeepers... in Auckland. Unlike members of the anti-abortion lobby, who are prepared to be arrested for their beliefs, ALF members carry out their "actions" anonymously. Attempts yesterday to contact members of the ALF in Auckland failed. Other animal rights groups said the front was a loose group of international activists. It had no formal membership but vegetarians or vegans who followed its guidelines could call themselves ALF members. "You won't get anyone to admit to you that they're members of the ALF,"... said... [the] national president of the Royal N[Z] Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals[, which - although]... many SPCA members were vegetarian or vegan... [-] did not in any way endorse the ALF... Despite this anonymity, police say they have a fairly good idea who some of the key members are. The... [NBCI's] threats assessment unit had been watching the ALF for some time. "These are not just yahoos we can just dismiss... If people believe strongly enough in a cause, and you only have to look at Ireland... it can lead to violence, including murder and arson,"... said the [head of the] bureau... While the front's activities in N[Z] had been confined to vandalism and wilful damage, in Britain[- where the ALF recently caused 'more damage in one year than the IRA' -] people had been killed in the name of animal rights... A group calling itself Auckland Animal Action said yesterday that no one had ever been hurt in N[Z] by ALF actions. Their spokes[person]... could not be contacted, but in a written statement... said that his group supported last Saturday's attack on "12 animal businesses around the Auckland area." ALF members were reacting to scenes of "animals raised in misery on factory farms, even when thousands of N[Z]ers have signed petitions against such practices," [the statement] said. "They have seen baby calves ripped away from their mothers within days of birth and killed so that humans can steal the milk that should have been theirs..." [The statement pointed out that] political lobbying took too long to get results; the ALF wanted the torture to stop now. "Although AAA campaigns legally, we obviously see the need for tactics such as this. All movements in the past that have struggled for some form of liberty, like the anti-slave movement, have used similar tactics."

- 1997

IN THE EARLY HOURS of May 21 last year, a group calling itself "Noah's Ark" broke into three National Institute of Health and Medical Research laboratories on the outskirts of Lyon, France. The intruders anaesthetized... then kidnapped 38 monkeys and 18 dogs, plus rabbits, rats, ferrets and other animals, while television cameras rolled. The attack halted research that had already led to a test for vision deficiencies in newborn babies. Mourned... [the] director of one of the labs: "A whole year's work is wiped out." Members of the... ALF... broke into a laboratory used by the Institute of Psychiatry at the Bethlem Royal Hospital in Beckenham, Kent, in February 1988. They "liberated" 80 rats, and stole documents giving the addresses of the lab's staff - whose homes were then defaced with paint. The institute, which had been seeking to learn about behavioural patterns and development, announced that all animal research would cease and its resources... "redeployed for economic reasons." The peace of Bristol University's Senate House was shattered by a bomb blast on February 23, 1989. The university had been a frequent target of demonstrations by activists, for using animals in experiments in its search for new drugs against Parkinson's disease, schizophrenia, and a virus that causes tumours in children. In this case, however, Bristol University did not give in, and continued its experiments. The animal-rights movement has held the biomedical research community under siege for years. The movement's modern prophet is... a professor of philosophy at [AUS's] Monash University, who became a visiting professor at New York University in the mid-1970s and was able to promote his ideas throughout the U[S]. But the movement's roots go back more than a century. In 1875, Britain's... Society for the Abolition of Vivisection declared: "Vivisection is monstrous. Medical science has little to learn, and nothing can be gained by repetition of experiments on living animals." This sentiment is endlessly parroted by contemporary "activists." It is patently false. Since... [1875], animal research has led to vaccines against polio, measles, mumps, whooping cough, rubella, diphtheria (...British antivivisectionists delayed use of the diphtheria vaccine there from 1925 to 1940, during which time the disease killed 53,558 people). It has meant eradication of smallpox, effective treatment for diabetes and control of infection with powerful antibiotics. Using bacteria injected into mice, researchers developed a new drug - ...tested on horses - that now controls river blindness, an ancient disease transmitted by flies that affects some 17 million people... The cardiac pacemaker, micro-surgery to reattach severed limbs, and heart, kidney, lung, liver and other transplants are all possible because of animal research. In the early 1960s, the cure rate for acute lymphocytic leukaemia in a child was [4%]. Today, because of animal research, the cure rate exceeds 70[%]. Since the turn of the century, animal research has helped increase our life span by nearly 28 years. And now animal research is leading to dramatic progress against AIDS and Alzheimer's... Animals themselves have benefited. We are now able to extend and improve the lives of our farm animals and pets through cataract surgery, open-heart surgery and cardiac pacemakers, and can immunize them against rabies, distemper, anthrax, tetanus and feline leukaemia... We should see even more spectacular medical breakthroughs in coming decades. But not if the animal-rights movement has its way... How effective has the... movement been? Very. British opinion polls suggest that roughly one-half of the public opposes all forms of vivisection and most of the

remainder accept it only reluctantly. In the U[S], recent polls reveal that more than 70[% of USers] support animal research – but about the same number believe the lie that medical researchers torture their animals... [‘Most animal experiment work is done under anaesthesia.’ In the US], the movement is spearheaded by... PETA... whose leadership insists that animals are the moral equivalent of human beings. Any differentiation between people and animals constitutes “speciesism,” [which they consider to be] as unethical as racism. Says PETA[’s] co-founder and director... “There really is no rational reason for saying a human being has special rights...” [The director] compares the killing of chickens with the Nazi Holocaust. “Six million people died in concentration camps... but six billion broiler chickens will die this year in slaughterhouses.” [The director] has been quoted as saying that meat-eating is “primitive, barbaric, arrogant,” that humans have “grown like a cancer. We’re the biggest blight on the face of the earth,” and that if her father had a heart attack, “it would give me no solace to know his treatment was first tried on a dog.” The movement insists that animal research is irrelevant, that researchers simply refuse to move on to modern techniques[or ‘they’ve been using animals for so long that they don’t know anything else’]. “The movement’s big buzz word is ‘alternatives,’ meaning animals can now be replaced by computer and tissue cultures,” says... [the] associate dean for research-medicine at the University of Western Ontario. “That is nonsense. You cannot study kidney transplantation or diarrhoea or high blood pressure on a computer screen.” Adds... [the] head of the Department of Pharmacology at Oxford University. “There is a simple test of the importance of animal work: open the *British Pharmacopoeia* at any point, and at the entry so found, ask, ‘Could this have been developed without animal experiment?’ Whenever I have tried it, the answer has always been ‘No.’” How then have the animal-rights activists achieved respectability? By exploiting the public’s rightful concern for humane treatment of animals[, and because it]... has taken the research community about ten years to realize that it is not dealing with moderates. It is dealing with organizations like... Trans-Species Unlimited, which trumpets: “The liberation of animal life can only be achieved through the radical transformation of human consciousness and the overthrow of the existing power structures in which human and animal abuse are entrenched.” - The ‘Animal Rights’ War on Medicine

Medical research depends to an unhappily great extent on experiments with live animals and primates are the most valuable of all animals for this because they are so closely related to [humans]. Experiments performed on rats or dogs are much less likely to be applicable to [humans]... Ideally, the great apes would be the ‘blueprints for [humanity]’... but gorillas, chimpanzees and orang-utans are rare and difficult to obtain. The Old World monkeys are the next closest to [humans], and among these the macaques are the most suitable. They are... imported by the thousand every year... By 1965 the annual ‘consumption’ of primates... for use in laboratories... in... Europe and the U[S]... was put at a quarter of a million. Many wild populations are already showing signs of drastic reduction as a result... Another scandalous situation is the lack of breeding programmes. If an adequate number of monkeys are born in captivity then – given an economical use of experimental animals – there need be no... drain on wild populations. But such is not the case... Steppe lemmings... were first bred in the laboratory 30 years ago... [T]he species has only a small number of chromosomes and the[y]... are easily distinguished. The lemmings are therefore an asset in the study of genetics and especially the genetics of cancer. [Other] advantages... are that the animals are... smaller than guinea pigs and therefore require less space[, are]... easy to feed and maintain, are docile in nature, and have no unpleasant odour. Moreover, they breed rapidly and grow quickly... – which is hard luck on steppe lemmings.

Emotions, such as fear, anger, startledness, pain and pleasure are being studied experimentally today in animals... [because m]any of these experiments would be extremely difficult or impossible with human subjects.

Vivisection could perhaps be justified morally if animals were different from humans, if they felt less pain and were less worthy of concern. But the practice is justified by some... p[eo]ple p[re]cisely because they are identical to us. Such philosophical niceties can have been of little interest to the animal experimenters who carried out 3.5 million pieces of research on living, struggling creatures in 1988... Britain has only nineteen inspectors to regulate millions of experiments and tens of thousands of premises licensed for vivisection. Their 7,000 visits each year allow them to see only the tiniest fraction of experiments. We do know that two thirds of the experiments they witnessed were performed without any kind of painkiller. Two million of the 3.5 million experiments were performed by drug companies replicating earlier trials or by industrial firms seeking to create new food additives, pesticides or household cleaners; 86,000 animals were subjected to ionizing radiation, while 1,000 were submitted to ‘physical trauma to simulate human injury.’ ...All British drugs have, by law, to be tested on animals. The pro-vivisection Research Defence Society argues: ‘Faced with a severe illness or a critically ill relative, most people would not hesitate to have their doctor prescribe an animal-tested medicine. Likewise even an ardent anti-vivisectionist would not want to see his [sic] pet dog die if an animal-tested antibiotic could save its life.’ But animal testing is not the medical panacea its supporters claim it to be. Penicillin... would never have been developed if it had been tested on... animals... Other drugs that have produced horrifying side effects, including Thalidomide... Opren... and Clioquinol... were said to be safe after extensive animal testing. Indeed, when [a p]rofessor... tested Thalidomide prior to its release, using cell culture, [the professor] found it to be teratogenic... but the medical and scientific world chose to ignore his advice in favour of the evidence provided by animal experiments. The W[HO] argues that only 200 drugs are necessary, yet there are nearly 20,000 licensed (i.e. tested on animals) on the UK market. Far from being pioneering forms of medication, most are merely slightly altered versions of commercially successful pharmaceuticals produced by rival firms... Legal ‘safeguards’ mean that tests are duplicated in different countries... The advances in health that are claimed to be the result of vivisection by the R[DS] – such as longer life expectancy, reduced infant mortality and a decline in diseases such as polio, tuberculosis, diphtheria and pneumonia – have been achieved largely through changes in lifestyle, including the introduction of better sanitation, housing and nutrition... Even for supposedly vital experiments there are alternatives to animal cruelty... Rabies vaccine can now be cultured from human cells, whereas the first vaccine, developed by Pasteur in 1885, involved killing hundreds of rabbits. Since 1970 the Hadwin Trust for Humane Research has invested... in developing alternatives to animal experiments in work on cancer research, rheumatism, liver failure, drug side effects, cataracts and diabetes... Pythagoras noted, ‘For as long as [humans] massacre animals, they will kill each other’... [R]espect for human life is enhanced by respect for the life of other species.

It is difficult to estimate the numbers of animals used... for experiments... In 1876 it is thought there were under 1,000 animals being used for research in the UK. The figure today is between three and four million. Most of these animals will be destroyed after the experiments... Use of experimental animals in the U[S] is... estimated in the region of 70[million] to... 120 million. Worldwide the total is probably somewhere around 500 million... The animal rights movement is said to be the fastest growing reform movement... [M]any... who believe in the... movement are not only against experimenting on animals, [they] also believe that meat eating, zoos, hunting, even keeping pets is wrong... Both animals and humans feel pain, hunger and fear[, but]... should all animals be treated in the same way? Is it all right to kill a rat because it is a pest, but not right to kill a fox by hunting it? Is it right to experiment on a mouse, but not on a dog or a chimpanzee? Is it right to breed animals, like pigs, for food, but not right to breed animals for experiments? ...Is urgent human need more important than animal rights? ...Animals have been experimented on for over 2,000 years... If animal research is not allowed for multiple sclerosis, kidney failure or epilepsy, for example, then either humans must be experimented on or there can be no research at all... Some say that if we accept that it is right to experiment on animals in order to benefit millions of humans, then it might be right (and logical) to experiment on human beings for the same reason. This logic led to humans being experimented on by the Nazis... during... [WW2:] Is there any possibility of obtaining from you two or three professional criminals to be placed at our disposal? These tests, in the course of which the ‘guinea pigs’ may die, would be carried out under supervision. They are absolutely indispensable to research

into high-altitude flying and cannot be carried out, as has been so far attempted, on monkeys, whose reactions are completely different. [Letter... to Himmler, Nazi head of Gestapo, 1944]... Some people say that not all experiments on animals are useful or accurate, but the alternative does not have to mean experimenting on humans... FRAME (Fund for the Replacement of Animals in Medical Experiments) is an animal welfare charity that... is... developing alternative methods that can replace animal experiments safely without restricting scientific progress.

An animal rights group plans to protest today at a Cancer Society Daffodil Day fundraising auction in Christchurch. The Anti-Vivisection Society said it would take the action because it opposed the Cancer Society's promotion and funding of vivisection... 300,000 animals were used in N[Z] experiments every year, based on national animal ethics advisory committee figures. Last year, four anti-vivisectionists chained themselves together and occupied the Cancer Research laboratory at the Auckland Medical School, in protest at drug trials on animals. [● 'A strict vegetarian is under attack for speaking out in support of animal testing to help cancer treatment. The former Beatle's wife recently died of cancer, aged 56. The pair were strong animal rights supporters and had always been against experiments on animals. But in a BBC Radio 2 interview, the musician said tests on animals to beat cancer in humans were "absolutely necessary." His u-turn came after his wife had to take drugs thought to have been tested on animals to treat her breast cancer. His wife had been kept in the dark about how the drugs may have been tested on animals. The Cancer Research Campaign was delighted the musician had made his "brave statement" and hoped it'd influence people to see the sense in animal testing of "very nasty chemicals." An actor and patron of the Humane Research Society also supported the musician's stand. The British Medical Association said some animal testing was acceptable to develop a better understanding of diseases and how to treat them. But the Animal Rights Coalition said supporters of testing on animals were "talking rubbish." Animals reacted differently to humans and thus there was no benefit. "Because of who the musician is thousands of people will be taken in by his words."]

... 'the three UK companies still testing cosmetics on animals have volunteered to give up the practice accounting for less than 1% of all testing on animals in the UK'.

...NZ] scientists have developed a radical system for creating vaccines that will save[the lives of many] laboratory test animals... At the cost of more than \$2 million, with additional grants from the Public Good Science Fund... a Wellington company... which makes mainly sheep and cattle vaccines... developed two systems of ensuring vaccine potency and testing the presence of antigens using fewer mice... [Previously, the company] used... about 250 mice for each batch of vaccine... about 30,000 [NZ mice are tested on each] year. It is expected to save more than a quarter of a million mice worldwide each year once the test is adopted as an international standard... A spokes[person] for the National Animal Ethical Advisory Committee... [described] the breakthrough as a "good example of what can be achieved when scientists put their minds to doing something" about animal welfare... [Unfortunately,] the company was held up waiting for approval by European countries of its antigen test. Canada and the... U[S still haven't] approved the potency system. [By the way, 'in recent years, grain farmers on the prairies have struggled from harvest to harvest. But a few neighbouring farmers are making a good living by collecting the urine of pregnant mares (PMU), which is prized by pharmaceutical companies for its estrogen content. Depending on the estrogen content, the urine is worth \$US15 to \$23 a gallon. Although millions of gals depend on horses for their daily dose of estrogen, PETA – the world's largest animal rights organisation, with about 450,000 members – recently decided to make a "focus issue" of PMU farming, which it considers cruel on two counts: the treatment of the pregnant mares, who are kept indoors for six months in stalls; and the fate of the foals born every spring. PETA has objected to the beef and dairy industries for years and has still barely touched America's culinary conscience, but PMU could be an easier battle. People seem more sympathetic to the suffering of a species that is often a pet. One friend told me that her first spoken word was *horse*, adding, "I lost my virginity wearing a little red bathing suit and riding a horse bareback." Jung describes how pregnant peasants once sought out stallions to nuzzle their genitals and induce labor. Only a horse could be so virile and so obliging. PETA prefers to emphasize less sexy subtext. This issue "goes right to the heart of motherhood, right to the heart of human guys dominating vulnerable gals of all species." Last summer, in the first of what promises to be many PETA publicity stunts, three people were arrested at a demonstration at the Philadelphia headquarters of the makers of Premarin, North America's leading estrogen-replacement drug. The same company has just announced plans for a \$123 million expansion of its estrogen-extraction plant']...

MELBOURNE researchers say an artificial artery they have developed from a cow's ureter works better than anything used around the world. It is the first time a tube not originally a blood vessel has been taken from an animal and used to replace damaged human blood vessels... [I]mmediate use would be repairing damaged leg arteries, often caused by smoking... but the prosthesis might be adapted for cardiac surgeons to use in bypass surgery... Meanwhile, a [local research group has undertaken]... an audit of heart donations to identify factors which, if addressed, might increase the number of transplants. Criteria for accepting hearts for transplant which could be relaxed include donor age and findings from echocardiograms, the... report says. The audit also found that the number of transplant operations was limited by the availability of donors. Between December 1987 and October last year, 267 hearts were offered to the cardiac unit at Green Lane... The average age of donors was 31 years and 61[%] were males.

...A whole new generation of artificial hearts is being developed that could help ageing baby boomers with serious heart disease and children born with heart defects, say researchers. Fourteen years after... the first... [operation to transplant] a permanent mechanical replacement heart – the Jarvik-7 – ...smaller, more efficient artificial hearts[are] being tested in animals. Human trials should begin by the end of the decade... While heart failure is the only cardiovascular disease on the increase, the number of hearts available for transplants has peaked, the researchers say. Since 1969, when the first artificial hearts were used as temporary measures, and since the 1980s, when the Jarvik system was tried and abandoned as a permanent replacement, researchers have tried to develop a system small enough to fit into the chest cavity. That meant developing a portable power source and replacing the cumbersome pneumatic pump that characterised the Jarvik. The two systems under development have accomplished this... Both systems deliver power through the skin. Along with some miniaturisation, the size problem was addressed by having the hearts pump through a single ventricle, alternating sides... Thousands of patients have already received what is known as a left ventricular assistance device. The device leaves the natural heart in place, using it as a reservoir for blood. A mechanical device is attached to replace the pumping action of the left ventricle. The present generation of devices is used only to keep patients alive until a heart transplant becomes available. But many recipients, sometimes waiting more than a year for a transplant, have done well with the portable systems.

...Medical doctors and agricultural scientists are working together to study the effects of human heart failure through experiments on sheep. Yesterday, at a laboratory resembling a cardiac intensive-care unit, a cardiologist from Waikato Hospital precipitated a heart attack in a sheep. The sheep will now have its weakened heart tissue injected with a growth hormone and then the tissue-repair process monitored... The project is part of a joint effort by two leading research centres, the Waikato academic division of the Auckland Medical School and the crown research institute, AgResearch Ruakura. The doctors say people with kidney failure, thyroid problems and heart conditions should eventually benefit from the project, which was looking at muscle biology, nutrition and reproduction... The researchers were seeking more funding but had been buoyed by a \$50,000 grant from the Heart Foundation. They have also received assistance from the Waikato Medical Research Foundation and Med-lab. A Ruakura scientist... said the Ruakura ethics committee had regularly reviewed and approved the experiments... [The chairperson] of the national Animal Ethics Advisory Committee, which watches over local ethics committees, said... [the] experiments would have been looked at by a veterinarian, members of the RSPCA and lay people... "It sounds as if, potentially, it is a very useful piece of research." ...[however, a spokesperson] for Save Animals from Exploitation... was sceptical about the impact of the studies on human diseases.

...Luck is often a big part of research but it usually comes hard on the heels of a lot of painstaking work. Again that has proved the case for the Waikato researchers who stumbled on a world-beating discovery just when they thought they might be staring at failure. Working with mice... scientists at AgResearch... were trying to turn off or knock out a gene which affected milk production. But they found that the... gene, known as STAT5b, which is present in all mammals, including humans... interacts with growth hormones, allowing [guy] growth to outstrip [gal] growth. Easily recognisable as the growth spurt [boys] have at puberty, the scientific term is “sexual dimorphism.” ...Now there is more work to be done. Researchers are already looking at implications for meat production, especially reduced fatness, fibre production, lactation, immunity and more. And N[Z] has a new export. Stunted mice have already been sent to US laboratories.

...This week... Ruakura Agricultural Research Centre... scientists gave us news of a genetic finding which could deliver new breeds of super stock. In late July the centre, with its neighbour Waikato University, announced the discovery of a key gene which allows... [guys to outgrow gals. Furthermore, while the NZ] public has heard of the two major breakthroughs in which Ruakura has finished first in an international race for acclaim[it] has not heard of the many times Ruakura has been pipped at the post. There are no prizes for coming second in this contest but it does mean that top-notch science is being done [at the centre]... One of the reasons for the... [success] is the network between the different science groups on the campus which enables a discovery to be translated into an improved animal, usable technique or product within a few short years. In its simplest form the network allows one scientist to identify a gene, another to inject it into a cell and on into an embryonic animal, and yet another to produce multiple numbers of the animal. Work under way at Ruakura could mean that around the turn of the century a range of designer animals could roam our farms all with production features desired by almost any number of different markets. There could be cows which give more milk, containing less water and fat but greater protein. Some milk... could contain nutritional or pharmaceutical properties which would be easier for sick or old people to digest, or prevent babies suffering diarrhoea. The fat from the milk could be softer. That way no extra processing would be needed to achieve spreadable butter. It is a joke now but maybe one day that naive city kid could stroll up to a cow and get chocolate milk from one teat [and] strawberry from another... [I]f present work is successful, the country's possum numbers may... drop... because Ruakura scientists... have... figured out a way to reduce the amount of milk possums produce[thus lowering]... their ability to raise young... Courtesy of the reproductive technologies group... the sex of sperm and embryos would be known, enabling genetically improved animals of the desired sex to be reproduced by only the top cows... [D]airy farmers would only need between 20 to 30 of their top cows to breed replacements for the herd. That meant wombs to rent. The rest of the herd could be implanted with beef cattle embryos... Once genes had been identified which, say, produced the marbling of fat in beef so desired by the Japanese, cattle could be bred with that trait... [A]nimals... could even have in-built defences against pests – a sheep, for example, that was unpalatable to the blowfly... It is, as they say, all in the genes... [In international news, the Scottish scientists who] made headlines in March last year when [they] cloned sheep from cells taken from embryos and cultivated them in a laboratory... have produced the world's first clone of an adult animal. The clone, a sheep named Dolly, was now seven months old and was showing every sign of normal development. The team at Edinburgh's Roslin Institute said that the breakthrough would provide a massive boost to the battle to understand human and animal diseases... But it acknowledged that there was no scientific reason why the technique could not be used to produce... identical copies of adult humans, raising fundamental concerns... [I]n... the film *Boys From Brazil*... copies of Hitler are created from one of his hairs.

...To clone Adolf Hitler, say, they would first have to get some living cells from Adolf I... [I]t could be technically possible to produce his look-alike genetic twin, Adolf II. But looks are not enough. This baby would be just the start. The next step would be to re-create the social environment which Adolf I grew up in. This of course means Vienna in 1889. Tricky, that. First of all, rebuild the place, then get to work on the people. Paid actors just won't do. Geneticists will have to clone an awful lot of people, from emperor Franz Joseph and Sigmund Freud, down to the mother of Adolf I, and his classmates. Since each of them was a product of their own particular social setting, their friends and family will need to be cloned as well. This is only the beginning... W[WI] had a massive effect on the psyche of Adolf I, so if Adolf II is to be identical [they] will need a repeat of that war. [Adolf II] probably won't be fooled by virtual reality, so they will have to create the real thing. This will involve a lot of cloning, and a lot of killing, and the rest of Europe could get a little annoyed at having to go through the whole business all over again. Just what or who will emerge from all this? Will Adolf II be a psychopathic megalomaniac? Maybe, but maybe not. [Adolf II] could simply turn out to be an introverted Viennese house painter, a great disappointment to his sponsors... If the aim of human cloning is to produce truly identical human beings, it simply won't work. On top of this, cloning would be a lot more expensive and a lot less fun than the traditional old-fashioned low-tech form of reproduction.

...The successful cloning of a sheep proves it is possible to clone dead humans who have been frozen according to strict guidelines, the Scottish researchers who cloned the animal said yesterday... [T]he Roslin Institute team had previously warned there was “no way that we can clone from a frozen animal or human.” However, they said yesterday that this referred to animals or humans placed straight into freezers after their deaths.

...Just weeks after British scientists... said humans could soon be cloned, claims have emerged that just such a clone is alive and well and living in Belgium. Doctors accidentally cloned the unidentified child, now aged four and living with his parents and twin brother, during infertility treatment for his mother, Britain's *Sunday Times* newspaper reported yesterday. But the unintended end-result, which was detailed in a science journal at the time, failed to capture popular coverage. The Belgium cloning occurred as doctors tested a new method of assisting the implantation of a fertilised egg into the womb. Scientists had rubbed the frozen egg with a glass rod – a process they discovered three weeks later had caused the egg to split into two embryos after it was placed in the womb... [C]loning a human... is illegal in many countries, but not in Belgium.

...China's cloning experiments have resulted in the production of eight animals from embryonic cells since 1993, a... Beijing... scientist... said yesterday... “The results were published in technical journals but not [through] the Xinhua news agency so very few people know about it... We have succeeded in cloning rabbits, pigs, goats and bulls...” ...the Government had given... the Academy of Agricultural Sciences' Institute of Animal Sciences... more than one million yuan... for the[5-year-old] project... The research was unlikely to be continued because of a lack of funds...

[Britain's] Agriculture Ministry is to stop funding the project that produced Dolly... [T]he *Daily Telegraph*... yesterday... quoted a ministry spokes[person] as saying: “If they have researched what they were supposed to have researched, then that's it. The funding will... end.” The... cloning team was said to be despondent, fearing redundancies and scientists being poached by rival teams from abroad as they seek to catch up...

Researchers have produced two monkeys with a procedure similar to that used to clone a sheep... The cloning of the rhesus monkey is less dramatic than the cloning of the sheep because primitive embryos were duplicated, rather than adult animals. But it marks the first time the technique has been used to produce animals so closely akin to humans... The... monkeys... are being raised by... surrogate mothers and will probably live... 20 years. Researchers want to see how the animals reproduce... Because monkeys are so closely related to humans, the Oregon research adds fuel to the growing controversy over the creation of life through science... This week[the US] President... banned federal funding of cloning and German[y's] Research Minister... called for a worldwide ban on cloning human[s]... Danish scientists trying to produce cloned cattle said they were halting experiments pending a full debate. The scientists behind the technique, developed at the Roslin Institute and PPL Therapeutics Plc, told British MPs this week that work with human eggs would be “distressing” and “offensive.”

...Breakthrough... technology cloning lambs with a human gene... is similar to techniques already under way on a backwater [NZ] farm. Scientists at the Roslin Institute in Scotland, who produced... the world's first cloned sheep, announced yesterday that... [NZ has] two cloned lambs... [which] had also been genetically altered to carry a human gene. This transgenic process allows animal milk to contain a blood-clotting protein that can be extracted for use in treating human haemophilia. The modification has been hailed as... it allows humans to benefit from cloning technology. Yet... similar genetically modified sheep are already grazing Waikato paddocks. On a small farm at Whakamaru, 140km south of Hamilton, this year's

lambling season... saw the birth of a flock of transgenic lambs which carry human material in their genes. The material has made them produce a human protein, hAAT, in their milk... [which] is being tested for use in treating cystic fibrosis and the lung disease emphysema. Although... [AgResearch] was close on the heels of the [Scottish] breakthrough when its renowned scientists cloned two lambs this year, the leading agricultural centre has not yet produced transgenic sheep like those at Whakamaru. The Whakamaru farm manager... said that when the transgenic lambs were born... tissue sample was sent to the farm's owners in Scotland for DNA analysis... "Some of the 100 lambs are transgenic, but we don't have an exact number yet – we know it should be roughly 50[%]." ...The genetic research was done in Scotland... Semen from transgenic rams at East Mains in Scotland was imported about a year ago for breeding with local ewes in quarantine at Whakamaru. - 1997

A public hearing will be held today on an application by a Scottish company to "field test" sheep which have been modified with human genes... Today's hearing in Wellington before the Government's Environmental Risk Management Authority is part of a bid... [by] PPL Therapeutics... to build its development flock to between 1000 and 1500 animals... But critics are expected to argue that because the hAAT was produced from the use of human genes in sheep, there[is] an extraordinary risk that the processing of the protein in the sheep's mammary tissues rather than a human liver could go wrong. Whatever went wrong could then be transmitted to other sheep, or to humans... The company originally wanted to develop a production flock of 4000 milking ewes, with a manufacturing plant on the farm to extract human protein for pharmaceutical use... Overseas, PPL... is also working on pigs that carry human genes to make animal-to-human organ transplants possible.

...THE world held its breath... [in 1967 when a South African] medical pioneer was bucking the odds. Exhaustive laboratory research and textbook theory gave no guarantee for this historic operation – the world's first human heart transplant. The patient lived for 18 days before dying of pneumonia... 30 years later, human organ transfers are reliable and commonplace, saving the lives of thousands of previously doomed patients. But there's a crisis building: organ donation is slipping further behind growing demand for life-saving operations... The chronic shortage of donor kidneys, hearts, lungs and livers is forcing the medical community to seriously consider an alternative, highly controversial, source for transplant organs – the common pig... Raising genetically altered... pigs for human transplants is set to become a multi-billion dollar industry. Some estimates put the annual world demand for these pigs at 100,000 a year. There is an annual shortfall of 25,000 organs needed for transplant just in the US... With the most common cause of sudden death in the US being gunshot wounds, surgeons there have greater access to organs than their [NZ] counterparts. Vehicle accidents and cerebral haemorrhage victims are the most common source of organ donation in... [NZ, but 'the supply of donor organs has decreased since we started wearing seatbelts', and] surgeons had access to only 42 donors declared brain dead last year. Yet at any one time, 350 desperately ill patients are waiting for kidneys, 10-14 for a healthy heart, and 4-6 for lungs. N[Z] averages 10 organ donors per million people, while the US has 21, UK 14.5, A[US] 10.3... and Spain – where organ donation is promoted through public campaigns – 29... Many European countries have adopted "presumed consent" legislation to meet organ demand. Everyone is automatically an organ donor unless they exclude themselves. But health professionals in N[Z] are sceptical that public opinion would accept this legislation because of cultural objections. The taking of organs from a dead person is tapu (forbidden) to most Maori. While 70% of [Pakehas] and 50% of Asians and Pacific Islanders support organ donation, only 5% of Maori agree to requests... While the first tentative attempts to transplant animal organs to humans – starting in 1964 when a chimpanzee heart was unsuccessfully used – were considered weird science, advances in research over the past decade make the goal realistic... Pigs are preferred over chimpanzees and baboons because they are more available and their organs are roughly the same size and work like human organs. To minimise exposure to disease, the genetically altered pigs are removed from the womb by Caesarean section. They are hand-raised by humans in a sterile environment and are never allowed to suckle or come into contact with their dam. Despite the outcry from animal welfare groups and warnings of high risk of cross-over diseases from pigs to humans[, the]... director of the [NZ] Liver Transplant Unit at Auckland Hospital, believes limited clinical tests will soon take place in the US on humans... "[However, pig] livers continue to produce proteins after transplantation that are incompatible with humans." ...[furthermore,] British scientists last year found that a virus, called porcine endogenous retrovirus (PERV), whose genes are found scattered throughout a pig's genetic make-up is shed by pig kidney cells. In cell culture, it can infect human cells... [A] renal physician at Auckland Hospital[believes] someone will soon transplant a pig organ, without waiting for all the pre-clinical issues of rejection and infection to be resolved. "Technically, any surgeon can transplant a pig organ. Rejection is the big issue. We still lose 20% of [human] kidney transplants to rejection... [and] there is a risk now of transplanting infections, such as hepatitis B and tumours, in human to human transplants." ...Around 14% of wealthy Saudi Arabian recipients of kidneys bought in India are reported to have Aids.

...[to find an AIDS vaccine, 10 monkeys were injected with a test vaccine, then they and a group of non-vaccinated monkeys were injected with a strong dose of a virus which is the monkey equivalent of AIDS. All of the non-vaccinated monkeys died, but only one of the vaccinated monkeys did. The test was repeated using different strains of the virus.' Incidentally, 'the Professor of Neurosurgery at Case University in Cleveland, Ohio, wants to perform the first human head transplant. "It's over 20 years since I successfully transplanted the head of a monkey on to the body of another. The monkey could see – his eyes followed you round the room – and eat, and bite you if you were stupid enough to put your finger in its mouth." Unfortunately, the monkey couldn't move. It was paralysed from the neck down. "How to connect the spinal cord to the new head is a difficulty I haven't tried to solve. It's an immensely complex problem. But it'll be solved, in my view, and before too long." The question of who exists after the head transplant raises profound questions about the nature of personal identity, but the professor doesn't have much time for them. "I think everyone accepts that personality lies in the brain." The most common reaction to the idea of a head transplant is simple: It isn't merely a question of how could anyone do that, but why would any sane person want to? "Yes, I am aware of that," says the 70-year-old. "But that's a very uninformed reaction. There was a very similar reaction when organ transplants first became possible nearly 40 years ago. And I've no doubt that within the next 50 years, head transplants will be as common as kidney transplants are today."']

...A South Auckland company forced to halt pig cell transplant trials on humans... hopes to resume its work with insulin-dependent diabetics... Diatranz halted human trials when fears arose overseas that pig virus – ...or PERV – might cross species to infect people. But the firm says an international research paper published in the American *Science* journal today has found no evidence of the virus in 160 patients from several countries who received a variety of pig tissues[, including 'eight Parkinson's Disease sufferers who have had pig cells (obtained from pig fetuses) injected into their brains to replace damaged cells'. 'Insulin-producing pig cells continued to produce insulin for at least six months and patients were able to reduce their insulin intake']... The Ministry of Health still ha[s] to give approval for human trials to resume... [on six NZ] patients...

While regulators are still assessing the risks of allowing a milking herd of 1000 genetically modified sheep, a call has come... [from] AgResearch... for field tests of engineered dairy cattle... [which] would have three gene modifications... One change would add extra copies of milk protein genes, copied from goats or cattle, to boost the percentage of casein produced by cows. The higher the concentration of casein... the more suited... the... milk... is to cheese manufacturing. Another would insert the human myelin basic protein so... myelin, the fatty covering that insulates nerve cell fibres in the brain and spinal cord... could be extracted from milk... for treatment of... the degenerative nerve disease multiple sclerosis[, and maybe even]... rheumatoid arthritis... A third trial would produce a "gene knockout" in transgenic cattle with deletion of the gene that controls beta lactoglobulin... the main whey protein in the milk of cows and many other animals, but[which] appears not to occur in human milk... At least two of the types of engineered cattle would also carry "marker" genes showing resistance to the antibiotic neomycin.

...the Environmental Risk Management Authority yesterday... approved, with controls, AgResearch's experiment to insert a human gene into cows to produce human protein myelin in their milk... The... Greens co-leader... was disappointed at the decision... Overseas research showed that myelin could be made synthetically, [the leader] said, and AgResearch claims that it could be used to treat multiple sclerosis were unproven.

...A British company may have just provided N[Z] with a leg-up into the most profitable era it has ever known. Or it may have begun a process which will eventually erode whatever prosperity the country has so far achieved... PPL Therapeutics has won approval... to breed 10,000 sheep with a human gene on a central North Island farm... Boom or bust – what does N[Z] stand to get out of the PPL deal...? The chief executive of Meat N[Z], says biotechnology is part of the fifth wave of the industrial revolution and the country's livestock producers need to ride it for their lives... The... chief executive... of... AgResearch... [also] believes that such work will keep N[Z] on top. "...we need to thoroughly test every avenue which may help in keeping our industries at the leading edge." ...But... Auckland University['s] associate physics professor... strongly disagrees... Putting the human gene into sheep crosses new boundaries and violates "the exclusionary mechanisms of nature at a molecular level... I see this as a continuation of our stuffing around with the basis of nature. We have really interfered in a way which we don't understand, degrading everything as a result of our agricultural practices and now this is a way of doing it in a more uncontrolled way. We ought to jump off this bandwagon altogether and go organic... In the end, my reaction to the judgment is that money talks. It is because, according to PPL's assessment, it is a billion-dollar-a-year industry. If it was a hundred-dollar-a-year industry, it would never have gone ahead." ...[In another development, dotting NZ] pet-owners are lining up to have their animals immortalised through cloning. An... [Aucklander] is desperate for a laboratory to preserve cells from her treasured 13-year-old dog... who is dying of cancer. [The Aucklander] is one of six people to approach the AgResearch centre... [The Aucklander] said yesterday that if scientists could offer cloning at a reasonable cost within a few years, [it would enable her to] order a... duplicate[dog]. The idea came to her two weeks ago... [after reading of the centre's] cloning expertise... the clamour for cloning pets had[also] been prompted by the birth of... a clone of the last surviving Enderby Island cow... However, [the head of the cloning team at AgResearch] did not like the idea of cloning pets and Ruakura was not offering the service, though that could change... In the [US], a Texan millionaire is paying a university more than \$10 million to clone his collie-Alsation within two years... Clones have the genes of their origin but not the personality, which is formed by environment.

...the cloned sheep that contain... human genes, will have to be milked for the medicinal proteins[their bodies] produce... But scientists at the[US] Department of Agriculture have found a more copious source of bodily fluids... Writing in the journal *Nature Biotechnology*... [the scientists] said they had genetically engineered mice that produce human growth hormone in their urine. This could lead, they hope, to herds of genetically engineered animals that produce useful drugs in the inevitable byproduct of any creature... [T]he technology only recently became possible, when researchers at New York University discovered a gene that is expressed only in the lining of the bladder. [The Department of Agriculture] group took the gene, known as uropalakin, and replaced part of it with the gene for human growth hormone... because it is easy to track... Like all genetic engineering technology, it is hit-and-miss and not all the mice "expressed" the gene and not all produced the hormone. But it worked well enough. [The head of the group] thought the approach could eventually be better than techniques that aim at milk. For instance[, there]... are two problems with the milk approach. Firstly, only [gal] animals can produce it. Secondly, breeders do not even know if they are producing the required product in the animals' milk until they are old enough to be mated, produce a baby and be milked. This can take years. But urine is produced by all animals and very early in life... [The scientists] also hoped it would be easier to purify proteins from urine – which is basically salt water – than milk[, and that]... the animals could one day be manipulated so their waste was less polluting. "The single biggest problem in animal agriculture right now is waste management,"... Such a development could make a problem into a solution. Animal waste from intensive factory farms is blamed for the blooms of toxic *Pfiesteria*, a water-borne organism that kills fish and may make people sick when they come into contact with it.

...['stem cells may be used to grow replacement teeth.' Already.] French doctors have grown skin with hair follicles using stem cells taken from adult mice, a potential breakthrough for treating baldness, severe burns and skin cancer, the National Institute for Science and Medical Research said.

...A Greek doctor working in Japan claimed a medical breakthrough yesterday with rats and mice that produce human sperm... [T]he key to success was the use of the animals' own eye cells in the operation... Previous attempts to grow human spermatogonia in rats and mice in Japan and the U[S] had failed due to the animal's white blood cells attacking the human transplant within the testes. But when some of the animals' own eye cells were implanted in the testes they killed off the white blood cells... [The Greek doctor] said there was much work ahead before it could be applied to humans. "I have to conduct many experiments before determining that these sperm can function properly,"... [A Japanese professor who supervised the doctor's] work, said it was "up to society to decide" whether to use such sperm for humans. "It is beyond our judgment..."

...Andi, the first genetically engineered monkey, was introduced to the world yesterday... [The] rhesus monkey, was born in October after scientists in Oregon manipulated his genetic makeup to include a gene for a green fluorescent dye. The American scientists used the dye, extracted from a jellyfish, as a marker to show "proof of principle" that monkeys can be genetically modified. They intend to produce monkeys with genes added or taken away so as to emulate human diseases such as breast cancer, Parkinson's or diabetes. But the development has raised fresh ethical concerns about the direction of genetic research, with some top scientists calling for strict controls on experiments. [● A 'US artist has commissioned a rabbit crossed with jellyfish to turn fluorescent green in certain light.'

... 'spider silk is comparatively stronger than anything humanity has made', but collecting sufficient quantities of it from laboratory spiders is inefficient. Now 'a scientist has replaced a goat gene with a spider gene in the hope that goats will produce the required enzyme in their milk. The enzyme would then be extracted from the milk and used to create artificial spider silk, which could be used, for example, in bridge supports and bullet-proof vests.' Editor's note: At least one medical researcher has pointed out that 'we use genes to cure disease now – so we don't need to do tests on other animals']...

RESEARCHERS at Stanford University in California say they have developed a new and improved "virtual frog" so squeamish students can dissect it over the Internet without the blood and gore associated with an actual laboratory. The Frog Island web site... lets users view the computer-simulated frog from any angle, or hit a command that turns its skin transparent so its internal organs... muscles... and skeleton are visible... [In further medical news, an AUSn]-designed artificial heart pump will be tested on patients for the first time within weeks... The temporary insertion of an inert device would fulfil regulatory requirements that it was anatomically correct... "This is a landmark step because it takes us out of research and development and into the clinical trial process..." the managing director... of... MicroMedical Industries said...

Patient with experimental heart pleasing surgeons... Four days after last week's groundbreaking surgery to implant... a... softball-size... self-contained... battery-powered titanium-and-plastic... artificial heart... device... known as the AbioCor, ...the patient was awake and able to communicate with his family... The patient, in his mid- to late-50s, suffers from diabetes, chronic renal and kidney failure and had had multiple heart attacks. Even to qualify for the experimental surgery, [the patient] had to have been given an 80[%] chance of dying within 30 days... [T]he... surgeon who performed the... seven-hour... operation, said there was a chance the patient could live well beyond the 60 days that is the initial goal of the experimental surgery and even go home... Only about half of the 4200 Americans on waiting lists for donor heart transplants received one last year... Since the operation, [a]Jewish Hospital spokes[perso]n... said the hospital had received "many many calls" from heart patients...

It is a story so awful, it is almost beyond belief. A family of seven dwarfs rounded up by the Germans and sent to Auschwitz to be gassed with millions of their fellow Jews. They were saved only because... Dr Joseph Mengele... wanted to perform experiments on them... "It was torture, but we knew as long as [Mengele] had an interest in us, we were safe..." ...[but t]hey feared when the experiments were finally over, they would be pushed into jars of formalin and exhibited for all to see... [However, in] January 1945, as the Germans were losing the war, Mengele... fled

Auschwitz... Mengele had arrived in Auschwitz in May 1943 to be the camp's chief doctor, responsible for the selection process. [Mengele] became known as the Angel of Death, because of the obsessive, savage experiments... [the] SS officer... was conducting on his captive human guinea-pigs.

...BEHIND every new miracle drug that makes headlines... are the people who volunteered to be its guinea pigs. Today, there is wide agreement that the system created in the 1970s to protect those pioneering test subjects is failing at a time when the number of medical trials is exploding. In fact, the U[S] government does a better job keeping track of the 299,011 actual guinea pigs[– plus '338,574 rabbits, 246,415 hamsters, 82,454 dogs, 72,331 pigs, 52,327 primates, 26,035 cats, 34,046 sheep, 47,967 other farm animals and 146,579 other animals' –] used in research, according to the latest count, than its human subjects. No one in government or industry knows how many people are involved in medical tests each year – let alone how many are killed or injured, or exposed to unsafe or unethical practices. But it is clear that those who are most desperate for a medical miracle are the most vulnerable to medical exploitation. This month, for the first time, four US government reports concluded the system must be fixed. "People are getting hurt every day by seriously bad research," said... a professor of medicine at Stanford... [who is] a member of... [the presidential] bioethics advisory committee, which is preparing a separate report on protecting human test subjects. "This is about therapeutic misconception. It's basically coercing patients by lying to them. Maybe it's under the guise of trying to help people, but the bottom line is everyone is winking their eyes at each other. But the patient doesn't realise this." ...For the most part, federal officials say, people who volunteer to test drugs in the US are treated well. Regulations require that human studies be reviewed both for scientific and ethical merit, and that each participant be told of the risks before being allowed to participate. But... market forces... [stretch] protections to the breaking point. The pressures increase in privately sponsored research... [– from] 1975-80, almost all human research was done at university medical centres and sponsored by the government[; today]... most of those who volunteer as test subjects are in privately funded studies[(which)]... tend... to move more quickly than government-based research...[.]. The number of people in an average... trial has doubled in the past 14 years, to 3567 per trial... One current trial has 50,000 participants. In addition... trials have become more complex, with an average of 146 procedures performed on each patient.

...[*Testing the trial testing* In developing a new drug, there are few quick fixes. First, an original design has to be dreamed up. Then its potential needs to be demonstrated in test tubes and laboratory animals. After that it must go through three separate phases of clinical trial on human guinea pigs. In the US it takes, on average, \$86 million and over 9 years to go from the first human tests of a substance to final regulatory approval. Figures from Europe are similar. And for every five compounds entering the initial stages of human testing, only one will get to market. The consequences for failure can be stark, particularly for small companies. No regulatory agency or drug firm wants the blame for another thalidomide tragedy. Until recently, the US FDA was famous both for its stringency and its slowness. By the late '80s it was taking over 2 1/2 years, on average, to trawl through all the data from the clinical trials of a drug before approving it. New cancer medicines often reached British patients more than half a decade before US doctors were allowed to use them. The justification for this was thoroughness. But there is little evidence that Britain was courting more risks by being swifter. Indeed, a study found that the recall rates of drugs after they had been approved for sale were only slightly higher in Britain (4%) than in the US (3%). Things improved somewhat after 1989 as a result of special "fast-track" rules introduced for Aids drugs. Then, in 1992, Congress gave the FDA 5 years to speed up its act across the board, and the power to collect over \$300 million from drug companies to help. But no amount of bureaucratic reform will make the trials themselves any faster. If anything, recent pressure has been the other way. New drugs approved by the FDA in 1994-95 spent an average 7.7 years in trials on people – over twice as long as such tests took in the '60s. There may, however, be a faster way. Tools such as trial computer simulations are still in their infancy, but their potential to streamline things is considerable. And they have a bonus – in virtual reality, unlike the real reality found in clinics, nobody gets hurt when things go wrong.]

...[the co-director of the Chimpanzee and Human Communication Institute at Central Washington University, says: "Chimps are not human, but equally there's no giant leap between them and us. Instead, it's a rather fuzzy distinction. Here in the US it's legal to put a chimp in a 5 foot by 5 foot by 5 foot cage for life, feed it, water it and give it a toy. There's something terribly wrong with that given what we know of their social behaviour and cognitive ability." They don't need to have haircuts, but 'like humans, each set of fingerprints is unique and under a microscope their blood is virtually indistinguishable from ours'](we have been said to share 98.5[%] of our genetic sequence... [with] chimpanzees... though a study published this month has revised this down to 95[%]). Furthermore, 'when chimpanzees meet after having been apart they greet each other by touching or even clasping hands and kissing; some are ideal mothers, caring for their babies zealously, others are over attentive, and their babies are "spoilt", and yet others neglect their children']...

WHAT distinguishes people from animals? A soul, insists the priest. An innate ability to distinguish right from wrong, declares the philosopher. Lippie and high heels says my three-year-old daughter. The priest's answer is the obvious one, although most scientists would not agree. After all, a uniquely human soul and evolution seem incompatible. If chimps and people shared a common ancestor just 5 million years ago, why did we acquire souls while they didn't? Make-up and shoes are more like it, a scientist would say. Well, technology, anyway. (I assume that's what my daughter meant, rather than only [gals] and transvestites were real people.) In other words, it's the human tool shed that separates the [guys] from the monkeys. This definition has always been a little suspect (otters build, don't they?), and there's something distinctly uncomfortable about suggesting nuclear weapons and smoke-belching factories are what separate us from the dumb animals. But now the technology gap seems to be closing... [US] chimpanzees have been seen wielding knives (no guns, yet)... OK if we have to jettison technology and souls as the great dividers, at least we still have our moral high ground. Our compassion, our code of ethics, our belief in equality – these are the pinnacles of humanness. Dream on... The high moral ground is made of very crumbly earth. In *Atlantic Monthly*, [an] evolutionary biologist... writes it's high time this myth of superior human morality was busted. For example, that trademark of humanity – selfless behaviour – is, in reality, always highly selfish... Take mateship. A mate won't dob in a mate... Not so, says... [the evolutionary biologist. Mateship was] designed by evolution purely to look after the individual. In biological circles they refer to it as the prisoner's dilemma. Two crooks are busted and each faces a choice. Either rat on the other and obtain legal immunity or admit nothing... If they both... [talk], they both get locked up. And if only one talks, of course, only one goes to jail... If they both keep quiet neither goes to prison... Purely in terms of self-preservation, what is the best choice? To obey a code of honour that says: don't dob in your mates... [The evolutionary biologist] goes on to say religions are not special either. In essence they are merely power hierarchies. Religious followers are told to submit to supreme beings, not to question beliefs and to indulge in self-sacrifice. Similar power structures exist throughout the primates and mammals. Basically, there are those that like to lead and those that love to follow the leader. An extraterrestrial visitor wouldn't be able to pick the difference between us worshipping a supreme being and a pack of subordinate wolves cowering to a leader... I wonder what[an alien] would make of scientists submitting to supreme knowledge? ...□ ...Regarding the article "Apes are people, too right," the premise that apes be given human rights... while sounding all very good and well, may be overlooking what is truly important to these animals and their natural habitats. Human rights acts have not prevented in this century... the suffering of millions of human beings at the hands of others. If we make the killing of... [great apes] akin to murder, will it stop such acts from occurring? And it must be noted that murder, rape, cannibalism and even tribal genocide have all been documented among the great apes, particularly among our closest relatives, chimpanzees[(e.g., someone 'who studied them in the wild has given a very graphic description of a chimpanzee catching a young baboon and killing it by holding its back legs and smashing its head against the ground')]. As pseudo-human beings will they have to face the consequences of such actions in courts of law?

...[*Apes are people, too right* Orang-utans and other great apes are close cousins to humans – so close that a growing number of NZ scientists and legal experts think they should be accorded basic human rights. Using the Bill of Rights as a model, the great apes should be given the right not to be treated in a degrading or cruel manner, and the right not to be used in medical experiments. A senior law lecturer at Canterbury University, citing the recent news that

the British Government has decided “as a matter of morality” to ban experiments on great apes because of their cognitive and behavioural characteristics, says that giving rights to the great apes is an idea whose time has come. A senior lecturer in psychology at Massey University believes the apes have a good case. “We give children basic rights, so it’s fair and reasonable to do the same thing for the great apes.” Scientists have discovered that, emotionally and intellectually, orang-utans and other non-human great apes are very similar to young human children. They recognise themselves in photographs and mirrors, a sign of self-awareness, and they have “theory of mind,” the ability to imagine what others are thinking – and hence the ability to consciously deceive others. They can match human pre-schoolers in reasoning tests and basic arithmetic and they enjoy pre-school level painting and drawing. They can also learn rudimentary language – a captive orang-utan in the US has learned to use sign language (his 150-word vocabulary is comparable to that of a human child aged about two and a half). What about fears from farming interests that giving rights to great apes might open an animal rights floodgate? “Very unlikely,” says a senior lecturer in philosophy at Canterbury University who studies human and animal consciousness. “The argument for great ape rights has nothing to do with animal rights. It’s based on the special mental traits that would automatically entitle them to rights if they were human. Sheep and cattle just don’t have those traits.” The philosophy lecturer thinks ape rights might even help to reinforce human rights by making it more difficult to justify denying rights to people. The world’s zoos and research laboratories are believed to hold about 250 orang-utans. Six are at Auckland Zoo. ■ The owner of a zoo in Kyoto, Japan, was arrested after dressing his three children in monkey suits and trying to pass them off as rare Sumatran orang-utans...!

...FROM the time they were born in Africa, [the three chimps] were destined never to live their natural lives. Separated from their mothers shortly after birth, they were hand-reared at Regent’s Park Zoo in London and shipped to N[Z] when they were... two. When they arrived at Auckland Zoo in 1956, they were feted like celebrities and played to packed houses. They were... the star performers at the chimpanzee tea parties. Dressed like little hairy people they pursed their lips, delicately sipped from enamel tea cups and scoffed goodies. Every now and again they would throw tantrums or engage in messy food fights, much to the delight of the[ir] audiences. But the party days are long since over. Today the three star performers, known affectionately... as “The Old Guys”, can be found in the old part of Auckland Zoo whiling away the rest of their lives in concrete cages behind heavy iron bars reminiscent to many zoo visitors of a human Alcatraz. Standing outside their steel-barred cage, the same sentiment is echoed hundreds of times by visitors... “Poor old chimps,” said a small boy on his dad’s shoulder. “Why can’t they be with the other ones?” Just a few hundred metres away is... a thriving colony of younger chimpanzees who enjoy the salubrious and spacious surroundings of the Chimp Arena – a simian paradise containing a running stream, toi-toi, flax and other shrubs without a steel bar in sight. Even the walls of the arena are emblazoned with jungle murals... High atop their perches on the 10m wooden pillars which crown the fun-packed jungle gym the members... have a panoramic outlook over the entire zoo where they spend hours watching the comings and goings of other animals and human visitors. Here, the blue sky is their ceiling... Grass and the earth forms the floor beneath their feet – not cold concrete. So why don’t the party chimps live like this? The problem is, they don’t really know they’re chimps. Taught by... human caregivers at an early age to ape their mentors, they were products of a zoo system that pandered to popular demand. And that demand was for chimpanzee tea parties... “Today, we’re more enlightened. We know it’s more important for people to see chimps and other animals nursing their young in natural surroundings, not performing as imitation humans.” Even as partygoers, the three chimps had a brief career. Once they became too big, they had to be “retired” because adult chimps become uncontrollable and unpredictable. With strength in their arms four times stronger than a human, they could cause serious injury to their keepers and anyone else in close proximity... Having been reared by humans, they have not learned “chimp language” and tribal social ethics. As a result, they are unable to communicate with other chimps... “When the Chimp Arena was first constructed in 1980, we tried to integrate the party chimps with the younger chimps,”... [O]n alternate days, [the party chimps] were allowed access to the great outdoors while the younger chimps were kept inside. The older chimps reacted strongly against the natural conditions. Being used to hard concrete floors, they couldn’t understand why dirt stuck to their feet and kept stopping to scrape it off... Walking on grass upset them – it was soft and spongy and wasn’t reassuringly solid like concrete. Intensive studies of the party chimps showed that when they were outside their cages they were insecure, apprehensive and antagonistic towards each other. They either didn’t eat their food or bolted it down quickly and nervously. On the days they were in their cages, they were relaxed, engaged frequently in grooming each other and munched their food at leisure. It was also hoped the younger “natural” chimps could teach The Old Guys the chimp language and social mores but it wasn’t to be. Chimp society is fiercely hierarchical... with [one dominant adult] maintaining control and discipline. All the other... members of the tribe submit to him and indicate their submission in various ways. They leave food for the dominant [chimp] who is the only [guy] in the tribe permitted to mate with the [gals (though, in some tribes, ‘chimpanzees are promiscuous – when a gal comes on heat all of the guys mate with her, no matter what their social standing’)]. They respectfully lower their eyes or avert them when the dominant [chimp] performs his “bluff display”, careering around screeching, hooting loudly, throwing things and beating his chest... saying: “Hey... I’m bigger and stronger and louder than you... So you had better respect me and back off!” Efforts were made to integrate the party chimps with the younger chimps by... [hoping that one of them] would submit to... the dominant... [member of the younger chimps. “But the party chimp] just didn’t understand what was going on... When [the dominant chimp] roared around making lots of noise... [the party chimp] just thought it was great fun and imitated him, which [the dominant chimp] naturally interpreted as a threat to his position.” The ongoing and unresolved aggression between the two... caused considerable anxiety to the [gals] in both groups so a decision was made to resolve the integration issue once and for all. One day the two... were put together while keepers stood by with hoses and fire extinguishers just in case things got out of hand and they needed to be separated. Although the brief encounter lasted only 10 minutes, from the moment they met [they] fought non-stop. The older [chimp] came off the worse... “At no time did [the party chimp submit to the dominant chimp]... Occasionally, we thought [the party chimp had] had enough when there was a lull in the fighting... Then [the party chimp would] just walk up to [the dominant chimp] and slap him across the face and it would be all on again.” If [the party chimp] was forced to live in the Chimp Arena... [it] would probably be killed in a short time. And there was no chance [the party chimp] could become... dominant... “[The party chimp doesn’t even know it’s] supposed to try and be dominant and make a take-over bid,”... [The party chimp also] had another much more personal problem [– it] was sexually dysfunctional. It was clear from all outward appearances that his sexual equipment was in perfect working order when... aroused. But... [it] never learned to mate by watching [a dominant chimp. Even if the party chimp had mated with its party companions] and they had produced babies, the... [mothers] wouldn’t know how to look after them. Rearing babies is[another] learned behaviour for chimps and they never had other chimp mothers to show them. In [the Chimp Arena] there are two baby chimps and both mums and the kids are doing just fine. Wellington Zoo has one former tea party chimp among its colony of 13 – the second largest in Australasia. The colony lives in a natural environment... The party chimp... integrated well with the natural colony... “[It] was young enough to learn chimp language and had minimal exposure to the tea party experience...” ...The zoo’s other party chimps died before the integration programme began... In party-going chimpanzee terms... life is still good [for The Old Guys]. They keep mentally stimulated, by solving puzzles to obtain food... and from the platform at the top of their cage... have a view of the city and the llamas next door. In the wild, chimps live to about 40 years of age – “The Old Guys” are already in their 40s. In the wild, they’d probably be dead by now, but with regular medical checkups, healthy food cut up for them and an easy lifestyle, the pensioner chimps will probably live to around 60. “It is all very sad because we have done this to them. We have deprived them of a normal life... Instead of having two groups of chimps, we could have decided to quietly [get rid of The Old Guys] because they didn’t fit in with the politically correct impression of a modern zoo. But there’s no way we could do this. We owe them an obligation to see out... their days in comfort.”

...Delhi residents are under siege from monkeys because of a shortage of trappers... – tranquilliser guns have been ruled out as many trappers oppose them for religious reasons... Residents have barricaded their houses with grilles and wire mesh to stop the marauding monkeys grabbing food from their fridges... “At times it seems as if we are inside a cage and the monkeys are like visitors to a zoo...” complained one resident.

...[Veterinarians at the Warsaw Zoo have prescribed three hours of television viewing a day for their chimpanzees in an effort to ward off the winter ennui. “They have ropes, tyres, a hammock and old clothes to tear up, but they get bored with all of it after a while this time of year.” The monkeys will sit still, eyes glued to the TV set, for up to 40 minutes at a time, and zoo officials believe the treatment is working. One day, however, the chimps suddenly appeared to regard the TV more as a jungle gym, jumping all over the set. “Maybe they just didn’t like the programme,” their keeper theorised.]

...Just a week ago, the future looked grim for Lola, an ageing NZ circus chimp facing death. Now an international campaign means Lola may leave the confines of her 12m trailer and return to her ancestral home in an African jungle. A chimp sanctuary in Zambia is keen to take 32-year-old Lola, of Ridgways Circus, Auckland, and her young son, in response to a quest by the International Primate Protection League to keep her alive. Last year, a report commissioned by the Ministry of Agriculture recommended that Lola be put to sleep. Lola had become ill and depressed after her partner, Charlie, was put down a year before. Her quality of life at the circus was also questioned: her trailer was too small and “very rundown looking,” according to a report by the primate expert at Auckland Zoo. However, Ridgways Circus will fight off any attempts to send Lola and her son to a chimp sanctuary. A spokesperson said Lola and her son were part of the circus family and they were reluctant to part with them. The circus was interested in their welfare, but is concerned the chimps would not adapt to a new environment. “These chimps are worth millions overseas and we wouldn’t want anything dodgy to happen to them.”]

...The transition from circus life to animal sanctuary has proved less than smooth for Buddy, the orphaned chimp. His handlers report that Buddy has been showing signs of behavioural problems and aggression towards other chimpanzees at his new home, the Chimfunshi Wildlife Sanctuary at Ndola in Zambia... However, Buddy was learning to curb his aggression and was gaining acceptance among his fellow apes... Buddy’s problems might have arisen because of his circus background and such animals often found it difficult to acclimatise after their release. During rehabilitation... chimps... were encouraged to play and forage for themselves. Buddy is the 3-year-old offspring of N[Z]’s oldest circus chimp, Lola, who died in Samoa just three days short of when [the chimp] was to be set free... [The NZ] organisation Save Animals From Exploitation (Safe)... rescued Buddy from an overseas circus. Thousands of N[Z]ers have made donations to meet the \$80,000 cost of Buddy’s relocation to Zambia.

...To [the person] who was ‘fuming over chimps’ (TV Guide, May 12-18, criticising TV2’s *The Chimp Channel*): I did not see any cruelty being dished out to these chimps. They were absolutely hilarious. As for the two cigarettes, did the chimps smoke them down to the butts? Has there been scientific proof two cigarettes will kill? [The letter-writer] may be appalled at this show, but I am equally appalled at his/her lack of humour.

I observed animals rights activists protesting against using a chimpanzee for entertainment. As activists of integrity, I assume that when the protesters are not outside Maungawhau School fair they are protesting outside the gate of every house in N[Z] which keeps a cat, dog or budgie. And of course they don’t own or exploit any such animals themselves. [These people apparently long for the day when] all the cats are saved from the oppression of living in a house and are enjoying the freedom of the bush with its possibilities of injury without veterinary care, and competing for limited food supplies such as our native birds... No, wait, we’ll ship all the cats, dogs, [introduced] birds and so on back to their native countries and let them fight it out in the wild there. I’m sure [the chimp in question would also] be much better off in Africa competing for limited food and space with other chimpanzees... [The chimp will] just love fighting, not usually to the death... for the right to be dominant... in a troop to which [it] tries to attach... [itself (unless it’s a troop of bonobos – ‘pygmy chimpanzees, who are predominantly vegetarians and led by gals, are more peaceful than their violent cousins from the northern side of the Congo River, who eat anything and are led by a dominant guy’). And if the chimp] loses such fights [it’ll] love being an outcast at the mercy of predators such as hyenas and lions – if disease or starvation don’t get [it] first. After all, it’s natural – right? - 1996

It may not be the jungle, but... the Auckland Zoo is far more of a natural environment than it was for the inhabitants when it opened 75 years ago today. In 1922, the lions, bears and wolves lived in a bleak and barren site of concrete enclosures and wire pens. But now the zoo prides itself on education and conservation, and attracts 400,000 visitors annually. It will be... celebrating the anniversary... tonight... with African music and dancing in [recognition] of Pridelands, a \$3 million development... [planned for animals like] lions, giraffes and springbok...

Auckland Zoo has failed to get big sponsors for a new \$3 million enclosure and is pleading for a lifeline from the Auckland City Council. The zoo faces a \$500,000 shortfall for the 6ha Pridelands enclosure and a director... says [the zoo] hopes to get a \$220,000 advance from the council... Without the money the zoo will not be able to buy flamingos and the enclosure will lack finishing touches... [T]he \$280,000 shortfall would be met by deferring work and juggling internal funds.

...Operation Roar is being launched this week to raise \$200,000 to bring in two rhinos... flamingos and three lions which will all become part of Pridelands... Donors to Operation Roar will get a memento of their generosity: zoo passes and small wooden animals or, for donations of \$45, [their name on] one of the 15,000 brick pavers which will make up the main Pridelands viewing plaza. These will be... laid alphabetically so donors can readily find their spot... The money isn’t to buy the animals but to help cover transport and quarantine costs. Such wildlife is no longer for sale and zoos give each other animals in a co-operative arrangement designed to ensure the survival of the wild animals.

...[‘THE argument for zoo’s captive breeding programmes as illustrated in *Our World* (TV1, January 6) is just so dumb. In essence it was propaganda to try and quell the growing protest of zoo “exhibits”, an ugly word today as it was in Victorian times. It was shown with the 6 baby tiger cubs stolen from their poor mother at only 2 to 3 weeks, brought up by a stupider species who arrogantly proclaim these babies will contribute to their survival in the wild. 1. No release is ever intended as all their home habitat is being destroyed. 2. Human-reared “domesticated” wild animals could not cope with survival in a jungle.’]

...a couple who live in a Moscow apartment have bought] six-month-old tiger... cubs from a Russian nature reserve and earn money for their upkeep by loaning them to television stations for appearances... [By the way, a] lion... that escaped from a theme park and was roaming near central Florida’s tourist meccas was spotted by game officials near Walt Disney World yesterday. Trackers kept... [the animal] under observation. But they did not want to move in yet because heavy rains had made conditions difficult in the undeveloped tract of land where... [the] 202kg African lion... had taken refuge. The Florida Fish and Game Commission warned that [the lion] was scared and hungry. “This is not a tame animal and I would not want to confront it.” The... declawed... two-year-old lion... got loose while handlers were repairing her cage[, then]... jumped a 2.7m fence... JungleLand Zoo... staff hoped for [a] safe return. “Of all the cats, [this one] is the most laid back... [It] seems to enjoy people and always puts on a show.”

...Two leopards imported from Britain died in a French zoo from a feline form of “mad cow” disease... They had been fed on cow carcasses in Britain... [In local news, a]n endangered red panda has been gassed to death at Auckland Zoo after [getting] into a nest box being cleaned with chlorine... Tashi – a familiar face to television viewers around the world this year after the birth of her cubs was captured by cameras – died from lung damage... [A] cub... also suffered lung damage but is recovering in the zoo’s hospital. The zoo director... said the keeper thought [there were] enough barriers to keep the pandas out while the nest box was being sterilised... and... [only] left the enclosure for 30 minutes... Since the death senior staff have held an internal investigation and formed a group to review the use of chlorine around the zoo... [T]he zoo generally favoured steam cleaning... but occasionally used [chlorine] for heavy-duty disinfecting. In future bolts and locks would be installed to keep animals away

while it was being used. “It’s very... unfortunate, but we always learn a lot from these incidents.” Staff were heartbroken over the loss... but were positive there would be little setback to the captive breeding programme... [T]he zoo... hoped... [it] could find another mate for [Tashi’s partner] before the... next... breeding season[. Editor’s note: ‘Himalayan raccoon, fire-fox, fox-cat and cat-bear are other names used to identify this beautiful and appealing carnivore. The cat-bear is the original panda but that name is now used by popular consent for its larger black and white bear-like relative’]...

It was a conversation that rocked [the businessperson] to the core. Dining at a lavish restaurant in... Phnom Penh, the A[US]n... listened in horror as some Korean tourists ordered bear paw soup, which would require the limbs of a live sun bear to be hacked off. “I was disgusted... [at] the thought of these sweet little creatures being cut up while still alive.” [The AUSn] stepped in and, for \$600, negotiated to buy the animal whose paws were destined for dinner... [T]oday... Victoria – as the luckiest bear in the world is now known – and two of her friends... are... pampered residents of Sydney’s Taronga Zoo, where they are part of a captive breeding program designed to replenish the depleted numbers of sun bears throughout the world... [(only an estimated 5000-10,000 survive in the jungles of Asia)]. The three bears’... rescue... has given [the AUSn] a new direction and purpose in life. Eight months later, [the businessperson] leads a dedicated band of A[US]ns... waging a war against... unscrupulous animal traders and restaurateurs across Asia in a bid to stamp out the trade in endangered species for human consumption... [D]espite laws banning the trade in Cambodia... the Fook Lum Moon Wildlife and Seafood Restaurant in Phnom Penh... provides bear paw at \$US100 a time[. It] also offers leopard and soft-shelled turtles. “B[ut] bear hand is the best meat,” says... [the] Chinese-American... restaurant manager... “Next best is bear meat from the body.” ...Often the mutilated creatures are kept alive so their remaining limbs can be severed to feed a succession of diners. - 1997

[A NZer], who has spent the past five years building bear sanctuaries in Thailand, Hungary and Turkey for the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA), will be in Pakistan next month without a fixed plan to tackle the country’s bear-dancing and bear-baiting industries... The self-styled international gypsy estimated that there were 500 dancing bears in Pakistan and around 150 were used for bear-baiting, where the animals have their teeth and claws taken out and have to fight pitbull dogs at weddings and other festivals for entertainment... [B]oth activities were illegal in Pakistan, although with legal loopholes and some authorities unwilling to stamp it out, confiscating the bears would prove difficult... [T]he hardest part of his work was dealing with officials who said one thing yet did another. However, the [NZ] attitude of getting involved with every part of the project and “if you won’t help me, then go and stop me” were his secret weapons... The society... [which] hopes to build a sanctuary in Islamabad... has been planning the Pakistan project for three years. It will have a budget of up to \$US150,000... for the venture.

...[the bear]’s chained up through his sensitive nose and made to walk on *red hot* plates, whilst the back of his legs are *hit* in time to music. Onlookers *taunt* him and force him to drink beer. Why? Because they’re teaching him to ‘dance’ for tourists who pay to watch his *agonising* waltz. WSPA rescues ‘dancing bears’ and takes them to sanctuaries where they can be free of pain and suffering. But we can’t carry out our *life-saving* work without the support of people like you. *Your gift of just \$25, or whatever you can afford, will help cut the chains of innocent animals.*

...N[Z]ers have helped give... bears their liberty... For 10 years... Lizzi... th[e] European brown bear has been crammed into a cage so small [it] can hardly move. One of 21 bears kept in similar horrific conditions in a village near Budapest... [since] the Hungarian wildlife film industry... went bust[, Lizzi]... spends her time either pacing in what little space there is or simply lying on the excrement-covered floor. In the cage next to her, bears tormented by boredom and frustration have ripped up the concrete floor... Until recently, her future was so bleak, it seemed the kindest option for Lizzi was to be gently put to sleep. However, by the time you read this, Lizzi will be roaming a four-hectare haven... [- with] pools for her to swim in, trees to rub against... and... grass to roll on... [- after] the plight of the bears came to the attention of British-based charity WSPA...

Chinese authorities have removed nine Asiatic black bears from bile production farms... and handed them over to the International Fund for Animal Welfare... An... estimated 10,000 black bears... [are kept on] the farms, where they are killed and their bile extracted for use in Chinese medicine[, but an]... agreement between... Hong Kong groups led by IFAW and the Chinese authorities... [means such] farms are being closed down.

...The failure by medical researchers to treat seriously the theory that Aids could enter humans via polio vaccines has significantly increased the danger of fresh plagues of deadly disease caught from animals, says... [the] author of *The White Death*... [P]olio vaccines are still produced worldwide in monkey kidneys, and there are now plans to grow flu vaccine in monkey kidneys... There is no disputing the risk. The only inquiry into the Aids theory, by America’s prestigious Wistar Institute, concluded it was possible for a monkey immunodeficiency virus to enter humans via a vaccine, although the probability of Aids appearing during polio immunisation was “extremely low.” ...The perils have also escalated sharply with the rise in medical transplants of animal tissue and organs to humans... With one person in every 10,000 in the [First W]orld now awaiting a transplant, researchers have been forced to turn to animals for spare parts. So far there have been more than a dozen attempts to implant baboon or chimpanzee kidneys and baboon or sheep hearts into humans, plus regular transfers of tissues from pigs and cattle. Animal transplants are also due to increase significantly with the breeding of special pigs designed to reduce the immune rejection of a foreign organ, with the qualified blessing of leading medical ethics bodies... Clear warnings of cross-species infection have already tragically appeared: • Monkey handlers and laboratory workers killed by a herpes virus harmless to its simian carriers. • Canine parvovirus, which killed millions of dogs worldwide. Many veterinary virologists believe it appeared in 1978 during experiments in which live cat virus was injected into a tissue made from dog cells. • The contamination of Salk’s vaccine by the previously unknown SV-40 monkey virus. • Ebola and Marburg viruses – the latter named for the German town in which laboratory workers using African green monkey kidneys died from a violently haemorrhagic fever...

Residents of Kostroma, 320km north of Moscow, have been warned not to buy mutton or rabbit meat from local vendors after thieves broke into a laboratory and stole animals that had been injected with syphilis. The experimental animals had been infected with venereal disease in order to try out new drugs... [Incidentally, 95%] of the wild rabbits in South A[US] were killed by the accidental release of the deadly calicivirus last November. The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation said most were between three and six weeks old and died within 48 hours of infection. N[Z] is considering a controlled release of the virus and plans to see if the disease would harm native fauna.

...New fears have been raised about the safety of... native birds if the Government approves the use of rabbit calicivirus disease, now rampaging through wild rabbits in A[US]. Two leading... experts in caliciviruses have criticised official assurances that birds will not be affected by the disease and given a warning that so little is known about the virus there can be no certainty that it will not spread to species other than rabbits. They have also raised the possibility that the disease could eventually infect humans, following confirmation of... RCD... antibodies in a Mexican laboratory worker and the ability of other caliciviruses to cause disease in people. The views of... [the] virologist at Oregon State University College of Veterinary Medicine, and... [a colleague from] the Centre for Paediatric Research at Eastern Virginia Medical School, have been rejected by researchers and officials promoting the release of RCD to control rampant rabbit populations... Four kiwi were inoculated with comparatively high doses of RCD last year to test their susceptibility to the disease. All produced antibodies, but did not show clinical symptoms of RCD or pass the disease to rabbits, and were declared safe from the disease... [But the virologist], who has undertaken ground-breaking research into calicivirus, told the N[Z] *Herald* that evidence of the vulnerability of birdlife to RCD was such that “if I were in N[Z] it would immediately raise a very big flag for me.” [The virologist] said proponents of RCD had described the antibody levels found in the test kiwi as “low” – despite the fact that one had an antibody score 10[%] higher than that of an experimentally infected rabbit – and that the... level of virus given to the kiwis was still a relatively low dose for trials designed to check for cross-species transmission... [T]he fact that the kiwi developed antibodies showed their systems recognised

calicivirus as a foreign protein, indicating they had calicivirus antibodies before testing: “You know it’s not RCD, but these agents cross-react among themselves, so th[is]... tells you that they are probably susceptible to calicivirus infection – then you turn around and hit them with this rabbit thing, and the antibodies go right on up.” ...other bird species had shown evidence of calicivirus infection, including a calicivirus disease in fairy terns, and British researchers were now considering the likelihood that infected birds carried RCD across the English Channel.

...The bomb began ticking in April last year on remote Wardang Island, 5km from the old windjammer harbour of Port Victoria, on South A[US]’s Youke Peninsula: a rabbit outside the enclosures of high-security biological control experiments was found dead. Alarmed at the implications scientists shut down the trials and killed the experimental animals. Within nine days of their resumption in September the virus spread beyond the electrified compound of the experimental station, and with unsuspected speed leaped to the mainland and raced through pastoral areas, slaying millions of rabbits... For a nation plagued by rabbits since Thomas Austin released a dozen for sport in 1859, the balance of concern swung in favour of a killer more effective than anything since the early success of myxomatosis, and away from cautions of potential harm to native wildlife and the possibility that predators starved of rabbit may turn to vulnerable and endangered species. The environmental and economic toll exacted by rabbits is enormous: ...estimates of the total cost to A[US] range from \$NZ172 million to \$700 million a year. According to a study produced last year for the National Federated Farmers, an 80[%] reduction in rabbits would increase agricultural production by 3[%]... With its hand forced by the accidental release of... RCD... and armed with scientific assurances it would attack only European rabbits, the A[US]n Government earlier this month approved its release... N[Z], afflicted with a similar scourge of rabbits, is [still]... evaluating its proposed introduction... But... [a US virologist] is critical of the A[US]n tests, saying they... were carried out on animals at time intervals that “virtually ensure negative results”... [The virologist] is also concerned that because RCD cannot be propagated in laboratories the virus has to be extracted from ground-up livers of diseased rabbits, causing problems for diagnostic and experimental work. Its rapidly-changing nature is a further worry. Already, European researchers have reported the emergence of new types of RCD beyond the control of existing vaccines. And... the escape from Wardang Island confirmed RCD’s ability to evade control: “The mechanisms of transmission are not fully known. Everything from fomites to flies, aerosols to birds, are suspect... The wisest course for N[Z] to take would be to just cool out for a while, and see what comes down in A[US]... But my own gut feeling is that if the release is delayed until you can learn what you need to know about the agent, you won’t release it.”

...In the remote outback of Central A[US], the rabbit, arch-enemy of pastoralists and environmentalists for generations, has found an unlikely ally in the arid land’s traditional owners. As governments around the country begin final preparations for the release of [RCD] some Aborigines have opposed the widespread destruction of what has become a major food source for people living semi-traditional lifestyles. Remote communities across the Anangu-Pitjantjatjara lands, a huge region covering parts of far north South A[US] and southern N[T]... which often were already struggling to meet food requirements now faced additional costs of buying from stores which may be up to hundreds of kilometres away... [In local news, f]armers hoping that no rabbits will be left across parts of... [the] South Island by next Easter have applied for the use of... RCD... M[AF] has called for public submissions on the application, and by late yesterday about 400 had been received in Wellington. Submissions close Monday... The... Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society opposes the... application... because it [i]s not possible to properly weigh up the risks and benefits...

The German Animal Protection League has announced a \$NZ50,000 reward for significant clues leading to the capture of one or more horse mutilators... Since the first case of horse mutilation west of Berlin in 1992, at least 319 horses have been attacked. Police say 89 have died of their wounds. Attacks have occurred in all but three of the 16 German states... Attackers have mutilated the horses by slashing their throats, or stabbing them in the eyes, heart, shoulder, stomach or genital area. Some horses have been shot to death. Others were driven from their pastures into oncoming traffic on busy highways, causing accidents that killed one person and injured several. Because the random attacks take place in rural sparsely populated areas, the criminals escape before police arrive... Possible motives for the attacks include sadism... or personal animosity toward horse owners... [However, i]n the south-western state of Baden-Wuerttemberg, police have identified a clear pattern in the attacks: sexual perversion... [I]n all the attacks in the upper Swabia region, genital mutilation occurred and some of the victims were pregnant mares... [The] director of forensic psychotherapy at the Bavarian University of Ulm, [who] helped police in the investigations... told the *Schwaebischer Tagblatt* newspaper... “Most of these criminals are lonely, introverted... Their actions are clearly driven by aggressive and sexual impulses. Horses are victims because of their pronounced genitals, which are easily noticeable.” ...A 40-year-old... who once worked as a horse caretaker has been arrested in Baden-Wuerttemberg. Police say [the suspect] has admitted attacking at least nine horses because of his hatred for [gals]... There is no national database on horse attacks... [and, so far, only one perso]n has been convicted... The convicted [perso]n, who cannot be identified under German law, was sentenced in February to 11 months’ probation. Attacks on animals are legally considered the same as property damage.

...A former[Canadian] dog-breeder whose punishment of her Irish setter left the animal next to dead could get her pet back as soon as tomorrow – and the authorities can do nothing about it. The elderly [dog-breeder]... tied... the three-year-old purebred... to the bumper of her car... then dragged it 500m along a gravel road to teach it a lesson... after it left her yard on Saturday... “It’s the worst injuries I’ve ever seen on a dog,” said [a spokesperson for]... the Alliston Humane Society... Despite broken bones, gashes and serious burns to 35[%] of her body, Holly is expected to live. Although criminal charges are pending, the Humane Society is powerless to seize the dog when it is released from the vet... “In Ontario, as long as the owner is willing and able to care for the animal, the law requires they get the animal back,”... [By the way, a] commercial to be unleashed on British cinema screens aims to bring home to dog-owners just how antisocial it is when their dogs foul pavements. Under the slogan “You Wouldn’t – Don’t Let Your Dog!” it shows a jolly, middle-aged [guy] open the front door on a beautiful morning, walk out into the street, drop his pyjama trousers, squat down and foul the pavement. As passers-by look on in horror, the [guy] calmly relieves himself before walking back up the path to his smart Georgian house, pausing to greet his neighbour... [Aimed] to shock... the... sequence was filmed... for... Islington Council... - 1996

Officials from the country that strives to be a model of tidiness are... impressed with the Waitakere City Animal Welfare Centre[, where a pilot programme gives]... animal welfare officers greater powers, both to control animals and protect their welfare... A new council dog policy announced yesterday will further bolster the officers’ powers over the city’s 13,500 dogs and their owners, and institute tighter controls. Policy measures include instant fines of up to \$400 for owners of improperly controlled dogs, exercise areas mapped out for West Coast beaches, and a ban on dogs within 10m of children’s play areas... [O]ne of the four Singaporean delegates... said they looked at animal control centres in the cities of Wellington, Manukau, Auckland and Waitakere, but the latter impressed them the most. The Singaporean Government would use the Waitakere centre as a model for a new, privatised animal welfare centre for the island, which is home to... 40,000 dogs... “We have two separate sections for control and welfare but I think it’s more efficient to integrate... and we... want to put more emphasis on responsible pet ownership.” A Waitakere City councillor... said staff at the purpose-built Waitakere centre handled 6500 complaints last year, most of them about dogs, although many were of a minor nature. About 1800 animals were impounded each year... [‘The centre caters for about 2000 animals a year. Among current inhabitants are cats, rabbits, goats, and a hen which had been abused with its beak cut off. The bulk of the animals, about 1200, brought in to the centre are dogs. About 60% are returned to their original owners, 20% are adopted and the remainder are destroyed.’ • An] increase in the dumping of pets has left[Auckland] SPCA staff reeling. Last month, 1583 unwanted animals arrived at the SPCA Village in Mangere – up 25[%] on a year ago... [Over] half the animals brought to the refuge had to be destroyed – 223 cats, 568 kittens, 48 dogs and 55 puppies. The executive director... said the increase had stretched finances and put staff under stress. “That so many little, innocent animals have been put to sleep has stretched human limits to the maximum. It is very sad and nobody likes it.” Recent extensions at Mangere left no shortage of accommodation, but condition, age or temperament

precluded keeping many animals. At the Rotorua SPCA, staff refused to let people take home pets as surprise Christmas presents. Previously, too many had arrived back in the New Year because they were the wrong shape, colour or size. But since January 1, Rotorua has still received 35 unwanted animals, compared with 15 last year. At the Waikato SPCA, 105 homeless animals arrived between Christmas Day and January 8 – up from 32...

[‘Founded more than 120 years ago, the SPCA charter was to provide comfort and hope to abandoned kittens, abused pups, and battered working animals. Instead, they have become society’s garbage collectors, well-intentioned killing machines and the main method of animal control. How can animal shelters seriously expect society to value pets when it has become the number one cause of death for our companion animals, argued *The Animals’ Voice Magazine*. “The monumental scale of mercy killing healthy animals only reinforces a public mindset that pets were disposable and worthless.” At Auckland’s SPCA, where more than 50% of the 12,872 animals received last year were put down, dozens of newly dead kittens, pups, adult cats and dogs are crammed into the shelter’s industrial freezer as they await final disposal. People don’t think twice about abandoning animals. “Last Christmas Day a family obviously heading away on holiday drove up, dumped the family puss and her new-born kittens at the door and headed off.” They’ll probably get another kitten when they return from holiday. “That drives home how scant life can be for some people. You have to seriously question their mentality and ask: Would they do the same thing to each other? It’s a callous betrayal of trust that makes me more determined to change attitudes. We have a contract with our pets, that we will take responsibility for them until they die.” But the executive director of the Auckland SPCA’s strategy to enlighten the careless and uncaring doesn’t include horror stories. Experience tells him that bludgeoning people with horror stories doesn’t work. The director has seen too many trusting pups beaten to pulp. So the director won’t tell you that some people’s idea of fun is exploding a young cat with fireworks. Or about the too friendly puppy doused with petrol and set alight; the pregnant cat hung by wire until its neck broke then having every bone smashed in her still warm body. The director could reel off dozens of stories about farm animals left to slowly die in the agony of neglect. And it doesn’t help to recall the countless instances of unwanted family cats tossed out of fast-moving cars with no more consideration than a hamburger wrapper. But his sidekick, the Auckland SPCA’s chief inspector doesn’t hold back his disgust. “These people are pillocks. We had a case of kids jamming a kitten in bicycle spokes and slowly cutting it to pieces while peddling around the street. But cruelty to animals is mostly by adults and we only see the tip of the iceberg.” The director shares a fond quote, from Leonardo da Vinci: “The day will come when people such as I will look upon the murder of animals, as they look on the murder of humans.” □] **The SPCA will again be licensed to kill... unwanted, surplus and injured... animals after an agreement is finalised with vets... But the SPCA must have a veterinarian’s consent to give the unwanted pets and feral cats a lethal injection... The Rotorua SPCA clinic[recently] admitted... it had... found out that under the Animal Protection Act it was unable to kill animals unless they were sick. Every SPCA clinic in N[Z] had been breaking the law.**

...For the fifth year in a row, the Government has deferred the task of revising animal protection legislation and the SPCA says N[Z] has fallen behind much of world thinking on the issue... “It’s not that animal welfare isn’t considered important, it’s just that there’s no room on this year’s agenda... [I]t’s now down for consideration next year[,” says]... the Minister of Agriculture... whose portfolio encompasses animal cruelty and rights... (last year, ‘the PM was among guests at a feast in honour of the South Pacific Forum in the Marshall Islands when turtles were burned alive then dissected while their heads and flippers still moved’). It’s now 37 years since the Animal Protection Act was last reviewed and the SPCA says public attitudes toward cruelty to creatures have changed in that time. The penalties are out of date and inhumane treatment of crustaceans... and fish is not covered by existing legislation... In N[SW], legislation has just... provid[ed] for a fine of up to \$10,000 and two years’ jail for anyone who serves live crustaceans, “screaming prawns” or slithers of still-quivering raw fish... The RSPCA’s chief executive in Sydney... tells of complaints of Asian diners picking the flesh from lobsters with their shells cracked but still alive and moving on the plate. Under [the] new legislation, ...SPCA inspectors will be able to raid restaurants to stamp out the practice... [Although] an 18-year-old trainee hairdresser from Waitakere... [claims to have been] offered the chance to “check the cray dance,”... [for] \$60... Auckland Chinese restaurateurs deny that they’ve ever done such a thing and a Japanese tour guide who takes parties throughout the country... [is] unaware of live servings of any form of fish. This does not preclude serving strips of raw flesh, sometimes marinated or eaten after dipping in sauces, or the selection of a live crayfish, kept in a tank, which comes back steaming within 15 minutes... [T]he SPCA... says crayfish should be killed by putting them in a deep freeze – “they painlessly go to sleep.” Drowning them in fresh water is cruel and can take a long time. Throwing them in a pot of boiling water is equally hideous – “how would you like to be boiled alive? ...We were told about live crayfish being served to Japanese tourists in a Queenstown restaurant. We got in touch with the owners, put our case, and they stopped... [W]e haven’t had any cases of ‘screaming prawns’ or ‘drunken prawns’ in which live green prawns are soaked in alcohol and then set alight. They’re a Chinese specialty [readily available in China]. The screaming is the noise the prawns make when set on fire.”

...An alcoholic... pensioner in wind-swept Kazakhstan has found... an unlikely friend and drinking partner... by coaxing a rare, black cockroach to become addicted to vodka, according to the country’s official *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda* newspaper. The unnamed... [pensioner] places a few drops of the fiery spirit on the table each morning and watches the insect emerge from a hole in the wall to imbibe the liquor... Breakfast completed, [the cockroach] spends a day of inebriation sitting on the window ledge, tenderly watched over by his master... Scientific interest in the story has... been aroused. It was previously unknown that cockroaches could become addicted to vodka... [However, an] entomologist in the region told reporters that cockroaches have a high capacity for adaptation, and could easily learn to enjoy alcohol... The serious side to the tale is that it is evidence of the extreme isolation of retired people in a country where many pensioners remain unpaid and the number of alcoholics is extremely high.

...the latest pet craze in the state of Queensland[is] giant cockroaches nearly 8cm long. The whopper roaches are 30 times heavier than the typical A[US]n house roach, are wingless and eat only dead leaves... “Macropanesthia rhinoceros” are very robust, and kids can pick them up and cuddle them by hand, then put them back in a box... [In local pet news,] 65 birds and 150 of their unfeathered friends flocked to... Auckland[’s]... Three Kings Domain... yesterday... for a party... Most of the birds could talk... [B]irds had different conversational abilities, depending on their breed and upbringing. “Some would have a grasp of about 20 sentences.” ...it was obvious that some were brighter and better behaved than others. “The cockatoo has the brain of a two and a half year old [child]... They need disciplining and, depending on the owners, you can have good birds and naughty birds.” The annual party is an opportunity for bird owners and fans to get together and discuss bird rearing techniques... [A]lmost all of the birds were hand-raised and... domesticated. In spite of all those feathers, the party was a no-fly zone. “All their wings are clipped.”

...a new law in Sweden... protect[s] budgies... Keeping them in caged solitude, legislators have ruled, is intolerably cruel. Owners failing to provide them with mates now risk up to 12 months in jail. Such companions can be of either sex because it’s believed budgies share a characteristic with sheep. British researchers claim that 10% of rams are gay – preferring other rams to ewes. But... [one bird – which, at 17 years,] is believed to be the oldest budgie in Sweden... [-] will not get a partner of either sex... [The budgie’s 82-year-old owner is] determined to safeguard his celibacy – even if it lands her in prison... [In further news from Europe, a ‘magnetic front’ has been] blamed for disorienting tens of thousands of racing pigeons that flew the English Channel... to mark the British Racing Pigeon Society’s centenary... Dead pigeons were strewn along roadsides in France.

...ONE OF the more poignant items on the shelves of Masterpet’s 4000-item Wellington warehouse is a small cardboard coffin that retails for... \$5. The days of burying your budgie at sea with the help of... a flush button are long gone... [B]ird-lovers in the ’90s find it reassuring to know that Tweetie can have a decent funeral before... [fluttering] off to that great, wooden perch in the sky. Strange? Not really, says... [Masterpet’s managing director, who is the] owner of a German shepherd... and two cats... Pets are people, too. “We get a lot of lovely letters from customers signed with the cat’s or dog’s name. Photos, too. So here I am, corporate director, writing back to [a cat or dog]! But it’s a nice feeling.” [His brother and co-

director, who also] has a mongrel... and two cats... and... has been playing catch in the pet business since... packing rabbit pellets at the age of 12, can only agree. "The vets have the sad side of this industry... the cat's been run over, the dog's sick. It's very stressful, but at the pet shop it's all about giving, it's all about love." Kiwis love their pets... [The NZ] pet accessories trade is worth an estimated \$40m-\$45m annually. Throw in food, and you're talking closer to \$250m... "It's like buttons. No one gives them a second thought, yet it's a massive industry. ['Pet food is a \$9b industry in the US.' The owner of US petfood] brand... Hartz Mountain... has two armed bodyguards... [and] is one of the 20 richest people in... the U[S]... His father was a German Jew who emigrated with a couple of German roller canaries shortly before the war, and couldn't get any seed in New York to his liking. That's how [his family] got into the business. You can talk about the money if you like, but it isn't something that turns us on. It gets down to the bond a person has with an animal. There's three types of pet owner: Those who see their pet as an animal, and we have very little to do with them. Those who see their pet as a pet, and we see a lot of that and, finally, those who see their pet as a family member – they're the people we love to deal with." The peculiarities of that unique bond... were no more apparent... than during the '87 crash. As the brothers watched other businesses slip into receivership, Masterpet grew 20%... and expanded. "It was embarrassing. You'd go into the pub for a few beers and be surrounded by people talking about how bad business was. The best thing to do was to keep quiet and nod your head... It seems that when the economy's down, people tend to spend more money on home pursuits such as gardening or pets." ...co-owner of Wellington mobile service Posh Pets, can recount similar experiences... "During the crash, we didn't notice any downturn... Some owners would laugh and tell us they were buying expensive shampoos for their cat or dog, but couldn't afford to buy any for themselves." For some, money is no object... "One... very wealthy [owner], had this very pampered corgi that was getting old and arthritic, so [the owner] bought a four-poster waterbed to ensure her dog enjoyed a warm, comfortable existence. It was in his own room with matching velvet curtains and the like... [Another owner] actually built her dog its own bathroom just so we could bath it every six weeks. I mean... the bathroom... belonged to the dog... I didn't ask [the dog if it] knew how to use anything else in there... I figured the toilet was installed for us." The business grooms up to 10 animals a day, five days a week, and the four-legged fervour is a passion that crosses all social and economic barriers. "We have people living in State houses who have their poodles or German shepherds cut six-weekly, which is not cheap. I feel like saying don't worry about paying, but they love having their pet look beautiful just as much as wealthier people do... I could be biased, but there's a softness around people that like animals that often isn't there otherwise. Maybe it's there because they love animals." Love 'em... and eventually leave 'em. In nearly a quarter of a century of "cat sitting"... [the] owner of Auckland's Aristocat Cat Motel – ...[priced] at \$7.50 a day... [-] has witnessed scenes of parting grief unlikely to assist any [player] in his quest for All Black selection. "We've had... [guys] bawling in here... I was surprised by that at first, but you soon learn that young couples or single people with no children have a very, very deep bond there... One [owner], who picks up and feeds strays, took five wild cats into her house and shipped them to A[US] after deciding to move] there. They were here for about three weeks while [the owner] was packing, and [the owner] came to see them every day. I think it's about \$400 each to get them from here to Brisbane. Some people would think [the owner] was mad, but cat people have a different perspective... The ones that were away for a year used to send postcards to the cat saying mummy and daddy are on the beach here or will be bringing you back a nice present. Of course, we... send postcards back from the cat – saying we're having a good time... and we've made friends with such and such a cat. We'd just put the name and then the cat's paw as a signature, but probably only cat people would understand that." Undoubtedly, says [Masterpet's co-director], the pet in question would have been buckled up securely in the backseat of the Pajaro when his "parents" did finally arrive to pick him up. "Car harnesses are huge at the moment... our sales double every year." Last month, Masterpet announced a 50% acquisition of leading independent A[US]n company Pets International – making it the largest pet supply company in Australasia[, and its co-director]... says the story behind those soaring sales is almost Biblical. "It's all about giving and receiving. People who treat their pets well get it all back – 10-fold and unreservedly. If you come home late on a Friday night and trip over the top stair, the dog'll still be there licking your face, even if the wife's not talking to you."

...[Look at the little fella, just sitting there wagging his tail at me! Sometimes I take my dog for granted, but there's no doubt about it – dog is guy's best friend! You know why I like you so much, Snert? You're loyal, you're brave, and you're a lot of fun! Plus, you can't talk!]

...respective members have ceased talking to each other following 'the cat-fight between the Fancy Cat Club and the Club for Fancy Cats.' Incidentally, Fancy Feast is the name a local petfood manufacturer is using to market a range of individual-serve, gourmet meals for cats...

'Britons are now allowed to obtain kidney transplants for their pet cats, joining countries such as AUS and the US.' ■ Colorado lawmakers are supporting legislation to elevate the status of its two million cats and dogs (spread among 1.6 million households) from property to companions. The measure would allow people in Colorado to sue veterinarians and animal abusers and seek damages for "loss of companionship," up to \$US100,000. At present, pet owners can seek only "fair market value" in a lawsuit. If passed, the measure would be the first such companionship law in the nation. The Colorado measure is opposed by the state Veterinary Medical Association, which contends the proposed changes would increase the cost of veterinary care.'

...in the US, 'total annual veterinary care expenditures are \$3.012 billion for dogs, \$1.573 billion for cats, and \$330 million for horses. The nation's pet population has remained fairly steady in recent years: 54.6 million cats, 52.5 million dogs, 12.9 million pet birds and 6.6 million horses. While the number of horses has remained steady, that of cats and birds rose slightly, and that of dogs declined. However, dogs remain the most popular of pets, with 38.2% of all households owning at least one, followed by 28.4% of all households owning a cat.' ● 'Dogs provide companionship in 35% of homes' in NZ.

... 'only a third of NZ's house-pets are wormed regularly, making them more prone to other diseases and posing a threat to children'. ■ 'France's pet population of 35 million – over twice the number of French children – is spread over 55% of the country's households. These domestic animals eat more meat annually than all Spaniards put together. In Paris, 40 animal clinics are open day and night, compared with five in 1975. Animal ambulances have appeared, and there are even canine taxis. A therapy centre for dogs and cats offers bone and muscle treatments, as well as exercises on moving carpets for pets that have grown arthritic and obese from lolling around. And dog-sitter agencies will watch over your canine for about the same rates that baby-sitters charge.'

... 'doggie daycare is the latest accessory for over-worked pet owners to keep neighbours and councils at bay. Petulant pooches who bark as soon as your back is turned can now spend the day with their mates at a pet centre in Massey. Pets can also be dropped in for the night if you're planning a big Saturday evening out and don't want your precious pet redecorating your living room while you paint the town. Dogs home alone can cause "heaps of problems" and stories of ripped curtains and eaten shoes abound. Cats are also catered for but the centre's manager says they're more uptight and don't settle in so easily'...

'A five-star hotel specialising in catering to "poofy little dogs" is booming as Aucklanders go on holiday. The Airport Pet Hotel promises a better class of service for pets which are considered more human than animal. Weekly guests have their toes clipped and their hair unknotted, washed, brushed and cut by staff. They are then given a quick rub-down followed by a blow-dry. Music soothes them through the ordeal. Games – including the perennial favourite, catch – are played in outdoor dog runs. Pets can expect their own favourite gourmet foods as well as house specialities. The hotel, which was based on European concepts, costs \$16 a day for a small dog through to \$28 a day for a large dog. The hotel has room for about 70 dog and 40 cat guests.'

... "Maddie's is like a home, not a kennel," says the editor of *Animal People*. "It really is a radically new direction and believe me, it's going to be copied around the world." There appears to be no stopping the "no-kill" animal shelter movement – which guarantee a home for all healthy cats and dogs. Of the 5000 shelters in the US, more than 700 call themselves "no kill" and the crown jewel, with a price tag of \$US7.4 million, is the gleaming Madison Pet Adoption Centre. Just about every detail of the centre is a departure from the norm. From the outside it looks like a fancy corporate head office. Inside,

dogs are assigned to “apartments” filled with tables and chairs, framed artwork and little refinements like candlesticks or tea settings. Every one of its 21 rooms for dogs has its own TV and VCR. The hustler and sweet-talker who transformed a run-down, deeply indebted San Francisco SPCA into a model shelter for the world has his critics, however. Most of them argue that the term “no-kill” is misleading and, worse, pits shelters against each other. Most US facilities fall into basically two categories: Government-run agencies which must take in all strays, uphold local ordinances and collect dangerous animals, and the private, non-profit shelters like San Francisco SPCA which do not have to accept all animals brought to them. A past president of the American SPCA has been one of the hustler’s most outspoken critics. In a newsletter last year the critic said no-kill is “more hoax than fact,” pointing to the more than 4000 dogs and cats euthanised by the city’s animal control centre last year. “The no-kill policy is everyone’s fantasy. No one wants that better than me. But realistically, how are you going to find 40,000 new homes for animals in New York City. I think it’s a wonderful idea, but I think the hustler’s dreaming.”

... ‘The well-to-do dog in New York has a life many a human would envy. In fact, many of their owners think they *are* human!’

... ‘*Pets are the ones who aren’t human*’ It seems that any service provided to humans must be extended to the animal world. There are pet cemeteries with a choice of headstone and burial tailored to the animals’ needs. Pet psychologists and animal behaviourists will unravel the reasons that pampered poodle turns wild whenever the postie delivers. There is cat Prozac for the feline who finds the stress of inner-city living just too much. Do you think those dinky but expensive tins containing gourmet food are designed to appeal to cats? No, manufacturers promote them because they appeal to pet owners’ vanity. The mind boggles as to what will be next? Pet restaurants? Let’s face it, we’re going to the dogs. Concerned that her beloved cocker spaniel might pine while its master was at work, one owner employed her mother to care for the obese canine during working hours.’ Editor’s note: ‘there are 14 million overweight dogs and 16 million overweight cats in the US.’ Part of the problem can be traced to the fact that ‘petfood manufacturers are in the business of selling petfood but, mostly, the owners are just very well trained by their pets.’ Although, ‘basically, dogs don’t know when to stop eating’, it is boredom that makes pets (and other animals – especially pigs and humans) eat too much. However, ‘studies have shown that dogs visiting resthomes alleviates boredom’ among the residents, and probably also for the dogs, for whom boredom is more of a problem than cats – because dogs are usually larger and more powerful (which means they can be more destructive), and they are more like human children (which means they are more likely to feel lonely or anxious if left alone). Unfortunately, most dog owners find it comforting if their pet gets excited when they arrive home – ignoring the fact that this proves how miserable the dog was prior to the owner’s return (and ‘animals are genetically created to hide pain’). A final point is that most dogs will be friendly just for the sake of being sociable, whereas most cats will only be friendly because they want food. ■ Tests conducted by the University of Michigan claim that while a dog’s short-term memory lasts no more than five minutes, a cat’s can last as long as 16 hours’.]

... *it’s reigning cats, not dogs...* Cats are... outnumbering their canine counterparts, according to a survey by a pet-food manufacturer... The survey... showed that every household owns 1.6 cats – that’s one million cats in the country – putting N[Z]ers at one of the highest cat-per-person ratios in the world. But dog numbers have fallen 10[%] in the past two-and-a-half years, and there are now only 600,000 in the country... [T]he biggest drop in dog numbers was on small rural properties outside big cities. A reason for this could be that many farmers used four-wheel bikes for stock work instead of dogs... [B]usier lives might... also... be influencing people not to have dogs as pets.

...A shamefaced father... took a... Yorkshire terrier to an animal shelter last week because his children preferred their Tamagotchi pets... [T]he children, both under 10, were... happy to get up in the middle of the night to tend to their cyber pets but would not feed or walk the puppy.

...WE ARE being overrun by cyber critters. While many N[Z]ers are now on the fourth and fifth generation of Norns, and thousands of others are coming to grips with the... Tamagotchi, Fujitsu Interactive is about to unleash the most lifelike cyber creature yet... Fin Fin is a super-cute part bird, part dolphin that lives on the magnetic planet Teo. Unlike other, often temperamental, cyber critters, it doesn’t pack its bags and leave home when disciplined. Nor does it die if you don’t feed it, as both Norns and Tamagotchi do. Fin Fin lives in the wild and must be tamed. It gets upset if you ignore it, but it will just be reticent about getting close. Although it is not reliant on humans, it thrives on making friends. Fin Fin needs to be talked to... You must actually speak to it through a special microphone called a Smartsensor. You don’t hatch Fin Fin, you have to find it and coax it closer with soothing words and soft whistling from the whistle provided... If there is a sudden loud noise or you speak in a harsh tone or too loudly, Fin Fin will fly away in fright. Despite the fact that this is nothing more than a computer program... the... brilliant graphics, smooth animation, overall “cuteness” of the character and its reaction to various stimuli was enough to entice even the most cynical family members to talk to the computer... Fujitsu has not included a breeding program, although in future releases it is looking at providing Fin Fin with a mate and a baby. Fin Fin is expected to be released in N[Z] later in the year. Warner Bros Interactive launched the first cyber-pet game, called *Creatures*... After receiving widespread market acceptance in Australasia and Europe, it is being launched in the U[S] this week. The *Creatures* software came with a separate disk containing six eggs. Each of the eggs had to be hatched and the resulting creature (called a Norn) had to be reared, trained and bred from to keep the colony expanding. There are now more than 100 sites on the Internet dedicated to *Creatures*. Players are even offering surplus Norns to other “breeders” to give them an opportunity to introduce new “genetic strains” into their colony. Bandai is now on its third generation of Tamagotchi and earlier this year signed a deal with Nintendo to put them on to Game Boy... [L]ast week... Bandai... announced it would create a full colour version for the Nintendo 64, which is expected to be released here sometime next year.

...CHILDREN who are hooked on those bizarre Tamagotchi “virtual reality” pets – and who grieve when they die – are being reassured there is electronic life after death... Bandai is selling a sophisticated version which, after its final farewell, transforms into a “virtual angel” – with delicate wings. And, the company emphasises, angels never die... [As for original Tamagotchis, the person] who runs a 10-hectare pet cemetery at St Blazey, Cornwall... markets funerals with cyberpets being interred in tiny pine or wicker-work coffins... for... about \$12... □... Psychologists warn extreme grief suffered by many youngsters... [over] the death of virtual reality cyberpets... can be magnified by feelings of guilt over having neglected the electronic beasts – by failing to “feed”... or tend to them properly. That’s why... a counselling service[is] now available in N[Z].

...Move over classroom mice and pet goldfish – virtual pets are taking over schools, but not without a fight from teachers. Since arriving in [NZ], the computer pet games – which require feeding, toileting and rest – have bred loathing among many teachers. The virtual pet dies if it does not receive constant attention and that thirst for attention is why several principals refuse to let them enter the school gates... “We don’t need children running to the toilet as an excuse to go and feed their pets... It was driving the teachers nuts and interfering with the children’s learning,”... said... [the] principal of Murrays Bay School[, which]... banned the toy three weeks ago... The principal of Ponsonby Primary School... banned the toys after they created havoc in the playground. “The biggest problem we had was when a boy accidentally killed a girl’s pet – we had a little stress over that one,”... Also enforcing a ban is... the head of Pinehill School... who confiscates virtual pets found at school. Doting pet owners could collect their toys on Friday afternoons as they left school... That attitude surprised the principal of Green Bay Primary... who said[its] teachers tried to encourage pupils to play with their pets at appropriate times... The head of Whangarei Primary... added that the virtual pet craze was just one of many fads for children. “We seem to have seasons with toys and this is just a new season.” ...Originally created in Japan for children who did not own pets, the toys are most popular here with children aged about 10. The distributor... has sold more than 10,000 of the beeping “animals.”

...A Wellington school which banned virtual pet toys... after their constant beeping in class interrupted lessons... has allowed them back after several “died” when left at students’ homes... The pet can be resurrected – by pushing a reset button – but owners have to rear it from scratch.

...[as millions of bored schoolchildren across Asia throw out last year’s bleeping “virtual pets,” a grisly new obsession is sweeping the Philippines – which allows children to infuriate their teachers at a fraction of the cost. The cool new fad is spider wrestling. Many hundreds of children are hooked on

the gruesome craze, which education officials say is spiralling out of control. They warn that youngsters are cutting class to hunt for spiders, betting away large sums of pocket money, and fighting over gambling debts. A superintendent of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, said: "Of course children always have some kind of gimmick, but this is different. It's been going on for months and we just can't seem to stop it. It's become a very serious problem." Even parents and other adults were now getting carried away with the eight-legged combat fetish – in which two spiders are forced to fight to the death. The favoured creepy-crawly contestant is the large brown wolf spider, which is prized for its aggression. Scientists have warned that because a single spider could kill up to 30 harmful pests a day there could be a negative impact on agriculture if the spider wrestling doesn't stop.' While on the topic of spiders, 'after four years with Bob the tarantula as a pet, three Christchurch brothers must make do with a plastic replica. Six officials descended on their home after a tip and took away the hand-sized spider to be destroyed. Their father said four police officers and two MAF staff broke into the suburban Aranui house when no one was at home two weeks ago and pepper-sprayed the family dog. The police had a warrant to search the house for the spider. "If they had waited 10 minutes, they could have knocked on the door and been let in." Tarantulas are classed as an illegal import, although they are not harmful to humans.' ■ 'Sunday News has six Furby Babies (which retail at \$69-\$79) to give away. Launched in NZ last week, the interactive, animatronic pets have 25% more vocabulary and 233% more phrases than the traditional Furby and react to light, touch, sound and motion. 30 million Furbies have been sold worldwide.'

...Cute robo-dog Poo-Chi is powering up to poach Furby fans. The latest virtual pet barks, sings, dances and plays with other Poo-Chis. Created by the makers of Furby, Poo-Chi can move its head, ears, legs and mouth, and senses light, sound and touch. Just like a real puppy, the palm-sized plastic pet learns as its owner plays with it. But unlike genuine dogs, it doesn't need vet treatment, registration, walks, food, water or toilet-training. "The only thing Poo-Chi needs is batteries," said a spokesperson for toy firm Hasbro. "It's a great toy for someone who can't have a real dog and, unlike the first robot dog, which cost \$4500, Poo-Chi doesn't bite parents in the back pocket." When Poo-Chi was released in Japan, kids snapped up 100,000 in three hours. Poo-Chi goes on sale in NZ in 2 weeks, price \$79.95. Sunday News is giving 5 readers the chance to become NZ's first Poo-Chi owners and beat the shop queues.'

... 'Forget your cute, cuddly kitty or puppy. Tomorrow's pets are more likely to be made of plastic or metal, have microchips instead of hearts, and brains equal to a human's. "The 1980s was the age of PCs," said the inventor of the Aibo (Artificial Intelligence Robot) at the launch of the latest model. "The 1990s is the age of the Internet. But the 21st century will be the age of digital creatures." 'Aibo can tell the difference between a friendly pat and a scolding slap. It shows that it is "happy" with a wag of its tail, and performs tricks such as sitting and begging.' 'You can pick one up for about \$6000. Software giant Sony says sales are going well in Asia and the US.' The company 'hopes mechanical dogs will replace real dogs and eventually be one in every house.'

... 'In the past few years young children had thrown their puppies into swimming pools, which is why some animal rescuers believe children should be banned from buying pets. They want NZ's government to follow British moves. In Britain, ministers have bowed to pressure from animal rights groups and raised the minimum age for buying pets from 12 to 16. In NZ, there is no minimum age for buying pets and the SPCA is split on whether the government should introduce an age limit. Auckland SPCA's director said young children rarely bought pets without their parents' permission and a domestic pet was usually cared for by the family. Cases of pet abuse were usually those where children harmed a pet that was not their own. The idea of introducing a minimum age for pet ownership is supported by the National MP who has been pushing for dangerous dog breeds to be banned since the mid-1990s.'

...**Top-level push for ban on bad dogs** Moves to ban so-called pit bull terriers from N[Z] were initiated last night following the death of a Bay of Plenty [resident who was] mauled by a dog originally identified as the type... The National MP for Waipareira... [is] writing to the Minister for Local Government... to ask her to take the banning steps provided for in the new Dog Control Act, which came into force last July... [O]ther MPs had tried to have the breed and cross-bred derivatives banned outright... [when the act was introduced. The act] enables courts to declare, based on evidence from any member of the public of aggressive or intimidating behaviour, that a particular dog is dangerous. That places security and costly registration requirements on the owner, any breach of which can lead to fines of \$1500 and destruction of the dog. [The National MP] envisaged little of the difficulty being experienced in Britain enforcing a ban on pit bulls under that country's new Dangerous Dog Act... But the difficulty of identifying the breed and the cross-breed variants... remains a problem... [P]it bull terriers should not be confused with English bull terriers or Staffordshire terriers, says [a member of the NZ] Kennel Club. Both the latter had been represented in N[Z] "since the year dot," and were specified and registered with the club... [T]he pit bull, on the other hand, was a comparatively recent development in the U[S. The member added]... that television images of pit bull terriers ripping apart [an adult in the US] led to demand for the dogs in N[Z]. "We'd never heard of them until 1989 when there was that article on television... Then everyone wanted one. They are not even a registered breed with us, and that is part of the complication of trying to ban certain breeds. In Britain, certain experts are making fortunes in court giving evidence about what constitutes certain breeds, and I believe two cases have gone to the House of Lords." [The member] predicted similar troubles for Queensland which, after a spate of attacks, has also recently placed bans on so-called pit bull terriers. It requires present owners to keep their dogs muzzled and to have them neutered in the hope that the breed will eventually die out. N[SW] is also considering action against the pit bull terrier... [The National MP] said that opposition to having a ban included in the act had come from a colleague, [the National MP for Whangarei], who was reported by the N[Z] Press Association yesterday as confirming that there were costly legal disputes in Britain over the ban. "The British have overbearing legislation which does not really deal with the problem," [the Whangarei MP] said. "I start off on the basis that there are very few bad dogs but far too many bad dog owners. It makes more sense to ban the bad dog owners than the dogs that have been turned bad by these people." ...[the Whangarei MP is supported by the Kennel Club member]. "Dogs can go insane like anything else, but to a large extent it is true" that problem dogs are the result of problem owners... [If dog owners can't] control their dogs... they should seek professional help. That might result in the dog being placed "in an environment better suited to its instincts." ...Singling out a particular breed of dog as dangerous is not supported by [the person] who runs animal control services for councils in the Auckland region. Advice literature his company puts out says: "Any dog with teeth can and will bite under some circumstances[(e.g., 'when a young child accidentally stands on its paws')], and any dog that displays aggressive behaviour will bite someone eventually." [The control adviser adds]: "Dogs have been selectively bred for 30,000 years not to bite people. Anyone that does is a renegade and it can be from any breed." [The adviser also] implies as strongly as... [possible] that savage, aggressive dogs are reflections of their owners. "If a dog is properly conditioned, socialised and controlled, it won't cause problems... If a dog does cause problems, it hasn't had the benefit of those things." ...In a 40-year career of handling dogs professionally – as a member of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps and as Dog Master for the... [RNZAF Police, the adviser] had not escaped being bitten. "I've got a few interesting scars... but in every case I was at fault. I knew the warning signs, and I pushed the situation too far." ...if challenged or attacked by a dog... [don't] face him head on or look him in the eye. (Don't run or scream)... Try to control him by sternly saying: No! Down! or Go Home! ...If you have something in your hand, get it between you and the dog, and use it as a bite object... If you have a child with you, don't pick the child up as [the dog] may think you are harming... [the child]. Keep the child behind you... Never attempt to end a dog fight by yourself[– as the Bay of Plenty victim had]. You need two people with some strength and agility... One person should approach each fighting dog from the rear... Grab the tail or hind legs and lift them from the ground. Each dog should then release its grip and they should be easily parted... [● '15 dogs and items described as dog fighting paraphernalia have been seized from two remote farming locations in Northland by Bay of Islands RSPCA inspectors. The seizures have led to charges being laid against one Northland resident, the first time dog fighting-related charges have been filed for prosecution in a NZ court. An inspector said yesterday that 14 of the dogs seized were pit bulls or pit bull crosses. The other was a cattle dog which inspectors believe could have been used as a bait. Six dogs were quite severely scarred and had bite wounds. The other 9 were

not as badly scarred or wounded but were emaciated and in poor condition. "People are generally apprehensive about giving us information leading to the conviction of a person for dog fighting through fear of repercussions," said the society's Bay of Islands prosecutor, who believes dog fighting is becoming a serious problem throughout the country and that many animals are encouraged to fight to the death. "That is abject cruelty."

...*Agent in war on animal cruelty* For the past 13 years, Saunders – an assumed name – has changed his identity more often than one can remember. Trained in covert SAS role-playing techniques and schooled in evidence-gathering by the police, Saunders is an undercover agent for the RSPCA. His job, in the society's special operations unit, is to infiltrate the shadowy, organised gangs who abuse animals for kicks. "There are certain sections of the population who get their thrills from seeing a dog's muzzle ripped apart. Most of them are low-life stereotypes, but there are also guys with respectable jobs, who wear suits to the office and drive BMWs, who share the same blood lust." For 10 years Saunders was a uniformed inspector. The idea of taking a more covert role in tackling animal cruelty came from Saunders himself. His bosses gave him the go-ahead. But with the publication of his autobiography, Saunders is bowing out of covert operations and returning to the regular duties of a chief inspector. After more than a decade, his face is becoming a bit too familiar. But there is a real sense of weariness, too. For every case cracked and every conviction secured, there were perhaps two dozen investigations that fell apart. Working alone, with meagre resources, Saunders was ultimately no match for the villains – and the RSPCA has not yet decided whether to replace him. 'The villains' activities can directly affect other members of the community because pet dogs are often kidnapped to become – or help train – fighting dogs...

'\$2,000 cash reward for the return of or information leading to the return of our Staffordshire Bull Terrier, missing from Otahuhu. Gemma is a much loved family dog who has a very kind nature and will befriend everyone. If you know of any new dog in your area, please contact us – NO QUESTIONS ASKED.'

... 'LONDON POLICE have launched a worldwide hunt for a burglar who cat-napped a rare puss. His owners paid \$3000 for the 2-year-old fluffy Ankara Turkish Angora, who commands a stud fee of \$2600 and could've earned up to \$750,000 during its life. A gal drove off in a car with a foreign numberplate after stuffing the cat in a bag.' In local news, 'a Glendene resident fears a cat killer could be living in her neighbourhood. An anonymous letter was left in her mailbox warning that her cats would be "punished" if they strayed into the author's home. The letter, signed "brassed off neighbour", says her cats will get the same treatment as a "bushy ginger cat". An animal fitting that description recently disappeared. Two of her cats also disappeared about 6 weeks ago and the resident fears her other three are in danger. They have recently become very frightened of strangers. "I'm very worried. They're innocent animals."'

... 'TOOT the dog sure got his 15 minutes of fame. The mongrel who killed a much-loved 14-year-old moggy became a folk hero. Sentenced to death for cat-killing, denied a last gasp appeal in the high court, Toot was spirited away to begin a new life far from home. I don't know what it was about the little guy that made him such a favourite. Toot did, after all, murder the cat. But a lot of Kiwis felt the death penalty was too harsh and that the dog should be given another chance. It's all over now and gradually we'll forget about Toot – unless one of my callers gets his idea of a bumper sticker off the ground – If you don't like cats Toot!' In related news, a 'Dargaville resident has admitted charges of animal cruelty after biting off a kitten's head in front of its owner.'

... 'the Porirua father who slit the throat of a dog that attacked his 3-year-old son, is to face a charge of animal cruelty. The suspect killed the bull mastiff with a hunting knife after the attack a week ago. His son, who was treated in hospital for wounds to his face and eyes, is expected to make a full recovery.'

... 'A Rotorua boy savaged by two large dogs in Linton Park thought it would not survive their ferocious attack. The 8-year-old's clothes were ripped off in the mauling that took place over 20 minutes. The boy needed more than 200 stitches after receiving extensive wounds to his upper legs, buttocks, groin and arms, as well as puncture wounds to his neck that narrowly missed his jugular vein. Two boys who saw the attack alerted a neighbour who rushed to the boy's rescue. By the time the police arrived the dogs had run off. The bull mastiff was later destroyed but the German shepherd was still on the loose yesterday.'

... 'a pitbull named Zeus – "king of the dogs," according to his owner – has brought calamity upon its species. Ten years after the rest of Europe started clamping down on attack dogs, Germany has finally done away with bureaucratic pussyfooting and declared war on the most vicious breeds. Tens of thousands face summary execution in the coming weeks after Zeus killed a child last Monday. Television stations interrupted programmes to report on the tragedy, which came as politicians were mulling over tactics against attack dogs for the umpteenth time. The federal Government had said it was powerless because dogs were a regional matter. With the exception of Bavaria, which had imposed a breeding ban some years ago, regional governments were gingerly moving towards measures that would not offend the powerful dog-loving lobby. But the shock of the Hamburg killing, followed by protests in the city, brought procrastination to an abrupt end. The Hamburg Government, which was just in the process of trying to make leashes and muzzles compulsory for the most dangerous breeds, changed tack. Pitbulls and their like must now undergo "aggression tests"; those that fail will be put down. The tests are likely to be extended nationwide. Even in Berlin, the dog capital where no restaurant will dare to put up a "no dogs allowed" sign, attitudes are hardening. Federal politicians are also beginning to respond, as every day brings headlines of fresh maulings. Owners violating Hamburg's new law will face fines of up to DM100,000 and three years in jail. That should stop the carnage eventually, but in the interim there is a new problem. Owners worried about the huge cost of licensing have started to turn their "killing machines" out on to the street. In just one day in Berlin last week ten were tied to trees and two were roaming free.')

... **under a "diversion" scheme adopted by the Waikato District Council[, cash-strapped] owners of dogs caught acting aggressively – rushing or biting – for the first time will now be offered the choice of paying a fine... of up to \$200... or fronting up to an approved dog education course. Owners who choose to pack themselves off to obedience school... will have to pay course costs of \$25 to \$70.**

...['*It's a dog's life* ONE of my neighbours has a dog. I've never met my neighbour, or his dog, but I hear them all the time. The neighbour is shouting words at the dog like "beg" and "shut up", while the dog works itself into a frenzy of barking. One of these two is an idiot, but unfortunately the dog is stuck with him. A Wisconsin animal behaviourist who specialises in treating aggressive dogs – many of whom have become so because they have owners who don't have a clue how and why dogs behave – believes there's a problem in the relationship because we are primates and they are canines. Things we do – such as looking directly into a dog's eyes, facing them head-on, and patting them vigorously on the head – may be fine in the primate world but for dogs those actions are aggressive and upsetting; in other words, biteworthy. ■'] 'The owners of two vicious dogs which attacked and killed 33-year-old Diane Whipple in the doorway of her San Francisco apartment last year were respectively found guilty of murder (the first conviction of murder in California based upon the actions of a dog) and manslaughter yesterday, ending a grisly trial which transfixed and horrified the famously liberal city.'

...NZ 'dog owners fearful of not being able to meet the cost of proposed new laws are considering having their pets put down because they didn't want to break the laws, MPs were told yesterday. The poor and elderly feared Government plans for all dogs to be micro-chipped and leashed in public places, and certain breeds would have to be muzzled in public, while all dogs must be securely fenced – in a way that gives visitors unimpeded access to one door of the house – would be beyond their means' ('a schoolgirl was recently savaged about the face by a dog after the girl had entered a property to sell raffle tickets').]

...*It can be a dog's life owning a pooch under today's restrictive laws and the complications are about to get worse... FROM Footrot Flats to sprawling cities, the dog's relationship as [humanity's] best friend is being tested to the limit... Having a dog can turn a person into a social leper overnight, banished from popular weekend spots and forced to carry the dreaded pooper scooper. The last bastion of freedom for Rover may be a roam in a designated dog exercise area with a pack of other mutts... [A]nd if Rover's pitbull characteristics has earned him a place on the dangerous dog list, [the mutt] will have to wear a muzzle during his romp. Only a few years ago owners could get away with walking a dog in the city, on popular beaches and parks, without a leash. If their pooch squatted to relieve itself, they could... look the other way... But the silent*

revolution began... last year, with the introduction of the Dog Control Act. This brought in a national standard for dealing with dangerous dogs, problem owners and dogs that wander, bark or bite. Now, Rover's midnight wanderings could cost an owner as much as \$400 and the pooch only has to wander as far as next door. That is a \$200 instant fine for being on another person's property and another \$200 if a dogmatic ranger catches Rover relieving himself. Worse, if a dangerous dog is caught at large without a muzzle, the fine is \$400. But that's only the beginning of a dog owner's problems. Local authorities have brought in their own regulations to manage their canine populations. And as dog officers flex their new powers, owners may feel they are the ones wearing the choker chain... In Christchurch... plain clothes... "pooch police"... will visit areas where dogs are known to hang out and capture their motions on film, through Poohcam... [– although the] Privacy Commissioner... said the council would have to adopt a protocol similar to that of the police... such as signs saying the park was subject to surveillance... [M]ore significantly, the council can, by resolution publicly notified in at least one newspaper, declare any public place a no-go zone, restrained dog area or dog exercise space[. The council does, however, plan to create 'the country's first park specifically designed for dogs']. Dogs in cemeteries have come in for special attention from several local authorities, including the Rotorua District Council. Its by-law forbids owners to walk their dogs through graveyards because of complaints that they are "desecrating" graves by fouling... The council takes 700 dog cases to the district court each year and estimates it wins 98% of them. Kapiti Coast District Council is seen as a leader in the "get tough on dogs" brigade, following the fatal mauling of a 59-year-old Rangiora freezing worker by a stray dog last April. It is formulating a dog control by-law that would... insist all dangerous and "delinquent" dogs were implanted with an identifying electronic chip. Kapiti Coast is also proposing a demerit points system, under which owners would be penalised with greater restrictions and extra costs for pound stays for repeated offences. "Some dogs turn up in the pounds on a frequent basis..."... But Tasman District Council near Nelson is going against the tide. It has agreed to ease its dog control policy because of public criticism that it was too restrictive.

...The North Shore City Council has toned down dog exercising bylaws. During summer, dogs will be allowed to be unleashed but under owner's control in parks, reserves, beaches and foreshores – except between 9 am and 7 pm.

...The star of... [a TVNZ] programme... lost control of one of her two pet Weimaraners [– which regularly appear on the show –] ...while exercising the animals... at Cornwall Park in central Auckland... It attacked a newborn lamb, killing it. [The star, who currently is in AUS], said in a statement that "as an animal lover I'm devastated by what happened. All dogs have hunting instincts but that doesn't make me feel any better about [the incident]..." Park rules stipulate that all animals must be kept on a leash... The park farm manager... would not comment on any action against [the star] or the dog... A dog control manager, said farm managers and police were authorised to shoot animals found harassing sheep. "It's a regular occurrence that dogs among stock do get shot... If we get called in to investigate, we would prosecute the dog owner." ...A [TVNZ spokesperson] said the animals would continue to [appear on the 5.30pm show. Editor's note: 'The Dog Tax, a measure protective of Pakeha sheep owners, was passed in 1881 to control the number of dogs owned by Maoris. The dispute came to a head on Apr 29, 1898, when Hone Toia led 200 armed Maoris to Waima, Hokianga, challenging the authorities to fight over the issue. A colonial force of 120 soldiers armed with field guns was dispatched.' 'But when they arrived they found that the MP for Northern Maori, Hone Heke's nephew (also called Hone), had already put down the so-called rebellion.'

...an Oklahoma, USA, resident was bitten by a police dog during a drug bust last year and retaliated by biting the dog back. Now the suspect has been bitten again, this time in the wallet. A judge has ordered him to pay \$US2263 to the police to cover the dog's veterinary bills.'

...a pensioner] was admitted to hospital in Christchurch yesterday after he was mistakenly bitten on the arm by a police dog chasing a suspected burglar, and suffered "moderate to serious" injuries. Police staff visited the [pensioner] in hospital and apologised to him... [Incidentally, a] 70-year-old West Aucklander... has been forced to send his beloved crippled dog into hiding to save her from the SPCA. The animal welfare organisation, backed by the strong arm of the law, wants to destroy... [the] German shepherd... but... [its owner insists the dog] has at least a couple of years left in her – an opinion backed by his veterinarian. [The dog], who is 10... has a degenerative spinal condition which has left her back legs useless... [To outsiders the dog] makes a sorry sight pulling herself along on her front legs. And [her owner] has to use a sling to take her for short walks and toilet stops. A Laingholm neighbour apparently became concerned and contacted the SPCA, which called in a veterinarian of its own. The advice was to have [the dog put down. However, the owner] refused to let an SPCA inspector take the animal on Tuesday night and by the time the inspector returned... with a warrant and two police officers, the dog had been taken to a secret location... [The owner] was shocked when police showed him a warrant accusing him of cruelty to animals and started searching his house... [D]espite her useless back legs, [the dog] was in good health and enjoyed life. "[My dog isn't] suffering any pain – just a bit of frustration – [it] still wants to go racing around." [The owner] said the dog should not be written off just because... [it was disabled. "My dog] has all the problems of a paraplegic person – [it] has to be looked after and cleaned and given special treatment and I'm prepared to do that." ...Auckland SPCA's] director... had called for a report and did not want to comment...

[Ratepayers will subsidise Auckland dog owners by more than \$2 million this year. The bill is high because thousands of dogs are unregistered. Picking up and impounding strays is a costly business. Dog control in Auckland and Manukau costs nearly twice what is recovered from owners']...

A noisy Manukau City dog pound in Papakura District is driving locals to distraction and the two local authorities look set to battle it out in court. Manukau plans a \$600,000 extension... increasing the 70 kennels to 100... and[an] upgrade to reduce noise, but Papakura wants the Ardmore kennels closed. Noise readings show barking... reaches 65 decibels at... about 20... neighbouring properties... five or six nights a week... The limit is 45 decibels... [Meanwhile, the] Otumotai... dog in trouble for barking, is on parole for 6 months. A Tauranga District Council committee decided yesterday to defer banning the pet from his... home. The owners of the four-year-old spaniel-huntaway cross... [had] appealed against the removal order, saying it was tantamount to having [the dog] destroyed. Now they have won time to work with dog control officers on a solution to the problem. The target of noise complaints since March 1995, [the dog] has had electric-shock treatment, his nose sprayed, been neutered and had his voice box surgically removed. But... [his] bark had "unfortunately returned" despite the operation, [and although] its volume had been reduced by two-thirds... still at least one person in the neighbourhood has continued to hound the council about him.

...A seven-year-old black kelpie... has made N[Z] history by becoming the first dog to be saved from death under the Bill of Rights... [The kelpie's home has a] fenced backyard but in March last year one of the seven... children left the front door open. [The kelpie] ran out to the footpath... [and allegedly bit a passing pedestrian. The kelpie's owner claimed it only sniffed the pedestrian. However, the pedestrian] complained to the Manukau City Council, which took... [the owner] to court. Neither [the owner], nor his lawyer at the time, could attend the hearing so... [they] asked for the hearing to be adjourned. But [the] request went missing and the hearing went ahead. The judge decided [the kelpie] should be destroyed... [The owner] appealed the decision... [and the] family have been waiting since January to hear if [the kelpie] would be destroyed. But there was relief on Wednesday when their[new] lawyer... succeeded in getting the High Court at Auckland to overturn... the Auckland District Court... decision... Under section 8 of the Bill of Rights, [the lawyer argued the owner] "had a right not to be deprived of life", which in this case was the life of his dog... Under the Dog Control and Hydatids Act 1992, a judge "may" order a dog be destroyed, but this was replaced by the Dog Control Act 1996 last July, which states a judge "shall" order destruction. As [the] incident occurred before the second Act it was argued [the kelpie] didn't need to be destroyed. "If this incident happened again now, there is no doubt that dog would be dead," said [the successful lawyer.

... Fargo was facing a death sentence after being accused of biting a pedestrian. But his owner was sure the five-year-old bitzer was being mistaken for another dog. "Fargo's absolutely useless. We've been broken into twice and Fargo hasn't made a sound. Fargo's more likely to lick someone to death than bite them." But it took a year of legal wrangling and three hearings before the Taupo district council let Fargo off a dangerous dog tag. At the final hearing

the council ruled Fargo was probably mistaken for a stray dog roaming in the area. Fargo's owner is delighted with Fargo's reprieve but says the battle to save his dog was very stressful and costly. "A lot of people probably wouldn't bother fighting the council but we were prepared to fight it all the way."

...a 'Blockhouse Bay resident wants justice. The resident returned from a holiday to find his pet dog Missy dead and a note from animal control in his letterbox. The dog was being looked after by friends while the owner was away. "One day while they were out two dogs entered the property and mauled her to death. Our neighbour called animal control." A witness said the control officer was not able to get on to the property because of the two dogs, believed to be a Staffordshire bull terrier and a pitbull terrier. The apparent owner of the animals later arrived and was asked to restrain them. "The apparent owner was told to wait with the dogs while the officer went to get some leads but instead hauled them over the fence and just ran off," said the animal control manager, who admitted finding him will be difficult. Missy's owner says the officer should've made more of an effort to get the apparent owner's personal details.'

...a National MP, who earlier] **this year chaired a parliamentary select committee investigating dog control[plans to]... push through legislation to ban... the future importation of pitbull types, including dogo argentino, filo brasileiro and the Japanese togo... despite a nationwide backlash from local authorities...** "So many attacks go unreported. I know of one pitbull which ran through a glass door and ripped a [gal's] cat to shreds in her kitchen,"... Pitbulls are [already] banned in the Mackenzie Country and Timaru, but councils in Auckland, Tasman, Napier, Wellington, Southland, Dunedin, Christchurch and Buller have said they will not support a ban. The councils believe a ban could lead to pitbull owners deregistering their dogs, with the breed sold on the black market... Buller District Council's animal inspector... said since Te Puke [resident] Koro Dinsdale was mauled to death... allegedly by a pitbull, the dogs have already disappeared from the district's register. "We've got nine registered but we know for a fact there are 14 – the owners told us their dogs had been shot... [However, a] labrador that is long in the tooth is just as likely to attack someone as a pitbull..." ...Wellington Dog Control[']s... chief inspector... said the present Dog Control Act was workable and it would be stupid to enforce a ban on pitbulls. "...The Government should look at creating a national register of all bites and attacks. For us not to have one is ridiculous,"... Local Government N[Z]... was also against the ban... "The councils may not want a ban but 80% of the [public do]," said the MP. Unfortunately, the]... Kapiti Coast District Council, which decided to ban pitbulls early this year, has now run into legal problems. Several vets in Kapiti have refused to sit on a panel that would decide if a dog was a full pitbull... One dog control officer... [claimed to have taken] a picture of a pitbull to a council meeting and not one councillor could identify it. "It just shows you that people could be attacked by a dog and say it's a pitbull when it isn't."

...A... Pukekawa... dog breeder was in a... Middlemore Hospital... plastic surgery ward last night after being mauled by one of his own... dogs – a rare breed the Government has been considering banning from N[Z]... A Westpac Rescue Helicopter crew[-member]... said the attack was so savage it was thought [the 37-year-old] could lose his arm... The attack has alarmed the chair[person] of a parliamentary multi-party dog control group... "This is disastrous. I had heard that a guy out that way was advertising these man-eaters and now [the breeder] has been eaten by one,"... [The breeder] told medical staff who treated him at the scene that [his were] the only two full-grown dogos in the country. [The breeder had]... broken his own rule of not breaking up a fight between... them... That morning, [the breeder] had advertised in the N[Z] Herald, offering the first dogo argentino litter for sale in the Southern Hemisphere... [The pups were 'expected to fetch \$3000 each.'] The dogo argentino breed – large white dogs with black spots – were once used to guard slaves in Argentina and are banned in Britain and... [AUS. The NZ] Government working party has recommended outlawing them, along with three other "dangerous breeds"... [Its chairperson claimed to know] of several fila brasileiro... fighting... dogs... being bred in N[Z]... "...I demand that my colleagues act now to ban these before a child is killed,"... On Saturday afternoon, a 7-year-old boy from Port Waikato was also airlifted to Middlemore Hospital after being bitten by a dog on Sunset Beach and almost losing an eye.

...[a wandering Staffordshire bull terrier-cross charged at a 4-year-old playing on the footpath outside his home in the Auckland suburb of Pakuranga, bit his face and dragged him across the path, shaking him like a rag doll. The boy needed extensive stitches and two months of plastic surgery at Middlemore Hospital but, in addition to losing a tear duct in his left eye, is likely to be scarred for life. According to a recent study by Otago University's Injury Prevention Research Unit, over 5700 NZers are bitten severely enough by dogs each year to need hospital treatment. Dog experts say people foolishly buy "guard" dogs without thought for their inbred aggression. They expect them to fulfil an ambitious role – part status symbol, part protection, part family pet – and are stunned when the animals turn on their children or passers-by. For the police, power boards and NZ Post, dangerous dogs have become such a problem that regular seminars for employees are held on how to avoid attack. But youngsters are most at risk. Children under 10 are most likely to require hospitalisation after a dog attack and four times more likely to suffer injury to the head or face than adults. The menace from dangerous dogs is exacerbated by the huge numbers unregistered, many of them strays. Although by law all dogs must be registered with local councils, the Auckland SPCA estimates that at least half the dogs in the greater city area aren't. In Manukau City alone, which has 20,000 registered dogs, the council reckons as many as another 6000 are unregistered including 150 classified as "aggressive and dangerous." Too often these animals end up in SPCA shelters or city pounds where each year throughout the country some 50,000 are destroyed because their owners can't be traced. To improve dog-owner identification, many authorities favour supplementing or replacing the existing registration tags that can be attached to a dog's collar – and easily lost – with a more permanent device such as the microchip implant. A vet can insert the chip, the size of a grain of rice, without anaesthetic under the loose skin on the scruff of the dog's neck. Every microchip carries an individual code that is "read" by passing a scanner across the animal's skin. The reading, fed into a computer, can identify the owner within seconds. Since the National Central Animal Registry, one of two companies marketing microchips in NZ, introduced their Trovan chip in the middle of last year, over a thousand owners have paid around \$75 for their pets to be fitted with it and entered on a central register. The Auckland SPCA inserts the rival Destron chip in dogs they place for adoption. Several local councils soon hope to introduce implants, but would prefer one standard national system.'

...'Legislation introduced in AUS means a \$45 microchip must be inserted into every kitten and puppy. Owners face a \$600 fine for breaking the law, which exempts working dogs – including greyhounds.' Speaking of which, 'those too old or too slow to race in the US (where greyhound racing brings in \$3 billion annually) are shot, bludgeoned to death, starved or left to rot in fields. Mass graves have been found.' In local news, [l]ocal authorities do not want to be forced into banning dangerous dogs, such as the rare Argentine breed that mauled a Waikato dog breeder. And the S[PCA] says the renewed call to outlaw four "dangerous" breeds is driven by hysteria... The SPCA head... said: "Tomorrow, there will be an attack by a Rottweiler and people will say that's another one to put on the dangerous dogs list."

...[a 'Rotorua meter-reader says it should be nicknamed dog tucker. During his six years with TrustPower, it has been bitten from his shoulders to his shins. "When you go on to a property you always run a risk. They hear the rattle of the keys and come running." The meter-reader has been recovering at home from his latest attack – by a rottweiler that jumped over a gate to get to him before the 55-year-old had entered the property.' □ The] Government is poised to prohibit the importing of four dangerous dog breeds and to put strict controls on those already in the country... The package... [– which requires no] legislation... as all the measures can be achieved through regulation... [–] would cut the number of these dogs to "as close to zero as possible."

...A victim of American pit bull terriers and a breeder agreed on one thing yesterday – new regulations banning breeds of dogs could not work... And local bodies – charged with dog control – are "bitterly disappointed" that they were not consulted about the... [new regulations. The chairperson of the NZ] American Pit Bull Terrier Club, said there were 7500 American pit bulls in the country and a further... 60,000 dogs... looked like them.

...[Bandogs – considered the ultimate fighting guard dog – are being sold in this country for between \$1500 and \$5000 each. The giant dogs are bred by crossing a pitbull terrier with a Neopolitan mastiff. Fully-grown bandogs weigh up to 55kg, and combine the great strength and size of a mastiff with a

pitbull's speed and fighting instincts. Popular in ancient Roman times, they were used to fight armed gladiators to the death. Some Neopolitan breeders make pup buyers sign contracts saying they won't cross-breed with pitbulls. A decade ago, the importer of the first Neopolitan mastiff described bandogs as "monsters." The Waitakere MP who has a dangerous dogs bill before parliament, wants to see bandogs added to the list of dangerous breeds. "I can't understand why anyone would want a dog which is capable of killing. The government must act, as there's a great deal of concern about dogs like this."]

...Let me begin my discourse on dogs by saying that... a... good rule of pet procedural thumb is to forever remember that doggie, although a tail-wagging joy, is a carnivore who never stops fantasising about food. So you do not, for instance, amuse yourself by... [getting] on your hands and knees and [pretending] to be interested in its dinner... You don't tell doggie it's going to the vet until it gets there... [However,] doggie needs to understand precisely what constitutes good behaviour on its behalf and precisely what happens to canines who never catch on... [If] a dog can't overcome its desire to bite... then it can expect to find itself on the wrong end of the big needle... I say this because we do not want cabinet to falter at banning... dangerous breeds... Your correspondent has never entirely understood why the decision to ban dangerous canines has proved so spectacularly difficult. There is something slightly obscure about the logic which says that citizens who are maniacal enough to like the idea of a vicious dog ought to be allowed to have one. But there you go. Nobody particularly wants to be eaten, but we keep the possibility alive.

...Good on the Government for moving to ban... nasty, vicious breeds of dog from this country and destroy most if not all of those already here. And good on Auckland's local authorities for passing bylaws banning dogs from beaches for most of the day[during summer months] and ruling that they be on a leash at any other time. These days it seems that many people have much more concern for animals than they have for people... [– like the gal] in England who chucked her partner out after [the partner] took her dog for a walk and allegedly lost it. I suspect that having competed with a dog for her attention for long enough, [the partner] had wrung its neck... Now I've got nothing against dogs. I can spend hours marvelling at the intelligence of sheep and cattle dogs as they do their thing on farms or in dog trials; and I have tremendous respect for guide dogs, police dogs... and the like. Nor do I have any complaint about well-bred, well-fed, well-groomed, obedient dogs. The thing about all those animals is that the dog is [the] servant... It is cared for, trained, appreciated, maybe even loved, by its owner – but the owner is always in command of the dog, not the other way round. [Like Confucius – who said, 'a human can not live with the birds and the beasts; if I do not live with humans, with whom shall I live?' –]I have always felt sorry for those unfortunate people who seem unable to form any close human relationships, to whom an animal becomes more important than any person and who becomes obsessed with the affections of a dog or a cat or even, these days, a ferret. And for those who need to have a vicious, snarling [people]-eater to give them some sense of power... But, in spite of all the foregoing, I do have some sympathy with the 19th-century French writer... who wrote: "The more one gets to know [humans], the more one values dogs." [By the way, 'some unions at Air France say they have called for a pilots' strike tomorrow to protest the punishment of a captain for refusing to allow a guide dog to accompany a blind passenger into the cabin.'

... 'using dogs to guide the blind started in Germany at the end of WW1 and soon spread worldwide. The first breed used were Alsations – only bitches are used to cut out the risk of fighting – and although other breeds (boxers, Labradors, Border collies) have been tried, the Alsatian is still the most favoured.'

... 'For every guide dog there are more than 100 people waiting.' One of the fortunate few – 'now on her third guide dog, Puzzle, which it has had for four years – is getting ready for the Blind Foundation's annual Guide Dog Appeal. Some of the proceeds will fund the Guide Dog Puppy Development Programme, which starts when the dogs are seven weeks old. Puppies are matched with volunteers who socialise with them so they get used to everyday situations. The dogs start four to six months of intensive training when they are 15 months old. They receive up to five weeks further training after being matched up with owners.'

... 'Henderson town centre will be full of dogs and marching girls this Saturday as the annual guide dog appeal gets into full swing. This year the appeal is based around three badges featuring two guide dogs and a stud for breeding the right type of dogs for the job. Each badge costs \$2. The Royal NZ Foundation for the Blind needs around \$22 million each year to provide its services for blind and sight-impaired people throughout the country. Just over half of this is provided by the government and other sources but the rest, including just over \$2 million a year for guide dog services, comes from fundraising. It costs around \$22,000 to breed, train and match a guide dog with a blind or sight-impaired person. Today is International Guide Dog Day and volunteers will be collecting in shopping centres and on the streets. Volunteers to help with collections are needed. Badges can also be bought at most supermarkets, The Warehouse, NZ Post Shops and Shell service stations, or you can ring the foundation on 0800 DOG DAY (0800 364 293)' to 'sponsor a dog for 50c a day.'

... 'Nasa turns heads wherever it goes. That's his only problem, says his Massey owner. Nasa is a guide dog whose good looks and personality sometimes make his sight impaired owner late, as people often stop to admire him. As well as being a guide dog, Nasa's also been a model, posing in the Foundation for the Blind calendar. Nasa's owner is the foundation's Auckland and Northland special events co-ordinator, and as such has been organising the annual Guide Dog appeal tomorrow and Saturday. The foundation trains 22 breeds as guide dogs, with the number changing yearly depending on funding. Each guide dog can take up to 18 months to train. A volunteer puppy walker teaches the dog how to socialise before it returns to guide dog services for training.'

... 'A partially sighted Massey resident is trying to catch whoever shot his guide dog. Leo, a German short haired pointer cross, was shot in the leg with a slug as they walked along Don Buck Rd last Thursday. "It sounded like a car backfiring and a split second later Leo let out a whimper. I knelt down to comfort him. Leo was holding his paw up in the air and I felt blood." Leo is recovering well but might now be startled by sudden noises. His owner has limited vision during the day but Leo is his lifeline at night. Anyone with information on the shooting should contact Massey police station'...

'There aren't too many people who can say their dog saved their life, but an Aucklander is one of them. Earlier this year, the blind triathlete was on a pedestrian crossing with her guide dog, Fletcher, when the Aucklander suddenly felt a big tug on the golden Labrador's harness. Then the Aucklander was hit by a car which had failed to stop in time. It came to a halt on her lower right leg. The Aucklander was seriously injured but it could have been worse. "The police prosecutor would have run over my hip and I could easily have been killed but Fletcher instantly leapt back like a kangaroo," says the 43-year-old. Fletcher is her third guide dog and the best one the Aucklander has had. "Fletcher's my best friend. Fletcher sleeps next to me. When you go blind, a huge door shuts, but Fletcher opens the door in so many ways," says his owner, who lost her sight at 22 through illness.' ■ '244 NZers have guide dogs'...

'Guide dogs for the blind are a well-known sight and now they're being joined by hearing dogs for deaf people. The dogs are trained to nudge or paw their deaf owner when they hear an important sound, such as a fire alarm, telephone, door bell or alarm clock. The dog then leads its owner to the source of the sound so they can investigate. Dogs can be of any breed, and there is even a dingo trained as a hearing dog. Donna the Dingo has proved invaluable for an AUSn deaf couple and is given the same rights to enter food and retail premises as guide dogs. However, Kiwi hearing dogs don't have the same rights'...

'What a difference a dog can make! Bonny has given a cerebral palsy sufferer a new lease on life. Dogs like Bonny make simple everyday tasks possible for those with restricted movement in their arms and hands. Assistance Dogs also bring companionship, confidence and an increased sense of wellbeing. Assistance Dogs aren't yet available in NZ, but the organisation welcomes applications from NZers who'd like a dog, or can help bring the scheme here.'

... 'Members of the cute beagle pack that sniff out contraband at NZ airports are our latest export. MAF has just sold three of the super snouts for around \$15,000 to AUS's quarantine service. NZ has a beagle-breeding programme, which means at times it has more dogs than it needs. AUS, with which NZ authorities work closely on quarantine issues, doesn't. Detector dog teams had been set up based on similar programmes in the US, Canada and AUS. However, NZ officers have now trained dog handler teams in Argentina, reviewed detector programmes in Hawaii, and consulted and trained staff in various Pacific Island nations. The NZ hounds, which can detect the scent of fruit in a bag three weeks after the fruit has been removed, had been an

outstanding success. If a working dog becomes sick, or a handler resigns, up to eight replacement dogs would begin the required three months of training. Usually half failed the course but recently there had been nearly a full pass rate, which had created the dog surplus.' Dogs are also 'trained and employed to sniff out dry rot.'

...Dogs are the main victims in a vicious war which has broken out between the truffle gatherers of central Italy. The dogs are specially trained to sniff out the pungent black and white fungi which are highly prized by the gourmets of Europe... About 1800 registered truffle gatherers operate in Umbria and competition has been especially fierce this season, because the summer was so dry that truffles are scarce. The price has soared... A well-trained dog is worth its weight in truffles and police believe that someone is seeking to put the opposition out of action by killing them... At the weekend two dogs died of strychnine poisoning... bring[ing] to 30 the number of dogs who have died since the... truffle... season...

THE CHRONICLE of [hu]mankind's great achievements has been the account of an individual's dogged pursuit of a noble cause or distant prize. For... [a] Dunedin scientist... and his colleagues, the noble quest is a small, dark, wrinkled fungus that grows... as much as half a metre... underground and only a trained pig or dog can sniff out. For them, the search has all the lure and magic of Jason's fleece or Pizarro's El Dorado. [Their] quarry is the truffle, one of the rarest – and ugliest – culinary ingredients on the planet... [The Dunedin group] are conducting a daring experiment in the South Island, seeking to become the first to produce the delicacy commercially in the southern hemisphere. Truffles were written about as far back as 1600 BC... [but while] once they were in plentiful supply in large parts of Europe, truffles are a scarce resource today. Traditional beds have been destroyed by acid rain, deforestation and two world wars. Annual production of the variety acknowledged to be one of the kings, the French Perigold black truffle, has fallen from around 1000 tonnes at the turn of the century to just 40 tonnes by the end of the last northern winter... If N[Z] could cultivate them... there would be big potential to supply out-of-season markets. Moreover... the ingredients truffles need to grow include temperate weather conditions and alkaline soils, and... N[Z] has plentiful supplies of both... [I]n the past two years, an inferior truffle from China has found its way into European markets... Several other countries had tried to cultivate the fungus artificially since the 1960s. In California, growers harvested their first truffle only after eight years of trying. And information was hard to come by. In Europe, cultivation techniques are fiercely guarded from one generation to the next. [However, the Dunedin group] knew that an early challenge was to "infect" the roots of oak and hazelnut seedlings – the tree species under which truffles are naturally found – with Perigold black truffle. After two years work, [the group] had managed to produce several hundred seedlings with good infections on their roots... Once a seedling is planted... the fungus spreads rapidly over the root system... Since 1987, [the Dunedin] group and the growers have spent \$2 million trying to grow Perigold black truffles, planting some 8000 infected seedlings on 32 truffieres. Success has been sporadic. A few truffles were found in 1993. Then, in 1995, several scores of kilos of white truffles – another highly prized variety – were harvested on... [a North Island property]. Ironically, none of these had been cultivated, and probably grew from infected plants brought into the country years earlier, but they proved that reasonable harvests were possible in N[Z]... Of the relatively few truffles unearthed in N[Z] to date, some have been sold to local restaurants for up to \$3000 a kilo. In Europe, where fake truffle rings are rife and poaching common, prices are even more exorbitant. A kilo of Perigold can fetch up to \$9000 in retail outlets like Harrods of London [and 'as much as \$22,500 per kg in Japan']... High prices mean buyers internationally have to watch for skulduggery. In France, truffle have, on occasion, been sold with buck-shot to increase their weight... ['The Europeans traditionally used pigs to find truffle, but have switched to dogs in recent years.' 'Pigs are also] used for truffle hunting in... N[Z] but I prefer to use dogs because they're easier to control... We only use [our pig] as a last resort... because [it] tends to eat the truffles before we can harvest them.' [Unfortunately, some 'people with a taste for haute cuisine are ending up in hospital after mistaking poisonous puffballs for truffles. The *Medical Journal* reports how a 51-year-old Ashburton resident picked some of the puffballs from beneath an oak tree in her garden and fried them in butter in the hope of enjoying a taste of the finer things in life. Instead, the resident was rushed to hospital suffering blurred vision and low blood pressure. Since then doctors have reported three similar poisonings around the country and have appealed to the public to leave truffle hunting to the truffieres. The National Poisons Centre knew of a further four adults and four children who had been poisoned by puffballs after mistaking them for truffles. "The odd thing is these puffballs look nothing like black truffles."'] • 'Demand for NZ's first commercial crop last year of Perigold black truffle was so high that the up-market Petit Lyon restaurant in Wellington wasn't able to secure any. That success prompted Truffle Investments Ltd to plan to raise up to \$3.6 million to establish two new truffieres near Gisborne, while Oakfield Truffiere Ltd is seeking \$1.8 million to buy one 8ha property. At present Oakfield's truffle farm comprises 400 trees and the proposed new farm will be planted with 4000 trees.'

...If your mutt likes to piss on your favourite wee tree, consider buying it 'the latest pet fashion – doggy knickers. The trendy pooch underpants were created in Nelson, where they are already selling like hot pants. Called Rip-Offs, the fancy pants with adjustable velcro sides come in 3 sizes and colours.'

...Relationships don't always work out. It's tough, for example, when the canine friend you thought would be a partner – be there for you at the end of a long day, keep you company on long walks, perhaps fetch your slippers – instead uproots the garden, shreds the furniture and disrupts the neighbourhood. "The fault can lie in an inappropriate initial choice of breed," says the NZ Veterinary Association president. "Often people choose a pet on impulse. They take a pet they think they'd like, and end up with one they can't live with." Sometimes potential pet-owners could use a match-maker. Now there is one – SELECTADOG. It's a programme that provides would-be owners with information to help decide which breed will best fit into their lives. It takes account of such factors as the owner's type of accommodation, the availability of recreational space, the amount of time and money the owner can spend on a dog, and whether the dog will share a house with young children. The program has information on 99 different dog breeds' ('there are about 225 breeds of dog').

...The classification of breeds of dogs tends to vary according to the author. A physician to Tudor monarchs during the 2nd half of the 16th century divided all breeds into high-bred, country and mongrel. By the 18th century 35 breeds were listed. Today we can reckon at least a hundred distinct breeds, the number rising considerably if all named varieties are included. They can be grouped as: sporting dogs, hounds, working dogs, toy dogs and non-sporting.'

...dogs really may be a human's best friend, especially if the human suffers from depression, panic attacks or claustrophobia, according to a German magazine. Dogs are able to sense the onset of such problems before they openly emerge, then instinctively try to cuddle up with their masters.'

...DON'T be surprised if Rover starts reading your *Sunday News* instead of fetching it. Dogs are getting smarter, scientists say. Overseas studies have found dogs may respond to human gestures better than other intelligent animals such as chimps. Researchers found canines could understand about 40 expressions. "Dogs are incredibly able to pick up the subtleties of body language," said an animal behaviourist. Canines have also evolved to share our emotions. The New Scientist journal says dogs have evolved so far from their wolf ancestors, that they can relate to their owners. That's because they are so used to living with humans they now think they are part of the same species. DNA tests have proven humans domesticated dogs over 100,000 years ago.'

...Humanity's] best friend was probably also [its] first friend, for the evidence suggests that dogs were the earliest domesticated animals. Partly as a result, dogs are also the domestic animals that have been most changed by people. Dozens, if not hundreds, of recognisable breeds have been established by humans choosing, with more or less deliberation, which of their canine companions would reproduce, and which would not. Although geneticists have long been interested in the resulting diversity of physical form, they have recently turned their attention to the parallel diversity of behaviour. Now that they have done so, researchers from Southampton University in Britain[have] concluded that what makes dogs behave differently is how much they have grown up. It is widely agreed among geneticists that many of the features which make dogs different from their wild ancestors, wolves, are the result of paedomorphosis – the retention into adulthood of juvenile features. The more paedomorphosis a

dog displays, the less wolf-like it appears... The researchers decided to concentrate on aggressive and submissive signals because they found that these could be stimulated fairly easily, for example by introducing food, toys and unfamiliar dogs into a group. They identified nine aggressive signals and six submissive signals in at least some of the... 10 different breeds... [they] looked at... but only one breed... the Siberian husky... showed all 15 of them... [T]he extremely un-wolf-like Cavalier King Charles spaniel... exhibited only two. When they asked a group of independent experts on morphology to assess how wolf-like each of the breeds they had studied appeared, they found that the degree of wolfish looks a breed exhibited correlated with the number of different aggressive and submissive signals shown by that breed. And when they compared their results with the order in which these signals first appear in growing wolf cubs, they found that the behaviour patterns of the least wolf-like dogs are those that appear earliest in young wolves. Arrested physical development, in other words, correlates with arrested behavioural development. There are, however, some suggestive deviations from the pattern. Gun dogs... tend to be more wolf-like than their physical appearance might have suggested. And, perhaps surprisingly, the wolf-like German shepherd was not as lupine in its behaviour as its looks suggest it ought to. But German shepherds are only secondarily wolf-like, having been deliberately bred to look that way in the relatively present past. How the loss of particular signals affects the social lives of dogs is not yet clear. In some cases signals seemed to mean different things to different breeds. Golden retrievers, for example, used several signals in play that German shepherds and huskies apparently reserved for real conflict. There is thus the potential for misunderstanding between dogs of different breeds.

...[Cry “*CRUFTS*,” and let slip the dogs of war! An international dog-grooming champion – who has been showing at Crufts for the last 30 years, and has won her class countless times – has a habit of sneaking beauty products and frilly cushions into her Surrey home with the price tags carefully removed. The potions and fripperies are not for her, but for her 10 beloved poodles (who have their own heated waterbed). While her husband is only too well aware of her devotion, the wife doesn’t think her guy – who gives driving tuition in performance cars – would appreciate learning that his wife parts with up to £50 for a single bottle of dog shampoo. When it comes to preparing for Crufts, the wife can get obsessive. Preparation for the cream of dog shows is an all-year affair. Long ears are kept tied up in blue plastic bags to stop them getting stained. The dogs are regularly washed, dried and combed, a process which takes half a day. Then there’s the fortnightly clipping. “I have friends who think I’m crazy, but I think they’re crazy, because they just sit at home and do nothing. They get very bored and very miserable, and their marriages aren’t very comfortable. My husband tolerates my obsession about showing dogs because I tolerate his obsession about motor racing.” Another couple go to dog competitions every weekend. In their dining room is a proudly displayed family portrait – the couple surrounded by eight dogs. “We never really had the time to have children,” explains the husband, who organises dog shows for a living.’

...‘two mongrels are reportedly rolling in it after inheriting \$1 million from their owner – to provide for them while they remain alive – while the owner’s two sons from his first marriage failed to receive a cent. The owner left the remainder of his \$4m estate to family friends. Any money left when the dogs die is also to go to friends. The estate was last week contested in the High Court at Auckland by the sons and the owner’s third wife, who was left \$200,000.’

...‘They’re no ordinary farm dogs. For three years, they were worth \$1 million – until the courts took the money off them in a long-running legal battle finally settled last week. Their rags-to-riches tale attracted international attention. An Auckland farmer whose identity is suppressed by the court, left \$1m of his estate to provide for his much-loved working dogs, whom the farmer had owned since they were pups (they are now both aged about seven). The bulk of his fortune was left to two sons of family friends, one an infant. His own sons, aged in their 30s (one of whom had assets worth about \$500,000), who had little contact with their father while their father was alive and are estranged from the farmer’s third wife, were left nothing. The trio contested the will and while the dogs weren’t required in court, they had a lawyer to look after their interests. The High Court decision saw the money taken off the dogs and redistributed among the family. In her decision, the judge said the money set aside for the dogs was totally unjustifiable, “even for the most aristocratically raised dogs”. However, the judge said that as the dogs were valuable farm assets, the court expected the widow to treat them appropriately, “that their registration and veterinary fees and all other luxuries they have come to expect will for the duration of their lives be met out of her own resources”.’

...‘*No paradise for dogs of Fiji* Outside the shielded luxury of rich tourist resorts, are images travellers, particularly pet lovers, prefer to forget. Forlorn, sad, even intimidating, the stray dogs are not a pretty picture: mangy, malnourished, scrawny and disease-ridden, often marauding in savage, semi-feral packs. Their escalating numbers are not only a Pacific Island problem; the same dilemma faces emerging economies in many parts of the world.’

...‘*What was the origin of the saying “Every dog has his day”?* Phraseologists say Cervantes apparently unleashed this dog within the weighty tomes of Don Quixote, written between 1605 and 1615. But great bard William Shakespeare may have piped the Don in 1603 with *Hamlet*, with “the Cat will mew, and Dogge will have his day.” Two centuries after, the phrase was well ensconced in the lexicon landscape, with George Barrow writing “youth will be served, every dog has his day, and mine has been a fine one.” Scholars are confident our learned scribes were never aware of the only occasion in the world where dogs literally have their day. In the Himalayan valleys there is a traditional festival for our four-legged friends. The Kashmir Indians call this Khich Mavas and the Nepalese call it Swana Boli. For a day dogs are adorned with garlands of beautiful flowers and feasts laid out for even the lowest of strays’.]

...The old Thai saying “Temple dogs never starve to death” is in danger as [the] deepening economic crisis takes its toll on Buddhist temples, traditional sanctuaries for stray and abandoned dogs. More Thais are dropping off their pet dogs... as they become unable to feed another mouth at home, says... [the] abbot of the Watklang Temple on the northern outskirts of Bangkok. But with more than 300 dogs in his care now, [the abbot] says feeding is becoming expensive... “I used to feed the dogs twice a day but these days we can only afford one meal a day for them... One temple said that even its monks did not have enough food to eat... So they transferred over 50 dogs to my temple. I love dogs and I will never turn them... [away,] but I want to appeal to people who leave their dogs with us to bring also food for them and share some of our burden.” ...[Meanwhile,] Thai loggers are feeding amphetamines to the elephants which haul timber out of the country’s jungles in a bid to speed up their work rate... [and] sustain nighttime log-hauling... before the monsoon rains start... the... secretary-general of the Friends of the Asian Elephant Foundation... said yesterday... The quagmires caused by downpours can stop... the... illicit timber... [operations. A] volunteer at Lampang’s elephant hospital, said that... 10 animals had died of overwork and exhaustion. The hospital has also tried to treat some... abandoned animals for amphetamine addiction.

...[a] local resident... said that... two elephants dragged a third that was injured 5km into... the Bankura forest area... in West Bengal and protected it for three days... [T]he companions tore tree branches and carried water in their trunks to the elephant[, which had been] hit by a train... Yesterday, a team of veterinary surgeons and forest officials reached the forest to treat the injured animal... [T]hey were kept at bay... until the two guarding elephants were chased into the jungle. The injured elephant was then shot with a tranquilliser gun, and examination by a surgeon found that its hip bone had been fractured... The medical team was unable to raise the elephant on its feet. The team returned to Calcutta after giving it saline, stimulants and cortisone. [A] forest officer... said: “We have made a temporary shade to protect the pachyderm from sun and rain. We are hoping that the companions will return and try to raise it back on its feet.” The medical team will visit the elephant again if need be...

Police are hunting the “sickos” who poured fuel over... Christchurch’s favourite sea elephant, and may have tried to set him alight. The attack... the third of its kind... had left... [the mammal – which] has visited... 11 times in the past five years [–] ...looking the worse for wear, said[a] Marine Watch co-ordinator... who spends many hours each week monitoring [the sea elephant]... “My patience and the patience of the D[oC] are wearing very thin. N[Z] is a leader in marine conservation and for something like this to happen is just sick.” ...burnt patches on [the animal’s] skin had a strong smell but it was hard to say if it was petrol... “[The sea elephant] usually goes on a bit of a rampage in the evenings, but when I was there last night [it] was very, very, quiet.” Another inspection yesterday revealed further lesions, which left... the possibility of infection. New Brighton police were in the... area until 2 am on Sunday but saw nothing. The offenders would be liable to charges under the Marine Mammal Protection Act...

['Too many seals resting on beaches are being attacked by dogs, says a marine mammal veterinarian. "Dogs left to run free on a beach can have an effect on wildlife. Owners need to remember this and keep dogs under supervision. The seal population is under enough pressure without the worry of dogs." Young fur seals were landing on west coast beaches as they dispersed from their birth sites after weaning. Their presence was expected to be more common than usual because the prevailing La Nina weather was thought to cause food shortages at sea.' In international news, **the plight of the so-called "Bridgeport puppies" [has] sparked outrage at the puppy trade... 100 puppies... from a... nursery in Missouri... were headed for pet stores along the [US] East Coast when [an] accident occurred... The Connecticut Humane Society received... 5000 offers from throughout the world to adopt the 10-week-old pup[s, which]... were found in filthy, overcrowded cages in the back of... [the] truck wreck... But only applicants from within the U[S] will be considered because of US animal quarantine laws... [The] truck... driver... was charged with cruelty to animals and put on probation for two years.**

...['A Californian telephone repairer, convicted of hurling a lap dog to its death in speeding traffic outside San Jose International Airport, has been sentenced to the maximum of three years in state prison after the judge in the case said it saw no real sign of remorse. The repairer, aged 27, said it reacted instinctively after the bichon frise bit his hand.' In related news, an 'unemployed 19-year-old appeared in a NZ District Court yesterday, charged with wilfully committing an act of aggravated cruelty for deliberately running over a gaggle of geese in his car, killing six of them.'

...['They are a common sight the world over – the people who keep dozens of animals and are often teased by children. "Public health professionals should recognise that animal hoarding may be a sentinel for mental health problems or dementia, which merits serious assessment and prompt intervention," said a researcher for the Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine. His team looked at 54 cases of people reported by 10 animal control agencies and humane societies across the US. The median number of animals the hoarders kept was 39, but some kept as many as 100 animals in their often filthy homes. "These people actually believe they are on a rescue mission to save the animals." Most – 76% – were gals, 83% were middle-aged or older and half lived alone. They collected dogs, cats, birds and farm animals, and in 80% of the cases the animals were found dead, malnourished or injured.'

...[a NZ] district court judge has expressed frustration at being unable to ban a farmer who had been convicted of animal cruelty from continuing to raise calves... [because the] Animal Protection Act did not permit such orders for first offenders... [The farmer] was yesterday sentenced to five months' periodic detention and fined \$3000... [after being] found guilty... of eight out of 13 counts of neglecting to supply enough food and water to animals in his care. During a three-week defended hearing, the court heard that in August 1995 SPCA inspectors visited the two Te Kauwhata farms run by [the farmer] and found dozens of emaciated calves, either dead or dying, on boggy, barren land... Authorities had sought \$35,000 from [the farmer] to cover the cost of cleaning up his farm and bringing the prosecution, but [the judge] said the probation report made it clear [the farmer didn't] have that kind of money. Less clear was whether this was because of mismanagement or because his savings had been diverted to a family trust. [The judge said the farmer's] sentence needed to send the message to farmers that "callous indifference" towards stock would not be tolerated.

...['a Central Otago farming couple have been ordered to pay \$210,000 for ill-treating sheep at their high-country properties, Bonspiel Station and Peak Valley, and failing to ensure their needs were met. The Dunedin District Court judge also banned the couple from commercially farming sheep for 5 years.']

...TOUGH new animal welfare laws, which could see people charged with aggravated cruelty facing fines of \$50,000 and banned from owning a pet for life, are being proposed... [A] Labour MP... hopes his Animal Welfare Bill will be passed into law by mid-1998... eight years after consultation on the idea began... The bill, which... covers animal research and trade... also... [changes] the way animal actors... are treated on film sets... outlaws the docking of dogs' tails... [- about] a quarter of the 12,000 dogs registered through the... N[Z] Kennel Club... each year are tail-docked... [-] the debarking of dogs... the declawing of cats... and the castration of some animals... The same rules will stop animals being used for entertainment in bars, such as drinking live goldfish and "wild cow" milking contests... sheep and calf riding... [or] roping... contests at rodeos... and ['paint a sheep', 'catch the rooster or "greasy pig" competitions.

...['The SPCA is being roasted by Auckland's Pacific Island community for comments made about backyard killing of pigs. Pacific leaders took exception to a claim by the Auckland SPCA's executive director in the journal *Animals' Voice* that there is an "increasingly wide-spread practice of clubbing pigs and in many cases skewering them with metal from end to end and putting them, still alive, on a fire." The director conceded yesterday that roasting pigs alive was "not something that is widespread," and admitted talking about an incident from some years ago. Pacific Choice sold up to 2000 whole pigs a year, while the "Mad Butcher" sold about 3000 whole pigs a year, and the manager of the Aussie Butcher in Mangere estimated that backyard killing had halved in the past decade. However, Mangere's Whole Body Meats knew seven piggeries that each sold around 100 live pigs a week for backyard slaughtering.']

...A funeral is not a dignified one in Tonga without dead pigs. Those were the words of... elders preparing the funeral for a N[Z]-born bishop in the Pacific kingdom tomorrow. The Most Rev John Hubert Macey Rogers had two final wishes just before... [dying] in Auckland last week... at the age of 81... The first was... [to] be buried in the main... Catholic cemetery in Tonga, where [the bishop] worked for 31 years. The second was that no pigs – large or small – should be slaughtered as part of his funeral... His body will be flown today to Tonga where tens of thousands of mourning [RCs] await, fulfilling his first wish. However, his second wish will have no such luck. Church sources say that hundreds of pigs are to be killed for the funeral, expected to be one of the largest held in Tonga in recent years. Pigs play an important part in traditional Tongan funerals, especially when the King and Queen of Tonga, most of the nobles of the realm and cabinet ministers are expected to attend. It is customary that large pigs are exchanged between the guardians of the deceased, in this case the Church, and the dignitaries that attend the funeral. Bishop Rogers... was one of the most influential [individuals] this century in terms of shaping modern Tonga, especially in the field of education and religion. Church elders maintained that although there was respect for the bishop's will, [the bishop] deserved to be put to rest "like a great, notable Tongan... And that means pigs will be killed in [the bishop's] honour." Bishop Rogers... who was made OBE in 1978 and CMG in 1979 was recognised as a scholar of the Tongan language and customs. Those close to him said that during his last days [the bishop] spoke nothing but Tongan. Nurses had to bring in a Tongan interpreter to understand what Bishop Rogers was saying. From 1973 to 1977 [Rogers] was Bishop of Rarotonga with responsibility for Niue. [Rogers] became auxiliary to the Bishop of Auckland in 1977 with special responsibility to Polynesian communities.

...['Tribal warfare and vast cultural differences kept a group of church workers on their toes in Papua New Guinea. The group from New Lynn's Church of the Nazarene spent 15 days in the southern highlands of Mendi, constructing a church building. While they were there, 15 people were killed in a neighbouring village caught up in a war. The cultural changes included gals always having to wear a dress and being careful not to step over food in the market place or else it would have to be thrown out. The group communicated in pidgin English and they say local generosity was mindboggling. The villagers worked nonstop with them to put up the church building and, in return, the group gave them tools and clothes. At the opening ceremony, the church workers had to stop the villagers from presenting them with more gifts and pigs – generosity which would have forced them into huge debt. "Pigs are very much the currency and are absolutely precious. The villagers have a very simple way of thinking. Life is about getting enough pigs to get married and growing enough sweet potato to survive. However, some of them are incredibly well educated, having returned home after gaining education overseas."']

...['What has become of NZ's good keen pig hunters? Their numbers are falling away because young guys these days are too citified and soft, some old-timers believe. With fewer blokes heading into the bush to bring home the bacon, the wild pig population is exploding in some remote areas and the animals are dying of starvation. It's nature's way of culling, says DoC's Waikaremoana area manager, who oversees pig hunting in Te Urewera National

Park. An archetypal Kiwi outdoorsperson and friend for more than 30 years of the legendary Barry Crump, agrees that many young guys of today are “softies” who prefer to buy their pork from the shop. But the 63-year-old has some sympathy for them. Access to wilderness areas for hunting has become heavily restricted. Hunters – especially with dogs – now find National Park, Maori, forestry and privately owned land increasingly closed to them. The editor of *NZ Pig Hunter* magazine estimates NZ still has at least 25,000 serious pig hunters and up to 30 clubs. Modern day pigs are wily and not easy to catch.’]

...A farm near Rotorua has been effectively quarantined after a rare parasite... *Trichinella spiralis*... which can cause a fatal disease in humans was found in a pig. A... [MAF spokesperson] said the response would involve slaughtering all pigs on the property. Two other farms have so far been identified as taking pigs from the Mamaku farm, which was served with a restricted premises notice preventing anything moving in or out. The farm is not a commercial piggery but a “backyard” operation carrying a small number of pigs. The alert began late last week when a live pig from the farm was home-killed. The buyer submitted samples for testing. The parasite, last recorded in domestic pigs in N[Z] in 1974, was confirmed by the Meat Industry Research Institute in Hamilton and later by a [MAF] parasitologist. The disease it causes in humans is called trichinosis... The last recorded case was in 1965. The chief executive of the Pork Industry Board... assured consumers that pork and pork products were safe if brought from reputable outlets... Meanwhile, [the PIB]... is seeking an urgent meeting with... the... Agriculture Minister... to stop its breeding farms... in Christchurch and Palmerston North... being sold... The sale has been recommended by Parliament’s primary production select committee. It wants the farms... sold by September 2000... But the board argues that there are very few players who might be interested in buying its company, which could mean the eventual sale price could be driven down... About half of the replacement pigs coming into the national herd come from the company – of which... the board’s chief executive... is also chair[person – with the remainder coming from] PIC New Zealand... [The] PIC chief executive... [– who confirmed that his company] would not be a potential buyer... [–] dismissed the board’s concerns and said there were at least two large private pig farmers who could be interested in the purchase, as well as an A[US]n company.

...PROTESTERS will line the streets of Palmerston North this week against[an AUSn] pig farmer... who... came to the attention of Animal Rights Activists here last year. Undercover camera footage... of the Bunge Meat Piggery in Corawa, N[SW]... revealed 80,000 sows, most of them pregnant, living on bare concrete in metal crates with no room to move except to stand and lie down. Some had bleeding prolapses infested with maggots. Other pigs were filmed with infections and open sores. Others were crippled. In November last year, around 30 activists chained themselves to the piggery and a N[SW] MP tried to remove piglets in protest of cruelty to animals. [The pig farmer] has been invited to N[Z] by the P[IB] to lecture about using science to maximise profits in the pig industry.

...[‘The SPCA is getting a shake-up from its new president, with promises of a tougher line on intensive farming of pigs. The Royal NZ SPCA, the national body that represents the more than 50 SPCA branches throughout the country, has been criticised in the past for shying away from controversial intensive farming practices. Pork producers have agreed to phase out sow crates, but differences remain over how long they should take to do so. The industry is aiming for 2012 while the SPCA wants them gone by 2006 at the latest. The Green Party is bitterly disappointed there was no money in this year’s Budget to encourage pork farmers to get rid of sow crates, as happened in Britain when the industry agreed to phase them out. About 20,000 adult sows in NZ were locked in the crates, which measure 200cm by 60cm. “If that happened to a dog, the owner would be prosecuted,” said an SPCA officer.’]

...European farm ministers[have] agreed on rules for “pig hotels” – rest centres for farm animals on marathon journeys across the continent. They set a basic eight-hour travel limit for cattle, pigs, sheep and other farm animals, after which they must be unloaded and allowed to rest for 24 hours before continuing their journey... Ministers hope the rules will ease the pain of millions of animals which are crammed into trucks for trips of up to 50 hours... Sweden and other northern nations have [welcomed the new] transport conditions... but those in the south, such as Italy, claim the new rules will raise costs, making imports of live animals uneconomic, and will throw tens of thousands of people out of work...

Declining livestock numbers are expected to save N[Z]’s bacon on the world environmental stage... In a speech... last night... [the] Minister for the Environment... said our hopes of meeting the internationally agreed target were dashed by less-than-expected forestry planting... But now declining emissions of another greenhouse gas – methane – would keep our tally respectable... Sheep numbers are 47 million from a 1985 peak of 70 million [(not ‘including the estimated 40 million lambs born that year’)]... and continue to decline; beef cattle are down to 5.2 million from 6.3 million in 1975.

...[‘The Government has ruled out introducing a “flatulence tax” on every sheep and cow, a spokesperson for the Research, Science and Technology Minister said yesterday. Federated Farmers raised fears of the tax after learning that the Government had looked at the issue in detail as a way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture. Farm animals produce nitrous oxide and methane through dung, urine and flatulence. The cost of the “flatulence tax” to farmers (levied at 9c for each sheep and up to 72c for each cow) was estimated at up to \$5 billion a year. The minister’s office said the most likely ways through which a reduction in emissions could be achieved were selective breeding of animals and research on how cows and sheep digested food.’]

...‘A giant underwater belch of methane gas 55 million years ago helped mammals take over the world, say US researchers.’ Incidentally, ‘the invention of refrigeration opened up the world for NZ’s primary products. The world’s 1st shipment of frozen meat left Sydney in 1880. The first attempt to ship frozen meat from NZ had to be abandoned when the refrigeration machinery failed but by the end of 1884, 30 steamers and 6 sailing ships had been fitted with refrigeration for the NZ trade.’ ‘NZ’s 1st freezing works opened in 1887.’ But it wasn’t until ‘1958 that the first shipment of beef cattle left NZ for the US.’

...[a] downturn in beef prices is leading to the lowest number of cattle going through the country’s freezing works in the last decade. Falling returns from the U[S] market meant fewer dairy calves were reared on for beef production in the spring of 1995. That has shown through as a smaller number of two-year-old cattle ready for slaughter. A total of 1.9 million cattle are expected to be killed in the year to September 30, compared with the highest recent kill of 2.289 million in 1989. However, farmers have been holding back animals, hoping prices will lift. As a result older, heavier beasts are now going through the works. So... beef produc[tion] this year is only expected to be down 2.6[%] at 499,300 tonnes.

...[‘Beef is the most fortifying and nourishing of all red meat (good quality beef is 97% assimilable – provided it is not eaten to excess – and, since it leaves little residue, is easily digested; cows’ meat is inferior to that of bullocks). The English have long specialised in rearing and feeding cattle for beef. The Durham-Manceau crossbreeds, Charolais, Limousin, Gasconne, Normandy and Salers are good for fattening. Prime beef is bright red in colour, firm and elastic to the touch. It has a fresh smell; the fat intermingles with the lean, peppering it with white or slightly yellowish grains of fat. Blotting paper applied to the surface should never be covered with greasy spots, as in the case of horse meat. In France, beef is graded according to breed, age, state of fattening, work done and sex of the animal. French beef is classified in three categories according to its market value, which depends on how firm and fine-grained the texture is, as well as on the proportion of sinews and fat’. By the way, f[at cuts of meat exported from... N[Z] are causing crippling health woes and early deaths in the Pacific Islands, says a medical researcher... [The] senior lecturer in epidemiology at Auckland University, said it was time N[Z] became responsible about what it shipped overseas. “We... may have caused more deaths... than the last 20 years of... French nuclear testing in the Pacific...,”... Mutton flaps made up a big chunk of the Tongan diet... It was often popular because it was cheap, even though a third of it could be fat... [The epidemiologist] said Tongan importers realised they needed to take responsibility as well. But this was often difficult when the incoming meat was not well labelled and fat content was often unknown. A spokes[person] for the Meat Producers’ Board... said N[Z] offered a range of export cuts and countries chose what they could afford... “It’s really a question of people’s incomes and what represents value to them.”]

...the double profit sheep farmers took from their lambs is fading fast... [T]o cash in on high prices and demand for meat – particularly from... [Britain] after mad cow disease – N[Z] farmers fed their lambs well. The lambs put on plenty of meat but they grew coarse wool to match... Seduced by the double-profit, farmers overlooked the long-term trend: consumers around the world want... finer wools... [A] move back in microns will take several years. However[, although]... fine wool Merino growers are... receiving prices estimated to be 28[%] up on those of last year... immediate indications are... that many farmers will... continue to put more emphasis on meat production, especially when there are good prospects of receiving more than \$50 for a well-grown lamb as opposed to less than half that for the annual wool clip from their crossbred animals.

...The old cliché of N[Z] living off the sheep's back has never been further from the truth... DESPERATELY low wool prices for farmers are about to trigger major reforms [within the NZ] wool industry... A typical breeding ewe... is returning its owner about \$15 a year net... It's barely sustainable... And farmers are getting edgy... Gone are the days when farmers came to town every year to watch their main wool clip being sold at auction and stopped off on the way home to buy a new family car or tractor. The glory days of wool are over, at least for the moment[('in 1991, wool's share of the total textile fibre market was around 4%, down from 20% 60 years earlier; in 1996, total world fibre output was estimated at 43.7 million tonnes, of which only 3.3% was wool')]. Leading the reform process is a new project by the... Wool Board to discover how and where to maximise value added to wool along the production line... Farmers' hopes of a revival in wool prices rest almost exclusively with the... Wool Board's ambitious Fernmark branding strategy. It was launched three years ago when the board broke away from the A[US]n dominated International Wool Secretariat (IWS), which developed the Woolmark. In contrast to the Woolmark, which promoted wool as a fibre in a generic sense, the Fernmark programme emphasises the unique qualities of the 195,000 tonnes of N[Z] wool produced each year. The board receives around \$40 million a year from farmers, through levies collected at a rate of 5% on the sale price of their wool. Since launching Fernmark... through its operational arm, Wools of N[Z], the board... has already invested more than \$150 million establishing the brand on the world market... Federated Farmers... says... [WNZ now] has less than two years to deliver a measurable improvement in returns for woolgrowers' investment...

The statistics for the first quarter... show a worrying 25[%] drop in exports to... [Britain], where the Wool Board has been quick to point to the success of its Fernmark branding strategy in increasing sales. However, the value of exports is up 30[%] on the same time last year, with a 5[%] lift in volumes... [E]xports to China more than doubled in the... [quarter], with sales of 557 tonnes... For the whole of last season China bought 3200 tonnes of fine wool[, making the country our]... largest buyer of... fine wools... Germany was the largest market with exports totalling 4940 tonnes...

In more bad news for the wool industry, sales of Nepalese hand-knotted carpets made from N[Z]'s clip have dropped sharply because of the downturn in the German economy. Nepal has been one of the few willing buyers for coarse wools of 39 microns or more which have been described as being almost unsaleable this season. But... the German market [is Nepal's] major buyer of hand-knotted carpets... Nepal's largest export industry... [T]here had been a tenfold increase in Nepalese rug sales to the U[S] recently... But they are still 85[%] dependent on Germany... Nepal was N[Z]'s seventh largest wool customer last season taking 8600 tonnes... “...80[%] of their wool comes from N[Z],”... said... W[NZ]'s corporate communications manager[, who]... was in Nepal recently on his way back from the N[Z] China 25 conference... To firm up links between the two countries, W[NZ] is bringing two Nepalese officials to this country early next year... A major British wool promotion has just been carried out in Nepal in an attempt to interest manufacturers in some of that country's coarse wool clip... • At last Thursday's Napier and Christchurch wool sales prices fell to their lowest level this season with the market indicator reaching 437c/kg. Exporters reported no major buyers and a high 31[%] of the offering was passed in because it did not reach farmers' reserve prices.

...Chinese and Nepalese importers have defaulted on up to \$20 million of N[Z] wool, raising fears that depressed prices will drop further... “This is not the sort of thing we need...”... said... [the] executive director of the Council of Wool Exporters... “None of the wool has been shipped but it has been scoured to a specific order and will have to be resold into a softish market.”...[the director] was at a loss to explain why there had been a sudden rush of defaults on around 40 wool supply contracts. One possible reason in the Chinese market was the tightening of border inspections by customs officials trying to police tariff and VAT duties. The crackdown seemed to mean that even well-respected customers appeared not to want to handle N[Z] wool... China, may take less than 20[%] of exports this season... [I]n the past selling season[Chinese] sales dropped to 27[%]. Yet the chairperson... of the... Wool Board... said last week that it would not necessarily be good for N[Z]'s wool sales to China to rise again to their high of 39[%] of the clip. If more work was put into lifting consumption in other countries, there could be better returns... However, [the CWE director] said wool exporters had little choice but to keep dealing with China in the hope that quality programmes put in place... over the past few months would help in concluding deals in the future... A task force of wool industry players has just been put together to try to deal with what the board says is the major problem of the coarsening N[Z] cross-bred clip. Wools over 38 microns are now considered... unsaleable... “...unfortunately, N[Z] farmers are shifting production to the undesirable 39 micron and stronger range[while their competitors are heading in other directions. For example, ‘Alaskan farmers are trying to domesticate the musk ox, which produces a wool that is eight times warmer than a sheep's and can be combed out instead of being shorn.’” In related news, a ‘new world record for shearing sheep in 9 hours (720 – 4 more than the previous record)’ has been set at the Golden Shears...

‘End of the golden fleece The choice facing hundreds of sheep farmers is stark – they must get out of their ailing wool-growing business and dispose of their flocks, or face death by a thousand slow cuts. The advice is contained in a hard-hitting rescue plan for NZ's \$1.5b wool industry, drawn up by the Wool Research Organisation of NZ. Gone are the days when almost universally we covered our floors and ourselves with wool. Not only does wool make up just 3% of worldwide fibre supply, but synthetic manufacture has undergone huge technological innovations which mean it can be produced at lower and lower prices which set the level for all fibre sales, including natural wool. Each NZ sheep produces more wool on its back than any other in the world, but that has not saved it from the same fate as its cousins across the globe. In most countries, sheep numbers are mostly static or, as in NZ, dropping.’

...The closure of the Wanganui wool scour... begs a question... As the national sheep flock contracts[, what]... is the industry doing to secure its future? ...The executive director of the C[WE] blames the industry's... huge overcapacity... on Government subsidies... which... [had] boosted sheep numbers... to... 72 million in the early 1980s... The majority of scours are owned by exporters who have tended to diversify into other areas of the wool industry as scours are not readily adaptable to other processing options. The proportion of wool which is exported from this country scoured has risen from about 60[%] 15 years ago to around 80[%] over the last four... years. This figure has slipped in the last season as buyers prefer to receive greasy wool and handle the fibre in their own country. Most notably the Chinese... have moved towards blending their own wool... “But N[Z] scouring technology is way ahead of the rest of the world and scourers are super efficient in terms of processing and... they are continuing to make... investments... in new technology.” One notable example is Wool Services International's new scour at Belfast, near Christchurch, which is one of the largest and most modern in the world. [The scour's managing] director... looks forward to the day when increased demand for wool will mean it can be run 24 hours a day, seven days a week. But... with recent closures in both[the] North and South Islands... there are only around 13 or 14 scours still in business... [T]he... Waikato Federated Farmers' meat and wool chair[person]... says there have to be advantages in increasing the amount of wool scoured in this country not only from the value-added point of view but also because of growing concerns about dip chemical residues left in fleeces which can cause pollution problems in overseas waterways if scouring takes place offshore. W[NZ] acknowledges the overcapacity in the scouring industry and also is keen to compact the procedure wool must follow on its way from the sheep's back to the consumer.

...a group of... [AUSn businesspeople] has made a bid to buy A[US]'s wool stockpile. The A[US]n Wool Group wants to take over the 1.4 million bales of wool left after the A[US]n Wool Corporation withdrew from market intervention in 1991 and delay its sale until market prices improve...

[I]t was not expected that the bid would have any significant effect on N[Z] wool sales or prices. The... stockpile is made up of wool between 22 and 24 microns, a range in which little N[Z] wool is produced... Meanwhile, [an 'AgResearch scientist says the AUSn green blowfly is likely to spread throughout NZ next year, causing major problems for farmers forced to change their dipping and shearing routines. "Central Otago farmers only dip their sheep once a year so an outbreak of flystrike might be pretty bad. Their sheep aren't under intensive care so some of the early signs could be missed." Because of its rapid movement south since arriving on Northland farms, it is thought that the blowfly is using vehicles such as stock trucks to hitch a ride. It is believed that the fly was introduced in the 1970s, possibly because of the large number of goat imports at the time. There was also an increase in small boat traffic across the Tasman. For many, the sudden increase in flystrike problems has hastened their move out of sheep and into cattle, with little indication that they would change back. Fighting the effects of the fly involves an integrated pest-management programme. Pesticides which cause no environmental harm based on bacillus thuringiensis bacteria and plant extracts are under development, with work concentrating on a suitable carrier liquid which will allow the toxins to remain active over a long period. There is also the possibility that if the gene producing the toxin could be identified in the bacteria it could be separated out and introduced to another bacterium already present in the fleece. In addition, a lot of information about parasitic wasps which attacked the AUSn green blowfly had been collected. These wasps were naturally occurring but it was not known how widespread they were throughout the country. One of the wasps breeds in cattle dung and the answer to flystrike might be increasing cattle numbers to encourage its buildup, in the hope it would then switch to the blowfly as its host. Large bin fly-traps can be used before fly emergence in November to help reduce AUSn green blowfly numbers,' while 'a group of Marlborough farmers has reduced the incidence of flystrike 30% by putting small yellow buckets of offal around their farms. AgResearch has supplied the buckets, which have clear lids and plastic piping. They're used at the rate of one to 50 or one to 100 head of stock.']

...Genetic engineering has joined the battle against A[USn green] blowfly. A molecular scientist at Massey University... has been given a \$75,000 grant from W[NZ] to work on a response to the pest, which has caused major flystrike outbreaks since its arrival nine years ago... [W]ith the help of a gene discovered by Greek scientists[, the NZer] aims to integrate proteins into the blowfly's DNA that could prove fatal to [gal members] of the species... [I]t would take up to two years to find out whether the gene would jump to the... blowfly and then more work would be needed to see if [gal blowflies] could be killed in this way. Farmers' use of insecticides to control the fly is meeting resistance from overseas wool processors.

...[sheep farmers] are under attack... from an animal welfare group that says [they're maintaining a practice which] is cruel. Wellington SPCA says drug-induced early lambing means the animals born in winter often suffer painful deaths in the cold... [L]ambs should be born in spring as nature intended. "What farmers are basically saying is because they can make better money from this they can put animals' lives at risk." Sheep farmers were criticised... in Europe five years ago when severe snowstorms killed millions of newborn lambs and pregnant ewes and pictures of the carcasses were shown on television... But Federated Farmers defended the practice... [of] using... Regulon, which... activates the ewe's breeding cycle.

...[a 'farmer was shocked to find the heads of 32 of his ewes in a ditch at the weekend. The heads had been dumped after the sheep were slaughtered in a nearby saleyard paddock and their carcasses stolen. The 4-year-old in-lamb ewes – part of a mob of 51 sheep in the saleyard – were worth \$80 to \$100 each.'

... 'A flock of about 20 sheep are the survivors of a vicious dog attack at a Mangere farm. An SPCA inspector and a veterinarian were cornered by a dog as they went to put down sheep that had been mauled. A second dog continued to maul and kill the remaining sheep. They were able to call the police from a cellphone and the dogs were shot. "One dog didn't die immediately and the officers followed the trail of blood back to the dog's home. Animal Control were called to uplift the dog and take necessary action against the owner.'" • In the 'US, a 10-month-old pup was hit by a car then shot by a police officer to put her out of her misery. Presumed dead, the dog was put in a vet's freezer, where it was found two hours later, sitting upright in an orange plastic bag.'

... 'Sheep farmers plan to protest today outside the US Embassy in Wellington and the consulate in Auckland, following yesterday's announcement by the Minister for International Trade that the US President would probably place trade restrictions on NZ and AUSn lamb. NZ's strategy now was to limit restrictions to a 20% tariff on extra lamb volumes for four years, which was proposed in March by the US International Trade Commission. The minister had hinted that NZ was unlikely to take the US to the WTO – as suggested by his PM last week – unless the decision breached the organisation's rules. NZ had argued for free trade but realised the US was under heavy domestic political pressure, with 31 senators writing to their President demanding trade protection. However, NZ's free-trade credentials could suffer from a Pork Industry Board move this week to apply for import protection under the WTO rules – although the PIB chief executive said the two cases were not the same as NZ pig farmers were trying to compete against heavily subsidised Canadian and AUSn pork. The minister wasn't worried that the country's 17,000 lamb-exporting sheep farmers could suffer from the actions of 500 pork producers.'

... 'The PIB says rapidly rising subsidised imports have cut local prices, at a cost of \$18.5 million, and halved incomes of local producers. In May, the board applied for a temporary safeguard, embarrassing the red meat industry because it had accused the US of hypocrisy over trade protectionism after its sheep farmers sought the same trade restriction against NZ and AUSn lamb. The PIB had to rethink its application in July after the Ministry of Commerce questioned the industry's position under the Closer Economic Relations agreement with AUS.' 'A 6.5% duty already applies to US pork'...

'The US is poised to deal NZ a double blow by imposing tariffs on our lamb exports and backdating them to January 1 this year. NZ and AUS are ready to move swiftly against the US by taking a case to the WTO as soon as the punitive rates are officially announced. But a WTO case usually takes about two years. The PM expects the US decision to be announced in two or three days. The tariffs have only to be signed by the US President, who left Washington yesterday for the G-7 summit in Germany. They include a 9% tariff on last year's volumes of trade, reducing to 6% then 3% in the subsequent two years. A 9% tariff on last year's volume, 21,000, would cost \$12 million. This amounts to about \$1 a lamb. But more punitive for an expanding trade is the 40% tariff proposed on any lamb exports above existing volumes. Nearly 4000 tonnes of lamb were exported to the US in the first quarter of this year.'

... 'One in two Americans has never tasted lamb. Last year, each American consumed 43.9kg of beef, 39.4kg of chicken and 32kg of pork, while lamb touched the scales with a tiny 450g – about one lamburger. But each year, American sheepfarmers lose about half a million sheep and lambs – about 1400 animals a day – to predators, mostly coyotes but also cougars, bears and wolves. The closest NZ would come to that would be the couple of dogs that go bad and maul sheep, maybe once a year and often on small blocks close to towns. It is seldom a problem on farms. The two countries' sheep industries differ in many ways. The American sheep flock numbers about 7.8 million but is owned by 75,000 farmers spread across every American state. The average flock size is 100. In NZ, the average flock size is 2830. The farming styles are as far apart as the numbers. In 1995, the editor of NZ's *Meat Producer* magazine, visited America to look at sheep farming. The editor wrote of biblical-style scenes in Wyoming. American producers have responded to NZ lamb producers looking to raise their returns through extended marketing in the US by calling for protection. However, the real blow to the American producers, say AUS and NZ, was the 1993 repeal of wool subsidies that funded much of the industry's promotional activities. The repeal had the expected result: marginal producers left the industry and production contracted. "In short, increased imports are a result of the domestic industry's contraction, not a cause of it."

...the 'year for NZ farmers has just got better, with confirmation that the US has agreed to abandon import quotas on NZ and AUSn lamb. Although widely expected, the decision by the US to drop quotas from mid-November was greeted by the meat industry yesterday as a significant victory. Last month, the WTO ruled the tariff violated international trade rules and gave the US 90 days to remove it. However, the NZ and AUSn Governments agreed to extend the deadline to give the US more time to persuade its sheep meat industry to agree to remove the tariffs' – which 'have cost NZ \$20 million so far.' In further meat industry news, scientists] have developed innovative new processing strategies to help deliver more consistently tender meat to consumers... [T]here were many factors which affected the eating quality... the main influences[being] the physiological state of the animal and the

method of processing... A[US]n research has shown that... [while] there was strong inheritability of high meat yield there was little that could be done to improve tenderness through breeding... The new controlled-temperature chilling regime, along with an acidity level for the meat which did not exceed pH 5.8, gave better hygiene, better colour in the meat cabinet, less product variability and a reduced chance of tough meat... [T]he Meat Industry Research Institute... had shown local market beef processors were chilling their carcasses too quickly to meet the standards of... quality... which had applied to export lamb for the past 12 years.

...The primary production select committee reported the Producer Boards Acts Reform Bill back to Parliament yesterday with the recommendation that carcass grading, which is compulsory at present, be phased out... Secondly, dairy farmers with a herd of more than 100 cows will, if the House passes the bill, be able to vote in elections for Meat Board members. The latter move is part of a switch to a multiple-voting system which will benefit large landowners... who until now have had only one vote... Changes to the acts controlling the meat, wool and pork industry boards were seen as being well overdue when debate started five years ago on updating their roles... Compulsory grading had acted as a barrier to innovation and its removal would allow meat companies to develop other ways of specifying the product customers wanted...

[On average, each NZer consumed] 45.3kg of beef and lamb last year. Now... the Beef and Lamb Marketing Bureau plans to launch a Quality Mark in the... [NZ market using] \$3 million of farmers' money... [The BLMB's general] manager... likened the mark to the Woolmark, which still adorns many garments – a symbol of purity and quality. To qualify for the new beef and lamb Quality Mark, the meat must be produced, processed, transported and stored to present, minimum standards prescribed in an agreement with the bureau. Regular, independent audits[will] ensure those standards [are] being met. The standards also covers animal welfare and food safety issues. But in spite of the mark's impending launch... the jury [is] still out on whether to exclude beef treated with growth hormone promotants (HPGs). For the 10% of N[Z] farmers which treated their cattle with HPGs [– instead of using the standard practice of 'hastening the fattening of animals destined for the butcher by castrating them' –]the possible exclusion[is] a two-edged sword... [The treatment offers] them a \$55 average gain in net profit from finished steers to heavier weights in the same time as untreated animals[, but]... they could miss out on the premiums available for beef which [qualifies] for the mark. Ironically, HPG-treated animals [are] also leaner, another factor high on the consumer priority list. The bureau's small board has been wrestling with the decision for months. At this stage, HPG-treated beef [remains] eligible to receive the mark, provided it [meets] the quality standards. The debate [has been] fought solely on the consumer perception that the product was not safe. Endless research worldwide[has always] cleared HPG-treated beef for human consumption... One study showed that a non-pregnant [gal] produces 90,000 times as much of the same hormone found in 500g of beef from an animal treated with HPG. Another showed that a 100g serving of cabbage contains more than 400 times the hormone level as that same 500g steak. Yet another, that a glass of milk [has three to five] times the number. No problem associated with eating meat from an animal implanted with HPGs [has] ever been documented. Only the E[U] has heeded the message from its consumers [to ban] HPG-treated beef from importation or sale. Its import ban has been challenged by the U[S] through the WTO court on the grounds there was no scientific evidence to support any restriction. In N[Z], beef treated with HPGs has been consumed for about 25 years... All five HPGs licensed for use in this country have been assessed by the W[TO] and the US FDA... The... launch of the [Quality Mark represents] an important milestone for[local] producers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers. It [follows] the bureau's largest and most successful promotional campaign – the Iron Campaign. That has reinforced the message that red meat is the richest source of accessible iron. Within three years of launching the mark, the bureau [aims] to increase... consumers' real expenditure on beef and lamb by 6%. "It doesn't sound like much but it would be a huge turnaround on recent trends," said [the BLMB's general manager]... Two market segments exist among N[Z]ers. There is the traditional meat eater and a second segment of mainly [gals] under 35 who see beef and lamb as old-fashioned, boring and unhealthy. The Iron Campaign has successfully changed the perception of the second segment. "They now see beef and lamb as something they should eat, but the aim is to move it to something they want to eat"...

We're all familiar with the TV advertisements that tell us seven out of 10 [NZ gals] don't get enough iron, leaving them tired and lacking in energy. But not all parents know iron deficiency can be a danger to the youngest member of the family as well[, and 'a study of 142 Auckland infants has found that 27% were deficient in iron']. A healthy, full-term baby is born with enough iron supplies to keep her healthy for the first six months of her life. From then on, it's important a baby's diet provides enough iron to maintain that level... The... [BLMB] says by the time a baby reaches seven months, [it] needs more iron than her dad. Iron provides energy necessary for physical and mental development... [A]n inadequate iron intake, especially from nine to 24 months, can have significant and permanent effects on mental and motor functions... A baby who is iron deficient will... [also] be restless, irritable, may have problems sleeping and be prone to pick up infections... You need to be aware if your baby is a 'milkoholic' and loves cow's milk. It's an important source of calcium but has a low iron content, and too much can fill up babies with an already small appetite, not leaving enough room for other important foods... It's also not a good idea to let your babies and toddlers drink tea because it inhibits the absorption of iron... There are two types of iron in food. Haem iron is easily absorbed and found in red meat and, to a lesser degree, in poultry and fish. Non-haem iron is not so easily absorbed by the body and is found in some fruits, vegetables, breads, cereal and legumes. ['The type of haem iron found in lean beef and lamb is up to eleven times easier for our bodies to absorb than the non-haem iron found in spinach.']From four months, baby cereals that have iron added to them are a good start. By about seven months, your baby is ready to be fed minced lean lamb, chicken, liver or kidney and egg yolk. A few months later, minced or finely chopped lean beef and flaked, boned fish can be added to the menu.

...Babies who are fed infant soy milk formula are receiving large doses of plant hormones at... six to eleven times the level shown to affect the menstrual cycle of... [adults, says a US researcher. T]he hormones, known as isoflavones... [– which] mimic the... sex hormone oestrogen... [–] "must have some biological activity in the infant" but there was not enough evidence to know if this was beneficial or harmful... The isoflavones... have been credited with reducing hormone-dependent diseases including cancer, osteoporosis and heart disease in Asian countries, where soy is a regular part of the adult diet. However, scientists in several countries have been investigating the safety of the hormonal effects since N[Z] researchers raised the question three years ago... About one in 60 babies born in N[Z] each year is fed on soy formula, usually because they are allergic to dairy foods... [Speaking of hormones, b]eef from cattle treated with [HPGs] will get the Meat Board's new... quality mark in spite of consumer resistance to additives. But a board executive said yesterday that the acceptability of hormone-treated cattle in the domestic market could be reassessed if supermarkets found their customers wanted it excluded... The quality mark would not get off the ground without the supermarkets... The board is spending \$10 million over the next three years on[promoting] the mark... About 10[%] of the national beef kill comes from cattle treated with hormones... Of this, about half is exported to countries that do not object to the hormones, particularly the U[S].

...in good news for N[Z]'s beef producers the WTO... [expects the US], which takes... half of N[Z]'s \$1 billion annual beef exports[, to import 10%]... more... this year... [T]he predicted increase... will mean the U[S] will replace Japan as the world's largest importer of beef... The report also predicts a 2[%] increase in... consumption in the E[U], with estimates that... over 7 million tonnes of beef will be eaten... There was a 7[%] drop in European beef consumption last year... N[Z]'s beef exports to the U[S] have increased by 15[%] in the past year... [Now all] eyes will be... [waiting to see if NZ's] beef... sales are... affected by Asia's[economic] woes... Any dip in consumer demand will come straight out of the farmers' final payout.

...Falls in South-east Asian share and currency markets have slowed sales of chilled N[Z] beef, meaning... the North Island meat industry... is again facing serious over-capacity problems. A Kereru farmer... told a Hawkes Bay Chamber of Commerce forum that the \$50 million buy-up-and-close deal for the six North Island... Weddel N[Z]... plants by the meat industry consortium Trial Run Holdings had been for nothing. [The farmer]

predicted that another meat processor could topple. [In reply, the] executive officer of the Meat Industry Association... said that while the industry had 25[%] over-capacity in the North Island, the situation was not as acute as in the two years before Weddel's [1995 collapse. The executive also] said it was acknowledged in 1995 that the Weddel plant closures[only] gave the industry a temporary reprieve of two or three years.

...The most tense game of high-stakes poker could not match the state of play between North Island meat companies. Caught between falling stock numbers and seemingly ever-rising processing capacity, the companies are holding their cards very close in a match of wills. The outcome could have some scooping up the rewards while others walk into the sunset of business oblivion. Raising the stakes recently, Progressive Meats of Hastings announced that by Christmas it should have a new plant at Gisborne... Affco, in turn, said its East Coast operations would be second to none when its Wairoa plant reopened in the first week of October after a \$5 million refit... The industry has replaced, in just four years, the capacity removed by the consortium which bought and broke up the six plants of the failed Weddel company. It has led farmers, meat company managers and industry observers to predict that [another company] is going to roll. Various companies are nominated as likely victims but naming names tends to raise the stakes. Once farmers fear a company is shaky they are reluctant to send their stock to it and, whether accurate or not, the prophesy of failure can then be fulfilled. Though most companies are restructuring to weather the storm, they try to keep that quiet too, because it can be perceived as weakness and set the demolition ball rolling. It was the way Benmore Products of Auckland was perceived after[its] managing director... sold his majority interest in Waikato Beef Packers of Morrinsville to Hamilton-based Greenlea Premier Meats. [The managing director] said the move had made his company stronger and... could now "tough it out with the best of them." ...While a recovery has been predicted in both returns and numbers the M[AF] said it was likely to be "weaker and shorter" than in the past because of market competition from Argentina and Uruguay in N[Z]'s main beef export market, the... [US. ■] Universal Beef Packers is[also] challenging the meat industry's over-capacity bogey with a \$4 million expansion of its two-year-old... \$8.5 million plant in... Te Kuiti... The Taiwanese-backed company... expects the new facility to be producing three tonnes of beef jerky a day by early next year. The managing director... said the jerky operation would mean the company... would send 20[%] of its total boneless production to Taiwan for a monthly contract for 60 tonne of the popular Asian bar snack of dried beef.

...More than \$10 million is owed to creditors of... Benmore Products, which went into voluntary liquidation on Thursday[, and the]... Commerce Commission is claiming \$20 million in fines from the failed meat company... for allegedly rigging prices with [14] other North Island meat companies... in 1995... But... the... general manager of the commission... could not envisage the maximum penalty... on each of four claims of collusion... being imposed... [A] maximum figure of \$12 million[is] tipped by meat industry sources... [Incidentally, the] town of... Taumarunui... has still had no word from the meat company Affco... about whether it will re-open the[local] processing plant that employs 260 workers and is a major funder of other services, including the Taumarunui water supply... The company[, which saw]... net... operating profit[fall] to \$9.79 million from \$26.45 million a year ago while revenues rose to \$966.68 million from \$889.47 million... had told staff they would be briefed early this month...

Collapsed meat-processing company Paramount Export is claiming \$2.8 million in damages from the Meat Board and others. Its recently appointed receiver... alleged Paramount's problems were attributable to the Meat Board's refusal to correct a "bureaucratic" mistake last year, resulting in the company's E[U] meat-quota entitlement being significantly reduced... Paramount... owes some \$1.8 million to unsecured creditors... Its main asset, a meat-processing plant at Taumarunui, has just been sold to Wallace Corporation[, which]... also owns Walford Meats, a beef plant at Waitoa in the Waikato... [The company said it] would invest \$1.5 million in the Taumarunui plant by the end of next year... Meanwhile... a... \$2 million donation that the chair[person] of the Farmers Fighting Fund says was promised by the Meat Board has hit a snag with the board calling off a scheduled presentation... [T]he board had intended to donate[the money] interest-free for five years, but when it studied its legal framework it believed it could run into difficulties if the plan went ahead... The... [fund's chairperson] hoped other producer boards would look at similar proposals... "The fund is a vital part of keeping agriculture secure and boards do have reserves of funds,"... However... the senior vice-president of Northland Federated Farmers... raised objections to the fund at its launch in his province last week. [The vice-president] argued that federation members could pledge a lesser amount to the fund than their annual subscription, resign from the federation and have access to the same services. [The vice-president] was also concerned about the wide variety of claims which could be lodged for fund money... [The fund's chairperson] said it was unfortunate that [the vice-president thought that] way... "No one likes to put their hand in their pocket... They would prefer that someone else did..." ...But [the fund's chairperson]... agreed there might be a better title for the fund and suggested the rural protection fund.

...In a major about-face, the Meat Board is reviewing its decision to give its new domestic quality mark to meat treated with growth hormones. Shortly before noon yesterday, the board spokes[person]... rejected a call by[a] safe-food activist... for a reversal of the "foolish" decision. But, six hours later, [the board] said the issue would be reviewed next week... [T]he Safe Food Campaign lobb[y's] convener – who... has been calling since last year for... meat to be labelled as containing... H[PGs –] ...told the board that... if the board accepted hormone-treated meat under its quality mark it would breach a fundamental consumer right to know what was in the food they ate. Consumers already suspicious of meat after the "mad-cow disease" scare would not accept the bland reassurances of board officials that hormone growth promotants were safe. They would be sceptical "when they become aware of international scientific research that implicates growth hormones with cancer and serious sexual and reproductive abnormalities." ...the [board's chairperson had]... said... that hormone growth promotants licensed for use in cattle in N[Z] left infinitesimal residues.

...of[the] five HPGs approved for use here[, estradiol], progesterone and testosterone are called "natural" hormones, since they occur naturally in humans and in food animals. Zeranone (Ralgro) and trenbolone acetate are synthetic hormones. Used properly, pellets are implanted in the animal's ear. That allows the hormone to release gradually. At slaughter the ear is cut off and discarded. If the hormone is injected, rather than implanted, particularly into muscle, there is a risk that too much residue could end up in the meat – as has happened overseas... [Z]eranone residues in veal and poultry have been linked with premature sexual development and ovarian cysts in infants and children, and breast enlargement in [adult guys], in Puerto Rico, Bahrain and Italy. Zeranone (widely used in N[Z]) should not be given to bulls that will be used for reproduction or to dairy animals, say the manufacturers. They say it can be used in lambs, although again farmers are warned not to implant breeding animals or to use the hormone within 40 days of slaughter... [J]ust a year after [an] EU working group reported no possible consumer harm a group of gastroenterologists from Israel published an article in *Nutrition and Cancer*... arguing that products like zeranolone (the parent compound of zeranol) have teratogenic, mutagenic and carcinogenic properties. The researchers' concern was less about overt poisoning from residues (although this has happened) than with the long-term health effects of repeated exposure to low concentrations of some of these chemicals, and possible insidious metabolic effects. Some scientists have continued to express concerns... [that HPGs] disturb the complex pattern of normal hormonal balance in the body... [Furthermore,] synthetic hormones... have a rather sorry history. One of the earliest to be used as an animal growth promotant was the... steroid diethylstilbestrol (DES). After some decades of use DES was found to be carcinogenic – and is now banned in most countries.

...The Meat Board has reversed its decision to give a... domestic quality mark to beef... treated with [HPGs after] an outcry by consumer lobbies...

A vocal group of farmers is livid at the Meat Board's U-turn... The change of heart came after several supermarket chains... said they would not accept such meat... The board believed the decision was in the best interests of farmers, because "if the consumers will not buy the farmers' product, there is no market, no return and ultimately, no industry." ...farmers could still sell their treated beef. It just couldn't carry the quality mark... But... the... Federated Farmers meat and wool section chair[person]... said that the board had neglected its duty to represent the interests of farmers, who funded the board through levies on stock killed... [T]he board had made the turnaround decision on the same day a W[TO] decision was made public which, in effect, said there was no scientific reason to ban the hormones. The U[S] and Canada had taken the case – with scientific

support from N[Z] – against Europe, which[still] refuses to import beef from hormone-treated cattle... [In another development], the councillor secretary to the E[U] Commission said AUS[felt nervous about the agreement N[Z] had reached with the E[U] on equivalent standards in meat inspection and certification. “They fear the consumer will doubt [that the AUS]n product is as good,”...

A FEW WEEKS AGO, WHEN A COW DIED from anthrax in A[US]’s north-central Victoria, farmers around the towns of Tatura and Stanhope treated it as happenstance. By week’s end, with 89 cattle dead, more than three dozen farms quarantined and one person in hospital, that early fatalism has long gone. “This is the most unusual and most serious outbreak that we have experienced in A[US] in the last 30 years,” says[a] veterinarian... of the Canberra-based Bureau of Resource Sciences. Spores of anthrax – a virus that mostly infects farm animals, but can also be transmitted to humans – have lain dormant in A[US]’s alkaline soil for decades. It is thought the disease may have resurfaced in Victoria as topsoil was turned to dust by recent extreme heat. Infected animals at first appear distressed and lose their appetite. Before the farmers have a chance to respond, the livestock die of blood poisoning. In humans, the symptoms are severe inflammation or pneumonia. Anthrax can be fatal if untreated – in Thailand last week, the Bangkok *Post* reported the death of one [person] during an outbreak blamed on undercooked, contaminated meat – but penicillin is usually an effective counterweapon. In A[US], where there have been no recorded deaths from anthrax this century, doctors... are... confident that no one will be affected by tainted live-stock products. Officials said meat from the contaminated area would not be sold until the quarantines were lifted, and humans have never contracted the virus through contaminated milk. Still, it has been a time of caution. To prevent further spread of the disease, carcasses of infected animals were burned in huge pits with 500-kg logs. And a livestock vaccination campaign was begun after the first cow died: within six days, 16,000 cattle on 157 properties had been injected. By last weekend, a few cases were still being reported, but the outbreak seemed to be contained. Slowly, the hidden killer was returning to the soil.

...Scientists in Kenya are trying to establish whether the anthrax bacteria is responsible for a... mysterious... epidemic... [which has killed at] least 143 people... since... the start of severe flooding... [By the way, ‘the annual pilgrimage to Islam’s holiest sites at Mecca begins on Thursday. The hajj includes the feast of the sacrifice, Eid al-Adha. Saudi Arabia opened a huge slaughterhouse yesterday and presented it as the “world’s biggest.” The 500,000 sq m Muaissem slaughterhouse cost 470 million rials (\$NZ257m). With its 10,000 workers, the complex is designed to slaughter 200,000 cattle and sheep a day in line with Islamic tradition. The sacrifice – in memory of Abraham’s readiness to sacrifice his son to God – is not obligatory, but most pilgrims elect to do it. For nearly a decade, the Saudis have been creating facilities for the sacrifices on an industrial scale and have spent tens of millions of dollars on abattoirs. Before that, the pilgrims either slaughtered the beasts themselves or hired butchers on the spot to perform the deed, and the plain ran with blood.’

...NZ’s slaughterhouses face temporary closure because ‘120 of the 150 veterinarians employed by the key MAF Verification Agency are set to take strike action. The Meat Industry Association’s executive director says serious damage could be done by the 120 vets, who are among the highest-paid group of civil servants in the country. A MAF vets’ base salary is around \$55,000 to \$65,000, but with allowances like overtime about 75% of the vets get more than \$80,000 a year gross. 15% get paid more than \$100,000. The vets also get shift, standby and meal allowances, although the executive director observes dryly that in the interests of advancing negotiations they are prepared to drop their sock and gumboot allowances. The vets’ union, the National Union of Public Employees (Nupe), say they want a 10% increase for the first year and 4% in each subsequent year, as well as less overtime. Federated Farmers says the vets are a gold-plated elite who are holding to ransom the industry and the jobs it provides. Meat companies are already losing contracts overseas because of the lack of certainty over the industrial situation, although the association will not say how much companies are losing. However, its executive director says the vets’ counterparts in the private sector get 20 to 25% less pay. Internationally there is a shortage of qualified vets, although MAF says the agency is fully staffed. This shortage affected NZ too, said Nupe’s secretary, pointing to the fact that last year MAF recruited overseas for vets in Zimbabwe and Britain.’]

...About 20 Iraqi veterinarians who left their war-torn homeland to start a new life in this country are stunned to find they cannot practise here. The Veterinary Council of N[Z] refuses to let them sit an exam that would give them the right to work. It says they cannot sit the exam until Baghdad University sends written confirmation that its veterinary qualification meets N[Z] standards. But the vets say the chances of getting this information from Iraq is virtually nil... because the authorities refused to help vets get jobs overseas... “If they just let us sit the exam we could prove... we are qualified,” said [one of the vets], who has been battling the council ruling for two years... Ironically, the[y]... were accepted into N[Z] on the tough points-based immigration system because of their sought-after qualification. N[Z] has a shortage of vets, mainly in rural practices.

...[an] Alliance MP... has asked the Government to help a group of Iraqi veterinarians gain work here. The vets were owed some assistance, having been allowed into N[Z] because of their sought-after occupation, only to discover their qualification was useless here... “I don’t think it’s fair to let them in, then leave them sitting in limbo.” ...The Immigration Service said the rules had been changed since this group of Iraqi vets were allowed into N[Z]. Vets seeking to emigrate here now had to gain registration before their application for residency could be approved. [In related news, ‘the 120 vets who have closed many of the country’s export meatworks and put about 9000 workers out of work with no pay, yesterday refused the eleventh-hour pay settlement from the MAF. The Agriculture Minister said the continuation of the strike was extremely disappointing. “They have chosen the time of the year when they can do the most damage possible. And it is costing hundreds of farmers millions of dollars. It is costing the meat industry millions. It is costing thousands of meat workers income they cannot afford to lose. And it is costing rural communities. The fact is that the union’s current demands amount to more than 30%. I regard this as particularly generous for a public-sector workforce which is already earning an average of 30% more than their equivalent private-sector colleagues. It is very, very difficult to understand why the union thinks it can justify another 30% on top of that.”’]

...International meat marketing is full of “crooks and vagabonds”... says... the Meat Board’s... former chair[person, who]... told the primary production select committee that food safety would continue to be the biggest problem in the international market[, where perceptions]... were often more important than facts with buyers... “There is huge trust in the N[Z] classification system as a minimum specification... One meat market wanted to buy... from Uruguay where the price was 10[%] lower... But they purchased from us just because of the grading system.” ...[the former chairperson] urged the continuation of generic promotion of red meat which other submissions to the committee have questioned. [The former chairperson] used the example of South Africa where... little promotion of beef and lamb had been carried out. “In South Africa, sheepmeat and beef are now perceived as poor quality products which are bad for your health,”...

GROWING concern over food safety is forcing a culture shift among... [NZ farmers. U]ntil now food safety had been someone else’s problem – a world away. That changed early last month during the debate over... hormone-treated beef... Meat processors have already responded. Farmers have not... Unless farmers here move quickly to address this glaring omission in the food production chain, particularly for meat[, NZ]... risks losing valuable market access to more consumer-oriented competitors... Some farming leaders believe N[Z] is already well behind its closest competitor in guaranteeing the safety and quality of its red meat from the farm gate to the table... [The newly] appointed Federated Farmers chief executive... says A[US]n farmers have made the “greatest culture shift” yet to become food suppliers to the global market. “N[Z] has already missed the boat – you’ve ignored the signs,” says... the [new chief executive, who was the] former head of a farming organisation in Victoria... “In A[US], the need for quality assurance has been brought on by one food disaster after another....”... [The chief executive fears NZ] is risking its clean green image by not moving fast enough to guarantee the quality and traceability of its food... “N[Z] has an enormous, clean image. But one glitch and the whole house will fall over.” ...The impact of a new law in Japan, giving food distributors total recourse on any food problems right back to the farm gate, has already been felt across the Tasman. At the peak of the prolonged drought last year, several desperate farmers fed their cattle on

cotton trash, the product left over after the crop is harvested in the paddock. Testing of the beef when it entered Japan showed the meat contained residues of a chemical used for controlling a caterpillar which attacks cotton plants. It cost the A[US]n Government \$100 million in compensation. "Insurance companies in A[US] now recommend farmers should have no less than \$10 million public liability insurance,"... Individual cattle passports from farm to retail outlet are a reality for beef farmers in E[U] countries. The US and AUS] are about to launch their own trace-back systems... Food safety disasters like BSE in Europe or E Coli outbreaks in Japan will ultimately drive N[Z] farmers to follow the lead...

The US Agriculture Department has announced the largest recall of US ground beef products in history... [A]n Arkansas-based meat processor, is recalling 544,000kg of frozen hamburger after possible contamination with a deadly strain of the E. coli bacteria... Meanwhile, a US Department of Agriculture inspection team was due in South Korea to inspect tonnes of beef from Nebraska[that was also] found to be contaminated with the... bacteria... South Korea last Monday slapped a temporary freeze on imports of Nebraska beef.

...The [President's] administration, acting a week after a record U[S] meat recall, has asked Congress for the power to order a recall of tainted meat and to fine companies breaking the law... [In local news, the] Government plans a compulsory ban on the use of sheep and cattle in feed meals for livestock because of fears voluntary controls... called for 18 months ago... have not been effective.

...PETER HALL DIDN'T NOTICE WHEN the proteins in his brain started to change. [Hall] noticed other things: a vague depression, general anxiety, sudden mood swings. But blaming any of that on brain chemicals wouldn't have occurred to him. The proteins in Hall's brain *were* changing, however. Ordinarily made up of tiny strands of intertwined amino acids, the complex molecules had begun to assume a very different shape, collapsing into sticky sheets. Before long, these gummy structures began to clump sloppily together, creating pits and divots where there had once been vital brain tissue. Within months Hall was delusional and bedridden. Not long after, [Hall] was dead. Hall, who was 21, was one of nine Britons felled in 1996 by a brain disorder linked to exposure to... BSE... The appearance of this degenerative disease... set off panic as Europe slammed its doors to British beef, and travellers anxiously cast their minds back to London vacations, trying to recall whether they had ordered the fish or sausage. The scare died down after the British government destroyed tens of thousands of cattle, removed infected feed from the food chain and promised to step up slaughterhouse inspections. Mad-cow disease has stopped turning up in the new generation of cattle, and the crisis is generally considered to have passed. That conclusion may be premature... [C]oncern is building in both Europe and the U.S. that the mad-cow problem may be larger than it seems. This week the science journal *Nature* published a paper on the possibility that last year's outbreak might only be the tip of an epidemiological iceberg, and that tens of thousands of Europeans are unknowingly infected and could die... Moreover, a number of researchers in the U.S. aren't convinced that some of the conditions that led to the mad-cow breakout in Britain might not exist in the U.S., leading to the same spread of the BSE pathogen. Making things even harder, scientists still can't agree on what that pathogen is – a first step in figuring out how to treat the disease if it does surface. "The only thing that stands between us and an epidemic," says... [the] director of molecular virology at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Baltimore, "is unmitigated luck." ... "The cheapest way to get protein into cattle is to feed them scraps of animals left over from slaughter," says... [the] author of the soon-to-be-released book *Deadly Feast*... which traces the history of BSE and similar diseases. "When British cows started to get sick, this practice wasn't banned. Instead the industry was merely required to avoid using parts from animals known to be infected. This was hardly foolproof, and it was inevitable that some diseased flesh would still be eaten by cows and enter the[human] food chain." When Britons started falling ill last year, some scientists concluded that that was just what happened. If cattle feed was indeed the indirect avenue of the recent infections, it could spell big trouble, since most Britons ate from a contaminated meat supply for at least 10 years. Just how many got bad beef is what the *Nature* paper tried to determine. Using a complex epidemiological model, the study concluded that the outlook for the beef-eating population is unclear... The researchers caution that too little is known to make confident projections, and in Britain the paper has had little impact. Beef consumption is about where it was a year ago... Ironically, the *Nature* paper generated concern in the U.S., where not one case of mad-cow disease has been diagnosed. "I hope we're not on the same course as the British," says [the director], "but we could be." What concerns [him] and others is that the U.S. agriculture industry, like its British counterpart, recycles animal scraps, turning them into both cattle feed and garden fertilizer. Should even one cow develop the disease spontaneously – something that is known to occur in nature – the pathogen could quickly spread through U.S. herds. In order to prevent that, [the] U.S. Food and Drug Commissioner... is proposing a new measure – set to take effect later this year – that forbids using cattle parts in animal feed but still permits them in fertilizer. The government concedes that switching to protein substitutes like soy would cost U.S. feed producers up to \$48 million a year, and the industry insists that the final figure would be much higher. Whatever the price, however, [the commissioner] believes it's worth it... Whoever is right, it's in no one's interest for the debate to go on too long. There are 44 million head of cattle in the U.S., and 7 million are killed for food each year. If just one of those slaughtered cows turns out to be a mad cow, the illness that's now an ocean away could establish its first beachhead on[U.S. shores. The scare may have died down in Britain, but the issue of 'compensation for victims has not yet been addressed' by the government (r:p1035, ln43) – which 'placed meat inspectors under the Official Secrets Act; ordered the slaughter of affected cows but said it would only pay 50% of their value, in order to stop cheats (many farmers then sold cows to the human food chain rather than lose 50% of their value); and, for years, had repeatedly told the public they faced no harm']...

Britain's Labour Government has promised a full inquiry into "mad cow" disease as anger mounts over the way the crisis has been handled since it began... The Deputy Agriculture Minister... told Parliament: "People are dying and it is incumbent upon the Government to take all possible steps to find out why this came about." ...[CJD] has already killed more than 20 people... [Farmers are also angry] following the latest decision to ban British and imported beef on the bone... [-] wiping oxtail soup, roast rib of beef and T-bone steak off the national menu... [-] because of a small risk of mad cow disease transmission through cattle bone and marrow. Farmers accused the Government of overreacting, even though the ban does not become official for another week... Nearly 1000 farmers besieged docks in Plymouth... planning to stop Irish trucks they suspected were carrying beef from France – and found the vehicles packed with vegetables. "It was definitely not a waste of time," said... [the vice-chairperson] of the Devon county section of the National Farmers' Union, who was allowed by police to examine the cargoes. "It proved that beef could come through this port." ...police arrested five farmers... as they tried to blockade the port of Dover with tractors and meat trucks... Both press and public are clamouring for explanations about what is going on. Some traders say they will continue to sell boned beef; supermarkets have stripped their shelves. The... [National Farmers' Union] president... accused the Government of "piling burden after burden on the struggling beef chain" and warned that farmers were at breaking point... [□ A 70-year-old Aucklander] is dying in hospital from suspected [CJD]... Three other cases have been recorded[in NZ] since the Ministry of Health made CJD a notifiable disease a year ago.

...Auckland mortuary staff are banning autopsies of suspected... CJD... victims. CJD... can be confirmed only from microscopic examination of infected brain tissue. But Auckland Hospital's lack of an isolated theatre for infectious diseases places staff, medical students and transplant organs at risk of infection at the School of Medicine facility. The last CJD autopsy was carried out in April last year, but only after heated discussions between the victim's family and hospital management... The absence of conclusive evidence of the rare, degenerative condition... stresses the need for post-mortem examinations, for surveillance reasons... [argues the chairperson] of the panel that advises the Government on BSE and CJD... Upgrading the mortuary... [to the standard of] mortuaries in Wellington and Christchurch... is estimated to cost \$1 million but arguments continue over who will pay... The University of Auckland owns the mortuary, which is run by the Forensic Services Management Board... British figures show that since 1990 almost 70[%] of suspected CJD cases have had autopsies. Official N[Z] data is unavailable, but estimates are that only 25[%] of clinical diagnoses of CJD have had autopsies. Since 1980 about 50 N[Z]ers are suspected of having died from CJD.

...N[Z] patients with lung and circulation problems have received blood deprivatives donated by a Briton who died of [CJD]. The Ministry of Health yesterday refused to release details of the blood product or the patients, saying it would send letters to 120 people who had received it. But N[Z] *Herald* inquiries revealed the blood was included in a product used to scan people's lungs. The agent is injected to show the blood flow through the lungs of people with blood clots or lung disease... The ministry was told about the product[, which was among]... 53,000... donations... sent to 46 countries... late last month... A ministry spokes[person]... said... the... risk of developing CJD from a blood product was extremely low... recipients need not be alarmed and were being traced as a precaution. [Incidentally, 'doctors in Britain believe that an 11-month-old girl, whose mother died of new variant Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease (vCJD) this year, has the symptoms. They say the baby probably contracted the disease in the womb. If the child's disease were confirmed – by post-mortem examination – it would be the first known case of vCJD being transmitted from a mother to her baby.'

... 'One mad-cow mystery has been solved: the disease broke out a year earlier than first thought. The implications are startling; so far BSE has led to the deaths of 170,000 cattle. If the disease had been identified a year earlier, the number of cases might have been reduced by a third – and later measures taken to protect public health would've been more effective. Why did nobody spot BSE earlier? Mainly because it happened in cows, not sheep. The tale begins around Christmas 1984 when a Sussex farmer noticed one of his dairy cows had developed an arched back and was losing weight. Over the next few months his vet noticed more cattle with "spooky" symptoms – one of them tried to charge him on her knees. By the summer of 1985 the farmer had lost 9 cows, and nobody knew why. The 10th cow was passed to Government veterinarians; on Sep. 19, after it had been killed and dissected, a junior pathologist at the Central Veterinary Laboratory noticed lesions – actually tiny holes – in the cow's brain. Holes in animals' brains aren't news in Britain. For over 200 years British sheep have suffered from a spongiform brain disease called scrapie. But until the junior pathologist's diagnosis, scrapie had never been seen in cows. The junior pathologist's own bosses missed the significance of her observations and maintained that some sort of poisoning was responsible. It was not until November 1986 that the central lab recognised from other cases that British cows now had a new form of spongy brain disease. One consequence of BSE has been to throw light on the farming and food-processing industry. In the wake of the disaster, standards of food safety and cleanliness have been tightened to levels that the British Government now claims are among the highest in the world. The aim is to get British beef accepted once again as a wholesome food.'

... 'British farmers and politicians are delighted at the lifting of a EU ban on their beef exports, but some scientists say the danger of mad cow disease persists. The British PM pledged his support to farmers, but said that getting sales back to where they were before the ban was imposed would take time. The effect of the ban on the meat industry was devastating. At the Reading cattle market, a 10-day-old calf that would have sold for £50 at the start of 1996 fetched just £1 yesterday. British meat will probably not be on sale in Europe until next spring, after EU inspectors have checked abattoirs and farms'...

'An Irish dairy farmer has been sentenced to five years jail for deliberately introducing madcow disease into his herd in 1996 to collect compensation. The farmer had stood to gain 75,000 punts (\$NZ191,000) following the slaughter of his herd. Another Irish farmer is also before the Irish courts in a similar case and two others are under investigation. The Government has so far paid out more than 40 million punts in compensation for the slaughter of over 57,000 of the country's cattle. Under the scheme to combat BSE, all of a farmer's cattle are destroyed after an infected animal is discovered.'

... 'A damning indictment of the system of government that kept the public in the dark about Britain's worst human and animal health crisis was delivered yesterday by the £27 million BSE inquiry. The obsession with preventing panic led to long delays in protecting consumers and the farming industry from the disease. "Officials and ministers followed an approach whose object was sedition." While individuals were criticised in the 16 volumes of the 4000-page report, the vast weight of censure fell on the tortuous workings of the Whitehall machine. "The Government did not lie to the public about BSE. It believed that the risks to humans were remote." The report added that: "Confidence in Government pronouncements was a further casualty of BSE." 80 people have officially died of the disease and no one knows how many more cases will follow. Families of the victims are in line for payouts of at least £100,000 as well as help caring for those with the disease under new measures announced by the Government. The report stated: "Some say that it offended against nature to feed animal protein to ruminants. Some say that it was not surprising that a plague was visited upon those that tampered with nature in this way."

... 'Britain offloaded tens of thousands of tonnes of potentially infected cattle feed on the Last World after deciding it was too dangerous to give to its own herds. The meal and bonemeal (MBM) was exported after March 1988. In July that year, the Conservative Government banned its use in Britain, and a week later officially told the EU, then the EEC, of its fears. By 1991, sales of MBM to Europe stopped. At the same time, exports of MBM to the Last World had soared to 30,000 tonnes. It was not until March 1996 that MBM was banned worldwide. No one knows how many cattle may be incubating BSE.'

... 'Outbreaks, many of them thought to be under-reported, have already occurred in the Falkland Islands, Oman, Canada, Denmark, Portugal and France.'

... 'The French Government and press are shocked to find that some European countries are imposing partial bans on French beef imports, in defiance of EU rules. Italian farmers are taking the law into their own hands, by blocking and searching trucks entering Italy from France, while the Italian police stand by. Mad-cow psychosis is now sweeping across European borders, with an incubation period of hours rather than years. Beef sales in Italy have fallen 20% even though no "native" BSE cases have ever been found in Italy. Spanish beef sales have fallen by 15%, and prices by 30%. Spain reported its first BSE case on Thursday. Yesterday, Switzerland announced a ban on imports of breeding cattle, Germany said it would propose extending to all animals a ban on feedstuffs suspected of spreading the disease and Britain announced it would extend spot checks on imported beef. And yet, despite all the evidence of the harm done by half-measures, first in Britain, and then in France where beef sales have plunged by at least 40%, the EU is still baulking (for "economic reasons" according to the farm commissioner) at imposing, Europe-wide, the kind of measures which could eventually eradicate BSE and shore up consumer confidence. This week EU Agriculture Ministers imposed compulsory BSE testing on older "at risk" animals. The European BSE epidemic is an extension of the British epidemic, spread largely by the morally unforgivable – even if legal – dumping of thousands of tonnes of suspect animal feed on the continent after it was banned in the UK in 1988. If the present consumer psychosis persists, or deepens, EU countries will be obliged to take stronger measures, whether they like it or not. Experience suggests that it would be safer, more prudent and even, in the end, cheaper, to take such measures now.'

... 'Europe's mad cow crisis has spread to Germany with the discovery of the first suspected cases of BSE in German herds. The Agriculture Minister called for nationwide testing of cattle. Germany had previously insisted its cattle were free of the sickness that has ravaged farms in Britain and France.'

... 'NZ's Ministry of Health has moved to ban imports of beef products from Europe as new fears of BSE spread across the continent. Last month, the EU imposed a six-month ban on MBM and decided to take two million older cattle "out of the food chain." But this has not convinced NZ and AUSn authorities'...

'America has no mad-cow disease scare, or at least not yet. Beef consumption is as high as ever, thanks in large part to the ubiquity of fast-food burger chains. Last year, Americans spent \$US110 billion feeding their burger and fries habit. Mad Cow? Most fast-food customers have not even heard of it. Does this mean a burger eaten in the US is a burger eaten risk-free? If you read the startling new best-seller *Fast Food Nation*, you certainly would not think so. In fact, once you reach the end of the book, the chances are you will never want to eat hamburgers or any other form of industrial minced beef again. The author describes in horrific detail how the ever more mechanised cattle and meat-packing industry is exposed to risk of infection by virulent pathogens. Cattle are fed the processed waste of dead animals, including pigs, horses and poultry, as well as myriad plant byproducts such as sawdust and old newspapers. Faecal material regularly spills into the meat, either because it falls off improperly cleaned hides as they are pulled off or because the minimum-wage workers who pull out the intestines accidentally dribble some of their contents. Aside from faecal material, shipments of raw meat can also include anything from insects and metal shavings to urine and vomit. What compounds these problems is the extraordinary consolidation of beef

production in the US, largely under the influence of giant fast-food chains who want every one of their patties to look and taste exactly the same. Just 13 meat-packing companies control the industry, and their considerable lobbying sway in Washington – particularly with the Republican Party – has virtually allowed them to dictate their own industry. A century ago, when hamburgers were not yet identified as the quintessential American meal, one food critic likened the minced beef patty to “getting your meat out of a garbage can.” As the author writes: “Today the US Government can demand the nationwide recall of defective softball bats, sneakers, stuffed animals and foam-rubber toy cows. But it cannot order a meat-packing company to remove contaminated, potentially lethal ground beef from fast-food kitchens and supermarket shelves.” Food industry experts grimly expect some kind of public health disaster if the system continues unchecked in its present form. It does not help that Government-funded school meals include beef bought in bulk from the cheapest, least health-conscious suppliers.’]

...A foul-smelling poultry farm that almost closed a school has itself been forced to shut down. The... Environment Court has ordered the farm... to cease operating... The board of Buckland Primary School had considered closing the school because it felt the obnoxious smells were affecting the children’s ability to learn... [A]t times... the... children were... forced to put t-shirts over their faces... [The farm’s] closure ends a five-year battle between Franklin District Council authorities and the owner over a failure to comply with a resource consent for extensions to the operation, which included strict conditions. Health inspectors told a hearing at the court last month that numerous dead chickens were left lying on the ground and live ones were walking over the... corpses. Most had been dead for long periods because they had decomposed badly, shrivelled and turned black. Eggs had to travel over the dead bodies to the ledge at the front of each cage. Other written evidence said that grass on some neighbouring properties was blackened with flies drawn in by the stinking chicken manure illegally piled at the farm... [The owner] was ordered by the court two years ago to remove all chicken manure off the... property... Neighbours who lived up to 300m away told the court that on the worst days they were reluctant to hang out the washing or open windows, making the heat in the summer unbearable. A parishioner at a local church said the strong smell of manure made her gag during services. The Sunday school was forced to close... [Meanwhile, the] Northland Regional Council is prosecuting a Dargaville meat-works following ongoing complaints about its smell... A regional councillor... said the company had emptied one effluent pond and deepened the other, but the people who lived around the meatworks were still reporting offensive odours. It is the second time the company... has been charged with breaching its resource consent.

...A large spill of fatty scum into the lower Waikato River... from a blood and bone factory has disgusted neighbours of the Tuakau plant. Riverside residents are calling on the Environment Waikato regional council to force the animal rendering plant, Waikato By-Products, to clean up its act. The group is also angry emergency calls to the council were not acted on for several days after the discharge of foul-smelling sludge.

...[the trend of converting] sheep and beef farms... to... dairy farming around Lake Taupo is increasing the risk of polluting the largest freshwater lake in the Southern Hemisphere... [D]airying... leads to more fertiliser and effluent run-off... The Taupo District Council and the regional authority Environment Waikato are considering measures to protect water quality of the lake, which is good at present[– unlike many of NZ’s other freshwater lakes and rivers, which are potentially unsafe to swim in or drink from because of the runoff from adjacent or upstream farms.

...[A] Pokeno dairy farmer[– who]... converted his 60ha dry stock unit to dairying seven years ago, grazing 164 cows on it and a 20ha runoff... [–] is a convert to nitrogen use and this year will be part of a trial using 60kg a hectare with a 40-day rotation. After three years in the more summer milk programme [the farmer] told the Grassland Association conference it was clear there was more profit involved in getting spring grass management right first... [His farm’s] milk production has more than doubled... from 6642kg three years ago to 13,249kg last year.

...A four-year trial on Waikato dairy farms has shown that nitrogen applications are by far the best bet for boosting milk production. While the increase in milk solids from nitrogen applications was similar to that from feeding turnips and maize silage, nitrogen, at \$54 a hectare, cost half the price of turnips, and maize silage left farmers out of pocket to the tune of \$123 a hectare... Nitrogen was used on nine farms and found to be profitable on eight of them at an average production cost of 6c a kilogram of dry matter. It was found that delaying the nitrogen application of 60kg a hectare until after the spring surplus allowed the feed to be carried directly into summer and cut silage-making costs... This year nitrogen application trials are continuing on five farms. Comparisons are being made between a 20-day rotation and a 40-day rotation... [In related news, ‘one in five dairy farmers in some regions are failing to comply with the law covering the discharge of effluent, says the latest Environment BOP monitoring report. The report comes in the wake of a Fish and Game claim that “dirty dairying” is dangerously polluting waterways. That claim, made as the country’s dairy farmers gathered in Rotorua last week for their national conference, drew strong protests and rebuttals from dairy farmers. Yesterday, the Rotorua-Taupo Federated Farmers dairy section chairperson called for those farmers who were not complying with the law to “clean up their acts”’.

...‘Lake Taupo farmers have won a temporary reprieve from pollution-control measures threatening to limit animal numbers and stop them switching from sheep and beef to dairying. Support for the move has been flagged by the Government through the Environment Minister. Booming dairying profits are spurring widespread farm conversions, mainly in the South Island, where water pollution and irrigation draw-offs from key salmon- and trout-fishing rivers anger conservationists. But North Island sheep farmers are not immune to the lure of higher returns. There have been 5 large conversions to dairy herds around Taupo, with a 6th looming. Although this may not sound like an industry out of control, dairying is by far the biggest agricultural producer of nitrogen, both through chemical fertilisers and livestock effluent.’ By the way, ‘as dairy farmers revel in a bumper annual milk payout, shoppers are about to pay the price. 95% of NZ milk is exported, so the world price set the benchmark for local supplies. NZ Dairy Foods’ chief executive said his company had to pay the going rate for milk. “We’ve simply got no option. If I don’t move, we lose lots of money and my shareholders expect a return.” The company has told supermarkets to expect the price of cheese to rise 30%, butter 21% and milk 11%. That means a 1kg block of cheese could rise by more than \$2 to \$12, a 500g pack of butter could cost \$2.50 and a litre of milk will rise to \$1.72.’ Editor’s note: Due to government subsidies, a pint (600ml) of milk sold locally for 4c in the early 1970s. As subsidies were removed, the price rose to 20c in the early 1980s, then to 50c by the late 1980s. A pint currently costs 85c.]

...Dairy Advisory Bureau figures show that while our production increased by 12[%] over the past season[, and we’ve been]... exporting plenty of dairy products[, NZers]... have been drinking less and less milk for several years... In 1981, N[Z]ers drank an average 112.5 litres of fresh milk per person... By 1990, it had dropped... to 97.4 litres a head... Key factors include the increase in immigrants, particularly from Asia, who are not big milk drinkers, the trend towards eating out, and aggressive marketing by the soft drink industry... [T]he Market Milk Federation of N[Z]... has said the milk industry’s future depends on how well it develops the habits of children and teenagers over the next decade, and convinces them of the health benefits of drinking milk as adults. [■ The ‘breakdown of standard NZ milk is: 4.8% fat, 3.6% protein, 4.79% lactose, 86.12% water and 0.69% ash’. ‘Even though milk is about 87% water, it is commonly called the most nearly perfect food since it contains so many vitamins, minerals and proteins needed by our bodies. (About 4% of whole milk is fat. Fat separated from milk is called *cream*. Cream can be churned until parts of it become solid. This solid is called *butter*. Cheese is made by solidifying the proteins and removing the water found in milk. Other dairy products are ice cream and sherbet. Casein is a dairy product made from milk protein that is used for plastics, glue, water soluble paints and some textiles.’.)

...‘NZers are drinking less milk, despite research suggesting low-fat dairy foods can help lower blood pressure. NZ Dairy Foods’ nutritionist said NZers now drank less fresh milk than people in AUS, Britain or the US – where blood-pressure research and findings on osteoporosis had caused the Federal Government to lift its recommended daily calcium intake. About 100,000 NZers took ACE inhibitor medications for high blood pressure.’

...Milk is losing the] battle for young consumers... [A 5-year-old from] Naperville, Illinois, is living proof that the \$US19 billion... milk industry is losing ground in [US grocery stores. The 5-year-old] prefers juice to milk because “I like the way it tastes.” ...The milk industry has an image problem, especially with its primary consumers: kids. They think Coca-Cola is hip. Paperboard milk cartons, with two-colour graphics and photos

of lost peers, are not... For children, “milk is a Volvo. It’s very safe. There’s nothing wrong with it, but it’s boxy. Coke is a sports car.” For dairy farmers, milk’s falling share of the beverage market and the high cost of feeding herds have put the squeeze on less-efficient producers. On average, [USers] last year drank 92 litres of milk, down 18[%] from... 1975, according to the Department of Agriculture. Meanwhile, juice consumption jumped 32[%] to 33 litres... and soda demand almost doubled to 196 litres... A milk industry study found that 20[%] of the beverages consumed by children between the ages of one and five is soda. Recognising that fact... Dairy Management Inc, a producer-funded group... started a “Got Milk” campaign to exploit the product’s association with certain foods, such as chocolate-chip cookies... “We are trying to make milk cool, dress up its image,” said... [the] vice-president of milk marketing at... Dairy Management... But changing long-held perceptions will be difficult.

...[NZ’s] Dairy Board estimates it has lost \$40 m... so far because of the financial turmoil in South-east Asian markets, but says that strong sales performance has clawed back \$27 m... [The board wouldn’t] know until May next year how far prices would drop because of the change in demand for dairy products. The board sold almost \$1.4 b... worth of milk products through the region last year, with Malaysia being the largest market... In the Philippines it has recently boosted sales to \$90 m... a year through an advertising campaign which gives more prominence to the product’s N[Z] origin... Its full-cream milk powder which had a 16[%] share of the market now is the market leader with 40[%]... ahead of the Nestle brand, Nido... [T]he board was [also] keeping a careful eye on its important North Asian markets which accounted for \$628 m... of sales last season.

...The Dairy Board is building a \$21 million factory in China as the basis of a projected \$50 million consumer products business it plans to develop there during the next five years[, giving]... the board a toehold in what would be the world’s largest economy in 15 to 20 years... The factory [will be built] in the Guangzhou economic and technical development zone... The zone’s administrative committee, East-West Investments Services, will hold 5[%] ownership of the factory]. The joint venture has taken two years to negotiate... The factory will make processed sliced cheese for McDonald’s outlets in China. It will also pack in sachet bags full-cream Fernleaf milk powder and calcium-enriched Anlene milk powder imported from N[Z]. The board has already... developed a 25,000-tonne ingredients business in China over the past five years, selling products to bakers and confectionery makers. That was[annually] worth \$70 million. During the next eight years the board would be reinvesting the profits from the consumers products business into developing other opportunities within the 27 distinct markets it has identified in China. [● The board expects to ‘send \$7.7 billion worth of products overseas next year, accounting for 25% of NZ’s exports and about one-third of the world’s free trade in dairy products’.

...[The] Dairy Board has been named as N[Z]’s largest company in *Management*[’s]... top 200 companies index, with a turnover of \$6.1 billion, 15[%] up on last year. It owes its top position to changes in... Challenge’s structure, but on a world scale... ranks higher than Reebok... and Mattel.

...Preparing for the future is the basis of successful dairy farming... So, bringing the debate out into the open about the future structure of the dairy industry is a sensible step to take... [NZ] Dairy Group, the country’s largest dairy producer, did so last week when [its chairperson] proposed splitting the Dairy Board into a statutory licensing arm and a marketing body... For some farmers, moving away from the shelter of single-seller legislation will require a leap of faith. As the sole exporter of the country’s dairy products, the board has served them well. They will also need to trust their dairy companies to work together for the common good which will mean putting aside provincial pride and deep-seated suspicion of the competition... But the dairy industry is evolving at a pace that leaves even the best-informed farmers bemused. For a start, they have to adjust to a new image – the board to which they feel intensely loyal has just officially been named the country’s largest company... The board, driven by its belief that most of its 14,500 farmer shareholders will want to stick together, might metamorphose into a corporate entity... [D]airy companies... will[then] have to work together like never before, putting the industry’s future ahead of their own payouts and balance sheets. Farmers will have the task of keeping the companies true to their promises about openness which shareholders in publicly listed companies expect as a right. And the dairy industry will have to take heed of one fact of corporate life it has not yet had to consider – the ultimate power of investors to take their money out of the collective enterprise... Insiders say the industry still has a long way to go to work out exactly what future it wants... Dairy farmers will want to make sure... their investments in land, cows, processing... and the board’s marketing functions are protected in the best way possible. But all are eager for a[continued] increase on the depressed returns of the past few seasons [that have seen]... farm values... drop by up to 20[%]...

‘NZ dairy farmers are paid for high protein and solids content, and not milk yield alone. Thus it is unlikely that any cow here could ever match the remarkable performance of a USer’s black and white (Holstein-Friesian) who, in one year, yielded a fantastic 25,000 litres of milk.’ ‘The average milk yield of a British Friesian cow is 900 gallons (4000 litres) in one lactation.’ From one ‘NZ Holstein-Friesian has flowed more than 120,000 litres of milk – enough to pour a glass for every fifth NZer. While the Friesian’s ability to pump out vatfuls of rich, frothy milk accounts for the greater part of its value, the farmer here also gets a bonus in the form of good quality beef. A 4-day-old bobby calf of a Jersey dairy cow is worth about \$45, but a Holstein-Friesian brings up to \$70. Friesians for fattening into beef or veal can sell for \$130 and 8-week-old calves fetch \$220. A newborn calf lives on its mother’s milk for about six months. Even when a farmer takes the newborn calf away to feed it powdered milk from a bucket, the cow’s body continues to make milk for a lactation period of about ten months, until shortly before the cow gives birth again and the cycle resumes. A cow can give birth throughout the year. As farmers have a set quota of milk to supply each day, their aim in husbanding the herd is to maintain a consistently high level of production, with cows drying up, calving and giving milk in strict rotation throughout the year.’ Incidentally, h[undreds of bloated cows were last night howling in agony in Southland after missing two milkings because of power cuts... when gales blew trees on to power lines... Most... [of the] 15,000 homes and properties in the region... were back on full supply yesterday but up to 100 rural consumers were expected to have to wait for their power to be restored... [S]haremilkers... said their cows had not been milked for 24 hours and were now pretty uncomfortable. “They’re up at the gates bellowing, waiting to be milked,”...

[‘During a trial of a robotic milking shed – which enables cows to enter the shed whenever they want without needing human assistance – some cows used it three times a day and the most popular time was midnight.’ By the way, m[jilk transport moved into a new era when the first train-load of milk arrived yesterday at the Kiwi Co-operative Dairies site at Whareroa...

The \$35 million cheese... casein and butter... plant opened at the former Tui Milk Products company’s Longburn site near Palmerston North in 1995 is being disassembled and packed off to Taranaki by its new owner, Kiwi Co-operative Dairies – with the jobs of its 360 workers.

...[‘the shape of NZ’s richest export industry hinges on a finely balanced vote by the nation’s 14,000 dairy farmers today. Proponents of the mega-merger of the largest processing companies were cautiously confident yesterday of winning the needed 75% approval, but with little to spare. The dairy industry is facing its greatest change since the Dairy Board was set up nearly 80 years ago. After weeks of intensive lobbying, dairy farmers will be asked to approve the merger of Hamilton-based NZ Dairy Group and Taranaki’s Kiwi Cooperative Dairies to create a \$12.5 billion giant, GlobalCo. It would be the biggest merger in NZ’s history and create a company twice the size of Telecom. The farmer’s decision could be fateful for the whole economy. GlobalCo would process and market 95% of the output of the industry that accounts for 7% of NZ’s GDP. Opponents of the merger, spearheaded by the Farmers for a Better Dairy Deal group, say the giant company could become “fat and lazy,” holding retailers, consumers and farmers to ransom by controlling milk supply.’

...‘AT THE old Te Aroha butter factory GlobalCo is a world away. The faded, wooden building on the edge of the Waikato town is far from this week’s gleaming arrival of NZ’s biggest company. Only rusting equipment and a stainless steel tanker body parked on the grass next to the Waihou River remain from its dairy heyday. But for a 73-year-old the factory his grandfather built in the early 1930s – and the one the grandson closed half a century later – is part of GlobalCo’s heritage. Its rise and fall mirrors the cooperative and competitive urges which have seen the dairy industry evolve from hundreds of small farmer groups – 474 in the mid-1930s – into one huge national company. It is the fifth merger the 73-year-old has been involved in during 30 years –

including 20 on the Dairy Board – of dairy industry politics. Any farmer will tell you it is the most bruising brand there is. However, the 73-year-old believes the latest merger will be better for farmers' business, allowing them to compete in a world market populated by multinational heavyweights. Across the green Waikato plains to the southeast, another dairy farmer – who has shared a similar farming heritage – has deeper concerns about what could be lost in the corporate devouring of dairy companies. "I have some real fears about having everything in one basket. If you get a crook chief executive or a board that can't handle it, or one that is out of touch with its owners, they do that at the risk of the total industry. That's really scary."]

...Up to half of the 1200 small-scale dairy farmers in the Waikato may have to change the way they are farming, says a M[AF] report... With above-average management skills and a lower level of debt loading, there was a positive outlook for the next... 10 years for 40ha dairy farmers. But the equity in their farms... erode[d] as land values dropped. For farmers with below-average management skills, it was likely they would already be facing a cash deficit, and the erosion of equity could be more serious. "These farmers should make a conscious decision on their future," [the report's]... author... said... T[his]... might mean selling the farm, introducing a sharemilker, or looking at uses[for the land] other than dairying...

Entries have opened for the Auckland sharemilker of the year competition with local farmers being encouraged to match the growth in entries in other provinces. Northland increased its competition entries by 50[%] last year, Bay of Plenty by 30[%] and Waikato by 22[%]. The regional competitions as well as the national final are being sponsored by the BNZ this year. The BNZ Auckland rural business manager... told the launch of the competition that the bank had a high respect for hardworking... sharemilkers: "They are the sort of people we want to bank." [Unfortunately, aspects of 'their work – such as stress and long, unsociable hours – have been blamed for a sharemilker committing suicide in the South Island' recently...

'His wife was in Hamilton running errands so the King Country sharemilker had no alternative but to take his two young sons to the cowshed last October. That, combined with a freak accident, led to the death of his elder son, says the coroner. Gus (4) was crushed to death on his father's rotary milking machine – the first death of its kind in NZ. Occupational Safety and Health investigators concluded Gus had been trying to get to his father – who was lubricating a turntable which had been sticking – when the boy climbed through a cow bail on the rotary table and on to the loading ramp. As the table rotated, Gus got caught in a 10cm gap between a stationary upright and the bail. A teat cluster holder swept him into the gap and Gus was crushed'...

'Two cows running loose on State Highway 10 caused havoc in traffic near Kerikeri, putting a driver in hospital and wrecking at least one car. One animal was killed when it charged head-on into a southbound car near Kapiro Rd. A few minutes earlier, another cow was put down after it had hit a second car.' In international news,] **Italian farmers blockaded Milan and Venice airports in a dramatic extension of their protest against tough E[U] milk quotas, as talks with the government to resolve the growing crisis ground to a halt. Farmers have been hit with \$336.5 million in fines, which have to be paid by the end of the month, for exceeding milk quotas in the 1995-96 season.** [Meanwhile, 'Japan's largest dairy producer has apologised for tainted low-fat milk that has caused 6500 people to suffer food poisoning. The problems were caused by a bacteria-laced tank valve at a milk packaging factory in Osaka.'

...powdered or 'dry milk is not the equivalent of raw milk. It is usually made from Grade B milk. That's why it's so cheap. Grade B milk has over 10 times the bacteria count of Grade A milk. Furthermore, pasteurization kills the bacteria, *but does not remove them*. Some researchers have raised questions about the effect of these dead "bugs" in the body. They may cause nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea in some susceptible children.'

...the NZ] Milk Corporation moved yesterday to allay fears over milk contaminated with cleaning fluid being sold in South Auckland. The corporation said it was confident it had retrieved all suspect bottles in the affected area... The corporation had isolated the contaminated product to two crates and had withdrawn all the bottles left on the shelves of the two dairies... that are believed to have sold the Anchor blue-top milk... leaving about 10 in circulation. More than 20 1-litre plastic bottles had since been recovered from[local] residents but none of the milk showed any sign of the... cleaning solution. A corporation spokes[person] said... the nature of the cleaning solution was not yet known, except that it was alkaline... [T]he corporation would investigate the solution and how it got into the bottles... [In the meantime, dairy] farmers already depressed by... lower [farm values] and high overdrafts have been further shaken by news of a suggested link between a protein in milk and diabetes.

...World-leading research to be unveiled to an international audience in Palmerston North today links the onset of insulin-dependent diabetes to a protein contained in milk from 80[% of NZ's]... three million... cows... The large number of cows producing A1 is the result of many years of breeding to obtain milk with more protein and less fat... About 5[%] of people are genetically vulnerable to the insulin-dependent form of the disease, and up to 1[%] of the population finally develop it... [T]he Dairy Board confirmed last night [that it is bracing] itself for fallout from the disclosure... The board... is urging people not to be put off drinking milk by a problem potentially affecting only a "tiny" proportion of the population[, but it]... suggests testing newborn children for predisposition to the disease to ensure they drink only milk containing another form of protein, known as A2, for which it is obtaining patents for potential derivative products... [Unfortunately,] genetic tests costing several hundred dollars [are only 60%] accurate, so there could be no guarantee that a person showing a negative result would not develop diabetes. [Furthermore, a] northern regional health authority spokes[person] said the issue of funding for such tests could not be resolved without proof of a causal link between milk and diabetes... Some[scientists also] say the theory is not proven and that it is dangerous to alarm people until there is firm evidence. Others say... [the] research shows the question urgently needs to be answered... Although N[Z] is the world's largest dairy exporter, an international trend to higher-earning, protein-rich milk... means... most countries have similar proportions of cows producing the A1 strain of casein... [which] spells potential trouble for dairy industries in most other countries as well... The latest research shows that milk is the chief "villain," but... other milk products containing protein [should be avoided by] those... who are susceptible... However, butter with its high fat content is ironically not such a strong suspect as a diabetes cause... [A professor] of the Auckland Medical School and Child Health Research Foundation, whose research was partly funded by the Dairy Board, is calling for cows yielding the suspect milk to be replaced... [But getting] rid of the A1 protein... is a much more difficult and expensive proposition than it sounds... [The professor] is conducting a study of predisposed Auckland children to learn whether A2 milk will slow the onset of the disease. This follows his collaboration with the Dairy Research Institute in a project which included a study of mice predisposed to diabetes. His work began... [after the discovery] of much higher rates of diabetes among... Samoan children living in N[Z] compared with those who stayed in their home country. This led to a study of world statistics showing a correlation between diabetes and milk consumption by children... [under 15. The incidence of diabetes in NZ – where '100kg of milk is consumed per person per year – is 10.1 cases per 100,000 people under 15. In Samoa, the corresponding figures are <10kg/year and <1/100,000. In Finland, 185kg/year and 35.3/100,000.'] Notable exceptions were Icelandic youngsters and those from the Masai of Africa, who drank lots of milk from "ancient" breeds of cows which produced A2 rather than A1 varieties.

...Stocks of special milk will be available to N[Z]ers susceptible to insulin-dependent diabetes... As the furore over the preliminary findings... [that suggested a] link... between a milk protein and the disease... abated yesterday, dairy officials vowed to increase supply of a milk without [the] implicated protein for those most at risk. But the special milk is likely to be given out only on a doctor's referral, and the patient will probably have to pay for it... Food such as bread, biscuits, muesli and other baked [items have also] been identified as containing the A1 protein, although in considerably smaller quantities than dairy products... The professor has, meanwhile, hit back at medical colleagues who have questioned his work and the way it was released. "There's been knee-jerk scepticism and I would expect better from my scientific colleagues than to make statements like that." [However, the professor claimed to have] no problems with international colleagues and... was asked to speak around the world. An overseas colleague yesterday said [that the professor] was internationally respected for his work.

...Dear old Federated Farmers – will they never learn? When... [a professor from] the Auckland Medical School discovered that a milk protein might cause diabetes in some people the chair[person] of Federated Farmers brushed aside the idea of breeding cows that would produce less

protein. Okay, the... theory is yet to be proved. But everyone knows how customers react to the whiff of a health scare... So dairy farmers face a marketing challenge. More than that, they face a mental challenge. They must look back coldly on a century of truly amazing growth and ask whether one wrong turn means that most of their cows now produce food that can hurt people – and hadn't they better breed harmless cows, and pretty damn quick? The Federated Farmers [chairperson] didn't see it that way. No, no, no. There were too "many millions tied up in dairy genetics." In other words: "Don't expect us to change." This is the first argument used by the [people] who owned buggy-whip factories: "Don't try to tell me them machines of Mr Ford's is ever gonna replace horses. I ain't gonna risk my money by switchin' to makin' them magneto things." Now imagine what would have happened if [the professor had only] pointed the finger at biscuits. In no time the biscuit [makers] would be putting on cosmetics for television and practising how to look like caring, responsible citizens: "Don't worry, folks. We've dumped all the bad flour. We've cleared the supermarket shelves. New flour shipments are on the way. Next week we'll have new products on the shelves, good ole wholesome biscuits – and every one made with a mother's care. Delicious, too, just like you've always loved them." But that wasn't the Federated Farmers way. Bristling. Defensive. Surly. Resentful. That's how they woo customers. Every cow-cocky in the country can get on his or her benders and thank God for the Dairy Board. It bounced up, confident and comforting. It promised cleaned-up milk within a year. No problem. Dairying has to survive. Otherwise we'll all be on the dole, but without any money to pay ourselves.

...Bottle feeding of babies can lead to adult diabetes... The warning applies not just to infant formula or cow's milk, but even expressed breast milk fed in a bottle... Research... in Arizona... has found that... breast-fed... babies usually filled their stomachs on the thin, sweet foremilk produced by their mothers and only took the fatty hindmilk if they needed it. In bottles the fat was mixed through the milk so that babies got more of it. Bottles were also easier to drink from, and babies could easily take more than they needed... [Consequently, b]ottle-fed babies were often overweight, which was a strong risk factor in the development of non-insulin-dependent diabetes... [T]he Arizona results had nothing to do with research by [an Auckland professor]... into possible links between cow's milk and insulin-dependent diabetes, which affects children.

...[M]ilk is rich in a complex sugar called lactose. This is more slowly absorbed than most sugars, and is handled better, except by people who are allergic to milk. They are usually lacking in *lactase*, the enzyme required for the digestion of lactose.' It is also 'best to steer away from dairy products, especially in the first year of life, if there is a history in the family of eczema or asthma. Whether we're meant to drink cow's milk is an interesting question. Cows have four stomachs compared to our one, and they've got different enzymes.' By the way, 'Brazil has discovered 28 cattle infected with foot-and-mouth disease. The cattle, which have been ordered destroyed, were found in Rio Grande do Sol near the Argentine border. Authorities have quarantined the area. The disease first appeared when officials destroyed 3000 cattle this month after 10 smuggled Paraguayan cattle grazing on Argentine pastures were found with anti-bodies for the virus. Argentina is the world's fourth-largest beef exporter, and Brazil has the largest herd with 170 million head. It has suspended imports of live cattle, pigs, sheep and goats from Paraguay and put troops along the 1000km border to block entry of suspect animals or meat products.'

... 'Britain is braced for food shortages at the supermarkets as an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) in pigs continues, with a countrywide ban on all movement of farm animals. The week-long ban imposed at the weekend closed all British livestock markets and abattoirs, prohibited hunting and also halted imports of live animals. The worst fears of Government vets were confirmed as the number of sites where FMD has been identified rose to six. It also emerged that at one farm in the northeast the infection had been present for "2 to 3 weeks" – longer than previously thought and enough time for it to have spread the length and breadth of the country. Some of the major supermarket chains urged consumers not to panic buy. The Agriculture Minister also asked that consumers not alter their shopping patterns. The international fallout from the disease outbreak gathered pace as Thailand and Romania joined the list of countries outside the EU which have banned pork and live animal imports from Britain. The European Commission has already imposed an export ban on British meat and live animals. Ireland has called up 300 troops to help police patrol its 386km border with Northern Ireland to keep out meat and livestock.'

... 'Britain yesterday announced a £152 million compensation package for farmers hit by FMD, as experts detected the highly contagious animal virus in new areas. After an emergency meeting with the PM, the Agriculture Minister also extended a ban on all livestock movement in the country for at least two weeks. As the disease continued to spread relentlessly, Britons were forced to curtail their leisure activities. The Government introduced powers allowing local authorities to place countryside footpaths off-limits and close areas of the countryside to everyone but essential workers. Key sporting events such as horse racing were cancelled for fear the movement of people could spread the disease. Saturday's Six Nations rugby international between Wales and Ireland in Cardiff has been postponed. The Irish Government requested the postponement, fearing fans returning from the match could carry the virus back to Ireland – which is so far free of infection – on their shoes or clothes. FMD can be passed on in animal faeces and borne by the wind in fine droplets for kilometres. Although not dangerous to humans, it can be passed on by people through breathing or sneezing. The promise of a compensation package for farmers is unprecedented. Farmers whose infected livestock were slaughtered were paid the market rate for the animals. But until now, those who had suffered financial losses because of the restrictions on movement had received nothing. Across the English Channel, France sealed off farms today and began a massive slaughter of 20,000 sheep imported from Britain. A farmer in the western Mayenne region, said: "This is terrible. They should do blood tests first. We're not certain these sheep are sick."

... 'At their 11ha farm on the Belgian coast, a farming couple are staring ruin in the face. Because 12 of their goats were imported from Wales last month, the couple have been ordered to destroy all 160 of their animals as alarm spreads about Britain's FMD outbreak. A personal catastrophe for one farmer is symptomatic of a wholesale crisis for the continent's agriculture, one which could eventually topple the common agricultural policy (CAP) that has played such a crucial role in the development of the EU. Britain's FMD outbreak comes just as Europe is battling against the effects of the BSE crisis. Brussels estimates that the BSE crisis this year will leave a mountain of unwanted beef of around 785 million tonnes. A cattle destruction scheme to dispose of 2 million cattle across Europe has had to be extended to include a further 1.2 million cows under a second plan, which allows the storage of tested meat. With two diseases to combat the central pillars of the 40-year-old CAP are beginning to crumble. The European Commissioner for Agriculture is prepared to admit publicly for the first time that the aims of the CAP, enshrined in the Treaty of Rome, are "not a good basis for future-oriented agriculture policy." The CAP was founded under an agreement in which German industry came to pay for French agriculture. Memories of food rationing and wartime hunger were still alive in the minds of millions of Europeans, so the aim was to encourage farmers to produce more food. Initially, the policy worked: food became more plentiful all year round, the EU became self-sufficient in all but tropical fruits, and from the point of view of the most efficient farmers the CAP was a goldmine. But from the late 1970s the combination of guaranteed prices paid to farmers and "modern" factory methods started to generate food mountains that by the following decade looked obscene. Worst of all, 80% of the money was ending up in the pockets of the biggest (and richest) 20% of the farmers. The cost of generous support for 9 million farmers now exceeds a crippling \$NZ90 billion a year, nearly half of the bloc's entire budget.'

... 'Eurotunnel workers were to disinfect all vehicles arriving in France from Britain after the FMD epidemic gripped the whole of Britain yesterday when outbreaks were confirmed for the first time in Scotland and Northern Ireland. More than 25,000 animals from confirmed sites have been slaughtered and their carcasses burned. One estimate suggested the outbreak could cost Britain £2.6 billion – almost as much as the entire annual subsidy to the farming industry. With much of the countryside already shut down, Britain's biggest landowner, the Forestry Commission, officially closed all its forests to the public for the first time in its 80-year history. Britain's leading dogs' show, Crufts, has been postponed. With supplies of British meat running out, the Government and industry leaders were to meet overnight to draw up emergency measures for limited numbers of healthy livestock to be slaughtered under controlled conditions to supply shops. The Agriculture Minister has come under pressure to explain why it did not respond to a warning last May that passengers from Nigeria and Ghana were bringing in potentially infected meat. This included entire butchered deer and dead monkeys carried in suitcases.'

...‘The British Ministry of Agriculture is investigating the idea that animal rights activists planted FMD in an attempt to discredit farming practices. As more cases of the disease were confirmed, a ministry source said the ministry believes terrorists could have copied the twisted scheme from the James Bond thriller *On Her Majesty’s Secret Service* – in which the evil Blofeld threatens to contaminate the world with the virus. “Many people in the department think it is no coincidence that farming has suffered swine fever and FMD outbreaks within nine months of each other after years of healthy herds.”’

...‘British farmers are fighting death squads sent on to their land to kill their stock as FMD continues to spread. Britain has started killing healthy farm animals in a desperate bid to keep the disease at bay. The action is also a bid to get importers like America to ease their bans on imports of meat and livestock. But the action has sparked a rural revolt. “There are a lot of farmers who won’t tolerate anyone coming in and slaughtering healthy animals.”’

...‘Britons in France have been bracing for an anti-British backlash triggered by the FMD outbreak, which comes smack in the middle of a scare about mad-cow disease, also a UK export. The double British whammy is costing European farmers billions of dollars in lost markets at home as well as abroad. But the atmosphere is not angry. It is one of resignation and deep despair, almost the response of an exhausted bull in the last stages of a bullfight’...

‘Portugal has banned bullfighting in a bid to stop FMD. Spain – where bullfighting is really big business – has taken no action against the sport. Portugal’s National Union of Bullfighters said it would meet government officials this week to look at other action – including extensive disinfecting of animals – in a bid to get the ban lifted.’ In Britain, ‘dogs starved of exercise are being put on diets. Demand for low-fat pet food has soared since FMD closed much of the British countryside to dog-walkers. A Sainsbury’s supermarket spokesperson told the *Mirror* newspaper that sales had risen 400% in the past four weeks’...

‘Britain’s blazing FMD funeral pyres risk giving people the human form of mad-cow disease, the British Government has admitted. Other assessments have suggested that E.coli and salmonella might also be released. However, the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Foods (MAFF) has not consulted local environmental health officers about the safest place to put the pyres to avert health risks. MAFF and other experts say the risk of people contracting CJD and other diseases from pollution arising from pyres is “very low.” But since everyone agrees that the epidemic itself poses no threat to human health, the cure appears to pose more danger than the disease. Meanwhile, British tourist chiefs say the holiday industry could be devastated by grim pictures of the diseased livestock being burned on the giant funeral pyres. “We are very concerned about what the FMD outbreak is doing to Britain’s reputation overseas,” said the British Tourist Authority. “Overseas visitors bring in about £13 billion every year to this country. Now people are either waiting to see what will happen or deciding to go elsewhere.” By the end of last week, according to MAFF figures, 7624 cows, 41,796 sheep, 3649 pigs and six goats had been burned’...

‘At least one million farm animals will have to be slaughtered if the British Government is to have any chance of containing the FMD crisis, says Britain’s National Farmers’ Union. But other estimates of the mounting epidemic suggest the kill may be double the figure.’ ‘The disease, though non-fatal, does have devastating economic consequences as the animals take a long time to recover. If vaccines were used it would mean British exports to disease-free countries would be banned. Vaccines are not effective against all strains, so outbreaks would occur anyway. In 1967, an outbreak lasted from October 23 until June 3, 1968. The virus, which thrives in winter months, is killed by heat and sunlight. In NZ,’ ‘the government also prefers to kill rather than vaccinate animals’...

‘The news organisation CNN has infuriated NZ border officials. CNN, which claims 50 million viewers worldwide, put a story on its website last Friday falsely listing NZ and AUS as countries suspected of having cases of the contagious stock illness ravaging Britain. NZ did not have FMD and never had.’

...‘Britain may deploy napalm flamethrowers – infamously used during the Vietnam war – as an emergency measure to help to destroy the carcasses of condemned animals. Maff is keeping the option open because of local shortages of the timber railway sleepers used for animal pyres and the difficulty of transporting them, and the large amounts of coal needed to burn with them, to remote areas of the countryside.’ In another development, ‘on Thursday Ireland became the third other European country, after France and the Netherlands, to confirm an outbreak of FMD. Irish food and animal exports were worth about \$US5.65 billion a year, about 10% of total export receipts. An estimated 60,000 jobs in agriculture and tourism are now at risk in the country’...

‘Britain’s Tourism Minister claims that FMD has not closed down the countryside, yet the vast majority of Britain’s country houses are shut. For the moment rural tourism appears to be on hold. Cancellations are soaring, while losses are estimated to be running at £100 million a week. The epidemic represents a body blow to an industry worth £12 billion a year, which supports about 380,000 jobs, and it is now threatening the agricultural show season.’

...‘What would 7500 rotting sheep carcasses smell like? Nobody could guess, and when the moment came the foreign press corps, camped on a perimeter road around Great Orton airfield in Cumbria, struggled to find the correct adjectives. It was a sick, heavy smell that seemed to cling to clothes and hair even when the wind had shifted and sent it another way. The Cumbria Tourist Board has just £20,000, raised as a fighting fund by local businesses, to counteract the latest images of “Wordsworth’s Lake District” that are being beamed around the world. Yesterday, as the number of cases rose to 634, the Government said it might reverse its policy and vaccinate livestock against the disease. According to a report in the *Times*, the Agriculture Minister will tell MPs today that the source of the outbreak was most likely smuggled meat thrown out by a Chinese restaurant that ended up in pigswill on a farm in Northumberland.’

...‘A million animals have been killed or are facing slaughter and the tourism industry is expected to lose up to \$NZ35 billion, but to Londoners the FMD crisis is out of sight and barely in mind. The pyre smoke does not reach the capital’s bars and offices, so conversation is as usual on football and the latest *EastEnders* development. Londoners are insulated from FMD not only by geography, but by their restaurant menus and supermarket freezers. The Masai, a cattle-breeding tribe in Kenya, have expressed more concern about FMD’s livestock-destroying effects. Representatives have volunteered their own expertise – and a cow urine and salt remedy – for combating the blight they call oloirobi.’

...‘Startling new evidence of scams practised by farmers to profit from the FMD slaughter has been uncovered on the day that a cull of 4000 sheep on the Brecon Beacons in Wales began. The investigation provides the first hard evidence that farmers are being offered diseased sheep for sale, so that they can infect their own flocks and claim hundreds of thousands of pounds in compensation, funded by British taxpayers. The investigation also reveals an official document showing how the Government allows farmers to make huge profits from cleaning up their farms, by hiring their own equipment to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) at exorbitant rates. Even ministers are unaware of the extent of this officially sponsored scam, though they are nominally responsible for it.’ ■ ‘Rare breeds of cows, goats and sheep – familiar from 16th century paintings by Dutch masters – are threatened with extinction by the FMD epidemic that has struck the Netherlands. The few remaining specimens of the Groningen Blaarkop, the Brandrood and the Lakenvelder could be caught up in the slaughter of barnyard animals. Today, the last 100 Schoonbeker sheep left in the world are due to be destroyed.’

...‘PET sheep hidden in a Scottish house for fear they would be slaughtered because of FMD were finally killed yesterday. They didn’t have the disease’...

‘Grunt, the rare NZ Kune Kune pig which rose to stardom in a hit British children’s film, is facing the chop because its owner had visited a farm infected by FMD – even though the owner wore gloves and disinfected boots, and the pig isn’t infected. The fate of the pig now rests with the British High Court.’

...‘The British Government has made its highest compensation payout for a single animal culled during the FMD outbreak – £50,000 for a pedigree breeding ram. The prized Swaledale sheep was put down after the disease broke out close to the farm where it was grazing. The payment would have compensated the owners for the ram’s track record and future losses. “This animal was never destined for the supermarket shelves.” Controversy over the costs of the FMD crisis emerged after newspapers reported that 37 farmers whose livestock was slaughtered were to receive more than £1 million each.’

...Defra said the 37 claims – one for £4.2 million – were still being considered. The *Independent on Sunday* had said the EU was threatening to withhold millions of pounds over allegations of fraud in compensation claims. The news came as an economist said that vaccinating animals would have been at least £3 billion cheaper than slaughtering them in the compulsory culls ordered by the Government.

...‘Closing Britain’s countryside over FMD was wrong and should not happen again, the British Government admits. This week, the Food and Farming Minister said that criticism of the response to the outbreak was justified. “Undoubtedly there are some things that with hindsight we would do differently or better.” ‘The Government estimates the tourist and leisure industries lost up to £5.3 billion.’ In related news, **the rabbit calicivirus disease... was released in Sydney yesterday as pet owners were urged to have their rabbits vaccinated against it. The Agriculture Minister... released 20 rabbits infected with RCD in the Cattai National Park on the city’s outskirts in a bid to aid the spread of the disease in the metropolitan area. The virus was first officially released in N[SW] at Wagga Wagga... last October, as part of a national initiative to decimate A[US]’s feral rabbit population.**

...*The war against feral rabbits might not yet be won, but a biological weapon is giving farmers hope...* [One NSW] sheep farmer estimates that in the past decade rabbits have nibbled him out of hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost production... But now, thanks to... [RCD, the farmer] no longer sees hundreds of the pests romping, bouncing and eating their way around his 1,600-hectare spread. Last Thursday, on a tour of the property, [the farmer] saw just one... “It’s just a great load off my mind that my sheep have plenty to eat.” The destruction unleashed by wild rabbits in A[US] is formidable: they ruin topsoil, endanger native flora and fauna, and imperil farmers’ profits... All told, they chomp \$A600 million off GNP each year in crop and soil damage... Unlike cattle and sheep, rabbits uproot the plants they eat, making regeneration harder. Says... [the] chief veterinarian officer at the N.S.W. Department of Agriculture: “Rabbits are the worst environmental disaster that A[US] has ever faced... [They] must be gotten rid of.” ...like a bad house guest, they have long overstayed their welcome... [T]wo... rabbits... can become 184 in just 18 months. RCD, however, changes the equation. Since the virus’ escape... from a quarantined lab... in October 1995, and its subsequent controlled release into infested areas, rabbit numbers in some districts have fallen by... 95%. Although RCD is not a complete solution – for some reason, the virus is less effective in rabbits under eight weeks old – it provides hope for many beleaguered ecosystems... Its lethal nature is impressive: the virus killed 64 million rabbits in Italy in six months. Forty-four countries worldwide are now using it. “It’s just a bonanza,” says... [the head of the] Otago Regional Council in [NZ]’s South Island, where the virus may be let loose later this year... Ever since rabbits were brought from England[to AUS] and released as game in the 1840s, farmers have waged war upon them. But most forms of culling are hugely expensive. The disease myxomatosis... [– which, incidentally,] can take weeks to kill, [whereas with RCD] it is all over within 30 to 40 hours... [–] wiped out 99% of the pests after it was introduced in 1950, but its effectiveness waned as rabbits became resistant to it. While it is impossible to gauge [AUS’s rabbit population] accurately – estimates range from 200-300 million – it is known that even after a 70% reduction, rabbits can return to their previous numbers in a year.

...The deadly... disease which is wiping out millions of rabbits in A[US] was released after inadequate research, say European and American scientists. They say there was no guarantee the disease could not jump species... The A[US]n Animal Health Laboratory disagrees. “Our testing of [RCD] is the most comprehensive study that we know of into the host range for an animal virus,” the deputy director... said. But... [a virologist] from... Oregon State University... said even if the tests were perfect, they could not foresee what would happen if the virus mutated. More concerns arise from the consequences of [RCD] in Europe, where it appeared out of the blue in the mid-1980s. In Britain, polecats and some birds have been affected. In Spain, where rabbits are the main food for at least 29 predators, red fox litters have declined and the imperial eagle... is... suffering.

...Giant eagles in A[US]’s outback have become a menace... now that a deadly virus has killed off the hordes of rabbits that the birds used to feed on... [RCD] has cut the rabbit numbers by up to 95[%], sending the eagles to the highways looking for roadkill. Motorists report terrifying tales of having their windcreens smashed and steel roofs torn off by eagles trying to flee from their meals as vehicles approach... [Near] Broken Hill... an eagle... crashed straight through [a van’s] window. The driver fled as the bird tore the cab apart looking for a way out... [● A Pukekohe rabbit farmer claims to have] obtained British vaccination information that rabbits suffered horribly from the effects of [RCD] – they convulsed and suffocated to death... Virus replication and tissue damage trigger uncontrolled clotting of the blood which blocks off small blood vessels in all body organs...

An Auckland company which put plans to export rabbit meat on hold when... RCD... was accidentally released... from research facilities to the A[US]n mainland... is to put pressure on parliamentarians to prevent its introduction in this country. Landcare Resources Ltd... is to press for time to prove its claim that rabbit meat and fur can make valuable export items, and the trade could control animal numbers in the South Island high country. The company... says that the commercial potential for rabbit products from a country free of RCD has never been properly assessed... “We are[also] sitting pretty without myxomatosis...” ...prices from \$12 to \$14 a kilogram could be earned from local sales for human consumption... inferior parts of the carcass are in strong demand from petfood companies... and... rabbit fur is coming back into fashion overseas... The company’s plans for capturing rabbits would involve putting traps on runholders properties. Rabbits would be billeted with farmers to control animal numbers to local body specifications... Expert reviewers who are studying the application to import RCD are due to make their report by the end of this month. The matter will go to the M[AF] and then to the cabinet before being made public.

...[MAF] yesterday rejected the idea of importing [RCD. The NZ Herald]... burrows into the reasons behind the decision. More than a century ago the country’s head rabbit inspector told Parliament that despite improvements in poisoned grain, no comprehensive method of destroying the pest had been found. The inspector concluded that without such a breakthrough “the annual destruction of rabbits must be a continuous tax on the country.” Central South Island farmers – taxed to their limits by the pest through the intervening generations – thought their prayers had finally been answered with the sudden arrival of [RCD] in the 1980s... The virus kills by enlarging internal organs... and causing respiratory and heart failure... The [person] charged with deciding whether [RCD] should be let loose in N[Z] knows long-suffering farmers will be upset and angry at his refusal... But the Director-General of Agriculture... said there was not enough information about how [RCD] spreads and how effective it would be in N[Z] to give approval... In two years A[US] had[not been able to pin-point how [RCD] had jumped from the quarantine island and how it spread after that, although insects, notably the bush fly, were top suspects. N[Z] had fewer insect varieties which could perform a similar role... Part of the mystery surrounding the virus goes back to its 1984 origins when it was first reported in a shipment of German Angora rabbits three days after arrival in China. Subsequently millions of Chinese rabbits were infected. Scientists do not know why, but... the... shipment[may have been] exposed to a new agent from some unknown animal source in their food or environment... It quickly spread... to... Europe... [There] is virtually no evidence of [it causing] harm to other species... [However, the director-general – who] assessed the health risks posed... to humans as “low but not zero,” and... [the] issue of rabbit predators switching to native prey ...as a “manageable problem[” – points out that while]... the low-level threats were not reasons for declining to import the virus, they could not be ignored, particularly when put against the doubts about its benefits. Those question marks made an illegal introduction of the virus dangerous and counterproductive, compromising the chance to use it more effectively in the future.

...Agriculture border officers will be on alert for any attempt to smuggle in... [RCD] after it was officially rejected as a pest-control method... The decision... to reject the virus could also be challenged in the High Court by the applicant group of regional councils and Federated Farmers... The chair[person] of the applicant group... called the decision astonishing... “Even if it did not work, nothing would be lost by attempting it.” ...[furthermore, it] created a perpetual border and surveillance problem against the virus’ unauthorised or accidental arrival... costing at least \$300,000 a day... Agencies would have to maintain a continual state of readiness to eradicate the virus if it arrived, but such attempts would fail... [Yesterday t]he Minister for Biosecurity... said all concerned should work together to examine all methods of rabbit control.

...The *Clutha Leader* understands that the chicken cholera experiment at Clydedale gives little or no prospect of success. [However, good] results for destroying rabbits have been obtained in Queensland by poisoning water with the intestines of rabbits which had previously died of chicken pox... [By the way, opinions] differ about how and when rabbits were introduced to N[Z] but the consensus is that they came from Europe and Africa. The R[CD] Application Group claims N[Z]'s first rabbits were released by Captain Cook in 1777 but they died out. An old *New Zealand Heritage* magazine says missionaries introduced rabbits into Northland in the 1820s. A couple of decades later they had reached... Southland. Another view is that acclimatisation societies introduced European rabbits as a game animal in the 1850s. The pioneers who brought in the animal would have had little idea of the damage the rabbits were to wreak on the landscape more than 100 years later.

...Legions of [NZers] have considered the only good rabbit to be a dead one and have pursued that goal with missionary zeal. Several times they have had the pest nearly beaten. But when it comes to the incredibly fertile rabbit, near enough is not good enough... Early attempts at control were[also] frustrated by a conflict of interest. Rabbits may have been one [person's] plague but they were another's harvest. Between 1870 and 1945 an average of 13.3 million rabbit skins and 1.8 million carcasses were exported each year. Farmers licensed or paid rabbiters to battle... rabbits... The rabbitier sometimes took his pay simply in the right to kill and often paid the farmer a share of his profits. In those circumstances it was not in the rabbitier's interest to kill off his quarry and many farmers enjoyed the financial rewards. The result was, effectively, rabbit farming. Apart from the native falcon, there were no natural enemies to slow the rabbit explosion. European solutions were sought. Ferrets arrived in 1882 and the Department of Agriculture bred large numbers to release. The department also advertised widely in the British press for live stoats and weasels. Between 1884 and 1886, 4000 ferrets, 3099 weasels and 137 stoats were liberated. Run holders joined in the breeding of the predators. Domestic cats had already been used. The predators failed to stem the rabbit tide... It was the settlers' land development practices – in particular the heavy grazing of tall tussock, which rapidly converted many areas into rabbit-friendly environments. Nowhere was this more so than in the grasslands... east of the main mountain divide running up the South Island... Between 1850 and 1880 these virgin tussock grasslands were invaded by sheep. In Otago, for instance, sheep numbers increased from 59,000 to 694,000 in 1861. Fire was used to create the short grassland needed for sheep. This made very attractive conditions for rabbits, especially when heavily grazed by sheep. Over-stocking, of both sheep and rabbits, was extreme. Between 1877 and 1884 sheep runs totalling 628,000ha were abandoned in Otago... In 1876... the Rabbit Nuisance Act [had been] passed. Rabbit boards were set up and paid for by landowners, who also had to do rabbit control work. In 1886, Government subsidies were introduced... Until the 1940s the main control methods were poisoning with phosphorus or strychnine, shooting, trapping and fumigation of burrows with chloropicrin or smoke. Weak rabbit control and the run-down of farms during... [WW2] meant that by 1947 the rabbit problem had again grown. With the Rabbit Nuisance Amendment Act 1947, known as the "killer policy," total war was declared on the rabbit. Farmer levies were matched by a Government subsidy. Rabbit and rabbit products were... decommissioned by a progressive levy on all sales. By 1953 the levy rose to 66.6[%], and in 1956 trading in rabbit products was totally banned. By 1960 live rabbits could only be kept by hospitals, zoos and research centres. It was said there was even a move to ban the sale of stuffed toy rabbits. At the peak of the crisis, when the hillsides seemed to move with rabbits, farmers flocked to join the crusade. The first battles were won rapidly... In the early 1950s the poison of choice was arsenic. By the mid-1950s sodium monofluoroacetate (1080) became the standard poison and aerial application revolutionised rabbit control. The early successes were so spectacular that a total eradication policy was adopted in 1959. But complacency was growing among farmers despite strident annual reports calling for greater effort. In 1968 most boards were just cropping the rabbits which remained at low density, except in a few hot spots... That year was the peak of the boards. There were 210 of them. A few years earlier questions had been raised by a visiting U[S] ecologist... about the wisdom of around 2000 rabbit board members meeting to decide the activities of 1000 rabbiters at an annual cost of \$19 million. Others came to share his view and in 1968 the Agricultural Pest Destruction Council was formed under a new act. Rabbit boards became pest boards with responsibility for a wider range of pests... In 1971 the total eradication policy was officially abandoned and replaced by one of control. In 1979 pest board spending was \$10 million, of which the Government contributed 65[%]... In 1983 the Agricultural Review Committee reported... rabbit populations were generally at acceptable levels... Among its recommendations were that Government funding should be phased out except for those areas where environmental qualities were threatened. A separate review of regional government and resource law overtook the reorganisation of pest destruction. In 1989 it became a responsibility of the newly formed regional councils. Rabbit management had to compete for funds with other community demands. Only... parts of [the South Is]land... continued to receive Government support via the Rabbit and Land Management Programme. In 1993 the Biosecurity Act came into effect. It required the benefits of undertaking pest control to exceed its costs and the benefits of control through a regional pest management strategy to exceed those of individual action. In June 1995 the Rabbit and Land Management Programme was axed and the Government cut its \$3 million a year contribution. In 1996 the total annual cost of rabbits to the economy was estimated to be at least \$23 million... There was also an estimated \$8 million of lost production due to rabbit grazing[– although r]abbit products... generate \$5 million worth of sales each year...

The war against rabbits in N[Z] is old... Farmers' threats to take matters into their own hands and release deadly diseases against the wishes of the Government are equally longstanding. In the 1980s, South Island farmers were begging to be allowed to use myxomatosis to wipe out rabbits – cute and cuddly to city folk, vermin to farmers... Some threatened to illegally introduce a myxomatosis-infected flea. That controversial disease, which causes a slow and painful death, was introduced in the early 1950s. Government action in 1977 outlawed its use. During the 1980s and 1990s, university research has been carried out on destructive agents from rabbit bait, including oral contraceptives, to the use of wild cats and ferrets as possible agents of destruction. The idea of using special grass as a contraceptive was discussed. In Auckland, Cornwall Park rabbits were gassed in their burrows. Lobbying continued for myxomatosis but, in 1992, a joint A[US-NZ] research project began into the potential of a new viral disease, rabbit haemorrhagic disease – later branded [RCD]. Myxomatosis was ruled out[again] in 1993 and farmers looked to [RCD] for salvation... At the end of 1995, the Government gave approval for [RCD] to be imported for testing, to the concern of wildlife lobby groups. By early 1996, farmers and regional councils were clamouring for permission to[also] import the virus. Despite pleas not to smuggle [RCD in, NZ] farmers facing huge rabbit control bills talked openly of encouraging someone to go to A[US] and fetch it. Government delays in making a decision led to more talk of an "accidental" arrival... Last month the Government said... N[Z] would not import the disease. Yesterday it was... announced that it had arrived.

...An Auckland company which planned to exploit the commercial potential of [RCD]-free rabbits in export markets says it has had the rug pulled from under it with the discovery of the disease in the South Island[, although]... it... contends that if the spread of the virus could be brought under control or it could be eliminated, there are... still... good prospects to build a valuable trade. The company had orders from A[US] for 16 tonnes of rabbit skins... as well as interest in meat sales to Asian countries... [A]s well as selling the meat and skins from rabbits there could be a lucrative trade in tissues not infected with the virus for bio-research purposes... Japan and the U[S]... used... rabbit brains and blood... in human health research... Another company... was set up out of Christchurch to process rabbits two years ago and sales have already topped \$800,000. Yesterday it... sent its staff home and told customers it could not deliver orders after the M[AF] told it to stop processing. The risk of the disease spreading to the North Island was also concerning workers at the country's largest commercial rabbit operation, The Shearing Shed in the Waikato.

...A[USn] monitoring of RCD] suggests its surprise appearance in N[Z] may not be as devastating to the nation's rabbit population as expected. The latest surveillance shows that the success of the disease has been highly variable in cooler areas with rainfall of more than 300mm a year,

which would encompass most of N[Z]. In semi-arid and arid areas of A[US] the disease has been far more effective, killing up to 95[%] of rabbits. However, immunity among young rabbits is causing major problems and where the kill has been high, predators are turning to native wildlife. Researchers also believe longer-term effectiveness will decline as the virus weakens and rabbits' resistance strengthens. This is a trend which, in 40 years, has reduced myxomatosis death rates from an initial 90[%] to as low as 10[%]. RCD]... was found in rabbits in the Cromwell area on Tuesday and five farms there have been quarantined... [However], irritation is growing in the Cromwell area at MAF attempts to contain... [t]he virus... The ministry's brief is to eradicate the disease and possibly recover the cost of containing RCD from those responsible for releasing it.

...South Island farmers suspected of importing the... disease want an amnesty from prosecution in exchange for information on how the killer rabbit control broke out. They say they will only help authorities to gather information... if they can be assured they will escape punishment. But... [MAF has] indicated the Government could not be seen to be condoning the breach of the Biosecurity Act by turning a blind eye. About 80 farmers met [the Minister of Agriculture] last night at Cromwell... The minister pleaded with the group for information... But his pleas were mainly met with wry smiles and chuckles... A team of eight police officers and a MAF investigator have [already talked] to people within the... quarantine zone.

...Rejoicing farmers who spread the illegal [RCD] may yet feel the clutches of the law – despite yesterday's announcement that they would escape prosecution under the Biosecurity Act... Legal experts argue... [MAF's] decision to let farmers off the hook was based on too narrow an interpretation of the law. Police stood down from the Operation Lowburn probe into the release of [RCD] are privately livid... their hands are tied... They returned to regular duties yesterday after public statements from M[AF] chiefs... that there were no provisions in the act to prosecute people for spreading the disease... But pressure building in political and legal circles could yet see the police operation reignited... Labour's biosecurity spokes[person]... said it was an outrage that people could admit to having deliberately spread the virus and escape penalty... [Even] the Biosecurity Minister... said farmers who spread the disease had put the country's agricultural lifeblood at risk. "We simply rely on millions of people entering this country to be honest, and farmers rely on that more than most,"... [But the] Minister of Agriculture... last night defended the decision... Prosecuting farmers for being accessories after the fact was extreme. "I think we've actually got more important things to do. Obviously whoever broke the Biosecurity Act and brought this virus into the country is not being let off the hook... I hope the police are directing their efforts to try and find out who that was." ...Anyone found guilty... of importing the disease faces a maximum prison term of five years or a \$100,000 fine.

...Agricultural officials looked resigned last night to... [RCD's] conquest of the whole of N[Z]... Acknowledging that the disease had probably spread over hundreds of thousands of hectares[, MAF]... lifted a controlled-area designation on the five farms where the outbreak was found... Although there has been no official confirmation that the disease has spread to the North Island[, MAF's] chief veterinarian... said the indication from farmers was that it had already been released. [A] [Mackenzie Country farmer... who helped spread the virus, said hundreds of farmers throughout the country now had stocks, distributed through the back country network... [C]arrots intended for a 1080 poisoning programme in the Mackenzie Basin would instead be laced with RCD to help its spread... The 1080 poisoning programme is [actually considered by many to be] ineffective. "What happens is some rabbits eat the (1080) bait and die. But rabbits are pretty resourceful. Other rabbits see them dying after eating the bait and don't go near it. You see it happening... The calicivirus on the other hand will take out a whole generation of bait-shy rabbits..."

...[a] Central Otago... farmer... farms 5000 merino sheep – and up to 70,000 rabbits. Walking at his... property, near Cromwell, you creep across a carpet of rabbit dung, sidestep warrens and watch the hillside come alive as colonies of rabbits bolt for cover. Dust blows from barren land dotted with the stumps of gnawed tussocks. His experiences show why farmers have gone to such incredible lengths, ignoring restrictions on importing... [RCD] and helping it to spread rapidly through the South Island in an orchestrated campaign of agricultural disobedience... These are desperate [people] fighting for their futures... [who] see RCD as their saviour... Rabbits have... cost him \$100,000 over the past two years, \$80,000 more than the next biggest expense on his farm, shearing. [The farmer] has paid the bill to keep afloat... Today [the farmer] has on hold a 1080 poisoning programme, costing \$25,000... "It's \$25,000 I haven't got...,"... So to the mild-mannered... farmer, RCD equals an immediate saving of \$25,000.

...[a Christchurch meat] processing company stands to lose a rabbit export order worth more than \$100,000... The 600 carton order was shipped to the U[S]... earlier this month... and is due to arrive in three weeks. "There's now a big cloud over it. It's a matter of waiting to see whether the U[S] authorities will let it in... If they don't, then that's the end of business. It is a lot of money to lose." ...the company had [already] lost a \$1000 export order to Tahiti. The five cartons of meat rejected at Christchurch airport had to be dumped... U[S] importers switched from A[USn] to NZ] suppliers following the outbreak of RCD across the Tasman two years ago... [A rabbit] skin processor... who handled up to 3000 skins a week, was also uncertain about the future of his family business, just north of Christchurch. [The company] collects and dries the skins of rabbits killed for meat... Most of the skins ended up as Akubra felt hats in A[US]. The problem] was, if shooters were no longer killing for meat markets, the company would not be getting pelts for processing. It was unlikely professional hunters would keep shooting for 20c a pelt... "The 20c for a rabbit skin wouldn't pay for the bullet to shoot them." ...a... North Canterbury... rabbitier... [who has] cut out a living shooting... rabbits... [for] 36 years... said... "Rabbitiers were [already] the lowest paid workers in N[Z],"... Meanwhile, Christchurch firearms shop Gun City said business had picked up. "Hunters are realising how valuable shooting is as a sport. And this has reminded them that they better go out and have a crack... But in the long term, they are confident the animals will survive. To them, RCD stands for Rabbit Control Dream."

...*Kill rabbits with bullet, not virus* We had rabbit on the dinner menu the other night – not the stringy, tasteless Chinese import half the size of a bobby calf, but a young buck shot on a King Country farm with a single .22 bullet... As youngsters, we roamed the hills above Te Kuiti at every opportunity to hunt rabbits with a .22 rifle. More often than not we returned empty-handed, cursing the vigilance of the rabbit control officer who had roamed the same patch only a day or two before. Rabbit control officers – and rabbit boards – are now part of rural history. And the rabbit has returned. Farmers, I'm afraid, can blame themselves for that because, once the rabbit population was brought under control, they objected to paying the rabbit board levy... All the talk about calicivirus, and its danger – real or implied – to livestock, has triggered discussion on other forms of rabbit control. Bring back rabbit boards, I say. Bring back a bounty on rabbit tails to encourage youngsters to take a stroll into the hills with some prospect of profitable gain. [Which 'reminds me of the time when a certain rabbit board ordered 28 tins of poison. Somewhere along the line, the letter I in TIN became an O. You can imagine the consternation when 28 tons of poison was delivered!']

...Conservation officials are gearing up to protect native species from predators as rabbit populations are hit by [RCD]... The Minister of Conservation... hoped to decide on Monday how to respond to the threat of rabbit-starved predators... switching to endangered native animals... [T]he full department programme to protect all 29 species... susceptible to predator switching... would cost [up] to \$3 million, but with the slower spread of the outbreak so far the initial response would not cost that much... At most risk from the 29 species... is the rare black stilt. Only a 100-strong population of the ground-nesting birds remains along rivers in the MacKenzie Basin where farmers have been spreading the rabbit disease.

...A colony of rare Argente de Champagne rabbits in Christchurch will be among the first to receive vaccinations for... [RCD]. Keepers at the Willowpark Wildlife Reserve would be devastated if their charges succumbed to the virus. Fewer than 80 Argente de Champagne rabbits are left in the world and all but 10 live at the Christchurch reserve. The remainder live in captivity in the lower North Island... The rabbits, also called silver rabbits, originated in France, but died out there when [RCD] was released 10 years ago. Fortunately, a colony had been released on to one of the Auckland Islands about 110 years ago by a humane society, to ensure that shipwrecked sailors would at least have food. When... [DoC] decided to return the island to its natural state five years ago, the rabbits were saved... The director... said the reserve was not in a panic, because the rabbits were kept in virtual quarantine anyway, but they would be vaccinated as soon as possible... The president of the Veterinary Association...

said 5000 vaccine doses would be distributed to veterinary clinics in the next couple of days, with South Island clinics receiving priority... M[AF] had earmarked another 5000 doses, and 5000 would be kept in reserve.

...A M[AF] staff member has been suspended after claims [the staff member] was involved in spreading... [RCD. A]nother staff member went to MAF bosses with the allegations on Friday. Police have been called in to investigate... However, it was understood the suspended worker had not supplied RCD to the farmers and was not involved in its importation. [MAF's] chief veterinary officer... said the only samples of RCD held by MAF were destroyed last year after being tested to see what effect the virus would have on kiwis. The suspended worker was not involved in the tests, carried out by two people unconnected with MAF... [Two kiwis] were killed to check the results... the other two[are] in the Kiwi House in Whangarei.

...a Northland tribe[that] sanctioned the use of... [4 kiwis for RCD experiments is] annoyed the disease had been introduced in the South Island... "While the kiwis injected with the disease were not affected we don't know what affect it will have on other animals,"... South Island Maori... said the introduction of animals and plants by early European settlers had done huge damage and the... virus could be a continuation of that practice.

...I am, like many rural N[Z]ers, enraged by the release of... [RCD]. This is not because I am upset by the killing of little furry bunnies. Those of us who live on farms are not likely to be sentimental about rabbits, any more than we are about possums or rats. These introduced pests cause problems for us and we shoot, trap, or poison as best we can... But most of us don't believe that introducing another pest is a long-term solution to any problem. I have another reason for being deeply angry. As a teacher I try to teach respect for law and for democratic process. How can I do that in a society where respected adults selfishly do what they want, without regard for law or for the consequences of their actions for other people? I would like to see all tax-avoiding, greedy, resource-gobbling creatures trapped... or suffering some deserved disease – but that doesn't give me an excuse to go and put poison in their water supplies. I'd like to protect high country tussock too – but that doesn't give me an excuse to introduce scrapie to rid the hills of sheep. The farmers or their cronies who have released this virus have deliberately poisoned other people's land... and damaged other people's livelihoods... However, the main reason for my anger is my sense of the futility of this action. What will happen when rabbits develop resistance, as they will? I'm old enough to remember my grandfather... talking about how myxomatosis would fix the rabbit problem... We need a coordinated approach in every rural area to managing... the rabbit (and possum, rat, ferret, stoat, cat, goat and deer) populations from increasing... Otherwise our children and grandchildren will be facing the same issues and maybe even more virulent plagues.

...A[n anxious] magician took his star rabbit to the brink of the calicivirus killing fields... [to avoid cancelling] two sellout shows in Oamaru and risk youngsters' wrath... "The shows were planned months ago, we had to push on. I couldn't let down all these kids and you can't have a magic show without a rabbit,"... His seven-year-old star showed no signs of stage fright although it was involved in an uncanny disappearing act at the end of the performances. "We usually let people meet him after the show but we had to keep him backstage in quarantine,"... The magician did not have time to vaccinate his co-star before heading south... [The secretary]-treasurer of the N[Z] ring of the International Brotherhood of Magicians... said about 70 magicians nationwide used rabbits. "I can sympathise with South Island farmers but... I'd be devastated if the rabbit didn't come out of the hat – they are pets as well as workers." ...getting replacements could be a problem. "You have to train them, they have to be non-aggressive. They need a lot of handling and care." His rabbits... will be vaccinated this week. [□ So far, 'three pet rabbits have died in Dunedin.']

...AN 0800 number for ordering the [RCD] vaccine was mistakenly made public last week... [T]he company that distributes the vaccine, said it received an average of 30 calls a day from pet owners wanting the vaccine [during the] week. The phone number was set up exclusively for vets wanting to order it... "We won't run out of vaccine,"... said [the company's project manager, who] did not want his company identified, fearing... "untoward reaction... The problem was we didn't know how many pet rabbits there were in N[Z]. We took a guess and ordered 20,000 and we still have 5000 in stock." It is up to vets to set their own charges for the vaccine, which is produced by Auckland company Cyanamid (NZ) Ltd. [A] Auckland Veterinary Centre vet... said only three rabbit owners have had their pets vaccinated at his practice, which has 30 doses at a cost of \$18 each... [The] Shearing Shed manager... said the Waitomo-based tourist attraction would have to pay \$1500 to vaccinate nearly 300 German angora rabbits and a further \$2000 a year for booster shots... But the... [manager] could get enough vaccines to inoculate only 50 of her rabbits. "We had to do our breeding stock first, especially our bucks, because they can produce more rabbits." ...Formerly known as Rabbit World, the business shears the rabbits for tourists and then processes the fibre into yarn... Meanwhile, concern... that calicivirus poses a threat to humans and may spread to hares is drawing a mixed response from scientists, politicians and lobby groups... The case of a Mexican laboratory assistant who ate and even slept with infected rabbits and developed high antibodies was not cause for alarm, the chair[person] of the RCD application group... said last night... [because] the case was not a sign of infection. The environment group Friends of the Earth believes the case raises unresolved scientific questions. Both groups, however, have been unable to get more details of the case from the Mexican authorities. An epidemiologist at Lincoln University... believes the extent of the risk to human health is unknown and that the only human research – carried out in A[US –] was "weak, poorly designed and done under the pressure of time. It appears that after virus exposure the rate of RCD antibody production doubled as did the rate of reported illnesses, suggesting but not proving a human health risk,"... [A] public health medical senior adviser... said even if the disease appeared to pose a low risk to humans now, it could change as it spread and was likely to mutate... [C]alicivirus was present in commercial rabbit farms in China, England and across Europe, but health authorities were satisfied the virus posed no risk and rabbit meat continued to be consumed.

...The cabinet has postponed a managed release of calicivirus until next week... Ministers had insufficient information to decide on any firm action and called for three urgent reports for next Monday's cabinet meeting on how to handle management of the disease... M[AF] will report on the merits of a managed release; the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology will report on what research needs to be done to support management options; and... [DoC] will provide more information on predators' switching from rabbits to native animals. Parties interested in using the virus as a control tool... have been invited to Wellington tomorrow to discuss the matter with the Minister for Biosecurity[, who]... acknowledged it was no longer feasible to eradicate the virus from N[Z] and there was an urgent need to gather more information about[its] circulation... Information to date suggested... that only minor "rabbit-to-rabbit" spread had occurred... But the agriculture spokes[person] for Act... a former president of Federated Farmers... said any lengthy delays in spreading the disease could see a once-in-a-century opportunity slip away. "The short shelf-life of RCD... means that the window of opportunity to obtain a maximum kill will only exist this spring and summer,"...

The uncertain killing power of the illegally imported... [RCD] may force the Government's hand... at the cabinet meeting on Monday... to bring in a known virulent strain from A[US]... The Minister of Agriculture... told Parliament that the Government could not wait the three to six weeks needed to identify the illegal strain, let alone the six months to gauge its virulence. If the existing strain... had low killing power such delays would allow rabbit populations to build an immunity to the disease, creating the "worst of both worlds." ...After a parliamentary select committee briefing earlier yesterday, [MAF's] chief veterinary officer... said some South Island farmers spreading the disease might have inadvertently made it useless. [RCD] was a temperamental organism, capable of being inactivated by heat, refrigeration and dilution in water. Farmers might... not be applying high enough concentrations of the virus on baits to create lethal infections. Rabbits which did not get a fatal dose could build up immunity... A managed release of a known strain would allow better information on how it was behaving in N[Z] conditions. It would also allow... [DoC] to run its predator control programme in tandem with declines in rabbit numbers to prevent... [them] switching to endangered native species.

...The Crown Law Office said yesterday that it was illegal to spread... [RCD], an opinion which opposes legal advice released by... [MAF] last week. But the development has not dented... South Island... farmers' enthusiasm for spreading the illegally imported disease... [However, the PM]

has signalled Cabinet is tomorrow likely to approve full-scale introduction of... RCD... [Meanwhile, the Education] Minister... has been playing down reports Cabinet ran a sweepstake on how long it would take... [RCD] to be illegally released... [Act's leader said the minister] told him of the sweepstake's existence during a brief airport encounter last month... "[The minister]... had taken six weeks, and then we discussed whether or not [the minister had] won, but that was difficult to determine, because we don't know when it did come in. It indicates that despite the decision not to import the virus, the ministers did not think for a minute that would stop it..." [The minister's spokesperson said his] comments had been a joke...

M[AF] is still asking North Island farmers not to spread... [RCD] for another two weeks until the Government legalises it... Despite farmer reports that stocks of the virus... had been sent across Cook Strait, all... tests of dead rabbits on North Island farms have been negative... As expected, the cabinet yesterday approved the legalisation of [RCD]... Details have yet to be worked out but the responsibility for producing and spreading the disease will continue to rest with farmers... The Minister for Biosecurity... said there were compelling reasons to legalise the disease now it was clearly established in the South Island. Farmers had to be given clear advice how to handle the virus safely and effectively... [The minister also said that] his confidence in... [MAF's] legal advice had been "seriously shaken" after it initially overlooked the illegal spread clause in the Animals Act. From now on [the minister] would seek a second opinion on legal issues dealt with by the ministry. An... R[FBPS]... director... said the ruling... made N[Z] "look a bunch of buffoons when it comes to biosecurity." ...In the meantime, it is still technically illegal to spread the virus...

[MAF] has taken disciplinary action against legal officers who gave mistaken advice on the legality of spreading... [RCD]. The ministry's deputy director-general... said yesterday that the legal advisers had received a "strong message," but the matter would not be taken further... The Minister of Agriculture... acknowledged... the advice had helped because it allowed farmers to front up about the spread of the disease... [In another development, the] Minister of Conservation... said... more would be spent on protecting native birds from the consequences of [RCD] only if monitoring showed a serious problem. Predators... would be trapped at 15 sites where [RCD] was active, at a cost of \$572,000, and a further 39 sites... monitored... [A] farmer... who conducted an aerial survey of the... Mackenzie Basin... region yesterday... noted that hares, birds and sheep were all alive and well in areas littered with rabbit corpses. "It looks to be totally species-specific." ...[the farmer] accidentally injected his hand... while infecting healthy rabbits. But [it isn't] worried: "We've had the stuff over our hands and... cuts. I'm still healthy... Never felt better..."

...The Health Ministry is planning to test whether... [RCD] can infect people. The ministry will compare a completed study of blood donors in two rural areas to a study of people exposed to the ...virus in infected areas... The ministry is carrying out the study in conjunction with the Wellington School of Medicine... as... a precautionary measure only... Health officials... [are sticking] by their assurances to the public based on an A[US] study that revealed no evidence of risk to humans. But had [that] study been seasonally adjusted... says... [a] Christchurch epidemiologist... it would have shown an increase in illness symptoms, including gastro-enteritis, diarrhoea and hepatitis, for people exposed to the virus... • [MAF] has not disciplined its legal advisers for mistaken advice over the farmers' spread of the calicivirus, as reported in the N[Z] *Herald* yesterday.

...Friends of the Earth, other environmental groups, rabbit breeders and rabbit processors [are] considering legal action to challenge the proposed controlled spread of [RCD]. The public has until 5pm next Wednesday to comment on the Government's [proposal]... Meanwhile, the... National Centre for Disease Control... fears a massive reduction in rabbit numbers from a further release of the virus could lead to the spread of bovine tuberculosis through infected ferrets.

...While MPs and lobby groups thrash out the issue, a self-employed Wairarapa pest controller is advertising his services to spread... [RCD]. The pest controller would assess interested farms for \$35 an hour and spread the virus for \$50 an hour... "It's... what I do. My job is killing rabbits and possums... I want to make it clear I am not selling the virus, let alone giving it to people to lay themselves. The \$50 per hour covers my time, any incidental costs and the additives used with the virus, not the virus itself." ...[the pest controller] estimated it would take... four hours to lay the virus on a farm of average size. The... Wellington Regional [Council's]... biosecurity manager... was concerned about [the pest controller's] intentions. It was a bad time to spread the disease, as up to 90[% of doe] rabbits were now pregnant. Young rabbits would not die and might build up immunity.

...Regional councils face a potential legal minefield if they become involved in the release or spread of... [RCD]. Next week the Auckland Regional Council will consider dropping any involvement with [RCD] unless the Government indemnifies it against legal challenges. Environment Waikato... is understood to be considering a similar stance... If the virus were a contaminant under the Resource Management Act, individuals could challenge any farmer who released [it]... Agriculture officials would talk to the Ministry of the Environment about using [RCD under the RMA]...

Because of legal obstacles... Environment Waikato will take no part in any managed release of... [RCD, and will even] opt out of providing information to farmers wanting to spread... [it. The ARC] has... also... decided not to become involved... [Incidentally, RCD] monitoring has confirmed rabbit kills of 69[%] on some... Central Otago... properties where it has been used as a biocide and there[']ve been lower kill rates where it has spread naturally as a biological control... [- 'a meagre 20% at some sites.' I]n all cases [RCD's] spread... appeared to slow after about 40 days.

...[MAF] has... revealed that interim results from local diagnostic tests had not shown up any new viruses or bacteria from the South Island's so-called "kitchen whiz" [RCD brew. MAF's]... acting chief veterinary officer... said the result also ruled out the spreading of Q fever from... A[US]. The fever is caused by bacteria carried by ticks. It leads to infections of varying severity in farm animals, rabbits, rodents and other domestic animals, as well as sometimes-fatal lung infections in humans... [However,] the Association of Scientists... said no one would know what the interim results meant until... [MAF] produced the final results and showed how it got them... [In related news, local] health authorities are beginning an anxious watch for symptoms of a rare bird flu which has spread to at least four people in Hong Kong... A 54-year-old [guy] has died of pneumonia caused by the virus, which first struck in May with the death of a 3-year-old boy, and a 13-year-old girl is fighting for her life in hospital. The other known case is... a 2-year-old boy who recovered. Experts... rushed from the U[S] at the weekend to investigate... [the] human cases of the highly lethal A strain of H5N1 influenza, previously thought to strike only birds. Last night they were locked in emergency talks with Hong Kong officials on how to combat such an exotic new health threat... The experts, from the... Centre for Diseases Control in Atlanta, fear the possibility of a world pandemic before they have time to develop a new vaccine... The flu virus becomes lethal only when it changes its genetic composition enough to deceive human immune defences... An Auckland Healthcare disease surveillance specialist... said there was no evidence so far to suggest the flu had spread from one human to another "which is reassuring. But on the other hand if it is a totally new virus in humans there is a potential for it to cause widespread and quite severe disease, because no one has immunity to it." ...humans might catch the new strain by eating poultry or eggs.

...Chicken flu is but one of... the 150-odd diseases that jump... from animals to humans, with more being discovered each year... [A professor] from Hong Kong University – one of the authors of a W[HO] study examining the influenza triangle between birds, pigs and humans – has said pigs can catch viruses from humans and birds, and it is thought they act as "middle [agents]" in spreading the virus from bird to human. If a pig infected by a human virus then caught a bird virus, "both viruses could infect the same cell and the virus could rearrange itself genetically to infect humans"...

History is rich in examples of diseases which are passed on from animals... to people: bubonic plague, tuberculosis, brucellosis, salmonella... rabies... and the common-garden flu. They're lumped under the heading *zoonoses*... In N[Z] farmers catch leptospirosis from the urine of cows but, unlike the other examples, that disease is not spread from farmer to farmer. The influenza virus in Hong Kong has scientific experts worried... It is a... strain of flu... that is avian – found in birds... Such viruses are found in ducks, chickens and wild, migratory birds... They lack the right antigens, or immune locaters, needed to lock on to receptors in the human throat cells and find their way into our respiratory tracts, causing... sore throats, fevers, coughs and bronchitis... While officially harmless to humans, new strains of bird flu are deadly to birds. A month before a 3-year-

old boy died, a severe outbreak of flu among Hong Kong's New Territories killed 70[%] of the birds on three farms. Two months before that another outbreak decimated the chicken population in a rural part of Guangdong, the province bordering Hong Kong... The issue that has the experts worried centres on a tiny spike, visible only with an electron microscope, known as the "H" agglutinin. Each time the flu virus evolves into a killer it undergoes what the virologists call "antigenic shift,"... By evolving a new agglutinin, the influenza virus effectively buys time to mount an overwhelming attack before our immune defences can develop the right antibodies to neutralise the strain of flu. The virus that killed up to 40 million people during the 1918-19 pandemic had an H agglutinin virologists named H1. The next big killer, dubbed the Asian flu, which... killed millions in 1957, had changed its H agglutinin to what was labelled H2. In 1968, when the Hong Kong flu swept the world, causing schools, businesses and services to grind to a halt while the new strain laid everyone low, the virus was found to have an H3 agglutinin. Interestingly, there were far fewer deaths in 1968... [-] 46,500 people, including 45... in Hong Kong... [-] because another significant feature, the "N" antigen, was the same as the one found in the virus responsible for the 1957 pandemic. Although no one had exactly the right antibody to fight the virus in 1968, many people had antibodies close enough to give them a chance of surviving the virus. The[latest] bird flu virus... has a new "H" agglutinin, now identified as an H5... Every February world influenza experts meet... at the W[HO] head offices... in Geneva... and try to predict which virus will next wreak havoc. Once they agree on the most likely type, they set to work developing a vaccine so adequate supplies will be in place before the flu season begins. Even so, getting enough vaccine ready and distributing it around the world, let alone organising mass vaccination programmes, will be a mammoth task, especially given the speed with which influenza can now travel the world. An infectious diseases physician at Auckland Hospital... said that at this end of the world we could be lucky. Since summer is not the time that flu spreads, we can watch what happens in the Northern Hemisphere winter. But our isolation is not necessarily a protection. "The problem with predicting epidemics is that you can't, and certainly not new ones." And this particular virus has a component which is totally different from those which WHO experts routinely monitor.

...Ten hospital staff who treated Hong Kong's first confirmed victims of the deadly bird flu have developed symptoms, sparking fears the virus can be spread through the human population. Tests have not yet confirmed the presence of the virus among any of the staff... However, the Hong Kong Health Department has put out a bulletin... advising anyone with flu-like symptoms to have tests immediately... [T]he new virus is sensitive to the anti-viral drug Amantadine, but the drug has serious side-effects and it is feared the virus may develop resistance if Amantadine is overused. The four world laboratories designated to develop influenza vaccines... have been asked to start work this week on the new virus.

...Hong Kong braced itself for an epidemic of bird flu yesterday as an American expert predicted the disease would spread around the world. As three new cases were reported, medical authorities... opened a special isolation ward and provided more facilities for viral testing. They ordered restrictions on the importation of poultry from mainland China. They also ordered a massive cleanup of the biggest wholesale poultry market...

There were few buyers yesterday as Hong Kong's poultry markets reopened after a three-day cleanup... Wholesalers said business had fallen between 70 and 80[%] and prices had halved... The Hong Kong Government told the world last night... that... the territory was safe for tourists.

...Hong Kong farmers say they want 1.2 million chickens slaughtered in an effort to reduce public concern over the... "bird flu." Farmers said they have been unable to feed their chickens after prices plummeted when demand slumped. The plan to slaughter all chickens in the territory has been submitted to the Agriculture and Fisheries Department. Chicken farmers could face losses totalling \$HK30 million... if the plan goes ahead... But a department spokes[person] dismissed the plan as "unnecessary and unhelpful" because 90[%] of the chickens consumed in Hong Kong were from China. A 13-year-old... Chinese girl... died in hospital yesterday, the third victim of the virus.

...Thousands of Hong Kong families are boarding planes to all parts of the world, looking forward to spending their two-week Christmas break with relatives and friends. But they could unwittingly be bringing a Christmas present no one wants... Many of those who caught planes this weekend were coughing and sneezing, but few were cancelling plans to travel... Most assume their illnesses are just normal bugs always around at this time of year... As yet, it is not 100[%] certain the virus has changed enough to be able to transmit itself from human to human. What is known is that the first few cases were unrelated and most had clear evidence of contact with chickens... But the fifth case, that of[a] 5-year-old girl... has the experts worried. [The girl] attends the Lei Tung Lutheran Day Nursery at Ap Lei Chau, where inside, everything is bright, clean and festive. But out in the playground, overshadowed by 30-storey Government housing towers, the children pick their way among dumped feathers, raw meat, paper rubbish and even syringes. That rubbish, flung out of the tower block windows despite decades of public education to stop this Hong Kong habit, could ultimately be the catalyst for the virus spreading... A couple of days... [after the 5-year-old] was admitted to hospital... a 2-year-old boy and a 3-year-old girl – who both live in [the 5-year-old's] family's cramped Government flat came down with similar symptoms... What makes these three children so special is that this is the first time the illness has affected people in close contact with one another.

...A mass slaughtering of chickens will begin in Hong Kong today as part of efforts to contain the... "bird flu." ...chickens from... 100 markets and stalls throughout the territory would be killed and burned... The announcement followed the first convincing evidence that bird flu can pass from human to human... About 30 people... have... [now] been infected... with the... virus... [and 4] killed... Hospitals throughout Hong Kong have been besieged by thousands of people suffering sore throats or coughs... [Tomorrow, WHO] experts will check southern China for signs of the disease...

In markets and farms across the territory... [of] Hong Kong... yesterday... workers began killing 1.3 million chickens and unknown numbers of ducks, geese, quail and caged pigeons... but officials said they would also be counted to ensure their owners were properly compensated... Stalls at a market in the crowded Mongkok district were splashed with blood as vendors slit chickens' throats and hung them up to drain their blood before throwing them... into a bin. The bins were delivered to... Government health inspectors... who refused to touch the birds, getting the poultry sellers to load the bodies into garbage bags. These were then topped up with a few spadefuls of "bleaching powder"... The full bags were heaved into a dumpster, ready to be taken to... eight landfill sites... where the chickens will be buried along with a load of disinfectant... The operation drew loud howls of protest from vendors... [A]n international health expert warned that the cull [would] not guarantee an end to the lethal bird flu[, but other critics]... have attacked the Hong Kong Government, saying it was slow to order the poultry kill. "The first case was announced in August..." said... [one legislator. Some people] say the Government misled the public, citing... [the Health Director's] statement earlier this month that eating chicken was safe... N[Z] health authorities say it is too early to restrict travel to Hong Kong but they are working... with... A[USn authorities] on a contingency plan in case the... bird flu turns into an epidemic... This included heavy surveillance and the ability to quickly introduce quarantine strategies to combat transmission of the disease. [On a positive note, 'a harmless chicken virus is poised to save millions of human lives and help alleviate poverty worldwide. The chicken is the staple source of protein and income for hundreds of millions of villagers and urban poor – yet 80% of all birds die from Newcastle diseases. Now a joint AUSn-Malaysian research effort has developed an effective vaccine to protect chickens against NDs.'

...America's] largest poultry processor... has pleaded guilty to giving [a] former Agriculture Secretary... more than \$US12,000... in illegal gifts in 1993 and 1994 and agreed to pay \$US6 million in fines. [By the way, 'pity the 2 million vegetarians living in the US at Thanksgiving time.' While they contemplated consuming 'Tofurky, a seasoned stuffed roast made from tofu and wheat gluten, or "drummettes" – drumsticks made from tempeh, a fermented food made from cooked soybeans' – their meat-eating compatriots devoured about '50 million turkeys, or one sixth of all turkeys sold in the US each year.']

...A type of bacteria that may stricken and sometimes kill people who eat undercooked chicken or turkey is becoming more common... says the New York Times. Estimates put the number of[human] cases of the disease caused by the germ campylobacter... [– which infects 70 to 90%] of all chickens... [-] at... 8 million a year in the U[S] and deaths at 200 to 800... [The] use of antibiotics known as fluoroquinolones to treat the infection in chickens has created strains of drug-resistant campylobacter in humans. Scientists believe the public is more aware of salmonella than the more

widespread campylobacter because the latter is hard to pronounce and spell and there is no simple laboratory test to detect it. For both germs, the safety advice is the same: cook poultry thoroughly and wash anything that has come into contact with raw poultry or its juices... [In addition,] swear off “sunny side up” partially fried eggs because... the risk of becoming ill from salmonella in eggs had increased four-fold since 1980... “Eggs used to be safe but now they are the leading cause of food poisoning outbreaks in the country,” said... the Washington-based Centre for Science in the Public Interest... The group was petitioning the F[DA] to require a warning on egg cartons that would read: “Caution: Eggs may contain illness-causing bacteria. Do not eat raw. Cook eggs until the yolk is firm.” ...45 billion eggs are produced each year in the U[S] and while the consumer watchdog acknowledged only a small fraction are contaminated, they stressed that consumers have no way to tell which eggs may be tainted.

...A Chilean ecological group has sounded an alarm about “mutant” rats, more than 50cm long, that have attacked barnyard animals in a suburb of Santiago. The... Ecological Council of Maipu, believed the rodents had grown so large because they fed on droppings of hormone-fattened poultry... [Speaking of *Rattus norvegicus*, Britain] now has more rats than people, an estimated 60 million... Newly privatised water companies were not co-operating with local authorities in baiting sewers and the result was that the rat population had risen alarmingly... Complaints of rat infestation averaged 1421 for every local authority in the country last year... “If rats can chew through plastic sewer pipes, they can easily chew through plastic water supply pipes... it has the potential for spreading disease[.]”... said... the Robens Centre for Public and Environmental Health.

...The kiore or Maori rat has been suggested as a new dinner delicacy... The rat used to be the main source of protein but had since been replaced by domestic animals such as pigs, sheep and cattle... Maori were also made to feel ashamed for having valued and eaten an animal such as the kiore when Europeans looked upon the rat as vermin. The Crown, not knowing the importance of the kiore, was trying to eradicate it because of its perceived threat to other native plants and animals... [Incidentally, a farmer who is] the father of a friend of a friend... was out hunting rabbits when, just as [the farmer] pulled the trigger, something flew through his sights. It wasn’t a bird... but the family cat leaping a tall bush in a single bound to pounce on what [the cat] thought was prey. Unfortunately pussy wasn’t faster than a speeding bullet and copped it in the neck. “Oh well, shame to waste a loyal friend,” the farmer decided [and] knocked up a warm, if a tad unfashionable, hat out of the ex-tabby. Now the mystery is, why didn’t [the farmer] fully apply the waste-not-want-not principle? Why not eat the moggy? Nothing wrong with cat meat. Full of protein, no doubt tastes a little like chicken and in some parts it’s considered a delicacy. But for some reason, in the Western world people won’t go within hissing distance of hearty feline fare. And it’s not just cats. [‘In China a breed of dogs (Chow dogs) is specially fattened for the table’ (they may be lucky dogs – some Chinese people believe the best way to make ‘dog meat tasty is to hang a dog up and beat it to death’), and there are many other] species that never make the menus of even our most experimental restaurants yet are considered yummy in other parts of the world. It’s one of the great mysteries of anthropology. Why does every society – and they all do – have a list of taboo foods? It’s not as if the unpalatables are inedible. When it comes to dining preferences, one culture’s trash is often another’s treasure... There’s been no shortage of theories over the years for humankind’s finicky eating habits. One has it that food taboos develop in a culture for very practical reasons. Take cows in India... [C]ould it be that it’s not so much the cow that’s cherished but the cow pat? The locals use the animal’s dung for fuel and even as bricks for their homes. Only a fool would eat his building supplier. As it happens the cow-ban came into force around 200AD, just as there was a population explosion in the region... [A] US anthropologist found a variety of food taboos in just a small region of the... Amazonian... rain forest... [While other tribes] won’t touch the stuff... the... Parakana’s favourite tucker is tapir and tortoise meat, but don’t serve monkey or any large birds. It’s like offering cat or rat to a Westerner.

...A last-minute appeal from the humane society persuaded organisers near Peru’s southern coastal town of Canete to cancel a festival of cat cookery intended to celebrate a local saint’s day. Just as the highly advertised festival began... and[with] 50 plump cats ready for the grill, health authorities arrived... The tradition... goes back to the 18th century... “Because cats are supposed to have nine lives, some believe it will make them live longer.” One Canete inhabitant... explained to a local television station that stray cats are the best, “because they have more flavour.” - 1997

...Taiwan’s 1.5 million stray dogs... are either buried alive, drowned en masse or made into soup.

...Wild... dogs... birds, cats... and even rats are being tested for bird flu as Hong Kong’s chief executive admits there have been inadequacies in his Government’s handling of the crisis... Fears that the virus may be transmitted to other animals surfaced when dumped bags of chicken carcasses were torn open and the contents eaten by cats, dogs and rats... If the virus is found in cats and dogs – never popular with the Hong Kong Government which bans them from public housing – they may be the next on the mass extermination list... However... [thousands] of chickens escaped the mass slaughter ordered... last Sunday... Others, including 8000 on a farm in Tai Po... were spared when Agriculture and Fisheries Department officers ran out of gas and forgot to return to complete their grim task... [T]here are unconfirmed reports that one person in Guangdong... has died from the virus, while several other people are seriously ill... Ducks and geese have[also] been found to be infected...

Thousands of ducks at a farm in... China refused all food and drink after staff separated the[m from the drakes. The pinning ducks]... started eating and drinking as soon as they were reunited with the drakes the next day... Ducks and drakes do not normally live and play together, and are not normally known for their loyalty to each other... [In related news,] Alfred Hitchcock gave us *The Birds*. [Another director] gave us *The Swarm*. Now, Naples, New York, is giving us the flies. The upstate town is teeming with thousands of houseflies that hatched after damp weather combined with hundreds of tons of chicken manure spread on a 7ha farm as fertiliser. Officials have declared part of the town of 1200 people a public health hazard, and some residents have fled their homes. “It’s just a horror, a plague. It’s biblical,” [one] resident... told a local television station... [The f]armer... who spread the manure... was abiding by environmental regulations when... plough[ing] his fields... Now [the farmer]... is offering to pay for a private pest control company to treat the... infested homes[. But s]ome residents... say they are [still] considering legal action against [hi]m...

DNA tests have shown that at least one of three deaths in New York City originally blamed on St Louis encephalitis was caused by a closely related bird virus, West Nile Virus, previously unseen in the Western Hemisphere... The West Nile Virus and the St Louis encephalitis virus are transmitted through the bite of a mosquito that has become infected by feeding on an infected bird... New York City health officials [have begun] mosquito-control measures... [While on the topic of bird viruses, Britain’s *Daily Express* newspaper has reported] that... Hong Kong[’s]... bird flu virus... originated from migrating birds from Siberia, citing experts saying that some 60,000 birds made their annual migration to Hong Kong.

...pets entering Britain will have to wait another two years before they get their special “passport” which will put an end to the six-month quarantine for all immigrant pets. The... British Agriculture Minister... w[ill] announce to the House of Commons this week the relaxation of century-old laws designed to keep rabies out of the country. Critics of the legislation say it is obsolete, given the effectiveness of modern veterinary measures, including inoculations... While a six-month stay in quarantine... costs between £1500... and £2000, the new system... [– which initially will be restricted] to animals from rabies-free countries, mainly European... [–] does not promise to be cheap or hassle-free. An owner taking an animal into Britain or abroad for the holidays will have to have an electronic chip implanted under its skin and a “passport” to guarantee its identity and injection history. The cost in Britain would be £160 to begin with, plus £60 for annual rabies booster injections and a £20 “visa.” The animal would... have to be checked by a foreign vet 24 hours before re-entering Britain and declared free of ticks, fleas and other parasites... [Incidentally, chickens are celebrating] a decade as Britain’s favourite meat... According to the latest figures from the British Chicken Information Service, the value of chicken bought by households... reached £1.65 billion... last year, exceeding beef sales, and was more than pork and lamb combined.

...Britons, already concerned about diseased beef, added poultry to their dietary worries yesterday after a court heard how [people have] sold hundreds of tonnes of chicken deemed unfit for human consumption. A jury at Hull Crown Court found three defendants guilty of a multimillion-

pound scam to sell heavily disguised pet food to butchers, traders, restaurants and supermarkets across Britain between 1993 and 1996. Two others had pleaded guilty before the trial... Five other defendants were acquitted. The court heard how... [h]ealth inspectors found containers of smelly, badly bruised poultry covered in faecal matter, flies and feathers. Large quantities of salt – used to remove slime from the meat and freshen its appearance – were also discovered... 1000 tonnes of turkey and chicken were recovered... “This investigation was potentially only part of a much wider problem,”... said... [t]he officer who led the investigation... “As it proceeded officers became aware that similar scams were operating throughout the country.”

...A friend of mine grew a breast recently. Just one, but one is more than enough when you’re a heterosexual [guy. Red-faced, the friend] trundled the breast off to a doctor, who exclaimed, “What... have you been eating?” A catalogue of all the things [the friend had] for dinner quickly fingered the culprit... those size 18 or whatever fowls that are all the rage. The doctor pointed out that you can grow giant chickens only by genetically altering them with the... sex hormone estrogen, so my friend stopped eating them. As quickly as it had appeared, the unwanted mammary vanished. I have no interest in eating chickens, small or large, so I’m not directly involved in the breast-producing poultry scandal. But I have enough sense to know that the damned things shouldn’t be on the market without clear labels warning [guy] diners that they are likely to grow breasts... It is an unspeakable outrage that our employees in Parliament, acting as usual in gap-toothed ignorance of the facts, have failed to send... [the] Genetic Food Modification Protection Bill to a select committee and on its way to becoming law. The purpose of... [this] bill was modest enough. All [its sponsor] wants is to give consumers the right to know whether their food is part of the dubious experiments into genetically modifying the reproductive processes of the plants and animals we eat. [The sponsor would] like to stop the false labelling of such food. If you deliberately leave vital information out of your label on a food product, information which could affect a customer’s decision to buy the stuff or leave it on the shelf, you are certainly perpetuating a falsehood... [However, the sponsor also] wrote to the Commerce Commission, pointing out that misleading the public is a breach of the Fair Trading Act. The commission replied that in their view failure to label is not misleading – but they added that their view is subject to judicial review. So [the sponsor] is now in the process of raising money to finance an expensive request to the High Court for a declaratory judgment on the meaning and scope of the Fair Trading Act... ■ [Yesterday]... the story of Tegal loading fluffy little boy chicks into a shredder hit the headlines. The excuse was that it didn’t hurt a bit, and besides, everyone knows [boy] chicks are good for nothing.

...Staff at a chicken factory were ill-prepared for the job of destroying thousands of newly hatched chicks in a machine, investigators say... But the... M[AF] inquiry... also concluded that Tegal had done nothing illegal. The use of the... shredder... was not against any law governing animal welfare... Tegal’s North Island operations manager... said last night that killing would resume given the positive findings of the investigation... [After t]he factory in New Plymouth had recently changed from a broiler chicken operation to a hatchery as part of a reorganisation of Tegal operations[... a]... staff member made an anonymous complaint about the “maceration” machine but other staff were also concerned... Staff were also worried about the arrival of a bigger... “instant fragmentation” machine over the next few days... The Tegal employees had been used to killing chicks which were “not viable” or sick, but the hatchery operation meant thousands more day-old [boy] chicks would have to be destroyed because they would not be needed for egg laying... The... Wellington SPCA animal welfare manager... said slaughter of [boy] chicks by “maceration” was highly efficient, but that was probably not what was making N[Z]ers squirm. “The industry calls them ‘hatchery waste’ – that typifies factory farming in N[Z]. In some ways you could say the [boy] chicks are the lucky ones – they don’t end up in a battery cage... But the question is whether it’s ethical to slaughter 2.5 million chicks per year. From a wider point of view, I don’t think it should be accepted.” ...“N[Z]ers intuitively know we shouldn’t be killing animals for anything other than vital needs,” said... [a] Save Animals from Exploitation spokes[person]n...

For N[Z]’s 2.2 million battery hens... crammed inside a tiny wire-floored cage... continually pecked by frustrated cage mates... denied... sunlight... and fresh air[, and fed a diet of]... mash... it’s a living hell. Help stop the madness. Pledge your support by calling... SAFE... toll free 0800 SAVE US.

...Egg McMuffins are off the menu for N[Z] animal-welfare lobbyists, who have joined an international campaign to improve conditions for the chickens that supply McDonald’s restaurants. The fast-food giant told all its U[S] egg suppliers this week to smarten up their act by providing bigger cages and to stop “debeaking” birds... Now N[Z] animal-welfare campaigners are urging the local McDonald’s to follow the American lead... [However, the c]ommunications director for McDonald’s N[Z]... said a U[S] expert had recently audited animal treatment in this country. “The review findings showed the McDonald’s (NZ) egg supplier visited had some of the highest standards witnessed internationally...” Another McDonald’s spokes[person]n said N[Z] laying hens were not “debeaked” as they were in the U[S], while the... executive director of the Egg Producers Federation of N[Z] said chickens in this country were “not stocked to the same density” as those in the U[S]. Beaks were trimmed, but not cut off completely as they were overseas. These arguments do not wash with local animal welfare groups... [A spokesperson for SAFE] said it was ridiculous to claim that battery hens here were treated any better than those overseas. “The cages used in N[Z] are the size of a piece of A4 paper – you can’t get much smaller than that.” ...350,000 N[Z]ers had signed a petition calling for battery hen farming to stop.

...Giving vent to a personal prejudice, I put it to... the writer and presenter of... *The Life of Birds*, the 10-part series which starts on TV One on Saturday and the reason for this... interview... that birds don’t have very big brains. It almost seems to ruffle his feathers. “You hang about... they’ve got extraordinary good brains.” And [the presenter’s] off, explaining... with typical vigour and clarity just how clever our feathered friends can be. A human being couldn’t, as soon as it walked, find its way across a couple of seas and a desert to... exactly the same place where its parents are... That’s what a cuckoo can do. Then there are the crows... They carry walnuts to... traffic lights and place them in front of cars to be cracked... In biological terms, [birds are] more successful than [us]... “They live in places where we can’t live; they are much the most widely dispersed of any kind of creature.” They beat insects hands down... because insects[– which ‘have come to exist in far more forms than are found in any other animal group’ –] can’t live on the sea... As the maker of acclaimed wildlife... series, including *Life on Earth* and its successors, *The Living Planet*, *The Trials of Life* and *The Private Life of Plants*, [the presenter] has had plenty of opportunity to grapple with such issues... His resolute defence of bewinged creatures finally falters, if only slightly, on the topic of pigeons. “I can’t pretend that I’m in love with pigeons... At least I can’t say that they’re stupid... well, no, they’re pretty stupid.” [The presenter] laughs heartily at this admission, but can’t help repeating the point that pigeons are efficient organisms. It’s egocentric to try to judge them by human standards, [the presenter] says. Excessive reference to the human perspective – verging into syrupy anthropomorphism – is, of course, a common failing of [TV] programmes about animals. A wondrous range of emotions is attributed to various cute little bundles of fur or feathers... [However, his] work with the BBC Natural History Unit has set standards by which other wildlife programmes are judged... Much of the first episode of *The Life of Birds* is concerned with the unique bird life of N[Z]... *To Fly or Not to Fly*... looks at the evolution of birds from dinosaurs and how isolated islands... allowed flightless species including the kiwi and kakapo to survive.

...An Oxford University scientist’s efforts to extract DNA from a dodo have annoyed former colleagues in N[Z]... A team of British researchers, led by [the] former Wellington scientist... have raised the prospect that the bird whose name is synonymous with extinction can be resurrected. [The team] plans to recover fragments of genetic material from the dodo’s preserved head and foot kept at the Museum of Natural History. But last year, while in N[Z], the scientist[] described work by Otago University researchers on moa DNA as “*Jurassic Park*-style fantasy.” ...[the scientist, who] has started to rebuild the dodo’s family tree by testing the DNA of African and Indian pigeons to which it is thought to be related... laughed off hopes of creating a genetically engineered “mostrich” – a... transgenic... cross between the moa and the ostrich[– then]... also dismissed attempts by the Otago team and Japanese colleagues to inject DNA from an old giant moa femur into chicken embryos... “We reckon [the scientist] was hacked off

at us treading on his toes as [it] sees himself as the authority on moa.” ...The Otago researchers stopped [their] project because they ran out of funds. [By the way, ‘several theories of the association of moa and humans have been put forward. Some people believed the moas were dominated by a race of people whom they called the “Moa-hunters” and who long preceded the Maori. They hunted the moa for food and used its bones to make tools and ornaments. Moa eggshells were placed in ceremonial burials. These people were apparently peaceful, for no weapons belonging to them have yet been found. Most sites of the moa-hunter period so far discovered are situated along the South Island’s east coast, usually near a river mouth. With the virtual extinction of the moa c.1500AD, the camps were abandoned, the occupants apparently turning to a fishing economy. This period, provisionally termed “Intermediate”, is complex and little understood. In some localities moa-hunter artefacts occur with moa bones; in others the artefacts are of moa-hunter type, but moa bones are absent, or there is a distinct break between typical moa-hunter and Classic Maori occupations. The Classic Maori culture was that encountered by the early explorers. Nowadays, all these types (moa hunter, “Intermediate”, and Classic Maori) are considered to belong to the one people’.

...a *Jurassic Park*]-style Moa Park might be a possibility in the future but with today’s technology it would take several hundred thousand years to get all the necessary genetic information together... [W]e have computer animation to create a life-like simulation of the huge bird which once roamed the land... But when it comes down to the nitty-gritty, there’s only the bones, eggs and a few Maori rock drawings to go on. Zoologists and palaeontologists say there were 11 species of moa, ranging in size from the 3m-long *Dinornis* to tiddlers not much bigger than turkeys. The popular image of Maori herding hundreds of moa to mass slaughter is not true, the experts say. Sites such as the Wairau Bar, where hundreds of skeletons have been found, were natural traps where individual birds perished over hundreds of years... Maori mythology is strangely silent about the moa, suggesting the name was a latter-day invention. The lack of references also implies the “marvellous source of protein” was reduced to drumsticks in a short space of time... [Moa]s were probably easy meat and homo sapiens likes nothing better. The bones of dead birds do tell tales... and so do suggestible humans once their creative juices start flowing. Sightings of the monster bird began soon after[a] British scientist... put all dem bones together in one skeleton in the 1830s... *The Mighty Moa* (TV One, 8.30 pm)... examines all those tall tales and the ones sworn to be true from those who claim to have experienced an avian visitation... A [couple have described seeing a]... large feathered creature... at water’s edge [while fishing] in a Fiordland sound... [and] a pioneer, spotted her bird in 1884. A descendant of the no-nonsense Scot... is inclined to believe her... [H]owever... a... group of young Maori scholars were early moa pranksters, mocking up a photo of Maori hunters aiming... spears at a suspiciously unruffled model.

...police on the hunt for 12 escaped emus thought they were on a Jurassic Park mission... [T]he emus escaped on Thursday night while being transported from Moutere... to be killed. With the help of [an] emu farmer... police rounded up most of the emus. A further three were found yesterday but two others died, believed to have been hit by vehicles. [One c]onstable... was relieved to finish the job unscathed. “Emus can be vicious if they are not handled right,”... [Speaking of AUSn wildlife, s]cientists believe they can use cloning to bring back the legendary Tasmanian tiger, thought extinct for more than 60 years. [The AUS]n Museum director... says a live clone could be created from DNA taken from a preserved baby tiger found in a basement storage room in the museum. The 133-year-old specimen was... preserved in alcohol rather than formalin, which would have destroyed the DNA for cloning purposes. The tiger was driven to extinction by hunters who considered the animal a threat to livestock.

...JURASSIC PARK could yet come alive in A[US] with plans to use cloning to revive an extinct wolf... [The AUS]n Museum director... said... his... plan was reinforced yesterday when six other baby Tasmanian Tigers, also known as the thylacine, were revealed in other museums. The cubs’ discovery ensures a greater gene pool and boosts the animal’s chances of future survival... The last known Tasmanian Tiger was captured in 1933 and died in a zoo in the Tasmanian capital of Hobart in 1936... [Incidentally, an AUS]n company is the first in the world to determine the sex of camels before they are born. And with [gal camel]s fetching up to \$A5 million... each in the camel-racing mad Middle East, the new technique could reap millions of dollars in export earnings, Queensland[’s] Primary Industries Minister... said yesterday.

...[‘abandoned over a century ago in an alien land, the outback camels not only survived but prospered: 60,000 or more now roam AUS’s deserts – the last big herds of wild camels on earth.’ In related news,] a vet from Britain, took... the cama for a photo opportunity to celebrate his first birthday this week. [The cama], who is part camel and part llama – was bred by scientists trying to recreate the animal that evolved separately into the North African camel and the South American llama when continents shifted 30 million years ago. [● ‘A species is defined, basically, as a group of animals that cannot breed with another group, but in all definitions there are exceptions. The most familiar exception is represented by the mule (the offspring of a mare horse and a stallion ass) and the much rarer hinney (the offspring of a mare ass and a stallion horse). Both are sterile and cannot themselves breed. Mules have been used as beasts of burden since ancient Greek times, being extremely sturdy animals and, unlike a horse, able to recover quickly from being worked to the limits of their endurance. Their tougher hide makes them less liable to suffer from saddle-sores and chafing, while they are relatively insensitive to disease. Their ability to live on coarse herbage and very little water, rivals, if not exceeds, that of the camel. The milk of an ass contains more sugars and less cheesy matter than cows’ milk and is reputed to be particularly good for tuberculosis. *The now extinct North African race of ass, Equus asinus asinus, probably gave rise to the donkey, referred to today as the domesticated ass. Zebras and wild horses also belong to the genus Equus.*’]

...Singapore has barred the entry of horses as well as live pigs from Malaysia out of fear of a... deadly virus... which could be related to the Hendra virus that killed two people and 16 horses in A[US] in 1994. The horse ban has stranded some racehorses that... were set to go to Singapore as part of the regular Malaysian racing circuit.

...[a] Singapore slaughterhouse worker died yesterday... amid fears that a deadly pig-borne virus had spread from Malaysia... Malaysia’s Health Ministry said it would mobilise the... Army to kill 64,000 pigs in Negeri Sembilan to check the spread of the virus, which first broke out in Perak.

...Malaysian troops have stepped up a cull of 300,000 pigs to stop the spread of a virus that has killed more than 50 people and prompted an Opposition leader to call for the Health Minister to resign... All the victims have lived on or near pig farms... The operation was mounted in response to an outbreak of Japanese encephalitis, which is latent in infected pigs and spread to [humans] by mosquitoes. All the soldiers involved in the cull are non-Muslims as pigs are considered unclean in Islam... Authorities had planned to shoot about 35,000 pigs a day over 10 days, but only 1200... were killed on Saturday largely because of a lack of mechanical diggers needed to bury the carcasses. Residents of three villages have been evacuated and the area cordoned off to prevent people being hit by stray bullets... [but authorities are] expected to use carbon monoxide to help kill the... remaining... pigs en masse... There were an estimated two million pigs in the country before the outbreak... [In local news, the MAF] has halted imports of foods containing significant amounts of animal products from Belgium, France and the Netherlands. Last week it was discovered that some Belgian farmers had used animal feed containing... dioxin. Belgian imports have been banned worldwide... The dioxin is thought to have spread to animal feed through contaminated fat from a Belgian fat and oil processing company... [A spokesperson for NZ’s] Ministry of Health, said... pork, poultry, dairy, egg and beef... products... from the countries affected... would be detained until the importer could provide assurances that the goods had not originated from the contaminated animals... M[AF] said dioxin occurred naturally and its elimination was impossible.

...Imported food is not routinely tested for dioxin and chemical contaminants because the Health Ministry puts the onus on the country of origin and importers... The ministry said that while it had ultimate responsibility for testing food the job of testing was too big... Yesterday supermarkets were still being cleared of foods possibly polluted with dioxin after 1400 Belgian farms were found to have used contaminated animal feed.

...Belgium has accused the world of overreacting to its dioxin-in-food scandal as it prepares to lift restrictions on most of the foods it had pulled off the shelves. But the E[U]... retained its ban on all products made with Belgian poultry, eggs, pork and beef. Many other countries maintained wholesale bans on such products from across the EU. EU Health Ministers spoke of their “grave concern about the loss of trust among citizens,” squarely blaming Belgium, said... the German Health Minister. Belgium[’s] Health Minister... defended his country’s handling of the crisis... “This could happen anywhere in Europe. Maybe this has happened already... but we didn’t see the peaks we had in Belgium,”... The Belgian Government

reportedly knew of the dioxin contamination a month before informing the EU two weeks ago... The Belgian food industry association said the crisis had cost the country \$US500 million... and consumer confidence in Belgian products has been harmed across the globe.

...The humble Kiwi meat pie is under threat from A[US]n bureaucrats. The Canberra-based A[US-NZ] Food Authority says food standards for pies are too old and restrictive and it wants to scrap rules about how much meat must go into a pie... [Local] pie-makers... who sold about 20 million pies last year... say relaxing the rules will allow inferior A[US]n pies to flood into the country[, which will] damage sales and consumer confidence... [The c]onsumer advocate... is[also] appalled. “Any honest N[Z]er who buys a meat pie expects to get a pie with a decent amount of meat in it – not a load of other, cheaper ingredients. The existing regulations ensure people get what they are paying for and now they want to remove them.” ...“Our industry is furious,” said... [the] director of Ponsonby Pies. “...Last year the A[US]ns granted us an export permit but said we can’t have more than 5[%] meat in our meat pies. As we have a minimum of 95[%] quality meat in our pies, we couldn’t comply.” ...The planned pie revamp would include abolishing the minimum-meat content – 25[% in AUS and 70% in NZ] – and allow previously banned types of offal such as... the brain, liver, spleen, pancreas, tongue... tripe... pig’s cheek and snout to... pose as meat... An authority spokes[perso]n... said pie manufacturers would still have to use some meat in their pies so as to call their products meat pies. If they did not they risked breaching fair trading laws.

...Remember when the *Beverly Hillbillies* first appeared on TV? I recall being fascinated by their favourite food – hog jowls. I didn’t know what hog jowls were, but they sounded disgusting. That was in the 1960s when crusty meat pies cost... about 12c. (I just thought you would like to know that.) Today, thanks to the A[US]ns, I know what hog jowls are, and they actually are disgusting. And crusty meat pies cost around \$1.80... Pies are an icon, an institution, an integral part of Kiwi life. I don’t know when our meat pie was born, but it was probably long before I was. I recall being shocked as a youngster when I heard from visiting Canadians that they didn’t have crusty meat pies in their country. How could a nation be so backward? The extraordinary thing about our pies is how little they have altered, within my memory anyway. In fact, they are one of the few products that have remained unchanged over at least half a century... However, this glorious [icon] is in terrible danger of being destroyed by the A[US]ns. Some Canberra hillbillies... have the gall to assert that our pies have too much meat in them, and they want us to discard our rules on minimum-meat content. Not only that, they want us to allow... cheap A[US]n pies of dubious content[to] flood the NZ market... So when the... foreign pies... [arrive,] don’t be fooled by the statement “Contains selected pig cheek meats” – that’s just a load of old hog jowls.

...A... Hastings dairy owner, is angry and has hired a lawyer because five members of his... Muslim... family were exposed to bacon... found... in a vegetarian pizza from Pizza Haven... [The dairy owner] said Muslims were not allowed within 40m of pigs or pork products and the family were horrified when his mother bit into a piece of bacon under some cheese in her slice. Yesterday, the Pizza Haven national operations manager... apologised to [the dairy owner] and offered him free pizza, but the devout Muslim... [– who] was unable to go to a mosque for the next 40 days, until the bacon had left his body... [–] wanted to be reimbursed for the family’s trip to Saudi Arabia next April when they will spend 40 days being cleansed. “That is the only place we can go to ask forgiveness. I have committed a big sin... I would rather die than eat a pig.”

...[the 16-year-old] is prepared to hunt animals and fish – if it were a matter of survival... [However, at the age of] 13... her diet... altered drastically. [The teen] stopped eating meat, eggs and dairy products, discarded leather shoes and became a vegan... [H]er friends are all vegetarians too. They have formed their views influenced by the lyrics of punk music and an anarchist bookshop, where [the 16-year-old] works as a volunteer. [It] loves cooking vegan food, supplementing her main diet of lentils and pulses with vitamins and occasionally taking iron tablets to battle anaemia. [The 16-year-old] and her flatmate spend... \$60 a week on food. Her flatmate will not eat honey, but [the 16-year-old] has not yet found a reason to go so far. “I think that’s kind of extreme... but then I haven’t educated myself about it. If I saw someone treating bees cruelly...” Some vegetarians carry their protests even further. They won’t wear wool or silk, for instance[, and ‘fruitarians live exclusively on fruit and vegetables (believing humans should feed only on that which can be eaten in the natural state in which it grows’). The 16-year-old] wears wool because... it would be cruel not to shear the sheep here... Her brother... who is 21, shares many of her views... [b]ut... is not quite so strict with his diet... occasionally eat[ing] free-range eggs and sometimes fish – [‘it’s okay to eat fish ‘cause they don’t have any feelings’ – though the brother] strongly opposes the fishing industry. “...if I’m hungry at the time... fish... [is] an easy option.” ...[their] strong political views do shock some people. But they enjoy quiet support from their parents... [who] have become largely vegetarian, too, though [dad] occasionally indulges in... steak at the pub and [mum] still likes cheese and milk with her tea. “These kids are politically pure, if you know what I mean,” says [mum]. “And I actually agree with all the things they... say... I like the way they want to change the world. They see it as a crusade.”[So did Mahatma Gandhi, who wrote: ‘I do feel that spiritual progress does demand that we should cease to kill our fellow creatures for the satisfaction of our bodily wants.’] For many other vegetarians, their eating habits simply evolve from a strong sympathy for animals. [One] turned her back on meat 21 years ago, at the age of 12. [Her family] had pet bantams... It didn’t seem right to eat their relatives... red meat... [was] soon banned... too. “I equated the meat... with the dead animal. I didn’t like the idea of animals being killed.” Her fervour grew... [to avoiding] anything made from animal gelatin, marshmallow and jellybeans included... Leather shoes were forbidden although [the 33-year-old has] had to relent because even though “they don’t kill vinyls for shoes” it was hard to find decent ones for fashionable adults... [Her] protective feelings for animals extend down the chain to insects: [the 33-year-old] has only once killed a mosquito... [H]er vegetarian partner... [does] any killing that may be required... “Obviously I do care for people... But animals don’t have a voice as such and... are my passion.”

...[‘Batgirl – the flying mammal impersonator – is involved in many animal rights organisations, and has five dogs in a house where “everything’s vegan and animal-free.” Before *Batman and Robin*, her biggest role was the lead in the comedy *Clueless*’.

...a steer] has been slaughtered at a Catholic school in Brea, California – to teach children that meat doesn’t come from a supermarket.

...VEGETARIANS with a craving for the forbidden taste of meat are indebted to [a] Brisbane ex-butcher... [– who] turned vegetarian in 1985 while still a butcher, but realising the potential of a meat-like substitute, worked on soy alternatives... [T]ruckloads of soy beans have been sacrificed in the making of his Longa Life range of Not Chicken Breast, Not Pepperoni... and... Vege Hot Dogs... The soy bean’s disguise as meat is pretty convincing... [T]he Not Chicken’s poulet impersonation in a Thai curry is scary... Longa Life also caters for vegans, so some products are dairy-free. Others have been made for Chinese Buddhists who also refrain from eating onions and garlic. And some vegetarians with a sweet tooth who shun lollies because of the use of animal-based gelatine will find gelatin-free eatings[(e.g., cornflour starch jellybeans)] at health food shops... The Sanitarium Health Food Company now owns Longa Life. [Its nutrition] manager... says the range is a healthy alternative to meat for many, including those warned by doctors to eat fewer saturated fats because of high cholesterol levels. [Editor’s note: ‘Carnivores have claws, no skin pores (they perspire through their tongue), sharp front teeth for tearing but not flat molar teeth for grinding, strong hydrochloric acid in their stomach and an intestinal tract three times their body length (so rapidly decaying meat can pass out quickly); herbivores and humans have no claws, perspire through skin pores, no sharp front teeth, stomach acid twenty times less strong than a meat-eater and an intestinal tract ten to twelve times their body length.’

...after surgery a NZer] was left with just 30cm of intestines – compared to a normal 720cm... Stretched end to end, [a human’s] entire digestive tract measures... over nine metres... Food stays in the stomach for two to four hours before passing through to the small intestine, which takes between one and four hours. It then takes at least a further 10 hours to pass through the large intestine. However, when you have a stomach bug, toxins cause extra fluid to be produced from cells lining the stomach and small bowel. This rapidly speeds the transit of food... The intestines are essential for breaking down food – which otherwise becomes toxic and poisons the body.

...ARE vegetarians healthier, or sicklier than the rest of us? The debate has raged for years. Some say they are less likely to get cancer and heart disease. Others say they are more likely to be pale and anaemic. [A spokesperson for] the Nutrition Foundation... believes that human beings were not designed to be vegetarians. But never mind. A “serious” vegetarian can be perfectly healthy, if the nutrients they reject in meat are picked up elsewhere... “The people who take vegetarianism seriously and learn about it will manage fine... Of course it’s much easier to eat animal food. But then N[Z]ers eat too much animal food anyway.”

...red and white clover – once a mealtime favourite of [the farmer’s] scourge, the rabbits – have taken hold... on the slopes of the Pisa range on the outskirts of Cromwell... [Striding] over familiar territory... that... [once] was pockmarked and barren... there is a spring in his step, as [the farmer] scrunches the vegetation underfoot... “Last year it wasn’t worth putting stock here, but now I’ll be able to move some lambs in.” This sustained growth among the parched brown ridges of craggy schist is enough to convince [the farmer that it was the right decision] to let loose “rabbit juice”...

Immunity to [RCD among rabbits is worrying South Island regional councils]... In the Mackenzie Basin, where the virus had been used as a biocide, 90[%] of the rabbits had been wiped out, but... half... of the... remaining[rabbits] were immune... Tests at one North Canterbury biocide site showed 73[%] of the surviving population was immune... with up to 90[%] immunity recorded in some... Otago... populations.

...Bids to control the persistent threat of renewed rabbit plagues with ...R[C]D... may have been doomed even before they started. Scientists now believe a non-virulent form of the disease may have already been in N[Z and AUS] when the lethal plague leaped the fence at a high-security laboratory in South A[US] in 1995, and in 1997 was illegally introduced to N[Z] by South Island farmers... [In related news, a] mite which kills honey bees has been found on a South Auckland property. Hives on three other properties have also shown signs of being infected with the mite varroa jacobsoni. A full-scale survey to determine how far the mite has spread will begin today.

...MAF... officials have quarantined... beehives... from Wellsford to Hamilton... to check for an invasive bee mite... The mite’s discovery threatens a \$1.8 million industry supplying mite-free bees to the northern hemisphere. All live bee shipments were immediately halted... “The mite, which is about a centimetre long, eats parts of the larvae, leaving bees without wings or mutilated in some other way. They... can’t fly and the hive is left with troublesome and useless bees... [T]he possibility of it spreading to the wild colonies is the real concern,”... says... a Waitakere beekeeper...

The cost of the hunt for the bee-killing Varroa mite will top \$250,000 today, as... 15 search teams... widen their quest for the pest... On Saturday, the M[AF] declared the entire North Island a controlled area, prohibiting any movement of bees, hives and beekeeping equipment for at least two weeks... So far 21 apiaries have been confirmed with the mite... Nearly 200 apiaries containing close to 2000 hives had been inspected.

...The nation’s beekeepers are finally getting recognition for their substantial business activities and the vital pollinator role of their bees, valued at billions of dollars, which underpins the rest of the agricultural sector. They are hating every minute of it. That’s because it has taken the invasion of the bee-killing Varroa mite to highlight this essential component of the rural landscape... Bee imports have been banned for about 50 years to reduce the risk of diseases and pests contaminating N[Z]... The industry’s major players number only around 200 but its ranks are swelled to 5000 by part-timers and hobbyists. It has fought hard to eliminate its biggest problem, American foul brood disease... Beekeepers were the first group to painstakingly create and run their own pest-management strategy under the new Biosecurity Act and the natural methods employed have attracted admiration worldwide. It seems especially unkind that an industry which has worked so hard on biosecurity should be let down by systems it has supported. And, inevitably, the blame for the mite invasion has been laid at the doors of the M[AF]... Only last year, Parliament’s primary production select committee noted that the ministry had been restructured seven times in the past decade and that more was ahead. The committee questioned “whether the public is best served by the energy and effort that has gone into restructuring rather than the provision of services.” The Varroa mite is likely to have been around for five years before its detection last week. There are fears it will not be the only economically significant pest or disease which has gone unnoticed while the ministry’s desks and chairs were being rearranged.

...A... blitz is being planned on the deadly bee mite. The [MAF] will tomorrow ask cabinet for another \$1.35 million to combat the varroa jacobsoni... But some experts say it will be impossible to eradicate the mite... So far 85 sites have been confirmed as infected with the mites.

...Genetic engineering could solve the... bee-mite crisis, says a leading beekeeper... [M]ites overseas are building up resistance to chemical control and attempts to eradicate them have failed... A gene from mite-resistant Asian bees could be introduced, which would allow bees to... survive the mites... Honey production collapsed in Mexico five years ago after a mite infestation, and N[Z] faced the same experience... [A] Kaitoke beekeeper... said the [MAF] had handled the bee-mite crisis badly. Infected hives had not been destroyed because beekeepers wanted compensation. “It’s hugely irresponsible leaving these hives... More than irresponsible, it’s stupid.” Eradication was a realistic option for N[Z], an island country. Compensation for lost hives could be discussed later... MAF has now inspected 29,334 hives... and found infestation on 162 properties...

Beekeepers fearing for their livelihoods as the hunt for the invading Varroa mite enters its fourth week have called on the Government to say how it will compensate them. Yesterday, [a] live bee exporter... near Rotorua, killed 10 million bees worth \$100,000 by gassing them. [The exporter fears his company]... Arataki Honey... will get no compensation for that loss, or for the \$500,000 in business lost since the trade was halted... [A MAF spokesperson said the exporter] could apply for compensation under the Biosecurity Act. But [the spokesperson pointed out that the exporter] had chosen to destroy his bees so that the place where [his company] packaged them could be taken off the list of infected premises, allowing exports to Canada. Meanwhile, Manawatu beekeepers say MAF has created a disease risk by allowing the re-use of anti-mite pesticide strips in their hives.

...Beekeepers have good reason to suspect they have been stung by the Government decision to spend \$40 million managing the Varroa mite, rather than spending \$50 million to attempt to eradicate it. They rightly wonder what sort of management it is that comes with an admission that it will only slow the spread of the bee-killing pest nationwide, keeping it out of the supposedly mite-free South Island “for as long as possible.”

...At least two big suppliers of bees for kiwifruit pollination will not be sending hives to the Bay of Plenty this spring for fear their... mite-free apiaries will become infected. The pullout... raises concerns that the \$600 million kiwifruit crop will not be adequately pollinated... About 80,000 hives are used to pollinate kiwifruit, of which 60[%]... are used in the B[OP]. It is estimated that 16,000 hives are based in the bay, suggesting that 32,000 are needed from outside the area... [K]iwifruit marketer Zespri Group, said there was no detail on how many beehives were available...

The... varroa mite... first found in South Auckland... is now believed to have killed off all wild bee colonies across the city. The same devastation... is expected to occur in the Waikato and B[OP]... In up to six years it could wipe out all wild colonies in the North Island... said... a member of the HortResearch apiculture team... Home gardeners keen to get vegetable crops or fruit trees pollinated would have to rely on bumblebees, flies or wasps, or get hives from beekeepers... Higher costs of managing hives is expected to force many of the country’s 4000 hobbyist beekeepers to give up their pastime... Controlling varroa now costs... [the equivalent of] \$14... for every one of the estimated 300,000 hives nationwide.

...The Agriculture Ministry’s economic impact assessment has estimated the cost to the country if [varroa] spreads throughout N[Z] could be \$900 million. A varroa control line, which stretched from Taranaki across to Gisborne, w[hich w]as put in place to check its southward spread to bee populations... has... been breached. Seven hives in Uriti, 34km northeast of Waitara, have been confirmed with infections of the bee parasite.

...Bees evoke romantic images of flowers and humming orchard hives presided over by veiled eccentrics steeped in arcane lore. What a pity the reality is so different. People and honeybees have a long history together. They pollinate our crops, their ecology is essential to the whole flowering world, and they provide us with honey and wax. But what do they get out of it? A life-sucking parasite... *Varroa jacobsonii*. The spread of the mite in honeybee hives around the world is a consequence of globalisation, free trade and the commodification of nature. Britain has about 35,000 beekeepers. Most are hobbyists, but together they keep up to 200,000 colonies, each containing between 5000 and 80,000 bees. Each colony can

produce up to 50kg of honey. Those beekeepers who have not yet got Varroa in their colonies soon will have. Its spread is inexorable. Varroa came from east Asia, where it is a parasite on the Asiatic honeybee. This bee co-evolved with the mite. When Asian countries switched their honey industry from their native, mite-resistant *Apis cerana* to the more productive but more vulnerable European honeybee *Apis mellifera*, Varroa also switched. Thanks to the international trade in bees, Varroa spread throughout *Apis mellifera*-dominated beekeeping, arriving in Britain in 1992. Since then it has spread through apiaries and feral colonies throughout England and Wales and is now heading north into Scotland. British honeybees are generally a mixture of types bred from bees brought in from around the world. Most are “Italian” bees introduced during the 19th century. Many are now imported from NZ (ironically, NZ’s ‘first bee hives were imported from England in 1839’), where Varroa has just struck.

...The British cannot wait to welcome our bumblebees while the A[US]ns are desperate to keep them out. The short-haired bumblebee, *Bombus subterraneus* [which was introduced to NZ]... more than 100 years ago for pollinating red clover... may be reintroduced to Britain, where it has been declared officially extinct... [T]he last sighting was in Kent in the early 1980s. A 95[%] decline in Britain’s meadows and pastures since 1945 was blamed for wiping the species out there... But the A[US]ns have declared war on another... species, *Bombus terrestris*... the most common and widespread... [of] the four species now found here... It was introduced [to AUS from NZ] seven years ago, and is now threatening native insects and plants in Tasmania... [The species appears] to be taking resources away from native bees... The senior curator of invertebrates at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery... said bumblebees were capable of island-hopping across Bass Strait, but [they] were more likely to be smuggled over because they were sought after as a hothouse pollinator. The bumblebee is a prohibited import, with penalties of up to \$50,000 and 10 years’ jail for introduction from overseas. But bumblebees can be carried across Bass Strait from the A[US]n mainland without restriction.

...Over the past few summers a number of readers have queried whether bumble bees have become more common. In some districts it is possible their numbers in the wild have been boosted by their use in the horticulture industry for pollinating greenhouse crops such as tomatoes... and runner beans. Where growers once used hormone sprays or hand-held mechanical vibrators to pollinate their crops, many now employ commercially reared hives of bumble bees. The hives are not cheap but the bees work all day without a break, seven days a week. As they are much more efficient pollinators, larger and more perfectly shaped fruit are produced. Most of a commercial hive’s bees stay within the greenhouse but some find ways out... In the garden it is fascinating to watch as it rolls around in the dense coronets of stamens of single rose flowers... Intermittently the bee buzzes loudly and the magnitude of the sound vibrations alongside ripening anthers is believed to rupture them causing fresh pollen to be released. The bumble bee’s furry body is the perfect pollen trap and grooming hairs on its legs allow the insect to gather it from the body hairs into pannier-like pollen baskets... on the hind legs. Unlike honey bee hives which contain tens of thousands of worker bees and last for many years, bumble bee hives are started from scratch each year. At maturity towards the end of summer, most contain only a few hundred bees. Fertile queen bees overwinter in holes in the ground and in spring each one seeks out a suitable nest site... Before laying eggs, the young queen collects pollen and nectar. The nectar, stored in a small flask moulded from plant waxes, provides her with sufficient energy food while... [brooding] her first batch of 8 to 10 eggs laid on a large ball of pollen... [T]he eggs hatch in about five days. The grubs feed on the pollen ball and, as this is consumed, the queen forages for more protein rich pollen and energy rich nectar to nurture them. It takes... two weeks... for the larvae to mature when each one then spins an ovoid silk cocoon to pupate in. At the same time the queen lays a second batch of eggs on a fresh ball of collected pollen. The pupae emerge as adult worker bees after 11 days and have a life expectancy of... two months during which they serve the queen... They clean the hive and defend it, against wasps and other intruders intent on robbing honey or larvae, by stinging them repeatedly. Most of their labours are spent gathering pollen and nectar to feed the second and subsequent broods laid by the queen. This releases her from foraging duties so she can concentrate her efforts on laying and brooding more eggs some of which... will become next year’s queens and... drones to fertilise them.

...[the queen receives only one insemination, which the queen stores for several years. As the queen lays eggs it is able to control which ones are fertilised. The fertilised eggs become queens and the unfertilised ones drones.] ‘Honey bee workers usually decide when their queen should be replaced – approximately once every two years.’ □ Two researchers at the Free University of Berlin say bees can measure the distance from their hive to a food source by counting landmarks... [like] bushes or trees... as they fly past them.

...The French government has launched an investigation into an outbreak of what’s being referred to as “mad bee” disease – a malady that is killing millions of honeybees in the west of the country. Beekeepers say that... the insects are becoming disoriented and failing to return to their hives after pollinating sunflowers. The disease first appeared last summer and is being blamed on the increased use of pesticides, which some beekeepers say destroys the insects’ sense of direction. It is estimated that 60[%] of the famed honeybees in the region have perished since last June. Agricultural authorities in the affected areas have suspended the use of the suspected pesticide Gaucho, which was introduced in 1994.

...A truck carrying millions of bees overturned on a Maine highway, leaving its cargo buzzing around the wreckage and closing down the road for nearly eight hours... Firefighters sprayed the spilled hives with water to calm the bees as they loaded the scattered containers in to another truck. “The bees thought it was raining and they wouldn’t leave the hives,” said... the police department in Falmouth, where the accident took place.

...Sixty people attending a funeral in Mexico’s western state of Nayarit were attacked by a swarm of African honeybees that suddenly emerged from a nest in the ground... Victims were treated at a local hospital while police chased off the bees using a mixture of insecticide, soap and water. [● The ‘African killer bee is taking over the Amazon rainforest’ and is also rapidly spreading north. It is expected to soon reach the lower states of America.

...‘In tropical America stingless bees of the genus *Trigona* (not closely related to the Old World honeybees) make large colonies in hollow logs and similar places and they used to be domesticated for their honey by the Maya Indians of Mexico. *Bees have been kept for their honey by humans for many hundreds of years. Throughout most of history this has been mainly a matter of inducing them to make colonies in hollow receptacles of various kinds and then robbing them of their honey. Until recently their breeding has been entirely uncontrolled and even now they are not domesticated in the same way as dogs, cattle, or even silkworms.* The natural food of bees consists of nectar and pollen, the nectar supplying the energy-producing sugar and the pollen being a source of protein. The bees also make honey from nectar and store it for food. The larvae are fed partly on a mixture of nectar or honey and pollen and partly on a secretion from various glands of the young workers, the substance that is often called “royal jelly”. Bees will readily drink a solution of sugar in water and are often fed on this during winter by bee keepers who take most of their stored honey but are also concerned to keep their bees alive.’

...‘until recently, honey was the only sweetener humans had.’ Today, NZers are said to be the ‘biggest consumers of honey per capita in the world. NZ beekeepers mostly feed their bees a sugar liquid so they don’t need to store honey for food’. ‘The industry is worth \$30 million annually, \$8 million of which is generated by exports.’ A major growth area for the industry is ‘bee pollen – “the perfect food” (it contains all of the 22 nutrients we need each day)’...

Bee pollen has ‘more protein than meat, calcium than milk and iron than spinach’. ‘By collecting pollen for ourselves, we don’t starve the bee. Specialised collection mats placed at the hive entrances ensure enough pollen is available to the bee while allowing us to benefit from its health-giving properties’...

IT IS four years since [a NZ] honey researcher... made world headlines by finding that a mystery substance in manuka honey could kill the bacteria thought to cause stomach ulcers. His work prompted scores of researchers to turn their attention to the potential medicinal effects of this ancient food and now [the NZer] looks set to capture the world’s imagination once again. His latest finding is that honey may be a new weapon in the war against antibiotic-resistant “super bugs”... [The] Associate Professor in biochemistry and co-director of Waikato University’s Honey

Research Centre... last year... sent samples of manuka honey and a Waikato pasture honey to the Institute of Environmental Science and Research in Wellington where... it... [was] tested... against eight strains of MRSA (methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus) – including several that commonly cause outbreaks in N[Z]. The results were extraordinary: “All the strains... could be killed by honey... at 4%... The one (strain) that was resistant to all the antibiotics was sensitive to honey diluted 100 times, which gives you an idea of the potential.” However, they came as no surprise to [the co-director], who has... known for years that certain types of honey pack an anti-bacterial punch 10 times as powerful as your average toilet disinfectant. [The co-director] presented the findings late last month at a major wound care conference in A[US]. “...Antibiotic resistance is a real problem. I had a large number of people asking me for advice on how to use it on wounds and several people interested in running comparative clinical trials, which is what I was really hoping for.” ...it’s been an uphill battle to get the therapeutic potential of honey acknowledged by the medical world... [A]n intensive care specialist at Middlemore Hospital, has shown a keen interest... but cautions that... “If a patient is colonised in the nose or some other part of their body or generally over the whole of their skin, then application of honey would not be suitable.” ...[the co-director] is careful to point out... the work that catapulted him to international attention didn’t prove as promising as... hoped. His follow-up study... on ulcer patients infected with *Helicobacter pylori* found that manuka honey didn’t actually kill the bacteria, although there was some suggestion it reduced patients’ pain... [But] the super bug aspect is only a small part of honey’s potential as a frontline medicine. Its most promising use to date appears to be as a general wound dressing, and... in dressing burns, or wounds created by harvesting skin to repair a burn... “If you get better, quicker healing, that area is available for harvesting again in a short time, which may reduce your hospital stay... but it’s also a... lot cheaper than conventional things.” While the... wound care conference was abuzz with talk about honey dressings, it’s actually nothing new. The first use of honey as a salve can be traced back thousands of years to ancient China, Assyria, Greece, Egypt and Rome... Honey fights bacteria in three ways: Its low pH retards bacteria growth; its high sugar content sucks moisture away from bacteria... but doesn’t dry... the wound... out, which makes for rapid healing and minimal scarring...; and most importantly it contains an enzyme which, when diluted, creates hydrogen peroxide – a highly effective anti-bacterial agent... [Manuka honey contains] a fourth, and even more powerful, anti-bacterial factor... Strangely... honey... remains an innocuous substance. While... the recommended carbonic acid concentration to clean your toilet (5%)... would burn your hand, you can stick honey... [with] ten times the... strength of... carbonic acid at 5%... on an open wound without so much as a tickle... [Honey also] seems to have a powerful anti-inflammatory effect which... [may have] something to do with an anti-oxidant content... Another Waikato scientist... has been looking into the possibility that honeydew honey may promote the growth of healthy bifido bacteria in the large intestine, which is thought to have a range of health benefits. Honeydew comes from the beech forests of the South Island and is actually made of the dung of tiny insects that feed off the sap of beech trees – ...bees make honey out of droplets of liquid they collect from the insects’ backsides... The Honey Research Unit is gearing up to... carry out a study on combining honey with milk to see if it will enhance calcium absorption, testing honey as a hang-over cure and there’s even a study under way to test honey as a treatment for bobby calf scouring. But there’s a big catch. Honey varies so wildly from batch to batch and region to region in anti-bacterial potency that if you buy any old jar from the supermarket and expect it to soothe your sunburn or clean up your cuts, chances are it won’t have the active ingredients... The beekeeping industry has recognised this and some hives are already testing their honey, producing labels with the words “active manuka honey” to alert customers. The result for the consumer is that prices are rising. Manuka honey is already in short supply, ironically because until a few years ago no one wanted to produce it... [B]ee-keepers used to feed manuka honey back to the bees because people didn’t like it. Now it’s quadrupled in price up to \$12 a kg] and there are tales of wealthy Asian honey dealers offering bee-keepers a small fortune to supply them with every drop they can produce... The jury is still out on the overall health benefits of honey, but seeing as it’s Sunday, it may be worth paying heed to a message in the Bible. In preaching the birth of the baby Jesus, the Bible states the child shall be fed butter and honey “so [the child] shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good.” Bearing in mind what we now know about the effects of butter [– ‘as bad as cigarettes on the heart’ (and ‘healthy people should only use cream, used for butter, sparingly, while sufferers from liver complaints should not eat it’ at all) –] maybe it’s worth heeding the advice... [The co-director still] believes honey has got a big future – if not as a cure-all, then simply as a healthy, natural food. [However, in the opinion of someone else: ‘honey should be used as a *condiment* – not a food. It provides almost pure carbohydrates in the form of sugars. This is “good news” and “bad news”. Honey is better for you than table sugar, but sugar is not an essential nutrient – your body can make sugar from protein and fat – and honey is so rapidly absorbed that the carbohydrate hits you all at once. If you have a need for immediate explosive effort, that’s good. If you are not extremely active physically, that’s bad – carbohydrates that aren’t burned up immediately get stored as fat.’]

...Knowing nyet about business, four out-of-work Russian immigrants started their own company collecting bee venom, and are now starting to collect business awards... [One couple] left their East Siberian home of Irkutsk two years ago to start a new life. They were attracted, as biologists, to N[Z]’s environment as much as wanting to secure a future for their 11-year-old son... But despite a combined experience of more than 40 years in the biophysics world, the pair, like many of their highly skilled immigrant friends, struggled to find work. Melding their expertise with a long-held interest in beekeeping, they decided to go into business with [two friends]... The plan was to extract venom from bees for use in the growing number of health products used to treat pain, blood disorders, neurosis, asthma and skin problems. Only a lack of business skills, local knowledge and finance held them back. Based in New Lynn, the partners approached the business agency Enterprise Waitakere, which helped them to set up a company structure, secure a loan, market their product and establish contacts in the pharmaceutical industry... [T]he company has [now secured a NZ] patent for its method of venom collection and is doing business with six[NZ] companies which use venom in their products. A deal with an overseas distributor is on the verge of being signed, which could open the company up to the lucrative North American market.

BEAUTY is always sure to cause a buzz, especially when you’re dealing with glitzy, big-name European cosmetic labels... A small two-person business from suburban Auckland that trades on the healing and beautifying qualities of honey, mixed it with some of the world’s top beauty houses in selling their wares... [at] last week’s international beauty fair in Hong Kong... [The pair] discovered, somewhat to their surprise, that other, far older cultures than ours were not so aware that you can do things with honey other than spread it on your toast. Like, use it as... a laxative or cure for diarrhoea, or... as a balm for rough hands... and... a lipstick for chapped lips... “The worth of honey as both a medicine and beautifier has been known for thousands of year[s], so... we were a little surprised,”... [Honey’s medical properties] had been forgotten... with the advent of antibiotics during [WW2]... Extended use of honey’s medical qualities would open up the possibilities of an even greater money spinner for the honey industry. But benefits may then flow more to larger drug and pharmaceutical companies than bee-keepers or consumers.

...[a beekeeper] of Plimerton, north of Wellington, will keep one hive on his property while a Porirua District Court judge decides if... an earlier injunction... to make [the beekeeper remove every hive can be enforced]... On July 8, [the judge convicted the beekeeper for] keeping bees without a permit... The conviction followed complaints over three years by residents to the Porirua City Council about [spots of yellow] bee excrement on their houses, cars and washing... - 1996

N[Z]’s largest maker of products that contain bee pollen and royal jelly is angry about a warning the Ministry of Health issued yesterday. The Acting Director-General of Health... had said evidence now existed of extreme reactions to products containing bee pollen and propolis... [which had been reported in AUS, NZ] and in international literature... [I]t was previously thought adverse reactions were limited to people with asthma or allergies who had consumed products with royal jelly... The ministry is seeking comment on a proposed food standard requiring mandatory

warnings on all food products that contain any of the three substances... At least three deaths in A[US] were thought to be linked to royal jelly, which is usually consumed in tablet form to relieve stress and give energy... But the managing director of Comvita N[Z]... said the health warning was “potentially libellous” and the company would certainly take action.

...Up to half a tonne of... [i]llegally imported pollen seized in Christchurch could have contaminated... N[Z]’s population of roughly 87 million bees... says the M[AF]... The breach comes under the new Biosecurity Act... Investigations could take some weeks and it would be months before charges, if any, were laid against... a Christchurch health product company... N[Z] is one of a few countries in the world free of European foulbreed disease[, which]... could be introduced by the bees being exposed to the pollen... [Incidentally, the] honeybee population across Bosnia has been nearly wiped out by unseasonable snow which blanketed the country. The insects had just come out of hibernation when the heaviest late-season snowstorm of this century struck earlier this month. It is likely that many crops will fail because there will be no bees to pollinate them.

...[‘VERS A SOIE – This rather unusual foodstuff was very well thought of in the “Celestial Empire”, if we are to believe the account of a French missionary in China: “It is some centuries since our farmers in the Midi took up the production of silkworms, but I know they have never dreamed of using any of them for nourishment. In China it is not the same thing at all. I have often seen Chinese people eat silkworm chrysalids, and I have eaten them myself. I can state that they constitute an excellent stomachic, strengthening and refreshing at the same time, which delicate persons often use with successful results.” COCHENILLE – Insect used to prepare a red dye called carmine (used for colouring in cooking and cake-mixing). The best-known cochineal is that of nopal (cochineal cactus). Gray cochineals are the most sought after, but there are also black varieties. The gal insect is used after it has been fertilised and before the complete development of her eggs. The bugs are put in the oven on metal sheets for a few moments, or plunged into boiling water, and dried.]

...because ‘maggots only eat dead flesh’, they are being used by some doctors to assist with the repair of open wounds...

‘L is for leeches. After an historical lapse in popularity they are being used again, this time after plastic surgery when they help skin grafts and reduce fluid by sucking out blood and pus.’ ‘The tiny parasites used by doctors to treat a variety of ailments before the advent of modern medicine, can also help relieve the chronic pain of osteoarthritis, say researchers. The blood-suckers produced faster pain relief for patients than conventional drugs. Leeches remove blood through a tiny incision in their teeth. Their saliva contains analgesic and anaesthetic compounds, as well as hirudin, an anti-bloodclotting agent.’

...‘Leeches are most closely related to earthworms – which some leech species feed on – and are hermaphrodite, but cross-fertilisation is the general rule. Leeches are usually collected by agitating the water and netting them as they floated up, but another method was simply to wade barefoot.’ “‘If there’s anything in the world I hate, it’s leeches,” said Humphrey Bogart, wading a stream in *The African Queen*. But the widely unloved insects are making an astonishing comeback. When a leech bites into flesh with its 300 sharp teeth, leaving an inverted Y-shaped mark, it injects a powerful anaesthetic; the patient feels no pain. As it starts sucking, the leech secretes a cocktail of substances that act as an anticoagulant, to ensure the blood’s purity and keep it flowing. Even though the leech will suck for only 20 to 30 minutes, “bleeding” may continue for several hours or so, clearing the most challenging blockage. A surgeon helped pioneer the modern use of leeches in Britain – against strong opposition from colleagues reluctant to take a “backward” step – when stitching back a patient’s severed finger in 1979. NZ doctors, too, have been using leeches on plastic surgery and microsurgery patients. Middlemore and Waikato hospitals get their leeches from a Dargaville family, who collect them from dams and ponds on their property. Found in many parts of the world, leeches come in around 650 species, from one-centimetre-long slivers to specimens that reach a jumbo 45 centimetres when fully extended. These annelids – not all bloodsucking – breathe through the skin, have two hearts and can go for months between meals. Some have suckers at each end of the body.’]

...As the days grow longer and the mercury rises, millions of little bloodsuckers are slowly but surely marshalling their forces against family pets. But there is one [person] who aims to stem their tide – Doctor Flea, otherwise known as... [the] associate professor of parasitology at Kansas State University, [who] has been in Auckland to talk to vets about new tactics in the battle against fleas. [Doctor Flea] breeds up to 50,000 fleas every week, all for use in deadly experiments aimed at working out better ways to kill them... [T]he flea’s rapid life cycle makes it a parasite particularly well-adapted to survival. New products have to be developed every couple of years as the beasts develop resistance. [● ‘Most fleas will feed and breed on a variety of hosts; the human flea *Pulex irritans* is found also on pigs, and the hen flea *Ceratophyllus gallinae* feeds on a great number of different birds and can live on mammalian, including human, blood as well. Fleas are very greedy feeders and only digest and assimilate a fraction of the blood they suck up, the rest being passed out of the intestine unchanged. It is thought that this apparently wasteful habit may have been evolved to provide a supply of dry coagulated blood for the flea larvae which are feeding in the nest of the host. Fleas are regularly caught and eaten in small numbers by their hosts, usually in the course of licking, cleaning and preening.

At the present time the manager of a flea circus would be faced with two difficulties – finding an audience and a sufficient supply of human fleas for his performers. The manager would have to be content with dog or cat fleas, which are not as easy to feed in captivity.’

...‘Britain’s only working flea circus has opened its doors, reviving one of the great curiosities of Victorian entertainment. A psychologist from the University of Hertfordshire, brought the show back to life – but using mechanical fleas – to stimulate interest in the bloodsucking creatures. Flea circuses arrived in Britain in the early 19th century and quickly became popular attractions on street corners. Fleas can jump up to 25cm, the equivalent of a human being leaping as high as the Statue of Liberty. The insects dazzled crowds with their feats of strength. Tiny strips of metal were sometimes glued to the twitching legs of two fleas glued to a table, giving the impression of swordfighting. “The Victorians loved dressing up animals and presenting fleas as historical figures. You would have one flea dressed as Napoleon glued to the back of another flea acting as his horse.” The original flea circuses remained popular until WW2, when they were replaced by mechanical flea circuses – using magnets, motors and threads instead of living fleas. There are around 2500 species of flea, the most common being the cat flea. Most species of bird and mammal have their own flea, which live on their bodies as adults.’

...‘In Greek mythology, the Cyclops were a group of one-eyed giants. One of the best known freshwater copepods has been called Cyclops because it has only one eye on top of the head. The Cyclops or water-flea are common in all freshwaters, particularly in stagnant ponds, and they may be active there even in the depths of winter. Copepods form the food of a variety of fish. Free-swimming ones are sometimes the intermediate hosts for certain parasitic worms (the parasitic larvae living within the crustacean cannot complete their development until eaten by a fish, in which the life cycle is completed). *Cyclops* swims with the front pair of legs on the underside of the body. It can also glide slowly by the action of the leg-like second pair of antennae on the head while the body limbs are held to the sides. Some copepods swim by alternately bending and straightening their bodies.’ By the way, reports] say that a group of dolphins saved a [human] from drowning after [the human] panicked in the surf while snorkelling... near Durban... “The sea was murky and I was very scared. Then the dolphins swam up to me and nudged me all the way to the breakers,”... [The] Natal Sharks Board chief scientist and dolphin expert... said that, while there are occasional reports of dolphins rescuing people, “I am sceptical they have sympathy for humans.” - 1997

References to dolphins are frequent in classical literature, and they appear regularly on Greek... coins and mosaics. The stories connected with them are usually of their relationships with [humans], often aiding someone in distress. Arion of Lesbos, for instance, was... on his way back from a music competition in Sicily, when his shipmates, jealous of his prowess at singing and poetry and envious of the valuable prizes [Arion] had won, conspired to throw him overboard. Arion picked up his cithara, the instrument on which his fame was based, and played so sweetly that a school of dolphins came to listen. Then, before his enemies could bind him[, Arion] leapt overboard and was carried to safety on the back of one of the

dolphins. Another story... is the account by the Roman naturalist Pliny of the dolphin of Hippo. Hippo was a North African port and... boys there had a sport in which they allowed themselves to be carried out to sea by the... [local river. The boy] who went farthest was the winner. One day one of the boys found a dolphin playing about him, swimming around and, eventually, under him to lift him onto its back. The story of this incident got around... and crowds flocked to see the dolphin who became very tame, allowing people to swim around and pat it, but only giving rides to the boy it first befriended. This story was treated as a fable until in 1955 a bottlenose dolphin appeared off the N[Z] town of Opononi... The story of the Hippo dolphin ended sadly, as did that of 'Opo', but for a different reason. The townspeople of Hippo became tired of acting as hosts to all the visitors who flocked to see their famous dolphin and it was secretly harpooned. How times have changed, that a centre of tourism should deliberately destroy its chief attraction to regain peace and quiet! ['At the height of the 1955-56 Christmas holiday season, when hundreds of people crowded the beaches at Opononi, Opo would appear almost every day and frolic with bathers. Opo established a special relationship with some children it seemed to recognise, allowing them to stroke her and even giving some of the smaller ones brief rides. Towards the end of the summer, the government decided to accord Opo the same kind of personal protection given Pelorus Jack – a dolphin who for 24 years regularly accompanied ships travelling between Nelson and Wellington, and, until disappearing late in 1912, attracted many tourists who'd take the ride just to see the world famous animal (so famous and beloved was Pelorus Jack that the Risso's dolphin became the first individual sea creature protected by government on 26 Sep, 1904, under the Sea Fisheries Act) – and on 8 Mar 1956 the Fisheries (Dolphin Protection) Regulations became law. Opo hadn't appeared that day and the next day NZ went into mourning when Opo was found dead, jammed among rocks where the tide runs from a large rock pool. One theory is Opo was stunned by the deliberate or accidental but certainly illegal use of explosives']... **It is not unusual to see a school of dolphins or porpoises playing, and the common dolphin seems to be the most playful species...** It is an impressive sight to watch dolphins playing and it is made all the more so by the way dolphins join together to play... Their behaviour... appears to be... just for the fun of it, rather than for a strictly useful purpose as is most behaviour[, although dolphins also]... pack together at times of danger... [A pregnant] cow slows down and at the moment of birth... is accompanied by two other cows. These swim one either side of her, their role being protective, especially against sharks, who may be attracted to the spot by the smell of blood lost during the birth process... They also assist an injured member of the school by one ranging either side of it and, pushing their heads under its flippers, raising it to the surface to breathe... It has often been said that if whales cried out in pain we might be less ready to slaughter them. Scattered reports suggest that in fact they do precisely this. Freshly captured bottlenose dolphins placed in the tanks in Florida's Marineland have been heard through the thick plate glass windows to cry with shrill notes of discomfort and alarm. At sea similar distress calls have been heard from injured... whales, porpoises and dolphins... A dolphin's eyesight is not particularly good. Yet... [tame dolphins can] *leap... some 30 ft into the air to take fish accurately, which proves that[their] eyes are... quite useful out of water...* Moreover... presumably they have partially stereoscopic vision. The sense of smell is, however, either non-existent or almost wholly so. Hearing is the main sense, apart from taste and touch. This is acute and is especially sensitive to high tones. It is probably second only to the hearing of bats... They sleep at night and are active by day, although each feeding session is followed by an hour's doze[('the two hemispheres of a dolphin's brain work independently; for 8 hours the entire brain is awake, then the left side sleeps for 8 hours, and when it wakes up the right side sleeps for 8 hours – thus, the dolphin gets 8 hours sleep without ever having to stop physically'). Cows] sleep at the surface with only the blowhole exposed... The [bulls] sleep a foot below the surface, periodically rising to breathe... [T]hey can stay submerged for up to 15 minutes... air can be released from the blowhole while the animal is still submerged... In captivity a bottlenose will eat 22 lb of fish a day, yielding 237 calories per pound of its body weight, compared with the 116 calories/lb taken by [humans]... Common dolphins are among the fastest whales... they can swim at 20 knots (24mph) for a considerable length of time. Faster speeds have been recorded with dolphins swimming in ships' bow-waves, when they hold their bodies at an angle, using them as surf boards... [T]he cheetah is... the chief claimant to the title of the world's fastest land animal... One record that has been widely accepted is for a cheetah running at 71 mph, over 700 yards while timed with a stop-watch... Later writers have put the maximum speed at 60 mph... In the 1920's, cheetah versus greyhound races were staged at Harringay, in London... [On]e cheetah clocked only 45 mph. But for those who would like to think cheetahs can really run faster, there is the consoling thought that... [having] failed to catch the hare in the first dash, the cheetah sat down to watch the fun... Cheetahs can make good, but expensive pets, being affectionate and playful... It seems cheetahs attack only frightened animals. One story tells of four cheetahs trying to frighten a young warthog. The warthog refused to flee and the frustrated cheetahs left it, to kill an impala. If this is true, it is good evidence that pet cheetahs should be treated with caution. It would not do to run away from one.

Children are innocent and teenagers fucked-up in the head Adults are even more fucked-up and elderlies are like children Will there be another race to come along and take over Earth... maybe Martians could do better than we've done We'll make great pets...

...back in wild west times they used to call... Dodge City... the wickedest little city in America. Now the only evil thing about the place is the smell. This is the capital of the world's beef industry... "...we will kill approximately 15,000 cattle in a day." "I had a friend who used to work in an abattoir who said that the animals knew when [their] time was up. Do you think that's true?" "...yes... the smell of blood kind of... [unsettles them. I]t's a distinct smell." "...do you inject them and give them hormones and things like that?" "...yeah, when the cattle are first brought into the feedlots... they are given anti-biotics and aspirin, so to speak..." "...when I see this L... [always] wonder if there is a planet somewhere where there's people who are much smarter than us who keep human beings in a pen..." "I guess there could be a place like that." "...maybe that's where we will go when we die. Ever worry... that... there'll be all these cows sitting in armchairs going, 'That's the guy!'"

One has to respect the animals, and... I admire and consider many... mammals superior to the human being.

Exploitation or enslavement of other animal species is directly linked to the belief that human beings are superior (e.g., 'the genus *Homo* is distinguished from other animals by superior mental development'). However, if having slaves is a sign of superior mental development, some ant genera must be more intelligent than gorillas! Furthermore, both ants and humans will go to war, whereas 'gorillas will rarely attack, unless severely provoked, and rarely do they war amongst themselves' ('home ranges of gorilla troops overlap extensively, [but] there is no defended territory'; 'remember 1986 when Jambo the 25-stone gorilla proved that it was just a big softie and came to the rescue of an injured child who had fallen into the gorilla pit at Jersey Zoo? – the gentle giant died of old age in 1992, aged 31'). In addition, the 'almost exclusively vegetarian gorilla' has superior physical strength ('a 400lb gorilla in his prime would probably have the strength of 7 or 8 Olympic weightlifters'), as does the elephant, while 'pound for pound beetles are the strongest creatures on Earth, lifting up to a hundred times their weight'; cheetahs can run faster, Komodo dragons have superior acceleration ('Komodo dragons can accelerate to 45 mph in 2 seconds'); bats have superior ears; dolphins have superior lungs; dogs have a superior sense of smell; owls have superior eyes; and 'according to experts, the human mouth is one of the dirtiest in the animal kingdom, coming second only to the camel.'

Who really exhibits superior mental development – the person who thinks it is superior enough to use whatever it considers to be inferior to suit its own purposes (and, perhaps, believes that killing an unaware animal with a long-range rifle is proof of its superiority); or the person who knows it is superior and proves it by trying to use its brain to learn how to satisfy its own needs without having to exploit less intelligent, or less fortunate, people and species?

Of course, at any given time there will always be a ‘most intelligent’ species; on Earth at present this is [the human species]. And this species will inevitably have its lineage wherein a trend towards greater intelligence is apparent. But that is not to say that all, or even many, species are endowed with an inbuilt tendency to grow more intelligent with time. One of the oddities of human intelligence is that its level of advancement seems like a case of overkill. While a modicum of intelligence does have good survival value, it is far from clear how such qualities as the ability to do advanced mathematics, create complex music or develop rich language structures ever evolved by natural selection. These higher intellectual functions are a world away from survival ‘in the jungle’. Many of them were manifested explicitly only recently, long after [humans] had become the dominant mammal and had secured a stable ecological niche. This raises the interesting question of when these abilities were selected for. Most biologists believe that the structure of the human brain has changed little over tens of thousands of years, which suggests that higher mental functions were selected long ago and have lain dormant until recently. Yet if these functions were not explicitly manifested at the time they were selected, why were they selected? How can natural selection operate on a hidden ability? Attempts to explain this by supposing that, say, mathematical ability simply piggy-backs on a more obviously useful trait are unconvincing... The record of human history does not suggest that mathematical or artistic genius has produced more successful breeding populations... The case of the A[US]n Aborigines is intriguing. These people remained almost completely isolated from the rest of the world for 40,000 years until the arrival of the Europeans. Yet they are... essentially indistinguishable from Europeans in their artistic, linguistic and musical abilities and, when educated, in their mathematical ability too. This suggests that... the ‘math’ gene and others were selected... more than 40,000 years ago, and... for countless [years]... remained... ‘unexpressed’...

A[US]N children are among the 218 worldwide who... [ma]y never learn the surprising and controversial facts about their conception. All were fathered artificially by geniuses – or by strangers selected for their exceptional intelligence... [M]illionaire Robert Graham... was an optometrist who made his fortune engineering shatterproof lenses for spectacles – now used by 100 million people. But his international fame stemmed from the sperm bank... founded in 1980 near Los Angeles... called... the Repository for Germinal Choice... [Its dono]rs included respected scientists... Are [their children] measurably more intelligent[?] ...Mr Graham hoped so – but was never able to provide tangible proof. [Bob] was found dead in an hotel bath, apparently after hitting his head in a fall, during a meeting of the U[S] Association for the Advancement of Science... [in] Seattle, February 13... aged 90... Among those who helped him create babies... was [a] Nobel laureate... whose belief about the “genetically inferiority” of black people had already caused fierce controversy... [In related news, a]ccording to a Newspann published... yesterday, a daunting and potentially powerful number of... A[US]ns have no problem with the phraseology of the independent MP-cum-eponymous party leader from Queensland, busy carving out a career resurrecting White A[US] from the trash can of history. The... poll, taken after... [her] One Nation party was launched two weeks ago, found the new party has already won the same level of support as the Democrats – the third force in A[US]n politics – and could win Senate seats in Queensland... [T]he attention gained by the launch of... One Nation... has been heightened even further by this week’s publication of the anonymously-authored [*One Nation’s leader*], *The Truth*, which among other often bizarre claims alleges Aborigines were habitual cannibals, killing and roasting older [gals] and children... The... claims of cannibalism have stirred a debate not many A[US]ns were aware existed, with a flurry of anthropologists arguing the case for and against cannibalism... One of the historians quoted in the book... angrily distanced himself from the publication, complaining his work had been taken out of context[, before noting]... that cannibalism had occurred among many races[(‘the word comes from Carib, a tribe reported by Columbus to indulge in the practice; it occurred in the Paleolithic period, and ancient Greek writers mention *anthrophaghi*, “people-eaters”; usually done to gain a dead enemy’s strength, occasionally vengeance was the motive, rarely hunger’). A] visiting professor of anthropology at Macquarie University, added support in an article written for the *Sydney Morning Herald*, in which [was] quoted a number of serious studies, including a 1964 publication reissued by the A[US]n Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. This described the ritual eating of portions of dead people as part of the mortuary process, and the eating of bodies of people killed in war or executed as punishment for a serious offence... [F]urther... work... suggest[ed the practice of] infanticide, often of the first-born and usually by the mother, in which many of the victims were eaten... [But a] James Cook University historian... disputed suggestions Aborigines had been cannibals, telling ABC radio there was no credible supporting evidence in historical anthropological literature. Either way, [One Nation’s leader] looks the winner... “What we are seeing is a struggle for the moral high ground using the method anthropologists call the politics of embarrassment... The aim is to soften up your opponents by making them feel bad about themselves or their ancestors.” [The ‘leader “sees it as the beginning of a resurrection.”] However, most analysts expect the leader and her party to be just another bright but brief phenomenon in a century-long shower of similar political comets from the right.’

...“A lot of people have had enough,” says One Nation’s leader. “Enough of what?” “Enough of all the things they’ve had enough of. You just don’t understand and I get misconstrued all the time.” “I want to know what you’d do if your daughter came home with an Aboriginal and said, ‘I’m going to marry this person’?” “Don’t be bloody ridiculous. My daughter’s not mixing in those circles.” “But how can you stop the course of true love?” “Are you implying you know what my daughter’s up to and I don’t. I’m not liking this line of questioning. We’re meant to be talking about serious issues; about your heroin needle abusing, welfare and public housing bludgers, and all the bad drivers that come from other countries. We want to, well, send them all back.”]

...an enormous fish... [saying ‘Racism Stinks’ invited visitors] to a Sydney fish market... [yesterday. To the AUS]n Human Rights Commissioner... it seemed apt – [because the person] who has whipped up a racist fervour in the country owns a fish and chip shop. The campaign is part of a hard-hitting attack on racism in the wake of fierce debate sparked by [the fish and chip seller, who is also the leader of One Nation]. The row topped off what has been a bleak 12 months for race relations in A[US]. A national inquiry into indigenous children “stolen” from their families up until the late 1960s to “assimilate” them into white society shocked the nation. And the nation’s race relations record was again spotlighted as the toll of Aborigines found dead in jail soared to record levels... Studies show that a \$NZ440 million programme over six years has failed to stem the number of deaths... Conventions on the Rights of the Child and on Elimination of Racial Discrimination were also being violated, with life expectancy for indigenous people... [being] 15 to 20 years... lower than other A[US]ns, while] infant mortality, unemployment, homelessness... and... poverty... [were] significantly higher... Only 33[%] of indigenous children finished school compared with a national average of 77[%]. The commissioner – in NZ]... to meet officials here – has taken the brunt of the fallout. [The commissioner] spent much of last year trying to “hose down” the furore sparked by... [One Nation’s] anti-Asian immigration and anti-Aboriginal funding views. But [the commissioner] said the outspoken MP’s popularity was merely a symptom of A[US]’s fears about unemployment and the state of the economy. “I think Asian immigrants and Aboriginal people have been scapegoated yet again,”... Incredibly, it took a federal parliament bipartisan motion condemning racism to cool things down... Since [WW2, AUS] has grown from a land of seven million people of almost purely British and Irish descent into a multi-hued melting pot of 18 million, almost a quarter of them born overseas. The transition generally has been smooth, unmarked by the sort of sporadic violence toward immigrants in parts of Europe and the U[S]... Last year, almost 100,000 newcomers settled [in AUS], more than half of them from Asian countries...

New findings by the authoritative Queensland Development Report reveal that since [One Nation’s] xenophobic Independent MP... rose for her maiden speech to the federal Parliament last year, Asians have looked elsewhere for their holidays. The Gold Coast, the 40km coastal strip that has become A[US]’s top tourist drawcard, suffered most... As the number of hotel rooms rose... in the March quarter... by 12[%], occupancy plunged 10[%]... Overall, the number of Asians visiting Queensland in the period rose... 7[%], compared with annual growth of between 17... and 40[%] for most of the decade. Reuters reports that A[US] yesterday stepped up its official campaign to counter [the One Nation leader], unveiling a special kit

to combat what it calls myths and distortions about immigration and race... The kit gives a detailed rundown on the immigration programme... It also explains the White A[US] policy, which restricted immigration to whites and was abandoned only in the 1970s.

...The A[US]n Archives exhibition, titled *Between Two Worlds*, reveals a dark chapter in A[US]’s past when it attempted to breed out Aborigines... Black and white film shows rows of Aboriginal children with blank faces, dressed in striped uniforms reminiscent of nazi concentration camps, and others bent over sweeping the dirt with their bare hands... Today, thousands of Aboriginal people face a life of family breakdowns, drug and alcohol abuse, violence and mental anguish they say is directly linked to being taken from their parents... [B]etween one in three and one in 10 Aboriginal children were forcibly removed... [I]ncomplete or destroyed records mean the exact number is unknown, but it may be as large as 100,000... Many... were used as slaves and one in 10 was sexually assaulted... “[The stolen children who have themselves become] mothers say to us, ‘I’m a rotten mother. I don’t know how to cuddle my baby,’ and then add, ‘The only time I have ever been cuddled was when I was being raped.’” ...[the] Social Justice Commissioner... has just completed a year-long national inquiry into the Stolen Generation... [which] is now before the Government and is expected to formally charge A[US] with attempted genocide and call for... compensation, possibly millions of dollars... A[US]’s churches have apologised for their part... They admit their role was to break the Aboriginal spirit. “People believed that if we were going to make good Catholics... out of the Aborigin[es]... we had to take them away from what we would have seen as pagan influences...”

CASE NO 1... who was removed in 1967, had been told his parents were worthless. “...They made... my mother... sound... bad... [and] stupid, you know... And when I... first met... her[my mother] was so beautiful... I walked into my mother and we hugged and this hot, hot rush... filled every part of my body... That was my first feeling of love and it only could come from my mum. I was so happy – and that was the last time I got to see her.” The unnamed witness’ mother died two years after their one and only meeting. “When my mother passed away I went to her funeral which is stupid, because [I wasn’t] allowed to go see her... when... [my mother was still alive].” CASE NO 2... was also taught to reject... [her] Aboriginality. “We were told our mother was an alcoholic and... a prostitute... [who] didn’t care about us. They used to warn us that when we got older we’d have to watch it [or else we’d also] turn into sluts and alcoholics...” CASE NO 3 The method of removal was often as devious as it was cruel, as related by three girls taken from their mother in 1935 and sent to Sister Kate’s Orphanage in Perth... “I was in the post office with my mum and auntie and cousins. They put us [all] in the police ute and said they were taking us to Broome... But when we’d gone [about 10 miles] they stopped the car and threw the mothers out[, then]... drove off while our mothers were... running and crying after us. We were screaming in the back of the car. When we got to Broome they put me and my cousin in the Broome lock-up. We were only 10 years old.” CASE NO 4... was four when... taken away from a native camp in... 1949 and sent to Sister Kate’s... “Because my parents were fair in complexion, the authorities decided us kids could pass as whitefellas... We were told Sunday was visiting day when parents came... For [my brother]... and I that was a patch of lies because our family were not allowed to visit. We spent each Sunday crying and comforting each other as we waited for our family... [T]hey told me my family didn’t care or want me and I had to forget them. They said it was very degrading to belong to an Aboriginal family and that I should be ashamed of myself. We used to get whipped with a wet ironing cord... To wake us up in the morning we were sprayed up the backside with an old-fashioned pump fly spray... While I was in my first year at high school I was sent out to work on a farm as a domestic... The... [farmer] used to come into my room at night and force me to have sex. When I returned to the home... I went to matron and told her what happened. [Matron] washed my mouth out with soap and told me not to tell the other kids. When the next holidays came I begged not to be sent to that farm again, but they said I had to. This time... [the] farmer and one of his workers raped me several times... and... I was... bashed and slashed with a razor blade on my arms and legs... When I returned to the home I got a belting. They told me I was bad and a disgrace and if anyone knew it would bring shame to Sister Kate’s Home. I ate rat poison to try and kill myself and got another belting.” [CASE NO 4.] then 13, was subsequently found to be pregnant, which earned her another belting. “...My baby was taken from me just as I was from my mother.” [CASE NO 4] was... denied access to her child... Perth’s King Edward Hospital told her there was no record of her having had a child. In 1972... Sister Kate’s... told her... the... baby had died... But... [that was a] lie. In 1996, [CASE NO 4] was reunited with her daughter. CASE NO 5... “When I finally met my mother through an interpreter [my mother] said that because my name had been changed [my parents] had... never heard about me. Every... morning as the sun came up the whole family would wait. They did that for 32 years until they saw me again.” ...[CASE NO 6 One day in 1941 an Aboriginal] mother lost eight of her children. There was no farewell: the[y]... were taken by welfare officers while [the mother] was at a funeral[. The children were] separated and sent to institutions across N[SW].

...yesterday the performer] who was the champion of her race and champion of the world... [after winning] two Wimbledon tennis titles was as close to her people as [the Aborigine] has ever been... [The performer was listening at the AUSn] Reconciliation Convention in Melbourne... to the hard truth of what happened to Aboriginal children [like herself] who... were taken from their families “for their own good.” ...[during the conference, the] head of the inquiry... said... any notion that the children were removed for their own good... was nonsense... [The inquiry head] defended the claim that the... policy... was a form of genocide... [and again] called on the... Government to compensate... [the victims. Incidentally], a parliamentary committee heard yesterday... [that] Aborigines could be better represented in the N[SW] Parliament if they were allowed non-voting seats... Guaranteed seats was the only effective way to ensure representation. Many Aborigines in rural communities did not see any point in voting... The assistant director of electoral education for the A[US]n Electoral Commission... said having guaranteed seats... was a positive step, but could be seen as “tokenistic” if they were allowed to vote... [A US] system allowed two “tribal members” to sit in the House but have no voting rights.

...Aborigines yesterday celebrated the 30th anniversary of becoming A[US]n citizens with a “call to arms” against the climate of racism and a demand for their rights to be enshrined in the nation’s constitution[, creating]... a legal pact or treaty with white A[US]... On May 27, 1967, A[US] passed a referendum granting Aborigines citizenship and the right to vote. Until then, Aborigines were governed nationally under flora and fauna laws. But the celebrations... were a mixture of hope... that A[US] was on the road to reconciliation... and sadness that Aborigines remained the most disadvantaged group in society... [T]heir lives have improved little since 1967, and... many of their hard-fought rights are now being eroded with a rise in racism and political indifference... [Some] Aborigines believe that if the 1967 referendum were held today it would be defeated.

...A group of Northern Territory Aborigines yesterday lost a High Court case which could have paved the way for compensation for the... stolen generation. The High Court... ruled there was no constitutional right of action against the... laws and ordinances which applied at the time... [But an AUSn] National University constitutional law expert... said the case... [was only] the first step in a long battle... [O]ne of the applicants... [also] said the fight was not over yet... Meanwhile... the Opposition... Leader... said stolen generation cases would be best decided by an administrative process involving the federal and state governments, rather than the courts, with compensation from the \$A1 billion... Federation Fund.

...[yesterday t]he Attorney-General... said that the Government opposed compensation. “The Government can see no equitable or practical way of now paying special compensation...”... [Furthermore, the Attorney-General] rejected the genocide finding, saying it was “flawed and wrong” because the assimilation policy was not intended to destroy a racial group... [The Government’s position is supported by the leader of One Nation, who says] Aboriginal people stolen from their families as children... should not be compensated... [because they] were in many cases taken for their own good... and... if people felt traumatised by the experience, monetary compensation would do nothing to alleviate that trauma.

...[the One Nation leader claims to have received] reports of a stockpile of weapons in Cape York Peninsula and evidence of Aboriginal gun running and involvement with terrorists... "There... have been exchanges of weaponry for a carton of beer,"... Last week, [a]Queensland National Party backbencher... warned that farmers in far north Queensland were... arming themselves... [with] banned assault rifles... for a race war.

...the... race-row politician[']s... party... is in turmoil after disillusioned members launched a rebel party, a former... supporter... who has been accused in Parliament of having links with the right-wing League of Rights, said... yesterday. Concerns about the party's direction... the dictatorial power of the party's core leaders... and ultra-right-wing politics prompted the formation of the new Australian One Nation Party... [In addition, the old One Nation's] popularity has steadily slipped to about 3[%] from a high of... 10[%]. By the way, AUS's]... Government stood by its refusal to apologise to Aborigines of the... stolen children generation yesterday when it unveiled a \$A63 m... package to address the lingering consequences of past Government policies. [The]Aboriginal Affairs Minister... told a packed press conference, also attended by local Aboriginal leaders, that while it was impossible to change the past, past wrongs should be acknowledged and responsibility taken for them. The package of practical assistance included \$A16 m... for 50 counsellors to help people going through the family reunion process... a \$A11.25 m... national network of family link-up services to assist individuals... \$A1.6 m... for an oral history project and \$A6 m... to develop indigenous family support programmes. - 1997

An A[US]n railway company has publicly apologised to a group of Outback Aborigines who were put in a train's baggage compartment after a passenger apparently complained about their smell... The 23 members of the remote Coonana community... had travelled 350km in the back of a truck from the Tjuntuntjarra community to meet the train... The Coonana community co-ordinator... confirmed yesterday that a confidential agreement... had been worked out... [but] would not comment on any possible financial compensation... [Now for some other news from overseas, officials] declared a state of emergency and temporarily halted handgun sales to try to maintain an uneasy calm in urban neighbourhoods of St Petersburg, Florida, after a white police[officer] shot dead a black motorist and black residents rioted... Police said the[y]... shot the motorist because they believed [the motorist] was trying to run them down after his gold Pontiac lurched forward... But some witnesses said the driver had done nothing to prompt the shooting... [O]ne witness told... a local television station... the driver had his hands in the air... The riot began shortly afterwards at the intersection where the shooting took place... "We're tired of... what's happening out there to our brothers," [said a]... resident... Community leaders called for calm and attributed the violence to small groups of you[ths]... who were roaming the streets setting fires... and... looting... "These things are spontaneous, it just ignites," [t]he... mayor... said. "It's a kind of wake-up call that you have a lot of work to do."

...[a r]etired military chief... has given marching orders to the Republican Party Convention... - branded by its enemies as a rich [white guy]'s club - to be more compassionate and tolerant, a "big tent" capable of attracting all Americans... "And... [l]et us... all... work together for our common goal - restoring the American dream." ...It was [the general]'s first major speech as a Republican and was a hit from the first line... By the time it was over, [the general] had been interrupted more than 40 times with applause. The cheers did not stop even when the Gulf War military commander hit on positions that many Republicans bitterly oppose - the right... to have an abortion... immigration... and the need for affirmative action programmes to help minorities... "[The general]'s going to be the first black President and I am glad [the general] is a Republican," said one North Dakota... delegate... [T]he first African-American to rise to chair[perso]n of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the audience how his parents emigrated to America 70 years ago in search of a better life and found it even though they were black "and treated as second class citizens."

...Auckland has failed to impress half of recent Asian immigrants many of whom feel unwelcome. A new survey... shows that Auckland is still the magnet for those coming to N[Z], but its pulling power may weaken if hostility continues... Auckland's environment comes out as the major crowd puller. Aucklanders, however, are proving to be a key liability, with about one in five immigrants concerned about racist remarks from locals.

...The boorish actions of the crowd were not surprising from a town which still prevents blacks from playing golf with other club members at the weekend, and yesterday was refusing black autograph hunters entry to the All Blacks' hotel. As the caddies at the golf club said, the change in Government has meant no change in apartheid attitudes in outback Kimberley.

...An apartheid police chief told South Africa's truth commission his [officers] killed black activists rather than arrested them and believed they had Government approval. The testimony from[the] retired police brigadier... heaped further blame on the country's political leaders for apartheid atrocities after evidence on Tuesday directly implicated[an] ex-President... in the bombing of a building used by black activists in 1988.

...[a former] South African President... has declared [that it is his intention to] never apologise for apartheid and denounced what... the 80-year-old... called an unforgiving assault on the Afrikaner by the country's new black rulers... [A] Truth and Reconciliation Commission, intended to heal the wounds of apartheid... has heard from police officers that... [the] ex-President... almost certainly knew about the torture and murder of black activists... [The ex-President claims to have] never associated himself with "blatant murder" but... conceded that there may have been instances... where individuals had "exceeded the limits of their authority. I cannot be expected to take responsibility for the actions of such individuals." - 1996

[Five security police officers], whose ranks range from warrant officer... to brigadier... are appealing to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission [(TRC)] for amnesty for their roles in the killing... of [a black couple]. They were part of the ruthless force that defended apartheid... [One of them] is giving his testimony in that matter-of-fact way that must be genetically implanted into would-be police[officers] at birth... They... knocked down the doctor and his wife and beat... them to death, making it look like a robbery. I am looking at [the doctor's son] at this moment. This is when pain turns to numbness... [The police officer] describes the aftermath and accuses, of course, a general of asking for a cover-up... The commission, headed by [the Archbishop 'who won the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize for his non-violent struggle against white rule'], is the brave attempt to turn the country that was the embodiment of institutionalised racism into the rainbow nation that is the vision of [its first black President]... It is difficult to quantify the damage... decades of apartheid did. There are the dead: The children shot at demonstrations, the tortured[, the victims]... of necklacing, the dreadful punishment ANC supporters meted out to suspected traitors [that involved] hanging... a burning car tyre around their necks... victims of the black-on-black war, nurtured to an extent by the regime, the "eliminated" - ...how... members of the security forces describe murders of the opponents of apartheid - and those who simply disappeared. There are the generations denied proper education, health, housing, denied basic human rights, denied dignity, all because of the colour of their skins. Now South Africa is trying to heal itself. Other torn nations - Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, for instance - have gone down the Nuremberg road to war crimes tribunals, with scant success so far... [The] Archbishop... tells me: "If retributive justice is the last word, these countries have had it. There must be forgiveness." The commission... must, in the terms of the Act of Parliament that established it, propose... "the ways and means and institutions which will ensure we don't repeat the ghastliness we have experienced." ...[the Archbishop, who] is ill with prostate cancer and is considering treatment options... freely confesses his weariness. His minders attempt to pace his engagements. And what a burden [the Archbishop] carries. As well as granting amnesty to individuals... who confess to... [being] guilty of planning, perpetrating [or] failing to prevent political violence... between 1960 and 1994... and recommending (limited) reparations to victims, "the commission sees as part of its role the establishing of a new moral order in our country"... [The Archbishop] is deeply satisfied that some of the truth of apartheid has started to emerge... "Many people thought all these things would never come out. (The proponents of apartheid) thought they were in control. We kept telling... these guys, in the dark days of apartheid... that... [truth] will one day prevail over lies. They thought this was just a slogan... We said... 'You have... already lost and we are too nice to you. We invite you to join the

winning side.' And they thought we were sloganeering again. But all history points to the fact that... it's not the Hitlers of the world who ultimately prevail... [E]verybody must know that ultimately, because this is a moral universe, God must prevail." ...[the Archbishop tells a story about the person] who, when asked for forgiveness for the murder of a loved one, said: "I'm not God. You will get your forgiveness in heaven." But [the Archbishop, who is] an optimist... says: "The wonder of this country is that many... people having had similar traumatic experiences, demonstrate an incredible magnanimity. There is the daughter of [someone] who was killed, who said: "We are ready to forgive. We just want to know who to forgive." ...[However, some blacks say] angrily: "The freedom fighters... should not... be compelled to apply for amnesty[too]. They were fighting... against crimes against humanity. They were only responding to the atrocities of apartheid." It is this argument about... means and ends that [the Archbishop]... has been having with the ANC... [I]n its final report, due to be delivered in March next year, the commission will make a moral judgment on the apartheid era and will make an assessment of whether the ANC's liberation struggle was that rare animal, a just war.

...[South Africa's TRC has labelled apartheid a crime against humanity, but says some actions by the ruling ANC against white rule were gross violations of human rights. "The Commission finds the ANC accountable both politically and morally for the commission of violations committed during the course of the armed struggle," the Commission said in a preliminary finding revealed in court documents yesterday. The findings were contained in a letter to the ANC in August warning the former liberation movement it would be implicated in human rights violations and giving it 15 days in which to respond.]

...In dramatic testimony before the [TRC, the ANC] admitted... it committed gross human rights violations in its fight against apartheid. These included bombing campaigns... which killed innocent civilians and summary executions in its military camps... in Angola... [22] people were either shot or beaten to death in 1982 after being "convicted" by tribunals of mutiny, rape or murder... It also conceded that it was slow in condemning the practice of "necklacing"... It was the second time... the ANC has appeared before the [TRC] and, in contrast to its first appearance last August, this time it faced tough questions from the... senior legal adviser... The ANC's 139-page submission gave a full list of the operations ordered by its military wing... [T]he ANC's former president... had personally authorised a 1983 car bomb in Pretoria which killed 29 people and wounded... 200. When asked why... the ANC had not adhered to the Geneva convention against targeting civilians... the [current] Transport Minister... answered "...when a military installation was in a commercial or civilian area that constraint had to be relaxed. We were very mindful that the tactics of the apartheid regime were drawing us into a morass where the rules of the games were likely to reduce an honourable struggle and besmear it."

...[South Africa's President] used a caustic farewell speech as ANC leader yesterday to lambaste rich whites for clinging to their ill-gotten gains[, proclaiming that]... some whites thought national reconciliation meant compensation for the loss of political power by [getting] guarantees of their wealth and economic muscle... [Coinciding with the] Reconciliation Day holiday, [the President then] warmly hugged his ex-wife... only minutes after appearing to attack her political ambitions, in a marathon four-hour speech to his party conference... [D]elegates... could... nominate her as future deputy party leader. But... [in 1992 the ex-wife] was convicted of kidnapping... [four] youths from a Methodist manse... [in 1988, and last] week... two of her acquaintances [who had testified that the ex-wife] was not present during the assault on the... [kidnap victims – one of whom] was accused of being a police informer, [and] was subsequently murdered... [– told the TRC] they had lied in court and that [the ex-wife] was present and took part in the attack... One of the assault victims... [had testified to seeing the ex-wife] stab Stompie to death... [The ex-wife, who describes such stories as being] "a fabrication"... has not applied for amnesty and can be prosecuted. Some of the victims are already talking about laying private criminal charges against her. The commission may also recommend that [the ex-wife] is not fit to hold public office.

...Almost 8000 people applied to the [TRC] for amnesty... before the deadline expired on Saturday... [M]ore than 1000 last-minute applications were received... Amnesty will be granted to all those who... can prove... [their] human rights abuses and political crimes... were ideologically motivated. Those who have failed to apply, face penal or civil charges. Since the commission was set up last year, 39 amnesties have been granted and 788 requests rejected. The ruling A[NC], which has taken collective responsibility for violence committed as part of its campaign to end apartheid has submitted the highest number of applications of all the political parties. The National Party, which ruled from 1948 to 1994, opted instead for individual responsibility. Only two [National Party] ministers have come forward...

The resignation of... the National Party... leader... [– whose release of his eventual presidential successor] in 1990 and the lifting of the ban on the A[NC] and other organisations unleashed seismic demographic forces that swept the once all-powerful National Party and its leader off the centre stage of... [South African politics –] marks the end of a tumultuous era... [His presidential successor], who shared the 1993 Nobel peace prize with him, said... [his predecessor] deserved an honourable place in history... The leader of the Zulu nation... added his voice to the appraisal, saying: "...I really respect him..." Even ultra-rightists acknowledged... [his] important role in transition... by branding him a traitor to the Afrikaner nation... "His betrayal of his own people is unmatched in history," the Boerestaat (White Afrikaner State) Party leader... said, adding that it had been high time... [the former President quit. The former President hoped] the move would help the party which designed apartheid[to] finally escape its guilt-laden past... History will ultimately judge whether... the... former... President... is viewed as a great reformer or simply someone who gambled all of the family silver and lost... Meanwhile, [another National Party President, who]... headed... the state security council... in the... 1980s... is defying an order to appear before the... [TRC because the leader] would not go on his knees before... "a circus. The Afrikaner only goes on his knees before God,"... The commission chair[person]... had threatened to lay charges against him but later said the commission had made a technical mistake in its subpoena and could not do so. Legislation setting up the commission makes provision for a two-year jail term for those who defy its subpoenas.

...[yesterday, an unrepentant 'former chief of South Africa's defence forces claimed to have been serving God and country, and called the TRC a witch-hunt.' However, the] AWB... has apologised for human rights violations and racism by its supporters since its inception in 1973.

...The [white] supremacist leader... who once promised to lead the Afrikaner people into a heroic death or victory against black majority rule... exploded with anger yesterday when a... court convicted him of trying to murder a black employee... by beating him repeatedly about the head, neck and shoulders with a pipe or club... The beating was punishment for falling asleep while on duty... as a security guard. [The employee] spent a month in hospital and suffered severe brain damage... Dressed in grey camouflage... [the supremacist] bent double and banged his fist on the dock as it became clear the magistrate would rule against him, and... when the verdict was announced... bellowed at the magistrate... "The law, justice and God marks you. The struggle of the nation continues!" ...Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB) supporters... cheered as their fiery leader charged out of the court, drowning out the magistrate who did not finish reading his ruling. "Today the war has started," [the AWB leader] told reporters outside the courtroom in Potchefstroom... But the defiant right-wing leader later returned after a lunch adjournment[– because police]... on duty had threatened to arrest him[– at which point]... sentencing was postponed... Bail was set at 2000 rand... but was then reduced to 1000 rand when[the] weeping... AWB leader... [claimed to be] a "poor farmer with a wife and child." ...[the AWB leader once] became the subject of derision after falling off his horse at a gathering in Pretoria... His movement of swaggering, gun-toting neo-Nazis [– their flag is an unashamed imitation of the swastika –] suffered a major blow when, in March 1994, a force of about 500 went into the former black homeland of Bophuthatswana in an ill-fated attempt to prop up its unpopular black... leader[who], like the right wing, was refusing to join the country's first all-race elections in April 1994... The episode ended in about 50 deaths, including the killing of two rightists shot dead by a homeland soldier as they begged for mercy in a scene broadcast around the world. [The AWB leader], however, hailed the campaign as a "brilliant victory." [A] Stellenbosch University political analyst... thinks differently. "Since Bophuthatswana, the AWB is no longer seen by Afrikaners as... [having integrity." The AWB leader could once] claim, with credibility, that the Afrikaner people would follow him into a last apocalyptic battle, rather than

succumb to government by blacks. His notions of racial purity and the divinely ordained destiny of the Afrikaner folk no longer chime with the new realities here.

...Next year, for the first time in the... 75-year history... [of the] University of Witwatersrand[–] the renowned seat of white liberalism during South Africa's apartheid years... [–] most of its students are expected to be black, many of them from communities with poor high schools, some requiring remedial education... A new leader has been chosen to confront these challenges and to complete the transformation of this nation's premier seat of higher learning into a truly African university... But racial strains remain, with blacks frequently feeling alienated within the system. "When some of these kids come... into a residence... [at] this university, they have never slept in a bed... there is an enormous cultural switch, and to expect them to feel fully oriented... is naive." There is[also] concern over falling academic standards as admission criteria are lowered to admit disadvantaged students. A cash crisis looms as more impoverished students require financial aid. And pressure could force the government, which is committed to affirmative action, to increase the number of entrants without increasing funding.

...*Racism goes underground in the new South Africa*... Two weeks ago I... a black journalist from Britain, now living in... one of Johannesburg's predominantly white suburbs... arrived home... to find a note slipped under my cottage door. It read "You poor sick little kaffir girl!" and was unsigned. Panic engulfed me at the thought that I had ignited so much rage in someone during my 10 months in South Africa that they had scrawled my first hate mail. It was not, however, the first time that I had been called a kaffir – an Afrikaans word with the same emotional charge as "nigger". In 1990, during my first trip to this former bastion of segregation, I was thrown out of a pub by a burly Afrikaner who furiously informed me that "kaffirs are not welcomed." That was two months after [the guy who is now the President was] released from his 27-year incarceration but the framework of apartheid still stood strong... The recent resignation of South Africa's national rugby coach... after the revelation of a taped conversation in which [it] called black people "(expletive) kaffirs," says so much about how this troubled country has changed in six years. Not that people no longer use the K-word (as it is now politely called), but it is no longer socially acceptable to do so openly. Words like *bantu*, *native*, *boy* and *girl* (for adult blacks) have quietly gone underground too, but [the coach] is not alone in believing racial bigotry is okay. A wealthy [Afrikaner], assuming I was also white because of my English accent, recently privately vented her feelings on the phone about how "the bloody blacks were contented living in their squalid townships before do-good liberals interfered." Despite [the President's] attempts to unify his people under a non-racial banner, it is clear that fundamentally attitudes remain the same among some whites. The only difference is that they can now be prosecuted for expressing them openly... Even the police, once the tools of oppression used by racist politicians, have put on the public coat of non-racism... Had [the coach] not resigned, the rugby authority said [it would've] been sacked for bringing the game into disrepute... The most damaging aspect of the affair is the embarrassment that it must have caused [the] President... who so proudly donned a rugby jersey... after the national Springbok team's World Cup victory. But rugby has always been a symbol of white oppression or supremacy, depending on which side of the fence you stand... The average white citizen is struggling to deal with racism at a gut level. Most have had little experience of dealing with black people, except as servants or labourers... All are at pains to assure me they did not know of the catalogue of murders and human rights violations carried out in their name by successive apartheid governments... It is as if the nation's whites have been afflicted with shared amnesia... To... [many whites] rising crime levels (something blacks have lived with in townships for decades)... [are] a euphemism for black encroachment into their once sheltered suburbs... [Yet] in rural communities... diehard Afrikaners continue such practices as beating black workers into a coma, or even to death, without charges being laid by the local police... [I]t is still rare for black and white people to mix socially... something I am used to from Britain... I came to live in South Africa to escape the sophisticated racism in Britain and was reminded of 1960s London as experienced by my Jamaican parents. I went to view a flat... advertised in a newspaper; on opening the door the landlord literally rocked back on his heels... At once the flat became unavailable. Another white... landlord confided to me by phone: "I rented it to blacks in the past, but they messed it up." I responded: "I'm afraid this is where I tell you that I am black." There was a pause, then... "Yes, but you're a different type of black." It is not just whites who are thrown by the new multiracial society. A friend's... [mother's] black maid would go into a spin each time I was invited for a meal... "It's hard for her to deal with seeing you at the table. It's not the norm in her eyes and [the maid] doesn't like the change." I am reliably informed that a black maid with a black 'madam' loses status within her community in the new emerging social hierarchy. There is also new racism, as expressed by the Coloured communities, who under apartheid enjoyed a degree of privilege but now say they are being discriminated against by the black majority Government's affirmative-action policy. "Once we were too black, now we are too white," they complain. Their protest vote for the formerly oppressive National Party has kept the Western Cape a strong Afrikaner stronghold. Affirmative action – the Government's policy to redress historical disadvantages by setting quotas for black recruitment in companies – has become a symbol of both white and Coloured rage because of the premium it puts on black professionals who can demand high salaries... [I]t is true that many receive inflated salaries beyond their worth... As for the mystery writer... after a process of elimination that Sherlock Holmes would have been proud of, I deduced that the culprit was a 52-year-old dog psychologist whom I had profiled that week for a newspaper... [The dog psychologist didn't like] the tone of my article...

[Graphic footage of police dogs savaging three unidentified blacks – said to have been illegal Mozambican immigrants – while six laughing white officers urged them on has thrown South African racism into sharp relief a month before nationwide local elections. The National Police Commissioner ordered the immediate arrest of the officers after the state-owned South African Broadcasting Corporation gave officials a private preview of the evening broadcast. Filmed by a BBC camera operator travelling with a police unit, it showed the victims being driven to a field. For an hour, they were repeatedly savaged by four dogs in what was billed as a dog-training exercise, while they screamed and begged for mercy. They were beaten when they tried to fend off the dogs. "I find it difficult to believe that such a naked display of racism and brutality could still occur in our democracy," said the Safety and Security Minister' ...

'A 5km trail of blood, still visible along the tarred roads of Sasolburg, paints a picture of the latest chapter in South Africa's unresolved race wars. The blood was that of driver Mosoko Rampuru, who at the weekend was dragged, by a wire tied to his ankle, behind his white employer's pickup truck until his body "was just skeleton." His boss, aged 44, has been remanded in custody on a charge of murder, as questions are being asked about the incident. Rampuru's colleagues said that since the 37-year-old had started working for the 44-year-old in January, the two had never fought over anything, and that the white employer did not have a reputation for being a racist. In a country still entertaining profound racial divisions, many attacks that could be termed racist take place on remote farms – where black farm labourers still ride in the back of pickups while the boss's dog sits regally on the passenger seat.'

... 'A black claims it was beaten with a sjambok (heavy whip) then tied behind a pick-up truck, dragged and left for dead by a Belgian diplomat – whose immunity is now under scrutiny – his son and four others. "The sjambok and the dragging behind a truck has been a characteristic of racist whites in South Africa for decades. We're appalled at even a suggestion that one of our number could be involved in something like this," the Belgian embassy said.' Incidentally, the fight against South African] racism was born long before the 1960 'no Maoris, no[rugby] tour' campaign... a book reveals... Major General Sir Howard Kippenberger incurred public anger in [NZ during 1949 after suggesting] the All Blacks should not tour South Africa that year if Maori players were excluded... *Kippenberger – An Inspired... Commander*... tells how Sir Howard nearly resigned as national president of the Returned Services Association over the controversy his comments created. "I am not going to acquiesce [to] any damned Afrikaners saying they cannot go... To hell with them... If the South Africans cannot welcome Maoris in the team, then it is our duty to the Maoris not to send a team." In direct reference to the Maori soldiers who fought... [under him in WW2, Kip], said: "I cannot forget that no one objected to the Maoris representing N[Z] on very different fields from rugby." Veteran anti-apartheid protesters hailed Sir Howard's stance as brave... possibly... heralding... the anti-apartheid movement which developed later... [The book's a]uthor... said the 1949 tour debate was acrimonious and took its toll on Sir Howard. But

on “this issue, Kip was way ahead of his time and once again demonstrated courageous leadership while under fire from all quarters.” ...Among Maori players[eventually] excluded from the team w[as]... the best first five-eighths in the country... later[becoming a] Minister of Police.

...[NZ's] Race Relations Conciliator warned yesterday... [that local race] relations are at a dangerous stage and will not improve until the fractured relationship between Maori and Pakeha is repaired... [However, the conciliator] had not seen any signs of an extreme nationalist movement, modelled on [South Africa's AWB or AUS's One Nation] Party, taking hold here. But the country could not afford to be complacent... [For example, although] the... Auckland... region boasts it is becoming more ethnically diverse, ethnic groups are living in clan-type neighbourhoods... [This meant that some] suburbs are becoming browner, while others are fading to white... [In another example,] Porirua parents are sending children out of the city for secondary schooling because of white flight... Four secondary schools in Porirua – all with rolls of at least 60[%] Pacific Islanders and Maori – could take up to 1000 more students between them. But at the same time there is a waiting list for[nearby] Tawa College... Many children are[also] being sent out of the city to schools in Wellington, Kapiti and Hutt Valley... The principals... were reluctant to comment because the issue was sensitive, and... publicity would compound the problem... “You cannot do a [balanced] article without saying that[if] it is not [racism], why are they doing it?” ...[the conciliator's] office hoped to create a new reference point for race relations, starting with a \$125,000 plan to mark the office's 25th anniversary this year... Visits from his counterparts in A[US], South Africa, Britain and Canada would... be part of the plan. Ultimately it would lead to the formation of a new race relations strategy for the next century... The... Conciliator... also... said the office funding of \$1.3 million a year worked out at be about 36c for each N[Z]er and should be boosted to \$2 million... [□ When NZ's] first census was taken... [in] 1851... unless you were a Pakeha [guy] earning a certain amount, you didn't count. [According to the latest census, NZ contains: '2,594,691 Pakehas; 535,374 Maoris; 173,178 Pacific Islanders; 160,280 Asians; 14,667 Others and 151,713 Not Specified']...

Race is a dirty word in polite society today. But does that mean it has no meaning? On one level it obviously does, given that definitions of individuals' race will affect their lives in so many ways... [and the US] Congress is debating how many different racial categories should be listed on forms for the next census... Assigning race is a highly subjective act. One U[S] study found that 34[%] of census participants changed racial groups from one year to the next... But does the word have any scientific validity? ...Sadly, scientists do no better than the rest. In attempting to categorise races they have relied on definitions of individuals' inherited physical characteristics – skin colour, hair type and physique. This has produced a welter of contradictory categorisations. In 1962[a US] anthropologist... argued that there were five human racial sub-species: the Australoid, Mongoloid, Caucasoid, Congoid and Capoid (...the “Bush[people]”... of southern Africa).[His categories were similar to those of a 19th century German, who divided modern humans into: 'Caucasian (white), Mongolian (yellow), Malayan (brown), Ethiopian (black) and American (red).'] Other scientists have proposed the existence of as many as 50 different races. Yet others claim that... race is a short and superficial coda to the long song of human evolution. [‘Inter-breeding of races has occurred widely in recent and probably also prehistoric times; hence, so-called pure races are non-existent.’ ‘Tribes and nations are social groupings not biological.’] Genetic evidence also reveals the essentially homogeneous nature of modern [hu]mankind, at least compared with other animals. Consider the common chimpanzee of central Africa. It has three sub-species, “races” that are almost 10 times as different from each other, genetically, as are the African, European and Asian divisions of Homo sapiens. In fact, there is more genetic variation within one human race than there is between that race and another... Categorising... by race can be a deeply misleading business... But... our awareness of these superficial differences... [and the subsequent] evolution of races... is a relatively new event... For most of our existence we had not attached importance to the notion, and it was only when we came to the age of European exploration in the 15th century that one set of people encountered another that looked starkly different. Before then, explorers travelled mostly on horseback. It never occurred to them to categorise people, because they had seen everything in between... In other words, racial groupings are simply the end points of old trade routes.

...[‘For 300 years Africans were kidnapped and shipped to the Americas in enormous numbers to be bought, sold and worked like cattle. After the Civil War US blacks were officially freed from slavery but well into the 20th century most black people were still not free to live where they chose, to eat, travel shop or play where they wished, to work at decent jobs, to get a quality education, or to vote to change the laws that oppressed them. The US was a racially and economically segregated society, and the captives of segregation were the former slaves' descendants’]...

Go into any big city in the U[S] today and you will find many black people living in squalor – illustrating that... [over] 130 years after the abolition of slavery, the country still has a distinct underclass. That is bad news, and some experts say it is worsening. The good news is that the... [country] founded on the principle of equality... is arguably making progress in removing legal, political and economic roadblocks to the advancement of blacks and other minorities. Since the Supreme Court outlawed separate black and white public schools in... 1954... the country has banned every form of overt discrimination... Thousands of blacks have been elected to political office, and [the] retired... first African-American to lead the armed forces, is considered a potential President. [The incumbent] President... will celebrate these gains when... [marking] the 40th anniversary of the integration of Central High School in his home town... on Thursday. Nine black students were protected by... 1200... federal troops when they broke colour lines there in September 1957... The [six gals and three guys will] triumphantly re-enter... the building on Thursday as [the President holds] open the door... Even a cursory look at the state of [US] race relations shows the situation is multi-faceted and highly complex, incapable of easy measurement. Adding to the complexity is the fact that the country is increasingly multiracial, with a fast-growing population of Hispanic and Asian Americans. Still the divide most perplexing the country remains the one between whites and blacks, who constitute 13[%] of the population... The poverty rate for blacks is nearly three times that of whites, and only about half as many earn a college degree... [A] Harvard Law School professor... was sceptical the U[S] would ever be completely colour-blind. “Perhaps the most discouraging thing to me is the poor quality of political leadership on these issues, with nothing but platitudes from people who ought to know better. It's not rocket science – it's harder... We are talking about people's perceptions and attitudes and how to change things.” ...Another... [problem is] the issue of affirmative action, a system of preferences in higher education admissions, hiring and Government contracting for disadvantaged minority groups. Launched in the 1970s, the programme has sparked a powerful political backlash. In California citizens voted last year to abolish most forms of affirmative action.

...Moving to confront racism, [the] President... said yesterday... [at] the University of California in San Diego... [that] it was time “to build one America” without segregation or prejudice... [The speech capped] a week devoted to race issues as the state has become the focus of race debate in the US. Whites in... California, where voters have passed measures against immigration... accounted for just 54[%] of the population in 1995 and are expected to lose their majority in 2002 to the fast-growing Hispanic and Asian communities... Californians passed a bill in 1996 barring the children of illegal aliens from public schools... California is also the site of the 1991 race riots [– sparked by news ‘that a jury had acquitted four Los Angeles police officers of charges in the beating of a black motorist (in another fateful decision, LA police had pulled back from the affected south LA area just as the violence accelerated; rioters furiously assaulted hapless Asians, Hispanics and whites who tried to escape’) –] and the home of... the black football star whose 1995 acquittal in the murder of his ex-wife laid bare racial divisions and prompted [the President] to begin thinking about what action to take. In the past week, the President formed an advisory board on race relations, scheduled four townhall style meetings and appointed the first Asian American to head the Justice Department's civil rights office... [However, the] Republicans controlling Congress are likely to fight funding for any new social programmes for minorities and are unlikely to back down on their anti-immigration stand... A recent... poll found 76[%] of whites believe blacks are treated equally... but only 46[%]... of blacks... said they had the same chances as whites.

...W[hen the 13-year-old's father en]-rolled his son in a martial-arts class, [the father] wanted his... boy to know that "the world isn't always kind" and to "be prepared for the bully that may be coming, because kids can be monsters." But [the father] had no way of anticipating that when the world turned ugly for his son... there would be three bullies, not one. Nor did [the father] know that they would be so monstrous: slamming [the boy's] head against a wall, beating him into a coma and leaving him lying in an alley before going home to brag about how they had taken care of the "niggers" in their neighborhood... By last Friday, a week after the attack, [the boy] had yet to regain full consciousness... at Chicago's Cook County Hospital... While a parade of politicians and community leaders filed past his... bed to pay their respects, the rest of the city wrestled with feelings of profound disgust, anger and shame evoked by a crime with unusually symbolic weight. The suspects in the attack[, aged]... 19... 17... and 18, live in Bridgeport, a neighborhood near Chicago's old stockyards that has given the city five of its last eight mayors... But in addition to its political pedigree, Bridgeport is also renowned for intolerance and bigotry... This is... where Irish and German gangs fought pitched battles in the streets during the 1850s... But... [since] 1980, when low real estate prices began drawing Chinese and Mexicans into Bridgeport, the ethnic texture of the place has changed dramatically... Some whites are determined to protect their dwindling enclave with an unwritten set of rules governing which avenues minority residents can walk on, which parks their children may play in and what time they must be off the streets. The rules are enforced subtly... [or] in more brutal fashion... "Here the No. 1 issue is color," says... the Bridgeport Volunteer Centre... director... "If you don't learn the rules fast, you could be dead." ...[another boy] has been studying the rules ever since his family became one of the few black families to move to Bridgeport in 1994. Even so, [the 15-year-old] has been spit upon, chased, beaten up "dozens of times,"... and had a beer bottle broken over his head. "I feel like we don't belong in our own home,"... Which seems fine by those whites in Bridgeport whose greatest fear is encroachment from the Stateway projects, part of a stretch of high-rise ghettos on Chicago's South Side where the porches are caged in steel mesh, 70% of the residents are under the age of 17, and, in the words of... a... mother, "You just keep the kids inside the house and pray." That ghetto is what [the 15-year-old's] family moved up from when they came to Bridgeport. It is what [the 13-year-old] may return to, if and when [the boy] recovers... "...part of the tragedy of this event," declares... a historian at Columbia College who grew up near Bridgeport... "[is that this isn't just] a Bridgeport problem. It's a... [national] problem. And if we don't solve these problems on the South Side of Chicago, we're not going to solve them anywhere."

...A judge supports new tests on the rifle purportedly used to kill Martin Luther King Jr in 1968 – a move that could lead to a trial for the civil rights leader's convicted assassin. The ruling pumped fresh energy into the conspiracy speculation that has dogged the tragedy for three decades. But it is problematic whether [the assassin]... will ever get his day in court. [The assassin], aged 68, is gravely ill with liver disease that may kill him in a matter of weeks. Moreover, the judge's ruling, which itself will likely be challenged, was only a recommendation that a state appeals court take up the ballistics test issue... [The 68-year-old]'s lawyers had argued that sophisticated new tests involving the use of an electron microscope could show that the rifle on which [their client]'s fingerprints were found was not the murder weapon... Because [their client had pleaded guilty, the client] avoided a trial and possible death sentence. [The client] was sentenced to 99 years in jail, but changed his story almost immediately and said that a mysterious accomplice actually did the shooting... But... a... congressional panel concluded that [the client] was the sole assassin. - 1997

In... 1963... Dr King and other black leaders decided to focus on what they called the most segregated big city in the U[S -] Birmingham, Alabama... The black leaders planned a highly visible demonstration of their demands for equality. On April 12... Dr King... and a thousand others marched toward downtown Birmingham. The marchers were in deliberate violation of an order by[the Birmingham] Police Commissioner... expressly forbidding mass demonstrations... [M]ass arrests began... King was held for 24 hours in solitary confinement, until President Kennedy personally interceded with Birmingham officials. Two days later King's brother... [led] another large demonstration. [The]Police Commissioner... was on public record as being strongly opposed to the civil rights movement. His police met the demonstrators with a show of force rarely seen in [the US]. Police dogs attacked unarmed and unprotected marchers. The Fire Department was called in to help suppress the fire of freedom. The force of water from their hoses was like a battering ram... This kind of response to the peaceful black struggle for equal rights was not new but now the confrontations were broadcast across the nation on... [TV. Millions of viewers] saw firsthand that the demonstrators remained non-violent while the police were unrestrained in their use of life-threatening force... On May 2... a large group of black children joined the... protests. After a speech by King they moved toward downtown. Again the police began making arrests... Before the day was over almost a thousand children were in jail. A day later another thousand children joined the march. This time the authorities resorted to violence[again]. The marchers were blasted with fire hoses, beaten with clubs, attacked by police dogs and gased. At last on May 10... under pressure from the Federal Government and... outraged world opinion, the leaders of Birmingham accepted the demands of the freedom marchers. There was little time for celebration, however. That night both King's motel room and his brother's home were bombed. Having witnessed the abuse of power by Alabama authorities... Kennedy... [declared:] "The events in Birmingham and elsewhere have so increased the cries for equality that no city or state or legislative body can... choose to ignore them." ...Kennedy agreed to push landmark civil rights legislation through Congress... But... [as the President] at last committed himself to passage of the Civil Rights Act his popularity dropped dramatically. [The]President and Mrs Kennedy arrived by plane in Dallas. They began a motorcade in open limousines into the heart of the city and there... J. F. K... was shot and killed. The nation and the world were in shock... Dreams were shattered. The first president in a century to hear the demands of black America and respond with a message of hope had died, just as Lincoln had... A year later King would write, "While the question of who killed President Kennedy is important, the question of what killed him is more important... [I]n a sense we are all participants in that horrible act that tarnished the image of our nation. We have created an atmosphere in which violence and hatred have become popular pastimes." ...Under the new... [President the US] would become involved in a major war in Vietnam. The country would be divided as never before. New forces in the civil rights struggle would emerge, including many who thought King obsolete in his insistence on peaceful protest and his belief in the inevitable unity of all races[into] one brotherhood... In 1964, for the first time, King experienced violence directed against him by blacks... During an appearance in Harlem [King] was assaulted by black Muslims... Both King and Malcolm[X] knew that if the non-violent movement did not succeed the alternative would be militancy. However, in February... 1965, Malcolm X was assassinated in New York City... Later in 1966... King encountered hostile Black Power militants who wanted to respond to violence... with violence of their own... Later that same year Los Angeles was shattered by the Watt's riots. In five days of violence 34 people were killed and hundreds of millions of dollars worth of property was destroyed. Then, in July 1967, Detroit and Newark experienced devastating riots of their own. Dozens were killed, thousands were left homeless... [During] this turbulent social and political climate King realised [it was no longer possible for him to] remain silent on [Vietnam]... Despite the council of major advisers, who warned that voicing opposition to the war would alienate some of the civil rights movement's most powerful allies, King... wrote: "...I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyors of violence in the world today, my own government... Do you realise that [when]the Vietnamese people proclaimed their own independence in 1945 after a combined French and Japanese occupation... they quoted our Declaration of Independence... [However,] our government refused to recognise... [their independence and is supporting a leader] who fought with the French against his own people and who said on one occasion that the greatest hero of his life is Hitler..." King was criticised on many sides for his stand... [but in 1968 went on to say: "For years people] have been talking about war and peace but... no longer can they just talk about it. It is no longer a choice between violence and non-violence... It's non-violence or non-existence... I've seen the promised land. I may not get there with you but I want you to know... that... [mine] eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord... It is time for America to repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand... God is not interested merely in the freedom of... black... and... brown... and yellow [people but]... in the freedom of the

whole human race and the creation of a society where all... will live together..." One day later... King stepped out on to the balcony of his hotel room in Memphis... From across the way a... shot was fired... King fell dead, murdered at the age of 39... a leader with a lifetime of yet untapped potential...

There is a black leadership vacuum... "The Charmer"... was touring nightclubs as a calypso singer... [before reading the] book, *Message to the Black[person] in America*. It taught that whites were devils created by an evil wizard... [and] said: "Separation of the so-called negroes from their slave masters' children is a must." That became an article of faith for... the... leader of the Nation of Islam... [who once] said... Jews... are "blood suckers" and... Hitler was a "wickedly great [person]". And, worst of all, Jewish international financiers had bankrolled Hitler. "Little Jews died while big Jews made money... Little Jews [were] being turned into soap while big Jews washed themselves with it..." That was in 1995, shortly before the Million [Guy] March in Washington carried... [The Charmer] into the front rank of [US] black leadership... I attended a rally in Washington last year... The message that night was basically the one... delivered [in 1995]... "...we can organise black [guys] to... pool our resources intellectually and financially, to create job opportunities for our people, to lessen the burden of crime and violence..." ...One in four black [guys] between the ages of 20 and 29 are in jail or on parole. [Editor's note: Unfortunately, most of the crimes so-called blacks commit are against other blacks (e.g., 'every year in the US, more blacks are murdered by other blacks than by whites' – and 'blacks make up nearly one half of all homicide victims with a rate per 100,000 black guys of 61.1, compared to the white guy rate of 8.2'). This suggests that, while it isn't fair for so-called whites to proclaim that blacks are inferior or generally worse behaved than themselves, given the chance, many blacks – especially black leaders – are unable (or unwilling) to behave better than most whites. Indeed, given the chance, most blacks try to be, or live like, whites (according to one black: 'the only colour is green – go out and get some money')! However, recent Olympic Games seem to prove that blacks are better at running than whites, who, in turn, are better at swimming than blacks – perhaps because blacks have, traditionally, lived in desert regions whereas whites lived in coastal regions; or maybe because blacks have had to do more running than whites, who, if they weren't involved in chasing blacks, had time to play in water. But it's illogical to apply the labels BLACK and WHITE to humans because members of the species are either very pale brown (or a shade of pink if the skin has been exposed to the sun), very dark brown or some shade inbetween (interestingly: 'when a child is born into this world it has no concept of the tone of skin it's living in') – although fire, and decay, can make human bodies become the same shade of black...]

'The names Negroid and Negro, from Latin *niger*, "black," refer to the dark skin pigmentation, which results from a relatively high concentration of the pigment melanin, present in all human skin.'] Black skin may be healthier than white, according to an A[US]n researcher... be[cause]... melanin, might help fight off infectious organisms... During the Vietnam War, American soldiers from a variety of racial backgrounds were sent into the Mekong Delta. White soldiers were three times more likely to contract "jungle sores," a skin disease caused by the bug *Streptococcus pyogenes*, than their black comrades... No one knows precisely why skin colour varies. A popular theory is that the extra melanin in darker skin protects against cancer and sunburn in hot climates. But some parts of the body which are hardly ever exposed to sunlight, such as the genitals, throat and nasal passages, are packed with melanin cells. And some animals, such as gorillas, have dark skin even though they are covered in fur and live in shady forests. Furthermore, studies have shown that melanin does not protect well against UVB rays. The theory that dark skin might be more than a sunscreen arises from observations of insects, which are known to use melanin to defend themselves against infection... Mammalian melanin is contained inside bubble-like capsules called melanosomes. Larger, more numerous melanosomes make for darker skin... [The] Sydney biologist... believes melanosomes... act like lysosomes, the "bubbles" within large white blood cells which entrap and kill invading organisms... ["The AUSn's] hypothesis... solves a lot of problems with... other theories,"... said... an evolutionary ecologist from the French scientific research centre, CNRS... [Speaking of other theories, near Jasper, Texas,] is an armed... "Christian Identity"... commune – Mount Enterprise – where [a radical reverend]... teaches... 100 followers... [that] Aryans are God's chosen, while Jews are "Satan's offspring" and blacks are "mud people."

...Recently, one of America's biggest militia training camps, Camp Pulwell, was set up at Double Bayou, south of Jasper[, Texas, where a member of the]... Ku Klux Klan... [-] a private social club... [formed in the US 'Bible belt' during 1865 by several] veterans of the Confederate Army... [-] taught guerrilla warfare... until[being] jailed for murder. ['Although originally intended to defend the southern way of life against northern attempts to change it, the KKK rapidly became devoted to keeping the Black population from attaining equality, and adopted terrorism and murder as a means to that end. The original Klan was outlawed by Congress in 1871'. 'The head of the Klan was called the Grand Wizard while each member was called a Ghoul. Klan activities included riding by night on horses with muffled hoofs, wearing white robes and masks. In 1867 the Grand Wizard was the famous Confederate cavalry commander, Gen. N. B. Forrest, who gave the Klan an elaborate organization and control. Lawless local groups, however, often committed violent acts which did not have the sanction of headquarters, and Forrest resigned and ordered the Klan disbanded in 1869. In the wake of the 1954 Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in the schools, attempts were made to revive the Klan, but instead several splinter groups appeared']...

The nights fall hot and humid on the Texas Bayou in summer... The scent of pine trees lingers through the dusk and into the darkness, lit by a big Texas moon. Bright enough to see the colour of a [person's] skin at a distance. It was no different the night James Byrd went to two appointments: a bridal shower for a niece and a friend's anniversary party on the eastern side of Jasper, a timber and bass-fishing town... Everyone in Jasper knew James Byrd[, who]... had shuffled in and out of prison for petty offences... Even his own family knew Byrd was not a great success... His luck was changing though. [Byrd had] found a place of his own, and... was a trumpeter and pianist[. Byrd actually] played at both gatherings... Byrd had no car and always walked home... [S]ome time around 2.30 am, a truck painted with grey primer stopped for him. Two of the three [white guys] in the truck were from Jasper, the third from Sulphur Springs to the north. One of the[m had been]... sent to boot camp for burglary in 1994, progressing to prison[, and]... the Klan... after failing a restitution programme... [Another had been] jailed for burglary but[was] paroled last year.

...A sheriff... knew pretty quickly that the accident... [being] investigated was no hit-and-run – especially after a cigarette lighter with three interlocking Ks was found along the bloody trail... Byrd... [had been] chained to the back of [the] pickup truck... and his body ripped to pieces as [it] was dragged for 5km... [An] unemployed labourer, is the first of three... [people] charged with the crime to stand trial... [The prosecutor said the] 24-year-old... was an angry racist who... sports a tattoo showing a black [guy] being hanged from a tree... [and] wanted to form a hate group and "needed to do something dramatic in order to gain, in their warped world, respect for his newly formed gang... After they tore... his body to pieces, they dropped him right in front of a church and cemetery to show their defiance of God... [and] everything that most people in this country stand for." ...The jurors... – ...11 whites and one black... [-] were given photos of Byrd's battered remains, which... were missing the right arm, neck and head... [They] will decide today whether... [the 24-year-old goes back] to prison for life or dies by lethal injection... The defence did not dispute that [its client] was involved in the murder but said the state had not proved kidnapping. Under Texas law, an additional felony must be committed in conjunction with a killing for a capital murder conviction... [The defendant] pleaded not guilty but was convicted on the basis of circumstantial evidence – much of it his own writing – that showed both his racist beliefs and his links to the crime... [The defence attorney blamed his client's] prejudice on a bad experience while in prison... from 1995 to 1997... Journalists have besieged [the defendant's father], a widower retired from a plywood mill who [came] to court in a wheelchair, carrying a bottle of oxygen to cope with his emphysema... "It hurts me deeply," the... father... wrote in an apology to... Byrd's... family, "that a boy I raised and considered to be the most loved boy I knew could find it in himself to take a life... That ain't the boy I knew,"... His son had grown up around black children, [the father]... had good friends who were black[and also has] two black goddaughters... The murder shocked [USers] for both its brutality and its overtones of the racist lynchings of a past era... [A forensic] pathologist... said... Byrd... fought to survive while... chained by his ankles... "[Byrd] was attempting to keep his head off the pavement... [and] would have been

very tired... trying to do a lot of things, trying to keep the pain from being so severe,”... Byrd’s head and right arm and shoulder were torn from his torso when [it] struck a concrete drainage culvet. “It’s my opinion that [Byrd] was alive up to that point.”

...As the verdict was announced... a middle-aged black [gal] ran from... the... courthouse, thrust a clenched fist into the air and exclaimed: “Guilty...! This white [guy] is going to pay... Can you believe it? Oh Lord, First degree!” The TV cameras caught the gleeful, exhilarated note of her surprise. [The gal] seemed stunned that [a] tattooed thug, former jailbird and committed racist... had actually been convicted of dragging... James Byrd... to his death... Among the black members of her audience, the sense of shared joy was palpable, almost as if they were sharing the grand prize in a lottery. To the rest of America – and here you should think White America – the verdict had always been a stone cold certainty... Forty years ago... the result almost certainly would have been different. Few white [people] paid the price in those days of burning crosses and bombed churches. But not today, not after all the progress this country has made to repudiate its past. Or so white wisdom goes.

...America’s Original Sin, that’s the way founding father James Madison described his new-born nation’s deal with the devil, the compromise reached by abolitionists and Slave Staters that determined just what a black man’s existence was worth. [2/3]rds of his master’s, as it happens, for that was how census takers were instructed to count blacks until the Civil War, when the debts accruing from that inequitable bargain had to be redeemed in blood... “I’d never fight with a Negro by my side. Rather I should die a thousand times,”... wrote... Mississippi[s]... senior Democrat... a former Grand Kleagle of the K[KK], who has opposed every black nominee to the Supreme Court. No one is calling for Byrd’s resignation...

With prayers and chanting, [a]veteran American civil rights leader... led off a highly charged two-day march from the Mississippi town of Kokomo on Saturday to demand the reopening of an investigation into the death of a local teenager. Raynard Johnson, aged 17, had been found hanging from a pecan tree in the front garden of his home on the evening of June 16, leaving an image that brought to the surface all the old fears and tensions of the segregationist South. The police and medical authorities said that Raynard’s death was suicide. But his distressed family and local people firmly believe otherwise. They maintain that... [the] exemplary pupil, easy socialiser and willing worker... was lynched in a racist killing for consorting with local white girls. If that could be proved, it would be the first documented lynching in Mississippi for 40 years.

...One of the vanished traditions of America’s Deep South is the “blackfruit tree,” which sounds innocent enough until you realise it was, quite literally, a killing joke... That euphemism for a lynching... is not heard much these days, not now that the Klan is but a withered and whittled relic of its racist past. The U[S] still has a long way to go before Martin Luther King’s dream is realised: one need only visit the educational ghetto of an inner-city school to see the next generation of second-class citizens in the making. But lynchings, the last of which occurred in 1964, are now a memory. These days, when [people wearing] sheets burn a cross, they generally need the police to protect them from far larger mobs of protesters. In Dixie, a redneck with a rope just cannot get any respect. Except, perhaps, from... a... [black reverend] who claims to believe that night riders are still at large in the tiny town of Kokomo... Two weeks after the teenage star of his high school football team was laid to rest, [the reverend] marched through Kokomo with 5000 protesters to demand that the “real killers” be found and punished... Yet, [there]... was no physical evidence of a struggle... nor any sign that Johnson’s wrists had been bound. The circumstantial case was equally persuasive. The tree is but four short steps from the Johnson’s front door and in plain view of neighbouring homes. It was a hot night, plenty of people were on their porches and a group of children played at the end of the quiet street... For the past month the furore has refused to subside. History certainly gives America’s blacks every reason for paranoia, especially in the South, where pictures of lynchings were once sold as postcards with wry captions like “Down in Old Kentucky.” So many blackfruit postcards were in circulation that the northerners who ran the US Post Office introduced the very first federal prohibition against racial slurs in 1908 by banning them... But to... [the reverend – who] took time off from campaigning for [the]Democratic presidential candidate... [-] the past remains very much alive. Or perhaps, with the polls showing that black voters are less likely to vote than ever before, the past is merely useful. Either way, some very curious decisions are being made regarding Johnson’s death. When the FBI requested an opportunity to examine [hi]s computer in the hope of finding a suicide note, his parents turned them down with [the reverend]’s full support: The Feds might tamper with the hard drive, even pen a bogus suicide note to cover up for the “real”... killers... Why [the reverend] should be so keen to ignore the evidence, to fan such suspicion, is a question whose answer is known only to him and his conscience. But perhaps... the cat... [was] let... out of the bag when [the presidential candidate] hailed his fellow Democrat as a [perso]n who would “play a vital role in my Administration.” What could be more vital for a presidential underdog than getting out the vote – even if it means sowing the seeds of racial paranoia and fear?

...“We have justice in Texas,”... the... Nation of Islam firebrand... said... on the day the verdict came down in Jasper... “Now we await justice in New York.” New York? Surely not the enlightened Big Apple, the town that sent so many white volunteers to stand beside Martin Luther King when [the civil rights leader] confronted Dixie’s police dogs and fire hoses. If there is one town where racist outrages are unthinkable, it would seem to be the liberal and tolerant New York. And yet... it [is] difficult to dispute that [the firebrand has] a point. In Jasper, the enemy was one of the usual suspects: the redneck rowdies from Central Casting with their pickups, gun racks and Confederate flags. In New York, the perceived enemy wears a different face – one crowned by the flat blue cap and silver shield of the New York Police Department. Over the past year... police shooting blacks have become an almost weekly event. Four black Eagle scouts are pulled over for no apparent reason and cops open fire when the anxious young driver allows his van to roll slowly backwards. Another black... makes the mistake of asking a cop for directions and is rewarded with[a] beating that puts him in a coma for two weeks and leaves him blind in one eye. A black undercover cop is mistaken for a subway mugger and shot without warning by a white officer, who then stands over the bleeding body and fires another bullet execution-style into his colleague’s back... The latest crop of incidents began when an unarmed Ghanaian migrant was shot 19 times by four undercover detectives who were combing a Bronx neighbourhood for a serial rapist... The... entirely innocent [Ghanian’s]... one mistake was to reach for... identification in his wallet. The jumpy officers mistook the black shape for a gun and squeezed off a total of 41 shots in less than four seconds. The very next week black anger received another boost when a white Harlem cop was exonerated of causing the death of a black teenager, whom [the cop] suspected of having bought a... bag of marijuana from a kerbside pusher. Unable to catch up with the youth’s bicycle, the cop threw a flashlight that knocked the kid from the saddle and fractured his skull. Finally, on the night before justice was done in Jasper, a carload of cops responded to a domestic dispute and gunned down the angry husband as [the black] pulled a mobile phone from his back pocket... [● Last Friday] was... the first day of New York City’s crackdown on discriminating cabbies... The clampdown is in response to a complaint by [a black] actor... after several taxis drove past him.[The] Mayor... said that as part of Operation Refusal, undercover police and taxi commission inspectors who catch drivers bypassing blacks would be issu[ing citations. The operation’s]... first hours... netted six cabbies... [Their licences could be] suspended and their cabs temporarily confiscated.

...angry protesters marched down Manhattan’s Fifth Avenue yesterday, denouncing the acquittal of four white police officers in the shooting death of an unarmed African immigrant. Carrying signs that read... “KKK Cops,” and shouting “Whose Streets? Our Streets,” about 2000 people of all races and ages paraded... a raucous display of dissatisfaction over the verdict a day earlier. Demonstrators blocked traffic in the heart of the city’s posh retail district and shouted epithets at police... who lined the route... Defence lawyers argued the... officers of the N[YPD]’s elite Street Crime Unit... shot in self-defence... The Fifth Avenue protest was the third of the day against the verdict in the death of... Amadou Diallo, which had already inflamed racial tensions in the city... [Earlier] in Harlem... some demonstrators cried “Murderers, murderers” and “Shoot the police.”

...A generation’s worth of obfuscations, official coverups, racial prejudice and denial will weigh on a courtroom in Birmingham, Alabama, today as one of four K[KK]... members accused of carrying out a notorious church bombing at the height of the civil rights struggle in 1963 comes to trial at last... [The suspect], now aged 62, is accused of the murder of four black girls... The bombing, which left 20 others injured, was the single most violent act committed against the burgeoning civil rights movement in the American South. The outraged public reaction to the deaths of... Cynthia

Wesley, Carole Robertson, Addie Mae Collins and Denise McNair, aged 11 to 14... was a major factor in hastening the passage of legislation outlawing segregation and recognising the full citizenship rights of African Americans. When it came to prosecuting the perpetrators, however, the wheels of justice moved with painful slowness... The F[B]I moved in, fingering [the suspect] and three other Klan[members] in a report filed 20 months after the bombing, but its findings were buried and the case was officially closed without a single charge being filed. (Much later, a Justice Department report found that the prosecutions were suppressed on the orders of FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover himself). Changing political winds in Alabama encouraged the state to reopen the case in the 1970s, leading to the successful prosecution of Robert Chambliss... Chambliss was sentenced to life in prison in 1977 after his own niece testified against him, and... later died behind bars. For many years it seemed the other three would get off scot-free... But a meeting between local black church ministers and the new FBI station chief in Birmingham in 1993 led to the discovery of long-buried evidence including incriminating tape-recordings of... [the suspect. While Birmingham's 70%] black majority has welcomed [the latest] trial as a necessary act of atonement for the past, the white, right-wing talk show hosts who dominate the local airwaves have chosen either to ignore it or to echo the complaints of [the suspect's lawyers that their client] is being picked on as an easy, politically convenient target.

...Black students at the University of Iowa last month began receiving e-mails with the most vile and vicious Klan-style taunts. These soon escalated to death threats and physical attacks... And as the e-mails continued their poisonous work, a black... opened his dormitory door one morning to find a splattered... note... that... suggested... black people – the term used was more offensive – had no business taking a living from white folks' mouths. The campus, which prides itself for equality, was outraged. So were politicians and church leaders. Police assembled a task force and the university's president led a candlelight vigil against "white hate" in front of 3000 students. The media agonised over what one paper termed the "ugly, racist eruption." Rewards were offered and "diversity consultants" summoned... So there was relief last week when the college community learned the culprit had finally been caught. Relief and embarrassment, because the alleged author of the racist notes... is a second-year dental student who was among the first to console victims. What's more, [the alleged author] is black. Suddenly, the earlier pronouncement by [the gal] college president... that "white [guys] are the root of most evil" began to seem premature. Her remark also showed an ignorance of the many bogus hate crimes that have taken place across the US over the past year of so... Why this should have come about is a matter of debate since the idea of minorities creating victims of themselves does not mesh with the view that there are enough genuine pale-skinned predators to go around. But what if there aren't? What if the death of the black hitchhiker dragged behind a pickup truck in Texas... [was just an] isolated incident...? What if America really has cast off all but remnants of its racist past? Where do the diversity consultants and racial separatists go then?

...In what prosecutors describe as rejection of the South's racist past, a jury... consist[ing] of 11 whites and one Hispanic... yesterday found [a white supremacist named] Lawrence... aged 32... guilty... of capital murder in the killing of James Byrd... [and sentenced him] to death by injection... His prison buddy... was found guilty in February and sentenced to die, while [a third suspect] is to be tried next month.

...The British Government was embroiled in controversy yesterday because it blocked publication of leaked extracts of a report said to accuse Britain's largest police force of racism. [The]Home Secretary... won a High Court injunction stopping... publi[cation of an]... independent inquiry into the way... the Metropolitan Police... investigated the... murder of a black teenager... Stephen Lawrence, [who was] stabbed to death by a gang of white[s while] waiting for a bus in Eltham... six years ago. No one has been convicted for the killing. Five [youths] were arrested, but three were acquitted and the cases of the other two never came to trial. The... inquiry was asked to find out why the police investigation was so badly handled.

...[the] Interior Minister... was unrepentant... yesterday after trying and failing to gag a leak of an explosive report... The career of... the high-flying chief of London's police, could be shattered when the report... is officially released tomorrow... [It] describes racism in the London police as pernicious and institutionalised. It recommends that the police should no longer be exempt from the Race Relations Act... The case of Stephen Lawrence... has severely damaged public confidence in the police among ethnic minorities. Because of police bungling, nobody has been successfully prosecuted for his murder, despite evidence pointing to the likely killers, who have all proclaimed their innocence. In the House of Commons... [the] Home Secretary... was... accused... of "an unjustified and autocratic course of action" which had led to a humiliating climbdown... [A Tory] dismissed as ludicrous... [the Home Secretary's explanation that the injunction was meant] to protect Parliament as well as the feelings of those involved, and accused him of a major error of judgment... [In reply the Home Secretary] told legislators the circumstances were exceptional and... prior publication of a judicial inquiry report was not remotely in the public interest[, then] promised an inquiry into the leak and declared: "The claims that the freedom of the press has been challenged by this injunction are absurd." But newspaper editorials... were scathing and accused the Government of hypocrisy... The tabloid *Sun*... denounced [it]... under the headline: "Is this the most ARROGANT cabinet in history?"

...Crime suspects in Britain face being tried twice for the same offence if important new evidence is discovered. The proposed law change is part of a radical overhaul of race relations in the wake of a damning report criticising London police for a bungled investigation into the murder of... Stephen Lawrence... The raft of measures... include... a proposal to extend current race legislation to all public sector bodies, including police forces, enabling officers to be prosecuted individually for racism[, plus]... measures to boost relations between the police and ethnic minorit[ies]...

Scotland yard officers revealed that police throughout Britain were liaising over their efforts to protect ethnic minority areas after the second [bomb] attack in London in a week. Seven people were injured in the Brick Lane attack, which followed a bomb in Brixton a week earlier that wounded 39 people. A number of far right-wing organisations have claimed responsibility... One of the groups claiming responsibility, the White Wolves, sent death threats to a number of black... and... Asian... organisations several days before the Brixton bombing... The group has published a pamphlet explaining how to manufacture bombs, and advocated attacks on ethnic minority targets to provoke a "race war."

...at the weekend... [a] young British engineer who launched a two-week nailbombing campaign against minority groups in London... received life sentences for each of... three murders and three further life terms for each of the bombings... A baby boy with a nail lodged in his skull, a young bride dead along with her unborn child, amputated limbs and horrific injuries from flying glass are among the legacies of his hatred.

The British *Daily Mail* newspaper is the envy of tabloid rivals after taking an audacious stand to demand justice for a black youth stabbed to death in an alleged racist attack. "Murderers," the *Mail* declared on its front page on Friday above the photographs of five young white [guys] it accused of killing Stephen Lawrence despite failed criminal actions against them. The newspaper invited the [accused] to sue if they dared.

...Pacific Island police officers do not speak out about racism in N[Z]'s force for fear of losing their jobs, says a Samoan inspector who is considering quitting... after losing another promotion... The post... [of] cultural adviser... at police national headquarters... went to a senior sergeant two years his junior, leading the career officer of 25 years to question the integrity of a selection process which expected him to answer questions in Maori. "...They did not specify that they wanted a Maori cultural affairs adviser." ...Many Pacific Islanders had left the police force because of racist attitudes... [which were] so subtle that "the administration is probably not even aware that it is being practised... I've had junior staff coming to me as recently as Friday about being called racist names. I've had commissioned officers come and tell me what happens inside their... meetings. I've become a dumping ground for... these guys [who] don't know where else to go." [By the way, if you *don't know where else to go* these holidays, consider Samoa – a place that will 'turn you into a kid again. You will be compelled to find a fallen coconut, or two, or three, and find yourself standing within a spit of one of the Alofaaga blowholes on the southern coast of Savai'i. Throw the coconut in when a wave is about to hit the rocks, and watch it shoot a hundred feet into the sky atop a huge, roaring jet of water. The pillars of water remind you of the inside of a piano and the keys that dance as they are struck. Savai'i is Samoa's island of lore, said to be the home of two legendary fishers – Maui, who hooked NZ, and Lata, who fished up Tonga.']

...Samoans and Tongans would get along much better if they knew they originated from the same place, an anthropologist has said... "It will take away a lot of the ignorance that they have of... [seeing] each other as being completely different,"... [B]oth peoples came from Manua, a group of islands in American Samoa... [T]heir collective leader was the holder of the Tuimānu'a title. Generations later a leader of the southern islands called the Tuitonga refused to pay tribute to the Tuimānu'a and part of the kingdom became independent. Eventually the southern islands and their people came to call themselves and to be known by their neighbours as Tonga – which means islands and people to the south... "When the Tongans later broke out on a conquering spree, they took over neighbouring islands including all of the Samoan islands but not Manua[, which]... was still considered by the Tongans as the sacred centre,"... Links between the Samoan and Tongan islands continued even after the Tongans were driven from Samoa... [However, they still] regard themselves as ancient foes[– although they only]... carry on the battle in rugby and other sports... [While on the topic of prejudice, a white] Blenheim labourer... aged 23... who... swore at... two Indian... [gals,] spat on the ground in front of them... and called them overstayes... has been... fined \$400, to be paid to ...his [victims]...

An attack on a Somali refugee family... was a "day of shame for Christchurch," says [a] local MP. Three [people] smashed windows in the... family home early yesterday... [Last month] youths threw bottles through windows and threatened the family.

...When Somalis get beaten up by [Pakeha] racists, there is no shortage of public outrage. But anti-[Pakeha] behaviour such as the widespread bullying practised by gangs of Maori girls in schools is somehow regarded as fair enough, because it is only payback for all those years of "colonialisation". I'll never forget the disgraceful way the "kill a [Pakeha]" statement on the Auckland University campus was excused,[then] swept under the carpet because it had been uttered on a marae. An awful lot of other people won't forget, either. The statement should have been punished, with maximum publicity, to reassure everyone that anti-racism laws are enforced even-handedly. The context in which it was uttered, and approved by the audience, gave it far greater significance than if it had been shouted, for instance, at my supermarket checkout counter... There is always a... catalogue of ignorant prejudices against people... [seen] as "different"... by... normal society... I thought of this a few days ago... in a supermarket, when I saw a Samoan... lifting a small girl by her hair. The child... had committed some crime or other. The angry... [Samoan] proceeded to drag her behind her... [while heading] for the door. The throng of mostly [Pakeha] people watched all this with varying degrees of disapproval. No one did anything, but their unspoken race-oriented... stereotypes and prejudices were being confirmed as I watched.

...A Somali was kicked and abused by a group of... Maoris – [six gals and a guy – in the Christchurch]... suburb of New Brighton [on]Wednesday... the third such incident in the city in five days... "A [Pakeha] girl tried to intervene but they took no notice [before also abusing] her,"... The Somali[who]... had a terrible life in his homeland, living with war... asked... why they were doing this to him... "...It is a good land here and a good life. But there is a sickness in [your society," the Somali] said... The Waimakariri MP... said yesterday that such incidents of racial violence were a shameful reflection on N[Z. The MP] was investigating law changes so that race-hate crimes carried their own harsh penalties... "Doing so would send a strong message that such behaviour is not tolerated by society at large. Currently the charge used is either assault or disorderly assembly." ...Members of [the city's white] Road Knights gang have appeared in court 50 times this year, and 23 have been sent to prison... One Road Knight associate was arrested... [for fighting with] Polynesians at the city's court buildings... minutes after [it] had appeared in court charged with fighting.

...skinheads ripped off a... Pakistani[s]... traditional Muslim headwear... then ran off with her baby in Christchurch on Saturday... The[y]... pushed the... seven-month-old... in her pram... around the Bishopdale mall, letting it free-wheel out of control... The... police yesterday described [the] attack as deplorable. "It was a straight-out racist-motivated attack on a defenceless young mother and her baby. Such cowardly behaviour is just not acceptable,"... After the attack, the three youths watched the... English-born Pakistani, who moved to N[Z earlier this year]... return to her car and followed her home. "They were driving very close behind me and I was scared they would hit my bumper... Last year, some racist comments were made to me, but nothing like this. It never happened in Britain, where there are a lot of our community. There are not many of us out here."

...A crowd of about 300 did nothing yesterday as a group of... about 10... skinheads abused and taunted a black English[person] and his family at the Christchurch beach suburb of Scarborough. The family's regular Sunday walk along the promenade in the late afternoon ended abruptly when the... [skinheads called the] bank officer of Nigerian origin... a "nigger." They then punched him, hit him with a bottle and made Nazi salutes... [P]olice were appalled at the lack of response from the crowd. "The only people who helped were a Polynesian [guy and a gal who was] an off-duty police[officer]." The victim... who has been in N[Z] since 1992... would normally have ignored being abused as a "nigger" but... [made] a stand for his... 5-year-old daughter... and 2-year-old son... "I have learned to live with this but I[had] hoped it would not happen to my children..."

...The Race Relations Conciliator has warned of the danger of apathy in fighting racism after the alleged attack by skinheads... although [the conciliator] would not comment on the case as it was before the court... [F]ear might have stopped people from helping the... [Nigerian said the conciliator, but the conciliator] was "most concerned that maybe people didn't care." It was easy to intellectualise about race relations and for people to say they respected other races, but it was important people just did not stand by when racism occurred... "Perhaps a new generation... needs to be reminded that evil can flourish where the good do not speak out." ...Two [of the skinheads] appeared in court yesterday... [The police] opposed bail for both... saying each was already on bail for unrelated alleged offences. After seeing a summary of facts... [the judge remanded one of the skinheads] in custody for another appearance tomorrow. [The other skinhead] was given conditional bail to appear again on Monday. Four [more skinheads] facing the same charge... [of] disorderly assembly... will[also] appear in court tomorrow... [On a positive note, the Nigerian's family] have been overwhelmed with messages of support. "It has been lovely that so many people care," the victim's wife... said yesterday... The family have received letters, cards, flowers and offers of outings. [The victim], who suffered from shock after the attack, returned to work... yesterday... "[Our daughter also] wanted everything to be normal again and wanted to go to school on Monday... [but] doesn't want to go back to the beach again."

...A DARK cloud of racism has taken much of the shine out of Canterbury's boast... We are ashamed, guilty and full of remorse[, which is why bouquets] of flowers are piling up outside the... house... of... a [Nigerian]... assaulted... at a local beach... [W]e can't understand how... some 300 onlookers... did nothing... Perhaps it was fear of retribution from gang members, or perhaps the reasons... [are] more frightening. A century ago, Russian physiologist and Nobel Prize winner Ivan Pavlov discovered our "conditioned" or acquired reflexes... Pavlov's discovery has led to brain-washing and the menace of subliminal advertising. We may condemn it, but we cannot deny it... In certain situations, such as being in a crowd, we can easily become anonymous and lose all sense of responsibility. The Nazis used this technique to capture the most intelligent people in the world.

...[9 skinheads are] arrested after an attack on Fijians at a petrol station... The list of... racist incidents in Christchurch... makes an awful litany... [for] a city that prides itself on being gentler and better behaved than the rest of... [N]Z... – especially Auckland... [D]oes the city have to confront... [an] awkward reality – that they are the surface of an ugly vein that runs from the heart of the respectable Ch[-ch character? A]... sociologist... who has looked at... supremacist activities in N[Z] over the past year, concluded that while [Pakeha] violence against "niggers" might be an aberration in most of the country, it has become intolerably high in South Island towns such as Ch[-]ch, Timaru and Invercargill. "Having lived in Ch[-]ch most of my life, I'm aware there is a lot of covert racism, and I think it is getting worse," said [the person] who runs marae programmes for unemployed... [people]. One explanation is that [Pakeha] kids get nasty down south because they can get away with it. "[Pakeha] kids on the rampage on a beach or in a suburban mall know they are not likely to encounter a Polynesian gang around the corner." [Ch-ch is overwhelmingly white]. In the 1996 census 86.2[%]... described themselves as European, compared with the national average of 74.8[%]. Just 7.2[%] of the city is Maori... Pacific Islanders make up 2[%]... After an influx in the mid-90s, Asians are Ch[-]ch's only ethnic group where the proportion – 4.2[%] – is

close to the national level. As well as being [predominantly white], the Garden City is also pretty poor... second only to Dunedin for poverty. [60%] of people over 15 earn \$20,000 or less, and one in five live on benefits. Some say those statistics explain racist violence. "It's a poor-[Pakeha]-trash reaction," said... [the] Ngai Tahu leader... who used to live in Ch[-]ch. "People who see themselves pushed into the same social conditions as Maori resent them... see themselves competing for jobs[, etc]..." More often, Ch[-]ch racism was "inadvertent... Often people down here literally don't know they are being racist... There is a level of hostility that is tolerated in the South Island, and that sort of intellectual racism frees up people in a way for the sort of attacks we saw at the weekend... We can tut-tut about bad behaviour, but when it's okay to hold ignorant opinions and okay to publicise them, it's very difficult to counteract." A leader of the city's 2500-strong Korean community... [also] believes the main problem is ignorance... The city council and the police have developed a strategy to deal with the skinhead problem over the past 18 months. When police investigated the skinheads, they found some surprising facts. While skinheads circulated white supremacist literature, some of the police line-ups found Maori and other Polynesians in their groups. To Ch[-]ch's Mayor... this suggests that a group mentality rather than racist beliefs is holding them together... "But really I don't know... Normally you can put yourself inside someone's head and... see what makes them act the way they do. But in this situation I... just can't see how people can act like that." ...[a Ch-ch] Labour MP... wants community leaders to support a public vigil... "In Germany and other countries where racial attacks have happened, leaders have organised public vigils in solidarity with victims,"...

A Havelock North family were the victims of an apparent racial attack on Monday night when an explosive device blew a hole in their front door. A 19-year-old youth has been arrested... Racist abuse and taunts from neighbours[has also] forced four Iraqi refugee families to flee their Lower Hutt homes... The last straw for the families... was when one family member... was... dragged... by her hair into a garage... [by] three Maori teenage girls... where they punched her repeatedly in the stomach and back and tried to strangle her... [The] 20-year-old... was taken to hospital with bruising and a cut below her eye. The three... aged 13 and 16... are being dealt with by the police youth aid section... The Lower Hutt coordinator of the Refugee and Migrant Service... said that when asked... why they had done it, [the girls] said the Iraqis laughed and spoke too loudly... The refugees, who asked not to be named, said they were having no problems in their new neighbourhood but asked that the area not be identified.

...Concerned residents of a Lower Hutt street met yesterday to discuss allegations of racism. Maori neighbours of a Pakeha solo mother had taunted, abused and threatened her for befriending Iraqi refugees... [who] had been relocated... [last week. In related news,] the Council of Christians and Jews and the Council of Christians and Muslims have swung behind an anti-racism rally organised by the Race Relations Office. The Unity of Diversity Rally, [will] be held on Wednesday, World Human Rights Day...

The Auckland... Race Relations Office... said[last night] there was no way to measure whether Nazi-type groups were on the rise. "But God forbid that they are." ...[the office was commenting on an article that alleged w]hite supremacist gangs striving for... Hitler's vision of Aryan domination are spreading their web and claiming support across the country. [The article said] Auckland is emerging as a key centre for Nazi sympathisers, despite common perceptions that Christchurch is the country's hot-bed for racism... Police intelligence sources are alarmed by some of the gangs' literature and activities, and worried by the links some have... At least one organisation, based in West Auckland, is establishing links with supporters in other main centres and recruiting from a racist underground... [The] group, called Unit 88, aligns itself with survivalist extremists in the U[S]... With a structure based on the German dictator's feared SS, group members are expected to swear an oath and be ready to bear arms to protect their race. Unit 88 was founded in Wellington but recently moved its headquarters to a Te Atatu warehouse... Police sources say the group has affiliations with the Fascist Union and several gangs, including a whites-only South Auckland motorcycle gang whose pad features portraits of Hitler and other leaders of the Third Reich... Authorities are also noticing more skinhead gangs springing up in the city's schools. The increase in anti-social activity is going hand-in-hand with a rise in "white power" material on the Internet, which contains more than 100 objectionable sites.

...The number of... sites inciting racial... hatred has doubled in a... year, to... 250, according to the... New York-based... Anti-defamation League.

...The Race Relations Conciliator is threatening to use the power of the courts... [via] anti-racism provisions in the Human Rights Act... to halt the covert activities of... Unit 88... The... [conciliator] is alarmed at the crudely produced literature the group disseminates... [using] press machines at its headquarters... "This is racism in its most blatant form. We should all be reminded what happened in Europe when this kind of philosophy was pursued in a large-scale, organised way. Let no society stand by and tolerate even the hint of a similar occurrence." Unit 88's landlord... said yesterday that the gang... moved in several months ago. "They rented the place and said they were a club. They have caused no trouble to anyone." ...[the landlord] had no problem with having such a gang at his warehouse. "It's none of my business [what they do]. It is nobody's business. They are no worse than the other gangs around." Meanwhile, N[Z]'s white supremacist gangs are believed to be hooking into the Internet to keep in touch with... [the] four international skinhead groups – High Resistance, Nordland, Blood and Honour and Hammerskins... Gang members were usually middle-class and lower-class young [Pakeha guys]... "In any country there will always be a group of people who see skinhead as attractive... It's an image for social inadequates... The kids are usually smashed on cheap cider and amphetamines," said... London-based Searchlight[, an]... international anti-fascist organisation... [which] received regular reports about skinhead activities in A[US] but only occasionally about N[Z].

...Unit 88... is... repackaging past evils for the consumption of modern-day society... Symbolism is everything when you are a Nazi... Take the name, for example... After the war, when anything linked to the Third Reich was banned or frowned upon, Nazis began using the figure "88" instead of saying "Heil Hitler," H being the eighth letter of the alphabet. Like other skinhead groups around the world, Unit 88 is riding on the back of such history. And modern technology is making their task easier. The Internet has emerged as one of the best tools for spreading the Nazi word... In the old days, they relied on crude leaflets... [or] "oi" music... for the spread of their propaganda. Now extensive information about the glories of Nazis' past is available... at the touch of a button... Southern Cross Hammerskin, an A[US]n-based gang, runs one... website... "Hammerskin is the fastest-growing white power movement in the world," says the... skinsite... "We have loyal members in every country... where our Northern European forefathers have staked their claim. We promote white pride, white loyalty, white heritage and white power. It is our birth right." Unit 88, which is believed to be connected to the group Blood and Honour, uses the Internet to fill the pages of its magazines and leaflets. It reproduces quotes summing up the group's aims: "If you worship your enemy, you will be defeated. If you adopt your enemy's religion, you will be enslaved. If you breed with your enemy, you will be destroyed... We have no time for armchair racists or pseudo-Nazis or anyone who would bring our sacred beliefs into disrepute. We see national socialism as the only hope to secure a worthwhile future for our race. For Blood and Honour."

...Before a... swastika flag, a dark force gathers... [as 50 youths] induct new members... Heads shaved, they make the Nazi salute... [T]his is not a scene from Europe where extreme-right political groups are sprouting again: this is West Auckland... Meeting weekly... members vow to be Aryan warriors, dedicated to... Hitler's vision of white domination. "We should prepare ourselves for an inevitable Government breakdown..." says... the group's leaders. "We have a youth division. We want to teach them to keep their blood pure, to keep ancestral lines pure. This is not racist – this is purist." ...A member of the Fascist Union... [- who, i]n 1970... formed... the N[Z] National Socialist Party and advocated the establishment of a private army of stormtroopers[, then 7]... years later... was convicted on a charge of publishing a pamphlet with intent to incite ill-will against Jews after a test case brought under the Race Relations Act[, and]... earlier served an 18-month jail sentence... for setting fire to an Auckland synagogue... [-] said the groups were trying to turn youths away from drugs and crime... [T]he groups dissociated themselves from incidents such as the attacks in Christchurch, but they were not totally against violence. "If you want to mess with us, we will hand it back... We have been labelled as dangerous, violent, lunatics. If being free-thinking people with our own ideals and beliefs, who look after our own folk and meet any attack with equal measures makes us those things, so be it... We may not change the opinion of the masses, but we will seek the enlightened few."

...It is understood that gangs including Black Power, the Mongrel Mob and the Headhunters... have reacted with anger to the discovery of a white-power supremacist movement on their turf... and have promised to mete out street justice... to put a stop to any race-hate violence from Unit 88. "We are not going to tolerate these guys getting up to Christchurch antics," said a source... "I would not be surprised if somebody went... to visit [their warehouse]," said a member of the Henderson police.

...A neo-Nazi gang has abandoned its West Auckland headquarters... leaving remnants of its... beliefs[... such as]... SS... symbols... and... a K[KK]-style mask... [which says:] white pride world wide... Visits from rival gangs convinced Unit 88 to leave, but the... leader of the Fascist Union and mentor of the gang... has a dire warning about the danger they still pose. "They are going to start a war if they keep doing what they are doing,"... [The mentor,] who had intended teaching... the young [guys] involved with Unit 88... his own trade of printing... blamed rival gangs for an attack on one of his properties in Panmure. Doors were kicked in on a storage shed and printing machines were damaged following publicity about his involvement with the gang. It is understood Unit 88[members] dispersed... under cover of darkness on Wednesday and were given instructions to lie low and regroup in about a month... Waitakere police, said officers were trying to track down the leaders... "We just want to talk to them about what they are doing and what they intend to do and, obviously, difficulties they might be experiencing... from other gangs..."

...Criminal charges may result from the distribution of a Fascist Union leaflet in Christchurch last weekend... which depicted immigrants as rapists and child molesters. The Race Relations Conciliator... had spoken to police and would soon decide what action... [to take. U]nion members who had distributed the leaflet could be prosecuted either under the Films, Videos and Publications Classification Act or the Human Rights Act, which forbids incitement of racial disharmony. A conviction under the latter legislation could result in a fine of up to \$7000 or three months' imprisonment. [Incidentally, 'a born-again Christian minister is on a 2-week speaking tour of Auckland churches and schools. The 40-year-old from Oklahoma has been invited to NZ by Christian groups, to tell about his conversion. The minister once was an apostle of hate – an imperial wizard in the KKK, preaching his gospel of white supremacy on America's TV talk-show circuit. His message was all the more menacing, as the hulking Klansperson was a professional wrestling champion. Since turning his back on the klan, the minister's travelled the world denouncing the feared racist group and taunting it via the internet. "When key words on search engines bring up klan websites, they put up mine as well." The minister leaves next week to preach in AUS'...

'Outrage over the KKK setting up in AUS has prompted the NZ police national headquarters' threat assessment unit to contact their counterparts to make sure there is no danger of the race hate group extending its links across the Tasman. A Massey University specialist on racist groups said a few copycat KKK groups were operating in the South Island, but they were "not a threat and not linked with the Klan." While police tended to play down the presence of supremacist groups because they did not want to give them publicity, the professor said exposing the existence of the neo-Nazi group Unit 88 in Auckland had forced the group to close its operations. A Sydney resident has been expelled from the One Nation party after claiming to have set up KKK branches in NSW, Victoria and Queensland. The "Klavern" had a growing membership base of about 70 members, the "Exalted Cyclops" said, and was actively seeking recruits over the Internet. One of the American Klan's "imperial wizards" said on radio in the US yesterday that it would soon visit those branches.' ■ 'Police were last night to attend a meeting called by the "Taree KKK", inviting Taree residents on the NSW mid-north coast to stone an Aboriginal mission. A leaflet distributed around the town over the past week invited residents to a "rock-a-thon" at Purfleet, which houses about 300 Aborigines. The local superintendent, who is still trying to identify the "Taree KKK" leader, said the situation arose after Aboriginal youths threw rocks at passing cars at night.'

...*The white supremacist KKK has turned its attention to AUS* America's KKK, entering what its own propaganda describes as its sixth cycle, has burst out internationally with a sophisticated recruiting drive threatening a global assault on the non-Aryan world. Recovering from the battering it took in the aftermath of the 1960s civil rights crusade, the Klan has regrouped and is using the World Wide Web to pursue its ideal of white supremacy beyond its former boundaries of the American south. The revelation that at least two orders have, or are about to, set up branches in AUS follows similar electronic recruitment that has already seen the Klan become active in England, France and Spain. According to Klan-watchers in the US, the revival of white supremacy has accelerated with the end of the Cold War and its dangerous, but clear, certainties, and with the rapid globalisation of economies and societies. The language has not changed since the lynch mobs, although all Klan sites carry statements of peaceful activism. "The Imperial Klans of America are a legal and law-abiding organisation that will NOT tolerate illegal acts of any sort. If you commit an illegal act your membership will be suspended and you may be banished." But the Klan's agenda is chilling: drug testing for all welfare recipients, the death penalty for drug dealers, quarantine of all Aids carriers, no more immigration, ownership of US land and industry only for USers, end free trade, the end of affirmative action and banning gun control groups as unconstitutional. The strength of the Klans in the US is documented by Klanwatch. It lists 43 Klans, with more than 160 branches. A leading US analyst of the Institute for Research and Education on Human Rights, told the Klanwatch publication *Intelligence* that white supremacy had become a broad movement, picked up by mainstream Americans who see the US as a European civilisation under threat of racial swamping by "non-European peoples."

...*'Europe is looking on anxiously as Germany, after Austria, struggles to contain a rising wave of neo-Nazi violence directed against foreigners, asylum-seekers and Jewish sites.'* 'The number of neo-Nazis in Germany has climbed sharply, says a German Government report on the far-right. The *Bild* newspaper says the study found membership of far-right groups up 11% to 53,600, and those ready to commit violent crimes up 9% to 8200.'

...*'The electronic visitors' book of Sebnitz, a picturesque town nestling among pines near the Czech border, oozes hatred. "I want the Wall back," declares one entry. "Then the whole of East Germany should be carpet-bombed." Says another: "A Nazi town like Sebnitz must be burned to the ground. You have brought disgrace to Germany." The disgrace is the death of a 6-year-old boy named Joseph. Fifty of Sebnitz's youths, with 200 people impassively looking on, beat him because of his dark skin. They tortured him, poisoned him and tossed him into the town swimming pool. And then they marched to his mother's house shouting: "Seig Heil." But that is not what makes West Germans reach for their mental "Nuke the East" button. They are shocked by what happened next: nothing. Sebnitz closed ranks, the local police declared Joseph's lynching an accident, and prosecutors shelved the case. Only now, after three years and under the weight of damning evidence gathered by the boy's mother, have they been forced to admit that they lied.'*

...*'In the five states of the former East Germany which became part of the Federal Republic under reunification in 1990, ignorance and mistrust of foreigners became ingrained by a century of turbulence and totalitarianism: imperial rule, the Weimar Republic, Hitler and Communism. Then there is the easterners' lowly status in their own country. Far from being lauded as heroes for overthrowing the Communist dictatorship, East Germans are widely derided in the West as dimwits, reactionaries or obese bludgers who spend their days watching satellite TV. Despite tens of billions of dollars spent on infrastructure and employment incentives, the East remains an economic disaster zone. Joblessness in the East hovers around 18%, double that of the West, while incomes for those in work are only about two-thirds of Westerners. Angry and frustrated, many of the young have deserted their homes in search of work in the prosperous West. Those who remain are bored, sullen and rootless – easy targets for the National Democratic Party, which with 6000 members is the biggest neo-Nazi group. The Government is mulling whether to outlaw the NPD and two other far-right groups, the German People's Union and the Republicans.'*

...*the founder and retired leader of Germany's far-right Republican party... [– a former] beerhall orator who fought as an SS officer... in [WW2 –] was quoted this week as saying [it] had held close contacts with a large number of top-ranking officers in the German Army... The revelation comes amid charges... levelled... in Parliament... that... [the] Defence Minister... had failed to prevent right-wing extremists from infiltrating the Army.*

...*Just three months after the German military was embarrassed by a homemade video showing soldiers pretending to carry out rapes and killings, more tapes surfaced yesterday with scenes of Army officers giving the Hitler salute and talking about killing Jews... as well as[containing]*

anti-foreigner and anti-American slogans... Music with extreme right wing lyrics is heard often in the background... [The] Defence Minister... ordered an investigation into the newly discovered videos, made in 1994 and 1995 by soldiers from the same mountain battalion that produced the other video. The newest tapes are sure to [cause further] embarrassment for the German Army, which has only recently been assuming a more active role abroad after the legacy of... [WW2]. The tape that surfaced in July was made in 1996 as an apparent prank during breaks in training for assignment to the Nato-led peace force in Bosnia... Four of those identified in the videos are active soldiers... while four others are in the reserves. One lieutenant was relieved of duty yesterday and forbidden to wear his uniform pending the investigation. A... sergeant major is already facing disciplinary action for other offences... [The videos have] intensified questions about the general character of Germany's [armed forces personnel], and particularly over the effectiveness of the draft as a means of curbing militaristic impulses.

...None of this would have come to light if not for the willingness of one soldier to eventually turn on his friends. [The soldier] hired an agent and tried, anonymously, to bring the video to German t[v]. The private channel Sat-1 acquired the tape and made a much-hyped TV documentary... Its broadcast last month followed a series of other troubled incidents in which German soldiers firebombed a residence for foreigners... and... wielded baseball bats against some Turkish immigrants... There have also been reports German ultra-rightists are putting out calls on the Internet, urging neo-Nazis to join the army... [The Defence Minister has] called for legal changes that would allow the army to review the criminal records of new recruits... to screen out active neo-Nazis or violent thugs... [It is already] illegal in Germany to incite racial hatred or glorify Nazi symbols...

Opposition politicians called on... [Germany's] Government yesterday to explain to parliament how a convicted neo-Nazi leader was invited to give a speech to a training course for German Army officers. The Defence Ministry said it had launched an investigation into how... [the] former lawyer who spent eight years in prison for a racist bomb attack, had been able to speak at the Army's prestigious staff college in Hamburg in 1995... The ministry pledged to establish whether course organisers had known of [the former lawyer's] background when they invited him to speak... The embarrassing revelation was the latest in a series of cases linking the post-war German Army, the Bundeswehr, with right-wing radicalism... [that] have damaged attempts by... the Minister of Defence... and... [the] Chancellor... to persuade Germans, wary of the military because of the country's Nazi past, that the Army deserves a central role in both civilian society and international operations. [The minister] has insisted the cases are isolated incidents... But as recently as last week, the Defence Ministry opened disciplinary proceedings against six paratroopers who decorated a room in their barracks with pictures of Adolf Hitler and pre-war Army flags for a drinking party.

...The son of a former German minister has been quoted as saying there were many neo-Nazis in the Army who gave the outlawed Hitler salute at drunken parties... "During one exercise, an officer made a derogatory comment about foreigners and others joined right in. They were saying shocking things like... 'Throw the foreigners out'." ...Despite[the Army's] efforts to weed out those soldiers with far-right sympathies, the number of right-wing incidents has risen sharply. A total of 130 cases in the 340,000-strong Bundeswehr... have been reported this year, up from 72 in 1996.

...neo-Nazi gangs... provide an important test for democracies. Fascist movements were established at the turn of the century [- 'originally begun in Italy, 1919' -] in opposition to the democratic and socialist movements of the period... The nazism of Germany came to define a particular form of fascism which justified genocide in the interests of racial purity... Now in the 1990s, neo-Nazis... range from parties who seek political office... to the shock troops of skinheads who feel quite at liberty to intimidate those who are culturally different... Their willingness to indulge in violence... ranging from verbal attacks to murder... has contributed substantially to the 5000-plus racially motivated attacks recorded each year by the German internal security service... The former communist societies of East Germany, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia have supplied new converts and movements... There are 55 active neo-Nazi bands which have played at 70 concerts this year in Germany... [B]ands such as Kraftschlag ("power through violence") Saccara ("total race war") and the German nationalists of Sturmwehr are some of those peddling race hate towards Turks and other ethnic minorities... The authorities have conducted a big crackdown, and a quarter of a million recordings of neo-Nazi music have been seized in northern Germany alone in recent months... [But] the racism... neo-Nazis... advocate will not be easily dislodged from the community.

...A report... says that Britain has one of the highest rates of racially motivated crime in Western Europe - a situation as desperate as that experienced by minorities in Germany[- a]nd... the level of such crime is increasing... Between 1989 and 1996, the number of... reported crimes... almost trebled to 12,199... Human Rights Watch... believes that the true figure is about 32,500 assaults and 26,000 acts of vandalism. Nearly one in five crimes suffered by members of ethnic minorities is linked to the colour of their skin. The report lists 14 racially motivated murders between 1991 and 1994... H[RW] also received evidence that a... black [person] had been arrested by police after being assaulted by his white neighbour and his wife threatened with a knife... The report adds: "Most shocking are the number of reports of vicious and racist treatment at the hands of the police themselves... Cases of severe police brutality remain far too common. H[RW] cites the deaths in custody of 10 black people. A 1996 inquest found that Shiji Lapite had been unlawfully killed after being arrested. The group criticises the Police Complaints Authority's decision not to bring charges against the officers involved. The Crown Prosecution Service also decided not to prosecute. A post mortem found that Lapite's voice box had been crushed as a result of a stranglehold and th[ere were] 45 other injuries, including bruises and abrasions to his head and face. The officers concerned... claimed Lapite became violent after being stopped, but a Home Office pathologist found no bruises on the [officers] and both admitted kicking Lapite in the face. In November 1992, Leon Patterson was found dead, covered in bruises, in his cell in Denton, Greater Manchester. A cleaner found blood smeared on the walls and... floor... An inquest verdict of "unlawful killing" was later replaced by one of "misadventure to which neglect contributed." ...[the chairperson] of the Commission for Racial Equality, said the report backed up what black organisations had been saying for years. "...Some people feel that they are living in terror. Any society should be ashamed that these things are happening."

...[For the first time in history black faces - and the darker hues of eastern Europe - are a regular sight on Irish streets. They are often victims of ridicule and abuse. Dublin, Cork and Limerick are now infamous for racism. New editions of best-selling tourist guides will warn visitors of the problem. Attacks are increasingly common. Last year a black Briton left Ireland after being stabbed in a race attack two months after his father had suffered a similar assault. Three months before, a 16-year-old Nigerian asylum-seeker was slashed across the face, and the chairperson of the African Refugee Network was beaten by a white mob. No one has been successfully prosecuted for a hate crime in Ireland. Faced with official indifference, refugees feel alone. They also fear the state they have appealed to for help. "For ethnic minorities it is difficult to have faith in the authorities when they see racial attacks go unpunished and even unrecorded," said the co-ordinator of the refugee charity Comhlámh. Ireland is enjoying the biggest economic boom in its history. Trappings of wealth are everywhere. The country has climbed out of decades of recession to become officially richer than Britain. With the boom came immigration. After long being one of the most homogenous societies in Europe, Ireland is facing an influx of foreigners, putting race on top of the political agenda. In 1992, 39 asylum-seekers arrived in Ireland. Last year, there were almost 11,000. Following Britain's harsh asylum laws, Ireland drafted its own versions: benefits were scrapped and replaced by a tiny allowance; hostels were created to house refugees; the right to work or education was denied. Some believe the hardline stance is leading to a catastrophe. "Right now our economy is strong and we're still seeing the emergence of racist problems," said the director of Amnesty International's Irish section. "If we have a serious economic downturn I think we know what the reaction to immigrants will be then."]

...British code-breakers were providing a detailed picture of the systematic slaughter of Jews across Europe from as early as 1941, newly released secret records revealed yesterday... The declassified files reveal the terrible emotional strain placed on... Winston Churchill who was informed of the extent to the atrocities, but was unable to do anything... Jews angrily demanded to know why[the] documents detailing when and where many

of their relatives were shot or “liquidated”... had not been released earlier... A spokes[person] for... the Government Code and Cypher School... said it was only considered safe to release the material in 1993, and it had taken years to process all the information.

...Hitler planned to slaughter hundreds of thousands of Allied prisoners of war as... [WW2] came to an end, newly discovered documents reveal. [The] interview with the Nazi air force chief, Hermann Goering, [was] unearthed in the U[S] National Archives... Goering, who was sentenced to be hanged at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials but killed himself... [with a cyanide pill on the day of his execution], told his interrogators that Hitler had wanted to renounce the Geneva Convention if the war had lasted another three months... Although historians said Goering had a major role in Hitler’s anti-Jewish policy, [Goering] feigned shock at seeing photographs of Dachau concentration camp and said all the Nazis wanted to do was remove Jews from German high society... Hitler... was not swayed by Goering’s arguments that, with the Nazis in retreat and many German prisoners in Allied hands, any order to kill Allies was likely to backfire... “It was pointed out... that German (prisoners) in allied hands would have to expect the same fate. To this the Fuehrer replied that those millions were of no use to the war effort anyway but that after his proposed action there would be no deserters from the German army. The German people, said [Hitler], would fight to the last [person.” However, an]... Aucklander... who was a prisoner in Germany, believes had Hitler got the chance to order his planned atrocity his troops would have rebelled... because... Germans who guarded prisoners... were already making plans for when they lost the war... [and] most had lost the heart to fight or kill. “They wouldn’t have done it at all. They were being nice to us.” The... [Aucklander] was captured in North Africa in 1942 and spent the... war imprisoned in Bavaria. After escaping and being recaptured, [the Aucklander] was put in a prison camp with Russians who... bore the brunt of Nazi brutality. Of the more than five million Russians captured by the Germans on the eastern front, only two million survived.

...[an elderly couple sit] in Moscow’s Terletski Park... Both are in their 80s and are veterans of W[WW2], as confirmed by the ribbons they wear this May afternoon. It is the anniversary of victory... over the Nazis who invaded their country in 1941. Right in front of them... is a surprising sight: a red flag with a white circle flaps in the breeze atop a well-kept one-story building on the edge of the park. Inside the circle is a stylized swastika. Even more surprising is what the old campaigners think about this, and about the... crew-cut [boys] strutting near the building dressed in black uniforms, the swastika [‘f. Skr. *svastika* = well-being’] repeated on their sleeves. “The sight of that flag is unpleasant... but they say their swastika isn’t the same as the German one, that it’s really the ancient Russian symbol, and that their black uniforms represent the cassocks of monks who once fought to defend Mother Russia.” Says the [other veteran]: “These boys do no harm. They keep drunks and hooligans away. People in the park feel better protected now.” “These boys” are members of the local branch of a nationwide paramilitary movement called Russian National Unity. RNU’s rapid growth reflects the alarming fact that “national socialism” is blooming in Russia, feeding on the failure of democratic reform and falling standards of living... Started in 1990, [RNU] is now the best-organised and most conspicuous of about 85 radical nationalist groups that have sprung up. RNU claims thousands of active members... plus influential support from the armed forces and the powerful Interior Ministry (MVD). Much of the training it offers Russian youth comes from former and active members of the MVD, the KGB and the military. Many of them are recognized by local authorities. In Terletski Park the black-shirts wave to the police, from whom they have nothing to fear. In fact the RNU has a contract with the district authorities to help patrol the park as auxiliary police, or *druzhinniki*. Hence the veteran’s mention of hooligans – never mind that recently the same *druzhinniki* savagely beat demonstrators at an anti-fascist rally in the park... Money does not appear to be a hurdle for the RNU... “We help some people resolve their problems, within the framework of the law, of course. They pay for the service. Purely business.” ...[Russia’s] President... has said that by the end of this year Russia’s creaking armed forces will have to discharge some 200,000 [personnel], including 70,000 officers. By law, many... will be due an apartment, plus a minimum of 20 months severance pay. Given that the state is broke and will not be able to deliver these entitlements, it is no brainteaser to work out to whom the disgruntled officers may turn... The Stavropol... RNU leader... boasts: “Soon, this regime will fall like a ripened pear. There will be none but us around to pick it up.” Back in Moscow... [the movement’s overall leader] sings the same tune, claiming the RNU will be essential “to restore and keep order under the conditions of chaos, anarchy and mass riots” that are to descend on Russia... [Both] insist that any likeness to Germany in the 1930s is, as they say, purely coincidental... [One denies being] a follower of Hitler... [but] can’t resist quoting from a book [it] describes as “a must for any intelligent [person,” *Mein Kampf*: “Whoever controls the streets controls the politics.” It is a message some old people on park benches have forgotten, and some younger Russians may have yet to learn... There are no prizes for guessing the [RNU’s] enemy: world Jewry and the [US. □ ‘Russian nationalists undertook pogroms (anti-Semitic riots accompanied by massacres and pillaging) in 1881 and 1903, with the tacit approval of tsarist officials, and, in 1918-21, in non-Bolshevik-controlled areas.’

...‘In 1929, Einstein said: “If my theory of relativity is proven correct, Germany will claim me as a German and France declare I am a citizen of the world. Should it prove untrue, France’ll say I’m German and Germany that I am a Jew.”’ ●] The Anti-Defamation League, a Jewish group, yesterday honoured a German leader for his efforts to end intolerance and prevent future hate crimes... “My gut says... I despise all that is German... yet I stand here today, Mr President, proud to honour you...,” said the league’s national director... who was born in Poland in 1940... [and became] a survivor of the Holocaust... [after] a nursemaid... baptised him and raised him as a Catholic... Earlier this year, in a bid to heal old wounds, [Germany’s President] declared the January 27 anniversary of the liberation of... Auschwitz concentration camp a national day of remembrance... pointing out that most Germans did nothing in the 1930s while the nazis built up a “totally irrational” racial ideology that led to the extermination of millions of Jews...

A... Catholic church, designed to recall “a horrific wound to all humanity,” opened yesterday in [a]... town near the former Nazi death camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau. St Joseph’s parish church in Oswiecim was sponsored by the Italian Church in memory of... up to 1.5 million people... murdered in Auschwitz... and of 40,000 Italians who died in various Nazi camps during... [WW2]. “I pray that this sanctuary will always recall not only the drama of the victims of hatred, but also the mystery of God’s love, which banishes death and opens the gates of resurrection,” Pope John Paul said in a message read... at the consecration... [The Pope has also] condemned anti-Semitism in an address to Christian theologians in the Vatican, and acknowledged that many Christians failed to live up to their faith when the Nazis tried to exterminate the Jews... Jewish organisations have often objected to the erection of Christian... symbols on or next to the former camp, which remains the world’s largest Jewish cemetery. But the new church is away from the site and has not drawn opposition from major Jewish bodies[, even though the]... foundation stone comes from a wall where the Nazis shot some... [Jew]s. Murals on the austere interior show human figures standing on earth and others ascending skywards.

...The Pope has said several times recently the Church should use the start of the third millennium in the year 2000 as a chance to make an “example of conscience” and seek forgiveness for past errors and sins... The “Roots of anti-Judaism in Christian Circles” symposium focused on religious attitudes towards Jews in Christian teaching in the past... and how this affected history. Both the participants and the Pope acknowledged that “wrong interpretations” of the New Testament relating to Jews had circulated for too long and had engendered sentiments of religious hostility that fuelled anti-Semitism. It was not until the 1960s that the Church repudiated the concept of guilt for Christ’s death and eliminated the phrase “perfidious Jews” from a Holy Week liturgy. [By the way, last year ‘hundreds of demonstrators from Berlin’s robust alternative scene spat venom at the Pontiff during his parade down the famed Unter den Linden boulevard towards the Brandenburg Gate, symbol of Europe’s Cold War divide. The Pope had appeared unperturbed by two paint bombs that splattered his car and cries of “Get lost” and “Go to hell”. The Pope had started the day by saying Mass for some 100,000 people at the Olympic stadium that Adolf Hitler built for the 1936 games, intending it to be a showcase of Aryan superiority. The Pontiff beatified two priests who died after being persecuted by the Nazis, but the step had again thrust the Church’s public silence about

the Holocaust into the limelight. The Pope had dropped parts of two prepared speeches defending the Church, but won praise from German Jews by telling them for the first time that too few Catholics dared stand up to Hitler.' During the war, 'the archbishop of Cologne told Germans: "We command you in the name of God, to fight to the last drop of your blood for the honour and glory of the country."' However, the '*Confessing Church* was formed in Germany by evangelists opposed to Nazism and the Nazi-supported German Christian Church Movement.' 'Karl Dibelius (1880-1967) was suspended from church duties as general superintendent of the Kurmark following a 1933 sermon to Nazi leaders stating that "the dictatorship of a totalitarian state is irreconcilable with God's will", although the German Lutheran continued to support the Confessing Church despite being forbidden to speak or publish.'

...a] right-wing leader... yesterday denounced as "scandalous" a decision by French Catholic priests to seek forgiveness from Jews for the... Church's inaction during... [WW2]. The National Front leader, who regularly denies claims of anti-semitism and racism, said today's church leaders should not feel responsible for what people did half a century ago... "People would do better... ask[ing] forgiveness for their positions on abortion... or on the... problem of immigration and France's survival,"... French Catholic prelates will make a formal declaration of "repentance" today for the Church's wartime support of the collaborationist Vichy regime that enacted anti-Jewish laws... In Bordeaux, the authorities carried out the Nazis' dirty work with particular enthusiasm... By seeking forgiveness, the... Church is following belatedly in the footsteps of the state which, in a statement by [the French]President... on July 16, 1995, admitted for the first time that French authorities had played an active role in the... deportation of... 76,000 Jews... to Nazi death camps... For the country's 650,000 Jews the apologies are a case of better late than never.

...Half a century after 50,000 Jews from... the... port[of Salonika] perished in Nazi concentration camps, Greece [has built] a monument to honour their memory in a move targeted to mend ties with Israel... The Greek President... unveiled the... bronze sculpture[of] a cluster of bodies with their hands up in despair... in a moving ceremony attended by the Israeli Health Minister... three senior Greek ministers, a U[S] Congressional delegation and representatives of Jewish communities from around the world... Greece, which has close relations with most Arab states, was among the last Western nations of officially recognise Israel in the early 1990s, and has since been at odds with Tel Aviv several times over mostly trivial issues. Among the most noted disputes was a refusal by a former Greek Foreign Minister... to attend the Auschwitz commemoration events in 1985 after Poland raised among others the flag of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, with which Greece is at odds... [In related news], the World Jewish Congress said yesterday... [that t]he attic where Anne Frank hid for two years was "plundered" by her Amsterdam neighbours just hours after the Frank family were taken off to Nazi death camps... In a new report, the group said that... the estates of most Jews deported and killed... were systematically stolen... 110,000 Dutch Jews died in the Holocaust – between 75 and 80[%] of the community and the highest percentage in Western Europe... "The bottom line is that some sectors of the Dutch population willingly participated in the theft of Jewish property, and after the war the Dutch took only reluctant and partial steps to return the property to its owners,"... The[WJC's] executive director... said the Franks were betrayed by a Dutch informant[whose]... name is unknown... But [the director] also... added... that... "things have to be kept in perspective: Germans and [their] collaborators were the murderers, not [the] French, Swiss, Dutch." ...The attic... was made into a museum in 1963.

...The Anne Frank Foundation yesterday angrily denied reports that neighbours looted the family's secret hiding place after their 1944 arrest... A... spokes[person]... said the Franks' belongings were taken out of the house by Dutch collaborators working for a removal company "within two weeks" of the family's arrest... "...We have historians here... so it would be... strange if we were not to know... [what] was true..." ...Although Anne's diary survived the war, the rest of the property was never recovered by... [her father,] the only member of her family to survive the Holocaust. - 1997

Jewish revenge groups have killed since the end of... W[W2] more than 1000 nazis in Europe who were involved in the genocide of six million Jews, according to an Israeli documentary to be screened today. The programme, called Eye for an Eye, will show for the first time witness reports from members of the "revenge groups" set up in Palestine before the creation of Israel... They will not be identified and their faces will be masked. Among the revelations is a plan to kill six million Germans by poisoning the water in several Germany cities including Munich and Nuremberg. But the plan was finally abandoned, according to one of the leaders of the revenge groups... However, in a separate plan his group did succeed in poisoning thousands of former SS members detained in prison camps... The programme did not say exactly how many people had died. Another, smaller group succeeded in 1946 in getting the only known photo of Adolf Eichmann, one of the main architects of the Holocaust. One of the group's members seduced Eichmann's mistress to get the picture, which was then used to track him down and identify him in Argentina where [Eichmann] had gone into hiding. Eichmann was kidnapped by an Israeli commando unit and later tried and hanged in Israel in 1962.

...Ten of the leading Nazis met their end by... [hanging] this day in 1946, 19 days after being found guilty in Nuremberg in the first war crimes trial in history... The trial... of... 21 top-ranking Nazi defendants... had begun 11 months earlier... and was presided over by an International Military Tribunal with a judge and one alternate from each of the four major Allied nations – Britain, France, the Soviet Union and the U[S]... The 21 prisoners... were tried for conspiracy to wage war and crimes against peace, violations of the laws of war and crimes against humanity, which included deportations, exterminations and genocide. Outlining the case against the defendants... the chief [US] prosecutor told the court: "We propose to punish acts which have been regarded as criminal since the time of Cain and have been so written in every civilised code." ...Hanged were... Hitler's foreign minister[; the]... armed forces chief of staff[; the]... chief of the concentration camps[; the]... minister for Nazi-occupied territories[; the]... governor of Nazi-occupied Bohemia and Moravia[; the]... governor of Nazi-occupied Poland[; the]... Nazi governor of The Netherlands[; the]... chief baiter of the Jews in *Der Sturmer*[; the]... slave-labour administrator[; and the]... armed forces chief of operations... Rudolf Hess, Hitler's heir-apparent until [his flight] to Britain in 1941, supposedly to seek a separate peace, was sentenced to life in jail. [Hess] died after 41 years at Spandau Prison... Others sentenced to life in prison were Hitler's economics minister... and[the] commander-in-chief of the German Navy[, while his successor – who also became 'Hitler's appointed successor after the latter's suicide (and immediately arranged for Germany's unconditional surrender)' – received 10 years. The]... weapons minister, drew a 20-year sentence... The 22nd defendant, Hitler's deputy... was tried in his absence and condemned to death. Some say [Hitler's deputy] was killed trying to escape from Hitler's bunker in Berlin in May 1945 but controversy raged for years, many insisting [the deputy] escaped to South America... The trial was at the... Palace of Justice – the site of Hitler's mass party rallies... Although Nuremberg had been devastated by Allied bombing, the Palace... still stood, as did the nearby prison. - 1996

IT WAS a soft summer day in Lausanne, Switzerland... People chatted and laughed in the shade of umbrellas at a cafe. But at a corner table, two [people] discussed the most ghastly information ever revealed in the history of the world. One... was... the 31-year-old director of the W[J]C office in Geneva and the most important conduit for accurate information on what was happening to the Jews in Europe... When the Germans invaded Russia in June 1941, the number of documents in [his] filing cabinet became horrifying. Special Nazi killing squads systematically rounded up all Jews in town after town and shot them, as many as 10,000 at a time... The other was... [the] press secretary of the Swiss Federation of Jewish communities. The news [the press secretary imparted to the director] that day – August 1, 1942 – was hard to believe. An important German industrialist with access to Hitler's headquarters had learned of a secret plan to... kill every Jew in every country controlled by Germany. "...Even newborn babies... Unless we can get Roosevelt and Churchill to threaten massive reprisals." [The director] gave a short laugh. But the sound was closer to tears. "Did your informant have any idea how this should be achieved?" "The U[S] consul is your friend... Tell him what we have learned." ...by December 1943 nothing had been done... Then on December 23... [the director] received... a licence... [from] the US commercial

attache in Bern... approved by President Roosevelt, authorizing [the attache] to transfer the first \$US25,000 to rescue Jews from Nazi persecution. "At last!" [the director] said quietly. But [the attache] could not contain himself. "...you have achieved what no-one else in the world has been able to do! It is a complete reversal of US policy." What [the director and attache] did *not* know was that this document was the result of a conflict that had come close to exploding into a disastrous scandal for the Roosevelt Administration. On July 22, 1943... [the] head of the W[J]C in New York... had finally managed to discuss [the director's] plan with the President, who told his Secretary of the Treasury... to implement it at once. But the State Department... dragged its feet. Finally[, the]... assistant general counsel at Treasury, and... [the] director of the Division of Foreign Funds Control, were assigned to investigate further. They prepared a memorandum for [the Secretary of the Treasury] tracing the State Department's incredible history of blocking plans... to help save European Jews. Their report charged that the State Department was guilty "not only of gross procrastination and wilful failure to act, but even of wilful attempts to prevent action from being taken to rescue Jews from Hitler." ...Armed with these searing words, [the Secretary of the Treasury] urged Roosevelt to form a special US government agency... Thus... [the Geneva WJC director] had received his licence. And on January 22, 1944, Roosevelt created the War Refugee Board... In the 18 months of its existence, the WRB saved some 200,000 Jews. But the rescue efforts were no match for the Nazi death machine. Between May 15 and October 30, 1944, more than 70[%] of the 800,000 Jews in Hungary alone lost their lives. Now that Germany was being defeated on all fronts, [the director] became convinced that, in their fury at losing the war, the Nazis would kill all the remaining Jews in the camps. Desperate, [the director] went to see... [the] permanent delegate of the Czechoslovakian government-in-exile to the Geneva-based League of Nations, and delegate of the Czech Red Cross... [The director] insisted that... all... [of the countries who had] government representatives... in Geneva... work together, not only to pressure the Nazis to "keep the camps intact" – which meant no more killing – but also, through the International Red Cross Committee (ICRC) and other channels, to organize trucks of food and medical supplies to immediately follow the liberating Allied troops into the camps. The [representatives] agreed. Hitler had indeed ordered that all surviving Jews in the camps be murdered before the war ended. But Heinrich Himmler, seeing the ICRC's demands as a convenient means of currying favour with the Allies, countermanded the Fuhrer's orders. On March 12, [Himmler] signed a document promising to hand the camps over intact to the Allies. When the Allies liberated the camps, they found that some had indeed remained intact.

They were plucked from Nazi extermination camps, spared death because they worked as slaves to help fuel the German war machine. As their attorneys filed class actions lawsuits against German and Austrian industrial giants... including Daimler-Benz, Audi, BMW and... Volkswagen... the survivors yesterday recalled their ordeals – how they loaded cement on their backs and felt their freezing hands stick to sheets of aluminium. "In the factory, they stayed behind me with a stopwatch and if you didn't produce enough, you were sent to... be killed," said... a 74-year-old...

Lawyers for Nazi-era slave workers walked out of a US State Department meeting in Washington yesterday in protest against a bid by German industrial companies to pre-empt their talks... German companies could be shielded from future claims in return for paying compensation to the slave labourers. About 600,000 people may be eligible to collect from the German fund, thought to be worth \$US1.7 billion... a sum... claimants' lawyers said was inadequate... The exact size of the outstanding claims is unknown, but insurance industry analysts say it could be... \$4 billion.

...A Ford Motor Company subsidiary in Nazi Germany used slave labour extensively during... W[W2] to produce thousands of vehicles for the German Army, says a U[S] magazine. By 1943, half of Ford Werke's workforce was foreign captives, including French, Russians, Ukrainians and Belgians, *The Nation* magazine reported. In August 1944, 15 prisoners were brought from... the infamous death camp... Buchenwald... The revelations come after Germany and the US agreed last month to set up a \$US5.1 billion... compensation fund for people the Nazis forced to work... Ford has refused to take part in the settlement talks. Its director of global operations... said: "Because Ford did not do business in Germany during the war – our Cologne plant was confiscated by the Nazi Government – it would be inappropriate for Ford to participate in such a fund."

...Historians and lawyers researching lawsuits for former prisoners of war have found evidence that major U[S] car manufacturers collaborated with the Nazis... "There are many indications that there were surreptitious contacts taking place" between the car makers and their German affiliates even during the war... said... [a] Washington lawyer... who is involved in a class-action suit against... Ford Motor Company... [S]imilar legal action could be taken against General Motors... [A] book scheduled for publication next year will accuse... General Motors... of playing a key role in... Hitler's invasions of Poland and the Soviet Union... "General Motors was far more important to the Nazi war machine than Switzerland," [the book's] author... told the *Washington Post*... [The] Nazi armaments chief... had told him in 1977 that Hitler "would never have considered invading Poland" without synthetic-fuel technology provided by General Motors... Both General Motors and Ford... have vigorously denied that they assisted the Nazi war machine or that they significantly profited from the use of forced labour[, and]... insist they bear little or no responsibility for the operations of their German subsidiaries, which controlled 70[%] of the German car market at the outbreak of war in 1939...

Almost two years ago, the Ford Motor Company revved up its publicity machine and sponsored an uninterrupted broadcast of *Shindler's List* on one of America's television networks. There would be no ads to cheapen... [the] epic, Ford proclaimed, explaining that the Holocaust was simply too sacred a subject to be demeaned by bubbly plugs for soap, sedans and soda pop. The decision drew the sort of publicity that money cannot buy as editorialists and TV writers hailed the car-maker for selfless public service. In the office of [a] New York lawyer... however, the deluge of superlatives landed with... the echo of a guilty conscience... [The lawyer was] presiding over a growing mound of recently unearthed documents that chronicle the dark history of both Ford and General Motor's complicity in the rise of Hitler... Nor was [the lawyer] alone in noticing the irony. According to [the US] author... who has spent almost 20 years working on a corporate history of GM, Hitler might never have pursued his expansive ambitions without the active assistance of the US auto industry. As with Ford... GM's top executives not only knew about Hitler's plans, they also preferred not to notice that their production lines were [operated] by slave labourers and the inmates of concentration camps. But... it is Ford's hidden past that has been dragged into the open... "...Ford... has always maintained that it had no choice but to go along with the Nazis, that it was powerless to resist, that it was just following orders. Well, all of that is a lie and we... can prove it. And we can also prove that Ford profited from slave labour directly and indirectly." ...A notorious and virulent anti-Semite, Henry Ford seldom missed an opportunity to revile Jews for all manner of improbable crimes against Christian humanity. In the 1920s [Ford] put up the money to publish and distribute *The International Jew, A Worldwide Problem*. This was a hate-filled omnibus, which Ford for a time distributed through his dealers... "Ford was the most prominent [US] anti-Semite of his generation. By saying that, I'm not telling you anything you couldn't find in any library,"... Less well known... were... Ford's close personal ties to Hitler, who not only hailed the master of mass production as "my greatest hero and inspiration" but also kept a signed photo of the auto magnate above his desk. In 1938, months before [his invasion of] Czechoslovakia, Hitler awarded Ford the Nazis' highest civilian decoration. It is small wonder the Fuehrer was so kindly disposed towards the... industrialist: [Henry]... provided... considerable assistance... in slowing White House efforts to prepare America and its beleaguered allies for the looming war with Germany. In the late 1930s... Ford consistently resisted pressure from President Franklin Roosevelt to convert some of his US factories to weapons production. Yet at the same time [Ford] was instructing his German subsidiary to put its plant at the complete disposal of [the person] who orchestrated Hitler's rearmament drive. In 1940, with the Battle of Britain looming and London being pounded by the Luftwaffe, Ford countermanded at the last moment a plan drafted by his subordinates and the White House to produce Merlin engines for RAF Spitfires... The evidence paints a very different picture from the one presented by wartime propaganda. In those days, Ford liked to point to the stream of bombers pouring off the production line at its Willow Run aircraft factory, then the largest and most efficient... in the world. If you were to judge solely by the morale-boosting posters in its factories' washrooms, Ford was nothing less than another gleaming weapon in... America's "arsenal of democracy." What nobody but a handful of Ford

executives could have known was that in June 1943, the Nazi manager of Ford's Cologne operation... made a secret flight to Portugal for a clandestine meeting with Ford managers. A... year earlier... the US Treasury Department had grilled Ford for illegal contracts with its subsidiary in occupied France. The supposition[was] extensively probed but never brought to court... Then there were the more tangible benefits. Until America declared war, Ford was an active participant in an agreement... that supplied Germany with rubber, industrial chemicals and the technology to produce synthetic fuels... [T]hose items were available from other sources, [but]Ford's assistance made it that much easier to circumvent a variety of embargoes and import restrictions. For Ford, the rewards continued after the war... "When the war was over and the allies rolled through Europe, Ford found... its plants had been extended... to accommodate Nazi war production," the lawyer said... "Wait, it gets better. Ford also obtained [\$]millions... in damages from the US Government after the war as compensation for the damage inflicted by bombing raids..."

...A N[Z]er has been compensated for being used as... W[W2] slave labour by German car manufacturer Volkswagon. The N[Z]er, whose identity is not known, was among 219 people compensated from a \$23.4 million fund that Volkswagon set up... The company estimated that the Nazis forced 17,000 people to work in its factories from 1941 until the end of the war... [Incidentally, t]he story of a poet whose grave is in west Auckland features in the next television series of *Epitaph*... As the toast of Munich society during the early 1900s, the wealthy Jewish writer... Karl Wolfskehl... was one of many young poets in Secret Germany, a society following the teachings of aristocratic mystic Stefan George. Wolfskehl fled Germany when Hitler gained control in 1933 and, after a brief time in Italy, emigrated to N[Z] with his young lover... The couple mixed with many NZ literary greats... before his death in 1948. Friends planted a cypress tree at his Waikumete grave as a reminder of his homeland and inscribed the words *Exul Poeta* (Poet in Exile) on his stone. Researchers later drew links between Wolfskehl and German brothers Claus and Berthold Stauffenberg who tried to kill Hitler in 1944. The brothers planted a bomb that injured the dictator and were executed after the botched assassination attempt. Many scholars now believe the pair, who were both members of Secret Germany, were inspired by a Wolfskehl poem written during the 1930s.

...NEO-Nazi vandals have desecrated Jewish graves with obscene graffiti. Headstones have even been daubed with swastikas. The vandalism – in west Auckland's Waikumete Cemetery, where survivors of the Holocaust are buried... [and a] memorial to the victims [is located]... – has appalled... a... 73[-year-old former]... slave labourer in Auschwitz concentration camp... His ordeal – including being a Nazi medical research guinea pig – was in last week's *Sunday News*... ■ ...The very public demolition of [a]historian... by a British judge[last week] was long overdue. The judgment was an obvious outcome of [the historian]'s weird rejection of proven history on the Nazi holocaust, his often stated belief that Hitler was innocent of the ultimate solution which took millions to concentration camp gas chambers. [The historian] and I have clashed several times on his outrageous and insupportable theories – first during my time on Radio Pacific and later in print in 1993. Then, angry reaction in particular from the Jewish community forced him to abandon a lecture tour here. [The historian] was – and no doubt still is – totally unrepentant.

...[a labourer] had a list of every... Jewish synagogue in N[Z]... a machine gun and a manual on how to build a bazooka... The Foxton labourer... was making explosives when police and customs raided his home. Now... [the labourer] sits behind bars... [after being] jailed... last month... for three years... But the 46-year-old... may never have been caught if it wasn't for the vigilance of customs staff. Mail centre officers noticed a stream of... survivalist magazines heading for [the labourer]. They warned police. "We don't know what sort of sinister activities [the labourer] was planning," said... [a] NZ Custom Service's manager... "But there was so much material on terrorist activity and assassination that alarm bells rang."

...The rasp of automatic rifle fire ripped out of nowhere at the children playing in the North Valley Jewish community centre, Los Angeles, wounding five... On giving himself up to the FBI... the... neo-Nazi... told agents... that his shootings... were "a wakeup call to America to kill Jews." ...Two weeks earlier, arsonists torched three synagogues around Sacramento... leaving behind leaflets that blamed Jews for the war in Kosovo. The reason for the stepped-up violence, experts suggest, is an old one: members of hate groups blame Jews for all that is wrong in their lives.

anti-Semitism [is a]late 19th-century term describing hostility towards Jews and/or Judaism... The Graeco-Roman period produced some anti-Jewish literature and activity, but only with Christianity did a consistent anti-Judaism appear. This originates in the New Testament, which subtly transfers the blame for Jesus's death from politically-motivated Roman and Jewish rulers to the Jews en masse as a specifically religious grouping (eg 1 Thessalonians 2.14 – 16). As the Church became Gentile and ignorant of Judaism, this trait intensified in... Medieval times. Because they had murdered Jesus, Jews were thought to have forfeited the covenant; they were likened to Esau... and to Cain... In art Jews were portrayed as ruthless, godless, and the embodiment of evil; in folklore they engaged in ritual murder of Christians, desecration of the Eucharistic Host, and plots to overthrow Christendom. Further, their commercial and money-lending activities encouraged comparison with Judas who betrayed Jesus for silver. At the Reformation, Luther hoped the Jews would accept his reading of the Hebrew Scriptures. When they did not, he was enraged and in 1542 published a tract called... 'On the Jews and their Lies'... calling for synagogues to be burned and Jewish worship prohibited. Even after the Enlightenment prejudice remained embedded in Western culture and fuelled modern anti-Semitism. In this the focus shifted from the religious to the racial, so that Jews were considered a social menace responsible for society's ills. This culminated in the Nazis' Final Solution to the so-called *Judenfrage* ('Jewish problem')... From the inception of the Nazi regime in 1933 Jews were deprived of civil rights, persecuted, physically attacked, imprisoned, and murdered. With the gradual conquest of Europe by Germany, the death toll increased... By the end of the war in 1945, more than six million Jews had been murdered out of a total Jewish population of eight million in those countries occupied by the Nazis. Of these the largest number, three million, were from Poland. Other minorities (gypsies, various religious sects, homosexuals) were also subject to Nazi atrocities, but the major genocide was against the Jewish people... Since [1945] there have been important changes. Jews themselves have gained political power in order to prevent a repetition of the Nazi holocaust, while many Christians have acknowledged their... role in that tragedy.

European Jews were traditionally the subject of persecution by the Christian majority, partly as a result of religious prejudice but also because of jealousy of Jewish commercial success... In medieval England, Jews were particularly familiar as money-lenders, their activities being publicly regulated for them by the Crown... (In private, Christians also practised money-lending, though forbidden to do so by Canon Law.) Thus the name of Jew came to be associated in the popular mind with usury and any extortionate practices that might be supposed to accompany it, and gained an offensive sense in some contexts... ['In late medieval times Jews were excluded from many lands, notably England, 1290; France, 1306; Spain, 1492; and Portugal, 1497.' However,] the Jewish community[itself] tended to maintain a separate and highly distinct identity.

[The *Sephardim* were descendants] of Jews who lived in Spain and Portugal before 1492... Subsequently they migrated to Northern Europe and the Americas, where during the 16th and 17th centuries they kept distinct from other Jews (especially those from Central Europe), considering themselves innately and culturally superior.

...middle-class [Pakehas] are bewildered by all this belligerency... and... impatience of modern Maori leadership[, muttering]... darkly about "truculence" and "arrogance". Little do they realise that the present posture may well be a consequence of early missionary teaching. The Old Testament, with its strong prophetic and tribal emphasis, had an instant appeal to Maori who saw themselves as the descendants of the Biblical Israelites and thus God's chosen people. They were not alone in this belief. As early as 1819, Samuel Marsden [– who 'held the first Christian religious service in NZ on Christmas Day, 1814' – was writing of being]increasingly inclined to identify Maori with one of the lost tribes of Israel...

To be God's chosen people brought immediate solace to a people who were deprived and depressed. They could accept their present fate as that of God's biblical "Suffering Servant" and look forward to all that was to come... The success of the Mormons among Maori in the '50s was partly due to their belief that a dark-skinned tribe of "labanites" would suffer this "curse" until they, by their own moral regeneration, became "exceeding fair and delightsome" [(although 'Mormon's renewed their ban on dark-skinned priests in 1970')...] The development and growth of Rastafarianism [amongst Maoris] is an embellishment of the same theme: The present "Babylonian captivity" will be followed by "A return to Ethiopia".

Ethiopia ("burnt face") was the name given by the Greeks to the people of the southernmost part of the known world. Homer divided the region into eastern and western Ethiopia... Ethiopia was the biblical Cush, or at least part of it... [Its earliest recorded civilisation, known to the ancient Egyptians as Punt, dates from the 2nd millennium BC. In ancient times Ethiopians were often confused with Indians.] According to tradition, Ethiopia's former rulers were descended from Menilek (Menelik) I, a son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (Saba), thus giving rise to the imperial title "Lion of Judah." ...Jewish and Phoenician travellers seem to have visited Ethiopia...

Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian... - Numbers 12:1

In 1990... Jews comprised 2.4% of the U[S] population... The Jewish... population has consistently dropped from the early decades of the century when they formed over 5%. The main reasons for this decline are the rise in the immigration of non-Jews and growing intermarriage with gentiles.

At 60 [the guy is] in good shape; at 27... [the gal is in better shape – although the guy muses that the gal] was "this kid eating out of garbage pails on the streets of Korea"... His father is 96, his mother 93... Mother, boldly lipsticked and red-frizzed, says: "I... don't think it's right to go out with an Asian girl. That's why the Jews will some day be extinct." [The Asian girl], standing right there, laughs. "This is the lunch from hell," says [the son].

Israel was branded a "racist apartheid" state yesterday by thousands of non-governmental organisations meeting in South Africa... The forum accused the Jewish state of "systematic perpetration of racist crimes including... acts of genocide and ethnic cleansing". It called Israel "a... state in which... apartheid as a crime against humanity has been characterised by separation and segregation... and inhumane acts". The declaration, adopted by 3000 NGOs in 44 regional and interest-based caucuses, shocked Jewish groups. Jewish delegates walked out... The Israeli Government delegation to the... parallel U[N] World Conference Against Racism attended by 153 Governments in the Indian Ocean port city[of Durban]... blasted the... Forum's... language as an incitement to hatred of Jews... Resolutions at NGO forums have no binding authority, but they increasingly influence the final declarations adopted at the UN governmental meetings they precede... The harsh anti-Israeli language in the NGO Forum's final declaration injected new Middle East tensions into the... UN conference... The U[S], Canada and Israel sent only junior level delegations to the UN racism conference, attended by about 6000 delegates, in protest at what they see as anti-Israeli bias. Washington had already warned it might withdraw before the conference closes... unless offending language is removed from draft texts... [T]he father of South Africa's multi-racial democracy, made an impassioned call for delegates to put aside differences and act to rid the world of... an "ailment of the mind and the soul".

[...] We march according to eternal laws We are on the way to a distant future We don't just want to fight better than past generations We want to produce the future generations to ensure the eternal life of the German people.[...] It's]... 1933. The National Socialists come to power and the German people take the first steps down a new road. They will be asked to put their trust in a set of ideas based on race, military strength and authoritarian government... State radio put across one idea above all else. "...the greatness of the German people. Propaganda gave people a big boost in confidence for the first time." ...Millions of ordinary Germans allow themselves to be persuaded that they are a special people with a special destiny... "For a long time we believed everything that came over the radio. Young people were most excited by the propaganda. Over 90% of us were behind everything that went on." ...The Nazis created a historical myth to support their ideas. Pure-bred Germans were naturally superior because they were the descendants of noble medieval knights from a less degenerate age... Germans were told their... Aryan... ancestors had been a uniquely advanced... cultured race... "I personally was in the SS... [We were told that] we shall be the future aristocratic spinebone of the German nation. Well I thought, wonderful, no? I felt myself very much flattered by being chosen for this..." The SS had begun as Hitler's bodyguard. Now it had become the spearhead in the drive to confirm the German people as the Master Race.

The Master Race is a brilliant idea. I only wish we'd thought of it first.

There is nothing wrong with wanting to create a *Master Race* or superior society if, unlike the Jews and Nazis, your plans include everyone!

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither [guy nor gal]: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. - Galatians 3:28

And [Peter] said unto them, Ye know how... it is an unlawful thing for a... Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; [well,] God hath shewed me that I should not call any [perso]n common or unclean. - The Acts 10:28

And I saw an... angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people... - Revelation 14:6

The above verse gives the impression that the New Testament *Revelation of St John the Divine* – 'written in a time of persecution (A.D. c.95) it foretells future glory through a series of visions and dreams' – is anti-racist, but it can also be linked to racist beliefs:

And in the midst of the seven candlesticks... [stood] the Son... His head and his hairs were white... as snow... and they... which have not defiled their garments... shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy... And I saw... a white horse: and [the one] that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and [they] went forth... to conquer... AND I saw an angel come down from heaven... [who] laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and set a seal upon him, that [Satan] should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that [Satan] must be loosed a little season.

Hitler had promised to build a Third Reich, successor to the Holy and Hohenzollern empires, which would last a thousand years.

Third Reich [was the] official Nazi designation for the regime in Germany... from January 1933 to May 1945, as the presumed successor of the medieval and early modern Holy Roman Empire... (the First Reich)[– which, 'in true apocalyptic style lasted about 1,000 years' ('in 1806, to forestall

Napoleon's assimilation of the Holy Roman Empire – established by Charlemagne, 800 – into the empire of the French, Francis II resigned as Holy Roman emperor and the empire was dissolved') –] and the German Empire from 1871 to 1918 (the Second Reich).

Bestes farouches de faim fleuves tranner, Plus part du champ encontre Hister sera. En caige de fer le grand fera treisner, Quand rien enfant de German observera... [says part of the second] Nostradamus... quatrain... There can be little doubt that Hitler is implied; who else could be so well described by the last line, the German who observed no law? ...Commentators before 1930 understood the Hister to be the river Danube, from its Latin name Ister. But Hitler recognized himself in these quatrains by the mid 1930s and Goebbels made great propaganda out of them in the pre-war party years. Evidence for this is found in many sources, chiefly... [the] book 'Nostradamus and the Nazis.' ...if Hitler's attention had not been drawn to the Prophecies and the connection between Poland and Britain, would [Hitler – who, in his early life, 'showed a readiness to live in a world of fantasy' – have] gone to war...? ...It is essential for thinking [people] to believe in free will, to believe that [their] future can be changed by thought and action. Prophecy denies this and declares that all futures are immutable and fixed, that nothing [a person] strives towards is relevant, as it is already preordained by whatever governs his future, be it God or Destiny. I believe that [hu]mankind must have free will; but also I must admit the disturbing fact that although I can dismiss ninety-five per cent of Nostradamus' predictions as historical coincidence, there remain a few quatrains which are hard to reconcile with this. What about the... verses giving the actual month and year of any occurrence, such as that which describes the obscure treaty between the Persians and the Turks in October 1727...? I find this type of quatrain difficult to explain away completely... In order to avoid being prosecuted as a magician, Nostradamus writes... [about deliberately confusing] the time sequence of the Prophecies so that their secrets would not be revealed to the non-initiate[(note that someone else writes: 'In order to afford a wide margin of free activity to future humans, prophecies ought to be stated in somewhat abstract terms'). His]... verses are written in a crabbed, obscure style, with a polygot vocabulary of French, Provençal, Italian, Greek and Latin... This... convinces me that Nostradamus' inspiration was certainly partly visual and [his quatrains try to] describe... in his limited vocabulary the puzzling glimpses of a future... Nostradamus... didn't always understand. - The Prophecies of Nostradamus

It is obvious that many prophecies are of such a nature... that, if they were clearly understood previous to the event, they would prevent their own fulfillment, and so cease to have been prophecies. What they foretold would never have occurred. - Oracles of Nostradamus

WITH less than three years before the apocalypse allegedly predicted by... Nostradamus takes place, interest in the doomsday prophet has skyrocketed... [N]ot even the 16th century astrologist and doctor could have foreseen that his prophecies would cause goosebumps through thousands of websites. Nor could [Nostradamus] have envisaged a more sinister plot would result from his... scrawls, which have been interpreted as predicting... the rise of Hitler and President Kennedy's assassination. In 1989 a bearded [Jap] in a long white tunic made the pilgrimage to see[a] Nostradamus expert... at Lyon's municipal library in frantic search of information on the spiritual soothsayer... [Later this pilgrim] would become famous as the leader of the Japanese sect Aum, which [was responsible for the] gas attacks on Tokyo's metro in March 1995. [The pilgrim] was convinced that a number of Nostradamus' prophecies directly concerned him... Nostradamus was most popular in times of crisis, war and revolution[, but has]... never been so popular as now... The number of books published on the philosopher... has shot from seven a year in the post-[WW2] years to about 100 a year and more than 800 websites today... According to... [the] author of *Nostradamus: Historian and Prophet*... Nostradamus should not just be recognised for his clairvoyance. [Nostradamus] also discovered sterilisation methods four centuries before Louis Pasteur... [while treating] victims of the plague in the south of France. The medical graduate of Montpellier's university, later to be appointed King Charles IX's physician, would bury the infected corpses under quicklime, burn their clothes and walk the streets with essence of beech. But there is no agreed authoritative interpretation of [his] verses... They are so vague they can be made to mean almost anything by wishful thinkers or religious sects. And despite the... July 1999... doomsday scenario, his predictions go on for nearly 1800 years after that date.

...TWO-and-a-half years after a poison gas attack on a Tokyo subway... the religious cult leader charged with carrying it out is still active and rebuilding its following. Authorities say that of the 427... members arrested after the gas attack, 138 have rejoined... many after serving prison terms... At least 1000 people, and perhaps twice as many... belong to Aum Supreme Truth and continue their devotion to[its] self-proclaimed guru... who is in jail and on trial for mass murder... The guru, who claims to be Jesus Christ, is also charged with a series of other gas attacks and murders police say constitute Japan's worst crime spree... More than 40 cult members are missing, and many are presumed to have been killed in cult rituals... [By the way, floating] a company to raise... \$11.35m... to fulfil a religious prophecy is fairly unusual – but that's exactly what gemstone explorer Diamond Rose hopes after listing on the A[US]n Stock Exchange last week. Diamond Rose[']s executive director... said her motivation for establishing the company was to find the 12 gemstones of the hoshen (breastplate), worn by the High Priest in the Temple of Jerusalem 3000 years ago, as described in the Bible... [T]he idea to find the gemstones was based on prophecies from the late New York Rabbi Schneerson... [who told the executive director]'s brother, a decade ago that... the mining magnate... would find gold in Western A[US] and also that the hoshen stones were in that country... Completion of the hoshen is said to signify the beginning of the Messianic era, according to the Talmud.

...a book... published... on Thursday claim[s] that the *Old Testament* contains a secret code that 3000 years ago foretold the Holocaust and the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin. The book says the code, found... by an Israeli computer expert, also foretold many other of history's major events and warns of an atomic war that could bring the end of the world in 2000... Its author... took all the words in the *Torah* and eliminated the spaces between them, turning them into one continuous strand, 304,805 letters long. This is the way the sages say Moses received the Bible from God. Using a computer, [the author] then searched the strand of names and phrases using a skip code that adds every fourth or 12th or 50th letter to form a word. [The author] said... several experts... verified... [that] the code brought together interlocking information – for example with the word Hitler came the word Nazi, with Kennedy came Dallas... [– and] suggests that the code might be the "secret book" promised in *Daniel* and *Revelation*... "...You know, Isaac Newton... tried to find the code in the *Bible*, and... considered it more important than his theory of the universe." ...Trumpeted with full page adverts in the big US newspapers, *The Bible Code* has been snapped up in Hollywood by Warner Brothers, which sees it as a perfect vehicle for those who like their *Raiders of the Lost Ark* flavoured with large doses of Nostradamus-style predictions. - 1997

The many eager active interpreters of the Nostradamus works are... worth considerable study by a student of abnormal psychology. Happily bypassing any and all arguments against their notions, they freely move in and out of their looking-glass world with shining eyes and determined steps. Their fixation is amusing to some and distressing to others, but it is an example of the same kind of obsession that often obstructs the pursuit of valuable knowledge and wastes developing minds that might have been the Curies and Einsteins of a generation... Belief in astrology and other forms of divination, which waxed and waned over the ages, became very strong again in the 16th c... The church dismissed and condemned such practices because they brought into question the doctrine of free will and implied a predestined future for everyone that might not be changed, even by prayer. Without free will, sin is impossible. Without sin and the prescribed penalties, the need for the church becomes less clear and less persuasive... Though in France the Inquisition never attained the ferocity it displayed in neighbouring Spain... Michel de Nostredame had excellent reasons for fearing the wrath of the Inquisition... [– facing] disgrace, imprisonment and loss of property if convicted of heresy... Furthermore, it was accepted that all thoughts, actions and abilities came either from God or from Satan. The art of living as a Christian was the art of sorting out which was which, a process that required ecclesiastic advice. [Nostradamus was lucky that most Christian authorities thought a] former Jew was

hardly likely to have God-granted powers... Though many printed copies of his works exist, beginning with a treatise on cosmetics in 1552... – ...Nostradamus... advised on cosmetics, beauty aids and deodorants for Renaissance [gals], who as a rule bathed only twice a year and wore the same underclothes for months on end... – ...there are no known written manuscript copies of any of his works. The very first editions of his prophetic writings are lost and we must depend upon the accuracy and integrity of those who transcribed them. Numerous known forgeries have been published, some to prove points not originally intended by the seer and others merely to take financial advantage of a public hungry for anything in any form bearing the Nostradamus name. Typographical errors, transpositions, changed italicization, punctuation and capitalization, altered spellings and “improvement” on his writings have bastardized his works to the point where proper scholarship is difficult... [A] complete edition said to have been produced at Lyons in 1558 – a few months before Henry[II]’s demise – probably did exist, but owing to the many bad guesses made by Nostradamus (in Centuries Eight through Ten) about his sovereign, all copies might have been destroyed... We need go no further than [his] early local activities at home in Salon to see just how bad a prognosticator... Nostradamus... was. Unfortunately for his reputation, we have a detailed account of a horoscope... for a High Justice in Salon... and the statement of that [perso]n’s son that shows *not one* correct astrological prediction by Nostradamus. [Indeed, Nostradamus] was strikingly wrong in every respect, especially in missing the subject’s death date by twenty-one years... [Despite the lack of] success of his initial... [efforts], Nostradamus... decided... to... [produce related] books. Since... Nostradamus... was already trained in astrology – it was a required subject at Montpellier – and [Nostradamus] claimed descent from the Jewish tribe Issachar, a family that was said to have “understanding of the times,” the idea of an almanac was obvious. An almanac is a periodical calendar of predicted events, combining such astronomical facts as moon phases with astrological speculations. In 1550, his expectations of success were more than met when the first of his yearly almanacs was published. In 1555, he printed the first, short edition of his book of prophecy, the *Centuries*, and with that publication, his lasting fame was more than assured... At almost the same time when Nostradamus was penning his first almanac, a prominent Italian scholar named Francesco Guicciardini was observing: How happy are the astrologers! who are believed if they tell one truth to a hundred lies, while other people lose all credit if they tell one lie to a hundred truths... *Rule Number 1: Make lots of predictions, and hope that some come true. If they do, point to them with pride. Ignore the others.* Over a four-year period, researchers examined predictions offered by major psychics working for the *National Enquirer*, the supermarket tabloid. There were 364 predictions, of which a total of *four* were correct. This means that the psychics – all of them top-rated professionals – were 98.9[%] wrong. They are still in business, except for one who died. Judging from his record, death was probably unexpected... [Nostradamus] set up for a gift that [Nostradamus] did not possess, and soon found the imposture was far more lucrative than the dull routine of medical practice, as in those times the superstition of the public was unlimited... In the prose section of the *Centuries*, Nostradamus wrote very clearly and in excellent French, unlike the crabbed, mystical words and construction of the quatrains. *Not one* of the many predictions contained in the prose was correct, and they were all made for dates that are now past, except the end of the world, which is happily placed in the year 3797, according to some, and in 1999 by others... [V]arious interpreters – six of the major figures in the field – believe they have each solved one of the Nostradamus puzzles, and they all have quite different answers. At best, only one can possibly be right... Some interpretations of the Nostradamus material are so very obvious and applicable that they cannot be denied; some are so far-fetched and convoluted that no reasonable person can accept them. I must declare frankly that I have no belief in the popularly held notion that Nostradamus or anyone else ever had or now has any supernatural prophetic powers. My rather considerable professional experience and my common sense dictate against such a belief, but I will always yield to facts and probabilities that oppose my admitted yet understandable prejudice when those facts are properly derived and set forth... In spite of great care exercised by cautious researchers, historical misconceptions become established and are difficult to correct... But... the Believers prefer to accept what is given them, rather than looking to original sources. - The Mask of Nostradamus

A source of endless dispute... [in Christian] theology, the doctrine... of... *predestination*... has been interpreted in many ways. It was first fully articulated by Augustine during his controversy with the Pelagians, who upheld the doctrine of free will. The Protestant Reformers Luther and Calvin defended the doctrine, though in varying degrees. Jacobus Arminius rejected the Calvinist view of predestination, and argued that the divine sovereignty was compatible with human free will... [because] “predestination is open only to believers.”

[According to the] prominent and very influential Christian writer, Origen... the power of the human will is not rendered useless because of God’s foreknowledge of the acts that will be ours in the future... One can only wonder if Origen was aware of a rather earlier writer, Confucius... who declared that Heaven sends down its good or evil symbols, and wise [people] act accordingly.

Following the Book of Genesis 1.26-8, Jewish tradition views humans as formed in the image of God, giving them a special dignity within the created order. As such humankind has dominion over the earth but with it the responsibility to act as a faithful servant. However, such accountability implies free will, and Judaism maintains that people are free... to trust God or reject him[, and]... to act justly or wickedly... Nonetheless... Judaism... also affirms that God guides the overall destiny of humankind towards an ultimate good.

...[contrary to the beliefs of] a priest... traditional morality is... neither the invention of nor a monopoly of the West; its standards have been set for thousands of years among all societies which have any claim to be civilised... Its main directions are... to have customs and... laws that regulate social relations, and so make human conduct predictable rather than merely self-willed... Until modern times, no serious thinker doubted that such judgments of value were rational... expressions of objective truth; that to live by them was to be in accord with the way the universe really worked. So thought Plato... and Confucius... Unless there is some objective standard overarching us all, we have no grounds for disapproval when Catholics and Protestants blow each other up in Ireland, or when Hutus and Tutsis massacre each other... they are after all, just acting out the values they have created. For them, as for [that priest], “good” means nothing more than “what we have been conditioned to like”... Ideas about “modern” moralities are no more than confused thinking... No human can invent a new value, any more than it can invent a new primary colour... - 1996

British philosopher Sir Isaiah Berlin, one of the century’s greatest thinkers... has died aged 88... [Hi]s main contribution to philosophy was the idea of “value pluralism,” the idea that human beings are so different that there can be no one overall set of values... “[Berlin wa]s not a political thinker so much as a moralist who insists on the irreconcilability of goods such as liberty or mercy – you can only have one at the expense of the other. Every time you choose you lose,” [his] biographer... said... Berlin, who spent most of his academic career at Oxford, inherited his father’s love of Russian literature, which inspired him to produce one of his most famous works – *The Hedgehog and the Fox*. In the essay, devoted to... Tolstoy, Berlin put forward the idea that there were two kinds of thinkers. “There exists a great chasm between those, on one side, who relate everything to a single central vision... and, on the other side, those who pursue many ends, often unrelated and even contradictory... The first kind of intellectual belongs to the hedgehogs, the second to the foxes.” ...Berlin... decided to give up philosophy after... [WW2] in favour of political thought. “Philosophy can only be done by very clever people. It’s rather like mathematics. To be a second-rate mathematician is no good... In the end, I... didn’t think that I’d ever be good enough... because I didn’t lie in bed awake at night thinking of solutions to agonising philosophical problems.”

...[I']ve been studying philosophy for many years and have yet to find an acceptable definition of right and wrong actions. What is within... and... outside... the law... is straightforward enough... But to determine whether a particular action is definitively right or wrong is way too hard... - 1997

The free will *versus* determinism argument has been with us for a good many thousands of years. Basically it is not a soluble one inasmuch that, if our actions are predetermined then we will either believe or not believe this according to our particular determinism; similarly, if we have free will we can believe it or not according to how we use that freedom... There is really no good proof one way or the other: all one can say is that, the greater the belief in freedom, the greater the progress of a civilisation at the time that the belief is strongest.

The general belief that all events are caused, or the result of determining conditions, is called the *Thesis of Determinism*... Most of us believe that events which occur in this world are not, in general, random or spontaneous happenings, but... the result of causal processes... [I]f a car won't start, if a bush fire occurs, if someone is in pain, then there is something which causes each of these things to happen, even though in many cases we are ignorant of what these causes may be. Even many things which we ordinarily call *chance occurrences* are not thought to be uncaused... We... call the fall of [a] coin a chance occurrence, but we don't mean by this that nothing is responsible for bringing about how the coin actually falls... down heads rather than tails... so far as we know nothing prior to the toss favours one outcome rather than the other... Another common belief is that at least sometimes people freely choose to act as they do: we act of our own free will in a certain way. For example, at 11.00... I may decide to have a cup of coffee. I want a cup of coffee, but I could go without one, and under these conditions it seems reasonable to say that my choosing to have... coffee is a free choice. There was nothing which forced me to have [it]... This is in contrast to... a caffeine addict whose craving compelled her to imbibe coffee at 11.00. We can say that a free act is one which the agent has freely chosen to perform. A free choice... [is] one which, given exactly the same situation, could have been different (hence it is not determined by the situation in which it occurs)... This belief that at least some human actions are free, and are the result of free choices, is very important to our ideas about when we can hold someone morally responsible or accountable for their actions. The connections between moral responsibility/accountability and free choice are far from simple, but it seems reasonable to say that we do not hold someone morally responsible for doing something which could not have been avoided... We certainly often believe, and act as if we believe, that people's decisions and choices can be blamed on their nature and their background. What makes us the people we are, and makes us do the things we do, is our environment (past and present), and our bodily makeup. But if our heredity and our environment together determine what we are and what we do, how can this be reconciled with the belief that at least sometimes we act freely and can be held morally responsible for the things we do? ...I suggest that the idea of moral responsibility, based on some notion of 'free' choice or action is in fact not a coherent notion, and that we should accept the... position that human actions and choices are determined and that people are not free and hence not morally responsible for what they do... Being morally responsible is not the same as being moral or being (morally) good... It is sometimes suggested that if Determinism with respect to human choices is right, then we should give up any attempts to decide what we are going to do and simply sit back and 'let the wheels of causation roll on'... [T]his is put as the claim that Determinism is really Fatalism... Fatalism is taken to be the claim that everything that has happened or will happen in the world was determined by the way the world was in the beginning... In this sense the future is already written... [H]owever... if one takes Fatalism to involve the claim that human beings are powerless to affect the way things happen, then a Determinist is not committed to this view. A Determinist holds that human thoughts, beliefs, wants, intentions and decisions are part of the causal processes determining what happens in the world. They are caused certainly, but in... turn they are causes and have effects on the world. So a Determinist is certainly not committed to the idea that people should just sit back and allow things to happen. On the contrary, we should do what we can to bring about those things which are desirable and good and to prevent any disasters we can foresee. Admittedly this looks like a strange position: to hold on the one hand that what will happen can't be changed, but to also say that one should try and affect what happens in the world. Indeed, such a position would be irrational if we knew what was going to happen and were trying to change this. But we do not know, in general, what will happen. And our intentions and actions may be a necessary condition for bringing about certain things.

Things To Come... is... H.G. Wells' adaptation from his own novel... [*The Shape of Things to Come*] – a relentlessly bleak view of the future from his 1930s perspective. Critics described it as a "leviathan among films... a stupendous spectacle" and a chillingly accurate prophecy of the future. Wells predicted war in 1940, followed by plague, rebellion, a new class-based society and the first rocket ship to the moon.

In 1895 Wells wrote a sci-fi novel entitled *The Time Machine*. Stories about time machines usually highlight the fact that time travellers have to be careful not to alter past events – because doing so could prevent future events, including their own birth. Although the past can't be altered – unless it really does become possible to travel back in time ('according to Einstein, the only way to go back in time is to exceed the speed of light') – it is theoretically possible to alter the future: because once a prediction has been made, someone just needs to do what was stated in order to make it come true – or try to prevent it!

A [gal] told British Rail [it']d had a vision of a fatal train crash involving... train... number: 47 216. Two years later, an accident of the kind... predicted occurred, all the details matching except one. The engine's number was 47 299. Then a keen train spotter noticed that 47 299 was not the engine's original number. It had been renumbered – from 47 216... Rail authorities had tried, and failed, to ward off Fate by changing the number.

...[A] LOGICIAN... wrote, "There can be no doubt that, however unlikely an event, if we... try for long enough, we will meet with such an event..."

...in 1967... a book *The Year 2000*... emphasised the view that 'economic trends [i.e., growth] will proceed more or less smoothly through the next thirty years and beyond', although this book is one of the rare examples which does also look at the possibility of thermonuclear war. The world of the year 2000 portrayed in the absence of such disaster, however, is one in which... the basic world situation is like that [of 1967], only bigger (and by implication better)... – everyone building in the image of the U[S] of the mid-1960s. More hamburgers... fast cars... neon lights... wealth... and so on. To be fair, the book also looks at... the... implications... of technological change, including increased nuclear proliferation, but by and large it leaves the unsuspecting reader with a feeling not only that such a future is possible, but that it is pretty well inevitable. Several other futurologists find this sticks in the throat, and the view has been widely expressed that *The Year 2000* was really a deliberate attempt to influence public opinion and steer the world towards this possible future... [T]here is no doubt that... forecasting... has been taken seriously and has influenced policy making by both government and big business in the US. The dangers are obvious – by presenting any one view as 'the future' we may make it inevitable, since we all begin to act in the way laid down by the blueprint... The... worst aspect of doomsday scenarios is that by their apparent inevitability they encourage a *laissez-faire* attitude in which people live it up while they can, for tomorrow may never come. - Future Worlds

Plato and Aristotle... could not imagine, much less predict, the changes in our understanding... that came to pass in the centuries that lay ahead. If some seer had prophesied the occurrence of these changes and the consequent improvement in human affairs and institutions, they would have dismissed him as a dreamer. They would have been quite right to do so in terms of their very limited vision of the possible. What I have just said about Plato and Aristotle in antiquity applies in the same way and for the same reason to the wisest of thinkers of the Middle Ages... None of them

could have imagined or would have predicted what has become actual for us in the twentieth century... The impossible is that which cannot be done and, therefore, should not be attempted... Nevertheless, the... dividing line between the possible and impossible is extremely difficult to determine. Drawing it correctly depends on our knowledge of past and present realities. The extent to which we know all relevant facts helps us to judge correctly what possibilities the future holds. The extent of such knowledge changes from time to time. Our judgment about the limits of the possible is consequently better than that of our ancestors. Must we not, therefore, concede that succeeding generations will be able to make even more accurate judgments about future possibilities? ...This being the case... present views of the possible may be as woefully inaccurate as that held by our ancestors... [and perhaps we ought] not impute to our successors... the still too limited vision of the possible that we hold today.

...from ancient times to the present, prophets claiming special powers have surprisingly predicted similar events. This strange and awesome ability to see what might come [– or to rehash previous visions –] has always fascinated and frightened [hu]mankind... In the real world a prophet can be the neighbour next door... From the very beginning [the Afro-American] showed signs of a gift that would come to dominate her life. [The Afro-American] reportedly was born with a thin membrane, or veil, over her face – a traditional African omen of psychic powers... Even as a child [the Afro-American] possessed a powerful gift. “I just knew people’s... hearts, and I didn’t like knowing it, because in a lot of ways it was hurting for me. You know, somebody says that we really like you, but then I would know inside that they didn’t.” As [the Afro-American matured, the gal] struggled with the constant attention [her abilities] received, yet family and friends pressured her to show off her rare talent... [The Afro-American says that by] her twelfth birthday... her psychic energies overwhelmed her physical body. “...[the Afro-American] used to fall into a sleep that would sometimes last almost a week, and her family didn’t know what was wrong with her.” ...[the Afro-American] endured numerous hospital stays as her family searched for the cause of her mysterious sleeping episodes. “I spent a lot of time in hospitals, a lot of time with specialists, had brain scans, all sorts of tests.” ...It took a doctor from the Caribbean to diagnose [her condition. The doctor] traced her trance-like states back to her African ancestry, where psychic children often undergo similar experiences... “...the people call them moon children...” As [the girl grew older, her] physical symptoms dissipated, but [the Afro-American] continued to battle the emotional shadow of knowing the future. Then one day [the Afro-American] received a vision of romance that would become bitter-sweet. “Before I met... [him], I was shown what... my... love-partner... looked like, and I was told that [this love-partner] would be the last... in my life. Well, I met him... at a party... I’ve never loved anybody like I loved this [person].” All lovers are spared knowing when fate will separate them; all except prophets... What [the Afro-American] saw was a wrenching vision... [of her lover’s murder. The Afro-American] struggled to block images of [her lover’s] death but... was compelled to continually experience the anguish of losing him forever. “I’d refuse to be still. If I kept moving then I wouldn’t have to hear or see anything.” [However, time] had run out. [Her lover’s] fate was sealed... Today [the Afro-American] seems at peace... [and claims] to use her psychic gifts to help others with personal matters. But [the Afro-American] also focuses on global concerns. [The Afro-American sees hu]mankind facing profoundly difficult problems. “It’s been a very Frankensteinish type of world that we as a people have created. By 1997-1998 there’s going to be a lot of turmoil, a lot of trauma, where people are going to become more violent in regards to their beliefs...” But [the Afro-American] also sees a future of hope and promise, both for [hu]mankind and the world. “...things are really going to turn around...” ...Some predictions appear inevitable, unstoppable, cast in stone; others are conditional and subject to change. Turn of the century Germany was a nation of peace and enlightenment. Wonders like the electric light and telephone offered a new age of promise... As was the custom of the day, the wealthy would entertain their guests with mediums... who could tell them about love, finance and adventure... It was during this tranquil time that a popular soothsayer... prophesied... [– like] Cassandra, the ancient Greek prophetess... [–] not the calm of the present but rather the ordeal of wars to come, and a time when civilisation as we know it might disappear... [The soothsayer, who] was perhaps the most famous German prophetess of that time... foresaw a war in which millions would die. When [WWI came about, the soothsayer’s] fame suddenly spread throughout Europe. One prediction had come true but there was another. A second war which would dwarf the first, and this time [the soothsayer described someone] who would set Europe on fire. “[The soothsayer warned about Hitler, saying that ‘this person] who would replace the... kaiser... will lash the whip’... [B]efore Hitler took power, people in Munich in the twenties used to note that [Hitler was ‘this guy] who used to run around with a bull-whip.’” ...[the soothsayer] also foresaw the future consequences of such... [a person when writing], “The iron crown will press... heavily on [the German people] for many years to come.” “Even to this day the Holocaust... and other war crimes still haunt the German people.” ...Of our near future [the soothsayer] wrote, “We will live in an age of ill-will, error and decay... A peculiar generation will exist on this Earth which does not carry an inner growth but only death for the whole race. Whatever the country in which they live, they are all united by an ancient law which provides that they wither and die.” “[The soothsayer] describes a kind of people that will be born among us which are almost like cannon-fodder for Armageddon... It’s somehow necessary these people... incarnate into our world and then fulfil their destiny... of self-destruction...” [The soothsayer also] describes the coming of an ecological disaster which will decimate humanity and leave only a handful to build the... new... world.” ...It’s believed in... [her final prediction the soothsayer wrote, “]When the sun will rise again... in golden glory a new generation will arise in the course of time and create a new [humankind.]” ...Scattered across the villages of Central America, a race of prophets has existed for over 2000 years. Their predictions[which] seem to have been strangely accurate[also see]... our generation... hurtling to what may be catastrophe. Reportedly, their calendar marks the precise day of our destruction... “On December 21st, which is the winter solstice, in the year 2012, the Maya have prophesied – in their books that go back to the 1st century BC – that there will be a... very large change. We will enter the Fifth Age.” The Fifth Age may mark the end of history. It’s the final cycle of a pattern the Mayas believe is repeated throughout the eons... “What happens in each of the Mayan creations and destructions of the world is that lots of the beings that belonged to the previous world survive. They go on living and they serve as a sign to the next people who come along of what happened to those who forgot the calendar.” The Mayan calendar is rooted in historical events... “Calendar priests would record the important events of their time on long books made of papyrus. That was the way they could then predict what would happen... in the future...” The Mayas practiced an ancient form of astrology using birthdates to guide their entire lives. “If you were born on a... day that said you were a doctor, then you were a doctor. If you were born on a day that said you were a thief, you were a thief.” ...According to legend... Mother Earth and her children sought revenge... for the harm [humanity had] inflicted on Mother Earth... Tools turned on their creators... “Everything the people had made... and... their domestic animals, rose up against them. Their dogs... [and] turkeys now talked to them and lectured them about what they’d been failing to do... and their houses caved in on them.” Mayans believe that... we too will suffer for mistreating nature. But instead of facing primitive tools, our enemy will be[modern] technology... “...Imagine all... those things you’ve got plugged [into] you house... deciding they don’t like you... [and trying to] attack...” ...“...the Old Testament, Book of Revelations, Nostradamus... the great pyramids[and the] Mayans... all seem to indicate that this particular cycle of evolution on Earth [is] coming to a finale...”

...this volume of the LIFE SCIENCE LIBRARY... recount[s] the evolution of the calendar, which began with a lunar device made by Sumerians 5,000 years ago to forecast the times for agricultural activities and religious ceremonies, right up to the proposed World Calendar, which seeks to establish rationally months and quarter-years of equal length, primarily for business usage... Unlike lower organisms, [a hu]man’s built-in rhythms do not keep... in time with the seasons, so [i]t... has been forced to anticipate changes in nature by keeping written tracks of time through calendars.

Quetzalcoatl... Plumed Serpent of the... Aztec civilization... traditionally known as the god of the morning and evening star, later as the... inventor of books and of the calendar, and as the symbol of death and resurrection... Legend said... [it']d return in another age, and when Montezuma, last king of the Aztecs, received news of the landing of Cortez and his [soldiers] in 1519, his first thought was that Quetzalcoatl had indeed returned.

...the Spaniards, reaching Mexico in the 16th century, found little evidence of Mayan culture and destroyed all remaining written records except four codices. Although the Mayan language is still spoken, the written pictographs of these codices and architectural remains have not yet been decoded, except for certain astronomical signs. These reveal use of a numerical system, including the concept of zero, superior to that of Europe before the 10th cent., and an intricate calendar, with a 365-day year, capable of designating any day in a period of 30,000 years.

They were steeped in the belief of a cyclic recurrence of everything and the Maya in particular were engrossed in specifications of the length of the cosmic period and of its sub-divisions. To illustrate the practical impact of the defeatist outlook generated by the idea of eternal recurrence, a reference to a well-documented detail from the last days of the Maya empire should be instructive. One Maya tribe, the Itza, was, due to its remote location in the Yucatan peninsula, still free of Spanish domination as late as 1618. Then two missionaries decided to convert the tribe, centered on the town of Tayasal on the Western shores of Lake Peten Itza. Canek, the ruler of the Itza, told the missionaries that the time of their surrender had not arrived yet. It would, however, inevitably come in eighty more years with the onset of the fateful age, Katun 8 Ahau. Having received this priceless information, the Spaniards waited patiently until March 1698, when Captain Martin de Ursua appeared with 100 [soldiers]... With hardly a shot fired, the hundred Spaniards overwhelmed 2000 Itza canoe[ists] and 5000 Itza footsoldiers. They fled in a panic generated not so much by the muskets of the Spanish as by the awareness that the wheels of eternal recurrence had just turned into the phase of total catastrophe. It was in their effort to determine the length of the various phases of the cosmic cycles or Great Year that the Maya practised most their finest scientific feat, the vigesimal system of counting... [T]he idea of the Great Year was the dominating feature of the world-view in all great ancient cultures... [T]he Ancients believed... that at the end of... the Great Year... everything would begin again, in a new cycle which was identical with the old... The Hindus of old had fully perceived that the eternal recurrence was a treadmill out of which there was no point trying to escape. This treadmill exercised such a stranglehold on Hindu thought that even the Buddhist program to escape it by achieving Nirvana could not effectively remove its mesmerizing perspective... [T]he decimal system and positional numbering, as developed by the Hindus, found its most prominent use in giving in ordinary years the length of the various Yugas, some of which were supposed to last millions or billions of years... In some cases time was counted in *Kalpas*, or days of Brahma; one Kalpa is 4 or 5 billion years... The 4 yugas constituted 1 mahayuga, or 4,320,000 years; 1000 mahayugas equalled 1 kalpa; 2 kalpas formed 1 day of Brahma, and 1 life cycle of Brahma was equal to 100 years of Brahma, or 311 trillion... ordinary years. This was the largest unit of time to which the Hindus were driven by their preoccupation with eternal cycles... The morbid preoccupation of the Hindus with assigning specific figures to the length of the Great Year is closely related to expressions of utter despair which turn up with great frequency in their ancient literature... This desperate outlook had to appear... in view of the fact that it was agreed among the ancient Hindus that the Kaliyuga, or the worst of the four ages[('the period at the end of the *kaliyuga*, the degenerate age, is called the *pralaya* – it translates as doomsday in eschatological thought; the sun sets the celestial and terrestrial worlds plus the underworld on fire, and when they are totally consumed a huge deluge ensues and the universe turns once again into the ocean of chaos from which it was born in the first place; it is the period in which Brahma sleeps dreamlessly until his next awakening, which will initiate the next cycle of 4 *yugas*, a process which will continue interminably')], had got underway only a few thousand years ago. Since it was to last 432,000 years, what else could be generated by a look at the future than a radical despair? This pessimism sets also the tone of the world-view of the cultures of the pyramids, the... Egyptian, and the... Babylonian... - Cosmology, History, and Theology

...study of the nature, movements, and distances of the celestial bodies... probably originated in Babylonia c.3000 B.C. among priests, who carefully observed movements of the moon, planets and other heavenly objects in an effort to foretell human affairs. They formulated a calendar based on the phases of the moon, and charted the paths of sun and planets through the belt in the heavens which the Greeks later named the Zodiac.

Astrology, long seen as applied astronomy, was developed by the Greeks and reached Christian Europe via the Arabs. It was a utilitarian science linked to medicine and agriculture, and also an ambitious philosophical system resting on the belief that the stars influenced the entire sublunar world. By studying eclipses, comets, and the movements of the planets in the zodiac, astrologers felt able to predict such effects as wars, plagues, and the weather. They found a key to a person's whole life in his horoscope... a forecast of a person's future from a diagram showing the relative positions of the planets etc... at his birth. In the Renaissance popes such as Paul III (1534-49) were enthusiastic patrons, and many rulers employed court astrologers for both political and medical assistance... A papal bull of 1586 condemned judicial astrology, and the Protestant reformer Calvin was hostile, but its decline was slow and many leading scientists in the 17th c. thought it had at least a residual basis of truth. Though it had lost its intellectual standing by 1700... it... has survived to the present day.

As might be expected, such a popular notion as astrology has been seized upon by religious and political activists. No fundamentalist group denies that psychic or divinatory powers exist. To disavow the methods by which these powers are established as belief systems, they would undermine and bring into question the methods whereby they have established their own dogmas. These groups take one of two attitudes about astrology: Either it is the work of the devil, and thus evil though possibly true, or it is proof of God's wonderful design, and undeniably true... About 130 B.C., the Greek philosopher Hipparchus discovered the precession of the equinoxes, thereby revealing that the astrologers had been assigning the wrong sun-signs to their clients, among other errors. The astrologers of his day ignored this fact, as those of today still do. This discovery, along with the Copernican revolution in 1543, should have killed astrology as an academic subject for good.

Beginning in ancient times in Babylonia... and perhaps about the same time in the Orient, astrology spread over the Near East and Europe. Astrologers were venerated as scholars and prophets, and as recently as the 15th cent. in Europe were regularly consulted on personal matters and affairs of state. Although now in disrepute among scientists, astrology... [is based upon] the belief that the... varying positions... of the heavenly bodies... influence human affairs... [The] practice of attempting to foretell events in people's lives by occult methods... existed in ancient Mesopotamia and was brought from Asia to medieval Europe by gypsies. It is today illegal in many states and countries.

Just 30[%] of... respondents... in a [NZ] survey... said they accepted Darwin's theory that humans evolved over millions of years, yet more than 40[%] believe fortune-tellers can predict the future... "When astrology and fortune-telling have more credibility than the greatest discoveries of modern science for a sizeable proportion of the populace, the education system has fallen down badly," [an]Associate Professor... said yesterday.

A fortune-teller in Italy... has been charged with criminal association for helping a hold-up gang decide the most auspicious days for robberies... 25 gang members... enjoyed a run of luck that yielded about 11 billion lire... from 1990 to 1995. - 1996

As Chinese opera singers wail in high-pitched falsetto, the... rows of formally attired fortune-tellers... of Hong Kong's Temple St night market whisper prophecies to clients: "Don't be too tense. Wait for a while, see how things turn out. You deserve better, things will change." It could be a prescription for Hong Kong itself, still settling down as a Special Administrative Region of China... This picturesque, lantern-lit street of musicians, seers, hawkers and prostitutes helped to inspire a symphony marking the historic transfer and is a magnet for poets and film-makers who see it as a shadowy cross-roads, or... a place of dreams, for the common people... But... soothsayers... who... will read your... face... or... hand [- 'palmistry, fortunetelling in which the various lines in the palm of the hand are supposed to indicate a person's character and destiny, was practiced perhaps as early as 3000 BC in China' (incidentally, 'when a Miami grocer went to a palm reader for help with his personal problems, the grocer was told they were the result of the "evil" in the money the grocer had earned and saved, so the grocer was instructed to bring his money to the palmist to have it "exorcised," which the grocer did; sometime later the grocer went to the authorities complaining of still having his problems, but not his life savings of \$20,000') - or use]... caged birds which will peck out your destiny from a pile of envelopes... have seen their own future and are not sure it's bright. - 1997

ON A BRIGHT morning in Liverpool, England, [a gal] locked herself in a dim, soundproof room, lay on a couch and used red lights, dark goggles and hissing radio frequencies to lull herself into a dreamlike state. Two minutes' walk away, [another gal] shut herself in a brightly lit cubicle... switched on her computer, and a random image - an orange-and-white striped balloon sailing over fields and a river - appeared on the screen. [The second gal] screwed up her eyes and tried to "send" it to... [the first gal. A] psychologist, was observing anxiously. This was the first time [the psychologist] had tested the power of telepathy. After a minute or two [the psychologist] was amazed to hear [the first gal] begin to describe in detail the picture... "There's a ball... I see a bouncy blow-up ball with orange and white on it. It's an aeroplane." [The psychologist] clenched his fist. "It's a direct hit... It's as if her mind can see what her eyes cannot." [The psychologist] wondered if the sceptics could be wrong and whether extrasensory perception might, after all, be a sixth sense... When receivers have described what they have seen, they will be asked to choose the correct image from a group of four. By guessing, people would on average pick the right one 25[%] of the time. If the success rate exceeds 33[%], the psychologist says it will prove telepathy exists... Scientists who study telepathy and the paranormal are usually dismissed as New Age spoon-benders who spend too much time watching *The X-Files*. But... ESP has baffled scientists for centuries. Greek philosophers struggled to explain how soothsayers and clairvoyants could predict the future. During the Cold War, researchers with the CIA tried to use ESP to uncover Soviet military secrets... [The psychologist] is "very excited" by the pilot studies, but still has doubts. "It looks very positive, but people are good at fooling themselves into believing they are psychic and deceiving other people too. Many of those who claim to have 'the gift' have been exposed as frauds..." ...Orthodox scientists say that no matter how impressive the early statistics may appear, there is something unnatural going on behind the goggles and the hissing head-phones... "It's illegitimate - absolute nonsense. They say they have statistical evidence - oh, yawn... Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence and they have none." The criticism angers... [the] co-director of the Research Unit at... Liverpool's John Moores University... who has spent 20 years studying transpersonal psychology. "There's more to consciousness than the brain itself... How many people have had... [near]-death experiences? How many... have dreamt about something before it happened? We are not a bunch of wishy-washy cranks. We are combining spirituality with science." ...levitation and telekinesis [remain] an enigma to scientists, despite extensive research[. □ 'A psychic healer's powers were repeatedly tested and accepted by Russian scientists then, in 1986, a Russian court became the first to validate a psychic. Russia's military worked on using parapsychology to have control over large groups of people. At least \$30m a year is spent developing psychic warfare']...

There is little - make that nothing - that the psychics got right in their predictions for the *National Enquirer*, the *National Examiner* and other tabloids. So says the *Skeptical Inquirer*... Undaunted by their 1997 misses, the psychics are polishing their crystal balls for 1998.

...I see a large phone bill... [An] unemployed New Plymouth [resident] ran up an \$832 phone bill by making 54 calls... to psychic phone lines... in just three days. But none of the psychics [the 33-year-old] spoke to predicted [their client] would end up homeless and in court... [However, some may have stated that] unpaid calls will incur collection costs... Some lines automatically disconnect after a set time period, so they can't be held responsible for people running up huge phone bills... Last month, [the 33-year-old]... pleaded guilty to obtaining credit by fraud and was sentenced to 50 hours community service... • N[Z]ers have been ringing 0900 psychic phone lines for 10 years and Telecom claims there have been very few complaints. Yet there is no official organisation to recognise genuine New Age professionals and nothing in place to prevent anybody from setting one up... To set up an 0900 number, customers pay a \$200 application fee, \$55 connection fee and \$20.83 per month line rental. All figures exclude GST. In addition, Telecom earns 45c per minute from each call the line receives. If it's that easy, then what are the consequences for the public? "They're very bad," says... an... Auckland clair-audio[, who]... finds it frustrating there's no guild for genuine New Age professionals... [The Aucklander] claims to have met people who have no psychic powers but have been hired as phone psychics and told simply to "follow their gut".

...PSYCHIC READERS WANTED For rostered work on high profile, busy 0900 phone line. Free psychic training offered.

Readers can listen to... [a] recorded summary of their stars for this month and next... You can also listen to your Money forecast for the next 12 months. All you need do is dial 0900 33533 and... enter in the access code number for your star sign... Calls cost \$1.50 per minute incl. GST. - 1996

A bleak future may be in the stars for an Auckland-based horoscope hotline which gives callers the same taped reading regardless of their astrological sign. Subscribers are charged up to \$2.99 a minute for the 0900 service, which instructs them to key in their astrological signs to hear daily readings or a weekly "overview." However, when called by the N[Z] *Herald* yesterday, the reading remained the same for the 12 signs - Aries through to Pisces... Despite numerous calls on the earthly plane... the astrologer who records the horoscopes... could not be contacted... One disgruntled dialler... a Gemini and mother of five from West Auckland, used the hotline for several months before... [becoming] aware of the repeat readings... [A]fter contacting her local *Western Leader* newspaper, [the mother] was promised free readings for her children. "[The astrologer] said you don't actually expect people to ring up other horoscopes..."... A Commerce Commission chief investigator... said the horoscope line could be in breach of the Fair Trading Act if the service provided was misrepresented. [The investigator] said no complaints had been received... [In related news, some people] believe auras are powerful energy fields portraying the human spirit. Others say they simply don't exist... While I can't claim to have seen auras personally, I confess open-mindedness. Years ago, my 12-year-old son came home from school and asked if everyone saw colours around people. Instead of booking him in for an eye test, I quizzed him further. [My son] perceived red around teachers when they were angry. Blues and greens when they were in better moods. Amazing aura stories abound. One teacher was a student's nightmare. [The teacher] could see a streak of lemony green horizontally over the top of peoples' heads whenever they lied. Then there was the [guy] who was shopping on the sixth floor of a department floor in the U[S. Just as the guy] was about to step into the elevator [the guy] was suddenly repelled. Even though the cubicle was well-lit and filled with people, it seemed dark. [The guy] told the lift operator to go on without him. The doors closed and the cable snapped, killing all occupants. The [guy] later realised why [it]'d felt so uneasy. The people in the lift had no auras, a sign of imminent death... If only I could walk into a room and sort out the saints and devils. [A spokesperson] for the N[Z] Skeptics Society... reckons I can rest easy and buy my son a pair of glasses. "Auras are absolute garbage,"... [His] main argument against the existence of auras runs like this: If a [perso]n stands behind a door and

moves gradually into a room, presumably [the person's] aura is visible before [the person] is. No psychic in his experience has been able to detect how close a person is to the edge of the door by seeing the aura first. Nevertheless I didn't turn down the chance to visit... a Papatoetoe [resident] who photographs the energies around people. [The resident] sold half his house nine months ago to buy the electro-magnetic field photographic system, originally from the U[S. The resident]... charges \$25 a photo plus analysis... I was... rewarded with an unflattering array of reds, greens and yellows... What colours would [one] expect to find around saintly people...? "Pinks, lilacs, purples... Jesus Christ would have been white or gold."

...ALL A young [gal] of substance used to need to sustain an aura of health and self-confidence was a hairdresser and a manicurist, plus the occasional consultation with a beautician about what shade of lip-stick to use. To that list should now be added a personal fitness trainer, a colonic irrigationist, an aromatherapist, a reflexologist and, of course, a psychic. Diana, Princess of Wales' recent helicopter trip... to visit [a]Romany-born medium... near Chesterfield... is proof that crystal balls are back in fashion... Given that [the medium] is the psychic who once [predicted that Diana's sister-in-law would marry J. F. Kennedy's son], it is to be hoped the princess got her money's worth... The only noticeable demographic trend is that almost all the interest in psychics comes from people between the ages of 25 and 50... Diana is plumb in the centre of this age band – arguably the most stressful time in work and relationships... Not surprisingly, in California you can contact dead pets as well as dead people... Whether mystic, psychic, clairvoyant... or... astrologer... the futures trade is easy to mock. One Fleet St editor, sacking the writer of the paper's horoscope column, famously began his letter: "As you will no doubt be aware..." These twilight activities – not illegal, but not wholly approved of – have come under a pincer attack from scientists and [the]church... A Church of England report published last year claimed astrologers and fortune-tellers were becoming "new gods"... The report concluded people were drifting into a "pick'n'mix spirituality". The Vatican has gone further, condemning horoscopes, astrology, palm-reading and clairvoyance as sinful. Scientific objections are that the whole business is harmless but mindless hocus-pocus... [One physicist (r:p957, ln10)] has declared that predicting the future is impossible... Researchers who have studied psychics are not impressed by their methods. According to... [the] senior lecturer in psychology at Goldsmith's College, London, "Most alleged psychics are very intuitive people who pick up clues from the client. They may believe they have paranormal powers, but they are simply skilled readers of body language." In a technique called overlap, the medium picks up the first syllable of a response and interrupts before the client can finish. Tapes of the late Doris Stokes showed a client saying "There's my sis..." at which the medium cut in reassuringly with "sisters". Reassurance and friendship are the core product. It has been claimed that [the Chesterfield medium suggested Diana] do the *Panorama* interview in 1995, and helped her to prepare for the questions. That is not strictly in the line of duty for a psychic, but [Diana] has described her sessions [with the medium] as "profoundly comforting". [The medium] has said: "I am very... loyal. My job is like being a priestess." [Diana's sister-in-law] was perhaps less lucky with [her former medium], under whose plastic blue pyramid... [the] Duchess of York... poured out the secrets of confessionals. [The medium] spilled the beans in a book called *The Duchess of York Uncensored*, and deflected criticism by claiming it was good for the duchess to get it all out in the open. The duchess subsequently turned to [the Chesterfield medium, whose talents the duchess recommended to Diana]. Apparently the duchess calls [the medium] all the time [and Diana, who]... used to call about three times a week... now calls almost every day.

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Tarot... emerged about 1440 in Italy as playing cards but were given a Hermetic interpretation by Gebelin in 1781 and from then on were used more commonly... as a medium of divination... A Tarot pack has 78 cards, including 56 cards in four suits (wands, pentacles, cups, and swords) of 14 each, plus 22 other freelance trumps (major arcana cards) which feature deeply symbolic pictures. Divination is based upon the sequence of the cards, the interpretation of the major arcana cards, and clairvoyance resulting in an insight into the character and destiny of the person concerned. Ostensibly there are usually four main reasons for consulting Tarot cards: money, a life-crisis, love, and family matters.

Early European cards were called Tarots (tablets of fate), or *tarocchi*. These were picture cards used for fortune-telling or instruction. The earliest such cards are the rare *torocchi di Mantegna*, engraved... in 1470. This 50-card pack has five groups of 10 cards each... From the tarots of Mantegna evolved the 78-card Venetian tarots... [T]his... pack was increased to 97 cards to form the Florentine minchiate deck.

Tarot cards are thought to go back to the 12th c. in Europe, though the earliest surviving set is from 1390... Renewed interest in the occult has led to a recent revival in the use of tarots[. 'I Ching' ('an ancient Chinese manual – originally used for divination – with symbols known as the eight trigrams and sixty-four hexagrams that were symbolically interpreted in terms of the principles of yin and yang'), 'rune stones' (which use 'marks – having mysterious or magical significances – based on the earliest Germanic alphabet'), and *Ouija* boards (which are)... marked with the alphabet and other signs with a movable pointer to obtain messages in spiritual seances[; 'made and sold by toymakers in the US but not by their counterparts in Britain').

The]... study of the occult significance of numbers... [– which ‘appears to have been a universal phenomenon among numerate peoples’ – is called] *numerology*...

...numerology calls upon the numbers 1 to 9 to explain your destiny. According to numerologists, life operates in cycles of nine. Love, work and adventure can be predicted by tapping into your personal month cycle. To find your personal number, just add the day and the month of your birthday and the current year to the present month. Then just keep adding up the numbers to reduce them to a single digit.

We all have a *destiny path* number. To find yours, add up your birthday, month and year, and reduce the total to a single digit. So, if your birth date is February 17, 1959[, you first get]... $1+7+2+1+9+5+9=34$. Now add 34 together (3+4...) and 7 is your *destiny path* number... If your numbers add to 11, 22 or 33, *do not* reduce them to a single digit as these numbers have a special destiny meaning.

Discover your perfect love match with the help of numerology... Any partner's[destiny path] number which reduces to 9 when added to yours is great. Any number which reduces to 7 when added to yours is excellent long-term. Any number which reduces to 2 when added to yours is ideal. Any number which reduces to 5 when added to yours is irrational but exciting.

...ancient Greeks believed... numbers were magical principles governing the... universe, with... number [1] as the spirit from which everything rose.

...numerology is based on the Pythagorean idea that all things can be expressed in numerical terms because they are ultimately reducible to numbers. Using a method analogous to... the Greek and Hebrew alphabets (in which each letter also represented a number), modern numerology attaches a series of digits to an inquirer's name and date of birth and from these purports to divine the person's true nature and prospects.

number... is the mediator between the divine and the earthly. So, if one performs various operations with numbers, these operations also affect the things related to these numbers... In the Pythagorean system, numbers from 1 to 10 had specific symbolic meanings as well as meanings in geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, acoustics, and thus in music... Among the symbols represented by 1 were the first principle, God the creator, the east, unity... immortality, the right side, the day, the sun, and equality. The number 2 signified divisibility... the mortal, the left side, the night, the moon, inequality... diversity... and matter. The odd numbers above 1 were [masculine], the even numbers... [feminine]. ‘According to the Pythagorean system nine represents Deity. As the odd numbers are the fundamental notes of nature, it is understandable how they came to be considered far more important than the even numbers. In Chinese lore the even numbers are *yin* and inauspicious, with the *yang* odd numbers as auspicious.’] The number three, equalling 1 + 2, represented perfection and stood for all reality... There are sacred trinities in many religions... However... [among] American Indians, the sacred number is 4... In addition to the occult meanings of numbers, another principle is basic to numerology – that of gematria, or cryptograph. In Hebrew, consonants are used as numerical signs, but by providing them with vowels, one can often read them as words and can read words as numbers. A combination of gematria and Pythagorean number symbolism formed the basis of the number magic of the medieval Cabala. This allows special readings of the Hebrew Bible to find secret or hidden meanings in the text.

Jewish magicians assigned every name a numerical equivalent, to which they attributed great mystical significance: for example, the number of God was eight... In folk magic, seven is usually a lucky number. A [7]th child, it is said, possesses the power to foretell the future and cure diseases.

The typical number, *seven*, is employed as the symbol of perfection, or completeness. - The messages to the seven churches

Hippocrates divided the life of [humanity] into seven ages, as did Shakespeare... traditionally... *seven*... [was] a number of mystic significance. The symbolism may have originated in the motion of the seven “planets” (including the sun and moon) known to the ancients. The Biblical statement that the earth was created in 7 days more recently intensified the mysteriousness of the number[, which is also ‘known as the number of harmony’ (since *harmony* means ‘a combination of musical notes’ as well as ‘the apt arrangement of parts’, it seems appropriate to point out that there are 7 musical notes – A to G; note further that there are, allegedly, ‘seven deadly sins’, while the world is divided into ‘seven seas’, plus it has ‘seven continents’, and supposedly contains – or once had – ‘Seven Wonders’)]. In nearly all religions, notably Christian and Buddhist, the number seven recurs frequently.

AND the LORD said unto Noah... Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens... and of beasts that *are* not clean by two... Of fowls also... by sevens... For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights... And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark... And [Noah] sent forth a... dove... to see if the waters were abated from the face of the ground; But the dove found no rest... [After] seven days... Noah... again... sent forth the dove... And the dove came... [back with] an olive leaf... so Noah knew that the waters were abated... And [Noah] stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more... [O]n the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried... Now Jericho was straitly shut up... And the LORD said unto Joshua... seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of ram's horns... and go round about the city once. Thus shall thou do six days. And... [on] the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times... And... when... all the people... shout with a great shout; the wall of the city shall fall down... - Old Testament

...to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne... I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And... I saw... in his right hand seven stars... and *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne... AND I saw... on the throne a book written... [that was] sealed with seven seals. - New Testament

The New Testament consists of 27 books. From this plus, presumably, the belief that Jesus will come a SECOND time, some people have decided that two sevens – represented numerically as 7 & 7, 27, 72 or 77 – are symbolically linked to the Messiah. (By the way, ‘our sun has a brightness magnitude of 27.’)

...BROTHER... 77... HONOR[S]... HIS MAKER... AND... HA[S] MERCY ON THE POOR. - SECRET 77

...if... God is seven... then the Devil is six...

Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: ...his number is Six hundred threescore and six. - Revelation 13:18

...in the fifth verse of the same chapter: ‘And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.’ If the French alphabet is treated like the Hebrew system of enumeration[–] by which the first ten letters represent the units, and the next ten the tens, and so on... [– by turning] out the words *l'empereur Napoleon* into ciphers on this system, it happens

that the sum of these numbers equals 666, and Napoleon is thereby seen to be the beast prophesied in the Apocalypse. Moreover, working out in the same way the words *quarante-deux*... the sum of these numbers again equals 666, from which it is deduced that the term of Napoleon's power had come in 1812, when the French Emperor reached his forty-second year.

Fear of spiritual evil has caused the loss – on paper... – of one of the newest streets in L[A]. The latest official guide boasted on its cover that it included 666 new streets. Appalled locals protested that 666 is “the number of the Beast”. The cover has been reprinted to read: “665 new streets”

...life brought no sense of direction until I started to write. In my first book I introduced *the child*. Little by little I nurtured the thought that I was glamorizing him. Then sometime near the end of 1973, after contemplating this and the preaching, teaching, and writing of others, my mission became apparent for the first time. It was to prepare the world for *the child*. Life would be given to the “beast from the sea” (Rev. 13:15). It was a stinging revelation, but did not come in a thundering vision. Perhaps the realization came after thinking about horoscopes: since my Grand Trine is in earth signs, I had to be the earth beast. Or maybe it began after reading about numerology? ...This child, who was born during the new moon and planetary alignment of February 5, 1962, also is *not* actually against Christ or any religion. But the... [*child*] will lead us through [a] tumultuous period... Soon my doctrine and version of history will be accepted, especially among the British nationalities... We are slowly making the progression into the coming of a new age; it cannot be stopped. Actually, basking in the splendor of both the old and the new, we can feel the aura of the ensuing period while still under the influence of the last one. The center-point will arrive in approximately A.D. 2,040... Earth will again be blessed with a demigod in the age of Sagittarius, about A.D. 6,300. - THE FALSE ANTI-CHRIST

666 is sometimes called ‘three sixes’, which can be represented numerically as 36, which – according to numerologists – can, in turn, be written as $3 + 6 = 9$ (furthermore, $3 \times 6 = 18$, while $1 + 8 = 9$). Genesis 3:6 describes humanity's first sin – and, because Eve was allegedly the first ‘to know evil’, some guys have taken this to be a justification for regarding gals as devils. Genesis is the first book of the Bible, and its last book seems to provide further justification:

AND there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying... Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with... her... wine... I saw a [gal] sit upon a scarlet coloured beast... having seven heads and ten horns... And upon her forehead was a name written... THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. - Revelation 17:1-5

In the book of Revelation, the opposite of the devil is more often described as being ‘Alpha and Omega, the first and the last’. Being opposites themselves, *first* and *last* can be described as a *yin* and *yang* pairing – as can the numbers 6 and 9.

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness all over the land unto the ninth hour. - St Matthew 27:45

The fact that 3 and 6 are missing if the numbers 2, 7, 4, and 5 (see above) are rearranged into their proper sequence, may be unrelated to the matter at hand. However, it might not be irrelevant to point out that if 6 and 9 can be described as a *yin* and *yang* pairing, so can 666 and 999 – plus, therefore, 36 and 39.

The number 39 is closely related to the number 40 – because 39 can be ‘rounded up’ to get 40 (which *recurs frequently* in the Old Testament). However, there are 39 books in the Old Testament. Incidentally, Earth is third among ‘the collection of nine planets in orbit around the Sun’; Earth's ‘average distance from the Sun is 93 million miles’; and ‘Earth has an equatorial radius of 6,379km (3,963miles)’. Furthermore, when a digital clock says the time is 9.30, the small hand on a manual clock will be pointing to the 9 and the big hand to the 6. Consider also the following equations: $96 - 69 = 27$; $3 \times 9 = 27$; $3 + 9 = 12$; $39 - 27 = 12$.

nidanas [are the]12 links in the chain of the Buddhist notion of dependent origination. Being interdependent, these links condition, and are conditioned by, the other links in the chain. The 12 links are: spiritual ignorance; constructing activities; consciousness; mind and body; the six sense-bases; sensory stimulation; feeling; craving; grasping; existence; birth; and aging and death. Thus the ultimate root of the twelfth link, aging and dying, lies in the first link, spiritual ignorance... [T]he 12 links are behind the basic problem of suffering, and the end of suffering will come when there is an end of spiritual ignorance, craving, and the other links of the chain.

The Chinese identify a cycle of 12 years, and each is given a name: year of the Dragon; Snake; Horse; Goat; Monkey; Rooster; Dog; Pig; Rat; Cow; Tiger; or Rabbit. Astrologers combine these years with the 12 zodiac signs (e.g., people born during July 1999 will become Cancer-Rabbits), and assume that people who have the same combination will exhibit similar characteristics, or lead similar lives.

Apart from there being 12 months in their calendar, the number 12 was hugely symbolic to the Jews.

The symbolism of the twelve tribes plays a special role in the *Temple Scroll* from Qumran... According to the so-called *Community Rule*... twelve [people] out of the whole of Israel played an important part in the group that is described... These twelve... were called the “House of Holiness for Israel,”... The [twelve members] were supposed to be distinguished by “perfect holiness”; to them fell the authority to teach because all special knowledge from the literature in scripture was supposed to have been imparted to them. They were thought of as the circle of founders; it is said of them that they were supposed to set themselves apart from the other, sacrilegious people, “and [they] shall go into the wilderness to prepare the way of Him”... They are characterized as a “precious corner-stone”... Their sheer existence atoned for the godlessness of Israel... Their relation to “Israel” is clearly discernible everywhere. The only question is whether this circle existed in reality or only on paper. The twelve[disciples] with whom Jesus surrounded himself were also unquestionably representatives of the renewed Israel... Similar to the way the twelve in [the Qumran text] are called a “foundation,” in Revelation 21:14 the names of the twelve apostles are inscribed in the foundation stones of the new Jerusalem.

...that great city... descending out of heaven from God... had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel... and... of the twelve apostles of the Lamb... And the... length and breadth and the height of... the... city... are equal... [at] twelve thousand furlongs... and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. - Revelation 21

The book of Revelation also refers to two numbers that are multiples of 12. The first, number 24 (12×2), is related to the words ALPHA and OMEGA – they being the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, which consists of 24 letters. The second number is 144 (12×12 , or 12 to the power of 2).

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto... me... John... to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass... Blessed [are they] that readeth, and... that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand... [Him] that

is unjust, let him be unjust still: and [him] which is filthy, let him be filthy still... Behold... the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth... cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him... To him... will... God... give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a *new* name written, which no [person] knoweth saving him] that receiveth it... I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice... I heard *was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me, which said, Come... and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and *one* sat on the throne... And round about the throne *were* four and twenty seats; and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold... The four and twenty elders... worship him that liveth for ever... saying... O Lord... thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created... And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book [(r:p1124, ln58)], and to loose the seals thereof? And no [person] in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no[body]... was found worthy to open and read the book... [Then] one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed... And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the... elders stood a Lamb... having seven horns and seven eyes... and on *his* vesture... [was] a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS... And [the Lamb] came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne... [Then] the Lamb opened... the seals... [When the Lamb] had opened the sixth seal... I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds... And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God... saying... to the four angels... Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads... [A]nd *there were* sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand... twelve thousand... children... [from each] tribe... These are they which were not defiled... for they are virgins... After this I beheld... a great multitude, which no [person] could number, of all nations... kindreds, and... tongues, [standing] before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes... And one of the elders... said to me, These are they which came out of great... tribulation, and poverty... They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more... For the Lamb... shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. AND when... the Lamb... opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour... [Afterwards] I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth... Saying with a loud voice, Fear God... for the hour of his judgment is come... And there followed another angel saying, Babylon is fallen... the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her... saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! ...And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no[body]... buyeth their merchandise any more; The merchants of gold... silver... precious stones, and pearls, and fine linen... and silk, and... all thyne wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass... iron, and marble, And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts... and horses, and chariots, and slaves... For in one hour so great riches is come to nought... for the former things have passed away. And [the one] that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new... there shall be no more... crying, neither shall there be any more pain... And... I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem... prepared as a bride adorned for her husband... And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it... And the gates of it shall not be shut at all... And there shall... [not] enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life... In the midst of the street... *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner* of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month... Blessed *are* they that... may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

In the Old Testament there are many references to sacred groves and to the setting up of altars in these groves and under trees, notably oaks... In the faith of ancient Egypt, the numerous deities were frequently supposed to inhabit trees, chiefly the sacred sycamores... The concept of the tree as a god's dwelling place a[ls]o a[pp]ears in Persian mythology: the cyprus was considered especially sacred... Tree worship was widespread in India; Gautama Buddha was reputedly incarnated as a tree spirit... 43 times... The concept of the tree as the universe is best known in its Scandinavian form, where the ash, Yggdrasil, represented the world tree... But the idea is found in many other parts of the world... Many oracular trees are mentioned in the Old Testament, such as the 'tree of the diviners'... mentioned in... Judges (9:37); 'the tree of the revealer' in Genesis (12:6)...

According to... Daniel chapter four, the heaven-high tree was cut down. However, the stump was left, and bands of iron and copper... put on it. This would keep the stump from growing until it was God's time to remove the bands and let it start growing again. But how and when was God's rulership cut down? In due course, the kingdom of Judah... became so corrupt that [God] allowed King Nebuchadnezzar to destroy it, to cut it down. This happened in the year 607 B.C.E... No longer was there a government to represent God's rulership in the earth. Thus, in 607 B.C.E. a period of time began that Jesus Christ later referred to as "*the appointed times of the nations*," or, "*the times of the gentiles*." (Luke 21:24...) ...What was to happen at the end of these "appointed times..."? Jehovah was to give the power to rule to the One "who has the legal right." This One is Jesus Christ. So if we can find out when "the appointed times of the nations" end, we will know when Christ begins to rule as king. According to Daniel chapter four, these "appointed times" would be "*seven times*." ...How long are these "seven times"? In Revelation chapter 12, verses 6 and 14, we learn that 1,260 days are equal to "a time [that is, 1 time] and times [that is, 2 times] and a half time." That is a total of 3 1/2 times. So "a time" would be equal to 360 days. Therefore, "seven times" would be 7 times 360, or 2,520 days. Now if we can count a day for a year, according to a Bible rule, the "seven times" equal 2,520 years. [(Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6)]... So by counting 2,520 years from... 607 B.C.E... we come down to 1914 C.E... In that year W[W]I began. Never in history had there been such a terrible war... Yet only 21 years after that war ended, W[W]II began. And it was four times as destructive as W[WI]. Those two wars... should be enough to show that we really are living in the time the Bible foretold as the "last days." Yet some persons may say: 'Such things as wars, famines, pestilences and earthquakes have occurred often throughout history. So it would not be hard to foretell that they would occur again.' But think: The Bible not only foretold these things, but indicated that they would occur on a *worldwide scale*. Also... Jesus said: "This generation will by no means pass away until these things [including the end of this system] occur." ...He meant the generation of people who were living in 1914. Those persons yet remaining of that generation are now very old. However, some of them will still be alive to see the end of this wicked system. So... we can be certain: Shortly now there will be a sudden end to all wickedness and wicked people at Armageddon [('derived from the field Megiddo, where the Israelites defeated the Midianites and the Canaanites, and where Saul fell before the Philistines')]... "ARMAGEDDON" ...is a frightening word to many. Often world leaders use it to refer to a possible World War III. However, the Bible speaks of Armageddon as the place of a righteous war fought by God. (Revelation 16:14, 16...) This war of God will prepare the way for a righteous new world. Unlike the wars of [humans], which kill both the good and the bad, Armageddon will destroy only the bad. (Psalm 92:7)... After Armageddon, God's kingdom will be the only government ruling over the earth. Satan and his demons will be gone. (Revelation 20:1-3)... The departing Jesus... ascended to heaven... in his... invisible... spiritual body... (1 Peter 3:18). Thus his return also would be invisible, in a spiritual body... [T]he expression "every eye will see him"... means that everyone will then understand or recognize that Christ is present... [H]is return does not mean that [Jesus] literally comes back to this earth... [Jesus] does not need to leave his heavenly throne and actually come down to earth to do this... Christ and his 144,000 faithful anointed followers will rule... for a thousand years... So Judgment Day will be 1,000 years long... During Judgment Day those who survive Armageddon will work to make the earth a paradise. Into this paradise the dead will be welcomed back. (Luke 23:43). ['The Last Judgment is not to be confused with the personal judgment received by each soul immediately after death; when Judgment Day arrives, each soul will be reunited with his original physical body']... Scientists have long known about the human

body's power to renew itself... They say that, under right conditions, humans should be able to live forever... Yet, is it really God's purpose that people live happily on earth forever? If it is, then everlasting life is not just a wish or a dream – it is sure to come! ...Since the earth was made to last forever, then [humans] should also live forever. Surely a loving God would not create humans with a desire to live forever and then not make it possible for them to fulfil that desire! [(1 John 4:8; Psalm 133:3)] ...those who survive Armageddon... will have pleasant work to do, and they will be able to see and enjoy the results of their labours... If a house has a maker... surely the more complex universe must have a Maker too... [W]here there is intelligence there is a mind... And... where there is a mind there is a brain and a body of a definite shape. So, then, the great mind responsible for all creation belongs to the great Person, Almighty God. Although [God] does not have a material body, [it] has a spiritual one... Since God is a person with a spiritual body, [it] must have a place to live... [God] is in the heavens... Yet his holy spirit, which is his invisible active force, can be felt everywhere. By means of his holy spirit God created the heavens, the earth and all living things... To create these things, God did not need to be present in body. [God] can send out his spirit... to do whatever [it] wants even though [God] is far away... No doubt everyone whom you know has a name. God also has a personal name to set him apart from all others... We learn God's name from the Bible, where it appears about 7,000 times. For example... Psalm 83:18 reads: "That [people] may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth." ...Some persons are surprised to see God's name in their Bible. This often is because their Bible is one that seldom uses God's name... 'But why,' you may ask, 'is God's name not used in every place that it occurs in the original Bible text? Why are the titles LORD and GOD generally used in its place?' ...[because there] are those... that argue that the word "Jehovah" should not be used because it is not really the name of God. - You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth

Jehovah [is the term] used since the 11th century as a form of the Hebrew name for Israel's God 'Yahweh'. It is formed from a combination of the Latinized consonants of the Hebrew word *YHWH* (the name for God) with the vowels of the Hebrew word *Adonai* ('Master, Lord'), this combination being necessary to prevent correct utterance of the term *YHWH*, which is considered too holy to be spoken... *Jehovah's Witnesses* [are a] millenarian movement organized in the USA in 1884... They adopted the name... in 1931; previously they were called 'Millennial Dawnists' and 'International Bible Students'. They have their own translation of the Bible, which they interpret literally, and view themselves as entirely distinct from orthodox Christianity, claiming that their intent is to 'shock, rattle and defrock' the traditional Church. Mistrustful of the claims of Protestant and Catholic Churches, whose ideology they see as false and deluding, they believe in the imminent second coming of Christ. They avoid worldly involvement, and refuse to obey any law which they see as a contradiction of the law of God – refusing, for example, to take oaths, enter military service, or receive blood transfusions... They... meet in... Kingdom Halls, and all 'witness' through regular house-to-house preaching.

...formerly called Russellites... *Jehovah's Witnesses*... follow the teachings of Charles Taze Russell... pastor of Brooklyn Tabernacle from 1909, who preached that the second coming of Christ had occurred invisibly, 1874, and was to be followed by chaos and a millennial period during which salvation would be awarded to many now alive[('the Jehovah's Witnesses have made no fewer than eight prophecies that the end of the world was nigh – in 1874, 1878, 1910, 1914, 1918, 1925, 1975 and 1984 – the last failure prompted the group to give up playing this game')]. The sect... propagates its views by radio, pamphlets, records, and its organ, *The Watch Tower*, distributed by members. Each member is considered a minister.

...Jesus taught us to pray: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." ...When God's Kingdom comes, what will happen to this hate-filled world? "The kingdom," will "crush and put an end" to all the corrupt governments of this world. (Daniel 2:44)... Concerning God's new world... "The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and... reside forever upon it." (Psalm 37:9-11, 29; Proverbs 2:21,22) What a glorious time that will be! ...Even dead ones will live again, and the entire earth will be transformed into a literal paradise. [(Isaiah 11:6-9; 35:1,2; Luke 23:43; Acts 24:15)]. To live in God's new world, we must love one another... (1 Thessalonians 4:9)... Jesus emphasized that, next to love of God, love of neighbor should govern our lives. (Matthew 22:34-40) But has any group of people ever truly loved their neighbors? Early Christians did! ...What about today? ...*Encyclopedia Canadiana* observes: "The work of Jehovah's Witnesses is the revival and re-establishment of the primitive Christianity practised by Jesus and his disciples..." ...Witnesses allow nothing... to cause them to hate their neighbors. Nor will they kill anyone, for they have figuratively beaten their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shares... The Witnesses, in fact, are noted for taking the initiative to help... neighbors... No wonder an editorial in California's *Sacramento Union* noted: "Suffice to say that if all the world lived by the creed of the Jehovah Witnesses there would be an end of bloodshed and hatred, and love would reign as king." A writer in Hungary's *Ring* magazine remarked: "I have come to the conclusion that if Jehovah's Witnesses were the only ones living on the earth, wars would cease to exist, and the only duties of the police... would be to control traffic and to issue passports." Admittedly though, a huge, worldwide change will be needed if all people are to love one another... For further information or a free home Bible study, please write to Watch Tower, using the appropriate address...

Knock! Knock! Hurry to the door. Two serene-faced people... are standing there. One... says: "Hello, we... thought we'd visit to..." "Are you Jehovah's Witnesses?" They nod. So you say: "Sorry." And shut the door... They are brave, devoted and dogged... these Witnesses. Brave, because in countries that refuse citizens the right to be pacifists they go to jail rather than let themselves be conscripted... Devoted, because they accept it as a duty to preach from door to door even though [at] house after house, the door is shut in their faces. And somehow they are still... believers even though their founder predicted that Christ would return in 1914, that all unbelievers would then be killed, that 144,000 of the super-pious would be vacuumed up into Heaven and that earthly life thereafter would continue in godly peace for evermore. Once, because I think people ought to be allowed to believe anything as long as they hurt no one, I joined in a letter-writing campaign to have... Witnesses freed from the prisons in which brutal Governments had locked them... And... I also... once wrote to the Jehovah's office... telling them to keep all their people away from my place. But still they keep coming. They even seem to have come into the house while I was away. The other day... I found a Jehovah's pamphlet on the floor. I have no proof of how the pamphlet got in the house. But I cannot push it under the closed door. So maybe it arrived by divine intervention... The pamphlet says that The End is Nigh. If they're talking about my patience, they are dead right. The end... may even have arrived already.

...I don't normally commit plagiarism but occasionally another journalist has an idea so good that it's worth ripping it off and spreading it around the planet immediately. Such a one is [the journalist] who recently telephoned... British bookmakers, and asked them to quote the odds on... 10 different ways for the world to end... [T]he results were splashed across the Sunday magazine of the *Independent*... What immediately got your attention was that the trendiest new ways... got the shortest shrift. The end of the world through overpopulation, for example, was given odds of 25 million-to-one against. That means... if you laid a bet of £10 on that proposition... and you turned out to be right, they would pay you... £250 m... when it happens. Are they being generous, or just cunning? Well, if you consider how the bookies have defined the end of the world, you begin to see the method in their madness. They will only have to pay out if, between now and 2097, the world should fall to a population of only 1000 people... Among the disasters that might get the world down to that number, the final cause quite literally cannot be overpopulation... The same logic relegates a couple of other favourite doomsday scenarios to the also-rans. Pollution is a million-to-one... drought is 100,000-to-one... and climate change and famine both come in at 75,000-to-one... Then there's the fashionable disaster-of-the-week, the "coming global anarchy." ...at

50,000-to-one... (generous, to my mind, as it's even harder to see how anarchy could wipe *everybody* out). And there's the end of the world through the natural processes of the universe – the Sun goes nova, we are sucked into a black hole, there is another Big Bang – which they dismiss as a million-to-one... [Excluding the] good old Four Horse[rider]s of the apocalypse[, that]... leaves three major contenders, and very interesting ones they are. "It Came From Outer Space" is taken quite seriously – 500,000-to-one against an alien invasion before 2097, but a mere 10,000-to-one against a massive meteor strike like the one that probably took out the dinosaurs 65 million years ago. Pestilence does even better: only 5000-to-one against new diseases arising that virtually wipe out the human race. And war comes in far ahead of the rest of the field, at only 500-to-one... Now, you can discount all this as wild speculation untamed by market discipline since... the... odds-makers... know that they would never really have to pay out. If the world were down to 1000 people, it is highly unlikely that any of the [insurance] firm's partners would be numbered among the survivors, nor any of the punters who laid bets with them either. And in any case a world as sparsely populated as that would have stopped using money. - 1997

In the past, it was held that [the end] would come through supernatural causes and it was accordingly expressed in mythological terms... The difference now is that the end of the world, if there is to be an end, is seen as coming about through, in some sense, natural causes. - *The End*

Nuclear war, holes in the ozone layer, disease, genetic engineering, asteroids and supernovas – any of these things may bring human history to an end... [A]re we in imminent danger of extinction? [One writer has assessed] the risks facing the human race and concludes... from the undeniable fact that we are a very young species... yes, we probably are... 'There have been upward of fifteen thousand generations since the start of human history – yet here am I, in the one and only generation which will have no successors!' - THE END OF THE WORLD

Despite the fact that there have been more than 24 generations of humans, for some reason the latest one (14 to 30-year-olds during 1997) is called *Generation X*. This title means that 'generation next' must be Generation Y, and implies that the generation after that – Generation Z – will be the last!

...as... Jesus... sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us... what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered... unto them... in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away... Take heed that no [one deceives] you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many... [Y]e shall hear of wars and rumours of wars... nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines... pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places... the sun... shall... be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven... [S]ee that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass... [I]n the last days... the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it... [T]he nations... shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more... [T]his is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach... Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness... [T]heir sins and... iniquities will I remember no more... [The] new *covenant*... hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. - The Bible

...you say it's going to happen now but when exactly do you mean... I've already waited too long and all my hope is gone... - HOW SOON IS NOW?

THE END of the world is approaching... This characteristic phrase, which opened the royal proclamations during the tenth century, might have been written today. At present, there is a general and universal physical fear, with only one question: "When shall I be blown up?" The idea of the end of the world has recurred again and again in the past, and yet the earth has not ceased to exist... The history of the "end of the world" is interesting, for it is also the story of the human mind face to face with its own destiny; and in these days of despair, a review of this history reflects certain aspects of contemporary human behaviour. During the early ages of the Church, the belief that the end of the world was at hand was universally spread among Christians. In Nero's reign, the great fire at Rome occurred (A.D. 64), which some ancient writers assert was ordered by the notorious Roman emperor. In order to remove the odium of the conflagration from himself, Nero tried to throw blame on to the Christians, and many of them were put to a cruel death. So much cruelty and madness, so many catastrophes, and so many horrors were crowded into the years A.D. 64-70 that there was every indication that the angel of death had spread his wings over the world. There were innumerable prodigies – comets, shooting stars, eclipses, showers of blood, monsters, earthquakes and pestilences... [However, though] there seemed to be ample warning, [and] the Apocalypse, which was written by St John in A.D. 69, seemed to announce the second coming of Christ before that generation passed away, the world's end did not take place... Once more it became necessary to interpret the words of the evangelists. On this occasion, the coming of Christ was put off until after the fall of the Roman Empire, and thus considerable margin was given to the commentator... [Henceforth,] belief in the end of the world was perpetuated from year to year and from century to century. Every catastrophe and rare phenomenon in nature was regarded as a precursor of the final cataclysm. The belief was so profound that terror haunted the human soul, and preachers successfully worked upon the dread apprehension. But as generation after generation passed, it became necessary to define once again the general and universal tradition; and this time the end was expected in the year 1000 [– because many] sects believed that Christ would reign with the saints for a millennium before the day of judgment. The belief took on an exaggerated and sensual form with many, who anticipated a day of general rejoicing for the elect and a reign of pleasure... In the year 999 an "invading army" of pilgrims went to the Holy Land to await the Last Judgment at Jerusalem. And during the thousandth year, the number of pilgrims increased. Most of them had sold all their possessions or given them away. Shooting stars or thunderstorms reduced them to panic and prayer. The end was prophesied for the [24]th of March... by Druthmar, a monk... Terror was so great on that day that the faithful sought refuge in the churches, remaining until midnight before the relics of the saints, in order to die at the foot of the cross. From this period date many gifts to the Church; lands and goods were given to the monasteries. The end of the tenth century and the beginning of the eleventh was a truly bizarre and fearful period. A widespread and fatal infectious malady, in which the flesh of the victims decayed and fell from their bones, swept through... Europe. Then came years of famine. "The... poor gnawed the roots of trees, and many were in such extremity as to devour human flesh. The strong fell upon the weak in the public highways, tore them to pieces, and roasted them for food. Children were enticed... into byways, where they were devoured... Famished children killed their parents, and mothers feasted upon their children. One person exposed human flesh for sale in the market place of Tournus, as if it were a staple article of food... [That person] was burned at the stake. Another, stealing flesh by night from the spot where it had been buried, was also burned alive." The end of so miserable a world was both the hope and the terror of that mournful time... [T]he fatal year 1000... vanished into the past, [but] the problem of the world's end (though uncertain and vague) remained. Fostered by the belief in prodigies and the devil, it was to endure for centuries in the popular mind where it is still harboured today. The idea of the end of the world was not confined to the Church alone. In 1186, astrologers terrified Europe by announcing a conjunction of all planets in the constellation of Libra... which indeed occurred... [A] writer of that period, says... "The astrologers of the East,

Jews, Saracens, and even Christians, sent letters all over the world, in which they predicted, with perfect assurance, that in the month of September there would be... the destruction of all things. But... the event very soon belied their predictions.” In 1198, another alarm was raised when it was announced that Antichrist had been born in Babylon and... all the human race would be destroyed. A curious list could be compiled of all the years it was said that Antichrist had been born; the years might be counted by hundreds... In Germany, Stoeffler, a very celebrated astrologer and one of the most famous European mathematicians, prophesied a great flood, as in the time of Noah, for the year 1524. The prediction was based upon his calculation that Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars would meet in the constellation of Pisces... in February... Everyone in Europe, Asia and Africa to whom these tidings came, was filled with a sudden overwhelming fear; and as the ominous day approached, the degree of fear and stupidity grew. Trade and commerce stopped... peasants ceased to cultivate... fields. Work, everywhere, came to a standstill. No debts were paid; and money was spent on riotous living, though some grew the more pious as February drew near and their wet grave loomed closer.

...a comet will fall from the sky followed by meteor showers... tidal waves... and... faultlines that can[']t sit still followed by billions of dumbfounded [people]... some say the end is near... we'll see Armageddon soon... I... certainly hope we will I sure could use a vacation from all this stupid shit...

[‘Showers of stars caused by a passing meteorite occur about every 33 years’, and thousands of NZ] skywatchers witnessed the spectacular Leonid meteor storm early yesterday... It filled Asia’s night skies with flashes of light and sandblasted satellites with comet debris but caused no major damage, satellite operators said... Nasa said preliminary reports indicated that the storm produced about 1000 meteors an hour, in line with expectations, but far below the 150,000 meteors an hour seen in 1966... [In related news, insurance] firms are being warned of an astronomical line-up of planets which could wreak havoc on Earth... on May 5, 2000 – the Earth, sun, moon and five planets come into line for the first time since the Pharaohs ruled Egypt. Some experts fear the gravitational pull will be so intense that it will cause major natural disasters... [G]eological evidence suggests... the... 4000BC... line-up... was accompanied by tidal waves, earthquakes and volcanic activity. The line-up of Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune in 1812 came as the Northern Hemisphere suffered freezing summer temperatures, wrecking agriculture and causing widespread famine. In 1962, during a five-planet alignment, 20,000 died in an Iranian earthquake... Normally cautious insurance companies are taking the threat so seriously they have consulted a leading risk expert... But N[Z] astronomers and geophysicists rubbish... [the] Doomsday claims. “The effects of this line-up will be minimal,” said[a] seismologist... of the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences... [T]he Auckland Observatory, said the tide might be a few millimetres higher but added: “It will be a non-event. We had a line-up of seven planets in December and no one noticed anything untoward.”

“The Bible... said countless times the generation that sees Israel come back in and regain their land after being dispersed throughout the world will be the generation that knows... this is the end time.” ...there’s a name given to this ominous event – The Three Days of Darkness... A husband and wife living in Texas take the warnings... with deadly seriousness... [and] plan to survive... “There’s no predictions that say... any place will be completely safe...” However[, urban]... areas may deteriorate into chaos. [So their] advice is to move into the country... and return to nature... They have buried their means of survival – a fibreglass bomb shelter – in a remote and secret location, hidden away from prying eyes... where a year’s stockpile of food and water awaits them. “The modern disaster shelter is designed not only for... some type of exploding device falling on it but... [also] for gunfire, earthquakes, tornadoes... There isn’t any question in our minds that we are going to need this. The question is when. Better to be five years too early than one day too late.” ...Drawing upon the technology of prefabricated housing, modern bomb shelters can be manufactured in factories, then trucked over back roads... The cost of a shelter... is less than that of a luxury automobile. But will we need to tunnel beneath the earth in order to survive? More importantly, if we do, what kind of world will be waiting for us when we crawl out from under the ground?

...let the Sun shine in... this is the dawning of the age of... harmony and understanding sympathy and trust... peace... and love... - Age of Aquarius

Astrology ages occur every 2000 years... and we’re on the cusp, coming out of the Age of Pisces, the age of thought, religion and philosophy[, into the]... Age of Aquarius[, which] is about organisation on a global scale... [and] old systems giving way to a kind of new world order.

Final orders... [please], I have it on good authority the world is about to end. Trust me, this hotline to the truth wasn’t from a trenchcoated bloke on Queen St with an END IS NIGH sandwich board. It came from primetime television – the fountain of all wisdom – on something called *Mysteries Of The Millennium*... The show’s first words were (from someone of deadly serious countenance) “the end of the world is coming in the next 20 years.” Pretty unequivocal... Most confusing for the viewer, however, was the exact manner... - 1997

Is it the end of the world, or simply the end of the world as we know it?

“Is this the beginning of the end, sir?” “No, just the end of the beginning.”

Evolution is the only way forward, so just when we think we’ve found perfection we begin anew.

A new religious movement... [called] *Children of God*... also known as the Family of Love... emerged out of the Jesus Movement... in California in 1968... It opposed the materialism of both the capitalist and communist systems and believed that, in the millennium that would soon appear, those two systems would disappear and the future would be left to the Children of God and like-minded godly people.

Once the earth was established, the gods created [humans]. Three times the human race became too self-opinionated and had to be destroyed, at about 2000-year intervals. They were destroyed by the fire, the waters, the winds. Now the present human race, who were made by the gods from the beloved maize plant which is still the sustenance of mankind, are being tested. The end of this universe will come from a terrible earthquake. Whether after this fourth sun, the earth will be re-populated by another better race remains to be experienced in the future.

The concept of a future Golden Age – either one recoverable from the past or a completely new age – has... been present in some religious traditions. It is partly bound up with the idea of a future millennium at the end of this age, to be introduced by a figure-to-come: the Jewish Messiah, the Second Coming of Christ, the Muslim Madhi, Maitreya Buddha, or the Kalkin avatara of Vishnu.

Every 25,000 years our Solar System completes one orbit around Alcione, the central sun of the Pleiades, a constellation at a distance of approximately 400 light years from our Sun. In 1961, science discovered a photon belt which encircles the Pleiades... Our sun, and Earth with it, is entering this photon belt between now and... 2011. This photon belt is the cosmic ‘trigger force’ to shift Humanity from third level into fourth level density, from Separation into Oneness. Thus, the magnitude and beauty of this event Earth is preparing for defies any description. Earth and

Humanity are aligning for its birth into Christ-consciousness – the union of Star Light with Matter – the marriage of Spirit with separated Selves. As the night transforms into a new day, so is the Age of Darkness giving way to the Age of Light... the greatest event ever to grace... Earth and her children. Terms such as New Age, Superconsciousness etc., are but different labels for... the same occurrence... the ‘end-time’ of the prophecies...

History is held to be divided into distinct periods or dispensations in which God works in a particular way. The present, sixth dispensation, the age of the Church, will end with the Second Coming of Christ.

Seventh-day Adventists... believe... in the imminent second coming of Christ... and... hold... with sabbatarian groups, that the 7th day, not the 1st, is the Sabbath specified in the Bible.

...the... movement began in the USA with William Miller (1781 – 1849) who predicted Christ’s return (and the end of the world) in 1843-4... Seventh Day Adventists... believe that the Second Coming of Christ is delayed only by a failure to keep the Sabbath...

What do you get for a 6000-year-old planet that has everything[but peace]? ...A 17th century biblical scholar... calculated that the Earth began at 6pm, October 23, 4004 BC, which makes today the globe’s 6000th birthday... Bishop James Ussher... also noted that the Earth would end after 6000 years... Ussher announced his findings after meticulously calculating his way backward... [I]t is interesting to note that modern scientists [have] found significant dates with a similar pattern to the 4004BC date. These include... 40,004BC, the date humans migrated from Africa; 400,004BC, modern humans evolved from Neanderthals... 400,000,004BC, the year our ancestors crawled out of the sea – although some of us remain like fish out of water... [F]or the world to be 6000 this year it must be remembered there was no year zero. Hence 4004 plus 1997 minus one equals 6000.

...HEAVEN and Earth were created simultaneously 6000 years ago... at... 9am. That was the view propounded by British mathematician Dr John Lightfoot... well before Darwin published his work on evolution. No one has ever established in which universal time zone [Lightfoot had] been researching, or why the creation clock had apparently been ticking 510 minutes before the momentous event, but Lightfoot was confirming the birth date identified by another Cambridge [fellow]... James Ussher who based his work on the number of generations in the Old Testament. - 1997

...ancient scholars tell the story of the natural order in the Old Testament. It is told allegorically. For example, the “day” mentioned is only a symbol of a period of time – not 24 hours as time is measured today... Geologists... divide... earth’s history into six major periods of time, or *eras*.

It is possible that, in God (or universal) time, life on Earth has existed for just one second. According to some Hindus, one God day equals 8 to 10 billion years (r:p1121, ln26-7). However, what if we combine the first and last books of the Bible to get the proposition that one God day equals 1000 human years? If we then take Jan. 1, 4004BC, to be the start of the 1ST DAY, when ‘God created darkness and light’ (in that order), the day ended Dec. 31st, 3005BC; the 2ND DAY ended Dec. 31st, 2005BC; the 3RD DAY ended Dec. 31st, 1005BC; the 4TH DAY ended Dec. 31st, 5BC; the 5TH DAY ended Dec. 31st, 995AD; and the 6TH DAY, when ‘God created humans’, ended Dec. 31st, 1995. This would mean that the 7TH DAY, when ‘God ended its work’, began Jan. 1, 1996 – or Jan. 1, 1997, if we don’t count the year 0 that goes between 1BC and 1AD (‘the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and Babylonians all evolved number systems, although none had a zero, which was introduced from India by way of Arab mathematicians in about the 6th c. AD and allowed a place-value system to be devised on which the decimal system is based’). Either way, the creation of humans has only recently been completed.

God created humans in Genesis 1:27 and again in Genesis 2:7! Clearly, Genesis 2:7 and everything after it picks up the story DURING the 6th day (i.e., prior to the commencement of the 7th day – Genesis 2:1-3) – but let’s assume that the second creation is an allegory for the people who survive God’s *Day of Judgment* (i.e., those who are like God – r:p945, ln43). Compared to pre-20th century cities, late 20th-century cities are, in many respects, heaven-like – consider their glass tower blocks (r:p1125, ln65) and electric lighting (r:p1126, ln30). It could be part of God’s plan to only destroy bad humans, leaving the cities intact for the good humans (who might, for example, number 144,000 people – r:p1126, ln16 – which, during 1997, equals 1-out-of-every-7 people living in Auckland; or 1-out-of-every-40,000 people living on Earth). The chosen survivors could then repopulate the Earth – unless they have become immortal, as Jehovah’s Witnesses and similar sects anticipate, in which case they won’t need to have sex (at least for the purpose of reproduction).

THE first hint that the secret of immortality might have been discovered emerged with the “masters of the universe”: among the stockbrokers on... Wall Street. A couple of weeks ago they began to call the Washington office of *Science*... wanting to know more about rumours of the discovery of a wonder substance that could stop the ageing of human cells. They had heard the journal was about to publish definitive evidence that... telomerase could make... cells continue to thrive and divide into new cells long after they would normally have decayed... [– meaning] it could be possible to extend the life span of human cells indefinitely[(‘human bodies were designed to live long enough to produce off-spring; once their job is done, their body becomes redundant’)]... From the prospect of eternal life the brokers saw a killing to be made. A... stock market... company called Geron... held the patents on telomerase... As the news leaked, a press conference was abandoned and *Science* lifted the embargo on the research. “Scientists find clue to the secret of eternal life”, said the headlines. Others described the Peter Pan effect that could deliver the fountain of youth... Shares in Geron soared... Had scientists really found the anti-ageing elixir that has been sought-after for centuries? Immortality was, for the moment, confined to a test tube, but experts held out the potential of extending life spans to well beyond the biblical three-score years and 10... Understanding how a cell grows old goes back to the 1960s when... a... pioneer of the study of ageing, introduced the concept of a cellular clock... [that] ticked away as the cell divided over and over... [A]fter about 100 divisions the clock stopped and the cell went into a sleep-like state. At this point it was neither dead nor actively dividing. [The pioneer] called it cellular senescence. The opposite to this state was when a cell, taken from the body and grown in the test tube, divided continuously. Scientists dubbed them “immortal cells” and the most famous are cancer cells taken from... a Baltimore [resident]. Billions of her cells are alive in laboratories around the world, continuing to divide profusely, and through them... [the resident, who] died in 1951 at the age of 31... has attained a curious sort of immortality. How to transform a senescent cell into an immortal cell, without making it run out of control into a deadly cancer, occupied the minds of a succession of [post-’60s scientists]. Among them was... [someone] who became fascinated by the role played by the structures at the tips of chromosomes called telomeres. These can be likened to the plastic tips of shoelaces and are designed to stop the chromosomes from “fraying” when cells divide... [The scientist and an assistant] constructed a theory that the cellular clock... was in fact the telomere... [and] proposed that as the cell grew old with each division, the telomere shortened until it came to a point where it would not allow the cell to divide cleanly any more... They then suggested that the clock could effectively be stopped by an enzyme... [whose] presence in a cell prevents the telomere from shortening... They showed that telomerase occurs in 85% of cancerous tumours as well as immortal cells growing in test tubes. The implications became obvious: block telomerase and it might help stop cancer cells proliferating; add telomerase to ordinary cells and it might extend their life span. The scientists and their backers were sitting on a potential goldmine and Geron was established to exploit their ideas and raise money for further research. The breakthrough they were waiting for came last year when other scientists managed to isolate and clone the gene for the active part of telomerase... [which allows scientists] to transfer the gene to cells that would

not normally produce the enzyme... Other scientists, however, were not convinced... [A] professor of zoology at the University of Idaho and an expert on ageing, said the research had been oversold. It showed only that telomerase was important for maintaining cell division, which is not the same as keeping cells, or people, young. "Very few people die because their cells don't divide any more. They die because their cells won't stop dividing in cancer,"... Britain's leading expert on the theory of ageing at Manchester University, said cellular senescence was just one aspect of ageing. For example, telomeres don't get shorter in brain cells. Ageing of the brain is probably due to the cells being damaged, causing a loss of function,"... At a recent gala to celebrate the 30th anniversary of... the "cellular clock"... [theory's] publication... an informal poll revealed that most scientists... no longer believed it was the key to ageing. Instead, scientists are pursuing different leads on why we grow old. Genes evidently play a role because experimental animals, such as fruit flies and worms, can be selectively bred to have long life spans. Fruit flies genetically engineered to have protection against harmful chemicals in the body (free radicals) can live up to twice as long as normal... The history for remedies for ageing in humans is littered with wild ideas such as injecting mashed monkey testicles, eating algae salads or (for [guys]) sleeping between two virgins. By comparison, the discovery of telomerase and its properties is a giant advance. But its first practical application is likely to be more prosaic, and perhaps more useful, than expanding life span. Geron is already researching ways to use telomerase for early diagnosis of cancer. Detect the enzyme and it may indicate cells turning cancerous. [Geron] is collaborating with drug companies on methods of making highly specific anti-cancer drugs that will kill the rapidly dividing cells in a tumour but leave healthy cells unharmed... [T]he Alliance for Ageing Research, a non-profit-making research body, said telomerase could be used to postpone old age. "This is not about engineering the 200-year-old... [person], but the potential for extending the health span of humans could be very far-reaching... [The research] raises the curtain on an era in which control of the process of ageing will be harnessed to human benefit..."

...death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. - Romans 5:14

Christian belief in immortality is due to *Genesis* 3:22. However, whereas the traditional Christian translation from Jewish into English says 'now, let the [hu]man take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever', at least one Jewish translation says 'let [hu]man'. Thus, the verse may refer to an individual ('adam, the Hebrew word for [hu]man, sounds like and may be related to the Hebrew word for soil or ground, *adamah* - see Gen. 2:7), or individuals, or it could mean the species.

By eating from the Tree of Knowledge, [the humans] had become... like the Unique One among us, meaning that [they] had become unique among the terrestrial ones, just as God is unique among the celestial ones, for now [the humans] can discriminate between good and bad, a quality not possessed by cattle and beasts. Because [the humans have] this unique ability to know good and evil, and [their] desire for sexual gratification had become enhanced, there was a new danger. If [the humans] kept the capacity to live forever, [they] might well spend all [their] days pursuing gratification and cast away intellectual growth and good deeds. [They] would fail to attain the spiritual bliss that God intended for [the]m.

...the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob... is not the God of the dead, but of the living. - St Matthew 22:32

With infinite variety, one generation makes a living commitment to the next.

While it is impossible - except in fantasy - for an individual human to literally become immortal (other than by living on in the memories of future generations), the ability to produce new generations means that it is theoretically possible for the human species to exist forever.

Nothing seems to kill me no matter how hard I try...

[The] *Christian concept of... [an] afterlife...* is enshrined in the credal statement 'I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting', which opposes all ideas of the survival of the soul alone, reincarnation, or extinction.

The belief in a soul helped make life on Earth more acceptable, even if hard, for life became then only an incident in a long journey.

Christians bury the dead so souls can one day be reunited with their resurrected bodies. While those dead were wrong to believe that they will literally come back to life then live forever, for as long as their graves (or at least their headstones) continue to exist, they will live *on in the memories of future generations!*

There are one million graves in the town's cemeteries and the... Colma... council is planning to tax each one \$US5... a year for eternity. Cemetery owners would have to pay that tax for everyone already buried on their grounds. That [will] double the present price of a funeral to \$6000. - 1996

The lavish lifestyle enjoyed by Malawi's former President Kamuzu Banda will follow him to the grave - in the form of a \$US37,000... coffin. The cost of the gold-plated coffin, imported from the U[S], has baffled many in impoverished Malawi. "Why spend so much money for [something] which will be put under the earth?" asked one. The official who bought the coffin said it had a 75-year guarantee. [□ 'In NZ, where 22,000 people (or 25% of the dead) are buried each year, a bottom-of-the-line casket costs \$300. "Of course, the higher the price, the higher the profit."']

... 'the death business is competing hard for our dollar', which partly explains why 'the Hollywood Memorial Park Cemetery - where some of the biggest names in movies are buried - has found a buyer interested in a futuristic use of history. A new corporation called Hollywood Forever Inc, won court approval in February to purchase the cemetery for the all-cash price of \$NZ690,000. The company says the acquisition will help it to market its major product - virtual-reality tombstones. These tombstones are not stone at all, but computer screens that flash messages or show home movies. The many tourists who visit the 100-year-old 25ha cemetery behind Paramount Studios will be able to visit kiosks or theatres to view computer-stored biographies of the dead.'

...A contribution to the World Wide Web keeps memories of [the] dead... alive. As a teenager, [the contributor thought it] 'd be great if people could go to a cemetery and press a button to see a video recording of what the... dead [person]... was like. The idea stuck when [the contributor] became an artist with an advertising agency, and was rekindled when his firm started offering web sites. The result: World Gardens, a virtual cemetery which lets loved ones pay their respects to the departed. "The... site offers a lot more than an obituary. Unless you are really famous, your obit is really short. This is highly personalised. Someone in the family gets to write the story. World Gardens is not a place of death, but a place to celebrate the life... of those we love..." A friend or relative of the deceased can buy a "tombstone"... for \$54. In addition to sharing normal obit-type information, photos can be posted as well as information about the funeral service and even *Bible* passages. Visitors to a gravesite can send a "virtual flower" arrangement... along with their thoughts. The page remains active for three months, then a plaque is placed in the site's "mausoleum."

...The family of a [body] buried at a Lower Hutt cemetery are upset that a council mix-up has led to a plaque being placed on the wrong plot... Mr Taputoro died in June last year and many people travelled a long way for the [plaque's unveiling]... But they found no stone on the grave, as had been promised by the stonemason. The stone was found next to an empty plot, three graves along... The funeral director... said the sexton had given the stonemason the wrong information. The incident gave him little confidence in Hutt City Council records of where people were buried. A... spokes[person] said yesterday that... [the] council... was 100[%] sure the mistake was a one-off. "It won't happen again..." The council would pay for Mr Taputoro's plaque and to have it put in the right place. It was also apologising to the family and would consider compensation for travel and accommodation costs... [F]ollowing the discovery in 1995 that 40 headstones were in the wrong place, the council had employed a researcher to triple-check the location of all graves and develop a computer database... [● Cemeteries] are clamping down on the use of natural rocks for personalised headstones in a move welcomed by stonemasons. Each year, the Christchurch City Council is approached by families who want to use a boulder, with a bronze plaque, to mark a grave... Until now the council has agreed but is about to toughen its policy because it says the rocks don't last... [They] tend to weather, crumble and grow moss and lichen. But granite was resilient to the elements and recommended by the Master Monumental Masons Association... [Its] president... said the push towards using granite only was not an attempt to protect the stonemasons' profits... [T]he council will... still... consider... individual requests... The country's largest cemetery, Waikumete in West Auckland, only allows headstones made of marble and granite to legal specifications... and... they were... kept in rows... looking uniform and tidy... North Shore Memorial Park at Albany also rejects rock monuments... [O]ther requests rejected included a V8 engine for a headstone and motorbike handles. They were considered too much trouble to maintain once families stopped regular visits. Anything goes... at Wellington's 100-year-old Karori cemetery.

...The spirit of a... recently buried [mother] is expressing unhappiness about partying at a neighbouring grave in the Maunu Cemetery at Whangarei... The family is considering exhuming the body and having it reburied at Totara North... [T]he family was also furious at the removal of toanga from the grave, especially a 1.5m-tall figurine treasured by [their mother. "Mum] is visiting some of her grandchildren and telling them [about her unhappiness] and this is upsetting the children." ...on Christmas Day when members of the family went to... [the] grave there was a party at a nearby grave including loud music and alcohol. The next day [the family] found butts of marijuana cigarettes around the grave. The family had tolerated it because "everyone has a right to grieve in their own way. We said nothing even though this offended us." ...[the neighbouring grave's widow, who claims to have] spent most days since the burial at the cemetery with her three children... admitted there had been drinking at the grave but said it was "not hard-out... Sure, some of my husband's mates have... had a few social drinks with him and played some of his favourite songs but that's all... this is a public place and we should be allowed to do what we like. I've paid for my husband to be here..." [The widow] denied that articles had been taken from graves. A Whangarei District Council spokes[person]... said a security firm had been employed to patrol the cemetery.

...[a grieving mother who found a tortured tethered chicken next to her son's Waikumete Cemetery grave wants other cultures to respect all mourners. "Part of its back had all its feathers plucked and cuts, like it had been sacrificed. Those responsible are mourning just like I am but when it comes to hurting other animals it isn't on." Her husband complained to the SPCA who collected the chicken which had broken free and died by the time they arrived. No charges have been laid even though another mutilated chicken has since been left at the grave. The mother – who's 19-year-old son Jamie was killed in a car crash on March 12 – says the Asian family also leaves food on the grave, which attracts rabbits, rats and dogs, scatters rice around and burns paper money. A spokesperson for Auckland's Hong Kong Information Centre says putting food at the grave is a Chinese custom like westerners laying flowers or Buddhists burning joss sticks. Scattering rice on graves is part of a ceremony much like Hallowe'en, and money is burned for the spirit to spend. The spokesperson is unaware of live animals being left by graves but an Auckland University Chinese historian says it could be a family's own interpretation of the custom.]

...every society has found a distinctive way to say goodbye... The Merina tribe of Madagascar... give their ancestors a party by exhuming them several years after death, [and] the mat that wrapped the corpse is considered an object of fertility. To have sex on it is highly prized.

...As creepy as exhumation may seem to most of us, the... Ministry of Health... last year received 37 applications... Most were approved... [although the ministry]'s disinterment guidelines for legally raising the dead have a gruesome footnote: "It is not usual to grant licences between one month and one year after burial because of decomposition during this period. If a body has been embalmed, this limitation will not apply."

...Soviet hero Vladimir Lenin[']s... body... is to have another makeover later this month. Every 18 months... Lenin's mausoleum closes for several weeks to enable embalmers to thoroughly refresh the body... [S]cientists immerse Lenin's body in a tub of chemicals for several weeks to hydrate it.

...Lenin's body, like his legacy, may live on for centuries. A scientist who helps in the annual embalming of the Soviet founder's body has been quoted as saying the mummified figure can be kept in good condition as long as the regular treatments continue... Since the Soviet collapse, the Russian Government has considered the possibility of burying Lenin and taking away his goose-stepping guards, but nothing more has been done. [● 'Stalin's mummified body was on display with Lenin's in the Red Square tomb until 1961, when it was moved to the cemetery within the Kremlin walls.'

...57% of Russians believe it is time to bury Vladimir Lenin, who died in 1924 and whose embalmed body has been on show in Red Square ever since. Before his death Lenin asked to be buried next to his mother in St Petersburg.' However, 'Stalin wanted Lenin's body preserved for all eternity to stand as a symbol of the lasting power of an ideology which, ironically, was against religious symbols.' In related news,] a writer and editor for Marvel Comics in America has been immortalised in print. After... Mark Gruenwald... died [his body] was cremated and his ashes... combined with ink[, which]... was used to print the 12-part comic series Squadron Supreme as a single volume. The 100-page book goes on sale... this week.

...Vikings sent their fallen warriors off on burning ships to Valhala. Now... [there's] a new way... to bid a fond farewell... Space, the final frontier[, could become the] final resting place. That's what [a] company, Celestis, is promising. It means Celestis will send your remains into orbit. "If you, or a loved one, have ever longed to journey in space, now you can buy that dream." For \$4800 that is... Once in space the... 1/4 ounces of personal dust... will orbit the planet at an altitude of 350 nautical miles. They'll stay up there for roughly a year before a fiery return to Earth. The idea was irresistible to [the person] whose late husband... created the series Star Trek. His ashes will soon boldly go where no ashes have gone before.

...Timothy Leary, the 1960s guru of LSD and 1990s icon of the Internet, was to take the ultimate trip today when his ashes were blasted into space with... Spain's first satellite... Leary... a... former Harvard professor who... died of prostate cancer aged 75 last year... urged a generation of [USers] to get high on LSD so they could "turn on, tune in and drop out." ...The cremated remains of Leary, whose final request before dying was for "one last far-out trip," will be launched into orbit with those of *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry and 22 other space enthusiasts for the world's first space funeral. "This is a way for people... to participate in the opening of the frontier and connect with the star-filled night sky," said... [the] head of Celestis, the Texan company organising the venture... The lipstick-sized capsules containing seven grams of remains will be released into space and will orbit the Earth for anywhere between 18 months and 10 years before gravity pulls them back into the atmosphere where they will burn up in a flash of light. Family and friends accompanied the ashes of their loved ones to Madrid before they were transported to the Canary Islands for take-off... [In local news, the] funeral directors' national organisation is trying to persuade members to stop collecting bodies for no charge after a sudden death. By law, when a person dies suddenly the body has to be taken to a mortuary for an inquiry and the police pay removal costs... Timaru police say two local funeral service companies... owned by the same directors, have been collecting bodies for... [them] for no charge. The director... did not wish to discuss the contract with police. His business did 70[%] of the funerals in the region and it was important to keep that advantage. In the past, Timaru police paid an hourly rate and a mileage rate for body removals – a trip to Mt Cook used to cost about

\$1000... The president of the Funeral Directors Association... was concerned about the motives behind offering a free service. "The fact that they aren't charging is a way of encouraging touting for business. It's obviously [done] to make contact with the families first to try to take advantage of a situation that is grossly against our code of ethics,"... Several local funeral directors agreed with their association's stance against free collections and feel it is unfair trading... The police removal contract, which expired last October, would be up for tender in the next few weeks. - 1997

A Florida lawsuit says a university, a funeral home and a body-removal company illegally allowed a dead... body to be used for embalming classes... Miami firm Robles Law Centre... said Professional Transport Systems took Madeline Post's body to Lynn University, where it was embalmed by students, despite stipulation in the Posts' contract that [Madeline] was to be cremated. The transporter's fee for providing the bodies enabled him to undercut competitors... [L]awyers say other funeral services may have similarly mishandled as many as 600 corpses.

...A crematorium operator in Georgia was arrested after dozens of decomposing corpses were found stacked in storage sheds and scattered in woods... When investigators asked... why the bodies weren't cremated, [t]he... 28-year-old... employee... told them the crematory incinerator wasn't working... Officials said the number of bodies found could be in the hundreds... Some of the bodies have been delivered to the Tri-State Crematory within the last few days, and some bore hospital toe tags. Others had apparently been there for as long as three years... Some of the bodies were found in rusty coffins, which could be up to 10 years old... that appeared to have been buried and disinterred... Georgia[s] chief medical examiner... said authorities suspect [the operator] may have provided ashes from wood chips to clients who asked for their loved ones' ashes.

...Customers are flocking to an American company that turns human remains into diamonds. LifeGem Memorials has patented a 16-week process that involves purifying ash at 3000C before further heating and pressuring into a diamond, ranging in cost from £2500 to £14,000... The news comes amid a boom for crematoriums in Britain, a rise that can be attributed to escalating burial costs... 70[% of Brits are now]... cremated.

...Sydney police are investigating a blunder in which a funeral parlour cremated [a guy's body that] was supposed to be buried and placed the body of a centenarian [gal] in his coffin instead. The mix-up made by Sydney's Caring Funerals was confirmed when authorities exhumed the body of 100-year-old Daisy Jane Jones, who was supposed to be cremated. [In local news, 'one of society's unspoken procedures hit the news following fallout between two families. Zyon Pauling, aged 21, and his 27-day-old baby, Victoria Rose, were buried in the same Masterton grave after dying in a car accident in 1995. Then the baby's mother was granted a disinterment licence, meaning both bodies would have to be dug up. The decision appalled Zyon's family. A bout of legal punch and counter-punch resulted in a High Court injunction, on the eve of the baby's planned exhumation, putting the move on hold.']

...The mother of a [body] buried next to the soon-to-be exhumed remains of Zyon Pauling and Tori Williams... [- who] were killed in a 1995 car crash... [-] is worried that her son's remains... [which may've] been shifted by water flowing under the cemetery... could be accidentally disturbed.

...A CEMETERY is on the move. But there is no mystery plot. More than 100 graves will be dug up and shifted from the 100-year-old Matamau cemetery, near Dannevirke... to make room for improvements to a dangerous corner on SH2.

...Graveyards in Johannesburg are running out of space as the Aids epidemic takes its toll. Some cemeteries have been closed... while others are nearing capacity... The problem is expected to get even worse, as Aids-related deaths in South Africa are predicted to increase from about 120,000 [annually at present]... to between 354,000 and 383,000 in 2005... Cemetery authorities were considering drastic measures including multiple "stacking" burials in the same plot and recycling of graves, where corpses would be dug up after 20 years to be replaced with others.

...Latvia's capital city, Riga, will make a killing – so to speak – from reselling gravestones and plots... for... as much as 75 lats (\$[NZ]52.67) each.

...If you've given up the search for a long-lost uncle's grave, software... may be just what you need... Cemtrack... incorporates aerial shots of... cemeteries and enables staff to pinpoint where a person is buried and which burial sites are reserved... At Waikaraka Cemetery, where nearly 20,000 people are buried, visitors regularly return to the office unable to follow the A4 map... [Cemtrack] will also make cemetery planning easier.

...[the person] who initially pushed for the idea... is confident eco-burials will catch on in Waitakere City, even if people are a little slow in coming forward. Only two people have been buried in a special 20-plot section of Waikumete Cemetery since the scheme was launched... [4 years ago. But the pusher] is still getting calls from a number of people keen to include the eco-burial option in their wills. The concept sees bodies buried without embalming in a biodegradable coffin. A tree is planted on the plot... as a lasting, living memorial... instead of the traditional plaque or headstone.

...A 22-month-old girl suffered a broken ankle when a headstone fell on her during a... visit to relatives' graves... [at] Christchurch's Memorial Park cemetery... Cemetery staff declined to comment... The toddler had come out of plaster around a broken wrist only the day before, [her] grandfather... said yesterday. Moments before the incident... his daughter had almost damaged her ankle after stepping in a hole... [■ In May, a 9]-year-old was killed during a cemetery visit in Ohio when [the boy] jumped on a grave and the tombstone fell on his head.

...A... Wairoa plumber... who unearthed a skeleton... in a shallow grave... "ran like a robber's dog" when [the plumber] saw the skull... "We saw the legs poking out first but did not realise what it was until we unearthed the skull. But 'come to think of it all the earth is a graveyard, you never know when you're walking over prehistoric bones and heads']"... Police believe the skeleton is old and there are no suspicious circumstances... [The] plumber and drainlayer for 23 years... had never come across anything like that before.

...certified dead and lying on an embalming table... Hine Hou "Susie" Kaiwahia, aged 61... bled heavily for four minutes when embalming began, and her head moved after being sprayed with disinfectant, Wellington Coroner's Court was told yesterday... The coroner... adjourned the inquest until next year because of the unavailability of counsel. The doctor who signed the death certificate was expected to be the first to give evidence.

...Police are seeking members of a goth-style group of heavy-metal... fans after a Christchurch grave was dug up and a... skull removed last week.

...A fourth person has been charged over the desecration of a grave at Waimairi Cemetery in Christchurch... [In international news, the] body of Italy's most powerful banker has been stolen and the thieves are demanding more than \$8 million from his family for its return.

...THE sexton who stole 81 rings from bodies at the New Plymouth crematorium has admitted his... "despicable"... actions... had devastated his family and offended the community... [T]he 62-year-old sexton... will be sentenced on Wednesday... After [hi]s arrest, the police set up a viewing room for relatives to identify the rings... [T]he task... was difficult because many were similar-looking gold-bands – only eight had been matched. Rings that could not be identified would be cremated in private ceremonies throughout Taranaki... [The sexton] had worked for the New Plymouth crematorium for seven years... [P]eople in the funeral business were horrified... A manager for an Auckland crematorium said sextons were responsible for the coffin after it was delivered to the crematorium by the funeral director... Funeral directors occasionally discussed with families the benefits of removing jewellery for keepsake purposes... [The 62-year-old], who made about \$2500 from selling the rings, would repay \$1200...

A... cattle-rancher in Montana took care of his heirs by installing an ATM in his tombstone... to make sure his grave had regular visitors.

...Some things in life just don't tot up... Every baby gets a free ticket into this world – yet it costs an arm and a leg to die! ...As of January 1... burial fees at Waikumete Cemetery have increased \$75 for the first time in four years... [The 3%] fee increase... covers inflation. One of the most upmarket choices for everlasting peace is to buy a plot on the cemetery's eastern berm for \$2850... [The cemetery's] manager... describes it as "some of the best real estate in Auckland" with sweeping views towards Rangitoto Island. Cheaper plots in other parts... – such as the lawn or the Hebrew and Muslim quarters – cost from \$1300 to \$1800... [The manager] says that compares reasonably well with other Auckland cemeteries. But the bills quickly mount up once you add digging fee... casket... memorial plaque or headstone, flowers and funeral service. Three out of four people choose to be cremated, [but]... even a modest, "no frills" cremation costs about \$1700 – ranging up to \$4000... Low income earners may be eligible for a means-tested grant from WINZ of around \$1200. But if you die in an accident, your family can seek ACC compensation worth around \$3000.

...There are fears that Waikumete Cemetery could become a huge drain on council coffers... [A Waitakere councillor] thinks the entire Auckland region should contribute towards looking after the 115-year-old cemetery, not just Waitakere City Council... It provides \$250,000 a year for maintenance at present. But that cost is likely to escalate in coming years as little more than weed control is being done in the oldest parts of the cemetery... [The councillor] told the works and services committee last Friday[that t]he government should pass legislation to impose a levy on other councils, so that Waikumete becomes a regional asset... The graveyard is the final resting place for more than 70,000 people and home to more than 500 species of plant. Burial space in the 108ha cemetery is expected to run out by the year 2031, when income from the sale of plots will grind to a halt. A memorial trust fund set up from the proceeds of land sold for residential development in Sunhill Park also pays for its upkeep.

...Graves are so overgrown at Waikumete... that elderly folk are taking to clearing the weeds themselves... [● Waitakere] City Council is looking to spend... \$525,000... on a new cremator at Waikumete... The three cremators date back to 1952. Two are expected to last no more than three years, while the third has broken down and is now being used for spare parts... Private operators today are allowed to provide the service, and the council is required to provide a cemetery within its district under the Burial and Cremation Act 1964. But it no longer has to provide a crematorium.

...A local funeral director[ha]s bid to set up a private crematorium... says one... Waitakere... councillor. Morrison Funeral directors has applied to the Auckland Regional Council for resource consent to discharge air contaminants from a crematorium at 239 Lincoln Rd. [The c]ouncillor... himself a former funeral director, says a private crematorium would threaten the financial viability of Waikumete's council-run crematorium... Morrison is one of two funeral directors in the west and represents a "substantial" chunk of business at Waikumete. Without this business the council faces closing or leasing out its crematorium, or expanding into the funeral business... [The councillor] says setting up in competition with private funeral directors may be the only way to offset the rates increase it would take to keep Waikumete's crematorium open.

...[The Far North may never get a crematorium, says a funeral director whose application to build one in Kaikohe was turned down as insensitive to all cultures. The proposal to build near a McDonald's food outlet prompted widespread community concern, said the council hearings committee chairperson'.]

...Funeral processions are becoming victims of road rage. Auckland funeral directors tired of vehicles cutting between hearses and mourners are encouraging family and friends to dispense with corteges and make their own way to cemeteries... It's not like the days when everyone would stop...

FAMILIES HAVE MORE SAY IN FUNERALS THESE DAYS Things are changing in the area of funerals and how they are conducted. A more personal approach is now sought by most people as opposed to the old-style funerals where funeral directors and clergy were in charge...

New firm plans funerals to die for FORGET churches and sombre hymns – when you get the country's wackiest funeral planners sending you to the next world, anything goes. *Lives Less Ordinary* has been set up... to cater for those unwilling to endure a "factory funeral" [by an Aucklander whose motto is]: "Have a great life and top it off with a great death." Already, one client has planned a send-off based on the ballet *Swan Lake*. The casket will have a swan's head on the front and the church will be filled with dry ice, to give the illusion of a swan floating on a lake... "...Whatever people want we can try to arrange. But it'll always be tasteful, and never illegal." One [client] wanted his pallbearers to be strippers, but... changed his plans... when [it was pointed out that] his family might be offended... L[LO] also send reminders from beyond the grave. "...it could... be a chance for someone to have the last say." Like the [client] who had a dispute with his neighbour over a tree which was eventually cut down... [The client] wants a tree sent to his former neighbour every year on the anniversary of his death... [T]he idea came to... [the Aucklander after attending] the funerals for [3] friends... "They'd led full, wonderful lives but their funerals didn't reflect that at all..." ...So how would [the Aucklander] like to be farewelled? There'll be plenty of music from her favourite artist... champagne and a natural, eco-burial. "I like the idea of nourishing the earth."

...One of the absolutes of life is you will die. For some, where they are buried does not matter; for others it's the most important decision. One of the most sacred objects to the people of Tainui is their burial place and mountain, Taupiri. Royals and chiefs lie side by side other members of the tribe. So sacred is the mountain, members of the tribe never pass it without some form of acknowledgment... to... remember their ancestors... On the eve of Tainui signing their deed of settlement in 1995, more than 100 members met at Taupiri at midnight to sit with their ancestors, many of whom had fought for the return of the land, to quietly... share the moment with them... [One] Tainui descendant... said... "Taupiri plays a big part in my life because I know when it is my time to go I will be surrounded by those I love and will be remembered by those I leave behind."

...Moses the servant of the LORD died... in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD[, who]... buried him in a valley... over against Beth-peor: but no [person] knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. - Deuteronomy 34

Fortunately for Moses, the lack of a known sepulchre hasn't prevented him from being remembered by (i.e, becoming immortal to) subsequent generations.

The Epic of Gilgamesh [(‘a Babylonian poem named after its Sumerian hero’ – is about humanity)’s search for the meaning of life... i[t]s futile quest for physical immortality, and ...i[t]s acceptance of the philosophy that the only human immortality lay in doing great deeds. - Guardians of the Universe?

HUMANITY'S HOT 100... [is] the argument-provoking list compiled by *Life* magazine, in the first of what is sure to be myriad attempts during the next two years to isolate the events and people who have shaped us in the past as we move towards millennium madness... A team of two dozen consulting scores of experts judged Thomas Edison – inventor of the telegraph and talking pictures – as the most important person of the past 1000 years... But there are some notable omissions and the order of the list has caused some immediate irritation, if not exactly consternation... The criterion used was that those selected had to "change more than just a corner of the world...". The magazine conceded an "embarrassing paradox" – the list is overwhelming "[guy-oriented] and pale", with all but 17 of those included being of European extraction and with only 10 [gals featuring]... There are no N[Zers or AUS]ns on the list... [T]he magazine ranked Christopher Columbus... [2nd]; then protestant reformer Martin Luther; and astronomer and physicist Galileo... At five, there is... Leonardo da Vinci; at six Isaac Newton... at seven, circumnavigator Ferdinand Magellan; at eight... Louis Pasteur; at nine, Charles Darwin... and at 10, Thomas Jefferson... Shakespeare comes in at 11... before Napoleon Bonaparte and Adolf Hitler... Henry Ford... [comes in at 15, followed by] Sigmund Freud... Karl Marx... [is at 18, just ahead of] Nicolaus Copernicus... Albert Einstein [is at 21, ahead of Mohandas Gandhi, but behind] Orville & Wilber Wright... Ludwig van Beethoven [comes in at 33, behind Rene Descartes but ahead of Thomas Aquinas and] Abraham Lincoln... Among those who have shaped recent history, there are [South Africa's President, who at 91, follows]... Walt Disney... Among the events that *Life* ranks as shaping the millennium, there is the world's first... application of imagination... the... novel, *Tale of Genji*, in 1008... and 100 years later the development of gunpowder weapons... the first known restaurants (1120)... the birth of fashion (1350)... public banking (1407), the brewing of coffee (1450), the first slaves brought to the New World (1509)... and the bottling of Coke (1886). - 1997

NAZI dictator Adolf Hitler... who triggered a global war that killed nearly 50 million people, is the century's... "most significant person – good or evil"... [The] failed Austrian street artist and beer hall agitator who died at 56 by his own hand in Berlin's ruins after vowing a 1000-year Nazi reign, topped a national survey of more than 100 US history departments... The historians [also saw WW2] as the century's central event, ahead of [WW1 and] the 1917 Russian Revolution... space exploration [came in at] sixth place.

People can become immortal for bad deeds. The most infamous figure of all, however, is a fictional one – though some people still doubt that (‘the greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world it didn’t exist’) and plenty of individuals have imagined themselves to be an incarnation of this entity!

[Aleister] Crowley... became interested in the occult while an undergraduate at Cambridge at the time of the ‘magic revival’ of the late 19th century, and was for a time a member of the Order of the Golden Dawn... Expelled for extreme practices, [Crowley] founded his own order, the Silver Star, and travelled widely, settling for several years in Sicily with a group of disciples at the Abbey of Thelema... Rumours of drugs, orgies and magical ceremonies involving the sacrifice of babies culminated in his expulsion from Italy. In 1921 a series of newspaper articles brought... the notoriety [Crowley craved – Crowley] liked to be known as ‘the great beast’ and ‘the wickedest [person] alive’ and certainly many who associated with him died tragically, including his wife and child... [Incidentally,] Christian and... Jewish... post-biblical literature... develops the idea of[the] demonic or fallen angels mentioned in Genesis 6.

In traditional Catholic belief every human being has a guardian angel. The existence of angels was reasserted by the Pope in 1986... The devil, or Satan... the supreme spirit of evil... in Jewish, Christian and Muslim theology... is mentioned only in the more recently written books of the Old Testament... Jesus recognized as a reality the kingdom of evil, of which Satan or Beelzebub was the prince. In the Middle Ages the devil in popular superstition assumed the attributes of the horned fertility gods of paganism, and was regarded as the god of witches.[Furthermore, it was commonly believed that people who were physically or mentally ill were possessed (so a hole would be drilled in the victim’s skull – usually causing death – to let the evil spirit escape).] The belief in a personal devil was strong during the Reformation, and the movement’s leader Luther regarded himself as the object of a personal Satanic persecution. With the development of liberal Protestantism... came a strong tendency to deny the existence of a positive spirit of evil, and to explain the devil as merely a personification. However, the traditional conception was never abandoned by... Catholic[s]...

The word “devil” is derived from the Greek *diabolos* (“slanderer”), while “Satan” is taken from the Hebrew word *shatan* (“adversary”)... [T]he Old Testament concept of Sheol as the abode of the dead involves no ideas of punishment or connection with Satan... The first clear reference to Satan... appears in the Book of Job. There, however, [Satan] is represented as the accuser who is admitted into the presence of God with the heavenly host and who tests [humans], with the permission of God. Neither the name Lucifer nor the account of the fallen angels appears in the Old Testament, although New Testament statements such as those in Jude 6 and II Peter 2:4, appear to refer to such a tradition. The fall of Lucifer is an important part of Christian teachings, for it explains the origin of the Devil and depicts evil as prideful disobedience to Divine Will... The early Christians identified all pagan gods and spirits with the Devil and thus considered their worship devil worship. This tendency has continued to the present in Christian missionary work. Baptism... often includes a ritual of exorcism with the individual forswearing the service of Satan... During the Middle Ages... witches... were thought to gather at “witches’ Sabbaths” to worship, by means of obscene rites, the Devil in the form of a black goat. Another example of devil worship or Satanism was the Black Mass... a blasphemous performance of the[Catholic] Mass... The Devil was the subject of many medieval legends, the central theme of which was the diabolic pact: the Devil promises wealth, power, youth, or beauty to a... [human] in exchange for the sale of his or her soul after a given term, usually seven years. The pact was signed in blood. As proof of such a pact, witches were thought to have a “Devil’s mark” on their bodies. The intervention of the Devil in everyday life was felt to be a concrete reality, and such a pact could be an explanation for the worldly success of some... and the failure of others. Furthermore, it was believed that the Devil could be conjured up easily by drawing his picture or speaking his name. Thus, many innocuous substitute names were developed, such as the dickens and Mr. Scratch. Many famous persons were believed to have had contact with the Devil and... been tempted by him, a frequent theme in the legends of medieval saints... While folkloric representations of the Devil may be humorous at times in the way they manifest the triumph of good over evil and the dangers of sin, the medieval view of the Devil was utterly serious. It formed the central concept in the activities of the Inquisition... In 1489 two German Dominican monks... published the *Witches’ Hammer*... which... showed how to make witches confess their dealings with the Devil. The... Devil is also evident in European folklore and folk customs. In Austria [the Devil] accompanies St. Nicholas on December 6, to punish wicked children, while the saint rewards the good ones... Representations of dragons in folk pageantry are also interpreted as references to the Devil.

Islamic theology is rich in references to Iblis, the personal name of the devil, who is also known as... ‘aduw Allah (“Enemy of God”). In the Qur’an, Iblis first appears in the story of the creation of the world. [Iblis] alone of the angels refuses God’s order to bow before Adam... [Iblis] is then cursed by God; his punishment is to come on the Day of Judgment, but until then [Iblis] is empowered to tempt the unfaithful (but not true believers). Iblis next appears as the tempter of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden... The devil was also an important figure in certain syncretic religions. In Gnosticism the devil was often called the Demiurge (the Creator) and in Manichacism the Prince of Darkness, as well as other names.

Spawn... [is] yet another... movie that has sprung from the pages of a modern comic... that’s going to give the medium a bad name. No, not films, but the source material. Those picture-laden volumes that line the shelves of those stores frequented seemingly only by [guys] who are either still growing into – or never grew out of – the comic-book habit. *Spawn*... is... super-agent Al Simmons who, after dying on the job, strikes a lopsided deal with Satan – [Al] gets to live, kind of, and see his beloved wife occasionally... if [Al] leads the... devil’s army in his world-wrecking campaign.

...IN a country renowned for brutal murders going back to Jack the Ripper, it takes a lot to set a new record, but Britain managed it recently when it convicted its youngest girl murderer. [The killer] was detained at Her Majesty’s pleasure for slaughtering a happy-go-lucky 18-year-old – Katie Rackliff – in a frenzied knife attack [that the killer] later described as a sexual high in which [the girl] “enjoyed putting the blade up her”. In any circumstances, it would be a shocking crime, but what makes this case so extraordinary is that the killer was only 12 years old when... [the crime was committed, and] would have got away with it had [the girl] not bragged about the killing more than three years after the event when... in detention for another crime. The case has received the full tabloid treatment in Britain, enhanced by unsubstantiated claims in some newspapers that... [the girl] was raised in a cult of voodoo including witnessing... [someone] being burned alive and the ritualistic killing of animals. [The girl], now 17, received a life sentence for the crime after a jury decided that her bizarre diaries describing the murder were not – as the defence suggested – the product of a fanciful imagination, but the genuine revellings of a self-described natural-born killer. The case drew parallels with the murder in 1993 of Jamie Bulger, the two-year-old... lured from a shopping centre and killed by two 10-year-olds. Britain is again asking whether the moral fibre of society is tearing apart... or whether some kids are just plain evil. As *The Independent* wrote in an editorial: “Lacking a map to understand the mind of a... child who murders, apparently for semi-sexual pleasure, we grab any clue that offers the relief of comprehension.” ...Such cases have prompted British researchers... to look at the impact of societal factors such as television and video violence, education policy and so on... [W]hile there is some anecdotal evidence of a rise in anti-social juvenile behaviour, the statistics are ambiguous and the reasons complex... If anything, offenders were less likely to be able to easily view violent videos because they generally came from poorer homes and did not have televisions in their bedrooms... The official figures actually point to a decline in crime among young offenders... but this is thought to be a reflection of police giving more informal warnings. While the rate of expulsion of schoolchildren has risen – from 3000 a year to 11,000 over the past four years – this could also reflect a change of policy, with schools deciding they “don’t want to keep these sort of kids”... [T]here is a

“small subset” of children who are subject to high-risk factors, such as a “neuro-psychological miswiring”, or extraordinary personal circumstances. “Some people start with a poor set of cards.” Such a description applies to [the girl]... The image that emerges is one of a girl who came from a back-ground of dislocation and violence, but who appeared to be a normal, well-adjusted student – until [a]fellow pupil... was discovered in the school cloakroom critically injured after [the girl had] plunged a knife into her chest... [Some of the girl’s] family history is known from a court case in which her mother was convicted of pouring boiling oil over... [her stepfather. Her] mother... was a Belizean-born factory worker, and her father – an American police[officer] – vanished within a year of her birth. [Her mother] married a Jamaican soldier serving with the British Army, and moved to Britain when [the girl] was five. Her parents split up and [the girl] was briefly fostered, but soon returned to her mother’s home between hanging out with a teenage gang. Although not confirmed, [the girl] claims to have been raped at the age of nine. Despite all this, [the girl] initially performed well at school... [and] was described, a few months after murdering Miss Rackliff, as sociable and talented... Somewhere along the line, however, it is clear that [the girl] had decided to take her revenge on the world, writing in her diaries that [it was] “payback time”. It began with animals, including lopping of the head of the neighbour’s dog and, possibly, frying live hamsters... “Killing for me is a mass turn-on and it makes me so high I never want to come down. Every night I see the Devil in my dreams – sometimes even in my mirror...” ...in one macabre diary rhyme, [the girl]... appears to show an slight element of remorse. “Look at me, I’m nothing but a disgrace. To my family, I shall no longer show my face. I am a sad specimen of human life. Oh, why did I use that knife?” Any sympathy is, however, lost on Rackliff’s family. Her father... would have preferred to see [the girl] hang. “I hope [my daughter’s killer] rots in hell,”...

[The person who is] accused of murdering [an] Auckland prostitute... and two other sex industry workers allegedly said that Satan was... “telling me to kill all the filthy bitches.” ...[the accused] sent a letter to the N[Z] *Herald*... signed NBK – said to stand for natural born killer – [which]... warned of further killings... [The letter was now] part of the crown evidence... [H]is lawyer... conceded a prima facie case in respect of all charges, saying that his client’s psychiatric state would be raised at trial.

...A... Wisconsin [resident] is suing her former psychiatrist for malpractice, claiming that [the psychiatrist was convinced the resident] had 120 personalities – and... charged her insurance company... \$US300,000... for group therapy... [His] treatment... left her suicidal and haunted by false memories. Her supposed personalities included a duck, Satan, and angels who talked to God... [In related news, two] convicts in Baton Rouge Louisiana, say it is unfair that they are not allowed to pray in the inter-faith chapel of the state prison while members of other religions can. They just happen to worship Satan... [The convicts] have filed suit in a Federal court on grounds that their religious rights were being violated.

...Two... Catholic churches in Picayune, Mississippi, have posted guards to make sure parishioners swallow the communion wafer and do not pocket it. The reason: Priests fear that the wafers are being used in satanic rites... [By the way, dozens] of university students suspected of organising open-air orgies in the desert were arrested yesterday by Cairo police on suspicion of worshipping Satan.

...A bunch of rich kids with a taste for heavy metal music has found out the hard way that Egyptian society may not be ready for... flirtation with Satanic ritual. Fans... and... organisers of rock concerts in Cairo over the last three years, are being held in custody under interrogation by State Security forces. They could face charges of contempt for religion, for which the maximum penalty is three years in prison. Religious leaders accused them of renouncing Islam... [or] apostasy... which is punishable by death. The nation’s Parliament passed a motion condemning what it called “deviation from the traditions of Egyptian society.” Government newspapers claim the “Satanists” sacrificed cats, took part in group sex... and... called up the devil on ouija boards... Incriminating evidence includes Black Sabbath albums and posters and T-shirts with Gothic symbols like skulls and inverted crosses. The papers say fans obtained these from foreigners bent on spreading the devil cult... The Mufti... the leading exponent of Islamic law, said the “Satanists” were apostates from Islam but as they were so young the right approach was to ask them to repent. “If they renounce their beliefs, they can be pardoned. But if they persist in their error, we should carry out the penalty prescribed by Islamic law,”... [D]etails from the interrogations... suggest many of the fans were in it just for the sex and drugs or even just to shock their parents... “I don’t have anything to do with Satanism,” said one of them. “I... used to go to feel up the girls when they were dancing.” ...Most just... said... they liked the music... and... imitating foreigners... But... one informant... told prosecutors: “Satan permits quick pleasure, things forbidden by other religions.” [In related news from ‘Africa, the mistaken belief that albino body parts have magical powers has driven thousands of albinos (believed to be harbingers of disaster by some communities) into hiding, fearful of losing their lives and limbs to unscrupulous dealers who can make up to US\$75,000 selling a complete dismembered set. The surge in the use of albino body parts as good luck charms is a result of “a kind of marketing exercise by witch doctors”.’ ‘Body parts – such the heart – are also highly valued by witch doctors if they have been removed from a child while the child was still alive’.]

...A [NZer] living in A[US] is accused of murdering her 4-year-old son in an exorcism ritual while her husband was in N[Z] for his father’s funeral. [The wife], aged 34... was... ordered to undergo... psychiatric assessment... [after it ha]d said: “I believe, in my heart, Jesus is my lawyer.”

...Biblical backing for ritual... In the... New Testament, Jesus cast out the Devil from those who were possessed. Since then, exorcism – banishing the Devil from people or places – has been a part of Christianity and also appears in other religions. It entered popular culture with the 1970 movie *The Exorcist*, which showed... the battle of Catholic priests to save... a young girl possessed by demons... The practice traditionally involves prayer and laying on of hands. In modern times, mainstream churches have concentrated more on emotional healing. The Catholic Church prints a manual with a sanctioned exorcism rite, the *Rituale Romanum*, which includes instructions on specific robes to be worn, scriptures to be read... [A] representative... said the Church believed people and places could be possessed by the Devil – and exorcisms were occasionally carried out in N[Z].

...The pastor who carried out the exorcism of a... 37-year-old Korean known as Joanna... who died in a Mt Roskill house believes that... [the v]ictim will... be resurrected this week... Speaking through an interpreter, [the]... Korean Assembly of God minister, said... [it] did not believe that... [Joanna was dead. The pastor] had performed many successful exorcisms and described... [Joanna]’s death as “a great opportunity for a miracle... God... [had told him that it] was just taking her to heaven to show her so [the alleged victim] could come back and tell everyone what [her eyes] had seen.” ...The... [pastor] said Joanna was “tormented by demons” while staying with friends... and that [Joanna] had cooperated during the ceremony... [The p]astor... wants police to assist Joanna’s resurrection by allowing ...h[is] group, called Lord of All, to... pray over her body... The police are now investigating the death to determine whether charges will be laid. They are... still trying to contact relatives[, and are]... awaiting medical reports to reveal whether the [Korean, in NZ] on a visitor’s permit, had any health problems that could have contributed to her death... [An] Assembly of God spokes[person]... said... the... probationary minister for nine months... had been suspended after the incident.

...The minister suspended by the Assembly of God church after an exorcism in which a [Korean] died will be allowed to continue preaching if [it] apologises and shows remorse. [The]Pastor... said God had told him the [37-year-old] would rise again within a month of the exorcism. The deadline passed on Tuesday... Members of the [pastor’s group had originally] prayed and waited for the 37-year-old[’s]... resurrection for six days, before police removed the body for an autopsy. Police have yet to release the [dead perso]n’s name or the results of a second autopsy.

...A Mt Roskill pastor has been charged with [hu]manslaughter after the death of a Korean... during an exorcism in Auckland last month... [The pastor], aged 37, entered no plea when... appear[ing] in the Auckland District Court yesterday. [The pastor] was remanded in custody and is due to appear again early next month... [In another] bizarre exorcism gone wrong[, a]... pretty American cheerleader was killed by her mother and sister... Another sister, [aged] 15, was in the Long Island house at the time of the killing, but had been ordered into another room by her 39-year-old mother and 20-year-old sister while they smothered Charity... [The 15-year-old]’s statement says: “Charity knew the demon was consuming her and that it had to leave her body. Charity said, ‘It hurts, get it out.’ Mum told her that [they were] not going to let it take her. Mum put her mouth

to Charity's mouth and told her to blow the demon into her and [Mum] would try to kill it. It didn't work." ...Charity who had been off sick from school for a week-and-a-half with the flu, had grown so fragile and weak [that the 17-year-old] could barely put up any resistance as the amateur exorcists... pinned down... [her] arms and violently suffocated her with a plastic bag... for two hours – ending only when [Charity] stopped breathing... The girls' grandmother, who lived with the family... raised the alarm... When police arrived, they were greeted by the bizarre spectacle of... [the mother – who] had embraced the Santeria religion [(a little-known cult which holds the belief there is a bitter conflict between good and evil in humans)] – ...and her two [surviving] daughters chanting, praying and reading Doomsday passages aloud from Revelations in the Bible while listening to Frank Sinatra records. Investigators at the weird scene say the body was placed at the foot of the stairs to make her death look like an accident. According to... one teenage neighbour... Charity had told a [guy whom the]... popular, bright and friendly[student]... believed to be homosexual that [it] wasn't gay. Instead, [Charity told the guy that it] was possessed by a demon and... just needed a bath in salt water. If only a bath had been the answer to Charity's problems... ■... Occult-style exorcisms aren't the preserve of American fanatics. In 1993, 49-year-old Joan Vollmer was killed in Antwerp, Victoria, by her husband... two other [guys and a gal]. All four were convinced... [Joan] was possessed by demons... Police said the shocking exorcism was tortuous and went on for four days before [Joan] finally died... For two days her body lay in the remote farmhouse while the macabre group prayed for her "resurrection"... Her attackers all received convictions over the crime, and two were jailed.

...A WITCH [has been] found guilty of killing her lover's wife in an act described by the prosecution as a human sacrifice birthday gift to her lover. [The witch] (36) was convicted of first-degree murder, kidnapping, conspiracy to commit murder and kidnapping, and murder for financial gain. The jury will decide whether to recommend the death sentence or life in prison. [The witch]'s lover... awaits trial on the same charges... Prosecutors said... the two plotted the killing so [the lover] could avoid a costly divorce... Sherri Dally (35) a daycare operator in Ventura, California, was abducted from a carpark in May 1996. Her... stabbed and beheaded... remains were found 26 days later.

...Blamed for just about everything, witches have been consistently portrayed as [gals who are] ugly, evil... and... old... *The Crucible* – first the play and then the film – has gone some way to setting the record straight... [The] compelling accounts of the witch trials of Salem, Massachusetts in 1692 show... ['superstition crowding out reason and righteousness crushing good in the mad rush to root out evil.' The people of Salem were] caught up in a morass of mass hysteria, their persecution stemming as much from jealousy, revenge and fears of non-conformity as any fears that [their victims] connived with the Devil to do harm. The [gal] spirituality movement of the past two decades has decried the patriarchal persecution of the past. It has reframed witchcraft as "[gal] wisdom" and rituals as a way of re-attuning with the rhythms of the natural world. So the tide is turning – although when the Pope called... the European Commissioner for human rights, a witch last month, it was hardly goodness or wisdom [that the Pope] was attributing to her... Everyone believed in witchcraft in the past... Witchcraft was a way of making sense of things that happened... Today witchcraft is seen as fantasy, but it was once part of mainstream society to such an extent that governments passed laws about it... But while the general population differentiated between white and black witches [i.e., witches who seek to do good or evil], those in power made no distinction... Witches in Britain were tried under both church and secular law, with the last recorded witch trial in 1717. By 1736 the Witchcraft Act downgraded witchcraft from a crime of occult power to one merely of deceit... The Inquisition... also brought the torture and killing of some witches – but not the millions some in the [gal] spirituality movement, intent on reinstating witches as good, have suggested died at the stake. Some have gone so far as to liken the treatment of witches to that of Jews during the Holocaust... As with the "witches" of Salem, those executed in England were hanged, not burned... [The professor] of the History Department at Auckland University... estimates 60,000 were killed during the height of the 16th and 17th-century witch-hunts and perhaps 100,000 overall. There was little persecution of witches in the medieval period... and over a 200-year period only 17 people were indicted of witchcraft in Sussex; but on the borders of France and Switzerland, [witches] accused of spreading the plague... were executed en masse... Witches are no longer common, but they still exist... [There are] hundreds of practising witches in NZ. □ Members of]... a Hungarian coven are facing a possible spell in prison for tax evasion. The Hungarian Witches' Federation was set up as a small religious denomination in 1992, but according to[a] public prosecutor... it also offers costly "religious" services for which it ought to be paying taxes. The federation charges as much as 80,000 forints (\$[NZ]666) – double the average Hungarian salary – for "charm removal" and 21,000 forints for common-or-garden "sorcery." Other specialities include "magic initiation," "astral projection," "technomagic," "work magic" and "mummy magic." [The prosecutor] took the witches to court after allegations that they had been extorting money from gullible victims. - 1997

BLOOD from a slit in his victim's throat trickled into a small cup... [The] 22-year-old... raised the vessel to his lips. Convinced [it] was on the brink of immortality, the... killer was about to fulfil a sick dream: to become a vampire... A year earlier, the remains of Welsh pensioner Mabel Leyshon were found mutilated at her home... [Mabel] was stabbed 22 times before her heart was removed and put in a saucepan on a silver platter next to her body. Pokers were placed at her feet in the shape of a cross. Last week the killer, [aged]... 17, was refused the right to appeal his conviction. [The 17-year-old] was obsessed with vampires and drank his victim's blood in a quest for immortality... [The 22-year-old] claimed the character Akasha from the movie *Queen of the Damned* – starring late US singer Aaliyah – had visited him and promised immortality if [it] murdered someone... The chilling murder of Thomas McKendrick in a small Scottish village was brutal and ritualistic. [Thomas] was sacrificed to satisfy a lust for blood and an obsession with the occult. Yet his killer's fixation with bloodsuckers is far from unusual. Vampirism is a rapidly growing youth cult and its followers are increasing in numbers... [T]housands of websites have sprung up on which vampire fans can trade material and chat about matters occult... In cities throughout Britain, vampire societies meet weekly and act out scenes from their favourite movies... Vampire films and magazines are thriving, while specialist shops meet the outlandish clothing requirements of those who fantasise about being Dracula.

...Count Dracula was not an evil and mysterious monster as legend would have it – [the count] just had rabies, according to a Spanish doctor... [The doctor] says the similarities between rabies sufferers and Dracula the vampire as described in folklore are too great to be coincidence... [S]ymptoms of the advanced form of rabies – in which the virus attacks the brain – include an aversion to bright light, water and mirrors... and... an apparent liking for blood and sex[, while]... muscle spasms in the neck could make rabies victims... vomit blood. Some suffer violent impulses which inspire them to bite people, while others get erections which "last for days," [the doctor] writes in the journal *Neurology*... [T]here was also evidence of a major outbreak of rabies in Hungary between 1721 and 1728, when the Dracula legend first gained momentum.

...in recent years [Halloween]'s been on the increase in my neighbourhood... Yet again, it's the swallow-all march of American culture, not that anyone remembers why Halloween exists... Last year we had a bunch of little goblins – five to maybe 10-year-olds – turn up at the door demanding a handout. They were complete strangers to us... and there wasn't an adult in sight. Who was looking after them, and who's to say that I wasn't a gun-toting, psycho child molester as well as grumpy about being bothered after a tough day at the coal face? We were long overdue for a supermarket trip so there was no fruit or lollies in the house. I was thoroughly annoyed when the beloved, stuck in a corner and unsure how to react, gave them money. I was also annoyed that kids... can invade privacy and demand people take part in something they may be completely against, for whatever reason. (There are enough door-to-door salespeople and members of the flock banging on our door as it is.) ...Down-country, two Rotorua [gals]... took their opposition to practical action, producing "Halloween-free house" signs for letter boxes. Great idea – ...I must get one for next year... [I thought a year ago. T]hen I heard about little brats heaving... water bombs into houses when they didn't get their own way.

...HALLOWEEN (All Hallows Eve) is the night when graves are meant to open, the dead walk and the sea yields up its dead – not an especially wholesome thing to celebrate and hardly suitable for children. It is one of the big-three black masses in the witchcraft calendar and as such should

only be of interest to those who practice it. Then there's the safety aspect – broken glass in sweets, razor blades in apples. I'd rather my children don't risk receiving those, just as I'd rather they didn't knock on doors after dark saying what amounts to "give us lollies – or else". This is behaviour I try to discourage all other days of the year. Halloween is a relatively recent introduction to NZ and most of our oldies don't expect it. An old neighbour, living alone and a little deaf, opened her door to three children in black robes and scream masks. They were her next-door neighbours but totally unrecognisable, so [the old girl assumed it] was experiencing one of the well-publicised home invasions and suffered a trauma-induced asthma attack requiring hospitalisation. There is nothing particularly nice behind the traditions of either Halloween or Guy Fawkes.

...REGARDING 'Oldie hospitalised after kids' Halloween scare', [the letter's author]... is correct in saying that the tradition of 'trick-or-treating'... is wrong for NZ. Like a lot of other traditions, it is grossly commercialised and overhyped... But I disagree with her statement about it being "one of the big-three black masses in the witchcraft calendar." To start with, Hallowe'en is the eve of All Saint's Day in the Christian calendar. The concept of witches celebrating black masses is a Christian one to discredit those who worship other than their patriarchal God. Satanists, who are not necessarily witches, hold black masses. There is a difference. As for the witchcraft element... Halloween, known as Samhain to Pagans and Wiccans... is but one of four major and four minor celebrations of the circle of the year. Samhain is a time of reflection, of looking back over the last year and of remembering those that have died. By the way, in N[Z] we celebrate Samhain in April, close to Anzac Day.

...October 31, Samhain, is a celebration of Saman (Lord of Death), a Celtic pagan festival before the season of the dark winter and [one] of the eight witchcraft high days. Saman returns with the souls of the wicked and spirits roam the countryside destroying unharvested crops. The Druid priests made their annual demand for a sacrifice to help them communicate with the spiritual realm. Where a sacrifice was given, a hollowed-out pumpkin with a candle made of human fat burning inside was exchanged to bring good luck. If no sacrifice was given a hexagram painted in human blood was put on the door, with a curse that someone in the family would die.

...Four [gals and one guy] died after they were beaten... tied to a tree and... set alight in the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh by villagers who suspected them of witchcraft, say police. The incident took place in Thimampur... The recent deaths of two villagers, one... mentally ill... had triggered fears of witchcraft... [Incidentally,] tourette's syndrome... was often put down to demonic possession... until recognised last century...

At 6 sharp every night... the... villagers of Kareng Sari set up camp around the rice paddies to protect themselves from nightly... attacks. They are armed with homemade weapons, machetes and sickles, all make-do replacements for unreliable police[officers], they say. Simple farmers protecting their homes. You would never suspect them of being cold-blooded killers. But, according to police reports, such simple farmers are responsible for at least 169 brutal murders in a wave of mob killings that have riveted... Indonesia. By the admission of residents themselves, villagers in East Java have been conducting a campaign to cleanse the countryside of alleged black magic practitioners. Like the plot of an *X-Files* episode, the killings were initially dismissed as fiction but are now the focus of several conspiracy theories casting blame on everything from Indonesia's defunct communist party to supernatural "ninjas" targeting devout Muslim leaders. Security officials are at a loss for an explanation, but admit... the killings may be a troubling side-effect of Indonesia's "reformation" fever that sparked widespread rioting and looting last May – old grudges are being hashed out and brutal vigilante justice is ruling the day... "You ask why it happens. It happens because of deeply ingrained social reasons and it is not easy to undo," says Banyuwangi's Police Chief... "Every year we have one or two killings of this sort and there is no clear law on this sort of thing. For one killing we can arrest a whole village but the masses support the killings and they won't be satisfied by these arrests." After arresting over 100 suspected villagers recently, Banyuwangi police were besieged by 500 angry neighbours... demanding the release of the suspects and protesting that the assailants had done nothing wrong. "How do I deal with this? ...Every officer that steps out into the field is rejected by the people. There are more people supporting the killings than stopping them." ...that... pattern... certainly fits the village of Kareng Sari... Two weeks ago, hundreds of Kareng Sari villagers beat their neighbour, Pak Roelsan, to death in front of his family... "Everyone knows [Pak] was a witch doctor spreading sickness in the village," explains [the] village leader... But when pressed further, [the leader] reveals that Pak... made unwanted advances on a young girl who eventually accused him of rape... Pak[allegedly] then cast a spell causing the girl's father to grow sick... "But we aren't worried about witch doctors here... any more." The occasional murderous mob is frightening enough, but why have the number of vigilante killings jumped so high? ...the numbers have jumped by 900[%]... Military officials have blamed the recent killings on revenge-seeking children of communist cadres murdered in 1965... when villagers, under the tacit approval of Indonesian armed forces, slaughtered hundreds of thousands of suspected communist party members... Most of the[latest] victims are, however, members of Nadhlatul Ulama, the nation's largest Islamic organisation. Nadhlatul Ulama's chair[person]... criticised the military for dragging its feet on the investigation... But for all the political blustering, it would be more unusual if the victims were not members of Nadhlatul Ulama. After all, 98[%] of East Java's population profess to be devout Muslim Nadhlatul Ulama members. If it is not the communists and it is not rival political factions, then who or what has sparked the killings? ...As [one writer] says in his play – ...evil [people] can be redeemed but the wilfully stupid are with us always.

... "I always knew I was a witch... My mother and grandmother were witches, although my mother didn't cast spells very often. I do remember how [mum] put a particularly difficult boss' name into a jar of honey though, to sweeten him up." ...The mystical A[USn's]... two daughters – Samantha, 12, who is not named after the Bewitched character, and three-year-old Zephyrina – are already following in her footsteps... [T]he witch is no tree hugger – but... does like to give them a tippie of beer... [when celebrating] the mid-winter solstice... "It's a way of encouraging them to grow [during]... the longer days..." ... With her auburn ringlets and slanting green eyes, [the AUSn] is pure witch. But there's no black robes or pointy hats. Just a simple, expensive cream silk suit and a patterned silk scarf... [The AUSn] is a fan of the new witches and wizards on TV and in books. "Charmed is a great TV show, because it shows young, beautiful witches working for good..." ... [The AUSn] never uses her powers for evil because any bad done to another is returned to the witch threefold. But the same applies to good... [Her] books of spells and her own fortune telling Oracle, based on the druid symbols for the different phases of the moon, are also working wonders for magic – with huge international sales.

...WHEN... [the owner of] Dragonspace... was a young... girl [the owner] wanted to be a missionary... Her mother lived a strict Christian life and from the age of five to 15 so did... [the girl, until being] kicked out of the church because of the wild parties [the girl] and a friend said they had gone to – in fact they were only making it up to impress... [As a] bare-footed 45-year-old – with brownish-blond dreadlocks, neck dangling with silver amulets, hands and arms bedecked with symbolic rings, stones and bracelets – [the owner] is spreading the word about an entirely different kind of belief system: Witchcraft. Having appeared on television, radio and in press all around the country (even to the extent of appearing on a *60 Minutes* documentary about witchcraft) [the owner] could well be considered a spokes-witch, a representative of the estimated two to three thousand N[Z]ers who practise her craft. One possible reason for her notoriety is that... her Auckland shop... is easily accessible and visible... And, depending on what you believe, another reason for her profile may be the result of a business deal... made with "the Goddess" about six years ago. The Goddess is the principle[(sic)] deity in her religion; a simplistic definition might be Mother Earth or Mother Nature. "I was in my garden when I decided to make a business deal with the Goddess. It was a five-year contract and I said to her: "if you help me with my business I will promote you any which way I can." The Goddess seems to have kept her side of the bargain... [The owner] has been a bit busy to renew the initial... contract... The religion [the owner] practises... sees her speaking with the Goddess... and... communing seriously with nature, on a daily basis. [However, the owner] doesn't consider herself religious in the accepted sense – "I try to tell the truth and do right but like everyone, I say and do things I shouldn't do..." But being a witch does in fact seem very much like being a devout... Christian or Buddhist. "I think... [that having] some form of spiritual belief system is like having security. It brings a kind of peace. And this religion is about beautiful things in every day life. There's

no guilt and no blame... From 16 to 21 I was running wild... I have done the hippie thing and the punk thing and I think you pick up a little of every phase you go through.” ...Her first step toward finding an individual spiritual solution was a foray into numerology. Then... tarot cards. In 1988 [the owner] and her husband sold everything they owned and went off to find adventure in the U[S, where the owner] found a book that told her everything [the owner] wanted to know about witchcraft. “As I read I was thinking ‘yes, that’s me,’ and ‘that’s me too.’” [The owner] came to understand... that... [it] was a witch... At the age of 40... now a self-trained and self-initiated witch[, the owner came back to NZ]... made her pact with the Goddess and opened Dragonspace... All of the products in the shop are home made... [using] a mixture of ancient European magic, New Orleans voodoo and even African and Indian lore... Although [her husband] had always sympathised with his wife’s occult learnings, at first [the husband] wasn’t that interested in joining in... but now [the husband] takes an active part in making up the spells and potions and considers himself a witch too. The couple’s son, now 20, isn’t that interested in his parent’s beliefs. As [for Christians, the owner] has, as one might expect, had her problems with them. “I have had whole churches praying for my demise,”... That can’t be pleasant? “Well, no. I suppose they are cursing me really. But it’s just hysteria and darkness and fear... I’m not anti-Christian. It’s certainly not about Satan or black magic. It’s about the earth and learning to worship ourselves... A lot of people will probably spin out at me saying this but I am quite sure if I saw Jesus Christ on the street today [Jesus] wouldn’t stone me... [Jesus would] pat me on the back and say: ‘Good girl, good on you.’” That’s because the spells [the owner] casts are not about asking the Devil for goodies but more like... [writing] a letter to Santa... As to black magic... the closest [the owner] comes is the love potions sold in the shop. There are... rules... “According-to-free-will-for-the-good-of-all-and-harm-none.” Black magic is about altering someone’s free will and also about intent. If a customer uses a spell to hold their lover they are manipulating that person’s free will – even if the intention is good. I[nterestingly] if you ask... why [the owner] doesn’t wear make-up [it will] tell you about black magic. “What so many of these companies do is a kind of black magic. Black magic is about intent and manipulation and what is advertising but manipulation? Their intent is not to adorn... but to make money. Their intent... is rotten as far as I’m concerned...” So, is [the owner] saying that making a profit is bad? Then surely [the owner] herself is guilty of commercialising her religion, devaluing witchcraft and earth magic by selling and publishing its secrets? ...“[It’s not]... about money... I am... doing this for the sole purpose of promoting the Goddess, putting her in the market place. It’s about waking people up to the fact that the Goddess is back.” Obviously the publicity is working. Dragonspace was the first, but there are now eight or nine occult shops around the country.

...[zombies (‘soulless people raised from the grave by voodoo sorcerers) are being sold into slavery’ in Haiti, and police] in Brazil yesterday arrested two voodoo priests – a [guy], 71, and his girlfriend, 22 – for the murder of a six-year-old boy who bled to death in a black-magic ceremony.

...South Africa’s first summit aimed at curbing witchcraft-related deaths opened... yesterday. About 200 people gathered... in Northern Province, where witchcraft-related crime is most frequent. Police statistics showed that between April 1994 and February 1995, 97 [gals and 46 guys] were killed, accused of being witches or wizards... Last year, 18 suspected witches were killed. Victims were usually aged between 55 and 72. The murders happen mostly in the rainy season, when poorly educated rural people accuse the victims of directing lightning at rivals.

In primal and especially African societies witchcraft is often used to explain mysterious calamity and death. The psychic power of a witch is often unconscious in contrast to that of a sorcerer, which is more premeditated and evil. In medieval Europe from the 14th century onwards witchcraft was seen as a satanic heretical religion involving a pact with the devil, and it was condemned by a papal bull of 1484. Accusations that witches engaged in black masses, flew on broomsticks, had personal devils as ‘familiars’ and so on spread, and by 1700 it is estimated that over 200000 people had been executed for witchcraft, and outbreaks of witch-hunting, like that at Salem Massachusetts in 1692, became notorious... The... Church often accused those who did not conform to Christian tenets of being Satanists.

...Belgian police have raided the headquarters of a satanic cult and linked it with the child sex ring which has rocked the country. They have three victims of satanic rite abuses in safe custody... They reportedly testified to suffering terrible cruelty during secret ceremonies and said they were forced to torture young children... The newspapers maintained that the well-established organisation used stolen children or children “made to order” by carefully selected families who sold infants to satanic sects as soon as they were born without registering the births.

...there are Satanists in the Manawatu and elsewhere. Though not the Satanists of popular imagination, they do hold beliefs and practice rituals that set them well apart from the mainstream of N[Z] society... Mention the dictionary definition of Satanism – those who worship Satan with blasphemous parodies of Christian prayers – or the fearful sociopath dreamed up by [fiction writers, and they are] adamant that the order takes no part in such activity. “We repudiate those types altogether on the basis that these people aren’t mentally balanced. We want balance and exclude people who have an unnatural interest in inflicting pain upon others for the pleasure of it. [Humans are] part of nature and anything that is out of tune with nature is anti-Satanist... Who has defined Satanism since the Middle Ages? It’s the Church. Surely the best people to define Satanism are Satanists.” ...[another local Satanist says:] “Christianity is a blasphemous parody of earlier religions, the Sumerians and Mesopotamians. The Bible is full of rewrites from the scriptures of earlier civilisations.” ...priests in the order, agree that they have met people who conform to the stereotype so powerfully portrayed in film and by some churches... “If they believe in the Devil and the upside-down cross and perform blood sacrifices we can be sure they are not Satanists. They could be called Christian Satanists. Most are drug addicts and their concept of Satanism exists only within the bounds of Christianity.” ...The order’s definition of Satan harks back to a pagan deity predating the rise of Zoroastrianism... [Christianity took on Zoroastrianism’s] dualistic view of the universe and... Satanists remain adherents to a pagan polytheism. Unlike the neopaganism of New Age earth religions, the Satanists seek as their patrons those that have come to be called the dark deities. So while the order describes itself as Satanist, that has come to be a collective term that encompasses deities from different pantheons, Lucifer, Pan, Kali, Helas and others. [One local Satanist] sees them as present in this world as separate incarnations. [Another] has a more abstract viewpoint... “Satan is an entity, but is more an aspect of the forces of nature. It’s semantics, but Satan is God and anti-God. [Satan] is the force of nature that encompasses all the polarities that the cosmos operates on.” By polarities [the Satanist] means dark and light... evil and good, yin and yang... Their Satan is not a deity to be worshipped, but rather a path to self-realisation... [which they – and, probably, anyone who believes that being ‘left-handed is a sign of the devil’ (e.g., the ‘9-out-of-10 people’ who aren’t left-handed – ‘50% more boys than girls’ are left-handed) – call] the Left Hand Path... “Through training and self-development, you bring yourself to the stage of union with the godhead. The deities we follow are patrons who can teach us. Satanists aim to fulfil [humankind’s] potential.” One of the locals... came to Satanism through an early interest in philosophy... [being] attracted strongly by the writings of German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche; in particular, the philosopher’s belief that [hu]mankind needs to continue to evolve culturally as well as biologically. Nietzsche used the term “herd religions and moralities” to describe beliefs that encourage cultural stagnation... Satanists... are individuals who describe their moral beliefs as the freedom to do anything as long as it does not infringe on another person... “We acknowledge that we have a duty towards other people, the culture and nation. We are not individuals who act regardless of the social collective.” - 1996

In his *Antichrist*, Nietzsche [– who introduced the concept of a ‘super[person] (an ideal superior [person] of the future, able to be evolved from the normal human type)’ –]describes Jesus as a psychological type, hypersensitive, prone to suffering and dreading it above all else. Thus reality was intolerable to him, [and Jesus] could accept it only as a parable, a sign. The world [Jesus] lived in was not a real world, but a world of vague, intangible symbols. Hostility, opposition, the resistance of concrete things were intolerable to him. For Nietzsche this explains why [Jesus] did not

contend with the world, and “resist not evil” is the key to the gospel. In this maxim Jesus’ personal incapacity for struggle is set up as an ethical principle. The only true reality is the inner reality, which is called life, truth, light. The kingdom of God is a psychological state. It is not expected, but is present everywhere and nowhere. It is a state of beatitude which cannot be demonstrated by miracles or by scripture, which offers no promise or reward, but is its own proof, its own miracle and reward. Its proofs are inner lights, feelings of pleasure and self-satisfaction. The problem is: How shall I live in order to feel that I am in heaven, at all times divine, the child of God? For this sense of beatitude is the sole reality. Jesus is not a hero or a genius, but more in the nature of an idiot.

“I was just trying to be... good...” “And you ended up daft and stupid, didn’t you?”

...Jesus... walked upon the water and... sank beneath your wisdom like a stone...

...there goes the fool... here comes the wise... - What The World Is Waiting For

The... LORD... shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel... [T]he child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good... Therefore the... government shall be upon his shoulder: and his [titl]e shall be... The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end... from henceforth even for ever. - Isaiah 7:14 - 8:7

According to Christians, Jesus is the Messiah prophesied in those above and other Old Testament verses. However, Jesus – whose loyalty to his friends is questionable (r:p861, lns32-3) – seems to have denied that the title *Prince of Peace* applied to himself (r:p861, ln22). Consider also the following verses:

...as Jonas was three days and... nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son... be three days and... nights in the heart of... earth. - St Matthew 12:40

...[because] of the resurrection of Christ... his soul was not left in hell... - The Acts 2:31

...and [Jesus] cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him. - St Mark 1:34

...people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils... Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan... how shall then his kingdom stand? - St Matthew 12:23-6

Jesus’ alleged trip to hell and familiarity with devils might not be a justification for linking him directly to *the prince of the devils*, but his speech doesn’t disprove the link either! In a game of chess a player might sacrifice a smaller piece (eg., pawn) in order to capture a larger piece; and in the practice of war it isn’t uncommon for a General to sacrifice large numbers of soldiers in order to capture an important piece of ground.

...you need to be prepared to give a little in order to gain a lot.

Sometimes you have to lose the battle to win the war.

In response to claims that their idol was the prince of the devils, modern-day Christians might remind Jesus’ critics of his miraculous conception (r:p895, lns6-11). However, the idea that *a virgin shall conceive* – which could simply mean that someone became pregnant during the act of losing her virginity – has been diluted by the development of artificial insemination and test-tube babies (perhaps Mary was impregnated artificially by aliens?).

A British insurance firm is offering insurance against “virgin birth by act of God[”] ...following the success of its alien impregnation... policy which it sold to 300 women in just one week. Virgins pay £2... a week and will be offered (£1m) if impregnated... “Virgins are genuinely concerned with the approach of the second millennium. Accordingly, we consider it our duty to provide coverage to help allay these concerns... All claims will be assessed by a panel of independent experts who do not include members of the church from whom we have received a frosty response.”

...My father was a doctor in the days when doctors made house calls... morning and afternoon as well as most Saturdays and some Sundays... [Dad] also got up in the middle of the night to deliver the babies of all his patients... Medicine was his profession but obstetrics was his passion. And long before it was legal [Dad] gave contraceptive advice – and contraception, too – to [gals] under 16. His view was that a youngster intent on sex needed reliable contraceptive equipment and knowhow more than hellfire homilies. I place him in no danger by divulging his crimes now; [Dad] long since went to a place where the phone doesn’t ring in the middle of the night. But [Dad] came to mind when I saw the news item last week about the... insurance broker offering cover against “virgin birth by act of God.” Unready young mothers-to-be used to respond with horror when Dad gave them his professional opinion that they were in the family way. They assured him solemnly that they had not engaged in any sexual act; [Dad] assured them, slightly less solemnly, that, throughout human history, pregnancy had never occurred in the absence of a sexual act – “with one celebrated exception.” What, though, would [Dad] have made of the enterprise which... will insure you against becoming the second celebrated exception? I suspect [Dad] would have enjoyed sitting on the “panel of independent experts” who will assess claims. With good humoured scepticism [Dad would’ve] disallowed every claim and saved the insurers a fortune... Having already sold... policies... against being impregnated by *aliens*, I figure they’re just laughing into their lunchtime champagne cocktails as they dream up the next lurk. Beats working... Who’s interested in my insuring them against being beaten at snooker by [a blind person?] ...Just send the cheques... We’ll take care of the paperwork later. - 1996

WELCOME to the all-[gal] world. Scientists have discovered a way of creating virgin births in animals by inducing pregnancy without the presence of sperm. The technique will be used initially to produce... calves... without the expense of maintaining bulls... by a form of “immaculate conception”... Instead of two sets of chromosomes – one each from the mother and father – they will all come from the mother, creating only [same-sex] off-spring and effectively dispensing with the need for... [sperm. T]he research, which is no longer conducted in the UK because of ethical disapproval, will revolutionise the rearing of farm animals, providing limitless generations of milking herds... Once perfected, it could be applied to any other species... Limited research on non-viable human eggs left over from infertility treatment in the UK has found they will begin dividing spontaneously, but... experts believe there are ethical and medical objections to extending it to humans because of the dangers of in-breeding.

...A THEOLOGICAL controversy has erupted in Israel over a ten-month-old... heifer, produced by artificial insemination from a bull in Switzerland... [The] farm animal named Melody[is] believed by some Jews to be the first red heifer born in the Holy Land in two millennia. Yesterday the beast was whiling away its time in the farming village of Kfar Hasidim in northern Israel, blissfully unaware of the furore that it has provoked in a country where it is seen by an extreme minority as an extraordinary portent for the new millennium. Some Israelis claim it is the

harbinger of the Messiah, while others demand that it be killed before it sparks new Middle Eastern violence on a scale greater than anything seen in recent decades. "The red heifer is one of the most important signs that we are living in a special time," says... [the] leader of an ultra-nationalist Israeli group... There are fears that some Jewish extremist groups will interpret the birth... as a sign the time is right to rebuild the... ancient Jewish Temple, destroyed by Romans in AD70... on the site that[now] houses some of Islam's holiest shrines.

...[two Jews tried to climb the Western Wall, Judaism's holiest site, because a water stain on one large stone has led some ultra-Orthodox Jews to believe the Messiah is on his way. Worshippers discovered the stain four days ago. The water might be coming from a buried pipe or well at the Temple Mount]...

I know when I'm being taken for a ride... [P]rank... however, is not a word much used in N[Z]... Until I went to England I always thought it was Chinese for a piece of wood. If we don't use "prank" we certainly don't talk of "prankster". This is a pity because life has taught me God is the supreme prankster and the Bible is alive with a comic sensibility. [Now 'I don't want to start any blasphemous rumours but I think that God's got a sick sense of humour'. For instance, in] the Psalms we are told God "laughs at the wicked" because [God] sees their downfall. Noah, like Jonah, is pictured as an inept buffoon... When Sarah at the age of 89 gives birth to a son, [Sarah] names him "laughter" (Isaac)... although bearing a child at that age could hardly have been a laughing matter. [Also not laughing are 'Waikato farmers after being hit by a black beetle plague. The beetles in their larval stage are a big problem because they eat the roots of grass and other plants, laying waste to grazing paddocks. Millions of South African black beetles swarmed into Hamilton and other central Waikato towns on Wednesday night, covering businesses and homes in a thick, black carpet. But it seems few of the insects were alive yesterday. The manager of the Ulster St United Video, who had vacuumed a "thick carpet" that built up outside his front door, said the bugs were still trying to crawl into his shop at midday on Thursday. "It's only been a week since the last cricket raid. Now these have turned up."]

...[Plagues of locusts across AUS are threatening sowing and yields in some of the country's richest cropping areas – and pose an even greater threat to maturing crops in a few months. The locusts are unwelcome by-products of good rains through AUS's usually parched outback areas, breeding grounds estimated to span more than 200,000 sq km. Able to soar up to 500km on a good windy night, they have moved relentlessly through the flowering deserts, into arid pastoral land, and now into cropland – where they are multiplying in unprecedented numbers, officials say. "Our gal locusts are plump, chockablock full of eggs and laying them all over the place," said a spokesperson for Agriculture Western AUS. "All they have to do now is survive winter."]

...Swarms of locusts... [have] hatched in Mozambique, then travelled through Malawi, Namibia and Botswana before arriving in... [South Africa's] Cape Province, causing extensive damage to crops and pastures... [A]bout 30,000 swarms, comprising about 10 million locusts each, have so far been killed by government pest control efforts... Madagascar has[also] been hit by a plague of locusts that threatens to sweep the island nation.

...Massive swarms of locusts... estimated ...at as many as 200 locusts a square metre... have chomped their way through crops in south-western parts of Chad. Recent rains amid lush vegetation prompted the hatchings... Agricultural officials say that days of air attacks on the swarms with pesticides have done little to reduce the number of the ravenous insects.

...ravenous insects are arriving[in Cameroon] from countries to the north, already hit hard by the swarms... [Cameroon has] launched a massive effort to fight[the] millions of locusts that threaten to devour crops... Already this year, crops in the drought-stricken country have been decimated by the passage of migratory birds... elephants and hippo[s]... Swarms of locusts[have also] crossed into Yemen and officials expect more to come from... the Sudan[where '11 people died and 1685 were hospitalised with breathing difficulties after a swarm of grasshoppers gave off a strong smell' ...

Albania ha[s] announced that 25 of the country's 26 regions have been hit by swarms of locusts. The Adriatic nation has suffered from invasions of the hoppers for the past three years... A plague of locusts has [also] descended in north... China's wheat belt, devouring 107,000 ha of crops. - 1997

And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth... And it was commanded them that they should... hurt... only those... which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. - Revelation 9:3-4

The desert locust (*Schistocerca gregaria*) – the locust of the Bible, which is found in dry and semi-arid areas of Africa, the Middle East and India – is perhaps the most destructive insect known to humanity. The spur-throat grasshopper can eat its own weight in a day.

Although the term 'locust' is loosely applied to any large tropical or subtropical grasshopper, it is better restricted to those whose numbers occasionally build up to form enormous migrating swarms which may do catastrophic damage... [T]hree species are of special importance... Both the red locust and the African migratory locust have their own control organisations which effectively prevent plague outbreaks. The desert locust, however, presents a real inter-national problem which has yet to be solved... [L]ocusts can exist in two phases: a solitary, grasshopper phase, or a swarming locust phase. When the grasshoppers are crowded together they change their behaviour, and, if kept like this for a generation or more, also change their shape and colour... Solitary locusts come together only for mating... When they first hatch young solitary locusts disperse and unless some environmental factor forces them together they never do begin to associate... It is known that structural changes between one phase and another are associated with relative differences in the insects' hormonal balance. Mutual stimulation leads to greater activity... Because an urge to keep close together is induced by development in the gregarious stage they march together in bands... When they set out, they move only a few yards a day, but they hop for up to a mile in the later stages... [when they become] airborne and move much faster. Weather conditions too can lead to the development of gregarious locusts and swarm formations. Scattered flying locusts fly downwind towards frontal systems of converging airflow and thus tend to accumulate in rainy areas... If all the locusts in a swarm only 2 miles square were to breed successfully, in only four generations there would be a severe infestation of the whole 196 million square miles of the earth's surface... [(By the way, Earth was recently hit by a plague of plastic grasshoppers – courtesy of the McDonald's restaurant chain.)] Plagues eventually come to an end due to adverse weather... Between plagues lasting 6 or more years there are equally long recessions when only solitary locusts are to be found... [The 17-year locust is not a grasshopper but a cicada. Also known as 'the loudest insect voice', their muscle-induced calls] can be heard a 1/4 mile away and, close to, can make ordinary conversation impossible... [Cicadas] do... not... appear in a district only once in 17 years, as there may be several broods in different stages of development... More than 1500 species are known throughout the world. [NZ has a cicada that 'comes out every 7 years, but there are 7' broods]... The breeding period... [can be] checked by observation of nymphs in captivity.

Moses... came ...to Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews... let my people go, that they may serve me. Else, if thou refuse... behold, to morrow will I bring the locusts into thy coast... [T]he LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the land... - Exodus 10

...Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind... and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the... dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses... chariots, and [cavalry]... And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come upon the Egyptians... And the waters returned, and covered... all the host of Pharaoh... [until] there remained not so much as one... Thus the LORD saved Israel that day... And Israel saw that great

work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses. - Exodus 14:21-31

According to Exodus 1:11 the Israelites *built cities for Pharaoh*. This means that some of the Israelites could have been skilled engineers – unless only Egyptians held such positions. At the very least, however, some would have picked up basic engineering skills while labouring on Pharaoh's construction sites. Their skills might have been sufficient to allow them to construct a floating platform which was strong enough to allow a large number of humans to simultaneously cross the sea – but not a large number of humans plus horses, chariots and armaments! Alternatively, the Israelites may have been able to make the platform become unstable after they had completed their crossing. Some historians have suggested that what really occurred was 'the Israelites were on high ground and the Egyptians on low ground when a huge wave from a volcanic eruption in the Mediterranean swept through where the Suez Canal is now situated.'

Whether or not Moses, with God's help, performed miracles isn't important – of greater relevance is whether or not Moses actually existed (if the answer is *not*, that would explain why no one can ever find his bones – r:p1134, ln44!)

HOLY MOSES! ...IN his latest incarnation Moses is a cartoon character... DreamWorks Pictures trumpet their version as "a story... we can relate to in our time." It presents Moses as a [guy] "who must come to terms with his past, his heritage and his faith." After this ringing affirmation, it is ironic that the first response has been one of doubt. Moses may not have existed. Biblical scholars have long been aware that, outside the scriptural text, there is not a shred of historical evidence for the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and their subsequent conquest of the Promised Land. Nor is there any mention of Moses in a contemporary document. The Egyptians, who kept good records, make no reference to the employment of Hebrew slaves. Archaeologists can find no evidence that in about 1800BC Palestine suffered a big invasion and the ethnic cleansing of its inhabitants, as described in the *Book of Joshua*. Nor is there any sign of foreign occupation. A significant number of scholars now believe that most of the ancient Hebrews were... apiru (outlaws, refugees), native Palestinians who fled the collapsing Canaanite city-states to settle in what is now the West Bank (where we first hear of "Israel" on an Egyptian stela of 1207BC). They may have been joined there by other apiru who had escaped from the Pharaoh's corvée under the leadership of Moses and adopted their liberation theology. We shall never know for certain. The actual events that may or may not lie behind the obviously mythological account of the Exodus... are lost beyond recall... The practice of reading the biblical stories as strictly factual is itself modern; the doctrine of the literal truth of scripture was first developed by [US] Protestants in the late 19th century. Hitherto, Jews, Christians and Muslims had all encouraged and even relished highly symbolic or allegorical exegesis; they did not share our concern for historical accuracy. Like the biblical writers, they were more interested in what an event... meant than in what actually took place. One could say that until an event has been mythologised (liberated from its historical setting by means of ritual and stylised narrative), it cannot be religious. St Paul mythologised the historical Jesus and created Christianity... The Passover ritual makes the Exodus a current event, and insists that every Jew must regard himself or herself as belonging to the generation that was liberated from Egypt. Thus, well-meaning scholars who have tried to explain the miraculous crossing of the Sea of Reeds by pointing to the frequent flash-flooding in the region have missed the point. The biblical writers deliberately described this event as a myth... The myth has... provided millions of people with the spiritual energy to fight oppression. Moses... has been an inspiration for Martin Luther King and to Christian liberation theologians in South America, as well as to Jews... We can all relate to Moses the Liberator, who bravely commands Pharaoh to "let my people go!" We can admire the Moses who courageously pleads for his people, when his irascible God threatens to exterminate them for worshipping the Golden Calf. We can see Moses' ascent of Mt Sinai and his meeting with God as a moving emblem of the mystical past... But all these readings are selective. The biblical story provides us with many different portraits of Moses, some of them morally dubious – even wicked. What... are we to make of Moses the Grand Inquisitor, who permits the Levites to massacre 3000 of the Israelites who worshipped the Golden Calf. According to the *Bible*, Moses introduced an intolerance that has, since his time, been one of the besetting sins of monotheism. In the pagan world, religious persecution was almost unheard of: another deity could always be accompanied within any pantheon. But Moses' jealous God commands: "You shall not have any other gods before me." The inquisitions, persecutions and crusades that have scared Jewish, Christian and Muslim history show the human cost of such an exclusive theological vision... To this day, religious people cite... biblical precedents to justify a policy of extermination... [R]eligion, like any human activity, can be abused. It can be used to give a divine seal of sacred approval to some of our most obnoxious prejudices and policies – and Moses is the first person in the Bible to succumb to this temptation. Moses does not seem to have been universally beloved in his own time. Throughout the 40 years in the wilderness, the people [Moses] had liberated were constantly simmering with resentment and in a state of incipient rebellion. At one point, a small cabal led an uprising against Moses and his brother Aaron, demanding more egalitarian rule. Moses quashed this with his usual brutality: the ground opened and swallowed the three conspirators at his behest (*Numbers* 16:33). The biblical writers were quite open about Moses' failings... [Moses was] slow of speech, often timid and indecisive, and given to fits of depression and sullen rage. [But some] scholars believe that the bad press Moses gets in the *Bible* reflects a later conflict between rival priestly dynasties: the priests of Jerusalem, who claimed descent from Aaron, and the priests from Dan and Bethel, who were descended from Moses. Moses remained a controversial figure for centuries after his death, before... finally[achieving] the reputation of being the greatest of all the prophets, since [Moses] alone had spoken with God face to face... Moses... reminds us of the difficulty of the religious quest and that our most sacred traditions can be deeply flawed. But this is, perhaps, too complex a vision for a cartoon.

...*Unholy Moses*... Hollywood [has rewritten] the Bible... for the new animated feature film, *The Prince of Egypt*... It deals with the conflict between love and duty and whether one [person] can make a difference. [However, liberties] were taken with the biblical story in the interests of dramatic entertainment. So the Pharaoh's wife rather than his daughter finds and adopts Moses, allowing [Pharaoh's son] Rameses and Moses to grow up as brothers... Dreamwork's co-founder... who spent 10 years as head of Disney Studios in a golden box-office era of *The Lion King*, *Aladdin*, *The Little Mermaid* and *Beauty and the Beast*, says... the film-makers talked to 680 experts, ranging from Christian, Jewish and Muslim religious leaders and theologians to archaeologists, historians and other scholars... [to avoid anything that might be] considered sacrilegious... So... a line... "You can work miracles when you believe" was changed to, "There can be miracles when you believe." The movie ends with the parting of the Red Sea... So what about a sequel showing why and how Moses got the Ten Commandments? DreamWorks say... the rest of Moses' story is too hot to handle... Jews and Arabs are still fighting over the Promised Land, after all... Can The Prince of Egypt lead DreamWorks to the promised land?

...BATMAN might wear tights and have a fast car but... can't divide the waters of the Red Sea. Superman may have x-ray vision but... can't turn water into wine or make a blind [perso]n see. Fear not. Moses, Jesus and the rest of the biblical cast are about to feature in the greatest story ever drawn. In a bid to attract readers who would normally never open the Good Book, the *Bible* is being turned into a graphic novel by a *Judge Dread* comic-strip artist... [The] veteran graphic artist and regular contributor to *2000 AD*, the weekly comic-strip anthology, has been working on *The Graphic Bible*... for nearly five years... [and] has reinterpreted in comic form every book in the Bible... But it has been difficult, especially when Lion, the [US] publisher of the 250-page book, said some of his drawings were too graphic. "They thought Eve was showing too much in the Garden of Eden. Sadly I had to... cover her nipples up." Drawing Jesus was also difficult, especially the Crucifixion scenes. "You've got to have blood in comics, lots of blood. In fact, I think we might have gone overboard there." ...It is the latest sign that the archetypal unread bestseller is in the process of a makeover... Canongate, an Edinburgh publishing house, is targeting the holy writ at another niche market. It is to publish 12 books of the *Bible*... with literary introductions by acclaimed[contemporary] writers... The *Pocket Canons Bible* series... [emphasises] the original's literary

pedigree, not its religious content... Shortly after publication of *The Graphic Bible* later this year will come *The Tabloid Bible*, said to include “all the word-plays and cheeky sensationalism of a tabloid newspaper.” ...*The Tabloid Bible* includes an agony aunt, the weather and sport. “Did Aliens Cause Multi-Chariot Pile-Up?” reads the headline on a report of the light that dazzled the Apostle Paul on the Damascus road.

...[‘whereas religion usually represents a group effort at control through common beliefs in personalized powers, magic (the practice of attempting to control things or events by mystic or supernatural forces) is cultivated by individuals as a secret art, often for socially disapproved ends, and assumes a compulsive or necessary relationship with less personal powers, so that a certain ritual or charm must achieve a specific result. Those who practice magic, variously termed sorcerers, witches, medicine or witch doctors, are qualified solely by evidence of their capacity to achieve results. Among primitive peoples the witch doctor is priest, physician and scientist. More advanced cultures, especially those with organized religions, generally frown on magic, but the practice is never completely eradicated. In modern society the word magic is used for a form of entertainment otherwise known as sleight-of-hand’...

A magician who] has sawed assistants in half and made people disappear with ease... is finding his latest assignment impossible: how do you make a television show vanish? The Auckland entertainer wants TV3 to pull the plug on a programme which reveals the secrets to age-old magic tricks. *Magic’s Biggest Secrets Finally Revealed* is due to screen on Thursday. It features a masked magician who unveils the illusions behind such classics as... pulling rabbits from hats, and making large objects disappear. [The Aucklander], a professional magician and past president of the Society of Magicians, said the programme was taking the magic out of magic shows. “If people are interested in magic, there are ways of finding out – books in libraries have information and there are clubs... This... mass exposure... show is revealing things to people they do not necessarily want to know...” TV3 said yesterday it had no intention of dropping the programme from its schedule. “It has already screened to a huge audience in the US...” said the network’s director of programming. [Incidentally, ‘pollsters tell us that approximately 34% of USers believe the Bible to be literally true, word for word. When you reflect that this belief includes walking on water, rising from the dead, angels, ghosts, demons, unclean spirits and a miraculous cure for the blind, it’s clear that there is an enormous mass of ignorance’ there. According to a local poll, 40% of NZers]... believe in spiritual miracles.

...An investigation into claims that a teenage girl is blessed with miraculous powers has found no “obvious evidence of chicanery” and deserves further study, a... Catholic bishop says. [The girl, aged] 14, has been in a coma... after... nearly [drowning] in her family’s swimming pool in 1987. Since then, thousands of people have flocked to the [family’s] home... west of Boston, in the belief that [the girl] can heal the sick. “There are inexplicable manifestations of oils and other substances emanating from religious objects in the... home...,” said... [the bishop. However,] a psychologist on the investigation team... said they may never be able to explain the happenings as either natural or divine... Believers who visit the... home said they had seen statues... of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary appear to weep... [and] move while others say they have seen Communion wafers stained with blood in her presence... Some visitors say the girl takes on the suffering of others...

IN early October last year, [a]mother of three... descended into her own silent world, where, accompanied only by horrendous nightmares, [it] would stay for five months... [D]octors are at a loss to explain why [it] lapsed into a coma... only days before her 51st birthday... ‘While everyone else was gearing up for Christmas celebrations... doctors were asking us for permission to turn off [her] life support,’ her husband... recalls. ‘They told us on at least four occasions that there was no hope. But there was no way I was giving up on her... Then, one day in late February, [my wife came]... out of the coma... One of the... doctors... said the only explanation... why [my wife] was better... was that it was... a miracle...’

...A [guy] is in Middlemore Hospital after flying from the U[S] especially to have his stomach slashed during a religious ritual on Saturday night. The 40-year-old Sunni Muslim was one of about 200 who gathered in the Otahuhu Seventh-Day Adventist Church when the Rativ ritual was conducted about 11.30 pm. During the ritual the [guy] was cut deeply with a blade described as a machete and then prayed over by the group in an attempt to heal him with sacred readings. The priest who wielded the machete was his brother. A member of the group called an ambulance after the wounds failed to heal quickly... Counties Manukau police have not decided whether any charges will be laid a[s]... the Indian... was a willing participant... [A]n Islamic scholar and former president of the Federation of Islamic Associations of N[Z], was angry about the incident and called it a “religious stunt.” ...[the scholar], from Mt Roskill, said it was an attempt to copy miracles attributed to Islamic saints and sufis about 800 years ago[, but added that]... such rituals had no place in mainstream Islam, and likened the slashing to Christian faith healing.

...[the f]aith healing doco... *Hallelujah Healing* (...TV1... September 3...)... made my skin crawl. Two questions. Why weren’t people cured 100% instead of slightly? Jesus didn’t do partial cures? Jesus also healed some non-believers, so why was that bloke (playing golf) claiming those who weren’t healed didn’t believe enough? What a classic case of brainwashing. I should know. I’ve been there and, praise the Lord, got out quick!

...I recently saw *Hallelujah Healing*. I would like to confirm that God still heals today, as I have had many divine healings, the most notable being my deformed leg and foot grew immediately as a result of prayer. I also saw the blind see, the deaf hear and the lame walk... This[letter] is just to encourage readers that Jesus hasn’t been asleep for 2000 years and is still a God of compassion and justice, for those who will believe.

...Medical schools are offering courses in spirituality, religion and health as studies say prayer can help people feel better and live longer. But researchers say that prescribing prayer is probably premature... [A] group of nine researchers and chaplains... say the... studies... had not been well designed, produced vague conclusions and generated sometimes conflicting results... Because there was no evidence of “a solid link between religious activity and health,” doctors had no business prescribing religion...

The latest scientific experiment on prayer has failed to find any evidence that it helps to heal the sick. Doctors in the U[S] have found that heart patients who were prayed for by groups of strangers recovered from surgery at the same rate as those who were not... But church leaders say the experiment was crude. The Bishop of Durham... said: “Prayer is not a penny-in-the-slot machine... This is like setting an exam for God to see if God will pass it or not.” ...the Rt Rev... said the Old and New Testaments said “very clearly” that you must not put God to the test.

...*Signs From God: Science Tests Faith*, got me wondering... [W]hat can scientific testing really tell us about such supernatural events as statues weeping blood, apparitions of the Lord and the stigmata? ...A[n AUS]n journalist... has been examining such mysteries for several years and his findings have put paid to... his credentials as a sceptical journalist... [The journalist] believes the increasing rate of natural disasters in the 90s are linked to the visionaries’ messages that such events are warnings from the Lord that [hu]mankind must repent. But the main point of the scientific testing... was to prove that the phenomena and claims of the visionaries were not fraudulent. Certainly, putting a religious statue which appeared to weep blood through a CAT scan proved it had not been tampered with and analysis determined human blood was oozing out of it... But for all they demonstrate the existence of medical and scientific improbabilities, the tests raised more questions than they answered... The Lord may indeed move in mysterious ways. But why does [the Lord] fiddle about making gilded holy pictures glitter... or shadowy copies of human artists’ images of Him and His mother appear on mopped floors? Science can’t answer these queries, although a fair proportion of the programme was devoted to attempts to recreate the purportedly divine artwork mysteriously appearing on rose petals. Religion, after all, is a matter of belief...

The... University of San Diego[’s]... Brain and Perception Laboratory... decided to study why the human brain is susceptible to feelings of religious belief. What they found has come as a revelation: it seems that we are all wired to receive the messages of God. All you need do is tune... into skull radio... This is difficult to explain, to say the least. “It is not clear... why such dedicated neural machinery for religion may have evolved.” ...Although the team is anxious to quell fears that it has reduced God to a few molecular gyrations, it was paradoxically quick to dub the part of the brain under scrutiny the “God molecule.” [The team leader] seems almost frightened by his own discovery. “We are skating on very thin ice,”... But [it] obviously does not see spiritual belief as simply one more challenge that is solvable by science: “The exciting thing is that you can even begin to

contemplate scientific experiments on the neural basis of religion and God.” So why do these findings make me pause? ...In *Mao II*... [it is written] that, “The future... is passing into the hands of the crowd.” [The author] seems to be saying that the power of individual thought and action has waned in the face of collective “easy belief.” This rush to join the credulous mass is fuelled by a diet of news that presents “an unremitting mood of catastrophe... where we find emotional experience not available elsewhere.” The remaining void is left to be filled by cults and gurus, and, as we have seen, our brains seem receptive to such blandishments. All of this could spell danger. Religious wars around the world show how despicable actions are justified by belief. And, who now, amid our cynicism about politics and tradition, do we take seriously? [The author] answers... “Only the lethal believer, the person who kills and dies for faith.” Does our biology contain a blueprint for this fatal illusion? It may be so.

...gullibility is enabling fraudsters to scoop fortunes. Former jailbirds... who formed a pseudo-religious group in Naples, claimed they could enable believers to chat on the phone with God – for \$50 a minute... The “voice of God” was provided by homeless wino[s]. Clients of another fraudster were]... guaranteed... they could become saints – for a fee of \$2500. Before being nabbed, [the fraudster had] raked in more than \$100,000.

...Two of the most fascinating articles to appear in the *Herald* lately were... the piece by a philosopher... wh[o]... said that determining whether actions were definitively right or wrong was way too hard – and... the [piece]... about the “discovery”... that part of the human brain is “wired” to receive the messages of God[, which]... is reported to have come as a “revelation” to the scientific researchers... Well, it will certainly be no surprise to any believer in God... for we have known about the divine connection since Adam and Eve woke up in the Garden of Eden. We know, too, that... “Skull radio” did not evolve. It was placed in us... at the time of creation... It is the means by which any[one]... who wonders if God exists can find out in the privacy of their own minds. It is simply a matter of... asking. If the request is sincere, the answer will come – as it has come to millions of... [people] over the millennia. No churches, no religion, no *Bible* – just one on one with God, a privilege to which every... [hu]man born is entitled. As to the fellow who says that determining right from wrong is too hard... I say it is[n’t]... In fact, it is so easy that it escapes most of us. Which is dangerous, because upon our continued ability to discern good and evil depends our survival. Any word or action which derives from patience, kindness, generosity, humility, courtesy, unselfishness, good temper, tolerance or sincerity is automatically definitively right. Any word or action which derives from pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy or sloth is automatically definitively wrong. It’s just that simple.

...*Is God Listening?* ...[the gal] stopped praying for a winning lottery ticket years ago... But when [the gal] learned that her sister... needed a kidney transplant, [it] began praying for a donor. *This*, [the gal] thought, *is worth praying for*. Less than one year later [her sister] has a new kidney, courtesy of a [donor] who heard of [the sister’s] plight and was so moved that [it] had herself tested; [the donor] was a perfect match. Coincidence? Luck? Divine intervention? [The gal] is sure: “It was a miracle.” For those blessed with faith, there is no doubt: [hers] was an answered prayer, pure and simple. After all, Christ urged his followers to petition the Father for their needs. “Ask and you shall receive... seek and you shall find, knock and the door will be opened to you.” In a world where public cynicism seemingly knows no bounds, trust in God persists. In a recent *Newsweek* survey, 54[%] of American adults said they prayed every day (29[%] more than once a day). [87[%] said they believe God answers their prayers at least some of the time. An astounding 86[%] said they accept God’s failure to answer their prayers. And only 15[%] said they have lost faith – at any time – because their prayers went unanswered. And their prayers keep coming: for health, safety, love and, to a remarkable degree, for others... At Oral Roberts University in Oklahoma, a prayer ministry takes requests by phone, fax, and e-mail round the clock. If you’re Jewish and can’t make it to Jerusalem, an Israeli company offers an e-mail service with direct delivery of prayer requests to the Wailing Wall. Such practices, quite frankly, embarrass some religious intellectuals. [One professor] of religion... points out that many faiths encourage their members to believe there is value in asking God to intervene in a crisis, but they don’t want to cross the line and say, “Yes, God can intervene in the world.” ...a vision of a God who is able to act but won’t can be unsettling. Jews continue to ask how an event so horrific as the Holocaust could have happened; this can generate scepticism about the power of prayer. Petitionary prayer is not foreign to Judaism, but most rabbis prefer to pray for wisdom, not relief... So how do the faithful know that God really answers prayers? It depends on your point of view. If you believe, no proof is necessary; if you don’t believe, no proof is sufficient. [A professor] of philosophy... kept a prayer list with hundreds of names, often of people [it didn’t know]. The professor] prayed for their jobs, their health, their children, and after observing a remarkable set of healings, concluded that personal prayer works. So when his grandmother was 87 and fell deathly ill, [the professor] sat at her bedside in “serious prayer.” To his delight, [his grandmother] recovered. In May 1995 when his wife of 23 years was told [it] had stomach cancer, [the professor] prayed more anxiously than ever... His wife died. But before... d[ying, the wife] told her husband, “God spoke to me. Three words: I love you.” ...[My wife] had doubted God’s love all her life... I trust [God] to have a good answer to my prayers. That’s not the same as knowing what that answer will be.” For nonbelievers, prayer of any kind is folly. In a book titled *The Demon-Haunted World: Science As a Candle in the Dark*[, an]... astronomer... included prayer along with astrology, spoon-bending, ESP and witches as examples of the persistence of irrationality. Although his belief in the existence of black holes was based on only indirect proof, [the astronomer] felt there wasn’t any evidence of a God who answers prayers... But then how does one explain miracles? ...Late one night in America, a [girl] decided to take a shortcut home up a steep, unlit path. Then [the girl] heard fast footsteps behind her. An instant later a [guy] was upon her, tightening her scarf and ripping at her pants. At home ...he[r]... mother woke from a deep sleep, seized with fear that something terrible was about to happen to her daughter. [The mother] immediately knelt down beside her bed and prayed. For 15 minutes [the mother] begged God to protect her daughter. Convinced [it] had won God’s protection, the mother returned to a sound sleep. Back on the stony path, the would-be rapist suddenly ceased... and fled down the hill... To... scientists like [one physicist]... of the University of Adelaide, an inexplicable event is only inexplicable because we don’t yet understand it. Still, while the scientific community may have no way to prove an act of God, there are some – doctors, for instance – who are convinced... [‘A Californian RC priest says it was told it had terminal cancer 16 years ago. “I was in denial and then when I was alone, it felt like God was asking me whether I still trusted him. And I said yes.” Later when the priest was praying with other Christians, it felt emotionally drained. The person quoting the prayer walked up and told him that God had cured him. “I went back to the doctor and the cancer was gone. It was so dramatic that it converted the doctor.” Several doctors] are designing tests to try to confirm... that prayer can significantly improve a patient’s health... [“What I learnt was to use my mind to control my body. This was using a meditative state of mind, and I realised that this is what we call prayer – people using their own consciousness. Then I began to go to the literature and see if there had been any studies done and I was astonished to discover over 130 studies that show, basically, that prayer works when you test it in a very rigorous scientific way. I regard this as one of the best kept secrets of modern medicine.”] One of the most intriguing experiments began in September 1996 and will eventually involve some 60 patients at an American arthritis and pain treatment centre... Some participants have already experienced extraordinary short-term results. “There’s something weird going on here, and I love it,” says one patient. At the start of the experiment [the patient] had 49 tender joints. After four sessions with a hands-on praying minister, [it] had only eight. Six months later [it] no longer needed pain medication. [But the study] director... an associate professor of medicine, doesn’t expect that all patients will get equally positive results... Indeed, one of the great problems in asking God any favour is that... when [God] favours some and not others, it appears [God] plays favourites. Is God unjust, or does [God] only appear that way? The question is as old as the Book of Job, and believers have been wrestling ever since with the answer God gives there: “Who has a claim against me that I must pay?”

...[‘An Auckland couple are refusing to allow urgent treatment for their 12-year-old and are relying instead on divine intervention to cure her. The girl underwent an operation last week for lymphoblastic lymphoma, a malignant cancer that mainly affects the lymph nodes. But her parents are now refusing to allow her to receive chemotherapy. Doctors say that without the treatment the girl will die. The girl’s mother told the High Court at Auckland yesterday: “If we trust in the Lord, the Lord will heal our daughter. That is why we are refusing any treatment at all.” An aunt told the judge that her nephew, who

received treatment for asthma until aged 14, had been cured by the power of prayer. “We stopped taking him to the doctor. We stopped using the inhaler. All we do is pray.” Now the nephew was a healthy, strong 16-year-old. The judge adjourned an application by Auckland Healthcare Services Ltd for the girl to be placed under the guardianship of the High Court, and for the court to consent to medical treatment. Legal counsel is being appointed to represent her.’

...‘Can children refuse medical treatment on the grounds of religious belief? Adults have the right to refuse or have medical treatment withdrawn. On the face of it NZ law in the Bill of Rights Act 1990 and the newly published Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers’ Rights regulations enacted under the 1994 Health and Disability Commissioner Act, state that every person, child or adult, has the right to practice his or her religion and the right to refuse or withdraw from medical treatment. But as Auckland University’s senior lecturer in medical law says: “Children don’t have the same rights as adults.” The Guardianship Act, which applies to children up to the age of 20, gives the courts the power to act in the best interests of a child under its guardianship and it prevails over other acts. Perhaps the most authoritative ruling has come from a Court of Appeal decision in April which upheld the court guardianship of a three-year-old boy whose parents, members of the Jehovah’s Witness Church, refused consent for the boy to have a blood transfusion. The court said the rights of the parents to express their religious beliefs cannot be exercised to the point where their child’s health or safety is at risk.’

...a Scottish person] went to bed with a headache and woke up speaking with a South African accent... Doctors say [the Scot, who is] in her 50s... had suffered a minor stroke and now has Foreign Accent Syndrome, a rare condition... Only 12 previous cases have been reported... Patients with the condition suffer damage to the left side of the brain which controls speech. Therapy can help but most patients find the condition distressing because their friends and family find it difficult [to come] to terms with... [Meanwhile, a]n image of a revered doctor and candidate for sainthood that appeared in an x-ray of a boy’s stomach has [continued to] baffle... Venezuelan doctors... The x-rays were taken after [the] 10-year-old... was rushed to hospital with back pains... [The boy] was later released, apparently fit and well... “It may have been gases in his stomach but the image is very clear... of a [guy] with a moustache dressed in a suit,”... They said the ghostly image bore a striking resemblance to Dr Jose Gregorio Hernandez, a bowler-hatted 19th century doctor who healed the poor for free and is credited with miraculous powers. - 1997

A judge in Como ruled that an 83-year-old... who beat his wife after mistaking her for a ghost should not stand trial, Italian media reported. The [husband] was awakened in the middle of the night by his 76-year-old wife shuffling around in the dark... clad in a white dressing gown...

Ghosts and other hallucinations may be caused by the brain trying to make sense of dwindling signals from diseased or failing eyes. Studies that have monitored patients’ minds found that even people who have had both eyes removed “see” ghostly visions of distorted faces. Others with a range of eye diseases report seeing knights in armour, people in Edwardian costumes or... W[W1] uniforms, and apparitions wearing hats or helmets... [T]he images were not of people they knew, which could begin to explain why reports of ghosts were often from elderly people. But people with perfect eyesight could experience seeing apparitions, [a doctor]... of the Institute of Psychiatry told the British Association.

...Mobile phones are killing off ghosts. Apparently paranormal events, which some scientists put down to unusual electrical activity, could be drowned out by the phone call and text message noise. Sightings had dropped from two new ghosts a week three years ago to none...

A survey has lifted the veil on an unexpected secret – many scientists believe in ghosts. The survey... found that most [scientists] were not willing to rule out the possibility that “some houses are haunted by ghosts”... and that “in the past aliens from some other planet have landed on Earth”.

...Ever woken up feeling there’s an evil presence in your room, yet you’re unable to move or call out? Scientists believe sleep paralysis could be responsible for many ancient reports of attacks by witches and modern claims of abduction by aliens. Sleep paralysis is caused by a faulty connection between the brain and the body as we drift in or out of sleep – half of us will experience it at least once.

...A bizarre, dream-like paralysis experienced when people wake from a deep sleep can cause some to believe that have seen a ghost or even to have been abducted by aliens, a... Harvard University... psychology professor... says. Susceptible people experience the paralysis – they are semi-conscious yet incapable of moving – and sometimes hallucinate so vividly they genuinely believe they are victims of a supernatural event...

Ghosts have nothing to do with supernatural experiences, but are simply the result of brain damage, says a Swiss scientist. The process is similar to the experience of “phantom limbs” – the sense that an amputated limb is still present, according to [the] neuroscientist... of the University Hospital in Zurich... Some people actually saw their double, often as a mirror image, and this could be the result of damage to visual areas of the brain which affected the way people sensed their bodies... Out-of-body experiences, where people “see” their body from the outside, might be caused by temporary overactivity of certain brain regions... [T]hese experiences were generated as a result of damage to the parietal lobes, the regions responsible for the distinction between the body and surrounding space.

A novice skydiver whose parachutes malfunctioned survived an 1100m fall and his wife credits a “flock of angels” for cushioning his fall... “God and his little flock of angels helped on the way down,” [the] wife... said yesterday, as her husband lay in hospital at Fort Worth [with]... a broken neck, a cracked vertebra... a fractured pelvis, a broken hip, a shattered femur, a collapsed lung, a ruptured bladder and broken ribs. - 1996

There have been many instances of people surviving parachute malfunctions (deep, soft snow is particularly good at cushioning falls), but only a feeble-minded person would assume that a *flock of angels* was involved. If every person whose parachute malfunctioned had survived, then angels might be the reason – but if, for example, only one out of a thousand people survives a fall caused by parachute malfunction, it is far more plausible to give the credit to statistical probability (the same goes for praying – i.e., if one prayer out of every thousand gets answered, it’s more likely to be a proof for the existence of coincidence than the power of prayer)! Other alleged miracles could also have equally mundane explanations (i.e., examples of ‘raising the dead’ could just be instances of people coming out of comas; examples of ‘walking on water’ could just be instances of people walking on tidal flats or other submerged land). This raises a valid question: do those people who await the coming of the Messiah (Christ or Saviour) expect this figure to be able to perform miracles? If it is taken into consideration that many people are alleged to have been able to perform miracles (‘records of miraculous cures are common in all religions’), whereas the coming of the Messiah is a one-off event which has yet to occur, perhaps a true Messiah doesn’t need to perform miracles in order to convince others of its identity (i.e., miracle-working is a tool used by people who don’t know how to prove God exists otherwise, and by anti-Christians – who use miracles to deceive others into thinking that they are the Messiah)? Such an argument would, at least, seem to confirm that Jesus of Nazareth wasn’t the Messiah (r:p1140, ln19 + p898, ln8-9).

A... bearded white [person] suddenly appeared from nowhere in Peru. The Incas called him Ayar Manco Capac... also known as Virococha... [(a term originally used to describe ‘the Inca creator deity, as supreme being’). Virococha] brought great benefits to the Incas, as well as spiritual assistance, including the solar cult. Before... [leaving, Virococha] set up a great cross on a mountain [and] told those left behind that... messengers [would be sent] to protect them and to renew their knowledge. Viracocha, like Jesus, was a healer and is also credited with walking on the waters.

Some scientists maintain that the origin of life was a singular event but, nevertheless, a natural one... [Exactly] what is meant by this... it might be supposed [is] that, if an event occurs only once, the distinction between miraculous and natural disappears.

Our modern understanding of greatness and uniqueness is especially characterized by ideas of personal originality. Here our views differ demonstrably and quite clearly from those of the New Testament. For example, stories there of miracles... that the Old Testament told of the prophets are carefully retold – thus, the awakening of the dead in Mark 5:21-43 (Elijah and Elisha in 1 Kings 17:17-24 and 2 Kings 4:18-37), and the feeding of the multitudes in Mark 6:35-43 and 8:1-9 (Elisha in 2 Kings 4:42-44). The point is that the greater and more significant someone is, the more... [that person] resembles other great persons (of the past). The more similar one is to them, the more certain also is his or her legitimacy because it concerns the same handwriting of God. That is to say, precisely because one is a “copy” and of the same kind confirms his or her significance. The more intensively a great person realizes everything that one knows about others, the more his greatness is confirmed... Jesus was not a political-military messiah, but rather a prophetic one whose dignity was established “charismatically.” ...In contrast to statements from the Old Testament, in Qumran there are clear references to the fact that “the” end-time Messiah or at least one of the messianic figures can derive his dignity by God’s gift of the Spirit. These texts are of particular importance in answer to the question of how Jesus could be called the Messiah at all. As the Qumran texts attest, one was able to call an essentially charismatically oriented bearer of authority “Messiah.” ...In the Qumran texts there are a wide variety of expectations concerning the Messiah or messiahs. Some texts deal with a single figure, others with two or three end-time representatives of God... Besides a Messiah from Aaron (for the priests) and from Israel (for the lay people), in addition still another prophet was expected... [F]or first-century Judaism it was quite possible to expect two or three messianic figures (with separate responsibilities)... In Qumran texts the Old Testament passage about the star of Jacob (Num. 24:17) is also associated with two different persons. The star of Jacob is explained as a reference to the “Interpreter of the Law,” [while] the scepter that shall rise out of Israel is identified with the “Prince of the whole congregation” (CD 7:18-21; Vermes, 89). There seems to be no connection here with the New Testament. The star seen... in Matthew 2 is not Jesus; it only points to him... Some of the texts from Qumran combine at least two of the figures... into one. They envisage a Messiah... “out of Aaron and Israel.” The coming Messiah was thus expected to be... of priestly extraction... Jesus... did not, as far as we can tell, fall under the commandment, only later imposed, that rabbis must marry, but rather... under the earlier traceable tradition regarding the virginity of prophetic figures, as it is reported in the Jewish tradition about the prophets Elijah, Ezra, and Daniel... To a certain extent, Jesus would have borrowed characteristics from every prophetic figure, every seer, wise [person], and martyr that was known, because everything good and helpful that had legitimated those sent by God must and could now be incorporated in him... Must God be appraised like a doctrinal candidate who is expected to demonstrate new ideas? ...would that not... distort... what we mean by “God”... Wherever God is at work, clearly repetition is legitimate.

...I miss you but I haven’t met you yet I know your habits but wouldn’t recognise you...

Jesus may have been an incorporation of past figures, but the society Jesus lived in – and those of the past figures Jesus is alleged to have borrowed characteristics from – shared most of the same characteristics. However, although many people living in the later stages of the 20th century give the impression that they still think and act like people who lived at least 2000 years ago, First World societies are vastly different to those of the past – including societies from the early stages of the 20th century. Therefore, is it legitimate to expect a coming Messiah to be a *repetition* of Jesus and the ancients, or is it more feasible to expect such a figure to be an improvement on them and everyone who has ever lived on Earth?

Because of the part played by the church in remaking a Western world that had fallen into barbarism, and because the entire spiritual life of Latin and Germanic Europe is permeated with motifs originating in Christianity, all Christian churches seem to have something in common. This common element forms a bond between the many... churches that have fought each other to the death... and even the indifferent who have grown up in the Christian world... Thus, insofar as the Western world is Christian, the Christian element, when it is not usurped by limited groups from the... Catholic Church to the Protestant sects, can only be the Biblical religion, which encompasses all Christian faiths as well as the Jews and those who believe without a church, and even in some way those who expressly abjure all faith. Biblical religion thus becomes the all-embracing whole, reaching through the millennia from Abraham to our own day; no Westerner can disregard it, but no one is entitled to claim it for his own possession. Every[one] who lives in a bond with the Biblical religion finds his[or her] sustenance in it, selecting and stressing what [are his or her] wishes. It is only when all the figures of the Biblical religion have been forgotten that the Christian West will be at an end.

Religion is slow to change, partly perhaps in contrast to the change about it, but also because it cannot ‘up anchor’ from its historical roots and cannot completely overturn its theories in the way that science can. If this sometimes leads to impatience perhaps one should temper this with the thought that ultimately the structure and organisation that is the Church must make the final sacrifice and make itself redundant.

Historical research consists of fitting together many scraps of information into a greater shadow of the reality we seek. That silhouette is often soft-edged and is cast upon an uneven surface, a ghost that answers our questions faintly and sometimes in lost idioms. The greater the quantity of information we have, the better and the more independently reported that data is, the clearer and more three-dimensional is the shadow we can summon from former times.

If it were possible to meet Jesus and the major biblical prophets in order to compare them to the way the Bible describes them and their feats, most if not all of the biblical descriptions might prove to be exaggerations. If the Messiah is to be a repetition of Jesus and the ancients, will it also prove to be less grand than the messianic figure described in the Bible? If, like the ‘Wizard of Oz’, the Messiah proves to be less than what people expect (e.g., nothing more than ‘a liberator of humankind, or someone who [just] shows humans the way to spiritual salvation’), will the people who await its arrival be disappointed? But, if the *Messiah doesn’t need to perform miracles [to prove] its identity*, how will it do so instead? Via a temple of proof (i.e., a law court)?

...Jesus and his lawyer are coming back...

Jesus won’t be *coming back*, but do the people who await a Messiah still expect this figure to literally be *the son of God* (i.e., do they expect a God, a half-god-half-human, a whole human, an angel or an alien – e.g., a super[person] like the fictional Clark Kent)?

...careless Ethiopians have gone astray they... [are] praying... night and day... for a god to come from outer space...

...I turn on the radio... [and] the TV I sit and I listen to what we’ve achieved Somewhere out there... him who’d come here... again... hears our call...

...can you come back soon We wish you could We think we’ve gone too far on this ship of fools... spirit... let the sun shine on me when I sing the last song I will give you even my body... - The Cult

If the people who await the coming of a Messiah expect it to be a *spirit*, do they also expect the Messiah to be re-born in a human body at the time of the human's birth, or simply enter the body at a pre-appointed time?

...I'll be coming back because someone somewhere is waiting...

If the people who await the Messiah expect it to be born (or re-born), do they also expect it to be born from a virgin (or someone who became pregnant when *losing her virginity*); do they think it will be a first-born child, second child, seventh child, last child or something else?

I went away to see an old friend of mine His sister came over... [and] laughing like crazy... said Jesus had a twin who knew nothing about sin...

Do the people who await the coming of a Messiah expect this figure to know *nothing about sin*, or do they expect it to know about everything; or just about everything that is necessary for a Messiah to know?

Before [the child] was born you said [the child] knew all the secrets of life and death and then at the moment of his birth an angel came... and sealed his lips. - KEY LARGO

Do the people who await the coming of a Messiah expect this figure to literally have 'the keys of hell' (Revelation 1:18), or do they think that the word KEY merely implies someone with 'a solution to a problem'?

This is... for the [perso]n who couldn't remember – a track called Walls of Jericho...

...you're gonna manifest the mystery you[ve] got a magic wheel in your memory... angels are dreaming of you... - Cotton Crown

Do the people who await the coming of a Messiah expect this figure to know of its identity from birth or to find out later? If later, do they, for example, think the Messiah will find out while it is still a young child (as in Tibetan traditions), at 25 years of age (as per Hindu theology) or 24?

...Isaac (1642-1726)... [had] the greatest single influence on theoretical physics until Einstein. His most productive period, which [Newton] called his *annus mirabilis* (1666-7), was when Cambridge University... was closed because of the plague... Albert (1879-1955)... [- who 'revealed the first real spark of genius when 12 years old' -] published several remarkable papers... [in] 1905... one dealt with the photoelectric emission in terms of Plank's quantum theory of light, for which [Einstein] was awarded the 1921 Nobel Prize for physics, another dealt with the Brownian motion in liquids and demonstrated that this effect was caused by the action of molecules, and a third described his Special Theory of Relativity, postulating a constant velocity of light which led to his famous equation relating mass and energy... the basis of atomic energy.

What 'about thirty years of age' (St Luke 3:23), or 36 (thereby linking the Messiah to the BEAST mentioned in Revelation – r:p1125, ln19), or older?

...clap your hands if you know... Charlie Brown... [alias] Jesus was born on an Indian reservation 100 years ago Christmas Day...

If the people who await a Messiah expect it *to find out later*, how do they expect the Messiah to find out? Via a *light that dazzled* it, or via its name being *written in stone* (r:p1126, ln3)?

...how would I know that this could be my fate...

The mark! ...[this person]'s the chosen one... whom the ancient parchment prophesied would lead us to glory...

...tell me I'm the chosen one...

Do the people who await a Messiah think that it is a predestined figure or that, at the appointed time, God will select the best candidate?

...if you want me to I will be the one that is always good...

Do the people who await a Messiah expect it to be *always good*, or just on important occasions (r:p874, ln56)? Do they know what it means for a human to be perfect, and do they expect the Messiah to always be like that?

...I wish I was special... I wanna perfect body I wanna perfect soul I want you to notice when I'm not around...

...you are... perfect... without you everything falls apart...

Unification Church [is a] religious movement founded... in 1954 in Korea, known popularly as the 'Moonies'. Combining elements of Taoism and Christianity, its teachings are... [that the] purpose of creation was to establish a perfect family... Now is the time for a sinless messiah to return to earth and bring the kingdom of heaven.

...the Unification Church [is] led by the controversial... [guy who is] derided as a kook by critics but hailed as a messiah by devotees[(who call him 'the only perfect person on Earth')]. Actually, its official name is now the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification. The church, always sensitive about public image (members hate being called Moonies) is having a makeover. The aim? To make the leap from oddity to mainstream respectability, by stressing its role as a bridge between religions rather than the only true religion... [But its] confronting nature, combined with the [leader's] family's lavish lifestyle, has brought the church bad press in recent years[(including accusations of 'wife and drug abuse' made against the leader's eldest son by the son's ex-wife)]. It will have to broaden its message if its wants more respect... The church denies it, but the apparent change in focus is due to the fact that [the leader] is now 79 and will soon pass on to... "the spirit world." This will leave his church without the charismatic figurehead who has been its motive force for more than 40 years[(the leader 'claims that when it was 16-years-old Jesus Christ appointed him to establish the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth')]. Outwardly, the church is sticking to its trademark events, best exemplified by its mass weddings. [The latest one] was held two weeks ago in Seoul, sealing 360 million couples around the world in new or renewed wedding vows, according to

church figuring... 40,000 couples, many of whom met their partners only days before the ceremony, [were] crammed into Seoul's Olympic Stadium, which [was] done up to resemble a giant wedding cake... But there are problems. [The leader] has handed power to members of his family, which has reportedly caused ructions within the movement. The church's sprawling business interests are also reportedly on the slide. - 1997

Has perfection a place in an imperfect world?

...this is no place for you... - THREE JOHNS

If the Messiah finds out its name via it being *written in stone*, does this mean written on a headstone (i.e., the Messiah has to die before its identity is revealed)? If the people who await the coming of a Messiah believe it will still be alive, do they expect it to be a virgin (r:p1146, ln20)? If not, do they expect it to be married (i.e., have a partner like Adam – but will this partner be the opposite or the same sex) or single – and, in that case, will it be lonely?

...if it's lonely where you are come back... you can [stand] beside me... and I won't tell no one your name...

...you're not alone I'll wait till the end of time for you...

And... [him] who once was the saddest and loneliest little boy you could find, now had all the friends in the world.

...miracles... still happen now and then... we'll be waiting... with... arms unfurled... for you Welcome to our world... knock and the door will open...

His father was a poor working [person] who had so much difficulty in feeding his large family that [the father] found it simplest to abandon... [his eldest boy, who was] fifteen years old... after a farewell meal in a tavern at the city gate, leaving him provided with this piece of advice: 'Go... little one, and perhaps this evening or tomorrow some fine house will open its doors to you. Go with what God has given you.' The boy, thus abandoned, could have knocked on the door of a carpenter or a locksmith. Destiny led him to... the meanest of cookshops. A precarious beginning! But... [his] great desire to work, his wise intuition of the secrets and resources of his art, and his serene authority revealed him as a person of exceptional quality. Very soon... [the boy] who... began work... as a kitchen help... [was being] called the... Cook of... cooks... and the King of... kings...

Do the people who await the coming of a Messiah expect this person to be a cook, a carpenter, doctor (i.e., healer), politician or preacher?

***Quietism* [is, in] a general sense, the belief that God works only in a person whose being is completely passive or quiet...**

...so in a manner of speaking I just want to... find a way to tell you everything by saying nothing...

...words end in disaster... you showed me silence can speak louder than words... - THE SOUND

Actions speak louder than words.

...some people tell me home is in the sky in the sky lives a spy I want to be more like the ocean no talking all action...

***Silent brides of Christ...* [Ou]r... reporter... was entering a foreign world where there's no television, no radio, no newspapers and visitors aren't allowed behind the barred doors. But this was no prison – it's the cloistered life of... Auckland's Carmelite monastery... The spiritual disciplines of the Carmelite order are particularly austere. The nuns take a vow of silence, and spend much of their day in prayer and contemplation. "Even during mealtimes, the nuns are silent – except for the one who reads prayers... For two one-hour periods every day they can talk to each other. And can they talk! They share gossip about their families and all sorts of things, and often they end up talking over each other." - 1996**

If it wasn't for their twice-daily talk-fests, an observer might assume that Auckland's Carmelite nuns believe *it is better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to open one's mouth and remove all doubt!* Preachers obviously don't accept *the belief that God works only in a person whose being is completely quiet*. They are also unlikely to accept that, as a general rule: it pays to distrust the words of anyone who is being paid to say them!

...I have a vision... I'll be a... preacher so I don't have to work...

...that doesn't mean that you can preach me your lies...

...I will lie for you beg and steal for you I will crawl on hands and knees until you see... I will die for you... 'cause I believe in you...

Lying often appears to be easier than telling the truth. However, sometimes it is necessary to lie in order to protect the truth, which isn't the same thing as lying to distort the truth – the former being known as *white lies* while the latter are called 'black lies.' But even in a world which is full of violence, and contains numerous atheists or people whose religious beliefs are related more to fantasy than reality, taking a vow of silence seems extreme. Wouldn't it be more prudent to just remain silent about certain issues?

Do the people who await the coming of a Messiah expect God to talk with it *face to face*, or less directly – via dreams, perhaps?

...let me put you in the picture let me show you what I mean the Messiah is my sister... [I know cause] I had a dream...

Do the people who await the coming of a Messiah expect it to be a guy, gal or something else (e.g., a hermaphrodite or transsexual)?

...it's been years since you were here Have you disappeared... - Everything But The Girl

...we've been waiting so long... for Mary to come along... - MARY-CHRIST

Founded in England c.1750... the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing... migrated to New York, 1774, under the leadership of Ann Lee, whom they believed to be Christ in his second and [feminine] incarnation... The sect[, which was also named *Shakers* –] ...derived from a kind of dance once forming part of their ritual... [–] has almost entirely disappeared.

Do the people who await the coming of a Messiah expect it to be economically and materially rich, poor, or somewhere inbetween?

...at least when Jesus does come back [it]’ll have a bit of pocket money. When... Ernest Digweed passed away, [t]he... Palm Springs, USA, [resident]... left his entire estate to Jesus Christ. [Ernest] instructed state trustee officers to invest the money in bonds, guaranteeing JC a total of \$615,820 by the end of the century. Two people have already filed for the money, insisting they are Jesus reborn.

...*Two faces of a messiah*... [Microsoft’s chairperson] has been hailed in books and on countless magazine covers as the messiah of the Information Age. The... [chairperson is who 78%] of American parents hope their children will grow up to emulate, according to one poll... According to *Brill* magazine, the American media watchdog, Microsoft’s public relations machine employs more than 300 operatives whose primary job is to make sure that [the chairperson] gets as much good ink as anybody who happens to be the richest [perso]n in the world can reasonably expect. Given the sophistication of Microsoft’s products... [– and the fact that] time and again, each and every competitor with the potential to shake Microsoft’s hold on the software market has been quite deliberately bought out, run off or ruthlessly sabotaged... [–] the aw-shucks hokiness of the message can be disconcerting. And it is doubly true when you consider... [the chairperson’s] personal fortune... According to the *Wall Street Journal*, [Microsoft’s chairperson] is at least half as rich again as the original Rockefeller, the much-despised John D, after adjustments for inflation. Yet the flow of press releases and media manipulations make [Microsoft’s chairperson] come across as some corn-pone combination of Honest Abe Lincoln and a distillation of the latest bestseller on the art of spiritual self-improvement. If [the chairperson] is rich, it is because [the chairperson] earned it. And isn’t that the American Way? If [the chairperson] is powerful – but not too powerful, mind you – it is because [the chairperson] has the wisdom to be trusted with power. But basically, [the chairperson] is like you and me, just a whole lot richer.

...*Moses had 10 commandments; [Microsoft’s chairperson] has 12...* Microsoft’s chair[person says in]... *Business @ the Speed of Thought*... that only managers who master the digital universe will gain competitive advantage... The successful companies of the next decade will be the ones that use digital tools to reinvent the way they work. To make digital information flow an intrinsic part of your company, [t]here are 12 key steps... The more consumers adopt the Web life-style, the closer the economy will move toward Adam Smith’s perfect market in... which buyers and sellers can easily find one another without taking much time or spending much money. [Unfortunately, i]f you’re a middle[perso]n, the Internet’s promise of cheaper prices and faster service can “disintermediate” you, eliminating your role of assisting the transaction between the producer and the consumer.

...The [perso]n who tops the world rich list has a fortune said to be worth... \$[NZ]158.3 billion... The... head of the Wal-Mart supermarket chain... of 4000 stores... founded... with a single shop in Arkansas 39 years ago... takes over as No 1 on the... rich list from [Microsoft’s chairperson]. For three years the Microsoft founder beat all comers with a fortune that rose to \$185 billion last year, but plunged to \$131 billion this year as technology stocks slumped... Anyone aspiring to join [the owner of Wal-Mart] and the others on the world’s top 50 rich list needs at least \$15 billion. A[US]’s richest... fails to make the cut with his \$8 billion. So too do the richest N[Z]ers – who look positively strapped for cash beside the likes of... [the Wal-Mart owner (whose fortune is] worth... about 50[%] more than N[Z]’s GDP and Microsoft’s]... boyish, bespectacled, badly barbered genius...

Do the people who await a Messiah expect it to be physically beautiful, ugly, or average looking; right-handed, left-handed (‘spiral staircases in medieval castles ran clockwise because all the knights used to be right-handed – when an invading army would climb the stairs, they wouldn’t be able to use their right hand which was holding the sword because of the difficulties of climbing the stairs; left-handed knights would have had no troubles, except left-handed people could never become knights because it was assumed that they were descendants of the devil!’), ambidextrous or armless?

It was implied on lines 47-8 of the previous page that the Messiah won’t be a preacher. However, in most dictionaries the word MESSIAH follows the word MESSENGER. What if the Messiah is merely a messenger? This proposition is supported by the fact that, like Hinduism’s ancient religious books, the Bible was largely compiled from stories that had previously been retold verbally. But if a group of people playing ‘Chinese whispers’ – in which one person whispers a short message into the ear of an adjacent person, who whispers it to the next person and so on until it returns to the original speaker – can’t do so without altering the message, by how much would long stories that have been passed from mouth to mouth for decades or centuries be altered?

Like myths, fairy tales and ballads spread in earlier cultures, [modern] legends travel far and wide. They pass from person to person by word of mouth, told as real-life experiences that happened recently to a friend or a friend of a friend. Where do these stories originate? When investigated, most leads simply evaporate. But [modern] legends live on, both for their entertainment value and because they gratify our desire to know about bizarre... and potentially dangerous incidents that *may* have happened... [However,] when it comes to... legends, truth *can* be stranger than fiction.

‘...how could the Bible be from God when it was written by [humans]?’ you may ask. True, about 40 [people] shared in... the actual writing of the Bible with the exception of the Ten Commandments, which were written personally by God on stone tablets by the direct action of his holy spirit. (Exodus 31:18) However, this does not make what they wrote any less the Word of God. The Bible explains: “[*People*] spoke from God as they were borne along by holy spirit.” (2 Peter 1:21) Yes, just as God used his powerful holy spirit to create the heavens, the earth and all living things, [God] also used it to direct the writing of the Bible... So... the Bible is *God’s Book*, not the book of the [people] who were used to write it.

Similarly, the Koran is not Muhammad’s book but Allah’s. Muhammad undoubtedly expected the Koran to supersede the Bible (‘the world’s greatest book’). If the Messiah won’t convey whatever messages it has verbally, maybe it will do so via a book (i.e., the one mentioned in Revelation 5:1 – r:p1126, ln8). In other words, maybe God will use the Messiah to write a book which can supersede both the Bible and the Koran (note: if it is taken into consideration that knowledge can be written on paper, which can be sourced from trees, the phrase ‘tree of knowledge’ – Genesis 2:17 – could imply a book)?

...how long shall they kill our prophets while we stand aside and look Some say it’s just a part of it we’ve got to fulfill the book...

...I think about a world to come[when] the book... written in pain... by the golden one... who questioned what we were here for... [heralds] the start of the coming race... [because that] solid book... cannot be found today...

DIY religion – by the book... A DEEP and meaningful new book... [by a NZ]-born... author... examining topics like morality, ethics, sex and spirituality, will be released this week. It purports to help with “finding true value in your life”. The publishers hope it will be a bestseller and it may well be. Why? Because it’s very similar to another book that’s been on the bestseller list for years – the Bible. - 1997

Altogether, according to the Bible Society, the [‘most sold book’ of human history (estimates range between ‘50 million’ and ‘over 200 million’ copies) – and ‘the first large European book to be printed via Johannes Gutenberg’s method of using movable metal type (c.1455), which remained the basis of printing until the 20th century’ –]has been translated into 349 languages and the New Testament into 841. Never until now, however, into the broad dialect of Yorkshire, where people delight in being tough, plain-spoken folk... *Ee By Gum, Lord!*, as the version is called, could almost be in another language... [T]he Lord’s Prayer ends with “An’ all t’ Pahr, an’ all t’ Glooary, Fer ivver and ivver.” ...Jesus calming the waves on Galilee becomes: “Jesus stood up an’ seemed ter bawl aht a sooart o’ command ter t’ wind an’ t’ waves – an’ by gum! Bit bi bit, t’ storm bated.” ...The Gospels were translated, if that’s the word, by... a Methodist lay preacher and former language teacher... [who] says that the robust Yorkshire speech was the equivalent of how the people of Galilee must have sounded, using the down-to-earth language of fisher[s] and farmers. - 1996

...speak to me in a language I can hear...

Would a Messiah’s book be able to speak to everyone or only the people who can read the language in which it is written? If the latter premise is true, in what language would it be written? Japanese, perhaps?

Between approximately 2020 A.D. and 2037 A.D., Japan will become like “Jerusalem” of today or “Mecca” of the world. This period will be the golden age of Japan. The country will be praised all over the world as the land where God’s Truth was first revealed... My own soul shall teach Laws during the period of about 50 years from the end of the 20th century into the 21st century, and then, from heaven, shall instruct various Guiding Spirits of Light on earth. I shall reincarnate again on earth 2,800 years from now. Many of you shall see me again at that time... In the early 25th century, still another Great Light[. alias] Jesus Christ... will reincarnate on the earth. - The Laws of Gold

A west European language would, however, seem to be more appropriate than Japanese for a Messiah’s book due to the current world-wide influence of such languages and the fact that none of the major religious documents were originally written in any of them (whereas Japan already has its *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*). The author of such a book might then be expected to be born in a country that uses one of those languages. French, perhaps?

They drive too fast, guzzle more than their share of vin, scoff huge amounts of fatty cheese and all quite shamelessly. God must be French... otherwise how can they get away with so many sins? - 1997

Paris... [has] long regarded itself as the centre of the world... - 1996

Civil religion tends to grow with and boost aspirations of nationalism, especially where traditional religion declines. Typical was the religion instituted in France during the period 1793-4, by Robespierre. This had its own rites and liturgies, celebrating the French Revolution, the revolutionary state and significant events and people in it. The growth of nationalism in the 19th century saw patriotism in various European countries and in the USA develop with quasi-religious fervour. Phrases like ‘la belle France’, ‘Mother Russia’, ‘God’s own country’ (USA), ‘the American Way of Life’ and dates like 14 July in France and 4 July in the USA evoked a religious response and appropriate celebration.

Apart from calling itself *God’s own country*, the US also regards *itself as the centre of the world*.

EVEN GOD LOVES AMERICA

If the people who await the coming of a Messiah expect it to be born in the US, what city is it most likely to be born in? Los Angeles? LA is, after all, called ‘the city of angels’ by some people. However, other people call it ‘Lost Angeles’! Perhaps they expect the Messiah to be born in Salt Lake City?

...the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints[was] founded at New York (1830) by Joseph Smith... who claimed to have discovered, through divine revelation, the ‘Book of Mormon’, which [Smith] translated, relating the history of a group of Hebrews who migrated to America c.600 BC; this work is accepted by Mormons as Scripture along with the Bible. A further revelation led [Smith] to instigate polygamy, a practice which... was abandoned in 1890. Smith was succeeded by Brigham Young... who moved the Mormon headquarters to Salt Lake City, Utah, in 1847.

[The] *Book of Mormon*... [is an] account of an ancient American people to whom Jesus Christ appeared after his ascension[which] teaches Christ’s future establishment of the New Jerusalem in America.

The digital parent... of family tree-making... is the Church of Latter-Day Saints... An important part of belonging to the church requires members to track and log their families as far back as they can. The church... has been collecting these records since 1894 and storing them... on computer... at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City... The church now has the most complete set of records of millions of names and families world-wide... There are 29 Family History Centres in N[Z] with more on the way. By comparison there are two in Sydney and only one in London. [Incidentally, ‘GOD’S OWN COUNTRY’ is a euphemistic phrase for NZ, now used ironically, and sometimes shortened jocularly to Godzone.]

...The first... world gathering of indigenous Christian[s]... in Rotorua has not been without controversy. The planning of the mammoth task that is bringing together... 2000 people from 32 nations has been questioned by some religious leaders who objected to not being consulted... [But the] story of how the gathering ended up in N[Z] is intriguing and... for the non-believer, it’s pretty heavy. In 1994 a Sioux chief... attended a conference in Israel and asked if God was calling a world... conference for Christians on indigenous people and if so where. The chief asked for feedback and over the months it came flooding in... 100 groups and people responded worldwide through visions, dreams and... reading the *Bible*. “The answer was God was definitely calling a world conference,”... The visions unanimously showed it should be held in 1996, and the feedback about where it should be held pointed in one direction. Vital pieces of information kept coming up in the visions... It was an island, the island was in a great ocean and it was in the outermost parts of the earth. Then there were visions of a land with a white cloud. “I said, ‘Oh, it’s N[Z]... We are an island,[and] we are in what is called Te Moana Nui Kiwa, the great ocean of Kiwa.” Also N[Z] was the furthestmost inhabited land from Israel... “Then I said... ‘The Maori name for our country is Aotearoa, which means the land of the long white cloud’, and they were just startled.” - 1996

...the... origin... of... AOTEAROA... is attributed to Hine-te-aparangi, wife of the legendary Maori navigator, Kupe. [Hine] is said to have called out ‘He, ao!’ (‘A cloud!’) on sighting land... and Kupe decided to enshrine this declaration in the name of the new land. Other interpretations of the meaning are ‘long white world’, ‘long bright world’ and ‘long, lingering daylight’... [By the way, the] *SOUTHERN CROSS* is a small constellation seen from the southern hemisphere, whose four main stars form the tips of a cross... The constellation was first reported in Europe by Vasco de

Gama in 1497, after his voyage round the Cape of Good Hope, and it became a widely-used navigation reference throughout the 16th century. The naked eye can discern 34 stars in the constellation on a clear night... but modern telescopes can pick up thousands of others... According to a proclamation of 1869, it was to be 'the distinctive badge of the Colony' of NZ, as represented by the four five-pointed red stars on the... NZ flag...

When NZ's Mt Ruapehu erupted in June 1996, air currents turned the ash and smoke into a long cloud that appeared white in newspaper photographs (r:p1126, ln2). Other interesting coincidences involving NZ are the words MANA (r:p182, ln47 + p849, ln39; 'presumably, ancient coins carried the *mana* – "magical power" – of the king') and MANNA (r:p1126, ln2; 'a substance miraculously supplied as food to the Israelites in the wilderness – Exod. 16'; 'manna isn't something that can be inherited so much as it has to be earned'), plus Revelation refers to a place which is called a *whore* (r:p1125, ln25 + p182, ln64), and the 'forbidden fruit' which Eve gave to Adam in the Garden of Eden is usually identified as being an apple (r:p582, ln3).

Envoy to Eden... [The] recently appointed... U[S] Ambassador to N[Z]... stands there in her brown checked dress, gold silk scarf, smile as wide as the Mississippi and launches into a speech that makes th[e] sober-suited Auckland Chamber of Commerce crowd grin too. "I'm the ambassador to paradise... N[Z] is the most magnificent country. It is so beautiful. It has such a conducive atmosphere. And the people are so very nice." [● 'The settlement and later the province that straddles the isthmus between the Hauraki Gulf on the east coast and the Manukau Harbour on the west coast of the North Island were named after the first Earl of Auckland, George Eden, who was Governor-General of India when NZ's largest urban area was founded.']
...It's been hailed The Garden of Eden and would be Adam and Eve's are in for a heavenly time at [a newly listed Auckland address]... From the white picket fence (that's to keep the serpents out) to the... plethora of mature... shelter[ing]... trees... the property is a true garden of delights.

Adding to the notion that NZ is *The Garden of Eden* is the point that the serpent ('serpents, which dwell unseen beneath the earth, and symbolized occult knowledge – 2 entwined serpents represent the light and dark sides of the mind, knowledge and intuition' – are now portrayed as common snakes) 'lost his place in paradise (Gen. 3;14-15)' while snakes lost their place in NZ ('geologists working at a fossil lake in Central Otago have unearthed a treasure-trove of fossils between 18 and 14 million years old, including snakes – the first evidence of snakes having lived in this country') – though there are eels and worms. It is illegal to bring snakes into NZ (the Central Otago discovery 'begs the question of why we don't let snakes in when they were here before us').

A metre-long snake found in Christchurch in a shipping container from Indonesia has been identified as a pope's tree pit viper. The snake, common throughout Southeast Asia and India, is poisonous but not usually lethal, according to[a] Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry expert... It is the second snake found in N[Z] in eight days, sparking concerns about border security. Usually, only one a year is intercepted... Last Tuesday, a metre-long... eastern brown snake – considered the second-most-lethal species in A[US] – was found near a Wellington shipping container park. [While on the topic of snakes, 'perhaps the most revolting parasite of all is a little-studied creepy-crawly known as the pentastomid. Pentastomids can, depending on their species, grow up to 15cm long. Surviving for up to 15 years, they live by the hundred, covered in a thick gunk like a large plate of spaghetti and sauce, in the lungs of pythons and vipers. Nor are pentastomids restricted to snakes. People can get them by eating underdone snake meat.'

...humanity's 'fascination with snakes is illustrated by the number of religious beliefs, myths, legends and folktales associated with them. In many religions snakes were often looked upon as beings with mystical powers. In some cases they were worshipped as gods of fertility (or as their representatives) or as the source of good fortune. The Greek god Zeus was thought often to assume the form of a serpent when it visited earthly beings. The ancient Hebrews were surrounded by people who worshiped snakes. Apparently in an effort to counter this influence the snake was taken by the Hebrews as a symbol of evil. This tag has followed snakes throughout all later Jewish and Christian religious history and still colors the views of both Jews and Christians. Yet all snakes did not fare so badly in the Bible. Jesus, though warning of a "brood of vipers" (Matthew 12:34), also admonishes his disciples to "be wise as serpents" (Matthew 10:16). This phrase probably indicates something of the respect and awe with which these animals were held in those times. The professional snake collector, who is usually after poisonous species, carries a snake hook or a set of snake tongs to pick up the animals it finds. A person searching for a harmless pet snake, however, needs nothing but keen eyes, his hands, and a cloth bag to put the snake in. Only a few kinds of snakes make good pets. Some snakes, of course, are poisonous, and many of the harmless kinds are too active or nervous to thrive under captive conditions. Still others require such exotic and unusual foods that their needs cannot be met by the pet owner. Nevertheless, thousands of snakes are kept as pets in the US and Europe']...

The Humane Society of Delaware County found a small dog reported missing by a local resident – unfortunately, it was inside a 3m Burmese python... found... under [a neighbour's] basement steps... with a telltale bulge in its middle... An x-ray confirmed the python had swallowed the dog.

...A metre-long pet snake that disappeared from its Finnish owner's apartment... has turned up in a neighbour's toilet... A plumber repairing a leak in the toilet on the ground floor found the reptile, which had slithered down three flights of pipes to its new home. Fire[officers] dismantled the toilet to rescue it... [In local news, i]s the Freeman's Bay python a snake in the grass or just a shy serpent? A team of four M[AF] staff with tracker dogs... scoured an area of Beresford St... yesterday without a sniff of the reptile. They were looking for a carpet or diamond python up to 2m long, after children found a snakeskin... It was possible the skin had been planted as a hoax, but was being treated seriously at this stage.

...The animal biosecurity director at the M[AF] needed a lowly university lecturer to tell him that his staff's search for the "snake" slithering through the Auckland suburb of Freemans Bay since the end of October was a wild reptile chase. The skin shed by the putative peripatetic python was, it turns out, the lining from a coat which the "hugely embarrassed" academic had dug out of mothballs for a Hallowe'en party... We're inclined to wonder how safe MAF is keeping us from reptilian invaders when its staff can't tell the difference between a python and a party outfit...

[The host of] *Ruby's American Pie*... outdid herself when [the comedienne] joined religious snake-handlers in their church. These devout Southerners are convinced they must hold serpents because the Bible tells them so. One dear [old Southerner] had a video of her husband being bitten by a snake during a church service. [Her husband died. But the husband] is in a "happier place" – so that's okay. Most of the people in the congregation had fingers and parts of fingers missing from snake bites. These people are devout enough to put their limbs on the line for Jesus. This was all grist for [the host]'s mill. Her raised-eyebrows-to-camera technique had so much use [the comedienne] must have developed eyebrow hernias. But the beauty of stupid fanatics is that you don't have to turn away from the camera to roll your eyes. You can just look them straight and say, 'boy, are you stupid' and they will simply smile that smile of the truly thick and say, "yes ma'am, I reckon you got that darn right"... [Speaking of snakes, t]he quick reactions of a crane worker spelled the end yesterday for yet another unwanted A[US]n stowaway. The 70cm snake was caught on an Auckland wharf after the worker saw it inside the locking hole of a container [the worker was shifting. The worker] immediately dropped the container, trapping the snake by its tail... A pest control company killed the reptile, and it was put in a bucket to be sent to Lincoln University for identification. The black and grey snake is the third to arrive in N[Z] in just over three weeks.

...Some of the most poisonous snakes in the world are swimming to our beaches, and the M[AF] says they are protected because they made it to our shores of their own accord. But... a... poisonous snake has been killed after being found among a cargo of used-car batteries from A[US] – the fifth snake discovered in N[Z] this year... Snakes... were difficult to fumigate... They were hitchhikers, and would crawl into a container to get out of the rain or cold... M[AF]'s cargo and vessel clearance manager... says... "Usually snakes get squashed in transit, and it's too cold here for them."

“[NZ is] a gorgeous country, but... the weather in Auckland... [isn't] that great... it's cloudy all day long...,” says... the... [US] star of the... series *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*, which [is filmed] in and around Auckland.

Although NZ is *the furthestmost inhabited land from Israel*, if you were to drill a hole from NZ that went straight through the centre of Earth's core, when you came out the other side you would be in Spain; and if you had begun drilling from Auckland, you would come out near the city of Malaga.

[The] port city and capital of Malaga *provincia*, in the *comunidad autonoma*... of Andalusia, southern Spain... was founded by the Phoenicians in the 12th century BC, conquered successively by the Romans and the Visigoths, and taken by the Moors in 711. Under Moorish rule it became one of the most important cities in Andalusia. When the caliphate of Cordoba disintegrated, the kingdom of Malaga was founded, ruled over by emirs who named it “terrestrial paradise”. After several unsuccessful attempts, the Christians took the city on Aug. 19, 1487.

Auckland was once the capital of a colony of the British Empire. Not far from Malaga is a last bastion of that empire.

[The] fortified town and rocky headland (the Rock of Gibraltar) at the southern tip of Spain... forms the only outlet of the Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic. It is a British naval and air base of great strategic importance... The site has been in British hands since it was captured during the War of the Spanish Succession in 1704 and formally ceded to Britain by the Treaty of Utrecht (1713)... Since... [WW2] Spain has forcefully urged her claim to the territory. Remains of what was later called Neanderthal [people] were first discovered in Gibraltar in 1848, but were not recognized to be this species until the discovery of other remains in the Neander Valley in 1857.

Gibraltar and... Mount Acho (the ancient Abyla) on the North African coast of Spanish Morocco... were known to the ancients as the Pillars of Hercules... [‘To the Romans it marked the end of the world, *ne plus ultra* – no more beyond.’] On Gibraltar can be seen the Barbary apes, the last monkeys to be found in a wild state in Europe.

Apart from Gibraltar, barbary apes are to be found in a few parts of Morocco and Algeria where there are wooded mountains and rocks. Not only unique as a monkey in Europe, the barbary ape is also the only macaque found in Africa. All other macaques are found in Asia... Whether the barbary apes of Gibraltar really belong there and are the last survivors of a population whose fossil remains are to be found across Europe, or whether they were brought across the Straits of Gibraltar by [humans] are questions that are debated by zoologists. One thing is certain, they did not make their way across the Straits by a tunnel, as legend once had it. Whatever their origin, the apes are now living a semi-domesticated life. The present population is very small. Having dropped to seven in 1942 it rose to 30 by 1955, mainly through the custodians importing more monkeys from North Africa... The continued existence of the barbary ape on Gibraltar is due to a superstition that sprang up when the French and Spaniards attacked the Rock from 1779-1783, that if the apes left the Rock, then the British would lose it. As a result, the barbary apes are accorded the same care and protection as the ravens of the Tower of London, which are surrounded by a similar legend. During... 1942 Winston Churchill sent a cable ordering the population to be maintained at all costs... The official interest in the colony is taken to extremes... There was a celebrated occasion when the Secretary of State for the Colonies was asked in the House of Commons whether the allowance paid for the apes' subsistence was sufficient. Members were pleased by the reply that the daily allowance had been increased to fourpence a day per ape to meet the rising cost of living... A junior officer of the Royal Artillery is Officer in Charge of Rock Apes, and, with a NCO to assist... cares for their welfare and maintains a record of their births and deaths, trials and tribulations. Sometimes the leader of the group becomes too much of a despot, terrorising both his subordinates and his human guardians, and has to be presented to a zoo. This is a job for the officer in charge, who is unlikely to have the skills of a game hunter that the task requires. That his success is watched by higher authority probably does not help.

Britain's Rock of Ages... MOMENTS after your arrival in Gibraltar, the road into town abruptly takes on the expansive dimensions of an airport runway. Three mildly befuddled observations pass through your mind: that it is an airport runway; that, indeed, a Boeing 737 is indicating an imminent take-off in your direction; and this may be the biggest blunder you've made in some time. In fact, no. In Gibraltar, space is so tight that jets and cars must periodically share paved space. Just 6.5 sq... k[m]s, Gibraltar is a little piece of Britain on the southwestern tip of Spain... English is the official language, pounds and pence the currency. The 27,000 people of Gibraltar are a blend of British, Spanish, Genoese, Portuguese and Maltese stock. Most were brought in as dock workers and support staff... in 1704... “Often they married Spani[ar]d[s]... from nearby villages, so English became the language of business and education, and Spanish the language of the home.” ...In the centuries after Britain took over, the colony grew into an important... [military] base, but with Britain's decline as a global power, the Rock's strategic importance has grown attenuated. Today Gibraltar is an awkward relic of empire, a cultural anomaly on the Spanish mainland... To Spain, Gibraltar is an irritant of long standing. As one Spaniard explained: “Imagine if a foreign power occupied part of your country, had troops and police there and subjected you to passport controls on your own soil. Wouldn't you resent it?” It is an argument that Gibraltarians have heard to the point of exasperation. “Spain has no more right to Gibraltar than to any of its former holdings,” says... [the] opposition leader of Gibraltar's House of Assembly. “We have not been part of Spain for nearly 300 years. California was Spanish as recently as the 1840s – shall Spain have it back as well?” In 12 centuries Gibraltar has spent less than 300 years in Spanish hands; little wonder that its control has taken on almost mystical significance to that country. To underline its resentment, Spain closed the border in 1969 and kept it so for 16 years. Phone lines were cut, and mail from Gibraltar to the town of La Linea, just a few hundred metres away, had to make a 3500-k[m] detour via London. Those cut off from family and friends could communicate only by shouting across a barren no [perso]n's land between security fences. Despite the border's reopening in 1985, Spanish customs officials still commonly order exacting searches of... [vehicle]s, which can cause hold-ups for hours. Most Gibraltarians see it as harassment. “It is totally counterproductive, since its only effect is to increase our hostility towards Spain,” says... the chief minister... “There have been 14 major sieges in the history of modern Gibraltar,”... the genial Oxford-educated biologist and historian who is director of the local museum... told me as we made our way down 350 steep, narrow steps along the eastern face of the Rock... – 430 metres of Jurassic limestone that rises nearly sheer from the sea... In 1907, long before these steps were cut, a British soldier... somehow made his way down this forbidding drop and discovered a cave that... is still exciting archaeologists. Roughly 20 metres high and... 30 metres deep, Gorham's Cave is the sort of cavern you find in adventure stories: full of moist stalactites, hanging ferns and cobwebs... “This is... one of the ten best caves in the world, in archaeological terms. It has a history of human occupation that stretches back 100,000 years... It's been used by everyone from Neanderthals (there's reason to believe that Gibraltar was their last refuge before extinction) to Phoenician and Carthaginian sailors, who stopped to make offerings to their gods to ensure safe passage through the strait.” If Gibraltar is a haven for archaeologists, it is no less so for botanists. Some 530 species of flowering plants are native to the Rock, including four found nowhere else... [But although] Gibraltar receives some four million visitors each year, most come only for a few hours, to tour scenic St Michael's Cave, photograph the famous Barbary apes... and perhaps do a little shopping. “It's a great shame... because there's nowhere with a history quite like Gibraltar's, and most of it escapes them.” ...In the 1980s, grandiose plans were laid to turn Gibraltar into a financial services centre and tap into the lucrative tourist industry of the neighbouring Costa del Sol. Waterfront apartment blocks and stylish marinas were built,

while beside the harbour arose a gleaming \$260-million office complex called Europort, with flats, shops and a 16-storey hotel. Unfortunately, the new buildings came on the market just as Europe was sinking into recession. The hotel still hasn't opened, though most of the flats and shops are now occupied after being empty for several years. Of the alternatives that lie ahead in Gibraltar's uncertain future, none was expressed more eloquently to me than by... its minister for trade and industry. "Either we can slowly bleed to death, as many people fear, or Britain and Spain can resolve their differences and we can become an example of European cooperation at its best. We have a unique history. We are a blend of cultures. We are a shining example of tolerance. In a tiny place, we are everything that Europe is trying to be in a big place..."

...Most of the Rock's 4 million annual tourists... together with visiting cruise ships sustain the economy of this duty-free colony – Europe's last colonial outpost... [T]he 1967 referendum to determine opinion about the maintenance of British links found that of the 13,000 who voted, only 44 sought change. Today, locals insist the population of around 36,000 has not changed its mind about the benefits of Britishness. Said... a driver...: "I prefer to be British even though I've never been to Britain. Too bloody cold. But I spend a lot of free time in Spain because on the Rock you get giddy driving round in circles all the time." No wonder. For the Rock – all 4 sq km of it – has a claustrophobic aura. One Gibraltareno confided: "It's a bit like Alcatraz without bars." Yet visitors love this intimacy. Everything – including the Rock – is easily accessible. To ascend, you either drive up the snaking road or ride the cable car and walk back, as I did. Keen hikers can plod both ways... When you reach the cable-car station high above the Mediterranean, simply dodge the apes cavorting around the restaurant and head for the lookouts... You can also walk down to the Apes Den and St Michael's Cave. This very beautiful limestone cave has fantastic acoustics and has been used as a concert hall... At day's end, when you sit in one of the small plazas off Main Street sipping real British beer and eating imported British pies with a Best of British fork, you wonder if Gibraltar's gushing Britishness is too passionate to permit an amicable coupling with Spain. I asked a friendly waiter... what [it] thought about the Rock's destiny. "The... Rock will remain British as long as it is inhabited by the apes... That's why we look after them so well."

...THE apes of Gibraltar, more famous than the Rock's human inhabitants, are breeding too fast and becoming such a threat to humans that the colony's parliament has voted to impose birth control... [The person] in charge of the ape question for the... Gibraltar Ornithological and Natural History Society... who knows every ape by name, said that in five or 10 years the population of 180 will have to be reduced by one-third.

A population explosion among Gibraltar's legendary Barbary apes may force officials... to cull them... Their numbers have soared to more than 200 on Gibraltar's rocky heights, which experts say should ideally house only 20... [The] director of Gibraltar's Natural History Society, has suggested that the excess population be exported to Morocco, where the species... has disappeared... [In related news, the local human] population has continued to grow slowly to about 3,770,000, according to Statistics [NZ. Amongst the increased number is a]... 39-year-old New York-based... [actor, who] is in heaven. Or, actually, Auckland – which is not usually thought to be a near approximation – shooting a film called *Heaven*, [which is based]... on a novel by [an] Auckland writer... *Heaven* is the... second feature from [a NZ director]...

An] underrated... jockey... used a magnificent piece of... [riding on] his way to victory in Saturday's \$A1 million Victoria Derby aboard *Second Coming*... [The horse's trainer], a former N[Z] *Herald* racing journalist, selected *Second Coming* from a South Island sale for \$27,000... [after it had previously been] sold at Karaka for just \$12,000... The colt... was not fancied against the big name three-year-olds because of his so-called inferior breeding... The big question facing the [trainer] after the race was whether to pay up the \$50,000 payment to start *Second Coming* in the Melbourne Cup... [The trainer] is enjoying wonderful success in A[US and spoke] after the win... [of] considering relocating a major part of his team of 25 in Adelaide to Melbourne... Meanwhile... the... abrupt decision by... [the Minister of Local Government, Gal] Affairs and Cultural Affairs... to quit her three ministerial posts has been seized as an opportunity by the [PM]... and the Deputy P[M]... to reduce the size of the executive to 24[(rp1126, ln6). The ex-minister, who now]... will simply be the Epsom MP... said... that the "ad hoc-ery" of Government process and the failure of proper consultation in the coalition thwarted her in doing her job... [H]er move is a protest and [the Epsom MP] hopes the Government will go through a "learning curve" as a result. "And I'm happy to be the victim." ...however[, her]... behaviour has reinforced the snide view around Parliament that [the Epsom MP] is a drama queen... [who has produced] just the kind of coalition-destabilising sideshow... [the MP has criticised. H]er departure poses major problems for the coalition... Every time [the Epsom MP speaks, the MP] carries the force of National's biggest majority in the country. Yesterday [the Epsom MP] demanded that the coalition "lift its game." In National's ranks, such language is code for [the PM] to lift his game and start providing real leadership. But it is the rapid mushrooming of dissent which makes the coalition's one-seat cushion look ever more vulnerable... Yesterday's rapid reallocation of portfolios held by [the Epsom MP and the former Associate Minister of Health] to existing ministers was a bid by the coalition to look decisive... [In news from London, the] *Times*... says th[at changing NZ's]... name to Aotearoa would be useful for children's stamp collections and help the Olympic team to be one of the first to march in opening ceremonies. A Treaty of Waitangi claim lodged in 1991... proposed the renaming[, and earlier this year a prominent NZ businessperson said the country]... should use the millennium celebrations as an opportunity to change its name... The newspaper ran a news item and an editorial on the proposed change, but did not pass judgment on whether it backed the former British colony adopting a new name[, although the]... newspaper cautions against the unpopularity of a name change, and the confusion for geography and history... [However, the *Times* also pointed out that: "NZ"]s delegation would sit in the front row of the U[N]."

...A] WORLD acclaimed conflict resolution mediator... believes N[Z] has the potential to create an important role for itself as a global peacemaker. Twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize... the director of the Washington-based Conflict Partnership Centre... has mediated troubles in more than 60 countries... Facilitators were dominated by the world's big military nations, regional powers or the U[N]. "In most of these cases, the intervening nation often has its own 'agenda' based on its perceived vested interests. The results often do not provide the most effective and sustainable conflict resolution for the parties directly involved." N[Z]'s geographical location meant it had had few significant roles in international conflicts to date... This meant it was less likely to be accused of bias, if it took up the role. It was also internationally recognised and respected for its courage in standing up to other, bigger nations, in pursuit of its commitment to its nuclear-free policy. The establishment of bodies such as the Waitangi Tribunal, which [the director] has also been working with, showed an awareness of the need to address disadvantages or wrongs inflicted on ethnic or indigenous groups – a component in many conflicts around the world.

...[a USer] has some good news and some bad news. The bad news is that the dawning of the Age of Aquarius has been delayed. But the good news is the new age of peace, love and harmony will happen before the new millennium. Last year, [the USer] was predicting that the Age of Aquarius would dawn this month if 144,000 people gathered at Auckland Domain to create a "light-house of consciousness and energy" and "open the stargate." ...Unfortunately, [the USer] doubts that enough people will turn up. "Judging from the tone of things [a critical mass] isn't going to happen... I think we'll get it by 1998 but I know we will do it by 1999." ...The 43-year-old retired Seattle business[perso]n's desire to find "heaven on earth" began eight years ago after a life-changing experience in an American Indian sweatlodge, a sort of spiritual sauna. [The USer believes NZ] is ideally placed to instigate a global consciousness – "Godzone is a special nickname" – because as the first country to see the sunrise it forms the "umbilical cord to the universe." Would-be participants at [this] month's One Earth Global Rainbow Gathering of One at One Tree Hill can expect dancing, chanting, songs and meditation before an attempt on Heaven's Gate is made at 4.44 pm.

...[TWO companies are squabbling over the rights to the first sight of dawn of the next millennium at the Chatham Islands. A partner in the Millennium Adventure Company (MAC) and founder of the *Guinness Book of Records* has bought territorial rights to Hapeka Hill on Pitt Island in the Chatham group. His co-partner said the company was preparing to auction TV pictures of the event. "The pictures of the first sunrise are an amazingly powerful symbol of

the world.” But their claims of exclusivity have been challenged by a former AUSn tennis coach and director of First Light 2000 (Chatham Islands), also based in London. The director claims it bought rights to 5 strategic peaks and headlands on the east coast of the Chatham Islands, including part of Hapeka Hill. “The argument about what hill or headland on the Chatham Islands encounters sunrise first is to a great extent worthless simply because we are talking about milli-seconds and Hapeka Hill at that time of year is invariably covered in fog. Our company controls the rights to a higher hill on Pitt Island which would arguably see the sunrise before Hapeka. But the simple fact is that the whole east coast of the Chatham Islands will see the sunrise at the same time.” The notion of buying exclusive rights to the sunrise has been branded ridiculous by the Royal Greenwich Observatory, which notes the first rays of sun will appear at a group of rocky islands near the Antarctic. “It really is a joke,” said the observatory’s professor of astronomy. “It is all a publicity stunt.”

...“TV rights to the first rays of light of the new millennium on the Chathams have been sold. AUSn TV giant Channel 7 bought rights to show the event exclusively to AUS for an undisclosed sum. FirstLight 2000 claims the deal is the final proof that the dawn of the next century is a money-making event. “It’s nothing less than a vote of confidence from the world of TV. We haven’t done a deal with a NZ company yet but there’s certainly interest there.” The deal was a victory over the other company which would be broadcasting from the Chathams. “We consider we’ve won the so-called battle of the sunrise.” The network is keen on showing a Moriori ritual planned for the morning. “The one that has been handed down for centuries of an elder handing weapons to a young boy, who then hands them back. It is symbolic of the pacifism of the Moriori who believe acts of violence are the exclusive domain of the gods.”]

...The descendants of a crusty Chatham Islands pioneer from Lincolnshire control most of Pitt Island, a rocky, peaty island which, by dint of a line on a map, happens to be the first inhabited place in the world to see the new day. This fact means little to the 50 or so people who live there but to foreign impresarios it’s a goldmine. Their eyes are fixed firmly on January 1, 2001, when the people of Pitt will be the first to see the new millennium. And, with an eye for an opportunity, they’re also planning to market Dawn 2000. The potential for chaos is enormous. Competing film crews, wealthy sightseers and hungry promoters could turn Pitt into the circus of the century. Instead Pitt Islanders plan on inviting a few people prepared to spend a lot of money to see the millennium dawn. The bulk of the profit will come from television rights. The big island, Chatham, is a two-hour flight from Wellington or Christchurch. From there it’s a hop in a Cessna across the strait to Pitt. Rangiauria, as the Moriori called Pitt, is the only other inhabited island in the Chathams. It has no harbour and before the advent of air travel the only way to get there was by braving the treacherous rocks at Flower Pot Bay. The odd-shaped rock with iceplants on top which gave the bay its name was accidentally destroyed when the entrance channel was widened, but many other aspects of the island’s early life can still be seen. Frederick Hunt settled with his family on Pitt in 1843. A handful of Moriori, whalers and sealers were the other inhabitants. Hunt... ran the first flock of sheep on the Chathams and was renowned as a whisky smuggler, taking liquor from Nantucket traders and slipping it into N[Z] in barrels marked tallow to avoid customs... [T]he wild sea which surrounded the island brought... disaster to the family. Boats were wrecked and children drowned, but the sea also yielded a rich bounty and kept visitors at bay. News that a couple of journalists from Auckland wanted to visit was not greeted enthusiastically until the publican from Chatham Island guaranteed they were not yuppies. It was just as well. Without local support a mainlander would be lost on Pitt. There are no roads, no shops and no transport... ANY preconceptions about inbred clans on remote islands should be abandoned; the people of Pitt are smart, articulate and travelled. [One of Hunt’s descendants and her husband] own the hill from which the sun can be seen four minutes before it is spotted from Eastern Point, the easternmost point of Pitt. (It can probably be seen sooner from the Star Keys or even the more distant Forty Fours – named for their latitude – but these islands are little more than inhospitable rocky outcrops.) ...[the wife] and her sister... ([who is married to the husband’s] brother...)... have been described... as the matriarchs of Pitt... part of a large family who lived a pioneering lifestyle long after the rest of N[Z] had moved on. In her teens [the wife] was sent to... the mainland, to train as a nurse. [The nurse] worked in the South Island for several years but, as for so many of her family, the pull of Pitt was too strong to ignore. [The nurse] returned and married... and bought her cousin’s farm, 400ha of grassy slopes running from Mt Hapeka to the sea... [■ A] focus group appointed by the Minister of Internal Affairs... [has] recommended that a “Year 2000 Millennium Commission” be established... with a \$40 million budget... to... take a co-ordination and funding role in helping to plan events to capitalise on N[Z] leading the world in seeing the sun rise on January 1, 2000... [However, the plans] could be shelved before they are even considered... Instead, a charitable trust may be established to handle the Government’s contribution to nationwide millennium celebrations.

...BOOK THE babysitter and cellar the champagne, the millennium is nearly upon us and the party preparations have begun. As of April 5 this year, there were 1000 days to go until the dawning of the new century. Worldwide, people are gearing up for what will probably be one of the biggest parties of our lifetimes. And, as the first country to greet the new day, N[Z] is going to play a starring role... although whether we really are first to see the sun is still a matter of some debate. The race has long been on to establish where exactly the sun will first rise on the new millennium and to secure the ancillary rights. Apart from Antarctica (and who wants to celebrate the new millennium in an icy wasteland) and without counting Kiribati’s dubious moving of the international dateline to make Caroline Island... [(the archipelago’s easternmost island, [which has been]... renamed... Millennium Island)]... the first to greet the new dawn or even Greenwich’s insistence that time starts there with Greenwich Mean Time – Pitt Island... is the place to be. At least, so says the M[AC] which has bought rights to the eastern side of... Mt Hapeka and claims to have the backing of the international scientific community through a research paper to be published by the Royal Geographical Society in London. Of course, where the millennium takes place is not the only issue. One of the sticking points is its actual date. Officially, 2001 is the dawn of the new millennium, because of the absence of a year zero – but the year 2000 is a round figure, which, like 1999, lodges in the brain a lot easier. There are also historically noted discrepancies in the calendar year to deal with too, for example when Julius Caesar’s calendar was replaced by the one we use today, six days were dropped. Meanwhile, [a member] from British ambient pop group The Orb is a staunch campaigner for the fact that “time is out of whack” stating the case for Jesus Christ actually being born back in 4BC because of the pinpointing of the proverbial bright star in the sky at around that time. According to [the musician], the new millennium should be celebrated this year. All of which is a moot point to countries such as Japan and China who operate on a different calendar and pay no heed to the millennium – and it’s not as if all civilisation blinked into existence in 1AD. THE MILLENNIUM is a mark that is very much in the mind – particularly if you’re living in the 21st Century environs of London... or... New York... And, at this end of the world, the millennium runs the risk of being marketed into the ground... According to colleagues... the founder of the *Guinness Book of Records*... is obsessed with facts and figures and believes that the millennium is the world record of all world records. [The founder] reportedly quit the *Guinness Book of Records* to concentrate on what [it] sees as the culmination of his career and intends to assemble a special *Millennium Book of Records*... Time capsules will be planted at the foot of Mt Hapeka to be opened in the year 3001, offering families the opportunity to record their existence on Earth for future generations. Visitors to the site on the big day will be strictly limited to 100 and M[AC] hasn’t ruled out VIP sponsors... FirstLight[, MAC’s rival,] plans to fly 750 revellers to the Chathams, paying up to \$25,000...

[The rival] companies will battle it out in London this week... [as they] make presentations to the BBC... for exclusive rights to[show] the millennium sunrise... [in Britain. MAC’s partners] go to great pains to stress that they are not just in it for the money and that the lion’s share will be ploughed back into the Chatham’s... Gisborne, meanwhile, as the first city in the world to experience the millennial dawn, plans to put on N[Z]’s biggest party ever, according to organisers Club Odyssey’s End. “We’re very happy for anyone who’s doing anything in the Chatham’s, Tonga, Kiribati or any other place because it all adds to the magic... However, to sell the worldwide television rights to see the sun rise for millions of dollars, you need the infrastructure of a city.” Odyssey’s End is promoting the millennium as a “festival of light” and aims to attract up to 70,000

people, including many overseas visitors through a subscription service. It will provide “sleep stations” for those who can’t handle the all-night pace. [Odyssey’s project] director... recognises a potential split between locals and... the... “client audience” and intends to appease that with a mardi gras... which will wind its way through the streets of Gisborne toward the main arena, where the floats will lock together to form the main stage, which will boast specially commissioned dance troupes and some of the world’s top rock stars. At midnight... [Odyssey] promises a spectacular fireworks display... [The director] wants people on a high at midnight before bringing them down for the dawn, which will be presented sans pyrotechnics and followed by low-key events such as a parachute jump composed of all the world’s flags. ODYSSEY is unrepentant about courting the world’s media and large corporate sponsorship. “If you look at the progress of [hu]mankind over the years, it’s by and large a technological progress... There’s no evidence that [humanity] has evolved morally. We still screw up in the ways that we’ve always screwed up. Where we’ve changed is through technology and that... is mostly funded by commerce. Commerce has... played a role in every major achievement of [hu]mankind.” ...Worldwide, the millennium itself is in danger of becoming old hat, with writers and musicians falling over themselves to get in first... [A NZ] science fiction writer living in London says: “The millennium has been so heavily trailed that it feels like it’s already happened. Inevitably the reality will be disappointing. I suspect there’s a self-conscious element to it all – like people feel obliged to believe weird things might happen. It’s already being played out in an ironic frame of mind – people will muster their caravans on isolated hilltops to await the coming of God or the aliens, but more as a joke than anything else.”

...In 1769, Captain Cook became one of Gisborne’s first international tourists when [the navigator] chose it as the first place in N[Z] to land. Just 228 years later [Gisborne is] poised on the edge of a new South Pacific tourism boom – the new... millennium. The Government recently set up the N[Z] Millennium Board to plan and co-ordinate events nationally for the year 2000 and provide the infrastructure for the expected increase in tourists. But each region needs to plan locally, too... Gisborne... ha[s] been planning ...s[ince w]e established our Millennium Trust in 1995 to co-ordinate and fund events in the region. Next month we... launch a Gisborne Tourism Marketing Board... 230,000 people visit the region each year... 20,000... from overseas... These visitors... come to Gisborne for many reasons: to enjoy the climate, to admire the scenery, to explore the Urewera National Park, to look at Gisborne’s role in both Maori and Pakeha history, to enjoy special events such as the upcoming Gisborne Opera Festival, or simply to relax in our vineyards. We believe we have the planning in place to... be recognised by the Government as an official millennium site. The recent announcement by Internal Affairs that sunrise on January 1, 2000, would hit Te Mata Peak before Kaiti Hill in Gisborne has not altered our marketing of Gisborne as the first city to see the sun. We are determined that Gisborne will always have its place in the sun.

...Gisborne’s disputed claim to be the first city to see the sunrise has been backed up by a computer programme the Carter Observatory in Wellington uses... [But] Mt Tapuae-O-Uenuku, in Marlborough, could claim a place in history as the first place in N[Z] to see the dawn of the new millennium. A Blenheim business[perso]n... has put a cat among the millennium pigeons with a claim that the much-hyped dawn of the year 2000 will hit “Tappy” at 4.40 am N[Z] time. That is exactly the same time as Mt Hikurangi, near the East Cape, Gisborne.

...N[Z]ers should unite behind Mt Hikurangi as the first point to see the new millennium dawn, [the]Millennium Office director... said yesterday. Mt Hikurangi... Te Mata Peak in Hawkes Bay and Mt Tapuae o Uenuku... all have their backers.

...With various... bits of N[Z] tussling over which will first see the millennium, it’s not surprising that television is also looking to cash in on a once-in-1000-years event. There’ll be plenty of televised cork-popping as the century ticks over, but the coming event has already inspired an American series which promises to be darker and more terrifying than even the worst post-celebration hangover. *Millennium*, on TV2 on Monday, is a creation of... the [person] behind *The X-Files*. Even if the deadpan weirdness and strange atmospherics of that show leave you cold, *Millennium* and its hero Frank Black... could well bring you under its creepy spell. Actually, this makes *The X-Files* look like a sitcom. Its horror is courtesy of psychopaths surfacing as the clock ticks down to 2000. Black is a retired FBI [agent] who belongs to the “Millennium Group” – a shadowy organisation dedicated to fighting “the growing forces of darkness.” [Black] has an uncanny ability to see the world through the eyes of the serial killers [his group] stalks, helping him to solve crimes of unspeakable violence. [The actor who plays Black] is probably best known to N[Z]ers for a beer commercial, but... might also be recognised as the android in the films *Alien* and *Alien III*. At least one American writer has compared... [Millennium with programmes such as] *Twilight Zone*... and... *Night Gallery*... [T]here is a seriousness and style here which is common to those classic old series. There’s no way, however, that the subject matter would have made it on to the small screen back in the 60s and 70s... In the first programme one poor chap is buried alive, his lips sewn shut, with only a severed head for company. [□ ‘The Doomsday cult death toll rose to almost 1000 last night with the discovery of another mass grave in Uganda. The latest grave was found in a cult member’s house at Kanungu, near the headquarters of the Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God. About 500 people were burnt to death at the church in what was originally thought to have been a mass suicide. But in the wake of the grisly discovery of burial sites, police are now treating it as mass murder. The tragedy now rivals the 1978 Jonestown deaths (when the infamous American pastor Jim Jones led 914 followers to take a cyanide-laced fruitdrink) as the largest cult mass killing.’

...‘The US government is preparing for possible violence from cults, guerrillas, hate groups and end-of-world zealots as 2000 approaches. Law enforcement officials are working on contingency plans to cope with everything from cyber attacks to bombs at New Year’s Eve parties, though they say they lack knowledge of any specific, credible threats. Groups with similar views to apocalyptic cults such as Heaven’s Gate might deem the rollover to 2000 “a good time for them to make their mark on history,” said the person who retired last November as head of the FBI’s domestic counter-terrorism arm. The head of a new FBI-led interagency centre to protect critical US infrastructure cited a fringe view among white supremacists that the world is on the verge of a final apocalyptic struggle. This required the faithful “to prepare for the second coming of Christ by taking violent action against their enemies,”]...

Anyone expecting the second millennium since the birth of Jesus Christ to be marked by momentous or cataclysmic events, had better brace themselves. Historical evidence indicates it will occur around October – 1998... If those prophets of doom are right – watch out!

...An elite corps of information workers will survive and prosper as the world plunges into a ferocious “new Dark Age” of unemployment, hopelessness, resentment and rage, according to one of the world’s foremost authorities on the impact of information technology... His radical forecasts challenge... and disturb... [The] Professor of Information Systems at the London School of Economics... is variously described as “the foremost prophet of the 21st century” or, more simply, “Angell of Doom.” Among his forecasts: • Offices will virtually disappear, causing a worldwide “meltdown” in commercial property prices... Disposing of offices will eliminate rent, power bills and insurance. If a physical office is needed, it will be hired by the hour from hotels, railway stations and airports. “With employers no longer tied to a single location, the workers are defenceless... Those lucky enough to still be in work will have to work harder, for more hours each week, for less pay, in less secure jobs – and they had damn well better be grateful.” • The near future would see entrepreneurs, innovators and knowledge workers (a group [the p]rofessor... lumps together under the term “alphas”), paid increasingly enormous sums in the battle between global corporations and nation states for world economic dominance... [T]op “alphas” in the banking and computer industries were already paid so highly they were evolving into a distinct “super class,”... • The surge in job losses sweeping the Western world was not the result of a temporary downturn in the economic cycle... Politicians claiming otherwise were lying or mistaken. Unemployment was the result of “a structural change, a new order.” It would keep rising and the shakeout would last two generations at least. “The lights are going out for whole categories of employment and for wide sectors of society... The ‘soon-to-have-nots’ have nothing to lose and... will riot. This is what happened in Paris in the winter of 1995... Only recently it happened in South Korea, Belgium and Germany... The Unabomber would prove the first of many such terrorists to oppose the information revolution... “Crime will

be the only option open to losers who are surplus to requirements of the legitimate economy. Disgruntled losers will organise attacks against business in general.” [The p]rofessor told... delegates at a recent conference in Barcelona run by Amadeus, a computerised airline reservations system for travel agents... that efficient agents would prosper in the midst of all this chaos and frenzy. Rich alphas would keep plenty of money for security and travel... “That means far more business for you... The rich will get richer and the travel business will be one of the most important factors in the economic advancement of this global elite.” The professor forecast security forces would be hired to crush resistance while traditional police work, such as solving crime, would be contracted out. “If you can’t be a knowledge worker, then be a politician,” [the professor] advised those seeking a career. Nation states would split apart but city states... and “hot spots” of technological innovation would survive. The alpha section of society would travel widely between these, “to maintain these human networks.” The future would see a tax-free world ruled by global corporations. The taxation base would decline as companies used electronic techniques like “disintermediation” and “dematerialisation” to make earnings effectively vanish. Under-reporting of taxes and falling tax revenues would proliferate worldwide... “Soon, under-reporting of taxes will snowball into the total migration of a state’s taxation capacity. Strapped for cash, governments will tax anything in solid form: taxes on fuel, food and clothes will inevitably rise. So will property taxes.” ...“frantic” tax[collectors] were working to devise a means of taxing data flow by volume, “just like... with whisky.” Such efforts... were doomed to failure. “To alphas, all taxation is theft... It is the state obtaining money with menaces; government is merely legitimate organised crime. Even the mafia doesn’t charge 60[%]. All taxation, all regulation, is extortion. Tribal leaders can no longer intimidate the entrepreneurial elite in their society. There is no justice in equality. The call for ‘fairness’ is the mere whingeing of failures and parasites.” ...top alphas employed as captains of industry should stop being embarrassed about their enormous salary levels. “You are being underpaid... It is the politicians who should be embarrassed; they are vastly overpaid. Do we even need them?” Liberal democracy was “an artefact of the machine age, an ideology from a time when the masses were needed,”... The masses were now superfluous. What will follow democracy? The professor quotes Voltaire: “The best government is a benevolent tyranny, modified by an occasional assassination.” - 1997

...in the darkest times darkest fears are heard and from the safest places come the bravest words... - *new dark age*

Dark Ages [is] a term denoting the obscurity or barbarity of the period between the fall of the Roman Empire and the high Middle Ages in the West... [T]here was political fragmentation, a hiatus in city life, a lack of major learned centres, and an emphasis on waterways rather than roads. The Devil was accorded great power, symptomatic of an age which made peculiarly little distinction between nature and the supernatural[, thereby]... inhibiting... human development. The Dark Ages may be said to have ended when St Anselm became the first medieval thinker to deny that the Devil had a rightful dominion over [humans]. The term *Dark Age* has been applied to a similar period in the history of Greece and other Aegean countries from the end of the Bronze Age until the beginning of the historical period, when the region seems to have been heavily depopulated, its material culture stagnant, there was no building of palaces or fortresses, and the art of writing (associated with the palace bureaucracies) was apparently lost... but some features such as ship-building and the extraction of silver, and strong oral tradition resulting in the emergence of the Homeric poems as we have them, are at variance with the generally humble picture of Dark Age Greece and suggest that it has been painted too black... [Incidentally,] *Manichaeism*... a religious system with Christian, Gnostic, and pagan elements, founded in Persia in the 3rd c. by Manes... was based on a supposed primeval conflict between light and darkness, teaching that matter is evil but within each person’s brain is imprisoned a particle of the divine ‘light’ which can be released by the practice of religion, and that Christ, Buddha, the Prophets and Manes had been sent to help in this task... [In Persian myth, *Mithras* was] a god of light, truth, and the plighted word, whose titles include ‘Saviour from Death’, ‘Victorious’, and ‘Warrior’. These partly explain his attraction for the Roman world, its army, merchants, and those hoping for immortality, and made his worship the principal rival of Christianity in the first three centuries AD... *Lucifer*... [or] the Devil, whose fall from heaven... early Christian writers thought was alluded to in Isaiah 14:12 (where the word *Lucifer* (L, = light-bringer) is an epithet of the king of Babylon). [In poetry, *Lucifer* refers to] the planet Venus when it appears in the sky before sunrise, the morning star.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. - Romans 13:12

[In] a few writings from Qumran... there are children of light and children of darkness, to which correspond spirits of light and spirits of darkness, spirits of truth and spirits of wickedness. At their head are the prince of light and the angel of darkness, respectively. Human beings then walk either paths of light or paths of darkness... The children of light are supposed to “hate” the children of darkness, that is, they are to separate and distance themselves from them. An end-time struggle of destruction will be carried out against the children of darkness... [C]lose... analogies to many early Christian statements are present... Above all, this is true for Paul... In his speech of exhortation, Paul reminded the churches that they are children of light and do not belong to the darkness (1 Thess. 5:4-11... Rom. 13:12), and... suggested to his opponents in Corinth that Satan had disguised himself among them as an “angel of light” (2 Cor. 11:14)... In John’s Gospel the dramatic struggle between darkness and light... is mentioned repeatedly... Jesus exhorts those with him to walk in the light “that you may become sons of light” (John 12:35-36). In Luke 16:8 Jesus contrasts the “sons of light” with the “sons of this world.” ...How are these... similarities to be explained? ...[it] could be that light is a “concept of enlightenment” that is bound to an acquired understanding... conversion (to the true God) is understood as a transition from darkness into light... Thus, one also speaks of Abraham and Job, who are converted to the God of Israel and to Judaism... with the result that after deep darkness they have now seen the light. In his conversion Paul also sees Jesus as light... [E]arly Christianity was first and foremost a radical religion of conversion.

For a [gal who claims it]’s eaten less than a month’s worth of food in the past six years, [it] looks pretty good. Her skin glows, her blue eyes are clear and [her body i]s slim but not gaunt or... wafer-thin. This 42-year-old “breathanarian” from Brisbane claims [it] has reached a state of being where [it] does not need or want food for nourishment. According to [the AUSn, it] lives on light – not the physical light we see – and is a qi master (qi, pronounced “chi”, means universal life force... what a Christian might call God...)... [The AUSn] claims to be one of over 100 million qi masters on this planet. A qi master has the ability to tap into spiritual sources of life energy... [The AUSn] wants to “stop the slaughtering of life on this planet”... [It] also claims to have the solution to world hunger and improving world health... Last week, [the AUSn] visited N[Z] to lecture at a three-day, \$300-a-head conference, the International Gathering for Higher Consciousness. Her lectures were delivered as prosecutors in Scotland questioned the part her teachings played in the death of... Verity Linn (48)... who died of starvation... Verity Linn is not the first victim of breathanarianism. Two years ago... Lani Morris, died after attempting to convert to the movement... German kindergarten teacher Timo Degen, also died after not eating. All three had tried fasting, not having any food and most fluids for 21 days... The three-week fasting programme is outlined in [the AUSn]’s book, *Living on Light*. It was the programme [the AUSn] used to make her own conversion six years ago. But... in her case, the fast followed over 20 years of preparation... “[The AUSn] is talking a load of rubbish,” [the]... former chair of the N[Z] Nutrition Foundation... says. “If a person has liquids, they can survive without food for 30 to 45 days. They would die within two weeks if they didn’t have water.” Human beings need food to produce energy... “Without energy, our hearts would stop beating, our brains would stop thinking and our lungs would stop breathing. [The AUSn says it] can live on light. Well, plants can live on light but they have a specially developed system to convert light to energy.”

...Nutritionists dismiss as fantasy a[n AUsn's claim that it doesn't need to eat. [The] new-age spiritualist... says [it] receives nutrition from an internal power source... The [AUsn]... drinks only tea and water, [but]... admits to eating cake occasionally to be sociable. However, the Nutrition Foundation's past-chair... says... "Everything in life must have energy put into it... We can't accept that her story is correct, although [the AUsn] may believe it to be, by some peculiar twist of her thinking." [The] Dr... was concerned about the deaths [of people following her] teachings...

MY FATHER DIED TWICE. THE FIRST TIME WAS IN AN AMBULANCE AS [my father] was rushed to the hospital after suffering a heart attack. His heart had stopped beating for several minutes before the paramedics were able to revive him. Afterwards [my father] described a vision [my father had while being] without a pulse... [My father] saw his brother Joe, who had passed away some years earlier, dressed in flowing white robes sitting on a kind of throne at the top of a hill. As my father approached, Joe was laughing uproariously and waving his hand, urging him to turn around and go back. The second time my father died was about three years later. Again, it was his heart that failed him. This time, though, his brother Joe wasn't there to wave him back to this world. What my father encountered in the back of that ambulance was a classic example of a near-death experience (NDE). According to statistics compiled by the International Association for Near-Death-Studies, some 35-40% of people who have had a close brush with death later report a NDE. They commonly tell of a feeling that the "self" has left the body, a sensation of moving through a dark space or tunnel, a vision of golden or white light, and the receipt in some form of the message "your time is not yet come." Are NDEs evidence of life after death, or are they just... one of the mind's greatest illusions... the last, desperate projections of the dying brain? [Such a brain might automatically switch into a dream-like mode that searches the subconscious for any information which can explain its current state of existence. If a person has previously heard about NDEs, that could be the first piece of information extracted from the person's memory, which then translates it via a dream. However, 'when our bodies start to shut down during the process of dying, our eyes are active even though the eyelids are shut. This may explain the tunnel of white light reported by people who have NDEs' – especially if their eyes are sensing sunlight or operating theatre spotlights through closed eyelids (note also that if you close your eyes after focusing on a bright light, your eyes will continue to register an impression of that light-source for up to a minute, if not longer). Unfortunately, w]hile modern science can explain why we age, it tells us very little about why we die, much less about what happens – if anything – after death. "In death, science is pitted against an impenetrable information barrier," says... an astronomer and physicist who has written several books on death and dying... [The physicist] suggests there are two events that approximate death: the [NDE] itself and the memory loss suffered by victims of Alzheimer's disease and traumatic brain injury. "Losing your memory is perhaps as close as we can come to death without actually dying... The person is dead because the memories are gone." And memories are the only things that give meaning and identity to our lives. If the difference between life and death is a question of memory, could death's sting be parried by replacing the fragile human memory with an infallible computerised one? In his book *Design for Dying*, completed earlier this year... psychologist and LSD guru Timothy Leary explored various strategies for achieving immortality. One of the most promising tactics... is to transfer an individual's consciousness into a supercomputer before death. This could be done by using multimedia technologies (video, audio, CDs) to record all your thoughts, feelings and experiences [in] a computer equipped with artificial intelligence. The result: a real-life ghost in the machine. Endowed with all your memories, the new computerized "you" would be able to chat and interact with people just as you would – except it would be doing so long after you had died. The idea is not as far out as it seems. According to... futurologists at British Telecom's Advanced Research Department, computers (or "soul catchers") with storage and processing capacities equivalent to the human brain will be developed within the next 20 years. "We will be able to transfer human minds into some machine form... Perhaps our only chance of making full use of such technology is to become part of the technology itself." But are these intimations of immortality real? The silicon soul described by Leary is actually not a captured consciousness at all, but an elaborate, interactive home video library. As useful and entertaining as that might be, it's a far cry from life after death... Many people don't require hard evidence about what's on the other side. They are satisfied with the explanations provided for millennia by the world's religions.

...*Questioning the Millennium* [– the latest offering from]... an eminent zoologist, whose books on various, often tangential and recherche, aspects of biology and geology have established him as one of the best popular science writers of our time[–]...predicts... "there will be an orgy of millennial books," inspired by an apocalyptic angst that... [is] "speculative, boring, and basically silly." ...[so why is the zoologist also] writing about such an intrinsically daft subject as the millennium? [The zoologist] does not, it scarcely needs saying, attach any importance to the entirely arbitrary calendrical calculation that makes midnight, December 31, 1999, the end of one millennium and the beginning of another. Neither is [the zoologist] very interested in speculating on the psychological source of the anxiety that such arbitrary transitions seem to inspire. No, his interest lies in the very arbitrariness of the calculation, and the confirmation it provides of an aspect of [humankind that the zoologist] finds as endearing as it is ridiculous: the determination to impose a neat order upon the messy realities of nature and then to attach to that order an entirely spurious significance. To take the messy realities first: the earth spins on its axis, the moon revolves around the earth and the earth around the sun. Nothing messy there, you might think, except that God (who Galileo... and many others have supposed to be a mathematician) has, in his infinite wisdom, refused to make any one of these events a... neat arithmetical multiple of the other. The moon... does not take 30 days to circle the earth, but 29.53059; similarly, the earth takes not 365 days to go round the sun, but 365.242199. "What a bummer," [the zoologist] remarked. And so it has proved for anyone who likes to believe that a day is a day, a month a month and a year a year... [The 'Jewish Calendar' normally has 12 months, but it has 13 months in leap years which occur 7 times in every cycle of 19 years (the years were reckoned from the Creation – 3761BC).] Julius Caesar introduced the system of counting one year in four as a leap year, whose extra day took care of the pesky 0.25 of a day that was added to every multiple of 365 days... But this did not solve the problem, since the fraction by which a solar year falls short of 365.25 meant that the calendar kept accumulating seven extra days in every thousand. To solve this problem, Pope Gregory XIII decreed that the day following 4 October 1582 should be 15 October and that, henceforth, the calendar should lose a day once every hundred years, so that 1700, 1800 and 1900... were not leap years. The advances of this system were not admitted by the British until 1752 (when Parliament was forced to decide that September 2 should be followed by September 14), and the Russians did not accept it until after the fall of the Tsar (which is why the "October" Revolution is or was celebrated in November). The Orthodox Church still refuses to accept it... But what about this number 2000, how do we arrive at that? Well... it is all the fault of Dionysius Exiguus, a sixth-century monk who, at the Pope's behest, introduced the system, according to which years are counted backwards and forwards from the estimated date of Christ's birth. Unfortunately, Dionysius made two errors: first, [Dionysius] got the date of Christ's birth wrong... and second, [Dionysius] did not allow a year zero between 1 BC and AD 1. Fierce debates on this question were held at the end of the 18th and 19th centuries, and, because of the presence of logical die-hards, the 20th century did not officially begin until January 1901. [The zoologist's] sympathies in this debate are with popular, rather than learned, opinion... [Popular opinion is that] if this means the first decade... [of the] new millennium... will begin on January 1, 2000, and... [have] only nine years, then so be it. In this, [the zoologist] is influenced by the affections of his son, who... is one of those extraordinary people, who, though classified as autistic, possess the amazing talent of calculating the day of the week on which any date falls. Such calculations are bewilderingly complicated; not only do they have to wrestle with the arbitrariness of the Gregorian calendar, they also have to deal with that additional piece of human absurdity, the seven-day week, a division that has no basis in nature whatever.

...The reason the world is preparing to mark the end of the second millennium is that... [w]hile compiling a table of dates for Easter... Dionysius Exiguus (Denis the Short), a monk and astronomer from Scythia, now south-west Russia, decided that... it made more sense to count the years from the birth of the Christian Church's founder than from the start of the reign of the Roman Emperor Diocletian, as had been the rule. His system of

Anno Domini (AD: “In the year of our Lord”) failed to catch on at first and was rescued from obscurity two centuries later by the Venerable Bebe. The custom of naming years in the Christian era came into common use in ecclesiastical circles in the Middle Ages, but was not adopted for civil use until much later. Thus the approach of the year 1000 caused little fuss among the populace, still counting time in terms of the reigns of kings and emperors. And the rest of humanity was advancing to a different drumbeat. Even today about 40 other calendars are in use around the world, all beginning at different epochs and with the start of the year occurring at different times. On January 1, 2000, it will be 7508 by the Byzantine calendar, 5760 by the Jewish, 4636 by the Chinese, 1921 by the Indian (Saka) and 1420 by the Islamic (Hegira) calendars... Too much for you? If the answer is yes, then... [I suggest you try to relax by w]ondering about where to spend the once-in-a-lifetime end-of-century bash...

Upwards of three million people dressed in white will greet the new millennium on Copacabana Beach, sending flowers and floating candles into the Atlantic as offerings to Iemanjá, the Afro-Brazilian goddess of the sea and fertility. At the stroke of midnight, the seashore will be lit up with fireworks in what the city is calling the world’s biggest beach bash.

...The Chathams may be the first and Auckland may be [planning] to rock, but the big millennium bash is going[to go] down across the Tasman. Sydney is steeling itself for a street and harbour party for 1.2 million people... This is... too much for many party-hardened Sydneysiders. According to... the *Sun-Herald*, at least half the city intends staying well away from celebrations ranging from a... fireworks display... above the harbour as a flotilla of giant illuminated sea creatures cruise its waters... to... the Queer Time party for gays... [The plans are] so big... that country towns throughout N[SW] have [scaled down their plans and complained that [this is necessary because Sydney will]... siphon... too many resources.

...A British couple saved nearly £10,000... by booking... two first-class tickets to Sydney in 1983 for £999 each. The tickets now cost £5773. A British Airways spokes[person] said the [couple] bought the tickets to attend a millennium party thrown by a friend who is now over 90 years old.

...THE new century is almost here and the English-speaking world still hasn’t decided what... to call the first decade. To wit: We’re coming out of the 1990s and going into the... what? The 2000s? How do you say that? No doubt most people haven’t thought much about this looming linguistic crisis – too busy arguing about whether computers will work or when the new millennium really starts. But it’s no small thing to those who need such a shortcut. Imagine the news anchor comes on one night and says: “The government predicted today the US economy will decline sharply in the middle of the... uh... Double Ohs...” ...A survey of language mavens, dictionary editors, dialect experts and futurists... came up empty. “You know, the person who comes up with this name is going to be significant,” said... [an] historian and author of *Don’t Know Much About History*. [The author] prefers the term Decade One – presumably D1 for short... [The] editor-in-chief of the US Dictionaries Programme for Oxford University Press, which publishes the authoritative *Oxford English Dictionary*, said his advice is to wait and listen. “...as a lexicographer [I]... wait for people to start talking and then hold a microphone out... Something likely will catch on...” We know what you’re thinking: Why don’t we just use the same term they used for the first decade of the 20th century? Well, it turns out no one knows what term was used back then... Some historians think the concept of referring to decades as discrete units of time didn’t develop until after [WW1]... Other historians say the terms used 100 years ago are so archaic as to be unintelligible to modern audiences... The Voice of America, which broadcasts to more than 80 million people, is running a... worldwide contest... on its weekly Wordmaster show... to find a name for the decade... [Speaking of contests, an] Auckland radio station is looking for 100 “loving couples” to hit the sheets... to produce a New Year baby... [It will host] the couples at a hotel... [where they’ll be] greeted with oysters... champagne and even personal lubricant... [The contest] has attracted international media attention.

...Turn off the telly, dim the lights and slip into something more comfortable – if you want to have one of the first babies in the new millennium an early night is in order for around April 9. As N[Z]ers watch the sun rise on January 1, 2000, our babies will be the first to be born into a new millennium... Fertility Associates, said while only 8 or 9[% of mothers] delivered on their due date, conception on April 9 would give the best chance of a New Year’s baby through spontaneous labour. None of [their] clients had yet asked for help to conceive a millennium baby. And those looking at helping nature offer a baby on January 1 will face ethical issues of opting for a Caesarean and staffing problems as medical professionals eye up a holiday. The general manager of National [Gal’s] Hospital... did not think it was justifiable to use public money to fund elective Caesareans at “three seconds after midnight.” [However, if] people wanted to pay and the baby had reached full term, it might be another matter... [The] chief executive of Wellington maternity services provider Matpro... [recommends booking] a midwife before getting pregnant and to prepare for a home birth... There have been suggestions that [some people] may fly in from overseas to have their babies here.

...IT started out as a cute idea. Now, so many couples hope to deliver a child at midnight on the millennium that Beijing is urging them to think again. The rumour started circulating in December: babies born just past the stroke of midnight on January 1, 2000, would win prizes, perks, even a “passport” from the W[HO]. Soon the notion of having what the media dubbed a Century Baby took off... But officials of the WHO do not issue passports and were not terribly amused. The prospects of a sudden baby boom would hardly advance their efforts to control the global population. Even as they denied the rumours, promoters around the world came forward with real offers. Millennium babies will win a car from a newspaper in Russia, and 100 francs from local authorities in France. Couples from Beijing to Paris are already aware that the best time to conceive a Y2K kid is on about April 9 – an evening the British press has dubbed “bonk night.” Only in China, what started as a silly rumour has put superstitious parents on a collision course with officials, who fear that even one hyperfertile night could end up overwhelming delivery rooms, crowding schools and generally aggravating the burdens of the world’s largest population... The political bosses have softened enforcement of the “one-child” policy, first imposed in 1979 and implemented by workplace overseers who charted menstrual cycles and forced sterilisation or abortion on [people] caught trying to have a second child. These days Beijing emphasises education, and allows rural parents to have a second child if the first is a daughter. It also does what it can to censure Chinese parents who have resorted to aborting, abandoning or killing baby girls to make sure they have a [boy]... But the concern is that parents are turning the harsh legacy of family planning into a new, millennial end. The *Beijing Youth Daily* reported... that a 27-year-old... has sought out an abortion [in order to] try again – this time for delivery on the morning of January 1, 2000. Soon the media was reporting new rushes on abortion clinics in one city or another... Unfortunately for China’s family planners, midnight on January 1 is not the... best opportunity for superstitious mothers. The most auspicious of 12 lunar cycles in the Chinese zodiac is the Dragon, and the next Year of the Dragon begins on February 5, 2000. Instead of trying to bear a child on January 1, 2000, in the middlingly favourable Year of the Rabbit, many... couples are now expected to try for a “Dragon Baby.” “The year of the Rabbit is not a great year – so why risk it?” said one WHO official, “especially since the year of the Dragon is the best for having babies.” What could promise a brighter future than a millennial Dragon Baby? A millennial marriage, with a Dragon Baby, too. Plans for weddings at midnight on January 1 are well advanced in various Chinese cities, including ceremonies that will unite 2000 couples in Beijing and 5000 in Shenzhen. Chinese entrepreneurs see “immense commercial opportunities” in these mass weddings, according to *Securities Times* online, which noted that one firm has registered the name “millennium wedding destiny” for a line of cigarettes, clothing and souvenirs. Promoters declare that a “thousand-jubilation dragon year” such as the one coming up won’t happen again for 3000 years.

...PICTURE THIS. The year is 2017... [A US talkshow host] shuffles around her enthusiastic inter-galactic audience with typical aplomb. A sullen, angry teen sits alone on stage... staring into space. The title of the show? My parents made me the millennium baby, and ruined my life. It may be a prophesy tinged with the desperate hysteria of daytime talkshows, but few would-be parents are tuning in to take it seriously. And why should they? As far as potential ‘mummy and daddy millennia’ are concerned, crystal balls are not currently high on the list of required anatomy. “I think it’s all good fun,” laughs [a spokesperson] from Fertility Associates. “There’s no harm in it, and the likelihood of anyone who’s trying to have the first baby on January 1 actually succeeding is extraordinarily small. One of the wonderful things about biology is it just happens. When

you try and make it happen on purpose, you almost invariably fail. Going about it as scientifically as possible, a [gal] ovulating on April 9 will have about a 20% chance of conceiving that day..." But a quick surf on the Internet reveals 'baby 2000' fever in all its nappy-clad glory: websites clogged with contests, advice on building 'sperm-friendly' environments, a Millennium Conception Kit (including candles and massage oils for only \$95) and chatrooms filled with clucky hopefuls known only as 'wannagirl2' or 'babybmine'. It's enough to make you take your menstrual cycle into Cash Converters. But [a] social psychologist... believes there may be more to this 'rugrat race' than meets the eye. "Is this about being 'first' or being 'special'? Because I'm not exactly sure they're the same thing. While there is glamour and guaranteed media attention associated with success here – and how else do ordinary people get that kind of attention? – I get the feeling that people imagine this would be a special child, somehow blessed or better equipped to thrive than a child born in 1999." While leading scientific minds have already ruled out the possibility of the millennium baby being born wearing matching red underwear and cape, in light of the current fuss, [the psychologist's] claim is hardly ridiculous... [A] breakfast DJ... is the driving force behind Auckland ZM's 'Big Night of Love', an event offering 100 couples the chance to buckle themselves into a top hotel for 24 hours... "...It's not a silly radio prank, it's actually something with a really nice spirit to it. So far only the... head of the Christian Heritage party, has come out opposed to it..." [The DJ] hasn't been tempted to join the action. Yet. "I'm not in a relationship right now, but one guy from Te Awamutu has offered himself as a 'stand-in' in case there's any fights... [B]ut I don't perceive any problems. We have entertainment planned for them, and I'm going to bring Scrabble along in case anyone gets bored." ...Like the rest of the world[, Users]... are hard at it to be the first to conceive – even stealing [the DJ's] idea... In Washington... [a] radio show is hosting a contest on April 9 and footing the bill for 10 married couples... One Norwegian town plans to hold an "erotic week" to encourage couples to try to conceive... A British television network reportedly touched off protests from church officials with its plans to track couples through Baby Race 2000, and ethical debates are raging on the Internet about the quest for a millennium baby... Ironically, the exhausted winners of 'millenniumania' may discover hospitals – just like the suddenly blank cockpit of a 747 or a portalo queue in Gisborne – may not be such a great place to be when the clock rolls over.

...EVERY portalo in N[Z] has been booked for Gisborne late[r this] year, claim the locals... Gisborne has beaten off all pretenders to be recognised as the first city in the world to see the sun rise on January 1, 2000... Most available beds in the town have been booked for the past two years. The showgrounds will be turned into a giant tent city to accommodate the 9000-strong worldwide First Son religious group that put a deposit on the venue three years ago. There are plans to construct a major hotel... "[This] year will see an amazing lift in Gisborne's economy... The town is being jazzed up. More trees are being planted, the city's three bridges have been lit with multi-coloured lights. Even the town clock has had a facelift."

...The east coast's laid back surfing city is gearing up for an influx of visitors... The population is expected to more than triple... Visitors who can't find rooms or who balk at high prices may be offered cheaper accommodation by local Maori. The Ngati Porou Millennium Committee is working out how the tribe will welcome the new century... Mt Hikurangi is the spiritual mountain of the Ngati Porou people. Within the area are around 50 marae and they are likely to be approached by the committee to get their response to opening their doors for visitors. About 30,000 people are expected at each of two music festivals: the one-night Odyssey's End party at the local stadium and the three-day Te Kowhai festival 15km out of Gisborne. Other events include... a tall ships festival, motorcycle, caravan, cycling and hotrod rallies; yacht races, a triathlon and a cavalcade led by 22 teams of bullocks which will travel to the East Cape lighthouse.

...WOULD you pay \$1000 for a motel unit in Gisborne for the millennium? It is new, sleeps 14 people, has a kitchen, large spa bath... and cable TV, too... is within walking distance of N[Z]'s party of the century[, and]... usually goes for \$55 a head. [M]arket forces... have hit Gisborne motels with all the subtlety of a cyclone. A storm of publicity broke over the East Coast town when the [NZ] *Herald* reported that a room was offered for \$900 a night. Within hours the Minister of Tourism... whose Government has championed the ability of "the market" to get things right, was warning moteliere against ripping people off. But local motels are struggling to decide what is a fair price for the town's 3000 beds when there are an estimated 180,000 visitors due to arrive to see the sun rise on January 1, 2000... Some... Auckland[ers] wanted accommodation at any price.

...Gisborne is poised to lose its airport's full air traffic control service. The Airways Corporation and Air N[Z] say the service is too expensive and want to pull the plug... But the Civil Aviation Authority has ruled the airport must have the full service to cater for the influx of millennium revellers. One solution may be a temporary return to full air traffic control over the end-of-year period. But[the] Gisborne Airport manager... said that was a costly option and no-one yet knew for sure how many party-goers would fly in for the millennium. "It's like crystal ball gazing in a dirty river. We've got no idea who is coming... If full air traffic control is withdrawn, it has the potential to be a major headache. It could also be difficult re-establishing a full service all over again – everything from staff training and operations. How much time would we have to do that and who would pay for it? There are so many variables. It puts everybody under a lot of pressure." Air NZ and the Airways Corporation want to replace the existing air traffic control with an alternative system known as Unicom. Declining passenger numbers and a six-fold increase in charges for full air traffic control facilities are behind the combined move... [In addition, to] satisfy safety standards... so that it can take 757 wide-body jets capable of carrying more than 200 passengers... the runway needs to be extended by 140m at a cost of up to \$900,000.

...Police planners expecting 150 extra personnel in town for the millennium thought they had their accommodation problems solved when they got an offer from the Gisborne Children's Health Camp. "On paper it looked great... Dorms, showers, kitchens the lot... but... the... beds are short, the toilets... half-size, the shower heads come up to the average cop's navel and there are no shaving mirrors." [The police are] still considering the offer and the cost of trucking in proper beds and improving the ablutions... It is disconcerting that more financial assistance has not arrived for a city which has had a bad economic run from the downturn in forestry and agriculture and the shutdown of industries based on rural activity. The Gisborne District Council has only 19,000 ratepayers yet they are carrying a \$3 million-plus cost for a party for the rest of N[Z]. The... mayor... is concerned but also cautious about criticism at this stage because [it] remains hopeful of outside assistance. The Department of Internal Affairs has consulted with Government agencies about infrastructure costs although as yet there are no firm figures on the table... "To be fair we haven't hounded [Government] as yet but that's not too far away. We need help and... assurances we'll get it." An example is power supply. Gisborne has only one transmission line through the hills from Lake Waikaremoana. If that should fail, or there are intermittent disruptions – and the three electricity agencies serving the region... give no unequivocal guarantees – it could be disastrous... The effects on 35,000 people would be bad enough – on more than 100,000 impossible. So as a precaution the council is advertising for tenders for temporary standby generators to be sited at pumping stations. But should it be required to pay? [The mayor] believes not – "it's the suppliers' responsibility and we've got to negotiate that in the very near future." The N[Z] Millennium Office, based in Wellington, is not authorised to contribute one cent for civic infrastructure, yet it has set aside \$1 million for Gisborne's dawn event celebrations... In addition, the office has committed \$400,000 to support greeting the sun at Mt Hikurangi, which... along with the beach scene, will be part of TV3's internationally televised coverage. The bureaucratic argument is that Gisborne stands to make a lot of money... [-] \$3 million a day... working on a conservative 60,000 visitors spending \$50 a day... [B]ut commercial undertakings do not provide the bulk of the council's funds. They come from the ratepayers who are billed on average between \$1200 and \$1300 a year... Gisborne residents are in two minds about the event. They are happy to be the centre of international attention but some are dubious about the impact on their pockets if there is no proper recognition from central Government that Gisborne is funding the nation... The impact of the event on daily life in Gisborne and health and safety precautions will be detailed in a millennium booklet. It is expected that simple things like jumping in the car to drive to the dairy for bread and milk will be virtually impossible because of congestion... [T]he three highways in and out of Gisborne can carry a daily maximum of 5000 vehicles according to Transit N[Z]. It's expected about 40,000 vehicles will be in the city for much of

the celebrations... Telecom is increasing capacity in and out of Gisborne by 65[%], including four new cellphone transmission sites and looking at bringing in additional temporary, trailer-mounted mobile sites... "Then there's the weather. What if we get a cyclone (the Weather Office says there's a 15[%] chance). Can you imagine hundreds of campers with tents flattened and flooded and nowhere to go..." ...[In related news, a] Northland waka builder has been given permission to chop down three kauri trees to build a double-hulled canoe for the millennium celebrations. The two live trees, with trunk diameters up to 1.5m, and one dead standing tree would be taken from the edge of an old logging track in the Herekino State Forest... The Director-General of Conservation... said the decision to allow [the builder] to take the trees, which were hundreds of years old, from a conservation area had been carefully considered. "In this case we are talking about helping to continue the now-rare art of building a double-hulled waka from traditional materials." ...[the builder] would use the waka to educate young people in voyaging and the navigation techniques of his Maori ancestors. "These waka are to Maori what sailing ships like the Endeavour are to European history." The approval was not intended to open the floodgates or set a precedent; rather the project was a one-off with national and international significance. [The director-general said it] had mixed advice on the application, including opposition from the Northland Conservation Board... The... [builder] was relieved to finally gain approval... [after] asking for kauri since 1994 when [his request] was turned down by the then Minister of Conservation... but now... had to move fast... "It's a bit late and I might not have it ready for Gisborne..." [When the 'plans of four tribes to build ocean-going canoes for a millennium celebration were stymied by bureaucratic delays back in Sept, 1997, the builder – whose traditional voyaging canoe Te Aurere sailed to Hawaii in 1995 – said it was now too late to fell the kauri trees needed for the canoes']... The 66-year-old plans to sail the waka... – with the double-hulled Te Aurere in support – to New Caledonia for the eighth Pacific Festival of Arts.

...the... western tip... of Savai'i, Samoa's... enchanting... island... will be the last place in the world to see out the millennium... [– arguably an appropriate honour for the nation whose name means 'sacred centre of the universe'. 'A committee representing 12 South Pacific countries has accepted the Samoan claim to be the last place to say goodbye to the 20th century. Samoans are hoping that being behind the times will be a money-spinner. As the rest of the world nurses a giant New Year hangover, Samoans will still be living in the previous year. They want tourists to come and see out the old. The South Pacific New Millennium Consortium – formed to discuss ways to make the event profitable to the region – also agreed that while the first stroke of midnight on December 31 would occur in Tonga, the height advantage of Gisborne and the Chathams would give them first sight of the sun's rays on January 1'...

A] RUSSIAN state will enter the millennium 10 minutes before the Chatham Islands and a N[Z]er will market it to the rest of the world.[The] First Light founder... has approached the Russian government for rights to the last millennium midnight when the state of Chukotka will enter the year 2000 two minutes before Tonga... "It's going to come as a bombshell, but a fact is a fact..." said [the founder]... However, the Chatham Islands would still be first to greet the first millennium sunrise because in Chukotka it got lighter later as it was the middle of winter... [The founder] hopes to market the Chatham Islands sunrise and Chukotka as a millennium double[, and]... plans a feature event where two people would stand on the dateline in the middle of the frozen Bering Strait and shake hands. Temperatures are expected to be around -15°C. "I want a Russian... and someone from Alaska... shaking hands. With the ending of the cold war between Russia and the U[S], the shaking of hands across the dateline will be a symbolic gesture for peace and reconciliation in the third millennium..." The event will be illuminated courtesy of satellite reflected sunlight[(although this artificial sunlight – which has more in common with moonlight – 'will only operate for bursts of a few seconds' and 'illuminate a 3 sq km area'). Editor's note: 'Morioris, the original settlers in the Chatham group, were for several centuries among the world's most isolated people, limited in their ability to venture into the ocean because of the lack of trees on the Chathams. They were decimated by an invasion from the NZ mainland in 1835...

2000 Morioris were living on the Chathams when they were discovered in 1791, and they were at the Archaic stage of Maori culture – hunting for and gathering their food. They were victims of Maori aggression throughout the 19th c. and, because of this and other causes such as disease, the last full-blooded Moriori is said to have died in 1933. One early theory claimed that Morioris were already settled in NZ at the time of the Maori arrival here, and were driven to the Chathams by the more aggressive newcomers. It is now commonly held that the Chathams were settled from among the South Is Maoris.'

... 'After the battle of Haowhenua – which had stemmed from rivalry for lands in the conquered south-west coast region of the North Island – Ngati Tama and Ngati Mutunga, fearing further aggression, decided to emigrate to the Chatham Islands, reported to be inhabited by a peaceful people. They commandeered the brig *Rodney* at Port Nicholson (Wellington) on Nov 5, 1835, and in two trips transported 900 adults and children plus supplies and canoes to the Chathams. The native Chatham Islanders or Moriori had already been decimated by contact with European diseases and by the loss of their staple for food and clothing, the fur seal, the work of European sealers. Now it was to happen again; those who resisted the invaders were killed. The survivors retreated to the bush and carried on a guerilla campaign; many died from starvation, but there was intermarriage and some Moriori settled in NZ when some of their conquerors returned there. In 1861 the Chathams population included at least 160 Moriori and some half-caste Maori/Moriori.'

...A feud between Moriori factions could lead to around 300 people who consider themselves Moriori having their ancestry claims rejected... thus [causing them to] miss... out on fisheries income and Treaty of Waitangi settlements... Moriori people, believed to number 2000, are saddened that the dispute has flared so soon after the Waitangi Tribunal found that they, and not Maori invaders, had ancestral rights to the Chathams.

...The Crown must pay Chatham Islands Moriori compensation for appalling, brutalising slavery under their Maori invaders, the Waitangi Tribunal has recommended... in a long-awaited re[port]... Its failure to stop the slavery, imposed by two Taranaki iwi who invaded the Chatham Islands in 1835, was a breach of the Crown's obligations under the Treaty... The tribunal found that the Crown knew of the plight of the Moriori... [– who] were forbidden to marry or to have children[–] ...but... did not intervene... Among the [tribunal]'s main findings were that the Native Land Court adopted criteria set by the Crown that... award[ed 97%] of the land to Ngati Mutunga and only 3[%] to Moriori... A... princip[a]l... claimant... the chair[perso]n of the Moriori Tchakat Henu Association of Rekohu... [– who is a descendant of t]he last known full-blooded Moriori, Tame Horomona Rehe, also known as Tommy Solomon... [–] described the report as "a beacon lighting up our future."

You know there's different ways and different days... like the moon passing through a phase Time will come for a change Brand new sun will shine its rays World will turn and begin to learn... South-Sea shores can not be ignored... What was before is opening doors... - Light Of The Pacific

Do the people who await the coming of a Messiah expect it to be light-, medium- or *dark-skinned*?

Was Jesus dark-skinned? ...*Son of God*, a new documentary television series co-produced by the B[BC], considers the... question... in its attempt at a scientific investigation into the Messiah of Christianity. For the series, a computer-generated image has been created to suggest what Jesus' face may have looked like. The result is a dark-skinned, curly-haired [guy] with a round, robust face and a stout nose – a sharp contrast to the fair-skinned and fine-featured image familiar in European art since medieval times. The new image was created by a forensic artist at the University of Manchester using... a... 2000-year-old skull... from Israel. Cues on hair and skin tone were taken from frescoes of Jewish faces painted in the third century... The idea of a darker Jesus is becoming more accepted by Catholics – a dark-skinned Jesus was selected... for a special millennium-edition of the American weekly, *National Catholic Reporter*. The series goes beyond the skin-tone question... It also questions whether Judas betrayed Jesus to the Roman authorities, suggesting that a mistranslation could mask the fact the Jesus worked with Judas to provoke his own arrest.

Do the people who await the coming of a Messiah expect it to be racist, sexist, elitist or somebody who loves everyone?

...Lord we don't need another mountain there are... enough to climb... we don't need another ocean... [or] another field... what the world needs now is love... not... just... for some... but for everyone...

LOVE IS A... [field study for] psychologists, a preoccupation of teenagers, and the gift of doting grandparents. There have been more books, songs, and poems written about love than perhaps any other single subject. It is necessary for physical and emotional growth, and essential for mental health. Yet despite its importance and the volumes written about it, there seems to be little agreement as to exactly what love is. Sir Walter Scott claimed, "love is heaven," while Shakespeare said, "love is blind," and Conrad Aiken stated, "love is bitter." In recent years, love has been defined as everything from "a warm puppy" to "not having to say you're sorry." Perhaps... John Masefield summed it up best when... the late English poet laureate... wrote, "we make Love what we choose." It might be likened to a Rorschach ink blot that looks like something different to everyone who views it. Less romantic but equally significant, a large number of people... act as though love is a commodity that can be bought and sold.

There is a widely held belief that the price of deeply understanding the complexities of nature is paid out in the currency of alienation... an inverse square law exists, it is said, between... genius and... capacity to love... Isaac Newton is pointed to as the most dramatic illustration of this theorem...

If it is assumed that the Messiah will *be an improvement on* Newton (r:1146, ln32), the Messiah could be both a *genius* and have the *capacity to love*. But would a Messiah know everyone – as Christianity suggests – and, if so, is it valid to expect a Messiah to love *everyone*? EVERYONE includes people who might not want to be loved, or are unlovable because they have a manner which is, selfish, moronic or evil! It is okay to CARE ('feel concern or interest') about everyone but, much like it is stupid to hate people you don't know, it is pointless to LOVE (feel 'warm liking or sexual passion' for) people you don't know.

If a... [person] loveth not his brother who... [can be] seen, how can [that person] love God whom... that... [person] hath not seen? ...If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. - THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF JOHN

Do the people who await the coming of a Messiah expect it to worship or *love God*, and do they expect to be able to worship the Messiah?

...all fall down before the... one... [who] eclipses the sun Prostrate yourselves before the new Messiah... there to [be] idolised by all for all time...

While [Jesus] spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him... And, behold, there[also] came a leper and worshipped him... Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him... [Next] came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him... Then [another person] came and worshipped him... Thou gavest me no kiss: but this [person] since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet... [Whoever] loveth son or daughter... [or] father or mother more than me is not worthy of me... And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith... the Spirit... of the Lamb... unto me, See *thou do it* not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book... Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a [person] think himself to be something, when [really that person is nothing, that person] deceiveth himself. But let every [person] prove his own work, and then shall [every person] have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. - New Testament

Let every [person] be respected as an individual and no [person] idolised... For the most part I do the thing which my own nature drives me to do. It is embarrassing to earn so much respect and love for it. - Einstein

...for many around the world it was Mahatma Gandhi who... symbolized the true meaning of freedom and independence. "People would try to touch Gandhi's feet in respect. [Gandhi] never allowed that. [Gandhi] said don't bow before another person..."

The Nine Billion Names of God.

According to... Edward S. Deevey... 36 billion... *Homo sapiens*... must have come and gone through the 3000 millennia before... [they first] appeared in the fossil record, [another]... 30 billion primitive people lived and died before the agricultural revolution that came at the beginning of history, about 100 centuries ago[, and]... the number of people that ever lived in these 100 centuries was about 25 billion. By 1600, the world population [– which 'around the end of the Stone Age in Europe (about 7000 B.C.) stood between 5 and 10 million'; 'in 4000 B.C. was estimated at no more than 100 million; and had doubled by the birth of Jesus' –]had increased to about 500 million... Since 1600, another 15 billion [humans have] come and gone.

The previous dozen or so pages don't prove anything about the Messiah, but they do show that lots of different ideas exist about what a Messiah will be like, and how, when or where a Messiah will come. A Messiah could satisfy none of the ideas, just one, or a combination of two or more complimentary ideas. Indeed, the large number of different ideas creates an even larger number of possible permutations, of which the Messiah only has to satisfy one. Theoretically, the larger the number of permutations an event has, the greater the probability of that event occurring. The odds of a Messiah coming today would be about 1-in-6 billion, but if the total population of human history is taken into consideration, the odds may be at least 1-in-100 billion. In other words, there have now been over 100 billion chances for the event to happen once (and the number of chances increases every day)!

Not everyone who lived in 1997 was waiting for the Messiah to come and, if the Messiah was to come, not everyone is likely to be pleased (e.g., people who are about to die via disease or old age; people for whom the coming of a Messiah would disprove the basis of everything they have ever believed in).

[The director of *Jesus of Montreal*] is, in essence, working the well-worn idea that if Jesus were to come back today, the same thing would happen to him all over again. Except that what [the director] seems to be saying is that Jesus actually does come back or recur, constantly; that [Jesus] was a particular type of extreme personality recognisable to us all, and that the historical Jesus was probably just another of these characters, accidentally promoted after his death in a way which [Jesus] himself would never have imagined possible. [Such]Jesuses are simply those idealistic and completely committed people who turn up in our lives from time to time and make us uncomfortable and briefly aware of the compromises we have made for the sake of a quiet and "reasonable" life. And if they lean too hard on the wrong people, as they so often do, they get hurt.

[In the film] *Touch... Juvenal*... is a modern Jesus Christ. His touch can heal. Although [Juvenal] does not fit the saintly mould ([Juvenal] has sex), when news of his miraculous powers leaks out, everyone wants a piece of him. Bill Hill... an evangelist forced to sell cars since... los[ing] his church,

believes there is good money to be made in Juvenal's gift and... wants the saviour on his payroll[(Juvenal could heal the sick fulltime – there would be a never-ending demand to exploit economically – and when Juvenal gets sick of healing the sick, Juvenal can heal himself!)]. Hill persuades Lynn Faulkner... a baton-twirler with his former church, to infiltrate Sacred Heart, the alcohol rehabilitation centre where Juvenal is working. But the plan goes askew when the couple decide they want to get to know each other better – including the Biblical sense. But Hill is not the only one chasing the good shepherd. August Murray[, a]... fanatical leader of an ultra-conservative group that wants to put the Roman back into Catholicism, sees Juvenal as a sign sent from God to turn his small band of followers into a national movement. But [Murray] has a problem with Juvenal's love life and believes a loaded gun is the way to straighten things out.

...*The Second Coming*... [is about] a Salford video shop worker who goes missing... after a night out with friends, including Judith... a [gal it]'s always fancied. Forty days later, Steve turns up – declaring himself the Son of God. Fine, you might say. A drama about some eccentric, believing himself to be the Messiah. What could be offensive about that? The thing is, [Steve]... is the Son of God, this is the Second Coming, and if the world doesn't listen to him there will be Armageddon... “I first had the idea for this eight years ago. It started with an image, which I never used in the end, of the sights on a rifle. They look like a crucifix and I thought that if the Son of God came back to Earth now, [it]’d be shot rather than crucified...”

...In [a NZ director's] debut feature film, the alienated Wellington street-kid Grace... is taken in by the unemployed carpenter Gerald... who feeds her, gives her a roof, provides pleasant companionship – and then tells her [Gerald is an alias for] Jesus Christ. *Saving Grace* explores all the major possibilities of this situation. Gerald could be a benign nutter; or... a dangerous nutter; or [Gerald] could be Jesus Christ.

...Everybody liked Jesus Everyone wanted to hang out with him Anything [Jesus] wanted to do [Jesus did; Jesus] turned water into wine and if [Jesus had wanted to Jesus] could have turned weed into marijuana or sugar into cocaine or vitamin pills into amphetamines[; Jesus] walked on the water and swam on the land[; Jesus] would tell these stories and people would listen... If you were blind or lame you just went to Jesus and [Jesus] would put his hands on you and you would be healed... [Jesus] could have played guitar better than Hendrix [and Jesus] could have told the future [or] could have baked the most delicious cake in the world[; Jesus] could have scored more goals than... [or] danced better than... [anyone;] Jesus could have been funnier than any comedian you could think of... [Jesus] told people to eat his body and drink his blood... But then some people got jealous of how cool [Jesus] was so they killed him But then [Jesus] rose from the dead... danced around and went up to heaven I mean that's so cool...

...if only I could be as cool as you...

...be your own personal Jesus Someone who hears your prayers Someone who cares... Someone who's there...

If everyone could be their own Messiah, there might be no need for a Messiah to come. Is it possible that a Messiah will never come? After all, if their behaviour around lesser personalities (e.g., sports, screen and pop stars) is anything to go by, how would most of the rest of society cope with being in the presence of a Messiah; and how could anyone be expected to cope with receiving the type of attention a Messiah would attract?

Snatched holiday snaps, intimate phone calls, half-clothed princesses – hardly a day passes without the private lives of Britain's rich and famous making public newspaper headlines... Unfettered by the kind of privacy laws enjoyed by France and tempted by a rich diet of scandal flowing from the royal family and an array of pop stars, Britain's press has been warned more than once that it “is drinking at the last chance saloon.” ...But the tabloid press may[finally] have gone too far when it ran three scandalous stories about the royal family, one which turned out to be a hoax... video purporting to show Princess Diana frolicking with her former lover... one... a false story about [her] 14-year-old... [son]'s first girlfriend... and the third was halted by a court order... [N]ot usually known for public pronouncements, [the British PM's wife has] supported calls for tougher privacy rules. “I don't think the public has a right to know everything and be everywhere,” said [the wife], whose family was snapped by paparazzi photographers during their summer holiday in France... [The] Queen made a rare bid for privacy in August when [the monarch] banned four freelance photographers from taking pictures on her Balmoral estate in Scotland during her annual summer break. The same month, Princess Diana, the most photographed [gal] in the world, took out an injunction against a freelance photographer who [the princess] said was hounding her.

...THE photographer branded a stalker by the Princess of Wales says [it] will go to court to fight an injunction banning him from approaching her... insisting [it] was merely a freelance photographer doing his job... In a 1000-word affidavit, the princess alleged [the photographer] had followed her car on a motorbike, hurled abuse and pushed her when [the princess] tried to remove a film from his camera... A friend of the princess said the unprecedented ban was a one-off response to a specific problem, and not the first move in an effort to fend off photographers altogether.

...A newspaper advertisement featuring the Princess of Wales dressed in leather and wielding a whip has sparked a protest by Buckingham Palace, which said it violated a rule prohibiting the use of images of the Royal family for commercial purposes without permission... Meanwhile... Di's enemies have accused the princess of deliberately ruining her mother-in-law's 70th birthday treat – despite ...he[r] latest sacrifice for a seriously ill child from the [Last] World. It was a stunt guaranteed to remove public scrutiny from her cellulite and focus it back on the part of her anatomy of which [the princess] is truly proud – her heart. With TV cameras in attendance, Princess Di... donned a surgical mask, cap and gown and entered the operating theatre of west London's Harefield Hospital... Di... proved [the princess] can do no right in the eyes of her palace enemies, who were quick to query whether [the princess] needed to witness the gruesome reality of heart surgery on the boy [Di]'d helped save. And that's not where the back-stabbing ended. Di's enemies say that in the same week [the princess] publicly displayed the caring side of her nature, the Queen of Hearts put on a private show of the less attractive part of her character... [The] Queen... who rarely gets the chance to eat out like ordinary people, had been looking forward to a special meal... [for a] 14-strong party... at the Waterside Inn near Windsor... But the day before her birthday a British newspaper printed a story revealing the Queen's plans and posing such a security risk that the family was forced to cancel the restaurant booking at the last minute. The name at the top of that story was... the [perso]n who has long been known to be the one royal reporter with a direct line to Princess Di... Neither Princess Di... nor ...he[r] sister-in-law the] Duchess of York had ever been on the invitation list.

...“Despite doing this movie... *The Madness Of King George*, a[nd]... despite doing... TV's *Prime Suspect*... I'm certainly not on any 'A' list... If anything I'm on the 'X' list, nobody cares about me...,” says the o[ut]spoken actress... who... is unrepentant about the controversy [it ha]s caused by publicly calling... Princess Di, whom the Americans adore... “an empty-headed bimbo”... in... a US magazine... “I actually find Di... really nauseating... and half crazy, poor thing. [Di] has an unbearable stress and pressure about her, the likes of which we can't really comprehend. It's compounded especially because [Di] doesn't have any mental resources to deal with life's challenges. [Di]'s incredibly stupid to start with.”

...FOR Princess Di, the news must have been a wonderful... present. Tantamount to a reprieve for a prisoner on Death Row. The Archbishop of Canterbury has announced that the name of the princess is to be removed from the prayer for the royal family in the Book of Common Prayer.

...A British Conservative Party magazine says Princess Di... is damaging the royal family and... asserted that it was time for [the]Princess... to be separated “irrevocably” from the institution... The magazine of the right-wing Conservative Way Forward group criticised Di[s]... “voracious appetite for the privilege and attention” that followed her 1981 marriage to... the Prince of Wales...

The royal divorce became effective on Wednesday, but already the Prince of Wales' business manager... has written to more than 40 of Di's... favourite stores and suppliers to say that after next week [the prince] will not pay any more of her bills... It means that the Princess of Wales will become personally responsible for her own finances for the first time in 15 years. The quick closing down of access to the royal accounts does not seem to have surprised some of the recipients of the letter... "I think under the circumstances it is straightforward book-keeping practice," said... [the] general manager of... the Bond St milliners who made some of the Princess' hats at prices ranging upwards from \$[NZ]1300 each. - 1996

[Princess Di once sold clothes it no longer wanted and used the money to go to the cinema and buy magazines.] Today a sale of 79 of... [Di's] glamorous cast-off gowns sold for more than \$US3 million[, and]... an additional \$US2.5 million was raised from the sale of catalogues and gala dinners... a record price for charity... A blue silk velvet dress Di... wore for a state dinner... at the White House, in which [Di] danced with... the... star of the hit film *Saturday Night Fever*... sold for \$US222,500... a record for a costume... The most controversial dress... was bought by a Scottish collector. The black silk crepe dress Di... wore on the night her ex-husband... admitted on British [TV to having] had an affair... brought in \$US74,000... [(Incidentally,) after the charity auction... [Di's] designer wardrobe would[still] be worth £3.5 million, fashion watchers said. It is estimated that [Di owns another] 95 ball gowns, 176 dresses, 178 suits and 54 coats.[) The chairperson of the]... auctioneers... would phone the Princess in London to tell her of the sale's great success... Proceeds will go to the Princess' favourite charities, including breast cancer research and the fight against Aids... [■ Yesterday, Di knelt] among schoolchildren outside the Hindu Temple in Neasden... to raise money for the Leprosy Mission, of which [the Princess is patron.

...last week came news that 'pictures of Princess Di which were estimated to be worth £1/4 million had been purchased from a schoolgirl for £15,000.' Now rival news groups are offering up to £500,000... in a bidding war over pictures of the Princess... and film producer Dodi Fayed kissing and cuddling on a Mediterranean cruise... London papers, certain that love is in the air for the princess, reported that Di... and Fayed... flew together to Nice in southern France last week where they boarded Fayed's father's luxury yacht... The report said Italian photographers followed the yacht and took compromising pictures of the couple... On the eve of her departure for Bosnia... on a visit designed to high-light the plight of victims of landmines... Di... refuelled speculation [of her being] romantically involved with Fayed by dining with him... Wearing a blue button-through dress and accompanied by one of his bodyguards, [Di] was driven in Fayed's Mercedes to his apartment next door to the Dorchester Hotel. Shortly afterwards, trays of food were brought into the apartment block, owned by Fayed's father... [who also owns] Harrods... The *Daily Mirror* yesterday quoted unidentified friends of the princess saying [Di] has told them: "It's time I started getting a life. Dodi can provide everything I need."

...As... Princess [Di]... embraced landmine victims... the *Sunday Mirror* tabloid splashed a series of pricey pictures of her cuddling... Dodi Fayed aboard a boat in the... Mediterranean. In one, the couple appeared to be kissing. But who could say? Although the *Sunday Mirror* reportedly parted with £250,000... for the pictures by an Italian paparazzo photographer, many were so grainy it was only just possible to make out the two figures... [Newspapers have been] desperate to be first to produce evidence of a new [guy in Di's] life. It is the first time the public has seen the princess, now 36, romantically involved with anyone other than... the Prince... of Wales... But even indistinct photos of [the heir to the British throne's] ex-wife mean boosted circulation figures – the *Sunday Mirror* reportedly printed 200,000 extra copies – and, predictably, some of Britain's other tabloids tried to spoil the big scoop. Most blatant was the *News of the World*, which produced several old pictures of Fayed canoodling with his... ex-wife... It also produced a computer-generated copy of one of the *Sunday Mirror* pictures. [Di's] office has declined to comment on her friendship with Fayed, 41... Yesterday Di... met two boys from opposite sides of Bosnia's ethnic divide to hear how they lost their legs in landmine accidents... When the princess visited [one boy's] family in the village of Klokotnica... his mother... [claimed to have] never heard of Di... and thought some sort of general would be paying her family a visit. [The mother] seemed bewildered by the posse of photographers lined up two-deep in front of her corn plants.

...[a jilted] model... has claimed millionaire Dodi Fayed made love to her by night while romancing... Princess [Di]... by day. In early editions of Britain's top-selling Sunday newspaper the *News of the World*, the 30-year-old [User] alleged the Egyptian playboy shuttled between her and Di... on a recent Mediterranean holiday. [The model] said Fayed... told her [of] wanting her to have his baby during passionate moments on a yacht across the bay from the yacht on which the Princess was [sleeping]. "I was blissfully unaware that the [guy] trying to father my child was setting his sights on Di...,"... [The model] believed Fayed wanted to retain her as a lover even if [the playboy] succeeded in wooing the Princess. When [the model discovered her lover] had been seeing Di... [it] claims Fayed tried to persuade her not to force him to choose between... them, asking "Can't we work this out?" "[Dodi] did not want to end it with me, nor had [Dodi] any intention of giving up... the Princess... The truth is [Dodi] wanted us both,"... [The model] is believed to have earned £200,000... from *News of the World* for exclusive rights to her story. [The model is also] suing Fayed for £1 million for breach of contract, claiming... they were engaged for six months and that [Dodi] effectively broke his promise to marry her by his meetings with Di... But in an interview published in the *Independent on Sunday*, Fayed's ex-wife... says... [the model claimed to have] broken off the relationship with Fayed two weeks before [the model] launched the breach of contract lawsuit. [The ex-wife] told the paper [about bumping into the model] in a Los Angeles restaurant, adding: "[The model] said 'I broke up with him. I've had enough'. But... 'I've kept the ring – I'm no idiot'. The next thing I know is [the model] is on the news crying hysterically and flashing the ring and [talking about] suing Dodi. I thought it very curious." Di... flew to Greece on Saturday with a [gal-]friend for her third Mediterranean holiday in two months. Meanwhile, there were claims yesterday that Fayed has a double, who has caused trouble for him by seducing [gals], offering roles in films to movie stars and running up debts while claiming to be the Harrods heir. The imposter – [a merchant sailor] – was now serving a two-year prison sentence for impersonation in Canada, the *Sunday Times* reported... [By the way, Di wa]s the controversial star of her own street scuffle. The Sun newspaper has pictures of Di... demanding film from[an] award-winning photographer... [who]'d snapped her outside a west-London gym. [Di] then asks a passer-by for help, stands by as [her helper pins the photographer] to the wall and grabs his film... [Di's helper says it] went to her aid because his mum brought him up to be... good.

...A young millionaire who organises parties and balls for the teenage children of the rich and famous [claims to have] turned down "potloads of cash" for pictures of [Princess Di's eldest son] in an intimate clinch with a girl... after Di... begged him not to sell the photos. [The millionaire] promised to keep them safely locked up until the future king is at least 90.

...in a break with... tradition[, Di's eldest]... is to be confirmed by the Bishop of London rather than the Archbishop of Canterbury... Buckingham Palace... rejected suggestions... the decision could be seen as a snub for... [the archbishop], who is currently on a "sabbatical" break... [but] is a leading member of the evangelical wing of the Church of England, with its so-called "happy-clappy" style of worship... "The Bishop of London is Dean of the Chapels Royal so it is entirely appropriate that [the bishop] should be asked to officiate,"... [□ T]he Royal Chapels are open Monday to Friday 9am-4.45pm, adults \$10, under-16s \$2.50... The nave and cloisters of Westminster Abbey are open weekdays 8am-6pm, admission free.

...The Princess of Wales is an increasingly confused [perso]n. That's not only the view of royal onlookers who watched her bizarre antics during her recent Riviera holiday... it's also the astonishing opinion of the [guy Di] has been desperately wooing! Now an insider has lifted the lid about the amazing row that caused the breakup of Di... and [a] Pakistani heart surgeon... and led to her strange behaviour in the past weeks. While [Di] has been snapped apparently having the time of her life... those in the know have been describing Di... as "overwrought and driven crazy" since [the surgeon] gave her a tongue lashing, accusing her in front of friends of having a "warped" personality and being incapable of telling the truth. "Her smiles in public hide a real hurt," says an intimate friend of the couple, who has witnessed their affair from its beginnings more than 18

months ago. Witnesses were amazed at the venom of the normally mild-mannered doctor, who rarely raises his voice and is usually a model of decorum... In a blistering tirade, [the surgeon] called the Princess “congenitally stupid” and added sarcastically that [Di] had the “brain the size of a gnat’s penis”... “At one stage [the surgeon] started imitating her ‘poor little princess’ whine and... fumed, ‘You are not a sweet, wronged [perso]n. You are a sad, deceitful cow!’” Di... retaliated by being seen publicly with[a] twice-married, multi-millionaire Indian business[perso]n... at London’s exclusive Harry’s Bar and Annabel’s nightclub... [The India]n invited her and her boys to holiday with him at his Thai villa in Phuket, [but Di] rejected the offer and accepted one from... the controversial Egyptian[owner of Harrods instead. In January the surgeon had given]... weight to... engagement rumour[s by presenting]... her with a stunning \$20,000 ruby ring – one [Di] has never worn in public – a few weeks before [Di] left for her four-day mercy mission to highlight the suffering of the war-torn African nation of Angola... Just weeks after... [that the] doctor... had a swift change of heart[, bowing]... to family pressure [by breaking] off their engagement... It has left her heartbroken and given her confidence a battering.

...Di... has discovered the one London newspaper that doesn’t regard her as headline material. Publicly reading the *Financial Times*... [while wearing a] Harvard University sweatshirt... heralds yet another image change for the gym-junkie princess... [who looked] quite the intellectual.

...[buy our magazine for your copy of] the... pictures the world has been dying to see... IN THE most sensational photographs ever taken of Princess Di, her... body language says it all: “I’m in love and I don’t care who knows it!” Di said just weeks ago [it was her intention to] shock the world – and [Di] has... Our intimate pictures show Di, at ease with her new, rounded figure, happy to let her swimsuit straps slip... [while sunbathing] beside her lover... Di... looks like a [gal] who is... relaxed, and getting plenty of passion! “I have never seen her look so happy and fulfilled,” says one of her closest friends. “I just pray it lasts.” ...Di met... Dodi at a polo match 10 years ago... [and their] families have always been close... The romance developed last month when Di and her sons... holidayed in the south of France with Dodi and his father... No-one[had] suspected this affair[, so initially] the focus was on Di’s relationship with... [Dodi’s father], a thorn in the side of the stuffy British establishment... There were even pictures of Di hugging [Dodi’s father on his] yacht’s deck... It can now be revealed that on returning to London, Di was whisked away to Paris in a Harrods helicopter to Dodi’s father’s hotel, The Ritz. [Di] slipped into the famous hotel late at night and was taken to the \$12,000-a-night Imperial Suite, with a vast bed that’s a copy of Marie Antoinette’s at Versailles... The Queen[– who once decreed that Di’s name ‘was never to be mentioned in her presence’ –] is said to be “relaxed” about [Di’s new relationship] and wants Di to find a stable union. [The Queen’s eldest son] would be delighted to see Di happily remarried. It would make it much easier for him to... [remarry. His sons] just want their mother to find inner peace. [The] Pakistani Heart surgeon... [– who is] rumoured to have been in love with Di – has also given his blessing... They all seem to recognise Di’s destiny... After these amazing photos were taken, rumours of an early wedding raged, with Dodi flying to Los Angeles to look for an engagement ring. [Dodi] has already bought Di jewellery... The princess has no royal duties after November. If they marry, [Di] would become Mrs al-Fayed, but retain her title as Diana, Princess of Wales. It seems likely they would live at his Beverly Hills mansion. Or they could choose to spend a great deal of their time at the magnificent Paris palace, now owned by [Dodi’s father], but once the home of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor[and ‘30 servants’]. The opulent furniture of the Windsors is now being cleared out and sold and it would be the perfect chance for Di to decorate the beautiful home to her own taste.

...an interview given two months... [ago showed that Di] did not expect to remarry... [Di] doubted anyone would take her on because of the glare of publicity... “...I have so much baggage. Anyone who takes me out to dinner has to accept the fact that their business will be raked over in the press. Photographers will go through their dustbins. I think I am safer alone.” ...Di... also expressed... [regrets about not becoming] Queen if and when her former husband... assumes the throne. “We would have been the best team in the world... I... would have made a good Queen of England... [because ‘I lead from the heart, not the head.’ Furthermore,] I could shake hands till the cows come home. And [the King] could make serious speeches.” ...[however, Di added that her ex] was “a follower,” born to the wrong job. “[The Prince of Wales] would have been so happy with a house in Tuscany, being a host to artists.” ...the *New Yorker*... told... that... Di... was investing all her hopes for the future of the British monarchy in her[eldest] son... “I think it is too late for the rest of the family... I’m hoping [my first-born] will grow up to be... smart...” ...[● Di’s] former private secretary... [–] the latest in a string of royal aides to jump ship... [(Di and her private secretary] parted company... after a row over who should pay for their luxury holidays together[; the secretary]... who earns \$56,000 a year, thought her boss was taking care of the... \$19,000... bill... for their... trip to the Caribbean[– has described]... life at Kensington Palace [as being like:] “...a slowly spreading pool of blood seeping out from under a locked door”...

Surgeons battled frantically for two hours yesterday in a vain bid to save the life of... the Princess of Wales, after a horrendous Paris car smash... Ambulance workers initially managed to revive the Princess at the scene of the accident. But by the time [Di] arrived at La Pitie-Salpetriere Hospital’s intensive-care unit nearly 90 minutes later her heart had stopped. Surgeons cut open her shattered chest... [but three]-and-a-half hours after the accident, they gave up hope. Di... died at 4 am... Her millionaire companion, Dodi al-Fayed, died instantly when the black Mercedes-Benz they were travelling in slammed into the wall of a tunnel... just north of the Eiffel Tower... after being chased through Paris by photographers on motorcycles. The driver of their car, a security agent at the Ritz Hotel, was also killed – apparently after losing control. The fourth person in the car, one of... [Di’s] bodyguards, was injured and freed from the crushed wreckage by rescue workers who cut the roof off... The force of the crash crumpled the roof of the Mercedes to door-high level and pushed the car’s radiator back into the front passenger compartment... It was supposed to have been a romantic evening in Paris... followed by a drive... to a private villa across the River Seine. But the discrete weekend ended in tragedy... Last night world leaders spoke of their grief at the loss of “the people’s princess,”... As the news travelled round the world, people who had come no closer to the “Queen of Hearts” – as [Di] asked to be thought of as after her marriage split – than a magazine cover or television broadcast listened and watched in shock. The world literally stopped – in the same way that the death of John F. Kennedy stunned hundreds of millions of people in 1963... As Britons woke to the news, passing motorists yelled abuse at a posse of... photographers gathered outside Buckingham Palace... Tearful mourners, gathering in small groups under grey skies, blamed the news media for her death. Britain’s racy tabloid newspapers, which have devoted blanket coverage to [Di’s] romance with Dodi this summer, came under attack... “[Di] was such a lovely [person. It’s disgusting that Di] wasn’t just left to live her life... How far do you have to go to get freedom?” Others called for new laws to curb the excesses of the tabloid press. “I think the Labour Government will have to take notice of the strong public outcry to bring the press under control,”... [The] British Foreign Secretary... said her death “would be doubly tragic if it does emerge this accident was, in part, caused by the persistent hounding of the Princess and her privacy by photographers.” [‘The princess once leapt 6 metres off her hotel balcony into deep snow while being hunted by paparazzi during a holiday at an Austrian ski resort.’] In Cape Town, the Princess’ brother... [claimed to have] always believed the press would kill his sister, but... never imagined they would take such a direct hand in her death... It had been a love-hate relationship between... [Di] and the paparazzi who, since [Di] was courted by [the Queen’s son] as a shy 18-year-old, have dogged her life... In Rome the Italian known as “Mr Paparazzo” said [Di’s] death showed there were no longer limits of good taste in his profession but... faulted Di... and Dodi for apparently fleeing photographers. [Mr Paparazzo], aged 72, was the inspiration for the photographer in [the] landmark 1960 film *La Dolce Vita*, which immortalised the genre of photographers who pursue the rich and famous. “...There is a limit where someone should say ‘stop’. You shouldn’t let it go this far,”... Parisians braved the traffic roaring through the Pont de l’Alma tunnel to lay white flowers at the crash scene... The flowers... and asters, lay in stark contrast to the traces of broken glass and rubble which bore witness to the violence of the collision... French radio said at least some of the

photographers[who had chased the Mercedes] took pictures before they helped and one of them was beaten at the scene by horrified witnesses. Four French photographers were arrested and questioned in Paris after the crash. Di... and... [Dodi] had been the focus of frenzied media attention for the past month... Only last week, Di... lashed out in an interview published in the French daily *Le Monde*. "The press is ferocious... It pardons nothing. It only hunts for mistakes. Every motive is twisted, every gesture criticised. I think that in my place, any sane person would have left [Britain] long ago. But I cannot. I have my sons." Now... [her sons], who were due to meet Di... at Kensington Palace today, have no mother... "the boys"... aged 15, and 13 in two weeks, were spending their summer holiday with... [their father] at the royal Balmoral estate in Scotland... before returning to school... [T]hey are reported to be devastated... The princes were born into the limelight but have had a tough childhood, growing up in a royal family far more open to publicity than ever before and with parents whose marital troubles were daily fodder for the tabloids. [The eldest son, who is] second in line to the throne after his father, was his mother's confidant and adviser. [The eldest son] has grown to loathe the paparazzi as much as his mother did. Two months ago, Di... said the photographers got him "freaked out." ...Criticism as the "hooligan prince" when... a young boy for his tearaway antics[the eldest son was recently]... hailed as a future royal star... Tall and slim with a shock of blond hair, [the eldest son] has become something of a heart-throb among teenage girls – recently featuring at the top of polls for the most handsome royal... Living with parents who are unhappy and then divorce is never easy for children. Yet, according to... the *Daily Mail's* royal correspondent... "both boys have emerged as pleasant, polite and well-adjusted." But how they cope without the mother they loved so much will be a much deeper test of their characters... Early today... [their father] was preparing to fly to Paris with [Di's] two sisters on a special jet to bring the body back to Britain... What started out as a fairytale over [the heir to the British throne's] search for a bride had ended so suddenly. Millions of [gals] copied her hairstyles, her ruffles and frills, and adored the glamorous gowns. People everywhere admired her spirit, style and courage. They all listened to her bare her soul and her personal pain on television. For 17 years [Di] brought the common touch and a Hollywood-style glamour to the royal family.

...Di... was a thorough blue-blood. Both sides of her family were aristocratic, and included four direct links to King Charles II and one to King James II. Her father... was directly related to the Churchill family... Little was known about Di... born on July 1, 1961, before her engagement... [when Di] was universally described as appearing to be just another quiet, rather unsophisticated upper-class girl, not a great conversationalist, but with a propensity for laughter... At her prep school, Riddlesworth... where [Di] was sent after her parents' divorce, Di... won prizes, not for the brilliance of her academic work but for being "the girl who tried hardest." Following Riddlesworth Di... attended another conventional girls' boarding school, West Heath... where [Di] led a happy if academically undistinguished life. [Di] attended an exclusive finishing school in Switzerland but returned after only a few months suffering from homesickness. Her father bought her a \$200,000 flat in Kensington which Di... shared with three flatmates. [Di] worked as a part-time cook, then a nanny, and finally a kindergarten teacher[which was her occupation when Di]... became associated with... the future King of England... From [that] moment... every move made by this shy girl has been scrutinised and publicly documented, from the self-confessed bulimia, self-mutilation, the consulting of psychics, and illicit affairs to her vitriolic divorce... If there is one image which captures the complexity of... [Di] and her public life it was that famous photograph taken in India in 1992. Behind her the Taj Mahal glistens – Emperor Shah Jahan's symbol of undying love built to the memory of his wife – and in the foreground [Di] sits alone, her emotional isolation apparent. It was a powerful, emotive image which became a symbol of her estrangement from her husband... Yet there was also the sure knowledge Di... was acutely aware of the message her pose would convey and the public sympathy it could engender. Over the last decade... [Di] emerged as acutely conscious of the power of the media. However, like so many in public life who initially court and charm the press, [Di] discovered to her cost that [not all press is good press]... From the time [Di] first appeared as a blushing ingenue who had captured the heart of the... Prince [of Wales], her shyness was endearing, and her willingness to become part of a British fairy tale reinvigorated the royal family. Twelve years younger than [her fiancée, Di] married him with all due pomp at St Paul's Cathedral in 1981. "I'm amazed [Di] was brave enough to take me on," [her fiancée] said... at the time of their engagement. [The prince] would be even more amazed in later years when [Di] courted the media when it suited her purposes... [The] unofficially sanctioned biography *Diana: Her True Story* exposed her depression and alienation within "The Firm." Her lengthy, revealing television interview in November 1995 was a calculated and well-rehearsed attempt to become "the queen of people's hearts." But they were things [Di] could manipulate. The rest – and it was daily – was out of her control. As her marriage fell apart and media interest accordingly increased, [Di] found herself the recipient of unwelcome attention: her holiday in the Caribbean in January 1993, as [her husband] was moving his possessions out of Kensington Palace, resulted in dozens of published photographs of her frolicking in a bikini. In March the same year [Di] confronted photographers in Austria who were following her and her two sons; five months later in London [Di] shouted at a freelance photographer... "You make my life hell." The litany of woes and intrusions into her personal life continued, notably the "Squidgy" tapes and... photographs of her in [a] London gym, published in November 1993. The following month [Di] announced her intention to bow[out of public life. "I was not aware of how overwhelming that [media] attention would become." In March the next year [Di] was... reduced to tears by photographers' attention while holidaying in Austria. In May [Di] was photographed sunbathing topless in Spain (photographs were subsequently bought by a Spanish magazine, which acquired the right but would not publish). But there was a sense that [Di] was also the architect of her own misfortune... When... [someone] went public with his story of being [her] lover for five years [Di] was reportedly devastated – as [Di] was when an official biography [of her ex-husband revealed the prince] had never loved her and was forced into the marriage by his father. Her fightback came with *Diana: Her New Life*... but [Di] was undone when her infatuation with[the] English rugby captain... was revealed and [Di] was cast as a marriage-wrecker. Her high profile meant her every action was reported: [Di] stood accused of "flirting" in Pakistan, was subject to stalkers, had her credit card refused at a fashionable store in Knightsbridge and was labelled "an actress, a schemer" by the former Archbishop of Canterbury.

...Two of N[Z]'s biggest weekly magazines, which were due to publish stories today about... Princess [Di]... and her lover... have withdrawn copies from sale... Under the headline "You've gone too far, Di...", *New Idea* was to publish a report on an angry... [Prince] of Wales... blasting his ex-wife for flaunting her new lover in front of her sons... *New Idea*... said they had pulled the issue... from the shelves at the eleventh hour... as a "sign of respect to Di... and the royal family" and it would have been inappropriate to publish the article... Although some copies... would have slipped through, letters had been sent to all retailers asking for them to be returned... [New Idea] declined to say how much the exercise would cost. "The most important thing... was... not to do anything that could hurt the family,"... [Gal's] *Day* offered "hot new photos" and "all the intimate details" of Di... and Dodi's affair, quoting a shipmate of the Harrods heir who claimed [to have seen "Di seduce Dodi." ...[Gal's] *Day*... said stores would not sell the magazine today out of respect for... [Di], but it was unclear last night whether it would be on sale later in the week... [Gal's] *Day* has also cancelled all... advertising promoting its scoop photos... All mainstream media changed their regular programming to cover the event. TV One extended its usual half-hour Sunday bulletin to 107 minutes, TV3 screened a... special at 8.30 pm and some radio stations abandoned their regular programmes to focus on the tragedy... TVNZ has shelved a documentary spotlighting... the 25-year liaison between... the heir to the British throne... [and the gal the heir claims to have always loved more than Di] which... was to have screened tonight on TV One. A documentary on a charity auction of the Princess' gowns, *Diana's Dresses*, scheduled to follow[it], has also been pulled. Both programmes have been replaced by a BBC *Panorama* documentary fresh off the satellite from Britain called *Diana: The People's Princess*, which will screen from 8 pm. And the network has dispatched [a presenter (r:p246, ln49)] to London to file reports on the tragedy and its aftermath. [The presenter] is expected to make his first broadcast from the British capital tonight. TV3... has roped in[its] former *20/20* reporter... who left for Britain earlier this year and is temping on BBC World, to provide reports for its... 3 *National News*[which drew 12%] of all viewers for its half-hour news bulletin at 6 pm on

Sunday. [The 2-hour special from 8.30 pm drew 10%]... Sky News attracted... 5[%] of all viewers in Auckland on Sunday afternoon for live reports on the tragedy... Sunday night's *One Network News*... advertisement-free special... garnered the highest ratings of any programme so far this year... peaking at 35[%]... "It would... have been unprofessional to have associated advertisers' products with [Di's] death... TVNZ lost a large amount of money as a result of this decision, but... it was the right thing to do." Meanwhile TV4 said it was unaware until after it had screened that *Whoops Apocalypse*, a film satire on nuclear politics, contained a subplot concerning a fictional kidnapping of the Princess of Wales. TV4... said any connection between the Princess and the spoof, which screened on Sunday night, was "regrettable." ...[Ironically, tonight's] *Inside New Zealand* documentary, *Fame* (TV3, 8.30 pm), looks at how celebrity has changed the lives of local lens-pullers and asks the stars about the perks and drawbacks.

...During her life... [NZ] magazines featured Di... a lot – her picture appeared in the top [3 gal] magazines 267 times this year alone. The[y]... also ran... Di on 25 covers and featured her in 54 articles... [They have helped a] signwriter... fill... 1500 scrapbooks with clippings... [about Di's] life...

The function of any magazine editor is to discern the kind of material his or her readers want, then do the best job possible of delivering it to them. For the *N[Z Gal's] Weekly* in the early 1980s that was a relatively easy task. Readers adored the royal family. They couldn't get enough of the royals, and in particular the gorgeous young... Di... Indeed, with a print run of 300,000, the issue featuring her 1981 wedding... was an all-time best-seller... The arrival in *N[Z]* of the first real competitor in the [gal's] weekly magazine market – the celebrity-oriented *[Gal's] Day* – coincided with the first signs of trouble in the royal marriage. The *N[Z]* edition of *New Idea*, which also featured celebrity material, appeared soon after and within 12 months the three... magazines were locked into a fierce battle for readership. *[Gal's] Day* in particular was – and still is – a bold magazine; exploiting the private lives of the rich and famous is its stock in trade. The royals were by no means exempt. [Di's] marital difficulties proved grist to the mill. Surprisingly, perhaps, the *N[Z]* public reacted favourably. Circulation... rose as a result. This left the *[Gal's] Weekly* in a terrible dilemma. Should we follow the same route? Should we enter the bidding war for the "royal scandal" stories on offer to us from overseas? We couldn't be seen as wimps. On the other hand, in accordance with our readers' expectation, we had traditionally supported the royals. Added to that was our reputation for scrupulous fairness. We decided to take a moderate line. We would feature reliably sourced news stories involving troubles on the royal front but would steer clear of what we perceived to be any form of cruel exploitation. *[Gal's] Day* continued on its merry way. The paparazzi pictures involving... [Di's sister-in-law's] toe-sucking incident provided a further boost to a magazine that was, in circulation terms, by now outperforming the *Weekly*. The lesson was all too obvious. And herein lies the crux of the problem. A magazine must pay its way. Publishing history is littered with instances of magazines that fail to do so and consequently go to the wall. Can an editor therefore afford to take the moral high ground? If the public demands scandal do you give it scandal (provided of course your budget runs to the exorbitant fees demanded for "scoop" stories)? It is said that people get the government they deserve. Sadly, something similar applies to our relationship with the media. As we have seen, however, the cost in human terms can be appalling... When I think of that beautiful, tragic [figure], I remember how... [for] seven years, under my editorship... we cashed in – however mildly – on the details of her troubled life. And I have to admit my conscience bothers me.

...In our shock at the news few have delved beyond expressions of sadness at the loss of the biggest star Britain has ever produced. Yet [Di's] death symbolises vital issues we face at the end of the 20th century and should send a message to us all to engage with our consciences... Di... was not stalked because [Di] supported people with Aids or those who survived land mines. [Di] was stalked because [Di] was perceived to be... [someone] of extraordinary beauty and a leader in fashion. [Di] was stalked because [Di] represents what the world promotes as the myth of pure beauty, an ideal which leads [gals] to anorexia, cosmetic surgery and serious forms of human butchery in an endless search for a myth of beauty which has been reinforced worldwide... The real killer of Di... was the materialism of the late 20th century which is the true motivation behind the beauty myth and which values the price of a lurid photo more than the right to privacy, the adoration of outer physical beauty even when we know the hideous human price this has exacted... Di... has died a martyr not only to the overt causes [Di] supported, but to the hidden deaths of thousands who follow the beauty myth at the expense of their inner freedom, a myth which supports the largest money-earner in the western world behind war and drugs. Ironically, in her death [Di reigns as Di] never could have done on the throne. Her memory has the power to invoke deeper questioning of whether we want to continue to be slaves to material superficiality and what price does this exact on us all?

...The Princess came to visit us only once. [Di] arrived in Auckland on her first big tour with her husband of 21 months and their 10-month-old baby... in April 1983... Back then there was no talk of bulimia, suicide attempts, no hint of unhappiness in the marriage. [The Princess] was still Shy Di, sitting quietly during after-dinner speeches peering up at her husband from beneath a thick, sweeping fringe. We were listening to him but we were watching her. [Di] seemed to be in post-honeymoon bliss and we were on honeymoon with her. For two weeks we travelled through *N[Z]* with them, watching closely. [The Prince] touched her affectionately as they walked about... The walkabouts became a familiar pattern. We trotted behind interviewing people who had just had royal contacts. "What did the Princess say to you?" (No one was interested in what [the Prince] said.) The reply usually went like this "Uh... um... I can't remember. But wasn't [Di] BEAUTIFUL!" Some, with tears streaming down their cheeks, couldn't even manage that. We, the cynical press, thought they were all a bit silly. That was until we met Di... in person. [The first time we met our ruling monarch in person was in 1953 – 113 years after NZers became royal subjects.] At the beginning of each tour, the royals throw a private party for the press. Everyone relaxes and it is all off the record. We stood crammed in a reception room... Without warning, Di... bounded down the staircase with [the Prince, who] went one way [while the Princess] went the other. I was standing with two *Herald* photographers and [a] fellow journalist... The team had been feigning boredom. They would be glad when it was over. Suddenly there [Di] was, looming – all 1.78 metres of her – perfect translucent skin, huge blue eyes, beautiful teeth. Striking. The [guys froze. So Di] and I started to talk – about [her son] and his legs. "Did [the baby] get sunburned in A[US]?" I asked her. "I noticed his legs were red when you arrived at the airport." (Well, what else do you ask a princess when the other members of your group are standing with their mouths open?) Like any new mum, [Di] launched enthusiastically into the topic. "No, no. [The baby's] just learned to crawl and [is] rubbing his legs." This was serious royal news. The heir to the throne had just learned to crawl and I couldn't report it. [Di] and I chatted on about [her son] and her time in *N[Z]* and still the [guys] gaped. And then [Di] was gone. Still the [guys] said nothing, until one of them burst out laughing, pointing at [the other journalist's] left hand. Oozing between the fingers... clutching a wine glass were tiny columns of squashed sandwich, lodged there to free up his right hand as the Princess arrived, arm outstretched... That was the effect [Di] had... At the same party [Di challenged a royal newshound, who was] known for his trademark binoculars which [were] trained on the Princess, about his reports that [Di] spent vast amounts of money on clothes. And how, [Di asked, did the newshound know that Di] sometimes wore thermal underwear? "I have visions of you... lying on the footpath with your binoculars..." It was about then that [her husband's] press secretary, with a deft movement at her elbow, ushered the pink-cheeked Princess out of the room, smiling his best diplomatic smile, as [Di] asked "Have I gone too far?"

...We stood in a forlorn huddle, heads bent, while the fury of [the Prince of Wales's] press secretary thundered over us in the lobby of an Auckland hotel. [The press secretary] wanted to know who in the rat pack, the hard-bitten mob whose members earn a crust chasing royals for British newspapers, had broken the rules in a big way. It was April 29, 1983, nearly the end of the Prince and Princess of Wales' first and [last tour of NZ] together. Earlier in the day we had been at Waitangi watching [the royal couple] take a historic ride in a giant Maori waka. The media were left behind on the shore and two inflatables full of police made sure onlookers stayed clear. It was a moment for [the Prince and Princess] to be away from the crowds and the photographers. But one [photographer], determined to get one over his colleagues, had given... a... Maori... [girl], who

would be riding in the canoe, a small automatic camera to take close-ups. During the journey, the [girl] stood up and started clicking. [The Prince] asked her about the camera and [the girl] quite innocently told him what [the photographer had asked her] to do. The incredulous look which passed between [the Prince and Princess] was enough to reduce the girl to tears, an incident which upset the Princess... more than the dirty tactics. The shy former kindergarten teacher... was learning fast that the... [press has] no rules, no sense of fairness, no manners. And yet no one understands better than the royal family the importance of the press pack. Without them, their tours, charity work, international diplomacy and good deeds would go unrecorded. To a certain extent the press and the palace need each other. [The]Prince... understands that. When the British photographers went on strike during a Wellington walkabout, in protest over restrictions laid down by a media liaison officer, [the Prince] noticed their inaction as the royal Rolls passed by and... moved quickly to solve the problem... Di... loved and loathed their attention. [Di] used them skilfully when it suited her; they reduced her to tears when it didn't... But while the paparazzi may keep their lenses hidden for [a few days while the world mourns for Di], it won't be long before they are defiantly back. Those of us who watch royals from afar may not admit we have bought, or even looked at, the magazine or newspaper which publishes their work. But if [one] was put in front of us, how many will turn away? ...Two [US] tourists... said that as they passed through the Alma tunnel in a taxi they saw the body of a blond... hanging out of a shattered window with her head twisted to one side. Five photographers were within centimetres of the dying Princess taking photos... *Le Monde* quoted reports that photographers had shooed away the first people who tried to aid the victims so they could get unobstructed shots... And as rumours circulate about how much the photographs of the fatally injured Di... and dead Dodi... will fetch – so far, as much as \$US1 million... – it will be only a matter of time before they are on public view, and then the Internet. The editor who writes the biggest cheque is counting on the inquisitive and ghoulish side of human nature which makes us slow and stare as we pass car accidents. Out there is a natural audience which will be shocked at the thought of paparazzi chasing celebrities and then photographing the resulting accident. There were those who were shocked at the photograph-in-death of another 36-year-old glamour icon, Marilyn Monroe, when [her body] was laid out in the morgue, stripped bare of makeup. But it was published; it had a market and still does. According to... [the] executive director of the *National Enquirer* (‘remember, *gossip* is just another word for *news*’), the pictures show the bloody princess and dead Dodi in the back seat of the car wreck. There will be a market, be it in France, Italy, Germany or Spain. If nothing else it will confirm that [Di's] beauty endured even in death... the world's most photogenic face apparently emerged unscathed from the crumpled Mercedes.

...A photograph... purporting to show the dying Princess... in her wrecked car is a fake, French police and emergency services sources maintain... [R]escuers in the picture were not wearing the gear of the French emergency services, and a three-digit emergency phone number appearing in the background was not a French number. The colour photo, distributed on the Internet... and published in black-and-white... by the Paris daily *France-Soir*... was... put together by a group which calls itself Rotten... [Incidentally, a NZ] *Herald* photographer who covered the Paris fashion circuit for six years, says French paparazzi often used motorcycles to pursue their car-bound prey. “That’s the big thing in Paris – because the traffic is very difficult they frequently operate in teams of two, one riding and one sitting on the back with a camera and a flash taking photos through the windows.” ...British newspapers agreed to stop hounding the Princess for a time, “but by the same token they would still buy in pictures if somebody else had them – and... pa[y] big money for them... [Freelance photographers] can earn phenomenal amounts of money... a million [NZ] dollars a year would not be unheard of among some of the elite... and they do it, they chase her hard, because they know there is a ready market for it in the UK. It’s no good the British papers throwing up their hands in horror and saying ‘this is wrong, we shouldn’t be doing it and we are going to give it up,’ while they are still prepared to buy them.” [The NZer], who worked for an agency specialising in celebrity coverage before beginning a 22-year career in British newspapers, said France had strict privacy laws “which the French paparazzi seem to believe don’t apply to foreigners and in particular to British royals. They would not treat French politicians and... celebrities in the way... they have been treating [US] and British celebrities.” ...The... [NZ] soprano... opera star... [who] sang at the 1981 wedding of the Prince and Princess of Wales... [and] had met the couple many times since then... was devastated about the death... “I stayed up all night following the story, I couldn’t believe my ears... I have experienced the same intrusions... When will it be controlled?” ...Ironically, [the]... Auckland squash coach... who used a hidden camera to photograph Di... working out at his London gym in 1993... said yesterday... “I’m very saddened – it was such a tragedy,”... Lawyers for the princess[had] filed for breach of contract but, faced with the prospect of days of cross-examination about her own use of the media, reached a settlement which... required the destruction of negatives and the payment of the princess’ fees, leaving ...h[im] with proceeds of photographs already sold – a figure of more than \$1 million. [‘□ On radio on September 28, 1996, an AUSn psychic – who spoke to Di nine times between February 1994 and this month, said, “I don’t feel Di’ll reach 40. Di’s going to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Di could be involved in an accident; I feel in a car, connected to Paris or France.”’]

...Di’s] death bears tragic echoes of the car crash 15 years ago that killed another “fairytale princess” – Princess Grace of Monaco... [– the former US] film actress Grace Kelly... Princess Grace’s[youngest] daughter... who was aged 17 at the time, was also in the vehicle[but survived. Grace’s] death cast a pall over the tiny principality. Princess Grace had married [Monaco’s ruler] in 1956 in a marriage that blended Hollywood and royalty.

...[a] Hollywood actor... wants laws to curb press “harassment” of celebrities... “It happens all over the world, and it has certainly gotten worse. You don’t know what it’s like... It is harassment under the guise of, you know, ‘We are the press, we are entitled,’... when people are having a private moment, they should be allowed to have a private moment.” The “substantial” prices paid for pictures of celebrities caused the aggressive behaviour, the actor [(r:p701, ln44)] suggested... Other celebrities are going to violent extremes as they fight back against the paparazzi... In Washington, [the US]President... and his wife... were “profoundly saddened.” “[We]... knew... Di... and... were very fond of her... Our thoughts and prayers tonight are with her family, friends, and especially her children,”... [US] television networks devoted hours of live television coverage to report [Di’s] death and interview people who remembered her. The... Princess had frequently demonstrated her fondness for the U[S] and often visited... [T]he father of Dodi, said the deaths were “appalling and quite needless. The world has lost a Princess who is simply irreplaceable.” In Calcutta, India, Mother Teresa expressed sorrow... “Mother has heard the news and... is very sorry. [Mother] is praying for her and we are all praying for her,” said a statement from the Missionaries of Charity... The U[N] said the world had... lost an important ambassador of goodwill...

The world’s telephoto eye was still watching, but this time there was no shouting and no smiles as the... body of Di... returned to the land [it] might have ruled as Queen... The skies themselves seemed to make way for her arrival, the clouds parting like an honour guard. Once the plane had landed it nudged towards the welcoming party hesitantly as if weighed down by its tragic cargo... Eventually the plane... hatch opened revealing a glimpse of colour, the Royal Standard clinging to the hard, square outline of the coffin. It seemed an unforgiving shape, just a box, with none of the curve or sparkle of the [person] whose body lay within. The silence of the air was cut... by the sound of distant traffic – which rumbled on as if to prove that the clocks never stop, even for the death of a Princess... The bearers of the body inched their way to the hearse. They stood, swivelled on their heels, and clasping tight with their white-gloved hands, lowered the coffin as smoothly as a hydraulic pump. A bit of the flag was still spilling out and had to be tucked in – just like the train of one of [Di’s] more lavish ball gowns... And then, on the final day of August, the sky darkened and the wind whipped harder. It felt like the last day of summer, and the beginning of a long winter.

...Di... will receive a funeral at Westminster Abbey on Saturday befitting her status as the mother of a future King, but not the state funeral usually reserved for monarchs... [There will also] be no lying in state. At the request of both the royal family and [Di’s family], the coffin will lie privately in front of the altar of the Chapel Royal at St James’ Palace until the funeral. The palace is the home of [her ex-husband. Di’s] coffin was moved earlier yesterday to the Chapel Royal, where mourners were being invited to sign a book of condolence... Four books of condolence will be...

accessible round the clock until midnight Friday... “Although there is no lying in state, obviously we want to ensure that as many of the public who wish to share in the grieving,” a palace spokesman said... Invitations would go out to 2000 people for the service. At the end of the service, the coffin... and members of the two families will travel by road to... Althorp, the home of her family... where the body will be interred privately. The route from the abbey will be announced later... [Di’s] millionaire companion was buried just hours after the Paris car crash.

...The Princess... declared just hours before [her death of having] found true happiness with Dodi... and planned to withdraw completely from public life. Confidants said yesterday that they had never known her so content and fulfilled... Calls for tougher laws to safeguard celebrities from media hounding have come from around the world following the Princess’s... death. In France, the Government wants new international laws to protect notables on their own soil and abroad. The French Minister of Culture... said French privacy laws were the strictest in the world but photographs taken in France and banned from publication there were often published in other countries. Anyone taking a picture of an individual in a private place – including a car – without their permission can be jailed for two years and fined up to 300,000 francs... But those fines may be too low and, while the French media needed to follow a code of good conduct, readers had to be aware of their role in buying pictures, [the minister] said. French media have also agonised over whether they bear responsibility for the crash. An editorial in the conservative daily *Le Figaro* said: “Everyone knows the solution. It would suffice for celebrities to renounce savouring glory, for magazines to give up massive print-runs, for the public to stop wanting to see what’s hidden.” The left-leaning *Liberation* ran a cartoon showing two pallbearers about to lower a coffin into a grave packed with photographers. “Okay, one more photo,” says one. “But it’s really the last,” the other adds... In Germany... privacy is protected, though more by precedent than by penal sanction. But judges oversee a law protecting citizens’ “personal integrity,” which means that details of private lives cannot be made public without permission unless deemed strictly relevant to public matters. Photographs are similarly restricted under German copyright. In both France and Germany such laws are rarely infringed, and judges do act to uphold them. In Italy, things have become even tougher for the prying or prurient. It can be against the law to publish certain types of private information even if the public has a clear and serious interest. New laws bar any report of a person’s sexual activity, religion, race or health without the subject’s consent... [K]inds of private dope can be reported without permission when it affects an official’s public activity but not in other circumstances... Italy’s new rules are partly a reaction against what some Italians see as the excessive zeal with which private lives have been exposed in pursuit of recent corruption scandals. But Italians may be right to be cynical about the new laws. Italy had privacy laws before, which did not seem to provide much protection to the innocent. And many Italians are now worried that the new restrictions may make it easier, once again, for crooked politicians to fend off justice. Some European countries manage without privacy laws. In Finland and Sweden, breaking rules on photography and intrusion reporting can lead to prison. But Sweden’s media face few curbs. Still, trespass laws stop journalists entering private property without permission; and, as in Germany, you must not disclose private information that could undermine the subject’s “integrity.” Unlike German judges, however, Swedish juries are highly reluctant to rule against disclosure. The Swedish press, like Britain’s, also has its own code of conduct agreed on by journalists and publishers and watched over by an ombudsman who inveighs against breaches of privacy. The Swedish media generally obey such strictures, partly because they fear that harsh laws would otherwise be brought in... Some legal eagles argue that Britain’s common law – the unwritten principles upheld by courts – already protects citizens’ privacy, but this is contentious: few cases are brought to court... Britain says questions have to be raised about media coverage of the Princess but first the families and the nation must grieve... [Ironically, for] the British newspapers who have been reviled for hounding... [Di], her death proved to be the biggest story of all. Staff of the national newspapers worked through the night to bring out special editions... The *Sun* devoted 22 pages to coverage and tributes, plus a 24-page supplement celebrating her life... In a full-page editorial the *Sun* stated: “Like a candle in the wind, the flame that burned so bright will burn no more.” ...The newspaper made a plea for the Press not to be blamed... “Even the harshest privacy laws... would not have stopped the terrible... event...” it said.

...Stamps carrying the image of Princess Di... sold out in Hong Kong within an hour of her death being announced. The stamps, issued in 1981 and 1989, had face values of \$HK6.50... and \$8.80 but were changing hands for up to \$150 and were expected to soar further... [In local news, NZers] created a huge demand for the wrap-around special edition of the *N[Z] Herald*, which sold out yesterday. As a further tribute... tomorrow’s *Herald* will carry a commemorative portrait of Di... in colour. The portrait... measures 55 cm by 76 cm or the size of two pages of the newspaper.

...Shock and sorrow at the death of... [Di] turned to anger and violence yesterday as *N[Z]ers* vented their feelings on the media. A... photographer was assaulted in Christchurch, some retailers refused to sell the... [*NZ Gal’s Weekly*, which] was the only [gal] magazine to publish yesterday... and Aucklanders telephoned [similar] magazines to complain about articles... Services for those wanting to express their grief... will be held throughout the country... tomorrow... [and] on Thursday... A collection will be held for those who wish to contribute to the charities the Princess supported... People can also sign and write messages in condolence books in the reception area of the British Consulate... or in Government House in Epsom from today. The books will be sent to England after... [Di’s funeral. Last night (NZ time), the] Paris prosecutor’s office said it was determined to discover “the exact unfolding of the facts” that led to the crash... Prosecutors have considerable leeway in considering what, if any, charges to lay against the paparazzi who were in pursuit of the Princess when the crash happened. Even if they are cleared of any direct role, France has a “Good Samaritan” law that makes it a crime to fail to help someone in danger. Charges they could face would include... obstructing a police officer and endangering the life of another person. A special criminal brigade that usually handles important cases such as terrorist attacks was leading the probe... Police are concentrating their efforts on questioning the seven paparazzi... detained at the scene. They have seized... 20 rolls of film... A lawyer for... [Dodi’s] family is demanding... the photographers be investigated for [hu]manslaughter... A bodyguard lying injured in a Paris hospital could be authorities’ best hope as they struggle to reconstruct the crash... The bodyguard... who was sitting in the front seat with Di... immediately behind him, was wearing a seat belt [and] was also protected by [an] air bag... Europe 1 radio said [the bodyguard] had not yet been questioned by police because [it] had not recovered sufficiently from his... head and lung injuries which were not life-threatening... [However, the] former British paratrooper who served in the Middle East and Northern Ireland... cannot talk... His mouth was so mangled his lips and tongue were torn away.

...The last day in the life of Di... was precipitated by a series of errors... The first was the illusion that by leaving Sardinia they could escape their predators... Di... had been upset by events in Sardinia, which at the time of writing remain unclear... [But there] was no escape now on the planet from paparazzi with satellite phones and networks of paid informants, including members of France’s police force. Error... two was worse – Dodi’s decision to place their lives in the hands of a non-professional driver at the wheel of a car which demands skill, especially at high speed... Dodi had... ordered their usual chauffeur to drive one of the decoy cars, making this decision, perhaps, because the driver’s face was familiar to the waiting paparazzi... The third error was the failure of Di... and Dodi to fasten their seat belts... Next came the fourth error. The paparazzi on their... motor scooters were on to their quarry immediately. Dodi was in charge, urged on, perhaps, by an anxious Di... Anyhow, eager to escape the intimidating persistence of their pursuers, Dodi ordered the driver to move fast enough to lose them. Just what speeds were reached may never be known... One witness... driving his car as the Mercedes overtook him... described hearing the sound of the car’s engine shifting into neutral – missing the change, in other words... This was just before the car entered the downslope into the tunnel which passes under the Alma bridge. Another witness... described two thunderous impacts, so loud that [it] thought at first of explosions. One may deduce that the first was when the car struck the central reservation at 150km/h at the mouth of the tunnel. The second would be the car bouncing on to the right-hand barriers, at a lower but still huge speed. Impact No. 3, when witnesses first registered the sound of broken glass and the screech of tearing metal, came when the car struck the 13th pillar supporting the Alma Bridge above. The choice of a bullet-proof car turned out to be a double error. Not only was it hard

to drive, its armour plating hampered rescue efforts. At 12.27 am, the first witness telephoned for the emergency services... Rescuers cut through the reinforced pillars supporting the windscreen before peeling back the roof. This took more than one hour from the time of their arrival on the scene.

...[Di's] last words... were "Leave me alone, leave me alone," the French daily *Le Parisien* reported yesterday. The newspaper, quoting an unidentified doctor at the accident scene, said Di... uttered the words as an emergency medical crew set up strong lights around her and began treating her. Moments earlier, as doctors and other rescue workers first approached her, [Di] said repeatedly, "Oh my God," as paparazzi snapped pictures nearby... "[Di] was very agitated, half conscious." Just after Di... asked to be left alone, the team of doctors lowered an oxygen mask on to her face... After Di... was given blood transfusions and other emergency care, [Di] was put in an ambulance. But the emergency workers ordered the ambulance to go so slowly, to avoid bumps, that the 10km trip to the Pitie-Salpetriere Hospital... took an hour... A further delay occurred when, less than a mile from the hospital, the ambulance crew ordered the vehicle to stop and administered further treatment... The trip took so long that the French Interior Minister... and the Paris police chief... feared the ambulance had become lost en route... ['At that time of night, the drive from the Alma tunnel to the hospital normally takes between 5 and 10 minutes.' By the way, the four] young Maori who performed a haka before astonished mourners outside Buckingham Palace are standing firm in the face of anger at home over their actions... "All we did was pay our respect in the best way we know how." Their performance provoked calls of outrage to talkback radio stations in N[Z] yesterday. Many callers felt the haka had been stage-managed for television cameras, and some were angry that the four were wearing shirts promoting alcohol.

...Disclosures yesterday that the... driver had a "criminal" level of alcohol in his blood... as well as traces of an anti-depressant drug... identified as Prozac... took some heat off the photographers... Judicial sources said a post-mortem test... showed... Mr Paul... had... 1.70 grams of alcohol per litre of blood, more than three times the legal limit... But prosecutors denied widespread reports that the speedometer... was stuck on 196 km/h, almost four times the speed limit. It showed zero... The 2.81 six-cylinder car, which sells for between \$160,000 and \$170,000, had a top speed of about 215 km/h.

...[a Palestinian businessperson] in Kuwait wants... to pay more than \$US1 million... to buy the car... "I like Di... and I want to keep a memory of her,"... But [the businessperson] said the crumbled remains of the 1994 Mercedes S-280 could also prove a good investment that might sell for \$5 m... or \$10 m... in five or ten years... [Meanwhile, the Prince of Wales's] lover... has cancelled a charity ball as a mark of respect for the Princess of Wales... [The ball,] planned... as a fundraiser for the National Osteoporosis Society... was widely seen as a first tentative step into public life for... [the lover] after years spent as an object of press and public scorn... [In another development, the fiancée] who... was dumped by Dodi... in favour of Di... told NBC: "Why didn't we just stay together? None of this would have happened..." ...[the ex-fiancee] has dropped her lawsuit against Dodi...

The high-speed crash that killed [Dodi and Di] has launched a legal tug-of-war that could involve millions of dollars in damages... [The] father of Dodi, joined... Mr Paul's family... [in] a civil suit against... seven photographers... yesterday... and appeared determined to fight evidence that Mr Paul was drunk and speeding... as blame for the Paris car crash turned increasingly towards the car's driver - whom... [Dodi's father employed. A spokesperson] said the family had no evidence that the driver was drunk... [while] a lawyer for the family... said two frames from a photographer's roll of film seized at the crash site showed Mr Paul startled by a camera flash. The film is being held by police and was not made public... Friends and colleagues painted contradictory pictures, some describing [Mr Paul] as a teetotaler and others as a drunk... [who] tried to disguise the extent of his drinking... [by grabbing] glass after glass at Ritz functions and [hiding] the empties behind curtains or pot plants. "Everyone could see what [Paul] was doing but no one in authority ever said anything about it... As... Paul... drank more [Paul] became more embarrassing. It was totally wrong for a member of the Ritz staff to be seen drinking heavily with guests, but somehow Paul got away with it... [S]enior managers... have had plenty of warnings about Paul's conduct. It seems absolutely staggering that [someone] like this should be selected at short notice on a Saturday night to drive the mother of the future King of England. The bosses must have been out of their minds." ...One Ritz colleague said... Paul did not have the special police licence required to drive limousines... while friends in his home town... said... Paul... had a passion for speed, owning a 1100cc motorbike... British papers... carried reports of the former air force officer's life as a bon vivant, a [perso]n who enjoyed whisky after work and boasted of his... working... life... [as] deputy security chief of the Ritz hotel... The *Daily Mirror* printed a front-page picture of Mr Paul smiling and with a drink in hand. A late call asking him to report back to chauffeur Di... and Dodi would have been difficult for his inebriated ego to resist, the paper suggested... The *Mirror*... said... [Dodi's dad] could be sued for compensation by his son's bodyguard... and by... [Di's sons] for the loss of their mother - although this was thought unlikely. Such a claim would depend on whether insurers blamed the crash on the Ritz, said the paper.

...All over London yesterday... people blaming the odious paparazzi for the death of their Princess were jolted on to a new target by headlines which screamed "DI'S DRIVER DRUNK." ...Londoners, their noses in the latest newspaper revelations, broke the unwritten rule of tube travel by speaking to the stranger beside them to lessen the impact of the news... "Three and a half times over, I heard." "Five times, I heard... two bottles of wine." "No, it was whisky. Half a bottle... Lucky the bastard didn't survive. You know what I mean?" But almost as quickly as talk of drunken driving had arrived, the angry mood of the city calmed, and the reality of life without Di... returned complete with sombre undertones. At St James' Palace... mourners queued for up to five hours to enter their thoughts in the condolences book... But there was no blame on blood-alcohol levels or paparazzi here; just the patient silence of the people grieving for a [person] the nation did not really know, but professed to love almost as much as their own flesh and blood.

...To the world, they are Kings-in-waiting. To Di... they were simply "my boys." Now they face a torment impossible to imagine: coping, before the eyes of the world, with the grief of losing their mum... [The eldest] is reported to be insisting[on being allowed to] walk... behind the gun carriage bearing [Di's] coffin on its journey to Westminster Abbey[, claiming]... it is what his mother would have wanted. A senior Buckingham Palace source said the Prince had shown great courage and maturity and was determined to have his say in the funeral arrangements. Church leaders, the royal family and protocol chiefs are working around the clock to make the funeral... a unique and modern event... The... funeral service... will be televised live around the world... to... [an] expected... worldwide audience of 2.5 billion... and[in NZ,] will be carried by [both TVNZ] and TV3. More than a million people are expected to line the route from St James' Palace... to Westminster Abbey... Extra trains will be laid on to bring people to London to pay tribute to the Princess... The day presents a dilemma for 7000 couples. They are all due to get married in Britain on Saturday and an insurance company has offered to pay compensation for services cancelled out of respect to Di... Cricket's NatWest Trophy final... at Lord's has been moved to Sunday and all sports have announced rearrangements as a mark of respect. Leading rugby matches, all horse racing meetings, a boxing world title fight and many other events have been cancelled... [However, Scottish] football has defied the British Government and plans to go ahead with a World Cup match against Belarus[, which]... was apparently willing to play the fixture on another day... Banks and shops will close on Saturday, although one major retailer said it would stay open and dedicate its profits for the day to charities linked with Di... Buckingham Palace said yesterday that an official memorial fund had been set up to take donations for... the... nearly 100 charities... Di... had headed... The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund would be coordinated and administered at Kensington Palace, her London residence.

...The death of Elvis Presley created a huge market for lookalike impersonators, but the Di... doubles who commanded... fees ranging from about £450... for a couple of hours work to £2000... per day for foreign assignments... might be forced into early, and perhaps permanent, retirement... [A] London celebrity lookalike... agent... suggested it might be... five years before a [Di] could make a public appearance without drawing complaints about bad taste... A rival lookalike... agency... said [its] 15 Di... lookalikes were not only facing no work, but also much grief, because many people in the celebrity double industry developed a strong sense of identity with the star they spent years learning to copy. Before... [Di] died,

her doubles had... appear[ed] at all sorts of social functions... [S]ometimes they were too good. Britain's... *Sun*, was humiliated last October when it published pictures that purported to show Di... frolicking with her one-time... cavalry officer... lover... The "princess" turned out to be a Di... double.

...What will they do without her? ...Di... boasted the world's most instantly recognisable... face... No other media icon... came close... Her image on the cover sold millions of extra newspapers and magazines around the world... But the attractions of this elegant clotheshorse... turned compassionate charity worker did not stop there... Every time [Di] sipped a mineral water, reached for her training shoes or ran for her car, the exposure was worth a fortune in free advertising... The magazine *Majesty* once calculated that Di... generated £14.5 million... worth of free publicity a year for... products... "Like Midas, [Di] helps turn any product or service or store or restaurant... to gold," said the *Independent on Sunday*... Di... was the first to admit packaging was everything. "You see yourself as a good product that sits on a shelf and sells well and people make a lot of money out of you," [Di] said during a heart-on-sleeve television interview... [The author of] *Diana Her True Story*... became an instant millionaire... But those days now are gone. [One media] commentator... told the *Independent*: "...Maybe when [Di's eldest son] leaves school and people write about his girlfriends, [the young prince] could become a [guy] version of his mother. But there is no other figure like her." ...[■] Dodi gave Di] a ring worth £130,000... just hours before the two died... a British newspaper said[yesterday.

...Di's] last gift to the British press... was to send newspaper sales soaring. The top-selling *Sun*... sold a million copies more than its usual four million yesterday, according to industry executives quoted by... its... News International... stablemate... the *Financial Times*... The *Guardian*... increased its usual output by 50[%], the *Daily Express* by 20[%] and its sister paper the *Daily Star* by 10[%]... The sales came despite public anger at the media... As... editors in Germany... rejected calls to restrict publication of intrusive pictures of celebrities, Germany's mass tabloid *Bild* ran a front page photograph of emergency workers trying to burrow their way into the wrecked car... *Bild*, which has a daily circulation of four million, declined to say how much it paid for the picture, which was taken from the rear of the car before it was cut open... [A spokesperson] for Axel Springer Verlag in Hamburg which publishes *Bild* and Berlin's *B.Z.* ...said that the company did not feel responsible for [Di's] death. Asked about the comments made by [Di's] brother... that publishing companies that trade in paparazzi photos had "blood on their hands" [the spokesperson] said: "There has been quite a bit of hypocrisy... in trying to portray prominent people as victims. You cannot close your eyes to the fact that prominent people use the press for their own purposes." Newspapers in Italy... also rejected accusations that the press had bloodied its hands[, and an]... Italian film director... said... "The whole world, even the highest levels of Italian Government, has idolised Di... as if [Di] were a saint, even though her humanitarian work was due to a skilful public relations strategy... It's a shameful scene of general stupidity,"...

Orders to buy the remaining copies of Christie's catalogues for [Di's] 79 dresses auctioned in New York... have soared since her death. The dresses, which fetched \$US3.2 million... are destined to become even more valuable with time, especially since they are her only personal belongings that the public can buy... While a Di... postcard may cost as little as loose change, pieces of limited-edition ceramics commemorating key events in her life are[also] expected to soar. "I have some real nice pieces... Next week I will take them out and increase their prices by 33[%]," said the]... owner of Britannia Past, a store in Kennebunkport, Maine, that sells royalty commemoratives.

...Grim-faced Britons dressed in black mourning attire, are leaving souvenir stores empty-handed... of memorabilia depicting their cherished Di... "Before her death, no one was paying any attention to Di... souvenirs and all of a sudden [Di] has become a hero and we don't have anything left," said... a souvenir store near Buckingham Palace. Since Monday, coffee mugs, plates, key-rings, postcards, "anything with Di... on it is going like hot-cakes." ...And flower stalls close to the focal points of national mourning have been unable to meet an unprecedented surge in demand, as the bouquets outside Buckingham and St James' Palaces have blossomed into deep carpets... The church of St Mary the Virgin was open to the public yesterday afternoon to allow wellwishers to lay flowers against the... railings of the... Chapel where Di... will be laid to rest. [Di] will be buried close to her beloved father... and among 20 generations of her forebears... Hundreds of mourners also paid their respects outside Althorp House yesterday. Police marshalled cars down country lanes, unaccustomed to heavy traffic, while people jumped out of their cars to pay their respects before being moved swiftly on. At the gates of the... 121-room Althorp House... to... [which Di] moved with her family... when... [aged] 14... a sign read: "House closed." Among the flowers onlookers left messages. One said: "For Di... A beautiful Princess who has gone to the stars." ...The overwhelming feeling of villagers was one of extreme sadness, though glad that Di... would be buried at her family home... [But other residents of Di's] home village fear... mourners will flock to their community for decades after [Di] is buried there and... turn it into an Elvis-like pilgrimage... Great Brington, a village of 200 people... is just 1.6km from where... [Di] is to be buried on Saturday after a ceremony in Westminster Abbey.

...Westminster Abbey, the central London church consecrated in the 11th century, is where the 1000-year-old British monarchy has traditionally... [been honoured]. The abbey... lies across a busy road from the Houses of Parliament... and is one of the top tourist sites in London with more than two million visitors a year... [The] Queen and her parents were married in the abbey, as were[two of] the Queen's children... [39] sovereigns have held coronations in the abbey, beginning with the Norman invader William the Conqueror in 1066. The only monarchs not crowned there were Edward V, one of the Princes murdered in the Tower of London in the 15th century, and Edward VIII, who abdicated in 1936 before his coronation... A church has probably stood on the site since the 7th century... Henry III rebuilt the abbey in the 13th century in the French Gothic style which remains today. The abbey was designed specifically for its role... as it enabled the whole lantern area to be transformed into a coronation "theatre"... [17 sovereigns] are buried at the Protestant abbey, along with 12 husbands and wives of sovereigns and a number of their children... Elizabeth I, who died in 1603, was the last monarch to have an elaborate tomb built in the abbey but six further monarchs were buried in the vaults below the chapel... Many other famous Britons are buried or remembered there – the nave has a floor tablet dedicated to war leader Winston Churchill... The last major funeral in Britain, that of Churchill in 1965, took place at St Paul's[, where Di was married.

...Di's] mother... had a strong but turbulent relationship with her... The "fragile" relationship... was said to have deteriorated sharply last May, when... mother... gave interviews to *Hello!* magazine detailing... [Di's] childhood... bulimia and her marriage. At one stage, [Di]... was thought to have contemplated legal action... [Di's mother] (61) lives isolated from the world in self-imposed exile on the remote Isle of Seil, a couple of ferry crossings from Iona, off the west coast of Scotland... [But her] conviction for drink-driving last year was... given extensive publicity. According to a friend of... [Di], the publicity over the court case deepened an already "sulphurous rift"... [but the mother's] parish priest... and a close friend, insisted that at the time of... [Di's] death, the feud had been settled... [However, Di's] death means... the rift between the two most popular members of Britain's royal family will never be healed... [T]he Queen Mother first welcomed her eldest grandson's bride into the royal family and tried to train her in the traditional royal restraint... Now 97, the Queen Mother... turned bitterly against Di] after her marriage failed]... It is a cruel irony for the "Queen M[other] – who once said: 'our work is the rent we pay for our room on the earth' –] ...that Di... the royal rebel, achieved both popularity and accessibility only dreamed of by the other members of the family... Aware that [Di's] overwhelming popularity held dangers for the monarchy, the Queen Mother tried last year to make a public rapprochement... [by inviting] Di... to join her at a royal event as the divorce terms were being worked out. But the[y]... could not even meet one another's eyes... The two had known each other since Di... was a child – her grandmother... was a [gal]-in-waiting to the Queen Mother[, who]... is said to have been instrumental in persuading [her grandson] to wed the demure 19-year-old, who was thought young and malleable enough to be shaped into the perfect, uncomplaining royal wife... [T]he Queen Mother... taught Di... the arcane intricacies of royal protocol and it was at her house that... [Di] stayed on the eve of [Di's] splendid but fated wedding... The[y]... had much in common. Both came from aristocratic, but not royal backgrounds, and had to learn the role to which their husbands had been bred. The Queen Mother... welcomed "the breath of fresh air" pretty Di... brought to the royal family's stodgy image. But her

approval waned as the Princess increasingly chafed at the demands of her royal role... To the Queen Mother, Di... as a royal wife should have borne in silence any problems in her marriage – even if her husband was cold and distant and in love with another... Seeking to limit the damage Di... could inflict on the increasingly unpopular royals, the Queen M[um] fought to persuade the family to keep her in the fold after her divorce... “That way we can control her more,”...

Has everyone said all they want to say about what swine those photographers are? Right then. Now let us look at the other side... We need to cross to Buckingham Palace and go back to 1952 or thereabouts. The new reign is hitting its stride. Everyone agrees that [the new Queen] looks radiant and [her husband] talks blunt salty common sense. And everyone agrees they are bringing... a breath of fresh air to the job. Only a *breath* of fresh air? Golly, it is more like a force nine gale. They are stripping away the monarchy’s fuddyism, opening it up to the common touch, getting close to the people and, though no one is crass enough to say so, milking their popularity for all it is worth. Back in 1952 not everyone agreed that it was a good idea. The fuddies said the Queen was losing control... [R]unning the family business the way George V and George VI did... [meant not courting] their subjects. They were distant and majestic. They sought no popularity, they exacted awe. The Georges froze out tittle-tattle. So the Queen’s uncles were able to lead rackety and disordered lives – and nobody cared because nobody knew. The papers contained no jokes about the Duke of Gloucester’s drunkenness, nothing about the Duke of Kent’s struggle with cocaine addiction, not a word of Edward VIII’s friendship with Nazi leaders. As for Queen Mary, no long lens caught her hand closing over a pretty bauble in a jeweller’s shop and dropping it into her handbag. The [new Queen and her husband] chuckled overboard this benign but kindly, apathetic acceptance of the royal family. In vain the fuddies tried to explain that when you invite praise you license prying and criticism. The fuddies were right. The press gave up fawning and simpering from a distance and started looking more closely. Scandals came tumbling out. Princes and princesses began badmouthing their spouses and chattering about their adultery... Di... and [her husband] at their worst epitomised the British adage that the natural weapon of a [gal] in affairs of the heart is revenge, that of a [guy], indifference. Their private war was not unusual for existing; it was unusual for being made so public and so personal by an institution that has depended on mystery and distance from the populace for its authority... Now that... [Di] has died the British press is baying for the Windsors to unbend more, to hug and weep in public. But – however badly – it has already tried that tack. It may now see the wisdom of a return to a facade of dull and dogged duty and reputations so proper and boring that no photographer would want to waste a stakeout... on them.

...“The royal family have been hurt by suggestions that they are indifferent to the country’s sorrow at the tragic death of the Princess of Wales...” ...Last night’s statement... [by] the Queen’s press secretary... follows a barrage of media and public criticism of the Queen and the royal family for its apparent coolness in the face of a massive outpouring of national grief after [Di’s] death... “Your people are suffering. Speak to us, Ma’am,” said the *Mirror*... The fact that the royal family had earlier issued only two brief statements since Sunday – neither in person and neither paying tribute to Di... – had fanned criticism of a monarchy seen as out of touch with the public mood. Critics have also asked why there is no national flag at half mast over Buckingham Palace like most other public buildings across the country – dismissing arguments that only the royal standard can fly above the palace and only when the Queen is in residence... The... *Sun* newspaper said in its... front page headline: “Where is the Queen? Where is the flag?” ...The Queen, [her husband] and the Queen Mother were to travel by train overnight for the funeral... but after last night’s statement they are now expected to arrive sooner in London... [The PM] tried to stem the tide of criticism, appealing to people to respect the royal family’s grief. But few were impressed... Even the usually loyal *Times* warned: “There are times in the history of every institution when its rules matter less than its raison d’être. For the British monarchy, this is one of those times. Failure to gauge correctly the expectations of the public could turn a melancholy mood into an ugly one.” ...[already, an award]-winning columnist... in the *Independent* [has called on the Prince of Wales] to renounce the crown and recommended that the monarchy end with the death of his mother... “The royal family are... behaving as if a revolution is taking place outside the gates of Buckingham Palace. And they may be right,”... “Whatever they do is wrong,” said... a biographer of the Queen. “If they show emotions it’ll be called hypocrisy, if they don’t they will be denounced as cold. The flag at Buckingham Palace did not even come down for Sir Winston Churchill. Are we really saying the princess was more important to the nation than Churchill?” ...[the press secretary] said the Queen would make a personal statement on television today... [Incidentally, a Pakistani,] aged 39... who had his photo taken with Di... when [the princess] visited his village in May has killed himself over her death... Police found the photograph in his pocket.

...Harrods has unveiled a shrine to... [Di] and... Dodi... Curtains were drawn back on window 20 of the imposing shopfront to reveal a black satin backdrop framing[their] photographs... Between the... two... photos, white lilies cascaded down and on to the window itself... The last time London’s flagship luxury store produced such a display was after the death of Winston Churchill... [By the way, a flurry] of bizarre conspiracy theories have sprouted on the Internet and crept onto some news media about the death of Di... most of them morbid and many demonstrably wrong. Conspiracy theories began appearing within hours of her death, including that [Di] was faking her death to escape the media. Others had her rubbed out by the makers of land mines. [Libya’s] leader... said the British and French secret services arranged the accident because they were annoyed that a British Princess might marry an Arab...

Death may have been the price... [Di] paid for giving up official British police protection when... [seeking] to make a new life for herself away from... [her husband. Di only] continued to use police protection officers when... with her two sons... British security experts said that if trained members of the Royal Protection Squad had still been looking after her, [the crash] would not have happened. A British police spokes[person] said driving – or reporting for any kind of duty – under the influence of alcohol was a disciplinary offence. An independent expert was scathing about the level of protection... accorded to “the world’s No. 1 celebrity”... “Had that been my assignment I would expect to be sued,”... [T]he Mercedes car carrying Di... should have been followed by another car with two more trained bodyguards and possibly even a third car, also with two security [officers]. The chase cars should have contained medical equipment and the bodyguards should have been trained in resuscitation skills. Following cars would also have been able to deter some of the paparazzi photographers on motorcycles.

...[someone] driving just ahead of the car in which... [Di was travelling claims to have seen] a motorbike swerve directly in front of the Mercedes, making it lose control... “I immediately pulled my car over to the kerb but my wife said: ‘Let’s get out of here. It’s a terror attack.’” ...[however, an] unnamed French photographer said the pursuing paparazzi was about to give up the chase when the Mercedes entered the tunnel ‘because we could not keep up.’... Henri Paul, had boasted “you won’t get us tonight” to [photographers as the car] left the Ritz. The car jumped traffic lights and skidded a few times in the bid to shake off the paparazzi... [T]he daily *Le Figaro* reported... [that the paparazzi] “...pushed back and blocked the [first] officer from coming to the aid of the victims,”... Until more police could reach the scene to help... all the officer could glimpse of Di... was “a blonde head,” the report said... [In response, some] of the photographers... have said they called ambulances and police immediately after the crash... But the *Journal du Dimanche* said... “so far, their mobile telephones have not retained any trace” of calls to emergency workers... The [7] photographers arrested at the scene were yesterday placed under formal investigation – a step short of being formally charged... for involuntary homicide and for not helping the victims – a move denounced by one of their lawyers as theatre justice... LS Diffusion... whose paparazzi took pictures of the car and ran while [7] of their colleagues were detained by police, said... [its] photographers were in a state of shock and now realised what had happened, but their instant reaction as professionals had been to shoot pictures of the car. “The first reflex for 99[%] of professionals is to do their work, film or take pictures, and if its blood, its blood,”... A French photographer... who... was in hiding... has admitted... [taking] pictures of the mortally wounded Princess... [after pursuing] her on a motorcycle... “[Di] was moving about. Okay, we took a few pictures... without thinking. But what should I do? I am not a doctor or a fire[officer]. My job is to take pictures. But it was so tragic... My friend and I said stop and then we drove away.” The paparazzo... [claimed to no longer have] the film because it belonged to the agency that employed him... Asked if... [it felt]

in any way responsible for the accident, the photographer said: "No... We are not guilty because that is part of the game of life." ...[one of the arrested photographers claimed to have] got there after the police and rescue services... [and, therefore,] was not among those chasing Di... "The first thing I saw was Dodi lying on the pavement with rescue workers trying to revive him... When I regained my composure, I took out my camera and began shooting. I think I got five or six shots off before a police[officer] grabbed me... What happened was horrible, but what has happened to us is also very unfair." ...Another... [claimed to have] taken a few shots of Di... at the Ritz, the super-luxurious Paris hotel where... [business is suddenly] booming... then gave up and headed for a friend's house. His route took him by the tunnel at the Pont de l'Alma. Noticing an accident, [the photographer] left his car and began to snap photographs. Minutes later [the photographer] was in custody. A news photographer who has covered gunfire in Beirut and tanks in Tiananmen Square, [it] was still shaken... by allegations [of his bearing] responsibility for Di[']s... death.

...The *People's Daily*, the flagship newspaper among China's tightly controlled media... asks "who are the real 'assassins' that cruelly killed Di...?" and answers with a stinging attack on Western media... "Under this false, mistaken precept of '[guy] bites dog isn't news, dog bites [guy] is,' in the midst of the 'free' competition for gold and silver, many western news media strive to expose private, secret things. Most publish news of sex, murder and crime and other scandals, use shocking methods to titillate the audience and seek huge profits without regard to social responsibility and effect... With Western press freedom, there's no freedom of privacy to speak of for Di... and others." Meanwhile, in a surprise decision, Japan said yesterday no member of its imperial family would attend the funeral despite an invitation for the country's crown prince and princess to go... A spokes[person] for Japan's Imperial Household Agency said there were "various reasons".

...[Di's] funeral will be one of the biggest live events ever televised... The BBC said it would use 100 cameras tomorrow to cover the funeral procession to Westminster Abbey, the service and the route the... cortege will take to her final resting place... The corporation will use all its available outside broadcasting equipment as well as hired equipment. Ironically, the previous biggest BBC outdoor broadcast was [Di's] wedding... ITN, the BBC's commercial rival, plans to deploy almost 400 journalists and technical staff [operating] 50 cameras, including 19 in Westminster Abbey... TVNZ and TV3 have extended their coverage... following the decision to lengthen the path of the funeral cortege through London. TVNZ will broadcast the BBC's coverage from about 7.30 pm, while TV3's feed of the ITN coverage will start at 8 pm.

...THE mournful bell of Westminster Abbey tolled each minute through London's sunny autumn morning... The bell was the only sound, save the wheels of the gun carriage bearing [Di's] body in the Royal Standard-draped coffin, as the funeral cortege made its way to the abbey... In death the "people's Princess" was clothed in a formal, long-sleeved black dress [Di] bought a few weeks ago but never got to wear... With her... were the rosary beads bestowed by... Mother Teresa... As the gun carriage passed... Buckingham Palace, [where] the... Royal family[was] assembled outside, the... Queen, her eyes red-rimmed, raised a handkerchief to her face, looking utterly distraught... [Di's] two sons... joined their father... their grandfather... and [Di's] brother, to walk the last 40 minutes of the procession... Behind the mourners came... 500 charity workers... [In front] mourners sobbed and cried, throwing flowers in the path of the coffin... About 30,000 mourners camped out in central London overnight, to secure prime spots... London's Metropolitan Police implemented a mammoth crowd-control exercise... The police closed off almost 100 roads around central London... Almost 27,000 officers were drafted in to cope with crowds of up to [a] million and to steward in the hundreds of celebrities at Westminster Abbey... They included singers[, one of whom (rp731, ln1)]... took his place at a black grand piano to sing... *Candle in the Wind*, his 1970s tribute to Marilyn Monroe... with new words... beginning "Goodbye England's rose".

...frozen forever in her golden youth... Di... now enters the realm of myth: The land of contradictions. [Di] was a saint and a jetsetter, a media victim and a wily manipulator, a feminist icon and the little girl lost... [Di] was a party animal and Our [Gal] of the Minefields... the greatest royal and the royal outcast. It's a tangled mix, but perhaps that is why... Di... became First [Gal] of the World... Even cynical republicans concede that [Di] touched many lives: The floods of grief and flowers prove it. About the reasons, however, the pundits disagree... On one thing everyone seems to agree: The global fascination with Di... would not have existed if [Di] had been plain. If [Di wasn't physically] beautiful, people would never have taken such an interest. "That is the nature of the world," says... [the] senior lecturer in [Gal] Studies at Victoria University... [The] senior lecturer in film and television at Waikato University, reports a conversation among teenage girls. "Their teacher asked them, 'What about [Di's ex-sister-in-law, who's] been doing charity work too, all her life.' And the girls said, 'Oh, but [the ex-sister-in-law isn't] beautiful. Who wants to see boring old photos of boring old [royals]?' " The Waikato lecturer does not want to seem grumpy and cynical, but "I'm mildly disgusted by this outpouring of somewhat unreflective stuff over the past few days... The 'People's Princess' dined in the Ritz and drove out in a Mercedes Benz. One of the people? [Di] had choices a lot of us don't have... [Furthermore, Di didn't just do] charity work... out of generosity - [Di] also did it to get her photo in the paper..." While [Di's ex-sister-in-law] did a lot of charity work without seeking publicity, "Di... courted the media all the way, every inch of her life. The notion that [Di] was a media victim is a bit self-serving." ...[the Victoria lecturer] finds nothing to criticise in this. Di... knew that a photo of herself... was going to create a lot of publicity for a good cause... [However, the Victoria lecturer] says... the... cult of Di... also reflects "the profound alienation of people in modern society. We don't really communicate as we used to - we sit around and watch television, and many people are extremely lonely... many people... [feel] closer... to... the characters... [on TV] than the members of their own family." Di... was a real person in a real-life soap opera, and people felt they had got to know Di... by seeing her on television over many years. Why should a supposedly non-political figure like Di... embody these hopes? [A]Wellington writer and academic... says there is "perhaps a desperation in large parts of society needing something that is good or someone they can admire because there are so many people they can't admire".

...[Di's] death reveals more about us than we think as surging grief gives way to a growing mythology and the creation and veneration of a secular saint... [P]erhaps we are expressing... a need within secular society, for the sense of the sacred... In Britain especially, forms of "folk religion" have quickly sprung up... Individuals suddenly identifying with a community (Union Jacks on the front lawn); the pilgrimage to a holy shrine; and the offering of prayer (messages in the books of condolence). Most remarkably, these condolence books appeared in supermarkets, hardly an institution renowned for attempting to meet the emotional and spiritual needs of a community! Helpfully, the folk religion allows communal grieving in a culture lacking in such outlets. This shouldn't mask its downside. It offers only a spurious and short lived comfort divorced from the remainder of the mourner's life (and sometimes deludes and endangers those caught up in the worst of its excesses). The temptation for those less affected, is to despise these tendencies as feeble signs of ignorance. But perhaps instead, we should recognise them as evidence of deep and unfulfilled spiritual longings in a society whose material gods speak no language that can carry us through such times... Though a young [gal] of 36, not a young [guy] of 33, and through a car crash rather than a cross, Di... becomes an icon in death. Figures like Di... remind us that our lives have some meaning that is beyond ourselves. We try to replace the sacred, but have we turned to lesser gods?

...Di... was, as so many of the tributes have mentioned, the most famous [gal] in the world. As such, her life had a special meaning [for other gals]. In a period of profound social changes affecting [gals], her marriage into royalty shot her into intense public scrutiny about how a modern [gal] and wife would behave. Di... became an icon because... [Di] symbolised the dilemmas and choices for modern... [gals, whose] concerns for Di... and how her life would turn out [were often concerns] for themselves. It is strange that it should be so. After all, this was a [gal] from a privileged background who, [at the time of her marriage], had experiences confined to an elite set with limited political and social outlooks. It was hardly an auspicious origin for a [princess] of the people... Like many feminists I wore a Don't Do It, Di! badge in the weeks preceding her wedding - one of the few occasions, it has to be said, when feminists got it spot on. But on the day, I gave in and watched the wedding entranced, with the same sound and commentaries issuing from a thousand windows around my home. In the ensuing years, I became more, not less fascinated... For...

others who have grown up with Di... the Princess will now be a series of historical facts rather than a vibrant human being. That's why... [one mother – who, as an 8]-year-old schoolgirl[waited patiently] in the roadside sunshine... [for just] a glimpse... at the... Princess... [- is] committing as much of it as... [possible] to tape. “If I have a daughter later on... I'd like to be able to pass them on down to her. Every little girl dreams of a fairy princess.”

...Di... was, it was often said, though not so much of late, a fairytale princess... For the young prince had been seeking a bride: but, as with princes, a pure bride of noble breeding. And these were in such short supply in the kingdom that some despaired of his ever finding one. Our first proper view... [of this fairytale princess who] failed all her exams at 16 and left school... was the one of the nursery assistant, shyly pretty, caught in the playground, innocent of the sunlight that would make her skirt entirely diaphanous. It was a... 20th century fairytale moment... And, as we all ought to know by now, 20th century fairy tales do not end happily. None other has come close to matching the life and death of Di... in its twists, turns, heroes, speculations, confirmations, villains, stark reliefs and immense, unrelenting profile in which every quality, every event was endlessly exaggerated and simplified for the century's easier digestion... In a segment endlessly replayed throughout the tortuous doings that were to follow... in February, 1981... the... [newly engaged couple] were asked if they were in love. “Of course,” replied Di... in an embarrassed rush. “Whatever love is,” replies the Prince, in an embarrassed rumination... The first time [Di saw the Prince of Wales in person], her immediate reaction was “God, what a sad [person.]” When the Prince had] proposed to her, Di... laughed nervously and “I remember thinking ‘This is a joke’ and I laughed and said ‘Yeah, OK.’ [The Prince had] found the virgin, the sacrificial lamb and in a way... was obsessed with me. But it was... hot and cold. You never knew what mood it was going to be.” ...Much has been made of the contrast, particularly in light of the revelation that the Prince... was conducting at the time, and continues to conduct, a relationship with... an old girlfriend who had married someone else. Not so much has been made of other subsequent revelations about [Di's] worries about the match, even up to the eleventh hour, when [Di] had to be persuaded to go ahead by her sisters, with their only half-joking warning that the souvenir teatowels were already on sale... [T]he nation, buoyed up by the earlier celebration of the royal jubilee, remained in the mood for pageantry, and the wedding, on July 29, 1981, was carried off with style amid genuine public interest and happiness... The differences between the couple in ages and interests did not excite much comment. Royal marriages had never dwelt overmuch on compatibility. Duty remained the watchword... [C]learly, Di... enjoyed the attention, whether or not, as the pop psychologists argue, this was to compensate for the lack of attention [Di] suffered as a child. Clearly too, what [Di] saw as lack of private attention from her husband contrasted cruelly with the unending public attention... The Prince, unhappy in his marriage, took refuge in his old round of holidays and country pursuits, and with his old mistress. The Princess, as with any princess, took refuge in her children and her charities... Then... came... [allegations that Di] had thrown herself down the stairs at Sandringham while pregnant with... [her first child,] had slashed her wrists with a razor blade, a penknife and a lemon slicer, and... had once thrown herself against a glass cabinet. It was also disclosed that the Prince kept in touch with [his old girlfriend] even while on honeymoon on the royal yacht, Britannia. It was a disclosure allied to the one that Di... had found an inscribed gold bracelet intended as a gift from the Prince to [his old girlfriend] only days before the marriage... In December of... 1992... the Prince and Princess announced their formal separation. This brought no respite from the line of allegation and disclosure, growing ever more public and ever more tawdry as the opposing sides, authorised or not, attempted to create two hard, clear, and opposing images. The Prince was portrayed as a weak, heartless, hidebound figure, bullied by his father, overwhelmed by his responsibility, dominated by his selfishness. For her part, the Princess was seen as neurotic, unbalanced, frivolous, flighty, in the thrall of fame and frocks. There was something in both characteristics... In 1994... in a television interview... the Prince told... [everyone about his unfaithfulness. Consequently, her being] the innocent party in the marriage break-up was felt to be a crucial part of the Princess' popularity. When, before the separation, the “Squidgygate” tape recordings had surfaced, allegedly detailing a [private] telephone conversation between Di... and a lover, the story was widely disbelieved as a malicious invention – much more so than the... [taped recording between the Prince and his old girlfriend], in which the Prince... inter alia, appeared to be favouring reincarnation as a tampon. In 1994, too, the publication of... *Princess in Love*, supposedly detailing her five-year affair with a former army officer... was similarly derided. But, in another extremely shrewd piece of PR timed for its influence on the couple's possible divorce and its custody implications, Di... gave an interview the next year... to the BBC TV *Panorama* programme that held the nation gripped with its combination of intensity and artlessness assisted by an artifice that by now seemed second nature. Asked... “Were you unfaithful” with [the army officer], the Princess replied “Yes.” [Di also] agreed that the Squidgygate tape was genuine... There was the winning, telling soundbite: “We had three of us in this marriage, it was a bit crowded.” And there was the typically overblown soundbite, that [Di] would never be Queen of the country, but... would like “to be a Queen... in people's hearts.”

...Linked for centuries in what may be the globe's most sophisticated love-hate relationship of nations, Britain and France must now sort out together the consequences and meaning of the death of [Di]... French justice... will be... shaped by the knowledge that the world is watching and waiting for convincing judgments of responsibility. These judgments may provide solace... for the British people. The inquest and probable trials will be played out against the long history of two nations that simultaneously admire and disparage what is different in their national culture, while cloaking strong, underlying political similarities. London is 320km from Paris, as close as Washington is to New York. But, outwardly, British and French societies are still separated by a giant gulf as well as by that narrow channel. Their sense of mutual ambivalence has been forged on the battlefields of Orleans... Dunkirk and elsewhere. Europeans believe that geography is destiny... Beyond its legal findings, the French investigation will unavoidably trace for the British how [Di's] final hours were an exercise in symbolism run amok in the European firmament. Killed in a French road tunnel in a German sedan, this British Princess died beside her wealthy Arab companion. Among the first to reach the accident were [US] tourists... who were then promptly interviewed on [US TV]. This scene occurred four months after British voters had decisively rejected a Conservative Party leadership that, rightly or wrongly, was widely seen as having isolated Britain on most European questions while seeking a smaller role in the world. A pulp fiction novelist commissioned to work the themes of globalisation into a plot would... not have the nerve to try that scenario. Only reality, and today's integrated economic, social and communications structures, could fashion it. There are even macabre echoes of colonialism in this event. Di... died with [the guy] whose Egyptian-born father owns the Ritz... in Paris and... Harrods... in London. The source of the wealth that enabled [Dodi's family] to acquire leading cultural icons in each capital is mysterious... And, as if to drive home the point about the British and French interconnection – with each other and their former colonies – [Dodi's family] also owns the villa in Paris where the Duke and Duchess of Windsor lived in gilded exile. More than either nation usually likes to admit, the French and British have shaped significant parts of their national characteristics by rubbing up against each other in conflict and cooperation... The force of circumstance... that... melds the British and French in mourning and weighing the death of Di... could lead to the rediscovery of a much broader agenda they share as nations.

...[at Di's] funeral they... played the same music, *The Burial Sentences*, as was sung at [another notable] funeral... The year was 1806, and the person Britons were mourning was Admiral Horatio Nelson, hero of Trafalgar and darling of the nation. Nelson was the first victim of Britain's paparazzi. His bravery in battle coupled with his exploits at home captured the imagination of an emerging popular press... Nelson... was mobbed in the streets, and at times resorted to subterfuge to escape the media pack... Nelson had even, on his last night on British soil before sailing into battle against France, sneaked out of the back door of a hotel to avoid waiting reporters. For [the person] who has devoted most of his life to Britain's greatest naval hero, the outpouring of public emotion which accompanied... [Di's] death was like stepping into one of his own history lectures. “For years I have been telling people about the open grief which accompanied Nelson's death, but it was difficult for people to imagine in stiff-upper-lip Britain. Now everyone has seen it.” ...in Auckland as a guest of the British Council to give a lecture at the National Maritime

Museum tonight[the person]... attributes Nelson's enduring fame at least partly to his untimely death. "[Nelson] died at the peak of his career, at the scene of his greatest victory. [Nelson] was a charismatic figure, the son of a humble country parson who had risen through the ranks to become a great leader in battle at a time when Britain needed heroes. The army was being regularly beaten by the French and the naval victories won by Nelson and his fellow captains gave the people hope. And by dying when... [Nelson did, Nelson] didn't have time to let the people down." ...[Speaking of letting the people down, a] Channel Four report said the Queen – who resented the damage done to the royal family's prestige by Di... during [her] protracted split with [the Queen's eldest son] – ...originally insisted that the... royal family have nothing to do with [Di's] body. "It was made very clear... that the Queen... did not want an air force plane to bring back [Di's] body... and... on no account [was it] to be brought to any of the royal palaces... [T]he Queen's desire was for her to be taken to a private mortuary and then to a private funeral," the programme said... [However,] the Princess' former husband... told the Queen the royal family could be booed at [Di's] funeral if the palace did not bend protocol to give her a fitting farewell... then had a blazing row with... the Queen's private secretary, and "told him to impale himself on his flagstaff." ...It was only when the Prince was flying to Paris to pick up his ex-wife's body that [the Prince] managed to talk to the... British [PM, who agreed]... that the body should be laid out at St James' Palace and the funeral service take place at Westminster Abbey. But the programme said the royal family then ran into serious problems when... [Di's] brother, learned of the Queen's initial wishes. Only after [the PM's] office intervened did the two sides start to talk to each other... The source of the story was a senior official close to court circles... Buckingham Palace dismissed the story[– which]... is a blow to a palace in damage-control mode... [–] as "a ragbag of nonsensical speculation." ...Another source told the programme that just 55 minutes before the Princess' body was borne into Westminster Abbey... close family members were still arguing over who should be walking behind the coffin.

...The battle of words over [Di's] final hours does her no service... It is shameful and pointless to have [it] paraded in front of the world's media... [Ironically, the] funeral of Di... was not the only occasion on which the Queen and [Di's brother] had encountered each other in Westminster Abbey. The first was 33 years ago at his christening. The Queen was – is – his godmother, and made all the... pledges of responsibility that are customary on such occasions. What Her Majesty must have felt on being given a lecture on family values by [her godson at Di's] funeral defies all imagination, or certainly mine. Never can the famed rigidity of her countenance have been more necessary – or more difficult to maintain.

...Booksellers and antique shops have done a roaring trade in Princess of Wales memorabilia since her death, but the rest of the royals have stayed on the shelf... [I]n sudden death... Di... became an image of regal perfection and that myth will haunt the House of Windsor for a long while. The mortals who must now perform in her shadow will never match up. In that prospect some are now seeing the end of the monarchy. I wish it were likely but Mexican wave theory says otherwise. The crowd might hope its demonstration will drive the performers to do better but it almost never does and the crowd does not really expect it. The game goes on and the crowds keep coming back. It will be especially so for the monarchy, for it is astonishing how little people really expect of the royals. How often have we seen the Queen come to a fairly momentous event, mount the rostrum and give a speech that makes not the slightest effort to match the occasion. Nobody minds. Every Christmas people turn to the television for her message knowing they will see a blank stare at the teleprompter as [the Queen] stiffly reads a stream of unmemorable phrases. It doesn't matter. They'll tune in next year. This time of course the palace blew it. No, let's be honest, the Queen blew it. [The Queen] now has far more experience in the monarchy than her courtiers, has spent far longer in public life than any politician advising her. [Therefore, the Queen] ought to be well-attuned to the country's mood. It should not have taken her five days to emerge from Balmoral and show an interest in the tributes to her estranged daughter-in-law. But hold the tumbrels. The remarkable thing was not so much the Queen's remoteness, or even the public criticism of it, but the number of people... who immediately and completely accepted her excuse. They readily agreed that comforting her grandsons precluded any public duty during those days... It doesn't take much for royalty to recover. A walk to the Buckingham Palace, a bow to the passing coffin... [plus a few *crocodile tears*]. By the time the funeral started the family was winning... The resilience of the monarchy rests in the fact that it does not actually need to do or say anything. It need only *be*. The only popular demand is that it be there as long as possible. "Long live the King," has been the cry down the centuries... It doesn't matter that we never really know the personality under the crown.

...An opinion poll yesterday provided some welcome relief for the royal family... by indicating that most Britons still support the monarchy. The... poll, published in the *Sun*... said 73[%] of those surveyed backed the royal family. The approval rating soared to 82[% if Di's] eldest son... were to become the next King rather than his father... Almost a third wanted the Queen to step down in [her grandson's] favour... The poll[also] showed that 22[%] felt the Queen was doing a bad job – 63[%] approved of her record – while 39[%] felt less favourable towards the royal family since [Di's] death. The *Sun* said the poll suggested the Queen had acted just in time last Friday when [the Queen] made a live broadcast praising Di... The poll held out little joy for [the Queen's son, suggesting the Prince of Wales] would find it impossible to sell the idea of marrying his long-term lover... Back in July, 45[%] of those polled thought [the Prince] should not become King if they married. After [Di's] death that figure shot up to 66[%]. However, the] Prince gained widespread approval for the caring way [the heir to the throne watched over his sons] during the funeral. [The Prince] has... cancelled all his public engagements for the next week to give him time to adapt to his new role as a solo parent. Planned trips to Prague and Berlin have been put off as [their father] tries to invent the role which will allow the boys the kind of freedom and contact with the public their mother wanted, combined with the duty and tradition of the monarchy... Meanwhile... the South African-born minister who took [Di's] graveside funeral service, has revealed workers used a compass to ensure that [her body] was buried facing the rising sun... [on the] island... in the middle of an ornamental lake on the family's... estate... [Di's] family has allowed the world a glimpse of the... bur[ial plot]... "There is a carpet of flowers 12 feet... wide stretching across the island... You cannot see the grave itself because it is submerged under the flowers," said... one photographer...

[Di's] family has appealed to Britons to stop bringing flowers to her home in the hope they would join a carpet of blooms that now covers her grave. Thousands of people flocked to the rural Althorp estate after seeing pictures of the Princess' last resting place on a flower-strewn island where [Di] used to play as a child. "It is turning into a problem and it is getting worse. People seem desperate to get their flowers to the gates of the estate because they believe they will be taken to the island... We are now concerned for public safety, both near the gates and in the surrounding lanes." The family asked people instead to make contributions to the memorial fund set up to funnel money to charities associated with [Di]...

While the politicians and press agonised and analysed, the crowds... said it with flowers. "Di... more royal than the royals," said a sign attached to one bouquet... "It was you who should have been queen," said another... Admirers... brought more than a million bunches, and the British Government has now come up with a solution for disposing of the ['10 to 15 thousand tonnes of flowers. Once each bouquet has been separated from its plastic wrapping' the] wilting tributes will be used as compost in the greenhouses at Kensington Palace. The Culture Department... announced that park officials and volunteers would start gathering up the bouquets from today. The department promised that other places would be designated for people still wanting to leave floral tributes. Flowers that are still fresh will be given to hospitals and old people's homes, as will gifts that have been left, such as soft toys. Cards left by mourners will be kept until... [Di's] family have decided what they want to do with them.

...[every] day... about 3000 people queue to sign condolence books... and... hundreds of bouquets are... laid outside... Kensington Palace... Florists' sales have swelled by \$129.16 million... Meanwhile, a Sardinian tourist... aged 20... who stole a... white teddy bear, which had been left by a child at St James' Palace, for his girlfriend... was sentenced to a week's jail for what the court called a "particularly mean and unpleasant theft."

...Several people have broken into... Althorp estate... in search of souvenirs from the grave of Di... [T]he *Sun*... said estate staff had caught all the intruders. Meanwhile, the *Daily Mail* reported yesterday that lawyers representing the Princess' memorial fund had applied to patent 26 of the most famous pictures taken of Di... as well as the... nickname, Diana, Queen of Hearts... [and] her title... "Diana, Princess of Wales." ...if the

application was successful, her charity fund would be able to control the use of all Di... images on goods ranging from books to clothes and memorabilia, and stop unscrupulous traders from using her image... [It would also mean that \$m]s from the sale of Di... souvenirs will go to charity, rather than to [Di's sons]... an expert in trusts, says: "In effect, we are talking about a huge gift from the princes to the charities." ...The necessary licensing powers[... including registering the]... trademarks... in the princes' names... are expected to be approved by the British High Court... Souvenir-makers would then have to be licensed to the [princes'] trustees, who would monitor their goods to keep out anything tasteless or offensive... The boys would retain ownership of the trademarks and... have the power to take over administration of them when they are older or if they decide the fund has been badly managed. "This move is good for protecting the memorabilia and it's also good PR for the palace,"... [T]he lawyers say they want[ed] to clarify the princes' position after "misleading" reports that they would make a fortune from a flood of memorabilia.

...An issue of special stamps commemorating Di... was put on hold yesterday at the request of her family. The British Post Office rushed ahead with preparation for the issue after [Di's] death... choosing five recent photographs of her. The royal family was consulted and a publicity leaflet for collectors printed. A few of the leaflets[... which could also become collectables...] were even accidentally sent out... The Post Office still hoped to issue the stamps at a later date. Leading stamp collectors[have] appealed to... Diana's family... to allow the stamps to be sold. "Postage stamps would make a wonderful... tribute... and would be collected by philatelists and non-stamp collectors throughout the world for years,"...

120 million sets of the stamps... marking the life of Di... go on sale in... February and [are] expected to raise... £7 m... for her favourite charities.

...[Copies of the official video, *Diana: The People's Princess*, are on sale, with a charitable donation made from every purchase.] In addition, *Diana – Her True Story*, is to be republished with a final chapter, while a photographic celebration... *Diana – A Tribute*, is available in a fortnight.

...IT MAY be just two weeks since the death of... Di... but the first of seven books written as a tribute to her will hit... bookshops this week... *Diana, Princess of Wales: A Tribute*[is expected] to sell like hot cakes... The 96-page book... includes 100 colour photographs... "There has been very little interest in terms of books on Di... in the past five years... but... [there's] been such a huge demand... in the last few days... for [A *Tribute* that the printers] ran out of paper...,"... [Amongst the other books on Di which will be released before Christmas is] a Ladybird book for children.

...the Rolling Stones... are among 10 rock stars who have agreed to perform on... [a] tribute album to be released before Christmas. Tribute concerts will take place in London and New York next August... [The] tribute album... will also feature... [the] reworded... musical tribute to... Di... Due out... on September 19, the song is the B-side to a single promoting [its singer's] forthcoming album... Music industry experts say the rewritten *Candle in the Wind* could become the biggest-selling single of all time... proceeds will [go to the Princess of Wales] memorial fund...

Shops in Britain sold out of... *Candle in the Wind*, yesterday just hours after it went on sale... Some stores tried to limit customers to just a few copies each, but others imposed no limits and some customers left stores with scores of the single... Some 250,000 copies had been produced for Saturday's launch, but a million more are being readied for sale next week... It is tipped to surpass the 1980s hit *Do They Know It's Christmas?*, made to raise money for Ethiopian famine relief, which sold 3.6 million copies... Music industry sources expect the... reworked version of... [*Candle*] to raise £10 million... Britain's Labour Government has promised to forego tax on sales of the song so that all the proceeds will go to the fund...

The[NZ] Government... which has contributed \$50,000 to the fund... will not follow Britain's example and forego GST on sales of *Candle in the Wind*... Polygram Records, which is distributing both an album-length compact disc of the entire funeral service and the... single on CD and cassette, last night expressed disappointment... [A] Polygram marketing manager, said that all[of its] proceeds from the recordings, apart from the \$1.60 manufacturing costs, would go to the fund. Retailers would decide if they on-sold at cost or charged a margin and donated some or all of it.

...The... major[US] discount retailer... Minneapolis-based Target Stores... said it was not donating profits from sales of the single... *Candle in the Wind* '97... to [Di's] memorial fund because the company already donated to charities across the country... The company said it would give \$US38... million this year... [In local news, more] than 100,000 copies... were sold yesterday, making it the biggest-selling single in N[Z] recording history.

...*Candle in the Wind* has become the best-selling British single... There has been 3.8 million copies sold in Britain... It was the fastest-selling single of all time in the U[S], with more than 3.4 million copies bought in the first week. So far 26 million copies have been pressed around the world[, not including the 540 fake] copies of the CD... seized by customs in Melbourne.

...Extraordinary how potent cheap music is, wrote Noel Coward in *Private Lives*... Coward... would have been moved to repeat... the line... if [Coward had] been around last week to see the rewritten *Candle in the Wind* become the fastest-selling single in history both here and abroad. It's probably just as well that the divine Mr C didn't survive to see the reception accorded the song. If [Coward] had, the affront to his delicate aesthetic sensibility would probably have killed him. Every piece of music has its moment, of course, and the funeral of the Princess of Wales was the moment for *Candle in the Wind* Mark II. The spare and unornamental version played during the service dragged from the world a racking sob... The tears in our eyes blinded us to the fact that [the singer] had unceremoniously hijacked his own song, taking the tribute to the screen star for whom it was penned and dedicating it to another icon (what price the sincerity of the original now?). It worked in the magic of the moment. But that moment (rearranged, reorchestrated and recreated in the studio) and committed to a compact disc has become something else altogether. Listening to it at all, much less owning it and listening to it repeatedly, is rather like being reminded over breakfast of how loose your tongue became at the restaurant last night when you insisted that the occasion deserved another bottle of wine. Now I am not a hard-hearted old cynic... It's wonderful that profits from sales of the new song will benefit the late Princess' favourite charities. But it would have been better still if we'd supported such worthy causes without the specious excuse of a sentimental song... [By the way, an] English member of the European Parliament hopes to persuade law-makers to nominate Di... for the Nobel Peace Prize. The [US] Senate has nominated Canada's Foreign Minister... for this year's prize for his work to ban land-mines, and anti-mine groups have been nominated... [However, it] is too late to nominate the princess' work for this year's prize [and Di] cannot be nominated because the Nobels are not awarded posthumously.

...the British Home Office has said the royal coroner carried out an autopsy on the princess but has refused to comment on reports... [that Di] was six weeks' pregnant... [A]n emergency service doctor told [Time] magazine an associate at the scene said Di... was drifting in and out of consciousness, at one point saying... [I'm] six weeks' pregnant while making a rubbing gesture on her stomach... Meanwhile... Britain still cannot shake off the pall of mourning that has hung over the country... Family doctors across the country have reported an increase in patients coming forward suffering from emotional and physical symptoms associated with grief... "People who never met [Di] are feeling a deep sense of loss..."

Family planning services in Britain are expecting a baby boom following public grief over the death of Di... [P]eople often react irrationally when suddenly confronted by an outpouring of emotion, and forget to take adequate precautions against pregnancy. A doctor was quoted as saying... a record number of demands for the "morning-after" contraceptive pill[were fielded by his clinic] on the weekend of... [Di's funeral. In related news, five French] paparazzi took legal action yesterday against the publishing house... [which is releasing a] book on the death of Di... entitled *Ils l'ont tuee* ("They killed her"). The photographers who... have been charged with [hu]manslaughter and failing to assist people in danger... claimed [the] work seriously impinged on their right to the presumption of innocence... [They] asked for a ban on all copies of the book already printed and on all future copies of the book that include the passages cited in their case. They have also sought \$27,000 each in damages.

...a Paris court has rejected an attempt by seven French photographers and a motorcyclist to cut passages from a book about the fatal, high-speed crash... The court ruled [that the] book did not directly implicate the eight... [Incidentally, a] former royal correspondent said many things about... the notorious and rich biographer of Di... All of them were unflattering... The enmity that five years ago greeted the publication of *Diana: Her True Story*... was matched only by the accompanying surprise. How could... an unknown hack, have landed the biggest scoop in journalism since Jesus briefed the disciples? (And the repercussions cannot be overestimated. Inside a year the Queen was paying income tax for the first time, the Civil

List was slashed and people were talking about the end of the monarchy.) How could [Di, being someone] with the world waiting on her call have chosen a tabloid scribbler... These questions are once again doing the rounds of Fleet St amid the controversy surrounding the publication of [a] hastily updated work, the snappily titled *Diana: Her True Story In Her Own Words*... In the introduction to the new tome, [the scribbler] forecasts that much will be written about the princess. This... “is not only right and proper but eminently desirable.” From a [person] who was once quoted as saying that “[I] could happily live off the ashes of the House of Windsor for the next 20 years,” who has made an estimated \$7.5 million out of his writings on [Di’s] life, who has been translated into 29 languages and sold in 80 countries, this statement may seem a little, shall we say, rich. But [the scribbler’s] solemn aim is, [in his own words], only to record the innermost thoughts of his subject (who, conveniently, no longer has a say in the matter) for posterity. Doubtless it was with this weighty duty in mind that [the scribbler] penned an opinion piece for the *Sun* a couple of weeks before Di... met her untimely death. “I now know why [the] Prince... spent his time talking to his vegetables... because [the Prince knew it would be possible to] get more sense out of them than the fruit [the Prince married.]” The scribbler also temporarily stepped away from dry analysis of past events to make a prediction. “In a few months, Di will get the hump with Dodi when [Dodi] swaps her for a pack of 20 Camels.” ...On [the scribbler’s] study wall... in... his \$2.5 million home... is a treasured cartoon. It depicts a mother and father who have just finished reading their daughter a fairy story. “Well,” says the girl “if the prince and princess don’t live happily ever after, who does?” “The author,” they suggest.

...AS THE world is divided into have and have-nots, the washed and unwashed[, Di’s]... death has separated us yet again, marked out by new parameters. There are those who are permanently saddened by the sudden turning off of a brilliant light. These are the people who are uncritical of... [Di’s] faults, who forgave her artful exploitation of her spectacular world-wide popularity to achieve her ends... They felt the impact of her death as if it was a physical blow, even though all but a few had never... met her or talked with her to judge for themselves... They acknowledged... the way her presence in the world had enlivened it, enhanced it, romanticised it and even improved it a little by focusing attention on the loathsome British trade in landmines for export to [Last World] countries... Then there are the others, the people who are now breaking cover, week by week, with laughter at Di... jokes, with thoughtful essays on the essential emptiness of the life of any royal personage, no matter how glamorous. They instruct us with lofty observation on the lack of real significance of the doings of members of the Jet Set, royal, semi-royal, former royal or otherwise... The fact is, of course, that [Di’s] death was a momentous occasion... As a lifetime journalist, I rate it professionally as the biggest news event of my career. It was the biggest news story... since the elimination of an entire city proclaimed the arrival of the nuclear age. Clearly the two events are not of comparable importance. But the news value of an event is not determined by its significance; it is defined solely by the number of people who are interested in it. [However, ‘I don’t think we’ll see that type of press attention for another person ever again.’

...the British] Press Complaints Commission has asked editors to adopt “the toughest set of industry regulations anywhere in Europe.” “Motorbike chases, stalking and hounding are unacceptable – and editors who carry pictures obtained by them will be subject to the severest censure,” said the commission’s chair[person]... “I have found that editors across the industry have been of the same mind – times have changed, and we want to change with them,”... Editors have already agreed not to pursue [Di’s] sons... who are back at boarding school... When the code is finalised, editors will have to justify the behaviour not only of their staff, but of any freelancer whose material they use, and if they expose someone’s private life they will have to show there is an “overriding” public interest... However, work continued on details of the code, including conflicts between “overriding public interest” and personal privacy – questions which are acute in coverage of Britain’s royal family and Government officials. No timetable was set for when a final code would be issued... The self-regulatory body is composed of newspaper editors. It acts only in response to complaints from the public and has no powers of enforcement. Broadcasters... are subject to statutory regulation.

...A thorough examination of media practices and transgressions was one of the expected outcomes of the death of Di... Yet in this country the... director of the Newspaper Publishers’ Association said “the[NZ] media do not need laws to stop paparazzi-style tactics because we don’t have a paparazzi-style culture.” On this point many would take issue. We may not have paparazzi but we are arguably moving towards a paparazzi-style culture. The description of our media as increasingly “tabloid” is a frequently voiced criticism... Observers have noted a transition in [TV] news from descriptive journalism, designed to provide information and affect knowledge, to a mode of journalism based on a narrative or storytelling approach... designed to evoke personal vicarious experience. Alongside the narrative style is the trend to more mediated journalism, the journalist tells you the story rather than hearing it from those whom the news item is about. This has led to greater editorialising and subjectivity in news coverage. The language of news is also on the move – from impersonal to the loaded, personalised and stylised. A murder is no longer a murder but “this brutal murder.” Presumably, notes one critic, this is to differentiate it from... [murders] where the victim is offered a choice of weapons [or] a few kind words. In television the visual and aural idioms are also influenced by entertainment values used to “enhance” the news. One news station in the U[S] even employed a composer to provide custom written music to underscore its nightly cavalcade of mayhem. There is also the question of the value system emphasised by entertainment-driven news and current affairs. A study of a personality-driven “soft-news” programme in the U[S] found it to be rather distinctly incomplete. It promoted values of personal success revolving around recognition, achievement, financial success, excitement and physical attributes. But are we not being badly, or at the very least, inadequately served when our media focus so intensely on the personal joys and tragedies of famous people? This kind of “news” displaces other issues and there is surely an important difference between the public interest and what interests the public. We are substituting ratings-driven entertainment for information which might be useful to us... The collective guilt exhibited after the death of Di... indicated that the public realised that their interest in her, fed by a tabloid press, had gone too far.

...After... [Di’s] death, the international paparazzi – in Italian it means “buzzing insects” – were vilified for stopping at nothing to get the picture they want. They swiftly ran for cover... Now that high-paying tabloid editors claim they won’t use aggressively intrusive photos, are the paparazzi an endangered species? As... a Los Angeles-based British photographer explains, several “stalkerazzi” are quitting the business, not for moral reasons, but because the payoff just isn’t worth it any more... [W]orld market prices for paparazzi shots [have] dropped significantly. The days of being [able] to start a bidding auction off between photo-editors at \$40,000 are over. “If you haven’t got the London market to sell to, it’s much more difficult to justify spending \$5000 on a trip to get a picture – you have to make a profit and it’s not going to be worth the expense. It’s strangling me,”... A few years ago [the expat] usually wouldn’t sell an exclusive photo for less than \$10,000... *The Sun* recently used... [one of his photos] without his permission. “They paid me just \$29... So right there is a newspaper removed from my list of clients”. Photo editors, [the expat] adds, now have computer data banks that detail exactly how much they last paid you... The day [the expat] first thought about “retiring” was when the *National Enquirer* informed [freelance photographers they] could claim an expenses allowance of only \$56 a day for food, which meant the end of luxury hotels and restaurants... [At Christmas the expat goes] to Aspen, Colorado, to ski with his celebrity prey... always... stay[ing]... at the Ritz-Carlton, where a standard room costs \$760 a night. Including lunch and dinner... [the expat spent] up to \$1500 a day... “The new tabloid editor philosophy is to live away from your target in a cheap hotel, and try to creep around and get a picture of them... The way I operate is to live with them... at the same five-star hotel... [and let somebody else] pay the bill... I’m gonna go this year... But I’m going to stay in a private house...” ...at his own expense... For his annual Aspen jaunt, [the expat uses] his state-of-the-art \$84,750 computerised transmitter... [that] can send a photo negative to London in... two minutes. His jeep has a special rack for transporting his customised coffin-like telephoto lens cases. His prize lens – the length of a baby elephant trunk – has been specially customised from a professional astronomical telescope... One of the most respected professional jackals today is the Canadian... whose main prey is [a singer-actress. The jackal] moved to Miami with her in 1994. Recent high-pay days were the first photos of [his main prey] and her baby and a picture of [another celebrity “]with cellulite over her bum”. “Editors are asking more questions,”... following the death of... Di... “They want to know where you got them. Now some editors – especially in London – won’t touch a photo if they think

it's intrusive". [US editors, the jackal] adds, don't usually ask. For years, trespassing was considered in the line of duty for tabloids, which would have a company lawyer and thousands of dollars ready in bail money at hand for a major "event" story should any photographer get caught. A notorious example was at... [a 1991 celebrity] wedding at... Neverland ranch, when a squad of sharpshooters from the *Enquirer* dressed up in kangaroo suits... [The jackal says, "In a way I'm intrusive, in a way I'm not – I don't physically intrude... I don't shoot on properties any more... but my lenses are long enough to get the picture." His trophy telephoto lens is a 1000mm, whose make [the jackal wouldn't divulge] because it's such a specialised item of hi-tech equipment. "It's very small... Like a tourist camera. I've had to change my style a bit... [as] editors in London... want to see that... the picture... [was taken in public." The jackal] gives the example of his recent *News of the World* shot of [an actress from the 1970s TV series *Charlie's Angels*]. "It was a public event, so I went in real close with the lenses. Getting her looking real old was the story." ...Probably the most infamous celebrity stalker in LA is... a ruthless professional who reportedly earns – pre-Di... – at least \$1 million a year and has been described by *American Photo* as "the most dreaded paparazzo in Hollywood"... [Mr Infamous] is widely credited as having been the first photographer to exploit the photo-opportunities of being chained to the outside rail of a helicopter... When I met him, at Santa Monica airport, [Mr Infamous] was on standby to jump into his \$1.7 million helicopter – of which [Mr Infamous is only] co-owner – to get a snap of [a celebrity (r:p385, ln17)] going into hospital on a stretcher. The helicopter is equipped with a police-style million-candlepower laser beam and a device that enables him to wire photographs to London from his back seat – while in mid-air. Disasters are also a... specialty... [of Mr Infamous, who] bemoans the sliding standard of the paparazzi [since] so many "scumbags"... latched on to the fact absurd profits [were] to be made from pushing a button... "So much of what passes for paparazzi these days is a bunch of morons standing in front of restaurants. To be good, you have to get in and burn celebrities right at their tables"... The idea photo editors feel any post-Di... guilt is risible. In [his] mind, the tragedy has simply provided them with an excellent excuse for being cheap. "There's not one of them who wouldn't buy a \$5000 picture for 50 bucks if they had a chance." ...But for [him], it's always been about having fun as much as making money. Some years ago, *Vanity Fair* crooned that the marriage of [an] actress and... sculptor... "was so private that not one paparazzo showed up". In fact, gatecrasher Mr [Infamous]... hired a tuxedo – sat through the wedding ceremony in a front row seat, chatting away to an unsuspecting [member of the Rolling Stones – then] ended up selling his batch of unofficial wedding photos around the world for... \$170,000. In the post-Di... world, they probably wouldn't be worth the Kodak developing paper they were printed on... [Speaking of Di.] French investigators are concentrating on finding a... white Fiat Uno made between 1983 and 1989 which may have played a key role in [her crash].

...an advertisement featuring a supermodel driving a car] at speed and crashing is being withheld in Britain amid fears it would cause [people to become] upset... The commercial... [which] promotes Citroen's rival to the Ford Escort and Vauxhall Astra... is being screened in Germany...

[NZ's] Broadcasting Standards Authority has turned down a complaint... from the Monarchist League, about a 3 *National News* interview with [a British] comedian... in which [the interviewer] said: "Yeah, we're a bit republican down here." The authority... [said the comment] could not be considered inaccurate or unfair... The authority [also] declined to uphold... [a]nother... complaint that... remarks on the royal family... w[ere] offensive, inappropriate and discriminatory... Two viewers, from Gore and Wanganui, [had] complained about a... interview... [during which someone] said: "The trouble with [Britain's] royal family is that they're Germans." [Editor's note: 'A North German tribe, originally inhabitants from a district called *Angul* – now Schleswig-Holstein – migrated to England in the 5th c., founding kingdoms in Mercia, Northumbria, and East Anglia, and finally gave their name to England and the English.' 'In 1917, with anti-German feeling running high during WWI, George V changed the family name to Windsor from *Saxe-Coburg-Gotha*, the name of the British royal house from the accession of Edward VII (1901), whose father Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria, was a prince of the German duchy Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.']

...The prestigious Free University in Berlin is offering a course on... Di... The course consists of 12 conferences with the theme, "Myth and Politics – Diana, from the Princess of Wales to the Queen of Hearts." ...Meanwhile[, protests]... are mounting... over the cost of the probe into... [Di's] death... after it emerged that up to a fifth of a Paris police squad have been assigned to the investigation... Concern has been raised in particular after a huge operation was launched last week to question the owners of up to 40,000 Fiat Unos – the make of car which police believe may have hit [Di's] Mercedes shortly before it crashed... Officials justified the resources being used, saying a big drugs case would use more, and dismissed accusations that the chance of finding the Fiat in question was "minuscule"... [□ The tribute song] *Candle in the Wind* '97... was declared the world's biggest-selling single yesterday after 31.8 million copies had been distributed around the globe... [It] took just 37 days to... overtake... the previous global record seller, Bing Crosby's *White Christmas*, which has sold an estimated 30 million copies worldwide... over the 55 years since [that] record's release... in [third place, with 17 million sales, is] *Rock Around The Clock* [by] Bill Haley and his Comets...

[A singer] has handed over a cheque for £20 million... to [Di's]... memorial fund – the first instalment of royalties from his worldwide number one hit *Candle in the Wind* 97... It [has] sold 33 million copies... [so far – no surprise! What's surprising is that] the Queen plans to move members of her family... including [her sister] and various cousins... out of Kensington Palace and convert it into an art museum and a memorial to its former resident... [T]he proposals were likely to be announced early next year, the... *Sunday Times* said yesterday... The Queen, who has not yet informed family members of the plan, would pay for them to be rehoused... There was no comment from Buckingham Palace... [In another development, the previous British PM] has been given the role of legal guardian to protect the inheritance of [Di's] children... The matter of her will is complicated and sensitive because her divorce settlement, reported to be around £17 million, was based on the assumption [Di] would live until [the age of 85].

...the Prince of Wales] has decided to abandon legal moves that could save his sons millions of dollars in inheritance taxes following the death of their mother... his office said yesterday... In Britain, inheritance tax is 40%. The prince's... solicitors were considering trying to get a court to overturn... [his] divorce settlement because... Di... did not change her will after her 1996 divorce... to take account of her greatly increased wealth. In her will, Di... had estimated her wealth at £1 million... but when [Di] died... her estate was worth £21 m... There is a 1987 legal precedent, in a case called *Barder vs Barder*. If a court [had] agreed to overturn the settlement, [the prince could] then have... put... the money... into a trust for his sons, thereby avoiding the huge tax bill... In another matter relating to [Di's] financial legacy, the *Sunday Times* said... [Di's] solicitors... plan... to seek compensation from companies exploiting her name by selling unauthorised memorabilia. Buckingham Palace played down another report in the newspaper... [by saying] there were no plans to convert... Kensington Palace into an art gallery and memorial... The 7000 pictures in the royal collection are currently spread around the royal residences and "it simply wouldn't be appropriate to allow them to be moved into one place,"...

The family of Di... is planning to sue... [Dodi's father] for at least £8 million... over her death... the *Sunday Times* said yesterday. The sum is the amount of the inheritance tax bill on the £21 million [Di] left to her sons. It said advisers to the Princess' estate were also considering a claim for a further £25 million that would have accrued on her wealth had [Di] lived to old age. - 1997

Officials said copies of [Di's] will would be available to the public... ['for £2 each'. T]he BBC reported yesterday that... the bulk of [Di's] will would be held in trust for [her] two sons... Other beneficiaries were [Di's] 17 godchildren and her former butler... who receives £50,000.

...Diana's mum... was devastated last week when thieves ransacked her cottage... taking thousands of pounds of family heirlooms. At the time of the raid, [Diana's mum] was away in London giving evidence in the trial of Diana's butler... who is charged with stealing from Diana's estate.

...Theft charges against Princess Diana's butler... have been dropped[, avoiding the problematic scenario whereby 'the Queen – the head of the Crown – would have been required to give evidence to defend a person the Crown was prosecuting'!]. The case collapsed after the Queen remembered

[the butler] had told her [it] was keeping Diana's things for safekeeping... The prosecution decided there would no longer be a realistic prospect of conviction...

Buckingham Palace was under pressure last night to explain why the Queen took so long to reveal that [a] former royal butler... had told her [it] was safe-guarding some of the late Princess of Wales' personal possessions... Did the Queen "forget" the vital evidence of [the butler]'s conversation once [the monarch] had been told that [the butler] had sold Diana's property? Is [the monarch] suffering from more general amnesia, in which case her constitutional position might be imperilled? Do legal cases involving the royal family benefit from consideration of privacy and courtesy not extended to ordinary people? ...While no members of the royal family were called to give evidence, Diana's mother... and her sister... did testify.

...The Princess of Wales' family yesterday launched advanced ticket sales to her grave site, publishing a telephone number for the public to call and announcing the entry price – £9.50... [for adults,] £7 for senior citizens and £5 for children... Would-be visitors to the... grave... were invited to call now to book tickets for the northern summer... More than 220 telephone lines have been set up to handle the expected deluge of callers.

...Telephone operators battled yesterday to deal with a flood of Britons booking tickets to see the secluded island where... Di... is buried... [Her] family have decided to open the estate to 2500 visitors a day between July 1, the Princess' birthday, and August 30, the eve of the anniversary of her death. Meanwhile, [Di's brother's] legal battle against the British Government for allegedly failing to protect [her] family's privacy will be heard by the European Commission on Human Rights... Commission officials said it would examine the complaint, laid in 1995, and, if it accepts the validity of the argument, would try to broker a solution. If no settlement can be reached, the case may be sent to the European Court on Human Rights. A final ruling would be binding on Britain... [By the way, Di's eldest son] has told his father [of his lack of interest in becoming] king... The tabloid *People* quoted senior palace aides as saying... [the] Eton College... schoolboy... [who intends] to... study... for[an] art history degree... [at] St Andrew's University in Scotland... had become more resistant to the prospect of assuming the throne since the death of his mother... "When... [the son] looks at the Royal Family all... [the] second in line of succession... has seen in recent years is misery... That feeling is deep-seated and [the son] gets angry and tearful about it." The *People* said [the son] had argued with both Di... before [her death and with his father] over his reluctance to be king... The teenager[who] can legally become king on... his 18th birthday... has appeared only rarely in public and, in contrast to his more extrovert younger brother... has looked shy and ill at ease facing photographers... [The eldest son is also] said to be angry and upset at the commercial exploitation of his mother... The... [eldest son] is reportedly behind a campaign by his uncle... to have the activities of the Diana Memorial Fund wound up within two years. At the weekend, [the uncle (Di's brother)] described the fund as tacky and said it was degrading [Di's] memory by allowing her name to be used commercially... The Prince's major irritation is reported to be with the fund managers' licensing of [his mother's] name to appear on tubs of Flora margarine in return for £1.25 million and on lottery scratchcards... "...His view is that they have already raised something like £100 million and that is enough." The chief fundraiser for the memorial fund, [Di's] butler... had "very strong and definite feelings" about the subject, which [the butler] could not discuss. "But the memorial fund will continue to go forward." The fund president... [who is one of Di's sisters], has reportedly told him that the fund cannot be wound up while it is raising £1 million a week. The fund's managers recently took out a 20-year lease for a London headquarters provided free by a Japanese corporation. They admit that the margarine endorsement was a lapse of judgment and have since declined to endorse products until endorsement guidelines are drawn up.

...THE DIANA WARS... T[he earth] had barely settled over... [Di]'s island grave before the mud-slinging began. Di... may have been at peace, but the nation was not. Social civil war broke out the moment [Di's brother] fired his funeral broadside, a withering fusillade aimed at the House of Windsor and the fourth estate. In the early days this seemed a conventional aristocratic feud... but... [recently several] families of the godchildren were reportedly disgusted by the arrogance [Di's family has] displayed in their handling of... the... sensitive issue... of the... [will. T]he family altered ...[i]t to include a £50,000 bequest to her butler... while her godchildren, who between them had been bequeathed a quarter of her possessions, were given only a token item each... Noticeably, [Di] left nothing to charity... [S]worn enemies... of... [Di's brother have] sneered at the cost of tickets for tours of Althorp, described as "tasteless" a pop concert held near the site of her grave, queried the amount [the brother] was giving to his sister's charity and most cruelly, criticised his memorial to her as "vulgar". Nor were they alone in their assault. The Archbishop of York expressed his belief that the family's temple shrine merely [encourages] the cult of Di... arguing that this near-deification was unsuited to the memory of a [person] who put others before herself. The moral high ground was rapidly slipping from the ninth Earl of Spencer... [and accelerated after the earl chose] to have the hearing [for his divorce in] South Africa rather than in Britain to save money... ignoring the fact that it would be heard in public. In court, [the earl] was depicted as a drunken, cruel, arrogant adulterer who had told his wife... [about wanting] a divorce while [having a] bath... The shield of Di... was now of little protection to her brother as [the earl] parried... blows about his plans for Althorp... [V]ictory in the War of Diana's Memory... [became complicated when Dodi's dad] launched a pre-emptive strike, planting his family flag on the territory of her unexplored future, arguing that his clan... brought her true happiness and love in the last weeks of her life. At first [Dodi's dad] seemed to have a formidable armoury[claiming]... Di... and his son... had been about to announce their engagement... [Di] was pregnant... and that in consequence there had been a conspiracy to kill them... It soon became clear, however, that [Dodi's dad], for all his expensively deployed weapons could not withstand the close combat required. His claim that Di... spoke... affectionate words... before... dying... was officially denied by the French authorities... Content to wound rather than cripple or kill, [Di's family]... unaccountably chose to hold their fire... [and] opted... instead... for a war of social attrition... They made it clear that they were "deeply upset" over [his] attempts to convince the world that Di... was murdered... This phoney war ended in a full-blooded confrontation in Paris... After eight hours in the courtroom, where [Di's] mother studiously and coldly ignored Dodi's [dad, the latter] launched an all-out offensive, riding head-long into the valley of social death... As the [families of Di and Dodi], in their own ways, self-destructed, the House of Windsor gradually clawed back the ground that it had lost during the onslaught of the funeral week... [Dodi's dad] soon fell victim to the Windsors' remorseless campaign[including ending]... his 12-year sponsorship of the Windsor Horse Show, usually attended by the Queen... [T]he Royal House, the fountainhead of all honour, was[also] able to argue convincingly that it had enabled [Di] to become an international icon. It was the royal family, too, which held the greatest prize, her sons... If the Spencers were keepers of her mortal remains, it was the Windsors... the family that had cast her aside[which] now stood guardian to her living image, the future king. In life the royal family had rejected Di... stripping her of her title of honour, ordering her name be excluded from the prayers for the royal family said in church, and thwarting her ambitions on the world stage. In death... [Di] underwent a process of "reverse Stalinism", being airbrushed back into the bosom of the royal family as though [Di] had never been away, as if all the difficulties of the early 1990s had been just a bad dream... [But] the lingering suspicion felt by many [is] that behind its public face the family, though affected by [Di's] death, rather wished the slate of history could be wiped clean of her memory.

...They were the photos that intrigued millions of devoted Princess Di... fans worldwide. There [Di] was on the sparkling waters of the Mediterranean looking tanned, happy and relaxed in the company of millionaire playboy Dodi Fayed... Only days earlier, Di... was crushed when... [a] top heart surgeon... finally ended their two-year relationship... Now, a British television documentary has revealed how the spurned but desperately in love princess used Dodi and the media in an attempt to win back [the Pakistani heart surgeon]... Whether Di... would have won back [the heart surgeon] and found the love [Di] craved will never be known. The... [heart surgeon] did not cooperate with the documentary makers, [and the]... crash that killed her... put an end to her plan. The last act of love between the couple saw [him] discreetly attending Di[']s... funeral...

Two new television documentaries screened in Britain last week have renewed a welter of theories about... [Di's] death... For the nerdish, nervous and plain nutty around the world, [Di's] death has been the JFK assassination to the power of infinity... There are 36,000 Websites positing and

discussing Di... conspiracies. A few of these are come-ons for porn or tacky souvenirs but... [what] follows is a sample of the ideas of the... world's population who believe [Di's] death was not accidental. WHY THEY KILLED HER • Di... was killed by the New World Order, a faction... [which] planned to marry Di... to [the US President, with the President's wife] to be eliminated through divorce or murder. But on her last visit to the White House... Di... informed [the President that they] would never marry... so [Di] had to go. • Di... was killed to set an example to future members of the royal family who might consider stepping out of line... • Di... was killed because the present royal family is an imposter, and the House of Windsor is a fraud. On the other hand, the lineage of... Di... goes back to Charles II... Having dubbed the royals "cold, distant, and uncaring", Di... was in a position to call upon the people to... raise an army to... overthrow them... So again, [Di] had to go... • Di... and Dodi... were killed because they were about to shift a huge amount of cash into banks in Germany and Austria, and this would have upset international bankers. • Di... was killed because the new Labour government wanted to save money on her security. • And, of course, Di... faked her own death, like Elvis. ISN'T IT QUITE ODD? • That Di... was placed in a closed coffin so there was no proof of there being a body, and that her burial on an island in the middle of a lake prevents the possibility of grave robbers discovering the truth? • That... the car in which [Di] died had been previously involved in a car-jacking incident and could have been tampered with? ...WHAT REALLY HAPPENED • Di... and Dodi were told that, in order to avoid photographers, they would leave the Ritz from the rear and then drive their car a few blocks and climb into a truck. Once aboard, agents killed them with lethal injections, injected alcohol into Henri Paul and then crushed the car in a mobile hydraulic press before dropping it off in the tunnel. • Di... and Dodi were not even in the car that left the Ritz. They were killed in the hotel and locked into a pre-crushed car... • Agents laid down a chemical slick in the tunnel. The famous second car – which, mysteriously, has never been found – carried agents of British intelligence. It came up behind the Mercedes and hit it. The slick did the rest... • The... site of the crash... Pont de l'Alma... is significant... It is not only that the word *pont* is connected with Pontiff – ie, the Pope – the spot is also an ancient pagan sacrificial site that was used in the time of the Merovingian kings (500-751AD) as an underground chamber. What any of this signifies is not clear, but a rogue faction in MI6, powerless to prevent the assassination, did manage to arrange for the deaths of Di... and Dodi to happen at Pont l'Alma, knowing that this would send a signal to the select and pave the way for the creation of a Saint Di... [A]ny day now, imaging will be used by the MI6 mavericks who opposed the killing of Di... to create "miraculous appearances" of her. Children at various locations will be randomly selected to witness "saintly apparitions". They will receive a "message from Di...", leading to... [her sons] becoming akin to two living Jesus Christs. It will be the start of a new religion by which the plotters will control the world... AND FINALLY • Now here is a conspiracy theory: what if all these conspiracies on the Internet are just a smoke-screen put up by the Establishment to let us think the issue is being properly discussed while they keep us from the real truth...?

...The Age of Di... has not ended but rather has just begun... CHAUCER wrote of a pilgrimage to Canterbury in the Dark Ages. In 1986... [people] sang of going to Elvis' home at Graceland. This... summer morning, we are going to Dianaville... Five of us... [in] the minivan... come from California, the sixth is an English chum... It is a sentimental journey, but no one is sad... I still dream about Di... I hardly knew her; we met only a few times. But [Di] changed everything about my life – where I lived, how I earned my living, how I dressed... It is almost 17 years since I visited... Althorp... Back then, the... Earl... and his porcelain countess... grinned proudly at tourists who paid £2... to see what Di... called home... [Tickets now sell] for £9.50 each [– 'more that it costs to see Buckingham Palace or the Tower of London', although Althorp 'could have charged double that.' The assembled] press... offer to buy them. Fat chance... Press cards are powerless here... Today, about 2500 Dianaphiles... will also spend... 20 quid each on food, guide books and oh-so-tasteful souvenirs. Do the maths. Though [the earl] spent £2 million getting Dianaville ready for its debut season, the belted earl is not exactly tightening his belt these days... Our first mission is to the lake with our fragrant bouquet. Here awaits the mock-Greek "temple" which serve[d] as a memorial to... deceased family pets... [T]he tiny central island[also] hosts a sculptured urn, surmounted by a flame. It... does not mark the grave; very few know the exact location of that... The fifth earl paid £3 for [Di's] little Grecian folly in the 1880s. Tinting it up with fresh paint, the present earl added inscriptions from his own famous eulogy and from [Di's] lips (such as: 'Everyone needs to be valued; everyone has the potential to give something back, if only they have the chance'). Between the dedications, like a Wedgewood silhouette, is her innocent profile. Some clergy screamed "paganism" when similar shrines appeared all over the world last September. The "cult of Diana" lingers, but Althorp's display is a triumph to political correctness. To Christianise [his temple, the earl] cleverly stuck a golden cross on the roof. As instructed by an attendant, we remove cellophane from our flowers and join the little throng of flower-bearers at the temple. Like sacrificial offerings, yesterday's bouquets are already compost in a neat heap to the side. I lay our tribute between the fluted columns... I try to focus on her memory but in the jostle of visitors I have no sense of her presence. Instead, I am arrested by the next bouquet, which has a plastic kiwi tucked into its petals. There are 2500 people here today and I end up beside an Auckland couple. The wife adored Di... They go to Paris, next. To see the Alma Bridge tunnel... Like mine, her husband is just along for the ride. Indeed, visitors today are 80[% gals], mostly 40 years-plus. Two... plonk varicose thighs down on a bench and contemplate the island, sighing: "I can't believe [Di's] really here." Crunching back to the house, we line up to view... [family treasures, including] one of the richest private art collections in Britain. The gallery is somewhat diminished these days. Devastated by death duties, the previous earl quietly sold off £1 million worth of antiques... little dream[ing] that 16 years later, an armful of his daughter's dresses would fetch more at auction than his precious van Dyck... Recent events altered the mezzanine gallery. A super-realist canvas of Di... hangs above a portrait of her brother. "Normally it's only pictures of the earls and their [wiv]es here," says a guide. "But they made a special exception for the princess." ...We... enter... the sniffy bit of the tour... film of [Di's] earliest days... We see how Di... learned to be the world's most photogenic... [gal] – posing coquettishly was a foolproof way to get attention from her camera-mad papa... In a bathing suit, Di... gyrates and twirls a scarf like Salome, both balletic and burlesque. Shy Di? Hardly. We watch the fractured flickers several times over, for it is amazing to see Di... inventing herself; creating the monster that would slay the world before it slew her. Everyone gasps to see her accidentally flung on her head while playing with her mother. We are spared the screaming fit that must have followed... The same reel shows us the stoic acceptance of a poor divorced kid in uniform, packed off to yet another costly boarding school. In the next room we read school reports that confirm the rotten time [Di] had of her education. A... 17[%] in a 1973 maths exam earns her teacher's comment: "I fear numbers mean nothing to Di..." ...Her gowns are displayed on faceless mannequins... [One of my companions] goes back twice to the Gown of the Century... "It still has the innocence of a fairytale wedding..." This, says [my companion]... "is the happiest day of my life." ...we head up the hill to St Mary's Church... In the family pew, an earl's daughter sang the same cheerful hymns the world heard at her funeral... knelt and prayed for things that mattered to an insecure schoolgirl... probably pray[ing] for love. And... found it at last, not in the arms of a husband, but from people like us, who... somehow loved a nice, quiet, country girl to death.

...The millions who mourned the death of Di... are... dependent, says the Dean of Westminster... who conducted [her] funeral service... people's fascination with the Princess... "...was... irrational, but not in the sense of madness or stupidity... There was displaced guilt as members of a world society which, through the massive projections which they had put on the Princess, generated the specific circumstances which led to her death."

...In his book, *50 Ways to a Healthy Heart*... a friend of Di... who performed the world's first heart transplant... said... [Di] could be alive today if [Di]d been rushed to hospital... "...they made a mistake in not rushing her to hospital quicker because her... internal... bleeding could only be stopped by surgery..." The suggestion that... [Di] had a chance of survival is supported by an account by... a doctor travelling in the opposite direction to Di... [The doctor] described the Princess as "in the best shape" of the... crash victims, including... the bodyguard who survived his multiple injuries... [However], Di... chose not to wear a seatbelt. No matter how rich and beautiful you are, no one can protect you from stupidity.

...The only person who could have been blamed for the deaths of Di... and... Dodi... was the driver of their car... the *Sunday Mirror* reported. It based its findings on excerpts from the official report into the Paris car crash... [which] began soon after [Di's] death... and was completed last week... The investigation heard evidence from about 160 witnesses and cost £6.4 million... [A] French lawyer for... [Di's] bodyguard... said the report... is a whitewash in that those responsible at Etoile Limousines and the Ritz for allowing Henri Paul to drive the car should stand trial... [T]he French Ministry of Justice... [has shown] a reluctance... to take action against... [those parties. The bodyguard's] British lawyer... said his client planned to sue [Dodi's father] in English courts for failing to adequately protect him during his employment.

...Di... was not killed by careless driving... [but] by careless road design. If the pillar which her car hit had had a proper guard-rail around it, her car would have simply bounced off and [Di] would probably have survived with a few bumps and grazes... This is the opinion of the researchers who spent months investigating the accident. As usual, the accident started with human error, and, as usual, the fatalities could have been avoided if the correct steps had been taken by road-safety authorities. However, as far as the... road safety establishment is concerned, because an accident starts with human error, the cause of a fatality is human error. Its reasoning continues that if human error caused the accident, then we should increase the penalties for drivers who make mistakes. As we can see from the Di... example, the basic assumption behind this reasoning is absurd. You may not be able to stop chauffeurs drinking and speeding, but you can design both cars and roads so that the consequences are not fatal.

...France's state prosecutor has recommended dismissing charges against nine photographers and a press motorcyclist implicated in the car crash that killed Di... judicial officials said yesterday. The prosecutor decided there was insufficient evidence to pursue the charges... The recommendations are to be sent to... [the] Judge... who is investigating the accident... [The judge] is expected to announce soon that the... investigation... is over. Then [the judge] will be able to determine whether to proceed with charges against the 10 suspects or dismiss them... [The judge is expected to do the latter, but] may ultimately decide to charge several of the photographers for failing to assist a person in danger... [In related news,] the British tabloid the *Sun* [is offering] a \$775,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of the murderer of... Jill Dando...

JILL... woke up with a list of a thousand things to do. It was a day for catching up with friends, family and the minutiae of life, so often pushed aside by the demands of a hectic career in television... Fate decided otherwise. When [Jill] drew up outside her home at 11.32am, a killer was waiting. [Jill] locked the car and walked towards her front door [but] never got inside. The murderer put a 9mm semi-automatic pistol against her head and fired a single bullet. [Jill] fell to the ground, with her head turned around in surprise... [Jill] did not even have time to scream... A witness heard only the sound of her gasping in shock... Why would anybody want to murder Dando and how could they have known [Jill] would return that Monday morning to a home [Jill] visited so erratically... since effectively [moving] in with... her fiancé... since their engagement...? ...Dando was devoted to the BBC1 programme *Crimewatch* and there are suggestions [Jill] may have been targeted by a criminal who wished to make an example of her... But... BBC sources say police have made no moves to examine *Crimewatch* case records... [and a] former commander of Scotland Yard's robbery squad, is dismissive: "[Jill] was just a presenter. [If a criminal] wanted revenge [it] could have killed the witness or the police[officer] who put him away." ...Was it, then, a crime of passion by a former lover or someone hired by him? The most recent records show that of 217 [gals] killed in England and Wales in 1996, all but 30 knew the killer... Detectives are questioning her friends, family and former lovers for leads... The ruthless manner of the "execution" works against the possibility of the killer being an obsessed fan or stalker. However, the trigger was there for a sexually motivated killing: jealousy... Dando was unthreateningly beautiful... the girl next door... sexy, but in a way that reinforced rather than challenged the social and familial order. As [Jill] herself put it: "I'm lucky I don't attract perverts or porn freaks. I must have a wholesome look about me." ...[yet t]he latest cover of the *Radio Times* has her in a leather-clad pose, with an unfortunate back page advert for the Mystery and Thriller (book) Club, saying: "Couldn't you just murder?" ...In the aftermath of her death, comparisons have been made between her and Di... as if the curse of modern celebrity could provide an answer. But[– though they were the same age –] Dando was no global icon and, so far, no evidence has emerged of a tragic flaw in the make-up of the former head girl from Weston-Super-Mare, who rose through local newspapers to become a \$1.2 million-a-year presenter... Dando was to marry... in the autumn and had signed a \$600,000 picture deal with *OK!* magazine for the wedding.

...a former cavalry officer, who... [was] a former lover of Di... is auctioning the newspaper rights to his memoirs of their affair for over £500,000.

...[the Prince of Wales] has vowed to take on... Di[']s former lover, to protect his heartbroken sons and their mother's memory. [The former lover], who is considered Britain's most hated [perso]n, has already published one book about their affair and is set to finally destroy Di[']s... reputation with further revelations about their passionate relationship... [via] 64 steamy love letters from Di... Extracts from the book are due to be published within weeks by a British newspaper that paid a reported \$1.25 million for the rights. The most shocking revelation in the book is tipped to be [hi]s claim that their affair started long before the date [the former lover]'s always admitted, the summer of 1985. According to leaks from the book, which have appeared in American newspapers, [the former lover] claims their affair started before [Di's second son] was born in 1984. And, in one of Di[']s letters, the Princess is alleged to have written ...one look at the baby and you'll know it's ours. [The Prince of Wales] and the Queen are furious and seeking to place an injunction on the book. 'This could turn into a pretty unsavoury legal battle,' says one royal insider. 'The copyright of the letters was owned by Di, and it passed to her estate. But in law, [the former lover] owns the ink and paper they were written on. [Therefore, the former lover] could draw from the contents of the letters without quoting them directly, and that will tie the lawyers in knots.' The Princes are devastated by the revelations... [The younger Prince] reportedly turned to [the Prince of Wales] in tears and asked: 'Aren't you my daddy?' [The Prince of Wales] dismissed it all as rubbish. [The elder Prince], according to the American newspaper *Globe*, phoned [the former lover] to plead: 'Please reject the money and save your honour...' ...[however, the former lover believes it] has no reputation left to lose...

Di... died believing her lover... was the father of her... younger son... But [Di] never realised that [her ex-husband] knew this too, [that the Prince] had been aware [Di had met her lover] the year before her second son was born. Di... confessed to a... friend that [the royal couple] had problems with their sex-life, and that [the Princess] faked orgasms when they made love. By the time they returned from their honeymoon, there was little physical contact, and soon afterwards Di... discovered [it] was pregnant... Throughout [Di's second pregnancy, her husband] never let on [it] knew Di... had taken a lover... hop[ing] Di... would enjoy a short fling and return to him after the child was born... It was with some trepidation that [the Prince] went to see the baby... His worst fears were realised – the baby had rust-coloured hair... Di... later claimed... his reaction killed her love for him.

...[a f]ormer cavalry officer... has denied [it is the father of Di's youngest son]... "...I can absolutely assure you that I am not... When I first met Di... [her youngest son] was a toddler..." ...A book by Di[']s... former police bodyguard... also rubbishes the rumours. [The guard], who worked with her for six years, said the gossip used to upset the Princess... "The nonsense should be scotched here and now... [The baby] was born on September 15, 1984. Di... did not meet [the officer] until the summer of 1986, and the red hair gossips so love to cite as proof is, of course, a... trait[of Di's family]."

...PRINCESS Diana's brother is selling family treasures to raise more cash. [The]Earl... plans to auction more than 300 items from... his ancestral home... The earl said it would be "difficult to part with objects long associated with my family". But [the earl] wanted to use the cash to develop a museum set up in Di[']s memory, and to buy modern art for... Althorp House... The furniture, paintings and books from 10 attic rooms at the mansion should raise around \$6 million. Up to 20 carriages will also be included, the biggest collection ever offered for sale.

...PRINCESS Di[']s... mum... was snubbed after the fatal car crash that killed her daughter... [Di's mum] was left out of funeral arrangements and ignored by the royal family[, which]... had not even bothered telephoning her to offer sympathy or... support. [Di's mum] also... was only told

about Di[']s death an hour before the media, but could not tell friends until the public announcement. [Di's mum] was even more upset when [it] heard about funeral arrangements through television news... "It really seems... ironic to me that having buried two children, for entirely different reasons, I was not able to see or touch or hold them when they were dead." ...In the Express article, [Di's mum] blamed... the... therapists... [who] had convinced her troubled daughter [that it] was a disappointment to her parents because [it] was not born a boy... for Di[']s unhappiness.

...DIANA: STORY OF A PRINCESS[(7.30pm tonight on TV3) is a 4-part documentary about... [the] Princess of Wales. *Part 1. Exploring Di[']s childhood, her work as a nanny and her first meeting with [the Prince of Wales]. It looks at the media pressure on [the Prince] to propose to Di... and her unhappiness when [the new bride] moved into Buckingham Palace... In letters... by [the] Prince... to a [gal] who was his lover for 16 years – before, during and after his marriage to Di[(and, no, it wasn't his current mistress!) – the Prince]... complains about having to marry a virgin and wishes [it] had "a wife in every Commonwealth country"... It's clear... [the Prince] was a serial cheater and led Di... like a lamb to the slaughter.*

...Books written about popular people after their death often tidy up their hero's image and leave out the tacky bits – and never more so than with Di... So a new children's book by an English author and illustrator comes as a refreshing change... *The Happy Princess* (RRP \$7.95... half of the revenue from the book will be donated to the Teenage Cancer Trust in the UK...)... doesn't try to avoid the unflattering or upsetting aspects of Di[']s life. The author... wrote the book after [it] noticed that children were struggling to come to terms with her shocking and untimely death.

...is... DI... in Heaven or Hell? ...Two English Sunday School teachers last week sparked a furore by telling youngsters... Di... went to Hell... because [Di] had not repented for her "immoral lifestyle". In N[Z], the comments are rejected by many church leaders... [One] Canon... labelled the English teachers' remarks "absurd, medieval nonsense", [which made him] want... "to throw up"... [However,] the head of the Anglican Church[in Britain] from 1974 to 1980... echoed... [the words of the] Sunday School teachers... [by labelling] the Princess of Wales a "false goddess" with "loose sexual morals,"... [and] said... the nationwide grieving and admiration for Di... had turned Britain into a godless nation.

...At last! A memorial fountain to honour Di... is to be built on the bank of the Serpentine lake in Hyde Park, London, one of her favourite spots. The \$8.3 million tribute should be finished next year... [Incidentally, fashion] experts have voted Princess Di... the best-dressed person ever.

...We've made a shrine for Di... The scarlet dress... [purchased for] \$44,000... in a Christie's New York auction... has become a shrine... in the LA home... [of] a passionate collector of Di memorabilia. "Both my kids say I'm crazy... They keep asking me, 'Why don't you have a normal house?'" [Their mother], who appears in the BBC documentary *Diana's Dresses*, says her house is normal, except for the wall-to-wall Di... showcases in one bedroom... "I've always been a collector. I started collecting Victorian memorabilia. Then... because I thought [her]s was such a romantic fairytale wedding... I began accumulating Di... dolls and miniature dresses. And then came this real dress, the piece de resistance of our collection."

...WHEN Princess Di... died, Foxton Doll Gallery[']s owner... was devastated – but out of the sadness came a 1000-hour labour of love to recreate... Di[']s wardrobe. The owner[has been a royalty fan since [the owner was a] child, but it was Di... who really made an impression on her – and [the owner] has more than 20 scrapbooks of the late princess to prove it. [The owner] met Di... when [the princess] came to Wellington in 1983. "[Di] stood and talked to us and I felt [Di] was so interested in what we had to say. I really felt I had made a friend. [Di] had the ability to make you feel the most important person in the world." ...While... the... [owner] makes her own porcelain dolls, [the owner] felt it would be too difficult to produce a doll that adequately resembled the princess but decided to put her sewing skills to the test by recreating tiny versions of 18 of Di[']s world-famous dresses... One day [the owner] wants to complete the collection with Di[']s wedding dress which [the owner] saw in England in 1982.

...Lawyers for the estate and the Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Fund have sued the Franklin Mint in US District Court in Los Angeles, claiming the firm is profiting from her likeness... [by] selling Di... dolls, plates and pendants... without their permission. They had asked [the] District Court Judge... to issue an injunction on the mint, stopping further sales of memorabilia until the lawsuit was resolved. But [the] Judge... rejected that request yesterday, saying a jury would have to decide if the charity owned the rights to the Princess' name and likeness in the US...

Lottery cash could be used to plug the funding gap left after the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund froze all its... grants... The fund... was forced to cancel payments to its beneficiaries amid a bitter and costly legal wrangle with a U[S]-based souvenir firm... About 120 good causes and 500 jobs worldwide are now under threat... Meanwhile... Franklin Mint, showed no sign of backing down from its £15 m... "malicious prosecution" action against the memorial fund. The suit stems from an unsuccessful court [case]... by the fund... to stop the mint producing Di... dolls...

Dead or alive, Di... sells newspapers and magazines and they have given the anniversary of her death wall-to-wall coverage. "Exclusive" photo montages vie with "Scented Diana Candle" offers for the reader's attention... [T]he same tabloids who were accused then of hounding "The People's Princess" to death are now being urged – yet again – to tone down the coverage... From clerics to rock stars, newspaper columnists to opinion pollsters, the message is the same – let her rest in peace... A poll in the *Daily Telegraph* showed that only 6[%] of Britons planned to observe the anniversary... One year after being gripped by mass hysteria over her death, the British are showing signs of "Di... fatigue."

...[thousands] are expected at... [Di's] former home, Kensington Palace, today on the anniversary of her death but no one expects the emotional outpouring of 12 months ago. And the royal family will be relieved. They could do nothing right then; the institution seemed shaken to its insecure foundations. While Di... was alive [Di] consummately outmanoeuvred the whole of the House of Windsor, and their popularity declined as hers soared. After [Di] died, they plummeted in public opinion, in what looked then like a freefall to destruction. A form of pseudo-republicanism swept Britain but the public did not really want to get rid of the royals, it just wanted them to become more like Di... The Queen, who until then had been a figure of muted affection, with her hairdos and matching handbags and her stout Corgis and her gloves that [the Queen seemingly] never takes off, became a figure of hostility. People... allowed themselves briefly to wonder about the taxes they pay towards the upkeep of this unemployed... – [excluding]... 2500 engagements a year – ...and vastly rich family. But the hysteria has abated; the media and the Government need the royal family and the royal family need them, and... since [Di's] death they have been gradually, quietly coaxing the British public back into line. [Di's] death has enhanced the family's popularity, said senior Buckingham Palace sources, mainly, they believed, because the Princess was no longer there to hog the limelight... The main beneficiary... has been [the Prince of Wales]. "The Prince has not suddenly changed... It's just that with the Princess no longer here his role as a father is more obvious and people can understand him better." ...[the Prince] lays his hand on his younger son's shoulder and a credulous nation sighs in approval... [E]ver mindful of the Di... gap... the royals... have enthusiastically rehabilitated... the tabloids... [The Prince – and '50 members of the British press' – went to] South Africa and in a triumphantly tacky photo opportunity posed with [its] President... and the Spice Girls[then]... went to a... HIV clinic in Nepal... [His eldest son] answered a bland media questionnaire. The Queen... went to a pub (for seven minutes)[and] was pictured in front of McDonald's... Unbelievably, this PR machine seems to have worked. Last year, 40[%] of the public thought [the Prince of Wales] would make a good King, but now well over 50[%] approve of him, and that support is rising. Britain overwhelmingly supports the continuing existence of the monarchy... The people need the palace, the palace needs the people.

...500 staff... make the palace tick... When the Queen is away, her servants will play – and how! Shocking tales of drug-fuelled sex orgies among Buckingham Palace staff have sparked a new royal scandal – ...pos[ing] a new threat to the future of the British royal family. [A former aide] claims the Queen would often turn a blind eye as... staffers would sneak guests into wild sex parties at the palace... Sometimes... the royals would attend bashes where gay... staff camped it up in [gals'] clothing. "Parties would happen two or three times a week and were attended by pot-washers and royals alike. Princess Di... used to come dressed in jeans and T-shirts. The Queen encouraged the wildest parties... At one point it became so bad... [that the] Deputy Master of the Household... ordered the palace bar shut down. Staff were serving the Queen almost drunk." ...The strange relationship between royals and servants goes on – culminating in the probe... into palace staff selling royal treasures for profit. An aide reveals

how trucks regularly turned up at Highgrove packed with gifts from fans. [The Prince of Wales took what it] wanted – then staff scrambled for the rest. The leftovers, including ornaments, clothes and gifts from children, were incinerated. “It was a waste on a sad and sickening scale,”...

From the moment [it] wakes up to the moment [it] sinks into bed at night the Prince of Wales... has his every whim catered for. It has been that way since the... [prince] was born. As a... child [it] was hopelessly spoilt by a retinue of royal staff. And as an adult... has come to expect the same special treatment... When the prince has to provide a urine sample for his doctor, his aide assists him in what most would regard as a humiliating task. This is hardly a lifestyle becoming of... the future head of a slimmed down, up-to-date, socially attuned monarchy... At present the prince... [– who ordered] many unwanted official gifts presented to [him] and Di... on royal tours [to be] burned by staff... [–] employs more than 80 full-time staff that cost him... \$8 million in wages... [●] In the *Mail on Sunday*... a former palace valet... claimed... “I was raped by [Princ]es’ servant”...

A convicted rapist... has resigned as an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) at the request of the Government. A spokes[person] from the P[M]’s office said a letter was received this month from the Queen accepting [his resignation. The rapist] received the honour in 1977 for services to the community in his position as a general practitioner. The former Christchurch deputy mayor was sentenced to six years’ jail... after admitting rape, sexual violation and 11 indecent assault charges dating back 30 years... [■] Cabinet is to make a decision soon on the honours system, with knighthoods and damehoods set to be scrapped. [The P[M]... said yesterday that N[Z]ers... should be recognised with N[Z] honours...

NZ[ers] with titles are an endangered species... But many of them seemed unfazed yesterday by Government plans to do away with knighthoods and damehoods and replace them with a N[Z] honours system. “Things change,” said[one] Sir... “We severed our apron strings from the old country many years ago. I hope we have a wider plethora of awards given to deserving people.” ...[a] Labour Party stalwart and former Pencarrow MP... who turned down four chances to become a dame... partly because it was not egalitarian... said it was better that people were remembered for what they did for others rather than their titles... [However, a f]ormer Court of Appeal judge Sir... was not in favour of abolishing the titles. “I don’t think people should seek to have a title as such, but if it’s bestowed on them I think they can be proud of it and other people respect it...”

...N[Z] will scrap the titles of “knight” and “dame” from the honours list. The decision, which has been approved by Buckingham Palace, will mean none will be named in the [next] Queen’s Birthday list... [The P[M]... defended the lack of public consultation, saying that had already occurred with the 1995... advisory committee on the honours system, which recommended scrapping knights and dames... But the P[M] predicted public opinion would have moved on “quite a long way” since then... [The PM] also... said knight and damehoods... overshadowed the country’s highest honour, the Order of New Zealand, along with the host of other awards recognising community service... The O[NZ]... is restricted to 20 living members. Introduced in 1987, it has never carried a title... Cabinet ministers may be next in line to have their titles chopped. The P[M]... yesterday floated the idea of dropping the “honourable” from in front of their names... [The PM] had already taken advice on that, although there was a complication with the title of “Right Honourable,” which comes with members of the Privy Council. “That’s a debate we now need to have.”

...[the] Queen... will get her third makeover in 46 years in N[Z] next month. The Reserve Bank will follow its A[US]n counterpart and begin minting coins with the Queen’s new effigy. But new coins now in circulation in A[US] show a dour, double-chinned image of the... Queen. A plot by A[US]’s republicans? Not likely, said[a] NZ Reserve Bank spokes[person]. “The Queen”... approved the portrait herself, so we can’t... argue with it.”

...Portraits of the Queen have been removed from the Auckland Town Hall in a midnight swoop that has angered royalists and delighted republicans. [The M]ayor... and five councillors took down the portraits of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh from the council chamber... [The mayor] said yesterday that the framed photographs were too old and [it] wanted to stimulate council debate on what should replace them on the wall behind the mayoral chair... They may be replaced by Polynesian art or the Treaty of Waitangi... [A member] of the Monarchist League of N[Z], said the move was “arguably insulting to the Queen,” unless her picture was put up elsewhere in an equally prominent place.

...Most N[Z]ers want to help God save the Queen. Republicans apparently have a long way to go to convince the country to dump the Queen as head of state. The latest... series of surveys reveals that 63.2[% of her NZ] subjects remain loyal... Such strong support for Her Majesty sets N[Z] on the opposite side of the republican argument from A[US]. Across the Tasman, a majority of respondents to two big polls in 1997 indicated they were willing to turn their backs on the royals.

...A[US]ns will vote late next year... on whether to cut 200-year-old constitutional ties with Britain... [The AUSn PM] has promised that if the majority... vote for... [it] the country would become a republic by January 1, 2001.

...Republicans have unveiled a new secret weapon for their campaign for an A[US]n head of state: [the Prince of Wales’ girlfriend! One]... friend once observed: [“The Prince’s girlfriend] is quite happy to jump off her horse and into an evening dress without a bath.” [The girlfriend is also] capable of raucous laughter at a disgusting joke. The agrarian goings-on of the blue-blooded classes involve quite a lot of jumping, and [the girlfriend] herself has often quoted with approval a saying of... her great-grandmother, and mistress of King Edward VII: “My job is to curtsy, and then jump into bed.” This scandalous precedent provided her with a memorable chat-up line shortly after... [meeting the Prince] in 1970 – “My great-grandmother and your great-grandfather were lovers – so how about it?” ...The prospect of the girlfriend... becoming Queen of A[US] sparked a renewed sense of anti-monarchic feeling at the national conference of republicans in Canberra yesterday... [T]he issue highlighted how A[US]ns had no choice over who became[their] Queen... Britain is engulfed in a new debate about whether [the girlfriend will marry the] Prince... and one day be accepted as Queen after the pair were photographed in public as a couple for the first time late last month.

...Relations between[the] Queen... and her[eldest] son... have hit a new low because [the Prince of Wales] is refusing to bow to her demands and ditch[his] long-time companion... The... *Express on Sunday*... said the Queen and her senior aides were concerned by what they saw as [the Prince’s] plans to ease [his girlfriend] more and more into the public eye... Last week... [the couple] took the unprecedented step of issuing a joint statement denying they had cooperated in a biography... which claimed Di... had made death threats against [her ex-husband’s girlfriend]. “Relations are so strained that [the Prince] last met the Queen face to face... [almost three months ago]. It is understood they never spoke last week despite the furore generated by the... book,” the newspaper said... [●] Di’s death means the] Prince... is himself not barred from remarriage. However, [his lover]’s former husband is still alive and it would be impossible for her and [the Prince] to pretend their adultery had no effect on her first marriage.

...[the Prince of Wales] is beginning a marathon weekend of 50th birthday parties that show the split between his public and private lives. Last night, [the Prince] was to be at Buckingham Palace for an official celebration – with 850 guests – hosted by the Queen. Today, the Prince will be guest of honour at a glittering reception for a sprinkling of European royals and his friends in high society, showbusiness and politics. The bash at his Highgrove country residence will be hosted by his long-time lover... The Queen... has no intention of attending and others in The Firm will also be conspicuous by their absence... [Instead, they will probably go to] Windsor Castle where [the Queen’s daughter has organised] an evening to mark the 21st birthday of her son... In reality, there should be no clash because [the Queen’s grandson]’s birthday does not fall until November 15.

...Why does the Queen have two birthdays? ...it has long been the tradition to celebrate the Sovereign’s birthday on a day during the summer. This is because so many sovereigns, most notably Queen Victoria, had their birthdays in winter – not the most pleasant time of the year for the public to be out celebrating. Official birthdays became separated from actual birthdays when King Edward VII decided to celebrate his in the summer instead of his true November birthday. Since 1805 the Sovereign’s “official” birthday has been marked by the Trooping the Colour ceremony, normally held on the second Saturday in June... Unlike the U[K], Kiwis have the first Monday in June as a public holiday in honour of the Sovereign... [The] Queen... was actually born on April 21... B[y the way, the]... Queen turned a blind eye to [her husband’s many]... high-profile...

affairs, but was “insulted” by his choice of... [lover] from 1955 to the mid-’70s... It began when [the Queen’s]... first cousin... was in her 20s and [her husband] in his late 30s... “You could set your watch on a Thursday afternoon because at 2.30pm, Princess A... would arrive at the palace. The pool was reserved for [the Duke of Edinburgh] until 3.30pm.” ...The Queen had lived with that secret since... [being] told in the late ’50s, and [her husband] refused to end the affair. The last thing [the Queen] needed was for the world to know... It seems extraordinary [that the Duke] should have led such a life yet describe Di... as a harlot... in a series of letters... – no wonder [the Duke] was worried that their contents might reach... the press.

...[after Di’s death, the Queen commissioned an inquiry into what people thought of the royal family and their role in society.’ Now t]he Queen is caught in the middle of a profound disagreement between... the conservative Duke of Edinburgh[, who is] advising the Queen that the family should hold to their long-established traditions... and her three sons[, who want]... to speed the pace of reform and safeguard the monarchy by keeping it in step with public opinion... The split emerged at a recent meeting of the “Way Ahead Group” of senior royals and their advisers, where a radical suggestion was made to restrict the title “Royal Highness” – now held by 18 family members – to the monarch and his (or her) immediate heir...

With the approval of [the] Queen... the House of Lords agreed yesterday it was time to bring equal rights to the British monarchy and end 1000 years of... [sexism] by giving a monarch’s first-born daughter the same claim to the throne as any first-born son... By tradition, a son has first rights even if... preceded by a daughter... [The current Queen] succeeded her father to the throne because [the then princess] had no brothers and was the elder of two girls... The... change would likely have no impact on the succession for generations: the Queen’s heir... has no elder sister and his heir... has no sisters at all... The 40 lords, not usually the vanguard of change, greeted news of the modernisation plan with approval and praise... Primogeniture... ensured that [guys] ruled in the days when kings were warriors and power was held through force of arms. But the half-dozen... [British queens] include two of history’s most remarkable sovereigns[– Elizabeth I, who] took her turn at the throne... after her brother and elder sister had ruled and died[; and] Queen Victoria, who was an only child... when her uncle died without surviving legitimate children... in 1837...

[England consisted of ‘independent kingdoms until that of Wessex, established in Hampshire in the early 6th c., became dominant in the 9th c. Under Alfred the Great (king of Wessex 871-99) and his successors, the kingdom of the West Saxons formed the nucleus for the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of England. An ineffective monarch, Edwy (king from 955) alienated a large part of his kingdom during his short reign, and, after Mercia and Northumbria had renounced him in favour of his brother Edgar in 957, Edwy ruled only over the lands south of the Thames. One of the strongest of the Anglo-Saxon kings of England, Edgar succeeded to the throne on Edwy’s death two years later. Although Edward the Martyr successfully succeeded his father Edgar in 975, the youthful king was soon faced by a challenge for the throne from his half-brother Ethelred, who eventually had him murdered at Corfe in 978. Succeeding his murdered half-brother, Ethelred proved quite unequal to the task of confronting the Danes, resorting to the payment of tribute (Danegeld) to keep them from attacking, and losing his throne briefly (1013-14) to the Danish king Sven Forkbeard. Having succeeded his father as king of Denmark in 1014, Cnut (Canute) became king of England after the murder in 1016 of Ethelred’s successor Edmund Ironside, ending a prolonged struggle for the throne. As king, Cnut presided over a period of relative peace, depending more and more on English rather than Danish advisers. Cnut is most commonly remembered for the occasion on which the king demonstrated his inability to stop the rising tide to fawning courtiers who had told the king it was all-powerful. An illegitimate son of Cnut, Harold I first came to the throne when Cnut’s legitimate son was absent in Denmark at the time of his father’s death in 1035. When the other royal claimant, Alfred the Aetheling, was murdered a year later, Harold I was formally recognized as king, although Cnut’s legitimate son Harthacnut returned to the kingdom when Harold himself died in 1040. Famed for his piety, Ethelred’s son Edward the Confessor (king of England 1042-66) was dominated through much of his reign by his wife’s father Earl Godwin, and in later years took less and less interest in affairs of State, effective control falling to Godwin’s son, who eventually succeeded Edward the Confessor (who had no children) as Harold II. The last Anglo-Saxon king of England, Harold II was faced with two invasions within months of his accession. Harold II defeated and killed his half-brother Tostig and the Norse king Harald Hardrada at Stamford Bridge, but was himself slain at Hastings by William, Duke of Normandy, who took the throne as William I. The illegitimate son of Robert (“the Devil”) Duke of Normandy, William “the Conqueror” claimed that Edward the Confessor had promised the throne to him and that Harold II had agreed to be his “liege person”. William I successfully repressed a series of uprisings in the following years, and imposed his rule on England, introducing Norman institutions and customs (including feudalism and administrative and legal practices); the effect on English culture was considerable. Known as Rufus because of his ruddy complexion, William II, son of William I, reigned 1087-1100. His death while out hunting may well have been at the hands of an assassin rather than by accident. On the death of his brother, the youngest son of William I was able to seize the throne in the absence of his other brother Robert on Crusade. Henry I campaigned successfully in France (1111-13 and 1116-20) after conquering Normandy in 1105. At home his reign was characterized by the development of the royal administration and the restraint of baronial power, but after his only son William drowned in 1120 there were problems with the succession, and although Henry extracted an oath of loyalty to his daughter Matilda from the barons in 1127, his death eight years later was followed almost immediately by the outbreak of civil war. Stephen, grandson of William I, seized the throne of England from Matilda a few months after Henry’s death. More popular with the English nobility than his rival, Stephen forced her to flee the kingdom, but failed to restore royal authority in a time of great domestic unrest and was eventually obliged to recognize Matilda’s son, the future Henry II, as heir to the throne. The first Angevin king, Henry II (reigned 1154-89) restored order after the anarchy of the disputed reigns of Stephen and Matilda, added Anjou and Aquitaine to the English possessions in France, established his rule in Ireland, and forced the king of Scotland to acknowledge him overlord of that kingdom. These successes were overshadowed by his feud with Thomas a Becket, who disagreed with him over the relative rights of Church and Crown and was eventually murdered by some of Henry’s knights. In the last years of his reign much trouble was caused by his four sons who intrigued with France in particular to raise rebellion against him. Soon after succeeding his father, Richard “the Lionheart” left to take part in the Third Crusade. Richard defeated Saladin, but failed to capture Jerusalem, and was captured on his way home by Duke Leopold of Austria. Held captive at the behest of Emperor Henry VI, Richard was released in 1194 only after the payment of a huge ransom. After staying in England for little more than a matter of weeks, Richard embarked on a campaign against Philip II Augustus of France, eventually dying from wounds received at the siege of the castle of Chalus in 1199. Nicknamed John Lackland – because, unlike his elder brothers, Henry II’s youngest did not receive a large fief from his father – John I was recognized by both England and Normandy on his accession, but lost Normandy and other areas of France by 1205. At home, his despotic inclinations caused him to fall foul of both the Church and the barons. His refusal to accept the papal nominee Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury led to England’s being placed under an interdict in 1208, and to his own excommunication. His character, a mixture of brutality, cowardice, and sloth, caused him to be generally hated and despised. The English barons opposed his high-handed methods of raising money and forced him to sign Magna Carta in 1215; when John ignored its provisions civil war broke out, and John died on campaign a year later. Until John’s son Henry III declared himself of age to rule personally in 1227, his regent the Earl of Pembroke kept the rebellious barony in check, but afterwards the king’s ineffectual government, characterized by financial mismanagement and a dependence on unpopular foreign favourites, caused widespread discontent, ending in de Montfort’s defeat and capture of the king at Lewes in 1264. Although Henry III was restored following the defeat of the rebels a year later at Evesham, the king was by this time little more than a figurehead, real power resting with his son who eventually succeeded him as Edward I in 1272. After coming to the throne Edward (nicknamed “the Hammer of the Scots”) did much to solidify the central administration weakened by his father’s fecklessness, but soon became involved in the wars which were eventually to impose a dangerous financial burden on the realm. His campaign against the Welsh prince Llewelyn ended with the annexation of Wales in 1284, but from 1291 onwards Edward became increasingly preoccupied with his attempt to impose feudal superiority on Scotland. There Edward dealt

successfully with a revolt in 1296 but a second uprising dragged on from 1297 until 1305. On his way north to deal with a third revolt in 1307, led this time by Robert the Bruce, Edward died, leaving his weak son Edward II (the first Prince of Wales) to deal with a situation which was to prove beyond him. Early trouble with his barons led to civil war, and two years later Edward II's defeat by the Scots at Bannockburn further weakened his position and the king temporarily lost power to Thomas, Earl of Lancaster. With the help of new favourites, the Despensers, Edward II eventually managed to overthrow and kill Lancaster, but his wife, Isobel of France, allied herself with the exiled Roger de Mortimer, who invaded England and deposed Edward II (who died soon after, almost certainly at the hands of murderers) in favour of his son in 1327. Edward III assumed personal control of his kingdom in 1330 by executing de Mortimer. Edward III restored order and reconciled the baronial opposition, but was soon involved in the wars which were to dominate much of his reign. Edward III resumed his grandfather's policy of undermining Scottish independence by supporting the pretender to the Scottish throne Edward de Baliol, and started the Hundred Years War with France. Although Edward III won dramatic victories in both theatres, final victory eluded him, and following his premature decline into senility in 1377, effective government fell into the hands of his unpopular fourth son, John of Gaunt. Though Richard II, son of the Black Prince (name given, for unknown reasons, to Edward Plantagenet, eldest son of Edward III), behaved bravely when still a minor during the Peasants' Revolt, Richard II proved a weak king, heavily dependent on favourites and on his uncle John of Gaunt. In 1386-8 noble opponents of his administration, known as the Lords Appellant, successfully removed many of the king's confidants. Ten years later Richard II exacted revenge, executing or banishing most of his former opponents, but when the king confiscated John of Gaunt's estate after the latter's death, the dispossessed heir returned from exile in 1399 to overthrow the king (who died in prison in Pontefract Castle, apparently of starvation) and reign in his place as Henry IV. One of the Lords Appellant, Henry IV established the Lancastrian dynasty. His reign was scarred by rebellion, both in Wales where Owen Glendower was briefly successful in establishing Welsh independence, and in the north where the powerful Percy family raised several dangerous uprisings. Although Henry IV defeated and killed Hotspur (Sir Henry Percy) at Shrewsbury in 1403, the Percy threat did not abate until the head of the family was killed at Bramham Moor in 1408. Henry V, son of Henry IV, reigned 1413-22. Having shown early military prowess in his father's wars against the Percy family and the Welsh, Henry V renewed the Hundred Years War soon after coming to the throne and won a resounding victory over the French at Agincourt in 1415. By the Treaty of Troyes (1420) Henry V was named successor to Charles VI of France and betrothed to his daughter Catherine of Valois. When the Dauphin repudiated the treaty Henry V took the field against him but died of dysentery, leaving a difficult inheritance to his infant son Henry VI, who eventually proved scholarly and kindly but prone to bouts of madness and unfit to rule effectively on his own. During his reign the Hundred Years War with France was finally lost, and the royal government, in the hands of a series of regents and noble favourites, became increasingly unpopular through corruption and inefficiency. In the 1450s opponents coalesced round the House of York, and, after intermittent civil war, Henry VI was deposed in 1461 by Edward IV. Henry VI regained his throne briefly in 1470-1 following a Lancastrian uprising, but was deposed once again following Edward IV's victories at Barnet and Tewkesbury, and died within days of his deposition, almost certainly murdered by the victorious Edward IV. His rule was characterized by vigorous and successful attempts to reform royal government, although in his last few years Edward IV seems to have given way to some extent to personal pleasure. Edward V, son of Edward IV, reigned 1483 but was not crowned. Illegitimized following his father's death, on debatable evidence of the legality of Edward IV's marriage, the youthful prince's throne was taken by his uncle Richard III. Historical opinion on the popular picture of Edward IV's brother as a bloodthirsty usurper is still divided; what is certain is that, after suppressing several plots in the early months of his reign, Richard III ruled with some success for a brief period before being defeated and killed at Bosworth in 1485 by Henry Tudor, who then took the throne as Henry VII. The son of Edmund Tudor, Earl of Richmond, Henry VII inherited the Lancastrian claim to the throne through his grandfather's marriage to the widow of Henry V. Threatened in the early years of his reign – which lasted until 1509 – Henry VII eventually established an unchallenged Tudor dynasty, dealing ruthlessly with other claimants to the throne. As king, Henry VII continued the modernization and strengthening of royal government commenced by his Yorkish predecessors, although his attempts to increase royal revenues made him increasingly unpopular. Henry VII's son, Henry VIII, reigned until 1547. Though Henry VIII's reign began in a burst of Renaissance splendour, costly wars, internal rebellion, and general mismanagement in his last years left England in a weak and uncertain condition. During the brief reign as a minor from 1547-53 of Henry VIII's son, England was effectively ruled by two Protectors, the Duke of Somerset and the Duke of Northumberland. Although the young and sickly Edward VI had little direct influence over the policies pursued by his guardians, his Protestant beliefs contributed significantly to the establishment of Protestantism as the State religion, a development which was to survive the Catholic reaction which followed under his elder sister and successor, Mary I. Having gained the throne after the brief attempt to install Lady Jane Grey – the granddaughter of Henry VIII's sister – in her place, Mary I began the series of religious persecutions which earned her the name of "Bloody Mary". Mary I, who married Philip II of Spain, died childless, however, and the accession of her Protestant sister Elizabeth I in 1558 guaranteed that England would not revert permanently to Catholicism. Although frequently courted, Elizabeth I never married and indeed owed much of her popularity and success to the cult of the Virgin Queen created around her. Her reign was dominated by the threat of a Catholic restoration (eventually leading to the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, daughter of James V) and by war with Spain. Her reign also witnessed a great flowering of national culture, particularly in the field of literature. Having survived a long and difficult minority, James I (James VI of Scotland), son of Mary Queen of Scots, had largely succeeded in restoring royal authority in Scotland before inheriting the throne of England on the extinction of the Tudor line in 1603. James I was a difficult and at times erratic monarch, and although the king managed to avoid serious trouble in the deepening constitutional and religious crisis in his new kingdom, his lack of decisiveness and the fecklessness of his declining years, when government was effectively in the hands of his favourite the Duke of Buckingham, left his son Charles I a difficult and potentially explosive legacy. Charles I became king in 1625. His attempt to rule without Parliament (1629-40) eventually failed when Charles I became involved in war with Scotland, and the Long Parliament proved so uncooperative that an open breach and war between the two sides followed in 1642. The king was finally defeated and surrendered to the Scots in 1646. Handed over to Parliament in 1647, Charles I escaped and negotiated with the Scots to fight on his behalf in return for religious concessions, but the Royalist forces were defeated at Preston (1648) and the English army demanded the king's death. Charles I was tried by a special parliamentary court and beheaded in London in 1649. After the king's execution, Oliver Cromwell became Lord Protector of the Commonwealth, an office Oliver held from 1653 until his death in 1658. After Charles I's death, his son, Charles II, was crowned in Scotland, but was forced into exile after the defeat of his invading army at Worcester in 1651. Charles II remained in exile on the Continent for nine years before being restored after the collapse of Cromwell's regime in 1660. Charles II displayed considerable adroitness in handling the difficult constitutional situation left by the preceding two decades of strife, but his failure to produce a Protestant heir left the future of the Stuart dynasty in doubt after his death in 1685. James II (James VII of Scotland), younger son of Charles I, was an accomplished soldier and sailor in the reign of his elder brother, but lost the support of many of his subjects soon after his accession as a result of his strong Catholic views and his attempts to reassert royal absolutism. Although James II put down the rebellion of the Duke of Monmouth in 1685 the king was deposed three years later in favour of William III and Mary II, and failed to regain his throne despite military action in Ireland and Scotland in 1689-90. James II died in exile in France, leaving the Jacobite claim to the throne in the hands of his son James, the Old Pretender. William III (known as William of Orange), son of the Prince of Orange and Mary, daughter of Charles I, was Stadholder (chief magistrate) of the Netherlands from 1672 and married Mary, daughter of the future James II, in 1677. In 1688, William III landed in England at the behest of disaffected politicians, deposed James II, and, having accepted the Declaration of Rights, was crowned along with his wife early in the following year. The last of the Stuart monarchs, Anne, daughter of James II, eventually succeeded her brother-in-law William III on the throne in 1702, there presiding over the Act of Union which completed the unification of Scotland and England. Although Anne was pregnant eighteen times none of the five children born alive survived childhood, and by the Act of Settlement the throne passed to the House of Hanover on her death in 1714. The great-grandson of James I and Elector of Hanover from 1689, George I was unpopular in England, the language of which the king never learnt, and George left the administration of his new kingdom to his ministers, devoting himself to diplomacy and the interests of Hanover, but despite all

this the relatively easy suppression of the Jacobite uprisings of 1715 and 1719 demonstrated that George was generally preferred to the Catholic Old Pretender. George II, son of George I, reigned 1727-60. Like his father, George II depended heavily on his ministers, but took an active part in Britain's entry into the War of Austrian Succession and successfully led his army against the French at Dettingen in 1743, the last occasion on which a British king was present on the field of battle. In the latter years of his reign, George II largely withdrew from active politics, allowing advances in the development of constitutional monarchy which his successor George III was unable permanently to reverse. The grandson of George I reigned 1760-1820. Unlike his two predecessors George III took great interest in domestic politics and attempted to exercise royal control of government to the fullest possible extent. His determination to suppress the American Revolution dominated British war policy 1775-83, but in 1788 the king suffered a serious bout of insanity and thereafter his political influence declined. This insanity became permanently incapacitating in 1811 and his son, later George IV, was made regent. As Prince of Wales, George IV's dissolute lifestyle had already gained him an unsavoury reputation. His attempt to divorce his estranged wife Caroline of Brunswick just after coming to the throne caused a great scandal and further damaged his reputation. William IV, known as "the sailor king", succeeded his unpopular brother George IV in 1830. Brought up in stifling seclusion, Victoria succeeded to the throne on the death of her uncle, William IV, and went on to have the longest reign in British history. Victoria initially showed qualities of determination and obstinacy coupled with a pleasure-loving disposition. After her marriage to her cousin Prince Albert in 1840 Victoria became more serious, more conscious of her responsibilities, and more businesslike; Victoria took an active interest in the policies of her ministers in both home and foreign affairs, ably advised by the Prince, who persuaded her that the Crown should not be aligned with any political party – a principle that has endured. Her death was rightly felt to be the end of an era. Victoria's son, Edward VII, who reigned 1901-10, was known as "the Peacemaker" for no very good reason. His reign, however, was a period of peace. An extrovert and something of a playboy, Edward VII was kept away from the serious conduct of royal affairs during the long reign of his mother, but although Edward VII played little part in government upon finally coming to the throne, his popularity and interest in public appearances generally increased the prestige of the monarchy. Edward VII died suddenly in 1910 before his plans to create a large number of new peers could have any impact on events. Edward VII's son George V, who reigned until 1936, proved to be one of Britain's most popular sovereigns, winning great respect for his punctilious attitude towards royal duties and responsibilities, especially during WWI. George VI, son of George V, reigned until 1952. George VI came to the throne on the abdication – in order to marry the American divorcee Mrs Wallis Simpson – of his elder brother Edward VIII, who was not crowned, and despite a retiring disposition became a popular and respected monarch, playing an important part in WWII...

George VI's wife, the] **Queen Mother** could be asked to move out of Clarence House, her home for nearly 50 years, as part of a plan to pay off her £4 million... debts. In an unprecedented move, [the Prince of Wales] faces the daunting task of proposing an emergency cost-cutting package to his 98-year-old grandmother... [If the Queen Mother] moves into neighbouring St James's Palace[, the prince] and his sons... could then have the option of moving into Clarence House. The cost cutting plan... includes proposals to mothball one of the Queen Mother's five homes, the Castle of Mey in the north of Scotland, and sell rarely used cars and some of her 10 racehorses. The Queen Mother will also be urged to cut down on her lavish lifestyle, which includes a taste for vintage champagne, designer hats and clothes, handcrafted jewellery and expensive dining out. Instead of permanent servants at each residence, it will be suggested that [the Queen Mother] have a smaller staff travelling with her between homes.

...the *Queen and other members of the royal family couldn't get by without their army of servants* Their titles range from the sublime – Mistress of the Robes – to the ridiculous – Yeoman of the Plate Pantry... At the last count, there were about 1000 ...servants... looking after the royal family and their homes. Together, they outnumber their charges by about 15 to one and cost British taxpayers nearly \$6 million a year in salaries alone. In Queen Victoria's day, it was deemed necessary for the monarch to have her own Royal Cobweb Cleaner and Official Spider Catcher. These days, such arcane indulgences no longer exist, although the Queen does retain her own piper, a tradition started 156 years ago... "I regard it as an honour – it's the highest point you can get to as a piper..." says... the 10th holder of the post... who's... duties include playing for 15 minutes under the Queen's window... at 9am sharp... each weekday... Confusingly, [the piper]'s also a Page of the Presence, which means [the piper]'s responsible for meeting the Queen's visitors at the Grand Entrance to Buckingham Palace. But, despite being required to follow the Queen around the country in the course of his work, [the piper]'s not responsible for the royal luggage. That's the job of the Travelling Yeoman, an indispensable aide who goes everywhere with the Queen and looks after her and her entourage's baggage – which can amount to five tonnes on foreign trips... When [the Queen] travels abroad, her luggage is sealed in tamperproof containers which not even Customs officers are permitted to open... Since becoming sovereign... the Queen[, who]... does not hold a passport... has visited more than 325 countries... The... domestic team which runs the royal residences is led by the Master of the Household – normally a former military [officer] who receives a hefty five-figure salary with rent-free, furnished accommodation thrown in. [The Master] commands a... 300-strong... battalion of staff which includes... a steady stream of unpaid [gals] in waiting – really glorified secretaries. The real nitty gritty of domestic chores falls to the Housekeeper and her... staff. Their duties include such prosaic tasks as letting out the royal bath water... and squeezing toothpaste from the tube with a special silver key to minimise waste... However, the most bizarre job of all must be Royal Vegetable Counter. At every dinner party held by the royal family, a senior catering assistant counts the number of Brussels sprouts on each guest's plate to ensure no one has more than the Queen... Then, there's the Royal Flower Arranger...

[YESTERDAY] THE QUEEN accepted her 3,435,758th bouquet of flowers... And... [j]ust days after creating a furore by wringing a pheasant's neck during a shoot, the QUEEN made a statement by wearing a jaunty hat decorated with, yes, you guessed it, pheasant feathers. Meanwhile... THE QUEEN has registered Sandringham and Balmoral as trademarks in a move which will allow her to sell her own merchandise under their brand names. Among the proposed items for sale are... venison, glassware, household utensils and clothing.

...before... Windsor Plc appears as the financial vehicle to take the British monarchy into the new millennium, an ancient money trail will have to be scrutinised... Almost everything pertaining to the crown has links with other aspects of British life. Some commentators... used words such as "mystical" and "magical" to try to describe ancient relationships that defy rational analysis. This means that even ideas for change which on fairness grounds seem inarguable are not always straight forward. Take the proposal to change the 1701 Act of Settlement that prevents the heir marrying a Catholic. It is, in 1996, an insult to millions of Catholics in Britain... and everywhere else where the Queen still reigns. Yet many see this as the start of the disestablishing of the Church of England. [The Prince of Wales], not his mother, appears to favour this further step... [The Prince – who is known to 'wear a traditional Muslim robe, called the djellaba, while relaxing and studying the *Koran* at home' – would] like to be [called the] "defender of faiths" rather than "defender of the faith." But the consequences of ending the church-crown relationship are hard to foresee. It would dilute the Coronation Act, which depends on mystery for its potency. It would affect the House of Lords, where 26 senior Anglican bishops sit by right. Some observers think that, with its privileged relationship abolished, the C[ofE] – which has heaps of problems of its own – would gradually subside to little more than a sect. What then of the great cathedrals, one of the glories of England? Then there's the even older succession custom... [Changing] the succession system... would mean daughters, when first-born, would succeed to all other titles from great dukedoms down. Many would ask, why not? But it would mean huge opposition from still very powerful vested interests. Another question: if it's absurd to prefer son over daughter, isn't it equally absurd for the first-born automatically to scoop the jackpot. The crown, unlike other inheritances, can't be divided. But if it's to go to the ablest, who decides? It's the financial issues, however, which are most labyrinthine... (the Defence Department, for example, pays... £[8.69m]... for the Queen's flight; the Department of National Heritage... [pays £20.54m] for the upkeep of her palaces)... [After '£1.52m has been refunded to Treasury from the Civil List, £7.9m goes to the Queen, £0.64m goes to her mother and £1.9m is divided between 9 princes, princesses and dukes' – excluding the]... Prince of Wales, [who] is separately funded from revenue earned by the vast Duchy of Cornwall, whose

assets extend far beyond the county of Cornwall itself... [B]efore 1710 the monarch used the [Crown E]state's revenues not just for royal living, but also to fund civilian Government. Government was, of course, rather cheaper then... There has... been some resentment that the Queen and her circle have been talking secretly for some time about a new carve-up of what many feel is really everybody's money. Sooner or later, in this less deferential age, changes will have to be argued openly rather than leaked in what looks like a kite-flying exercise.

...[THE QUEEN is to become the first monarch to pay for her own stamps and postage. Palace postal costs are estimated at \$NZ300,000 a year which, until now, have been met by the British taxpayer.' Her 'financial adviser, the Keeper of the Privy Purse, said the Queen wanted to lighten the load on the taxpayer.' In another development, 'the British Government's top legal adviser has called for a repeal of the ban on Catholics ascending to the throne.']

...Can a Catholic remain a loyal subject to a divorced king? A Catholic theologian... writing in this week's *Catholic Herald*, accused the Queen of setting aside Christian values for "secular moral relativism" in urging her heir... to divorce Di... "The monarchy... has become identified not with order but with instability; not with... Christian ideas of sacrifice and duty but with the quick fix,"... [said the former CoFE] priest who converted to Catholicism... [However, the] assistant secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference... said... "The Church recognises that civil divorce in some situations is the lesser of two evils,"... The debate is a reminder of strained relations between Catholics and the state harking back to King Henry VIII's failure to obtain a Church-sanctioned divorce from Katharine of Aragon. A furious Henry broke from the Roman Church, and established the... [CoFE in 1534. In related news, yesterday the Sydney] throngs who once would have showered the Windsors with adulation... were instead clamouring to cheer the progress of... [the US President. T]he elite were scrambling over each other for a place at the [President's] side... the final affirmation of America's political aristocracy as a new royalty for A[US]ns picking at the remaining shreds of the imperial umbilical cord.

...[the] Republican candidate... d[idn't] have enough royal genes in his ancestry to become the... President... a leading British genealogist said yesterday... after *Burke's Peerage* probed his background for any signs of blue-blooded ancestors. The upper-class bible for Britons checking on their family trees has researched the ancestry of every U[S] President back to George Washington. It said the candidate with the most royal genes has always been the victor. "[The incumbent President had] the advantage in this [year's] election not only because [of being] related to the British royal family through [the 13th century] Simon de Montfort but because [the President] is a direct descendant from Robert I of France,"... [The Republican candidate's] sole link to the blood royal was to the 13th century King Henry III of England through the Harrison family... Through the family, [the Republican candidate] was also related to... President William Henry Harrison, noted for the longest inaugural speech in history delivered in rain, sleet and snow. Harrison died... weeks later in 1841 from pneumonia... "[His]... descent from Henry III is, however, illegitimate."

...[Many believe the reason royals long ago were called blue bloods is because the silver from the goblets, plates and utensils they used would react with acids in their food and drink to affect their skin, giving them a blueish colour – a medical condition called argyria. Silver is a powerful natural antibiotic that has been used for thousands of years, with no harmful side-effects ever observed (earlier this century, people put silver dollars in their milk and wells to ward off spoilage and illness). It has been suggested that one reason the upper class did not succumb to many of the plagues which almost wiped out entire villages was because they used silver utensils. Churches did, and still do, use silver goblets for communion.' By the way, 'most outsiders who marry into the British royal family come in for some criticism (e.g., the Duchess of York), but the Duke of Edinburgh was spared that, in part because his blood lines are more royal than the Queen's own. The duke, who is of German origin, of a Danish royal house transposed to Greece, and sixth in line to the Greek throne, also had an intellectual, inquiring mind which was then so uncharacteristic of the British royal family that the Queen's husband appears to have decided to play it safe and play it down (perhaps an even more striking incongruity is to hear how much the duke would like to have been a theologian – and has published two volumes of argument on theological issues with one of the deans of Windsor; in fact, his great-aunt was a canonised saint – Aunt Ella was thrown down a well by the Bolsheviks during the Russian Revolution and survived three days there, singing hymns – and his mother became a nun.)]

...Researchers from... the Technische Universitat Berlin and... the Plant Protection Research Institute in Stellenbosch, South Africa... discovered that bees have royal blood lines just like the great families of Europe... Queen bees mate with many of the [guys] in a hive, but... the family lines of most [guy bees] die... out after a few weeks. The same families tend... to survive... and [the gal bees who take over come] from these dominant lines.

...A leading authority on titles is unable to support a suggestion that N[Z], and particularly Auckland, is home to large numbers of the European nobility... [Someone] said after a court case in Auckland this week that there were many European bluebloods in N[Z] who kept a low profile. - 1996

A British documentary team claims to have... uncovered a secret marriage of King George III, made before [George] succeeded to the throne and before [his marriage to] Queen Charlotte. The team... found documents which show that the marriage produced two sons, one called George Rex. "In 1797, George Rex sailed into Cape Town and was given a royal warrant... Rumours abounded that [Rex] was the legitimate heir." The programme also interviews a... descendant of George Rex and, as such, is... a rival to [the Prince of Wales] for the British throne.

...The Queen of England can look beyond her own fractured family for more exotic heirs to the throne – all the way to the tiny Pacific atoll of Niue and even to the heart of the All Black backline. A British documentary team has uncovered... King George's clandestine marriage to Yorkshire draper Hannah Lightfoot... which produced... three sons – George, John and Henry. The story goes that the mother and her children were banished to South Africa and given large amounts of money to keep quiet about their royal connections. Although the family were erased from the royal histories they were given the name Rex, which is Latin for king. Later in life the three sons went their separate ways – George stayed in South Africa, Henry went to Utah, and John to A[US, eventually becoming] an early Governor-General... Long-time Niue Premier, the late Sir Robert Rex, and his great-nephew, [the incumbent] All Black centre... apparently have blue blood running back to George... The link is well documented in family circles... [However], the son of... Sir Robert... said his father... never talked about his lineage. His father's books and documents relating to the Rex line were treated as "sacred." While [the son] still lives in Niue, his daughter... is studying in Auckland – one of 300 to 400 descendants of George Rex living in N[Z]. Some descendants... say King George's "madness," thought to be schizophrenia, has been passed down through the generations. The way they play rugby in the Northern Hemisphere suggests that the royal rugby genes developed a good deal later.

...The Queen's English may be coming Down Under... A visiting linguistics expert... says the way N[Z]ers speak English might become the way the rest of the world speaks it. N[Z] English was probably the most recent variant of the language to develop around the world... "Until about 100 years ago there was no such thing as N[Z] English... Take dialects and accents from all parts of the British Isles and place them down on the other side of the world. Stir them around for a couple of generations and a whole new way of talking this language of ours [develops]. It's a pleasant way of speaking English, it's very innovative... particularly in the sound system. N[Z] English seems to be showing the way other varieties of English will be going in the future." ...A study of old broadcasting recordings revealed that N[Z]ers of the 30s, 40s and 50s spoke a very different English to the language uttered today... Kiwis [now] pronounce the short "a" in bat like a short "e." The "i" in kit is becoming more like the "u" in but, while the short "e" vowel is moving towards the short "i" in fit... [Modern NZ]ers tended to say "Sudney" instead of Sydney, and pronounce trap as "trep,"... [L]inguists did not know why this was happening... [However, many NZ]ers are uneasy about their own voices, and increasingly prefer North American... accents... and... the 'dreadful Aussie accent,'... to their own. Research by [an] Otago University anthropologist... looking at how attitudes to N[Z] and other English accents had changed over the past decade, suggests N[Z]ers are still "culturally insecure." His study showed that someone with a broad N[Z] accent is still regarded as a "no-hoper drop-out" or a "cow cocky-labourer type of person."

...The New Zild accent may cause some to cringe but an ace exponent of Kiwi English... the [MP] who strikes fear into the hearts of the elocution police, has spoken out in defence of the Antipodean take on the mother tongue... "I think we're culturally insecure generally, but I don't think our accent is top of the insecure list," said [the MP and ex-radio broadcaster], unashamedly swallowing her vowels. Indeed, the MP's comments rendered phonetically would read, "I think wear cultyourilly insicure genrilly, but I don't think our accint is top of the insicure lust." [The MP] said people should celebrate their accent. "The N[Z] accent is distinctive. What we do with our vowel sounds is completely different to A[US]." ...The Kiwi accent now has such cachet that actors often sound "more N[Z] than anyone actually is,"... An English linguistics expert[']s prediction that NZ English)... was probably how other varieties of English would be spoken in the future... delights [her. "NZ] leads the world in bad pronunciation."

...The Queen is said to have been hurt by the attempt by the [NZ PM to steer his country towards republicanism. A] former cabinet minister... in his biography published yesterday, discloses the topic of a May 1994 executive council meeting attended by himself, fellow National ministers... and the then Governor-General... "The Queen was very disappointed at the [PM's] outburst... Her Majesty thought [the royal family] had a good relationship with N[Z]..." Buckingham Palace declined to comment at the time... but the British Government has always insisted that it is for N[Z] to decide whether the Queen remains its head of state... [The PM accused the former minister] yesterday of breaking his oath. A spokes[person said the PM] was "dismayed and disappointed that [the MP] has decided to break a solemn oath... [sworn] on a Bible when [the MP] became an executive councillor." The sworn oath by members of the executive council... promises not to directly or indirectly reveal matters debated in the council.

...[a gambler convinced that the Queen will abdicate by the end of next year has placed the largest royal bet ever taken. The Welsh punter, aged 50, stands to win £72,500 if the Queen steps down, having placed a £2500 bet. A leading British bookmaker says the royal bet "doesn't usually attract more than £20." Earlier this month, the *Guardian* newspaper called for a referendum to determine whether Britain should become a republic once the Queen dies.]

...friends of the Prince of Wales (who 'was once so deeply depressed by the trauma of his marriage breakup that it was on the brink of suicide – according to the shocking revelations of Lord Goodman, a solicitor and adviser to the royals who died in 1995) say the prince has become convinced it will be the last of the line. "The monarchy will end with me. I don't believe my eldest son will ever be king," the prince recently confided.)

...the Prince of Wales was giving his youngest] son... a few tips in the finer arts of tobogganing at Klosters in the Swiss Alps yesterday. But [the prince] had more serious matters on his mind. British papers quoted him as admitting that [his recent activities] had let the royal family down. [The prince] was responding to a survey that showed... [36%] of... Britons thought [the heir to the throne] would make a bad king... The Mori poll also found that only 8[%] believed the royal family had high moral standards, and only 10[%] thought they were in touch with ordinary people.

...two-thirds of... two million Britons yesterday voted to keep the monarchy after an extraordinary two-hour [TV] talkfest on the future of the ancient institution. Scotland was the only part of the kingdom to vote against it. But many observers believed the fact that Britain's main commercial... network would even hold such an event was in itself another nail in the coffin of the beleaguered royal family. Moreover, the results of a conventional poll conducted as part of the programme indicated widespread unease about the present form of the monarchy and its future after the Queen's death. ITV called its programme *Monarchy – The Nation Decides*, and hyped it as the biggest live debate ever staged on [TV] and a "unique royal referendum." ...3000 people... were taken to a Birmingham convention centre as the live audience. There was a [gal who']d turned her home into a royal shrine, a [guy who's] replayed the Queen's 1995 Christmas message every day since, and another [guy] who venomously denounced the royals as "corrupt parasites." There was also an unidentified [gal] who criticised the Queen "for dissolving A[US]'s Parliament in the 1970s." Facing them was a panel of expert and not-so-expert partisans from both sides of the fence. The heaviest hitter on the royal side was... [a] novelist... who... ended a particularly hammy defence of the Monarch by threatening the republicans with "off with their heads." ...Overall, the... poll... figures were not... unexpected. Despite all the unease about the younger royals, there is... considerable suspicion about the alternatives.

...should [AUS] have an A[US]n head of state, chosen by... [AUSns]? ...The point of a monarchy is that the monarch comes by a sort of genetic lottery. No one decides who is to be King or Queen. Every now and then a baby is born who, barring accidents or inappropriate passions, becomes it. Theoretically, everyone has an equal chance to be born to the job. That, incidentally, is the source of the old doctrine of the divine right of kings – the view that, by being born to the throne, an individual had a mandate from God[– and hence can do no wrong.]

...It has been said that: 'The monarchy and the House of Lords and the honours system are important to the rich because they do prop up and legitimise the class system. However, breeding, as far as people is concerned, is arrant nonsense, with the single exception, maybe, that the more highly bred you are probably the more stupid you are.' 'Sexual excesses and cerebral shortcomings dog the royals', but t]he reforming zeal of some individuals of the Commonwealth concerns me... Human society is a very fragile organisation and much easier to destroy than to improve... I lived 35 years in a country that had suffered from three revolutions during the 20th century... In Russia an unthinkable social experiment was undertaken. The result: the massacre of the best people of two generations, the countless material losses and the collapse of a country which had been established by our fore-fathers over 1000 years. After the ideological blinkers had fallen from our eyes we could compare the facts of our history. It distresses me to realise that before the October Revolution Tsarist Russia was making steady progress in economic development. If the reforms had stopped at constitutional monarchy the outcome would have been different... By comparison with other democratic countries this system is more stable. Nobody who has got to the top by democratic machinations could announce himself the only one capable of expressing the interests of the nation. Those who express dissatisfaction over the behaviour of the members of the royal family do not understand that there is no need to have a super[hu]man king. History knows many examples of famous rulers who were responsible for endless misery for their countries... If a monarch has only average intelligence [that monarch can still fulfill its] role. Having been trained from childhood [an heir] knows about his duty and is prepared for it. [A monarch] does not need to lose his dignity in the search of power. [A monarch] has his "position" for life and hence cares about the results of his activity for the long term, not about what voters might say at the next election... Humanity has experienced throughout history many kinds of government. None is ideal. But it would be possible to suggest that the evolution of the checks and balances of the constitutional monarchy, is still the most acceptable form of government... [Indeed, in his book '*Leviathan*', one of the great classics of political philosophy (whose title refers to a kind of total state, instituted to end the war of every person against every person'), 'British philosopher Thomas Hobbes argued that simple rationality – and his view of human motivation – made absolute monarchy inevitable.'] Is having a sense of history and tradition something to be thrown on the scrap heap? ...The clever learn by the mistakes of others, fools learn by their own mistakes...

EARLY this month, a train arrived at the central railway station in Yekaterinburg pulling a green, armoured wagon containing several heavy safes and some medical equipment. The special car was sent by Russia[']s President... to carry to Moscow the bones of the murdered Czar Nicholas II, his wife, Alexandra, and their children, family physician and servants. The return trip was meant to open the last act in one of Russia's most... painful historical sagas, that of the imprisonment, execution, secret burial, discovery, identification and, finally, reburial of the Romanovs, the country's last imperial family. But local officials refuse to give up the remains. Following much negotiation and the hurling of insults between Moscow and Yekaterinburg authorities, the train left bearing only the bones of Anna Demidova, Alexandra's loyal [gal]-in-waiting. The tug-of-war adds yet one more indignity to the many visited on the family, which in their last moments of life suffered pitiless torment in the basement of an Yekaterinburg mansion. For six years the nine skeletons... [whose] crushed skulls and jaws attest to brutal murders... have been examined for authenticity, and dates for a royal burial have been set and discarded repeatedly... [A] geologist... who was part of a team that discovered the remains [says.] "It is immoral that in six years they have not yet been buried." But some Russians suspect the bones are not authentic and there is debate on the Czar's place in history. This affects burial plans. Politics enters in: Who is to blame for the murders? Was it Lenin or zealous local

officials? Plus the far-flung Romanov family is divided over... how they ought to be buried. And, of course, whoever gets final control of the Czar's remains obtains an instant tourist and pilgrim attraction. So Yekaterinburg, Moscow and St Petersburg, the czarist capital, vie for the privilege.

...I'd arranged for a friend in Manchuria, a professor of history, to... accompany me to... trawl the uncatalogued eunuch records in the Forbidden City[("barbarians" were not allowed to enter this section of Peking until modern times)]. As we entered through the west gate, we passed the hut – derelict now – where desperate boys used to submit themselves for castration. "[90%] success rate," commented the professor approvingly. But how does one judge success if you've lost both your penis and your testicles, your urethra's bunged up with a cork and you're doomed to spend the rest of your life bent and mincing – and leaking so badly that the world can smell you 250 metres away? How could [our target eunuch] Sun... have let himself be castrated when... [aged] eight, by his father, with a shaving knife, in the kitchen[of their] home? Sun, said the professor, came from a poor family. His father was a pancake-seller who had lost a lawsuit and faced bankruptcy. So the boy volunteered to help the family by having himself "cleansed". [Sun] had been tremendously impressed the previous year when a rich and powerful palace eunuch, born in his village, had returned in a cloak of sea-otter, with a retinue of servants and a carriage full of presents, to open a new temple. If that's what a eunuch was, then young Sun was ready for the cut. Alas, [Sun had] left it too late: The days of eunuchs were already over. When at last Sun... was admitted to the imperial service – as a pipe-stoker in the eunuch's opium den, in 1917, aged 15 – the boy Emperor Puyi had already abdicated and the imperial system was slipping into a wretched and decadent limbo, imprisoned within [the Forbidden City's] high walls, while outside China stumbled into the 20th century. In 1924, the Nationalist Army marched into the Forbidden City and, in a bloodless coup, expelled the court – Emperor, Empress, consorts, concubines, eunuchs and all. Many of the eunuchs, facing isolation, even starvation, in the new world outside, leapt to their deaths in the moat; others sought sanctuary in the temples. Sun... never forgot that morning, November 5. "I was working for the Empress at the Palace of Concentrated Purity. The Son of Heaven arrived earlier than usual to play shuttlecock with the Empress, but Her Majesty was still in bed, so I woke her, dressed her quickly and sent her out to play. They had a happy time and when they finished their game they came back to the palace for an apple... The Empress... had taken the first bite when the Nationalist soldiers rushed in to drive us all out of the Forbidden City for ever, and the apple... dropped to the floor, with the Empress's teeth marks still in it." In the mid-'30s... Sun... and seven other young eunuchs rejoined the former Emperor Puyi in the Japanese puppet state of Manchukou. "At first I thought it was a privilege," Sun once recalled, "But soon I realised it was nothing to be proud of. Puyi was very scared of the Japanese and imagined they were trying to poison him. We eunuchs had to taste all his food before [the Emperor] would eat anything." Looking after the Empress was no less demanding. By then the beautiful Wan Rong, abandoned by her boy-loving husband, had resorted to opium. Sun was one of two eunuchs who fed her habit, kneeling to carry her smoking set from one side to the other. [The Empress] died of her addiction in misery and madness in the Everwhite Mountains. [□ When 'China's first emperor died at the age of 47, his wives were buried with him in his tomb, which was built by 700,000 workers, so the emperor wouldn't be lonely on the other side.']

...Li Shuxian, widow of China's last emperor, who began life as the son of heaven and ended it as a gardener to the communists, has died of lung cancer in Beijing... aged 73, according to the Xinhua news agency. [Li] married Aisin Gioro Pu Yi in 1962... [Li] met Pu Yi... while... working as his nurse in a Beijing hospital after the 1949 communist takeover... Pu Yi described [their marriage] in his autobiography... *From Emperor to Citizen*... as the start of a new life. "On May 1, I and my bride... started our own home, and this ordinary home was, to me, something extraordinary,"... Pu Yi... who was known as the Emperor Xuan Tong... ascended the Dragon Throne in 1908 at the age of 2 1/2... but... was deposed in 1911... Pu Yi... was captured by the Russians at the end of... [WW2] and handed over to the communists in 1950... [T]he communists... jailed... [him, then released him] under an amnesty in 1959, [after which Pu Yi] worked... in the Beijing Botanical Gardens... Pu Yi's empress... whom [Pu Yi] married when they were both just 17, died... in an asylum in 1946... Pu Yi[, who] died of cancer in 1967 at the age of 60... also married one consort, who divorced him... two minor consorts[and] kept at least one concubine... At least one half-brother and half-sister of the last emperor are believed to be still alive... The[royal] couple had no children, and Li... once said in an interview that her formerly imperial husband was impotent.

...A soon-to-be-published book claims the Queen [of England and her sister] were artificially conceived because their father, George VI, could not procreate naturally... [I]t took "embarrassing" artificial insemination administered by a doctor... The claims, splashed across the *Express* newspaper in a front-page report, seem likely to spoil celebrations of the Queen Mother's... birthday today.

...A gossip-laden new book about Britain's royal family[, which will be 'banned from being sold in Britain (although Britons will be able to access it via the Internet')], lands this week in [US] bookstores, rushed ahead of schedule... [Its author is said to be] unhappy with the decision to move up the publication of *The Royals* – 502 pages of the family's alleged sexual dalliances, closeted homosexuality, questionable birthrights, domestic violence, drug abuse and bad taste jokes... A few of the juiciest tidbits benefit from a clever backhanded introduction. For example... "No evidence has been found to verify the suspicion" that a royal family member was the illegitimate child of a Welsh maid.

...the... *Mirror* newspaper[has] quoted an unidentified aide to the Prince of Wales as saying [the Prince] was enraged by opinion polls commissioned by the media after his ex-wife Diana's death... [which] showed that many people wanted him to step aside as heir to the throne in favour of... [his eldest son – who] is claimed, on the basis of no evidence, to have qualities his father does not. It is assumed [the boy] is more like his mother, more charismatic. The people are no longer prepared to wait. They want an instant star, a boy king, even if it means pushing aside the once-adored Queen and her son. There is no appreciation that this break in succession to suit the public... would undermine the whole meaning of the monarchy... "The monarchy is hereditary, not something that can be passed over on a whim..." ...The aide also said [the Prince] believed that the commissioning of polls was a calculated attempt to whip up public feeling against him. Meanwhile, [the Prince's girlfriend]... is seeking legal action to stop two photographers from stalking her... [The girlfriend] has complained that the freelance photographers have made her life a living hell by pestering her at her new home. Her [boyfriend] fully supports her actions.

...the] warts-and-all expose book about the royal family will be available in N[Z] next month... *The Royals* is being printed in... [AUS] and will... sell... for \$34.95... However, Whitcoulls may refuse on moral grounds to stock... the book... In the past the company had refused, on moral grounds, to stock *Sex*, [a coffee table] photographic tribute to erotic arts... Whitcoulls' subsidiary, London Bookshops, will sell the *The Royals*...

Embarrassment may have led N[Z] police to play down [a local] assassination attempt on the Queen, says a friend of the anti-monarchist... "It was beyond their ability to accept that some lad from Dunedin, their home town, was capable of even having the thought of wanting to shoot a member of the royal family,"... [However, police] yesterday denied they covered up [the anti-monarchist's] plans to kill the Queen in 1981, saying her life was never in danger... Nevertheless, police regarded [the anti-monarchist] as a high risk and tracked him during royal visits – including banishing him to Great Barrier Island when the Queen visited two years ago... His internment was concealed at the time... Dunedin police found drawings and plans which [the anti-monarchist] hatched to kill the Queen in the Dunedin Octagon. On the day, [the anti-monarchist] changed his mind and went to the top of a building in the university and museum area. Frustrated... [at not obtaining] a clear line of sight because [of being] too far away and blocked by buildings, [the anti-monarchist] fired a shot into the ground. In his statement, [the anti-monarchist] said: "I couldn't be bothered any longer waiting for the Queen so I... [aimed] the rifle... at... nothing in particular and fired... I have no idea where the Queen was when I fired the shot."

...[*Royal security alerts* A leaked report reveals 6000 mentally unstable people have stalked the royals since 1994. London's Metropolitan Police is responsible for guarding the Queen and other major royals through its Special Operation 14 squad, part of the Royalty and Diplomatic Protection Department. Of the department's 450 staff, 50 protect the royals at their houses. The Special Escort Service protects them when on the move. All are accurate shooters and expert close-combat fighters. Even this level of security cannot protect the royals all the time – as the following incidents show:

1966: The Queen's car falls victim to a block of concrete while in Belfast. Armour plating protects her. 1974: Attempted kidnapping of the Princess Royal in London. SO14 members overpower the gang. 1981: 6 shots fired at the Queen during Trooping the Colour. Soldiers grab the culprit. 1982: An intruder famously manages to get into the Queen's bedroom. Queen raises alarm after chatting to him. 1994: A demonstrator fires a starting pistol at the Prince of Wales in Sydney, AUS. Bodyguard immediately steps in front of prince. In the past 12 months an AUSn writer has paraglided into the grounds of Buckingham Palace (it was arrested immediately) and an intruder triggered the alarm system after climbing the 3-metre railings at Buckingham Palace'...

Yesterday] **Buckingham Palace... forecast spending in 1998-99... [at] £42 m... – a cut of 39[%] over eight years earlier...** [The palace also] **squashed speculation that the Queen is planning to abdicate...** "It's an extraordinary idea, abdication, generation-skipping. It isn't going to happen,"...

It was 50 years ago today that the Duke of Edinburgh... and... [the then] heir to the [British throne became husband] and wife. The couple's golden wedding anniversary was the occasion for members of the local monarchist league to kick up their heels. This they did last Saturday evening with a concert at the Anglican Cathedral, which featured music appropriate to the occasion – ...a handbell ensemble. It seemed as good a time as any to talk to the members of the world's most far-flung royalist group and wonder whether they didn't feel as if they were pushing a heavy barrow. Not at all, says the league's articulate and unflappable spokes[person]... "In fact, we're not pushing anything. We are just advancing the status quo. It's not for us to justify the monarchy, it's for those who want to change it to justify change and say why it should be."

...six European kings and eight queens... gathered in London yesterday for a theatrical celebration of... [the Queen of England's] golden wedding anniversary. The Queen, wearing a shimmering gold gown, and [her husband] were serenaded by love songs at a glittering gala concert around a Shakespearian theme of courtship and marriage at the Royal Festival Hall... The concert came at the end of the first two days of celebration. Earlier the Queen and [Duke] were guests of honour at a banquet hosted by the Lord Mayor of London at the historic Guildhall... [To]night... the royal couple and representatives of heads of state from around the world... attend a special anniversary service at Westminster Abbey...

The Queen marked her golden wedding anniversary yesterday with a pledge to respond more closely to what Britons tell her. After a thanksgiving service at Westminster Abbey, where... [the Queen was] married in 1947, the Queen looked back over her marriage and spelled out her vision of the future... "I believe that there is an air of confidence in this country of ours just now. I pray that we, people, government and royal family, for we are one, can prove it to be justified and that Britain will enter the next millennium... [as] a truly United Kingdom." ...[the banquet was] hosted by... Britain's 10th [PM] since the Queen took the throne... The [PM], who has urged the House of Windsor to be less aloof and adapt to a more caring Britain, told her: "You are our Queen. We respect you and cherish you. You are simply the best of British." ...In the evening, the Queen hosted a ball for her royal guests at Windsor Castle, which has been meticulously restored after a huge fire in 1992.

...Windsor Castle has opened its doors to the public for the first time since the completion of a £37 million... restoration... It has been completed five years ahead of schedule and £5 million under forecast. Windsor... is the Queen's favourite residence. But there was an outcry when it was suggested after the blaze that the restoration should be carried out at public expense. Instead the Queen agreed to fund the work and opened Buckingham Palace to the public each summer to raise money. Extra funding came from public works grants. Nine of the state rooms were left unrecognisable by the blaze, which started in the former Chapel Royal during general maintenance work at the castle. These rooms include the 55.5m St George's banqueting hall, which has a new hammer beam oak ceiling, prepared from 140 trees, to replace the destroyed Georgian ceiling[, and the castle now has a 'laser fire alarm system'. The Queen's youngest son's]... Ardent Productions has chronicled its restoration... for a television documentary... The Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York tell... their memories of the devastating fire in the programme. The Queen was not interviewed... [but, according to her youngest son, the restoration – which involved '4000 craftspeople from 200 specialist companies' – was "[quite simply the greatest project of its kind ever undertaken,"... [● The British Government has commissioned a new royal yacht for £60 million, with tax-payers footing the bill. One MP described it as being "good for the prestigious image of Great Britain, and [for Britain's shipyards] – because] building the new yacht will create hundreds of jobs in an industry which has shrunk by two-thirds since the mid-sixties." ...[but s]ome designers believe private investment would have produced a more luxurious vessel and cost the taxpayer less. "You're going to get [a] ship that's going to be upstaged by... ships... own[d]... by many other people around the world including the leaders of other countries who are far smaller and less significant than ourselves and that, I think, is a bad sign for our country."

...The royal yacht Britannia is set for a reprieve from the scrapyards in a... \$[NZ]127 million... refit financed by private firms under a novel "timeshare" scheme. The... elegant three-masted symbol of a once mighty empire... [which] has steamed more than one million miles in her career... was due to be decommissioned at the end of 1997 but Britain's... Labour Government... may now opt for a complete refit that could give the yacht a 20-year lease of life... The ship could pay for herself [by] being rented out to firms for up to 70 days at a time. But the royal family would have first call on her. With her crew of 236... Britannia cost British taxpayers about £8 million a year to run.

...The Queen has agreed to abandon plans to replace or overhaul Britain's 44-year-old royal yacht Britannica after the government decided it would cost too much... [E]ven if private finance could be found for either a new yacht or a refit, annual running costs would be \$NZ30 million.

...The future of Britannica, which is to be decommissioned at a ceremony attended by the Queen and [Duke of Edinburgh] at Portsmouth on December 11, has still to be decided. Suggestions range from a museum to an exhibition or conference centre... [The Queen's daughter] has called for the... yacht... to be scuttled at sea... The Princess said it would be impossible for anyone to maintain the yacht in its present pristine condition... "Do you realise that the brasses are cleaned every day – not every month or every week... Nobody could do that,"... [the Princess confessed when speaking to] *The News*, Portsmouth's local paper... The... yacht... received an emotional welcome when it sailed into Portsmouth for the last time last weekend, following its farewell tour of British ports...

Britannica will be sold for less than £100,000... – its scrap value – when it takes up its final berth in either Edinburgh or Manchester... [T]he ship, which hosted the Queen's honeymoon and that of [the Prince of Wales], was to be sold off cheaply to allow its new owners to spend properly on its upkeep... Its gleaming brasses... polished woodwork, and... distinctive deep blue paintwork, would have to be properly safeguarded... said... [the] Minister of Defence... The royal family has not yet decided whether it will lend furniture and other items when it goes on public display.

...The Queen disembarked from... Britannica for the last time yesterday... Officers... stood to attention on deck as a sombre-looking Queen, who wiped away a tear, and her family left the 6000-tonne vessel, which... has sailed... the equivalent of more than 40 times round the world.

...It is one of the most exclusive clubs in the country, probably the world. The Order of Merit was founded by Edward VII in 1902 and ranks among the highest orders of chivalry. The award is restricted to 24 people from all walks of life who are judged to be top achievers. And the honour is the personal gift of the sovereign... [One person unlikely to ever be honoured is Dodi's father, who] is set to construct a glass pyramid on... HARRODS... roof where... the store's... [owner] intends to lie after his death... like an ancient Pharaoh. Many will see the bizarre scheme as a snub to the Establishment which has, so far, refused to grant him a British passport. The Egyptian tycoon, I can reveal, intends to invest an estimated £20 million in the project. It will include a vast Valley Of The Kings escalator to take shoppers up to his... tomb... "When I go, I will be mummified... I will be lying down in the pyramid so that anyone can come and visit me upstairs and look at me, where my soul, my spirit, all the time, can filter down." The canny entrepreneur, who bought Harrods in 1985... is currently engaged in a bitter war with the Conservative Party over cash-for-questions... allegations... [The owner of Harrods] contributed to the defeat of the Conservatives in the May 1 British elections... [because of the allegations that the owner] had paid senior Conservatives to ask questions for him in Parliament.

...[a] British business tycoon has issued a series of High Court writs accusing the Harrods owner... of offering him a \$US17 million... bribe... and ownership of the royal shirtmakers Turnbull and Asser if... the [tycoon]... would lie to a parliamentary select committee to support the London

department store owner's allegations against the former Home Secretary... [The Harrods owner claimed the Home Secretary] once accepted a \$US2.5 million bribe from [the tycoon] to start an official investigation into the[1985] takeover of Harrods. There had been a bitter ownership battle for the top store between [the tycoon] and the Egyptian multi-millionaire... [The tycoon] also alleges... security staff [employed by the Egyptian] plundered his safe-deposit box at Harrods looking for documents that could be used to blackmail him to back the allegations against... [the Home Secretary. The Egyptian has denied all] the allegations... Scotland Yard is investigating... [In further news from Britain, 'this week the Government announced a funding freeze for the royal family which froze payments until 2011 and required the Queen to pay for her own porters, cleaners, 100th birthday telegrams and golden jubilee celebrations'...

'The Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations in 2002 may be sponsored by (horror!) an ice-cream manufacturer. Around \$NZ\$85 million is needed, and established firm Wall's may put it up – in exchange for its logo appearing on stands around London.'

...as the Queen plans 'for her 50th Jubilee tour of NZ, a journalist's three-part series at last reveals the real Queen. Today: Who does the Queen love more, her kids or her corgis? THE Queen's ancient retainer chose his words carefully. "I think I could say," ventured the Crown Equerry in charge of the Royal Mews, "that, like myself, Her Majesty prefers animals to human beings. For one thing, they don't talk as much." How astonishing, I remarked to her assistant private secretary, that after decades of state visits and walkabouts, the Queen should still be better at dealing with horses than people. "The Queen is just as good with dogs," retorted the secretary drily. The Queen's preference for four-legged creatures is obvious to all those who know her well. Asked by a courtier 30 years ago what the Queen missed most when it went abroad, the Queen replied, "The dogs." For the Queen, remarked a veteran gal-in-waiting, "it has always been dogs and horses first, even before the children". "The Queen talks to the dogs when you're there, but not to you," complained one of the Queen Mother's gals-in-waiting, and if anyone, including herself, is bitten by one of her dogs, the Queen makes it plain that it is never the animal's fault. Courtiers who care nothing for either dogs or horses often feel thoroughly beached in the royal palaces. "At Windsor weekends," sighed one of the Queen's former private secretaries, "there is no conversation except about horses. They ride it, race it, drive it and talk about it incessantly from morning till night. If you know nothing about the horse, you're useless. At Buckingham Palace, thank God, the conversation is more about politics, but that's not to say there's no horse talk." In all this, of course, the Queen is little different from any number of other countrygals. In her case, however, the fact that the Queen is infinitely more at ease with animals than with people has a deeper significance than mere natural preference. For a person who is so constantly surrounded by people that it scarcely knows what privacy is, and, who, for well over four decades, has been the principal player in a seemingly endless round of ceremonial duties, it is not too much to say that her dogs and horses have helped to keep her sane. With them, this flawlessly, obsessively dutiful monarch who feels that it must watch every word it speaks and must never in public allow the mast of regality to slip, can be entirely herself. With them, the Queen has no role to play, no dangerous, revealing words to stifle. "The animals are not going to repeat what the Queen says – they don't even remember it, so they can be trusted," said a former private secretary. Dogs and horses, what is more, neither know nor care who the Queen is. So, with them, all the trappings of monarchy and human expectation fall from her burdened shoulders and the Queen becomes, for an hour or two, an ordinary person. "One of the Queen's problems," said the widow of a much-loved courtier, "is that nobody, except her husband, can be quite themselves when they are with her. The day you're natural with the Queen is the end of the monarchy. If you were not to get butterflies in your stomach when you met her, the Queen would be just an ordinary person. But how awful it must be when nobody can be themselves with you." Even her favourite private secretary, the late Lord Charteris, that most unselfconscious guy, told me that it had never been able to forget that his boss was the Queen. The same goes even for regular guests at Balmoral. "There are times when I've been almost totally relaxed in her presence there," said one, "but, even then, you'd still be minding your Ps and Qs. The Queen enjoys being teased but you'd hesitate to risk doing it. You're always second-guessing yourself in that way, because it would be so awful if it went wrong."

... 'Ten months of the year are spent preparing the grounds of Balmoral for the Royal family's annual visit. Not only must the formal gardens around the house be neat and tidy – with fresh bedding plants in the borders and stands of fuchsias and pelargoniums around the entrances – but the kitchen garden must be primed to produce a constant supply of vegetables and fruit for the royal table, as well as a succession of cut flowers and potted plants. "It's not easy working to such high standards so far north," says the head gardener'...

You can visit Balmoral, the[British royal] family's Scottish home, when the royals aren't there. It's a bleak mock-Gothic pile, surrounded by dark, claustrophobic woods. The gardens are not large, but they are filled with memorials to the royals erected by other royals... The concerns of the outside world seem a long way away... [Incidentally,] the Queen... takes 18 to 19 weeks' holiday each year.

...the... Windsor family... live by the support of the masses. Put bluntly, it is the Queen's job to understand her people quite as well as the editor of the *Sun* does, and, unlike the editor of the *Sun*, to understand which of their instincts deserve respect. If [the Queen doesn't, it] should employ people who do. But [the Queen] never has. Everything that we hear from Buckingham Palace suggests that [the Queen] is surrounded by stupid, blind, stuffy, self-promoting, rivalrous, gin-drinking courtiers who haven't realised that a modern constitutional monarch exists no longer by right but only by consent and free will... [L]ast week... the *Independent*, said: "Something[has] snapped... in the relationship between throne and subjects. For the first time in modern history the Crown[has] been[] openly challenged and forced to respond quickly and ignominiously to the people..." ...Even now they probably have little idea of how perilous their position has become. The last great crisis the Windsors faced was the Abdication[– when a] playboy king, enamoured... with a range of ghastly political views, made way for a [king] of impeccable dullness.

...The Boring Institute in New York has issued its annual list of the 10 most boring celebrities. Top was [a] lesbian actress... closely followed by the British royal family.

...THE Queen is set to screen her Christmas TV message live in a bid to show the monarchy is moving with the times... Viewing figures have been slipping and executives hope the new format will bring in larger audiences... TV bosses and Royal aides believe [the Queen] comes across much better in live performances... but going live will mean breaking into her family's own festivities... In previous years the Queen recorded her speech a few days before transmission.

...Many of those who became Queens of Britain must have wished they had not... one or two others went mad... "For Queens... there was the pressure of the double standard. A King was allowed to take mistresses, bring them to Court, acknowledge and ennoble their children. A Queen must either be very chaste, very clever or very rash; for infidelity... was treason, and the penalty was severe," says... *Queens of Britain*... The bad news for Queens starts with Queen Isabella of Angouleme, who married King John in 1200 at the age of 14. The king was besotted with Isabella but also, sadly for her... insanely jealous. Once when [John] suspected – without much reason – that [Isabella] had taken a lover, [the king had the alleged lover] hanged, and his corpse suspended over her bed. Isabella was later accused of treason, fled to a French abbey and took refuge in a "secret chamber"... for two years until her death in 1246... Another Isabella – of France, Queen to Edward II – took part in an even gorier saga. [Isabella II] is widely thought to have organised the murder of her husband – a homosexual – who was impaled on a red hot poker. Her son Edward III succeeded him. Edward III then had his mother's lover, Roger Mortimer, hanged at Tyburn. Joanna of Navarre, Queen to Henry IV, survived her husband but after his death her son, Henry V, had her arrested in 1419 on a charge of being a witch. [Joanna] was kept in close confinement and stripped of all her possessions, even spare clothes. Later her son, dying of dysentery, relented and had her released. The Kings of England were a randy lot, always on the lookout for extra-marital activity. When Elizabeth Woodville was asked by Edward IV to be his mistress, her reply was almost exactly what Anne Boleyn said years later to Henry VIII: "My liege, I know I am not good enough to be your Queen, but I am far too good to be your mistress." ...[Anne] became the Queen... Henry's first wife... Katharine of Aragon, who married Henry... in 1509, couldn't provide him with a... [son] so was ousted from Court, had her jewels confiscated and was not allowed to see her daughter, Mary. [Katharine] was banished to

“grey and cold” Kimbolton Castle, and died there in 1536 still in love with [Henry]. His second wife was nowhere near as fortunate. Anne Boleyn married Henry in 1533 and had only three years left to live. Had [Anne] given Henry an heir [Anne] might have lived longer. [Instead Anne] bore him a daughter – who became the famed Elizabeth [I] – then suffered a miscarriage. But it was late enough in the pregnancy for [a penis] to be seen in the embryo. No fool, [Anne] remarked: “I have miscarried of my saviour.” But at the worst [Anne] could only have anticipated divorce... “It was her misfortune that divorce was a word Henry was heartily sick of. [So Henry] accused Anne of adultery...” But unless [Anne] had gone stark raving bonkers, would [Anne] have committed adultery with no fewer than five [lovers, one of whom was] a musician at courts, another her own brother? ...in *England under the Tudors*, [it says] of the ill-fated Queen: “Anne and five [guys] were put to death by due process of law because the king wished to marry again. Of all the victims of Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn... has had almost no sympathy; yet by her death and the manner of it [Anne] deserves it. Henry had now so far discarded scruple, that to get his way [Henry] was prepared to appear as a cuckold and a victim of witchcraft.” On May 17 1536, Archbishop Cranmer declared Anne’s marriage to Henry void, two days later... [Anne] was beheaded not by the axe but by a sword wielded by an expert imported from France for the task. Told of this and assured there would be hardly any pain [Anne] said: “I have heard that the executioner is very good. And I have a little neck.” ...on May 30 Henry married Jane Seymour. After Jane’s death – in her bed, not on the block – it took two years for Henry to find another wife. [Gals] of high position were, not surprisingly, a little chary of a liaison with the King... One, according to legend, responded to his approach: “Had I two heads I would risk it, having only one I dare not.” Catherine Howard did dare and became his fifth wife. [Catherine] has been described as a “beautiful, vivacious, tiny girl of 20” but proved to be “a silly, wanton, sex-hungry girl who was willing to risk her head for pleasure that her husband could not provide in the abundance... desired.” ...in *Royal Heritage*, [it says]: “Foolishly misled by the torrent of presents the King deluged her with, [Catherine] behaved with complete indiscretion. This was even more foolish because [Catherine] was a Catholic. Presented with the unsavoury facts about the Queen’s behaviour by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the King’s idolatry turned to hate.” Much of the evidence against her was rigged, much obtained after the [guys] allegedly involved were tortured. [Catherine] was beheaded in the Tower, at the same place and on the same block as Anne... Her ghost is said to haunt a gallery in Hampton Court. Caroline of Ansbach was treated like a Queen by George II, but even so [George] played around a bit. There is a rumour [that Caroline] hand-picked his mistresses, making sure they were uglier than herself. On her deathbed in 1737 [Caroline murmured that George] should marry again. In a reply that scored full marks for honesty and zero for tact, the king replied: “No, I shall have mistresses.” Another Caroline – of Brunswick – was queen to George IV. Once popular, a series of affairs in Italy turned the public against her. London crowds on one occasion jeered: “Go back to Italy”. When George was to be crowned in 1823, Caroline, not unreasonably, thought [the future Queen] would be a part of the ceremony. [Caroline] turned up at Westminster Abbey only to [have] the doors... slammed in her face... on the King’s orders... “As [Caroline] tried this entrance and then that, the crowd... hooted and laughed. Utterly humiliated, [Caroline] went home and within 19 days was dead. Most accounts agree that the final rebuff broke her heart.” Alexandra of Denmark, Queen to Edward VII, put up with his infidelities. As [the King lay dying, the Queen] made... a gesture of “exceptional magnitude”. “[The King] had a number of mistresses, the actress Lillie Langtry among them, but his current love was a Mrs Keppel. Alexandra sent for her to be at his bedside. What further proof of love could a... [Queen give?]” While on the topic of British queens, the current one[’s youngest son] – who once said ‘you have no idea how precious anonymity is until you’ve lost it’ – has won a \$6.25 million deal to host his own show on... [US] TV. The... 33-year-old’s production company is to make... six... documentaries on famous US families... The Prince was signed up after CBS bosses were impressed by his programmes on the Royal family[. At the top of the list of prospective targets for the Prince is likely to be ‘a dynasty so powerful that people all over this planet call them America’s royal family. Booze, drugs, sex scandals, a rape trial, murder, assassination, that’s America’s longest-running soap opera – Camelot. The dynasty started with a ruthless, whisky-smuggling, wheeler-dealer who flaunted his mistress right in front of his wife; who taught his boys that if you had money and power, the opposite sex were there for the taking. Not even your own wife could stop you. John learned dad’s lesson well. As a senator and then president, John flaunted countless affairs in his wife’s face. But America never knew about his wild sex life. It was shamefully covered up by the star-struck White House press. John knowingly shared one lover with a Chicago mafia boss who ended up with a bullet in his head. Ironically, while JFK partied with a gang mole, his brother Bobby – the Attorney-General – was screaming about wiping out the mob. And the brother’s were sharing Marilyn Monroe. Marilyn died of a drug overdose. Some called it suicide. Some say Marilyn was killed because the actress had threatened to go public about the Kennedy’s. The dynasty started to crash and burn in the ’60s. JFK was assassinated, then Bobby. JFK’s widow, Camelot’s pretty princess, horrified millions of admirers with her marriage to a crude, toad-like Greek billionaire, 23 years her senior, her non-stop shopping spree, and her laughter during his funeral 7 years later.’ Editor’s note: *Camelot* was ‘the seat of the legendary court of King Arthur. Some historians believe Arthur was a chieftain who led the Britons against Anglo-Saxon invaders and died at the Battle of Camlan, A.D. 537. First mentioned in early Welsh and Celtic literature, the warrior king evolved through song and story into the noble Christian monarch described in the famous *Morte d’Arthur*, by Sir Thomas Malory. Arthur ruled wisely and well with his unfaithful queen, Guinevere, who became the mistress of Lancelot, the most renowned knight of the Round Table. The story as told in *Morte d’Arthur* describes her as the daughter of the king of Cameliod. After Arthur’s death Guinevere retired into a nunnery’...

USers ‘have always secretly wanted their own posh set of royals – so much so they had to invent their own with the creation of the Kennedy’s Camelot.’ ...[JFK] had a secret, never annulled 1947 marriage to a Palm Beach socialite plus scores of love affairs that were escalating in his last days in the White House, according to a new book... The book, *The Dark Side of Camelot*, also alleged that the late President had close ties to organised crime, paid up to \$US2 million... in bribes to win a key 1960 primary and was heavily involved in plots to kill the President of Cuba... The book... to be published today... quoted... Secret Service agents as saying... that... [JFK] had suffered from venereal disease for more than 30 years. - 1997

Nine years into US President Kennedy’s official first union, with Jackie Bouvier, rumours began circulating of an earlier marriage to [a]blonde Chicago divorcee... JFK admitted dating her twice but friends have recalled a marriage ceremony on July 12, 1947. As the story goes, JFK’s powerful father Joe used his clout to make the records of the wedding to the twice-divorced [blonde ‘disappear’.

...a] Kennedy cousin... has been convicted of beating neighbour Martha Moxley to death in 1975 when they were 15 – a crime that opened a window on to a world of privilege and raised suspicions that his family ties had protected him. [The cousin] could get 10 years to life in prison for murder... Martha’s battered body was discovered under a tree on her family’s estate in the gated Greenwich, Connecticut, community of Belle Haven. [Martha] had been bludgeoned with a golf club – later traced to a set owned by [the cousin’s] mother – and stabbed in the neck with the shaft of the club. According to testimony, [the cousin] had a crush on Martha and got upset his attractive blonde neighbour seemed more interested in his older brother... an early suspect in the slaying. Prosecutors had a... case with no eyewitnesses and no forensic evidence such as DNA that could directly connect [the cousin] to the slaying. Instead, the case was based almost entirely on people who said they had heard [the cousin] confess over the years. Among them were several former classmates of [the cousin’s] from the Elan School, a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre in Poland Spring, Maine... The defence argued that Elan students were berated and beaten until they told administrators what they wanted to hear.

...The KENNEDY clan has made a move to end the bitter dispute with the parents of CAROLYN BESSETTE over compensation for the air crash involving their two daughters and JFK JNR. The family has offered... over \$30 million as a final settlement. But... [Carolyn’s parents], aware JFK Jnr’s estate was worth more than \$535 million, are holding out for more. They want \$51 million or they’ll bring an embarrassing wrongful death suit to court... [Speaking of family feuds, the British Queen’s eldest and youngest sons] are barely on speaking terms after the extraordinary row over filming [the Prince of Wales’ eldest son] during his first week at University. The Earl of Wessex... was forced to apologise after his

company, Ardent Productions Limited, broke a media agreement and allegedly “stalked” [his nephew] at St Andrews in... Scotland, while making *The A-Z of Royalty*, a programme for American cable television... [The Prince of Wales] was said to be “incandescent with rage” and telephoned [his brother], with one newspaper claiming [the Prince of Wales] demanded, “How could you be such an idiot?” ...[the answer is perhaps supplied by] the publisher of *Burke’s Peerage*, [who] says... “The simple fact is that [the earl] is not very intelligent. [The earl] wouldn’t have survived for five minutes on his own ability. [The earl]’s not very talented at anything in particular, yet... can be amazingly arrogant and wants to be treated like royalty when it suits...”

...Buckingham Palace last night angrily condemned as “premeditated cruelty” publication of a topless picture of [the] royal bride-to-be... in a British tabloid. The *Sun* splashed a photograph of a TV presenter... yanking her bikini top to reveal her breast. Rival newspapers claimed the *Sun* paid up to \$750,000 for the photo... [taken] more than 10 years ago... [The bride-to-be] said the scandal would ruin her wedding to the Queen’s youngest son... “This has ruined my engagement. This [wedding] was supposed to be the happiest day of my life,” the *Daily Mail* quoted [her]... as saying. It said [the bride-to-be] felt “utter betrayal” at the expose and [the fiancée] was “totally disgusted and livid.”

...They may have impeccable pedigree, but even the royal family are not averse to helping the camera lie. [The r]oyal photographer... admits [it] doctored photos of... [the Earl of Wessex’s] wedding because... the... [Prince of Wales’ eldest son] looked too glum. But now it has emerged that the... [family] all got the beauty treatment normally reserved for supermodels when they appear on the covers of glossy magazines. “[The earl didn’t think the Prince of Wales’ eldest son] looked absolutely his best... [f]or the official photograph of the groom’s family with the newlyweds... so digitally we were able to put in another picture of him from one of the other shots where [the prince] is smiling and laughing,” said [the photographer]... But wedding pictures issued yesterday underwent further tinkering. [The Prince of Wales’ younger son]’s doleful look became a cheerful smile; the Duke of Edinburgh was given a more open smile and his head was moved to the right to give a clearer view of the Duke of Gloucester behind him. The Prince of Wales’ open-mouthed look was swapped for his more usual lopsided smile... the Duchess of Kent’s strained expression became a happy grin... the Princess Royal’s daughter... look[s] at the camera... [the] bridesmaid... aged 5, no longer looks glum[, the Princess Royal]’s son... and[the] pageboy... have improved smiles, and the Queen looks directly into the camera, her smile replaced by a more regal gaze.

...The Earl and Countess of Wessex are deep in right royal troubles. Hot on the heels of the... ‘sheikh’... tape scandal, [the earl] and his public relations queen wife are once again in the news following revelations they are living beyond their modest means... Between them, the royal pair earn \$[NZ]960,000 a year – many times more than most Brits – but their outgoings are a whopping \$4.15 million. The \$3.19 million shortfall is mainly due to the enormous repair job needed to keep... their elaborate 57-room residence, Bagshot Park, which has been... [their] home since they married... running, and the Crown is footing the bill. Taxpayers are peeved that they have to shell out for [the earl] and his wife to live in the lap of luxury... What galls the British public even more is the fact that the couple have rented the property from the Crown for a fraction of what it would cost anyone else. On the open market... the biggest private home of any member of the nobility... would come with a price tag of \$45 million... but thanks to the fact that his mother, the Queen, is the landlord, the Wessexes are living in a palace for a pauper’s fee – \$3000 a week. “A business would pay at least \$1.5 million a year to turn it into a prestigious company headquarters...,” says a leading real estate agent... [The earl] signed a secret 50-year lease on Bagshot Park in 1997, planning to use the estate’s stables as a base for his television company, Ardent, but now the English taxpayers are calling for the details of the agreement to be made public and want justification for the alleged \$6 million shelled out by the Ministry of Defence for renovations of the former Army property. The company responsible for doing up the mansion has recently gone under as a bill for extra renovations demanded by [the earl] totalling almost \$2 million remains unpaid. They blame the [earl]’s “dithering”... Although [the earl and countess] have always prided themselves on being ordinary working folk, it would seem they may need to start cutting costs to keep themselves out of the red. It is no secret that [the earl]’s business pursuits have been less than fruitful and the recent dramas surrounding [his wife]’s company will no doubt have an impact on her end-of-year returns, meaning the couple may have to bid farewell to their lavish living quarters.

...*Royal couple on strike*... [The Earl of Wessex] and his wife, [who]... receive £141,000... a year from the state to compensate them for costs incurred while on royal duties... have boycotted public royal duties for the rest of the year in protest at the way a probe ordered by the Queen into their finances is being conducted, Britain’s *Observer* newspaper reported yesterday. The inquiry came after... the... Countess... embarrassed the royal family by admitting to an undercover journalist there was an “unspoken benefit” for the clients of her public relations firm as a result of her royal status. [The countess] also made indiscreet comments about... [the British MP.] his wife... and... the Queen...

If Edward VII had chosen the crown instead of Mrs Simpson, [his niece]’s life would have been that of a minor royal enjoying country pleasures, moderate comfort and privacy. But... Edward... didn’t... Head of state in Britain and 15 other Commonwealth nations, [Britain’s Queen] signs bills passed by parliaments. In Britain, where [the monarch] reigns but does not rule, [the Queen] is entitled to see government papers and be briefed by the P[M. The Queen] opens parliaments and buildings, patronises charities, represents Britain on state visits overseas and aims to be the non-party political focus of national unity. “I have a feeling that, in the end, training is the answer to a great many things,” [the Queen] says. “You can do a lot if you have been properly trained. And I hope I have been.” ...Latest estimates suggest [the Queen] is worth \$[NZ]825 million but this does not include royal palaces, art and other treasures from the Royal Collection, heirloom jewellery and the Crown jewels, all of which are held by her as sovereign and not as an individual. If these were included, it is said [that the Queen] would have a fortune of more than \$39 billion. [The Queen] receives a private income from the Duchy of Lancaster – an estate held in trust for the sovereign since 1399 – which amounts to approximately \$17.1 million a year... The[other] modern queens of Europe [also] are... formidable force[s] of... wealth... and... influence...

The late Queen Wilhelmina... blocked a refugee centre for Jews fleeing the Nazis... *De Telegraaf* said... yesterday... [The] director of Westerbork, a Nazi camp-turned-museum – discovered a March 14, 1939, letter from the Queen in which [Wilhelmina] objected to plans to house Jewish refugees near the Het Loo palace in the central Netherlands. “The monarch didn’t want any Jews in her backyard,”... The refugee camp was proposed for a tract of land within 12km of the palace... After... Wilhelmina... lodged her protest, the Dutch national tourism agency also complained, saying a refugee camp would disrupt the atmosphere of the area and discourage campers and other visitors. The Royal House could not be reached for comment yesterday... Wilhelmina, the grandmother of [the current Dutch] Queen, sealed her place in history by serving as a symbol of hope for the Dutch during five harsh years of Nazi occupation... [By the way, a son and mother] are attempting to establish themselves as rightful monarchs of European Christendom... [The son] has changed his name by deed poll to incorporate a huge glob of text that reads... “His Imperial and Royal Highness Prince...” There’s not really space to write... all... of ...his... self-aggrandisement... here[, but the son]’s also persuaded his mother to adopt a similar identity. It’s all part of their masterplan to claim the titles and privileges of Charlemagne, and make Teddington, a leafy suburb of south-west London, the centre of a new Holy Roman Empire... Founded in AD 800... the Holy Roman Empire expanded from an initial powerbase in the German states to encompass territories in Italy, Bohemia and Burgundy. It also claimed sovereignty over lands east of the Balkans, although nobody east of the Balkans ever took much notice. Voltaire’s remark that it was “neither holy, nor Roman, nor an empire” was broadly true for most of its 1000-odd year history. In 1806 it was formally dissolved by Francis II, who feared that Napoleon might grab the title for himself. The dissolution, however, is not going to put off the Wettinbergs – or whoever they really are. [The son] is not asking anyone to believe that royal blood flows through his veins... Von Wettinberg is not the name of an ancient family of Mittel European nobles – it’s simply a word [the son] has plucked out of the air. Von Knackwurst would have done just as well. [The son]’s quite up-front about being an ordinary bloke... who has

decided that, as nobody has been Holy Roman Emperor since 1806, and as the title was elective rather than hereditary, there's nothing to prevent him from legally establishing himself and his mum as the Royal Electoral House. Nothing but an appreciation of the ludicrous nature of the project, that is. Last month they took out an advert[in] London's daily *Independent*, cramming several thousand words of royal proclamations into the public notices column. "All and Singular Believers in Christ, Sovereign Powers and Courts of Europe" were informed of [the son]'s usurpation of the empire. "[My son]'s informed the Pope," says M[um], proudly... Is life in Teddington so catatonically tedious that a boy and his mother have to resort to fantasies like this? Well, there's a hard-nosed objective to the Wettinberg project. "It's an opportunity to set up societies, an opportunity for the conference of titles..." says the son d[uring] our interview, over coffee in the Royal Garden Hotel, Kensington – where else? ...Now, I feel, we're getting to the reason why his mother chose to blow £4000... on an advertisement. Might [her son], perhaps, be in the business of title-selling? ..."I will never sell any titles or honours whatsoever at all... If you were a very wealthy [perso]n you could give me a hundred thousand. But if I didn't particularly like you I wouldn't give you a title." And what if you really liked me... what would happen then? "Well, if you wanted a title, then you would give me a stipend. Or a gift. You must realise that you are not buying the title. Say if you were interviewing a really famous person, you would give them a gift. You're not necessarily paying for the interview, you're paying for his time and his patronage." I fear, however, that the Wettinbergs will have trouble finding people thick enough to surrender their cash in return for the favours of the Teddington branch of the Holy Roman Empire. Title-selling is a minor but lucrative and legitimate business in this country. Excel Multimedia in St Albans offers to make the punter laird of a "souvenir plot" of Caithness land for only \$300. Noble Titles of Sussex have nine titles on offer. For \$30,000, you can be lord... of Kidbrooke (a suburb of south-east London within gobbling distance of Eltham). For \$13,500, you can go over to Stubbington, Hampshire, and encourage people to tug their forelock and call you "squire." "Our company's service," their brochure reassures potential customers, "is based on the fact that the English legal system allows titles to be claimed and registered, if it can be proved that there are no living heirs... Technically, we are able to register a 'possessory title,' which can be sold on for a fee." Basically, if you can find a reference in the *Doomsday Book* for a Lord Feckless of Scunthorpe and nobody holds the position today, you can assume the title and sell it on to some brag-hungry third party... Surprisingly, [the son]'s... looking forward... – because of the publicity it would generate, I suspect – ...to [being challenged by]... another pretender. I could start the ball rolling myself and use this space to announce my own accession to the emperorship, claim the duchies of Swabia, Franconia and Thuringia for my goldfish and establish a rival empire downriver at my flat in Greenwich. But I don't think my mother would go along with it.

...[a] West Midlands furniture sales[perso]n... 56, has laid claim to the crown of a tiny Welsh island. Bardsey Island measures 3.2km by 1.6km and has just five residents, including a shepherd and a nun... [T]he grandson of the last ruler, King Horace, heard that the trust which oversees the island was considering crowning [an] opera star...

Tonga's all-powerful royal family are facing a test of credibility following the emergence of a 13-year-old love letter... [The] King... departed for China yesterday, leaving behind his bachelor son... aged 51, as regent and a swirl of rumour surrounding [his daughter]... Already the richest [gal] in the kingdom thanks to her control of a satellite slot leasing company, [the Crown Princess] is reputed to be in a power struggle with her brother. The widespread circulation among politicians of a 10-page love letter signed "P" to a one-time N[Z] police officer has caused a sensation in Tonga. The letter was purportedly written by the Princess and contains details of a relationship [the Princess] had with the unidentified [officer]. So far the royal palace and the P[M]'s office have refused to comment on the letter, which journalists in Tonga have authenticated... [but refused] to publish... It details the stress within the royal family over succession to the throne... [The] Crown Prince... has no... [son]s and neither has [his sister]. In the letter, [the sister] explains that her marriage had been arranged... "...the purpose of such a marriage as mine is to beget a son to ensure the line of Tuita. I have as yet to fulfil this obligation. So when you hear that I have become pregnant or given birth again, it's not that I have forgotten you (for I never will), it's just the normal performance of such duties that are expected of me." [The Princess], aged 47, is the King's only daughter and has four daughters and an adopted son, but under Tonga's constitution, the King must have a [masculine] heir.

...JAPAN's Crown Princess... has given birth to a girl, bringing cheer to a nation mired in... economic gloom, but raising questions about whether a [girl] should be allowed to ascend the Chrysanthemum Throne... ['Only guys can become the monarch (and their wives must walk 3 feet behind them'), but no son]s have been born into the imperial family since 1965... The princess miscarried [two years ago] after a media circus which some blamed for the unhappy outcome of her first pregnancy... Both [the princess], 37, and the baby... were doing well, said court officials[yesterday].

...Nepal is in shock as it struggles to come to grips with the murder of King Birendra and seven other senior members of the royal family. They were reportedly killed by[the] 29-year-old Crown Prince[, who]... then shot himself... at a dinner party on Friday... There was said to be opposition within the family to the Prince's choice for a wife. The massacre was the latest blow to hit the impoverished nation of 22 million people[. 'The Nepalese believe their royal family is descended from Hindu gods, so for one of them to have committed such a violent crime is hard for them to accept']...

Nepal's caretaker king could decide whether to switch off life support for his nephew, who lies in a coma after apparently killing eight royal family members... Three others were injured[, not including the]... Crown Prince... who... has been named King in keeping with Nepal's constitution. But [the Prince] is said to be clinically dead... [T]he late King's brother, has been appointed regent and will become king if [the Prince dies. Someone]... who worked as a liaison officer in the Nepal embassy in Germany for 10 years and now lives in Wellington, said yesterday that [the Prince] was "into arms and martial arts," and had several times got him to buy guns... "[The Prince] wanted to be able to draw [his gun] out like a cowboy." Speculation about a motive centred on a dispute between the Crown Prince and his mother over an arranged marriage. [The] Queen... is believed to have disapproved of [her son]'s choice of bride... the daughter of a former Government minister. [The Prince] was reportedly drunk at the family dinner, and his mother asked him to leave the room. The prince returned armed with two automatic rifles. After spraying the room with bullets, [the Prince] left the room but... shot himself in the temple when... confronted by place officials, according to the *Nepali Times*... Nepal's first official comment [had said] that the accidental firing of an automatic weapon was to blame... In keeping with Hindu tradition, the bodies of the dead were cremated on Saturday... The body of the King, revered by many in the nation as the reincarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu, was carried by 12 pall-bearers around the pyre three times before it was lit... Soon afterward, the pyres of the Queen, Prince Nirajan... and... Princess Shruti... were lit... Civil servants were ordered to shave their heads in a traditional Hindu mark of respect while the country began a 13-day period of mourning... At a memorial for the royal family in Auckland yesterday, [the first NZer to climb Mt Everest] said the late King was greatly admired by the Nepalese[, and]... the president of the N[Z] Nepal Society, said the Nepalese royal family had provided their country with stability and unity.

...So outrageous has been the court circular from Nepal this week that it has captured the neurotic imagination of a world that nevertheless has no idea at all what to do with the information it is receiving. It is tempting for Westerners to peruse the mounting architecture of bizarre developments with our minds geared firmly into "boggle," and then to assume that cultural differences are behind our failure to make any sense of the terrible news. But the looks of angry incomprehension on the faces of those Nepalese who turned out to watch their new King... processing through the streets of Kathmandu are confirmation that the inability to grasp these extraordinary events is utterly universal. Nothing can keep the conspiracy theories down as people tell stories to each other that will somehow make the slaughter of a family more understandable, more palatable. The temptation to see the unrest and unhappiness as the reactions of a poor, largely illiterate and mainly unsophisticated populace can quickly be dismissed, though. Our reaction to the death of... [the] Princess of Wales... was, after all, comparable. There may not have been riots, but there was plenty of anger, and hordes of conspiracy theories. This royal tragedy involves the murder of nine relatives, the injuring of two others, and finally the suicide of the 29-year-old... who until last Saturday was Crown Prince of Nepal, and who spent one weekend, in a coma, as its King.

As the news of the mass murder broke, the Deputy P[M named the Prince] as the killer. This was quickly retracted, and instead the P[M] suggested that the deaths had been the result of accidental automatic gunfire. The explanation was utterly unbelievable, of course. But the Nepalese constitution regards the King as above suspicion, and the murder of his father, even by his own hand, meant that automatically [the Crown Prince] was King. So this lame excuse was obviously the course the P[M], appointed by the King, felt protocol obliged him to take. Further, the Nepalese believe their King to be an incarnation of... the Hindu God whose duty is preservation of the divine order in the world, guardian of humanity, and protector of dharma, or righteousness. Accusing such an incarnation of mass familial murder is bad dharma indeed. Right at the epicentre of these extraordinary, history-defining events, is an insane but wholly human story and one that does not seem to be so terribly unbelievable... This is a tale of thwarted expectation, generational confusion and the clash between tradition and modernity. Here is a young [guy] brought up in splendour in a nation of great poverty, living his whole life with his father as God and King and in the knowledge that [it] too will be God and King. Far from being schooled in the serious problems his nation faces, and the tensions racking it, [the Prince] is sent to Eton, one of the world's most exclusive schools, in one of the world's most affluent countries. Here [the Prince] gains an education in privilege, Western-style, and a reputation as a stroller on the wild side. As well, incidentally, [the Prince] sees at first hand the break-up of one of the most influential and most emotionally dysfunctional arranged marriages in modern royal history. Why shouldn't [it – a prince, god, educated person and] witness of royal marital disaster – return home certain that [it] knows far better than his family how his life should proceed? The refusal of his family to accept his chosen love was probably the first time that [the Prince] had faced the total rebuttal of his wants. [This] was a post-modern Prince who found himself in a position unallied to any of the norms [it] had come to expect his life to conform to. Like young people the world over, [the Prince] cracked under the contradictory pressures of his existence. No one could possibly have predicted that his anger would be so absolute, his solution so final, or his resolution so spectacular. But the fact remains that far from being too fantastic to believe, the events in Nepal follow a terrible logic that beneath the shock and repulsion form a shape we all recognise, but would prefer not to. Bad Dharma indeed.

...“*THERE'S A ONE-EYED YELLOW IDOL to the north of Khatmandu*” begins the tragic poem by J. Milton Hayes about a lovelorn soldier who risks and loses all – including his life – for the [gal it] loves. Today, the line of the poem that many A[US]ns learned in primary school resonate with a bitter irony... It was no secret in the tiny Himalayan kingdom... that Dipendra, the 29-year-old Eton-educated son of King Birendra and colonel in chief of the royal army, was madly in love with... a beautiful part-Indian princess and the daughter of Nepal's former foreign and finance minister... Alas, theirs was a forbidden love. Prince Dipendra's mother, the fervently religious and overbearing Queen Aishwarya – dubbed “the wicked queen” because of her scheming – vehemently opposed her son's choice. In line with anti-Indian sentiment in Nepal, [the queen disapproved of the girl-friend]'s half-Indian background and felt her Nepali family was too low caste to make a future queen, despite the family being a branch of the queen's own Rana clan. Queen Aishwarya tried to end the affair, sending her son out of the country to London and Sydney, and putting forward two other girls as would-be consorts. The queen was strengthened in her resolve by the dire predictions of court astrologers and a ...old prophecy, which said that the ruling Shah dynasty would end after 11 generations. The ancient prophecy was made on the eve of the battle for Kathmandu in 1768 to King Prithvi Narayan Shah, King of Gorkha and founder of the current dynasty, who conquered the city and united Nepal, which had for centuries been divided into many principalities. Crown Prince Dipendra, who was aware of the prophecy, was the 12th generation Shah. The astrologers are believed to have told the royal family that their rule would end if the crown prince married before June 27, 2006. They warned against him marrying before the age of 35 and said that [the prince and his girlfriend]'s union was ill-fated because their horoscopes were not “cosmically synchronised”. For the besotted... poetry-loving... Dipendra, a [perso]n who had been denied nothing in his entire life, the news was shattering... What no one could have foreseen was that the prince's passion, thwarted by the wishes of his family (and it is rumoured, his fury that his younger brother Nirajan, 22, would be made Crown Prince if [Dipendra] continued to defy the queen), would end in the world's worst case of regicide since Russian Tsar Nicholas II and his family were slaughtered in 1918... In three bursts of automatic gunfire, the soldier prince sprayed 90 bullets around the room, hitting his father, his mother, his sister... and his brother... The shots could be heard 300 metres away but, according to press reports, Gurkha soldiers, posted as palace guards, stood rooted to the spot, obeying their orders not to intervene in royal affairs. After gravely wounding his father, the Prince then disappeared, returning a few minutes later carrying a nine-millimetre Glock pistol. As the wounded royals lay dying and others hid behind furniture, the Crown Prince picked out the King and Queen and shot them at point blank range in their faces before returning upstairs where [Dipendra] was finally challenged by the guards. [Dipendra] put the pistol to his head and shot himself. Although critically wounded, the Prince did not die immediately. Rushed to hospital, [Dipendra] lay in a coma on life support...

KING Hussein of Jordan is being kept alive by artificial means after his family decided against switching off his life support system. “...There is no way to consider lifting the life support,” said a palace source, adding it would be left on for “whatever time it takes”. The 63-year-old king had been pronounced clinically dead hours after returning from a last-ditch trip to the Mayo clinic in the US[, which failed to stem his final stage lymphatic cancer. The source said the family, including[the] Queen... and the king's sons, had gathered at the King Hussein Medical Centre on the outskirts of Amman, and that differences on religious ethics had kept them from disconnecting the life support machine. The decision meant further uncertainty for the country Hussein guided through 47 years of war, revolution and assassination attempts, and for a region losing one of its most committed and adept peacemakers. Among those at Hussein's bedside was... the army major-general and eldest son named as successor by Hussein just 10 days ago after his first return from the Mayo clinic... [Yesterday the Israeli PM said his] whole country was praying for Hussein, echoing comments made earlier by[the] US President... The... French President... called him a great ruler who had “inspired the respect of all world leaders for his contribution to peace in his country and in the region”. Throughout yesterday about 100 Jordanians kept vigil outside the hospital. “We cannot stay in our homes when [our king] is sick and our hearts are crying... If crying would help we would flood the street with tears.” ...Hussein's peace with Israel earned him acclaim abroad – but the distrust of many Palestinians who fled to Jordan from land taken over by the Jewish state in the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948 and 1967, and who now outnumber East Bank Jordanians. Nevertheless, many of those Palestinians, who still lead a refugee existence, said they had lost a champion in Hussein. “We pray for him. We are very worried about our future. What will happen to the Palestinians here if his heirs decide we are unwelcome in Jordan?” ...In a moving eulogy at... the funeral of the assassinated... Israeli leader Yitzhak Rabin... Hussein recalled that his grandfather was also the victim of an assassin [and, to] the astonishment of his listeners... expressed the wish that... [it would be his destiny to] meet the same end.

...The defining moment in his life was the assassination of his beloved grandfather, King Abdullah, as the 16-year-old Hussein walked alongside him into Jerusalem's al-Aksa Mosque. The incident impressed on him that [kings] lived in a cruel world which required courage and alertness if [one] were to survive. [Hussein] himself would be the object of... [12] assassination attempts, including an attempt by a Syrian fighter to shoot down the private plane [Hussein] was piloting. Survival also meant a Byzantine shifting of national alliances over the years in order to assuage or defy potential enemies more powerful than Jordan. In 1967, [Hussein] could not resist the pressure of his own people and other Arab states and joined in the Six-Day War against Israel even though [the king] knew it would likely bring disaster. The war cost him Jerusalem and the West Bank... The assassin's bullet never found Hussein; [the king] was destined to die a noble death in the service of his people, loved also by his former enemies.

...Syria's power brokers moved swiftly yesterday to ensure a smooth succession after the death of President Hafez al-Assad robbed the country of its all-powerful ruler of 30 years. Parliament, dominated by the ruling Baath Party, quickly amended the constitution to permit the succession of Assad's 34-year-old son... a British-educated eye doctor and Army colonel... A political source said last night that the party leadership had since met and recommended [the son] for the leadership... If the nomination were approved, Parliament would issue a decree for a referendum in which

voters would be asked to accept or reject the nomination... Under Assad, Syria carved a regional role beyond what might have been expected from its weak economy and under-equipped Army, such as dominating Lebanese policy and refusing to sign a peace treaty with Israel... Whether Syria can maintain its grip on Lebanon and resist Western and Israeli pressure... if [Assad's son] chooses to follow his... policies... remains to be seen.

...Allies and adversaries of Syrian President Hafez al-Assad mourned his death yesterday, some pledging to press forward for Middle East peace, some voicing concern for the future of the region. Israel, the long-time adversary of the wily leader once dubbed the "Mr No" of Middle East diplomacy, struck a conciliatory note. "The Government of Israel understands the grief of the Syrian people following the death of President Assad," said a statement issued by... [the PM]'s office. "Israel worked in the past for a peace deal with Syria and will continue to work for this in the future with all future leadership." ...Lebanon, where Syria is the main power broker, declared a seven-day mourning period... In Egypt, which incurred Assad's wrath for becoming the first Arab state to sign a peace treaty with Israel, [the]President... ordered three days of state mourning.

...Back in 1948, four years before... [being] overthrown by a military coup, King Farouk of Egypt remarked: "The whole world is in revolt. Soon there will be only five kings left: the King of England, the King of Spades, the King of Clubs, the King of Hearts and the King of Diamonds." How wrong [Farouk] was. The King of England – or rather the Queen, in her present incarnation – is still there, but the British monarchy is in serious trouble. On November 6 A[US] votes in a referendum that could make it a republic, and even in Britain there is a relentless long-term decline in popular support for the monarchy. But in the Arab world the institution of monarchy still seems to be in the rudest of good health. The stories are straight out of the *Thousand and One Nights*. [An eldest son] comes to the throne in Morocco last month after decades as his father[']s... understudy, immediately pardons 7988 convicted criminals and promises to eradicate illiteracy (60[%]) and unemployment (two million) in his North African kingdom. [Another eldest son] comes to the throne in Jordan a few months earlier after decades in the shadow of his father Hussein, and dresses up in shabby clothes and a false beard so [it] can drive a taxi around Amman and hear his subjects' secret complaints. ("God bless you, Your Majesty. Now we realise that it was only your evil advisers who misled you.") ...And this is the sophisticated end of the Arab world. At the other end, out in the Gulf, there is not even the facade of parliaments and elections (with the honorable exception of Kuwait). The kings and sheikhs rule by divine right. Sometimes they do it well and sometimes they do it very badly, but they do it on their own... It is very striking that not one of the 20-odd Arab countries... is a working democracy, and that many are monarchies as absolute as those of Henry VIII of England or Louis XIV of France.

...THE identity and secret crime of one of the world's most infamous prisoners – "The [perso]n in the Iron Mask" – has been uncovered by a Californian historian after a decade of painstaking research. [The person] was a... minor... royal valet... Estache Dauger... jailed for telling court secrets as a warning to all "palace sources" ever tempted to talk to the media. And [the prisoner] did not wear an iron mask... "The only record that suggests the prisoner wore an iron mask is about as credible as a recent sighting of Elvis Presley,"... At most, Louis XIV's victim was made to wear a velvet covering when [being] moved to the Bastille in 1698... says... [the] professor of Western civilisation and early modern European history at the University of California at Santa Barbara, [who]plans to end almost 300 years of speculation later this year when [the professor] travels to France to... put paid to the story (given currency by Voltaire and then Alexandre Dumas) that the prisoner was the Sun King's own older twin brother and the rightful heir to the French throne... "Voltaire was a publicity hound [who claimed to know] everything." ...The story has appealed to successive generations and[was] most recently... rewritten as a vehicle for Hollywood's[latest] heart-throb... There have been numerous theories on the identity of the [person] who spent 34 years behind bars, under threat of death if [the prisoner] so much as... [mingled] with other prisoners or ever... spoke to his jailer... [The professor claims to have] documentary evidence linking a terrible secret to Dauger's employer... So what was the secret? [The professor] is being coy about that until his work is complete and published. "I don't want to be remembered as the last in a long line of crackpots who claimed they had the right answer only to find out later I was wrong... Besides, then I could sell it for a lot of money..."

...[Louis XIII was an insubstantial king who'd virtually handed control of the country over to Cardinal Richelieu. Richelieu became the king's inseparable friend, confessor and protector. Others who tried to gain influence or authority ended up in exile or on the scaffold. Supported by his musketeers, Richelieu concentrated power about himself and his central government, destroying the power of the old high-ranking nobles and replacing them with ministers from bourgeois professional families elevated to the peerage. But there was a fly in the ointment: for King Louis XIII was uninterested in sex, love and the opposite sex in general, and there was no prospect whatsoever of an heir being produced. Waiting in the wings was Gaston of Orleans, the king's hated brother, first in line to the throne, and head of the group of nobles who opposed Richelieu and all the cardinal stood for. "I avoid love," said Louis XIII. "His affections were purely spiritual", commented a contemporary, "and his enjoyments always chaste." The one thing Louis XIII disliked more than sex was Spaniards: and in 1615, for political reasons, Louis was forced to marry Anne, the daughter of the King of Spain, confusingly named Anne of Austria. It was not a recipe for domestic bliss. The royal couple detested the sight of each other, and it took Richelieu four years to persuade the king to try to consummate the marriage. The king and queen spent one uncomfortable night together, and the queen later miscarried after an accident. Other reconciliations were tried, but with no effect. The couple stayed literally miles away from each other, and no child was born. Their dislike was deep, lasting and mutual. In 1630 Louis nearly died, an episode which brought home to all concerned the real possibility that Gaston might take over the throne. Nobody wanted that, certainly not Louis, who had already suffered attempts by his brother to unseat him, and least of all Richelieu, who knew that if Gaston became king it would certainly lead to his own death. Gaston had already tried to have him murdered. Richelieu's deputy Mazarin, too, would have been in great personal danger if Gaston took charge, as would all the ministers. Queen Anne would have lost all influence. Yet the royal couple simply could not produce an heir, and both were growing older. The fault seemed to be the king's. The queen was not short of admirers; but the king was colourless, always ill, unattractive, uninteresting and suffered from a wasting disease which seems to have made him impotent. But then, early in December 1637, after twenty-two years of marriage, came a curious event. Louis XIII went travelling with Cardinal Richelieu and Francois de Cavoye. A few weeks later the king made a public announcement that it was commending the provision of a son and heir to the Virgin Mary: it was almost as if Louis acknowledged that the matter was now out of his hands. Nine months later, the Queen gave birth to the future Louis XIV. Francois de Cavoye's eldest son was not very responsible, spending most of his life in debt. After the death of his father, Eustache d' Auger de Cavoye came across a family secret, which Eustache used to try and blackmail the king. In 1669 Eustache mysteriously disappeared. So it was that Eustache came to be the guy in the mask. We also know what Eustache knew, and must have ruefully reflected upon in his prison: that Louis XIV, and all the kings that succeeded him, were no more the rightful kings of France than was the gaoler who brought dinner every day. People were more likely to ask questions about a guy in a mask than about an ordinary prisoner. Rumours began to emerge from Provence about a mysterious captive who was masked because it looked like someone. It was this dilemma that led to the cover-up operation, and the "tall stories" about a prisoner in a mask that were told to mislead and confuse enquiries. The alternative versions of the masked prisoner story that were spread by ministers and others were cleverly close to the truth. Some, such as that planted by Barbezieux on Madame St Quentin, identified the masked prisoner as the illegitimate son of the queen. This is almost true – Louis XIV was. But what immediately springs to mind in this context is the child of some embarrassing liaison between the queen and a visiting duke, not surrogate fatherhood. Similarly, other stories told of the king's secret twin, a version picked up by Voltaire and Dumas. Anyone checking the descriptions of Louis XIV's birth would know that no twin could have been born without it becoming public knowledge.'

...*'essai* at the French royal courts was the ceremony of tasting the king's food and drink. The fear of poison in the Middle Ages gave rise to the complicated ceremonial attending the sovereign's meals. For drinks, the ceremonial was equally complicated. The same ceremonial took place for the queen. By special favour, Louis XIV bestowed the same prerogative upon the *dauphine* (the wife of the heir to the throne). The service which dealt with the kitchens of the royal household is termed BOUCHE DU ROI. *Bouche du roi* included dealing with food supplies, the pantler's office – which had

charge of everything concerned with the king's tableware, bread, and accessories of the table – and the royal butler's office. These services, under certain kings, at times employed over 500 people. There were heads of service, their assistants, keepers of table-service, equeries, master cooks, cooks in charge of roasting, soup cooks, pastry cooks, *galopins* or kitchen errand boys, water-carriers, fuel-carriers, armchair-carriers, ushers, *sommiers*, heralds, valets of *sert-d' eau*, and washers-up. They were exclusively concerned with the king's table and were distinct from the common service, which catered for the officers and certain members of the royal household. The queen, the dauphin and the dauphine all had their separate kitchen services, bringing the total of servants to a very great number. The officials of the royal household were all members of the aristocracy until the end of the reign of Louis XIV'. By the way, s]o many workers died during the construction of his palace at Versailles that Louis forbade any mention of the subject in his presence.

...[*Versailles*, a town SW of Paris, noted for its palace, of which the central part was built by Louis XIII and the wings and other edifices by Louis XIV. The palace's active life terminated and its *raison d'être* was gone when in October 1789 the Paris revolutionaries forced Louis XVI to leave for the city.]

...Science is no lover of legend. It takes a scalpel to mystery, wielding it with the same clinical relentlessness as a breadknife in the hands of Hannibal Lector. This week the power of the laboratory dealt a fatal blow to another myth, an end as sad in its way as the news that the Loch Ness Monster was always an optical illusion or that the Dead Sea Scrolls were written in ballpoint. DNA tests carried out on a scrap of mummified heart, preserved in a crystal urn in France's royal chapel, undid the 2[-century]-old dream of monarchists and romantics alike. The heart, they confirmed, came from the uncrowned King Louis XVII, who died in agony in a notorious Paris prison at the height of the French Revolution... "These results support very strongly the official version that Louis XVII and not a substitute died in the Temple [prison] in Paris on June 8, 1795," concluded the study. Louis' parents were the ill-starred Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette, guillotined before baying crowds at what is now the Place de las Concorde in 1793... The 10-year-old boy... survived just 18 months before dying of tuberculosis in the Temple, alone... But even before the boy's demise, rumours swept the country that a *Scarlet Pimpernel* figure had somehow spirited him to exile abroad. Genetic specialists... of Belgium's Louvain University and... Germany's Muenster University, compared the heart with locks of hair taken from his executed mother and her two sisters, Johanna Gabelda and Mada-Josepha, and with DNA samples taken from two living relatives, [the]Queen... of Romania and her brother... The sequences were "identical," with only the remotest chance of error, they said... The material they analysed is called mitochondrial DNA – scraps of genetic material that are passed on only in the egg, not the sperm, and so are inherited from one's maternal ascendants. A new and highly accurate technique, it has been used to confirm the identities of the Russian imperial family, slain by Bolshevik revolutionaries... In 1993, it posthumously debunked the claims of a German watchmaker, Karl Wilhelm Naundorff, one of more than 30 [guys] who came forward to say that [they were] Louis XVII. If the tests had been negative, that would have meant one of two things: that the heart – removed from the boy's cadaver by a prison doctor – had been swapped, or that Louis XVII had indeed escaped his tormentors. The latter possibility would have caused enormous ructions among French monarchists, a struggling cause after being out of power for a century and a half. It would have meant that Louis XVII may have had descendants who would have a much more legitimate claim on the throne than the present royals. The senior branch of the French royal dynasty died out in the 19th century, leaving the junior branch, the Orleanists, as claimants to the crown.

...the LORD spake... saying, Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb... *both* of [hu]man and of beast: it is mine... *for* the firstborn... is the beginning... THIS is the book of the generations of Adam... Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth... Adam... begat[more] sons and daughters... [before Adam] died... And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years[(though, because the Jewish calendar wasn't introduced until 3761BC, Adam's age could've been measured by a system that, for example, meant every modern year is equal to 7 old years – like dog and cat ages – in which case Adam really died at the age of 132 years)]... Seth... begat Enos: And Seth... begat[more] sons and daughters[before Seth died]: And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years... Enos... begat Cainan... [then begat more] sons and daughters... [before dying, aged] nine hundred and five years... Cainan... begat Mahalaleel... and begat[other] sons and daughters... [before dying, aged] nine hundred and ten years... Mahalaleel... begat Jared... [then more] sons and daughters... [before dying, aged] eight hundred ninety and five years... Jared... begat Enoch... and[more] sons and daughters... [before dying, aged] nine hundred sixty and two years... Enoch... begat Methuselah... and[other] sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and... *was* not; for God took him. And Methuselah... begat Lamech... and[other] sons and daughters... And Lamech... begat a son: And... called his name Noah, saying, This *same* shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed... Noah was a just [person] and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth... And God blessed Noah and his sons... and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood. AND the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass... [that] Shem... begat Arphaxad... Arphaxad... begat Salah... Salah... begat Eber... Eber... begat Peleg... Peleg... begat Reu... Reu... begat Serug... Serug... begat Nahor... Nahor... begat Terah... And Terah... begat Abram... and Haran... [but] Haran died before his father... [died. T]he name of Abram's wife *was* Sarai... But Sarai was barren... NOW the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee. And I will make of thee a great nation... in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed... Abram went down into Egypt... and Lot the son of Haran... went with him... And... when [Abram] was come near to enter into Egypt... [Abram] said unto Sarai... Behold now, I know that thou *art*... fair[in appearance]: to look upon: Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. Say, I pray thee, thou *art* my sister... for my sake; and my soul shall live because of thee... [T]he Egyptians beheld... that [Sarai] *was* very fair. And the princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commanded her before Pharaoh: and... [Sarai] was taken into Pharaoh's house... And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of... Abram's wife. And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What *is* this *that* thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that [Sarai] *was* thy wife? ...now therefore... take [Sarai], and go thy way... [So] Abram went up out of Egypt... And Abram *was* very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. And [Abram] went on his journeys from the south even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning... And Lot also... [But] the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great... And there was strife between the [herders] of Abram's cattle and the [herders] of Lot's cattle... And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my [herders and thy herders]; for *we be* brethren. *Is* not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if *thou wilt take* the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if *thou depart* to the right hand, then I will go to the left. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it *was* well watered every where... *even* as the garden of the LORD... Then Lot... journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot... pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the [people] of Sodom *were* wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly... And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing *them* rose up to meet them; and [Lot] bowed himself with his face toward the ground. And... said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay... we will abide in the street all night... but... [Lot] pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and [Lot] made them a feast... they did eat. But before they lay down, the [people] of the city... compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter: and they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where *are* the [two] which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them. And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him. And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. Behold now, I have two daughters which... [are virgins]; let me... bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as *is* good in your eyes: only unto these [strangers] do nothing; for therefore came they under the

shadow of my roof. [But the people] said, Stand back... And they pressed sore upon... Lot, and came near to break the door. But the [two angels] put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. And they smote the [people] that *were* at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door. And the [angels] said unto Lot... we will destroy this place, because the... LORD hath sent us to destroy it... [W]hen the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here... and... bring *them* out of this place... lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city... Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain, lest thou be consumed... Then... rained upon Sodom... brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven... But [Lot's] wife looked back from behind him, and... became a pillar of salt... And Lot went up... and dwelt in the mountain, and... dwelt in a cave... with... his two daughters. And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and *there is* not a [guy] in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth. Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father... [who] perceived not when [his daughter] lay down, nor... arose. And it came to pass on the morrow, that... they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him... Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father. And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same *is* the father of the Moabites... And the younger... also bare a son, and called his name Benammi: the same *is* the father of the children of Ammon... [Abram had] looked toward Sodom... and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld... the smoke of a furnace... [So Abram] journeyed from thence toward the south country, and... sojourned in Gerar. And [again Abram] said... his wife... *is* my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took [Sarai]. But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou *art* but a dead... [person, for Sarai] which thou hast taken... *is* [another's] wife. But Abimelech had not come near her: and... said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Said [Abram] not unto me, [Sarai] *is* my sister? and... even [Sarai herself said, Abram] *is* my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart, for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. Now therefore restore the [husband] *his* wife; for [Abram] *is* a prophet, and... shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live... And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen and ...servants, and gave *them* unto [Abram], and restored him... his wife... AFTER these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram, *I am* thy shield, *and* thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless... Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and [no] one born in my house is mine heir... And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and... the word of the LORD *came* unto him, saying... Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not their's, and shall serve them... NOW Sarai... had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name *was* Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. And... Hagar... conceived: and... her mistress was despised in [Hagar's] eyes. And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong *be* upon thee: I have given my maid unto thy bosom; and when... [my maid] had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee. But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid *is* in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, [Hagar] fled from her face. And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness... And... said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And [Hagar] said, I flee from the face of my mistress... And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands. And... I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou... shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael... And [Ishmael] will be a wild [person]; his hand *will be* against every [person, and every person's] hand against him... And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael... AND when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, *I am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect... and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham... As for... thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *shall* her name *be*. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her, and [Sarah] shall be *a mother* of nations, kings of people shall be of her. Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall *a child* be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bare? And... God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed, and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, *and* with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael... Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall [Ishmael] beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. And... God... left off talking with... Abraham... [Eventually] it came to pass that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him... Take... Isaac, whom thou lovest... and offer him... for a burnt offering... Abraham rose up early in the morning... saddled his ass, and took... Isaac... and... wood for the burnt offering... unto the place of which God had told him... Abraham built an altar there... laid the wood in order... bound Isaac... and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand... with... the knife to slay his son... THEN... the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said... Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God... And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven a second time, And said... I will bless thee, and... I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which *is* upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemy. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice... And Abraham gave all that [belonged to him] unto Isaac... And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac... Isaac was forty years old when... Isaac... took Rebekah to wife... and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her... so... [Rebekah] went to enquire of the LORD. And the LORD said unto her, Two nations *are* in thy womb... two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and *the one* people shall be stronger than *the other* people; and the elder shall serve the younger. And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, *there were* twins in her womb. And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and... the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter... of the field; and Jacob *was* a plain... [person], dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because [Esau did share] of *his* venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob. [Now it so happened that] Jacob sod pottage: and [one day] Esau came from the field, and... said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that... red *pottage*; for *I am* faint... And Jacob said, Sell me thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, *I am* at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? ...[so Esau] sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and [Esau] did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised *his* birthright... [W]hen... forty years old... Esau... took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and Rebekah. AND it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that [they] could not see, [Isaac] called Esau... and said unto him, My son... Behold... I am old... Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons... and go out to the field, and... make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die. And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau... And[after] Esau went to the field to hunt... Rebekah spake unto Jacob... saying... my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father... And thou shalt bring *it* to thy father, that [Isaac] may eat, and... bless thee before his death. And Jacob said to Rebekah... Behold, Esau my brother *is* a hairy [person while] *I am*... smooth... My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall feel to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me... not a blessing. And his mother said unto him, Upon me *be* thy curse, my son: only obey my voice... And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which *were* in her house, and put them upon Jacob... And [Rebekah] put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and the smooth of his neck... And... Jacob... came unto his father: and [Isaac] said... who *art* thou, my son? And

Jacob said unto his father, *I am Esau thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.* And Isaac said unto his son, *How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son?* And [Jacob] said, *Because the LORD thy God brought it to me.* And Isaac... blessed... Jacob... God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine. Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee, be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee, cursed *be* every one that curseth thee, and blessed *be* [every one] that blesseth thee. And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac... that Esau... came in from hunting... And Isaac his father said unto him, *Who art thou?* And... Esau... said, *I am thy... firstborn... son...* And Isaac trembled very exceedingly... And when Esau heard the words of his father, [Esau] cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, *Bless me...* also, *O my father...* for... Jacob... took away my birthright: and, behold, now [Jacob] hath taken away my blessing... Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me? And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, *Behold, I have made him thy lord... but... by thy sword shalt thou live, and... it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck...* Esau... *is...* the father of the [*'people living in an ancient region south of the Dead Sea' who are called*] Edomites... Now the sons of Jacob were... Reuben, Jacob's firstborn... Simeon... Levi... Judah... Issachar, and Zebulun... [by] Leah... Joseph, and Benjamin... [by] Rachel... Dan, and Naphtali... [by] Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid... Gad, and Asher... [by] Zilpah, Leah's handmaid... AND it came to pass... that Judah... saw... a daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name was Shuah; and [Judah] took her, and went in unto her. And [Shuah] conceived, and bare a son... called... Er. And [Shuah] conceived again, and bare a son... called... Onan. And [Shuah] yet again conceived, and bare a son... called... Shelah... And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, whose name was Tamar. [But] Er... was wicked in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD slew him. And Judah said unto Onan, *Go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother.* And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it came to pass, when [Onan] went in unto his brother's wife, that [Onan] spilled *it* on the ground... And the thing which [Onan] did displeased the LORD; wherefore [the LORD slew Onan] also. Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter in law, *Remain a widow at thy father's house, till Shelah my son be grown...* And in process of time... Judah... went up unto his sheepshearers to Timnath... [When Tamar] was told Tamar... put her widow's garments off from her, and covered her with a veil, and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place, which *is* by the way to Timnath; for [Tamar] saw that Shelah was grown, [but Tamar] was not given unto him to wife. When Judah saw her, [Judah] thought her *to be* an harlot; because [Tamar] had covered her face. And he... said... *I pray thee, let me come in unto thee; (for [Judah] knew not that [the covered person] was his daughter in law.)* And [Tamar] said, *What wilt thou give me, that thou mayest come in unto me?* And [Judah] said, *I will send thee a kid from the flock.* And [Tamar] said, *Wilt thou give me... thy bracelets... signet... and thy staff...* [as] a pledge, till thou send *it*? ...[Judah gave them to] her, and came in unto her, and [Tamar] conceived by him... And Judah sent the kid... to receive *his* pledge from the [harlot's] hand, but... found her not... And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah... behold... thy daughter in law... *is* with child by whoredom. And Judah said, *bring her forth, and let her be burnt.* When [Tamar] was brought forth, [Tamar] sent to her father in law... the signet... bracelets, and staff... saying, *By the [person], whose these are, am I with child...* And Judah acknowledged *them*, and said, [Tamar] hath been more righteous than I; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son... And it came to pass in the time of [Tamar's] travail, that, behold, twins *were* in her womb... and the midwife took and bound... the... hand... [that] came out first... [However,] *the one...* drew back his hand... [until] his brother came out... called Pharez. And afterward came out... Zarah... that had the scarlet thread upon his hand... Now these *are* the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron, and Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab, and Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon, and Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse... NOW there was a certain... [resident] of mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah... And [Elkanah] had two wives; the name of... one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children... [which made] her fret... And... Hannah... was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. And... Hannah... vowed a vow, and said, *O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and... wilt give unto mine handmaid a [boy] child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.* And it came to pass, as... Hannah... continued praying before the LORD, that... the LORD remembered her. Wherefore... Hannah... bare a son, and called his name Samuel, *saying*, *Because I have asked him of the LORD.* And... Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established *to be* a prophet of the LORD... AND it came to pass when Samuel was old, that [Samuel] made his sons judges over Israel. Now the name of his firstborn was Joel; and the name of his second, Abiah: *they were* judges in Beer-sheba. And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment. Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel... And said unto him, *Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.* But the thing displeased Samuel... Samuel prayed unto the LORD. And the LORD said unto Samuel, *Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them...* Samuel told all the people the words of the LORD... This will be the manner of king that shall reign over you: [Your king] will take your sons, and appoint *them* for himself, for his chariots, and *to...* run before his chariots. And [your king] will appoint himself captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and *will set them* to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war... And [your king] will take your daughters *to be* confectioneries, and... cooks, and... bakers. And [your king] will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, *even the best of them*, and give *them* to his servants. And... will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers... And... will take your... asses, and put *them* to his work. [Your king] will take the tenth of your sheep... And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day. Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said... *we will have a king over us.* That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles... And the LORD said to Samuel, *Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king...* NOW there was a... mighty... Benjamite... whose name was Kish... [who] had a son, whose name was Saul... and *there was* not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than [Saul]: from his shoulders and upward [Saul] was higher than any of the people. And the asses of Kish... were lost. And Kish said to Saul... *Take now one of the servants with thee, and... go seek the asses...* [T]hey passed through mount Ephraim... but they found *them* not. And when they were come to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant... *Come, and let us return; lest my father leave caring for the asses, and take thought for us.* And [the servant] said unto him, *Behold now, there is in this city a [prophet] of God... all that [the prophet] saith cometh surely to pass: now let us go thither; peradventure [the prophet] can shew us our way that we should go.* Then said Saul to his servant, *But, behold, if we go, what shall we bring...?* for the bread is spent in our vessels, and *there is* not a present to bring... And the servant answered Saul again, and said, *Behold, I have here at hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver: that will I give...* Now the LORD had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying, *To morrow about this time I will send thee a [person] out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him *to be* [king] over my people Israel, that... my people... may... [be saved] out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me.* And when Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said unto him, *Behold... whom I spake to thee of! this same shall reign over my people...* Then... all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king[, offered]... sacrifices of peace... and... Saul and all the [people] of Israel rejoiced greatly... SAUL reigned one year; and when... Saul... had reigned two years over Israel, Saul chose him three thousand [soldiers]... *whereof* two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in mount Beth-el, and a thousand were with Jonathan... the firstborn... son of Saul... And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geda, and the Philistines heard of *it*... Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying, *It repenteth me that I have set up Saul *to be* king: for [Saul] is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments.* And it grieved Samuel; and [Samuel]

cried unto the LORD all night... And Samuel came no more to see Saul... nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul... AND the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons. And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear *it*, [Saul] will kill me. And the LORD said, Take an heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to the LORD. And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me *him* who I name unto thee. And Samuel did that which the LORD spake, and came to Beth-lehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, Cometh thou peaceably? And [Samuel] said, Peaceably... come with me to sacrifice. And... [Samuel also] called... Jesse and his sons... to the sacrifice. And it came to pass, when they were come, that [Samuel] looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD's anointed *is* before [me]. But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: *for the LORD seeth* not as [a hu]man seeth; for [humans] looketh on the outward appearance but the LORD looketh on the heart. Then Jesse called Abinabad, and made him pass before Samuel. And [Samuel] said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this... Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, the LORD hath not chosen these... Are here all *thy* children? And... Jesse... said, There remaineth yet the youngest... [who] keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till [your youngest son] come hither. And [Jesse sent for his youngest son], and brought him in. Now [the youngest son] *was* ruddy, *and* withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look on. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him, for this *is* [the chosen one]. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed [the youngest son] in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward... But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul... And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold, now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee. Let our lord now command thy servants... to seek out... [one] *who is* a cunning player on an harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that [the harpist] shall play... and thou shalt be well. And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a [harpist] that can play well... Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Beth-lehemite, *that is* cunning in playing, and... a comely person, and the LORD *is* with him. Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son, which *is* with the sheep. And David came to Saul, and... it came to pass, when the *evil* spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played... so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him... And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me; for [David] hath found favour in my sight. And... [David] became his armourbearer... NOW the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle... with Israel... by the valley of Elah... And Saul and the [soldiers] of Israel were gathered together, and... the three eldest sons of Jesse went *and* followed Saul to the battle... But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Beth-lehem... Now... the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, and *there was* a valley between them. And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height *was* six cubits and a span... And [Goliath stood in the valley] and cried unto the armies of Israel... Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? *am* I not a Philistine, and ye servants of Saul? choose you a... [champion] and let him come down to me. If [your champion] be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then we will be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants... When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid... And the Philistine... presented himself forty days. [Meanwhile,] Jesse said unto David... Take now... an ephah of this parched *corn*, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren; And carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of *their* thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge... David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper... and ran into the army, and came and saluted his brethren. And as [David] talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath... out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard *them*... And David said to Saul... thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou *art but* a youth... And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after [them], and... slew both the lion and the bear... The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear... will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee... David... took his staff... and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag... and his sling *was* in his hand: and [David] drew near to the Philistine. And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and... when the Philistine... saw David, [Goliath] disdained him, for [David] *was but* a youth... And the Philistine said unto David, *Am* I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And... said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou has defied. This day will the LORD deliver thee unto mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcases of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel... for the battle *is* the LORD's... And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang *it*, and smote the Philistine in his forehead[– ‘Goliath was too big to miss’ – and Goliath]... fell upon his face to the earth... So David prevailed over the Philistine with a [long-range offensive weapon]... David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and... cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled... And when... David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine... Abner, the captain of the host... brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand... AND it came to pass, when [David] had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house. Then... Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that *was* upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even... his sword... bow, and... his girdle. And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, *and* behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the [army of Israel, and David] was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants. And... when [the army] was returned from... [Elah the mothers and daughters] came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of musick. And... [the musicians] answered *one another* as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. And Saul was very wroth, and... said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *but* thousands: and *what* can [David] have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day forward... But all Israel and Judah loved David... [So] Saul said to David, Behold my elder daughter Merab, her will I give to thee to wife: only be thou valiant for me, and fight the LORD's battles. For Saul [thought], Let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him. And David said unto Saul, Who *am* I? and what *is* my life, *or* my father's family in Israel, that I should be son in law to the king? But it came to pass at the time when... Saul's daughter should have been given to David, that... Merab... was given unto Adriel the Meholahite to wife. [But Saul's other] daughter... Michal... loved David: and they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. And Saul said, I will give him her, that [Michal] may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him... And Saul commanded his servants, *saying*, Commune with David secretly, and say... the king hath delight in thee, and all his servants love thee: now therefore be the king's son in law. And Saul's servants spake those words in the ears of David. And David said, Seemeth it to you *a light thing* to be a king's son in law, seeing that I *am* a poor man... And the servants of Saul told him... [what] David... spake... And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any dowry, but an hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged of the king's enemies. But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. And when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king's son in law... Wherefore David arose and went... [with his soldiers], and slew of the Philistines two hundred... and David brought their foreskins... [So] Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wife. And Saul... was yet the more afraid of David, and Saul became David's enemy continually... AND Saul spake to Jonathan... and to all his servants, that they should kill David.

But Jonathan... told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret *place*... And I will... commune with my father of thee... And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant... because... David... hath not sinned against thee... For [David] did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the LORD wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest *it*, and didst rejoice: wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause? And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan: and Saul sware, As the LORD liveth, [David] shall not be slain. And Jonathan called David, and... brought David to Saul, and... was in his presence, as in times past... [until] the evil spirit from the LORD was upon Saul [again, as the king] sat in his house with his javelin in his hand: and David played with *his* hand. And Saul sought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin; but [David] slipped away out of Saul's presence, and... fled... THEN came David to Nob to Ahimelech the priest... Now a certain... servant... of Saul was there... and his name was Doeg, an Edomite, the chiefest of the herd[ers] that *belonged* to Saul. And David... fled that day for fear of Saul, and... came into the forest of Hareth. When Saul heard that David was discovered... the king sent to call Ahimelech the priest... and all... the priests that *were* in Nob... And the king said unto the [servants] that stood about him, Turn, and slay the priests of the LORD; because their hand also *is* with David... But the servants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the LORD. [So] the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And Doeg... turned, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod. And [in] Nob, the city of the priests, smote [Doeg] with the edge of the sword... [adults], children and sucklings, and oxen... asses, and sheep... [But] one of the sons of Ahimelech... named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David. And Abiathar shewed David that Saul had slain the LORD's priests. And David said unto Abiathar... I have occasioned the *death* of all the persons of thy father's house... THEN... David... [was] told... the Philistines fight against Keilah, and... David enquired of the LORD... And the LORD answered him and said, Arise, go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand. So David and... his [supporters], *which were* about six hundred... went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and... smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah. And it came to pass... *that*... Saul... was told... David was come to Keilah. And Saul said, God hath delivered him into mine hand; for [David] is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars. And Saul called all the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David... [However,] David knew that Saul secretly practised mischief against him... [So] David... and his... [supporters] arose and departed out of Keilah... And it was told Saul that David was escaped... And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand... Saul... pursued after David in the wilderness of Moan. And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his [supporters] on that side of the mountain: and David made haste to get away for fear of Saul... But there came a messenger unto Saul, saying, Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land. Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David... AND it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that... Saul came to the sheepcotes by the way, where *was* a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: [but] David and his [supporters were] in the sides of the cave. And the [supporters] of David said unto him, Behold... the LORD said unto thee... I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily... [A]fterward... David's heart smote him... [for cutting] off Saul's skirt. And [David] said to his [supporters], The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD's anointed... So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on *his* way. David also arose afterwards, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king... Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD had delivered thee... into mine hand in the cave: and *some bade me* kill thee: but *mine eye* spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for [Saul] *is* the LORD's anointed... And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said... to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou has rewarded me good, where I have rewarded thee evil... wherefore the LORD reward thee for that thou hast done unto me this day... [N]ow, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand. Swear now therefore unto me by the LORD, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house. And David sware unto Saul[, who]... went home... and... sought no more again for him... But Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Phalti the son of Laish... [So] David... communed with [a widow called] Abigail, to take her to him to wife... David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel; and they were both of them his wives... And David dwelt... in... Ziklag... [Unfortunately, one day] David and his [soldiers] went up, and invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezites, and the Amalekites... and smote the [inhabitants], and... took away... sheep... oxen... asses... camels, and the apparel [of the dead]... AND it came to pass, wh[ile] David and his... [soldiers were still away], that the Amalekites... invaded the south, and Ziklag, and... burned it with fire. And... [took the wives and children] captive, that *were* therein: they slew not any... but carried *them* away... So David and his [soldiers] came to the city, and, behold, *it was* burned... and their wives... their sons, and their daughters, were taken captive. Then David and the people that *were* with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep. And... David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved... for [their wives,] sons and... daughters... [Therefore] David enquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? ...And [the LORD] answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake *them*, and without fail recover *all*. So David... pursued... and... behold... [the Amalekites] *were*... eating and drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had taken... And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day: and... recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away... NOW the Philistines fought against Israel [yet again: and the soldiers] of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa. And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and... slew Jonathan, and Abinabad, and Melchi-shua, Saul's sons. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and [Saul] was sore wounded... Then said Saul unto his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and... abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; for [the armourbearer] was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, [the armourbearer] fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him. So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armourbearer, and all his [soldiers], that same day together... NOW it came to pass after the death of Saul... [that the people] in the cities of Hebron... anointed David king over the house of Judah... But Abner... took Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and... made him king over... all Israel. Ish-bosheth... *was* forty years old... and reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David. And... there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker... And it came to pass... that Abner... had a concubine... [from] the house of Saul... and *Ish-bosheth* said to Abner, Wherefore hast thou gone in unto my father's concubine? Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ish-bosheth, and said... as the LORD hath sworn to David, even so I do to him; To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set the throne of David over Israel and over Judah. And [Ish-bosheth] could not answer Abner a word again... So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the LORD: and they anointed David king over Israel. David *was* thirty years old when... [his] reign... began... *and* [David] reigned forty years... And the king... went to Jerusalem... [and] took the strong hold of Zion... So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David... And David went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts *was* with him... And unto David were sons born in Hebron; and his firstborn was Amnon... And David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth... saying, Deliver *me* my wife Michal, which I espoused to me for [two] hundred foreskins of the Philistines. And Ish-bosheth... took her from *her* husband... Phaltiel[, who]... went... along weeping behind her... And David took *him* more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem... and there were yet[more] sons and daughters born to David... [But David was not satisfied with all of his wives and concubines, for] it came to pass in an eventide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof [David saw a gal] washing herself; and the [gal] *was* very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and enquired

after... [her]. And *one* said, *Is not this Bath-Sheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? ...David sent messengers, and... [Bath-sheba] came in unto him, and [David] lay with her; for [Bath-sheba] was purified from her uncleanness; and [then Bath-sheba] returned unto her house. And... [Bath-sheba] conceived, and sent and told David... I am with child. And David sent... [for] Uriah the Hittite[, who was among them that David had sent] forth to battle... [against] the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah... And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how... the war prospered. And David... [made] Uriah... eat and drink before him; and... made him drunk: and at even [Uriah] went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house. And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, [the captain of his army], and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And [David] wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that [Uriah] may be smitten and die... And when the wife of Uriah heard that... her husband was dead, [Bath-sheba] mourned for her husband. And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and [Bath-sheba became his umpteenth] wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD... [So 'Jehovah punished him with trouble in his household for the rest of his life.' T]hus saith the LORD; David shall never want a [hu]man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel...*

Despite that last sentence (and p1198, ln46-7), most Christian nations adopted rulership by a king, whose title and power was handed to the eldest son – even though the theory behind this practice is discredited by the fact that David was a last-born child! But although David wasn't a firstborn child, David was a direct descendant of Noah, as was Jesus (or, if Joseph wasn't Jesus' dad, his siblings). This suggests that major religious figures of the future (e.g., a Messiah) could be from the same family. Many people living at present might be related to Jesus via his (half-)siblings or cousins – or, perhaps, by Jesus' own children?

In 1972, B.B.C.'s *Chronicle* telecast... 'The Lost Treasure of Jerusalem?' This was followed in 1974 by 'The Priest, the Painter and the Devil' and in 1979 by 'The Shadow of the Templars'. The response to these programmes was remarkable. A vast number of people became enthralled with the story of the nineteenth-century French priest who, in his mountain village at the foot of the Pyrenes, discovered *something* which enabled him to amass and spend a fortune of millions of pounds... What really lies at the core of the discovery... is not material riches, but a secret... of explosive and controversial proportions, which radiates out from the little Pyrenes village to encompass the whole of... contemporary politics and the entire edifice of the Christian faith... On June 1st, 1885 the tiny French village of Rennes-le-Chateau received a new parish priest. The cure's name was Berenger Sauniere... a robust, handsome, energetic and, it would seem, highly intelligent [person] aged thirty-three. In seminary school not long before [Sauniere] had seemed destined for a promising career. Certainly... something more important than a remote village in the eastern foothills of the Pyrenes. Yet at some point [Sauniere] seems to have incurred the displeasure of his superiors... And it was perhaps to rid themselves of him that his superiors sent him to... Rennes-le-Chateau. At the time Rennes-le-Chateau housed only two hundred people... No doubt it was a blow to Sauniere's ambition. Nevertheless there were certain compensations. Sauniere was a native of the region, having been born and raised only a few miles distant, in the village of Montazels... Between 1885 and 1891 Sauniere's income averaged, in francs, the equivalent of six pounds sterling per year – hardly opulence, but... [together] with gratuities provided by his parishioners, it appears to have been sufficient – for survival, if not for any extravagance. During those six years Sauniere... had wanted to restore the village church... Consecrated to the Magdalene in 1059, this dilapidated edifice stood on the foundations of a still older Visigoth structure dating from the sixth century. By the late nineteenth century it was, not surprisingly, in a state of hopeless disrepair. In 1891... Sauniere embarked on a modest restoration, borrowing a small sum from the village funds. In the course of his endeavours [Sauniere] removed the altar-stone, which rested on two archaic Visigoth columns. One of these columns proved to be hollow. Inside... [Sauniere] found four parchments preserved in sealed wooden tubes. Two of these parchments are said to have comprised genealogies, one dating from 1244, the other from 1644. The two remaining documents had apparently been composed in the 1780s by one of Sauniere's predecessors... the Abbe Antoine Bigou... The two parchments from Bigou's time would appear to be pious Latin texts, excerpts from the New Testament. At least ostensibly. But on one of the parchments the words are run incoherently together, with no space between them, and a number of utterly superfluous letters have been inserted. And on the second parchment lines are indiscriminately truncated – unevenly, sometimes in the middle of a word – while certain letters are conspicuously raised above the others. In reality these parchments comprise a sequence of ingenious ciphers or codes. Some of them are fantastically complex and unpredictable, defying even a computer, and insoluble without the requisite key... [Sauniere had also] immersed himself in the turbulent history of the region – a history whose residues were constantly present around him. A few miles to the south-east... for example, looms... a peak... called Bezu, surmounted by the ruins of a medieval fortress, which was once a preceptory of the Knights Templar. On... another peak... a mile or so east of Rennes-le-Chateau, stands the ruins of the chateau of Blanchfort, ancestral home of Bertrand de Blanchfort, fourth Grand Master of the Knights Templar... The... Templars... were the archetypal crusaders – the storm-troopers of the Holy Land, who fought and died heroically for Christ in their thousands. Yet... at the end of their two-century-long career, these white-garbed champions of Christ, were accused of denying and repudiating Christ, of trampling and spitting on the cross. In Scott's *Ivanhoe* the Templars are depicted as haughty and arrogant bullies, greedy and hypocritical despots shamelessly abusing their power... they are depicted as vile satanists... [by] other nineteenth-century writers... More recent historians have been inclined to view them as hapless victims, sacrificial pawns in the high-level political manoeuvrings of Church and state. And there are yet other writers, especially in the tradition of Freemasonry, who regarded the Templars as... custodians of an arcane wisdom that transcends Christianity itself... On virtually every point... the accepted accounts of the Templars... raised more questions than they answered. They not only collapsed under scrutiny, but suggested... that something had been deliberately concealed and a 'cover story' manufactured, which later historians had merely repeated... Most people today speak of 'Christianity' as if it were a single specific thing... Needless to say 'Christianity' is nothing of the sort... [However, if] there is a single factor that does permit one to speak of 'Christianity'... that does link the otherwise diverse and divergent 'Christian' creeds, it is the New Testament, and... more specifically... the accounts of Jesus known as the Four Gospels... So far as popular tradition is concerned, the origin and birth of Jesus are well enough known. But in reality the Gospels, on which that tradition is based, are considerably more vague on the matter. Only... Matthew and Luke... say anything at all about Jesus's origins; and they are flagrantly at odds with each other. According to Matthew, for example, Jesus was a aristocrat, if not a rightful and legitimate king – descended from David via Solomon. According to Luke, on the other hand, Jesus's family, though descended from the house of David, was of somewhat less exalted stock... The two genealogies, in short, are so strikingly discordant that they might well be referring to two quite different individuals... According to Luke, Jesus, on his birth, was visited by shepherds. According to Matthew... by kings. According to Luke, Jesus's family... are said to have journeyed – for a census which history suggests never in fact occurred – to Bethlehem, where Jesus was born in the poverty of a manger. But according to Matthew, Jesus's family had been... residents of Bethlehem all along, and Jesus himself was born in a house... This contradiction cannot be rationalised. There is no possible means whereby the two conflicting narratives can both be correct, and there is no means whereby they can be reconciled. Whether one cares to admit it or not, the fact must be recognised that one or both of the Gospels is wrong... The more one studies the Gospels, the more the contradictions between them become apparent... Given these discrepancies, the Gospels can only be accepted as a highly questionable authority, and certainly not as definitive. They do not represent the perfect word of any God; or, if they do, God's words have been very liberally censored, edited, revised, glossed and rewritten by human hands. The Bible, it must be remembered... is only a selection of works, and, in many respects, a somewhat arbitrary one... it could well include far more books and writings than it actually does. Nor is there any question of the missing books having been 'lost'. On the contrary they were deliberately excluded.

In A.D. 367 Bishop Athanasius of Alexandria compiled a list of works to be included in the New Testament. This list was ratified by the Church Council of Hippo in 393 and again by the Council of Carthage four years later. At these councils a selection was agreed upon. Certain works were... cavalierly ignored. How can such a process of selection possibly be regarded as definitive? How could a conclave of clerics infallibly decide that certain books 'belonged' in the Bible while others did not? Especially when some of the excluded books have a perfectly valid claim to historical veracity? ...In 1958... [a] Professor... of Columbia University discovered, in a monastery near Jerusalem, a letter which contained a missing fragment of the Gospel of Mark. The missing fragment had... apparently been deliberately suppressed – at the instigation, if not the express behest, of Bishop Clement of Alexandria, one of the most venerated of the early Church fathers. Clement... had received a letter from one Theodore, who complained of a Gnostic sect, the Carpocratians... Theodore apparently attacked them... [for] interpreting certain passages of the Gospel of Mark in accordance with... principles that did not concur with the position of Clement and Theodore... Clement replies to his disciple as follows: You did well in silencing the unspeakable teachings of the Carpocratians... Such... are to be opposed in all ways and altogether. For, even if they should say something true, one who loves the truth should not, even so, agree with them. For not all true [things] are the truth, nor should that truth which [merely] seems true according to human opinions be preferred to the one truth, that according to the faith. It is an extraordinary statement... In effect Clement is saying nothing less than, 'If your opponent happens to tell the truth, you must deny it and lie in order to refute him.' But that is not all... Clement... freely acknowledges that there is an authentic secret Gospel of Mark... then instructs Theodore to deny it... What was this 'secret Gospel'...? Clement answers the question by including a word-for-word transcription of the text in his letter: ...'And they come into Bethany, and a certain [person], whose brother had died, was there. And... Jesus... went off with her into the garden where the tomb was, and straightway a great cry was heard from the tomb. And going near, Jesus rolled away the stone from the door of the tomb. And straightway, going in where the youth was... Jesus... stretched forth his hand and raised him... This episode... is, of course, the raising of Lazarus, described in the Fourth Gospel... [T]here are... however... some significant variations. In the first place there is a 'great cry' from the tomb before Jesus rolls the rock aside or instructs the occupant to come forth. This strongly suggests that the occupant was not dead and thereby, at a single stroke, contravenes any element of the miraculous... If Mark's Gospel was so drastically expurgated, it was also burdened with spurious additions... Clearly if Mark's Gospel was so readily doctored, it is reasonable to assume that the other Gospels were similarly treated... [Incidentally, according] to the Fourth Gospel... Jesus... states plainly that Lazarus's 'death' has served some purpose and is to be turned to account: 'Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.' (11:11) And four verses later [Jesus] virtually admits that the whole affair has been carefully stage-managed and arranged in advance... [Indeed,] Jesus's reaction to... news... that Lazarus is ill... is distinctly odd. Instead of returning post-haste to the succour of the [person Jesus supposedly loves, Jesus, stays 'two days still in the same place...' (11:6)... If such behaviour is bewildering, the reaction of the disciples is no less so: 'Then said Thomas... unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.' (11:16) What does this mean? If Lazarus is literally dead, surely the disciples have no intention of joining him by a collective suicide! ...The explanations of the matter would seem to lie... in the... rituals... [of] Palestine of Jesus's era. They often entailed a symbolic death and rebirth... a rite, which is now called baptism... And Jesus himself uses the same terms at the Last Supper... Palestine in the first century was a very troubled corner of the globe... More than half a century before Jesus's birth, Palestine fell to the armies of Pompey, and Roman rule was imposed. But Rome at the time was over-extended, and too preoccupied with her own affairs, to install the administrative apparatus necessary for direct rule. [Rome] therefore created a line of puppet kings to rule under her aegis. This line was that of the Herodians – who were not Jewish, but Arab... But the final authority was Rome. This authority was implemented according to Roman law and enforced by Roman soldiery – as it was in Britain not long after. In A.D. 6 the situation became more critical. In this year the country was split administratively into two provinces, Judaea and Galilee. Herod Antipas became king of the latter. But Judaea – the spiritual and secular capital – was rendered subject to direct Roman rule, administered by a Roman Procurator based at Caesarea. The Roman regime was brutal and autocratic. When it assumed direct control of Judaea more than two thousand rebels were summarily crucified. The Temple was plundered and defiled. Heavy taxation was imposed. Torture was frequently employed, and many of the populace committed suicide. This state of affairs was not improved by Pontius Pilate, who presided as procurator of Judaea from A.D. 26 to 36. In contrast to the Biblical portraits of him, existing records indicated that Pilate was a cruel and corrupt [ruler], who not only perpetuated, but intensified, the abuses of his predecessor... In A.D. 6... a Pharisee rabbi known as Judas of Galilee had created a highly militant revolutionary group... [which] became known as Zealots... By the time of Jesus's mission, the Zealots had assumed an increasingly prominent role in the Holy Land's affairs... Long after... Jesus's... Crucifixion, Zealot activity continued unabated. By A.D. 44 this activity had so intensified that some sort of armed struggle already seemed inevitable. In A.D. 66 the struggle erupted, the whole of Judaea rising in organised revolt against Rome. It was a desperate, tenacious but ultimately futile conflict... At Caesarea alone 20,000 Jews were massacred by the Romans... The aftermath of the revolt in Judaea witnessed a massive exodus of Jews from the Holy Land. Nevertheless enough remained to foment another rebellion some sixty years later in A.D. 132. At last, in 135, the Emperor Hadrian decreed that all Jews be expelled by law from Judaea, and Jerusalem became essentially a Roman city... Jesus's lifetime spanned roughly the first thirty-five years of a turmoil extending over 140 years. The turmoil... engendered the psychological and cultural adjuncts inevitably attending any such sustained defiance of an oppressor. One of these adjuncts was the hope and longing for a Messiah who would deliver his people from the tyrant's yoke. It was only by virtue of historical and semantic accident that this term came to be applied specifically and exclusively to Jesus. For Jesus's contemporary's, no Messiah would ever have been regarded as divine. Indeed the very idea of a divine Messiah would have been preposterous if not unthinkable... The term – whether in Hebrew or Greek – meant simply 'the anointed one' and generally referred to a king. Thus David... became, quite explicitly, a 'Messiah' or a 'Christ'. And every subsequent Jewish king of the house of David was known by the same appellation. Even during the Roman occupation of Judaea, the Roman-appointed high priest was known as the 'Priest Messiah'... For the Zealots, however, and for other opponents of Rome, this puppet priest was, of necessity, a 'false Messiah'. For them the 'true Messiah' implied something very different – the legitimate *roi perdu* or 'lost king', the unknown descendant of the house of David who would deliver his people from Roman tyranny. During Jesus's lifetime anticipation of the coming of such a Messiah attained a pitch verging on mass hysteria. And this anticipation continued after Jesus's death. Indeed the revolt of A.D. 66 was prompted in large part by Zealot agitation and propaganda on behalf of a Messiah whose advent was said to be imminent... It was this mundane political term that was applied to Jesus... Only later was this designation... 'Jesus the Christ'... contracted to 'Jesus Christ' and a purely functional title distorted into a proper name... The Gospels state that many of the disciples – Peter, for example – were married. And at no point does Jesus himself advocate celibacy... And if Jesus did not preach celibacy, there is no reason either to suppose that [Jesus] practised it. According to Judaic custom at the time it was not only usual, but also mandatory, that a [son] be married... And it was as obligatory for a Jewish father to find a wife for his son as it was to ensure that his son was circumcised... Except among certain Essenes in certain communities, celibacy was vigorously condemned... [O]ne... first century... Jewish writer even compared deliberate celibacy with murder, and... does not seem to have been alone in this attitude... If Jesus were not married, this fact would have been glaringly conspicuous. It would have drawn attention to itself, and been used to characterise and identify him... If Jesus were indeed as celibate as later tradition claims, it is extraordinary that there is no reference to any such celibacy. The absence of any such reference suggest that Jesus, as far as the question of celibacy was concerned, conformed to the conventions of his time and culture... The hypothesis of marriage becomes all the more tenable by virtue of the title of 'Rabbi', which is frequently applied to Jesus in the Gospels. It is possible, of course, that this term is employed in its very broadest sense, meaning simply a self-appointed teacher. But... if Jesus was a rabbi in the strict sense of the word, a marriage would not only have been likely, but virtually certain. The Jewish Mishnaic Law is quite explicit

on the subject: 'An unmarried [person] may not be a teacher.' In the Fourth Gospel there is an episode related to a marriage which may, in fact, have been Jesus's own... To this wedding Jesus is specifically 'called' – which is slightly curious perhaps, for [Jesus] has not yet really embarked on his ministry. More curious still, however, is the fact that his mother 'just happens', as it were, to be present. And her presence would seem to be taken for granted. It is certainly not in any way explained. What is more, it is Mary who not merely suggests to her son, but in effect orders him, to replenish the wine... quite as if [Jesus's mother] were the hostess... There is further evidence that the wedding at Cana is in fact Jesus's own... 'the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and said unto him...' (John 2:9-10; our italics.) The... words... seem to be addressed to Jesus... An obvious conclusion is that Jesus and the 'bridegroom' are one and the same... If Jesus was married, is there any indication in the Gospels of the identity of his wife? ...there would appear to be two possible candidates – ...who... apart from his mother... are mentioned repeatedly in the gospels as being of his entourage. The first of these is Magdalene – or, more precisely, Mary from the village of Migdal, or Magdala, in Galilee. In all four Gospels... [her] role is singularly ambiguous and seems to have been deliberately obscured... In the Gospel of Luke... [Magdalene] appears relatively early in Jesus's ministry, while [Jesus] is still preaching in Galilee. It would thus seem that [Magdalene] accompanies him from Galilee to Judaea – or, if not... at least moves between the two provinces as readily as [Jesus] does. This in itself strongly suggests that [Magdalene] was married to someone. In the Palestine of Jesus's time it would have been unthinkable for an unmarried [gal] to travel unaccompanied – and, even more so, to travel unaccompanied with a religious teacher and his entourage. A number of traditions seem to have taken cognisance of this potentially embarrassing fact. Thus it is sometimes claimed that the Magdalene was married to one of Jesus's disciples. If that were the case, however, her special relationship with Jesus and her proximity to him would have rendered both of them subject to suspicions, if not charges, of adultery. Popular tradition notwithstanding, the Magdalene is not, at any point of the gospels, said to be a prostitute... When first mentioned in the Gospel of Luke, [Magdalene] is described as [someone] 'out of whom went seven devils'. It is generally assumed that this phrase refers to a species of exorcism on Jesus's part... But the phrase may equally refer to some sort of... ritual initiation. The cult of Ishtar or Astarte – the Mother Goddess and 'Queen of Heaven' – involved... a seven-stage initiation. Prior to her affiliation with Jesus, the Magdalene may well have been associated with such a cult... Magdala, was the 'Village of Doves', and there is some evidence that sacrificial doves were in fact bred there... [T]he dove was the sacred symbol of Astarte. One chapter before [it] speaks of the Magdalene, Luke alludes to a [gal] who anointed Jesus. In the gospel of Mark there is a similar anointment by an unnamed [gal]. Neither Luke nor Mark explicitly identify this [figure] with the Magdalene. But Luke reports that [the figure] was a... 'sinner'... If the Magdalene were associated with a pagan cult, that would certainly have rendered her a 'sinner' in the eyes not only of Luke, but of later writers as well... Quite clearly... Magdalene was a... [person] of means. Luke reports... that her friends included the wife of a high dignitary at Herod's court – and that both... together with various others, supported Jesus and his disciples with their financial resources. The [figure] who anointed Jesus was also a [person] of means... The whole episode of Jesus's anointing would seem to be an affair of considerable consequence. Why else would it be emphasised by the gospels to the extent it is? ...One must remember that anointing was the traditional prerogative of kings... From this, it follows that... the [person] who consecrates him in that august role can hardly be unimportant. In any case it is clear that the Magdalene, by the end of Jesus's ministry, has become a figure of immense significance. In the three Synoptic Gospels her name consistently heads the lists of [gals] who follow Jesus, just as Simon Peter heads the list of... disciples... Throughout the Gospels Jesus treats the Magdalene in a unique and preferential manner... And, of course, [Magdalene] was the first witness to the empty tomb following the Crucifixion. Among all his devotees, it was to the Magdalene that Jesus first chose to reveal his Resurrection... But the Gospel of Philip is more explicit: 'There were three who always walked with the Lord; Mary his mother and her sister and Magdalene, the one who was called his companion.' According to one scholar, the word 'companion' is to be translated as 'spouse'. There are certainly grounds for doing so, for the Gospel of Philip becomes more explicit still: '[...] And the companion of the Saviour is Mary Magdalene. But Christ loved her more than all the disciples and used to kiss her often on the mouth.' The... other... possible candidate for Jesus's wife... is... Mary of Bethany, sister of Martha and Lazarus... [H]er family are clearly on very familiar terms with Jesus... The point becomes clearer in the 'secret' Gospel of Mark... As... Jesus... approaches... the tomb... where Lazarus lies... Martha... greets Jesus... alone. One would expect Mary, her sister, to be with her. Mary, however, is sitting in the house – and does not emerge until Jesus explicitly commands her to do so... It would be plausible enough for Mary to be sitting in the house when Jesus arrives in Bethany. In accordance with Jewish custom, [Mary] would be 'sitting Shiveh' – sitting in mourning. But why does [Mary] not join Martha and rush to meet Jesus on his return? There is one obvious explanation. By the tenets of Judaic law at the time, a [wife] 'sitting Shiveh' would have been strictly forbidden to emerge from the house except at the express bidding of her husband. In this incident the behaviour of Jesus and Mary of Bethany conforms precisely to the traditional component of a Jewish [husband and wife]. There is additional evidence... It occurs, more or less as a *non sequitur*, in... Luke 10:38-42... [where] it would seem apparent that Jesus exercises some sort of authority over Mary... [However, if] Jesus was indeed married[, Jesus could have had more than one wife – although, to confuse matters, the]... medieval Church regarded... Magdalene... the [gal] who anoints Jesus... and... Mary of Bethany... as one and the same person... [In] John 21:20-24... the... 'beloved disciple' has been explicitly instructed to wait for Jesus's return. And the text itself is quite emphatic in stressing that this return is not to be understood symbolically in the sense of a 'second coming'. On the contrary, it implies something much more mundane... that Jesus, after dispatching his other followers out into the world, must soon return with some special commission for the 'beloved disciple'. It is almost as if they have specific, concrete arrangements to conclude and plans to make. If the 'beloved disciple' is Lazarus, such collusion, unknown to the other disciples, would seem to have a certain precedent... In any case... it is not unreasonable to assume that these plans included the care of Jesus's family. At the Crucifixion [Jesus] had already entrusted his mother to the 'beloved disciple's' custody. If [Jesus] had a wife and children, they, presumably, would have been entrusted to the 'beloved disciple' as well. This, of course, would be all the more plausible if the 'beloved disciple' were indeed his brother-in-law. According to much later tradition, Jesus's mother eventually died in exile at Ephesus... There is no indication, however, that the 'beloved disciple' attended Jesus's mother for the duration of her life... If the 'beloved disciple' did not go to Ephesus, what became of him? If [the 'beloved disciple'] and Lazarus were one and the same that question can be answered... According to tradition, as well as early Christian writers, Lazarus, the Magdalene, Martha, Joseph of Arimathea and a few others, were transported by ship to Marseilles. Here Joseph was supposedly consecrated by Saint Philip and sent on to England, where [Joseph] established a church at Glastonbury. Lazarus and Magdalene, however, are said to have remained in Gaul... Magdalene died at either Aix-en-Provence or Saint Baume, and Lazarus at Marseilles after founding the first bishopric there... [In addition,] tradition subsequently maintains... [that Lazarus was] set ashore at Marseilles, together with his sister – who... was carrying with her the Holy Grail – the 'royal blood'... Is there any evidence in the Gospels that Jesus actually did have children? There is nothing explicit. But rabbis were expected, as a matter of course, to have children... Indeed, it would have been unusual for [Jesus] to remain childless whether... a rabbi or not... But there is evidence of a more... specific kind. It consists of the elusive individual... identified in the Gospel of Matthew... as Jesus Barabbas... [An individual named simply Barabbas also features in the Gospels, who] popular traditional depicts... as a 'thief'. But... Mark and Luke agree that Barabbas is... a Zealot... guilty of insurrection... According to Luke... Barabbas... had been involved in a recent 'disturbance'... in the city. History makes no mention of any such turmoil in Jerusalem at the time. The Gospels, however, do... [T]here had been a civic disturbance... when Jesus and his followers overturned the tables of the money-lenders at the Temple. Was this the disturbance in which Barabbas was involved, and for which [Barabbas] was imprisoned? ...According to modern scholars, the 'custom' of releasing a prisoner on the Passover did not exist. But even if it did, the choice of Barabbas over Jesus would make no sense. If Barabbas were indeed a common criminal... why would the people choose to have his life spared? And if [Barabbas] were indeed a Zealot or a revolutionary, is it hardly likely that Pilate would have released so potentially dangerous a

character, rather than a harmless visionary – who was quite prepared, ostensibly, to ‘render unto Caesar’. Of all the discrepancies... and improbabilities in the Gospels, the choice of Barabbas is among the most striking and most inexplicable. Something would clearly seem to lie behind so clumsy and confusing a fabrication. One modern writer has proposed an intriguing and plausible explanation... Barabbas was the son of Jesus and Jesus a legitimate king. If this were the case, the choice of Barabbas would surely make sense. One must imagine an oppressed populace confronted with the imminent extermination of their spiritual and political ruler – the Messiah, whose advent had formerly promised so much. In such circumstances, would not the dynasty be more important than the individual? Would not the preservation of the bloodline be paramount, taking precedence over everything else? ...If the line survived, there would at least be hope for the future... [Furthermore, ‘Jesus Barabbas’] may be a corruption of ‘Jesus Berabbi’. ‘Berabbi’ was a title reserved for the highest and most esteemed rabbis and was placed after the rabbi’s given name. ‘Jesus Berabbi’ might therefore refer to Jesus himself. Alternatively, ‘Jesus Barabbas’ might originally have been ‘Jesus bar Rabbi’ – ‘Jesus, son of the Rabbi’. There is no record anywhere of Jesus’s own father having been a rabbi. But if Jesus had a son named after himself, that son would indeed have been ‘Jesus bar Rabbi’. There is one other possibility as well. ‘Jesus Barabbas’ may derive from ‘Jesus bar Abba’; and since ‘Abba’ is ‘father’ in Hebrew, ‘Barabbas’ would then mean ‘son of the father’ – a fairly pointless designation unless the ‘father’ is in some way special... It is certainly not impossible that Barabbas was Jesus’s son. Jesus is generally believed to have been born around 6 B.C. The Crucifixion occurred no later than A.D. 36... But even if... Jesus... died... when... only thirty-three... [Jesus] might still have fathered a son. In accordance with the customs of the time, [Jesus] might have married as early as sixteen... Yet even if [Jesus] did not marry until aged twenty, [Jesus] might still have had a son aged thirteen – who, by Judaic custom, would have been considered [an adult]. And, of course, there may well have been other children too. Such children could have been conceived at any point up to within a day or so of the Crucifixion... If... Jesus... [had] survived the Crucifixion, however, the likelihood of offspring would be still further increased. Is there any evidence that Jesus did indeed survive the Crucifixion – or that the Crucifixion was in some way a fraud? ...Whatever the trespasses for which Jesus was crucified, his apparent death on the cross is fraught with inconsistencies. There is, quite simply, no reason why his Crucifixion, as the Gospels depict it, should have been fatal. The... Roman practice of crucifixion adhered to very precise procedures. After sentence a victim would be flogged – and consequently weakened by blood loss. His outstretched arms would then be fastened – usually by thongs but sometimes by nails – to a heavy wooden beam placed horizontally across his neck and shoulders. Bearing this beam, [the victim] would then be led to the place of execution. Here, with the victim hanging from it, the beam would be raised and attached to a vertical post or stake. Hanging thus from his hands, it would be impossible for the victim to breathe – unless his feet were also fixed to the cross, thus enabling him to press down on them and relieve the pressure on his chest. But, despite the agony, a [person] suspended with his feet fixed – and especially a fit and healthy [person] – would usually survive for at least a day or two. Indeed, the victim would often take as much as a week to die – from exhaustion, from thirst, or, if nails were used, from blood poisoning. The attenuated agony could be terminated more quickly by breaking the victim’s legs or knees – which, in the Gospels, Jesus’s executioners are about to do before they are forestalled. Breaking of the legs or knees was not an additional sadistic torment. On the contrary, it was an act of mercy – a *coup de grace* which caused a very rapid death... There is consensus among modern scholars that only the Fourth Gospel rests on eyewitness account of the Crucifixion. According to... [that Gospel, Jesus was] on the cross for no more than a few hours before being pronounced dead. In the Gospel of Mark, even Pilate is astonished by the rapidity with which death occurs (Mark 15:44). What can have constituted the cause of death? Not the spear in his side, for the Fourth Gospel maintains that Jesus was already dead when this wound was afflicted on him... [T]he Fourth Gospel... declares that... Jesus, hanging on the cross... thirsts. In reply to this complaint [Jesus] is proffered a sponge allegedly soaked in vinegar... Vinegar – or soured wine – is a temporary stimulant, with effects not unlike smelling salts. It was often used at the time to resuscitate flagging slaves on galleys. For a wounded and exhausted [person], a sniff or taste of vinegar would induce a... momentary surge of energy. And yet in Jesus’s case the effect is just the contrary. No sooner does [Jesus] inhale or taste the sponge than [Jesus] pronounces his final words and ‘gives up the ghost’. Such a reaction to vinegar is physiologically inexplicable. On the other hand such a reaction would be perfectly compatible with a sponge soaked not in vinegar, but in some type of soporific drug – a compound of opium... or belladonna, for instance, commonly employed in the Middle East at the time... Such a stratagem would not only have saved Jesus’s life, but also have realised the old prophecies of a Messiah... According to Matthew, Mark and Luke, the Crucifixion is witnessed by most people... from ‘afar off’... It would thus seem clear that Jesus’s death was not a public event, but a private one... performed on private property... Needless to say a private crucifixion on private property leaves considerable room for a hoax... [F]rom... a distance, it would not have been apparent who in fact was being crucified. Or if [the victim] was actually dead. Such a charade would, of course, have necessitated some connivance and collusion on the part of Pontius Pilate – or of someone influential in the Roman administration. And indeed such connivance and collusion is highly probable. Granted, Pilate was a cruel and tyrannical [ruler. But Pilate] was also corrupt and susceptible to bribes. The historical Pilate, as opposed to the one depicted in the Gospels, would not have been above sparing Jesus’s life – in exchange for a sizeable sum of money and perhaps a guarantee of no further political agitation... What is more... Pilate... acknowledges Jesus’s claim as ‘King of the Jews’... And, perhaps most important of all, [Pilate] grants Jesus’s body to Joseph of Arimathea... a flagrant breach of procedure... This clearly attests to some complicity on Pilate’s part... According to Roman law at the time, a crucified [person] was denied all burial. Indeed guards were customarily posted to prevent relatives or friends removing bodies of the dead. The victim would simply be left on the cross, at the mercy of the elements and carrion birds... In the Greek version... of Mark’s Gospel... when Joseph asks for Jesus’s body, [Joseph] uses the word *soma* – a word applied only to a living body. Pilate, assenting to the request, employs the word *ptoma* – which means ‘corpse’. According to the... [original] translations... then, Joseph explicitly asks for a living body and Pilate grants him what [Pilate] thinks, or pretends to think, is a dead one... On what grounds does... Joseph... receive it? ...There is little information about Joseph of Arimathea. The Gospels report only that [Joseph] was a secret disciple of Jesus, possessed great wealth and belonged to the Sanhedrin – the Council of Elders which ruled the Judaic community of Jerusalem under Roman auspices. It would thus seem apparent that Joseph was an influential [person]. And this conclusion receives confirmation from his dealings with Pilate... According to... the Gospel of Peter, a copy of which was first located in a valley of the upper Nile in 1886... Joseph of Arimathea was a close friend of Pontius Pilate... Medieval tradition portrays Joseph of Arimathea as a custodian of the Holy Grail; and Perceval is said to be of his lineage. According to later traditions, [Joseph of Arimathea] is in some way related by blood to... Jesus’s family. If this was indeed the case, it would, at very least, have furnished him with some plausible claim to Jesus’s body – for... Pilate... might... with the incentive of a bribe... grant the corpse of an executed criminal to... the dead... [person’s kin. Lazarus’s family were also] wealthy, maintaining a house in a fashionable suburb of Jerusalem large enough to accommodate Jesus and his entire entourage... Basilides, an Alexandrian scholar writing between A.D. 120 and 130... claimed that the Crucifixion was a fraud, that Jesus did not die on the cross, and that a substitute – Simon of Cyrene – took his place instead... As late as the seventh century the Koran maintained precisely the same argument... In December 1945 an Egyptian peasant, digging for soft and fertile soil near the village of Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt, exhumed a red earthenware jar. It proved to contain thirteen codices – papyrus books or scrolls – bound in leather. Unaware of the magnitude of the discovery, the peasant and his family used some of the codices to stoke their fire. Eventually, however, the remainder attracted the attention of experts; and one of them, smuggled out of Egypt... proved to contain the now famous Gospel of Thomas... Taken as a whole, the Nag Hammadi collection constitutes an invaluable repository of early Christian documents – some of which can claim an authority equal to that of the Gospels... And at least one of them may include material that is even older than the four standard Gospels of the New Testament... What is more, certain of these documents enjoy a claim to a unique veracity of their own. In the first place they escaped the censorship and revision of later Roman orthodoxy. In the second place they were originally composed for an

Egyptian, not a Roman, audience, and are not therefore distorted or slanted to a Romanised ear. Finally they may well rest on first-hand... or eyewitness sources – oral accounts by Jews fleeing the Holy Land, for instance, perhaps even personal acquaintances or associates of Jesus, who could tell their story with an historical fidelity the Gospels could not afford to retain... In one undated codex, for example, the Second Treatise of the Great Seth, Jesus is depicted... escaping his death on the cross by dint of an ingenious substitution. In the following extract, Jesus speaks in the first person: '[...]I did not succumb to them as they had planned... And I did not die in reality but in appearance... it was another, Simon, who bore the cross on his shoulder. It was another upon whom they placed the crown of thorns... And I was laughing at their ignorance.[...]' ...Perhaps the most famous and profoundly radical of the [supposed] heresies was Manichaeism – essentially a fusion of Gnostic Christianity with skeins of earlier Zoroastrian and Mithraic traditions. It was founded by an individual named Mani, who was born near Baghdad in A.D. 214 to a family related to the Persian royal house... Around A.D. 240 Mani commenced to propagate his own teachings and, like Jesus, was renowned for his spiritual healings and exorcisms. His followers proclaimed him 'the new Jesus' and even credited him with a virgin birth – a prerequisite for deities at the time... In A.D. 276, by order of the king, Mani was imprisoned, flayed to death, skinned and decapitated; and, perhaps to preclude a resurrection, his mutilated body was put on public display. His teachings, however, only gained impetus from his martyrdom; and among his... [teachings Mani had] maintained that Jesus did not die on the cross, but was replaced by a substitute... If our scenario was accurate, where did Jesus go then? ...According to certain Islamic and Indian legends, [Jesus] eventually died at a ripe old age, somewhere in the East – in Kashmir, it is claimed most frequently... According to... the documents found by... Sauniere at Rennes-le-Chateau... Jesus was alive in A.D. 45, but there is no indication as to where... For the purpose of our hypothesis, however, what happened to Jesus was of less importance than what happened to the holy family – and especially... his children... During the fifth century this lineage appears to have intermarried with the royal line of the Franks, thus engendering the Merovingian dynasty. In A.D. 496 the Church made a pact with this dynasty, pledging itself in perpetuity to the Merovingian bloodline – presumably in the full knowledge of that bloodline's true identity. This would explain why Clovis was offered the status of Holy Roman Emperor, of 'new Constantine', and why [Clovis] was not created king, but only recognised as such... By 752... Pepin[... the son of]... Charles Martel, Mayor of the Palace and grandfather of Charlemagne... had... [brought] the region of southern France known as Septimania... fully under his control... This area had long contained a large Jewish population... In 768 a... Jewish... principality was created in Septimania... which paid nominal allegiance to Pepin but was essentially independent. A ruler was officially installed as king of the Jews. In the romances [this king] is called Aymery. According to existing records, however, [this king] seems, on being received into the ranks of Frankish nobility, to have taken the name Theodoric or Thierry... According to most researchers... Theodoric... the father of Guillem de Gellone... was... [from] the Visigoth-Merovingian family tree descended from Dagobert II and... a Visigoth princess whose father was called Bera[... an]... unmistakably Semitic name... Theodoric... was recognised by both Pepin and the caliph of Baghdad... and, albeit grudgingly, by the pope... as 'the seed of the royal house of David'... Why would an individual of Merovingian descent be acknowledged as... [such] unless the Merovingians were indeed... of the House of David... When the Church colluded in Dagobert's assassination, and the subsequent betrayal of the Merovingian bloodline, it rendered itself guilty of a crime that could neither be rationalised nor expunged. It could only be suppressed... Despite subsequent attempts to conceal it, modern scholarship and research have proved Guillem's Judaism beyond dispute... When Charlemagne's son, Louis, was invested as emperor, it was Guillem who placed the crown on his head. Louis is reported to have said, 'Lord... it is your lineage that has raised up mine.' It is an extraordinary statement, given that it is addressed to a [person] whose lineage – so far as later historians are concerned – would seem to be utterly obscure... Guillem was more than a warrior. Shortly before 792 [Guillem] established an academy at Gellone... one of the first known seats in Europe for the cult of the Magdalene... In the ninth century the bloodline of Guillem... had culminated in the first dukes of Aquitaine. It also became aligned with the ducal house of Brittany. And in the tenth century a certain Hugues de Plantard – ...a lineal descendant of both Dagobert and Guillem... – became the father of Eustache, first Count of Boulogne. Eustache's grandson was Godfroi de Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine and conqueror of Jerusalem... in 1099... If the Merovingians were indeed descended from Jesus, then Godfroi... had, in his conquest of Jerusalem, regained his rightful heritage... According to Guillaume de Tyre, the Order of the Poor Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon was founded in 1118... [by] one Hugues de Payen, a... vassal of the count of Champagne... [who], unsolicited... had... presented himself with eight comrades at the palace of Baudouin I – king of Jerusalem, [and younger brother of] Godfroi... By 1100 Jesus's descendants... in Europe... would have known their pedigree and ancestry... In... 1143 Peter the Venerable of Cluny, in an address to Louis VII of France condemned the Jews of Narbonne, who claimed to have a king residing among them. In 1144 a Cambridge monk, one Theobald, speaks of 'the chief Princes and Rabbis of the Jews who dwell in Spain [and] assemble together at Narbonne where the royal seed resides.' And in 1165-6 Benjamin of Tudela, a famous traveller and chronicler, reports that in Narbonne there are 'sages, magnates and princes at the head of whom is... a descendant of the House of David as stated in his family tree.' ...But [Jesus's descendants] might not have been able to prove their identity to the world at large; and such proof may well have been deemed necessary for their subsequent designs. If it were known that such proof existed, no effort would have been spared to find it. This would explain the role of the Knights Templar – who, under a cloak of secrecy, undertook excavations beneath the Temple, in the so-called Stables of Solomon. On the basis of the evidence we examined, there would seem to be little question that the Knights Templar were in fact sent to the Holy Land – with the express purpose of finding or obtaining something. And... they would seem to have accomplished their mission... and to have brought... what they were sent to find... back to Europe. What became of it... remains a mystery. But there seems little question that, under the auspices of Bertrand de Blanchfort... something was concealed in the vicinity of Rennes-le-Chateau for which a contingent of German miners was imported, under the most stringent security, to excavate and construct a hiding place. One can only speculate about what might have been concealed there. It may have been Jesus's mummified body. It may have been the equivalent, so to speak, of Jesus's marriage licence... or the birth certificates of his children. It may have been something of comparably explosive import. [It might be] all of these items... Once installed on the throne of the kingdom of Jerusalem, the Merovingian dynasty could sanction and even encourage hints about its true ancestry... The king of Jerusalem would then have taken precedence over all the monarchs of Europe, and the patriarch of Jerusalem would have supplanted the pope. Displacing Rome, Jerusalem would then have become the true capital of Christendom, and perhaps much more... For if Jesus were acknowledged as a mortal prophet, as a priest-king and legitimate ruler of the line of David, [the patriarch of Jerusalem] might well have become acceptable to both Muslims and Jews. As king of Jerusalem, his lineal descendant would then have been in a position to implement one of the primary tenets of Templar policy – the reconciliation of Christianity with Judaism and Islam. Historical circumstances, of course, never allowed matters to reach this point. The Frankish kingdom of Jerusalem never consolidated its position. Beleaguered on every side by Muslim armies, unstable in its own government and administration, it never attained the strength and internal security it needed to survive... The grandiose design floundered; and with the loss of the Holy Land in 1291 it collapsed completely. The Merovingians were once again without a crown. And the Knights Templar were not only redundant but also expendable... In order to establish themselves, therefore, the Merovingians were obliged to resort to more conventional measures... dynastic intermarriage... political machination, intrigue and, if feasible, an overt seizure of power... On... occasions... these procedures came frustratingly close to success, and were thwarted only by miscalculation, by force of circumstance or by the totally unforeseen. In the sixteenth century... the house of Guise very nearly managed to seize the French throne. In the seventeenth century the Fronde very nearly succeeded in keeping Louis XIV from the throne and supplanting him with a representative of the house of Lorraine... In was in the eighteenth century, however, that the Merovingian bloodline probably came closest to the realisation of its objectives. By virtue of its intermarriage with the Habsburgs, the house of Lorraine had actually acquired the throne of Austria, the Holy Roman Empire. When Marie Antoinette, daughter of Francois de Lorraine, became

queen of France the throne of France, too, was only a generation or so away. Had not the French Revolution intervened, the house of Habsburg-Lorraine might well, by the early 1800s, have been on its way to establishing dominion over all Europe... Sauniere's predecessor... had concealed, and possibly composed, the coded parchments on the eve of the Revolution – and then fled to Spain, where, shortly afterward... Antoine Bigou... died. It is thus possible that... the [Swiss Order of] Prieure de Sion [– the last protectors of]... the Merovingians – ...for a time at any rate, did not know precisely where the parchments were. But even if they were known to have been in the church at Rennes-le-Chateau, they could not easily have been retrieved without a sympathetic priest on the spot – a [priest] who would do Sion's bidding... If the parchments, moreover, referred to something else – something concealed in the vicinity of Rennes-le-Chateau, such a [priest] would have been all the more essential. Sauniere died without divulging his secret. So did his house-keeper, Marie Denarnaud. During the ensuing years there have been many excavations in the vicinity of Rennes-le-Chateau, but none of them has yielded anything... As for the parchments found by Sauniere, two of them – or, at any rate, facsimiles of two of them – have been reproduced, published and widely circulated. The other two, in contrast, have been kept scrupulously secret... [It has been] stated that they are currently in a safe deposit box in a Lloyd's bank in London. Further than that we have been unable to trace them. And Sauniere's money? We know that some of it seems to have been obtained through a financial transaction involving the Arch-duke Johann von Habsburg. We also know that substantial sums were made available not only to Sauniere, but also to the bishop of Carcassonne, by the Abbe Henri Boudet... [A] poor parish priest himself [Boudet]... would clearly seem to have been a representative of the Prieure de Sion; but whether the money issued directly from Sion remains... unanswered... It might equally well have issued from the treasury of the Habsburgs. Or it might have issued from the Vatican, which might have been subjected to high-level political blackmail by both Sion and the Habsburgs... We cannot point to one [person] and assert that [this person] is Jesus's lineal descendant. Family trees bifurcate, subdivide and in the course of centuries multiply into veritable forests. There are at least a dozen families in Britain and Europe today – with numerous collateral branches – who are of Merovingian lineage... Most of these houses could presumably claim a pedigree from Jesus; and... at some point in the future... one... [of their members may] be put forward as a new priest-king... If the Prieure de Sion intends to 'show its cards', the time is ripe for it to do so. The political systems and ideologies which, in the early years of our century, seemed to promise so much have virtually all displayed a degree of bankruptcy... Because of their small-mindedness, lack of perspective and abuse of office, politicians no longer inspire confidence, only distrust. In the West today there is increasing cynicism, dissatisfaction and disillusion. There is increasing psychic stress, anxiety and despair. But there is also an intensifying quest for meaning, for emotional fulfilment, for a spiritual dimension to our lives, for something in which genuinely to believe. There is a longing for a renewed sense of the sacred that amounts, in effect, to a full-scale religious revival... There is also, increasingly, a desire for a true 'leader' – not a Fuhrer, but a species of wise and benign spiritual figure, a 'priest-king' in whom [hu]mankind can safely repose its trust... There are many devout Christians who do not hesitate to interpret the Apocalypse as nuclear holocaust. How might the advent of Jesus's lineal descendant be interpreted? To a receptive audience, it might be a kind of Second Coming... But... [so] far as we personally are concerned, Jesus's lineal descendant would not be any more divine, any more intrinsically miraculous, than the rest of us. This attitude would undoubtedly be shared by a great many people today. We suspect it is shared by the Prieure de Sion as well. Moreover, the revelation of an individual, or group of individuals, descended from Jesus would not shake the world in the way it might have done as recently as a century or two ago. Even if there were 'incontrovertible proof' of such a lineage, many people would simply shrug and ask, 'So what?' - THE HOLY BLOOD AND THE HOLY GRAIL

Even if there were 'incontrovertible proof' that someone was a direct descendant of Jesus, the information could be irrelevant! The generations of Adam – to which Jesus and such a descendant belongs – only deals with the firstborn son until reaching Noah. But Seth (r:p1196, ln33) wasn't the firstborn son of Adam.

...Adam knew Eve his wife; and [Eve] conceived, and bare Cain... And [Eve] again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel... also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering. But unto Cain and to his offering [the LORD] had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And... it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel... and slew him. And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And [Cain] said, I know not: *Am I my brother's keeper.* And [the LORD] said... the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now *art* thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, *that* every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark on Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and [Cain's wife] conceived, and bare Enoch. And [Cain] builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son... And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech. And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one *was* Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal: [who] was the father of such as dwell in tents, and *of such as have* cattle. And his brother's name *was* Jubal: [who] was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ. And Zillah... bare Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron... And Lamech said unto his wives... I have slain... a young [person]... If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold. And Adam knew his wife again; and [Eve] bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, *said* [Eve], hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. - Genesis 4

Because everyone in the world except for Noah's family was allegedly drowned by the *great flood*, it would seem to be valid to presume that a direct line of descent from Cain doesn't exist in modern times. However, the Bible states that Adam and Eve were the first humans, yet also states that Cain had a wife, while neglecting to mention where this wife (or the ones that *shall slay* him) came from! Furthermore, God – who was in large part responsible for Abel's death (i.e., God made Cain jealous of Abel by favouring him – even though Abel seems to have disobeyed God's decree that humans use vegetation for meat instead of killing other animals) – marked Cain so no one would kill him and, although the Bible records Adam's death, it doesn't mention Cain's. Another point is that various artisans are described as being the descendants of Cain, which implies that some of his descendants existed after Noah's flood. This scenario (bearing in mind that every biblical character from Adam to Noah is probably fictional) is supported by the fact that references to a great flood aren't unique to Judaism.

[The] *Gilgamesh Epic*... narrates a story of the Flood that has striking parallels with the biblical account.

Various details of the Mesopotamian story of the Flood are so similar to those of the Biblical account that there can be no doubt about the dependence of the latter upon the former. The overall theme of the traditional tale is very different, however, in the two versions. Not only does the

Bible remove the polytheistic setting of the... *Gilgamesh*... story, but also the central theme is no longer eternal life. (The hero of the Biblical Flood, Noah, dies in due course.) Instead, the story depicts the righteousness of God in his historical dealing with [hu]mankind. Sin is severely punished in history, though a remnant is saved to mark a new beginning... In the ancient Middle East, only Israel and Mesopotamia seem to have had the Flood tradition. However, the story of a great flood in which all but a select few were drowned appears in a wide variety of forms in many different cultures... as widely separated as those in Greece, Polynesia... the Arctic Circle region... and Tierra del Fuego...

In some Inca myths, Viracocha... (or Huiracocha)... is seen setting up the sun and moon from Lake Titicaca, destroying the first disobedient world by a flood, and allotting the nations their respective locations, bases of livelihood and places of worship in the remade universe.

When Zeus flooded the earth in wrath at the impiety of [hu]mankind, Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha took refuge on the top of Parnassus... a mountain of central Greece, which rises above Delphi... (or built an ark in which they were carried there). When the flood had subsided, to repopulate the world they were advised by Zeus (or by an oracle) to throw stones over their shoulders; those thrown by Deucalion became [guys], and those thrown by Pyrrha [gals. *Manu* is]... the archetypal first man of Hindu mythology, survivor of the great flood, and father of the human race... [T]he flood that forms part of Chinese mythology was not a retribution for sin.

...some... wait for Jesus and some... wait for Cain...

The statement *from the face of the earth... shall I be hid* implies that Cain's descendants could exist in the world but go unnoticed. However, it is possible that some of Cain's descendants have been noticed by the world, but their line of descent from Cain hasn't been recognised (the line of descent may even have been hidden from the descendants themselves – who, theoretically, might constitute over half of the human population at any point of time). It is also possible that somebody (i.e., a *major religious figure... e.g., a Messiah*) can be a descendant of both Cain and David.

Einstein was greeted like a new Messiah and idolised by millions... there is no other physicist whose name and face are so universally known.

Einstein[was] a great scientist and possibly the smartest [hu]man of all time.

EINSTEIN... [was] by general consent the greatest theoretical physicist who ever lived... Einstein[, who] was born... to middle-class Jewish parents in Ulm, Germany[, disliked school]... because of the mindless drilling that prevailed. [Einstein] much preferred to study at home, especially geometry and books on popular science. At the age of 12 these studies came into conflict with his deep religious feelings when [Einstein] realized that the Bible could not be literally true. To that shock [Einstein] ascribed his lifelong distrust of authority.

[Einstein] was a self-confessed lone traveller; his mind and heart soared with the cosmos, yet [Einstein] could not armour himself against the intrusion of the horrendous events of the human community. Almost reluctantly[, Einstein admitted having]... a “passionate sense of social justice and social responsibility.” His celebrity gave him an influential voice that [Einstein] used to champion such causes as pacifism, liberalism, and Zionism. The irony for this idealistic [hu]man was that his famous postulation of an energy-mass equation, which states that a particle of matter can be converted into an enormous quantity of energy, had its spectacular proof in the creation of the atomic and hydrogen bombs, the most destructive weapons ever known... By the age of 12 Einstein had decided to devote himself to solving the riddle of the “huge world.” Three years later, with poor grades in history, geography, and languages, [Einstein] left school with no diploma...

‘I was 16 when the image first came to me. What would it be like to ride a beam of light? ...I had no idea, but the question stayed with me for the next 10 years. Simple questions are always the hardest, but if I have one gift it is that I am as stubborn as a mule.’ Albert Einstein once [claimed to have spent his] whole life trying to understand the nature of light. More than any other scientist, [Einstein] succeeded... The Einstein that we know is the familiar, wise old... otherworldly genius. But new revelations from his papers, notebooks and love letters, have revealed the younger [Einstein], who at the turn of the century made discoveries about light, space and time that have transformed our view of the Universe... [The discovery that electro-magnetism is] a fundamental force of nature was the greatest breakthrough of 19th century physics. Within decades it produced a technological revolution... [Albert's] father... set his sights on this booming new market[, and]... started a factory in Munich to manufacture generators and electrical appliances. [Therefore] Albert grew up surrounded by electricity, its machinery and its mystery. [Albert] and his sister... enjoyed a comfortable childhood, despite the riskiness of their father's business endeavours. But in 1894, overwhelmed by competition in Germany, Hermann Einstein was forced to shift his factory to... Italy. The Einstein family followed, leaving Albert alone in Munich to complete the school year. ‘I hated my school in Munich[, where school-masters strutted]... round like officers, whipping the troops into shape. I searched for a way out... finally it came to me. The next time the teacher scolded me I went to my family doctor and obtained a certificate. It seems I was suffering from nervous exhaustion and needed to leave immediately.’ ...Einstein's plan was to abandon school and take the entrance exam to one of Europe's top technical universities... But Albert was without a school diploma, and stateless, for [Albert] had renounced German citizenship to avoid military service. So, when [Albert] failed his entrance exam, Albert agreed to his father's demands that [his son] complete his schooling in [Switzerland]... To Einstein it seemed a setback, but as it turned out it was here that [Albert] first experienced what it might mean to be a scientist. “[Albert] has this great stroke of luck... [of coming] into an excellent school system with a new physics laboratory...” In the laboratory Einstein first came to grips with the physics which lay behind electrical technology... With a simple bar magnet Einstein explored the patterns formed by iron filings swept up by the lines of magnetic force, and... was taught that light itself is an electro-magnetic wave travelling through space. ‘That was when... that image [of] riding a beam of light... came to me.’ This was the first of Einstein's famous thought experiments. [Albert] created deceptively simple scenarios to explore the most complex concepts. If light were a wave, [Albert] reasoned, then no matter how fast it travels, it ought to be [possible for a hypothetical observer to] catch up with its peaks or valleys. But then, Einstein wondered, what would [the observer] see? Would the light stand still? Would time stand still? Would [the observer] ride that same peak of light forever? ...At 16 Einstein could not find the answer to his questions. [Albert] was not yet a trained scientist. But as his year... came to an end, [Albert] had to turn his thoughts to practical concerns... Following his graduation... Einstein enrolled at the... Federal Polytechnic in Zurich. It was one of the leading technical institutions in Europe. Its laboratories were second-to-none. Einstein could have obtained the best education there, but... avoided regular attendance in class. [Albert] preferred to spend his time at his favourite haunts... Einstein would stay in the cafes for hours, sipping coffee and talking with his classmates – among them the one [girl] in Einstein's course. Her name was Mileva. [Mileva] had come from Hungary to... one of the few European universities open to [girls]. “Being bright at school [Mileva] was taught by her teachers to go further. First [Mileva] went to a boys' school because, of course, the boys could go further than girls at that time. And then... some of her teachers told her that a school was opening in Zurich where girls were admitted, which was quite unusual... [Mileva] probably was a kind of realisation of a dream for [Albert, because Mileva was free. Mileva] had no family on her back, [so] had to take care of herself... In a sense [Mileva] was freer than [Albert] was.” Gradually Albert and Mileva came to feel that they were two of a

kind... For Einstein... study with Mileva, walking beside the lake and thinking about physics... were the important things in life... 'Fortunately there were only two examinations, which meant, for the most part, I could do as I pleased. Of course, it certainly helped to have a friend who attended the lectures faithfully.' That friend was... a brilliant mathematician who gladly provided Einstein with his notes. But even with [his friend's] help, Einstein did have to attend a few classes... Einstein's papers... produced a portrait of a truly infuriating student. "We have here his college record and... by the third year... it says that a reprimand has been issued to Einstein through the administration because of a lack of diligence... in the... physics lab... I think that that's a way of saying [Albert] was lazy... We also have as an indication of that a very fat 1, which is... essentially the lowest grade... To be fair, [Albert] also gets in[the] electro-technical lab that same year a 6. So... [Albert] has already developed that which is his hallmark... that is [Albert] turns his attention and is assiduous in those areas where [Albert] wants to, and other areas [Albert] just ignores." That kind of arrogance brought Einstein into direct conflict with the head of the physics department at the institute... 'You are a clever boy, Einstein... but you have a great fault. You never let yourself be told anything.' 'Of course, I wasn't going to be told anything by [him]. As far as I was concerned [the head] thought that physics had stopped 70 years ago. When I came up with experiments of my own [the head] wouldn't hear of it. What could I do? Just sit back and hope that [the head] didn't know what I thought of him?' The experiments Einstein wanted to perform turned once again on the unsettling problem of light. His image of riding a beam of light had told him that very odd things must happen at the speed of light. Einstein's contemporaries focused on the fact that light travels in waves, which implied that light must move through some type of substance – just as waves on a lake travel through water. "...there was really one big mystery – that if light was a wave phenomenon it must propagate in something; it must be the... vibrations of something. And... they called this something the ether... [I]t really was, for the 19th century, the foundation of physics." The ether, it was thought, filled every corner of space. The ether was designed to make light behave itself, to make its motion conform to everyday experience. In ordinary circumstances it's easy to analyse motion... Speed is relative here on Earth – one can add or subtract velocities depending on which way you move with respect to another moving object... We can measure the speed of [a] ship relative to [a] lake. We can also determine the speed of [a] sailor across the lake – a little faster than the boat when [the sailor] walks forward; a little slower than the boat when [the sailor] walks back towards the stern... But the great mystery was would... speeds add and subtract where light is concerned? Researchers tried to measure the speed of light through the ether using the Earth as the laboratory. The Earth orbits the Sun at 20 miles per second, racing through the ether as it goes. That would set up a wind as the ether rushes past the Earth and, if light travelling through the ether matched ordinary experience, then a beam of light moving with the ether wind should move faster than a beam of light travelling in the opposite direction – against that 20 mile per second breeze. Unfortunately, every attempt to measure such variation in the speed of light failed. With every experiment, the speed of light remained rock steady, unchanging in any direction. Einstein dismissed the notion of an ether long before any other physicians could accept such a radical step. But if there were no ether the message was clear – the speed of light was... an exception to all the laws of motion that governs what happens here on Earth. It made no sense, but Einstein was in no position to figure it out. In 1900 [Albert] graduated, but his battles with [his teachers] cost him the university job [Albert] had expected. And in [Italy] his father's firm had collapsed. Now [Albert] desperately needed an income... 'I honoured all the physicists from the North Sea to the southern tip of Italy with an offer of my services. Not one responded.' And amongst a growing sense of crisis, Mileva became another bone of contention. "Einstein's parents were at first formally against Albert marrying Mileva. [Mileva] was too independent... his mother said '[Mileva is] always going to be in her books and not cooking for you', or something like that... [Albert's mother said things like 'I'm] going to die if... [you marry this girl.' Maybe Albert's mother] would have died if [Albert] had married any [girl]? ...still, this one obviously was not the right one." 'July, 1900. Dearest [Mileva], I promise I will not tolerate my parents opposition to you. When you failed your exams I went into mama's room. [Mama] asked, "What will become of your little [Mileva] now?" "My wife," I told her. [Mama] threw herself on the bed. "You are ruining your future! If [Mileva] has a child you will be in a pretty mess." At this point my patience finally gave out. I denied completely we were living in sin.' ...his mother's fears would come true. Within weeks the news reached Albert – Mileva had become pregnant. For the next few months, Mileva remained in Zurich to retake her exams, while Albert travelled throughout Switzerland to a series of temporary teaching jobs... 'Dear [Mileva], when you are my... little wife, we will diligently work on our science together, so we don't become old Philistines. Everyone but you seems foreign to me, as if they were separated by an invisible wall.' In the autumn, Einstein found a temporary tutoring job... north of Zurich. By now visibly pregnant, Mileva could not be seen with him in the same town. [So Mileva] hid... three miles up the river. Lost amongst the tourists at the famous Rhine Falls, the couple would steal time with each other. Mileva would always have to compete for Albert's attention... [After Mileva] failed her exams for a second time, which ended her hopes for a scientific career[, Mileva] left Switzerland to give birth at her parent's home in Hungary. The couple could not marry unless Albert got a real job... [Eventually Albert got a job] at the Swiss patent office... in Bern... In his new home Einstein resumed the serious study of physics... [Mileva, meanwhile,] remained with her parents, and in January 1902 gave birth to a daughter named Lisa, a child who's existence has only recently come to light... But as a new Swiss civil servant Einstein could not risk a scandal. Keeping the child could have cost him the job that had been difficult to get. After months of wrestling with the problem, [Albert] and Mileva made their decision – Lisa was given up. "It wasn't cruel, it was just something convenient that many people did. Einstein and Mileva intended to take the child with them later on when they could... get married... This was a very ordinary plan... at that time." Einstein never saw Lisa. [The child] fell ill and subsequently all record of her disappeared. The same year that Lisa was born, Hermann Einstein fell ill. When it became clear that his father was on his deathbed, Albert rushed to Italy. "Einstein had a very complicated relationship with his father[, who] was the weaker of the two parents. [Albert] felt very guilty about having demanded and received money from the father in the times when the father had progressively failed in... business... [Albert] also felt guilty because the father had proved to be a failure – something that [Albert] had set his mind never to be..." 'My father's failures ruined his health. That's what taught me how cruel life is – the endless chase just to fill our stomachs... This marked a turning point for me. I came to understand that... the... essence of a [hu]man of my type lies in what I think, not in what I feel.' A few months after Hermann's death, Albert and Mileva were married... After returning from the wedding supper, Albert had to wake up his landlord – [Albert] had forgotten his key. At the patent office Einstein was[a] probationary technical expert, 3rd class. A secure job, ideal for the least likely bureaucrat in the Swiss civil service. "...[Albert] had to work... eight hours a day... six days a week... [but was still] able to consolidate the work in such a way that [the budding scientist] could turn to his physics work, either on the side or under the table." 'You might not think so but the Patent Office was a far better place for me than a university. Had I become a lecturer I would have been forced to produce papers as fast as possible, no matter how trivial...' ...Mileva became increasingly isolated. In 1904 [Mileva] gave birth to their first son... Now Einstein's ideas about physics really started to gel. Questions of light and motion ten years in the asking were coming clearer. By 1905 Einstein simply accepted that the speed of light was absolutely constant everywhere in nature. But that left the problem of motion... Speed is simply a measure of distance travelled in a unit of time, and Einstein realised that if the speed of light never changes then something else must vary. 'What if,' Einstein asked himself, 'the speed of light is constant but the flow of time is not.' It was an instantly radical thought. To everyone but Einstein, time was absolute, unchanging, the steady beat of the Universe. The idea that the tick of time could waver... that time is not the same for all of us; that it flows at a different rate for someone moving and for someone standing still... was exceedingly difficult to accept, even for Einstein... Einstein staged his thought experiment alongside a railway track. 'Set up two poles,' [Albert] said, 'and then measure the distance between them; find the mid-point and mark it. Using a right-angled mirror it is possible to see both poles. Imagine that lightning bolts hit the two poles at once. The observer beside the track could see them both in his mirror and would be able to confirm that the two events occur at exactly the same time. But how would the same event look to an observer on a train [who] also has a two-sided-mirror...? ...At the instant [the passenger] reaches the mid-point

between the two poles lightning strikes again... [The passenger] does not see the events as simultaneous [but instead] sees the lightning strike the pole that [the train] is moving towards first. Light takes time to move from the pole to the mirror, and in that time the train travels towards the forward pole. The light has a shorter distance to cross to reach his eye. So the two observers – one moving; one standing still – cannot agree when the lightning bolts hit the two poles.’ That confirmed what Einstein intuitively grasped – that time is relative. ‘There is nothing mysterious or unreasonable here. All my theory does is show that time flows at different rates for each of us. But very few believe me when I tell them it’s that simple.’ It took Einstein five weeks to move from his first insight that time varies to the finished form of what we now call the Special Theory of Relativity. His theory showed that the faster you move the slower your clock ticks – compared to that of a stationary observer. “...and [Albert] even says that if you took a clock round the equator, and you had a... clock at the pole of the Earth, the one that went round the equator would be going slower than the one going at the pole...” Which means, hard as it may be to believe, that time actually passes more slowly on the drive to work than it does while sitting at a desk. Lengths also shrink as speed increases. In a car travelling at 30 miles per hour changes in time and length are imperceptible, but if you drive at 90% of the speed of light you would shrink to 44% of your usual length – from the point of view of someone watching from the side. And here, finally, was the answer to Einstein’s first question about light – what would happen if [someone] could ride a beam of light? Nothing, for [someone] never could. At the speed of light itself, length shrinks to zero and time stands still... On the 30th of June, 1905, Einstein submitted his new theory to the *Annalen der Physik*, the leading German physics journal... The paper stood alone. There were no references to earlier works; no footnotes... Throughout 1905 Einstein overflowed with ideas. Even today it’s called... Einstein’s miracle year. [Albert] completed breakthrough works on the quantum theory of light, exploring light’s particle nature, and on the existence of the atom. Then, in what was almost an after thought... applied special relativity to mass and energy... [to get his equation] which means: the energy contained in any object is equal to its mass times the speed of light squared – an enormous number. ‘Every gram of matter contains a tremendous amount of energy, but if none of that energy escapes none... can be observed. It’s like a fabulously rich [person] who never spends anything – no one can tell how rich [the person] is.’ And if mass contains energy, then energy has mass. Every second the Earth is struck by 2kg of sunlight. As remarkable as Einstein’s discoveries were, the world didn’t seem to notice at first. A 25-year-old patent clerk who worked on physics in his spare time had altered our understanding of the Universe. ‘Why was I the one? Normal adults never stop to think about such concepts as space and time – these are things children ask about. My secret is I remained a child. I always ask the simplest questions... [For example, could] God have created the Universe any other way, or had [God] no choice? And, how would I have made the Universe if I had the chance?’ It was... Einstein’s astounding ambition to read the mind of God, and... Albert... succeeded time and again... But as his... papers reveal, there was a price that [Albert] and those closest to him had to pay for every triumph. ‘I have learnt to isolate myself from the unpredictability of human relations. Life tends to get clogged up, especially marriage.’ ...Still in his twenties, the humble clerk was no longer a scientific outsider. [Albert] now corresponded with the greatest physicists of his day... Einstein’s theory encompassed all of physics, except one crucial gap – gravity. ‘Max Planck warned me not to work on the theory of gravity. “The problem was too difficult,” [Max] said, “And even if I succeeded, no one would believe me.” But I took it on anyway... The first Theory of Relativity was child’s play compared to the problem of gravitation.’ Gravity seemed straightforward enough. A kilo of... anything will move the scales the same amount because the Earth’s gravity pulls on them all in exactly the same way. Yet, what the Earth does to make itself felt... that no one knew. Isaac Newton had shown that gravity governs the motion of the Solar System as well. But how? That was the mystery – how is it that the heavens stay on track? What is it that orders the Universe as a whole? Gravity treats every object the same, no matter what it is made of... [or] how big it is. There were no exceptions to give Einstein a place to start. ‘Then, all of a sudden, it occurred to me... the happiest thought of my life: if a [person] falls from the roof of a house, [that person] will not feel his own weight.’ Einstein put the idea another way[by asking:] ‘What if someone were in a lift when the cables snapped?’ [That person] would float, weightless, as [his body] and the lift both free-fall at the same rate in the Earth’s gravitational field. Next Einstein changed the scene: ‘What if the passenger were in a rocket ship far from Earth?’ [The passenger] would still float, with no gravitation field to hold his feet to the floor. But what would happen if the rocket began to move? As it accelerates, the floor of the rocket rises. On its way up it would catch the passenger, and to him it would seem that gravity was holding his feet to the floor. And if gravity and acceleration feel the same, Einstein concluded, perhaps they are the same – and there is no difference between accelerating in outer space or standing in the Earth’s gravitational field... [Albert] realised that the equivalence of acceleration and gravity could form the basis of a revolutionary new theory. “If I had the opportunity to ask Einstein one question, I would ask him how [his faith] could... be so sure... that the dear Lord required that the relativity part of... his theories... be satisfied throughout nature, everywhere and at all times...” Einstein worked with ferocious concentration, to the exclusion of all else. Over time [Albert] gave less and less attention to... his wife... When they courted, [Albert] had promised they would be scientific partners – two against the world – but Einstein’s [priorities] had changed. ‘I am not much good with people, and I am not a family [person]. I want my peace... it makes me happy.’ In 1911 [Albert] became a full professor at the German University at Prague... a major step up the professional ladder. But for Mileva... with a second son to care for, Prague felt like exile. ‘Mileva felt... ever more pushed to the side... [and] less important... the division of labour was that [Albert] do the scientific work and... [Mileva] the domestic side of things... [T]he pretence that they had tried to maintain over the years fell apart completely.’ “...[Mileva] had failed in her ambition... [of] becoming a new kind of [gal]... in a world of [guys]...” Recently discovered letters reveal an uneasy mix of pride and concern. ‘I am very happy about his success, which [Albert] has really earned. I only hope and wish that fame does not exert a detrimental influence on his human side... Not much time remains for his wife. I... am starved for love and I almost believe wicked science is guilty.’ ...[Albert, for his part, wrote:] ‘When I think seriously, day and night, I cannot easily engage in loving chatter. In the same way, one can’t play the violin if [one has] just been working with a large hammer.’ ...Science would always come first – especially gravitation. Einstein... now asked: ‘If acceleration and gravity are equivalent, what happens while accelerating that reveals something new about gravity?’ As the rocket accelerates, a ray of light shining through the window hits the other side at a lower point than it entered. To a passenger, the light appears to curve. If acceleration can bend light, then – by the equivalence principle – gravity must do the same... For five years gravity became his sole obsession... In 1911... [a conference] in Brussels brought together Europe’s finest physicists. Einstein was the youngest to attend... There was one person who missed Einstein’s triumph – Mileva. ‘It must have been very interesting. I would have loved... to have listened a little, and to have seen all those fine people. It’s been an eternity since we’ve seen each other. Will you still recognise me?’ Einstein wanted domestic comfort, not an intellectual partner... Mileva’s isolation deepened, and on a visit to Germany Einstein met a cousin... who came from a town and background similar to his own. Einstein saw in Elsa a chance for a domestic life free of demands and conflict. “...[Elsa] shared a lot of the traits that... [Einstein] would have identified with very strongly... unaffected pleasure in the simple things in life... enjoyment of food and drink...” ‘Dear Elsa, thank you very much for your letter. There is no book on relativity comprehensible to lay[people]. But what do you have a cousin for? If you ever happen to be in Zurich then we, without my wife, who is, unfortunately, very jealous, will take a nice walk and I’ll tell you about [the] curious things I have discovered.’ ...In 1912 Einstein... moved to Zurich to teach at the... polytechnic where [Albert] and Mileva had studied. [Albert] had been an undistinguished student. Now [Albert] was coming back a full professor of theoretical physics. Here [Albert] embarked on the most intense effort of his life – the gravity problem... [A] former... teacher... ‘...translated it into mathematical terms, whereupon even I couldn’t understand my theory.’ ...his old teacher had the key insight – space and time are fused together into a single 4-dimensional picture of the world. ‘...three numbers – length, width and height – allow us to record the position of all objects. Now add time. With this 4th dimension we’re able to record any event in the Universe...’ ...As the idea of space-time sunk in, Einstein realised [it was possible to] go one step beyond. “...Einstein hit on the idea that this wasn’t a rigid, straight space-time, it must be curved,

and it must have variations of curvature within it.” [Albert] asked: ‘What if the shape of space and time could warp and curve – what would happen then?’ His answer – gravity happens. “Einstein’s brilliant idea... that makes the whole thing work, was the fact that it is... matter and energy that drives the bending of space and time. Throw a rock in a pond, for example... ripples start to form... Therefore the presence of a rock creates ripples in space and time that we call gravity.” Space-time without matter is flat. But add a rock or a star and the whole picture changes... The enormous mass of the star causes a huge dent. Anything that passes close enough will roll down and around that warp in space-time. That’s gravity – the straightest path through the curves in space-time created by matter and energy. It was this insight that showed Einstein how gravity holds the Earth in orbit – the Earth simply follows the warp in space-time created by the Sun. Einstein published an early version of his new theory of gravity in 1913. There were still gaps in it but [Albert] impressed the one audience that mattered. In that year... Germany’s leading physicist travelled to Zurich with a colleague to offer Einstein a job in Berlin. ‘[They] looked me over as if I were a prize hen, but I didn’t know if I could lay another egg...’ It was the climax of a career. Berlin was the world’s leading centre for theoretical physics. Without doubt the former patent clerk had arrived. But for Mileva the promise of Berlin held no attraction. The marriage lay in shambles... Einstein resumed contact with Elsa... ‘Dear Elsa, it isn’t easy to get a divorce if one does not have any proof of the other party’s guilt, so I treat my wife as an employee who I can not fire. I have my own bedroom and avoid being alone with her. But how nice it would be if one of these days we could share a small, unassuming household.’ By then [Albert] and Mileva were completely estranged, but the family moved to Berlin in April 1914... [J]ust three months later Mileva gave up. [Mileva] and her sons returned to Zurich... ‘It’s still a great sorrow to me that I have been cut off from my sons. I even thought of seeking custody... but it was out of the question. Mileva poisoned the minds of both boys against me. [Mileva] was impossible to live with. Jealous of everyone [and] everything. How could I have married her?’ “...[Albert admitted to being a bad] father... Einstein wanted to really make a go of it in the first marriage but one has to... ask what [Albert] was prepared to sacrifice to make it work, and there I think [Albert] fails rather miserably.” Amidst the private turmoil, Einstein faced his first public moral challenge. In August 1914 [WWI] began. ‘Europe, in all her insanity, has started something unbelievable. In living through this so-called Great Epoch I find it difficult to believe that I belong to such an idiotic, rotten species. [The] species that actually boasts of its freedom of will, heroism on command, senseless violence and all the loathsome nonsense that goes by the name of patriotism.’ When 93 leading academics... issued a manifesto in defence of German aggression, Einstein helped launch a counter petition urging peace. It got three signatures. [Albert] withdrew to live and work in isolation on the outskirts of Berlin. [Albert] turned again to his theory of gravity. [Albert] faced one last hurdle – [Albert] could not solve the mathematics of curved space-time. The problem had stumped him for three years... “...[Albert] was at times desperate and... [eventually] turned to a friend to help him with the mathematics, because... [Albert no longer knew] where to go.” The friend... tutored Einstein in the complex geometry of curved surfaces... [and] gave Einstein the tool... needed to complete his analysis of gravity... By the autumn of 1915 [Albert] was ready to put the theory to the test. The orbits of the planets were understood with extraordinary precision, with one exception. Mercury’s orbit shifted slightly, unaccountably, every year. “...on the basis of this theory, which [Albert] had invented out of nothing in a certain sense – out of his view of how God would have had to make the Universe to make it right – [Albert was] able to calculate this very real, small effect, and get the right answer...” “And I believe at that moment Einstein said: ‘I don’t care what the world will say – I am right, because the Lord has told me’...” ...The calculation vindicated Einstein’s radical idea that space-time is curved. Mercury, the inner-most planet, shifts its orbit as it travels around the dent in space and time created by the Sun... Even light must follow all the curves in space and time, mapping the shape of the Universe as a whole. Einstein’s theory drives the scientific story of creation – the Big Bang; the expanding Universe... The great sweep of modern cosmology derives directly from... the General Theory of Relativity – Einstein’s theory of gravity. “...We are just stunned, even decades later, that [someone] could come out with that theory back in 1916. I would say [Albert] was 50 years ahead of his time.” Eight years of sustained effort took their toll. Einstein collapsed, near death, in 1917. His illness marked him[, but Albert]... was nursed back to health by his cousin Elsa. This relationship had cooled during the war, but now [Albert] needed her. ‘I have gained 4lbs... thanks to Elsa’s good care... [Elsa] cooks everything for me.’ Her influence showed in Einstein’s renewed attention to his appearance. Finally, in 1919, the couple decided to marry. Einstein’s divorce settlement with Mileva revealed characteristic self-confidence. [Albert] promised her the money from his Nobel prize, despite the fact that [Albert] would not win the award until 1922. The spring of 1919 was special for Einstein. A silent film explained Einstein’s breakthrough to the public. General Relativity predicted that starlight passing close to the Sun would curve around the warp in space-time created by the Sun’s mass. That bending of the light would make the star seem to occupy a different position in the sky to an observer on Earth. This could only be seen during a total eclipse of the Sun. A British expedition travelled to the South Atlantic in 1919 to photograph an eclipse. It would be the first public test of Einstein’s theory. May 29th dawned overcast over the Atlantic, but then the sky cleared and in the shadow of the eclipse the starlight warped around the Sun. Gravity bends light, exactly as Einstein had predicted... The eclipse results were announced in November. Literally overnight Einstein had become world famous – the first scientist-celebrity of the 20th century. This was the birth of Einstein the icon – the embodiment of scientific wisdom; a friendly, incomprehensible sage. “...The world was in a chaos because[of] the war... nations were tired, empires had fallen, and there comes this little [guy] who says, ‘I proclaim there are new laws of the Universe.’ It was an historic moment... against the background of confusion. It’s like Moses coming down the mountain...” Einstein... was more than a scientist – [Einstein] was a symbol of the hope for peace... No scientist had ever received such public adulation... When Einstein and fellow superstar Charlie Chaplin crossed paths, the two compared notes. ‘With fame I have become more and more stupid, which, of course, is a very common phenomenon... Charlie Chaplin had it right. When [Charlie] and I met we were surrounded by people calling our names. “What does it all mean?” I asked him. “Nothing,” [Charlie] replied.’ Not quite nothing. Einstein did enjoy some of the pleasures that fame can bring as [Albert] began to step out in Berlin society... Throughout the 1920s Elsa revelled in her husband’s increasingly prominent position, but Einstein drew sharp lines between them. They had separate bedrooms, [Elsa] was not to enter his study and Einstein kept company with other, younger [gals]... “Einstein wanted sex without complications. [Albert] also wanted relationships with his closest family members without complications...” ...‘My friend... has lived happily with the same [wife] for the whole of his adult life. I failed twice, rather disgracefully. I can love humanity, it seems, but when it comes to close personal ties with... [individuals] I am a horse for[a] single harness – not cut out for tandem or team-work.’ But for important causes Einstein would break his solitary rule. After... [WWI Albert increasingly allied] himself with a group [Albert] had left behind in childhood – the community of European Jews. Anti-semitism was spreading virulently in Germany. Some German scientists even attacked him for what they called “his immoral, Jewish physics.” In response, Einstein ever more publicly identified himself as a Jew... ‘I am a Jew, certainly, but not a practising one... And yet... I’ve come to realise that behind... everything is an order that we glimpse only indirectly... In this sense I am a religious [person].’ Einstein’s deep belief in the order of nature led him to ponder the mystery of light; to reach his Special Theory of Relativity... But his faith that nature must make sense set him on a collision course with the next great breakthrough in physics. In 1927... [a conference] brought Einstein together with the leading proponents of the revolutionary theory of Quantum Mechanics – the description of nature at the very smallest scale. While Einstein had focused on the large-scale structure of the Universe, younger scientists... explored the atom and the tiny building blocks of energy and matter... These researchers found that uncertainty and randomness govern the physics of the very small. Einstein loathed the notion that there was anything uncertain about nature. ‘I don’t deny that Quantum Mechanics is useful, up to a point, but I am convinced there is a deeper theory that will replace the uncertainty at the centre of it... God does not play dice with the Universe...’ “It is [with] a certain arrogance... that Einstein says ‘God does not play dice’. How does [Albert] know...? You can’t know what the Lord has [hidden] up his sleeve.” Einstein never warmed to Quantum Mechanics, despite a life-time of arguments... [Albert] had grander ambitions – a theory that would unify the fundamental

forces of nature within a single, comprehensive picture. Few of his contemporaries thought such a unification possible... Unified Field Theory is what Einstein believed would subsume Relativity and Quantum Mechanics within a single formulation – simpler and more comprehensive than either. [Albert] sought his unified vision for the rest of his life, but alone, in exile. By 1932 Hitler was on the verge of power in Germany. Einstein himself had already received death threats and, as [Albert] had as a boy, [Albert] once again prepared to flee Germany. ‘I’ve never really belonged to any country or state, to my circle of friends or even my family. My isolation is often bitter, to be sure, but I’ve never regretted it. If I am cut off from the understanding and sympathy of others, I am also independent of their opinions and prejudices.’ Early in 1933 Einstein [– ‘with a price of 20,000 marks on his head’ –] and Elsa set sail for the U[S]. They never returned to Europe... [Albert] moved to the quiet college town of Princeton, New Jersey, and settled quickly into a routine – walking every morning to his office at the Institute for Advanced Study, and returning in the afternoon to his modest home... [Albert] never learnt to drive. In America Einstein gave free reign to his eccentric streak... Einstein always refused to play the role of the proper professor, but the good humour masked growing isolation. In 1936 Elsa died after a brief illness. [Albert] wrote to a friend that... ‘[Elsa] was more attached to human beings than I.’ Einstein never saw Mileva again. [Mileva] died in 1949. His [younger] son, a schizophrenic, remained confined to an asylum in Switzerland until his death in 1966... [His elder son] became a professor of Engineering in California, but saw his father only rarely... Einstein passed the [WW2] years quietly, although [Albert] wrote a much publicised letter to Roosevelt urging nuclear research, but... had no role in building the bomb. After the war, the outside world would seek him out for views on causes of all sorts... [Albert was even offered] the presidency of the new state of Israel... Einstein declined. Science still came first. Finally, in the spring of 1955, Einstein’s heart began to fail... - HORIZON

EVEN FOUR DECADES after his death, an exceptional fascination is evoked by the name of Albert Einstein... but Einstein is much more than a subject for specialists in the history of science... BORN on March 14, 1879... [Einstein’s] parents and relatives, anxious to perpetuate the family name, were no doubt pleased that the first child was a boy. But as often happens with young couples who are facing parenthood for the first time, their joy was clouded by concern and even anxiety. “When [Albert] was born” his younger sister wrote many years later – “Mother was alarmed at the sight of his exceptionally large angular occiput and at first thought [their child] was a monster.” The physician reassured the twenty-one-year-old mother... that this peculiarity would soon disappear, and a few weeks later the size of the baby’s skull was indeed quite normal, though a rather square occiput remained a lifelong characteristic... In the [birth certificate] column provided for religion, both parents and child were recorded as “Israelitic.” - ALBERT EINSTEIN A BIOGRAPHY

Although... Einstein... was not associated with any orthodox religion, Einstein’s nature was deeply religious. Merely to come into his presence was always a profoundly spiritual experience. Although [Einstein] felt that belief in a personal God was too specific a concept to be applicable to the Being at work in this universe, [Einstein] never believed the universe was one of chance or chaos. The universe to him was one of absolute law and order... When Einstein was five years old, his father showed him a pocket compass. The little boy was deeply impressed by the mysterious behaviour of the compass needle, which kept pointing in the same direction no matter which way the compass was turned... [Einstein] felt then that “something deeply hidden had to be behind things.”

With primitive [people] it is above all fear that evokes religious notions – fear of hunger, wild beasts, sickness, death. Since at this stage of existence casual connexions is usually poorly developed, the human mind creates for itself more or less analogous beings on whose wills and actions these fearful happenings depend. One’s object now is to secure the favour of these beings by carrying out actions and offering sacrifices which, according to the tradition handed down from generation to generation, propitiate them or make them well disposed toward a mortal... Fathers and mothers and the leaders of larger human communities are mortal and fallible. The desire for guidance, love and support prompts [humans] to form the social or moral conception of God. This is the God of Providence who protects, disposes, rewards and punishes, the God who, according to the width of the believer’s outlook, loves and cherishes the life of the tribe or of the human race, or even life as such, the comforter in sorrow and unsatisfied longing, who preserves the souls of the dead... The Jewish scriptures admirably illustrate the development from the religion of fear to moral religion, which is continued in the New Testament. The religions of all civilised peoples, especially the peoples of the Orient, are primarily moral religions. The development from a religion of fear to moral religion is a great step in a nation’s life. That primitive religions are based entirely on fear and the religions of civilised peoples purely on morality is a prejudice against which we must be on our guard. The truth is that they are all intermediate types, with this reservation, that on the higher levels of social life the religion of morality predominates. Common to all these types is the anthropomorphic character of their conception of God. Only individuals of exceptional endowments and exceptionally high-minded communities, as a general rule, get in any real sense beyond this level. But there is a third state of religious experience which belongs to all of them, and which I will call cosmic religious feeling. It is very difficult to explain this feeling to any one who is entirely without it, especially as there is no anthropomorphic conception of God corresponding to it... The religious geniuses of all ages have been distinguished by this kind of religious feeling, which knows no dogma and no God conceived in [humanity’s] image; so that there can be no church whose central teachings are based on it. Hence it is precisely among the heretics of every age that we find [people] who were filled with the highest kind of religious feeling and were in many cases regarded by their contemporaries as atheists, sometimes also as saints... How can cosmic religious feeling be communicated from one person to another, if it can give rise to no definite notion of God and no theology? In my view, it is the most important function of art and science to awaken this feeling and keep it alive in those who are capable of it. We thus arrive at a conception of the relation of science to religion very different from the usual one. When one views the matter historically one is inclined to look upon science and religion as irreconcilable antagonists, and for a very obvious reason. The [person] who is thoroughly convinced of the universal operation of the law of causation cannot for a moment entertain the idea of a being who interferes in the course of events – that is, if [the person] takes the hypothesis of causality really seriously. [Such a person] has no use for the religion of fear and equally little for social or moral religion. A God who rewards and punishes is inconceivable to him for the simple reason that a [hu]man’s actions are determined by necessity, external and internal, so that in God’s eyes [a human] cannot be responsible, any more than an inanimate object is responsible for the motions it goes through. Hence science has been charged with undermining morality, but the charge is unjust. A [hu]man’s ethical behaviour should be based effectually on sympathy, education, and social ties; no religious basis is necessary. [A human] would indeed be in a poor way if [it] had to be restrained by fear and punishment and hope of reward after death. It is therefore easy to see why the churches have always fought science and persecuted its devotees... It was the experience of mystery – even if mixed with fear – that engendered religion. A knowledge of the existence of something we cannot penetrate, of the manifestations of the profoundest reason and the most radiant beauty, which are only accessible to our reason in their most elementary forms – it is this knowledge and this emotion that constitute the truly religious attitude; in this sense, and in this alone, I am a deeply religious [hu]man. I cannot conceive of a God who... has a will of the type of which we are conscious in ourselves. An individual who should survive his physical death is also beyond my comprehension, nor do I wish it otherwise; such notions are for the fears or absurd egoism of feeble souls. Enough for me the mystery of the eternity of life, and the inkling of the marvellous structure of reality, together with the single-hearted endeavour to comprehend a portion... of the reason that manifests itself in nature... To enquire after the meaning or object of one’s own existence or of creation generally has always seemed to me absurd from an objective point of view. - Einstein

According to Einstein, *cosmic religious feeling – the highest kind of religious feeling – is very difficult to explain*. This compliments statements such as that of Darwin – *the whole subject [of God] is beyond the scope of [humanity]’s intellect* – and a species can’t be expected to fully explain or understand God... while its knowledge of the Universe remains incomplete.

During a visit to Auckland this week... the... senior astronomer of the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, said that in... 1998, two groups of astronomers discovered that the expansion of the universe is accelerating. Experts then realised that there must... be another huge source of energy to counteract gravity – which they called “vacuum energy”... [A]stronomers were also “embarrassed” to find that the current theories of the origins of the universe explain only 3[%] of what is now believed to exist in space.

Humanity is unlikely to be able to physically prove anything about God until it also possesses the knowledge to explain 100% of the Universe, but until that time – which may never eventuate – humans can assume the beliefs of the most god-like members of their species are most likely to be nearest to the truth.

It was stated previously that *the more a person knows, the more god-like it must be*. However, what if we were to divide existing human knowledge into two separate sets – information that is IMPORTANT and information that is TRIVIAL (using *worth to human society* as a guideline). Now consider someone who knows so much that its brain is full to capacity, but every piece of information it possesses is contained within the latter set. No one who is sane would call such a person *god-like*. Therefore, when it comes to being god-like, it is the QUALITY of a person’s knowledge – not the QUANTITY – that counts (and how the person USES its knowledge – otherwise, most human-made computers would literally be more god-like than any human!).

Although sociology and related subjects currently have the most *worth to human society* – certainly more than cosmology – if the contents of the set of IMPORTANT information were to be rated in order of ultimate importance, knowledge of God would have to head the list (after all, although it might seem unimportant for humans to know the truth about God – at least while they continue to know so little about the Universe, and even their own planet – while the truth remains unacknowledged by the majority, no one can justifiably be accused of, or prevented from, distributing mistruths about God). *Knowledge of God* can be further rated according to age (i.e., modern concepts of God are more likely to be correct than older concepts). Hence, we can conclude that everyone who is less god-like than Albert Einstein (despite being a bad husband and father, and who knows what else, Einstein was undoubtedly the most god-like person of his generation) ought to accept his beliefs – regardless of whether or not they understand them. This means believing in the *Thesis of Determinism* (r:p1119, ln9) or the *law of causation* (every event is caused by a previous event, which in turn was caused by a previous event, and so on [note: because the Universe undergoes change, it isn’t true that *for every action in the Universe there is an equal and opposite reaction*]), which is a technical way of saying that nothing in the Universe occurs by chance (or as Einstein would say: *God does not play dice with the Universe*).

God is not an entity that exists outside the Universe (deism), or is contained within it – God and the Universe are the same thing (i.e., the Universe is God’s body – pantheism). Furthermore, because everything in the Universe is inside God, nothing can have more of God in it than anything else (i.e., god-like people and ungod-like people have equal amounts of God in them – the difference is that one type behaves in a manner befitting a god, or at least a human, while the other behaves in a manner befitting a lesser, non-human species; note that a large person isn’t more godly than a small person because it has more bulk – although it is *very difficult to explain* how two differently sized people can contain equal amounts of God, apart from pointing out that people don’t consider their gall bladder to be less a part of themselves than the much larger liver, unless the latter was transplanted into them). Because parts of the Universe regenerate continuously (r:p960, ln51), the Universe, and therefore God, can be called IMMORTAL. Because God is immortal, it doesn’t need to totally reproduce itself – so God doesn’t have genitals and, therefore, isn’t gender-specific. In addition, God is impersonal (i.e., God doesn’t love any human, or any planet, more than any other – ‘only insofar as we love can we know God’s love’; God doesn’t feel *jealous* – as is stated in Exodus 20:5). Although the Universe contains brains (e.g., inside humans), God itself doesn’t have a human-like (i.e., organic) brain, which means God can’t decide to alter what is going to happen in future (i.e., God doesn’t have *absolute* control over its bodily functions) and, therefore, everything that happens has been predestined.

I am the Lord, and there is no... God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me... Shall the clay say to him that fashioned it, What makest thou? ...I have made the earth, and created [people] upon it: I... have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded... I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the LORD do all these things... This saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come... - ISAIAH 45

...Thus saith the LORD... I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them. - EZEKIEL 11:5

Recall that Jesus allegedly said: *the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me*. This and other quotes (r:p861, ln18 + p1149, ln53-4), in conjunction with predestination, means that the act of PRAYING is like taking *coals to Newcastle* squared (note that because God can control a mind while it is conscious, it follows that God must be able to control the subconscious part of a mind, or a mind that is unconscious or dreaming; note further that every written word is, literally, *the word of God*, and no one but God can claim to have ownership of anything because in reality no one but God has created anything)! It also means that, in theory, God has the capacity to tell everyone the same thing at the same time. Historically, however, this has not happened (i.e., in the past God has used one person to speak to the rest – hence, it should be safe to assume that God is still using this method today, and will continue to do so into the future) – primarily because the law of causation precludes it from happening.

How does God manage to bring about whatever has been predestined if it can’t interfere directly with the Universe? The simplest explanation is to say that the Universe is activated via ENERGY (if it were possible for some parts of the Universe to be more god-like than other parts, this would mean that the closest god-like entity to Earth is the Sun’s centre) – which, incidentally, is also immortal!

...energy is neither created nor destroyed in any given physical system... Although one kind of energy may be converted easily into another, such as potential to kinetic type or chemical to electrical, the total energy always remains the same... Electricity has become the servant and messenger of the modern world... help[ing to] reveal the innermost secrets of the stars, atoms, and of life itself. Electric charge is one of those things that can be measured, thought about, and used, but cannot be defined in terms of anything simple. For, like space, time, and mass, there is nothing simpler in nature... the best way to define it is to observe what it does. An electrically-charged object exerts a force upon another charged object at a distance.

Electrical connections control... every action our brain takes...

It turns out that the human brain is pretty close to[its] limit right now. This means that we cannot expect genetic engineering to produce a gigantic increase in brain size... At present, the limitation set by birth... [so] that a baby’s head be able to pass easily through the birth canal... is partially overcome by having a substantial portion of human brain development take place in the first nine months of life, rather than in utero... Artificial

intelligence, on the other hand, suffers from no such biological restrictions. In fact, we can learn a great deal about intelligence by understanding the way a computer works.

In Newtonian mechanics, science comprehended the realm of ordered simplicity; in nineteenth-century statistical mechanics, the realm of disordered simplicity; in twentieth-century quantum electrodynamics, the realm of disordered complexity; and now... equipped... with the megabyte power of the computer... science confronts the realm of ordered complexity.

We can think of God as being like a computer using a continuous program (a program which, when the computer's power switch was first activated, created a universe – that can be viewed by an external observer on a monitor attached to the computer – and, while the switch stays turned on, or the power source remains constant, maintains the universe's existence). Contained within the computer's memory banks is a record of everything that has occurred in this universe in the past and will occur in the future – but nothing ever occurs out of sequence (i.e., the program never suddenly jumps back into the past or forward into the future – although various characters created by the program may be able to find out what will happen in the future or happened in the past; therefore, when characters claim to be talking to the dead or recalling past lives, they are merely tapping into the record of historical experiences and personalities).

Apart from external forces (e.g., wind, gravity) – which can activate both animate objects (e.g., humans) and inanimate objects (e.g., rocks) – animate objects are activated by a form of energy that is called the LIFE FORCE (*qi*, *mauri* or *creative energy*) or UNIVERSAL SOUL (if this soul exists in inanimate objects – i.e., pervades every atom in the Universe – it must in such instances be dormant; or have *potential* force – as opposed to having *kinetic* force). The Universe doesn't contain billions (or trillions) of immortal souls – as is promoted by all of the major faiths – but just one. This is why Einstein didn't believe in life after death (the soul – which contains a record of a person's life – does continue to exist after a body dies, but this in no way resembles the Western concept of an afterlife or the Eastern concept of reincarnation; the record has no more life than characters in an old movie or TV show).

Unless an individual is as god-like as Einstein (or is more god-like), or has personally experienced one or more events for which no other explanation could be given, that individual may have difficulty accepting everything is predestined – especially if the individual doesn't want to accept that when bad things happen to it or others this is, effectively, because of *God's plan*. However, if God isn't controlling everything which happens, it means the majority of humans (i.e., social creatures with highly developed brains) are freely choosing to perform all of the stupid or evil things that they have done in the past – and continue to do! The theory of predestination is further supported by the fact that any plans God has devised for Earth or elsewhere could be undone by the actions of self-determining individuals (what if, for example, God had planned for the Messiah's mother to be 'born during a London thunderstorm on Black Friday, July 1934', only for her to be killed a decade later by a 'German robot bomb'?).

Although predestination means that humans and other animals are like puppets, a god-like person accepts responsibility for its actions – even though Einstein stated *that in God's eyes a human cannot be responsible* – because, in most instances, it is able to think about its actions before performing them (while the god-like person accepts that God was responsible for making it have those thoughts, it has the sensation of being responsible for making its own decisions). If a god-like person is in a situation where it doesn't have time to think about what to do, or lacks the experience to make the right decision (or doesn't know of an experienced person to gain advice from), and the decision it makes proves to be a mistake, the god-like person tries to learn from that mistake to avoid repeating it (and, by informing others of its lesson, it may prevent them from repeating that mistake – a process that compliments the *law of causation* and any plan God might have). Note that even though a god-like person accepts it has the potential to learn about its future (r:ln12), it doesn't try – because it doesn't want to know (finding out about your future is like watching a football game when you already know the result). Instead, it tries to identify what it wants to happen, then plans how to make it happen (in the knowledge that if its plans are successful, this is because they were meant to be successful; if its plans are unsuccessful, this is because they weren't meant to be successful – or they are incomplete, and thus need to be reworked). Note also that a god-like person doesn't worship God (such an act implies that God is *vain*; it also means revering something that is *evil* – r:p1212, ln45).

If humans aren't meant to worship God then why did God create them – what purpose do humans serve? To be able to appreciate itself and its own existence, perhaps? To date, humans are the only Earthlings to conclude: *I think, therefore I exist*. God can only THINK via the brains of suitable lifeforms (although, it is worth noting, God only needs one human in order to appreciate its own existence); and – although God can see what it has created on Earth via the eyes of non-blind, non-human Earthlings – humans are the only Earthlings capable of seeing beyond Earth or, at least, understanding what lies beyond Earth; and of understanding that God is behind the creation of everything.

The immediate purpose of humanity is to exist and to recreate themselves (i.e., the purpose of each generation of humans is to ensure that there will be future generations). In recreating themselves, humans are gradually becoming more god-like in their thinking and behaviour (r:p898, ln23) – or at least certain individuals are. Hence, becoming god-like as a species could be considered humanity's ultimate purpose.

The glory of God is [humanity] fully alive.

Without the history of [humanity], God would be alone and lifeless.

Why has *the history of humanity* contained – and continues to contain – so many extremes of happiness and suffering? Perhaps recognising evil (or the consequences of evil – e.g., creating suffering) – and, consequently, choosing to be good (creating happiness) – is necessary for the development of the species? For most of humanity's history, the species has been linked directly to the cycle of life that includes every other Earthling species. No one would argue that life in the wild is associated more with suffering than happiness ('nature can be so cruel')! Technology has, however, enabled humans to disassociate themselves from much of the struggle for survival necessary for the maintenance of Earth's food chains, and continues to eliminate, or minimise, other forms of suffering (e.g., humans can now cure most of the diseases or handicaps that afflict them; can shelter or protect themselves from climatic extremes and many forms of natural disaster). Although some people imitate nature – by being *cruel* – there is no reason to believe that this will always be the case (e.g., humanity has the potential to further disassociate itself from the wilderness and, therefore, to further eliminate human suffering or cruelty). If every Earthling can currently be classified as one of 'God's children', maybe humans will one day be classified as God's adults?

...you were a mystery no one could help me solve... now I know about you... no more doubts no more fears no more guessing...

Much of the suffering currently experienced by human society can be indirectly attributed to God and directly attributed to the fact that the majority of its members don't *know about* God, or about many other forms of knowledge and understanding that should be considered basic for a modern human to have.

We have bred generations of youngsters who end up believing anything. - 1997

TREE

...in my life I've got nothing to believe in...

Crawling on the bathroom floor wondering what I'm living for ODing on some pills escaping life with cheap thrills... thought I had something to say but now it[ha]s gone away... - THE DUM DUM BOYS

...a while back... I was absolutely certain I'd figured out the meaning of life and I put it on paper. A few years later, I've come back, but... it's [like it was] written in another language... I used to be the sort of kid that could see dragons flying along the motorway. I used to cry when people killed whales. Now I just say, "F--- the whales", and all I see on the motorways are these white crosses. I'm 14 years old. Doesn't that worry anyone? Doesn't it worry anyone that... ['the problem of unhappy children plagues Western society' and m]any teenagers have succumbed to... pain, pressure and fear in a desperate plea to rid themselves of so many unexplained questions, which have haunted them so much they would take their own life.

...*Bleak view of life in teenage novels worries doctors...* A study of 94 novels chosen as "notable" by the Children's Book Council of A[US] finds that humour is rare, and devastating loss is the norm. T[he]... acting director of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services for the Central Sydney Area Health Service... and colleagues... considered 269 characters in the books... About 78[%] of characters suffered a loss such as the death of a family member or close friend... While 180 characters were distressed or had psychiatric symptoms, 26 characters had suicidal thoughts and 10 killed themselves. [The acting director] said that while literature might not be the main medium for young people, the possible effect of the negative portrayal[s]... on vulnerable teenagers should be considered. "We... may well ponder whether the genre has crossed the threshold from realism to nihilism... I think it might be time for authors and health professionals to... exchange viewpoints on the subject."

...Consider what we mean by intelligence – or, more particularly, ponder the notion that a tally of correctly ticked boxes is the measure of a child's potential. IQ tests, we call them, the "Q" standing for quotient, a term from mathematics for the result when one number is divided by another. It's as if there are only so many smarts to go around, and the experts' computations are the only way to decide who is blessed with how much. Now contemplate [the] 8-year-old... whose recent attempt to end his short and miserable life is an indictment of the conceit that it is possible to calibrate intelligence with the oracular accuracy the experts claim. More than that, what happened to [the 8-year-old boy] poses a grave question about the experts. How could so many intelligent people be so stupid? America first heard of [the boy] almost six years ago when, at least according to his mother, [the boy] picked up a violin and began to play. At 3 [the boy] had mastered chess, and by 4... was enrolled in a Stanford University correspondence course. At 6, an IQ test made it official: with a score of 298, [the boy] was "the greatest genius ever to grace the Earth", said[the] Denver psychologist... who graded it. There were talk-show appearances and speaker's fees. Grants and scholarships flowed in. Eager publishers offered six-figure contracts for books that [the boy] was to write all by himself – a piece of cake for a 6-year-old who had aced a college course on Babylonian history and read the *Iliad* at bedtime. A foundation was established to help ensure the prodigy would some day make an immense contribution to the world. And now? Well, if one takes the word of the Colorado child-welfare authorities who removed [the boy] from his mother's care, the alleged genius is nothing but an average kid. The only thing that makes him stand out from the pack, they say, is a pronounced learning disability... [A neighbour had previously blown] the whistle on what... [it] witnessed over the back fence. [The boy's mother] was forever riding her son... hectoring him to master lessons that went on long into the night. The authorities took note but declined to conduct a comprehensive investigation. With all those experts assuring them [the boy] was different, welfare officials decided normal rules of child-rearing did not apply. Then, one night in November, [the boy] was rushed to hospital after his mother found an empty medicine bottle in his room. That was when the world's brightest boy began to seem anything but. Officials... turned up a host of anomalies, starting with the IQ tests the mother cited as proof of her boy's genius. In most instances... the mother had graded the tests herself. On those rare occasions when they were taken under supervision, [the boy] had sat on her knee while filling in the answers. So how to explain the extraordinary scores? After all, if the answers were provided by the mother, then [the mother] must be a genius, too. Not so fast, [investigators] cautioned. In every case, [the mother] knew which test was to be administered – knowledge that would have allowed her to find the answers on the internet. [The boy] is now living with a foster family... "His recent suicidal gesture," states a psychological appraisal submitted as evidence in the ongoing custody case... [-] the true believers[who] clamour to have [the boy] returned to his mother... say... history demonstrates that societies always fear the things they cannot comprehend... [-] "exemplifies his inability to continue the existence that has been assigned by his mother, the gifted community and, most likely, by himself"... [In local news, t]he parents of young people who have committed suicide have launched an aggressive campaign to raise public awareness about the issue... The no-holds-barred campaign, sponsored by an anonymous corporate, will use full-page ads and posters in bus shelters. The advertisements will have catchlines such as... "Too many kids hang around every week – unfortunately it's not around bus shelters," and give information and statistics. But the Ministry of Health has opposed the campaign, saying the messages are ambiguous and could have the wrong effect.

...*Families fight back* OVER the past 20 years – during which N[Z] has pursued a code of silence around suicide – our youth suicide rates have soared to among the highest in the [First W]orld. Every week an average of nearly three young N[Z]ers kill themselves. Meaning every week three families are wrecked. And every week three wider circles of friends, schoolmates and the community absorb the shockwaves caused by another sad, impetuous, senseless death... But now 12 brave families who have experienced the pain of losing a loved one to suicide say it is time to face up to reality and speak out in a bid to stop other youngsters taking their own lives... "We want to change everything at the top of the cliff so that kids never get to the suicide stage," says [the group's spokesperson]n... who lost her 17-year-old son Aaron three years ago. As a first step, [the group]... hopes through fund raising, a link with Rotary, and the use of volunteers that it can get[other] groups going throughout the country.

...They find the first one after less than a quarter of an hour, just off the narrow path... In less than an hour the dead [body] is wrapped, sealed and wheeled on a metal trolley to the car park where they are gathering this year's harvest from the Sea of Trees. The Aokigahara Sea of Trees is a remarkable place, and in different circumstances it would be known for any number of interesting things. In a country overrun with development, it is a genuine wilderness, one of the few virgin woods left in Japan. Wild mushrooms grow in its mossy cavities; looming above it is the thrilling and immaculate shape of Mt Fuji, Japan's most famous and most sacred mountain. But Japanese know Aokigahara for one reason alone, and there is nowhere else like it in the country, probably nowhere in the world. Every year, people come here in their scores with the sole aim of committing suicide. As they have done every year for the past three decades, a small army of police, volunteers and attendant journalists arrive for an annual search to bring them out... In the 70s, about 20 bodies were discovered by walkers or police over a year... But 10 years ago, the number began rising and 57 corpses were found in 1994. Last year, there were more than 70... The four found in the latest annual search... brought this year's

tally to 48... Most of those who succeed in killing themselves here do so by hanging, although some take pills and booze and, during the winter, there are those who simply lie down in the snow. Why here, apart from the practical reason that it is an easy place to disappear? The answer goes a long way back. In the 19th century, feudal Japan suffered bitter famines. Aokigahara was one of many places where poor families used to come and dispose of infant and elderly mouths which they could not feed by the simple means of leaving them out in the open to die. [More recently, a w]riter... published a famous novel, dramatised on television, called *The Pagoda of the Waves*, in which a character comes to die in Aokigahara. A notorious book called *The Suicide Manual*, which achieved alarmingly high sales a few years ago, recommended it as the perfect place to end it all. In the carpark, [a]Buddhist monk... provides another explanation. "The spirits are calling people to kill themselves – the spirits of the people who have committed suicide before,"... said [the monk, who together with] 50 monks from his temple came for the first time to construct a temporary altar in the car park and to pray for the repose of the troubled spirits of Aokigahara. For as long as recorded history, the area has been dotted with various places of worship, both conventional and unorthodox... The great mountain is itself a giant deity of the indigenous Shinto cult; in the whole of Japan, there is absolutely nowhere that is more symbolically Japanese than Mt Fuji. And nothing is more symptomatic of Japan's present state of national health than suicide. Finland and Hungary have higher suicide rates, but of the big industrialised countries no population is more prone to self-destruction than the Japanese. [Two years ago], the annual number exceeded 30,000 for the first time. Last year, it rose to 33,048. The profile of the victims, and the timing of the suicide boom, corresponds with those of Japan's economic crisis, which began in the early 1990s and which has affected most of all the middle-aged and the middle-ranking whose corporations, small businesses and investments have been stricken by restructuring, bankruptcy and collapse. Railway stations in Tokyo have taken to placing mirrors along platforms – the idea is that the sight of a person's reflection will prompt the would-be suicide to think again, pause, and save the transport companies a fortune in delays and clean-up costs. The ministries of Labour and Health and Welfare have asked for funds to be put aside for measures to combat suicide. Everyone knows that the only reliable way to reduce the suicide rate is an economic recovery – and that even in boom times, the number of Japanese people who can find no alternative to taking their own lives[('suicide rules out every other solution to your problems')] is higher than any comparable country.

[For Japanese guys, 'the supreme honour is to die in battle'. If they fail to achieve that, the next best thing is a self-inflicted death (*harikari*).

...yesterday, a] 16-year-old... student committed suicide by harikari in front of Fukushima railway station in Japan, watched by 200 people.

...['A 40-year-old Thai yesterday killed herself by jumping into a pit of over 100 crocodiles, shocking crowds of onlookers at a Bangkok reptile farm.']

...Abnormal levels of a key brain chemical may predispose depressed people to commit suicide, and measuring levels of this chemical may enable doctors to identify those most likely to take their lives, researchers say... [Washington's] Columbia Presbyterian Medical Centre said yesterday that studies by a number of researchers have shown that levels of serotonin, an important neurotransmitter protein in the brain, are 20 to 25[%] lower in patients who are at high risk of suicide. Serotonin is particularly active in a part of the brain that controls inhibition, and a lack of the neurotransmitter, or its related chemicals, lowers the amount of control a person has over actions... By identifying those most likely to kill themselves, such patients then could receive more aggressive care to help them control suicidal impulses through a variety of medications now available... Identifying people who are seriously planning suicide has long been one of the most difficult challenges for doctors who work with depressed patients. People who have a dedicated plan to commit suicide often are able to disguise and hide their intentions. Also, doctors often fail accurately to gauge how serious a patient's suicide intentions are. For instance, studies in Finland and England show that about half of all people who commit suicide see a physician in the 90 days before they kill themselves, but only about 25[%] of them receive adequate care. Suicide is the eighth leading cause of death in the U[S] ('the national suicide rate per 100,000 grew from 11.6 in 1970 to 12.2 in 1989; the rate was 21.4 and 7.1 for White guys and gals – 12.2 and 2.4 for Blacks') and 'the 12th leading global cause of death, with about 950,000 people annually dying of self-inflicted injuries'].

...The partner of an Auckland[er]... traumatised since her rape two months ago has condemned Social Welfare as harsh and uncaring. [His partner] attempted suicide on Sunday – the day after her 24th birthday... [H]is partner had wanted him to take six months' leave from his Power N[Z] job to help her to get over the ordeal... When [the partner] approached Income Support Service's Waitakere office to apply for the unemployment benefit [the partner was told the couple] must spend all of his savings, then wait 10 weeks before the dole would be paid... [They] would be given "limited assistance" of \$118.74 a week for the 10 weeks – but that was money which would have to be paid back. The [partner] said the couple had no savings and... believed the financial pressures had contributed to... [the 24-year-old's] already stressed state... [The mother of] four sons... was in a stable condition at Auckland Hospital yesterday after taking an overdose of pills... [In related news, f]ive young people from the town of... Marton, population 7300... have killed themselves in the past six weeks. The... Mayor... felt "frantic"... [upon hearing about] the latest death... of a... [girl] aged 17. As well... three suicide attempts have been reported to the police in the past three months... "I ask again, is there anyone out there who can help to stop the anguish and pain being suffered here? ...this town is in trouble... We need all the information we can get from experts throughout the country. I hope they hear my plea and contact us..."

...Young people are killing themselves from an earlier age, says an expert on youth suicide... [T]he most disturbing trend in N[Z] was an escalating number of 13-year-olds attempting suicide... but the reasons for the trend were not clear, [the expert] told a seminar at the Auckland School of Medicine... [The expert], who recently completed a doctorate on youth suicide, said N[Z] still had the highest youth suicide rate in the world for [guys] aged between 15 and 24. It had the third highest rate for [gals] in that age group... [The expert] was hopeful that the services related to youth suicide would improve under the new mental health commissioner... who had been closely involved with her research.

...N[Z]'s high youth suicide rate could drop if teenagers received more help to cope with stress, anger and low self-esteem, Barnardo's says. The child welfare agency has been testing a course for teenagers under stress at three Nelson schools this year... At 39.9 per 100,000 of population, the rate... for [guys] aged 15 to 24... had doubled since 1985... [to become] the third highest in the [First W]orld... Suicides among young [gals] had remained at five to six per 100,000...

Young British... [gals] are turning increasingly to suicide... They are starting to follow young [guys], whose suicide rate has soared in the past 20 years, reports the *Times*. The department of social work at the University of Southampton says figures show the suicide rate generally among [gals] has dropped in Britain over the past two decades, but in the 15 to 24 age group it has risen sharply. The rate has also risen among 25 to 34-year-olds... [One professor] thought the rise was caused by their emancipation. "Young [gals] feel about work now as young [guys] have always felt. They feel they need to be in employment and successful. Young middle-class mums are employing child-minders so they can hold down their jobs. Then they grieve and feel guilt. Their bodies are telling them to be mums and their minds are telling them to go out and be breadwinners. The accumulation of all these stresses and pressures is leading them more to suicide." - 1996

Why did [Sarah] have to die? ...Sarah... was only 16... when... [the Aucklander] decided enough was enough and made a noose of her scarf... There's the waste of a young promising life but what hurts the family almost as much is their own sense of helplessness. They watched the once vibrant teenager become a thin and sickly girl, who, as her mother noted in her diary, "hardly ever smiles these days". Despite their efforts they were unable to steer Sarah through what... was her only bad patch in her life... Faced with little option... [the family] had accepted that the... counsellors... knew best... "If [Sarah] had got the right support I'm sure [my daughter] would have got through it..." ...her... [mother] recalls how Sarah... would skip down the hall of their modest brick state house, clap her hands and announce: "When are we going to get some fun?" It was

her mischievous sparkle the family likes to remember. "Sarah was the light of our family," said her elder sister... "[Sarah] was the most enthusiastic of all of us..." [Sarah] was perhaps also the most sensitive. The bad and sad of society were not lost on her. But her introspection and melancholy had not been cause for alarm... Sarah had the looks to follow [her sister] into modelling but it seemed more likely [Sarah] would have found a career where [it would be possible to] use her artistic talent. [Sarah] had filled a notebook of pencil, ink and crayon sketches which showed real ability... [However, her] jottings suggest... that [Sarah] was depressed about what to do with her life and unsure whether it was worth entering the game. "Basically, we live a short disappointing life and then we die," [Sarah] wrote in her notebook during her last year. "We fill our lives with shit things like careers and relationships to delude ourselves that it is not all totally pointless..." ...[Incidentally, w]isdom teeth can lead to depression and even suicide, say... researchers at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands. The phenomenon is most visible in people in the 15 to 25 age group, when people are most likely to cut their wisdom teeth. The likelihood of depression is stronger when the upper... wisdom teeth are pushing through.

...Shocking new... figures show that... suicide... now rates as the second most common cause of death among young N[Z]ers, behind road crashes[, although more]... than twice as many Aucklanders die by their own hand as are killed on the roads... [O]ne in four N[Z] teenagers has tried or thought about taking his or her own life... The latest figures, for 1995, show a leap to 156 suicides and 1310 hospital admissions from failed attempts... Based on the 1995 figures, N[Z] has the second highest suicide rate for [guys] aged 15 to 24 behind Finland... The results... of... [the] Injury Prevention Research Centre survey... have been presented to the Government as part of its national youth suicide strategy, due to be released tomorrow. The Minister of Youth Affairs... has led Government agencies in preparing the strategy to slash the rate and identify contributing factors... [The strategy is] dependent on budget funding but [the minister] was confident the money would come through... This year a National Health Committee research team produced guidelines estimating an average-sized secondary school could expect 20 students a year would attempt to take their lives... Schools are the most logical sites... to attack suicide... because young people can be easily accessed individually and in groups... [Suicide is already] an issue that young people talk about a lot... But... [public] awareness needs to be raised.

...The suicide-awareness programmes that were available to schools should not be undertaken... Teaching school students about suicide[– 'the #2 cause of death in the world' –] may serve to increase the problem, a Ministry of Education and National Health Committee research team said... It called instead for schools to promote healthy environments where students could develop self-esteem. It urged schools to address and manage difficulties facing young children and to improve the recognition of emotional distress.

...IT'S A peculiar paradox for a journalist – how to write about whether or not to write about a particular subject, because to do so might have fatal consequences... A top N[Z] suicide researcher's quest to quell media coverage of suicide cases – because... it can provoke copycat suicides[(a 'number of similar attempts were made the day after a suicide featured on' a popular local soap opera)] – does not sit easily with the hallowed freedom of the press and the public's right to know. While... guidelines for minimal and "muted, cautious" reporting are left to the discretion of journalists and editors, one publication aimed at deterring youth suicide has been canned for fear that its contents could have the opposite effect.

...N[Z]'s restrictive laws on the reporting of youth suicides may contribute to the country's high youth-suicide rate, says a body representing newspapers in the Commonwealth... Unless the coroner rules otherwise, all that can be reported is that someone died and there were no suspicious circumstances... The Auckland office deals with at least one suicide every fortnight where young people – with no history of mental illness – have decided to end their lives. [Last year 'the Mental Health Commissioner backed a call for a review of the law covering suicide inquests. The commissioner said coroners had an important role in preventing suicides. They had access to information not available to anyone else. The commissioner did not know if publishing details of coroners' findings would increase or lessen the chance of copybook suicides.'

...yesterday a psychiatrist 'said it was worrying that the suicide of Nirvana lead singer Kurt Cobain, which at the time prompted a significant increase in suicide crisis calls, was applauded by a 15-year-old character in the recently released AUSn novel *Shoovy Jed*.'

...With his death, Michael Hutchence joins the long list of rockers who have taken their lives. The most recent high-profile casualty was Nirvana vocalist and guitarist Kurt Cobain, who shot himself in the head... in April 1994, aged 27... According to Cobain's suicide note, "I haven't felt the excitement of listening to, as well as creating, music... for many years now." As with Hutchence, [Cobain] left a baby daughter. Like Cobain, Joy Division singer Ian Curtis built a career on songs filled with angst, paranoia and death... [Curtis] hanged himself in his Manchester... home in 1980... One of the more spectacular exits can be claimed by Johnny Ace, one of the most popular balladeers of the 1950s. [Ace] died back-stage at Houston City Auditorium on Christmas Eve in 1954, while playing Russian roulette. [One of the more surprising suicides was that of 'Freddie Prinze. At 21, Prinze "was one of the biggest stars in the US, earning hundreds of thousands of dollars and being pursued by every starlet in Hollywood." At 22, Prinze was dead. Like Marilyn Monroe, Prinze was love-starved and unsure of himself when younger, and continued to feel that way even though millions of people professed love for him and showered him with gifts and money.'

...When Isambard Kingdom Brunel built his monstrous Clifton suspension bridge in Bristol... the [son of the French engineer who had 'invented a mechanical method of producing ships' blocks – regarded as the first example of automation – and the first tunnelling shield, with which was built the first tunnel under the Thames between 1825 and 1843'] failed to predict the tragic consequences... [T]here have been well over 100 "falls" in Brunel's shadow during the past 20 years... alone... People come from as far as London, Oxford and Shrewsbury to step off this... 85m... landmark. Few survive... [A]bout 300 suicides each year (one-20th of all cases in England and Wales) are leaps from a staggering height... Jumpers average 35 years old, and [guys] are twice as likely to leap as... [gals, who] are more likely to commit suicide when suffering from pre-menstrual syndrome, according to a Swedish study... (interestingly, more [gals] attempt suicide, but more [guys] succeed)... Napoleon, however, made a complete botch of suicide. When 3000 French troops were slaughtered during the last engagement of the Peninsula War at Toulouse in 1814, the ill-fated emperor swallowed a vial of poison prepared two years before... Unfortunately for him it was stale, and [Napoleon] was forced to retire alive and shamefacedly to Elba... Sociologist Emile Durkheim called suicide "contagious." And so it is... A wave of European suicides followed the publication in 1774 of Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, in which a romantic... [youth] shoots himself. Now, similar imitative behaviour can follow soap opera suicides (apologies to Goethe)... [A]ggressive behaviour is often the key. In a confidential inquiry into suicides among the mentally ill, completed by the Royal College of Psychiatrists last year, a third of people who took their own lives had displayed past evidence of aggression... The paradox is that it seems almost impossible to know how to prevent a suicide from taking place... Back in the 1950s suicide was a criminal offence.

...In war torn countries around the world, young people fight desperately for survival, while in N[Z] they increasingly opt for death by their own hand to relieve the emotional burdens life has to offer. These are stresses caused by hopelessness, depression, neglect and abuse, accompanied by adolescent hormonal changes. At the same time, our teenage crime rate continues to grow, gaining in momentum in its blood-curdling levels of violence. Teenagers are raping, killing, holding up dairies and banks at gun point, and stabbing taxi drivers for loose change. Where has it all gone wrong? Adolescence is the turning point where many young people decide to go one way or the other... [T]he Principal Youth Court Judge for N[Z], deals primarily with the accidents at the bottom of the cliff[, witnessing]... daily the results of a long entrenched destructive cycle. By the time our youth reach him, many have lost their boundaries and have no sense of right and wrong. However, [the judge] emphasises strongly that more of these children are sinned against, rather than the sinners... "What surprises me is how well some of these children do, not how badly they do..." For those not so responsible, it seems that since the 1989 introduction of Tomorrow's Schools, education has lost its tracking system... There is no follow up from primary school through to high school, so if a child disappears from school, it goes largely unnoticed. Without some form of tracking, the most at risk children stand little chance of receiving any form of help... [M]any children are left to fend for themselves... [■] More

young people are roughing it on the streets of Auckland, according to the city's community welfare agencies... [T]he numbers under 18 had doubled... The... city missionary... said that once young people were on the streets they stopped learning and were vulnerable... to... abuse... "I think we haven't as a society taken seriously the problems that many young people face day by day..."

...Youthline[– the teenage version of Lifeline –] has accused the Auckland City Council of failing young people after bureaucrats recommended it miss out on a \$5000 grant... for help with its volunteer development programme... In 1995, a tough policy was introduced that excluded health, education, welfare and counselling groups and employment initiatives from receiving discretionary grants. The council sees these as Government responsibilities... In total, 121 groups are seeking almost \$850,000, with only \$180,000 available... down sharply from the almost \$1.2 million distributed in 1994-1995.

...[the number of young people helped by a free nationwide telephone counselling service is limited by a lack of funds. Only a fraction of calls made to Youthline's crisis line service can be answered. Youthline estimates that for every one of the 20,000 calls answered by volunteers annually, 11 callers don't get through. In human terms, says the service, more than 200,000 calls for help go unanswered every year. To meet the demand, Youthline is launching its first-ever annual appeal this week. Funds will be used to double Youthline's free crisis service from 12 to 24 hours daily. Five thousand envelopes will be sent to households throughout NZ during the week.' By the way,] Selwyn College students[– who are also fed]... up with waiting for politicians to act on youth suicide and despair[– have]... decided to take the matter into their own hands... [by organising] a workshop... for fellow teenagers to work through the pressures and problems they face.

...Suicides in Auckland have reached epidemic proportions, giving the police and the Auckland coroner grave concern... The number of Auckland people taking their lives has almost doubled since 1995... [A s]ergeant... said the... 68 suicide reports during the past five months... had no common denominator – they involved people from all walks of life, all ages, both sexes and different cultures... The Otahuhu inquest officer... said that three to four years ago cases would have involved almost solely teenagers. "It now goes through the whole gamut of ages and it's pretty horrendous."

...the... principal investigator with the Canterbury Suicide Project... says suicide... is the result of many factors, but 90% involve a diagnosable psychiatric condition... [Of such conditions,] the Anxiety Disorders Foundation of N[Z] (formerly called the Phobic Trust)... [estimates that] disabling anxiety, social phobia and obsessive/compulsive disorders affect about one in every 30 children...

Between 10 and 20[%] of people who attempt suicide are referred to their GP with no other follow-up care, says an Auckland psychiatrist... That is despite research showing people who have previously inflicted harm on themselves are 20 to 30 times more likely to commit suicide than the rest of the population... [O]ne crown health enterprise referred more than half such patients back to their GPs with no other care.

...[GPs] have hit back at official concern that they are failing to detect suicide warning signs in... patients. They say... people are taking their lives because of long delays for specialist help... [In another development, a South African] psychologist... who set up practice in N[Z] four years ago... said... [yesterday that:] "There are 50 different suicide prevention programmes running in N[Z] but there is nothing for the caregiver..." [So the psychologist]... has designed a course "Caring for Caregivers". It aims to teach caregivers... [like the Aucklanders who'd] had enough after a member of her family attempted suicide for the 11th time late last year... how to recognise traits in someone who may attempt suicide and how to understand them when they are in suicidal distress. The course also teaches the caregivers self-development and how to... cope with suicide.

...Southland's high suicide rate is partly due to the lack of light, says an Invercargill psychologist... Turning on... more bright lights at work and home was one way of... [reducing] the region's... suicide rate... "People don't believe me when I tell them they don't need me, they need electricity."

...There is no mystery about the huge increase in the number of people taking their lives in the past couple of years. Suicide is simply another downside... of the society we have chosen for ourselves – or, rather, that has been chosen for us... We no longer place any emphasis on virtues, which are timeless and unchanging, but sprout on ad nauseam about values, which we can, at the drop of a difficulty, adapt to suit ourselves... In such a society is it any surprise that... [people] of all ages, but mainly young people, commit suicide – the ultimate ego trip, the final expression of utter selfishness and its brutal companion, self-pity? I think not... And where is the surprise in reading of young [guys] who top themselves because they have been jilted by their girlfriends? Many young people today are so desperate for human love – something they've heard about but never experienced – that when they find it, or one of its counterfeits, and are then suddenly deprived of it, they decide that life isn't worth living.

...['Maoris do not commit suicide.' According to Maori tradition, 'the body should not be wasted'; 'the body of each member is regarded as belonging to the whole village and, therefore, a person who commits suicide is stealing something from the rest of the village'.]

...Suicide is likely to have been part of Maori culture before European colonisation – and... unrequited love or shame... was at the heart of it, a medical researcher says... There was no information about suicide rates before Europeans arrived but Maori oral history and early ethnographic evidence revealed it did exist... The notion that suicide rates were low before colonisation and high as a result of it did not appear to be correct... Now both Pakeha and Maori [guys] had high suicide rates by world standards... However, [the]... rate for Maori [guys] aged 15 to 34 was half that of Pakeha... [guys, and] suicide rates among Maori dropped markedly after the age of 24 while Pakeha rates continued to rise... [T]his difference indicated there was a possible protective effect related to the esteem of elders in the [Maori] community. Suicide in custody was a particular concern. About 23[%] of Maori suicides occurred in custody, as opposed to 2.2[%] for Pakeha.

...The Department of Corrections has earmarked \$2.3 million to build 82... special cells... in prisons around the country... to stop prisoners committing suicide... as part of a national strategy to reduce the suicide rate. Among other initiatives are a new computer system... and new agreements with mental health providers and the police in identifying and treating suicidal prisoners. Safe cells have no projections or surfaces that would enable prisoners to do themselves harm. They also have television monitoring... [In addition, staff] were being trained to recognise the warning signs... Suicidal Maori prisoners displayed different symptoms from Europeans... [The] assistant general manager of public prisons, said that staff were... traumatised by prisoner suicide. "The impact... is far-reaching... it's around an institution for months." ...[meanwhile, the] Government has allocated \$8.8 million over the next three years to help high-risk young people.

...A visiting expert on suicide... said [NZ's G]overnment... could not afford to blindly throw money at the problem, [then added that] there were enough written reports and recommendations to begin pilot programmes here years ago... [The expert, who left NZ for AUS] four years ago after working for the Ministry of Youth Affairs, [and now] manages the Statewide Youth Suicide Prevention Project... says... the [AUSn Government has] invested about \$45 million in research and services for suicide prevention in the past year, at both national and state level... "I'm not saying what the A[US]ns are doing is perfect, but successive N[Z] Governments have been warned and have sat on their hands." ...[AUS's youth suicide] rate has quadrupled over the past four decades[, but young NZers still]... kill themselves at twice the rate of... [their AUSn counterparts. It has been suggested that NZ] should lower the voting age to 16 to show young people they are valued...

The Ministry of Youth Affairs is working through hundreds of submissions for its proposed suicide prevention plan... and hopes to report to the cabinet early next month... An Approach for Action aims to tackle the problem on five fronts: promotion of well-being; early identification and help; critical support and treatment; support for families and friends after suicide; and information and research. While many people involved with youth suicide applaud the efforts... they doubt whether [the Youth Affairs Minister] will get the resources to make a difference... The minister... has asked for patience as [it] puts together the plan... The minister said the problem was urgent but finding a solution was "a really big ask." ...The Government has been repeatedly criticised for dragging its heels over the problem, which claims the lives of hundreds of young N[Z]ers each year.

...The grieving for young... [NZers] who have ended their own lives has become a wailing. The... mothers and fathers... and friends who wish they'd understood[cry] out "enough!" We have made the word tapu too long. We avoid talking about suicide but it is a curse on our youth and

they are our future. We... need to talk about it, not blame ourselves or the Government... [– although,] compared with other public spending[, the]... price the Government has placed on this problem... [is] hardly enough to raise a ripple in the pond. Death is big. When someone takes their own life... it's too late... to ask... questions... We live in one of the most wonderful places on Earth... [However, is] it possible that... because we have... images of another heavenly dimension... our children... think... [the sooner they die the sooner they will go to an even better place? (The mother of a recent suicide victim recalls 'lying in bed in the evening in their Howick home and talking to Aaron through the wall. A question that Aaron asked her just days before his death, still teases her mind: "Mum, what's heaven like?") After all, many adults think] **DEATH itself is a wonderful and positive experience...**

With their bags packed as if for a trip, most of them carrying a passport and driver's licence, 39 members of the American Heaven's Gate cybercult apparently died in shifts. One group consumed a fatal mix of phenobarbital and vodka – the next tidying up before taking the recipe... One day after a tip led them to the macabre scene – decaying bodies clad in uniform-like black clothing and brand-new black Nikes, and all but two draped in large, purple shrouds – authorities said they had not yet delved into the reason behind the mass suicide... the largest... in [US] history... But one of the bodies provided a powerful and significant clue: the corpse of Marshall Heff Applewhite, a 66-year-old self-styled messiah who for years journeyed the nation... [T]he dead were 21 [gals and 18 guys], ranging in age from 26 to 72... "This seemed to be very well planned,"... said... the... San Diego County Medical Examiner...

Their plans... included leaving videotaped farewells from each of the victims who explained their motives and actions, said[the] San Diego Sheriff's Commander... The sect's legacy also included web sites that... provided a good, convenient source of income, allowing them to run... the rented... \$2.2 million mansion... they considered their monastery... and... to... describe their faith... [T]he teachings of Applewhite and Bonnie Lu Trusdal Nettles... promised the faithful would be rescued from earthly evils and transported by spacecraft to their reward. Nettles died in the 1980s. The couple first came to national attention in the autumn of 1975 when they persuaded two dozen people in the Waldport area of Oregon to abandon their possessions and leave on a journey of metamorphosis that would lead them into eternity. They preached that 2000 years ago "crew members of the Kingdom of Heaven" sent one of their own to Earth in the form of Jesus Christ. Jesus' "sole task" was to "offer the way leading" to the Kingdom of Heaven to those who followed his teachings... With society controlled by "Luciferians" and the Earth destined to be "spaded under" in preparation for a new civilisation, the sect believed their salvation lay in... a one-way trip... aboard a UFO trailing comet Hale-Bopp, a journey that could only be made through death.

...Two former members of the UFO cult which committed mass suicide in California last week said yesterday they were confident the group had beamed up to a space ship as their leader had promised. [One of them], whose wife... was... [amongst] the 39 people who killed themselves... was sorry [about missing] the suicide... "I wish I had the strength to have remained... and continued to be a part of that crew... [which will 'go to nourish and tend various gardens and planets in the literal heavens'.]" His daughter... who was abandoned by her parents when they left to join Mr Applewhite in the 1970s, told CBS... "I don't believe [mum] committed suicide. That's a strong word to use... This was something [my mum] worked all of her life to accomplish. [Mum] graduated to the next level... that is enough for me to let her go with peace." ...Meanwhile, the first book about the suicide is about to leap off the printing press. A division of HarperCollins Publishers has announced that its as-yet untitled paperback will have a first printing of 500,000 copies... [□ Under] the terms of... a bizarre insurance policy taken out by the cult members... each... stood to receive \$US1 million... in the event of alien abduction, alien impregnation or death by alien attack. The annual insurance policy was taken out... last year... But a verdict of suicide from the US coroner would invalidate any claims against... the... British... underwriting agent... [who was also associated with] policies against... virgins becoming pregnant through immaculate conception.

...I... typed in the Heaven Gate's web site address for another macabre look. My computer blinked for a minute then returned an error message saying the site was unavailable. The message read: "This means the named host probably does not exist." ...A FEW weeks ago, the kooky hog-wash on the internet could be dismissed easily as part of the entertaining nonsense that occurs when you open up a publishing platform to anyone. But as San Diego authorities get rid of the odour of death... serious questions are being raised... Applewhite... rejected conventional religion... in favour of a mutant science... [by interpreting] the Biblical reference to the Kingdom of Heaven as referring to an advanced civilisation in outer space... "Religion is less than truth... it is an abuse of truth... If the extent of your religious background was *Star Trek* – that in itself could be the best background you could have, if you could accept this as Truth, if you could accept this as reality... Our 22 years of classroom here on planet Earth is finally coming to a conclusion – 'graduation' from the Human Evolutionary Level..." ...Fantasy... is the oldest form of literature there is. Sci-fi, though, is a product of the last two or three decades... [In addition,] unlike any other previous communication system, the net enables myths to quickly take on the appearance of fact... Type a subject like "paranormal" into an internet search engine and you are soon connected to those trying to push their often unusual point of view. Millions of net users will experience no problem. They are stable and intelligent enough to tap into this information database and make a sound judgment on what they find. It is only the minority, those introverted souls already willing to try anything to improve their dismal existence, who can fall under the spell of a misguided cult leader or unusual philosophy. Especially vulnerable are those lacking social skills who spend their entire leisure time in front of their flickering computer screen switching between playing the increasingly realistic fantasy... games and surfing the net. They are in danger of losing touch with real people in "the real world" in the same way that long-term prisoners do. There are[already] some who consider the internet itself is... a great terrestrial god.

...As the last comet of this century and one that astronomers rank as a great comet for its brightness, Hale-Bopp holds a special appeal for end-of-the-millennium groups, some of whom believe it presages the end of the world. Some of the more imaginative postings on the Internet link the comet's visit with everything from the coming of the Messiah to extraterrestrials arriving on Earth... The Heaven's Gate site made no mention of the coming millennium, but[one] trend spotter... predicted that similarly bizarre behaviour would only increase... [P]eople may use this "millennium fever" as an excuse for more mass suicides and irrationality.

...Officials piecing together the grim story of the Heaven's Gate cult suicides have released more bizarre details. Among the revelations was the fact that some of the... [guys, including 'their god'] Applewhite, had been castrated... and that one was the brother of a star of the 1960s *Star Trek* television series – itself the object of a cult following among fans of science fiction and fantasy... [T]he group had been trying to make a science-fiction movie about its bizarre beliefs... Entitled "Beyond Human: Return of the Next Level,"... the cult's screenplay featured motherships, alien abductions and clashes between bad reptile-like aliens and benevolent ones for control of the Earth... The *Washington Post* reported yesterday that Applewhite was fired from his post as music professor at Houston's Catholic University of St Thomas in 1970, after administrators learned [Applewhite] was in a homosexual relationship with a student. The... depressed and ashamed Applewhite checked into a psychiatric hospital the following year and asked to be "cured" of his homosexual desires. It was there that [Applewhite] met Bonnie Nettles, who became his spiritual companion... The couple renounced all sexuality and sought to purge it via their cult. Coroners have completed autopsies on 30 of the victims and... [their families] prepared yesterday to bury their loved ones, ending one chapter of a tale that mixed... science fiction... religion and... computers... in a... deadly brew... [In related news, a] relationship forged in cyberspace led to the double suicide of a... 24-year-old... from Chicago[who] was in the midst of a sex change... and a 21-year-old [guy] from Orillia, Ontario, the first time they met in person... A report from the Canadian Press news agency said the [pair] were found in bed with soft music playing... [and] they died of an overdose using a drug recipe found on the internet.

...ON SATURDAY, MARCH 22, around the time that the disciples of Heaven's Gate were just beginning their quiet and meticulous self-extinction, a small cottage in the French Canadian village of St.-Casimir exploded into flames. Inside the burning house were five people, all

disciples of the Order of the Solar Temple... [Left outside at] the last minute were the... [three teenage children of two of the dead. The children's grandmother was another of the dead]. As many as four times, the[disciples had] swallowed sedatives, then arranged themselves in a cross around a queen-sized bed, only to rise in bleary frustration when the detonator failed. Finally, they blew themselves to kingdom come. For them that would be the star Sirius, in the constellation Canis Minor, nine light-years from Quebec. According to the doctrines of the Solar Temple, they will reign there forever, weightless and serene... Since 1994, 74 members of that group have gone to their death in Canada, Switzerland and France.

...Princess Grace of Monaco belonged to the Order of the Solar Temple... the Sunday Times reported, quoting producers of a documentary on the cult... According to the documentary... the princess... was initiated into the order only a few months before her death... [and] gave nearly \$US10 million... to the sect... [However,] the allegations... were "sick fantasies," a Monaco spokes[person] said.

...Fifty-three... Solar Temple... members killed themselves in October 1994. The... tragedy of faith is that its promise of a better world can outweigh the value of the current life. The last posting from Heaven's Gate... [showed that] their fear of the future conquered their fear of death... The first of the modern wave [of cult suicides] occurred in April 1993, in Waco Texas, where at least 71 members of David Koresh's Branch Davidian cult died in a fiery shoot-out with federal authorities... THE PROTOTYPE cult self-destruction occurred in November 1978, in Jonestown, Guyana, where more than 900 followers of the Rev Jim Jones met their deaths.

...From the time of St Paul, some elements of Christianity have indulged an impulse to subjugate the body. But like Judaism and Islam, it ultimately teaches reverence for life and rejects suicide as a shortcut to heaven. The modern era of cultism dates to the 1970s, when the free inquiry of the previous decade led quite a few exhausted seekers into intellectual surrender. Out of the rubble of countercultures came such groups as the Children of God... the Divine Light Mission... and the Unification Church... On Nov. 18, 1978, the cultism of the '70s arrived at its dark crescendo in Jonestown... where... members of Jim Jones' Peoples Temple died at his order, most by suicide... "Jim Jones' last words to his followers were 'We will meet in another place' and his followers drank the poisoned Kool-Aid because they thought they were going to heaven," said [a] cult expert... and... co-author of the book, *Snapping: America's Epidemic of Sudden Personality Change*. [The co-author] calls the cult process a death spiral that takes place in three stages. First a person is enticed into the cult where his personality will be "snapped." ...In the second stage, the convert is isolated, deprived of sleep and subjected to mind control techniques and indoctrination reinforced on a daily basis. The idea is to... make them totally susceptible and vulnerable to command... The third stage... is the confrontation – real or imagined. In the case of the Jonestown mass suicide... people died because a critical [US congressperson] had flown in to see Jones' jungle compound. - 1997

AT THE edge of Evergreen Cemetery overlooking a dusty suburb of Oakland in California is a small granite gravestone. It is inscribed simply, "In memory of the victims of the Jonestown tragedy." Nearby is another stone, set flat in the dry earth, that gives some small sense of the scale of that tragedy. It was put there by a [guy] whose wife, five daughters, two sons and sister all died on November 18, 1978... On Wednesday two groups will gather on either side of the U[S] to remember the victims... and to continue their search for answers to why they died... Of the 911 [USers] who died... after taking grape Fla-Vor-Aid laced with cyanide, 234 are buried in a mass grave in Evergreen Cemetery. Most were among the 260 children who died and, lacking dental records, were never identified. It took six months to find a cemetery that would accept the bodies, which had been turned away from communities across northern California. Even in Evergreen, there is nothing that mentions the number of children buried there. Plans for a memorial wall fell apart over whether to include Jim Jones' name among those who died... The People's Temple still grates on exposed nerves of horror and incomprehension in California... The People's Temple has become the archetypal cult, its members seen as the brainwashed victims of an unhinged [person] who believed himself to be the reincarnation of both Jesus and Lenin and turned his charismatic power into a force of destruction. After Jonestown, new religious movements could no longer be benign. They were all seen through the prism of the Jonestown suicides. In 1955, Jones founded the People's Temple Full Gospel Church in Indianapolis... A decade later, Jones, haunted by a vision... of a nuclear war, moved his congregation to Redwood Valley in northern California, which *Esquire* magazine had listed as among the safest places in the U[S] in the event of an atomic attack. That year the church had just 86 members... Always obsessed by the threat of nuclear war, Jones had sent some members to the former British colony of Guyana in 1974 to begin work on Jonestown, a 2400ha agricultural commune... In 1977, Jones' church came under increased public scrutiny with news articles based on testimony of defectors accusing him of physical and sexual abuse. The group enlisted the help of the Bay Area congress[person] Leo Ryan, who travelled to Jonestown in November 1978 to investigate allegations that people were being held there against their will. Along with a group of television and press reporters, [Ryan] spent a day at Jonestown, being shown around and entertained with a show in the evening. Only some two dozen people chose to leave with him, but these defections of long-standing members pushed the increasingly fractious Jones and his inner circle over the edge. One [follower] tried to stab Ryan, who was only superficially hurt but decided to leave Jonestown immediately. A group of [followers] followed Ryan back to the airstrip and opened fire on the plane, killing... [Ryan], three journalists and one of the Temple members who had chosen to leave. Shortly after Ryan was killed... the suicides began. Jones told his followers that Guyanese troops would soon arrive and would kill their children. On the tape of the suicide [Jones] rants about the betrayal of those who had left, suggesting that to prove their loyalty to him, his followers must die now... Some accounts suggest that 70 adults and 260 children were murdered... first... – the rest went willingly to their deaths... Later a temple leader, Sharon Amos, who was in the Guyanese capital of Georgetown, slit her throat and those of her three children. The final suicide came a few months later when the Temple spokes[person]... shot himself in a motel room in California. In all 923 people died... 'We got tired. We didn't commit suicide, we committed an act of revolutionary suicide protesting the conditions of an inhuman world.' – Jim Jones' last statement... The standard analysis, produced in dozens of books soon after the event, portrayed Jones as an evil genius surrounded by a compliant harem... For five years before the suicides, Jones had been conducting rehearsals for the suicides, known as "White Nights." These were mostly tests of loyalty to him that built up a mindset that loyalty meant sacrificing one's life...

A rise in pensioner suicide is being blamed on society's failure to treat older people as human beings... [A visiting AUS]n lecturer in ethics and religion, says American studies point to a... growth in the aged industry, where people were "warehoused" and treated like a commodity, ...since 1980... Previously care was more family based and personal... [S]peaking to nurses at a national gerontology conference in Auckland, [the lecturer] said suicide was also triggered by depression following the death of a spouse, heavy drug dependency and fear of impending death.

...I'M GLAD I'M NOT ...A... NURSING HOME ASSISTANT... *The money may be good, but is it any compensation for putting up with pooped beds, burst colostomy bags, bed sores and dead patients?* ...When I'm old... [says a student who] *funds his way through university with a job in a Perth nursing home...* give me a gun and a bullet. I've had a lot of old people ask me to give them a tablet to put them to sleep for good. I've become a strong supporter of euthanasia... The worst thing is being dribbled or spat on, that's worse than being shat on... *Do you have a job worse than the nursing assistant? Then write to us*. [Incidentally, the Orlando resident]... who became a quadriplegic when her mother shot her in the neck has been given the right to end her own life by a Florida judge – a ruling that may see the mother charged with murder... The shooting occurred in March when [the mother heard the daughter] and her boyfriend talking about putting her in a nursing home... [● A severely disabled person] died yesterday after asking officials at a hospital here [it] had lived for 32 years to unplug his ventilator. Bill White, believed to be one of the longest surviving quadriplegics on a ventilator in the US, died at Strong Memorial Hospital. [A hospital spokesperson]... said: "There's a great sadness there. And yet, people feel maybe a strange sense of gratification as well, because this is what Bill wanted." ...White (50) needed 24-hour care and rarely left his bed... [after breaking] his neck in a high school gymnasium... Under New York law, patients may discontinue life-saving treatment.

...Paralysed by a bullet to her spine and barely able to speak, Georgette Smith nevertheless was able to make her views clear: [the 42-year-old] did not want to live this way. [Georgette] died yesterday, one day after a Florida court granted her wish[– having deemed her mentally well enough to make the decision –] and gave permission for the ventilator that was keeping her alive to be disconnected. For her family, the ordeal is far from over... Even though Smith made the decision to die, prosecutors are likely to charge... her... frail and ageing mother, already charged with the shooting, ...with murder, creating a highly unusual – and perhaps unprecedented – case... Legal experts said the prosecutors were within their duties to upgrade the charge but the civil liberties lobby said a strong case could be made that the cause of Smith's death was the removal of life support, not being shot... Before asking to die, Smith gave prosecutors a videotaped deposition from her hospital bed. It will be... the evidence...

CBS News has agreed to hand over to police a videotape of [a US pathologist] administering a lethal injection to a terminally ill [person], evidence that will help prosecutors decide whether to charge the assisted-suicide crusader... Michigan's Oakland County prosecutor... said on Monday that the injection appeared to have been a clear case of homicide. CBS News, usually resistant to giving material to police, was subpoenaed to hand over the videotape. The... [pathologist] dared prosecutors to arrest him immediately after the *60 Minutes* programme on Sunday showed an edited version of the videotape... The fiery... pathologist wanted either a court battle to settle the long-running issue of the legality of euthanasia or to be left alone by police... 52-year-old Thomas Youk... who suffered from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis... nodded his head when asked if [it was his wish] to end his life... Mr Youk... was [also] shown signing a consent form agreeing to the lethal injection.

...When a doctor hastens the death of a terminally ill patient, the end is not always easy or peaceful, researchers report in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The scientists from the Netherlands, where physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia have been legal for years, found that such efforts often went awry. When patients tried to kill themselves using drugs prescribed by a doctor, the medication did not work as expected in 16[%] of... 649... cases. In addition, technical problems or unexpected side-effects occurred 7[%] of the time. Problems surfaced so often that doctors witnessing the attempted suicide felt compelled to intervene, to ensure death, in 18[%] of cases. Even when the doctor was directly performing euthanasia... complications developed in 3[%] of the attempts. Patients either took longer to die than expected or, in 6[%] of the cases, woke from a drug-induced coma that was supposed to be fatal... The new study... introduced a new element into the U[S] debate over physician-assisted suicide[s] by a pathologist (who 'has been present at over 45 suicides' and 'been cleared of criminal wrongdoing in 3 trials involving 5 deaths')...

THE ASSISTED-suicide crusader... who dared prosecutors to charge him, was convicted of second-degree murder [yesterday]... After deliberating for more than 12 hours over two days, a jury rejected [the pathologist's] arguments his intent was not to murder Thomas Youk... who was confined to a wheelchair and had difficulty breathing and eating. The 70-year-old retired pathologist, who represented himself during the trial... faces a minimum of 10... years and a maximum sentence of life. Some members of the handicapped-rights group Not Dead Yet who have been critical of [the pathologist's] assisted suicide activities quietly sobbed in the courtroom. The jury also found [the pathologist] guilty of delivery of a controlled substance, which carries a prison term of seven years... [The judge ordered that the pathologist be] released on a \$US750,000 bail... [The pathologist], known to some as "Dr Death" during his nine-year crusade, said last November... [that it was his intention to] starve himself to death... if... sent to jail... But in a recent interview... [declared that it was his intention to] appeal the case if convicted, a process that could take years.

...A [person] jailed for life for the torture and killing of three children in the 1960s yesterday begged a court to overturn a high-security hospital's decision to force-feed him. [The]Moors murderer... aged 62, who has been on a hunger strike for five months... wants the right to starve himself to death after 35 years of imprisonment. "I am not in the least interested in being kept artificially alive by force-feeding for a further 20 or 30 years merely to provide an overmanned army of penal bureaucrats and prison warders with overpaid employment,"... said... a 5000-word letter to the B[BC]. "I'm eager to leave this cesspit in a coffin." ...[the 62-year-old] and his lover... now 57, were sentenced to life in prison for the... murders of 10-year-old Lesley Ann Downey and 17-year-old Edward Evans. The pair buried their victims on desolate Saddleworth Moor in Lancashire... [The 62-year-old] was also convicted of murdering 12-year-old John Kilbride. In 1987, [the pair]... confessed to having killed 16-year-old Pauline Reade and Keith Bennet, 12. In his letter, published on the BBC's Website, [the 62-year-old claimed to envy his lover] for having an illness that may kill her... [His lover], who claims to be a reformed character, appealed for parole last week to the House of Lords. That decision is still pending.

...A tragic young victim of motor neurone disease in Britain was yesterday granted his wish to be allowed to die when [t]he... 19-year-old... loses his final means of communication... with the world around him... – the blinking of his left eye... A High Court Family Division judge in London granted doctors a declaration that they would not be acting unlawfully in withdrawing life support from the... [19-year-old – who is] one of the youngest people to be afflicted by the fatal nerve condition, which cripples the body but not the mind...

A climbing mishap 21 years ago left [a Christchurch resident] a tetraplegic. His spine snapped after a headlong fall down a crevasse at the top of Tasman Glacier... His eyesight is failing and since the death of doting wife Elizabeth in 1995 [the tetraplegic] has taken a dim outlook on life... Robbed of feeling in his fingers and with no effective muscle control, his fit, well-built frame has wasted away in a wheelchair and [the ex-pat Brit] is reliant on 24-hour care from nurses. His clipped southern English... accent is now whining and gravelly, the legacy of a tracheotomy to clear a huge infection after his chest collapsed... "I'm a condemned body. It's like living in a house that's falling down,"... Yet although his body is wearing out, [the 59-year-old] notes a cruel irony: one muscle won't give out. His heart is too strong to grant him "merciful release". So for three years [the 59-year-old] has asked politicians to show compassion and pass a law enabling him to legally end his life by voluntary euthanasia. While the A[US]n euthanasia debate gained publicity last week when[a] terminally ill cancer patient... made a televised plea to die, [the Christchurch patient's] attempts to spark debate here have had little impact... This month his latest letter, dictated to a nurse, was posted to[every one of NZ's] MPs, hoping to find one who would initiate a bill to enable discussion. By last week 60 had replied. Some quoted the Bible in refusing support, most were non-committal... [The patient, who] describes his day-to-day existence as a form of torture... seeks an act giving adults of sound mind the right to put an end to painful suffering by merciful means... [The patient] has to be washed and toileted, and turned during the night. The physical pain is numbed by codine tablets... Ironically, his fight for the right to die is his only reason to live.

...A pioneering A[US]n doctor who wants to set up "how to die" clinics in N[Z] has unveiled plans to set up the world's first floating euthanasia clinic. A ship will drop anchor off A[US] and administer lethal injections or drug dosages to terminally ill patients who wish to die with dignity. [The]Dr... plans to buy a Dutch-registered ship so that [it] can circumvent A[US]n law. The Dr... will take advantage of impending legislation in the Netherlands to legalise euthanasia... The Dutch Upper House will begin debating the euthanasia legislation tomorrow but the vote is seen as a formality after the Lower House approved the bill in November. Dutch authorities have turned a blind eye to the practice for decades anyway. Mercy killing is also tacitly tolerated in several other countries, including Switzerland and Belgium, but none has yet legalised the practice. The US state of Oregon has legalised medically-assisted suicide where the doctor gives the patient legal drugs but does not administer them. [The]Dr... rose to prominence when [it] performed euthanasia on four terminally ill patients after the A[US]n Northern Territory... legalised the practice in 1996.

The N[T] Supreme Court yesterday upheld the world's first voluntary euthanasia law in the face of a challenge brought by a coalition of doctors and church and Aboriginal leaders. The court found that the law was within the territorial Parliament's power, but opponents say they will appeal to A[US]'s federal High Court, asking for a ruling on whether the right to life is protected by the constitution. The territory's assisted suicide law, allowing the terminally ill to die by lethal injection or pill if they meet strict conditions... [– t]he patient must be 18 or over, obtain the signatures of two doctors and a psychiatrist, and undergo a seven-day cooling-off period before[receiving] the... fatal drugs... [–] came into force on July 1. But

it has not yet been used, with doctors unwilling to approve applications in the face of the legal challenge and separate legislative threats in the territory and national Parliaments. Doctors have been warned that they could face murder charges if they help a patient die and the law is later overturned... but doctors have admitted the practice occurs unofficially... The law... is overwhelmingly supported in popular opinion polls.

...After a meal and a relaxing drink with his doctor on a warm Sunday afternoon, death came quickly to cancer sufferer Mr Bob Dent in the world's first legal assisted suicide. Mr Dent's peaceful death with family and friends in his Darwin home has ignited debate about whether... the dying should endure their agony until death comes naturally. The Government that runs this remote outback territory represents less than 1% of AUS's 18 million people, but its... law legalising assisted suicide has far-reaching impact in A[US] and overseas, supporters and critics agree... Mr Dent himself fuelled the debate with an emotional plea from beyond the grave for A[US]'s federal Parliament to reject... a private bill that would see the... Parliament use its constitutional powers to override the territory law... In an open letter released on Thursday but written on the eve of his death by computer-delivered lethal injection, Mr Dent said... "The church and state should be kept separate. What right has anyone because of their own religious faith, to which I don't subscribe, to demand that I behave according to their rules and endure unnecessary intractable pain. If you disagree with voluntary euthanasia, then don't use it, but please don't deny me the right to use it... If I were to keep a pet animal in the same condition as me... I would be prosecuted." ...While... between seven and eight out of every 10... [AUSns] support... the law... Aboriginal, medical and other community leaders, say killing can never be legalised, warning abuse would follow and the weak would suffer.

...It has been a long time since the consciences of A[US]n lawmakers have been so sorely troubled: today they resume the debate on euthanasia... This is no ordinary political squabble. Conventional and party loyalties have been thrust aside in an issue that has bracketed the... [PM] with the Leader of the Opposition... against similar cross-bench forces opposed to intervention in... the Northern Territory... right-to-die legislation... Outside Canberra, the leaders of [other AUSn] states and territories have condemned... [opposition to the bill], more for the principle of the right to frame their own laws than for the right to die... [By the way, a] son of the first person to die by legally sanctioned euthanasia, collapsed yesterday with what was understood to be a stress-related disorder... [The son] was admitted to hospital the day after... [giving] a press conference to announce [a reversal of his] support for mercy killing[. Editor's note: 'Mercy killing of animals has long been common practice, while mercy killing of suffering and incurable human beings has been advocated in various societies since ancient times (Plato favoured it for the aged)'...]

The AUS[n] House of Representatives has adopted a bill to quash the world's first voluntary euthanasia law... The Senate is not expected to vote on the bill until next year but if it backs the anti-euthanasia bill... the Northern Territory... law would be rescinded. The national Parliament can overturn laws in A[US]'s territories, but not its six states. - 1996

A... second person... has... [committed] suicide under the Northern Territory's voluntary euthanasia law... [The] 52-year-old... who was suffering from a rare form of cancer which causes the skin to disintegrate... and[left her] unable to stop scratching herself... [declared] 'Peace at last'... [while using] a computer-driven device to self-administer a lethal dose of drugs... The controversy around the law meant that it took several weeks for Mrs Mills to find a local cancer specialist to support her after travelling to the Northern Territory from South Australia. In the end... Janet... found... one after "begging" for help at an emotional news conference last month... Mrs Mills[, who died with her] husband and her son... beside her... said in a letter written the day before her death... "I hope that anyone else wishing to use this act does not have to go through such a long battle to find a doctor to help them. The whole thing was very hard on me and my family... I believe that euthanasia is the greatest thing for people who are sick with no chance of getting better. It... stops people from suffering when they don't need to. I hope this law survives and is able to help others... who have found the suffering has become too great. It should not be overturned by the politicians in Canberra but given a chance to be made to work in the way it was intended." ...A backbench bill to overturn the act... is expected to go next month to the Senate, where it faces greater opposition.

...A 69-year-old... has become the third A[US]n to commit suicide under the Northern Territory's euthanasia law... A spokes[person] for the National Coalition for Voluntary Euthanasia... said medical specialists were becoming more comfortable using the controversial law. All the safeguards had been met and it showed the law was working well... [However, a spokesperson] for the Northern Territory branch of the A[US]n Medical Association... said... "To be killing patients under a circumstance where the law is challenged both in the Parliament and the High Court strikes me at the best as preemptive and at the worst as enormously foolish,"...

Only... weeks ahead of a Senate debate that may kill it before it is born, a new bill to create... A[US]'s second voluntary euthanasia law was yesterday introduced to the parliament of the A[US]n Capital Territory. The... [bill's sponsor] said mercy killings were already a fact of life and no legislation could prevent their taking place[, therefore it] was preferable to bring them into the reach of expert advice and stringent safeguards... [B]oth supporters and opponents of euthanasia... agree that... about 5000 A[USn] people are[dying with their doctors' help a year. But pro-lifers argue that if euthanasia remains legal... [the] trickle... will... become a flood... [of killings. However, a spokesperson] from the Coalition of Organisations for Voluntary Euthanasia... believes national legal euthanasia will eventually arrive... "A[US] is a democracy and when you have 75[%] of the people supporting voluntary euthanasia, eventually the politicians listen,"...

[Yesterday, AUS]'s... Senate asked one of its committees to report on the voluntary euthanasia issue before a vote this month on a bill which would quash the suicide law in the remote Northern Territory. Four people have committed medically-assisted suicide since the law came into operation last July – the most recent a 70-year-old Sydney [resident] who died at the weekend. The committee made no recommendations because politicians will be allowed a conscience vote on the issue... However, it said Aboriginal communities opposed the right-to-die law and may be driven away from quality health services through fear of dying. Aborigines already have a significantly lower life expectancy than white A[US]ns. "Aboriginal attitudes to euthanasia may have been affected by a belief that the Western health system was part and parcel of a generally antagonistic culture which, with the additional spectre of euthanasia, could lead to the further demise or even genocide of A[US]n Aborigines," the report said.

...Speaking after the second reading of the controversial... anti-euthanasia bill narrowly passed the Senate last night by four votes... the Northern Territory's... Chief Minister... said the vote broke the conventions of the commonwealth's Self-Government Act for the NT and would severely damage territorians' confidence in the federal Parliament... "We thought we had put the bad old days behind us... This could be the beginning of a series of interventionist type activities by different groups right across political lines who seem to have an agenda... quite at odds with the people who elected them." ...Asked if the vote was the end of euthanasia in the NT, [the chief minister] said: "It would appear to be." ...The world's only voluntary euthanasia law is looking terminally ill[, but euthanasia]... proponents have predicted that it is now simply a matter of time before South Australia, or another state government, enacts a right-to-die law that would lie beyond Canberra's reach...

Fallout from the federal Parliament's abolition of the N[T]'s euthanasia law spread yesterday to the A[CT], and provoked calls for the abolition of the Senate by the Victorian Premier... [T]he ACT... Government is examining advice by its solicitor that the new federal law may also override its Medical Treatments Act. Under this act doctors are protected from prosecution if a patient dies from an overdose of painkiller, provided the doctor intended relief of pain rather than death. It also allows doctors to abide by a terminally ill patient's request to be allowed to die naturally by the withdrawal of life-extending medical treatment, a provision existing through common law or statute in most states... If... [the] legal advice... is correct, doctors using the ACT law could now face 10 years' jail... Meanwhile... the... Governor-General... has rejected pleas from two terminally

ill people to delay signing the new federal bill into law... [T]he Darwin euthanasia advocate whose equipment has been used by four people to kill themselves... told the *Sydney Morning Herald* that... of the... 60 people who had asked him for help to die... about [a] third were not... terminally ill.

...[AUS's] euthanasia campaigner... said yesterday [it] had designed a "coma machine" to give terminally ill patients a guarantee that they would never regain consciousness after an infusion of pain-killing drugs. [The] Dr... who helped four people die through computer-delivered injections under A[US]'s short-lived voluntary euthanasia laws, said his new device would expose the hypocrisy of laws which allowed doctors to induce death through drugs infusions under the guise of treating pain... A[US's] national Parliament quashed the N[T]'s world-first euthanasia law in March...

The decision by the... [AUSn] Senate to overturn a N[T] law allowing assisted suicide by the terminally ill should give comfort to proponents of euthanasia in N[Z]. What looks like defeat is, in fact, a kind of victory, even if it feels a little hollow at the moment. That's because the opponents, in flexing their constitutional muscle, have cast into sharp relief the political and moral bankruptcy of their position... One politician who... [is] a leading member of a Christian morals faction... said... that we have no business attempting to alter... the... human experience... of... pain and suffering... That's an argument of such spuriousness that it would be funny if it weren't so sad... [What next for] the simpleminded fundamentalists who saw fit to overturn this perfectly constitutional piece of legislation...? ...Seatbelts in cars deny us all the ennobling experience of flying headfirst through the windscreen in a car accident; refrigeration denies us the pleasure of food poisoning; umbrellas keep us unnaturally dry. If they truly believe that pain is an experience to be embraced, perhaps the opponents of euthanasia will spurn anaesthetics when they next lie agape in the dentist's chair or cast away their inhalers when they next have an asthma attack... It is not in the nature of those who support euthanasia to impose their ideas on others. It's a shame that the same cannot be said of those who overturned this far-sighted law... The events of the past[year] seem certain to trigger a push for full statehood for... A[US]'s sparsely populated north.

...A... NT... MP is planning new legislation which... would circumvent the federal ban and once again allow euthanasia in the territory... "What I am suggesting is to draft new legislation which does not permit voluntary euthanasia, but in such a way that breaking that law would invite only minimum penalties,"... [The MP suggested imposing] a fine of just \$A50... Meanwhile, the Dutch Government yesterday proposed new measures in an attempt to stem an upsurge in assisted suicide. Between 1990 and 1995, the number of people requesting an assisted suicide rose by 33[%] in the Netherlands, reaching an estimated 3600 in 1995... Some 80[%] were cancer patients who probably had less than a week to live. A further 950 seriously handicapped babies, patients in a coma or old people suffering from senile dementia were put to death without explicitly requesting it... Yet the Dutch admit that it is not possible to be totally sure how much involuntary euthanasia is practised in their country because many doctors (anonymously) admit to falsifying death certificates... No matter what legislation is in place, there will always be members of [the] profession who will circumvent it... The real... dilemma is... that legalised killing can[create lazy doctors ('Dutch doctors haven't learnt about things like good pain control and so it becomes an easy way out', plus it puts] elderly people under unacceptable overt and covert pressure, particularly from their relatives.

...I agree that legalised guidelines, as practised in Holland, are not enough – they obviously can so easily be circumvented[, and Dutch doctors are 'now terminating patients for such complaints as chronic depression.' However, the writer who]... admits to being aware of the pressures of some families on their elderly relatives... should also be aware that if legalisation of the "living will-advanced directive" were acceptable, these pressures would not exist. Only the patient's request would be acceptable.

...[In Holland, has "a right to die" become "a duty to die"? Here is the shocking story: WHEN Dr Z examined a 50-year-old at a clinic, the doctor knew immediately that the patient did not have long to live. Cancer had spread beyond her breast to her bones, liver and lungs. Carefully, the Polish-born oncologist explained to the patient that it could reduce her pain with drugs, and offered her a hospital room. Dr Z sensed, however, that the patient was fearful of Holland's policy allowing doctors to end the lives of the terminally ill. "I am a Catholic," the patient said. "My religious beliefs would never allow me to accept euthanasia." Dr Z assured the patient that it would take care of her, and finally the patient agreed to be admitted to the hospital. After 24 hours of morphine treatment, the patient was free of pain. Though the patient knew death was close, it was at ease, able to see her husband and family. Later, however, a nurse phoned Dr Z at home with distressing news. After Dr Z left the hospital, another doctor had entered the patient's room and asked her husband and sister to leave. The doctor then ordered an increase in her morphine dosage, but refused to confirm the order in writing. Within minutes the patient was dead. Dr Z demanded an explanation. "It could have taken another week before the patient died," his colleague told him. "I needed the bed."

... 'IN THE INTENSIVE-CARE unit of a Dutch hospital, a patient lay with chronic leukaemia combined with pneumonia. His hands and feet were bound, and the patient was being respirated with a tube in this throat. A young doctor appeared and said, "I assume that if your heart fails, you don't want to be resuscitated." The patient could not talk, but shook his head vehemently left to right, the only movement the patient could make to indicate that indeed it did want to be resuscitated. Despite the seriousness of his illness, the patient knew it still might have years to live. But the doctor misinterpreted his gesture, said, "That's assumed then," made a note on the patient's chart and moved on. The patient was in panic. Fortunately, by means of gestures, the patient was able to tell its son, who was able to correct a potentially fatal error. This is one example of how increasingly casually doctors deal with the ending of life by withdrawing medical treatment – also known as passive euthanasia – in the Netherlands. There are many others. A professor of criminal law at the Free University of Amsterdam was on a commission that, in 1990, looked into the practice of active euthanasia. Of an annual total of 130,000 deaths, doctors had reported that euthanasia was carried out at the request of the patient in 2300 cases. But the commission ascertained that, in more than 1000 cases, doctors had ended a life without an explicit request. The professor is not happy about the power Dutch doctors now have over life. "From dossiers and personal contacts, I know how many mistakes have been made concerning euthanasia and how many weak physicians there are. Some are beginning to talk about euthanasia before the family or patient have even thought about it." In the absence of adequate legislation concerning euthanasia the Dutch judiciary determines what is permitted, and sentencing practices have become ever more accommodating. On this subject a former Secretary General of Justice says, "Ten years ago physicians would have been jailed in cases of euthanasia that the public prosecutor now deals with as a matter of routine." In 1994, a new step was taken in the famed case of a psychiatrist who had supplied a lethal amount of medication to a 50-year-old who was divorced and had lost her two beloved sons. The mother said it no longer wished to live and called on the psychiatrist to help her commit suicide. The psychiatrist did. Immediately after his "medication," the psychiatrist surrendered himself to the authorities. Two courts decided that the psychiatrist had not committed any penal offence. The Supreme Court eventually considered him guilty, but imposed no punishment. The judgment made quite clear why. According to the Supreme Court, physical suffering in the terminal phase of an illness was no longer the only criterion for permissible suicide. Mental suffering could also be a criterion. The case became world news and stirred public opinion on assisted suicide in the Netherlands' which, **apart from Germany before... [WW2], is... the only country that has a lengthy experience of the practice of euthanasia...**

[The Dutch Health Minister is not opposed to allowing suicide pills for very old people who are tired of life. Her comments came just days after the Dutch Upper House passed a landmark law legalising euthanasia, making the Netherlands the first country to do so and sparking worldwide controversy. The new law – which makes children as young as 12 eligible for euthanasia (patients as young as 16 can seek euthanasia in consultation with their parents, and children aged 12-15 must have parental consent) – allows mercy killings under strict rules, one of which is that the patient must be facing a future of unbearable suffering and without hope. Although it recognised a practice tolerated in Holland for over 20 years, the law ignited outrage in some other countries. Some compared it with the policies of Nazi Germany, which systematically killed handicapped adults and children.]

...following the introduction to NZ of string-pull plastic bags that, once fitted, have to be cut open if a user changes its mind about dying, 'the head of the Salvation Army said euthanasia was "a horrible prospect – Hitler did it". A recent Massey University survey showed over 70% of people supported doctor-assisted suicide for someone with a painful, incurable disease. When a Wanganui resident who was charged last week with the attempted murder of her dying mother spoke last month, it was still waiting to hear whether police would take any action. The former intensive-care nurse kept her silence during a 10-month police investigation into her mother's death. With the publication last year of her book about her mother's death, *To Die Like A Dog*, the nurse said it knew it had laid herself open to charges, but it was a risk it was "willing to take," so strongly did it feel about the need for law change. Her arrest came on the same day that legislation forcing a conscience vote on voluntary euthanasia was introduced to Parliament. The nurse said the experience of the US state of Oregon, where doctor-assisted euthanasia has been legalised, showed people wanted only "reassurance that help is there if they need it".]

...Pioneers are eccentrics almost by definition, but their obsessions can change everybody's agenda. Last year, two [people], both nicknamed "Dr Death" in their home countries, finally put euthanasia centre stage as a moral and political issue... [The US's Dr Death had] faced trial three times, and three times the juries ignored the strict legality and found him not guilty. But... as the appeals percolate[d] upwards to the... Supreme Court, [the retired pathologist attracted]... the attention of the big guns. "Creating a new 'right' [to assisted death] will endanger society and send a false signal that a less than 'perfect' life is not worth living," wrote Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, Catholic archbishop of Chicago... just days before... [dying naturally] of cancer. "The law exists to protect life. When it begins to legitimate the taking of life, one has a right to ask what lies ahead for our life as a society." Many [US] states routinely take the life of convicted criminals[and, of course, the Catholic Church is infamous for once legitimising the taking of life – and deliberately inflicting obscene suffering on its victims in the process –] but let us not quibble. When the Catholic Church, the A[MA] and 29 other organisations write to the Supreme Court asking it to condemn Dr [Death]'s actions you can truly say that... euthanasia... has[been] put... on the national agenda... From the beginning, civilised states have taken decisions about life and death out of private hands. This did not mean an end to killing: the state reserved the right to kill its own citizens for various transgressions and to kill foreigners in wartime. But private individuals were forbidden to kill each other. There were always exceptions, however... [S]uicide is inherently an unpunishable crime... [Indeed,] some cultures have seen it as an honourable option for people in difficult circumstances... Other cultures deplore it, even ban it – but in practice most people everywhere regard it as none of the state's business. We may own nothing else but we do own our own lives... It only gets tricky when people cannot commit suicide without help. Even then, it is not a legal problem most of the time. If you are dying in agony and you have family or friends and a sympathetic doctor, then an accidental overdose or an empty oxygen tank can cut things short... There are thousands of genuine "mercy killings" each year and it is very rare for somebody to be prosecuted... But... [given] the infinite varieties of human greed and malice, we are rightly reluctant to grant any individual the right to administer death to another. [The two Dr Deaths we]re not doing it for profit or revenge – but some time, somewhere, someone might... One way to deal with this would be to emulate the pragmatic Dutch, who left the anti-euthanasia law on the books but stopped enforcing it... More than 50,000 Dutch now carry a "euthanasia passport" which tells medical staff that the carrier has written a "living will" setting out the circumstances in which... [the carrier] should be allowed to die.

...Why do many Christians, though by no means all, oppose voluntary euthanasia? The... essence of [Jesus'] message was compassion for [hu]mankind, summarised as love of God and love of one's neighbour. Organised Christianity has retained this message but it has become much entangled with the picture of God as the terrible and vengeful father figure depicted in the Old Testament. God is seen as a stern judge who will send misfortunes to sinners, particularly in the form of plagues, illnesses and famines. Naturally, if illnesses are sent by God we must be careful how we deal with them. The traditional view is still implanted in many of us, though we may not be aware of it. We may minister to the sick but if we help anyone in long agony who wishes to die God will be angry with us for interfering with his ordained plan. This may seem to be an exaggerated view, but how else are we to account for the callous treatment of some dying people approved by many professing Christians? ...Those people who oppose voluntary euthanasia should appreciate that they, just as much as anyone else, may desperately desire to end a life which has become intolerable... One of the best short accounts of the situation came from the late Reverend Leslie Weatherhead, who wrote: "I sincerely believe that those who come after us will wonder why on earth we kept a human being alive against his own will, when all the dignity and meaning of life have vanished, when any gain to anyone is clearly impossible[– unless *anyone* is a private hospital or church which stands to lose a source of revenue if the human being dies –] and when we should have been punished by the state if we had kept an animal alive in similar conditions."

...an associate fellow of the British Psychological Society... asks "Why do Christians oppose voluntary euthanasia? ...then goes on to answer his own question with a summary of the history of religion which I, as a practising Christian find so warped as to present a travesty of Christian belief... Suffering, like love and death, is... a mystery which we, as human beings, must all experience... Christian faith affirms hope not despair... Of course, questions of religious faith have little meaning for those who have none and they will resist what they see as an imposition upon them of this faith and its implications[as enthusiastically as some of my fellow Christians have set about imposing it!] But what do those who have no religious faith put in its place? I suggest that those who advocate euthanasia are substituting a blind faith that their human judgment is infallible... Considering that the history of human affairs constantly demonstrates the fallibility and imperfection of human judgment, one may well conclude that the supporters of euthanasia launch themselves upon a far more hazardous leap of faith than the Christian who believes in a[n]... all-loving... God... In the light of recent and present failures in N[Z]'s "underfunded" public health institutions, is it unreasonable to regard with apprehension the interest now being shown by medical and political authorities, here and elsewhere, in... [euthanasia]? After all, suicide is a cheaper option than long-stay hospital care or expensive life support systems.

...A British former medical director of the U[N] has admitted helping at least 50 people die in "mercy killings." ..."They wanted to die – I helped them,"... Aside from... morphine overdoses, [the director] supplied sedatives to put patients to sleep, and a plastic bag to tie over their heads and asphyxiate them. Under British law a doctor who "aids, abets, counsels or procures the suicide of another" can be jailed for up to 14 years... [The director had] decided to speak out to provoke a debate.

...Britain's leading paediatrics group yesterday issued guidelines advising doctors when they should let seriously ill children die... The report suggests treatment should be stopped if the child is brain dead, or in a permanent vegetative state and unable to relate to the outside world. When treatment delays death but does not alleviate suffering, or if the pain is unbearable and the child will survive with severe mental or physical handicaps – then it may also be appropriate to stop treatment... [However], the head of the British anti-euthanasia group Alert, warned that it could be particularly dangerous to set up such a frame-work for children because they sometimes made remarkable recoveries... [In local news, the] Minister of Justice... has floated the possibility of giving judges the discretion to impose prison terms for "mercy killings" significantly shorter than the present 10-year minimum for murder.

...Severely injured patients should have the option to die rather than burden relatives and the health system, a specialist says in the wake of a landmark court ruling. The call from [the]... consultant neurosurgeon, follows a decision allowing food and fluid to be withdrawn from an Otago patient. It is the first time[in NZ that] food and water have been cut to someone not in a persistent vegetative state. While the brain-damaged patient had limited reactions, specialists described his condition as hopeless and irrecoverable. The patient, aged in his 60s, had been in hospital for 15 months after a car accident when sustenance – given through the nose – was withdrawn. [The patient] died four days later. [The specialist, who was]... in charge of the [patient]'s care, said... the request to cut support came from the [patient]'s family and was backed by health professionals... [because] all the ethics stacked up on one side. "Why should we continue inflicting this treatment on someone who's obviously not at all keen on what we were doing?" ...Continuing support was often wasteful and degrading to the patient. Most ended up living in long-term nursing care for

many years[, at a cost of]... about \$4000... for a month, [the specialist] said. “I will suggest to a medico legal conference next week that [withdrawing support] is a recourse we should not shy away from,”... However, others urged caution in the wake of the decision. A specialist at Auckland Hospital said the judgment related only to the Dunedin patient’s case and every case had to be judged separately.

...In [his] world, euthanasia will never be an option... The... Otago-trained doctor[, who is now]... medical director... of St Christopher’s Hospice in London... [and is] in Auckland for Hospice NZ’s conference, said the vast majority of patients did not want euthanasia, although a few asked him about it... The... [NZer] draws the distinction between “the deliberate killing of patients who are suffering” and the idea of withdrawing treatments which are keeping them alive unnecessarily. People did not seem to have a problem with the latter... [But] there are treatments and support which can salve the fear and pain of dying. It’s called good palliative care... The... [Dr] said... hospice was a philosophy not a place. - 1997

A hospice is a special kind of hospital that cares for the dying. Modern hospices began in the late 1960s and usually have a Christian foundation. Although many of the nurses may be Christian, the patients can be of any religion or none. The staff not only look after the patients, they also help the relatives to cope with the death. The atmosphere is a warm and caring one, where the patient and family are encouraged to talk about dying, to feel at home and see each other as often as possible. The staff relieve the patient of as much pain as possible... It has been estimated that over 20% of hospital beds are occupied by the elderly who are unable to wash and feed themselves or speak to people. Some argue that these people would surely prefer to die quietly and painlessly and not be kept alive by medical science. Other people have been so badly injured in accidents that they are only kept alive by life-support machines. Relatives may be caused more unhappiness by seeing their loved one kept alive in this way than if they were allowed to die with dignity... The following is an extract from a play, *Whose Life is it Anyway?* After a serious accident, Ken is paralysed from the neck down and is faced with total dependence on a life-support machine. [Ken] claims the right to make his own decisions about his life... [which, for him, involves being] discharged from hospital. If [that happens, Ken] will die within a week. KEN: Of course I want to live but as far as I am concerned I’m dead already. I merely require the doctors to recognise that fact. I cannot accept this condition constitutes life in any real sense at all... [W]hilst I am... [in] this hospital... everything is geared just to keeping my brain active, with no real possibility of it ever being able to direct anything. As far as I can see, that is an act of deliberate cruelty... The cruelty doesn’t reside in saving someone or allowing them to die. It resides in the fact that the choice is removed from the [person] concerned... I find the hospital’s persistent effort to maintain this shadow of life an indignity and it’s inhumane... Dignity starts with choice. If I choose to live, it would be appalling if society killed me. If I choose to die, it is equally appalling if society keeps me alive... [E]uthanasia... literally means ‘to die well’ or ‘a good death’... Should badly deformed babies... be kept alive at all costs? Doctors must try to preserve life, so how can they approve of abortion? Are the rights of an unborn child more important than the health and rights of the [mother]? ...Abortion is simply the ending of pregnancy before birth. It can happen naturally, when it is called ‘spontaneous’ abortion, or a ‘miscarriage’. Most conceptions[, perhaps even]... 80%... abort in this way[– ‘most in the first few days’]... Deliberately expelling a foetus has been practised for over 3,000 years... It is a very emotional subject and people, countries and religions have strong feelings for and against... Abortion in Britain is not available ‘on demand’. Until 1967 all abortions were illegal unless the mother’s life was in danger... If they had the money some private clinics carried out the (illegal) operation. If they were poor they... often... had to visit... unqualified persons... Thousands did visit these ‘back-street’ clinics. Many suffered permanent ill health as a result. A number died. In order to stop these illegal abortions, the 1967 Abortion Act made abortion legal in England, Wales and Scotland in certain circumstances... The Act did not give a time limit, but it was linked to a 1929 Act that made it a criminal offence to destroy the life of any child capable of being born alive. This was believed to be at 28 weeks... There is no time limit, however, if the [mother’s] health is seriously at risk, or if the foetus is... seriously physically or mentally handicapped... It is up to the doctors to decide whether any of these things will happen. A doctor can refuse to give approval if it is against his or her conscience. One doctor’s opinion about the risks... will often differ from another doctor’s. It is still easier to get an abortion if a [mother] has money and goes to a private clinic, than it is if [the mother] tries to get one on the National Health Service... In April 1990 MPs reduced the time limit for abortion to 24 weeks [because, since] the 1967 Act, medical advances have meant that a small percentage of babies born at 24 weeks can survive... [I]n 1981... 162,454 abortions[were] carried out in England and Wales... Risk of injury to health of mother... [was the reason] given on... the... form... 158,499... times... The USA allows abortion on request up to 12 weeks, though each State has the right to decide on this... In 1988 there were 1.6 million abortions – about one-third of the total number of registered conceptions. In France abortion is available on request up to 10 weeks. About 1.5% of [French gals] have abortions. An ‘abortion pill’ was launched in 1989 and many thousands of [French mothers] each year use it to have very early abortions. The Netherlands allows abortion on request up to 24 weeks. It has the lowest abortion rate in the West – 0.6% of [Dutch gals]. In Eastern Europe, where contraceptives are difficult to find, abortion is the main method of birth control. Although accurate figures are difficult to obtain, it is estimated that 18% of [gals in the former Soviet Union] have abortions... In the Republic of Ireland... [and] also... in Northern Ireland... all abortion is illegal, and so is giving... advice about it. However, in 1988 almost 4,000 Irish [mothers] had abortions in England. Unofficially there were perhaps thousands more... About a third... [of the] almost three million legal abortions in... England and Wales... [during] the twenty years between 1968... and 1988... were carried out on [mothers] who were visitors or not resident in England and Wales... For most people, whether they are religious or not, an important question is: When does life begin? ...Some people believe that... life begins at conception. This means that... from the very moment when the sperm fertilises the egg the embryo has the same rights as anyone else. They believe that to destroy the embryo is the same as murder. Other people, with equal concern, argue that the state of the embryo in the early weeks is so unlike that of the newborn child that to abort it is not murder... The moment at about twenty weeks when the baby moves used to be called the ‘quickening’ and in some religions was the moment when the unborn baby has ‘life’... Abortion is never taken lightly. It can be distressing for the mother, the doctors and nurses. The argument... [concerning] the rights of the unborn child... [includes the fact that it] is impossible to know how valuable their lives might be... Many people argue that it is every [mother’s] right to choose whether or not to have a child... It is her life that will be most affected – her health, her freedom... Every child should be a wanted child. Every mother should be a willing mother... [‘To bring into the world unwanted children is one of the most awful crimes of which the parents can be guilty. It brings a curse to the child, to the parents and to the world.’] No one wants abortion but it is better than misery or poverty. Legal abortions early in pregnancy are easy and... safer than childbirth... Anti-abortionists have no right to impose their morality on the rest of us. They have no right to say that they know better than the [mother] concerned what choices [the mother] can make about her life... No... rape[-victim]... should be forced to have a child...

Since my stay in a Chinese village in 1980, when I saw [mothers] in their third trimester of pregnancy forced to undergo abortions, I have written extensively about China’s coercive population-control programme. I have interviewed many Chinese about their experiences. But... [one] story was different. “My wife is seven months pregnant with our second child,”... [the person] on the phone... told me. “The Chinese government has been trying to force her to get an abortion.” I was astounded... [The] call... was... from Phoenix, Arizona. [The husband] was a student at an American university... [who] was selected by the Chinese eight years ago to pursue a doctorate in mechanical engineering in the U[S]. His wife, a nurse, and his four-year-old son had to remain in China, to ensure that [the husband would return. The wife] chafed at this separation from her husband and, four years later, applied to join him in America. Such requests are seldom granted. [The wife], however, was in good standing, and her unit, the Walfantia Bearings Factory, endorsed her application. [The wife] and... son arrived in America a year later. [The husband] completed his PhD degree in March 1986 and the US government allowed him to stay for an additional 18 months of training... [The couple] were looking forward to

returning to China. [The husband] had been promised a professorship, while [his wife] was told that a good position awaited her at the factory. Then in late May last year, [the wife] became pregnant, even though [the wife had] had an IUD inserted after the birth of their son, as mandated by Chinese birth-control regulations... [H]is wife “was very responsible about going in for the required pelvic examinations each quarter. The IUD was always in place.” The couple rejected the idea of an abortion. Back home, [the wife] had assisted in forced abortions. Now those experiences came back to haunt her in nightmares. They wrote to [the wife’s] factory, asking the population-control official for an exemption... [Unfortunately, during the past year the] Communist Party General Secretary... [had] reaffirmed the “technical policy on birth control” and officials were ordered to redouble their enforcement efforts. The regulations call for IUD insertion after one child, sterilization after two, and abortion for [mothers who are] pregnant without official permission... I... also... heard shocking accounts of infanticide of “illegal” newborns... The [couple] soon received a letter from... [the wife’s] factory’s personnel officer [which said: “]Second children are absolutely banned. If a [mother] insists on having the child, all the workers of her factory will be punished. No salary increases will be allowed, and the factory will be disqualified from production contests. [The mother] herself will be placed on probation, and receive only minimum living expenses. Do not lose any more time. Fix this problem as soon as possible.[”] Without further delay, the [couple] applied to the US Immigration and Naturalization Service for permission to stay in the US. They also left their flat... “[My wife] was afraid that even in the U[S] we might be watched by agents of our government,”... As efforts to pressure the [couple] continued, Chinese officials turned to their next of kin. [The wife’s] elderly mother was paid nightly visits and warned of the terrible consequences for the entire family if [the wife] did not abort... In desperation, [the husband] wrote to his mother-in-law that [her daughter] had gone for the abortion. [The mother-in-law showed the] letter to officials, ending the nightly visits. But then [the husband] made a serious error. [The husband] wrote to his Chinese university, the Dalian Institute of Technology, hoping that colleagues there might be more forgiving of their situation. Unfortunately, the Walfantia Bearings Factory found out... and the pressure was on again... “[After explaining the birth-control policy to you in our last letter, we were sure you would fix your problem right away. But from your husband’s letter we know that your pregnancy continues. We have been severely criticized by the birth-control departments and ordered to send you this extremely urgent letter of warning. The Walfantia Bearings Factory is now working on a major government-sponsored expansion. If our birth-control programme allows even a single second birth, the factory will not be permitted to advance. The strenuous efforts of our 20,000 employees towards this goal will have been in vain... The consequences for you are unthinkable. You would be condemned by all the employees of the factory. How could you bear the losses you would cause and suffer? ...If you have real difficulties [getting an abortion in the U[S]], return to China immediately. There is no time to waste. To your health!”] ...On February 24, 1988, the application... to remain in the U[S] was turned down on the recommendation of the State Department because they did not prove “a well-founded fear of persecution upon return” to China. The next step: deportation. The decision provoked strong reaction. [A] former under-secretary of state [declared], “It’s unconscionable that our government should abet this barbaric act of state intrusion into the most intimate sanctum of human life.” ...IN EARLY AUGUST, the [couple] were finally granted political asylum... The [couple’s name for] their daughter... means beautiful and smart but also stands for America, land of her birth.

The Republican Party has called for a ban on abortion in the U[S] even in cases of rape, incest or to save the life of a mother. The party overwhelmingly adopted the platform at the opening session of its national convention in San Diego yesterday... The party wants the passage of a “human life amendment” to the U[S] Constitution which would give full human rights to fetuses... The platform also includes a tough new provision on immigration that would overturn a 128-year-old guarantee of citizenship for any child born on U[S] soil. ● ‘The number of abortions in the US rose from 586,800 in 1972 – around the time of Roe v Wade – to 1,590,800 in 1988. The rate for every 1000 gals increased from 13.2 to 27.3 – the states with the highest abortion rates were California (45.9) and New York (43.3), while the lowest were South Dakota (5.7) and Wyoming (5.1) – and the ratio per 1000 live births from 184 to 401; the relative figures were 21.2 and 333 for Whites, and 57.3 and 638 for Blacks. Of the total abortions in 1988, 14,000 were performed on girls under 15 years of age, and 393,000 on girls between 15 and 19; 83% of the abortions were performed on unmarried mothers and 11% after the lapse of the legally permitted trimester.’

...an MP introduced a Bill to restrict the time span during which people in Britain could have abortions. In March 1988 the Green Party supported an emergency motion to the spring conference supporting the existing 1967 Abortion Act and opposing the MP’s Bill. The Green Party stated that it was “opposed to any amendments to the Act which would further restrict the reproductive freedom of gals”. Greens believe that it is a mother’s right to choose.’

...a British mother [with eight fetuses in her womb... has rejected doctors’ calls to have... [up to] six... of the[m] aborted... Doctors say that chances of all eight being born alive and undamaged are nil but [the mother]’s deal with *News of the World*... means that the more babies... who survive, the more cash [it] will get for her story[, although the paper’s]... executives... deny this amounts to a per-baby rate... “If all goes well over the next year, we are talking about £1 million in sponsorship, syndication and deals,” her publicist... said... yesterday... [A l]egislator... said the newspaper deal was “quite revolting and quite improper and was the worst kind of cheque-book journalism.” [The father’s] mother... criticised her son... [in] the *Daily Mail*: “I love [my boy] but this is all wrong. We are talking about human life but [my boy] sees only the money [it] can make.”

...An ethical controversy over whether a British [mother] should be allowed to abort one of her healthy twin fetuses took a bizarre turn yesterday when it was revealed that the termination had already taken place. The 28-year-old single [parent], who already has one child, had told her... Queen Charlotte’s hospital... doctor [that it]... could handle one more child, but not two. [A]*Sunday Express*... story sparked three days of heated debate in the media and members of the public offered £50,000... to the anonymous [mother] to have both babies. But a curt statement by hospital officials made it clear that the offers, if not the debate, were misplaced... The hospital declined to say exactly when the abortion had been carried out. Media reports put it variously at about four weeks ago or as far back as March. The announcement shocked anti-abortionists, who only hours earlier had won a court injunction to gain more time to campaign against the abortion.

...The Vatican’s official newspaper, *L’Osservatore Romano*, yesterday condemned the controversial abortion in Britain of one of two twins.

...Another pregnant... Brit... wants to have one or both of her twins aborted. The mother-to-be, who is 20 weeks pregnant, claims her house is too small for two more children and insists... her husband cannot afford to bring twins up... It is not thought that any abnormalities have been discovered in either twin... Pro-lifers have launched a fund-raising campaign in a bid to stop the latest plan to abort a twin... [They have already got] about £80,000... [rom] the first... campaign... The Abortion Act requires two doctors to believe that continuing a pregnancy will cause greater risk than its termination. The British Medical Association said that the act would not allow for abortions on the grounds of financial hardship alone.

...Several British doctors stepped into a growing debate over abortion today, declaring that [mothers] who want to terminate their pregnancies should not have any fear that the foetus is suffering. In a clear message to anti-abortion groups which have presented videotapes of fetuses twitching and apparently grimacing in the womb, the doctors said unborn babies could not feel pain... Babies showed reflexes to what could be painful stimuli, they said, but did not have enough brain development to register this consciously... Doctors used to say that newborn babies could feel no pain, but studies have since shown that they do. The abortion debate has come to the fore in Britain since... [news about an RAF employee winning] compensation after being forced to have [an] abortion to keep... [her job followed] recent reports of a [mother] who had one healthy twin aborted but kept another. A second [mother] who took fertility drugs announced [it was her intention to] try to carry eight fetuses to term... Anti-abortion groups have been very vocal in their opposition, demanding a rethink of Britain’s abortion laws. [● ‘SWITZERLAND’S parliament has voted to legalise abortion after eight years of debate.’]

...South Africa's... President... has signed [his country's] new abortion bill, clearing the way for one of the world's toughest abortion laws to be replaced with one of the most liberal. Despite strong protests from opposition parties and anti-abortion groups, the law gives girls of any age the sole right to decide whether to have an abortion... [In local news, health] officials are struggling to cope with a soaring demand for abortions. In some areas abortion rates have jumped by as much as 20[%] since last year. That despite a \$17 million campaign launched in May to cut the rate. About 5400 Auckland [mothers] are expected to have publicly funded abortions... [this] year... at a cost of \$3.2 million... Abortion services in Hamilton are reported to be under huge pressure, forcing hundreds of [mothers] to travel outside the region... [S]ome... go... private. It costs almost \$700 to have an abortion privately... The Family Planning Association said it was disappointing that the number of abortions was rising so steeply. The association's clinical spokes[person]... said the cost of contraception and doctors visits often led to unwanted pregnancies. The Ministry of Health signalled earlier this year that the morning-after pill would likely be available over chemist counters, but this was yet to start... National figures for previous years show [that, statistically, 'Asians have the most abortions (about 1-in-3 Asian pregnancies are terminated compared to about 1-in-4 Maori pregnancies and 1-in-5 Pakeha pregnancies'), and] the largest number of [mothers] having the procedure are in the 20-24 age bracket.

...Giving general practitioners the power to approve abortions could achieve what people on all sides of the debate have long been trying for – a reduction in the number of terminations... A recommendation in a select committee report on the work of the Abortion Supervisory Committee states that all medical practitioners should automatically become certified consultants, and therefore able to authorise the 13,000 abortions that take place in [N]Z each year. At present GPs have to apply to become consultants, and most certified consultants are obstetricians and gynaecologists who also perform the abortion operations... [The deputy chairperson] of the Medical Association and a practising GP who refers up to four [mothers] a week to consultants[says,] "I have sent patients off who I felt haven't needed an abortion and said so in my referral letter, but they've ended up having one anyway..." One doctor described a case of a [mother] who wanted an abortion mainly because [the mother] wasn't ready to have a baby, but the doctor knew the "right time" would not be far away and advised against a termination in his referral letter. Two consultants, who had never previously met the [mother], approved the abortion. "[The mother] became pregnant again a month later when [the mother] realised it wasn't such a bad idea after all." ...The Government pays certified consultants \$87.50 for assessments of [mothers] wanting terminations, totalling \$2.5 million a year. The select committee suggests this money could be better spent on education and improved contraception, inferring that GPs would not be paid as much as consultants. This does not wash with [the deputy chairperson]. "If I'm expected to go through a process, at the end of which I must be able to confidently assess whether a [mother] should have an abortion, I won't be doing it for a normal ante-natal fee." ...Everyone agrees, however, that money needs to be channelled into education as the best way of reducing unwanted pregnancies... The select committee report told how a shortage of certifying consultants in smaller centres is mainly the result of many suffering harassment. Consultants have their practices picketed and covered in graffiti, are telephoned at all hours of the night, and their children are sometimes harassed at school. One practitioner spent \$12,000 in legal fees trying to remove protesters from his surgery. - 1996

Tens of thousands of anti-abortion protesters marched[through Washington, DC.] on Wednesday for the... 24th... anniversary of a land-mark... Supreme Court decision... legalising abortion... known as Roe versus Wade... The demonstrators... [shouted] slogans including "Stop Abortion Now" and "The Real Choice Is Life." At the same time, pro-choice advocates marked the anniversary with a luncheon... The... Vice President... and First [Wife]... were scheduled to meet abortion-rights advocates... later in the day... [While on the topic of abortion, according to a] recent article... pregnant [mothers] vacillate between "wanting" and "not wanting" a child... "Before... [the mother realises it is pregnant it] is just your usual happy-go-lucky young [gal]" but "from eight to 12 weeks when [the mother] is sick, tired, depressed and worried the baby is definitely not wanted. (This is the stage when most abortions are performed.) ...In the middle months [the mother] gradually realises that [it] will be able to cope. In the last month, with swollen legs, varicose veins and apprehension, the baby is once again unwanted. During labour – very much unwanted. Five minutes after delivery the baby in its mother's arms is deliriously wanted. Seven days later, with engorged breasts, painful stitches and a crying baby, it is once again unwanted..." To many of us, the tone and substance of the article will seem incredibly arrogant and patronising. Does [its author] really believe that [mothers] want or want a baby simply as a reaction to their physical or emotional well-being? I can assure... [the author] that the great majority of pregnant [mothers] do not... decide to terminate a pregnancy without considering in some depth just what it will mean in their particular circumstances to give birth to this particular child. When, some 60 years ago, Dr Dougal Baird pioneered a domiciliary birth control service in Aberdeen[Baird] was able to prove that ignorance and poverty were why, in the words of the song, "the rich get richer, the poor get children." Nurses visiting these impoverished Scottish [gals] in their own homes explained how they could, if they so wished, avoid unwanted pregnancies by using the contraceptives freely provided. The... enthusiastic response indicated that poor [gals] actually wanted fewer children than their richer sisters... Those who decide to limit the number of their offspring are likely to be those who believe that any child brought in to this world deserves the parenting that will best enable it to reach its potential. Bringing up a child is the most difficult and rewarding job in the world. Many of us believe that taking on such a demanding job should always be a considered decision, and one that only the [mother] herself can make. Ideally, [the mother] is able to do this together with the child's father, but for some this is not feasible... Most remarkably, and very peculiarly[some people are prepared to kill in order to promote their pro-life philosophy]... On such reasoning, I rest my case.

...An anonymous letter purported to be from a militant Christian group called the Army of God claimed yesterday that it had planted the bombs that exploded recently in an abortion clinic... The first blast shattered one side of an office building housing the Atlanta Northside Family Planning Services centre in a suburb known as Sandy Springs... four people were inside at the time but no one was injured. A little over an hour later a garbage container in the corner of an adjacent parking lot exploded, knocking people to the ground and injuring several at the scene... The FBI could not say whether the letter was genuine... But investigators said they were aware of a radical anti-abortion group called the Army of God, which has been known to circulate bomb-making manuals as a means of advocating violence against abortion clinics. The Army of God letter threatened "total war" against the federal Government and promised further attacks... In Washington, [the]President... condemned the [group]... "Nobody has a right to use violence in America to advance their own convictions over the rights of others... We will punish those responsible..."

...Investigators continued their search for possible links between a bomb that exploded... in Atlanta on Saturday and two other unsolved bombings which have shaken the city over the past seven months... Police found a second bomb in a backpack hidden among some bushes in an adjacent parking lot... [The latest] attack bore similarities to [the]... January double-bombing at an abortion clinic and the deadly Centennial Olympic Park bombing last July. That fact led a senior FBI official in Atlanta to speculate that investigators could be dealing with a serial bomber.

...[one of the FBI's 10 most wanted fugitives was charged yesterday with the 1996 Olympic Park blast and two other Atlanta bombings. The Attorney General said the criminal complaint charging the 32-year-old carpenter was being filed in federal court. An affidavit detailing the case against the carpenter was filed under seal and not made public. The carpenter had previously been charged with bombing an abortion clinic in Birmingham, Alabama, which killed a police officer and severely injured a nurse. Now the carpenter is facing five further charges, all are for malicious use of an explosive in violation of federal law. For months, hundreds of FBI and state and local agents have been searching for the carpenter, who is believed to be hiding in the rugged wilderness of western North Carolina around the Nantahala National Forest. The carpenter was last seen on January 30 near his North Carolina home, where his truck was abandoned. The FBI is offering up to \$US1 million for information leading to his arrest. "A dangerous fugitive is a danger to everyone," the FBI Director said. Immediately after the Olympic Park bombing, which killed one person and injured more than 100 other people (in addition, a Turkish camera operator died of a heart attack while responding to the blast), investigators had focused on the security guard who discovered

the bomb. But the security guard was never charged. Eventually, the FBI publicly ruled him out, but the security guard said his life had been ruined by the massive media coverage. His lawyer said yesterday that the former security guard would not comment on the charging of the carpenter in connection with the bombing.'

...in 1994 Dr Barnett Slepian wrote to a newspaper predicting that the tactics of non-violent anti-abortion lobbyists could encourage murder. And in a TV interview, the father of 4 worried about how his family would cope if his work ultimately led to his death. At the weekend the 52-year-old obstetrician-gynaecologist was killed by a sniper who fired a bullet through a window in his home. His death – the first fatality among 5 sniper attacks on upstate New York and Canadian abortionists in the past 4 years – came just 4 days after local authorities warned physicians who perform abortions of possible attacks.']

...THE methods are extreme, but the prolonged campaign of terror against US abortion clinics is slowly achieving its goal of closing down the industry... Many doctors are... unwilling to become martyrs for the principle of [mother's] choice... In North Dakota there is only one doctor left who is willing to perform abortions... The number of counties where abortion is available has fallen by a third. In the Deep South, abortion doctors are extinct outside the biggest cities. The result is a fall in abortions from 1.6 million to 1.4 million a year – or in the eyes of the pro-life militants, a "rescue" of 200,000 babies a year, an outcome they regard as a triumph. Almost a third of all abortion clinics reported attacks last year... More [doctors] are likely to stop performing abortions after the double bombing of a clinic in Atlanta[, which]... was on a new scale of violence... Sometimes doctors are shot, or stabbed with their own implements... Two receptionists were murdered at clinics in Brooklyn, Massachusetts, in 1994... Fire-bombs are more dramatic. They cause panic among other businesses in the building. Insurance becomes a nightmare and it becomes nearly impossible for the clinic to lease space. Costs are driven up until the abortion procedure, which costs an average of \$415, becomes unprofitable... Who is responsible for this [terror campaign? A spokesperson for] the National Abortion Federation in Washington, says that it is an underground network based in Oregon and exonerates "justifiable homicide" of doctors. It has a secret cell structure modelled on the IRA and Middle East terrorist groups. Mainstream pro-life organisations have denounced the violence and have been waging their own struggle of passive resistance. Pro-life activists have spent more time in prison for their convictions than the civil rights activists of the Sixties. There have been 72,000 arrests for picketing abortion clinics since 1987. Some campaigners have been jailed for up to two and a half years for non-violent protest that mostly involved quiet chanting and prayer. In terms of grass roots protest, day in, day out, they are the biggest movement of civil disobedience in America this century. In 1994 Congress passed the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances law, making peaceful picketing a federal crime with a penalty of 10 years in prison... The move caused outrage by singling out prolife activists for draconian punishment. The bill has probably ensured the escalation of violence. With the avenues of peaceful protest blocked off, passions have gone into guerrilla warfare.

...I'd like to discuss abortion today. And survive... I would like to propose... that abortion is here for a while [yet]. And as a sexually active [gal] who doesn't want to get pregnant but doesn't always act like it, I feel I have light to shed... Intensity about abortion has permanently diminished. Even the annual TV news finger-pointing session about abortion lacks the vicious commitment of say, a Roe v Wade... [L]egal abortion is now quietly, deeply, widely sanctioned by the individual mind, and working in perfect concert... at society's most sophisticated levels. I might add – I recently told a close... chum how trustworthy the withdrawal method was... I sense, even in my own petite brain, a lack of commitment to reducing... abortion statistics[, which show that NZ now]... has the fourth highest abortion rate in the [First W]orld at 17.7 for every 1000 [gals] aged between 15 and 44. Countries with higher rates are Sweden (18.3), A[US] (18.5) and the U[S] (25.9 in 1992).

...[NZers] under 25 are to be offered free sexual health advice and checkups in a bid to cut unwanted pregnancies and abortions. The Family Planning Association will also offer free visits for [gals] of all ages for up to a year after an abortion to cut the number of repeat... terminations.

...MPs have to share some of the blame for the spiralling abortion rate that saw one in five N[Z] pregnancies terminated last year, says a watchdog panel. The Abortion Supervisory Committee yesterday accused MPs of ignoring its advice for 20 years and called for cross-party leadership and courage to take up the challenge to reduce the need for abortions, which hit an all-time high of 14,805 last year. Figures made public by the committee also revealed that: most Pacific Island [gals] have one abortion some time in their life; three out of four abortions take place in Auckland; and that a 12-year-old girl needed an abortion in 1996... [In addition, there were] 12 abortions for 13-year-olds, 47 for 14-year-olds... Most [mothers who aborted] were "never married" – 8810 or 59.5[%]. Almost half had no other children... For... 15 [mothers]... it was their... seventh, for three their eighth and for one at least her ninth abortion... The leader of the Christian Heritage Party... called for the committee to be replaced. "They have no idea how to control the situation and are failing miserably in their responsibilities. Ultimately, the Government must close the abortion clinics and instead turn their attention to helping those [mothers] who, for whatever reason, cannot keep their babies." [Incidentally, the]... number of teenagers putting their babies up for adoption dropped from 635 in 1970 to 118 in 1996... Family specialists believe the reasons for the decline include... the growing acceptance of single-parent families... increased support from them... and... the greater availability of abortion...

More abortion clinics are needed so [mothers] are not forced to travel far from home, the Abortion Supervisory Committee says... Auckland clinics were used by central and upper North Island health authorities, which put pressure on services... [In related news, m]idwives have defended a rural homebirth in which a baby died after a warning that the birth could become complicated... Isabell Grace Riddell suffocated during birth after being delivered by three midwives at Taupiri... Her parents went ahead with a homebirth despite a Waikato Hospital obstetrician's recommendation for a caesarean section because the baby was in breech position – coming out bottom-end first... Emergency care would have been more readily available in a hospital and the risk of death greatly cut... But the College of Midwives last night said such a suffocation could occur in all births, at home or in hospital. The suffocation, caused by part of the placenta coming off the uterine wall, was not related to the breech position... [The p]arents... yesterday said they were caught between midwives and obstetricians and were not fully informed of the homebirth risks... The case prompted the Hamilton coroner to call for an unborn child's safety to override its mother's right to choose how her baby is delivered... "The law preserves the right of unborn children to be born and protected from harm unless it can be shown that there is an overriding legitimate right." But it was not clear whether the mother's rights to decide how to give birth outweighed the baby's safety: "In my view the mother has no such right... Unborn babies' rights needed to be made clear during a review of the Health and Disability Commissioner Act in October,["']...

An abortion watchdog panel appointed by Parliament is calling for a review of the 20-year-old abortion law and thinks its role to license doctors and termination clinics could also be scrapped... [The person] who chairs the Abortion Supervisory Committee, said... the committee should be dumped and the health system empowered to oversee abortions. Her comments came after the Minister of Health... told a pro-life group at Parliament this week that [the minister] would investigate cutting the \$2.7 million paid to the committee and certified doctors to assess abortions. The Minister of Finance, [who is] also a pro-lifer, said the abortion system was no longer working and money was being wasted... The P[M says it]... remains committed to a safe and free abortion service[, but]... believes there is little prospect of Parliament reforming the licensing system...

NOT content with destroying the health system, the three "Bs"... [of the National Party] have turned their attention to abortion services. There are too many abortions, they say, without stopping for a moment to think why this might be... [One of them, the] Minister of Health... wants [mothers] to have support to decide to have the child. This is barely credible given the way this Government has stripped supports away from ordinary people. Many... solo parents have suffered benefit cuts and work-testing. Other disincentives to motherhood are in the pipeline. The implication of these policies is that the job of bringing up children is not valued by the Government... [The minister] is wrong to say the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act was designed to restrict abortions. It sets up grounds for abortion and regulated abortion facilities... The lesson of history is that if legal services are not provided, desperate [mothers] will find other ways... [B]efore safe, modern facilities were set up, [mothers]

died through backstreet abortions or dreadful things they did to themselves... [T]he present increase, while it has multiple causes, is occurring at a time when people are struggling financially and feel insecure about the future. It was a similar increase during the Depression that led to the MacMillan Inquiry in 1936. At that time it was estimated there were 4000 abortions a year, which puts the 14,800 of 1996 into perspective. Between 1927 and 1935, 223 [mothers] died of septic abortions in N[Z]. Contrast this with the fact that no [NZ mother] has died from an abortion since the CS&A Act was brought in 20 years ago... [By the way,] Cambodia yesterday legalised abortion in a bid to end deaths from illegal operations.

...[mothers] who have abortions or doctors who perform them may soon face the death penalty if a tough new bill passes through... the Philippines... Congress. [Gal] rights groups are planning to lobby against it but the Department of Health has thrown its support behind Senate Bill 2249 which aims to define abortion as a "heinous" crime on a par with murder or rape... [□ The] Irish High Court has cleared the way for a 13-year-old rape victim to travel to England for an abortion. Last week, the Children's Court ruled the girl, who is 13 weeks' pregnant, could travel for an abortion but the decision was appealed by her parents. [However, 'a pregnant under-12-year-old rape victim has chosen to have her child.'] - 1997

I can think of one very compelling case in particular where a [perso]n had every good reason for an abortion. [That person] was forty-one years of age when... [it became] pregnant for the fourth time. Her two oldest children were fully grown teenagers, and her third child was ten. Her husband was in his sixties. Her elderly mother was living with her, and ailing. Times were hard. There was a war on, and rations were modest. [That person] really was in despair as to know how [it] could cope with another child. [That person] wept for weeks when the pregnancy was confirmed, and felt deeply depressed... [but] gritted her teeth and carried on. The baby was born in due course. And that baby was me... I am very glad I was born...

Scrimping and saving for months, I finally got the money together to spend two months overseas. First stop would be Munich in Germany, then England and Ireland. The trip coincided with the last month of my brother's work contract in Munich, so I would spend a month on my own, then tour the UK with him... [I]n Munich I found castles, palaces and museums... It made for an enchanting time, but wasn't as special without someone to share it. This all changed in the second week when I was lunching in a picturesque "biergarten". Someone ran past my chair to "accidentally" push me off my chair and, in the confusion, stole my wallet. I never saw my money again, but the theft paid off, as I met... a stunning blond, blue-eyed German... [who] saw it happen and helped me through the police interview and cheered me up later with a meal and a beer. By that night and a few drinks later... I realised we would have to meet again. We swapped numbers and for the next two weeks I had an expert guide of Bavaria. It was magical and I soon realised we had something special. In the days before we were due to depart, me to Britain with my brother, him to see his sick mother in the country, we spent as much time together as possible. On our last night, we made love and whispered of plans for a future. I left Germany feeling exhilarated, hoping I'd found what I'd always wanted. While travelling I wasn't able to contact [my lover]. I still couldn't get through to him by the time my holiday ended, or for the next month when I got back home. Misgivings that I'd been used crept into my head and I soon gave up on finding him. By this time, I realised I was pregnant. Considering my single status, financial situation and the treatment I expected from my family and friends about being a single mum, I made the harshest decision of my life and decided not to bring the child into the world. While it was hard, I survived and began to heal. About three months later, there was a knock at the door. It was [my lover]! ...his mother had died soon after [my lover] reached her and [it]d remained there to make arrangements and be with his family. As soon as [my lover] returned to Munich, [it] borrowed money to travel to N[Z]... While I was happy to see him, I was racked with guilt. It was wrong, but I couldn't think of jeopardising our relationship, so I didn't tell him what had happened when I thought [my lover] was out of my life. It's been four years and the fairytale has continued. [My lover] has a visa... and we have a house and marriage, but have been trying for a child for nearly six months... I went for tests and found out that, due to complications from the termination, I can't have kids. I still haven't told... [my husband, who I know will be] devastated...

So abortion is again back on the menu, with [the Gal]'s Affairs Minister... saying the Government is unlikely to make good its promise to overhaul "outdated" abortion legislation before the next election. While[the] Justice Minister... has instructed officials to draft legislative changes to remove the need for two consultants to approve each abortion, right-to-life proponents are cranking up their objections to possible changes and to the law as it exists. But in a similar way to the economic upside that is now being attached to divorce – that it doubles the market – researchers are now redefining the economic and social consequences of abortion. Abortion used to be a purely moral issue. The debate surrounding termination centred on the individual's right to choose. The last time this subject hit the headlines, the leader of the Christian Heritage Party... suggested that realistic foetus photos would jig the consciences of [mothers] contemplating abortion. The opposition, of course, countered with the usual well-reasoned, [mother]'s-right-to-choose argument. But that was the extent of the dialogue – the same old moral high ground, reasons and refutations trundled out for the umpteenth time. But perhaps the moral equation has at last reached its use-by-date. New research in the U[S] has come up with a unique angle. Becoming known as the abortion bonus, the research centres on the correlation between abortion rates and the startling drop in crime in major American cities. Abortion may account for as much as half of the decreases in the American crime rate, say[the] researchers... They add that the 1973 *Roe v Wade* ruling means that many people who might have become crooks in the 1990s were never born. The... theory holds that a high proportion of the [mothers] who received legal abortions after 1973 might otherwise have given birth to unwanted, economically deprived children raised in single-parent or dysfunctional families – the type of background that often produces delinquents... Are the American researchers suggesting that, as a species, we are spontaneously controlling the quality of our populations through termination, or are they saying that there is a surreptitious conspiracy to manipulate entire populations? Either way, we moderns are in good company. After all, *Mein Kampf* was predicated on control of the gene pool. Plato's philosophy was that bad elements should not be allowed to reproduce, and *limpieza de sangre* – the purity of blood – was the justification for the Inquisition. Extrapolating the concept of abortion as a population-control tool, whether conscious or otherwise, sparks a number of interesting ideas. On one side it removes a cast of people who are traditionally economically dependent on the state, draining tax revenues without replenishing the wider community in an economically tangible way. Downstream, this removal releases resources from such areas as policing, incarceration services and education and frees them to be used in effective community creation. Perhaps abortion is not solely a sign of moral decline but an example of the momentum towards upscaling and improvement – a morphic desire by the general population to create a better population. If so, you would think the environment that is gradually being created by rampant abortion would suit many anti-abortion advocates very well. White, upwardly mobile, stable, well-mannered and well-behaved taxpayers would prevail. On the negative side, successful abortion campaigns, while reducing demands on resources and our fragile ecosystem, might actually increase the abuse and damage. One of the key findings of the[latest UN] GEO... report was that environmental degradation is known to be caused by excessive consumption by the... middle classes, the most excessive consumers since history began. So whether rampant abortion is a bonus or a hindrance to the development of society, the latest findings will enliven and perhaps revive a debate that has been mired in simplistic notions of right and wrong.

...Dozens more [mothers] are seeking help from a Catholic anti-abortion centre since the Church offered them financial help. In April, the Catholic Bishop of Auckland... publicly pledged to give every possible help, including financial aid, to [mums] undecided about the future of their unborn child. Since then [the bishop] has not had to carry out his commitment to personally support any [mum] deciding to have her baby throughout the child's life – [the bishop believes few] would want that level of help anyway. But [the bishop] has been delighted by a 100[%]

increase in the number of [mums] contacting the Catholic-oriented Family Life Pregnancy Centre, increasing from around three appointments to six a day. "I knew if there was a critical need people would respond. We've seen a good increase due to the greater publicity – I think word's really getting around." The initiative followed a similar cash pledge in Britain by the Archbishop of Glasgow... who claimed that more than 100 [mothers] had been encouraged not to have abortions... [■ A guy] has pleaded guilty to offering \$3.6m over the internet to anyone who killed an abortion provider.

...Abortion opponents who created... Wild West-style posters... offering a \$US5000 reward for information about a "Deadly Dozen" doctors... and a Web site listing the names and addresses of "baby butchers" were ordered to pay \$US107 million... in damages by a federal jury that said the tactics amounted to illegal threats. Planned Parenthood, several abortion doctors and a clinic had sued the activists under the U[S] racketeering statute and a 1994 federal law that makes it illegal to incite violence against abortion doctors or their patients... Unlike previous cases brought under the 1994 law, this one did not involve any physical confrontations or explicit threats. Because of that, the... activists contended the Internet site and the posters were protected by the First Amendment. But... [after] five days... the... jury [disagreed]... As part of the tight security surrounding the case, the judge said the names of the eight jurors will never be made public. The defendants, who included more than a dozen individuals and two anti-abortion organisations, said they would appeal. Some said they would not alter their tactics. And they said the other side would be hard-pressed to collect, because they had transferred their assets to make themselves "judgment-proof." "This is a moral and constitutional outrage," said one of the defendants... At issue was a Web site called The Nuremberg Files, which lists hundreds of abortion doctors accused of committing "crimes against humanity" and invites readers to send in doctors' addresses, licence plate numbers and the names of their children. When three doctors were killed... [- including] Dr Barnett Slepian... – ...their names were crossed off like items on a grocery list while those who were wounded were listed in grey... The defendants maintained they were simply political protesters collecting data on doctors in hopes of one day putting them on trial as the Nazi war criminals were at Nuremberg. They said they could not be held accountable for the violent actions of others.

...UP to 200,000 Polish [mothers] have abortions each year despite the country's strict anti-abortion law, according to a report by the Federation for [Gals] and Family Planning... [In further news from overseas, a] monstrous pattern of mass rape is beginning to emerge[from Kosovo]...

Serb police found only [adult gals] and children when they took over the western Kosovo village of Dragacin in late April. All the [adult guys] had fled or joined the Kosovo Liberation Army. So the Serbs crammed the... [villagers] into three houses. At night the captors would come and shine flashlights in the [gal]'s faces, discussing who was pretty and selecting a few to take away. Hours later the chosen [ones] would return. Nothing had happened, they said: the Serbs had only wanted them to serve coffee... So "Anita" (not her real name) wasn't too worried the night... the unmarried 20-year-old... was picked – at first. But the Serbs didn't want coffee. One police[officer] raped her while four others sexually abused her. After they finished, they handed her some lollies. [Anita] threw them away. Back at the house [Anita] told the other [captives] what had happened. "I said, 'Why didn't you tell us?'..." [Anita] was glad to learn [it] wasn't pregnant... Anita... got her period in May, a week after the Serbs shipped the [villagers] of Dragacin to Albania. Many villagers demanded immediate vacuum abortions, without waiting for a pregnancy test. Some had been raped within the previous three days; they got morning after pills in special UN kits. The Vatican last week reiterated its condemnation of all such efforts, no matter how desperate the [mothers] are. "The 'morning-after pill' does not exist," declared[one] Monsignor... "This is an abortion." The reaction from [gal]'s groups has been furious. "The Vatican is out of touch," said [a spokesperson for] Marie Stopes International, a group that provides birth control and abortion counselling in [Last] World countries. Relief workers are only slowly determining the scope of the Serbs' crimes against [gals] in Kosovo. Much of the problem has been kept hidden by victims too humiliated to talk. Albanians tend to ostracise [gals] who have been raped. "Our counsellors see [gals] all the time and know they were raped," says [an official from] the Albanian Family Planning Association. "...But they're just unable to talk about it." ...Nato has alleged the existence of "rape motels," which Serbs also used in the ethnic cleansing of Bosnia[and the FPA official]... tells of a 16-year-old girl in Malisevo who... was gang-raped by Serbs in front of her younger siblings. "They were doing the worst thing they possibly could to these [gals]," says the... official. "What could be worse than bearing the child of the Serbs who murdered your husband and brothers?" The Vatican disagrees. "We must distinguish between the act of violence and the reality of new human beings who had no control over how their lives began," says... a close adviser to the Pope. During the Bosnian war John Paul II took a similar stance against abortions for Muslim[s]... who had been raped by Serbs. In Kosovo the church has gone further by explicitly denouncing the morning-after pill as an abortion-inducing treatment. The W[HO] and most physicians insist the pill is a contraceptive, since it works before the fertilised egg has been implanted on the wall of the womb. Although the Vatican ordinarily opposes artificial contraception, an exception was made for nuns in the Former Belgian Congo during the upheavals of the 1960s. "In the Congo, it truly was a defence against the very real possibility of rape," said [the Pope's adviser]. "In this case, it is not a defence – it is an afterthought. After the pregnancy has occurred... after the life has begun."

...West Auckland health professionals are welcoming the decision to allow over-the-counter sales of the emergency contraceptive pill from early next year. Often referred to as the "morning after pill", it is used to prevent pregnancy within 72 hours after unprotected sex – although the earlier the better... [A] registered nurse at Wai Health... does not believe it will make people more casual about sex. "I can understand that stance, but I don't think in reality that'll be how it is." ...Under the new legislation, pharmacists and registered nurses must do extra training before they will be allowed to sell the medicine. At the moment, [gals] need to get a doctor's prescription... [C]hurches have responded cautiously to the news.

...The morning after pill would be more accurately described as an emergency abortion pill... [if the] Family Life Pregnancy Centre[had its way]... First, because pregnancy begins at fertilisation not its implantation, and second, a chemical abortion is still an abortion... Apart from the ending of an innocent human life, what about the longer term (effects) from these extremely high doses of synthetic hormones? [One r]esearcher... fears that an increase of hormones due to conceived babies that were aborted in their first week of life will increase the risk of breast cancer... [Of greater concern, perhaps, is that a]t the inaugural Abortion Providers Conference of N[Z a] Dr... showed the failure rate for the morning after pill to be more than 25[%]. Other studies indicate that the actual failure rate is as high as 40[%].

...Official approval for the abortion pill RU-486 is likely in about two weeks. It is understood that the controversial French drug has been recommended by the Ministry of Health's medicines assessment advisory committee. All that remains before it goes on the[NZ] market is to decide on packaging. RU-486 has caused controversy all over the world since it was introduced in France more than 10 years ago. It is[also] available in... many[other] European countries and parts of Asia. It is intended for [mothers] up to eight weeks pregnant and is an alternative to surgery.

...It used to be that having an abortion meant undergoing surgery. Now it looks like N[Zers]... may have a choice about the type of abortion they want, with an abortion pill to be introduced soon... Invented in 1980[using]... RU-486 or Mifepristone... involves taking the pill... prescribed by a doctor, and returning up to two days later to take a second drug. Mifepristone stops the embryo developing by blocking the hormone progesterone, which is essential to maintaining pregnancy. But Mifepristone does not expel the embryo by itself so, 36 to 48 hours after taking it, the [patient] must return to the clinic to take prostaglandin, a drug (currently legal) which will complete the abortion by inducing contractions, forcing the embryo out of the uterus in the manner of a miscarriage. In other countries, after taking the second drug, the [patient] must remain at the clinic for the next four to six hours in the hope [it] will miscarry in the clinic. Otherwise, the miscarriage occurs at home... It is not yet clear in N[Z whether a patient] would have to remain in the clinic until the embryo has passed, which could take more than a day for some... [patients], according to F[IPA NZ's clinical spokesperson]n... A follow-up appointment is necessary in the next two weeks to make sure the abortion is completed... [Mothers] up to

nine weeks pregnant can take the abortion pill but it is most effective before seven weeks... After [nine weeks], the body produces higher levels of progesterone and the drug is not powerful enough to stop pregnancy... Common side-effects include bleeding, menstrual-type pain and cramping, which are comparable to those of [mothers] who miscarry... As a relatively new procedure, the long-term safety of the abortion pill cannot yet be confirmed. [However, t]ests since 1982 have not revealed any evidence of long-term health effects and it is thought that, given the very short time [patients] are exposed to the drug, such effects are unlikely... There are some [people] who won't be medically suitable for the abortion pill – mostly due to adverse effects to the prostaglandin – including [patients] with heart disease... At present, a legal surgical abortion is free and it is expected there will be no cost attached to the abortion pill either... ● The number of [NZers] choosing to have abortions is increasing every year.

...15,206 [NZ mothers] had abortions in 1997[, accounting for '22% of registered pregnancies']... 2962 abortions... were carried out on girls aged between 11 and 19 years[, including 56]... aged 14 or under... [A spokesperson for] the Parkview Clinic, Wellington... said successive Governments had ignored advice from specialists pleading for compulsory education to help reduce the rate... Recommendations from the... Abortion Supervisory Committee... included compulsory sexual health education in primary schools and a huge campaign using various media, including youth television and magazines. In the Netherlands[, where people can obtain]... free terminations on demand... the abortion rate was half of N[Z]'s because the Dutch had compulsory education... and... free contraception... [Although the] Minister of Youth Affairs... was not available for comment... the Ministry of Youth Affairs... plans to consult young people directly on ways to solve the problems... Young people's access to information needed to protect themselves from pregnancy and STDs is a focus area... [L]ast year, nearly 300 girls under 15 were treated for a sexually transmitted disease. A further 6843 aged 15 to 19 with STDs sought help from clinics nationwide... [This age group] made up 21[%] of all patients attending STD clinics... However, it was believed the real number of youngsters with STDs was much higher.

...Teenage girls should have easier access to the morning-after pill as a form of contraception, the Minister of Youth Affairs believes. A background paper on N[Z]'s high teenage pregnancy, abortion and [STD] rates reveals that policymakers want a review of access to contraceptives and of sex education in schools. The recommendation raises the possibility of a... review of the Education Act... The paper said that, in general, parents were reticent in discussing sexuality with their children and many young people were also missing out on learning in school about sex. No sex education is allowed in schools unless boards of trustees agree to it and, even then, parents are able to exclude their children from classes. Going on 1996 figures, half of N[Z]'s schools do not offer sex education. The paper warned that if boards did not consult parents adequately, decisions could be dominated by a "vocal minority" who were opposed to sexual education. "Ironically, no parental consent is required if a young person chooses to access the same information from other sources... but by this time the young person may already be sexually active." ...The ministry was forced to release the in-house document to the Christian Heritage Party under the Official Information Act. [The party's leader] said... boards should be applauded for making informed decisions not to implement the sexual education curriculum[, adding that]... the report failed to acknowledge that the morning-after pill was a "form of abortion" and did not place enough weight on abstinence and adoption... [However, the paper had said that] abstinence-only programmes were not highly effective because sexual exploration was an inherent part of adolescent development.

...ONE in 10 N[Z] children has had sex by age 12, a new survey has found... [The medical researcher]'s study also shows almost four out of 10 Kiwi kids have lost their virginity by 14[, and 30%]... were drunk at the time... [The] Health minister... is so disturbed by the survey [it] is considering introducing sex education to younger children. "This has to be a wake-up call to everybody," [the minister] told *Sunday News*. "There are things the government can do. We are facing human nature here. But we have to ensure these kids have information and education. But it is also up to communities and parents." The survey was carried out among 1000 Hawke's Bay schoolchildren. Medical experts believe the results are mirrored around N[Z], and represent a trend towards kids having sex younger. The last major survey was in 1987. It found only 1.7[%] of 12-year-olds had had sex. [The medical researcher, who] presented her findings last week at a conference in Christchurch... says parents should be worried.

WHEN [A] DUNEDIN MOTHER... drove home from work one Friday last year to fetch her handbag, [it] heard music coming from the bedroom of her 13-year-old daughter... [The mother] looked in and was stunned to discover [her daughter] naked on the bed having sex with a boy... brought home from school. [Thi]s story is not unusual. According to a 1986 study by... a community-medicine specialist in Wellington, nearly one in three 15-year-old girls in Hutt Valley secondary schools – which could mean as many as 18,000 15-year-olds nationwide – have already had sexual intercourse. The percentage increases by age. A survey of... sixth- and seventh-form students at a North Island school by three psychologists found that 39[%] had already lost their virginity. [(In comparison, 'only about 15% of Japanese girls lose their virginity when aged 16; 18 is a typical age and, these days, it is very rare to find a Japanese virgin over 21 years old.')] The North Island poll also] found that of the sexually active kids, only 41[%] used birth control... According to a 1991 Department of Health paper, N[Z] has one of the [First W]orld's highest teenage pregnancy rates... But pregnancy is not the only risk in premature sex. There is also the risk of contracting a[n STD] that can result in chronic infection, infertility and in the case of AIDS, death. What's more, premature sex can disrupt the normal process of gradual self-discovery that takes place in early adolescence. Who are the youngsters behind these statistics? Medical, mental-health and educational experts have pinpointed... [that they are] often uninformed... "It's wrong for adults to assume that kids today know more about sex than they did when they were young," says... a human relations and sexuality educator for the F[PA]... Many parents worry that discussing sex will only encourage adolescents to become sexually active. But the evidence seems to prove otherwise... "Kids from homes where there is open discussion about sex are more likely to act responsibly when they become sexually active." ..."I thought you couldn't get a baby the first time you did it... Afterwards, my boyfriend said nothing would happen to me and I believed him..." says [a] 15-year-old... who now has a ten-month-old baby... Experts say many very young sexually active teenagers engage in mythical thinking about sex... Most are ignorant and are afraid to talk with parents... "Kids tend to stop asking their parents sexual questions at the age of nine or ten – they get their information from peers." ...Girls are often sexually active because they fear unpopularity. For many, having a boyfriend is vital to their self-esteem. And some feel sex is the price they have to pay for it. [One girl] fell victim to this pressure when... 13. "My schoolfriends always spoke knowingly about sex and I felt left out... So I did it with a boy I liked, then wished I hadn't... We don't speak to each other now." ...Boys may also use sex to win favour among peers. "My friends teased me that I didn't have the guts to go all the way with a girl," says [one boy], who had his first[sexual] experience at 14. "But afterwards I didn't feel better about myself. I worried my parents would find out and that the girl would get pregnant." ...Sexually active girls are likely to be dating or spending time with older boys. "Because they mature much faster, sexually active girls of 13 are usually two or three years younger than their boyfriends," says... [the] manager of a marriage guidance service in Dunedin... Some parents try to prevent sexual activity by not allowing their kids to date or by imposing strict curfews. "This can be a futile strategy... Children can have intercourse on the way home from school or when you go out." ...THE BEST WAY for parents to prevent their children from engaging in premature sex is to help them understand that they have a bright future – a future that can be easily damaged by experimenting with sex too soon... Young teenagers need to understand that by moving gradually into adulthood – building friendships, holding hands, experiencing a first kiss, discovering a new interest or talent – they will give themselves time to achieve the self-knowledge and self-respect that are the essence of true maturity.

Working-class girls have customarily been trapped in a position of chronic maturity – ...apprenticed to housework, child care and other 'labours of love' while still at school. Waged work may have echoed many of the features of their domestic servitude, but it also offered them a brief interlude

of economic independence before marriage and this is now being drastically threatened. Unemployed daughters are under enormous pressure to go on 'making themselves useful about the house' in return for their continued upkeep. For many girls, the only way out of this impasse lies in early motherhood – though not necessarily marriage. Getting pregnant and becoming a single parent may not be a calculated choice, but it's a way of qualifying for council housing. As one girl put it to me, it may be out of the frying pan into the fire – but at least it's your own hearth!

TEENAGE girls in California are being pushed by local authorities into marriages with... [whoever got them pregnant. The] head of Orange County's social services department, believes the scheme will go some way to tackling the explosion of teenage pregnancies and make [guys] think twice about engaging girls in under-age sex... California has the highest rate of teenage pregnancy in the U[S]... 70,000 babies are born to teenage mothers every year and the state spends \$7 billion a year supporting them. In nearly 80% of cases, the fathers are adults... Critics have derided the scheme – introduced with the full backing of the... juvenile courts in Orange County – as "medieval"[(although the scheme doesn't involve having the brides 'sleep with the local squire (chief landowner), not their husband, on their wedding night')]. They argue the authorities should concentrate on bringing criminal charges against the... [dads instead. One critic], who runs a shelter for teenage girls, said: "We're talking about official approval of a criminal act of child abuse. Guys in their 20s and 30s are pros at manipulating naive girls looking for love they never had at home." ...Some... social workers have rebelled against the policy. Five supervisors have written to [their department head] complaining "it is illegal and unethical for our agency to be involved in any way in the marriage of minors to adult perpetrators"... The scheme has also incensed California's governor... who earmarked \$52 million this year to tackle teenage pregnancy. "It's not macho to get a teenager pregnant... But if you lack the decency to understand that yourself, we will give you time to think about it in jail." ...Under Californian law, children as young as 12 can get married so long as they have a special licence and the approval of their parents. Outside marriage, an adult engaging in sex with a person under 17 can be prosecuted for child molestation or sex with a minor, which carries sentences of up to eight years' jail[– but the]... head of Orange County's sexual assault unit, admits it is difficult to prosecute in such cases because few girls will press charges. Fewer than 350 cases of unlawful sex are brought each year in California. Public anger at Orange County's response to the problem was summed up by a question posed in a letter from a professor of social work printed in the *Los Angeles Times*: "Will Orange County Social Services create a dating service for abusive [guys] to cycle them into relationships with troubled adolescents?" ...Among the young mothers who have already been pushed into marriage is... [one aged 13], who was encouraged to marry her 20-year-old boyfriend... several months ago. According to [her boyfriend], social workers threatened to arrest him for child molestation but then suggested that if the couple married, no charges would be brought. His wife [claims to be] happy with the marriage and... loves her husband, who works cleaning tables in a restaurant. "[My husband] just talks to me real fine," [the wife] said, her teddy bears arrayed on a shelf behind their bed... [In related news, the] Dutch government is reviewing its five-year-old law allowing child sex from 12 years upwards... [It] is thought... the age [of consent will rise to 14. ■ Prior to '1893 the age of sexual consent for NZ girls was 12 years. It has been 16 since 1896'.

... 'there is no age of consent in Cuba, where, due to their overcrowded homes, people are resourceful when it comes to finding places to have sex – they even make love on railway lines, often with fatal consequences. Schools and churches are the most popular after-hours trysting spots.'

... "Just say no until you're married," was the only contraception advice... in sex education classes at her Catholic girls school. The 19-year-old – seven months pregnant and single – wishes [someone had taught her] more about condoms and the contraceptive pill. "...it's not easy to say no to guys. There are a lot of guys out there who are really interested in sex." The possibility of teenage pregnancy did not even come up during the sex education classes, taken by a... [guy] teacher fond of quoting from the Bible... [T]he only reference to contraception was that any protection from pregnancy was a sin and that the Catholic church was against abortion... [The young mother] came from a home where talking about sex was forbidden. Discussing sex was a taboo subject in her mother's Samoan culture... [H]er parents had disowned her when they learned of her pregnancy and her relationship... with her boyfriend... had broken up... Now living at the Salvation Army's Bethany Home in Grey Lynn, [the young mother] said her dreams of going to university had been sacrificed for life on the domestic purposes benefit. "Sex education is important so teenagers know what they are getting themselves into – if I had known how much [an unplanned pregnancy] was going to change my life I would have been more careful." ...Other girls from her school had also had unplanned pregnancies... The lack of sex education at the Otahuhu school reflects the results of an Education Review Office report which stated this week that many schools were not allocating enough time to sex education. The Minister of Health... commissioned the report to find out whether schools were meeting the needs of students. "If this is an indication of how sexual and reproductive health is being taught in school, it appears patchy at best and seriously inadequate at worst," the minister said. Sex education issues are supposed to be introduced as part of the health syllabus taught in N[Z] schools from Form 1 to Form 7. Overseas research suggests that effective programmes require at least 14 hours teaching per year... [A 12]-year-old... said [her class] had just one 3 1/2 hour session last year on puberty. The Colwill School pupil said... it was important to start discussing these matters before youngsters started experimenting. "I know a girl at my school who had sex when... 12... got pregnant... and... has had a baby at 13. If [that girl] had known more about safe sex that might not have happened."

...['Each year, more than 15,000 AUSn teenagers become mothers. Twenty years ago, according to the AUSn Bureau of Statistics, this figure was about double what it is today. But despite the significant decline, unplanned early pregnancies (as many as 90% of teen pregnancies are accidental) still cost the community – financially, socially and in terms of personal hardship. With contraception now so simple to use and so easy to obtain, why is unplanned pregnancy still such a problem? And what can we do to prevent it? Many people think the solution lies in curtailing the sexual activity of teenagers. But the adolescent sex drive being what it is, young people are not simply going to stop having sex. Numerous studies have shown that not informing teenagers about sex, or making it hard for them to get contraceptives, doesn't stop them from having intercourse – it just makes them less likely to do it safely.'

... 'Safe-sex message from the past In 1873, when Rochester buried a time capsule filled with seed catalogues, maps and coins, someone managed to add something not on the official list: a condom, made of sheep intestine, found tucked into a book.' ● 'The world's oldest condoms are to go on show in Holland. The contraceptives made of animal and fish intestine and dated to 1646 were excavated from a medieval toilet in Britain's Dudley Castle in 1985'.

...the UN] has added the [gal] condom to its anti-Aids weaponry... A [US] firm... last week signed a three-year deal with UNAids... to provide[such] condoms at lower prices... Already on sale in 14... [First World countries for an] average... cost... of \$[NZ]4.30... the... condom could make its appearance in the... [Last World for] under \$NZ1.40... A... study showed that the condom, which is more than 95[%] effective if used correctly, is widely accepted by [gals]. "It doesn't appear to alter sexual pleasure, in contrast to the [guy] condom,"... A feasibility study of 160 countries showed a potential market for seven million [gal] condoms in 1997... The [gal] condom is the only product controlled by [gals] offering protection against... [STD]s and unwanted pregnancies. [By the way, 'a new paint-on invisible condom is being developed in Canada. Clinical trials are under way on the liquid which is applied to the gal's genitals. Body temperature turns it into a waterproof gel which can prevent STDs, HIV and even pregnancy.'

...46%] of all abortions last year in N[Z] were from failed condoms... [C]ondoms do not offer protection from two [STD]s – herpes and genital warts[('the genital wart virus affects at least 75% of the sexually active population at some stage of their lives, although they may not know they have the complaint – the virus can lie dormant for 40 years and be reactivated late in life'; 'in the early 1980s, genital herpes was the scariest STD around – incurable, painful, highly contagious and marked by recurrent outbreaks of weeping blisters, it was described as the scourge of the decade until Aids began to kill people in their thousands – and threatened to undo the sexual revolution; while genital herpes may have disappeared from the lay headlines,' it is

again 'on the increase nationwide – about 400 new cases were reported in the past year – a Christchurch doctor said yesterday'). These conditions last for life... [B]oth British and [US] research show that girls under 17 who have sex, have twice the likelihood of getting cervical cancer. Scare tactics? No – just the facts that our teenagers need to know. On this basis I was astonished to read in last Wednesday's *N[Z] Herald* an article... that politicised and trivialised the importance of sex education... Our programme includes contributions from Grapevine and Parenting with Confidence. Their... excellent... booklet "*Sex with Attitude*"... [-] funded by the Minist[ry of Health -] ...is given to all students at Avondale College.

...The Avondale College principal and anti-abortion evangelical Christian[- who is]... National's Owairaka candidate... [- said FPA material had been] banned... from his school[, and also]... undercut his party's attempt at a liberal sex education message yesterday by... [saying that] the state should stop funding the association because it promoted promiscuity... Earlier yesterday the Minister of Health... took the opposite line, praising the association and saying [that, if the ministry remains hers, it is her intention] to see compulsory sex education in schools... [A]t a breakfast celebrating its 60th anniversary[, the minister added that the FPA]... has "a proud record in producing well-targeted material for many school programmes." ...Incidentally[, the mother of the]... Alliance candidate for Owairaka... convened the first meeting of the association...

Sex with ATTITUDE These days we all know a lot about sex, ...right? But you probably want to know more. If you don't, *somebody* must... because every month bookshops sell a truckload of books, packed full of information on sex – how to do it, how to get it, where to do it, who is doing it, what to wear for it and recipes for breakfast after it! ...In much of the media today, sex is portrayed as a casual, physical act...

The country's youth are getting most of their sex information from television, says an Auckland University researcher. Mothers came sixth on a list of sources indicated by young people – ...[including] friends, books, pamphlets and videos... [G]irls were more likely to get information from friends instead of their mothers, but boys tended to opt for their fathers or a youth group after TV and videos. Most alarming was that four of the top five options for information involved no discussion or clarification of the subject... [Boys] were more likely not to discuss sex, but... 20[% of the boys] who did not discuss sex with anyone said they wanted to discuss it... [In international news, s]ince the start of the year, the prosecutor for Gem County... has, in a bid to reduce teenage pregnancies, revived a 75-year-old law banning fornication... Fornication is a fine, antique word. So antique, in fact, that[one] 17-year-old... had to look it up... [after] being charged with committing the act... [The 17-year-old] was convicted in May, given a suspended one-month jail sentence, and ordered to take "parenting" classes. Two weeks later [the 17-year-old] gave birth to a son. Her 16-year-old boyfriend was also convicted of fornication, put on probation and sentenced to community service. [Her] case... and... other[s have]... ignited a furious debate... Undeterred, [the prosecutor] is pressing ahead. The little courthouse... in Emmett, a farm-and-timber town of 4900 people in bucolic north-west Idaho... has seen a stream of teenagers, parents in tow, as they admit their misdeeds (most... in this conservative, Mormon-flavoured part of [the US]... do) and receive their punishment. Others, no doubt are honing up on their birth-control literature. - 1996

[NZ FPA] officials say a sex education pamphlet for young people contains inaccuracies, inconsistencies and biases. The association, whose own publications have attracted controversy, has just completed a review of *Sex With Attitude*, a booklet by... [a] group... which describes itself as a community organisation with a Christian underpinning... [The FPA] could not recommend use of the document – published with the aid of \$109,000 of government money – and has listed areas of concern. These included the use of scare tactics and advice that feelings are not to be trusted... misinformation about homosexuality... and... about condoms... Parenting with Confidence stands by its document, although it has conceded there is room for criticism on a couple of points.

...Sex education has proved to be a contentious issue at every turn. It seems each time new material is released for young people, someone somewhere lets fly with their disapproval... In the wake of the salvos, the *N[Z] Herald* asked several teenagers... about... the... pamphlets available... [One boy], aged 13... preferred *The Word*... which... is produced by... [the FPA,] to *Sex With Attitude*... because it covered all of the topics without repetition... and... *Sex With Attitude*... was "coming down your throat like a teacher... don't, don't, don't." ...[another boy], aged 14... thought... *The Word*... was the best of the booklets... [because:] "It's a dictionary. It basically had everything..." ...[a girl of 15 also liked] *The Word*... because... *Sex With Attitude*... did not contain the sort of facts which interested her... [● Free] contraceptives and advice for young Christchurch patients are now as close as their family doctor. Pegasus Medical Group doctors, representing more than 90[% of Christchurch's] GPs, say they are taking action to lower the rate of unwanted pregnancies and [STDs] in young patients. The project manager... said the move was prompted by concerns that patients under the age of 21 faced too many barriers to the means of preventing pregnancies and protecting sexual health... [T]he project was the first time all people under 21 had access to such a programme, regardless of income.

...Help is on its way for Auckland teenagers facing the trauma of hormone-driven growing up years. The country's first specialist youth service will open tomorrow in South Auckland to handle medical, sexual and mental health problems... Although based in... Manukau, the service's three staff members will travel around central and West Auckland and provide advice to medical professionals up to Northland... An adolescent health specialist... said the service was long overdue... The... \$300,000... service is being financed by North Health and the Auckland Medical School.

...The future of a sexual health clinic at Pukekohe High School is in doubt with a small group of parents pushing for the facility to be closed. The school's Parent Teacher Association will host a public meeting tonight to debate whether the Government-funded service should continue to operate on the premises. The principal... said a minority of parents were opposed to the F[PA]-run clinic because it offered pupils contraceptive pills, condoms and counselling without the consent of parents. "They can go to their local doctor and do the same," [the principal pointed out. The principal] was worried that teenage pregnancy rates and [STD]s would increase if pupils' access to contraceptive advice was cut. [The principal] believed that some parents had been influenced by a [US]-based anti-abortion group called Family Life International, which is sending a representative to the meeting... The F[PA] approached the school last November to set up a service there. The school trustees agreed to the proposal in February and the clinic began operating in March as part of a North Health pilot programme on sexual health and awareness. North Health contracts the association to provide free clinics in areas where access is difficult. [The principal] said that while students had access to a medical centre in Pukekohe, some could not go there because of transport, financial or personal reasons. Students felt more comfortable attending the school clinic, run by a F[PA] nurse for two hours every Monday. However, the contract expired on October 1 and the service is due to be reviewed. The board of trustees is likely to consider the matter next month.

...100 parents have met to consider whether... a... Government-funded... sexual health clinic at Pukekohe High School... should continue to operate... The principal... said the school was in a difficult position because the clinic run by the F[PA] offered contraceptives and counselling to students who were otherwise at risk of pregnancy... [Ironically, t]he Minister of Youth Affairs wants free contraceptives at schools as a key part of the drive to promote safe sex among teenagers. [The minister] said last night that free condoms should be available to school students. [The minister] was also keen to see the range of free oral contraceptives expanded for [girls], and suggested it was time to think about sex education for younger children... "Research tells us that sexuality education is most effective when delivered before sexual activity begins... [A]lthough we may not like it, some young people are starting to experience sexual activity as young as 11 or 12 years old. We need to make sure they are safe... We need to champion the condom culture... They need to be available in places where young people meet, such as schools... and... youth clubs..." However, [the minister expects]... that her free condoms in school push would be strongly rejected at some schools. Individual school boards would make the decision... Her proposals would first need to go through the Ministry of Health. The ministry had already started a sexual and reproductive health strategy which it was reviewing... [The minister] rejected arguments that early sex education and access to contraceptives will boost sexual activity and unwanted pregnancies... The president of the School Trustees Association... was aware of two boards which had approached students about

making condoms available at school. The students rejected the idea, saying they already had adequate access to contraceptives... The Minister of Education... is reluctant to step into the condom's-in-classrooms debate[... saying]... the issue... was something for the Minister of Health to address.

...Free condoms in schools, as advocated by the Minister of Youth Affairs... could lead to a rash of water bombers and vending machine vandals, says a Wellington principal. But... the head of Upper Hutt College... welcomed the minister's suggestion that free condoms be available from one-stop health shops, GPs and health clinics.

...TWO five-year-old boys are being chauffeured to a party. One... says to the other: "I had a dream I was sexing with a girl." Giggles and snorts cocoon them until the other thinks of a comeback that goes one better. "Well... I had a dream I was sexing Robert." Big ears at the wheel is riveted. Has my son just come out? ...These boys in short pants have all their baby teeth, yet already they are talking about losing their virginity. I brace myself for a late 20th century panic attack – a "what's the world coming to?" spasm. But then I remember getting engaged to [a boy] in kindergarten and scenes behind the shelter shed and soon I'm... relaxed about the fact that sexuality is more exotic these days and we don't eat chops and two veg much either. We have never been comfortable mentioning young children and sex in the same sentence. Sex is perceived as dirty, children as pure, and the most enduring taboo in modern society keeps the two at a distance. A mother may feel uncomfortable when her three-year-old son presses his groin into her body or begins to play with her breasts in a way which [the mother] thinks crosses the border of curiosity into a country that is very confusing. But it is [guys] who feel most insecure about cuddling youngsters or bathing with them because of a climate in which we suspect the worst... "Who's that [guy] in the bath with the children?" one well-intentioned chemist asked a customer who'd come to collect holiday snaps. Workers at the [NZ FPA] report that as sex abuse issues are better publicised, more parents have become concerned that natural affection and interaction will be misinterpreted. Our focus has been on adult behaviour, with the protection of children properly accorded the highest priority – but perhaps that has distorted our response to the range of normal physical and sensual behaviour exhibited by the very young. The five-year-old who dreamed of sexing Robert has a thing about rubbing soft tummies and the older [it] gets the less comfortable I feel about having him pull up my skirt for a stroke. When [my son] told me recently the previous night's babysitter had a really silky tummy, I wondered whether this 20-something trainee nurse would cry sexual harassment. How do we read and misread children's sexuality, and has the explosion of information and images changed the way youngsters conduct themselves? In her book *A Mother's Eye*, [a]n author... recalls how it was in the '50s. "Boys were told that if they touched themselves their penises would fall off... Children were not told the facts of menstruation, of birth. If I asked a question my mouth was washed out with soap." The giant leap in knowledge is summed up best with the joke told by one sex educator about the father who says to his son: "I found a condom on the patio." The boy wrinkles his nose and asks: "What's a patio?" MOST modern parents can deal with the facts, and if we can't there are now picture books for children as young as three which tell it plainly enough... *Mummy Laid an Egg* has childlike drawings of the way mummies and daddies fit together. "Children's stories and questions are certainly more explicit than they were 10 years ago," says... [the education spokesperson for the FPA], who draws on more than 30 years' experience in the field. "We are in the middle of a communications explosion and children are exposed to more explicit images earlier on. They can now see couples in bed together on television or read headlines or hear radio reports about sex. Some also have access to videos or the Internet." Educate early and often is the message of most experts in the field. Storks and cabbage patches are passe and parents are discouraged from using pet names for genitalia to avoid ambiguity. The example often given is of the child who complained to her teacher that "Joe wants to play with my bear" and the teacher distracted with homework merely delivers a sharp lecture on the need to share. It is easy to forget the dramatic changes in attitudes towards sex and the openness which flows from this enlightenment. We now talk freely about gays, lesbians, Aids, condoms, anal and oral sex, and sex change operations. Modern lifestyles have also contributed with increased use of electronic babysitters and high rates of family breakdown, prompting parents to search for new partners and engage in a different level of affection than might otherwise be shown in a well-established relationship. The re-partnering of parents can contribute to a whole other level of sexual tension. In... [the] novel *The Good Mother*, a custody battle turned on the daughter's description of touching mummy's boyfriend's penis, a simple moment of curiosity in the bathroom which became monstrous with meaning in court. Reproduction is the easy bit. It's technical and everything has labels. What people still find terribly confronting is how to convey the idea of sex as pleasurable and its role in a relationship. There are sex shows on television and relationship manuals galore, but many adults are coy about discussing sexuality. They can barely articulate their feelings to a partner let alone talk appropriately with an adolescent or younger child. In a three-part documentary called *Myths of Childhood*, [a] psychotherapist and author... described the relationship between sex and childhood in society as weird. "We live pretending we don't have a body. Children as far as I can tell have not learned yet how to read those [attitudes]. They simply find sensuality. They love physical experiences." Some of us will recoil at the sight of a two-year-old breastfeeding because we may perceive a blurring between sustenance and sensuality. Others may protest against images of naked children for fear they stir sexual desire. What we find hardest to accept is children masturbating or receiving sexual pleasure from physical stimulation... [– even though, according to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 'boys and girls are physically capable of experiencing orgasm from infancy, and children who engage in masturbation or sex play may achieve this sensation of sudden and intense pleasure'. The] author of *The Mask of Motherhood*, describes the trouble individuals have adjusting to sexual norms that feel wrong even when they sound right. "While my mind is fully committed to a joyous acceptance of my child's sexuality, my gut remains wary. I find the sight of a masturbating child almost unspeakably difficult to accommodate. I do the next best thing: I deny." [A child] psychologist... says sexuality begins early with the pleasurable sensations of sucking a thumb in the womb or a breast nipple during feeding. "There starts to be an idea of what one person can do to another." [The child psychologist] says excessive masturbation may signal a child's disturbance through withdrawal into this self-absorbing, comforting activity. CHILDREN do not experience sexual desire in the same way as adults, but are curious about their bodies and those of others and enjoy... having different parts of their bodies touched. It is normal and healthy for young babies to explore their bodies, including their genitals, in a pleasurable way, and towards the age of three interest in genitals will increase. "Seeing a three-year-old masturbating really shocks most parents. They think: 'Oh my God, that must be wrong. What is happening to my child?'" says... [the] manager of the professional support team at the Auckland Kindergarten Association. "But it's actually very normal. We see sex play in children as young as two. For them it's a little like finding out how a pen works. It arises from natural curiosity, not because they want to start sexing each other." Three to five-year-olds begin to want to know about where babies come from, how bodies work, and body differences between the sexes. Sexual play such as "show me yours" and doctors and nurses are quite common and some children may mimic adult sexual behaviour they have seen on television. How teachers react to displays of pre-school sexuality depends on the situation and the community in which they are working. "Teachers need to be aware of arguments about morality... But if the child is just wanting information I think it's best to give an honest answer." In [NZ] there is presently no national sex education curriculum to satisfy the curiosity of primary school age children. Some schools cover the subject, others don't – officially we are still using the 1985 Health Education Syllabus which doesn't introduce "real" sex education until Form One. Filling the gaps, [FPA] has published a brochure, "Grab the Moment", and produced a video dealing with sexuality education for children aged eight. They also run workshops at schools for children and their parents. And the Ministry of Education is working on a new syllabus which will introduce general sexuality education at an earlier age (probably Standard Three or Four). For pre-schoolers, all chartered early childhood services subscribe to a child protection policy which concerns itself mainly with preventing sex abuse. A national kindergarten curriculum teaches general life skills and well being. But no sex education, in terms of biology, is included. "Kids might ask about the life cycles of caterpillars," says one pre-school teacher. "But that's as far as it goes." The push for an early start to sex education and special programmes to teach about "good touching" and "bad touching" worries some parents on the grounds that this may alarm children unnecessarily

by identifying potential threats to their personal security. Educators insist this kind of instruction empowers children to feel good about their bodies and gives them a sense of control. They battle against the view that five-year-olds will be queuing up for condoms once they conquer the facts of life in kindergarten. [The FPA education spokesperson] has a stock retort for the worrywarts. "There's a difference between ignorance and innocence. And if you think sexuality is dangerous, try ignorance." [The spokesperson] tells the story of a mother who came to one of the FPA's workshops after her nine-year-old daughter told her [it] didn't want to get married. When asked why, the little girl replied [that it] didn't want to die of Aids. "Somehow [this girl] had connected marriage with... Aids or HIV... I believe this highlights the need for parents to take responsibility for their children's education. Otherwise they are leaving it to chance – their children will get their information from other sources." But knowledge alone is not enough to prepare young people for adult sexual roles and relationships. Closing the gap between children's technical knowledge about sex and the development of successful personal relationships is the next frontier, something that may be addressed by the new national curriculum under construction. The emphasis will be on sexuality, not sex says [the FPA]. Sex education is about the biological facts. Sexuality education takes a more holistic approach and also looks at family and lifestyle issues. The nine and ten-year-olds who went with their parents to a recent family life workshop in Sydney certainly knew the facts. They were taught to tell testicles from a scrotum and knew the difference between vaginas and vulvas. The children drew lifeseize outlines of themselves and filled in the pubertal changes, creatively gluing on cotton wool, sheepskin, egg cartons and toilet rolls. But when the instructor introduced the notion of love, a boy at the back pretended to stick his fingers down his throat as if gagging at the thought. His friends snickered on cue.

...[the FPA] has won a Sexuality Education Award – despite N[Z] having one of the highest teenage pregnancy and abortion rates in the world. The award, presented by the World Association for Sexology at its world congress in Spain, described the [FPA]'s... "innovative and groundbreaking"... sex education resources as the most outstanding of the 20 countries that entered... [The] FPA resource manager... said... "Contraception is just a small part of our programme." ...the association was recognised for four courses: Grab that Moment for parents of children aged from birth to eight years; Pleased To Be Me, for children aged 11-13; The Next Step, for the same group; and Challenges and Changes, for adolescents.

...comparative research of school health programmes in different countries has shown that those countries with low adolescent pregnancy rates are those which introduce age-appropriate sexuality programmes at a young age. "N[Z] has the second highest adolescent pregnancy rate among [First World] countries in the West... The present programme reflects the conviction based on the research evidence that clear information about sexual matters should be given to young people before they reach the age when they begin to form sexual relationships." This defence of comprehensive sex education echoes the flaws in comprehensive sex education itself. It is propaganda dressed up to look scientific. Many countries with little or no "age-appropriate" sexuality programmes have low adolescent pregnancy rates – Japan, Singapore, Korea and Poland. The truth is that pregnancy rates are the result of a complexity of cultural phenomena rather than the result of the existence or the non-existence of "age-appropriate" sexuality programmes. Even the term "age-appropriate" is specious. It sounds scientific but there has been very little research done anywhere in the world to determine what "age-appropriate," in the context of comprehensive sex education, actually means.

...New research has found that girls in the U[S] enter puberty at a younger age than ever, possibly because they are exposed to more products containing... [gal hormones – such as] beef, plastics, hair care products and insecticides [-] ...according to a doctor who highlighted the trend... [B]lack girls begin puberty shortly before age nine on average, while white girls began just before age 10. Before age eight, 27[%] of blacks and almost 71[%] of whites already have begun developing breasts, growing pubic and underarm hair.

...Limited sex education for[N[Z] primary school children could be on the cards – but parents will be able to object and remove their children from the class... [The Education] Minister... says parents don't want sex education to be made compulsory in schools[, so his ministry] will not support moves in that direction. The sex-in-schools debate looks set to be rekindled... [because the] new health and physical education curriculum... includes more specific references to sex education than the current curriculum and includes programmes for new entrants upward... Christians are concerned, saying most children in standards three and four, aged around nine and 10, are too young... The executive director of the Catholic Education Office... said children as young as nine were not intellectually ready for sex education... [However, the FPA] says sex education needs to be taught younger... [The association's] manager of medical services, said a study from the U[S] underlined this. Of almost 2000 girls in the study, 34[%] of African-Americans girls and about 8[%] of European girls had public hair at eight years old and some got their period at [the age] of nine.

...health officials[in the US] have endorsed the[new generation] morning-after pill... The FDA found it safe and effective but has not granted[US] approval until manufacturing and labelling questions are solved... [‘In 1988, 57.9 million US gals used contraceptives (of these, 36.7% used nonsurgical contraceptives, such as the pill, IUD, condom and other methods’). In local news, the standard] contraceptive pill is to become free... from March 1. The cost-free brands are Norimin... and Femulen... [However, to obtain them gals] still had to see a doctor for a prescription and pay a \$3 prescription fee... Poorer [gals] are exempted under a "special authority" and can get full subsidy on any brand they choose. But health officials are considering taking the special authority away, which will force [gals] to use Norimin and Femulen if they want free pills... [While poorer gals] had open access... drug companies could keep their prices high, knowing the Government would pick up the tab. The plan was to fully subsidise a range of contraceptive pills... when prices fell. The issue is likely to cause further friction between Pharmac and the drug industry...

The Governor-General... has questioned... the Minister of Youth Affairs'... call to put free condoms in schools and decried a moral breakdown. Lessons of modesty and self-restraint should come before messages of safe sex, [the Queen's representative] said last night.

...The majority of teenagers were not sexually active and that needed highlighting in teaching manuals and Government publications... says the Minister of Health... in rejecting a proposal to put free condoms in schools... [T]he Government had no plans to fund free condoms... [The minister] was concerned about the messages being sent... Young people had to think about sex responsibly so they did not just act on impulses. "...any Government-funded programme needs to give young people choices, but not the choice to become sexually active." ...The proposal... [was] raised by the Minister of Youth Affairs... at the weekend as a key to promoting safe sex among teenagers.

...[‘SAFE sex promoters have a new vehicle – taxis. Timaru's condom's-in-cabs campaign has been so successful it may be followed by taxi companies throughout NZ. The Erection for Protection campaign run by Timaru's public health office gave local cab firm Budget Taxis 2000 condoms in July to supply free to customers. "It was the most entertaining promotion I've had," said the co-owner of Budget Taxis. The company's trade rose during the campaign and a new campaign will be launched for the Christmas holidays.’

...two contraceptives boasting lower failure rates are now available in NZ – an improved intra-uterine device (IUD) and a new emergency contraceptive pill, which has a 1% failure rate compared with the 3% failure rate of the old morning-after pill. The new pill used the same hormone, progesterone, but had no oestrogen. "You get less nausea and vomiting because it's usually the oestrogen which causes that." The FPA says the contraceptives are revolutionary, with the IUD also acting as a hormone replacement therapy which is successfully reducing heavy bleeding and period pain. The IUD's stem contains hormones which are released into the uterus every 24 hours and as well as regulating periods, overseas studies show the treatment could be a viable alternative to a hysterectomy. The IUD, Mirena, has a failure rate of 0.3% and costs \$280 but can be used for up to five years. Gals who suffered side-effects from the contraceptive pill were less likely to suffer them from the IUD, which is primarily designed to prevent thickening of the uterus and stop sperm from meeting the egg.' In related news, a study in 1994 found that many [gals] on oral contraceptives became pregnant because they forgot to take the pill, found it a hassle or had busy lifestyles[, and]... one in five N[Z]ers having abortions were of Pacific Island ethnicity – a huge proportion given that they were a minority group... [Next month] North Health, will launch a three-year pilot programme to try to cut Pacific

Island abortion rates... The pilot is limited to South Auckland... due to budget constraints. It will cost about \$300,000 a year... [However, the NZ] First MP for Te Tai Hauauru... said... [the problem was that:] "In many Pacific Island cultures, sex is tapu. It is not talked about and teenage pregnancy is not tolerated. The consequence is the trauma of abortions for too many of our [teenage islander girls]."

...Talking to your children about sex may seem embarrassing – but the sooner you start, the easier it becomes. You might be tempted to wait until they reach high school age or until puberty begins but even very young children can pick up all sorts of information about sex from the world around them. That information is often confusing, misleading or wrong. British FPA surveys have shown being forthright with kids about sex can help reduce the risk of them contracting an STD, of having an unwanted pregnancy and even of being sexually abused. It's also important to discuss methods of contraception'...

Under the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act... no one was allowed to instruct anyone under 16 about the use of contraception. This turned out to be complicated: how could you talk about contraception without talking about how to use it? And what if a question came up and half your class was under 16? This law was often misinterpreted to mean no sex education for people under 16. The Act was repealed in 1990.

...[the movie *Riding In Cars With Boys* is based on the memoir of a gal whose unplanned teenage pregnancy in the 60s became the defining event of a miserable, hard-knock life. The central character recounts her turbulent, often resentful relationship with her son and with his goofy, dropout father, who the mother was forced to marry and who became a junkie. Should be required watching for teenage high school students.' By the way, 'a baby girl, six weeks old and unnamed, was left lying beside a rubbish bin in an Auckland street yesterday. The baby appeared to have been abandoned after an argument between her parents as they drove through Avondale. The screaming baby was found by a family who handed her to the police. Not long before, a couple had been seen driving along Rosebank Rd. The passenger was trying to get out of the car as it was moving, screaming to the driver to let her go. When the car stopped further down the road, the passenger escaped and ran back towards the Avondale shops. The car drove off and the child's mother arrived at the police station soon afterwards with a toddler. They and the baby were taken to Starship children's hospital where the baby was kept for observation overnight. The mother had minor grazes from trying to escape the car. Avondale police are seeking the driver. A charge of abandoning a child carries a maximum 7-year jail term.'

...[last weekend someone] found a live newborn girl in a toilet bowl at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. The baby's head was sticking out of the water and the umbilical cord was wrapped around her neck. The 3.2kg baby was taken to hospital where her condition was described as good.

...OF ALL the stories of newborn baby dumpings, [the latest] is the most chilling. [A] New Jersey teen and her boyfriend arrived at her high school senior prom at 7.45pm on June 6. By 8.15pm, authorities say, [the teen] had delivered a healthy baby boy, killed him and stuffed him in a plastic bag in the bin. Then... went back to the dance. No-one, apparently, even knew [the teen was pregnant. The teen,] now charged with murder, has been portrayed as monster or mad-[perso]n, but her story may not be as bizarre as it sounds. Last Monday, work[ers] found the body of a newborn girl, umbilical cord and placenta still attached, stuffed in a plastic bag under a house in central Auckland. The house was just a few hundred metres away from the Bethany Centre... where young, unmarried mothers-to-be come to terms with their pregnancies... The dumping site may well have been a poignant pointer to the factors which led a desperate and probably very young [person] to abandon the baby... The house where the Polynesian baby was found was used for church gatherings by the Samoan Assembly of God... [M]any young island [gals] did not have the social skills to cope when they were vulnerable and many were coerced into sex by boyfriends who, though brought up with the same rigorous religious rules, operated under the age-old double standard... The disgrace of a pregnancy in an unmarried young [islander] is greater if her father has high social status or the baby is the result of rape or incest – for which [the young mother] is often blamed. Hiding pregnancies and abandoning unwanted newborns – often on the plantations – are fairly regular events in Samoa... A young [mother] driven to abandon a baby could be in great fear of punishment or the shock of the birth could pitch her into a state in which [the young mother] was incapable of functioning logically. The law recognises this in the Crimes Act provision for infanticide which says a [mother] can be acquitted of killing a child under 10 [days] "on account of insanity caused by childbirth or lactation." ...[Bethany's] director... had seen [mothers] lapse into catatonic shock for a few hours after childbirth[, and] had also seen young [mothers] who did not connect the act of sex with pregnancy.

...Sex. It's everywhere. It's used to sell everything from cars to shampoo to yogurt. Hollywood can't make films without it [whereas, in comparison, Bollywood films can't be made with it – even though at least 22 Hindu temples in India feature 'thousands of intricately sculptured figures engaged in an alarmingly explicit variety of gymnastic sexual positions and auto-erotic pursuits']]. None of us would have been born without it. And yet some people argue that young people shouldn't receive information about it at school... When a child is small, parents are the first teachers. The attitudes they display towards sexuality will shape the child. At school good programmes build self-esteem, respect for others, decision-making, and negotiating skills – essential ingredients in building relationships with other people. They also provide young people with information that will allow them to take care of their reproductive and sexual health throughout their lives. The F[PA] does not claim that sexuality education will eradicate [STD]s, teenage pregnancy and abortion. These are related to community attitudes, education and the availability and cost of services. But [US] and British research has shown that sexuality education can have some positive results for teenagers including delaying first intercourse... [– 50% of British gals] describe the experience of losing their virginity as "disappointing" or "awful" –] ...having fewer partners... not being pressured into sexual activity, protecting oneself against... [STDs] and... unintended pregnancy...

[*HAVING A BABY 'IN YOUR teens: ADVANTAGES* ■ Energy for night feeds and play. ■ Lots of time to focus on baby. ■ Fewer career demands. ■ Negligible generation gap. ■ More flexible about lifestyle changes and parenting. *DISADVANTAGES* ■ Missing life experiences. ■ Greater chance of relationship with child's father failing. ■ Less chance of finishing training or higher education. ■ Reduced financial security. ■ Forced to grow up too quickly. *HEALTH AND FERTILITY* Not only is your fertility at its peak, but the risk of birth defects is lower than at any other age and the chance of miscarriage is only around 14%. This is the age when your body bounces back best after pregnancy. During labour, however, there is an increased risk of caesarean section, possibly due to the reproductive system not being mature enough for childbirth' ('having a baby when the body isn't fully developed for it can cause all sorts of ruptures – e.g., of the bowel – during birth; girls suffering from such complaints in Ethiopia generally don't receive medical care'...

'The proud father places a protective arm around mother and child as if to proclaim to the world, "This is my family and I will care for them." It's a familiar portrait of private joy, replayed daily in maternity units everywhere. But scratch the surface and this touching tableau reveals a disturbing reality. For the baby's father is only 12, a child himself, who regards parenthood as an amusing diversion from the tedium of school. "My mum woke me up in the middle of the night to say my girlfriend was in hospital having our baby. I thought it was really great because I'd get to have a day off school. Really, all I wanted to do was go back to sleep. I'm very happy about my son, but if Manchester United win the league, that will make it a perfect year." The 12-year-old, believed to be Britain's youngest father, lives with his single mother (38) in a Bedfordshire council house. His girlfriend lives next door with her mother (46) and her father (49), an unemployed forklift driver and a convicted sex offender. When his girlfriend became pregnant, the boyfriend was at first too afraid to tell his mother. When his mum found out, a war of words ensued between the two families amid claims the boyfriend "had been led astray" (the girlfriend has admitted her boyfriend was not her first sexual partner). But an uneasy truce seems to have descended, as long as it's in the mutual financial interest of the families to co-operate. Meanwhile, the welfare of the baby appears to have assumed secondary importance. Bedfordshire social services have said they are content to allow the girlfriend's parents to bring up the infant, despite her father's criminal conviction. In the meantime, while the girlfriend talks of keeping her family together ("Despite our ages we wanted this baby and we'll love him like any other parents. When I found out I was pregnant, the last thought on my mind was that the father was only 11. I still can't get over all the fuss," the girlfriend said from her hospital bed.) the boyfriend offers little cause for optimism that this could be a very long-term relationship. "I want to get my life back to normal. I hope to stay close friends with my son's mother for as long as possible. Things are okay at the moment and nothing has gone wrong," says the 12-year-old, apparently

unaware of the enormity of the situation it now faces. The news that the 12-year-old, then 11, was to be a father by his girlfriend, who was then 15, first hit the headlines last August.’]

...News of... Britain’s youngest known father... has raised eye-brows in N[Z]. But those who work with teenage parents in this country say some of our youngsters may not be far behind... [A] social worker tutor, said... [t]he youngest father [it] had encountered was 13, but there were probably lots of 11-year-old boys who were sexually active... A 12-year-old boy is the youngest father the... Bethany Centre in Auckland... has dealt with, but [a spokesperson for the home] said it was not uncommon for 13-year-old boys to impregnate their girlfriends... Government statistics show that in the 1980s several girls aged only 11 had legal abortions, and at least six aged 12 have had terminations since 1990.

...WE HAVE an alarming teenage suicide rate. The authorities, not wishing to add to the problem by exciting the imagination and inviting experimentation, pleaded in the past for a low-key approach. I can understand this. What I can’t understand is why the same logic does not apply to the other great teenage problem: Unwanted pregnancies... Being instinctive, the practicalities of sex should be discovered and its purport discerned without tuition... People will gather information, misinformation, conceptions and misconceptions from the environment in which they live... The most fortunate children will receive [sex education] naturally and imperceptibly from the time of their birth as part of family life... Direct teaching at school is not easy. There is evidence that proves... [some] sex educators project their own guilt and inadequacies. In Britain, there has been great concern about a teacher who has launched the slogan “Masturbate for Britain”.

...[although children do get some basic sex education at school, they will benefit enormously if you as parents are willing to talk about sex with them. Step up efforts to prepare your child for the bodily changes which are imminent. Girls need to know more about periods than just that they happen once a month and boys need to know wet dreams are normal. Talking about masturbation should be on the agenda for both sexes as some children may have experimented already and may be afraid it’s harmful’. Incidentally, a] Tauranga school... installed... a fixed location... security camera... six months ago to “look after school property,”... without telling... students where it is. Otumoetai College... did not... reveal where the camera was because [the principal didn’t] want to risk it being vandalised. The use of security cameras in schools is spreading. Fraser High... in Hamilton... [is] proceeding with plans to install... two security cameras and Tauranga Intermediate will install seven security cameras in its new administration block.

...Behind the barbed wire, children play ball in a school yard. Not in the Bronx, or South Central LA, or Soweto – this is education behind the lines, or at least behind 2m-high fences, in parts of South Auckland. Conventional schools striving to serve their communities are having to erect harsh barriers to keep some in those communities at bay – and protect what little stability and resources they have. At least four school boards have opted for high-perimeter fences topped with barbed wire to keep unwelcome visitors and vandals out. And it works. The schools have found their pupils are much safer and their damage repair bills are slashed drastically. Some teachers have been encouraged to stick with these struggling schools and more money is available to spend directly on children’s learning. Almost gone are the days when teachers and pupils arrived to find the school walls daubed with graffiti, windows smashed, classrooms trashed, young trees and plants snapped, fields littered with broken glass or delinquent intruders beating up students and even teachers.

...A 5-year-old who assaulted staff was shut out of school last year as the suspension and expulsion of students hit a new peak. While the total of 10,000 was double the number in 1992, lawyers advocating for young people say the real total may be closer to 20,000 when informal suspensions are included... [A] large number of students were informally suspended from several different schools by the time they were nine or ten... Overall the behaviour that led to the most suspensions last year was continued disobedience followed by physical assaults on other students, verbal abuse of staff... substance abuse... and... theft... Other facts: • Boys made up 72.6[%] of... suspensions, with the largest group being 14 and 15-year-old boys. • Of the... suspensions, 3471 were for an unspecified period of more than three days. [By the way, ‘an Oklahoma high school has suspended a student after accusing her of casting a magic spell that made a teacher sick. But the assistant-principal’s act has prompted the American Civil Liberties Union to file a lawsuit on the 15-year-old’s behalf charging that her civil rights have been repeatedly violated after notebooks the student used to write horror stories in were seized and the student was barred from drawing or wearing signs of the pagan religion Wicca. The lawsuit stated that because of the “unknown cause” of the teacher’s illness, the assistant-principal told the girl “that it was an immediate threat to the school and summarily suspended her.”’]

...‘A 13-YEAR-old student who’d been sent home for bad behaviour returned to his school and shot dead a 35-year-old teacher, who was married with three children. It happened in front of a classroom full of children, just minutes before classes ended on the last day of the school year. The student had been suspended earlier in the day from Lake Worth middle school in Florida for throwing water balloons.’ In local news, ‘bad behaviour in schools has soared again, with record suspensions for arson, vandalism, alcohol abuse, smoking, theft, attacks on staff and students. The Minister of Education conceded last night that the numbers were “out of control” when close to 12,000 suspensions are being imposed each year.’]

...An article in the N[Z] *Herald* yesterday incorrectly stated that 12,000 children had been expelled from N[Z] schools last year. A total of 10,000 students were suspended... in that period. On present figures, the Youth Law Project expects more than 12,000 students to be suspended this year.

...suspensions are up 24[%] on the same time last year... an education lawyer with the Youth Law Project, said... “...we can’t say that young people have been 24[%] naughtier than last year.” [The lawyer] called for more consistency and objectivity in relation to suspensions, and saw an independent suspension review panel as the best way to achieve that.

...Schools will get clearer directions on how to suspend pupils under legislation the Government intends to introduce in the parliamentary session starting next week. The Minister of Education... said there was no law at present covering suspensions, although there were ministry guidelines. The new law would see school suspensions monitored by the Education Review Office...

Thirty-four Fraser High School students have been suspended for bunking class to protest against their principal’s plans to use security cameras... The mass suspension is the biggest in N[Z] – and a youth lawyer says it is illegal... [However, t]he... principal... made no apologies for his swift action in suspending all... of the... students [who had] marched through the Hamilton school on Wednesday afternoon disrupting classes and ignoring police and teacher requests to stop... The school board supported the measures... [In response to comments made by the chairperso]n of the Auckland Council of Civil Liberties, [who]... said the cameras invaded children’s rights... [t]he deputy chair[erso]n of the school board... said Fraser High had yet to work through the legal implications.

...A 14-year-old Hauraki Plains College student suspended for refusing to shave his moustache will probably shift to A[US] because his family doubt they can enrol him at any other school in the area. [The student] was suspended indefinitely after meeting the school board on Thursday... His mother... said the moustache was tidy and did not interfere with his learning. “Once [my boy starts shaving my boy] will be doing it for the rest of his life. I don’t see the need for him to start this early.” [The mother, who said it]... would like to take legal action but... could not afford it... knew of a [girl] pupil with facial hair, but the school was not enforcing its policy on her. The head of the school board could not be reached for comment yesterday, but a letter written by the deputy principal... said [the boy’s] stance was “disobedience which is a harmful example to other students...”

...[‘the Commissioner for Children has publicly decried the suspension of students who have violated school rules. What on earth can the commissioner be thinking? Is the commissioner thinking? The commissioner has spoken about the right of children to an education. As a teacher I can assure the commissioner that the right of the children to an education is consistently prominent in my thoughts. That right is most often denied children by the actions of their peers. When 27 students in a classroom are denied the education that is their due by the severely disruptive behaviour of three or four of their fellow students, I must consider the rights of the 27 at least as much as the rights of the four. The problem is not too many suspensions, but too few. If more disruptive students were expelled, the majority of students would receive a far better education. As the Education Minister and many others have pointed out, suspended students have not been denied an education. They can attend another school or, if need be, the Correspondence School.’]

...yesterday t]he Commissioner for Children... said his staff would meet the Minister of Education... in the next couple of weeks to discuss the idea of an educational law tribunal. [However, the minister] said the continued increase in suspensions was a response to the abandonment of corporal punishment in schools and to the changing social climate.

...What we want can change what happens in schools. For ages, people thought corporal (physical) punishment was okay, even necessary, in schools. There are still people who think this is the way to keep students under control, and even to make them learn. But so many people didn't agree with that approach, the Education Amendment Act 1990 was passed to stop anyone employed by a School Board of Trustees... from using any force, by way of correction or punishment. This means no more caning or strapping, hitting with a ruler, or throwing things at... [the] 220,000 secondary school students... [that] there might be... at school here in NZ... [on] any one day...

School's out for the day for... Auckland college students but school's been out of bounds for more than 2,000 students around the country so far this year. Topping the Education Ministry's suspension list: nearly 530 pupils suspended for fighting...

TEACHERS may need self defence courses to cope with classroom violence as physical attacks by students continue to mount... Self defence classes are not part of the national curriculum for trainee teachers... Teachers are taught about how to deal with difficult children but not necessarily how to defend themselves. The Ministry of Education reports 35 students have been suspended for assaulting teachers so far this year... A further 273 students were temporarily banned from school for verbally abusing teachers. During the last six months of 1996, 107 students were suspended for violence against staff... The... Post Primary Teachers Association president... claimed very few teachers would not have been assaulted in the past five years... "In a sense these kids are making a call for help but it's hard to see that in the middle of a scrap,"... [The president] claimed violent attacks on teachers had steadily increased since 1991 but publicity had waned because schools "don't want their name in lights. The issue is being hushed up because of intense competition to attract prospective students and teachers,"... Meanwhile, the Special Education Service says... [it]s psychologists visit schools on request and its eliminating violence programme had been adopted by about 50 schools.

...Avondale College[s] principal... says the school's non-violence policy discourages students from venting their anger physically and programmes help rehabilitate wayward students. "We have a behaviour code which ensures students respect themselves, others and property... Any breach of the code is disciplined. Students know right from the start that if they fight at school they will be suspended..." ...Western Springs College[s] principal... says... "The majority of students... suspended for physical violence are new to the school and don't re-offend... The kids are very aware of our anti-violence policies – we reiterate them constantly." The college runs support and social education programmes for students and families.

...[A GROUP of children at a Colorado primary school received a week's detention after they were caught using their fingers as imaginary weapons during a game of soldiers versus aliens. The principal says the game violated the school's zero-tolerance policy towards violence.' In further news from overseas, a] 12-year-old... in China's Hunan province... beat his teacher to death after [the teacher] told his parents of his misbehaviour at school...

Trustees and teachers were alarmed yesterday about the vicious attack on a Northland deputy principal by two senior students, and warned it could be the start of things to come... [The] horticulture teacher at Opononi Area School, was kicked, bashed and hit over the head with a spade by two brothers after... [telling] one off for wearing a beanie hat... The Minister of Education... deplored the attack but did not think a large number of extra teachers would solve the problem. The principal of neighbouring Northland College in Kaikohe[, where beanies]... were also banned... said yesterday... schools were increasingly dealing with students who were anti-authority... Violence in the community was mirrored in schools and teachers had to deal with it... The president of the School Trustees' Association... said boards should write policies and run anger management programmes for problem students...

One of the worst tasks facing members of a secondary school board of trustees is sitting on the discipline committee. A trustee is conscious that with the media highlighting the number of pupils suspended from schools every year, some educationalists, lawyers, and others are questioning the ability of lay people to decide a student's immediate future. At the same time teachers are putting up with increasing discipline problems in the classrooms. A discipline committee meeting is very intense. That is as it should be – after all you are dealing with people. An incorrect decision can have wider repercussions than we care to think about. But a correct decision means that a student will not only have been punished but also educated, and can go on to academic as well as sporting and cultural success. To the general public headlines such as, "Assaults keep west students out of schools," are further evidence of declining moral standards in society, the state of youth today and a failing education system... [Incidentally,] the Occupational Safety and Health service... says... [s]chool managers, like any other employer, must ensure working environments are safe for teachers... The comments follow an alleged assault... at Opononi Area School on Wednesday... [A]ll employers are obliged to notify the service of any incidents of violence in the workplace...

More than two-thirds of secondary teachers have been abused or threatened in the past year[, including 10 who]... had suffered serious physical sexual harassment... according to a teachers' union survey... While the study found N[Z] teachers were less likely to be sworn at or threatened, the rates of physical assault were higher than those documented in comparable U[S] studies. Young, often [gal], teachers felt particularly intimidated... More than 90% of teachers... believed families were under increasing pressure, but successive social and economic reforms had whittled away the support systems that were previously available. Schools had become the "one-stop shop" for youth problems, frustrating teachers' ability to teach and placing them in danger... And 87.5% of teachers had personally perceived a decline in student motivation.

...Schools have been the focus of many news reports... t[his year]... Teachers report increased workloads in recent years. They say the stress of teaching is quite enormous and more teachers are needed to enable them to do their jobs effectively... [Meanwhile, the] number of students suspended has nearly doubled... Suspensions are either definite, for a period of one to three days, or indefinite, often meaning expulsion... Some schools provide separate classes, counselling or home visits to suspended students but most schools don't have the resources to give as much support as they would like... [('Rotorua Intermediate hired a counsellor to help troubled students out of its own pocket after expelling five kids last year – so far this year it hasn't expelled a single student and is urging the government to rethink its policy on only funding counsellors for secondary schools as many intermediate kids needed help so problems were dealt with before their teens; the school is considering sending a bill for the counsellor's services to the government; the education ministry said under current rules, schools could apply for flexible funding that would help cover the cost of a counsellor'). If an expelled] student is under 16 it is the principal's responsibility to try to place the student at another school. Many schools are reluctant to enrol at-risk students, so they drift from school to school and their problems get worse... There could be as many as 2000 children not enrolled at any school. We have no system for tracking down children who leave primary or intermediate school and don't enrol at either intermediate or secondary school. Legally, parents are required to make sure their children attend school until they are 16 years old. Parents can be prosecuted and liable for fines of up to \$15 for every day their child is absent. However, only 50 parents have been prosecuted since 1989 because most schools can't afford the costly legal bills... Recently the Labour Party called for the government to prosecute the parents of truants... a[nother] growing problem in[NZ] schools. There are two kinds... *Hard core truants* usually have many problems to deal with at home and school. They hate school and may not be enrolled at any school. *Casual truants* see others wagging and, having tried it once and got away with it, they'll start skipping school whenever something goes wrong. A Massey University study identified 73 different reasons why kids play truant... Police and welfare agencies only become involved if truants are caught in the act of crime... [– but 'Waitakere police are cracking down on truancy in a bid to reduce petty crime (Operation Scamp is being co-ordinated by police from the community affairs and youth aid divisions; a youth aid officer says the last sweep on truancy, carried out in Henderson four or five years ago, saw a corresponding drop in burglaries, shoplifting and car conversion'). T]ruants get bored

and... quite often... need money... they... do not have... 80% of young offenders under the age of 16 are truants... Most rural schools reported low or zero levels of truancy, saying children living in isolated areas came to school for company. It was also harder to wag when the school bus picked up and dropped off students at the gate. - 1997

SOME west Auckland college classrooms were emptier than normal on Friday after a radio host encouraged children to wag school... Henderson High[']s principal... has laid a complaint with the Broadcasting Standards Authority over the... chat host[']s... comments endorsing National Wagging Day... on March 19, "we should all be able to enjoy our lives and if you take a day off school, what the heck"... [The radio station's] chief executive... says the views expressed by [the chat host] are not supported by the station. "As a radio station we are definitely not supportive of children taking a day off school... It is most unhelpful to schools who spend a lot of time trying to ensure students turn up to school."

Schools ask why students wag Recent comments by a retiring principal that troublesome truants should be allowed to leave school at 13, and a boost in funding for anti-truancy programmes next year, raises the question of what prompts children to turn their backs on school. Dargaville High School[']s principal... says enabling schools to shut their doors to disruptive students who don't want to be there would return the problem to parents and society, who... should have the responsibility for dealing with such youngsters rather than schools... Those working with truants say that... [t]ruants come from all socio-economic groups, possess a range of personality traits, and a Massey University study has identified 73 different reasons why kids skip school. They include having no friends at school, having friends who pressure them to truant, parents keeping them home to help with child-minding, feeling like a failure at school, bullying[('about 12% of NZ children wag school because they fear fellow students'),] and abuse from teachers. The Ministry of Education... has added \$1.6 million to the \$6 million previously budgeted to fight truancy over the next three years, and has started the Non-enrolled Truancy Service (Nets) to try to trace... about 2000 students... who are lost between schools. - 1996

They have been dubbed the lost generation. Thousands of children who are regularly absent from the classroom, some who do not go to school at all. They are a growing underclass that new research by Otago University suggests are seven times more likely than their peers to grow up to rob, rape and steal, almost three times as likely to be unemployed and, even more disturbing, five times more likely to become parents before the age of 21. It is a world that... [one] truancy officer... knows well. The 34-year-old South Auckland[er]... started wagging school when... 11 and had quit [school] altogether by... 14[], when it[] was made a ward of the state... and... sent to borstal... [before graduating] to prison and serv[ing] six years for a string of armed robberies and burglaries. After... [being released it] went into the Army, then teachers' college... [I]t was then that [the former truant] "began to feel for the youth." [The former truant] joined the Otara student attendance programme set up by the local Maori wardens almost three years ago. Now [it] is part of a team of three that scours the streets, liaises with schools and confronts parents. How many children they should be looking for is anyone's guess. No official statistics exist on the number of truants – or even the number of children that are in school every day in N[Z]... So what is being done? ...Until last year no one was responsible for finding those children who dropped out between schools. Under political pressure, the Government set up... Nets... to find the thousands of children who were missing. It had a \$450,000 budget for the financial year... and employs 25 part-time workers... Its detractors argue that the scheme is an ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. They say the only effective way to keep tabs on the 700,000 school children in this country is to set up a national database to track them through the system. Schools are required to remove a child from their roll after 20 consecutive days absent. They are not required to inform the [Ministry of Education] and... the student is a "non-person when they leave that school." Tough laws that allow the ministry, schools and the police to prosecute the parents of habitual truants are used irregularly because of the legal costs involved... Truancy officers were abolished under the Tomorrows' Schools legislation in 1989 which passed responsibility for chasing truants on to schools. Eight years later there are just 70 truancy programmes set up by school boards of trustees across the country. Almost 1700 of the 2700... schools have no truancy schemes.

...STUDENTS are helping to select staff to head an innovative... project aimed at stamping out truancy in schools. There are no truancy officers in this programme being pioneered in Dunedin schools. Today's politically correct version are "mentors", staff who will help students overcome problems and stay in school for longer. Mentors are jointly chosen by the organisers of the Community Intervention Project and students, at least one of whom has a history of truancy... The project was started last year by a group of police, five schools, health and welfare agencies and the Dunedin Multi-disciplinary Health and Development Unit. Due to its success, it has been extended this year to cover all Dunedin schools and more than just chronic truants. The pilot has funding of more than \$100,000 from the Ministry of Education and four other agencies.

...A pioneering truancy scheme in Hamilton has received extra funding from the Ministry of Education to help... the other 67 ministry-funded truancy schemes... to... follow... in its footsteps... [T]he service was awarded the... \$14,000... contract in recognition of its high quality and success... [Furthermore, the ministry] will spend \$3.7 million next year on community truancy schemes, compared to \$1.6 million this year.

...Truancy is a big problem in N[Z] schools. But cash shortages would prevent us copying a solution being pioneered at Portland Oregon. Parents are paid \$3 for each day they make certain their kids turn up for class. The bonus for half days is \$1... [L]arge families are making big money.

...truancy... [in Japan] means an overhaul of the education system is imminent, say analysts. The Ministry of Education said that... 94,245 students at elementary and junior high schools across the nation were deliberately absent for at least 30 days during the year to March 1997. That represented a 15[%] jump from a year earlier and the fifth consecutive annual increase... Some students gave bullying... as the reason for their absence... Bullying, or "ijime," is widespread in Japanese schools where students pick on a colleague, who is humiliated and sometimes beaten. In some cases, money is extorted from the victims, and some of them decide to commit suicide. Officials also said more students were now going to private tutoring schools, known as "juku," even cutting regular classes so that they could pass the entrance examinations of celebrated universities, widely seen as the first step to climbing the ladder for success in Japan... "Unless schools recover a flexible, liberal education and become more attractive, the number of truant students will further rise,"... said... a school counsellor... The ministry sent school counsellors, including doctors of clinical psychology, to a total of 1065 schools this year. But such an effort has so far failed to show visible results... As another effort to reduce truancies, the ministry has called on schools to cut the number of classes following criticism that a hard curriculum would depress students and bear more dropouts. But some analysts said such measures appeared likely to backfire as students were now required to receive necessary credits in a much shorter period. Cutting the number of classes without reviewing the volume of study would mean no spare time for students, [they] said.

...JUN HASE WAS A GENTLE, HAPPY BOY WHO loved to visit with friends and family in the Kobe suburb of North Suma. Six weeks ago, while walking to his grandfather's home, [Jun] stopped at a park and then vanished. The fate of the missing 11-year-old soon made national headlines and triggered a media frenzy. Three days after his disappearance, everyone's worst fears were realized: Jun had been murdered. His severed head – the eyes gouged out and the mouth split open ear to ear – had been placed in front of a school gate. The unknown killer shattered the community's sense of security further with a written threat to murder again as "revenge against the compulsory education system and the society that created it." The crime was shocking enough. As Japanese wondered what demented soul could be capable of such an act, they were shaken to learn last week that the prime suspect is a youth himself, a local 14-year-old who allegedly... confessed to Jun Hase's killing after... [being] summoned by police for questioning about reports that [the 14-year-old] had mutilated and killed cats and other small animals... Earlier [the suspect] had reportedly boasted to friends [that it was his intention to] do "something big" to take revenge on the school, from which [the suspect] had been suspended... for fighting. Confirming suspicions of local residents, police now say the suspect... may be linked to two unsolved incidents in

mid-March. While searching the youth's home, investigators reportedly found a note... which... describes attacking two children. One victim, Ayaka Yamashita, 10, died of head injuries a week after... [being] assaulted with a metal pipe. Fifteen minutes after that attack, in the same neighbourhood, a nine-year-old was stabbed and seriously wounded... Anguish over the crimes is most acute in North Suma, where many people know the suspect and his victims... The sites where Jun's head was discovered and Ayaka was attacked have become shrines... Police say that the suspect... lured... Jun, a playmate of his younger brother's... to a nearby wooded hill with the promise of a game[, then]... strangled the boy and, the following day, returned to... saw... off Jun's head and mutilate... his body... According to media reports, attributed to police sources, the suspect carried Jun's head home in a plastic bag and hid it for two days... "I can't believe that a junior high school student may have been involved in such a savage crime," says [the] Education Minister... Such disbelief was echoed around the country as people struggled to come to terms with what had happened. After the horror had subsided, politicians and academics voiced fears that the problem may be deep-rooted and malignant. "This is a sign warning us there is something wrong with our society and the education system," says... a University of Tokyo education professor. "Because of pressures at home and in school, children are not developing normally, and this has resulted in serious youth violence." ...In the wake of the Kobe incident, politicians are discussing... a review of the Juvenile Law. Currently, offenders under the age of 16 cannot be jailed... If the Kobe suspect is found guilty, the stiffest punishment [the suspect] would face is a three-year stint in a reformatory. Critics want the law revised to allow the justice system to bring criminal proceedings against the errant youth. "As long as you're under 16, you can kill 100 people and never have to face criminal proceedings," says [a] Nihon University criminologist... The case has kindled a heated debate on the decline of youth morals and family values. TV talk shows endlessly discuss why the suspect may have gone astray... Friends in elementary school describe him as bright and popular. But after entering his junior high school, a strict test-oriented institution, the youth reportedly grew withdrawn and uncommunicative. [The suspect] was bullied and then became a bully himself. His mother complained to a neighbor last year that her son had returned home from school one day in tears after a teacher had harassed him and instructed other pupils to ignore him. Around this time, [the suspect] began torturing cats and pigeons and collecting horror books and videotapes, as well as survival knives. After a school fight... in which [the youth] knocked out two of his opponent's teeth, [the suspect] was told by his teacher not to return. At what point the boy may have turned into a murderer is not known. But experts caution that Japan's pressure-cooker education system is churning out numerous despondent young people, similar to those who joined the Aum Shinrikyo cult that carried out the deadly 1995 sarin gas attack... High schools do little more than force-feed facts to students and subject them to countless rules and tests... At home, there is little family life to speak of, with a father always at work and children attending after-school cram centers. "Children today are not allowed to argue, make mistakes and go through the necessary stages of development," says the [professor]... "So we have many seemingly normal children who are withdrawn, violent or afraid of school."

...Violence in [NZ] kindergartens and pre-schools has forced some parents to keep their frightened children at home, and others have been asked to remove their children for being disruptive. Psychologists and the Office of the Commissioner for Children say bullying among preschoolers is rising. An early-intervention psychologist for the Special Education Service... knew of cases where children had destroyed property, poked one another with scissors, hit teachers and constantly used explicit four-letter words... A senior advocate at the Commissioner for Children's office... said bullying was "endemic in all educational institutions."

...An international study which tested the maths and science levels of nine-year-olds in more than 40 countries also asked them questions, ranging from how much television they watched to whether they had been bullied. "Disturbingly, proportions of N[Z] students who reported having been bullied... were amongst the highest in the world. Negative relationships were found between the frequency of bullying and... achievement in maths and science,"... The study showed N[Z] pupils were below average in maths, and barely average in science... The senior manager at the Ministry of Education... said that with evidence bullying was having an impact on pupils' learning, the issue could no longer be swept under the mat.

...[Some NZ schools are coming under fire for not doing enough to protect children and teachers from violence. A Youth Law solicitor says there is an alarming lack of action on bullying in some schools, and has called for law changes to introduce penalties for failing to ensure student safety.]

...Playground bullying is so rife in NZ that if schools do not take a stand they could soon face incidents such as US-style school shootings. "We don't want to get to the stage here where, like in some parts of America, teachers will only work in schools which have metal detectors to stop the kids bringing weapons in." The warning is contained in a new study, which found that a quarter of all NZ schoolchildren are bullied. The study, by an Auckland University researcher, is the first in NZ on bullying. Teenagers told of having their money stolen so the bully could buy lunch, being beaten up after playing well at rugby and tackling the bully's friends, and getting kicked around and taunted "for no reason at all." Bullies were more likely to be Maori or Pacific Islanders, the victims Pakeha or Asian. Girls and boys were equally likely to be bullies. The researcher said the results were alarming but reflected international trends, then added that teachers were not always supportive and many teenagers thought it was a waste of time reporting bullying because teachers did nothing to fix the problem. "Being bullied has a big impact on people's lives. Many adults are easily able to recall incidents from their schooldays and violent youngsters are more likely to have a criminal conviction by the time they're 24. It's a real problem and it's got to stop."]

...Sticks and stones may break bones but words break spirits, according to researchers looking at a programme to eliminate violence from schools. University of Auckland staff spent a year gathering information on the use of the Special Education Service's "Eliminating Violence – Managing Anger" programme in three at-risk Auckland schools during 1995... [S]tudents were asked to define violence as part of the study, with many highlighting the damaging nature of verbal assaults. Some students reported that "this verbal battering from other kids was much more pervasive and harmful than the physical stuff." The students were also asked about being bullied and being bullies. Two-thirds said they had been the victims of bullying, while just over half said they had bullied another child.

...Bullying affects children more than divorce... says a study published by the Commissioner for Children's office. The co-author of the research... presented the findings to Wellington teachers as part of a joint police and Telecom campaign to stop bullying. The study surveyed... children between the ages of 11 and 13 from a cross-section of schools in the... North Island. About 75[%] reported being physically or emotionally bullied in the past nine months. The only experience that rated higher as "the worst things that had happened to them" was the death of someone close.

...Bullying and victimisation were a significant factor in a 15-year-old... boy's life in the months leading up to his suicide... [H]is parents... hoped the issues relating to the bullying their son suffered... would help people understand the serious effects bullying could have. Matthew[, who] was the nephew of the Minister of Health... had attended Otago Boys' High School in Dunedin until the end of last year[, but] transferred to James Hargest [High School because of] being bullied at Otago... Earlier this year boys from Otago Boys' High were in Invercargill on a sports exchange with another school and sought Matthew out. They threatened to beat him up and took his skateboard... Soon after, Matthew started getting threats from a boy at James Hargest... Matthew had boarded with [a] family for about two months while... [attending] James Hargest... On June 25... Matthew... [complained about] not feeling well... and would not be going to school. [The owner of the house] left... but returned home at 11.50 am... went to Matthew's bedroom and found him... slumped over to one side and a rifle belonging to the [the householder] lay across his chest.

...Bullying, teacher assaults on students, and the principal verbally abusing staff are among serious allegations outlined in a report on Te Kao Area School in the Far North... [which] caters for new entrants to form seven. All the students are Maori except for one Pakeha... The Education Review Office... did a specific-compliance audit of the school in response to a request from the trustees... [that] found disharmony among board members, between parent representatives and the principal, and between the board and some employees... The report concluded that the school's governance and management had deteriorated to become a serious risk, and more students were seeking schooling elsewhere... The... E[RO] has

recommended that the board of the remote 76-student school be replaced by a commissioner. It also wants the Secretary for Education to consider the benefit of providing other educational arrangements for the secondary students, such as attending Kaitaia College, 70km to the south.

...[‘St Stephen’s School in Bombay has made positive changes in the past year, but much remained to be done, says the ERO. A report last June condemned the school for an “undercurrent of violence,” poor academic standards and ineffective management. In its latest report, the office says the all-boys Anglican Maori boarding school has “improved substantially” in all areas. But the board was still far behind in developing proper policy, procedures and management systems to run the school. The report said the board had failed to meet its legal obligations to the Crown and the new principal was doing much of its work. It recommended a management consultant be brought in to work with the board and develop a five-year strategic plan. “Considering that there has been a huge turnover in staff, a change in the management and new routines at the school, we’ve done amazingly well,” the principal said. It pointed out that Maori boarding school boards faced unique problems because smaller rolls meant they had a narrow range of parental expertise to draw on. Parents often lived far away from the school and could not afford the extra expense incurred in serving on the board. But the principal was confident his school’s board members were up to the job.’ In related news, a] 15-year-old student... quit school in disgust after Te Kuiti High School failed to act against the teacher who assaulted her. The student should have been sitting school certificate this week but fear and mistrust of school authorities led her to abandon classes about six months ago. “If I had hit the teacher I would have been suspended immediately – instead the school did nothing,” [the ex-student] said yesterday. Her mother said the board of trustees was more concerned with protecting itself than providing a secure environment for her daughter. [The mother] complained to the police when it became apparent the board would not act against the teacher[, who] was ordered to do 200 hours’ community service and pay the student \$2000... [after appearing] in the Hamilton District Court this week. [The judge said the teacher] lost control after... hear[ing] laughing during a prayer in a Maori class... [The teacher] pulled the girl off a chair by her hair and slapped and kicked her... The Te Kuiti High chair[perso]n... said the board would probably have sacked [the teacher if it] had admitted the assault instead of claiming self-defence. After a disciplinary hearing it ordered her to do an anger management course and gave her a final warning.

...Teachers’ groups are discussing the prospect of establishing a fidelity fund to help colleagues in legal battles... when [they] faced accusations of incompetence or misconduct... It would involve teachers paying in a set amount each year... [T]he Post Primary Teachers Association already helped teachers in some situations but a professional body could discipline those who were out of line... “It’s all about proving to the community that we are concerned about issues of competence and conduct.” ...the High Court at Wellington cleared the way for four former students to sue Victoria University over the quality of a course, while elsewhere several teachers face charges of [student] abuse. But the Principals’ Federation, which already has a legal benefit insurance scheme, does not support the fund idea. Its president... said most teachers were already covered by their union. The Minister of Education... was pleased teachers were trying to make the industry more professional but cautioned them to be aware of the risks associated with fidelity funds. Submissions on the ministry’s green paper, Quality Teachers for Quality Learning, close today... [By the way, c]hildren are reading more, stealing fewer school library books and getting up to less mischief – thanks to a project that puts books into homes... [Even] public library membership had risen at one of the pioneers of the scheme, Camberley School in Hastings. The school, in a high unemployment area, is 75[%] Maori, with most of the remainder coming from the Pacific Islands. After five years of the scheme, truancy had virtually disappeared and... the cost of cleaning vandalism up and fixing damage had dropped from \$15,000 a year to about \$1500. Parent interview night attendance had increased from about 50[% to 90%] this year... Financed by corporate... sponsors, such as Mainfreight[, CHH]... and the Ministry of Education, 380,000 books have been given out to children... in 150 schools, mainly in poorer, provincial parts of N[Z]... The ministry donated \$250,000 to the scheme in 1996, and \$900,000 more over three years was announced in this year’s budget... Students tested before and after the programme started in their schools had improved their reading skills by 35[%] more than they would have without the programme. They could recall 81[%] of the book titles given them... [and.] despite their children receiving free books, parents were also buying more books for them.

...THE computer revolution is giving young people a head start in life which otherwise would take them years of hard work. They grew up with computers and arcade games and understand the logic behind them while their parents floundered along behind. And the Net, being a new medium, means that Web designers and programmers have the status of a lifetime’s work in the industry even though they have been employed in it for only a couple of years. This gives smart young entrepreneurs the chance to get ahead fast and make money. Three Selwyn College seventh-formers are doing just this... “It just comes naturally,” says [one] as they speak business-talk about their... company, Pulse Media... These three are typical of the young chasing the opportunities and riches of a new industry... “It’s hard enough dealing with all the decisions teenagers have to make in their life, let alone making decisions as a company director,” says... [the managing director, who] began using a Commodore 64 at the age of 7 while his classmate started on a computer at 5... Pulse Media is a Web design and multimedia production company formed under the Young Enterprise scheme. Explaining what they do is the difficult part. Other teenagers who have set up companies under the scheme can easily show products they have made and are trying to sell.

...An alarming lack of general knowledge has been shown by a survey of [ex-7th formers]. Half did not know when... [NZ entered WW2]. One in seven did not know the sun rose in the east... [Almost 10% of both sexes] had no idea what a fallopian tube was[– 3%] thought it was part of an underground railway system... Only one in five could place the American Revolution, the French Revolution, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War in chronological order... Overall, [the 1st-year university] students got only half the answers right. One... got only one correct answer and 10 scored only two. Through sheer chance a monkey should be able to get three or four answers right... “Humans should have a bit of a head start.” No one got all 14... The findings were published yesterday in the Canterbury Students’ Association magazine, *Canta*... [The survey also] highlighted an alarming ignorance by some... in their areas of interest. Nearly 10[%] of English students, for example, could not identify a noun... “This is stuff people should know without having to think about it... [and the people questioned are] supposedly the top 10[%] of the education system.” ...[unfortunately – or fortunately, depending on your point-of-view – lack of general knowledge isn’t confined to NZ students: confused] schoolchildren in the former Soviet peninsula of Crimea think Napoleon or Adolf Hitler led the 1917 Russian Revolution... A fifth of final-year students said “kommunyaki” – a derogatory word for communists, rather like “commies” – organised it... The Soviet state founder, Vladimir Lenin, might have repeated his famous phrase “study, study and study once again.” Or worse. The children[even] showed a lack of knowledge about him, which would have been suicidal in some periods of Soviet history... Less than half the... group approved of Lenin... The findings highlight a generation gap in the former Soviet Union. Older people, including those in Crimea, were out in force last week to mark the revolution’s 80th anniversary.

...[although many of the survey respondents may have deliberately given wrong answers, as] editor of... ‘Canta’... [I feel able to state that] Kiwi youth are in trouble. Statistics illustrate that. The problem is a lack of soul, or depth, in our young people and ignorance of the real goal of education, which is to understand ourselves and the world so that we may seek a good life... Universities in N[Z], for example, no longer require all students to attend courses in traditional subjects like philosophy, theology, history or languages – subjects that would give them great insight into their personal lives and the state of the world, giving them the potential to seek a more fulfilling life and contribute fully to society... Too many of our young are shallow. They must be told that there is more to a wealthy, satisfying life than chasing money and buying things; that beauty of the mind is as worthy as that of the body, if not more so... Capitalist faith has both infected and been encouraged by our education system and this has led to our young people’s shallowness. Many parents, themselves products of the same system, lack the depth to correct things themselves.

...News that barely half of the University of Canterbury students who took part in a survey could recognise the first Labour [PM of NZ], even when his name is given to them as one of four in a multiple-choice list, will not surprise many academics. University students represent the best and

brightest young N[Z]ers, but in presenting university-level material to them, lecturers these days can assume nothing. So far as reliance on general knowledge goes, it's always back to square one... How did we arrive at this point? As a philosopher, I'm used to the accusation that contemporary philosophy has no effect on society: but it certainly makes a difference in education theory. The abandonment of teaching a broad base of factual knowledge in schools is part of a policy fashionable here and in the U[S] and Britain for ...a... generation. The attack on general knowledge[, or the] 'dumbing-down' of the education system... comes from both ends of the political spectrum. From the politically correct left of the teachers' colleges, we are told the "traditional notions of memorisation, recitation, and even sitting quietly are, in the words of one educational theorist, characteristic of a "closed authoritarian system" that stifles children's natural creativity and enjoyment of learning. But the political right, with its vocational view of education as business training, is equally for dumbing down. It too preaches a message of "relevance" – not to the social designs of the left, but to the economic life of business. The vital and richly textured life of the mind is of little use to the practical aims of commerce. Both sides of this political divide are united in the delusion that knowledge is advancing so fast there's little point in teaching information that will soon be outdated. The Internet, that chaos of disorganised and often dodgy information, is supposed to be our children's salvation. The computer is yet another false god of education theory. Surfing the Internet for solid information is a time-wasting exercise for youngsters, compared to reading a well-organised text. Information, no matter its quality, is not... knowledge until... it is part of a human mind and its outlook... A few years ago I complained to a former education official that students came to university seeming to know little in the way of specific information, such as, I remarked, the year of the French Revolution. "They don't need to know that," [the official] snapped... The idea that any ministry official, business[person], politician, or teacher might somehow know in advance what students need to know, and that it doesn't include the year of the French Revolution, should give us pause. One teacher told me that... students were better prepared today and that [his generation] was taught lots of "useless" things in school. Asked to name some of the useless things... [the teacher] had trouble remembering, which seems to indicate [that the teacher] had not actually learned them at all. Educating for skills instead of content, what is called "learning how to learn," has amounted to a kind of knowledge replacement therapy practised on our unsuspecting young. Except that I'm not certain what all that factual knowledge has been replaced with. (It's certainly not any familiarity with spelling and grammar.) ...As Aristotle so eloquently stated... "All [humans] by nature desire to know." It's a message I wish could get through to the Ministry of Education... Developing mastery of content – facts and information – excites young minds to want to know more. Knowledge forms a system of endless interrelationships. The more you know, the easier it becomes to absorb new knowledge. Self-confidence and self-esteem are not conditions to be reached in order to gain knowledge. Just the reverse: it's actually knowing things that gives young people confidence and self-esteem... [Incidentally, t]he Government's decision to put off raising the school leaving age to 17 will save it at least \$90 million... In documents released... by the Minister of Education, the... Department of Labour... said there were wider social and economic costs to consider in keeping the leaving age 16[, such as providing] benefits and assistance to those who did not receive "a sound educational foundation"... An explosion of more than 74,000 extra secondary school students is expected in the next decade and the Government papers show that keeping all students at school until they are 17 would add a further 16,867 to rolls during the next three years. Teacher training is already struggling to keep pace with demand, and nearly 900 extra teachers and 90 managers would be required to handle the increased roll generated by a higher leaving age... At present about 20[%] of state school students leave before they are 17, but the figure varies between 5[%] in some schools to 45[%] in others. The Minister of Education... said in a briefing paper to the Cabinet Committee for Education and Employment that students who wanted to leave school were unlikely to benefit from being made to stay another year. Instead they should be encouraged to stay through improved educational environments with more diverse programmes, a greater focus on quality and recognition of cultural and social circumstances. Initiatives to support students who leave school early are being implemented or considered for schools.

...[the younger daughter of the founder of the Body Shop international cosmetics chain says her attitudes to life were born when it left school at 17, worked with a film crew in Brazil and witnessed child labour and slavery first hand. "Now I can't justify spending money on anything when people are dying of malnutrition." Yesterday the founder admitted to being a failure as a mother to her younger daughter. The founder may have a fortune estimated at £410 million but her 25-year-old daughter is living as a drop-out in a run down area in Canada rummaging through skips for her furniture, the *Daily Express* newspaper said. The founder, aged 54, was said to be deeply saddened by her daughter's choice of lifestyle and blamed her radical child-rearing methods for her rebellion. The founder had encouraged her children to grow up too fast by introducing them to the harsh realities of life at too young an age. "Now I yearn for her company. I should have preserved her sense of awe and wonder for longer. I could have shaped that a bit better." However, the daughter told the *Express*: "I think my mum is brilliant, the most radical gal I know. But when I was a kid, I did wish mum was around more." ■ 'The call to lower the NZ school leaving age to 13 was made to provoke debate by a retiring principal, who noted that schools are not resourced to solve the social and behavioural problems which inhibit learning for significant numbers of young people. All First World societies are dealing simultaneously with loss of the work that used to provide purpose, identity and self-esteem for young people who formerly "left school and got a job." "Children learn what they live" is a truth of human behaviour. By the time adolescence is reached, complex family variables of inheritance, opportunity, skills and priorities have shaped a young person's character. For some, supported by skilled, committed parents, education success comes easily and the job of the school is straightforward. For others, even if there is no dysfunction, the gap between family skills and the ever-increasing qualifications that open up desirable future pathways can be totally daunting. Simply letting such young people drop out and roam is not socially responsible. If society does not want such young people to drop out and be a lifelong charge on our country, we must be prepared to pay for ways of bridging this skill gap. Do we, and our Government, care enough for the future of all this country's children to make the necessary investment?'

... 'NZ teachers think they've got it tough? The British Government is about to make teachers legally responsible for the welfare of their pupils after school and when pupils are not on school property. Teachers will be trained to spot potential cases of child abuse, and each school will have to nominate a member of its staff to communicate with the local social services department. Teachers will be sacked if they fail to spot or report any signs of abuse or neglect.'

... 'In some cases family functioning breaks down and severe abuse of children may occur. Although it is difficult to obtain precise figures on how many children in the US are abused, it is estimated that over 500,000 children are maltreated each year. Many of these children have been molested, starved, burned, beaten, cut, chained to furniture or kept in isolation. Most people probably think that no one they know would ever abuse a child or that only someone who is really mentally ill would inflict grievous physical harm on defenceless children. However, child abusers are found in all social classes and all religious, racial and ethnic groups. In addition, there is no evidence of severe mental illness as a major contributing factor in child maltreatment, although abusive mothers tend to be emotionally immature and frustrated. Abusive mothers are more defensive, more anxious, and more aggressive, and less intelligent and less concerned about social conformity than are more competent mothers. Certain characteristics of the child and family also are associated with maltreatment of children. Child abuse is more likely to occur in large families and to children under the age of 3. A higher-than-normal incidence of birth anomalies, physical and intellectual deviations, irritability, excessive crying and a peculiar and extremely irritating cry, fussiness, negativism, and other behaviors that exasperate the parents are found in many of these children. It may be that such problems in children are enough to tip the balance in already stressed families. Parents in these families often have conflicts with each other and are socially isolated. They seem to have fewer friends, relatives or neighbors they can turn to in times of stress. Parents who abuse their children are frequently unemployed, poorly educated, and economically deprived. However, it is obvious that most parents of low socioeconomic status do not maltreat their children. Hence environmental factors might be associated with child abuse. A study found that a high-risk neighborhood had a rate of 130 cases of child abuse per thousand families, compared to only 15 cases in a low-risk neighborhood. It has been suggested that the high incidence of child abuse may be supported by the general acceptance of

physical punishment of children in US culture. In groups in which physical punishment of children is not accepted, such as among the Chinese, battered children are rarely found.’]

...Sure, children are no longer up chimneys or working in coal mines, and we don’t have the problems of child labour and child prostitution experienced in some cultures, but nevertheless [NZ ranks] high in the child abuse stakes. [Furthermore, there exists in our society] “significant emotional and social poverty in families who... do... not know how to care, where fathers [are] distracted in making money and mothers in spending it,”... Barnado’s is one of N[Z]’s largest providers of children and family support services, offering a range of courses on parenting and family relationships, as well as budget advice. They provide a parent help telephone counselling service, as well as individual and group counselling. They also provide a number of services for at risk children, including a foster care service, family homes, a buddy system and a youth skills programme... [A] senior at Barnado’s, identifies three main areas of concern which their parenting programmes seek to address: Communication skills; self-esteem; and alternative methods for guiding children’s behaviour. “Parents are not taking the time to listen and talk to their children. The other pressures of life have resulted in a lack of time for communication... The trend towards Sega games, computer games and watching TV have contributed further to this communication breakdown. Children are not being encouraged to express their emotions, instead they are encouraged to repress them... Repressed emotions eventually explode into rebellion or implode into depression, adding to our increasing crime and suicide rate. Often, when our family counselling service is approached, the focus of the crisis is identified by the parent as being a problem child. In a large majority of cases, when the counsellor goes in and looks at what is really going on, it is more often the parents’ relationship or a lack of communication skills... Often, when a parent has been raised in an abusive family, they will either perpetuate the cycle or go to extremes in order to avoid it, which leaves a child with no boundaries or guidelines,”... As [the senior] emphasises, parenting is not instinctive; it has to be learned, and you learn mainly from the people who parented you... A government funded programme, Parents as First Teachers, was... launched in 1992 to encourage better parenting. Funded by the Ministry of Education and run by the Plunket Society, it provides 9000 places for first time parents and expects to spend around \$9 million this year... Unfortunately, those who need help most, never seek it. For this reason, [the senior] believes self esteem and communication skills should be part of the education curriculum. [‘It’s about up-skilling parents.’ Editor’s note: the human parent ‘cares for its young far longer than any other animal. This is because humans rely on learning and reasoning to care for themselves.’]

...‘Parents rush in where society fears to tread You need a licence to drive a car, get married, own a gun and keep a dog (in addition, the SPCA screens you if you want to take home a puppy). If you want a credit card, you must divulge details of your finances and your employment. You have to fill out a form for a library card, and you need to train to be a builder or a hairdresser. You need to pass exams if you want to be a doctor or a lawyer. But there’s no licence required, no information to divulge, no training, no exams, no screening when you take on the greatest responsibility of your life – that of bringing a child into the world. Our nonchalance regarding the bearing of children has no doubt evolved largely as a result of the prevalence of the practice. Familiarity has made us immune to what an awesome undertaking it is. When you marry your spouse, presumably a grown person capable of looking after itself, you usually pledge your undying love and commitment at a solemn occasion. Yet when you’re suddenly responsible for some helpless newborn baby, you just sling it in the car-seat and drive on home. New citizens of NZ take part in a formal ceremony acknowledging the link with their adopted country and even the Scout and Guide movements require oaths and promises of their members. Surely, it’s not too much to expect of parents. Some sort of ritual involving a vow to eternally love and care for the child would not be out of place just to prove your best intentions and to help to seal them in your heart. Or even a promise to keep the progeny warm and fed would do. Anything is better than nothing. No training or evidence of skill is required to create a baby and raise a child. My computer game came with a 15-minute instruction video but no helpful manual is supplied with a baby. Where kids are concerned, you simply muddle along with a mixture of sheer good luck, trial and error, gut instinct and unwanted advice from the well-meaning. While child-bearing seems to be a free-for-all, there is rigorous screening for prospective parents who wish to adopt a child. These would-be parents must jump through hoops to prove not merely their fitness to be a mum and dad but that they’re practically perfect candidates.’ Which is somewhat ironic, considering that ‘it’s not illegal to be a bad parent.’]

...“Parenting is a very important profession; but no test of fitness for it is ever imposed in the interest of children.” George Bernard Shaw wrote that in 1944, but it applies equally today, perhaps moreso. The old dictums, about children being seen and not heard and spare the rod, spoil the child, have been sent to their rightful resting place. But their departure leaves parents uncertain about what a good parent is and how to be one.

...three girls, two teenagers and one younger, entered... [a] South Auckland... dairy... about 5 pm... yesterday... say police... The youngest was caught stealing by the... shop owner... “There was a bit of a verbal dispute,”... A [gal] aged in her 30s then entered the dairy, assaulted the shopowner and warned her not to “touch my daughter...” The shop owner was not seriously injured but during the assault money was taken from the till... “If this is how parents deal with their kids... it’s a pretty bad indictment on society,” [one constable] said. “What are you teaching your children?”

...Parents need to learn before they can teach their children... For more than a year now scientists in the U[S] have been trying to educate parents, teachers and public officials about how the foundations of social, emotional and intellectual development are all laid early, in the first 10 years of life. Whether a child learns how to soothe herself when... distressed or needs the comfort of others; whether [a child] learns to think abstractly or is mired in the concrete; whether [a child] learns to empathise or never opens her heart to friendships – all are influenced by early experiences. At first glance that message is powerfully optimistic, since it means that a child’s potential is almost unlimited. But there’s a catch... [In contrast to] Dr Benjamin Spock’s mantra to new parents: “Trust your own common sense” – which has been promoted in the US for... more than 50 years... [– a] stream of new research suggests that, for the majority of fathers and mothers, doing the things that maximise a child’s potential is not intuitive. Despite the media attention... many parents have not heard the message, or are confused by it. “There is a wide gap between scientific knowledge and the public’s,” said... the Carnegie Corporation... at last week’s much anticipated White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning... At the... conference, which was televised in 37 states... the President asked, can we educate parents and others so they take advantage of the findings? It won’t be easy. According to a report released last week by the American national research and advocacy group, Zero to Three, 25[%] of parents of young children do not know that what they do with a child can affect his intelligence, including increasing curiosity, confidence and problem-solving ability. And 87[%] think that the more stimulation a baby receives, the better off [it] will be. In fact, talking, reading, singing and playing must be carefully matched to a child’s level of development, temperament and mood, or the child will tune out or even cringe from the interaction. “Only 20 to 30[%] of parents know how to do this instinctively,” said[a] child psychiatrist... of George Washington University. One scientist has documented how the size of a toddler’s vocabulary reflects how much her mother talked to her; the conclusion was possible only because hundreds of children in the study had parents who did not speak to them much and who had small vocabularies. Another team of researchers found that children of professionals heard 75[%] more words per hour than did the children of working-class parents, and more than three times as many words as did the children of welfare parents... Yet there is no reason to believe the welfare and working-class parents loved their babies any less than the lawyers... [L]ove, sadly, is not all you need... Opening the conference[, the President asked]... the Pentagon, whose child care facilities are considered among the best in the U[S], to... make its... facilities training sites where people being pushed off welfare can learn to care for children. Perhaps the Pentagon can fight a couple of land wars and simultaneously save the nation’s children.

...Welfare with ‘tough-love’ hooks... The Hinds County office of Mississippi’s Department of Human Services sits just off a poorly-maintained street littered with cheap liquor stores and pawn shops. This is a poorer part of Jackson, the sleepy state capital of... the poorest state in America in which more than a third of the children live below the poverty line. For the African-American staff inside the welfare office, Mississippi’s salvation

from chronic welfare “dependency” lies in the “tough love” warfare language of... conservative Washington think-tanks. They are the shock-troops implementing the Republican Party’s radical welfare “reform” agenda now in vogue across the U[S]... On the front counter of the welfare office... sit copies of a “personal responsibility contract.” The... staff of Hinds County talk constantly of instilling “personal responsibility” and “self-sufficiency.” [NZ’s Treasurer] uses similar phrases like “reinforcing responsibilities,” “self-reliance” and benefits not being “a one-way deal”... “We hope to provide beneficiaries with a plan that details what the Government expects of them in exchange for help they receive from taxpayers,” [the Treasurer] told Parliament last week. [The Treasurer] talks of ensuring children go to school... [Another minister] thinks beneficiaries should be obliged to get their children immunised. [The Minister of Social Welfare] says the code should apply to all parents. But ministers are coy on detail – and clearly not in agreement on the big unanswered question: What sanctions would apply for failure to comply with the code?

...Differences are emerging in the coalition Government over the planned “code of social responsibility”... The Treasurer... sees the code... as a form of contract between beneficiaries and the taxpayers that would restore the integrity of the welfare system. But the Minister of Social Welfare... does not think it should be restricted to beneficiaries – and suggests parents of young children could... be involved... Parents whose children were involved in petty crime[(e.g., the parents who ‘refused to foot the \$142.80 bill after their 3-year-old threw a stone at a passing car, damaging a passenger window; a Disputes Tribunal referee has directed that the toddler pay the bill; the boy doesn’t have the money, so when it is a liable adult at 18 the bill will be due with accrued interest of 11%’)] might also be asked to attend parenting courses. The code is... viewed as a “toughlove” measure by proponents. But... [one opponent i]s concerned that [the Government] might dictate to parents how they are to raise their children.

...A public eager for details on the workings of the Government’s controversial code of social responsibility... was thrown only crumbs yesterday. The [PM]... and the Minister of Social Welfare... gave little away when talking to a business leaders’ breakfast in Wellington... [The minister] explained to his... audience why a code was necessary. Every day there were examples of people who had stopped taking responsibility... “I’m talking about parents who leave someone else to pick up the pieces.” ...[the minister also] said it would cover all N[Z]ers and could be a foundation for social policy development, but... failed to say how. A similar speech is expected at a business breakfast in Auckland today... [In his speech, the PM said the] business community, which helped to pay for welfare, had to join other N[Z]ers in meeting the challenge... welfare... posed. “I look forward to business becoming a more active partner in tackling social as well as economic issues,”... [However, the] chief executive of the Wellington Regional Chamber of Commerce... was annoyed that the Government expected business to take on an even bigger load.

...More details of... [the] code of social responsibility for parents and beneficiaries will be unveiled this morning... The code has been the centre of controversy after leaked Treasury papers suggested the Government was considering cutting the benefits of people who failed to meet certain parenting standards... [Although the Treasurer has been reported as saying: ‘when we pay parents to look after their children we expect them to look after their children’, the suggestion that benefits would be cut] was quashed by... [the] Minister of Social Welfare.

...[‘unlike most other primates, the young orang is never disciplined by his mother in the wild. Perhaps because orangs must lead a solitary life, there is no need for social rules; no codes for group behaviour.’ Perhaps because humans must live a social life, ‘the Government plans to deliver a 28-page “Public Discussion Document” entitled *Towards a Code of Social & Family Responsibility* to every NZ household.’ By the way, although it is widely acknowledged that ‘punishing parents will not make them better parents – offering them help to raise their parenting skills will’ – ‘parents in the US are being fined or put into prison for the crimes committed by their children.’]

...The British Government... pledged yesterday to “break the excuse culture” with a package of measures to force parents to be legally responsible for their children’s behaviour until the youngsters reach 17. Under [the] proposals, courts will be able to impose orders to require parents to exercise proper control. Failure to comply could lead to fines of up to \$NZ2600 and jail in extreme cases. Local authorities will also be given new powers to set up local child curfews. These will bar children under 10 being in particular public places at night unless accompanied by an adult. The proposals, which should become law next year, represent the biggest shake-up in British juvenile legislation in 50 years. Parents of children under 10, too young to be charged with an offence, can be charged in their place. Children themselves will be forced, in some cases, to apologise to their victims and pay compensation... [In local news, a recent] survey shows that far too few Maori [fathers] are prepared to accept the responsibility of parenthood. They would rather spend the night with their mates in the pub than read stories to their youngsters at bed-time. If the absentee father is a problem for Maori children, pakeha kids have another deprivation: Disappearing grandparents. Through mobility, rehousing, divorce and remarriage[, Pakeha] children no longer inherit an extended family. In a Christchurch school more than half of the 12-year-olds questioned couldn’t say what their mother’s maiden name was. In the modern world grandmas are urged to be glamorous, play golf, do bungee jumps, go on cruises and have affairs. Small children however want grandmas who have white hair, bake pies, knit, tell stories and have lots of time. This is where Maori kids are rich. They live in a world centred on grandparents and full of aunts, uncles and lots of cuddles. Grandparents are honoured because they embody a people’s history and become a living link with ancestors. You won’t find them hidden away in old people’s homes, visited on alternate Sundays. Unlike Anglo-Saxon emphasis on subjective immortality – the self going on – Maori culture is far closer to Bible teaching, with its synthesis of life and death achieved in the here and now... The catch phrase bandied around social circles in the ’80s used to be, “One good parent is better than a good one and a bad one”. It is now more popular to say, “It takes a village to raise a child”.

...Sunday is Father’s Day on the commercial calendar but absent fathers are becoming increasingly blamed for modern social problems... Every news bulletin these days indicates a steady decline in the well-being of our nation. We... cannot solve our rampant social problems without first saving marriages and strengthening families. If children do not learn self-discipline in families that practise self-discipline where can they learn it? The condition of our society merely reflects the condition of our marriages. The responsibility of the state is to preserve and sustain marriages and families, not to facilitate their demise. Yet since no-fault divorce was introduced there has been a succession of legislation that encourages relationships without commitment... No-fault divorce, designed mainly for the benefit of [mothers] and children, has played into [fathers’ hands. Previously, the] fear and shame of bad behaviour being presented in a public divorce court was a major deterrent, especially for... [fathers. Now they] are free to behave irresponsibly, knowing there will be no public accountability. Instead of public divorce courts we now have [mothers’] refuges. The social pressures to be a lifelong father to the children of one wife no longer exist. The cost in human tragedy is horrendous and mounting, while our political leaders play Nero.

...Fathers, especially absent ones, have to do better for their children, says Act’s education spokes[person, who yesterday]... told Parliament... “that we are no longer a child-rearing utopia.” ...180,000 children lived in single-parent families whose sole income was the domestic purposes benefit. “I want to say to the fathers of those 180,000 children that... just because they are not there doesn’t mean their responsibilities have ended... We’ve become so caught up in issues of privacy and a parent’s right to do whatever they like with their children... that we have put at risk the rights of children. It is our problem. Today’s neglected child is the burglar who climbs through your window 16 years later.” [□ ‘4 out of 10 US children live in a fatherless home; 72% of adolescent murderers in the US grew up without fathers.’]

...‘The outspoken head of Nelson’s Specialist Education Services got everybody’s attention when it warned us of an angelic five-year-old who was on his way to prison, and would probably kill on the way there. Who could fail to be moved by the story of a child whose life was over before it had begun? This boy was one of four siblings with four different fathers. His mother had damaged his brain by blowing dope up his nose to keep him quiet as a baby. The child had started school just six weeks ago, but was on the verge of being suspended because of his behavioural problems. The head’s evocative picture personalised the statistics. And now the head’s been fired – even though the former head has admitted the boy does not exist. But it does. There are babies born to mothers who have a different father for every child – a form of biological pick’n’mix. There are children who will never know their fathers.’

... 'All children in NZ are equal before the law. There are no "illegitimate" children in this country. *Paternity* – If a couple are married, the law presumes that the husband is the father of any children born while the couple are together. If you are not married to the father of your child, it is important for the child that the father should be identified in law. The child's rights to financial support and to inheritance depend on proof of paternity. The simplest way to establish paternity is for the father to go with the mother to the office of the Registrar of Births when a child's birth is registered (or some time later) to sign the birth registration papers. Another way is to get a paper signed by the father confirming that it is the father of the child. It is best to get the paper drawn up by a lawyer, and the father's signature should be witnessed. If the father will not sign any paper, the mother can get a paternity order through the Family Court. Even if the father of the child has died it is possible to prove paternity through a declaration in the High Court.'

... '14,000 domestic purposes beneficiaries cannot or will not name the father of their child. New figures show that of the 14,000 people on the DPB, two are mothers with 10 children each, one has nine children, five have eight children and 16 have seven children. The majority, around 11,000, have one or two children. The Act MP who requested the figures says the Government must urgently find out why so many fathers are getting away without contributing financially to their child's upbringing. "If the fathers are being irresponsible, that is not good enough and we have to have a system that makes any parent realise that the moment they are a parent they are basically a parent for life." There is a dearth of information about why so many mothers fail to name the fathers. In some cases, the fathers refused to acknowledge the child or had left the country, landing the mothers with a lower benefit rate. The MP said the Government might have to look overseas to see how other countries dealt with the problem.'

... 'It has been a year of hell but the New Yorker more or less has her life back. No more crying all day and night. The NYer still has her job, her husband and her 7-year-old son. The nightmare, which began last July when her husband confessed it was having an affair, could so easily have ended differently. The husband moved out briefly but was back with the news that his mistress was pregnant and the baby was his. But her instinct for self-preservation and scepticism that her husband was the father combined to save her. What helped her was the booming business of uncertain paternity. There are a growing number of genetic laboratories, which, thanks to recent advances in DNA testing, can tell you for sure who the father of a child is in cases where there might be some doubt (most companies charge \$US475 or thereabouts and results are back within a few days). Take any urban highway in the US these days and you are likely to see many billboards that are barely subtle in their attempt to stir fear and suspicion, especially in guys who may harbour doubts as to whether little Jimmy is really his little Jimmy. There are the ads that appeared earlier this year, for instance, featuring a baby's face with a Pinocchio nose. "Is his mother a liar?" it asked. Like all such billboards, it then offered a freephone number, in this case, "1-888-WHOSDAD." These new purveyors of truth in genetics have reason to be bullish. A variety of studies suggest that somewhere between 5 and 20% of USers are wrong about who their fathers are.'

... 'One in 10 of NZ fathers may be paying child support for children who are not theirs. The North Shore-based national organisation the Guy's Centre said AUSn research indicated 10% of children were raised by guys who were unaware that they were not the biological father. British research suggested it might be 20%. Local tax collectors confirm that payments have been stopped and money refunded after guys proved that the child they were supporting financially was fathered by someone else. But the centre's president said some guys knew a child was not theirs but were still happy to care for or pay child support. The president said it was often a tragedy when guys contested paternity because, if unsuccessful, the father-child relationship could be damaged.'

... '*Children caught in tug of war* CALL me naive but I never imagined in a million years that a child in this country could be snatched out of school by representatives of the state, packed off to a new home and refused the opportunity to say goodbye to her classmates and her mother. And yet that is exactly what happened at an Auckland school. The child was at the centre of a bitter custody dispute, and these things are notoriously messy. The father was awarded custody of the child although the girl had been living with her mother. We don't know the reason why the family court decided in the dad's favour – the judge was in possession of all the facts and made the appropriate decision. But the way the family court ordered the social welfare workers to deliver the child to her father was totally inappropriate. To invade school grounds – a place where children are encouraged to feel safe – to remove the child from the classroom in front of her friends, and to fail to inform the mother that the legalised abduction had taken place is inhumane.'

... 'The young Chinese girl who disappeared from Mt Roskill in May last year had been living a miserable and lonely life since moving to NZ and may have committed suicide, an inquest heard yesterday. The body of 12-year-old Chong Liu washed up on Pollock Beach, in the Manukau Harbour, 16 days after the girl vanished. There was an extensive police inquiry and speculation remains as to whether Chong was murdered, kidnapped or simply fell into the harbour. But although the coroner agreed that her life must have been "intolerable," the coroner excluded suicide as a cause of death because it could not be confirmed. Instead, the coroner – who praised what it described as a thorough and professional inquiry accounting for \$1 million of police hours – ruled that Chong died of "unascertainable causes" that most likely resulted in her drowning. The inquest heard from a child psychologist that the girl lived in a household where "parental neglect, emotional abuse, conflict and dysfunction were evident." Chong would have felt unwanted despite her father's love, and additional risk factors such as cultural alienation, loneliness, inability to communicate and shyness could have pushed her to commit suicide. Chong was left to fend for herself when her father was out and other household members – her stepmother, stepmother's sister, and step-grandmother – hardly spoke to her. Chong often ate meals alone in her room and was aware her father and pregnant stepmother were considering placing her in a home-stay. Chong struggled at school, had only two friends who could speak Mandarin and the girl repeatedly said it missed her mother. Chong was raised predominantly by her mother and grandparents in China but came to live in NZ two years ago with her father, and her new step-mother, as part of her parents' divorce settlement.'

... **Children can be more affected by a divorce than parental death, a British speaker told a children's issues conference at Otago University yesterday...** [The professor] of Cambridge University's centre for family research, said children whose parents divorced were less likely to behave well or do well at school, and generally had lower self-esteem. "Transitions to adulthood for the children that experience divorce is a lot quicker as they move into forming relationships – marriage, cohabitation and becoming parents[–] at earlier ages on average,"... The effects were not limited to children... [A] recent study in Britain showed some... [fathers] whose families had been rocked by divorce in their early lives had lost contact with their children, been socially isolated and were less well off now.

... **WE ARE** so used to hearing gloomy reports about the state of society that the results of the... poll for [Britain's] National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children will come as a great surprise. And a welcome one, for it makes clear that the picture of breakdown and unhappiness so often painted is false. [Although 'each year more than 50,000 British children under the age of five had parents who divorced', the] **great majority of children still experience the feelings of happiness and security that come from a stable home. But though the survey overturns recent conventional wisdom, it also reaffirms some common-sense axioms that have been dismissed as unfashionable. It has discovered, for instance, that children want their parents to exercise authority. Many parents may read this with incredulity, finding it hard to square with their own experiences of life with teenage offspring. But countless generations of parents, luckily unencumbered by modern theories of child-rearing, have been aware that even the most spirited children need and crave a firm framework of rules and guidance. Failure to give them is one of the greatest betrayals of which a parent can be guilty.** - 1997

Discipline is more than punishment – it's helping a child learn what you want IN MY 30 years as a psychologist and educator, I have tried to help parents understand that effective discipline teaches a child why certain behaviour is wrong and how to correct it. The main principle behind teaching children desirable behaviour is simple. When you see a child behave well, reward him with praise, a... hug or a pat on the shoulder – something that indicates you think [the child] is a splendid little person. This process does wonders for a child's behaviour... [A] child wants positive attention from his parents, but if the only attention [a child] can get is negative, [like a dog (which 'often works on the premise that any

attention is better than none – barking incessantly may bring you out into the garden telling him off, but at least it has brought you out into the garden’) a child] will settle for that. It’s better than none at all. Parents tend to pay more attention to children when they misbehave. That only makes children misbehave more, because this is how they can get the attention they crave[(but, unlike a dog, a child is less forgiving if punished for misbehaving)].

Discipline – only a two-minute pep talk away... What is the minimum amount of quality time Malaysian parents must spend with their children each day? Two minutes, says Malaysia’s Deputy Education Minister... This would help reduce the risk of children turning violent or misbehaving... “I am asking for only two minutes, not even one hour. It is not too much to ask.” Violence and arson in schools have recently become rampant in Malaysia, officials say... In a move to beat the chaos, authorities [– who last year were ‘shocked by a nationwide study which revealed the spread of casual sex involving teenage girls (the survey begun in 1994 by the National Population and Family Development Board showed that one in four girls between 13 and 18 years old admitted having experienced sex or being sexually active’) –]are contemplating giving teachers greater power to use the cane, which has become a topic of hot debate in[the] letters page of the *New Straits Times*. One reader wrote: “I used to get whacked when I was in primary school because I talked a lot in class. It was painful and I tried not to cry. But from then onward, I began to respect authority.” [Incidentally, ‘attitudes toward child rearing have changed dramatically in China since the takeover by the Communists. Punishment is less severe and discipline maintained through subtle coercion and pressure to conform to a common standard of behaviour rather than by spanking or physical force. Pressure to conform to the group norm is applied by the family, the school, and the state. Society is placed before the individual.’]

...ISN’T it amazing how far we’ve come as a society? To think only 20 or 30 years ago corporal punishment was considered not only normal, but a good thing... What’s normal about some deviant getting a power kick out of forcing young[sters]... to bend over, grasp their ankles and steady themselves for a good whacking on their bottoms? What’s normal about hitting the hand of a seven-year-old child until it swells because the child doesn’t do their multiplication sums properly? There are many people over the age of 30 who harbour resentment and ill feeling towards teachers in the education system after being intimidated, humiliated and hurt by adult bullies. And I am so glad... [that, unlike the teacher in China who forced a] pupil... to eat 1000 flies as a punishment... [for calling the] teacher a dog behind his back[, NZ]... teachers today use their wits and compassion rather than brute force when it comes to disciplining children. But that’s not to say I agree with the jury’s decision in A[US] to award nearly \$3 million to a snivelling 30-year-old who nurtured his resentment against his school for 17 years before successfully suing the Catholic church. [The sniveller] may well feel [it] was unfairly treated, but seven whacks on the hand should not equal \$3 million. And while I’m glad corporal punishment no longer exists in our schools, teachers should not be judged by today’s standards for something they did 20 years ago.

...What’s wrong with being old-fashioned? ...the effects of corporal punishment at school may not have been as bad as [is proclaimed]... Takapuna Grammar, when I was a student, used corporal punishment... for serious offences involving school discipline. Six of the best meant bending over and receiving six swipes with a cane or leather belt. I can testify that it hurt – but when a boy emerged after this chastisement [it] was not only more likely to obey school rules but was accepted by his peers for taking due punishment in a [grown-up] manner. The unacceptable behaviour that some teachers put up with in our schools will remain until we return to what over-liberal people would refer to as old-fashioned standards.

...[a letter-writer] and others may have missed the point regarding... corporal punishment in schools. It is not the brutality of caning that is important. It is the humiliation. Sure, I can remember being caned by a zealous sports master at Auckland Grammar many years ago. At the time the infringement (whatever it was) seemed trivial to me. It stung, but not severely so, and the pain such as it was would not have been a deterrent. However, it stung my pride much more, and that was a deterrent... Maybe we should reintroduce the... public humiliation... [of] stocks.

A mother whose son is launching a legal bid to end his parents’ right to smack him has defended the use of corporal punishment for the child. Speaking for the first time ahead of a European court hearing, the [mother claimed to be] astounded that the case was going ahead... [because] the boy, now aged 12, was totally out of control and had run riot since the age of two. The dispute centres on an incident three years ago when the boy’s stepfather beat him with a garden cane after [the boy] tried to stab a[nother] child with a kitchen knife. The [stepfather] was acquitted of assault occasioning actual harm by a British court. But the boy, backed by his natural father with whom [the boy] now lives, hopes to take his complaint to the European Court of Human Rights. If successful, the case could lead to the outlawing of smacking in British homes bringing it into line with many other European countries... The 34-year-old mother of five, now married to the stepfather, said [they] had had no problems with her other children and that the boy’s natural father had been forced to smack him too... [The mother] had lost count of the number of times... the boy’s school... had... called [her] in... because of his disruptive behaviour. Social services, educational and clinical psychologists had all been involved with him at various times. “I think that half of the problems with today’s youngsters is they are not properly disciplined. They know they can get away with things. It was not like that when I was growing up or at schools,”... Both mother and son remained in contact and even holidayed together... But the decision to go ahead with the legal challenge had come as a shock and now put the chance of reconciliation out of the question... Lawyers for the boy will argue the British Government failed to protect the child’s human rights by allowing punishment with the cane because it constituted inhuman and degrading treatment.

...The Archbishop of Canterbury says there is nothing wrong with gently slapping children to enforce moral values. Children who transgressed should be smacked as long as it was “done with love,”... [the] father of four who has five grandchildren... said during a BBC Radio interview... His comments came five months after the... opposition leader in Britain... admitted... smack[ing its children. The politician] said at the time “children must realise there are some things they can’t do.” ...[the archbishop]’s comments... were seen as likely to reopen debate on corporal punishment...

British classrooms, once regarded as a bastion of order, are under the spotlight over a crisis in discipline which has raised a national debate about standards of morality. The focus centred on the Ridings School in Halifax... which was closed by local authorities yesterday after teachers voted overwhelmingly to strike in protest at attacks by children whom they said were unteachable... [E]ducation has become an emotionally charged battlefield for politicians vying for the support they need to win the next general election... Politicians competing for the moral high ground are putting every outburst of classroom anarchy under the microscope. They and the media play up fears that social values are breaking down in once-tranquil Britain. Right-wingers want caning brought back in school... [However, t]he Education Secretary, [who is] at the eye of the classroom storm, was publicly rebuked this week by the P[M when the secretary]... supported a return to caning, banned in Britain in 1985. [The PM], whose own “back to basics” morality campaign badly misfired... said the Government had no intention of bringing back corporal punishment.

...The British Parliament is to vote on whether to re-introduce corporal punishment in schools following a spate of high-profile cases of insolent and disruptive children causing havoc in the classroom. Britain abolished the use of the cane or slipper in 1986 under pressure from the European Court of Human Rights. But the P[M]... bowed at the weekend to pressure from right-wing members of his... Party to reconsider the issue... The vote will take place early next year but [the PM] himself is against the reintroduction of corporal punishment and has said Government ministers must fall into line. Most members of the opposition... are also against the idea and political commentators said the idea... was likely to fail.

...A Kenyan schoolgirl died last week after a caning, despite a ban on corporal punishment in schools imposed after the death of a schoolgirl in July. The 14-year-old was hit on the head with the cane, a newspaper said. - 1996

N[SW] voters want to overrule their Government's one-year-old ban on corporal punishment and bring back the cane, according to an opinion poll published yesterday. The state's Labour Government, claiming overwhelming support, banned the cane from its schools from the end of 1995, allowing private schools a further 12 months to come into line – or face deregistration. But a... survey in the *Sydney Morning Herald* showed that 53[%] of voters believe schools should have the right to cane unruly students... The pro-cane vote, however, varied widely between age, gender and even place of residence. Less than one-third of the 18-24-year-olds surveyed supported the use of corporal punishment, while 65[%] – the highest proportion – of those over 55 said... [yes] to... the cane. Two-thirds of... [guys said yes], compared with 41[% of gals; as did 60%]... of... rural... people... against 49[%] of those surveyed in metropolitan Sydney. The Government, however, remains unmoved. The State Education Minister... told the... *Herald* that community opinion shifted over a period of time and that the poll had shown an increasing number of people were coming to accept that caning was an ineffective way of providing discipline... [● The NZ] public is being naive if it thinks teachers never lay a hand on students, say... [local educators. They've seen kids hit around the head, whacked on the back of the legs, kicked in the bottom and spread-eagled and physically restrained against walls. A teacher who did not want to be named said violence still occurred and in her experience it was younger, inexperienced teachers who were the main perpetrators... But in a bizarre twist, teachers were sometimes asked to hit pupils by parents...

A Motueka school using corporal punishment to discipline its students is breaking the law, says the E[RO]... The principal... said yesterday that the school had replied to some of the office's recommendations, but its response on corporal punishment might not have been satisfactory to the office... [The principal] declined to comment further. Shiloh Christian Academy is a fully registered private school run by the Motueka New Life Centre for primary and secondary school students. The philosophy of the school centres on providing a *Bible*-based curriculum and training students in the principles of Christian living. It is understood that parents sign a form when enrolling a child at Shiloh which gives permission for corporal punishment to be used. But children's commissioner guidelines say teachers cannot hit students even if they have permission from parents. "...the use of force by a school employee against a student at school remains an offence under section 139A of the Education Act," the guidelines say. A... report had now been forwarded to the Ministry of Education for further action... The ministry could strip the school of its registration... The school's founder... was reluctant to talk about the matter, saying it was an "in-house issue" that was being worked through... "We would rather not make it public or discuss it. I don't think it is the public's concern."

...The National Council of [Gals] wants the Government to repeal part of the Crimes Act, which allows parents to... [use] reasonable physical force against children as punishment within the family... "We acknowledge children need to be disciplined but there are other ways of doing it... Adults are not allowed to use force against each other, so why should parents be allowed to use it on their children?" ...[according to the retired] first senior lecturer in environmental studies at the University of Auckland, [if]... children are safely to survive the perils of childhood they must learn to obey adult commands and will probably need well-chosen, careful applications of corporal punishment... "...The Swedish blunder of prohibiting corporal punishment even in the home must not be copied here. And I urge that... this method ...o[f] discipline... be restored for teachers to use..."

...N[Z]'s attitude to corporal punishment lags behind other [First World] countries, says... a professor of psychology at Waikato University[who] has asked the Minister of Youth Affairs... to act on a U[N] report that says that section 59 of the Crimes Act... is contrary to article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child... "Most parents, most of the time, can hit their children without abusing them... but who can say at what point a parent will snap? Every child hit is at risk and as a community we have to give up some things for the good of all."

...Thou shalt smack thy child and any attempt to take away that right will be met with widespread civil disobedience, says the Christian Heritage Party leader[who]... is vowing to stir up trouble if the Government takes seriously an international call to ban corporal punishment. Smacking children for discipline is fine, and so is strapping them at school, [the CHP leader] says. "If they try this one they will meet with opposition that will far exceed the homosexual law reforms, mark my words." [The CHP leader]'s outcry has been provoked by the release of a largely damning U[N] report on how N[Z] is complying with the U[N] Convention on the Rights of the Child... The U[N] wants the Government to ban all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse. [However, the CHP leader says NZ] law already guards against that, and the UN and the Government should stay out of people's homes... [otherwise] parents could end up facing assault charges for smacking their own children. Hundreds of thousands of Christians would unite against it, [the CHP leader promised]. God had given the power and responsibility to parents to train their children and while [the CHP leader] did not advocate indiscriminate smacking and strapping, sometimes it was called for. Banning corporal punishment in schools had already been a bad move, [the CHP leader] said. Truancy had gone through the roof, unruly children had ended up on the streets and teachers were leaving because they did not know how to control children.

...The head of the Auckland School Trustees Association is battling to bring back the cane despite chairing the board of a school with an anti-violence policy... [V]erbal or physical punishment is not tolerated... [at] Massey High School... [However, the head] said many schools spent a lot of time and resources, often unsuccessfully, trying to discipline badly behaved students. Some students specialised in trying the system... "Possibly corporal punishment may be effective for them where all the talk in the world won't be." [The head] envisaged a deputy principal being able to "deliver a whack on the bottom" but... [the] comments have left educationists and politicians smarting. The Minister of Education... said the chance of politicians voting to reinstate corporal punishment was "probably zero." But [the minister] conceded that the ministry was concerned about discipline within schools... The Principals' Federation president... said schools' problems with disruptive students were not improving but... hitting students was not appropriate... The executive director of the Independent Schools Council... said corporal punishment was an anachronism.

...The head of the Auckland School Trustees Association has been universally caned for advocating corporal punishment in schools. [The head] will push for corporal punishment in his final report next month as president of the association. [But the head] was given six of the best this week from educational and youth aid bodies unanimous in their condemnation... The president of the Educational Institute... said the teachers' union had thought "barbaric methods of controlling children had ceased." Disruptive children came from homes where they were hit... so "whacking and beating them [at school] would make no difference... [Instead,] more money should be spent... studying why children were disruptive..."

...Research suggests it's hard to know if your child's a bully, but parents often lead by example... [W]hen there's violence in the home, or when they see their parents behaving violently towards others[children]... learn to come to accept violence as just part of a way of life and there doesn't seem anything wrong about going out and hitting another kid.

...If we are a society that considers itself serious about reducing violence, then banning corporal punishment... [is] a necessary and positive step... Though corporal punishment as a quick and easy method of correction seems simple and benign[one]... of the primary criticisms of corporal punishment is that it conveys mixed and often damaging messages about how to deal with conflict, such as: "If someone does something you disagree with, or annoys you, hit them," or "if you have a problem, use violence to solve it." As history shows, the use of violence is not a productive or life-affirming way to solve conflict. The horrors of Bosnia, Rwanda and Iraq are still fresh in the minds of many people and remind us of the devastation and suffering that occurs when negotiation or mediation is not used at an early stage... Lacking alternative conflict resolution skills or outside intervention from those who could provide those skills, each of these countries quickly found themselves falling back on the only system of conflict resolution they knew and, "following in their father's footsteps," took to arms. Corporal punishment, while occurring on a more personal level, is based on a similar model. One party (the child) performs an inappropriate behaviour, the other party (the parent) hits the child, and the child ceases the behaviour. As in a wartime climate, "might is right" determines the outcome... First the child learns that power, and the holder of power, determines the outcome of conflict. The child begins to associate power and outcome as mutually exclusive and learns that... [it] must employ power strategies to gain the upper hand... Bullying, which has become an increasing problem in some schools, is one example of a

child exercising his or her physical power over a peer or sibling. Secondly, it transmits the idea that power management, and not reasoning or communication, is the principal mechanism for resolution... [which] leaves little opportunity for any sort of discussion, for feelings to be expressed or understanding to be achieved. A [bully] does not learn what... [it] has done wrong, or that each side must be heard. Thirdly, the child learns that parties are not equal entering a conflict; that one is superior, the other inferior; and that the exploitation of the imbalance will decide the outcome. Any concept of an outcome of mutual benefit is unattainable; one is the "winner"['], the other the "loser." That message at a personal level is one that plagues society. Inequality continues to cause suffering, from human rights to international business... With corporal punishment the child is the loser and, later, society...

A standard family practice that leads to 90[%] of child abuse cases must be outlawed, say two Waikato child rearing experts... [Only 10%] of child abuse is pathological in origin, and the rest is committed by parents who think their practices are normal, but this time went too far... In their new book, *The Next Generation – Child Rearing in N[Z]*, the psychology professors... continue to promote their uncompromising, and unpopular, views on smacking. The book reviews the couple's 40 years of research into how N[Z]ers bring up children, and addresses what they call the "dark stain" of child rearing – physical punishment... [The book is] their seventh joint effort, since they wrote *Child Rearing Patterns in N[Z]* in 1970... The couples' 1981 book, *Spare the Rod*, advocated a law change to limit smacking... They say N[Z] research confirmed a relationship between... physical punishment and behavioural problems, while American studies showed spanking children was related to suicide, depression... street crime, and impaired relationships... "In the light of awareness of abuse, why does physical punishment remain unquestioned by so many? ...When one knows that the consequences of a custom or practice are harmful, the time for change has come... Most cases of child abuse are not dramatic or bizarre, but simply sordid, grubby and all too familiar... Those who commit them have simply become caught up in confusion, barely coping and in bad habits of child management that have gone on getting worse and worse." ...[in American news, a Cincinnati mother] accused of letting her children live in squalor while... [spending] up to 12 hours a day on the Internet has been put on probation and ordered to take parenting classes.

...[p]arenting courses for prison inmates are being developed to reduce family abuse and violent crime. Around \$250,000 will be spent on the three-year pilot programme for... [three] prisons... "Research shows children with violence or abuse in their upbringing are 30% more likely to commit violence offences than those with more stable backgrounds. We want to better equip parents to provide non-violent family environments for their children, with the result that prisoners will be less likely to offend and so will their children. Not all prisoners lack parenting skills, but a reasonable number had problems in their upbringings." ...controlling and disciplining children without violence would be a focus of the parenting programmes, which cater for nearly 270 prisoners a year. "...45% of [guy] and 65% of [gal] inmates have dependent children under the age of 18."

...One of the richest blessings bestowed on my wife and me is the privilege of having two godsons. They are five and four now... Early on, the parents became aware of the boys' acute sensitivity to the atmosphere in the home. Any hint of dissension between parents caused distress; overt displays of affection brought smiles. The parents soon learned to settle their differences – and they have as many as any other couple – out of sight and earshot of the boys. When the lads are naughty, they are quickly and firmly told the nature and consequences of their misbehaviour. When they become insufferable they might be given a short, sharp, safe smack. And if you call that "violence" then you're nuts.

...Smacking, violence not the same... To think an opposition to violence automatically commits one to oppose all use of physical force is to confuse two distinguishable things... Obviously, we ought to be against violence in interpersonal relationships – including those between parents and children... But the argument against violence is beside the point when the issue is whether the rare smack on the occasion of a child's flagrant disregard of well-understood rules of justice, accompanied by an explanation of why it was deserved, should be beyond the pale... Just as there is a difference between the bald and the not bald, though the difference is a matter of degree, there is a difference between violent and non-violent applications of physical force, though they may shade into one another. It is said that corporal punishment teaches children to be violent. But this gives too little credit to our children's intelligence... Children can understand very well the difference between violence as a means to get one's own way and physical force as a balwark against injustice. It is as well they should learn this as children, since society is not going to give up enforcing the law by physical constraints on violators. And the swat has certain advantages over other methods of rule-enforcement. It can be immediate rather than postponed, it is over quickly and does not poison the air for days and it has a remarkable capacity (if not used too often) to concentrate the attention on what has gone wrong... Though physical violence should never play more than a minor role in the armoury of parental techniques... whomever would forbid it altogether needs better arguments than those that trade on the confusion... that any application of physical force constitutes violence... There are those who advocate as many as 30 swats from a leather strap...

A N[Z]-made video... has sparked outrage on the other side of the world. British child protection authorities have condemned the parental advice tape which uses a character called Sam Smack... [T]he National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, condemns the video's content of how to strap children "correctly" with a 23cm-long red leather strap as "bizarre" and "incredibly tasteless." The... three-hour video, called the *Safe Smack Parenting Programme*[, which]... also sets out when it is acceptable to smack... is made... by a Hamilton-registered company called Safe Smack Ltd. It will be marketed in Britain by... mail order... [from a former Christian Coalition candidate, who] could not be contacted yesterday.

...The [Hamiltonian] behind a "safe smacking" video promoting the use of a leather strap to discipline children has returned home after a failed marketing bid in Britain, but is vowing to remake the video and release it within weeks... [In related news, a t]eacher-turned-politician... believes the cane should be a punishment option for serious misbehaviour in schools... [T]he Minister of Police and... [NZ] First MP... was not surprised by a N[Z] *Herald* poll showing... 55.6%... support for corporal punishment to be reinstated... [because the minister had] carried out his own poll in 1995 which showed similar opinions... The Labour Government abolished corporal punishment in its last year of office in 1990. [The minister], who was then a Labour MP, was one of four from the party who crossed the floor and voted with the National MPs against the move... [According to the minister,] Parliament's removal of one form of punishment for serious offences had forced some schools to concentrate on... suspensions and expulsions... Nearly 70[%] of people aged over 51 wanted a return to the good old days of teachers meting out justice... Seven out of 10 of those polled who earned less than \$19,000[also] took a hard line and wanted children to face tougher measures... [However, p]eople aged 18 to 30... were against any plans to remove the carrot and replace it with the stick... and... principals contacted by the *Herald* yesterday were not in favour of corporal punishment returning to schools. - 1997

We shouldn't be surprised at last week's *Herald* poll showing that more than half of us want to restore to teachers the right to beat our children. We are, as a species, fond of simple solutions to complex problems and there's nothing quite as simple as violence. I suspect, what's more, that evolution has us hard-wired to extract supreme satisfaction from belting the daylight out of anything that frustrates us. That's why I behave as I do on the tennis court... So let's take it as given that bringing back the cane would make some teachers feel a good deal better. But... at the risk of offending the other grizzled veterans of "the good old days," I have to say that it never did me any good... [M]y form two... teacher (tellingly, we called them masters) was the school's most enthusiastic dispenser of canings and few mornings passed without a hapless pre-teenage boy, white and sweating with fear, shuffled into our form room where the boy would touch his toes and be viciously thrashed by a lean and muscled person almost twice his size. This grotesque spectacle was so commonplace that I was soon able to... barely even flinch... as the thin whiplash of cane ruptured hundreds of small blood vessels in the body of someone who was barely out of childhood. The reasons for the thrashings were sickeningly ordinary... For those who think that things began to fall apart when teachers stopped handing out daily thrashings these reminiscences will cut no

ice... [However,] this I know for sure: I can remember, as though it were yesterday, the... burning in my buttocks when my form two teacher beat me (for clowning around at square leg during a cricket game)... But... I cannot remember a single thing [that teacher] taught me.

...“Not a word,” commands... [the] Children’s Commissioner... as his son approaches the tape-recorder, “about how I used to smack you as a kid or it’ll be all over the *Herald*.” “Nah,” says the 28-year-old... barely breaking step. “[Dad] never used to smack us. [Dad] used to use a belt.” ...The... [perso]n whose job is to lobby on behalf of the country’s most vulnerable... emits a soft groan. But, moments before, [the commissioner had] ‘fessed up anyway. [The commissioner]’s anticipated my reminding him that, in 1992, as Associate Minister of Education in a National cabinet, [it]’d said decisions on corporal punishment should be left to schools themselves. Now, [the ex-minister] wants smacking of children to be outlawed by the repeal of section 59 of the Crimes Act, which lets parents use “reasonable physical force” to discipline. “I’ve changed,” [the commissioner] says simply... What changed his view was becoming a grandfather... “I’m a grandfather of two now, nearly three,” [the commissioner] says with obvious pride. “And we [[the commissioner] and his wife...] became instantly very close to our first granddaughter. I cannot think of any reasons why [it] would require smacking.” Like most people of his generation, [the 55-year-old... looks back on a childhood where physical discipline was accepted. [The boy] would be told to “choose a switch off the tree by the outside toilet,” although discipline was more formal than random and neither frequent nor regular. Likewise, [the commissioner] smacked his own children. But... “wouldn’t do it now if I could do it all again... So I say to those of you who think you have a God-given or cultural or historical right to smack your children: ‘What about giving that away in the interests of saving some lives down the track of children whose parents don’t know the difference between what’s appropriate and not?’”

...Do you sometimes feel you have a teenager from hell? A dose of tough love may be the answer – and groups in three parts of Auckland are holding open information evenings next week, Toughlove Awareness Week, to help parents deal with pre-teen and teenage children whose behaviour is unacceptable. There are eight groups between Orewa and Pukekohe, says[the] regional administrator... and membership in that area totals 550. “Toughlove doesn’t offer a quick fix... but by regularly attending meetings, parents learn to cope.” They are helped to set boundaries, find innovative ways of dealing with bad behaviour and follow through with their own decisions. “Toughlove doesn’t support physical or verbal abuse and does not advocate kicking kids out of home,”... But there has to be authority in the family, “and that’s the parent because teenagers don’t have the maturity or the wisdom to produce a quality home life.” ...[By the way, e]ight years ago nearly 500 members of the Maori [Gal]’s Welfare League rose to their feet and clapped at the suggestion that naughty children deserved a hiding. The... annual conference in Kaitaia had just passed a remit that parents’ rights over the care of their children be reviewed under the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act. Not all the league members were impressed with the rousing support for physical discipline. But there was concern that parents could no longer discipline their children by hitting them without ending up in court. At the weekend’s 48th league conference at Mangere, in Manukau City, members looked slightly aghast when reminded of that Kaitaia applause over a junior delegate’s call for parents to be able to strike disobedient children. [The league’s] president... said attitudes then were a reflection that many of the members had been smacked as children... [The president] said the climate had changed and [most members now] believed... smacking should be avoided... “We have been making inroads.”

...An anti-smacking campaign is being credited for a dramatic shift in Maori attitudes to child discipline. Research by the [CYPS] shows the proportion of Maori who see smacking as desirable has dropped from 48 per cent to 19 per cent... [■ T]he Government has taken its first cautious steps towards a possible ban on adults smacking children. [The] Social Services Minister... yesterday released documents detailing... [the] issues... The Government is looking at action taken by other countries before making a decision this year.

...Big brother is getting even bigger in N[SW]. This week the state Government began laying down the rules on how, where and with what parents can smack their kids... But as parental and political opposition surged, it was clear the bill would stand a chance of surviving only if it allowed the continued use of kitchen implements and their ilk, and instead concentrated on the set impact of a whacking. It was also clear that the law would fail if it tried to introduce a general prohibition that would enable police or social workers to act against parents seen to deliver a smack to the backside in public... Although the limits need to be established by the courts, parents would generally be able to clip their children on the ear and apply the wooden spoon so long as they did so briefly and without excessive force.

...[the only time my dad ever whistled a particular tune was when my dad was trying to control his temper, and since my dad never did control his temper it was always a prelude to a slap around the head. That is negative conditioning. But for all anyone knew it could have been the perfect trigger for a pathological mind. Some killers rely on the flimsiest of excuses for the most heinous crimes. By all accounts I should be barking mad and very, very angry.]

...a newly released study... shows that children who are severely smacked or beaten are twice as likely to turn into violent criminals.

...[after a ‘16-year-old Amish boy ran away from home to escape daily beatings, 20/20 found that the bishops instruct parents to beat their children to make them submissive (in addition, higher education is forbidden). Every Amish home has a strap in it. Their goal is to get to heaven, and the Amish believe strict discipline is necessary. This explains their increased emphasis on rules over religion.’ (‘The Amish are trapped, by choice, in a 17th century timewarp, and spend lifetimes arguing over what aspects of modern life can enter their world. A community in Kansas was split over the question of whether air could be allowed in tractor tyres. The argument in this community by the older guys has been, “Hey, if you put air tyres on, when are you going to put electricity in your house? You don’t need electricity, you don’t need a telephone.” I guess you don’t really – but maybe you don’t need a horse? Maybe you can just dig your field by hand? The only thing that gets me is that, with all those systems that I’ve encountered across here in the US, if you step out of line and question it you’re out. You don’t even get a postcard. Well, where’s the kindness in that?’) □ It is estimated that ‘90% of American parents spank their kids.’]

...FOR a generation of parents increasingly weary of brattish and unruly offspring, the advice from America’s newest childcare experts... that small children should be seen and not heard... has come as welcome relief... They say that to spare the rod is to spoil the child. In a country long-renowned for the indulgence of its parents – and the appalling behaviour of its spoilt children – their message is hugely controversial... The couple [even] say babies can be spoilt through too much cuddling... The [couple] are traditional conservatives and committed Christians. Quoting freely from the *Bible*, they say babies should be left to cry because: “God did not intervene when His Son cried out on the cross”. The [couple] are responsible for the biggest reappraisal in parenting since Dr Benjamin Spock more than 40 years ago. Their books sell faster than those of any other childcare expert in the world, but their extraordinary popularity has not gone unchallenged. One leading paediatrician said their theories were “the most dangerous I have seen”. There are reports of babies being admitted to hospital with malnutrition after parents ignored babies crying to be fed... [A] Californian expert on breast-feeding... is aware of at least 100 cases of poor weight gain connected with people following the books... The [couple], who are in their 50s and have two adult children, developed their programme through their... family-run company, Growing Families International, [which] is responsible for *On Becoming Babywise* and its sequel. The [couple] seem to have struck a chord by promising that parents who follow their techniques will train babies to sleep through the night within weeks. In doing so, they run counter to modern “child-centred” theories which say babies should be fed on demand. The couple also believe children are born with a predisposition to naughtiness. In courses distributed through churches, they recommend spanking toddlers as young as 18 months for indiscretions such as banging high chair tables. Children up to three should be slapped up to five times. The [couple] suggest hitting children with an implement reserved for the purpose. They warn that a wooden spoon might break a child’s fingers and that a belt could damage skin tissue... They recommend a rubber spatula or wooden paint stirrer... In another publication *Preparing for Parenting*, they scorn the significance of bonding with your baby after birth. “In Biblical times, a new mother did not... attempt... to establish a bond with her child,” they write... [The couple] rarely give press interviews, saying

the “secular media is decidedly anti-God and anti-God’s people”. They also say that babies who fail to thrive on their programme “usually have pre-existing medical problems”... [Their] former church, the Grace Community Church, has publicly distanced itself from the couple. A statement approved by the board of elders denied any Biblical basis for refusing demand feeding. “We... caution young mothers not to adopt any system of parenting... so rigid it requires them to quell the God-given maternal impulse,”... • *Several thousand... Babywise books have been sold in N[Z]...*

Baby and Child Care was published at exactly the right time... 1946... It was the end of the war, babies were booming and people were looking for new ideas. After all, it had been an era when starchy guidebooks told parents not to touch their children – just shake hands with them in the morning... The [author of *Baby and Child Care*] urged parents to trust themselves – “you know more than you think” – and not to be afraid to love their babies. [‘Children who have never felt loved grow to feel worthless, unwanted, inferior. They not only feel unloved, but unlovable.’] The great irony is that [the author] did not practice what [his book] preached... Shockingly, [Dr Spock] never hugged or kissed his sons. Family life, his sons confess... left much to be desired. Archive footage of... Dr Benjamin Spock... in the 60s and 70s is revealing, showing a [person] hooked on fame...

“Paediatrics became an established specialty in the 1880s. The American Paediatric Association was established in 1888... [A]n early president [of the association] published the first text on the care and feeding of infants... [I]n his book [the paediatrician] said that babies should rarely be picked up... The less contact between baby and mother the better. This was... the age of... scientific motherhood.” The scientific method... led to new ways of raising children in the 1920s. “Parents felt that traditional ways of rearing children in... the new, modern, industrial... world were... no longer appropriate... Millions of dollars were poured into establishing scientific study during the 1920s. John Watson... was the first psychologist to apply laboratory techniques to babies. [Watson] published in 1920 what has become a classic study... It was... of a little baby... and his reaction to a white rat... Watson showed that... you could, through his method of conditioning, make a child into anything you wanted to. You could make him fearful or... unfearful... a genius or a thug... You had the raw material, a child was completely plastic – something to be moulded as the parents saw fit... And, since a child could be conditioned to become anything you wanted it to be, [Watson] advocated a brave new world through making brand new human beings... Watson’s study was based on a single experiment, and people were very taken by it because it was the first application of science to babies, but his results have been rejected and the evidence that Watson was wrong... is just overwhelming.” But... many new parents were instructed to follow... rigid paediatric advice... [such as] don’t kiss your children, don’t pet them... “...in those days it was believed that loose schedules [led] to loose bowels. It was one of the reasons why... they insisted upon babies being fed every 4 hours.” ...Spock knew Freudians traced the roots of many adult problems back to early childhood experiences, but Spock – who first came to the attention of the world when ‘his US rowing team won gold at the 1924 Olympic Games’ – took that idea one step further. After learning what certain kinds of early childhood behaviour meant, [Spock] tried to help parents deal with that behaviour before it became a problem for their children in later life. “...the big problem for me during those first 5 to 10 years was there didn’t seem to be any correspondence between psychoanalytic concepts and what mothers were telling me about their babies... Gradually, bit by bit, the things fitted together... By the time my second son was born, which was 11 years after the first, I’d had a lot of paediatric experience, and I was a much more reasonable person – who believed in flexibility [with] feeding schedules, and to go to a baby, of course, if it cries.” ...[Spock] begins the book saying ‘TRUST YOURSELF’. Again and again [Spock] says... ‘don’t worry about what the experts say, don’t worry about what you’re being told.’ ...in fact, the book is full of endlessly detailed advice... [It] goes on for 5 pages about... how to wash diapers, and along the way... will say, ‘don’t drop them down the toilet.’ I mean, this mother who’s supposed to be so competent and trustworthy can’t even be trusted to hold on to the diaper! ...the power... and importance of Spock is that [Spock] is at the very centre of the... most momentous change in American character in the 20th century – the change from thoughts essentially conditioned by scarcity to a character that’s essentially conditioned by abundance... and [Spock] managed a revolution in the guise of acceptable ordinary common sense... It’s hard to realise now that... in 1957... breast-feeding was very uncommon, and it was said ‘American [mothers] lived too high-strung lives to be able to breast feed.’” ...Spock had seen that children can be psychologically harmed if parents constantly try to dominate them and interfere with their wishes. Children either surrender their spirit or rebel, so Spock encouraged parents to let their babies take responsibility for how much food to eat and on when they were ready for toilet training... “...My basic idea is that children are striving – all through childhood – to grow up to become more responsible. Children love to be kind and love to co-operate. This is why a 2-year-old begins trying to set the table. [The 2-year-old] wants to contribute to the family’s welfare... [T]he parent should be very appreciative of the offering... and should compliment the child and say, ‘...you did a beautiful job. If you keep on putting the silver on so well, pretty soon you’ll be able to put the plates on the table.’ ...this is exciting to a child; to think there’s more and more responsibilities, and more and more skilful things to do... [T]his is what we need in our society rather than this fierce competitiveness, and the emphasis on getting hold of as much money as you can. Well, it’s gonna take a long time to change this because America is obviously built on this idea of ambition – get ahead kid...” ...“I remember Ben Spock as... [someone who proved that if] you care about children you’re going to be concerned for peace.” ...“I think... if you love your children, if you love your grandchildren, you ought to be working to get rid of nuclear arms. The Government will get rid of them if enough people say ‘we don’t want trillions of dollars to be spent that way’... In 1964 Lyndon Johnson’s campaign committee asked me to go on radio and television in support of his candidacy... I said ‘I certainly will support him – as a citizen, as a paediatrician and as a spokes[person] for the disarmament movement’... because [Johnson] said ‘I will not send American boys to fight in an Asian war.’ ...I did enough so that... Johnson himself called me up a couple of days after the election to thank me, and... said in this humble-sounding voice, ‘Dr Spock, I hope I prove worthy of your trust.’ ...I said ‘Oh, President Johnson, of course you’ll be worthy of my trust.’ It never occurred to me that 3 months later [Johnson] would do the very opposite of what... [Johnson had promised. In 1972 I decided to run for president myself. My party] didn’t do as well in the final counting as we had hoped – but we were on the ballot in only 10 states. We spent about \$40,000 on the presidential campaign. Nixon spent more than that for balloons at his nominating convention...” ...[‘Something of a revolution occurred in child psychology in the 1970s, when scientists found that babies are predisposed to interact with adults, and to learn how to behave, without any need for reward or punishment. The most graphic example is the tongue-poking test: put out your tongue at a newborn baby, and it will put out its tongue right back at you. Instead of trying officiously to tell mothers how to treat their babies, the people in the van of psychology are now content to observe and learn.’ As a consequence, Spock’s theories have remained popular, and by] the early 1990s 40 million copies of his book... *Baby and Child Care*... had been sold in over 30 languages... more than any other book in history except the *Bible*... Building on his pioneering work, thousands of experts throughout the world collect data on the development and care of children. “All of this material has been integrated and... it points to the validity of the basic points... Spock made: that parental bonding is important; that physical contact... a relaxed, comfortable... parent... [and a] loving approach... is the best way to achieve... happy... well-adjusted children.” - Dr Spock The Baby Doc

...Dr Benjamin Spock... died in March at age 94 – [not long after the latest septuplets] burst upon the paediatric scene.

...[the 7]-month old Saudi septuplets could remain in hospital until they are a year old and the family are better able to care for them, their father said yesterday... But the children’s mother, who visits the hospital twice a day to feed them, would like to take them home sooner than later... The situation of the four boys and three girls... is far different compared with the world’s other set of surviving septuplets, born last November to[an] American couple... of Carlisle, Iowa. The [USers] have as many as 60 volunteers working in shifts at their home to feed and care for their babies. But the... Saudi... parents... have had to rely on the staff of the Government hospital in... Abha and two recently hired Malaysian nannies.

...All [the 30-year-old] longs for is a normal life and to once again resume the career [it] adores: caring for children. But... the A[US]n child-care worker branded 'The Killer Nanny' after [it] was charged with the murder of baby Caroline Jongen in the UK... more than three years ago... fears [it]'ll never be allowed to rebuild her life... [(six-month-old Caroline suffered fitting convulsions[; the nanny], home alone with Caroline, tried to revive her... [by gently shaking] Caroline for two seconds and call[ing her name; the nanny] maintains that the technique was included in her course, [though] current first aid stresses not to shake a baby... 'Given the chance, I'd have done things differently... I panicked, I did what I was trained to do and it had consequences...') - t]three months later, [the nanny]... was in prison[). The AUSn knows it]... will never again work with children, so... recently resorted to a banking career - to no avail. Last month, [the 30-year-old] was asked to resign from Westpac Bank, where [it]'d been working as a teller for eight weeks, after her employers learnt of her UK conviction... 'I'd hoped to tell you that my life was improving and that people had stopped judging me, but sadly that's not the case... I feel frustrated. Nannying was my dream job. I want to... try to find a job that I enjoy as much, although being given that chance feels like a dream at the moment.' Like so many Kiwi and A[US]n girls, the 30-year-old, a qualified child-care worker, loved living in London and her job as a live-in nanny. But like [an] English nanny... in the US, [the AUSn] became responsible for a tragedy.

A Massachusetts grand jury has indicted an 18-year-old English nanny on a first degree murder charge in the death of a nine-month-old boy... [The nanny] has pleaded not guilty to a charge of assault and battery...

An English au pair testified yesterday that... [at no time was] the nearly 9-month-old infant... shook, hit or hurt [while in her care]... "I love kids,"... [the au pair, who] moved to Boston in June last year... told... a packed courtroom... [The mother] and her husband... used their moment in court to portray the beauty in the eight-month life of their "gift from God." ...[speaking of beautiful babies,] tomorrow those winsome ways... [of NZ's] cutest little... faces... will win one of them \$10,000. The five... [competitors - aged between 5 months and 1 year in age -] beat 6000 other entrants to the finals of the Johnson's Baby of the Year Contest... Six judges... will spend several hours in Auckland watching the children play and interact with each other and their parents before deciding the winner. The judging will not be in public.

...In a daring bid, the British au pair accused of killing a 9-month-old baby has chosen to have jurors decide on a charge of murder and refused to have them consider a lesser charge... For jurors to deliver a guilty verdict for murder in the first degree, prosecutors must prove beyond reasonable doubt that the crime was committed with extreme atrocity and cruelty. It carried an automatic sentence of life in prison with no chance of parole. Second-degree murder carried a mandatory life sentence with an option for parole after 15 years. But the judge has some discretion when sentencing for involuntary [hu]manslaughter, defined as the unintentional killing of another through wanton or reckless conduct. Under that charge there is no minimum sentence... [T]he other lesser charges were automatically included... [with] the first-degree murder charge...

[A] British au pair... collapsed in tears after a... jury yesterday found her guilty of second-degree murder... "I didn't do it. I didn't do it... Why did they do that to me... I'm only 19,"... [the au pair] sobbed as... the nine [gals and three guys of the Superior Court] jury, looking pale and haggard after deliberating... for more than 26 hours... left the courtroom... During the three-week murder trial, the prosecution claimed that... the... frustrated and angry... nanny... first violently shook the crying and colicky baby and then slammed his head against a hard surface. [The baby] died of massive head injuries five days later... But medical experts challenged much of the prosecution's case, testifying that the baby's injuries were likely to have been sustained about two weeks before the date on which [the au pair] was accused of causing them. "I don't know what happened," [the au pair's lawyer]... told reporters. "I... don't understand how anyone in their right mind could come to this verdict[.]" The lawyer had been so certain of victory... that... [the lawyer somehow had allowed the au pair] to enter into a sophisticated gamble that has now cost her at least 15 years of her life... "[The parents are] obviously satisfied that the person responsible for killing Matthew has been found responsible," [the prosecutor] said.

...THE parents of [a] British au pair... said on Friday their daughter was an "innocent child" and vowed an all-out fight to overturn her[US] life sentence for murder... The verdict[had] stunned Britain... Sky television, which asked its audience to phone in their views... said 98,677 callers thought the trial unfair and 7443 felt justice had been done. The British government said it would offer all support to the [family and that their daughter] would be visited regularly by British officials in her cell. "This is a tragic case for everyone concerned," said a Foreign Office spokesman[person. The family's local MP]... said... "...I and this whole community will continue to fight for justice..."

...As lawyers for[a] British au pair... prepare appeals against her murder conviction... the case[continues to] rock... two nations... NOTHING last week scared working parents as much as a plump, round-faced 19-year-old... The case has touched off debate about who is ultimately to blame for the death of a child left in someone else's care. To... some conservative Americans the baby's mother... bears ultimate responsibility because [the mother] should have been at home caring for her children. The tragic outcome has been that [the mother], a Boston ophthalmologist in her early 30s, has not only had to deal with losing her young son but has received abusive telephone calls and letters blaming her for his death. One accused her of "greed and poor judgment" in choosing to work while having children at home. The case has led to claims that childcare is too unregulated and that parents often must place their children's lives in the hands of nannies whose characters they know little about... [The 19-year-old, who] arrived in the US in mid 1996 under a US government-funded au pair scheme[, and whose]... training in child care consisted of only a four-day course... claimed that the fatal injuries to the baby may have occurred days or weeks earlier, when Matthew... was not in her care... [However, a police officer testified that the au pair admitted being] "a little rough" with the baby... Au pairs usually receive about \$200 a week in addition to room and board and are treated, in effect, as another member of the family. The au pairs receive a return air fare and are expected to stay for a year. In return, however, they are asked to work long hours at a job for which they may have few qualifications... A N[Zer]... who's worked as an au pair in America describes it as slave-labour... "...people undervalue them, they underpay them, they often overwork them." ...Many young au pairs who go to the US expecting to use the job as a way of seeing the country are disappointed to find themselves stuck in the suburbs, dealing with the daily routines of nappies, bath times and cleaning. Prosecutors say that... [the 19-year-old] found it difficult to deal with the hard work involved. [The 19-year-old] began staying out late at night and was reluctant to get up early in the morning... would leave Matthew unattended while... [doing] the laundry, took long showers and talked for extended periods on the phone. The... [parents confronted her] and gave her a list of conditions, which included a night-time curfew... In Britain, much of the media coverage has been sympathetic towards [the au pair]... *The Guardian* in London said, "It may officially be the State of Massachusetts v [one au pair] in that courtroom, but it's also America v Britain." ...Many people agree... "We hope you are all hanging your heads in shame," said one fax sent to the American ambassador in London and to the state attorney-general in Massachusetts... On Wednesday the judge will consider defence motions to set aside the verdict... and declare [the au pair] innocent or order a new trial... But a Boston prosecutor warns it would be an extremely dangerous and inappropriate precedent for [the judge] to throw out the jury's hard-fought verdict... [even though the judge] has changed jury decisions at least three times in his career...

A... judge considering the fate of a British au pair... has decided to release his ruling directly on to the Internet in the hope of avoiding "the usual media circus," court sources said yesterday... More than 160 Web sites have been devoted to covering the case.

...Prosecutors said yesterday they would appeal against a judge's decision to reduce a jury verdict against[a British] au pair... and... free her, calling the ruling "bizarre" and "arbitrary." ...[the] Middlesex County Superior Court Judge... changed a jury's second-degree murder conviction... to involuntary [hu]manslaughter and sentenced her to the 279 days... already spent in prison while awaiting trial... "I don't know what happened here," said[the] Middlesex County district lawyer... "I have never seen anything like the rapid series of events that occurred today."

...[the lawyer] had spoken to the baby's parents... who had fled the state over the weekend in an attempt to avoid the media, and they were devastated. [However, residents in the au pair's] home town of Elton in England, packed shoulder to shoulder in the village pub, exploded in cheers and exchanged exuberant hugs after learning of the decision... British newspapers celebrated the decision as a triumph for justice in an American legal system slammed only a week ago as harsh and heavy-handed... One juror, contacted by telephone in Dallas, Texas, expressed relief at the judge's decision. "It's something I, and I think the other jurors, can live with,"... [The au pair] won't be going home immediately... The judge ordered her to remain in Massachusetts until the prosecution's appeal of her sentence runs its course... – which could take up to a year.

...The parents of baby Matthew... are stunned by a judge's decision to free the British nanny... "[The judge] acknowledges on the one hand that someone killed Matthew and on the other hand... frees her. It makes no sense,"... the baby's father, told the *Boston Globe*... "What does that say about justice? Does it say that you can fake a few tears and you are forgiven? Does it say that you can kill a baby and that your youth and inexperience with cranky babies counts for more than a child's life? ...[the nanny] killed Matty and[the] Judge... at once admits that and then does not make her take responsibility... If only [the nanny] would say, 'I did this. I'm sorry.' We could go on with forgiveness, without bitterness. [The nanny] had denied us that option,"... Matthew's mother... said. For her part, [the nanny] yesterday issued a statement to thank the judge and express her sorrow at Matthew's death. "I am enormously relieved that[the] Judge... has seen fit to give me back my liberty,"... [However, the] media have laid siege to the hotel where [the nanny] is staying... The... [nanny] has consistently maintained her innocence and her lawyers have said they will appeal the lowered conviction in a bid to clear her name... [The nanny] denied rumours that... her story... had[been] sold to the news media... [The judge,] who succeeded in getting himself kidnapped in his twenties, [and] has never shied away from high drama... can[also] expect... lucrative book offers... [The US] President... backs... the... [judge]'s decision to reduce... [the] murder conviction... the White House said yesterday.

...A British cabinet minister indicated yesterday [that it was his intention to] set lower sentences for two boys convicted of murdering a toddler when they were 10 years old... a case that drew international attention... [The] Home Secretary... was responding to a ruling in June by Britain's final Court of Appeal that [the] former Home Secretary... acted illegally in treating the two boys, now 13, as adult murderers and extending their minimum prison term to 15 years... In November 1993, the original trial judge sentenced [the two boys] to be detained at the Government's pleasure, with a recommendation that they serve at least eight years. The Lord Chief Justice, who heads the Court of Appeal, increased the minimum sentence to 10 years... [before the Home Secretary raised it again. An] uncle of the murdered toddler, said the Government should consider the feelings of the family. "The family is all of the same opinion – that those two should never get out for what they did,"... [By the way, within minutes of a] British au pair... being originally found guilty of murder, America wasted no time in exorcising its mob instincts. "They should fry her," was the reaction on television from one [USer], while the *New York Post's* veteran trial-as-media-carnival columnist... wrote: "This little witch... should go away for ever". Yet on Monday, following a week of howling on both sides of the Atlantic, [the judge saved the au pair] from such a grim fate... More predictable howling has resulted, with the British nanny TV show trial once again holding up a dark mirror to the Caliban of American justice. By overruling the jury, [the] Judge... has placed the U[S] jury system itself on trial. Thankfully for [the au pair], the 65-year-old Superior Court judge belongs to a dangerously endangered species in America: The... polka dot bow-tie wearing, Harvard and Oxford educated, diehard Anglophile. The judge is known in Boston circles for his donnish passion for British colonial history... [H]is... streak of Anglophilia was certainly not shared by the 12 members of the... jury. The tourist image of Boston as the... liberty capital of America... is far removed from the reality... [S]peaking or being English does you few favours in America today. Part of the problem... is that so few people either speak or understand English in America any more. A good example of linguistic confusion in the courtroom was when... [the au pair said "I] popped" the baby on the bed... Regrettably, nobody told her that "popped" in America means either to punch or to have sex. In truth, the jury's problem with [the au pair] was not so much specific anti-British sentiment, but the fact that the U[S] is a great, brash, hulking country whose bulk of non-educated and ignorant citizens are deeply afraid of anything alien to themselves. Her quietly reserved nature, her nervous – almost cocky – giggle, her emotional detachment and her ability to articulate herself is a sure sign in America that you probably have something to hide. "I didn't find her appealing," said [one US] media trial authority... What moved the jury against her, [the media trial authority] said, was having a legal gun-for-hire defence "dream team" led by [the] super lawyer... whose courtroom theatrics helped get [a major black celebrity (r:p1103, lns64-5) off a murder charge] in 1995. In contrast to the \$750,000[defence] team... paid for by[the] EF Au Pair agency, which fears being sued should any [hu]manslaughter charge stick, the prosecution was led by... [someone] whose strong Boston accent the jury could understand... Just as the black[1995] jury chose to believe in the innocence of a black celebrity role model, so the nine [gals in the] Boston jury... chose to believe a Boston mother and doctor. The[Boston] trial buried the old cliché that money buys you justice in America. But while [the] Judge... seems to amplify the[traditional] model of a hard working Boston professional... the parents of the eight-month-old baby... represent the darker side of the late 20th century version of the American middle class dream. Certainly one reason for the extremity of the initial reaction against [the au pair] in America is that the case aggravated the guilt that has become part of the lives of [gals] who choose to put their careers ahead of being a mother at home. Although portrayed by the media as a rich Boston doctor couple, the reality is they are debt-ridden – still paying off medical training – refuse to turn on their heating and, according to [the au pair]'s testimony, washed their baby only twice a week. In her "impact" speech after the verdict, [the mother] revealed herself to be coyly sentimental as well as self-obsessed and almost as verbally unintelligible as her hand-writing is illiterate. "[Matty] was a real butterball," [the mother] said of her baby... whose wrist – despite being a doctor – [the mother] somehow failed to notice had been fractured for two weeks. However reluctant Britain may be to entertain that [the au pair] was a baby killer, the fact remains that something went horribly wrong on February 4 when Matthew was in her untrained care. Many [USers], as a result, are now seething at her lenient treatment. What puzzles [USers] about the uproar over the verdict was how the British public could be so flagrantly convinced its cherubic au pair from Cheshire was 100% innocent. In less shockable US, teenagers, and especially young mothers, are routinely convicted of throttling or drowning small children in their care. Certainly, until[the] Judge... took matters into his own hands, relations between Britain and America hadn't deteriorated more quickly since the Boston Tea Party... [US] TV networks are being besieged by a public which feels outraged over what it sees as the letting off of a [British person] in whose care an American baby somehow died... While British papers seethed with feverish protestations... and small pubs removed American beer from their bars, the *New York Times*... drily commented on how the different perception of the "facts" in [the] trial on both sides of the Atlantic "speaks volumes about how the countries see themselves and each other."

...agencies supplying au pairs to American parents are facing lawsuits over the information they provide. [A] Police Officer... was called to a fire at a home in Thornwood, Connecticut. In the nursery [the officer] found the body of a baby, Kristie... Meanwhile, a young [gal] was screaming hysterically in a foreign language at the entrance to the garage. This was... a Swiss girl working as an au pair... [Kristie's parents] went to extraordinary lengths to hire the right au pair for their precious only child. They were impressed by the almost parental demeanour of the agency which placed [the Swiss au pair] into their home: EF Au Pair of Cambridge, Massachusetts. EF is one of eight agencies which enjoys a monopoly over the recruitment of 10,000 au pairs to America on special visas in a scheme set up by the Government. The... agencies[also] enjoy... "non-profit" charity status. [Kristie's parents received an EF brochure which] was full of smiling European girls pushing babies in buggies, reading to them, nurturing them, even baking European delicacies. EF boasted a "unique matching process." Within a year [the au pair] was on trial, accused of arson and the murder of Kristie. Within another four years, EF would be under the spotlight again... [In the first] trial, the police thought they had a case. Three fires, one in the nursery, were clearly deliberate. "Close on two gallons" of flammable accelerator had been spread around the

upper floor. They believed [the Swiss au pair] had read a German-English language book about an au pair who starts a fire and rescues a child from it to win recognition. EF Au Pair paid hundreds of thousands of dollars for a top Manhattan firm to defend – and clear – [the Swiss au pair]. Now Kristie's parents are suing EF despite there being no criminal conviction... [Their New York attorney claims they] were conned by EF Au Pair's "fraudulent, misleading and false advertising." [The attorney says the parents] were told by EF Au Pair that both of [the Swiss au pair]'s references were checked... But... inquiries in Switzerland found that neither of those references could have been checked because the references did not exist... [In] another case, filed for a trial in January... [next year,] the... court papers expose the au pair recruitment process, allegedly showing it to be a shambles of lax screening and deception of parents. They also blow the myth of the "charity" status... of the agencies, showing them to be part of a system accused of being... "only too ready to cut corners in child safety to save and make money." [A couple from] Carlisle, Massachusetts, took in [a guy au pair] from Germany to look after [their] seven-year-old... and four-year-old... in 1992. They were impressed by the literature of Au Pair in America and felt able to relax in the knowledge that the candidates had been, as the brochure promoted, "fully screened," "carefully selected" and "of good character." In the year that [the German au pair] looked after the children... [the 7-year-old was] sexually molested... almost daily. In 1993 [the au pair] was convicted for assault and battery on a child and deported to Germany. [The parents] sued Au Pair in America and its parent company, AIFS. Two of Boston's most expert children's rights lawyers... began discovering that the agency was well aware it had serious problems with child molestation among its recruits. The issue arose in 1992 because the company's insurer, Continental, was uneasy about continuing its cover for AIFS. The brochures and verbal undertakings made by Au Pair in America to parents assure them that applicants are screened by the company itself through its "London office." But AIFS officials admitted in depositions... that the screening was done by a contracted company in Germany, GIJK. The German company was only paid for au pairs who were placed, not for any who failed to pass the "screening." The interviewers... "therefore had a straightforward financial incentive not to screen out applicants." The result was obvious... Perhaps the lawyers' most extraordinary discovery was that, according to company policy, "negative family history," if discovered, would be deleted because [US] families "would find this information disturbing."

...A nanny has been convicted of murder[ing]... a six-month-old in her care as his parents slept in another room... [The nanny], aged 35, was accused of shaking, beating and suffocating Matthew... in Wheaton, Illinois, in January 1996... [The] licensed practical nurse working for the home health service, was hired to care for Matthew in his home. The boy had a chronic digestive problem and vomited frequently. Defence lawyers contended Matthew died of injuries received before [the nanny] started her shift. The defence was similar to that ordered at the trial of... the 19-year-old English au pair.

...[a federal agency is proposing stricter rules for the US au pair programme in light of the British nanny's case. The main changes would require that host families interview prospective au pairs; and that au pairs have training before going to care for children with special needs'. Incidentally, 'English authorities and the FBI have a question for the parents of the British au pair who has now returned home: What happened to about \$US340,000 from their daughter's legal defence fund? The *Boston Herald* reported that authorities are investigating about \$US270,000 that had been transferred out of the daughter's appeal account in the Cooperative Bank in Manchester. Investigators are also reportedly examining a \$US60,000 payment made to the parents, who are divorcing, by the *Daily Mail*. The money, which the parents said was needed for the fund, was never deposited in the fund. Other allegations relate to a forged invoice which the mother allegedly used for more than \$US15,000 in rent and expenses during the weeks the mother stayed at the Marblehead home of her daughter's lawyer. But the lawyer and her husband deny charging a penny. They say the phoney invoice was written on a stolen letterhead.']

...in an interview in the latest issue of *Time*... [the mother of baby Matthew] said... "How did [the British au pair] become the hero and I become the victim? ...[the au pair] took away Matthew and the judge took away justice." ...the judge's decision demonstrated "a total lack of understanding of child abuse." ...[the mother] "definitely" plans to have another child in the future. "But childcare... that's going to be a difficult issue."

...a caregiver accused of [hu]manslaughter of a 17-month-old baby on January 5, was yesterday committed for trial in the High Court at Christchurch. [The 29-year-old caregiver] also faces trial on charges of administering a noxious substance, namely salt, to an 11-month-old girl two months earlier and of injuring a two-year-old boy... [In international news, the] decade-long battle of a Georgia [resident] to clear her name over the death of her baby half-brother ended last week when her father was convicted and sentenced to two concurrent terms of life in prison... for the 1971 murder... [The father and] his then companion... had blamed [his daughter], two years old at the time, for the infant's death. But... the... [companion] testified last week that [the daughter] had been framed... [Her father had placed her] in the baby's crib so it would look as if [the daughter] had thrown the baby on to the floor... A medical examiner [confirmed] the baby's injuries had been "inflicted or caused by another person" and could not have been the result of a fall. The conclusion was reached after the remains were exhumed... "I'm sorry we had to go through all of this," [the companion] said after the verdict... [The companion and the daughter's father had] married but divorced when [the father] received a life sentence for armed robbery in Florida... where [the father] will be eligible for parole in 2016.

...POLICE in Trinidad have charged a couple with murdering... their children in killings suspected to have been ritual child sacrifices... Police unearthed the remains of... their three-year-old daughter Vidya and son Daniel, who was 17 months old... from small pits behind a house in central Trinidad where the couple once lived. Police also said they had abandoned after four days a search for two more children in the family, three-month-old twins Preya and Ria... Police said the couple had confessed to torturing and strangling the 18-year-old... sister [of the 36-year-old father], whose battered body was found in a cane field... and then led them to... two... [of] the... buried bodies of... their... children... [In local news, the unemployed 34-year-old who claimed to have] murdered his 12-year-old daughter... Peti Taihuka Cherie Kokiri... "for God" was sentenced to life imprisonment... at... the... Gisborne... High Court... yesterday afternoon.

...[yesterday afternoon, 'about 300 mourners packed St Barnabas Anglican Church in Stoke to bid farewell to three "wonderful and happy" sisters. The church overflowed with family and friends for the funeral of Alice, aged 8, Maria, 6, and Cherie, 23 months, who were killed by their mother last Friday. The girls' father remained composed throughout the service but broke down at the end while sitting alone in a hearse. Tributes at the funeral mentioned the girls' happy personalities, thoughtfulness and vivid imaginations. No mention was made of the tragic way the girls died or of their mother, Rosemary, who killed them as they lay in their beds before taking her own life. Rosemary was involved in a custody dispute with her estranged husband. A private funeral for Rosemary will be held today. Last Friday, before the girls died, the Family Court had granted Rosemary custody of the children, and had granted her husband unsupervised access to them. Her father believed the access dispute triggered his daughter's actions. In the wake of the tragedy, a national lobby group has renewed its call for shared parenting custody. A spokesperson for Families Apart Require Equality (Fare) said the Family Court had contributed to a succession of child murders in recent years by encouraging parents to fight over their children, instead of promoting equal and shared parenting policies. In another murder-suicide case, in Wanganui in 1994, three girls were killed by their father after a prolonged custody battle with his wife.']

... 'A scene of unbearable sadness played out in Texas yesterday as five young children drowned by their mother in a bathtub were laid to rest in a funeral service attended by distraught family, friends and neighbours and besieged by television cameras. The small white coffins of Noah, aged 7, John, 5, Paul, 3, Luke, 2, and Mary, six months, were laid out in a semi-circle in the Clear Lake Church of Christ, all of them adorned with angel figures and floral sprays. "I don't think there are words in any language that can describe what has happened," said the church's pastor. Last week's killings were the most dramatic instance of infanticide in recent American history. The mother is in police custody without bail and could face the death penalty if prosecutors choose to pursue criminal charges rather than accept her likely defence of innocence by reason of insanity. The cold, calculating manner in which the mother drowned each of her children in turn and even chased the oldest around the house before dragging him to his death has stunned the American public and raised questions in the media about the circumstances that led to such a startling act. And yet, according to experts in the field, there was

nothing unique about the horror of what the mother did. "Infanticide is far more common than people are willing to accept," said a Chicago area doctor and the author of an exhaustive history of child killing down the ages. "There is a social taboo in place preventing people from looking at the issue as any more than a string of isolated incidents." Two weeks ago, a young mother in Dania Beach, Florida, drowned her seven-month-old daughter and immediately shot herself. Last week, two six-week-old twins were found dead in Orange, Texas, and police have not ruled out the possibility of foul play by the parents. And this week a mother and her three children were found asphyxiated in the family garage in Jacksonville, North Carolina. The doctor says child killings account for more than 3% of all murders in the US. As many as half of all pregnancies in the US are unwanted, the doctor estimates; even after accounting for abortion, which cuts the number in half again, that still leaves more than a million children a year who run the risk of rejection or worse. The doctor estimates that around 10% of all children ever born have been killed by their parents. Infanticide is still very common in non-industrialised societies where abortion is unavailable.'

...infanticide is 'the putting to death of the newborn with the consent of the parent, family or community. It is believed that infanticide is most common among peoples whose food supply is often inadequate; among the Chinese and the Eskimo, it was once common for girl babies to be killed for this reason. In most of the Greek city-states and in ancient Rome a child was virtually its father's chattel – e.g., Roman law granted the father the right to sell, offer in sacrifice, kill, or otherwise dispose of his offspring. In Sparta the decision was made by a public official. If infanticide served as a primitive form of birth control, as many anthropologists believe, then the introduction of contraceptives, abortion, and other methods of population control have helped to replace that function. Although an allusion to the custom of infanticide is made in the biblical account of Abraham's near-sacrifice of Isaac, Christianity, Islam and Judaism, condemns infanticide as murder, and in all countries the act is now a crime.' ■ A] jury took 12 minutes yesterday to find a Wellington [mother] not guilty of infanticide by reason of insanity in the killing of her five-month-old daughter. The [judge said the mother], aged 38... was suffering from post-partum psychosis and the balance of her mind was so disordered at the time of the killing that [it] was unable to distinguish right from wrong.

...A young mother who beat her baby son to death was short-changed by the Income Support Service, the High Court at Wellington has been told. [The mother], aged 27, was placed on two years' supervision for the infanticide of 17-month-old Anaru... on January 28... [T]he defence, said Anaru's father... a Black Power gang member, took Anaru from... [his mother, who has] three other children... and gave him to[the] Black Power leader... immediately after his birth because [the leader] had nine daughters and no sons. It was the untimely removal of her child that laid the foundations for [the mother's] later severe mental disorder. For a time, her[other] son... as well as Anaru, had lived[away] from her home. From October 25, 1995, [Anaru's father] had collected the family support supplement payments for them. [The other son] returned to her when [the father] was jailed for his part in a gang shooting but Income Support continued paying the boys' supplement to [the father]. Despite repeated requests, the payments, which would have given her a further \$110 a week, were not restored... The prosecutor... said [the mother] had repeatedly beaten Anaru for crying, bed-wetting and poor eating habits. Anaru had died from brain swelling but there was a disagreement among pathologists about whether that had resulted from pressure on his neck or the severe shaking... [his mother admitted inflicting] on him... Income Support last night said it strongly disputed the suggestion that it denied [the mother] any assistance to which [the mother] was entitled. The acting general manager... said the first Income Support knew that [the mother] was caring for more than one child was when staff read a newspaper report after her arrest... [During the mother's trial, it was revealed] friends, family and neighbours had turned their backs on... Anaru... Even though they watched [the mother] punch, kick and scream at her child, no one reported the abuse... A friend of [the mother told police about watching] her punch and kick Anaru from the lounge to the toilet[but] said nothing to her because... it was "none of his business,"...

All are responsible for looking out for safety of children... Like Craig Manukau and Delcelia Witika, Anaru's name will now be synonymous with any public or private discussion about child abuse... Like those before, Anaru's death has resulted in an inevitable search for explanations. [The mother's] counsel... has been joined by the Labour spokes[perso]n on social welfare... in a condemnation of the Income Support Service... In response, the Minister of Social Welfare... has shifted the focus of this debate to where it really lies. The issue here, the minister has argued, is why those adults who knew that Anaru was being beaten before [the day of his death] took no action. The Children, Young Persons and Their Families Service was not notified that Anaru was at risk... We need to get over whatever it is that stops us from taking collective responsibility for the prevention of child abuse. It's not just up to those... professions whom we like to blame.

...in the High Court at Auckland[a] baby-battering trial ended suddenly... when a father admitted violently shaking his 7-week-old daughter, effectively turning her brain to fluid... known as shaken baby syndrome... [The daughter] suffered irreversible and profound brain damage and is now a spastic quadriplegic... In addition[the daughter]... had two fractured ribs and severe retinal haemorrhaging... The judge discharged[the] mother... who had earlier denied wilfully permitting the baby to be ill-treated in a manner likely to cause unnecessary suffering... [The mother] allegedly told the police that when angry her husband would throw [her daughter] at her because [the baby] was crying too much and [her husband] had problems controlling his temper... [The mother's mother] told the court of seeing the couple tugging the child in different directions during a row... Yesterday the crown prosecutor... told the jury there was overwhelming evidence that the baby had been abused repeatedly. [□ 'A new study published in the July edition of the British journal Brain, indicates that even relatively mild shaking of a baby can cause death or severe injury.'

... 'Babies can die from brain injuries caused by even gentle shaking, one of the largest and most detailed studies yet has found. Doctors in Britain found that "rough handling" could be enough to damage nerve fibres in the neck that control breathing, leading to the brain swelling also characteristic of violent shaking. The research, published in *New Scientist*, challenges the view that only extreme violence causes "shaken-baby syndrome," and has far-reaching legal implications since convicting people of shaking a baby to death may become more difficult. Lawyers say the findings would have seriously weakened the case against the British au pair who was convicted in America of manslaughter after the death of a baby in her care. The Brit maintained that it was innocent, but American prosecutors said the au pair must have shaken the eight-month-old with all her might for up to a minute to kill him. The Child Safety Foundation of NZ said the study sounded feasible. Parents had been told for generations that they should support babies to stop their heads rolling violently.'

... 'Police are outraged at a "grossly inadequate" community sentence given to a body-builder who broke six bones in a newborn girl's body. They want it appealed. They also want the body-builder's name suppression lifted. Last week, the 28-year-old body-builder was sentenced to 16 weeks periodic detention after pleading guilty to injuring with intent. The maximum penalty is five years imprisonment. After four years on the child-abuse team, one detective said, it was the first time the detective had seen a conviction for injuring with intent not result in imprisonment. In sentencing, the judge said the body-builder inflicted the injuries due to his "frustration" at the pressures of dealing with two young children. The body-builder was also under financial pressure. The injuries to the baby had been caused by "carelessness and recklessness" rather than a deliberate intent to injure, the judge said. "I find this sentencing surprising," said the Commissioner for Children. "A 2-month-old can do no wrong, they just can't. I have no time for this. It's unbelievable."

...an Auckland[er] is furious that the [person] who broke his grandson's bones in 13 places faces only nine months behind bars. X-rays taken in August last year revealed injuries which a Middlemore Hospital surgeon said were usually seen in car crash victims or when someone fell several stor[ys. The baby]... suffered the injuries during the first 11 weeks of his life. On Monday his father... aged 19... pleaded guilty to causing the infant grievous bodily harm with reckless disregard. The charge carries a maximum sentence of seven years' imprisonment. In handing out the sentence... the High Court... [judge said the father] warranted a discount on his sentence... [because of his] guilty plea and... it was a first offence... But [the grandfather] believes "discounts are for supermarkets"... [N]ine months was "not enough time for him to realise just what... has[been] done." ...Although [the baby], now aged 15 months, has made a full physical recovery, medical experts say any long-term effects are more likely to

be psychological... [The judge said the] **sentence was based on previous cases...** **However,** [the judge also said that the father] **showed a “disturbing lack of acceptance, understanding and insight” as to his part in the tragedy.** [■ ‘It has been less than a year since four-month-old Patrick Martin died of sudden infant death syndrome in a social welfare caregiver’s home – a case that made national headlines. The mother had suffered post-natal depression after a traumatic hospital delivery with Patrick. The first-time mother also found breast-feeding difficult and had breast infections. The mother and her husband contacted various agencies for help, including Waitemata Health’s maternal mental health services. Then, desperate for support, the mother admitted that once, when exhausted and upset, it had given Patrick a slight shake and put her hand over his mouth “for a second”. Even though hospital tests showed the baby was unharmed CYFS took the baby into care, arriving at the couple’s west Auckland home with a child protection order and six police officers to remove the little boy from his parents. Two weeks after that night, the parents learned their son was dead. But this tragedy has a happy ending – shortly after losing Patrick, the mother became pregnant again. The couple now have a little girl, who seems entranced by photos of her brother’...

A ‘British survey estimates that 1-in-5 cot deaths are caused by parents smothering the child (NZ estimates are 1-2% at most’). Of greater concern, however, are cases of ‘parents who lie about their children being sick, or deliberately making their children sick, in order to gain attention for themselves – or to look like heroes by putting the problem right (or to play the person taking care of the child’). ‘Covert cameras in US and UK hospitals have caught parents abusing their children while unsupervised (out of 39 cases filmed in the UK, 30 parents tried to suffocate their child; 2 tried to poison their child)’...

‘Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy has been quoted in a number of high-profile NZ cases. The suspects are accused of hurting their own children for attention, and can find themselves stripped of their families or jailed. But do parents diagnosed with MSBP really have it? Does it even exist? What complicates the issue is that at the heart of many of the alleged cases is sudden infant death syndrome (Sids) – a tag that indicates not a cause of death but an absence of knowledge. The director of Britain’s Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths says that it’s often not possible to distinguish at post-mortem between smothering and Sids. That was the case with a British mother who overcame a diagnosis of MSBP this year. When the mother was acquitted of killing three of her children, there were calls for a review of hundreds of cases of MSBP in which the expert at her trial had given evidence. When the expert was asked – at the appeal of the case of another British mother, who had spent three years in jail for alleged child abuse – to produce research papers to justify his findings on MSBP, it couldn’t because his secretary had shredded confidential material when the expert retired last year. Some of the doctors involved in MSBP cases – such as the British paediatrician who recommended that 7 children be removed from their homes – now face charges of serious misconduct. The expert himself faces being struck off. Although the 70-year-old is retired, his evidence is still used in court. But where once the expert was a vocal crusader for child welfare, it has now fallen silent – consistently refusing interviews; meanwhile the accusations against him continue. But in a BBC report made about MSBP this year, the expert issued a statement in which it sounded unrepentant. “The media is more eager to publicise the dangers of perverts in the park than face up to the uncomfortable fact that most child abuse occurs in the home and is perpetrated by the child’s parents or carers.”’ ‘At least one million children in Britain each year are victims of child abuse, says the National Commission of Inquiry into the Prevention of Child Abuse.’

...an Ohio couple who admitted faking their 7-year-old daughter’s leukaemia to gain about US\$31,000 dollars in donations from 65 people and businesses were sent to prison yesterday. The mother will serve over six years and her husband almost five years. Champaign County authorities said the mother shaved her daughter’s hair, gave her sleeping pills to make it appear the child was receiving chemotherapy, and put her into counselling to prepare for death.’

...an American ‘father has been accused of injecting his son with the Aids virus to avoid paying child support.’

...doctors, b[ar]bers and real estate agents... who fall behind on their child support payments can be barred from practising in New Mexico... It’s part of a new tough policy just announced... And, as additional encouragement to pay up, drivers’ licences will also be confiscated. Nearly 12,000 parents are at risk... [Incidentally, p]hysical violence by children against their parents is increasing, according to a German psychiatrist. Children hit their parents, throw things, kick and spit at them and tyrannise them with demands, said... the Clinic for Child and Youth Psychiatry at the Olga Hospital in Stuttgart. The phenomenon occurs mainly with parents who are socially isolated and have close ties with their children.

...Teenage mothers are more likely to come from families where fighting and physical punishment are commonplace, a new study has found. The researchers discovered that adolescent pregnancy does not occur randomly in the community but in... [teenagers] from families with “psychosocial problems.” ...Their report in the *N[Z] Medical Journal* added: “The potential push to leave the family unit early suggests that the... [teenagers] may actively seek an intimate relationship which provides companionship, absence of major personal disharmony and freedom from physical punishment to counterbalance problems at home.” The... team said adolescent pregnancy appeared to be a particular problem in... [NZ, adding that a]dolescent pregnancy often led to ongoing difficulties for both the teenager and the child... [A] teenage mother’s educational, employment and financial opportunities... [are hampered. M]ore teenage mothers than older mothers were supported by welfare and they were more likely to have repeat pregnancies and poor parenting skills... Their children were more likely to have low birth weight, poor development and behavioural problems... The report said improving the way families functioned was critical... a call backed by the... [FPA, which has just] released a new video and booklet called “Grab That Moment”, to help parents communicate with their young children. [Editor’s note: according to another ‘new study – by a research team at McGill University in Montreal – the most highly creative people come from homes where parents are constantly at each other’s throats. For years psychologists have claimed that creativity is a delicate flower most likely to emerge among those raised by warm and loving parents’...

‘A Vietnamese mum who forced her son to sew up his mouth (as punishment for stealing 32c to buy a comic) has been sentenced to 2 1/2 years in prison.’ By the way, ‘police in the southern California town of Norco have freed a 6-year-old girl they believe has spent almost all of her life chained to a bed in a filthy room filled with human waste. The girl was taken to hospital, where it was being treated for malnutrition. Her mother, aged 39, and grandfather, 76, are being held on suspicion of child endangerment while an investigation is conducted. The girl, found in a foetal position and apparently unable to speak except for grunts and moans, was rescued after the Riverside County Sheriff’s Department received an anonymous call believed to be from a neighbour.’

...‘Police are outraged social workers returned boys to their home where they were living among human excrement. Officers found a 14-year-old riding his skateboard along streets in Mangere, south Auckland, late one night last week. They took him to his father’s home nearby. The father told the boy to go to the basement room the boy shared with his 16-year-old brother. But a police report obtained by *Sunday News* says officers were met with an “overwhelming stench” when they took the boy to the room. The floor was littered with dog droppings and human faeces. “The stench coming from the boy was so overpowering, police staff could smell him from 10m away,” the report said. Neither boy could remember the last time they had bathed or been to school. Police called Children, Youth and Family Services (formerly the Children and Young Persons Service) to find the boys alternative accommodation and were told by a social worker to take them to the police station. There, officers were told by the social worker to return the boys to their father. They refused but a social worker took the boys back. Police are considering charging the father. The Children’s commissioner will check the boys’ safety tomorrow.’]

...The official watchdog of the country’s children has delivered a damning report on the state of the C[YFS], suggesting its work is inadequate... and... that it is in a state of “acute demoralisation”... The Commissioner for Children... praised... C[YFS]’s ability to analyse and manage its finances, but said it did not have the staff or funding to keep up a good service... in [his office]’s report to the... Government, which was not well received by the Minister of Social Welfare... [However, the] Commissioner... said... “It is not suggested that C[YFS]’s problems] arise... from a lack of concern at Government level but rather that there may be a lack of understanding about the nature and extent of demands upon the... service.” The consequences... included: • Case work being closed prematurely, only to return in a more critical state. • Monitoring of long-term placements

[in a home, for example] becoming so light as to be little more than occasional and superficial. • Inexperienced social workers evaluating the seriousness of incoming cases relayed by telephone answering services. Comprehensive records of after-hours notifications were not kept... Notifications of abuse or neglect may not be allocated or may be deferred because of staff shortages... Suitable placement cannot be found for some young people with addiction problems and/or serious behavioural disorders. This appears to be a significant cause of despair among social workers who are aware of the impacts on young people arising from the non-availability of suitable facilities for their care; The professionalisation of social work has not been reflected in starting salaries commensurate with professional status and responsibilities; Experienced social workers are leaving the service in increasing numbers, apparently disabused of the belief that it is possible to provide a safe, adequate service for children under current resourcing levels... 186 staff with five or more years' experience left... [the department] between July 1995 and February this year... Just in case the country has the impression that the state's social work agency is in complete chaos, the Commissioner... at least offers the reassurance that "the adoption service functions smoothly and efficiently." Given that the adoption service is such a small part of the operation, it is hardly the reassurance that the... Government would welcome... [The minister thought] the report was negative and might contribute to the demoralisation of the service that [the commissioner] wrote about... "Most of the issues raised are not new. Unfortunately, what the report does not do is identify many of the new initiatives." ...But [the minister] has picked up on... the commissioner's... push for a register of child deaths to find out more about increasing levels of child mortality and asked for further work on it... In spite of expanding welfare demand, [the minister] said that did not mean the Government's economic strategy was failing. Rather, it showed it must strive for higher economic growth because without it welfare growth would overtake the nation.

...In his hard-hitting report, released yesterday, the country's watchdog for children paints a picture of a service if not in chaos, then at least as dysfunctional as the clients it seeks to help. In a section headed "The stress of funding insufficiency on service delivery," [the report] notes the fine balance required under the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act: action to safeguard the child but no more than the minimum necessary to do so and no undue interference in the rights and responsibilities of their families... "Initial indications are that for each investment dollar, savings of four dollars are made in the long term. These indications underscore the wisdom of providing early and adequate services for children in need... [But in] the absence of sufficient resources, the interpretation of 'minimum intervention' is likely to be biased to suit departmental shortages rather than the demands of the child's situation." ...The report says one of the factors underlying the demoralisation is the raising of public expectations for a service which is readily accessible and responsive to a broad range of safety concerns. The effect of campaigns to raise awareness, such as the television campaign "Breaking the Cycle" appears to have been "paradoxical." "It is surmised that this campaign very probably led to an increase in notifications made by the public... at a time when intake criteria were narrowing at some sites of service delivery because of financial constraints. Whether or not this surmise is true, it is clear that considerable tensions have developed between expectations and delivery of... protection services." ...The Commissioner... was [also] experiencing tensions between his office and the C[YFS] because of the critical reports that had been written on welfare. [● 'CYFS failed to use \$1m worth of pre-purchased bednights in the past 12 months, an MP said yesterday. The waste of money further showed systematic failures within the department, the MP added. "The Government has been unable to give any guarantees that children weren't left in an unsafe environment while taxpayer-funded beds were not being used." The Acting CYFS Minister told Parliament a contract problem had led to the beds not being used, but it understood "that no child was left in circumstances that they should not have been".']

...Saliel Alpin and Olympia Jetson might still be alive today if CYFS staff had followed the department's policies and procedures, the Government admitted yesterday. An urgent debate into two reports on the death of the half-sisters was held in Parliament, and Opposition MPs said the Government had to take responsibility for the public's loss of confidence in the department. The reports come on top of a highly critical baseline review of the department, the announcement of the resignation of its chief executive and concerns over Masterton CYFS's failure to properly handle a call from the father of Coral Burrows (the 6-year-old who's body was found last month – her stepfather has been charged with her murder). One MP said the Government had learned nothing from previous reports, including the Children's Commissioner's report. "The names of the murdered children have changed, but the same issue remains." The MP did not blame CYFS for the girls' deaths, but it had to be held accountable for some of the "appalling errors of judgment" by its staff. The CYFS supervisor and social worker responsible for the mistakes were no longer working there and only they could explain why they did what they did.'

...A report into the deaths of two Masterton sisters found poor integration of relevant agencies and suggests social workers' familiar relationship with the girls' unstable family could have resulted in standard procedures not being followed. Olympia Jetson, aged 11, and Saliel Aplin, 12, were killed by their stepfather, who is now serving a life sentence for their murders. Police were called to the girls' home 18 times between 1994 and the girls' death and completed 12 family violence reports. These were forwarded to a girls' refuge, but not to CYFS as police decided there were no immediate safety concerns. Despite extensive involvement with the family there were only five records of social workers talking directly to the girls. The chief social worker confirmed that the department had failed to do its job and had apologised to the family. The chief social worker said there were serious breaches of policy where social workers failed to follow Serious Abuse Team protocol. As a result, abuse claims were not passed to the police. It had been unsafe and unnecessary for a social worker to have written to the girls' mother on November 16 wanting to see her about "new information" when the stepfather lived at the address. It was thought the stepfather had intercepted the letter because the mother only saw it a fortnight later, already opened. The mother immediately contacted the social worker and confronted the stepfather, who went on to murder the girls that night. The supervisor had since left CYFS and the disciplined but not sacked social worker had resigned. CYFS's involvement with the family from the late 1980s had been appropriate in the early stages. After the mother began a relationship with the stepfather, social workers had found the children inadequately cared for and physically abused by the stepfather. They were placed with grandparents, but a social worker reluctantly agreed to return the children as the couple had sought counselling and other guidance. The Family Court also had agreed. But many opportunities to help the girls were later lost because no single agency had the whole picture or understanding of the risks and the police, CYFS and other professions did not meet to discuss their concerns. Also, neighbours had not reported violence. On September 3, notes made by Olympia in her school book were forwarded from her school to the social worker. In the notes, Olympia mentioned being sexually abused by her stepfather and two other adult guys. The principal of the school that Saliel attended has called for social workers to become mandatory in all intermediates and for regular medical checks for all young children. The principal also called for the return of child protection teams that disappeared after the 1980s. They had been phased out, the principal assumed, because of cost, but the price of that decision had been paid by young people and their families ever since. The department had been restructured seven times in nine years. The CYFS Minister said outside the House last night that CYFS's response to the latest baseline review would improve the quality of service and provide more support and resources for social workers. Immediate priorities were to employ more frontline social work staff, develop strategy for managing demand, and give greater support for regional delivery of services, the minister said.'

...CYFS has spent \$8.93 million on training 100 of its staff, according to a report by the accountants Coopers and Lybrand. The report, commissioned by the service, is damning of senior management, noting that although the money intended to train 90% of the staff to a competent level had been spent, the management could not detail how most of it had been used. "During the course of our visits and discussions we gained an impression that many staff continue to view professionalism as an 'optional extra' which is in some way secondary to the 'real' work of the service," the 65-page report says. Prepared after Coopers and Lybrand was asked to assess the effectiveness of a "professionalism strategy" begun in 1992, the report has been handed out to staff, minus 36 pages. It is understood only three senior staff in the service have been allowed to see the full version.']

...The head of Social Welfare has attacked a Starship hospital paediatrician for publicly exposing the incompetent handling of two severe child abuse cases by welfare staff... An exchange of letters between... the... Social Welfare director-general... and Auckland Healthcare, which runs Starship, was obtained... under the Official Information Act... In a tit-for-tat swipe, [the director-general] said her staff had noted shortcomings in the health system, including abuse cases not reported to welfare staff quickly enough... The head of Auckland Healthcare... initially defended [his paediatrician], saying the doctor's first ethical priority was the wellbeing of patients... But in a subsequent letter, [the head] said the decision to publicly discuss these "deplorable cases" was not justified. This week, [the head claimed to understand] the frustrations his staff faced, but it was important to peacefully resolve the matter with [the director-general] rather than keep arguing.

...[Auckland Healthcare's health promotion adviser says only 5% of abuse victims seek help from the police or other specialist agencies.' However, last year 'the president of the Principals Association said that the support system for troubled, abused or violent school children is unco-ordinated and a mess. Such students are sometimes having to wait months for help from agencies like the Special Education Service and the Child Development Centre.'

...unregulated] agencies are picking up the slack in the welfare system... The information comes from a report which... officials fought to keep secret. It talks about how a "secondary system" of individuals and agencies has stepped into the breach to help abused... and neglected children... in the belief that... CY[F]S... is unable or unwilling to help... [– or], in Auckland anyway, help only the ones they can't escape responsibility for.

...Hundreds of abused and neglected children are waiting to be assigned a social worker at any one time and voluntary agencies are being forced to help at-risk cases not deemed urgent enough. In a bid to shock people, social workers revealed this week that 6128... children were in enough danger to require state intervention last year. But official figures released by the Opposition yesterday show that 684 at-risk children were not allocated to a social worker when a snapshot was taken of cases awaiting investigation by the C[YFS] about two months ago. Voluntary agencies and children's representatives are alarmed about the delays and say at-risk children are not getting sufficient help because of funding pressures.

...Several decades of social and economic pressures resulted in "a significant and growing proportion of the population suffering severe and persistent disadvantage." [5% of families are] trapped in a cycle of disadvantage – 45[% are] considered at risk of becoming severely disadvantaged. Families coming to the attention of... [CYFS have] a range of problems including low health status, psychiatric disorders, severe marital stress, poor or non-existent child-rearing skills and a strong likelihood of family violence. "Born of this group are some of the most seriously dysfunctional children [and families] in N[Z]." As many as 95,000 children and young people lived in such families and reported violent crimes against children had more than doubled between 1991 and 1994.

...The[UN] child rights committee, sitting in Geneva, says N[Z] should develop a national plan of action for children. It demanded answers from a N[Z] delegation on a range of issues, including this country's high youth suicide rate, the effect of economic reforms and the absence of an official poverty line... The call comes amid a heated response to the release in N[Z] on Tuesday of hard-hitting ministerial briefing papers on the state of the country's child protection and welfare services. The... delegation, headed by the Minister of Youth Affairs, presented the committee with the Government's official report on N[Z]'s compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Child watchdogs monitoring the meetings from N[Z] say the delegation's answers have been "woolly" and "wishy washy." ...the group Action for Children in Aotearoa said the delegation was trying to gloss over an appalling child welfare record... [M]any children lived in crowded, squalid conditions which led to problems of "incest, stealing, children wandering the streets, health problems, the whole social fabric disintegrates." [The] group submitted its own report to the UN late last year accusing the Government of breaching the convention in a myriad of ways. The... [minister] also came under attack yesterday over her stance on child welfare. [The minister] endorsed the Government report, saying that N[Z]'s policies complied with the spirit of the UN convention. However, the N[Z] First MP described the ministerial briefing papers as a "deeply disturbing account of the lives of too many young N[Z]ers." The... Minister of Social Welfare... would not comment yesterday on the UN committee[, which]... identified five positive factors but listed 13 principal subjects of concern and made 13 suggestions and recommendations... The Coalition Government had, however, signalled it was "determined to put children first" and the onus was now on it to do that.

...THE U[N criticism of NZ]'s record on children highlights the confusion of responsibility for their welfare. Once we were very clear about who was ultimately responsible... The state saw children as the future of the nation. Producing children was viewed as a social good. While parents had direct responsibility, the state adopted a larger role as guardian of the welfare of the country's children. Free maternity care, state funding to Plunket, the free kindergarten system, free school dental care, the Family Benefit with the ability to capitalise for housing, state housing, milk in schools, health camps, and school medical officers were just some of the ways the state took care of children. In 1997, only a few of these services survive, and others, such as Plunket, are under threat. The unravelling of the state's responsibility to children had happened imperceptibly because it has been gradual. But it is not accidental. The changed stance has followed N[Z]'s lurch to the right, reinforced by religious fundamentalism. This has led to an exaggeration of individual parental rights over those of the much-maligned "Nanny State". The swing towards parental supremacy began for liberal reasons, but was overtaken by the Right. The pernicious doctrine of "self-interest" underlies the current abrogation of state responsibility. This argues that people will always act to maximise self-interest. The dogma was taken to include people's dependants, even though parents and children's interests can be in conflict. The worst right-wingers take this argument even further. Having children is no longer viewed as a contribution to the future of N[Z]. It is simply a personal choice. By reducing children to personal property, the argument can be made that only parents should provide for their support. Parents have been given the right to choose their children's schools and state funding of private schools means that parents can control the type of education their children get. Parents have been given greater control over state schools and what is taught in them. One consequence of this is that half of state schools deny their pupils the part of the health curriculum that deals with reproduction, even though this is clearly not in the children's best interest. User-pays... policy directions have exaggerated the difference between children of the rich and... of the poor. The social welfare services... had been aimed to cancel the disadvantage of poverty and feckless parents. With the state as benign godparent, children from the most economically and culturally impoverished backgrounds still had a chance. The move back to parental responsibility has allowed the children of the well-off to prosper – although there have been negative consequences for them too... [Emotionally inhibited parents who are well-off but unable to freely express love and affection to their children may offer presents, or money instead (known as The Santa Claus Syndrome). As these children grow up, the equation sticks. Money equals love. Before long the child learns that "love" can be exchanged for money and money can be exchanged for "love."'] The role of the state has dwindled from protector of children to occasional policer of parents. The scrag end of state responsibility is a raft of legislation that drags errant parents into court... Social censure falls heavily on parents who transgress... This moralism towards parents is not backed up with practical support... For N[Z] to win good marks from the U[N] for its record on children, the state would have to resume overall responsibility for children. But that... seems highly unlikely.

...Grassroots help for neglected and abused children is being thwarted by bureaucratic time-wasting, says the director of Parentline... In the annual report for the national group... [the director] said her aim was to bridge the cultural gap between Government officials and the community.

...WELLINGTON SPCA is to train its officers to spot signs of child abuse – to combat the number of animals being tortured by juveniles. The move has been prompted by overseas research which says there is a link between abused children and those who abuse animals and people. Mass murderers like... the Boston strangler... were known to have been cruel to animals as children. "I call it the unholy trinity. You are abused, you abuse animals and you grow up to abuse humans," said [the] SPCA director... "We were determined to do something about this because my officers have seen all sorts of things... We do cross-report (with other agencies), but we want to fine-tune what we see when we go into a house,"... The SPCA received regular complaints about youths abusing animals... Neighbours were often more willing to complain about suspected animal

mistreatment than suspected child abuse... The SPCA... is in the process of setting up a garden in central Wellington where at-risk children could learn about animals, modelled on a similar scheme in the U[S].

...Child deaths from abuse and neglect can be stopped by early intervention programmes, says a... [US expert. The] director of the National Centre on Child Abuse Prevention Research in Chicago, yesterday reinforced the importance of home intervention to Plunket Society conference delegates in Auckland. While one child a month in N[Z] was killed by abuse or neglect, in the U[S] three children a day were killed... [80%] were under five and 50[%] were under one year old. "They are enormously young children whose parents didn't get the help they needed... I believe we can end that slaughter." ...Home visits were the lynchpin of a system of support for families. The U[S] had developed the Healthy Families America programme... Home intervention led to improved parenting, better health care for children, stronger parent-child relationships and families making better use of their resources... Plunket's national paediatrician... said compulsory primary schooling was accepted by society, but ensuring all children stayed well was not... "Children in N[Z] do have freedom but it is freedom to be killed on the roads, to die from meningitis or... [other illnesses, or from] abuse... The lack of adequate parenting education for parents ultimately leads to our high rates of... childhood injury."

...At least a dozen children known to child protection agencies are murdered or commit suicide each year... said... the... Commissioner for Children... [I]n many cases the family lacked a caring, nurturing father figure... Although the... [services were] not to blame for the tragic toll... [the commissioner] wants agencies to identify policies and practices to change so deaths can be avoided.

...A[social] welfare review into the deaths of two Fielding youngsters in a caravan fire last month has begun after confirmation the children were in the joint custody of the department and their mother... A spokesperson for the C[YFS]... would not comment until the review was completed.

...There can be few public scandals greater than children dying or being abused when they are already... under the Director-General of Social Welfare's care. Everyone remembers Craig Manukau, [who was 'kicked to death'] by his father for dancing at a disco... A six-year-old girl with gonorrhoea was sent back to her abusive home after hospital care and left for six weeks before social welfare officials began inquiries[, even though]... Starship hospital staff urgently alerted the service to her [STD and warned that the girl] was at risk at home... Sources around the country have listed similar delays... In [a] second case, a 10-week-old baby – severely brain damaged through repeated physical abuse – was to be put into the care of a convicted sex abuser until hospital staff blocked the move... CY[FS]... refused to answer detailed questions. [The chief] social worker... said both cases were complex and... [it] was unfortunate the concerns were disclosed to the media as complaint procedures existed for dealing with these matters... [T]he six-year-old's family denied knowing how [the girl] contracted gonorrhoea... the girl... continues to live at home while investigations go on... [T]he brain-damaged baby... is in foster care, until a formal family group conference can be held.

...A repeatedly bashed Auckland baby was to be placed in not one but two abusive homes by social welfare staff, health workers revealed yesterday... The N[Z] *Herald* yesterday revealed that the girl – severely brain damaged through repeated violent shakings – was to be put into the care of a relative previously convicted of sex abuse. A nurse involved in the baby's temporary care yesterday told the *Herald* that... [CYFS] then tried to place the girl with a Northland [caregiver] with a history of child neglect. The nurse, who did not want to be named, had little confidence the C[YFS] could make sound decisions given its appalling record in protecting the girl from further harm. It was only the refusal of Starship Children's Hospital to release the girl that blocked the moves... Welfare officials have launched an investigation into staff handling of the... case.

...[the guy 'who helped to get a toddler removed from her parents' home over concern for her safety is relieved the girl's grandmother has admitted it later seriously abused the child. Yesterday in the Whangarei District Court, a weeping 52-year-old pleaded guilty to charges of grievous bodily harm, wilful ill-treatment and endangering the life of the toddler. The grandmother was remanded in custody for sentencing in two months. The charges related to the grandmother's assault on her grandchild, and her omission to supply the child with the necessities of life over 17 days leading up to the assault. The child, then aged 28 months, was admitted to hospital in a coma with severe head injuries, a broken arm, cuts, bruises and cigarette burns to her body. The child was transferred to the critical care unit of the Starship children's hospital in Auckland and was discharged a week ago into the care of CYFS. The *Weekend Herald* is not naming the grandmother or the child because the background to the incident involves the outcome of a family group conference. The guy who first reported the child to CYFS said it was worrying that the child had been harmed since it was referred to CYFS, which had placed her with the abuser.'

... 'A desperate Whangarei grandmother called social workers at least twice for help in the weeks before beating her granddaughter so badly that the 2-year-old is brain damaged for life. The day before the final beating, two police officers played with the little girl at the grandmother's house but suspected nothing because there were no referrals from welfare authorities. Wiping away tears yesterday, the grandmother was sentenced to five years jail. The 52-year-old alcoholic was given custody of the child by the Palmerston North branch of CYFS just two months before the little girl was found unconscious with severe head injuries. The grandmother's lawyer said the grandmother, a victim of abuse herself, had warned social workers of her personal problems, and later told them it was struggling to cope. "The grandmother raised the flag. There were things in her background that made her a risk." No help was offered.'

... 'Just when you thought this country's child abuse record couldn't get worse, along comes news of a 33-year-old Whitianga resident who apparently decided to counter tantrums from a 10-year-old boy, a difficult foster child put in her care by CYFS, with fear. Fear? Make that terror. And then some. Like, threatening to chop his head off with an axe, swinging at him with a baseball bat, tying his hands, smearing him with fake blood, threatening to put a dead chicken around his neck and tying him to a tree. Then, the attacker doused the boy's skivvy with petrol and "to give him a fright" attempted to flick a lighter at him. The fumes ignited and the boy was engulfed in flames. The boy's scarred on his face, neck and chin but "is expected to emerge without major physical or mental harm". You want to bet? Bad enough? What about the sentence? The attacker was jailed for only four months with leave to apply for home detention! No wonder people in the court screamed abuse at her and the sentencing judge, and that the Crown is considering an appeal. In sentencing, the judge spoke of the attacker's "excellent record, particularly with difficult children", how it "snapped because of stress levels exceeding her endurance". Well, those offences and that sentence exceed by a very long way public acceptance levels. So does the unexplained behaviour of CYFS placing a child in need of help and stability in the care of someone capable of that sort of behaviour. Particularly since the department put him there knowing, in the words of the attacker's lawyer, that others had been unable to cope with him ("many, many others", according to the department) and that the child "needed consistent and unflappable caregivers". And there was "urgent need" to find a home for him. Instead, the child was handed over to someone who had not been screened or trained, according to the department.'

...Nineteen caregivers in the past year have had their approval to work for a Government agency revoked after they were found to have abused young people in their care. [Furthermore, the]Social Welfare Minister... said 79 allegations of abuse involving 52 caregivers working for... [CYFS] had been made... More than 1000 service caregivers provided parenting to 2020 children and young people, dealing with some of the most disturbed, hurt and "behaviourally challenged" children. [The minister] said these difficult young people were prone to testing the boundaries imposed on them. This could lead to a higher than average incidence of unsubstantiated allegations, but any allegation of abuse was treated seriously. "The fact that children feel able to report a complaint, when they believe an inappropriate incident has occurred, must be seen positively." ...Social workers investigated allegations promptly and referred them to authorities when necessary... [A]ll caregivers underwent police and medical checks, reference checks and selection interviews from two social workers. Once approved, caregivers were provided with ongoing support from social workers. The minister announced the service would receive an extra \$1.32 million to buy... an extra 38,610... out-of-family bed nights... from agencies... The extra funding would meet increased demand for care for young people who could not be safely looked after by their families... Boosted coffers should[also] help to stop the exodus of experienced social workers, says the Minister of Social Welfare[, who]... last night

conceded that the C[YFS] had a problem with burned-out social workers... [Earlier yesterday,] a Starship children's hospital abuse specialist, said inexperienced staff often had to handle cases beyond their skills. In the past five years [the specialist] has dealt with about 30 violently shaken babies but few cases had resulted in convictions.

...EIGHT years ago [a] baby screamed for attention from the confines of his cot. [The baby] was hungry and his nappies were filthy but no one came. His young, inexperienced mother, herself neglected and abused as a child, left him lying for hours on end every day. Eventually [the baby] stopped crying and his mother felt relief. [Her son] had finally become a "good" baby. Specialists now describe [the child] as "globally retarded." [The child] is short, has a small head circumference and his motor, social, verbal and intellectual skills lag behind others of his age... [The child] was not cuddled or stimulated and it shows... According to... research the brain of a neglected, abused child can be 30[%] smaller than that of a child raised with love and attention. The research is led by... a [US] neuroscientist whose message is simple: "The part of the brain that allows us to feel pleasure and positive emotional connection to others is dependent upon consistent, nurturing experiences during the first few years of life." ...Roughly 85[%] of... core brain structures are organised by the age of three... [L]obbyists believe the implications of the research are so serious that countries which do not act on it will lag behind... "They will be burdened with the huge costs of dealing with dysfunctional people. It means that resources have to be directed to early childhood. It's so important and cost-effective there ought to be no question about really getting into ways of promoting early intervention and engaging the whole of society." The idea that young children can be permanently impaired by negative experiences is not new but the neurodevelopment studies... physically show that it happens. There are three reactions to danger: fight, flight or freeze and the brains of children whose early years have been a battleground know only these responses... [T]he brain grows in a way to enable them to survive in that kind of world. "So they become people who have a short attention span... people with short fuses who don't do a lot of thinking and tend just to react and respond." CRIMINALS who commit spur-of-the-moment murders fit into this category. "They can, without remorse and thinking, quickly kill someone because that's the way they are programmed[.] Abused[.]... girls are more likely to freeze. In a classroom they are not picked up because they are generally good children who do not make a fuss. They... [also] don't learn well. Boys tend to fight or flee. They wear people out, they are hyperactive, difficult, destructive – distracting in the classroom and defiant in the playground. "What's happening is a child sits in a classroom in a state of anxiety because of all that's gone on in his life and at home. [The child] will be watching the teacher's movements [but isn't] listening to the lesson. The teacher only has to approach him and say 'get on with it' and that approach will send him into terror and [the child] will do something like hit out or march out or tear up his book." A residential centre to help children like this is being piloted in Auckland but funding is still in question. The Auckland City Mission initiative is the first in the country to be based on [the neuroscientist's] assessment of traumatised children carried out at his unit in Houston... [The neuroscientist] says... "You can do one of two things. You can reduce the risk of such things happening by attending to children's upbringing. The only other way you can protect society is by clamping down in an authoritarian oppressive way." ...[Incidentally, CYFS] staff are being investigated after allegations that they falsified legal documents, including death certificates. A spokes[person] for the Minister of Social Welfare... said last night that the minister was taking the allegations... very seriously... The allegations were brought to [the minister's] attention early this month by the Act deputy leader... who used parliamentary privilege yesterday to go public on the matter. During question time, [Act's] deputy leader asked if the minister had received any reports indicating that Auckland staff members of the service had "falsified legal documents..." [However, the]Speaker... ruled the supplementary question out of order because it was not directly related to the main question about the case of a bashed baby highlighted in the *N[Z] Herald*. The... Auckland care and protection manager for the service... had no idea what [Act's] deputy leader was talking about and was shocked by the allegations. "I've never heard anything like that, ever. And I would be horrified if anything did happen like that..."

...The deputy leader... failed to produce evidence to back up his claims... last night. [But following] an hour-long meeting with [the Social Welfare Minister] and the Director-General of Social Welfare... the Act MP... would try to facilitate some form of independent forum where his informants could give evidence. [The minister] said... "To make an allegation that the service is rotten to the core is quite serious; to make criminal allegations against staff members is also serious, and I... would plead with [the MP] to put that evidence before the appropriate authority, which is the police."

...Police child abuse teams are taking up to a year to investigate cases as staff struggle with a relentless workload. Team leaders say delays in getting to abuse complaints are similar to those faced by social welfare staff... [Furthermore, training] for police working in child abuse was limited to two courses a year which was unsatisfactory... Abused children generally got a raw deal with the delays in the legal and welfare system... said... [the] head of the Papakura child abuse unit[– who described one case of a]... father jailed for ongoing abuse, including... performing a home abortion using a knitting needle.

...A 32-year-old Hastings [mother] asked her 10-year-old son to make her day by killing himself, a court has heard... [The mother] showed the boy a rope... and... a tree... [to] use... A week before... [the mother] told him how to kill himself using the kettle cord and told him to get a butcher's knife and put it to his heart... The [mother] had five other children, all aged under six. In February the boy had a fight with a sister that left him with black eyes. His mother also punched him in the face, saying no one would know it was her because [the boy] already had black eyes. On another day... [the mother] hit him over the head with a kettle cord because [the mother] was angry at him for not doing his household chores... If [the boy] cried or moved [the mother] hit him again... [The mother] admitted wilfully ill-treating her son... [and] was remanded on bail... for... sentencing.

...[the boy] was 12 years old when [the boy] first came to the attention of... CY[FS]... His mother was an alcoholic and drug addict, incapable of looking after him... No one knew where... [his] father... was. The service found [the boy] a temporary place with a foster family and, as the... C[YFS] Act... requires, organised a family group conference to discuss his future. [His] uncle drove to Auckland from a small North Island town for the conference and offered [his nephew] a home. The law says [the boy's] situation should have been regularly reviewed by the CY[FS]. A plan for his future should have been drafted and applied. Instead, [the boy] drove off with his uncle, and disappeared from the system for the next two years... It was easier to deliver him into the arms of another family member and hope for the best. Predictably... the relationship with his extended family disintegrated. They may have provided food and shelter, but certainly no nurturing, discipline or guidance. For those two years [the boy] never attended school... [and as far as CYFS was concerned, the boy] was simply "out of sight out of mind"... [until this year when], at age 15, [the boy] reappeared in Auckland and was picked up by police for a spate of minor crimes... [His] case is not the most dramatic example of what's gone wrong with the way we look after children at risk[– the boy] has not become a serial rapist... or a pile of ashes in the garden incinerator... How did we get to this? It began, ironically, with legislation lauded by social workers, lawyers and judges as an excellent piece of law... Central to the act's workings is the family group conference, where the child, its family, social workers and lawyers gather to sort out a child's problems or punishment without recourse to court or foster homes. Success is the family finding the solution. Therein, say the critics, lies the fundamental flaw. If the families were functional to begin with, their children wouldn't be wandering the streets aimless and hungry, nor would they be holding forks to the throats of taxi drivers... Critics think it absurd to put a dysfunctional family in a room with a social worker and expect it to emerge several hours later with a plan to fix itself. Inexperienced... social workers are likely to be bullied by dominant family members who may not know how to care for a child but share that fundamental human revulsion at the idea of having their child taken away. Yet the act's proponents – the majority of people working in the field – are convinced... the family... are the only people with a long-term emotional commitment to the child, which foster families will never have. Some problems can be solved... a mother[was] deemed unfit to care for her child. CY[FS] took it into care. Once a psychiatrist got involved, diagnosed the mother's mental illness and prescribed effective treatment, mother was back on the rails and reunited with

her child. Under the old system the state would have taken the child and never revisited the case... However, eight years on from the act's introduction, we still have no qualitative research to tell us whether the overall outcome for children is better under this act than under the old system. Only now are tenders being received for such research... In the absence of solid research on the act's effectiveness, we have to rely on the gut feeling of those who use it every day. Even the majority who like the principle worry about the practice.

...[an] Auckland voluntary youth worker... tells the story of one teenager from a home where mother was an alcoholic and was regularly beaten by her husband who also gave the children cannabis. [The teenager] was sexually assaulted by a psychiatric patient. His parents separated, sharing the children between them. CY[FS] got involved after [the teenager] continually ran away. The first eight hours of the family conference... were spent debating whether [the teenager] was the Grey Lynn or Henderson CY[FS]'s responsibility. After another 13 hours [the] father was given custody. CY[FS] never got involved again, even though [the teenager]'s father beat him. At 18 [the teenager] is now too old to interest CY[FS]. The youth worker] sees him occasionally, working as a prostitute on Karangahape Rd. [The youth worker] reminds social workers about sections 13 and 456 requiring them to seek immediate alternatives for a child whose family is its deadliest enemy. But clearly social workers feel pressure from the department to leave at-risk children with their families for as long as possible... [The] convener of the Auckland District Law Society's family law committee... stresses the policy is not about keeping the child with its abusers, but encouraging other members of the extended family to step in. That hope can be found within the... surge in the number of concerned grandparents applying to the courts for custody. That too rings alarm bells. Even well-intentioned grandparents can be quickly worn down by a child who is out of control. Why are grandparents resorting to court, rather than approaching CY[FS]? Chances are they have approached CY[FS], only to be greeted with voicemail or a social worker who takes a report and is never heard from again. At last count CY[FS] had close to 1000 reports of child abuse on its books that had yet to be allocated to a social worker. Faced with that pressure CY[FS] has to prioritise cases. The tighter it is squeezed, the greater the abuse has to be to qualify for intervention. It is tantamount to telling children their abuse isn't serious enough, come back when it is... Lack of money coupled with years of restructuring has ripped the head and heart out of the department... Many within the service are choosing not to go on trying... Under the Treasury model CY[FS] is funded for its output – for example the number of family group conferences it holds – as opposed to its outcomes, that is how successful they were. It means there is no financial incentive to get it right the first time or to keep on trying until we do.

...“A great place to bring up kids.” For decades now, that phrase has sat as comfortable with mention of N[Z] as All Blacks and roast lamb. People all around the world said it; everyone believed it. But no longer. Today, too many young lives seem blighted, not blessed. Rather than the past rosy image of happy healthy children, we are too often facing the nightmare of suicides, crime, ill-health and [abuse]. Parents see the horizons of their young darkened with prospects of physical and social decay... [The NZ] *Herald* has mapped the anatomy of a threatened generation... We look for the glimmers of hope and discuss the solutions. The week-long analysis starts in your *Herald* tomorrow.

...THE words ring out like an accusation: “The first duty of a state,” they say, “is to see that every child born therein shall be well clothed, fed and educated, till it attain years of discretion.” Only a few words hint that the source – an essay in the collection *Time and Tide*... – is 130 years old. But the sentiment is no Victorian curio: the sad fact is that the words, with a few minor changes as a concession to modern style, would fit neatly into any 90s publication. And they could do duty as a motto for our investigation into the state of the nation's children which begins today. The series makes grim reading at times. The occasional flashes of light seem more like testaments to individual dedication and the resilience of the human spirit than signs that things are getting better. We've found young shoplifters who know all about their legal rights but not much about what's right and wrong[, including]... a master criminal with a rap sheet running to 500 crimes[who's] only 15 years old... To his peers on the streets of south and central Auckland, [the 15-year-old] is the “guru” of crime. To the police [the 15-year-old] is a nightmare who has still to reach his awful potential... [To one of his foster parents,] officials can shoulder most of the blame, because they did not act hard and fast when [the boy] was offending from the age of 10... [T]he unpleasant truth[is] that this is a nation whose children are in danger... What's obvious from listening to the people we've spoken to is that many people regard themselves as surplus to requirements in the construction of the great N[Z] economic miracle. And the focus of this series has confronted us with the uncomfortable fact that some children have never known any other feeling than this: that life is passing them by. What also emerges strongly from the stories is the sense that... [a] child in trouble is the symptom of a society in strife, and time and time again the people working at the coalface are bogged down in procedure and swamped with caseloads... [due to] being underfunded and understaffed... Yet the danger is that we're being penny-wise and pound-foolish... As our writers have teased out individual histories, they have found that they all link together like a Chinese puzzle. Scratch the surface of a truant's story and you soon uncover a family where parenting skills are inadequate. But wait: before you nod knowingly, dig a little deeper. You'll find a family where no one's had a job for 15 years, where one parent's chronically ill or another is an alcoholic[, where the]... first two years of life – surrounded by damaged violent people – have literally shrunk the[child's] brain... They may be other people's kids, but their plight is our national shame. If we do nothing else, the pieces which will appear on our pages over the next week should ignite the rage of all of us on behalf of those too young and weak to fight for themselves. We owe it to them... [Our first article is] about... street kids wasted on solvents... which will burn out their brains before they reach adulthood.

...At the age of 11, the South Auckland boy was offered a bag of glue on his way home from school. All it took was one sniff... Within a year [the boy] was living on the streets. His parents didn't seem to care... Now 18[, the boy]... commits slow suicide beside railway tracks... or in houses which, like him, have been abandoned. His world stops at the bottom of his bag of glue or paint... [The boy] has kids of his own – four of them, who all live with their mothers. It doesn't do to wonder what they'll be doing when they're 11.

...This time last year the 17-year-old was playing netball and getting good grades at an Auckland high school. Then... [the 17-year-old met a guy] who was... a long-term solvent abuser... Now... [the 17-year-old is] squatting in a Manurewa house with... other sniffers... is “in love” and wants to be a mum. The couple are trying for a baby but shrug their skinny shoulders when asked how the solvents will affect their unborn child.

...[a British study has shown the number of serious cases of brain damage from solvent abuse is virtually negligible. The main effect was on the brain, because the fumes were inhaled through the nose and went directly into the blood stream. Sniffers were far more likely to die from accidents resulting from their lack of awareness than the actual physical effects of inhaling. A professor of the Auckland University Medical School says most solvents inhaled by sniffers depressed the central nervous system. They caused users to lose the higher brain functions, including inhibition of aggression, guilt and fear, and produced or facilitated undesirable social behaviour. The professor said solvent abuse generally had its roots in a mixture of child mistreatment or neglect and social disadvantage. Youths turned to solvents because they were easier to obtain than alcohol. Ironically, although alcohol is far more toxic than solvents over a prolonged period, drinking is seen to be socially acceptable while sniffing' (and 'huffing' – sniffing air propellant via paint cans) isn't.

...A party trick went wrong when a guy used a canister of helium gas instead of a balloon to make his voice squeak and suffered what appears to be a stroke, a collapsed lung and nitrogen bubbles in his bloodstream, causing total blindness. A doctor from Brisbane's Wesley Centre for Hyperbaric Medicine said yesterday that the guy had had “a fair bit to drink” last year when it put the hose from a helium canister in his mouth. But instead of speaking like Minnie Mouse, the 27-year-old passed out unconscious. The patient has since made a full recovery. In 1994, a 13-year-old boy who inhaled helium recovered after suffering similar symptoms.' In local news, 'Hamilton's coroner is calling for bigger warnings on fly spray cans after the death of a second Hamilton teenager in less than a year. Last June, Gerard Anthony Versteeg, aged 13, died after inhaling fly spray at a party in Tamahere. The second teenager – whose name has been suppressed at the request of her family – died in February after being found collapsed in the hallway of her Hamilton home. Efforts to resuscitate her failed. The autopsy showed butane – the propellant used in fly spray – in the teenager's blood, and empty cans of

fly spray were found under her bed. The girl died from acute heart failure. A friend said the dead girl had told her it was sniffing fly spray because it gave her a “short buzz.”

...‘It took 2 seconds for a fireball to engulf a boy when it was sniffing petrol by candlelight with six of his mates last Thursday. Today the boy is spending his 13th birthday in an induced coma in Waikato Hospital. The boy has burns to 80% of his body and also has pneumonia. Doctors say the boy will be lucky to survive. His older brother wants his plight to stand as a warning to parents in rural towns. The brother – who admits that it sniffed solvents when younger but gave up after seeing a friend set fire to its eyebrows – says youngsters in Turangi and similar towns turn to solvents because there is nothing better to do.’

...‘When a boy was dragged from a burning shed with his skin running off him like melted wax, few people thought it would live to crack another of his trademark jokes. But the Turangi teenager was determined to prove them wrong. Now the brave youth is warning others of the dangers of solvent abuse’...

‘Social services in Turangi are declaring war on solvent abuse after a local boy was nearly burned to death while sniffing petrol. Local health and community agencies said an anti-sniffing campaign in Turangi two years ago had worked, but they were now faced with a new wave of solvent abusers. Details on the new campaign were yet to be sorted out yesterday.’ By the way, the response to the... *Herald’s* series on the plight of the nation’s children has been overwhelming. The hearts and minds of thousands of people have been touched... [A] voluntary community worker[hopes] the *Herald’s* taking up the cudgels on behalf of young people would see positive results. [The volunteer says it is] important the stories of the many disadvantaged young people were told... Like... the... [story the] police told us about their concern for a 14-year-old runaway prostitute who had been living and working on the streets for three weeks. It took about five hours for Social Welfare to find a place for the girl – from which [the girl] promptly ran away. Police were disturbed to find no one had reported her missing... In Monday’s paper[an] Auckland lawyer... observed the rise in the number of grandparents seeking custody... According to one set of Whangarei grandparents who contacted the... *Herald* after reading that story, the law is weighted unfairly in favour of parents who neglect their children and stacked heavily against grandparents who want to intervene. Their daughter has been in a succession of violent, drug-laden relationships and according to the grandparents is neglecting and abusing the three children. The grandparents knew it “was going to be dynamite within the family” when they decided to make a bid for custody, a decision they made when they learned the children’s respective fathers had the same plan. The grandfather, whom we cannot name while the case is still before the court, puts the total cost of the court battle at \$250,000; money [the grandparents] would rather have spent on helping the children. Their daughter and the children’s fathers have been granted legal aid, while the grandparents are selling land to pay their legal bills... In Wednesday’s paper we highlighted the plight of... a brother and sister from Otara who have not been to school for a year. They said they dropped out to help their mother care for their siblings... The pair’s grandfather contacted the... *Herald* to say [the family] was upset that the teenagers had spoken with the media about their home life. “If there is something wrong, they should come to the whanau first. We’ve got several members of the family who are prepared to come together to discuss these things because we are here to help these children.” ...The grandfather said the teenagers did little to help their mother and instead “more or less ran her down” when [their mother] was doing her best to cope... [then] claimed the pair had refused to go back to school and said [the girl], who was pictured smoking, seemed to have “more money for smokes than food.” ...A sixth form class from Rutherford High School... was critical of our series for calling them part of a “wasted generation.” ...“Why should our generation be called ‘wasted’ on account of a small minority?...” ...“This minority is not without hope, just without guidance...” ...“Why make them... popular. Show young people how to achieve the best by presenting the best achievements of young people of the same age who just tried a bit harder.”

...N[Z]s not the only nation troubled by the plight of too many of its children. Our... neighbours... have equal cause for worry... This is not a good time to be young in A[US]. In the age of the Aces, the teenagers of the lucky country view life with a blend of pessimism... and yearning for a return to the certainties their parents knew. The term Aces was coined by the... advertising agency Mojo-partners to encapsulate its findings in a survey of the mood of teenagers around the world: it means alienated, cynical, experimental and savvy. There has been no lack of such surveys in A[US] and abroad. All show depressingly similar results: dismay at baby boomer parents who have failed to grow up and who have been betrayed by their own rules and values; youths’ pessimism, even fear, about their own future; cynicism at a society they believe is unlikely to fulfil their ambitions or possibly even their needs... Our children are inheriting a different world. There is no single, or even simple, definition of a “normal” A[US]n family any more, and the units that now cross the new family spectrum are subject to strains and breakdowns at levels unknown to preceding generations. While most children still live with adult couples, there are more step-parents, and de facto, solo-parent and homosexual households. In more than 40[%] of households, both parents work, and almost half the nation’s children under 12 are in some form of child care. The divorce rate is rising – 40[%] of marriages fail over a 30-year period – the number of children born out of marriage has risen from fewer than one in 10 in the 1960s to a quarter of... births, and parents are spending less time with their children – an average six minutes’ play a day, compared with an hour and a half of TV, for example... [R]eported cases of child abuse and neglect have been rising at an average rate of about 10[%] a year for the past decade, and more children are born into struggling families: A[US]’s child poverty rate is second only to the U[S] in the First W[or]ld... One quarter of all job seekers in A[US] are aged 15 to 19; the unemployment rate for teenagers ranges from 20 to 30[%]... Participation in sport – or even moderate physical activities – falls significantly after primary school, while TV, video and computer time has soared to levels higher even than in the... [US]. An exception to the moderate physical activities trend is that] sex... is on the rise... The mean age for loss of virginity is now 16 years... Major cities have reported the rise of turf wars, brawls and stabbings among teen drug gangs... [Juveniles] are “disproportionately over-represented” in breaking and entering and motor vehicle theft – the two most frequent property offences. Boys outnumber adult [guys] for robbery, and girls outnumber [adult gals] in most categories of crime... The number of homeless 12 to 18-year-olds is estimated at 25,000[. □ ‘The tradition of older children looking after brothers and sisters while their parents are out is under threat from a group that wants the legal age for babysitters raised to 16. Auckland-based charity the Child Safety Foundation says the present age of 14 is too young. The foundation wants a law raising the age to also define how many children a babysitter can look after and how long they can be left. A spokesperson for the foundation said the law was too vague because all it said was that 14 was the legal age. The spokesperson said the foundation received calls during school holidays from children who were home alone with younger children and frightened. However, the Social Services Minister is not convinced about a law change, although the minister welcomes debate. The minister acknowledges that there have been some “spectacular” cases where things have gone wrong, for example children left in burning houses. But in those cases it had not been legal to leave the children in charge because they were too young. “It’s usually neglect we’re talking about here – people who have gone to the pub or something and not come home all night and left very young children together. Well, that’s actually a criminal act and that’s covered already”]...]

A five-year-old boy found wandering in central Napier at night had been left in a vehicle while his father went to a bar in the city. Police... found the boy in a shopping precinct about 12.30 am... [T]he... 34-year-old... father... was charged with leaving a child without reasonable supervision.

...Social Welfare is warning parents not to leave their children alone after two incidents in Christchurch... Two girls, aged five and seven, were placed in emergency care with the C[YFS] after the oldest child sought help on Thursday night from a neighbour. Police said the children were left “home alone” in suburban New Brighton and were in a “filthy state.” In the second incident, a 12-year-old boy was found sleeping at 2.30 am yesterday at the Ruru Lawn Cemetery. The boy told police it was his second night there after being kicked out of home by his parents. When police checked, the parents were not at home... The Christchurch area manager of the C[YFS]... could not say how common home alone cases were in Christchurch, but... said... “I personally think that probably we are hearing about it more now because people are becoming more and more aware – more vigilant.” [The manager] said the police were responsible for prosecutions of parents in home alone and neglect cases, and the service did not

normally make recommendations about prosecutions... [However,] Christchurch police said the service was investigating the cases, and police would take no further part unless the service thought it necessary.

...A six-year-old boy was caught shoplifting at Foodtown supermarket in Mangere last night. Police who took the boy home found that his parents were out of town and that his 13-year-old sister was supposed to be looking after him. The C[YFS] was called in.

...POLICE are searching for a 15-year-old babysitter in a home-alone case where... a... four-year-old was spotted carrying his one-year-old sister about 2.20am by a truck driver outside a hotel on State Highway 2... [T]he children believed their parents were at the hotel and they had gone to look for them when they became hungry... [T]he children's mother told police... the youngsters... had[been] left... in the care of a... babysitter [when the mother went] to the hotel about 1.30am... [The mother] returned about 3.30am and after trying to find her children, called police around 5am... The police were still trying to... confirm the story... [and the] children have been placed in the care of the C[YFS].

...New Plymouth police were last night desperately seeking the parents of... a boy aged about 3 and girl about 2... found huddled together at the Kawaroa playground just before dark... on Saturday... Police could not find their parents or guardians in the immediate area, so took the children, who would not talk, to the station. Social workers helped police knock on doors and stop motorists. Radio bulletins broadcast appeals with no luck. By midnight the parents had still not been found and the children were placed with the C[YFS]. By yesterday morning the pair were talking more confidently and gave their names to staff, but could not say where their home or parents were. "The fact that no one has come forward or reported them missing for more than 24 hours now has us worried,"...

Their mother was found by police at her home at 9 am yesterday. [The mother] had left them with a friend on Saturday and was unaware the children had been in Social Welfare care for more than 36 hours.

...A mother left her 3-year-old son shut in a bedroom alone without food or water while... nightclubbing... Alerted by a neighbour, ambulance staff and police found the child late last night... covered in urine and faeces... Ambulance staff believed [the child] had been left for more than 24 hours. They said [the child] needed a lot of comforting... The child was taken to Auckland's Starship Hospital and cleaned up... Police were still trying to find the mother early today. The boy was handed to the... C[YFS].

...Neighbours said the boy was violent, spoke in grunts and went through their rubbish like a dog... Yesterday the 23-year-old mother, who... worked as a stripper... sobbed in the Henderson District Court when, after a defended hearing[, the judge]... convicted her of wilful neglect... Henderson police told the court... [that] the toddler... was... [found naked] except for a filthy T-shirt, [and]had dried and fresh faeces on his legs, hands, around his mouth, his head and cheeks... [T]he child was "stunned, frightened and glad to see somebody." ...The flat was clean and tidy – the stripper had made her own bed – but the child's room was a "pigsty." ...The bedroom walls were smeared waist-high in faeces and 75[%] of the floor was littered with dirty nappies, soiled clothing, food scraps and an empty water bottle... His mother walked into the Henderson police station the next day between 4.30 am and 5 am. [The mother] was drunk and gave... a false statement... but would not sign it. Under cross-examination in court, [the mother] said: "I know I shouldn't have left him alone like that, but it didn't enter my head it would harm him." ...the child is[currently] living with his mother under supervision in a residential parenting programme... Henderson... [p]olice were still looking yesterday for the mother of a[n]... 11-year-old... girl left alone without food for three days in a Waitakere City house.

...Welfare staff are impressed at the resourcefulness of an 11-year-old West Auckland girl left alone at home for three days who cooked her own meals... did the dishes... made sure the Ranui house was well-kept... and attended school daily... A neighbour phoned the police on Wednesday night to say the mother had taken a younger sibling and walked out on the girl. Left without money, [the 11-year-old] had run out of food after three days and went to the neighbour's to ask for a meal... [T]he girl was now being cared for in a foster home and was "settled and in good spirits." ...The mother contacted the service on Thursday after... [returning] to find the girl missing and a calling card on her doorstep... The girl's future would depend on a service investigation... [The mother] was likely to be charged with neglect[. By the way, 'in England, Wales and Scotland it isn't illegal to leave children alone in the home, unless there are signs of neglect or abuse']...

A pair of grief-stricken parents in Macau hanged themselves a day after their... children, aged 6 and 5, died in a fire after being left home alone.

...HOLLYWOOD ensured the words *Home Alone* were something to chuckle about. A 10-year-old's mischievous romps while left to his own devices were laughed at by millions. However, in N[Z] the phrase has a more depressing definition. "Home alone" is synonymous with the neglect of children through either a reckless disregard for their welfare or the foolhardy belief "nothing can go wrong" even if mum or dad are just popping to the shops for 15 minutes. The number of cases reported to police – the offence is commonly described as "leaving a child under 14 years without adequate supervision" – skyrocketed from... 45 offences in 1990... [to] 569... in 1996... Occasionally, a case is so tragic it warrants widespread coverage. Take Dylan Hoeta who died in a caravan blaze at a South Auckland motor camp. Dylan (4) was one of six children left without supervision while his parents... went socialising. Mum was convicted and discharged after admitting leaving her... children home alone. Dad escaped punishment because of "insufficient evidence." ...Four children (aged 2-11) caught a bus to McDonalds in Porirua after their mother went to housie... An Auckland couple, known for anti-abortion protests, admitted failing to provide supervision and care for their son... [T]he boy, who had two broken legs, [was] left alone and out of reach from food, water and toilet facilities... [A] 13-year-old boy[was] left home alone for a week in the Coromandel town of Whangamata while... [his] mother... worked in Auckland... A Taupo toddler crawled through a house cat-door and wandered on to the street after [the toddler] and his baby brother were left while their father drank at a local hotel. Police found the father when [the father] was dropped off by a taxi at the station for refusing to pay the fare... The mother of two children found home alone in Hamilton was so drunk [the mother] could not get off the footpath... Such cases are at the extreme end of the home-alone spectrum, and child welfare organisations concede many more parents are guilty of leaving children alone for shorter periods of time, often because of their work. The latter parents, while more understandable, are nevertheless committing an offence under the Summary Offences Act and risk a maximum fine of \$1000... [However, the] home-alone law has been accused of hurting children because fining parents meant there would be less money for the family. Of the 325 cases "cleared" by police in 1995, 168 parents were given a warning while 46 were prosecuted. The remainder were cautioned or referred to youth aid... The... chief social worker... said it was a mistake to think only irresponsible people left their children unattended. [Incidentally, 'my children think it's funny because I have *love* tattooed on my fist – but that's what I thought love was' ...

The] Manurewa footwear factory... [worker] doesn't find it easy to talk about his childhood. But it was rough. [The 19-year-old] has never met his dad; it was his mum who was quick with her fists. Beaten and bullied at school, the Otara youth... came close to heading down the wrong track. What stopped him was his grandmother, the one person who cared enough to keep the pressure on to keep him straight... Without her, [the youth] would... have given in and joined the Mongrel Mob... become involved in "drive-bys and robberies" and joined his mates in prison, mates that didn't have that one person who cared enough, or was strong enough, to stop them... While [his] grandmother kept him straight, the intervention of... KT Footwear... was another factor that changed his life direction. [The company's owner] believed in him and gave him a job... "No one else would have accepted me," says... [the] part Maori... part Rarotongan... [The owner says:] "I'm only a small business. There are huge businesses out there that could open their hearts and give the kids a go." ...the product of a broken, violent Pakeha home, is a fore[person] at the shoe factory... [G]iven part-time work there when... 14[, the Pakeha] used to walk several kilometres from school each day to sweep the factory floor. The few dollars... earned were spent on groceries for his three siblings and solo mother... At 20[, the foreperson] looks back at the time that his father left and says it was a good thing... the fighting stopped... [A] 14-year-old is attending the Waipareira Trust's alternative education unit in West

Auckland and living at a trust hostel... [This 14-year-old] used to get beatings from his dad who [called] him... a “stupid loser” and a “dumb nigger.” Then, two years ago, his mother died. [The 14-year-old became] a tagger... converted cars[... was]... kicked out of several mainstream schools and... [developed] a big anger problem. But [the 14-year-old] is finally recognising it as a problem and is trying to tame it... “I’m sick of being a pain in the arse... I let heaps of people down. I want the people I care about to be proud of me. I used to have a negative mind but even the teachers have said I’m turning positive.” [Another youth] is... about to leave the unit. [The 17-year-old, who] hopes to attend a Unitec course... came from a good family that cared, but fell in with a bad crowd at school... threatened teachers, broke into shops and tagged houses. It was getting caught and being sent to the unit that changed his life... Youthtown in central Auckland[is] a free drop-in-centre for young people. It welcomes kids in trouble with the police... with anger problems... who are suicidal... from dysfunctional families... who don’t know what love is and have never had a kind word said to them. What stops them from self-destructing is developing a special relationship with a caring staff member, or just being in a supportive environment... says... the director... “Often I find it’s just a learning process in an environment where they are appreciated and valued and the self-esteem starts to come up... they start to experience success and acceptance and belonging... these are the sorts of things that... turn people around.”

...Recently, leading members of the Mongrel Mob came and sat around the... dining table... [of the organiser] of the Houhanga Rongo Trust, a Maori term which means reconciliation... telling [him] they wanted a better way to raise their children... [The organiser, who] has been working with Otara children and families for more than 20 years[... asked]... them to describe what an ideal father looks like. Armed with those descriptions [the organiser implored] them to go home and be that father... [O]ne... of those... [fathers] – a gang member not long out of prison – ...decided... to become a teacher. [The organiser] encouraged him to enrol at polytech to learn Maori. From there, [the] father went on to university, topping the sociology class... The gang member’s wife was a drug addict living on the streets... their children... [lived with the organiser’s family. Now the] three children live with [their father]. His wife has joined a drug rehabilitation programme. To [the organiser] it was a simple story of a family taking control of its own circumstances. Through the East Tamaki Resource Centre [the organiser] hopes to draw in more of those families... who see the need to change. [The organiser] is so far resisting going to the Government for finance for the centre. Government funding, [the organiser] says, is unreliable from year to year... A centre supported by its own community has greater hope of long-term survival, [the organiser] believes. A fundraising programme called Operation Boot Strap – the name indicates a desire for Otara to pull itself out of the social and economic mire – is in its early stages.

...Manukau Youth Centre staff manage to cope with demands for their services, but their... annual \$200,000... budget is being stretched to breaking point. Hundreds of youngsters are flocking to the centre’s new Lambie Drive complex for help, many of them from outside its anticipated catchment area. Established under the auspices of the South Auckland Youth Resource Service... the centre is contracted to North Health... to assist young people... “at risk,” troubled, stressed or in need of support... “We are a hospital for social ills. We fill a huge void.” ...the centre’s full-time staff of three... were trained to take a holistic approach in dealing with youngsters referred to the centre by teachers, parents or community organisations or those who just dropped in... [E]ven 7-year-olds have been making a beeline for what was once a church... The... co-ordinator for SAYRS... said Government agencies such as Social Welfare, the Police and the N[Z] Employment Service should become involved with the centre.

...Social workers strike today over pay and conditions knowing it will delay the investigation of child abuse cases. Serious home-alone cases and children at immediate risk of serious injury will still be treated as emergencies and removed to safety by managers or striking staff released specially. Notifications of sexual abuse, unless severe, would not be dealt with as emergencies, says the Public Service Association... A South Auckland social worker, who did not want to be named, said staff were striking a blow for children. “It’s time to take a stand about the cuts in services...”

...People who tried to report child welfare problems yesterday were told to “ring back tomorrow,” after 1500 social workers walked off the job... Staff were to return to work today at 9.30 am[... excluding]... several hundred social workers[who] were suspended... The service’s service delivery manager... said... “We certainly are not happy our people have seen fit to express their grievance in this way.”

...Being yelled at, hit, spat on and sworn at is all in a day’s work, say staff of the C[YFS]. The job is intimidating, demanding, stressful and sometimes dangerous... Getting past gang members and into a house to remove a child is no easy task... A survey by the Social Work Association found social workers have been threatened with axes, guns and knives. Violence affected their confidence and their work; they suffered panic attacks, anxiety, depression and sleep disorders; and their work took its toll on their relationships. For this they are paid between \$26,000 and \$36,000 a year, and if they work after-hours they get... [an extra] \$3000 a year. They can also earn performance bonuses of up to \$4000. The maximum possible earning is around \$43,000 but... “It takes 10 years of hard slog.” Social workers say it is not good enough, and mounting frustration led to industrial action which last week culminated in mass suspensions of social workers. Yesterday, the situation had calmed and indications were that both parties would next week head back to the negotiating table. Social workers say they have not had a pay rise for seven years, and they want 15[%] to compensate. Management offered 2.25[%] for 18 months with a lump sum of \$2000, an increase in work hours, changes to the extra duties allowance and a restructuring of the bonus system. Staff claim this means some of them will end up with less money. The pay talks have been stalling for months. But while that is the big issue... it is not the only issue. Under question is the whole philosophy of the service that social workers say is so underfunded they cannot do their job properly... Meanwhile, [three]... youths were still on the run from the Social Welfare home at Weymouth last night after absconding while social workers were on strike. Security guards hired to control residents during Wednesday’s strike could not keep them inside the walls of the Northern Residential Centre. The manager of residential and caretaker services... said youths at Weymouth, and a similar centre in Christchurch where 11 ran away, had been unsettled because of the strike... The youths were no more dangerous than some of the other youths already out on the street, [the manager pointed out.

...1100 juvenile delinquents escaped from two notoriously violent detention centres in the Brazilian city of Sao Paulo over the past 15 days, unleashing a wave of violent crime. Lawmakers and public defenders say the rash of break-outs and violence was a predictable result of torture and inhumane treatment at the detention centres.’ In local news, lawyers say a) locked-door policy at the Northern Residential Centre in Weymouth is illegal and may amount to wrongful imprisonment... They also say the policy is the real reason for the number of absconders from the home dropping by more than half. The N[Z] Herald reported yesterday that the Social Welfare Minister... believed abscondings had fallen because specialist programmes in youth centres and in the community were paying off... Social Welfare was waiting for legal advice yesterday before commenting.

...Body searches of young people living at Social Welfare residential centres are continuing despite a ruling they may breach fundamental human rights... says... a lawyer for the Office of the Commissioner of Children. There had also been complaints that some young people have been required to do “star jumps” naked and bend over naked. Social Welfare denies that star jumps and humiliating methods are used and says searches are carried out only if a staff member believes no alternative exists for detecting items such as drugs... But [the lawyer] said the searches were routine, carried out whenever a young person returned to a centre from outside. And while some of the young people in the centres were there on remand, others were there for their own care and protection. “These kids may have been sexually abused and... they are being exposed to something which they would find quite disturbing and distressing...” The new search powers came into force on February 1 and are among a list of regulations which update the Children and Young Persons (Residential Care) Regulations 1986.

...The Commissioner for Children’s office will take Social Welfare to court if the department refuses to stop degrading body and strip-searches of young people in its care. Social Welfare has acknowledged that the searches are intrusive and degrading but... told the regulations review committee it had extended its power of search because more contraband was being brought into the residences.

...The Government has agreed to curb the powers of Social Welfare staff to make controversial body searches of young people in residential care. But youth advocates say the proposed legislation does not go far enough and fear young people in Social Welfare care and custody will still be worse off than adult criminals being searched for drugs and weapons in jails. The legislative amendment, expected to be introduced to Parliament next year, comes amid revelations that less than 3[%] of the 912 strip-searches and “pat-downs” of young people in residential homes led to the seizure of drugs and weapons... The searches were also criticised by the parliamentary regulations review committee about three months ago. It said the powers should be in law rather than in Department of Social Welfare regulations.

...The Environment Court was asked yesterday to shut two Auckland homes for juvenile delinquents. The Government-funded homes – designed to treat offenders aged between 11 and 15 – have provoked fierce community opposition from their neighbours in Manurewa and Pakuranga. The Youth Horizons Trust is contracted to the Department of Social Welfare to house up to six youths in each treatment programme at an estimated cost of \$100,000 a child annually. Earlier this year, the trust’s project manager... was sent a threatening note and the Manurewa property... was trashed by intruders and had diesel tipped through it. The Sunset Community Residents Association in Pakuranga and the Homestead Community Residents Association in Manurewa want a court ruling that the trust is contravening the district plans and needs resource consents from the Manukau City Council... However the trust’s lawyer... told the court that the homes were residential only as the occupants went to a learning centre in Newmarket during the day. They were therefore permitted as of right under the transitional and proposed Manukau district plans... [T]he Homestead group, told the court that residents were concerned at the potential risk to them and their families if a seriously disturbed young person absconded[, but]... a trust psychiatrist... said... the criteria for the occupants was that they be of minimal risk to themselves and others.

...The Government faces growing chaos in its ailing child protection service. Social workers take strike action tomorrow for the second time in four months... [S]ocial workers at residential homes will join the industrial action... Social Welfare [also] faces legal action by dozens of unpaid foster parents in a tussle which could cost the department millions of dollars. The disgruntled workers[, who] provide emergency care for abused and neglected young people... get... an allowance for each child... [that] covered the basic needs of each child but nothing was left over... and are fighting... [for] backpay for former workers... who had burned out and quit. The service was breaching the Employment Contracts Act by not recognising the around 100 past and present caregivers as employees and claims had been filed in the Employment Tribunal... [T]he workers... were on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week... The service called them contractors but by law they were employees and therefore entitled to a minimum wage and holiday pay. One of them... has run a family home in Otara with her husband... for four years... [The caregiver] got four hours off a week and one weekend a month but often could not take the time because it was impossible to get relief staff. The house took six to eight children but was often overcrowded. “They are all abused children... Most have behavioural problems... You have to really be like a police[officer] and watch them day and night.” - 1997

[The sisters are] aged 6 and almost 4. They are engaging and appealing little girls who are currently reaching normal milestones. They interact well with both adults and other children although they can be demanding and attention seeking at times. The girls have been subjected to extensive neglect and emotional abuse. As a result they need to be placed in a family with a clear understanding of their needs. Caregivers should have the skills and experience to provide a stable and secure environment whilst maintaining clear boundaries... [The sisters] should be the youngest in the family. They need to maintain links with their birth family and prospective caregivers should therefore live in the Auckland Region.

...[th]is... eight year old European... is a lively boy with good conversational skills. [The boy also] is outgoing... responds eagerly to adult praise and attention... likes animals... enjoys games and using the computer. Because of past trauma and neglect [the boy] has some emotional and educational delays and some behavioural difficulties. [The boy] needs a permanent home with caregivers who can offer him warm positive attention and clear boundaries. [The boy] will need to be the youngest in his family and his caregivers will need to assist him in maintaining contact with his biological family. Prospective caregivers must live in the Auckland region and permanency will be secured under the Guardianship Act.

...[this girl] is a European child aged eight[, who] enjoys learning ballet, tap and jazz dancing. [The girl] is a competent swimmer and likes most water and outdoor activities. [The girl] also loves playing with her dolls and reading. [The girl]’s history is one of emotional and physical neglect which has affected her social, emotional and educational development. [But the girl] is now making progress in all areas of development. Fear of failure can be a problem however leadership qualities are evident once confidence is achieved. [The girl] needs parents who can nurture, encourage and help... develop her full potential. Links with biological family need to be maintained[, and the girl] should be the youngest in the family... If interested please contact: C[YFS’s]... PERMANENT PLACEMENT UNIT... Telephone 914 1155 (Business Hours)

...Dozens of Kiwi couples are opening their hearts and homes each year in response to the poignant silhouette newspaper advertisements placed on behalf of children in welfare care. Without this show of generosity and love, these children – rescued from environments where they’ve suffered every kind of neglect and abuse imaginable – would be sentenced to a lifetime of upheaval and uncertainty, due to the temporary nature of foster care. The C[YFS]’s Permanent Placement Unit in Auckland places advertisements for up to 25 children a year. We track the success stories of four Auckland silhouette kids given a new chance, thanks to appearing in the saddest advertisements of all. LINDA* Raising other people’s children is something Elizabeth and Clive* have done for years. Despite having seven kids between them, [and now]... 26 grandchildren, two of which they care for before and after school... they always managed to find the time and energy to take in another needy soul... [When] they responded to [a CYFS]... advertisement for Linda, 10 years ago, the... [little girl] was in desperate need of love... “When I first moved in here, they were just like a real mother and father,” Linda recalls. “I’d help with the work and get pocket money and they’d take me places and organise things for me to see and do.” In just a few months time, Linda, now 21, and her boyfriend will be moving into a home of their own. [Linda] still has regular contact with her birth mother but admits it isn’t easy. “My mother doesn’t care about me but I still ring her up... When I ring, [mum] says, ‘What do you want?’ I was a lovely child but not once has [mum] ever said, ‘I love you’. I know how much [mum]’s hurt me but I don’t feel I can hurt her back...” JACOB* Jacob’s childhood was cut short at an early age when [Jacob] was forced to become a father figure to his baby sister in a home where anger, alcohol and violence were the norm... The burden of that role was finally lifted off Jacob’s shoulders at the age of 10, when, after three years in a foster home, [Jacob] and his sister were placed with different permanent families, allowing Jacob to reclaim his childhood at last. Although [Jacob] has contact with his sister and his mother every month, his father has never applied for access. Jacob’s guardians, Bridget (46) and Neil* (45) have been married 26 years and have two sons, aged 26 and 24. Neil recalls how a visit to an orphanage as a child member of St John’s Ambulance meant [Neil]’d always had a “soft spot” for children less fortunate than himself. “W[hen w]e... saw the ad for Jacob we thought [this] was someone we could help.” The couple’s two sons were more than happy with the plan and have provided additional role models for Jacob, now 13. [Jacob]’s now getting A’s in his grades at school and is proving to have a flair for sport. “The satisfaction you get from seeing his development and having his company is great,” says Neil. MARY* Nobody knew the exact extent of damage to baby Mary when [Mary] first came into welfare care. Low IQ and personality disorders affecting her parents prevented them from caring for her but it would be some time before experts would know if [Mary] had inherited the traits. Mary had been fostered by two different families by the time David (47) and Anne* (40) took her in at 18 months old. Mary is now six. A neuro-development therapist gave her the all-clear at two-and-a-half and, thanks to heroic efforts on Anne’s part, working with Playcentre groups and offering educational support in the home, Mary is now catching up with her peers at school... Mary had become so used to being cared for by different people that [Mary] hadn’t developed the normal feelings of attachment for her age. “[Mary]’d just go to anyone,” Anne recalls. “The first time [Mary] cried after leaving her at Playcentre was a real breakthrough... Normally, mothers are upset when

that happens but I felt really good. It was a sign [Mary] was starting to care.” Mary has knitted so well with her guardians and two older brothers that the family are now in the process of helping another child, who is two. ANDREW* Andrew had been with two foster families and was six years old when [Andrew] first met his guardian couple, Mark and Pauline*. [Andrew] had suffered severe physical and emotional abuse and neglect while in his parents’ care, so much so that, even today, at the age of 11, [Andrew] still finds it hard to express his feelings. “Andrew doesn’t really show much emotion,” says Pauline, “whether... happy, sad or excited. I remember we got him a bike for Christmas once. We were more excited than [Andrew] was...” “But that’s okay,” adds Mark. “[Andrew] may never be any other way. What we do is accept and support him the way [Andrew] is, we allow him to be different.” Although Andrew initially tested his new guardians sorely through disobedience and by throwing tantrums “to see if we would send him home”, the couple now believe they’re over the worse. [Andrew]’s catching up at school, has shown a talent for art, joined a local rugby club and... might want to join the Navy one day. Mark and Pauline responded to Andrew’s silhouette ad after trying unsuccessfully to have children of their own through IVF. An older child was perfect for them, since they’re both in their forties and running a business from home... Andrew’s placement has been so successful that the couple is now going through the process again with another child. “We always said we’d have two children,” says Pauline, “and Andrew made it very clear to us [that the boy] desperately wanted a brother.”

I sometimes wonder – with justifiable concern – what became of... a regular resident at a Social Welfare home where my mother worked many years ago. The last time I saw him [the young boy] had chopped the paws off his foster family’s puppy with an axe... [N]ow... the... foster care system is in crisis and in some areas is verging on collapse, says the Auckland Foster Care Association. Foster families are burning out, then dropping out, according to the [association’s] president... who... has never seen it so bad... In September, the Association of Social Workers called for a national inquiry into what was happening to foster children. It reported cases of children who had histories of sexual abuse and violence being placed in homes with other youngsters[, while ‘more than 150 children have been removed from state foster parents after being physically, sexually or emotionally abused by them in the past three years.’ Other]... examples highlighting the breakdown were: • Social Welfare’s failure to tell caregivers their new foster child was an arsonist. • Some family homes say Social Welfare owes them thousands of dollars. • Family group conferences not called within the specified time frame, leaving children in limbo with temporary foster carers. • A 16-year-old who had not seen his father in 14 years was given a day to move towns to live with him. • Children often abruptly moved without explanation to them or their foster parents... [The president] said the welfare system operated under a lot of intimidation and fear. “Social workers don’t talk because they’re not allowed to. Foster parents don’t talk because... they fear if they complain they will be cut out from doing foster care.”

...Social workers in West Auckland have asked schools to stop sending them all children except likely abuse cases. The Waitakere C[YFS] says it can only take the most urgent cases because it is short of five social workers... The principal of Henderson Primary School... said the [request] meant schools had to make the difficult decision about whether a child was likely to be abused... [The principal] said the service seemed to be no better off after years of restructuring and reports about how it could be improved. [The principal] wondered about a recent newspaper report that the nine highest paid staff at the Social Welfare Department would share a bonus payment of almost \$120,000. “Possibly some of that money might have been better used in improving the salary structure of the people who actually do the work or even employing some more of them.”

...[by] March all of the C[YFS]’s social workers will be trained in new child abuse risk assessment procedures based on a model developed by a Canadian university and called the Manitoba Risk Estimation System... The... system was an excellent model and provided a thorough check-list for social workers to work to... the... former Commissioner for Children... said. “But if the service still has the problems of resourcing and organisation that they have in the past, then any procedure they set in place is not going to work.”

...THE Government is looking at a... initiative to... identify youngsters in danger of abuse, neglect, health problems or becoming delinquents. The proposal... require[s] agencies to co-operate and exchange information more than they have in the past to target families likely to have problems. Once identified, children would be logged through the systems of police, justice, welfare, health, and schools from the time they are born – and in some cases, such as teenage solo parents, before birth. [The]Health Minister... has given officials just four weeks to respond to the policy package, making it a fast-track Cabinet item... Central to the policy is a system of home visits... Teenage parents, those with criminal records or drug problems, or... from already dysfunctional families would be offered extra help... in budgeting, health, parenting and other relevant areas. Police, schools and other agencies would check with other departments about at-risk children’s welfare and progress... [It is hoped that this will prevent] child deaths in... cases where the victims had come to the attention of one agency or another... [– like] Wayne-Marshall Kairau (11)[, who] was murdered and his body burned in a 44-gallon drum in 1993 by his stepfather... The boy had been fathered by his mother’s father and Social Welfare had worked with his family for a year before his death. The search for the boy was hindered by weaknesses in the system of tracking the transfer[of] pupil records between schools... In 1994, Dane Gibson (12) was bashed to death with a concrete paving slab... The parents, who believed [Dane] was possessed by the devil, were found not guilty of murder on the grounds of insanity. Officials from the police, mental health service and Social Welfare visited the family 36 hours before the killing to assess the [parents’] mental state but none contacted the family GP... [Progress of the proposal is, however, likely to be affected by its projected cost of] \$66 million next financial year, rising to \$119 million for 1998 and \$156 million for 1999.

...The cost of child abuse in N[Z] has hit an estimated \$1.5 billion a year – and that figure doesn’t take into account sexual abuse and neglect. A Social Welfare departmental report, released by order of the Ombuds[person], conservatively estimates that 27,000 children a year suffer physical assault and emotional maltreatment... The report’s... costing of abuse put the loss to the economy at \$1200 million and the cost to taxpayers at \$393 million... [for] providing health and foster care and paying for legal enforcement... The report assessed that 18 children were killed by their caregivers and two committed suicide at a cost of \$2 million per life. Physical assaults of 9000 children requiring medical attention were costed at \$50,000 per case and the 2800 with permanent emotional injury were assessed as costing \$200,000 each. Another 15,000 serious abuse cases were costed at \$10,000 each... It is understood the issues of sexual abuse and neglect presented too many problems to be dealt with in the report’s timeframe... Yesterday... the... Minister of Social Welfare... played down the report, saying its figures were all... based on the amounts academic studies show N[Z]ers are willing to pay to prevent child death and injury.

...let’s stop heartbreak and save money[. NZ] can no longer ignore the economic impact of its alarming statistics on children at risk... Of the 23 [richest OECD nations, the UN] Children’s Fund ranked N[Z] as having the sixth highest rate of infant abuse... Early intervention for at-risk families from the time a child is born is the most cost-effective investment that N[Z] can make in the long-term reduction of the welfare bill... In a 20-year study of child-care outcomes... in the U[S] it has been estimated that two years of early childhood care results in savings per child of \$16,415 in reduced welfare costs, \$7082 reduced education costs, and \$3100 reduced crime related costs... This... total of \$26,579 a person... is seven times the cost of one year’s child care... An A[US]n National University cost benefit study of child care showed similar... results. When you consider that it costs over \$50,000 a year to keep one person in jail, and that the vast majority of our long-term inmates are from dysfunctional homes, the advantages of investing in early support for families are obvious.

...“There’s not enough support. The only cases you’ll get to deal with are the most critical ones and you don’t have the time and resources to do anything more than work from crisis situation to crisis situation[.]” says a[... social worker in the fourth and final year of her training... [who will] be reluctant to take a job with the C[YFS], regardless of the scarcity of other positions... The estimated burnout time for a frontline service social worker is said to be four years. “To be frank,” says... the service’s chief social worker... “[this]... is the hardest job. Our people see the worst of it;

they go into the toughest homes in the community and they face getting abused constantly and some people simply... [aren't] able to handle that." Yet there are children who are expected to handle the same environment every day.

...Every year 900 children under 20 die in NZ. Some are battered to death, some kill themselves, some die from avoidable diseases, and some by accident. For the Commissioner of Children... the situation is sickening and unacceptable. The statistics, and the recent deaths of battered babies Veronica Takerei-Mahu, aged 11 months, and Victoria Kayla Watson, eight months, compelled him to... push for a comprehensive child-mortality review system... "What we've got... is a whole lot of information sitting out in a whole lot of different files and no one is analysing its significance..."

...[a former NZ PM] in a new book, *Children of the Poor*, argues that... something has gone terribly wrong in the past 20 years. When I first became a [n MP], local priests... would bring people to see me so I could help with a home, a payment or a job. Now, I take people to the local churches to see if they can help... Last year police reported 272 cases of children under 14 being left home alone... [and] 930 violent crimes were committed by youngsters under 14... Third parties such as the police, the courts and schools are being conscripted more and more to deal with... our collective... failures, only to get the blame for not doing enough... The welfare state is a "third party" attempt to intervene on behalf of society to solve a problem before it explodes and hurts both its immediate victim and others. It is a moral and financial force for good... [Yet some] now see it as the problem. The welfare state does save some from terrible poverty, and their children from second-class citizenship, if run properly. But it has also provided a hammock for some, rather than a springboard out of trouble and into a better future. Civil engagement and popular participation can be brought back to life, giving new meaning to citizens and more control over their lives while at the same time building up more secure, enjoyable and healthy communities. People have a basic need to be part of something larger than themselves, whether through membership of a darts team, trade union, or church congregation. We are wasting too many people. Why not encourage people who are in retirement, or close to retirement, to help us all out? ...Why not encourage some people to retire early, give their job to a young person and then pay them a little to help out in the community... Let's say to young unemployed people... that if you can't find a job we will find you one, or you must... work in the community... If the economy doesn't work for all NZers... it works for none. We are working on the 80/20 rule. The danger is that because... 20[%] are missing out, some reactionaries will want to smash the success of the 80[%]... But it's higher education that is the passport to a better life and a stronger nation.

...Last night's *World In Action* documentary on TV3, *Minds To Crime – The Dangerous Few*, examined every parent's nightmare – that their little monsters will grow into big ones. The hour-long programme put forward the possibility that some children are biologically disposed to criminal behaviour as adults... The case studies were chilling – the three-year-old with a penchant for microwaving cats, the six-year-old who cheerfully told grandma [about killing] her dog. The kids were definitely not all right. Recent scientific research suggested it was possible to identify children as young as four or five as potential prison inmates... [US] studies apparently indicated that hyperactive children with attention deficit disorders [(ADD)] were most at risk of developing anti-social attitudes... [C]hemical imbalances in the brain could be responsible for such juvenile offending. The implications were intriguing – ignore the signs of constant abnormality, said one expert, and there was an 80[%] chance that your child would grow into a criminal. Predictably, medication was touted as a promising treatment, combined with behavioural modification techniques. But what of the other possible factors relating to the criminal tendencies of children? Surely issues such as social deprivation, environment and upbringing had a bearing on the matter. Counselling and pills seemed a simplistic cure-all. Then again, so did the proverbial kick up the backside. - 1996

"Experience... is the architect of the brain." ...The child's early experiences develop all the brain's functions – including the control of physical movement, thought, and emotions... Exactly how this development occurs is not understood completely but it has to do with the way the 100 billion neurons or nerve cells of the brain interconnect. The circuits the neurons establish with one another determine how the brain functions. Without a stimulus from outside, parts of the brain fail to develop properly. "...When a mother holds the infant, rocks it, looks into its eyes and speaks to it, on one level that is a beautiful thing and on another level it's a necessary physical stimulant for the appropriate growth... of the brain,"... says... a... visiting... [US] neurobiologist and psychiatrist... But if a child's earliest experiences are of violence, their brains become abnormally attuned to danger. "The world for this child is chaotic and... terrorising... So it needs to build in as best it can, the machinery to be hyper-vigilant, to scan the environment, to read nonverbal clues – basically, to be attuned to threat." In time the child develops a permanent state of anxiety... The behaviour of traumatised children... is likely to be misunderstood... Too often... these kids are labelled as suffering from ...ADD... and are put on drugs. In some [US] inner city neighbourhoods up to 40% of children are being treated for ADD. "But it's not ADD at all..." ...Abusive parents can learn how to care for their children... "Most (abusive) parents aren't evil, they're just dumb;"... Contrary to the popular myth most physical violence against children is by [mothers. But the mothers], in turn, have been abused by the [fathers]. "We won't make children safe until [mothers] are safe."

...THE new Domestic Violence Act is causing delays in routine family court hearings of up to six months. Family court lawyers say before the Act, cases would take two or three months to get a hearing after they were first listed... Under the Act, applications are regarded as urgent fixtures and are given priority over other family court matters... In the first six months (to December 31[. 1996]) of the Act, 3191 domestic violence protection orders were issued... A [n Auckland family law expert... said routine hearings for matrimonial property disputes and interim maintenance disputes, were the major areas within the Act suffering delays... [as a consequence. By the way, many guys] referred to anger management courses after a domestic violence order are failing to turn up. [The]National Network of Stopping Violence executive officer... said 700 [guys] had been referred to the organisation by the Family Court as a result of the... DVA... [but] only 320 had arrived for an interview and only 25% had started courses... If [someone] failed to attend anger management or anti-violence programmes as directed by the court, they were usually contacted by their course supervisors telling them to attend. If they still failed to turn up, they were summoned to explain. Further failure to attend, or to answer a summons, resulted in arrest... [Yet only one person] had been arrested for... disobeying an order under the act... [But the] Auckland family court deputy registrar... said news of the... arrest appeared to have spread and was "encouraging [other absentees]" to attend courses. [Guys] themselves have applied for around 7% of the orders since the DVA was introduced... Most... would probably be applying for protection of their children from a violent step-parent or partner... The act also allowed [guys] who live in gay relationships to apply for orders against their partner. [The officer] said the fact that 93% of orders were applied for by [gals], should not be forgotten. "Overwhelmingly violence is still committed by [guys on gals]."

...The Department for Courts' latest weapon in the battle against domestic violence is aimed not only at offenders, but victims and their families too. Programmes – starting on July 1 – will be paid for by the department and provided by private contractors... The scheme was announced this week following revelations that domestic violence remained a major problem in... [NZ. The] "proactive" scheme aimed at stopping violence should also reverse the spiral of Legal Aid bills associated with domestic violence. Critics claim the change in legislation means that the Family Court legal aid bill will rise by around \$7 million a year. Ultimately[, however,] the new scheme should reduce that bill as it will be mandatory for offenders to take part... Control over the content and duration of the programme rests with the department: offenders must complete a 30 to 50-hour course and victims will have the option of attending from 20 to 40 hours. The number of offenders attending a course is limited to 16... Similar schemes in Canada and the U[S] have been useful in changing behaviour, said... a... Family Court adviser... "It's not going to make everybody 100[%] better but there's generally been a reduction in reported violence continuing." [In international news, "Punch and Judy have been banned in an English town for promoting domestic violence. Punch and Judy shows have occupied a place in Britain since the 17th century, with children gleefully shouting at the

hump-backed Mr Punch as the puppet relentlessly wielded a stick on his put-upon wife. But the Colchester Borough council said wife-beating was not funny in an era of broken homes and domestic violence. "Young people are very impressionable," said a councillor. "Mr Punch's weapon is, of course, the slapstick," said the coordinator of the Punch and Judy College of Professors. "But we are not actually talking about real violence here. We are talking about knockabout comedy. The same comedy that Tom and Jerry engage in." Maybe the cartoon cat and mouse had better avoid Colchester.'

... 'A people at war with ourselves According to figures from the British Home Office, NZ is now the most violent country in the First World. With 1121 violent crimes per 100,000 people, we outstrip Canada at 979, AUS at 861 and, astonishingly, the US at 610 (the US still leads the murder table, largely because of easy access to guns). Countries such as France, Spain and Italy record only a quarter of the violent crimes in this country. Worse, studies from both Victoria and Otago Universities have found that only a fraction of the violence in the community turns up on police files. What the criminologists call this "dark figure" of unreported violence was also discovered by the researchers responsible for the Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study. Statisticians warn that the international comparisons are not absolute because of variations in how crimes are classified or even reported to the police. For instance, where we may record three charges from one crime, the British will record only the most serious crime. But when NZ was included in an international crime survey in 1992 – a study relying on random telephone numbers – we had the highest rate of victimisation for assault and threats and the second-highest rate for assault with force. And that was before the peak in 1995 when convictions for violent crime hit 16,778, close to double the 9548 convictions for violence in 1988. Not only is there more violence than a decade ago, but as Ministry of Justice researchers found, the type of violence is more serious than in the 1980s. And what most concerns those in the field is that every year the culprits get younger. Paradoxically, this rise in violence is accompanied by a growing abhorrence for the type of violence society often sanctioned, such as caning in schools or smacking children at home. In 1996, a Victoria University criminologist led a team looking at the victims of crime. It found that – rather than the entire country drowning in a tidal wave of violent crime – a particular segment of NZers are being repeatedly victimised, accounting for 86% of the violence.'

... Repeat victimisation is a key finding in the first national survey of crime victims made public yesterday. The survey found that [guys and gals] were equally at risk of violence, although [gals] were more likely to be assaulted by a person they already knew. Multiple violent victimisation was common, particularly among Pacific Islanders, and Maori and Pacific Islanders were more likely to be victims of violence... Almost a quarter of Maori... [gals] had to be treated by a doctor after partner abuse, [whereas only 7%] of non-Maori... sought help... but... 94[% of all gals] with recent partners reported that they had experienced at least one type of controlling behaviour... The survey found that one... [gal] in 16 would be sexually violated, and one person in five would be the victim of some type of assault. More than half of all violent offenders were thought to be under the influence of alcohol... [Overall,] the average rate of victimisation was estimated at 0.74 offences a person. However... offending was not spread evenly over the community... [6%] of victims of violence and sexual offences suffered 68[%] of such offences, an average of 12 offences per victim... "The consequence of crime prevention efforts targeted at repeat victimisation would be, at least, to spread crime more evenly throughout the population and thus to dilute its impact on any one individual," the survey says... Sponsored by police, the Ministry of Justice... the Department of Social Welfare, the Crime Prevention Unit, and[some other] Government ministries, the survey was done to provide a measure for crime victimisation, including the extent that offences are reported and recorded, perceptions and fear of crime, and the needs of victims.

... A claim that their [guys] are bred to be macho has angered prominent members of the Samoan community here who say that violence is not condoned in their culture. During a High Court trial in Auckland this week of two Samoans who jumped on a [another guy]'s head, a defence lawyer... said young Samoan [guys] were taught not to turn from a challenge... [and] her client... a 19-year-old member of the Bloods gang... [- who] was jailed for [4 1/2] years for the "cowardly and shameful" attack on a helpless, unconscious young... [person -] had grown up believing that macho culture was acceptable... [The lawyer] has repeated her claim that machismo is rife in Samoan culture, telling the N[Z] Herald that young Samoan violent offenders were over-represented in crime statistics... The Samoan community... [is, however,] divided over whether cultural breeding... [causes it. A Samoan] barrister... was taught to box and wrestle by his father when growing up in Otara, and was told by... members of his family to "throw the first punch," to defend his pride and honour... "If there is going to be a fight, why wait for someone to hit you? That is the attitude. Running away is not an option as you look like a coward." ...[the barrister] is dealing with the implications of "this macho attitude" every day as [the barrister] represents young Polynesian [guys] in the courts. Re-education is vital. Samoan elders needed to declare "enough's enough," convincing parents and the community to condemn machismo, [the barrister] said. But a... Samoan high chief... who is also a South Auckland barrister, said Samoan [guys] are taught to defend themselves – possibly to throw a punch if hit first – but that is it. "...that happens with any race."

...[Pacific Island church ministers are responsible for abusing "more than a few" gals who seek help from Gal's Refuge. Its chief executive said the case of a minister and his wife jailed for two years last week was a "wake-up call" to the Samoan community. The pair were found guilty of 22 assaults and neglect and cruelty towards eight children adopted from Samoa. The Samoan Council chairperson said NZ's court system needed to educate itself on the Samoan ritual of ifoga (forgiveness) when sentencing Samoans for violent crimes. But the chief executive said rituals such as ifoga often made it worse for Pacific gals. "They find the pressure from their family so overpowering that they stay silent for years. I think the chairperson could better direct his advice to his own Samoan guys to stop immediately their ugly behaviour towards their partners and children." More than 1000 Islander mothers and children sought refuge last year. The two Pacific Island refuges in Auckland were always full, "and the people there tell of horrific stories of abuse, physical and sexual. On more than a few occasions the victims have mentioned church ministers as being their abusers." Incidentally, a] **Maori Labour list MP... says many Maori [guys] consider violence to be a normal form of communication. "Proud of their macho image, too many Maori [guys] want to dominate their partners through violence... Maori must have the courage to address domestic violence within their whanau."**

...The film... *Once Were Warriors* shocked a lot of people with its portrayal of violence in a Maori family, but... that portrayal was pretty real... Maori children are 12 times more likely to be admitted to hospital with injuries caused by abuse than other[NZ] children. - 1997

A report, Maori Family Violence in Aotearoa, shows Maori are overrepresented both as victims and perpetrators of family violence... The research was carried out to find what contributed to Maori family violence, its effects and traditional methods used by Maori to address it. There was a lot of debate among Maori over the forms of social control which existed before Europeans came. The report says there was a system to deal with family violence. "Many marriages were arranged to secure land, tribal alliances or strengthen blood ties. A slight or attack on one member of a hapu could therefore be considered an attack on the hapu. The family would then remove the battered [person] back to their hapu and in some instances retribution would be sought... [If the victim was a gal,] retribution could be swift." However, today the collective consciousness of Maori has changed to one of individual consciousness. The Maori community's ability to impose and enforce sanctions against its own people has gone, and in its place has come the practice of shielding the violence and the abusers from possible state intervention. Turning a blind eye has replaced direct intervention. "Although a lot of people know there is violence in the family... nobody really talks about it and they accept it as a fact of life..."

...Maori [guys] who abuse their families should be publicly shamed, says the president of the Maori [Gal's Welfare League. The president]... told... the International Congress on Child Abuse and Neglect... conference in Auckland yesterday that statistics showed 38[%] of young Maori[come] to the notice of welfare officials because of emotional, physical or sexual abuse and neglect... "Poor health, poor education, poor housing, poor social services, poor everything are a reason – but not a good enough reason for us to abuse our children." ...[Island leaders at the conference said] scrutiny of domestic violence in the Pacific is long overdue. They have welcomed a five-year... study into abuse in the Pacific Islands... paid for by the UN] Fund for Population Activities... The Samoan Advisory Council chair[perso]n and Pacific Safer Community Trust spokes[perso]n... said violence

had become ingrained in Pacific communities and culture but there was no excuse for abuse. [The spokesperson] warned that researchers working on the... study would encounter a [guy]-dominated society that saw nothing wrong with violence. That could potentially make the violence worse if [offenders] reacted stubbornly to the outsiders...

Last night, when the 1200-plus delegates and 500 speakers from 52 countries packed up their papers and prepared for the trip home after the 12th International Congress on Child Abuse and Neglect, they would have been well satisfied. Because... among the depressing sordid stories, the professional infighting, overheated photocopiers and endless stuffed croissants... there... was a clear message. To save the children, to stop the abuse perpetuating itself generation after generation, we must intervene early. Speaker after speaker reiterated the same formula... Late on the last afternoon of the conference, a different sort of delegation arrived to add its mana to the occasion. These were people who did not get the kind of help... described. Headed by a... inmate from Mt Eden Prison[, their]... message was one of thanks to the delegates for their efforts in trying to eliminate child abuse and neglect. Their poem, recited in Maori, was heartfelt: *"The sun is like a bright morning star That we will awake to see, One day we will rise above And break these shackles free."*

...Even the most fearsome Maori warrior impressed early explorers and missionaries by the tenderness ...the... supposedly blood-thirsty savage... lavished on his children. "They are kind and hospitable to strangers and excessively fond of children," wrote the artist Augustus Earle in 1827... Yet a[s we draw near to] the start of the 21st century... [- and while] the proportion of N[Z] children hit regularly by adults has dropped from around 90[%] to only one in three in the past 40 years... [-] Maori are abusing their children at three times the rate for European N[Z]ers, and almost twice that for Pacific Islanders[(the abuse rate for Maori is 1.23%, compared with 0.72% for Pacific Islanders, 0.42% for Europeans and 0.12% for Asians)]... Maori and part-Maori children, who are 24[%] of the country's... population aged 17 and under, account... for 47[%] of those accessed... by C[YF]S... And in 1997, according to Health Ministry figures, child abuse claimed the lives of five Maori aged under 15 compared with 12 children overall... A[n a]nthropologist and Maori Language Commissioner... is lost to explain the rash of violent deaths inflicted by Maori on their most precious but vulnerable taonga – their children... [A]n 1862 report by a native schools inspector[said] that Maori were shocked by beatings teachers meted out to their children and were withdrawing them from school. Despite the exaction of utu (revenge) against adult miscreants to maintain the balance in tribal and inter-tribal relations... physical punishment of children was unheard of in traditional Maori society. Rather than confusing discipline with punishment, the overriding priority was to nurture the heart of the harakeke (flax plant) to guarantee new life for the tribe.

...Child abuse was once alien to Maori, claims the Minister of Maori Affairs... Although Maori children in the 1990s were over-represented in abuse statistics, in the past they had been born into a "golden world of affection," [the minister] said... citing anthropological research... "Children were loved and indulged, especially by their nannies. Benevolent child-rearing practices persisted into the first half of the century,"... The... professor of Maori Studies at Auckland University, said the first Pakeha missionaries and explorers had reported tender treatment of children. At that time Pakeha children were often hit, while Maori children were cosseted and spoiled, although they were said to be polite and happy. "What the minister says is historically accurate and that is something that makes me incredibly sad." It was common for Maori heritage to be dismissed as having little to offer in a contemporary world, but this was wrong, [the professor said. A retired professor]... formerly of Auckland University, said... abuse had been extremely rare... and... [the retired professor] had never come across historical accounts of sexual abuse... But the head of the Maori [Gal]'s Welfare League... said grim statistics showed that the abuse now afflicting Maori children was more relevant than a historical debate.

...At a depositions hearing this year, a pathologist said... Mereana Te Mana Motuhake Edmonds... had suffered three major brain traumas before her death, caused by a lack of oxygen to the brain. One, from a severe blow, was received about two hours before... [the little girl died. Mereana] was a happy little girl who lived most of her six years with her beloved Nanny in Hawkes Bay. Then [Mereana] went to stay with her mother – and her life turned into a living hell. From almost the moment [Mereana] arrived to live in Hamilton in December... Mereana was brutally bashed, punched, slapped and kicked. [Mereana] was rarely without bruises, her collarbone was broken and her ribs were fractured. As punishment for wetting her pants or bed, the little girl spent nights locked in a dark shed outside her house or was violently slung into the wash-house. [Mereana was once] kicked so hard [the little girl] lost her sense of balance and was unable to walk around the house without hitting furniture or walls. [Mereana] was often picked up by her hair. Once, [Mereana] was slammed backwards into a hard object with such force that her brain rebounded off the front of her skull. Mereana almost escaped her abusive world. In May last year, plans were made for her return to Flaxmere to live with Nanny. But too late. On May 10... Mereana was found dead in her Hamilton home. Yesterday in the High Court at Hamilton, her mother... aged 32, was jailed for five years on a charge of [humanslaughter. The mother's lesbian partner, aged] 31... was jailed for 18 months on a charge of cruelty to a child... [The judge acknowledged the mother's] psychological problems contributed to her actions. Mereana died as a result of violence. [Mereana] was also conceived as a result of it – [her mother] was raped at 26. In normal circumstances names of rape victims are suppressed, but... [the judge said that] in this case [the mother's] name could be revealed because a charge of rape was never laid. Despite the lack of a criminal conviction, the court accepted that Mereana was conceived by rape. The third of eight children, [the mother] became a solvent abuser at the age of 10 and later a repeat offender[– having starting to live] on the streets after leaving school in the third form. [The mother] has 48 convictions – ...five for assault... Most of her siblings have also been through the courts. A brother in the Mongrel Mob was recently jailed for 10 years... In court yesterday, her lawyer... said [the mother] had conflicting feelings for Mereana. On one hand, [the mother] felt motherly emotions and affections. On the other, her personal problems, especially the rape, made it difficult to care for the little girl... Mereana was enrolled in Hamilton East Primary School. But the school was troubled by her behaviour. On hot days [Mereana] would arrive wearing full-length clothing, then refuse to go swimming. [Mereana] was sometimes too scared to get off the school bus to go home, and would cling, crying, to the legs of one of the teachers. The school notified Child, Youth and Family Services. [The school's b]oard of trustees chair[perso]n... will not say what follow-up came from that call, or how many times the school called CYFS, but is confident the school acted appropriately. But sources told the *Weekend Herald* that CYFS made one call to Mereana's home to ask if there was a problem with her care, and was told by one of the accused that all was well. No other call, no home visit and no follow-up were made. CYFS will not discuss Mereana's case except to say its actions were "appropriate" and would not be reviewed – a decision made by [the] chief social worker... with the Commissioner for Children's backing. Asked if a single phonecall to one of the people alleged to be abusing the child was appropriate, a CYFS spokesperson was "not sure if we're prepared to comment on that."

...The Commissioner for Children will investigate how... CYFS... handled the case of a 6-year-old Hamilton girl beaten to death by her mother... [The commissioner] would also talk to Mereana's school and other groups which had contact with her.

...LITTLE Mereana Edmonds' tragic death may save the lives of other Kiwi kids... Since her [mother's] jailing, nine days ago, the number of cases of suspected child abuse reported by schools to social welfare has rocketed... "There is greater awareness by schools and that is important because we see the kids more than anybody else outside their families," said... [the] principal of Peterhead School, [where]... Mereana had attended... before being moved to her mother's home in Hamilton... [The principal and hi]s teachers had been devastated by Mereana's death. They [also] had to explain to her classmates what happened... Mereana was remembered in a march against child abuse, held at Hamilton on Friday.

...[THE] SOCIAL welfare minister... has vowed to prevent any other youngster dying a horror death like little Mereana Edmonds... [The minister] is chairing a top-level committee of ministers determined to stop child abuse deaths. It includes [the ministers of] health... police... justice... corrections... and... Maori affairs... The ministers will order their departments to work together to end the sickening crimes. N[Z]ers have been appalled by recent child abuse cases, including Wairarapa toddler Hinewaoriki Matiaha, who died after being beaten and sexually assaulted. [The

police still haven't arrested anyone for Hinewaooriki's death, and are shocked that her killer is being protected by family members.']Concerns have been raised over whether the Child, Young Persons and their Families Agency (now Child, Youth and Family) could have prevented the tragedies.

...Three people appeared in the Masterton District Court yesterday charged in connection with the fatal abuse of toddler Hinewaooriki Karaitiana-Matiaha of Carterton... [A] 28-year-old mother of five, her brother... an unemployed 31-year-old, and... a 27-year-old beneficiary, were led into court each handcuffed to a police officer. All three live in Carterton and the [28-year-old and 27-year-old] are aunts of the 23-month-old... nicknamed Lillybing[, who]... was delivered dead to Masterton Hospital... The charges are: [hu]manslaughter by failing to provide medical attention for a life-threatening brain injury; failing to provide the necessities of life, namely medical attention for genital injuries whereby the child's life was endangered... for a haematoma to her forehead and a full-thickness of skin burn to her face and head... and three charges of wilful ill-treatment likely to cause suffering, including scalding... The three were remanded in custody... Applications for bail were rejected by [a JP]...

Lillybing, the 23-month-old toddler shaken to death by her aunt... could have been saved from her brutal fate. Previously suppressed court evidence shows that [the aunt], who yesterday pleaded guilty to the [hu]manslaughter of her niece, asked for help several months earlier... [as it] had "had enough of bashing Lillybing" and "was afraid [it] might go too far." The family decided to send the little girl to her grandmother, but a month later Lillybing was crying for the aunt who once breastfed her. The grandmother... then told [the aunt]: "This bloody kid's fretting for you, take her." Within two months, Lillybing was dead. According to the evidence, the family had agreed that no one else needed to know about the abuse.

...[the Government] would oppose any attempts to introduce mandatory reporting of child abuse, [the]Associate Social Services Minister... said last night... [The associate minister said o]verseas experience was that mandatory reporting brought a big increase in the number of cases notified to the authorities, but most of the allegations turned out to be unsubstantiated. "We don't want to have our officials spending time investigating abuse allegations that aren't true." ...Mandatory reporting also discouraged people from seeking help for abused children because health professionals were required by law to report their suspicions... "If there's anything that makes me feel more sick, it's the idea of a child being beaten and not getting any treatment." ...Much better ways existed of getting every potential abuse situation looked at, [the associate minister] said.

...Parents whose children have more than 10 accidents before they turn 5 will be investigated for child abuse the next time they seek medical treatment for the child. The decision follows [the Accident and Compensation Corporation]'s discovery of 236 children who have each been the subject of claims for treatment for more than 10 accident injuries in the past five years. In the most disturbing case, there were 52 claims for one child. Such cases will now be referred to the [CYF] for investigation... The service is also negotiating with the Royal College of General Practitioners to set up a similar link that may help identify child abuse cases. Other organisations with access to children, such as the Education Review Office, are also being targeted as potential sources of information to identify abuse... The move to exchange information between Government agencies is part of a surge of initiatives to fight child abuse after several highly publicised deaths. The report into the death of 4-year-old James Whakaruru by the Commissioner for Children prompted ACC to search its records last month... [The] Children's Commissioner... felt "quite chuffed" that the... new protocol linking ACC and CYF... had stemmed from his... report. "Someone has sprung into action - little James Whakaruru's life has amounted to something after all." But [the commissioner] criticised doctors who have treated children suffering signs of abuse and failed to notify anyone of their concerns. James... had seen doctors 40 times before... finally[being] killed by his stepfather. "How can you repeatedly treat the wounds of a child that are suspiciously non-accidental, then remember to claim ACC for your work, but forget to tell anyone that there is possibly a child in trouble? ...If you claimed insurance for your car 40 times in five years, the insurance company would be asking you a few questions. Why shouldn't doctors?" ...However, the... Minister of Social Services... said that... it was difficult for doctors always to recognise the signs of child abuse...

Will the horrific death of James Whakaruru finally galvanise us into living less violently, and intervening to stop violence when we suspect it? Those are the questions being asked by remorseful doctors, social workers, police and probation officers after... the Commissioner of Children[']s... damning report on James' death... [The c]ommissioner... yesterday described his investigation as one of the most significant [his office] had done. "It was investigated at my own volition because I couldn't stomach the thought that a young [guy]... went to prison in 1996 for so severely beating a 3-year-old and then came out of prison after two years and beat the same boy to death before [it] could go to school at 5,"... [The guy, now] aged 21, was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment... for James' [hu]manslaughter. James was punched, kicked and beaten with a steel vacuum-cleaner pipe and a jug cord for refusing to call [the guy] "Daddy." ...None of those who saw James during his brief life of just under five years feels comfortable, in retrospect, with the way they collectively failed to do anything to save him. "It has certainly opened my eyes," says [the]urologist... who gave James an emergency circumcision when his mother brought him in with a torn penis... [when the boy was] aged almost 4. At the time, [the urologist says, it] accepted the mother's explanation that "[James] was playing with some of the other boys and it somehow got cut." [The urologist] has now decided to refer any child with a genital injury to Hawkes Bay Hospital's paediatric non-accidental injury team to check for child abuse... [The] CYF... chief social worker... is... astounded by the number of times just about every agency that came into contact with James failed to carry out checks that were legally required. "We couldn't have designed a scenario that had that many corporate failures." Each agency is now committing itself to make the most of the changes that... [the commissioner recommends. The chief social worker] is trying to ensure the rules are followed, partly by centralising all calls to CYF... offices in an Auckland-based call centre where 30 social workers will handle all calls about possible child abuse. There will be a toll-free number, 0508 FAMILY, and publicity to encourage anyone who suspects child abuse to ring... This will be aimed particularly at... GPs... because [CYF] is concerned that they notify less than 1[%] of all child abuse cases... But the doctors and welfare agencies are just those who bind up the wounds after people get hurt. The bigger questions raised by James' death are: Why do so many of us turn to violence so easily? And when the rest of us suspect that someone is getting beaten up, why are we so reluctant to intervene?

...The mother of James Whakaruru... is daily being judged by people with no understanding of what [it] went through herself, says her uncle... [His niece] had slit her wrists 10 days before James was born in 1994[when] aged 15. Her partner at the time, James' father... says they had just broken up. "I told her, 'F... off!'" ...In a letter to the *Herald* this week, [the uncle] described the shock of learning about James' death. And... had a message for those who criticised the family for having failed to protect the boy. "I pray... that the writers of the articles who apportion the blame to the parents and families of James do not suffer any similar tragedy... James' whanau were not absent in his short life. For me, I was later and I assumed that so much was being done for my moko and my niece. A similar assumption was made by others in the judicial system, social services and medical profession, resulting in not one but two victims being left totally isolated and unprotected... These judgmental comments have... resulted in... [m]y niece... becoming the worst type of outcast viewed by our society and... is being penalised constantly and will be throughout her lifetime. [James' killer] will get another chance in 12 years or less if paroled..." Inquiries by the... *Herald* have revealed that a cut-price Hastings medical centre that treated James nine times... between October 1995 and March 1997... mistook him in its... computer... records for another child... with the same birth date who visited the centre twice in April and July 1995. And it never alerted... [CYF] or any other authority to the possibility that [hi]s... injuries were being caused by child abuse, because [James] was seen on his nine visits by... at least six different doctors... so no one doctor saw the pattern of injuries. The centre... manager... says... "I personally would never remember him. I only saw him once and very fleetingly."

...On the day James Whakaruru was beaten to death in Hastings, the hell was just beginning for a bright, happy 7-year-old on the other side of the world... [A]s James' battered body was buried, Ivory Coast girl Victoria Climbié was brought to England by her great-aunt for a better life in

a golden city. Less than a year later [Victoria] died, miserable and lonely. The pathologist counted 128 injuries on her tiny, malnourished body. [Victoria] had been burned by cigarettes and beaten with bicycle chains, football boots, coathangers and a belt. Boiling water had been poured over her and her toes had been smashed with a hammer. [Victoria] had been bound hand and foot and left naked in a bathtub in a dark, windowless bathroom, sitting in rubbish bags, in the middle of winter. [Victoria] was fed cold food on a piece of plastic, which [the girl] could eat only by pushing her face into it. [Victoria] lay in her own faeces and urine, sometimes for more than 24 hours. Finally, [Victoria] froze to death... "To say [Victoria] was treated like a dog would be wholly unfair," said [a] lawyer... last week as a public inquiry began into her death. "[Victoria] was treated far worse than any dog." What is equally disturbing is the number of times Victoria's case was brought to the attention of the authorities – local councils, social workers, police and health workers and local churches. Many of the dozens of people who saw her suspected abuse, but each time [Victoria] was sent back to her tormentors, her... 44-year-old... great-aunt... and [the aunt's] 27-year-old boyfriend... Just hours before [Victoria] died... social services inexplicably closed her case, satisfied there was no longer any concern for her safety. Now her name, like James', has been inscribed into a country's conscience. It has been called the most horrific case of child abuse in Britain's legal history. The chair... of the inquiry... said it had sent shockwaves through the nation and a wake-up call to social and health services. "I hope something will come out of this which, in respect of at least the memory of Victoria, will ensure that the safeguards for children in this country will be strengthened so that tragedies of this kind do not occur again,"... Like James, Victoria was failed on three levels – by her abusers, by those who failed to intervene and by a system that allowed her to fall through the gaps... The inquiry has identified at least 12 occasions on which Victoria could have been saved... Victoria's mother... who thought [it] had done her best for her child by sending her away from the poverty of the Ivory Coast, says the authorities should have prevented the murder. "It is as though they were complicit somehow because, if they had done their job, my daughter would not be dead... Today this has happened to me but tomorrow it could happen to somebody else." Two days before Victoria died, far away in Carterton, N[Z, an aunt] admitted to a local kuia [it] had been hitting her niece, Lillybing... ■ [Lillybing's]... mother... tried to kill herself... just hours after learning that her step-sister... had admitted killing the girl... [T]he 23-year-old mother of two more children – one the subject of a custody battle and one left with her mother – is lying low in the Wellington suburb of Wainuiomata to escape intrusion and gossip in Carterton... [The mother] had nothing to do with ...he[r] baby's death... and... was cleared by police... Meanwhile, [the]... police plan further questioning over... the sexual abuse of Lillybing.

...several hundred people marched through the Wairarapa town... [of] Carterton yesterday... in memory of Hinewaoiriki Karaitiana-Matiha.

...On Wednesday... Tangaroa Matiu did not jump out of bed like most 3-year-olds. After his hiding the night before, [Tangaroa] was probably aching. Certainly [Tangaroa] was terrified. Only when his de facto stepfather... called did [Tangaroa] limp to the toilet, desperately trying to hide the fact that... his pants... had[been] messed... Minutes later, while [Tangaroa] was frantically cleaning his faeces from the toilet seat, the short but powerful [stepfather] spotted him. As [the stepfather] would tell the police later, [it] was mad, ropeable. "There was kaka – shit – all over his pants, all over the toilet... I told him [you're] really going to get it this time." [The stepfather] meant it. After a few slaps to Tangaroa's head, [the stepfather] grabbed one of his favourite weapons, the orange plastic toilet brush. Seizing it by the brush end, [the stepfather] whipped Tangaroa so hard that the tough plastic curled round his thin legs. "...You shouldn't kaka your pants, you naughty little boy..." While the child cowered on the toilet, [the stepfather] padded to the bedroom [it] shared with Tangaroa's mother... for the white-painted four-by-two-inch veranda paling... used on Tangaroa three days before. The... pathologist's evidence would show that over the next 20-odd minutes [the stepfather] hit the child around 100 times. Favourite spots were places that hurt terribly but would not kill – feet, hands, back, knees, shoulders, scrotum – until [the stepfather] miscalculated and whacked Tangaroa's head so hard that blood splattered the toilet walls. When the child's bottom slipped into the toilet, [the stepfather] hauled him out and hit him again. When the boy's mother came down the hall, far from saving him, [the mother] slapped him a couple of times too, then stepped back to let her boyfriend carry on. Only once did [the mother] say, "That's enough." Next [the stepfather] lifted Tangaroa out of the toilet and carried him by the scruff of the neck to the shower... Tangaroa, who had been systematically beaten and tortured for months, lay moaning in the empty bath, in his own blood and faeces, and started to die... Over the next hour and a half, [the stepfather] attempted to dress the boy's wound with sticky tape, forced sugary water down his throat until [Tangaroa] vomited, listened to his raspy breathing and watched him bleed to death. [The stepfather] refused to get medical help. When Tangaroa stopped breathing, [the stepfather], a confident first aid graduate, attempted CPR. Throughout Tangaroa's ordeal, his mother mostly kept away... Only when [the mother] could see that [her boyfriend's] efforts at CPR were not working did [the mother] drive to the phone box to call an ambulance. The death of Tangaroa Matiu is a glimpse into an ugly underbelly of urban life. This is a world where girls get pregnant at 15 and hand their babies over to their parents. Where, by their 30s, many have several children by a series of [fathers] and move between rented houses with a restlessness born of shattered lives. Where one of the biggest drawbacks for a [guy is a gal's] domestic purposes benefit. Where almost everyone has clumsy blue tattoos – the badge of jail or the streets – on their hands. Where tough brutal childhoods are routine. Tangaroa... died at... a Hardiplank house down a right-of-way in a small development at the tip of the Northwestern Motorway. The local school is shabby, dilapidated. Police cruise the streets, kids wave at strange cars. While five minutes up the hill people lead the good life in smart homes with addresses such as Picasso Place, down where Tangaroa and... his 8-year-old brother... lived life is impossibly grim. It was not always this way for Tangaroa. [His mother's] fourth child by a third father, [Tangaroa] was her signal to get away from violence that had started... when her mother knocked her baby teeth out. By age 13... [the] third of six children, was drinking heavily and regularly running away from home. A year later [Tangaroa's mother] gave birth to [her first son], who was taken away by her parents. Next came [a daughter] – this time to [a] Mongrel Mob member... who knocked out [Tangaroa's mother's] second teeth, pulled knives on her and shot her in the thigh. After eight years, two children, 20-odd breakups and spells with [the Mongrel Mob member] on a coastal trader, that relationship ended too. [The Mongrel Mob member] was granted custody of their children... and soon [there was] a new baby, Tangaroa, from a short affair. Tangaroa was special, according to his mother... [The mother got] a job at Tegal[Chicken] in Henderson and[began] studying business administration... [Then the mother made a friend who's] brother... was fresh out of prison... The brother seemed to offer a chance of a serious relationship. Within a month, [the ex-prisoner] had shifted... in... with her... and the boys... And the hell began. On the old heater, dubbed the "naughty seat," Tangaroa was made to sit while [the stepfather] drew his knuckle down so hard over his forehead that his eyes went black; hidings in... [the] laundry where the child would emerge, nose bleeding and bruised, leaving handfuls of hair on the floor. And no one came to his rescue. Says [the stepfather's sister], who brought her own beautifully dressed children to court: "It's her kid... [Tangaroa] was a really naughty boy... [His mother should have go]t off her fat bum and... discipline[d him]." The stepfather... took over the "discipline" of the boys, becoming obsessed with Tangaroa's toilet training. The brother's were separated, kept in their rooms, banned from playing with their toys. Tangaroa was forced to stand for hours, face to the wall. His mother... was not even allowed in his room. "[My boyfriend] said I wasn't tough enough, that I was always trying to save my boys' arses." ...[the p]athologist... detailed "a minimum of 300 bruises" on Tangaroa's small body... inflicted over weeks. It was not just the head wound that killed him, it was the blood from his battered arms and legs which collected in his soft tissue and was lost to his circulatory system. Almost worse was the psychological hiding that the little boy suffered, shut in his room, waiting for his torturer to arrive... [N]either Tangaroa nor [his brother] screamed... They knew from experience that it would mean more violence – and that no one would come. For once, this was not a systems failure. Doctors, police... and [CYF]... were strenuously avoided, not just by [the stepfather but by Tangaroa's mother] too... The family [had beco]me increasingly isolated. Visitors were warned off, there was no phone – family visits – even to [the sister's] house, ceased... Only

the Corrections Department had contact. Throughout the abuse, [the stepfather had] attended Straight Thinking – a \$7.1 million course designed to teach social skills including apologising and negotiating rather than... acting aggressively. Presumably – the service refuses to comment – his tutors were satisfied with his progress. Throughout the trial, while [Tangaroa's mother] – who pleaded battered [gals'] syndrome – cried intermittently, [the stepfather] sat implacable... in the dock... in his dark suit, bottom lip loose, staring straight ahead... Only his lawyer... g[o]t... a smile: "D'you think I look great...? Not too formal?" "...you look great..."

...It should have been a huge success, riding on a wave of unprecedented public support. A member of the family of a slain boy holds the child's picture and tells the camera that abuse of our young people has got to stop. Instead, the hard-hitting advertising campaign, intended to raise awareness of child abuse, is in embarrassing disarray. The newly formed Children First Foundation's founders are devastated after allegations that the [guy] fronting the ad abused his own family, and the name Whakaruru seems even more stained than it was. [A]TVNZ newsreader... who heads the foundation... was yesterday in tears wondering how something so worthy had backfired... Mr Whakaruru admitted that [it ha]d abused his family and pulled out of the campaign. TVNZ has withdrawn the ad featuring him at the foundation's request...

Save the Children usually conjures up heartbreaking images of skeletal [Last] World children wasting away from disease, famine and drought – a long way away from our doorstep. Now the organisation is stepping in close to home, to help to stop the child abuse plague affecting N[Z] children. In the first venture of its kind, Save the Children N[Z] and the National Collective of [Gals'] Refugees have banded together to help break the cycle of violence. Save the Children will dip into the money it raises from its annual appeal, which begins next Tuesday, to pay to enhance the training of refuge workers to identify at-risk children and to make sure they receive the support and care they need... The Commissioner for Children... said the venture was great news. "This sort of initiative is the positive extension of the horror being expressed about child abuse and neglect by N[Z] society now." More, similar initiatives would occur as adults became as outraged about child abuse as the victims of child abuse had a right to be. □ To donate to the Save the Children N[Z] annual appeal, telephone 0800 167-168.

...Youthline is warning... Auckland residents about making donations to bogus collectors. The group, which provides services for youth, including a helpline holds its annual appeal week until Sunday and has issued... stamped, self-addressed envelopes to be posted back, a[s] there are no door-to-door collectors... To make a \$20 donation to Youthline phone 0900-YOUTH (0900-96884). To make a \$2 donation by text message from an 021 or 029 mobile, enter DON8 and send it to 3668. Youthline will send a "thank you" message in reply. The youth helpline is 0800-376-633.

...a system to track all children from birth is the key recommendation of a report compiled by the former Principal Youth Court Judge... The... Judge[, who] has suggested that options to track and share information about children at risk be investigated... said yesterday that a register of all children in N[Z] seemed the best method... In Britain, concerned doctors and other health professionals involved in a child's welfare could check with a central child protection register managed by each local authority... [the judge said. Hi]s report was commissioned in response to a spate of deaths... of children who had come to CYF[s]' attention... *Herald* records show that at least eight children were killed last year... The Minister of Social Services... said the patterns of child homicides had not changed over the past 30 years, averaging seven or eight a year. Just over half the children killed in the past decade were Maori. While recent improvements were already having some effect, it could be years before statistics would tell a new story... [the minister said. In international news, AUS]'s Catholic Church, damaged by long-running allegations of child sexual abuse, has drafted a national code of conduct for clergy and religious staff aimed at restoring its credibility. The church will now seek comment on the document, Integrity in Ministry.

...[Canadian Indian children at a Catholic boarding school in Ontario were tormented with physical and sexual abuse and forced to wear their soiled underpants on their heads, while others had to eat their own vomit, the *Globe and Mail* newspaper reported. "Eat like a dog," a former student was reportedly told by one of the nuns who ran the school, which closed in 1973 and is now under investigation by the attorney-general. The attorney-general, who began his investigation into the Sainte Anne boarding school three years ago, was "absolutely shocked" by police reports on the school and said it would seek to prosecute those responsible. However, his calls for prosecution have met with some resistance, with some believing only a higher power can punish "servants of God". The school was operated in the small community of Moosonee from 1904 by missionaries. Hundreds of Cree and Ojibway tribe children were allegedly abused by the Grey nuns and the nuns of the Olbate order, according to the paper. Among the 900 people questioned by police, many accused boarding school officials of rape, sodomy and said children were lashed with wire whips. There were even reports of a crude homemade electric chair used to administer electric shock. Parents who sought to pull their children out of the school were reportedly threatened with the end to their social benefits. "This was our holocaust," says one of the alleged victims, who added "they did not kill us physically, but they killed us emotionally and spiritually.""]

...Red Indian camps and other "fun" activities were the happy hunting ground for paedophile Chief Winterhawk. The [Maori]... abused no fewer than seven boys and you[ths]... over 13 years. His council said... that[by] being tohunga... the... [Maori] was regarded as sacred, and youngsters known as "Koro Boys" were obliged to sleep in his bedroom to safeguard his tapu and keep [gals] away... "In keeping with traditions, young boys were selected to encase him physically and spiritually to protect not only his tapu but also others who would unwittingly touch him and thereby expose themselves to possible harm..." ...Yesterday, in the High Court at Auckland, the honorary Indian chief, church minister and former Cub leader was sentenced to preventive detention after being found guilty on 12 charges and admitting a further eight charges of molesting... [boy]s.

...A FORMER Scout leader who ran a paedophile ring has now been accused of sexually abusing patients while [working as] an ambulance officer... with the Wellington Free Ambulance. Ambulance colleagues also complained [their co-worker] sexually harassed them, though [the offender] was never dismissed... [I]t was... his... [involvement] in the biggest scandal to hit N[Z]'s scouting movement... [-] exposed only when one of the former Scouts broke a 14-year silence last September... [- that caused the ambulance officer to eventually appear in court. The ambulance officer, who] joined other Scout leaders in handpicking boys and plying them with alcohol before abusing them... has admitted five charges of sexually abusing children between 1981 and 1985 in the... coastal town of Whithy... At least eight Scouts out of 20 were abused, although police believe others are reluctant to come forward. Police say some parents became suspicious and notified Scouting N[Z]. They say the accused] was asked to leave in 1985 after the parents threatened to go public. But, ironically, Scout bosses awarded him a plaque recognising his time in the service... Scouting N[Z]'s national secretary... said... a new code of conduct had been drawn up to protect children, there was greater supervision of Scout leaders and parents were encouraged to take part in activities. But leaders could still arrange meetings in their own homes... [The three offending leaders lived together, and] their... home... meetings... [involved stripping and bathing] Scouts... in a spa pool...

THE affluent town of Whithy has been hit by a second paedophile scandal after a TV boss pleaded guilty to sexually abusing young neighbours. [The 48-year-old], who ran Saturn's community channel in Wellington, abused three young children... at the same time[that a] Scout leader... was preying on youngsters less than a kilometre away. [The former TV boss], who is married with two children, [and]was the head of TVNZ's film library service until May 1996 before joining the cable TV station... babysat his neighbour's two children, plied them with alcohol and stripped them naked. [The TV boss] also took the youngsters, aged nine and 13, and their friend [on] camping trips where [the TV boss] performed oral sex[, and] organised trips to a villa in Lower Hutt where... there was only one rule... the boys... must walk about naked. The mother of the two boys[, who lost her husband before they]... moved to Whithy... told the *Sunday Star Times*... [her sons] tried to seek independent help but didn't know where to go. "They tried all the agencies, like The Samaritans, but there was no one set up then to deal with child abuse for boys. In the end they gave up. The reason they still went next door is because if they hadn't I would have started asking questions and they didn't want me to know. They felt guilty, as if what was going on was their fault." One of her sons, who now lives in England, confided in his partner last January. [His partner]

persuaded him to tell his mother. “I felt absolutely shocked, sick to the stomach... I immediately went to the police, who were wonderful... [Our neighbour’s] wife is absolutely devastated... [His wife also] didn’t know this was going on. [The wife] is just as much a victim.”

...*Health camp a place of sickness...* Children sent to a Government health camp have been bullied, sexually and physically abused by other children and left with behavioural problems, a *Herald* investigation reveals. A former staff member at the Princess of Wales Health Camp near Rotorua has accused its management of doing nothing to help children when told by staff of abuse. The camp staff are said to lack the skills needed to manage disturbed children. One girl who had been referred to the camp after being sexually abused at home was sent to hot pools for “sulphur steam therapy.” Her fear and shame were never addressed, the ex-staff member said. A confidential report written... by [a] Wellington psychologist... and obtained by the *Herald* said children at the camp were not always safe and sometimes went home with new behavioural problems. An earlier report, by University of Waikato psychology students last November, said children were upset by the bullying and sexual touching that went on – especially at night when there were few staff to monitor the dormitories. But senior management at the camp and the attached school, Te Kura Hauora, have either denied that any abuse occurred or refused to comment. The camp, financed by the Health Funding Authority and the Ministry of Education, is one of seven in N[Z]. Last year the authority said the camps were not a priority for finance and there were more effective ways to help children and families at risk. [The] Health Minister... and the Royal College of General Practitioners[have] defended the camps[, while the] commissioner of Te Kura Hauora, sa[ys] the alleged abuse never happened at the Rotorua camp. [The commissioner] was supported by [the school’s] head teacher... who told the *Herald* the camp worked together to make sure children with abusive tendencies were not admitted to the camp. [The person] who was camp manager for 18 years until le[aving two months ago], refused to comment. [Yesterday, the camp board chairperso]n... – who also oversees the other six camps – said it was not in the public interest to disclose the... report[s].

...It is a wet afternoon... and about 40 boisterous children aged 5 to 12 are crowded into a classroom, the air muggy with the warmth of their little bodies after playtime... [A] shy 10-year-old, is sitting on a small yellow chair, gazing out the window towards the playground, his friend... on the carpet at his feet. [The 10-year-old] has befriended the 6-year-old because [the little girl] is a loner like him and [the boy] protects her from bullies when they play outside. The school principal has praised him for taking care of the little girl, and [the boy] is proud of what [it] has done to help her. [The boy]’s attention is on the teacher, who has begun explaining the afternoon’s lessons, when [the little girl] turns to him, smiles sweetly and takes hold of his genitals. It is the last time [the boy] allows himself to get close to the girl, who has been to Rotorua’s Princess of Wales Health Camp twice before and has a history of sexual abuse. Teachers agree that [the little girl probably thought it] was doing something nice for [the boy] to thank him for his kindness, but the boy, who was admitted to camp because his sick caregiver needed a rest, is devastated. Despite the concerns of school staff, [the boy] gets no counselling and spends the rest of his days at the camp alone, keeping his thoughts to himself. A former staff member, who came to the *Herald* after deciding that [it] could no longer keep quiet, says incidents like this happen daily at the camp, attended by up to 50 disadvantaged and emotionally disturbed children at a time on five-week residential programmes. [The former staff member] believes that the camp is in crisis, a timebomb waiting to explode... [The] Children’s Health Camps board chair[perso]n... who oversees N[Z]’s six other camps at Whangarei, Auckland, Gisborne, Otaki, Christchurch and Roxburgh, said it was well known that the Princess of Wales Health Camp had problems[, but] told the *Herald* that airing those problems would only distress the people concerned... Some... insiders... fear that the day of the health camp – an institution founded by a gung-ho doctor newly returned from war in 1919 – may have passed. When Dr Elizabeth Gunn bet a Wanganui farmer that [the doctor] could put the blush back on the cheeks of malnourished children if [the farmer] supplied a patch of land for tents and enough meat and dairy products to provide three square meals, [the doctor knew it] was on to a winner. Soon [Elizabeth] was inviting children from all over the country to her camps for fresh air, sunshine, folk dancing and discipline. But the modern health camp is a much more complicated institution. Children are rarely sent away to gain weight but because there has been a tragedy in the family, they have a disability, need to learn anger management or are socially awkward. Put 50 children with diverse special needs together in one place and problems will naturally arise... [The] Education Minister is considering closing the[Rotorua] health camp and school after five scathing... Education Review Office... reports in three years pointing to financial mismanagement and sexual and physical abuse. A commissioner appointed to run the school... has made final submissions and the minister is expected to decide in a few weeks. Sources close to the school believe [the minister] will close it and are devastated. They say the problem lies not with the school but with the camp, where staff with no professional expertise make poorly informed decisions. They say the culture at the camp favours dismissing children’s concerns and taking a heavy-handed approach to discipline, punishing children who complain when hurt. They also claim that the school has never had input into the selection of children for the camp, meaning teachers are ill-prepared to deal with an increasingly challenging mixture of students. As for the camp, its HFA contract expires in the middle of next year. It is not clear what will happen, as the HFA announced last year that funding the camps was no longer a priority. Meanwhile, an uneasy standoff remains between the school and the camp, with children caught in the middle. [The school’s] principal... and her deputy... are on stress leave and seeking legal advice. Both taught at the school for more than 13 years and were regarded as excellent advocates for children. A third teacher left for a job in A[US and the] interim principal... – who says abuse has never happened at the school – is working with three part-time staff. [The camp manager recently]... left... after 18 years. The *Herald* understands that [the manager] did not leave voluntarily... Several assessments of the Princess of Wales Health Camp point to wider problems within the movement... The[needy children] know nothing about the problems... and they don’t care. They come [to the camps] for a bit of sunshine, three good meals and attention. Sadly, children like [the 10-year-old boy] are going home with even more problems on their young shoulders than they arrived with... [In related news, t]he legal age for sex should be lowered from 16 to 14 because teenagers are now better informed, says an Auckland lawyer. [The lawyer], who is representing a [guy] charged after allegedly having under-age sex with a 14-year-old girl, made the call for change after it was revealed that a 21-year-old [gal] swimming coach in Wellington could not be charged for having a sexual relationship with a... 1.83m... 13-year-old boy. The boy’s mother is furious that the swim coach, who works for the Wellington City Council, cannot be prosecuted. [The lawyer] said... the inequality in the law... needed to be eliminated[, but t]he real issue was whether 16 was an appropriate age for consent. Children under 13 needed to be protected, said [the lawyer], but children older than that should be allowed to make their own decisions... about when they had sex, and society’s attitudes had relaxed since the laws were last changed in 1961.

...The Crimes Act 1961[, which states that only guys] can be charged with indecent assault on boys... will be changed... [Gals] can be charged with indecently assaulting girls, sexually violating a boy by oral sex or anal penetration, but not with indecencies such as fondling genitals... The anomaly came to light after a 12-year-old was denied ACC-funded counselling after abuse by his [gal] babysitter, because the indecent assault was not an offence under law... [O]fficials would brief... the Minister of Accident Compensation... on whether... the minister... had the power to issue a direction that ACC finance the boy’s counselling... Rape Crisis said that in six years, nearly 300 [guys], 62 in the past year, had asked for counselling for abuse. A senior psychologist with... [CYF] said it was much harder for [guys] to report abuse, particularly if perpetrated by a [gal].

...Remember when children could be hours late coming home from school and cause little or no panic to their waiting parents? But if today’s kids are even an hour late alarm bells ring in the minds of worried mums and dads fearful their child may be the victim of, or involved in, crime. In the last four years 51,927 children aged 13 were held by police – a statistic that prompted calls to make 12-year-olds criminally accountable... Currently before the courts are six young people – one as young as 12 – charged with the murder of pizza delivery[perso]n Michael Choy. On the flip side... a number of youths now aged around 14 will duck trial and penalty after admitting the rape of a girl when [the girl was aged] between 6 and 8 years... □ A BOY of 11 will appear in [a British] court this week accused of the... rape of a 12-year-old[boy. The 11-year-old] is the youngest Briton to be charged with such an offence. The boy was 10 at the time of the alleged rape in Nottingham.

...A study that has rocked Britain shows brothers and stepbrothers commit more sexual abuse in the family than fathers and stepfathers. Their victims are usually younger sisters – and while N[Z] has no comparable study, experts believe we, too, may have a problem of sibling abuse... The study was undertaken by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, a charity that works with British Government social services. Its child abuse survey, one of the biggest done in Britain, [found]... that one in 10 children – mainly girls – had been forced into sex acts when they were under 16 by people known to them. In 43[%] of cases, the perpetrator was said to be a brother or stepbrother... [The survey] also found that a third of victims never talked about the abuse they suffered as children... The sexual acts included exposure, voyeurism, genital touching and intercourse. The *Guardian* newspaper quotes the survey's project leader as saying physical abuse was one of the most significant causes of sexual aggression in young people... [The person] who heads C[YF]'s specialist services in South Auckland... [agrees. M]ost adolescents in the [South Auckland CYF] treatment programme had been physically abused, some severely, and only a minority had been sexually abused... "What adult offenders tell us is that more than half of them started offending in adolescence, so we've got to deal with the problem early or it keeps going[," the head adds. The head believes]... sibling abuse for most people f[alls] into the "unthinkable" category and some families coped by tolerating it as "boys-will-be-boys" behaviour. The girl found it hard to tell on a person who probably had a lot of power over her and... would know her parents might believe her brother if [the brother] denied the abuse.

...Boys sexually abusing their sisters is one of the most serious forms of child sexual abuse. But specialists say that in most countries it is ignored, though it is often more violent than other types and carries on for longer. Experts... say families and professionals in most countries – N[Z] included – sweep the problem under the carpet... by saying... sibling incest... was just "the games children play," or "that's normal behaviour," or "it doesn't do any harm." ...Parents tended to take the brother's side during childhood and later... Yet victims endured deep feelings of loss and betrayal... "The fact that the victim and the abuser have the same parents creates serious complications. The simplest response is to conceal the truth, a solution which does the greatest harm to the victim... Many of the [victims] had spent their complete childhood in constant fear and terror of a brother or brothers. In some cases this even continued into adult life." ...Also denied by society is the sexual abuse of daughters by mothers... Abuse by mothers, difficult to believe though not as common, took many forms... About 2 to 3[%] of... new clients the... Oslo centre... helps each year have been abused by their biological mother, and 8[%] by biological brothers... [S]tudies showed incest [rates were] similar in all countries.

...PRIMARY school parents are horrified a six-year-old sex pest is being put into their kids' classroom. The boy has been withdrawn from his South Canterbury school after five separate incidents in which [it] allegedly abused girl schoolmates. But attempts to place him into a Timaru primary school have been met with outrage. Timaru parents have held meetings to oppose the boy's enrolment and have threatened to withdraw their youngsters. The school is legally obliged to accept the six-year-old – who is too young to be charged by police... [T]he education ministry's Christchurch operations manager, confirmed staff were dealing with a Timaru family. [The manager] said children sometimes engaged in inappropriate behaviour. "...there's been some reaction. I suspect it was inevitable and understandable, but I'm not sure it's helped the process,"...

Five children under seven years old were suspended from schools last year for sexually assaulting other pupils... While there was a "fairly normal degree of sexual experimentation" among young children, precocious sexual behaviour teamed with aggression raised concerns about the child's experiences... Any sexually inappropriate behaviour "rang alarm bells" for schools as a possible indicator of sexual abuse... Schools were seeing sexually inappropriate behaviour more often... The president of the... Auckland School Trustees' Association, said schools needed to act in a way that protected both the young offender and other pupils. "...these children, for the sake of other children at the school, need to be removed until the situation is understood and under control." ...[By the way, a] Northland couple who say their son, aged 6, was raped by a 13-year-old they were fostering will today picket the Whangarei office of the social workers they say never told them about the teenager's history of sexual offending. The couple, who... cannot be named, as this would identify their son, who was 4 at the time of the offending... said yesterday that they promised not to take the C[YF] to court, as long as they got a formal apology... [T]he service's area manager for Northland, said her staff had reported to her that concerns about the youth were passed on to the foster parents. "At the time of the placement, they were fully discussed with the foster father..." ...[however, the foster father, who] caught the youth abusing his son... told the N[Z] *Herald*... "We... would never have taken him in if we had known. The results have been immensely painful for my son, and for the whole family. [My son has] been deeply affected, to the point where we've had to... home-school him." The foster child is now in a special unit for young sex offenders. Once the teenager was caught, a family conference was held, where [the teenager] was confronted by the extended family and forgiven. Last month the Commissioner for Children launched an investigation into why a teenager with tendencies towards paedophilia was placed with a Pukekohe foster family, where [the teenager] regularly raped a 2-year-old girl. The secretary of the Family and Foster Care Federation... said that social workers were not telling families about foster children's emotional, sexual or health problems. As a result, other children were being put in danger.

...ELEVEN foster children were placed in the care of [someone]... whose live-in fiancée is a convicted child sex offender. C[YF] admits it did not carry out proper checks on [the live-in fiancée – who] gave a false name to cover up his criminal past. The mid-Cant[abrian]... was last month found guilty of indecently assaulting an eight-year-old boy. The 28-year-old had three previous convictions for indecencies with boys under the age of 12...

A FORMER care worker[has been] charged with sexual assaults on 13 boys in Britain's biggest institutional abuse inquiry.

...Two [guys] were released early in the inquiry, but freed on police bail. Another [guy] from Liverpool was arrested and released without charge... [D]espite a huge police hunt and worldwide publicity, [Sarah] has still to be found... For the past two weeks Sara[h's mother] has been living every mother's worst nightmare. One minute her 8-year-old daughter... was playing happily in a field. Then [Sarah] vanished... The... family's existence has been shattered as day by day they are subjected to an ordeal of horrifying proportions. Sarah's predicament is unthinkable... The level of public interest has been enormous. It emerged that there had been a possible sighting of Sarah at a motorway service station 400km from where... [the] little girl... disappeared, and when police released a computer-generated image of the [person Sarah] may have been with, they were astonished by the response. Calls were coming in at the rate of 1000 an hour at their peak, some from as far afield as Israel and Greece... "We have been overwhelmed," said Sussex Police[']s Assistant Chief Constable... "All the calls are motivated by a genuine desire to help but obviously most turn out not to give us anything of value. But we would much rather that than no calls at all." The number of children killed by strangers in Britain remains at the same level as 25 years ago – between five and seven a year. But today parents are more frightened than ever of their children going missing, and it is rare to see a young child playing outside unsupervised. Britain's biggest-selling daily newspaper, the *Sun*, has offered a £50,000... reward to find Sarah, and her favourite pop band, Steps, recorded a special video message in the hope [Sarah] would see it. At one press conference, Sarah's grandfather... wept as [it] read letters written by his missing granddaughter's brothers and sisters... As [the grandfather] left the room, police officers and journalists were in tears. Some of the 300-strong police team, who are working around the clock, have become so distressed they have been given counselling. But no one can share, or imagine, the torment of Sarah's family. They firmly believe [Sarah] is still alive, and being held against her will. "I think someone has taken her and fallen in love with her," said [Sarah's] dad... on ITV's current affairs show, *Tonight*. "That's the only explanation I can give." Mum... again appealed to the abductor to let [Sarah] go... But officers involved with the case are less optimistic, and know they are most likely to be looking for a body.

...After more than two weeks of hoping that their daughter... would be brought home to them alive, Sara[h's parents]... could not face the prospect of seeing their murdered child's body. After the 8-year-old's naked body was found in undergrowth in West Sussex, Sara[h's mother] said: "We can't... see our daughter because it's too hard..." [The mother], aged 31, said "death is too good" for the person who abducted her child... "They

watched our family go through something nobody should have to go through. I have no pity for them any more. No pity at all..." Police believe Sarah was lying dead in the undergrowth within hours of being abducted outside her grandparents' home 19km away... A farm worker stumbled across the body on Monday night (NZ time). During the family's 16 days of waiting they bared their anguish to the press in a series of appeals to Sarah's kidnapper and the public to help them get their daughter back. On Thursday they were in front of the cameras again to plead for help in bringing their daughter's killer to justice." ...People on the streets wept as news of Sarah's fate spread. "There is a terrible sense of shock and sadness," said one [person] in East Preston. "There is also a terrible realisation that none of our children are safe, not even here in the English countryside on a lovely summer day..." In Hersham, too, Sarah's death has brought pain to many, not least to... [someone] who lives less than 1km away from [Sarah's family] and whose daughter... is in the same class as [Sarah's sister]. In 1986 in Brighton, [that person's] 9-year-old daughter, Karen... and her friend Nicola... also 9, disappeared. Their bodies were later found in a local park. They had been sexually assaulted and strangled. "Sarah's disappearance affected me deeply... For the first week I just couldn't sleep, thinking about Sarah and remembering Karen. I felt this terrible pain in my chest... My wait lasted 23 hours before Karen and Nicola's bodies were found, and I know how agonising it is. I, too, never gave up hope. You can't... and I still haven't got over [Karen's death]. I never will."

...Police reconstructed the last known steps of missing English 10-year-olds Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman yesterday after ruling out a theory that they went to meet someone they had talked to in an internet chatroom. The Cambridgeshire town of Soham stood still as two actors retraced the last known footsteps of the pair, who vanished a week ago. The... [police... admitted they are still no closer to discovering what happened to the girls. Two [guys], one in his mid-30s and the other in his late-40s, have been arrested. But police played down the arrests, saying the [guys] had been detained because they had failed to co-operate with routine inquiries... The actors, aged 9 and 10, from a Cambridge drama company, were chosen for the reconstruction because of their resemblance to Holly and Jessica. Police went to extraordinary lengths to ensure the girls fitted the roles as closely as possible. As well as being dressed in the same clothes as Holly and Jessica were last seen in, they were also given identical haircuts. The girl playing Jessica was wearing the same jewellery... Walking side by side, the actors chatted and fidgeted with their football shirts, watched by more than 200 local people... They passed dozens of posters of Holly and Jessica in shop windows. The case has generated immense news media interest in Britain and prompted rival tabloid newspapers to offer a US\$1.72 million... reward for vital information. Police have said they are optimistic the girls are alive, but fear they have been abducted... In Britain, abductions of children by strangers are considered rare, but several recent cases have increased concern among parents about the safety of their children. The girls' case follows by months the... kidnap and murder of Sara Payne, 8... by a convicted child molester... A flurry of abductions of girls in... the U[S] this year has spurred similar fears among Americans...

It started with a trip to buy sweets. It ended, tragically, on a scrubby dirt track on the fringes of a Royal Air Force base. The discovery of two small bodies as police searched for Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman was the outcome that the villagers of Soham had hoped they would never have to confront. The find came hours after detectives arrested [a] school caretaker... 28, on suspicion of abduction and murder. His girlfriend... 25, was arrested on suspicion of murder. [The caretaker] had been a part of the investigation since day one, having reported seeing the two 10-year-olds on the night they vanished... [His girlfriend], who knew the girls as a teacher's assistant at their school, joined the appeals to find them, posing for pictures with a card Holly gave her on the last day of term... In Soham, people wept in the streets as the news broke that two bodies had been found... In a surreal twist, church bells could be heard ringing to celebrate the nuptials of a young couple who had unfortunately chosen that day for their wedding. The bells were soon cut short out of respect. In his sermon, the Rev... paid tribute to the dead girls: "No one can doubt Jessica and Holly live in love." It is a message that the people of Soham will eventually take on board – but not for a very long time.

...Holly... and Jessica... whose disappearance and death... made headlines around the world, were probably suffocated and their bodies later set alight, a court was told yesterday... [A] school caretaker... denies murdering the girls but the prosecution has said [the accused] is likely to concede they went to his house on the evening they vanished and died there. [The prosecutor... said it was murder. "Ten-year-old girls don't just drop dead," [the prosecutor] told the jury at London's Old Bailey... The naked bodies of the two youngsters had been dumped side-by-side in a woodland ditch... The bodies were so badly decomposed that the actual cause of death was impossible to establish and the possibility that the pair had been sexually assaulted could not be ruled out... Jessica was still wearing her bead necklace and Holly was wearing a metal necklace, but most of their clothes were discovered in a bin, along with hair from... [the caretaker]. Fibres from the girls' distinctive red Manchester United football shirts had been found on [the caretaker's] clothes and on the carpets of his house. Pollen from the ditch had also been discovered on [his] car and on a can of petrol in the boot... The prosecutor said [the caretaker's] former girlfriend... had conspired to cover up the crime... but... is not accused of murder.

...A[n Arkansas resident] convicted of raping and murdering a 13-year-old boy during sexual bondage has been sentenced to life in prison...

A 14-year-old boy was held captive by a [35-year-old] who chained him up... and abused him during seven days of perverted sex, says the police officer heading the case... The police summary alleges [the offender]... plied... the boy... with alcohol... then made the boy perform oral sex before sodomising him. [The offender also] pierced the boy's scrotum and inserted two rings. The following day... [the tattooed offender allegedly tattooed the boy] around his groin with a... tattoo gun... [The offender] then restrained the boy in a wardrobe, using shackles and chains, and beat him. Once the beating was over, [the offender] is alleged to have poured hot wax over the victim's body... [before sodomising] him again... Over the following days there were further beatings and degradations... It was only when the boy was able to make a furtive telephone call to his home that police came to the rescue. In the High Court at Auckland last week, [the offender]... pleaded guilty to representative charges of kidnap, assault, assault with a weapon and sexual violation of the boy... [The offender] also pleaded guilty to representative charges of violating a 13-year-old boy in 1991 in a similar manner... The officer in charge of the case... described [the offender] as a "calculating, manipulative sexual deviant who preys on teenage boys from single-parent families." In 1996 [the offender] was jailed in A[US] for nine years for arson attacks on a Salvation Army hostel for homeless [guys] and the "devastation" of the business centre of Beaudesert, southwest of Brisbane... [Amazingly, the offender only served a fraction of that sentence. Hopefully our penal system will prove to be more competent! The offender was] remanded... in custody for sentencing next month.

...A 14-year-old girl taken into custody for begging outside a [Tucson, Arizona,] striptease club stunned police by telling them... her Gypsy parents had sold her twice, the first time last year for about \$US11,000 to a family in... Fresno, California... [The girl claimed to have] suffered a miscarriage and was returned to her family for a partial refund. Shortly after... [the girl] was sold to another family for more than \$US5000... [The police have] released... the girl... to her mother's custody... A Phoenix police spokes[person] said: "...they sold her as per tradition of their culture." ...It is not illegal in Arizona for a family to sell a child to another family for reasons other than sex or slavery, the Arizona attorney-general's office said... And although it is illegal to sell another person in California, police in Fresno decided they could not determine that a crime was committed there... Charges against the girl were dropped... [In local news, a] scathing... report states that the sexual and physical abuse of children is given "extremely low priority" by police chiefs – and in some areas "the investigation of child abuse, no matter how serious, did not happen." The leaked document, Police Child Abuse Teams, written... by [a] specialist course co-ordinator... says staff are untrained, investigation procedures are not followed and delays are common. "Due to homicides and other crime commitments, Lower Hutt has not had a fully staffed child abuse team for at least a year, if not longer... The child abuse work simply does not get done." The Lower Hutt abuse team was an example of a national problem... says... [the co-ordinator]. Police policy states that only specially trained staff should undertake child abuse investigations. "This point is totally ignored by the N[Z] police administration and at the moment there are at least 30 police officers investigating child abuse with no training. It is anticipated that number is actually much higher." It was disclosed that at least nine of the 15 child abuse managers had not received any formal

child abuse investigative training... [The] acting national crime manager... said prioritising cases was a fact of life but denied the report's conclusion that... abuse of children... was a low priority... [The manager] was not surprised that so many staff were untrained in an area that involved high stress, a high workload and high turnover. "Would you rather we left the team understaffed while we wait for the training course to come along or would you rather the person commenced and at the first available opportunity receive the training?" [The manager] stood by the child abuse teams, which [it] described as being world class... The report was requested by the Crown Law Office, which is conducting an inquiry into... sex offences against children. [The] Police Minister... would not comment because it "was an internal police issue." Leading criminal lawyers say the report is a serious concern with implications as far reaching as the jailing of innocent people and the acquittal of serious child sex offenders.

...A child counsellor concerned that paedophiles who abuse pre-school children are not being prosecuted is calling for a new "children's court" to be set up. [The counsellor], who has worked with sexually abused children for the past 11 years at New Plymouth's Safer Centre, says the court system is not able to cope with young children testifying. "Over the past 12 months I've worked with 72 children under the age of five who have been victims of sexual abuse, and many of these cases are not going to court because the children are too young." N[Z]'s court system was daunting and paedophiles knew children under five were unlikely to talk about the offending... A children's court was needed to provide a more reassuring environment. A senior advocate at the office of the Commissioner for Children... said discussions were being held with the Department of Courts on ways to improve the court system for young victims. [The advocate acknowledged] convictions were rare when the victim was under five. "We're not saying that people are getting off [criminal charges]... but there needs to be strong consideration given to a new way for supporting children who are giving evidence." [Incidentally, 'three Court of Appeal judges want sentencing policy for sexual violation cases to be reviewed by a full court after being required to reduce a sentence because of a precedent. A 33-year-old convicted last year of assault with intent to commit sexual violation of a profoundly deaf gal, had his sentence reduced from five to four years. The court's decision to reduce the sentence, despite the observation that the attack was violent and the five-year sentence "appropriate," was based on a previous appeal decision on a case it deemed more serious. A 58-year-old who had attacked his 15-year-old granddaughter to "break her in" had his sentence reduced on appeal from five to four years. The court said it had to avoid disparity or there would be an adverse impact on the public's perception of the administration of justice. But one of the judges referred to a need to reflect the seriousness that Parliament intended when it increased maximum sentences for sexual violation to 20 years in 1993.' Editor's note: 'In 1987, one of Her Majesty's judges stated, "The trauma suffered by the girl was not so great." This girl was raped by two burglars, tied up and had a knife handle inserted in her vagina. The two rapists received shorter prison sentences than a third, who had committed only burglary. Recently another custodian of British morals "quite understood" how a father could sexually abuse his daughter while his wife could not perform her "conjugal" duties because the wife was pregnant.']

...Child sex abuse is not the kind of thing you want to read about over breakfast, but the unpalatable issue was [one NZer's] life for eight years, and haunts him still. The former Hamilton sexual abuse squad detective has poured his heartache, observations and experiences into a book, *Is That You, Daddy?* ...The book begins when [the detective] and a girl [the detective] calls Melanie are both seven. "I am enjoying a wonderful family life, and [Melanie] is being subjected to sexual intercourse with her father in the chook run." The comparison of their lives continues as [the detective] describes attending police college while Melanie becomes pregnant to her father and attempts suicide. Eventually, the two stories merge as [the detective] successfully prosecutes the father. Now 48, [the detective] quit the police in 1995 because the pressure of his work became too much... [The former detective] hopes the book, which includes profiles of victims and abusers and explains how paedophiles select children, will educate parents to protect their children. "Adults know how difficult it is to deal with another cunning adult. How do we expect children of 5 to 7 to deal with it? ...These are not the type who leap out of the bushes down at the lake. They are a person who will get to know mum and dad – if they are not already a member of the family. They will become such a friend, they will be called 'uncle' by the children... It will start off with cuddles, then become sexual touching, and will be 18 months to two years before it reaches full intercourse. The child is reluctant to tell on a 'wonderful family friend';" ... [The detective believes NZ] should switch to a "public defender" system in which lawyers are paid regardless of how their client pleads. This would stop the practice of lawyers convincing their clients to deny their guilt... [The detective] devotes a chapter to the Catholic Church, warning that paedophiles can hide within it...

The sins of the fathers... CATHOLIC bishops will consider police checks on all would-be priests to stamp out sex abuse of kids by clergy... at the week-long N[Z] bishops' conference, which opens in Christchurch next Sunday. The move follows a Catholic church-commissioned report in Britain which recommended police checks. It also recommended setting up a national database to record details of all candidates for the priesthood. Twenty-one priests in England and Wales[have been] convicted of offences against children[since] 1995... A *Weekend Herald* inquiry reported the[NZ] Catholic Church had confirmed 38 cases of sexual abuse committed by [people] in its ranks, going back to the 1950s. The church also admitted that its previous way of dealing with offenders – often moving them to other parishes or schools – was wrong. The... [previous way allowed 'offenders to repeat their behaviour on a new batch of victims.' O]n Tuesday, the HIV-positive head of religious studies at a Catholic boarding school... in Northcote... will be sentenced in the Auckland high court... [after earlier pleading] guilty to five charges of indecent assault on students aged 13 to 15... [The 45-year-old] – who trained as a Marist brother and priest but was never ordained – ...is the second... Hato Petera College... staff member convicted of indecencies. [A former c]ultural group head... admitted abusing three students in the 1970s and 1980s.

...John hoped for a calm meeting as [John] confronted the Catholic brother who had molested him... years earlier. But denial from his abuser bred fury. And fury nearly spilled over into violence. "[My abuser] was in total denial, but I said to him, 'You know you did it. God knows you did it.'..." That was October, 1994. John, whose real name is suppressed, had tracked down... the headmaster who sexually assaulted him at a school camp in 1979. When the hierarchy within the Marist order of brothers was made aware of John's allegations against [their member] in 1994, it was not the first time that such allegations had been made. And it would be another two years before [the headmaster] would face justice. Today, John[– who] lives on a benefit in a North Island town[–] ...has just accepted a \$20,000 cheque from the brothers as ex gratia settlement of a civil claim... made against the order and the Catholic dioceses of Auckland and Hamilton. Tight times enticed him to sign the agreement, though... [the] payout was handed over on the condition that neither the order nor the bishops acknowledged any legal liability for [their employee's] crimes. "Their whole attitude, I would have to say, is one of cover up. They have operated in such a way for so long..." ...The Church's failure to accept legal liability has embittered John. At one point, the order's lawyers were arguing that [the headmaster] was not its employee at the time of the abuse... [The headmaster] had first been confronted over his actions in 1979. After complaints involving two pupils, [the headmaster] was removed from the school during the third term as the order investigated... [But] the investigations failed to find evidence to back the complaints. For John, who was relieved to see his abuser go in 1979, there was shock when [the headmaster] returned in the first term of 1980. "...for... a kid, the confusion sets in, and this is where you go off the rails." [The abuser] remained principal until the school closed in 1988. After that [the abuser] taught for a year at Marcellin College in... Auckland, then was appointed principal of St Pius X Primary School in Glen Innes... [The abuser] remained at St Pius... until November 1995, when [the abuser] sought a year's leave to study in the U[S]. The abuser... returned the week before his first court appearance... The... [abuser], who remains a member of the order, was jailed for 21 months on indecent assault charges involving seven former pupils...

A Catholic religious order has paid tens of thousands of dollars to two victims of a paedophile brother in the Church's largest compensation payout to sex abuse victims[in NZ]. Sums of \$30,000 and \$20,000 were paid to the pair... It is understood to be the first time the Church in N[Z] has faced a claim from more than one victim of [the same wearer] of the cloth... The national director of Catholic Communications... yesterday refused to confirm that any payments had been made, citing a confidentiality clause... [L]ast year... the victim of a Catholic priest who committed indecencies was paid \$5000 for counselling.

...Churches scarred by revelations of sexual abuse want to establish a standard system to cope with complaints... Abusive behaviour by priests, ministers and members of religious orders has sullied the images of most denominations in the past... [N]o research had been carried out in [N]Z, but overseas studies suggested up to 15[%] of the clergy are abusers... [The] Catholic church in Scotland has started a hard-hitting campaign... entitled "Saving the Children"... to fight paedophilia among its members... [The campaign urges] priests and parishioners to call the police if they suspect a church member has committed an inappropriate act... [while a] toll-free telephone number has been established for victims of sexual abuse... [The] Catholic hierarchy in... the [U]S... and... A[US]... have been forced to pay millions of dollars in settling claims for... sex crimes.

...A... [NZer] blew the whistle on A[US]'s Catholic paedophiles... then hanged himself in his own church hall... [T]he church ostracised... MORRIE CROCKER... when... the... former rugby player, boxer, soldier, teacher and Catholic priest... went public with accusations that two high-profile Catholics... were paedophiles... For three years [Crocker had] battled for justice and in 1993 went to the press, which splashed the allegations, backed by sworn statements from six... [victims], across its front pages... Friends say the abuse by his fellow Christians and inaction by the church broke Crocker's heart and destroyed his faith... An editorial by [the] *Illawarra Mercury* editor... summed up community feeling: "I could weep for those whose faith has been shattered because they can get neither personal satisfaction nor justice from the hierarchy of the church. [The church] treated him like a leper, preferring to sing the praises of the accused and the jailed rather than applaud the courage of the priest who cut the paedophile clergy off at the knees." ...[known as] the "boxing priest," Crocker was extremely popular... [P]eople in Wollongong went a little crazy after Crocker's suicide, blaming the church for the priest's desperate action. To cope with the grief, [a champion boxer] went to a tattoo parlour and had the words Faith, Hope and Charity etched into his arm, the same message tattooed on his mentor's brawny bicep. Yet his death cannot in all honesty be placed solely at the doors of the church. The death by cancer of close friend and fellow Christian boxer Fraser Toweel had hit him hard, as had the suicide of [one of the Catholics Crocker] accused... Brother Michael Evans... fled Wollongong and committed suicide before [the accused] could be arrested and charged... Crocker's treatment for depression had not helped either. The priest regularly travelled to a Sydney hospital... [to receive] shock treatment and a prescription for Prozac, a drug which has been linked to many suicides. Yet... a friend for 30 years... said his friend was still "the most unlikely person ever to take... [his own life]." If [Crocker] was an unlikely candidate for suicide, then his decision to enter the priesthood also surprised some. Crocker was a rabble-rouser, a hard drinker who could turn the air blue with profanities, and often did... Crocker's decision to join the Army about 1960 was typical: [Crocker] got drunk with some mates and enlisted. [Crocker] hardly ever talked about his time in Malaya fighting "communist terrorists" as his commanding officer... calls them, but [Crocker] was reportedly haunted by the experience... [Crocker] had killed in Malaya and felt guilty about it. His exit from the Army was also typical... Crocker... had a run-in with the English military police and the rumour was [Crocker] had "knocked one around pretty bad." ...It was... unrequited love... that drove his decision... to [join] the church... Crocker often [claimed to have] few real friends but a death notice placed in the *N[Z] Herald* tells a different story. People from all over the country... had been touched by... Morrie Crocker... Bitterness and conspiracy theories still surround his death, perpetuated by the mysterious disappearance of his scrapbook, which contained details of further allegations against three other members of the church... [The second person Crocker accused] was charged, convicted and sentenced to 18 months jail... The priest's crusade became an international story when events in Wollongong prompted the A[US]n Government to establish the Wood Royal Commission on paedophiles.

...Child sex assault criminal trials now comprise nearly half the cases brought before judges in the District Courts of country NSW... while they comprise nearly 16[%] in the Sydney District Court... Most people charged with crimes such as homicide, fraud and robbery tend to plead guilty and avoid a trial... [or] flee to Queensland... However, most people accused of child sexual assault want to go to trial and... [some] cases date back to events more than 10 years ago. Legal and welfare workers believe the rise in child sexual assault cases stemmed from heightened public awareness following massive publicity about paedophilia in NSW during the Woods Royal Commission into the police service and the annual September police sexual abuse phone-in, Operation Paradox... Now in its ninth year, Operation Paradox has seen sexual abuse phone calls climb... to 1,450 last year. Last week's phone-in led to 1,277 calls and police are arresting about 50 people a month... [T]he rise in child sexual assault cases coming to trial also lay in legislative reforms in the late 1980s and early 1990s that eased restrictions on children's evidence. A Department of Community Services child protection specialist... said the higher incidence of child sexual criminal trials in country NSW did not suggest that the incidence of the crime was any greater than in Sydney. "Rural communities are closer knit. They tend to be more supportive of each other and at the same time busybodies. So it is far easier... to find out or see things that can be ignored or hidden in a denser urban environment..."

...Frequently a... NSW... judge will sit in a country court on circuit and hear nothing but child sexual assault cases... There is now a heightened community awareness about a problem that previously dared not speak its name... and[, according to]... a paediatrician... often... [wasn't] taken as seriously as crimes against adults... [M]ore than 40,000 A[US]n children are sexually abused each year; the average age of most victims is 10; 76[%] of the victims are [girls]; most abused children know their attackers; and most attackers are [guys].

...As a lawyer... wanting only correct information... [the gal] labelled the "Shame Dame" for calling on [guys] to fight against child sex abuse... went to a reliable source – a Ministry of Justice report called *Conviction and Sentencing of Offenders*. 'I'm used to dealing with sex abuse issues, but even I was appalled at what I read,'... [The lawyer] learnt: • In... the [most recent year for which statistics were given – 3 years ago – the]re were 2038 convictions for sex offences (rape, unlawful sexual connection, attempted sexual violation, indecent assault, incest, indecent acts, unlawful sexual intercourse, attempted unlawful sexual intercourse and anal intercourse). • 79[%] of those sex offences where the victim's age was available involved victims 16 years and under. • 45[%] of the total number... involved children 11 years or younger... It is generally agreed that convictions represent only a portion of the actual abuse occurring. 'I have been very careful not to hazard a guess as to the actual level of child sex offending... However, if convictions conservatively represent one half of actual offending, we are looking at some 27,000 sex offences on children... during th[e most recent] eight-year period... If convictions represent only 10[%] of the actual abuse occurring, then we are talking at over 137,000 sex offences. It doesn't bear dwelling on... A lot of [N]Z guys would say that they abhor [other guys] who rape kids and that it wouldn't involve [anyone] they knew. But the reality is that there must be ingrained beliefs in the [guys] who rape kids. Th[e]... question I would like [guys] to ask other [guys]: What is going on? Are there issues of power and control...? Having said that, I would never negate that there could be some [guys – and gals] – who have been sexually abused as children by [gals]. But the conviction statistics show us that 99.1[%] of offenders are [guys.]' The lawyer (who has not been sexually abused) remembers the profound impact when as a... 13-year-old [it] read about a girl the same age in another country who was taken away by a group of 40 soldiers and gang raped day after day until [the girl] was eventually raped to death. 'The question I asked then... and the question that I am still asking today is where were the [guys who were]... prepared to stand up... and stop that girl being raped to death?'

...WHEN I got up at around seven on that summer morning in 1981, my son Adam, was still sleeping... On most evenings as soon as I got home from work, I would... tell him stories I made up. That's how Bobby... came to be. Bobby was a little kid about Adam's age – six – a brave little boy who always helped people. And no matter how scary things got for Bobby... dad... would always be there... [Adam's] godfather... had taken him to a movie the night before and kept him out so late there had[n't] been time for... a... story... So when I left for work that morning of July 27, I looked forward to returning home that evening... [M]y wife and I were careful with Adam. We took him to school and picked him up every day... Adam... wasn't allowed to go to the park by himself or to ride his bike in the street... LATER THAT same Monday morning... [my wife] and Adam... drove over to the shopping centre... and... went into the store... [with] the toy department. Right in the middle of Toys was the big attraction: a television monitor displaying computer video games. They were brand new back then... Adam [begged his mother] to let him play the video game... [My wife]

pointed to where [my wife] was going to be... From the video game it was about 20 metres – out of sight, but not very far... Adam... said, “OK, Mummy...” ...my [wife] had been gone a few minutes. Five. Maybe ten. But when... [my wife returned, my wife] didn’t see Adam... [My wife] went... to... a shop assistant. “Have you seen my son[, who] was here just a minute ago.” [The shop assistant] hadn’t... Finally someone called the police. The Hollywood Police Department was right across the street from the shopping centre... The police... asked a few questions and said they would run a BOLO – “be on the lookout for.” ...SECONDS AFTER receiving [my wife’s] call I was in my car speeding to the shopping centre... I knew... that Adam had not simply wandered off. [Adam] was not that kind of kid... I went on local television to plead for information about Adam... We made a poster with a photo of Adam in his T-ball uniform... At the bottom of the poster we included the message: “We are willing to negotiate ransom on ANY terms. Strict confidentiality. DO NOT FEAR REVENGE! We only want our son.” By the end of that first week, we had printed 150,000 fliers, and 50,000 were distributed free by a postal-delivery company... BY THE MIDDLE of the second week... some detectives sat me down at a table and took out a big loose-leaf binder and said, “This is a book of sex offenders who have been released on bail into this community.” I said, “They release perverts?” ...the county forensic pathologist... spoke first. “...they do it all the time. These people get a slap on the wrist. There are guys in this book who have been arrested 14 times and released. They live all over Hollywood.” “What do the guys do?” “They’re paedophiles. They rape little boys and girls.” Then they handed me the book... There were 200 photos. A lot of them looked just like anyone... There was obviously no way to tell a child molester just by looks. Finally, I began to understand what they were trying to tell me. “One of these monsters could have Adam?” “Yes... That’s probably who’s got him.” The next night, for reasons I don’t understand myself, I went back to talk to [the pathologist, who] came right to the point: “You’ve got to accept the fact that Adam might be dead... People who don’t believe that the devil walks this earth have not seen the things I’ve seen. For example, I’ve got four girls up in the morgue, all homicide victims, all runaways, I believe. A couple of them were tortured very, very badly. They range in age from 13 to 16... Florida law says that if no-one claims them after six months, I’ve got to bury them.” “But someone loves them, misses them,” I said. “Maybe, but I’ll tell you something... The state has no official system for finding out. In Florida, coroners do exchange information about unidentified bodies, but that is only on a voluntary basis. And this is not just in Florida, but in the other 49 states as well.” I said, “Do you mean to tell me that the same country that put a [hu]man on the moon does not have a way to identify these children?” “That’s right... There is no such thing as a comprehensive ‘unidentified dead’ file anywhere... If Adam’s in a morgue in Tallahassee... there is the chance that you might not hear about it, and [Adam] could be buried in an unmarked grave.” ...I said, “...What about Georgia? ...New York?” And that’s when it dawned on me. We had to take the search for our lost son nationwide... Shortly afterwards two agents from the FBI walked into the Hollywood police detective bureau... I met them... [and] said, “If Adam is outside the county, it’s not a local matter. And what if [Adam’s] outside of Florida?” They explained that there had to be either a ransom note or some sort of proof that Adam had been taken across the state line in order for them to become officially involved. I couldn’t believe what I was hearing. At one point, I was so desperate I even considered forging a ransom note... TO MY puzzlement, the police were leaning hard on... Adam’s godfather... I kept defending him... But they kept calling him in. Then I found out why: they knew something I didn’t. [Adam’s godfather] had been having an affair with my wife... But I knew that it was a total dead end... [T]hen we got... wonderful news: “Good Morning America” wanted to do our story... BEFORE THE SHOW, we met the two [people] who were going to appear with us. One was... the mother of a little boy... [who] had disappeared on his way to the school bus in New York two years before and had never been found. With her was... the information director for an organisation called Child Fund. It was started by a [mother] whose daughter had been missing for seven years... [M]y wife and I... finally felt we had found someone who was going to help us... [H]owever... what I thought was a sophisticated East Coast organisation – was run out of a little room in a member’s house. It was another one of those horrible revelations, like when I suddenly realised I was in charge of Adam’s search effort... When we arrived at the studio, everyone was so gracious to us. On the air [the presenter] covered everything – Adam’s description, his photo... Like any good journalist, [the presenter] had to include the latest information... I understood that... [The presenter] said, “this morning there has been information that some remains have been found in a canal near Vero Beach.” “I don’t think it’s Adam,” I said... Afterwards... the phone rang... “[Adam’s father], we are so very sorry to have to tell you this, but the remains that were found last night have been positively identified as Adam’s.” ...The phone rang again. This time it was a “Good Morning America” producer. “...I’ve got some really great news. Every talk show wants you. Every radio station. We’ll find Adam. We’ll get his name all over the place.” ...We didn’t know... what to do. We only knew we had to get home. They took us in a car from our hotel to the airport... At the airport, it seemed like there were a million lights and cameras in our faces. I couldn’t understand. What did these people want to see? Two destroyed human beings for the six o’clock news? After we arrived at home, we could hardly get from the driveway to our front door. Reporters were all over the lawn, all over our street. Police had to push them back just so we could get into the house. We walked across the threshold, without our little boy. It wasn’t a home any more. Without Adam in it, it was... [just] a building... Where there had been promise, now there was none. Where there had been an endless wellspring of hope and a limitless future, now there was nothing... We didn’t sleep. We lay on the floor, crying... Around four in the morning there was a knock on the door. Thinking it might be the... police telling us that a suspect had been picked up, I opened it... “...I’m a reporter, and I need to get a comment about Adam’s murder for tomorrow’s editions. My editor said that if I don’t, I’m going to be fired.” At first I just stood there. I wasn’t sure of what I had heard... Then it sank in, and I lost it. “You tell that coward to come over here right now! Because I am going to pound him into a bleeding *pulp*...!” A few days after that reporter’s visit, [my wife] answered the door and found a different kind of visitor. It was Adam’s little friend... [asking] if Adam could come out to play. [The friend] had been away at summer camp... Day and night, all I could think about was Adam... It took every bit of mental energy that I had not to dwell on what Adam’s last hours were like. Because I knew that kind of thinking could destroy me... I decided I needed to keep my mind occupied. The Cornell University campus wasn’t very far... So one morning I went over there... I wanted to find out about the kidnapping of children – how often it happened and what had been done to prevent it. I spent hours in the library using the microfilm collection. One of the things I pulled out was the FBI’s annual crime report. I was amazed to see that there were no official statistics on child abuse, missing children or even kidnapping. Then I found some magazine articles about how the FBI had investigated the disappearance of a \$500,000 horse from a breeding farm in Kentucky. The bureau justified including the case in its jurisdiction, said a spokes[person], “because of the value of the horse” and the likelihood that it had been taken out of state... So what I had suspected all along was true: the bureau could investigate a kidnapping case – even of an animal – without a ransom note or absolute proof that state lines had been crossed... MY wife and I got... 20,000 letters... – prayers and condolences. Mass cards and notices that trees had been planted in Israel in Adam’s name. Eventually we had to rent a ministorage space to keep them... [T]here were... more and more... letters... each day, that said, “I can relate to what happened to you because this happened to me...” It was around then that I got a call from the Washington office of [the] Florida Senator... It was beginning to look into the issue of missing kids... [The] chief counsel of the Senate investigations subcommittee... wanted me to talk about the Missing Children Act that was introduced into the House of Representatives... The bill would require the government to keep a national file on missing children and unidentified dead. [The senator] had introduced a similar version of the bill in the Senate, but they had not made much progress. Still, [the chief counsel’s] gut feeling was that if we helped, we could get this bill passed... Then in November, about four months after Adam died, we found out that [my wife] was pregnant. When our daughter... was born, it was as if the whole country celebrated our happiness. Letters poured in from people who wanted pictures of the baby, from people who were glad to know that [my wife] and I were still together... In October 1982, just 15 months after we lost Adam, Congress passed the Missing Children Act... NOT LONG AFTER... a piece about Adam’s murder ran on ABC’s programme, “20/20.” The show brought a lot of positive reaction. The filmmaker of the segment... wanted to do a full-length documentary about our story... The telemovie, “Adam,” debuted on NBC on October 10, 1983.

At the end of the show, a roll call of 55 missing children's names and pictures was displayed... For three days, over 100 calls per hour came in to the toll-free number that ran after the roll call... 13... missing children... were located and reunited with their families... Seven years after Adam's death, a call came in that changed my life again... Fox television asked me to host a pilot programme for a crime show on their new network... And so "America's Most Wanted" was born. The programme is still going strong. And we *have* caught fugitives – 480 of them to date... **ALTHOUGH** I have helped to bring many... criminals to justice, to my great sorrow, I never was able to get justice for Adam. Back in 1983 there had been a flurry of publicity when papers around the country announced that police had found the [person] who killed Adam... [A] drifter... arrested as a suspect in a fatal arson case in Jacksonville... had told police that [it was him who] was responsible for... Adam's... [death and] between 35 and 50 killings around the country... [The arsonist] had made a confession admitting... [to picking] up Adam outside the Hollywood shopping centre, lured him into his car with toys and lollies, and then killed him. According to Hollywood's assistant police chief... [the arsonist's] stories were "grisly and heinous beyond belief." The Hollywood police announced that [the confessor] would be officially charged with Adam's abduction and murder. But weeks went by. Then months. And years... [The confessor] was never charged. I never received a satisfactory explanation why. I did learn that [the confessor] recanted his confession a couple of times... Bloodstained carpet samples had been taken from the car, on which police scientists could have run DNA tests. But those were lost... [The confessor] was in a Florida prison, facing five life sentences for other crimes... was ill with cirrhosis of the liver and possibly AIDS. I pinned my hopes on a deathbed confession. It was the only thing that could finally put everything to rest... [even though the] police weren't able to find... the rest of Adam's remains... But two days after... [the confessor] died...

California police are reported to have DNA evidence linking [their prime]suspect... to the murder of 5-year-old Samantha Runnion... [The 27-year-old] factory worker acquitted ...2[years ago] of molesting two 10-year-old girls, was arrested at the weekend at a motel... 16km from the two-lane mountain road where Samantha's bruised and naked body was discovered... It was the third highly publicised disappearance of a young girl in the U[S] in recent weeks... [First] 7-year-old Danielle van Dam vanished from her canopied bed in the quiet San Diego suburb of Sabre Springs. After a three-week search, her decomposed body turned up on the side of a road... [Then a] 14-year-old... was abducted from her Utah bedroom at gunpoint – a crime witnessed by her younger sister... [T]he child who witnessed Samantha's kidnapping, gave police a description of the... 27-year-old...

MODERN HISTORY'S WORST murderer... has been released from prison and is free to kill again. In 1979 [the serial killer] became known as the "Monster Of The Andes" when [it] led shocked Ecuadorian police to the graves of 53 of his victims, all girls aged between nine and 12 years of age. However, [the monster] did only 18 years in jail – just two month's prison time for each of his victims. [The monster] was released from prison – Penal de Moreno, in Quito, Ecuador – in... conjunction with that country's maximum 18-year sentencing law for all crimes. The Monster's crimes first came to light... when a river overflowed near the town of Ambato and the bodies of four girls were washed up on its swollen banks. Three of the children had been strangled with such ferocity that their eyes had popped out of their sockets... Three days later [the monster] was captured as [it] tried to snatch another girl... Ironically, his incarceration in Ecuador... wasn't the first time [the monster] had met with retribution. [The monster claims it] had been captured once before after a bungled murder attempt in the Peruvian mountains. "Indians in Peru had tied me up and buried me in sand to my neck and they had poured sweet syrup over my head and were going to let me be eaten by ants. But an American missionary... came by in her jeep and promised... [to] turn me over to the police. "They left me tied up in the back of her jeep and [the missionary] drove away. But [the missionary] released me at the border of Colombia and let me go. [The missionary] didn't attract me because [it] was too old... so I let her go free." ...in 1980, [the monster] pleaded guilty to a total of 110 counts of murder in Ecuador and was convicted on those charges. At the time police said the killer could have been responsible for a further 240 murders of missing girls outside Ecuador, but additional trials in Colombia and Peru would have been too complex and costly to pursue. As a result [the monster] escaped extradition after release, despite openly confessing to the killings during his time behind bars... In 1994, in his only interview while in prison... [the monster], then 43... attempted to explain his killings, comparing his reactions with those of spectators who attend bull-fights to watch the "moment of truth" when the... matador, faces death. "There is a wonderful moment – a divine moment – when I have my hands around a young girl's throat. I look into her eyes and see a certain light, a spark, suddenly go out. It is the exact moment of death and it is enthralling and exciting. Only those who actually kill know what I mean." ...[the monster] took the girls to secret hideaways where [it] had already prepared graves. Sometimes there were bodies of earlier victims lying in the pits. [The monster]... lulled the distraught children into a false sense of security by cradling them in his arms throughout the night... then... would... rape and kill them at sunrise. "At the first sign of light I would get excited. I would force the girl into sex and put my hands around her throat. When the sun rose I would strangle her. It was only good if I could see her eyes..." ...[the monster] was already a convicted murderer before [it] started preying on young girls. [The murderer] slit the throats of three [fellow prisoners] who had raped him as an 18-year-old in a Colombian jail where [the monster] was serving time for car theft. [However, the monster claims to have known] from the age of eight that [it] was going to be a killer, explaining "I was the seventh son of 13 children of a prostitute in Tolima... My mother threw me out when I was eight after... ca[tching] me touching my sister's breasts, and I was taken in by a [guy] who raped me over and over again. I decided then to do the same to as many young girls as possible."

...A Pakistani... [serial child killer] has surrendered, bringing a dramatic end to a weeks-long ...hunt. [The killer]... walked into the offices of Urdu language daily *Jang* in Lahore and said: "I am giving up. Had I surrendered to the police I would not have been able to put across my point of view as to why I killed the children... I have no regrets over what I have done[.] The Pakistani claims to have]... killed 100 children over the past six months and dissolved their bodies in acid-filled containers... [I]n a letter to police, [the killer]... said his victims were young beggars and strays and that [it] killed them in revenge for his arrest and treatment by police on child-abuse charges... Police have arrested about a dozen people in the case so far, including [the killer]'s wife. They said the others arrested... admitted knowing that [the killer] was sexually abusing young boys.

...[a] Judge... made himself the most popular [perso]n in Pakistan this week when [the judge sentenced the suspect] who admitted murdering 100 children to be strangled in a public park, cut into 100 pieces and thrown into a bath of acid. In case that didn't do the trick, [the judge] also sentenced him to 700 years in prison, seven years for each of his victims. [Pakistan's]Interior Minister... wasted no time in pouring cold water on the dramatic sentence, telling reporters: "I'm quite sure this will be challenged in a higher court. We are a signatory to international conventions on human rights which do not allow these things." ...the 42-year-old... sentenced to die in this way, became the author of his own downfall... when [it] wrote to the Lahore police claiming to have killed the children... after sexually assaulting them... "I killed 100 children. I could have killed 500, this was not a problem... but the pledge I had taken was 100 children, and I never wanted to violate this." ...[the 42-year-old] documented his killings with the desiccated passion of the overseer of an extermination camp. Several times since 1985 [it] was arrested on suspicion of child molestation and sodomy, but was never brought to trial. Despite his repeated and gratuitous confessions, and the piles of evidence at his home... [–]r]eporters who beat police to the scene of the crime... found a drum full of acid containing human remains, sacks of children's clothing, and neatly inscribed placards on the walls giving details of the killings and photographs of some of the victims... [– the 42-year-old] changed his tune in court and pleaded not guilty. [The 42-year-old] told the judge that his earlier confessions had been a fake, inspired by western detective stories... add[ing that it] had made up the confessions to bring the issue of absconding boys and paedophilia to the Government's notice. It was an explanation which did not amuse the crowds gathered outside the Lahore court throughout the two-month trial, baying for [the killer's blood. His]... lawyer... said that his client would appeal against the verdict. So instead of ending speedily, in accordance with the judge's wishes, in a spectacular act of public

retribution before the eyes of the victims' parents, the case... is likely to meander through Pakistan's overloaded judicial system for years. If [the killer] is eventually executed, it will be on the gallows... [●] A labourer who raped his 13-year-old niece four times has become the 700th person given a death sentence since capital punishment was restored in the Philippines in 1994... 377 were convicted of rape... None has been executed.

...[A Philippine trial court has sentenced a member of congress to up to 173 years in jail for raping a minor in one of the country's most celebrated sex cases in years. The court also sentenced him to a maximum of 93 years on six counts of lasciviousness with the then 11-year-old girl, who is now in state care. The congressperson was also ordered to pay the girl 220,000 pesos for "moral damage." The prosecution had said the girl was paid 10,000 pesos (\$NZ628) for each time it was taken to his apartment for sex last year and that the congressperson had promised to make her a film star. It was also said that the girl's step-father had offered her for money to a number of people.' In local news, a businessperso]n has been convicted of sexually abusing boys in his care over a lengthy period. In the High Court at Auckland this week, a jury found [the]46-year-old financial consultant... guilty on 16 charges of indecent assault involving five boys aged 12 to 15. [The offender] was cleared on two charges of sexual violation. Before the trial started last Monday, [the offender] admitted charges of sodomy and indecent assault involving another boy. The offending stretched from 1975 to 1993... Two of the youngsters were foster children. At the time of the offending against these youths, [the offender] was married. The couple later split up and [the offender acknowledged that it] was gay, but denied that the marriage had never been consummated... After the verdicts [the offender's lawyer] said outside court: "[My client] had a problem with his own sexuality in the days when the act of homosexuality was illegal. When [my client acknowledged it was gay, it] sought older partners." [The offender was] remanded... in custody for sentencing.

...A Perth Aids sufferer was found by a District Court judge yesterday to have passed the deadly virus on to a 12-year-old boy through unprotected sex. [The Aids sufferer], 30, pleaded guilty to having sex with the child but denied... infect[ing] the Fremantle schoolboy with HIV.

...A POSH Sydney school is reeling after three boys were charged with sexually assaulting boarders.

...Schools attracting foreign fee-paying students were attacked by police and the Office of the Commissioner for Children yesterday as they revealed how they rescued a 14-year-old Korean girl from a year in captivity. The girl, formerly enrolled at one of Auckland's exclusive private schools, was found in Christchurch, where [it] worked in a Korean restaurant and suffered constant sexual abuse from the owner... The girl had been transferred to a Christchurch state school, but did not attend classes. Her plight was discovered in April by police investigating the sexual abuse of a 7-year-old girl – also from Korea – who lived at the home of a [Korean businessperson] entrusted with the care of the two children sent to N[Z] for education... Teachers at the 7-year-old's school became concerned about her behaviour and called in social workers, who suspected sexual abuse. They contacted the police, whose inquiries led to the discovery of the 14-year-old... [The businessperso]n... aged 32, fled the country that night, returning to Korea with his wife and two children. His business, the Seoul Restaurant in Christchurch, has closed. [The businessperson] is wanted on charges of sexual violation, slavery, and indecent assault. Police say they have received cooperation from their Korean counterparts, but the two countries do not have an extradition treaty. The children are now with the C[YF]. Horrified staff of the Office of the Commissioner for Children say the appalling case highlights the vulnerability of foreign fee-paying students and the need for schools that accept them to take more responsibility for them... "All these schools seem to be concerned about is getting their money." It is understood the 14-year-old came to Auckland in 1995... [H]er mother... stopped sending money... to... the... [businessperson, who then] took the girl out of the Auckland school and enrolled her in Christchurch... Neither school obeyed the legal requirement to inform the Immigration Service, which issues student permits... Police would not name the schools for fear of identifying the girls... [The] Immigration Service... said it would be impossible to monitor... [every] foreign student...

The mums and dads of Britain made a Faustian sort of pact. They would sacrifice several years with their children in order to save the little ones' lives. And so those children were dispersed by the millions throughout the countryside and even overseas, to escape the wartime bombing of British cities. But as one of them... says now, "We were safe – but at what emotional cost?" For families seldom mended fully, and grown-up survivors now lament a lost childhood... The ex-evacuees, wherever they may be, are concentrating on their childhood with a particular intensity this year. On September 3 there is a[n]... anniversary service at Westminster Abbey which is seen as a collective effort to harmonise all lingering feelings. For some 1500 of them in this country there will be a June 26-27 reunion in Christchurch, at which names will be entered in a Book of Memories to be taken to Westminster Abbey "so people who cannot go will be represented," says[the] organiser... Many of the 3.5 million evacuees immediately ran away and swarmed back home, as a... fugitive at 7, tells in his 1995 book *Blitz Kids*... The overseas scheme stopped with the sinking in 1940 of the City of Benares, in which 77 Canada-bound children died. [By the way, 'in the 1940s, '50s and '60s, about 10,000 British children, some less than five years old, were sent to AUS and NZ under a government-backed child migrant scheme. Many were told they were orphans. It was a wicked lie. Most of their parents believed they were still in Britain, adopted or in the care of charities. At some places, such as the outback home known as Bindoon Boys' Town run by the Christian Brothers, a Catholic educational organisation, some boys were victims of prolonged physical or sexual abuse. "The brothers were paedophiles and sadists," one victim said. "Little boys were woken up at night and taken from their beds. We'd hear footsteps on the wooden floor and we'd pray they wouldn't stop beside our bed." The abuse was not confined to a single organisation'...

'Britain's Parliament will investigate the cases of thousands of children – the number involved is uncertain – sent to NZ, AUS, Canada and elsewhere from orphanages between 1938 and the late 1960s. Many put through the child immigrant project were told they were orphans. In fact, most had been abandoned by parents, authorities said. On arrival in the former British colonies, the children were housed in camps, orphanages and religious schools. One reason for sending children abroad was the hope they would find better lives away from austere times in Britain, but some of these migrants say they were made to do hard work or were sexually abused. In the past, British authorities have insisted it was the responsibility of the receiving countries to investigate.'

...It was an achingly poignant reflection. "All those babies," the nun said. "They'd always be putting their arms up and you didn't have time to give them any individual love... to love them as I wanted to." Another sister said: "I remember walking into the little girls' dormitory one night and stopping to speak to one. The next thing I knew I had 60 little girls on top of me and that was the tragedy of the place. I just said to someone at the time, 'My god, where are their mothers?'" Some of their mothers were dead. But many children were torn from their parents by the state or by circumstance, and plunged into an existence of appalling deprivation, cruelty and brutality that carved indelible and disabling scars into the psyche. Those scars were unveiled this week in a ground-breaking report by [a]former Queensland Governor... into decades of abuse on children entrusted to Church and Government institutions in Queensland. Most of the children who were flogged, raped, half-starved, not educated and denied even basic health and medical care are now adults. At least 14 of their former tormentors face criminal charges. Fifty survivors are suing the state for wages earned, as wards of the state, which were placed in a trust fund but never paid. And the state Government has admitted responsibility, opening the way for compensation that could reach \$A100 million... as hundreds of former wards seek some recompense for the Dickensian horrors of their childhoods. Most of those horrors were inflicted by the Church... Left-handed children were flogged "to get the devil out of them." ...Sexual abuse was common and in some cases known paedophiles, shifted from other posts by Church leaders, were let loose on children. One notorious chaplain bound and assaulted a 12-year-old boy. "Well, of course, Mother, we knew about[that] Father... when we sent him down here," the acting head of the local Diocese told a complaining nun.

...A Porirua pastor... aged 58... was sentenced yesterday to two years' jail for indecently assaulting an 8-year-old girl... [The] pastor of Titahi Bay Baptist Church since 1994, had earlier admitted in the Wellington District Court that [it] induced the complainant, now aged 34, to perform countless indecent acts... They included oral sex and genital penetration. The secret... was unearthed when the victim, who has permanent name suppression, asked Porirua police in February to revisit the case. [The pastor], who had denied any wrongdoing when the case was first

investigated, admitted his actions during a police interview last month... [In related news, a]n Auckland mother and son... have been applauded by... the C[YF] for their commitment to change... The mother, who did not want to be identified... first contacted... welfare authorities... when her son, then aged 6, disclosed that his father had sexually abused him. Her own childhood had been marked by sexual... abuse, rape and teenage pregnancy. “When I was molested, I wish I had got the help I did for my boy...” ...The child’s parents separated when [the boy] was 5... but the mother... could not settle anywhere or maintain stable relationships, and was totally isolated from her family. [The mother] never spent time with her son... and did not provide adequate supervision. This meant that, at the age of 8, [the boy] was befriended by a paedophile and was again sexually assaulted... “When I got to know him, [the boy] was 9,” said... [a social worker. “The boy] had started to attack his mother, had developed a propensity for fire-lighting, was bullying at school and had attended nine primary schools.” ...But a year after... [starting to] help... the mother and son, the social worker was almost ready to close the case. The mother was resolving her own abuse through therapy, and this meant that [the mother] was more able to respond to her son’s needs and keep him safe... The... sports-mad son, now 10, was much happier... [and] was... thriving at school.

...A 19-year-old... was arrested on Friday, five days after Toesulu, who had just returned home from her first day of school, was found... naked, raped and hanging from a tree... The murder of[the] 5-year-old girl... has left Samoa stunned and demanding the use of its... death penalty. The country has not enforced its mandatory death penalty since independence in 1962; its last execution was in 1951 when it was still ruled by N[Z].

...[an] Auckland detective sergeant... was delighted... [that the person] kept as a sex slave for nine years... could now get on with her life... The [victim] was too scared to go to the police earlier... [H]er uncle... 55, and his wife... 59... threatened to kill her if [the niece] told anyone what they had been doing... The victim... was first raped by her uncle when... [aged] 13, a few weeks after arriving from Samoa. [The niece] became pregnant to him when... aged 15. The Auckland high court heard that her abusers... made her drink Epsom Salts and jumped on her stomach when they found out... The next day [the niece] miscarried. The court also heard [the niece] was beaten by her uncle... Police found out about the abuse in May after [the niece] was beaten so badly... [it] needed hospital treatment. [The uncle], who earlier pleaded guilty to 10 sex charges, was yesterday also found guilty of sexually violating another [gal. The aunt]... was found guilty of [6 charges, but]... was acquitted on a joint charge of raping her niece.

...The one good thing in her miserable life was her job. At work the 22-year-old had friends who saw her as normal. At home [the 22-year-old] was the sex slave and punchbag of her uncle... and aunt... But then her work hours changed, meaning [the niece] would not necessarily be home when [her uncle] wanted to rape her in their south Auckland home. “[Uncle said it] would [now] come every day and have sex with me before I [went to] work. So I gave up my job.” That was the final indignity that forced her this year to run away and end nearly a decade of horrendous sexual and physical abuse that began after [the niece] arrived... at her relatives’ Papatoetoe home from Samoa. On Saturday in the High Court at Auckland... [the uncle] was found guilty of indecently assaulting the 22-year-old’s 18-year-old sister when [the sister] was visiting from Samoa this year... The 22-year-old told the *Herald* that [it] wanted her uncle jailed for “a long time.” ...In the witness box, seated with her back to both accused, [the niece said it had forgiven her aunt but not her aunt’s husband. The aunt, the niece] told police, participated in the abuse because “[aunt] didn’t want her family to know what was going on – this was her way of avoiding having arguments and keeping the family peaceful.” In her defence, [the aunt had] stated to police that even from age 13 the girl wanted sex with [her husband. “My husband] definitely isn’t raping her if [the girl] wants to do it.” The young [victim]’s ordeal began... after family members decided [it] would have a better life and education living... in N[Z]. But just]... two weeks into the victim’s schooling at Papatoetoe Intermediate, the school had a half-day and [the uncle], who was a butcher at a South Auckland abattoir, came to take her home. In the lounge [the uncle] kissed her “tongue to tongue.” Recoiling, [the niece] fled to her bedroom and climbed out the window. However, [her uncle] caught her and administered the first of many “hidings.” Frightened and alone in a new country, [the niece] turned to her aunt for protection. [The aunt] confronted her husband and was told it would not happen again. But two weeks later [the uncle] crept into the girl’s room where [the girl] lay sleeping and raped her, whispering that [it] would kill her if [the niece] told anyone. At first the rapes were weekly, but over the years they increased in frequency to sometimes several times a day... At 15, [the niece] became pregnant... Apparently delighted at the news, [the uncle] left town to make arrangements for her to have the child. While [her husband was away, the aunt] gave the teenager a dose of Epsom salts... told her to lie down and after feeling her stomach, stood on it. A day later the girl miscarried. When [her husband returned, the aunt] told him about the miscarriage. [The aunt] also established the bizarre rule that from then on [her husband] had to ask her permission every time [it] wanted sex with their niece. “A young girl shouldn’t be able to tell an older [guy] what to do – that’s the wife’s job, not the young girl,” [the aunt] told police. About a week after the miscarriage the teenager was raped again. This time [the aunt] held her down. When discussing with police how his wife assisted him in raping and abusing the victim generally, [the uncle] punctuated his statement with the comment: “Good wife, eh?” and laughed.

...The [person] kept by her father as a sex slave for 23 years came close to death before... rais[ing] the courage to tell police... [– inspired, perhaps, by] two trials held late last year[that resulted in a]... retired New Plymouth farmer... aged 77, [being]... jailed for three years and ordered to pay \$50,000 reparation for sex offences [against two young girls] dating from 26 to 56 years ago... [(the oldest ever taken to court in N[Z], which has no statute of limitations)]. The father, now... aged 66, began sexually abusing his daughter when [the girl was 9. The daughter] was 32 before... manag[ing] to escape his control... The verdict came three years after her heart, fitted with a pacemaker, stopped... “The next day I thought if I had died, [my father] would have gotten away with it. I [had] thought non-stop about [telling police] but I didn’t think anyone would believe me. But I realised that if I’d had the strength to survive those 23 years, I had the strength to survive anything... so I did it.” [The daughter], now 40, this week watched a jury in the High Court at Auckland convict her father on numerous charges of rape, sexual violation and indecent assault... The sexual abuse began when the... Auckland... family moved from N[Z] to Vanuatu and her parents separated. The sexual activity became even more bizarre when, aged 22, [the daughter] returned to N[Z] with her father... While working for a bank in Newmarket in 1992, the [daughter] became pregnant to her father but suffered a miscarriage... [The father], who told police his daughter had a “wild imagination,” will be sentenced next month.

...The documented evidence – the fading photographs, the home movies – of [her]... early years makes it look idyllic. There... is[the] pretty young girl with untamed hair, running a bit wild against the exotic backdrop of Vanuatu. *To Hell and Back*... is the story behind those pictures. We already know that [her idyllic life quickly changed, and as a result her father is now] serving a 14-year prison sentence for the crimes... committed against his daughter... [The daughter] and her father had been deported from Vanuatu after independence. They were “undesirables” – a label likely to have been a consequence of the rumours about their “relationship”, whispered about in the tiny township of Vila for years. When it became apparent that they were going to have to leave, [the father]... in one of a sickening series of bizarre moves, forced his daughter to see a doctor to demand a note indicating that [it] was still a virgin. The doctor refused, but did provide a letter that said: “[The girl] did not show signs as such from sexual intercourse.” However, [the girl] had shown signs of abuse from an early age: [being]... described by her primary school teacher in Vanuatu as a child who didn’t smile, laugh or talk. By the time [the girl was 12 it] had been treated a number of times for sexually transmitted diseases. When, 30 years later, [the daughter] tracked down one doctor who had treated her, [the daughter] only had to say her first name before [the doctor said that it] had been waiting to hear from her for years. *To Hell and Back* does not delve too deeply into the story of how... [the father] was able to get away with it for all those years, or how a mother could leave her child to him... Or why a doctor, waiting for a phone call for decades, didn’t make his own phone call decades ago to somebody about a small girl in trouble... [Her father] did not just keep his daughter as a sex slave. [Her father] kept her, for 23 years, in a state of total bondage – which went far beyond the sexual torture [it] submitted her to. His

preferred tools of physical bondage were handcuffs, chains and clamps, while his preferred tools of psychological bondage were many and varied... [Her father] put her head in a padlocked box while... rap[ing her, but the father] didn't need padlocks to ensure that her entire life was lived within a prison.

...The tormented face of a little boy stares out from the overhead projector. His hands clutch the bars that trap him in a dimly lit cellar – the cage where the predator who is sexually abusing him keeps him prisoner. His is the frightened and largely anonymous face of paedophilia... Other more graphic and disturbing images... of children being forced to smile as they are raped and as they have objects inserted into them... are shocking even for the audience of child abuse prevention experts attending the Auckland conference. For those in the community who do not believe in the widespread existence of paedophilia, the pictures are proof. New Scotland Yard and the N[Z] police have boxes and boxes... “The day I understand these people will be the day I'll have a problem[.]” says the person[.]... who heads the paedophilia unit of the London Metropolitan Police Service... But the task of understanding paedophiles is part of what his job is all about. His unit was set up to vigorously detect abusers through sophisticated intelligence methods... Paedophiles are devious, cunning, fixated and well organised. “It is incumbent upon us to try and at least attempt to understand their methods, behaviour patterns and what makes them tick.” The police have identified three major behaviour patterns... The most common is “the seducer.” They court children, give them presents and seduce them but they don't rush. Those with an age preference may identify a boy or girl they want to abuse, then spend several years “grooming” them until they reach the desired age. The [seducer] often holds a position of trust. Parents... are also seduced into allowing access to their children... who... are blackmailed and subjected to violence to keep them quiet. The next pattern is the “introverted offender.” [This paedophile] lacks the interpersonal skills to seduce children and more fits into the stereotype of the abuser who hangs around school playgrounds. Then there is the sadistic offender. There are few of them but they are dangerous. To be gratified they must inflict pain and suffering. “I've got lots of videos... where children are subjected to the most horrendous torture.” ...A two-year-old girl held mid-air by two [guys] and swung like a hammock, while another [guy] raped her and another filmed the scene. “[T]he video particularly focuses on her face as well as the actual rape to capture the screams coming from her[.]” The head[.]... shows a photo of a smiling naked child who is covered in bruises. The smile gives the subliminal message that the child is enjoying what is happening and legitimises the behaviour of the abuser... An Auckland forensic psychiatrist... says there is no psychological test to identify a paedophile, who is medically defined as a person with intense sexual urges and sexually arousing fantasies about prepubescent children. Some are distressed by these desires, and seek help. They cannot be cured, but can learn to control their behaviour with the help of psychological therapy and medication... Also presenting a paper at the conference is an A[US]n law lecturer... of the University of Technology in Sydney... [who] warns of international effects of moves to lower the age of consent... [I]f countries adopt it, a precedent would be set that would simply encourage paedophilia... [T]he... Detective Sergeant... who will lead a new specialised “paedophile unit” being set up in Auckland by police, says offenders defy the public's expectations, which helps them to escape detection... Paedophiles are often narcissistic, well-educated and usually unmarried [guys] who seek out work or activities involving children.

...Mr X's pupils loved their teacher, and [their teacher] loved them. Signs of his devotion to his job included the weekend group outings... [and] classroom resources... bought with his own money – and the... kissing or touching [of] children on various parts of the body... But it had been done in the misguided spirit of “love in its purest form” rather than for sexual gratification... Yesterday the middle-aged [Mr X], who lives at home with his mother and has few interests or friends outside teaching, was sentenced on 18 indecency charges and one count of inducing an indecent act... Mr X was given three months' periodic detention and a two-year suspended jail term... In deciding to keep [Mr X] out of jail, [the j]udge... took into account that [Mr X] was losing the career that had consumed his life, was in poor health, and had been traumatised by the trial... Passing sentence, [the judge suppressed Mr X's]... name, the name of the school and its specific location in Auckland... The charges related to seven of his former pupils, aged 9 to 12 at the time of the offending. The[y]... gave evidence, in person and via videotape, during the two-week trial... Evidence from the victims indicated they were unlikely to suffer long-term effects... “The sad thing is they held you in high esteem, and you let them down.”

...“...Maybe I let him down[.]” the former tutor[.]... admitted in a video interview with police... [in response to accusations] that more than a decade ago... [a boy who] “...saw me as a bit of a role model, a father figure...” ...was... plied with alcohol and ultimately sexually abused... [The] tutor already jailed once for abusing one of his... pupils has been found guilty of violating another young student after lying about his criminal background to land a job teaching life skills to teenagers. The case has again raised questions about the vetting procedures for teachers.

...It would be nice to think that it couldn't happen again. But schools can still hire teachers who left their last job under a cloud, and never know that they're buying trouble. A law change last year requires schools to alert the authorities when a teacher is sacked or resigns to avoid dismissal. But it leaves major loopholes which let bad, or even evil, teachers quietly move on to new jobs... [A teacher has just] been jailed for two years after admitting five charges of indecently assaulting boys – two of whom were pupils at King's School in Remuera, where [the paedophile] taught art for 11 years. [The paedophile] resigned when... confronted about his actions. But the school notified neither the police nor the educational authorities because the distressed parents of one of the boys wanted the matter dealt with privately. About six months later [the paedophile] was hired by an intermediate school in Weymouth... and the principal there is understandably angry that King's had not pushed the alert button.

...WHEN news flew around Newcastle, England, that a [22-year-old guy] childcare worker had been caught sexually abusing children in his care, a [mother] in a nearby suburb became anxious. [The mother] started noticing that her 2 1/2-year-old son became distressed when approached by the only [guy] childcare worker at his Shieldfield nursery... [The mother] asked the boy about it, and [her son] pointed to his penis. [The mother] took that to mean that [the childcare worker, aged 22,] had touched him there, and two days later... told that to a social worker. By the time [the mother] spoke to police the following day, the story had changed. The silent gesture had become a verbal complaint that [the 22-year-old] had touched the boy's bottom. The boy was examined by a paediatrician who concluded there was nothing to indicate abuse. Police and social workers interviewed the child. Did [the 22-year-old] hurt you? they asked. “No,” the boy replied. [The 22-year-old] was suspended anyway. In the weeks that followed, the mother's complaint became more elaborate. Her son had been taken to houses with black doors and abused by strangers inside. [The mother] claimed another worker[at the nursery was involved. That married gal], too, was suspended. The mother told the press that her son's personality had changed. [The mother] spoke to other nursery parents about it and the story gained momentum, until a depraved and elaborate paedophile network had been created around [the 22-year-old and his colleague, 28]. The case became to England what the Christchurch Civic Creche case was to N[Z]...

A Christchurch childcare worker who was] convicted of child-sex offences, has been denied parole for the second time. [The childcare worker], aged 40, continued to maintain his innocence when... [appearing] before a parole board... In its decision yesterday, the board said [his] continued stance meant it had to decline parole. “As the offender has not acknowledged or addressed his offending, the board... had no option...,” said a Department of Corrections spokes[person]n... The board said that, as [the 40-year-old] had continued to maintain his innocence, [the 40-year-old] had not faced the usual consequences of sex offenders, such as attending rehabilitative courses and programmes... “The board is not in a position to go behind the jury's verdict...,” the board said. It postponed [the] case until December, saying it would then probably impose conditions under which [the prisoner] would be released... at the end of two-thirds of his 10-year sentence. [The 40-year-old], found guilty of abusing children at the Christchurch Civic Childcare Centre, said to the board last week: “I cannot accept any parole that you could offer me because the board could only release me as a guilty [person]. I'm not... guilty... I am... innocent...” [The 40-year-old] has twice been refused bail pending a Court of Appeal hearing... The hearing was the result of a petition to the Governor-General requesting a pardon... [His] mother... said the decision was buck-passing, in which nobody wanted to take responsibility and face the repercussions of admitting that the original conviction was wrong. [The mother] feared that her son could be “forced into a corner” by the Parole Board... when it was compelled to free him next year... “[My son] can live

with most conditions but... [is] not going to address something that didn't happen." ...[meanwhile, another] convicted sex abuser... was summonsed yesterday to appear in court on a charge of breaching a parole condition forbidding contact with children under 16. The Department of Corrections said it was reviewing the self-styled guru's residence at the Centrepoint community in Albany... A breach of parole carries a maximum jail sentence of three months.

...[followers of Auckland's disgraced Centrepoint guru are suing the Attorney-General for an unprecedented \$110 million for alleged breaches of religious freedom. The claim has been lodged by one of at least 10 people at the community who describe Centrepoint as their religion and its guru as their spiritual leader. They claim that a committee of inquiry ordered by the Attorney-General in July last year "denigrated and discredited the spiritual leader, his teachings and beliefs and those who follow him." It is also alleged that counsel for the Attorney-General had indicated "no wish for the Centrepoint religion to be protected or preserved," contrary to the Bill of Rights legislation. However, in the High Court yesterday the Crown asked the judge to strike out the \$110 million claim because the matters "simply do not come anywhere near" a breach of rights under the legislation.]

...they proclaim that 'their leader is to them what Jesus is to Christianity' – and, like Christianity, 'Centrepoint is in disarray, with various factions squabbling over the future of the community which has an estimated \$20 million in assets.'

...[a judge has appointed the Public Trust to run the charitable trust that owns the land and buildings at the Centrepoint Community. In his decision the judge stated that "this is not a case about religious freedom, but merely a holding operation to enable the trust to sort out its affairs." The judge did not give reasons for his view that the case was not about religious freedom except to say that this aspect may become involved when there is later an application for a scheme change. No matter what the public might think about Centrepoint's spiritual leader, this case has ramifications for those holding out to practice their chosen form of religion. The Centrepoint Community have lost control over the physical assets of their community and therefore there might be a case for saying this would affect their ability to manifest their religion. The freedom to manifest or express religion has been held in Europe to overrule contrary legislation. It was recently held that the consideration of religious freedom acts as a kind of overlay to the ordinary law of the land. One of the tests of a religion is that there must be a body of spiritual teachings and followers who call that their religion. It is not necessary for there to be belief in a divine being. While in prison Centrepoint's guru produced a substantial body of written work to expand his teachings and despite the criminal convictions still has a number of followers and those influenced by his teaching who live in the community at Centrepoint and claim his teachings as their religion. The judge never really considered the effect of that on the ability of the Centrepoint people to manifest their religion; and his attitude suggests that the judge did not regard the teachings as a religion'...

'The guru endorses paedophilia in teachings to his followers. In an essay published during his 9-year imprisonment on sex and drugs charges, the guru says sexual experience between children and adults is harmless in an ideal world. "It is stupid to confuse our children by telling them certain touching is bad when they know it feels good. It is even more stupid conditioning them to feel guilty about their sexuality in the name of protecting their innocence." Sexual games between children were normal and should be allowed without overt notice being taken of them. In another essay, the guru says psychopaths who cause death are extreme cases and need to be differentiated from paedophiles or other adults who may have nonviolent sexual contact with children.'

...[the guru] and his followers have been paid \$1.35 million to leave the Centrepoint community, which will be rebuilt and renamed. The convicted child sex offender and his 25 adult followers will have no more influence over the Albany commune [the guru] founded more than 20 years ago. [The guru] and his supporters, called the Old Believers, and their children will receive \$49,200 each after costs under a deal which was approved yesterday by the High Court at Auckland... [The judge] said the amount would outrage some people, but fitted the provisions of the Centrepoint Community Growth Trust... The court judgment said the trust had a \$7 million to \$8 million net worth... Seventeen adults and their children[are] still living at the Albany site... which they will lease from the new trust... [The guru] is living in Mt Albert, but could not be contacted yesterday.

...[Having a]convicted child sex offender... living next door has outraged Northcote Intermediate School, which wants answers from Housing N[Z] after finding out who their new neighbour is. [The guru, who ha]s just served a one-month sentence for breaching parole conditions [(during which the guru went 'on a hunger strike in protest at the removal of his computer – a uniform act after four prisoners used their computer to launch a successful escape'),]is living in a Housing NZ flat less than 10 metres from the school's boundary. Yesterday, the 74-year-old Centrepoint founder told the *Herald* [it] had moved into the Lake Rd flat two weeks ago. "I just want to be left alone to live a nice, quite life,"... But Northcote Intermediate... was not told who its new neighbour was and now wants Housing NZ to remove him... [A] Housing NZ spokes[person said the guru]... had been unable to find private-sector housing and had asked the agency for help. "Housing N[Z] recognises the decision to house [the guru] in his current accommodation is not an appropriate long-term solution." ...the probation service knew where [the guru] was living and would work with Housing NZ to find an alternative home for him as soon as possible... [■] Groups representing the abused children and non-resident members of the Centrepoint commune say they reluctantly agreed to pay off[their] disgraced leader... so they could begin helping victims. The two groups, representing about 40 abused children who are now adults, and 50 non-residents, will be part of a new advisory board that plans... [using] Centrepoint assets valued at about \$10 million... to support victims of institutional and cult abuse. Those abused at Centrepoint will be the initial focus...

The abuse experiences some... [gals] recount from their childhood at Centrepoint are horrific. They tell of 12-year-olds being ordered by... [the commune's] spiritual guru... to have contraceptive injections, and of [STDs] they contracted as children (which, years later, some still suffer from). In one of the most severe cases, [a victim claims to have been] systematically abused from the age of 18 months until her early teenage years... [Guys] performed oral sex on her regularly and [the victim] recalls at the age of three being made to orally stimulate them in return. The abuse worsened to the extent that by the time [the victim started school, the victim] was enduring assaults almost daily by [guys] who attempted to penetrate her: "It wasn't like someone trying to rape me. It was all done in such a way that it was supposed to be... good for the children to have this wonderful, loving thing done to them and especially before they were five because if it didn't happen then you'd be fucked in the head for the rest of your life." ...[the victim was eventually] raped once... and, along with other children, forced to watch [the guru] have sex with [adult gals]. At the age of 11 [the victim was even] pressured into taking the drug ecstasy... [Another victim] recalls as an 11- or 12-year-old having sex with [the guru] after school; it was a "task" [the guru had] assigned her because [the guru believed this second victim] had an emotional block... "His wife was there; it was disgusting. I could only stomach it for three or four days. I didn't say no to him. I was too scared. I just didn't go back." ...It was her testimony and that of four other [victims] at the High Court in Auckland... that first brought to public attention the nature and extent of abuse [at the commune]... Despite his... convictions on five charges of indecently assaulting girls aged between four and 15 years old for which [one disciple] was subsequently sentenced to four years' jail... [the disciple, who is a] father of five children... continues to deny that [the adults] did anything wrong. "[Our guru] says that sexual activity initiated by the child and kept at their level is not harmful, and I believe that... Just as I believe that driving at 160km[h] on a safe road is fine..." ...[Incidentally,] up to 15[%] of sexually abused teenagers... suffer the additional pain and trauma of being infected with... [STDs. A US] sexual abuse expert... sa[ys] STDs bring[ing]... guilt, shame and depression to innocent victims... Up to 5[%] of prepubescent children caught a related disease after sexual abuse... Gonorrhoea was a sure sign of abuse in children... Even so, some children were so traumatised they refused to admit to being abused. Accurate clinical results from medical examinations were often vital in prosecution cases... It was therefore a huge concern [to the expert] that about a third of specimens taken from sexually abused patients used to get lost between her paediatric ward and the diagnostic laboratory two floors way... The... [expert] remembered... a... child[who] was unwilling to let [the doctor] physically examine her, despite signs of sexual abuse. The girl later disclosed that her father used to play "dress up," putting on a white coat and using medical accessories to molest her. The girl also used to be sedated, making her naturally wary of a clinical setting. In Africa, rates of [STD]s in young people are at

least double the... [US rates. T]here was an African belief that sexually infected young [guys] could get rid of their diseases by having sex with virgin girls. In the process, they were infecting entire new generations of people unable to fight abuse.

...Yesterday, [a 71-year-old... father of 63 children... was sentenced in the Victorian County Court, Melbourne, to seven years and six months' jail for 20 child sex offences... The offences involved four girls aged between 7 and 11 and occurred between 1987 and 1991 at his Bells Beach compound in Victoria. One of the girls was... [the offender]'s daughter. The other three were the children of followers of the self-styled messiah who came to stay at Bells Beach for weekends and holidays. [A Detective Sergeant... of Melbourne's Sexual Crime Squad, told the *Weekend Herald* yesterday that [it believed the offender] preyed on this one daughter because [the offender] did not realise [the victim] was his own child. "I think it was a case of mistaken identity." ...[the offender] was born in Auckland... and brought up by his maternal grandparents. His grandfather was a carpenter, a trade which the [grandson]... briefly embraced before taking up an apprenticeship as a baker. At 25, [the offender] married his first wife in a Mormon Church, where [the offender] was introduced to the concept of polygamy... Police records show that [the offender] abandoned his baking career to become a constable in 1953. However, the job did not suit him and [the offender] resigned within the year. In 1969, his marriage in tatters, [the offender] decided to seek his fortune elsewhere and moved to Sydney. During the 1970s [the offender] changed his name and began to gather a group of devotees – mainly [gals] – who were attracted to his religion, a hybrid mix of Jewish, Hawaiian and Mormon faiths, and who believed [the offender]'s claims that [it] was Jesus Christ. After travelling around A[US] for some years, [the offender] and his harem of nine wives, who were all at least 30 years younger than him, moved to the Victorian surf mecca of Bells Beach in 1983. It was here in the two-storey house – where the children slept 15 bunks to a room – and in the sheds outside that [the offender] practised his abuse. Describing by his victims as "the controller" who "absolutely terrified" them, [the offender] bought their silence through fear and religion. One of the girls, now aged 18... was petrified of the [perso]n who claimed "his God would punish her" if [the victim] told anyone about the abuse... [This victim] was assaulted hundreds of times over a three-year period until... le[aving] to live with her own father... [The offender] slept with two wives at a time in the same room as the seven other w[ives]. A roster system ensured that sexual attention was shared equally among the w[ives]. It was not until the summer of 1991 that the wives stopped home-schooling their brood and enrolled them at nearby Torquay Primary and Oberon High School... [S]ome time during the following year, one of the girls told a school friend about the abuse and [the offender]'s game was up. [The Detective Sergeant... believed that the wives were unaware of the sexual abuse and... said... they turned against [their husband] when they found out.

...A bishop has received a... three-month suspended... jail sentence for covering up the paedophile activities of one of his parish priests – the first time a senior French clergy[person] has been convicted of a crime since the Revolution... [The] Bishop of Bayeux, was tried in June for failing to tell the police... that one of his priests had admitted sexual acts on boys in his care. The prosecution was the first of its kind in France and forced the Church to revise its advice to senior church[officials] on how to deal with paedophile priests... [The bishop] took no action, except to move [the priest] to another parish. The admission was made outside the confessional but the bishop told the court [it] believed it was covered by the secrecy of his "professional" relationship with the priest[, who]... was later convicted of the sexual assaults... The bishop's lawyer... was surprised by the verdict since... none of these acts took place after [the priest's admission, which meant that]... "no child suffered from the bishop's silence."

...FOR years, rumours circulated about child abuse at Hare Krishna boarding schools in the 1970s and '80s. But ultimately it was the group itself that confirmed the problem, exposing many of the shocking details in the past week. In an extraordinary display of candour by a religious group, the Hare Krishna movement published the findings of an official journal, recounting sexual molestation, beatings, public humiliation and isolation in roach-infested closets. Teachers, administrators and monks were among the abusers. The report was written by an independent sociologist... [who] did not know how many children were abused... sexually, but it was a sizeable number... [The sociologist] said the stage for abuse was set by the Hare Krishna's elevation of celibacy and its belief that only the spiritually weak pursue sex and marriage. "Children were abused in part because they were not valued by leaders and even, very often, by the parents who accepted theological and other justification offered by the leadership,"... Children only had occasional visits with their parents, and letters home were often censored by school officials. By 1986, all... ISKCON... boarding schools in North America were closed except for one in Florida, where a child protection office was established.

...A... [s]chool has banned parents from taking pictures of their children's nativity play to prevent images ending up in the hands of paedophiles... The decision was condemned by the child protection charity Kidscape as an overreaction which "demeans" the issue of child sex abuse.

...[In the American city of Chicago a guy] is facing a trial for raping a nine-year-old girl and pouring bug killer down her throat in a horrific attack.

...[an actor], sickened by recent cases of disappearing children in the UK and US, has bought [her] son... a trendy tracking device. It comes in the form of a watch and costs \$1300, and [the US-based actor] considers the money to be well spent. The Welsh beauty is so enthusiastic about the device, [the actor] told an aide: 'It uses satellites to pinpoint the wearer's location... I will always know where to look for him, even if [my son] decides to wander off somewhere in the house.' '[The actor] may legitimately need help in their pad, considering it's over 900 square metres,' the aide says. 'Now [the actor's joking it] just needs one for... [her husband]' Incidentally, Britain's 1970s glam rock star... was jailed for four months on Friday after pleading guilty to 54 charges of taking and possessing pornographic pictures of children. But [the star] was cleared of... sexual abuse of a young fan in the 1980s. A jury... found [the sta]r (55) not guilty of the four charges of sexual assault and four of indecent assault on the 14-year-old fan. [The sta]r stood smiling in the dock as the sexual abuse verdicts were returned to cheers from the public gallery... His lawyer... accused [the fan] of inventing the allegations for money, saying [the fan] went to the police only after [the sta]r became hot news. The girl first made public her allegations when [it] sold her story to *News of the World* for £10,000... in a deal which included a further £25,000 if [the sta]r was convicted.

...Thai police are battling to gather enough evidence to convict a[n a]lleged child molester... The high-profile case involving the American has outraged Thailand's elite, whose children were allegedly abused by the... former piano player at Bangkok's five-star Oriental Hotel... [The] musician... ran a private piano school, using it as a front for his sex acts, say officers. Despite a front-page confession of paedophilia by [the musician] in last month's English-language *Nation* newspaper, the wealthy parents of his victims... have refused to allow their youngsters to testify, fearing the shame they would have to endure... Lawyers prosecuting the piano player, who... is now behind bars awaiting trial, say convicting [the musician] is the key to denting Thailand's reputation as a sex haven for foreign paedophiles. Although there have been numerous arrests, almost all the offenders escape conviction by paying off officers or arranging bail and then fleeing... This month a British police team specialising in prosecuting sex abusers... has been training 50 police and social workers[who] will work with a new police Child Protection Centre in Bangkok, and selected police stations. The \$US50,000... project is part of an international effort to stem the tide of child-sex tourists. Video recording equipment and special interview rooms to encourage children to testify have also been provided. But in Pattaya, things remain much as they were. Foreign [paedophiles] can be seen on so-called "Gay Beach" arranging rendezvous with the young boys who sell ice cream or with street kids who hang outside bars. Recently a Swede... arrested... after allegedly forcing a boy... to commit an indecent act on him... [was freed] on \$US2500 bail.

...When the heat came on, [the]convicted paedophile... fled the tropical paradise of Goa and slipped back into N[Z], hoping to vanish in the bland suburbia of Upper Hutt. But this week the long arm of the law stretched from the Indian state to the Wellington District Court and collared the 60-year-old former chef, who consented to be extradited to India for trial on multiple charges of running a child-sex ring out of an orphanage... [The NZer] is understood to have left India after an alleged associate... was sentenced to life imprisonment... for having sex with children and prostituting them to foreigners... The... British-born... [associate] controlled his paedophile kingdom from behind the walls of the Orphans Family

Home, where authorities believe 150 children were sexually abused... [The NZer] is no stranger to the paedophile tag. In 1991 [it] was sentenced to nine months' periodic detention, two years' supervision and psychiatric treatment after pleading guilty to six charges of indecently assaulting a 6-year-old and an 11-year-old boy. At the time, [the NZer] offered to undergo chemical castration. Both offences occurred when [the NZer] was on parole from a two-year jail term for similar charges. Goa, a former Portuguese enclave on India's west coast with stunning, palm-fringed, white sand beaches, has long been a magnet for hedonistic travellers seeking sun, sand, surf, all-night dance parties and designer drugs. But for many the lure is not just the beaches or the travellers' scene, it is the disposable sexual commodity – children... [A] senior detective in Goa's capital, Panaji, said police could do little except "fine anyone we catch." ...Goa had become a haven for sex offenders, particularly paedophiles, because they knew police would not bother them... and... the... children[']s... silence was bought by gifts or fear... □ [There is]... credible evidence to suggest... underground foreign paedophile rings are starting to tout... Vietnam... as the next destination, says an expert.

...Authorities fear a European based paedophile ring targeting Pacific Island countries has claimed a young Cook Islands girl who was whisked away to Germany. Immigration officials said the 8-year-old was taken by two Germans who paid her parents an undisclosed sum... The authorities were unable to stop the child being taken out of the country, after the parents signed a document giving consent for their daughter to go for three months... [R]equests to German authorities for background checks on the German mother and son had gone unheeded... In the past two years two boys have also been taken by a German... who showered the parents with gifts and money. It is understood there have been other cases... Anti-child-sex campaigners in N[Z] said paedophiles are now targeting poor Pacific Islands as Asian countries clamp down on child-sex activities.

...Opposition to Pitcairn Islanders standing trial in N[Z] for the rape and indecent assault of young girls has been put to a parliamentary committee considering legislation to allow that to happen... [S]peaking... through a satellite phone link... Pitcairn[']s Mayor... said a trial could take years and if it was held in N[Z] the community could not survive it. [The mayor also] said the island did not have a specific age of consent. The select committee is expected to hear further submissions before recommending whether or not the bill should go further in the legislative process...

A parliamentary committee has approved a bill allowing Pitcairn Islanders to stand trial in N[Z] on sex abuse charges, despite opposition from the island and Green and N[Z] First MPs. The foreign affairs, defence and trade select committee has reported the Pitcairn Trials Bill back with minor amendments and Parliament is almost certain to pass it before Christmas... because of [the] difficulties of holding... the trials... on the island, which is more than 5000km east of N[Z]. Around 45 people live there... [The i]slanders were disgusted by the decision, although they expected it...

Pitcairn Islanders have sent a petition to their governor in Wellington after [it] refused the islands' commissioner permission to travel to Pitcairn when sex abuse charges are laid next month. The petition was signed by 17 of the 27 adult islanders, with another six offering more muted support. It reads: "We demand that the commissioner for Pitcairn Islands is with us during the laying of charges..." [The] Pitcairn public prosecutor... and police officers will go to the islands early next month to lay charges of sex abuse and under-age sex against an unspecified number of Pitcairn [guys]. Similar charges will be laid against a Pitcairner living in N[Z]. The[... Pitcairn public defender... and an associate will be in the travelling party to ensure the islanders' rights are protected... Islanders were feeling stressed about the pending charges and were desperate for support.

...Tensions between Pitcairn Islanders and a party of lawyers and police arriving to lay charges of sexual assault surfaced before the party even made it ashore. Three of the police officers in the party are the subjects of a complaint by one of the alleged abuse victims and Pitcairn[']s Mayor... was reluctant to have them on the island. The legal party of 12 arrived on Friday after a two-day trip by charter boat. But all visitors need to be ferried to the island's lone harbour on one of the island's long boats. When they radioed to be picked up, [the mayor] sought advice from [the] Pitcairn public defender... asking if the officers... [- who the victim] claims... asked her to make false accusations against her attacker... [-] should be allowed ashore... [The public defender] advised the islanders to allow the party ashore. "The legal team is ashore and the reception was anything but warm," [the mayor] later told the *Herald*. Within the next few days, many of the [adult guys] on the island will be charged with a range of sexual offences, expected to extend from underage sex to rape and child abuse. It has been three years since allegations were first made... The arrests will end an agonising wait for Pitcairners around the world, who have all lived with the stigma of child abuse while police investigated the claims. The police and... the... Auckland-based... p[ublic] p[rosecutor]... have refused to reveal the number or names of people being investigated or the charges.

...One paedophile can, and often does, commit thousands of offences involving a huge web of victims – and may never be found out... [A] member of the Auckland Child Abuse Team... [refers to] the police Operation Toast campaign, first based at the Onehunga public toilets. It uncovered a recidivist paedophile responsible for at least 4229 offences carried out on 42 boys over more than 20 years. This [paedophile], who was involved in community groups, the local church and held down a respectable job, had transformed part of his home into a mecca for underprivileged children[, even persuading]... his mother to cook them dinners when [her son] was not bribing them with McDonald's hamburgers. Meanwhile, behind the facade, [the paedophile] was systematically performing indecencies on them... Most frustrating of all, although the [paedophile] had three previous convictions for indecent assault, [the paedophile] was never either jailed or placed on long-term supervision. The warning flag never went up... Also, say those working in the field, people are still not ready to believe that paedophile rings exist... [A] professor of child psychiatry from Leuven, Belgium, described even more insidious attitudes towards child abuse in that country. There, once the initial horror and fuss over the abduction, sexual abuse and murder of... young girls by [a] known rapist... had died down, the curtains of silence began to come down... The police[, who]... had... spent four days inveigling [the 'multiple child' rapist] into revealing the specially constructed cell... built to hold his victims, found that his... ring of accomplices included, importantly, a Brussels member of the judicial police... But... despite a 300,000-strong march in Brussels led by the parents of the murdered children and others still missing, the case floundered... [A] major back-lash had undermined... the [prosecutor's] efforts – and reputation. [The prosecutor] was impeached by the Belgian Supreme Court. His colleague, [the] District Attorney... was subjected to an investigation over alleged leaks. Two journalists who helped focus public attention on the affair lost their jobs.

The police have dug up three bodies in Belgium's biggest and bloodiest paedophile scandal after rescuing two young girls alive from a makeshift dungeon last week and detaining six people. The bodies of Julie Lejeune and Melissa Russo... both aged 8... – who disappeared together in June last year – have been found buried in the garden of a house owned by a 39-year-old electrician... The third body was identified as a former associate of... [the electrician, who] has been charged with the abduction and illegal imprisonment of [one girl], aged 14, kidnapped on August 9, and [another girl], aged 12, kidnapped on May 28. They were rescued on Thursday from a tiny concrete basement prison in a terraced house near the... city of Charleroi. Police had searched the house twice before [the electrician] showed them the hidden entrance. Both girls had been sexually abused. [The electrician] was present at the exhumations on Saturday and was taken away by helicopter to avoid the gathering crowds. [His] second wife... who protests her innocence, will appear before the court tomorrow... Thirteen other children have been abducted in the past six years – seven have now been found dead. The parents of Julie... and Melissa... had travelled the world following tips about the whereabouts of their daughters – including a visit to South America. There was no immediate information about how long the girls had been dead. [The electrician] was detained... after eyewitness evidence identified his van in the area where [the 14-year-old] was abducted during the short walk from the local swimming pool to her home. It is still unclear whether anyone visited the girls or whether they had been left in the dark and without food or water during the three days after the arrests.

...The two girls whose bodies were dug up from a Belgian garden at the weekend had starved to death while their abductor was in custody on an unrelated charge, according to the police... [A] 39-year-old father of three... told police that the girls died... in late February or early March while

[the 39-year-old] was serving a four-month jail sentence for theft... [T]heir parents have attacked the authorities for failing to find them, even though the house where they were imprisoned was searched twice... The prosecutor... said [the 39-year-old]... had given money to his associates to feed the girls during his detention. [The 39-year-old admitted killing one] accomplice... whose body was found with the girls, out of anger that [the accomplice] had allowed Julie and Melissa to die... The parents say the police doubted that there were links between a series of missing children cases and sex criminals. "Julie and Melissa are victims of organised paedophilia, sacrificed by the scepticism which has reigned in Belgium towards groups of evil doers who are capable of kidnapping children... and sexually abusing," said a statement by the parents which was read by their lawyer... "It was paedophilia which killed our daughters but equally it was the incredible generosity shown to paedophiles by those who are responsible for protecting our children." ...[the 39-year-old] and some of the five other people being held by police said they had also kidnapped [two other] teenagers... in August 1995. "Finding these girls is now the priority," said [the prosecutor]. Radio reports suggested that the pair may have been sold abroad... Newspapers published special Sunday editions calling for the reinstatement of the death penalty, which was erased from the statute books in Belgium in June after lying dormant for many years... Melissa's father... hoped the deaths would lead to a change in the law. "I hope Julie and Melissa didn't die for nothing." Belgian law on child rape is relatively mild. A defrocked 73-year-old priest... was sentenced in 1992 to three years detention – to be served in a monastery – after being found guilty along with two others of rape and child abuse.

...Two missing victims of a paedophile ring may have been sold into prostitution in the Czech Republic, according to reports on Belgian television... [which came as public] anger erupted at the fact that [the electrician] had been released for good behaviour 10 years early in 1992 from a 13-year sentence for rape and child abuse. A beneficiary of a controversial early release programme, [the electrician] fooled social workers and psychiatrists who were supposed to keep tabs on him. "His... behaviour was aimed at bamboozling officials," said the Justice Minister... who conceded [the electrician] succeeded, and soon... returned to his search for young girls to prey on. "Bring me a girl and you'll get 50,000 francs..." [the electrician] told accomplices last year, according to the investigating magistrate... In some of [the electrician's houses, more] underground cells and dungeons have been found, some still under construction, built to hold children prior to their transfer... Brussels Free University said there was a growing paedophile trade in Europe as child sex abusers looked increasingly for younger victims out of fear of catching Aids.

...the Charleroi... paedophile[s']... mother... warned... prosecutors about her son's activities in a letter... a year ago, Belgian RTBF [TV] reported yesterday... In part of the letter read out for the cameras, [the mother] said neighbours had complained about "numerous nocturnal comings and goings" not only of cars "but also of two young girls... who passed through the house... where the windows had been blacked out. In these times where... increasing numbers of girls are disappearing, I think that I can do no more than report that these two unknowns were at Jemeppe,"... The tip-off was written "before September 1995" to the Charleroi prosecutor's office, and a copy was passed on to the Namur prosecutor's office. The Namur prosecutor's office sent her a reply, saying no action would be taken over her letter... [The] Charleroi prosecutor... confirmed that such a letter from [the known paedophile's] mother existed but... had no personal knowledge of its contents... [In another development, the] daily *Le Soir* said... some 875,000 Belgian francs... were deposited into one of [his] bank accounts on August 26, 1992, three weeks after the disappearance of... a nine-year-old Moroccan girl, and two days after the disappearance of [a] 16-year-old... Several deposits were also carried out... shortly before the January 1994 disappearance in Antwerp of Kim Heyrman and her brother... Kim was found dead a month later and her brother is still missing.

...Hope that more children missing in Belgium's child sex and murder scandal could be found alive has evaporated after the discovery of two more bodies. "The hope is dead," the newspaper *La Dernière Heure* said yesterday in reaction to the confirmation earlier in the day that the bodies were those of An Marchal, aged 17, and Eefje Lambrechts, 19, kidnapped last year by [the] convicted rapist... The girls were identified by a wristwatch belonging to Eefje, and their dental records... [A] credit card belonging to [the rapist] was found with the bodies... The bodies were taken... to their home town of Hasselt as Belgium went into mourning... [I]nvestigators are still chasing clues into the disappearance of several other children in the widening paedophile scandal, in which nine people have so far been arrested. The inquiry has spread to the Czech Republic, where [the rapist] is alleged to have also carried out some of his crimes, and investigators have contacted their counterparts in Germany and Austria.

...The... paedophile scandal in Belgium has made millions of adults, especially [guys], fearful of showing physical affection towards children... All... apparently natural manifestations of love are now subject to question. "My husband used to go take a bath with our [four-year-old] daughter. But this affair has made me think 'what if [our daughter] talks about it in school?'" said... a 36-year-old... "At my son's birthday party, one of the boys came over, gave me a hug... and put his head in my lap while other parents were there... Because of the [scandal]... I was petrified..." said the father of a five-year-old. Besides killing what faith Belgians had left in the ability of their police and courts to prevent such crimes, the... scandal has shattered a widespread belief that atrocities like this could not happen here. "This is... the loss of innocence for a whole country..."

Belgium's Parliament was meeting overnight to consider urgent steps for rebuilding public confidence shattered by a shocking child sex abuse case and a political murder scandal. Political parties were expected to back the setting-up of a committee of inquiry into judicial bungling in the investigation of the 1991 mafia-style murder of a leading politician and the activities of a paedophile ring. The scandals have shocked the mainly Catholic country of 9.9 million people at the hub of Western Europe and sullied its image as an untroubled backwater famed for good food and beer. High-level corruption has emerged in both cases... [By the way, a Catholic] bishop who covered up widespread child sex abuse in an impoverished part of New Mexico claims [to not have known] his priests were breaking the law. "I didn't know it was a crime," said... the former Archbishop of Santa Fe. In one of the biggest scandals to hit the Catholic church in the US, [the archbishop] kept quiet about sexual abuse of hundreds of young boys by scores of priests in his archdiocese. [The archbishop also] claimed the sexual abuse of a child was a less serious sin than striking a priest. "I certainly had no idea that I had any obligation to bring that type of offence against a person to the authorities' attention,"... His diocese became a haven for paedophile priests, deemed unsuitable to serve in other parts of the US... [T]he scandal... could cost the church \$50 million in compensation to the victims... [However], a lawyer working for the victims, said: "To this day I have grave doubts as to whether there is any sincere remorse on the part of the church hierarchy for what was done to these kids." ...Most people in New Mexico suspect the real reason for [the archbishop's] coverup was because [the archbishop] feared any scandal might jeopardise his chances of being appointed cardinal by bringing into light his own sexual promiscuity. [The archbishop, who] was forced to resign in 1993 after an investigation was launched into the abuse, was sexually linked with 20 young [gals]. The archbishop had a particular taste for devout, church-going virgins just out of high school. "If you're spending as much time as [the archbishop] obviously was chasing nubile young Hispanic[s]... it's not surprising you don't have time to deal with the real problems of your parishioners," said [a mother] whose two young boys were abused by a priest. [The mother told the archbishop] in 1976 that... a priest close to her family, had been molesting her sons. For more than 15 years, the church kept it hushed up. Although her sons have now won a financial settlement from the archdiocese... they were still deeply traumatised... [Furthermore, the priest] was never prosecuted and in 1992... disappeared; [the mother] believes the church knows where [the priest] is. "What I have actually and reluctantly been forced to accept... is that an institution I, a born Catholic, did not choose to believe was corrupt, is completely corrupt and has been for a long time..."

...The Catholic Church is to investigate how a defrocked Hamilton priest jailed for indecencies on altar boys came to live in a church house next to a... primary school without its knowledge... The Catholic Bishop of Hamilton... immediately asked him to leave... town. [The] Bishop... yesterday apologised to the staff and parents of the 270 children attending the school and promised to do all in his power to prevent it happening again.

...An English Catholic priest convicted and jailed for sexually abusing young boys has sparked an investigation into paedophile rings in N[Z]... A report in the British newspaper, *UK Mail*, said... [the] parish priest... was nabbed after using the internet to send the details of his crimes around

the world. The massive amount of data collected by investigating police identified links in six other countries, including N[Z]. The names were passed to authorities in each country. [A]Detective Sergeant... of Interpol N[Z], confirmed... yesterday that the matter was under investigation... However, [the detective sergeant] refused to comment about where the investigation was centred or how many people were involved.

...[the police] are remaining tight-lipped about investigations into an international paedophile... trail which has led to N[Z]. An Interpol spokes[person] said police were continuing investigations but... refused to comment further on Thursday's raid on an East Auckland house... Auckland police and customs officers raided the house and seized a computer and several hundred discs... The seizure was part of Operation Starburst... No arrests were made... Criminal charges might be laid when the analysis... of the computer and discs... was complete. However, a spokes[person for Mothers/Fathers] Against Sex Crimes... said failure to arrest the [owner] would enable him to warn others within the paedophile network... [The spokesperson] said his group devoted much of its time to tracking down paedophiles but the ease of accessibility and lack of physical boundaries made policing the internet increasingly difficult.

...perverts are using the Internet as a sordid travel guide for molesting young girls, a British academic revealed yesterday... Subscribers can pick up details of what activities are on offer, where to go, which pimps to talk to and what the package costs... [Paedophiles] wanting a nine-year-old prostitute in Bangkok had only to tap into the Internet to find a seedy mine of information... [The] Bradford University... lecturer... told the Psychology of [Gals] Conference at the University of West England in Bristol: "I was utterly shocked when I found out how much information was available... The material I studied was not fantasy, you can tell by the details. These... young children are being repeatedly raped and abused by different [perverts] every day. This is just encouraging it." One researcher tapped in and... [became] the 64,411th visitor to the site. One contributor to the web page described a brothel as "the best chance of finding guys selling very young girls – pre-teens." Another wrote: "The establishment made no attempt to dress them as sexy but rather clothed them in young girls' outfits befitting their age. I couldn't restrain myself – I had to have one of them." [The lecturer] said this trafficking must be stopped immediately. "The Internet is not the whole problem. It is just a vehicle."

...Police investigating the biggest paedophile ring uncovered in Poland say that more than 100 foreigners were on the lists of a homosexual contacts service which offered underage boys for sex. Police... said the alleged organiser of the ring, a 44-year-old local government official in the northern city Szczecin, had been formally accused of sexual offences against minors. The ring's existence was revealed by Polish public television's *Wiadomosci* news programme... [A] Lieutenant... said... none... of... the... names on the computer... were from Belgium, which has been rocked this year by child sex scandals... but... included [guys] from... Saudi Arabia... Germany, the Netherlands, Russia, Austria, Canada...

Six members of a Catholic lay order in St John's, Newfoundland, have been charged with the sexual and physical abuse of orphans who had been under their care years ago... [In related news, t]he three-year legal action by former students of the Christian Brothers' Western A[US]n institutions was formally settled in the N[SW] Supreme Court yesterday. The setpiece of the settlement is a \$3.5 million trust to assist the... 260 former students, who will be paid at least \$A2000... each... The Christian Brothers spokes[person]... said the order might take out a loan to meet the commitment... [T]he order was shocked and disgusted by the cases of physical and sexual abuse, but maintained that its leaders had not been negligent.

...A Western [AUS]n victim support organisation has described a payout to... [people] abused as children by the Christian Brothers as "despicable." [A]Victims of Institutional Cruelty, Exploitation and Supporters (Voices) spokes[person]... said the payout was an insult. The 210 [victims], now aged in their 50s, were offered \$2000 each as compensation... [and] the offer... prevents them from taking further legal action... [The spokesperson] said the money was to be put in a trust fund which the [victims] had access to, but criticised the option for the public to make donations... "They're rubbing the [victim]'s noses in the dirt. And they want the public to pay for their disgraceful behaviour... We have exposed the Christian Brothers for what they are, and they have to walk the streets of Perth with their heads held in shame,"...

A 54-year-old Christian Brother stunned the Wood Royal Commission yesterday with revelations that [it] had sexually abused children as young as five in his care over a 35-year period. The [brother], identified as X11, told the hushed commission [it] had abused children throughout Sydney and was still working with children as recently as this June... Details of his work history and private life were suppressed after the hearing...

Children aged as young as eight to 14 were preyed upon by at least three paedophile rings each numbering from 20 to 100 [paedophiles] at three Sydney locations, the Wood Royal Commission was told yesterday... [In local news, a] transvestite and a[nother guy] alleged to have... pushed... a 6-year-old... into a car... on her way home from school... and... taken... her... to a house... [where things] had been done to her bottom which made it hurt... were committed for trial in the High Court after a hearing in the Christchurch District Court yesterday... Several witnesses gave evidence that both of the accused had been drinking in Christchurch bars that day... [E]ach defendant blamed the other for what happened.

...[a 29-year-old] labourer... convicted... yesterday... in the High Court at Christchurch... of raping a four-year-old girl... was jailed for 6 1/2 years.

...A teacher has appeared in the Rotorua District Court charged with sexually violating five girls. The 37-year-old... whose name was suppressed, was remanded on bail without plea... [In international news], French police sa[y a]... 16-year-old boy raped his four brothers and sisters, aged between four and 18, copying the crimes of his incestuous father... The boy and his 40-year-old father were both jailed yesterday.

...AT THE age of five, a tiny girl became the sexual property of at least 10 members of her extended family. From boys in their early teens to [adults] in their 50s, they treated her as "available" for their sexual gratification, the High Court at Napier heard... At the age of eight, M – who medical reports show weighed just 20kg – disclosed... that a 13-year-old boy in Tokoroa had raped her. When police spoke to her, accusations arose against... further... offenders... Police also believe there could have been more abusers than M identified... [Although CYPs] says such abuse is not rare... the... scale of the abuse stunned even... the... Crown prosecutor... "I didn't believe it at first... then I was told how many had admitted it... Short of homicide, it is the most disturbing case I have ever seen..." To reach the homes of the many relatives M was passed around... M attended about 12 primary schools in three years. [A]Hastings Detective... says M's mother was just 16 when [M] was born and couldn't cope so [M] went to live with relatives... [I]t is possible the offenders didn't know about each others' abuse but... M's mother found offender H abusing M years ago and told M's grandfather, who ignored the accusation and the abuse continued. [The detective] believes M's mother and aunt had been sexually abused within the family and some of M's abusers were also victims. "You get an attitude which is almost 'It's a part of growing up – you should accept it. It happened to me and it will happen to you'." M, who has just turned 10[, was]... placed with a foster family and made good progress. But [M] has since started running away and the long-term impact... on M, like almost all abuse victims, is likely to be devastating.

...A MORMON church spokes[person] whose radio broadcasts often decried the evils of sexual abuse has been arrested for investigation into allegations of sodomy of a 14-year-old girl... The director of the church's radio news services... programme *Time And Seasons* was jailed last week after the girl complained to a counsellor... On November 6, the girl was taken to a parking lot behind a radio station, shown pornography, photographed in her underwear and told to perform oral sex... The Mormon Church declined to comment...

A Mormon Church spokes[person] yesterday pleaded guilty to sexually abusing a 14-year-old girl. [The offender], aged 51, from Salt Lake City, could face a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison and a \$US10,000 fine... [The offender] has... been released on bail... [Incidentally, it] was just over three months ago that[the US] President... signed a document that turned American law on its head... [Previously,] a convicted criminal who had served his or her sentence was returned to the community a free person. No doubt they had been punished and that was the end of the matter. Now the President, with the support of Congress and vast public backing, has decreed that one category of criminal will no longer be able to melt quietly back into society. From now on child molesters and rapists may get out of jail but their movements will be checked and, crucially, their

neighbours will be informed of their past. Paedophiles are the new lepers – wherever they go the cry will resound: “Unclean unclean.” The legislation is called “Megan’s Law” after a seven-year-old New Jersey girl Megan Kanka. Two years ago [Megan] was raped and murdered by a twice-convicted sex offender who lived across the street from her. To the neighbours, blissfully ignorant of his past, [the sex offender] was just an ordinary guy. “Today America circles the wagons around our children,” declared the President... “Studies show sex offenders commit crime after crime. We respect people’s rights, but there is no greater right than a parent’s to raise a child in safety and love.” Statistically... 70[%] of child molesters reoffend. The president was echoing the new orthodoxy sweeping the U[S] and Canada: paedophilia is an incurable disease, cause unknown. It could be genetic or possibly the result of social factors... In fundamentalist America many search no further than “evil” for an explanation. If it is an incurable disease, it follows... that, once diagnosed, a “sufferer” should be isolated. Put another way: lock ‘em up and throw away the key. But abuse, short of murder, does not carry a life sentence so [the President] has ruled that the police must notify local people when a convicted sex offender moves in. The civil liberties lobby has objected that this infringes a person’s right to privacy and amounts to additional punishment... The American Civil Liberties Union has warned of dangerous precedents – today paedophiles, tomorrow armed robbers? But faced with a conflict between the rights of a known abuser and those of a child, the public has had no such problem... Such is the support... for tough measures to stamp out child abuse that few politicians have felt able to speak out against Megan’s Law... [However,] a handful of commentators have asked what the point of the law is. The respectable answer is that it allows parents to shield their children, preventing them, for example, from talking to the “sexual predator”... in their midst. The not-at-all respectable answer is that it empowers the community to protect itself, a polite way to describe vigilantes, lynch mobs and assorted petrol bombers who have decided they don’t want perverts in their backyard... Washington State introduced a variant on Megan’s Law six years ago and there have been 17 reported vigilante attacks. In New Jersey intruders nearly killed... [someone] they believed to be a former offender. They broke into the home of a paedophile but attacked an innocent visitor by mistake. The New Jersey police have been issuing community information orders for over a year. At least 30 [paedophiles] have been identified and, according to police, there have been numerous outbreaks of vigilantism. Pickets gather outside a house, usually demanding the resident quit the neighbourhood; many do... New Jersey’s Guardian Angels have done their bit to make life unpleasant for released offenders... The Canadians are taking a similar line... [A] mentally handicapped 39-year-old, was released from prison last year after serving five years for molesting children... Before [his] release Edmonton police provided his address in a computer-dialled message to 3500 homes... [The 39-year-old] returned home to Edmonton... to find a welcome committee. They suggested [the 39-year-old] hang himself before they hanged him. [The 39-year-old] fled to British Columbia only to be similarly hounded... is now in hiding, and has tried to commit suicide. The mother of the six-year-old girl... [the 39-year-old assaulted, said]: “I want him dead... I would really like him to commit suicide.” ...Well aware of the vigilante threat, a number of [US] states are considering laws of their own... allowing the indefinite internment of sex offenders in mental institutions... [But] philosophical opposition has come from lawyers and child abuse experts who fear... many suspected offenders, especially from the suburban middle class, will refuse to plead guilty or plea bargain. Faced with the prospect of being branded for life they will deny everything. It is very difficult, on both sides of the Atlantic, to secure convictions. Parents are often unwilling to put children through the ordeal of a court appearance and only a fraction of cases come to court. In the [US 80%] of such cases are resolved through a guilty plea or plea bargaining (admitting to a lesser offence in return for a shorter sentence)... [T]he New Jersey Civil Liberties Union, raises another pragmatic objection... serial offenders will stay on the run, constantly changing name and moving from area to area. “The concept of rehabilitation is undermined. Offenders will... become more dangerous.” Megan’s Law has unsettled American liberals because of the painful conflict between their hearts and their minds. Yet when Megan’s mother appears on television applauding the new law it is hard to separate emotion from intellect: “This is like a new wave across the country. I’m ecstatic that they put the safety of children over the concerns of paedophiles,”... In Britain, the... anti-paedophile group Action on Child Exploitation... wants tough action to stamp out abuse but stops short of Megan’s Law... [Its chairperson] admits... “My heart tells me I want to know if a sex offender is living next door. But my head tells me that if we start with paedophiles, tomorrow it will be Aids victims. But... if your child is vulnerable you want to know.” - 1996

N[ighbours] of a Wellington[ian] facing sex charges have been warned by police of his presence – even though the courts have yet to deal with his case and... [the] 68-year-old... has no previous convictions. The... [68-year-old] did not know police had been informing some of his neighbours of his charges... The former sales[person]... denies the allegations and said the police action seemed unfair... The incidents are alleged to have occurred in the late 1970s and early 1980s... Neighbours said a... police officer knocked on their doors about 10 days ago[and] said a paedophile... [who] “liked young boys”... was living nearby... [The] Council of Civil Liberties... said police had to balance the right of the individual against public safety, but appeared to have acted prematurely. “This is somewhat indicative of the way police are working these days, which is lazy policing. What happens if a neighbour ends up on his jury?” ...[However, a] Police National Headquarters spokes[person] said no one at Johnsonville or Wellington’s CIB or child abuse team knew of any door to door work in the area... It appeared a lone officer had decided to door-knock the neighbours.

...Police worries about an 82-year-old convicted child molester have led to... 700 copies of... a... warning notice... bearing his name and photograph... [being sent] to parents... Copies have also been sent to the staff of Whangaparaoa Primary School, the local kindergarten and preschools in the area. The police and parents say the [paedophile], who has convictions for assault and indecent assault on young girls, has been approaching children and trying to entice them into his home... [The] Whangaparaoa Peninsula community constable... said the leaflet was intended to protect the elderly [paedophile] from temptation as well as informing parents of the potential danger... The principal of Whangaparaoa Primary School... agreed with the police action[and] said a trespass notice was issued against the [paedophile] two years ago after [the paedophile] began annoying children while walking through the school grounds to visit his wife at a nearby rest home.

...[NZ] police... are being asked to look at an A[US]n proposal to register convicted paedophiles. The Wood royal commission has recommended that compulsory registration with police of all convicted paedophiles be considered, with the legal requirement that they notify any change of address. [NZ’s] Minister of Police... said yesterday... “I believe that parents in this country would also want the maximum protection for their children, and while there may be complaints from civil libertarians, the rights of children not to be abused must be paramount.”

...A publisher planning to launch a British directory of paedophiles has been attacked by probation officers who claim the book could encourage vigilantes without protecting children. [The publisher], who has published the N[Z] version of the directory, said the planned British edition was vital because most sex abusers tend to re-offend. The information, compiled from newspaper clippings and court records, is designed to protect communities from paedophiles, [the publisher] added. The Association of Chief Officers of Probation claimed... the offenders named in the book... will be driven by fear of violence to change their identity or simply disappear. “In this instance our job supervising them and recalling them to prison when necessary would become impossible and the public would then be endangered, not protected.” Those concerns were echoed by [the] Liberal Democrat spokes[person]... who said the private book was “illegal” and called on the Government to draw up a code regulating access to the new official paedophile register being brought in under the Sex Offenders Bill. “The police should be given strict guidelines on access to the register which should be limited to bodies such as Area Child Protection Committees...” But the arguments were rejected by [the NZer] who told BBC Radio 5 Live: “In N[Z], for instance, the book has been extremely useful. It has not been used by vigilantes to burn down or deface the houses of convicted paedophiles who have come out of jail. It has generally been used responsibly by educational groups.” ...[however, the NZ] book was blamed for at least one paedophile’s suicide. An A[US]n edition – *The A[US]n paedophile and Sex Offender Index* – was published on Monday by [the publisher’s partner. The partner]... has shrugged off death and legal action threats and opposition from civil libertarians and legal authorities to

name more than 300 convicted perpetrators in her book... "I've only put these people in a book. It's nothing compared to what they've done to other people... but I'm the bad guy. I say that these people may have a need for privacy, but they don't have a right to privacy – they have been found guilty of a crime and have given up their rights, and the right of the innocent to be protected far outweighs these people's need for privacy."

...["My son is a paedophile – keep your children away from him." These words that would break any mother's heart have been uttered by a Wellington resident more times than it cares to remember. But the mother will keep saying them as often as it needs to in a quest to protect children from her son. "It's hard because I really do love my son, but I think people need to know that a sex offender can be the articulate, nice-looking boy from down the road. Having experienced abuse myself as a kid and being a doctor to a lot of people who have been abused, I know the long-term effects." The mother's experiences of abuse at eight years old sent her life into a downward spiral that included stowing away on a US Navy ship back to America, being pack-raped in the back of a car when hitchhiking, and being deported back to NZ to become a solo mum, prostitute, drug abuser, housewife and divorcee. Her son is back on the street after serving a jail sentence for sexual violation, and the mother fears that her son will offend again. The mother first learned of his sexual attraction to young children when her son was only 13 years old and was caught abusing an 8-year-old cousin. Even then the son had the cunning of a seasonal abuser, threatening the girl that it would cut out her tongue if the victim told anyone. The mother's disgust was tempered with pity for the son it believes was abused by an older guy at a Christian camp. But as much as the mother tried to help her son, the mother was equally vigilant about protecting children from him, stepping in quickly to warn parents, police and whomever else would listen when the son would start lavishing attention on yet another innocent child and unsuspecting family. While most families were grateful and immediately cut off contact with her son, not everyone welcomed her calls. The mother of an 8-year-old boy refused to believe what a stranger was saying about the charming young guy it had welcomed into her home. "That mother brushed me off. My son had primed her for such a call from me, and that mother thought I was lying." Sadly, the paedophile was later arrested for sexually violating the boy, and given a suspended sentence. The distraught mother of the victim then helped distribute posters all over Wellington warning people about a sex offender'...

'A Texas judge has ordered offenders who had had a long probation instead of jail for offences ranging from aggravated sexual assault to indecency with a child, to put "Danger! registered sex offender lives here" signs on their front yards. The convicted offenders were handed the signs and bumper stickers reading: "Danger! Registered Sex Offender in Vehicle" on Saturday. A Nueces County probation department supervisor said checkups would follow. However, the president of the Corpus Christi Criminal Defence Lawyers' Organisation said the signs were unconstitutional. "It's a return to the days of the scarlet letter. This is madness. We will have vigilantes out destroying property." The organisation was contemplating legal avenues to block the judge's action. The judge had called about 55 registered sex offenders to court to be given new probation conditions. 40 showed, 21 got the stickers. "Everybody is looking at you," the judge told them. "You have no one to blame but yourselves." The other offenders were ordered to send letters to all neighbours within three blocks of their homes. The District Attorney said the judge's action was a practical way of implementing the state's sexual offender registration act. It requires offenders to register with local police and have their names and photos posted on the internet.'

...NZ is one of a handful of countries publicly branding dangerous sex offenders in a controversial move to protect communities. Last month the Taupo police warned local schools about an abuser then told other regions that a convicted abuser might be headed their way when the abuser moved on. The US state of Washington was the world leader in setting up notification laws, which have also been adopted in Britain and AUS. In Britain, a new law allows police and the courts to place paedophiles under close supervision, including banning them from playgrounds and near schools. A Washington study had shown that community notification has not led to a drop in reoffending, but the abusers seemed to be caught earlier. Sex offenders would always be part of society said a US abuse worker, who says Governments had an obligation to protect innocent lives by exposing repeat offenders through flyers, community meetings and the media. Original concerns that the laws would raise community fears and vigilantism were unfounded the Seattle sexual assault and trauma centre worker said. In Washington, 11% of all sex offenders were deemed dangerous enough to warrant notification. Less than 4% of that group had been harassed, although most of it was minor. It was important that only selected information was released about offenders, including their name and where they lived. In one US case, the police had revealed an offender's sex abuse fantasies, leading to his house being burned down. If repeat offenders felt harassed, they were less likely to redeem themselves. The goal was to be cautious of them but allow them to prove that they could fall in line.'

...Should NZ establish an official register of paedophiles and other sex offenders? The Justice Minister seems intent upon setting up some means of ensuring that people are not employed in situations where they present a risk to children or others. For a year now his department has been looking for ways to better manage sex offenders after release from custody and the minister expects to receive their paper shortly. A register of some sort would seem to be inevitable if agencies are to keep track of such people. The real questions are who should have access to it and how it should be used. Britain simply keeps a record of convicted sex offenders and requires them to notify the police when they change their address. That does not seem to go far enough. In some parts of the US the police alert parents when a convicted paedophile moves into their neighbourhood. That is going too far. The minister is not contemplating a register that would be available to the public, citing recent events in Britain as evidence of what can happen when such a list is published irresponsibly.'

...Britain's biggest-selling weekly newspaper published the names and photographs of 33 more paedophiles yesterday, despite a continuing controversy. The *News of the World* defended its decision to "name and shame" convicted paedophiles, saying it was in the best interests of children. "More names and photographs of child sex offenders living near you," the front page proclaimed. The paper began its campaign by publishing the names of 49 alleged paedophiles the previous weekend, angering police, political leaders and groups representing offenders and children. "Our object is to enlighten," said a spokesperson for the paper. It also set up a paedophile database accessible through the internet. Protesters supporting the paper rallied in central London yesterday to demand a change in the law to allow public identification of offenders against children. But last week a resident in Manchester was confronted by angry neighbours who thought it was one of the 49 individuals. And in Plymouth yesterday, police had to rescue a couple and their three children from their home after a crowd of about 60 gathered outside, apparently thinking there was a paedophile indoors. Both incidents underlined fears that "name and shame" lists could lead to vigilante attacks and drive convicted child sex offenders underground, making it harder for probation services to monitor them.'

...A stone-throwing mob have protested outside the home of a suspected paedophile in another episode sparked by a British newspaper's controversial campaign to "name and shame" sex offenders. A hundred people gathered outside the suspected paedophile's home in Portsmouth, throwing stones and damaging property, police said yesterday. It emerged that the victim had been named as a paedophile by the *News of the World*. Earlier, police in Croydon, south of London, offered to protect an elderly guy after it became the second innocent victim of a hate-mail campaign which wrongly identified him as a paedophile named by the newspaper. About 300 households close to his home received letters giving his name and address and warning people with children. On Thursday, a 55-year-old who lives in the same area, found that similar letters had been sent to 500 of his neighbours.'

...The *News of the World* newspaper has been forced into a humiliating climbdown as it ended its "For Sarah" campaign of "naming and shaming" paedophiles. The decision to abandon its pledge to identify up to 11,000 child sex offenders followed strong criticism from the police, politicians and children's charities. The publication of 82 names and photographs of convicted paedophiles has led to a spate of violent demonstrations and innocent people being driven from their homes. The worst of the vigilante violence erupted on Friday in Portsmouth when a mob of 150 people wrecked the empty flat of a named offender and set fire to a car. At least six people with the same names or appearance as offenders identified by the newspaper have been wrongly targeted by vigilantes. However, the paper claimed a partial success, pointing out that the Government had promised to give "urgent" consideration to the idea of a national register of sex offenders that would be available to the general public. The paper said it would continue its campaign for such a register'...

'A small but powerful army is on the march. One foot soldier, a boy of 4, struggles to lift a placard that reads: "Paedophiles – don't house them, hang them." A girl aged 3 holds aloft another sign: "Kill paedophiles." These are the unwitting backers of a campaign to rid an area of the child molesters within their midst. For seven nights a vigilante mob hunted down paedophiles, intent on hounding them out. Windows were smashed, missiles hurled, cars overturned and burned out. A police officer was injured. Five families fled. All were innocent and wrongly identified, sometimes because they had the same surname as a convicted paedophile. It was hardly surprising. Many of the 20 targets had been identified purely on the basis of rumour and hearsay. This week's riots in a sprawling housing estate in Portsmouth have earned chilling comparisons with a similar outbreak of hysteria in 17th Century Salem. The allegations of a vindictive child, Abigail Williams, sent 20 harmless citizens to the scaffold. Those who wonder how such an outrage could have happened then should cast an eye over the modern-day witch-hunt which has infected the Paulsgrove estate in recent days. Residents there are now living in fear of their neighbours in addition to paedophiles. Two people suspected of offences against children have committed suicide. James White, aged 54, fled his home in Oldham last month after it was reported that James had been charged with sex offences against young girls. James took a fatal overdose, and his solicitor claimed James was driven from his home by a vigilante mob which scared him to death. John Potter, 49, was a millionaire who had built up the largest Harley Davidson motorcycle dealership outside the US in Southampton. Potter was found at his home with a single bullet wound to the head. Potter had been under investigation by police for allegedly indecently assaulting two 15-year-old boys. And yesterday there was fury when a paedophile convicted of indecent assaults on a 7-year-old girl walked free from court. The judge said the suspect, aged 51, who was "named and shamed" by the *News of the World*, had "suffered considerable adverse publicity," and in those circumstances handed down a 15-month suspended sentence. One of his victims, now 22, was left furious by the latest verdict. "The sentence is absolutely disgraceful. To let him go free opens the floodgates for all paedophiles to plead not guilty at their trial." Many groups have pointed the finger of blame for all this at the *News of the World*. Last week the paper dropped its name-and-shame tactic – a campaign supported by the parents of Sarah Payne, who believe all paedophiles should be sent to prison for life – and condemned vigilante violence. Moderating its stance, it came up with a more considered range of policies designed to protect children which received the support of police and child protection agencies. The paper continues to press for the setting up of a public register which would emulate Megan's Law in America.'

... 'A paedophile shot dead on the doorstep of his London home may have been the victim of a contract killing, say British police. Scotland Yard named the victim as William Bruce Malcolm, aged 44. Malcolm was jailed twice in the 1980s for attacking the same girl before and after his first sentence. In 1994, Malcolm faced 13 counts of rape, indecent assault and cruelty against three girls and a boy but was freed when a judge ruled a mistrial. Neighbours shed no tears for the dead person. "I was shocked when I heard someone had been shot in their home," a teacher said. "But when I heard who it was, it was a relief. It couldn't have happened to a nicer bloke."

... 'The paedophile at the centre of a civil-rights debate is fleeing Napier for a secret location after death threats and a vigilante-type attack. "I fear for my life. I thought Hawkes Bay would always be home, but for my own safety I am getting out of town," the 47-year-old, twice-divorced father who was convicted in 1996 of indecently assaulting a 15-year-old boy, told the *Herald*. Napier police said that on Sunday afternoon three guys kicked in the door of the paedophile's flat and attacked him with a piece of driftwood. The victim required hospital treatment for abrasions to his head. The 47-year-old hit the headlines last month when Napier police threatened to use section 48 of the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989 to detain youths short-term if they were found on his property. The 47-year-old sought legal advice and claimed police were harassing him. The move also angered civil libertarians, who said the 47-year-old had not broken the law and the teenagers could associate with whomever they wanted. But police said the 47-year-old, who delivers junk mail for a job, had set up his flat like a Club Med for boys and provided them with beer, cigarettes and pornography. If the 47-year-old did not keep away from the youths, they would use their power to keep them away from him. The mother of a 14-year-old boy who used to visit the house, said "Good job" when the *Herald* told her of the attack. "I don't know who attacked him and I don't care. We are glad to see the back of him."

...someone] who beat the alleged rapist of a 14-year-old girl with a builder's spirit level... would be charged with assault because it was unacceptable for people to take justice into their own hands... Rotorua police said yesterday... [after a] Rotorua schoolteacher who twice raped one of his... 13-year-old pupils... was... sentenced to 8 1/2 years' jail... The court heard that... [the rapes occurred when the teacher] was drunk and... the victim had been asked to babysit. [Editor's note: A 'young guy who had recently immigrated to NZ with his mother found out that the son of an acquaintance had been sexually abused by the acquaintance's gay lodger. The immigrant allegedly went to the acquaintance's house while drunk, beat up the lodger then left, after which the acquaintance killed the lodger and told the police that the immigrant had done it. The immigrant, who only had a vague recollection of the events, was convicted of humanslaughter and spent most of the following decade in NZ's maximum security prison.']

...Last year... the Victorian Supreme court, free[d a killer] on immediate parole following his conviction on [hu]manslaughter charges... The... [killer] had been drinking heavily before... [knocking] on Gordon Kerr's door... When Kerr opened the door, [the killer] brought an axe down on his head, again and again, before embedding it in his 68-year-old victim's buttocks. Police found [the killer] asleep soon after, curled in a foetal position... [The killer] was one more victim of predation, forced into repeated sex as a child by Kerr, disbelieved and punished by his parents, ignored by police for 20 years. As his anger burst into bloody revenge in a quiet country town, a much wider revulsion was growing around the nation. This week it took form in the report handed to the NSW Premier... by [the judge handling the royal commission]. For month after month the judge pieced together a sordid portrait of callous, systematic and brutal exploitation of children, of corruption, concealment, apathy, incompetence and denial that seeped across social stratas, through police, schools and the officials charged with the care and well-being of the young and vulnerable, to the Church and youth organisations... A Sydney conference was told... [that paedophiles] allowed to remain free to sodomise young boys and procure girls still not fully formed are unrepentant, serial offenders... [The conference also heard] of 232 convicted paedophiles who had each abused an average of 76 children before they were caught. One, in Queensland, kept a record of 2500 boys seduced over 20 years... [Among the paedophiles was a retired] Supreme Court Judge... [who] committed suicide after his name was raised in Parliament. [The judge] was arrested after exposing himself in a railway toilet, but was released by police and the offence covered up.

...[two people] were dead and another critically ill after what police described as an attempted group suicide by three alleged paedophiles near Brisbane. The [paedophiles], from Armidale in N[SW], were... at the centre of a Child Protection Enforcement Agency investigation known as Operation Diamante... The survivor was a 34-year-old Health Department employee who... was charged on Friday with six counts of homosexual intercourse with a child between the ages of 10 and 16. The... [health worker had been] bailed to appear in Armidale Court on December 1. As a result of the recent Wood royal commission, all Health Department employees are subject to criminal record checks by police.

...N[SW] education officials yesterday ordered 36 teachers suspected of sexually abusing their students from classrooms across the state in a sweeping new crackdown on paedophilia in schools. Allegations against more than 100 others will also be reinvestigated by a former Supreme Court judge following startling revelations in the [report on the] royal commission that teachers warned or reprimanded for sexual misconduct were allowed to remain in their jobs... The exposure of widespread abuse, including the ignoring or covering-up of complaints by education authorities, last month led to the suicide of a secondary school principal. Officials have admitted that it was possible for paedophile teachers to transfer from school to school without hindrance, and... some had even been provided with good references, and... told the royal commission that children remained at risk because the... Education Department... had not monitored 106 teachers reprimanded for sexual misconduct.

...[the Supreme Court judge who headed NSW's royal commission] has recommended... that the age at which [guys] could legally have sex with boys should be lowered by two years to 16 to bring N[SW] into line with other A[US]n states. In tandem with this change, accused paedophiles should be afforded recourse to the legal defence that they believed a 14-year-old victim was aged 16... Gay lobby groups had heavily argued in written

submissions to the inquiry that... [the] judge... recommend a... lower age of consent... [In further news from across the Tasman, a] former State MP... [is facing 29 paedophile] charges relating back to 1973, including... using drugs to stupefy his victims.

...[a former] Nelson city councillor... was sent to jail for nine months for two indecent acts with a young girl, the first when [the girl] was eight years old. A retired senior police officer was jailed for six years in Auckland for three rapes, two indecent assaults and one attempted sodomy committed on his daughter and an indecent assault on his granddaughter... [The] Wellington Rugby Union marketing manager... was given 18 months' jail for indecently assaulting a 15-year-old boy after an earlier jail sentence for indecent acts on boys... [A] 52-year-old Auckland [father], was jailed for eight years on five counts of raping his daughter and one of procuring an abortion by pouring hot water into her vagina after [his daughter] became pregnant to him at 13... Child sex abuse, once unmentionable, is becoming widely recognised as one of our society's greatest ills... Is there more sexual abuse of children in N[Z] these days, or are we just hearing more about it? The experts don't really know, though... [according to the CYFS chief social worker... "Media attention and educational campaigns run by the Department of Social Welfare have resulted in cases being reported to us now that would never have come to light just a few years ago." ...[14%] of the more than 5000 substantiated "abuse notifications" received by the C[YFS] in the six months to December last year related to sexual abuse. Some experts believe that only one case in ten makes it to court, and that the real total runs into the thousands... Incest strikes many people as the most disgraceful form of sexual abuse, but in up to half the cases, the offender is not the biological parent. [The molester] is a stepfather, foster parent or the mother's de facto... In one recent case, a four-year-old Auckland boy had been the victim of attacks by both his stepfather and his 28-year-old mother since [the boy] was a baby. His stepfather was jailed for 12 years; his mother for ten... Why don't the victims of child molesting tell someone? "Often the only adults these children know are their abusive care-givers," explains... [the] chairperson of the N[Z] Child Abuse Prevention Service. "They simply don't know who to tell." Young children can also be confused by sexual abuse. "They have little understanding of what to say or how to react... They are used to seeing adults as people who provide for them and can't comprehend any other sort of motivation for this behaviour." This confusion is sometimes reinforced by threats – "Your mother won't love you any more if you tell her" or "I'll be sent to prison." Often children feel that no-one will believe them, or that the abuse is their fault and must be kept a secret. Unfortunately, if a child does try to tell, even those closest to him or her may not recognise the call for help... Others simply ignore the clues. "They say the child made it up or hope it will go away if they ignore it." One reason for this is that an entire family can be stigmatised by the abuse... Even if action is taken, our legal system does not always protect victims from further anguish in court. The child's testimony is often the only evidence available, and some children find questioning in court intimidating and distressing. Recently a judge threw out a case in Auckland after a child became confused answering questions. "Children are easily bamboozled and frightened by the adult manners and language of a courtroom," explains... a... [CYFS] psychologist... "Lawyers and judges deal with adults most of the time and find it difficult switching to the language of a four-year-old... Children also suffer pressure because of the usual delay of 12 to 18 months before the court hearing, especially if family members are trying to force them to retract allegations,"... Fortunately, changes *are* under way... [A] prosecutor at the Auckland Crown Solicitor's Office, says N[Z] has become a world leader in making the legal process easier for the victims of child abuse. "Police, doctors, lawyers and child-care workers now cooperate more closely in trying to ascertain the truth... Every effort is made to record children's testimonies on video as soon as possible after their first disclosure of an offence." Says... [the] research manager for the Children's Issue Centre at the University of Otago, "Some children still have to tell of the circumstances more times than they would like to, but offenders now have less opportunity to think up a story." When a molestation case reaches court nowadays, children can give evidence on closed-circuit TV or from behind a screen to prevent direct eye contact with the accused. However... some prosecutors still prefer that a child, particularly an older one, give evidence from the witness box, believing this has more impact on the jury... Despite[the] improvements to the legal process, convictions are still difficult to secure... "Where there is no medical evidence or supporting testimony from witnesses, successful prosecution is very difficult... In many cases, the police have to drop the case." In a trial, juries may be swayed into acquittals by the belief that the offence is not serious or that molesters face assault or rape by inmates who despise them. "In fact... child sex offenders in N[Z] are segregated from other prisoners." When offenders *are* convicted, the sentences can be ridiculously light... Therapy for offenders is mandatory in some countries, but its use is controversial... Treating molesters requires skilled therapists. "Child abusers are often very clever at deception... They are great manipulators." But... [the] senior psychologist in charge of the Te Piriti Special Treatment Unit at Auckland Prison... believes that therapy can work. Nearly three years old, Te Piriti has 60 inmates. Its programme is based on that at the Kai Marama unit at Rolleston Prison in Christchurch, where almost 400 self-referred [sex offenders] have been treated in the past seven years. Of these, 95[%] have not been reconvicted since release from jail... "Many of the [sex offenders] I've worked with knew they had a problem but didn't know how to go about solving it... We must spread the word that advice is available outside prisons." Meanwhile... there is an urgent need for counselling services to target adolescents who molest children, often due to their own abuse. "We know that the majority of adult molesters begin offending as teenagers... so it's at this age we have the best chance of succeeding with therapy." Molesters hurt children seriously – sometimes physically and almost always emotionally. Victims may develop bedwetting, regression to an earlier childhood stage, insomnia... Another peril is... [STDs. I]n Sydney a 13-year-old boy sodomised by an HIV-infected [adult] died of... AIDS... in 1994. The effort to spare children such ordeals is taking several innovative forms. One of the most successful is a joint programme between schools and the Police Youth Education Service called Keeping Ourselves Safe. "What if" cards prompt discussion with children, and a range of educational videos is available, depending on the ages of students. One video, Pete and Penny, uses cartoon characters to teach children that they can say no if someone touches them in a way they dislike, and, if it happens, urges them to tell trusted adults... such as a teacher... Educating potential victims is easier than attempting to cure offenders. "It's sad, but the reality is that children have to be able to take steps to protect themselves from abuse," says [the research manager].

...the CYFS] placed a girl in the care of... [a 23-year-old] who has been charged with her sexual abuse and murder... The principal Family Court judge confirmed that the service believed the 2-year-old girl was at risk with her mother and a custody order by the court was made... giving custody of the girl and a 17-month-old boy to the... 23-year-old... [T]he court appointed a senior counsel to check the children were not at risk in the [23-year-old's] care. The counsel had said the children were safe.

...An eight-year-old child placed in a family home by Social Welfare has sexually attacked other children in the house 13 times – the most serious of a number of alarming cases revealed yesterday. [The eight-year-old offender] is not the youngest. Information disclosed by Labour pointed to a seven-year-old who also sexually abused a child in a home where [the seven-year-old] was placed by the C[YFS]. Since July 1 last year... about five... assaults... a week... were recorded in the service's residential and family homes... The Commissioner for Children... said last night that the figures were extremely concerning. "We have to take great care where we place young people where there is a potential for further abuse. It puts themselves and others at risk." ...[In related news, two] 10-year-old boys have become the youngest in Britain to appear in court charged with rape. The pair are accused of attacking a nine-year-old girl in a school toilet in West London.

...TWO boys aged eight and 10 stood alongside their mothers in court as they pleaded guilty to sexually attacking a nine-year-old schoolmate. Police said the boys snuck out of the detention room at Delaware Elementary School in Syracuse city north of New York... and... dragged her into a gymnasium, where the older boy held her down while the eight-year-old raped her. The pair pleaded guilty to lesser sexual counts that carry... up to 18 months in care, with the option of keeping them there until they are 18.

...A 16-year-old schoolboy who raped a 12-year-old girl last year could sexually attack other young [girls unless it] sought psychological treatment, the Chief District Court Judge... said yesterday. [The 16-year-old] appeared in the Dunedin District Court for sentencing after earlier

admitting three charges of rape. On each charge, [the 16-year-old] earned two years' jail, suspended for two years, plus 18 months' supervision with conditions... [● A] youth in foster care[who] raped a three-year-old girl and sexually molested two other children... was now making good progress in a programme for adolescent sex offenders and was considered by a psychologist to be unlikely to reoffend.

...A[n]... expert in teenage sex crimes says that only 50 of an estimated 200 young offenders in Auckland are enrolled in treatment programmes... "...Either they are still out there on the street and no one knows about them or their cases have not been passed on from church groups or social organisations that deal with them." ...Most teenage sex offenders do not get help because of a lack of funding and poor co-ordination between community and Government organisations, says... [the chairperson] of... an organisation which runs Auckland's only treatment programme[, which]... treats teenagers as young as 13... Five specialist programmes are run in the North Island... [A family] therapist with the C[YFS]... said that treatment programmes should be mandated by the court. [The therapist also] said that the secure unit in Christchurch – due to open this year – was essential but did not solve the problem of placement... [The] former president of the National Association for Adolescent Sexual Offender Services, [speaking] yesterday at a symposium of child and adolescent sexual offending held in Mt Maunganui... said that... [contrary] to belief only 28[%] of offenders had been the victims of sexual abuse... A [recent study into NZ] children who rape and sexually abuse other children... discovered[that] 40% of sexual attackers were girls... [M]uch of the findings were similar to overseas research or statistics compiled by others.

...Determining whether juvenile rapists are an aberration or a growing trend is difficult because... "there is no effective data capture. It's almost like they don't rate." ...[one] clinical psychologist... draws a distinction between sexual misconduct by 9- to 11-year-olds and that of older offenders. The younger boys... are what [the psychologist] calls sexually reactive. They imitate what they have seen done to others, or to themselves. After puberty they can become sexually aggressive and turn into true sexual offenders... Their motivations are as complex as any sex offender's. But, generally, as with adults, children who commit sex crimes are driven by anger and a desire to gain control. Rape is seldom about sex. Commonly, child rapists abuse their sisters as a way of getting back at their parents for abuse the parents have perpetuated against them. "One way they get to feel better about themselves is by controlling someone else... [Guys] see being dominant as more acceptable." More acceptable, that is, than being subordinate. While most sexual offenders have been sexually abused themselves, not all victims of sexual abuse become sex offenders. It depends on their own personal attributes... how well they socialise with their peers and their IQ level. Typically the less intelligent and more socially isolated are more likely to perpetuate the abuse cycle... The rationale is simple: the earlier you tackle a problem the easier it is to fix. "I wouldn't work in this area if there wasn't hope," says [the psychologist]. "A lot of these kids are good kids. Sure what they did was horrendous, but they're not all bad." Effective treatment takes two years and ideally includes the young offender's family. A recent evaluation of the programme for young sex offenders operating at the Leslie Centre in Auckland – managed by Presbyterian Support Services – fuels his optimism. Of 14 young sex offenders interviewed two years after completing a treatment programme, none had reoffended. [13] said the programme had shown them how to stop sexual offending. All took responsibility for what they had done... Most importantly for the rehabilitation of sex offenders, they had learned to empathise with their victims. [Auckland's only treatment] programme... runs on a year-to-year contract with the Community Funding Agency... Yet funding remains a constant worry... [T]he bulk of the money comes from the budget tagged for the yet-to-be-completed Christchurch residential centre. Although it is still a year away, [the programme's manager] wonders where the money will come from after it opens. [The manager] argues North Health should offer funding from its adolescent psychiatric care budget, but, apart from a one-off grant that has... been spent, it refuses to do so.

...A... Sydney... youth centre... for... children with behavioural problems... is to close after an anonymous letter said children at the centre were hired to paedophiles for \$A80... The letter, which was tabled in Parliament... also... said a 15-year-old boy with a sexual disease had sex with girls as young as 12 at the centre and a 15-year-old girl at the centre became pregnant and had an abortion without her parents being told... The N[SW] Community Services Minister... announced the closure in a statement, but did not mention the letter's allegations. "It is now internationally and nationally recognised that institutions are inadequate in meeting the very special needs of young people in care,"... [the minister said instead, before adding that] the centre would be sold and profits put back into community services for children.

...SIX years ago [a paedophile] shed the blood of an innocent child... stalked and abducted just 400 metres from her home. Now the former church elder and Sunday school teacher who for 30 years preyed on little girls in A[US and NZ], has won a legal battle to stop police taking a few drops of his own. Police had sought it for the sake of a second grieving mother... [A] blood sample and DNA profile from the convicted child sex killer is the best chance of ending the [mother's] mental torment that began when her six-year-old daughter Kylie was snatched on her way home from a corner shop in Melbourne in 1984. But police have abandoned a Supreme Court application for the sample after [the paedophile] launched a constitutional challenge funded by legal aid. Legal advisers warned police that although blood samples have been taken from other criminals, their bid for [this guy's] blood would be likely to fail... While... legislation was intended to allow such samples to be taken, lawyers said the wording was so vague it allowed defence lawyers to argue it actually forbade random testing... The Victorian government says it will now rewrite its laws to eliminate the loophole... The raped and strangled body of Kylie Maybury was found in a gutter. No one was charged with her murder. There the matter would have remained – one more shocking but unsolved big city crime – had it not been for [the] almost identical abduction in another Melbourne suburb seven years later. This time the victim was Sheree Beasley. Like Kylie... [Sheree] was just six... And like Kylie, Sheree suffered the final indignity, her body forced like a rag doll into a drain on the city's outskirts, until it was found three months later. THE evidence pointing to one [person] being responsible for both crimes was never stronger... The little girl, screaming and still wearing her bicycle helmet, had been seen in a blue Toyota hatch by several drivers... Two witnesses were able to narrow the car down to a... 1985 to 1988... Corolla... Detectives discovered... 800 Corolla hatchbacks in various shades of blue had been built in that period. Every owner was tracked and asked to account for their whereabouts the day Sheree was snatched. From those hundreds of routine interviews appeared... a 54-year-old travelling sales rep... and a [former perso]n of God...

A PAEDOPHILE Catholic priest... has returned to Ireland to face 74 new sexual assault charges after [the priest] was freed from prison in Northern Ireland... after... [having] served four years... for abusing boys and girls during a 20-year span in Belfast. [The priest] was flown to Dublin for a court appearance after charges of indecent assaults and attempted assaults in the Republic were read out in the Limavady court. Outside, a crowd jeered... [the] member of the Norbertine Canons order. Revelations of [the priest's] assaults on the children of friends shook Irish church authorities and the nation's four million Catholics. The shock intensified when the case brought several other incidents involving sexual abuse by clerics to light. A furore about a seven-month Irish delay in processing a bid to extradite [the priest] to Northern Ireland engulfed the government... in 1994. It played a key part in bringing down [that] government in a row over high-level legal appointments. [It is unlikely, however, that rumours of what 'top echelon members of MI5 allegedly did to young boys in Irish borstals' had any bearing on the downfall of Britain's last Tory government!]

...The Roman Catholic diocese of Dallas has been ordered to pay a record \$US120 million... in damages for a priest's repeated sexual abuse of his altar boys. The money will go to ten former altar boys... and the parents of another who committed suicide. It was by far the largest cash penalty ever imposed against the Catholic church in a sexual abuse case. A Dallas jury... decided in a civil lawsuit that the diocese was guilty of gross negligence, malice, conspiracy and fraud in failing to stop the priest... from abusing the children over an 11-year period... and in covering up evidence when the victims complained. It said the diocese bore even more responsibility for the years of abuse than [the priest] himself... "I hope they wake up the Pope tonight with this," said the plaintiffs' attorney... "This verdict sends a clear message to the Catholic hierarchy of the world that this abuse must stop." ...[the bishop] said the church would likely appeal the damages in the hope of finding a final verdict that is "just and appropriate to the facts of the case." The diocese argued that... the... [priest] was suspended as soon as the first youth complained...

[The priest], now defrocked and awaiting trial... routinely spent the night with boys in his charge and, even in public, would “rub them against him” according to church correspondence presented at the trial. Lawyers for the diocese never contested the charges... “This diocese was clearly wrong, but at the time it was making what it thought were reasonable judgments,”... a church attorney, said of senior clergies’ failure to discipline or reassign [the priest] despite repeated warnings... including one in 1985... and... two in 1986... [I]nstead... the church... promoted [the priest] from assistant pastor to pastor... The verdict[, which]... brought a 30-second standing ovation... is a stinging indictment of church complacency and the issue could resurface in courts across the country. Settling pending sex abuse cases could now cost the Catholic Church of America well over \$[NZ]1 billion... The church had already spent up to \$650 million settling similar cases... “This is going to act as a lightning rod,” said... a former Catholic priest who heads a national support group for those abused by priests and claims to have names of 3800 American priests implicated.

...A senior Dallas priest who said... [the] parents of the 11 boys... abused hundreds of times by... another priest... were more responsible than the church for letting it happen... has retired after a public outcry over his comments... The... Monsignor... aged 73... also had words of criticism for the victims. “They knew what was right and what was wrong... It’s hard for me to believe why they kept quiet for so long.”

...[“Dignity” and “reform” – they are two words with very subjective meanings to Catholics these days, particularly in the US, where the sex scandals that have been touching priests the world over are erupting with the particular virulence of an all-consuming epidemic. Though it had been bubbling for years, the present rash of shame began slowly: a court case in New England, another in Arizona, more in California, Washington and then in Miami, where the bishop resigned in disgrace when his dalliances with young girls were brought to light. To date it has cost the church more than \$1 billion in settlements and payouts. Now the church’s disgrace is metastasising, each edition of the nightly news seemingly featuring another priest dashing with face covered past pursuing reporters. In Boston last weekend, the street outside the residence of the local cardinal – a stern, conservative confidante of John Paul II, and America’s most senior Catholic – looked like Camp O.J. as a 100-strong posse of TV crews awaited the announcement of the prelate’s long-rumoured resignation. Instead, after a two-day stakeout, they learned that the cardinal had been summoned to an emergency meeting in Rome, where it was to join the Pope and all of his fellow American cardinals to discuss the rising tide of scandals. The question perplexing Catholics is just what tack the parley will take. Will it clean house, sweep the corrupt from office and beg forgiveness? Or will it bolt the doors, batten down and pray that the storm can be made to pass? Whatever the outcome, the long-serving Boston Cardinal will be able to speak with particular authority at the gathering, for his is the most prominent public face of the church’s problem. No longer the stuff of court cases and lawsuits, his culpability is proven: for years, Boston’s Cardinal knowingly concealed the crimes of his priests. One of them, Father 1, molested scores of boys, while another, Father 2, was protected even after being described by a church psychologist as a psychopath and unrepentant pederast, a rapist of children not yet in their teens. How did the cardinal react? Like his predecessors, the cardinal transferred the predators to unsuspecting parishes, set church lawyers on to accusers and their families and bundled out the hush money. Confession was evidently a sacrament the cardinal administered but disdained for himself. In Chicago, where a series of similar outrages have come to light, a novelist priest claims a similar cover-up may even have extended to murder. “They are a dangerous group,” the novelist said of the church’s molesters. “There is reason to believe that they are responsible for at least one murder, and may perhaps have been involved in the murder of the murderer.” True, the best-selling novelist has a weakness for breathless hyperbole. But these days, even the notion of killers in cassocks cannot stretch credibility too far. In any case, the novelist has another charge to level, one almost as damaging – it twice gave the names of paedophile priests to the city’s cardinal, who did precisely nothing to stop them. What is a Catholic to believe these days, the novelist asks, when princes of the church prefer to see no evil? No such questions trouble the worshippers at St Agnes. The old-school purists gather every Sunday at 11am to hear the Tridentine Mass that was all but banned by Vatican II reforms intended to involve the laity in the liturgy. After the service, several worshippers spoke in tones that mixed regret and vindication as they nominated the 60s-era changes as the culprit, when the church they loved traded its birthright for “a font of novelties”. It wasn’t the abandonment of Latin that did it, they say, for that was but a symptom of the church’s change of heart. With their Mass, the old one, the priest is an anointed intermediary between Heaven and Earth. At a modern service, the priest faces the flock and leads the faithful in an open, shared celebration of the community’s oneness before God. Here is how a regular at St Agnes put it: “The old rite is an invitation to relate to God as an individual sinner. Its replacement says none of us are better or worse than the person beside us. And, since none of us is perfect, no sin is worse than any other.” Modernist Catholics strenuously disagree. In their eyes, the scandals are the consequence of a church that has failed to move far enough. Allow priests to marry and the Children of Mary will be safe. Accept gays and altar boys need not worry. In the meantime, congregations dwindle, the ranks of seminarians shrink. Both sides, however, can take righteous umbrage at the delusional absurdities and excuses being offered by priests both high and low, conservative and liberal. To a Californian priest convicted last week of molesting underage girls, the victims bear the blame. “Girls wanted the challenge of the forbidden fruit,” the priest said. A Vatican spokesperson blames homosexuals. “People with homosexual inclinations cannot be ordained,” the spokesperson said, turning dogma on its head, since the church has always taught that it is the sin, not the sinner, that is repellent in God’s eyes. Nor did the spokesperson address the inconvenient fact that many of the scandals involve heterosexual molestations. And if the spokesperson is serious about banishing gays, why hasn’t it been done? Why, when Boston’s Father 2 had been shipped off to the City of Angels, did the cardinal of Boston’s episcopal envoys stay at the motel the banished priest bought with his gay lover, a fellow priest? The *Los Angeles Times* says the place was infamous for group sex parties beside the pool. And here is another example of the way the cardinal preferred lies to truth. “I can assure you,” the cardinal wrote to the bishop of Los Angeles, “that Father 2 has no problem that would be a concern to your diocese.” Even more breathtaking than the spokesperson’s remarks was this observation from Milwaukee’s Bishop. The problem, the bishop said, isn’t abusive priests but the victim’s unfortunate habit of “squealing.” Added the bishop: “That’s when you have to deal with it.” Now there is no choice.’

...Catholic bishops should avoid telling congregations their parish priests sexually abused someone if they believe the priests won’t reoffend, a Vatican official says. The official, a judge of the Vatican appeal court and dean of canon law at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, writes in the influential Jesuit magazine *Civiltà Cattolica*, which often reflects papal thinking, that church leaders have no legal or moral responsibilities if abuse does occur. “From a canon law perspective, the bishop and the superior are neither morally or judicially responsible for acts committed by one of their clergy.” The official argues that a priest whose past acts of abuse were revealed to his congregation “would be totally discredited in front of his parochial community and in fact would be blocked from any effective pastoral action”. The official also says church leaders confronted with cases of abuse should attempt to resolve problems without going to the authorities. The national-director of the Chicago-based Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests found it disturbing that the article appeared to be contradicting the Pope’s statement at last month’s Vatican summit on sex abuse. “It seems like the Pope was very clear last month: there is no place in the ministry for these perverts – none. Ever since, we’ve seen church leaders humming and hawing and making exceptions.”]

...Despite more attention being focused on cases of pastors[sexually] abusing their parishioners, many churches still did not know how to deal with the problem... said... a Canadian expert and Baptist minister... [who] works as a professor of theology and ethics at Regent College in Vancouver and two years ago co-wrote a book on sexual abuse within the clergy, *Betrayal of Trust*... [The minister attributes] an increase in clerical abuse... to the rising importance of individual self-expression rather than a focus on community. Clergy... in particular, were guilty of thinking about themselves rather than their congregation when they abused their parishioners... [T]he challenge was to educate priests to be sexually responsible during their training and to ensure that churches dealt with allegations of abuse sensitively and without blaming [the] complainant. “Generally speaking the victim is viewed as this seductress that led the pastor astray but blaming the victim just doesn’t work.”

...A... 27[-year-old], of Westmere, who had been brought up in India to be a Brahmin priest... was yesterday jailed for 20 months for indecently assaulting a nine-year-old girl... [The] missionary... admitted the charge[, although the crown prosecutor]... told the judge that [the priest] had

preferred the bizarre explanation that [his body] had fallen on the girl and ejaculated on her stomach by accident. [The priest] had also blamed the provocative way Western [gals] dressed for his behaviour... [The judge accepted that the priest] was extremely remorseful, but it was a serious case... and had had a serious effect on the victim... Passing sentence in the High Court at Auckland, [the Justice... said perhaps the most worrying implications of what [the priest] had done, from the victim and her family's point of view, were cultural. Earlier... the Crown, had said that [the priest] would have been aware of the effects his offending would have on the girl's marriage prospects... Most [gals] do not suffer long-term effects of childhood sexual abuse, according to a survey by the Otago Medical School...

A victim of childhood sexual abuse has disputed a survey which highlights the resilience of many [gals] who report no long-term effects from the experience... "The impacts [of sexual abuse] are enormous and insidious... If you've [lived] all your life with a headache, how do you know what it's like to be without a headache?" A senior psychologist with the C[YFS] in Tauranga... said that to say sexual abuse did not affect people was simplistic. But, the study also showed what clinicians had been saying for a long time – some people coped with traumas much better than others... [Overall, however, gals who were] sexually abused... were about three times more likely to have current mental health problems... [Furthermore:] "The more intensive the abuse, the more likely it was [that the victims] would have mental health problems." ...a review of 15 international studies... has found that 50% of... [gal] psychiatric inpatients had been sexually abused... [Gals] whose childhood abuse involved genital contact were five times more likely to be admitted to psychiatric hospital as an adult, and those whose abuse involved intercourse were 16 times more likely... The Otago study... calculated... [that about] a fifth of all... [gals] had suffered severe abuse involving genital contact. Around a quarter were subjected to some sort of touching and a third had suffered abuse including propositioning and adults exposing themselves...

Between 6 and 14[% of NZ boys] have been sexually abused by the time they are 16... [– although guys] under-report sex attacks on them because of shame, fear of being disbelieved and worry about being, or being seen as, homos... [However, for guys] and boys who are victims of sexual assaults, help can be hard to find... [But a counsellor] says it is imperative th[ey]... seek help, even if the abuse was a long time ago. "You can't keep avoiding the past. It comes out in anger or sickness,"... [The counsellor], who is now 53... blocked out what happened to him for decades and it manifested itself in painful physical symptoms. Now that [the counsellor] has confronted the abuse the physical symptoms are gone... [Guys] who have been physically abused often do not realise the way it affects their lives... There are few services for sexually abused [guys but Guy]sline in Auckland runs a support group. It addresses issues such as the shame and guilt associated with the abuse, worries about sexual identity, parenting and how to keep safe... [The counsellor, who is the] co-facilitator of the... [group,] says abusers are found in all facets of life; they are not restricted to priests...

The fate of the Colombian Ambassador to N[Z]... should be known tomorrow. [The ambassador] is accused of sexually assaulting an 18-year-old... at a cinema in Lower Hutt on Saturday. The head of the diplomatic protection squad... said that police had spoken to the ambassador and... [will] report to the Foreign [Affairs Ministry. The ambassador]... has claimed diplomatic immunity over the alleged incident, so any disciplinary action will be at the discretion of the ministry, if police find there is a case to answer. [The]Dr... has been ambassador to N[Z] since June last year, [after his predecessor]... resigned three months after arriving in Wellington... after a drug-money scandal involving his friend, Colombia's President...

The] teenager who complained of being sexually assaulted by the Colombian Ambassador... is glad [the ambassador] has left the country. The 18-year-old... student... thought it was strange that an old [guy] sat beside her and her sister in the near-empty... Lower Hutt cinema... but... took no notice of him until [the old guy] made a grab for her.

...A Lower Hutt District Court judge was revealed yesterday as the [person] facing 21 indecent assault charges... The 53-year-old has denied the... charges involving two girls and a boy. The offences are alleged to have occurred between 1970 and 1984. [The alleged offender] was appointed a district court judge in 1985, after three years as a crown counsel in Wellington... The Chief District Court Judge... had learned about the police intention to lay charges against [one of his judges] just before the New Year and discussed the matter with the judge. "We agreed that the only appropriate and responsible course of action until such time as his case was heard and the matter resolved was for him to stand down from all duties on the Bench..." Because the stand-down was voluntary, [the judge has remained] on full pay.

...[a district] court judge... was committed for trial yesterday on eight charges of indecent assault... [F]ive of the charges are described as representative of one or more alleged offences... The evidence of the three complainants was read to the court during the depositions hearing... The complainants were not present. [The judge's] application to cross-examine them was refused. Their identity is protected by law. Three other witnesses – the parents of the girls and a police officer – gave evidence in person. The evidence of the remaining witness was accepted in writing. [The defence] counsel... objected to its admissibility and [the presiding judge] suppressed it in the meantime. Throughout the hearing evidence to which the defence objected was suppressed... [T]he admissibility of the evidence would be decided at a later hearing.

...[a former] police officer... who represented N[Z] at the 1972 Munich Olympics... was yesterday sentenced to jail for... sexual offences committed 20 years ago... on a girl under 16 years. The... girl was 10 when the... rape and indecent assaults... started and 15 when they stopped... [Apart from that offending, the 48-year-old, who] had managed a number of businesses... had an exemplary background... [The cyclist – who] was described as one of N[Z]'s "great hopes" for an Olympic gold... [after "winning] everything there was to win" in 1971, including beating the then-world champion from Holland three times out of four... races... in... [NZ, but] crashed in a warm-up race, breaking his shoulder and missing the medal race[– continues]... to maintain his innocence after two trials. The first resulted in a hung jury... [His counsel had] asked for continued name suppression... [because, with his] high profile in sport, his family would be affected. [However, the prosecutor] said that as [the offender] did not recognise his offending, [the offender] was now asking the court for mercy... [N]ame suppression was not appropriate because if [the offender] had not offended, the matter would not have arisen. [The judge said the offender] had no previous convictions and it was not often someone with his background appeared for this type of offending[, then]... said four years' jail was the appropriate sentence after having weighed up all matters in this historical offending... "You are not now the [person] that you were,"...

One of N[Z] yachting's golden boys... yesterday... confessed to child-sex offences... involving a girl between 12 and 16... between February 1992 and October 1993... It was an ignominious fall for... the... 36-year-old drainlayer... who... had... three world titles... was part of the N[Z] team which won the Admiral's Cup 10 years ago... and sailed with Sir Peter Blake on Lion N[Z] to win the round-the-world race... [The 36-year-old also] hit the headlines two years ago when, driving a Team N[Z] chase boat, it] helped to pull the crew of OneA[US] out of the sea off San Diego when their yacht sank. [The yachtie] had a minor role in N[Z]'s campaign, but sailed as 17th [person] on Black Magic in the final race of the America's Cup – his 150kg frame helped to stabilise the boat in windy weather. The N[Z] yachting fraternity were not shocked by yesterday's news – it was more a case of dreading the day when it became public. Many sailors were concerned it would be seen as a slur against Team N[Z], which is preparing to defend the Auld Mug...

[The disgraced yachtie, who] sailed... on Lion N[Z] to finish second in the 1985-86 the round-the-world race... has been sentenced to jail for two years and nine months for sexually abusing a retarded underage girl... His lawyer... said the accused's sexual relationship with the girl began when [the girl] was 14 and continued until last year when... the girl[, who has]... a mental age of about nine... turned 19... The 36-year-old... had shown the girl pornographic pictures before persuading her to perform indecencies... [T]he accused was "basically a very decent human being" who now acknowledged that the girl's age and limited mental capacity made her unable to give informed consent... [The yachtie's] overwhelming obsession with pornography[, which]... was well documented in yachting circles... had led to his offending, which was discovered by the girl's family. As a

result his wife and... 15-month-old... son had left him, his home and business had been sold and [the yachtie] was in a poor financial position. However, [the yachtie] offered to pay reparation to the complainant to show his genuine remorse. [The lawyer said his client's] yachting career was over. "His name... is just worthless at the moment."

...Sexual abuse of intellectually disabled people may be being covered up by organisations caring for them, says the Hamilton West MP, [who]... is launching an investigation into the matter after being involved in several cases and hearing reports of others. But police and providers of services to the intellectually disabled say his concern is ill-founded because organisations have adopted appropriate responses for dealing with allegations of abuse... Police confirmed they were investigating an allegation of an intellectually disabled [patient] in a Hamilton hostel abusing a younger IHC client, but this incident is believed to be separate from the matter [the MP] was working on. The head of the police sexual abuse team... said the [patient]'s intellectual abilities were being assessed and [it] would be charged and appear in court if that was appropriate.

...A former IHC worker has appeared in court on charges alleging [it] sodomised handicapped boys in his care... [The accused, now] aged 34, is alleged to have submitted two teenagers to the indecencies at a Wanganui residential home between 1984 and 1986. The boys, aged 16 at the time, had a mental age of nine... [T]he alleged offen[der]... had not worked for the IHC since 1987 and was now a nurse aid in a... geriatric hospital.

...I[ntellectually] handicapped children will do almost anything for you. That's part of their charm, what makes them so lovable. It's also what makes them so vulnerable. Particularly if a paedophile is left to care for them. What easier target could there be? After all, their disabilities are such they may not know right from wrong. And for those who do, language difficulties often mean they can't tell. Could anything be worse? Yes. What if management was warned eight years earlier but did nothing – didn't investigate, didn't note the complaints and treated those voicing them as tel'tales? That's what happened in the case of... a caregiver... now serving a jail sentence of two years and four months for abusing three young boys, one an autistic [8-year-old. The 34-year-old's] unmasking has left parents of handicapped children who came into contact with him wondering whether their children, too, are victims... In a bizarre twist to the case... the father of two of the boys – spent 14 months in jail after being wrongly convicted of sexually molesting them... As nightmarish as that scenario is, some parents say it was able to happen because IHC deflects rather than acts on criticism... During the late 1980s... a Dunedin schoolteacher... worked for IHC at a home managed by... [the offender] while putting herself through college... Concerned by his taunting of patients and habit of pressing himself against her, [the student] and a colleague complained several times. They thought the police should be called after they found a patient one morning with bruises resembling finger and thumb marks on her... inner thigh. The patient told them "a bad [guy]... hurt her with a stick." [The manager] was the only staff member on duty overnight. Police weren't called and there is no mention in IHC files of these complaints despite it being policy to record them... A comment by an IHC manager that privacy considerations prevented further probing infuriates parents who say once again the obligation to provide patients with safe quality care has taken a back seat... [The offender joined IHC] in 1985 with endorsements from hospitals here and in A[US] and since leaving in 1989 – while under investigation on other matters – taught at two schools on the North Shore... But... wasn't it reasonable to assume IHC, which employed him again a few years ago, had checked his suitability? ...No one seems to have checked [his] IHC file which contained a note saying [the caregiver] was not to be hired without speaking to the west Auckland branch manager... The branch manager who made the note had left IHC... [anyway! The schoolteacher says of her IHC working days:] "There are so many things that went on... We were expected to... show casuals arriving for sole-charge overnight shifts how to give an injection... using an orange... [then] go home and not worry [that] this is a person's life we are talking about. Sometimes (a diabetic patient) would have bruises because they had jammed it into her stomach or used an old needle... I wouldn't give to IHC because some... [staff] they hire are just not interested in helping people." The *Sunday Star-Times* has interviewed more than half a dozen parents... [Two mothers] say in their view IHC has become business-oriented and is not the caring organisation it once was. They paint a picture of an organisation which lacks accountability, has a top-heavy and inefficient management structure and gives little support to parents whose fundraising contributes to the \$110 million a year IHC receives in benefits and donations... "Worse still... IHC management... seem determined to spend an unwarranted amount of time and resources trying to paint a picture of a caring organisation where everything is rosy." ..."To my mind", says... a solo-parent whose step-daughter (25) is in fulltime IHC care, "...parents who put their kid in IHC care know they have failed in being able to look after them. So they go to IHC in a very vulnerable position... All IHC parents are desperate and they fall into two categories: Those who fight for the kids and the other half who are so grateful someone is looking after a mistake of theirs." His fighting... resulted in ACC paying for counselling for his daughter caused by the behaviour of other patients [his daughter] is exposed to, including... a boy... who only wants to masturbate... Some [parents] have brought their children home... Although it meant [her husband] had to retire early, [one mum brought her son (25)] home after 20 years in IHC care... They had been worried for sometime but the decision to bring [their son] home was made last year when [the mother] attended an outing to be told her son had been left at the IHC home as punishment for toileting problems. [The mother found her son] in the care of another patient. "I was appalled..." [Her son was] toilet trained and would not have been wetting himself unless upset, but rather than try to discover the cause [her son] was being punished... "I feel they have forgotten what they are there for – the care of people who can't care for themselves."

...PICTURE this. You are in a courtroom lobby, standing just metres away from [the perso]n who sexually molested your children for three years. Not only that, but you'd been wrongfully convicted of the abuse and sentenced to six years in jail... And you'd just found out [the person]'s been regularly assaulting your children while you were behind bars. That's what happened this month when Michael Smith (36) went to the North Shore District Court to watch[the] paedophile... jailed. "People have asked me if I wanted to kill him... But I didn't. If [that person] died it would be too easy for him. I wanted him to go to jail... to go through the absolute hell I went through. I am just so angry at him." Michael's lawyer... is preparing a compensation claim for the wrongful imprisonment, but says establishing the amount is difficult. "We are looking at a per day figure for the 440 days... spent in jail. How do you compensate someone for those lost months, for being labelled a child molester and for the best part of three years being deprived of your children?" Michael was paid \$7500 in damages after the Corrections Department kept him inside for one day later than necessary when the Appeal Court quashed the convictions in October 1996 after his son admitted his father had not abused him at all... [D]uring a snap debate in Parliament on Tuesday, [the]... Justice Minister... told Labour[']s Justice spokesperson... the father did not qualify for compensation because his case did not involve "a free pardon" or reference back to the Appeal Court by the Governor General. But [the lawyer], who acted for Michael on appeal but not at his trial, said the compensation claim would be filed this week. "Not only is there an appearance of bad faith on the part of the police (who failed to pass on to the defence before the trial that [the] son had retracted his abuse allegation) but the government has relaxed the laws of evidence and this makes it easier to get convictions for child abuse." A civil claim has also been filed against the C[YFS], the police and the family therapist who counselled [the] son for more than a year before [the son] named his father as his abuser. Michael... is not seeking compensation only for himself, but for his family who have suffered just as much. His parents mortgaged their home to raise \$50,000 towards his appeal... Since his release, Michael and his partner... whom [Michael] met in February 1995, have been living together. The boys are very much part of their lives. [The partner]... never doubted Michael's innocence, from the time [Michael] told her of the charges against him. In hindsight, [the partner]... kicks herself for her naive faith in the justice system; her belief that the truth would come out at the trial. For Michael, too, trust has been destroyed. "I don't trust anyone. I don't go near [other people's] kids. I used to be the class idiot at kids' parties, running around picking them up... now I'll be walking down a quiet street and a boy will walk towards me and I have this fear [it]ll claim I've touched him." Michael says since his release, no one has apologised[, confirmed his innocence or]... acknowledged the hell [the 36-year-old] has been through. And someone, [Michael] says, should have to pay for that. ● Michael's name has been changed to prevent identifying his sons.

...[‘an Aucklander compensated for wrongful imprisonment on child abuse charges would have received \$200,000 less under new Government guidelines. The Minister of Justice confirmed yesterday that the cabinet had granted the Auckland \$570,000, as well as announcing that a new policy would limit future awards for non-pecuniary losses in similar cases. Future payments to people wrongly convicted will now be set in three stages. As well as \$100,000 for each year in jail, the person concerned will receive an average of \$100,000 as recognition of suffering. Loss of income will be considered on top of that. In the case of the Aucklander, it received \$400,000 compensation and about \$170,000 in costs.’ By the way, ‘since ACC developed a special sex-abuse unit in 1992, it has accepted over 47,000 victim compensation claims. Around 80% of these were from adults who were sexually abused as children (49% of those claims accepted were for rape). Hundreds of elderly survivors – including 100 gals a year in the Auckland region aged over 65 – are now telling of the abuse they once suffered. Latest ACC figures showed that 74% of the abusers were Europeans.’ However, ‘NZ guys can’t receive compensation for abuse from gals because the law doesn’t recognise sex abuse by gals on guys’ (although that policy may soon change – r:p1271, ln59)!

...‘Lump-sum payments for sexual abuse victims were still available under ACC laws at the time of the Christchurch creche case and it’s understood more than \$500,000 was paid out to 60 claimants, with some families receiving up to \$50,000 for multiple claims relating to the charges.’]

...The spotlight... was... on the convicted Christchurch childcare sex abuser... [during] last night’s 20/20 television feature... The programme claimed a... detective... who played a leading role in the case... was in psychological trouble at the time of the inquiry and that one of the Crown’s child witnesses had confessed to lying to the court... [‘The child’s parents said, “We were told by experts to believe our child. We believed our child then and we believe it now when our child tells us it had lied.”’ In addition, the] programme alleged that[the] detective... propositioned a mother of one of the complainants and had relationships with two other mothers of complainants... The... programme also questioned the impartiality of two jury members. The Solicitor-General is believed to be looking into the allegation.

...The TV3 documentary that raised doubts about the conviction of[a] Christchurch childcare worker... has prompted a complaint to the Broadcasting Standards Authority... [by an] Auckland child advocacy group, Children’s Agenda... [T]he... organisation was concerned about the hysteria caused by the documentary... [T]he executive producer of 20/20 said the programme had evaluated the criminal justice system, and if it was found wanting, that was not the fault of the programme.

...Is the case against... [the Christchurch childcare worker] a miscarriage of justice? ...The child came home from day care and said, “[The guy] showed me his penis.” The alarmed parent called other parents who had recently attended a seminar on ritual sexual abuse, so they knew what to look for. Authorities were called in, and within months a [guy] worker at the centre was arrested on numerous charges, including forcing children to eat faeces and urine, tying them up or locking them in cupboards and taking them to secret locations for games of naked dancing and worse. The abuse had allegedly gone unnoticed for years, before the first child’s comment sparked any fears. The worker became a monster who had terrorised the children in his care, and parents were warned that [the worker] might be merely the beginning of a much wider circle of abuse, through all levels of society. Additional charges were considered against [gal] co-workers at the centre. The worker was not... at the Christchurch Civic Childcare Centre, but... in San Diego[. His] case became one of the most notorious in a rash of ritual abuse cases that flared across the U[S] in the late 1980s and early 1990s. [The Christchurch worker] came under suspicion when a child went home and mentioned “[the Caucasian worker’s] black penis.” The inquiry subsequently unearthed similar allegations of cages, sex-games and secret outings. [The Christchurch worker] is nearly... through a 10-year prison term... But there are mounting doubts as to whether the abuse happened at all or whether the... investigators, determined to “believe the children” at all costs, went down a path unwittingly fabricated by worried parents and suggestive children... In the U[S], ritual and outrageous abuse seemingly became rife... and an industry grew up to identify and support the victims... A jury eventually acquitted [the San Diego worker], and more than a dozen similar high-profile cases involving bizarre child abuse in day-care centres have been overturned by [US] appeal courts since 1990, usually because the children’s evidence was found to be unreliable. Since [the Christchurch worker] was convicted... his supporters have argued that his case marked N[Z]’s introduction to the same hysteria about child abuse, with the same false conclusions... As they see it, [the Christchurch worker] became a target for well-meaning, liberal parents who lost all sense of perspective after they became convinced that abuse was a dirty secret in respectable society that must be outted. In their conviction... they came to believe that [the Christchurch worker] was capable of unspeakable horrors and, to the wider Christchurch public, the gay, flamboyant [childcare worker] fitted the role perfectly... [H]is... supporters... want a retrial, or preferably an outright pardon. They hope that last week’s revelations on TV3’s 20/20 will finally lead to such an outcome... Police this week announced an inquiry into their handling of the case. But [his] supporters want a much wider review. Among their concerns, they cite: • The... sparking of allegations by a sexual-abuse counsellor who has made similar, unproven, allegations elsewhere... • Repeated and allegedly leading interviews of children by Social Welfare investigators. • The quality of the evidence on which four [gal] creche workers were originally charged, before the case against them was dropped. • The withholding of the most extreme evidence from the jury that heard the case. • The lack of any corroborating evidence or unsolicited complaints. So far, the... conviction has stood impregnable to the doubts. The Court of Appeal upheld the conviction in 1994 and the cabinet in 1995 rejected a call for an inquiry... In Christchurch, the case has lost none of its emotional grip. The children concerned are now approaching their teens, but few of the parents have let go of the trauma. To them, the case remains one of the city’s most infamous, and they say that more is yet to be exposed. To others, it is infamous for altogether different reasons... [■ Some of the gal] creche workers accused by some of those confused toddlers of having... exposed their genitals to them in Satanic ritual circles... can no longer go near... any children, or show them affection. [However, the] effect has multiplied like ripples spread from a flung stone... Many of the bizarre fairytales told by the creche children... originated in being cleaned up by [the guy worker] after toilet “accidents”, and having their nappies changed. I... am considered a dab hand at producing a neatly pinned nappy. But there’s no way I would ever touch a naked child again, thanks to the perpetrators of the creche witch-hunt. Other [guys] have told me their attitudes have changed in the same way.

...[‘JUSTICE GONE CRAZY On the morning of May 4, 1991, jurors in the child sex case of Florida v. a 15-year-old boy announced that they’d reached a verdict. After more than three months of trial and scores of witnesses, judgment time had arrived. Sitting in a holding room, the 15-year-old’s heart was pounding. A guilty verdict could mean spending the rest of his life behind bars. It had been one of the longest, most expensive criminal trials in Dade County history. It had everything: lurid allegations of child sex abuse, medical evidence that seemed to buttress the charges and a confession by the defendant. THE FIRST HINT of trouble came early in 1989, when three-year-old Debbie Smith started behaving abnormally. Debbie was having nightmares about the “Big Bad Wolf” and was afraid to be touched. Debbie was also suddenly afraid of a baby-sitter at her family’s church, and refused to go to Sunday School. When Debbie’s mother sought advice from the church, a minister urged her to contact a parishioner and state-licensed psychologist (who had seen only one alleged victim of sex abuse under the age of five before). When the psychologist questioned Debbie, the child did not mention anything about having been abused. Nevertheless, the psychologist suspected Debbie had been. Under Florida law, anyone who sees children professionally and suspects abuse must notify authorities. The psychologist referred the case to Florida’s Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. A caseworker interviewed Debbie and concluded that the case was unfounded. The fear of the Big Bad Wolf may have been triggered by a video tape of “Little Red Riding Hood,” which Debbie’s parents had played at home. A forensic interviewer in the state attorney’s office also failed to elicit any allegation of sexual abuse. But the inexperienced psychologist still suspected that the 15-year-old baby-sitter had somehow abused the child. During months of therapy sessions, the psychologist encouraged Debbie to disclose if anyone had done terrible things to her and what those things were. Eight weeks into the sessions, Debbie told the psychologist that the baby-sitter had touched her. Debbie was taken to hospital, where an examination appeared to confirm sexual assault. Meanwhile, other mothers had been questioning their kids, and claims of further crimes emerged. One five-year-old girl alleged that the baby-sitter had urinated in her mouth and forced her to eat faeces. A five-year-old boy said that the baby-sitter had flown him to NZ and abused him. A

six-year-old said that himself and his brother had watched a mother give birth. The baby-sitter, the boy claimed, had forced him to eat the infant's arm at the church. The distraught parents spoke to the psychologist, who referred them to therapists who, like her, encouraged the children to provide more details. In July, Debbie's mother called the police, and the case was assigned to a 27-year-old officer who was new to sex-crime cases and was also new to the business of questioning kids. The detective let the therapists dictate the direction of the inquiry. For months, the therapists interviewed the kids and reported to the detective. The alleged crimes became ever more bizarre. One therapist, for example, reported that a five-year-old "has described events where adults were costumed and doing things like killing babies, chopping up animals." The therapist believed that ritualistic activities were actually taking place. THE baby-sitter's family were only vaguely aware of the storm clouds gathering around them. His father had had a distinguished career in the foreign ministry of the Netherlands Antilles before moving to Miami with his wife and their two children. Shortly after 10.30 a.m. on August 28, 1989, the detective and three other police officers arrived at the baby-sitter's home. They wanted to talk to the baby-sitter and search his room for pornographic pictures. His father was shocked by the request, but knew that his son wouldn't collect pornography. "No problem." A slender youth who played football and loved computers, the baby-sitter was getting ready for work. The detective took him outside. Although the detective later denied it at the trial, the baby-sitter testified that the detective told him, "Before I saw you, I knew you were guilty. But now I definitely know you're guilty." The search turned up nothing unusual, but the police still took the baby-sitter to the station. For 40 minutes, the detective asked about church, school and friends. Then, after a break, the parents agreed to remain outside, and the detective stepped up the pace. "Did you do it?" the detective demanded. Angry and bewildered, the baby-sitter denied the accusations, and claimed not to even know Debbie. A juvenile diabetic, the baby-sitter needed regular meals and two shots of insulin every day. Without them, the baby-sitter could suffer from hypoglycaemia. His parents had told this to the detective, who stopped the questioning several times for the baby-sitter to eat. But the baby-sitter had eaten no more than a bite of a sandwich in nearly seven hours when, at 2.30, the baby-sitter admitted guilt. "It just happened. Now can I go home?" The baby-sitter always carried a gluco-meter to measure blood sugar levels. Below 70 was cause for concern. During the questioning, his blood sugar level had plummeted to 50. Although not required by local police policy, detectives elsewhere typically tape a confession, or get a stenographer to take down the suspect's words and present them for his signature. The Dade County detective did neither, and even destroyed his notes without showing them to anyone. "These are things that you absolutely do not do in these cases," says a former Miami Police Chief who calls the detective's performance "inept, incompetent." When his parents returned to the room, the baby-sitter said, "I didn't do it, but they made me say I did." However, the baby-sitter was booked on molestation charges and sent to the Juvenile Detention Centre. A court-appointed psychologist examined him and reported that the baby-sitter exhibited none of the characteristics typically found in adolescent sex offenders. This psychologist concluded that the baby-sitter posed no risk of flight and recommended that the boy be kept under house arrest while awaiting trial, and be tried as a juvenile. Nevertheless, the prosecutors decided to try the baby-sitter as an adult. His name could now be used by the media. The floodgates of publicity opened wide. On November 8, 1989, a grand jury indicted the baby-sitter on eight counts of sexually abusing three girls. At a bail hearing, the prosecution claimed the state had evidence that the accused abused 17 children. The judge denied bail. The church's lawyer had been conducting an independent investigation for the church's insurance company. His team interviewed 600 parishioners and examined the church building. This was a busy church, with people passing to and fro all the time. There were windows between the nursery and crib rooms, allowing a clear view of what was happening. No-one remembered anything that might have led them to suspect abuse. At the conclusion of his probe, the lawyer was convinced they were dealing with an epidemic of false charges. Many of the allegations were simply not credible. Some children claimed the baby-sitter's family had driven them various places in a red truck. The family didn't own such a vehicle. One five-year-old boy claimed to have donned his Superman uniform to fly through a window and rescue his sister from the baby-sitter's clutches. Meanwhile, the family's lawyer got a call from the head of an organisation called Justice for Sexually Abused Children. The head apparently believed there was a Satanic cult at work and that others – most likely the entire family – were involved in an international child-pornography ring. The lawyer shook his head in disbelief. However, the head found a reporter/anchor for a TV station to broadcast her message. In January, the two of them visited the agent who handled pornography cases for the FBI's Miami office. The FBI rarely got involved in a child sex case like the baby-sitter's unless asked, and neither the Metro-Dade police nor the state attorney's office had done so. Although the police had turned up nothing at the baby-sitter's home, the two amateur investigators told Miami's FBI agent that some of the children claimed they'd been photographed or video-taped while engaged in heinous acts. The films may have been transported "interstate or internationally," and that was within FBI jurisdiction. On January 17, 1990, the FBI opened the case and assigned it to the Miami agent. The media focus on the baby-sitter's family sharpened. A helicopter with a searchlight flew over their house at night. In one report on television, an unidentified father told that his two sons had been forced to perform oral sex on the baby-sitter's father. Children were saying that the baby-sitter's mother, too, had played sex games with them. The family were stunned by the dirty rain of unsupported charges now descending on them. Engaged in a ratings war, Miami's TV stations took full advantage of the case. A second bail request was denied, even though the baby-sitter's uncle, a retired justice of the Connecticut Supreme Court, had said that the baby-sitter could go to his home, and always wear an electronic ankle bracelet that revealed his whereabouts. After finding no evidence to substantiate the pornography allegations, the FBI closed its case. The charges being handled by the state attorney's office, however, would remain. The children whose allegations were the basis for the criminal charges had already been questioned by parents, police and therapists who would testify for the state. Nevertheless, the Judge refused to allow the defence lawyers to cross-examine the children, ruling that it would be too traumatic for them. The defence lawyers asked if they could hire a therapist to interrogate the children on closed-circuit TV. The judge said no again. Defence lawyers knew the prosecutors were going to put therapists on the stand who would testify that they believed their patients had been abused. But the judge ruled that the opinion of the caseworker who'd examined Debbie Smith and concluded that no abuse had occurred – was inadmissible because the caseworker was not an expert. The defence lawyers feared they'd lost the case before the trial began, but the baby-sitter remained positive – telephoning his parents every night and reading his Bible, which filled him with confidence. At the last moment, the charges were reduced to six counts of sexual battery against two girls and one count of lewd and lascivious assault. Allegations from a third child – who insisted upon seeing someone turn into a witch and fly – were dropped. THE TRIAL finally began and, after 48 days, the state rested its case. The defence lawyers believed that in the parents' justified alarm, fears had become facts. On the witness stand some parents conceded that they had shared information. One mother even admitted that, after hearing a grisly allegation on TV, the mother had asked her daughter whether that had ever happened to her and received confirmation immediately. The defence cross-examined the original psychologist. Studying the transcripts of the inexperienced but state-licensed psychologist's interviews with Debbie exposed a pattern. To the defence, it was clear that the psychologist had been asking leading questions. The defence also called on experts who testified that young children could be conditioned to make false allegations – which they would later believe to be true – if an "air of accusation" was created. The expert described a study in which children, after being interviewed several times, supplied details about an event that had never occurred. "Over time, they became more confident and added more detail." A doctor testified that: "Emotions have an infectious quality, and children are suggestible." When questioned about the psychologist's tapes, the doctor exclaimed, "This is not therapy. This is a brain-washing process from the word go." The defence set out to refute the medical evidence. One by one, the defence established that the doctors who had examined the children were not specialists in paediatric gynaecology. By contrast, the defence called an authority in the field and a frequent consultant with prosecutors in child abuse cases. Based on his study of the photographs and records, the examinations of the children showed "no physical evidence of sexual abuse." On at least four occasions the judge called the baby-sitter, his parents and lawyers into his chamber to make sure the defendant understood what a guilty verdict would mean: prison. Others pointed out that the baby-sitter would be subject to rape, brutality, even death at the hands of other inmates. The prosecutors offered a plea bargain. If the baby-sitter would confess his crimes, the baby-sitter would go to a treatment facility for sexual offenders, not prison. Then the baby-sitter would be set free. The baby-sitter looked at his mother as tears streamed down her cheeks. "No. I'm not guilty." On May 3, 1991, the jurors retired to deliberate the defendant's fate. When the State Attorney had arrived and the jury had filed in, the

courtroom grew quiet. To each and every count the clerk pronounced an unequivocal "Not Guilty." "The jury has spoken, and we accept its verdict," the State Attorney said. "There was no credible evidence of any sexual abuse," concludes a psychology professor. "The kids initially had *nothing* to say about abuse. Only with the work of therapists over a number of months and constant pressure from parents did any allegations emerge. Then you had an ambitious state attorney who wanted to make a name for herself." The baby-sitter's family applied to the Judge to certify the costs they incurred during the trial so they could be reimbursed. Even though Florida law required it, the judge refused, relenting only when an appellate court ordered him to. CITING HER RECORD in combating child abuse, and saying, "Florida's state attorney has truly put people first," the US President nominated her to be the Attorney General. When the baby-sitter's father heard this, the father sent a letter to the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee; in it the father charged that the state attorney had "abused my son by her actions and robbed him of one year, eight months and one week of his life." No-one called him about it. No senator questioned the state attorney about the case, and the new Attorney General of the US was confirmed by a vote of 98 to 0. The baby-sitter's family moved to Holland. During a recent interview, the boy reflected with quiet anger on his long ordeal: "In my case, the phrase 'Innocent until proven guilty' was turned around."]

"...Did you ever get your hand caught in a mousetrap and have to go to a hospital to have it removed?" one of the scientists asked [the little boy]. "Think hard. Did that ever happen to you?" "No," [the boy] replied. "I've never been to the hospital." A week later, the scientist asked [the boy] the same question. "Yes," [the boy] responded this time. "I cried." In week three... the researcher asked about the mousetrap incident... [once] more... "Did that ever happen to you?" "Yes... My mum went to the hospital with me." By week 11, [the boy] was describing the trip to the hospital in the family van with his parents and brother... point[ing] to his finger where the doctor had applied a bandage... and... describ[ing] the location of the mousetrap by a pile of fireplace wood in the basement. "My brother pushed me into the mousetrap... It happened yesterday." ...[the boy] had never caught his hand in a mousetrap. And there was certainly no trip to a hospital to have a trap removed, his parents assured the researchers who were quizzing pre-schoolers about memorable events... It was time to debrief [the boy] and explain that the mousetrap incident was all in his head. But [the boy] insisted it had happened... "...we don't have a fireplace in our house," his mother reminded him... [The boy's] story was related to researchers gathered for the annual meeting of the Cognitive Neuroscience Society. His case was part of a session on the "memory wars" – disputes about supposed "recovered memories" by adults of long-forgotten sexual abuse in childhood. Similar disputes occur about the reliability of testimony from children who report sexual abuse allegations to investigators or counsellors. No one doubts that many children are sexually abused. And at least some cases of "recovered memory" of past abuse appear to be well confirmed by independent evidence. But in many instances those accused of such abuse vehemently deny the alleged victim's claims. Sometimes the accused is innocent. Yet the accuser may not be intentionally lying. It is indeed possible, modern neuroscientific studies show, to implant "false" memories that are as vivid, or more so, than the traces left by real events. Thus children... can recount various experiences that never really happened... In fact, panels of judges, psychologists, paediatricians or social workers can view videos of pre-schooler testimony and be completely fooled[, a researcher]... of Cornell University told the neuroscience meeting... Such observers are more likely to guess wrong than right about whether a child is detailing a real event. "You could toss a coin and you'd do better,"... Scientists have known for years that people can be tricked into remembering something that didn't really occur, said[a] psychologist... of Harvard University... [E]xperiments conducted over several years on pre-schoolers... showed how trivial suggestions could induce elaborate memories of imaginary events... In the first round of questioning, fewer than 10[%] of the children would say they had in fact experienced one of the fictitious events. But the questioning alone seemed to instil memories that were recalled during follow-up sessions. After several weeks of repetitive questioning, more than half of three and four-year-olds eventually said they had experienced some of the imaginary events. Some of the children... probably said yes just to please the investigators. But other checks suggest that more than a quarter of the children gave false answers that they genuinely believed. And some were very resistant to attempts to explain they never really dropped watermelons from a balloon. While the possibility of firmly believed yet false memories is now well established, it's still unclear how these findings related to real-life problems, such as court cases... And even if the laboratory findings do apply to real-world memory, they won't easily resolve legal disputes. "Cognitive neuroscience doesn't really have the tools to judge in any particular case whether a memory is accurate or inaccurate,"... Research... published last year in the journal *Neuron* showed a slightly greater activity in a small area near the front of the brain during false recognition, but not an adequate difference to use as a lie-detector test... But the research so far, and new studies under way, do have the potential of explaining a lot more about how false memories fool the brain into holding inaccurate beliefs.

...three Auckland medical school researchers... surveyed 69 families where an allegation... of... sexual[abuse]... had been made on the basis of recovered memories, and where the allegation was said to be false by the accused (usually parents) or by other family members. Similar studies have been conducted in Britain and the U[S]. Nearly all of the accusations in the... studies were made between 1989 and 1994. In all three countries many of the families reported they had never been told the specific nature of the accusations... About half the accusers in all three countries claimed they could remember abuse starting before they were five, and 22[% of the NZ] accusers claim memories of abuse before three. Where this information was known, more than 90[% of the NZ] families indicated the allegations were made with the involvement of counselling or therapy... In all three surveys the accusers appeared to be vulnerable people in distress. Many of them were in psychotherapy for unrelated issues when memories of sexual abuse surfaced. Some of the accusers have retracted part or all of their allegations...

FRESH allegations of sex abuse have been made against [the Christchurch creche worker], just days before a bid will be made to have him freed from his 10-year jail sentence. The police will decide this week whether they will pursue the new allegations made last Thursday by a [mother] who says her two children were sexually abused during a two-year relationship [the mother had with the worker] in the late 1980s. Her children were interviewed by detectives during the sex abuse investigation at the... Civic Childcare Centre in the early 1990s. They were then aged five and seven. On that occasion they did not disclose anything. However, since a deluge of publicity about the creche case last week, the children... had spoken of alleged incidents involving [their mother's ex]... The mother... hopes [her ex] will not be pardoned. "I know TV is making him out to be a nice guy but [it isn't true]. We got together at a time when I was down, but now I really wish I hadn't,"... [the mother] said. Legal experts say there would be nothing to stop police investigating and charging [her ex] if they had enough evidence.

...Police have been ordered to pay \$25,000 costs to a teacher acquitted on charges of sexually molesting[girl] pupils, because the investigation was inadequate. [The] judge... said in the Wellington District Court yesterday that police had been wrong to accept general allegations of sexual abuse of three pupils against the Hutt Valley teacher and not investigate further. The costs awarded... were higher than normal to remind police of the need for proper investigations to be done... [In related news, p]olice in mufti and community volunteers have started patrolling Otahuhu and Papatoetoe to protect children from [people] trying to entice them into their car... Six pupils aged from 5 to 11 were approached near schools and reserves in the neighbouring South Auckland suburbs last month... The first abduction attempt happened... when two Maori [guys] approached a 5-year-old boy... Four days later, two Maori [guys] asked an 8-year-old girl playing in Seaside Park... if [the girl] wanted lollies and a lift home. [The girl] threw bark at them and ran to her house. The latest reported incident was on... the final day of last term... [A] Detective Constable... said the [suspects] had frightened the children and seemed to have a clear motive... The police[also] want caregivers to accompany their children between home and school and have asked schools to warn their pupils... The principal of Papatoetoe Central School... said pupils had been told... "We don't want to create mass hysteria but unfortunately there are some very dangerous and crazy individuals out there."

...A South Auckland mother is alarmed that detectives are too busy to interview her 9-year-old son, who was approached by a [guy] fitting the description of a school stalker... [H]er son was approached outside Puhinui School, Papatoetoe, on Thursday afternoon by a Maori... in his 30s who

offered the boy sweets in return for a lift home. The principal was forced to leave a message with police on an answer phone and calls to the Otahuhu police station were fruitless... [The mother] was told to complain to her MP about the lack of police... in South Auckland. [The mother contacted a] Labour MP... which resulted in a call from police saying her son would be interviewed that day. "But then I got another call and was told that police are dealing with an aggravated robbery, a body in a tip and a rape. My child is... not important enough." [The MP] intends to lodge a complaint with the Minister of Police.

...A Christchurch school-girl, kidnapped and raped by a dangerous repeat offender... [who] was on bail on similar charges, is lucky to be alive, her parents say. "I can only describe her as a survivor," her mother said. The 15-year-old... was at the sentencing of her attacker yesterday before sitting her first school certificate examination. Her parents are angry that [the 31-year-old offender] was at large on the... night... their daughter... [was] attacked. Against strenuous police opposition, [the offender had been granted] bail... The Waimakariri MP... said... "There needs to be a wake-up call to our judges and our bail system. When police have records... and... oppose bail, judges must err in favour of the police submissions."

...The mother of an 11-year-old rape victim believes "the Devil himself" crept into her Manurewa house in the dead of night this week [to steal] her daughter's innocence. The attacker slashed the stomach of the girl's father when the parents confronted him in the hallway. Police fear the intruder... could strike again... [They] were almost certain the same [person] was responsible for an incident at a nearby home five weeks ago. In that case, a [guy] crept into the bedroom of a 14-year-old girl but fled when other people in the house disturbed him... [P]olice are now looking at other cases in the area to see if the attacker had struck elsewhere. They are still waiting for DNA evidence. "We don't want to create hysteria, but by the same token we are treating it very, very seriously." ...a... Detective Sergeant... warned families in the area to lock windows at night... The Manurewa community is still recovering from the activities of... a ruthless... sex fiend... [whose] 11-year reign of terror... ended in 1994... [The sex fiend is now] serving a 25-year jail term... The new attacker is described as a Maori in his late 20s... with long black wavy hair in a ponytail.

...[P]OLICE are hunting the person who sold to a TV network video footage of an All Black staggering after a night out. The amateur camera-operator, a convicted child sex offender and fraudster, is wanted by cops after it launched a hate campaign against a Queenstown real estate agent. The agent refused to rent him a windowless building because it suspected his motives. The offender is known to have at least 24 false identities. Less than 4 1/2 years ago the offender was jailed for 4 1/2 years after admitting 20 sex offences against boys aged six to 17. The sentencing judge said the offender had the longest list of convictions it had seen for someone of his age. The then 24-year-old had 185 convictions in addition to the sex charges. A Queenstown police sergeant said: "We are very keen to get a hold of this offender. We're confident it hasn't left the country. We're truly thankful the real estate agent smelt a rat."

...A mother called off a photo shoot after seeing a photographer push her daughter's skirt to her knickerline. The mother had grown uneasy during the shoot because her two daughters... - aged 9 and 11 - were wearing transparent clothing and make-up. But [the mother] was reluctant to intervene because there was a contract stipulating that no erotic photographs would be taken and that the shots would be "heads and shoulders" only. The photographer... yesterday pleaded not guilty to performing an indecent act on each of the girls and sexually assaulting one of them... In evidence handed to the court yesterday, the girls' father said [the photographer] approached him and one of his daughters in a Jervois Rd cafe and [expressed a desire] to photograph the girl. [The photographer] gave them a business card claiming various credentials, including... [being] a justice of the peace. The girls' mother... [had] agreed to the photo session because it was important to her daughters and... seemed "harmless." ...[the photographer] came to their home on the morning of February 1, but... [the mother] subsequently demanded the negatives... and called the police. [The photographer] told the police the photographs were not indecent or erotic and that the girls had chosen the garments... However... [the police] executed a search warrant on a photography laboratory and found full-body photographs of the girls in underwear and transparent garments. They found portraits of other young girls at [the photographer's] Mt Eden bedsit, some of which depicted girls in revealing clothing or naked. A bag of sex aids, including two penis-shaped dummies, were also found. ['The daughters thought the photographs would lead to modelling careers.' 'The photographer had once convinced the mother of a teenager that in order to further her modelling career, the teenager needed to go with him to Sydney - where it had to share his bed each night and endure being sexually fondled, until neighbours grew suspicious and called the police.'

...a New York paedophile has been sentenced to 15 months in prison on a charge [of] travelling across state lines to have sex with a 13-year-old girl [the paedophile] met over the Internet... [The girl] turned out to be an undercover detective with the St Petersburg Police Department.

... "There are more than 600 advertisements on the Internet... inviting paedophiles from foreign countries to [visit Sri Lanka in order to] enjoy sex with children of any age of their choice safely," the independent *Island* newspaper quoted... the Commissioner of Probation and Child Care Services, as saying... A survey in 1986 showed that 36,000 young boys were in the sex business in the coastal districts... "But today, the number should have gone up many times." Non-commercial child abuse is also on the increase in Sri Lanka... The Government last year passed tough new laws aimed at curbing paedophilia and non-government organisations have been running awareness campaigns to combat the menace.

...Suva police are investigating eight more cases of child abuse in connection with an alleged paedophile racket linked to the Internet. A total of 11 children aged between 11-16 have been identified as victims...

An A[US]n accountant facing 26 counts of indecent assault in Fiji has been assaulted by a prisoner at Suva jail while awaiting trial. [The accountant], aged 40, is accused of being part of an international paedophile ring. [The] Commissioner of Prisons... said that... [the accountant was] taken to hospital for examination... [but] would not reveal the details of the medical examination. [The accountant's] arrest has led the police into an extensive investigation... Those being investigated are mostly expatriate workers, including a diplomat who had left the country, and a prominent media executive... [Incidentally, an AUS]n charged with 91 child sex offences, is being held without bail in Miami pending completion of an application for him to be extradited to A[US]. The paedophile, arrested in Honduras on Wednesday after an A[US]n news crew tracked him down and alerted authorities, is considered to be one of A[US's] most wanted fugitives].

...Philippine immigration authorities yesterday imposed a permanent ban on 24... A[US]ns convicted or charged with child abuse, including two... former Anglican priests... [T]he ban was issued at the request of a non-government support group, the Network Against Sexual Abuse of Children.

...South Pacific police have been warned by A[US] to be on the look-out for... [AUS]n paedophiles who, having been] scared off by increasing exposure in A[US] and Asia, were now moving to the islands. The Child Sex Tourism Act, passed in 1994, targets paedophiles in overseas countries. "This makes it an offence with extra-territorial implications for any A[US]n to commit an offence of a sexual nature... with a child under 16. Anywhere in the world, that person can be tried and imprisoned in A[US] for that offence..." ...Pacific traditions meant that neither the parents nor the authorities wished to talk about the subject. "But it's something we have to bring out in the open because it's growing and not going to go away." Fiji's Police Commissioner... is also... determined to combat this newly exposed type of crime in his country. "It's now a political concern in Fiji. Paedophilia is a new word in the Fijian dictionary. For the first time we hear about this. It's most worrying because... [we're] wondering how many cases there are that we're unaware of." ...[By the way, a] Nobel Prize-winning scientist pleaded guilty yesterday to two counts of child abuse for molesting a 16-year-old boy [the 73-year-old] brought back from a research trip in the South Pacific... [The scientist, who] won the 1976 Nobel Prize for medicine for work on infectious diseases and is on leave from his job as chief of the Laboratory for Central Nervous System Studies at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda... will serve a maximum of one year in jail under a plea agreement... His accuser was one of 56 children, mostly boys... brought back from Micronesia to live with him... according to the FBI... Published journals of his research trips to the South Pacific contain many passages documenting local sexual customs, especially sexual relations between [adults and] boys...

The N[Z] Listener has been accused by the Minister of Social Welfare... of running "creepy and disgusting" child sexual abuse television advertisements for commercial gain. [The minister] has joined Rape Crisis in calling on the *Listener* to pull the advertisement, which shows the

voice-over of a[n adult] and a little girl in a caravan discussing “our little secret.” [The minister] said the only message contained in the advertisement was showing paedophiles how to victimise children. “It shows a complete lack of social responsibility on the magazine’s part...” The chief executive of the *Listener*... said the advertisements... were off screen for now “but we will be running them again.” ...the advertisement was part of a series dealing with themes and issues that affected the lives of N[Z]ers – political incompetence... recreational drugs abuse... and sexual abuse... A spokes[person] for Rape Crisis... said the group had received numerous complaints, including “one [from a person] who rang us and said [it] had vomited after seeing the ad.” Rape Crisis has laid a complaint with the Advertising Standards Complaints Board.

...We collect the rape victim in the morning and take her to the Starship Children’s Hospital so... the... 12-year-old... can be checked to see [if the girl] has been damaged or has picked up any diseases. “Will it hurt?” the girl asks. [The girl] looks scared and lost but... goes through the trauma for nothing. The appointment falls through because a [guy] doctor turns up to carry out the examination – the girl cannot face a [guy] doctor. The day has been complicated further because a new place of safety must be found for the girl. [The girl] was raped by a stranger but when Social Welfare looked into her case they found physical abuse in the home and took her into care. But [the girl] is very disturbed since the rape and has been acting inappropriately at the family home, walking naked into the boys’ room. “We need to shift her,” says... [the] social worker... The frustrations of the day continue as [the social worker] searches fruitlessly for a new place for the girl to live. Beds for children like her are scarce. Sometimes social workers travel all over Auckland to find somewhere for them to go. “That’s just adding to the disruption for the poor kid,”... It takes hours to find a new family home but eventually [the social worker] succeeds. Late in the afternoon we visit an intellectually handicapped family living in the community... [A] mother and three grown boys, who had all been raped and sodomised for years by relatives... in their own home and by strangers in public toilets – they represent the dilemmas of the job. Do you kill them emotionally by splitting them up and putting them in homes where they are unloved but fed, clothed and safe from predators in the community? Or do you leave them together where at least they have each other but are vulnerable? [The social worker] made the decision to leave them together but now has to live with it. One of the heartbreaking and frustrating aspects of this family was that their abusers were never brought to justice... Because of the family’s handicap they do not have the language to articulate or the ability to remember things in order, so their evidence is disjointed and would be inadmissible in court. “So we have these paedophiles roaming around,”... The mother has a trespass order out against the worst offender but “we can’t be there 24 hours.” [The social worker] chats with the family and makes sure there have been no unwelcome visitors, and another exhausting day draws to an end. So what of the day? “This is heavy stuff but it is mild compared to other stuff,” [the social worker] says... The job of a state child protection social worker is about serious and savage abuse and is something they deal with day in, day out. The decisions they make are crucial. When they get it wrong the headlines scream the news. When they get it right the public does not notice... [The social worker] also tells of personal stress... [and sometimes the social worker] drives around all day with dangerous young people in the car. One time [the social worker] got home to find one of her clients sitting in her lounge... [The] young Samoan... goes alone into households that don’t want her there, and has been attacked. The caseload is heavy, the abuse [the social worker] encounters so horrific it can’t be rationalised. “It’s scary if you let yourself get scared. But if you get scared you’ll never go knocking on a door again because you never know what’s on the other side.” [The social worker] does it because when [the social worker] is able to protect a child or help a family, the job is satisfying and [the social worker knows it] had made a difference.

...[yesterday, ‘a sickness beneficiary with a 30-year history of sex offending asked for chemical castration when it appeared for sentencing in the Nelson High Court. The 57-year-old had admitted two charges of sexually violating a 15-year-old boy. The judge said the procedure was serious, but “I realise it’s a very serious situation”. The judge adjourned the case until Friday.’]

...Texas yesterday became the first state in the U[S] to approve surgical castration for repeat paedophiles when[the state’s] Governor... signed the radical measure into law. But castration will be performed solely on those criminals who see it as the only way to stop them from sexually abusing minors, [the Governor] said. Under the new law, repeat sexual abusers seeking the procedure must be over 21 years of age. They have to make a written application to justice authorities and undergo a psychiatric evaluation... [The] Republican Senator... who proposed the legislation... cited the case of a 32-year-old paedophile... who pleaded to be castrated before [it] was released from a state penitentiary last spring. Out on parole, [the 32-year-old] assaulted a minor and was sent back to jail where [it] is awaiting trial. California passed a law in September making chemical castration mandatory for anyone found guilty of a repeat offence of sexual assault of a child under 13 years of age.

...A KIWI is at the centre of one of A[US]’s most gruesome murder cases. [The Kiwi] (23) is one of two [guys] accused of repeatedly raping two schoolgirls... [aged 14 and 16], who were found in a remote Victorian bush with their throats cut last month.

...The Queensland Council of Civil Liberties has demanded an investigation into claims... by two senior Government officials... that police were told to “go no further” in an investigation of a “snuff film” which showed a child being abused and murdered, possibly on the banks of the Brisbane River... In a submission to the Criminal Justice Commission, the civil liberties council quotes... the Queensland Children’s Commissioner... as saying: “I understand that the investigating police had done all of their job, they had very conclusive evidence but when it came to the crunch... they were told ‘no further’.” ...The Police Minister... was disturbed by the... allegation that police had been prevented from investigating a murder, even though they had conclusive evidence... “The police have informed me those allegations have been under investigation for some time...” ...The... [potential scandal comes] after allegations by [a] Queensland Opposition... MP... that [the MP] had evidence of a range of paedophile activities on resort islands in the Whitsunday passage off the Queensland coast and that [the MP] suspected police had protected the racket since the early 1990s. Resort managers reacted angrily to her claims yesterday... [while the] Queensland Premier... said the allegations were more damaging to the tourism industry than a natural disaster. [The Premier called the MP] a “disgrace” for engaging in a “blanket smear” of the region... It is estimated that, across the state, some 420,000 children had been sexually abused – one-in-four girls and one-in-11 boys by the age of 18. [In further news from AUS, ‘a couple have appeared before a court on a charge of allowing an elderly guy to have sex with their young daughter’.]

...Spanish police... arrested ten people on suspicion of involvement in child prostitution... 40 children may have been prostituted by their parents.

...A SPANISH child pornography and prostitution ring used official medical and social services records to draw up a list of vulnerable children as young as five... [Spain’s PM] was “extremely concerned” by the investigation. “There will be new laws so that these sort of people can be pursued and tried more efficiently,”... A local politician and the former head of a children’s day centre were among 12 people arrested in the first stage of the operation... Police said they suspected the ring had been operating for nearly a decade... The gang selected its victims from one of the poorest districts of Barcelona. [‘Parents are thought to have given permission for their children to be prostituted out in return for a share of the takings.’]

...according to the ‘International Labour Organisation, every year more than a million children are lured or forced into the ugly world of sex trafficking, bondage and pornography. They soon lose their human rights, their dignity and their childhood. UNICEF is reclaiming some of these stolen lives. With your contribution we can continue our work, and keep millions of children out of it. Phone 0900 HELP KIDS to make a \$25 donation’]...

Sexually abusing children for profit is “a contemporary form of slavery,” according to the draft agenda of an international conference... The draft, to be adopted today... [by] the World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children... urges strong criminal sanctions against a range of child-sex-related crimes, including punishment for people who pay for the services of child prostitutes, and says international co-operation is required to stop sexual abuse... Delegates from... 130 countries are attending the five-day conference... the first international meeting of its kind. This month’s excavation of the bodies of girls allegedly killed by a child pornography ring in Belgium added urgency to the effort.

...A string of kidnapped, raped and murdered Belgian children might have been rescued if police and magistrates had worked with, not against, each other, according to a special report published yesterday... The report spares no one in its scathing description of rivalry between the country’s

three different police forces and lackadaisical magistrates... Investigators were slow to get on to the cases, ignored vital evidence, were cold and dismissive towards the parents, jealously guarded key information, had insufficient resources and used them badly and in a completely uncoordinated manner, it said... In October more than 250,000 people marched through Brussels in sympathy with the victims and their parents and in a show of disgust at the system seen by most as incompetent and by some as corrupt.

...Belgian... public anger is still seething over the justice system's failings... The 5000 people who demonstrated in the southern town of Neufchateau may have been only a handful compared to the more than 250,000 who marched through Brussels exactly a year ago. But they gave a clear signal to the Government that deep discontent remains... "We are the employers of the politicians, not the other way round. But they have inverted the relationship." ...Reforms promised by the Government last October are, for the most part, unfulfilled and no one has yet been identified as having bungled the initial investigations of child abductions... An all-party parliamentary committee began work last October on the initial investigations into the... scandal of child sex... and issued an interim report in April. It listed a catalogue of blunders, incompetence and inefficiency by police and magistrates of such a magnitude that it is now investigating whether [the main offender] and his accomplices had protection. The gendarmerie, judicial police and communal police were found to have run parallel inquiries, either not communicating with each other or passing on false information. Key among its recommendations were that [the] Brussels public prosecutor... and [the] judicial police chief... should be removed and that the three police forces should be merged into one national force... [However, critics] said the plan to merge the judicial police into a national force in effect controlled by the paramilitary gendarmerie alone was a recipe for deepening, not reducing, rivalries... The body of a fifth girl was found in February.

...A year after Belgium was rocked by revelations that a convicted sex offender had allegedly kidnapped and killed several children... the international fight against paedophilia has been stepped up... and... paedophiles are running scared... The impetus to deal with the problem has been strongest in Europe where internationally linked child abuse networks have been uncovered in... Britain, Germany, Austria and Poland... In [France's] southern city of Marseille a school principal was charged with not reporting a paedophile teacher. In Spain police last month arrested 12 people after smashing a network in Barcelona which had links with groups in France, the Netherlands and Mexico... The presence among the suspects of a Barcelona town councillor has raised suspicions that the network could have had political protection. In Italy the question of protection by the Naples Mafia of a network which was infiltrated in the region of Torre Annunziata has not been ruled out by the authorities. Some 17 members of the group were arrested in June and accused of sexually abusing about 20 schoolchildren aged between six and nine years and having produced videos for the Italian and international market... The Italian Parliament last month unanimously adopted a law increasing the sentence for paedophile acts from three to 20 years... However, the fight against child abuse is being impeded by a lack of resources particularly since the Internet has become a new method for communication by child abusers... [Furthermore], the suicides of five French people arrested during... so-called Operation ADO 71... of whom two were teachers, and the suicide near Paris of a teacher falsely accused of sexual abuse by one of his students, has led to a big debate in the country about how to tackle the problem... of sexual exploitation[which, Unicef estimates, affects]... more than 100 million young people... throughout the world.

...A Hamilton primary school teacher accused of indecently assaulting seven boys has been remanded for a depositions hearing next month.

...A 47-year-old South Auckland teacher who allegedly molested[girl] pupils will stand trial at the Otahuhu District Court next month on 46 indecency charges... The... former teacher at Manurewa East Primary School, conceded in the Papakura District Court that there was a prima facie case against him[but] pleaded not guilty... The Manurewa [teacher] is charged with... a variety of... assaults... [which] took place from January 23, 1995, to December 15, 1996[including]... rubbing the thigh of one of the girls under a table at a Pizza Hut outlet, touching the bottom of another girl at The Warehouse and touching her breasts during a visit to Rainbow's End theme park. [The teacher] was given bail on condition that [the teacher does] not go within 1km of his former school or associate with any girl under 17.

...As more teachers appear in court on charges of sexually abusing pupils, [the NZ Herald] asks what schools are doing to stop it... [The pupil] was 15 when her school athletics coach kissed her. When [the pupil] rebuffed him the coach[began following her everywhere... and making phone calls to her home every day. When [the pupil] complained to her principal [it] laughed at her and told her to stop being stupid. The school guidance counsellor said the [coach], who had taught at the school for 30 years, was one of his best friends and... didn't want to hear what [the pupil] had to say. The harassment continued for six months, and despite repeated pleas from... her parents, the Waikato school did nothing. [The pupil] gained a non-molestation order to stop him coming near her outside school, but police said [the coach] had not gone "far enough" to enable them to lay charges. It was only when the family turned to the Commissioner for Children's office and the Auckland-based Youth Law Project that the school finally removed the [coach] from its grounds. By then the family had moved to another town... Since then it has been found that [the coach] harassed and molested other students... and police hope to be able to lay charges... While [the pupil], now 19... has managed to put the ordeal behind her and move on with her life – [it] is studying to be a nurse – other victims have suffered lasting effects. One of her abuser's other victims is too disturbed to testify... [The mother of a] Mahurangi student... whose complaint against... another teacher... triggered investigations... [which led to the teacher being] jailed for 17 years on 30 sex charges committed over 21 years... says her daughter is still "shattered". [The daughter] (18) dropped out of further study after moving schools, suffered stress-related problems, is now flatting in Auckland and is due to have a baby this month... The School Trustees Association has noted a 30-40% increase in reports of sexual harassment... [by teachers since the] Mahurangi College... offending came to light. A number of protocols, procedures and kits have been distributed and adopted by schools anxious to prevent sexual abuse of students and [so they] know what to do about allegations. The Commissioner of Children... is due to release a report of his investigation into the Mahurangi College case within the next few weeks, with recommendations on how students could be better protected. But... those dealing with victims... still... see a lag in willingness to believe students and take their concerns seriously. As [the commissioner] says, "Schools have to get past the denial mentality." ...[a YLP lawyer] says seven students have approached her in the past 18 months with allegations of physical assault by teachers, and in every case the school's board of trustees seem reluctant to challenge the teacher's version of events. "The child's view is routinely given little weight, and in some cases the school has not even interviewed the child... The concept of children having a voice is relatively new, and it's a long, slow process to change the thinking by boards and principals... Even though they may have a good procedure in place, they still have to have a will to listen, and listen with an open mind." ...another... lawyer dealing with cases of alleged abuse of students by teachers... [says,] "Boards are understandably very fearful of an employment suit being brought against them (by teacher representative organisations such as the Post-Primary Teachers Association) which can be very expensive. They are less fearful of legal action taken by students. There have been some out of court settlements with students, but these are usually confidential, so boards don't know that student lawsuits can also cost them considerable amounts of money." Mahurangi College settled... out of court, after what... the Human Rights Commission describes as "incredibly difficult and vexed negotiations that went on for months"... [T]he amount of compensation paid is confidential, although [the victim's mother] says it covered their legal fees of \$7000, some out-of-pocket expenses and provided a small amount for [her daughter's future education. Meanwhile, a third]... lawyer... is bringing further action against [the offender] and the school on behalf of six other... abused... students... They are suing for exemplary damages for assault, claiming the school... breached its duty of care; and breach of fiduciary duty, which is similar to that which exists between a doctor and patient, where the offender is in a position of power and control. It is the first case of its kind in N[Z], so if damages are awarded, the amount would set a precedent – \$200,000 has been claimed for each plaintiff... "...it's a timely warning that it's not just the person

who does the abusing who gets sued.” ...Ultimately, vigilance still rests with parents. Hopefully they no longer have to fight as hard as... the... parents [of past victims] to have their children treated fairly.

...A former school teacher who bore the child of her 14-year-old student has been sentenced to six months in jail by a judge in Washington state... [The] King County Superior Court Judge... suspended an 89-month prison sentence on condition that... [the teacher], aged 35... complete a three-year treatment programme and meet other parole conditions. With credit for time already served, [the teacher] could be free in less than three months... [The tearful teacher had] apologised and begged for mercy before her sentence. “I did something that I had no right to do morally or legally... It was wrong, and I... give you my word that it will not happen again.” Prosecutors had sought a sentence of between five and eight years, the standard for child rape... But [the teacher] was supported at the hearing by the mother of her victim, who is caring for their six-month-old daughter... Under conditions of her parole, [the teacher] is not allowed to have any contact with the boy, although officials said [the teacher] was likely to get custody of their... daughter. [The teacher] was a married mother of four and a popular teacher in the Seattle suburb of Burien last year when... [her] eight-month sexual relationship with the boy, who was then 13... began... [Her] husband, who sat expressionless in the back of the courtroom when the sentence was announced, has filed for divorce and moved with their children to Alaska... The boy has denied... [being] a victim and... wants to marry his former teacher. - 1997

...primary school teacher rearrested after being found late at night in parked car with 13-year-old boy whom [it] admitted raping last year...

[The Seattle] teacher jailed for seven-and-a-half years for having sex with[a] 13-year-old pupil [has been returned] to prison after... being found with [her] young lover during parole...

[The Seattle] primary school teacher [is] pregnant again by [the boy whom it] was found guilty of raping...

THE teen who fathered two kids with his teacher... is seeking damages from the school... of \$2 million for emotional suffering, lost income and the cost of rearing the girls. The claims contend the school failed to protect him from [his teacher]’s sexual advances...

THE case of the 16-year-old schoolboy seduced by his teacher has caused a certain amount of titillation. The buxom games mistress instructing the handsome schoolboy in the facts of life has long been the stuff of fantasy. On the face of it, inviting the strapping young student around for dinner then having him for desert sounds harmless enough. Many have said they are appalled at the outing of the tutorial temptress – they say the exposure is unfair. It was a victimless crime, they say. So should [the teacher] have to suffer for the sake of five minutes of pleasure? Quite frankly the words “five minutes” sum up exactly why I prefer my [lovers] older and experienced. But I digress. [About the same time that a Seattle primary school teacher first caught the international media’s attention, a NZ teacher was convicted ‘for having sex with a 9 to 10-year-old boy. The boy was her student and also the son of a friend, who the teacher was staying with – until the day the friend found her son having sex with their lodger. Initially, the mother simply kicked the teacher out, and only went to the police upon discovering that her son was visiting the teacher for more sex lessons at her new residence.’ Why would a 35-year-old gal be interested in having sex with a boy? Perhaps the teacher has a thing about small penises? Editor’s note: It’s been suggested that some guys become paedophiles to avoid *catching Aids*. Another possible explanation is that paedophiles are guys who have *small penises*! However, while this may be true in many cases of paedophilia, recent evidence proves that the generalisation doesn’t apply to every case.]

...*Latest baby rapes open floodgates*... The rape in Johannesburg at the weekend of a 5-month-old-girl... has sent shockwaves through South Africa, prompting a deluge of calls to children’s helplines and claims that sexual abuse on infants is increasing. The baby was yesterday recovering at Johannesburg Hospital after surgeons inserted a colostomy tube in her abdominal wall. Doctors said it was likely [the infant] would require reconstructive surgery. They would not say if [the infant] was being given anti-retroviral drugs to counter a possible HIV infection. Police said a 17-year-old “friend of the family” had given himself up at the inner-city block of flats where the rape took place on Saturday. A second [person] was being questioned. The rape is the latest in a series of attacks on infant girls, including, last month, [a] 9-month-old... who was sodomised by up to six [paedophiles] at her home in Northern Cape. [The 9-month-old] remains at Kimberley Hospital where [it] is doing well. “[The 9-month-old] will soon be transferred to the Red Cross Hospital in Cape Town where [it] will undergo surgery to repair her sphincter,” said [the hospital’s] medical director... The powerful media response to [the 9-month-old]’s rape has prompted police to release details of at least a further 10 reported rapes of girls under the age of 2 since the beginning of last month... South Africa’s ruling African National Congress has called on residents of two Cape Town suburbs to cut down trees and flatten hills in a bid to stop the abduction and murder of small girls in the area.

One morning almost halfway into April... the... six-year-old girl... who had[once] abducted a... three-year-old boy, tied him to a tree in a nearby woodlot and burned him... arrived at school subdued... and... after morning discussion had started... Twice during the half-hour session [the girl] got up and went into the toilet. I worried that [the girl] might be ill because [the girl] looked so pale and seemed so restrained. But the others were clamoring for attention and my mind was distracted. When I was handing out math assignments I could not find [the girl], only to discover that [the girl] was in the bathroom again. “Don’t you feel well today, hon?” “I’m okay,” [the girl] replied, taking the math papers from me and going over to her place at the table... [The girl] was speaking more now... and I was pleased. Later in the hour, just before freetime, I came over and sat down with [the girl] to show her how to do a group of new math problems. I took her on my lap. Her body was surprisingly rigid as I held her. I felt her forehead to see if [it was hot. But it wasn’t. Yet the girl] was certainly acting oddly. “Is something wrong...?” [The girl] shook her head... “I’m okay,” [the girl] reasserted... As the lesson concluded, I lifted her off my lap to the floor. On the leg of my jeans was a widening red spot. I stared at it not fully comprehending what it was. Blood? I looked at [the girl]. “What on earth is going on?” [The girl] shook her head, her face emotionless. “...you’re bleeding!” Down the inside of her right pants leg spread a red stain. Picking her up I rushed into the bathroom and shut the door behind us. Unbuckling the overall straps, I let them fall around her ankles. Wadded into her underwear were paper towels. Apparently that had accounted for the numerous trips to the bathroom earlier. [The girl] had been trying to staunch the blood flow so that it would not come through and show. “Good God... *what* is going on?” I cried, my voice sounding louder and more alarmed than I had meant it to. Fear rose in me as I pulled away the last of the towels from her clothing. Bright red blood trickled from her vagina... [The girl] stood immutable. No emotion ran across her face. Her eyes were blank... [and her skin] was paler than I had thought out in the dimmer classroom light... I wondered how much blood [the girl] had lost. In an attempt to shake her out of her stoicism, I grabbed her shoulders and shook her. “...what happened? You have to tell me...” [The girl] blinked like one coming out of a heavy sleep... “Unca...,” [the girl] began softly, “...tried to put his pecker in me this morning. But it wouldn’t fit. So [Unca] took a knife. [Unca] said I was keeping him out, so [Unca] put the knife inside me...” I went numb. “[Your uncle] put a knife in your vagina?” [The girl] nodded. “One of the silverware knives... [Unca] said this’d hurt a whole lot more and I’d be sorry.” “Oh God... why didn’t you... let me know [girl]?” “...I’s scared to. Unca... told me not to tell... worser thing would happen if I told.” Rushing out of the bathroom carrying [the girl, I told someone] to watch the class... grabbed my keys and raced... for my car... The distance to the hospital seemed interminable. The traffic impossible. Maybe I should have waited for an ambulance. I had no idea how much blood [the girl] had lost, nor... what I could do about it. I cursed myself for never having followed through on my Red Cross training... “...Stay awake,” I whispered, trying to manoeuvre the car and keep a hold on her at the same time. I should have taken someone with me... “I do be awake,” [the girl] muttered... “But it hurts.” “Oh, I’m sure it does, baby... But keep talking to me, okay?” “...My Unca... said [Unca] was going to... show me how grown-up people loved each other... [Unca] said I better know how grown-up people loved. And when I screamed, [Unca] said nobody ain’t gonna never love me if I can’t learn how.” “Your Uncle...

doesn't know anything, lovey..." [The girl] caught her lips in a tearless sob. "[Unca] said that be how you and [your partner] loved each other... said if I want you... to love me, I had to let him show me how..." ... "Oh lovey, [your uncle's] wrong... I love you already. [Your uncle] was just saying that so... [you'd let him] do something... to you [that your uncle] had no right to..." - ONE CHILD

Some paedophiles (e.g., those at the former Centrepont centre) believe that they DO have a *right* to engage in sexual activities with children. Perhaps they think that such behaviour is condoned by the Bible (r:p835, ln50)? After all, the Bible condones another type of child sex abuse!

This is my covenant, which ye shall keep... ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin... Every... [boy] that is eight days old... that is born in... your... house, or bought with money of any stranger... must needs be circumcised... - GENESIS 17

The practice of... severing the prepuce, or foreskin, in [boys]; and a corresponding minor operation in... [girls,] was widespread among ancient peoples, frequently as a rite signifying purification or initiation. This was notably true among the Jews... no uncircumcised [guy] could participate in Passover. The occasion of Jesus' conformity is celebrated as Feast of the Circumcision, Jan. 1, a holy day of obligation for Roman Catholics. In the early days of Christianity the controversy as to whether converts must accept this and similar Jewish rites was settled negatively. [Some maintained that 'by means of the filial relationship to God in the Holy Spirit, all Christians are so near to God that such proximity must not be supplemented by circumcision or purification commandments. Their consideration would indeed mean doubting the effect of the gift of the Spirit.'] **Circumcision is still practiced ritually by Jews and Moslems** [(who 'usually perform it on boys between the ages of 7 and 13')], **and by many others for medical reasons.**

There are *medical reasons* to justify cutting off haemorrhoids when they are causing someone problems, but cutting off a healthy foreskin without the consent of the individual being operated on is an abuse of parental power! A weak defence of the practice is that removing their foreskin may enable boys to gain enhanced sexual pleasure in later life. Such a defence might be used to justify performing *a corresponding minor operation in girls*, but girl circumcisions can seldom be called minor operations and are usually intended to have the opposite effect.

Clitoridectomy... or "[gal] circumcision"... is not foreign to Western culture: as late as the 19th century it was practised in Europe to cure... nymphomania and hysteria. In London, one doctor viewed it as a remedy for... insanity. In the US, the last recorded clitoridectomy was performed in 1949 on a five-year-old girl. Its justification? "Curing masturbation". But it's still believed to occur among some migrant groups in many Western countries, including A[US, which currently has]... no legislation covering it... This operation ranges from *sunna* (the "mildest" form), in which the hood of the clitoris is removed, to *infibulation* (the most extreme)...

..."infibulation"... [refers to] an operation... generally performed on young girls between the ages of four and eleven years... It involves the removal of much of the labia majora, the mons veneris, the labia minora, and often the clitoris, using razors, knives or other sharp objects... "a reed, tube or match stick is inserted into the vaginal opening in order that after the wound heals a small hole may remain for the passage of urine and menses. The girl's legs are strapped together for forty days to allow the wounds on the two sides to heal together by contact... When the... girl is married, a "midwife" or her mother usually has to be called in to "defibulate" her in order to facilitate intercourse. Although, ideally, it is the husband who deflowers the wife, the pain and size of the opening often make this impossible... [Sometimes] a husband attempts to force the opening with various objects, in order to avoid the shame of calling in the girl's mother or a midwife for assistance... When and if the girl becomes pregnant, she must be "defibulated" to facilitate birth, and restitched thereafter... The physiological consequences of such an operation are numerous. And, although there would seem to be a low death rate associated with the operation, deaths are often not reported. There are, however, numerous cases of chronic infection, sterility, tetanus or septic anaemia, haemorrhage, long-term gynaecological and obstetrical complications, cysts, keloids and fistula formation, etc. Nevertheless, the operation and its consequences have changed very little, with the exception perhaps of urban core areas.

In much of Africa... [girls are subjected] to a ritual that [seems] abhorrent to many – circumcision of young girls between the ages of 4 and 12. Traditional communities believed the practice helped preserve girls' virginity to marriage. In the 1980s, 90[%] of Sudanese girls were still being circumcised. "...I was 5 years old and I remember... the pain... I don't think circumcision is good... it is a heritage of [the] Dark Ages... maybe... it suits [that] time but not ours." Governments made the custom illegal and individual mothers tried to resist it, but... [many continue] to face pressure to take their daughters to the local circumcisers... "[My mother] is warning me... that someday [my mother] will circumcise... my [daughter]... I don't want [my] child to be circumcised." It [is] reckoned that each year... 2 million girls in more than 30 countries [are] subjected to genital mutilation.

On a cloudy afternoon last month, thousands of [gals] danced through the shabby streets of Freetown... Most were members of Bundo, a... secret society [for gals] whose initiation rite includes... removal of the clitoris, cutting of the labia or stitching up the genital lips. Uninitiated girls led the throng, followed by elders in a sea of... singing, ringing bells and beating drums. It felt like a party – until the parade reached... [the clinic of] a critic of... circumcision, [at which point the crowd began calling the doctor] *o'gborrka*-uninitiated and dirty. They laid cursed charms at the clinic door and waved placards... Then the mob began to chant, "Let's circumcise her here and now." Practitioners of... circumcision are striking back in Sierra Leone... Since the early 90s, [First World agencies and gal] groups have criticised the practice, arguing that it brutalises [girls] and puts their health at risk. They claim that as many as 130 million African... [gals] have been cut... The [patients] often contract septicaemia, tetanus or gangrene. They may develop difficulty in urinating and chronic pelvic infections. Amnesty International recently recognised... genital mutilation[of girls] as a human rights violation. [First World] countries have begun granting asylum to [mothers] who fear that they or their daughters would be circumcised if forced to return home. For Bundo members, the fear is that African elites, who do not normally engage in the practice, will be influenced by the campaign against circumcision and attempt to curb it. "We will continue to do it no matter what people say," insists... a Bundo elder and the mayor of Bo, the country's second largest city. What are the Bundo protecting? Their secrets, they say. The society constitutes 90[% of the gals] of Sierra Leone and is a powerful traditional institution, respected and feared by the [guy] dominated establishment. Every year Bundo elders take pubescent girls deep into the bush for several weeks to receive *te'foos*, or things that are forbidden to discuss with the uninitiated, particularly [guys]. "All you can know is that when the girls return they are [gals]." In related news, four]... teenage boys died after traditional circumcision rituals went wrong in South Africa's Eastern Cape province.

...[a seventh South African boy has died after circumcision ceremonies, and 100 have been treated in hospitals in the past 10 days for septic wounds. The latest death was in northern Limpopo province, where a boy bled to death and all 35 initiates of one school were treated for wounds.' Incidentally, a] Jewish circumciser who cut a little too deep on an Israeli baby has been sued for \$2.89 million in damages by the child's parents... [T]he circumciser, in an operation five years ago, cut off the top third of the baby's penis. The parents said a graft failed, and they are suing for negligence, resulting in "deep psychological damage." - 1996

Mohels, the practitioners of the ancient Jewish rite of circumcision, appear to inflict less pain on their subjects than do most physicians, possibly because of the tools they use, a researcher says. In a Hartford, Connecticut, study involving 48 newborn boys, the Mogen clamp used by mohels was [also] found to be much quicker to deploy... than the Gomco device favoured by most doctors... The findings were no surprise to... a Los Angeles mohel who has performed more than 10,000 circumcisions... "Doctors are not as comfortable with the whole procedure. A mohel is used to working with a grandmother breathing down his neck,"... A mohel does not have to be a rabbi... most[mohel] circumcisions are done in the home. The researchers concluded that infants should be anaesthetised to reduce the pain no matter which clamp is used.

...The 13-year-old boy... is unlikely to forget his traumatic "rite of passage." The quick flick of the scalpel led to hours of bleeding and an emergency dash to hospital... His father... said the circumcision was done for cultural reasons, but it was important that parents knew complications could arise. The family was told to use cloths, soaked in salted water to stop the bleeding... but... [even though] his son went through numerous towels... the bleeding continued. [The boy] finally blacked out on his way to the toilet... 26 hours after being circumcised by his doctor... The clinical director of paediatric surgery at the Starship children's hospital... said a handful of children were admitted every year after circumcision. Bleeding usually came from a blood vessel which was cut when the foreskin was removed. In rare situations, blood transfusions were needed... [I]ncreased age did not make boys more prone to bleeding... [By the way, child] welfare groups are being alerted to... genital mutilation to prevent African girls from undergoing the... procedure in N[Z]. In a pilot project, professionals including nurses, teachers, police and staff of the C[YFS] are being educated about the practice... The growing numbers of immigrants from African countries which practise mutilation also have prompted training for health workers rehabilitating [gals] who have undergone the procedure. According to a recent report, National [Gals'] Hospital in Auckland has seen at least 39 [gals] in the past year who have been mutilated... Last year, the Government made genital mutilation illegal, except for medical reasons. It is also an offence to make arrangements to take a child from N[Z] for the procedure.

...[NZ] – far removed from countries where... genital mutilation[of girls] has traditionally been performed – is now facing up to the health fallout of such practices. Confronted with growing numbers of refugees from African nations... health workers are increasingly seeing the complications wreaked by the practice, particularly in childbirth... There is scant local information on the practice, but an Auckland researcher... is establishing a database to gauge the number of [gals] and girls who have already undergone mutilation, their health and education needs and the number of children at risk... [A]n estimated 127 million [gals] and girls worldwide had undergone some form of... [genital mutilation. □] Thousands of bees disrupted a... circumcision ceremony in Sierra Leone, putting half the 100 girls taking part in hospital... Hospital sources said that some girls who had been mutilated were also being treated for serious bleeding and fever. - 1997

Unicef has applauded Senegal for becoming the latest African country to ban... circumcisi[ng girls], the traditional operation decried by critics as an unsafe and degrading kind of mutilation. "Senegal's action is of great significance because it reflects the resolve... to end a cruel and unacceptable practice which violates the right of all girls to free, safe and healthy lives," Unicef['s] director... said. The legislation institutes prison terms of up to five years for people who violate the ban... [A]bout one-fifth of the girls in the West African country... ha[ve undergone]... circumcision... Senegal joins Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Djibouti, Ghana, Guinea-Conakry and Togo in outlawing the practice. The operation... is considered an important custom in dozens of countries across Africa, Asia and the Middle East, where girls may be seen as unclean and undeserving of marriage if they have not undergone it. Because sexual contact is often painful for circumcised [wives], some husbands believe it prevents their wives from being unfaithful. [‘FGM can also deter girls from marrying outside their community. Yet, today, most younger guys are against FGM and are even choosing to marry “uncircumcised” gals outside their communities because mutilation brings so many hidden problems.’]

...A court has handed down tough sentences in a landmark trial of a Malian charged with mutilating young girls in the rite of... excision. [The Malian], 53, was handed an eight-year term for practising excision on 48 girls, while the mother of... [one girl] who had been mutilated... was given a two-year term for failing to come to her daughter's aid. Twenty-six other defendants, from Mali, Senegal, Gambia and Mauritania, were given suspended terms ranging from two years to five years for abetting the mutilation. The trial, which ended in a Paris court earlier this week, was unprecedented in its scope, seeking to end a string of legal failures to stamp out circumcision among a small minority of France's... citizens... Previous attempts foundered on defence arguments that the parents were... ignorant of French law... [T]he 24-year-old law student who was hailed in court for having the unbelievable courage to tip off the authorities and thus bring about her mother's conviction, praised the jury. "It... means that people will no longer be able to say, 'I didn't know.'["] Excision... robs the [victim] of the prospect of sexual pleasure...

Since [it] was a child, [the now-29-year-old Ghanaian] has lived with a fear that no-one should face. The Ghanaian['s]... tribespeople want to forcibly... remov[e] her genitalia... because they believe it is bad luck for a [gal] to remain intact... [Hence] the need for all [gals] to be circumcised. "I can't... go back to Ghana. My family's been waiting for a long time to catch me. I am scared for my life." [The Ghanaian] is seeking refugee status in N[Z] after fleeing her homeland for South Africa... [The Ghanaian and h]er fiancée... who has be[come] a NZ citizen... plan to marry at the end of this month. The couple met in South Africa in 1995 and has kept in touch since. [Her fiancé had told her that it] would come back to South Africa to marry her, but [the Ghanaian] beat him to it and travelled on her own to N[Z] without telling him first... Following her arrival in Auckland, [the Ghanaian] was thrown into jail and, after spending three months in Mt Eden Prison, is now waiting for the result of her appeal from the Refugee Status Appeals Authority... "When I was in Mt Eden, I thought they were going to deport me to Ghana, so I made up my mind to hang myself before they could send me back..." ...Even now that [the Ghanaian] is out of prison, stark reminders of the threat hang over [her] head. As part of her bail conditions, [the Ghanaian] reports three times a week to the police and must live in an Auckland refugee hostel.

...From a short-term pilot in Auckland, a national programme has emerged to cater for growing numbers of refugees and immigrants from nations where... genital mutilation[of girls] is practised... The [person] behind the Auckland trial and now the national programme... talked to a [gal] fighting for abandonment of the practice in her native Somalia... [at] a recent Inter-African Committee conference in Senegal... [A]t the age of 8 [the Somali] underwent the most radical form of mutilation practised – infibulation. Performed by her aunt in a small village, the procedure was carried out without anaesthetic, using basic cutting tools and thorns. "You know in Somalia, circumcision is such a deep deep part of a girls' life. From the moment we are crawling we know about circumcision, we know that our grandmother and mother and sisters are circumcised and we look forward to it being done. Back then, no one would even dream of not being circumcised." ...[her] struggle with mutilation was a long and brutal one – suffering many of the complications of the practice and losing an older sister who died after the operation. "I have seen girls die after being circumcised, and the harmful effects go on and on, so I do feel much anger about it all, but I have no one to be angry at. You see, mothers always make sure their daughters are circumcised because they believe that this is the best thing for them. Despite the pain, I myself agreed with the practice because I thought that was best for me. For example, if a mother doesn't get her daughter circumcised, her daughter will be an outcast, no one will marry her and everyone would think [the uncircumcised person] is a prostitute – so it is a very difficult situation – we can't be angry at anyone, because the mothers' intentions are good." In her early 20s [the Somali] travelled and studied overseas where [the Somali] discovered there were other [gals] who were not circumcised, and most importantly, other... [Muslims] who were not. Slowly [the Somali] realised "how wrong the tradition was" and committed herself to the fight against the practice. In the early 70s [the Somali] returned to Somalia and... was appointed director of [gal] education... and with a small group of [fellow victims] behind her... began to bring about [enough change that] in 1977 infibulation was declared illegal. Government money was provided to start an anti-infibulation campaign. [However, with] the outbreak of civil war in 1991, the campaign was disbanded... [M]illions of Somalis fled the country, including [the director] who, with her husband, went to Canada... In

1995 [the ex-director] returned home... to... [find] a resurgence of the practice. “I was devastated by what I saw. It seems that we have gone back 40 years. Girls were being infibulated every day with razors and thorns. Two young girls recently died following the procedure and yet still many don’t question it.” ...So, despite civil war and lack of resources[, the ex-director]... and 18 other Somali [mutilation victims] in the town of Kismayo... have set up a... centre providing education programmes... “Our message... is that circumcision is very harmful, that it is bad for our daughters, that it is not part of our religion and we must give it up... My dream is that in my lifetime there will be young girls living in the heart of Somalia who can run free and play without pain, without the cruel and devastating effects of circumcision. Even just a few. Even 10.”

...SOME people think N[Zers – especially NZ guys] – are a shy and retiring lot. But I know better. I raised the subject of circumcision on talkback last week and we could have debated the issue for four days, not just the four hours of my show. Old [guys, young guys, married guys, single guys, religious guys] and horny little toads all had opinions on whether or not baby boys should be circumcised. The discussion came about because there’s a lobby group in Canada trying to get... circumcision[of boys] outlawed. The group, led by a Canadian doctor, argues that while there are laws protecting [girls] from genital mutilation, there are none protecting [boys], and that circumcision is akin to child abuse. There have been outraged reactions from religious groups that insist they have the right to chop their boy children. There’s little chance of getting the government to intervene but they’ve done the trick in attracting attention to the issue – even across the world in N[Z]. It seems the trend is moving away from circumcision and I must admit that if I had a baby boy, I would be most reluctant to have him done. When you’ve gone to all the time and trouble to deliver a perfect child, why chop bits off him? And besides, if [guys] feel that strongly about their foreskins, they can always chop them off later. It’s a lot harder to grow one back. I support the Canadians. Hands off our [boys’] penises!

...In 1967, after a bungled circumcision in which... a... Canadian baby[’s]... penis was effectively burned off, his distressed parents decided to follow the advice of [a]leading sex researcher... and have the baby’s sex “reassigned.” [The baby] would, following further genital surgery and later hormonal treatment, become... [a girl. The NZ]-born sex researcher... assured the baby’s parents that because the primary factor determining a person’s gender identity was not biology but rather the way the child was raised, [their baby] would make a relatively trouble-free transition to girl and [gal]hood. How delighted [the researcher] must have been when the [baby’s parent]s appeared in his office at the prestigious Johns Hopkins Hospital’s psychohormonal research unit. Along with [the baby], they brought his identical brother... who had escaped the surgeon and was therefore intact. What a rare gift to science! The perfectly matched pair could be compared with each other to test the veracity of [the sex researcher]’s theories. Without realising it, the [parent]s had stepped into the heart of a long-running scientific and cultural debate which was heating to boiling point as second-wave feminism took hold in the late 1960s and 1970s: “nature versus nurture.” Was biology destiny? [The NZer], a maverick, controversial psychologist... was already the most famous researcher in the burgeoning field of gender identity and had been responsible for many sexual reassignments on babies born of indeterminate sex. However, the truth, as revealed in [a]New York journalist[’s]... bleakly sensational study of what became of the world-famous “twins’ case,” was that sexual reassignment never worked... In their faithful commitment to [the sex researcher]’s dictum, the [parents raised their child] as an unambiguous girl, encouraging “feminine” attributes such as cleanliness, politeness, doll-playing and the wearing of frilly dresses. But in reality, [the child] never ceased being the dominant, more aggressive of the twins who, even as a girl, would fight off anyone causing trouble for her or her less pugnacious brother. [The child] was from the beginning a social outcast at school: children, with their instinct for the abnormal, intuitively knew there was something not right and rejected her. As the years rolled painfully on, [the child] fell behind with her school work... The years were punctuated with visits to [the sex researcher], who is depicted as a figure from a nightmare: the researcher who looks only to have his own ideas confirmed, and who is unable to accept the clear reality before him. [The sex researcher] continued to pump out academic articles about, and indeed to base his career on, the success of the twins’ experiment, and the case became the cornerstone of many other people’s articles and books about gender identity as well... In N[Z] we are used to thinking in admiring terms of those who, like [the sex researcher], “make it” internationally. Most kindly [the sex researcher] can perhaps be seen as a [guy] of his time, whose thinking and methodology are now largely rejected. [The NZer] was one of those who absolutely eschewed prudery and judgment about sex and sexuality and this led him into some very dicey areas: defence of “consensual” sex between adults and children, for instance; or an insistence on speaking with the... [twins] in extremely graphic terms about sex, and insisting on their rehearsing certain sexual positions, despite their obvious discomfort, embarrassment and active resentment. But from very early in th[e] book... AS NATURE MADE HIM... one has no instinct to be kind to [the sex researcher]. His wilful blindness in the case of [the twin] seems inexcusable; his extreme arrogance and rudeness towards anyone not slavishly falling in behind his theories, simply bullying. For [the twin], the crunch came at age 14. Finally told the truth about herself, [the teenager] immediately began the long road back to becoming a [guy]. By the time [the journalist] first met this famous twin, [it] had become... happily married and... was... living the kind of ordinary life (loving wife, factory job, three stepchildren) that represents a version of paradise to those who have felt themselves excluded from such possibility. In the telling of this deeply disturbing story... is... a powerful plea for there not to be surgical decisions made on behalf of children, who should be left to make their own decision later in life.

...[‘In a study published last week in the *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, a professor of anatomy and reproductive biology at the University of Hawaii, and a psychiatrist with the Canadian Ministry of Health, report that the twin, whom they called “Joan,” never really adjusted to her assigned gender. In fact, Joan was surgically changed back to “John” in the late 1970s, and is now the happily married father of three adopted children. Almost from the beginning Joan rebelled at her treatment. Even as a toddler, Joan felt different. When mum clothed her in frilly dresses, Joan would try to rip them off. By second grade, Joan had come to suspect it would fit in better as a boy. But her doctors insisted these feelings were perfectly normal, that Joan was just a tomboy. “I thought I was a freak or something.” Although the other kids didn’t know about Joan’s surgical history, they teased her about her tomboyish looks and behaviour. Public bathrooms proved to be a source of particular discomfort. Joan often insisted on urinating standing up, which usually made a mess. In junior high school the other girls finally refused to let her in anymore, forcing her to use the boys’ room instead. By this time, Joan was pretty convinced it was a boy. But no matter what Joan told her doctors and psychiatrists, they kept pressing her to act more feminine. Eventually, Joan gave up trying to convince them. “You can’t argue with a bunch of people in white coats. You’re just a little kid, and their minds are already made up. They didn’t want to listen.” In 1977 Joan decided it had only two options: either commit suicide or live her life as a boy. Finally, in a tearful confrontation, her dad told her the true story of her birth and sex change. “For the first time things made sense, and I understood who and what I was.” Following the second set of sex-change procedures, John’s new doctors advised the family to move to a new town and start over. This time, however, John’s parents rejected the expert advice. People would find out anyway, they reasoned. It was better to stay put and be open about what had happened. Their strategy seems to have worked. After a brief transition, John was accepted by his peers in a way that Joan never was. At its worst, this story could be read as a lesson in scientific hubris. At its best, it’s a story about the courage of one boy who claimed the right to determine his own identity. Unfortunately, no follow-up study reporting that John had rejected his initial sex change was ever published. As a result dozens of other boys may have been needlessly castrated. In defense of the original team, Johns Hopkins says it wasn’t able to conduct a follow-up because the family stopped coming to see its doctors.’

■ Last week John ‘committed suicide.’

...hi]s blue eyes are windows into a life of pain and mental anguish. Since his first teenage yearnings, [blue-eye]’s longed for the thrill of a kiss... and the fulfilment of love and sexual intimacy. Instead, [blue-eyes] has contemplated celibacy, sex change and even suicide. [Blue-eyes] was robbed at birth of the chance to be a normal, functioning [boy] by a bungled circumcision that left life-long damage... In addition to the foreskin, the shaft skin had been removed and the scrotal skin pulled up to the head of the penis. Only shreds of sensitive fraenum (sometimes known as the... G-spot) remained. “...Erections caused pain, and my penis was misshapen and twisted. There were girls I felt attracted to, and who liked me, but I

was so fearful of rejection because of my deformity, I avoided relationships... At university the problem escalated. As my interest in girls intensified, I felt frustrated because I couldn't do anything about it... I often wish I'd never been born. My life has been a living hell," says the shy 26-year-old, who has been paid \$360,000 by an A[US]n doctor. "My right to the intact body I was born with has been violated. As far as I'm concerned, it's a breach of my human rights. I've been assaulted. Someone held me down, then amputated part of my body while I screamed and went into shock. My parents were not told that circumcision had no medical benefit, or the risk of complications, which... amounts to fraud."

...The practice of clipping the foreskins of most newborn boys' penises in the U[S] has come under greater scrutiny now that a powerful group of doctors has declared it "not essential." ... "A parent's consent cannot justify removal of healthy tissue – whether it be a finger, a breast, or a foreskin – without a valid medical reason,"... declared the Chicago-based American Academy of Paediatrics, the country's largest paediatric medical group. "Even though it does have some potential medical benefits... these benefits are not compelling enough to warrant the academy to recommend routine newborn circumcision," the group reported in the journal *Pediatrics*. With studies suggesting circumcision could reduce sexual pleasure, the operation's popularity has dropped since the 1960s when more than 80[%] of boys were circumcised. But the U[S] still conducts the practice on most of its infant boys – 64[%] in 1995... (...13% of A[US]n boys are now being circumcised, up from 11% in 1995... about 60% of [guys in NZ – where]... the surgery... is... performed for \$250 in the "flashy" city offices of a paediatric surgeon... [or for] \$150... at three health clinics in... south Auckland... – ...are now uncircumcised...)... A survey published in January of circumcised American [guys], done by the British *Journal of Urology*, found that 60[%] felt mutilated and about half felt inferior to uncircumcised [guys]. According to the survey, 61[%] complained of progressive sensitivity loss and 40[%] said they had difficulty achieving orgasm... [Incidentally, for every guy] who is worried... about... diminished... sexual... performance... and for every partner who has ever wondered what to do, there now exists a dramatic advance. Many [NZ guys] who suffer from erectile dysfunction, or ED, may soon be able to restore their virility. Effective and with few side effects for many, these new pharmacological remedies are sildenafil (brand name, Viagra), apomorphine and phentolamine... and... drug companies are working on nearly a dozen other new remedies for impotence that are in various stages of development. ED affects millions of [guys] of all ages and circumstances... [I]n up to 80[%] of all cases the cause is at least partly physical... While chronic illness, surgery and medications certainly contribute to ED, there are very particular, modifiable health risks that play a major role. These include smoking and excessive drinking. Therefore, to a large extent, optimum virility depends on certain lifestyle choices you make... For decades it was believed to be a psychological rather than a physiological problem.

...the spiritual interpretation of the function of the orgasm... has always baffled physiologists: 'Just why do... [gals] have a clitoris? It has no function in reproduction. It's just there for sexual pleasure!' ...orgasmic pleasure can be a gateway to experiencing the profound Oneness... (I do not expect a papal encyclical to be forthcoming on this spiritual experience, as the church fathers generally deny the existence of the clitoris...)

"When a [gal] monkey has been inseminated... [it] can wander away without any fear of losing the seminal fluid... If a [gal] of our species were so unmoved by the experience of copulation... the situation would be different. Under the simple influence of gravity, the seminal fluid would be lost. There is therefore a great advantage in any reaction that tends to keep the [gal] horizontal. The violent response of... orgasm, leaving the [gal] sexually satiated and exhausted, has precisely this effect." This behaviour is a facet of the recent evolution of homo sapiens, say biologists. But could the [gal] version still be more advanced neurologically than that of a... [guy? A guy] is thought to need to consume 40kg of food to produce one tablespoon of semen. Loss of the vital substance is considered to be debilitating... The yogi of India believe [guy] pleasure depletes vigour and wellbeing[, but recent studies have shown that guys]... with a high frequency of orgasm had a 50[%] lower mortality risk than those with low frequency... They can lengthen your life, but they don't half play havoc with your driving. That is the conclusion of two teams of scientists who say that even in the best of families, an orgasm can be a mixed blessing. And, in the process, the scientists raised an intriguing question: why does the earth move for us in the first place? Nature is never gratuitously generous, after all, so why did it create the evolutionary gift of an energy-wasting orgasm? It was a particularly pointed question for doctors at the Western General Hospital in Edinburgh who treated a 44-year-old [gal] plagued by continual, uninvited and unexpected orgasms... The team traced... [her] problem to a deformed artery which had damaged the right temporal lobe of her brain. Here, the scientists concluded, lies the nerve tissue that triggers [a gal's orgasm. The patient] was given anti-epilepsy drugs to stop her bouts of inappropriate flushes and moans, while the doctors prepared a paper for the medical journal the *Lancet*... [The paper concluded that guy and gal] orgasms have fundamentally different neurological sources... [Judging] from the only known cases of a [guy] afflicted with a similar condition [to the 44-year-old gal, guy orgasms] are set off by the hypothalamus, a more primitive part of the brain... [than] the temporal lobe... This led them to rate [gal] orgasms as more evolutionarily advanced than those of [guys] – a conclusion that flies in the face of accepted evolutionary wisdom... [Even the contemporary] godfather of natural selection... disagrees [with the Edinburgh conclusions]: "The clitoris and penis are one and the same organ, identical in early form, but later enlarged in [guy] fetuses through the action of testosterone"... Equally, both types of orgasms must have the same evolutionary origin, so whatever the success of their treatment, the Edinburgh doctors' conclusion looks incorrect.

...[Generally, the differences between the human guy and gal orgasms are that the climax in the gal can be physiologically interrupted more easily than can the guy's response, and the guy's orgasm is usually accompanied by ejaculation of semen; both experience momentary muscular contractions during the orgasms, but the gal's effects are usually longer in duration' than the guy's.

... 'as with the penis, the clitoral system erects and subsides about every 90 minutes during sleep. The tips of both have hoods or foreskins, and at the moment of orgasm, guys' and gals' genitals pulsate at exactly the same rate. However, the clitoral network's sole function is as an organ of pleasure. "The penis has two other uses, namely peeing and procreation." Behind the clitoral tip (the equivalent of the top of a penis) is the clitoral "stem", a couple of centimetres long; while leading down from it wishbone-fashion are two clitoral "legs", slender ligaments five or six centimetres in length. These follow the line of the pelvic bone and correspond to two very similar "legs" or "roots" within a penis. This whole structure forms a triangle with the clitoral glans at the top, and the base formed by a traverse muscle on the far side of the vagina. Within it are clumps or "bulbs" of tissue which correspond to similar tissue inside the penis. During arousal these fill with blood and the whole clitoral system swells up or "erects" until, in terms of size, it's roughly equivalent to an erect penis. "The only real difference between guy and gal erections is that guys' are on the outside of their bodies, while gals' are inside."

... 'The *Vagina Monologues*, *Puppetry of the Penis* and now National Penis Day. Three decades ago the "genitalised society" was predicted. But even the predictor could scarcely have imagined the blatant saturation this concept has reached in our culture. The deconstruction of natural modesty has moved into high gear. Not only are any remaining vestiges of feminine and masculine modesty being eroded, we are being desensitised. In the process, we are being dehumanised as well. We are our sexual organs. Our genitalia are being presented as a means of emancipation and empowerment (but the connection between the advancing genitalised society and this fascination feeding a culture of sexual crime and offending is seldom made – perhaps it's time). Ideology masquerading as health is also a vehicle for advocating and normalising alternative sexual expressions.' By the way, Italians] **have been hanging kilogram weights from the ends of their penises to test the efficacy of a new virility drug...** 123 [guys] aged between 33 and 77 took part in the study of alprostadil at the Centre for Impotence and Sterility in Rome... The drug improved blood flow in all patients, more than doubling the size of some... penises... Once the [guys] were given "visual erotic stimulation," the hardness of the penis was first measured using an electronic "rigidometer." Then came the "penile buckling test." If the weight could be carried – no hands – the [guy] passed. - 1997

As many as 200 [guys] a year suffer penis fractures, an injury which announces itself with a loud crack... Once snapped, you're looking at 40 stitches and a splint to put it back together again. Of the unfortunate 200, 64[%] are wounded during masturbation, 12[%] by falling out of bed... The remainder are probably not telling the truth when they say, "It just happened while I was lying down." [While on the topic of penises, 'in NZ one-in-three guys (or 40% of 40-year-olds, and 67% of 70-year-olds) suffer from some form of impotence'.]

...The Government's drug-buying agency Pharmac says it will consider subsidising the impotency drug Viagra... Pharmac said... the condition affects 52[% of guys] aged between 40 and 70. Pharmac's clinical director... [said yesterday that] an application for Government subsidy... [by] Viagra's manufacturer, Pfizer... would be considered on the grounds of the drug's benefit and how it could substantially improve users' quality of life. Special consideration might be given to certain groups particularly in need of the drug, such as diabetics. Viagra will go on sale by prescription in chemists today for \$20 to \$25 per 100mg pill. A weaker 25mg pill will retail at around... \$20 a tablet... Since its release in the US, Viagra has become the biggest-selling prescription drug in history.

...THE SEX drug Viagra has pushed up house prices by 11 times the national average near the... Pfizer... factory... at Sandwich, Kent, UK... The company... has taken on 1,000 workers and aims to take on another 1,000 by 2002. But only 300 new homes are planned... [In related news, AUS]n and Israeli scientists have discovered that Viagra's anti-wilt qualities extend to flowers. The anti-impotence drug can extend the life of cut flowers by about a week, they say, and double the shelf-life of fruit and vegetables... The produce and flowers were fumigated with the Viagra in gas form... [One scientist] acknowledged that, given the cost of Viagra, it was cheaper to buy new flowers, but said that the price would doubtless come down.

...Taiwan yesterday approved sales of the... impotency drug Viagra with a medical prescription... The blue pills were expected to be available in local pharmacies in six weeks at around \$T400 (\$[NZ]23.86) a tablet. The drug has been sold for as high as \$US2500... on the black market.

...It's not... the content of the Viagra ad but the tim[ing -] ...as early as the news breaks. My small daughter keeps asking what 'erection' means.

...SEX SELLS – and this advertising truism has never been more conclusively proven than in the world of pharmaceuticals. Delivering cures for the diseases of the [Last] World is all very well but it doesn't deliver money like the so-called "lifestyle" drugs, which tackle anxieties as much as medical conditions. And the real profit generator is sex, with every major drug company trying to hit the jackpot... Inspired by the phenomenal success of Viagra, more than a dozen firms are developing medications to treat a variety of sexual dysfunction. Among the products in the pipeline are pills for premature ejaculation... and... low sexual desire... In 1995, a fledgling Princeton... firm named Palatin Technologies was investigating a drug that could give people a natural looking tan, even indoors in the middle of winter. Then [guy] test subjects noticed they were becoming sexually aroused. That discovery perked up the company's interest, too. Palatin has since tweaked the drug, removing its ability to tan and boosting its capacity to arouse. Because PT141 stimulates receptors in the brain, it's being developed as a fast-acting nasal spray – for both [guys and gals].

...The development of a version of Viagra for [gals] is "progressing extremely well", says the head of the Pfizer research unit that developed the famous blue pills... The development of Viagra for use by [gals] has been more complex than that for the [guy] pill, and there has been conflicting clinical trial data on whether the pill can help improve [a gal]'s sexual response by improving blood flow to the genitals... [The] senior vice-president and director of the company's British laboratories in Sandwich... added that his team was also working on an improved version of the anti-impotence drug... [The director] said that a Mark II version of Viagra for [guys] – codenamed 369003 – had started phase two trials. It should be more effective than the existing drug, which faces competition from rivals that have claimed their products act faster... Viagra takes effect an hour after being taken and the benefits last for only four to five hours. Users complain that it means sex has to be carefully planned.

...*Rival stands up*... When you think of erectile dysfunction, you think of – what else – Viagra. Introduced less than two years ago, Viagra... [already] tops \$US1 billion... in annual sales worldwide. About 4 million American [guys] take it regularly, generating 200,000 prescriptions every week. But it may soon have competition... Drug companies are racing to expand the options for... erectile trouble... treatment, and TAP Pharmaceuticals, of... Illinois, is now close to the goal. Last week, a federal advisory committee recommended approval of TAP's new erection drug, Uprima. If the Food and Drug Administration follows the panel's advice, as expected, the new pill could reach the market within three weeks. Uprima comes in a lozenge that dissolves under the tongue, delivering medication directly to the bloodstream. As a result, it usually takes effect within 19 minutes, about three times faster than Viagra, which must pass through the digestive system. Uprima does not cause the hazy vision that afflicts some Viagra users, and it may prove less dangerous when combined with heart medications containing nitrates[(at least '16 deaths in the US have been linked to Viagra')]. But Viagra's most common side-effects – flushing, headaches and nasal congestion – may be easier to tolerate than those of Uprima. One in five Uprima users suffers nausea, one in seven has dizziness and one in 30 experiences sudden drops in blood pressure that can cause fainting. During clinical trials, a 33-year-old... who took 4mg in his doctor's office fainted on the way home, driving his car into a fence. That clearly worried the FDA's advisers. Though they voted to approve Uprima at doses of 2mg and 4mg, they thought the product should carry a warning that alcohol could exacerbate its side-effects... But th[e]... studies suggest that it fails more than 40[%] of the time.

...SEX FOR LIFE... TABLETS AVAILABLE... [DO YOU HAVE] PROBLEMS WITH GETTING & MAINTAINING AN ERECTION[. OR] PROBLEMS WITH PREMATURE EJACULATION[?] ...IN SOME CASES ORAL TREATMENT MAY NOT BE ADVISABLE. HOWEVER, WE CAN OFFER AN ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT WITH A 97% SUCCESS RATE FOR [GUYS] FROM 18 TO 90 YEARS... including those suffering from Diabetes, blood pressure, heart and psychological problems... NO SCRIPT CHARGES... FREECALL 0508 362 867...

Enhance your Libido... When you think of the bedroom, do you just think of sleep? ...You won't be surprised to find out that frustration in the bedroom is not a modern problem. All over the world, hundreds of substances believed to have aphrodisiac qualities have been tested for thousands of years. Now modern research into traditional aphrodisiacs has le[d] to the formulation of two natural supplement blends... The [guy] formula is called Horny Goat Weed Plus and the [gal] formula is named Horny Goat Weed For Her. The names might sound outlandish but Horny Goat Weed is actually the genuine name of a potent traditional aphrodisiac. Horny Goat Weed was discovered in 200 BC. Legend has it that an ancient Chinese goat herder noticed that his flock suddenly became sexually active after grazing in a certain patch of weed. The Chinese consider Horny Goat Weed to be the premier libido supporter for both [guys and gals]. Both formulas combine Horny Goat Weed with a number of other herbs traditionally used as aphrodisiacs, PLUS hormone balances for her or a little extra help with circulation, stimulation and stamina for him.

...Scientists have found a libido gene which, coupled with Viagra, could really get people going... The newly discovered gene... separates [guys] with the most voracious sexual appetite from others who would prefer a nice cup of tea. The discovery could lead to the creation of sex-drive-boosting drugs to complement performance enhancers such as Viagra... "How often you want to have sex may well be determined in your genes,"... said... a molecular geneticist who led the American research team... [The team] found that half of the 250 [guys] studied possessed the high-libido form of the gene in their DNA. The group was far more likely to have sex... than those who had the low-libido variety... – some several times daily...

It's a tough job but somebody's got to do it... ABOUT three nights a week – sometimes more – ...a 58-year-old... won't touch his beloved beer, shuns antihistamines and hops into bed early for a good night's sleep. Sure, [the guy's] retired and on full Army pension, but [it's] got big responsibilities these days and when [this guy isn't] in top form, there's nowhere to hide. Cummings is a porn star, the oldest... in the business. After a 25-year career in the military... [Cummings] has become a major force in an industry that chews up [guys] half his age. To his buddies in the military [Cummings] is a hero... [for] doing a job the average guy (industry insiders estimate 5000 [guys] inquire about job prospects each week) can only fantasise about. Cummings (not his real name) sees himself as about as wild as a box of salt. [Cummings] doesn't even believe his sex drive is unusual – "average" is how [Cummings] describes it. On the other hand, [Cummings is] certainly prolific. In just three and a half years in the

business [Cummings] has performed in some 140 movies. [Cummings] makes no bones about [his motivation for starring] in X-rated videos – and it's not for the money. "Where else could an old, fat, bald guy like me have so much fun with so many beautiful young [gals]?" ...But Cummings does possess something very few [guys] have: the ability to perform on command and in front of cameras, hot lights and several onlookers, often including the boyfriends of his sex partners. Talk about pressure. "That's something 99[%] of these hotshots who fantasise about getting into the business can't do," says... an adult-film producer and owner of Shooting Star productions. It's also one of the reasons why of the 600 to 700 porn actors in California (where an estimated 95[%] of American X-rated films are produced) only about 30 are [guys]. They are the treasured few who have a proven track record of functionality. While [gal] performers are generally considered on the down-side of their careers by the time they reach 25, [guys] – subject to the elusive ability to perform – can stay with the business almost indefinitely. After Cummings, for example, the next oldest [guy porn] star is... 50... [However, older gals are increasingly] becoming more visible in adult video. Shooting Star Video, for example, has a catalogue of more than 50 titles in the 40-plus and 50-plus age groups, a segment that accounts for about 20[%] of the company sales... Cummings' rise to X-rated fame could not have been more haphazard. After his wife of 22 years left him "for [someone] with a full head of hair," [Cummings] found himself drawn to the Californian swing scene. At a party [Cummings] met... a top starlet in adult video. His big chance came soon afterward when [the starlet] invited him to help as a stage-hand for one of her films. On that day a young actor was unable to perform the all-important climatic scene. When the director asked if someone could step in to finish the shot, Cummings volunteered. His Johnny-on-the-spot performance earned him an ovation from the crew and a bit role in a film being shot the next day. [Cummings] has had steady work since. "Word gets around quickly in this business,"... And while people ask if the erection drug Viagra might usher a new wave of senior [guy porn] stars, Cummings is flatly dismissive. "I... don't think Viagra is going to help any old guys break into this business." ...While [gals] typically earn \$US700 to \$1200... a scene... [(the scenes are well set and touch on the artistic with real fake orgasms'), guys] earn about a third of that. Cummings... [is usually] paid \$400 to \$1000 for a three-hour shoot.

...[A 62-minute ode to one gal's fellatio talents, *Deep Throat* was the movie that made pornography acceptable to the average citizen. The film, which opened in 1972 and immediately received favourable publicity (eventually grossing over \$30m), also piqued the interest of the New York cops – who tried to close it down. "Attendance was average until the police handed us all that publicity. The legal reaction is what made the film take off the way it did."]

...The Government's child welfare agency has gone to court to try to stop a... 7 1/2 months pregnant... former stripper... having a pornographic movie made of the birth of her child. The... Deputy Solicitor-General... said the unborn baby was entitled to grow up free of the stigma that would inevitably follow if the movie was allowed to proceed... and... that filming during childbirth... was an infringement of the child's privacy. "What the mother is proposing to do is not illegal, but... would have a negative flow-on effect nevertheless." ...The case is expected to finish today.

...[the] Health Minister... is seeking advice over plans to film a... birth for a porn movie. A High Court judge last week ruled Vixen Direct... could film the [mother]... in labour and giving birth, but... banned use of footage of the baby for the porn film, *Ripe*. Justice... declined an application by C[YF] to be given wardship of the unborn child and has instead appointed [the mother] an agent of the court. The [mother and the production company's owner] have been threatened with jail if they do not comply with the order.

...HARDCORE pornography is being filmed illegally in the Waitakere Ranges and at west coast beaches. [A p]ornographic film-maker... admits his company, Vixen Direct, filmed parts of its latest adult movie, *Ripe*, in the Waitakere Ranges without Auckland Regional Council... consent... [and] says both areas are popular with visiting foreign pornographic film-makers, who often use N[Z] actors in their movies... Commercial film-makers must pay the ARC \$1000 a day for filming permits. But [the film-maker says it] can't see why [it] should pay the ARC money to film in public locations[and – since the ARC says any] breach is not punishable by a fine... [– it'll] continue to film wherever [it] likes... "I'm not interested in bureaucracy... My attitude is I'm tangata whenua and I'll do what I like. As long as no member of the public can see it, we can film where we want. I haven't told [the ARC] and I don't consider it any of their business." ...Vixen Direct made national headlines this year when it revealed plans to use a [mother] giving birth in a pornographic film... [The] controversial film... screened at the Berlin Venus Adult Film Festival this month.

Nearly 50% of German viewers would like to see more pornography broadcast on network television each day, says a new survey. German media executives say pornography and soccer are regularly the highest rated programmes... [Meanwhile, a technician's] enjoyment of a hard-porn film seems to have killed huge profits for a firm in France. [The technician] was secretly watching[the film] in a Paris switching centre, which sends TV programmes around the world, when... it... unwittingly hit the wrong button. The film immediately displaced a children's programme in 21 Arab states. Saudi Arabia denounced this "attack on Islamic morals" and cancelled a \$10 million-plus contract with Canal France International.

...It's 4 pm on Friday. Most of your colleagues have gone, and your boss is in a meeting. Feeling bored, you persuade yourself you need to check some data on the Internet. You log on and start searching. As there is no one around, you decide to do something simpler and more entertaining. You request information on the Louvre, and enjoy a stroll around its virtual galleries. But improving your knowledge of European art is probably not what your company is paying you for. And you are almost certainly not the only employee using your firm's computer for purposes unconnected to work. Internet security firm Secure Computing found staff at one major corporation indulging in 400 hours of non-productive surfing a day. [The security firm's i]nternational marketing manager... says: "It's a fair assumption that staff in Britain with access to the Internet spend a daily average of 45 minutes looking at non-business sites. Once you're using the World Wide Web it's very, very easy to get side-tracked." Many Web sites accessed from the workplace contain pornography. When Nielsen Media Research investigated visitors to *Penthouse* magazine's Internet pages, it found that thousands were staff at well-known companies... Aside from the sheer waste of time – and the potential embarrassment of having employees' pornographic predilections made public – unofficial surfing can slow down computer speeds for legitimate users, especially if pictures or videos are downloaded... Last year, a researcher at Birmingham University... was jailed for storing child pornography on the university's computer and distributing it via the Internet. Just two months ago, NatWest Markets in London discovered that 15 of its staff were using the company's system to post pornography on the Internet. Three were sacked and 12 were reprimanded.

...Sex is the main motivation of Internet users, according to a survey in the latest *Web* magazine. Every two seconds, an Internet user consulted a site concerned with sex... [T]he four most popular code words chosen by people consulting the Yahoo search engine were: sex, chat, XXX, and Playboy, in that order. Nude, porno and *Penthouse* were respectively 6th, 7th and 10th... [Incidentally, a] quarter of N[Z]ers caught down-loading or trading explicit child pornography, torture and murder images on the Internet in the past year were boys aged between 14 and 17. The Internal Affairs Department's publications inspector... said that... 25... search warrants had been executed... [for boys in this age group]. Most parents were shocked by their children's behaviour but the parents of one 14-year-old did not seem to care... The boy had 600 explicit pictures, more than half featuring children. Most of the boys had been lured... with promises of money and "fun,"... to the graphic sites by... [paedophiles using] teenage chatlines... "Kids are encouraged to sell, trade and swap images, like swapping baseball cards, perpetuating the whole thing." There was also the chance the youths could become victims if they contacted people they met through the computer...

Free speech ruled in cyberspace when the [US] Supreme Court... dumped the Communications Decency Act, a law aimed at controlling minors' access to pornography on the Internet... [C]ivil libertarians, Internet surfers and businesses, paedophiles and perverts alike welcomed the ruling, which declared unconstitutional the law that made it a crime to transmit sexually explicit material to anyone younger than 18. In his decision, [the judge] found the law was overly vague and would infringe on the free speech rights of adults in the name of protecting children. [The judge] ruled that constitutional free speech protections should apply to online systems as they do to books and newspapers... [The] inspector of publications for

the Department of Internal Affairs in N[Z] said the non-specific and broad nature of the... act was the crux of the problem and enabled it to be overturned under the guise of free speech. [However, NZ's] Films, Videos and Publications Classification Act passed in 1993 made the rules on objectionable material in this country black and white... "There are six things which, if they are depicted or promoted, are automatically objectionable under[NZ] statute. They are: child pornography, bestiality, necrophilia, extreme torture... the use of urine or excrement in association with sexual conduct and the use of coercion or violence to compel somebody into sexual activity." Although child pornography appears to be a loose category, the law defines it as the exploitation of children or young persons for sexual purposes. Any depiction of children in a sexual circumstance, be it performing sexual activity or posing in a sexually suggestive manner, is deemed to be objectionable. The... act defined as a publication anything that can be stored and reproduced under electronic format... [- so the] department's powers extend to the Internet where people trading in indecent material can be traced back to the service provider. The department has the power to obtain the user's details and search his or her home. The department also works closely with the police and the Customs Service, which set up its pornography programme about three years ago. But the department is far from smug or convinced that its roadblocks on the information super-highway can't be bypassed... Children accessing indecent material was a concern and the industry had responded by developing special software to filter out what youngsters might see, but this was merely an interim measure. "Technology and law can only do so much... We have to compromise and come up with solutions that are going to work both ways. We can't restrict people's freedom unduly but we have to find ways to protect children from objectionable material." ...The... Internet Service Providers' Association of N[Z]... said that despite what some paedophiles think, it was no longer "safe" to transfer pictures through the Internet[, although]... parental... responsibility for supervising their children's use of the Internet... was the first line of defence.

...Paedophiles and child porn distributors may find it harder to target young children on the Internet, now guidelines for parents and children have been issued. "Keeping your children safe on-line" and the "Guide to On-Line Safety" will soon be sent to N[Z] secondary schools and computer retailers... [■ Experts] will meet in Auckland on Friday to discuss the extent of computerised child pornography in N[Z]. Thirty representatives from the police, Customs, I[SP]s and the Judiciary will consider increasing cooperation between agencies and the public.

...set up in 1991 and with branches in 30 countries... Ecpat, formerly End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism but now known as the Campaign Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, has turned its guns on how new technology is being used to spread child pornography... The ease and immediacy of computer communications meant paedophiles were no longer isolated and... led them to believe their behaviour could be legitimised merely as their particular "sexual orientation." ...In a statement published after... [last] week's meeting, organised by Ecpat, [which] brought together police, Internal Affairs inspectors, Justice officials... and... I[SP]s... the group said... "There is convincing evidence that many N[Z]ers are regularly downloading child pornography images despite the illegality of this action. Some of this material portrays horrific and disturbing sexual scenes involving... infants." ...N[Z] needed new laws to bring legislation up to date with new computer and on-line developments. I[SP]s however, are concerned they will be asked by law enforcement officials to act as censors for their customers... "We can't censor everything." ...The general manager of the Internet Company of N[Z]... said it was important that people realised the Internet... had all the attributes, good and bad, of the social community... [S]ervice providers, while wanting to be responsible, did not have the capacity or right to be judge and jury. Of billions of transactions every day, only a very small percentage would relate to pornography... The meeting did, however, publish two basic principles that should please many of the Internet providers: the right to freedom of expression and the right to have privacy respected. But the providers were asked to adopt a code of conduct relating to their business as soon as possible. [● 'To find out just how accessible objectionable material is the NZ Herald searched the Internet for, and easily found, a series of nude photographs of young boys in various poses and lists of movies which featured boys naked, engaging in incest, simulating masturbation, urinating, cross-dressing and being raped, as well as writings discussing paedophilia.']

...The porn video *No 1 New Golden Boys*, depicting sexual acts between boys, should not be available for sale or hire from N[Z] video shops, Customs said yesterday... A Canterbury University lecturer... aged 46, was fined \$2000 last week for importing the video from Germany... [But on] Tuesday, the part-owner of a Christchurch video store said his shop held two copies of the video... The shop proprietor, who asked not to be named... agreed... that it was "grossly indecent," but anyone aged 18 or more could hire it legally. A Customs officer... said [the lecturer] was fined for importing, not viewing, the... video... "It does not have a classification..." [However, an] Internal Affairs officer... said the video was six or seven years old and the first in a series of about 36 *Golden Boys* tapes... [I]t was possible some of the other videos in the series could be completely different and approved for hire or sale on shelves because they might involve older [actors].

...Videos, computer software and photographs featuring child pornography, torture and sexual fetishes have been discovered by Auckland police... They also seized \$50,000 of pirated computer equipment from a Manurewa house and have charged [its occupant] with counterfeiting and obstruction. More people will be charged... once police computer experts have cracked codes to see what is on the discs and after the videos have been... [further scrutinised. A] Papakura... Detective Sergeant... said the seized material contained disgusting and bizarre images. "I'm shocked that people would even want to be in possession of some of this stuff." ...It is the first time the... Papakura police sexual abuse unit... has become involved in searching for child pornography... Many of the images had been introduced into the country via the Internet and some computer discs had arrived by post... "Some people are gathering their own libraries of objectionable material and setting up their own web sites." The searches were already having a snowball effect[, which meant that the]... police had increased the number of staff working in the electronic forensics field and were also bringing in overseas experts to help... [In international news,] China has released figures from its latest crackdown on pornography... and they are massive: more than 12 million publications and 1.8 million video discs seized.

...[people who download child pornography from the Internet face up to five years in jail under a crackdown by the British Government. In legislation to be enacted this year, jail sentences would also increase to 10 years for people who created and distributed pornography involving under 16s. A former glam-rocker is serving a two-month jail sentence after child pornography was found stored on his computer.]

...the "glam-rock" singer... renowned for... platform shoes and outrageous costumes[, and]... who sold 18 million records in a rollercoaster career, was... arrested by British police probing child pornography after indecent images were allegedly found on a computer [the star] took to be repaired.

...[A 'FOUNDING Bay City Rollers member has admitted possessing child porn. The former drummer for one of Britain's most famous 1970s teeny-bop acts admitted having indecent photographs and videos of children. The former drummer, now a senior nurse at Edinburgh's royal infirmary, told an Edinburgh court the porn belonged to an American friend. The former drummer said nothing as it left the court with a cap low over his eyes. The former drummer will be sentenced next month. The case came just weeks after another 1970s British pop phenomenon was released from prison after serving two months for possessing hardcore child pornography.' In further news from overseas, France's]... operation ADO 71... [has to date] resulted in 300 people being charged with possession of child pornographic videos which were made in Poland, Spain, the Netherlands and Germany. In June this year 71 distributors and purchasers of similar videos which were shot in Colombia and discovered when French police infiltrated the so-called Toro Bravo network appeared in court. Since July, French police have been trying to pinpoint a school where an erotic film using children was shot.

...writing... a pornographic book about children being tortured cost [a NZer] \$1000 in fines and a \$200 lawyer's fee when [the author] appeared in the Wellington District Court yesterday. The judge said [the author], aged 44, had hoped to sell the manuscript to an overseas publisher.

...[the Marquis de Sade - who was incarcerated for writing about sodomy, necrophilia and other topics that appalled the people of Napoleon's day - was "ignored as a boy and essentially abandoned by his mother." The boy went to stay with different relatives, including a priest with a library of pornography.]

...‘a local edition of *Hustler*, the magazine happy to be branded “porn for the working guy” – “it tries to be offensive on all levels” – will be available next month.’ By the way,] **girlie magazines are no longer regarded as subversive in Russia, [so] it’s time for the first home-grown centrefold...**

[When we meet her, the first home-grown Russian centrefold, standing] in a simple floral dress... looks like[a] wholesome Belorussian girl... The glistening black hair demurely taken back off her forehead reveals a heart-shaped face, and a pair of large soulful eyes. [The centrefold] must have looked breathtaking... [while standing] in front of the audience, her violin tucked under her chin... as a star pupil at the Moscow Conservatoire... [The centrefold] wears... little... except lashings of lip gloss... in this month’s edition of *Playboy*... Next to the full frontal cover of *Penthouse*, and the array of hard-porn magazines which beckon S & M fans from newspaper kiosks all over Moscow, [the centrefold’s cover picture,] gazing out from under her dark eyelashes looks very demure, not a nipple to be seen, a sort of sultry Princess Di... The “wholesomeness” of *Playboy*’s brand of soft-focus porn, a complete absence of whips, manacles, or even body hair, was a novelty for the Russian punters. But they continue to buy it every month, and now in its first anniversary the magazine sells a steady 100,000 copies. Until now all have used imported Playmates... [because] Russian porn has not produced models endowed with the sanitised Barbie-girl sexuality of the *Playboy* girl... “In Russian erotica there is no healthy sexual centre, and the girls look like frightened animals,”... said... [the] Russian *Playboy*’s editor... THUS the hunt was on to find... a [local Barbie-girl. The winner] was selected out of 300 contestants... The competition yielded a diverse crop of photographs, everything from shots of family vacations in the Crimea to bikini-clad gangster molls in the Canary Islands. “We weeded out the obvious undesirables such as the nude photograph of himself sent in by a 40-year old [guy,” said the editor, who]... candidly admits that as far as [his opinion] is concerned the *Playboy* models could be from outer space. “Their huge breasts defy the laws of gravity. It is not really sexy. They are not like real [people], more like some fairytale object, a geometric formula or a beautiful car. I don’t think the people in American *Playboy* will like that speech very much”... [However, skip] to this month’s centrefold, and it is hard to spot the essential Russianness of the undoubtedly beautiful [model, although the] backdrop of central Moscow in the snow does add some Russian atmosphere. [The model] bravely poses in minus 30 deg C with nothing more than a jaunty fur hat, and a generous dollop of instant bronze suntan. Over the page... [the model] is posing at Revolution Square metro in a Red Army jacket and hat, and suspenders. Anyone in search of erotica will be disappointed – there is something distinctly coy about these pictures... On the subject of her modelling career [the centrefold’s] face looks temporarily blank... “My ambition, my life, is music not modelling.” ...[but the centrefold] is flattered by the attention and likes the money... It is unsurprising in today’s Russia that... the... Playmate could have equally as well been a brain surgeon living on a salary of \$50 a month, or a cosmonaut on hard times... [Nude modelling] finances her penchant for... [designer] clothes and... make-up. More importantly it enables her to send money to her family. Her parents are both engineers, which means they are living on a very small income... “But there is more to life than money, isn’t there?” [the model pleaded while regarding] the Mercedes and BMW’s disgorging Russia’s new rich at the doors of Moscow’s most expensive hotel. “Yes, but what precisely?” “It is the soul,”... The soul crops up a lot in [the centrefold’s] conversation. Her grandmother is also concerned about souls, because [grandma] is praying for her granddaughter’s. “My mother and father are not critical of me posing nude, but my grandmother has not spoken to me since,”... Soul was to be found almost completely lacking in Los Angeles where the latest Playmate was invited to stay as a guest of [*Playboy*’s founder] in his Playboy mansion... Had [the centrefold] been overwhelmed by the luxury, and glamour of Hollywood? “I liked the good service in the shops, and it was very clean, but... it is a plastic city with plastic people. They smile too much, and they have no soul, [whereas] we Russians have a lot of soul.” DESPITE her spiritual bent [the centrefold] sees nothing wrong in shedding her clothes before the camera. In fact it is a public service. “If you have a beautiful body there is nothing wrong in showing it to other people. On the contrary I think it is greedy if you keep it to yourself. Why did so many painters paint naked [gals]? There is no shame in it.” No, but their paintings did not have “Entertainment for [Guys] Only” written on them. So what more does [the centrefold want] from life? “I would like to get married and have a baby... and... I want to leave my footprint on history.” ...All you need is a back room, a couple of girls and a camera and you too can produce a porn magazine[and during]... the past five years the sex industry has taken off in Russia... From being a nation where sex was performed as an act of duty, the Russians are making up for lost time... Sex in its infinite varieties is everywhere...

CYBER SEX... One of the main early uses of electronic communications [wa]s to let [guys] watch and talk to naked... [gals – which has], in the end, le[d] to better things... Many of the main innovations in communications are tried out first – and, in a few cases, even developed – by the adult-entertainment business. Video-conferencing on personal computers is merely the latest in a list of electronic technologies whose chief early colonisation is by the erotic. The cinema, the videocassette, France’s Minitel system, the compact disc and pay-per-view television have all been used, in their early years, partly or mainly for adult entertainment. Some of them still are. Adult entertainment is now a main-stay of pay-per-view television. In American hotels, between \$NZ200 million and \$250 million, or at least half of the revenues for pay-per-view films, usually comes from adult entertainment. NOT surprisingly, as pay-per-view television in the U[S] has become available on cable and satellite channels, the two main companies in the business, Playboy and Spice Entertainment... have rushed to take advantage of it. Between them, their four adult channels account for perhaps \$280 million of the \$845 million American market for pay-per-view television. Now, both have big plans to make money from cybersex... Spice[Entertainment]... has launched Cyberspice, an on-line peep-show... Playboy Entertainment[’s]... internet site, with 5 million “hits” a day, [i]s “potentially our most important revenue-earner.” The company is now experimenting with charging people to peek at a page. But on the internet they will come head-to-head with competitors battle-hardened in an area where the ability to make good use of the latest electronic kit is the key to success. These are the veterans of the telephone sex industry... The service... does not come cheap. Customers pay almost \$8.50 a minute and stay on the line, on average, for 13 minutes, running up a bill of \$110. The girl at the other end receives \$35 an hour... Customers may pay by two methods: through the cost of the call, in which case the bill appears on their ordinary telephone bill (or their employer’s), or by credit card. To escape regulatory constraints, companies using the first method often run their services from faraway places with strange-sounding names, many of them penurious [Last World countries (e.g., Niue – ‘Japanese are making tens of thousands of calls a month to the remote South Pacific island, but it has nothing to do with interest in Polynesian culture: it has everything to do with clever advertisements in X-rated Japanese magazines which promote international phone sex numbers in a way that misleads many into thinking the calls are within Japan, causing big trouble for Japan’s major international telephone supplier as thousands of customers are calling to complain they were billed for calls to countries they have never heard of, let alone tried to call)’].

...Internet addicts roam cyberspace in search of social support or sexual fulfilment rather than information, according to a U[S] study released yesterday... Respondents said they saw “cybersex” – playing out erotic fantasies of novel sexual acts via the Internet – as the ultimate safe sex method to fulfil sexual urges without fear of disease. “Unlike 900 numbers which can be traced... dependents viewed cybersex to be completely anonymous... They feel free to carry out illicit sexual impulses and were able to act in ways that differed from real life conduct without fear of repercussions,” [a]... University of Pittsburgh psychologist... said... at the American Psychological Association convention... in... CHICAGO...

[‘In Florida, a Fort Lauderdale phone sex operator has won a “minimal” workers’ compensation settlement after claiming it was injured after regularly “pleasuring herself” at work. Her lawyer said his client developed carpal tunnel syndrome – a form of OOS – in both hands. “My client was told to do whatever it takes to keep the person on the phone as long as possible.”’]

...AS everyone knows, the main contribution the Internet has made to society is to stem the steady flow to the corner dairy by those in search of mags with pics of nude babes. Now, of course, you can purr over the pin-ups without ever leaving the privacy of your own home. Even super babes... Offer... [the name of a particular] Danish supermodel... to a search machine and you’ll get around 16,300 matches – most of them in the form of tribute pages; many of them salivations to... [her] starkers... form... But before anyone gets over-excited, it pays to remember that it’s more

unusual to see a supermodel on the catwalk actually wearing clothes than it is to see them strutting the stuff they're paid to show off. Venture into sites with names like "The Realms of Magic" (there are 30 of [th]em), or... "Supersite for a Supermodel" and what you'll get is gallery after gallery of vaguely arty shots of [the Dane] wearing wisps of fabric which pass for haute couture, a snake or two or (frequently) a smile and a splash of ocean spray. Then there are sites... [wh]ere you can learn such fascinating stuff as the fact that [the supermodel]'s measurements are 90cm-60cm-90cm, that [the supermodel] was born on Christmas Day in 1968 and... appeared in a "British sexploitation film" (double click for more info), that [the supermodel] never diets or exercises and that [it] is (according to [the supermodel] herself, apparently) "a total Viking when it comes to drinking. I can drink any bloke under the table." There's a quote from ex-accessory Michael Hutchence about how much [the supermodel] eats – a lot, some vital information on how [the supermodel] lost her virginity and... well, a lot of other stuff that obviously interests a lot of people out there in cyber-model space judging by the feed-back page. And the two questions... asked most by visitors to the site? "Is [the supermodel] aware of the tribute?" ([the]... Net-nut who... [created the site] has no idea, and "how can you get hold of a copy of the sexploitation video?"

...["I've faked it with everyone," says a 24-year-old, who's only half bragging. As one of Britain's leading "faker makers" – warped web-heads who submit fake nude shots of celebs to the Internet – the 24-year-old spends half his time dreaming up, and later mocking up, what stars look like without their clothes on. According to the 24-year-old, the *Friends* co-stars are among the most popular subjects of Internet photo-fakery, since none have ever posed for explicit nude shots – let alone hardcore girl-on-girl action. And stripping down any photograph is scarily easy. All fakers need is a decent head shot, a matching snap from a porn mag and a copy of Adobe Photoshop. "However, you better have a pretty thorough knowledge of a gal's body," the 24-year-old confides, failing to explain how someone who spends so long in front of his computer could possibly acquire one. There are good financial reasons why people invest thousands of pounds in Net gear just to fake up phoney honeys. A 20-year-old has one of the largest selections of bogus beauties on the web, and gets £6 for every £10 users pay to access an age verification service – more than enough to cover his site's £600-per-month running costs. The 20-year-old insists that purveyors of pervy pics only do it because they worship the stars. "Fakers spend hours on their work because they adore them, and wish to create a visual fantasy of them. Celebrities should take them with a grain of salt and be humbled by their popularity." Although many of the famous fakes currently circulating the web were originally passed off as genuine, the process has now gone legit. Today, sites are clearly labelled as fakes, which does little to dampen the enthusiasm of browsers bursting to see Buffy The Vampire Slayer in the buff. So what do the subjects of these so-called "cyber-crimes" make of the fakers' efforts? The most-faked actor on the Net, the *X-Files* co-star, seems relatively laid-back about starring in more than 500 fraudulent photos. "It's not her," says her publicist. Still, not many celebrities share the joke. The second most-faked actor recently complained about the fakes sully her girl-next-door image. "But there's absolutely nothing you can do," the star of *The Net* said. "It's uncharted – like the Wild West." Even actors who regularly disrobe for the camera, like the star of *Species*, are unhappy about being digitally touched up. "I hate the Internet. The fact that you take your clothes off in a film makes them think that they can say and do anything." There is very little the "victims" can do about it. In the US, fakers are protected by the First Amendment – unless they sell shots, in which case they may fall foul of copyright laws. Some celebrities pay up to \$2,000 per month to watchdog firms which trawl the Internet issuing writs to those displaying or offering for sale dodgy shots of their clients. One such company, Cyper Trackers, was launched by the mother of an actor after her 12-year-old son accidentally downloaded dodgy shots of his celebrity sister. Ironically, genuinely raunchy shots of the sister are readily available to anyone with a Blockbuster membership, since the sister shed her inhibitions in *Fear and Poison Ivy 2*. But that didn't stop the family filing a lawsuit against two faker-makers. And they're not the only ones. A retired businessperson, better known as the Fake Detective, has been "recovering the sullied reputations of beautiful damsels in distress since 1996." His own website – which some say is just an excuse to publish shots of nude celebrities, although the Fake Detective insists his non-profit service is run "for the public interest" – features an A to Z of naked gal celebrities, but not one solitary naked guy celebrity. "Those guys can take care of themselves," the Fake Detective retorts.

... 'When it comes to painless and effective ways to get your own back on an ex, nothing beats a sly sex session with her best friend. Sadly, the chances of your former girlfriend's lifelong buddy agreeing to this are slim – leaving most spurned blokes exacting pathetic revenge by scribbling their ex's phone number on the toilet wall. But these days, thanks to the Internet, there's a new way to get your own back – guaranteed to impress your mates while deeply traumatising your erstwhile partner. Ex-Girlfriends is one of a growing number of websites devoted to defaming a former lover by publicising stories they'd rather forget. Visitors are free to add libellous stories of their own one-time partners; pick of the bunch is the tale of a Montana hunter whose ex rolled a massive boulder on top of him. But if mere words don't satisfy your hunger for revenge, you could always send a nude picture of an old flame to The Naked Ex-Girlfriend Collection, which has an alarmingly up-to-date "Ex Of The Hour" spot. But don't expect sympathy if you get burned yourself – details of your dastardly behaviour might turn up on The Dick List, where gals from all around the world rant about guys who have made their lives a misery. Worst of all, you could appear in the Ex-Boyfriend Nude Pic Club'...

'When my fiancé broke up with me I was devastated. With tears streaming down my face, I carted his things to the backyard and started to burn them. When I came to the intimate photos we'd taken together, I knew what I would do. I collected the most sexually explicit photos of my ex and phoned a workmate who is a whiz on the Internet. The workmate sent my ex's photos out across the Net, specifically targeting gay sites, and also attached my ex's personal details – name, e-mail address and home telephone number. I heard through mutual friends that the pictures are still available on the chosen sites more than a year later. My ex received e-mail messages and telephone calls from gay guys for months until changing his phone number and e-mail address.'

... 'Scotland Yard's child pornography squad has investigated photographs on display at London's prestigious Saatchi Gallery. Metropolitan Police said they had received three complaints about pictures in the gallery's current exhibition *I Am a Camera*. Police would not identify the pictures, but the gallery said they were images by a London-based American photographer. They depict her young children clad only in masks. The gallery said police threatened to seize the photos if they were not removed. The police had also told the publisher of a book on which the exhibition is based to pull all copies of the volume from bookstores. "They warned me that the book I have published was in contravention of the obscenity acts. This is not child pornography. These are brilliant works of art." In local news, 'police are trying to track down the person who distributed a pirated computer game CD-Rom with direct links to sites distributing child pornography. The CD was offered widely at flea-markets and car-boot sales and through magazine advertisements, according to Ecpat. "The CD has been identified as made and produced in NZ, but that person may have downloaded it unwittingly," said an Ecpat spokesperson, who would not name the game to prevent people from deliberately seeking out the CD-Rom. It was one game in a compilation of games for children. Police knew the city where the disk had been made and were following leads. Local ISPs had been told to deny all access to the site from within NZ.'

... 'An Auckland Internet buff who was caught with up to 30,000 pictures of child sex and rape on his computer has been jailed for four months after a landmark court case. The Internet buff, aged 54, was sentenced yesterday after being convicted of two counts of making copies of objectionable material for supply and two of distributing it for gain. The buff was charged under laws written in 1993, and there was much debate during his trial over the relevance of those laws to Internet crime. Staff at Auckland's electronic crimes unit yesterday applauded the sentence and said it sent a strong message to other paedophiles. They believed it was the first conviction of its type in NZ. Police allege the buff used the nickname Lurker Down Under while a member of an international child pornography ring called Pado University, which was busted after US detectives started a probe in February. Thirteen people were arrested in the US, Canada, Sweden and NZ. The operations manager of the electronic crimes unit was happy that the Auckland Internet buff was being jailed, even though some of his overseas accomplices were imprisoned for years rather than months. "For NZ, under the current legislation, I'm very pleased."

... 'A primary school principal who collected hundreds of child pornography pictures from the Internet was fined \$4400 yesterday in the Whangarei District Court. The offender had been principal of Hora Hora Primary School in Whangarei for six years until being dismissed by the school board

following a raid on his Kamo home by the Department of Internal Affairs and police. The pictures, many of which featured girls as young as 5, were grossly indecent and particularly graphic. 722 images had been downloaded from 27 Internet porn sites, five of which were dedicated to child pornography. When police asked him why a principal would have such pictures, the ex-principal simply replied: "Because I'm stupid." His barrister said its client had no other explanation for the offending, which had started 12 months earlier out of curiosity, but had eventually cost a 35-year teaching career. The ex-principal, who still lives in Whangarei, was now unemployed and had no prospect of working again in the education sector. The judge ordered that the images be destroyed.'

... 'A judge has criticised the limited penalties available to sentence people convicted of possessing pornographic pictures of children. The judge made the comment after fining an unemployed and previously bankrupt 60-year-old \$760, with court costs of \$4940, for possessing more than 250 computer images of girls as young as 3 involved in sexual acts, bestiality and extreme cruelty. Under section 108 of the Films, Videos and Publications Act 1993, the fine was the only type of penalty the judge could give the offender, who pleaded guilty in the Pukekohe District Court to 38 charges of possessing objectionable material. The judge also complained that while it could order the destruction of the material, it did not have the power to confiscate or destroy the offender's computer, which will be returned to him once the offending material is removed. In his sentencing notes, the judge said: "Mr, there are times when the law is a bit of an ass and this is one of them."

... 'A federal judge yesterday imposed a preliminary injunction banning the enforcement of a US law called the Child Online Protection Act, which was aimed at protecting children from sexually explicit material on the Internet. The judge's decision was a victory for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and a setback for the Administration. In his ruling, the judge expressed sympathy with the law's intent, but said the law threatened the constitutional free-speech rights, adding that "the greater good" would be served by barring enforcement of the law, for which a temporary restraining order that the judge imposed in November had been set to expire last night. The law was passed by the Republican-controlled Congress and signed by the US President in October as a replacement for the Communications Decency Act. Unlike the earlier law, the new one was aimed solely at the operators of commercial Internet sites. It required Web sites to impose electronic proof-of-age barriers, including credit-card registration systems. Violators faced up to 6 months jail and \$50,000 in fines. The ruling stems from a legal challenge mounted against the law by the ACLU and 17 Internet companies, booksellers, homosexual rights groups, medical professionals and the media. The Justice Department defended the law.' In other news from overseas, 'Swedish chambermaids want alarms to protect them from attacks by hotel guests who become "over-excited" after watching pornography on television. They also want to work in pairs. The Hotel Workers' Federation says chambermaid work has become disgusting since hotels began screening hard-core pornography.'

... 'Denmark's most popular place of culture listed in official guidebooks under museums is the Original Scandinavian Erotic Museum. A four-storey monument to Denmark's place in modern history as the first country to liberate pornography (in 1968-69), the Erotic Museum claims to be the first in the world to put the history of eroticism into perspective'. By the way, 'adult erotica is a \$100 million industry in NZ'...

'If AUSNs are as shy about sex as some experts say, a visit to Sydney's Hordern Pavillion over the next few days could cure all. Rarely have so many sex aids been assembled under one roof. 50,000 people are expected to examine the products and services in an adult entertainment industry said to be worth \$A2.5 billion a year. Sexpo is the Royal Easter Show of the sex industry. Some displays may raise eyebrows, but all are legal. Body paint comes in four flavours, as do nipple drops and "orgasmic" love gel. Bondage devotees can choose from all manner of whips, paddles and harnesses. There are dildos and vibrators of every conceivable colour, flavour and size, including a few that wouldn't suffer by comparison with a surface-to-air missile. Some even glow in the dark.'

... 'an American who was pulled off a plane and asked to take a sex toy out of her luggage after it started vibrating is suing the airline for the public humiliation it felt when her name was called out.' In local news, 'three companies involved in sex fashion and toys have been given a helping hand by the Trade Development Board to attend "Sexpo" in Melbourne. Designer Sex Gear was working with two other companies to break into AUS's \$120 million retail market for sex-related products. The group had initially planned to go to the Sydney Sexpo last month, but instead had sent a representative to make contacts'...

Sex shop owners are angry about an Auckland City Council proposal to restrict the spread of the industry. A number of councillors want to use the Resource Management Act to make it harder to set up sex shops, despite planners' warnings against the idea. Councillors are particularly concerned about sex shops near schools or residential areas... [but only] massage parlours, treated as entertainment facilities, need... to obtain resource consent from the council... at present. Escort agencies are treated as offices, and book, video and sex-aid stores as retail premises. They are all permitted as of right in business zones... The deputy mayor... [was amongst the councillors who] favoured restrictions on the setting up of new sex shops. "The more we make this sort of stuff available, the more people will participate. I accept it's been around thousands of years but I don't believe we should have the blatant sex shops that we have got in the city." ...[in reply, the] owner of the Pleasure Chest magazine, video and sex-aids store on Karangahape Rd, said yesterday that... "They're a bunch of hard-core churchies, aren't they, using their position [as councillors] to push their personal views on to the rate-payers." ...The owner of a similar shop, who declined to be named, said the proposal was a vote-catching move and that the council wanted to "clean out the city" for the America's Cup. "There's a need for these shops or they wouldn't survive."

...A new town-planning code which will control N[Z]'s premier patch of real estate comes into effect today. The proposed district plan for central Auckland... may include restrictions on new inner-city sex shops, to complement controls proposed for the rest of the city... Meanwhile, the suburban and gulf plans will from today contain a proposed new definition: "commercial sex premises." These will be deemed "non-complying" activities and force applicants to obtain a council resource consent and submit plans to public objections and hearings. The proposed plan changes will be publicly notified together with the central-area proposal and will also be subject to submissions, hearings and appeals.

...a former Lord Mayor of the southern NSW city of Wollongong, was allegedly associated with... a wealthy real estate agent and another former mayor... who... was involved with paedophile rings supplying local and Philippine boys as young as 13 to fellow deviants, procuring victims from the streets and even from a refuge for the homeless. [The real estate agent's] network was linked to Costellos nightclub in Kings Cross, where the top floor was converted to cubicles rented to [paedophiles] to drug and have sex with young boys. [The real estate agent] was also associated with another pervert who ran a bed and breakfast resort for paedophiles on a farm near Wollongong, whose vices including filming acts of bestiality between boys and farm animals... Girls... as young as 12... [are] offered food, shelter, protection and drugs, [to] strip... in... Kings Cross... clubs. - 1997

...the art of strip tease has become strip sleaze[(another 'sad commentary is that the gal who made the most amount of money ever on film had to strip to do it')]. The glittering strip acts which once drew huge crowds to the Cross and St Kilda have degenerated into squalid live sex shows... [Incidentally, over] 30,000 Australians visit the Philippines every year and few are there just to see the sights... [However, with the] end of the Marcos regime... and emerging Filipino [gal movements, is]... the heyday of this X-rated fantasyland over?

San Francisco could become the first[US] city to license group sex clubs... [A] member of the city's governing Board of Supervisors, is working on legislation that would have the city grant permits to businesses "that encourage patrons to engage in, or to watch other patrons engaging in, sexual activities," the *San Francisco Chronicle* said... [In local news, a] paper prepared for an international tourism conference by... Waikato University's education studies department, has called for the promotion of prostitution as a means of shedding the "rugby, racing and beer" and "green and

squeaky clean" images of N[Z]. Sex tourism was already worth \$9.4 million a year in Auckland, and \$5.2 million in the capital, [the paper's author] said. "Ignoring 9000 people working in an industry which generates millions of dollars is absurd." ...[the author, who] is writing a book, *Sex: Learning to Work It*, about mentoring and apprenticeship in the industry... was shocked by interest in her "innocuous little presentation," but admitted that the sex industry was topical because of the murders of three sex workers in Auckland. Her paper, *Sex Tourism in N[Z] – What Do the Kiwi Prostitutes Have to Say About It?* will be delivered to delegates from 17 countries at the Pacific Rim Tourism 2000 Conference in Rotorua today. However, [the Tourism Board's]... deputy chief executive... said the board believed the figures... quoted were suspect and anyway it had no intention of taking up the suggestion... as part of its international marketing strategy... "We feel the suggestion that N[Z]ers should sell their bodies to promote themselves to tourists is ridiculous." ...[the author] spent two years studying the N[Z] sex industry, and talked to 300 workers about their experiences with foreign clients. Her paper suggests that the Karangahape Rd and Fort St areas of Auckland should be valued as tourism attractions, and Cuba St and Vivian St, in Wellington, could be promoted as "the world's smallest red-light district." "They should be cleaned up and equipped with proper lighting to encourage pedestrian traffic and to make it safer for people who work there. No one's interests are being served keeping it out of the public eyes." Foreigners would learn more about the other side of life in N[Z] by spending time talking to sex workers.

...[the] Prostitutes' Collective agrees the sex industry could be used as a successful marketing tool. Kiwis who travelled overseas often cited a visit to a red light district as a highlight... said... [a member of the collective. The NZ] Tourism Board chief executive... declined to comment on sex tourism... [L]ast week... Auckland's mayor said it)... wanted massage parlours forced out of the city after the murders of [3] sex workers in a week.

...prostitution, despite the massage parlour ads that say "No experience necessary," is a skilled job. "In an average one-hour booking, the bonk takes five minutes and you have to talk to the guy for the other 55 minutes[,"] says an author and)... lecturer in Waikato University's department of education studies since July 1994, [although] her accent singles her out as Canadian... What is the academic's response to public comments about her – ...from the polite end of the [social] spectrum – this week? Bemused laughter... The outcry that has brought more than her 15 minutes of infamy started unexpectedly at the Pacific Rim Tourism 2000 conference... There are... reasons [her] views jangle the nerves of everyone from your mum to politicians. Mainstream N[Z] holds two main opinions about prostitutes: they are victims of drug or sexual abuse or both; their work degrades the position of [gals]. The longevity of their profession does not stop prostitution from eliciting a sense of shame and wrong in the most liberal of [NZ households. The author] has heard this before: "There are a lot of feminists who want my jugular. There are [gals] who believe that prostitution is rape. Whenever you talk about prostitution there's such a wide range of opinion and ideas and beliefs. My particular stance is that it's just a job. We should decriminalise the industry so [gals] cannot be charged with soliciting or living off the earnings. We should bring it out into the open and recognise prostitution for the personal service which it is." ...[the author says many guys] in our society depend on prostitutes: the lonely, the ugly, the disabled, who would otherwise find it difficult to find a sexual partner... In [her] ideal world, brothels would be visited in the same way we pop in to see the hairdresser or hire a personal trainer at the gym... [Her] research cannot be done in an office. "I spend my weekends doing research. I live and breathe it. That's one of my sins – I'm having too much fun,"... The interview ends. [The author is] busy. Got papers to mark and then [it's] off to Tauranga. Where to? A brothel called Made in Heaven.

...EUROPE of the late 20th century has the free movement of goods and girls – call-girls, brides, escorts, dancers, hostesses and a range of other euphemisms for [young and old girls] who often end up in prostitution. In Hungary, a trafficker can buy an orphan girl for the price of an old car – around \$1350. [The trafficker] can sell her to a western pimp for \$4000 and [the pimp], in turn, can get his money back several times over by leasing her to brothels in London, Paris or Amsterdam. The trade in [gals] is booming because... [although t]rafficking in drugs makes money... it is increasingly risky and now carries sentences of up to 20 years[, whereas trading in gals] is easy and profitable, especially when you can bring them from eastern Europe in a car or van, saving on the plane fare. A European Commission conference in Vienna on trafficking in [gals] heard that the best-known traffic, in cleaners, sweatshop workers and brides from the Far East, is the tip of the iceberg. An increasing number of the [people] providing sexual services in western European capitals are now single mothers or unemployed [gals] from central and eastern Europe. According to the Brussels-based International Organisation for Migration... the trade affects thousands of [gals] each year. It works like this: through friends or newspaper advertisements, [gals] learn of jobs as dancers or hostesses in western Europe. The jobs demand no language skills and promise high earnings and a work permit... [The] director-general of the IOM, says: "It may seem naive of these [gals] to take up the offers, but they are often very poor... To them, the offer of a work permit in the wealthy west is like a gift of gold." ...The [gals] are charged a fee of up to \$22,000 for being brought to the west. It is reimbursable as they work, but there are other deductions: the pimps' commission, lodging and food. The system ensures that they are constantly in debt and are able to keep only between 10 and 25[%] of what they earn. Vice units throughout Europe agree that, whatever the... country of origin and under whatever pretext they have been brought to the west, they suffer brutal conditions: 12-hour working days, imprisonment, violence and rape... For the police and voluntary groups working with [the victims], the Vienna conference provided a chance to exchange business cards and meagre statistics. Few shared... the European Justice Commissioner's)... optimism that trafficking might move on to the political agenda. [An official] from the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry, was particularly pessimistic: "...let us be realistic... [Eastern gals] will go on... working in the west... until the west does the only thing it knows how to do: put up the walls of Fortress Europe. Then no one will get in, just like during the Cold War." [In related news, a recent UN]... report described prostitution among children as young as seven or eight in Brazil. - 1996

According to unofficial estimates, more than 10,000 girls aged between 10 and 15 are prostitutes in Dhaka and other... Bangladeshi... cities...

CLIMBING FOR MILES THROUGH THE terraced cornfields of the Himalayan foothills, the Nepali porter finally reached his destination: a one-room clinic. [The porter] had been carrying on his back a teenaged girl, scarcely alive, who was so skinny the porter had managed to fold her up inside his wicker basket like a piece of cardboard. "I knew [the girl] wouldn't live," recalls [the clinic's doctor]. "But at the time, I wasn't sure what had caused her illness." The villagers knew. The girl was dying of the "Bombay Disease" – AIDS. It is the custom among the Tamang highlanders of Nepal that when someone dies, the entire village takes part in lovingly washing and burying the corpse. But because the Tamang were afraid of catching the "Bombay Disease," the girl's mother was left to carry out the ritual alone. The girl had contracted the virus as a sex worker in India. [The girl] was hardly the only one: every year around 10,000 Nepali girls, most between the ages of nine and 16, are sold to brothels in Indian cities. According to international social agencies, this flow of Nepali girls into Indian whorehouses is probably the busiest slave traffic of its kind anywhere in the world... Some experts believe that more than 200,000 Nepali girls are involved in the Indian sex trade. A few choose prostitution voluntarily to flee mountain poverty, not knowing [about] the risk of disease and the prison-like confinement of the bordellos, but most are underage girls who are sold or tricked into the flesh trade... As a result, a backlash of AIDS is starting to hit the Himalayas. Kicked out of the brothels after they develop the disease's telltale fevers and skin lesions, legions of forlorn girls are now staggering back to die in their Nepali mountain villages. Rarely are they accepted. The Nepali press, which often reflects the government view, refers to the girls as "India's soiled goods." As... [the] president of ABC Nepal, a social agency in Kathmandu, says angrily, "Nobody wants to speak about it, not even the girls' families. There are parents who have sold their daughters and husbands who've got rid of their young wives." Depending on her beauty, a girl can fetch anywhere from \$200 to \$600 – less than a water buffalo, slightly more than a video recorder... Two Bombay girls, seven and 15 years old, were turned over to Kathmandu police two weeks ago. They are victims of a growing superstition that [guys] suffering from AIDS and venereal diseases can be cured by having sex with a virgin. "The worst part about this myth is that younger girls are extremely vulnerable to AIDS," says...

[the] executive secretary of the group E[cpat]... “Their tissues tear more easily.” Maya (not her real name), a puffy, moon-faced girl, was only eight when her cousin sold her into prostitution. [Maya] had not yet reached puberty. “I was so small. They gave me hormone injections so that I’d grow breasts faster. These injections hurt so, so much. When I tried to struggle, the madame beat me on the chest with a metal kitchen spoon.” Far worse treatment awaited Maya. One day, the madame unlocked her room in Bombay and began dolling her up with lipstick and mascara. “A [guy] came, and they forced me to have sex with him...” Now 13, Maya is HIV positive. Her anger flares briefly... “[Guys]? I’d like to kill them, chop off their penises.” Escape is rare from Bombay’s notorious Kamathipura brothel district. More than 70,000 prostitutes are crammed into dormitory-like rooms, where they have sex with up to three clients a day. Condoms are seldom used... Maya was one of 218 Nepali girls rescued last February in a Bombay police raid. Nearly half, fearing that their families would shun them, refused to return to Nepal... Still, most are happy to be back. Says one: “In India I was like a walking corpse. Here at last I can breathe again.” But for many of these returning girls, now with full-blown AIDS symptoms... [which d]octors in government hospitals at first refused to treat... that breath of Himalayan freedom may soon be their last.

...[“On the Burmese border of northern Thailand, edging the Golden Triangle, money means opium and heroin, and every spring the thatched bamboo huts of the villages are roofed with poppy heads drying in the sun. The only other commodity here is young girls. In Mae Sai town, the flashing red and yellow fairy lights outside a local brothel casts a surreal glow over an 11-year-old as it sits quietly with ten other frilly-dressed girls waiting for customers. At first glance it seems unbelievable that this small child is working as a prostitute. But the 11-year-old is available for sex at \$38 a night. The 11-year-old is owned by “Big Boss Ma”, who controls the trade of girls from Burma, China and Laos into Thailand. Ma doesn’t look the part: a fat middle-aged gal dressed in a red dress, giggling at TV-karaoke. But Ma is one of the most feared and powerful mafia bosses in the country and her network of cronies is armed and deadly. Her cronies do not deal in words – runaway girls get their throats cut. Nobody messes with Ma, not even the police. When I arrived at Big Boss Ma’s brothel, the police were already there. They are regular customers of hers. Working with a Thai interpreter, I posed as a tourist. I told Ma that I wanted a girl no older than 15. The fact that I am a foreign gal didn’t raise suspicion. It seemed acceptable to Ma that I should buy a night of sex with a Thai guy and a child. But Ma warned me that the 11-year-old, her youngest trick, was having a period. This seemed odd since the girl looked too immature, but I put the price up to \$50 and the deal was done. Later, in my guest-house room, it became clear why Ma warns punters about the 11-year-old’s “period”. “I’m burning,” the girl said, pulling at the crotch of her shorts. After her first rape the girl bled for five days but Ma refused to take her to a doctor. Clients think the wound which they reopen through intercourse is just menstruation. “They pity me but they still fuck me,” the girl says. “My father sold me for 2000 baht two months ago, and comes to the brothel every month to collect 3000 baht from Big Ma. I clean Big Ma’s house in the day and then work as a prostitute at night. I don’t get any money at all – just food. I get one client a night but most of the girls go with six or seven a night.” The girl adds that it has never used a condom. The recent boom in the underage sex trade, with an estimated 800,000 children currently working as prostitutes in Thailand, is partly due to the mistaken belief that children are too young to contract AIDS. Officially, there are 80,000 prostitutes currently working in Thailand; but unofficially two million. The Public Health Ministry admits to just 600,000 HIV positives and since 1991 has banned doctors from publishing any AIDS data. However, it is estimated that as many as four million Thais will be HIV positive by the year 2000 and a recent survey shows 70% of adult prostitutes and 50% of child prostitutes to be carrying HIV. Of the 5,136,443 visitors to Thailand last year, an estimated 80% bought sex from prostitutes. The blow-job bars and sex-clubs of Bangkok are filled with boggle-eyed AUSn, English and German guys. At the Queens Castle bar – where girls pull strings of razor blades from their vagina before being hired out to clients – three lads, all 23 and from Newcastle, are holidaying without their girlfriends. Thais also consider it a guy prerogative to buy sex. Last August the deputy finance minister held a “bachelor party” in which Thai government MPs were awarded prostitutes as bonuses for good work performed. When a brothel in Ranong, owned by an ex-police corporal, was raided last year in July, 144 Burmese slaves (40 of them underage) were discovered to be living in a battery-compound of 150 tiny 2.4 by 1.8 metre concrete cubicles resembling prison cells. They had been roped, raped and beaten with wire coathangers by their captors to force them to serve clients. The Centre for the Protection of Children’s Rights (CPCR) based in Bangkok, who organised the Ranong raid, have since been banned by the government from mounting any rescue operations ‘cause they expose embarrassing truths. For this reason the CPCR volunteers are now working underground from secret safe houses, using assumed names. Although fines and jail sentences do exist under Thai law to discourage child prostitution, CPCR’s director says: “It is only written law, and pimps and owners are invariably let off.”]

...French investigators have cracked a ring that sent prostitutes to the Riviera palaces and yachts of wealthy sheikhs, even allegedly hiring [a US] actress for \$US1 million... Though few names have been made public, the widening probe is embarrassing for a French Government reliant on lucrative ties with Gulf oil states that are major customers of French military hardware. A central figure in the investigation is... a former deputy commander of the special forces National Gendarme Intervention Group who was fired for alleged misconduct and formed a private security agency. The former Emir of Qatar... was one of his clients... [as is the] emir’s son... who assumed power in July 1995... The ring allegedly charged from \$US500 to \$US8600, the French daily *Le Monde* reported... Prostitution is legal in France, though pimping is not.

...the original Mata Hari[was] executed by a French firing squad in 1917. But no such sticky end awaits the Mata Hari’s of today. Instead, they can look forward to years of lucrative semi-retirement. In the world of international espionage they’re known as “honey traps”, sex-for-secrets spies who seduce their prey for vital information... The CIA says it is not something they encourage, but then the agency does not work to a set of fixed rules. In the past agents used whatever worked and, given certain [guy] weaknesses, a pretty face can be the most powerful weapon of all... [One agent] dyed her hair blonde for the mission, believing this would increase her chances of snaring her target, a senior French trade official who has not been named. [The agent] was using a false name and carrying forged documents when, in late 1994, [it] met the official several times at dinner parties and began to weave a web of flattery around him... By the time the agent started sleeping with her target, [it] had the tacit approval of her supervisors... However, the flow of information from the agent improved so dramatically that the supervisors became alarmed. [Technically speaking, “honey trap” is just another euphemism for *prostitute*.

...*prostitution* is defined as the ‘offering of sexual services in return for material reward. Prostitutes solicit customers alone, or as inmates of houses of prostitution (brothels), or by making themselves available by telephone (call girls). Some are “managed” by so-called procurers or pimps, who take a commission or wage. Prostitution is known to virtually all advanced societies. Because of the mounting rate of venereal disease in the Middle Ages, prostitution was occasionally outlawed, or put under state control and subjected to periodic medical control. In the 19th cent., registration of prostitutes was introduced in most of Europe. The profitable white-slave traffic became an international concern, and today in many Western countries, prostitution and brothels are illegal. In the U.S., “red-light districts” are now tolerated in few localities, but illegal vice syndicates often operate in association with the underworld and corrupt officialdom. In the period after WW2, three major countries that had long allowed legal prostitution, outlawed it. These were France, Italy and Japan (note: *geishas* – Japanese gals trained to entertain guys, and popular since medieval times – should not be confused with prostitutes’).

...Traditionally, girls began to train as geishas at six years, six months and six days. A geisha costs about \$A15,000 to support. Today there are 4000-5000 geishas. In the 1920s there were about 80,000. “Japanese husbands often can’t converse with their wives and that’s why the geisha system has survived.”]

...GEISHAS have long been regarded by foreigners as the most exotic of Japan’s closed-door traditions. But plans to cash in with a geisha theme park in the heart of Tokyo have divided a society still uneasy with parts of its cultural history... [T]he very idea of promoting this seedy aspect of Japanese culture has raised the hackles of [gal] groups. They point out that many of Yoshiwara’s prostitutes were girls unwillingly sold to brothels by poor farming families... However[the owner of]... a historic restaurant in... Yoshiwara, Tokyo’s historic red-light district... argues that it will

enhance Tokyo's reputation to bring back the atmosphere of old Yoshiwara by using actors in period costume to play the parts of courtesans and their clients. "I want to let people see how life really was in those days." ...[his] restaurant stages re-enactments of the entertainment provided by high-class 18th-century prostitutes in which [gals] with white-painted faces dance to the sound of traditional instruments. It is pretty tame stuff compared to the live sex shows found elsewhere... [The restaurant's owner] is perplexed by the inconsistent attitudes towards sex as [the owner] tries to revive the culture of Yoshiwara[, which was]... designated a brothel district in 1617... Although they refuse [to give] their support to Yoshiwara, Japanese companies still sponsor late-night television shows which feature tawdry sex games, simulated rape and bare bosoms. And just around the corner from [his restaurant], real prostitutes still ply their trade in the bath houses and bars that remain the hidden legacy of Yoshiwara. Tourists come here by the bus-load too – but much more discreetly. Immoral behaviour is seemingly acceptable – as long as no one makes a show of it.

...a pouting 15-year-old with a two-pack-a-day nicotine habit and an even costlier addiction to French and Italian designer labels, skips classes but still wears her prim school uniform. [The uniform is kept] on for the be-suited salary [workers] behind a booming new Japanese industry: sex with schoolgirls. "They really like the uniform. I'm not sure why. It's a kind of mania with these weird old [guys]," says the 15-year-old of the clients who shuffle each day into the Melon Club, a rancid single-room flat in Shibuya, a swirling high-tech carnival of neon-lit desire and desperation in the centre of Tokyo... To satisfy the fetish, [the 15-year-old] keeps one uniform at home and a second at the club. Such work, insists [the 15-year-old] in between drags on a Marlboro menthol, is not prostitution but "enjo kosai" or "compensated dating," a merchandising of mock innocence that, like so many other Japanese innovations, betrays the country's genius for re-inventing the mundane. It sometimes involves no more than holding hands in the park or knee-touching but often leads to far less innocent encounters. Police, nudged into concern by a mounting public outcry, have set up a special hotline, prepared booklets for parents and questioned 5481 teenagers about sex-related offences since the start of the year. In June they arrested a preparatory school headmaster near Tokyo for running a prostitution ring with some 300 girls aged 14 to 17. Arrests, though, are rare. In Tokyo, sex with children over 12 is legal and only when a pimp helps broker the relationship does the sale of sex become prostitution and therefore criminal. WHILE youths in the Philippines and other Asian countries sell sex to escape starvation, teenagers in Japan – where the average annual income is about \$NZ55,000 – turn tricks so they can splurge on Chanel... and... Versace... Like many of the schoolgirls involved in what Japanese police call a national epidemic, [the 15-year-old] comes from a well-heeled middle-class family. Her father... works as a bureaucrat at the finance ministry, the pinnacle of respectability in a country of minutely calibrated and very rigid social hierarchies. [The 15-year-old claims to] earn... nearly \$40,000 a month, a steady income that has allowed her to splash out more than a million yen (about \$12,600) so far this year on Versace, her favourite designer. "If I didn't earn money from [old guys] I'd have to start shoplifting. But everyone is doing that. So boring." [The 15-year-old] started working at the Melon Club more than a year ago after seeing it on television – in a news report about a raid by the Tokyo vice squad: "I thought it looked interesting." Before that, [the 15-year-old] fed an expensive habit for brandnames by servicing one of the more bizarre niche markets of what Japanese call the "water business." [The 15-year-old] sold soiled underwear to dealers specialising in fetishes. "The dirtier the knickers the more they would pay," [the 15-year-old] says, matter-of-factly. Consumerism in Japan has run amok, establishing a tyranny of fads and fashions that has touched off much anguished soul-searching about the country's direction. Girls are not the only victims. The popularity of a new Nike sport shoe has led to a spate of ugly muggings by schoolboys... "A lack of individuality and the desire to be average in every way," commented[a] journalist... "have resulted in a situation where fads tend to turn very quickly into national epidemics." THE obsession of many Japanese [guys] with schoolgirls is not in itself new. It reflects a well documented phenomenon known as "rori-con," the Japanese shorthand for "Lolita Complex." Comic books have long featured sexually explicit images of girls dressed in sailor suits or pleated skirts and white shirts, the standard uniforms in Japanese schools. A cosmetic manufacturer sells Virgin Cream, a potion to turn nipples pink and, the company promises, more schoolgirlish. The arrival of the cellular telephone, however, has helped to turn prurient fantasy into a lucrative reality, fuelling a massive explosion in the number of "telephone clubs," a uniquely Japanese solution to loneliness and boredom. Police and social workers blame such establishments, which now number more than 2000, for accelerating the spread of compensated dating. A survey by a national parents' association found that up to a quarter of [girl] pupils in secondary schools have phoned a telephone club at least once. Most do so out of curiosity. But conversations quickly turn to sex and offers of money. THE number of [guys] arrested for abusive sex with teenage girls met through telephone clubs has more than tripled since 1992, and the clubs are sometimes used by [gals to lure guys] into extortion traps. Keen to avoid such problems, one prefecture has banned the clubs from the vicinity of schools and libraries, while Kyoto has banished them from residential areas. "This is a serious social problem that can no longer be neglected," says a Tokyo police spokes[person]. But unless the law is changed drastically, authorities in the capital can do little against either telephone clubs or dating clubs such as Melon. [The 15-year-old claims to] get... picked up by police at least once a month for questioning. They give her a lecture, phone her parents and send her home. The next day [the 15-year-old] is back to work, waiting for customers behind a smudged two-way mirror. The equivalent of \$67 buys a peek through the mirror at a handful of bored teenagers puffing cigarettes. For a further \$67, clients get an hour-long "date" at a nearby coffee shop. What follows is negotiable. WATCHING over the Melon Club is a young [guy] with dyed red hair... [who] recommends early evening for customers seeking schoolgirls. "They go home before it gets too late to do their homework. They are good girls." The reality is less wholesome. [The 15-year-old], whose mobile phone rings constantly, has no interest in homework: "School is a real hassle. It is so boring it can kill you." Only money excites her... [H]er best "date" was a rich business[person] who gave her the equivalent of \$1300 as a tip. "I'd like to be really rich. I'd like to have an easy life. Then I could get on with it and then I could die."

...Karangahape Rd prostitutes were as entitled to say no as Remuera maidens, a prosecutor told the Natacha Hogan rape trial yesterday... [A Manurewa resident], aged 34... denies a charge of raping the 20-year-old prostitute on August 29 last year. Several weeks later Miss Hogan was killed by [a] triple murderer... who is now serving a life sentence with a minimum of 15 years behind bars. In his closing address in the High Court at Auckland, the crown prosecutor... quoted the words of... an Appeal Court judge, in another prostitute rape case. "No [person], rich or poor, high or low, moral or immoral, deserves what [it] gets when sexually assaulted against her will... All... are entitled to say no." ...The Crown alleges that [the defendant] picked up Miss Hogan in Karangahape Rd, agreed to a price but raped her in a nearby alleyway. [The prosecutor said the defendant] liked to have forced sex because that was "how [the defendant] got his kicks." But... the defence... said what happened was consensual sex... [In addition, the defence] queried how much of Miss Hogan's statement to the police was hers and how much input there was from the interviewing detective. Because Miss Hogan was not available, there was no opportunity to challenge what [Miss Hogan] said in the witness box and for the jury to see how... [Miss Hogan said it. Speaking of prostitutes, rather than scouring the personal columns for a... "...escort",[gals] can now visit... [Australasia's] first brothel for [gals]... and select from an in-house menu of [guys].

...Police threats to prosecute an HIV-positive [guy prostitute if it] does not stop working will hinder Aids education in the industry, say sex workers... [T]he police threats would intimidate prostitutes, who would then not take tests for the virus or seek health advice. The executive director of the Aids Foundation... agreed, saying the police warning posed a public health hazard. [A] Detective Inspector... had told [the] HIV-positive prostitute to quit or face charges of endangering clients' lives. [The detective], who said up to 30 rent boys were infected with the virus, discovered the prostitute's secret during a murder inquiry... [A spokesperson] for the N[Z] Prostitutes Collective, said... the collective would support a prosecution of a worker who knowingly endangered a client, but... disputed police claims that 30 prostitutes had the virus. "The very limited number of HIV-positive sex workers in this country has been achieved through education, not fear." [The spokesperson] said it was not sex

workers who posed a public health risk, but clients who demanded unsafe sex and were prepared to pay for the privilege. "We have kept HIV out of the sex industry by empowering sex workers to say no to unsafe sex, not by threatening them." - 1997

Keeping a promiscuous HIV-positive [guy] isolated from the community[will] cost taxpayers... \$165,000[a] year... but health authorities see no alternative... [as it] cannot be held in jail because [it] needs rehabilitative care... Intellectually impaired... [the 33-year-old f]ormer Christchurch... prostitute has absconded from care four times since [it] was ordered in May last year to be detained in isolation under section 79 of the Health Act.

...A Thai... with HIV has been sent home from N[Z] amid fears that immigrant workers held in virtual sex slavery are contributing to the spread of Aids. An Auckland[er]... has told health authorities [it] contracted HIV from a Thai prostitute in a city brothel. It is not known how many [people]... were exposed to the virus before the [prostitute] was sent back to Thailand. An estimated 500 Thai[s]... work in the Auckland sex industry. Some were enticed here thinking they were coming to legitimate jobs, and have been bonded to pay off travel debts to their employers. The customer infected with HIV was married... The Aids Epidemiology Group in Dunedin confirmed it was notified of a [person who said it] contracted HIV while having sex with an Asian prostitute in Auckland in late 1997. Since then, an Auckland Thai sex worker had also been notified as HIV-positive, said [the group's spokesperson]n... But because his group received only limited, anonymous information, it was impossible to know whether the... [sex workers] had infected anyone else or had developed full-blown Aids... N[Z] sex workers as a group did not have a high HIV infection rate, but his group had been notified of at least two [more cases of] HIV-positive Asian prostitutes from Auckland since it began keeping records in 1996. Auckland Healthcare's medical officer of health... said HIV was not a notifiable disease and his office had not been told of the [latest] sex worker case... Auckland Healthcare's sexual health services refused to comment because it fears that publicity will force [prostitutes] who attend its weekly Thai clinics underground. But the Aids Foundation says it is concerned that [people] who are tricked or forced into prostitution are made to take part in unsafe sexual practices. "Our concerns about sex workers who are not working through their own choice is that they are people who are particularly powerless... That would lead us to believe there is a very strong chance that they may be required to have unsafe sex." ...[●] T]he reported passing of the HIV virus from a [gal] sex worker to a [guy] in Auckland is one of the very few occasions where the potentially deadly disease appears to have been transmitted by a [gal] in this country... The Aids Epidemiology Group... has received notification of only five [guys] being infected through heterosexual sex in N[Z] since it began gathering statistics... In that time, 58 other [guys] have reportedly contracted HIV through having sex with [gals] overseas. Of the 50 N[Z] gals] who reported being infected by [guys], only 12 say it happened here.

...Syphilis cases have... [nearly] doubled in N[Z], with the rare and potentially fatal disease... [- it] killed American gangster Al Capone[-] ...linked to migration and gay sex... and some has been associated with sex work... Health workers are worried that 47 cases... were reported by clinics in [the past 12 months], an increase... from... it[s] previous highest in 1997, w[hen there were] 27 cases... Syphilis is a curable infection caused by a bacteria. The first stage... spontaneously heals but, if it is untreated, secondary syphilis will develop in two to eight weeks. One-third of the cases will progress to tertiary syphilis some years later, where signs and symptoms include inability to co-ordinate muscle movements, paralysis, numbness, gradual blindness and dementia... The infection is treated with a series of antibiotic injections or intravenous treatment, if syphilis has spread to the brain. But if it damages the brain or other parts of the body, the damage cannot be reversed... The median age of people with this infection is 37 years, 60[% were guys]... Almost half of the confirmed cases, 22, had their ethnicity classified as "other", while 12 are Europeans, 12 are Pacific Islanders, and one Maori... [Most] new cases are appearing from... short-term visitors to N[Z] and NZers returning from overseas trips.

...IF ANYONE has a good excuse to hang around the go-go clubs of Bangkok it is [the local] Senior Sergeant Major... While girls dance topless inside the bars of the city's notorious Patpong district, and Thai boxers slug it out for the amusement of ring-side drinkers, [the major] soberly patrols the neon-lit market out on the street. [The major] is one of Thailand's 1000 tourist police, posted to nightspots and popular attractions across the country to keep a helpful watch on foreign visitors. "When tourists having fun get drunk and have a problem, I am here to help them," [the 42-year-old says as it does] his rounds with a colleague, two-way radio at his hip and a .38 calibre handgun in his holster... [F]raudsters, market stall scams and outrageous overcharging for drinks and taxis are some of the problems faced by holidaymakers[, but]... there are also some unusual risks for starry-eyed tourists who get too drunk or stray off the beaten track... [S]mall gangs of katoey (transsexuals) prey... on [foreign guys] lulled by drink into thinking they were cavorting with the [gals] of their dreams. The tourist police have compiled a directory of over 200 katoey tempters, or temptresses, with previous convictions... During the past couple of years, some prostitutes have been known to slip punters a dramatically effective drug called Upjohn 27 that puts a person to sleep for 30 hours within 15 minutes... In a recent case at the seaside resort of Pattaya, an Austrian... was slipped an Upjohn pill during a kiss. [The Austrian] spat it out, only to pick it up off the floor and put it back in his mouth when... persuaded that it was in fact an aphrodisiac. The drug knocked him out and [the Austrian was] robbed of goods worth... more than \$NZ40,000.

...[Christchurch skinhead gang-members appeared in court charged with getting a 14-year-old hooked on homebake then forcing her into prostitution']...

An international prostitution researcher claims to have uncovered an "apartheid" system of prostitution in N[Z] - Pakeha prostitutes]... usually work in massage parlours, while Maori are more likely to... enter... prostitution at a younger age than their Pakeha counterparts, [and]... work the streets. While street prostitutes experience more physical violence than those in massage parlours, there is no difference in the mental affect... most prostitutes exhibit symptoms of... post traumatic stress disorder and most [the researcher] has spoken to want to leave prostitution... [By the way, tonight's late-night movie on TV2 is the f]orgettable TV melodrama... *The Ultimate Lie* (1996 - US)... about a high-class hooker (played by an act[or] from *Sex And The City*) who is as shocked as her next customer to discover her next customer is her father.

...Sex workers losing the right to say no... For 20 years... Jenny... has earned her living providing sexual services to [guys] prepared to pay... During 10 years in licensed massage parlours... [the] sex industry... veteran... was often forced to be with clients for 14-hour stretches, from 6 pm until 8 am, until [it] was utterly exhausted. But refusal to "entertain" any client - even those [it] feared - could have resulted in instant dismissal. "Ninety per cent of parlour owners have never worked as prostitutes themselves, and so don't have any respect for the girls... Every[one] has the right to say no. But the parlour owners don't understand the terminology of no. They are not sympathetic, they don't care." Candy, another sex worker, says one of the most disturbing developments in the sex industry is the erosion of traditional taboos. Girls are sometimes required to kiss clients and forgo the use of condoms for other intimate acts. Kissing increases the risk of workers catching a host of diseases... It was once an industry no-no... An Inland Revenue inquiry this month found the average annual income for a sex worker was between \$15,000 and \$25,000 - debunking the popular myth that the workers can earn a fortune... Th[is is partly because th]ere is... exploitation, the [pair] claim. Jenny says many owners are increasingly operating a system of fines which they impose if workers are late, sick, or break the rules - such as not wearing stockings to work. At up to \$100 each, the fines offer income for the owners while keeping [their workers] dependent on them. Candy says parlour owners have found other ways of taxing their workers. They no longer get a cut from door charges. And shift fees, which didn't exist 10 years ago, have sneaked up from \$10 a week to \$20 or more a day. Many owners have also started charging a bond of around \$200 when new workers start. This is ostensibly to cover any breakages or theft, but most never see the money when they leave. Candy says parlours are also moving towards a system of charging clients an "all-inclusive" price at the door. Workers often pocket less than half of the \$175 or so charged, and owners can hold out or short-change on credit-card payments. Traditionally parlours would charge clients around \$50 at the door for a massage, while "extras" would be negotiated between the workers and the clients in the privacy of the rooms... [A spokesperson]n for the Prostitutes Collective, says the move to all-

inclusive charges is a double-edged sword for the wo[rkers]. While it offers some protection from having to haggle with obnoxious customers, it also increases pressure on workers to have sex because they have been “pre-sold.” “The freedom to say no has been utterly undermined.”

...SOME things should never be said. Examples: anything a [gal] says to a [guy] than involves the word “small”, and anything a [guy] says to a [gal] that involves the word “big”... But on the other hand, there is a need for frankness at times. Frankness, with tact. Especially in intimate matters... You’d think no one would know this better than the professionals, the people we now call “sex workers” on the grounds that “prostitute” sounds too much like selling your soul. The new terminology has obviously been the thin edge of a wedge, because this week the sex workers went a bit strange. Now, it is well known, there is a central necessary mystery about the relationship between sex workers and their clients, the mystery being why they do it. According to [guy] fantasy, they do it because it’s wildly sexy. And since [guys] pay, there has been a considerate silence from the [gals] they hand the money over to. Why shatter [guy] illusions? has been the sensible line taken. The pathetic creeps don’t need to know they’re wearisomely vile. Let them persist in their nutty belief that... sex workers do it because a) they’re studying French philosophy and need pocket money and b) they just happen to love bonking strangers. Let them think it’s pleasure, pleasure, pleasure, all day and night among the balding saddies, gang bullies and wankers in suits. But this week, a couple of Wellington madams snapped. They revealed that their girls... er... *don’t*, as it happens, you know, actually *like* it at all. Rather than adoring their customers, they said, the girls want the dirty deed over and done with as soon as possible. As if it were distasteful, even. The madams were provoked to such frankness by... the... arrival of Viagra among the impotent and ambitious, and thoughts of the impact it might have on their line of business. Were they rejoicing? Far from it. The madams revealed that their girls were greeting Viagra’s marathon possibilities with a collective groan. It’s bad enough when you’ve got drunks going on and on for hours, one of them sighed, without a drug that guarantees an erection for a full nightshift. An Auckland sex worker agrees. “Basically, the girls aren’t enthused about it...” Tactlessly, [the Aucklander] added: “It’s a job, you do your bit, get paid and the sooner it’s over the better.” ...Meanwhile, also this week, a rural [worker] was amazed to be found guilty of raping three under-age girls a decade ago. Like so many idiots, [the paedophile had] chosen to take the stand and give evidence on his own behalf, and it was there that [the paedophile] uttered the words any [gal] jury would have convicted him on without hesitation. [The paedophile] boasted that one girl had asked him when [the paedophile] was “going to let her have it”... It sounds like a punch on the jaw. But isn’t that another cherished [guy] fantasy, that young [gals] are all dying for the opportunity to frolic with boring old farts like themselves? That healthy girls with futures and dreams are begging for it, and that the next dirty old [pervert] on the horizon is doing them a favour? ...in a final blow against [guy] illusions, one sex worker volunteered this week that... her colleagues might need to learn first-aid... [The sex worker] feared... mass karking on the brothel shag-pile if Viagra took off among customers with heart problems. Truly, there is too little tact in this world: madams revealing that their girls don’t really like it; underage girls rounding on bewildered Lotharios who are just trying to help; and now the images of brothel carpets thick with expiring old [guys]. Will resuscitation for the chaps be free, or a negotiated add-on? ...[] T]he country is evenly divided over whether the sex industry laws need liberalising. [A NZ Herald] poll shows that 46.3[%] of people do not want prostitution and soliciting legalised – as against 43.9[%] who believe the law should be more generous to prostitutes and their customers... About 48[% of guys] were in favour of liberalising laws... Only 39[% of gals] want a change... [O]lder, richer people are more likely to want to rewrite the law books... The result comes as politicians ponder alterations to the present laws governing the sex industry. [A]National MP... and [a Labour MP] travelled to Sydney’s red light district in May as part of preparations for a member’s bill they are drafting between them. The pair want the... laws... to be more consistent. At the moment it is illegal for prostitutes to offer sex for sale but not for clients to ask to pay for sex.

...[a Labour MP has introduced a] private member’s bill to legalise prostitution. [The MP] is heading in the right direction;[but]... far too many others – ...[including the] Christian Heritage Party leader... [– still] have their heads in the sand, knees jerking wildly. [Guys] will always pay for sex; [gals] will always offer it. Why do many people try to deny it? In this country, discriminatory and ridiculous laws that allow [guys] to pay for sex but bar [gals] from advertising it are long overdue for reform. We have to take a practical, utilitarian approach to selling sex – the greatest good for the greatest number – and resist the urge to descend into hysteria or switch our brains off because the subject involves dirty bits. Legislation will require brothel-keepers to ensure condoms are used and to provide information on safe sex, and make pimping an offence. Paying for sex with under 18-year-olds will be out... The bill looks like it has wide cross-party support and, if plucked from the ballot, will probably pass. It would be nice to see Parliament agreeing on something for once – and to see the world’s oldest profession encouraged out of the shadows.

...Scientists working on Antarctica’s Ross Island have discovered a courtship ritual among penguins in which the [hen] requires her suitors to pay for having sex. London’s *Daily Telegraph* reported that the [hens] elicit payment in stones, which they need for nest platforms to keep their eggs out of the icy waters. [Hens] have been seen slipping away from their mates and approaching the nest of an unpaired [guy], giving the standard courtship signals of a dip of the head and a coy look from the eye. After mating, the [hen] will grab a stone and take it to her nest. Sometimes, satisfied customers allow them to take more than one, and some [hens] have discovered that heavy flirting is enough to persuade some more gullible [guys] to part with a rock or two... [Incidentally, a] German folk singer has leased out his girlfriend for a year for 500,000 marks... so that [the singer] can pay debts and have a liver transplant. [The singer], aged 56, drew up a contract with[a] 34-year-old millionaire... before telling [his girlfriend]. “I was shocked when I heard about this offer,” [the girlfriend] said. “But I will sleep with [the millionaire] because I love [the folk singer].” ...Asked if [it] was prostituting his girlfriend, [the singer], who has cirrhosis of the liver, said: “I am honourable and just want to pay my debts. [The millionaire] fell in love with [my girlfriend] which I can well understand. I thought this ‘indecent proposal’ was a joke when we first spoke about it. But now [the millionaire] has produced a cheque and a contract. To be honest I could use the money.”

...A... Napier... [police officer] has admitted having sex with prostitutes at massage parlours [it] was responsible for policing... In a letter obtained by the *Sunday Star-Times*, the officer’s boss... said the officer’s behaviour was unwise and an error of judgment but [the officer] had not breached any police regulations or the law. The officer has not been disciplined, but an adverse report will go on his file... The officer’s admission came after... [someone] associated with the Hawke’s Bay sex industry laid a complaint with police about a prostitute who was an intravenous drug user and who had [STDs]. The prostitute was having unprotected sex with unsuspecting clients to earn more money. The officer went to the massage parlour and told the owner who had made the complaint. [The complainant then] complained to... the Police Complaints Authority... [that] the officer had breached her confidence and [added the officer had] had sex with local prostitutes. The officer admitted both charges... The officer’s actions go against ethics instilled in police recruits during their first week of training, when they are told having sex with prostitutes is a no-no... Police College sources told the *Sunday Star-Times*... “Prostitutes are often associated with a criminal element, and if officers are having sex with them, the prostitutes have the potential to hold something over them.”

...The 32-year-old... remembers her attacker’s words... “I’m going to kill you, bitch.” The Auckland prostitute was then subjected to a frenzied attack which has left police amazed [the 32-year-old is still alive. The 32-year-old] was stabbed in the head, face, chest, shoulders, back and arms. Her skull was fractured and hundreds of stitches and staples were used to put her head back together... A prostitute of 15 years, [the 32-year-old] wanted cash to buy Christmas presents; the [client] – a tall, thin Pakeha aged in his 40s with a weathered complexion, number one haircut – agreed to pay \$200 for 15 minutes. [The 32-year-old] got into his brown or caramel-coloured four-door car, possibly a 1970s or ’80s Ford Falcon or Holden and [the client] drove her to an empty house in Napier St, Freeman’s Bay. The [client asked the prostitute] three times if [it] had someone watching out for her. [The prostitute] said no and thought nothing of it. Outside the house, the [client]... came up behind her. “[The client] stabbed me right

through the back of the head. The blood just spurted out,”... The attacker took her black leather bag containing money and personal items and ran off saying, “I’ll get you an ambulance”. [The attacker] lied... With 12 murders in the last month, [the 32-year-old says it] is just happy to be alive. The mother of three has no idea who attacked her. Despite a colourful past, [it] cannot think of anyone who would want her dead. When the attack happened, [the 32-year-old] was only two weeks out of a six-month jail term for fraud for her part in a car ring... [T]he attack had made her fearful of the streets and [the 32-year-old] would never go back. [The 32-year-old] was already aware of the dangers: [the 32-year-old] knew Leah Stephens, a prostitute who was stabbed to death because [it] witnessed the murder of Dean Fuller-Sandys more than a decade ago. [The 32-year-old] now wants an agency, church or health group to help her to run a project talking to school children warning them not to go into prostitution... “I want to tell girls it’s not worth it. If I can stop one girl from doing it then it will be worth it,”... [The 32-year-old] knows a 12-year-old working the streets.

...Police picked up an 11-year-old girl who was working as a prostitute on Auckland’s inner-city streets this week. Earlier, police pulled in an eight-months pregnant 13-year-old, who had been living on the city streets for two years. It was not clear if [the 13-year-old] was also a prostitute... An anti-child prostitution lobby group spokes[person]... said reports of children selling themselves for as little as \$5 or a bag of glue, had increased over the past couple of years. The Auckland barrister... estimated that in summer the number of prostitutes aged between 11 to 13... had swelled to 150... The increase in underage prostitution in the city has alarmed police... and groups dealing with at-risk children... A spokes[person] for the Prostitutes Collective... knew of other cases of very young girls working as prostitutes. “But it is very rare for an 11-year-old to be out there.”

...[the] Social Services Minister... [has] ordered an investigation into child prostitution after Auckland police found an 11-year-old girl soliciting for sex in the city last month... A recent amendment to the Crimes Act means you can be charged for having paid sex with someone under 18 but a client can still get off a charge of having sex with an underage prostitute by claiming ignorance of how old [the prostitute] is.

...CHILD psychologists in A[US] have condemned a colleague’s decision to allow a 15-year-old boy with terminal cancer to have sex with a prostitute before [it] died. The case has sparked an intense ethical debate while arousing considerable public sympathy. The identities of the boy... and the psychologist have not been disclosed as the specialist concedes that what happened was illegal. Details... emerged when the psychologist anonymously contacted a Sydney radio station, days after his patient’s death... last week... Without speaking to his parents, the boy apparently told staff at the... Royal Alexander Children’s Hospital... of his desire to lose his virginity. When... [hi]s psychologist canvassed opinion among colleagues... there was an initial suggestion to organise “a whip-round to pay for a prostitute”. The idea was rejected on legal grounds, but a group of friends were later allowed to escort the boy out of hospital and take him to... King’s Cross... His parents were not consulted... [The specialist] felt no qualms over not informing the[m]... about what was happening, saying that, like most 15-year-old boys, his patient was unwilling to talk to them about sex. The boy had little opportunity to meet girls of his own age, having been in and out of hospital since the age of 12... The specialist said the boy’s greatest wish had been to experience sex with a [gal, adding: “The boy] was very... happy, and only disappointed that it was over so quickly.”

...[the 56-year-old]’s most frightening experience as a prostitute came when [it] was working for a parlour which also sent its staff out as “escorts”. [The prostitute] was driven to a Titirangi house by a [guy]... and his girlfriend and paid to have sex with another [guy the prostitute] suspected of being an escaped prisoner. Later, [the prostitute] learned the client had been shot dead by [the first guy just after the prostitute] left the house. [The 56-year-old] stopped working in the sex industry after [it] started going out with a client. They married but the relationship was a disaster. “It was a bad move... I’ve never known any sex workers who’ve had relationships with clients that have worked out.” [The ex-pro] has since married again... Looking back on her days as a prostitute, [the 56-year-old says it] has no regrets[, and adds that]... most of her clients were fairly nice, “ordinary chaps. Often their wives just weren’t interested in sex anymore. I think it’s better for [such husbands] to see a prostitute than have an affair if they need sexual relief. There are no emotional attachments and nobody gets hurt... I think [being a prostitute] made me a more understanding and tolerant person. It made me think more. Before I was a bit of an airhead... I can honestly say I enjoyed it – it could be fun – and I made some... good friends. [By the way, another NZ version of the happy hooker – “I couldn’t believe that guys were prepared to pay me for what I’d been giving away for free” – who now operates brothels in Perth, AUS, has returned to invest some of her fortune in Awanui, her rundown Northland hometown.]

...Once a month] on Saturdays in a San Francisco suburb, [a middle-aged gal] takes the floor in front of around 70 [guys] and tells the story of her life as an unhappy hooker. It’s not an uncommon story[and – like that of the ‘27-year-old New York prostitute who said, “My mum’s boyfriend started raping me when I was 8; when I was 14 I finally told her, which made her throw me out (she was jealous I guess), and that’s why I got into this at 15” –] it sure ain’t a pretty one... Sexually abused... by drug-addicted, hard-drinking parents... from the age of five... on the streets soliciting from the age of 15... a heroin addict for 10 years... raped... “30 or 40 times,” beaten by both a pimp and clients... time in prison for prostitution and drug offences... [Her story has] an underlying inference that [gals] need rescuing from the grip of prostitution[, an]... argument... unpopular with advocates for sex workers... including the[NZ] Prostitutes Collective. “Unfortunately... the prostitute collectives who argue that prostitution is fine are not helping to get government funding to help [prostitutes out.” The monthly meetings are]... a vigorous public education programme which recognises that “[guys] are part of the problem. If there wasn’t a John out there looking for a prostitute, then there wouldn’t be a [gal] standing on a corner.” The Californian model has been adopted by other States; the first British scheme began late last year... The schools are symptomatic of what many... still working as prostitutes regard as... “re-education” (a term stricken with slightly sinister overtones, say some... who remember 70s discussions on the viability of “re-construction camps” for [guys]) of those who use prostitutes – one in 170 of British [guys] according to recent research.

...[according to an infamous British homosexual and ex-prostitute – who, nowadays, lives off the ‘free meals available at New York parties in exchange for being photographed with other guests – guys use prostitutes “because they don’t need to say they love them”].

...‘THE WORLD ACCORDING TO H, the madam to the stars – *Pearl of wisdom 1*: “I was born with a hooker’s mentality. I believe guys should pay for everything. Girls shouldn’t have to do anything. Girls should have fun, that’s it.” *Pearl of wisdom 2*: “Everyone has their own definition of a prostitute. Even I will say ‘Stick it, whore’ under my breath to a waitress who is taking too long.” Frankly, this madam is one sister we don’t need in the ‘hood.’

...‘Now a caterer, Madam A was the empress of Hollywood whoredom whose client book the ingenue H allegedly coveted and deployed. During her long career, Madam A required that her employees look very low-key, with defined hair, little jewellery and no hangnails. “You must look like you’re going to a garden party, very conservative,” Madam A explains, then adds: “In all creation, all gals are prostitutes. It starts when you are a little girl. You begin with your father and work your way through the other masculine members of the family, and there’s always a tradeoff: The father becomes putty in the little girl’s hands. The more affectionate the girl is, the more loving her father becomes. Putty. And it goes on from there.” The rest concerned the wrapping. “You must never wear suits – guys don’t like suits, only dresses. Guys also like refined hair.” There are other exactions in this little-examined world. “Black patent-leather Italian shoes – a lot of us wear Ferragamo,” explains a prostitute from San Francisco, until quite recently a member of the \$2,000-a-night club. Now it is kept by one guy in a luxurious penthouse apartment flat with a glorious view. “I upped it from many to one,” is how the prostitute puts it. This is her ideal. His maintenance fees the prostitute will not reveal. “No perfume,” a notorious New York madam recalls. “If someone’s got a wife, you don’t want your scent left behind. And no short hair – I don’t care how gorgeous the girl is.” “I find the guy who pays for sex is more gentle, old-fashioned and sweet than guys who don’t pay,” retorts someone who, as a teenager, longed to enter the profession after reading *The Happy Hooker*. “Guys who don’t pay for sex are misogynists – they’re trying to rip gals off.” “Guys don’t pay for sex, they pay us to leave,” declares the San Franciscan.’]

...Strung along the main freight route north from Prague, Dubi has earned an unenvied reputation as a sex playground for Germans from across the frontier 8km away... [The] Czech border town... has a population of 8000 – and 800 prostitutes... Many of the prostitutes are there voluntarily,

police say. But some of the [prostitutes] sitting scantily clad in the windows of the town's 37 brothels or standing in the snow at the roadside, are victims of an illicit, often violent trade in human misery across Eastern Europe to the borders of the rich West... Prostitution existed in Dubei even under communism... But it boomed after... 1989... Statistics are difficult to obtain. Prostitution is not a crime, though pimping is, and many of the foreign[ers]... working on the border do not need visas so are beyond police control. And, says... [the] director of the Czech La Strada group which seeks to help victims of trafficking, many [victims] are too scared to press charges against those who exploit them... The Czech La Strada, which is funded by the E[U] and the Dutch Government, works closely with similar groups in Poland, Bulgaria and Ukraine. Its local representatives in Bulgaria have put the number of Bulgarian [gals] who work abroad at 10,000... But in this chain of misery, Bulgaria is not just a source. An official of the [Gal]'s Alliance for Development said Bulgaria also served as a base for [gals] from Ukraine and other parts of the former Soviet Union.

...[Passport prostitutes is a phrase that refers to gals from the former USSR who, lured by the promise of easy money, risk their lives by flying to Islamic countries every week: the Koran dictates that gals who have extramarital sex are to be stoned to death; single gals caught fornicating receive 100 lashes.]

...in Afghanistan, 2] prostitutes were hanged last week as a crowd of 1000 looked on[, then 2 gals and 10 guys] were publicly lashed [for adultery.

...Three guys] working in a psychiatric hospital in Kazakhstan have been charged with murdering seven prostitutes and eating them. A police investigator said they... made "pelmeni" – Siberian meat ravioli – out of them... [In local news,] Asian health and beauty clinics are offering sex from the middle of shopping centres as the sex industry spreads into suburban Auckland. Police, alarmed by the proliferation of prostitution in unorthodox outlets, are discussing ways of reining in the industry before it gets out of control. There are 18 licensed massage parlours in the inner city and three in outlying suburbs, but industry sources say more than a hundred illegal operations are offering sexual services. It is unlawful for both licensed and unlicensed operations to act as brothels, but police have special powers under the 1978 Massage Parlour Act to control activities in licensed parlours. They have no such rights to monitor illegal centres. Authorities fear that abuses of human rights, use of under-age prostitutes and risky health and safety practices are widespread in illicit operations. Licensed parlour owners are furious that the unlicensed centres are allowed to operate because they say they are driving the sex industry underground. They say sex is also being sold from apartment buildings... motels and suburban homes. The Asian Crime Unit is aware of more than 10 Chinese therapeutic massage businesses in Auckland reportedly selling sexual services... The[y]... advertise haircuts, beauty makeovers and "medicinal" massage. They charge about \$50 for hour-long massage sessions... But there is evidence that once a customer is taken to a room, "extras," including intercourse, can be negotiated with the masseuse.

...Salon 45... in the Panmure shops... and Salon 28 on Ponsonby Rd... advertise traditional Chinese-style therapeutic massage. But there is more on offer. [Yesterday, t]he *Weekend Herald* arranged for... a... volunteer... to visit... Salon 28[, which is]... run by the same Chinese people who operate Salon 45... Our volunteer paid \$55 to get past the front hair salon to a private room. The Chinese masseuse began a rubdown and then offered sex for \$80... [However, the] manager of Salon 45 and Salon 28... denied sex was on offer at her premises... But... [the manager] said... other businesses which offered the same service also sold sex... [W]hen the *Herald* [rang one of the other businesses and] suggested sex was... [being offered, its owner] said... "No, never. Goodbye."

...Moves to get the Auckland sex industry off city streets have upset disabled people wanting equal access to its services... One of three options put before a council planning committee this week would banish the industry from ground-floor retail sites and require it to operate instead from basements, upper floors, or at the back of buildings. But the plan has brought cries of discrimination from disabled people, who argue that... [it would impede their] access to sex-industry premises. The... Prostitutes Collective was also concerned that planning controls would drive the sex industry underground and obstruct Government-paid efforts to educate sex workers about infectious diseases. Support for controls came from Newton Central School, where teachers and parents were horrified to find a massage parlour opening across the road from the school... Auckland Girls' Grammar School... has campaigned for years to get the industry out of neighbouring Karangahape Rd.

...The... Auckland... council decided this week against imposing strict controls on licensed sex premises – they can continue operating in the central city and suburban business zones, as long as they are 250m from schools and houses.

...A PUBLIC meeting will be held to discuss the controversial Prostitution Reform Act, at West Harbour's Marina View School, next Monday... It will look at the implications for west Auckland and the role the Waitakere City Council will play in regulating prostitution. The legislation gives councils power to control the location of brothels through bylaws and district plans. They also control the use of signs advertising sexual services.

...“Prostitutes required...”, trumpets the... ad. “Our very successful group of... all ages, sizes and nationalities will make you feel right at home.” So I ring (legally). The husky-voiced [gal] on the other end... is disarmingly frank when I say I'm a mature law student seeking quick cash. “Well, prostitution's legal now...”, [husky] rasps, with a hint of glee. The phone, [husky] says, has been ringing “off the hook” with inquiries. “We have night and day shifts... The average tip for a girl is about \$100 for an hour and that's for sex and everything...” ...You pay \$30 a shift for laundry costs, otherwise you're on your own. And paying tax and the like? [Husky sound]s a bit nonplussed. “It's gonna take a while for that to kick in. Legality is great.” ...• [Legalised prostitution w]ill... end up costing ratepayers big dollars, [the]Waitakere City Mayor... says. The council has yet to discuss the Prostitution Reform Act but [the mayor] suspects the new law will create more work for staff... Councils must now include provision for brothels in their district plans... [The mayor] says the act is yet another example of central government dumping its responsibilities on to councils.

...As the intellectually disabled were released into the community over the past decade a great deal of attention was paid to where they would live and how they would feed and clothe themselves, but no thought was given to what they would do about sex... Welcome to what one researcher in the field... calls “the hellish area” of managing sexual aggression in the intellectually disabled. In her award-winning thesis on the impact of sex education on this group, [the researcher] concluded they are not oversexed, as many believe, but their “normal” sex drives are more visible because they lack the social sensitivities that keep the rest of us from lifting our skirts over our heads or dropping our trousers in public. Teaching appropriate behaviour can change that. But how often is training being bypassed in favour of sexual release with prostitutes? ...The Waikato Community Living Trust which cares for former Tokanui Hospital patients has quietly ventured into the controversial practice of arranging sex workers for some of its more sexually unsettled clients... [The trust's] chief executive... says it is not routine... In nine years “exceptional circumstances” have persuaded her to grant approval for five clients. “It tends to have only occurred in situations where in our opinion if the person's sexuality is not given an outlet it will cause significant difficulties... the person might seek sexual gratification in unacceptable ways.” ...[the patient] will try to force sex on someone else or they will be abused or exploited by sex workers they approach alone... [The chief executive] says many of these [patients] had access to sex when they were in Tokanui – either with other patients or... staff. Moving them into the community often isolated them from their sexual partners... “Our experience... is that a carefully planned approach involving supporting the person to access a sex worker can lead to the elimination or significant reduction in behaviour that has been of concern, often for considerable periods.” The trust's staff, overseen by a clinical psychologist, will find a suitable establishment, discuss specific needs with a sympathetic sex worker, and, if necessary, stay nearby through the transaction in case there are tears after bedtime... [I]t is the client who pays. But should caregivers, be they privately or publicly funded, be actively involved in arranging sex for the impaired clients? Does it make them pimps? ...Academics and medical professionals are notably quiet on the topic. Many had never heard of it. Some were shocked into silence when told... [A] specialist in ethics in psychiatry... would certainly question the practice[, and] asks who is making the decision to use a sex worker – the client or the caregiver? ...[the] Associate Professor... also wonders if it is the caregiver's values taking precedence. “The whole thing worries me,”... [A] Porirua Hospital psychiatrist... who has extensive experience with the intellectually disabled, says... there are drugs to control sex drive... [U]sing sex workers is unusual and an approach [which people should] be wary of for managing sexual aggression. “Sexuality is not a pressure-cooker you can relieve from time to

time,”... Waikato University’s Professor [of Psychology and] president of the N[Z] Psychological Society, a voluntary organisation of psychologists, did not know about the use of sex workers even though [it] is also a [WCLT] trustee... Yet using sex workers for the intellectually disabled has widespread approval. The Family Planning Association recommends it in some circumstances. For instance... “where it’s unrealistic that they will form a relationship but they still have sexual needs.” The IHC, the largest agency caring for the intellectually disabled, agrees... grounded in the IHC’s belief that people with intellectual disabilities have the same rights and needs as everyone else. But... a psychopaedic nurse and counsellor with Spectrum Care, the agency set up to manage community care for the intellectually disabled from the old Mangere Hospital... would never recommend introducing intellectually disabled [guys] to a sex worker... [because] it is potentially exploitative – the services are expensive and the [patients] are usually beneficiaries. Worse... “it leads to a voracious appetite for more of the same. This group has only a tenuous grasp on appropriate relationships. Suddenly a complete stranger comes in to have sex with and do provocative things with them. It completely destroys any sense of social norms they previously had. And I’m trying to teach these guys what the social norms are.” Nor does [the nurse] accept the argument that if the intellectually normal can have access to prostitutes that the intellectually impaired should also. “You have to recognise their emotional and cognitive levels range between a 3- and 7-year-old’s. They haven’t got the emotional maturity to cope with it. It confuses the world even more for them.”

...Depressed, suicidal or sexually aggressive [guys] with intellectual disabilities are being taken to prostitutes by their state-funded caregivers, as a way of improving their behaviour... One... is a 37-year-old Te Avamutu [resident arrested last] November for exposing himself and yelling abuse in the street outside his flat. His parents... wrote to the Health Funding Authority, which finances the... Waikato Community Living Trust... but it is not commenting on the case. However... the Prostitutes’ Collective... is regularly contacted by relatives and medical professionals caring for disabled [guys] with sexual frustrations... “If the public gets hold of it and sees the sex industry is arranging sex for disabled people, they will jump up and down. They can’t grasp the concept that... [there] is an incredible need for this service.” ...[In related news, there is] a strong possibility the cure is worse than the problem, but scientists now say fish oil can beat manic depression[(it was previously held that ‘manic depression is incurable’)]. The fatty oil... has already been touted for its effectiveness in combating heart disease... Now a study has found the naturally occurring dietary ingredient can affect the brain... The chemicals... believed to be at work... were omega-3 fatty acids, present in... fish such as salmon and cod.

...It is the hidden disease which apparently affects one in five of us, but no-body talks about it. Most celebrities would rather admit to murder than depression – and that is particularly true of [guys]. In the past 20 years, the number of well-known [guys] who have come out about being depressed... can, literally, be counted on the fingers of one hand. It is not just [guys] themselves who are in denial about their depression, but society as a whole. “There is a definite treatment deficit for [guys],” says a member... of the Institute of Psychiatrists, about a healthcare system in which one in four [gals] receive treatment for depression compared with one in 10 [guys]... It is well known that social isolation is a big risk factor in depression. [Guys] are especially at risk because they are reluctant to ask for help from friends, partners or health professionals. So silent are [guys] about their mental health that the Royal College of Psychiatrists says the under-diagnosis of [guy] depression may be as high as 65[%]. This has serious repercussions: each year, three times as many [guys as gals] commit suicide... in Britain. Commentators suggest a “crisis in masculinity” to account for these figures. Whopped by high-achieving girls at school, the theory goes, [guys] struggle to find work and status in a world where feminine skills are valued. Unable to express their frustrations, they get divorced, socially isolated, never see their children. [However, a member] of the consultancy Working With [Guys], thinks the crisis analysis is woefully simplistic. [The consultant says depressed guys] need to be understood as [guys], not just as depressives. “What’s interesting about masculinity is that every single transition point in a [guy]’s life is problematic. [Guys] find change difficult, and if society is changing it will accentuate this problem,”... [The consultant] argues that the way [guys] perceive themselves makes it harder to seek help. “[Gals] are brought up to feel that they’re not good enough, which means they are seeking change and want to improve themselves. For [guys], the message is that they’re meant to be adequate already: they should be competent, able to deal with things. So they resist change until they hit crisis point.” Recent studies have also shown that [guys] experience depression in a different way from [gals]. The most common symptoms for [guys] are anxiety and irritability, feelings of emptiness and fatigue. They may be aggressive and violent, show poor impulse control and lash out, even when this is out of character. [Guys] also hate arguing. To avoid conflict, [guys] withdraw emotionally, then their partners feel ignored and the vicious spiral leads on to relationship breakdown, explains Depression Alliance’s booklet [Guys] Behaving Sadly. What can a [guy] who is suffering from depression do? First, admit it to yourself. Talk to somebody close to you. Secondly, go to a GP. The Department of Health estimates that 80[%] of people with depression can be helped... If that is too difficult, there is Beating the Blues, a computer program that aims to alleviate depression. According to [the program’s creator], progress can be expected after six sessions or so. Fast enough for most [guys]. And anonymous. ■ Of the well-known guys who have admitted to suffering from depression, the most celebrated was ‘Winston Churchill: “When I look back on all these worries, I remember the old guy who said on his deathbed that it had a lot of trouble in life, most of which never happened.”’]

...CHURCHILL called it his “black dog.” ...For every well-known sufferer of depression, there will be thousands of other ordinary people facing up to extraordinary challenges with the illness. Depression – the illness as distinct from a temporary attack of the blues – is becoming so common that some psychiatrists are calling t[oday]... the “age of melancholy.” The state of misery, also termed the “blue plague,” is... a characteristic of the [entire] world. Studies in such disparate places as Puerto Rico, Christchurch... Florence, Taiwan, Beirut and Los Angeles show that more people, and especially more younger people, are seeking help for “major depression.” The W[HO] predicts that in 20 years depression will be the second most significant cause of suffering and disability worldwide. (Heart disease is the first, traffic accidents[will be] the third)... In N[Z] about one in every seven people and one in every five [gals] will, at some time in their life, become clinically depressed... Half of those who have one episode of depression are likely to have another... B[etween 1/4 and 1/2] of people who are seriously depressed attempt suicide and up to 15[%] who need hospital care for the disorder will kill themselves... Children, too, can be seriously depressed, boys equally as often as girls until the age of about 15. What lies behind these disturbing statistics is not well understood... A U[S] study has found children today suffer more anxiety than those of previous generations. The study, which examined surveys of 40,000 college students and 12,000 children between 1952 and 1993, found young people today have more to worry about than their parents did when they were kids. From fitting in with their peers to worrying about crime or finding a job, life can be tough... Was life really less stressful a couple of generations ago? Psychiatrists agree that stress is a major factor in depression. They describe its causes as “multifactorial,” starting with a genetic predisposition or “biological vulnerability” that has to do with chemical substances called neurotransmitters in the brain... Some physical illnesses bring on bouts of major depression – for instance, glandular fever, stroke, fibromyalgia. Stressful events, like a relationship breakup, financial difficulties, dysfunctional parenting in young people, poor social support, trauma such as abuse, can act as triggers in those who are predisposed – in contrast to the remarkable resilience shown by other people when life deals them similarly harsh blows. Deciding whether you yourself, or somebody close to you, is experiencing “normal” unhappiness or whether it is a depressive illness is not always easy. The onset of depression isn’t like getting a virus and it usually occurs over a longer period. Feeling sad is not necessarily a sign of being depressed, according to the Guidelines for the treatment and management of depression by primary healthcare professionals... What distinguishes the two states... are the intensity and the duration of the feelings. “The difference is profound. People experience a... loss of energy and apathy. Everything loses its meaning and colour. Eventually they get ‘biological shift symptoms’ – loss of appetite, weight loss, a characteristic sleep disturbance of waking in the middle of the night, and they have ruminative thoughts that go round and round.”

But you need to be in that state for more than a day to be diagnosed ill. Two weeks, says... a... Professor... of the Auckland Medical School... is the cut-off point. During that time... life can be difficult for those around them as well as for the affected person. "They can be withdrawn and querulous, and seem not to be pulling their weight. It may be difficult for them to do simple tasks. It's important that family or flatmates recognise the condition and don't respond in a critical, punitive or derogatory way. They have to appreciate that the person is unwell and needs support and gentle encouragement. It's difficult for a lay person to judge that they are sick but they should be encouraged to seek professional help." For those who do, the prognosis is encouraging. Between 70 and 80[%] of those who receive treatment respond well, 10 to 20[%] have a mixed response and in only 5 to 10[%] is treatment unsuccessful. Recovery is... a long haul. The Guidelines recommend... a first episode be "actively managed" for at least nine months, and a second or subsequent episodes for three years. Treatment classically consists of two groups of drugs. Those known as tricyclic anti-depressants, such as amitriptyline and nortriptyline, are chemically composed of three linked chains. Their disadvantages are the length of time – two to four weeks – before they begin to have an effect, and certain disagreeable side-effects. Prozac works on the uptake of the neurotransmitter serotonin. It is slightly faster acting and is said to have fewer side effects. Increasingly use is being made of drugs in combination with psychotherapies such as cognitive behavioural therapy. This is based on the premise that a person's negative thoughts lead to a negative appraisal of themselves, the future and the world. As the person becomes depressed, physical symptoms develop which exacerbate the feelings of low morale. It's a little like the chicken and the egg situation... [O]ur thoughts can affect our biochemistry, just as having the flu or some other illness can make us feel gloomy... [The] Associate Professor... of the School of Psychology at Massey University... says... "The mind-body distinction is an artificial one. They work in unison and one influences the other. The ancient Greeks believed that it's not reality that upsets people but our perception that creates the difficulty and cognitive behaviour therapy focuses on people's perception of what's going on around them." ...[at] the Waitemata Health Cognitive Therapy Centre... therapy typically consists of 15 one-hour sessions, with a therapist on a one-to-one basis. If this sounds expensive, [the associate professor] points out that the cost of continuing depression and relapse is much higher... A... fit, able [24-year-old guy] has made serious attempts to end the misery... [of] depression... Sitting in the immaculate lounge of the house [the 24-year-old] rents with friends, [the 24-year-old] appears the epitome of... success... two degrees, selection from 180 applicants for a prestigious job as a managerial trainee (which [the 24-year-old] left), experience as a mountaineer, a circle of supportive friends. The irony of his situation only heightens its poignancy... "No matter how outwardly successful someone is, they can still feel in a mess. It's bizarre [because] we're so lucky here in N[Z]." ...there is no history of depression in his family and until a couple of years ago his life was normal. "One minute I was bumbling along, everything was going all right. I had my ups and downs. Then suddenly I was completely out of my depth. I had just finished university and was in South America climbing a mountain when suddenly – bang, I lost control." [The 24-year-old] doesn't discount the possible effects on his mental state of a climbing accident... on Mt Taranaki two winters ago... when... two of his friends were buried in an avalanche. But [the 24-year-old has] difficulty in accepting that what [his body] has is a mental illness... [On a positive note, d]o you ever picture the worst scenario and imagine what you'd do if that situation ever arose? If so, you're what psychologists call a "defensive pessimist". But they say that's a good thing! Just like positive thinking, imagining the worst also has its health benefits. A defensive pessimist mentally rehearses how things might go wrong, so they come up with reassuring options or solutions to a problem in advance. This process gives them a greater sense of control and calm, plus greater immunity to anxiety and upset.

...Depression is a hidden complication of diabetes, affecting up to [33%] of sufferers... A clinical nurse consultant with Diabetes A[US]... said US research showed that depression in people with diabetes was two to three times greater than in the general population. The treatment of psychological effects from diabetes was underfunded and often overlooked by health practitioners, including GPs and specialists... "Mega-millions of dollars are poured into addressing the physical complications, but even if patients haven't got physical complications they are spending their whole life waiting for them,"... The threat of physical complications, such as blindness or foot amputations, was enough to plunge patients into depression. "Like all chronic illnesses, people feel they will never escape, and in addition there's a lot of negative images there, from amputation to dying,"... [] This information may be of no use to diabetics, but it i]s no coincidence that people talk of being "chocoholics," says [a]British psychology researcher... [H]is research shows... people may seek out chocolate to elevate their mood. [Gals] suffering premenstrual syndrome especially crave it... You may even come to rely on it... Just as the body of a smoker comes to expect... certain cues, the body of a chocoholic may demand satisfaction when [their] mood is down. In a survey... a majority reported eating chocolate when... bored, lonely or depressed... "To that extent the mechanisms with nicotine or other drugs are similar to those of chocolate. I don't want to imply that it is addictive but there is likely to be a psychological dependence."

...German experts have discovered why chocolate is the perfect winter comforter and why a craving for sweets is common during colder months. One reason is that the body breaks down the "happiness messenger" substance serotonin more quickly when there is little sunshine. That is why a quick bar of chocolate... can work wonders for a gloomy mood. But that is no excuse for pigging out on chocolate, say the spoilsports at the Hamburg nutrition advice centre. They say the potato... or a walk in the fresh air... is just as good at helping combat winter blues.

...Research by German scientists shows that author Charles Dickens was on to a good thing when [it] took long, brisk walks to ease periodic bouts of depression... Experts at the Free University in Berlin recommend following in his footsteps. Aerobic exercise such as rapid walking can be more effective at lifting depression than drugs, says... the scientists' leader. Studying 12 people with severe depression that had lasted an average of nine months, the team found that in 10 of the patients, drugs failed to make much difference. The team devised a regime for the group that involved walking on a treadmill for 30 minutes every day. The researchers found that after 10 days of the course, six patients felt "substantially less depressed." Five of them had not found any relief using drug treatment. Two were slightly less depressed, while four others were unchanged.

...Laughter really is the best medicine, and [a]"joyologist"... prescribes it by the bucket load! Having a good chuckle is more important than ever today, [the joyologist] says, with increasing stress in our lives, loneliness, and high rates of depression... Studies show that in the 1950s people used to laugh for 18 minutes a day, but today we only laugh for six minutes a day... In her bright orange hat with a "Miss Positivity" doll on her shoulder, it's pretty obvious this [gal] can see the silver lining in every dark cloud... In fact, [this]... Aussie entrepreneur... guarantees to have you in stitches within 90 seconds when you attend one of her... 20-minute... "infectious therapy" classes!

...Therapy is at least as effective in treating depression as drugs, and its effects last longer, say scientists. Their report is sure to annoy drug companies, which make millions selling antidepressants. The cost of therapy is about the same as drugs in the short term and cheaper in the long term, the researchers told a meeting of the American Psychiatric Association. "This will be a surprising, controversial finding for many psychiatric professionals," said... [the chairperson] of the psychology department at the University of Pennsylvania. "Most believe quite strongly in the efficacy of medication, and psychiatric treatment guidelines call unequivocally for medication in cases of severe depression."

...A leading N[Z] expert on psychiatry says people with personality quirks are being prescribed drugs to treat mental illnesses they don't have. [The]Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry... forced an international psychiatrists' conference in Hamilton to consider the galloping rise in the prescription of "life-style" drugs in a talk called Brave New World. [The p]rofessor... suspects many adults taking anti-depressants did not have a disease, but a personality variation. Such variations sometimes hampered people, but they also gave humankind its diversity. The... prescription of stimulant drugs had risen by more than 1000[%] since 1993. Government spending on mood-controlling drugs had soared to \$36 million from \$13 million... [The professor] believed factors such as the medicalisation of psychiatry, and public demand, were responsible for the increase.

...The tally of [NZers] prescribed antidepressants has ballooned from about 150,000 in 1993 to 241,000 last year. A psychiatrist who developed official guidelines for treating depression says drugs should never make up the entire treatment package... [The] professor of psychological

medicine at the Wellington School of Medicine, says antidepressants play an important role in treating depression... But [the professor] also points out an apparent inequity in other potential remedies, the sort of sessions which helped... the [NZ actor who once]... played Shakespeare's crazed King Lear[, and more recently... put his face to the Like Minds, Like Mine televised campaign, a project aimed at dispelling prejudices about mental illness... While the pills are Government-subsidised, there are few or no subsidies for sessions with psychologists. "It's an issue of social equity and consumer choice,"... says... [the professor. The] Health Minister... says [it] will take advice from officials on the issue but... stops short of promising any action... As a result of Government subsidies on antidepressants, at least some pills are in the financial reach of most, if not all, of those prescribed them. A wage-earning adult prescribed one of the new-generation antidepressants like Aropax or Prozac can pay as little as \$15 a month for the drugs. For those in tougher financial straits the cost is even less, and in some cases they are free.

...N[Z]'s Prozac use has rocketed in the past year. Since the anti-depressant was added to the list by the Government drug-funding agency, Pharmac... doctor's prescriptions for Prozac soared from 111,905... to 273,531 the following year. The just-issued figures show the use of all anti-depressants... rose from under 500,000... prescriptions... five years ago to 1.1 million in the year to last August... The... general manager of Pharmac... said the increased number of Prozac prescriptions indicated that GPs were using the drug to treat moderate depression. GPs were also using it to treat a pool of people with depression who had not been treated properly in the past. [Pharmac's general manager] said the drug's manufacturer, Eli Lilly, had acted responsibly since prescribing rules were relaxed for Prozac by promoting new guidelines for the drug.

...Breast-fed babies might be better off if their depressed mothers take Prozac rather than going without treatment, despite concerns about high levels of the drug being passed on to infants... A Christchurch medical researcher... has questioned whether breast-feeding mothers should be prescribed the popular anti-depressant after his team found residues of it above recommended levels in babies. However, [a]Christchurch psychiatrist... who took part in his research on another anti-depressant, Aropax, now argues that babies might suffer more from severely depressed mothers than from elevated Prozac levels. The research into Prozac... was funded by the maker of Aropax... Adverse reactions to Prozac reported in babies include vomiting, diarrhoea, increased wakefulness, colic and being unsettled.

...Prozac, the world's best-selling antidepressant... is being blamed for turning healthy people violent. It is thought to have led to crimes that include murder. About 250,000 N[Z]ers take antidepressant medication. Of these, 64,000 are on Prozac... Research to be published soon will claim that up to one in 10 adults who take Prozac can become belligerent and pose a risk to others and themselves. The study is the strongest support yet for mental health campaigners who claim that dozens of people have been wrongly imprisoned because of the effects Prozac has had on their behaviour... [The person] who set up the Prozac Survivors Support Group in London, said: "People are going to prison for what amounts to medical negligence. If they're throwing the book at vulnerable individuals, they should be throwing it at doctors who prescribe the medicine." In the... U[S], school shootings have been linked to a number of children given Prozac... The Welsh study is a potentially devastating blow for the US drug company Eli Lilly, which has made millions from Prozac. The company says Prozac, developed in 1972, is one of the world's most studied drugs... Previous studies linking Prozac to violence have been discredited because aggressive behaviour could be caused by patients' personality disorders, not the drug... [T]he University of Wales... study is the first to show that Prozac can affect even healthy individuals.

...Eli Lilly and Co is bracing itself for another round of bad publicity about its famous product... In 1989, while on Prozac and other medicines, [a] 47-year-old... walked into his former printing plant workplace in Louisville and went on a shooting rampage. [The 47-year-old] killed eight people, wounded 12 and then committed suicide. Survivors of the massacre and the victims' families sued Lilly for \$US50 million... alleging that Prozac drives some people to violence. More than 160 similar legal actions followed. Lilly maintains that Prozac is safe... Lilly also contends it has never lost or settled any of the court cases. But a spokes[person]... now admits that just before the end of the [Louisville] trial, "Lilly and the plaintiffs did reach an agreement that included financial terms that would protect both sides." ...Last year... Prozac... sales hit \$US2 billion, 30[%] of Lilly's revenue. [Over '70% of the sales were registered in the US, where some 18 million people suffer from depression in any given year.']

...A proposal to widen the availability of... Prozac... will be discussed by N[Z]'s top health officials today... At present, doctors must consult psychiatrists before prescribing it. They will also consider a proposal from... Eli Lilly, to provide Prozac free if demand goes above certain levels a year. This would ensure the Government's drug budget is not blown. Whatever the decision, it is bound to raise controversy. Psychiatrists are pushing for prescribing restrictions to be lifted on all new anti-depressants, not just Prozac... "The worry we... have is whether what's being set up will end up driving the makers of other products out of the market,"... said [the chairperson] of the Royal A[USn and NZ] College of Psychiatrists... At the same time, mental health groups have called for tougher restrictions so anti-depressants are used only for the most serious disorders.

...[N[Z]'s] General Practitioners Association... said yesterday that the restrictions on Prozac were driven by financial consideration, because it cost much more than conventional anti-depressants which GPs could prescribe... But... Prozac was... more effective and more tolerable... It had none of the side-effects, such as blurred vision, drowsiness, constipation and dryness of the mouth, associated with conventional antidepressants.

...Pharmac[has] struck a deal with... Eli Lilly. Regional health authorities would pay for a set amount of Prozac each year, and any spending above that level would be refunded by the drug company. In the 1996-1997 year the ceiling is \$13.2 million of the drug, before distribution costs. Under the arrangement the amount the R[HA]s will pay will rise each year to \$19.6 million in 2001. The scheme will initially cost R[HA]s more than they would otherwise pay but savings are expected further down the five-year track.

...Patients are the losers in a deal which singles out Prozac from a batch of new antidepressant drugs for easy access, according to a leading psychiatrist. Local doctors should be able to prescribe alternatives to Prozac if patients reacted adversely to it, said... [the] head of Psychological medicine at the Christchurch School of Medicine. [The professor] applauded the lifting of restrictions on Prozac – but... said the same should be done for other similar antidepressant pills. "Personally, I have no difficulty in trying [a patient on] Prozac first, but that won't work for everyone. Sometimes you have got to try two or three to find the one that most suits." ...[two] other antidepressants introduced on to the market about the same time as Prozac – Aropax 20 and Aurorix – remain restricted medicines... [and, therefore, are] available only from specialists... The drug companies which manufacture these pills are also concerned that local doctors can not prescribe alternatives to Prozac. But... Pharmac... dismissed the criticisms from the drug companies as "commercial sour grapes." The general manager... said... Pharmac had tried to come up with a deal lifting restrictions on the other newer antidepressants which had come on the market in the past three to four years. But the drug companies had elected to compete rather than cooperate. "There are always people who do well and others who don't do so well in that situation." ...However, the medical director of [the company that makes Aropax 20]... said the company's offer to Pharmac – a reduced price... – had been turned down. "While the Prozac deal doesn't stop GPs prescribing Aropax 20, the endorsement process provides a barrier which we fear may lead to inappropriate prescribing." The medical and pharmaceutical director of [Aurorix's maker]... said the Pharmac deal had given the... manufacturers of Prozac... an edge over other companies. But... [his company] was negotiating with Pharmac to have Aurorix soon available on prescription from local doctors.

...The Government is wasting money buying more drugs to treat... depression... says a leading psychologist... [The] senior lecturer at Auckland University, said too much emphasis was put on costly drugs... at the expense of alternatives... [By the way, if] the figures on... pimple pills are an indicator, Aucklanders are either spottier or more vain than Wellingtonians. While people in the lower North Island used \$1.99 million worth, those in Auckland and north used \$3.26 million worth. But perhaps it made them happier. Aucklanders' bill for anti-depressants was lower... [at] \$3.71 million, while the bill for Wellington and its neighbours was \$3.92 million[('the prescribing of anti-depressants in Christchurch was twice the national average')].

...The gloominess that grips France has recently found new expression. Two of the nation's darlings... announced plans to move. And they are not alone. In Parisian salons, the atlases lie open as the rich discuss the safest overseas havens for their money, while business[people] whisper of Britain's greener economic pastures. The government's oft-repeated message "Cheer up!" has become a national joke in the face of worsening economic figures. One in eight workers is unemployed, while the social security deficit is, at \$13 billion, three times the size predicted. Also, growth is down, taxes are up and "deflation" crops up on the front pages of the papers with depressing frequency. More specifically, France's celebrated quality of life is under threat... [One of the darlings] cited pollution as her reason for swapping the City of Light for the bracing fresh air on the banks of Lake Geneva. The French Association for Public Health reckons poor air quality is to blame for 350 deaths a year in Paris. Although [France's] Environment Minister... declared "everyone has a right to breathe clean air", her efforts have been foiled by Parisians' love affair with the car... The morning rush hour now lasts from 6.30 to 11 o'clock and in the evening from 5 to 8. Even the half-million parking tickets issued each year have no effect... Marches are the new entertainment. And the street – rather than the restaurant, nightclub or art gallery – is now the place to meet like-minded folk. It's cheaper... Six thousand cafes close each year. And... the French spent 25% less on art this year than last... [Furthermore,] Paris' most high-profile art exhibitions are British... Every day, the French are reminded – by their magazines, shops and cinema screens – of the growing glamour of London... [The] Paris editor of London-based *Time Out* magazine, says: "There's just not the buzz here that there is in London." ..."Gay Paree" has ended. [Ironically, 'I've been to England fifteen times and never liked it once – everyone is so sad.'

...Britain's reputation of being a nation full of whingers has received further backing with a quality of life survey commissioned by the European Union branding it "the saddest place in Europe." Britons had far more cause to grumble than most European countries, according to the survey, which listed overwork, unhealthy living, pollution and crime among the country's weakest points.]

...Britons are depressed about their future and certain they are getting more stupid, less healthy and less well-behaved. A poll of... adults showed that most were gloomy... "There seems to be a powerful fear that, in certain important respects, we are heading downhill,"... In May 1968, 68[%] of those polled thought the nation's health was improving. In 1996, 51[%] thought it was getting worse... In 1968, 66[%] thought overall intelligence was improving; now only 26[%] think so. In 1968, 62[%] thought overall behavioural standards were getting worse – now... 92[%] believe it. - 1996

Fresh research on post-natal depression has cast doubts on the view that delinquent juveniles are the product of bad parenting. The study... [by] the Winnicott Research Unit at Reading University... suggests antisocial behaviour in very young boys may be linked to maternal depression – an illness that strikes 10 to 15[%] of new mothers... "Even very young babies are acutely sensitive and sophisticated communicators. When adults are depressed – withdrawn, irritable, very low, babies will detect this,"... Early detection and support for mothers can reduce problems... [Ironically,] irritable or sensitive babies – those who are easily upset and hard to calm – significantly increase the likelihood of their mothers becoming depressed... [T]he investigation shows that... [by] the age of five, just over one in 10 boys whose mothers had suffered post-natal depression were disrupting classes, challenging teachers and squabbling[, whereas]... the daughters of clinically depressed mothers appear not to be affected... The question is whether the girls' resilience is making them a little too good... [M]ore research is needed to see whether an extreme need-to-please on the part of the girls is masking other problems, or whether it is an early indicator of future difficulties.

...Thousands of [NZ] university and polytechnic students are seeking counselling for depression – and many are on the verge of suicide... The director of student counselling services at Waikato University... said her staff had held meetings to discuss the problem because it was much worse than in 1996... Of the 2000 Auckland University students who are seen each year, the percentage suffering from depression has risen from 15 to 18... The head of counselling at Auckland University... said high fees, pressure to complete assignments through the year because of the two-semester system and uncertainty about jobs exacerbated students' depression... [While on the topic of depression, GPs] should not be able to prescribe... Prozac, says the Auckland coroner, who has linked its use to suicide... [The coroner] presided in four recent suicides in which the victims had been taking the drug... It could be coincidental that the victims were on Prozac or it could be that the drug had a "deleterious" effect on some people. [GPs] have been quick to defend the drug and their role in prescribing it... [by pointing out that it] is... used by more than 30 million people.

...N[Z]'s hunger for Prozac... has thrown [Pharmac's] budget out by more than \$740,000... which will be covered by the drug's manufacturer... [Eli Lilly's NZ] manager... said the... refund was a little more than the company had expected to pay...

N[Z]ers with depression will be able to turn to a new drug fully subsidised by the taxpayer. Health officials have approved subsidy of Serzone, available with a psychiatrist's recommendation... [Incidentally,] the clinical trials which led to official approval of Prozac reportedly tracked the use of the drug for only six weeks – hardly long enough to determine any long term side effects. Perhaps the side effect... of most concern... is the "sudden switch of mood to one of excitement, overactivity, talkativeness and uninhibited behaviour".

...TRIALS are under way in three N[Z] centres to treat extreme shyness with an anti-depression drug. If successful, researchers believe the drug may become the frontline treatment for "social phobia"[, which]... can make people afraid of writing cheques... eating or drinking in front of others, receiving visitors or meeting people in authority... "They are afraid of being nervous and they are also afraid people will notice they are nervous... which compounds the problem." The trials, involving about 36 N[Z]ers, have been funded by Swiss pharmaceutical giant Roche, manufacturer of the drug moclobemide under the brand name of Aurorix. Roche has also instigated similar trials in... A[US], South Africa, Canada... and Europe... [A] Phobic Trust psychiatrist... could see many positives to the use of moclobemide in treating social phobia. "It's a heck of a waste of potentially very talented and creative people because of the crippling shyness,"... [T]he belief that "a good stiff drink" was all shy people needed showed how lightly social phobia was often taken... "A lot of these people are prone to alcoholism." ...[Speaking of which, s]ome people medicate their depression with... alcohol... [This will] eventually worsen the condition... [because] alcohol is a potent depressant.

...People with extreme shyness are being successfully treated with an anti-depressant drug... The N[Z] patients in the trial took up to five Aurorix pills a day, a slightly higher rate than used for depression... [In related news,] a leading expert says... [people] are too readily turning to anti-depressant drugs for a quick-fix remedy[(Prozac has even been 'given to cockatoos'). The US]... clinical psychologist, said depression was becoming the most common disorder worldwide... The world authority on depression[, who] is visiting Auckland to hold treatment workshops sponsored by Massey University and Waitemata Health... said too many drugs were being thrown at people – often in the wrong circumstances... "Despite the great promises of anti-depressant drugs, they can't teach the kinds of skills people need if they are to avoid succumbing to depression,"...

Children and adolescents are being prescribed the anti-depressant Prozac in increasing numbers, although the drug's distributor does not market it for paediatric use... Eli Lilly's manager for N[Z] said... there had not been enough research to show its effect on those aged under 18. "If it was proved that it was safe or effective we would be able to promote it." ...Despite legal action[by hundreds of USers]... who allege it leads some people to violence[, US]... physicians prescribed Prozac and the related drug Zoloft more than 580,000 times to children and adolescents... [last] year... In 1994 it was given 220,000 times to children aged 5 to 10... Pharmac does not record the age of N[Z] patients given Prozac. [However,] doctors say more primary and secondary schoolchildren are being given it... [A]dolescents usually took Prozac for depression, whereas younger children were given it for attention deficit disorder and obsessive compulsive disorder.

...[the] Minister of Health... is concerned about the use of the drug ritalin, prescribed for attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children. Prescriptions for ritalin have increased dramatically in recent years... For the year ended August 1996, 24,000 prescriptions had been

dispensed, an increase of 83[%] over the previous 12 months. "This year we spent more than \$1.2 million on Ritalin... Figures like this do concern me. Strict criteria should be followed where powerful drugs are being prescribed, especially for children."

...The controversial drug Ritalin should be prescribed with caution and never be the first resort, says... the lobby group Children's Agenda, [which] was responding to concerns raised by the Minister of Health... [In addition, the] former Commissioner for Children, said most children were better off without Ritalin, or any medication... "It is so easy to just try to zonk them with something without taking into account what the child's personality is, or what their interests are." ...The Labour [Party's health spokesperson] said the lack of special education resources meant Ritalin was the only thing helping children cope. But the Minister of Education... said her claim was nonsense. "The Government has already committed \$134 million of between \$150 million-\$200 million set aside in the budget for Special Education 2000."

...[THE AGE OF RITALIN IS THERE A PARENT TODAY WHO HAS HEARD the talk or read the best sellers about ADHD and the drugs used to treat it without wondering about his or her child – the first time it climbs onto the school bus still wearing its pj's or loses its fifth pair of mittens or finds 400 ways to sit in a chair? The debate goes straight to the heart of our expectations and values. How dreamy is too dreamy? Where is the line between an energetic child and a hyperactive one, between a spirited, risk-taking child and an alarmingly impulsive one, between flexibility and distractibility? What if a little pill makes everything a bit easier, not just for severely impaired kids but for those who teachers say are a little too spacey or jumpy or hard to settle down? Is there something wrong with the kids – or is there something wrong with us? For years Ritalin has been a godsend for children who were so hot-wired they were simply unreachable, and unteachable. In severe cases, the benefits of Ritalin (and the family of related drugs) on these children's ability to function and learn and cope are so direct that advocates say withholding the pills is a form of neglect. But it is not the severe cases so much as the borderline ones – the children who occupy that grey area between clear dysfunction and normal unruliness – who raise the tough ethical issues, both public and private. The pace at which Ritalin use has been growing has alarmed critics for a while now. Some doctors find themselves battling anxious parents who, worried that their child will daydream his future away, demand the drug, and if refused, go off to find a more co-operative physician. Some parents feel pressured to medicate their child just so that his behaviour will conform a bit more to other children's, even if they are quite content with their child's conduct – quirks, tantrums and all. Many doctors won't discuss the matter publicly because the issues are so hot. Production of Ritalin has increased more than sevenfold in the past eight years, and 90% of it is consumed in the US. In AUS – where 2-6% of children are estimated to have ADHD – the prescription of stimulant medication for the disorder has increased 13-fold in the past seven years. Such figures invite the charge that school districts, insurance companies and overstressed families are turning to medication as a quick fix for complicated problems that might be better addressed by smaller classes, psychotherapy or family counselling, or basic changes in the hectic environment that so many children face every day. And the growing availability of the drug raises the fear of abuse: more teenagers try Ritalin by grinding it up and snorting it for \$5 a pill than get it by prescription. "Let's not deny Ritalin works," says a Manhattan Beach, California, family therapist who has written several books on raising children and who lectures extensively around the country. "But why does it work, and what are the consequences of overprescribing? The reality is we don't know." For that matter, even ADHD is still something of a mystery to doctors, who speak of it sometimes as if it were a single condition and sometimes as if it were a broad range of problems. Researchers suspect that the disorder stems from an inadequate supply of dopamine and norepinephrine in the brain – a hypothesis that is supported in part by the fact that Ritalin boosts dopamine levels. But proof of any of this has been tough to come by. So it should be no surprise that the latest research raises more questions than answers."

... "Whatever other shortcomings may be laid at the feet of those who run America's schools, a gift for hiding unpalatable truths behind bureaucratic euphemisms is clearly not one of them. Last week US educrats were adding to the list of opaque official titles that conceal some very strange jobs. Along with "self-esteem enhancement counsellor" and "conflict resolution mediator," no self-respecting school is these days without its "administering nurse." While the name makes her sound like a paper-shuffler, the truth is that this new breed of matrons – the country's fastest growing educational occupation – push pills instead of pens. With more than 12% of America's school-age children now under the influence of mood-altering prescription drugs, somebody has to hand out those daily doses of attitude adjustment. In most schools, public and private alike, "pill time" has become an entirely unremarkable fact of everyday life. The lunch bell rings, a queue forms outside the school sick bay and students, the vast majority of them boys, wait dutifully to toss down their daily hit. Just why so many American children are being medicated is a moot point. Even the First Wife, who has studiously avoided spelling out her positions on scores of other issues as it pursues a seat in the Senate, has joined the chorus of voices calling for "a full and comprehensive clinical review." In the meantime, drugs like Ritalin and Luvox cut across class, race and economic divisions. In some Harlem public schools, where parents are eligible for as much as an additional \$US450 a month in welfare payments if their children are diagnosed with learning disabilities, entire classrooms are on one or other form of medication. "When the American Psychiatric Association declared ADD a recognised disorder in 1987, it started a gold rush," a Citizens Commission on Human Rights spokesperson says. "In a decade, Ritalin production has increased by 655%. The economic incentives for keeping kids high are very potent. Schools, parents, drug companies and the psychiatric community all get something out of keeping kids high."

...Hyperactivity medicine in high demand Prescriptions for the psychiatric drug Ritalin in NZ have jumped 16% in the past year, according to the government's drug-buying agency. Pharmac has released figures showing that 49,239 prescriptions for Ritalin, were issued last year. The Ministry of Health's chief youth adviser said no figures were available to show how many NZ children took Ritalin or how many of the prescriptions were for patients newly diagnosed with ADHD. The adviser is coordinating an advisory group that is drafting a set of guidelines for the diagnosis and management of the disorder, following controversy about the prescribing of Ritalin and its use as a recreational drug. Ritalin has become popular with users of illicit drugs because of its similarities to methamphetamine (speed). The guidelines, which are expected to be released next month, will look at the causes of under and over-prescribing of Ritalin as well as other solutions to the disorder, such as behaviour management and dietary restrictions."

...AUSn 'mothers are sedating unruly children with over-the-counter cough and cold mixtures in a trend which raises important public health issues. A lecturer at the Key Centre for Gal's Health at the University of Melbourne said a pilot study of mothers with under-5s had confirmed anecdotal reports of widespread use of antihistamines to "keep children quiet." "We've now coined the expression 'social medication,' which is using a drug for the sole purpose of controlling behaviour rather than the purpose for which it was intended. Our concern is that parents who are likely to medicate their children like this are maybe the ones which present them later for ADD or ADHD because they believe medication should control children's behaviour. Are we creating a culture of pill-popping to get children to conform to a notion of 'the normal child'?" "● Tonight's INSIDE NZ documentary *Out Of Control Kids – Living With ADHD* (TV3, 8.30pm) looks at the lives of people who have been diagnosed with ADHD, the hardships they face and the problems it causes their families."

... "a 10-year-old runaway Dunedin boy with ADHD and a fascination for heavy machinery may be made to wear an electronic tracking device – worn as a pendant or wrist bracelet – to help authorities locate him quickly. The police plan has been welcomed by the father of the boy, who has run away more than 50 times and has often been found driving heavy vehicles. Late last month the boy was stopped on Dunedin's Main South Rd after driving an excavator about 500m. The tracking unit has a range of up to 4km and would cost \$15,000 – although someone has offered the use of their unit for free. The proposal was put forward after the boy disappeared again last Monday in Mosgiel and was found driving a tractor. The boy's father said his son's penchant for heavy machinery meant it was only a matter of time "before my boy kills himself or someone else."

... "When the Mt Eden mother wants to cook a meal it sometimes ties her 8-year-old son to a chair. The mother has called for police assistance just to get home when her son has tried to climb out the window and on to the roof of the family car in traffic. The son has smashed windows and furniture in their battered villa in tantrums his mother calls diabolical. His wild behaviour is not the worst of it. Epileptic seizures convulse his small body and the boy is asthmatic; even when the boy is quiet, his mother watches him closely for fear it may fit and stop breathing. Diagnosed with ADD and mild retardation, the

boy has driven his mother to near distraction. The mother finds herself identifying with the Palmerston North mother convicted of humanslaughter for strangling her teenage autistic daughter, Casey.'

... 'A mother with no medical or scientific training may have made a dramatic breakthrough in the search for a cure for autism. The English graduate from New Hampshire in the US has discovered a possible treatment, the effects of which are being hailed as "near miraculous." Her findings will be unveiled next month at a conference organised by the Autism Research Institute, which is endorsing them. The mother's research centres on a hormone, secretin, which stimulates the pancreas to produce enzymes. Secretin is also used in the diagnosis of gastrointestinal illnesses, and it was this use that led to her discovery. The hormone was given to her autistic son when it underwent an endoscopic examination. The boy began to show remarkable signs of improvement within days of receiving secretin. "Before my son received secretin it was completely non-verbal, non-responsive and zoned out to concentrate on specified tasks. It also had to wear nappies all the time because we could not potty-train him. We referred to him as being 'zoned out'. After the secretin, we noticed an amazing difference in eye contact. Our son became calmer and started sleeping all night long, something it had virtually never done before. We then realised our son was no longer exhibiting the facial tics it had had for two years. And two weeks after the examination it began speaking for the first time in over two years. By week three it was saying small phrases such as 'I love you,' 'Thank you, Mummy' and 'Good night, Daddy.' It started to dance to music and sing to its favourite videos. Within weeks it was potty trained, almost effortlessly." In the two years since, around 120 children have been treated with the hormone. However, fewer than 20 doctors are willing to administer it, since America's powerful FDA has not approved it. Doctors involved are therefore forced to work covertly. The mother said: "It has been two years since we initially discovered the hope that lies behind this hormone. My son has made incredible progress in the past year, particularly since enlisting the care and treatment of some fine doctors and scientists. But we are left to question whether his gains would have been more magnified if it had had stronger, more frequent doses. This is what propels our efforts for further research." The secretin research is too late for Casey Albury, who became the face of autism in NZ when her mother admitted killing her.'

... 'A Northland couple had to bind their autistic son. Early diagnosis could alleviate such problems, say experts. All babies should be routinely screened for any developmental problems, especially autism, say new US guidelines. Babies diagnosed and treated early for autism usually do better than children who are treated later, according to the American Academy of Neurology. "It sometimes takes years after the first symptoms are noticed for autism to be diagnosed," says a pediatric neurologist at the University of California, who headed the subcommittee that wrote the guidelines. "It should never be assumed that the child will grow out of it or catch up." Autism, which is marked by social withdrawal and behavioural problems, affects one in 500 children, the subcommittee says in its report. The report also says children with autism generally learn better when they are given visual as well as verbal instruction, and when other children are around to help demonstrate language, social and behaviour skills.'

... 'The Phoenix Centre at Riverhills Primary School in Pakuranga is NZ's first class for autistic children to be integrated into a mainstream school. The class started in January but officially opened this week. It is the result of three parents' desire for an autistic class within a mainstream school. The parents found that Riverhills School had a spare classroom and its principal was willing to take the children. They would normally have attended a special education school, or an extension unit at a primary school. Apart from a safety fence, the room appears the same as every other classroom. But its interior has been purpose built for autistic children. Inside are individual work cubicles so pupils are not disrupted by others, "quiet rooms" for time alone and carpet to minimise loud noises which the children cannot tolerate. From the combined funding of nine children, the class receives a full-time and part-time teacher, as well as teacher aids and speech and occupational therapists. Several mainstream classes are held in the Phoenix Centre to include the autistic children, with a buddy system between mainstream and autistic children. There is now a waiting list and parents in other cities are looking to set up similar classes.'

... 'The most widely recognized of the pervasive developmental disorders is *infantile autism*. Children with this disorder were first identified by psychiatrist Leo Kanner (1943), who noted many of the most puzzling and disturbing characteristics of autism. It is difficult to imagine just how disturbed an autistic child is, but once you have observed one of these unfortunate children the memory will last forever. If two autistic children are placed side by side in a room full of toys, chances are they will ignore each other and most of the toys; these children seem to be living in a world much different from our own. In their aloneness, autistic children seem to prefer inanimate objects to human interaction. A failure to use eye contact to modulate social interaction is a frequently observed feature of the disorder, and autistic children often appear to be unaware of people or even of themselves. However, studies using subtle measures of attending, such as heart rate, show that autistic children are aware of the presence of other people although this may not be reflected in their overt behavior. This disruption in social behavior also is found in a lack of attachment behavior and empathy in social relations. Language deficits constitute one of the most incapacitating problems autistic children face. About half of autistic children never develop meaningful, useful speech, and most others have limited and sometimes bizarre means of verbal expression. Many autistic children learn to master only a few of the tasks necessary to function in the world and need constant help with feeding, dressing, toileting and learning. Autistic children spend much of their time engaging in *self-stimulatory behavior* such as repetitively spinning objects, switching lights on and off, or flapping their hands in front of their eyes. Whether autistic children are of normal, below-average, or superior intelligence has been the topic of much discussion. Kanner and others have suggested that autistic children have normal or even super intelligence that is hidden beneath a blanket of psychopathology. Several pieces of circumstantial evidence support this speculation. The parents of autistic children are somewhat more likely to have higher than average IQs, and the normal physical appearance and motor development of the child does distinguish autism from many forms of mental retardation. Furthermore, some autistic children show what is called *idiot savant* capacities: they may have peculiar talents, particularly mathematical ones, such as being able to quickly and accurately predict the day of the week that some future date will fall on. However, despite such indications that the psychological problems of autistic children shroud a superior intelligence, about 70% of all autistic children score as mentally retarded on psychological tests. Currently, it is almost universally accepted that autism has a biological cause that has yet to be specified. To date, autism has proven to be a discouraging behavior disorder to treat. Of the host of treatments that have been tried, operant behavior therapy appears to be most effective, but this is a time-consuming treatment producing change that greatly helps the children in day-to-day functioning but still leaves them performing well out of the range of normal development. While behavior therapy may not be the solution to all of the problems of the autistic child, it does offer these children the opportunity to develop many more skills than they would otherwise acquire. Unfortunately, even what is called a "good" outcome, while a dramatic change, is far from the sort of life that most of us would consider to be ideal. In every classroom in the country, there is a child who has difficulty sitting still, attending to the teacher, finishing school tasks. Drug therapy has been a popular solution to this problem. However, not only may drugs produce undesirable side effects, such as growth suppression and increased blood pressure, but in 30 to 50% of the cases, drug treatments are ineffective. An alternative is the use of operant learning principles to control this type of child. Considerable disagreement can be found in the discussions of childhood depression. It has even been argued that because of immature cognitive and personality development, it is not possible for children to be clinically depressed, or at least it may be impossible for younger children to experience depressive disorders in the same manner as adults do.']

...Magnets may be able to replace more radical treatment such as electro-convulsive shocks for depressed people... [T]he University of Valencia used a method called transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) on... patients with severe, drug-resistant depression. A magnetic coil was placed on the patient's scalp and pulses sent to various areas of the brain associated with depression... 11 of the 17 patients showed marked improvement. "TMS... is practically painless, does not require anaesthesia, is not coupled with induction of a seizure, and has fewer risks and cognitive side-effects." But... more study was needed... [□ The] *British Medical Journal* last year reviewed 23 controlled studies of 1,757 depressed patients, and reported that US and German researchers had found the herb St Johns Wort worked nearly three times better than a placebo. In Germany, St Johns Wort is now the leading treatment for depression, with doctors writing 25 times more prescriptions for St Johns Wort than... for Prozac.

...[her] black moods were often accompanied by inexplicable bouts of insomnia, crying and lethargy... [when] the 58-year-old... didn't care... [about staying alive. But the] Toronto accountant... balked when her physician suggested a common depressant: [the 58-year-old] didn't feel comfortable taking drugs. Fortunately, a friend suggested the herb Saint Johnswort[, which]... is available in N[Z]... Within three weeks, her depression had lifted. "I feel restored... [and, apart from continuing] to take two herb capsules daily... I'm my normal self again." In Europe, Saint Johnswort, a yellow-flowered plant with the Latin name of *Hypericum perforatum*, has been popular for about 15 years. In Germany, where it's the leading treatment, physicians write three million prescriptions a year... Thanks to books and articles touting the herb's properties, its popularity is spreading... [T]he Herb Research Foundation calls Saint Johnswort "the premier herb for moderate depression." What's the evidence for this claim? ...One compelling study tracked the herb's effects on 3250 patients battling mostly mild and moderate depression and found that about 80% either felt better or became completely free of symptoms after a month... In spite of the promising studies, researchers know little about the herb's active ingredients or how it works. They also aren't sure whether Saint Johnswort can help the severely depressed or if it's safe and effective long-term[, although]... millions of Germans have used the herb extensively without any reported deaths. In the study of 3250 depressed patients, only 2.4% experienced side effects. Those included restlessness, gastrointestinal irritations and mild allergic reactions... [A]ntidepressants, such as Prozac, cause more common and more serious side effects, such as insomnia, weight loss and sexual dysfunction. "The absence of serious side effects is one of *Hypericum's* biggest selling points,"... [However, experts] note that many of the products in [US] healthfood stores contain overly diluted concentrations that render the herb impotent... [H]ealthfood stores now peddle a panoply of mood-boosting supplements, including... the hormone pregnenolone... the amino acids 5-hydroxytryptophan and L-tryosine... and... kava root...

Health agencies are sounding warnings over kava drinking moving from ceremonial supping to abuse... [Drinking kava, which] is made from the pounded pulp of the piper methysticus plant... had become an activity in its own right: "When it goes 11 to 12 hours, it's not ceremonial." ...But... [a] senior lecturer in Maori and Pacific health at the Auckland Medical School, does not see consumption of the powder and water brew as a public health problem... Kava... made drinkers sedate and lazy but it was preferable to alcohol... [However, a spokesperson for] Alcohol Healthwatch... said... "When I was in Fiji last Christmas, it was a health issue there... [Dads] were going away for three or four days then sleeping the rest of the week – the [mums] were having to provide for their families." ...Last year a Fiji newspaper reported that kava was turning married [guys] off sex, forcing wives to have affairs and breaking up marriages... [T]he doctor in charge of... [Fiji's] only psychiatric hospital... told a medical conference this week that many [Fijians] were so drugged by the drink they were unable to properly satisfy their wives in bed... [The] Nigerian working on a Government contract... said the problem was also experienced in other South Pacific nations... [P]owdered kava... is widely available from shops... in Auckland.

...[the sudden worldwide demand for the narcotic South Pacific plant by Western companies seeking to manufacture it as a health drug – marketed as a no-side-effects cure for stress, depression and symptoms of menopause – has sent the root's price spiralling out of reach of many Fijians. The price has doubled already this year from \$20 to \$40 a kg. Kava exports earned \$20 million in the first six months of this year – the same amount as for the whole of last year. "I'm already projecting that with the investment the Government has promised, we should be making \$200 million a year by the year 2000," said the chairperson of the National Kava Council, which was formed earlier this year by Fijian farmers and traders. One of Fiji's biggest exporters says 50 tonnes of dried kava roots, stuffed into nylon sacks, are shipped out of the country every week. Between 30 and 50 foreign buyers from the US, Europe, China and South-east Asia are in the Fiji Islands at any one time hoping to cash in on "the drug choice of the nineties," according to one of the scores of kava sites on the Web. Kava roots are traded on the Internet by the kg at several times the Fijian price. "Just a few cupfuls and you'll find euphoria, tranquillity, friendliness," promises one ad. Indigenous to the Fiji Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and Samoa, the root produces a muddy, brown liquid tasting like peppery dishwater. "It makes my body feel loose and it numbs my brain cells. I forget all the things I'm worrying about," says a 27-year-old mechanic. But looking out to sea on the shores of the small, hilly, kava-growing island of Ovalau, a young farmer still waits for money owed by a US agent who took his kava crop and has not returned. "The agent took it to Suva and I don't even know the name of his company. I left the Navy to plant kava when the price went up but now I regret my decision." The Pacific Concerns Resource Centre based in Suva has begun drawing up legislation regarding "the intellectual property of indigenous peoples." Unfortunately: "Kava has already been hijacked," says a spokesperson for the centre, referring to the illegal sale of green plants for mass cultivation on experimental farms in Hawaii, Guatemala and AUS.' By the way, NZ p[atients with depression face paying almost \$300 a year to stay on certain pills as the Government moves to cut drug spending. Health officials have written to the manufacturers of Prozac and Aropax warning that the subsidy will drop in February by about 25[%]. That forces the drug companies to either drop prices or make patients pay a part charge above the subsidy... SmithKline Beecham, the makers of Aropax... said patients on Aropax would have to pay \$24 a month if the company did not drop prices... [The] company has started legal action against Pharmac, claiming that the latest move is unjustified... To cut spending, [Pharmac] has started paying subsidies only to the level of the lowest priced drug within a similar drug group... Eli Lilly... is considering taking legal action but said that would be a last resort. It would decide within four weeks whether to go to court, drop its prices or make patients pay a part charge... Pharmac said yesterday that it could not talk about the planned subsidy drop because of the legal action.

...[the 2500 NZers who take the anti-depressant drug Cipramil will be spared a manufacturer's surcharge when taxpayer subsidies on Prozac and several other anti-depressants are cut in February. Cipramil's supplier will meet the subsidy reduction, which the Government drug-funder has negotiated with the makers of a generic version of Prozac. Pharmac is investigating the possibility of paying manufacturers' surcharges for the 11,500 patients who take the anti-depressants Serzone or Aurorix.' Incidentally, 'top psychologists readily admit that, while it is impossible to overdose on Prozac, the drug can be addictive – although its manufacturer says no studies have been done into its addictiveness'...

'Even "beneficial" activities' when] done to excess can be addictive. The key is to follow the ancient Greek maxim "Nothing to excess." Each person is free to interpret excess, but it is important to know one's limits ("Know thyself")... V[iewing addiction as simply a func]tion of neurotransmitter levels gives people one more excuse not to take responsibility for their actions... "...We can blame God for the dopamine in our brains."

...AS A BIOLOGY WATCHER FOR MANY YEARS and a pain-management professional, I'd like to sound a note of caution regarding the dopamine hypothesis of addiction. What is known is that the relationships between dopamine, brain content and addictive behavior are associative, not causal. Even those of us who are advocates of greater understanding of neurotransmitter mechanics in human behavior do not see the situation as "simpler than anyone has dared imagine." As our attempts at interdiction and control so amply demonstrate, there is a flaw in advocating simple solutions for complex problems: the solutions are usually wrong... [Our attempts reveal] more serious American addictions: the desire to explain complex human psychology in... materialistic terms and the need for a pill to solve every problem... [T]he "dopamine cycle" may reveal the physiological underpinnings of human cravings, but this is not the whole story. Though dopamine pleasure may "take hold" and perpetuate addictive behavior, the source of the need is psychological and relational. People [become addicted] to... whatever... will give them the dopamine rush, either as a misguided way of connecting or to deaden the pain of being disconnected.

...[University of Toronto scientists say they may have found the key to better treatments for addiction. They think the clue to controlling the illness is the interaction of proteins on the surface of brain cells that decide how much dopamine (linked to pleasure and addiction) and other brain chemicals called GABA (associated with learning, memory and emotion) to let into the cell. Too much or too little dopamine and GABA produces symptoms of addiction.]

...AS A RECOVERING SHOPLIFTER, I KNOW THE payoff was not just the high but also the immediate gratification. Shoplifting was a way for me to express anger, reward myself when life seemingly didn't, assuage a feeling of emptiness, and give myself the illusion of control. You can

say all this goes back to dopamine, but haven't we seen many people who, although stabilized chemically, continue to be addicted or switch addictions? There's more to addiction than meets the neuron.

...I [take exception to comments by the] director of the U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse, that for a recovering person "the occasional relapse is normal." Thanks to the programs of Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon... I learned... that I do not have to accept another person's active alcoholism as normal behavior... My husband has been continually sober in the fellowship of A.A. for eight years. And we've personally known members with... 40 years of sustained sobriety. The fact that there can be recovery from this devastating family illness is the light at the end of the tunnel for so many of us. And the knowledge that our three-year-old son does not have to grow up in alcoholism is the greatest blessing of our lives.

...[learning about the causes of ad]diction was a blessing... I'm a recovering alcoholic and ex-smoker, and it took me a long time to accept addiction as a physical disease, not a characteristic flaw, and to realize... it must be dealt with in the same clinical manner as high blood pressure or cancer.

...W[hile treating addicts on a] daily basis, I... found that a common mechanism underlying addictive behaviors is stinkin' thinkin' (a term coined by A.A. long before cognitive therapy). This refers to beliefs that lead people to engage in addictive behaviors despite their potentially devastating consequences. Some such types of thinking are anticipatory beliefs ("I'm gonna win a fortune... at the casino"), relief-orientated beliefs ("If I smoke a cigarette, I won't be so tense"), and permissive beliefs ("One piece of chocolate won't kill me"). According to cognitive therapy, "recovered" people have replaced their addictive beliefs with more adaptive ones ("I can enjoy life without drinking, drugs, gambling or smoking").

...[People are astonished that 60,000 suicides are committed in Europe each year, but they ought to be surprised there are so few. Every human of our time, if we go deep enough into the contradiction between his conscience and his life, is in a most terrible condition. The contrast between the permanently armed condition of Europe and its profession of Christianity is alone enough to drive anyone to despair, to doubt the sanity of humankind, and to induce him to end his life in this irrational and brutal world. This contradiction – which is a quintessence of all the other contradictions between life and conscience which fill the life of a human of our day – is so terrible that to live participating in it is only possible if one does not think of it and is able to forget it. And this is the only explanation of the terrible intensity with which people of our time strive to stupefy themselves with amusements, or opium, wine, tobacco']...

Gloomy outlook for depressed smokers... A visiting health expert... of Harvard University... said non-communicable diseases were fast replacing traditional ills such as infectious bugs and malnutrition... [The expert] co-edited the first international study in this area, called the Global Burden of Disease, estimating which diseases would inflict the most death and disability... [H]is work, made public a year ago, had prompted many governments to launch specific studies to better plan health services... Two key factors will shape afflictions in 20 years: aging and tobacco... [T]he biggest horrors plaguing humans by the year 2020... will be... heart disease, depression, road accidents, stroke and lung cancer... - 1997

Since 1949 when... a relationship between smoking and cancer... [was] discovered... many investigators have studied the problem. Although there still exists some debate about the degree to which smoking contributes to lung cancer, virtually everyone agrees that there is some relationship... Dentists also find that the action of... nicotine... can stain and injure the porcelain of the teeth, which often must be completely recapped for their protection. Every so often a substitute is put on the market to compete with tobacco; in the U.S. in 1959, for example, a cigarette was sold which was made of combustible vegetable material not containing the nicotine or tars which so often coat the lungs of a smoker. The venture, however, was doomed to failure, as the leading tobacco companies united all their forces to discourage the sale of this new cigarette.

This herb belongs to the potato or Solanaceae family. It is not dangerous to touch like poison ivy, but smoking the leaves may affect the proper functioning of the body... [T]obacco's narcotic property... is used in some insecticides... In 1964 the advisory Committee to the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service in Washington did research on the effect of smoking on the health. Its report produced strong evidence that smoking is a hazard. Unfortunately this report had very little effect upon American smokers. In 1965 government legislation required tobacco industries to print a warning on each package... Since then, millions of dollars are continuing to be spent on further research. The government is putting restrictions on the number of acres that can be planted and the amount of yield per acre. Tobacco was originally an American tropical plant but has been adapted for cultivation in subtropic and temperate regions... It is an unbranched annual, growing three to six feet tall, with large oval leaves.

TOBACCO has been grown as a commercial crop... near Motueka... in... [NZ] for more than 60 years... Most of the tobacco produced here is flue-cured, producing a yellow-leaf tobacco... The policy of the NZ government has been to use locally grown leaf as an import substitute... [50%] of the tobacco used in locally manufactured cigarettes and in cut tobacco was home grown by the early 1960s, and this continued until the beginning of the 1970s since when it has been declining[. By the late 1990s only 'a few small, privately-operated NZ farms were still growing tobacco']...

A Motueka... r[esident]... has been convicted of illegally manufacturing tobacco... Manufacturing tobacco is prohibited under the Customs and Excise Act and carries a maximum penalty of a \$5000 fine. R[esident] was fined \$1000... 52kg of tobacco, manufacturing equipment and a bag containing \$7350 cash was found during a search of a property where R[esident] claimed to live... Defending himself in the Nelson District Court, R[esident said it] was exempt from prosecution because a regulation in the act said it was okay to grow and manufacture tobacco for personal use.

AFTER BEING bothered by a nagging cough with increasing phlegm for some months, [a] 41-year-old Auckland housewife... consulted her doctor, who ordered a chest x-ray and blood tests. When the x-rays revealed a dark shadow on Mary's lungs... Mary... was admitted to hospital for an urgent biopsy. The diagnosis was devastating: inoperable cancer. Mary had smoked 20 cigarettes a day since her teens, rarely worrying about cancer. "I thought only older people got it... and rarely [gals]." Mary delayed treatment for a few weeks to give her husband and two sons time to adjust, then had chemotherapy and radiotherapy. The treatment controlled the tumours for ten months, until secondary growths in her brain caused her to have frequent fits. Despite her desperate will to live, Mary died a year after diagnosis. The [gal] who succumbs to lung cancer in the prime of her life has become an all-too-familiar tragedy in... [NZ. The] acting medical director of the Cancer Society... says it is shocking that so many [people] use tobacco without realizing the dangers. Moreover, smoking costs us \$125 million each year in hospitalization, practitioner care and drugs for heart and lung diseases – and many millions more when you include hidden costs such as lost productivity, insurance and fires. "Every year we lose nearly 5000 years of working life as a result of people aged 15 to 60 dying prematurely because of cigarettes," says... a Hokianga epidemiologist... 1100 of the 4000 who die each year because of smoking are [gals]. At Tauranga Hospital, a study of patients aged 55 or less... showed that of 15 cases of lung cancer diagnosed between 1986 and 1988, 12 of the victims were [gals]. Of these, 11 were smokers and the twelfth lived with a heavy smoker. Most died within a year of diagnosis... Among [NZ guys], the lung cancer death rate has been fairly steady since the late 1970s, but there's been a 252[%] increase in the number of [gals] dying from the disease over the past 30 years. Lung cancer now kills nearly one in 40 [NZ gals] and is likely to replace breast cancer as the leading cause of cancer death among [gals] early in the next decade. "The most devastating thing about lung cancer is that fewer than [5%] of its victims are alive five years after diagnosis, compared with a 70[%] survival rate for those who get breast cancer," says... [a] respiratory specialist... The figures are even more alarming among Maori [gals]... In this community, lung cancer has [already] overtaken breast cancer as the leading cause of cancer death. It is no coincidence that the 1981... census – the

last to question smoking habits – revealed that nearly 60[% of Maori gals] smoked compared with only 26.8[% of gals] from other groups. Smoking is also implicated in other types of cancer, especially of the larynx, mouth, throat, gullet, bladder, pancreas, kidney, cervix and stomach. According to a report by the Toxic Substances Board to the minister of health in May 1989, smoking accounts for nearly a quarter of all cancer deaths in both sexes. But [gals] who smoke run extra risks. Smokers who take the oral contraceptive pill have a dramatically increased risk of coronary heart disease as they get older. Pregnant... [smokers] are much more likely to miscarry or have stillborn children. Their babies are more often below normal weight and susceptible to a variety of diseases during their first year. Smoking during pregnancy and after birth may increase the cot death rate. “Our research shows that severe pre-menstrual symptoms and period pains are more frequent for smokers, and related to the number of cigarettes smoked,” says... the Family Planning Association. “Smokers also have an earlier menopause.” Ironically, most [gal] smokers are in their twenties, the prime child-bearing age. Fortunately, publicity in recent years urging addicts to “kick it in the butt,” may have had some effect among older smokers... But doctors are alarmed that people aged 15 to 24 are *not* heeding the messages, particularly since the risks of lung cancer and other diseases are greater the earlier smoking begins. One [gal] in three in that age group smokes – the same number as in 1983. A study by... the University of Otago Medical School, showed that among 15-year-olds, one in five girls and one in ten boys smoked every day. “Almost as quickly as long-term smokers die or quit, their ranks are replaced....”... So why do so many continue to smoke, and why do so many younger [gals] start? Here are some findings from recent studies of smoking habits: *Ignorance of the dangers... Fear of gaining weight.* Today’s society exerts tremendous pressure on [gals] to be slim, and it is true that many who graduate from stop-smoking programmes report gaining from two to four k[gs]. “However, about] a third who quit... stay the same and a third actually lose weight,” asserts... [the] national director of ASH. If nothing else, food tastes better and many ex-smokers eat more. A craving for sweets also grips some people. But it’s more complicated than that. Nicotine is a stimulant *and* a relaxant. Smoking burns up kilojoules... [A] study published in... 1986... [by] the University of Lausanne in Switzerland found that a pack-a-day [gal smoker expended 10%] more energy when... [smoking than when the smoker] stopped... *Psychological need.* People who suffer from anxiety, low self-confidence, stress or depression often use cigarettes to try to relax. Those... who use cigarettes as an emotional crutch find it difficult to abandon them. A paper prepared for the[NZ] Medical Association says this applies especially to [gals] in lower socioeconomic groups who have less control over their lives. *Advertising enticements.* Tobacco companies portray the [gal] smoker as confident, slim, successful and sexy. This image has a strong appeal for young [gals]. “I bought my first pack of cigarettes, lit one and posed in front of the mirror,” says one 16-year-old girl. “I liked what I saw, just like in the ads, and I’ve been smoking ever since!” Antismoking groups say that advertising expenditure is one of the main factors affecting increased consumption... Studies in other countries have shown that tobacco use decreases when tobacco promotion is banned. The Toxic Substances Board has recommended that tobacco promotion “in all its forms” be eliminated by December this year... “THOUGH IT’S never easy and often takes more than one attempt, half of [gals] and more than half of [guys] over 25 who have ever been smokers *have* managed to give it up,” says... the Department of Health. In 1989, 50,000 smokers became ex-smokers, and ex-smokers now outnumber smokers... To emphasise the blunt warning of our antismoking lobby: Tobacco is more addictive than heroin. Act as if your life depended on quitting. It does.

...at Green Lane Hospital, where long-term smokers go to die from cancer, blockage of the airways and lung failure[, doctors]... watch... people struggle to their last breath... Patients are usually admitted because of breathlessness, their already damaged and constricted airways further blocked by the infection of cold and flu viruses. Some are hypoxic, their lungs so badly damaged they won’t pick up oxygen and pass it on to blood for delivery to other organs... Chronic obstructive respiratory disease (CORD) is the third-most-common reason for admission to Green Lane’s general hospital wards... Hospital staff don’t lay blame. Smokers get the same treatment as anyone else... Treatment is with steroids and dilating agents to increase the size of air passages, and with oxygen. But there’s “not a lot of reversibility” in those wards. The ones who do go home often come back, if the ambulance makes it in time. “They feel like they should die but they hang on for... a long time in a very distressing state... It’s very depressing to watch.” ...Perhaps most disturbing for staff is the increasing number of young [gals], particularly Maori, being diagnosed as having lung cancer. “The youngest was in her early thirties, and that’s a tragedy for her, for her family and friends.” In another part of Green Lane... the coronary care unit... 60[%] of patients have a history of smoking... Drug treatment for cardiac problems often has undesirable side-effects... [Doctors] tell... them the single best thing they can do to help themselves is stop smoking, and 90[%] do. But there can be little clearer indication of addiction than that the remainder continue to smoke after being confronted with their own mortality... 17 out of every 100 [NZers] will die of a smoking-related illness... [L]ast year... 2934 tonnes... of tobacco were consumed in... [NZ, down from] 3758 tonnes... in 1990[, and the cost]... to the country is estimated at \$250 million annually... But that \$250 million cost provides little imperative for politicians to act to discourage smoking. For each of the past eight years governments have taken around \$600 million in tax on tobacco.

...plans [by NZ’s Government] to legalise tobacco advertising are hypocritical and will encourage younger children to start smoking... claims... the Smokefree Coalition... which represents more than 20 health and consumer groups... [T]he organisation would withdraw its support for new smoke-free legislation if the Government persisted with its plans... “We understand the Government is dead set on legalising and sanctioning tobacco advertising within the Smokefree Environments [Amendment] Bill and, to us, that is wrong,” [the coalition’s chairperson] said. “It is a backward step. It is going against [the aim of] the original 1990 act, which was to get rid of advertising.” ...The 1990 act limits advertising to price notices without “any pictorial representation, design or device.” The 1996 bill[, which was introduced last October by]... the Minister of Health[, and is]... now before a select committee, endorses the tobacco industry’s advertising code of practice... including [letting retailers display] posters equal in area to four pages of a newspaper. “The companies exploited a loophole in the [1990] act via the price notices which... [they] blew up into advertisements and now the Government is sanctioning the loophole.” ...[the chairperson] said other aspects of the bill, including raising the legal age for buying tobacco from 16 to 18 and banning the sale of single cigarettes, were aimed at discouraging teenagers from smoking but would be outweighed by the advertising... [The Minister of Health’s] announcement this month of a \$3 million advertising push – part of a five-year... campaign – to cut the number of new smokers demonstrated the hypocrisy of the Government and its mixed messages to youth, [the chairperson said. A spokesperson]... for the Minister of Health said it was inappropriate for [the minister] to comment on a bill before a select committee.

...Young people could soon be hauled before the courts... for buying tobacco. A parliamentary committee has recommended... punishing... people under the age of 18[who] buy tobacco... with \$40 instant fines. If they do not pay the fine or deny the offence, they will find themselves in front of a district court judge facing a maximum fine of \$400. The matter is similar to parking fines or under-age drinking... At present it is only an offence for retailers to sell cigarettes to minors... However, since the Smokefree Environments Act came into force... the Ministry of Health has successfully prosecuted just four retailers... The ministry hopes the number of prosecutions will rise with increased funding for enforcement work... [T]he committee has also proposed that... the size and design of price notices in shops be enforced under the bill and fines introduced of up to \$50,000 against tobacco companies and up to \$10,000 against retailers... Further, the committee wants a law change to replace the present colour price notices with black and white ones. Each price would be limited to the size of a business card and the complete price list could be no bigger than the size of an A4 sheet of paper... Despite promises made in December 1994 to put tight restrictions on brand price lists... the Minister of Health has been slow to take action and [only signed a] voluntary agreement with the industry... [The minister] has also to act on another promise to put stronger health warnings on tobacco packets, similar to those in A[US] which cover a third of the front of the packet... [T]he Auckland Council for

Civil Liberties doubted that moves to punish young people for buying cigarettes would be a success. "The punitive approach is unlikely to work and is certainly impractical because a lot of youngsters won't be able to afford fines at that level."

...A proposed law change that would allow fines of up to \$400 to be imposed on under-age smokers caught buying cigarettes is too harsh and unworkable, the Cancer Society says.

...Porirua in Wellington, the Far North and South Waikato topped the table of deaths due to cigarette smoking between 1989 and 1993[. according to a] Cancer Society report... More than 20[%] of all deaths in... [the three areas] were attributed to cigarette smoking... The lowest death rate... was in the Queenstown-Lakes district (13.5[%]) and the Chatham Islands (13.2[%]). The main cities appeared midway in the table...

The Cancer Society is urging the Government to implement a programme of measures to reduce the death toll from smoking. A request to increase cigarette prices is a key proposal... "Increasing the price is the single most effective measure to reduce smoking, but there has been little change in the real price of cigarettes in the past five years,"... [A]n increase in the price of roll-your-own tobacco in December last year reduced the percentage of N[Z]ers smoking from 27 in 1995 to 25 in the first half of this year... [S]imilar effects resulted from price increases before 1991... Other proposals include the banning of... all tobacco advertising in shops... smoking restrictions and encouraging interest in healthy lifestyles... In addition... the Cancer Society wanted: • ...All schools and educational institutions totally smoke-free. • Smoke-free environments as of right for all workers... Offices were smokefree, but other workplaces such as factories were not... • Lowering the tar in cigarettes to two-thirds of current levels... The society's report, entitled *The Big Kill Continues – The Human Cost of Smoking in N[Z] in the 1990s*, [included] a national and regional analysis of smoking... Another report, *Tobacco Statistics 1996*, published by the Ministry of Health and the Cancer Society, was also released yesterday. One in six deaths in N[Z] is caused by smoking, according to statistics. "These deaths can only be prevented if current smokers quit,"...

['Cigarettes are blamed for a 1/3rd of fatal house fires each year in NZ', which gives credibility to the phrase: 'a fire on one end and a fool on t'other'...

A fool] was fatally burned when his pipe set fire to the chair [it] had fallen asleep in at a Kaikohe rest home yesterday. The Fire Service says that without the sprinkler system the fire would almost certainly have killed four or five others. [By the way, 'smoking may have less impact on your health than you thought – it's the size of your wallet that seems to count. Studies show wealthy heavy smokers still enjoyed better health than poor non-smokers.']

...Non-smokers who live with smokers are 30[%] more likely to have heart attacks than those who do not, says the draft of a report the tobacco industry is trying to muzzle. The report was compiled by a working party from the A[US]n Health and Medical Research Council, but the Tobacco Institute... [and the AUS]n subsidiaries of tobacco giants Philip Morris and Rothmans of Pall Mall... [are] suing the council to stop it publishing the final version... on the grounds that the council acted improperly by failing to comply with the requirements of the federal act under which it operates. "We believe the... draft report is an example of dishonest reporting... It shows only one side of the story – from reading it you wouldn't know there is serious disagreement amongst reputable scientists about the effects of environmental tobacco smoke." The industry claimed the council... breached the requirements of its act by deciding to consider only scientific material published in recognised journals which had subjected the authors' work to a review by other experts in the field. This effectively excluded most of the institute's [material], which had been submitted at the specific invitation of the council... The case is due to come before a federal court in Canberra... Because of the case, [a] [Professor... of the Wellington Medical School, who chairs the health council's working party, was forced to withdraw from a conference last week at which... the final report... was to [be presented]... However, drafts have already been published for consultation. They show: • Based on 24 studies, children exposed to environmental tobacco smoke are about 1.5 times more likely to suffer from asthma. About 50,000 child asthma cases each year in A[US] are attributable to passive smoking. • Based on 21 studies, children exposed to environmental tobacco smoke are 60[%] more likely to suffer bronchitis and pneumonia[, and passive smoke]... contributes significantly to... eye and throat irritations in children... • Based on 31 studies, non-smokers who live with smokers have a 26[%] higher risk of lung cancer... • Passive smoking costs A[US] about \$A20 million... a year in health expenses. A director of Action on Smoking and Health... said passive smoking in N[Z] was believed to cause 20 deaths and 1000 admissions to hospital a year...

That sneaked cigarette... could do you the world of good if only health freaks weren't making you feel so guilty about it... [A] survey carried out in eight countries found that people around the world are plagued with guilt about the small pleasures in life. This doesn't stop people indulging in... cigarettes... but it does stop them from enjoying them... suggesting that they weren't getting the stress-reducing benefits... The survey... [found AUSns] are the world's most guilt-ridden people... Germans... came second... [T]he Dutch were the greatest pleasure-takers and also least remorseful about their indulgences... "People should not feel guilty about pleasure-giving activities, as long as they don't over-indulge or harm others,"...

A British study has found the strongest evidence yet that parents who smoke risk losing their babies to cot death... also known as sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) or crib death... [T]he Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Bristol... found that 62[%] of the mothers of babies who died smoked, compared with 25[%] of the mothers of babies who lived. Babies of fathers who smoked were also slightly more likely to die... [Mothers] who drank alcohol were also more likely to have cot-death babies, but smoking and drinking were strongly linked and it was hard to tell if alcohol had an independent effect. The researchers, working for the British Foundation of Infant Deaths, also looked at other factors... [and] confirmed earlier findings that babies laid down to sleep on their backs were at least risk of dying from the sudden and mysterious syndrome. They... were... surprised to find that lying a baby on its side seemed to be risky.

...Smoking damages [gal] fertility, reducing the number and quality of eggs they produce, a[n Aucklander's] study... at Oxford University... has revealed... [The] British experience was the result of winning a three-year Nuffield Medical Fellowship... Her research is set to be published in a British journal of obstetrics and gynaecology medicine... [In related news, cancer] researchers have attacked a decision by Cambridge University to accept a controversial £1.5 million... donation from... British American Tobacco Industries... [- which] owns many of the world's leading brands of cigarettes including Benson and Hedges, Silk Cut and Lucky Strike... [-] and use it to set up a professorship in international studies named after a former company chair[person. "We're]... sorry... Cambridge did not have the sense to turn down the tobacco industry money," said... the Imperial Cancer Research Fund. "British American Tobacco kill half their regular customers so they have to spend a lot of money buying goodwill,"...

R[esearchers] are trying to pinpoint whether the nicotine cravings of heavy smokers are related to... genes. The Christchurch School of Medicine is studying pairs of siblings who are addicted to smoking to see if they inherited their vulnerability. "Other addictions like alcohol have been proved to be genetic," said [the] study co-ordinator... "If you look at family trees, you can pick the smokers all the way down through the generations." This does not automatically mean [kids] will have the smoking traits of their parents but it may increase the risk... [I]t is unlikely the study will throw up one gene responsible for nicotine addiction... The information will go to the Medical College of Virginia... which is heading the study. The [US] college had problems recruiting people to talk about smoking but the N[Z] researchers struck little reticence... "N[Z]ers are so co-operative..." ...70 pairs of siblings from throughout the country have signed up and [the co-ordinator] hopes to recruit another 130 by next year.

...A study of more than 10,000 children has found smoking as few as five cigarettes a day can affect their lungs and that teenage girls are particularly vulnerable... Girls who did not smoke tended to develop the strongest lung capacity at the age of 17 or 18. But among girls in that age group who smoked, lung capacity actually declined... The findings did not mean boys who smoke were immune... Smoking slowed development of the lungs in both sexes but "the deficits may be greater in girls,"... Girls might be more likely to wheeze because they tend to be smaller than boys,

so the airways leading to their lungs tended to be narrower... The smoking rate among teenage girls has been rising dramatically, to the point where they have become the major source of new smokers in the U[S].

...*US President* steps up tobacco war... A long-awaited series of restrictions to try to curb the growing use of tobacco by young [USers] is expected to be announced by [the] President this week. Last year... [the President endorsed a FDA] recommendation that nicotine was a drug, paving the way for FDA regulation of tobacco... The... FDA commissioner... says 3000 youths begin smoking each day... The curbs would... [ban:] sales of cigarettes to people under 18 years of age – up to now only loosely enforced local laws have banned such sales... [– and sales] by vending machine or mail order[; packets]... of fewer than 20 cigarettes[; advertising]... within 305m of schools and playgrounds[, and also clothing]... with advertising logos... The... executive director of... [ASH], said of the likely announcement: “I think it’s great,” adding it was something his group had sought for 15 years... But [the executive director] predicted that the issue would end up in court.

...Kansas and Arizona yesterday filed lawsuits against nine tobacco firms, joining a growing list of states seeking to recover hundreds of millions of dollars for the costs of treating smoking-related illnesses. At the same time, sources said two other states, Michigan and Oklahoma, were preparing to file similar suits this week...

Oklahoma has become the 14th state to sue the tobacco industry, seeking to recover more than \$US1 b... in state Medicaid funds... The Attorney General... a Democrat who... accepted... \$32,000 in... campaign contributions from the industry... in his most recent run for office... said the suit alleged... [that “in] the name of profit...” ...tobacco makers misled consumers about the health risks of smoking and manipulated nicotine levels to keep smokers hooked on cigarettes... [F]igures indicate Oklahoma spent... \$70 m... a year in Medicaid contributions since 1980 treating patients with illnesses related to smoking... The suit was filed in a state court in Cleveland County against the nation’s leading tobacco manufacturers, trade groups, public relations and law firms... New Jersey, Hawaii, Utah and Arkansas are also said to be preparing suits against the industry.

...Tobacco companies gave hundreds of thousands of dollars in campaign contributions to members of the U[S] Congress who opposed anti-smoking regulations, according to the Public Interest Research Group. The group said that the 124 House of Representatives members who signed a letter opposing federal regulations to reduce smoking by teenagers received an average of \$US6961... from leading tobacco companies. The 103 representatives who signed a letter supporting the regulations received an average of only \$103 each... During a 10-year period, the 13 tobacco industry political action committees gave a total of \$US10.7 million in contributions to candidates for federal office including \$US1.8 million from January last year to June this year. “This unprecedented flood of tobacco cash buys the industry pro-tobacco action by legislators and long-standing loyalty to this industry,” said the president of Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids... “We ask citizens across the country to tell their publicly elected officials that our children are not for sale and to stop trading our kids’ lives for tobacco cash.” The campaign is a coalition of groups including the American Medical Association, the American Cancer Society and the National Parent-Teachers Association.

...the U[S]’ most populous city... joined the nationwide battle against the tobacco industry last week by suing to recoup healthcare costs of smokers. The suit – filed [at the]... supreme court in Manhattan – sought restitution and punitive damages to be determined at trial... The Mayor of New York City... who had long supported smoking-control efforts... suspected Philip Morris Co[would] threaten to move its headquarters out of Manhattan because of the suit. In 1994 the world’s largest tobacco company threatened to leave because of a proposed expansion of New York City’s smoking restrictions... “If they want to leave the City of New York, we’ll replace those jobs...” Philip Morris had no immediate comment. R J Reynolds Tobacco Co, however, responded: “It would appear that [the] Mayor... has conferred only with rabid anti-smokers and product-liability lawyers before filing today’s suit. We regret that [the mayor] didn’t ask the tobacco industry at the very least to sit down and discuss the litigation before suing us,”... It said it believed there was a serious question about whether [the mayor] had jurisdiction to bring such a case. “The mayor may garner some political mileage out of this filing but that will be all,”...

The widow of an actor who appeared for years as the “Marlboro [Guy]” and died last year from lung cancer is suing... Phillip Morris, which makes Marlboro cigarettes, along with Liggett Group, R.J. Reynolds, the American Tobacco Company and Brown and Williamson. The... lawsuit[, which]... seeks unspecified damages... claims... David McLean... sometimes smoked five packets of cigarettes while posing for a single commercial.

...Smoking and free trade; now there’s a duo to stir debate. And they have recently... It has not been a great year for the tobacco industry. The recent disturbance[in NZ] over... the annual tobacco price rise... report’s on smoking’s effects and the row from an A[US]n study of passive smoking are nothing compared to what is happening in the U[S, where t]he industry is on the defensive. Who, for instance, sought federal bans on vending machine sales of cigarettes, permanent name-brand advertising at virtually all sports venues, and advertising within 350m of a school or playground including on public transport? Why a cigarette company, of course. That was a pre-emptive strike to counter moves towards Government intervention. Too late. [The US]President... introduced regulations that classify nicotine as a drug... The classification came in the wake of a steady stream of whistle-blowers testifying that during their employment in the industry they were aware that companies knew nicotine was addictive and manipulated its level in cigarettes. It was also the year of state lawsuits... The industry’s defence has been interesting. It claimed states were already compensated for smokers’ health by revenue from hefty excise taxes, that smoking imposed little extra cost on local governments and... health costs could not fairly be separated from tobacco’s overall contribution to the economy. No suggestion there that smoking does not affect health... To cap a bad year, the widow of a Marlboro [Guy] actor has sued tobacco companies over his death from lung cancer... So what has this to do with free trade? Well, while various[US] Governments have been acting, appropriately if slowly, to address the smoking-related health interests of their own citizens, they have also been going to bat overseas for the[US] tobacco industry in its efforts to re-coup home losses... The... industry came under its strongest official attack in the U[S] during the tenure of... [the] surgeon-general in the [40th] Administration. Talk about two-faced. It was not [the surgeon-general’s] fault but while his name is synonymous with the challenge to smoking’s health affects in America, the 1980s decade was also the time when the Government used Section 301 of the[US] Trade Act on behalf of the... industry against Japan, Korea and Taiwan to open up their markets – with no advertising restrictions. This, of course, is the sort of Government intervention that gives free trade a bad name; it was unilateral action to counter perceived unfair trade in the interests of a politically influential industry. And unfair trade tends to be in the eye of the beholder... Washington has taken unilateral action on behalf of any number of[US] products... while showing willingness to protect its own when it is politically convenient. Again that is a bastardisation of free trade... Washington’s playing bully boy on behalf of the tobacco industry in Asia is a salutary reminder that politicians place power-retention at the top of their priorities. Such intervention suggests a health warning would not be out of place on all polling booths: Governments can be a threat to your well-being.

...One by one, the “wonderful virtues of tobacco” (as a 1659 treatise put it) have gone up in, well, smoke. The belief that tobacco soothes the throat, cures colds and quenches thirst has been replaced with evidence that cigarettes instead cause lung cancer, heart disease and early death. But one claimed benefit of tobacco is still standing: that nicotine improves memory. Nicotine, at the levels circulating in a smoker’s bloodstream after only a single cigarette, has long been known to increase recall in psychology tests. But no one knew exactly what nicotine was doing in the brain. Last week... Baylor College of Medicine in Houston claimed to have solved the mystery. Nicotine... strengthens the communication between neurons in the hippocampus, a structure in the brain involved in learning and memory. Nicotine seems to work by increasing the strength of messages zipping around the brain as electrical impulses. As an impulse travels along a neuron, it reaches a gap called a synapse before the next neuron. In order for the message to leap the synapse, it has to send an under-study: molecules that can diffuse across the gap. If enough of these molecules, called neurotransmitters, reach the neuron on the other side, they spark an electrical impulse in it, and the message continues on through the brain circuit... The more messages that get through, the more the neurons in a circuit change, becoming the physical embodiments of a

memory... Nicotine, the Baylor team found, increases the amount of neurotransmitters released... [A] 1991 study found that the risk of Alzheimer's disease is lower in smokers. Another study reported last week found nicotine seems to inhibit, in the test tube, formation of the plaques that gum up the brains of Alzheimer's patients. The problem with using nicotine as a memory aid, of course, is that "the delivery system contains 400 known carcinogens," as [a] biologist... of the University of Chicago puts it... The tobacco industry maintained that nicotine was not addictive... - 1996

Four top tobacco company executives have said under oath that smoking cannot kill despite... current estimates that one in two smokers die from it[, and last week's news story about a]... nicotine addict on horseback... who... shot... an off-duty police officer in central Argentina [because the officer] couldn't give him a light for his cigarette... The depositions were given in response to class-action lawsuits filed by... a Florida lawyer[, one of which]... is a \$US5 billion... lawsuit for flight attendants who say secondhand smoke gave them lung cancer and other diseases... [that] is set for trial on June 2 in Miami... The... president of RJ Reynolds Tobacco... did not believe tobacco is... conclusively linked to any illness[, and] does not believe tobacco is any more addictive than coffee or carrots. "Carrot addiction?" the lawyer asked. "Yes," [the president answered]...

Breaking] the nicotine habit can be a formidable task. But... Quit Now[']s 8]... meetings over a [3]-week period... programme, originally conceived as a [5]-day plan in the late 1950s, has proved highly successful in the fight against nicotine addiction. A range of reformed smokers from varying backgrounds, and as young as 14, can vouch for the positive changes it has made in their lives[- one even swapped]... cigarettes for carrot sticks...

Regional health authorities fund a variety of preventive health treatments but they do not systematically buy stop-smoking treatment and the Government has given them no clear guidance to do so. It is unclear why this basic preventive treatment is not supported more energetically. It would make sense based on the tremendous costs of smoking... [-] the estimated annual cost of smoking to N[Z] is... \$4000 per capita... [-] and the social benefits. Smoking is the chief cause of preventable morbidity and mortality in N[Z]. We are all aware of the major killers to which smoking contributes. However, many people are unaware of some of the other consequences. Smoking is a major cause of failure to recover from surgery, [while the]... children of smokers are more likely to suffer from a host of ailments such as infection of the inner ear... colds and respiratory infection... Moreover, smoking is a great economic drag on business and factories. Data gathered by businesses show that smokers take 30 to 50[%] more sick leave than non-smokers and that smoking rituals (lighting cigarettes, pausing to smoke, securing cigarettes) require about 30 minutes of work time each day. The good news is that smoking can be treated effectively. In 1996, the U[S] Government's agency for health care policy and research convened an expert panel of researchers, statisticians, physicians and others to evaluate treatment... The core findings are that treatments exist that can increase a smoker's chances of quitting four to five-fold... The panel concluded that while... only about 5[%] of smokers achieve long-term abstinence on their own in a given quit attempt... 20 to 25[%] will quit who use the nicotine patch and receive multiple sessions of counselling.

...[the Health] Minister... will soon be asked to approve government funding for a comprehensive stop-smoking programme for... N[Z]ers addicted to nicotine. The first national Smokefree Symposium in Wellington... said anything from nicotine patches to [hypnosis and] counselling should be made available to those struggling to stop smoking[, while the] Health Sponsorship Council director... said the Government needed to take some responsibility for helping smokers to quit... An estimated 675,000 N[Z] adults smoke, with [75%] of those... saying they are addicted to nicotine...

[Japanese lingerie manufacturer Triumph has introduced a cash reward of 30,000 yen (\$NZ530) for employees who promise to give up smoking - and for colleagues who inform on them if they return to the habit. The penalty for employees who declare they will stop smoking but fail to quit would be 60,000 yen']

...[US] smokers trying to kick the habit are getting a new source of help: The... F[DA] has approved the first smokeless nicotine inhaler. The Nicotrol Inhaler, to be sold only by prescription, allows smokers to suck nicotine through a plastic tube, letting the chemical be absorbed through membranes in the mouth. It will be on pharmacy shelves later this year. Currently, would-be quitters can buy nicotine patches or[nicotine-based] chewing gum over the counter, or a nicotine nasal spray with a prescription. Clinical trials showed the inhaler worked about as well as these other products... [- although many smokers already have a secondary habit which is directly related to one of the other products: after smoking a cigarette they chew standard gum in order to freshen their breath!] Each puff of the inhaler contains eight to 10 times less nicotine than a puff of a cigarette - and none of the dangerous tar and other toxins cigarettes deliver. The inhaler also provides a sensation in the back of the throat similar to the feeling of inhaling a cigarette, and the ritual of bringing hand to mouth that many smokers report they miss when they are trying to quit... The inhaler can be used six to 16 times a day at first, tapering off after the first three months... Side-effects include mouth or throat irritation or coughing... About 46 million [USers] smoke and surveys indicated 75[%] of them want to quit but have failed or are afraid to try.

...[a pharmaceutical firm hopes to make suckers out of NZers wanting to quit smoking. The firm yesterday launched a nicotine inhaler developed in Sweden - the first of its kind in the country. It has a plastic inhale tube, inside which is a cartridge containing about 30% of the nicotine found in one cigarette. The capsule is replaced by another after use. The device is already getting the thumbs-up from people who run smoking-cessation programmes. Pharmacia and Upjohn's consumer healthcare manager said six to 12 cartridges were recommended for heavy smokers. This would gradually reduce until people stopped altogether about six months later. A starter pack, which includes the inhaler, costs \$15 to \$17. Eighteen cartridges cost \$25 to \$30.' In comparison, the 'normal price for a pack of 30 NICORETTE gum is \$12.95'...

'The fourth time the supportive Quitline counsellor called, something inside Catherine screamed out for a calming drag. "I'm great thanks. I'm not smoking any more. Thanks for calling." Then Catherine quickly hung up, walked outside and lit a cigarette. Catherine is one of the lucky ones who was able to reach the overstretched stop-smoking service. But Catherine found it takes more than a phone call to stub out that last cigarette. The Quitline phonelines show the numbers calling out for help. The service expected about 10,000 calls last month, but the national manager says it has had more than 40,000. Requests for the Government-subsidised nicotine replacement patches and gum are so high the helpline is recommending people call back in a month. The patches and gum, worth about \$125 for a one-month course, cost smokers \$10. About 6000 subsidy cards, exchanged for gum or patches at pharmacies, have been sent to smokers, and 4000 callers have been put on a waiting list to be rung back by an assessor. The manager agreed the wait might mean lost quitting opportunities. "It's very frustrating from our end that we are not able to deal with everyone." The service is recruiting an extra 17 staff to process the backlog. Quitline now has 23 quit-smoking advisers, compared with 15 before the subsidy programme started. The Ministry of Health is expanding the scheme to include doctors and other health workers. But it cannot say when quitters will be able to swap their vouchers for gum and patches from supermarkets and other retailers. A spokesperson says the idea of having them available from retailers is new, and its development depends on the retailers. It was only recently that nicotine gum and patches had been allowed to be sold through retail outlets such as supermarkets. The Health Minister says no one could have predicted the demand for the subsidised service, and is asking people to be patient. The Government has allocated \$6.18 million a year for the programme for at least four years. It expects that up to 40% of NZ's estimated 750,000 smokers will be interested in it. Catherine's path to Quitline began when her six year habit reached crisis point during a netball game. "I found I just couldn't run around any more. Then on the way home I was having a smoke and thought what the hell am I doing?" But going cold turkey got Catherine the cold shoulder from her workmates. "I was a total pain and everybody got sick of months of me moaning and groaning. Eventually, they forced me to call Quitline and even stood over me as I made the call. It's like everyone is trying to force me to give up and that just makes me more determined to say 'oh no, that won't work on me.' Stupid, I suppose, but then so's smoking."

...[Nearly a fifth of smokers using Government-subsidised gum or nicotine patches have quit tobacco for 3 months or more, Quitline research indicates.]

...Minnesota researchers found that patients suffering from mild to moderate ulcerative colitis, which is an inflammation of the colon, had fewer symptoms when treated with strong doses of nicotine through skin patches. In the study, symptoms improved in 39% of the 31 patients who

received nicotine compared with... 9% of 33 patients treated with fake patches. The treatments did not cure the disease. But [the study] also found... 77% of... patients reported adverse reactions to the nicotine, such as skin ailments, nausea and dizziness, and 13% had to quit treatment because of the side effects. While smokers had a lower rate of ulcerative colitis... they had a higher rate of a similar intestinal ailment called Crohn's disease...

['Smokers trying to wean themselves off cigarettes with the aid of skin patches or nicotine chewing gum could still be putting their health at risk. Laboratory tests have discovered that nicotine on its own can cause cancer and narrow arteries in mice. Previously, nicotine had been seen as a drug that kept smokers addicted to tobacco, but as relatively harmless in itself. However, anti-smoking groups urged smokers trying to give up not to abandon nicotine patches and gums. "It is important to keep a sense of proportion," said ASH. "Taking off the patches is much more likely to kill you than keeping them on."']

... 'Overdoses of the anti-smoking drug Zyban resulted in seizures, hallucinations and such extreme aggression that some patients needed sedation, a study has found. Researchers at the AUSn Health and Medical Congress in Melbourne identified 59 cases of adult and 10 cases of child poisoning with Zyban. Smokers rushed to try the drug when it was released in November last year.' Incidentally, NZ's] **biggest selling cigarettes are about twice as addictive and cancer-causing as the most popular brands in A[US], according to tobacco companies' own figures...** Rothmans' Holiday Extra Mild in N[Z] had 11mg of tar and 0.9mg of nicotine, compared with 6.6mg and 0.64mg respectively for Holiday Super Mild in A[US].

...NZ] smokers are puffing on cigarettes with twice the amount of nicotine of those in Canada and the U[S]... Tests on 16 brands of manufactured, filtered cigarettes showed nicotine levels ranging from 16.5mg to 27.7mg in each cigarette... [while] some manufacturers' mild cigarettes had higher nicotine concentrations than other regular cigarettes... [T]he director of... Ash, said the report had provided evidence... that the industry was trying to attract smokers at a young age by loading their preferred packs of 10 cigarettes with higher nicotine levels... Holiday Special Filter 10s, had easily the highest nicotine content of any filter cigarette in the survey...

The findings looked simple at first... N[Z]'s cigarettes averaged 19.5mg of nicotine each, compared to 9-10mg in Canada and 6-11mg in the... U[S.], which makes them twice as addictive, as their American or Canadian counterparts... [However, NZ's] tobacco industry hit back immediately, accusing the researchers of using the wrong test for nicotine and generally failing to understand the industry. A spokes[person for one manufacturer]... said the only valid test, and the one required by law, was based on a machine which simulated smoking... The smoking machine, used by manufacturers since... [WW2], takes an artificial puff on a cigarette once a minute... Based on this test, N[Z] cigarettes have a nicotine yield of 1.2mg a cigarette, compared to 0.9mg in the U[S]... But one of the authors of the study... said the machine test was inaccurate because [it doesn't replicate the way] real people smoked... [In addition, the spokesperson acknowledged that NZ] cigarettes did have about twice as much nicotine as [US] ones but said this was what N[Z] smokers demanded. "They like what's termed a fuller-flavoured cigarette." ...[the spokesperson also] said the idea that tobacco companies put more nicotine in packs of 10 was "a popular myth." Cigarette factories had machines which made cigarettes and machines which packed them. "The same cigarettes go from the making machine to the 10s packers, the 20s packers and the 25s packers."

...tobacco researchers have modified claims... that N[Z] cigarettes were twice as addictive as [US] ones... The... ESR... said last night that retesting nicotine levels showed that the N[Z] cigarettes were 40[%] more addictive. This figure matched results on international standard tests... [■ Nicotine is an] alkaloid... carried on... tobacco... "tar" droplets in smoke and... [up to 90%] of it... is rapidly absorbed from the lungs... It reaches the brain within seven to 10 seconds where it "excites" the brain cells... [but] is cleared from the body very rapidly requiring regular repeat doses.

...Smokers who switch to low-tar cigarettes are increasingly victims of a different type of cancer... [A]deno-carcinoma, which attacks the tiny outer branches of the lungs, is becoming common... "This is not good news for tobacco producers or for public health," said... [a] professor of epidemiology at the University of Lausanne in Switzerland. In N[Z], less than 20[%] of smokers buy low-tar cigarettes, which are... perceived as [being] healthier than higher-tar equivalents... [Indeed, tobacco] companies have argued that nicotine levels drop with the lower tar, but it is now thought that people take more and deeper puffs to satisfy their cravings.

...Cigarette smokers are getting as much as twice the tar and nicotine they expect when smoking so-called light or ultra-light cigarettes, according to testimony at... [the] Massachusetts Department of Public Health hearings... on cigarette contents... Two-thirds of the cigarettes sold in the U[S] are light or ultra-light and most consumers believe that means less tar and nicotine, said... a Johns Hopkins Medical School researcher... [A] Washington lawyer who represents four major tobacco companies... was not surprised by the findings. "The ratings are not meant to translate intake of nicotine or tar, but allow smokers to distinguish one brand from another,"... [By the way, an AUSn] electrician who chewed electrical cable to ease withdrawal pangs from smoking ended up with lead poisoning instead of lung cancer... For 10 years the patient chewed almost a metre a day of the cable, which contains lead to ensure greater flexibility, while working on building sites which prohibited smoking. The [patient] told doctors the cable had a "sweet and pleasant taste," especially near the centre. Regular treatment lowered... [his] blood lead levels[, which had reached]... three times higher than accepted safety standards... although [the electrician] remains a smoker...

[Guys] who smoke run the risk of fathering children who develop cancer. Researchers believe that as many as one in seven cancers, including leukaemia and brain tumours, might be because of the fathers' smoking habit... The Cancer Research Campaign said... that cigarettes should carry Government health warnings over the risks of "paternal smoking... We already know that most childhood cancers are caused by factors which occur before birth... [but this] new study gives a compelling reason for [guys] who smoke and want to have children to quit." ...Laboratory experiments have shown that chemicals in tobacco smoke can damage DNA in sperm which can lead to cancer... [and the risk of damage increases the more a guy smoked. T]he statistical risk level for low smokers – between one and nine cigarettes a day – was 1.03 ([3%] greater)... and... for heavy smokers – more than 20 a day – was 1.42... There were no extra risks shown with mothers, however much they smoked.

...More than a third of pregnant [NZers] smoke... and nearly 27[%] continue smoking] in late pregnancy... a Canterbury study has revealed... But only 19[%]... admitted smoking in early pregnancy and 16[%] in late pregnancy... For [mothers] aged 18 to 22, 9[%] of those who had miscarried were heavy smokers... compared with 2[%] who had never smoked. [Unfortunately, when it comes to smoking and pregnancy, the media continues to promote mixed messages (e.g., while some people declare that 'babies born to smoking mothers have 2 1/2 times the cancer causing products in comparison to adults', others suggest that it's 'OK to have 7 cigarettes a day while pregnant').]

...Four out of 10 parents of young babies in Northland smoke, despite the increased risk for their children, says a public health study... As a result the report abandons a target of the now disbanded Public Health Commission to cut smoking by... 35[%] in Maori by the year 2000... 45[%] of Northland] Maori smoke – twice the regional average – and there are no signs that general or Maori smoking rates will fall.

...[second-hand cigarette smoke exposes unborn babies to cancer-causing chemicals, delegates to the annual meeting of the American Association of Cancer Research have been told. Several studies add to evidence that cancer-causing agents in the smoke can get through the placenta, which normally protects a foetus from toxins. Newborns in all age groups exposed to any kind of smoke had decreases in forced respiration, a measure of lung capacity. In one study presented at the conference, researchers at the University of Essen made a group of pregnant rats inhale second-hand smoke for five days. They killed the rats before they were due to deliver and looked at the pups. The foetuses had soft bones and three separate changes in their lung tissue. Certain lung cells were hyperplastic, meaning they were starting to divide abnormally and look pre-cancerous. There was also a higher rate of cell death and some retarded tissue development. Baby rats whose mothers were not exposed to smoke showed no such damage. "Exposure (to smoke) in very early years, including in the foetus, could well be more harmful than exposure as an adult," said a researcher from the University of Texas cancer centre in Houston.]

... 'US researchers studying the genetic structure of lung tissue cells from guys and gals found that a gene linked to abnormal growth of lung cells is much more active in gals, which may explain why gal smokers are more than twice as likely to develop lung cancer as guys who smoke.'

...‘a study has found that young NZ gal smokers won’t kick their habit despite research showing they are twice as likely to get lung cancer as young guys. “Almost anything you do can give you cancer now,” said an Auckland marketing representative. “My brother, who never drank or smoked, died of cancer when aged 16. So I think if you’re going to get it, you’re going to get it.” The 27-year-old, who has smoked for 10 years, said the only reason it would quit was when it had children. Meanwhile, Hawke’s Bay has been chosen to pilot a quit-and-win contest because of the high number of young Maori gal smokers in the region. Entrants must stop smoking during next month to be in the draw to win major prizes including a gym membership and flights around NZ.’

...Air NZ] becomes totally smokefree at midnight tonight as flights to or from Japan become the last services to come under the policy.

...[in 1963 NZ was the first country to ban] tobacco advertising on TV and radio... Cigarette advertising[was] banned in cinemas[throughout NZ in 1973. Smoking was] banned on Air NZ domestic flights[in 1988].

...THE world’s most modern cruise liner will be missing one feature when it is launched next year... ashtrays... The... \$300 million MS Paradise... will be... the world’s first smoke-free cruise liner... [In related news, a] cigarette butt thrown from a passing car is believed to have caused the destruction of... 60ha of scrub north of Turangi on Saturday. The fire started near the Desert Rd section of State Highway 1 and quickly spread... as a strong south-westerly wind blew. About 50 firefighters, aided by... helicopters with monsoon buckets, fought the flames for about four hours.

...Taxes up in smoke says lobby group... Millions of taxpayer dollars spent [on advertising to encourage] smokers to give up are wasted because of the numbers who start, says A[SH]... However... a Ministry of Health spokes[person] said 1996 statistics showed a slight reduction in the number of smokers, down 1[%]... But tobacco consumption had also increased 1[%] for the same period.

...Smoking in N[Z] has increased for the first time in the past nine years[, according to] Ministry of Health figures released yesterday... The number of cigarettes available for consumption [also rose – by 2.6% –] in the year... [In international news, ‘with their arresting aromas and frequently lower prices, Bidis (pronounced beedies) have become the latest smoking fad among American teens. The skinny cigarettes that arrived from India in candy-like flavours – chocolate, vanilla and strawberry – are luring thousands of youngsters and worrying public health authorities. It’s legal to smoke them, but since many are unfiltered, they’re hazardous to health. Research shows smoke from bidis has about three times as much nicotine and carbon monoxide and five times as much tar as smoke from regular filtered cigarettes, according to a study by the Massachusetts Department of Health. Bidis have been around for decades, but the new varieties (which closely resemble clove cigarettes, imported from Indonesia) are boosting their popularity. No one knows how many young people are using bidis, but importers see a boom in demand – in the past six months, the number of bidi requests from retailers has increased 500%, says the director of sales and marketing at a California-based importer. 58% of high school students in San Francisco have tried them and 31% smoke them at least once a month, according to a survey. The fad comes as American tobacco companies are facing restrictions on how they market cigarettes, especially to youth. Tobacco billboards have been forced from the nation’s highways, and teen smoking rates have started to dip, although they remain stubbornly high. One-third of high school seniors still smoke at least once a month. Bidis alarm health authorities, who view them as cigarettes with training wheels’...]

‘Modern lolly cigarettes are encouraging new generations to get hooked on smoking, says NZ’s Associate Health Minister. Many adults will remember pretending to puff on cigarette-like candy sticks on the way to school – and those are bad enough. But new ones on the market, mainly from Germany, were worse because they looked much more realistic, from the packet to the cigarette. “They have even got a filter on them.” Anti-smokers want them banned like in other countries. The Ministry of Health is writing to importers of fake cigarette products to discourage them from bringing them into NZ, but the associate minister will try to push through an amendment to the Smokefree Environments Act to prevent the import, production and sale of candy and bubblegum cigarettes. “Anything that imitates tobacco products should be banned as it only encourages children to think smoking is cool when it’s revolting.”

...‘Kids as young as 3 think smoking is “cool” if their parents do it, and 55% plan to smoke themselves when they grow up a study of 504 preschoolers found. Most were black or Hispanic and nearly all came from poor families. Over 2/3rds had a family member who smoked. “I think we expected 20 to 25% at best.” The American Health Foundation in New York said the findings show it is important to start anti-smoking campaigns aimed even at the tiniest kids – and to get their parents to kick the habit. Only 25% of 5-year-olds planned to smoke. “So as they got older and more socialised, they realised that smoking is not a socially acceptable thing to do.” Other studies have borne this out, showing that kids know they are not supposed to want to smoke. When primary school-aged children were surveyed, all said they were not going to smoke. But the researchers suspect they may just be parroting socially acceptable attitudes. “By the time they get older they do experiment.” 1 million US children will start to smoke in the next year.’ □ ‘When shown pictures of Mickey Mouse, Barney, and Joe Camel, 67% of children surveyed knew that Joe Camel smokes, even though Joe Camel didn’t have a cigarette in the picture.’

...Three young Floridians, barely out of their] teens, have just been sentenced to 15 years each for removing a stop sign from an intersection. The defendants sobbed, and even the judge evinced regret, but everyone seems to agree that stealing stop signs is a particularly heinous prank. In this case, three other young people were killed when they drove through the signless intersection into an eight-ton Mack truck. Now, suppose these three miscreants had... removed stop signs at not just one but 133,333 intersections... resulting in three deaths per intersection... annually... Suppose further that they had not only removed the stop signs but also replaced them with GO signs or, better yet, billboards... featuring yellow-slickered cowboys or a suave camel named Joe. Then what do you think the sentence would have been? Well, if the kind of judicial reasoning that applies to tobacco companies also applied to stop-sign cases, then the three witless young vandals would have faced a stiff fine and been forced to downsize the cowboy and put the camel out to pasture. But there would be no talk about prison terms; in fact, Congress would be considering legislation to bar any such vengeance on the part of the courts... the youths... might even find themselves rewarded for their crime with immunity from future class-action suits brought by the relatives of deceased drivers. They would[also] be encouraged to take their act overseas... You don’t have to be a Floridian to find instructive contrasts... In Oklahoma earlier this year, a 38-year-old father of three was sentenced to 93 years for growing marijuana in his basement. (That’s 70 years for possession alone.) ...There is another way the three Florida vandals went wrong: they failed to incorporate before committing their dastardly act. According to a fateful 1886 Supreme Court decision, corporations are persons, entitled like anyone else to freedom of speech, even when they use it to promote the widespread consumption of a poisonous substance. They are not, however, persons who can be lethally injected or attached to a chain gang, no matter how wicked their crimes. In 1996, for example, Rockwell International was found guilty of causing an explosion that killed two company scientists. Pfizer manufactured a defective heart valve that caused 360 deaths worldwide. In[both of] these cases, hefty fines were levied and stern statements were made, but no executive or plant manager spent so much as a night in the slammer. The lesson from these cases... is that that mysterious masked entity known as a corporation is in fact an ingenious device for collectivising responsibility. Even when a corporation is found guilty, no actual individual need take the fall. But if the defence lawyer for a mere biological person attempts a similar diffusion of blame – by, for example, pointing out the defendant’s history of abuse as a child, or the fact that several upstanding citizens had noticed the missing stop sign and failed to report it – said lawyer can expect these days to be laughed out of court. So here’s another tip for anyone contemplating the old stop-sign prank: don’t do the sign removing yourself. Call yourself Superior Sign Relocation Inc., and hire others to do the manual labour so you can always point proudly to your contribution as a pillar of the economy and a creator of jobs.

...[‘Trying to teach schoolchildren that they should not smoke does not work, say researchers who last week reported the failure of a 15-year anti-smoking programme in the US. The researchers tried to persuade children, starting at the age of 9, not to smoke. They helped them practise saying no to

cigarettes, bombarded them with information on how dangerous and addictive smoking is, and even had students re-enact tobacco lawsuits. But about a quarter who completed the programme smoked by the time they were 18 – the same percentage as elsewhere. The Fred Hutchison Cancer Research Centre said the results were disappointing and showed that experts really did not know what made teenagers smoke. But activists urged health officials not to give up.’

...the NZ] Government has decided proposed legislation making it an offence for people under 18 to buy cigarettes is unworkable... Parliament... was... told... this week that... young people who flouted [the proposed law] could be seen as heroes among their peers... [T]he Government was instead focusing on using an education approach to discourage youngsters from smoking... [But the Government] has recognised gamblers’ passion for smoking. Casinos have so far dodged smoking restrictions because they weren’t around when smokefree law was passed in 1990. They now face restrictions but far less stringent than those imposed on restaurants and most other workplaces. Restaurants must keep half their tables smokefree, but casino operators must set aside just 25[%] of their gaming rooms for non-smokers under the amended act.

...A... resthome has defended itself against criticism of its “draconian” smoking policy, which forbids its residents from smoking anywhere within its boundaries... Hillview Eventide Home... has had a total smoking ban since July last year, forcing at least four residents to give up their habits. A former caregiver at the resthome... and Grey Power say it infringes on the rights of the elderly, some of whom have smoked for... 70 years. They can understand restrictions within the home, but see no harm if a patient lights up in the expansive gardens... Residents had come to stay at the home in the belief they could smoke... “To have it and then to take it away from them – it’s discrimination.” ...the daughter of a resident... said it was cruel to deny her 72-year-old mother “her biggest pleasure.” ...her mother... enjoyed sitting in the sun and smoking. “Now when we go... there [mum]’s sitting in the lounge. [Mum]’s got no reason to go outside any more.” ...The president of Waitomo Grey Power... feared the elderly residents, if forced to smoke in secret, could cause a fire... One[had already] burned herself badly with a cigarette[, and rest]... homes now housed more frail and sick people than they had in the past[, therefore]... smoking areas should be set aside in the resthome... However... the Northern King Country Old People’s Home Trust chair[perso]n... said the policy was in residents’ best interests and was not likely to change... The resthome matron... said yesterday the issue has been blown out of proportion[but] refused to let the N[Z] Herald talk to any of the residents, saying they were “confused” and “too old and frail.” ...[Incidentally,] ASH wants tobacco retailers to be licensed in an attempt to crack down on underage smoking.

...A sting operation using children to catch out retailers selling cigarettes to minors has snared 29 shopkeepers. All of the retailers... would be prosecuted, said the Ministry of Health. Crown health enterprises are being funded to run the three-year programme... The crackdown began last year, with Rotorua recording eight offenders and Auckland seven... An Auckland Healthcare manager... said catching seven retailers illegally selling cigarettes from 70 visits to shops “shows that there is a problem out there.” ...Efforts to nab offenders in Nelson fell flat, however, with no dairy owners seen selling to minors... [T]he real test of the programme’s worth would come this year when volunteers made return visits to retailers previously caught offending to see if they had learned their lesson. Before the crackdown, seven shopkeepers were prosecuted for selling cigarettes to... children under 16... resulting in five convictions... 21[%] of Auckland’s 15-year-olds smoked in 1992 with 15[%] of that number getting their cigarettes from shops... Of 899 shops[in Auckland] which sell and may advertise cigarettes, only one was prosecuted between 1992-96...

The Retail Merchants Association, the Retail and Mixed Business Association and... cigarette maker Rothmans... yesterday denounced the sting operation funded by the Ministry of Health... Children should not be used... to catch shopkeepers selling tobacco to minors, [they say because]... the practice is unfair... it is difficult to tell a 15-year-old from someone aged 17... Shopkeepers can ask how old a child is but youngsters can lie... Retailers caught by the young undercover agents should be warned, not prosecuted... said... the... retail and mixed business secretary... Rothmans director of public affairs, said it was his personal view that “only an adult should be asked to set someone up for a prosecution.” ...If a retailer was charged and pleaded not guilty, then the... “undercover agent” would have to give evidence in court... Shopkeepers... face a maximum fine of \$2000.

...[‘After years at the forefront of smoking reduction, NZ is now in reverse gear. Tobacco consumption has increased, something not seen since the early ’60s, and now a Cancer Society survey has shown 42% of 4th form girls and 25% of boys consider themselves smokers – an alarming increase from 30% and 15% in 1991. In the face of these hard facts it is very disturbing to see major opposition to the prosecution of dairy owners for selling cigarettes to underage kids. The judge who threw out the Ministry of Health’s cases in Invercargill last week and slapped \$11,000 costs on the ministry may well have contributed to future rises in kids smoking. The judge ruled the use of 14-year-old volunteers amounted to entrapment of otherwise law-abiding dairy owners. His interpretation of a law that was designed to protect kids, not shop-keepers, was saluted in the editorials of several newspapers. In the Cancer Society survey, only half of 14-year-olds who tried to buy cigarettes were refused and 35% said it was very easy to buy cigarettes. The community has a responsibility to protect these kids against a product that has a 50:50 chance of killing them. Unfortunately, only about \$12m a year of the \$650m in tobacco tax is spent on tobacco control, mostly on smokefree sponsorship. A tiny \$4-5m is spent on health education, media campaigns, and enforcing smokefree environments regulations and laws. If this Government wants to leave a positive mark on the nation’s health it needs to rewrite the plot so the bad guy starts losing.’

...Statistics NZ] says there were 3.66 million cigarettes available for sale in N[Z] in the year ended last December – 9.7[%] more than there had been in the previous year... ● T[he figure may be 3.66 billion – otherwise, statistically, last year every NZer only had 1 cigarette; or every NZ smoker averaged just 5 cigarettes (it is estimated that, worldwide, ‘18 cigarettes per human are made each year’)! By the way]... Labour’s health spokes[perso]n... has challenged... the... Minister of Customs to stop travellers getting the duty-free concession on tobacco products when they enter N[Z].

...CIGARETTE importers are crying foul as the Government moves to crack down on the mail-order trade that sees N[Z]ers ordering thousands of packages of tobacco... from Norfolk Island each week. The Government says it’s losing at least \$2.5 million a year from tax avoidance. Suppliers have been able to send cheap cigarettes through a loophole in Customs regulations, which makes the collection of duty on parcels worth under \$50 discretionary. But the... decision to start collecting that duty from May 15 has prompted allegations of victimisation... “If the Government wants to crack down on this, the \$50 ruling should apply across the board. You name it and it’s being imported under mail-order schemes from all over the place – clothing, printed material, [etc.] – but this ruling is not attacking the major players.” ...Norfolk Island’s outgoing chief minister... said the... decision would drastically impact in the island. “Our economy is finely balanced and this has the potential to hit us hard,”...

A booming trade in overseas mail order cigarettes ends today with the closing of a Customs loophole allowing personal imports of duty-free tobacco... [T]he concession... making the collection of duty on parcels under \$50 discretionary... has been withdrawn after wholesale abuse by entrepreneurs who were shipping hundreds of parcels of cigarettes and tobacco across the Tasman each week. Mail-order businesses on... Norfolk Island... were bringing in the tobacco duty free from A[US], allowing them to charge customers about \$4.50 for a packet of cigarettes which normally cost around \$6 in this country[(although, back in]... 1970 it cost 32 cents for a pack of 20 cigarettes[!])... Pouches of tobacco selling for about \$16 here could be ordered through the post for about \$10 each. A N[Z Customs spokesperso]n... said a large shipment of tobacco parcels which arrived at Auckland Airport from Norfolk Island on Sunday night was expected to be the last of the lucrative trade.

...Not so long ago, you could hear... the Tobacco Institute[’s executive director] before you saw him. The rasping voice and the bronchial wheeze of [NZ’s] Mr Tobacco was as much an industry trademark here as the healthy cleancut image of the Marlboro [Guy] was in the U[S]. And, to the cynical non-smoker at least, a more honest one. We know the grim fate of the Marlboro [Guy. NZ’s Mr Tobacco], on the other hand, gave up

smoking, and it shows... For most publicists, abandoning your masters' fine products – especially one as controversial as this – would have been awkward. But, with the international tobacco wars focused on the addictive nature of... nicotine... [Mr Tobacco] has turned it to good use. "I don't subscribe to the view that it's hard to give up... [because] there's a hell of a lot of people out there who have given up..." The high moral plain is not a place that the cigarette industry has occupied much in recent times. So they are marking their current camp-out there with high indignation and many expensive – and brand-promoting – full-page newspaper ads. [Editor's note: prior to the arrival of Europeans, there was no tobacco industry in NZ. But Maoris had the potential to create such an industry – 'early European settlers used Kotukutuku bark and Tikumu leaves as a substitute for tobacco'...

For the] Tuhoe activist, notorious for a spitting incident involving [a] former governor-general... at Waitangi... giving up smoking was a political act. [It symbolised] snapping his colonial chains, trampling the European weed which helped dope the Maori into submission. Now his famous face, with its dramatic moko, can be seen on anti-smoking posters everywhere... [The activist claims that it was necessary for him] to liberate himself from nicotine and... other foreign drugs... before... [gaining] his moko. Otherwise [the activist] would not be worthy to wear it. "...it's no good us talking about governing ourselves when we can't even deal with our own issues, simple things about our health." [The activist] got hooked when... [aged] 18: "I started smoking just to look... cool." During a three-month visit to China in the early 1970s, [the activist] can remember children putting cigarettes into his mouth and lighting them as an act of hospitality. In Mongolia, on the other hand, [the activist] found a new kind of smoking. "They have a long pipe and a little wee pot down the bottom and you place this horseshit in there. One whiff of that and whoooaaggh. I came back from China quite sick and I stopped smoking..." But it didn't last. After a... [while the activist] was puffing his way through 50 cigarettes a day. When [the activist] started coughing and getting pains in his chest, [the activist] would light up another cigarette and feel better... [The activist finally] adopted a warrior approach to the problem: [the activist] "declared war" on tobacco... During his battle, [the activist] took strength from Maori legend – especially Tu, god of war, and Tane, god of the forest. They and their siblings wanted to separate the sky-father Rangi from the earth-mother Papa. Tu's solution was to kill the parents... while Tane, the god of growth and new beginnings, was opposed... "The pakeha call this a mythical story, but... there's a lot more depth to it. There is a meaning to it." ...[the activist] followed both – by killing the tobacco, [the activist] was giving himself new life... Smoking is an epidemic among Maori... Maori [gals], in particular, are dying in battalions because of tobacco. They... had been smoking longer than others – internationally, smoking among [gals] only started its growth spurt in the '20s – and now had the worst lung cancer rates in the world... [Another] celebrated quitter is [the] Maori Affairs Minister[... who]... took up smoking at 14 because "all my mates did and it appealed to my rebellious nature"[... although his]... approach was more personal than political... His brother-in-law [and fellow NZ First MP] had publicly challenged him to quit, "but don't forget [my cousin] did that to get his name in the paper as well – there is method in his madness." ...But there was a carrot as well... [The deputy PM] bet him a bottle of whisky that [the minister] would not last 58 days without a smoke ([the deputy] is 58 years old). [The minister] has the bottle... [● Three Chinese] provinces and Shanghai city plan to tax tobacco sales in a landmark move to raise significant sums and support [a] cash-strapped anti-smoking campaign[... which receives]... just 200,000 yuan a year from the Government... A 1993 study showed that a tax of 0.1 yuan levied on each pack of cigarettes would raise eight billion yuan... – equivalent to the Government's health budget for a year... About... one in four... people... in China, smoke a total of about 1.7 trillion cigarettes a year... [C]igarette advertising and smoking in public places... [are banned] in 71 cities. However, the bans are usually ignored. Smoking kills about 750,000 people in China each year...

[Countries like China are inviting cancer epidemics by not taking smoking seriously enough, says a leading expert on tobacco-related deaths. The director of the Imperial Cancer Research clinic trials unit at Oxford University in England said the mantle of being the world's heaviest smokers had passed from Britain to the US, then to Russia and now China, where two-thirds of guys smoke and most don't know it can be harmful. China has already overtaken the US as the country with the highest number of smoking deaths at more than 2000 a day. If present patterns persist, at least 100 million of the 340 million Chinese guys below the age of 29 will be killed by tobacco. Tobacco-related deaths account for 20% of cancer deaths each year' around the world]...

THE 10th World Conference on tobacco being held in Beijing reminds us that death by smoking is fast becoming the world's biggest killer of adults. Experts from the W[HO] and Oxford University said more than 10% of all deaths in the world were now due to tobacco... The global marketplace requires global resistance as international trade agreements can sabotage the attempts of nations to legislate against tobacco. Thailand provides a case in point. While 60% of [Thai guys] smoke, for cultural reasons only 6% of Thai [gals] smoke. When Thailand tried to stop [US] cigarette brands entering the country, it was threatened with trade retaliation from the US and censure from Gatt. Supported by overseas anti-smoking activists, Thailand moved to protect itself by passing some of the strictest anti-smoking laws in the world. Gatt ruled that Thailand could not prohibit the importation of cigarettes, but accepted that as smoking was such a serious health risk, the country was entitled to pass such legislation. The new laws effectively made Thailand an unattractive market for Philip Morris and Co... although Philip Morris has sought to get around the... ban by sponsoring concerts and art competitions in Bangkok.

...[A tobacco giant is under fire for claiming the premature deaths of smokers has economic benefits. A report commissioned by Philip Morris saying that the early deaths of smokers saved the Czech Government between 943 million and 1.19 billion crowns (\$NZ56.4 million to \$71.2 million) in health care, pensions and housing for the elderly last year, has sparked a new burst of outrage from tobacco industry opponents. "I think it's pretty egregious," said a Northeast University law professor and chairperson of the Tobacco Products Liability Project. "You don't see other companies doing it. It's not the normal way we think about the lives of citizens, that the Government benefits when they die prematurely." The report was produced as part of "an ongoing debate about the economics of cigarette excise tax policy in the Czech Republic," the company said. "Philip Morris deeply regrets any impression that the premature death of smokers represents a benefit to society. There's no intention by Philip Morris to enter the debate on tobacco and health."

...[A closely divided US Supreme Court has ruled that the FDA lacks power to regulate tobacco products, handing the US President a stinging set-back in the effort to curb youth smoking. The nation's highest court ruled by a 5-4 vote that the federal agency overstepped its authority in 1996 when it issued unprecedented, sweeping regulations for cigarettes and smokeless tobacco. The decision is a major victory for the tobacco industry, which has been hit with a number of civil lawsuits seeking huge damages for smoking-related illnesses. The ruling, which sent the stock prices of Philip Morris and other tobacco companies sharply higher on Wall St, sends the issue back to Congress, and the President immediately urged congressional leaders to approve tobacco legislation. "Even some in the tobacco industry – after fighting the FDA rule in court – now say they support regulation of tobacco," the President said.] In another development, Liggett Group] has indicated it may file for bankruptcy [rather than] face... multi-million dollar legal action.

...Liggett Group [has beco]me the first U[S] tobacco company to admit that cigarette makers concealed the dangers of smoking, officials said in announcing a deal ending lawsuits by 22 American states... [The] Arizona Attorney-General... said that Liggett had acknowledged that cigarette smoking caused lung cancer and heart disease, that nicotine was addictive and that tobacco firms market to children, which is illegal... Liggett had [also] agreed to help prosecute lingering lawsuits against four larger tobacco companies... Liggett, the smallest of the leading U[S] cigarette makers, apparently made the unprecedented agreement because it was having trouble paying its mounting legal bills, according to analysts. Under the terms of the settlement, Liggett... would pay \$US25 million... to the states and give them 25[%] of annual profits for 25 years. In exchange, the states will drop Liggett as a defendant in their lawsuits... Cigarette giant Philip Morris has filed suit, along with R.J. Reynolds, Lorillard and Brown and Williamson, to prevent Liggett from disclosing documents involving what Philip Morris describes in a press release as "legally

privileged discussions with others in the industry.” ...Despite evidence to the contrary, most of it statistical, [the larger tobacco companies continue to deny] any direct link has been established between tobacco and health problems.

...O[ff] all the targets of government wrath in US] industry, none have been scorched more severely or more often than U.S tobacco companies. But despite being hit hard with everything from health-warning labels to smoking bans in buildings... cigarette makers have survived and prospered. The industry’s profits have been healthy for a decade, and in spite of countless lawsuits, no tobacco company has ever paid out a single penny to compensate anyone for damaged health. That is precisely why jubilant anti-smoking forces applauded a remarkable string of confessions by... Liggett... last week as the straw that could finally break Joe Camel’s back... What excited prosecutors most was the prospect of getting their hands on mountains of documents that Liggett agreed to surrender... The attorneys general of the states that won the settlement could hardly contain themselves. “This is the beginning of the end for this conspiracy of lies and deceptions that have been perpetuated on the... public by the tobacco companies,”... They have already seen a slew of Liggett files, the product of other lawsuits... One memo states a new packaging should be used “so as to have more appeal to youth.” ...“Is it morally permissible to develop a safe method for administering a habit-forming drug when, in doing so, the number of addicts will increase?” a... 1978 memo... asked... “It’s basically a drug dealer deciding how they could increase the dependence causing impact of their product without regard to the harm it would cause.” ...Liggett... [also] confessed it targeted ethnic and racial groups in its marketing... Anti-tobacco activists immediately labelled the documents as more damaging than even those admitting nicotine’s addictiveness... But hundreds of thousands more, particularly those pertaining to the group of industry lawyers that met to discuss litigation strategy, may be protected by client-attorney privilege and remain under seal in a state court in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. A judge is expected to hear arguments next week from Philip Morris and other companies that want to keep the papers boxed up... Last year Philip Morris... which controls half the... \$45 b... U.S. tobacco... market... made \$6.3 b... worldwide on revenues of \$96.2 b... [(in comparison,) Liggett had a net loss of \$9.7 m... [through] the first nine months of 1996[), but even]... as some Wall St analysts downplayed the impact of the settlement... the stock of several tobacco companies took a drubbing... Philip Morris... plunged \$17.50 a share... a drop of 13.6% or \$14 b... in market share... The settlement struck a resonant note at the... White House, which... strongly backs new F[DA] rules that require smokers up to the age of 27 to show photo ID when buying cigarettes.

...AN ADMISSION by an American tobacco company... will have far-reaching implications well beyond the U[S], say legal experts... The US settlement could be particularly important for... Imperial Tobacco and Gallaher, which has 80% of the British market[, and is one defendant]... in Britain’s first class-action suit against two tobacco companies... [by] 23 lung cancer sufferers... [who are being represented] on a no win, no fee basis... Experts say that now... one tobacco company has admitted the health hazards... it will be difficult for others to continue denying it.

...Tobacco companies... could face legal action in N[Z] by the end of the year... Anti-smoking campaigners, health authorities and the... Minister of Health... have hailed the... Liggett... admission as a landmark... The admission could also help 53 N[Z]ers seeking compensation for smoking-related illnesses through a class action taken by... Ash... The Tobacco Institute said that the Liggett Company did not sell its cigarettes in N[Z] and it was “inappropriate” to comment on the legal activities of individual companies. The Auckland District Law Society litigation spokes[person]... warned that the admission did not create a legal precedent in [NZ and other] cigarette companies were not bound by Liggett’s concession... [T]he situation concerning potential claimants in N[Z] may be different depending on the age of the plaintiff and whether they started smoking before or after Government health warnings printed on[NZ] cigarette packets were introduced in 1974. Legal action in the U[S] to recover medical costs partly relied on the low level of taxation on cigarettes, while in N[Z] smokers pay about \$3.90 to the Government for each \$5.90 packet of 20. [‘The US has a 30% tax rate on cigarettes (Denmark’s smokers pay 85% in tax’).]

...“Big tobacco is on the run and we’re going to keep after them until justice prevails...” said... a lawyer[after] the... Los Angeles County’s suit seeking... to recover nearly \$US400 million... in compensatory damages... from the Big Six tobacco companies [was given the] go ahead... mean[ing] the defendants must answer charges of business fraud, unfair business practices, breach of express warranty and unlawful business practices.

...Major win in tobacco war... [P]lans to sue tobacco companies[in NZ] have been dealt a “big blow” by the acquittal... in Florida yesterday... of a[US] cigarette maker over the death of a... life-long smoker... Six jurors – three of whom once smoked and one who still does – decided that Reynolds’ cigarettes, Winston and Salem, were not dangerous or defective and did not cause Jean Connor’s death... The widely watched wrongful-death trial over Connor’s death in 1995 at the age of 49 was the first liability test for tobacco companies since a case was lost [last] August... So far, in at least 19 other tobacco liability suits, the industry has yet to pay a cent in damages... Brown and Williamson Tobacco was ordered to pay \$NZ1,098,600 for the lung cancer of a former Florida smoker. The company is appealing... The only other monetary award against a tobacco company in a liability case was won in 1988 but was overturned on appeal. In 1990, a Mississippi jury agreed that cigarettes killed Nathan Horton, but awarded no damages because it found the tobacco company and Horton equally at fault... [Yesterday,] the Massachusetts Attorney General... said the... Florida... verdict was not a major setback and that state officials would continue their efforts.

...In a major turning point in tobacco litigation, the U[SS]’ two biggest cigarette makers are having secret talks with plaintiffs over a broad settlement, *The Wall Street Journal* reported yesterday. The sweeping settlement would... [involve] a \$US300 billion... payment... and an agreement to cut back on advertising... immediately eliminate all advertising aimed at youth, eliminate all outdoor ads, stop using Joe Camel or any other human figures in ads, stop sponsoring sports events and eliminate vending machine sales...

Two of America’s biggest cigarette companies are negotiating an end to billion dollar legal battles... “...all of Washington was stopping to watch as the biggest deal ever unfolded.” ...Together the tobacco companies would pay out between \$250 [billion and \$]300 billion over 25 years. The money would be divided between all 50 states and a separate \$500 million fund would be donated for anti-smoking messages... In exchange cigarette makers get legal relief. For starters, the 22 state lawsuits lined up against them will immediately be dropped, and a limitation will be put on all on-going lawsuits by individual smokers... For the tobacco industry, abandoning its all-out legal defences could be a small price for peace. “They are paying lawyers some \$[NZ]882m a year,” said... an industry analyst... and... the... payout... would amount to... about \$26.6b a year for cigarette makers, which had combined revenue of about \$88b last year.

...[the US] tobacco industry, which once vowed it would never settle lawsuits over smoking, is on the verge of reaching a deal in which it could pay as much as \$US370 billion... to do just that... Sources involved in the talks[, which]... have been going on since early April... at a Washington hotel, said a deal would probably be announced today... The companies will not comment on the talks. However, congress[people] and financial advisers warned that any preliminary agreement was a long way from becoming a final deal. [The]Senate Majority Leader... said the Senate could not take up related legislation until at least... October.

...The landmark \$368.5 billion... tobacco industry settlement will have to survive some tough challenges if it is to remain intact. After the celebrations end and the dust settles, the top state legal officers will have to watch their hard-won work[being] picked apart by a White House task force and then by Congress... [Furthermore, the] agreement is being sharply criticised as inadequate by some prominent health figures... [A former] US Surgeon General... called the... settlement “paltry”... warned there were serious flaws in the pact... that tobacco industry lawyers would... exploit[, and said it]... feared the agreement would be watered down on Capitol Hill... In Minnesota, [the attorney general agreed that] the agreement was woefully inadequate and [said it was his intention to still] bring his lawsuit to trial against the industry... In spite of the critics, the agreement marks a severe defeat for the proud and powerful US tobacco industry...

The business landscape for [US] tobacco companies has suddenly become a moonscape... In coming to terms with its role in the health of... [USers], the tobacco industry has allowed outsiders to dictate how it will do business. In exchange, the business of selling tobacco will live with

shackles, but not the threat of extinction... The FDA will now have final approval of all ingredients in tobacco products and will impose standards for reducing harmful components... The FDA will[also] require the tobacco industry to hand over all research it conducts. The new restrictions and lines the industry will have to toe will add significant costs to doing business, analysts said... At the bottom line, retail prices will rise to offset the companies' costs... As a result of the price hike, sales... [are expected to fall by] as much as 12[%]... Still unclear is how volume of sales might be further affected if the Federal Government raises taxes on cigarettes to 44 cents a pack from 24 cents. The Senate Finance Committee approved the measure last Thursday... [Yesterday, US tobacco] shares fell... as investors recoiled from the high price of [the] historic settlement...

Billboard company shares [have fallen because of the agreement between the US] tobacco industry and its opponents... The settlement means Joe Camel and the Marlboro [Guy] will disappear from billboards and displays on bus stops and train stations across the nation. However, profits of outdoor advertising companies will not be badly hurt because tobacco ads made up only about 10[%] of all outdoor ad spending, down from 37[%] a decade ago... Tobacco companies spent about \$160 million on billboard advertising last year. That compared to about \$300 million in entertainment and travel advertising, the Outdoor Advertising Association said... [■ The US President, when asked yesterday] if the G7 should take up regulation of tobacco, said the [US and its] partners in the group... were not the primary places where the tobacco market was growing.

...The Marlboro Cowboy may be riding into the sunset in [First World] countries with anti-smoking campaigners snapping at his heels. But in Africa, with its vast horizon and its young and rapidly expanding population, there is no sign that anyone is looking to run him out of town any time soon... Jeeps emblazoned with Marlboro and other brand names turn up in deep tropical forests, where Coca-Cola Co is rare.

...[US] cigarettes are viewed more as a status symbol than a health risk abroad. With cigarette sales expected to shrink in the... [US, its] cigarette manufacturers are expected to seek a bigger market overseas. [In anticipation of this, anti]-smoking groups in 19 countries, from Austria to Thailand, wrote to... Congress last week, urging international curbs on US tobacco makers... East African tobacco companies face no restrictions beyond health warnings on cigarette boxes, and there are no anti-smoking lobbies. There are some indications that the big tobacco companies consider the region a growth area... One company has sponsored smoking contests in western Kenya, with participants competing over who can smoke the most cigarettes simultaneously... In the world's trouble spots, the... anti-smoking campaign and preoccupation with health draw bewilderment. The residents of former Yugoslavia... have placed little emphasis on the dangers of nicotine. During the hostilities, soldiers were often paid in cigarettes and the Sarajevo tobacco factory is one of only a few companies working at full capacity. The Israeli Government is fighting a losing battle to enforce a smoking ban in the West Bank and Gaza, where doctors and teachers smoke while working. The Voluntary Health Association of India estimates that tobacco co-related illnesses cost the Government \$US11 billion a year. The group fought in vain to have sports teams drop their tobacco company sponsors after receiving findings that 8.6 million teenagers had smoked a cigarette or tried a tobacco product after watching cricket matches. Several Eastern European countries have already passed legislation banning cigarette advertising on television, but manufacturers have found creative ways around the laws. Perhaps the most creative approach comes from the Rovinj tobacco company of Croatia, which airs TV ads of the town that bear the company's name. "A good product remains a good product. However, we have to keep silent about that," says the slogan. In China, the world's biggest cigarette market... [- it consumes] 30% of the world's tobacco, and it's increasing at 2% a year... - ...officials shrugged off the US settlement. "This cannot affect China's market," said an official of the State Tobacco Monopoly... With cigarettes[being] the biggest single source of state revenue - one eighth of the annual total - the Government has little incentive to penalise the industry to save on health costs[, and tariffs of 150%]... acted as an effective barrier to foreign brands reaching its 300 million smokers... In Japan, [where 60% of the guys and 18% of the gals smoke,]foreign cigarette companies... make up more than 20[%] of the... market, and the [US firms'] share is growing... Warnings on cigarette boxes show greater concern over etiquette than over health. "Let's carefully observe smoking manners," one Japanese label gently admonishes... There are half a million cigarette vending machines in Japan - on pavements, in restaurants, even in temples - awake and glowing 24 hours a day, making cigarettes the most easily purchased product in the country... [If *The Social Contract* had been written in Jakarta, Rousseau might have kicked it off by saying, "Humanity is born free and everywhere is in chain-smoking".] British Columbia, meanwhile, became the first Canadian province to follow the US and demand that tobacco companies pay for health costs linked to smoking.

...[a group of US] tobacco industry "whistleblowers" have urged a revision of a \$US368.5 billion... settlement... "I don't feel the agreement is an acceptable one..." a former Philip Morris scientist... said after a meeting... of [the] presidential task force... [reviewing] the... settlement...

COULD you please explain the recent... tobacco settlement? A. Sure! Basically, the tobacco industry has admitted that it is killing people by the millions, and has agreed that from now on it will do this under the strict supervision of the Government... To compensate for the immense suffering caused by its products, the tobacco industry will pay huge sums of money to the group most directly affected... Q. Lawyers? A. Yes... Q. What will happen to all the Tobacco Institute scientists, who, despite decades of dedicated research, were never able to find a single shred of evidence proving that cigarettes cause cancer? A. At the request of the White House, they will be reassigned to the... aliens whose space ship crashed near Roswell... in 1947, and whose bodies are now being kept in top-secret Government freezers... Q. Many people started smoking because they watched classic movies in which glamorous Hollywood stars were always inhaling and exhaling vast clouds of smoke and looking totally cool. What will be done to correct this under the historic tobacco settlement? A. By 1998, all classic movies will be digitally reprocessed by special Government computers so that - to cite one example - in *Casablanca*, when Humphrey Bogart makes his dramatic final speech... [Bogart] will have the voice of Rocky the Flying Squirrel. Q. Whose voice will the late John Wayne have? A. The late Lucille Ball's.

...HOLLYWOOD loves a good smoke. It's hard to picture stars like Humphrey Bogart [- recently voted 'the greatest movie actor of the century' -] ...without a cigarette... A University of California study[found] that half the movies released between 1990 and 1995 had a major character lighting up on screen (up from 30[%] in the 1970s) and that 77[%] of last year's films had smoking scenes... That image, though, will soon pass into film history. [US]tobacco companies have agreed to stop paying to place cigarettes in movies... "If this had happened in the 1940s it would have saved... Bogart's life," an[an]alyst... says of the *Casablanca* star, a heavy smoker who died of lung cancer. It's the end of a beautiful relationship. In the old days cigarette-makers and Hollywood were partners. The companies got publicity and glamour by association with the names in the marquee lights. And the movies got a way to convey sexuality at a time when films were heavily censored. Viewers got the message when [a gal] blew a plume of smoke toward Bogart in *To Have and Have Not*. "Smoking was eroticised," says... [a] professor of film at the California Institute of the Arts. For a time television supplanted movies as the medium of choice for the tobacco companies. Then in 1971 the[US] Government banned cigarette ads from the airwaves. To make up for the loss of time on the small screen, tobacco-companies started paying... to get their brands' roles in movies... [In 1984, American Tobacco supplied more than \$5000 in props to have Lucky Strike appear in *Beverly Hills Cop*. And four years later, Philip Morris and the Liggett Group paid \$350,000 to place Lark cigarettes in the James Bond movie *Licence to Kill*. Philip Morris' also] paid \$US350,000 to have its brand of cigarette appear in the movie *Superman II*... The results weren't always satisfactory. Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp, for instance, agreed to pay[a] macho actor... \$500,000 to showcase its cigarettes in five of his movies, according to internal company documents leaked to the public. Once the company saw the films, it changed its mind and terminated the contract, disappointed not with the story lines but with the lack of prominent shots of their products. Consider the company's analysis of [the actor]'s action epic *Rambo: First Blood*: "We observed a Kool Light billboard on screen for a couple of seconds. We saw a glimpse of a Raleigh billboard and a Barclay poster." ...Brown & Williamson was no happier with *Body Heat*, a steamy whodunit... that[didn't feature their sponsored actor but] had three shots of a Kool poster. "The first time it was on screen for approximately a minute but it was blurred except for a couple of seconds. We also observed the two lead

characters smoking Marlboro... [made by... a... rival...] ...throughout the movie,"... Hollywood doesn't glamorise cigarettes quite as much anymore. These days it's mostly crooks, killers and psychos who smoke. In the post-apocalypse film *Waterworld*, [the villain] leads a gang of jet-skiing hoodlums called "smokers." The image is hardly more flattering in the thriller *Basic Instinct*, in which a mystery writer and murderer... provocatively pulls on a cigarette. Same for [the actor] who fires up one butt after another in *Broken Arrow*, in which [the actor] plays an Air Force pilot plotting to steal nuclear bombs. "Hollywood is attuned to public attitudes," says [the professor]. "Tobacco is now on the no-no list." The movie studios don't have a lot to lose if tobacco is banned from films. The money to be made by showing cigarettes is puny compared with the \$NZ58 million that it costs to make the average... film.

...a... famous ad for Lucky Strike, which ran in 1925, shows how much our social mores and beliefs have changed over the years. The advert... reads, in part: "These tobaccos are toasted – a costly extra process which develops and improves the flavour. That's why Luckies are a delightful alternative for fattening sweets. That's why there's a real health in Lucky Strike. For years this has been no secret to those... who keep fit and trim. They know that Luckies steady the nerves and do not harm their physical condition. They know that Lucky Strike is the favourite cigarette of many prominent athletes who must keep in good shape. They respect the opinions of 20,679 physicians who maintain that Luckies are less irritating to the throat than other cigarettes." It was when the tobacco industry realised it was losing the medical debate over tobacco, and it started running out of eccentric, semi-retired doctors it could wheel out to endorse smoking as not harmful at all – that it began to change tack. It's now become popular for the industry to claim that its advertising is not designed to bring in new smokers, but instead is intended only to achieve brand switching from existing smokers. The makers of the Lucky ad... had no such problems. Indeed... [the] president of the American Tobacco Company, proudly proclaimed at the time: "Many in marketing today believe that this campaign created more [gal] smokers than any other single promotional effort." In N[Z], of course, tobacco advertising is banned from all media. N[Z] tobacco companies did for years attempt to get their brands promoted through sport and entertainment sponsorship, until this too was clamped down upon. Overseas, however, the advertising debate rages on. In Ottawa, The Supreme Court has just struck down the federal law banning cigarette advertising, saying that it violated freedom of expression. The ruling... [will] eliminate lifestyle adverts featuring attractive young people engaged in exciting activities, or ads aimed at children or youth. But it... [leaves] the way open to allow brand preference advertising or ads that are "purely informational." Even in countries where tobacco ads are allowed, the life of a cigarette advertising copywriter, or art director, has never been harder. This week, the A[US]n Medical Association called on the caucus of the Federal Labour Party to stage a backbench revolt to reverse the decision to allow tobacco advertising at the Melbourne Grand Prix... The... AMA... said that the... 1996 Grand Prix exemption was nothing less than an act of tobacco control vandalism. The AMA has the support of the Caucus Environment, Sport, Tourism and Territories Committee for its 18-month old campaign... It also has the backing of many individual Labour politicians in both the Federal and Victorian parliaments. "We now want them to put their words into action and get this decision stopped... Smoking now kills three million people around the world each year. This is set to rise to 10 million deaths a year by 2025... You only have to look at what advertising people say about the Grand Prix to understand the importance of the event to tobacco companies. An advertisement in the tobacco industry journal, *Tobacco Reporter*, described the Formula One racing car as 'the most powerful advertising space in the world' which will 'carry your brand to 18 billion TV viewers in 102 countries.'...,"... [the] AMA's Federal vice-president... said.

...[Britain's PM] yesterday apologised for his Government's handling of a row over Formula One tobacco sponsorship. "I take full responsibility..." [the PM] said after his Labour Government suffered its worst week since... [its] election victory on May 1... [His] Government had been riding high in opinion polls but has been hit by withering press comment since it announced on November 5 that it would exempt Formula One motor racing from a ban on tobacco sponsorship... The Labour Party then revealed it had received a [pre-election] donation of £1 million... from[the head of] Formula One... Its troubles deepened when Labour acknowledged that [the head –] one of Britain's richest business[people –] had offered the party even more money after the election. The offer was declined... The [PM], eager to draw a line under a lingering row that has dented his reputation, said: "I guess we should learn the lesson... that... when something like this happens again, you deal with it quicker and in a better way... It should not come out in drips and drabs... It looks as if it was a great issue, was the thing the Government was concentrating on – but... I suppose in the six months of Government, I[only] spent about... an hour on Formula One..." ...prompted by a move within the E[U] to make such a ban uniform throughout the area... the new Government[had previously] announced... it would ban all smoking-related sponsorship of sport.

...Tobacco sponsorship will continue to be permitted in... Grand Prix races until... 2006[following a] meeting of European health ministers...

Organisers of the Belgian Grand Prix have threatened legal action against the International Automobile Federation... if they take the Formula One race from them. The Belgian race, although still listed for August 30 at Spa-Francorchamps on next year's calendar, faces the axe because of a Belgian law banning all tobacco advertising and sponsorship from January 1... [In local news,] the Smokefree Coalition... said it stank of double standards for the Minister of Health... to grant an exemption for teams sponsored by cigarette companies to compete in the Smokefree Rally of N[Z]. Although the Smokefree Environments Act 1990 bans any form of tobacco advertising at organised events, it allows the minister to exempt overseas teams if the event is of "international significance." The motor rally receives... \$1 million... from the Health Sponsorship Council, which is under a statutory requirement to replace tobacco company funding. Advertising for this year's event features a pair of squashed possums dying for a fag. The rally used to be sponsored by Rothmans, which now backs teams in the popular event along with 555 and Marlboro. "This means they will have their logos plastered on cars and team uniforms, and the pictures will be beamed around N[Z], through most of Europe and to parts of Asia," said... the National Heart Foundation... "...[the promoters] are getting their cake and eating it too." Meanwhile, rally officials fined three Japanese drivers \$500 after three separate crashes on Waikato roads this week. The drivers were familiarising themselves with the terrain...

[NZ's] Government will try to use a landmark [US] settlement by tobacco companies to push local firms into stronger anti-smoking measures... But... the... Health... Minister... conceded... the Government could face major obstacles if it tried to follow the lead of... [US states. L]egal advice... showed it would be more difficult to establish liability under... [NZ law. Under the US] agreement... companies will face heavy fines if youth smoking does not fall to agreed levels... [T]he recommended drop was... 30% in five years and 60% in 10... [The minister] believed the idea was worth investigating in [NZ], along with making tobacco companies pay for anti-smoking campaigns and phasing all nicotine out of cigarettes by 2009.

...Taiwan may ban tobacco products containing nicotine beginning in 1999, making its already stringent anti-smoking laws even tougher... "Under our motion, which still needs review and legislation, violators will be fined from \$T1 million and \$T10 million... on a daily basis." ...Taiwan last week implemented a draconian anti-smoking law, restricting smokers from puffing in all public areas, including aircraft, hotels, restaurants and financial institutions. Violators can be fined up to \$T3000 and compelled to take courses on the dangers of smoking. The law bans tobacco sales to minors and virtually all forms of promotion, including television, newspaper, movie and video ads, and sponsorship of sports events. Only magazines can run cigarette ads – but under strict limits... Lawmakers said there was a need to quickly revise the law before [US] tobacco suppliers dumped cigarettes in Taiwan... [US] firms, major suppliers for Taiwan's six million smokers, forced open Taiwan's tightly controlled tobacco market in 1987... The [US] Government has signed an agreement to ban all tobacco products with nicotine 12 years from now.

...[the] proposed \$US368.5 billion... settlement in the U[S] between tobacco companies and the health sector would not even cover the damage from smoking in N[Z, says] an Auckland doctor... [T]he settlement should have been more than \$US25 trillion (a trillion is a million million).

...Florida declared victory yesterday in its battle against the U[S] tobacco industry, announcing an \$[US]11.3 billion... settlement in its lawsuit... and the first payment, \$1 billion, is due within the next 12 months... State officials said the industry had also agreed to pay millions to cover Florida's legal costs... The state filed the suit in February 1995 under the Medicaid Third Party Liability Act 1994 which stripped tobacco firms of the traditional defence for cigarette-related health problems... The settlement was the second between a state and the tobacco industry. Mississippi announced in July a \$3.36 billion settlement... The tobacco industry said, however, that a national accord was still needed, and that the so-called global industry deal between the industry and state attorneys... would largely supersede the Florida[and Mississippi] pacts...

A US[Judge has dismissed a class-action lawsuit against the tobacco industry on behalf of more than two million Pennsylvanian smokers, less than a month before it was to go to trial. The... Judge... granted a tobacco-industry motion for dismissal, ruling that Pennsylvania's two-year statute of limitations had expired for five of the six plaintiffs... [Furthermore, the judge said the smokers] had known for years that smoking posed serious and specific health risks for them... [Incidentally, NZ and AUS]n researchers are joining forces to look at passive smoking in public venues, using a ground-breaking technique... They will analyse the hair of bar staff on both sides of the Tasman... A Wellington public health specialist... said hair had proved an accurate measure... because it... had a lifespan of two to three months... and... stored nicotine. Parts of A[US] are about to restrict smoking in restaurants and bars... [T]he Wellington Medical School... is[also] examining hair samples from about 100 children.

...Virtually all[NZ] workers are likely to be told to stub out in future... crackdowns on smoking... The... Health Minister... seems intent on targeting workplaces such as building sites, given that employers must have a policy for office workers. Under new legislation passed last week, the age at which people can be sold cigarettes rose from 16 to 18 years. That change came into effect yesterday... but... several tobacco-related issues needed further work... Health groups... [want] all teaching institutions[to be] smokefree... and for bars and... clubs to set aside smokefree areas...

The Smokefree Coalition yesterday released research published in the *American Journal of Public Health* which showed that making bars and restaurants completely smoke-free did not hurt bar takings... [It] plans to push for laws that ban smoking in all indoor public areas[within NZ]. But the... Hospitality Association... said there was almost always a smoker in social groups, and people would consider that in choosing a venue.

...On New Year's Eve, there will be two "last calls" at most Californian bars: one for drinkers, the other for smokers. "It will be 'Happy New Year, put out your cigarettes['," said the... manager of Plainfield Station, a bar and grill outside Sacramento. On January 1, California will become the first state in the U[S] to ban smoking in most bars and casinos... [T]he only exempt businesses will be casinos and bars on Indian reservations and small family businesses with no employees. - 1997

[The] 29-year-old sporting-goods sales[person]... sipped an orange juice and breathed the unfamiliar smoke-free air of the Bus Stop, a popular bar on Union St in San Francisco. By 10am New Year's Day, on the first day of California's ban on smoking in bars and casinos, the... nonsmoker, and his friends had gathered around some of the Bus Stop's 12 TVs to watch football. "This is great. I like it," said... [the 29-year-old,] who comes in three or four times a week. "I'm tired of going home with my hair and clothes smelling like smoke. After a night here the lungs would kind of tighten up. I'd go for a... run the next day and it always took longer to recover." Outside the Bus Stop... a... [smoker] took a drag from a cigarette and offered an entirely different perspective. The 62-year-old retired merchant marine captain suggested that "the people who want this law ought to suck it into their lungs like cigarette smoke and then" – well, the rest of ...[hi]s proposal probably should be left to the imagination. [The 62-year-old] and a handful of Bus Stop patrons puffed away on the sidewalk... "I come to one bar, and this is it... The law won't affect where I go, just where I smoke when I'm there." Bus Stop... employees began gathering up ashtrays and asking customers to extinguish cigarettes at the stroke of midnight New Year's Eve. Most complied, but a few were escorted outside. Elsewhere in the state, smokers were less accommodating, and some bar owners were openly rebellious. At the trendy Derby Club in Los Angeles, the band struck up *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes* at midnight, as the... smoking continued. Shortly after midnight... after kisses and the hoorays and the clinking of glasses marked the start of 1998... an actor and bouncer at the Liquid Kitty... lit his first cigarette of the New Year. "People don't come to a bar to get healthy... Part of the fun of coming to a bar is to have tobacco with alcohol. It's like popcorn and movies." Already, there is talk... of civil disobedience, of test cases, of last-ditch efforts to force the legislature to reconsider... [The] owner of the BAC Street Lounge in Redondo Beach, southwest of L[A], has started collecting a kitty to pay the fines and legal expenses of the first bar owner – there are 35,000 in the state – who fights a smoking citation. Only 18% of California[n] adults smoke. But [the owner] estimates 70% of his customers are smokers. [The owner] intends to walk the thin line between compliance and defiance... print[ing] up statements... to... hand to smoking patrons, [which] [they will sign, to acknowledge [the owner] has advised them of the smoking ban... [– a ploy it] hopes... will protect him from the complaints of nonsmokers – and from citations. The smoking ban is the result of a 1995 workplace law designed to protect employees from the hazards of secondhand smoke. It prohibited smoking in all enclosed... workplaces, ranging from offices to restaurants. Bars and casinos were exempted for two years, to let the state set safe levels for tobacco smoke exposure. But the state, concluding there were no safe levels... extended the ban to bars and casinos. Supporters heralded the law as the most important assault on tobacco yet, and predicted other states would begin to implement similar measures... But critics called it a Draconian attack that would be difficult to enforce in the last bastion of die-hard smokers. State officials say there will be no smoke police trawling the bars looking for recalcitrant smokers. But they will respond to complaints that bars are still permitting smoking. Bar owners will be liable for fines ranging from \$100 for a first offence to as much as \$7000 for repeat offences... [T]he San Francisco Health Department... will be looking for evidence of smoking during[its] regular, twice-a-year inspections of the city's 1000 bars. The city will give bars plenty of time to comply. Despite dire predictions of the law's economic impact, one study, by the University of California, concluded that the state's restaurants suffered no revenue losses after they were forced to ban smoking two years ago. And... [the owner of a] Santa Monica bar, Father's Office... has seen his business quadruple since... ma[king his bar]... smoke-free seven years ago.

...at Lola's suds joint on Second Ave, the resident barflies don't pay too much attention to great[ness] and the tide of history. But if they were given the chance to elect a new mayor – maybe even a president – then someone in the mould of Count Joseph Radetsky would be a shoo-in. "I will not recognise or tolerate," the Austrian field-marshal declared after a wave of violence swept Milan in 1848, "any society that insults and attacks peaceful smokers". The old fellow would be apoplectic about what has gone on in New York since the country's harshest anti-smoking laws were introduced three weeks ago. Radetsky had only to contend with rebellious Italians protesting tobacco taxes and their country's occupation. In the Big Apple, where bar bouncer Dana "Shazam" Blake was stabbed to death last weekend in the East Village while attempting to enforce the law, emotions are more heated. This latest attempt to wean Americans off nicotine is the most aggressive and, in its own way, the most instructive example since Prohibition of the pitfalls awaiting legislators who attempt to mandate virtue. In theory, banning smoking in nightclubs, bars, company cars, even under sidewalk awnings, is good for everybody. Nicotine fiends will live longer for not being able to indulge their habit so often and innocent bystanders won't be imperiled by secondhand smoke. But look closer at the crusade's consequences and the most obvious lesson – one even non-smokers can't deny – is that tobacco sullies civility and shining principles as readily as it stains teeth... New York[']s... mayor, was unrepentant. The murder was terrible, [the mayor] said, but the smoking ban would do the city good. It was the same line [the mayor] took last year, after adding a \$3... tax to a packet of smokes, which now cost... \$8... While that initiative was supposed to fill the city's coffers, the evidence is that it has achieved little. Police say "butt runners" are doing a roaring trade trucking untaxed cigarettes from Dixie, where Marlboros still go for \$3... a pack. It's been a boon, too, for the Indian reservations that take orders over the internet and mail out thousands of tax-free cartons every day.

City Hall's line is that... Californians have coped... so New York's stoics can just learn to cope... New Yorkers will become used to the new regime, just as they did when smoking was banned in restaurants, and then in betting shops, and at baseball stadiums, and, well, just about everywhere.

...SMOKING will be banned on all scheduled flights out of America from today[, which reminds me of a]... friend whose thriving livelihood runs off her cellphone[. The friend] was recently chastised when her phone lay abandoned on her desk; the endless ringing of lost sales alerted her boss to her absence. [The friend ha]d nipped down to the carpark for a fag. Cellphones don't work well in underground carparks and her need for nicotine outweighed her drive to clinch another deal. That's the cost to employers of banning smoking in the workplace: lost hours of productivity as smokers down tools to light up. And then there's the negative effect on corporate image when arriving clients wade through the huddle of addicts flushed from the building, now smoking outside instead. Despite the world closing ranks on them, smokers plough on, admitting they're addicted and choosing to delay the inevitable. But when it's time to face the music in the doctor's surgery, some feel compelled to shift responsibility back to the tobacco companies. As the[NZ] Government takes time to ponder the possibility of legal action against tobacco companies to recoup smoking-related health costs, let's consider who should be footing the bill: the manufacturer, the smoker or the Government that represents them both? We have always rolled our eyes at the hypocrisy of the litigation-addicted U[S], where it has become socially acceptable for consumers to stop taking responsibility for their own choices and actions. On the one hand they demand freedom and individual rights, and on the other they shift the blame when the inherent risks of freedom of choice leads to disaster. N[Z]ers have always been a bit more sensible and pragmatic about such matters. But now we consider putting responsibility back on the manufacturer for a vice we readily embrace. Imagine the repercussions... Could... the Dairy Board... get it in the neck for blatant promotion of cholesterol-ridden cheese? I look forward to recouping liposuction costs from Cadbury's who seem to be turning a blind eye to my stubborn cellulite... I ask my packet-a-day girlfriend if [it] feels the tobacco companies should front up with compensation for health costs. "Legal action against tobacco companies? Hmm... I'd only sue them if they withdrew the product from the market." ...Recently there was talk of enforcing a nationwide smoking ban in restaurants, another earnest attempt by the Government to quick-fix society. Sounds good, but it would brass almost everyone off – smokers, restaurateurs and broad-minded non-smokers who are big enough to make their own judgment calls regarding the establishments they choose to frequent. Non-smoking vigilantes may think they are triumphing, no longer feeling awkward when they ask guests to smoke outside or smugly witnessing planes and workplaces making a stand. But unfortunately for them it looks as though smoking is here to stay. These days, vice is nice.

...Sunday afternoons are usually quiet at... Te Atatu RSA, just a few members enjoying a snooker, a beer and a smoke. But under proposed anti-smoking legislation that last pleasure will be outlawed, prompting... [NZ]'s 170 RSAs to campaign against what they believe is an infringement of their rights... Smokers made up a minority of Te Atatu RSA's 800 members, but the club could not afford to lose them... The... legislation will ban smoking in... pubs, cafes, restaurants, casinos and RSAs, with smokers facing a \$400 fine for lighting up indoors. It could become law by next year.

...The private members bill banning smoking in bars and restaurants is crawling through Parliament at such a slow pace that the Government may adopt it as its own and pass it under urgency before Christmas.

...I am a non-smoker. I made this choice for myself to lengthen my life and to take the best possible care of my family... However... I took my children to the local Santa parade this year, and... my family were surrounded by three smokers who didn't seem to care that my older daughter was sneezing the entire time and that my baby was wheezing from the fumes... I find inconsiderate people like [those three smokers] sickening.

...DEAR Kicken Butt ('Smokers ruined my kids' Christmas treat...): [I]... you and your kids were receiving second-hand smoke then you should have moved... [E]veryone knows that everyone dies one day and if smokers want to die from something they like doing, then just don't interfere.

...Nicotine addicts lighting up at Waitakere Hospital may be forced off-site for a cigarette as the Waitemata District Health Board puts together its new non-smoking policy. Waitemata is joining other boards around the country implementing tough new policies banning smoking on hospital grounds... The board currently has a smoking ban in Waitakere Hospital buildings, apart from a patient smoking room at the secure Te Atarau mental-health unit. Staff are allowed to smoke in designated areas and patients are offered nicotine patches.

...In 247 days and counting one of the most potent accompaniments to a night out in Ireland will be stubbed out, literally. Dublin smokers are stunned. New York, they argue, might have fallen recent victim to the health fascists... – but Dublin? Surely there was some mistake. Stockholm, Toronto, Gstaad, or somewhere else clean, dull and wholesome, yes – but Dublin, famous the world over for its smoky bars, unbridled hedonism and contempt for authority? ...It's been compared with banning singing in heaven or swearing in hell. Ever since Sir Walter Raleigh brought tobacco to the Irish port of Youghal in 1584, lit a pipe and mused on what a good job god had made of East Cork, smoking has been as much a part of Irish life as black stout, silver charm and white lies... Nevertheless, some 7000 bars and restaurants across the Irish Republic will become smoke-free... Smokers will... face eviction, fines and even arrest. If the reactions of outraged Irish publicans is anything to go by, the ban will halt in its tracks a once-unstoppable business success: the Irish pub, the most-copied type of licensed premises in global history... [■ TODAY] PEOPLE can breath[e] easier in Queensland. Smoking is now banned in most public places after it was found a barmaid's throat cancer was caused by passive smoking.

...*Passive smoke no joke* [THE] AUCKLANDER... remembers how the long flights to Japan left his throat croaky and eyes reddened. [The Air NZ] cabin crew member... suffered as passengers around him smoked[, and] left those flights feeling "three times worse" than if it had been a non-smoking route. [Recently, a 'passive smoker in AUS was awarded \$0.5 million' as compensation for the illnesses it has developed.]Now a major new international study has confirmed what non-smokers feared for years: passive smoking raises your risk of asthma and respiratory problems. Almost 8000 adult non-smokers, including 608 N[Z]ers, were questioned in the... European Community respiratory health survey[, which] found high rates of passive smoking in southern and central Europe, with low rates in... Sweden... USA... A[US and N]Z...

Sniff smoke, risk a stroke... Breathing in tobacco fumes from a relative or workmate increases your chances of having a stroke by up to 82[%], Auckland Medical School research shows... The authors say few studies have looked at the association between smoking and strokes... The latest in a long list of medical conditions to be linked to passive smoking is revealed in... *Tobacco Control*, a publication of the *British Medical Journal*.

...Results from personal air monitors carried by more than 1000 people in cities around Europe revealed that even the most highly exposed passive smoker inhaled the equivalent of only 0.02 of a cigarette each day[, or]... six cigarettes a year... – a tenth of estimates backed by the British Government... [– and] not enough for any real harm, according to a report in the *Sunday Telegraph*... Even those who lived with smokers were typically exposed to [just 0.1%] of the dangerous components of cigarette smoke inhaled by smokers... [T]his suggested that passive smokers faced a tiny excess lung cancer risk over those not exposed to cigarette smoke... The 10-year, seven-country... study[also] says there is no relationship between childhood exposure to second-hand smoke at home and lung cancer.

...Scientists said the study showed a 16 to 17[%] relative risk if you lived with or worked with a smoker – but said the result was non-significant, implying it could have been produced at random.

...*Non-smokers rights a hazy issue*... [N]o other Western democracy is as highly regulated as Germany. Laws dictate what names you may bestow on your children, what kinds of waste you can produce and how much per week, and when you are permitted to wash the car or mow the lawn. But when it comes to public health and safety, German laws can be curiously lax. Foreigners are often amazed by the absence of speed limits on freeways, where a frenzied parade of Porsche, Mercedes-Benz and BMW automobiles roar down the pike at speeds of 240km/h. Smoking has also escaped the constraints of law. In contrast to nearly every other Western nation, the German government has avoided waging an anti-smoking campaign, perhaps because many leading politicians... are... tobacco fans. There are few restrictions on smoking in such public areas as

restaurants, bars and offices, and Germany's cigarette consumption per capita ranks as one of the highest in the Western world. About 90,000 people die every year in Germany from smoking-related diseases. The reluctance to crack down on smoking may have something to do with an aversion by all postwar German governments to embrace policies the Nazis endorsed. The Nazis conducted one of the world's most vigilant anti-smoking campaigns. They imposed severe restrictions on smoking in public and banned pregnant [people] from lighting up as part of their quest for physical purity. But an intensifying barrage of warnings from German health professionals is starting to have an impact... [A] member of parliament from [the Chancellor's]... Christian Democratic party, is promising legislation that would protect the rights of non-smokers... "We are not looking for a general prohibition of smoking... All we want is a law that protects non-smokers in places where they are forced to meet smokers."

...Smokers are four times more likely than the general population to fall prey to *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, the bacterium that causes meningitis, blood poisoning, pneumonia and ear infections. A study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* says the bacterium sends 500,000 Americans to hospital each year, claims more than 40,000 lives and is a leading killer of young children... The research found people exposed to second-hand smoke for as little as an hour a day are two and a half times more likely to develop one of the illnesses, known collectively as invasive pneumococcal disease. An adult vaccine against the bacterium is available but it is usually recommended only for the elderly and people with other health problems that open them up to the disease. A vaccine for infants and toddlers was approved last month by the US FDA. The study, by a team at the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, raises the question of vaccinating healthy adults, particularly smokers.

...Smoking in later life promotes mental decline, says new research. A team from Britain's Institute of Psychiatry studied the health and lifestyle of more than 650 people aged 65 and over, and tested them for mental sharpness using a technique similar to one used to screen for dementia and Alzheimer's disease. A year later, of the 417 people who could be retested, one in 16 had suffered significant intellectual decline... After taking into account factors known to affect brain function in older people, such as depression, general health, education and alcohol use, the researchers found that smokers were up to four times more likely to be mentally impaired than people who had never smoked. The suspected reason: smoking narrows and hardens the arteries, impairing blood supply to the brain. The authors strongly attacked several previous studies that suggested smoking, through nicotine, might help to prevent the onset of Alzheimer's. In a separate study, reported in *Occupational and Environmental Journal*... doctors found that smoking exacerbated the symptoms of an industrial illness called vibration white finger. This ailment, suffered by workers who frequently use drills, chainsaws and grinders, causes blood pressure in the fingers to drop, making them painfully sensitive to cold.

...Smoking ages the face by an extra 14 years every 20 years, say British researchers. Tobacco triggers a protein that breaks down collagen, the fibrous material that keeps wrinkles at bay. Normally, the enzyme is used during growth to assist tissue remodelling, breaking down certain structures so that they can be rebuilt. In the body, an inhibitor substance called TIMP regulates the effect... Middle age begins in the 30s for smokers, as wrinkles accumulate around the mouth and eyes. "Once the collagen has been destroyed it is gone forever and cannot be restored..."

...[studies by Sydney University have linked smoking to 20% of irreversible blindness in people in their 50s]...

Smoking for as little as five years... damages the lungs, heart, eyes, mouth, throat, digestive organs, genital tract and skin – damage that can only be partly undone by quitting, says the American Council on Science and Health... [However, stopping] smoking at 60 almost completely banishes the risk of developing lung cancer in people who do not already have it, an international conference heard yesterday. The finding surprised researchers who said the trend had emerged only recently as a result of studies that have followed lifetime smokers into old age... [Most] current health prevention strategies... focus on dissuading children from taking up smoking but... older smokers were not told of the advantages of giving up.

...[NZ] tobacco giants are paying shopowners to display multiple rows of cigarette packets in eye-catching units – a measure ...Ash... believes is against the law. The Ministry of Health is seeking a legal opinion... that the payments... breach smokefree legislation. Since December tobacco advertising near cash registers has been forbidden... Now, in a widespread move, rows and rows of cigarette packets are being prominently displayed in new containers near shop counters... Ash had reported only Rothmans to the Ministry of Health because the group had a copy of an agreement worth \$1700 between that company and the owner of a small shop. But it also believed... British American Tobacco... might be in breach of offering similar arrangements... The managing director of... British American Tobacco (formerly Wills)... [confirmed that] his company had similar... arrangements... Rothmans... said Ash had lost the plot... The tobacco companies say their arrangements with retailers, and their displays, are within the law... The... companies... paid a rental to shopowners for the display space. It was a normal commercial practice... [However,] the only difference with the displays since the latest ban was that advertising had been removed... One Auckland dairy owner, who did not want to be named but had a large display of Rothmans products, said Ash had a point. "It's not a small display, it's humungous. If you look at it you can't get better advertising than that." ...[By the way, a] new report from the Imperial Cancer Research Fund... and A[sh]... showed the international tobacco industry had 57 US patents approved for modifications that could have reduced the... toxic cancer-causing compounds in the 4000 chemicals in tobacco smoke... But the tobacco companies never made them because producing better cigarettes would have been expensive and an admission that the existing ones were "unsafe", according to... a 1986 internal memo... [from] a former chief executive of British American Tobacco.

...*"There's more to the tobacco industry than the controversy surrounding our products."* British American Tobacco is the world's most international tobacco group, with active business in 180 countries, employing almost 90,000 people worldwide... Working for us means being part of an instinctively international, multicultural environment where team spirit and professionalism is strong and success is celebrated.

...*Cross-border big business in gun...* For [the cigarette salesperson]... 1993 was an especially good year. A star employee with Northern Brands International (NBI), a tiny, four-person export outfit owned by the tobacco giant RJR Nabisco, [the salesperson] sold an astonishing eight billion cigarettes... reaping about \$US60 million... in profits. Walking the company's halls, [the salesperson] received a standing ovation from executives who had received hefty bonuses as a result... On his wrist [the salesperson] flashed a Rolex, a gift from grateful wholesalers. These days, [his] name is no longer greeted with applause in the tobacco industry. [The salesperson] and other former executives are soon to be quizzed by federal prosecutors about the shady side of the cigarette business... [A] federal grand jury in North Carolina is investigating explosive allegations about global smuggling operations that move vast amounts of cigarettes across borders without paying any taxes. It is a multibillion-dollar-a-year enterprise. The grand jury deliberations spotlight a new round of legal troubles for Big Tobacco. (The proceedings are secret and it could not be learned which companies are under scrutiny. The US Attorney in Raleigh... declined to comment.) Cigarette makers are under attack from Governments around the world that seek to hold them responsible for the costs of smuggling: billions in lost taxes, soaring violence and weakening efforts to prevent kids from smoking. Last week the EU announced that it plans to launch a civil suit against US cigarette makers for their alleged involvement in smuggling. In the last eight months, Canada, Colombia and Ecuador have all filed smuggling suits against US tobacco companies using US anti-racketeering laws. Britain, Italy and China have also mounted intensive investigations. The Canadian and European investigators are cooperating closely with their US counterparts to build a case against the industry. The Feds have even set up a cigarette-smuggling "war room" in the US Federal Building in Raleigh which is now ground zero in the latest battle against Big Tobacco... Though tobacco executives acknowledge that cigarette smuggling is a problem, they vehemently deny any involvement in the illegal shipment or sale of their products. R. J. Reynolds executives say their organisation has been completely reorganised and bears no responsibility for the now-defunct NBI. They also insist they knew nothing about [the salesperson's] illegal operation. [The salesperson] was a rogue smuggler, they say, who fooled them all and brought shame to the industry... In addition[to the smuggling issue], the World Bank and WHO plan to release the results of a three-year investigation

claiming the tobacco industry has deliberately thwarted international efforts to control [i]t... Cigarette makers can ill afford a new volley of legal problems.

...A California jury's record-breaking award of \$US51.5 m... – [over]three times what her lawyer asked for... – ...to a former three-pack-a-day smoker could herald a wave of jaw-dropping verdicts against the tobacco industry... Analysts suggest cigarette makers' willingness to pay billions of dollars to settle state lawsuits has made the industry an easier target. The settlements are perceived as a public admission of guilt and a sign... the industry has lots of money to spend. "When tobacco companies start offering billions of dollars of settlements, juries lose their sense of how much is a lot," said... a law professor at Wake Forest University who specialises in product liability... Philip Morris lawyers said the... company planned to appeal.

...A judge has refused to overturn a... verdict against Philip Morris but has lowered from \$US51.5 million... to \$26.5 million, the total damages the company must pay to a former three-pack-a-day smoker with lung cancer. When [the smoker] won the \$51.5 million in February, it was the largest award ever in a tobacco liability lawsuit filed by an individual smoker. Th[e]... judgment... also denied the company's request for a new trial.

...A lifelong Marlboro smoker who won a record \$US100 million damage award against cigarette maker Philip Morris has died of cancer. Richard Boeken, who began to smoke as a teenager 40 years ago before warning labels were placed on cigarette packets, died on Thursday at his California home[, aged]... 57... Philip Morris is appealing against the award, which had been reduced by a judge from \$US3 billion.

...THE U[S] tobacco industry won a major victory yesterday when a state appeals court ruled damage claims in a landmark smoking case must be considered one smoker at a time. That removes the threat of a single multi-billion dollar verdict. The ruling came on behalf of about 500,000 sick Florida smokers. In July a jury decided in the smokers' favour, ruling the industry produced a deadly product... The class-action lawsuit by smokers was the first to go to trial. The second round will begin on Tuesday, when the jury will determine whether two sick smokers should be compensated. The defendants are the nation's five biggest cigarette makers... and two... associates, the Council for Tobacco Research USA and the Tobacco Institute... "This has essentially devastated the most threatening aspect of the claim to the tobacco industry," said[a] tobacco analyst... The individual claims would produce smaller dollar awards, and the industry would have an opportunity to wipe out the whole case by appealing once one damage award is set, [the analyst] said. In March, a jury in Portland, Oregon, awarded \$US81 m... to the family of a smoker who died of lung cancer. The month before, a [smoker] with inoperable lung cancer won \$US51m in San Francisco. Both awards were reduced by judges. But the industry won another Oregon case as well as lawsuits on behalf of unions in Ohio, three dead smokers in Tennessee and one in Missouri.

...TOBACCO companies have vowed to fight the billions of dollars awarded by a jury to sick Florida smokers. A Miami jury deliberated for just five hours before ruling that America's biggest tobacco companies should pay \$[NZ]319.45 billion in damages... the largest punitive award ever in a personal injury lawsuit... Philip Morris Inc's attorney... called the ruling "an unfair procedure, unheard of in American history" but predicted its effect on the company would be minimal. "This is a verdict in favour of no-one," said [the attorney], whose company was ordered to pay \$146 billion... Other tobacco lawyers said they will spend years appealing the jury's decision and will try negotiating a more modest settlement... The six jurors have been on the case... [for] two years... They already found the companies liable for the... ailments in 500,000 smokers in Florida.

...*Jury punished big tobacco for lying*... After listening to two years of trial, a jury of six... didn't hesitate to tell Big Tobacco to pay \$US145 billion... in punitive damages to ailing Florida smokers. "We all thought we needed to send a strong message based on the evidence," said [the jury foreperson, who]... found the tobacco lawyers insulting, especially when they tried to explain away... [one plaintiff]'s throat cancer by saying it was caused by wood dust the clockmaker had inhaled at work, not cigarettes. "To us, that was unbelievable... I'm not an idiot... It was insulting to me and an incredible level of denial in the face of all the evidence and the earlier verdict." It was the third time the jury had deliberated in the case... "The jury was unwayed by the tobacco companies' threat [that a high damage award] would cause them to go belly up," said[a] Harvard Law Professor... "The verdict should not endanger the settlement payouts to... any state since the companies have the financial capacity to pay us as well as these verdicts in private actions," said[the] Connecticut Attorney-General[, who]... was among Attorney-Generals that helped hammer out the \$US246 billion settlement of state suits brought against the industry. The 1998 landmark accord resolved the states efforts to obtain Medicaid reimbursements for money spent on sick smokers. "We don't feel threatened at all," said[the] Mississippi Attorney-General... who filed the first of the state suits. [The Mississippi Attorney-General] expects the latest award will be tied up in appeals for at least five to 10 years. "Who knows what the end result will be. They will cause every type of delay... It's not like they're going to write a cheque." Lawyers said they expected the award will be reduced on appeal and that the industry would be able to handle the amount by raising the price of cigarettes.

...ONLY in America. The \$[NZ]300 billion award against US tobacco firms to half a million smokers may sound big. But just six people are sharing in a \$10 billion payout by General Motors after an exploding fuel tank hurt them.

...British researchers say they have genetically engineered tobacco plants so they could... break down the... explosives from soil... into harmless substances... The plants could be used to clean up areas around weapons factories and munitions dumps... "The Environmental Protection Agency priority list contains 22 ammunition production and processing sites that are laden with explosive and propellant wastes... Some of these sites are literally on the verge of exploding." ...[In related news,] New York has passed a bill making it the first US state requiring the sale of self-extinguishing cigarettes. The law, to take effect by July 2003, aims to reduce fires caused by careless smokers, who account for at least one-third of the fire deaths in New York. The state now has... to come up with the standards for self-extinguishing cigarettes[, which 'tests show are unreliable']...

If death doesn't turn smokers off, what will? ...[smoking] gives you something to do with your hands in public... It means you can squint your eyes in a steely way, as the smoke drifts past. It helps you mark territory, dog-like, with gobs of hoick. It means you leave a subtle odour behind you wherever you travel, for others to savour. It gives cleaners something to do, which is a social service. The inevitable bouts of coughing cover up those embarrassing gaps in chit-chat when you're trying to impress somebody attractive. It makes you taste delicious. It gives you an excuse to leave the office, and hang about with other smokers in alleyways... This, in turn, reminds you of schooldays, the best days of your life, you betcha. But best of all, it's dangerous. Sucking on durries is a mixture of fire-walking, speedway racing, kamikaze piloting and drunk driving. So it'll kill you? Who cares...? We're not here for a long time, we're here for a good time... No wonder kids still take it up, even after the \$44 million the Smoke-Free Act has cost this country since 1989... One solution? Pay them to give up. That's the brainwave of... [a] Tauranga... Judge... who let two [young people] off their outstanding fines recently after they said they'd stop smoking... [A 23-year-old had] told the court [about being] too poor to pay to sit his driver's licence. [The judge told him that giving up smoking would enable him] to pay to sit his oral test in a fortnight, and in a month... have his licence. As an extra incentive, [the judge] airily wiped \$814 of [his] outstanding fines. Still on a roll of good works and joy, the judge offered a similar deal to... [a 22-year-old], also unemployed, of Te Puke, who had \$500 owing. "If you never smoke again you will be richer, healthier, and live longer," the judge piped cheerily, offering him the choice of periodic detention or a clean slate. And so the two... tripped out of court, surely light-headed with disbelief, and hungering a durry. How long before they lit up? One hour? Two? Madness takes many forms, but none more so than in the belief that sweet reason will persuade a smoker of anything... More good news: Cigar smokers, according to a study released last week, face double the risk of dying... from all forms of cancer... than the smoke-free population... – and this from smoking an average of only two cigars a day for 10 years. Talk about sexy! Watch the rush on cigar sales[, and look out for advertisements like: 'When you smoke a cigar you're in heaven'].

...a]s a... presidential candidate [the US President] confessed that, as a student, [it] had smoked marijuana “but never inhaled.” Now [the President] “chews cigars but does not smoke,” says [the]White House... Still, in a country where smokers are social outcasts and cigars in the White House are the butt of sexual innuendo after... the... independent prosecutor[’s]... report on the [intern] scandal... said... the [President] used a cigar as a sex aid... the President does not like to be caught with a cigar in his mouth... But... this week... press photographers... managed to get a perfect shot of the President sucking on a sizable corona... during one of his golf rounds... before [the President] could snatch it out of his mouth.

...WITHIN seconds of ignition, cigar smoke fills the puffer’s mouth and throat with a brown coating containing cancer-causing compounds, setting in motion a tug of war between acquired habit and a genetic instinct for survival. The invading compounds chemically break down the cells in the mouth and throat. The smoker’s body automatically responds by repairing the bombarded cells. But when they enter the system repeatedly, the carcinogens can overwhelm the body’s defences. The cigar smoker, as a result, is four to 10 times more likely than non-smokers to die from laryngeal, oral and oesophageal cancers. The rate of lung cancer among cigar smokers – two to three times higher than among non-smokers – would be even higher if they inhaled. But the chemical makeup of cigars – denser and less acidic than cigarettes – creates a caustic smoke that usually inhibits the smoker from breathing it deep into the lungs... The carcinogens, however, have other ways of attacking the body. They pass through the lining of the mouth and throat into the circulating bloodstream. Tissue throughout the body is exposed... Vaporised by heat moments after the cigar is lighted, nicotine... is a[ls]o a]bsorbed... and set loose in the bloodstream... Experts say the typical cigar delivers more tar to the smoker than does the average cigarette. And a higher level of nicotine... – up to 400 milligrams – than in a cigarette, which on average contains about 10 milligrams.

...[here’s some m]ore loopy laws from the craziest country in the world. In California it’s illegal to set a mousetrap without a hunting license, while in Oklahoma you can get picked up for making ugly faces at a dog. And in Illinois it’s against the law to give lighted cigars to cats and dogs. Keep that in mind next time you invite the neighbour’s dachshund around for a poker game.

...Hollywood lights up cigar sales... ALIENS blow up the White House. The human race teeters on the brink of annihilation. What does a brash young hero need... [when setting] out to save the day? “Oh damn, wait a minute... we got to find some cigars,” exclaims [the]actor... in *Independence Day*. If you were among the... 60 million... who watched the movie... you witnessed a persuasive promotion for cigars. Operating behind the scenes, cigar manufacturers paid Hollywood brokers to feature their product in the movie, a type of stealth marketing that the US Congress thought it had stamped out. The result: The movie industry has fanned a resurgence in cigar smoking. Actors lighted cigars in 51 of 133 movies with a domestic box-office draw of at least \$5 million in a survey by the American Lung Association... Manufacturers want the public to believe that the proliferation of cigars on the silver screen is mere happenstance... “We don’t promote our products through movies,” said... [the chairperson of] one of the nation’s oldest and largest private cigar makers... But the company’s internal documents contradicted him. On June 9, 1995, his son, [the company’s] president... expressed interest in Hollywood in a letter to... [the] president of Feature This!, a Los Angeles product placement company... Almost four months later, the company... took further steps. “Enclosed please find the following cigars to be used in specific movies which we discussed (yesterday),”... the president’s assistant, wrote... on October 3... [The son] was not available for comment, but when asked about the discrepancy, [the chairperson claimed to be unaware] of his son’s efforts to get the company’s cigars into the movies... *Independence Day* and another hit, *The First Wives Club*... “First I’ve heard of it,” [the chairperson] said... At Paramount Pictures... the... executive director of production resources and promotion, said that no cigar product placement was involved in *The First Wives Club*, whose promotional poster featured... [the three gal stars] holding cigars. “That wasn’t a product placement... That was a creative decision.” ...[the president] of Feature This!, [claims to have] supplied Cuesta-Rey cigars to the film after receiving a request from [the person] who was in charge of props. Twentieth Century Fox, which released *Independence Day*, also said that cigar product placement was not used in the film. “None whatsoever...,”... Feature This!, however, said it supplied... Cuesta-Rey cigars at no charge for use in the movie at the request of the filmmaker’s property master in charge of props. General Cigar Holdings also furnished cigars for the movie through another product-placement firm, according to cigar company executives. Asked about the discrepancy, the studio’s public relations firm said Fox executives were not available for further comment... Even though the Cuesta-Rey name was “greeked out” – industry parlance for obscuring product identity – ...[cigars] appeared in about 12 scenes, or once every 12.5 minutes, in *Independence Day*... [T]he exposure was a boon for the industry... Other consumer products[have] made an enduring impression on movie-goers... After [the lead actor] donned a pair of Ray-Bans in *Risky Business* in 1983, sales of the sunglasses jumped 55%. And when... James Bond hopped in a BMW Z3 roadster in *GoldenEye* in 1995, the car’s first-year production was sold out by the time it hit the market... Hollywood lore has it that chocolate-maker Mars turned down the idea of having an extraterrestrial movie character munch its M&M candy, which led... [the] director... to Hershey Foods, maker of Reese’s Pieces. Sales went up 65% within a month of the candy’s cameo appearance. The product-placement industry took off, too.

...Cuba’s world-famous tobacco industry, under pressure to lift output but also to preserve quality, turned out a record 160 million Havana cigars... traditionally viewed as the world’s finest... for export last year. That figure, worth more than \$US380 million... in revenues for the cash-strapped island, was a major leap from the 100 million cigars produced in 1997, and 70 million in 1996... [The] head of Cuba’s state-run group of... 43 factories... the Union of Empresas de Tabaco... paid tribute to an “extraordinary effort” from the industry’s 160,000 workers. Spain, France and England were the principal buyers of Cuba’s... cigar output[which represents]... the island’s third biggest export earner after sugar and tourism... With world demand still outstripping supply, the Caribbean nation hopes to raise output of cigars for export... to 200 million this year.

A jump in fake Cuban cigars coming into N[Z] risks giving the world’s most expensive cigar a bad name... The owners of Havana House Cigars in Auckland... said the number of copy-cat cigars from Mexico and Caribbean countries... had grown in the past few months. Six boxes of fakes had been brought into their wholesale, retail and export business by prospective sellers in the past few weeks, adding to about six others during last year... [O]nly two fake boxes[surfaced] in 1995... counterfeiting was becoming a problem as cigar sales worldwide climbed. “It’s worrying when people get bad cigars because they will smoke them and say: ‘Oh God... I don’t want this’,”... Fakes were often packed in authentic Cuban cigar boxes... But tell-tale signs included uneven cigar sizes and colours, uneven labels and bands, broken seals and odour – some smelled like horse manure... A box of phoney Hoyo De Monterey cigars brought into the shop recently could sell for about \$US50... the real item costs \$US280.

...A COMPLAINT from two [US] cigar smokers has alerted the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to a multi-million dollar scam in smuggled counterfeit Cuban cigars, some containing potentially lethal banana leaves. The cigars... are brought from Cuba by people who have heard of big profits made selling oversized Cuban cigars to US citizens banned from buying them at home.

...[T]HE decadent 1980s are over, but the 1990s have ushered in boom times for a leading symbol of indulgence. Cigar sales soared by 44.3% in the first quarter of 1996 over the same period in 1995 – and last year 170 million premium cigars were sold in the US alone. This represented \$1b worth of cigars sold mostly to 25 to 50-year-old guys. But gals account for 2% of cigar connoisseurs and their ranks could soon double, industry experts say. Tossing aside political correctness about health concerns, for some gals there’s nothing like the hedonistic pleasure of a good cigar. For others, cigars represent glamour appeal. Then there are those who smoke because it’s empowering – they’re crashing one of society’s last traditional guy bastions. *Cigar Aficionado* magazine recently featured a supermodel on the cover. The person who launched the magazine in 1992 isn’t surprised by the growing ranks of gal cigar smokers. “Some have learned a great deal about cigars and will be smoking them for many years. Others are smoking because it’s the ‘in’ thing to do and attracts attention, but I’m not sure they know what they’re doing.” The Dallas-based author of *Cigar Chic: A Gal’s Perspective*, smokes cigars so the

author and her husband have a shared ritual. But “it’s also a real guy-catcher. It gives guys a reason to come and talk to you. And it’s better than having a guy come up and say, ‘I like your pants’.” Consolidated Cigar rolls out a cigar specifically for gals, the Cleopatra, selling in the US for \$5, but most gals are smoking premium, hand-rolled smokes that sell for \$20 each. “Which is still cheaper than taking up golf,” says a psychologist, who also says smoking a cigar offers a way to level the playing field of a guy-orientated world. Gal cigar smokers say sampling different cigars is like tasting different types of coffee.]

...IN the hip cafes of Europe, [the US, AUS and NZ], the politics of troubled East Timor are a more likely topic of discussion than its coffee. But from the hills of this remote and rugged former Portuguese colony there is talk of a new taste – naturally grown and worth savouring... [– and] thousands of small farmers are eagerly signing up to join the new movement... “The response has been exceptional. In our first year, in a trial period, we started with just 700 farmers,” says... the country director of the [US]-based National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA)... [which], together with local cooperatives, runs what is known as the Timor Coffee Project, a programme funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID). “In the second year, we targeted about 2500 farmers and we had to cut off at 6700. This year we plan to get... 10,000,”... Ironically, the territory’s troubles have played a part in keeping the arabica coffee trees of thousands of small farmers free from pesticide and fertiliser use, making it ideal as a source of organically grown arabica coffee. As in Nicaragua and El Salvador, where the NCBA has also worked, guerrilla activity in the mountains kept government extension officers, who would have promoted pesticide and fertiliser use, far from the coffee-growing districts... Certification as organic farmers allows them to tap into a lucrative market for clean produce... “...Organic coffee in a strong market will pay 15 to 20[%] – and in a weak market 10 to 15[%] – more....”... Timor’s arabica bean, known as Hibrido de Timor... is vying with the already popular boutique arabicas from Indonesia’s main islands... New names could soon enter the coffee drinker’s lexicon... The premium-grade brand, Cafe Timor, gets its special flavour from being grown at higher altitudes... The project, still in an experimental stage, produced only 50 tonnes of premium coffee from the 1995 season... [T]he 1996 season would yield 600 tonnes of high-grade export product. The most recent government statistics show the 25,177 coffee farming families of East Timor’s 13 regencies produced 8450 tonnes of mostly arabica coffee in 1995...

WE all have secrets, some more guilty than others. Mine is a daily escape from my desk to worship at the altar of *Coffea Arabica*, brewed in the serene light of my local Aroma cafe. Caffeine is the most widely used drug in the world. Some diehard members of our health police even argue it is our most popular drug of abuse. It is true that caffeine produces physical dependence. And it can be harmful, causing gastritis, palpitations, anxiety and insomnia though that is not the whole story. The earliest references to it are in 10th-century Arabian literature. The legend goes that a [goat-herder] discovered the stimulant effect of the coffee bush when his goats “pranced excitedly” after chewing on its berries. The berries also kept him awake... The Dutch created the first coffee plantations 200 years ago in Java. The first English coffee house opened in Oxford in 1650. During the next 25 years more than 3000 were founded... Our addiction is certainly enjoyable. And here’s a difficulty. For years smoking was regarded as merely a “bad habit” and alcoholism as a “drinking problem.” Only when bodies began to pile up was it agreed we were facing dangerous addictive drugs. The same pattern of denial surrounds caffeine. It took until 1994 for [US] psychiatrists to prove that a syndrome of caffeine dependence did exist... But there are legitimate reasons to think caffeine may not be all bad... because specific tissues in our bodies respond to our own natural caffeine-like substances. Caffeine has been used to treat weak breathing in premature babies and it seems to improve athletic performance. [Furthermore, the] difference between caffeine and its uglier sisters, nicotine and alcohol, is obvious: it does not kill. Still, we should recognise caffeine as a drug of dependence used by as many as eight out of 10 of us. The importance of this fact is that... [if] we accept our need for coffee and chocolate, then perhaps a little more compassion might be shown to those who smoke or drink, or worse. That these behaviours produce the intolerance they do among the self-righteous is a peculiar and harmful inconsistency.

...Bad news is brewing for caffeine addicts... as soaring world coffee prices push the cost of a fix to near-record heights. Consumers buying roasted and ground coffee beans will bear the brunt of the world shortage, with price hikes of up to 50[%] predicted... if the supply shortage continues... [I]ncreases are likely to filter through to the cafe society... with industry sources saying a \$2.50 cup of coffee could cost up to \$3 in the next few months... The supply crisis has been building during this year, with prices increasing by more than 150[%] in the past five months... Cerebos Greggs Ltd, the largest coffee manufacturer in N[Z], said the market could not go on absorbing the climbing costs... A combination of human and natural disasters... [– civil] war in Central Africa, general strikes in Colombia and leaf and berry disease ravaging crops in South America and Indonesia... – ...has put the heat under the notoriously volatile international coffee market... And the market remains unsettled with the frost season looming in Brazil, the world’s biggest coffee crop producer.

...Coffee prices are expected to fall in coming days after the US Department of Agriculture forecast a larger-than-expected Brazilian harvest... for the year starting July 1 [of a] total 28 million 132-pound bags, the largest in six years[, while a]... Rio de Janeiro-based consultant... estimated Brazil would harvest a... coffee crop of... 35.5 million 60kg bags... [However, one analyst] said... “The USDA report was bearish, even though its estimates tend to be on the high side, just as Brazil’s estimates tend to be on the low side... There’s nothing supportive for coffee at the moment.”

...[‘Low prices bitter latte to swallow in Last World The contrasts are glaring. On the one hand, coffee-producing countries and farmers in the Last World are suffering from the worst-ever slump in prices; on the other, global coffee giants, such as Starbucks, which sells lattes by the billion in the cities of the First World, are profiting as never before. Starbucks can charge £2.70 in Britain for a single coffee; millions are ready to pay. Nestle says its profits (estimated coffee profits last year: \$US1 billion) have increased “thanks to favourable commodity prices.” But Oxfam, in a new report, argues that the failure to reverse current trends will have “devastating consequences” all across the Last World. The author of the report, Bitter Coffee, claims companies portray themselves as socially friendly while shrugging their shoulders at the relentless logic of the market. “It just doesn’t work, if something is destroying people’s livelihoods on an epic scale, to run a few community projects in Central America. That doesn’t solve the problem.” In addition to the destruction of low-grade coffee (with estimated compensation to the farmers of \$US250 million), and in addition to a retention of 20% of world exports, Oxfam proposes the imposition of a windfall tax on major coffee roasters to help fund such compensation schemes. It also suggests long-term reforms which could make the coffee market more sustainable, and calls for the wider use of fair-trade schemes, with guaranteed higher prices, for coffee prices to have a chance of at least sliding back past the \$US1 a pound mark. Coffee prices are now at less than US50c a pound. The downward spiral is especially bad because production consistently outstrips consumption. If production could be cut back, the problem would partly be solved. In practice, dog-eat-dog is a more popular option.’]

...YOU’LL never buy cheap coffee again: As prices of raw coffee have slumped... so has the quality of what we drink. The BBC reports... coffee drinkers may be swallowing... up to 20[%] rogue ingredients, which can include... mouldy... beans... ground-up twigs, dust and floor sweepings...

Coffee drinkers beware: there may be grounds for concern brewing in the bottom of your cup. Unfiltered brews such as espresso and Turkish coffee have higher amounts of a substance known as cafestol, and people who regularly drink unfiltered coffee experienced an increase in their cholesterol levels, a Dutch study has found. Coffee that passes through a paper filter to remove the cafestol may be easier on the heart and blood vessels, researchers said yesterday. To coffee connoisseurs they offer this bit of heresy: Instant is even better, healthwise, if not tastewise, because the cafestol is squeezed out of the crystals at the factory... Numerous studies in recent years have examined coffee, and none has established a meaningful link between drinking it and developing heart disease. But most of those studies were done in the U[S] and involved filtered coffee... [However, more USers] are drinking... espresso and unfiltered coffee... as European-style coffees and French plunger-style pots with metal filters take hold... Even a few tenths of a milligram of cafestol ingested daily can significantly raise bloodstream cholesterol levels, and a single cup of

unfiltered coffee contains three to four milligrams... [A caffeine-addict], savouring a cappuccino at a sidewalk cafe in Amsterdam, was defiant... [T]hey can have his mug of coffee when they pry his cold, dead fingers from around it. "I don't want to hear it," [the addict] said.

...the 72-year-old head of the burgeoning Illycaffe coffee empire... that is now producing more than six million kilograms of coffee each year[... is]... sipping espresso from a tiny Illy cup in Parnell... "We are now present in 55 countries..." ...The secret to Illy's success, the coffee doctor explains, is that it has one brand and one blend so wherever you are... in any of those 55 countries your Illy espresso will taste the same[(excluding additives such as sugar and milk or cream, etc. – which suggest that many coffee drinkers don't like its natural taste!)]... But that's not all. "[50%] of the quality is in the beans and 50[%] in the way the beans are transformed in a cup," says... [the graduate] from the University of Bologna with a chemistry degree... which explains why [the 72-year-old] takes the time to travel the world and check out how his coffee is actually being made. (The correct "extraction" time to be pouring the coffee out of the espresso machine being 25 to 30 seconds.) "We travel a lot because you must understand what makes a consumer smile... From one kilogram of coffee you make 150 espressos so you can have 150 people with big smiles or 150 people making a face. And we want to have all smiles." ...So, how many cups of his beloved espresso does [the coffee-doctor] drink himself? "I drink from a minimum of three cups a day to a maximum of 10... In Naples they have a proverb – no less than three, no more than 33." [The 72-year-old] makes it at home... from an "expensive" French Pony coffee machine but, strangely, it's not an Illy espresso that gets him going every morning. "I have tea with porridge, which is very unusual." [□ The purchase of a \$4440 espresso machine for workers at the Ministry for Economic Development provoked predictable comments from Act's perk-busting MP – and this comment from the Minister for Economic Development: "There is nothing wrong with a good cup of coffee and there is nothing wrong with treating staff well." A similar machine has also been installed for workers at the Treasury Department.]

... "A cuppa" in N[Z] is now more likely to be coffee than tea. Last year N[Z]ers bought 2549 tonnes of coffee, as against 1987 tonnes in 1986 – an increase of 28[%], while... in that time tea sales fell... 20[%]... The one bright spot for tea was that herbal and fruit sales were increasing at a brisk 12.5% a year, but with annual retail sales of just \$5.5 million, it was a tiny part of the market... The total value of the N[Z] coffee market last year was \$95 million, compared with \$40 million for tea. Importers... said... "Consumer research shows that tea is regarded as conservative, whereas coffee is seen as exciting and exotic." [Other research shows that 'drinking 6+ cups of coffee a day protects 50% of guys and 30% of gals from a form of diabetes.']

...*Coffee beans have the smell of money* ANYONE looking for a steaming investment could do a lot worse than put their money into coffee. Whether you are roasting it, distributing it, serving it or drinking it, N[Z]'s coffee market is booming, with plenty more growth tipped to come. Coffee sold through supermarkets and other shops is worth \$89 million a year[... of which]... instant coffee... accounts for... \$71m. On top of that is the coffee sold by the cup in the ubiquitous cafes that are now a feature of the country's urban landscape. In these places, asking for a cup of tea is almost unheard of... [Indeed], the owner of Articus, a bohemian cafe in Auckland, displays a prejudice that relegates tea drinking to the domain of filthy habits. "Drinking tea is something people should do only in the privacy of their own homes – certainly not in public, and never in front of young children." [The owner has] thrown her tea pots away, and on the two or three occasions a week when someone asks for tea, [the owner] dangles them a tea bag in a cup of hot water and charges them \$2 for the privilege. That compares with the 1200 cups of coffee [her establishment] serves each week, with prices up to \$3.50... At anything above that, you'd be expecting more than the coffee for the price... N[Z]ers consume an average of 0.7kg of coffee each year. Compare that with Scandinavians, who quaff 12kg each year... Around 80% of N[Z] homes now have a coffee plunger or filter, but we still have some way to go to match Switzerland, where 87% of households have an espresso machine.

...I had a fairly normal childhood... AT LEAST as far as hot drinks were concerned... In the late '60s my family acquired its first percolator: The coffee tasted like stewed aluminium. We thought it was very stylish, and we'd drink a couple of cups and all lie around laughing randomly while our neurotransmitters went haywire. But then we were always right up with the latest trends. My parents owned a coffee lounge in Auckland called the El d'Oro. The main trade was in cheese toasted sandwiches... My father once chased out some hippies who were hallucinating over their light meals... My father... wasn't prepared to stand by and watch while someone hallucinated in his coffee bar... But to return to coffee. Nowadays it seems that everyone drinks it. Not counting the Mormon Church, I can number the non-coffee-drinkers I know on the fingers of one hand. Everyone else is wild about it. They claim it's a stimulant, that it helps you to work late. But I think the real reason it's so popular is that people like to believe in a force greater than themselves, and in the '90s coffee happens to fill that need... Coffee is... one of those ritual substances that lets us think we have a common vision of a reality that might otherwise be unbearable. - 1997

Coffee, in the Middle East, is one of the first necessities of life... The coffee shrub originated in Abyssinia and the Sudan... Coffee contains alkaloids, volatile aromatic products and various substances belonging to the phenolic series. It stimulates the central nervous system and the cardiac muscle. History, or perhaps legend, tells us that the first [hu]man to drink coffee was the Mufti of Aden, who lived in the beginning of the ninth century. According to another tradition, we owe the discovery of coffee to a certain... Moslem priest... This holy [person], upon finding himself often overcome by sleep in the middle of his prayers, attributed his drowsiness to the half-heartedness of his devotions, and his conscience tormented him. The Prophet, touched by his sorrow, led him to encounter a [herder], who told him that each time his goats ate the berries of a certain shrub, they would remain awake, jumping and gambolling all night. The Mullah... testing these unusual berries, made himself a potent brew, and spent the night in a state of delicious intoxication which, however, in no way affected his intellectual capacities... [The] Mullah... told his Dervishes about his discovery and soon coffee became much in demand among devout Moslems, who looked upon it as a divine gift brought by an angel from heaven to the faithful. The use of coffee spread... Coffee was taken during prayers, in the mosques, even in the Holy Temple at Mecca and before the Tomb of the Prophet... Travellers who had acquired the habit of drinking this beverage in the East imported it at first for their personal use... [until] the ambassador of the Sublime Porte to the Court of Louis XIV in 1669 popularised coffee in France. As laid down by Turkish custom, [the ambassador] offered it to all who came to visit him. The vogue for coffee spread through high society; it was soon in demand and the price was high... When green, coffee keeps for a long time, provided it is protected from damp. It is entirely devoid of smell. To release the aroma, coffee has to be roasted, an operation which many coffee lovers insist on performing themselves... During the industrial roasting process a small quantity of sugar molasses or other product is sometimes added to 'coat' the berries. This is permissible by law. It gives the berries a better colour and more shiny appearance; it prevents the loss of aroma and has the further advantage, for the merchant, of increasing the weight. It also enables him to use inferior quality or damaged grains. After roasting, coffee does not keep its aroma for long... Soluble coffee, more commonly known as instant coffee, was the invention of... an English[person] living in Guatemala. One day while waiting for his wife to join him in the garden for coffee, [the husband] noticed on the spout of the silver coffee-pot fine powder which seemed to be the condensation of the coffee vapours... his product[was] put on the market in 1909... Various grains and roots have been used to replace coffee, or for adulteration... The wild chicory root has been used as a substitute for coffee since 1769. It was first used in Sicily, then in Germany and has given rise to an important industry... Chicory has more food value than coffee, although this is not important as the amount consumed is small. It produces a dark infusion with laxative properties, and prevents caffeine poisoning which occurs when too much real coffee is drunk. Coffee addicts, justifiably, do not allow the addition of any chicory in coffee... Apart from chicory, the most important adulterants include figs, dates, acorns... malt, barley and other roasted cereals, chick-peas and lupins (used a great deal in Brittany). The majority of these adulterants are harmless... Coffee (especially strong black coffee) must not be given to children, adolescents, people of nervous disposition or those suffering from heart conditions; nor should it be given to certain dyspeptics... black

coffee ought never to be drunk on an empty stomach and white coffee is even worse for the system than black... A moderate amount of coffee soothes, eliminates the feeling of tiredness and exhaustion, makes mental work easier...

Caffeine (KAFF-eeen)... a stimulant... derived from PURINE, a nitrogen compound in vegetable matter... supposedly increases one's mental and physical abilities. There is also some variable effect on the digestive system... Two cups of coffee... will increase the rate of blood flow, the depth of respiration and the heat production of the body by 10-20%... Too much caffeine can result in sleeplessness and nervousness. Since children are very active, they do not need the stimulation of caffeine. In adults' diets... coffee often replace[s] milk, a vital food product.

WITH COFFEE BARS proliferating from Seattle to Auckland and specialty brews having turned round a decades-long decline in the consumption of coffee worldwide, the news about coffee and health is surprisingly good. Many scientists believe that research has turned up little solid evidence that a moderate intake of coffee or its caffeine poses significant or even a minor health threat... For the average healthy person, about the most serious charge against caffeine is that it may be addictive... But caffeine is only one of some 500 chemicals in coffee... Sorting out the health effects of coffee, with or without caffeine, is complicated by the fact that coffee drinkers are, on the whole, a different breed...

That innocent-looking cappuccino could one day be as socially reviled as a cigarette. Caffeine has supplanted nicotine as America's socially accepted drug... As much as a decade ago, caffeine outranked nicotine as the most widely consumed drug in the world, according to a 1986 study conducted at the Addiction Research Foundation in Ontario, Canada. But by trading in Camels for Cokes, has society simply substituted one socially accepted addiction for another? ...people are forgetting that, like nicotine, caffeine is a physically addictive drug that could be harmful... notes... a pharmacologist from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland... Like nicotine products used to be, caffeine products today "are actively promoted as containing the drug,"... [A] Seattle-based spokes[person] for the coffee-house chain Starbucks, is unsurprisingly dubious about [the pharmacologist's] claims. "There are good points about caffeine and there are bad points about caffeine... There are so many studies out there now that contradict each other, we don't really pay that much attention." ...In 1980, following an experiment in which pregnant rats fed high doses of coffee produced pups with missing toes, the US FDA warned pregnant humans to avoid even... moderate caffeine consumption. Two years later, a report on 12,000 pregnant [humans] linked four or more cups of coffee daily to premature birth and low birth weight. Smoking turned out to be the chief culprit, but the agency still advises prudence. A Canadian study also linked large doses of caffeine to a rising risk of slow fetal growth... Reviews of caffeine and conception conflict. One study... found no effect of caffeine on... chances of conceiving, while another... linked... three cups of coffee... daily to a delay in conception. Still, enough research suggests that caffeine may... increase the risk of miscarriage. - 1996

Cutting back on coffee and other caffeine-laden drinks during pregnancy or while you're breast-feeding could be a wise idea. There's growing evidence caffeine is associated with spontaneous abortion in the second trimester of pregnancy, as well as low birth weight. Even as little as one or two cups of coffee a day can pose a small risk. Caffeine readily passes through the placenta and into breast milk. The trouble is – newborns and foetuses are unable to detoxify it in the same way we can once we're fully developed.

...[pregnant people] who have regular caffeine fixes are heavily raising the risk of cot death, N[Z] researchers say. High daily intakes of coffee, tea, or cola have been found to boost the risk of cot death by 50[%]. The... research director... expected people to be surprised by the results, published in the latest *British Medical Journal*. High intake was defined as four cups of coffee or 10 of tea or cola a day. The study found that 18[%] of pregnant people were drinking that amount... [W]hen heavy caffeine intake was added... [to smoking, it] boosted the risk... to 5 1/2 fold.

...Evidence is mounting that drinking tea can prevent cell damage that leads to cancer, heart disease and perhaps other ills. Scientists say tea is loaded with phytochemicals – a wide range of molecules that can act as antioxidants... [However, c]offee beats green tea by containing four times the amount of health-boosting antioxidants... says a Nestle-financed study... The antioxidant activities were not affected by the addition of milk... The study was carried out "in vitro" – in test-tubes – and further studies "in viro" – on cells, cultures, animals, healthy humans and eventually humans with diseases – will need to be carried out... Researchers differ over whether a cup of coffee is good or bad for you... [Another] study has found... [that j]ust one cup of coffee can stiffen arteries for more than two hours, which might raise the risk of heart attack and stroke... albeit temporarily.

...Research... shows that long-haul drivers who stop for a cup of coffee to help them keep awake are dreaming. The Royal Bournemouth Hospital has found that caffeine keeps people awake, sure, but impairs their driving ability by... [making] them less alert and... slowing reaction time.

...*Tea party not a mad idea after all...* The humble cuppa not only quenches your thirst, it can also boost your brainpower. A scientist in Wales has discovered that drinking a cup of tea improves concentration and ability to learn. A brew is especially helpful to people who are doing two things at once and also helps them concentrate when they are performing one task after another. The research... demonstrated that caffeine is not the magic ingredient that boosts the grey cells, because those drinking tea outperformed those given a caffeine-only drink... Unilever, which markets Lipton, Choysa, PG Tips and Bushells, said... "Evidence that there is a link between consumption of tea and good health and general wellbeing is definitely good news for our tea industry." ...annual consumption of tea in [NZ is estimated] to be 1.75 billion cups per year... [A self]-confessed tea addict... [who is Auckland's] manager of the Royal New Zealand Ballet... needed a cup of Earl Grey to wake her up in the morning, "and I drink about four cups a day to keep me going. But I would have to say my favourite drink is champagne."

...You won't find it served at your dentist's office yet, but drinking black tea between meals may help reduce cavities and plaque... Studies, financed by the Tea Trade Health Research Association, found that several doses of black tea every day not only reduced plaque build-up but helped to control bacteria... Of course, to help prevent cavities the tea must truly be "black," without sugar, milk, honey or other additives. Researchers also emphasise that drinking black tea should not replace traditional oral hygiene. "Tea will affect the plaque formation but one has to brush their teeth to remove the plaque,"... And while black tea may fight cavities, it does not combat tooth stains. "It is going to stain [people's] teeth, but at least we know it's good for oral health." [● 'Tea contains three useful chemicals – essential oil, tannin and theine. The last one is a stimulant. When tea is brewed too long, the tannin dissolves and is freed, making the tea bitter.']

...Sri Lankan tea company Dilmah wants scientists to test what the Chinese have believed for thousands of years – that a humble cuppa not only aids digestion, relieves headaches and lifts spirits, but can actually stop weight gain... [The] company has given Massey University researchers a \$20,000 grant to establish... whether... [this belief can be proven], among other things... The company said it chose Massey because scientists there had already done research into nutritional antioxidants in plants. Antioxidants are important in maintaining human health and protecting against degenerative disease. Studies have shown that tea is particularly rich in a type of antioxidant called polyphenol. The antioxidant properties in green and black tea, similar to those found in red wine, are thought to be active ingredients against skin cancer[(research has found that 'black tea more than halved the incidence of skin cancer in mice')]. Other... research suggests the fresher the tea, the higher the level of antioxidant qualities... Dilmah is different from other big-label brands because it is the only tea wholly produced and blended in Sri Lanka. This means it is not stored for long periods before being auctioned and blended overseas. "Some teas are up to a year old from the time when they were picked..." ...researchers would compare various brands of tea to establish whether those stored for shorter periods had more antioxidants.

Tea is very delicate and must be kept in airtight containers in a dry place, well away from any food whose odours might contaminate it. The teapot, for the same reason, must be kept exclusively for making tea[, and it]... is very important to rinse the teapot first... with boiling water. When this has been done, the tea is put in, one teaspoon for each person plus one 'for the pot'... Only pure water must be used to make it, and that as free from lime as possible... The water must be absolutely boiling. The infusion is ready at the end of 5 or 6 minutes... [T]he most universally consumed of all beverages, [tea] is made from the leaves of... a tree that in its wild state can reach a height of 10 metres... It is native to Assam, China and Japan. Tea was brought to Europe by the Dutch in 1610... Tea-growing in China and Japan dates back to prehistoric times, but it was not started in India and Ceylon (now called Sri Lanka) until 1865. India and Ceylon are now the largest tea exporters in the world[, although]... China is the largest producer of tea... [where it] is grown both on open fields and on terraced hillsides. It requires a warm climate with a very heavy rainfall... For fine tea, the first one or two tiny leaves which appear at the end of each twig, during 'flushes' or growing periods, are plucked. The third and fourth leaves are used only in course teas. These pickings occur 10 to 25 times a year in Formosa and every 10 to 12 days in Ceylon... [I]n hot countries [tea] constitutes one of the best ways to drink water, since this must necessarily be boiled before it is used.

...tea increases... skin temperature more than coffee or hot water, resulting in the drinker being more relaxed. Tea also helps people to cool faster...

[The author of] *Come Rain or Shine*... doesn't drink tea, which wouldn't normally be a problem except... [that her book is] based around the time-honoured... tradition of having a cup of tea and a chat. Last year [the author], previously editor of *More* magazine and associate editor of *Fashion Quarterly*, left all the glamour of Auckland behind and spent... three months travelling... in a campervan. Her mission: To find [people] who could talk about their "ordinary, yet extraordinary" lives over a cup of tea... "I drank a lot of coffee actually," [the author] says by way of an apology for her dislike of tea. "And in some places I drank herbal tea." Anyway... it wasn't so much about the liquid of choice as the tea-drinking ritual, "because that's how friendships are sustained. Over a cup of tea or coffee you're sharing feelings, ideas and stories about what's happening in your life,"... [Friends can also share time while waiting for the water to boil and the brew to infuse, or while collecting firewood (where electricity isn't available)! Incidentally, drinks] with high acidity and sugar levels should not be sipped continuously, a dental expert says[, because doing so]... was likely to promote tooth decay... A British study has suggested that sports drinks can soften and decay the teeth... But... [the] paediatric dentist... of Otago Medical School, said... the main problem for dental health was how often the drinks were taken. Having a rest period between eating or drinking allowed saliva in the mouth to restore calcium... With rest periods, people could eat "just about anything" without damaging their teeth... The problem with sipping was particularly serious for young children who were given fruit juice in a bottle to take to bed. In Otago alone... 100 children a year were treated under general anaesthetic because their teeth were so badly damaged. The condition had been labelled "baby bottle tooth decay." If first teeth were damaged, it could affect the spacing of permanent teeth and abscesses could cause defects in the developing teeth.

... "Don't let the kids drink it." With these awful words of warning[, the]... managing director of Atlantean Power Products... adds a can of X Blaster to the stash of smart drinks in my car. I felt strangely exuberant driving home with caffeine-laced, non-alcoholic drinks rolling around on the seat beside me. My fingers itch to rip into X Blaster. But, no, it's too late in the day. I must let the X Blaster wait until morning. I would rather slump in front of a pacifying video than be strung out until 2 am. As it turns out, I've forgotten about the glasses of guarana-boosted Breeze and caffeine-enhanced spring water I[had previously] glugged back... There was to be no slouching tonight. I find myself vacuuming the house at 8 pm. At 9 pm I ponder a moonlight jaunt – to Whangarei and back, but sensibly choose to read instead. Next day, I (guiltily) issue the kids with small slugs of chocolate guarana-boosted Viper to see them through the school day and (after some trepidation) open the X Blaster. The label says: "Adult usage recommended. Up to three serves per day." It is described... as "a blend of amino acids which may relieve stress and anxiety and provide a 'pick-me-up' for adults who work and play hard and fast." This may be a figment of my vivid imagination, but I'm soon extremely wide-eyed and conscious of a vague internal vibration. Instead of finding the usual excuses not to sit down at the computer, I am actually working. And my fingers are hitting the right keys instead of vaguely stabbing in their general direction... X Blaster is one of a new generation of drinks known as smart/energy drinks, or New Age sodas, that are beginning to make a small but significant impression on the drink market. They are... quite different from isotonic drinks like Powerade and Gatorade, which pump salts back into flagging athletes. You buy them in bars, cafes, service stations and convenience stores. Except you pay heaps – some cost \$6 a can. They are niche drinks for the X Generation, aged between 14 and 30, who want to clutch a bottle on the dance floor and not feel a nerd or a geek... Atlantean Power Products, began importing smart drinks in 1995... [The company's] managing director... is an avid fan of guarana, an ingredient of many smart drinks. It is a gentle stimulant extracted from the seed of a vine in the Amazon jungle, now cultivated commercially. The difference between guarana-enhanced drinks and a cup of coffee is simply a matter of timing... "Guarana is similar to caffeine chemically, but not identical... A short black will give you a rush within 15 minutes... With guarana, the hit is spread over a longer period. It's a good substitute for people who can't cope with coffee but want an energy lift." [Someone] who... serves the young club crowd until midnight on Fridays... believes smart drinks provide a good alternative to alcohol. "A lot of kids don't drink alcohol: they drink Red Bull. It's cool to be right into health, so they go out dancing on Red Bull and Breeze and Viper and all those things. I'd like to think it's a growing thing. Here at night, the ugly ones are the drunks." The goodies jammed into smart drinks vary considerably. Jolt Cola, which arrived here in February 1996, has simply twice the caffeine of your regular caffeinated soft drink... OTHERS such as Red Eye and Red Bull are also spiked with B vitamins – rather like Berocca tablets... Some, like X Blaster, contain vitamins, amino acids, and taurine (which has an effect on blood sugar levels similar to insulin). This drink also contains something called 1-Phenylalanine, which is reputedly effective against depression and helps control weight... H2ON, a caffeinated bottled water... is becoming big in the U[S]. Meanwhile, my kids are back from school. I ask them if Viper made a difference to their day. The 10-year-old says: "I made me do... things I wouldn't normally do – like jump down steps [and hurt my ankles]." The 12-year-old reports: "It made me talk a lot. I could think of things to say." As for me, I can only say that my day felt strangely different. So what's the catch? Maybe these drinks are addictive – I don't know. They're certainly potent stuff.

...A heated debate is brewing over a range of potent... iceblocks that critics fear is bound for N[Z]. The drinks on a stick, with names such as Spiked Ice (vodka and raspberry), contain between 4.5... and 8[%] alcohol. They sparked an uproar last June when introduced in Britain, where they are sold at off-licences. The... iceblocks have now arrived in A[US]... The Alcoholic Liquor Advisory Council chief executive... said the iceblocks targeted the young... The sale of alcoholic pop drinks – the fastest growing sector of the liquor industry – met similar opposition in N[Z]. But the manufacturers rejected accusations that the drinks were pitched at underage drinkers.

...The former principal youth court judge... yesterday attacked liquor companies for using "alcopop" drinks to entice young people to drink alcohol. The explosion of alcoholic sodas on to the N[Z] market was a blatant attempt to counter the declining consumption of alcohol in this country, [the judge] said... "Most of these products were designed to fill a gap, to encourage a new clientele, particularly young [gals], and to create an image of rebellion and coolness among young people... The products are generally very sweet and brightly coloured, some come in packaging... such as a test tube. A number of brands have used cartoon characters or violent anti-social imagery..." One was packaged in a container resembling a hand grenade... Most of the products have an alcohol content ranging between 4 and 6[%]. Bottled beer tends to range between 4 and 5[%]. While these drinks were clearly targeted at young people... very little was known about which age groups were actually consuming them in N[Z]. However, researchers in Scotland discovered "alcopops" were most popular with young people aged between 13 and 16. A recent study in Britain found 87[%] of girls aged between 15 to 16 had tried alcopops and 84[%] of boys.

...N[Z] has become a dumping ground for a alcoholic drink banned in Great Britain for its inappropriate labelling... Hoopers Hooch... is being sold in... [NZ] for around \$5... in three forms: alcoholic lemonade, alcoholic orange drink and alcoholic blackcurrant drink. All the drinks... contain 4.7[% alcohol and]... have cartoon labels... Some British pubs are now being refused liquor licence renewals if they sell alcopops.

...The Alcohol Advisory Council... admitted yesterday that it was wrong in saying a week ago that the alcoholic drink “Hooper’s Hooch” had been banned in Britain... Alac said: “The product... was not banned in Britain and the labelling was changed voluntarily by the manufacturer.”

...Some liquor companies... voluntarily agreed to tighten controls on the naming, packaging and marketing of “alcopops” after controversy over their appeal to underage drinkers. The[y won’t]... cover “alcopop” drinks already on the N[Z] market, but any new products would have to comply.

...The alcohol industry is working on a voluntary code that will prevent under-age drinkers being bombarded with gimmicky promotions and packaging. The... A[lac] chief executive... said [it] had broad agreement from the industry that something needed to be done... The... Minister of Youth Affairs... was keen to see the industry sign a voluntary code and... urged it to resist the introduction of alcoholic iceblocks. “It is entirely inappropriate and irresponsible to market alcoholic products that deliberately target young people.” The chief executive of the Distilled Spirits Association... said it already had its own code to monitor marketing and packaging and would talk to... [Alac] about a broader voluntary code. The association covers manufacturers and distributors of liquor and spirits. The executive director of the Beer, Wine and Spirits Council... was more cautious, however... sa[ying] products such as alcopops involved a very small section of the industry, and [the director] did not want to see everyone bound by a restrictive code... [By the way, on this day in 1920, prohibition was] introduced in the U[S].

...Today in history... 1933 – Prohibition ends in US, making sale of alcohol legal again.

...A Mexican police[officer] yesterday killed... Sabino Segura Galan, aged 26... who had refused to be arrested for drinking a beer in public... “It was crazy. The police[officer] got angry and shot him in the neck,” said one witness. [In local news, ‘Wellington police are paying two youths an out-of-court settlement after their bottle of vodka and two cans of beer were illegally confiscated, and one was allegedly told to “sit like a dog.” Each youth received a \$200 infringement fee for drinking alcohol in a public place. Police dropped the charges when the youths sought a court hearing.’]

...Wellington police sa[y they are]... investigating one incident involving unruly behaviour in their police bar, but other claims that it regularly played host to violent drinking games were unfounded. The *Evening Post*... reported that some officers had kicked and punched intoxicated colleagues... in a room next to the bar on the fourth floor of the Wellington Central police station after beer-skulling sessions. In some cases they had been left with rib and face injuries... [P]olice were interviewing three constables allegedly involved... If the allegations were found to be true, the officers concerned would face disciplinary action, probably involving suspension from the bar... Three other officers were already suspended from the bar because they had been given a special licence to use it for a function. They had then abused the privilege by continuing to drink after the licence expired and leaving the bar in an untidy state... [In international news, mini-bar] fraudsters who refill gin or vodka bottles with tap water need to move fast in Paris. Spy cameras activated when a drink has been removed for 30 seconds have been installed in top hotels.

...A group of thieves is using young girls to sneak top-shelf spirits out of... liquor outlets while older [people] distract staff by quibbling over prices. At least 20 bottle stores have been hit between south Auckland and the North Shore... [Six adults] enter the store and split up, making it hard for shop assistants to keep tabs on them... while girls... aged between 10-18 transfer bottles between themselves before concealing them in baggy clothing... The problem for retailers is they are often not aware what has gone on until video surveillance footage is analysed.

...A North Shore bottle-store owner who allegedly used his teenage son to look out for police while selling alcohol to minors has had his liquor licence revoked. Police and the North Shore District Licensing Agency opposed the renewal of a licence for the Shakespeare Liquor store in Milford on the grounds that the owner... was an unsuitable operator... [D]uring a surveillance operation, set up after complaints from parents, five underage customers were sold alcohol over a 95-minute period. In the first incident, two 17-year-old girls bought a bottle of whisky and a bottle of vodka... without being asked for identification... [O]ne of the underage customers, an 18-year-old youth, bought three dozen bottles of beer and six alcoholic sodas. Two days later the police found the youth among 150 intoxicated young people at a disorderly party in Glenfield where a vehicle had been damaged, two letterboxes smashed and a phone box set on fire.

...Drunken teenagers from wealthy North Shore families are taxing police resources with ugly weekend brawls. Police chiefs will meet in Auckland today to discuss ways to crack down on what they believe is “rich kid” syndrome. They say teenagers from affluent suburbs have more access to money, alcohol and motor vehicles and are left to run riot on the streets or at parties... On Saturday police donned riot helmets and were pelted with bottles during a brawl by 200 youths in Takapuna... [T]he incident tied up the entire North Shore police... Thirty officers, including reinforcements from Otahuhu, were called in to disperse the crowd about 11 pm... The brawl broke out while an alcohol-free concert was being held in the North Shore City Council buildings. When security guards refused entry to those with alcohol, they drank outside on the pavement. Three teenagers were arrested and held in police cells for several hours before being released to their families... The police in Whangarei, Hamilton, Rotorua and Tauranga say such incidents are not major headaches for them... The Region One commander... [agreed that] the problem was worse on the North Shore than elsewhere and [the commander] would meet police chiefs to look at alcohol-related statutes and bylaws. The Minister of Youth Affairs... called last night for a multi-agency approach, saying schools, families and the police needed to be involved. Drunken youths who escaped criminal charges should be accountable and prepared to give something in return, such as community service, [the minister] said. The regional director of the Police Association... said affluent parents were neglecting their responsibilities and having time out from their children by giving them money to disappear for the night. One of the... 18-year-old... organisers of the function... was disappointed that [some] youths had ruined an event held specifically to give them something to do.

...North Shore police struggling to deal with partying “rich kids” say it is inevitable that innocent bystanders will get caught in the police net. Police faced with a potential riot do not have time to sort the real troublemakers from the crowd... “When there are 10 of us and 200 intoxicated teenagers about to riot, we have to show we are in charge, and quickly.” ...[the] comments followed complaints by a North Shore mother over the way police are dealing with the problem... [H]er eldest sons and their friends had been wrongly arrested numerous times on minor charges. “They’ve been walking past or in a crowd but haven’t done anything wrong, yet they’re arrested for disorderly behaviour.” [The mother], who is organising a meeting on the issue, rejected claims of a “rich kid” syndrome on the North Shore. While there were no doubt some troublemakers, it was wrong to tar all North Shore youths – many from modest homes – with the same brush. “The police would be better to try an old-fashioned approach and take the troublemakers home to face their parents.” [The Acting] Senior Sergeant... understood [her] point of view. “Many of these kids don’t see the full picture of what’s going on around them and their parents are understandably horrified by what they are told.” ...North Shore police were called to two teenage incidents at the weekend. One was outside a concert by the American band Tool at the [alcohol-free] North Shore Events Centre in Glenfield, where some youths were drinking. The other was a party in a cave at North Head. The organisers had set up music and lighting systems but left after being told the reserve was out-of-bounds after 10 pm.

...Frustrated... North Shore police... officers intend to boost the number of arrests at out-of-control... teenage... parties and hand out more tickets for underage drinking. The latest “rich kid” brawl came at a 16th birthday party on Saturday night in Lake Rd, Devonport... 20 police wearing riot helmets and carrying shields were pelted with beer bottles when they arrived at 11.30 pm to break up the party of 400 teenagers. In the melee, a police officer suffered a gash on her leg... [T]wo 14-year-olds, were a[mong four teens a]rrested on a variety of offences... “These kids... have had it too good for too long. We want more apprehensions so they know that it has to stop.” Police were targeting liquor outlets and their teenage clients, sending 30 Sale of Liquor Act infringement notices to minors in the past two months... Breaking up teenage parties was labour-intensive and time

consuming... It took 90 minutes for almost every available officer to bust Saturday's riot. "It is a difficult situation because you simply cannot turn up and ask the kids to move on... If there was anything that happened of equal or greater importance we would... not be able to respond."

...Police desperate to curb drunken riots and parties in affluent North Shore streets are backing the launch of Auckland's first photo ID card. The joint venture with the North Shore City Council will see a voluntary proof-of-age card available [in a month]. For a \$10 fee, applicants will be issued with a plastic tamper-proof card bearing a photograph and date of birth verified by police. The card is designed to replace less reliable forms of identification such as driver licences, and would benefit both youths wanting to prove their age at bars, stores and movie theatres, and liquor licensees wanting secure documentation. [A] Senior Sergeant... hoped the rest of Auckland would follow the lead set by the North Shore...

North Shore[']s Mayor... launched... Auckland's first photo ID card... last night... The \$10 voluntary card, available from today, is a joint initiative of the North Shore City Council, the police and the hospitality industry. It will help bar staff to determine the age of patrons...

When I was 17 and looked 14 I accompanied a few friends of similar age to a pub in Adelaide. We ordered a glass of beer each and sat in the lounge bar sipping our drinks and believing we were grown up. A small tremor of fear passed through us when the door swung open and three plainclothes detectives entered. Their eyes scanned past us, however, and they quickly left. They were after bigger fish than under-age drinkers. Late one Saturday afternoon nine years later I scraped up two shillings and went off for a drink or three at a pub in Otahuhu (beer was 8 pence for an 8oz glass in those days.) However, the bar[worker] refused to serve me, saying I was underage. When I explained to him that I was 26 and married with a child, [the bar worker] told me to prove it. The Oirish on me mudder's side flared up and I stormily strode the mile or so to our flat... dug out my birth certificate, and stormed... back to the pub, only to find that the bar[worker] concerned had finished for the day. His replacement served me without a murmur. So there were checks and balances – at the Adelaide pub I was left alone because I wasn't disturbing anybody, and at Otahuhu was refused a drink because the bar[worker] doubted my age. The recent launching of proof-of age cards [o]n... the... North[Shore] is good news for bar[workers] who now more than ever have to police under-age drinkers because the police have too much other work. But I don't like ID cards. We don't have to prove we are not thieves or vandals and nor should we have to prove we are old enough to drink (unless a police officer or bar[worker]... has just cause to question us). More chillingly, proof-of-age cards could be a foot in the door to having ID cards for everybody... If we are not breaking the law, then who or what we are or what we look like is nobody's business. I could take a not-so-wild guess that there are judges, lawyers, ministers of the Crown, [MPs], police officers, and many others from any cross-section of society who have tipped a beer in a hotel while being underage. [Yet] the adage "don't do as I do – do as I say" is fair enough in this instance. Control has to be exercised over young people's drinking.

...Parents... [of] pupils at eight schools... are the target in a campaign to lower alcohol abuse among North Shore teenagers. A "Parent Pack"... will be launched on Friday by the Northcote MP... The \$10,000 pilot project is sponsored by the Safer Communities Council North Shore, the Community Funding Agency and Al[ac]. North Shore teenagers had the second-highest number of alcohol-related school suspensions in the country during the first quarter of the year. Only Marlborough scored slightly higher. The kit aims to raise awareness about the effects of alcohol on teenagers and arm parents with ways to communicate with young people more effectively. It includes guidelines on how to host "safe" parties.

...Arrests of young people at parties out of control are signs of a worsening problem in Hamilton, says a police youth aid officer... [U]ntil recently police called to parties had been able to control situations without making arrests. That has changed over the past two months... Most young people attending parties were aged about 16, but the number about 13 was rising... [■ A] just-released Safer Community Council report on the... Waikato towns of Matamata, Morrinsville and Te Aroha, shows 83[%] of the... 12 to 20-year-olds surveyed got drunk most weekends.

...Police... had to wait for two teenage girls to sober up before... investigat[ing] alleged indecencies... A Paraparaumu patrol picked up the... 14 and... 15[-year-olds at]... 4am yesterday. They said someone had performed an indecent act against them, but both were too drunk to be interviewed.

...Paraparaumu police may follow the North Shore's lead and introduce an 0800 phone line for early warnings of youth parties. Kapiti-Mana police... were considering ways to prevent trouble after a sergeant had his eye socket fractured by a kick at an unruly teen party on Friday night... The Mayor of Kapiti... would meet police this week and ask for a total crackdown on youths drinking in public on the Kapiti coast[, which would involve]... closure of the area's beaches to youth gatherings... The beaches have been closed in previous years[, but only]... during the... Christmas and... New Year... holiday period... In the latest alcohol-related disorder in the area, Wellington riot police were sent to Raumati, 50km north-east of the capital, to deal with about 100 youths pelting Paraparaumu police with bottles... During the incident an officer, trying to make an arrest, fell to the ground and was kicked in the head... The officer... needed treatment at Hutt Hospital's plastic surgery unit... was on sick leave and would be for some time... [H]is wife and family were not shocked at seeing him coming home with a swollen face... The officer... had been assaulted before in his 10-year career and probably would again... "It's now an occupational hazard, unfortunately." ...Three youths were arrested, but the officer's assailant has not been found. Investigations are continuing.

...Auckland police were busy at the weekend coping with teenage parties... Henderson police called in reinforcements with riot gear after youths threw bottles and kicked police cars... [outside a] party in a hall... About 30 officers spent two hours breaking it up. One officer had a bottle thrown at his face and could have been seriously injured if not for his riot helmet... Twelve people were arrested... Police closed West Coast Rd after bottle throwers attacked passing cars. Bottles were also thrown at police on the North Shore after they were called by a home owner, wanting help after gatecrashers turned up to his party... [North Shore p]olice arrested eight youths after a party got out of control in Torbay, earlier on Saturday night.

...['North Shore police officers had to dodge a barrage of beer bottles on Friday night as they cleared about 250 people – including drunk 14-year-olds – from a party that got out of hand in Target Rd, Glenfield. As the crowd, some of whom had spilled into the grounds of Target Rd Primary School, was dispersing, officers found a guy in his 20s lying in the driveway with a stab wound to the stomach. His injury was not life-threatening. Frustrated police would now reactivate last year's scheme to send undercover officers to parties. Other officers would visit gatherings early in the evening to offer advice'...

'Keeping Waitakere neighbourhoods trouble-free these days takes more than a few baton-wielding police officers. The parties are bigger, the trouble-makers are smarter and the chances for violence are growing. In order to pinpoint those at the centre of the trouble, police are constantly experimenting with new methods of catching them out. In certain situations over the past six months, plainclothes officers have been circulating in the crowd while uniformed police move in, watching individuals closely. Lately, cameras have also been explored along with other new equipment and new directions in staff training. Police have also been working from the other end, trying to prevent parties getting to the stage where force is required. For instance, over the summer there was a spate of organised parties advertised on the radio, which enticed larger crowds than usual. The first method of attack is sending Youth Aid officers to see party organisers and encourage them to call the police early. The police insist they are not trying to stop parties'...

A 'Senior Sergeant of the Henderson police says they want west Auckland party-holders to include them in their plans so they can stamp out loutish behaviour. "We respect the right of young people and everybody else to hold parties but we want to help them be responsible." The senior sergeant has set up a party register and wants organisers to phone in with as much information about their event as possible. If the parties are for youngsters police also want to know if parents are going to be present and if not, how they can be contacted. Organisers can then ask police to drive past the party location and make sure everything is running smoothly. Police were called to disperse a mob of around 300 teenagers who gatecrashed a party in Louise Place, Massey, last weekend. Six people were arrested and the party was closed down. The party-list project is successfully used on the North Shore and overseas.' In related news, 'two towns – Paeroa and Te Kuiti – have introduced curfews for teenagers to stop them wandering the streets at night.'

... 'Retailers, town leaders and the Police Association have rallied against an attempt to curb youth curfews. Their concern follows a Ministry of Youth Affairs approach to the police to develop guidelines for policing unsupervised young people roaming the streets at night. The ministry's national policy analyst said there were fears that the police approach was a "bit heavy-handed and we wanted to clarify the way they were dealing with young people out and about after dark." The guidelines recommend that the police consult widely schools and community groups before sending out patrols to remove youngsters from the streets. The police in Te Kuiti and Paeroa already have programmes that limit the nocturnal activities of their young people. The Auckland Youth Law Project solicitor, whose office was involved in drafting the guidelines, said the curfew in Te Kuiti was an abuse of young people's rights. The YLP wanted to tighten police training on the Bill of Rights, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and relevant case law. However, suggestions that the curfews be curbed have met with outrage from townspeople concerned that any changes will lead to an increase in petty crime, street gangs and alcohol abuse. A Te Kuiti dairy owner said the curfew had helped to end harassment by gangs of youths and brought a decrease in crime. "People who were crying foul about the scheme needed to come and live in Te Kuiti to see how vital it was to community crime control."

... 'The PM weighed in yesterday behind small-town leaders battling a bid by civil libertarians to curtail youth curfews. Police-imposed curfews in places such as the PM's home town of Te Kuiti are under attack from the Ministry of Youth Affairs as too heavy-handed, and others have questioned their legality. The Police Association defends them as a vital crimebusting tool but police chiefs will be under pressure next month when given ministry-sponsored guidelines for dealing with youngsters roaming streets at night. The PM has, meanwhile, defended the curfews and declared last night it had no doubt that the police were enforcing them within the law. Police in Paeroa, Nelson and Levin also have programmes limiting the nocturnal activities of youngsters, and Whakatane intends introducing similar controls this week.' ● About '300 cities across the US have teenage curfews.'

... The middle class, if I may speak of class, is an interesting place to grow up in. It has a thousand things you need but nothing you really want, especially when you're a teenager... To young, biased minds, the middle class' chief offerings are an obsession with safety, uniformity, tidy lawns and unhappiness. You'd rather die. Exposed during the 80s and 90s to movies, websites and videos which tell you action, adrenalin and the realisation of your unique personality and dreams are life's only true grails, suburban life strikes you as the end. In fact, it makes you sick. I imagine this is why middle-class teenagers have recently been holding all-night drunken parties and rounding things off with riots. It's inexcusable, but as any ex-teenage wise-ass knows, it's on the cards from the moment you're born. The problems work in fatal combination. To begin with, teenagers today are expected to loathe their parents' lives, preferably in front of them... Boring old everyday life just seems too much to bear. All this is made worse by the simple fact that many senior members of the middle class don't seem to like their lives. Around the place in my teens there was partner-swapping, financial blowouts, uppers, downers and endless visits to the shrink. With our movie-inspired dreams of strength and wit, we were revolted. It's cruel, but it's true. Kids pick up on parental frustrations and freak-outs and regard them as loathsome weaknesses... The middle-class feels terribly guilty about its kids... I'm not really sure why... Discipline is the key, but it needs to come from people who respect themselves. God only knows where you find them... [□ 90%] of 9-year-old Kiwi children have tasted alcohol. For many it was just a sip, but 25[%] reported drinking on their own, according to a 1994 Dunedin study. The most recent national study on drinking habits, carried out in 1995 by the Alcohol and Public Health Research Unit, found that one in ten 14- and 15-year-old... and almost a quarter of 16- and 17-year-old [boy]s drank six or more drinks on a single occasion at least once a week. A third of... [teenage girls] are drunk at least once a month.

... Teenagers are hitting the bottle earlier and harder than ever before... Another worry was that parents seemed to be buckling under growing pressure from their children to provide alcohol at parties... says the chief executive of the Al[ac]... By the council's criteria, one third of 14-to-18-year-olds surveyed are heavy drinkers who "binge" on more than five drinks in one sitting. Nearly a quarter have drunk "rocket fuel" – potent cocktails of several kinds of drinks – although beer is still the most popular drink. Almost half the... youths surveyed nationally have vomited after drinking and more than a third have had memory blackouts. Many reported that drinking sessions led to unhappy sexual encounters, aggressive behaviour and brushes with the law... Overseas research showed that lowering the drinking age simply led to more teenage drinking...

['In the '70s the US lowered its drinking age to 18. It was believed then that if you could fight and die for your country you could drink, but it didn't take long before the drinking age was returned to 21. "When the drinking age was lowered there was a significant increase in alcohol related problems and a significant increase in the total amount of alcohol consumed by young people".]

... The... 26-year-old... Minister of Youth Affairs... yesterday came out in support of lowering the drinking age to 18. "Going through my teens I saw situations where my peers had access to alcohol and were drinking in unsafe environments, on the street and in parks or whatever... It would be much better if young people could drink in a controlled environment." ... In particular, [the minister] supported... her... ministry's view that the drinking age should be fixed at 18 without exemptions; a form of national identification should be introduced, preferably including a photograph; a zero alcohol limit should be set for learner drivers; and any changes in the law should be delayed until a review of driver licensing was done. The minister also supported the ministry's view that 18-year-olds were treated as adults in many aspects of their lives such as voting and joining the armed forces, and should be allowed to make decisions about drinking. With the present drinking exemptions – the law allows for 18 and 19-year-olds to drink in pubs if they have a meal or are with a parent or their spouse aged 20 or over – ... it was hard for hotel workers to enforce the law... An addiction therapist for the Salvation Army's Bridge programme for alcoholics in Auckland... also supported lowering the drinking age... provided young people could produce identification that included their photograph. "Young people who flock together at beach parties or private parties are not really scrutinised by adults. If they go into a more controlled environment their behaviour is more likely to be like those around them,"... The Salvation Army, however, does not support lowering the drinking age. Its submission to the committee... reviewing the liquor laws... calls for a legal minimum age of 20 with no exceptions. The army said young people were more susceptible to the undesirable side-effects of drinking... The police, who maintain that about 80[%] of crime may be alcohol-related, have refused to release their submission.

... The police favour lowering the minimum drinking age on licensed premises to 18... [T]hey argue that it is safer to let young people drink in a controlled environment... The Licensing Trusts Association agrees... In the interests of road safety, however, the Automobile Association favours 20[('in AUS, 9 out of 10 teenage car accidents involve alcohol abuse')]... Other submissions... suggest... youngsters need to be protected from themselves – and if the nation has to adopt a photographic identity card to keep them out, so be it... The Business Roundtable is in favour of making the drinking age as low as 16[– the same age as NZers can 'get married with parental consent (they can get married without consent when 20')]. It believes parents have the prime responsibility for overseeing liquor use... The Minister of Youth Affairs... wants standardised the age at which young people can vote, drink alcohol, buy cigarettes and drive[, etc. Incidentally, the]... minimum age for recruitment into the[NZ] armed forces has been raised from 16 1/2 to 17 [(which is the age NZers can 'get a private pilot's licence' – although they can 'fly solo at 16'). But the]... Government has back-tracked on a decision to raise the school leaving age to 17 next year because the National Qualifications framework will not be ready in time and more work is needed on suitable programmes for students. The... leaving age would remain at 16... Labour's education spokes[person]... said the announcement signalled that the Government was "disorganised, incompetent and completely lacking in the ability to plan properly."

... ['an art tutor at Christchurch girls' school St Margaret's College knows her girls like to party hard, and has come up with a plan to let them do that safely. Students planning a party fill out a form listing the number of guests, where it's held, kick off and finish time. The form is signed by a school representative, police and a guardian. In return, the party organiser gets a pack of goodies – including food and fizzy drink – aimed at keeping boozing to a minimum. The teacher said her idea had been sparked by reports of growing numbers of out-of-control Kelly Brown-style parties. Bored teens with nowhere to go were hooking up by cellphone and gatecrashing parties. Police were being called to break them up, finding kids as young as 14 vomiting on the footpath, houses ransacked and up to 1000 teenagers milling around. The tutor said encouraging kids to "just say no" was naive. "We can't keep telling

kids don't drink. Adults do. What we need to tell teens is that getting rolling drunk every Saturday night is not normal behaviour." Recent surveys showed girls binge drinking was a growing problem. 10% of gals aged 16-24 surveyed drank heavily at least once a week. 4% said they went out weekly aiming to get drunk. "You're young, you're independent, you don't have any responsibilities and you can do what you like," said an 18-year-old Otago university student. "You can handle hangovers better and your body bounces back – it's a big part of socialising too." But alcohol watch groups are warning the growing number of young Kiwi gals taking to the bottle that their binge drinking could cost them their health. "Binge drinking has serious short and long term effects on gals' bodies," the Alac manager said. "It's not sexist, just a fact that gals absorb alcohol faster and it takes longer to get out of their systems." Drunk gals also put themselves at risk of attack or sexual abuse. About 15% of young Kiwi gals say they have been involved in a sexual situation they felt uncomfortable with. "We don't want to alarm young gals, but we do want them to be informed and understand that sometimes heavy drinking has very serious consequences. Lowering the drinking age would probably mean a further increase in underage drinking." Tomorrow is international alcohol abuse awareness day.']

...THE current review of the liquor laws is considering widening access to alcohol. This could be achieved by lowering the drinking age, allowing sale of liquor at supermarkets and off-licences on Sundays (as well as full strength beer in supermarkets), extending the hours licensed premises can operate and allowing Sunday trading in hotels and taverns. Support for these proposals shows a confluence of libertarian views and capitalist self-interest... The Business Roundtable... says youth drinking should be a parental responsibility and paints a rosy picture of parents inducting their offspring into civilised drinking habits. This middle class idyll bears little resemblance to observations from my own childhood. I remember being shocked at seeing a tanked-up family friend teaching his eight-year-old son to drink beer. The boy grew up with a drinking problem[then in] his middle years... blew out his brains. A singularly [guy] way to live and die. Others have questioned why young people shouldn't drink when they can marry, have sex[(plus raise a baby if that is the result of having sex)], and have a drivers' licence. The logic behind this argument evades me. If it is that all social and legal rights should be received when the first one is allowed, then we would confer drinking rights at the age a young person can drive – at 15. It is hard to see the rationale that young people should be able to drink, if they can drive. The late age at which the public purchase of alcohol is allowed is a recognition of the social damage alcohol can cause in the hands of young people who lack the judgment to see the consequences of their actions... Young [NZ guys] are already the heaviest of all drinkers and they are the most likely to have alcohol-related problems. A third of the heaviest drinkers come from the 18-24 age group even though they make up only 9% of the population. A recent survey showed that almost a third of young [guys] said they got drunk at least once a week. It is hard to see the sense in increasing access to alcohol. Changes to the Sale of Liquor Act in 1989 to allow alcohol in supermarkets and 24 hour licences – along with television advertising of products – have led to greater late night drinking and a high proportion of youth drinking in licensed premises and buying alcohol from off-licences. A 1995 national survey found that one-third of under-age youth had managed to buy alcohol to take away and had drunk in pubs. Pubs and bars, far from being the safe drinking environments apologists claim them to be – are a focal point for alcohol related incidents involving the police... The public has shown great concern at the death of a sixteen-year-old athlete... [who] had been drinking at Auckland's Globe Tavern... Despite their liking for beer... a... survey by the Alcohol and Public Health Research Unit showed that 80% of all [guys] and even 75% of young heavy-drinking [guys] did not want alcohol outlets to be increased. A clear majority did not want drinking hours increased. [Gals] were almost universally opposed to it.

...One of the[liquor law review] committee's jobs is to see whether the hospitality industry can make its premises safer drinking places... [P]olice favour cancelling the licence of premises where unsafe drinking practices are promoted or permitted: "bladder busters", "happy hours"... deals which offer two drinks for the price of one... and [cheap or 'free drinks for gals']... The existing law makes it an offence to serve liquor to someone who is intoxicated or – in most cases – even to allow them to remain on the premises. The police say some establishments brush the issue aside "because they suggest it is too difficult to know when someone is drunk." ...Many staff have difficulty deciding what "intoxication" is – the courts have ruled that it is "some degree less than absolute capacity from drunkenness" – and the Government has asked for a definition. The... ALAC... says it varies according to a drinker's gender and genes. Drinking history, nutrition and state of health as well as the circumstances in which the drinking occurs "are all complicating factors." ALAC emphasises what is called "host responsibility" – provision of low-alcohol or non-alcohol alternatives and food... and ensuring there is alternative transport to driving after drinking. [Some licensed premises offer free soft drinks to 'designated drivers']... Getting the safe drinking message across to the liquor industry is one thing; making drinkers listen is quite another. The Government has asked the committee to consider whether health warning labels should be required on liquor containers – even with liquor commercials on radio and television. The message it is getting, particularly from government advisers, is that they will not be heeded. Even ALAC – which is responsible for seeing that millions of dollars of moderation messages are aired – advises that warnings on containers are unlikely to be effective. "Labels which... tell people not to do something they may enjoy do not assist in making informed decisions." The Ministry of Commerce points out that by the time much alcohol reaches eye level it is in a glass, and spirits are usually diluted with mixers. The Salvation Army put the warning label proposal to some of its... more than 800... clients... [who] attend its Bridge programme... for... [people] who have alcohol... problems... More than half said they would drink less if warned about the possible dangers – but 84[%] of them smoked tobacco. "It seems hard to believe that people who do not heed the warning on products which are detrimental to health would pay a great deal of attention to warnings on products which may be detrimental," says the army's submission... Both ALAC and the... Ministry of Health... favour putting what is known as "standard drinks" labelling on liquor containers: each can or bottle would be defined in terms of the number of standard drinks – each of 10gm of pure alcohol – it contained. That has been the law in A[US] since late 1995, where health warnings were rejected. Trans Tasman food labelling is now being harmonised through the A[US NZ] Food Authority, and is therefore inevitable here, anyway. Indeed, many A[US]n liquor containers coming in already declare it as do containers of N[Z]-made liquor being exported to A[US]. Regardless, the Ministry of Transport doubts its usefulness: "Drinkers might find it difficult to make accurate informed judgements about how much alcohol they can actually [safely] consume," it says... The television companies point out that they are required, as part of the liquor commercials, to run without charge moderation messages: \$1.1 million worth by TV3 in the past two years, and \$3.2 million by TVNZ in the [pa]st nine months...

Pedestrians were disconcerted when George Smith... drove his taxi along the pavement before crunching into a shop on Bond St, London. [Smith had] drunk three glasses of beer and was fined £1. That was a truly memorable escapade because it took place 100 years ago, in 1897, and made Smith the world's first convicted drunk driver. Convictions for the offence have soared recently in N[Z] ('of the 11.25 million persons arrested in the US during 1990, the largest number was for driving while intoxicated – 1.391 million; the 3rd largest number – 717,000 – was for drunkenness'). The 1981 total was 12,583 but the latest available, for 1995, was 25,505. Booze featured that year in 36% of fatal road crashes. TV campaigns now seem to be cutting the drink-drive carnage but, even so, official attitudes here are more relaxed than overseas. For instance, anyone... who causes death by dangerous driving, under a law being planned in India, will risk execution. [□ 'A 44-year-old Chinese immigrant who accidentally drove into a teenage boy was attacked by a mob of party gatecrashers who had already turned a birthday celebration into a brawl. The force of the crash threw the boy through the air and into the path of another car, whose driver ran him over then drove off. The first driver stopped to help the boy. The mob then attacked – punching him, kicking him and smashing a bottle over his head. His car was stolen during the beating. "I thought I was going to die. Five more minutes and I could have." One party-goer came to his aid and tried to fight off the mob, but was dragged away so the beating could continue. The driver was saved by the police, responding at 10pm to calls from the host's parents and neighbours concerned by the series of fights that had broken out on Asquith Ave in Mt Albert on Saturday after the party was ended by the schoolgirl's parents half-an-hour before. The boy was last night in a stable condition at Auckland hospital.']

...A Surfers Paradise hotel has been ordered to pay compensation to a patron who jumped in front of a car after the hotel's staff had served him while [the patron] was drunk... The judge found that publicans were negligent if they continued to serve alcohol to a drunk if it was reasonably foreseeable that to do so endangered their safety... [T]he Queensland Supreme Court [estimated that the patron was 45%] responsible for the accident and adjusted the amount... awarded him from \$A504,654... down to \$A277,560. [The court] found the hotel, which is in liquidation, was 25[%] responsible and should pay more than \$A126,000. The driver of the car was ordered to pay the remaining amount... [The patron], who formerly worked as a dredge operator, was left with a permanent brain injury which affects his personality and results in behavioural problems.

...The A[LAC] believes intoxicated boaties should face the same laws as drink-drivers... At present... the... Maritime Safety Authority... could prosecute intoxicated boaties but on the grounds of reckless navigation rather than being drunk... The A[LAC] chief executive... said boaties were not tested for alcohol, even after an accident. "If people are intoxicated on boats and they are putting other people's lives at risk, let alone their own, I think they should expect the same laws to apply,"... [An Aucklander], aged 58... drowned early on Sunday after falling into the Tamaki Estuary while getting into a dinghy from his yacht moored at Panmure. Police said [the deceased] and his wife... had been drinking wine into the early hours of the morning when [the husband] decided to go ashore... [T]he incident illustrated again the dangers of people mixing alcohol with boating... In January, the authority director... called for random breath-testing of boaties. The recommendation followed release of a report blaming alcohol and speed for a crash which killed two teenagers in the Bay of Islands... [last September. The MSA's duty] manager... agreed there was a case for alcohol-testing after accidents... "But we... believe in education not legislation..." ...[By the way, a]n Alcoholics Anonymous member who was found to be nearly three times over the legal drink-drive limit after becoming addicted to an alcoholic mouthwash was yesterday banned from driving for two years. [The AA member], aged 59, escaped a ban in November last year after telling magistrates [about having been unaware that] Listerine contained alcohol, but reappeared yesterday after the High Court ruled the JPs' original decision was "perverse."

...A former undercover police officer had drink-driving and reckless driving charges dropped after his chief argued the offences were committed in the line of duty. The Wellington [officer], who does not want to be named, [said it]... disagreed with the principles of the undercover programme – including the fact that [it] escaped conviction for a... wild chase through city streets... on a Triumph motorbike... "I was going for it. Neither myself nor the pillion passenger on the back of the bike were wearing crash helmets. It's lucky I didn't kill myself or anyone else."

...Two [drunks] who abandoned an injured friend... after a... head-on... [collision between their Mazda] RX7 and a Ford Telstar... are still on the run. The driver and passenger of the... RX7 abused members of the public trying to tend the injured... They tried to rip out the stereo and tear the number plates off their car and also attempted to conceal a large amount of alcohol in the back of the RX7. A keg of beer was rolled into a paddock where the pair also tossed whisky bottles... then jumped into a getaway car to flee the crash scene in South Auckland... The [Telstar's driver] and a passenger from the RX7 were eventually flown to Middlemore Hospital with serious injuries... [■ The show] *Fatal Denial* [screening on TV One, at 8pm on Tuesday...],... examines... three cases of road carnage caused by drunk drivers. The tales of horror are told by survivors, families of victims, eye witnesses and rescue personnel. All Black front-rowers aren't known for being sensitive, but... [the hulking] Hurricane and All Black prop [who co-hosted the 90 minute documentary]... says... *Fatal Denial*... has made him even more concerned for the road safety of his daughter... 9, and sons [aged] 2, and... 11 months... "And it's not just at night. If people have been up late drinking, they can get up early and drive, and still be affected."

...Convicted drunk drivers... in Sweden... [will] have an alcohol sensor fitted to their cars. They have to blow into a mouthpiece before switching on and any trace of booze automatically blocks the ignition.

...[a] Swedish exchange student who died near Methven last month had an alcohol level... [over 5] times the limit for driving... Mr Ejire, aged 23, was found dead in the rear seat of a car... Mr Ejire had been showing off... [at] a party... the night before... bragging about being a Viking... [who] could hold his liquor... About 2 am Mr Ejire fell asleep... A... fellow exchange student... estimated his friend had drunk... a... litre bottle of vodka... Ashburton[']s coroner... found Mr Ejire... died from an asphyxial coma caused by acute alcohol intoxication combined with the inhalation of vomit.

...[Britain is considering lowering the drink-driving limit to the equivalent of one pint of beer. The new limit would cut the permitted level of alcohol from 80mg to 50mg per 100ml of blood, bringing Britain into line with a new Europe-wide limit. The brewing industry said the new limit could force as many as 5000 pubs across the country to close because of insufficient business. But the British Medical Association, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the Automobile Association welcomed the move.] In local news,] **Auckland teenagers will be targeted in a drink-drive prevention programme in the next five weeks...** While the overall road toll dropped in 1996, the toll for people aged 15 to 19 increased, from 82 in 1995 to 100... The... "One More for the Road" programme, piloted last year, combines a hard-hitting play with a kit for classrooms. It will tour 25... secondary schools... The project co-ordinator... said... "Teenagers take risks. What we're trying to say to them is beware of the consequences."

...*Writing's on the wall for drinkers...* THERE will be no getting away from the latest anti-drink-driving campaign – hard-hitting posters are being put up on toilet walls in bars, schools and sports clubs... The "convenience advertising" is the brainchild of Auckland's road safety co-ordinator... who adapted overseas research for the campaign. "It showed the proximity of the message to the target had a huge impact – it's a bit like lollies being at the height of children in supermarket trolleys. So, applying a bit of lateral thinking, I realised you can't avoid going to the toilet when you've been drinking... And it's often the last place people might be before they leave a bar or sports club." ...The set of 10 posters... include a poster of a bag of blood which asks the question "Need another pint tonight?", and a map of N[Z] covered in red dots representing road fatalities.

...[a brewery] boss... is under attack for... linking the drink-driving campaign to a fall in his company's profits... The Lion Nathan chief executive made the comments at a news conference to announce a 20.8[%] slump in profit to \$72.2 million for the six months to February, and a 6[%] overall decline in the N[Z] beer market... Young people, [the chief executive (r:p604, ln11)] said, were price conscious and chose to use other things to stimulate themselves as there was no testing for driving under the influence of drugs, other than alcohol... [T]he chief executive of the A[LAC said the]... comments were not supported by the facts. "I find it very hard to believe that there will be sufficient people moving away from alcohol to illicit drugs or other drugs on the grounds that they won't be detected that would cause a drop in consumption in the magnitude of 6[%], which is a very large amount indeed in terms of volume." ...Blaming the reduction on television advertising was... "simplistic"...

Alcohol advertising on television tempts people with alcohol problems to return to drinking, a study shows. Auckland University research recently published in the New York journal *Contemporary Drug Problems* [also] shows that... the liquor industry pitched advertisements at people who over-indulged, such as the young... [R]esearch, by a New York economist, says the banning of all alcohol advertising would save between 5000 and 10,000 lives... each year... in the... [US. However, NZ] police did not support a complete ban on alcohol advertising because there were benefits... The A[LAC] agreed. Alcohol consumption and alcohol-associated road death totals were down [in NZ] while alcohol advertising had increased, it said.

...A stag party advertisement in a liquor trade publication encourages people to drink too much, says the Advertising Standards Complaints Appeal Board. The advertisement... breached the liquor advertising code by suggesting liquor would cause a significant change of mood. The board also said it was not protected because of the type of publication it appeared in. The advertisement included the statement: "Of course you can't have a bloke dropping by without cracking a couple of Lion Browns, so by the end of the evening this guy's a bit emotional... and offending most of your wife's relatives." In its ruling, the board said the advertisement seemed to give special licence for publicans to continue serving people at stag night celebrations, regardless of how much alcohol they had consumed.

...[I'm not in the first flush of youth. But the passage of time doesn't trouble me, for though my hair has fallen, wisdom has sprouted in its place. So when Sam rang this week to invite me to a stag party, it was wisdom which whispered two words in my ear. "No thanks," said wisdom. It's not that I

disapprove of stag parties. In my time I have staggered, and I like to think I staggered well. I can remember a stag party that began in the back of a bus, moved on to the roof of a cathedral and ended in custody. I can also remember several that I can't remember. Besides, a stag party is a ritual and we need rituals. Before a Serengeti guy can become a warrior and take a wife, it has to slay a lion with his bare hands. In our suburban tribe, a guy may not marry until it has done much the same to his liver. But in middle age I've found that the aftermath of a stag party hurts more than it used to, and lasts longer. On the list of preferred lifestyle choices these days, a hangover ranks below death and only marginally above watching breakfast TV. Which is why wisdom said no. "But," said Sam, "this is no ordinary stag party. We're going to do things." "Do things?" "Fun things," said Sam. "Count me in," I said. "Tut," said wisdom in my ear, "you're going to regret this." "I'm old enough to look after myself," I said. Wisdom was proved right, I was proved wrong. Speaking of being wrong, the recent furore over my comments about the Government's drink-driving campaigns failed to focus on the key point. I am not opposed to such campaigns. Lion Nathan has supported them from the outset plus a host of other responsible drinking measures... [But surely] we should concentrate on those who break the law, not terrorise those who don't. The fact is the law does allow you to have a drink and then drive. The law does not allow you to drive when you are over the legal limit. Yet the random breath-testing and advertising campaigns are having such an impact many [NZers] have stopped drinking completely when they are driving... A 1995 study of... 4000 people by the University of Auckland showed a third were drinking less or had stopped altogether compared to the previous year. The prime reason they gave for cutting back was not, as you might expect, health and fitness but the risk of being caught by random breath testing. What does it say about our nation that law-abiding citizens can be so intimidated? ...The... study showed 87[%] of the adult population drink alcohol and their average consumption is nine drinks a week for [guys] and three for [gals] – well below recommended health guidelines. Furthermore, international research shows N[Z]'s per capita alcohol consumption is considerably less than other [First World] countries... Among... the [OECD] we're 23rd. Moderate consumption of alcohol has been shown to be beneficial to health. At least six independent overseas studies conducted in the 1980s and 1990s found that while heavy drinking boosted the risk of death, the lowest risk was among moderate drinkers, not non-drinkers. These studies support my view that... the... problem in N[Z] is not the use of alcohol but its misuse.

...DRINKING... could be good for you... [S]tudies, published in the latest issue of *Annals of Internal Medicine*, found that moderate alcohol consumption can decrease the risk of angina as well as heart attacks... The... studies... also found [that guys] who had two or more drinks per day were more likely to die from cancer, but [guys] who had between two and six drinks per week had a lower total death rate. [■ 'A 17-year study by researchers at the Institute of Preventative Oncology in Tokyo found people who regularly drank alcohol were 4 times at risk than teetotallers of developing cancer of the sigmoid colon, part of the large intestine, and daily beer drinkers were 12 times more likely to develop cancer of the colon than non-drinkers.']

...Germans are slowly abandoning the biergarten and the bar as a desire for healthier living prompts many to turn their backs on strong beers and hard liquor, sales figures show. Brau und Brunnen, Germany's largest maker of beers and soft drinks, said it expects to report its third loss in a row this year. The drinks maker posted a net loss of 228.9 million Deutschmarks... last year. In the five months to the end of May, the company reported a 3[%] decline in beer production to 3.78 million hectolitres... Statistics published by the Ifo Economics Institute show that in 1996 Germans drank 131.7 litres of beer and 6.3 litres of spirits. This translates to a 6 litre drop in beer consumption and a 2 litre decline in spirits intake from a year earlier... Germany's awakened health consciousness has led a boom in softer alcoholic drinks... "In our stores we have seen a definite trend towards light mixed drinks layered with tequila or vodka."

... "The urge to drink is gone – you just don't think of alcohol any more," says... an alcoholic who has been dry for three years. A new drug played a major role in his recovery. Just as methadone can help heroin addicts come off the needle, the new drug acamprosat (trade name Campral) can curb alcoholics' dependence on drink, scientists say. In Germany, where the drug has been on the market for a year and is prescribed by many doctors in their efforts to cure the 2.5 million alcoholics in the country, its therapeutic effects are disputed. Many self-help groups still believe the only way to really overcome alcoholic dependence is without drugs... Treatment with Campral in tablet form may last for up to a year. The manufacturer says the drug... is not addictive in itself, nor does it have any narcotic effects. It is known to have occasional gastro-intestinal side-effects and to interfere slightly with sexual performance. German health insurance companies have no hesitation in covering patients for Campral treatment (the daily dose costs the equivalent of around \$5)... The German economy suffers losses estimated at \$NZ69 billion a year because of alcohol-related problems. "Failing to treat alcoholics costs the health insurances far more in the long run,"...

A Dutch alcoholic... aged 37... has appeared in court on drunkenness and vagrancy charges for the 170th time, setting a new record, police said.

...SEVERE addiction to drink sent rock 'n' roll multi-millionaire Brian Connolly – famed for his wild antics and daringly effete image – slithering to destitution... [and, ultimately, his death when] aged 47... "Booze"... Connolly... readily... admitted, "was my downfall." It destroyed his health – giving him heart problems and the shaking demeanour of a far older [person] – and forced him to live on [the] unemployment benefit in public housing. [Connolly had] already sold his possessions when unable to pay a tax bill of more than \$3 million. His wife [and] mother of his two daughters, divorced him. Yet [Connolly] had enjoyed international adulation as the charismatic... lead singer... of the four-strong Sweet, the outrageously glam and glitter group, which soared to fame in the early 1970s.

...In the 1970s... a... [researcher] from the University of California San Diego School of Medicine's psychiatry department... began a... [study which has] revealed alcoholism runs in families, passed down through a genetic link, much like heart disease or diabetes... [The] study of 450 children of alcoholics, which is still continuing... showed the chances were high – sons had a 40% likelihood of developing alcohol dependence. Daughter's had a 20% chance of following in mum's bleary-eyed footsteps. "Identical twins of alcoholics... adopted children – even if they have been raised in a booze-free environment – all these things points to genetics being involved."

...researchers believe they are on the brink of identifying a group of genes that pass on a hereditary liking for alcohol, offering the ultimate excuse for families such as the Kennedy clan, who claim they cannot help their harmful binges because they were born drunks... [E]ight or nine members of the 28 Kennedy cousins were involved in Alcoholics Anonymous... meetings daily. "It's easier to get an AA meeting together at the family compound than a touch-football team," [one]... son of the late Robert Kennedy... said... The breakthrough has been provided by a strain of mice in laboratories at Pennsylvania State University which prefer to drink 10% alcohol rather than water... [A] behavioural scientist working with the boozy... mice, said: "Whether alcoholics are born or made is a touchy subject. There is certainly a predisposition to develop alcoholism but I think you inherit the predisposition and not the alcoholism." ...The danger of passing on a fondness for alcohol is a big fear for many drinkers... [A former British] footballer who has now combined business with pleasure by opening a wine-exporting business, has expressed concern that his alcoholism might be passed on to his son... [But the 16-year-old son] said, "I'll never drink. Why would you want to kill yourself?"

...Beer bingeing can cause more than a painful hangover, Finnish doctors have found – it can kill... The results of the study suggest that a heavy intake of beer... six or more bottles per session... could increase heart attacks... among middle-aged... [guys] by triggering irregular heart beats or blood clots... [Unfortunately, a] Pacific Island host is considered mean if the guests do not leave drunk, says a report prepared for the A[LAC]. The report... says binge drinking is common in Pacific Island communities because generosity was an important cultural concept... Some communities revealed that there was nothing worse than the alcohol running out... [at] a social function... Binge drinking... has not always been practised and the host's role is a tradition from ritual drinking or kava ceremonies. But a North Health senior clinical adviser and special projects manager... criticised the findings, saying the majority of Pacific Islanders in... [NZ – 53% according to] figures from a 1993 survey... [–] never used alcohol.

...[a gal] died in a police cell and another is in a serious condition... in Nelson Hospital... after a drinking binge in... Nelson yesterday morning... They had been detained after an incident near the Maitai River in the city... The cause of Lesley Moses' death was unknown "at this stage."

...[a youth] was killed by a freight train at the Papakura railway station about 2 am yesterday... Counties-Manukau police, said the [victim], whose name had not been released last night, had been seen drinking earlier with friends... [The victim] was either hooked up by, or fell under, the train. ['Add his name to the list of dozens of young NZers who find death in a bottle each year – such as Jeremy McKenzie, a 17-year-old who shared 2 1/2 casks (approximately 7.5 litres) of wine with a friend. Eventually the friend fell asleep. The friend awoke the next morning to see Jeremy's face was blue and his body was cold. Doctors say the alcohol raced through his bloodstream, reached his brain and shut down the centres that control breathing and heart rate.'

... 'the brain is protected from many chemicals but alcohol molecules are so small that they pass through the protection, switching the brain off by blocking messages passing through it (they also switch off many of the nerves that feel pain). Thousands of years of evolution are dissolved by a few bottles of beer'...

'EVER wondered why people fall over after drinking too much? Research by a leading American cardiologist links falling over to changes in blood pressure. To test the theory, 14 volunteers drank the equivalent of three beers. An hour after each drink, the group was asked to climb into a vacuum chamber that caused the same drop in blood pressure as standing up. Without alcohol, the volunteers' blood pressure corrected itself but after it the pressure didn't recover.' The problem is compounded by the fact that 'alcohol affects the part of our brain that keeps us balanced'...

'How drinking helps the brain An American study has found that moderate drinking may reduce the risk of certain types of stroke and scarring in the core of elderly people's brains. Elderly light drinkers – those who take one to six drinks a week – were found to have less scarring than tee-totalers or moderately heavy drinkers, defined as those who have more than 15 drinks a week. And moderately heavy drinkers were 41% less likely than non-drinkers to have "silent strokes" (lower-level strokes that patients do not notice – they happen when a vessel that delivers blood to the brain becomes blocked, causing brain tissue to die). Much of alcohol's protective effect against strokes is thought to stem from its ability to raise levels of so-called good cholesterol. Alcohol also is known to be a mild blood thinner. That can prevent clots from forming. The bad news is that every drink is associated with greater brain shrinkage – a condition seen in Alzheimer's patients. "It's been clear that alcoholics have shrunken brains," says an instructor at Harvard Medical School. "It was a bit of a surprise that it wasn't just alcoholics." Brain shrinkage, called atrophy, also has been linked to dementia. The instructor said patients should not change their drinking habits based on the study's findings. "More studies have to be done to show if the benefits of alcohol outweigh the risks.""]

...A study of Aussie battlers has thrown doubt on the link between boozing and brain damage... But N[Z] experts have warned that the results from across the Tasman should be treated with caution... [T]he chief executive of the A[LAC], said the study results were at odds with "irrefutable evidence" that brain damage does occur in some people who use alcohol excessively... and... long-term... including a type of alcohol-induced dementia... Researchers from the A[US]n National University in Canberra, and psychiatry colleagues from Sydney, could not find any evidence that life-long consumption of alcohol is related to cognitive functioning... in a group of heavy-drinking [WW2] veterans... The 209[70-year-olds] studied, 178 of whom used alcohol, represented a broad range of alcohol intake. About 40[%]... consumed alcohol amounts recognised as hazardous or harmful, a much higher percentage than has been found among the... population as a whole. The heavier drinkers in the group consumed the equivalent of about 13 drinks a day... [The participants] underwent tests measuring a range of intellectual functions... The participants also had a computerised x-ray scan of their brain, which found there was no difference in brain shrinkage between heavy drinkers and non-drinkers of the same age... [Speaking of shrinkage, a] British chain of pubs yesterday introduced oversized glasses to guarantee drinkers a full pint of beer. The move follows complaints from consumer groups that up to 80[%] of pubs are selling drinkers short by including too much head in a pint measure. The... [new] pint measure... glasses... [are] marked up to a line allowing extra room for the head.

...IN these days of micro-technology, downsizing and diminishing returns, even our bars are shrinking. N[Z], once home to big sprawling bars where big sprawling [guys] consumed big sprawling amounts of draught beer, is now turning into a place full of bars the size of your front room where [guys and gals] with cell phones choose their drinks like they choose their clothes. Well, it's heading that way. The drink-drive laws look like tightening up so much that too much nail polish or aftershave – or both – could push you over the legal line. Great big pubs with great big car parks just don't seem relevant any more in these sophisticated times. Our previous lack of civilisation in drinking can be traced back to the infamous days of the six o'clock swill when drinking on licensed premises was reduced [by 6pm closing legislation ('which was introduced in 1917 as a wartime measure and prevailed until 1967 – when closing time was extended to 10pm, and opening time was changed from 9am to 11am')] [to the primal level of a liquid sprint, necessitating swift service and bars as long as the evening [drinking hours for workers who finished at 5pm] were short. It was a time when drinking was reduced to a physical act and drinking places were no place at all for [the opposite sex], children or sensitive [guys]. Pubs were named after their suburbs or the beer they served and drinking and driving went hand in hand. The six o'clock swill ended, but change was slow in a business where quantity not quality remained the thing. But change has come... The big old boozers are now dinosaurs from an ancient drinking age... It was the 1989 Sale of Liquor Act that catapulted us into the new sophisticated drinking age. Pre-1989, there were about 3500 licences scattered around the country. Now, according to [the executive director of] Dominion Breweries... there might be as many as 13,000... "The old booze barn mentality of people drinking out of jugs has disappeared... People have traded up to better beers, more people are drinking lagers... People are looking to drink a beer that reflects their personality." This last bit, of course, is downright weird. But hardly surprising in a country where we regard television newsreaders as personalities. [The DB executive] seems excited by the new possibilities in... a world where people suddenly see what they swallow as an extension of their personal charisma. The reason, apparently, that the staff don't automatically offer you a glass with your beer or alcoholic soda in the new kind of bars is so you can display your bottle like some sort of name tag. "We call it badging... People want to be seen to be drinking a quality beer in that situation, in contrast to the old booze barn where you had a jug that was unbranded." They've even tried to cover the people who insist on drinking out of glasses by introducing branded glasses. Some brands are in more hands than others. "Sales of Heineken, for instance, are going through the roof in those sorts of places because it's a very aspirational type of beer." It's that sort of talk that makes you realise going out for a beer isn't what it used to be... "Beer consumption continues to decline. There are health pressures... [and drink]-drive laws have[also] hit consumption." But N[Z] puts its own spin on the changes in our drinking ways. For instance, while low-alcohol beers have been a big hit in A[US], they haven't been swallowed as readily here. The movement instead in N[Z] is... towards higher strength beers... Changing N[Z] attitudes to alcohol saw Grey Lynn accept alcohol into the neighbourhood at the last elections. But... it's not that easy to get wet...

The prospects of a lively battle over the Grey Lynn liquor poll emerged yesterday with a supermarket giant and a libertarian residents group declaring they would take on supporters of licensing trust control... The opening shots fired were over campaign donations... Grey Lynn Residents for Freedom of Choice[GLRFC]... had been told the Licensing Trusts Association had given \$12,000 to help the group promoting a Grey Lynn trust... They... saw this as the Portage Licensing Trust of West Auckland coming to Grey Lynn to make money at the expense of locals. The alleged figure was denied by... a spokes[person] for the Residents for a Licensing Trust group[RLT], who said donations from local groups, private individuals and the trusts association amounted to only a few thousand dollars... [T]he association... had helped with advice and costs of printing campaign leaflets, of which 8000 had been delivered to residents in the poll area. [The spokesperson challenged GLRFC's spokesperson] to say where his group was getting its funds and how much... [The GLRFC spokesperson] did not "have a clue" how much was going to be spent. Volunteers

would distribute a newsletter that would be done on a desktop printing operation, with “a few mates” helping to photocopy 17,000 copies. [GLRFC] had spoken to Foodtown but had not received donations from the company... The Foodtown marketing manager... said his company’s campaign would be done with signs, leaflets and by communicating with customers in two Grey Lynn supermarkets. “We will spend enough money to make sure everyone in the area is aware of our view... we don’t want to get political. We just want to sell wine.” Voting papers for the poll are to be sent out to residents on [the 7th] and the poll closes [two weeks later. Incidentally, ‘supermarkets fighting for liquor sales in west Auckland outlets say they have enough signatures to hold a referendum in Portage Licensing Trust-controlled areas. Representatives presented the trust with their petition on Friday, ending a 15-week campaign. “We’ve got about 18,000 signatures,” says the Foodstuffs Auckland managing director. “We needed a little under 10,000.”’

...‘WEST Auckland’s liquor licensing war is likely to cost the Waitakere and Portage licensing trusts more than \$300,000. The Auckland City and Rodney District Council electoral officer confirmed this week that a petition carried out in the Waitakere area has the signatures of 15% of registered voters needed to force a referendum. The poll is likely to be held early next year and will be paid for by West Auckland Trust Services, the organisation administering both trusts. The petition and poll costs are based on estimates, given that it is not yet known if a referendum will be held in the Portage area.’ In the meantime, [t]he Portage Licensing Trust... is embroiled in legal action over being turned down for a liquor licence. The trust is appealing... to renew the licence relating to the Avondale Peninsula Hotel. The trust sold the hotel in the early 1990s and then leased it back. Under a management agreement the business is run by the... Peninsula Hotel. But when the licence came up for renewal the police and the local authority successfully objected... [T]he Liquor Licensing Authority... had refused to renew the licence because it decided that the trust had deliberately chosen not to sell or supply liquor pursuant to the Sale of Liquor Act. “In other words they are saying only the trust can have a licence in this district and in this case the trust has distanced itself from the operation of the premises.” Another objector, [a] liquor retailer... said trusts were probably outdated these days.

...FOR a country that previously based its relationship with alcohol on a six o’clock swill, you can’t say we haven’t made progress. Today, you can sit at a cafe at 2am with your chardonnay, or... load your supermarket trolley with pinot noir instead of groceries. Unless you live in a dry area. Not that there are many of these pockets of alcohol free society left. When Grey Lynn in Auckland voted to go wet... it left only three... areas in the country where bars and bottle stores are banned – Eden and Roskill in Auckland, and Tawa in Wellington. The 17,000 electors in Grey Lynn might have thought voting for greater access to alcohol would be the end of the matter... But... [voters must now declare whether they] want liquor sales in the area to be controlled by a licensing trust or the free market. A trust would be controlled by a board of elected local representatives, and have a monopoly on running bars and liquor outlets in the area. The 26 licensing trusts operating throughout the country tend to run their own establishments, although they sometimes take over franchises of chain stores such as Liquorland, and supply alcohol to supermarkets to sell in return for a percentage of the profits. The alternative... is to... allow any person, group or company to apply to the Liquor Licensing Authority’s local agency, usually the council, to set up a bottle store or bar. (None of the decisions apply to licensed restaurants and clubs, which are already permitted to operate in dry areas and in areas governed by licensing trusts)... Residents’ main worry may be that a bar will open up on the corner of their street and they won’t have any say, but... private operators are still subject to resource management and town planning controls, which provide opportunities for objections to be lodged before licences are granted, and which bar commercial operations from setting up in residential zones... In areas of Ponsonby and Parnell, for example, where outlets are close to homes, their hours and days of operation are restricted. “Ponsonby is an example of what free enterprise can do,” says [GLRFC]. “There you have small, boutique cafes and bars which wouldn’t be viable if their owners didn’t run them day to day. Those are the sorts of outlets that most people in Grey Lynn also want, but there’s no way a big licensing trust could operate venues that small. Instead of building a bar that 20 people could fit into, they’ll build booze barns that fit 200.” The convenor of the... [RLT] denies this would happen as the aim of a trust would be to “be a good neighbour” and consult with its community about the type of establishments wanted. “The new Grey Lynn wet area has a population of 25,000 (covering Grey Lynn, Pt Chevalier, Westmere, Kingsland, Arch Hill and parts of Western Springs and Carrington), which we figure could support about six small bottle shops, one or two larger drive-in facilities located in industrial-commercial areas, and several bars, ideally one in each area so... they would become ‘locals’ and patrons would have a... personal interest in maintaining their standard.” [RLT] also denies that a trust’s monopoly would allow it to push up liquor prices. Competition already exists in the form of sports club bars, licensed cafes and nearby outlets of some of the main bottle store chains. The chief executive of the Hospitality Association... says Grey Lynn residents’ fears about a proliferation of alcohol outlets are unfounded, because operators will only set up if demand makes it economically viable... The president of the Licensing Trusts Association... says two of the main arguments for the Trust system is that they are more accountable than private business to the community they serve, and that they return a substantial percentage of their profits back to the community through donations. [GLRFC] questions the extent to which trusts return money to communities, saying that private enterprise does the same through sponsorship. It was for reasons of community accountability that licensing trusts were set up by the Labour government of the early 1940s. [‘From 1840 to 1881 there was no control on the number of liquor outlets nor on the conditions under which alcohol was consumed’ in NZ. The ‘sale of alcohol was forbidden in the King Country by a 1884 government proclamation. The refuge for Maoris who refused to make peace with the colonial government was not surveyed until the 1880s’, and the prohibition order suggests that the government was paranoid about what drunk Maoris might do to Europeans (although Maoris made their own alcohol from ‘fermented berries’). Nationwide prohibition ‘referenda were held in 1902, 1905, 1908 and 1911. On each occasion over half the votes favoured prohibition, but a three-fifths majority was needed for legislation. Another referendum was held on Apr 10, 1919: this time, only a simple majority was required. Prohibition received 246,104 votes and Continuance 232,208. But soldiers still overseas voted Prohibition 7,723 and Continuance 31,981, defeating prohibition by a small margin.’] From 1893 the Alcoholic Liquor Sales Control Act had given electors the chance to vote for “continuance” of the status quo in their area regarding access to liquor, “reduction” in the number of outlets, or “prohibition”, so making their electorate a dry area.[‘By 1908, 12 of the 76 electorates were no-licence areas.’] But when Invercargill voted to return to being “wet” in 1944 (a close decision that was carried thanks to votes cast by local [military personnel] at war overseas), the Government took another look at how it managed liquor sales. The... liquor licences used to be traded between individuals, local authorities and the Government throughout the country. The licences were seen as gold mines, but the Government recognised that the unruly booze barns set up under them had not served communities well. It decided to try an experiment using a Scottish model of granting licences to companies formed by community members, with the intention that profits would return to the community, and to remove the profit motive from individuals trying to maximise their return. The Invercargill trust was the first to be established... and today is the most successful. Its income totalled \$46.6 million in the 1995-96 financial year, clearing \$7.6 million in tax paid profit, of which it returned \$2.1 million to the community (the 26 trusts combined made \$259 million... clearing \$21.2 million in profit, of which \$7.7 million, or 36.5%, was given back through donations). Most areas changed from dry to wet in the 1950s and 1960s, and before Wellington East in 1994, the last licensing trust vote was in 1972 in the north Canterbury electorate of Hawarden... [Its] trust, which now covers less than 1000 voters... was the only one to return a loss at the end of the 1995-96 financial year, albeit of only \$182. [Since] Wellington East... voted for private enterprise... only a couple of pubs and a couple of bottle stores have sprung up in the district, and the entrance of the free liquor market has not caused the problems... others feared it would. “The local New World supermarket, which sells alcohol, has almost taken the place of a licensing trust anyway...” If Grey Lynn residents choose to go with a trust, their choices don’t stop there. [The] Justice Minister... then decides on whether a new trust or trusts should be set up to focus specifically on the area, or whether the area is adopted by a neighbouring trust. If a new trust is to be found, the community is once

again called on to nominate possible board members, and then to elect a number of them until the next local body elections. If locals find they don't like the way the trust is running things, a petition signed by 15% of voters can force a referendum on whether to continue with a trust monopoly, or open up the area to private enterprise. Six or seven trust areas [are currently] going through this process. A trust can still operate within an opened up area, but must compete for liquor sales... Trusts in Masterton, Balclutha and Oamaru, which lost their monopolies in recent years, are now competing successfully with private enterprise.

...[A BOOZE battle of a different sort will be fought in suburban living rooms this week. The drought was broken in NZ's last dry areas when residents voted to allow pubs and liquor stores into Auckland suburbs Mt Eden and Mt Roskill, and Tawa in Wellington. But now the Auckland householders have to decide whether they want their alcohol outlets controlled by a community trust – putting profits back into playgrounds – or by supermarkets and pub chains, meaning cheaper booze. A postal ballot is being sent to residents this week.]

...[Liberia – now there is a country in which fine democratic traditions are celebrated. Indeed, I thought of Liberia fondly as I cast my vote in the Mt Albert electorate on whether Mt Roskill should remain dry. This was a subject dear to my heart, as few examples of the denial of human rights or assaults on the human spirit raise my hackles faster than the fascist terror that is teetotalitarianism. Few vestiges of wowsersism remain in this country, but we must be vigilant and act when we can against the credo of teetotalitarianism that insists NZers cannot buy a drink in a pub or a bottle shop near the home. So it was with relish that I ticked the wet box. The wetter, the better. This is a great democratic tradition we are honouring. It is the principle of one beer, one vote. Which is why my thoughts turned kindly to the West African republic. Sure, Liberia is a Last World country torn apart by a bloody civil war notable for the inhuman conduct of the warring parties, who displayed viciousness remarkable even by the standards of that troubled continent. But some standards of decency were maintained. At the height of the civil war, when both factions fought for control of the capital, one public amenity kept operating while death and destruction reigned around it. This monolith, this colossus, this exemplar of democracy was the brewery. Unbelievably, both parties agreed that the nation's brewery should continue producing the pale amber brew that is the lifeblood of any civilised society. I shall think of Liberia when booze barns erupt like pimples on the face of Mt Roskill. I shall raise my glass to Liberia when I buy my first drink from a supermarket on a Sunday.]

...The Government will pop the cork on Sunday drinking if it heeds public demand... Many... liquor... review... [submissions] pointed to the unfairness of letting wineries sell wine on Sunday, but not supermarkets; and of being able to drink in a bar in a club, but not in a pub unless with a meal... Submissions emphasised deregulation and fair trade, and called for responsibility over restriction... an attitude reflected by Grey Lynn voters who last month rejected a trust for their newly wet area... Even the Ministry of Transport... could see no sense in prohibiting supermarkets from selling [alcohol]... The police wondered about BYO restaurants. "Why is it necessary to control those [restaurants] which encourage people to bring their own?" ...Several of the 250 submissions asked whether it was necessary to license... small workplace social clubs, sellers of liqueur chocolates or motels with mini-bars... Others asked why an off-licensed wine shop must have an on-licence to allow customers a free sample; or why, say, a [clothing] shop (one in Auckland is licensed) should require an on-licence to open a bottle for a valued customer... The... Hospitality Association... claimed supermarket staff would need more training to deal with problem drinkers. A 15-year-old... check-out operator would not have the... experience to deal with a drunken group of party-goers who ran out of beer and tried to buy more late at night... Many [submissions] did not trust teenagers with alcohol, but others said that if people do not learn how to drink responsibly when they are young, they will not know how to do so in adulthood... The committee is not expected to ignore the potential for drinking and driving if service stations were licensed.

...THE liquor law review committee has recommended that the drinking age be lowered to 18 and supermarket liquor sales extended to Sunday... It is understood that the report does not recommend photographic identification cards, but does require some tightening of the surveillance of under-age drinkers... [T]he committee has also asked the Government that supermarkets be able to sell beer and spirits as well as wine... It is not clear whether the report recommends extending pub opening hours to Sunday... Any change to the laws would be the subject of a conscience vote... But industry leaders do not expect the suggested changes – which will be debated at length in Parliament – to become law until 1999 at the earliest.

...Some MPs are strongly opposed to a suggestion that the drinking age be lowered to 18 without the parallel measure of a national identity card... The committee... said there were five reasons which made the issue of a national card impracticable. They included questions of privacy; the availability of special-purpose cards, such as the "Pub Card," featuring a photo and date of birth; ...and the onus of proof being on the individual.

...In his younger days... the duty manager of Hamilton student pub the Hillcrest Tavern, would walk past his local watering hole in school uniform on his way home from class. And at nights... would be back for a drink. "Everyone knew you and you had to behave yourself or you got your butt kicked,"... Lowering the drinking age would promote similar responsible drinking, but only if pubs could rely on a universal identification system to police it. Managers of student pubs across the country agree with dropping the age of consumption to 18 but say it is already impossible to police thoroughly a drinking age of 20... [F]orged identifications were rife and while bouncers were pretty good at spotting the fakes students would "always find a way around things." Using brothers and sisters' identification was also popular. While some pubs around town catered for the 18 to 20 market by offering dining... the Captain Cook... avoided it because it was near impossible to check that people were using their meal tickets and eating the food... [However, the Cook's] licensee... said the infamous Dunedin student parties accounted for at least 10 times as much drinking as took place in pubs, and that was where a lot of underage people were consuming alcohol... [– although modern] young people appeared to be a lot more responsible than those of years gone by. "There's no such thing as uni 'chunder miles' any more." ...Auckland student drinking holes The Globe and Shadows, the university student association-run bar on the campus, also support the lower age... A Shadows trust board member... said students would find access to alcohol by "fair or foul means" and it was better for them to be drinking in a controlled environment. The Globe owner... said the lowered drinking age would bring more customers his way but it was already a challenge, without a photo identification, to tell whether people were of age. "I defy anyone to tell whether someone is [16.] 18, 19, 20 or 25 – it's... impossible..." ...other publicans... had done away with beer jugs and student focus because the identification was too hard to police and they were "sick of babysitting."

...The extremely liberalising stance of the liquor review advisory committee's recent report came as no surprise to observers of alcohol policy in the past few years. Community concerns expressed to this and previous committees have been ignored in favour of the ideology that legislation is of limited value and that education about dangers of excessive drinking is the key... As I sat writing this, a report from our counterpart research unit in A[US] came in my e-mail. It dealt with the impact of late-night licensing hours... In that research, violent and sexual assaults more than doubled in and near late-night trading hotels and clubs, compared with violence levels at liquor outlets trading normally. Furthermore, late-night trading postponed or delayed alcohol-related violence and road crashes until after midnight when police and emergency services are more expensive and less able to cope with increased demand. It is research like this coming from several parts of the world and covering many aspects of availability... which is encouraging many jurisdictions to increase their restrictions and enforcement. This is in marked contrast to the approach taken by our review committee. The costs to the health system suggest that alcohol licensing is a legitimate interest for the health sector. The review report suggests, however, that the medical officer of health's limited statutory responsibility for monitoring licensed premises be reduced, despite submissions that it needs to be strengthened. Nor are host responsibility issues such as overcrowded pubs and offering free or cheap drinks to be addressed in the act. The report recommends... the reduction of the minimum drinking age (including allowing children of any age to be supplied with alcohol in some premises if accompanied by a parent)... One of the review committee's arguments for a drinking age of 18 is that those under 20 are getting alcohol anyway. There is no doubt that some underage drinkers already buy alcohol due to the lack of enforcement of the present law, but the situation could become worse. In a 1995 national survey one in four 14 to 17-year-olds had purchased alcohol in the previous 12 months. Only 9[%] of all purchase attempts were refused. However, this leaves three out of four 14 to 17-year-olds who had not brought alcohol.

Fear of being caught breaking the law is likely to be a deterrent. Lowering the legal age to 18, without increasing resources to monitor sales to underage customers, is likely to increase illicit access by those under 18. Would this matter? Well, from a public health point of view it would. Alcohol is a drug with the potential to induce dependence, a wide variety of organ damage and social ill-effects. Research shows that those who drink more in their mid-teens suffer more alcohol-related problems in later life. Much has been made in arguments for greater liberalisation of the fact that overall alcohol consumption in N[Z] has been dropping – by about 18[%] between 1986 and 1996. The frequency of drinking has reduced, but the pattern of behaviour remains unchanged... In our surveys, the average 18 and 19-year-old... [guy] drinks seven to eight cans of beer on a typical pub visit. And we know they are underestimating their consumption... This is not a civilised drinking culture... [and to] increase young people's access to [alcohol] will not bring "more young people into controlled drinking environments," as the review report suggests.

...[Three schoolgirls with platinum tastes – one aged 14 and the others 15 – have brought a top Auckland restaurant to its knees. Mikano Restaurant and Bar at Mechanics Bay on the waterfront is closing for 11 days from today after having its liquor licence suspended for serving the girls, who ran up a bill for \$562 – including \$375 for two bottles of champagne – before ordering a limousine and trying to make a getaway without paying. Restaurant staff became suspicious of their ages only after they tried to buy an inordinate number of cigarettes. Police were called. Two of the girls' fathers arrived, one of whom eventually settled the bill after the other objected to paying for the alcohol component. Mikano's owner stands to lose \$100,000 in takings and his 45 staff will have to take unplanned holidays'. By the way, 'MPs are about to decide for the third time in little more than two decades whether to let teenagers buy liquor – which many countries allow. Some parties have already signalled whether they will vote to lower the drinking age from 20 to 18. The Deputy PM has told the Wine and Spirits Merchants Association his NZ First MPs will vote against 18. Countering them are the Alliance's members, who will vote for 18. The leader of Act says his eight MPs are likely to be liberal. The PM also supports lowering the age, but his cabinet colleague, the Health Minister, does not. Liquor industry lobbyists fear the vote will be lost. The drinking age was 18 until prohibitionist sentiment in 1918 lifted it to 21. It didn't drop to 20 until 1969 (bringing NZ in line with Japan, while in Norway and Finland 20 is the limit for sale or consumption of spirits, 18 for beer or wine; the US raised its drinking age to 21 in 1984). MPs voted 38-28 against 18 in 1976. The last review of liquor laws also proposed lowering the age to 18, but it was defeated 38-31 in 1989.'

... 'The drinking age will be lowered from 20 to 18 and shoppers will be able to buy alcohol on Sundays in sweeping changes to liquor laws expected to take effect on October 1. Parliament tempered the changes last night with several measures to tighten enforcement of drinking laws. These will not allow any exceptions on the sale of liquor to under-age drinkers – although parents and guardians will be allowed to buy their under-age children a drink on licensed premises. Under an amendment proposed by the National MP for North Shore, courts will be given the power to close for up to seven days the premises of a licensee convicted of selling or supplying liquor to a minor. MPs rejected a proposal to let premises such as dairies and video stores sell alcohol. The vote to lower the drinking age was debated at length and passed narrowly, 59 votes to 55. The final vote on the drinking age was corrected four times throughout the night, though the result did not change; eight proxy votes cast by National were mistakenly cast on instructions left by absent MPs (including the PM) on another issue. The vote to open up Sunday trading was carried after virtually no debate, and no one called for individual votes to be recorded. MPs voted down a move to let supermarkets and grocery stores sell spirits, but approved letting them sell beer as well as wine. The 11 conscience votes on liquor laws are not yet binding. Yesterday's decisions will now be drafted as legislation, and will be returned to Parliament in about three weeks.'

... 'Alcohol, health and youth lobby groups have reacted with a mixture of surprise and disappointment at Parliament's decision to lower the drinking age to 18. "I'm disappointed, but that's democracy," the Commissioner for Children said last night. The commissioner hoped the road toll would not rise as a result. The Automobile Association's spokesperson said politicians were "flying in the face of overseas evidence that road deaths and injuries increase among young drivers if the drinking age is lowered." And the chairperson of the Medical Health Association said the decision would exacerbate youth alcohol problems. Alcohol Healthwatch described the decision as a disaster. "The health and well-being of young NZers will go backwards because of this decision." But the head of the Hospitality Association said the decision was "one of common sense and practicality." The Hospitality Association head also welcomed the vote to allow Sunday trading in licensed premises and bottle stores. "Again, it's very common sense – we are a seven-day society."

... 'AS of Wednesday we'll all be able to get booze on a Sunday if we're so inclined. 18-year-olds will be able to suck on a cold one legally. And if you're a wouser, Wednesday will also mean the disintegration and moral decay of our young people, our society and western civilisation as we know it. I don't happen to subscribe to that particular view. Nor do I think that the state should impose limitations on the sale of liquor for the good of the nation. One caller I had on talkback radio felt that it was unfair to sell alcohol in supermarkets because it made it very hard for alcoholics. His rationale was that alcoholics can avoid bottle stores but they can't avoid shopping for food, and when confronted with glistening bottles of wine, albies buckled under temptation and popped their corks. Well, sorry and all that, but expecting the state to impose draconian laws simply to protect a tiny minority is ridiculous. I predict the vast majority of us will cope admirably with these new licensing laws – teenagers included. I think the doomsayers' fears will prove unfounded – just as they did when the six o'clock swill was replaced with 10pm closing. We are mature adults capable of deciding what is good for us.'

...In 1987, before we started cutting back, the average N[Z]er put away 121 litres of beer over the course of the year. By last year, the figure was down to 94 litres... [Put another way, last] year... we consumed... 8.5 litres... of pure alcohol per person... a 26% decrease... [since] 1977... The industry needed to attract more [gals] to beer and generate more "excitement" in the market to stem the decline... DB's latest television campaign, involving Clydesdale horses and interaction between a [guy and a gal], reflected a conscious move away from macho images.

...Lion Red beer, long marketed as "the measure of a [guy]'s thirst," is to be "de-bloked." Lion Breweries will tomorrow launch an advertising campaign to position the brand closer to the [guy] of the 90s. The campaign is also expected to be less offensive to [gals]. Recent Lion Red campaigns... which include[d] T-shirts with the slogan "Leave the old trout at home" and "If you want me to spend more time in the kitchen put more beers in the fridge," have... been withdrawn after drawing public criticism for being too blokey, too macho and sexist. Marketing and advertising industry representatives contacted yesterday were surprised to hear that Lion Red would be portrayed as less blokey, and suggested that the brewer risked alienating loyal... customers who drank jugs of the beer in public bars. "If you change their perception of the brand into something else, say Lion Pink, they will switch... and won't be back," said one marketer... "You don't go changing a winner and Lion Red, as a brand, is a winner, right up there with Weetbix and Vegemite." Others said much of the 7[%] decline in beer consumption in the past year was in the tap-beer market, which was dominated by Lion Red, especially in the upper North Island.

...[guys] are to be given the message that there is more to being a good Kiwi bloke than drinking beer with your mates... The... new campaign to sell Lion Red, the nation's most popular brew... will revolve around the copyline, "What it means to be a [guy]." "It used to be the thing to be hard," said... Lion Breweries... "That has changed. Now it's more about being fit and healthy, being responsible and more worldly..." ...the public bar, blokey drinker was Lion Red's core market... "The art with the new campaign is to keep that core market and to get others to like it as well..."

...The launch last week of a new softer marketing campaign for Lion Red is the latest move in a subtle but significant campaign by both major breweries to change the public perception of beer... Lion's research showed there were three major relationships that were important to [NZ guys]. They were, in no particular order, their relationship with their mates, their parents and their partners. The Lion Red advertisements play on those relationships... One, depicting what it means to be a mate shows a mountain rescue while another, showing what it means to be a son, has three generations fishing from a wharf. In the past few months Lion's rival... has also launched a number of softer advertisements for its products. The storylines... show situations with more involvement from... [the opposite sex, such as] the DB Export advertisement showing a mixed flattening situation... There are now about 100 brands of beer on the [NZ] market but the top seven or eight of those hold 50[%] of the market. That is a far

cry from the early 1980s when there were two breweries and... [consumers] either drank DB or Lion and both were extremely loyal to their brand. The approach taken to the new segmented market by the two major breweries is slightly different. Lion has concentrated on the lower alcohol part of the market with the recent successful launch of its low-alcohol Light Ice brand and the introduction of its mid-strength Lion Gold brand. The idea of a mid-strength beer is taken from A[US] where it has been hugely successful. DB has instead concentrated on the higher alcohol end of the market with its very successful Heineken brand and more recently Amstel beer[, which] has been marketed as an upmarket tap beer... Lion subsidiary N[Z] Wines and Spirits has tried to match that with the introduction of English Boddingtons tap beer this week. Lion has responded to the Heineken success by introducing Stella Artois from Belgium... The sale of beer in supermarkets will lead to greater competition at the retail end of the market and may also lead to new packaging of products to appeal to [gals].

...With strong beer brands such as Heineken and DB Export Gold taking some sting out of a declining beer market, DB Group reported... [that its net] profits for the six months... were \$17.2 million, up 7.5[%] from a year earlier on sales down slightly at \$351.0 million from \$351.4 million... DB Export Gold volume, up “between 5 and 10[%],” had overtaken arch-rival Lion Nathan’s Steinlager in the domestic market... But analysts pointed out the two were not strict competitors. Steinlager was stronger and more expensive... Better advertising and marketing support was a key factor in DB’s brand strength... “In the past, we’d screwed up on brand positioning but we’ve now been consistent for the third year in a row.” Shifting money from sponsorship into direct advertising had helped to support the brands and the trend would continue... The switch would not immediately affect the DB Warriors rugby league team because two years were left of DB’s five-year sponsorship. But DB signalled its unhappiness with the team’s losing streak. “We think the Warriors could have done a lot of good for the brand but that’s not happening... We’ll be loyal to the bitter end,” but [don’t like our product to be associated with losers, so] if the club was sold beforehand “we may have discussions with the new owner.” Group operating profits rose 8.4[%] to \$29.5 million with Corbans wine and the group’s spirits division contributing to the upturn.

...Threatening to turn off the tap to a Papakura tavern manager who offered cheap beer cost DB Breweries \$115,000 in the High Court at Auckland yesterday. DB admitted breaching the Commerce Act, by trying to stop the... Whitehouse Tavern... discounting 16-can packs of DB Draught beer by \$1... [T]he Commerce Commission... accepted DB had stopped doing it and if it were not for its co-operation, the penalty could have been even higher... The chief executive of DB... regretted that “one of his company’s sales reps had attempted to prevent a tavern owner from selling promotion packs at less than the recommended retail price.” ...Manufacturers or suppliers are allowed to recommend a retail price for their product, but [aren’t allowed to] try to enforce it... The chief executive of the Consumers Institute... was delighted at the conviction and the size of the fine. The penalty was a good warning to other businesses, large and small... [In related news, selling] beer at 5c a bottle is likely to guarantee further embarrassment for Lion Breweries, already struggling to keep up with demand for its mid-strength Lion Gold beer. Supplies of Lion Gold were running short after 240,000 bottles of the 3.5[%] alcohol beer were sold during its first week on the market. That shortage is likely to be compounded by a marketing campaign in which 300,000 households throughout the country have been offered the chance to buy a bottle of Lion Gold for just 5c... [The] national marketing and sales manager for Lion Breweries, said “we got caught with our pants down...”

...The inclusion of an undisclosed severance package gave... [the] former chief operating officer for Lion Nathan, a total pay packet of \$1,594,166 in the year to August 31, the largest yet disclosed for a N[Z] public company director. The previous largest was \$1,501,787 for [the] Telecom chief executive... [The former chief operating officer], who is now the New York-based head of advertising agency Saatchi and Saatchi, resigned from Lion Nathan on January 31... The next highest paid Lion executive was [its] chief executive... who received \$1,219,090 in the August year... [and] recently announced his move upstairs to [be chairperson] at... Auckland’s other business dynasty... Challenge... The Lion Nathan annual report also shows four executives earned more than \$1 million in the August year, while 214 of Lion Nathan’s 3741 staff earned more than \$100,000.

...[Lion Nathan has outgrown NZ and is heading to AUS. The company’s long-time executive and present chairperson expressed a sense of sadness to the Business Herald following the release of the company’s interim results yesterday, when the move was announced. “I am a NZer and always will be. I feel a loss. But this is part of growing and being part of the world,” said the chairperson (r:p1350, ln53), adding that it would continue to live here. It was certainly a decision the chairperson endorsed and one that was made many years ago when, under his stewardship, the company decided to go international. AUS (where Lion has 42.1% of the market) now made up 70% of the company’s assets and the NZ shareholding in the company had slowly declined from 85% to 15%. Lion’s chief executive said the decision to go had nothing to do with the environment in NZ. “We have \$1 billion of assets here. We have 1000 employees that we have to look after. We pay over \$200 million in tax a year. This year we spent \$11 million renewing our business with capital expenditure. We spend over \$5 million a year in sponsorship. Those numbers are not going down, they are going up.” □ ‘Closing its Hastings and NSW factories cost almost \$33 million’, but] Lion Nathan’s 200 million litre brewery at Suzhou, near Shanghai has been completed two months early and \$20 million under its \$200 million budget. The savings would be used to expand distribution and develop the Rheineck and Taihushua brands.

...Interbrew SA, a Belgian brewer, has bought an 80[%] stake in a second brewery in China. The Nanjing Brewery... sold 650,000 hectolitres of beer last year and employs 655 people. Interbrew said it would reinforce the local brands, introduce its Stella Artois beer and increase capacity.

...Brewing companies are focusing on emerging markets to drive their future growth as sales in the [First W]orld peak... Market liberalisation, rising disposable incomes and youthful populations all pointed to more beer drinkers in Asia, Latin America, Africa and Eastern Europe, according to... a... report... [by a] British investment banker... In 1990, China’s beer market was just 54[%] that of the U[S]. But if current growth rates continue, China is set to become the world’s biggest consumer of beer by 2000. The average Chinese now consumes just 12 litres of beer a year, a fraction of the average 160 litres downed by the Czechs, who hold the world record for beer drinking... [Second place goes to the ‘Irish (141.3 litres), and third to the Germans. In 1994, the total world beer production was 1,200,000,000 hectolitres.’ The] world’s largest breweries were hunting for opportunities in emerging markets through acquisitions or joint ventures...

British drinks giants Guinness and Grand Metropolitan have unveiled a £23 billion... merger aimed at tackling difficult conditions in a fragmented market by creating the world’s leading spirits and wine company. The merger, the biggest in British corporate history... and... [based] on the value of the “junior partner” in the deal – Guinness in this case – the... 10th largest in history... will form the world’s seventh-largest food and drinks company... [T]he combined group [will] be called BMG Brands...

The \$US37.3 billion... merger... has been cleared by the European Commission after... Grand Metropolitan and Guinness... agreed to give up some scotch whisky brands in Europe... [The] British drinks giants... [had previously] knocked back a de-merger proposed by [a] rebel shareholder... saying it would result in tax costs of £1.5 billion... [The chairperson] of French luxury-goods and drinks company LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, has vigorously opposed the... merger since its announcement... and is pressing for a de-merger of GrandMet’s Pillsbury and Burger King food interests from Guinness’ brewing business... However... the GrandMet chair[perso]n... described the problem as “a bit like the old tail wagging the dog.” ...IDV – GrandMet’s spirits arm – was already the world’s largest spirits company, and United Distillers – Guinness’ drinks division – was number two, whereas... the... Moët Hennessy brands... [only increased] the spirits portfolio by 3.0[%] and the wine portfolio by 6.0[%].

...Coca Cola Co will buy the sparkling orange drink Orangina from France’s Pernod-Ricard for five billion French francs... The deal includes four bottling plants in France. Pernod-Ricard will use the proceeds to finance the international expansion of alcoholic anise products and Wild Turkey bourbon. [By the way, ‘the wines of the rolling chalklands of the Beaujolais region have graced tables for centuries, a symbol of France’s good cheer and fine agricultural traditions. This, though, will not be a year that local winegrowers will want to remember. Instead of being bottled and corked,

much of the Beaujolais production will be turned into vinegar, ending up in salads, fish and chips and, who knows, even household cleaners. Some 10 million litres of lesser-quality wine, around 13 million bottles, which has been lying around in storage vats, will take this sad route. Growers will receive \$NZ140 per 100 litres, just a fraction of their production costs but still better than nothing. For the planet is awash with this grade of wine, and most of the competition is far cheaper. "The market can't absorb this sort of amount at this time," said a spokesperson for the Union Interprofessionnelle des Vins du Beaujolais (UIVB), representing the 3169 local growers. "We are only three months away from the next harvest. We wanted to be proactive so that the situation does not get any worse. There's no shame in taking 10 million litres off the market." The UIVB is also calling for a halt to new vine plantings and smaller harvests. Beaujolais is losing out in the world wine war, pumelled by "New World" wines from California, Chile, South Africa, AUS and NZ.'

...NZ]'s grape-growing area will rise 17.6[%] over the next three years to more than 8700ha, according to a new national vineyard survey.

...N[Z]'s wine] exports in the past year almost covered the cost of imports for the first time. Nearly \$75.9 million worth went out of the country, while \$76.3 million (\$6.6 million of it champagne) came in. The Wine Institute believes that the annual value of exports will exceed imports for the first time by mid-1999. A decade ago, exports were worth only \$4.5 million annually, and the institute predicts that they will... reach \$125 million a year by the turn of the century. Exports already represent 25[%] of total production, compared with 2[%] a decade ago. However, it expects export growth to slow and imports to rise... next year because this year's harvest was relatively light – an estimated 60,000 tonnes compared with about 75,000 tonnes in each of the past two years... [M]ore than 51 million litres of local wine was sold... 16 million of... [the] 22 million litres of imports... [came from AUS]. Wine consumption, per capita per annum, which was 13.7 litres a decade ago and fell to 8.7 litres by 1995, increased for the second successive year, to 10.7 litres... The institute's annual report reflects the move to planting premium varieties: the area producing muller thurgau, used mainly for bag-in-the-box white wine, has halved in the decade to 600ha, while chardonnay has increased more than threefold to 1700ha and savignon blanc fourfold to 1400ha. Among the red varieties the area producing merlot has increased by more than fourfold to 367ha and pinot noir almost fourfold to 524ha.

...A new disease is threatening the multimillion-dollar wine industry. Symptoms of "A[US]n grapevine yellows" – the disease damaging A[US]n vines – are present in North Island vineyards but scientists are still trying to establish whether it has gained a foothold in N[Z] wine-growing areas... Caused by organisms called phytoplasmas, the disease had already decimated boysenberries growing in Auckland and spread to Nelson and Motueka, seriously threatening export orders worth between \$5 million and \$10 million... Many broad-leaved weeds common in N[Z] vineyards as cover crop between rows might host the disease and growers might need to eradicate those plants to stop the spread... But a Wine Institute viticulturist... said [it] had seen symptoms of grapevine yellows in N[Z] vineyards only two or three times in his 25 years in the business. Scientists needed to establish whether there was an insect, called a vector, spreading the disease. "If there is no vector, there is no threat." ...Treatment for infected vines included hot water and heat. [While on the topic of wine – which 'provides the body with calories, a large number of mineral salts, iron, tannin and a considerable quantity of B vitamins' – 'total world production was less than 260,000,000 hectolitres in 1994, down from nearly 380,000,000 hectolitres in 1989. The world's greatest wine drinkers per capital consumption in 1995 were the French (63.5lts) and Italians (60.4lts).']

...Scientists at Liverpool's John Moores University have confirmed that wine consumption protects against disease... Unlike other studies, the researchers claim white wine is as beneficial as red and, contrary to medical orthodoxy, say [gals] can drink as much as [guys] – provided they do not exceed 17 glasses a week... [Another] discovery... is... that... the... beneficial effects of wine... increase with age... The good news does not stop at the wine counter. There is no link between increased blood pressure and spirits consumption... [However, the scientists also] discovered that beer drinkers may be at greater risk of heart attack or stroke... They believe beer, even in small quantities, raises the blood pressure...

A beer at the bar[in NZ] could cost less if a Hospitality Association proposal to buy bulk supplies on behalf of its members goes ahead... A handle of draught beer in Auckland costs from \$2 to \$4.20. Government tax on beer [– which costs about '20c/litre to make' –]is levied at 76c per litre... [In international news, 'New Delhi police say drunken rats are creating a unique problem at most city police stations where scores of emboldened rodents frequently "riot" after draining moonshine from plastic sachets. Brewing illegal liquor is rampant in and around Delhi, especially along the border with neighbouring Haryana state where prohibition was introduced two years ago but lifted last year. This moonshine is cheaper and stronger than regular alcohol sold in liquor stores and is favoured by labourers and farm workers. The inebriated rats also create a credibility problem for the police, who are frequently unable to produce samples of the seized moonshine in court as evidence. "If we tell the judge it has been consumed by rats, the judge laughs at us and holds us in contempt," said an officer at a East Delhi station plagued by rats. There'd been instances where the officer in charge of the evidence room had been suspended for consuming or selling the moonshine, but in most cases the officer was the innocent victim of a "frame up" by drunken rats. Police have tried various techniques to tackle the tipping but to little effect. A West Delhi station acquired a fierce cat but after a few active months it got bored with chasing and killing rats. Now it either ignores them or at times even frolics with them, mostly when they are drunk and willing to take on the cat. Rodents aren't the only off-the-record imbibers. Alcoholic monkeys also create havoc in the Excise Department lab in Delhi, guzzling liquor samples brought in for testing and going berserk when denied their daily quota of drink. Despite security, the pack of seven monkeys who have lived around the lab for years manage to enter it. Elaborate plans to catch the tipsy monkeys have been futile as the simians, even inebriated, are too cunning an adversary. Efforts to catch the animals when sober have also failed as India's Hindu community hold monkeys in reverence and there are few animal trappers who want to risk divine wrath.'

...Hindu religious sentiment associates monkeys with Hanuman, the mythical monkey god, and every Tuesday is reserved for his worship. Monkeys also hold sway in New Delhi's corridors of power. Government officials walk warily down passageways in North and South Blocks, looking apprehensively over their shoulders for fear of being set upon by marauding monkeys craftily concealed in niches in the building. At the nearby All India Institute of Medical Studies, India's flag-ship research institute, ward windows are kept locked against gangs of monkeys, descendants of those who escaped from the institute's laboratories in the 1970s. Institute doctors said that years of experience and familiarity had enhanced simian ingenuity. They said patients in post-operative wards sometimes surfaced from the mists of anaesthesia to be greeted by a grinning, red-bottomed monkey sharing their bed or casually playing with their glucose or blood transfusion drip. Monkeys "arrested" for harassing people in the northern town of Patiala, 300km north of New Delhi, are locked up in a special jail for varying periods before being declared "fit" enough to be "released" back into society. Wildlife officials running the "monkey jail" said they were inundated with complaints about ruffian monkeys from across the state of Punjab but did not have enough personnel to make arrests. There are around 50,000 monkeys in Punjab, almost all wild, with the largest number in Patiala district. Their numbers have increased after monkey exports were banned in the late 1980s. Controlled by ringleaders, usually the biggest and most vicious of the pack, the monkey gangs chalk out fiefdoms in crowded neighbourhoods across the state and terrorise everyone around.' In further news from India, a]n elephant addicted to illegally brewed liquor has been on a rampage in [the]north-eastern state of Bihar, destroying houses in the villages where the hooch is being fermented... [T]he animal is lured out of the forest by fumes billowing into its habitat from the bootleg operations. It then smashes the stills, drinks the concoctions and goes on rampages looking for more. The villagers have nicknamed the drunken marauder "the excise commissioner" and have appealed to authorities to capture it. People in many Indian villages brew alcoholic beverages by using tree leaves and locally grown herbs because they cannot afford commercial liquor.

...Fifteen people have died after drinking bootleg liquor brewed from furniture varnish near the Indian city of Bombay. Police have launched a ...hunt for the owner of the country liquor bar which served the brew. Bootlegging is rampant in India because of huge demand for cheap liquor...

Drink up, we need cash, says [Russia's president.] RUSSIANS are likely to continue drinking themselves to death until they have a reason to live, says... [the] president, whose own drinking habits have been the subject of considerable speculation, [although the president] urged his vodka-loving

[comrades] at least to choose legal booze, which is healthier for both the drinker and the federal budget... “The state must do everything so that the people do not get poisoned by fake alcohol. And if the people spend their money on vodka, the money should go to the treasury, not to swindlers... We are resolved to turn off the tap of alcohol smuggling,” said [the president], whose government in recent days has blocked more than 1500 trucks carrying unlicensed alcohol from entering Russia through Georgia... Up to 50% of all alcoholic drinks checked by food inspectors in Russian stores and kiosks turned out to be unfit for consumption, “and we’re only checking a small portion”... The number of deaths from alcohol poisoning had tripled over the past five years... In some towns and villages the entire population is alcoholic... [The president]’s own health is widely rumoured to have suffered deeply from heavy drinking. In a recent memoir, the president’s former chief bodyguard... claimed [to have] routinely watered down [his] vodka to save the president from drinking himself to total ruin. Last December, the Russian government announced a major crackdown on the country’s huge alcohol industry and introduced a stricter system of controls in a bid to stem tax evasion... Those measures, which bring in more than 500 billion roubles... a month from alcohol taxes, would be intensified.

...The cost of alcohol and tobacco misuse in N[Z] is \$39 billion a year, says a health economist... [who] calls for tougher penalties for those who drink and commit crimes, greater liability for those who provide alcohol at social functions and an end to the transtasman liquor allowance... [But the] executive director of the Beer, Wine and Spirits Council... said the sums were “extraordinary numbers.” “...the approach is so theoretical as to be meaningless really... [T]he figure... makes no sense in our economy and I think we need to keep it in perspective. [The health economist] has essentially said if there was no misuse of alcohol, 30,000 people would still be alive and the economy would be better off by \$16 billion.” ...Treasury had carried out a similar study and arrived at \$500 million for the cost of alcohol misuse alone and “we don’t even agree with the Treasury figure.”

...In some sobering figures to add weight to the classic New Year resolution of giving up smoking and drinking[. doing so]... and investing the money for 30 years would add up to a \$250,000 nest egg, an Auckland investment adviser says.

...Festive season liquor bans used by authorities to control public drunkenness are probably illegal, say the police. The force’s legal advisers are warning police chiefs not to support such bans[during *THE SILLY SEASON*] because they are unlikely to withstand a legal challenge. Every year, authorities impose liquor bans on beaches and holiday resorts round the country during celebrations such as New Year’s Eve, Christmas, Guy Fawkes and Easter. Whangamata and Mt Maunganui are traditional trouble-spots where liquor bans are regularly imposed... [Last season] Mt Maunganui police had a calmer night than their colleagues in Whangamata, with most physical attacks coming from teenage girls seeking kisses from constables at midnight... Between Boxing Day and the[next] weekend 300 people were arrested in Whangamata – 106 alone on New Year’s Eve during the riot in which six police were injured. Two official complaints... [were] made to the Police Complaints Authority... [that police] control at Whangamata over the New Year was overzealous... [and] the officer in charge of the operation... received several calls from parents complaining about the treatment of their children by police during the riot. An Auckland[er]... who was at his holiday home near where the crowds rioted, [spoke of seeing] several incidents in which police took “excessive and unnecessary force, to say the least,” in controlling the crowd. [The Auckland] went outside his house about 1.30 am after hearing noise “associated with happy, partying people. They [the police] were using expletives to address the crowd, not telling them to go home or anything, just swearing at them and attacking with batons,”... [The Auckland] also saw one police officer approach a girl sitting on a fence and “belt her with a baton” before “charging off down the road to deal to someone else. It was disgusting. I was not there for the initial rioting but the incidents I saw were certainly not instigated by the crowd.” An Auckland [mother] said her son, who was arrested on the night of January 1 – the night after the riot – was told by police that it was payback time. The [mother], who did not want to be named... was concerned that[such] “unnecessary... police behaviour” caused the youths to rebel against police, despite the efforts... parents made to teach their children to respect the law. But... [the] Detective Inspector... defended the police action and said that if officers had not dispelled the 3000-strong crowd as they did, someone might have been killed... Police feared for their lives during the riot, which lasted longer than an hour... About 120 rioters went on a rampage in the town centre where they smashed bottles, tried to break into shops, and armed themselves with road signs, fence posts, metal standards, and the remains of a destroyed telephone box. Seven police vehicles had their tyres slashed and windcreens smashed, and a real estate business had its windows broken. Finally, the angry crowd vented its anger at the break-up of their “celebrations” by throwing bottles at the police station at the other end of town... [The commander] acknowledged that some bystanders, “other than those being targeted” may have been “on the receiving end” of police batons but said they would have been warned by police... first. “Once the decision is made to have a baton charge the people in the area are told to get off the street. People living in the area have assured us they heard that command before police moved in... Some people have said they stood their ground because they were doing no wrong, but... [we] cannot be blamed. It’s common that young persons give an account of the situation to their parents that differs markedly from the police account of events,”... Most of the 300 arrested[. some of whom]... came from as far away as Christchurch ...though “a good 90[%]” were from Auckland... signed forms admitting their guilt... And in Auckland – the boredom finally got to everyone as shortly after midnight the inevitable fight broke out in Aotea Square... The police moved in and the square cleared... [Things have] changed... much in Auckland since... [an] ill-fated concert in the square a[number of] years’ ago... Round Auckland, police impose liquor bans at Takapuna Beach on the North Shore, Mission Bay in the eastern suburbs or Piha in West Auckland. Anywhere that large numbers of young people drink and cause trouble can and have been subjected to a liquor ban. The legal opinion has widespread repercussions for local authorities attempting to control crowds drinking and causing trouble. Although liquor bans failed to deter people drinking in public at holiday spots last New Year, [and a ‘fulltime ban on alcohol in outdoor places in Gore – to counter young “hoons” (or boggins) who get drunk and cruise the streets in their cars – didn’t stop out-door drinking by teens’ (or a ‘mother buying a large volume of alcohol for her 16-year-old son and mates, who later lost control of their vehicle, crashed through a fence and killed a young boy playing in the front yard of his home’)], [police said afterwards that they were an effective tool if there were enough officers to enforce them. The legal opinion hinged on whether the festive season was a public event. Under local government legislation, bans can be imposed only on public events, functions or gatherings. The... Criminal Bar Association... said it was ironic that the police were raising the issue when civil libertarians seemed unconcerned about the legality of the bans... [Lawyer]s had raised the issue with clients charged in connection with the bans, but challenging the prohibition would be costly for such a minor offence. A group of Hamilton hoteliers yesterday failed to have a liquor ban imposed on inner-city streets from December 19 to January 1. A Hamilton City Council committee decided it had no legal power to implement it. The Hamilton Hospitality Group had argued that people gathering in the central city to celebrate constituted a public gathering. [But] a police regional legal adviser... said the council had correctly interpreted the legislation. “No application for such a ban should be made other than for one-off events... Obviously the end result if the bans are tested and shown to be illegal could reflect badly on police... [who], as upholders of the law, must be seen to be acting within it.” The... committee recommended that the ban apply to Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, and on New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day. However, the police national legal adviser... said it was debatable whether all of these days qualified as “events.” Police would not be able to enforce blanket bans, such as the December 13 to January 6 ban imposed by... Rotorua District Council last year... Hamilton[’s] council is likely to approach the Local Government Association to gauge members’ support for lobbying for a legislative change to... give councils... [more] power... to control drinking in public places.

...[Politicians and local bodies are seeking a law change after a court ruled that councils do not have the power to impose long-term liquor bans. Gore’s attempt to keep its main street free of drunks received a set back after a 23-year-old challenged a bylaw that permanently banned alcohol consumption in the area. The 23-year-old had been charged with consuming liquor in public. Two years ago, Parliament passed a law allowing councils to ban drinking in public places for up to 24 hours during the holiday periods or for specific events. Nelson’s National MP said the current law was a “recipe for drunken

riots” and together with Southland’s National MP – the Minister of Health – was proposing a law change to give police and councils more power to control the problem, by reinstating drinking bylaws. “We don’t dispute the court’s ruling. We think the law is wrong. We think the right of people to live in a civilised town is more important than the right to drink in a public place.” The MPs hoped to introduce the legislation to Parliament next month. The Auckland City Council is also seeking the power to impose long-term liquor bans. Last October, its regulatory committee adopted a recommendation to permanently ban the consumption of alcohol in selected public places, but recognised that changes to legislation would be needed. Tauranga’s mayor said the present legislation was wrong and Gore should be congratulated for its stance. Tauranga was also seeking the power to impose long-term liquor bans. The mayor said it would be a tool in helping to prevent the hooliganism and drunkenness that had marred previous New Year celebrations at Mt Maunganui. “I can’t act the goat waiting around. We need to get on with it.” The Gore District Council chief executive was very disappointed with the judge’s decision. The main street had quietened down since the bylaw. “The bylaw served a good purpose.” The council had not fought the legal challenge because it knew the bylaw was on “shaky ground.” Gore would seek support from other councils to lobby for a change to the law. The Local Government NZ acting chief executive said Gore had erred by making its ban too extensive. “They tried to deal with an issue that was upsetting the community and passed a bylaw that was invalid.” Wanganui has had a liquor ban on its main street for six months which the district council environmental services manager said had helped to reduce the amount of drunken crime in the town. The manager said Wanganui’s ban would have to be reassessed in the wake of the Gore District Court decision.’]

...Police patrolling the beach resort of Whangamata this New Year may be backed by the Army. A hardline strategy targeting hoons and underage drinkers, and featuring a civilian support network... [plus] the possibility of Army personnel staffing first aid stations... was unveiled yesterday. Road blocks will be set up on all routes into town... and local volunteers will be used as eyes and ears to report potential trouble to the police[... who]... promise “zero-tolerance”... Police would use whatever means they could to turn away city youths bent on causing trouble in the town... “We want the decent people... to have a good time, and we don’t want the undesirable scumbags ruining it for everyone else,”... [declared the] Hamilton Senior Sergeant... responsible for the festive season operation on the Coromandel Peninsula, [who also] said the strategy should prevent a repeat of last year’s riot. “We will plan for the worst, but we don’t expect it to happen... The idea is to have a high and visible police presence...” ...A proposal to ban liquor in all public places from December 28 until New Year’s Day will be considered by the Thames-Coromandel District Council this month. Until now the ban has covered just some reserves.

...A police plan to have the Army help at holiday troublespot Whangamata at New Year may fail – soldiers will be on holiday themselves... [Furthermore], yesterday... the Auckland Council for Civil Liberties... warned Whangamata police that their plan for road-blocks may result in “scruffy-looking kids... having a good time” being singled out... All of Whangamata will be under a liquor ban between December 28 and 31... The unprecedented sweeping prohibition – which excludes licensed premises – ...[includes the installation of security] floodlights... at Williamson Park, where last year’s riot began... [O]ther centres would watch the full-scale liquor ban to see if it worked... At Mt Maunganui... the seasonal liquor ban will start on Boxing Day and... lift... on the morning of January 5. It... [only applies] to specific streets and beach areas between 3 pm and 3 am.

...Undercover police... will mingle with crowds to identify and remove troublemakers from traditional New Year party spots this week... People found with alcohol on the streets... [of] Whangamata... could be arrested, though it was likely a more passive approach would be taken at first... Police at Mt Maunganui would also use the tactic. The Mount had been[relatively] trouble-free for three years, but police said there was always potential for drunk people to turn nasty... Police have also enlisted the co-operation of hoteliers and Dominion Breweries. On New Year’s Eve hotels will only sell beer in plastic bottles and DB is encouraging people to buy beer in plastic bottles by selling it at special rates. Nelson police hope the peaceful festivities of recent years will continue. Special operations[will be] set up for Nelson city, Takaka... and[other] traditional holiday spots. The Gathering, an annual dance party[for ‘8000 people’], will again be held at Takaka... [I]t had become [an alcohol-free,] family oriented event in recent years and no trouble was expected. Queenstown and nearby Wanaka, where riots were once an annual event, were also expecting... [a] reasonably trouble-free New Year’s Eve party. Sixty-four officers, up from the standard 30, would be on duty in Queenstown[where]... 6000-odd... young people... [congregated last] New Year... Hotels now had to close [at] 2.30am and have their patrons out by 3am which would help police keep control... [■ A] search is on for a concert venue in the Bay of Islands to deter New Year’s Eve mayhem in Paihia, rumoured to be this year’s party hotspot for young Aucklanders. The Mayor of the Far North... was disappointed that the Waitangi National Trust Board had turned down a request for a concert to be held in the Bledisloe Domain at Haruru Falls, 4km west of Paihia... [T]he trust had “categorically” refused allowing the domain... used as sportsfields, to be the site of a rock concert with alcohol consumption permitted. [The mayor] said... the... community should provide a controlled venue for youth, and... would do her best to find an alternative.

...Auckland police will help... to maintain law and order in Northland on New Year’s Eve... Additional police have already started arriving in the Bay of Islands... [L]iquor bans would be in force in some places and the police would deal with any breaches... The organiser of the Buzz 98 concert... said thousands of tickets had been sold. Free shuttle buses will run between the concert and Paihia, security guards will patrol the... site.

...Police expect a crowd of up to 15,000 to attend the Rotorua New Year’s Eve Mardi Gras tonight, and they warn that an alcohol ban will be tightly enforced... Experience had shown that strict enforcement of the liquor ban prevented problems later in the night... By yesterday, police had arrested more than 30 people for breaching the ban... [at] Mt Maunganui, where another 15,000 people are expected for New Year’s Eve celebrations... most of those charged were out-of-towners, but ignorance was no excuse... [Incidentally, young gals] are more at risk of being raped in the festive season... Parties, alcohol and teenage miscommunication all increased the risk of sexual assault... “In the U[S] it’s called ‘date rape,’ but here... we most often see ‘party rape,’ where [gals] aged between 14 and 24 are sexually assaulted at parties by young [guys] they know in a social situation. More than 50[%] of teenage... victims are raped in that kind of circumstance... It is also important that [young gals] know they have the right to set sexual limits, and to communicate those limits assertively.” ...A recent survey showed that one in three [young guys] thought it permissible to force a girl to have sex... Rape Crisis says alcohol is involved in many situations where sexual assault occurs, and warns young people to stay sober. “Nobody can give informed consent about sexual activity if they are very drunk. And if informed consent isn’t present, then it’s rape.”

...Stirring from sleep after the... celebrations, perspiring profusely with head hammering, you could be forgiven for praying that flu has struck. You went, you danced... you drank, you drank some more and now you are about to experience The Hangover From Hell. According to... [a] psychologist... who conducted test studies on a group of university students, as long as 16 hours can elapse before complete recovery... Will there ever be an end to the timeless quest for the holy grail of hangover cures? ...The biblical book of Genesis indicates that Noah [(who allegedly ‘introduced grape growing’)] may have been an early sufferer... It’s not recorded if... Noah... was the first to wear thinner the time-honoured cliché of “never, ever, ever again.” A hangover is particularly well described in the German word katzenjammer, literally translated as “wailing of cats”. Sweden’s hont i haret (or pain in the roots of the hair) and Norway’s Jeg har tommermen (carpenters in my head) sound horribly familiar. With most people happy to brag about their tried and tested cures, the Internet has become a haven for boffins, geeks, and freaks. For anybody sober enough to surf and seek highly dubious cures and concoctions, this is the place for you. The Haitian voodoo cure of sticking 13 black-headed pins in the cork of the bottle that gave you the hangover is an interesting one. Or how about the ancient Egyptian cure of drinking a couple of pints of cabbage water or the Chinese recommendation of a small serving of horse brain the next morning. The Romans tried powdered pumice stone, roasted boar’s lung and screech owl eggs which may cure a hangover but must play havoc with one’s digestion. The Japanese have been known to wear gauze surgical masks soaked in sake and in the Netherlands, sheep’s trotters, cow’s livers and oatmeal boiled for six hours, strained and

drunk as a soup is apparently popular. Many hangover cures have origins in transference magic... For example, if you rubbed a snail or slug over your forehead nine times, then threw it as far as possible, the hangover would disappear. Similarly it was believed that if you threw up over a frog and then threw the frog as far away as possible, your hangover went with it... A survey conducted by US-based researchers this year showed 75[%] of the adult population regularly consumed alcohol, with half of those surveyed admitting to regular over-indulgence giving the average adult a hangover every 12 days... Bayer's Consumer Care Division... discovered 52[%] of sufferers purchase packaged remedies. Further research resulted in the production of Alka-Seltzer XS, launched in Britain last [year]... The product still uses the famous "plink plink fizz" formula of the original Alka-Seltzer invented almost 70 years ago, but with the addition of old standards such as caffeine and paracetamol for extra effect... A [TV] and poster campaign aimed at reaching casualties of... New Year over-indulgence features a languid, green around the gills, cartoon-like worm slumped at the bottom of a tequila bottle. The bottle is situated next to an effervescent glass of water containing the product and ends with the caption, "Akla-Seltzer XS. When you've had one too many." ...[Incidentally, the] Apple and Pear Marketing Board has told [TV] stations not to broadcast its Fresh-up fruit juice advertisement following the deaths of two [people] who jumped from waterfalls last Friday. The ad... features rugby league players-cum-[TV] show hosts... jumping off the Hunua Falls, east of Papakura, in pursuit of a can of fruit juice. Both emerge unscathed[and one says: 'It's gotta be good for you'], but a sign at the falls warns that 13 have died attempting the jump, and another life was claimed on Boxing Day. A spokes[person for TVNZ]... said about 15 viewers had called at the weekend suggesting the ad... be stopped out of respect for the families of the dead and staff had passed that information on to the advertiser. Residents near Hunua Falls had also started a petition to take the... ad... off air.

...A 22-year-old... who was killed jumping 30m from the top of Hunua Falls... ignored a sign that said 13 people had been killed doing the same thing, say South Auckland police... [The 22-year-old] failed to resurface after... jump[ing] fully clothed and hand-in-hand with a girlfriend. [The 22-year-old] was named as *Justin Kevin Cunningham*, of Waiuku. The [girlfriend] resurfaced but hurt her back striking the water... The pair were part of a group of four day-trippers, all in their early 20s, who were visiting the popular... picnic spot when the accident happened about 4 pm. Police were informed of the accident about 4.40 pm... The two jumpers were inspired after watching a boy leap from the top... One of their friends... tried to talk them out of it... The [22-year-old] was one of two people killed in waterfall jumps [on Boxing Day]... The other waterfall death occurred when a 28-year-old Ngaruawahai [resident] jumped 55m from the top of Bridal Veil Falls, just south of Raglan. His name ha[s still] not been released...

A European tourist couple captured on video-tape... the fatal plunge... down Bridal Veil Falls... *Aranui Shane Herangi*... leapt... to his death about midday on Friday from the top of the falls, a popular tourist attraction... Police seized the footage which will be presented at the coroner's inquest into the death.

...*Lemmings flock to waterfall for leap of lifetime* Daredevils are continuing to leap over the Hunua Falls, despite the loss of 14 lives there already. Yesterday a 21-year-old... laughed in the face of death and hurled himself over the waterfalls... to the cheers of a crowd of picnickers... [It] had made the jump for... "fun" and... the... "challenge"... On Boxing Day, a Waiuku [resident]... was killed jumping from the same spot... Two other [guys] were fatally injured in waterfall dives over the past five days, at... Maraetotara Falls near Havelock North... and... Bridal Veil Falls... - 1997

A Hamilton [resident] fell 55m to his death at up to 200 km/h yesterday when [it] jumped off a viewing platform at Bridal Veil Falls... Four friends watched in horror from below as the 25-year-old climbed on to the platform's hand-rail and leaped. They pulled him from the 3m-deep water and called police and a rescue helicopter but could not revive him. [A Senior Constable... of Raglan, said the [25-year-old] had been drinking and left his friends without explanation minutes before jumping. [The 25-year-old] was the second to jump from the platform and die in a week. On Boxing Day, Aranui Shane Herangi... who had also been drinking, stood on the rail for about a minute before jumping. [The Senior Sergeant... said there were no confirmed reports of anyone surviving the Bridal Veil Falls jump. "It's two down and two dead. If people jump off there, they're obviously wanting to commit suicide." Fourteen people have died jumping off the Hunua Falls...

The Hunua Falls may become off-limits to the public because of the "crazy" leaps over the waterfall. The Auckland Regional Council is considering closing the picturesque falls... to stop daredevils leaping over the 30m drop... The regional parks manager... said a full-time ranger was now patrolling the area to prevent people jumping. However, if the warnings were ignored, the council would have to consider closing the tracks leading to the falls... [The regional parks manager] was disturbed to hear from rangers that "people were almost sitting there waiting for someone to jump." "We're not going to sit back and allow this to develop into a activity." • An Auckland[er]... *David Zulkarnain Zakaria*, aged 24... drowned at Okere Falls, near Rotorua, [after it]... apparently jumped from a 2m bank into the water below the falls about 2 pm... on New Year's Eve.

...A total of 147 people died in New Year's Eve celebrations across Colombia, most of them young people who drank too much... In El Salvador, 38 people died and 295 were injured in festivities. But in Brazil, where nearly 1.5 million people crowded on to Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana beach to ring in the new year, there were no serious injuries, although in Buenos Aires 72 people were treated for eye injuries after being hit with firecrackers or champagne corks... A fire... ripped through a disco packed with... some 1000... rich young partygoers in the Peruvian capital, killing up to 26 people a... caged lion... and a Bengal tiger... At least 50 [people] were injured and some were in hospital in critical condition... [The] head of Peru's volunteer firefighting force, said the blaze that devastated the Utopia disco appeared to have been sparked by... an apparent miscalculation by the bar[tender, who] set the ceiling on fire... [while] "doing demonstrations with fire and pyrotechnics" that... got out of hand... Police earlier said a plume of flames from a fire-eater set the curtains on fire and spread. One witness... said the blaze may have been started by the staff's trick of dousing ashtrays on the bar with gasoline and setting them aflame. Although Utopia was in Lima's premier shopping centre, favoured by the wealthy elite, [Lima's Mayor... said it had no building or operating licence... [T]he dark club... was a disaster waiting to happen... it... had no signs to emergency exits and no fire extinguishers... Tearful relatives, some clutching photographs of their loved ones, went to the Lima morgue desperate for news. The scenes were a painful reminder of a devastating blaze in December when more than 300 people died... [The mayor] said Peru, a poor Andean nation where more than half the population lives on US\$1.25... a day or less, appeared to be deaf to fire safety precautions. December's fire – Peru's worst blaze – started with an explosion at a shop where fireworks popular at New Year's parties were on sale.

...Last month 24 drunks died from frostbite, while in November the figure was 66, a threefold increase over the same period [of the previous year]. Victims were too drunk to feel the onset of frostbite... "In winter we turn into a rescue service," said... the head of Moscow's Detoxification Tank 6, one of 28 in Moscow... The detoxification tanks... maintain order by clearing public places of drunks, and also ensure the drunk is prevented from harm... Tonight's latest edition – an unemployed [person] in his 30s with scars all over his torso – ...was sleeping without a coat, hat or gloves, but, fortified by vodka, was oblivious to the cold... If all goes to plan, the [drunk] and his cell mates will emerge sober, repentant and 83 roubles... poorer the next morning. Nobody is let out before a doctor signs official papers confirming the client's sobriety... [In local news, a youth] is facing a life sentence for being in the wrong place at the wrong time on New Year's Eve. The Katikati resident, who played Jesus in a recent church production, lost four teeth in a police baton attack at Waihi Beach... Months of work are ahead, beginning with removal of nerves in the gums and the stumps of the damaged teeth. Eventually a plate will replace the missing teeth... [Jesus] had gone to the beach with a group of friends from the Katikati Baptist Church Youth Group. "We were sitting on the beach taking no part in what was going on. When we realised the riot was moving our way, some of my friends left and I went looking for another guy who had come with us. I saw him caught up in the riot and went across in front of police to get him out. That was when I heard someone yell 'run' so I started to run. I looked around and two police[officers] were springing

towards me... One hit me in the face and they kicked me enough to make me fall down. I saw them a bit later and said they had broken my teeth and could I have their numbers so I could make a complaint,”... They used an obscene colloquialism to tell him to go away. “I always thought the police were there for our protection. I can understand they thought I was part of the riot, but there was no reason to hit me in the face.”

...Litres of alcohol were poured down Tauranga and Mt Maunganui drains at the weekend as year-round liquor bans came into force... The bans previously applied o[nly o]ver the Christmas and New Year period... Several dozen [youths] were caught drinking in liquor-free areas... Their alcohol was confiscated and most were given a warning rather than a \$500 fine. “...from here on in there won’t be the same sort of leniency...”

...Taking risks is an inherent part of growing up, but young people are now taking higher risks, [the]... Minister of Youth Affairs... told youth councillors in Auckland yesterday... [I]t was unclear whether this was a result of added pressure on young N[Z]ers or media influence. It was most likely a combination of many factors... [The minister] was... particularly... concerned about the level of risk-taking behaviour... by young [guys], and was interested in ways to reduce the harm they did to themselves and others... “We need to recognize and support the normal rites of passage... but not when it translates into damaging, anti-social behaviour which hurts everyone else.” ...Statistics were sobering on the consequences: •... Young [guys] were twice as likely to be killed or injured as young [gals. • Guys] aged 18 to 24 were overrepresented among heavy drinkers.

...As a... hilarious after-dinner speech impresario... once quipped: “I’m a member of Alcoholics Anonymous – I still drink, but under a different name!” ...But... the unavoidable truth is that heavy drinking is no laughing matter. For although boozing improves conversation and makes even an awayday to Mansfield palatable, it also destroys lives, families and careers, leaving otherwise sane people’s reputations in tatters. One only has to look at the celebrities who choose to tread the lonely road of the alcoholic for confirmation... But of course, it’s not only overpaid celebrities who turn to the demon drink for solace... [O]ne in 60 Brits are alcohol-dependent... – ...incapable of performing normal everyday functions without turning to the... grog for assistance... – that’s a million loser drunks... [Brits] spent £28 billion on grog... last year... We also lost 14 million working days nursing hangovers, costing business over £964 million. A quarter of all UK [guy] hospital admissions are booze-related. They cost the NHS £164 million a year, and 33,000 die. Here’s how their bodies cry “last orders!” ...Alcohol is a diuretic, and prolonged, heavy drinking causes kidney failure... Treatable only by removal, and only one in four sufferers lives more than five years... Occasional pains in your upper right abdomen might indicate an enlarged, fatty liver. One in three sufferers go on to develop cirrhosis: there are 4,000 reported incidents and 3,000 UK deaths per year. Worryingly, a mere two pints of beer a day can prompt cirrhosis... Heavily abused livers show bands of gnarled, functionless scar tissue... [Gout is caused] because the body can no longer metabolise uric acid, which is deposited as “tophi” in the joints. As well as causing arthritic agony, urates are eventually deposited in the skin and ears, rendering victims as attractive as old onion bags... Alcoholic hepatitis and metastatic liver cancer typically develop after 5 to 15 years of dedicated heavy drinking. Both promote accumulation of yellow-brown pigment in the blood. This gives the skin and eye-whites a grim yellow tinge, plus tiny, red spider “naevi” marks... Increased blood pressure – hypertension – affects nearly all alcoholics. Like a flesh balloon, the hooter becomes inflated with pressurised clarat, peeling open the pores. Bloating capillaries also promote the trademark deep purple complexion of the alcoholic and “grog blossom” acne. Then there’s oedema, where the face swells through fluid retention... The irritant effect of alcohol causes gastritis and ulcers, which affect 13[%] of all Brits. Intense stomach pain is made worse by eating, and excruciating if aspirin is taken to quash pain... Aspirin[also] increases alcohol’s effect... Pain in the upper abdomen, loss of appetite and weight loss could mark you out as one of the 7,000 annual UK pancreatitis victims. By then, it will be too late for 90[%] of sufferers, as tumours will have already spread into the liver and lungs... [‘Heavy drinkers may experience damage to the central nervous system, while the body’s ability to use vitamins and produce disease-fighting white blood cells is impaired.’ A]lcoholics often suffer from three grim vitamin B1 deficiencies: beriberi, Wernicke’s encephalopathy and Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome... Confabulation – invention of stories – regularly occurs to make up for tragic gaps in short-term memory... [A] hefty... *drinking bout [destroys] 10,000 brain cells* Considering a human brain consists of around 100 billion nerve cells, it’s tempting to think that such a piffling amount won’t be missed. Don’t be fooled: prolonged and severe exposure to alcohol’s neurotoxic effects will cause serious degeneration... [In comparison, being punched is thought to destroy] *7,000 brain cells... The Physician And Sports Medicine* concluded that almost half of... 42 boxers... analysed had borderline brain atrophy. More immediate fatalities occur, however, from blood clots under the membrane around the brain. This increases pressure and eventually forces the brain down onto the brain stem, shutting down all... vital functions. [Another interesting comparison is that *h]eading a football[destroys] 4,000 brain cells* After a two-year study, [a]Dutch neurologist... drew the predictable conclusion that footballers suffer from impaired memory and poor recognition skills, when compared to elite swimmers and athletes. Heading around 1,500 times a season, defenders are hardest hit. “It’s like taking a 175lb battering,”... [Returning to the topic of] alcohol... some 70[%] of all homicides are associated in some way with [it], as are 70[%] of all beatings, stabbings, and half of all assaults in the home... According to Alcohol Concern, 65[%] of all suicide victims had been on the grog when they finally reached for the noose, not to mention half of all those who drowned, 39[%] who burned to death and 15[%] of road fatalities... [USers] in the Twenties demanded quantity, not quality, of booze. “Mean whiskey” often incorporated rubbing alcohol, kerosine, paint thinner, bleach, embalming fluid, chemical fertilisers and manure for colour. By the thirties, blindness, palsy and partial paralysis had afflicted thousands. Despite this, ten million gallons were being downed every year... A[US]n aborigines cope with the soul-sapping openness of the outback by drinking bitter formic acid from the abdomen of dead red ants. When mixed with pulped gum-tree bark, “Ubo Gobo” induces seizures, and helps rookies achieve Dreamtime status... [However, modern aborigines are more likely to *cope* by drinking alcohol. Prior to 1967, ‘aborigines had no vote and were forbidden alcohol. But with citizenship came entitlement to the national minimum wage. Graziers pared their workforce by the tens of thousands. Aboriginal people were left in a cultural no-person’s-land, unable to adapt to the white person’s ways and unable to return to their own. Many drifted to squalid “camps” in outback towns like Alice Springs. Chronically unemployed, anchored to social welfare, they fought off boredom with boozing and brawling. In three decades, a once-proud people has been nearly destroyed by drunken dissipation.’] Alarmingly, alcohol suppresses testosterone... [(reducing sexual desire...)], yet increases oestrogen production – thus encouraging [guys] to lay down fat in feminine places. Many boozy [guys] are cruelly afflicted with gynaecomastia... meaning they grow[gal-like] tits... Although gurgling convinces [guys] that they are sexual Tyrannosauruses, constant alcohol intake actually shrinks testicles. A 1997 *Aceology Medical Journal* report found that 39[%] of alcoholics had decreased sperm count, while half had altered sperm motility... increasing the chances of fathering a child with birth defects... [Furthermore, ‘a hormonal imbalance can cause impotence’.] Rather like the sex act, drinking is shrouded in mystique, half-truths and just plain old bullshit... ■ Milk “lines the stomach” – FALSE... ■ Brandy [(which ‘takes 10 times as many grapes to make as for normal wine’)] “warms your cockles” – FALSE Spirits have no warming properties whatsoever; they actually increase blood flow to the skin, thus losing body heat... ■ Drinking gin prompts miscarriage – TRUE Long before the days of the back-street abortionist, [unwilling mothers] would hop in a steaming tub with a bottle of gin in the hope they would lose their unborn sprog. “Mother’s ruin” worked sometimes...

Being a father ‘harder than being a Prime Minister’... [A]fter his 16-year-old son... was arrested for being drunk and incapable[, an emotional PM] went ahead with a speech to black church leaders in Brighton... [The PM] made clear that his religious faith had kept him strong during family and political crises... [His son, who] had been out with friends celebrating the end of their GCSE exams[, was]... found by police lying on a pavement in London’s Leicester Square just before 11 pm on Wednesday local time. They were sufficiently worried about him to call an ambulance... The news travelled fast, some newspapers were tipped off and Downing St was telephoned about the incident in the early hours... The disclosure threatened to embarrass [the PM], coming only days after [it had] proposed tough new measures to allow the police to take action against drunken louts.

...Britain will seek to emulate Europe's cafe culture after the Government unveiled plans for the biggest shake-up of pub laws since the First World War[... when]... strict opening hours were imposed on bars across the nation to prevent factory workers getting drunk instead of furthering the war effort. Now the Labour Government is proposing much laxer licensing laws – allowing round the clock opening in some cases – for the new millennium as well as measures to tackle under-age drinking and antisocial drunks... Last year alone, Britons drank £12.3 billion... worth of beer on licensed premises and police then had to cope with 676,000 violent incidents on the streets outside... [P]olice will get tough new powers to be able to close premises which have become a focus for alcohol-related violence and disorder and locals will be consulted in advance.

...A 1.54m (5ft 1in) tall [gal] throwing a wobbly over getting the wrong drink is all it takes now to put the wind up [one bar-tender]. The 29-year-old from Wellington has been left shaken and unable to sleep since two [people] burst into the London pub where [the NZer] works and sprayed drinkers in the face with acid. [The]... assistant manager of the Cabbage Patch pub in Twickenham, approached the [offenders] and was punched to his knees... Talking to the *Weekend Herald* a week after the attack, [the NZer said it] could not forget what happened. "It was worse than a horror movie. Two guys... enjoying a birthday celebration... copped [acid] in the face full-on. Their skin was falling off. It... ate through the cloth. Their wounds were going green and bubbling." ...T[he victims] needed skin grafts and plastic surgery... Like thousands of other young N[Zers], the 29-year-old] sees London as a "brilliant place to earn money" and had planned to stay for another six months. But... £6... a hour was not enough to risk your life for, and his only wish was to come home... [The 29-year-old] and his fiancée ...f[rom] Tauranga, who was there during the attack, had been working in the bar for six weeks. They left jobs in the Barbican, a haunt for high-flying city workers, because they wanted a safer environment.

...['are drinking, violence and destruction of property the things we think of when we think of the Irish or St Patrick's Day?']

...There was green hair, leprechaun hats and shamrock face painting, but the most celebrated St Patrick's Day accessory was a frothy white moustache. It was a day for spinning tall tales, toasting Irish bloodlines (perceived or real) and meeting old friends... Ireland's honorary consul-general in Auckland... said the foot-tapping music, traditional dancing and inviting pubs made St Patrick's Day "good craic" – that is good times, friendship and enjoyment to the rest of us. Around 20[% of NZers claimed Irish ancestry... "Indeed, N[Z]ers are the new Irish." In recognition of the vast spread of Irish around the world, Irish Ministers of State go overseas to celebrate the day with immigrants. N[Z] was this year's destination... At the Muddy Farmer Irish Pub in central Auckland around 40 "Patricks" attempted to start a world record for the most Patricks in one place on St Patricks Day... [One] Patricia... was out with friends celebrating not just St Patrick's Day but her "41st" birthday... "We are very proud to be full Irish. It's like Christmas Day to us... and it just keeps getting bigger and bigger." Across the road St Patrick's Catholic Cathedral sported the green, white and orange ribbons of Ireland... It was a bonus day for the city's publicans, with the Irish bars bursting at the seams, while the student pub crawl organised to coincide with the celebrations visited other bars around town.

...*Drinking and students traditionally go together like bourbon and coke...* [A]s *annual Capping Week festivities rage*, [the NZ Herald]... *reports on efforts to battle booze on campus...* [A]n Alcohol Health Promotion officer for HealthCare Otago, is... involved in the North Dunedin Project, a community initiative urging binge drinkers to "Say Forget It" when challenged to a jug scull... And it will take some effort, for as [the officer] admits: "Otago has a reputation as a place to learn to drink." Its university's motto is A Degree in Distinction. Ironically... Distinction is also an ale made by Speights, an iconic brewery for the young southern [guy and gal] who might not make the distinction between working like a dog and drinking like a fish. However, the project, which started last June and also involves representatives from police, the district liquor licensing agency and Otago's student health unit, made some progress in March when new students got their first taste of orientation. One hall runs a mystery bus trip where the final destination is no surprise, a beer tent of circus proportions. "Last year they had 300 students and an astronomical 40 kegs of beer. This year we met the executive. They feared the trip might be cancelled but we talked about host responsibility and this year they only had 25 kegs,"... recording a minor victory[a keg holds 50 litres]. The]... Otago student health educator... concedes a percentage of students will continue to be binge drinkers. "These issues have to filter through before they get to university. When we go to secondary schools and ask leavers what their expectations are of orientation they say 'get pissed and get laid',"... Therefore the project team often attends seventh form "after ball" parties to try to explain the dangers... Dunedin publicans largely support the project... although "there is still the odd one that offers six doubles for \$10". The A[LAC] says it has ongoing problems in Waikato with pubs trying to lure new students with cheap deals... At Waikato, first year students in the halls are told "...Kegs are banned... because the implication is you have to finish it before you return it." ...[one ex-student] didn't quite find God... [while attending] the University of Canterbury in 1986, but... was a regular at Religion 101 lectures. It was assumed first year students would frequently appear at the gatherings described as "Sunday School" – Sunday's all-day drinking sessions. "...we drank every day but Tuesday." [Another ex-student] also has the occasionally vague memory of time at Ilam. "In my day we all drank heaps. I remember once a Japanese tour party went through the university during a massive session. They must have thought we were putting on some exhibition or play then all the blokes started chundering and dropping their pants. The bus took off pretty quick." Canterbury's student activities co-ordinator... says orientation is still massive "but it's a festival rather than a piss-up. We also have a re-orientation festival which promotes healthy lifestyles." Canterbury's capping ceremonies passed without incident last week, although it was held during term break when there were fewer students around. The [co-ordinator] says the... media continue to inquire about legendary campus drinking exploits but are generally disappointed... At Massey, once notorious for its Tour De Coma bicycle pub crawl and Soak Days (where unlucky students were covered in vomit and urine)[– and where students]... downed a 1500 litre non-alcoholic cocktail to make the record books... [– the] student social activities officer... added: "Our first-years don't drink as much as they used to..." ...Continuing research by Auckland University's Alcohol and Public Health Research Unit showed a greater proportion of young people were abstaining from alcohol although there is a hard core who are drinking more than four years ago... A change in student attitude was further illustrated by the Easter Tournament, an inter-varsity competition where in recent years sporting endeavours often took second place to the after match. In 1990 at Dunedin 1500 students rioted when a party turned ugly after the competitions. Victoria hosted – and won – the tournament this year and no arrests were made. "Since 1990 our mission has been to modify behaviour. Drinking games were outlawed and the competitors had to sign a code of behaviour," said[the NZ] Universities Sports Union event manager... "Social players are unwelcome. Auckland's contingent was down 130 – they're the ones that wanted only to drink beer." ...Auckland held its traditional inner city pub crawl last Thursday but the [students'] association social activities officer... said demand was steadily declining. "I'd have liked to have changed it to a cafe crawl but that would never have worked,"... The very thought of a cafe crawl grates with [a]former association president... "The student's association has become PC. They don't make a provision for drinking,"... [It] responded by establishing the Drinking Horn, Wild Parties, Quad Pyramids, Silly Games, Roger (Metaphorically) Anyone Who Gets In The Way Club two years ago... The club boasts 750 members... Campus drinking is a worldwide culture. A survey finds binge drinking among students is an issue in many countries... [However], drink-till-you-drop partying is practically unheard of in China. College students drink – and sometimes get drunk – but usually only on special occasions. Dorm rooms are jammed – people often sleep seven to a room – so dorm parties seem gratuitous. Says... a junior at Beijing University, the Harvard of China: "People here would say, 'Let's go to dinner, let's go to a movie, let's go roller skating.' For most people, drinking would not be their first choice for entertainment." Bars are geared more toward Westerners and affluent Chinese and are too expensive for most students. At the Hot Spot, a large Beijing disco with a mirrored ball and cage dancers, a bottle of Heineken costs \$7... China does not have a drinking age. Parents warn their children not to drink before a certain age. In a society where obedience of authority is heavily emphasised, many comply... Drinking always has been such a natural part of... Russian culture that for hundreds of years police officers gently guided drunk students home on St Tatyana's Day, a day dedicated to students... [An 18-year-old],

who studies economics at the Institute of Culture in Levanaberezhnoe... says beer and vodka are the drinks of choice, and are often drunk together. Theoretically, one must be at least 18 to buy alcohol, in reality, anyone can buy anything. But [a 22-year-old], who studies art history at the Institute of Culture, contends heavy drinking is more of a problem among older people. "Young people have hope for the future... Older people don't."

...Two thirds of Russian [guys] die drunk, often after a weekend of drinking. Commenting on a three-year study in Moscow, the Kommersant newspaper said: "Everyone is drunk: murderers and their victims, drownings, suicides and heart attack and ulcer victims."

...MORE Russians are drinking themselves to death than ever before... 20,000[have] died of alcohol poisoning... [so far] this year, up 50[%]...

The 26-year-old Czar of Russia, who would later be known as Peter the Great, went to England to learn how to Westernize his nation. The Czar was ensconced at a grand country home near the Deptford shipyards, where Peter performed manual labour in an effort to gain first-hand experience of the British genius for shipbuilding. The Czar had hoped to spend time with Isaac Newton, but Newton sent Edmund Halley in his stead. By all accounts, the English astronomer and the Czar became best friends, sharing passions both for knowledge and for brandy. For the duration of Peter's stay in England, Halley remained his scientific adviser and drinking partner. One disputed, although contemporary, account depicts Halley raucously pushing the Czar in a wheelbarrow in the dead of night. It was said that the two of them were inebriated, and that the escapade caused grave damage to the topiary hedges'...

Despite, or perhaps because of, Russia's economic crisis[vodka]... sales climbed more than 10[%]... in the first quarter... [S]ales of vodka and other hard liquor nationwide reached 495 million litres while Russians guzzled 815 million litres of beer... up 19[%] over the same period last year.

...[Siberians have been] told... to bring gifts of vodka for their gods to a big gathering today, but leave local moonshine at home... More than 150 people died in Buryatia, on the Mongolian border, from drinking Katanka – the local hooch – ...last year... [Incidentally,] Montana Wines has recalled three products from its sparkling wine range after glass particles were found in bottles at its Glen Innes winery in Auckland... The recall is a precaution... Only one in 10,000 bottles was likely to be affected... Consumers should check batch numbers... Batch numbers are 2 for the Millennium magnum, B09L12J9N and B09L13J9 for the Special Reserve 750ml batch and B02L11J9N, B02L12J9 and B02L12J9N for Bernadino.

...a [US] professor is erring on the side of caution when... [warning] that mixing alcohol and paracetamol can damage the liver... A[n A]uckland Hospital... liver specialist... said that while there was a theoretical risk in mixing the [2, alcohol]... drinkers who stuck to the prescribed dose of up to 4g of paracetamol a day were unlikely to develop liver disease... Other hangover cures also won approval. Aspirin is handled differently by the body to paracetamol, so the alcohol does not have a toxic effect. Codeine does not interact much with liquor, and anti-inflammatories are unlikely to do harm... [● USers] will soon see a message touting the health benefits of drinking wine alongside label warnings about possible hazards.

...Researchers in North Carolina believe they have unlocked the mystery of how an antioxidant found in grapes and red wine fights cancer. Their findings... conclude that the compound resveratrol, which acts like an antibiotic to protect grapes from fungus, may turn off a protein that guards cancer cells from cancer-fighting therapies such as chemotherapy. The finding might allow the compound itself to be used in cancer prevention and treatment... The benefits of drinking a glass of red wine have been touted over the past decade after the discovery of the "French paradox"...

A renowned French chateau is cashing in on studies showing the beneficial effects of wine by launching the world's first alcoholic health spa. Visitors... will be able to bathe in red grape juice, enjoy massages with grape pip oil and plaster their faces with wine-based creams. Above all, they can consume large quantities of food and wine safe in the knowledge – according to the owners – that they will become thinner and less prone to a range of fatal diseases... [Research shows that drinking] wine during a meal helps digestion and prevents food turning into fat... Tourists are already lining up to pay \$1240 for a two-day stay as soon as the wine spa opens next May. The so-called French paradox – people from the south-west of France live longer and suffer fewer heart attacks than almost anyone else, despite their celebrated appetite for alcohol – has played a key role in promoting wine. But [the chateau's owner] has taken the promotion a step further. In 1994, her daughter... launched a company that produces wine-based creams after academics at Bordeaux University discovered the fruit can prevent wrinkles in the same way that it keeps arteries supple... The firm's turnover has grown from \$880,000 in 1996 to a likely \$150 million this year.

...French politicians tried to shower their secret service agents with gifts of cognac and fine wine just weeks after they had been sentenced for the Rainbow Warrior bombing, newly released documents reveal. A previously top-secret dossier shows that a diplomatic spat broke out when N[Z] prison officials refused to give... [the agents] the Christmas gifts sent from Paris... [T]he French External Relations Minister, [who]... sent the agents a case of Bordeaux region wine... was upset when [it] found out... His complaint, sent via the NZ Embassy in Paris in January 1986, was knocked back with a terse response informing him that the pair would not be given special treatment. "Alcoholic beverages are under no circumstances allowed into N[Z] prisons," said a cable to Paris. "Our authorities could not permit an exception in a matter which is so sensitive in N[Z]."

...It should not surprise the French that we prefer the taste of plums and figs to dirt and mould. But their winemakers, Gallic noses well out of joint and pointing straight to the sky, claim to be abandoning their treasured traditions to compete with our exports to Britain. The French say they are "dumbing down" their wines in an attempt to win back market share because on the other side of the English Channel soft and fruity A[ustralas]ian... varieties are flying off shelves. The *Herald* asked three knowledgeable wine buffs to rate four wines from N[Z] and France. The local ones, with their complex, clean and fruity flavours, won the day. The French wine was compared to medicine, soil and that stuff left on the bottom of your shoes after walking through a farmyard. But the experts agreed that the finest French wine, which can cost four to five times as much as those they sampled yesterday, would stand up favourably against anything produced in N[Z]... The panel said N[Z] winemakers took advantage of modern technology[(for example, they have begun to introduce plastic corks – in Germany alone, 'losses due to "corked" bottles is put at 5 billion marks a year')], while in France, winemakers tended to cling to the methods used for generations. Here, wine is stored in stainless steel vats. In France, it sometimes sits in old wooden tubs lined with mould. While N[Z]ers and Britons find the almost-rotten flavour unappealing, the French love its earthy character... Americans prefer an oilier sauvignon blanc than the crisp variety produced here. A[US]ns like bold, jammy reds... French wines had terrior, a personality resulting from the combination of soil, climate and exposure. While N[Z] produced some great wines, it did not yet produce fine wines, the rare finds that were as unforgettable as your first kiss.

... "Wine is a constant proof that god loves us and likes to see us happy," said Benjamin Franklin... This amusing quotation[– which contradicts the one which goes: 'People drink less when they're having fun' –] adorns the cover of the wine list at the new *Partingtons Winery*...

The surrendering of a gold medal and trophy by [a NZ estate] because of inconsistent bottlings of its 1997 Shiraz raises the question of how trustworthy medals are as a guide for wine drinkers. First, we should recognise that a hint of trouble should not call all wine companies into question. Even in the Lintz case, no rules were broken nor was the wine labelled illegally. Yet the disappointment of finding that a gold-medal wine is not the same as one being sold with the same label highlights the issue of batch variation. The larger companies bottle popular labels more than once a year. It is not possible to blend hundreds of thousands of litres to make one huge batch for consistency. Batches are bottled as required. Tank One may have come from a separate vineyard from Tank Two but they may both be 1998 Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc. By definition they are the same... but Tank One may have won a medal while Tank Two never got near a judge. This is inevitable with big companies. In the much smaller Lintz case the batches could have been blended and one consistent brew bottled. Gold medals are, of course, the opinion of a set of judges – usually three – who assess one bottle of the wine on one day of its life. Judges with international wine-tasting experience should be able to assess wines consistently. Yet one competition may give a wine a gold medal and another set of judges a few weeks later may award a bronze – or nothing. The people are different, the bottle of wine is different and the judging environment and time are different. The variations in results are not necessarily to do with batches or the ability or integrity of the judges. Wine is a living and changing product, or award variations may lie in

something as simple as the place of the wine in the line-up. One wine may do better as a powerful statement when it follows a light, elegant sample. Coming after another big, mouth-filling wine may not show it off as well... Entry conditions in wine competitions should minimise abuse... Quantities are randomly audited in the Air N[Z] Wine Awards. But the minimum entry requirement is just 50 cases, which will not go far among thousands of wine outlets and restaurants for a gold-medal winner. The Liquorland Royal Easter Wine Show now requires a minimum of 500 cases to be available for any entry selling at less than \$15 a bottle... and above \$25 at least 100 cases... As drinkers we have to accept that gold medals are just a guide... The gold-medal bottle we buy may have been bounced on a truck for days and stood in the sun for a few weeks in a wine shop, while the bottle that went to the judges had white-glove handling... Many a popular wine selling tens of thousands of bottles can manage no more than a bronze medal. Conversely, gold-medal wines are not liked by everyone. So we accept the medal lists with a grain of salt and remind ourselves that wine is a personal taste anyway and serving it with different foods can make a difference to how well it shows.

...Winemakers face random testing of their vintages and expulsion from wine shows for five years if the product is not the same as one entered in awards. A new rule in this year's Royal Easter Wine Show has spelled out that vintners must ensure that the wines they enter in the awards are the same as those for sale. The condition follows cases in the past three years in which two wineries, Coopers Creek and the Lintz Estate, were found to have won awards for wines that differed from those sold in shops. The Royal Easter Wine Show director... said yesterday that... nothing in the previous rules had stipulated award wines had to be the same as those for sale. "Wine is all about integrity and therefore the industry and its competitions must similarly be based on integrity and keeping faith with consumers." The rule was developed with the help of the Wine Institute, which plans to bring in tougher auditing and record-keeping standards... this year... Despite problems with certain wines, the industry has not suffered from negative publicity. Figures released yesterday showed that in the six months to December, N[Z] wine exports grew 15[%] in volume, to 9 million litres, worth \$67.7 million – a 40[%] jump in value. "With every dollar of sale overseas it becomes more important because if we don't get the right systems in place then everything can be placed at risk." ...Judging for the competition will be conducted this weekend.

...Wine a 'win-win-win' for brewer... Brewing giant Foster's \$A2.6 billion... acquisition of Napa Valley-based Beringer Wine Estates is part of a plan to protect the company from slowing growth in its traditional beer market. [Foster's c]hief executive... said on A[US]n television yesterday the purchase was not a gamble. "Now wine, especially premium wine, is in growth mode all around the world, and we've got a great premium company with Mildara here in A[US],"... Foster's bought Mildara Blass winery about six years ago in its first foray into wine... [The chief executive] said the move into the U[S]... gave Foster's an entry to a market with huge scope for growth, expanding its presence in the wine industry, and created the first truly global alcoholic beverage company... "Together they [Mildara and Beringer] will form the new growth engine of Foster's, so this is not a [move to] better-the-company at all. This is a make-the-company[move]... When I look at the US market as a whole, with 8 litres [of wine consumption] per capita, A[US] at 19 litres per capita, and France at 50 litres, the prospects are outstanding." ...the company did not pay too much for Beringer... Foster's bought the opportunity to spread its risk. "Foster's lessens its dependence on... A[US]... this economy, and... on... beer..."

...IN Great South Rd, Otahuhu, there's a world-class example of Art Deco industrial design still in working order. It is the Ziemann Brewhaus, a hall of soaring ceilings, Bauhaus windows and terrazzo floors and walls which is the heart of Dominion Breweries' Waitemata Brewery and which has been in constant use for almost 70 years. Installed in 1934, it was so well maintained that in 1965, [the manufacturer] offered to buy it back. It was used for the first brews of Heineken before demand forced DB to build bigger facilities, and on most days you will still see trial batches of beer settling in one of the four grand copper tuns (brewing vats)... But for the computer control desk in one corner, the brewhaus is largely as it was when... [DB's] head brewer and technical director, oversaw its opening four years after DB was incorporated in 1930... His legacy is the continuous fermentation process... patented in 1956, an internationally acclaimed brewing system which allows... continuous production and eliminates the great risk to beer of oxidation... [The head brewer] amassed pages of correspondence between DB and Ziemann of Germany after they were introduced by an English supplier of industrial equipment, and the brewery was commissioned with specific modifications to suit DB's brewing style. With Hitler on the rise in Europe and a trading conservatism at home born of the Depression just past, buying a brewery from Germany was not easy. "Our chair[perso]n made a deal with [the [PM]]... to obtain a licence for barter – foreign exchange had to be earned before imported goods could be paid for. We sent a boatload of good... apples to New York, where Hitler had appointed a chap who knew the tricks to turn apples into dollars with which to pay the Germans,"... The copper tuns arrived in thirds through the... windows, and their installation was supervised by a German engineer... Assembly work was done by master crafts-[people] short of work post-Depression... The methods were meticulous and confirmed the stereotypical Prussian efficiency. "Hammers were covered with cloth to avoid scratching the copper. Rivets had to be cut from the same sheet of copper that they were to fasten. We'd never operated a brewery like this before, but I specified that the brewhaus be set up so that, with a turn of a few valves, we could change the style of brewing from English to American to German." ...Once it was built [DB] stuck with the infusion method of brewing... – adding hot water to the malt. "It suited... N[Z] barley." A needle-and-paper contraption... records the temperature, which is raised and held progressively during the brew. [The head brewer] suggested the roll, instead of being changed each day, be left as a template to follow, and the skill of the brewers was such that over a week's brewing the needle never deviated from the map of the previous brew.

...[archaeologists have unearthed a four-vat operation that may be the oldest brewery in the world. Built in the ancient city of Hierakonpolis, it was active about 5400 years ago, before the construction of the pyramids, and brewed a beer from Nile water, half-baked bread, wheat malt and date juice.]

...*Papyri* of the period 1300BC refer to the regulation of beer shops to prevent people over-indulging in beer.' By the way, 'an American anthropologist believes that the process of brewing beer helped prehistoric hunter-gatherers band together and learn to develop agriculture and create civilizations.')

...Finding a job in today's fast-moving society may be complicated but when [a]Blockhouse Bay resident... left school, it was only a matter of filling in a few forms... Mr Smith joined N[Z]'s customs service... and his 45 years of service was rewarded last month with a long service award. [Mr Smith] was among 115 of his colleagues nationwide who had worked there for between 10 and 45 years. During his career Mr Smith has worked in virtually every department of customs including passenger processing at Auckland Airport, import licensing, sales tax, distillers and excise. While supervising the old distillery in Te Atatu, [Mr Smith] had to stay on the premises and keep an eye on the tanks, taking a whiff before the gin was bottled to make sure it was the right strength and had been mixed properly... [Mr Smith] and his colleagues... also have to check for hazards like deteriorated liquor. "If liquor goes off or is not mixed properly it is not fit for consumption and we have to destroy it. We dispose of liquids on the premises, for instance pouring them down drains, and other goods are taken to the tip and run over with the bulldozer."

...West Aucklanders running unlicensed bars from their basements risk a \$40,000 fine if caught... [They] also risk a maximum of three months' imprisonment... [A]liquor licensing officer... says people caught selling alcohol, or running unlicensed premises, can expect to be charged. "We will prosecute, and they do risk losing everything related with running an unlicensed premises,"... His warning comes after police seized \$650 worth of alcohol from a Massey house. The haul[, which has been]... donated to a sports club... included 362 bottles of beer, three casks of wine and a variety of spirits. Police also confiscated a till... [T]he basement was set up as a bar, with full facilities. [Incidentally, 'children are watching hundreds of television commercials for alcohol each year despite a restriction limiting brand advertising to after 9 pm, an Auckland University study suggests. The average child in the 5 to 14 age group saw almost 300 such advertisements a year. Researchers used viewer information from "people-meter" surveys of 440 homes. They found that the average 5 to 14-year-old watched 107 hours of television after 9 pm a year. The study concluded that there had been an increase in the number of alcohol commercials young people were exposed to, and the 9 pm restriction was only partially effective. The executive director

of the Beer Wine and Spirits Council said: "If society has a problem with advertising after 9 pm, why are they letting their children watch TV after 9 pm?""]

...We are awash with images and associations that promote alcohol. In recent years alcohol promotion has intensified, leading to an uneasy tension between those promoting alcohol and those attempting to control it. Alcohol images reach into our children's lives. For example, half of all G-rated American cartoon feature films in one analysis show alcohol use, while none suggested any long-term... risk. A recent survey of the most popular rental movies in the U[S] showed that 76[%] of those rated G or PG (Parental Guidance[recommended]) showed alcohol being used. Alcohol appeared on average every 16 minutes during these movies, and 22[%] of the major characters who looked under 18 used alcohol. More than 70[% of NZ] children aged 5 to 14 see an alcohol ad on television at least once a week and the average child of that age group sees more than five such ads a week. During the 1990s alcohol advertisements on N[Z] television have far outnumbered those for alcohol moderation... Alcohol-industry logos are seen at art and cultural events and on fun rides at school galas... The line between television programmes and alcohol commercials blurs with sports sponsorship. We see the same brewery logos in sports programmes during "non-advertising" programme time as we see after 9 pm, when alcohol product brand advertising is allowed... The use of sporting settings for alcohol sponsorship advertising reinforces the link between alcohol and sport. A... [sports] sociologist... says that nowadays there is a growing acceptance of players who do not wish to drink. This is good for individual players but pressure on young [players] to drink remains... Alcohol ads associate drinking with strength, courage, success in sex and sport, toughness, good company and mateship. The use of sports-related alcohol promotion, and other advertising to attract young people, may help recruit the next generation of heavy drinkers. About half the alcohol in N[Z] is drunk by about 10[%] of the drinkers, according to the Ministry of Health... [Therefore, c]ontinued heavy drinking by young people maintains alcohol-industry profits... Our culture tries to balance the positive associations of alcohol with pleasure, relaxation and celebrations, against our knowledge of the risks...

Pregnant [people] can have up to 15 alcoholic drinks a week, according to controversial guidelines from medical experts. The landmark advice from the Royal N[Z] College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists has drawn immediate flak from health groups demanding abstinence to guard against tragic foetal deformities... But the college says an abstinence policy would only create unnecessary anxiety, guilt and requests for abortions from concerned [expectant mothers], especially those who had unwittingly drunk alcohol before pregnancy was diagnosed... "There is no conclusive evidence of adverse effects in either growth or IQ levels of consumption below 15 units per week," the[college's] advice states. The college's secretary... said specialists were divided on the... issue. The guidelines tried to strike a middle ground between the British college's relatively liberal view[(the 'British government recommends no more than four glasses of alcohol per week', although 'Irish research shows that any alcohol will affect the development of the fetus' brain')] and the U[S] college's zero tolerance... The... [secretary] said it was frustrating that clinical research had yet to determine whether there was a safe drinking level for pregnant or conceiving [people]. A leading child health researcher... labelled the guidelines irresponsible when rates of foetal alcohol syndrome were unknown in N[Z]. "It's like saying, 'because the dead bodies haven't turned up yet, it doesn't exist.' That's the wrong way of going about dealing with a known neurotoxin... Everybody in this field knows that if you say it's okay to have a couple of drinks, people will have four." ...the health promotion adviser for Alcohol Healthwatch, said cutting all alcohol was vital as associated problems in children could take years to show up. "It's admirable the college has [mothers'] best interests at heart, but if you try and tread the middle ground you end up having a mixed message which isn't good for anybody." ...[FAS s]ymptoms include retarded growth, intellectual impairment, brain malformation and facial deformity... [It 'may be a cause of ADD and behavioural problems.' A] study, which had looked at FAS sufferers in Canada, has already revealed 90[%] of sufferers have mental health problems, 60[%] have disruptive school experiences, 60[%] are involved with the justice system, 50[%] show inappropriate sexual behaviour, 50[%] have been confined to residential or correctional centres and 35[%] have drug and alcohol problems... The syndrome affects 1.7 per 1000 Swedish births, a rate estimated to be similar to N[Z]. The ALAC] will spend about \$100,000 this year on television commercials pushing for abstinence during pregnancy.

"If you must go out with your friends, fine. But just remember, no matter what they're getting up to, I'm not even old enough to be born, never mind drink! I... don't want to spoil your fun, but there are things you should know. A few drinks can do me some serious damage. And I don't mean a bit of a headache in the morning, either. We're talking about the kind of hangover that can affect me for life. Like I could be a real slow learner. And if I make a mess of school, it won't do my career prospects much good, will it? If you don't want both of us to have to live with problems for the rest of our lives... remember[, wherever]... you're invited... I'll be coming too. So stick to a few soft drinks instead. And lay off the alcohol until well after I'm out of here." Contact your GP for more information... [or] ALAC... - 1996

Work is under way to better understand and treat [FAS], a condition that can irreversibly retard a child's development. The A[LAC] is planning a conference on the subject next year... [I]t was not known how many children were affected by the syndrome... [but it] is considered one of the most common causes of mental retardation in the Western world. N[Z] has about 100 registered cases, but anecdotal evidence suggests thousands of children could have the syndrome... [T]oo often children with the condition were written off as suffering [ADD], or as difficult kids. Another problem facing health professionals was that no clear evidence existed on how much alcohol during pregnancy was too much. However, it was known that just one drinking binge could be enough to affect the foetus, with the danger time being the first three months of pregnancy.

...SMALL babies. It has become a national trend, accompanied by the heightened risk of sickness or death. Rates of babies classified as low birth-weight – below 2500g – have jumped since 1979, prompting officials to label what's happening "one of the greatest challenges to obstetric and paediatric services." In 1979 there were 44.9 such babies in every 1000 live births. Latest statistics show that the 1994 rate had climbed to 59.6... Nobody knows why more babies are born small but N[Z] is not the only country confronted with the problem... A number of factors have been linked to low birth-weight... Young mothers had the highest rate when ages were compared... Some, such as the height of the mother, cannot be controlled, but N[Z]ers have more say over the others – smoking, drinking[('82% of teenage mothers and 36% of adult mothers continue to drink alcohol while pregnant')], drugs, and sometimes nutrition... But even before a Kiwi baby is conceived, at least part of the blueprint for his or her health could already be decided by previous generations... [F]actors in the grandmother's background may also count. - 1997

It is estimated that over 80[% of pregnant USers]... drink alcohol and 57[%] smoke. Although many pregnant [USers] might avoid using hallucinogens, others would be reluctant to consider giving up their evening cocktails... for the sake of their unborn child. How wise is this? ...Reports of abnormalities in the growth of children of alcoholic mothers can be found as early as 1800, when concern was expressed that the high consumption of gin, euphemistically known as "mother's ruin," in English [mothers] was leading to increased rates of dwarfism in their offspring. More recently, a malformation syndrome called... [FAS] has been discovered in one-third of infants of alcoholic mothers. These infants have a high incidence of facial, heart and limb defects, are 20[%] shorter than average, and are often mentally retarded... The mental retardation may be related to *apneic* periods, that is, periods where breathing movements cease in the fetus. It has been demonstrated that the intake of only an ounce of 80-proof vodka by [pregnant people] who were not heavy drinkers results in cessation of fetal breathing movements for over half an hour of many fetuses in the last trimester of pregnancy... In addition, many children with... [FAS] exhibit abnormal behaviors such as excessive irritability, hyperactivity, distractibility, tremulousness, and stereotyped motor behaviours such as head banging or body rocking... The shaking, vomiting, and extreme irascibility of babies born to alcoholic mothers is caused by the withdrawal of alcohol from the addicted infant and is similar to the

symptoms of delirium tremens found in adult alcoholics. It has also been suggested that heavy drinking in [fathers] may result in genetic damage that leads to birth defects in their offspring... [Although a lot of sex is performed while couples are under the influence of alcohol, the relevant point is whether there was any alcohol in the father's system over the period when the sperm ejaculated during that sexual liaison was produced! However, the] fetal damage from alcohol appears to be greatest in the last trimester of pregnancy. If pregnant [people] who are heavy drinkers can cease drinking in this period, their babies are longer, weigh more, and have a larger head circumference than those of [mothers] who continue their heavy drinking... It should be noted that no long-term data are available on the effects on older children of mild to moderate maternal drinking during pregnancy[, but]... abnormal behavior patterns have... been found in the infants of moderate drinkers... Alcohol readily crosses the placental barrier, and soon after the mother drinks alcohol the alcohol level in the blood of the fetus is similar to that of the mother... Infants whose mothers used both alcohol and tobacco show greater prenatal growth deficiencies than do infants whose mothers used only alcohol or only tobacco...

With our increasing sexual, social and financial freedom, more young [gals] are drinking – around 73[%] of us according to recent government figures. Of this figure, 32[%] drink occasionally... and 9[%] drink too much... Why do we drink? Mostly because we enjoy it... I'll admit it – I think drinking can be sexy. If a couple of glasses of wine at a party can make you feel more confident and more likely to talk to that gorgeous guy, then surely that's not such a bad thing? ...it helps us wind down after a nightmare day at the office or relax at dinner... [– though it also makes us] talk... too loudly, laugh... too long, confess... too much... and evidence is showing that heavy drinking can lead to breast cancer... and... early menopause...

PUT IT down to courage or blind faith, but [the actor] took a huge risk before shooting her latest film, *28 Days*. Her character, Gwen, is a New York writer and out-of-control party gal who crashes her sister's wedding limo while under the influence. That earns her a court-ordered 28 days in rehabilitation for her drinking problem. [The actor] quips that the title might get it mistaken for a menstrual-cycle film, "a bunch of [gals] getting really angry once a month." The star has had friends who have been in rehab, but... felt the need to get some first-hand experience so checked in at the Sierra Tucson rehab centre in Arizona. Her four days there gave her a life-changing jolt... One thing [the actor] has done since her rehab experience is to cut out alcohol. When [the actor] told the others in therapy that [it] didn't drink much, they asked her whether [it]'d ever been on a date and had a glass or two of wine. [The actor agreed that it] had. When they asked why, [the actor] replied, slightly sheepishly, that it helped to break the ice. "As soon as I said it I thought, 'That's exactly what they're talking about.' Just observe why you use alcohol. It forces you to connect with people without the crutch, and I did it, but it's not easy."

Points to ponder... We drink for sociability and become argumentative. We drink for sophistication and become obnoxious. We drink to help us sleep and awake exhausted. We drink for exhilaration... [or] for joy... and end up depressed... and... miserable... We drink to gain confidence and become afraid. We drink to make conversation flow and become incoherent. We drink to diminish our problems and see them multiply.

...alcohol[– t]he cause of, and solution to, all of life's problems.

alcoholism... habitual heavy drinking of alcohol; a diseased condition caused by this... *habitual...* done constantly or as a habit... *habit-forming...* causing addiction.

People can become addicted to tobacco, as it contains nicotine, but standard alcohol doesn't contain addictive substances, which means alcoholics are addicted to being DRUNK ('lacking proper control of oneself from the effects of alcohol'). An alcoholic's body can become so accustomed to containing alcohol that it shows withdrawal symptoms when denied the substance, but the addiction is *psychological* – the alcoholic thinks that its drunk personality is superior to its sober personality (i.e., its out-of-control state has more personality than its in-control state); or that being drunk makes life more bearable.

YOU GET DRUNK EVERY NIGHT YOU CAN'T GET DRUNK ON LIFE... HEAVEN KICKED YOU OUT... - THERAPY?

...it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted. Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more. - Proverbs 31:4-7

While the Bible infers that kings (i.e., leaders) shouldn't get drunk, it permits 'physically or mentally distressed people' to do so – even though drunkenness can induce a state of physical or mental distress! It is possible to drink alcohol and not get drunk (commonly referred to as 'drinking in moderation'). However, if someone wants to avoid getting drunk, the obvious solution is to drink water (or any other non-alcoholic drink). Few alcoholic drinks taste nicer or cost less than the majority of non-alcoholic drinks, so the majority of people who choose to drink alcohol in moderation must do so because they feel socially obligated to (i.e., they don't want to look uncool – by being seen with a non-alcoholic drink in their hand, or by giving the impression that they 'can't hold their alcohol'). Unfortunately, whereas an observer can identify no obvious difference between someone who, for example, smokes two cigarettes during a 2 hour session and someone who smokes 20 cigarettes, in most instances the difference between someone who has consumed 2 alcoholic drinks in 2 hours and someone who has consumed 20 alcoholic drinks in the same period are blatantly obvious! Furthermore, a smoker will feel the effects of nicotine almost instantaneously, but the effects also disappear rapidly, whereas it takes longer for alcohol to affect the body and leave the body. This means that a person might need to have 3 drinks before there is enough alcohol in its body for the effects to be noticeable, by which time it could've consumed 4 or more drinks. If the person chooses to stop drinking alcohol as soon as it starts to feel 'tipsy' (slightly intoxicated), it should remain happy for a while, thereby achieving nothing more than the desired effect; but if the person continues to drink alcohol, the effects of the 4th and 5th drink won't hit the person until it is on the 6th or 7th drink, and the effects of those drinks will compound the effects of the previous drinks. This subtle process usually succeeds in taking the person past the tipsy phase into the *lacking proper control* phase, which often includes being unable to stop further drinking, performing uncool (or highly embarrassing) actions, having black-outs, losing control of one's stomach, bladder or bowels. Most people only need to achieve this phase of intoxication once, or several times, before deciding that they should either drink alcohol in moderation or not at all.

The people who prefer to habitually reach the last phase of intoxication may have good reason to avoid being sober, but they don't have good reason to hurt innocent people – as is sometimes the result of severe intoxication (e.g., one USer confessed on the Internet to 'setting his house on fire, while "wickedly drunk", in order to listen to his little girl die'). For this reason, some teetotallers have sought to prevent such results by creating a state of prohibition. However, prohibition usually fails to work. One reason for this is because prohibition turns *otherwise law-abiding citizens* into criminals and creates a market that can be exploited by genuine criminals. Another reason is because alcohol is extremely easy to produce ('almost any water solution of a sugary or starchy food can be fermented by certain ENZYMES and by YEAST cells to form alcohol'). Anyone who has water, yeast and honey in their house can make an alcoholic beverage called mead, and – in spite of protests by the liquor and taxation industries – anyone who isn't underage can purchase equipment which enables them to make more sophisticated brews at home.

An amateur distiller has accused the [NZ] liquor industry of exaggerating the cost of legalising homemade spirits. Proposed regulations under the Customs and Excise Act 1996 would allow home distilling for personal use under the same exemptions as for home-produced wine, beer and tobacco. A leading supplier of distilling equipment... said the proposal would cost the Government less than \$7 million a year in potential excise tax, not \$20 million as claimed by the liquor lobby. Industry sources estimated a maximum of 10,000 stills in the country, half of them homemade... Present regulations allow the sale of home-distilling equipment but prohibit their use for making liquor. The volume of ingredients sold for making alcohol indicated that the average moonshiner produced about one litre of untaxed 40[%] alcohol a week... Sales statistics... showed that 57[%] of customers were aged over 40, and 34[%] over 60. "It is definitely a mature adult's hobby – the younger drinkers make beer."

...[The emergence of a marijuana wine has prompted police to issue a warning that anyone found making it could face 14 years in prison. A recipe for the potent home-brew was published this month in *Norml News*, the 20,000-circulation free magazine put out by Norml, the National Organisation for the Reform of Marijuana Laws. The recipe – an explosive concoction of 4oz of marijuana leaf, sultanas, white wine yeast, sugar and lemons fermented for three months – promises 25 litres of passionfruit-flavoured wine. But because the wine is a byproduct of marijuana, police say it could fall into the category of a class B drug. Marijuana leaf is class C, but if the oil or resin is extracted it becomes class B. An Auckland drug squad detective said police had no knowledge of people brewing the wine, but intended to watch the matter. "We know people make cakes, muffins and so on, but we have not heard of wine. We have enough problems with wine and students let alone putting cannabis in it." The detective said the police were interested in sending a sample to scientists. The editor of *Norml News* said the recipe had been sent to the magazine by a "keen reader." The editor warned potential imbibers that the brew combines the narcotic property of cannabis and alcohol. "It is obviously illegal, so we would not advise anyone to do anything illegal. But for those who try it, caution is advised. You should always go easy when combining alcohol and cannabis and moderation is the key." The editor said marijuana and alcohol had been combined in many cultures for centuries. In India, for example, bhang drinks or sweetmeats were used by many Hindu families and holy people.]

...[A Lower Hutt resident who uses cannabis leaf in a Japanese tea ceremony has appealed against his conviction. The 58-year-old was convicted by a judge in the Lower Hutt District Court and fined \$300 for possessing cannabis and sentenced to 50 hours community service for cultivation]...

Invest in HYPERGROW – supplied by EASY GROW GREENERIES LTD from \$88 deposit (or \$1199 retail) – and harvest herbs or flowers all year round in the comfort of your own home: • The growing lights will shrink stems so 4 plants can be grown together and still produce abundantly • Doubles the growth rate • Increases the potency • Self watering • Suitable for all plants', but mostly used to grow marijuana (cannabis; ganja; dak; pot; weed; dope)]...

Dope grows well here, [be it]indoors... in a Mt Eden house[or] outdoors... in a central North Island forest... MOST N[Z] teenagers know someone who smokes cannabis – often their parents – or have smoked it themselves. Dope is relatively cheap, accessible, easy to use and because it's illegal, the perfect tool for rebellion. A study into the use of cannabis in the Far North, undertaken... last year, reports that cannabis use has reached "epidemic proportions" in the communities studied, with a general acceptance by most people... Sports and social clubs are often offered as alternatives to bored kids smoking dope, yet research shows young people are most likely to get access to drugs through involvement in sports and associated social functions. Methods of addressing drug use are ineffective and under-resourced... Schools play a major role but, by necessity, take a disciplinary approach... The number of students expelled for smoking marijuana in recent years indicates how widespread cannabis use is in schools... Unlike alcohol it doesn't contribute to liver damage or countless acts of violence... Cannabis can temporarily soothe overwhelming feelings of anger, stress and depression commonly experienced in adolescence... Any well-informed teenager will say that alcohol and tobacco kill thousands every year[, whereas] no one is known to have died from the effects of cannabis[(or to have caused a forest fire by throwing away a 'roach' – the butt of a cannabis cigarette or joint; a roach collection can be used to make more joints or DOOBIES!)]... But its gentle image, cultivated in a climate of love and peace in the 1960s is starting to wear a few dents. The idea that cannabis is non-addictive has been disproved. Researchers now say it's psychologically addictive and may be physically addictive... [However, parents] need accurate information to discuss the use of cannabis with their kids. • Marijuana contains more than 420 known chemicals, the most dangerous of which is THC (delta 9 tetrahydrocannabinol). THC accumulates and is stored in fatty tissues, especially the brain and reproductive organs. THC from one joint may stay in the body for up to 30 days... Drink half a bottle of wine and your body excretes the alcohol in a few hours... • Use of marijuana increases the risk of bronchitis, lung cancer and other lung diseases. Marijuana smoke has twice as much tar as tobacco. • Long-term or frequent smoking of cannabis can affect the ability to study and learn. THC makes it harder to remember, thinking becomes slower and concentration more difficult... The drug slows reactions, affects co-ordination and the sense of speed, making it dangerous to perform some jobs... But... [these effects] are subtle... and... probably reversible when a person quits... "We're not talking about brain damage and it's probably less severe than the effect of alcohol abuse on the brain,"... • Marijuana can lead to feelings of anxiety, panic, depression and behavioural problems. Heavy use can also confuse thinking. While cannabis doesn't create schizophrenia, it can unmask the condition in people already predisposed. • Marijuana use is linked to a decreased sperm count... Menstrual cycles can become irregular... and cannabis can harm the unborn child and increase the risk of birth abnormalities... • Quitting cannabis can sometimes cause withdrawal symptoms such as cramps, night sweats, nausea and mood swings... [One person], aged 30 and still hiding her bong (water pipe) from her mum, is a veterinary nurse and mother of a five-year-old... What was fun at 19 was now a habit [the nurse] could do without. A parent with a fulltime job, [the nurse] didn't want her son seeing her stoned... was sick of using eye-drops every day to banish the red eyes that came with smoking dope... and... was worried that 13 years of cannabis use had dimmed her memory. "I was having to concentrate so hard at work to remember things... Whenever someone asked me to do something, I'd have to write it down in case I forgot. Mentally I was ready to quit pot but it was hard to do..." THEN last year [the nurse] turned on her radio to hear that the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre at the University of NSW (NDARC) needed research "guinea pigs" to find ways to help cannabis smokers to quit. [The nurse] volunteered and became part of the world's first individual treatment programme for marijuana addiction. Also tuning in to the radio and smarting from a row with his girlfriend was a 28-year-old horticulturalist... Like most fights the couple had, this one was about the four or five "cones" [the horticulturalist] smoked each day (a small metal cone is packed with marijuana and smoked in a pipe or through water in a bong; four or five cones equals between one and two joints). A pot smoker since Form II, the horticulturalist... volunteered for NDARC'S programme and, along with [the nurse] and most of the programme's first graduates... has quit cannabis... The volunteers... [included] one who'd smoked as many as 75 cones a day... [Another] who smoked 62 cones daily for 12 years... cut down to nine... When NDARC first advertised in April last year, the stampede of volunteers reflected what researchers suspected – a lot of people want to give up cannabis and can't... "OFTEN people were – and still are – going to drug treatment centres and are being turned away because cannabis hasn't been recognised as a major problem." ...however... much of the pot now available is far stronger than before. It can be the difference between drinking a pint of beer and drinking a pint of Scotch, say... experts. Hybrid varieties such as Skunk and hydroponically-grown cannabis can contain as much as 18[%] THC... In contrast, normal cannabis contains only 1-2[%] THC. "This means a lot of people are smoking a much stronger drug and it may be more addictive,"... BUT... [as with all drugs,] the effect... of... [cannabis] is different... for different people. □ 'Police in Opatiki believe they have stumbled on a new strain of cannabis. "At first glance it looks like mint, but it certainly smells like cannabis," said a Senior Sergeant after his staff uncovered an elaborate indoor operation where 23 plants of the alleged new variety were flourishing. The shed had been set up with \$12,000 worth of lighting. 7 arrests have been made. The grower claimed clones of the new variety were worth \$15 a seedling. Samples were being sent to Auckland to determine its origins and potency. The discovery came during a blitz by Opatiki police

against drug dealers. The community had been challenged to do in cannabis growers instead of “moaning” about people making a good living out of the crop.’

...‘The smell gave it away: strong wafts of marijuana that kept drifting past the noses of the police search team. It seemed they had searched everywhere, but all they had found was enough dope for a few joints. As they stood in the garden of the holiday retreat, they noticed the smell coming out of a vent, hidden beneath a flax bush, releasing air from an underground bunker. Inside was the most potent marijuana ever tested in NZ. This week, Auckland’s High Court heard scientists found the crop contained levels of THC up to 19%. Previously, NZ’s most potent hydroponically grown cannabis was 8.8%.’]

...Avondale police have busted what they say is one of the biggest non-hydroponic cannabis growing operations of its kind... [A]bout 500 maturing plants with a street value of more than \$500,000 were seized from a disused factory... Three [people] were later arrested.

...Sparkies who wire up marijuana factories could end up in court alongside the growers, say police. The caution to electricians comes after the discovery of a string of sophisticated “cannabis factories” in Auckland... [S]uch a prosecution would be a first as far as... [a criminal] law expert... of Auckland University... knew. While the police could bring a test case, it would be a tough charge to prove. “The electrician could [claim to have] had no idea and, unless... shaken under cross-examination by some astute crown lawyer, it would be hard to sink that evidence,”... But a person found guilty of aiding and abetting cannabis cultivation could receive the same penalty as the growers. One electrician said the police warning was “not really an issue.” “I think there are very few cannabis factories. One dope-head sparky is probably doing the lot,”... [and a businessperson], whose Auckland company, Switched on Gardener, supplies indoor growing equipment, said cannabis growers were unlikely to hire an electrician. Anyone growing dope for a living would ensure that as few people as possible knew that. Five people were arrested recently after raids on four small factories uncovered more than 3000 potent “skunk weed” cannabis plants. Police suspect the electrical installations were the work of one of the people sentenced, a refrigeration technician... [By the way, in] an annual cannabis recovery operation that suffered from budget cutbacks Northland police recovered a record 70,478 plants in the last growing season.

...The overturning on appeal of a jail sentence for a first-time offender convicted of growing 70 cannabis plants has disappointed Northland police and highlighted different sentencing philosophies. When... the Kaitiaki District Court... sentenced... [the offender], aged 19... to nine months’ jail to be followed by six months’ supervision... the... police in a number of Northland stations... were obviously delighted with the tougher line[, which sent]... a clear message to the community that cultivation and possession of cannabis for supply were offences that would not be tolerated in the Far North... But in the High Court at Whangarei last week, [a judge replaced the original] jail sentence with a sentence of nine months’ periodic detention to be followed by 12 months’ supervision... [T]he Kaitiaki court... judge... is one of the Auckland-based judges helping out in Northland courts while... [two Whangarei judges] are on leave [because] their expenses claims are being investigated. [The offender’s lawyer said one of the suspended judges] had sentenced a [Northland person] who grew 316 plants to nine months’ imprisonment and [the other suspended judge had sentenced someone] with two previous cannabis convictions to seven months’ jail for a crop of 240 plants.

...An Auckland warehouse[worker] who lost his job after twice testing positive for marijuana use has failed to be reinstated by the Employment Court. The [worker], who worked for Air N[Z]’s cargo operations at Auckland Airport, sought an interim injunction for reinstatement. [The worker claimed to have] tested positive for marijuana because [the worker] had accidentally eaten cake laced with the drug at a party. His employment was subject to his passing a medical examination, including a drug test. The letter of appointment, signed by the [worker], said that if [an employee] failed the examination his employment would be terminated... The court acknowledged that the worker would not have been tested if [the worker] had applied for a position other than in a “safety sensitive” area[, but]... there was no alternative position to which the worker could be appointed[, therefore] it was not in the interests of justice to order interim reinstatement... [In related news, an] Oamaru shop displaying a poster with a marijuana leaf has removed it after the local police youth education officer complained. The... constable... was disturbed by the message such a poster[, which]... promoted “hemp” jeans... would convey to young people... [and] said... Hallensteins was profiting from the notoriety of cannabis.

...[the Brit who was] imprisoned for writing a book on cultivating marijuana, spent his first full day of freedom in a dilapidated London cinema lobbying for legalisation of the drug. The “annual conference on cannabis” brought together several hundred enthusiasts, professional and amateur, who smoked and inhaled throughout a day celebrating cannabis and its uses in industry, food, medicine and, of course, relaxation. Veggie burgers containing hemp seeds, clothing made from hemp, and smoking paraphernalia were on sale. Raw and roasted marijuana seeds – legal as long as they aren’t germinated – were available for sampling. Raffle tickets offered the chance to win a 1.6m water pipe... The question of legalisation was on everyone’s lips, along with hefty joints... Possession of cannabis remains illegal in Britain and growing it can attract heavy prison sentences... [Another Brit, this one] just released from a seven-year jail term in the U[S] for drug smuggling, told the meeting the quality of pot had deteriorated because today’s smugglers aren’t users. [This lobbyist] wants to see high-quality marijuana sold legally in police stations, chemists and “head” shops across Britain... [A 3rd lobbyist] advocated a system not unlike that in the Netherlands where marijuana is illegal but tolerated in small quantities. Legalising cannabis... would commercialise the product just like tobacco. “It shouldn’t be in the hands of those who don’t smoke it,”... declared... [the 3rd lobbyist. A] clean-cut Oxford graduate, extolled the virtues of marijuana’s medical properties. [The graduate] and his wife founded the Medical Marijuana Foundation and were developing a marijuana “vitamin” until they were busted... “If... [legalisation of cannabis] in Britain... doesn’t happen this year, it’s bound to happen next year,” [the graduate] said... “It’s like the Berlin Wall. People are not going to live with these restrictions any longer.” ...[the graduate] would consider becoming a candidate for Britain’s Cannabis Party if it remained committed to the single issue of legalising marijuana. The Cannabis Party plans to put up a handful of candidates at the next election to push its legalisation campaign. “The need to get political is paramount,” one party member told the gathering... [In local news,] National’s Tasman MP... yesterday attacked N[Z] First for “making a populist sop to disadvantaged youth” by suggesting a referendum on legalising cannabis.

...Supporters of legalising cannabis turned out in their thousands to publicly smoke the drug in Auckland on Saturday... [T]he “J Day” rally[was] organised by the Aotearoa Legalise Cannabis Party... The generally young crowd was aided by a “joint scramble” in the traditions of a lolly scramble. Many of those who attended held banners calling for the Government to “free the weed.” Others covered themselves and their children in stickers calling for cannabis to be legalised. Police in uniform and plainclothes attended the rally, and said they were generally pleased with the behaviour of the crowd. [However, an] Inspector... said that just because no arrests were made at the time did not mean police could not use information gained to make arrests at a later date... [P]olice had to weigh up arresting people for committing unlawful acts with the possibility of inflaming a crowd... Those at the hour-long rally observed a minute of silence for the two hundred thousand [NZers who have been] arrested under cannabis prohibition. The... crowd then moved on to Albert Park for a free concert and entertainment. The... activities were designed to correspond with similar events in other centres across the country... A[LCP] established itself as Triton among the minnows in[NZ’s parliamentary election]...

Almost any publicity involving cannabis attracts calls for decriminalising its use; claims are made that in the Netherlands, for example, teenage cannabis use has dropped in the decade since decriminalisation... The... Ministry of Health... report on public health issues surrounding cannabis... concedes that “overall, the relative risk of occasional cannabis use appears to be minor,” [but] its principal points are surely that frequent cannabis use has significant health risks... The supply of alcohol and tobacco to young [NZers] is limited by laws which, mostly, reasonably restrict their accessibility. It is surely absolutely uncertain that decriminalising marijuana would assist in keeping it from young people, particularly... [since it] grows so easily in our climate... Cannabis is not the health problem in this country that alcohol and tobacco are, simply because access to it is restricted. The last thing we can afford is another problem of similar size. Alongside such costs the present effective police efforts to restrict

cultivation and supply seem cheap enough. And if that produces a scarcity that stops young people from using enough of a drug to harm their brains... just when adequate schooling becomes an increasingly critical component of... [their lives,] the nation should be thankful.

...Teaching kids to “say no” to drug use and to peer pressure is the focus of most curriculum-based drug education programmes and those designed by the myriad of outside agencies which offer services to schools... [However,] the police national co-ordinator of the Youth Education Service, says the big debate among those involved in drug education in the 90s is how to find some evidence that it works... [T]he only way to be certain drug education works is “to show in some way that the children you deal with don’t take drugs... and that’s virtually impossible.” ...Ask those who are directly affected – today’s students at Tomorrow’s Schools – and you find that most are perfectly clear about two aspects of drug use: cigarette smokers are losers and kids who smoke cannabis at school are stupid, if only because they face suspension.

...The Commissioner for Children... has modified his call for an inquiry into drug-related school suspensions and expulsions... Since the present debate started... [the commissioner’s] had reports of between 25... and 30[%] of students in some schools using cannabis. A range of drug education programmes existed, but... they did not seem to be working. While indefinite suspension might sometimes be appropriate[– suspension is inappropriate if it enables a student to get *wasted* more often –] there were far too many suspensions... Good practices needed to be identified and encouraged. In a reference to Cambridge High School, which last month suspended 14 students for drug use, [the commissioner] said some schools were paying more attention to their reputations, particularly [if they’re] marketing themselves as “a safe haven for Asian students.” ...The School Trustees Association has backed the need for a forum to examine drug use and the provision of alternative education, but is opposed to restricting trustees’ ability to suspend and expel. The president of the Secondary Principals Association... said an inquiry into disciplinary procedures was not needed, but the lack of alternative education should be examined... The Cambridge community is split over the school’s actions. A group formed to fight the decision has been deluged with phone calls, running five to one opposing the school. A public meeting is being organised.

...Our 14-year-old son is one of the 14 suspended from Cambridge High School... [Our son] is not in this situation as a result of my husband and I being modern-day parents who have never taken a “firm line.” ...my husband and I have always been actively involved in all our children’s lives in areas from schooling through to sporting activities. We have always taken a hard line in punishment but with a firm and fair sense of justice. Our children have grown up with the knowledge that if they break the rules then there is a consequence for their actions: a punishment must fit the crime... Our son is a kind, loving, caring boy who has shied away from trouble until now. [Our son] has never been... exposed to marijuana in our home and we thought that we had educated him on drugs as much as we needed to at his age. In this case we have certainly been remiss as parents; we never realised that this was a major problem in our secondary school and take responsibility for not making sure we were aware... [– even though] we... are always on a learning curve ourselves; we do not have the luxury of a degree in parenting... Our son realises that [his behaviour] deserves punishment and that [such actions have] not only broken the school rules but the law. What [our son] and us his parents, along with the others involved, cannot comprehend is why the school cannot see that its way of punishing is not effective. It is causing irrevocable harm to entire families and to the community at large by dumping these teens out into the streets and then saying it has solved the drug problem in the school.

...AT LEAST seven [NZ] cricketers have reportedly done it. So have some of the most famous names in the game. A former National backbencher was notable for doing it in Parliament Buildings. In some parts of N[Z] one third of secondary school pupils are supposedly doing it regularly. Even the President of the U[S] has done it... “It” comprises a significant part of the Northland economy. I am referring to the smoking of marijuana – a drug not harmless but relatively innocuous if taken in moderate quantities... Certainly marijuana smoking is far less dangerous than cigarette smoking, which kills people by the score. Yet it is marijuana that is illegal. Can this be justified? Surely we go to the trouble and expense of having a criminal justice system to discourage those people who abuse their freedom by doing harm to innocent third parties. We punish murderers, burglars, rapists, fraudsters, drunken drivers and people who cheat on their income tax, because these crimes have victims. We should not be punishing people who merely have a lifestyle of which we disapprove. So long as they are not harming us, we have no business making them criminals. After all, most of us have lifestyles of which some people might disapprove. Making people criminals is also expensive. An absurdly large amount of police and court time is spent policing the drug laws. At no time this century has there been more genuine crime, yet we still throw taxpayers’ money at persecuting crimes of our own invention. Many – perhaps most – N[Z]ers have had the experience of coming home to a burgled house, yet finding the police too busy to even call around. The police... might as well say, “Sorry, tied up policing the drug laws.” The case for legalising soft drugs... is strong. We should bring marijuana under the GST net so it becomes a source of income to the Government rather than a drain on taxpayer resources. If the side-effects of marijuana add significantly to the public health bill, we should recoup these costs with a specific extra tax, just as we tax alcohol and tobacco for this reason... There is also a case for legalising hard and truly dangerous drugs. For there is little sign the war on drugs is being won. Victimless crimes like drug-taking almost inevitably bring in their wake organised crime and corruption. We saw it in the prohibition era in America. When a normal trade is made impossible, the gangsters step in. This is certainly the case with hard drugs in N[Z] today. Supplying them is a brutal, high-risk, high-return business. The price of the final product is steep, leading to desperate addicts, additional crime and unhygienic drug-taking methods. We can all feel sorry for the addict... His weakness of will has led him down a slope that exists somewhere within all of us but which most people manage to keep firmly fenced off. Making him a criminal may not be the answer... [● In] 1994, according to... the FBI, 481,098 [USers] were arrested for marijuana offences – that’s one... every 66 seconds – and 80[%] of those were for possession... Marijuana prohibition costs[US] taxpayers... \$8 billion annually... [including] \$1.2 billion to keep... 40,000... marijuana[users in prison]...

In the US yesterday, the] Speaker of the House of Representatives, admitted... [to smoking] marijuana in college, then promptly urged the White House to fire any staff member found to have smoked... drugs in the past three years... [L]ast week... the... White House spokes[person] admitted that some members of the White House staff, including himself, had used drugs before joining the White House staff, and [the President] knew it.

...a drug dealer, sits in the front room of his bungalow below the bleached hills and saguaro cacti on the outskirts of Phoenix... opens the plastic margarine tub and tips a little of the sweet-smelling marijuana on to the portable scales. When the platform registers an ounce, [the dealer] places the dry green leaves into a plastic bag and rolls it into a fat sausage... Then... seals the bag with the official cannabis duty stamps... bought from the State of Arizona... [The] licensed marijuana dealer... has a laminated certificate, marked with an official seal[, which]... cost him \$100... to prove it... The revenue stamps required by the Arizona authorities come in sheets... For each \$80 ounce... [bag sold], local taxpayers benefit by \$10. “This year, I have bought \$2800-worth of stamps,” says [the dealer], who complains that the duty is eating into his profits. Others are also unhappy at this unexpected taxpayers’ windfall, but for different reasons. America’s war on drugs is one of the defining issues in the presidential election. Arizona’s decision to confer legitimacy to the cannabis trade threatens to seriously embarrass both Republicans and Democrats. Despite its reputation as one of the most conservative states in the union, [the] President... has high hopes of winning Arizona. But [the President], who famously did not inhale as a student, will not want to be associated with those who do, quite legally it would seem, in Arizona. Nor will [the Republican candidate] wish to contrast his tough “Just say no” campaign slogan with the state’s growing reputation as a haven for liberal thinking on soft drugs – particularly as the state legislature is controlled by the Republicans. Privately, many Arizona law-makers admit that its cannabis laws are a disastrous mistake. The licensing laws were passed in 1983, and were intended to serve as an ingenious method of confiscating convicted drug dealers’ profits. One senator even predicted that the proceeds from the duty might eventually make all other local taxes unnecessary. At least 150 cannabis licenses have been issued in Arizona, many after a local judge ruled that the certificate effectively gave [drug dealers] immunity from prosecution. The law has raised nearly \$350,000 to date... [However, Arizona] law enforcement officers continue to insist that the sale of cannabis

there is illegal, despite the revenue stamps... Recently, three dealers in other parts of the state were arrested. What happens to them may determine if the drug becomes effectively decriminalised in Arizona... Next month the people of Arizona will be asked to vote in a referendum, Proposition 200, which proposes that the use of cannabis be decriminalised for medical reasons. A similar ballot is to be held in California.

...California ballot initiative No 215... would allow people with Aids, cancer and other illnesses to cultivate and smoke pot to ease their discomfort. "...it sounds like Prop 215 could change everything for us!" said... [a] comic strip's... goateed slacker hero. That's what worries... the button-down... state Attorney-General... "...These strips contribute to the national wink-and-nod attitude toward drug use," [the Attorney-General] said at a news conference... called to ask California newspapers to yank the pro-pot strips. None of them did. [The Attorney-General] may have failed to purge the comic pages, but... managed to draw attention to a little-noticed initiative with national implications – an issue the anti-drug warriors seem to be losing... Proposition 215 does not limit the amount of marijuana an individual can grow or smoke and requires only oral permission from a doctor to obtain the narcotic... "Every pothead in America will want to move... [to California," say opponents]. But proponents say that marijuana provides precious relief from the nausea and pain of chemotherapy and potent Aids drugs and is worth the risk that people will abuse the law. "It's like denying penicillin," says... [someone] who used to buy marijuana for her cancer-ridden son at the Cannabis Buyers' Club, an underground San Francisco group. In August, [the Attorney-General] closed it down. That kind of get-tough manoeuvre is not very popular in California. In a recent poll voters favoured the initiative by a two-to-one margin. That is not surprising since the state legislature twice passed bills similar to Proposition 215, only to have [the]Governor... veto them. The proposition's backers, which include the California Academy of Family Physicians and the 25,000-member California Nurses Association, also have hefty financial support. Led by a handful of millionaires... pro-pot forces have raked in \$1 million. The proposition's foes... raised \$30,000. If it passes, Proposition 215 will almost certainly become a national model. Several states have already passed nonbinding resolutions supporting the medicinal use of marijuana; Washington state has funded a \$70,000 study of the issue. Though federal drug laws would still make marijuana illegal regardless of state statutes, the Drug Enforcement Administration cannot police small-scale abuse... [The President's] former... drug czar... believes... the... proposition is a ruse to legalise pot for one slice of the population, then decriminalise it entirely. As it is... the initiative is so full of loopholes that it would make pot available to practically anyone. The proposition says that patients suffering from "any" condition "for which marijuana provides relief" could qualify... This is one fight that is likely to smoulder well past the election.

...Californians voted yesterday to legalise the use of marijuana by the sick... The measure had the support of about 56[%] of voters... and nearly 60[%] of electoral precincts, said state election officials... The chair[person of NZ's] Medical Association... said yesterday that there was no reason marijuana should not be allowed for medicinal use like morphine, which is a controlled drug. There were medical conditions for which marijuana could be prescribed... the only thing stopping doctors from prescribing marijuana was its illegal status. The deputy chair[person] of the General Practitioners' Association... said because it was a drug with the potential to be abused, marijuana should be approved only with tight controls on its use. [However, a] former Medical Association chair[person]... was more cautious and said there was no evidence to show that marijuana could control pain. The issue was complex and it was not known whether patients with chronic pain were using marijuana for pain relief or to help them to get through the day... A Ministry of Health spokes[person] said the ministry was following the Californian situation "with interest."

...A youth who believed [his body] had divine powers[, and]... subjected his mother to two hours of terror, causing horrific injuries, was yesterday ordered to be held... indefinitely... in a psychiatric hospital. A [Melbourne] Supreme Court judge... said the 17-year-old youth suffered from schizophrenia "brought to the fore" by heavy use of marijuana in the past two years... [T]he youth believed... his mother was Satan... and... had... [tried to kill her. T]he... mother had been found covered in blood in the front garden of the family home... Her throat had been cut... The youth... had also assaulted his father with a knife about a month earlier... [Incidentally, a]fter attending Marijuana Anonymous, a programme run by the Salvation Army, [a local mother] broke her dependency, and counselling has been invaluable in helping [her relationship with]... her eldest child...

A SOLO m[um] is to appear in court after three children... were found experimenting with cannabis. Police visited ...he[r] house... after the... m[um] had left an abusive message on the Hastings Income Support Service answerphone. Officers smelled cannabis smoke and found the children, aged 12, 10 and [8], with a cannabis cigarette. There were no adults in the house... More cannabis was found in the house. The children told police the[ir] mother had not been home for about a week, apart from "popping in and out to give the oldest child instructions to cook for the younger ones"... The children were now being looked after by relatives and... [their mum] was to appear in Hastings District Court this week on various charges.

...The paternal grandparents of a baby girl poisoned with cannabis oil have lashed out at Social Welfare for sending her back to live with her mother. The Auckland couple have also called for a law change to allow grandparents more rights in getting[access] to their grandchildren. The child was nine months old in April when... [it ended] up in Middlemore Hospital... [The baby] was discharged a few days later back into her mother's care. Now, at the age of 16 months, [the girl] and her younger sister have been taken to live in another town. Her grandparents say her whereabouts are a mystery and they are worried sick... They said they had not applied for full custody, but wanted to be allowed access to the child in their own right. As the law stood now they could get access only through their son, they said. But they now have no contact with their son... They do not want to be named for fear of identifying their granddaughter but yesterday... criticised the C[YPS] for allowing the child to return to her mother before the completion of an in-depth at-risk report... [A CYPS] manager... understood a guardianship report had been completed and was still to be put to the Family Court. [The manager] said if a child was believed to be in immediate danger, action would always be taken. "The fact is children end up in hospital with accidental poisoning and we don't remove them from the care of who is looking after them on that basis. The courts don't remove children from every home where you know illegal substances are being consumed."

...[a Samoan] is sitting in an upstairs room at the Wellington City Mission's Youth and Recreation Centre – a place designed for kids like him, who have done drugs and got into trouble... [This 16-year-old started] smoking dope when... [aged] only 11... and... learned the hard way... [F]or example... sometimes skinheads coat the dak with flyspray... or horse tranquilliser... before they sell it to black kids. "It trips you out real bad." ...The young Samoan used to buy from [skinheads who lived in] the House of Joy in Christchurch[, but doesn't]... know why they called it that... Next time [the Samoan] bought from them, [it got revenge for the flyspray episode by ripping] them off. The seller put two \$50 bags through the slot in the door, and [the Samoan] held the money in the slot too. Normally buyer and seller each hold the dak and the dollars, and both let go at once. This time, [the Samoan] grabbed the drugs and kept the cash and ran... Another time, [the Samoan] went to a new dealer, and "I packed myself up with clothes to look big. I was going, Oh, it better be good stuff", and I opened it right in front of him and [saw the dealer] had ripped me off... [by rolling] up heaps of foil just to make it look big, and I unfolded it and said, 'I want another one or... my money back.' The guy also tried to sell him cabbage – leaves only, not the buds which give you the best buzz... When [the Samoan's] cousin knocked on the door, the dealer got nervous and offered better stuff... [The Samoan] would smoke every second day or so, and then all weekend[, and] used... his lunch and bus money to buy the dak. [Cunningly, the Samoan] would get lunch money from his dad... then ask his mother for some... And[also] told them... the bus fare was much dearer than it was. [The Samoan and a]mate would team up with a couple of... younger schoolkids who would contribute \$5 each towards a \$20 tinny. The[older boys] would only let the[younger boys] have a couple of puffs... the[n]... hog the rest... Later[, the Samoan]... started stealing to fund his habit. "My cousins taught me how to use a fork on a car, as a key. Old Escorts and minis... they're like the only cars you can do." [The Samoan] would steal money or the car stereo... then sell it to second-hand dealers... [by telling them it was being sold on behalf of] his uncle, and...

[supplying] a false address... Sometimes they would trip him up by asking him to repeat the story, [which the Samoan] would get... wrong. "So I would just go, 'Oh, I'll go somewhere else'..." ...when threatened... [in this manner] they would change their tune and buy it off him. "They'd rip me off but as long as you got over \$20 for the stereo it was sweet." ...[the Samoan] has some regrets. Dak "stuffed up my schooling... and I let my parents down and that."

...The number of undercover officers planning to sue the police is growing, opening the Police Department to a potentially huge damages bill... [L]ast month... about 20 former undercover agents... [lodged] claims, through the Police Association, against the department for physical and psychological abuse they say they suffered in the field. The association's president... said last night that the number could now exceed 30... [T]he claims would be lodged in the High Court and the Employment Court at Wellington... [The president] said the court action was the culmination of an awareness that had built up over the past couple of years of the problems experienced by undercover agents, particularly in the areas of cannabis use and readjusting to society... [T]he association was confident of a successful outcome. "We wouldn't be going through this process if we didn't think the agents had a good case." The former agents are members of the 55-strong Undercover Seriously Affected by Drugs group (USED), which includes a number of serving members of the police... Dollar amounts had yet to be finalised, but in a private case now before the High Court at Auckland a former undercover officer is suing the police for \$750,000 for allegedly revealing his identity to the press... Two former officers supporting their colleague in the High Court at Auckland this week claimed that to avoid further court proceedings the police hierarchy was now making recruits sign waivers saying they would not sue the department. The former agents say N[Z] is the only country in the civilised world which still uses long-term undercover operatives. "We really don't think that the long-term undercover programme is necessary," one said.

...A former undercover officer's claim that the police breached a duty of confidentiality by disclosing his identity to the press was something of a test case, a judge said yesterday... Reserving his decision... [the judge] said the issue of confidence regarding undercover officers had probably never been as exhaustively analysed by anyone before the three days the court had spent on it... The former agent... was named in an article in the *Auckland Star* in October 1990 as having been in the unique position of having witnessed a murder carried out by an underworld associate while working undercover 10 years earlier. [The agent] did not, in fact, witness the killing, but was a principal crown witness in the murder trial, which resulted in a conviction of his erstwhile gangland colleague... The former officer is claiming that a police contact of the *Auckland Star* crime reporter... released certain details linking him with the homicide, publication of which put his life and the lives of his family in danger. Under cross-examination, the... contact accepted that information supplied by him might have linked the former agent and the homicide... [T]he Crown, said... it was accepted that there was a reciprocal and life-long duty of confidence between the police and undercover agents. However, that duty ceased where there was prior publication of secret information. In this case the information said to have been supplied was "already in the domain of the relevant public" – his former gangland associates. When the... agent gave evidence at the murder trial... [it had used] his real name in open court [knowing] that that information would be available to the press and the accused. But [the lawyer who was] representing the agent, described as unconscionable the Crown's suggestion that by being summonsed to give evidence in his own name, that information was then in the public domain. His client accepted that [it was necessary for him] to give evidence using his real name, but did not accept that after... [giving] his evidence there was no longer any confidentiality... (The law has been changed to allow undercover officers to use their assumed names in giving evidence.)

...[in] December 1990, Detective Anthony Harrod (43) died after plunging from a helicopter while taking part in a drugs recovery operation...

Police often face deadly obstacles when they identify... jealously guarded cannabis... plantations so another tactic in the aerial warfare against growers will be tested near Rotorua. Police have studied a helicopter-based ploy used successfully in Hawaii where cannabis crops are sprayed with poison from above and left to rot. Moves to emulate the tactic have been investigated for two years... Scientists at the Rotorua-based Forest Research Institute have developed a... deadly cocktail of products already available on the market, to wipe out the popular drug... The poison kills off plants in about two hours by chemically sapping up the water supply. A herbicide component then works on the roots. "It has a quick rapid scorching effect," according to an FRI spokes[person, who] said the spray was innocuous for humans and smelt like rancid butter. It would affect surrounding vegetation but the applicator mechanism allowed cannabis plants to be targeted precisely... However, cannabis growing threatened both flora and fauna... [as bush] areas were cleared to plant cannabis and traps set for possums often killed kiwis... The poison has had a dye added so growers are aware the plants have been sprayed and police know which areas have already been treated. [The]Assistant Commissioner... said the poison had been extensively tested. "There were so many environmental groups we had to satisfy. Some... had visions of poison flowing down the rivers. We're quite satisfied there is no danger to the environment or health side effects,"... FRI will not reveal the makeup of the potion, because... "We may be able to make... money out of it." And scientists working on the project would not be identified for fear of retribution by drug growers and dealers... The project is scheduled for... late in December or early 1997. It is expected to run until April when its effectiveness will be assessed... Police are still calculating the cost of the pilot scheme. Meanwhile, police are expected to unveil details and costings of the 1996-97 drugs snaring strategy in a fortnight. Last year, Operation Jo, a nationwide operation spanning five months, netted 216,000 cannabis plants and led to 339 arrests. - 1996

N[Z] green is turning bright blue in a new police assault on cannabis growers... Since Monday an estimated 35,000 young plants... in the forests of Rotorua and Tokoroa... have been poisoned by a bright blue herbicide dropped by a specially equipped helicopter and sprayed by 10 ground staff with knapsack equipment... It meant police could destroy five times as many plants as they could by the old method of pulling them up and burning them. The forests of Rotorua and Tokoroa were a good place for the pilot programme because police had found a quarter of last year's cannabis haul there... Damage to other flora was minimal... [S]cientific analysis showed the[sprayed cannabis] plants would not be harmful to smoke.

...POLICE may have to reassess a pioneering programme to eradicate cannabis crops with a secret herbicide after revelations that the high inducing component of the drug could survive an aerial poison assault... Cannabis leaves wither away almost immediately after being doused with the blue-tinted spray but the stem takes between five to seven days to decompose[during which time]... traces of... THC... may be salvageable... Police are concerned growers could attempt to retrieve the stems and produce cannabis oil... Samples taken from an initial spraying operation near Rotorua last month will be analysed... the spray could be modified if tests revealed enough THC was able to be extracted from the affected plants.

...the Neurosciences Institute of San Diego says chocolate contains anandamide, a substance that occurs naturally in the brain and acts like THC. Researchers say you'd have to eat 11kg in one go to get stoned... [By the way, twelve guys] were arrested in Poland for digging up a road after hearing a rumour that the asphalt was hashphalt. The story going around was that not all of the 15 tonnes of hash taken to be burnt and sold as ash for road construction was actually destroyed. Of course it was just a rumour – and anyway, they got the wrong road.

...The NORML bus is off the road after being smashed by a car. After six years of spreading the word... the big green Budford has fallen victim to mindless stupidity. The crash happened as a result of someone stealing a car and letting it go from the top of Liverpool Street (the steepest street in Auckland). The bus, parked outside the Liverpool St NORML office, took the runaway vehicle in the drivers side corner... It has been estimated that the repairs will cost thousands of dollars... Finances – simply put, we don't have any! This is the main reason why NORML... now [has]... new premises... between Fort St and QE2 square... [O]ur Liverpool St offices... h[ad meant] that [our costs went up but our income went down... One way of helping out is to make a regular direct credit contribution to NORML's bank account. Even a couple of dollars a week would help.

...Want to help save the planet when you go shopping? Buy hemp products! Hemp is one of the most *environmentally friendly* crops around. It can be *grown*... without chemical fertilisers and pesticides, in rotation with other crops, on the same patch of ground year after year... Hemp is one of

the world's most versatile of crops. It can be used to make... thousands of other products... It's also one of the *most efficient* in terms of the amount of fibre that can be produced on a given area of land... A hectare of hemp yields 2 1/2 times as much fibre as an acre of cotton[... which]... is actually one of the most chemically-dependent crops in the world... Hemp cloth is stronger and longer lasting than cotton – in fact, the first Levi jeans were made from hemp. It has been used for fabrics for thousands of years. Hemp fibres have been found in tombs nearly 10,000 years old – that's how long it lasts! ...Making paper from hemp can be done without using the toxic chemicals needed for wood pulp paper. Hemp paper is naturally acid free and lasts longer than paper from trees... And more trees could be left alone to get on with making oxygen so we can all keep breathing. Someday, in a world that's saner than the one we live in today, you could fill your car with hemp fuel. The pulp of the hemp plant can be distilled into ethanol, a clean burning fuel that causes far less air pollution than petrol or diesel. Ethanol can be made from virtually any plant, but in terms of yield per hectare, hemp is way ahead. The same process that turns hemp into fuel can be used to make environmentally friendly plastics. Henry Ford made car bumpers out of bio-plastic hemp in the 1930s – before the US government brought in prohibition and began leaning on the rest of the world to follow suit. Hungry? How about a hempburger? Hemp seed contains the highest percentage of edible protein of any plant, as well as essential oils that keep you healthy. It can be cooked like porridge, turned into a spread like peanut butter, baked in bread, used in casseroles – the possibilities are endless... [H]emp seed oil... can also [be used to make] soap, shampoo, conditioner, massage oil, and other body care products... Cannabis chipboard? Placemakers don't stock it yet, but it could be the building material of the future. Hemp's long, tough fibres are much stronger than wood fibres and can be pressed into durable, versatile boards – the house that hemp built. The technology exists to make all these products – all that's missing is a government with enough sense to realise their value and encourage a... [NZ hemp industry to rival those of AUS], Canada... and... Great Britain... Hemp is slowly but surely finding its way into the[NZ] marketplace... Two years ago, if you wanted to buy anything derived from the cannabis plant legally, you could forget it. Now you can find hemp jeans in your local shopping mall... [made by AUS]'s Hemp Inc. and N[Z]'s own Bakoff and the... Tasman Hemp Corporation... Most of the hemp gear is imported from the USA, where a crop of hemp clothing makers have sprouted up in recent years... The hemp is... processed into fabric in its country of origin, [then is] shipped to the USA... China is the world's leading producer of hemp fibre. It has large areas under cultivation and has built new factories with the latest processing technology. Hungarian hemp, although the best quality, is currently prohibitively expensive... Research commissioned by the NZ Hemp Industries Council found that our farmers could earn NZ\$860 per acre per year, on marginal land. This compares to what they earn now; \$332 for wheat, \$300 for sheep and \$250 for cattle!

...[an actor] famous for his roles in *Cheers* and *Natural Born Killers*, has vowed to go to jail if necessary after admitting to planting four cannabis hemp seeds. [The actor] faces a possible three months after planting the seeds to promote hemp as an alternative to tobacco for [US farmers].

...hemp] marketers... are seeking political backing to legally grow non-drug cultivars of cannabis as a renewable resource crop... The Deputy P[M]... had been supportive, as had the Northland MP... and the Labour leader... “And the Minister of Health... is quite positive... Interestingly, the Minister of Agriculture... was not very supportive and said it would be years before the issues were worked through... It looks as though hemp is continuing to suffer from decades of bad publicity, false information and association with the drug underworld.” Unlike its better-known cousin, industrial hemp contained negligible amounts of the psychoactive substance [THC. The chair]... of the Hemp Industries Marketing Board... said industrial hemp... could become a “multibillion-dollar industry” in N[Z], capable of providing huge growth in rural areas suffering from depressed prices for traditional products. There had already been approaches from Japanese companies wanting to grow hemp in N[Z] for paper-making.

...[‘Cultivation of trial plots of industrial hemp will be allowed under strict Government guidelines. The Health Minister said the decision followed a year-long investigation into growing hemp for industrial uses. Regardless of how it was used, it still fell under the Misuse of Drugs Act, the minister said. The trial would run for two seasons, and licences would be issued for one year’]...

A detective's unsupported contention that the word “things” in an intercepted telephone call meant cannabis was not sufficient for a search warrant for drugs to be issued... ruled... the Court of Appeal... Police applying for search warrants should set their grounds in reasonable detail...

THE Privy Council's judicial committee will be asked by [an]Auckland barrister... in London on Tuesday to rule police searches without a warrant are a breach of the Bill of Rights Act. If the committee supports the argument it will go before the Privy Council for a hearing. [The barrister]'s action follows a Court of Appeal decision in November which... set “a disturbing precedent to citizens' rights”. [The barrister] said the case had significant repercussions for the law of search and seizure in N[Z]. “It's about the rights of N[Z]ers to be free from illegal police practices involving the search of the person, property, correspondence or anything else.” In the case under appeal, children told an adult they had seen cannabis plants growing in a Tauranga kiwifruit orchard. The adult then told police. Police admitted they had insufficient information to apply for a search under the Misuse of Drugs Act to enter the property on December 12, 1994, the Court of Appeal said. The Bill of Rights protects N[Z]ers from “unreasonable search and seizure”. [The barrister] attempted to have the evidence thrown out, but[a] Tauranga District Court Judge... ruled the search, though unlawful (police had technically trespassed going on to the property), was not unreasonable. The Court of Appeal upheld the decision. Police were on the property for only five minutes' observation. Search warrants were later granted on February 3, 1995, 1650 cannabis plants seized and two [people] charged with cannabis cultivation on the property.

...A Sydney judge yesterday confirmed the old adage that possession is nine-tenths of the law when [the judge] ruled that a [mother] was entitled to keep a briefcase containing \$A433,000... even though [the mother] had no idea where it had come from... [P]olice had found... the money... hidden in a cupboard in her home during a search for cannabis in 1994... The police search was related to... [her son. The mother] had never seen the briefcase before and did not know who owned it... The police handed the money over to the National Crime Authority but as it had laid no charges [the mother] sued to get the money back... [C]ounsel for the authority had conceded at the hearing that there was “No current operational necessity to retain the money” but had argued that it could keep it because [the mother] had not established title to it... [However, the judge] said the owner or occupier of a private house had control not only over the property but over everything in it. “It [is] irrelevant that the owner/occupier is aware of the existence of the article in or on the property,”... The judge said it could hardly be suggested that the real owner of the money was in possession of it rather than [the mother, because the real owner] “could at any time at the whim of [the mother] be excluded from access to the premises.” ...[In further news from across the ditch, AUSn] Customs and Federal Police[have] claimed their biggest ever drugs haul after examining 10 tonnes of cannabis resin, worth an estimated \$A77... million, seized from a fishing vessel at Port Stephens on the N[SW] coast last weekend.

...Four countries co-operated to bust the world's largest cannabis smuggling operation, worth more than \$A500... million, say the A[US]n Federal Police. As a result of the efforts of authorities in the U[S, AUS], Canada and Mexico the ship used for transporting tonnes of cannabis resin across the Pacific Ocean had been detained in Los Angeles... [Incidentally, a US] federal judge ruled yesterday that the right to free speech allows doctors to recommend cannabis for seriously ill patients... A preliminary injunction issued by [the]Judge... bars police and courts from taking action against doctors who recommend cannabis... But [the judge] warned doctors not to help patients to obtain the drug... Unless appealed, the injunction will remain in effect until a case filed by two San Francisco doctors goes to trial... [The person] who heads the Los Angeles-based Americans for Medical Rights, said that with the judge's decision there was little the U[S] Government could do to stop patients from using the drug. But... “we're reasonably certain the federal Government will appeal the decision.” [The person] who runs the Cannabis Buyer's Club in San Francisco... expressed exasperation with the Government refusal to drop its opposition. “What a stupid game. Why don't [Government officials] just give it up and let them sell marijuana... along with other medicine?” In San Francisco and Los Angeles, marijuana clubs... have virtually been off limits to police after city officials repeatedly voiced their support for allowing the clubs to operate.

...The menu at... the Cannabis Club... runs from AAA-rates California Green, allegedly the best marijuana in the world, to the cheapest B-grade Mexican. The happy leaf will be served as joints, as tincture soaked in alcohol in “Merry Pills”, or baked in “brownies”. The Cannabis Club is illegal under federal law... but is now permitted in California... All that is needed to join the club is a recommendation from a doctor, hardly a problem in [a state] which abounds with New Age physicians vaunting the therapeutic benefits of pot. If Proposition 215 is allowed to run its course unchallenged, it is only a matter of time before a joint of Mendocina green leaf will be consumed in California as openly as a glass of Napa chardonnay. And what starts on the West Coast usually spreads to the rest of the U[S]. “The whole house of cards is coming down,” said... [the] founder of the Cannabis Club... Government reaction has been a mixture of outrage and disbelief. In the past 30 years, the “war on drugs” has escalated to the point where it has become the chief activity of the criminal justice machine – and the prison-industrial complex that accommodates it. Drug prohibition is why the US has 1.6 million people incarcerated, more per capita than any other country. Of all inmates in federal prisons, 63% are drug offenders. Most have never committed a violent crime but under “mandatory minimum sentences” passed by Congress in 1986, their average sentence is longer than those convicted of murder and rape. Incarceration for drug offences is now the biggest single cause of fatherlessness and family break-ups among blacks. There is little to show for this policy of “zero tolerance”. Drug use is higher now than it was in the 1960s and marijuana consumption among teenagers has doubled in four years. But the habit of draconian repression is now so firmly rooted that the federal government seems incapable of thinking in any other terms. Denouncing Proposition 215 as an intolerable step... the White House drug czar... (or director of the White House drug control policy office)... has warned [that it is his intention to] do whatever it takes to invalidate the popular vote in California – including the prosecution of doctors who prescribe marijuana and veiled threats of withholding federal funds from states encouraging “dysfunctional behaviour”. It sets the stage for a spectacular clash between Washington and California, a hazardous venture. The days are long gone when Washington could run roughshod over the states. The mantra of the 1990s is the 10th Amendment, which stipulates that all powers are reserved to the states unless specifically allocated to Washington – very few are and drug policy is not one of them.

...the U[S] President... is making heavy weather of frustrating the will of the electorate, by insisting that the voters of California and Arizona had no right to authorise the prescription of marijuana for medical purposes... One curious feature of this row is that the federal Government accepts that THC... can be a useful medicine. Doctors may prescribe a drug, Marinol, approved by the F[DA], which is THC suspended in sesame oil.

...[as] cracks in the dam of prohibition have appeared with the legalisation of cannabis for medical use in California... a... herb used by people in the northern Brazilian town of Cruzeta to cure all their ills has turned out to be cannabis... [and a] Canadian judge has ruled that a Toronto [resident] could grow and use marijuana to control his severe epilepsy, saying the law banning the medicinal use of the drug was unconstitutional... N[Z] law already has a provision to allow medical use of cannabis for specific individuals. The Government so far refuses to acknowledge that law].

...I am not the sort of person you'd expect to smoke marijuana. I'm 56 years old and the mother of two grown-up sons. I do use this illegal drug but I do it for very good reason – I need it for pain relief. For the past six years I have suffered from chronic leg ulcers, a side effect of diabetes and poor circulation. Four years ago one ulcer flared up, causing incredible pain and leaving me crippled. I would lie in bed at night crying. The pain was so intense, sleep was impossible. I tried everything. I went to hospital but they couldn't help me. I was living on pain killers and taking more and more pills. My doctor put me on pethidine, which is a serious drug, but even that didn't help... [Then a] friend suggested marijuana, and it worked marvellously. It was the only way I could get relief. I was really scared at first because I'd heard things about what it does to your brain. But... I've had no ill effects at all. I think pethidine is far worse than marijuana. When my ulcer was really bad, I lit up a joint once or twice a day, taking three or four puffs at a time. Now, however, I only use it about once every six months. My ulcers aren't so bad so I don't need it as much. [However,] I'm nervous about using it because it's illegal. Many people in my local community don't know I smoke marijuana. I'm scared of what they will think of me. I told my doctor and I don't think [my doctor] was very happy, but [my doctor] couldn't give me anything to ease the pain. A couple of years ago I was busted for growing cannabis. Someone must have told the police and they came round. I only had one 40cm high plant but I felt like a real criminal. I was going to defend the charge but in the end it just got me down so much I pleaded guilty. I was convicted and discharged. Now I won't have cannabis in my house. I don't want to get caught again. But I can get it if I need it... again [for my ulcers...]

An Aucklander, who is dying of cancer, his wife... and nephew... said they sold 2430mg of... [his] morphine to buy cannabis to ease his pain, because side-effects of the prescription drug were turning him into a “vegetable.” ...[the terminally ill Aucklander] was receiving \$2000 of morphine sulphate tablets a week. Police charged the three after visiting and searching their home during an eight-month South Auckland undercover operation which began in August last year. They found a stockpile of 4380mg of morphine. [The] Judge... sentenced... the... [Aucklander] to supervision for a year on the grounds... [of his] short life expectancy and that his health would be impaired by a prison term. [His wife and nephew] were given nine-month jail terms, suspended for a year, and six months' periodic detention.

...[a] computer contractor – whose wife... is an American citizen – ...is looking forward to meeting his... in-laws after an Auckland District Court judge quashed a cannabis conviction [the Aucklander] collected as a teenager 12 years ago. U[S] immigration authorities refused entry to the 30-year-old... because [it] had two convictions for possessing cannabis in 1985 as an 18-year-old labourer. However, his lawyers... successfully sought a discharge without conviction on the second charge after having the case reheard yesterday... [One of his lawyers] told the judge the conviction had “disastrous consequences” for [the Aucklander], who at the time had been unaware of the ramifications of pleading guilty... [The Aucklander told the retrial] judge that a very small quantity of cannabis was found in the pocket of a jacket [the Aucklander] was wearing when the... drug squad raided his shared flat in November 1985... [The 18-year-old] had planned to defend the charge but decided it was not worth the cost... [The Aucklander] had not met his wife's elderly parents, who could not afford to come to N[Z]. Under the U[S] Immigration and Nationality Act, the authorities could waive one minor cannabis conviction, but not two. There was no police opposition to the application for a rehearing, but the court was told that police records relating to the charge were destroyed after seven years... Outside the court, [the elated Aucklander]... said people convicted on minor drug charges faced harsher penalties than the gravity of the offence warranted, particularly in immigration matters. [His wife said it] had not realised the significance of her husband's convictions. “M[y husband] told me about his record and said ‘Do you think that will be a problem?’ I said, ‘Oh, I don't think so, that would be ridiculous.’” They learned differently a week before [the Aucklander] was due to join his wife in the U[S].

...*The Economist's Pocket World in Figures*... says that NZ... is second only to the U[S] for the number of cannabis arrests per capita each year [‘23,000 annually – 1/2 for low-level possession’]... This claim has upset... the... head of the National Drug Intelligence Bureau (sic)[, who] says it is ridiculous to publish such a statistic, because though accurate it gives a misleading impression! “NZ has one of the most drug-free societies in the world”... the... Det. Insp... claims, adding that the country could be drug free within 10 to 16 years if police keep up the pressure.

...A Papakura [resident, whose wrist was] handcuffed... to his ankle... by armed intruders[, who then]... made off with cannabis plants growing in the garage... was rescued by police... officers... They took him to the local fire station to cut him free and then arrested him for growing cannabis.

...the singer and actor who wrote the lyrics “No, no, no, I don't smoke it no more,” has been charged in Montana with possessing cannabis and drug paraphernalia. [The singer] was an honorary sheriff's deputy who spoke against drug use to school children.

...FIVE third-graders were suspended from school after they were caught smoking marijuana cigarettes rolled with their homework paper during morning recess... “Earlier this year we caught this same group smoking a cigarette, and... even... that was... a first for me,” said [the] Principal... in Eaton, Colorado... The students'... will not face criminal charges because state law bans prosecution of children that... are under 10.

...TWO 12-year-old children nabbed chewing cannabis leaves have been suspended from a west Auckland intermediate school... The shock find followed claims by researchers that one in 10 N[Z]ers are hooked on cannabis by the age of 21... It is understood up to [9] children were suspended

from the school on March 7. They are expected to return to classes tomorrow if they agree to sign a good behaviour contract and undergo drug counselling... Ironically, the school runs a Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) programme to discourage children flirting with drugs.

...Two boys aged 9 and 10 were suspended from a Lower Hutt school after they brought drugs for "show and tell."

...Police are lighting up cannabis in schools to help teachers to sniff out students using drugs... The demonstration involved burning a small amount of cannabis in a dish... Nationally, 335 school students have been suspended for drug offences... – barely two months into the first term.

...*Sniffer dogs for use in school bus searches*... Buses taking students to the two Whakatane secondary schools will be stopped on occasions in the next two months and searched for drugs. Whakatane police are supporting Whakatane and Trident High Schools in their fight against drugs and have agreed to a joint anti-drug initiative... The principal of Whakatane High School... wrote to the police six weeks ago expressing concern that marijuana was being brought into school on the buses and asking if they would search them. The buses, which carry students from Taneatua, Ruatoki, Waimana, Paroa and Poroporo, will be stopped at least once during term... Drug dogs could also be brought into the school grounds during term... The dogs would identify the school bags containing drugs and the police would deal with the students to whom they belonged.

...[Whakatane High School has] suspended 9 students and expelled 2 for drug use in the past month. "I've heard of students swapping a reefer of marijuana for a meat pie." ...Education Ministry figures show other schools are cracking down too. In the second half of last year 153 Auckland students were suspended or expelled for drug... and alcohol use. 81 in Hamilton were sent home, there were... 114 in Lower Hutt, 45 in Christchurch and 19 in Dunedin. The Commissioner for Children... says "...there is a significant problem."

...Cannabis use may be a bigger... problem than we think. A Dunedin survey of a thousand 21-year-olds has found that more than 60% have used the drug... "...61.9% have used cannabis at some time; 52.4% in the previous year..." ...The Otago researchers say their results were probably the first true indication of the use of cannabis in N[Z] society because of the special nature of their research project... The study members, now aged between 23 and 24, have been closely monitored by researchers since they were born... Other research is not directly comparable... but the latest figures are significantly higher than those revealed in similar projects. A 1990 study in Auckland found almost 40[% of guys] and just over 25[% of gals] aged from 18 to 19 reported using cannabis... [T]he British co-founder of a rehabilitation centre in Germany who has been speaking to N[Z] secondary school pupils about the dangers of drug use, said yesterday that... [if] young people were not given the opportunity to express their emotions and give in to their feelings, they were likely to turn to substances such as cannabis and alcohol, which helped to put them in touch with their feelings and their sensations.

...[while 3%] of 14-year-olds in N[Z] admit to having tried cannabis, in A[US] the figure is 27.6[%], but... by adulthood the picture is similar on both sides of the Tasman... The A[US]n Household Survey of 1995 shows that just over half the population have tried it and 12.3[%] use it weekly.

...when cannabis laws have been relaxed in... Holland and A[US], consumption has remained steady – or, in the case of teenage use, declined.

...In the late 1970s the potheads of A[US] talked in awed tones of Canberra, the eldorado in their midst where the cafes were paved with Colombian Gold and the police looked on with gentle tolerance. If they had ever got it together to make it to the national capital, they would have found the myth to be as dangerously ephemeral as the conquistadors' dreams: cannabis, even with decriminalisation of small amounts in 1993, is illegal. The same applies in South A[US], which is in the process of reducing... from 10 to four... the number of cannabis plants users can grow under the on-the-spot fine system that has been in place now for a decade. In fact, according to [the]Alcohol and Other Drugs of A[US] chief executive... cannabis smokers are better off in Victoria – where possession and use of even tiny amounts is still a criminal offence – than they are in Adelaide[, where]... fines range up to \$A150... for possession of less than 100g of cannabis or 20g of cannabis resin... Since the on-the-spot system was introduced by S[A] in 1987 the number of people given "dope tickets" has soared to 20,000 a year – almost three times the level of possession charges laid in Victoria, which has four times the population. And, while... half the people issued with on-the-spot fines eventually wind up convicted in court of failing to pay the fines, in Victoria first-time offenders are usually placed on bond without a conviction being recorded. But there has been a change in A[US] over the past decade, with an increasing body of support for decriminalisation of cannabis. Last year a Victorian Government report urged the legalisation of marijuana, permitting dope-smoking in public places and the expunging of all recorded convictions for possession and personal use. Despite backing from the State Premier... his cabinet refused to implement the report's recommendations. As in other states, politics remain the main barrier to reform of marijuana laws. Public opinion polls, however, have generally favoured decriminalisation, and surveys by such august bodies as the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre have found that one-third of A[US]ns, between a quarter and one-third of the nation's under-16s, and more than a half of its 20 to 24-year-olds had puffed on a joint. There are other arguments. According to the A[US]n Institute of Criminology, the cost of enforcing cannabis laws is well over \$A300 million... a year, three-quarters of the total costs of drug law enforcement, and overwhelmingly involving minor cases. And because cannabis is illegal, the estimated \$A1.9 billion... annual turnover of the dope industry is pumped into a tax-free black market.

...One of the first studies of long-term marijuana use in A[US] has found the health of such users is on par with the general population. The study [was] conducted in the['feral'] subculture of the North Coast of N[SW], in which cannabis use is an integral part of everyday life and social relationships... [However, the] rate of respiratory problems among the marijuana users was higher than the general population, although 86[%] were current or former tobacco smokers. More than 33[%] drank alcohol at hazardous levels... [In local news,] Cambridge High was criticised last year when it took no action over a member of its board of trustees convicted for drink-driving.

...Seven Cambridge High... students caught drinking in school time this week have been treated rather more leniently than the pupils who were expelled last year for trying cannabis... Of the seven, six received punishments ranging from three-day suspensions to detentions. Only one was suspended indefinitely... None of the... 14... expelled... students, all under 16 at the time, have been allowed back into the school, despite many attempts. Six are now studying by correspondence. The principal... refused to discuss the[alcohol-drinking] students' punishment and said it was "not a matter for the media." But one parent, who did not want to be named... was "pleasantly surprised" at the level of punishment her son received... [because,] during the publicity surrounding last year's expulsions, [the mother] had "made it very clear that offences involving drugs and alcohol were in the same league. So, of course, I was fully expecting my son to be expelled..." The [mother] said that instead, her son was given a fair punishment and a second chance to "right the wrongs" by working hard on his return to the school... [The mother] was unsure why the school had chosen to give the students a second chance, but was certain the bad publicity surrounding the expulsions last year was a deciding factor. "My heart goes out to those kids, and it's a shame their wrong-doing could not have... been treated [in a similar] way." The spokes[perso]n for the parents of the 14 expelled... was also pleased with the way the high school handled the students caught drinking... [and] would give the school "the benefit of the doubt" that its punishment policy had been amended... "But it is unfortunate that the other children did not have the same kind of response from the school."

...Four Cambridge High School fifth formers have been suspended indefinitely this week for smoking cannabis. Police were called to the school after students told senior staff other pupils were smoking cannabis on the playing fields at lunchtime. The incident comes just a week after more lenient treatment of seven pupils caught drinking sparked speculation that the school's hard-line policy on drugs and alcohol had been amended... [A spokesperson] for the parents of the... group of [14 students expelled last year]... said the school was fostering double standards... [However, the] school's hard-line policy has won the support of the Hamilton regional police commander... [who admired the principal's] stand "despite what other... so-called enlightened people... might think." ...the principal... was very surprised more students had been found smoking... [cannabis but] was pleased to see other students supporting the policy and were prepared to have it enforced.

...[the four] Cambridge High School students indefinitely suspended last week for smoking cannabis can apply for re-enrolment in a couple of months, says the principal... The school board's disciplinary committee met on Monday and decided that the students would be suspended until they were 16 years old. But [the principal] said the 16-years designation was applied merely to meet a legal requirement. Students under 16 could not be expelled so this was the only way to have them excluded from the school roll.

...the principal of Trident High School in Whakatane... says... [students who have been suspended for smoking] marijuana should be drug-tested before being allowed to return to classes... Industries could drug-test workers if they were considered a potential risk, and schools should be allowed to do the same... [The principal] admits the move – which the Law Society says would be illegal without consent – is deliberately provocative, but... believes schools have to force the issue... Other pupils had a right to know their school was a drug-free, safe environment... A drug test by a medical professional would cost the student about \$150... On Wednesday Trident High suspended its first students this year – three fourth-formers – for smoking marijuana... Meanwhile, the town's other secondary school, Whakatane High, is continuing its strong stand against drugs, with five fifth-formers suspended this week for smoking marijuana.

...Nationally, 443 students... have been suspended this year for drug offences... The principal of... Northland College in Kaikohe... is calling for a specialised police taskforce to investigate cannabis consumption in the region following a record number of student suspensions for drug use at the college... Drug searches were being stepped up at the 518-pupil school... and... the school's board had resolved early last month to toughen its stand by increasing the terms of suspension for students caught using cannabis... Trident meanwhile is pressing ahead with plans to drug-test students suspended for using marijuana before allowing them back to school... Trident's board has asked a Whakatane law firm... to look into whether students can be legally required to return a negative drugs test before returning to school. The... requirement would mean young offenders effectively suspended themselves for three weeks – the estimated time it took for marijuana to leave the system. At present, many schools suspended students for three days for a first offence. "How do we know they don't go home and smoke pot for that time and come back to school more doped than before? We are not trying to be vindictive, we are trying to get these kids off the drugs." The president of the School Trustees Association... said yesterday that her organisation would back the move if it could be done legally and with parental support.

...A Bay of Plenty... mother-of-four... is lobbying to have security guards placed in schools to help curb teenage drug use... [The] former security guard... will put the proposal to colleges and intermediates in the Western Bay of Plenty over the next week... The aim was to set up a scheme sponsored by the community. Schools would pay about \$100 a week for five security workers to police the school grounds. The balance would be funded by donations and sponsorship from local businesses... [The mother] would also write to the Ministry of Youth Affairs and the Tauranga MP... to ask about Government funding... The Minister of Education... has promised more money in the budget to combat drugs in schools... 862 children have so far been suspended for drug use [during the first half of] this year compared with about 900 for all of 1996.

...Schools planning to drug-test students have dismissed as hogwash a report... commissioned by the Youth Law Project and written by a American Yale Law School graduate... [plus three NZ] solicitors... which finds the process illegal... in most circumstances. It infringed students' rights under the Bill of Rights, the Privacy Act and the U[N] convention on the Rights of the Child. But... [the] principal of Trident High School, Whakatane – the first to announce plans to drug-test students suspended for cannabis – condemned aspects of the report as "absolute codswallop." ...Trident was still waiting for a legal opinion. "I'm quite certain that we will bring it in, like other schools." The... principal of Te Aroha College... and the... chair[person] of the Tauranga Boys' College board... were also dismissive.

...Students at Tauranga Boys' College yesterday joined the ranks of N[Z]ers who face drug testing... The school is the country's first to introduce testing of students... The school... had sought legal opinion and was confident the testing procedure was sound. Parents or caregivers would be present during the test and the student had to consent to the test. The student would not be suspended for refusing, although the school would still have to consider the evidence of drug use in each case. The saliva test for alcohol and urine test for cannabis would be carried out using medical strips supplied by a pharmaceutical firm. Only students showing obvious signs of drug or alcohol use would be asked to take a test... [T]he Youth Law Project, described the move as very serious because it involved fundamental laws of personal privacy. Students' actions outside of school were the responsibility of parents, yet the school was in the position of regulating that behaviour because cannabis could stay in the bloodstream for some weeks... [However, the] assistant principal... said... [students] who used drugs outside of school hours brought the effects into the classroom...

THE P[ost] Primary Teachers Association is likely to advise teachers at Tauranga Boys College not to take part in the school's decision to drug test students. [The] PPTA president... said the association's executive had yet to discuss the issue, but... believed that was the advice it would give. Saliva and urine testing students went "way beyond what has ever been done in N[Z] schools before"... The Tauranga board of trustees decision seemed more of a marketing ploy aimed at parents, than a serious attempt to address the problem. "Is... [it] about helping kids or is it about finding them out and punishing them? This is entirely the wrong way to go about it." ...The Government has said it will commit \$1 million towards the school drug problem in the Budget. [However, the NZ] Principals Federation Council president... said that money wasn't enough. The... School Trustee Association president... was pleased some money had been allocated to the problem. "But will it be enough?" The lack of specialised facilities for students made it difficult to bring them back into schools if their problems hadn't been addressed.

...Debate on... the new principal... of Fraser High School[']s... proposal, testing students for drugs, was deferred [by the school's]... board... Thirteen opponents... [of the board's decision to okay his other proposal attended the meeting to] present... a petition with 211 signatures from [student]s opposing... security cameras... Whakatane High School, where [the principal] last worked, has a camera watching bags outside the library.

...A student protest at a Hamilton school, which led to 34 suspensions[(r:p1236, ln53)], was over teacher behaviour not security cameras and drug testing, as the school principal reported, says its organisers. The principal of Fraser High School... suspended all students who disrupted classes with their protests on Wednesday. Two organisers said teachers had called them useless and stupid. On Monday they had complained to [the principal], saying they would protest if [the] principal did not act... [By the way, marijuana] testing kits are being made available to parents of students at [the principal's previous school –]Whakatane High School. The school has bought urine-testing kits from an Auckland company and is offering them to parents for \$7 each... The kits... came with easy-to-follow instructions and were as simple and accurate as a urine pregnancy test.

...Drug testing of students at Trident High School in Whakatane will start next year. The principal... announced yesterday that the board of trustees had given him the power to require any student suspected of using cannabis to undergo a urine test.

...a... military police[officer] yesterday denied threatening to urine-test a soldier who was later charged with cannabis offences...

Three soldiers based at Hobsonville near Auckland will face cannabis charges at court-martial hearings at the base next week. Two of the defendants are lance-corporals... [A]n Army Land Force Command spokes[person] said it was uncommon for soldiers to face drug or alcohol-related charges, but the Army took a serious view of such offending. However, [the spokesperson] denied that soldiers found guilty would automatically face discharges. [The spokesperson] was confident cannabis use was not widespread in the Army. [Editor's note: Soldiers and drugs have had a long association. 'Some of the Assassin (Arabic *hashshashin*, "hashish addicts") sect's members were exclusively devoted to the task of assassination, which they fulfilled while under the influence of hashish' (but a different source says the group 'notorious for a series of killings of political and religious opponents were so called because they acted as if crazed by hashish'). Drug use is also linked to the Japanese *samurai* and kamakazis, and – for completely different reasons – with US soldiers when they were fighting in Vietnam!]

...Two lance corporals], both aged 31, deny charges of smoking... cannabis... at Hobsonville and Whenuapai on November and December last year... At a court martial in Auckland... [it] was alleged they bought... the class C drug... in \$20 tinfoil “bullets” in partnership with two other soldiers who have since been disciplined... [One of them, a] Lance Corporal... was demoted to private and fined \$500... under the Armed Forces Discipline Act 1971... and[the other, a] Private... spent 14 days in a military prison after admitting smoking the drug... [The private said the accused] had turned their back on him after the drug incidents came to light... Both accused have been in the Army for 11 years... [An] MP Sergeant Major... told the court yesterday that... a urine test... might have[been] mentioned... during the course of an interview, but [the military police officer] could not recall... The... Sergeant Major... said urine tests for cannabis were generally [performed] at the request of commanding officers, who received the results after analysis at Middlemore Hospital[, and then alleged that] positive results had been encountered among the troops.

...One soldier was dismissed from the Army and another demoted to private and fined \$400 after being found guilty of cannabis offences by a court martial in Auckland yesterday... Their lawyer... told the court the offences were not committed while the pair were on duty... [The] Lance Corporal... who was found guilty on cannabis smoking charges after an internal Army inquiry in 1987... had been due to be discharged on medical grounds last December after injuring her knee but had been held back until the charges against her were resolved... Another soldier who allegedly smoked cannabis with the pair will be tried by court-martial today.

...A third Auckland soldier convicted over the past week of smoking cannabis has been fined... \$250 and... censured... [In related news, cannabis] growers have destroyed native bush to plant [their crop on NZ]’s premier nature reserve, Little Barrier Island. More than 2700 cannabis plants and a campsite have been discovered in the Hauraki Gulf sanctuary, home to numerous endangered species... Police said the... largest of... [the] 27 individual plots... was about the size of half a football field. Kauri trees were trimmed to allow sunlight to reach the illegal crop, and soil was brought from the mainland, resulting in the introduction of exotic weeds. Conservationists said the growers’ actions threatened rare native flora and fauna, including the fragile kakapo recovery programme. If one rat reached shore it could have wiped out the entire kakapo population... Police believe the growers chose... the last sanctuary for a large number of species... because it is free of predators, such as possums, who feast on the lucrative crop... Police and Department of Conservation staff are now monitoring other islands such as the Poor Knights and the Hen and Chicken group. Yesterday, police raided four Northland properties...

This week two [people] were sentenced in the Warkworth District Court to... 12 months’ imprisonment after a police officer investigating their cannabis patch stumbled on to a booby trap and was peppered with pellets from a home-made pipe-gun... punctur[ing] his leg in 27 places... With a well-tended plant priced at up to \$3000, growing dope had become big business and was now the territory of gangs and “serious criminals,”... the Police Association president... said. “...There is real money in it and it’s no accident that people are prepared to take risks to grow and protect it. It started with a few nails on trees and razor-blades hanging down and now... [the] ingenuity involved in protecting these crops knows no bounds...”

...Dope growers threatening workers have forced a major security operation in... Challenge forests. The company... [which has just told its 1400 forestry employees that they] have to submit to drug tests or lose their jobs... will spend “a significant six-figure sum” on the new security measures... [but] would not say exactly what measures [were planned – although it is believed they involve ‘employing three security groups to patrol’ the company’s forests]... In the last marijuana growing season, from October 1996 to April 1997, police recovered 53,000 plants from [Challenge]’s forests worth an estimated \$160 million... The huge haul was a “considerable stake” which the growers wanted to protect and were “less than co-operative” when stumbled on by forestry staff... In addition to the threats, dope-growers also cause damage to property and vehicles, and cut down trees...

[‘Dope rife in forestry industry By noon each day, thousands of NZ forestry workers have each scaled more than 50 pine trees and dragged ladders, harnesses and metre-long pruning shears through dense gorse and blackberry bush. But instead of putting their feet up and taking it easy, many eat on the run while they go in search of a different kind of relaxation. A recent survey on cannabis use in the forestry industry showed 77% of silvicultural workers, who plant, prune and thin trees, had smoked marijuana in the previous year. Furthermore, the Canterbury University forestry student who conducted the survey found that 27% had used the drug at work. The figures come as no surprise to those in the industry. One former forestry worker, who does not want to be named, said many workers ate their lunch in five minutes and spent the rest of their break searching for the drug in forestry plots. “Pruners and planters come across cannabis all the time because they know where it’s more likely to grow,” the former worker said. “And if they find it, they use it because it’s free. For a lot of them it gives them an incentive to go to work because the money isn’t that great.” The Murupara resident, who worked in logging and milling around the central North Island for 12 years, said forestry workers smoking marijuana would rather be sacked than give up the habit. “People know there’s a shortage of forestry workers. If they’re going to sack 75% of the industry, who’s going to fill those spots? Until those odds turn around, the workers aren’t going to be too worried about getting fired.” In some rural communities, forestry companies admit they are hard pressed to find a drug-free labour market. CHH’s remanufacturing group manager said young guys with low qualifications tended to do the physically demanding silvicultural work. “We’re dealing with a labour pool who pretty much live day to day. Habitual drug use is a fact of life with silvicultural groups. It’s just part of the scene. If you picked another industry which employed people from that group, I wouldn’t be surprised if cannabis was an issue for them too.” The Challenge Forests executive who chairs the health and safety committee of the NZ Forest Industries Council said companies discovered that cannabis was being widely used while trying to improve workplace safety records in recent years. Many companies administered pre-employment drug tests’.]

...the Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union... says... Challenge Forests’ proposed drug testing of employees is illegal, [a]s... the policy... impinge[s] on employees’ out-of-work activities... “The employer is... exercis[ing] power it does not have,”... [I]t was legitimate for employers to be concerned about the state of employees at work, but if an employee chose to drink alcohol outside work and was not rendered unfit for work on the next working day “it is no business of the employer.” ...The union also believed urine testing breached the Privacy Act, which protects against collection of unnecessary information, and the Bill of Rights, which protects against being subjected to scientific or medical experimentation.

...Drug testing in the workplace [i]s... a growth industry in N[Z]... More... companies are calling on the services of urine samples... seeking profiles of potential employees’ drug use. In the U[S] similar set-ups have created a multi-billion dollar industry... It’s legal for companies to drug test workers in N[Z] under the Health and Safety Act but just what a company should do with a drug positive employee is a subject of debate. “In A[US] we believe that it will be used as a weeding out process... of [employees] who might be troublesome in other ways...” “In the U[S] we take a much more blanket approach and are willing to test a lot more people, and it’s just been taken out of the privacy, civil liberties debate.” Mandatory testings[have] been tried here. Mercury Energy tried to sack workers who refused drug tests but threw the idea away when unions protested... Air N[Z]... conducts pre-employment drug testing of pilots and other staff working in areas considered “safety critical” but... not... random testing...

[‘Almost 1/4 of staff randomly tested in about 50 firms have been found with drugs such as cannabis in their urine, the Employment Court in Auckland heard from a forensic toxicologist and client manager at the Government’s Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR). But the toxicologist disclosed that just 2% of 480 samples taken in the past 5 months from applicants to Air NZ showed drugs from any of the 5 targeted classes. That was under a pre-employment screening contract which the airline now wants extended to random and other forms of drug and alcohol testing for its 10,000-strong workforce, against a legal challenge by 6 unions. The airline’s chief executive testified earlier that drugs or alcohol were endemic problems at Air NZ’]...

Drug-affected workers may be getting through their employers’ drug tests undetected because of flawed drug-testing procedures, according to the [ESR]. The institute, which provides N[Z]’s largest workplace drug-testing programme, says most other organisations which offer commercial

testing and analysis do not meet the international standards it complies with. As a result... positive test results may not stand up under legal challenge... Challenge Forests told its 1400 employees last month that they would have to submit to drug tests or risk being sacked.

...[NZ] motorists could face breath tests for cannabis within three years. A British company that makes alcohol sniffers is developing a similar instrument to test for cannabis use... [I]t is still about two years away. Asked if N[Z]'s police would consider introducing the sniffer... the head of traffic safety at police headquarters... said yesterday: "We certainly will if such a device comes available." But[an] Auckland lawyer... who specialises in civil liberties, said the introduction of such devices had wide-ranging implications. Not only was there no evidence to link cannabis use to bad driving, but sniffer tests could seriously erode people's rights to avoid self-incrimination... People could refuse to undergo a test but at present refusal was treated just as harshly in the courts as failing the test... Driving vehicles under the influence of alcohol or drugs was already covered in the statutes, [the lawyer] said, and there had been many cases where people had been convicted after agreeing to undergo blood tests for cannabis... [The head of traffic safety] last night agreed that the issue of self-incrimination had to be looked at... [but declared:] "If you think cannabis doesn't affect complex tasks, would you mind your surgeon having a joint and then operating on you?" [The head then] said road deaths surged in the Far North and East Coast-Gisborne area during marijuana cropping season. A leading road accident researcher... is working on a study of whether cannabis is linked to road accidents. His report will be out in September... [Someone] who specialises in toxicology at the Auckland School of Medicine, said much work still needed to be done to determine how much cannabis a person could ingest before becoming incapacitated.

...A coroner has warned about the effect of cannabis on the judgment and reaction of drivers after a motorcycle was hit by a train, killing two young people in Feilding last year. The youth who rode the motorcycle in front of a freight train had been using cannabis, the Coroner's Court in Palmerston North was told. The drug diazepam was also found in a blood sample.

...['New Orleans police have blamed a bus driver's use of marijuana for a Mother's Day crash that killed 22 people. A blood test showed the driver, aged 46, who died of a heart attack on Monday, had taken marijuana between two and six hours before his bus, full of mostly elderly citizens, veered off a highway in the city and crashed into a concrete abutment on May 9.' In local news, millions] of dollars of cannabis, semi-automatic weapons... [a] helicopter... and a high-tech growing system have been seized in what police say is the largest drugs seizure in N[Z]. The raid, meticulously planned for more than three months, hit the huge plots deep in dense bush in the Whanganui National Park. At least 7000 fully grown cannabis plants... camouflaged with netting... [and irrigated by a petrol]-driven... mist-spray... system from water supplied by dams... were found surrounding two drying sheds and an accommodation camp... [powered by] solar panels and a generator... [I]t would take several days to remove all the cannabis[, which included about]... 200kg of dried cannabis... in wool sacks... 120 police from as far away as Auckland and Christchurch took part in the operation, codenamed Operation Ragwort. Four [people] were arrested at the scene... [They were] armed... but no shots were fired. Two of the four... tried to run away but were caught and mauled by police dogs... Eight others from the Waiouru area and Northland were taken into custody... Detectives suspect gangs are involved in the cannabis plantation and say further arrests are likely.

...The... police chief... in charge of the country's biggest cannabis seizure... says [his department] is aware of "three or four" other plots each holding several thousand plants... but [the department is] forced to let them grow... to maturity and be harvested... because they have neither the money nor the staff to deal with them... "We also know of farmers who have been offered big money to keep out of an area of their farm bush for six months. Some were offered more than \$200,000." Three years ago the Wanganui district commander... decided his patch would not take part in the annual national drug-recovery programme because of what was termed "prioritised funding."

...Last week's raid by armed police on a cannabis plantation in the upper reaches of the Whanganui River showed how wrong we are to insist, in the face of reputable evidence, on driving this harmless narcotic into the hands of drug barons who make millions from its scarcity value. The raid was enormously expensive and highly dangerous. It could easily have led to a shootout with the cannabis farmers' patrols, who were armed with... AK47 automatic rifles... [Helicopter pilots have already been] shot at while flying over Whanganui National Park... Police helicopters hovering above bush on the Coromandel during annual cannabis recovery programmes had also been shot at. Pilots and companies hired by the D[OC] to drop 1080 poison in Northland were also threatened with being shot down if they flew over bush suspected of containing cannabis plots... [Furthermore, there] are far more important things for 130 police to spend their time on – like patrolling the streets to curb rapist gangs...

[Far North] police say more Northlanders are prepared to do in cannabis growers as they fight to take back their communities. For areas such as South Hokianga the new attitude has seen former "hot spots" virtually clean of cannabis-growing.

...AN ESCALATING cocktail of drugs, guns and money is concerning residents of the Far North... [and local] police are obviously concerned about a trend for drug users and dealers to arm themselves. A little over a week before [a Far North resident] shot and fatally wounded one of the armed [drug]-robbers who had assaulted and threatened his partner... at their farm house... Kaitia police arrested a [person] at gunpoint after the routine stopping of a car. Their decision to draw weapons was made after the [driver] placed his hand across his chest towards a bulge in his jacket which turned out to be a small bottle of beer. [The] Kaitia police district boss... said officers had no option but to take seriously every incident.

...A High Court judge yesterday... remarked that people who wanted to legalise the use of marijuana should take a look at the way it had affected the lives of the three offenders... involved in a sword attack on a young couple in their... home. The incident... started when [the offenders] burgled a Papakura house. After returning home and drinking more alcohol, they went back to burgle a neighbouring home, expecting it to be unoccupied... The couple who lived in the home were attacked and... [one defendant] sexually assaulted the... 17-year-old girlfriend... with his tongue... They then left, but [the defendant] decided to put on a condom and return to rape the... [girlfriend. F]ortunately the police were on the scene by that time.

...[THE] ASSOCIATE Treasurer... has spoken out in favour of decriminalising possession of marijuana, saying it is no more harmful than alcohol... But [the minister] said his views were formed long before... his son was... convicted for possession of marijuana and... fined \$350 in the Whakatane District Court... The impact on a young person of a criminal conviction for possession could be far-reaching and was out of all proportion to the seriousness of the offence, [the minister] said. For example, many countries denied entry to anyone with a drug conviction... [The minister's view] is not shared by his N[Z] First colleagues. The Minister of Maori Affairs... the Associate Health Minister... and... the Minister of Youth Affairs... all have strong anti-drug views[, although]... the Minister of Youth Affairs... had tried marijuana[, as has the Associate Treasurer. A spokesperson for the]... Police Minister... said the issue was not under consideration by the Government.

...the Minister of Police... says people with minor marijuana convictions should have their criminal records wiped. But the same should go for other minor offences such as minor assault or property offences... "I do have some considerable sympathy with the view that convictions of this sort tend to hang around the necks of otherwise law-abiding citizens... As a member of the Government I would strongly support suitable legislation." The... Minister of Justice... [also] favours such an approach... [The Minister of Police] does not support decriminalisation but says... [that more] than \$17 million of police time (on the basis of \$70 an hour) was spent last year in enforcing marijuana laws... Eleven more MPs have come clean and admitted smoking cannabis... [The Minister of Police] would not say if [marijuana had ever entered his body, adding that] it was an offensive and prying question. A[n A]ct list MP... also said it was nobody's business, but... supported decriminalisation... [pointing out that] there was "a complete failure in the history of [hu]mankind to control any drug." Making it illegal had created a whole culture of violence and terrorising neighbourhoods.

...Sometimes a law is valuable even when it is honoured in the breach, perhaps especially when it is breached. It is hard to believe that many youngsters smoke marijuana for its own sake. I dimly recall an awful lot of sucking and gasping and soreness in the throat for a few minutes of

giggling while the world slowed down. It is hard to credit that anybody pays or risks prosecution for a drug so dull... Something other than soporific experience has to explain the drug's attraction to them. Probably it is the simple mischief of it; the daring-do of flouting a law... That is... a reason why some say legalise it. Remove the element of defiance, they say, and young folk will lose interest. Maybe, but what then will they challenge? There are, as the legalisation lobby insists, far worse narcotics than cannabis. Some of those concoctions are said to be rife in schools in certain cities of the U[S]. We are lucky to be drawing the line on a soft drug.

...When it comes to cannabis, MPs are all talk and no action... [A]mong MPs who favour a law change, no one is coming forward to... bring a bill to Parliament. That produced a huge sigh of relief in National ranks yesterday. The last thing the Nats want is to be seen going soft on drugs.

...The National MP for Tamaki ...[i]... in favour of decriminalising cannabis and wiping criminal offences from the public record after a period of time... [The] lawyer and former police[officer]... sees no good reason for people who... possess... cannabis... for their own use to be dealt with under the criminal law. "It's a... waste of police time... clogs up the courts and gives young people a criminal conviction they don't really need. The way to deal with cannabis is education, example and encouragement not to use it." ...most offenders were aged... 15 [to] 25 and did not re-offend.

...After nearly six years in the political wilderness, the Misuse of Drugs (Drug Paraphernalia) Amendment Bill is due to be reported back to Parliament. Originally introduced in 1992, the watered-down bill empowers the Minister of Customs to ban bongs, water pipes and other paraphernalia used to smoke drugs. But the proprietor of an Auckland pipe shop said the proposed law would drive her out of business while having no impact on drug use. About 50[%] of sales at her Karangahape Rd shop were pipes, mostly imported... The proprietor... could no longer afford her central city rent if [ordered to] not sell pipes. Drug users would make their own at home... [The chairperson] of the parliamentary commerce committee, agreed that the bill would have little impact on drug use but said it addressed concern about drug paraphernalia being sold openly. The original bill would have outlawed tobacco pipes and common kitchen implements which could be put to illegal use.

...I FIRST smoked dope at 17. I'd been looking forward to it for months, ever since I'd escaped parental scrutiny in the provincial town where I'd grown up and come to university in the big city. The smoking evening, arranged by a flatmate who knew "someone who actually had some," was keenly anticipated by the whole household, so I was alarmed to feel no perceptible effect (though not as alarmed as the generous supplier; [who was] watching some expensive Afghani hashish go up in smoke and I was reporting nothing). Experienced smokers told me later that there was no cause for concern. It was common not to feel any effect from the first few smokes and they were proved correct within a few months. Some would say that that evening around the kitchen table of a student flat in Ponsonby was the first step down a path to perdition, but whether or not you agree with them rather depends on your view of heaven. Certainly in the ensuing quarter century, I have tasted most of the fruit forbidden by statute and a bit more besides. That is not to say that I spent the rest of my student days in a drug-induced haze. I finished a degree of moderate academic distinction and... have never had any trouble holding down a job. My OE was considerably enlivened by the consumption of stimulant... substances which were either ludicrously cheap in the countries where they were bought or, best of all, growing wild and refreshingly legal. It's one way to spend your 20s and those indignant of my lack of remorse might reflect that I never engaged in the young [guys'] preferred pursuits of the day: getting drunk, driving fast cars and beating up other young [guys] (preferably all three at once) and impregnating young [gals] whose names they barely knew. I wondered then at society's apparent indulgence of those young [guys], who were fondly regarded as "sowing their wild oats" while I and my peers were reviled as "druggies." And I wonder now as my teenage son confronts a 90s version of the same confusion... Yet when [a current affairs programme] was tossing around the issue of decriminalisation on television this week and my son asked me what I thought about the matter, I froze, momentarily unsure of how to reply... If my answer seemed to minimise the potential danger of drugs, I would be failing in my protective duty as a parent. But if I backed a law I genuinely believed to[be] wrong, I would be betraying my principles – a bad habit for any parent under adolescent scrutiny... THEY say you're getting old when cops and politicians start looking young. Here's another measure: you're getting old when you have to hide your dope-smoking from your kids the way you used to hide it from your parents... HERE'S why I remain uneasy about my children's chances of negotiating the drug-strewn path of adolescence even though I have emerged sufficiently unscathed to pass inspection. First, I'd left school and home by the time I first saw dope; my children were hearing about the dangers of drugs before they gave up sleeping with their teddy bears and fourth-formers, red-eyed and obviously ripped, are to be seen on the way home from school in any part of the country. Second, dope, like everything else, has improved out of sight since I was a kid. We smoked joints the size of penlight torches full of leafy green matter that growers these days wouldn't use for compost... [M]y children are in danger that I never dreamed of. Third (and this one's the kicker), my kids are navigating the treacherous waters between childhood and adulthood in days more stormy than we, the children of the 50s, ever experienced. The world into which they will set sail is infinitely more hostile than the one we inherited. When we were young, life seemed like a game in which we all held winning hands. Too many modern kids stare at a future of joblessness, crime (much of it connected with the dope trade which wouldn't exist if the drug were legal), deceit, dysfunction, dishonesty and despair. The epidemic of dope-smoking in schools may look like a problem, but it's simply a sign of a deeper malaise... [I]f some kids would rather get stoned than get educated, that's not a drug problem, that's a social problem. We need to ask ourselves what kind of world we're offering our kids if they'd rather burn their brains out than take it from us. It's all very well telling our kids not to take drugs, but we need to make sure that we are giving them a reason not to.

...A highly regarded survey using members of the Multidisciplinary Health and Development Unit of the University of Otago has... [found] significant co-relationships between cannabis use among young people on the one hand, and unemployment and violent behaviour among the same group on the other. That's... [just] what the opponents of legalising cannabis, or making its use non-criminal, want to hear. See, they cry, not only does cannabis rot your brain, shrink your testicles and turn your teeth green, it also makes you violent and stops you getting or keeping a job! Now that's what I recognise as a coincidence – just like the coincidence between the piece I wrote calling for cannabis to be legalised and the start of the current furore. I take no credit for prompting such unlikely figures as... assorted junior cabinet ministers and MPs, the outgoing president of the Law Society... and the august Criminal Bar Association itself, to burst suddenly from cover like startled stags and agree that the stuff does so little harm it should not be a criminal offence to use it. Of course it's a coincidence [that guys] of a high cannabis-using age, between 18 and 21, are not too hot at holding down jobs. Of course [guys] of this age are more inclined to violent behaviour than other groups in the community. And of course [guys] of this age, for reasons strongly associated with the desire to give the fingers to prohibitions of every sort, are more likely than any other group to use cannabis. [However, there] is no possible justification... to say that using cannabis leads to violence and unemployment than to argue... that the figures prove beyond a doubt that violent behaviour and unemployment lead to cannabis use. Just a flaming coincidence! It is rather sad that the best reasonable people can hope for is decriminalisation... The sensible thing would be to take a deep breath and legalise it, a move which would drive the gangs to the wall. I allowed myself a hollow laugh when I read the crassly stupid comment by Labour's police spokes[person]... who said proposals to legalise cannabis would be greeted with delight by criminals. Even a Labour MP should be able to see that the last thing the gangs want is to have their warehouse stocks made virtually worthless... Another sad thing is the continued bandying about, by people who should know better, of the word "addicted", which means clinical withdrawal trauma when supplies are withheld. Cannabis is not addictive, any more than... sex. People squeal when they are deprived, but there are no medically recognised withdrawal symptoms if they have to go without.

...Recent investigations show... marijuana is addictive, causing drug dependency by reducing the body's production of endorphines... It is ironic that at a time when society is moving to halt the harm... tobacco and alcohol... causes, we are having marijuana promoted instead. Alcohol and tobacco are too thoroughly ingrained in our society to contemplate having them removed by prohibition. We must stop abuse of them by other methods. [But] we still have the opportunity to keep marijuana from becoming a more widely socially accepted drug... If we permit marijuana to be

harvested and smoked legally in N[Z] we will truly reap what we have sown... [and, as] a law student[, it would remove a source for my future income!]

...A... lawyer... was re-elected unopposed... as party leader... [and a psychologist] as party president... at... the... A[LCP] conference in Levin at the weekend... [while a] roving mayor and one-time N[Z] First parliamentary candidate, has popped into politics again – this time as deputy leader of... the... party, which gained 1.6[%] of the vote at the last election... The party announced this yesterday, expressing great pleasure at its latest acquisition. “[Our new deputy leader] is a great communicator, with years of experience in public speaking and campaigning... Our job will be to get the message across that N[Z]’s prohibition policies breed crime, corrupt the police and do not have majority public support except from older age groups who have never tried cannabis.”

...Outlawing cannabis is wrong... a high-powered group of N[Z] doctors and scientists says. The Drug Policy Forum Trust has issued a discussion paper[, which]... says freeing the use of cannabis would have little adverse impact on public health. It could even be “mildly positive” because alcohol and tobacco use would fall... The leader of the A[LCP]... was delighted with the paper[, which]... concluded that cannabis appeared to be harmless for about 90[%] of the people who used it (however, ‘chronic cannabis users experienced impaired frontal brain functioning, which interfered with attention, memory and concentration and was similar to some symptoms of schizophrenia, said a senior registrar of psychiatry in Newcastle, AUS’)...

The adverse effects of cannabis... on schizophrenics should be widely publicised, a coroner’s inquest into the... fatal... shooting of... [an] Invercargill... sickness beneficiary... on September 27, 1995... by... police... has recommended... Mr Gellatly... had broken into a sports shop... fired numerous weapons at random and was shot... in the heart... while trying to escape with a .22-calibre rifle... [P]sychiatric evidence... showed... heavy use of cannabis “impacted very badly on his schizophrenia.” The hearing heard that... [it] was recognised that cannabis use among schizophrenics produced more symptoms and relapses and they were less likely to take appropriate treatment... Mr Gellatly’s condition had deteriorated significantly in the months before his death but this was undetected by Southern Health mental health staff... [where] too few psychiatrists were carrying too many cases... While mental health services had improved in Southland since 1995, Mr Gellatly’s death had speeded up the reforms...

Young people who suffer from schizophrenia and are drug users have “dual diagnosis,” says [a] Professor... of Auckland Medical School... [The p]rofessor... says that the Schizophrenia Fellowship is disturbed by the association between the disorder and cannabis use, and does not know what to do about it. A[n A]uckland Schizophrenia Fellowship liaison officer... says... over half the young people (under 40) with schizophrenia that her organisation is in contact with “would be smoking dope.” ...Some schizophreni[cs]... find... cannabis... reduces their anxiety, at least in the short term... [A]necdotal reports indicate... cannabis can neutralise the distressing anti-psychotic medication side-effect of akathisia (restlessness of the legs and a feeling of inner restlessness)... In the U[S] they may well be using cocaine instead of cannabis because it is cheaper and more available... [said the professor, who] was responding to a warning this week by the Christchurch coroner in his report on the fatal shooting of... Eric Gellatly... [But an AUSn] drugs researcher... takes a more cautious line on the link between dope... and schizophrenia. [The AUSn] recently reviewed cannabis studies, looking at both the research findings and how well the studies were conducted. Some were so poorly done they had to be discredited.

...[an] Associate Professor... has a lot to do this summer. That, one senses, is usual for Fellows of the Academy of the Royal Society of N[Z]. Her election to the elite among elite of the country’s scientists was recognition of the enormous reputation [the scientist] has achieved internationally for her research into the implications for Government policies of alcohol and drug use. On her desk is a fax from Washington telling her that her work was recently quoted in the... [US Senate. The associate p]rofessor... has been the key figure in alcohol and drug research since her appointment in 1980 as executive director of the newly established alcohol research unit at the Auckland University School of Medicine. That appointment also saw the beginning of her long association with the W[HO] and her work on its panel of experts studying alcohol and drug dependency. [The scientist] came here in 1970 as a raw 21-year-old psychology graduate from Sheffield, England, to a teaching job at Otago University and to her PhD on the acute effects of cannabis intoxication... [The scientist was, in her own words], the first and only N[Z] recipient of a licence to administer cannabis to human subjects... [The associate p]rofessor... is looking forward to work next year which will follow up a national drug use survey done in 1990.

...the latest... polls reveals that 70.6[%] of the country believe N[Z]ers should not be able to grow or buy cannabis for their own use... Aucklanders were more inclined to be in favour of a change to the law. Nearly one in three people in Greater Auckland said people should be able to cultivate cannabis... More [guys than gals] were prepared to let people light up... [Incidentally,] South Auckland police are sending letters to landlords, telling them their tenants are selling cannabis. The letters also warn property owners that if drug dealing continues they could be prosecuted for allowing their premises to be used for an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act... An Otara house that police raided four times in the past six months suffered major damage at the hands of... police on Monday, prompting[a local] Labour MP... to claim police went “on the rampage” smashing doors, windows, floors and walls... [In response,] the... police... said the damage... could serve as a lesson to landlords not to let their properties be used for dealing drugs. An Insurance Council spokes[person]... said damage caused by police in a search would not necessarily be covered... If the home owner could show they had no idea their property was being used for such illegal activities, an insurance company could pay out.

...Two cannabis joints wrapped together in tinfoil explain the origin of the name commonly given to suburban houses where the drug is sold. Tinnie houses are more common in some areas than others – Glenfield on Auckland’s North Shore, for example... is one such area where the police will[regularly] swoop with a search warrant hoping to find drugs... [Tinnie houses are the end of the cannabis supply line. Police often target them in the hope that people working at the bottom of the line will provide the names of those higher up it in order to gain a reduced charge for themselves. Growers generally sell in bulk (e.g., oz or lb lots) to dealers, who then split the cannabis into tinnie-sized lots. The cost of an oz is related to the fact that marijuana is illegal – growers’ overheads are minimal (even people who buy hypergrow systems can recoup their overheads by selling just one plant, and they can produce at least 4 harvests – or 16 plants – per year!). It is more economical for cannabis users to buy an oz than the equivalent weight in tinnies, but many can’t afford to pay around \$300 in one go so they have to buy tinnies at regular intervals. Furthermore, many users are scared to possess larger quantities of cannabis because of the threat that it might be stolen by associates or found by the police.] The tinnie houses often contain nothing more than a table and chairs and a television... for the temporary inhabitants to watch... Characteristically: • They open while the cannabis is in supply, and close when the supply dries up. • Some will open only on certain days, others for as little as three hours a day. • One drug dealer will service a number of tinnie houses, run by a trusted associate who is often younger than 17... Sometimes they are gang prospects, in other instances solo mothers. The associate[often] takes... stolen property in exchange for the drugs, then on-sells the property... [T]here are some in the police ranks who do not believe the hierarchy pays enough attention to... tinnie houses... In a recent successful raid of a suspected tinnie house in Takanini, the police found the house and garage full of stolen property... [A] criminologist... who served time in the 1970s for dealing heroin... remembers how the stolen property network opened to him as soon as [the budding-criminologist] began dealing drugs... [The criminologist] believes everyone involved in drugs is a receiver of stolen property... If a drug dealer had a watch or a boat it would have been stolen...

[‘Gangs and drug dealers are increasingly using rented properties to avoid having houses seized under the Proceeds of Crime Act. Police have taken \$11.6 million worth of cash, houses, boats and motorcycles in the past eight years under the act. They say it is hurting criminals, but admit the use of rented properties for “tinny houses” has increased. Rented properties can’t be forfeited under the act. The largest overall seizure is \$1.5 million of property and assets taken from an Auckland drug partnership last year. Other big hauls include a \$495,000 South Canterbury farm last year. Most of the money goes into the Government coffers, although mortgages on seized properties are paid.’]

...A house in Eastbourne was forfeited to the Crown yesterday because one of the owners was growing 228 cannabis plants in its basement. In the Wellington District Court, [the]Judge... ordered that the home... be sold... [and said the grower's] de facto wife... was entitled to 50[%] of the proceeds after the ANZ Bank had covered a mortgage against the house because [the de facto wife] had known nothing about the hydroponic cannabis operation. The judge also granted her compensation of \$1200 for a tax bill. The house has a 1996 government valuation of \$285,000. [The judge also sentenced the grower], aged 43, a cleaner, to two years' jail... [The grower] was growing two to three good-quality crops a year and passing some to an associate for selling. The associate helped meet power costs and had paid \$20,000 for the basement to be built.

...A Lower Hutt [cleaner] jailed and forced to forfeit his house after his elaborate cannabis operation was uncovered... has been hit with a "barbaric" penalty, says his brother. "It's almost unbelievable that a person that grew marijuana in his own home for his own use gets two years' imprisonment and fined a couple of hundred thousand dollars,"... It is the first time a home in the Wellington region has been forfeited for a drugs conviction... Commenting on the court-ordered forfeiture... the Hutt police area controller, said: "That's justice..." The research officer for A[LCP] Wellington... described the sentence as "double jeopardy." ...[the accused] should have been [jail]ed or had his property forfeited, but not both.

...*FLYING HIGH* Courier pigeons are being used to smuggle drugs into a jail in southwestern Colombia. The "narco-pigeon" scandal was uncovered when a pigeon... weighed down by packets of marijuana... crashed into a wall near the municipal jail in Buga, in Valle de Cauca.

...Commuters smoke so much marijuana on South African trains that the urban railway company, Metrorail, is worried about the effects of passive marijuana smoking on its conductors. Even though it is outlawed, marijuana, or dagga as it is known in South Africa, is openly smoked on suburban trains carrying millions of commuters between the country's cities and satellite black townships... [In local news, c]laims by former undercover police officers that they lied under oath are evidence of moral corruption within the force, says a Victoria University senior law lecturer... [28] agents, including a serving Auckland officer, have made statements to the Police Association saying they have been psychologically damaged by covert operations. Many... say they lied under oath by telling judges that evidence used to convict criminals was not gathered while they were under the influence of drugs... [T]he former officers had highlighted a problem in the police force. "To nail someone they believe is guilty, they break the law quite regularly... It is not for monetary gain, but it is a form of corruption and strikes at fundamental N[Z] justice... However... I imagine police officers all over the world do that." A former agent... supported [the lecturer]'s comments... "Our whole programme is based on drug use. How can anyone say there is no corruption?" The... officer[, who] testified in 1988 during a drug-dealing case in the Whangarei District Court that [it] was not intoxicated, nor was his memory impaired wh[ile buying]... cannabis from a dealer... [- but now admitted to being stoned and that] his recall must have been affected... [-] had evidence of drug supply, insurance fraud, forgery and perjury within the police.

...AN INVERCARGILL-born A[US]n cop is to sue the Queensland Police Force for more than \$500,000 after [the cop] was set up on a drug bust and arrested following a personality clash with his boss. [The former]Senior Constable... who... has worked in the Hong Kong and A[US]n police forces over 20 years, receiving bravery commendations and community awards... was acquitted after a two-day trial in Queensland's Sunshine Coast but says his life has become an "unbelievable hell" in the eight months since his arrest. "I've separated from my wife... and my three kids and lost my career and my health over this. I can't believe Queensland police are now advertising... for Kiwi recruits after the way they treated me." ...a Queensland magistrate threw the case... out of court[, saying]... the circumstances of the alleged offence of supplying marijuana to a [person] who worked for the constable's immediate boss... was... "outrageous, bizarre and incredible."

...An internal inquiry into claims that Gisborne police supplied underworld contacts with drugs in exchange for information will take at least 10 days to complete. The head of the investigation... said a uniformed branch constable had been stood down from duty pending the outcome of the inquiry, but no charges had been laid... [C]omplaints had come from both the public and within the police.

...Four Gisborne police officers and a former detective have appeared in court charged with supplying... or offering to supply... drugs to informants in what could be N[Z]'s biggest case of alleged police conspiracy. After a five-month inquiry involving up to 15 investigators from outside Gisborne, the [officers] were arrested at the city police station yesterday morning... Several of the informants are linked to the Mongrel Mob. Other charges involve conspiracy and aggravated robbery. "I wouldn't for a minute say we have a N[SW]-size problem on our hands, but having said that, it is alleged corruption," said the Midland region commander[, who also]... said the long inquiry and subsequent arrests had had a devastating effect on the morale of Gisborne police... The Police Association yesterday stood behind the accused officers. Its president... said: "I would ask people to wait until the full facts come out before they make up their minds on this." There was no suggestion of personal gain involved in the charges... The NZ First MP... who was commander of Gisborne police at the time the alleged offences took place, said... that... the officers involved... were "extremely industrious catchers of criminals." ...The [accused] were... suspended from duty.

...The public gallery of the Gisborne District Court was packed with police officers yesterday morning when four of their colleagues and a former detective made appearances on drug-related charges. Three officers... have been remanded on bail to appear for the hearing of depositions... on... August 25, and... September 1... [The other two defendants], both facing more serious charges, were remanded until August 11, pending an application to have their depositions heard in Hamilton... [T]he Crown believed it was appropriate to have [their] case moved to another centre... [The officers] consented to the continued suppression of the complainant's details.

...A POLICE Complaints Authority investigation has been launched into fresh allegations of misconduct by Gisborne police. In the latest incident, a Mongrel Mob gang member... [claims to have been] assaulted by officers... this month... [after the] gang member... was arrested for assault... During the arrest, a scuffle between the gang member and police broke out, during which a police[officer] was allegedly kicked in the head. The... assault... by police officers [allegedly occurred later on] in the cells at the Gisborne police station... The officers accused are still at work. Gisborne police officers... believe Mongrel Mob gang members were engaged in an orchestrated campaign to target police and get them removed from duty... The... Police Assistant Commissioner... from police national headquarters in Wellington, would not comment on the likelihood of an organised gang movement against police, but did not think there was any proof of widespread police misconduct in Gisborne.

...A CHARGE against one of five Gisborne police officers accused of supplying informants with cannabis will be withdrawn next month.[The] Crown prosecutor... confirmed no evidence would be offered... when... [the] constable... appears in the Gisborne District Court on November 5... A more serious charge of offering to sell cannabis was withdrawn in August because of lack of evidence... [Speaking of which, cannabis] with a street value of \$8000 was stolen during a weekend break-in at the Blenheim courthouse. Thieves apparently forced a door at the back of the courthouse, taking 1.3kg of cannabis that had been used as an exhibit in a trial. [A]Detective Sergeant... said the break-in would prompt a revision of security[, although]... exhibits would normally be kept elsewhere... [A] "unique set of circumstances" led to it being held at the court... "It won't happen again. The thief was very lucky..." ...Six search warrants had been executed in a bid to find the stolen cannabis[, which]... was not recovered... [but] several unrelated drug arrests were made.

...Allegations that two Gisborne police[officers] engaged in corrupt activity to elicit information from informants was rubbished in court yesterday by [an]Auckland QC... a depositions hearing in Gisborne District Court[heard] that the prosecution's three key witnesses each had a "monumental" list of previous convictions... [and] were also associated with the Mongrel Mob. Earlier, [the] prosecutor said that corruption was able to "flourish" among members of the Gisborne police because of a "lax way" of dealing with informants... [A] former detective sergeant[, who is]... now a company director, faces one charge of supplying morphine, four of selling cannabis and one of attempting to obstruct the course of justice... [A serving] Detective Sergeant... faces... [similar charges and one charge of arranging] for the Elgin PostBank to be robbed in January 1994. A street youth was "recruited" by a police informant to commit the robbery. The robber took \$11,000 but was caught by [the accused, who's

alleged] intention had been to obtain a good result for his service record... Nine new charges of stealing cannabis owned by the police were also laid... The hearing... is... expected to take two weeks.

...A police informant, who is now a key prosecution witness... claims [to have been] given drugs about 30 times by [the accused Gisborne] Detective Sergeant. The [witness], called witness A, said that to get drugs [the witness] had only to ring and ask. Witness A, a prison inmate whose identity cannot be revealed[, allegedly]... was “committing crimes all over town” during his time as a police informant[but] was left alone because of [his relationship with the accused]... Members of the public were asked to leave the courtroom before the informant... was called to give evidence.

...In the witness stand, a Mongrel Mob member turned police informant was describing how much the gang hated the... Detective Sergeant... Hated him so much, in fact, a “hit” was being planned on the head of the crime control unit which had so successfully hindered the mob’s crime... It would be hard to find a clearer explanation for the 10 months of anguish [the detective sergeant and 4] colleagues have endured... “It was revenge, payback time. These career criminals wanted us out of action. We got into this mess because we were doing our jobs. If we’d been [8]-hour-day cops this would never have happened,”... The mob doesn’t scare him but [the detective sergeant] does worry about the threat to his family... [after it and a former colleague] were yesterday cleared of... [all charges, 3 constables] were last month cleared of [similar] charges... While the [accused] are relieved their ordeal is over, they’re angry the inquiry, dubbed Operation Vine, ever got off the ground. It began in May 1996, but it wasn’t until just before... Christmas [that the detective sergeant] became aware of it. Ironically, it was one of his informants who tipped him off. It was the start of what would become known as... “the biggest form of police corruption ever seen in N[Z]”. And on the face of it, that seemed so. But as details of the case unfolded over the past two weeks... it seemed more like the plot of a seedy B-grade cop movie... There were allegations the pair had given away thousands of dollars worth of cannabis – which they’d stolen from the Gisborne police station drug safe – to informants they’d already paid money, in return for information on the whereabouts of Terrence Thompson, on the loose last year after fatally shooting Flaxmere Constable Glenn McKibbin; [and for] the killer of Mongrel Mob prospect Stuart Te Wano, murdered in 1995... There were also allegations the [accused] arranged for cannabis to be supplied to prisoners, but the most farcical charge of all... was the allegation [the detective sergeant] set up an armed bank hold-up so [it] could “catch a bank robber”... At various times, witnesses admitted lying in an attempt to “destabilise the Gisborne police”, and one was “saying anything to keep the Hamilton police happy”... In his closing address to the court... the... defence counsel... said the witnesses’ determination to destabilise the police was helped by “an inquiry team all too ready to accept a pack of lies”. And that’s what hurts [the accused] the most. They say they were treated as guilty from the outset and can’t believe “the administration was ready to believe those scumbags over us”... Now they... are considering suing their police bosses for malicious prosecution... The... Assistant Police Commissioner... yesterday defended the decision to bring the charges against the officers, saying the action was necessary if the public was to maintain confidence in the police.

...[the police] spent more than \$500,000 and 6000 hours investigating [the] five Gisborne officers accused of supplying informants with cannabis... [The] Police commissioner has defended the costs, saying allegations of impropriety against police officers were treated “very seriously” and demanded “extensive inquiries”... The final cost of the investigation and prosecution of the officers is likely to be much higher...

THREE Gisborne police constables cleared of charges they supplied informants with cannabis may be off work on full pay until next year... The *Sunday Star-Times* understands they could be on stress leave for the rest of the year, while deciding on their futures. The [constables] are bitter at their treatment, but want to return to the force... The officers have not been at work since February, when they were stood down...

THE first of three Gisborne police officers... returns to work tomorrow – but getting back in uniform has been harder than [the former] Constable... thought. It’s not the 10 months spent clearing his name that have made it so difficult – it’s because the easy-going cop has been out of uniform so long [it] doesn’t own a full regulation set... [The cop] hasn’t been in uniform since early 1995, when [it] joined Gisborne’s Crime Control Unit, which works in plainclothes... While [the cop]’s apprehensive about setting foot inside the Gisborne Police Station again, [the cop] knows it’s time to get his life back on track... [The cop] returns to uniformed section work, and while [the cop is annoyed it]’s not returning to the Crime Control Unit, [it] hopes to get back on the elite crime-fighting squad. “I’ll have to learn a few new things. There have been some new regulations and laws introduced in the last year,” said [the cop], who passed his sergeant’s exams while... suspended.

...Frontline police officers and lawyers are condemning as dangerous the suggestion of paying... cannabis to police informants. The view has come from the... former Gisborne police district commander and now chair[perso]n of the parliamentary justice and law reform committee... [The NZ] First MP... said that in some cases cannabis could be used to pay off informants. Police would sometimes... pay “thousands” of dollars for good information, [the MP] said on *National Radio* yesterday... Cannabis could also be used in limited circumstances. “Say someone was threatening to kill someone... like a hostage situation or a kidnapping situation... and we had the chance to do something about it... or if you are looking for firearms that you really need to find...” ...The Police Association rejected [hi]s suggestion... The association president... agreed with the use of cash... to... buy information... but said no to drugs. “Police would never use that, even in the extreme circumstances, because police would find themselves on a slippery slope. The integrity of the police... [has] to be protected for the good of N[Z].”

...Undercover police officers have supplied cannabis to criminals, the Police Assistant Commissioner... has confirmed. Two undercover agents claimed this week that covert agents commonly provided informants with cannabis for information. This followed a statement from the N[Z] First MP and former Gisborne police chief... that police officers could resort to swapping cannabis for tips on serious crime. [The assistant commissioner] said a technical supply might be unavoidable, particularly if an agent’s cover or life was in jeopardy. But such situations were rare, and the circumstances were “reported and scrutinised internally. They are also subjected to the scrutiny of the court process.” But [the assistant commissioner] said the cannabis was not given in return for information. “Our policy on informants is quite clear... The supply of cannabis is an ‘earn’ to an informant and is actually promoted in the undercover programme,”... Another former undercover officer... said [it] had regularly carried an ounce of cannabis – provided by his undercover operator – to smoke with criminals. Officers did this to “blatantly get inside the criminal fraternity.” The Police Association president... said... “Supplying cannabis to criminals is not really a goer... Once you fall into that trap, you are setting yourself up and making yourself vulnerable to criminals. You are breaking the law by supplying cannabis.” [The president adde]d that if police supplied cannabis to informants, they would then have the dilemma of whether to prosecute the person for possession of drugs... [In international news, t]he *Independent on Sunday*... has become the first British national newspaper to call for the legalisation of cannabis... A quarter of disabled people in Britain questioned in a survey are taking cannabis with their doctors’ approval. The survey, in the journal *Disability Now*, also found 195 of the 200 disabled people questioned believed that cannabis should be legalised.

...The British [PM]... and his Labour Government faced acute embarrassment yesterday after the 17-year-old son of an unnamed cabinet minister was arrested for selling cannabis... Several members of... [the] 22-member cabinet... have sons... The case was revealed... over five pages... in the *Daily Mirror*... whose reporter... had bought the drug from the youth in a London public house. The newspaper... told the minister, who confronted the son and went with him to a police station... [after which the son] was released on bail... The boy was not named as defendants under 18 remain anonymous until formally charged with an offence... Government lawyers will now decide if the minister’s son will face charges. British law lays down a maximum sentence of 14 years’ jail for supplying cannabis but offenders are normally fined if the quantity is small[(although ‘statistics show that 45% of British police give people a verbal warning for possession of cannabis or hashish’). The]... Government has followed an ultra-hard line on drugs. It said a campaign by the liberal *Independent on Sunday*... to have cannabis legalised was irresponsible.

...an article called “Family Values,” written... for the *Independent*... mined the opinion polls to provide a unique portrait of human behaviour in post-modern Britain... It is a picture that is relevant... because... it... [shows that 20%] of the British population has smoked marijuana.

...[a former Beatle (r:p811, ln27 + 1050, ln11), who was] promoted to the British establishment this year with a knighthood, says cannabis should be legalised... [since] it was pointless to fill jails with people who smoked cannabis because this was likely to turn them into criminals. [However, his] comments angered anti-drugs campaigners[, while a spokesperson]... for the British Home Office said... [his] comments were “unhelpful.” Citing his own experience of being arrested for possessing marijuana in Japan in 1980, [the ex-Beatle claimed to have] learned nothing from it.

...[a] Rolling Stone... says his first experience with marijuana did not come courtesy of [a knighted Beatle], contrary to what the former Beatle is claiming. [The Beatle] told his official biographer that in 1966 [it introduced the Stones' singer] to pot in London. “How would [it know?]” the singer said, when asked if this was true. The 54-year-old... [claimed to have] first smoked marijuana “somewhere in California” during the Stones' first [US] tour in 1964, and that [the Beatle] was nowhere near. [The singer also] noted that marijuana was hard to come by in England in the early 60s.

...[a] campaigner for the legalisation of cannabis was arrested yesterday after opening Britain's first Dutch-style cafe openly selling the drug. The multiple sclerosis sufferer, who uses cannabis to ease his symptoms, was involved in a scuffle with police soon after opening The Dutch Experience in Stockport'.

...want a] whiff of Skunk? Some dazzling Northern Lights? How about a Great White Shark bite? Different tokes for different folks competed yesterday for the attention of high rollers judging the 10th annual Cannabis Cup... 2000 marijuana lovers... are in the drug-tolerant Dutch capital for their yearly blowout, a five-day “harvest festival” organised by the [US]-based *High Times* magazine. Judges puffed their way through bags of home-grown weed as paying guests took a special bus tour of Amsterdam's famous marijuana-selling “coffee shops.” “You have to pace yourself,” said... the event's publicist[, who does]... not smoke – not that it mattered. Sitting in the corner of a room thick with sweet-smelling smoke, [the publicist] confessed to being high for... days on the secondhand fumes. More than a five-day marijuana binge, the festival is an attempt to show the world what cannabis users can achieve... There are seminars on religion... medicinal use of marijuana, as well as a presentation promoting hemp... This year's heady mix is completed by a hemp cloth fashion show, a... trade exhibition... and... a... ceremony honouring the late... Bob Marley...

Reggae great Bob Marley made no secret of his passion for marijuana, singing an album in tribute to the drug that is regarded as a religious sacrament by his Rastafarian faith. No surprise then that Marley will be the first inductee into the High Times Cannabis Hall of Fame, the latest addition to the annual Cannabis Cup festival, which runs until Friday in Amsterdam.

...They tell a story about UB40, the Birmingham reggae band which took its name for satirical effect from the official number of England's dole application form. In Auckland for a series of concerts in the late 80s, the eight-strong ensemble and assorted support staff piled into the mini-bus the promoter had hired, complete with driver, to ferry them to the concert venue. Before the motor had even fired, the air inside the van was filled with such thick clouds of marijuana smoke that it was impossible to see outside. The driver, unprepared to work in such conditions, exited the van and resigned on the spot. Stories like that grow in the telling, so when I read our report yesterday about [a US] blues trio... being busted at the airport for possession of marijuana... and remembered the UB40 yarn, I decided to check the facts with someone who was there at the time. Sure enough, it was exaggerated. The driver didn't quit; [but] turned round and gave the boys from Birmingham a piece of his mind. Unless and until they put their “cigarettes” out... the bus was going nowhere. History does not record where the visitors obtained their smoking requisites, but it's a fairly safe bet they didn't bring them from home. If they had, the dogs that sniffed out the aromatic contents of the [US blues trio's] pockets would surely have noticed. UB40 would have known that their widely professed passion for the demon weed assured them of the most minute attention from the Customs Service. So it seemed astonishing that the band's trombonist and one of its roadies were done for possession of cannabis on a 1993 visit. The promoters who negotiate with rock stars' management to set up tours routinely warn them of the dangers of trying to import drugs. “We send them a fact sheet,” explained one yesterday... No one's saying that all rock stars do drugs, but there is an association at least as strong as that between used car sales[people] and gold chains. For all that, no promoter I spoke to had ever seen a demand for drugs in the contract “rider” – in which bands spell out to the last bottle of Evian and reel of dental floss what they expect in their dressing rooms. “If they want them, they can get them,” said one. “It's not as if it's hard to get. No promoter I know would ever get drugs for an act. But [we] might suggest they talk to the electrician or the driver or something.” Another hardened observer of rock tours suggests that the performers who bring drugs in are doing so absent-mindedly rather than deliberately, having failed to check their pockets after the party a few nights ago. And the tiny quantities involved... bear out that view... in most cases... It seems unlikely, to put it mildly, that a highly paid entertainer employing up to 40 people in a multi-million-dollar, trans-global enterprise would imperil it all for the sake of a few dollars worth of dope.

...researchers[have] identified two main influences on Maori communities in recent years that have compounded... [their] cannabis... problem. The first was the settlement of alternative lifestyles promoting cannabis use. The second and more significant influence was the introduction of Rastafarianism from Jamaica, with a religious and musical message encouraging young people to smoke cannabis all the time.

...[The first in a series of documentaries made by “up-and-coming” Maori directors and producers is *Jah*, a look at Rasta in Godzone. Four Maori who have embraced Rasta talk about their religion. Why has Rasta found a faithful Maori following? Good question. Rasta is a religion of rejection: of Orthodox Christianity, of colonialism as a weapon of oppression, of meat and alcohol. What Rasta does embrace are dreadlocks and dope. Its scripture is reggae music. Our own favourite Rasta is the dreadlocked, hemp suit wearer trying to make it to Parliament who talks about smoking dope as a tool for meditation. *Jah* is almost coyly quiet on the position – because for the four Maori interviewed Rasta is “so much more than good beats and high times”. One likes the freedom of the religion: no one dictates what being Rasta means. His mother was an early convert, a member of the 12 Tribes of Israel who set up house in Ponsonby in the early 80s and held notoriously great parties. If *Jah* never quite gets to grips with the contradictions inherent in the cultural embrace that is Rasta and Maori, well, its subject is religion, a slippery and personal topic. The attraction appears in part to have been the adaptability. As the mum says, it's all about interpretation. The mum went looking to reconcile the connection and discovered “many similarities between Rasta religion and early Maori religion”.]

...The... 12 Tribes of Israel community celebrates a significant day in the Rastafarian calendar tomorrow – the 67th anniversary of the coronation of... Haile Selassie. The... former Ethiopian... emperor, who died in 1975, a year after [being] deposed in a Marxist coup, remains a figurehead for Rastafarians. The local community... founded in... 1983, [that now has]... 300 “active members, double that on the books,”... believes Selassie to be the 225th in succession in the Solomonic Dynasty (a lineage it traces back to Solomon and... Sheba) and was “the second advent” of Christ. - 1997

“Look to Africa for the crowning of a Black king; [who] shall be the Redeemer.” ...[so said] Marcus Mosiah Garvey... in... 1916[, the same year that an Ethiopian ‘Prince led a revolution against Lij Yasu and became regent and heir to the throne’]... On November 2, 1930, Ras Tafari Makonnen, great-grandson of King Saheka Selassie of Shoa, was crowned Negas of Ethiopia. [Ras] took the new name of Haile Selassie (Power of the Trinity), to which [Ras] added the titles “King of Kings,” “Lord of Lords” and “Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah.” Selassie claimed to be the 225th in line of Ethiopian kings which could be traced all the way to Menelik, the son of Solomon and Sheba... To a handful of Jamaicans (mostly Garveyites[– who believe ‘that Blacks are the chosen people’]), this was prophesy fulfilled. Thus, the visionary Garvey had prophesied the coming of the Messiah just as John the Baptist had prophesied the coming of Christ... [Ras ‘settled in England after the Italian conquest of Abyssinia (1935-6), but in 1941 was restored after the liberation by British forces. Opposition to his reign had existed since 1960, and the disastrous famine of 1973 led to economic chaos, industrial strikes and mutiny among the armed forces, and the emperor was deposed in 1974 in favour of the Crown Prince’.] Haile Selassie... was the world's oldest and longest ruling monarch when... deposed... Often called a “medieval autocrat”, [Ras] was renowned as an international states[person], and his reign is particularly noted for the modernisation of... Ethiopia... beg[u]n... before his coronation... In 1923, [Ras] succeeded

in having Ethiopia accepted into the League of Nations. In 1924, [Ras] abolished slavery... established schools throughout the country and set up a program for Ethiopian students to study abroad... Selassie convoked the first meeting of the Organization of African Unity and supervised its charter... was also responsible for the establishment of the UN Economic Commission for Africa and was renowned... for his almost magical skill of acquiring foreign economic aid... Selassie's reign was responsible for "leading a largely illiterate, rural and feudal country with 2,000 languages and dialects into the 19th, if not the 20th century," according to an obituary in the *New York Times*... [However, 'as an insult, Selassie was buried under a lavatory', and it] is difficult to find any description of Selassie's reign that doesn't criticize him on a number of points. [Ras] was said to have "lost touch with his subjects in later years, showing more affection for his pet cheetahs and dogs than for his human entourage." ...[Ras was also] alleged to have secretly sent vast sums into private Swiss bank accounts... [Ras] died at the age of 83 – the last emperor in the 3,000-year-old monarchy... Many Rastas still insist that reports of his death in 1975 were mere propaganda... [T]he orthodox Rastafarians do not see [Ras] as *any* ruler or *any* human being... *messenger* of the Lord or an immaculate son... Rather, they claim Haile Selassie is God Almighty... Looking at the early Rastafarian movement, we see the crucial significance of Jamaica's (and Garvey's) Christian roots for its ideology. [90%] of the Rastas are ex-Christians, and the Bible provides the foundation on which they form their beliefs... Rastas reject orthodox Christianity... They see it as a colonial weapon to oppress the powerless and disenfranchised, and view the church as death-worshipping (the crucifix, graveyards, funerals). They also reject the syncretistic, Christian-African cults (Kumina, Pocomania) and Jamaican folk beliefs (Obeah, duppies). These are considered superstitious, unscientific and backward. They are seen as "unreal in the presence of formidable sociopolitical forces." Thus the Rastafarian belief system is a rich and complex theology of liberation. The Rastas redefine and reinterpret the Bible. This is necessary because they feel it has been corrupted throughout its many translations from the original Amharic language of Ethiopia[(the country Rastas 'view as being the promised land')]. But, when read carefully and selectively, the Old and New Testaments provide meaningful answers to life's fundamental questions... ['Rastafarians follow strict taboos governing what they may eat (eg no pork, milk, coffee); they usually wear their hair in long dreadlocks and they cultivate a distinctive form of speech.'] Marijuana is used in some form (smoked, drunk, eaten), by approximately two-thirds of Jamaica's population[, including]... children... This is possibly the highest percentage of national marijuana use in the world. But, marijuana smoking is not merely a way to pass time or a form of entertainment for the Rastas. They believe that it was given to [humans] by Jah in order to aid [their] meditations and open... consciousness to a higher reality. To them[– and the 'Nihangs (militant Sikhs whose religious life includes sustained periods of hymn singing and the "sacramental" eating of *bhang*, a form of cannabis') –] it is a sacred herb and smoking it can be a form of religious worship, supported by many biblical quotations[(note that 'dreadlocks can be traced as far back as biblical times and the book of Judges, where Nazarite Samson – whose hair, described as having "seven locks", wasn't cut from birth – vanquishes the Philistines thanks to superior strength from his hair')]. Some Rastas believe that marijuana first grew on the grave of King Solomon[, thus explaining why]... it is dubbed the... "wisdom weed" (although the... [beliefs of Rastas – e.g., *Selassie is God Almighty* – appear to contradict that title!]). N[ot] all Rastas smoke ganja... [but for] many... growing it is a career... Although... ganja is a valuable Jamaican export... [it has been] illegal in Jamaica since 1913... and... ever since the inception of the movement... Rastas have been consistently arrested and harassed in connection with it... "The menacing devils with snake nests for hair." "Cult that worships old newspaper clippings of Haile Selassie." ..."No good Jamaican bums." "Rastafarian Link Seen in Shootout." Believe it or not, those descriptions actually reflect popular opinion about the Rastafarian movement in Jamaica. Even with reggae music's recent popularity, it is amazing how little the public knows about the movement... Marijuana is said to have first appeared in Jamaica with the arrival of East Indian indentured servants in 1845. Other studies claim it arrived in 1545, carried by the Spanish from Asia... Some say it has always existed in Jamaica and was used by the original Arawak inhabitants of the island. Its East Indian roots would explain why it is most commonly known by the Hindi word "ganja." Kali (the most potent form of marijuana) is also a Hindi word referring to the Black Goddess of Strength. - Reggae International

If God had meant us to eat health food [God woul]d have given us health buds...

Cannabis... a stout, aromatic, erect, annual herb that originated in Central Asia... [and] is now cultivated widely in the Northern Temperate Zone... The genus... is... [used] as a fibre... [and] as a drug... Marijuana varies in potency, depending on where and how it is grown, prepared for use, or stored... [The gal] plant... is prized as the more abundant source of a mildly hallucinogenic drug present in... all parts... but... most concentrated in the resin (cannabin) in the flowering tops[(heads or *buds*). Guy cannabis 'plants produce pollen, or *staminate*, flowers, and gal plants produce ova and *ovulate* flowers', which – due to the presence of resin – catch the wind-blown pollen, thereby causing the ova to produce fertile seeds]... A more powerful form of the drug, hashish... is made by collecting and drying this resin. Mentioned in a Chinese herbal dating from 2700 BC, the drug has long been used as a sedative or analgesic. The effects of marijuana vary, depending upon the strength and amount consumed, the setting in which it is taken, and the experience of the user. Psychological effects tend to be predominant; the user commonly experiences a mild euphoria. Alterations in vision and judgment result in distortions of time and space. Acute intoxication may occasionally induce visual hallucinations... and psychoses lasting from four to six hours. Physical effects include reddening of the eyes, dryness of the mouth and throat, moderate increase in the rapidity of the heartbeat, tightness of the chest... drowsiness, unsteadiness, and muscular incoordination. Chronic use[causes the body to *build up tolerance* for THC (thereby reducing its effectiveness – which means the user has to consume larger quantities to get wasted) but] does not establish physical dependence nor, upon withdrawal, does the regular user suffer extreme physical discomfort (such as that associated with narcotics); but its use may be psychologically habituating. The worldwide use of marijuana and hashish as intoxicants has raised various medical and social questions... International trade in marijuana and hashish was first placed under controls during the International Opium Convention of 1925. In the U[S], the use of these drugs in the 1930s prompted passage (1937) of federal restrictions on the botanical substances; these were extended to THC in 1968... [after] THC was first isolated and produced synthetically... By the late 1960s most countries had enforced restrictions on trafficking and using marijuana and hashish and had imposed generally severe penalties for their illegal possessions, sale, or supply. Since the 1970s, however... medical research revealed the therapeutic effects of marijuana and THC. They found it to be useful in lowering internal eye pressure in persons suffering from glaucoma and in alleviating nausea and vomiting caused by chemotherapeutic drugs... and[, since the]... 1980s... some countries... have reduced the penalty for possession of small quantities. - *ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA*

Britain's largest tobacco firm is embarrassed that it discussed lacing its product with... "subliminal" levels of marijuana to boost sales. The plans, set out in internal British American Tobacco documents, show that the cigarette firm considered "exploiting" cannabis if the drug were legalised... It concludes that "nicotine and marijuana are not direct competitors"... The news has shocked drug-awareness groups, and anti-smoking campaigners have labelled the plans as sinister. "This is a ploy by the tobacco companies to make even more money," said... a director of Action for Drugs Awareness... Cigarette firms anticipating legalisation have already registered brand names with links to marijuana. In 1993 Philip Morris filed a trademark application in France for[a cigarette called] Marley... The tobacco firm later denied the... drug-related... connection.

...A senior bishop who provoked widespread criticism after admitting [it] had smoked cannabis, yesterday called for a debate on the legalisation of cannabis. The... Bishop of Edinburgh... made the comments as [it] launched his new book, *Godless Morality*.

...The challenge to Britain's drug laws has received a powerful boost with a call by a senior Anglican bishop for cannabis to be made freely available for medicinal purposes. In a lecture paper, the Bishop of Edinburgh[, who recently declared his intention to]... leave the Church and stand

for the Scottish Parliament... argues that cannabis is less dangerous than alcohol or tobacco and... banning drugs has left organised crime in control... In a thinly veiled attack on the Government's heavily promoted "war on drugs," [the]bishop... warns: "The purely prohibitionist approach does not seem to work. In open societies, prohibitions that do not have the overwhelming consent of the people are almost impossible to police and end up corrupting the very system that is there to enforce them." ...[By the way, c]annabis may affect vision by plugging into tailor-made receptors in the eye. Researchers have discovered the receptors – which are chemical doorways into cells – in animals ranging from chicks to salamanders to monkeys. This suggests chemicals similar to the cannabinoids in cannabis, known to occur naturally in the human body, are ancient and highly important in eye function... Some research suggests [cannabis] can affect vision and may also help to relieve symptoms of... glaucoma.

...Pregnant [people] who smoke cannabis are likely to cause much greater harm to the brain of their unborn baby than their own, says the head of the Auckland University anatomy department... [A] study by his department showed the brains of fetuses and babies had many more marijuana receptors than adult brains... [The findings were] revealed to a parliamentary select committee inquiring into the mental health effects of the drug... which met in Auckland yesterday... "These findings highlight the dangers of making marijuana freely available by legalising the drug,"... Research [also] shows that sperm swim much more slowly... and [are] less likely to penetrate the egg... when heavily exposed to the drug's active ingredient... [But a] small amount of... THC... makes sperm more alert and increases the chance of the egg being fertilised.

...Extracts of the marijuana plant might one day be prescribed to stroke victims to prevent brain damage, if new findings by [US] scientists are converted into medical practice... Stroke victims suffer a blood clot which starves brain cells of glucose and oxygen and sets off a cascade of chemical reactions which destroy cells. The... US National Institute for Mental Health in Maryland... found that marijuana compounds THC and cannabidiol blocked this destructive process... [In further news from the US, the FDA] has approved testing of a painkiller and anti-inflammatory drug that is a synthetic derivative of the active ingredient of marijuana. The... president... [of the] manufacturer, Atlantic Technology Ventures, said... "Our animal studies have strongly demonstrated CT-3's likelihood for successful administration in people." Aster clinical research centre in Paris will start scientific testing of CT-3 in Europe this month, using human volunteers.

...A[US]n doctors have applauded the N[SW] Government's plan to consider using cannabis to relieve pain in seriously ill people and urged other states to follow suit... [NSW] is considering the recommendations of a controversial report into the legal use of cannabis... The trial would help people who needed relief for... pain... not relieved by traditional painkillers, relief from nausea caused by chemotherapy that was not being relieved by medication and for patients who had other distressing symptoms such as wasting syndrome from HIV/Aids. "Those sorts of patients can possibly benefit and should not have to face criminal prosecution for trying to get relief of their symptoms,"... [the AUSn] Medical Association... president... said... [Meanwhile, a] British company is a step closer to launching cannabis-based medicine for patients suffering multiple sclerosis and other forms of severe pain. GW Pharmaceuticals said results from the latest phase of clinical trials were encouraging and it was now into Phase III trials. These will involve a wider range of patients in new locations and are the last hurdle before approval is granted... [The] private company, set up in 1997... operates under licences issued by the British Home Office (interior ministry) to cultivate, possess and supply cannabis for medical research. The company has been growing cannabis in secure, computer-controlled glasshouses in southern England. The plants are the same as those grown for recreational use but trials are designed to maximise the drug's analgesic... effect rather than to make subjects so high they do not care about the pain... GW has invested £12 million... in its research and hopes to market the first prescription cannabis-based medicine in 2003.

...GW Pharmaceuticals... aims to raise £16 million... in an initial share sale so it can boost its production of... cannabis... to 100 tonnes in two years from the 15 tonnes it now grew at an undisclosed location in England... UK law classifies cannabis as a Class B drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, which banned its employment for medicinal use... [However,] GW held a special licence from the Government to grow cannabis. The plant contains... a substance that may be used to treat multiple sclerosis... "We are carrying out a programme of clinical research to provide scientific truth that these methods have medical benefit,"... The company said it had also obtained regulatory approval for clinical trials in Canada.

...A Canadian senator who admits to having smoked cannabis has called for the legalisation of soft drugs, saying a committee should study the negative effects of Canada's war on drugs... Canada's Liberal Government has become more tolerant of cannabis, seeking domestically grown pot to be tested as a pain reliever in medical trials and allowing sick individuals to grow and use the drug. The... Progressive Conservative Senator... aged 48... marshalled the help of the Canadian Foundation for Drug Policy, which has long advocated decriminalisation... The idea of using cannabis at least for medicinal purposes clearly has the support of [the] Health Minister... who spent his formative years in the 1960s and who helped to arrange for John Lennon to attend a peace conference in Ottawa in 1969. [The minister], who approved the clinical trials, was asked if [it] had used the weed. [The minister] replied with a twinkle in his eye that [the minister] had not smoked it "for medical purposes."

...BOY, who needs Semtex to blow up National's political future when the senior Tories can do it all by themselves? First, [one accused a] Green candidate... of posting how to make a bomb information on the Green's website, and accusing him of being a dangerous oddball. [The accuser] was unable to come up with any emphatic proof that [the candidate (r:p1382, ln49)] was actually a terrorist in training, but hey, [the candidate]'s got dreadlocks... [i]s young and... owns a hemp shop, so near enough is good enough. Then [the PM] attacked the Green's policy to legalise the possession of cannabis for personal use as extremist. But it's common knowledge that a number of National MPs support the decriminalisation of cannabis, so [the PM] ended up with egg on [its] face. And to round off the week, [another senior Tory] was forced to apologise for comments... made during an interview with [the] Greens co-leader... One... was that his local hospital's psych ward was full of patients suffering from drug induced psychosis... Whakatane hospital pointed out that the ward had seven people in it, none of whom were suffering from the ill effects of cannabis.

...For me, J-Day... the... international day of protest against cannabis prohibition, was like being allowed to have a glass of wine in the park. Although, because I don't do drinking (except perhaps the odd glass of champagne), I had to make use of the opportunity and take a stroll through the grass, adding myself to the numbers supporting changes in legislation. Sadly, to many people the word "drug" has such negative connotations that it's hard to engage in rational debate... I suspect that many of you reading this will just think, "what a silly girl." You'll have that knee-jerk reaction that drugs are *bad* and never for a moment think there's anything wrong with your beer, your sherry or your gin, your Valium or Viagra, even in light of the fact that no one has died as a direct and immediate consequence of recreational or medicinal use of marijuana. In fact, animal tests suggest that a fatal overdose would take 40,000 times the amount needed to get high. Since the beginning of time humans have looked for ways to alter their state of consciousness and still the only legitimate choice in N[Z] is booze and you'd have to look hard to find a more damaging mood-alterer... It's well known that I'm no stranger to a good time. I've been drunk and behaved inappropriately... But... I've been sober and behaved inappropriately... [too! W]e've most of us been a little worse for wear. It's okay to get inebriated, to slur our words and stumble into taxi cabs – its legal, encouraged even, a rite of passage. But what about choice and the free market? ...As a poor drinker I'd like the right to choose an alternative drug... I'd even like to grow a little pot myself so I wouldn't be at the mercy of unscrupulous growers who doctor their plants or have had their plants poisoned by the police... I wouldn't be surprised if the big liquor [– not to mention the tobacco and synthetic pharmaceutical –]companies were behind a lot of the scaremongering and "drugs are bad" hysteria peppering our papers. Increased access to drugs must surely be felt in their market share... Our cannabis legislation is an infringement of my personal freedom and because of that I'd like to stand up and be the poster girl for pot. As a well-balanced, good person who makes a valuable contribution to society, I'd like to vote that we repeal our laws enforcing prohibition, improve our drug education programmes and take a more rational and humanitarian approach to drug use.

...Ruling out decriminalising cannabis has been dubbed irrational and cheap electioneering by experts who advised the Government on the drug. Parliament's health select committee held an inquiry last year into the mental health effects of cannabis and recommended that the Government

review the legal status of the drug. Health, drug and education specialists told the panel that cannabis use caused no significant harm and that the criminal status of the drug made the health consequences worse. But the Government this week ruled against decriminalising the drug.

...THE Swiss government's legalised marijuana and hashish and will allow dope shops. [1-in-4] 15 to 24-year-olds uses the drug in Switzerland...

[“]IT’S MOVING further towards decriminalisation than any other country in the world,” warned... the former police[officer] who was the British “drugs tsar” until the Labour Government belatedly realised that his job was as ridiculous as his title. [The former cop] was responding to[the] British Home Secretary[’s]... announcement last week that being caught with marijuana will in future be treated no more seriously than illegally possessing other Class C controlled drugs such as sleeping pills and steroids. [The former cop] was technically wrong, but in terms of its political impact [the former cop was right. The former cop] was technically wrong because Britain is not leading the parade of European countries who have broken away from the prohibitionist U[S] approach. Even after [the Home Secretary]’s changes, Britain will lag behind... countries such as Switzerland... and... Belgium... in its laws on recreational use... The main engine of the war on drugs is the US, which managed to enshrine its prohibitionist views in international laws during the Cold War by a series of treaties that make it impossible for national legislatures to legalise the commonly used recreational drugs. All that other countries can do without Washington’s agreement is to decriminalise the possession and use of at least some of the banned drugs. Numbers of smaller European countries have already decriminalised various drugs, but what the Portuguese or the Dutch do will never have an impact in the US. Britain is one of the very few countries whose example will ever be seen as relevant in the country that is the real home of the drug war. Britain’s decriminalisation of marijuana... could finally open the door to a real debate in the US. The actual changes in British law are rather timid. In future British police will generally confiscate marijuana and issue warnings to users, rather than arresting them, but “disturb public order” by blowing marijuana smoke in a police[officer]’s face and you’re in jail.

...British prisoners get marijuana from heaven... Inmates in Britain’s Stafford Prison have found a new use for origami – using paper aeroplanes to get marijuana... from outside the jail walls... [A] damning report on the Midlands prison... described how the prison authorities had strung up “snagging lines” to try to stop them but with little success... Last week, newspapers reported that inmates in one of Scotland’s toughest jails had been using postage stamps to sneak in... LSD... The tedium of prison life has made Britain’s jails hotbeds of narcotics.

...Walking is never dull in Amsterdam... And... if you are into iniquity there is plenty available... [in] the city’s red-light district... Prostitutes in all states of dress preen, pout, fix their hair, chat to friends on cell-phones in the garish, Martian-red glow of shop-front windows... Drawn blinds indicate the occupants are busy. Interspersed with the live window displays are all manner of sex-shop exhibits... The only things prohibited are photographs... Other types of culture abound in Amsterdam... there’s the dining culture, headed by the ubiquitous ancient brown cafes, so named after their smoke-darkened interiors. A few Dutch beers later, and... you are ready to venture into the subculture. Battling through the heavy smoke... and nonchalantly asking for the menu sounds easier than it is. “What menu?” the scowling West Indian bar[tender] asks. “Ah, um, you know, the drugs one.” Very in-the-know. [The bartender] hands over a plastic-covered list with an array of exotic sounding substances from Morocco, Thailand and Col[o]mbia. The marijuana[costs] about \$15 for 3g... A pre-rolled joint is \$7.50, the same as a slice of innocent-sounding chocolate space cake... The[cafes] are... gradually dwindling in number as the authorities... do not renew their licences once they close... A number of Amsterdammers say such cafes are now largely for the tourists, having long lost any trendiness among locals.

...A British travel documentary which featured Northland’s cannabis industry as a tourism attraction has left some N[Z]ers in Britain fuming. The proud Kiwis rang the Tourism Board in London and Wellington alarmed that the British programme, *A Rough Guide to [NZ]*, which... screened on BBC2 about three weeks ago... gave an unfair portrayal of their country. The board’s N[Z] staff had not seen the programme, but it was understood to show balaclava-clad Northland marijuana growers giving a reporter a tour of their cannabis plot... A Paihia-based Maori tourism operator... said the film crew had not been interested in the standard tours.

...The social and economic fabric of Northland was under a marijuana cloud last night after one of Maoridom’s top figures[– inspired, perhaps, by the recent news article about a]... Dutch local authority [that i]s... subsidising work experience for the unemployed in coffee shops selling marijuana... [–] challenged the Government to create jobs or legalise the drug... The Tai Tokerau Maori Trust Board chair[perso]n and National Party stalwart... was concerned that 86 people from his Ngati Kahu tribe had been arrested on marijuana-related charges in the past year, with 24 of them jailed... [His] claim that growing marijuana was a reasonable way for unemployed people to earn a crust drew some support – and a storm of protest... [A spokesperson for] the Ruakura Hauora O Tainui Trust, a tribal health authority serving 40,000 Maori... was alarmed by... the... comments. “The war over marijuana is over and marijuana has won if... [people] are going to take that attitude,”... Decriminalisation of cannabis... would all but “destroy” the Maori race, said... the manager of Maori health... [The manager pointed out that] an estimated 60[%] of Maori used cannabis... [The] Whangarei MP... said the veteran leader’s comments were a bankrupt response to Northland’s social and economic malaise... “Marijuana use in Northland is the single biggest cause of a region in moral and social collapse.” The debate came a day after a prominent Northland farmer... was jailed for 3 1/2 years after a 4000-plant marijuana plot was discovered on his property... The National Drug Investigation Bureau said the nearly 46,000 plants police discovered in Northland last season dwarfed recovery operations elsewhere.

...With the cannabis growing season in full bloom, police are right behind the spraying of crops from the air with a blue herbicide... Manual recovery requires a minimum police team of 14; aerial spraying requires just four... Research[conducted by the police] had shown that sprayed cannabis would be no more toxic than smoking cannabis itself[, but a spokesperson]... for Norml... told of users who experienced headaches, nausea and had even coughed up blood after smoking the poisoned dope. “Growers are not always ethical and the dye used in the spray is not obvious when plants are dried...” ...Police claims that the spray is essentially harmless are further backed by their own belief that spraying falls outside requirements of the Resource Management Act. [However, the]Northland Regional Council monitoring manager... said police would have to obey act provisions like any other agri-chemical users, including notifying property owners in advance of any intention to spray on their land. [A]Senior Sergeant... denied that the police were bound by the act – the herbicide was harmless and did not contaminate the soil... [although the senior sergeant] declined to name the harmless chemicals used in the spray. Police feared they could be swamped by false spray-drift damage claims from food growers if the ingredients were widely known... But... one ingredient was Roundup and another a common desiccant spray... Spray experts doubt a herbicide that... wilted plants within two or three hours and killed them within 48 hours... is harmless. [A]Massey University weed scientist... said the only desiccant herbicides with such rapid results are paraquat and diquat. These were far from harmless and would make people very sick if ingested... [Incidentally, police] have seized the largest marijuana plantation ever found in California, uprooting and confiscating more than 21,000 plants worth about \$US84 million... [from] land owned by the San Francisco Water Department...

RUSSIAN police in the region of Primoriye detained more than 300 people after discovering 120 cannabis fields covering close to 100 hectares.

...[a w]oodcutter... was working in an isolated gully on his family’s Paengaroa farm when [it] saw two trespassers tending a cannabis plot they had secretly planted there. Minutes later, one of those [trespassers] was dead, shot in the back with a .308 hunting rifle. [The woodcutter] has never denied killing Grant Bourne, aged 36. But [the woodcutter] has maintained since the shooting on January 14... that [it] had not meant to hurt the... [trespasser], just warn him. This week, in the High Court at Rotorua, a jury... deliberated for just 3 1/2 hours before finding the shy 27-year-old guilty of [hu]manslaughter, but not murder. [The woodcutter] will be sentenced next month. [His p]arents... were delighted by the decision, which they said was the best possible outcome for their son... People in the tiny, close-knit community... 11km southeast of Te Puke, are also pleased. They have been ripping cleverly hidden cannabis plots out of their land for years, often fearing retaliation from the growers. “The [so]n did bloody right,” said[the] Paengaroa Motor Lodge owner... “There are too many dopey idiots who can do what they like on your property and get away

with it. If there was a lighter sentence, [the son] should have got it.” ...Two warning shots were fired and [the woodcutter] shouted at the two fleeing [growers] to stop, as Mr Bourne ran in front of [him] and jumped over a fence into a neighbouring property. Just as [Mr Bourne] was disappearing into thick scrub, [the woodcutter] shot in his direction. “I wanted him to stop and come back, not die...,” [the woodcutter] told police later that day.

...A woodcutter who shot and killed a cannabis grower after finding him secretly tending plants on the family farm has been sentenced to three years’ jail – to the outrage of his neighbours... The judge said Mr Bourne had no right to be on the property. [Mr Bourne] was a trespasser and was committing a criminal offence. But [the woodcutter] had no legal justification for shooting him... the proper course of action would have been to call police. But people who live [along] the same road... – and have long complained about... stumbling upon booby traps and electric fences protecting cannabis plots in quiet corners of their properties... – said... that it took Te Puke police 30 minutes to reach farms in Maniatutu Rd, by which time the growers were long gone... “Nothing’s changed and giving sentences like this doesn’t do anything for us as a community,” said a [neighbour]...

The billionaire business[person] who escaped conviction on drug charges in an Auckland court on Friday made a donation to charity – and the court knew it. [The billionaire] is understood to have made a financial donation to Odyssey House drug rehabilitation centre... Section 19 of the Criminal Justice Act enables offenders to be discharged without conviction if a judge decides that the consequences of their conviction outweighs the gravity of the crime. Under the law, offenders who admit their crimes may be allowed to walk free because a conviction could affect their employment, health or rehabilitation. Donations to charities can be part of the deal. The American billionaire... had admitted three charges of importing drugs after customs officials at Auckland Airport and elsewhere found more than 100g of cannabis resin and leaf. A [N] Auckland barrister... said judges were using their discretion under Section 19 more often. It was not uncommon for donations to be part of the “matrix of submissions” made by a lawyer on a client’s behalf. But in the billionaire’s case, wealth seemed to have put him in a more privileged position... “Is that a test under the Criminal Justice Act – that you can pay your way out?” Last night... the [billionaire]’s lawyer... said offenders donating to charity occurred on a daily basis in the courts... The American billionaire... has given more than \$142 million to charities.

...The billionaire who walked free from an Auckland court on Friday was the second American let off drug charges in the court that day... [The same] Judge... entered no conviction against the earlier defendant on the grounds that it could have jeopardised his job as a safety officer and ordered him to contribute \$250 towards the cost of prosecution. That [defendant], whose name was not available from the court yesterday, was caught with a much smaller quantity of cannabis than his wealthy fellow-country[person]. Unlike the billionaire, [the safety officer] did not have his own lawyer... The court’s leniency to the billionaire, whose name was suppressed... made news around the world after it was disclosed in the *Weekend Herald*. The tycoon’s identity was published in newspapers outside the jurisdiction of N[Z] courts and posted on the Internet. Lawyers for the *Herald* will file papers in the Otahuhu District Court today seeking leave to appeal to the High Court against... [the] suppression order. The billionaire... will have little time left to enjoy the... [country] as the Immigration Service has slapped a limited-purpose permit on him requiring him to leave the country by Wednesday. The immigration permit gave him... stay... solely to attend court. There was no room for appeal.

...The police have stepped into the case of the drugs-smuggling billionaire. They may appeal against his discharge without conviction. The... move came as the *Herald* won the first round of its battle to name the [billionaire]... The billionaire’s lawyer... was confident of defeating any... appeal.

...A prominent citizen is caught urinating on an Auckland footpath and the legal system goes to extraordinary trouble to protect his reputation. Why? The offence may be minor; the question is not. It is being asked widely in the community since the *Herald* reported the suppression of the name of a visiting billionaire in the Otahuhu District Court. The response, not only in letters to the editor but in telephone calls coming in daily, suggests the N[Z] courts should seriously review their whole practice of giving special protection to people of high status... Name suppression is available in law to protect the innocent. Nobody, for example, wants victims of incest or rape to be named. And if that means the guilty also benefit from the name suppression in such cases, it cannot be helped. But courts have long taken it upon themselves to protect the names of the guilty, particularly if they are big names. The practice is completely out of step with the view of the community that judges serve. It should cease... Meanwhile, a Spanish journalist... has been convicted and ordered out of N[Z] for possessing 7g of cannabis – 93g less than the billionaire.

...A Spanish lawyer on a \$15,000 South Pacific holiday that was to include nights at some of N[Z]’s best hotels received taxpayer-funded legal aid after... [being] caught bringing drugs into the country... [The Spaniard], aged 42, was granted legal aid – supposedly reserved for those who cannot afford lawyers – even though [it] gave his occupation and had cash and credit cards on him... [The Spaniard] paid a fine before flying to Fiji for three nights. The *Weekend Herald* understands that it is common for foreigners caught with drugs at Auckland Airport to receive legal aid. The... [Spaniard] was charged with importing a class B drug... after... 11.4g of hashish, also known as cannabis resin, in his pocket... was sniffed out by a dog in the airport customs hall last week... [The lawyer], whose English is poor, [said]... it... did not realise the drug was illegal in N[Z].

...An unexpected walk through Customs ended in court for an Auckland[er] who flew home from Christchurch... The 27-year-old... made the journey between the cities as a domestic passenger in an Air N[Z] jet. Unfortunately for him, the plane was on the last leg of a flight from Japan, which meant [the 27-year-old] had to undergo customs scrutiny, with his fellow passengers, on arrival in Auckland. A customs drug dog gave the hapless traveller a noisy welcome and... [the 27-year-old] cabotage passenger... was strip-searched by customs officers, who found... 14g of cannabis and three used cannabis pipes... The [27-year-old] appeared in Otahuhu District Court the next day and was fined \$150 for possession of the drug.

...Anxious parents who call in sniffer dogs to search for drugs in their children’s bedrooms in their absence should not fear legal problems under the Privacy Act. [A lawyer] who works for Youth Law providing free legal advice to under-25s, said that as owners of the house, parents needed only give permission for a search... N[Z] was a signatory to the U[N] Convention on the Rights of the Child, which says children should not be subjected to “arbitrary” infringements of their privacy. “But the convention is not written into law in N[Z]. It’s really only a guide... What would concern me more is the breach of trust involved. Parents would have to consider how they might repair any damage done in their relationship with their children, especially if they’ve gone behind their backs.” [An e]x-police dog handler... has been steadily building a customer base over the past two years, hiring out three teams of handler and dog for between \$300 and \$700 to search companies, schools and private homes... the only private drug dog search service in the country. In the past year [the handler] has searched up to 40 private homes for drugs, usually while children were at school, and about half the searches yielded drugs... If “dealable” quantities of drugs were found, police must be notified, [but it] had not had any parents who tried to stop that happening. Some wanted the police involved if drugs for personal use were found and “that’s [the parents’] choice”.

...\$10 marijuana detecting kits are being sold over the counter at the police station in Greymouth... so... parents... can bust their dope-smoking kids... And the scheme may become national... But youth groups are outraged and fear parents will force their children to submit to the tests.

...Concerns have been raised about the accuracy of \$10 home drug-testing kits being sold over the counter at a South Island police station. The kits, similar to a home pregnancy test, [require a urine sample which]... shows a negative or positive result within five minutes. But... Norml... says the kits are dangerous because they often return a false result. “They are unfortunately not reliable and often return a false negative or false positive result.” ...a more accurate test for cannabis was to send a urine sample to the Institute of Environmental Science and Research... at a cost of more than \$100. However, the test was so sensitive that someone who had not smoked – but just stood next to someone who had – could return a positive result. [Norml] supports the controlled drug testing of young people but only when the effects of marijuana become problematic... [Norml] said a national guideline was needed for drug testing in schools... Greymouth... schools had been told about the kits but had so far not bought any.

...Five Long Bay College students were made to strip naked from the waist down as part of a police drug search in a school office. The family of at least one of the boys are considering laying a complaint with the Police Complaints Authority and taking legal action against the school on the grounds the search was unreasonable and breached his rights. The school has confirmed the strip search happened and say police had the legal

authority for it. The... students, aged 14 to 17, are understood to have been suspended after they were allegedly found smoking cannabis outside the school grounds by police last Wednesday morning. [A c]onstable... and a member of the youth aid section were on their way to the school to talk to fifth formers about drugs, the law and their rights, when they caught the students. [The d]eputy principal... said the students were taken to his office, where they were questioned and individually... asked to turn away and remove [their] trousers and underwear. No cannabis was found.

...[WEST AUCKLAND] POLICE say they're prepared to strip search Waitakere youngsters if needed in a bid to beat drug use in schools. But... the force is happy to discuss concerns raised by a search of five pupils at a North Shore college last week... [The] Waitakere City Council children's advocate... [ha]s concerns about the search. "I guess schools do need to have stringent procedures in place to ensure that there isn't drug use in schools but we also need to make sure we deal with young people in the same way as adults,"... [However, Waitakere's] Detective Superintendent... says that adults and children usually get the same treatment... Kelston Boys High School[']s principal... says... "I wouldn't be adverse in supporting the police in that course of action... I haven't got a problem with keeping drugs out of schools and society." ...[■ Three under 7-year-olds were among the] 1770 students... suspended... [throughout NZ] last year... for using drugs.

...Long Bay College is reeling from the suspension of 22 students after a lonely girl tried to swap cannabis for friendship. The third-former, who took cannabis from her home to give away, was one of five children suspended indefinitely this week. A further 17 were sent home for three days... Teachers were alerted when some students were found smoking cannabis at the school. One student had tried to sell it, while others had simply kept hold of it. None of them had told a teacher... [□ The latest NZ] *Herald-DigiPoll* survey shows... [that a] total of 53.3[% of NZers]... had never used the drug and never would; 3.3[%]... had never used it but would try if it was not illegal (whereas '6% of people who stop using cannabis do so because of the law'); 23.8[%]... had used it occasionally (two or three times); 8.7[%]... used it from time to time; and 2.7[%] used it regularly.

...A[US] is one of the worst nations in the world for cannabis abuse and... the rate of... use – particularly among the young – was soaring... More efficient growing techniques are slashing prices... [a]n ounce in Sydney in 1990 would have cost A\$438 but by... the date of the research, it had fallen to A\$275[)]... and pushing up consumption.

...[A] CONVOY of... pro-cannabis activists bearing a 12-metre joint will leave... northern N[SW]... today looking to create a stir at next week's... drug summit in Sydney. Led by the Nimbin Hemp Embassy, the activists will co-host a five-day People's Drug Summit at the Domain next to parliament house where the... summit will be staged... Hemp Embassy[']s spokesperson... said the... Drug Summit was about peace and healing.

...WHAT'S the perfect present for the guy who has everything, including cancer? Dope, apparently, if some of my e-mail is to be believed. I could be described, I suppose, as belonging to the cognac rather than the marijuana generation. But... I've been forced to consider dope in its medicinal sense, because several proponents of the Dope-As-A-Shamefully-Neglected-Medication school have been urging it on me as a course of treatment. Cannabis, they write, numbs the pain/relieves the fear/quells the nausea/eases the chemo/helps focus the mind on the inner essential you, thereby strengthening the immune thingummies and so on and so forth... One correspondent stoutly maintains that Queen Victoria took hash to ease her menstrual cramps, and would go reeling back to her apartments late at night with the aid of special fixtures on the walls to hang on to. Whatever the truth of this whimsical anecdote, I shall leave dope to the royals and stick with my own special blend of tea which contains nothing more narcotic than camellia leaves. For I have an instructive illustration of the effects of marijuana practically on my own doorstep – it is the cautionary tale of the Cat Who Smoked Dope. Toffee was born in a caravan up north, one of a liquorice-allsorts litter of kittens whose owners were of herbal tendencies to such a degree that Toffee was brought up in a permanent dense blue haze of dope smoke... Reclaimed from the sinful environment into which [it] had so innocently been born, and travelling in an old baseball cap, Toffee was brought to Ponsonby for rehabilitation. Maybe if it had been another suburb – ...say... Mt Roskill... – all would have been well. But Ponsonby well, I suppose it was asking for trouble. Anyway, too late now for vain regrets. As soon as Toffee was old enough to go out, [it] did, and naturally... sought out those places which most reminded him of his misspent kittenhood. Frantic searches from Three Lamps to Freeman's Bay revealed [Toffee] was seeking out the low life... [Toffee] became an expert gatecrasher, rolling up to the door of a certain kind of party and, yes, inhaling... Nor did it have to be dope smoke. As far as Toffee was concerned, even ordinary cigarette smoke was better than no smoke at all. [Toffee] started sleeping around – anywhere [it] hung his hat was his home. When [Toffee] got the munchies [it] would just help himself – [Toffee] learned how to open the pantry door and steal cat bikkies one by one from the bag, a neat trick when you don't have an opposable thumb. An elegant cat-collar with his name and phone number was added to his ensemble, but then the phone started to go late at night. Calls from restaurants on Ponsonby Rd, saying: "Excuse me, but is this your cat having a drink on our bar?" "Honestly," said [Toffee]'s mum, "I didn't think I'd have this sort of problem until the boys hit their teens..." But Toffee continues to do his own thing. Some might say [Toffee] is a cool cat. It only goes to show how insidious dope can get. For it all started with just a sprig of catnip, and look at Toffee now. I intend to take heed of his tragic example, the medicinal qualities of dope notwithstanding.

...*Drug of nuns, queens and criminals...* In 1883, when the French nun Mother Mary Joseph Aubert clambered up the banks of the Whanganui River to found the mission outpost of Jerusalem, a bag of marijuana seeds was in her luggage. Legend has it that [Mary] grew cannabis for medicinal purposes, using it to make a tea to ease the nuns' menstrual cramps. The earliest known reference to cannabis is in Assyrian tablets of the seventh century BC, and it has been widely used as a medicine – and an intoxicant – throughout Asia, the Middle East and Europe. It was popularised in Victorian England by returned Indian Army surgeon Dr W. O'Shaughnessy and was widely used for a variety of ailments... – Queen Victoria was reputedly a user... [However, c]annabis was first cultivated in England in 400 AD... Researchers are investigating whether the secret of the Bard's creativity was his dope-smoking... Pipes found at Shakespeare's home in Stratford-upon-Avon... were being tested for traces of the drug... [The] head of palaeontology at the Transvaal Museum in Pretoria, believed Shakespeare's use of complex imagery of darkness and of mental journeys were evidence of drug-induced visions... [Cannabis generally] was taken by mouth, usually in an alcohol-based tincture. Readily available in colonial N[Z], it was also sold in cigarette form to treat asthma. By the 1920s, however, cannabis had lost its acceptable medicinal face. It was increasingly seen in Western societies as an evil recreational drug used in conjunction with opium by no-good foreigners. In 1927, N[Z] legislation responded by banning cannabis – which few in N[Z] had seen or used... The demonisation of cannabis for nearly a century has meant little funding for scientific research into its effects. Political and social prejudice has often clouded commentary on what research there has been. As the US National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine observed last year... "Scientific data on controversial subjects are commonly misinterpreted, over-interpreted and misrepresented, and the medical marijuana debate is no exception." Other recent surveys on the effects of cannabis include a British House of Lords report... which led to a recommendation that doctors be allowed to prescribe it for medical use, and surveys by the A[US]n Task Force on Cannabis, the W[HO] and the Auckland University Alcohol and Public Health Research Unit. The consensus seems to be that smoking the drug can be harmful, but in terms of lasting effects, the healthy individual has little to fear from occasional... use.

...*DOOBIE, OR NOT DOOBIE...* Shakespeare may have been one of the first overworked authors to seek inspiration from drugs, a study suggests... The study, carried out by South African researchers, was partly inspired by a rereading of some sonnets in the search for drug references. Sonnet 76, for instance, refers to a "noted weed" and "compounds strange," while in Sonnet 27, Shakespeare talks of "a journey in his head." ...Yesterday, Shakespeare experts dismissed the suggestions that the author's genius was fuelled by drugs... [However, a] chemical analysis of clay pipes from the 17th Century, including some found near the Bard's home... have shown traces of... compounds created by burning cannabis.

...Drug-smoking paraphernalia will be banned by next year under a Government plan to crack down on cannabis and other drugs. But there are few other specific changes in an "action plan" released yesterday by the Minister of Health... The plan, prepared by the Ministry of Health, says

the visibility and availability of drug paraphernalia, particularly pipes and bongs, could give young people conflicting messages about taking drugs... The penalty for possession... [of] pipes or bongs... would be three months' jail or a \$1500 fine or both, the same as for cannabis.

...a new health action plan will harm rather than help cannabis smokers, say pro-drug lobbyists. Sellers of the paraphernalia... doubted yesterday that the legislation would cut cannabis use and said banning bongs, or water pipes, would be harmful because they took toxins out of the smoke.

...Smoking cannabis five times a week does as much lung damage as 20 cigarettes a day... That is the verdict of... researchers who studied the lungs of 943 people aged 21... The Otago University respiratory research group looked at symptoms such as wheezing, shortness of breath, early morning coughing and sputum production. It found that 36[%] of cannabis-dependent smokers had those symptoms, followed by smokers of 21-plus cigarettes a day (29[%]), 10-20 cigarettes a day (24[%]), and up to 10 cigarettes a day (17[%]). 20[%] of non-smokers had the symptoms, some of them from asthma... [An] Asthma and Respiratory Foundation... "fact sheet" warn[s] that the drug was dangerous. Its medical director... said... "Marijuana smoke – like tobacco smoke – can trigger asthma symptoms... when inhaled either directly or in the form of secondhand smoke."

...*Marijuana smokers 'passive dreamers'* THE recent storyline on *Home and Away* (TV2, 5.30pm weekdays) involving the teenage surfer, Sam, smoking marijuana is yet again a fine example of how scriptwriters have got their heads in the clouds. They have gone about portraying Sam's behaviour under the influence of marijuana as being violent and aggressive. These are traits more likely to be associated with excess alcohol consumption. All the people I've come across who smoke marijuana tend to be passive dreamers who definitely don't go around constantly threatening to smash people's heads in every five minutes as Sam has been shown to do.

...Mentally ill Ian Hope used cannabis in the days before... kill[ing] his daughter on a command from God, the Christchurch Coroner's Court heard yesterday. A psychiatrist... told the coroner... that Hope, aged 34, gave a very high cannabis reading when... admitted to Sunnyside Hospital the day [it] stabbed his daughter to death... In later interviews Hope told staff [it] was using cannabis every day and was certainly abusing it... [The psychiatrist] was giving evidence at a joint inquest into the deaths of 8-year-old Lisa Hope on December 17 last year, and Hope, who died from a self-inflicted injury on January 5. Hope suffered from manic depression and believed [it] was the third son of God with a grand mission on Earth. [Hope] was an outpatient of Sunnyside Hospital when [the 34-year-old] killed his daughter... It was also revealed... that a child custody report ordered by the Family Court from the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Agency was over a month late. The court gave the report a 28-day urgency rating on August 13 last year after the children's mother... had applied for custody. The report did not arrive at the Family Court until October 22. A service leader at the agency... had not had any immediate concerns about the children's care after... visit[ing] them.

...A westie is in... Middlemore Hospital with serious burns... after an explosion ripped through a Henderson home in what police describe as a bungled cannabis cook-up. The roof of the Moselle Ave unit was blown out, doors torn from their hinges and cars damaged in the blast at 11.30pm on Monday... Henderson [police]... say... it's lucky someone wasn't killed... A [gal] and 10-year-old child also in the unit escaped injury. The centre of the explosion was a bathroom where police say they found cooking pots and electric hob rings... [P]olice believe they were being used for cooking cannabis plants with the chemical iso-propyl to create cannabis oil. Cannabis oil is used by heating it and inhaling the fumes and is a class B drug.

...A POLICE officer has been pulled off an inquiry in which [it] was investigating his own staff in a... bungled drugs case. [A] Police Complaints Authority Judge... said the decision to appoint [the] Auckland Detective Senior Sergeant... to head the inquiry was inappropriate. The *Sunday Star-Times* revealed last week... [that a citizen had] spent... \$100,000... defending cannabis charges. The charges, which involved a \$1 million cannabis plot on [the citizen]'s Great Barrier Island property, were thrown out of court... because of what [the] Judge... called a poor police case... [In related news, t]hree of the country's most senior detectives have been put in charge of investigating allegations against police following the flawed Gisborne corruption inquiry. The trio of detective superintendents were appointed by [the] Police Commissioner... after a judge criticised the decision to prosecute five Gisborne officers wrongly accused of supplying criminals drugs for information... [The judge criticised the original] investigators for not interviewing enough witnesses, and... for [forming] a mind-set that the officers were guilty... [T]he Minister of Police... said [the commissioner] had taken steps to change police practice in future investigations.

...A public apology to a group of Gisborne officers cleared of corruption charges has been followed up with a... compensation pay-out... The group... will reportedly share \$200,000, but in return must give up the right to take further action against the police.

...Former undercover police should not be getting ACC payments for marijuana addiction... says [Labour's justice spokesperson]... But ACC says everyone is entitled to compensation for injuries suffered from workplace accidents and it will keep paying... [However, the] ACC Minister... would seek a briefing from ACC officials tomorrow on the payouts... [because] the issue had been highlighted and was clearly of public interest. An ACC spokes[person] said that... only police could legitimately claim for drug addiction. There was no time-limit on how long people could receive compensation, although the goal was for clients to return to work or independence as quickly as possible... On Saturday the *Weekend Herald* revealed a[n addicted] former undercover detective, who [claims to] still smoke... 10 to 15 joints a day, has been receiving ACC for nine years...

['Marijuana could be a "gateway drug" that primes the brain for dependence on harder drugs, scientists say. Two groups of researchers write in the American journal *Science* that the active ingredient in cannabis does its work in the same region of the brain and uses the same triggers as heroin. This region, known as the limbic system, is where the addictive drugs nicotine, cocaine and the amphetamines are most active. The research is bound to provoke controversy. Many campaigners argue that cannabis could safely be made legal. But a Spanish-Californian team and an Italian group tell a different story. The Madrid-La Jolla group gave rats daily doses of a synthetic cannabinoid, then made them go into withdrawal. During this time the animals showed a sharp jump in a brain chemical in the limbic system called "corticotrophin-releasing factor." This is what makes alcohol, cocaine and opiate addicts suffer when they undergo a "cold turkey" cure. It may also be why 100,000 people in the US each year seek treatment for marijuana dependence.' Editor's note: The White House claims to be anti-cannabis because, according to one of its spokespeople, 'cannabis makes people move on to harder drugs' (NZ's PM also doesn't want to decriminalise cannabis because, 'going on advice from the FBI, criminals will merely move on to another drug'). However, 'based on the National Drug and Alcoholism Treatment Unit Survey – a census of all known drug abuse and alcoholism treatment facilities in the US – in 1974, 52.7% of 18 to 25 year olds had ever used cannabis, but only 25.2% were current users, while the percentages who had ever used cocaine, hallucinogens and heroin, were 12.7, 16.6 and 4.5 respectively. In the 26 years and over group, the corresponding percentages were 9.9, 2.0, 0.9, 1.3 and 0.5 respectively. In comparison, the corresponding percentages for 1994 were 43.4, 12.2, 9.6, 11.7 and 0.2 for 18-25 year olds; 35.0, 3.0, 10.9, 8.0 and 1.3 for people over 25']

...The much-vaunted cannabis economy in the Far North is in the doldrums. Customers on the Auckland market are turning away from "bush dak" to more sophisticated urban... hydroponics... products and... "designer" drugs... particularly in Auckland's nightclub scene... sending demand for the Far North's finest plummeting... It is also cheaper to come by: buyers with contacts can get good-quality Far North cannabis for between \$160 and \$200 an ounce, about 75[%] down on last season's prices. Those without contacts can expect to pay up to \$300 an ounce... It is a glut which police say partly explains the upsurge in drug-related incidents among Northland school children... [G]rowers and dealers who normally sell in bulk [have been forced] to break their crops into small lots for local use, often as a form of currency[(i.e., green dollars)] in barter transactions...

Glen: 24, single, Auckland urban professional, likes golf, dancing and class A and class C drugs. Police believe Glen and his ilk are driving a change in the market for illegal drugs in this country. "They're the ones who are supplying most of the demand for the new party drugs – young Aucklanders with disposable income who want to dance all weekend," says the head of the Auckland drug squad... Cannabis is waning in popularity. Says Glen: "I don't even think of it as a drug any more. It's there if you want it [but] there are more interesting things to take the edge off a stressful week." In place of cannabis are methamphetamine – also known as speed or "poor [hu]man's cocaine" because of its similar high –

and Ecstasy... An Ecstasy raid by the Customs Service two weeks ago yielded 25,000 tablets hidden inside a BMW car gearbox. It shows how much of the drug is consumed here, says [a] customs... investigations manager... Obviously, there are no figures that show how much of any illegal drug is being consumed here. A survey by the University of Auckland Alcohol and Public Health Research Unit comparing rates of use in 1998 with 1990 showed that the percentage of people who had used... Ecstasy... had increased from 0.4 to 2.1[%]. The... attraction for criminals to supply the drug... is obvious... Ecstasy... can be bought in Europe for as little as \$2 a tablet and sold here for \$100... [A spokesperson] for the N[Z] Drugs Foundation, whose mission is to minimise drug-related harm, says there is little doubt that... Ecstasy use will lead to further deaths... Aucklander Ngaire O'Neill's death] in 1998... has] been attributed to Ecstasy use... "But let's get things into perspective first. There are 500 alcohol-related deaths and 4500 tobacco related deaths in N[Z] every year,"... A... Detective Senior Sergeant... says... "It doesn't matter how many times you tell people that taking drugs can kill them, they all adopt the drink driver's [mentality]: I know 500 people kill themselves on the roads by smashing up their car, but it won't happen to me." That... is an attitude that will take more drug education programmes and probably two generations to change. Until that change happens the use of... Ecstasy will increase in line with trends in Europe and there is little police can do to stop it, says [the] Detective Senior Sergeant... "If you ask me whether we are losing the battle, I would have to say yes, yes we are."

...The white powder that put four... 15-year-old... South Auckland schoolgirls in hospital – one in intensive care – was the drug Ecstasy... Police, concerned about the girls' access to the class-B drug, believe this is the first time it has been found inside a N[Z] schoolyard... Another 15-year-old girl, understood to have brought the substance to Mangere College, had been referred to the police youth aid section... A... Detective Sergeant... of the National Drug Intelligence Bureau, said last night that Ecstasy was an expensive drug – selling for between \$60 and \$120 a tablet – normally associated with the club and dance scene... A... Mangere Detective Sergeant... said... [the girl] had found the drug on the floor at a party. Ecstasy claimed its first N[Z] fatality last October with the death of Aucklander Ngaire O'Neill. The 27-year-old... died after taking the drug while at a dance party at The Kase nightclub in Karangahape Rd. Overseas medical research has found that Ecstasy can produce severe health problems including overheating, irreversible damage to brain cells, irregular heartbeats, high blood pressure, anxiety and depression. Institute of Environmental Science and Research tests... confirmed the drug the girls took was MDMA. Ecstasy is one of its nick-names, as is the love-drug.

...The apparent Ecstasy-related death of Ngaire O'Neill has revealed a new range of love drugs hitting the N[Z] dance party scene. And it is the combination – or polydrug use – with other substances such as alcohol which is causing concern in N[Z] and deaths overseas. Gamma-hydroxybutyrate – known as Fantasy or GHB – is just one of a host of substances which dancers are consuming to make the party last all night... [Others include] *Speed*... and... Liquid Ketamine (horse tranquilliser) [or *Special K* – which is sold in \$50 'ampoules' (vials), the same as GHB. GHB]... is called a love drug because it reportedly increases sexual awareness, lowers inhibitions, enhances erections and strengthens orgasms... [N]ightclub bouncers report that... [vials] of clear liquid are being sold or shared, with no indication of the amount of GHB in each vial. [It is not unusual for people to "just drop dead" then have to be resuscitated, according to a former dance party bouncer on the Gold Coast, where 10 people collapsed in a mass overdose last weekend. "It's hot, they overheat and go into cardiac arrest because their heart is pumping so fast."]The problem with GHB, as with most illegal drugs, is that the correct dosage is notoriously difficult to determine – and can prove fatal, especially if taken with alcohol... Proponents of the drug say half a gram is safe for a 55kg person, while more can cause... vomiting, diarrhoea, headaches, confusion and dizziness... GHB, a neurotransmitter which occurs naturally in the body, has been used in Europe to treat sleep disorders for 30 years. First manufactured by a French chemist in the 1960s, it has also been used as an anaesthetic in some countries and has been popular among bodybuilders as a nutritional supplement... Possession of GHB is not illegal in N[Z] – primarily 'because legislation hasn't caught up with it' – though it is illegal either to sell it or use it for therapeutic purposes, say authorities. It is illegal in the U[S, where it]... has been linked to date rape... but not in Britain... In the harsh language of number-crunchers, GHB-related deaths are statistically inconclusive, while the consumption of other drugs and alcohol in combination further muddles conclusions. Even the controversy surrounding Ecstasy – with users dying through either dehydration or "drowning" when more water is consumed than perspired, causing the brain to shut down – should be put into perspective. Opiates kill 1.9[%] of British users, reports the *Economist*. Ecstasy claims the lives of 0.0002[%] of users. Viagra... is also proving popular with dancers...

University of Manchester researchers say a survey of clubbers in the north-west of England has shown 3[%]... had admitted to taking Viagra on a night out... [Both guys and gals], aged between 19 and 34, [are paying] £10... per tablet... Most admitted they had taken it with other drugs commonly thought to hamper sexual performance, such as Ecstasy... [● Researchers] at Johns Hopkins University in Maryland [have found that Ecstasy damages] nerve endings in the brain that release serotonin, a chemical that regulates mood, memory, pain, sleep and sex. Scientists knew from earlier studies that Ecstasy... caused nerve damage in baboons... "This is the first time we've been able to examine the actual serotonin-producing nerve cells directly in the brain,"... Experiments on monkeys showed that as little as four days of using Ecstasy... twice a day... can cause damage lasting six to seven years... [T]he drug appears to destroy a part of the human brain cells called axons which transmit nerve signals.

...POLICE are targeting a dangerous sex drug that has hit N[Z]. The drug called yaa baa, which means "crazy drug", is causing havoc in Thailand's sex industry. A consignment arrived in Auckland last month. The small pink pills, which... are made in Burma laboratories for about 10c each and sell in Bangkok for \$5[, but]... sell for \$100 each [in NZ], can be swallowed or crushed and smoked. They increase sexual stamina and give a high lasting up to 16 hours. "We've heard it's stronger than anything comparable," said [a] detective senior sergeant... [Incidentally, d]rug rape is on the rise in N[Z], with agencies reporting an alarming trend of sexual predators spiking drinks... Auckland Sexual Abuse Help, said that during the past five months the centre had received about 20 calls from [people] who said they had been drugged and raped. Previously, it had received about one such call a year... It was possible that the increase was a result of predators becoming more aware of the practice, which is widespread overseas... Counselling services and police say that although [gals] out partying have been the main targets, [guys and] children... have also been victims. In one instance, a seven-year-old South Auckland boy was lured into a fast-food outlet, abducted and sexually abused after his fizzy drink was drugged... [T]races of the drugs often remained in the bloodstream for more than 48 hours after the victim regained consciousness and could be detected in a blood or urine test[, but]... by the time [many victims suspect they] had been drugged it [i]s too late to be tested... The most common drugs being used are sedatives, tranquillisers and antihistamines... While the most common method... of... [delivery] is spiked drinks, sexual abuse counsellors are now seeing cases of recreational drugs also laced with sedatives... A spokesperson for Auckland Rape Crisis... said the drugs were fast-acting and induced a blackout which could last six to 12 hours... Last weekend, one [victim] contacted the centre after sharing drinks with her workmates. The next morning [the victim] discovered bruising in her genital area and had "had the feeling that something awful had happened," but could remember nothing about the previous night. In another instance, a [victim] went to an inner-city nightclub, had a drink and woke up in a park with her pants around her ankles... "We tell [gals]: buy your own drinks and don't take your eyes off them..." [A] Detective Senior Sergeant... of Waitakere police said two [guys] were due in court next month in connection with the alleged drug rape of a [gal] after her drink was spiked at a West Auckland nightclub... Drug rape campaigners in A[US] and England have called for a ban on the drug Rohypnol, which is banned in America, but its local distributors, Roche Products, say they have not heard of it being used in rapes here.

...A new type of beer coaster that can tell people whether their drink has been spiked has been invented in Britain. But it may not make it into N[Z] bars and restaurants because our drug rape experts say the mat may be unreliable. The... cardboard... mats... [that] cost around 60p... each... change colour... on the sensitive areas... to show whether a drink contains the so-called drug rape substances rohypnol and temazepam.

...The controversial “date rape pill” Rohypnol will be replaced on the A[US]n market with a lower dose substitute containing a blue dye to make it detectable in drinks... [By the way, o]ne of the Mangere College students who was taken to hospital after sipping a soft drink spiked with Ecstasy has told of her shock at watching her friends fall ill one by one... The student, who will return to school tomorrow... and her friends had no idea that Ecstasy had been put in the bottle of Sprite... The 15-year-old who supplied the bag of powdered Ecstasy... did not take it herself...

Police are re-examining the South Auckland schoolgirl Ecstasy scare after admitting they made some wrong assumptions in their investigation. They said yesterday that new evidence about the purity of the Ecstasy had changed the focus of the inquiry, and raised the possibility the drug came direct from a manufacturer or importer... The N[Z] *Herald* revealed this week that the scientist who analysed the Ecstasy found it to be in an almost pure powder form not seen before in this country... [There was] no evidence of the binding agents used to hold tablets together... Police had assumed until now that the Ecstasy was in a powder form because someone had ground up tablets, and that it was a street-level supply.

...“We... are not going to stand aside and allow people to destroy the lives of many N[Z]ers...”... Ecstasy sellers will face life imprisonment if moves by the... Government to get tough on drug dealers become law. The... [PM] would push Parliament to reclassify Ecstasy from a class B drug to a class A... put[ting it] in the same class as heroin, cocaine and LSD... At present, Ecstasy users face a \$500 fine or [3] months’ jail or both. That would increase to \$1000 or [6] months jail... But... Youth Law Auckland... said changing Ecstasy’s legal status would have little impact on young users because they were ignorant about its class or any penalties it carried. “It comes as a surprise after they have been arrested and charged.”

...Promises of higher penalties for Ecstasy demonstrate inconsistencies in drug laws and cheap electioneering, claim opponents of the move... The Canterbury University... criminologist... believes sensational reports about the effects... have created an irrational fear... [The] lecturer... knew of no research which showed that Ecstasy was anywhere near as dangerous as heroin or more dangerous than morphine and opium[, which]... are almost identical to heroin, [yet]were class-B drugs. But[an] Auckland drug squad head... said yesterday... that amphetamines, of which Ecstasy was a derivative, were originally placed in a lower category because previously people knew little about them and they had only recently been abused on a large scale... [Complicating the issue is the fact that] MDA was already a class-A drug, MDMA was class B and MDEA was class C – yet all three were Ecstasy... “It is a complex definitional issue, which we realise we have to get a solution for which is quite clear to people,”... said... [the] Director of Public Health... [Strange as it may sound, if NZ] police believed a person possessed class-A drugs, or cannabis... then they could search premises, vehicles and people without a search warrant. However, they had to obtain a search warrant for Ecstasy and speed... New Scotland Yard police... said Ecstasy was a class-A drug in... Britain[, where it]... has been linked to at least 60 deaths... since the late 1980s.

...It was a clear, starry night at the biggest dance party of the year when the 19-year-old student decided to pop her first Ecstasy pill. [The student] paid \$80 to a drug dealer at The Gathering, swallowed the little white pill with the big E on it and waited for its effects to hit. The Nelson [student], who does not want to be identified, is one of an increasing number of people using designer drugs such as Ecstasy... [The student] was a friend of 32-year-old Dai Bowden, who died in a Nelson car park on March 19 from what is known as “drowning,”... The [student] had been planning to have her third Ecstasy pill the week Mr Bowden died but put those plans on hold. [The student] said his death, the third Ecstasy-related in this country, had sent a chill through Nelson’s burgeoning designer drugs scene but it would not stop people using the drug... Within about 30 minutes of taking the drug [the student had] felt a surge of confidence caused by the pill releasing a flood of serotonin... into her system. “I just started charging around feeling... confident and talking to people. You just feel really good.” [The student] also had an overwhelming feeling of love for everyone around her and found it difficult to stop smiling. “I[t]... makes you feel like the world is really good and people are really beautiful... [I]’m sure I freaked out a few people telling them how beautiful they were. You just want to touch people...” After about four hours, the effects started to wear off. [The student said it] suffered no obvious side-effects apart from feeling very tired and having a sore jaw from smiling too much.

...Even light weekend use of the party drug Ecstasy can harm intelligence, a new study suggests. German scientists report that weeks after partying, those who used Ecstasy along with marijuana performed worse on intelligence tests than people who smoked pot or took no drugs at all... “Because almost every Ecstasy user smokes cannabis, it was impossible to recruit a reasonable number of exclusive Ecstasy users,” the study said... Those who smoked marijuana performed no differently than those who were drug free... [■ NZ p]olice are preparing to crack down on the dance-drug Fantasy, after the Government yesterday outlawed its recreational use. The Ministry of Health, fearing users will die, has now classified the drug as a prescription medicine as a “stop-gap measure” ahead of expected changes to drug-abuse laws. The... listing under the Medicines Act means people possessing the drug without a prescription face maximum sentences of three months’ jail or a \$500 fine. Those selling or dealing in it unlicensed risk up to six months’ prison or a \$1000 fine. The ministry said Fantasy had never been registered here as a medicine and it would now be virtually impossible to get it legally. Police have been stockpiling intelligence about people using and obtaining Fantasy but have been frustrated by its being legal... It is sold in clubs and in gyms, as some body builders take it to promote “slow-wave sleep” during which a growth hormone is secreted... The depressant drug, which surfaced in the dance club scene last year, is commonly a colourless and odourless liquid sold in small bottles for about \$35 a “hit.” The so-called joy drug can induce euphoria and lift confidence but its dark side is linked with convulsions, coma and death... Auckland and Christchurch hospitals have reported an influx of people suffering its effects in recent weeks.

...Two... [guys], aged 23 and 27... who collapsed in a Te Awamutu bar are thought to be victims of the newly banned party drug Fantasy... Both were taken to Waikato Hospital and kept in intensive care overnight. One... was discharged yesterday and the other is in a stable condition... [P]olice had spoken to one of the [victims] but charges were unlikely... The Government outlawed its recreational use and supply... after Auckland and Christchurch hospitals reported 14 overdoses in a few weeks. Fantasy has been linked to several deaths overseas.

...A student has died and his girlfriend almost stopped breathing after taking the illegal drug Fantasy in what is thought to be the first fatal case involving the drug in N[Z] or AUS]. Shawn Jacob Brenner, 22, fell into a coma on Friday night and was declared brain-dead in Auckland Hospital at 3.30 pm on Saturday... Mr Brenner’s brain had been badly damaged from lack of oxygen... Mr Brenner, a University of Auckland engineering student, is the son of [an] Auckland gynaecologist... Police are investigating his death... in a house in Richmond Rd, Ponsonby... which comes after years of concern by the medical profession and police over the use of Fantasy – also known as ...GHB... GBH (grievous bodily harm) and Liquid Green. The drug... achieved notoriety in 1993 when it was identified as a drug which contributed to the death of Hollywood actor River Phoenix.

...Doctors who treated two club patrons taken unconscious to hospital want a legal party drug banned before it kills someone... [The two patrons] were admitted... to... Auckland Hospital intensive care... early on Saturday suffering breathing problems and seizures. They had collapsed in the Auckland nightclub Jones after taking One4b, a dietary supplement that is not illegal – its makers compare it to “the elixir of youth” – but it is a version of the banned drug Fantasy. In a strongly worded letter to the *Herald*, the doctors said they wanted the community warned of the dangers of the drug... described... as a “time-release version of GHB.” ...The clear liquid is packaged in 10ml and 5ml sachets, and a set of 15ml costs \$20... The dangers of taking One4b in conjunction with any other stimulants – alcohol, caffeine or other drugs – are marked on the sachet... Police are looking at charging whoever sold the substance to the [two patrons] with causing harm or injury. [A]Senior Sergeant... said the [patrons] said they had followed the instructions and had not taken alcohol or other drugs... [However,] the company that markets One4b says... the comatose state of the [two people] taken to hospital was a natural effect of the drug. It could produce a three-to-five-hour deep sleep from which users were “unwakeable.” “The problem may have been that no one knew what they had taken and when they were in the deep REM sleep some people thought they were gravely ill.” The... Minister of Health... was unavailable for comment last night.

...Thousands of sachets of... One4b were recalled last night as yet another overdose victim was taken to hospital in a coma... Medical experts fear someone will die from One4b, and the Ministry of Health yesterday issued a rare public warning urging people not to take it. The ministry also

ordered the distributor, Outerspace, to withdraw One4b from sale. In last night's case, Auckland Hospital staff were told the victim[, who is]... in his 20s... took several sachets of the drug at Piha Beach. Three other people were admitted to Auckland Hospital over the weekend, saying they had taken One4b... All were discharged within hours of arrival. In yesterday's *Herald*, intensive care specialists... urged that One4b be banned... Last night [one of the specialists said it] was pleased "and surprised" at the speed with which the Ministry of Health had acted.

...*'Speed' manufacture labelled 'new social evil'* Tough sentences have been imposed on an Auckland drug quartet by a judge wanting to set a deterrent against what the Crown termed a "new social evil." In the High Court at Auckland yesterday, [the ringleader], aged 54, was sent to prison for 10 years after admitting manufacturing, possessing and supplying methamphetamine... In what was claimed to be the biggest drug-making operation in [NZ history, the ringleader] and his accomplices used the Highway 61 motorcycle gang to distribute drugs made in secret laboratories in Avondale and New Lynn... [The prosecutor] for the Crown, said [the ringleader] had spent years trying to perfect manufacturing techniques[, and] had ordered a book from the U[S] in 1995 detailing how to make it. More than... \$1.3 million of drugs... were [thought to be involved, from which] more than... \$200,000 had been deposited in a trust account... [The ringleader had also paid cash] for cars, properties, travel and home renovations...

[First we heard about the] Customs officer... caught working for an international drug syndicate... [Now comes news that two] dealers walked free and another escaped serious charges after a CourierPost driver stole crucial evidence that had been mailed from regional police stations... to forensic experts at the... E[SR] in Auckland... A fourth suspect... is believed to have pleaded guilty before... f[indin]g out the evidence against him had been stolen... The 18-year-old [courier] admitted that... it... threw away most of the drugs, including cannabis, morphine sulphate and methamphetamine.

...**DRUG COOKS** caught making methamphetamine are reoffending on bail because of a two-year wait for trial. The Police Association says the delay is due to a huge backlog in scientific evidence tests... The backlog made a mockery of a supposed war on methamphetamine... The backlog is due to a big increase in speed and "P" lab discoveries – [including some found set up in motel rooms.] ESR has budgeted for 20 labs a year but this year the number is expected to top 200. Police... said ESR was recruiting qualified scientists and funding was not the reason for delays... It takes two years to train scientists and technicians but [ESR is] looking to fast-track more staff... Lab tests cost police close to \$300,000 in the last financial year... The government announced \$6.6 million over three years in this year's budget for two more police teams to clean up speed labs.

...*Acid trip finally up to speed...* [I]n 1964... Merry Pranksters drove their psychedelic bus across the U[S], introducing the world to LSD and gave a whole new meaning to the term "tripping." Now... it is all available on video. The journey, as all good hippies know, was exhaustively chronicled by... [the] book *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*, a landmark of 60s counter-culture literature. What the hippies may not have realised was that... [the Pranksters] also had film cameras running throughout and intended to release their chronicle of the trip as a movie. There was, however, a snag. The sound system was powered by the bus generator, which had the unfortunate effect of slowing down and accelerating the tape recorder in sync with the speed of the bus. For years [the film-makers] tried to match the sound with the pictures but could not crack it until the advent of digital technology. Now everything has been matched, re-edited and converted to video – hours and hours of acid-dropping, philosophical musing and pranks... The excuse for the trip was a visit to the World's Fair in New York and a launch party for... the author of *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*'s... second novel, *Sometimes A Great Notion*. But the true motivation was the journey itself. A 25-year-old bus was daubed in psychedelic paint and nicknamed "Furthur." The driver... hired was... the inspiration behind the central character in... *On The Road*, and the fuel that kept the Pranksters rolling was not petrol as much as LSD. The Pranksters crashed a Unitarian Church conference, partied with the Hell's Angels and, at one point, even staged [the author]'s death. The video tracks the first part of the journey, in which the bus gets painted, becomes stuck in Arizona's Big Muddy River, and cruises into Houston where one of the Pranksters dies as a result of a bad acid trip. All along we see [the person] at the wheel spouting a non-stop, barely intelligible monologue in which [it] talks a lot about gonads... Cultural historians are divided on whether the trip defined the 60s or whether the real landmark was [the written] account of it. The video will no doubt fuel that debate further.

...A middle-aged Auckland couple found... [\$0.5m] worth of LSD and cannabis in a rubbish bag on their doorstep... Drug squad detectives now fear for the... couple's safety and want the criminal world to know police are holding... the drugs. They believe the 12,500 LSD tabs... and 3kg of high-quality cannabis heads... were smuggled into N[Z] and delivered to the wrong address. They suspect the smugglers are gang-related and say the person who delivered the drugs to the wrong address could suffer retribution... [I]t was the first time [NZ police] had heard of such a large quantity of drugs being misdirected... The haul is equal to more than half the entire national LSD seizures last year. The tabs feature pictures of Bolivian revolutionary Che Guevara, cartoon character Bart Simpson, comic book hero Fat Freddy's Cat and two futuristic figures in an embrace... [Authorities admit that 'a drug which can be made in the kitchen sink is hard to stop.' The] drug was usually manufactured in liquid form in clandestine laboratories in California, then shipped to Europe, where it was sprayed on to perforated, patterned paper for international distribution.

...The International Narcotics Control Board, a U[N] organisation based in Vienna, has released a report that paints a grim picture of N[Z]'s increasing involvement in a global narcotics industry that is almost out of control... Ecstasy, LSD and amphetamine abuse in N[Z] is rising, along with a developing black market for... Ritalin[, which – much like the 'legalised hallucinogenic drug DXM (the drug of choice for Christchurch skinheads') –] is increasingly being abused for recreational purposes... N[Z] was among the leaders in[the] alarming international swing that had seen the use of the... drug... used to treat... ADHD... increase a "staggering" 100[%] in more than 50 countries... [(At the age of eight, my son... changed from a well-behaved little boy into a "whirling dervish"... We saw a specialist, who diagnosed a new drug – Ritalin... The... medication seemed to calm [him down. But my son] wasn't happy taking drugs every day and I often had to force him... At 15,[my son] rebelled and moved out to live with friends for three months. When [my son] returned, I learnt [it]d swapped Ritalin for marijuana. I couldn't stop him and one day [my son] confessed: 'Mum, I'm in trouble. Last night I had heroin and cocaine.' I immediately booked him into a drug rehabilitation centre. After three months, [my son] came out drug-free, but a few years later I was cleaning his room when I found a needle and spoon. We had a fierce argument and [my] son moved out again... Because of my experience with my son... my house became a kind of informal hostel for those no-one else wanted. I learnt that many of the drug addicts had been diagnosed with ADD or ADHD as kids. They'd been given prescribed drugs like Ritalin or Dexamphetamine, and used them as stepping stones to drugs like coke, speed and heroin. I did... research and found both Ritalin and Dexamphetamine are highly addictive... 'It's my fault [my son] is a drug addict,' I blamed myself. 'I made him take those pills.'). Illicit... drugs other than marijuana... were used by 9[% of NZ]ers aged 18 to 45 in the past year... LSD use was reported by 4[% , magic] mushrooms by 2[%] and Ecstasy by 1[%]... The increase was greater in Auckland... LSD use in the city increased from 2[% to 5%]. Nationally, the... use of cocaine, heroin, or homebake showed no increase over the past 12 months, remaining at 1[%] or less... The bust[rate] of... amphetamine lab[s in NZ] since 1995 matched the growth in illicit "speed" manufacturing in A[US], where a trend towards portable laboratories had emerged... The[NZ] Customs Service last year estimated that drug traffickers were smuggling more than half a million LSD tabs into the country[and] about 648,000 doses... of Ecstasy... each year.

...Customs is concerned at the amount of high-quality Ecstasy flooding into N[Z] from Asia and the difficulties of detecting the drug... [– although, during the past 15 months,] Customs has intercepted more than 12,000 tabs of Ecstasy... "LSD is the biggest concern in that it is odourless, colourless and tasteless, and the mail system is obviously a huge worry... [However,] MDMA is really no different – it's the same sort of situation." ...Customs is also concerned at the enormously varying potencies of Ecstasy, which ranged from tablets containing very high levels of MDMA to fake Ecstasy tablets... [Consequently,] people often had no idea what they were taking... Most supplies were from Europe, but A[US]n intelligence

showed that large amounts[now] came from... Indonesia and Thailand, where a clampdown on heroin production has turned drug barons to Ecstasy.

...A[US]n federal police have seized 23,000 Ecstasy tablets in Adelaide, estimated to be worth more than \$A1 million...

[The AUSn PM]’s bid to push the nation towards zero-tolerance crime policies as part of his “war on drugs” campaign will run against tough opposition... Two key states and the A[CT] have already rejected the plan ahead of the meeting [the PM] will hold tomorrow with the head of America’s F[B]I... The proposal, under which police would blanket targeted areas for even minor offences, was raised after talks with [NZ]’s PM]...

People have been taking drugs for no good medical reason since the dawn of history. For just as long, other people have raged against that. The official attitude to drugs can seem mysterious at first glance. For example, numerous drugs are illegal while tobacco... is distributed legally... Leaving a 13-year-old alone at home is an offence but poisoning infants by smoking in confined spaces is not. The full range of social thought is illustrated in the drug debate. At one end of the spectrum libertarians say... jails have been filled, police corrupted, civil liberties lost and [Last] World peasants propelled into... [illicit-drug] production, all to stop people doing something they should be free to do. They also say illegality creates high prices and addicted people become criminals to pay inflated prices... In the purest form they say the state has no role in protecting people from themselves. At the other end of the spectrum are the prohibitionists, who say that addictive drugs entrap human personalities so that arguments about human liberty are spurious. Prohibitionists say there are some human activities that are so socially destructive that even when the perpetrator is the victim they cannot be permitted. The... [NZ] Drug Foundation favours a middle path. If all drugs were legal, human greed would see new products developed with the intent of maximising addiction through the population. On the other hand... prohibition... of alcohol in the 1930s is proof enough... [that a] war on drugs is a hard one to win... Even in [NZ prisons 35%] of inmates test positive for drug use... Meanwhile, [300]... new assessments for alcohol and drug treatment are made monthly in the Auckland region alone. These people may represent just the tip of the iceberg... [While on the topic of drug control,] with the tacit approval of the Victorian Premier, [the]... youth welfare agency Open Family intends to open safe drug injection rooms for addicts in Sydney and Melbourne... in defiance of the law and in the hope that police will turn a blind eye...

How do you control drugs without creating new victims? Yesterday five state and territory leaders met in Melbourne at the drug summit called by Victoria’s Liberal Premier... in a bid to find some consensus on the question... [The Premier and ACT]’s Chief Minister... support trials of safe injecting rooms for registered addicts as a half-way house between the streets and rehabilitation. [The trials, which would have seen ‘addicts buying pharmaceutical heroin for about \$A15, was supported by state, territory and federal health ministers at their annual meeting’ last year.]To other powerful figures, most notably... [AUS]’s PM], the idea is abhorrent. [The PM]’s favoured policy, for the moment at least, is zero tolerance... But zero tolerance has its own fervent opponents... and drawbacks... [M]ore often than not [it] simply sweeps crime from one precinct into another. There is also objection which will ring alarm bells in N[Z]: the impact of zero tolerance on racial and ethnic groups whose members already experience high levels of arrest, and claim victimisation and harassment... “Let’s face it,” said[the] Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commissioner... “past and present law and order policies have created a high level of suspicion and resentment between indigenous A[US]ns and the police. Zero tolerance will only worsen this situation.” ...an Atsic-commissioned study by... the Institute of Criminology at Sydney University... says that because almost one in three Aborigines are taken into custody because of intoxication in public, and almost half of the A[US]ns arrested for other public order offences are indigenous, zero-tolerance policing will have a “dramatic and discriminatory effect” on Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. More arrests will mean more indigenous deaths in custody, and will undermine successful community policies providing alternatives to arrest, custody and criminalisation... The blow would fall even harder in the Northern Territory, where 81[%] of people sentenced to imprisonment are indigenous... And [the institute] warns of wider problems. “International experience strongly suggests zero-tolerance policing leads to an increase in the incidence of police misconduct, including violence...” Policymakers will need to be sure zero tolerance does not mean zero gain.

...safe injecting rooms... have been rejected by [AUS]’s PM], and in NSW, Queensland and Western A[US], blocking a Swiss-style trial proposed in the... [ACT, as drugs and crime are] thrust to the front of A[US]’s political agenda... [There are estimated to be] 15,000 addicts in A[US].

...Swiss voters headed to the polls overnight to decide on a sweeping proposal to legalise narcotics. The proposal is widely expected to fail.

...No one was admitting responsibility yesterday after a triple murderer stole into N[Z]... for two weeks... Embarrassed police and immigration officials had no idea the [53-year-old] who slaughtered three innocent people in a drug-entured “revenge” for his baby son’s accidental death in 1973 had come here, apparently under his own name. Alarm bells rang when his wife... arrived legally from A[US] a few days ago. Her visit triggered Interpol inquiries that tracked... “Mad Dog”... to... where... the... [wife] had joined him... [The guy] once considered among the most violent prisoners the A[US]n penal system had ever seen... was removed quietly by police from a Kawarau house on Friday night, after his entry to the country went unchallenged this month. The Scot... who spent most of his life in A[US], was to have appeared in court on immigration charges but agreed instead to be repatriated to Britain... [Incidentally, v]igilante groups in Dublin [have] put up posters of drug dealers who are to be shot...

Two or three nights a week, the menacing clatter of... police helicopter... blades wakes residents of the newly developed apartment blocks near the Grand Canal in... the Liberties area of... Dublin... That noise, together with the relentless wail of car alarms, is a reminder of the drugs-and-crime problem that is blighting one of Europe’s most successful cities... In prosperous commercial areas, every shop has security staff on the doors... After two decades of an escalating drugs problem, the tactics of Dublin’s anti-drug vigilante groups are uncompromising. In the Sundrive area late last year they put up posters listing names of drug dealers to be shot. As if this were not enough, there are savage internecine “turf wars” between dealers... [A]n alleged Ecstasy dealer, is accused of the torture and murder of [another] dealer... in... 1996. Similar levels of violence surrounded the operations of... a criminal... who tried to take over Dublin’s cannabis market... PJ “the Psycho” Judge... who was shot dead two years ago, was suspected of killing five rivals. [The body of one] of his suspected victims... was never found... William “Jock” Corbally... reportedly had his teeth pulled out, was beaten with a shovel before having his throat cut, then thrown into a lime pit in County Kildare. But dealers are willing to risk such violence for a share of a burgeoning market. Dublin has around 13,000 regular heroin users, up from 8000... two years ago. Officers based at the Garda headquarters, in Dublin’s Phoenix Park, believe that heroin is behind 80[%] of the city’s crime... The Irish Government has tried to deal with Dublin’s heroin problem. In the early 80s it used undercover officers whose efforts, accompanied by community action, were effective in tackling dealers... And after drug dealers killed journalist Veronica Guerin in 1996, a murder which prompted an international outcry, the Government poured more funds into anti-drugs measures, and set up a Criminal Assets Bureau to target major dealers. But as fast as the Garda act, so[me] new dealers move in... and... the estates built with short-sightedness in the 60s continue to be littered with syringes...

A half-full syringe lay next to her arm. Salonika’s coroner and police force insisted that... Eva Fotiadou... was another victim of the heroin scourge now sweeping Greece. But [Eva’s mum], who has been separated since 1995, would have none of it. [Mum] might have lived on the wrong side of town and money might have been scarce, but [mum] was sure her shy daughter, a marketing student... who had just turned 20... was not a drug addict... When [Eva’s body] was found... behind a derelict building outside the centre of Salonika... chunks of her long, raven-black hair were discovered entwined in the wheels of a cement-mixer behind her – incriminating evidence that later vanished inexplicably... [– and Eva] had been “hit across the forehead, hit across the eyes and bashed in the gums and teeth.” ...“When I saw that, I died myself. The whole village started to scream, ‘What wild dogs have done this? Murder. Murder’... [But the] police were totally indifferent. They hadn’t taken fingerprints or conducted toxicological tests, or even examined her clothes which showed clearly that [Eva] had been raped...” It was then that [mum] vowed to contest the

official view... Thus began her extraordinary journey into an underworld of prostitution, addiction, cruelty, corruption and death... [- not to mention doing things mum previously] would never have imagined. The worst was to sleep with the [guy] who is now accused of killing her daughter and have him confess. "I wanted to rip him to shreds, but the whole time the tape-recorder was rolling." On the basis of a thick dossier of evidence [mum] garnered with the help of a private detective, eight people... have been charged with gang rape and premeditated murder... Not for nothing is [mum] now being branded the new "Mother Courage." ...Greeks[even] say that in... [her] they have found a modern-day Demeter, the mother goddess who searched for her daughter Persephone after Hades carried her off to the Underworld... But [mum] says that now, more than at any other time... Mother Courage... is scared. The threatening telephone calls are increasing and [mum] fears for her life and that of her only other daughter. "The underworld, you know, is very powerful and it has no limits. Since none of the accused has been arrested, I'm obviously very afraid." There are[also] worries that, with police credibility on the line, the investigating magistrate will come up against even more obstacles... With growing numbers speaking of a police coverup, her quest for the truth has touched a nerve in a nation sickened by official incompetence and corruption. This year a score of police officers have been arrested for alleged involvement in protection, prostitution and drug rackets.

...It is a business to dream about. Its gross margins are 100[% and it] does not need to advertise... [B]ut... it pays tax at a rate of about 30[% which]... comes in the shape of seizures by customs officers or police, a cost the industry is easily able to absorb... The product is heroin, whose rampant growth as the drug of choice has been the subject of crisis talks by European ministers. The \$135 per kilo paid to farmers on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border for opium gum becomes up to \$48,000 when it reaches Britain as heroin... Ministers of 13 European countries have agreed on a paltry \$2.4m programme that has little chance of slowing what is becoming an epidemic... Government control over opium-producing areas is often non-existent and widespread corruption hinders law enforcement efforts... ['For most of the 1980s, USers - who constitute 5% of the world's population - were using 50% of its illegal drugs.'] This year the [US] Government will spend \$16 b... on the war against drugs - a 400[% increase since 1986. But... [in] US-dollar terms the total revenue of the international [illicit] drug business is put at \$300-\$500 b... At \$400 b... it would amount to 8[%] of total international trade... State Department officials suggest as much as 10[%] of world opium production could now be situated in South America - primarily Colombia. But the main source for European heroin remains the Golden Crescent of South-West Asia... Most heroin arrives in the [UK] by car or lorry, via the Balkan route. As a result, smugglers require few skills other than the ability to drive and are easily replaced if arrested... Previously investigators regarded a 10kg heroin find as a major triumph. Now recoveries of more than 100kg are not uncommon... Nevertheless, drug profits are so high that gangs are barely dented by seizures of the product on its way to the market. A [UN] drug control program... report conservatively estimates... at least 75[%] of international drug shipments would need to be intercepted in order to reduce substantially the profitability of the drug business... Turkish gangs who dominate British supplies are aggressively building their market. "There are more sales pitches and discount shopping than ever before," said... [a] Customs National Investigations Services... chief investigation officer... Special deals include giving heroin away as testers or as part of a "buy one, get one free" package or in return for introducing friends. In cities such as Bradford... dealers sell teenagers "pocket-money" wraps for £2... Once hooked, they are then sold bags for... £5 and £10... On the streets the average price of a gram of heroin has dropped from \$150 to \$120 as supply drives down price and widens the customer base... Heroin is still scarce... in... [NZ, where the] street price of imported "smack"... has remained constant for a few years at about \$1000 a gram - [or] 10 intravenous "tastes." ...Sources say... our geographical isolation, lack of land borders and limited drug scene puts us a decade behind drug crazes overseas.

...Life has become infinitely worse for the world's law-enforcement agencies in the 90 years since the first international conference on drugs was held in the opium-riddled Chinese city of Shanghai. The opium dens that spread across turn-of-the-century Europe have been replaced by a vast global industry with an [annual] turnover of hundreds of billions of dollars and countless thousands of lives. Yesterday, the latest annual report from the International Narcotics Control Board warned of even greater problems... For [NZ], the portents are grim. There are now sophisticated... drug... trade and communication [systems operating]... Such factors allow rapid access to new drugs and trends... in this country... and there is a huge and expanding drug production centre in nearby Asia. War and political turmoil have raised the stakes. While Pakistan has repeated its pledge to eliminate illegal poppy fields by 2000, war-torn Afghanistan appears to have filled the void created by the loss of Pakistani opium. The narcotics board fears that export stockpiles are mounting along the Tajik border in northern Afghanistan. New opium routes have been opened through the former Soviet republics of central Asia, which have also become alternative sources of the chemicals used in illicit production of heroin... The board warns of computer-made drugs... and the penetration of the Internet by the illegal narcotics industry. Dealers can now learn how to make drugs, then sell them, through the worldwide Web... and [have] created a new trend towards smoking [heroin among USers]... Elsewhere, purer and cheaper heroin has moved on to the market, causing a spate of overdose deaths in... [AUS. The AUS]n National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre says deaths from heroin overdose have been steadily rising since 1991, peaking last year at 600...

On Wednesday night alone, [AUSn] paramedics attended 17 heroin overdoses - two of them fatal - adding to a total that has increased steadily...

Toni Worth should have been celebrating at her sister's birthday party in Auckland... But [Toni] died on a sofa in suburban Melbourne... where... the... 25-year-old... had... injected heroin for the first and last time... one of hundreds of young people being killed by the cheap, pure heroin readily accessible in [AUS]n cities. Now customs officers here are warning that the tide could start washing up in [NZ] as enterprising dealers look to expand their operations... [AUSn overdose] deaths, up 40[%] since 1994, are predicted to top 800... this year. Street prices for heroin have dropped from \$A150 a hit to \$A30 in Sydney; in some rural areas it sells for \$A12 - less than cannabis - as Vietnamese gangs... have seized control of the trade... Toni's mother... says: "I'm sure [Toni] didn't suffer. I think [Toni] was having a good time in her last hours. But it was just such a senseless and careless waste of life." ...[] Yesterday... customs officials... made the biggest heroin haul ever in Germany, seizing more than 300kg of heroin at the Polish border. The... heroin, with a street value of \$US15 million... was found during a routine check of a Turkish truck...

A[US]'s largest-ever drug haul - \$A400 million... worth of high-grade heroin - went up in flames yesterday. The destruction by federal police of about 400kg of the narcotic follows its seizure in a pre-dawn raid on the [NSW] coast two months ago.

...Crime and violence on Sydney streets will jump as a result of A[US]'s record heroin haul, a welfare worker predicted yesterday... [A]nother immediate effect would be a downgrading in the purity of the drug. "The present supply is going to be cut and diluted with other substances to make it stretch further, which will make it more impure and much more dangerous to users."

...It started with the biggest heroin bust in [US] history - and ended nine years later at the doorstep of a short, balding Auckland business[person]n. The case against [the businessperson] has all the elements of a classic crime novel, with huge drug shipments, bugged phone calls, secret witnesses and millions of dollars in laundered cash. But even a crime novelist would have been proud to invent the name Mad Six, the nom-de-plume of the drug lord said to have drawn [the businessperson] into his inner circle. Yesterday the US failed in its five-month bid to have [the businessperson] extradited on charges of supplying and possessing heroin, which the 37-year-old denied. Now Hong Kong authorities want him extradited there. According to US legal and media files, [the businessperson]'s story started in earnest... at the port of Oakland, California. Among freight being unloaded from the ship President Truman that day were more than 2500 cartons of plastic bags. Working on a hunch, customs officials found that 59 of the cartons held a total of 486kg of heroin - the second-biggest shipment ever recorded. Officers seized some of the shipment and followed the rest to a warehouse in Hayward, California. Seventy officers packing guns and combat armour launched a five-week stakeout. Eventually they videotaped two members of a wealthy Taiwanese family looking for the missing drugs... Police busted the family and broke the story to the media as law officials leapt in to claim credit. The head of the Drug Enforcement Administration in San Francisco... said: "Law enforcement has ripped the heart out of a very significant organisation. We've cut the head of the dragon off." But officers soon suspected

that the dragon had merely lost its tail. They found that the family had received 12 shipments of furniture, plastic bags and porcelain from Asia since 1989 and uncovered evidence of up to \$500,000 at a time moving between bank accounts. They decided they had busted only the shipping “cell” of a drug cartel where most of the players knew little about the rest of the operation. [The businessperson]’s alleged role started to emerge in 1995, when police uncovered [a] New York heroin dealer... [who said it] was recruited into the drug trade by a childhood friend of an important Thai dealer... – whom authorities claim was actually [the businessperson]... Exactly how US authorities tracked [the businessperson to NZ] is unclear, but last December Auckland police were watching a [suspect] involved with a Queen St business who matched their description. An Auckland detective said [the businessperson] had lived in N[Z]... on a Thai passport... and... [had] used eight aliases while on the run. [The businessperson] was jailed – but not for long. Within days [it] had obtained cash from associates overseas and hired [a] top defence lawyer... who got [the businessperson] freed on what may be the strictest bail conditions ever seen in N[Z]. The businessperson had to live in a secret city apartment, pay \$100,000 for a security anklet and two guards to watch him 24 hours a day, was denied access to a cellphone, and had to meet a host of other conditions... [The] Judge... found that there would have been enough evidence to extradite [the businessperson] had the US properly authenticated its papers. The US had initially sought extradition on three heroin charges, but dropped the third for lack of evidence. [The] Judge... dismissed the first charge for various reasons and the second because only two of about 10 affidavits had been properly certified by a US government official. [The businessperson]’s future in N[Z] (which has a ‘largest heroin haul of 10kg’) is uncertain. It faces the Hong Kong extradition hearings in October, and the US may yet appeal yesterday’s decision.

...US heroin population[estimates], which have remained constant at... 500,000 for... 20 years, [are] being revised upward... The most encouraging sign [last year] had been a continued cut in coca production in the Andean countries... [But according to a] State Department report... the U[S] “faces another potentially serious drug threat from heroin,” which... South American drug barons... are trying to develop as... [they seek] to diversify from a saturated [US] cocaine market... It said a disturbing trend of multiple drug use suggested... more of America’s 2.1 million hardcore cocaine addicts were using heroin to cushion the ‘crash’ that follows the euphoria of crack... use... [The report also] had dire predictions on Russia, where it quoted... authorities as saying there were two million heroin addicts... Afghanistan[, whose]... crop was at an all-time high... and... Burma... remained the overwhelming opium producers, although unfavourable growing conditions in the Golden Triangle saw Burma’s crop fall by 16%.

...Helicopter gunships swoop in over the mountains and touch down in a jungle clearing, disgorging an elite team of Royal Thai Army drug enforcers armed with M16s and crop cutters... Just as one helicopter takes off another swoops in... The... [soldiers] are... on their latest mission to destroy the opium fields of the notoriously lawless Golden Triangle, bordering northern Thailand, Laos and Burma... Armed with satellite pictures supplied by the U[S], on-the-ground intelligence and information from spotter planes, the Army has just a few weeks to destroy the crops... before they can be harvested... The red-and-white opium poppies swaying in the gentle wind on the remote 1000m hillside plantation look innocent enough. But the heroin refined from the poppies is said to be the best in the world... “This is an ideal place to grow opium because it is cool and the soil is so good... There are four hill-tribe villages around here and we do not know which one planted this crop. They plant the poppies among vegetables to make them harder to spot and then deny planting opium...” ...Thailand’s Office of the Narcotics Control Board says... in 1984 there were... 55,000 rai of poppy fields. Now there are roughly 11,000... Each rai can produce 1.6kg of opium sap, worth up to \$US2700... – a fortune to the hill-tribe villagers who otherwise barely eke out an existence with subsistence farming... Hill-tribe planters are getting wise to the Army’s search-and-destroy missions... [– planting] crops in smaller and more remote spots[, or]... growing outside the cool season, using fertilisers and... sophisticated sprinkling systems... Village chiefs are also keen to tap into tourism and the money it brings by showing off their culture to foreign visitors... [But the] Government is determined to wipe out production altogether and has recently stepped up efforts... [In the last three months] 391,310g of heroin... have been seized and 970 people arrested.

...[the son] was just 17 years old when his father made the mistake that would change his and his family’s life forever. In 1991 [the father] was caught at Bangkok airport with 425 grams of heroin. [The father] began a 30-year sentence in Klong Prem, one of the world’s toughest prisons, also known as the Bangkok Hilton. To begin with, [the son] was bewildered and angry, but as the years went on [it] learned of his father’s secret pain, of the trauma [his father] still suffered from his time as a soldier in Vietnam... [A]n award-winning current affairs journalist and now associate director of news for TV3, lives with [the son]. They have a five-year-old child. [Three years ago the couple] began a desperate quest to save [the father] from dying in the Thai prison. At great personal risk they smuggled a still and video camera into the Thai jail to film an emotional meeting with... [the] poet and former prison officer. Their story is told in *In The Name Of The Father*, the *Inside NZ* documentary on TV3 at 8.30pm, Wednesday. Filming took place over the three years... [the couple] have been trying to get [the father] released. Most people thought it an impossible task. In Asia more people die in these prisons than ever see the light of freedom. Couple that with the fact that N[Z] is one of the only countries in the western world that does not have a prisoner transfer treaty (where prisoners are repatriated to serve their sentences at home). It doesn’t look good.

...What’s the matter with the press when they give hero status to Kiwi drug runners who get caught? After two other celebrated cases involving N[Z]ers, we now have... [a third] getting coverage on TV3... My heart bleeds... I feel no remorse for the [prisoner’s] family. To blame the Vietnam War for the trauma does not hold water as hundreds of Kiwis went and they have not followed this road.

...[of the 194 AUS]ns currently serving time in various jails throughout the world... 160 [were imprisoned]... for drug related offences. The highest lock-up rates being 17 in the US, followed by Thailand with 11...

[The AUSn] had been caught red handed... attempting to smuggle 24 bags of grade-four heroin out of Thailand... but the Thais beat a confession out of him anyway. And that was just the start of... [his] 12 years of suffering... [T]he arresting officer... [told him:] “Nobody... can help you. Forget your embassy! Forget about a lawyer!” ...[the officer] (known as Mad Dog) was true to his word. For the next month, [the AUSn] and his accomplice, rugby league player Paul Hayward, were questioned for 14 hours a day. They were charged under Article 37, which permitted execution by the military without trial. [Mad Dog] twice petitioned the... government to have [the AUSns] summarily shot, but after consideration, the [Thai PM] insisted that the case should go to trial. “Mad Dog was my first encounter with the Thai justice system... [Mad Dog would] hold guns to our heads... beat us, attach batteries to our nipples and genitals. One day [Mad Dog] just kept kicking me repeatedly under the table... hour after hour, until I couldn’t walk... [Mad Dog] told us we’d die or rot in a Thai prison, and... was pretty much right...” Several times Mad Dog convinced [them] that they were about to die. On one occasion... a caucasian... claiming to be from the [AUSn embassy was] brought in to see them. Instead of asking after their well-being, the [caucasian] sombrely informed them they were to be shot that day, and asked if they’d like a priest to visit. For 37 days the relentless physical and mental torture continued. By the end of it, [they were] prepared to sign anything put in front of... [them]. When] finally told they were to be taken to jail to await trial, they were simply relieved... the interrogation was over... until they heard the jeers of one of the guards who came to take them away. “Ha ha ha... You go monkey house.” Monkey house was Bumbub prison, a “rehabilitation jail” for drug users. On arrival, a blacksmith hammered heavy chains around... [their] feet. “I was in chains for three years... I’ve still got marks on my legs. But we were lucky. If you were unpopular with the guards, they’d bribe the blacksmith to smash a prisoner’s ankle...” Next, the new inmates were presented with what was to become their standard diet for the next 12 years – bowls of red, steamy rice crawling with maggots, plus a fish skeleton soaked in dirty water. [The AUSn] shared a cell with 30 prisoners. The stench of faeces from the open toilet in the corner made it difficult to breathe. Added to that was the threat of indiscriminate violence. “...Some of the guards believed that the only way to get through to a prisoner was

to beat him into submission or to death..." After a few weeks, [the pair] were told they were being transferred to Maha Chai prison – a place... Thai prisoners talk[ed] about in frightened tones. One of them... [described] a game... popular among the guards there. A prisoner would be placed in a tiny, spherical bamboo cage and kicked around the yard by the guards. After this, an elephant would be given the "ball" to play with, while the guards laughed at the screams of the terrified prisoner. Before long, the beast became bored with the game and would impatiently bring it to an end by stamping on the cage, crushing its occupant into a mangled heap of blood and bone. "Maha Chai really was a terrible prison... apart from anything else, it had the darkrooms." According to Thai officials, darkrooms – underground cells in which prisoners were confined without light for months at a time – no longer existed in the country's jails. But it was not long before [the AUSn] was accused of plotting an escape attempt and led into the depths of Building One... There, along with 20 other inmates, [the AUSn] was chained and flung into a tiny, stinking, cockroach-infested pit. The darkroom was [his] home for the next three months... Many prisoners died in the darkrooms. While [the AUSn] was incarcerated there, one Thai prisoner bludgeoned another to death with a sharpened rock, splattering every other occupant in the room with blood. "The [victim] was murdered at 10pm, and the guards didn't even open the door until four the next afternoon. By that time the stench was abominable. We were all vomiting constantly." The rice fed to darkroom prisoners was disgusting, but unless they ate, they died. The Thai inmates' solution to this dilemma was ingenious, but [also] unpalatable. One morning... [the AUSn] spied another prisoner scooping the rice out of his bowl and into his sarong... [then] lifted a loose board in a corner of the cell. [The AUSn] could just make out a teeming mass of cockroaches. The [prisoner] poured the rice into the throng of insects and watched them devour every grain... Then, one of the other prisoners... reached down and lifted a handful of the squirming bugs. Placing them in to a plastic bag, [the prisoner] crushed them with an empty can until they were pure pulp. Seeing his interest, the Thai offered [the AUSn] a portion of the mash. At first, [the AUSn] refused. But the Thai insisted, explaining that the reason so many foreigners died in the darkroom was that they wouldn't swallow this vital source of protein. Amazingly, [the AUSn's] worst experience in Maha Chai occurred outside his time in the darkroom. [The AUSn] was among a group of inmates caught playing dice in their cells. Gambling was forbidden, and each player was led up to the prison sewer tank, in which all the excrement from the prison was held before being drained away. The offenders were forced to climb in the tank and stand for... hours up to their necks in faeces... It was around this time that [the AUSn] took to heroin. Although a convicted smuggler, until... [being] sent to prison [the AUSn] had never used the drug himself. But in Maha Chai, the conditions were so soul-destroying that anything which could lift the all-pervading gloom, however temporarily, had to be worth trying. Nearly all the foreigners holed up in Thai prisons used heroin, and sometimes it was even sold to them by the guards... After three years in Maha Chai, [the two AUSns] were finally sentenced, receiving life and 30 year sentences respectively. After their conviction, they were moved again, this time to Bang Kwang jail... known by its inmates as "Big Tiger"... "By this time, I'd reached the point where I had to accept that this place was to be my home for years. A lot of foreigners kill themselves because they can't bear it. Suicide is an easy way out." [The AUSn] only seriously attempted suicide once... [by tying] one end of this sarong to a pipe above his head and the other end around his neck... but the sarong ripped and [the AUSn] went crashing to the floor. For the rest of his sentence, [the AUSn] tried to comfort himself with the knowledge that although... [his was] a serious crime, [the AUSn] had never become as brutal and heartless as his captors. "The objective of the Thai prison system is to make you completely subservient. In there you are worthless. Your life means nothing. But whatever you've done, I don't believe people should be treated like that..." Big Tiger was no better than Maha Chai. Nine thousand prisoners were squashed into its tiny cells, a hundred of them foreign nationals. They could sometimes count on receiving less severe treatment than the Thais, but the threat of beatings and murder was ever-present. On one occasion... guards repeatedly [dragged] a chained American up and down a stone staircase, smashing his head against every step until [the USer] was dead. When the US embassy came to collect the body, they were told [the deceased] had overdosed and fallen down the steps. Equally perilous was the constant risk of death from disease. For several months, [the AUSn] was laid out with hepatitis. "You could get every disease under the sun in there – typhoid, leprosy, cholera. There was hardly any medication. I remember one French guy... [whose screaming woke me." The AUSn] had lost count of the number of times [his sleep had been disturbed] by the bawling of sick, tortured or suicidal inmates. But this time it was different... As the night dragged on, the screeching grew louder and ever more inhuman. In response, [the AUSn] began screaming himself, imploring someone to come and investigate. Fortunately the duty guard... that night was friendly, and, after a brief search, led him into the cell next door. Inside was [the] young French prisoner, curled into a ball and wailing uncontrollably. So intense was his suffering that [the French prisoner] appeared to not even notice the people standing over him... [The AUSn] quickly discovered the source of his anguish. On the French[prisoner's] neck was a lump the size of an avocado – and whatever was inside, it appeared to be moving. Horrified, [the AUSn] rushed back to his cell to fetch... an American prisoner with first aid experience in the US army. While [the AUSn] and the guard held the French[prisoner] down, the USer] lanced the lump with a razor blade. Out of the wound oozed hundreds of tiny, wriggling worms... In the morning the French[prisoner] was taken to the prison hospital. According to the Thai doctors, a cockroach had burrowed into his neck and laid its eggs. The larvae were working their way up towards the brain when [the AUSn and USer] intervened... "I have dreams about it now. Despite everything, I'd never seen anyone suffer like... that." ...[the two AUSns] and the other inmates did their best to recreate some semblance of a normal existence... but inevitably those attempts were twisted by the reality of the conditions. The prisoners given the privilege of looking after the Bang Kwang pig farm developed a lucrative sideline prostituting their charges to inmates desperate for sex... [The AUSns] spent almost all the '80s in Bang Kwang... [They witnessed] the infamous riots in August 1985, when the army killed hundreds of prisoners... Finally, on Christmas Day, 1989, and without warning, [the AUSns were] released. "They just told me to get my things. It wasn't until I arrived back in [AUS] that I realised it was over." [But they found] it impossible to readjust to society... "I... get panic attacks. I don't know how to get into a conversation anymore. There are... plenty of days when I wish I'd died in there." ...Paul Hayward... died of a heroin overdose in 1992... [The other AUSn had given] up heroin when... still... [in prison after the AUSn] saw another prisoner – [who also was] a good friend – die after shooting up drugs contaminated with pig's entrails. The heroin had been smuggled in inside the pig, but the bags burst before they reached their destination. The prisoner... injected it anyway.

...The flight must have terrified her... As the flight attendant moved towards her down the aisle, Maria* breathed deeply, keeping her expression impassive. Was the stewardess looking at her strangely? [Maria] knew... attendants on the four-hour flight from Colombia to Miami were trained to notice passengers who seemed dazed or ill, or neglected to eat or use the bathroom. If [Maria] pressed on her stomach hard enough, Maria might feel the... heroin inside her, a latex-enclosed time-bomb. [Maria] knew if her mission were delayed as much as three hours, her gastrointestinal acids would dissolve the rubber and send the drug surging through her blood stream, triggering sweating, convulsions and death. Even if [Maria] made it safely off the plane, [Maria] could still be caught at customs. But perhaps a[US] jail would be better than the home [Maria] had left. Maria was a "mule" – cynical drug parlance for a human beast of burden whose cargo is cocaine or heroin. Last year, Miami International Airport rounded up 791 mules, 367 of them "swallowers". Many more made it through undetected, carrying an estimated three tonnes of drugs every week. Maria obviously hoped to be one of these and to start a new life on her own, with cash in her pockets and – so much more importantly – her independence. The fate of a drug mule rarely makes the news. Yet every day, [guys and gals] wretched enough to swallow half a kilo... of heroin or to endure hack surgery to hide drug parcels inside their bodies attempt to enter the U[S]. Though the dealers in... Colombia like to boast that "it takes balls to do this job", the preferred mule has none – [gals] are less likely to arouse suspicion. Many are poor mothers whose husbands have died or deserted them. Destitute and alone, with few options for survival, they... use various methods to conceal the contraband – in jacket linings, shaving-cream cans, even artificial limbs – but their bosses know that nothing beats the human stomach when it comes to hiding their deadly cargo. Maria's path

to the mule trail began years ago in the ghettos of Pereira... Maria remembers nothing of her father, who abandoned the family[, condemning]... his wife and five [kids] to life in a squalid two-room apartment in the midst of gang territory. Maria's older brother joined the "killer kids" who roam the streets as low-level security guards and hit[-guys] for the *narcotraficantes*... [Maria] dropped out of school at eight and helped her mother pick coffee beans... At 16, [Maria] met Reynaldo, a self-crowned ghetto king[, who] was 22 and... had earned notoriety in the neighbourhood by making two trips to New York with half a kilo of heroin in his stomach and returning each time with \$AUD15,000 – a few years' income earned in a weekend. For Maria, Reynaldo's arrogant, outlaw swagger was hard to resist and [Reynaldo], in turn, was attracted to her. After two years, though, the allure of a criminal boyfriend began to lose its gloss. Reynaldo could be terrifyingly violent and beat her every night... Crime offered an escape from both poverty and her boyfriend's brutality, so... Maria... contacted the neighbourhood mule recruiter. They're known as "loaders" and many slums in Colombia have one... The loader explained that [Maria] would have to swallow chalk-sized pellets made from the fingers of latex surgical gloves. Because the pellets have to be airtight – or they will expand in the stomach and burst – they are rock hard and agony on the throat. Maria was told to practise by swallowing grapes, olives or small sausages without chewing. The loader also put her on a special diet to ensure that her bowel movements would be regular. Once in Miami, Maria would excrete the drugs in a hotel room, clean them and hand them over to her contact. The loader provided her with an airline ticket and \$3000 in "vacation money" – enough carrying cash to allay suspicions of customs officials. Like most first-time mules, Maria's arrest record was clean, as was her new passport... The night before her flight... in a farmhouse in the desolate countryside, the loader brought out the first bowl of pellets, almost 30 of them, some wrapped in carbon paper. "To prevent detection by X-ray," the loader explained... Next to the bowl the loader placed dishes of butter and cooking oil to lubricate them. [Maria] was expected to swallow 60... Her painful trial would last all night... Maria kept gagging, forcing the... pellets... back up. The loader was angry... [15] was the minimum t[o]... provide a profit for the cartel. For that [Maria] would make \$4500, not the \$15,000... Reynaldo had earned. Maria was frantic[but] tried again. The eleventh pellet slid down. Painfully [Maria] accepted another. And another... Harrowing as it was, Maria was better prepared than many mules... A major Colombian cartel can reap up to \$120,000 in profits per half kilo of heroin, so it trains its couriers with a sophistication unknown among smaller, independent operations, where bottom-of-the-barrel mules rent out their stomach for as little as \$3000. Irrespective of the size of the enterprise, the bottom line is that humans are dispensable; they can die at any point in the process and the cartel just builds their loss into its marketing plan. Ward D at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami is devoted solely to mules. Its central feature is a bank of toilets in the middle of the stark room, where a customs agent has the unpleasant duty of monitoring the smugglers as they excrete the drugs. At New York's JFK International Airport, people suspected of ingesting drugs are asked to submit to an x-ray. If they refuse, they are taken out to special vans or a local hospital and kept under surveillance until they go to the toilet. On the plane, Maria must have considered the consequences of being caught. Loaders often tell mules they'll simply be deported. But the 15 pellets Maria carried weighed at least 28 grams, enough to bring an automatic [4 1/2]-year minimum sentence in a Florida state prison... For a young girl from Pereira on her first trip away from home, Miami International Airport must have been startling. As many as 4000 travellers arrive in an hour... [Maria] proceeded to customs, where "rovers", plain-clothes detectives trained to spot likely smugglers, mingled in the queue. The loader had briefed her on what questions officials may ask. [Maria] answered them all satisfactorily and was waved through. It may be profitable, but a drug mule's "career" will be short, probably only two years, before ending in prison or death. Low-level drug offenders make up 60[%] of the inmates in US jails, most of them non-violent, first-time offenders. Human Rights Watch has called this "cruelly excessive" punishment. But in America, where about 14,000 people are killed every year by drug crime, overdoses or drug-related illness, there's little sympathy for narcotics smugglers who wind up behind bars. And mules will keep arriving as long as [USers] keep consuming six tonnes of heroin and 60 tonnes of cocaine a year. "...As in all wars, the most heart-rending casualties are [gals] and children." Maria stayed in Miami until her money ran out, a little less than two months, then reluctantly returned to Pereria... Maria may have managed to evade America's sophisticated, multibillion-dollar anti-drug network, but... Reynaldo was furious that his girlfriend had dared to approach the cartel behind his back... [Maria]'d been home less than a week, when her lover hunted her down and stabbed her to death. *Names have been changed... • A[US]n customs officers have carried out 194 internal searches of suspected drug carriers in the past year. They found 18 people had concealed heroin, cocaine, cannabis or other drugs in their bodies... Under A[US]n law, a customs or police officer can perform an internal body search only if they have grounds to suspect someone is a drug carrier. Random or routine frisking or body searches are illegal.

...Six young Christchurch people are suing the police for up to \$1.5 million over an armed offenders squad raid the group says targeted the wrong house... [T]he High Court yesterday... heard that on September 7, 1995, the house, divided into two flats, was surrounded by police... carrying firearms... Police were seeking an armed robber with a history of violence and drug-related offending, after a tip-off indicating [the robber] was staying in one of the flats and had parked a stolen car out the back. [The lawyer for the young people] said two members of the group were pounced on by armed, masked police when they left their flat next door... A police dog barked aggressively next to their heads. The pair said they were... told that if they moved they would be shot... [T]he rest were ordered to leave the flat at gunpoint... The... [four] teenagers, and two... in their early 20s... claim human rights breaches – that they were unlawfully searched and detained – and that their property was unreasonably searched, that they were assaulted, and that police were trespassing... Police acknowledged that they handcuffed... and pointed firearms at them, but denied... the firearms were placed against... heads, or that they were searched or threatened... Police were given names and descriptions of the two [offenders] they were after... [but] had obtained a search warrant that covered the whole house and did not specify a flat, despite their knowing there were two flats.

...One of the beneficiaries of ACC's \$3 million and rising payout to drug-addicted police is a convicted heroin importer. [The former] undercover detective... had been receiving ACC payments for two years at \$600-\$700 a week – 80[%] of his former police wage... [T]he bill to the taxpayer could climb higher, with 25 former undercover detectives now preparing a \$5 million class action against the Crown. This includes [the addict] and some of the other... 12 former police[officers]... already getting compensation... The group had been forced to sue to make a stand after being ignored for years by the police... [The addict] believed the police, not ACC, should foot the bill because [the addict] became hooked during two years under cover. [The addict] was convicted of importing heroin in the mid-1980s and sentenced to 16 years jail. The term was cut to eight years on appeal, and [the addict] served 4 1/2... [H]is life since had been an uphill battle. These days [the addict] was "more or less" drug-free, and off hard drugs, but had been unable to get a private investigator's licence and his travel had been restricted.

...High on the catwalk The fashion industry insists it has cleaned up its act... But frightening tales keep emerging of young models abusing drugs... Like how Supermodel N's cocaine tab is now running between £2000 and £3000 a week. And how K won't get out of bed unless there's Bolly on the breakfast trolley. And how Super A has grown careless about being seen fixing heroin at photo sessions. But hey, don't worry, [Super A] shoots up between her toes, so the track marks won't show and spoil the picture... It's not surprising the fashion industry goes silent as the grave at the mere mention of models and drugs. It's still bruised from the public mauling – by all from [the US] President... downwards – for its promotion of "heroin chic," a trend for stick-thin zombies with dead eyes. Yet it continues to be strafed by real-life stories of death or near-death of its most beautiful and glamorous children as a result of drug abuse. The air resounds with the thud of fashion's finest falling off wagons, strung out by addiction to heroin, cocaine, amphetamines and alcohol, having lost friends, fortunes, advertising contracts and even their minds in the process.

...[researchers have discovered that cocaine – which 'is used as a local anaesthetic and to dilate the pupil of the eye (and, taken internally, blunts hunger') –]causes blood vessels in the brain to shut, making it look like Swiss cheese... [The researchers also] force-fed Ecstasy to squirrel monkeys [to find] that the drug destroys the brain stem... [and then found out that] poppers burst thousands of capillaries, resulting in cerebral Armageddon.

...Researchers say they found molecular abnormalities in the respiratory tracts of heavy smokers of... crack [(a 'derivative of cocaine which is less pure and, therefore cheaper – but is also more addictive')] that for the first time suggest... users are at increased risk of developing lung cancer... Crack cocaine smokers were [studied] if they had smoked one gram or more a week for nine months or longer. [In related news, 'the original lead singer of the Village People, the 1970s disco group that made fun of macho guys, has been arrested in Nevada on robbery and drug charges. The former lead singer, 45, of San Francisco, was arrested in his Flamingo Hilton room, where officers say they found about 45g of crack.']

...THE new drugs craze in the UK is called "foke", or fake coke. It costs £5... and has no effect at all, but those who are buying it are doing so purely for the "glamour" of chopping lines and sniffing them... [Incidentally, a]n English aristocrat... who had been quoted in 1984 as describing heroin as "evil"... "wicked["]... and... "I've always been against narcotics and always will be["]... was jailed for ten months in December 1993 for possession of heroin and cocaine. It emerged during the London trial that... [the] Marquess of Bristol... cost his family about £7 million during a 10-year period through his drug addiction[. However, the Marquess isn't the only Brit to squander a fortune on drugs. Another aristocrat admits: 'The first time I took a class A drug was cocaine. I was 14 years old. Amongst my friends cocaine was acceptable, but heroin was considered a no-no, so I started taking heroin. I learnt about my inheritance while I was in a drug rehabilitation centre. I certainly didn't plan to go out and spend 90% of it on drugs.']

...Paying through the nose for COCAINE Cocaine is the rich person's drug of choice. Chopped up with a credit card, snorted through a banknote, the white powder literally reeks of money. In Britain, cocaine is taken at show-business parties and by the young aristocrats who surround... the future king. It's snorted too, it seems, by top sportspeople including our own successful equestrian... So it's no wonder cocaine has taken on an aura of glamour in certain circles. [However, one] shocking and horrifying photo... is just about all it takes to smash the glamour myth. It is the most graphic evidence imaginable of the terrible damage cocaine can do. It shows [a] former *EastEnders* star... (26), who's had an addiction to cocaine for more than five years. During that time, [the actor]'s frequently spoken of her problem and her attempts to give up the drug – yet it has always reclaimed her. Last month, [the actor] attended the British Soap Awards. As [the actor] turned to make a typically cheeky gesture at photographers, [the actor] tipped her head back and the dreadful truth was revealed. Her nose, through which [the actor] has habitually snorted cocaine, appeared to have no septum – the membrane which separates the nostrils. Where there were two nostrils, there is now only one. Poignantly, photographs of [the actor] taken only a few years ago show a bright, vital and lovely young girl. But cocaine is a greedy consumer of youth and beauty. Since this photo was first published by Britain's *Daily Mail* newspaper, it has been turned into a poster and distributed to schools all over the UK... It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say cocaine has destroyed [the actor]'s life. At her very worst, in 1996, [the actor] blew about \$300,000 on the drug in a single year. Her erratic behaviour led to her losing her job on *EastEnders*... Last month, [her] family and friends finally convinced [the actor] that it needed help and [it] checked into rehab at the famed Priory Clinic. "Being on the TV really young and going clubbing a lot got me into trouble at such an early age," [the actor] says. "Drugs twist a person and, once they get their claws into you, it's tough to turn back." Still, [the actor] is hardly the first person to be seriously addicted to cocaine or to have it destroy her looks... [A]lso at a branch of the Priory Clinic at the moment – this time to be counselled for alcohol abuse... [– is a musician], who has now kicked his cocaine habit... Twenty-five years ago, [the] Rolling Stone... was waiting backstage before a performance at New York's Madison Square Garden when [the musician] noticed the tip of his nose had fallen off and [people] could see through the hole. Dumbfounded, [the musician] tried to stick it back on with tape. Eventually [the musician] had a plastic septum inserted... According to an estimate by British drugs research charity Action On Addiction... a staggering 50,000 children in Britain aged under 16 will use cocaine this year... In the US, cocaine is even more prevalent... [An AUSn] study released last November reported a six-fold increase in cocaine use in Sydney, with the price of one-hit caps... tumbling from \$80... three years ago... to \$50 last year... Here in N[Z], police don't identify cocaine as... causing... problems... The reality is cocaine is expensive, hard to come by and often bad quality when it's bought here.

...An American business[perso]n whose family control a billion-dollar banana empire has been thrown out of N[Z] for importing cocaine and cannabis. [The USer], aged 48, pleaded guilty to importing drugs, was fined \$12,500 and flew straight back to the U[S. After sentencing him]... in the High Court at Auckland, [the judge admitted to having] some misgivings about imposing only a fine. "We send to prison people who import drugs,"... But in [this] case the quantity of drugs was small... 11g of cocaine and 8g of cannabis... and was for his own use, [plus the USer] had no criminal record... If [the USer] had been a N[Zer, the judge] would have ordered him to undertake drug counselling, but rather than having him become a drain on our community, [the USer] should address his drug problem in the U[S. The USer]... was held in custody overnight, got bail from the High Court, and was still able to spend time fishing at [the prestigious] Huka Lodge near Taupo before his final court appearance... [His] arrest is expected to cause shockwaves in the Cincinnati community... [The USer], described in court as an "up-standing pillar of his community," is president of a chain of more than 200 convenience stores that sell ice cream and yoghurt[, and] was previously executive vice-president of a large Ohio bank... The Ohio-based... family... [who] like publicity only when giving money to charity... own Chiquita Bananas and donate millions of dollars to the Republican Party. They have entertained former... [US and French presidents]. Family investments include part-ownership of the Cincinnati Reds baseball team, an oil company, insurance, hotels, real estate, resorts and [the entertainment company] which makes TV shows such as *Melrose Place* and *Beverly Hills 90210*... The High Court was told that [his] wife and two children had no knowledge of his drug addiction until... [hi]s arrest... at the airport... A customs dog sniffed out the drugs on his body... [as the USer was] arriving with his family on a flight from A[US.

...Two NZers are in custody after police intercepted the biggest shipment of cocaine seized in A[US]. Yesterday's seizure of 500kg of Colombian cocaine came after an 18-month, multinational, multi-agency operation including satellite tracking of a yacht as it sailed from N[Z]. The value of the drugs was put as high as \$286 million... Yesterday's seizure was more than twice the size of the previous record haul of 225kg... in December...

PORTUGUESE police have seized 1400kg of cocaine – valued at \$473 million.

...Spanish police have seized... 10 tonnes of cocaine on a Russian-crewed ship 900km off the Canary Islands, the biggest haul of the drug by a European police force... [By the way, f]or 16 years, [an undercover agent] was the most successful informant [US] anti-drug authorities ever had. With a kind of streetwise quixotic brilliance [the agent] managed to persuade dealer after dealer across the country that [it] was one of them, luring them into major sales of cocaine or heroin while hidden surveillance cameras captured their every move. In a career that took him from coast to coast, [the agent] made it possible for federal officials to make... 400 arrests, seize 1.5 tonnes of cocaine and recover... \$US6 m... in assets... That golden period, for him and for the Drug Enforcement Administration, is now over, however. [The agent] has been discredited and dropped by the Government like a hot potato. No, [the agent] did not steal money, or deal drugs on the side, or play double agent. Rather than own up in court to a handful of misdemeanours unrelated to his activities as an informant, [the agent] lied about his past almost every time [it] took the witness stand in a drugs case and thereby jeopardised every strand of evidence [it] ever collected. Police records show that [the agent] was charged... with misdemeanours ranging from domestic assault (hitting the [perso]n who is now his wife) to forging a relative's signature on a loan application. Twice [the agent]... got himself arrested for soliciting prostitutes. And twice... [it] was accused by the Internal Revenue Service of cheating on his taxes. In the inflexible context of the [US] legal system, where lawyers eagerly jump on any irregularity by their adversaries to bolster their clients' cases, [the agent's] refusal to confess to his misdeeds has triggered a full-blown Government scandal. Did the DEA know [the agent] was lying on the witness stand, and, if so, why did it not try to stop him? Were taxes and prostitutes the only things th[e agent] lied about, or was there something inherently suspicious about his extraordinary ability to nail drug dealers in whichever city [the agent] set foot? Was it appropriate for the Government to pay him... \$US4 m... as his cut of the recovered assets and drugs? "What I worry [about] is that it is the tip of the iceberg," said... an

ethics professor at Santa Clara Law School... “How many other [lying agents] are there?” ...the Attorney-General, has pressed for an internal investigation and a number of prominent drugs cases are now being reopened and convictions thrown out... 12 defendants in Florida ha[ve ha]d their cases dismissed, followed by three others in South Carolina. Another 11 appeals have been lodged around the country and are yet to be heard.

...Old habits, like a taste for cocaine, are hard to kick – and none know that better than the unfortunate citizens of Colombia, who have recently learned that America’s passion for meddling in their affairs will shortly put them back on the front lines of the latest war on drugs. The news came three weeks ago, when[the US] President... paid a flying visit... and informed his Colombian counterpart... that the US would shortly be spending all of \$US1.3 billion... on a massive offensive aimed at ending the cocaine trade once and for all. And this time, [its President] promised, the US was really taking off the gloves. Squadrons of helicopters were on the way to spray the... coca crop with herbicides. And while US military advisers trained Colombian troops in search-and-destroy techniques, agricultural consultants in US Army uniforms would make the peasants see the wisdom of growing wholesome vegetables rather than coca. A compliant sort of chap, [Colombia’s] President... nodded and smiled, even giving [his US counterpart] a farewell embrace for the cameras before Air Force One climbed back into the skies. What else could [Colombia’s President] do but get with the programme? As a [guy] well versed in Colombia’s history, [its President must’ve] known there has never been any point in telling his domineering northern neighbour to mind its own business; even less in urging it to set its own house in order by reducing the demand for cocaine in [US] cities... As every Colombian schoolchild knows: in this part of the world, America gets what America wants. Meddling in Colombian affairs has been something of a passion among US leaders for... 100 years – certainly since President Teddy Roosevelt engineered a revolt in what was then Colombia’s northernmost province of Panama so... [Teddy] could build his famous canal. Back in Washington, however, a few voices have questioned the wisdom of such a massive spending spree... One of the most cogent is... a foreign policy analyst at the Cato Institute think-tank. “The last time the US put Colombia through this, it wasn’t pretty,” [the analyst] recalled. That was... 10 years ago, when Washington threatened to slap tariffs on Colombia’s exports unless the Bogota Government put the infamous drug cartels out of business. Colombia set out to do just that – and the cartels responded by declaring an unconditional war of their own. A car containing 500kg of dynamite exploded outside the national police academy... killed 80 people... [Over] 50 judges and journalists were murdered. A passenger jet was blown out of the sky in a terror attack that claimed 107 more lives. Meanwhile, state security forces were given free rein to protect Colombia’s access to the vital [US] export market. According to one estimate, a modest one, 5700 people were murdered in 1989 alone by the police, the military and officially sanctioned death squads. “There were no more good guys... Bloodshed and mayhem were endemic. And when the Medellin and Cali cartels were finally broken, drug warriors in this country and Colombia loudly proclaimed victory. They said: ‘The back of the drug trade has been broken!’ It wasn’t – it was just reorganising itself. But those victorious statements always get swallowed by the Orwellian memory hole whenever we set out to make the same mistakes all over again.” According to another think-tanker, [a] former Princeton Professor... the “victory” over the cartels actually worsened Colombia’s woes. Instead of just two gangs presiding over a relatively peaceful web of corruption, the trafficking industry is now so fragmented it is impossible for even the participants to know who controls what, or which faction just opened fire on the next. “And, in addition to cocaine, Colombian gangs are now producing opium, refining it and shipping that north as well. The leftist guerrillas are using cocaine to finance their operations, and the landowners’ vigilante groups are using it to fund their private war against the guerrillas. When the US pours all these additional dollars into what is a very chaotic situation, Colombia’s agony will grow... Nobody in their right mind can be happy about this.” Actually, that’s not quite true. The Lockheed Martin Corporation and Occidental Petroleum will be delighted to see the first US s[oldiers] heading south. Lockheed because it paid for and publicised the... poll that seems to have prodded the [US] Administration to open its purse – a poll that showed [USer]s held Democrats responsible for the rising incidence of drug use among [US] teenagers. Now, with most of that \$US1.3 billion destined for military operations and equipment, Lockheed will get a slice of the action. And Occidental? Well, the oil company’s main Colombian pipeline was blown up 79 times in 1998. Now US taxpayers will be footing the bill to keep the oil – and the profits – flowing. As for the supply of drugs reaching the US, cokeheads need not worry. In 1980, a gram of cocaine cost \$US120 in New York. Today, the same gram goes for \$US40. Some way to win a war.

...on February 24, at 3 am, 500 Colombian police officers, plus agents from the ...[US] DEA... raided several homes and arrested 19 Niche members. Anti-narcotics officials said the gang was using Internet connections and satellite phones to coordinate cocaine shipments from Colombia through half a dozen countries to the US and Europe. The gang’s take: \$US100 million... a year. The bust came just two days before the US fully “certified” Colombia as a partner in the war on drugs for the first time since 1995. Colombia’s relationship with the US soured during the [previous Colombian] presidency... whose campaign allegedly accepted \$US6 million from the notorious Cali cartel... [Nowadays,] drug seizures are up and Washington has earmarked [large amounts of money] for helicopters, weapons and other wares for Colombia’s drug war... But the drug war in Colombia has never been harder to fight. How else to explain the fact that Colombia is still the source of 80[%] of the world’s cocaine, an estimated 62[%] of the heroin seized in the US and more coca-leaf production than Peru and Bolivia combined? ...one reason... officials say... [is that with] the destruction of the Cali and Medellin cartels over the past five years... more than 100 new and elusive trafficking groups have emerged... [T]hese new groups... [are largely composed] of university-trained professionals... [who] are... savvier and much... more likely to carry laptop computers... than pistols... Rather than trying to control every aspect of the drug trade, as their predecessors did, the newcomers focus on specific facets of the trade and link up with other groups for a few shipments only. That makes relationships among traffickers extremely fluid and difficult to trace. And because they keep their money in offshore accounts, there are few traces of their presence in Colombia.

...Police in Colombia have captured a [person who] they describe as a major drug trafficker who set up huge cocaine-processing laboratories in eastern Colombia and ran his own private army... [The] alleged chieftain of the so-called Eastern Plains Cartel, is suspected of being involved in the killing of 11 officials, including members of the Chief Prosecutor’s Office and soldiers, in October... Dozens of Colombian [soldiers,] pilots and police have been killed on fumigation and anti-drug operations in guerilla territory. In the north, right-wing paramilitary forces patrol drug plantations and laboratories and allow drugs to flow through the Gulf of Uraba toward the US and Europe... In Southern Colombia, Marxist guerrillas protect coca fields and laboratories in exchange for a 10[%] tax on coca sales.

...Colombia... has decided to include income from illegal drugs in official calculations of its... GDP... [The] Finance Minister... said the move... “...doesn’t mean the[industry is] being validated or given some kind of blessing.” The calculation... [that] could increase... reported economic growth... by a full percentage point... [won’t] include the value of processed heroin and cocaine – ...estimate[d] at up to \$US7 billion a year.

...[the actor] could never have imagined [it] would one day become a sounding-board for everything that is wrong with the [US] criminal justice system. For a while, [it] was content to be hailed as one of the finest film actors of his generation: the precocious Oscar-winner (for *Chaplin*) and reliable stock player for every[top director]... But as his drug addictions have spiralled out of control and [the actor] has had to interrupt his shooting schedule to shuttle from courtroom to rehab clinic to jail cell and back again, survival has been his main concern. This week has been no exception, what with his arrest last Saturday on drugs charges in a hotel in Palm Springs. For much of the mid-90s [the actor] was so out of it that there are whole films [it] has no recollection of making. [The actor] has pleaded with judges to keep him out of prison to allow him to clean up, only to respond by skipping drug tests, dropping out of treatment programmes and failing to show any sign of overcoming his addiction. On one occasion [the actor] discharged himself from rehab by climbing through a window and hitch-hiking back to Malibu... Nobody looking at this record of misadventure, self-destructive behaviour and repeat violations of the law could argue that [the actor] has suffered some gross abuse of his civil rights. But his case has shed some light on a murky legal process. [A few] years ago, California passed some of the most draconian criminal justice

laws in the U[S], notably a so-called “three strikes” law that mandates a minimum sentence of 25 years for anyone convicted of three crimes in a row. Addicts who committed petty thefts to fuel their habits were put away in their tens of thousands – some had stolen no more than a slice of pizza – while some first-degree murderers qualified for parole after six to eight years. The attitude of the populist media was that drug addicts were scum. Race and class prejudice had more than a little to do with this attitude, since most addicts were Latinos or African Americans. [The actor] has hardly tasted the worst of the system, since [it] was offered just about every rehabilitation programme in the book. But... [h]is judicial travails have contributed to a changing tide in public opinion that increasingly believes prison criminalises addicts without addressing the root cause... Californians [have now] voted overwhelmingly for a ballot initiative that will keep almost all first- and second-time drug offenders out of jail and offer them court-ordered treatment programmes. The logic is seemingly impeccable: the state is wasting billions of dollars on prisons so drug addicts, who now make up 30[%] of the prison population, can be squeezed into more cells. Instead of spending \$US25,000... on each prisoner a year, the state could be spending just \$US4000... a person on rehab. The irony is that for all the public sympathy [the actor] might have generated for the plight of his fellow-addicts, [it] is hardly a poster-child for the effectiveness of treatment. That might help to explain why the battle over the drug treatment initiative (known as Proposition 36) attracted the attention of [a father], who stood full-square on the opposite side of the argument. [The father] gave up booze 11 years ago, but his son[’s]... problems with hard drugs two years ago fired his zeal. When [his son] failed to follow a rehab course, his father shopped him back to the courts in the belief that only the threat of jail would make him wise up. The strategy worked... [for the son (who, like is father, is also an actor), but hasn’t worked for the other actor – who, when it] was first locked up... was beaten so badly that [it] lost consciousness and woke “in a pool of my own blood.” [The actor] spent... much of the past year in one of California’s nastiest state prisons, an institution notorious for gladiator fights between inmates, orchestrated gang rapes and guards firing live ammunition at the prisoners. Just three months after his release [the actor] was arrested again with a stash of cocaine...

Of course, Freud... experimented with... cocaine, and so did many others... Drugs have generally been associated with New Age enthusiasms... The mushroom drugs used by the American Indians [and ‘Aztec Indians in religious ceremonies (Vikings chewed poisonous mushrooms before battle to gather courage or to drive themselves *berserk*’)] played an especially important part in the last two New Ages... It was rumored among Jungians that the great [psychologist] had secretly taken peyote [(‘a hallucinogenic drug prepared from a Mexican cactus of the genus *lophophora*’)] in the 1920s; and the same rumor was spread about D. H. Lawrence... [A] “karmic connection” between Jung’s peyote and the later discovery of LSD and its alarming effects... in Switzerland... [has been] suggested... In the 1960s LSD seemed like a major threat to official American culture – a dissolvent of officialdom. Some radicals talked of “turning on” a whole city by tampering with the municipal water supply... The... 1775-1805 period was a time when hallucinogenic drugs became a prominent fact in the intellectual life of England, famous cases being Coleridge and, later, de Quincey. One of the popular favorites in the treasuries of English verse in the [19]th century, Coleridge’s “Xanadu,” was popularly supposed to be drug-inspired.

Alice looked all round her... and... found a little bottle... with the words “DRINK ME” beautifully printed on it... It was all very well to say “drink me,” but the wise little Alice was not going to do *that* in a hurry. “No, I’ll look first... and see whether it’s marked ‘poison’ or not;”... However, this bottle was *not* marked “poison,” so Alice ventured to taste it and finding it very nice... finished it off... Soon her eye fell on a... very small cake, on which the words “EAT ME” were beautifully marked... Alice... ate... [T]hen her eye fell upon [another] little bottle... There was no label... but nevertheless... Alice... uncorked it and put it to her lips. “I know something interesting is sure to happen... whenever I eat or drink anything; so I’ll just see what this... does...” ...There was a large mushroom growing near her, about the same height as herself; and... sitting on... top with its arms folded, quietly smoking a long hookah, and taking not the smallest notice of her or of anything else... was... a... blue caterpillar... [After] a minute... the Caterpillar took the hookah out of its mouth... yawned... and shook itself. Then it got off the mushroom, and crawled away into the grass, merely remarking as it went, “One side will make you grow taller, and the other side will make you grow shorter.” - ALICE IN WONDERLAND

...one pill makes you tall and one pill makes you small and... the ones that mother gives you don’t do anything at all [so] go ask Alice... [for] some kind of mushroom...

The mushroom which is named *A. muscaria* – popularly ‘Fly agaric’ – has now been proved by... detailed examination of the Vedic hymns to have been the food of the gods. It is there named ‘soma’. That it is also ‘ambrosia’ and ‘nectar’ (both these words mean ‘immortal’), famous as food and drink of the Greek Olympian gods, had been shown some 12 years previously... October was the mushroom season. The effect of the *A. muscaria* taken without other intoxicants is to give the taker the most delightful hallucinations, if [the taker] is in a state of grace, but horrible nightmares otherwise... Why mushrooms were called ‘toad’s bread’ or ‘toadstools’ by mycophobes can readily be explained. When the toad is attacked or scared the warts on its back exude *bufonenin*, the same poison that is secreted in the white hallucinogenic warts of the *A. muscaria*. In ancient Greece the toad was the emblem of Argolis, the leading state of the Peloponnese. The capital city was Mycene (‘mushroom city’) said to have been built by the legendary king Phoroneus’s successor Perseus... who had found a mushroom growing on the site beside a spring of water. The toad was also the emblem of Tlaloc, the Mexican god of inspiration, and appears surrounded by mushrooms in an Aztec... painting of Tlalocan, his paradise.

In religion... *ecstasy*... signifies the state of being outside the body or transcending oneself, a condition, often excited and frenzied or blissful, known in varying forms to nearly all religions. Typical is the state of the *shaman* or inspired priest of preliterate societies... Ecstasy is also a feature of prophetic experience (eg... Samuel 10.1-16), in which the prophet receives messages from God... The ecstatic state is almost always temporary... Different religions offer different techniques for achieving ecstatic states: yoga (Hinduism)... orgiastic dancing (cult of Dionysos), and also flagellation, self-hypnosis, and deep-breathing. It can also be induced by drugs, as in the Peyote religion of Mexico... Some commentators see the excitement and frenzy of large crowds, for example at football matches, as a secular expression of ecstasy... Smoking as a means of prayer and of communion is widespread across North America. Some have derived it from the shaman’s sucking pipe, which is the source both of the inhalations that assisted ecstatic vision and the means of withdrawal of dangerous alien substances from the sufferer’s body.

By his own testimony, we know that Halley used opium... Halley... gave a discourse on his personal experience of the drug at a meeting of the Royal Society, and does not seem to have suffered much from the ‘amotivational syndrome’ sometimes associated with opium and other euphorics.

It has been said that opium has brought more relief to the world through its legal uses and more unhappiness through its illegal uses than anything else known to [humanity]... Opium is a mixture of chemicals called *alkaloids*. Chief among these are *morphine* and *codeine*... Morphine is a wondrous drug which has relieved the pain of countless millions of persons suffering from CANCER or other agonising diseases... [Ironically,] *heroin*... a very powerful narcotic... which... is derived from morphine... causes a... person [to suffer] much pain when deprived of [it]...

In Leeds, and throughout Britain, drugs are changing the nature of crime and creating a parasitic new economic sub-culture... In 1976 there were just five people registered as heroin users in West Yorkshire[, where unemployment]... is 14% and [most people live in] low income estates... Now

there are about 2000, but that almost certainly understates the real number... [This] helps to explain why robberies in West Yorkshire have risen... fourfold in ten years and burglaries have almost doubled... All those who see the problem first-hand blame one thing. "...if they're stealing to feed a habit then they steal... buy the drugs... take the drugs; 12 [to] 24 hours later they need more drugs, [so] they steal again... It's... not like stealing a television because you want one at home... it's... a consumable... you need to replace... day after day... and the more you take the more your habit escalates, and the more it escalates the more offending you need to do." ...An unpublished survey by West Yorkshire police suggests at least half [of] persistent shoplifters have a drugs problem... Serial crime has serial victims. "How many times have you been burgled?" "In the last year, 17 times." ...Throughout West Yorkshire police and traders complain ordinary people are effectively supporting the drugs economy, some even ordering cheap goods from the local drug addict, the ultimate discount retailer... In the last 10 years violent crime in West Yorkshire has risen by... 40%... The national figures are even worse... The victims of violent crime may... be those taking the drugs themselves. If bills are unpaid dealers are unforgiving. In the drug economy contracts have to be enforced and you can't go to court to do it... It's the early hours of the morning and... a local GP arrives in the custody suite of Wakefield Police Station... 5 years ago about 1-in-10 of the people [the GP] saw would be on drugs, the rest would be drunk or suffering some minor trauma. Now the vast majority of his work, up to 9 cases out of 10, involves drugs. Elsewhere in the country it's the same story... "This is a product, I think, of unemployment, of nowhere to go for these people. They often are poorly educated, they have no qualifications, they see no future, they have no money, they have nothing to protect, nothing that they can have taken away except their freedom... so they take something to make them feel better." With the drug economy so deeply embedded in the life of local communities, stopping the growth in drug crime is a daunting task. The police have traditionally tried to control the problem by stopping the supply of drugs by arresting the dealers. But... finding sufficient evidence to convict them is often well nigh impossible, even though everyone may know who they are... If the police find street dealers hard to catch, those further up the chain are even more elusive. Often they are so removed from the street trade they can seem like respectable citizens... The drugs trade is increasingly controlled by... shadowy figures who pose as legitimate business[people]... While the dealers may get clean away the custody suites are full of addicts... But few professionals... believe that... prison is an effective deterrent. "Prison has no effect whatsoever. We had someone last week in court who [claimed to be able to] get heroin in... prison more readily than [someone] could get it on the streets of Leeds... [S]ending them to prison... punishes them, it takes them out of society for a limited period, but at the end of that period they're going to come back out and without addressing the difficulties they're... going to reoffend." ...[some people have complained about local programmes that only 'enable their drug-addicted teenager to receive publicly-funded treatment if the teenager manages to be convicted of a crime and sent to jail', but] the current focus on punishment means there is no national programme to seize what may be the best chance to do something about drug crime – offering addicts help at the moment they're most likely to benefit... "...There are break points. Coming to a police station, being arrested, is still traumatic, and at that stage... a drug addict feels: 'Okay, I want to do something about it.' Unless we can give them immediate attention, unless we've got the network and structure to provide that support... then the system that we try and operate will fail." - PANORAMA

There are journalists, judges and academics who say that the... antidrug war... is pointless... We should cure drug addicts, they say, not prosecute them. But these exponents of legalization underestimate the profoundly disturbing effects of drugs on the brain-cell genes that program behaviour, and... they overestimate the effectiveness of treatment for drug addiction, for which no real cures are known, merely therapeutic methods that may or may not work. These people also underestimate the cost to... [the public and ignore evidence that wherever legalization] has been applied in the past... drug use [has increased] in proportion to its availability... Let's not forget what happened in the mid-nineteenth century, when the British forced the Chinese to legalize the opium traffic: 50 years later the drug had an iron grip on millions of Chinese.

...the... *Opium War*... between Britain and China (1839-42) and later (1856-60) Britain and France against China, [followed] China's attempt to prohibit the (illegal) importation of opium from British India into China, and Chinese restrictions on foreign trade. Defeat of the Chinese resulted in the ceding of Hong Kong to Britain and the opening of five 'treaty ports'...

In the war against Latin American drug dealers, American customs agents are armed with radar-reconnaissance planes, long-range pursuit aircraft, high-speed helicopters, assault rifles, and radar balloons that can scan hundreds of kilometres of border in good weather. But weather is capricious, the border more than 3000 kilometres long, and air-interdiction efforts costly – averaging over \$9 million a week in 1990. Can the battle be won?

PERU's air force [has] shot down a plane carrying missionaries... It thought the plane was carrying drug smugglers.

...American missionaries shot down by Peruvian Air Force jets over the Amazon jungle were on their way back to the U[S] overnight, taking with them the bodies of a mother and her baby killed in the incident. The US admitted yesterday that its own anti-drug surveillance plane had located the missionaries' aircraft for the Peruvian jets, saying they were mistaken for drug smugglers. The White House called the incident a "tragic accident," while an embassy official in Lima said the US had suspended such "interdiction" surveillance flights. Roni Bowers, aged 35, of the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania-based Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, and her 7-month-old daughter Charity were killed when the floatplane was riddled with bullets on Saturday and it ditched into the Amazon River about 200km from the Colombian border. Bowers' husband... and their son... escaped unhurt. The Michigan couple had worked in Peru since 1993. The pilot of the Cessna 185... also survived, but was hit by a bullet in the leg... The three survivors floated on the aircraft's pontoons for 30 minutes before villagers rescued them... [A] Peruvian Air Force colonel investigating the incident... described a hellish scene in which two or three light-attack planes swooped in, making no effort to communicate before opening fire and setting the Cessna ablaze. "It happened very fast,"... said... [the husband's] brother... who... sat in as [the colonel] relayed the harrowing account... "The planes flew by first, did some swooping, and then came in from behind and started shooting. At some point one of the bullets had gone through Roni's head, right into the baby's head, from behind. They died instantly, which was a blessing." The... US statement that it helped the Peruvians came after it had carefully avoided admitting any role in the incident for much of yesterday. "The U[S] is certainly upset by the fact that two American citizens lost their lives," [the US] President... said at the Summit of the Americas in Quebec, Canada. Military activity and drug trafficking are rife in the jungle area of northern Peru where the missionaries went down.

Peru will suspend all commercial operations by its Navy and Air Force to stem the use of military ships and aircraft in drug trafficking,[its] President... said yesterday. The decision, which takes effect next week, follows a string of drug hauls that confirmed widespread suspicions the security forces were involved in the illegal trade... Peru, like many Latin American countries, allows its armed forces to rent out ships and aircraft and hire out personnel for commercial purposes. The income helps support the Army, Navy and Air Force. In May the Peruvian Air Force arrested four officers, including one of [the President's] pilots, after 174kg of cocaine was found on a military plane... Two police[officers], including a former anti-narcotics agent, were among 25 members of a major Peruvian drug ring arrested last weekend. Despite these high-profile incidents, [the President] stressed his Government's efforts to combat drug trafficking. More cocaine has been confiscated in the last year – 41 tonnes – than in the whole of the 1980s... In the first six months of 1996, police... arrested 5883[drug] traffickers and consumers.

...at the Port of Miami... yesterday... [US] Customs agents... shovelled their way through a shipment of coffee beans and seized... 2700kg of... cocaine... [A]gents became suspicious while inspecting... the vessel Rengo. The ship had picked up cargo in Chile, Peru, Ecuador and Colombia...

Almost 3kg of heroin was discovered aboard [the Colombian President's] jet yesterday, just hours before [the President] was due to take off for an official visit to U[N] headquarters in New York... [The President], whose 1994 election campaign received millions of dollars from the Cali drug cartel, was stripped of his U[S] travel visa on July 11 because of what Washington described as his known ties to the narcotics trade. The travel restriction generally does not affect heads of state visiting U[N] headquarters, however, and a State Department spokes[person] confirmed last week that no limitations had been placed on [the Colombian President]'s movements during his four-day stay in New York.

...Nowadays, everyone professes a love of autonomy. But the term autonomy no longer means that we have a right to, and a responsibility for, our bodies, minds and selves. Instead, it means that we have "constitutional rights" the framers never dreamt of, such as the right to abortion, affirmative action, health care and physician-assisted suicide. Although the right to drugs, and to suicide... are two of the most basic human rights, few [USers] now support them... Because we have a free market in food, we can buy all the bacon, eggs and ice cream we want and can afford. If we had a free market in drugs, we could similarly buy all the barbiturates, chloral hydrate and morphine we wanted and could afford. We would then be free to die – easily, comfortable and surely – without any need for recourse to death doctors or violent means of suicide. Our drug control policies are emblematic of the principle that pharmacological self-determination is a form of mental illness ("substance abuse") and that free trade in plants and chemicals the government labels as "drugs" is inimical to the health of the body politic... We cannot come to grips with the issues associated with the use of legally forbidden (so-called recreational) drugs without also addressing the issue associated with the use of medically permitted (so-called prescription) drugs. To buy a chain saw, we do not need permission from a state-licensed tree-removal expert. It is enough that we know how to operate the instrument and assume responsibility for its use. By the same token, we do not need prescription laws... The person who does not know what drug [it] needs or wants could still consult a physician. That is all the self-protection a competent adult needs for dealing with drugs. After all, drugs are just one class among many dangerous artefacts in our environment. Fire, electricity, cars, household appliances and countless other products of human inventiveness are also dangerous... Failure to appreciate that, in a free society, the government's foremost duty is to protect individuals from others who might harm them – indeed, replacing it with the duty to protect individuals from harming themselves – makes the prospect of repealing our drug laws a mirage. This misranking of the proper function of the state... has undermined [the US] attachment to limited government... I doubt we shall be able or willing to re-embrace a free market in drugs until the drug war causes us a great deal more suffering and until we are willing to attribute that suffering to drug laws rather[than] to drugs.

...we need to reallocate the money the federal government spends on the war on drugs, which some estimates put at \$15 billion a year... [and others put at] roughly \$35 billion... Currently, two thirds of these funds are spent on criminal justice and interdiction, and only one third on treatment and prevention... But for thousands of [USers], prevention comes too late... We must significantly increase the number of treatment slots for those addicts who have made the decision to seek help or who have been ordered into treatment by courts... Studies have found that treatment is cost-effective and that those who are in treatment or who complete treatment are much less likely to commit crimes or engage in high-risk behaviour. They are also more likely to become productive members of society than their drug-using counterparts... Essentially, I am suggesting a federally funded managed care system for drug addicts... For every \$100 spent maintaining prisons, \$15 spent on treatment would do commensurate good... Maintenance for hard-core addicts would provide other compelling benefits to society. Most important: If addicts have legal access to drugs, they won't have to turn to crime to support their habits. And... drug dealers would be forced out of business.

...Curiously the mandatory penalties for crack[dealing and use in the US] are 100 times more severe than... for using powdered cocaine. That may be because crack is more dangerous but critics point out that blacks habitually use crack while whites use cocaine in powdered form. And some allege deliberate discrimination... [When BBC World News] looked into this in Georgia the Department of Correction produced an astonishing statistic. Out of 423... [people] serving life for drug offences, 419 were black... "It was pretty clear to those of us who deal regularly and professionally in the field of crime and punishment that there is discrimination by[US] law enforcement officials. That is to say, twice as many blacks go to prison for robbery as are arrested for robbery in comparison to whites... for the same crime; the same prior criminal record... I have little doubt... that the disproportionate number of blacks who are sentenced to death is a result of racial discrimination in our whole judicial process..." ...Last year saw the largest increase in prison population in [US] history – 1725 new convicts every week... Pleading guilty invites a mandatory minimum so most [accused] choose a jury trial which clogs up the courts and the[remand] jails. Time on remand used to be 20 days, now it's 140... "[Previously]... first-time offenders would have been given probation, [or]... sentences of less than a year. As it is now there are people who are doing 5, 10 or 15 years even as first-time offenders... Drugs provide the life-line... of the gangs – money. They're making so much money,[and] the size of the gangs is steadily growing... [that,] to be realistic, I see [the situation] getting much worse before it gets better..." ...School offers... ghetto children virtually the only chance they'll have of making something of their lives and yet education budgets have been cut at a time of vast spending on building more prisons... In... Georgia... the... [attorney-general] has responded to public concern about drugs by passing one of the most stringent drug laws in the country. Anyone convicted a second time of selling any quantity of an illicit drug can be charged under a state law that carries an automatic sentence of life imprisonment... "I[, your attorney-general,] can guarantee safe streets if you'll do one thing... [-] give me enough prison space and I'll give you safe streets. It's just that simple..." ..."...I[, a 19-year-old 2nd-offender given three life sentences for three counts of selling \$30 of crack to support my own habit, think sending] me to... a rehab would have been more appropriate..." ...In her first year in prison... [the 19-year-old passed her GCE equivalent and was] studying for a degree in business communications using a federal government grant. Recently the Republican Congress... abolished the grant and with it higher education in prison... leaving [her] only vocational training in domestic subjects and hairdressing. "[As your attorney-general] I don't think it's right for a prisoner to have the opportunity to gain a college education when many people on the street... who are keeping that prisoner in prison with their tax money... aren't getting it... [P]rison is for punishment. They should be... kept off the streets to protect the public..." ...If the prevailing attitude to crime and punishment is ever to change it is unlikely to be due to widespread concern about individual cases of injustice. What does worry [USers] is the huge expense of imprisonment... In the last fifteen years the number of elderly inmates has doubled and doubled again. "You're going to have the prison system filled with... tired... old... [people] who are not a danger to society [but] who become increasingly more expensive to keep and take care of. Locking people up for the rest of their lives... makes no economic sense..."

...In 1982, armed with... hundreds of billions of our... tax dollars, [the 40th US] President... reignited our 80-year-old "war on drugs." Here we are, 14 years after the beginning of this... protracted and expensive war, with many casualties and still no treaty signed... Uncle Sam is the world's fattest jailer... We imprison a higher percentage of our citizens than Russia did under communism, more than South Africa did under apartheid.

...About 1000 armed South African Muslims yesterday warned Cape Town's drug dealers to stop dealing or risk the same fate as [the] gang leader... who was burned alive on Sunday. Chanting... "Kill the merchants," supporters of the militant movement, People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (Pagad), paraded through the silent early morning streets of the mixed-race Silvertown district to the home of an alleged drug dealer. [They were w]atched by police in six armoured riot-control vehicles and a fleet of trucks... with a helicopter hovering overhead shining a spotlight...

Sporadic clashes broke out yesterday in Cape Town's impoverished, crime-infested areas... [as members] of... Pagad... roamed their neighbourhoods hunting for gang members, and there were numerous reports of shootings. Violence first broke out when gang members and vigilantes exchanged fire after a rally by Pagad. Police fired tear gas, stun grenades and rubber bullets in an attempt to break up the fight, but the two sides only dispersed after a clergy[person] pleaded with Pagad members to go to their prayers.

...[South Africa] is moving to quell rising violence in the townships outside Cape Town... between local drug lords and vigilante groups... The vast profits from drug dealing that put... the criminals... in luxury cars are now being spent on protection. Many of the drug dealers under constant fire have armour-plated their homes. Every week, stories of PAGAD's retribution dominate the headlines, forcing the army and police to stage regular displays of power, only with little effect. "...we know... many of the police are actually inexplicably linked to the drug trade." Admirable though their cause may be, there is a growing concern that PAGAD's methods are dangerously close to those of the gangsters they are trying to eliminate.

...Police yesterday arrested a leader of the Muslim vigilante group that has declared a holy war against Cape Town's drug-dealing gangs, charging him with sedition and a role in the murder of a drug baron.

...[In South Africa, the world's most crime-ridden country, the 54-year-old vigilante leader is safe and, therefore, powerful. The leader has two bodyguards and carries a 9mm pistol. But what makes him untouchable are the 40,000 people who have joined his group. Three years old, it is growing so fast that soon its members could out-number South Africa's 90,000 police. The regional court at Groblersdal, 300km from Johannesburg, is hearing claims that last year the leader and eleven members – all on \$NZ600 bail – spearheaded a 28-hour mob attack on eight people they suspected of burglary, two of whom died. There are at least 75 similar charges pending against members of the group at courts around the country. However, the group is bigger than the law and its leader, a member of the Northern Province Parliament, has cast himself as South Africa's hand of God. "I'm doing a job which God loves, for the poor people of South Africa, who are victims of police making a business out of crime and of the law, which is on the side of the criminals." His disciples – guys and gals of all ages and races – worship him. "Our leader cares about us and South Africa in a way that none of the politicians do, because our leader understands how to make life better for us by ending crime," says one. Latest to join the growing army of those disillusioned with the faltering criminal justice system is a shadowy formation called Die Vuis (Afrikaans for The Fist). Formed in the Cape Town area last month by a former police officer, Die Vuis already claims a membership of 7000, most of them white former police officers and soldiers. The organised crime unit's director said the group appeared to be "somewhat fanatical" and they were watching it like a hawk. The *Cape Argus* newspaper said the group had launched its anti-crime campaign by warning prostitutes in Cape Town's working-class northern suburbs "to stop operating or else." Prostitutes were quoted as saying that members of Die Vuis rode around "Mafia-style," clad in black and always armed, threatening them. Die Vuis' leader, who is facing a murder charge after shooting an alleged mugger, said his group is serious about fighting crime and drug-trafficking – but declined to detail his plans. The director of the centre for the study of crime at Rhodes University said the rise of vigilantism was an indication of "public frustration at what is seen to be major failure in the criminal justice system. But the problem with any crime vigilante group is that the principles of democracy become sacrificed for quick solutions. Paradoxically, they contribute to the crime problem because enormous police resources have to be invested in monitoring their activities." In further news from Africa,] Mauritanian police have seized 6.75 tonnes of heroin valued at \$235 million on a Danish-flagged container ship in sacks addressed to the Agriculture Ministry in military-ruled Gambia.

...[800g of] heroin... with a street value of about \$4 million was seized on Thursday after a raid on a Wellington address. The drug probably came from Asia... The bust was the biggest heroin haul in Wellington and the fourth-biggest haul in N[Z] in the past 20 years.

...Police seized \$4 million worth of heroin at a Wellington address this month – the biggest N[Z] haul in 20 years... [The haul confirms] that the drug is making a resurgence... THE packet of heroin was bought in a seedy corner of Manhattan's East Village... "the heroin capital of the city, if not the world"... and arrived at the swank Recency Hotel on Park Avenue that evening. When ambulance[officers] arrived in the early hours of the morning, one young rock star was dead and the life of another lay in ruins. [The death of] Jonathan Melvoin, a keyboard player with the band Smashing Pumpkins... and the arrest on possession charges of[the band's] drummer... have exposed the extent to which heroin has become the fashion drug among young New Yorkers – upstaging the deadly kudos of cocaine... [A spokesperson] for the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, says: "In music, film and fashion, heroin is being positioned as the drug of the '90s... It is being marketed to a new generation of young people who don't have the same history as people over the age of 30." ...A 1994 study by the National Institute of Drug Abuse showed nearly 90% of people over 35 believed it was dangerous to use heroin, compared with only half the respondents aged 12 to 17. The last wave of high-profile deaths from drug abuse was in the 1970s... At the time, few... knew of the problem... So severe has the problem of hard drug abuse come that it is believed some record companies require groups to be tested as a condition of their recording contracts. Smashing Pumpkins, whose latest record went to No 1 in the U[S] charts, had to cancel sellout concerts at Madison Square Garden. [The band immediately 'sacked their drummer.']The tragedy comes as the British film *Trainspotting* opens in the US. The film, which follows a group of Edinburgh drug addicts, has received widespread critical acclaim but has also been accused of glamorising heroin despite its uncompromising realism. [While the] magazine *Time Out New York* quotes one of the characters on the cover of its latest edition: "Take the best orgasm you ever had, multiply it by a thousand, and you're still nowhere near it", a]... *New York Post* columnist... accused the makers of... gross irresponsibility. More and more celebrities have been associated with heroin abuse in recent months. They include... the [actor that played the] title role of *Chaplin*, who was arrested last month for possession of heroin and crack[; the] Depeche Mode singer[, who was] charged after overdosing on cocaine and heroin on May 28[; and the]... lead singer with the up-and-coming band Blind Melon, [who] was found dead of a cocaine overdose last October, ironically while attempting to kick heroin.

...Drugs in films might date back to the 1936 original *Just Say No* flick *Reefer Madness*, through much LSD-fried unwatchables of the mid-'60s to the early '70s, to the coke-frenzied likes of *Scarface*... in the early '80s and beyond. But... for drugs in movies these days, read: heroin. Unless it involves an Afro-American neighbourhood, then substitute: crack cocaine... *Plup Fiction* tells [the audience]: "Coke is dead as... dead. Heroin is coming back in a big way." ...*Trainspotting*... would spectacularly fail the big-screen equivalent of a urine test from the first reel.

...Heroin is fast overtaking amphetamines as Perth's most popular recreational drug with teenagers, according to the Alcohol and Drug Authority and city youth agencies... "It's no longer the coolest thing to be connected with speed... There's a sense that heroin is seen as the next challenge, breaking the next set of adult boundaries." The authority revealed that 84 deaths in Western A[US] over the past 18 months were linked to heroin. There had been a 24[%] increase in the number of heroin addicts seeking detoxification, bringing the number of people on the methadone programme to more than 1000.

...A new report... pushes for easier access to methadone treatment[, joining] a growing call across the country... The report, written by... the National Centre for Treatment Development, suggests [GPs] directly prescribe methadone. This will remove often lengthy waiting lists for assessment and treatment at specialist clinics... The Ministry of Health will call for submissions over the next month before giving policy advice to the Government... In the past 18 months, almost 70 [GPs] in Auckland and Northland have been trained to directly manage methadone patients... But the Auckland Regional Alcohol and Drug Service says such a bold move would merely welcome widespread abuse and failure... "All GPs will do is prescribe and every month people will go back for their prescription... In N[SW] there are about 8000 people on methadone and it's quite out of control. Everybody is prescribing and people who didn't even have a methadone habit have now got one... [We're] very interested in making more people get methadone, but that's not a safe way." ...The service's regional manager... says addicts going onto methadone first need the help of a specialist clinic to get stabilised. This can take from six months to a year... But... the Ministry of Health... assessment of the Victorian system is that specialist clinics are often not needed. [Furthermore, many] people are put off by specialist clinics and avoid getting much-needed help, [the assessment's author] says... "People seem to go for help if they can get methadone from GPs rather than congregate in a specialist clinic. GP surgeries are more anonymous, more private and more normal to having a major health problem." ...At a rough estimate there are... 13,500 to... 33,000 opium-based drug-users in N[Z], while only about 2500 are on methadone treatment... Not all addicts want help, but probably up to 6000 do... North Health... says about 900 people in... Auckland and Northland... are in methadone programmes to stabilise their addictions. Based on

population guidelines, however, that number should be 1500 people, but the limited Government money does not allow for that... [A spokesperson] from the Methadone Consumers' Committee says methadone is often the only thing to pull people's lives together... "A lot of us have good jobs and families. All we are saying is, let us help them by giving us methadone. It means people don't have to rob houses or work as prostitutes [– or 'force their 8-year-old boy to sell himself – to support their] habit. Isn't that a good thing?" ...the cost of methadone [is] \$4400 per patient annually.

...["Have a good look at me," the mother tells her teenage daughter, who it suspects may be smoking dope. The mother was just 14 or 15 when it started popping Valium and smoking dope. Her life became ever more fixed on drugs and securing the likes of heroin, home-bake and prescription pills. "You name it, I've been on it. It's like a best friend – that's what my heroin used to be like to me." And at times the mother resorted to crime and prostitution to pay for the comfort the friend brought. What broke the cycle was the methadone programme and what allowed her to get immediate treatment was being pregnant with her youngest child. Pregnancy is one of two conditions to get priority, the other being people who are HIV-positive. Replacing opiates with methadone can reduce stress on the unborn. While the opiates can cause highs and lows for the baby as well as the mother, the methadone smooths the process, reducing the chance of miscarriage or growth retardation." Her baby, now a toddler, was fine. "Methadone really changed my life – I don't know where I'd be today if I wasn't on it – probably still using hard drugs." Now in her thirties, the mother wants a career and to eventually come off the methadone.'

... 'There's been a great controversy in past decades over the use of methadone as a less deleterious substitute for heroin. It's been found that the use of methadone during pregnancy leads to withdrawal symptoms in infants that are believed by some experts to be more severe than those resulting from heroin.'

... 'A Torbay resident's death at the Taupo police station from a drug overdose is a warning of the dangers of drugs, says the Taupo coroner. Clifton Fane Oxborough died after ingesting methadone, a synthetic drug used for pain relief or for stabilising drug addicts. Witnesses told police Mr Oxborough had been drinking before his arrival at a massage parlour in a sleepy state. Within a few hours Mr Oxborough had lost consciousness and staff and clients carried him out of the club, left him alone at the bottom of a flight of stairs and called the police, who took him to the Taupo police station, but Mr Oxborough died before an ambulance officer arrived. Mr Oxborough's reaction to the drug was exacerbated because the 24-year-old labourer had no food in his stomach and was probably tired after working all day. There was no evidence of any history of drug use, and there was no reliable evidence of when, where or how the methadone was ingested. However, a doctor said Mr Oxborough would have to have drunk methadone, which was usually inhaled, for it to reach the quantities found in his stomach. A Taupo resident has already admitted a charge of supplying and offering to supply methadone to Mr Oxborough and was sentenced to two years in prison.' ■] The Corrections Department has begun a drugs swoop at Mt Eden Prison. The department's communications adviser... confirmed that... drug dog team... searches would continue for the rest of the week as part of the department's policy to crack down on drug use at penal institutions. Statistics show about 70[%] of inmates use or have used drugs[, which]... were usually smuggled in by visitors, although on occasion packages had been hurled over the prison wall... [Y]esterday's search uncovered some cannabis.

... Customs officers at the International Mail Centre in Auckland have intercepted nearly 6000 LSD "tickets" four times over the past 10 days. The drugs came in mail from A[US], England and Holland... A customs drug dog led officers to one of the packages... Small quantities of methamphetamine and hashish were also found. Several people around the country have been charged in relation to the seizures after police drug squad officers and customs investigators made controlled deliveries of the narcotics... [to] addresses in Auckland, Hamilton and Wellington.

... An 11-year-old boy excluded from his school after being branded a drugs peddler has been cleared. Detailed forensic tests have shown the white powder the youngster was sharing with friends at Thornaby Village Primary School on Teesside was not amphetamine sulphate but sherbet. Now the angry parents of the unnamed boy are considering legal action against the police and the local education authority over the mistake, which arose after teachers saw him passing around white powder in tin foil. The family's solicitor... said the boy had told teaching staff it was sherbet.

... Herbal Ecstasy is back on the market after a short-lived ban by the Ministry of Health but is no longer allowed to be advertised as promising sensual euphoria. [The] ministry... said... that the product had been tested and found to be harmless. It contained a combination of herbal material containing stimulants... notably, caffeine. But... the price of \$39.95 for 10 tablets was steep – especially as a cup of coffee w[as]... more stimulating.

... A Life Education Trust officer... said the Nature's Kingdom promotion of herbal ecstasy in the teenage magazine *Rip It Up* was a gateway... [that] could entice teenagers to take... harder drugs. The... advertisement claimed the herbal version provided the world's only "organic ecstasy experience." ...the tablets would deliver the sensation of "euphoria" with no side effects... "We're against drugs,"... said... [a] Nature's Kingdom spokes[person, who added that]... more than 10 million packets had been sold worldwide... The... tablets [are] made of nine "botanical ingredients,"...

['IMMIGRANTS are being targeted in a war against a new drug. Khat – pronounced kot – is a narcotic plant commonly used in Somalia and other East African nations. But it's a class C illegal drug in NZ and customs authorities are warning immigrant communities they risk prosecution if the shipments don't stop. The NZ customs service's drugs and prohibited goods investigations manager said the plant, which produces a high that makes people cheerful and heightens the senses, was being sent here through the mail. A fist-sized package is worth about \$50. Most of the khat stopped by customs was destined for Auckland, Hamilton and Christchurch. The manager said many immigrants didn't know khat was illegal, so customs was working to spread the word.'

... [the Auckland] hardly fits the stereotypical image of a drug supplier, but... feels like one because of what grows in her garden. Outside the back door of her Avondale home stands a khat tree – known scientifically as *Catha edulis* but better known to some as a source of a hallucinogenic drug. Properties of the tree have come under the scrutiny of the law – possessing its leaves is outlawed under the Misuse of Drugs Act – with the arrival of Somali immigrants who use it as a common social stimulant. They chew the tips of the leaves or brew leaves into a tea to get intoxicated. [The Avondale resident has] had regular contact lately with a couple of Somali boys who had noticed the tree from the footpath. The boys came at least once a month to collect the tips of the leaves for what, they explained to her, were religious or ritual purposes. [The] retired dancer... had let the boys take the leaves but became concerned two weeks ago when other Somalis arrived and stripped the tree of its leaves... With the latest publicity, though, [the dancer] decided to cut down the tree... [as per] police advice... "I'm very indignant to think I'm a de facto drug supplier and we don't want that sort of person hanging around here." [The dancer] bought the tree five years ago for \$1.95 from a local garden centre "because it was on special,"... Among all the fuss, [the dancer] has a tiny secret: "I chewed one of the leaves once but it didn't have an effect on me[, although] I didn't want to be flying high as a kite." - 1996

[The NZ] *Herald* foreign editor... reports on the... [p]roblem that drives Taiwanese b-nutty... [The merchant] makes a good living for her extended family of four children, her husband and her in-laws by selling betel nuts from a small cubicle in the Shilin district of northern Taipei. Her husband describes the betel-nut store as a supplementary source of income but the figures tell a different story. [The husband] makes 30,000 New Taiwan dollars a month (\$[NZ]1500) as a driver for a private company. The betel-nut shop returns \$NT5000... a day, tax-free. However, the... family's nice little earner may soon be hit by taxes and a Government publicity campaign against betel nuts. The Government has decided to try to break the Taiwanese people of a habit which it blames for undermining the social fabric by encouraging licentiousness, [and for] causing... environmental catastrophes... The Premier... has ordered officials to find a solution and among the options they are considering is the regulation and taxation of the betel nut-trade. So far the Government is losing the battle to discourage betel-nut chewing... Betel nuts used to be known as the traditional chewing gum of the native Taiwanese aborigines and of working class people like truck drivers, but... [now their c]onsumption is expanding across age, class and ethnic barriers... "In the old days only old people would chew betel nuts but now the tendency is that even junior

high school... and elementary school students chew them, too. Chewing betel nuts is a unique cultural phenomenon in our society. It has become a necessity like smoking. You get addicted.” With the growing popularity of the nuts comes the social... problems that the Government is so worried about. Competition among sellers is so tough that some are using scantily-clad teenage girls to attract customers and there is a real concern that this may lead some into prostitution. The girls can make \$NT50,000 a month compared to a graduate just out of university who gets \$NT28,000 to \$NT30,000... There is also growing evidence to link betel nuts to cancer of the mouth, the death rate from which is four times higher than in Japan and 2.6 times higher than in the US. [80%] of those dying from mouth cancer in Taiwan are betel-nut chewers. Then there are [the] environmental problems. Chewers make a disgusting mess when they spit blood-red juice on the pavement. But there is an even more serious environmental problem... Taiwan is a small island with a narrow coastal plain and high mountains in the middle. “If you want to raise b-nuts you have to cut down many native trees and plant b-nut trees on the slopes,”... a senior legislator... says. “...b-nut trees have very short roots and... won’t hold the soil very firmly. So when you have heavy rainstorms, it seeps off the soil and damages the land, sometimes causing serious disasters to the coastal plain area.” Betel-nut trees were blamed for much of the damage when Typhoon Herb struck... last August... Despite the gravity of the allegations raised against betel nuts, [the merchant]’s husband is unfazed... While [talking, his wife] and her mother-in-law sit behind him preparing the betel nuts for sale by slitting them open with sharp knives and packing them with a red lime paste... Meanwhile, [the]... father-in-law, his teeth as black as coal from a lifetime of chewing the nuts, sits next to the cubicle and hops up every few minutes to sell a packet at \$NT100 for 20. The[y]... are a mild stimulant with a taste like aniseed. If you are unused to them, they will make you lightheaded... Despite the determination of the Government to clamp down, [the merchant]’s husband is confident that betel-nut chewing is so deeply ingrained in the culture of Taiwan that it will continue to flourish. Like the stains on his father’s teeth, it is here to stay... [In local news, t]he Health Ministry is reserving judgment on a “mystical, magical journey in a pill” about to go on sale. The product... is being launched by Nature’s Kingdom, the Auckland-based distributor of Herbal Ecstasy 2... [The company] said Magic Mushrooms were a dietary supplement and had nothing to do with the hallucinogenic class A drug of the same name.

...[‘Herbal Ecstasy cigarettes are being sold in AUS.’ Incidentally, a] new designer drug often passed off as ecstasy has killed six South A[US]ns in 15 months... It is paramethoxyamphetamine, known as PMA, similar in effects and appearance to ecstasy but made with different chemicals. Its most recent victim was Carolyn Webb, aged 26, who took a quantity at a New Year’s Eve party and died the next day. Her death prompted the South A[US]n coroner... to hold a press conference yesterday with the director of Drug and Alcohol Services... to warn of the drug. “Although [PMA] is similar to ecstasy in its effect, it is much more lethal,”... said... [the coroner, who added] that it was made in S[A] by people who might not even know they were making PMA instead of ecstasy. “They may think they are making ecstasy, but they have no way of verifying this... The user does not know if they are getting one drug or the other and the dealer has the same lack of knowledge.”

...[NSW police] with drug and alcohol problems will escape prosecution and disciplinary action if they come forward during a six-month amnesty and seek rehabilitation, according to a memo circulated to officers... “Those who do not seek help, however, and subsequently test positive, must expect to be treated more formally.” The circular said random drug and alcohol testing would begin in September.

...Police across the Tasman are studying the link between drugs and road deaths... [after] a national road safety summit in Sydney[predicted] that drugs will soon overtake alcohol as a major road killer... “In a study of dead drivers about a quarter of them have alcohol in their systems,[and] about a quarter of them have drugs other than alcohol in their systems... They know that if they get pulled up by police they’ll be given a breathalyser for alcohol and they’ll pass that but they’ll still be stoned out of their minds.” ...That raises the question of screening drivers for drugs... but progress on that could be two years[away] at least...

The police in Britain have come up with new ways of testing for drug abuse... In one... the officer wipes a motorist’s neck with a special tissue. The sweat absorbed... is then analysed for drug byproducts. Another test involves a lookalike lollipop. The driver sucks it, the coppers stick it in a monitor, and... know if the driver has inhaled more than fresh air... [In related news, the defective] gene, known as the dopamine D2 receptor A1 allele[which may]... explain... compulsive personalities that lead to alcoholism and drug abuse... can be identified by a simple blood test that should soon be available... [D]octors think the test will enable them to concentrate more on prevention rather than cure by targeting those most vulnerable.

...Doctors are to give the drug ecstasy to volunteers in Britain’s first human trials of the illegal drug... [M]edical authorities have approved the test to find out what damage the drug does to users’ brains. The tests also require the approval of the Home Office, which... is expected in time for them to begin next year... Volunteers will be carefully selected to exclude anyone who might suffer an allergic reaction... but researchers said tests will be safe... The research is being funded by a private [US] medical foundation... similar trials in the U[S] showed small doses led to increased flows of blood to the brain and improved memory. But when higher doses were given repeatedly to animals they suffered brain damage.

...Something strange has happened to youth literature in Britain during the past year – books have started moving from the shelves of bookshops to dance clubs up and down the country. Instead of signing books in the high street, authors now read their wares in between sets by top DJs at leading clubs such as Ministry of Sound... It all started with... [the] 1993 novel, *Trainspotting*, which became the classic text of the ’90s. Written in a hard-to-decipher Scottish vernacular and not featuring anything resembling a linear plot, *Trainspotting* was composed of a rambling series of short stories, centred around the seedy exploits of a bunch of no-hope heroin addicts living in Edinburgh’s run-down housing estates. Hardly uplifting, feel-good material but it struck a chord... The novel was followed by the play and then the acclaimed film. The soundtrack bridged the gap between American guitar, indie and dance music... It was a decade ago when British DJs... first travelled to the Spanish resort of Ibiza, discovering the drug ecstasy and the ground-breaking way in which local DJs were mixing American house music with balearic holiday tunes – before shipping both the drug and music back to transform London’s clubland. The music has grown at a phenomenal rate – conquering the charts, turning DJs into pop stars, ranging from illegal warehouse parties to exclusive, up-market clubs with their own brandname merchandise, spawning a myriad of off-shoot musical forms such as ambient, jungle and trance, and spreading all over the world... Meanwhile, the flood of ecstasy reached epidemic proportions, capturing media headlines... and entering the nation’s popular psyche – as can be seen in *Disco Biscuits*[, a novel available in NZ]... this month... which takes its name from one of the many slang terms for the drug. However, [its journalist author] wasn’t interested in listing facts and figures – [the author only] wanted to celebrate the personal experience of the average punter “off their faces and with their hands in the air on the dance floor”, subscribing to a “if you remember the name of the record, you weren’t there” philosophy. (In an ideal piece of serendipity, Serpent’s Tail has just published what is probably the best history of dance culture so far in... *Altered State: The History of Ecstasy Culture and Acid House*.) [Disco Biscuits’ author] believed that fiction would make the perfect vehicle. In her introduction to the book[the]... first 15,000 print run[of which] has completely sold out – no mean feat considering selling short story collections is traditionally an uphill struggle[– the journalist]... cites how jazz and psychedelic music inspired such important ’50s and ’60s tomes as... *On The Road... Howl* and... *Kool Aid Acid Test*. In the ’90s... the... influence of dance culture on literature ranges from crime fiction such as in... *Acid Casuals*, set against Manchester’s brutal, gang dominated clubland, to science fiction as in... *Vurt*, which saw kids trying to escape the cold reality of a futuristic but equally desolate Manchester through transcendental “vurt” feathers... The author of the pivotal social commentary *Cyberia*... will late this year publish his first novel, *The Ecstasy Club* – a cyberthriller about a San Francisco rave collective... In the face of *Trainspotting*’s tidal wave of publicity, [its author] moved to Amsterdam... His last book, *Ecstasy*, was launched last May... [By the way, an] heir to the richest member of the Rothschild banking family has been fined £400... for possession of 8.9g of heroin... [The] registered drug addict... aged 33... is [an] only child... and will inherit more than £1 billion on his father’s death.

...[a musical super]star... escaped with a police caution yesterday for possessing cocaine... [The singer] was held by police in Oxford Street after a night of drinking and celebrating Oasis' victory at the *Q* magazine Awards. The... [singer] refused to comment but the decision clears the way for Oasis to tour the U[S] unhindered by that country's strict immigration laws. A Scotland Yard spokes[person] said: "...It is common practice for first time offenders arrested for possession of small quantities of drugs for personal use, and who admit the offence, to be cautioned in the Marlebone division..." [The singer] has made no secret of spending up to £300... a day on the drug... [and once said] on *BBC Radio*... "[Taking] drugs is like getting up and having a cup of tea in the morning." ...At the *Q* Awards in London's Park Lane Hotel [the singer] had jokingly threatened to run amok saying: "I was about to smash the gaff up if you didn't vote for us."

...[the] Oasis rock star... hasn't forgiven his father's violence... "If [Dad] died tomorrow, I wouldn't go to his funeral," [the singer] was quoted as telling the *Daily Telegraph*... "I stopped believing in God because of what happened to me mam... Her husband, who unfortunately is my dad, started knocking her about but [mam] stayed in the relationship because of us..." [H]is mother moved him and his two brothers to another apartment and started a new life... [when the] 24-year-old... was 11... His father's apologies were not welcome... Oasis... topped the charts last year with their second album... They are due to launch a new album this week.

...[the AUSn PM] yesterday launched his Government's response to the drugs menace – an \$A87.5 million... strategy the Opposition described as one step forward, two steps back. The three-year campaign – Tough on Drugs – aims to halt the tide of narcotics flooding the country... [a]uthorities were now believed to be stopping only about 10[%] of the estimated 1700kg of heroin coming into A[US annually]... but also earmarks funding for education, research and the reintegration of drug users into the community.

...In some media and political circles... heroin is an enemy, on which war must be waged. In the recent words of the Victorian Premier... it's a "scourge on modern society... No compassionate society can ignore or avoid the responsibility of trying under special supervision to reduce [heroin] abuse, death and hurt..." ...How far his Government is prepared to go, though, will be tested by a proposal by the Greater Dandenong Council in Melbourne's outer east to set up A[US]'s first heroin "shooting gallery" at a health centre where long-term users can inject the drug, using their own heroin and needles... [The Premier, who] urged his federal colleagues to support the controversial... [but] since torpedoed... ACT plan to give heroin to a small group of addicts in supervised trials... has said that the galleries, which are also being considered by the Melbourne City Council, "sound revolting." Disappointed that the ACT trial was thwarted, [the Premier]... said Victoria will now focus on its own trials to test the effectiveness of [4] drugs in reducing heroin craving, stopping withdrawal symptoms and blocking the effects of heroin... The state Government has committed \$2 million over three years for the alternative drug trials, due to start in November... The council reported that heroin deaths comprised half the drug-related deaths in Victoria in 1995 and that the number of A[US]ns using heroin jumped from 109,000 in 1986 to... 300,000...

[Local] border security is being tightened... [because NZ] is poised to become an attractive alternative market for [drug] traffickers after the A[US]n Government announced a \$[NZ]99.5 million campaign to combat the scourge... [- which, in AUS,] had reached alarming proportions, with drug dealers approaching young people on the streets. Ironically, one of their recent targets was the 14-year-old son of a N[Z] customs liaison officer based in Sydney who was offered heroin for less than \$20 while walking to school... A[US]n federal police estimate that up to 3000kg of heroin has been smuggled into A[US] in the past year, compared with 135kg in 1987.

...The incidence of hepatitis C may soar [in NZ] following a massive increase in the number of N[Z]ers injecting illegal drugs. The liver disease is already rife among older intravenous drug users but is now taking hold of a growing breed of young users... Health officials are concerned that young users are sharing drug preparation equipment and needles, oblivious to the high risk of contracting hepatitis C... The... Needle Exchange Programme... said... [over] 600,000 needles are expected to be sold [in NZ] this year, compared with 283,000 in 1994... [But despite] the existence of the exchange service, only a quarter of the needles were returned... The popularity of injecting steroids was another reason for the huge increase.

...A decision on the future of a Lower Hutt police[officer] who yesterday pleaded guilty to possessing anabolic steroids is in the hands of... [the Police Commissioner. The officer], aged 27, was fined \$1400 on seven charges of possessing prescription medicines... The Wellington district police manager... said the... officer... has been on paid leave for the past 17 months... [● The] cost of policing and prosecuting offenders under the Misuse of Drugs Act is more than \$40 million a year with the health agencies paying out at least another \$30 million annually on education and treatment for people with drug dependency. These are the latest available estimates from the Ministry of Health. The costs cover all drugs and alcohol.

...The Ministry of Health has backed moves to open methadone access to drug addicts despite grave predictions from key players... The GPs Association chief executive... said doctors preferred an extension of the existing system – so long as funding was boosted. Doctors felt that only up to 50[%] of patients could be referred to GPs as many remained intermittently unstable and needed ongoing specialist care. Many GPs would not want the patients as they were time-consuming, disruptive, demanding and often did not pay their fees... The Auckland Regional Alcohol and Drug Service says... Melbourne[']s... methadone programme... had high suicide rates among patients who were getting minimal support from their GPs...

A how-to guide to drug use has landed the Auckland University student magazine *Craccum* in trouble again. Earlier this year the magazine caused a storm with an article on how to cheat the student allowance scheme. The guide, "How to take drugs and minimise the risk," was compiled by *Craccum* staff in conjunction with... NORML... The magazine's editor... said the "just say no" motto of anti-drug groups was ineffectual and it was time helpful information was given to the growing number of young people using drugs. The magazine was not advocating the use of drugs but sought to allow students to make informed choices... People experimenting with drugs needed information on how to protect themselves... However, the director of the Life Education Trust and an anti-drugs campaigner... said the article was "lunatic" and would only encourage teenagers to take drugs. The article provides information on soft and hard drugs including... cocaine and heroin. It says how much they cost, what effects they have, the best way to take them, the penalty for possession, and in some cases where to find them. Under the section on ecstasy it says someone would have to be carrying at least 56 grams before they could be charged with supply – "then again, they can't get what you've already popped." ...The vice-chancellor... described the article as irresponsible and said the university in no way condoned the statements made by *Craccum*...

A dose of heroin which killed a "novice" drug-taker was twice as strong as most hardened addicts use, the Crown told a drugs trial in the High Court at Auckland... The Crown... says Mr Williams had been recruited as a courier, but curiosity got the better of him... with fatal consequences... [The defendant], aged 42... denies supplying Mr Williams with a bag containing nine syringes filled with heroin, one of which was found empty after Mr Williams' death. It is the crown case that Mr Williams was to courier the syringes to a user who had ordered them from Stockholm. Yesterday the Crown called a former drug squad officer... [who] said that on the street, addicts using liquid heroin would use a syringe with about 1ml of liquid with a heroin content of 15mg to 25mg per millilitre. However, scientific analysis [showed] the drug found at Mr Williams' Mangere home had a strength of 50mg per millilitre... "This heroin is very pure... it is extremely unusual to find heroin of this purity in a syringe," said... [the officer, who also] said it was extremely unusual for heroin to be supplied with needles and syringes. It indicated that the heroin was either for immediate use or for delivery either to a prison inmate or someone on a drug rehabilitation programme.

...A four-year prison sentence handed down to... [a defendant] convicted of supplying heroin was a clear message that drug trafficking would not be tolerated, a court heard yesterday... [The defendant] was last month found guilty of supplying a bag containing nine syringes of heroin to Mack Williams on December 8, 199[6]. The Crown... said the drug was... destined to be smuggled into prison for use by an inmate... who was given a life sentence in October 1996 for importing \$20 million worth of uncut Thai heroin. [The defendant] was... related to... [t]he inmate... by marriage.

...Inmates will be strip-searched by prison guards and watched while providing urine samples under new anti-drug legislation expected to be passed... today. The Penal Institutions Amendment Bill empowers... authorities to randomly test inmates... \$1.5 m... would be... spent each year on

testing... Guards are not allowed to conduct cavity searches but can force inmates to bend over and squat in such a way that internally concealed drugs fall out. But a... lawyer... warned that prisoners find strip-searches abhorrent and the expected increase in the practice could cause trouble.

...Prison authorities are reviewing methadone treatment for drug-addicted inmates after criticism that the policy breaches prisoners' rights. But the Department of Corrections says the review is not linked to the criticism, as its treatment programme was a trial and was due to be assessed after one year. The Health and Disability Commissioner... said prisons were withdrawing prisoners from methadone too quickly... Between 100 and 140 inmates who were receiving methadone treatment before imprisonment have undergone withdrawal from the drug since the policy was implemented... Previously, policy for methadone treatment was implemented independently by prisons on medical advice... Now inmates are weaned off methadone over 21 days, or 42 days for inmates who are pregnant, HIV positive or are being treated for hepatitis C... [Their] treatment is funded by health authorities... The department spends about \$400,000 treating other addicts who were not on the methadone treatment before imprisonment... [M]edical authorities questioned the worth of methadone treatment, and the department was concerned about the drug being smuggled to other prisoners. [While on the topic of drug treatment programmes, the 'Institute of the Human Brain in St Petersburg is claiming an 80% success rate at curing heroin addiction by removing a part of the brain from addicts. However, if the patients try drugs again, they could relapse.']

...Drug treatment programmes do work to stop drug abuse, says the U[S] National Institute on Drug Abuse. It studied 100 programmes... and found four... [that definitely worked. Of those, methadone] treatment reduced heroin use by 70[%].

...a panel of... experts... called together by the National Institutes of Health... [estimated] that there are 600,000 addicts in the U[S]. However... the panel is... only aware that 115,000... are currently in treatment... [In further news from the US, c]ocaine abusers may have trouble seeing blue and yellow, even for months after withdrawal... Researchers found that all 31 of the cocaine withdrawal patients at a Washington hospital suffered from colour loss, which they believe is caused by the loss of dopamine...

[The Queen Mary Centre's] chief executive... said cocaine could be "the next big plague" to hit N[Z]. Up to 15[%] of... his... patients... had a cocaine problem... Three years ago, none of the clinic's patients had the problem. The head of the Wellington drug squad... said cocaine was readily available for the limited number of users in Wellington... [There] was "big demand" for the drug... Police had received warnings from health experts about amphetamines shortly before the drug... became popular in Wellington a year ago... Raids on houses in the area last week netted cannabis and what is believed to be a sizeable quantity of cocaine. Four people arrested on a combination of drugs charges have appeared in... Court and have been given bail... Although none of those arrested were gang members, [a]Detective Sergeant... said a recent upsurge in the use and distribution of class A drugs, such as cocaine, could be pinned on gangs. "In the background, gangs are up to their necks in the circulation of controlled class A and B drugs... – they certainly do have their fingers in the pie."

...It's an ironic situation for a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre to be in: touting for business offshore. The Queen Mary Centre at Hamner Springs... is in the business of cleaning up addicts, yet it needs cash generated by treating addictions to keep its core services afloat. Its latest initiative is to sell employee-assistance packages to companies across the Tasman... that need to put a "helping hand in place to identify problems that interfere with somebody's job satisfaction and performance." Put it to... Queen Mary's chief executive... that it seems strange that the A[US]ns don't have comparable programmes and [the CEO] points out that half of the 70 residential beds available to private patients are filled by addicts from A[US]... "As far as I know, we're the only one in the Southern Hemisphere which offers 24-hour medical nursing and medical coverage, seven days a week." It's an option which... "is more expensive than the outpatient model, but we believe that the problem exists in a continuum – and so does the solution." And initiatives like the development of the A[US]n programmes – intended to pick up problems before they demand residential care – represent... the only hope the unit has of continuing to supply the remaining 40 beds for publicly funded patients... Hamner's addiction-treatment programmes have long been under the threat of closure. In 1989, when the clinic was faced with closure by what was then the Canterbury Area Health board, former patients and their families held rallies around the country. The question for the health board then was: how could it justify treating patients to the tune of \$3.6 million when 80[%] of the referrals came from outside Canterbury? The debate went on... [until a] reprieve... announced in 1993... [meant] those suffering from addictions[from outside] the... catchment area were eligible for a free bed at... Queen Mary... at a cost to the [addict's regional health] authority of (in 1993)... \$38,000 a patient... [I]ts private-pay residential programme is a good earner (you pay a daily rate of \$235 plus GST for the first 35 days of treatment... [– whereas AUSn] rates start around \$NZ420 a day)... Four years later, the clinic may have broken even for the first time, but, much like the recovering addicts it treats, it is far from pronouncing itself cured. In August the centre[... which]... has its own web site... takes its wares... out throughout the Pacific Rim... "There are 100 million English-speaking people around the Pacific Rim." Paying patients have [already] come to Hamner from Hong Kong, Indonesia... Thailand... and... the U[S]...

The US anti-drug czar... said his life was threatened by Mexican drug cartels during his tour last week of Mexican border cities... [A]n unnamed source, said officials intercepted a telephone call on Wednesday in which [the US President's drug adviser]'s assassination was ordered "with a missile"... The... retired general, said US and Mexican authorities were investigating.

...Forensic scientists and relatives have identified a body that was found stuffed in an oil drum as that of... Dr Jaime Godoy Singh... an eye, ear, nose and throat specialist... On Sunday, police found... Dr Godoy... [and two other] bodies on the side of the Mexico City-Acapulco highway. They were handcuffed, burned, blindfolded and had cables hung from their necks. The drums were partially filled with cement... The identification... may solve the mystery surrounding the disappearance of doctors who participated in an operation that resulted in the death of Amado Carrillo Fuentes[... who]... died... at the age of 41 of a mix of anaesthetics and other drugs administered after [the drug lord] underwent... an apparent bid to change his appearance. Investigators said they don't know whether the death was accidental or intentional, nor have they been able to locate the surgeons who performed the operation at a Mexico City maternity hospital.

...A witness... has identified the [2nd of 3] bodies... stuffed into oil drums as one of the doctors who botched an operation [that] killed a drug lord...

MEXICO'S ruthless [drug]barons are hiring former members of the... Green Berets and other elite units... to help them spirit their cargo undetected across the border, says a senior former drug enforcement official... His claim has provoked uproar, and the U[S] government has denied it. But few people know more than [the former DEA official] about the war against drugs being fought on the Mexican border. For years [the former DEA official] was the top border patrol agent in El Paso... the main drug entry point. His success in that post carried him into Congress... [and] the House national security committee... The well-paid mercenaries had done immeasurable damage to the war... [the congressperson] said... His accusations are the latest embarrassment in the American battle to halt the creeping influence of the Mexican drug cartels[... and follow accusations that, in order 'to finance their war against the Sandinistas, Contra rebels smuggled crack into US cities with CIA help. The head of CIA has promised that a thoroughly independent commission will be set up to investigate the claims.' The US] government had been buoyed by the capture, extradition, trial and conviction last year of... the... former head of the Gulf cartel of northeastern Mexico. It also welcomed the demise of Amado Carrillo Fuentes... But there is bad news on the way. A trial in Mexico threatens to reveal the full extent of America's inability to stop the flow of drugs. [A general who was] once Mexico's top drug enforcement official... and who received a plaque from the D[EA]... citing him for "Outstanding Contribution in the field of Drug Law Enforcement," is... accused of being on the payroll of... Fuentes... [The general] was arrested after it was discovered [that the general] lived in a flat owned by Fuentes. The general, who claims... [to have been] targeted by the government to protect other corrupt officials, is threatening to name members of Mexico's elite who are in the pockets of the drug lords.

...a hood, or a Robin Hood? ...In Mexico's rugged north-west, the heroes are the bad guys. The cult of crime is epitomised by a shrine... to Jesus Malverde, a local... who has become Mexico's patron saint of criminals. His shrine was popular with Mexico's most notorious drug lord, Amado

Carrillo Fuentes, who died... after undergoing plastic surgery and liposuction in a Mexico City hospital. “Amado... was a good [person because Amado] always helped the poor,” said... a homeless youth living on the railway tracks behind the shrine. “[Amado] used to come here to see Malverde and one of his ‘pistoleros’... gave me 200 pesos...” ...authorities finally confirmed his death[when] they... received the result of DNA tests. They had been deeply suspicious that the body in the morgue was not really the drug baron known as the Lord of the Skies. Gun-toting police guarded the morgue, opening the lid of each coffin carried out to ensure the drug lord who evaded capture during his life did not elude them in death as well. But in Culiacan, the capital of his home state... where most of Mexico’s major drug bandits were born... [– and] a city with a tradition of defying the law to help the underdog... [–] the legends about Amado... were already being written... [There] is a saying here: “The gringos sell us guns so we can kill each other. We sell them drugs so they can drive themselves crazy.” ...His double standards also irked the parish priest in his home village... “Amado is the modern-style Robin Hood[– a person] who sold poisonous drugs to the young to give money to others,” ... At the family ranch there were signs everywhere of the loyalty money can buy. After... [hi]s death was announced last weekend, a stream of mourners entered the heavily guarded gateway... The last big family gathering was the wedding of... Fuentes’ sister in January, when invitations were handed out like winning lottery tickets to locals in nearby villages... The party turned ugly when it was invaded by the military and Carrillo... only just managed to slip away in time after receiving a tip off... US and Mexican authorities said Carrillo... made billions flying Colombian cocaine to the U[S].

...More than 560,000ha of Colombian tropical rain forests are being razed every year by drug traffickers and poor farmers to plant illegal coca and poppy crops... [The] head of the anti-narcotics division of the National Police, told reporters that “We have to put a definitive end to this, once and for all, because a natural disaster is occurring...” [The head] stressed that many of the forest areas cleared for use as drug farms never reach the planting stage because authorities often spot the clearing from the air, and intervene.

...W[hat a different the] death of an empire can make. Thanks to the post-Soviet whirlwind of conflict, crime and porous borders, the legendary Silk Road, once traversed by caravans bearing the riches of the East and the West, [and which locals]... call... “the Road of Life,”... has turned into an opium highway... Last year, Afghanistan became the world’s leading opium producer. But a crackdown in neighboring Pakistan and Iran, the traditional exit routes for Afghan opium, has forced smugglers to head north. The result: a rising sea of drugs in each of the five Central Asian “stans” – ...Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Marijuana and hashish have long been common contraband in these far-off lands, but... [today opium rivals] cotton as... Central Asia’s... top cash crop... In the hands of the burgeoning generation of local users, some of it will be boiled into tea and some... injected intravenously. But most of it will mature into heroin and hit Russia’s street corners, or, via the new direct flights from the former Soviet states, reach its most profitable destination: the West... Farmers in the opium heartland of Afghanistan’s southern Helmand Valley report earning \$30 per kg. But at the bazaar in Osh, where a few nods can lead to drugs stashed beneath tables of fruit, the same k[g] sells for \$800... [then] goes for \$6,000 in Moscow... Russia’s 201st Division, stationed in Tajikistan ostensibly to keep the peace and mind the 1450-km border with Afghanistan, is nick-named “Shop Number One.” The 201st, it is said, beats the local pharmacy for its range of drugs... In recent years, drugs have also turned up... on Russian military aircraft. Moscow’s troops, of course, are not the only ones seduced by drug profits. “Everyone has a hand in the opium pie,” claims a retired Russian military intelligence officer who knows the terrain well. “Whether it be the Russian border guard, the Tajik police[officer] or the Kyrgyz customs officer – they’re all taking a slice.” ...In Tashkent, scientists are secretly devising opium-killing bacteria. The early results – seen by the DEA and Scotland Yard – are said to be promising... The cancer of narcotics trafficking, however, is quick to metastasize. In Ashgabat, delux hotels and casinos rising out of the Turkmen desert are used to launder drug money. In Dushanbe, the tally of drug-related murders is rising. And in Afghanistan warlords spin opium into weapons needed to fuel the country’s unending civil conflict. [The country has seen a ‘50% rise in the number of poppy producers. The Taliban, which claims it is not involved in the trade, says it will stop drug trafficking if the West invests in their people by building hospitals and funding projects to get people to grow wheat instead. “If no one is concerned about us why should we be concerned about them? Our people are poor and poppies are most profitable.”] Given the obstacles to interdiction and the immense rewards, Central Asia’s ancient Silk Road is turning into a highway of death for Russia and the rest of the world.

...Asian drug syndicates are using the Pacific islands to funnel drugs to [AUS and the US], says... the... head of prosecutions for Hong Kong Customs... [while] in Wellington for the Asia-Pacific regional customs conference... One consignment of heroin organised by a Hong Kong drug syndicate was transported from China to Vanuatu, and then stored in a refrigerated container bound for... [AUS. Furthermore.] Tongan criminals have forged links with South American cocaine dealers and are muscling in on the... Sydney cocaine market[, which is currently shared between]... Lebanese syndicates and homegrown... dealers...

Singapore[’s] Minister of Home Affairs... has defended the caning of a N[Z]er found guilty of overstaying and drug consumption... “The N[Z] High Commission... expressed to the Singapore Government N[Z]’s concern at the inclusion of the rotan [cane] punishment as part of the sentence,” said... a spokes[person for the NZ] Ministry of Foreign Affairs. [The spokesperson] stressed, however, that no request had been submitted to change the sentence as N[Z] has a policy not to interfere in the judicial processes of other countries. [□ Another NZer who has received a rotan punishment for drugs charges, and was imprisoned along with his mother, has, together with his mother, ‘been charged with importing, possessing and supplying drugs – but the search warrant police used to gather evidence may be invalid. The warrant, which was issued for 30 days, expired on Wednesday. Police raided their Blockhouse Bay home on Thursday morning and charged the pair with offences involving heroin, morphine, methamphetamine, methadone and cannabis. Five other people have been charged with similar offences. Both the mother, aged 57, and her 34-year-old son were refused bail, but another bail hearing will be held next week for the mother, who contracted breast cancer while in jail in Malaysia.’]

...AN elderly couple whose house was secretly used for N[Z]’s largest illegal drug laboratory have been told they must pay \$21,000 to have the property cleared of toxic substances. [But they are] already financially sunk, [and]say they have no way of paying... They had... the Cheviot house... on the market for two years, during which time it was rented, but last July thought they had finally sold it when an investment company offered \$40,000 for it. It was \$30,000 below... valuation but the [couple] needed the money and decided to sell. They had agreed to a 90-day settlement, but during that time the police raided the property. The investment company then pulled out of the sale. Two weeks ago, the [couple] were awarded a summary judgment of \$5000 from the investment company, the deposit agreed to but never paid... If the[couple] refuse to pay, or can’t, Hurunui District Council... said legal action could be taken against them. “This is our worst nightmare. We haven’t got that sort of money...,” said [the husband] (60), a sickness beneficiary. The[ir] only hope... is their insurance company, which is looking at the situation to see if their policy covers cleaning up contamination. [The couple said ideally they’d like to see the house bulldozed because of the toxic substances. A health report shows... there is a potential risk from radioactive thorium material in the house. As part of the clean-up, linings, carpets and furnishings will be removed, cleaned and some destroyed... The house has been closed off since the... multi-million dollar amphetamine... laboratory was... raided by police.

...Police are battling silent crime... in the underground world of drug-dealing... People are routinely tolerating bashings, burglaries and aggravated robberies but not reporting them to police because of their own involvement with drugs and their fear of further attacks. “Unless they end up seriously injured or dead... we... often... don’t hear about it on an official basis.” ...Th[e recent] revelation by West Auckland police that they have begun investigating a drug-related death which has remained secret for eight years demonstrates the extent to which people involved in the drug scene will keep mum. The victim was believed to have been murdered in 1989 after a drug deal turned sour. The death brings to three the tally of unsolved drug-linked homicides in West Auckland over the past 10 years... [Whangarei’s] drug squad head... said... [that during a recent] high-profile murder trial... one of the witnesses... told the High Court... how [it and the person who was] killed, went to [the defendant’s] Far North

house armed and looking for drugs[(r:p1377, ln45). The defendant], aged 35, denied murdering Mr Rogers[– but doesn't deny shooting him as the would-be drug-robber was trying to run away –] and was facing a retrial until... the charge was dismissed... Since the incident people had come forward with tales of similar attacks involving guns... the... Detective Sergeant... said... Earlier this year two youths stumbled on a cannabis plot and removed some of the plants. The grower teamed up with his neighbour and hunted down the teenagers... They took the youths to a beach, assaulted them and repeatedly held their heads under water until they told where the plants were... “There was one[other] example when a couple of boys came up from Auckland and one of them ended up getting shot in the foot as part of a drug rip-off, but we only heard about it because the guy ended up in hospital.”

...People in agony may face delays in getting pain relief after a string of violent robberies has forced pharmacists to cut down on stocks of narcotics... mainly morphine... Chemists were reluctant to reduce what was seen as a valuable public service but if the violence continued to escalate they might be forced to refuse to stock the drugs... Stores in rural areas, often sole charge, were becoming prime targets because it took police longer to respond. These were also the areas where people faced the longest delays if pharmacists decided not to stock the drugs and they had to be supplied from bigger centres... N[Z] Pharmacy magazine reported that three small-town pharmacies had been robbed at gunpoint in the past month. One of the victims... had spent \$25,000 on security following the holdup, which was effectively protecting a product which would make him \$100 to \$200 in a good year. [The pharmacist] said the more pharmacists spent securing their stores the greater the personal danger as addicts and criminals would try other ways of obtaining drugs. “Next thing – and this has already started – they come around and get you at night and bring you back at the point of a gun.”

...hundreds of wounded [Vietnam] veterans were addicted to... morphine... [after] the war... “The idea of finding an anti-drug addiction medicine came into my mind during the time I lived in a neighbourhood of drug addicts in Saigon[.]” says a physician whose[... father was an opium addict, [and whose] brother died of an overdose... [The physician] sold his home[and] travelled to live among tribal groups in northern Vietnam where [the physician] sought an answer to addiction in traditional herbal remedies among communities where opium had been grown for decades. Fifteen years after that quest began, the 55-year-old may have found a cure, with potential implications for addicts worldwide. In June this year the U[N] Development Programme announced it was stepping up testing of the medicine... a fiery-tasting brown syrup named Heantos... [T]he programme's Washington director, said... that the medicine had already been tested on 3000 Vietnamese addicts... [T]rials had shown a high degree of success and reported extraordinary results, with only about a 30[%] rate of recidivism... and minimal side-effects. Full tests would require two more years... [D]octors say the medicine is delivered in two doses. The first eliminates withdrawal symptoms and within a week leaves patients able to abstain. The second course is taken a month later to prevent re-addiction... In Vietnam, the costs of treatment are typically around \$30 per person, about a third of the cost of existing alternatives. The medicine is non-addictive... It's said to have a quick effect on addicts to heroin, cocaine and some addictive medicines. For opium users the process is slower... [F]or thousands of people across the thinly policed and ancient world of northern Indochina [opium use i]s a... 19th century... reality that remains today... [I]n... a poor village near the Laos border, [a] 63-year-old... scoops opium paste into a pipe, holds it over an oil-lamp flame in a dimly lit room, inhales and lays back in ecstasy.

...It's 3.15 am on a rainy morning and hundreds are dancing under the strobe lights at Atlanta, a “discotek” in Kota, Jakarta's old Dutch quarter. Patrons groove frantically to the beat... Wander into the toilets and three guys are hanging over the vanity basin, popping pills. Love is in the air – you can sense it – but it's a new kind of love. Ecstasy, the recreational drug most widely used by young, affluent Indonesians, has become as common as marijuana in Auckland... According to official figures, more than 300,000 pills were seized by the authorities in 1996. But... the real number of pills in circulation probably reaches millions, according to a Jakarta-based narcotics expert... [Among the seizures were] more than 29,000 pills [found at the] Jakarta home... of... a small-time television personality... [– who] had overnight become a national figure... [after being] caught hiding behind a clothes rack in a Houston, Texas, department store... by Indonesian detectives working in co-operation with the FBI... [– and] 70,000 pills... two Singaporeans [were attempting] to smuggle into Indonesia through Soekarno-Hatta International Airport in Jakarta... Until recently, authorities had problems trying to convict dealers because ecstasy was not classified under the 1976 Anti-Narcotics Law... [However,] late last month... [t]he House of Representatives... passed a “psychotropics bill” allowing courts to deliver the death penalty, life imprisonment, or a maximum of 20 years in prison and a fine of 750 million rupiah... to members of syndicates dealing in ecstasy... In [the TV personality's] case... sentence will not involve gallows or electric chairs because until[the] President... officially signs the new law those caught on ecstasy offences will be tried under the old, more lenient legislation... It is widely accepted that if you are caught on Jakarta streets with less than 20 ecstasy pills in your possession, the police will confiscate the drugs and charge you 100,000 rupiah a pill... before letting you go. The average street value of ecstasy in Jakarta is about 50,000 to 100,000 (\$30-\$60) rupiah a pill. According to regular users, fines paid to police on the street invariably end up in the officers' pockets, and the drugs are often resold... Late last year a pilot flying for the national airline, Garuda, was caught with 8000 pills strapped to his waist at Schiphol Airport in Amsterdam... The Dutch are being blamed as the source for much of the ecstasy that finds its way to Indonesia.

...A[US]n customs officers have found 27,000 ecstasy tablets in an air-cargo crate of wooden tulips from Amsterdam... On Monday, customs officers at Auckland International Airport found 1000 ecstasy pills after searching a... 22[-year-old]... who had arrived on a flight from Europe.

...Police and customs officers are alarmed at the growing popularity of the drug ecstasy among young... [NZers, and a] Detective Sergeant... of the Auckland Drug Squad, said... suppliers were trying to make the drug more attractive by lowering the price... [R]ave parties in A[US] were attracting thousands of young people, with between 30... and 60[%] of patrons using the drug... but evidence from A[US] indicated it was also popular in the gym and body building communities... “It also seems to be very popular in the gay community.” The general manager of the Odyssey House drug rehabilitation programme... said the organisation had little contact with ecstasy users because it was not considered a physically addictive drug. [But the manager] said that British reports indicated long-term users built up a tolerance to the drug... “People over time need more to get the same buzz, and there have been some attempts to market a cheaper version of it... [But] people need a lot more of that as well.”

...[THE] UNLUCKIEST smuggler of the year[award must go to a British resident]. An airport security scanner was triggered by a surgical pin in his leg. Customs officers searched [the Brit] and found... 2000 tablets of the drug Ecstasy... [In local news, an] actor... aged 22... has been sentenced to 3 1/2 years' jail for importing... 1000 ecstasy tablets... [which the actor] claimed were to pay off her \$20,000 student loan... A psychiatrist report said that [the actor] brought the drugs into N[Z] while in a state of mental illness.

...A survey of 469 frequent users of... ecstasy... found nearly three-quarters suffered some form of long-term health problems. Mental health problems were the commonest, especially depression and loss of concentration. But despite these worries, only one in 20 of th[os]e... surveyed said they would not take the drug again. The BBC Radio 5 survey is thought to be the biggest of its kind... A separate BBC survey of 36 doctors from accident and emergency departments found... ecstasy was the second most common illegal drug to cause adverse reactions in patients... But... the... report's author... of the Maudsley Hospital, London, said... “There have been about 62 deaths from ecstasy in this country in the last 10 years. In the same period, there were 1070 deaths from solvents, 2395 from opiates and 200,000-400,000 alcohol-related deaths.” ...Almost all those interviewed... at some point... had taken ecstasy with another drug... [60%] said they always did so, the most common other drugs being speed, cannabis, alcohol and LSD.

...People taking prescription medicines should avoid... recreational... drugs like... LSD... and ecstasy. That advice comes in a *New Scientist* article which asks whether pharmaceutical companies should be warning patients about the dangers of mixing some medicines with illicit drugs... When a 32-year-old tax inspector died after taking ecstasy at a London night club last November, levels of the drug in his blood were equivalent to his

having swallowed 22 tablets. His friends insist [the tax inspector] took only two, but that those two pills interacted lethally with another drug [the tax inspector] was also taking... the newly approved anti-HIV drug Ritonavir – which interferes with a liver enzyme which metabolises ecstasy. Someone taking both drugs could have problems clearing ecstasy from their bloodstream... The magazine says the... major class of antidepressant drugs, monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOI), can trigger a dangerous surge in blood pressure when mixed with ecstasy... and... that... antidepressants... also... increase the brain's response to LSD, resulting in unpleasant trips... Most medicines come with safety notes which warn about potentially hazardous interactions with other prescribed drugs. But interactions with illicit substances are rarely mentioned. The drug companies are not required to issue warnings about them and most want to keep it that way... [T]hey do not want to be seen as “condoning drug abuse.” “We can hardly say in our literature that our drug may be taken safely with heroin, cocaine or whatever but not with ecstasy,” said... [the] head of clinical development for... the company that makes Ritonavir. Given the growing popularity of ecstasy among young N[Z]ers, that delicacy could prove unfortunate... But... [not] everyone is susceptible. What little research has been done on this suggests that only 3 to 8[%] of the population possess the genetic defect that makes them especially poor at metabolising certain drugs.

...A NEW book by a Californian chemist... is being awaited eagerly by the rave generation – and with trepidation by police and drug enforcement agencies. Police expect... [the] manual for making illegal drugs to be published in America in September. [The chemist], aged 72, brought Ecstasy to public attention in the early 90s when... his original collection... detailing recipes for more than 300 psychedelic drug compounds... [was] published... *Pihkal: A Chemical Love Story* won instant cult status... Pihkal is an acronym for “Phenethylamines I Have Known And Loved.” ...Ecstasy... was invented before... [WW1] but became popular with the rave generation after the release of [the chemist]'s... book... *Pihkal* recipes... were popularised across continents via the Internet. Now the Web is buzzing with users looking for information on... *Tihkal* (“Tryptamines I Have Known And Loved”), which concentrates on LSD and other plant-derived hallucinogens, such as magic mushrooms... [The chemist] used to be part of the establishment, even having a DEA... licence to analyse drugs seized by the authorities and [giving] expert evidence at trials. His earlier book, *Controlled Substances: A Chemical & Legal Guide to Federal Drug Laws*, is on hundreds of [US] drug officers' bookshelves. But now [the chemist] has changed sides and... argues in his new book for the legalisation of psychedelic drugs and discusses traditional uses for drugs such as belladonna, mandrake, datura, nutmeg and khat in both the old and new worlds... [■ Police in] Auckland... have... seized about 3000 Ecstasy tablets... [– NZ's] largest single haul of the drug... – and a small amount of LSD. The find follows a nine-month investigation, Operation Politik, which focused on drug transactions at the city's bars, cafes and nightclubs.

...It was 30 years ago today [when the] so-called ‘psychedelic revolution’ flamed into the Summer Of Love... WATCH out, kids! If your parents were teens or 20-something in 1967, they may be keeping some dark secrets from you – tales of rampant drug use, free sex orgies and running wild. Then again, they may just be normal, run-of-the-mill parents who, like all but the lucky few, weren't even aware of the psychedelic revolution when it was in full flower. Despite its persistent hold over the imaginations of successive generations, the original exponents of the psychedelic revolution were a subculture tiny in number and covert in lifestyle, one of the reasons... [why the writer who] has contributed a lucid account of the psychedelic era for a coffee-table book, subtly titled *I Want To Take You Higher* [prefers]... to describe the '60s phenomenon as the “underground movement”... Originally [attempting] an essay commissioned to tie in with a psychedelic exhibition at the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame And Museum... in Cleveland, Ohio, [the writer] ended up providing the London perspective of the book, which together with... [a] San Francisco slant, gives the reader a fascinating chronological insight on the years 1965-69. Invaded as we are by the fat hand of America, San Francisco has become synonymous with the birth of the psychedelic revolution, but [the writer] knows better: It began on the streets of London. [The writer] was one of the organisers of the original event, the Poets of the World/Poets of Our Time reading at London's Royal Albert Hall in June, 1965. Long before there was a musical style to reflect the new mindset, this event signalled the new scene... “As the audience arrived, they were handed flowers by prototypical flower children who had their faces painted with paisley patterns. Incense and pot smoke wafted. A dozen bemused schizophrenics brought along by [a] psychiatrist... blew bubbles and danced to music heard only in their own heads... At one point [a] Dutch poet... high on acid, snatched the microphone and ran round the hall screaming, ‘Love, love, love...’ ...Despite participation from big stars like [a former Beatle (r:p1382, ln1)], the scene was without a voice... “The regular press didn't cover rock'n'roll. The Beatles might get covered, or the more spectacular outrages of the Rolling Stones, but you didn't get the regular coverage of popular culture. That's why we had to start the underground press... These days MTV and endless hype has reduced the value of the work, but back then a new album was a really big thing, people listened really carefully. The underground... *International Times*... was really IT, the source of communication in our [particular] community...” ...In *I Want To Take You Higher*, [the writer] notes that Pink Floyd's enigmatic leader... lived for a year in a flat with a glass that was constantly spiked with LSD. “Yes it's true, and it's probably why [the ex-Pink Floyd leader is] still a vegetable... I suppose nobody was aware of that at the time, because there hadn't been any acid casualties at that point. But I think John Lennon was heading in that direction too. [John] took a tremendous amount of acid, and there was one point where [John] called a meeting of the Beatles at Apple headquarters and announced [himself to be] Jesus Christ. ‘Well right you are John, we'll bear that in mind!’ ...You've got to get rid of your ego, right? So [John] smashed his to pieces... Had [his new lover] not turned him on to heroin, [John] would have probably turned into an acid casualty...” ...[the writer] states baldly that it was [the other main Beatle] – not Lennon – who explored the psychedelic landscape. It was [that member] who turned to LSD first, and whose musical experiments resulted in the classic psychedelic albums *Revolver* and *Sgt Pepper*... and, “for the last five years I've been working on a book with [that member] about the '60s. It should finally be out in October...” ...The writer's own drug use is fairly obvious on his liner notes for a 1969 album by hallucinogenic hippy band Caravan: “The flute playing Sahara bird-flight solos hovering over the camel-train, earth magic, soft machine and sky...” Etc. “They don't make any sense... I don't know what I was on when I wrote that!” [Despite his own drug-induced ramblings, the writer] is far from “down” on drugs, crediting LSD experimentation with a good deal of the creative brilliance and exploration of the psychedelic era. “It's a pity it turned into such a bete noir. It could have been much more use to society instead of just a recreational drug, which is what it turned into. That was partly to do with its popularisation on the [US] west coast... People were constantly spiking each other, and it became quite an unpleasant thing. There was tremendous one-upmanship about how much they'd taken and how much they could deal with... ridiculous posturing.” ...[● C]ustoms dogs at Auckland Airport are defying conventional wisdom... Border authorities have long considered... LSD... to be odourless, making it undetectable even to canine noses. But recently three dogs have scored “hits” on consignments passing through the international mail centre... The customs officer in charge of the... dog section... said there had been previous isolated cases where sniffer dogs indicated parcels containing LSD... The labradors were not trained to find LSD... but nor had they been trained to seek amphetamines until handlers realised they seemed to be sniffing out that drug.

...Crown prosecutors have failed to have LSD dealers treated the same as heroin dealers in court. In the High Court at Hamilton on Friday, [while sentencing two people]... to eight years' jail on 10 counts... [of] manufacturing and selling LSD [a judge]... ruled that heroin was more dangerous than LSD... [A third person] received a sentence of four and a half years on six counts... The... convictions followed police operations using telephone surveillance and an undercover... [agent. However, the judge] said LSD sentences had been too lenient.

...Judges need to consider whether the lack of addictive potential is still any justification for lighter sentences where LSD and other Class A hallucinogens are involved, says the Court of Appeal.

...The son of wealthy [US] doctors has been sentenced to 11 years' jail for drug importing [in Auckland's] High Court... The judge... did not know why the 26-year-old... from a privileged background... had become involved in drug importing although the motivation was clearly commercial

gain... The... self-employed film-maker of Illinois, was found guilty... of importing... 10,000 LSD tabs... The judge said... sentences of nine years had been imposed in similar cases where there had been guilty pleas – [whereas the son] continued to maintain his innocence. And [the judge] noted... the Court of Appeal had said that sentences landed down for LSD offending were “too lenient.” ...[the son had sent] a parcel of drugs from Los Angeles which [the son] tried to pick up from Air N[Z] Cargo in Mangere. When told it was to be inspected by Customs [the son] hurriedly left, but a couple of days later tried to have it delivered to a city hotel by courier. The judge said that although it was not a professional exercise, it was a “cheeky” importation and... the message had to be reinforced to people from overseas that N[Z] was... not a “Noddyland when it comes to narcotics.”

...Nelson police have only today to continue detaining a [person] suspected of concealing drugs in her body. [The suspect] has been held at a city hotel for 20 days. The law limits such a detention to 21 days... [In international news, undercover] drug-squad cops from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, were delighted when strangers offered them cocaine – until they realised the strangers were undercover cops from nearby Pompano Beach.

...[a 49-year-old], of Portland, Oregon, w[ho]... prosecutors called one of the most successful drug smugglers in the western U[S.] faces a possible life sentence after pleading guilty to... delivering 10 cardboard boxes stuffed with more than \$US7 million... in \$20 bills to federal undercover agents posing as drug middle[people] for an Asian marijuana supplier.

...International schools in other cities may see their students look to softer drugs like alcohol and marijuana to ease the boredom[, but a]... Beijing school for the children of... expatriate westerners is considering random drug testing of its students as it deals with a growing heroin problem. The use of the drug by students at the Beijing International School – run under the auspices of the... Canadian, [AUSn, NZ and US] embassies – reflects the flipside of the often exotic life of those growing up as children of diplomats and business people sent abroad... The ready availability of heroin, however, has added another dimension to the problem in China’s capital... An A[US]n student studying at the 350-pupil school... estimated 20[%] of the school’s secondary school students were regular heroin users. The school principal... said a small poll of students found an average estimate of 7[%]. The NZ Government]... contributed \$15,000 to help establish the school in 1980, but it has been financed by fees since then.

...THE past year has been bountiful for the Golden Triangle: more than 3000 tonnes of opium has been processed into heroin by mobile refineries... then poured into the West along routes that have now spread through China.

...Earlier this month Guangdong, the mainland province adjacent to Hong Kong, was outraged that[the] Chief Judge... had jailed drug dealer Xie Chuliang for life and his accomplice... for seven years after they were arrested with 21kg of heroin. [The Chief] Judge... was sacked, Xie was executed and [his accomplice]’s sentence was increased to 15 years... sending a clear message to others. “The stand we take is clear-cut...” Bitter colonial memories of the opium war and France’s empire in Indo-China fuel the anger against drug traders. “China still has a very fresh memory of 150 years ago when some foreign countries opened the door to China to drug traffickers,”... says... the Yunnan Vice-Governor... “That was a very miserable time... I don’t think we will repeat that period of history.” ...In addition to tough enforcement policies... Yunnan has begun a major education and awareness campaign, and introduced a rehabilitation programme for addicts. The province is also working with Laos and Burma to develop crop-substitution programmes in the Golden Triangle... “China will spare no effort in helping other Governments to eliminate drugs,”...

[The Shenzhen executive ‘was given a half-day off to watch seven drug dealers sentenced to death. “It’s good education for us,” said the executive, one of 3000 people attending a rally for the sentencing. “We can come and see by ourselves the fate of being bad guys. I’ll go home and tell my kids.” The Higher People’s Court of Guangdong province turned down the appeals of 10 defendants in the country’s largest drug case since the Communist take-over in 1949, sentencing four Hong Kong residents and three Chinese mainland residents to death. Of the remaining three Chinese mainlanders, one was given a suspended death sentence, one was sentenced to seven years in prison, and one was given life. The 10 appealed after they were convicted two weeks ago of trafficking 600kg of heroin from Burma into south China. The public rallies are part of Government efforts to stem the growing drug trade in China. Drugs were effectively eradicated after 1949, but returned after economic reforms were launched in the 1980s. The 50-year-old executive found the rally exciting. The stadium was half-packed with spectators, many of them in army and police uniforms. As soon as the sentencing was over, the condemned prisoners were marched out of the stadium and put on trucks en route to their execution in a remote place. Grieving relatives chased after the trucks for a short distance.’

...‘Authorities in western China have executed eight people and jailed 14 from the same family. A 60-year-old farmer, his wife, three sons and three grandsons were executed in Hezheng county in Gansu province for murder, robbery, arson, drug trafficking and theft. The farmer in January led 23 members of his family in an attack on five police officers who came to Zhongzhuang village to arrest one of his sons for stealing cattle. The family hacked one officer to death with an axe and seriously injured three other officers. They then turned on neighbours who had called the police. Seven villagers were killed, 10 injured and 14 houses set on fire. The court sentenced two other family members to death, suspended for two years.’]

...The Ministry of Foreign Affairs last night named a Chinese [person] holding a N[Z] passport who was killed in an attack in China nearly 18 months ago... although the ministry had no knowledge of his connection with N[Z]... News of Mr Lin’s death surfaced in reports from China of the execution of nine killers responsible for his death and those of 16 others between October 1994 and August 1996... On Saturday a Guangdong provincial court upheld death sentences against... Zhang Zhicheng, a homicid[al] maniac... and his gang... Zhang... [had] pleaded guilty and did not appeal. The rest of his gang appealed... Sentence was carried out immediately after the verdict... China imposed more than 6100 death sentences and carried out 4367 confirmed executions in 1996... China has executed more people in the 1990s than the rest of the world put together... and the number of capital crimes is soaring. Chinese now face the death penalty for offences from tax fraud to cattle rustling... Executions in China are done with a single bullet in the heart or back of the head.

...*Revolution in style of execution...* OVER the past six months... [the] director of the Kunming Court Hospital in southwest China, has pursued an unusual medical vocation: ...testing the most reliable method of putting people to death. In a series of hitherto secret experiments, [the director] has personally killed several convicted criminals by lethal injection. The authorities in Kunming are so pleased with the results that after 22 such executions they are likely to do away with China’s traditional firing squads. [The] experiments are being studied by Chinese medical and legal experts, who are interested in taking organs from executed criminals for transplantation. There is an unresolved and unusually frank debate in official journals about whether lethal injections could damage the organs to be extracted. The government states organs are removed only with the prior consent of the victim. But human rights groups have said Chinese officials “harvested” kidneys and corneas without consent and sold them to wealthy patients... including [USer]s... At least two military hospitals, in Nanjing and Beijing, have been identified as providing kidneys to patients in Hong Kong for up to \$40,000], and ‘two people who allegedly plotted to sell the body parts of executed Chinese prisoners in the US have been indicted on conspiracy charges’]. The... director’s zeal in dispatching the condemned has been revealed in detail... In March... his team of doctors tried two mixtures of drugs... [A] convict... administered the first cocktail... took... [22]5 seconds to die, his face contorted in pain... [The] second mixture... killed... in less than a minute and... the... victim... did not seem to suffer. After that the Kunming authorities decided to... approve... the use of “mixture No 2”... [and] call on the hospital director more regularly to speed up the queue of those waiting to die... International legal experts have strongly criticised the Chinese judicial system, saying the death penalty was often applied to poor, illiterate people guilty of minor offences. In one notorious case, a Beijing court sentenced Lu Qigang to death for sticking thorns or pins into the buttocks of [gal] cyclists passing the horticultural farm where [Lu] worked – an offence the court defined as “hooliganism”. One legal nicety has not yet been resolved. The normal custom is for the families of those executed to be presented with a bill for the bullet that killed them. It is not known whether the relatives of [the director’s] victims have been handed the bill for the expensive lethal drugs – but no doubt the correct bureaucratic procedure will soon be established.

...China has dismissed as a fabrication a U[S] television report which alleged People's Liberation Army hospitals were selling the organs of condemned prisoners to foreigners. [The f]oreign ministry... denied that Chinese hospitals had ever sold the organs of convicts sentenced to death.

...[Chinese doctors have removed organs from executed prisoners who were not yet clinically dead, to make money from foreign transplant patients, a doctor who fled China a year ago told the US Congress yesterday. "My work required me to remove the skin and corneas from the corpses of over 100 executed prisoners, and on a couple of occasions, victims of intentionally botched executions. It is with deep regret and remorse that I stand here today testifying against the practices of organ and tissue sales from death row prisoners." The doctor described coordinated procedures Chinese Government and health officials developed to extract organs from inmates after their executions, in some cases before the prisoners' hearts stopped beating, so they could be transplanted. The doctor became tormented by the practice after it followed orders to remove the skin of a still-living prisoner in October 1995. The incident prompted him to alert the international community to organ harvesting in China. "Whatever impact I have made in the lives of burn victims and transplant patients does not excuse the unethical and immoral manner of extracting organs." A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson last night accused the doctor of lying. "Any clear-sighted person can see that this is a vicious slander against China. I believe for personal purposes, they have created sensational lies."

...China has executed 1781 people in the past three months, more than the rest of the world has executed in the last three years, says Amnesty International. Another 2960 have been sentenced to death since April, when China's Strike Hard campaign against crime was launched. But the figures, based on public reports monitored by Amnesty, fell far below the actual number of executions in China, said the human rights group. "Only a fraction of death sentences and executions carried out in China are publicly reported, with information selectively released by the relevant authorities. National statistics on the use of the death penalty remain a state secret." The Strike Hard campaign, like others before it, was unlikely to have a lasting impact on China's growing crime problem. "The campaign is nothing short of an execution frenzy – a huge waste of human life." Executions had been recorded across the country for crimes as diverse as bribery, pimping, tax fraud, petrol theft and selling harmful foodstuffs. Hundreds of people had also been executed for drug offences under the slogan "Treasure life, reject drugs," said Amnesty. It appealed to the Chinese Government to "end its spiralling use of the death penalty and to replace this callous and counterproductive policy with more effective and humane criminal punishments, in line with global trends."

...If the Pope really seeks to penetrate the peculiar cultural oddities of the American cult of death, [the Pope] might go beyond his unusual decision... to ask the Governor of Virginia for clemency for... [a prisoner on] Death Row... and visit the state of Utah, where the local custom of execution by firing squad never lacks for volunteers. "We had a whole platoon from Fort Bragg that... wanted to come in. And a former CIA... sharpshooter... called...." recalls... the state's Department of Corrections, which recruited a five-[strong] firing team this year to shoot a [person] who had raped and murdered an 11-year-old girl. As these grisly things go, [last year was] not... too bad a year for capital punishment[!] in the US]. After 56 executions in 1995 – the highest since 1957 – there were only 45 last year, but this is an artificially low number because various state and federal laws which were passed to accelerate executions and curtail the appeals process are themselves being challenged in the courts. This process should soon be complete and the experts at the Death Penalty Information Centre tell me gloomily that they expect a bumper crop... this... year. Texas alone, which executed 19 people in 1995, only managed three [last] year because of these legal hurdles. This bottleneck in the pipeline from Death Row, where about 3000 [guys and 50 gals] now await the rope, the bullet, the sizzle of the cyanide pill dropping into the bowl of acid, the electric chair or the final needle, will soon be cleared. The[?] 'US is the one remaining western power which retains' it, but the[?] death penalty has never lived up to the claims of its supporters. ['From 1968 to 1976 no one was executed in the US. The steep rise in homicides in that decade led to a clamour for the restoration of the death penalty', but it] does not deter killers. Texas, the state with the highest rate of executions, is in that unenviable band of nine states with the highest rate of homicides. Each of the other eight states with a homicide rate higher than 10 per 100,000 population also enforces the death penalty. By contrast, North Dakota, with the lowest homicide rate, has no death penalty. The other claim made for the death penalty is financial – that it saves the taxpayer money, obviating the need to feed and house and guard a prisoner facing a life sentence. This is a popular argument among conservative politicians. But the evidence is all the other way... Two professors of public policy at Duke University last year published an illuminating study of the costs of... summary justice... based on the experience of North Carolina. Beginning at the beginning, [the]Professors... found that it cost the state \$329,000 more to prosecute, try and convict for the death penalty than it did to get a first-degree murder conviction carrying 20 years to life. The length and complexity and the higher legal fees of a capital trial, along with the further extra costs of maintaining a Death Row, explained the difference. It costs \$16,600 a year to keep a high-security prisoner in North Carolina, so 20 years in prison would just about balance the higher costs of a death trial. But that does not account for the further costs of the appeal process for those sentenced to death. "It certainly is an expensive process," comments... [a judge] of the California Supreme Court. "It has to be, to make it fair." California spends \$90 million a year enforcing its death penalty. Supreme Court justices... reckon they spend half their time reviewing appeals. The state's attorneys, whose time is charged to taxpayers at \$90 per hour, claimed 57,000 hours on death appeals. The state also pays \$8 million a year for a special division of the Office of Public Defender to handle Death Row cases but is overwhelmed by the caseload, and sub-contracts the appeals to private lawyers at a minimum fee of \$75,000. "It is always more expensive to have and to use the death penalty than it is not to have it, for the very simple reason that lawyers are more expensive than prison guards," notes... the... Legal Institute at Berkeley. The Duke University study found that the extra cost of the death penalty meant that each such sentence cost the taxpayer \$2.6 million more than keeping a convicted killer in prison for the usual alternative of 20 years to life... [T]hat suggests the 72[% of USers] who tell pollsters they support the death penalty are condemning themselves to pay an extra execution tax of \$7.8 billion.

...Coleman Wayne Gray was put to death by lethal injection in Virginia yesterday for murdering a grocery store manager... in May 1985... His case had wound its way through the legal system for... 11 years. The final ruling of the Supreme Court came only 10 minutes before the execution[, which]... took six minutes... The... director of the Virginia Department of Corrections, said injection was the preferred method... "This process does not aim to dehumanize the person being executed, but it's not designed to provide them with dignity either. It's done without emotion." ...An all-white jury convicted Gray, who was black, of robbing and abducting [Richard]McClelland, a white, and shooting him six times in the back of the head... Gray... was found guilty largely on the testimony of his accomplice[, who]... Gray... insisted was the [one who pulled the] trigger...

Forty years ago Jim Bolton had nothing to say when asked by the sheriff of Auckland if [Jim] had any last words. Moments later [Jim] was dead, hanged in a little high stone-walled yard open to the sky at Auckland Prison, the last [hu]man executed in N[Z]. Today Bolton might have had a lot more to say, given the much easier access to the media, and certainly there would have been a greater public clamour to save him. [Jim] was a Wanganui farmer, convicted of poisoning his wife on evidence of traces of arsenic found in her body, which may well have accumulated from the drinking water on the farm contaminated by arsenical weed killers. Throughout, 68-year-old Bolton [claimed to be] innocent, but in the 1950s there wasn't the forensic science available to support his defence. So did an innocent [person] hang? To this day some of his family say yes –[although 'Jim was having an affair with his wife's sister prior to her death' –] as do the family of James Hanratty, the last [hu]man executed in Britain, 35 years ago. The Home Office is now considering a post-humous pardon for Hanratty and doubts about his conviction led to Britain abolishing capital punishment... [in 1969 – just as doubts about Bolton's conviction, and the conviction of the 2nd-to-last person to hang in NZ (a '20-year-old Irish immigrant who stabbed someone once in the neck – the fatal blow allegedly occurred when the victim's body fell to the floor, causing his spine to snap'), led to capital punishment being abolished in NZ in 1961 (capital punishment had also been 'abolished in 1941, but was reintroduced in 1950'). But 'treason remains punishable by death in NZ.' In 1992, the Maori chief Mokomoko (hanged for allegedly killing a missionary; another Maori, whose wife

and kids were killed, had taken revenge upon the missionary, and was eventually hanged as well) was pardoned by the Government, whose predecessors allegedly arranged for his execution in order to confiscate a large area of land.' (By the way, 'Maketu, a Maori chief, was hanged for the murder of a European, her two children and a half-caste servant in 1842. The trial was the first criminal sitting of the NZ Supreme Court. It attempted to address the problem of making the trial process understandable to Maoris and to demonstrate the sanctity of human life. However, Maoris were excluded from all jury service, except for the very narrow function of Maori juries in criminal cases where both defendants and victims were Maoris. There was provision for a mixed jury in civil cases where either party was a Maori. A 1908 Act reinforced these provisions which were not abolished until 1962.')

Misgivings and the conflicting nature of evidence are problems facing many a jury and they sometimes get it wrong. Two juries did just that, as did the Court of Appeal on four occasions and the Privy Council, in the case of the... Pukekawa... [farmer] who was eventually pardoned of the murders of Harvey and Jeanette Crewe... [The farmer] would have long been dead if the advocates of capital punishment had their way. Yet most N[Z]ers consistently say they want a return of the death penalty. After Constable Glen McKibben was murdered last year, 58[%] of those polled said they supported hanging to 36[%] against (the figures were 52 for and 44 against in a similar poll in 1992). When questioned further some were more selective in who should get the rope – 89[%] wanted it for the murder of children, 85[%] for the murder of a police officer, 75[%] for the murder of public figures and 62[%] for the murder of spouses or partners... South Africans hardened by spiralling crime[also] are increasingly demanding the return of state hangings for violent criminals, with a new poll showing 80[%] support among urban residents. However, the... South African President... yesterday called the death penalty barbaric and blamed the country's violent crime wave on police and judicial corruption... [The] president of the Howard League for Penal Reform which is opposed to capital punishment, says what concerns him is that Western society seems to be becoming more aggressive and wanting the vengeance usually meted out by dictatorships. "That sort of ethos can lead to the reintroduction of capital punishment as in the U[S, where] 26 states... have so far resumed executions... yet... [most] murders are spur-of-the-moment acts..." [The president claims to] understand the emotions of people whose loved ones have been killed, and there are few crimes worse than those involving children, but often such murders are committed by the criminally insane. "In British law it's long been the practice that the insane don't hang even though you could say they're the very people who should because they're psychopaths, and perhaps are still dangerous when they are eventually released, much more so than those who are sane. But we only execute the healthy and in one case in [NZ the condemned person] had an operation for appendicitis and his execution was delayed until [the prisoner] was well enough to die... People say only hang those where it's definitely clear the individual is guilty. But where do you draw the line? How do you make a legal definition for those cases?" The Minister of Justice... who led the parliamentary debate to abolish capital punishment in N[Z], spoke of the "agonising" in cabinet over who should hang and who should be reprieved because, as the executive council, it told the Governor-General whose execution warrant to sign or commute. There was also the harrowing effect on those carrying out the sentence. In the 1950s, when hanging was resumed under the National Government, the hang[person's] only duty was to release the trapdoor. [The hangperson] was a shadowy figure apart, wearing a long coat, a scarf wrapped around his lower face, and a hat jammed down over his eyes to hide his identity. Watching over the condemned [guy (gals) had their sentences commuted) and the grim task of strapping, capping and then cutting down the body was done by prison staff[('public hangings had been abolished in 1858')]. The process was directed by the sheriff (one of whom had a nervous collapse as a result) and observed by a handful of senior prison staff, often a justice of the peace who was the only known volunteer present, the police officer who led the investigation, a doctor, chaplain and a few journalists. An inquest was held that night (executions took place at 6.30 pm) and it was a subdued bunch who waited... for the body to hang and then sign an official notice for publication in the N[Z] Gazette that so-and-so had been executed according to law. There were no descriptive reports of how the condemned behaved, although they were remarkably calm given the circumstances. One young Maori asked the prison superintendent "will I go to heaven?" [then] waved his bound hands and wished everybody "merry Christmas." It is hard to reconcile the scene in Auckland Prison in the 1950s with the jubilation shown by some witnesses at... executions today[in the US.

... 'The ringleader of a Texas prison break that touched off a huge hunt across the southwest of the US was sentenced to death yesterday for killing a police officer during a Christmas Eve robbery while on the run. The ringleader, 31, got the punishment it asked for. The only other option under Texas law was a sentence of life in prison. The ringleader said it did not want a life term. "What you call the death penalty, I call freedom."

... '*Freedom feels good* After 17 years, eight months and one day on death row, the 50-year-old Puerto Rican said it didn't want to talk about negative things on his first day of freedom. The Puerto Rican was convicted on witness testimony for the killing of cosmetology school owner Delbert Baker, even though there was no physical evidence linking him to the slaying. During his years in prison, the Puerto Rican lost several rounds of appeals and had his death sentence upheld by the Florida Supreme Court before the transcript of another person's confession to the slaying was discovered three years ago. The Puerto Rican was freed after prosecutors in central Florida's Polk County announced last week that they would not go ahead with a court-ordered retrial because they no longer had enough evidence. The administrative assistant state attorney said one of the two witnesses against the Puerto Rican had recanted and the other had died. Defence lawyers said the true killer, the now-deceased Vernon James, confessed to at least four investigators or lawyers, but none of those admissions was allowed in court. The 50-year-old planned to return to his native Puerto Rico and live with his 73-year-old mother. "Without hope, I probably would have committed suicide." The 50-year-old has not decided whether it will sue. The executive director of the Death Penalty Information Centre in Washington said the Puerto Rican was the 99th US death-row inmate freed after being cleared by new evidence.'

... an inmate 'walked through the Louisiana State Penitentiary gates a free person yesterday after the murder conviction that put him on death row for 13 years was dismissed. The state attorney-general's office dismissed charges that the inmate and a co-defendant murdered an elderly couple in 1986. A new investigation of the case was launched when a state district attorney judge threw out their convictions after defence lawyers cited questionable testimony and a lack of physical evidence. The co-defendant is also expected to be released.'

... 'John Wilkes Booth broke his leg in a fall after shooting President Abraham Lincoln on the balcony of Washington's Ford (Henry's granddad) Theatre in 1865. Booth fled on horseback but his injury slowed him. So Booth banged on a doctor's door in a village along the trail and spun a story about falling from his horse. The good doctor strapped the leg and allowed Booth to rest in a barn on the property. A posse in pursuit of Booth, knowing that Booth was hurt and likely to need help, also stopped at the doctor's. Booth was either shot or shot himself. But such was the confusion surrounding the assassination of Lincoln in post-Civil War America that the doctor's claim of being an innocent party was dismissed. Ultimately, all the jury needed to hear was that the doctor had tried to help Booth to escape. The doctor was hanged as a co-conspirator and his name quickly became a byword for treachery. But historians and his descendants uncovered the truth and, in 1976, the US President granted Dr Samuel Mudd a posthumous pardon.'

... 'an American death-row inmate who died of cancer 11 months ago has been cleared of the crime it was said to have committed. DNA tests revealed Frank Lee Smith did not rape and murder Shandra Whitehead, eight, in Florida in 1985. Mr Smith was on death row for 14 years.'

... 'Declaring that it was being lynched and proclaiming his innocence, convicted killer Gary Graham was executed on Thursday night for murder in a case that sparked national debate on a presidential hopeful's support for capital punishment. The 36-year-old fought the guards who took him to the execution chamber at the state prison about 130km north of Houston and his final words before a lethal injection took effect were defiant: "They are killing me tonight. They are murdering me tonight." In an angry, rambling, six-minute statement that called on black Americans to resist "genocide" by the state of Texas, Graham, an African-American, maintained his innocence in the 1981 murder of 53-year-old Bobby Lambert outside a Houston supermarket. Graham was convicted largely on the testimony of a single witness and no physical evidence linked him to the crime. Graham's case galvanised death penalty opponents who called for a new trial on grounds Graham had poor legal counsel and could be exonerated by witnesses who were never called to testify in his 1981 trial. Outside the looming walls of the prison where Graham's legal battle ended, several hundred demonstrators gathered to support him

and shout angry slogans at the state governor. A small army of police kept them in line and well separated from about 20 Ku Klux Klan members who said Graham should die. The governor backed Graham's execution and believed Graham was guilty. "After considering all of the facts I am confident justice is being done. May God bless the victims and the families of the victims and may God bless Mr Graham," the governor said. The governor, who under Texas law could not intervene in the execution, said the Board of Pardons and Paroles "thoroughly reviewed" the case before giving it its stamp of approval. The governor noted Graham admitted to "at least 10 armed robberies of 13 victims," two of them shot and one kidnapped and raped at gunpoint, and had brought his case before 33 judges before his execution. Graham's last-minute flurry of appeals ended when two courts, including the US Supreme Court, refused his final bid for a stay of execution. The Supreme Court, by a 5-4 vote, turned down Graham's request and a federal judge in Austin, Texas, later rejected defence lawyers' attempts to sue the state's parole board on grounds that it had violated Graham's civil rights. At that point, Graham's lawyers gave up their legal fight.' ■ 'Texas is the only US state where prisoners can't appeal directly to the governor because a previous governor accepted bribes in return for clemency.'

... 'A SMALL Texan town has turned executions into big business. Huntsville, population 35,000, is the venue for one-third of America's executions. Prisons and corporal punishment contribute \$NZ180 million a year to the local economy.'

...The rate of execution in Texas nearly rivals that in Iran, Iraq [- which, incidentally]... is branding the foreheads of criminals who have had limbs amputated so they cannot be mistaken for war veterans... [-] and Saudi Arabia, Amnesty International said yesterday as the state carried out its seventh execution of this month... Patrick Rogers, who killed a police officer in Texas during a 1985 crime spree... [will be] the first of a record 11 executions set for [next month] in Texas, prison officials said.

...Jessel Turner, a 37-year-old... Houston... truck driver... [who was] convicted of killing a taxi driver during a 1986 crime spree has been... put to death in a record 27th execution in Texas this year.

...Texas prison officials have carried out their 29th execution of the year, putting John Cockrum to death by lethal injection for murdering elderly Eva May during a robbery of her DeKalb shop in 1986.

...A drifter convicted of murders in three states yesterday became the 37th person to be executed... in Texas this year... The Catholic Church, shocked by [the] unprecedented number of executions... urged the state yesterday to abandon the death penalty. All 21 of the state's... bishops said Texas was "usurping the sovereign dominion of God over human life"... Meanwhile, a sharply divided Florida Supreme Court ruled yesterday that the state's use of the electric chair was not cruel and unusual punishment, clearing the way for a new round of executions. The 4-3 decision upheld the constitutionality of the 74-year-old chair, dubbed "Old Sparky." But a majority of justices also urged state law-makers to strongly consider adopting lethal injection as an alternative for the condemned. The chair was last used in March to execute... Pedro Medina. Blue and orange flames shot from the right side of the mask covering Medina's head and flickered for six to 10 seconds, while smoke filled the death chamber.

...Convicted hit [guy] Alan Bannister was put to death by lethal injection yesterday at a Missouri prison, despite an international campaign... to stay the execution... Hollywood stars... and... the police officer who arrested him, all made appeals on his behalf... The execution ended a 14-year battle to have his death sentence overturned by supporters who claimed that a bungled defence led to a wrongful conviction of premeditated murder... Bannister, aged 39, was sentenced to death for... killing... Darrel Ruestman after prosecutors argued that [Bannister] had been promised \$US5500... by the jealous husband of a [wife] who had run off with Ruestman. [Bannister] admitted to the killing, but said the shooting was accidental so... second-degree murder, which is not punishable by death... should have been [his] charge... at most... In his final words, Bannister strongly condemned the state for committing "as premeditated a murder as possible, far more heinous and deliberate than my crime."

...when you get down to it, vengeance is just another way of saying: "[That guy] did bad, let's do worse to him." ...that line of reasoning... [imposes] a crazy arithmetic which says that every death has to be balanced by a second death... the state... [matches] the violence of every murder in the hope that by doubling the number of killings the state might lead the way to calm, secure and peaceful lives for every citizen... I doubt it... I guess, though, that the... [people who support capital punishment] think that prison is a softer option than death.

...Murder is the most horrible of crimes... Yet the mere horror of the crime does not prevent its commission. Every age, therefore, has guarded against it with moral commandment and with a penalty as dreadful as it is just; that of taking from the murderer that same precious gift... [stolen] from his victim. There is in our decadent age widespread reluctance to stand the consequences of one's own actions. The sentimental easily regard criminals as decent people deserving sympathy and forget to sympathise with their victims... The only appropriate penalty for murder is in many cases the time-hallowed and final one. It is simple justice. The fashionable tendency is to dismiss this as unworthy 'revenge.' But justice - rendering to someone that which is his due - is as good a name; and, call it justice or revenge, no society can survive without a horror of wickedness and the fulfilled desire to see fitting punishment for the wicked. No one is forced to murder. If murderers dislike the penalty, let them refrain from the crime... Much hypocrisy surrounds this debate. No one seems to worry when unpleasant criminals are killed in prison... Many consider taking innocent human life by abortion and euthanasia positively desirable. How can such people object to the execution of murderers? The death penalty's opponents object to the state cold-bloodedly killing citizens. They believe it should set an example of tolerance and humanity. But one cannot tolerate murder. In accepting prisons we accept in principle that some unpleasantness is necessary. Why are unpleasant years of imprisonment acceptable but a swift humane end is not? The strongest objection to the death penalty is that innocent people may be wrongly executed. This would indeed be dreadful. Yet... [if] a conviction were doubtful, that would be an appropriate reason for commuting the sentence. Moreover, murder itself involves taking innocent life. If the death penalty did reduce the number of murders, then, even if an innocent citizen were occasionally regrettably convicted, there would still be a net reduction in the number of innocent lives lost. It is not that murderers are simply the product of an environment of cruelty and deprivation. Such a claim insults the many from less than perfect backgrounds who become decent citizens. Well brought-up people murder just as easily. We always have a choice. I do not enjoy killing possums. A possum cannot help being what it is. In an ideal world one might not perhaps kill anything... Life is the ideal, and death is always turning away from it. Nevertheless, I do kill possums, swiftly and humanely, because they must be killed. Likewise, there is nothing inherently sadistic in answering the voice of innocent blood that cries out from the ground. By a dreadful paradox, the lesson of life's preciousness can only be learnt by taking it away from those who have, in justice, forfeited it already by their actions... [● Since] the US resumed executions in 1976, there have been 391 executions...

The trial of... the Oklahoma City bomb[er]... has ignited a rare debate over capital punishment in a country that takes it for granted. Opponents of the death penalty, whose voices are usually drowned out by overwhelming public sentiment favouring capital punishment, have suddenly found a new opportunity to make themselves heard. The result has been a serious moral discussion on editorial pages and television shows. Prominent among those who oppose death... [has] been the National Conference of Catholic Bishops... "We see, in our modern day, a tremendous need to break the cycle of violence. Execution does not do that..." ...If the jury in Denver decides against the death penalty... opponents of capital punishment are likely to... say... that if [the Oklahoma City bomber] was not condemned to death, nobody should be... [because] if there is one person truly deserving of the death penalty, it is... [him. A prominent civil] rights leader... who believes society is demeaned when it takes the lives of murderers, acknowledged that [the bomber's] apparent lack of remorse made it hard to argue that his life should be preserved... "But I can't help but think that when it was time to kill Jesus by capital punishment, the people cheered, 'Kill him...' And yet, they were wrong." ...To many opponents, a major problem with capital punishment is the inconsistency with which it is applied, not so much in high-profile cases... but in the many anonymous trials that take place around the country every year. Recent cases demonstrate that not all violent crimes end with the death sentence. Two white Marines convicted of murdering blacks in pursuit of their neo-nazi beliefs were sentenced to life imprisonment although it was

unclear what mitigating circumstances applied. And a [mother] convicted of drowning her two infant sons in her car, ignoring their pleas for help, received life imprisonment after the state of South Carolina decided not to seek the death penalty, apparently because [of the offender's sex. In another notable case, before a sports personality (r:p1251, ln40)] went to trial and successfully beat murder charges, the prosecution decided not to seek the death penalty in his case because the public celebrity and financial resources of the defendant might make it difficult to get the execution carried out... [● The] bill to reinstate the death penalty in Massachusetts failed in the state House of Representatives by a single vote which changed because of the British nanny case... [A] Democrat... switched his vote from “yes” to “no”... after talking to constituents about... the British au pair convicted... of murder in the death of an infant in her care... Massachusetts appeared ready to join the 38 other states with capital punishment when House members, many spurred by a month of grisly crimes that left mothers and children slain, passed a death penalty bill 81-79 [last month]... The bill was then sent to committee to be reconciled with a similar Senate measure approved earlier this month. [The]Acting Governor... had vowed to sign it. The Senate has passed a death penalty bill three times this decade, but it always died by a narrow margin in the House. It did again on Thursday, 80-80. The bill called for allowing the death penalty in... 15 types of... murder cases... Massachusetts, long considered a liberal bastion, held its last executions in 1947. The state Supreme Judicial Court threw out the most recent capital punishment law in 1984.

...[there are only '35 countries where the death penalty is abolished for all crimes, of which the first was Venezuela in 1863. In another 18 countries (including Canada, Italy, Spain, the UK and Israel) the death penalty is abolished except for certain crimes under military law or crimes committed in exceptional circumstances such as wartime. The laws of the remaining countries and territories provide for the death penalty for ordinary crimes.'

...*'Move to kill death penalty* THE UN will consider a petition calling for an end to the death penalty around the world. A Rome-based peace group will present the petition with more than three million signatures to the secretary-general tomorrow. The organisers said the signatories were from 146 countries. They included the Dalai Lama, the archbishop of Canterbury and the world Methodist council president. Amnesty International also worked on the campaign. Although many countries have abolished capital punishment, executions remain legal in 90 countries and about 30 nations carry them out each year. Meanwhile, 'als attorneys for... the... **Oklahoma City bomber...** prepared more testimony aimed at avoiding his execution, a new poll showed that two-thirds of [USers think the bomber] should be put to death... and even among those who said they were opposed to the death penalty, 32[% said that, in this case, the offender] should die... Defence attorneys said [the bomber] set the bomb... that killed 168 people... in response to the Government's 1993 attack at the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas, where some 80 people died. [The bomber] thought the Government was at war with the American people... [The bomber was] someone “who you will not be able to dismiss as a monster or a demon, but who could be your son, your brother... We believe... you will come to the conclusion that the right response is a life sentence,”... the jury... was... told...

Now that the Oklahoma City bomber... has been sentenced to death, it's time to ask the obvious, but distasteful question: should his execution be televised? ...“I'm all for it,” says [a]60 Minutes veteran... “I would watch it. I would broadcast it. I find it difficult to understand why this should not be televised.” In fact, [the veteran] recently pitched the possibility of 60 Minutes broadcasting another execution to his boss... [following] “a dialogue”... with someone from an unnamed state about the revolutionary idea. The revolution will not be televised, sa[id his boss]. “That hungry for ratings, I'm not... I wouldn't watch it. I wouldn't put it on the air... We're not in the business of bad taste...” ...[a co-host of American ABC's *This Week*, agrees... “Society is barbarous enough, thank you very much... I can't imagine... we would do anything that medieval. Some of it would encourage voyeurism. ‘Let's watch the guy fry.’ Besides, I'm a good Catholic girl, and I don't believe in the death penalty.” [The]CNN legal analyst[, who is]... also a Catholic, has fought against the death penalty as a lawyer but is re-examining her stance because of the [Oklahoma City bomber's] case. When it comes to televising his execution, however, [the analyst] is unequivocal. “We shouldn't impose punishment behind closed doors... We need to be confronted by the sentence we impose. It's a barbaric procedure. We shouldn't hide it and pretend it doesn't exist.” If the U[S] only had one TV network and [the analyst owned it, the analyst] “would feel obligated” to air [the] execution. “The American people should see it, instead of just reading about it. It may change their views on the death penalty. It might go out of existence.” But if too many executions made the nightly listings, viewers “would get sick of them... It would get to the point where people would say on Thursdays at 9 pm, ‘Do you want to watch *Seinfeld* or another execution?’ ...But... I wouldn't watch the actual execution... I'd turn it off... To witness someone die is more than I'm prepared to do.”

...[‘When Timothy McVeigh is put to sleep next month, the concept of the execution of criminals as an act of justice will have taken another insidious step forward. His death will be watched by at least a few hundred people and perhaps even by millions – depending on whether the first amendment to the US constitution can be stretched to further absurdities. Freedom of speech has already accommodated the notion that obscene thoughts should be publicly lanced like boils for the benefit of all of us through the lyrics of entertainers. Consequently, it might seem reasonable to accept the idea that vile deeds should be matched by equally vile public deeds. And it will all seem so easy, so hygienic. McVeigh will be strapped to the “gurney” (a friendly word that), say a few self-important words and take a permanent nap. Just a guy going gently to sleep like the ageing cat with cancer we reluctantly had put down a few years ago as gently and painlessly as possible. The lethal injection is without fuss, without apparent violence, without the unseemliness of gore and of bodies behaving badly, without even a true sense of death – more a kind of moral cleansing. Perhaps one day soon these gentle public judicial murders will have their own pay channel and become a kind of soft porn for psychopaths. No one – not even in Texas, the capital punishment capital of the US – seems to be urging a return to the lash or the cane as instruments of justice. Is this because it's impossible to administer it without the victim revealing agony, without the ugly sight of tearing flesh offending the sensibilities of the just and forcing them to examine their consciences? I have tried to climb into the minds of those Americans who want to watch McVeigh die to see “justice” done. Is their justice that kind of elemental revenge of the Old Testament, a book so revered as a literal code of conduct by so many of them? Or is it a hangover from the Old West with its recurring myth that order is imposed on anarchy only by good guys killing bad guys? If you've ever been to Texas you'll have noticed that many guys there affect a kind of masculine swank and hubris. I used to think all people in any community that legislated for capital punishment should be forced to watch it, but I fear too many Americans might enjoy the experience, especially now that it's without havoc. And what about McVeigh? Does McVeigh fit the comforting (for capital punishment fans) image of the reckless, blood-lusting monster? I'd say the opposite is true – that McVeigh's an insensate psychopath, an emotional cripple incapable of compassion for himself or anyone else, without anything like the normal range of human feelings. McVeigh's shown no remorse for even the children it so casually killed and wants to die, too. I'd say it wasn't extreme hate that drove McVeigh but the lack of any feeling, the cold, warped, self-obsessed rationality of the fanatic. If you examine his beliefs you'll find they're not all that different from the philosophy of a substantial minority of right-wing Americans who believe the Government, although democratic, is the enemy against whom they should be ready to bear arms in defence of some deluded sense of freedom. If you listen carefully you'll find it has much to do with the freedom to oppress those who disagree. McVeigh just reduces these beliefs to his own horrendous banality. There is gathering opposition to executions in the US among the many millions of intelligent and compassionate American people because of the number of victims who have been inadequately represented in court, who have been severely intellectually handicapped, and because of the proportion of the white and well-off who escape the death penalty compared with those who are black and poor. All this is giving executions a bad name again. In the meantime, I would like to ask the grief-stricken (to whom my heart goes out): why do you want to assuage your anguish at all those murders with yet another? I would like to ask the voyeurs, the “just” and those who, despite all the evidence think this is a deterrent: will some Great Truth be honoured by this killing of McVeigh, will the anger of your Old Testament God be propitiated by the sacrifice? Will we be bigger, better people for this revenge, or will we all be diminished?]

...‘By tomorrow morning two concerns pressing the people of Terre Haute, Indiana, will be settled: the winner of the state’s beauty pageant will be known, and Timothy McVeigh, the most famous resident of this Midwestern town, will be dead. The accidental convergence of the two events is an inconvenience to this farming town. As the town began to fill up on Saturday with reporters, residents expressed weariness at the mention of McVeigh. The notoriety McVeigh has heaped upon Terre Haute has become an inescapable fact of life. “We have no control over it,” said the president of the Greater Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce, who conceded it would rather be talking about the state’s corn-fed daughters than discussing someone who, according to recent reports, has starved himself to make his appearance more dramatic when the curtains are drawn back on the window of the execution chamber to reveal him strapped down and ready to go. “Frankly, there is never going to be a good time for an event of this kind.” On a large, closely mown field between the muddy Wabash River and the penitentiary itself, a vast media encampment has been rebuilt a month after the last one was demolished when McVeigh’s execution was delayed by the FBI’s disclosure that it had found 4000 pieces of evidence not disclosed to the defence. With all the activity, the city of tents, portable toilets and carefully demarcated protest pens could be mistaken for a county fair. The prison has rented a wedding marquee for press briefings; military tents housing barracked “special forces” ring the perimeter in the unlikely event of trouble; and kilometres of cable run between satellite trucks and the grand stages from which the world’s newscasters will report with gravity. Still, an air of purposelessness hangs over the media encampment. Besides the red-brick walls of the prison, razor wire and guard towers, there is little to view. The attention of the world’s media will be trained on a small building it cannot see, reporting on an event it cannot witness. McVeigh’s execution may be a strangely muted denouement to a saga that began with a bomb blast. To prevent any embarrassing hitch in the first federal execution in 38 years, executioners have been doing mock exercises last week. The decorated Gulf War veteran who, aged just 26, built the fertiliser and fuel bomb that destroyed the Alfred P. Murrah Building on 19 April, 1995, and damaged 300 buildings over 1.5ha, will remain an impenetrable figure of evil to most Americans. But the FBI’s incompetence in the case and still unanswered questions over alleged accomplices have only strengthened McVeigh’s hand and threaten to confuse his legacy as a mass murderer. “I think McVeigh’d rather go out as a martyr, and if McVeigh is killed, I think McVeigh will, in the mind of a small number of people,” said the coordinator of a militia watchdog group in North Carolina. At election hour doubts about the death penalty will be apparent in Oklahoma City itself. “People are starting to realise it doesn’t accomplish anything,” said someone who had 40 bones broken in the blast. “You start to think, death doesn’t deserve one more death.” But McVeigh will certainly die, and be given the opportunity to deliver a few last words before the executioners open the taps. According to McVeigh’s biographers, those words will be selected from William Ernest Henley’s stunningly defiant 19th-century poem *Invictus*: “I am the master of my fate/I am the captain of my soul.”

...the ‘US Attorney-General has authorised federal prosecutors to seek the death penalty against a Tanzanian citizen charged with preparing the explosives used during the near-simultaneous bombings of 2 US embassies in Africa in August that killed 224 people, including 12 US citizens, and wounded 4000’.

...‘The European Court of Human Rights has asked Turkey to delay the Kurdish rebel leader’s execution until it has ruled on his plea that the death penalty breaches European law. In Ankara, the Turkish PM delayed stating any firm position on the case, which is central to Turkey’s hopes of winning EU candidacy this month. The PM must juggle Turkey’s EU aspirations with the wishes of his hardline nationalist coalition partners. Neither want to be seen to be bowing to European pressure.’ In related news, ‘four convicted Pakistani murderers who tried to escape hanging by selling their daughters – including a five-year-old – into marriage to the elderly relatives of their victims, are due to be executed today. The attempted deals were met by a storm of protest’]...

The family of a N[Z] pilot murdered in a shooting rampage in Indonesia last year say the death sentence handed down to the offender is “a bit barbaric.” Michael Findlay was one of 16 people slain by a second-lieutenant of the Kopassus elite forces at the Irian Jaya airport during a two-hour massacre. Irian Jaya’s Jayapura military court rejected lawyers’ arguments that the officer was mentally deranged and did not know what [it] was doing. Mr Findlay’s wife... said from Brisbane that the verdict was beyond the family’s control. “...None of us desperately want this soldier to die. I would rather have seen him get life imprisonment... – [the soldier] did kill 16 people and injure numerous others.” Mrs Findlay... [and] the couple’s five children were relieved the trial had finally been held. “It’s been a struggle for 12 months, it’s still a struggle. We’ll never get over it.”

...[‘the mother of 23-year-old Katherine Sheffield knew it did not have all the answers to her daughter’s killing, but never knew what was missing. “I was surprised by the compassion I felt for the person convicted for the killing and how easily I forgave him. It was not a feeling I or Katherine’s father expected to feel.” A Northland resident was convicted in 1995 and jailed for 11 years after his girlfriend was discovered buried in a shallow grave behind his house. The boyfriend admitted slashing Sheffield’s throat and stabbing her in the chest under provocation, but also said it couldn’t remember committing the killing. Two weeks ago police announced they were re-investigating the case after another person confessed to the crime in a letter sent to the boyfriend’s sister. The letter was passed on to the police and the boyfriend’s lawyer. Katherine’s mum had been contacted by police to investigate some rumours about the case but it wasn’t until the mum saw the television news that the mum found out about the admission. The mum had had an “uneasy” feeling that the boyfriend had been made a scapegoat for a crime it did not commit. “This would not be the first instance of a person confessing to a murder it had not committed.”

...‘The first person executed by guillotine in France was a highway robber, decapitated in April 1792. Hamida Djandoubi, a Tunisian immigrant convicted of murder, was the last, in 1977. The guillotine, named after Joseph-Ignace Guillotin, gained fame during the French Revolution, when more than 10,000 people, including Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, lost their heads. Use of the guillotine and capital punishment was outlawed in France in 1981.’]

...Saudi Arabia yesterday beheaded [5 guys] convicted of raping a boy while... drunk... rais[ing] to 101 the number of... execut[ions]... this year.

...Saudi Arabia has executed more than 100 people this year, most[ly]... drug traffickers, but the drug trade continues unabated... [O]nce considered virtually crime-free... Saudi Arabia is a conservative kingdom which clings to ancient traditions while securing the trappings of modern life with its vast oil wealth. Under its strict reading of Islam, convicted murderers, rapists and drug smugglers are[publicly] beheaded. Some 68 people were beheaded in 1996 and 192 in 1995. In recent weeks, executions have averaged one a day, raising the year’s tally so far to 107... Witnesses say the beheadings attract large crowds... [However, with the notable exception of their Government, most Saudis] agree... that beheadings do not deter drug smugglers... “The people who get beheaded in Saudi Arabia are not drug barons. They are couriers, poor people... who... agree to smuggle the drugs for a few hundred dollars... They take the risk because for them a few hundred dollars is like winning the lottery. The drug lords brutally take advantage of these people.” Saudi officials, contacted repeatedly, offered no comment[, but diplomats] in the... capital said the drug runners were often duped into believing their employers knew “special tricks” to avoid getting caught... “Many are used by big drug traffickers who... offer them a free umra [pilgrimage] to Saudi Arabia[then] load them with drugs without their knowledge,”... said... a... senior Asian diplomat... Most of the condemned drug smugglers this year were Pakistanis... Two [gals], both Nigerians convicted of drug smuggling, were also beheaded.

...the British nurse charged with murdering [her AUSn] colleague Yvonne Gilford, will go through lengthy legal manoeuvring before any death sentence could be carried out. Capital cases... automatically go through an elaborate appeals system and must finally be ratified by... the... King... before execution can take place, lawyers in Saudi Arabia said yesterday... “The appeals process can take from a few weeks – in cases, for example, where the individual has terrorised the society and there is a public outcry – to months in an ordinary case. In one case it took 14 years,”... Up until the last minute, the victim’s family can intervene and spare the life of the condemned... “...Nothing is irreversible except for death,” one lawyer said... Under Saudi law, the family of the victim has the right to decide whether a death sentence should be carried out or commuted on payment of “diah,” or blood money... A legal expert in Riyadh said the level of required “diah” for a non-Muslim [gal] was 30,000 riyals (\$[NZ]12,712). The

rate was significantly higher for Muslims and [guys]... Yvonne Gilford's brother... had not waived his right to demand the death sentence, despite statements from defence lawyers... Despite the brother's strong views, lawyers in Saudi Arabia said it was unlikely the [British nurse] would be executed in the event of a guilty verdict... "As far as we know, no Western [gal] has ever been executed in the kingdom,"...

The desert kingdom is a place of wild extremes... Saudi Arabia's temperature hits a blinding 50 deg C during the day, and plummets towards freezing at night... alcohol, drugs and the mixing of the sexes are utterly forbidden in public and yet... parties rage privately through the night. For the 30,000 British workers living there, including hundreds of young single nurses... lured ...by the prospect of high, tax-free salaries... Saudi Arabia is alternately a place of grim oppression and... illicit excitement. But at times it can all go horribly wrong, as... [some] found to their cost on Christmas Eve last year. Thirteen days earlier... the body of Yvonne Gilford was found in the closed expatriate compound of... [the] medical centre in Dhahran... Less than a week after... the... murder... Saudi police identified her killers as two British nurses... Outside the compound... the... Committee for Encouraging Virtue and Preventing Vice, and the Mutawwah, the feared religious police... enforce... some of the harshest... social behaviour... codes in the world... On the inside of the complex's high-security gates, ex-pats were pretty much allowed to let their hair down... Dhahran airbase is famous among ex-pats. Until recently the Saudi authorities turned a blind eye to its 15 pubs and discos. Most have now been closed. Drinking alcohol remains the source of most problems between ex-pats and the Saudi authorities: bottles of Johnny Walker Black Label whiskey change hands for \$US112 and some smuggle wine-making kits into the country... Both... [of the British nurses] were earning \$US25,600 working in the hospital at the time of their arrest. Their rooms had telephone and television, they had drivers... [- guys, of course (gals) are forbidden to drive... [in Saudi Arabia) -] laundry facilities, swimming pools and tennis courts. But the existence is a claustrophobic one, in which tensions often arise. "It is an unreal and unhealthy existence," one former nurse said... According to the well-leaked Saudi account, a quarrel had broken out at... Gilford's flat after [the two British nurses] had described her as "old" and claimed [Gilford] was about to lose her job... In the ensuing argument, the story goes, one of the [Brits] hit her with a teapot... Gilford fell, then took out a kitchen knife to defend herself... was relieved of it and stabbed in the face, back and chest... Saudi police claim they... discovered an automatic cash card receipt which was to lead them to make their arrests... 5000 riyals... - the maximum allowed - had been withdrawn after the savage murder. Detectives placed the bank complex under surveillance. A week after the killing, the British [nurses]... made for the cash dispenser with Miss Gilford's cash card. Security officers then detained them. There was only one problem with this seemingly open-and-shut case... Both [of the Brits], who were said by Saudi police to have confessed, withdrew their "confessions" in January. They had only confessed after being promised they would be sent home without prosecution, their lawyers said. They had also been sexually abused by their interrogators and threatened with rape. The case was rapidly proving a diplomatic nightmare for both the British and Saudi authorities, anxious not to jeopardise the kingdom's huge defence contracts with Britain and to avoid the embarrassing and unprecedented spectacle of a British [gal] being publicly executed in what the Saudis blackly dub Chop Square. Meanwhile, in Jamestown, A[US.] a 59-year-old postal worker was doing everything [in his power to ensure the British nurses] were indeed decapitated... As media interest grew, [the British nurses] were getting used to the grim realities of Damman prison, where they... shared a cell with six other inmates. Seventy prisoners shared four lavatories... In March... [their] lawyer... made a direct approach to the [victim's] family, asking them to waive their right to insist on the death penalty[, but] was rebuffed... Two months later [the British nurses], wearing long black robes and in chains, appeared for the first time before the Supreme Court in Al Khobar for the start of their trial. For the first time in Saudi history, defence lawyers were allowed to be present. But the trial was adjourned repeatedly. In June, [the British nurses'] families called a news conference in Glasgow, casting doubt on the police's version of events. They pointed out the two [suspects] supposedly used... Gilford's cash card after they had been interviewed by the authorities, a highly unlikely move. And they provide alternative suspects: five security guards who worked at the complex and were involved in a money-lending scheme. They took exception, it was claimed, to... Gilford's willingness to lend money interest-free. All were fired after the murder, and one disappeared, a Saudi source maintains. Confusion remains.

...Lawyers for [the brother of Yvonne] Gilford yesterday opened the door for a deal to spare the lives of two British nurses... after claims that [the brother] would accept... \$1.8 million... in "blood" money... [T]he nurses' Saudi lawyer... said [the brother] would keep \$1.1 million and give [the remainder] to a children's hospital in... [AUS. One of the nurses has already] been found guilty of being an accessory to murder and faces 500 lashes and eight years in prison, while the Saudi courts are yet to pass a verdict on... [the other nurse. In another development,] the British media warned [the British PM]... to proceed with caution in his attempts to persuade Saudi Arabia not to carry out the sentence of 500 lashes... saying angry condemnations of Islamic law could backfire... Under Islamic law, her 500 lashes should be administered with a bent elbow, not bruise or break the skin and normally would be doled out over the course of her sentence.

...SAUDI ARABIA'S King... and his advisers face a dilemma... The case... of... the... two British nurses... has set in motion outraged demands in Britain for diplomatic action to spare the nurses, culminating in an extraordinary meeting in New York between[the] British Foreign Secretary... and[the] Saudi Foreign Minister... to discuss the issue. If... [one of the nurses] is led to a public square in a black cloak and decapitated... the... event would have shattering repercussions in Saudi Arabia's relationship with Britain and the kingdom's desire to be seen as a civilised, modern state would undoubtedly suffer in Europe and the U[S] also. Yet Saudi authorities believe in their system and intend to stand by it. They say they are not alone in the use of capital punishment, and see beheading as a quick and humane death compared to hanging, electrocution or poison gas... From the beginning, the Yvonne Gilford murder case has been a hot potato. Saudi officials knew their system would be put under a microscope by the West, which they regard as ignorant of and biased against their Islamic beliefs. The case has been so sensitive the verdict is still under wraps.

...[the] brother of... Yvonne Gilford yesterday would not confirm or deny whether more than \$A1.6 million... had been paid into a trust fund as part of a "blood money" deal.

... "I have agreed to waive the death penalty in consideration of sources, other than the nurses and their families, providing \$1.7 million," [the brother of Yvonne] Gilford told a news conference[yesterday]. "I would like to make it clear I have not accepted any 'blood money' as that is a specified sum under Saudi Arabian law... [I] have accepted compensation which is an alternative to 'blood money' under Saudi Arabian law..." [His] lawyer said the money would be donated by British companies which... had no connection with the nurses... [M]ost of the compensation money [would] be donated to charity, with \$A1 million going to the... construction of a day surgery ward... in Adelaide... in honour of his sister. [The brother] would receive a nominal sum of \$A50,000 for "pain and suffering" and the rest would go to pay lawyers in Saudi Arabia and A[US].

...an A[US]n's decision to spare the life of a British nurse... accused of murdering his sister improves the chances that a second nurse will escape flogging, [the] British Foreign secretary... said yesterday... "It would be unusual in Saudi law if the nurse who had been convicted of the lesser offence got the heavier sentence..." ...[Incidentally, the] hospital which is set to receive a \$A1 million... "blood money" donation... meets this week to decide whether to accept the offer... [Its] chief executive officer... conceded the hospital had been put in an awkward position. But [the CEO hinted that it was his intention to] recommend the windfall be accepted because it was legally obtained and therefore morally acceptable.

...Adelaide [Gal]'s and Children's Hospital has accepted a \$A1 m... donation offered by... [the] brother of murdered nurse Yvonne Gilford and will name a children's day surgery after her... [In another development, the] sentence of eight years' jail and 500 lashes imposed... on... [one of the British nurses] for her part in the murder... has been reduced... [The nurse] will instead get a four-year term and be spared the lashes, Scotland's *Daily Record*... said, citing an unnamed Saudi source. The newspaper also reported that... [the 2nd British nurse], who has yet to be sentenced by the Islamic court... also would serve four years in jail... Relatives of the nurses were surprised by the report. [The 2nd nurse's] brother-in-law, said: "We have not heard anything either here or from our lawyers in Saudi Arabia. I am somewhat surprised that this information is flying around."

...The Adelaide [Gal]'s and Children's Hospital was still undecided at the weekend how to respond to a letter from the lawyer representing the nurses accused of murdering... Yvonne Gilford... asking them to reconsider the decision to accept a \$A1 million... blood money offer... [□ Yvonne's brother]'s lawyers had set a deadline of 5 pm on Friday for the payment of \$A1.7 million... The deadline passed without any payment being made.

...Lawyers for [Yvonne Gilford's brother] yesterday applied to the... Adelaide Supreme Court... for dismissal of legal action taken against him by two British nurses... As wrangling continued over the[agreed] payment of \$A1.7[m, the brother's]... lawyer... said... his client... would argue that the ongoing action against... [him] was an abuse of process... Before the agreement was reached, the nurses... had taken action in the... Supreme Court... to sue [him] for acting in a manner to cause them damage... [In further news from across the ditch, a] painful traditional punishment imposed in an Aboriginal community in Northern Territory has met a familiar obstacle – the white view of things. The Lajamanu community near Katherine... wants to spear [a]28-year-old... five times in his thighs for killing his 23-year-old nephew in a fight... That is after they have thrown large, heavy wooden boomerangs at him and beaten him with their fists. But they cannot carry out their... punishment, even though [the offender] wants them to. A N[T] Supreme Court judge has stepped in... [and refused the offender's] application to be bailed... [The offender] even threatened to commit suicide if [the judge prevented him from suffering] the punishment, but [the judge] denied his plea saying the punishment would “more likely than not” cause him “grievous bodily harm.” ...legally a person could not consent to being “grievously” harmed and therefore the punishment would be a crime and the court could not facilitate a crime. The question of Aboriginal law has vexed A[US]'s British-based law courts since colonisation. In one 1981 court case – a judge... allow[ed] a murder accused to be punished in the traditional... way. In that case, the judge granted bail saying it was almost certain that until the spearing had taken place the matter would be unresolved and the community would be ill at ease and serious trouble might flare up at any time. But [in this case the judge] was given a detailed description of the... punishment... An Aboriginal law specialist at the N[T] University... said... “It's always going to be a tough one [as] courts cannot be seen to be sanctioning assaults outside the law, but then again they must take into account that some A[US]ns face two kinds of punishment.” ...A tribal elder... told the court that in his experience victims of these types of punishments could normally walk in about two weeks... [O]ther members of the community would monitor the punishment to make sure [the offender wasn't] permanently injured... [H]owever... mistakes had been made in the past and spearings had fatally punctured arteries.

...[‘following Islamic law in Somalia means people have had a hand cut off – often leading to death by blood poisoning – for stealing goods worth £1.30.’

...‘A POTENTIALLY lethal ritual will be imposed on fellow villagers of the person who admitted killing a Samoan MP. The 34-year-old was sentenced to death yesterday for killing Samoan Public Works Minister Luagalau Levaula Kamu, who was shot in the back at a social function on July 17. The 34-year-old's father, the recently dismissed Gal's Affairs Minister, and another government politician are also in custody facing murder and conspiracy to murder charges over the same killing. Since gaining independence in 1962, Samoa has never carried out the death sentence which is routinely commuted to life. But by tradition, the 34-year-old's conviction means his village of Malie must make a traditional apology or ifoga to Kamu's village. In an ifoga, the matia or chiefs of the offending family gather before dawn outside the home of the offended family, where they sit on the ground and cover themselves with fine, hand-woven mats. They must stay there and deal with whatever indignity is inflicted upon them until forgiven by the offended family. Deaths have been known to occur during ifoga. The *Samoa Times*, published before the guilty plea, said the 34-year-old had struck a deal which would see him transferred to police custody on the island of Savai'i while his wife and three children would be escorted to NZ. Samoan police are understood to be making investigations into some of the wider allegations against the 34-year-old's father and the other government politician as they build cases against them before their next Supreme Court appearances, on Thursday and Friday this week. American Samoan media yesterday reported other alleged accomplices were also being sought, and Samoan community leaders in NZ said there were rumours a second gun-holder had failed to assassinate the Samoan PM.’

...‘The assassination of a cabinet minister, the arrest of two leading politicians and the imposition of the death penalty on the son of one of them is turning into a seismic event for Samoa. Whether the death sentence will be carried out is still in contention. Samoa has not hanged anybody since independence. But one day after the son had been sentenced to death, Samoa's PM said the death sentence would be retained for murder; keeping the penalty would make those contemplating murder think twice. A deep strain of high-level political corruption is revealed in the drama.’

...‘Samoa needs to have a South African-style truth commission after its political assassination trials are completed, says the country's Opposition leader. Speaking in Auckland yesterday, the leader said that a wider inquiry was needed to reveal the extent of corruption in Government departments. The leader blames a culture of state corruption as a trigger in the murder of Mr Kamu. However, the leader was not optimistic that such a commission would be established under the present Administration. It had failed to act on a critical 1994 report from the Controller and the Chief Auditor that high-lighted widespread misuse and lack of accountability of public funds. “Unless we address that political, economic environment it will spawn even more violence.”

...‘A death sentence imposed on the son of the Samoan Gals' Affairs Minister for his role in the assassination of Public Works Minister Luagalau Levaula Kamu has been commuted to life imprisonment, officials in Samoa confirmed yesterday.’

...‘Illinois' Governor yesterday emptied the state's death row by commuting the sentences of 156 inmates, in an unprecedented move as concern grows about the fairness of executions. The governor, whose term comes to an end tomorrow, hastily dispatched letters to the prisoners' families, explaining that it was commuting death sentences to life imprisonment. “I thought about it night and day. I finally came to the conclusion that this was the right decision.”

...‘the US Supreme Court made a landmark decision on Thursday when it ruled that the execution of the mentally retarded was unconstitutional. Its decision that the punishment was “cruel and unusual” will have a huge and immediate effect in states that still put to death prisoners with an IQ of less than 70. The move followed a similar decision in Illinois, which halted executions after 13 death-row inmates were exonerated, including one who had ordered his last meal. The Supreme Court's 6-3 decision overturns one of the court's previous rulings from 1989 that a prisoner's mental state was not an issue. Opponents of the death penalty say that, since the Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty in 1976, 35 of the more than 775 executed prisoners showed evidence of mental retardation. While the ruling has no direct effect on the execution of non-retarded prisoners, it does reflect a growing public concern about the fairness of the death penalty’ (e.g., ‘a death sentence is 4 times more likely for the killing of a white USer than for the killing of a black USer’)...

‘In its second major capital punishment ruling in four days, the US Supreme Court said juries and not judges must decide facts warranting a death sentence, a ruling that may affect nearly 800 death-row inmates in nine states. Reversing itself, the court overturned by a 7-2 vote its 1990 decision that upheld an Arizona capital sentencing law giving sole responsibility to the judge to make factual findings necessary to sentence a convicted murderer to death.’

...‘a Texas jury has sentenced a 46-year-old to death by lethal injection, rejecting defence claims that their client is so mentally retarded that it believes in Santa. The 46-year-old had twice before received a death sentence for raping Pamela Carpenter, 22, and killing her with a pair of scissors, but both times the US Supreme Court threw it out in a case that became a lightning rod for the national debate on whether the retarded should face capital punishment.’

...‘A US federal appeals court has ruled that a mentally ill death row inmate can be forcibly treated with anti-psychotic drugs to make him sane enough to be legally executed. In a 6-5 vote, the Eighth Circuit court in St Louis found that “involuntary medication followed by execution” was “a better choice” than withholding drugs, followed by psychosis and imprisonment. The ruling is likely to be appealed to the Supreme Court.’

...‘A freed former death row inmate, experts and prosecutors – including a prosecutor in the Oklahoma City bombing trial – told a Senate judiciary committee yesterday of incompetent defence lawyers appointed in death penalty cases. The former inmate, who spent 14 years on Louisiana's Death Row until being exonerated, told the committee that his defence team consisted of a lawyer fresh from law school and another who had never tried a death

penalty case. "My trial only lasted a few days. When the jury convicted me of capital murder, I was stunned. So was my inexperienced lawyer, who disappeared." In the sentencing phase of his trial, the recent graduate was left to represent him. "During my 14 wasted years on death row, I always hoped that my nightmare would count for something. That's why I'm here today. Mistakes like my nightmare are real." The committee is chaired by the Vermont Senator who, along with other senators, this year introduced a bill called the Innocence Protection Act, which proposes reforms for death penalty cases including DNA testing and minimum standards for defence lawyers. The chairperson said that while the bill had been awaiting action in Congress, six people had been freed from death row and exonerated of crimes they did not commit. Critics of the bill say it plays into the hands of those who would like to see the death penalty abolished. But a leading death penalty lawyer who is also the director of the Southern Centre for Human Rights, citing examples, said an Alabama lawyer was so drunk that the trial had to be suspended for a day. "There have been far too many cases in which defence lawyers defending capital cases were impaired by alcohol, drugs or infirmity." In Houston, a defence lawyer slept through a trial where his client was sentenced to death and later said it found the case "boring." The director said: "For poor people facing the death penalty, this is what it means to be represented by the 'dream team'.""]

...JUDGES are perfectly entitled to snooze during criminal trials. And it's also permissible if, after awaking, they decide to dish out prison sentences. That's been decided by a British Court of Appeal – after a complaint by[a] convicted fraudster... because the judge had been slumbering during the hearing at Liverpool Crown Court. Three Appeal Judges disagreed because, they argued, [the fraudster] had failed to specify when the judge had been dozing – and, therefore, could not say what evidence [the judge] might have missed. Meanwhile, [another convicted person] is hoping for a more sympathetic response from appeal judges in California. [The convict is] facing execution for the 1981 murder of his wife, but claims a juror was unduly influenced against him. [The juror is a 79-year-old who feels the convict] probably was guilty because [the 79-year-old had] been advised by her long-dead Uncle Frank. It's perfectly normal, [the 79-year-old] insists, for people to accept the guidance of dead relatives. But a dangerous precedent is set... lawyers protest, if a juror is swayed by the opinionated chatter of[the] dead... - 1997

A jury in Texas sent a [hu]man to jail by mistake... The jurors in Plainview intended to give Jesus... of Roswell, New Mexico, 10 years on probation for a 1978 aggravated assault. But they signed the wrong verdict form, giving [Jesus] 10 years in jail [for the 20-year-old crime]instead. They realised their mistake only after reading an account of the case in the Plainview Daily Herald. "We couldn't figure it out,"... [the jury foreperson] said. "We wondered if the judge changed our decision, or did the newspaper make a mistake? It wasn't until we spoke with the judge that we realised what we had done." The court was hastily reconvened and [Jesus] was freed.

What if Jesus of Nazareth was to come back with his lawyer (r:p1146, ln60)? If we assume that Jesus is someone who has nothing to hide and is capable of speaking for himself, Jesus wouldn't need to have a lawyer (although, if Jesus was arrested – e.g., for cultivating the burning bush – in NZ, a counsel would be recommended to him, or one would be appointed by the court, to offer him 'free legal advice' if Jesus should require it). [Note that if Jesus of Nazareth had been arrested in NZ for marijuana cultivation, it might've pointed out to the court that although buggery is legal in NZ, sexual assault – including sticking you fingers up someone's arsehole against their will – isn't, yet police officers are allowed to 'anally penetrate' citizens with gloved fingers if they suspect cannabis has been hidden up a rectum (cavity searches aren't regarded as sexual assault because, presumably, the officers don't get sexual satisfaction out of the act; it is, however, an assault on a citizen's dignity) even though their suspicions invariably prove to be false (few people would carry cannabis in their rectum at any time, or have enough time to insert some while a police raid is in progress; and, anyway, a person who is suspected of hiding drugs inside its body should be taken to a hospital to be x-rayed, then – if the x-ray appears to confirm police suspicions – an internal examination can be conducted by qualified medical staff).] Regardless of what the charges are, Jesus' court appearance could be expected to proceed as follows:

JUDGE: "How do you plead to the charges made against you?" JESUS: "I enter no plea on the basis that I don't recognise your authority to judge me on this or any other matter." JUDGE: "Really? And on what basis do you found this lack of recognition?" JESUS: "On the basis that you took an Oath of Allegiance ('I swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty[the Queen of England], Her heirs and successors, according to law, so help me God') plus the Judicial Oath ('I swear that I will well and truly serve Her Majesty, Her heirs and successors, according to law, in the office of [District Court Judge, Judge of the High Court, etc] and I will do right to all manner of people after the laws and usages of NZ without fear or favour, affection or ill will, so help me God') upon being admitted to the Bench – and when admitted to the Bar swore 'by Almighty God that you would truly and honestly conduct yourself in the practice of a Barrister and Solicitor according to the best of your knowledge and ability' (in addition, 'every session of NZ's legislative body opens with an Anglican prayer'; and court 'witnesses are asked to swear with their right hand on the Bible to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth"' – although they can now object to swearing on the Bible [which ought to be considered a positive step considering how the Bible is full of untruths!]) – yet, according to the Bible, on the Day of Judgment the Almighty God you refer to will judge the life of *each and every person who ever lived, including unbaptized infants*, then eternally punish or reward them accordingly. Therefore, you have no mandate to judge and punish me in this life – as is clearly stated in Revelation 22:11 (r:p1125, ln71 to p1126 ln1). Your pleas for God's help will become more relevant when the time comes that you don't get a chance to explain why YOU shouldn't be punished for either pre-empting God's judgment or doubting the Day of Judgment will occur!"

Although an event 'may be attributed to an Act of God, and no one can be held liable for it', either no one has ever used belief in the Day of Judgment as a line of defence for alleged criminal activities in a Christian-based court or every judge and jury has failed to accept the use of such a defence (and have also denied God's absolute control of the Universe as a defence?). After all, doing so would make themselves redundant! There is, however, another scenario: lawyers and judges (plus everyone else who supports the judicial system) know that their actions are *usurping the sovereign dominion of God over human life*, but they don't care – because they believe that God is responsible for evil (r:p1212, ln45) and accept their role in helping to create it.

...behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried... - Revelation 2:10

The conclusion that Christian judges, lawyers, etc., are DEVILS can also be reached if they are ignorant of what the Bible says (r:p945, ln40-1).

If Jesus was the Christ, and a judge and prosecution was to oppose his desire to do something (e.g., to grow one of God's botanical creations), would the judge and prosecution qualify to be called ANTI-CHRISTS?

Antichrist[means] an enemy of Christ...

antichrist, in Christian theology, [refers to]a mighty ruler who will appear at the end of time to conquer or seduce the wicked and the unbelieving (thereby revealing them) and persecute the righteous; in turn [the antichrist] will be conquered and destroyed, together with his followers, at the second coming of Christ. In the N[ew Testament] the word appears only in the Epistles of St John, but the... idea derives scripturally from the prophecies of Daniel, vii-xi, and ultimately from the Ahriman of Zoroaster... Apocalyptic literature, both Jewish and Christian, is largely concerned with false or antimessiahs and antichrists and is as much political as eschatological. The antichrist was identified by various writers with Arianism and other heresies, with the Roman empire or emperors – especially Nero, with Islam and Mohammed. In the Middle Ages popes

bestowed the title upon emperors and emperors upon popes... During the Reformation, most Protestants were convinced that the pope was antichrist and the Roman church the “whore of Babylon.”

If the Christ was ever to come to Earth, everyone else could be regarded as a non-Christ – which would be akin to being an anti-Christ. Certainly, anyone who opposed the beliefs of the Christ would be one (if Jesus was the Christ, then most modern Christians are one!). However, a more precise definition of *anti-Christ* might be: anyone who attempts to divert attention away from the Christ, or who makes people look at (or think about) itself instead of Christ.

If you were God and you wanted to protect (or hide) your Christ until a designated time, how would you do so? A simple solution could be to create a substitute or imposter (i.e., someone who everyone will see instead of Christ). It might be hard for one imposter to continuously divert the attention of every other human, but what if there were two or more imposters (or attention-diverters)?

Little children... ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. - The First Epistle of John 2:18

ANTICHRIST SUPERSTAR

In NZ, the most obvious example of *attention-diverters* – superstars or antichrists – would be the *All Blacks*.

ALL BLACKS was the name given to the NZ touring... rugby union... team in Britain in 1905 and it stuck... **RUGBY UNION** was first played in NZ on 14 May 1870... [and became] an intense national preoccupation with a breadth of interest through the community that raised it, as was often said, to the status of a religion... The first NZ team to go overseas (to N[SW] in 1884) wore dark-blue jerseys with a gold fernleaf on the left breast, dark-coloured knickerbockers and stockings... [The team achieved] a spectacular record of eight wins from eight matches... From 1893 to the end of the century NZ teams wore black jerseys with a silver fernleaf but white shorts. From 1901 the playing uniform was all black with a silver fernleaf... The inspiration for the soubriquet would seem to be self-evident, but according to one member of the... 1905... team... the name is derived from a printer's error. [‘It appears that R. J. Seddon, then Premier of NZ, had arranged with London's *Daily Mail* to cover the tour, with the result that a reporter, Buttery, travelled everywhere with the team. After the match against Hartlepool Clubs on 11 October 1905, which NZ won 63-0, Buttery reported that the whole team, backs and forwards alike, had played with speed and precision as if they were “all backs”. This comment was repeated after the Northumberland game on 14 October (31-0) and the Gloucester City Club match on 19 October (44-0). But when the NZ team arrived at Taunton to play Somerset County (21 October), they found the whole town placarded with posters welcoming the “All Blacks”. Buttery inquired into the matter and reported to the team's management committee that the printer had in error inserted an “l” in “Backs”. The name appealed and from then on gradually won acceptance, so much so that by early November, following the match with Surrey (1 November), the *Daily Mail* made direct mention of the All Black team “that everybody is talking about”. It is also interesting to note that on 15 November 1905 the term “Blacks” had even appeared in the pages of *Punch* which printed a number of stanzas dealing with the shortcomings of Seddon, the last running as follows: Can it be your head is turned/By your team of Rugby “Blacks”?/Has the glory they have earned/Set you trotting in their tracks? Although the new name “caught on” so quickly in Britain, its acceptance in NZ was much slower. On 5 March 1906, the day of the team's arrival at Auckland, the *Herald* editorially acclaimed the “New Zealand Footballers”, but on the following day it headed its report on the official function of welcome with a bold double-column caption – “Return of the All Blacks”. Meanwhile, throughout the country special shop window displays and feature advertisements “to mark the return of the All Blacks” suddenly appeared. The “All Blacks” had indeed arrived’]... **INVINCIBLES** is the name given to the 1924 All Black... team, which became the first to tour Great Britain without losing a match... Over the following... years, NZ's ALL BLACK sides have established an international record second only to that of South Africa.

[A] LEADING Kiwi rugby writer... and[a] South African broadcaster... have captured the spirit of the rivalry between the All Blacks and South Africa in their new book, *Toughest of Them All*. The revealing book... features both N[Z] and South African views on the... clashes between the two sides. The... insightful book, which goes on sale on Wednesday for \$39.95, also reveals controversy surrounding the 1921 clash between the Springboks and N[Z] Maori. A South African reporter sent the following telegram back to the republic. “Most unfortunate match ever played. Bad enough having to play a team officially designated as NZ Natives, but spectacle of thousands of Europeans frantically cheering on a band of coloured[s]... to defeat members of own race was too much for the Springboks who were frankly disgusted.”

...The great rivalry that is All Black and Springbok rugby opened at Carisbrook... on August 13, 1921. It began a sporting battle, which... has involved epic and sometimes bitter contests, endured the stench of apartheid, brought respect between hardened foes, and linked two countries who might otherwise have regarded each other as just another name on the map... The All Blacks wore letters rather than numbers on the jerseys of that first encounter[, which NZ won 13-5]... The opening try went to... a future Olympic athlete... As with the first series[, which included a 9-5 win to South Africa and a 0-0 draw], the second in South Africa[– consisting of four matches –] was also drawn[(2-2)]... South Africa edged ahead with a series win in N[Z] in 1937... But it is the 1949 series which will be remembered as a landmark in the contests between the two countries. As in 1928, South Africa would not allow non-European players to tour their country and, to our shame, the All Blacks agreed to tour under those conditions. So the All Blacks departed without their genius centre... the country's best halfback... and others... South Africa won the... series 4-0, with their marauding number eight... leading the way... N[Z] had trouble dealing with the crushing defeat[, blaming]... poor... refereeing... and especially [the South African No 8]'s tactics, which they believed were illegal. [The No 8] crushed the All Blacks' inside backs and critics claimed [the player] was offside and destroying the game by concentrating on spoiling tactics... The truth just might have been that [the No 8], whose stooped figure was said to have come from the gold mines, where [the No 8] carried mercury buckets weighing up to 65 kg on his shoulders, was too fast and too good... N[Z] had to wait seven years for payback... [The] series loss to the All Blacks... was [the Springbok's] first series defeat this century... [and] the final test at Eden Park[was played] in front of a record 61,000 crowd... The Springboks won at home in 1960, and the All Blacks triumphed[at home] in 1965, a year when the Springboks won just one of eight tests. It was a golden period for the All Blacks... The 1967 tour was cancelled because of apartheid, and 1970 saw the All Blacks lose another series in South Africa... [However, the] tour announced the arrival of [the current Manu Samoa coach. The winger – then] just 19, with thighs like barrels and a side-step which left opponents tackling thin air... [– and another three All Blacks.] were allowed to tour, despite being “non-Europeans.” ...[ironically,] there was at least two people with Maori blood... in the... [1928] team... while in the 1949 team there were at least three and[again] in the 1960 team... [‘The decision of the NZ Rugby Union in 1959 to (officially) exclude Maoris from the representative team due to visit South Africa demonstrated that many people, Maori and Pakeha, still equated racial equality with cultural uniformity. In 1968 South Africa reversed an earlier decision, stating it would accept Maoris in an All Black team invited to tour in 1970. Many Maoris welcomed the decision; others said no Maori could tour South Africa with a clear conscience because of apartheid.’] 1970 also uncovered an All Black protester... [in a] superb Wellington prop, [who] refused to be considered for the tour... urged the Government to cancel it, and called for trade sanctions and the breaking of diplomatic relations because of South Africa's apartheid system... Another series defeat in South Africa [occurred in 1976. Unlike the 1970 version, this All Black] team was probably not good enough to win the series, but they came desperately close to drawing it, and there were some very dodgy refereeing decisions. The most notable came in the final test... lost 14-15... when a penalty try seemed

in order after [an All Black] was blocked as [the player] chased a ball behind the... [Springbok line. Even the South African] rugby boss... reckoned a penalty try[was] due... For the first time, a series in South Africa was televised live to N[Z]. That brought the images of an injury-plagued [but tiny All Black winger] running miles to belt a Springbok forward... [a giant All Black lock]'s match-saving tackle... [the same player] having his ear stomped to pieces and [a Springbok] goalkicking the All Blacks to pieces (the All Blacks outscored the Boks five tries to four in the series.)... [Unfortunately, t]he series was overshadowed by... [s]everal All Blacks who were caught in the middle of a riot in Cape Town need[ing] treatment after being tear gassed[, and the]... decision to tour led to the boycott of the Montreal Olympics by 28 countries... [I]n spite of the Gleneagles Agreement[, 'on July 19, 1981, the Springboks flew into Auckland, sparking off a sustained and violent protest against South Africa's apartheid policy. The first game at Gisborne was played amidst battles between police, demonstrators and rugby supporters, and the game against Waikato was cancelled after demonstrators invaded the ground. Although the tour continued, the protests escalated. The worst violence occurred outside Eden Park, Auckland, during the final test on Sept 12. Hundreds of demonstrators were arrested, including the pilot of a plane that buzzed the ground.' (By the way, 'on the eve of attending the inauguration of the first black person as President of South Africa in 1994, NZ's incumbent PM called the divisive 1981 Springbok tour a "mistake." The PM, who was a senior minister in the Muldoon Government which allowed the Springboks to tour NZ, said the visit demonstrated "very graphically" that attempts by the Government to separate sport from politics were not possible. The tour preceded the 1981 elections, which Muldoon won with a one-seat majority with backing from rugby-mad provincial electorates.') NZ's first-choice No 8, who was]... one of the finest of All Black captains, did not play because of his opposition to the tour, [that]... left images of barbed wire, violence and the flour bomb, from [the] protester's plane, which landed on [an All Black prop] during the third test at Eden Park... [In the years since the tour,] footage of the protest action and police reaction, [or]the clashes between rugby supporters and protesters, retain[s] the power to shock. What N[Z]ers saw on television news and on the front pages of the newspapers each weekend had the same impact as footage of the carnage of the Vietnam War had had on Americans. The political issues that lay at the tour's heart could not be ignored, though paradoxically they often had to be for the sake of family and workplace peace. The police[, who saw their]... responsibility as being to enforce the law – [which meant]allowing the tour to proceed[–]...would never retain their position of trust in the community. That other institution, rugby union, found its place at the forefront of the national consciousness crumbling fast. The Muldoon Government would topple, and in its place grew a widespread sense of cynicism towards politicians. The media, not for the first time, but more strongly than before, found itself blamed for the message. Ordinary N[Z]ers were forced to shed their customary polite reticence and address a political issue that would have repercussions for our own state of race relations. But perhaps, most troubling of all, the tour tapped a seam of latent violence that lay only lightly buried in far too many of us... The chaos and division the 1981 Springbok tour to N[Z] caused is a landmark in this country's history. It would be nice to think it made a difference in South Africa and maybe it helped N[Z] mature as a country... [Afterwards, South Africa entered] a period of isolation, and [– excluding the unofficial NZ Cavaliers tour of 1986 –]it was another 11 years before the rivalry resumed... N[Z] has held the upper hand since...

...after the torrid 15-11 win against the Springboks[, a]... battered All Black side left yesterday for the return Bledisloe Cup test[against AUS] in Brisbane, a match [the coach] predicts will be their toughest yet... with the Wallabies coming off a fortnight's rest and also a victory against the Springboks... [The All Black coach] was adamant the Wallabies would be much stronger now than they were when thrashed 43-6 by the All Blacks at Athletic Park... on... July 6[– that]... date should be writ large when historians pin-point red-letter days of All Black rugby[, because it's when]... the All Blacks tackled a highly proficient A[US]n side in appalling conditions and tore them apart... [(t]he search for the perfect game is meaningless, but qualify it as the perfect wet-weather game and you need look no further than Athletic Park that day[)] – ...and no team had won a tri-nations test away from home... There would be a public preoccupation about the All Blacks' matches... in South Africa[after the Wallaby game], but the message for the All Blacks had been about Brisbane, with no thoughts of the republic until Sunday... [The coach] always had a personal ambition for the All Blacks to take the tri-series, to win the inaugural competition against two of the best sides in world rugby. The All Blacks will play at a new venue for rugby in Brisbane – SunCorp Stadium, which is the old Lang Park of rugby league days. It might be useful, [the All Black coach] joked, to get [a former AUSn rugby league captain] out to explain some of the old tricks and vagaries of his famous State of Origin stamping ground, just as[the] Wallaby coach... had used another league legend... to help his side with their tackling after the Athletic Park massacre. On a more serious note, [the All Black coach] has asked to meet[Saturday's] referee... today to avoid "the fiasco" of last week, when the All Blacks had to change their entire lineout the day before the Springboks test after receiving new interpretations [of lineout rules from last week's]... referee... • ...The All Blacks will turn out in a mixed collection of boots on Saturday after a further six weeks of negotiation between rival Mizuno and Nike sponsors ended yesterday in another impasse... [Two players] had Nike boots on at training yesterday, showing they believed they had personal exemptions from the team boot sponsorship in their contracts with the N[Z Rugby Football] Union. The third player involved in the boot wrangle... was at a gym in Auckland rather than Eden Park because of a strain behind his knee. [The]NZRFU chief executive... said there was no chance the trio would be banned from Saturday's return tri-nations test against the Wallabies because of the problem... At one stage there were threats from the NZRFU that the Nike trio would be dropped. Then the warring parties agreed to a moratorium until yesterday... There was no solution by yesterday and the boot row now seems as though it will go to mediation. "The union finds itself in a really difficult position. On the one hand we have an exclusive boot contract with Mizuno and we accept that and on the other hand we have three players who contend they have the right to wear Nike football boots... [W]hen the players come back from South Africa, we will be invoking the mediation clause in their contract."

...Sky[TV (NZ's pay-to-view channel)] last night opened the door to negotiating its rugby contract to allow T[TVNZ – the state-owned, free-to-view channel that, previous to this year, screened All Black tests live –] to screen the next three tests on Sunday morning. The backlash from... fans after last Saturday's test was not screened on TVNZ until 4 pm the next day[(fans were also 'outraged at the incessant commercial interruptions')] seems to have persuaded both companies to reconsider, although neither had contacted the other when approached by the N[Z] Herald yesterday... Sky[']s publicity officer... said the ball was in TVNZ's court... Sky had always regarded the terms of the contract which was agreed in February as open to discussion... But... T[TVNZ's] corporate affairs manager... said... if Sky was prepared to be "flexible" it was a new development as the delays – one hour for a match played in N[Z], 4 for matches in AUS] and 12 for [matches in]South Africa – had been "imposed" on TVNZ in the original negotiations. The... Labour Party spokes[perso]n on sport... suggested 9 am... as a possible... replay... slot but said that would cost TVNZ money as it was not allowed to run advertisements between 6 am and noon on Sunday. It would also have to pay more to Sky for the rights to an earlier screening.

...The Police Complaints Authority is dealing with an official complaint over the divulging by a police officer of a rugby test score to a Christchurch rugby fan who did not want to know the result... [T]he officer's indiscretion... occurred when [the fan] was stopped at a police checkpoint on his way home to watch the video replay of the[first] Bledisloe Cup game... last month... [The complainant] had not been able to watch live the July 6 game between A[US and NZ], so had taped it to watch seven hours later when [the chef] finished work – warning his workmates not to tell him the score or the result. The... [chef struck the] police checkpoint... about 11.25 pm... [T]he officer asked whether [the chef] had been drinking. "I told [the officer] that I hadn't and that I had just finished work. I then said I was going home to watch the rugby, so don't tell me the score,"... [The chef] emphasised twice that [it] did not want to know the 43-6 score... [The chef] did not know whether the officer was trying to be smart or acted out of spite... [The PCA] imagined the complaint would be resolved quickly, but declined to give details of how this might be done.

...Jabbing fingers became fisticuffs when drunken former pupils turned the annual rugby match between Christchurch's most prestigious boys' high schools into a brawl yesterday – apparently a hangover from scrapping among spectators at the Christ's College v Christchurch Boys' High School game last year... [Yesterday's] game was disrupted several times because bottles and cans were thrown and fights broke out... [But CBHS's] principal... said the incident should be kept in perspective. "The game always involves friendly rivalry... It has been played for 104 years and is an occasion for both schools." His... counterpart... said the fighting lasted only a few seconds. "What is more important is that the two teams played a wonderful game of rugby." Christ's College won the match 20-7... [Speaking of rugby groupies, 2000 NZ]ers are paying... \$6000 [to] \$15,000 to follow the All Blacks in South Africa... So why do they go when the matches will be televised...? ...[a] 74-year-old... is going... to watch... the All Blacks play live... and to see South Africa... [The former soccer fan also] hopes to meet up with two of his... four sons... while in South Africa[, one of whom is the All Blacks']... doctor... Atmosphere is a key attraction for those who travel with the All Blacks. Sure, it's fun to watch games on television and to have the option of getting a cup of tea (or something stronger) at half-time. But nothing replaces the feeling of being there, says... [an Aucklander, who claims meeting] people was one of the highlights of... [his] trip to the World Cup in South Africa last year. The... business[person] and a group of colleagues have attended all three [Rugby Union] World Cups... At the 1991 World Cup in the Northern Hemisphere [their] bus was termed the U[N] coach because it had... [fan]s from 10 countries aboard... Rugby has a way of bringing people together, no matter where they are from... Business commitments prevent [him] from travelling to... [watch this year's] test series in South Africa... [but it] fondly recalls last year's World Cup matches there. At the All Black semifinal against England [the Aucklander claims to have] had the best feeling ever at a sporting event... England supporters painted their faces... and kept singing *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*... [T]he chariot stopped... [when] the All Blacks started winning... "The euphoria after that was just incredible." ...Eight of the group are already planning itineraries for the next World Cup in Wales in 1999. "We tend to follow our rugby quite passionately,"... [However, the Aucklander] was surprised at the fanaticism South Africans have for rugby. "It's almost a religion and it was almost frightening to be over there." ...And if you've ever wondered where All Blacks go when the black jersey is tucked in a drawer for the last time[and their boots thrown in the bin], it's probably away on... an organised tour ...as tour leader... [● Sportswear] manufacturers Mizuno have filed legal action in [Wellington's] High Court... to force the N[ZRFU] to honour its sponsorship agreement... Mizuno's barrister... claimed that yesterday was "probably the saddest day in the... company's near-100-year history." ...The action includes a claim for damages which have yet to be advised... [Three] All Blacks... have personal contracts with... Nike and have declined to wear Mizuno boots for fear of jeopardising their own deals.

...Mizuno... claim they provided [the All Black's most marketable winger] with the right footwear for his midweek game and say [it] wore... partially blacked-out Reebok boots... instead as a publicity stunt... [However, the] All Black manager... said that... Mizuno had not delivered the requested studded pair for the wing. His old pair of Mizuno boots had broken and [the winger] asked for a replacement pair with studs, but when they arrived they had moulded soles... [But t]he Mizuno representative in South Africa [maintained the No 11] had never asked for a new pair of studded boots and th[e manager hadn't] mentioned there were any boot problems on the morning of the game... Meanwhile, the... [returning] All Black first five-eighths... has been so frustrated after his knee operation, and by South African rugby supporters, that [the No 10] is praying... for a final-test victory tomorrow at Ellis Park. The 23-year-old... is usually a very chirpy character, but his recent inactivity and the constant heckling and demands from Springbok fanatics have left him rather bitter... "I... have been pretty angry in the last few days, sick of the people, really quite grumpy. I abused three people at Kimberley, quite loudly and viciously because they were obnoxious, though I shouldn't have... South Africans are very welcoming but the ones that give them a bad name are shocking and I am sick of running into them..." ...the All Black... [No 10] wants to return to test rugby with a vengeance so [it] can enjoy the trip back to N[Z]. "Otherwise it will be a long, depressing trip even if we have won the series,"... Coming back to Ellis Park for the first time since the World Cup final loss was no bogey now the All Blacks had won four straight tests this season against the ...[B]oks. "Hopefully the Boks will be feeling 'here we go again.' With [three losses in three] weekends their confidence must be down..." ...[regardless of tomorrow's result], the... All Blacks... [are sure to receive a rousing welcome at] the Eden Park reception planned for them on Monday afternoon and the street parade through Auckland the day after... [But the] 'Unconquerables' tag... is... there for... the... All Blacks to grab...

Cheers and tears as All Blacks end Bok dominance THERE are many wonderful images to take away from the All Black tour of South Africa. It might be [their No 8] dropping the goal that sealed the series. Or... seeing a boyhood hero, [a] former All Black fullback... looking red-eyed 10 minutes after the victory in Pretoria, and reading later that [the former fullback and the] 1949 captain... had fallen into each other's arms at the final whistle. But the memory that will linger longest for me was the scene in the All Black changing room... 30 minutes after the test had finished. N[Z] media... had been given full access, an unusual privilege, and one that usually I would rather avoid. A sports locker room is where most of us would feel most like an outsider. Even if there are players you know well, an ounce of sensitivity should alert you to the fact that you're moving among an exclusive club... you can admire but never join. But last weekend in Pretoria was something different. History had been made, and if you're a 49-year-old N[Z]er who has been mad about rugby since childhood any part of the event is worth a little awkwardness. So, armed with no more than a fierce look, and the words, "I'm a N[Z] journalist", it was past the security guards, into the dark, red-brick corridors of Loftus Versfeld... Inside... the changing room... you knew... you were looking at the most exhausted group of footballers you had ever seen. Many had yet to drag themselves to the showers... The only All Black who could hardly restrain his excitement was [the No 8]. But who else could it have been? [The No 8] still plays his rugby with a boyish fervour which prompts him to do crazy things at times, like deciding [a forward is] better suited to dropping a goal [from near the half-way line] than some flashy back. Pretty cheeky stuff wasn't it? "Nah... It was never in doubt"... laughs [the No 8] with sheer pleasure at attempting the kick, and... succeeding, and the All Blacks winning the series. It certainly wasn't done without pain and suffering, but no matter how long they live no other rugby players can ever be the first All Blacks to beat [the Boks] in a series in South Africa. [□ The Boks won the last game of the series 32-22, meaning each team had now beaten the other 22 times; while the series' record stood at '5 wins each, 2 draws.'

...the current All Black] manager... believes international rugby must devise a scheme to financially reward touring teams. Under present rules the touring team gets nothing from the host country's gate... The just completed tour of South Africa... is a classic example. N[Z] will take virtually nothing away from the month-long visit other than a treasured first series win... But the S[ARFU] will have its coffers overflowing... [Due to the tests being] sold out and the four midweek matches all producing solid crowds, SARFU could earn more than \$6 million from the All Blacks' visit. [The manager] rightly claims the All Blacks to be the game's most marketable product and wants N[Z] to get a slice of the profits... N[Z]'s expenses on the tour... were considerable, with its monthly wage bill for the... squad running close to \$500,000. [While on the topic of paying players, although rugby union officially turned professional at the end of last year, it was semi-professional for a number of years (e.g., money was collected from spectators at important matches; the 'Auckland Rugby Union has had at least one full-time office employee since about 1981'; touring rugby players received token remuneration – during a 'four-month All Black tour of Britain in 1973, the players were paid \$2/day'), and the 'All Black great who organised the 1986 Cavaliers tour of South Africa has come clean on player payments, saying the rugby rebels received \$50,000 each for the trip which ripped apart Kiwi rugby. The average family income in NZ that year was \$27,000. The All Black great makes his revelations in *Legends of the All Blacks*'...

"Financially it was well worth the players going on the trip. I got exactly the same as every other player. That's one of the anomalies today, where some players are paid exorbitantly larger amounts than others, and in many cases don't deserve to be. It's incorrect to say the players received \$100,000, but there was certainly a payment made to players. It was not run along the lines of previous All Black tours. This time it was better than a subsistence relationship. The South Africans had got us a sponsor and we got far more match tickets to on-sell for the team fund than ever before." While rugby would

go professional nine years later, the Cavaliers were clearly the catalyst for big money sums coming into the NZ game. They were banned for touring but many returned to the All Black fold and lifted the inaugural World Cup in 1987. Yet a former SARFU boss, who was president of the Transvaal union which was heavily involved in organising the tour, still refuses to acknowledge player payments which were clearly worked from an elaborate team fund system. "There was no payment from us. We invited auditors to come in and investigate and they couldn't find anything. We didn't pay them. That's my word of honour."

...[a] kitchenhand... was paid to poison the All Black[s]... on the eve of last year's World Cup final... [The team's former coach] said in a television interview last night that... two sources [claimed] the team's tea and coffee had been spiked in the lead-up to the final, which the All Blacks lost 15-12 to hosts South Africa... The team's [former manager, and arguably NZ's all-time greatest player, told the NZ] *Herald*... that the All Blacks should have pulled out of the final and asked that it be played later. [The former manager] was unsurprised at [the former coach's] account. "You don't have that many people going down crook and violently ill... without something happening." ...A handful of players were unaffected... They had arrived late for a meal and... dr[a]nk freshly made tea or coffee... [The former coach] believes English book-makers facing hefty payouts if the All Blacks won the match were behind the poisoning... [By the way, the current coach] wants some All Black contracts renegotiated so the future of [his] outstanding young talent... can be secured through to the next World Cup. Most of the leading player contracts, signed in the mad rush of last year, expire in 1998... In persuading the N[ZRFU] to allow him to take a 36-[strong touring party to South Africa the coach] was clearly covering his test team for injuries. But, at the same time... was also planning ahead to 1999... [In addition,] some players have enhanced their reputations through the tour... and perhaps deserve better remuneration... [The coach] doesn't see league as the real danger to his players but believes the Japanese rugby market remains a threat as does the burgeoning scene in the U[K] where clubs are handing out lucrative deals to star names. "There is still a vulnerability with the sort of money that is around... [But most] of the guys love playing for the All Blacks so the money would have to be astronomical to attract them away." Ironically, at a time when some All Blacks may be in line for better deals, the beleaguered Springboks face heavy pressure to take... pay cuts. The successful Springbok World Cup players are on massive money but the S[ARFU] is apparently seeking to introduce some performance clauses and has promised that the money that was handed out last year won't be a guideline for future negotiations.

...[a former All Black wing has just signed] a three-year deal with NEC in Japan believed to be worth around \$1m... [In another development, free]-spending English clubs are ready to wave checkbooks at the Wallabies who arrive in Europe this month. Relaxation of the 180-day residency rule has made the A[US]ns eligible to play in the Courage League soon after their seven-week tour of Italy and Britain finishes in early December... [The AUSn] captain... could command \$A400,000... a season.

...[the All Black No 5 – whose input] earlier this year... helped the N[Z gal's] rugby team to a 28-5 win over A[US] in their annual test in Sydney... [-] is the latest target as speculation of British raids on N[Z] rugby stocks grows. Reports out of Britain say glamour English club Bath is prepared to pay [the No 5] around \$300,000 a year to bolster its scrum. Bath, whose title defence is faltering, is apparently desperate to add some uncompromising play to its forward effort and sees the hard-nosed [No 5] as the perfect player. Reports also suggest [the lock] rejected a \$200,000 offer from Northampton last month, claiming [himself to be] worth more. And it seems London club Harlequins is still interested in [the lock's brother, the All Black No 8 and their No 7]... All Black... and... Auckland... team-mate...

It is too late to do anything about it now, but Taranaki used an illegal move at the start of their final tryscoring move which defeated Auckland 42-39 in the Ranfurly Shield challenge last Saturday... "The law says that for a quick throw-in the player must retrieve the ball himself, and the same player must throw it in. In this case the player did not retrieve the ball, and another player threw it in. The referee... made a mistake, simple as that." ...a similar event has been occurring in South Africa when the home teams, at test and representative level, have been binding together for tapkicks near the All Blacks' goal-line. "That 'flying-wedge' has been banned for years. Yet the South Africans are getting away with it, and scoring points." Taranaki might be advised not to try their matchwinning trick today. The referee for North Harbour's challenge... was a touch judge at Eden Park last Saturday. [Editor's note: 'The inter-provincial *Ranfurly Shield* has been the bedrock of NZ rugby since the turn of the century but because it is a challenge trophy to be played on the holder's home ground (unless the holder volunteers to tour with it), and because the number of challenges which can be accepted in any season is limited, it was felt that the shield was not a true reflection of inter-provincial supremacy. As a result, the early 1980s saw the evolution of a national competition to find the top province each winter.']

...Rugby fans are expected to pour into Eden Park for this Sunday's National Provincial Championship final despite tickets going up by 40[%] since the round-robin games... The Auckland Rugby Union... said the decision to increase... prices was because of the quality of the match. That was standard practice and "happens year after year." ...For the final between Auckland and Counties-Manukau... covered seats... will be \$35... uncovered seats... \$25 and \$15... for the terraces... Tickets for [kids] have gone up to \$17, \$15 and \$7. Family passes for the game are \$30... - 1996

Aucklanders are being invited to "take ownership" of their champion rugby team by joining the players for a photo call behind Eden Park today. Five hundred fans are wanted for the 2 pm poster shoot... with Auckland's A squad... [In related news, the] Auckland Rugby Union will have to spend about \$1.2 million to allow it to manage the Blackheath club in England... The Blackheath club and property was independently assessed and valued at about \$4.8m. If Auckland gets involved it will own 25.5[%], Blackheath supporters will own about an equal amount, and 49[%] will be sold to private investors who may include the N[ZRFU]. The ARFU chief executive... said Blackheath was chosen because the club... was in the bottom half of the second division, was within 100km of London, was a club with a healthy tradition and had a huge player catchment area in the south-west... [The] Auckland coach... would liaise with the club's coach, [who is a] former All Black... and[the club's] captain... another former All Black... who [left NZ to become a professional league player, then switched back to union when the sport went professional]... "We would also like to be able to send three or four young players from N[Z] each year to the club, provided they meet the restrictive criteria."

...[the ARFU] chief executive... yesterday confirmed... that Auckland had purchased 25% of Blackheath – formed in 1858 and considered to be the oldest open independent club in the world – at a cost of £500,000... [The chief executive] said the benefits for Auckland from the deal were multi-faceted. It gives young players an opportunity to expand their rugby experience... [- one] young Auckland hooker... has[already] headed to the club as part of an inter-change of resources and... more would follow... [-] it makes use of fulltime employees in the Auckland organisation at a time when there is no rugby in this country and it utilises capital invested in financial and marketing systems by the ARFU... [I]t is anticipated that, with Auckland's input, the club will be able to regain its place in the top echelon of the game. The Canterbury union, never one to lag behind for too long, is also investigating the possibility of following in Auckland's footsteps. Its chief executive... leaves this month to undertake talks with several British clubs... [Incidentally,] England... RFU... bosses have named a squad of 77 to train next week, but have so far failed to name a coach... [A former Waikato and NZ] No 8... is being considered as a potential forward coach for England, but is in France with his club side Sale... [T]he... Bath co-coach... remains favourite to be coach.

...English rugby's bank balance will increase by more than £10 million... when the international team's new kit sponsor – believed to be Nike – sign with the R[FU] today. The contract means that Twickenham will have completed [three sponsorship] deals... in the past two months. Allied Dunbar paid £12 million to underwrite the top two leagues and Tetley's Cup commitment is estimated at £7 million...

The Five Nations championship will be sponsored by the Lloyds TSB banking group in a three-year deal worth £20 million... The deal with Britain's largest retail banking group also covers European qualifying tournaments for the 1999 World Cup and rights to banking facilities at the World Cup tournament in Britain... [In local news,] listing the All Blacks on the stock exchange is not yet on the... [NZRFU's agenda, but the union's

chairperson acknowledges that it] could happen in the next few years. "The reality is that if we float the All Blacks the public could buy into the scheme, [although] they might think they own them already, with the NZRFU acting as custodian,"...

Sports giant Nike is ready to sponsor the All Blacks in a... deal which will see the side taking the rugby gospel to places like Japan and the U[S]. The All Blacks' clothing contract expires next year and while the N[ZRFU] has been mulling over several tenders, it is understood the Nike deal will get the go-ahead. The deal will... be similar to the recent partnership between Nike and the Brazilian soccer side, a 10-year deal estimated at \$US200 m... in which the groups agree to promote the sport as well as the brand. The All Blacks signed a 10-year contract with Canterbury in 1989, a deal understood to deliver the NZRFU \$500,000 a season. Sources suggest Nike has offered \$US70 m... for a similar [7]-year contract... that will kick off at the start of the next World Cup season... Some All Blacks are already on individual contracts with Nike while [a] wing... is employed by the company. Signs of a change came last year when [the Nike-sponsored players]... began wearing Nike rather than the accepted Mizuno boots.

...Lane Walker Rudkin's boss... is not about to throw in the towel when the contract to supply the All Blacks' rugby jerseys next comes up for grabs... [The boss] is fully aware that the \$12 million or so paid by its subsidiary Canterbury to secure the exclusive worldwide supply contract in 1994 will not even get near the play next time. But whether it would be able to foot it with the likes of Nike (which is reportedly willing to pay \$100 million-plus to tie up the sponsorship rights to the All Blacks for 7 years) is another question for the little South Island company. Such an amount easily exceeds LWR's market capitalisation. However, as [the LWR boss] said, the \$100 million would not just be for the apparel rights. The kind of contracts being talked about also include footwear, naming rights and three exclusive games a year in other parts of the world. "At the end of the day it is the apparel rights that we are interested in." [The boss] is not willing to speculate just what those rights might be worth, but analysts point to a figure of about \$25 million... LWR did have first right of refusal on the "apparel" contract... The current contract is for the right to supply all the NZRFU teams, which includes the All Blacks, the N[Z] colts and the five local Super 12 sides. It also gave an exclusive right to internationally market the replica products for that merchandise, as well as put out other ranges of All Black apparel. [The boss] would not say what portion of Canterbury's \$100 million of sales came from the All Black contract. But while the contract was important for the company, it would not be the end of the world if it was lost. Canterbury still had a very strong involvement with teamware and rugby at grass roots... [which has seen it become] the largest maker of rugby jerseys in the world, [including making] jerseys... for Natal... on behalf of... clothing manufacturer Reebok... [which, ironically, won] sponsorship rights... to the A[US]n rugby strip... this year... ahead of the former sponsor... Canterbury.

...The A[USn] Rugby Union has bowed to pressure from new sponsor Reebok to change the [Wallaby] jersey from plain gold and green to what [a] former Wallaby lock... called "volcano vomit on a rag." The change was designed to make the jersey more marketable and is worth a minimum of \$A6 million... to the ARU over the next three years... [The NZRFU chairperson] was contacted by a Sydney radio station to comment on whether the All Black jersey would ever be as radically reformed... [The chairperson] said the All Black jersey was unlikely to change because it would need the consent of all provincial unions and that it was quite marketable the way it was. The century-old, No 1-selling All Black jersey has been the favourite point-scoring weapon of those opposed to the dramatic facelift of the Wallaby outfit. The *Sydney Morning Herald* yesterday devoted almost a full page to the debate, under the headline "Are the All Blacks white?" A telephone poll which attracted 758 callers showed 91[%] of respondents opposed the new design. "People protested that such a major change would never be allowed in rugby strongholds like N[Z] and South Africa. Would the All Blacks go white? Would the Springboks turn brown? Never! There'd be riots in the streets, even civil war," was the summary of the responses.

...The Wallabies sold out to Reebok, allowing them to redesign the national jersey... [(which the AUSn Football Union has so far] sold \$A1.5m worth of... compared to \$A400,000 sales for the old green and gold in 1996...); Nike have... Auckland... and... the Springboks; Adidas have France and Argentina and soon they'll probably have the All Blacks. Few were aware the German-based sports clothing and equipment manufacturer was in the running to sponsor the All Blacks until their bid was revealed as the first-post winner after the N[ZRFU] board met in Wellington yesterday... Canterbury, which has supplied All Black gear since 1924... and... has... an option on another five years' sponsorship if they meet the highest bid, will be urgently seeking details of the newcomers' proposal today and have until the end of the year to move against it. Adidas - the name [is] a conglomeration of... [its founder's] first and surname, and nothing to do with the oft-quoted "all day I dream about sport" - are trying to reclaim their position as number one globally in their market. Nike turned over \$US7.8 billion last year; Adidas had \$US2.67b but an ongoing merger with French sports outfitter Salomon promises to put them into number two, ahead of Reebok at \$US2.9b. To win market share Adidas is prepared to do what Nike has done - buy winners... "The All Blacks have the greatest strike rate of wins of any team in the world," said [Adidas' NZ] managing director... yesterday. "They're part of our vision." ...[the managing director] refused to say what Adidas was prepared to pay to buy in, but agreed the World Cup would be a huge leg-up for Adidas in making ground against Reebok and Nike. "We're going to pay a lot of money for that." ...Adidas wants its identifying tags on the All Black jersey, shorts and boots when the team run out in front of an audience of more than 500 million... Adidas will provide playing and training gear... including hand-made boots for the top side... [although this raises again the issue of] players who have long-term personal footwear contracts with rival companies... Adidas would [also] market and distribute the All Black brand overseas, a great opportunity to help develop the game... [The] NZRFU key negotiator... said the Adidas logo would be on the chest opposite the Silver Fern, replacing the Steinlager logo which has been there three years. Steinlager would continue their 11-year sponsorship of the All Blacks... but yesterday it was not clear how. The deal was news to most rugby people yesterday. [The] All Black captain... rang the N[Z] *Herald* last evening asking for details... ■... Founded in 1920 by Adi Dassler, the inventor of the first shoes designed especially for sports, the company enjoyed a near monopoly in athletic shoes until an upstart called Nike appeared in the 1970s and rode the running fad to riches. By the early 1990s Adidas had come under the control of [a French businessperson]... who was later jailed for bribing three French soccer players. Although the company tried to spruce up its staid image with a team of American designers, Adidas lost more than \$[US]100 million in 1992, prompting the French banks that had acquired control of the company... to begin a desperate search for a new owner... [T]he 50-year-old... learned... late last year... that after years of declining market share, the company had sprinted past U.S. archrival Reebok International to take second place behind Nike in the race for worldwide sales. But... the rumbled... [new owner] didn't even stop for one of his trademark Havana cigars in celebration, worried that the company would grow complacent. Instead, [the new owner] and a group of friends bought French soccer club Olympique de Marseille... Not only has [the new owner] turned Adidas into a global company with market capitalization of \$4 billion ([his stock is] worth \$250 million), but [the new owner] also has endorsement contracts with a host of sports heroes... and considers it part of the job to watch his star athletes perform on the field... A sports addict[, the new owner says it] hasn't missed... the Olympic Games since 1968... or... attending a soccer World Cup since the 1970s...

THE N[ZRFU] will push to have sponsors logos on jerseys at the 1999 World Cup. Under existing rules only the crest and a Rugby World Cup badge are allowed on the jerseys of teams participating in the finals. Jersey suppliers like Canterbury... or... Nike... have to remove their logos. But [the] NZRFU chief executive... feels the game's biggest spectacle needs to come in line with the commercial realities of the new professional environment... "We're not comfortable with the World Cup arrangement and... [you] can be 100% sure that the apparel suppliers for England, South Africa... A[US] and all the leading countries would be of the same view. These guys are putting huge amounts of money into these teams and this is the third most watched event on TV now, so no one is happy about not having their partner on the jersey..." ...While the [Adidas] sponsorship is massive [- the 5-year contract is]... reportedly worth \$70-100 million... [- the CEO] was quick to point out the running costs of the union, now... the game has gone professional. The NZRFU's costs for the year are tipped to be \$41m... Meanwhile... the fate of correspondence sent

to the Education Minister... by the [NZRFU is missing], presumed lost... The union requested a meeting to discuss the possibility of Government assisting secondary schools to pay the union's compulsory \$240 levy per team for accident cover. Schools throughout the country have told the NZRFU they won't be authorising payment – due at the end of this month – which will leave the union... \$240,000 out of pocket. [The]NZRFU... was, “quite astounded we haven't got a reply.” After searching the minister's files without success... the Ministry... spokes[person] confirmed the minister was unaware of the issue. [However,]Ministry sources told the *Sunday Star-Times* that given the pressure on the education budget, the matter was not a high priority.

...The bosses of the All Blacks and... other professional players, have been penalised for high injury rates... Accident compensation premiums for professional players have shot up by the maximum 25[%] in a bid to tackle spiralling claims. The increase flies in the face of falling... levies in many other sectors, including meat processing... and... house construction... This news did not come as a surprise to the [NZRFU's]chief executive... the physical knocks that were unavoidable in contact sports... meant... there would always be injuries among players... However, the [NZRFU] was working hard to reduce the rate of injuries to bring down the cost of premiums... [that] have gone up from \$2.99... for every \$100 of payroll... to \$3.74.

...THE physical demands of one year of professional rugby are clearly being felt as the second season gets under way. N[Z] got off lightly in terms of injuries last year and that was a major factor in our international success with the All Blacks and the Super 12. But the warning signs are there that virtually continuous play and training is catching up with the leading players. Just look at the high profile players absent from the opening round of the Super 12... [The All Black No 8 (pelvis), No 7 (knee), No 15 (knee and virus), No 10 (hamstring) and four more All Black squad members] are all out... Add in... [the No 11 ('debilitating kidney illness')] and you've got the makings of a pretty useful side. We're not alone either. Natal[has lost one Springbok, Transvaal two and Queensland's Wallaby centre is] also sidelined this weekend... When [the]All Black coach... and his fellow selectors sit down to nut out their sides for the national trial and opening tests in June, they will be hoping the situation will have eased. But reality suggests it may have worsened. How much can a body take? The intensity of the rugby played in the Super 12 is certain to take it[s] toll. It's virtually test match football and it's continuous for three months. That's before a black jersey is pulled on for an 11-test international programme that runs all the way to early December with the NPC in between. The durability of players... during last year's hectic international season could only be marvelled at. It was a tribute to their fitness regimens that they managed to endure everything thrown at them. But it seems good luck may be as important as good management when it comes to preserving our top players and enabling them to stay on the field... There were concerns last year that some high profile rugby players continued while injured, that fringe players played on to enhance their chances of higher honours when they should have been resting niggles. It's a problem common with professional sports. High wages demand high performances and there is pressure from employers to extract everything they can from their assets, even at the risk of long-term damage. But success often comes at a price and sooner or later someone will have to take stock and realise that these players are human and not instantly repairable robots... [● The] 25-year-old... Welsh rugby skipper... was being treated by neurosurgeons yesterday after suffering a serious neck injury.

...[the Welsh] captain... has suffered a “significant” spinal cord injury but did not break his neck... The injury left him with a “major weakness” in his arms and legs, but it was impossible to predict the long-term consequences... [his doctors said. Incidentally, the] number of serious spinal injuries among rugby players has not diminished in the past 20 years despite rule changes in the 1980s, a study by medical researchers has found. Instead, admissions to the Burwood and Otara spinal units rose steadily between 1976 and 1995... the researchers examined the records of 141 patients admitted to the units [during that period. 22] of them were injured in rugby league. At the time the report was compiled, a third of the patients were in wheelchairs, one had died, the fate of two was unknown and the rest were walking but[many] with serious residual disabilities... The authors... knew of a further [5]... players who died before getting to a spinal unit. International research suggested a death rate for spinal cord injuries of between 5 and 10[%]. The study did not include “near-misses” – where players had sustained significant damage to the vertebral column without spinal cord injury – as [ACC] records were not in a form to be incorporated. However, it had been suggested there were 10 significant neck injuries for every one spinal cord injury, the researchers said. They found the riskiest position was hooker, the riskiest grade senior club and the riskiest month April. The front row accounted for 56[%] of all injuries, loose forwards 18[%] and locks 9[%]... Rugby spinal injuries were most often from scrums... Most league spinal injuries were from tackles... Last year... the... [NZRFU] instituted compulsory nationwide safety seminars for coaches of all grades, reinforced by an ACC campaign. Since then there had been no spinal cord injuries from scrums, although one player sustained tetraplegia from a tackle[(which now means that '72 NZ tetraplegics were injured playing rugby')]. But there have been several near-misses.

...[the] Welsh rugby captain... [who] won his 13th cap when... [leading] Wales for the fifth time... earlier this month... has been forced to quit... after being trapped in a ruck 13 minutes into the game... between his club... Cardiff... and... league leaders... Swansea last weekend... [The player, who] has been in hospital since being carried off unconscious... is comfortable... and has slight movement in his limbs, but it will be some time before doctors can tell if [the player] will make a full recovery... [In local news, one] promising player's rugby career ended this season as a result of an eye-gouging attack, and a league player was blinded last season. Auckland Hospital treats an average of three players with serious eye injuries each week. Not all of those are caused by illegal assault. But rugby and league players need to be aware of the damage they can cause through either deliberate or careless action around the eye, according to[a] retinal surgeon... The eye is a robust organ, [the surgeon] said: “To blind someone you have to have a really good go. Sharp objects might penetrate the eyeball itself, but a blunt injury such as that caused by a finger will not easily cause rupture.” More likely such pressure will deform the eyeball, causing a blurring of vision that will persist in proportion to the amount of force used. Straight pressure into the eye socket can push the eyeball into the skull but more serious damage is caused if the eyeball is squeezed against the side of the socket, as might happen if a thumb was deliberately used... The player put out this season was first injured on an overseas tour with a [NZ squad, then] received a blow to the same area soon after.

...Violent players causing on-field injuries that result in loss of income can be prosecuted or sued, says a Wellington sports lawyer... Clubs and unions employing violent players could also be taken to court, as lawyers sought to make civil court action worthwhile... [The lawyer cited an AUSn] rugby league case from the mid-1980s where [a player] was badly injured by a violent act and missed a Kangaroo's tour to Britain as a result. [The player sued the offender] and his club, alleging the club condoned his behaviour. In Britain[– where 'the future of amateur sport looks uncertain after a Welsh rugby player became the first non-professional sportsperson to win a claim for damages against a referee who had failed to protect him from being paralysed for life when a scrum collapsed (the case could cost governing bodies hundreds of millions of pounds in insurance and put refereeing on a permanent professional footing') – 2] rugby players are in jail for violent on-field behaviour in the past 12 months... [The lawyer was] approached for comment after the suspension of the Waikato Chiefs prop... for three weeks for punching two opponents in Saturday's Super 12 game against the Auckland Blues... [The lawyer] said sport was “no longer a bit of fun.” N[Z] was catching up with overseas trends, in which players were protecting their sporting talents... Players were employing lawyers and taking out loss of income, medical and disability insurance to protect their futures.

...N[Z] is fighting a twin flank attack from A[US] and South Africa as they push to extend the Super 12 rugby competition to 14 teams next season... N[Z] started with five sides... South Africa with four, and A[US] with three. However, when AUS[US]... learned it would have a bigger cut of the... extra \$US11m due... from News Corporation's \$US43m... funding for the second season of Super 12, it put a case for having an extra team in the competition... perhaps based in Melbourne.

...[the NZRFU] chief executive... compares his job... with that of a top referee. If things go well the match controller gets little recognition while all the attention is centred on the game or the occasion... It is not his job to seek the limelight. [The chief executive] has been given the task of moving

N[Z] rugby through the minefields into the new era of professional and amateur mix. It is a big job but [the chief executive] is so confident there will be a turnaround this year that [the chief executive] may have to wear a new title of the Six Million Dollar [Hum]an. The tag will sit uncomfortably... [because] during his time with the troubled N[SWRU the chief executive] inherited a staff of 12 and a \$6m debt at the union's Concorde Oval headquarters. In three years [the chief executive] turned that around to a debt-free union running a staff of 32... [Ironically, after its first full year of professionalism] the NZRFU showed an operating loss of \$6m. "I am budgeting for a one million dollar profit this next year and barring unforeseen results I think we will achieve that... The first moves to professional rugby were very tricky and now I think we are better equipped..." ...his involvement with the NSWRU led to his stint running Sanzar, the group hastily convened in 1995 to run the Super 12 and tri-series as [another group, the World Rugby Council,] fought with the establishment for the world's best players... "With Sanzar we had to do a deal before the end of the [1995] World Cup and with the mess we now see rugby league in with their split, I am very thankful we have rugby where it is at the moment... The three crucial elements were that we did a deal with News Ltd for \$US550m to pay the players... [which enabled us to] sign... the Springboks and the volume of the N[Z] players... The one mistake we made was that we should never have underestimated the power of the players who signed with WRC and could do a similar thing again." [The chief executive] prefers to think they won't and while England, Japan and Italy can offer a lot more money... coming sponsorship deals... [such as the soon-to-be] signed... three-year contract... [for] Coca-Cola... to be the official softdrink supplier to the All Blacks... and the powerful All Black brand will hold most of the players in N[Z]. The All Blacks were not yet a superbrand like the Chicago Bulls [basketball team] or the Brazilian soccer team but they [are] getting close... Progress would not be totally dollar-driven or by corporate officialdom. "For instance the A[RU] wanted to stage three Bledisloe Cups every year but while we have agreed for this year and next, after that we will accept only two matches annually..." ...[Incidentally, the] International Rugby Board will be asked to rule on the status of the All Black trial teams, with its decision having major repercussions for players with dual nationality. Western Samoa's coach... is annoyed that the trial teams... have been deemed to be N[Z]'s top two teams. A new IRB ruling says that players picked for a country's top two sides are bound to play for that country. Therefore, Western Samoans or players from other Pacific island countries who play in trial teams or even make the reserves bench but then miss selection for the All Blacks, would not be able to play for another nation... The... NZRFU... interpretation means this country's player base will be extended at the expense of struggling Pacific countries[, but Western Samoa's coach]... argues the IRB regulations [only] apply to games between nations... [and] would appear to have a strong case... "We have a powerbase of five top teams in the world – A[US, NZ], South Africa, England and France – and everyone else is being left to languish... The world wants to see the best players on the field. If you have a situation where six or... [more] guys can't make the All Blacks but are stopped from playing for other nations and therefore making international rugby more attractive, then I think someone needs their head read." If the decision goes against the island nations, [the coach] didn't rule out legal action.

...N[Z] rugby knew no finer, fiercer or more faithful hero than... the great All Black winger of the 1970s... so [as coach of Manu Samoa, the ex-All Black] draws on a ready store of sympathy when... [championing] the cause of Western Samoan rugby... Manu Samoa competed with distinction at two World Cups and were regarded as credible opponents on many of the great grounds of the world. They were admitted to the private club of competition with South Africa, N[Z] and AUS in the old] Super 10. Then, like many other rugby countries whose population and financial resources did not quite [match] their skill and enthusiasm, the Western Samoans ran smack-bang into the high brick wall of professionalism. Rugby, especially in the Southern Hemisphere, became entangled in the multi-millions of pay-television. The pity was that A[US, NZ] and South Africa were so busy holding on with both hands that they let slip sentiment and the old amateur brotherhood of rugby... Being a rugby realist, [the coach] realised one key factor: in rugby, especially now[it is] the plaything of the television tycoons, you either get better, or your standards drop... [I]f his team are not in regular and strong competition... [its] better players will move towards the golden calves of N[Z] or other television-friendly countries... The second part of that proposition is that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer... Ideally the I[RB] should take a stronger role in developing the game in the places of urgent need... [T]he IRB relies for funds on World Cup takings and franchises, and it now has no fewer than 76 countries under its wing. Last year about \$7 million was distributed, much of it aimed at grassroots development in places hard to find on the map. In contrast, the Pacific Rim tournament planned last year for Western Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Argentina, Canada, the U[S], Hong Kong and Japan probably only needed \$1.3 million to become a very useful fact – and perhaps another enterprise to come under the pay-television umbrella. The battle plans were drawn, but the IRB could not, or would not, bankroll the enterprise. These days \$1.3 million, while not exactly loose change, is not some mythical amount at the end of the rainbow... After the Super 12 final... the Auckland Rugby Union chief executive, was... looking at the low side... [while declaring that] the Super 12 bonus could have the [union post a profit] over \$1m this year.

...[a] former All Black... is poised to become... rugby's first £1 m... player in a deal with English club Newcastle. [The 27-year-old] has returned to rugby... with London club Wasps... [after] a... stint with... league club Wigan... [– during which it] also represented Samoa in league's 1995 World Cup[–] ...with his reputation enhanced, in a season which also saw him return to international rugby with Western Samoa. [The 27-year-old is still] contracted to both Wigan and European Super League, but Newcastle's offer is so high the cash-strapped... club can not afford to say no... Newcastle have agreed a transfer fee with Wigan in excess of £500,000 and, with contracts and compensation payments, they will complete rugby's world record transfer... [T]he 27-year-old... who was contracted to Wigan until 1999, was signed [3] years ago after touring... with the All Blacks.

...rugby's first £1 million player inspired Newcastle to a 20-13 victory at former champions Bath on their debut in the top flight of English rugby yesterday. [In local news, using the slogan 'get out and get behind your team', Air NZ, the principal sponsor of the National Provincial Championship, plans to promote air travel packages to rugby fans. Supporters groups will be able to obtain a 'match ticket and economy class return airline ticket for' less than the normal price when the NPC starts after the completion of the Tri-nations, which begins next month.]

...Auckland promoters of air charters to A[US] have admitted being unable to obtain an aircraft in time for flights due to start on Saturday. Central Pacific Airlines... said yesterday that it had cancelled eight proposed flights and was either helping to rebook hundreds of passengers on alternative services... although they were having to pay the extra price above Central Pacific's \$399 return fare... or refunding their money. The chief executive... insisted that their money was safe and easily refundable from a trust account... [The chief executive] had been let down by an [AUSn businessperson] who had failed to deliver a Boeing 747-100... but was optimistic that the aircraft could begin services on July 19... [The chief executive] was negotiating options with two [US] leasing companies for an alternative aircraft should [his company] be let down again... A Commerce Commission manager... said this might be a breach of the Fair Trading Act but her staff needed to find out more details.

...Rugby fans stung by a package airline deal that went sour are still anxiously waiting for refunds and may seek an injunction to secure their money. Up to 2000 people booked cheap charter flights to... [AUS] to support the All Blacks' bid for the Bledisloe Cup... A Papatoetoe company set up the charter flights after recognising that regular airline services would be swamped by sports fans crossing the Tasman. They asked an A[US]n company, Seaboard Airlines, to provide planes for at least four chartered flights over the weekend of July 26. Four operators then put together package deals... Up to 25... travel agents could be... [involved. A] lawyer representing five tour operators, said Seaboard Airlines had refunded their cut of about \$300,000 yesterday. But a request made to Central Pacific's lawyer for an immediate refund of the balance of the money went unanswered... [The tour operators' lawyer] was... considering laying a complaint with the police and the Serious Fraud Office.

...Compensation for [fan]s caught out over the failure of Central Pacific's... Bledisloe Cup... packages is still up in the air. A lawyer representing a group of tour operators says people should be covered by the Travel Agents Association's fidelity fund, but another says this is not guaranteed.

...Central Pacific Airlines... is winding itself up... It went into voluntary liquidation yesterday, leaving a trail of debts and about 2000 angry rugby fans... About 750 rugby fans who bought cheap seats would get to the... Bledisloe Cup match in Melbourne... on other flights, including a Qantas 747-400 making a special trip to Melbourne early on the morning of the game. Tour operators had to buy the extra seats. Air N[Z] revealed last night that it was also putting on extra flights and might have up to 3000 more seats to Melbourne next week... Liquidators would divide the \$100,000 still held by the... company, which is being investigated by the... Commerce Commission... and... [the SFO,] among tour operators... [– although one] Auckland-based travel company... is refunding clients out of its own pocket... Central Pacific is the second cut-price trans-tasman flights company to collapse in the last year... • Central Pacific Finance Ltd, a finance company with branches in Otahuhu and the Wellington region, has no connection with Central Pacific Airlines.

...[a former Wallaby] captain... believes next Saturday's history-making Bledisloe Cup showdown... will live up to the billing... [of AUS's] biggest sporting event of 1997... [The former captain], who is in comeback mode... after battling injury for much of the last two seasons, believes the gruelling schedule facing the All Blacks makes the Saturday night match the ideal chance for the [Wallabies] to claim the scalp they prize the most. "The main advantage the[y]... have is that six days before the All Blacks would have just played [the Boks] on Ellis Park. After a huge confrontation like that, and then the flight back to A[US], they will only have two or three days to prepare... That's a big ask and will be incredibly tough for the All Blacks. I'd say next weekend is A[US]'s biggest chance to knock them over." [The former captain] knows all about the magic of the Bledisloe Cup... having played in every one between 1989 and last year, when [the captain] was ruled out with recurring Achilles heel and knee injuries. "It's become just huge in A[US] now. Up until the mid- to late-'80s it wasn't really seen as anything special..." While [the former captain] believes the All Blacks are vulnerable, [the hooker] also confessed to being an unabashed admirer of... [the] team and what it had achieved in recent seasons. "...South Africa has got some great points, especially on defence, but... [for] the last three years... the All Blacks have clearly been the best and most competitive side in the world." ...the former test hooker[was speaking] while on a visit to Auckland... [to promote] his latest project – a limited edition print montage... tribute to the 94-year history of Bledisloe Cup matches... signed by All Black... and Aussie legends... Only 500 of the prints have been made. They detail every fixture from 1903 and include memorabilia covering the many battles, which at present count are scored 88 for the All Blacks, 33 for [the Wallabies and 5] drawn. There have been 37 cup series contested, with N[Z] having won 28, A[US] 7 and two drawn... [The hooker and] his business partner... presented print No 001 to the N[ZRFU]. For anyone else the special piece of history will set you back \$695.

...[secure a piece of history – a "very special", "very limited" (600 copies only) All Black signature series jersey – for 10 payments of \$119.90 + \$50p&p'.]

...THE All Blacks have set up a crunch date in world rugby, with their Wembley showdown with Wales... being confirmed for the same day as England play the Springboks at Twickenham. The double-header in London on November 29 will test the pulling power of rugby's super nations... The Welsh believe the lure of the black jersey could see as many as 65,000 trek to Wembley, a necessity with Cardiff Arms Park being rebuilt, while England and [the Boks]... try to fill the 78,000 capacity at Twickenham. In what is a major victory off the field, N[ZRFU] officials have finally got satisfactory test dates for the end-of-season tour to Britain... [and, in another first, the NZRFU] negotiated a tour financial package with Wales and Ireland that gives [the All Blacks] a percentage of the gate takings... [The NZRFU chief executive] hopes to negotiate a similar deal with English officials when [it] meets them in London on Tuesday. Frustrated by the lack of communication from British officials during the past few months, [the chief executive] believes his decision to join [the NZRFU chairperson] on the trip north has been vindicated by the success of his visit. [The]All Black manager... can now head north on his reconnaissance mission to sort out team hotels and internal travel for the five-week tour... With the All Blacks selling out the 100,000-seater Melbourne Cricket Ground for next Saturday's Bledisloe Cup test... [being] proof of their pulling power, the bumper crowds expected at Wembley and Twickenham mean [the All Blacks] can start to reap some financial rewards from costly overseas tours.

...*"I think this next (Bledisloe Cup) match will be a lot closer, and it could go A[US]'s way. There's going to be... 100,000 A[US]ns there, and most of them sober... [T]hat's just a joke... But the crowd should help [the Wallabies] enormously."* – England rugby coach... adds his... prediction, for what it's worth... [AUS's selectors have] made two changes to their squad [that had a] 25-6 win over... [an English team weakened by players being involved with the British Lions' – the English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish rugby unions (or 'home unions') combined team – successful pre-Tri-nations tour of South Africa.]

...*"All we need is for the Brits to say: 'We've beaten the Boks, the Boks have beaten the All Blacks, so now we're world champions'. We can't let that happen,"* the All Black No 11 offers as] ample motivation for an All Black win over [the Springboks this weekend.

...the All Black No 11] has changed tack in his sickness claim against his insurance company. Lawyers acting for the rugby superstar yesterday withdrew an application for summary judgment against GIO Insurance... GIO's manager... said last night that the withdrawal represented a vindication for his company... But far from the matter being at an end, it will simply proceed by another route, probably towards the end of the year... [Lawyers] would not disclose how much is involved in the claim but... acknowledged it is substantial. "[The No 11] is not a lowly paid football player." ...[the player is currently in South Africa preparing for the opening Tri-nations match between the All Blacks and Springboks. Incidentally, a US] sports gear giant is to sponsor the Springbok rugby team to the tune of \$US5 million... [The SARFU] president... confirmed that a new sponsor would take over from South African Breweries but declined to name the company. [However, the] Johannesburg *Sunday Times* said the sports gear giant was Nike, and added [that the SARFU president]'s son... stood to earn around \$US400,000... for acting as an agent in clinching the deal.

...[South Africa's] rugby boss... is under attack on a number of fronts again, battling major outbreaks of antagonism rather than minor disagreements. [The Sarfu president] stands accused of nepotism after it was revealed that his son would receive a huge, 2 million rand commission for organising a new sponsorship for the Springboks. [The president] is also at war with four major provinces, who object to the scheme to introduce [NZ-style] regional squads for next year's Super 12 competition... The latest attacks... come as his family's influence on South African rugby is being investigated by a Government-appointed task-force inquiring into Sarfu and the Central Guatang Lions Union, both of which are controlled by [the president. By the way, the]... All Black coach... says his side will not be affected by Sarfu's decision to switch [this year's Tri-nations] test from Pretoria's Loftus Versfield to Johannesburg's Ellis Park... The All Blacks have lost their last two matches at Ellis Park.

...76-year 'war' on field... On August 13, 1921, at Carisbrook in Dunedin, George Aitken, the captain of N[Z], kicked off in the first test between the All Blacks and Springboks. Both sides were nervous, an understandable reaction given that the series was labelled a contest to find "The World Champions Of Rugby." In the 76 years since, virtually every series has been a world championship. Tomorrow's test... at Ellis Park... continues this tradition. Kicking rather than running was the tactic used by both sides at Dunedin in 1921. As a consequence there were 114 lineouts. The Springboks scored first from a dominating scrum... The scrum since that day remains the powerhouse of the South African game.

...In the team talk before yesterday's match against [the Springboks, the] All Black coach... told his team to expect a journey into an Ellis Park stadium which would resemble the Coliseum. "And I think it was every bit of that," [the coach] said after the All Blacks' dramatic 35-32 come-from-behind win against the Springboks to open their tri-series campaign... It was like Daniel in the lions' den before the test and at halftime as a crowd of 59,737 scorned the visitors and willed their Rainbow Nation heroes to slay the invaders. Before the battle was joined there was great drama, with[the] referee... wanting a number of All Blacks to remove vests holding taped shoulder padding[, citing]... IRB laws... Eventually there was no change and both sides played with similar vests covering the padding under their jerseys... There was a rattled edge to the All Blacks'

work... They wanted to play a pacy game but they neglected to engage the Springboks properly or enough in the opening stages... The All Black backs looked overhyped... and... the... Springboks forced early turnovers and mistakes to get out to a 23-7 lead... "The team are down a bit, but let's savour the five [tri-nations points gained from the 4 tries to 2 victory (4 points for the win, plus a bonus point for scoring 4 or more tries; the Springboks also received one bonus point for losing by 7 points or less)]. There is a special quality about a team that can do this," [the All Black coach] said. "I was really worried at 23-7... more worried than the 18-6 we were down at Cape Town last year." ...It was something the rugby diehards of yesteryear would have thought impossible. Yet as the crowd drifted away, it was impossible to deny that a defeat to N[Z] was being regarded as some kind of victory. Everywhere people spoke sadly of missed tackles and missed opportunities. But they also spoke animatedly of how well their team had done. The Springboks had gone down by just three points, a result far less depressing than that which had been envisaged. At the post-match reception it was hard to distinguish the victors from the losers. The All Blacks wore long faces. Some Springboks looked almost euphoric. "Now we know these guys can be beaten," said one of the home players... Perhaps it had something to do with the recent series defeat to the Lions. Everyone said during those bleak times that losing to a good team like N[Z] was at least acceptable while a defeat to the British side was intolerable... But the All Blacks cannot play so poorly again, and... [some Springbok fans are] shuddering at the prospect of what might happen in Auckland in three weeks... Both teams now fly to A[US], but the All Blacks have the first task of meeting the Wallabies in Melbourne on Saturday.

...[THE] VICTORIAN Premier... has described... [this weekend's] Bledisloe Cup match at... the Melbourne Cricket Ground... as Melbourne's biggest sporting event since the 1956 Olympics... About 90 day and night events each year attract huge crowds to this landmark complex within a roar of the... sports-mad... city's central business district. It occupies 7.2ha of Crown land and... [such] is its magnetism that visitors from overseas have been known to go direct from the airport to the MCG before booking their hotels... Visitors... find much more than a famous sporting arena... The MCG library has an outstanding – and extremely valuable – collection of sporting books and magazines. And since 1986 the MCG has been the site of one of the finest multi-sport collections in the world: The A[US]n Gallery of Sport and Olympic Museum... Despite its Coliseum-like appearance, the ground provides what has been described as "theatrical intimacy" between players and spectators. Vast cantilevered stands... are the sounding boards for the partisan tribes who turn out in their scarves, beanies and other regalia for major sporting events... The city was just three years old when the Melbourne Cricket Club was formed in 1838 and 15 years later occupied the present site... MEMBERSHIP of the MCG is so valuable to Melburnians that children's names are often registered with the club at birth. Full Membership of the M[CG] is just over 46,000... But the registered waiting list – this is a democratic club, no queue jumping allowed – is 132,000. The club estimates the 1997 waiting time for full membership is about 30 years... [Gals] were first admitted as members in 1984... MOST Victorians have never seen a game of rugby (union or league) but the Bledisloe Cup has been a sellout for weeks... [– although about] a third of the spectators [this] weekend will be from [outside Victoria]... An attendance of 98,000... would double the existing A[US]n crowd record for a game of rugby union... [A] crowd of 87,000 turned out in 1994 to a rugby league State of Origin [match, while a US]... evangelist... holds the MCG attendance record of 130,000 (some of them on the arena itself) at his Melbourne crusade in 1959. [Apart from cricket, the game normally associated with the MCG is Australian Rules (the 'AUSn version of football, developed in Melbourne about 1858 by H.C.A. Harrison; played by teams of 18 who mostly kick or punch the ball – players may run with the ball no more than 9.1m without bouncing it on the ground – it has been described as a mixture of soccer, rugby and Gaelic football; distinctive to Aussie rules football are the four posts 6.09m high set up in a straight line 6.4m apart at each end of an oval field with a greatest width of 110-155m and a length of 135-185m – any punt, placekick or dropgoal that goes between the two inner posts without being touched by a defender scores a goal worth six points, whereas any kick that goes between the inner and outer posts or between the inner posts after being touched scores a "behind" worth one point.)

... 'They called him God. Not Champ. Not even Legend. Just God – plain and simple. The athlete cut an unlikely Messiah with his craggy face, big chin, receding blond locks and bushy moustache. Below, one of those notoriously tight-fitting, sleeveless Aussie Rules Football outfits wrapped like cling-film round a pale, muscular torso. In the famous stripes of the Geelong Cats, the athlete looked less the pin-up superstar, more a zebra on speed. Yet the athlete possessed style. It kicked goals from anywhere and outpaced opponents at leisure. Most of all, this guy could fly. Critics have never quite understood the charms of the game they dub aerial ping-pong, but in football-mad Victoria, nothing beats the wonder of an athlete leaping high to collect a catch as chaos reigns all around. Others could only dream of levels which saw him soar past 1000 goals in a 15-year career. "The guy could do anything," recalls a former team-mate. "It made a habit of making something out of nothing." No one had better hands than this athlete, the only player who could induce a sharp intake of 100,000 breaths every time the ball went near him at the MCG. And no one could crash back to earth with anything approaching such supreme poise. How the mighty are fallen. The paddock was always where the athlete felt at home, but the outside world seemed an alien arena which the athlete failed miserably to master. And then those two worlds collided in the most tragic of circumstances. The athlete awoke in his hotel room to find a besotted young fan slumped on the floor. Alisha Horan was a barmaid who had been seduced by her hero only a few days earlier. They had partied together ever since, and now Alisha was dead after overdosing on a cocktail of drugs. Footie fans were left numb with shock. Former team-mates and acquaintances reacted with less surprise, almost as if such a sad outcome had been inevitable. When the athlete walked away from the game earlier this year, it had long been a troubled soul trying to deal with the consequence of fame, yet it now faced a future without the game which had sustained most of his life. The athlete simply disappeared from the public eye, but after-dark sightings became common in the goldfish-bowl atmosphere of Melbourne. Rumour and innuendo – centring on persistent stories of him being drunk, and perhaps worse – trailed him through the shadows. But such was his standing in Geelong that many footie fans seem prepared to forgive and forget. The same cannot be said of Alisha's family, who have maintained a public silence. After Alisha died, the athlete checked into a depression-and-drugs clinic run by, ironically, the Assembly of God, about 200km north of Melbourne. Today the athlete, a born-again Christian who never liked his ultimate nick-name, is believed to be there again. Perhaps the athlete's pondering whether it really has found God.' ■ The violent interlude in the Sydney Swans-West Coast Aussie Rules game... last weekend had its sequel before the disciplinary tribunal [yesterday], with verbal wrestling replacing the physical stuff. West Coast's... 195cm tall and 100kg... [player] told the tribunal [it] had "an altercation" with [one Sydney player] then was grabbed by [another Swan. The 100kg player]... said the 191cm, 110kg [Swan] put his hand on his chest to hold him down and said, "Don't make me angry." ...[the 100kg player] was the only combatant to escape punishment. The tribunal fined [two players from] West Coast... and [three]Swans'... one week's wages. In [the 110kg player]'s case that's \$10-15,000, depending on whether the Swans win or lose.

...Melburnians have been bombarded with footy stories all week – in their newspapers and on television and radio. Nothing unusual about that in Melbourne, except this footy is a different shape and size to the Aussie Rules one they're used to. The locals have been trying to get used to the idea of a rugby union match between A[US] and N[Z] being played on their hallowed M[CG]. A Melbourne newspaper this week tried to help its readers with a two-page spread of a "mug's guide" to rugby. Highlights included: Remember these three simple laws – a player cannot pass the ball forward [but it can kick the ball forward – as long as the receiving player was behind the kicker when the kick was made)], you don't laugh when [the All Blacks] do the haka, and the All Blacks invariably win. This is not rugby league. This is something more aesthetic, more operatic, more hands-on, more international. This is a barbaric sport played by [civilised people], unlike rugby league, which is a barbaric sport played by barbarians.

...[a Wallaby flanker said this week:] "Even if we beat [the All Blacks on Saturday] it... doesn't mean we are the better side. We've got to, and want to, do it consistently. But at least until that starts to happen we are still beating the rest."

...All Blacks hit 'em for six... THERE had been a war of rugby union words raging around [the] Victorian capital all week, but last night the [guys] in black let their impressive games do all the talking they needed as they ensured the Bledisloe Cup would spend another summer in N[Z].

...The Bledisloe Cup rugby extravaganza has been valued as being worth as much as \$70 million to Melbourne. And much of it flowed from Kiwi wallets as... [NZers swamped Melbourne. The chairperson] of the Melbourne Major Events Committee which helps run the A[US]n Grand Prix and the Melbourne Cup, is ecstatic... adding his[inexperienced] description of the encounter as “the greatest rugby match in the world”. And the hoteliers were delighted. The... bed shortage was so severe that the Brazilian dance company Oba Oba, which had its Melbourne season extended by five weeks, was thrown out of its hotel and was forced to sleep on stretcher beds on its dressing-room floor. And tickets to the match were about as scarce as Wallaby tries in Wellington last year. Scalpers were asking \$500... Restaurants and bars were overflowing, taxis were working around the clock and there were chaotic scenes at Melbourne airport... over the past two days as the Kiwis flocked to the city. Air N[Z] and Qantas put on 27 extra flights to cope... Despite claims of the M[CG] holding 100,000, the capacity last night was 95,000. And that’s not a record for an attendance at a rugby match. That honour lies with Edinburgh’s Murrayfield stadium which housed 104,000 in 1975 for a match between Scotland and Wales.

...[the] NZRFU wants... a share of the gate takings from future Bledisloe Cup matches played in A[US]. The drawcard All Blacks helped fill the... [MCG but the ARU] waltzed away with the profits, believed to be more than \$4 million... There is already talk that a Bledisloe Cup clash would return to Melbourne next year... A[US], meantime, is considering reviewing its ticketing arrangements for Bledisloe Cup matches. For years the ARU has passed cup tickets to the NZRFU which sold them as tour packages for a profit of around \$200,000. But A[US] is looking to package its own tours with Qantas and to sell directly to the Kiwi market. [Ironically, as the NZRFU starts to get serious about its earning potential, some Maoris have said that they ‘want \$1.5 million from rugby bosses for using traditional imagery – including the All Blacks haka. NZRFU officials will meet Maori rugby administrators in New Plymouth on Friday to discuss the request. Maori rugby heads want the money to promote the game among their people.’ Editor’s note: ‘Maori traditions used the term “haka” to cover a whole group of dances, whereas today it refers almost exclusively to the war-dance type. It is usually performed by a team of guys, with a leader, working in unison, and involves energetic, usually aggressive, postures, with rhythmical chants of defiance, accompanied by movements of hands and feet. The haka is a form of literature to the Maori who follows the unity of words and action. Because it is vigorous and visually dramatic, however, it has appealed to the Pakeha and been taken up by rugby teams for performance on the field immediately before a match since the haka performed by the 1888-89 Maori rugby team in Britain delighted crowds. Although this new use of the haka is a degeneration from a range of dances with words that are pre-European in origin, it has had the beneficial effect of making the form popular with modern Maoris and thus encouraging at least some continued composition. What is certain is that, for good or ill, it is the most widely known Maori performing art form’]...

FROM the moment the ...[B]oks refused to face the... haka every South African at Eden Park feared the worst. Not to take up the challenge was an insult. It was, however, in keeping with the arrogance and attitude of a Bok management which is out of its depth and an embarrassment to the proud history of South African rugby. The Boks, their arrogance personified by the belief that they could jet into Auckland on Thursday, have a run... the next day and beat a side of the All Blacks pedigree, were humiliated for the second successive weekend. The All Blacks were good yesterday. No, at times they were sensational. But there were periods in which the mean machine coasted. [The Boks], despite this, w[ere] never in the game. Two gifted tries flattered the Boks at the break. Two late tries only added to the illusion. The... record 55-35... [fulltime scoreline suggests the] All Blacks... are a 20-point better side... [but, conservatively, the guys] in black were 35 points better. To deny this is to deny the parlous state of the game in South Africa... [The new Bok coach] is a nice guy... [but doesn’t] belong on the international scene... Appointing [someone who hasn’t got] any coaching experience at any level, was a moment of madness and not one of inspiration. Yesterday vindicated this belief even if the Lions and [Wallabies] had previously laboured the point. The Bok rot starts at the top and the smell has filtered through to a squad lacking in skill, physical presence and mental fortitude. The Boks are ordinary. The All Blacks are on another planet. Still, given the tradition of the contest, even the All Blacks must have expected more from the Boks. To call the Boks performance planless, gutless... and... spineless... would be stretching poetic license. It would, however, not be inaccurate... THREE hours before kickoff in the test at Eden Park a former All Black summed up the ...[B]oks. “They’re a bunch of overpaid prima donnas. There’s no backbone in the side. Once every [Bok] team had at least four or five real mongrels in it. Now most of them just lie down and die. If the All Blacks cut loose they’ll tear them to bits.” Watching the crumbling remnants of ...[B]ok glory yesterday the astonishing thought kept getting stronger and stronger, that South African rugby is tumbling down the same slope that Welsh rugby did... The All Blacks can look to a fascinating game at Carisbrook next Saturday against the reborn Wallabies. All that’s ahead for South African rugby may be a long spell recalling a glorious past... It would be astonishing if South Africa can raise itself to 1995 World Cup level again, although in a country where a handover to black rule could be accomplished without civil war, miracles must be possible... [□ The Bok flanker who was sent] off... for stomping on [the] All Black skipper... 10 minutes into the second half... faces the judicial committee today... [A Bok] lock... was lucky to escape punishment for another attack on the prone [All Black skipper]... The... ill-tempered... match was [also] marred by... several dust-ups and [the] Bok... team’s most experienced test player... was yellow-carded for a blatant foot-trip on [the] All Black fullback...

The latest All Black-Springbok duel offered the perfect discussion platform about rugby style... “It makes you long for a 3-3 draw in a grim and pitched battle,”... [an] acerbic English rugby critic... has written of the rugby played in the Southern Hemisphere. While there were many mistakes from both sides, which drew exasperation at Eden Park, the exhilaration of movement and endeavour which produced 12 tries was a knockout winner for this viewer... It would have been magic to have gathered [the English critic and the] All Black coach... together... to discuss the merits of the modern game... “What do you want to see?” [the coach] asked after the All Blacks’... victory... “Do you want a team that are really going to express themselves and have a crack, and that means every now and then they are going to throw the bad pass and make mistakes? I am a great believer in encouraging them to be positive... I am sure it is the best outcome for the game. I am sure the spectators have gone away feeling happy...” Amen. Exasperated but happy. Exasperated because like any N[Z] rugby addict I wanted a few more passes and tackles to stick so the All Blacks would really bury the old enemy. But putting a 20-point margin on the Boks and seeing them squirm... was some recompense for the harrowing 1949 tour to the republic, the refereeing injustices of the 1970s and anyone raised on tales of ‘we wuz robbed by the Boks.’

...A shame of two halves... The All Blacks put up one of the more bizarre performances in their long and illustrious history to beat [the Wallabies] 36-24 at Carisbrook in Dunedin yesterday. The All Blacks had the tri-nations trophy sitting alongside the Bledisloe Cup in the dressing room... But the atmosphere resembled more of a morgue... as frustration took over jubilation. For the second week in a row, the All Blacks had failed to cash in on a chance to really humiliate top flight opposition. After playing some sublime rugby[with the advantage of a strong wind] in the first half to lead 36-0 at the break[– during which there was a ‘\$50,000 goal-kicking competition to be won’ by a spectator –] the All Blacks never looked like scoring again in the second spell and allowed [the Wallabies] to make them look ordinary... [The Wallabies also achieved] a four-try burst that [compared favourably to the All Blacks’ three tries and] would have done wonders for the team’s morale, not to mention belief that it can beat the All Black bogey... “I don’t think what this team has achieved this year should be remembered by that second half,” said... [the All Black coach, although it] conceded the ability of both [the Springboks and the Wallabies] to edge back at his team with some stirring rallies was “probably good for rugby overall”... [The Wallaby No 10] said his side was “shell-shocked” when it gathered at halftime... “Words like humiliation were used... We had... to get it together and I suppose we can say that for 40 minutes... [we did].” ...The... Wallabies Coach... said: “...this is a great All Black team. They’ve lost one test in two years and in 1995 they were the best team at the World Cup...” ...There has been much talk about this being a great All Black team, but yesterday’s performance showed they are still some way off achieving perfection. Their effort allowed every rugby cliché. If ever there was a game of two halves, this was it... Having disposed of the leading southern hemisphere nations, [the All Black coach] can start his planning to

conquer Europe. Two tests against England and clashes with Ireland and Wales in November and December await. So does the 80-minute effort... [which, at least, the 'Gal Blacks' looked able to produce. They crushed their AUSn counterparts 40-0 in] the curtainraiser to the All Blacks-Wallaby tri-series test... after beating England 67-0 midweek... [However, the team has only] been seeded fourth for next year's World Cup in the Netherlands. England, the U[S] and France are seeded No 1, 2, and 3 in the 16-team event... N[Z] did not compete in the 1994 event.

...A WHISTLE-HAPPY performance from[the] French referee... was a major factor in yesterday's Jekyll and Hyde test. [The ref], who blew 42 penalties and free kicks in the match... played as big a part in it as any of the players. In the second spell alone [the ref] blew 26 penalties.[The] Wallaby coach... would not comment on the [ref's display, but agreed with hi's] decision to only give[the] All Black No 8... a yellow card for a late charge on... [the Wallaby No 10. The No 8] was not overly perturbed by the high penalty count or the referee's performance. "[The]... ref... blows the whistle quite well... actually,"... A few... of[the] 42,000... Dunedinites who paid big money to attend yesterday's match would probably disagree.

...SUPER 12 rugby coaches will be on an increased pay scale when the five [NZ] appointments are announced this week... For the past two years the[y]... have been earning about \$65,000 a season. That will improve in the new packages, where there will also be significant bonuses available, based on performance... South Africa is still to finalise its new regional concept and the coaching and selection ramifications that will go with it in a rugby environment notorious for its infighting. Across the Tasman... [all three] have been reappointed, despite being in charge of largely disappointing Super 12 campaigns this year... NZRFU[and ARU] officials... also met in Dunedin yesterday to discuss the joint bid for the 2003 World Cup.

...The Dunedin City Council [has given] the go-ahead... for four 48m-high... [floodlight pylons to be] installed at Carisbrook... providing up to 2000 lux of light for night sporting events and concerts...

Floodlights could be lighting up[a] new era of night sport at Eden Park by March 1999 following Environment Court approval for the park's \$30 million redevelopment plans. Following a 15-day appeal hearing... the court has approved up to 16 floodlit night matches a year and three daytime non-sporting events... The court decision followed the appeal by the neighbours association against the Auckland City Council's approval of the floodlights and night sport... They believe night matches will attract hordes of rowdy, drunken sports fans[, which would]... threaten the residents' peace and security... and harm property values. But the Environment Court accepted evidence given for the... Eden Park Trust Board... that night games would not affect property values in the long term... The court's 81-page decision... contains 45 conditions on traffic, alcohol, light spill, maximum noise levels, a community liaison group and other matters... The E[PTB] intends installing four giant lighting towers – 47m above the pitch – on the north and south stands. The lights and new north stand are part of a 20-year, \$100 million overhaul of the 97-year-old park. The Eden Park chief executive... said work on the lights and north stand would begin next July... "It's the Genesis Project," [the chief executive] said, referring to the name of the park's upgrading scheme, "and the first stage is: 'Let there be light.'" ...Auckland sport officials hailed the [court's] decision, saying it secured the future of the historic ground... [which was built on a 'swamp' and "has] already lost games [to other venues]..." ...The chief executive of the Auckland Rugby Union... said it was a big day... for Aucklanders. Night sport was the way of the future and[, according to him,] what the market wanted... Representatives of the Eden Park Neighbours Association [EPNA] were studying the decision last night and were not willing to comment, although one said the outcome was not unexpected... [and they] have vowed to keep fighting the... decision... "We haven't spent the last two years trying to hold on to our peaceful night-times, spending \$100,000 plus, just to give up at this stage,"... The Mt Albert City Council[had] opened the way for limited night sport at Eden Park[in 1982]. But anyone planning to stage sports fixtures at night [had to] apply to the council, overcome objections at a public meeting and agree to a range of conditions the council... imposed.

...The last legal hurdle to erecting floodlights at Eden Park fell yesterday as residents opposed to the scheme said they would not appeal. The E[PN], already \$13,000 in debt after losing its... legal battle, said it could not afford a fresh fight... [Meanwhile, t]he \$41 million North Harbour Stadium, in Albany, is in a financial crisis – only three months after it opened. Needing \$150,000 a month just to repay interest on a \$20 million loan, stadium managers believe there must be urgent measures to rescue the upmarket venue... The... loan [is] owed by the North Harbour Stadium Trust, a group of seven people who could have personal liability should its financial standing fail to improve. The trust has a long-term lease from the... North Shore City Council... for the land but owns the stadium. Since it opened on March 8, the stadium has been plagued with problems. Queues and traffic congestion have marred various events, most recently the soccer international between N[Z and AUS] last Saturday.

...The North Harbour Stadium has a more secure future after restructuring its \$20 million debt. The Albany stadium had needed \$150,000 a month to cover interest on the loan, but its main banker, ASB Bank, has agreed to refinance \$12 million of short and medium-term funding over a longer term of up to 15 years... The deal between the stadium trust, ASB Bank and the... North Shore City Council... includes a \$6 million bridging loan from the bank, to be repaid from the proceeds of naming rights and new seat sales... Since it opened... the \$41 million stadium has attracted \$8.1 million of seat sales, commercial packages and grants.

...The financially pinched North Harbour Stadium received a \$2.4 million donation from the ASB Trusts yesterday. No naming or sponsorship rights are involved. The stadium trust chair[perso]n... was thrilled that the hospitality areas of the stadium could be finished... [In related news, when] the great stadium debate began raging in Wellington, the Paekakariki Express – aka [the All Black No 15] – was still at school. But the decade-long debate... hot up... as the Wellington Hurricanes thundered into th[e]... Super 12 semi-final, taking rugby's popularity in the capital to an all-time high... [The] clash between the Hurricanes and the ACT Brumbies at Athletic Park was the first non-test match to sell out the 39,500-capacity ground. And that sellout crowd indicates the problem, according to a detractor of the \$115 million WestpacTrust Stadium, proposed for the city's former railyards... [The detractor] has proposed a \$93 million version with an extra 10,000 seats. But the Wellington Stadium Development Trust has said the dollars don't add up for a bigger stadium and the seats would rarely be filled. But even before the bums-on-seats argument, many other issues had to be resolved before the first clod of earth could be turned on the railyards site later this year. The stadium concept arose from the recognition, in the late '80s, that the city could not afford to spend millions on sorely-needed upgrades for rugby's Athletic Park and cricket's Basin Reserve, and that one facility was needed. Then came wrangles over the stadium site (Wellington or Aotea, north of Porirua), the cost, opposition from residents, and resource consent – two applications were needed before it was approved last month.

...[Challenge] Construction has won the job of building Wellington's \$121 million stadium, creating about 500 jobs. Construction should begin in March and is expected to pump... \$40 million into Wellington's economy and be completed by May 1999.

...Wellington City Council has approved a \$10 million underwrite for the... \$122 million Wellington railyards sports stadium, bringing its funding and underwriting contribution to \$25 million. However, this is conditional on the regional council giving \$25 million, which is yet to be debated. [By the way, 'ratepayers in Hamilton should foot a third of the \$30 million cost of the proposed Waikato sports stadium, the Hamilton City Council has decided. Councillors voted 11 to 2 in favour of a \$6 million contribution to the outdoor stadium, and \$3 million for an indoor complex.']

...Waikato's proposed... super stadium is now officially not quite so super... Plans for the \$34.2 million stadium... at Hamilton's Rugby Park... have been mooted for more than a year... But... [its] backer, the Waikato Regional Sports and Events Centre Trust... has so far secured only \$12.1 million in funding... Now... what was to have been a... 30,000-seat facility... has been scaled back to 22,000 seats... [Meanwhile, t]he Rugby Hall of Fame... founders... have again staved off bankruptcy... [The Hamilton businesspeople] who had guaranteed a \$1.8 million loan from the Bank of N[Z] to set up the \$9.5 million hall in Auckland, were to have been made bankrupt on Monday. The hall closed in October 1996, 15 months after it opened.

...The Auckland Secondary Schools' Heads Association has adopted a tough set of rules aimed at curbing player recruitment and covering eligibility of foreign students, transfers and a host of other contentious sporting issues... The influx of Pacific Island students to bolster teams, predominantly 1st XV rugby sides, and help a school win is covered in section 9... It says, in part, "schools be limited to two overseas or non-resident students competing in a premier, open A or first grade sports team." After simmering for years, the issue of foreign students reached crisis proportions late last year when Manu Samoa Rugby Limited offered schools talented players from Samoa for this school year. Following an outcry the scheme was modified, but it put the spotlight on schools recruiting independently in the Pacific. The transfer of students within the school year for purely sporting reasons has, in the past, caused friction between principals... [T]he bylaws reflect a similar approach to those at high schools in North America. They make it clear any school caught seriously breaching the new rules runs the risk of watching, rather than competing... [Incidentally, a] rugby match in Tonga turned into a riot in which one of the kingdom's colleges was destroyed, leading to the arrest of 154 schoolboys... The riot arose out of bitter rugby rivalry on July 3 when... Tupou College... defeated... Tonga College... 8-6... [O]n July 8... Tupou College students attacked... [the] state-owned... Tonga College... [causing] \$1.1 million... damage... Tupou is owned by the Free Wesleyan Church.

...Otahuhu College, which serves the deepest working-class suburbs of South Auckland, has snatched a glittering prize... from a far more exclusive institution. On Saturday the state school ended the two-year reign in the national schoolboy rugby competition of its posh neighbour, King's College, when its First XV won the Moascar Cup 32-17 in front of... 1500 people. King's had... last week beaten another elite private school, Wanganui Collegiate, to set a record 19 straight defences of what is schoolboy rugby's equivalent of the Ranfurly Shield. It has been 20 years since Otahuhu last beat King's, and... has never before won the 77-year-old trophy, even though [a couple of past pupils] played together for it on the way to becoming revered All Blacks. The cup did not have far to go after the match, as the two schools back on to each other off the same street... One who crosses the divide daily is [the gal] who teaches at Otahuhu but lives at King's as wife of a housemaster there. [The teacher] said her husband and others at King's knew they could not keep the cup forever, and they were delighted that the neighbouring school should be the one to take it.

...31 pupils from Aranui High School's sports academy in Christchurch are each being paid weekly training grants of \$121 and \$97... The payments have angered the city's regional schools sports director who wants Aranui teams banned from inter-school competitions. [The director] will ask the N[Z] Secondary Schools Sports Council tomorrow to consider the situation. [The director] believes payment of the benefits has made Aranui sports teams virtually professional, giving them an unfair advantage over other schools. [The director] also said Aranui High School denied the payments were being made when [the director] questioned them about it earlier this year. However, the Income Support Service has defended the payments. [The area] manager... said the academy qualified for training funding... Aranui High School was in one of the most depressed suburbs in... [the city and a] number of Aranui pupils have been enticed back to school after being unemployed, while others have stayed on at school and joined the academy instead of leaving and going on to the dole... Pupils spend their time in class, at sports practice, and learning life skills with the aim that when they leave they will be able to join the workforce or pursue a professional sports career... Other schools are looking at similar initiatives... [(e.g., Mt Albert Grammar in Auckland is setting up a soccer academy; a Waikato HS is setting up a surfing academy) and the] Social Welfare Minister... yesterday applauded the initiative. [The minister] had no problem with the money being paid to school pupils. But [the director] said if students were receiving benefits to which secondary school pupils were not entitled, "then as far as I'm concerned they're not secondary school pupils,"... The Aranui academy has received national recognition since its inception earlier this year. Its rugby team played the curtain raiser to [this season's] Bledisloe Cup rugby test at Lancaster Park. That side will be safe from a sports ban because it plays in a Canterbury Rugby Union Saturday competition... But... the... school's rugby league team[- which 'includes many of the union team's members' -] is scheduled to play in the Canterbury final on Wednesday. It is expected to win the match and progress to the national finals. That now is likely to be... [in] jeopardy.

...Last week I discussed the reasons why rugby union has become a much better spectacle in recent years and cited a number of law changes which have encouraged running play and kept the ball in play for more of the match... A LETTER from... Christchurch this week... had no argument that rugby union had improved as a spectacle, but being a rugby league supporter, [the correspondent] was disappointed I did not acknowledge that virtually all the law changes had been borrowed from rugby league... [And the correspondent is] right. It seems to me, until recently, rugby league has always had a much greater emphasis on the need for the game to be an attractive spectacle. This no doubt because the professional game puts a high priority on income from sponsors and spectators to pay players and officials. Rugby union on the other hand has until recently regarded itself as something of a purists' pastime... [R]ugby officials believed the traditional game was the thing. Some of this thinking persists today. [A critic] writing in the *Sunday Times* of London earlier this year, lamented the free-scoring, wide open rugby of the Super-12. [The critic] claimed to prefer a 12-9 nail-biter to a 44-32 free for all... [Fortunately,] union lawmakers... have seen... the need... [to] copy the best from rugby league. In fact union players have learned from elements of rugby league in recent years too. When I played seven-a-side for N[Z] we watched a lot of rugby league videos as part of our training. We particularly watched the great... Kangaroo teams that completed two consecutive unbeaten tours of Great Britain. We learned from them a great deal, including how to "pop" a pass to put a player in a gap, how to pass around a tackler, how to slow before passing to achieve a "whiplash" effect for the player hitting the ball at pace, how to support on both sides of a runner to give him options and pressure defence. The two games are coming closer together but will not, I believe, ever merge... [However,] league has been severely hampered by the split in the game... [and] I think the game has lost ground to rugby union as a spectacle. The spectator numbers for the Super 12... compare more favourably to the Super League and ARL numbers. The chief difference between the two games for a spectator is continuity. Every two seconds or so in league a player is tackled and the game stops for a brief moment as [the tackled person] plays the ball. In union the stops are longer as a scrum or lineout is formed but the periods of free-flowing running and passing are more frequent and longer.

...[an AUSn player] gambled a small fortune on his ability yesterday when [the player] accepted incentives in a deal with the A[US]n Rugby Union and decided against switching to rugby league. But tensions between the Queensland and A[US]n Rugby Unions were simmering after [the player] agreed to a three-year deal and rejected a \$A1.2 million offer from Super League club the Sydney Bulldogs. The QRU is said to be disappointed with the amount of "guaranteed" financial help that the ARU has offered [the player]. The QRU had scraped together a rescue package, including a \$A100,000 salary with the Bank of Queensland, to keep the 20-year-old in the code.

...[the former Wallaby] coach... is pushing for compensation from the A[US]n union, threatening otherwise to sue for \$A500,000... for unfair dismissal following his resignation[. The former] Wallaby coach... is believed to be seeking \$A200,000 for 16 months salary and a further \$A300,000 in damages claims in legal action against the ARU initiated through... [his Sydney solicitor. The former coach] had been contracted until the end of the season for tours of Argentina... Scotland... and... England... [- who face AUS, NZ twice and] South Africa on four consecutive weekends... in a programme originally designed to replicate what they might face in the 1999 World Cup... [However,] English rugby... officials say the... schedule... imposed on the national side is a case of overkill and will not be repeated.

...As a group of 10 All Blacks face varying injury layoffs after a gruelling test programme, [their] team doctor... has called for some mandatory breaks for the sport's leading players... "I think we are expecting too much of the players,"... [The doctor] has written to the N[Z]RFU with that personal view, but there has been no directive from officialdom, which means the issue is left to an arrangement between N[PC] team coaches and players... The lack of direction from the NZRFU... [seems] strange, especially as it is understood[an All Black] flanker... received a critical letter from the union after his recent surfing accident. While the union apparently wants to protect the players from themselves, it does not want to carry

the issue any further. However[, the All Black]... and Wallaby team doctor[s]... intend taking the matter further, suggesting players have a fortnight's break after the Super 12 series and another similar layoff after the Tri-Nations tournament next year.

...THOSE poor tired All Blacks. It's been such a rough, tough season. All those tests. All that travel. Can't we just give the poor chums a compulsory rest somehow, now, before they take part in the NPC... What a load of rot. These guys are professionals. Highly paid pros earning upwards of \$250,000 a year and more. That is huge money by any standards, so why do they deserve a vacation mid-way between pursuing what happens to be this country's finest employment opportunity? Why don't they just get on with playing rugby and stop bleating? ...Coaches in the American NFL don't require some compulsory stand-down period mid-way through their season. They deliberately under-utilise their top players in the pre-season so that when crunch time comes, the players are ready. Quarterbacks are given only 15 minutes or so play in early games, top linebacks might miss an entire game. Certain running backs... mightn't even play the first two or three season fixtures. Why is it All Blacks can't operate in a similar fashion? ...Take this year. All Blacks played in the Super 12. Fine. So they should. Then they competed in an eight-test programme. Not so fine, some will have us believe. But was there the need for all or any of our leading players to: • Be involved in a trial match before the test[s] started. • Have fronted against... Fiji. • Make a busy test season unnecessarily cluttered by playing Argentina.

...THE All Black tour to Argentina in 1999 has been cancelled... The decision was taken with the best interests of the South American country in mind. It follows Argentina's dismal tour of N[Z] earlier this season, when the Pumas were annihilated by the All Blacks in both tests, losing 93-8 in Wellington and 62-10 in Hamilton[– results that elicited the following comment from their coach: 'NZ hit you, they tire you and they keep at it until they break you. And then they score the points. And it's impossible to reach their level of speed']. "Argentina has had a real shock and sensibly they are looking to rebuild," said... the... NZRFU chair[person, who] heads to Europe this week with a proposal [the chairperson] hopes will result in the I[RB] helping fund a Pan Pacific tournament... to involve... struggling... [rugby nations like] Western Samoa, Fiji and... Argentina... [The chairperson] is adamant rugby needs to increase its level of competitiveness as the sport looks to globalise. "The Five Nations is well catered for and Sanzar looks after A[US], South Africa and N[Z]... But what we have to do is look at what can be done on a more regular basis for other countries... We're all conscious that the gap... [between the top 8 rugby countries and] what you could term the [remainder of the] top 20... is getting bigger. The best way to bridge that gap is regular competition between countries of approximately equal standards."

...WHEN promoting my book, *Black and Blue*, I[– the All Black captain who lifted the 1st Rugby Union World Cup after defeating France in the 1987 final –] visited 15 of N[Z]'s 27 provincial unions, many of them second and third division. I met many people, made a lot of speeches and was asked a lot of questions. In the smaller unions one question dominated: "What is the future for smaller unions in the professional era?" ...In Manawatu and Hawke's Bay they didn't... ask... the question... But then... they... believe they have the answer – mergers... What the smaller unions want is to retain local talent, to have a decent rugby competition and a top provincial team. South Canterbury wants to get back to the days when it held the Ranfurly Shield and Bay of Plenty wants to win the NPC first division again. The locals realise this sort of ambition is probably not practical, but they can't accept that what is happening is sustainable either. What is happening – all the good players leaving as the gap between rich and poor, top and bottom widens – cannot be in the best interests of the game, they rightly argue... The professional era allows the rich to establish a virtuous circle of financial muscle, player purchases, a winning team, more sponsorship and higher gates, more money, better players, more success and so on. The little provinces are trapped in the minor image of a vicious circle of no money, players [– most of whom are only 'part-timers' –]leaving, poor results, low gates, less money, more players leaving and worse results. Money causes these spirals. It can also break them. The money needs to come from the N[ZRFU, which]... has... to... distribute... more money... to the smaller provinces... Five... teams... seems about right for the Super 12, but 27 is almost certainly too many for the NPC. I wish this wasn't the case... [but NZ] is too small for 27... The future is uncertain for many smaller unions and it cries out for leadership... from the centre. Meanwhile we continue full steam ahead into the fog.

...N[Z] rugby needed a "redistribution of wealth" to direct revenue from the professional area to the 98[%] of the game that remained amateur[, the]... NZRFU... chief executive... said yesterday... [But it then turned politician by saying:] "The first thing the N[ZRFU] has to do is create some wealth. We have been [operating at a loss] in the last two years and this year we will show only a small profit..." ...[furthermore, international] player fees must be introduced... There has been an alarming leap in players moving to England this year, with rich contracts offered to second and third-tier players... [The IRB] had to take action or wealthy countries... with a shallow pool of quality players, would destroy N[Z]'s depth. "We will become the nursery ground for world rugby." England, in particular, has become a who's who of international faces... with 80 non-English players from 14 countries in the 12-club premier competition... Many of these players are Kiwis and [the chief executive] said the NZRFU should be compensated for their loss. But [it] also predicted the big contracts on offer in Britain would soon dry up as several major clubs had reported huge deficits from last year. Leicester lost... \$750,000, Harlequins \$1.24 m... and Sale... \$1.86 m... [Yet,] despite these losses, English clubs would always be able to lure N[Z] talent as the NZRFU could afford to pay only the elite... [T]he NZRFU would increase Super 12 contracts, but the players realised pay rises had to be rational... "..."some of the money being paid [in England] to players outside this group... [is] bizarre and unsustainable."

...Auckland[']s captain will retire from all rugby in N[Z] after this season to take up an overseas contract with the Harlequins club... a two-year... deal... under[stoo]d... to be worth... [over] \$1m... The 32-year-old No 8 told his... teammates about his decision at an emotional meeting on the eve of his side's 31-29 loss in the Ranfurly Shield challenge against Waikato on Saturday... his 139th match for his province... The 54-test veteran with 17 test tries to his name – more than any other All Black forward – has spoken about the arduous demands of top-level rugby... The tough forward... named in a newspaper "rich list" this year as a millionaire, has been negotiating with the N[ZRFU] to try to sort out some compromise allowing him to either reduce his commitments or to be released from his... contract, which runs until the end of next year... [The No 8] has flirted in the past with overseas offers – nearly moving to Manly in the Sydney league competition in the late 1980s, and then being tempted to play rugby in Japan.

...[the r]ugby colossus... staged his farewell to the All Black jersey in the suburban Auckland club that gave him his first big chance. The 32-year-old All Black No 8 held court in the Jubilee Lounge of the Marist Rugby Club for whom [the colossus] played his first game in his new province, in 1983 – initially as a prop. Yesterday his front-row support was the All Black coach... and the [NZRFU] chief executive... The Auckland captain confirmed to a media pack – some of whom have followed him around the world since his international debut in 1987 – that [it] would quit N[Z] rugby this year... When his N[Z] contract ends in August next year [the player] will head to the Harlequins club in London... Both [the All Black coach and the NZRFU chief executive] said they had tried – and failed – to persuade [the No 8] to change his mind during the past six months... [The All Black coach] was saddened by [his No 8]'s decision but... believed it was right for him... It was the selectors' "strong wish" that [the No 8] make the All Blacks end of year tour to Britain... His loss next year would leave a "horrendous" gap in the game... [The No 8] modestly said his departure would not leave a gap in any side. Instead it would create "an opportunity for someone to stand up and say the No 8 jersey now belongs to them."

...NO SMOKE issues forth from the chimney, but the NZRFU cardinals have recently met, so the rumours tell us, to discuss the pros and cons of reducing the N[PC] to two divisions. This would of course increase the number of teams in each division... [and] would require a season that was too long if club rugby is to be accommodated... The top of the provincial tree is occupied by Auckland and Canterbury. There is a certain historical consistency to this... Auckland has dominated... [in recent times but] Canterbury is re-emerging. Thoughtful and committed administration and a structural change in the way we play provincial rugby have been behind Canterbury's[recent] rise... Canterbury has been the architect of its own success. The province serves as a great example to some others who remain mired in petty squabbles and personal agendas. It has also however been very much helped by the arrival of the Super 12 competition. Canterbury and Auckland are the only two provinces in N[Z] which field very nearly the same players in the Super 12 and the NPC. This has obvious advantages. The players are playing together all the time. They are

professionals who can afford to train fulltime. The players gain experience in the world's toughest provincial competitions... If the top of the provincial tree has a familiar look about it the bottom is not so predictable... Winning a division and gaining promotion can be something of a poisoned chalice... Spectators want to watch quality rugby [but they also] want to watch their team win. These two come into conflict when a top team in one division gets promoted to the next and finds itself out of its depth... The same crowds who turn up to watch the local boys run over the best in the third division get a bit tired of watching them get slaughtered in the second division... [■ Now] that Canterbury has again emerged as a top team in... [NZ, the] Auckland-Canterbury rivalry is back and it is back to stay[, resulting]... in signs like I Hate Auckland.

...LOVE it or hate it, the intense rivalry between Canterbury and Auckland is not just child's play. But some rugby-mad youngsters from Panmure Bridge Primary School have shown maturity beyond their years... The children in room six... were so appalled by a young Canterbury fan's publicised expression of hate for Auckland at Lancaster Park... last Friday they put provincial allegiance aside to exemplify fair play... [One pupil] said the Canterbury supporter was stupid and not fair to be so scathing on Auckland. "[The fan] should have said 'I love Canterbury'..." His classmates spent [this] week penning more appropriate expressions of support – and they certainly did their homework. The Cantabrian boy's view from the stands attracted criticism, even from the Canterbury Rugby Union, which said the photograph of the lad published in last week's *Sunday Star-Times* was not an accurate reflection of the atmosphere when the home side beat Auckland for the first time in 14 years. [The union's chief] executive... said: "We had 32,000 people there, including 4000 on family tickets, and there was only one family who thought it was all right to have a sign like that. I don't condone it and I don't condone the bank singing '[Auckland's No 10] is a wanker' when [the No 10] takes a goal kick either. But you can imagine how the crowd felt – it was a milestone." ...The Hillary Commission, supporters of a Fair Play campaign, said the boy's sign was "over the top and took provincial rivalry a bit too far." But... [the commission] doubted if the sign constituted a massive breach of sporting morals... Meanwhile... a senior lecturer in psychiatry and behaviour science at Auckland University, said the sign represented "a nasty element of N[Z]'s sporting support". "Instead of saying 'Go Canterbury' we are getting detestable about the opposition. It's like war-time propaganda."

...THE picture... published last week of the young Canterbury fan holding a placard reading "I hate you Auckland" has attracted a lot of comment. I make none, other than to suggest that if the child – who may be a little angel, but who may rip heads off pet mice for a hobby for all I know – produced a placard by himself, then [the child is] a budding Picasso. But the point is the poster epitomised the fanaticism Canterbury supporters have for their team. A dear friend of many years standing is among that band, and whenever... asked which province [the friend supports the friend] quickly raises one hand to cover an eye. Point immediately made. Hate is a strong word, but in the realms of baseball, for example, the New York Yankees are cordially hated – if one can cordially hate a team – by fans of every other club. It may not be surprising that a musical involving them was titled *Damn Yankees*. In the annals of fandom, Philadelphia is considered a hotbed of frenzy that would make even the most rabid Canterbury supporter look wussy. It could well be the city is a very boring place, so the only thing to while away the time is to boo visiting sports teams. It used to be so boring, that WC Fields, musing on his epitaph, considered having it read: "On the whole, I'd rather be in Philadelphia." A baseball player... once criticised Philadelphians with these words: "Not only would they boo at a funeral there, but they might even throw bottles at the hearse." The game that attracts real madness, though, has to be soccer. It is probably at its most fanatical in Liverpool where... [someone] once famously said, there are only two teams – Liverpool and Liverpool reserves... In a... [literary] piece called *Koppite*, after the Liverpool fans who crowded the famous Kop terrace, an interviewer is informed that the answer to the graffiti "What would you do if Christ came to Liverpool?" is: "Play St John at inside right." ...When Liverpool reached the European Cup final in the infamous Heysel Stadium disaster, and 40 fans died in the rioting, the match went ahead. An awful thought, with so many lying dead, but the alternative might have been even more chaotic. The match was decided by a penalty for [Italian club] Juventus in the closing stages of the match. As soon as it was over – it was shown live on television here – I called a mate who is a Liverpool nut. "Wasn't that awful?" I said. "You're not bloody kidding... It was never a penalty – that Juve bastard was at least a yard outside the box when we brought him down."

...The N[ZRFU] had all season to sort out the N[PC] semifinal arrangements – and then they come up with a mess this weekend. Competition broadcaster Sky television has been keen to have coverage of the games this season drip-fed over three days or nights from Friday[, which is] probably called maximising your commercial opportunities, or some other business jargon. Fans – those groups who go to watch matches live or on television – like it too. There is less conflict of interest. But now... [in] its semifinal wisdom, the NZRFU has ignored the chance of a Friday night game and has squashed four games, three of them televised, into Saturday and two on Sunday. Both first-division matches are on Saturday, split by... [one of the second-division games]. Who can get a leave pass to watch three consecutive games on television and who wants to sit down for that length of time anyway? ...Now Sky is committed to screening live the World Cup Challenge rugby league final this Friday night, even though it is a match between two A[US]n Super League sides... Some strange boffin at the NZRFU has not been thinking too well.

...It was a rugby playoff to match the absorbing ferocity of the 1995 World Cup final. It could also have headed into extra time until two late Auckland errors allowed... successful penalties to edge Canterbury to a 21-15 win and the prize of a Lancaster Park final next Sunday against Counties Manukau. The result signalled the end of a superb four-year reign as NPC champions by Auckland and the finish of [the All Black No 8]'s gifted career in N[Z]... provincial rugby. [The All Black No 8] tarnished his departure, though, with his verbal battle against [the] referee...

It was as furious as [the All Black No 8] has been during his time as Auckland rugby captain. Whenever [the] referee... blew his whistle against Auckland in their 15-21... semifinal loss to Canterbury on Saturday, it seemed [the Auckland captain] blew his top... In the end, [the Auckland captain] may have been fortunate not to have been sinbinned for his conduct. [The referee]'s work obviously rattled Auckland, a team ironically known as the unofficial kings of the professional fouls. "The referee had a major influence on the game. It is disappointing that had to happen," said [the] Auckland coach... However, [the coach backed his captain]'s right to question calls.

...It was hard... watching Auckland's exit from the N[PC] on Saturday... But I was disappointed less at... their loss than at the manner of their going. It was sad and shameful to watch the display of graceless petulance by Auckland[']s skipper... playing what is almost certainly his final game on N[Z] soil. I have every sympathy with the anguish top sports[people] must feel when the calls of match officials go against them. But to understand is not to excuse... I hope that time will change my abiding memory of [the No 8]. It should be of those blazing runs from the back of the scrum, of the field-width gridiron-style passes, of the long-range... drop goal which surprised no one more than him. Instead, I can only see his scowling face filling the [TV screen as it] barks: "This is a [expletive deleted] joke." ...I couldn't see the funny side. It looked more like a tragedy...

[The All Black No 8] apologised to the nation last night for swearing on live television at [the] referee... during Auckland's highly charged NPC semifinal defeat by Canterbury. But the Auckland captain refused to apologise for actually questioning the referee's decisions... [The No 8] said of the infamous televised profanities: "I was swearing to myself. When you're in a tight battle it's not a game of monopoly or... tiddlywinks." [The No 8] wanted to apologise, however, "to the young kids... for a couple of things I might have said" and to tell them "I definitely do not agree that you should take that frustration out on the referee."

...Auckland may have lost the two major prizes on offer in N[Z] domestic rugby but... netted... \$1,045,988... for the year ending October 31... the highest surplus for a N[Z] provincial union and... more than double any previous recorded profit... The union showed a \$269,323 profit last year.

...the NZRFU has... changed the 1998 NPC... [1]st division... to 10 teams. The [2nd and 3rd] divisions will compete with [8] teams each next year.

...The Hong Kong Sevens – traditionally a gloriously relaxed event on the rugby calendar – is turning professional. A... \$US500,000... cash bounty... is being put up for grabs from next year, making it the richest invitation sevens event in rugby. The winner of the annual[3-day, 24-team] tournament will get \$US120,000... The cash carrot is aimed at convincing the top teams... to keep Hong Kong in their increasingly crowded diaries,

even if the tournament's future at grassroots level may seem a little less secure after the British colony returned to Chinese rule... [However, the] Hong Kong bank Peregrine Investment Holdings is the new sponsor... [Regular winners Fiji will have an eye on the cash as their 15-a-side squad's recent] economy-style tour... cost them about \$100,000... [Unfortunately, diehard 7]s fans... complain that the event's boozy, party-like atmosphere is being transformed into a boozy, hard-sell marketing event... Tickets are increasingly difficult to acquire and the best seats go to corporate sponsors.

...THE first real battle in N[Z] rugby since professionalism was introduced in 1995 is... be[ing] fought over how often our All Blacks play. In other professional sports there is virtually no rest during a season... [A NZ] softball player now attempting to play his way into the Atlanta Braves baseball team... [currently] plays in a lower grade team run by the Braves... Their schedule is fierce, 160 games, with barely a day off over summer... That sort of relentless competition is also the lot of basketball teams in America. It's a schedule that professional tennis players and golfers might also relate to. British soccer teams can sometimes play three games a week when cup competitions are involved. So why should the All Blacks have it any different? A key element, of course, is the physical nature of the sport. In boxing, at the top end of the body contact scale, taking months off between fights is nothing unusual. There's good reason for that... Rugby might not make quite the same demands on the body, but it's not far behind. Over the 10 games of the... NPC season, [for example, one Canterbury loose forward]... made 146 tackles. As [an] All Black great... said at a recent school fundraiser in Auckland, "in the game now the number of times players impact is a lot higher than it used to be. They're smashing into each other more often, and at higher speeds. Loose forwards will wear out a lot quicker than in the past".

...THE All Blacks will miss the... 1999 N[PC] rugby season as [their] coach... concentrates on the team's build-up to the World Cup... When asked if this would not raise the ire of... [people who want] to keep international rugby away from the successful NPC competition... [because, otherwise, you] don't get the [top tiers] of players rubbing shoulders, passing information... [etc., hi]s reply was emphatic. "Well, it all comes down to whether they want to win the World Cup... If they do, then there's no way we can have our players in there playing NPC right up until we leave." [The coach] believes the All Blacks have been taxed too heavily over the past couple of years and believes the ideal game load for a season to be... 25 to 30... "...To play 36 games in a year is crazy..." ...Many of the All Blacks will be well into the mid to high 30s by the end of the tour to Britain.

...AS THE All Blacks leave today for their first tour of Britain in four years, [their] coach... has called for a globalisation of rugby, bringing together the top international sides from both hemispheres... In his new book *Change of Heart*, which is released tomorrow, [the coach says]... "The real worry that I have about professionalism now is that we in N[Z] have got it organised pretty well – some by accident, some by design – but it is lurching around the world. We can't do it on our own, it needs cohesion... The challenge facing the IRB is to integrate the Super 12 and tri nations with their counterpart competitions in Europe and think laterally about ways to make rugby a genuinely global game. That may involve looking at a global season at the top level... It's a new game now with new opportunities..."

...Six weeks ago... [a] former All Black now based in Llanelli, in Wales, approached the club bosses with a request that his two sons be the match mascots for Sunday's All Black tour opener at Stradey Park... His eldest son... will be clad in the All Black colours, while [his] four-and-a-half-year-old... will be dressed in the scarlet of Llanelli. [Their dad] was due to wear the Llanelli jersey on the field against his old team-mates, but a shoulder injury has now made him a doubtful starter. The last of [his] 27 games for the All Blacks was in Ulster in 1989, before [the No 10] embarked on a rugby league career with Wigan, the Warriors, and Castleford, before rejoining the union ranks last year... [The No 10] was good enough to win the player-of-the-year award for... Llanelli... and has also reignited his international rugby career, playing for Croatia in the World Cup qualifiers. "That's a bit of a laugh, but I had a mate ask me over. We beat Russia but we have to play Italy in June so we need another 10 Kiwis... with the right bloodlines... to pop their heads up for us,"... [says the player who] arrived in Llanelli on a contract reputed to be worth about \$500,000 for a couple of years, too much lucre for him to ignore. When [the player] turned pro in 1990, his initial three-year deal with Wigan earned him just a steady income... [but the player] was not insured when... his leg... broke... [while] with the Warriors... and... though on loan from Wigan... spent the next six months with a busted leg and no income. [The player] went as a bargain buy to Castleford and ran into more woes in Wales... A local caravan-park entrepreneur had promised \$8 million to bankroll Llanelli. The deal went belly-up. The club had to sell Stradey Park for \$3 million this year to help the financial problems. But the 34-year-old [ex-All Black] is still there... There is one bugbear though: October 31, 1972. It was the greatest day in the club's rich rugby history, when they beat the All Blacks 9-3. [The ex-All Black claims to have been] regaled weekly with the match details when [first joining] Llanelli... "I am getting sick of it now though, because I am reminded of it every day. They've re-enacted the match on TV, the score is always on the board at Stradey Park, it's everywhere and getting worse as this game approaches."

...The All Blacks have gained some relief from the threat of a northern hemisphere refereeing nightmare with A[US]ns controlling two of their tests in Ireland and the U[K]... The issue resurfaced last weekend when the whistle of [an Irish referee dominated the Wallabies'] hard fought win over Argentina. A[US]n officials were so incensed with [the referee], who dished out 47 penalties in a stop-start affair[, that they]... want southern hemisphere referees in charge of southern hemisphere tests[in future]. They were unhappy some of the northern hemisphere referees used were well down the rankings in their own country... [By the way, since] the All Blacks arrived in London last Monday, the British media has lauded [the 36 guys] in black as the undoubted kings of world rugby and if you were to believe half the words written by the Fleet St scribes over the past week, they only have to turn up to sweep the four tests. However, [a]... fleetfooted All Black fullback of the '80s, warned [the team] to ignore the fawning tones of its welcome and concentrate on combating an English side which still possesses all the strengths of its 1993 and 1983 models. On both those occasions England emerged from Twickenham tests on the right side of 15-9 margins. [The ex-All Black, who is] now playing his rugby... at the Blackheath club... does not discount a similar shock this time. "If you're a betting [person] the All Blacks have got to be favourites to win the game at Old Trafford (November 22)... It's just another away fixture for them, albeit a very important one, but for England it's practically an away game too. They've never played at Old Trafford before. But at Twickenham (December 6) they've got a huge advantage and... [will] be very competitive there at least... On top of that, when you consider it's just the start of the northern hemisphere season and the players are very fresh, compared to N[Z]'s players who have been going since March, and you've got the prospects of a very close encounter. At the moment the English press is building up the All Blacks and writing off their own side. That's dangerous – I've seen it before." Precisely. In 1983 the British Lions were swept 4-0 in a test series in N[Z] and the All Blacks were expected to make short work of England at Twickenham later in the year. [The ex-All Black said] to heed the lessons of that year, and one decade later when the All Blacks came off a big win over Scotland only to fall at Twickenham.

...AMONG all the turgid prose portraying the All Blacks as the biggest thing since someone worked out how to divide a loaf of flour and yeast... is some good old pro-England chest-thumping... "Now's the time to smash them off their pedestal,"... [said a] rugby writer for the *Daily Telegraph*... [while] urging his boys "to get to know the enemy... to watch them, learn from them, read every feature, every match report... and study the videos six or seven times until you know them as well as... your own team-mates." ...[the] former England second rower... goes on to tell England to understand the All Blacks method, talk them up at every opportunity, lure them into a false sense of security and then call on every ounce of character you've got, intimidate them and, most of all, be aware how privileged you are. "There are thousands, maybe millions, of people who would like to swap places with you, who dream about the chance you are getting,"... [Incidentally, English] rugby is in the midst of gulping a severe dose of financial reality... Saracens last week brought into stark [focus] the unrealistic situation facing English clubs. The first division club, backed by [a] philanthropic millionaire... announced a \$5.2 m... loss for the year to April. The forecast isn't much better for this term. [The backer], who has poured... \$9 m... into the club, has expressed misgivings about... [it]s precarious financial state... [A former All Black who is now the] director of

rugby at West Hartlepool... said salary cutbacks were the only answer... [C]lubs with big money backers set salary precedents other aspiring organisations followed. The result was financial expenditure unable to be sustained by income... "In business [backers] can all be winners with the right people in the right place, but in sport there's always only one winner..." ...Signs the English game is retrenching are around. Saracens spent \$4.3 m... on salaries for 61 players in the previous financial year. This year commitments were trimmed to 32 fulltime players and five coaches. Newcastle, another of the big spenders, has transfer-listed its star international fullback... rather than meet his \$500,000 contract demands.

...THE All Blacks feel they have been duped by England's R[FU] over their midweek tour opposition... [I]t seems certain [the] team will play three successive midweek matches against what is, to all intents and purposes, an English A side[, which goes]... against the spirit of the tour agreement... [England's] coach... will run the non-test element of his 40-strong squad in three matches... "The N[ZRFU] has written (to the RFU), complaining and asking the tour to be restored... It's... better to have a variety of opponents..." ...[but the original tour schedule is even less likely to be restored than the] Shrine of Rugby Remembrance, the spot where Bob Deans had his try disallowed during the 1905 All Blacks' test against Wales at Cardiff Arms Park... That piece of historic turf in the north-east corner of the famous ground has gone... as developers build a third-generation stadium... All that was left yesterday when we visited was... a portion of the North Stand... In place of the old ground will rise a new 73,500-seat complex, a stadium with the only retractable roof in Britain, a multisport and recreational arena at a cost of £120 million... The National Lottery will fund half the cost... Demolition of the ground, which received its last facelift in the 1980s, began after the Welsh Cup final in May because the capacity of 50,000 was considered too small, corporate facilities were non-existent and other facilities were substandard... [M]ost of the old ground facilities which could be uplifted were sold at a public auction. Pieces of the turf, memorabilia and even the seat from which Princess Di... used to watch games, were all sold... [However, there] were massive objections to the new complex, one of nine projects earmarked throughout Britain for the new millennium. Locals howled about extravagance, unnecessary waste and the destruction of history.

...It was billed as the Carwyn James memorial match... James coached the Lions to their historic series win in N[Z] in 1971 and a year later orchestrated the... famous... Llanelli... win... Now gone to the playing fields on high, James would have beamed down on yesterday's massive 81-3 All Black win... and approved... The All Blacks produced the running game and consequent enjoyment which James espoused... [According to the] *London Daily Mail*... "The rugby with which they tore Llanelli to shreds came not from the other end of the world, but from a different planet."

...WHEN you start getting thrust into the same sentence as the big guy upstairs, it's enough to get the head spinning... If... the All Blacks' 21-year-old fullback with speed, skills and strength to make you salivate... wasn't such a level-headed young [guy] with a personality rounded in the provinces and ego kept in check by a sensible family, [the No 15] might indeed believe [the press articles which say the player] has the gifts of a god... Never before has a once-proud Welsh club been humbled by such a margin against the All Blacks. And never before have they seen such a display by a fullback... "[The No 15 is] even better than we expected," was the general tenor... [in] the press section of the main stand... [A former] Welsh great... who was known to possess some slick skills himself in his day, was amazed... "I have never seen anyone like him," [the Welsh great] said after the game, the memory of Llanelli's famous 1972 9-3 win, in which [the Welsh great] played, finally dispatched. "The mind boggles at the sort of damage [the No 15]'s going to do in the internationals coming up. From one to 15 this is the best [All Blacks] team I've seen." Phew! But wait, there's more. [A former] England first five... referred to [the No 15] as "the gilded, gliding assassin" and it was [a] *London Daily Telegraph* rugby correspondent... who came up with the most divine praise. "It is said that [the uncapped reserve No 15 is pushing the 1st-string No 15] hard for the fullback spot... On this evidence, [the reserve] must be a celestial talent himself for [the 1st-string No 15] truly plays the rugby of the gods..." ...On, and on, it went... What [the No 15] produced against Llanelli... should not be a surprise. That his abilities have so excited the Brits probably has more to do with the fact that unless they see it with thine own eyes, they don't tend to regard it so reverentially... [The No 15] has averaged a try a game in 18 tests, the only player in international rugby to have achieved such a feat. His four touchdowns against Llanelli took his tally to 74 in 75 first-class matches, which compares favourably with a couple of other scoring supremos, [the All Black No 11] (59 in 68) and [No 14] (92 in 133).

...Wrinkly rockers the Rolling Stones are ready to paint it black for the [guys] in black. But there'll be no sympathy for the devil... Stones stars... asked for autographed... team jerseys as part-payment for rights to use Paint it Black in a Steinlager ad... campaign featuring N[Z]'s finest... beginning tomorrow. Payment includes a six-figure sum... and a supply of Steinlager... But it is understood they are trying to secure tickets to matches on the team's tour... said... Lion Breweries spokes[person]... "It turns out they were quite big fans of the All Blacks." As are a convention of priests in the All Black's Dublin hotel as the players prepare for tomorrow's test match in Ireland... [Like Scotland, Ireland (which is represented by one rugby team – unlike in soccer, where the island is represented by the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland) has 'been trying to beat the All Blacks for 90 years'. ● The] All Blacks will net the N[ZRFU] around \$4 million from their tour of Britain and Ireland, prompting[the] team manager... to issue a warning that the world's most successful rugby team not be regarded as a cash cow. The Irish test... it is believed, [will earn]... the national union... around £200,000 and already it has been agreed that the All Blacks receive a \$US1m payout from the sellout Twickenham gate. Add in a sold out Old Trafford test against England and a Wembley international against Wales... and the N[ZRFU] coffers will be significantly enhanced.

...[the] England rugby coach... yesterday doubted the All Blacks would be losing any sleep at the prospect of playing his young charges at Old Trafford in a week... [after] his... team snatched a 15-15 injury-time draw with A[US] at Twickenham... The match failed to inspire any enthusiasm from the capacity crowd... who treated the players to a dose of slow-handclapping after the match descended into a display of loose kicking, spilled passes and unimaginative attacks. The mediocre contest, which A[US] dominated and should have won, contrasted dramatically with the All Blacks'... seven tries to two... demolition of Ireland in Dublin... Irish newspapers yesterday mourned... [their] team's... record 63-15 defeat... [but the] *Sunday World*... said of [the All Blacks'] five-try second half: "This was total rugby with no discernible difference between backs and forwards, a constantly moving mass of black-clad players producing the nearest thing to perpetual motion it's possible to achieve on a rugby field..." ...It had the crowd of 53,000 buzzing about the visitors entering a new time zone of sport...

THE[*unsmiling giants* 'intimidating aura prompted a journalist to write that NZ wears black "cause they're in mourning for their opponents"' ■ The] first win was scored by N[Z] over England... overnight... The England-A[US] match, carried live on BSkyB TV in Britain, attracted... 500,000 viewers, reaching... 20% of homes capable of receiving satellite t[v]. The Ireland-N[Z] match, screened live on free-to-air BBC1, was watched by 3.5 million... No doubt these... figures will rekindle all the arguments which erupted 18 months ago when Sky outbid the Beeb for the rugby rights.

...GET SKY INSTALLED FOR JUST \$25 AND SEE THE BRITISH BOW DOWN BEFORE ROYALTY. It's the crowning glory in this year's scintillating All Black season, exclusively live on SKY. England and Wales take on our Tri-Nations champions, plus there's exclusive coverage of the Wallaby and Springbok tours of the UK. So make that call and get set for a battle royale to round off the rugby year... Special conditions apply. Offer includes standard UHF installation and use of aerial and decoder. Offer excludes satellite areas. First month's subscription is payable in advance. SKY may not be available in all areas. Offer expires 8.30pm Friday[. ● Local rugby fans who don't take advantage of this offer – or don't already have pay-TV – can watch delayed coverage the following afternoon of each test (8.30am for midweek games), or listen to live radio commentary]...

After a remarkable recovery from illness, the world's most feared wing... has been recalled to the All Blacks for Sunday's test against England. Sidelined until October with a rare and serious kidney complaint, [the No 11] has made such progress in only seven matches since then that [it] forced the selectors to... [give him a] start... The choice will deliver a host of bad memories for England supporters. They are still trying to deal with their second-best side being thrashed yesterday 59-22 by the midweek All Blacks, while [his] reintroduction will remind them of the destruction

[the No 11] inflicted on England at the World Cup semifinal in 1995... [Unfortunately, only] an emergency will have [the All Black captain] stripped for rugby action on this All Black tour but [the hooker] has not yet discounted a record fourth World Cup in 1999. After aggravating his right knee injury during training for the first game, [the No 2] battled through one further session and is now struggling to complete his gym work. That will eliminate him from selection for Sunday's test... There is unlikely to be a call for a replacement hooker; if need be [the No 2] could act as a reserve for the mid-week squad... [In the meantime,] his role has shifted to a quasi-managerial, coaching and motivational portfolio[(perhaps it should include minding the team's gear – some)... people... cleared off with souvenir All Black training gear [after the Irish test]...]

After the late night end to the midweek match... [– the start of which] was delayed 20 minutes because of traffic problems... [–] the food ran out at the aftermatch function and a check with the team hotel found no joy there either. Even McDonalds across the road was shut but some persuasion... had the fastfood outlet opened again after midnight where the famished squad filled their stomachs and the tills... [The No 11 – who has made TV advertisements for the fastfood chain –] told Channel 9's *Wide World of Sports* that... "I spent \$44 at McDonald's and the guys thought I was ordering for everybody." But no, the order was for the big fella himself. It allegedly included seven cheeseburgers and six Big Macs.

...Will the world's most feared wing return to the international arena with the same venom [the No 11] had at the last World Cup? His story is remarkable already and [the No 11] has only just gone past his 22nd birthday. From being the youngest All Black in history through... to... [refusing] \$6.5 million to play for an English rugby league team... [and, finally,] this year's recovery from a severe kidney problem. No wonder the English public can't get enough of him off the field, while the England rugby side waits with some trepidation to find out if [it] will steamroller them... again... His opponent on Sunday... trots out the standard replies about giving it his best shot and hoping [the Tongan] doesn't get too much ball in open territory. At 1.75m and 82kg, [the opponent] is giving away 38kg in weight and is 20cm shorter than the All Black colossus... though [the Tongan] will be nervous, too, about stepping back into the test cauldron... [The Tongan claims to have been] stunned... when... his name... [was] read... out at the team selection meeting... It had crossed his mind... [while] undergoing... drug treatment for his ailing kidneys... that[his All Black career could be over.

...the NZRFU] chief executive... returned from a meeting with his equivalent at the famous Manchester United soccer club optimistic that one of the world's more unlikely liaisons could reap rewards for the oval ball half of the partnership... [The chief executive] believed soccer's most popular club had a lot to offer rugby's most popular team. "I wanted to take a opportunity to have a closer look at one of the great sporting brands in the world... In certain areas, such as sponsorship, we're on a par with... United. But in other areas we're well off the pace." ...[the chief executive was especially] interested in the way Manchester United had extended its empire to the point where it produced its own merchandising – "they had £5million... worth of gear in the warehouse that I visited"... [The NZRFU's annual] merchandising revenue is... around \$2m... [His meeting with the] United CEO... – just a day after the world's biggest soccer club announced a record £27.6 m... profit – completed a cross-code axis. A day earlier [the]All Black coach... had had a lengthy discussion with [the Manchester United manager...

The guys in black are in] town, but soccer-mad Manchester d[oes] not know them from a successful England rugby goalkicker. The *Manchester Evening News* splashed [a] scoop of rugby's finest "taking a break from training" at a strip club after two canny Kiwis enlivened their stopover by conning locals into thinking they were All Blacks... [The photographer] said they were "big... very, very big" and "popular with the [gals]." An indignant All Black camp cannot see the funny side and want an apology from the paper... [Ironically, murmurings] are that the All Blacks are being locked up so tight that their enjoyment factor on this trip is minimal. They are kept to a very strictly regimented diet of meetings, trainings and appointments. [Will] the lack of enjoyment be... reflected in... lacklustre All Black displays?

...To win tomorrow the All Blacks need only continue their concentration. Were England to find victory it would compare with producing a genie from a bottle. In skill the All Blacks are way in front... Complacency would be the only All Black enemy... and perhaps the weather, which does not promise great things... [By the way,] *Spectator* magazine... has invented an awfully funny, jolly joke about N[Z]ers in order to cope with the fact that the All Blacks are, with brains and flair, beating the hell out of the prancing English upper classes at their favourite game... 'How many N[Z]ers does it take to change a light bulb?' Answer: 'I'm sorry, Jim, I don't really understand what you're saying. It only ever really takes one person to change a light bulb. You just take out the old one and throw it away, then you get the new one.' ...I was at a writers' conference in Britain earlier this year and, after listening to the Pommy delegates constantly demurring, I invented the English joke: 'How many English people does it take to change a light bulb?' Answer: 'Change it? You colonial simpleton, that's one of the oldest light bulbs in the world. It was glowing when Queen Victoria was alive. It's part of our glorious past. We don't change our light bulbs, we prefer to live in the dark.' ...[the *Spectator*] says the English play rugby with confused notions of... fun and character-building while the All Blacks play with a hard, cold purpose: a methodical game plan clearly thought out and put into practice without flinching or grudging... [The *Spectator*] also... says the N[Z]er faces the world as defensive, plonking, half-aware that something is going on but unable to see quite what, and when the Kiwi visits places which pride themselves on their sophistication, [it] feels second-rate. Now I happen to... be a tad more analytical in my defensive, plonking way. The English rugby players certainly know what's going on but they don't know why. They've lost the plot... The unsophisticated All Blacks score tries and win and the English delude themselves it's someone else's stupidity. When I was a kid, we were told over and over again of the great English virtues: they always muddled through and could laugh at themselves. Well, now they just muddle and we laugh at them.

...[England's] rugby coach... has delivered a stern warning that the game in his country must change dramatically or risk being trampled into the ground by N[Z]. The coach] has even gone so far as to hint that revolutionary change could be in the wind. It was bold talk from the new England coach on the eve of the test against the All Blacks at Old Trafford, but [the coach] clearly believed that it was time for strong words as rugby reached crisis point in this part of the world... [The coach] is dismayed that England does not have a level of play between club and international rugby, such as the Super 12 competition[, and] is... equally dismayed that so few England players feature in elite club play. "...our 12 top clubs... have... over half the places filled by non-English players. It's what rugby league did up here and[British] rugby league is an absolute disaster at the moment because of the influx of overseas players..." ...[the coach] used the example of Harlequins' signing of... the All Black No 8. "We've got a situation where the... RFU pays... out money to clubs... [It gives] Harlequins £500,000 which is a lot of money, and then they sign an overseas player. Back in N[Z] the headlines are '[No 8] retires'. So instead of spending our money generating young players we're spending it on [an All Black]'s retirement. We're now paying his pension." ...[the coach] estimates that out of 250,000[English] rugby players... only 70-80[are] competing at the top level... [The coach] would like to see a European-wide competition where England had, say, four teams and thus had its top 60 players on the field week-in, week-out against the best from the northern hemisphere. The logical progression from that, [the coach] said, would be for the winner of the European competition to meet the winner of the Super 12 to find an unofficial world champion. Likewise, [the coach] can see considerable merit in pitting the winner of the tri-series against the Five Nations champion in an annual fixture which would not only provide huge interest, but would be a big money-spinner. "I can see all these things taking place. It's all part of the globalisation of this game. It's what the people want and I think it's what the players want... That's what I love about... [the All Blacks' coach. Their coach] wants a strong England team... [and] a strong northern hemisphere. [Their coach] doesn't want to see the All Blacks just belt everybody, [but] wants to see full-on international competition..."

...There are several reasons why England have not been able to compete consistently on a level footing with the All Blacks – some are changeable, others are set in concrete. Rugby is not the No 1 sport here; soccer is a religion, top professionals are paid in telephone numbers, and young [boys]

want to play soccer for England. Rugby is seldom played in the state schools so the majority of schoolboys and perhaps those with the greatest hunger to play pro-sport have little opportunity to be involved in rugby... Finally, and perhaps most critically, is the difference in players' and coaches' attitudes about how to play the game. Those attitudes are created by how the game is refereed and by the weather... [Northern hemisphere referees] give greater leeway to the team not in possession at lineouts and at the tackle, so continuity of possession is decreased. Add to that playing conditions and you have a more physical, less structured game – a game where ball retention is difficult. This results in more kicking, both for touch and position, and constrictive back play. The development of athletic attacking ball players is diminished. In time there will be positive change. With 30 times more players in England than in N[Z], the worm may turn.

...A half-way square-off during the haka when[the] England hooker... eyeballed [his opposite number]... set the tone for a scrappy forward confrontation in the... test at Old Trafford yesterday. "I thought it was totally disrespectful and I am disappointed the match officials didn't keep the[English players] back... That sort of thing doesn't have any place. To have some respect for our traditions and culture is all we ask,"... [the All Blacks'] coach... said afterwards... There was niggles from both packs throughout; the seventh-minute punch that flattened... [the All Blacks' No 9] and nearly removed the All Blacks'[new] captain from the game was close to drawing an historic first citing last night from [the coach]... At one stage, there were thoughts of substituting [the No 9] because of fears [that the player] had a broken jaw. Later x-rays uncovered bruising but no fracture... Late last night... rugby politics appeared to have entered the fray, with... [the coach indicating a desire to] hold off on an official citing if England took sufficiently strong disciplinary measures against their lock... While [the coach] did not condone his centre... punching[an English] flanker... late in the test, that had been in retaliation, and[the] referee... had dealt with it. Until the... [7th-minute] punch there was little evidence that the powderkeg beginning had seeped into the match. But England[– who play in an all-white strip –] did bring a physical power lacking from their recent play. "We had to take [th]em out at the front office and play them in the backstreets," was... [the appraisal of England's] centre... England also ended the test in bizarre circumstances when, to the bemusement of the All Blacks, they did a lap of honour of the stadium... They claimed they were saluting the crowd support, but you had to feel they found some satisfaction with the margin of their 8-25 defeat despite the raft of disappointed comments later... The contrasting reactions gave a clearer image than any words. The All Blacks stalked away from Old Trafford... unhappy with many things, staggered by the English insult to the haka, [the] king hit on [their No 9 from the] Lions skipper... and their inability to bring enough composure to their play... If the attack was a little astray, the All Black defensive pattern was secure save for one late hopeful infield pass which several defenders overran... [allowing England in] for a try... Inquisition will be the All Black task for the return test... [However, had] the All Blacks won well[yesterday] there might have been the danger of a letdown at Twickenham.

...The All Blacks enjoyed dainty sandwiches and delicate cream cakes but refused more fat-packed snacks when they took tea [yesterday with the] Queen. Buck House chefs laid on platefuls of rich treats that were left untouched... [Incidentally, an English] lock... was last night suspended for one match over a punch that floored... [the All Black No 9. There's] a real dichotomy in rugby over the issue of punching. The public face is that it's outrageous and deserves punishment. The private face is that biffos become legend, and aren't often presented in a bad light. What saved the All Black outrage... from hypocrisy was that [the English lock] blindsided the All Black halfback, hitting him from behind when [the No 9] was in no position to defend himself in any way. That's the reason [why the All Black centre whacking an] English forward... wasn't in the same league... [Both players] were face to face. It wasn't right, but it wasn't reprehensible... [However, when] you discover that the usual punishment for punching in English rugby is a 30 day suspension... [it looks like the English lock got off almost] completely scot-free.

...The first real broadside from the English press brought some sizzling retorts yesterday from the All Blacks. There has been the occasional tame flick from the racier tabloids but a column from a former England lock and now *Daily Telegraph* writer... accusing the tourists of systematic cheating at the breakdowns at Old Trafford hit the mark. [The All Black manager] led the charge, declaring... [that to] suggest the All Blacks killed the ball on the ground or gave away penalties rather than possession was an insult to the style of rugby the side aspired to... [The All Black coach] said the great disappointment was being accused of achieving what they had through cheating... Meanwhile, demand for tickets to the Wembley test is so feverish an extra 5500 have been put on sale, taking the crowd to 78,000.

...As the All Blacks prime their arsenal for the Twickenham finale this Sunday, their worries will be about [one] of the big guns in the pack... [The No 1] damaged his neck when a scrum collapsed... in the 42-7 cleanout of Wales yesterday... and... appears... [a] doubtful starter for what would be his 50th test[, thereby making him]... the first All Black prop to play 50 tests... As many as five tries were missed[yesterday], but it looked like the All Blacks were saving the real execution for next Sunday... [when they attempt] to compete the perfect 12-from-12[test] season... This test[(the start of which was 'delayed due to a traffic jam')] always had the feel of being just an interlude before the chance of putting on a top-drawer performance against England... [– who, on] the other side of London... were sliding to defeat against the Springboks... The test XV certainly want to ram home their superiority... [in what will be their No 8's] 100th and last game for the All Blacks... The worry will be that they peaked too early.

...A CLOUD hangs over television coverage of next weekend's rugby test... due to a row between rugby bosses and Sky TV... [The RFU chairperson] said it would meet its obligations under the \$NZ240m deal with BSkyB. However, [the chairperson] confirmed the RFU was seeking urgent talks with BSkyB over the package which gives Sky the exclusive rights to screen all England's tests for the next five years. Under the agreement, England must play two pre-Christmas tests each year against either N[Z], South Africa or A[US]. This year, England will be playing four tests and the RFU now believes it should receive extra fees for the additional two tests... [The chairperson] has estimated the extra revenue for BSkyB from the two additional tests would be \$5.4m... [N]ewspaper reports yesterday said the fourth test... might not be screened... [at all if the RFU doesn't back down. In further news from the UK, British bookmakers have] installed... the... All Blacks... as 28-point favourites.

...The midas touch deserted the All Blacks yesterday at Twickenham... [as] England blew out the candles on [the All Black coach]'s birthday cake... though the[All Blacks] did scramble a 26-26 draw after trailing [3-17 after 16 minutes and] 9-23 at the interval... [The All Blacks] made the near-fatal mistake of buying into all that "omnipotent" talk and England cashed in... The tourists went too wide too quickly... but... lacked up and at 'em grunt... and were... smacked with three unanswered tries... [However,] the All Blacks will look back on an afternoon when... [they missed] about half a dozen tries which they would normally have scored. That they could salvage a draw was some reward for a tour of pulsating style and athleticism where the greatest compliment came from England, who knew they had to emulate the All Blacks to reach a new level in the sport... England were everything [the All Blacks] had been in their eight previous matches... They played the game at wondrous pace of thought and deed. While the All Black machine spluttered and misfired, England threw off the shackles of Northern Hemisphere conservatism and played with a freedom which had[their] coach... and 75,000 others, pinching themselves to confirm they were not dreaming... All square... [with] 10 minutes left, both sides were out on their feet. They still attacked but with a carelessness brought on by fatigue... Anything but a draw yesterday would have been an injustice to a match where both sides put adventure ahead of safety... A nation reared on a diet of penalties and opportunist tries is heartily grateful to... an All Blacks squad who have both inspired and educated during their month-long stay...

THE 1998 N[Z] Barbarians rugby team that will follow in the footsteps of this year's All Black conquerors of Britain and Ireland is set to reap a multi-million dollar payout. The N[Z]RFU is still negotiating a tour schedule and match fees for next year's visitors, who will come for around six matches, including two against full international opposition... And although the Barbarians will not be an official N[Z] representative side, it will still be close to test strength and viewed thus by the British. Given that this All Black tour has reaped the NZRFU a gross [of]... around \$3 million, it could be accepted the Barbarians would be worth about \$1.5m... After two loss-making years, the... NZRFU... will post a \$1m-plus profit...

An approach has been made to the N[ZRFU] to have the All Blacks play a test match against the Wallabies in Japan next season. The offer is from a Japanese consortium which said it is interested in putting up \$8 million. [The]All Blacks team manager... said the programme (of seven tests) was already set for next year. "...But we have a responsibility to maximise our income." ...[By the way, as far] as the All Blacks have come in the past two years – and[their] coach... believes it has been further than... his wildest dreams – there is a menacing shadow about to cast itself over the world's most popular... rugby team. It is called... [the Springboks, who] tore up the record books as they completed a hugely successful European tour with a 68-10 demolition of Scotland at Murrayfield yesterday. They ran in 10 tries, making it 35 in five tests, and inflicted on Scotland their heaviest defeat ever. It came a week after the Springboks scored a record 29 points against England and a fortnight after they savaged France by a record 52-10... [An] international rugby panel has rated the Springboks to beat the All Blacks if they played a rugby test tomorrow on neutral ground... [However, a] former Wallaby coach... [says]: "I wish they had played a match between N[Z] and South Africa to complete the 1997 international programme. I would take the All Blacks to win because they combine better than the South Africans. The Springboks are playing a game of great speed now but without much subtlety or control of the ball. Under the sternest of pressure, N[Z] can still control the game, whereas South Africa don't seem to be able to transfer the ball with that much security in tight situations.[" The former Wallaby coach]... refused to let his thinking be clouded by that 26-all draw, reasoning that N[Z] had their worst day for years against England in ball control... The All Blacks' disappointing tour-ender... did not deter four of the world's leading rugby writers from stacking their 1997 World XV with nine All Blacks. There was no argument as to the best fullback, first five-eighth, No 8, hooker and tighthead prop – all... incumbent All Blacks.

...Where to in 1998 for the All Blacks? ...Planning has started already for next season and beyond and the form of players in the Super 12 will have an impact on any changes against a promising England and a resurgent Springbok side... With [the No 8 retiring, only the] captain... seems in doubt for another go at the world's best... The captaincy will be an issue if [the hooker] does not front up.

...I was hanging a poster... on my five-year-old's bedroom wall... last week... and [despite his rugby career being over]the little fella was pretty excited about having the All Black captain look down on him. Then in walks my wife and spoils the party. [My wife] was unhappy with... the piece of art. The poster has only a handful of words, written as though sewn into the label inside the jersey. It read – Care Instructions: Care about nothing but winning. My wife thought that was hardly an appropriate message to be getting across to our children. I felt that was a bit much coming from her, especially considering [my wife is] South African. The Springboks hardly have lesser ideals when it comes to rugby. Maybe it was the fact that... one of the most reviled [people] in the republic, was going to be hanging almost life like in her home in Godzone. I'm all for the fair play charter and the fact that our youngsters should be simply playing some form of sport rather than worrying about the result. But when it comes to serious sporting business... then the ideals of the All Blacks are the very reason why they stand alone as our dominant team in terms of world sport... Can you imagine a satisfied All Black after a six-point loss to the Wallabies or ...[B]oks? Chances are [it] wouldn't be an All Black too much longer... They simply won't accept second best when it comes to preparation, performance and results. It's part of their whole psyche. They have confidence bordering on arrogance... If a few more of our top teams and sportspeople could adopt a similar attitude, there would be... more champions coming from a country that already over-achieves for its small population base. For too long the "nice guy" image... associated with... Kiwi sportspeople has translated into minor placings. Sometimes, it seems, we are too nice. Sure we'd like to be remembered as nice people. But heck, let's not forget why we play sport at the highest level. That is to perform up to and beyond our ability and, ultimately, to win. Few people remember second placings. Who... came runnerup at... Wimbledon? Which team lost the World Series...? Can't recall? It's not surprising... We should never condemn the All Blacks for their lofty thoughts and attitudes. We should only try and emulate them. That's why the poster is still hanging in the little fella's room... [The fella] might never be an All Black, but... can still learn a thing or two from them, no matter what mum says!

...HEAVEN knows we could do with some humour in N[Z] sport every now and then. The All Blacks in particular have been accused of being p-faced and too serious by commentators for years. "Unsmiling giants" is the nick-name some British journalists gave the All Blacks so long ago I can't remember. The nickname is usually trotted out at the beginning of every British tour. As the bleary-eyed team disembarks at Heathrow, the five seconds of air time the BBC 6 O'clock News devotes to the arrival usually contains some variation on the theme of "unsmiling giants, here to win, known for their rucking, hopefully the referees will sort them out." Rugby is of course a serious thing in N[Z]... This is one of the main reasons why we are a consistently successful rugby playing nation... From the aspiring schoolboy to the hardened All Black our players know that to succeed takes lots of time and lots of hard work. The match itself is of course a terribly serious thing. Eighty minutes of blood, sweat and toil. Eighty minutes of smashing over the advantage line and setting the ball up properly. Eighty minutes of perfectly accurate passing and kicking. Eighty minutes and not one missed tackle. Pressure, pressure, pressure. We also take rugby very seriously in N[Z] because we have a lot at stake. Our long tradition of winning has given us a lot to lose. The players play to live up to the standards that they have been set by previous teams. The public require victory to confirm their belief in our national superiority. "Only three million people and the best in the world," we say to ourselves.

...160,000 Kiwis play the game. By contrast, South Africa, with over ten times the population, has just under twice the number of players... - 1997

The American[Eagle]s'... match against Ireland scored an unprecedented page four lead in the sports section of that influential journal of record, the New York Times, spread over three columns plus a photo. For US rugby it was... "...a huge deal... It's never happened before, or at least not since I've been here,"... said... a N[Zer who's been the] New York Rugby Club coach for four years... [and] has worked in the States since the early 1980s... Rugby in America has struggled for a profile despite appearing in the first world cup in 1987[. but the]... coach... believes the US will have a professional league up and running within two years, and that will be bolstered with the recruitment of athletically-gifted grid-iron players who can't make the NRL... America will then become a force in international rugby... America... already has more adult rugby players than N[Z].

...The official 1995 Rugby World Cup Anthems Album booklet lists the following: N[Z]: 1000 rugby clubs, 182,500 players. England: 2405 rugby clubs, 375,000 players... [Incidentally, the] 1924 All Blacks have been voted the best team ever to tour Britain by *Rugby World*, England's chief rugby magazine... It... rated the 1997 All Blacks as the fourth best to tour behind the 1984 Wallabies and the 1951 Springboks.

...N[Z] is clearly the top rugby... country in the world, according to an international ranking list released... yesterday. Since January 1, 1996, the All Blacks have won 20 out of their 22 tests... [and] scored 912 points, almost twice as many as England who are ranked fifth. The... [All Blacks' 93.18%] success rate... is miles ahead of... nearest rival France, with a 65[% winning rate. AUS]... is third on 63[%], just ahead of South Africa.

...France have played more tests than any other nation. They've won 307 of their 572 matches, a 54[%] success rate. N[Z] are well down on the list of tests played, with 369, but their winning ratio of 72[%] is by far the best. South Africa, who have played 292 tests, have the next best win ratio of 63[%]. ■... Pierre de Coubertin brought the game to France after the humiliating defeat in the Franco-Prussian war, and... was convinced it could stiffen the sinews of a demoralised ruling class... French rugby union was virtually saved in 1941 when the... Vichy Government... banned the booming sport of league... and... seized... League assets... (Union was in decline, and the national team banned from the Five Nations for violence.)

...France, once regarded as the most flamboyant team in European rugby, were given a lesson in flair... yesterday when Wales scored only their second triumph in Paris in 26 years with a 43-35 win. The French, who began the [Five Nations]tournament keen to prove they were the Northern Hemisphere's best team, suffered their second defeat after a late drop goal and try from [the Welsh]first five-eighth... Wales came back from an early French try... [and o]n a day perfect for rugby, it was the Welsh who were throwing the dummies, producing the clever switch-passes and

using their speed to exploit the open spaces of the Stade de France pitch... Wales[’ NZ-born] coach... was full of praise for... [his first five-eighth, who scored a total of] 28 points... bec[oming] the first player to surpass 1000 points for his country.

...Wales and Scotland get down to the relatively uncomplicated business of playing rugby tomorrow after a week of controversy about who should be allowed to pull on their national jerseys. Wales’ preparations for the... clash have been dominated by eligibility doubts over their N[Z]-born players... both of whom will miss the game... More importantly, the Welsh go into the game without their influential first five-eighth... who misses the game because of a shoulder injury... Scotland, who have 11 players in their top squads who qualify through the nationality of a grandparent, including their N[Z]-born captain... announced this week that they plan to fight proposals to scrap the grandparent rule. The Welsh will be looking to restore some pride with a victory and take the pressure off... [their coach – the] former Kelston Boys High School principal... [who] left teaching to devote himself to rugby... in the nascent professional age[, a decision which, following a successful stint]... with the Auckland Rugby Union[, led to him taking]... on the task of reviving the rugby fortunes of a proud nation[(s)uccess came swiftly, with landmark victories over South Africa, France and England giving H[im] the tag of the “Messiah”... and... his coaching tenure with... the British Lions...]. The team’s NZ-born f[ullback]... who has been dropped pending the outcome of an inquiry, has played a key role in attack and defence this season. His place has been taken by another N[Z]er... the latest Kiwi recruited by [the]former Auckland coach. More controversy surrounded [the replacement player]’s eligibility but his grandmother’s birth certificate confirmed his qualifications during the week.

...*Wales fiasco creates leak that needs plugging* Someone ought to make a movie out of this. Perhaps the title could be *Plugging a Leak in the Family Tree*. [A rubber-faced US comedian] would naturally play the lead as... the Kiwi hero who ransacks the upper valleys of Wales for evidence of the long-lost grand-daddy. The pronouncement by the Welsh Rugby Union that [the fullback] and his co-conspirator... are guilty of illicitly masquerading as Welsh... until proven innocent by the production of a grandparent’s birth certificate, is worthy material for high farce. It reveals, as if further evidence was needed, the blundering nature of the I[RB], which has decreed all this. Listening to... the Welsh chair[person] of the IRB, trying to put a rational gloss on it is like listening to someone from Winz telling us how to administer student loans. Surely the IRB can come up with something a bit more cooperative than requiring anybody who opts for one country over that of his birth to produce hard-copy evidence of his ancestry? Like asking a Maori for written evidence of his or her whakapapa, it often just can’t be done. Is the IRB asking [another NZer] for a piece of paper that testifies to his Japanese ancestry? [That player’s famous All Black fullback] dad... might have a bit of a problem with that one. Stand by for an international incident. The whole business of who gets to play for what country needs to be sorted out... At the moment we have a more or less open season for mercenaries. There is heavy traffic in players heading in all directions. Pacific Islanders are fleeing the impoverishment of their own unions in search of riches in A[US and NZ] and opting for local eligibility. Needless to say, this serves N[Z and AUS] rather well but it permanently cripples the game in Samoa, Tonga and Fiji. Legions of players from just about everywhere are beating a path to the doors of the cash-rich Japanese companies who run rugby[in that country], and much the same thing is happening in Italy, who rushed an Argentine into their national team with indelicate haste. What to do? The simplest solution is to restrict eligibility to one’s country of birth, as the Home Unions in Britain used to do... In that way there can be no confusion. We will not witness the ridiculous spectacle of players tracing a fanciful ancestry through the files of some distant register of births, deaths and marriages in a country with which they have no emotional or material affliction. It is, after all, a bit easier to produce your own birth certificate than that of the mythical grand-daddy... [□ The] fullback... has said his maternal grandfather was a... Thomas Williams who was born in Cardiff. The Maori register, however, shows his grandfather was a full-blooded Maori called Hare Matenga Popata, from Oturu, north of Kaitiaki... [But] in a Welsh newspaper interview on Saturday... [the fullback insisted:] “I am Welsh. I have never had any doubts about that.” [The f]ormer All Black... said the family had a secret which hid his true claim to play for Wales[but the player] was reluctant to go public with all the details because it would mean humiliating his mother.

...BOOK NOW AT TICKETEK... [for the NZ] PREMIERE SEASON OF THE HILARIOUS AWARD WINNING COMEDY... *ALONE IT STANDS*... [a play about the scoreline] MUNSTER 12 ALL BLACKS 0... THE GREATEST UNDERDOG VICTORY IN SPORTING HISTORY!

...Had the rugby folk of 47 years ago been projected by some freak of time into the winter of 1997, they would have fallen about the place laughing. What on this orderly strait-laced earth were those rugby players doing, wearing those gaudy, technicoloured jerseys, pants and socks with logos...? Was this some circus act? Did the players even hug each other as consenting adults were not supposed to do when a try was scored? Rugby in the early 1950s contained some brilliant players... a few... still find themselves picked in the “best-of” selections which still abound... It matters not that if the time warp could be extended to play a game between, say a team of the 1950-60s and another of the 1980-90s, the fitter, faster, stronger modern marvels would win. But if the stars of the last two decades could be transported back to play in, say, 1956, they would find a very strange, difficult and different rugby environment. In those days, for example, fullbacks wore No 1, hookers No 14... You could kick the ball into touch on the full from anywhere. Occasionally games could contain 100 lineouts – and lifting the jumpers was illegal. Shoulder pads, any padding was banned unless you had a doctor’s certificate saying the padding was necessary. The wings threw the ball into the lineout... Time-and-motion experts used to work out that in a game there might be 18 to 20 minutes of action in each half. [Half-time breaks were once a few minutes long (modern first-class games have at least 10 minutes rest). Tries were worth 3 points and conversions were worth 2 (nowadays tries are worth 5 points, conversions 2, penalty and drop-kicked ‘field goals’ – which once were worth 4 points – 3; in comparison, tries are worth 4 points, conversions and penalty goals 2 points, and field goals 1 point in rugby league). Editor’s note: The value of penalties and drop-kicks in rugby union enable weak attacking teams (e.g., England) to accumulate points from long-range rather than attempting to cross the try-line of a strong defence.]

...You know the feeling. A couple of minutes to play, “your” team a few points down, hot on attack. Desperate for one last charge. A lineout conceded, the forwards ready, but wait, the opposing hooker calls for a committee meeting, precious seconds... lost... and... the game[is over]... Calls for a penalty for time wasting falls on the referee’s deaf ear and the vanquished turn and trudge off. In these days of professional sport, time wasting has become an art form, one the public and opposing teams should not have to tolerate... Tardy throw-ins... the preoccupation of halfbacks... in delaying the put-in at scrum time and players who hold the ball or kick it away when a free kick/penalty has been awarded, should be jumped on... Analysis of... matches a season or two back showed there was less than 20 minutes of actual play in each half of a game. Boring.

...AS THE turnstiles click [while NZ]’s wavering rugby patrons enter grounds these days, they might be issued with a bottle of NoDoze and a set of ear plugs. Boring rugby and the shrill sound of the referee’s whistle are... [killing] our national game. The final straw came at North Harbour Stadium last Saturday night. It was the fourth week of the Super 12 and, with one or two exceptions[, it]... made watching the grass grow a pleasant diversion. What the Auckland Blues and Queensland Reds served up that warm night was the nadir of this season of shame. As in, shame about the rugby. The... tired old penalty-ridden game[had lurched] from one set piece to another and[was] decided (or in the case of the Blues, not decided) by goalkicking and infringements. That no tries were scored was the only fitting aspect of the whole shambolic evening. As the teams trudged off the field, the crowd booed. Vociferously. They weren’t just booing the players. They were booing the game of rugby... [with its new] rules, new interpretations, [and]new approaches to refereeing... And to make matters worse, a casual glance above the equator finds the Five Nations humming along merrily, with the rugby, on the whole, expansive and enjoyable. Supposedly we’re all playing under the same rules and interpretations these days, so who in heaven’s name flipped the world on its head? There are a few theories. One has that grumpy, anorak-clad, pasty-faced lot from the northern hemisphere as villains. They’re the ones who have taken the fun out of rugby. They’ve made us play by their rules, and they’re a lot better at it... [AUS’s ‘world record test try-scoring wing’ is among those who] blame... the Brits. “Who else would dream up such a brilliant scheme to take continuity out of the game?” ...Another... school of thought blames administrators... [and, in particular, the

contentious IRB] meeting in Vancouver last year... The southern hemisphere fishheads, they say... sold out to the penalty-obsessed, running rugby-detesting rulers of the north... The... Crusaders skipper... believes the tackled ball law is to blame... [but the Crusaders coach], who was at the IRB meeting in Vancouver, said bridging at the breakdown was outlawed to create more contesting of the ball. "It is very difficult for referees, because if players play in a certain way it is possible to blow up every breakdown. It is quite a complex issue, and will take a while to sort out." On that [the coach] is right... the best approach seems to be one that is often given to rugby players. Put your head down, your bum up and get stuck in. The rest will take care of itself... [A former] test prop and rugby analyst... believes the problems go beyond rules... [although] rugby's complicated laws may have finally overstepped the mark... "Defences have gotten a lot better. They've copied off rugby league to an extent, and it's harder now to break tackles. That, coupled with what's happened with the rules, has made it very hard to get [the ball] through the backline... I'm just a normal Joe Blow watching it on TV and I don't know what's going on in the rucks any more. I honestly haven't bothered trying to figure out the rules, and it looks like some players have given up too. Every time the whistle blows it's a lottery... [However, if] rules are being put in place to make the game less predictable, it's a good idea. One of the things I didn't think was good was the business of winning 12 rucks in... a... row." ...the... [former] All Black skipper... now the NZRFU's roving rugby ambassador, has no doubt players, coaches and referees are having trouble adapting to new rules. But [the skipper is also] not sure tinkering with regulations was the wrong thing to do. "Look at the Five Nations... Who would have said a year ago they'd rather watch... [that] than Super 12. I hope it will correct itself, because I'm not enjoying watching it any more than anyone else... Maybe we need to work out why they're playing so well, what they're doing that we're not..."

...I HAVE had plenty of feedback on last week's column, all agreeing with my view that rugby at the top level has become boring. I made the point that the only two points of attack in the modern game were on the pass away from the ruck or, if the team with the ball was feeling particularly adventurous, two passes away. I put a lot of the blame for the repetitive crash ball game we now see on the new tackled ball law... that... encourages... three or four forwards never to commit to the ruck, and instead stand out amongst the backs filling all the space that a talented backline would otherwise use to develop running attacks. Better defensive patterns and more athletic defenders also have contributed to a modern game in which defence dominates attack. To understand just how far the game has moved in the direction of muscular full-frontal confrontation, consider who gets to play in the backs these days[e.g., the All Black No 11]. Gone are the... lithe... masters of the deft touch, players with vision and grace... Rugby Union[had] been, above all other footballs, the game for all shapes and sizes. It is no more. In keeping with its showbiz overtones today it is a game for Tarzans, Rockys and Rambos... I don't like this trend at all. It removes a whole class of player... who brought skills rather than athleticism... A couple of knowledgeable rugby friends pointed out another major, although more subtle contributor to the full-on confrontational game rugby has become. This is the advent of protective clothing... To continue down this route we may as well go the whole hog and become the regional variant of American football we seem to be aiming for. Let's introduce the forward pass – that would make defences hang back and open up space on the field. Let's have offensive and defensive teams – we more or less do it now with "impact players". And let's sub on the best kicker for all the goal kicks... Only don't expect me to watch it.

...N[Z]ers had long watched delayed telecasts of South Africa's Currie Cup and seen something different. Big [athletes], upright in the mauls, prodigious kickers, lifting in the lineouts... and high scoring games... The moment it was born the Super 12 was something different... [However, today the] Super 12 seems... to have passed from blooming youth to clapped out pensioner. The South Africans have made no bones about the fact that they consider the event nothing more than a prelude to the Tri-Series... [– although that might be related to their lack of success in the competition! The Natal] Sharks were smashed the first year in the Eden Park final... Last year it was, if anything, even more of a N[Z] benefit, with three NZ] teams in the semifinals and a final on Eden Park between the Canterbury Crusaders and the Auckland Blues. [That] time it was the Crusaders who got there... Rugby is a manifestation of what it means to be a... [NZer]. More that this, at provincial levels, it is a manifestation of what it means to be a Cantabrian or... an Aucklander... We want to belong to our teams and we want our teams to belong to us. They don't... Three... teams in the Super 12 are made up of one overwhelmingly strong province with a number of minor feeders... The other two are not. The Chiefs and the Wellington Hurricanes are hotchpotches and they don't work. They have no heart and they play that way... EXCLUDING the Island nations from the Super 12 has had a huge effect on the N[Z] sides. Many Samoans, unsurprisingly, opted to play for N[Z] provincial teams and to focus on the All Blacks where the big money was. Their physical presence in all of the N[Z] teams has changed the style and approach... Big hits, big steps, direct running... Injuries abound – the inevitable consequence of ferocious weight training and a style of play that mandates high velocity collisions as often as possible. It is ironic that by excluding them from[the] Super 12, the organisers have created conditions which have seen the Pacific Island approach to rugby dominate the competition. The other influence which has created the unique style of the Super 12 has been the rule changes. Many have worked well, keeping the ball in play longer and preventing stoppages for minor injuries or infringements. But one rule change has come to bedevil the game. The requirement for an ultra-quick release of the ball in the tackle... No longer are forwards required to commit to rucks and mauls. They spread out in the backs, looking to take a pass... or tackle. The result is a cluttered field and points of attack concentrated close to the tackle. In [NZ our play is now] dominated by "one-off running" and "pick and go". The moves are increasingly predictable: ox makes his metre and leaves the ball for buffalo. Buffalo scoops up the ball and slams forward his half metre before leaving the ball for rhino. Rhino roars ahead a couple of centimetres and releases the ball into hippo's charging path. Unfortunately hippo, being the... least agile... knocks it on. The exquisite ballet of "pick and go" comes to a temporary end.

...The Super 12, as it lumbers towards a climax, has thrown up a variety of intriguing questions. Will... the spectacularly abject Bulls consider it worthwhile turning up for their remaining two matches at Loftus? Come to think of it, will anyone else turn up? Can the Chiefs pluck something from the wreckage of yet another calamitous season? Will... the Hurricanes finish up with as many tries as yellow cards? ...These questions might be interesting but they are idle compared with the only one of any remaining importance: how to stop the Brumbies? As the season has unfolded everyone who has watched them has begun to realise that the game has been shifted up a notch organisationally and tactically. I call it a formula because that is essentially what it is. There is nothing particularly complicated about the Brumbies' game-plan. It is the execution that counts and that is built around meticulous attention to getting the basic skills right, to getting the right bodies in the right place at the right time, and infinite patience and composure. The Brumbies just keep probing away, constantly changing the direction of the attack. They are always content to cut their losses, go to ground and start again. The secret is, of course, ball retention. If you wrap up possession for long enough and don't rush things, then eventually the holes will begin to appear in the defensive screen in front of you. A few weeks ago I was convinced that the Brumbies' success was due essentially to the exceptional vision and dexterity of [the team's half-back and No 10]. It is now obvious that it is the whole team who deliver at the same extraordinary level of consistency. The Brumbies are collectively better at playing hide-the-ball than any other team in the game.

...If ever there was a lesson in how not to play the Brumbies, it was given by the Hurricanes last week. [The Wellington] side continually allowed the Brumbies to crash through and over tackles, creating the momentum for the home side to cruise to victory in Canberra. You can get away with that grasping tackling style sometimes – as the Hurricanes did against the Cats in Palmerston North in the fifth week of Super 12. But anyone giving the Brumbies that latitude will be crushed... The Brumbies have almost reinvented how to play rugby union, taking many lessons from the rugby league code which has flourished in Canberra with the exciting Raiders. One of the main objectives of league teams is for ball runners to go over the top of tacklers to create momentum. Ditto the Brumbies. As in rugby league, the Brumbies' ball players – primarily [the No 10] – advance on the defensive line with runners at their side and the ball held tantalisingly in front of them, to create confusion in the minds of defenders. [The No 10] will use that confusion to glide through gaps with his distinctive but extraordinary running ability, or... will use up the powerful runners

next to him if [it] feels the gap is not available... Another favourite Brumbies tactic also has league origins, where it is called a second-[perso]n play. Runners come from sharp angles behind the ball carrier, with the shadow backline in front of them acting as a decoy, leading to claims from some... that they are running illegal blocks. But... [the critics] are clutching at straws because they are being out-thought by an innovative coaching team with superb athletes able to carry out the moves. The Brumbies are playing almost the perfect fusion of rugby union and league – they are a team from what was a rugby union outpost who are not trapped by playing traditions and, instead, find inventive ways to entertain spectators and destroy opponents. The Blues won in Canberra in round one, when the Brumbies' patterns were still being fine-tuned and the Auckland-based side targeted [the No 10] with aggressive tackles. The Waratahs managed a win in Sydney, where the Brumbies continually fail, relying on instinctive defence and [their fullback]'s goalkicking. But the Brumbies still scored three tries to two and you suspect that nine times out of ten those Waratah tactics would fail. Perhaps the key is to stop the Brumbies' momentum... Confronting the Brumbies' ground-makers must be uppermost in the minds of the Chiefs forwards as they take on the Super 12 leaders at Rugby Park in Hamilton today... Otherwise, the Chiefs will become just another canvas on which the leaders in rugby innovation paint more of their brilliant colours... ■ The NSW Waratahs have re-signed[their] Wallaby fullback... until the end of the 2003 Super 12 rugby season... A[US]'s most capped fullback... is his country's second-highest points-scorer.

...If we can't beat them, then at least let's get a few of them on our side. That may have been behind the N[ZRFU]'s signing of [the t]alented Suburbs and Blues fullback... The 23-year-old, born in N[SW], was in the A[US]n under-21 and the N[SW] sides before coming to N[Z], where it... played for the Auckland NPC side... and cemented a place in the Blues Super 12 team... [The 23-year-old i]s happy to make N[Z] his home and has no immediate desire to return to A[US]. "There... is no NPC competition over there. Players just go from club rugby to the Super 12 which is tough for the younger kids because there's not another level in between... Also there... are only three Super 12 teams [in A[US]] and you really have to be one of the top halfbacks in the country to get a spot,"...

AUS[n] officials will consider quitting the Super 12 if they don't get a fourth team. The A[RU] general manager... will call for a fourth side at the expense of one of N[Z]'s five teams – most likely the Chiefs – at the[next] SANZAR meeting. Previous attempts earlier this year fell on deaf ears. "I'm not being threatening or aggressive, but if any one country continues to use its power of a veto on a proposal then maybe there has to be a complete re-examination of the future of the joint venture... It's incongruous that the future of A[US]n rugby can be stifled by N[Z]... The 4-4-4 option is in the interests of equity and fairness... The ACT are in the final for the second time, and we do have the depth of playing talent."

...the... Chiefs chief executive... says... "I think it is inevitable that the Super 12 will grow because it is such an exciting competition... I've got no doubt that the Super 12 will become a Super 16, and that it will lead to some involvement from the Northern Hemisphere..."

...It is [late-autumn], but could just as easily be spring, for the events of the last week suggest it is the season for growth... The... bosses of Sanzar did what everyone expected they would and announced, shock/horror, that the Super 12 will become the Fab 14 in two years... Watch out for any rugby officials who try to tell you with a straight face that 14 teams will improve the quality of the competition... Fourteen teams means two extra rounds of ho-hum games for those franchises out of semifinal contention, and it's a sure bet... half a dozen will be going through the motions come the final stages of round robin play... [What t]wo more teams mean[s i]s greater playing opportunities, [it]gives the national coaches a wider spread of players with experience at the level immediately below test rugby from whom to choose, and more games will likely mean more money coming in.

...LATER this year it will be three years since rugby union turned fully professional. The fight for control of the game in the Southern Hemisphere with the rebel World Rugby Corporation left one legacy... – huge player salaries. South Africa and A[US] paid more for their players three years ago than N[Z], although N[Z]... paid more players... [The Springbok ex-captain – now playing in England –] was rumoured to have received \$1 million to lead his players back to the fold. [One AUSn back] was reportedly paid A\$450,000 a year. [Most]All Blacks received... \$250,000 and... Super 12 players \$60,000... [(whereas m]ost players in the [NPC]second division... received weekly payments of \$100 from their provinces to cover expenses[– s]ome received bonus payments of \$50 for a win...; p]layer payments drop to just \$60 for many third division players[)]... A few exceptions, notably [the No 11], received a great deal more. The NZRFU signed most players up for two years; A[US] and South Africa signed theirs for three... On the whole, the second round of contracting has gone well in N[Z]. Few players have been lost and, as last year showed, the NZRFU can, at this stage, afford to pay its salary and still make a profit[, which it]... needs... to enable it to reinvest in other parts of the game[, such as club] rugby, referees, small provinces and schools coaching... We have reached some sort of equilibrium. This is not the case in South Africa and A[US]. The second round of contracting is under way now and the signs are there will be some problems. It is hard to cut people's pay and have them feel good about it, but this is what needs to happen. Also at stake will be the form of contract. The players will probably press for a large guaranteed payment whether or not they play, particularly if... they be injured. The unions will want to pay for performance. The solution to this difference of opinion is insurance. The players can turn an uncertain future payment into a certain one by insuring themselves. The problem is, this will likely be quite expensive... While \$250,000 is a great deal of money to most people, compared with other major professional sports it is not a particularly high salary. This does not, however, mean we should be paying our best rugby players more than this. In the end salaries have to be affordable and... [our] players are unfortunate to be the best in the world and living in... a small country. This limits sponsorship, ground capacities and ticket prices... If they were in England they would receive a good deal more. If they were American and rugby was [popular] there, they would be very wealthy indeed. But even in the US there is a limit. The franchise owner of the Miami Dolphins... recently [threatened to pack up, claiming]... American Football... has reached the stage where "excellence is just too expensive". For players this is the point at which they have priced themselves out of a job.

...Rugby's move to professionalism has been the big story of N[Z] sport in the past decade. Predictions about its evolution in the new millennium have a common theme. Teams will be less about provinces and more of an entity of their own... We are already seeing the beginning of it in Super 12 with the Chiefs and the Hurricanes whose teams are only nominally to do with Waikato and Wellington. If we look to the US as a cue to the future, we see examples of teams leaving a city if it isn't doing them any favours, be it tax breaks, or providing a suitable stadium. "They'll just piss off," says... [a] Wellington sports author... "The LA Dodgers was the Brooklyn Dodgers. A pile of football teams have done it, a couple of NBA (basketball) teams[and] ice hockey teams." ...There is nothing new in rugby players heading to Japan or Europe to cash in. Usually they are near the end of their careers or have missed All Black selection but the current trend some see coming is for current All Blacks to play for overseas clubs, returning for internationals. Rugby League does it and... most of the Brazilian soccer team, play for rich sides in Europe, and go into camp for their country before tournaments... "You can't stop free market forces. If you have high demand in one part of the world and high supply in another, basic economics says where demand is strong there is likely to be a fair bit of money." That boils down to a drift north from countries which produce good rugby stock: N[Z], AUS], South Africa... and... the Pacific Islands... [The former] All Black captain... supports overseas-based players being considered for the All Blacks. In his book *Turning Point*[, the ex-hooker] argues it makes sense for a younger player who misses selection for rugby's World Cup to take a contract overseas, make some money, then return in two years to try again for the All Blacks.

...Amid all the wailing and gnashing of teeth over the drain of rugby playing and coaching talent from N[Z] we seem to have forgotten one key consideration... imports. Having created the next best thing to a free market in rugby skills, the administrators have set about restricting that market by setting up a range of non-tariff barriers. The most obvious of these is the shutting out of foreign players in the Super 12 and NPC competitions... a closed market[is also operating in AUS and South Africa (where, in addition, Super 12 squads must 'maintain a quota of non-white members')].... This is short-sighted, fortress-economy stuff. If the game is going to be truly globalised then there is no room for restrictive trade

practices... The French have for decades welcomed... others into their domestic competition. Having been the first N[Z]er to play in the French national championship, in 1971, I can recall clearly the debate that began in French rugby circles over the prospect of a foreign invasion. Within a year or two the French had established a limit on the number of aliens who could play for any club. It was a sensible, rational policy that has worked well ever since... By all means have a quota limit on foreigners if that makes us feel more secure. But let's not complain about the ravages of the marketplace eroding the resources of N[Z] rugby. It was us, after all, who led the charge towards the free-market nirvana.

...[the NZRFU chairperson] has urged caution from Tri Nations partners South Africa and A[US] over a major "face-off" reported to be looming at this month's IRB meeting in Argentina... [The chairperson] is in an invidious position... [chairing] not only his own national union but also Sanzar... and is deputy chair[person of the IRB]. And as dissatisfaction grows in A[US] and South Africa over the new "global" style of game, [the chairperson] is stuck between loyalties to his own region and to the world body's desire to have all countries playing to the same interpretations... [The ARU] general manager... told the *Australian* newspaper the ARU and the S[ARFU] will question the validity of the Vancouver charter that referees appear to have taken as their bible... [However, the NZRFU chairperson is using this year's] Super 12 statistics... to... [support his request]. "What they show is... a marked drop in the average number of scrum penalties per game over the last couple of rounds... There[was] also... a slight downward trend in the number of penalties around tackles, rucks and mauls and, interestingly, the average number of penalties in that area is slightly less than last year. There have been fewer tries scored this year, but it's only marginally less than last year and there were something like twice the average number of tries in the last round compared to the first round." But the N[Z] rugby chief has a clear mission for the Argentina meeting. "One thing I will be expressing very strongly is that I believe law 8 (the advantage law) is the law the referees need to pay most attention to."

...The I[RB] yesterday defended referees criticised over their performance in international matches. Referees have particularly come under attack for allowing teams to obstruct their opponents in order to secure the ball. A[US]'s... win over France last year is a typical example of how defensive play triumphed over free-flowing action. An IRB statement... call[ed] for players and coaches alike to make the game more open, and for referees to stick by the rule-book... [M]eetings will be held over coming months to discuss the matter with... experts from all areas of the game.

...*Licence for leniency might help referees* Some time back, there were moves to install Esperanto as a universal language. For whatever reasons, the idea failed. When people of different nationalities meet and have no linguistic link, they generally get by with some universal sign language. It has worked [in the past] for the All Blacks and supporters... who might not have any grasp of French. But in the rugby arena, connections between players, match officials and the public are becoming more unstable. Referees worldwide are under consistent decree to control matches to the letter of the lawbook and are being assessed stringently. In N[Z], it is common during the NPC to find assessors with their pages of checklists, ticking or crossing points about the refereeing in those games. The wonder is how these assessors qualify for their jobs and what allowances are made for referees bringing some warmth and feeling to a game. Out in the middle, the match officials are very aware that they are being rated by grandstand panels. They might feel that a match would benefit from a little leniency, but know that if they want to get ahead they have to keep rigidly to the rules... Of equal concern must be the signals from match officials. They vary from dramatic sweeping gestures, arm flailings, to timid movements. In... [a recent international] game... the... Scottish referee... looked as if [it] was opening and shutting a car door several times with one decision. What [the referee] was trying to tell the crowd was uncertain. There lies a problem. Rugby has to be more interactive and signals have to be easily understood. The game is getting messier with the latest rule changes and crowds do not understand what rulings are being applied. In this professional era, rules and refereeing have a long way to go to be more effective, sympathetic and understood.

...[the standard of refereeing these days shouldn't] be excused. Much of it has been diabolical. Most... has been invasive, dictatorial and... lacking in any feel or understanding for the spirit or passion of the game. Too many... referees have based their rulings on what they hope will give them the inside running for key World Cup matches. Any coach of junior rugby will assure you that the day the marking panel comes to grade a ref... is the day the kids will get the rule book thrown at them by a ref desperate to make an impression. Inevitably the game is stuffed up. All we are seeing is the same thing happening at a higher level. Not all the blame should be lodged at the referees. It was our administrators who dropped the ball first. It seems inconceivable that in October last year at Vancouver they agreed to major changes in the interpretation of the rules of rugby, particularly those that apply to the scrum and the tackle... [T]he NZRFU... has been quick to say this week... [its] delegates at that meeting were outvoted and it is time for us to stop whingeing and get on with adapting to these new interpretations. What absolute rubbish... [O]ur administrators... went to that meeting after [two] years of... superb Super 12 football that had drawn huge crowds, rave reviews and unprecedented support... Why didn't our administrators say at Vancouver, "Our game is in good nick. We are not changing the rules nor will we allow them to be interpreted differently. If you don't like it you can have a World Cup without us." Such a statement would have received overwhelming national support.

...*Referee whistled up Hawkes Bay's...* 35[year-old] ref, who's controlled 38 first-class games... has become N[Z]'s fifth fulltime rugby referee...

In 1984 Auckland had racked up 18 straight NPC victories before they met Wellington. And they fully expected to make it 19. But it was not to be as Wellington ran in three tries to run out eventual winners by 22-18. The [third] try was scored by [Wellington's No 8] All Black... and the crowd, already ecstatic with the prospect of victory over their old foes, reacted wildly. One youth, feeling that [the referee] needed support, ran onto the pitch and hugged the referee... T[h]is was the moment... [the referee realised it] was the darling of Wellington's Athletic Park... [The referee]d never been hugged by a fan before and it's never happened since... The same wild reaction of joy today would be rewarded by the youth being escorted from the ground and, as was the case in this season's Super 12 at Rotorua, a lengthy ground ban to accompany a red card.

...For [the]avid Springbok fan... it was a momentous day out in more ways than one. It was the first time... the 43-year-old father of three, who lives in Potchefstroom, about 100km south-west of Johannesburg... had been to Durban's Kings Park... It will also be the last rugby game [the 43-year-old] will see. Midway through the test, in front of the 52,000-strong crowd and hundreds of thousands of television viewers, the heavy-set [43-year-old] appeared from nowhere to attack the... Irish... referee... dislocating his shoulder... before two plainclothes security officers marched him away. KwaZulu-Natal police arrested the... own[er of] a mining supply business[who] had played rugby when... younger. "The whole of the stadium was mal [angry] with him [the referee]. It's just that I decided to do something about it," [the 43-year-old] told the South African *Sunday Times* from the back of a police van. "Referees around the world think they are bigger than the game and they're not. Fans like me is what rugby is about." ...[the referee, who is 'considering suing the fan'] was... last night... feeling "not too bad, a bit shook". The S[ARFU] has banned the 43-year-old from any rugby game for life. Late last night [the 43-year-old] was freed on bail... after appearing in the Durban Magistrate's Court... charged with assault, grievous bodily harm and trespass... Asked about the incident following his appearance [the 43-year-old] told the *Herald*: "Of course I regret it." But... his lawyer... had... advised... [him] not to talk to reporters. Durban police said [the 43-year-old] was "moderately drunk" at the time of the attack but knew what [it was doing]. The 43-year-old was a "compulsive" person... [but] realised the gravity of what... it... had done and knew [the assault] would tarnish the reputation of South Africa... [The 43-year-old]'s sister, who would not reveal her first name, said [her brother] was usually "a very calm guy and wouldn't hurt a fly". The incident was labelled the "ugliest moment in South African rugby history" by South African media. The *Sunday Tribune's* front page banner read: "You Scumbag". The *Sunday Times* said: "No amount of sanction, lip service or spin can disguise the utter embarrassment faced by South African rugby this morning. Why was the [guy] allowed to enter the field and why was the security cordon so lax?" ...[the] chief executive of S[ARFU], said there was a security presence of 419 people at the ground, and it was hard to imagine what other protective measures could be taken... [The] Kings Park stadium manager... was furious. "This bloody visitor behaved in such an irresponsible and barbaric fashion. [The visitor] told security personnel and police... [it] was tired of the way referees were treating S[outh

African] players generally.” But some Springbok fans were not perturbed. On[e]... said referees had made a pact to screw South Africa. “Yesterday a heroic South African spoke for us all. I bet [that ref] won’t mess with South Africa again.” Another... said: “I felt ashamed when I saw that guy go on the field and assault the referee. I mean, what’s wrong with the guy? But then again, the refs from all across the world will remember this and won’t penalise the Springboks for nothing... right? Unless they want their shoulder dislocated as well.” The attack was the latest in a series of incidents which have disrupted rugby games, and has sparked further calls for a review of security at international matches. In Rotorua three months ago a schoolboy tackled [the ACT Brumbies’] half-back... during a Super 12 match. Two streakers disrupted play... [during a] match in Sydney this month.

...The South African rugby spectator who attacked and injured [an] Irish referee... last Saturday... is unrepentant and may defy a pledge by officials to ban him from matches... [The 43-year-old said it] had tickets to [this] Sunday morning’s game [in Johannesburg]... and was deciding whether to attend... The chief executive of the S[arfu]... said after the assault: “I guarantee that the person who committed the attack will never again attend a rugby match in South Africa.” If [the person] did turn up at any of the union’s boxes “[it] will be removed”... But [the 43-year-old]... said: “Remember, there is no court order against me. I am a taxpaying citizen. Look, I don’t want to cross swords with Sarfu or any of its officials. But any attempts to ban me from rugby fields, trust me, will be opposed very strongly by my attorney... Don’t forget that the incident happened when the referee closed his one eye and ceased to see the Springboks. I am therefore not sorry that I did what I did...” [The 43-year-old hoped his actions] would lead to an initiative “where referees and match officials will be evaluated according to their performance”. Asked whether [it] would do the same again, [the 43-year-old] replied: “Look, if you put me in the same situation, with the same referee again, I can’t say exactly what I will do.” Meanwhile, a second Springbok fan has been banned for life from attending matches at one of South Africa’s leading grounds. The [fan] was... banned... on Tuesday... after invading the pitch to plant a South African flag in the in-goal area during the... match[last Saturday].

...There was a time when the entry of a spectator on to a playing field at cricket, rugby or tennis was regarded with mild amusement. In the more carefree days of the ’70s, a few wags with several lagers under their belts would run on to the cricket field and streak down to the bowlers’ end, perhaps hurdling the stumps with flair if not grace. The players would have a brief laugh and the showboat (for want of a better term) would disappear into a jovial crowd to receive more banter and the return of his clothes. Of course, not all the players saw the funny side of the situation. In 1977, [one cricketer] collared a scantily clad, sunburnt streaker and proceeded to launch a few cut shots at his posterior. This broke the A[USn] batter]’s concentration to such an extent that [the player] was dismissed soon after. I doubt whether [a Wallaby No 10] was distracted by the two topless young [gals] at Eden Park in 1991. But [the No 10] did miss six from seven goals and allow the All Blacks to retain the Bledisloe Cup. However, recent public tolerance of these streakers and pitch intruders has been wearing thin. And in the TV age, one suspects the pitch invasions have been motivated by a desire to appear on the box and promote a product or cause. This year we have seen three pitch invasions in major rugby matches – two of which went beyond drunken self-indulgent antics. The teenager who crash-tackled [the Wallaby halfback] at the Chiefs-Brumbies Super 12 match at Rotorua sparked an outrage over the Tasman about our supposed lax ground security. I suspect this was more an act of arrant stupidity and was more about unsettling [rather] than hurting the A[USn] captain. Still, it was unacceptable. [The halfback] was copping enough from the Chiefs forwards without having to protect his flank from someone who had given security the slip. The two streakers who landed themselves and a certain telecommunications company in hot water at Aussie Stadium merely highlighted flaws in ground security and the ugly side of commercialism. [But t]he suggestion that they cost the [Wallabies’ opponents] victory is utter nonsense... The darker side of illegal entry on to the playing arena comes when a spectator actually interferes with the players and referee, or worse, influences the result. A numbskull tackled a player [two years ago] in the... Horowhenua club final to ensure a 13-all draw and another lout put a copybook tackle on a player in a Currie Cup final some years ago to stop a try. On both occasions, referees were stymied as there was nothing in the rules to adapt to such a rare situation. But the actions of [a 43-year-old businessperson] at King’s Park, Durban, represented the nadir of pitch invasions. The bulging Afrikaner, having the temerity to wear a Springbok jersey (it barely covered his girth) assaulted [the] referee... then had the audacity to claim [it] was acting in the interests of all South Africans for an appalling display of officiating. Granted, [the referee] had a shocker but it is inconceivable to think that [the referee deserved what the referee] got from the hefty [43-year-old], who was apparently too slippery for the security presence of 419. Most disappointingly of all is the level of support [the 43-year-old] has received in South Africa – a bit rich when one considers the blatant cheating of their referees in All Black-Springbok tests between 1928 and 1976[(including once ‘awarding points for a shot at goal that had clearly missed’!).

...England lost yesterday’s] rugby test to the All Blacks 22-64 at Carisbrook and[their] coach... lost his cool... [England’s coach] was angry and suspicious to find [the All Black coach at the referee]’s door at the break and demanded it be stopped in future... [However, the All Black coach] defended his actions, saying that with the England scrum down to seven [members] after the sending off of [an English] lock... for stomping after 30 minutes, the All Blacks had decided to de-power their own scrum for the second half in the interests of safety[, and] merely wanted to relay that to... [the ref. “Anyway, t]here’s no rule to say you can’t talk to the referee at half time...” ...[England’s coach] also described the A[USn] referee’s performance as “appalling”... But it had the taste of sour grapes... [England’s coach is] under pressure after... a second record defeat in as many tests... [England received a] 76-0 hiding from... [the Wallabies] a fortnight ago... [The Carisbrook score was a record for NZ] against England, a record winning margin and a record nine tries[(England scored three). In related news, the]... England hooker... and All Black[reserve] hooker... are reported to have traded punches outside a Dunedin hotel early yesterday... but an England team spokes[person] dismissed the incident as a play fight. However, team management will probably speak to [England’s hooker] about such behaviour in a public place, said the English media liaison officer... His All Blacks counterpart... confirmed that there had been a fight but said the two hookers had gone back to the All Blacks’ hotel together. “There were no hard feelings.” According to witnesses who had seen the pair earlier at a different hotel, [England’s hooker] was slapping his thighs and chest saying, “Show me how to do the haka... I can smack my legs.” ...At Old Trafford last year, the haka led to an on-field confrontation between [the two hookers] when the Briton ended up toe-to-toe with [his opposite number as the All Black hooker (who was replacing the injured All Black captain) and the replacement All Black captain] were leading the war cry... [The English hooker also asked the All Black hooker], who did not play in the test match at Carisbrook[, if the hooker]... had splinters in his backside from sitting on the bench... [Other witnesses] saw the pair in a taxi with at least one other English player early in the morning... [T]he hookers had “a couple of cracks” in the back of the cab. They then got out of the taxi but started throwing punches again for about a minute. No one was knocked to the ground... [T]he fight finished with a flurry of punches from [the All Black]. “It was probably the best five-punch combo I’ve ever seen in my life.” Bystanders then intervened and stopped the pair. [England’s media liaison officer said the All Black had telephoned the English hooker] later in the day. They had chatted about it and had a good laugh.

...[the chairperson of the RFU’s] National Playing Committee... has promised rugby’s Southern Hemisphere superpowers [that it was his intention to] fight to ensure England’s disastrous summer tour was a one-off – after... Sanzar... warned they would reject tours from weakened British teams in future... Sanzar stressed it was committed to globalising the sport and if the Home Unions continued to send under-strength squads on tour it would look to the likes of the U[S], Western Samoa and Argentina for opposition... England, missing a host of regulars, suffered record... defeats by A[US] and NZ] respectively before losing 18-0 to South Africa. Scotland crashed 45-3 and 33-11 to A[US], Wales were humbled 96-13 by South Africa – the heaviest defeat for a Five Nations team – and Ireland slumped 37-13 and 33-0 to South Africa... [By the way,] the Springbok and Northern Bulls No 9... [says, “This year’s] is going to be THE Tri-Nations tournament and we’re going to see the best rugby played... All our

spectators just expect us to win all the time and now... I think... that A[US] and South Africa have caught up with N[Z so] we're all on the same level..." ...[the Springbok coach agreed, saying, "AUS] have improved 20[%], South Africa have improved 20[%], and NZ] have lost a couple of key players... this... [third] Tri-Nations series... really is the toughest. I think this is the World Cup to be honest."

...*Wallabies complete blackwash*... An 11-0... halftime lead[was] eroded as the Wallabies... wore down an inexperienced All Black side to triumph 19-14 in the last major rugby test to be played at... the Sydney Football Stadium on Saturday night. Five successive defeats for the All Blacks, [including two to the Springboks – this year's Tri-Nations competition winners – and] the first 0-3 series loss to the Wallabies in almost 70 years, [makes this year] an annus horribilis to match or even overshadow the horror season of 1949... [and has generated jokes like: 'What's the difference between an All Black and an arsonist? An arsonist wouldn't lose its last five matches!'] AUS]'s Bledisloe Cup clean sweep... was hailed as a miracle by one Sydney newspaper. *The Sunday Telegraph*... said [the Wallabies'] 73rd-minute matchwinning try provided a sellout... crowd with some late delight after a night otherwise soured by the refereeing... "The first half provided evidence that Northern Hemisphere referees should be kept away from such matches at all costs," the paper said... The *Sun-Herald* used the winter's favoured headline of "Blackout" on its back page. On the inside pages the win was described as [the Wallabies'] most critical since the 1991 World Cup[final triumph in England (over England – and following the Wallabies' semifinal defeat of the All Blacks)] because the team were able to overcome numerous setbacks in the week leading up to the match... In contrast, the loss would "gut N[Z], as they have never experienced such despair, or such a long losing sequence involving their most important commodity." [A former]Wallaby flanker... described the win as incredible, especially as the All Blacks "just had to win this game, no matter what." [AUS's world] record test try-scoring wing... said the turning point of the match was when[an] All Blacks speedster... was held up near the tryline... [The No 14] looked to have the tryline at his mercy but checked back inside and was wrapped up[preventing]... the All Blacks from stretching their lead to 18-0. That might have been too big a hurdle for [the Wallabies] to overcome. In a televised panel discussion on Channel Seven, [the former flanker questioned the All Blacks' No 10]'s propensity to kick away possession, while another former... [Wallaby suggested that the No 10] was no longer playing by instinct because [the player] had been given too many conflicting instructions from the coaching staff.

...[the] All Black coach... walked away from an exhaustive meeting of the... NZRFU... board... yesterday... with his... job, as well as his head, intact. It was an emotional time for the... [person] who has faced intense media and public scrutiny in the wake of his side's five consecutive losses... [The coach] looked relieved and tired after... the... seven-hour meeting... during which his job was reviewed and three lengthy reports on the national team and its direction were presented. The reports came from[the] All Black manager... [the coach] himself and... the... NZRFU rugby services manager... The... coach confirmed... [that] the fallout from the All Blacks' horror season had taken a personal toll... [and the coach] came close to resigning as the pressure... for... a public execution... mounted...

The contractual pantomime being played out between [the All Blacks] and their employer, the N[ZRFU], has become a farce. It transpires that half the All Blacks team have not been able to reach agreement with the union on their contracts for next year's World Cup season and some of the newer stars... don't even have contracts... The price of opening up rugby to the free market is turning out to be a high one and it is getting higher all the time as the top players squeeze the union for the very last pip. Less than a decade ago the players were the exploited party... [Now lucrative] offers are on the table for contracts in Europe and many, perhaps the majority of the All Blacks, have had their heads turned by these... Is it unreasonable to draw a link between a preoccupation with salary negotiations and a string of indifferent performances on the field? ...The[new] captain... whose first task one would have thought is to set a patriotic example, has, it seems, had his agent negotiating most of this year and things are still unsettled... There are already ominous rumblings of public discontent over All Black salary levels. That could quickly break into open resentment, as it has with top corporate salaries. Corporates can live with that. The All Blacks can't. But it gets worse. Such is the drain on the game's resources that we are now treated to the insulting spectacle of a television commercial featuring [the All Black No 9], who urges us, the public, to provide donations to keep poor old clapped-out rugby on the road... It is what a cynical economist would call trickle-up. On the one hand we have the professional players bleeding the system dry by their apparently unquenchable appetite for more money, and on the other, one of them with hand on bleeding heart pleading the cause of the game at the grassroots which is steadily dying.

...[HAMILTON – Someone] knows only too well the pressures faced by young rugby players trying to break into the professional scene. The [person] who wears the Chiefs No 6 rugby jersey so coveted by Ryan Wheeler, the player who took his life in Sydney this week, also suffered depression after failing to live up to his and others' expectations... Another player who suffered depression, [a]former All Black star... [winger], who is part of a television campaign on mental illness, said the key for players who were struggling was to talk to someone... Friends say... Wheeler, aged 27, was... devastated when [it] did not make the Chiefs squad[, and]... suffered from depression, blackouts and mood swings after being concussed last year... SYDNEY – The A[RU] has expressed its sympathy following the death of a player in a country match in northern N[SW]. Kempsey Rugby Club centre Kullen Beathe died following a tackle in a grand final. "Our hearts go out to Kullen's family," [the]ARU managing director... said. "We are all struggling to understand this..." Another Mid-North Coast player... suffered a serious spinal injury during a separate grand final match on Saturday. [The player], a hooker from Coffs Harbour... in his early 30s... who was playing for Southern Cross University, was injured in a scrum and was airlifted to Sydney's Royal North Shore Hospital. [The]Mid-North chief executive... said Beathe... was aged in his early 20s.

...When [Barney]Armit died on November 15, 1899, [the]... 25-year-old Otago [resident]... became the first player to die in an organised game of rugby in N[Z]... Alexander "Barney" Armit had played senior rugby for the Kaikorai club since 1892 and scored more tries than any other Dunedin player of his time. [Barney] played for Otago 19 times and toured A[US] with the 1897 N[Z] team. But in the Otago-Taranaki game of August 1899 his rugby career was shattered in a tackle by Taranaki captain Alf Bayly who had captained the 1897 N[Z] team. Armit's trademark "hurdle" which [the player] adopted to avoid being tackled was to be his downfall. Running close to the sideline, Armit turned infield and attempted to "hurdle" past Bayly who tackled him low. The Otago player fell back on to his neck... Three doctors at the Caledonian Ground venue at once had Armit taken to hospital where [the player] was found to have a dislocated spine and badly crushed spinal cord. An operation mended the misplaced vertebrae but "little hope was held for his survival". But in a two-month battle which the whole country followed Armit clung to life against the odds. When [Armit finally] died... there was national mourning as Armit was a popular athlete and death by rugby was a new experience for followers of the game. While Armit's widowed mother received telegrams of sympathy from all parts of the country and was given the benefit fund which had been subscribed for her son, an inquest sought to establish how such a tragedy would happen. With a real possibility of facing criminal charges, Bayly engaged famous criminal lawyer Alf Hanlon, while the Otago Rugby Union was represented by another illustrious law[er], William Sim. During the hearing it was suggested North Island rugby was rough and Bayly had been over-vigorous... but... the players themselves were reluctant to give evidence against Bayly to avoid "the stigma of informer". Some... witness[es]... defended Bayly, saying the tackle was vigorous but lawful, while others said they saw Armit lifted over Bayly's shoulder and "then flung to the ground at an angle of 45 degrees, head foremost, with the same violent action that one would impel a bayonet into an enemy". What did most to save Bayly, though were the comments made by Armit from his hospital bed. "Bayly played the game. I don't think Alf would do it intentionally. I sincerely believe it was an accident." The jury decided it was an accident and that no blame attached to anyone. All that remained was for Dunedin to give Armit the funeral such a popular athlete deserved. Armit had been a fire brigade member and the coffin was carried on the Roslyn Fire Brigade's hose reel wagon attended by brigade members. It left his mother's Kaikorai Valley home and the procession included Foresters' Lodge members, six bands, family members, rugby players, members of six fire brigades and the public. The procession, watched by thousands, covered the long miles from Kaikorai,

over the hill to the Octagon and along Princes St to the Southern Cemetery. Although it was [almost] 100 years ago Armit's death is a reminder that rugby has always been a tough, physical game in which laws preventing dangerous play have an important part to play.

...Clubs stunned as try-saving tackle takes a life... [Whilst] playing on the right wing for his Central Hawkes Bay Rugby Club in their premier-level local clash with neighbouring Otane on Saturday afternoon... Tino Amato was... racing for the tryline when hit by a tackle... The high-speed tackle from the Otane fullback was a try-saver – it forced Mr Amato, who had been heading for the corner, out over the sideline. Mr Amato had beaten a couple of players and was hit at a right-angle by the fullback, who was coming across for what spectators say was a “full-on collision”. [Tino] lay there without moving. Then... started to have a fit. The local ambulance service and a doctor tried to resuscitate the father of one before a rescue helicopter flew him to Hawkes Bay hospital in Hastings. Mr Amato, a 34-year-old butcher at the Takapau freezing works, was dead on arrival. An autopsy found that [Tino] died of internal injuries suffered in the tackle, [which]... happened just before half-time. Central Hawkes Bay[’s] president... said the game was then shifted to the back paddock of the club’s grounds in Waipukurau. Otane went on to win 10-8. B[ut]... “The guts had fallen out of both teams, especially the Central players... They knew how critically ill Tino was, and every time they turned around they could see him being worked on.” ...the club would not be citing the player. There was no penalty at the time... [However,] Waipukurau police are investigating and there will be an inquest... It is understood that the tackler has talked about quitting rugby for good.

...THE rugby star investigated over the death of a rival player in a tackle has quit for the season – costing him an NPC spot. [The fullback], 23, had been selected for Hawke’s Bay and played a warm-up match against Wellington last weekend. But [the fullback] was penalised for his first tackle of the game... Last month... Tino Amato... died after being tackled by [the fullback]... Police said criminal charges would not follow. A fortnight later, playing for his Otane club, [the] star back... was sinbinned and rivals Hastings awarded a penalty try after [the fullback] felled their centre in a tackle. Hawke’s Bay[’s] NPC coach... talked to [the fullback] about his technique... Otane[’s] manager... said... the... [fullback] – who received counselling after Amato’s death – was struggling to deal with the tragedy... [The fullback] – a dad of three – ...and Amato worked together at the Richmond Takapau meat plant. “[The fullback] remains deeply remorseful, and like everyone else has the deepest sympathy for Tino’s family... It has been a terrible and unreal situation for all those involved and there are many people trying to cope...” ...ACC figures show there have been crippling injuries to 17 rugby players in the past three years, as well as the deaths of 48-year-old Ponsonby player Pita Fuafiva last year and 25-year-old Joe Fitita in Christchurch the year before – both spine related.

...PROFESSIONAL rugby players have claimed a huge increase in ACC payouts in the two years since the sport turned pro. In [the first year], 35 players claimed \$89,218 but last year, that rose to a staggering \$832,307 from 96 players. The payouts do not cost taxpayers, because the claims – which are mainly for income replacement, home help and specialist equipment – are met from premiums paid by employers.

...YOUR rugby heroes may soon have to cough up an extra \$25,000 a year to the tax[department], with top players looking at hefty six-figure tax bills. Under a tough new IRD policy, All Blacks and star Super 12 players will have to carve off a bigger slice of their hard-earned cash to swell the [country’s] coffers. Star players like [the All Black No 11] could get hit by up to \$100,000-a-year. “It’s going to cost more and players aren’t going to be happy about it,” said... [the No 11’s accountant. Because 80%] of their income [comes] from one source the... IRD is to reclassify all rugby players as NZRFU employees. That means no more individual contracts for star players. And no more “writing off” the cost of the managers’ 20[%] fee, cars, clothing or other business expenses... [T]he tax hike could spell the end of managers for a number of players... The NZRFU is keen to support players looking for ways to get around having to pay more tax... One way of reducing tax is to class a player as being owned by a trust... [In another development,] the NZRFU... chief executive... is concerned about the financial viability of some provincial unions... [Yesterday the chief executive said p]rovincial unions trying to gain promotion or avoid relegation have spent up to \$1.5 million in the past 12 months on players alone.

...The country’s 27 provincial rugby unions have been handed \$2.7 million by the five Super 12 franchises... [C]ash injections... to individual unions vary from \$15,000 up to more than half a million... [Incidentally, as] the first N[PC] unwound its novel way during 1976, the supporters of Bay of Plenty could see a double prize looming. As their match against Auckland loomed, there was the prospect of leaving Eden Park with both championship points and the Ranfurly Shield. Alas for the Bay the shield was whisked away by Manawatu. But the Auckland match still figured as a crucial step along the way towards the Bay becoming the inaugural first division champions. The first NPC was played without the All Blacks, who were in South Africa. The Bay were without their captain... Auckland did not have a great representation in the All Blacks that year, though their absentees were keys – fullback... wing... lock... and prop... Where Auckland came unstuck was with the laudable plan by [their] coach... to play an expansive game. It broke down because of handling and option errors and staunch Bay of Plenty defence. Auckland were also hampered by losing, at a crucial time, [another] prop... with a broken leg. [This prop] was one of the rarities of N[Z] rugby – a player who twice turned down the chance to become an All Black. One of those times was just a week before the Bay match when [the prop] resisted the All Black selectors’ request for him to go to South Africa as a replacement for the injured [Auckland prop who was already there]. Auckland were rocked early and trailed 9-19 but they... got back up to 19-all and then again 22-all and seemed headed for victory. But... the Bay... edged... back into the lead... and... eventually... won... 31-22... Three weeks later, they beat Hawke’s Bay 10-7 in Rotorua to secure their [first and last] championship win.

...Bay of Plenty went to Auckland for their third-round [Gals’] NPC match without six... leading players, but bolstered by a second-round victory over Otago. But by the end of an entertaining match they had been beaten 70-0, despite playing a good deal better than the scoreline indicated. Auckland have not been beaten since falling to Wellington in 1994, and with their latest victory have recorded 49 successive provincial wins.

...In just five years, King Country have gone from being the cinderella province of N[Z] domestic rugby to being one of the ugly sisters. Having boxed above their weight in the NPC first division from 1992 to 1996, they... [are now playing] with the lightweights of the third division... Their demise has saddened King Country’s greatest rugby figure... “It’s tragic. It’s a sign of the times, we just haven’t got the depth in our rugby,”... said[the former All Black nick-named *Pinetree*]. It was no coincidence that King Country’s demotion from the first division to the second in 1996 marked the start of professionalism. “King Country do not have the resources to keep players, and promising schoolboys lured to big centres on scholarships do not return... Our club competition is terrible[and we’ve] lost four representative players to first division unions [for] this season...”

...A Taranaki rugby fan sent [the team’s] coach... a magazine cutting with a phrase which has become a motto for one of the underdogs in the NPC first division... “Remember, the Titanic was built by professionals, the ark was built by amateurs.” It is a catch cry which might give some hope to a number of first division coaches around the country... [Three of them] have all claimed recently that their sides are amateur outfits pitted against the professionals from Super 12 bases. While teams like Auckland and Canterbury train fulltime during the day and lure players through the promise of Super 12 places – though the big city sides often deny they hold such an advantage – ...Taranaki still only train on two nights a week because the players work. That means cramming in such vital aspects as video analysis rather than having the time to do it properly. And while [Taranaki’s coach] preferred to steer clear of too many provocative comments, [it] said: “I’m sure the N[ZRFU] knows the problems and are looking at some changes. We still think that even if we are amateurs we can still act like professionals and the Taranaki union has done as well as it has because we have always had visionary people. But... I spend 50[%] of my time on keeping and finding players. Our players are getting approached all the time – sometimes they tell you and sometimes they don’t. I’m continually worried about losing them, although we never begrudge them going. They always go with our blessing...” [This season’s] Taranaki side have struggled to match last season’s achievements, when they made the semifinals... Taranaki and Counties-Manukau face each other in a do-or-die clash tomorrow, although don’t expect a dour battle for the points. Their faint hope of making the semifinals lies in taking maximum points, which means both will be after the four-try bonus.

...Superstition shouldn't really play a part in rugby, but you could easily forgive Otago players if they hung garlic round their necks and avoided black cats on their way to Eden Park. The last time they won there... was... in 1976... Auckland weren't having a flash year in '76, and the loss to Otago was the third in a row at Eden Park, after a draw with Southland, a loss to Manawatu that saw the Ranfurly Shield go, and a loss to Bay of Plenty. But since that... afternoon 22 years ago, going to Eden Park has been a horror story for Otago that makes... *Heart Of Darkness* read like a pleasant bedtime story for the kiddies. Some were big losses, and some were losses that they'll still argue about in Dunedin, like the 1995 N[PC] final, which Auckland won when[the] referee... awarded a penalty try. But the most frustrating loss ever may have been in 1988... The one thing [about] 10 years ago... [is] that "it was just go, go, go from the Otago players. They ran everything. It was like modern rugby is now, but they were playing it back then"... and now... it's turned dog yet again for Otago, and it'll be 2000 before there's another chance to win in Auckland. How to change it? If anyone out there knows, fly to Dunedin, where the freedom of the city for the rest of your life awaits.

...a transformation is under way that will take N[Z]'s major sporting venues into the new millennium and bring them closer to the modern stadiums Kiwis have only been able to observe or experience with envy overseas... It started with Dunedin where Carisbrook now boasts an impressive curved stand at the railway end... It continues with the upgrade of Auckland's Eden Park which will be floodlit... and have a... new grandstand... with seating for 12,312 – ...the... largest... [seating capacity for a single stand at a NZ] sportsground... In Christchurch, the southern end of [Lancaster Park] is now barren but work will start [next] year on a redevelopment sweeping through the embankment, enclosing the ground into an all-seated... 40,631[-capacity]... venue... The redevelopment will cost \$35m... But the biggest project is in Wellington. It will make Athletic Park, the home of N[Z] rugby, redundant... The Westpac Trust Stadium, built on the foreshore and within goalkicking range of the [CBD], is a state of the art facility that is on target and, importantly, within budget, for completion in December. The oval shape of this \$122 million facility already dominates the downtown area. Its location is unrivalled in the country. Standing 600m from the Wellington Railway station and a stroll from... 8000 carparks... [means] transport to the ground won't be a problem... With another 5000 seats being added subject to resource consent, the Wellington stadium will seat 40,000... And 24,000 of those seats will be fully covered. There will also be 69 corporate boxes and an 1100-seat dining room, the biggest facility of its kind in the capital. Funding is coming from several areas. The Wellington Regional Council put in \$25m and the Wellington City Council \$15m. Corporate boxes will raise \$15m, there's a commercial loan of \$20m, an undisclosed amount for the naming rights and signage plus... 15-year memberships which are selling for \$13,500 each and are limited to 2500. They offer a seat and right of entry to every major sporting event at the ground, excluding Commonwealth Games and World Cup rugby, but members have priority for those events.

...The Mayor of Christchurch... is confident [of being able to] sell the idea of Lancaster Park being named after an Auckland-based bank. Confirming negotiations with the ASB Bank over naming rights to the upgraded Lancaster Park, [it was claimed that the mayor] would be "amazed" if Cantabrians felt concerned about the park's new name being linked to the province's greatest sporting foe. "I welcome any businesses looking for opportunities that work for them here... There are not many organisations falling over themselves to invest in Christchurch[and, anyway, this is a NZ] bank owned by A[US]ns." The potential deal is understood to be worth about \$4 million over 10 years towards the \$35 million upgrade.

...Tainui's investment wing expects to reap long-term profits from the \$7 million it is paying for naming rights to Hamilton's new stadium, but others in the tribe are less sure. MDC Investments Holdings Ltd said yesterday that it would pay the money over 10 years for the planned 30,000-seat venue... MDC[']s special works manager... said the deal would boost the tribe's overseas profile, give it a free corporate box[(normally worth a 'minimum of \$195/head for test matches')] and ensure that 20[%] of stadium staff were Tainui... The... stadium will employ [5 or 6] permanent staff and 60 or 70 for major events... [The deal] would also give Tainui free use of the venue four times a year for lucrative events that might include... Maori All Blacks games. [The manager] said the tribe was confident its people backed the scheme. But most Tainui people the N[Z] *Herald* spoke to on the streets of Hamilton yesterday said they opposed the deal. They felt the money would be better spent on housing or university scholarships. Previous Tainui investments... [such as] a plush resort in Pauanui, the Tainui Novotel hotel in Hamilton and the city's planned Riverside Casino... have also been controversial... The chief executive officer of the stadium trust... said the Tainui cash meant that just \$15.5 million was still needed for the \$43.5 million venue... Building would start in November and... the... stadium was expected to last at least 50 years... The naming deal is believed to be the nation's biggest for a stadium. Computer firm Aoraki Corporation paid an estimated \$4 million to name Jade Stadium...

CHRISTCHURCH[City's] manager... has won the backing of the Christchurch council in the wake of a furore over his claim that the city has been made ready for Christ's second coming. [The manager], a fundamentalist Christian, said in a paper written for fellow fundamentalists that the Lord wanted to move "very soon" on the city and projects such as the WestpacTrust Centre, Cathedral Square and Jade Stadium were part of His plan. After a meeting yesterday, [a] councillor... said the council had confidence in [the manager]'s abilities and... noted that it was the councillors who initiated the building of the city's new facilities "for the benefit of all the people in Christchurch."

...In days past, communities used to compete to erect the biggest and grandest war memorial. These days we war over stadiums... Predictably enough, Manukau City's latest plan for a... indoor-outdoor sports and cultural complex has sparked a round of fear and loathing from the rest of the region. It's not that people necessarily begrudge Manukau its dream of a new... arena... it's just that any new facility poses a commercial threat to existing – or planned – ones elsewhere. What concentrates the heat in this case is that the South Auckland proposal is a multipurpose bitser... The history of multipurpose anything is so studded with failure, both here and abroad, that you must wonder why local bodies continue to waste public money on them. I guess it's a case of better a mediocre hybrid concert hall/opera house/convention centre/rugby field that you can afford than nothing. Before Manukau becomes a real threat to other venues, of course, its promoters have to come up with the little matter of \$37.6 m...

Big-stadium food and drink are the pits... Everywhere, stadium food and drink are expensive. Generally... food is cold when supposed to be hot, and vice versa. And always bad for you... My first time at a U[S] baseball game in 1994 – ...at brewer-sponsored Anhauser-Busch Stadium – I was keen to try the sponsor's product, but was seated 50 seats from an aisle. The bloke in the next seat introduced us to the local custom. First, grab the attention of the aisle-moving busboy whose product you want. Second, raise the number of fingers required to indicate the amount of product you want. Third, use both hands to flash the size of the bill you're paying with. So we waved wildly at the beer carrier, flash[ing] him... two... high-fives. Then we gave \$US10 to the bloke in the seat to the left and said goodbye to it, expecting to get nothing more than a story to tell the folks back home. [But the bloke] passed it to his left – and so on, 48 times. Back came two beers and two crumpled \$1 bills stuffed between the plastic cups in a two-beer holder. Shame about the beer. Despite its lack of head, stadium temperature, poor taste and price, we were impressed. Our adviser could see we weren't used to this behaviour and we told him that, in N[Z], there was little likelihood of the cash making it to the end of the row. Should such an unlikely event occur there was absolutely no chance of the beer making it back... Do you like sport? Then get used to cold, fattening food and warm, flat beer, no hot drinks on offer. Or get down to your local club ground. The Mangere East Hawks win my prize of [this] season... so far. Hot meat pies that live up to the description and large mugs of steaming tea and coffee, \$1.50 and \$1 respectively. It takes the same amount of time to prepare good food as it does bad. How come the big-stadium guys can't serve stuff they would eat and drink themselves? [Speaking of big-stadiums, the 'Seattle "King Dome" has been demolished – even though the county still owed over \$US200 million on the 24-year-old' facility.]

...The famous Murrayfield roar, dating back to when 90,000 fans used to pack the old terraces, is not what it used to be. Although Scotland's [recent] game against South Africa attracted 60,000, the Scottish Rugby Union saw fit to augment the crowd noise with taped cheering... [In related news, South Africa's 1995] World Cup hero... announced his retirement from rugby yesterday, after suffering a serious knee injury playing for Leicester last season. [The No 10] guaranteed himself rugby immortality with his extra-time drop goal against the All Blacks [in the final]...

FRESH from a 14-try flogging of Italy, [the All Black No 14] claims the 1995 All Blacks were a better side than the current... [side and] remain the best team of all time. "I don't think any team is going to play rugby like that again... In 1995 we attacked from everywhere. We had weapons everywhere." ...[the No 14] dedicated his record-breaking try to his father Bill who died last November... [The No 14] said the try that put him ahead... as the leading [All Black] try-scorer in tests was made more special with his mum... among the 22,000 spectators in the crowd... [Regarding his playing future, the No 14 said:] "It's a year by year thing. I honestly don't know what I'm going to be doing next year... If I'm playing rugby it will be [in NZ]. I'm not going to play rugby anywhere else in the world. I won't." ...[the No 14] plans to holiday with h[is mum] in Europe for three weeks... before a week in America and a week in Fiji with his girlfriend... In Fiji [the No 14] will contemplate his future.

...WHEN Fiji's NZ-born coach – soon to become the Italian coach – wanted to talk to [a couple of his top players, it] had to telephone a police officer on the tiny Pacific island and persuade him to cycle across half-inhabited terrain with a message. "They got through a lot of bicycle parts, those police... It's a good job they love their rugby." It's a good job coaches like [him], and his players, love their rugby too because they are not doing it for the money... Fiji rugby's budget [is] \$225,000 – not even enough to cover travel expenses. Fiji player payments range from \$2500 for rookies to \$5000 for experienced players and \$7000 for stars... Compare that with... [NZ's players.] No bikes for them. They drive... Landrovers and BMWs and are paid between \$180,000 and \$400,000... [By the way, next season the NPC provinces can buy a maximum five players... First division players carry a \$20,000 price tag. Other transfer fee costs are \$30,000 for a Super 12 player, \$15,000 for a second division player and \$10,000 for a third division player. All Blacks are split into four categories – \$125,000 for an All Blacks star, \$75,000 for established, \$50,000 for current and \$40,000 for... former All Blacks... NZ U-21 and NZ Academy players cost \$20,000, NZ U-19 players... \$15,000 and NZ Secondary Schools players... \$10,000.

...Kelston's dream of defending its world secondary schools rugby championship title has been shattered with news that the tournament has been cancelled. Kelston Boys High won the inaugural tournament in Zimbabwe... and was preparing to defend the title in Cape Town... But a lack of sponsorship has meant that the tournament has been cancelled... Kelston's director of sport... says the tournament was meant to be held every two years... "We started preparing for it last year. The boys worked hard all over the summer and it is very disappointing that it is not going ahead..." N[Z] teams win the right to compete in the world tournament if they win the national secondary school championships... Despite its world cup disappointment, Kelston's first XV may still get to see the sights of South Africa. The team is planning an 18-day tour around Cape Town... The side will play at least four games against various high schools and development squads. Unfortunately the cost of... the team touring South Africa is substantially more than the proposed world cup tour... The team needs to raise \$94,000. Each of the players in the 23 member squad has to pay \$1900 and the rest will hopefully be found through fundraising. [The director] says... local businesses have been very generous...

A Tongan college, rebuilt by N[Z] donations, has been destroyed by students from a rival school for a second time. After a fierce rugby match between... state school... Tonga College... and church school... Tupou College, two Tonga College students, including the captain of the first XV team, were set upon by a mob of students from Tupou College. Buildings... were trashed in the early morning raid. Estimates of damage range from \$500,000 to \$2 million... With the groups involved as large as 200 students... the police force was helpless to do anything... "In the past there have been one-on-one fisticuffs but now they just aim to trash each other's gear... And there will be retaliation for this. Someone will be killed."

...BEFORE considering rugby tests, you need rugby exams – this is the vision of [an] All Black great... who wants the national game to become a school subject. "Rugby is an industry... We need to change our mindset that it's just a sport." The former Auckland winger and Manu Samoa coach has been asked by the Auckland Rugby Football Union to come up with ideas to rescue the game from decline – a problem felt nationwide... [with] players deserting rugby between primary and secondary school and again after leaving school... Several Auckland schools were especially "at risk" of declining numbers – with less than 20% of [teenage boys playing rugby. The former All Black] said his former school Mt Albert Grammar, which ran 18 teams in the 1960s, had only nine this year. It was vital to have qualified people teaching students, [the former All Black] said. "Many school teachers are willing volunteers but many of them haven't had [enough] background in the game to do it effectively so the rugby union needs to put better coaching resources into the schools... The way they can do that is to create situations where club people can come into schools and assist with the coaching. They can come up with funding to pay designated people in schools to run the rugby programme. We can create better accessibility to our top players... we can have them training at the school and going along to prize givings." Rugby should also be considered as a career option by [gals, said the former All Black], who believed that... [gal] rugby would eventually turn professional [in NZ].

...the Black Ferns coach... emphasised forward power in naming his side to play the first test against England in Rotorua today. [The coach] expects the improving English side to attack the Black Ferns at the set pieces and in the tight, in a repeat of the forward battle between the two sides in last year's Canada Cup final in Winnipeg, which N[Z] eventually won 32-12... [The coach] said his team were feeling the pressure going into the two-test series against England, who swept aside A[US] 3-0 in a test-series en route to N[Z]. "Their players are semi-professional and they have two fully professional coaches... What they don't have is the black jersey of the Black Ferns' history and tradition to motivate them." The N[Z]ers have not lost an international match since their World Cup semifinal defeat to the U[S] in 1991, going an incredible 26 matches without defeat. [The team's captain... acknowledged the record could be used for motivation heading into the clash. "No one wants to be a member of the first Black Ferns team to lose since 1991,"... The second test will be held at North Harbour Stadium next Saturday...

The Black Ferns' inspirational 27-match... winning run was ended by a strong England side at North Harbour Stadium when they lost the second test after winning the first. The N[Z]ers, with only 10 days' preparation behind them and limited club rugby, toughed it out against an internationally hardened England side. An injection of \$1 million and a sound build-up against A[US] and Northern Hemisphere teams gave England a decided advantage. With her team trailing 15-17 with five minutes left to play on Saturday, [an English player spoiled NZ]'s record with a 50m runaway try to seal victory... Both teams scored three tries, but it was N[Z]'s poor goalkicking that proved the difference... Communications problems, which N[Z]'s coach... targeted in the build-up to the test, continued to plague the side, with frequent lineout errors and missed calls.

...England's record-breaking rugby win over N[Z]'s Black Ferns was achieved in part using underhand tactics at North Harbour Stadium. The... English management team had an unexpected helping hand as they stumbled on the radio frequency that the N[Z] coach... and his assistant were using to field calls from the grandstand to the sideline, and tuned in for the entire match. [The NZ coach] only found out that England were eavesdropping on the N[Z] tactical conversations at the after-match function when the English physiotherapist confessed to [a former Black Ferns] captain... "They knew what we were doing the whole match... They heard my calls about where the holes in their defence were. I wondered why those gaps suddenly closed. It was a kick in the guts. The girls sweated their brains out there. They gave it their all and I feel we lost it for them off the field." The winning try... was brought into question, the English well aware that the N[Z] side were worn out, courtesy of [the information the coach thought it] was telling just his staff... [In... the final minutes... "I said, 'We've lost our spark, we have to dig deep,' and on hearing that, England officials said after the game that was when they... started to throw absolutely everything at us,"... [The coach] is sure that without the inside knowledge England would not have [won]... While the loss reduced some of the team to tears, [the coach] is pleased they were beaten now rather than at [the]... World Cup... "I said to the girls, take a big, long whiff of that because that's what defeat smells like."

...[NZ] will be the first television audience in the world to see the [gals'] rugby World Cup final this weekend – provided the Gal Blacks are in it. The game, to be played in Amsterdam early Sunday morning (NZ time) won't be shown live anywhere around the globe. But TVNZ has arranged for a tape to be couriered to London where a local team will add commentary and graphics before it is shown on Sunday Grandstand...

[The Gal Blacks], who won their first World Cup... yesterday, may in the future be paid... However... any money paid would not match the lucrative [All Black] contracts, but be designed to help cover costs... The [team (who prefer to be known as the *Black Ferns*) has] been a class above the other teams competing – none have got closer than 33 points – and finished the two-week tournament by beating the U[S] 46-12 in the final. It was a personal victory for [one] wing... who scored five tries and is now averaging more than three a game. The win ended years of work for the players and their coach... and avenged the 1991 semifinal defeat to the U[S] in the only other World Cup [NZ gals have contested. There was another gals' World Cup in 1994 – 'won by England' – but this year's was the 'first official' gals' rugby World Cup].

...A superb defensive display ensured back-to-back Hong Kong [gals]'... rugby tournament titles for N[Z]. The NZ[ers], unbeaten since they made their sevens debut in 1997, beat the U[S] 22-0 in a rugged final at the Hong Kong Stadium... ■... Hong Kong's annual rugby sevens tournament... is likely to continue despite the loss of the tournament's head sponsor, the collapsed Peregrine group. It's bad news for the organisers regardless: they'll have to dump \$HK6 million... worth of T-shirts, umbrellas, teaspoons, caps and bags stamped with the words 'Peregrine Sevens'.

...An emotional [All Black No 11] dedicated his three-try effort to [his] injured captain... as [the captain led N[Z] to their first World Cup sevens rugby win, in Mar del Plata, Argentina, yesterday. [The All Black] emerged from a quiet first two days to spur N[Z] to a 31-12 win over a much-improved... A[US –] who upset reigning champions Fiji 22-14 in the semifinals... [–] in the final... N[Z] stormed through finals day without the [team's inspirational captain – who]... broke his right leg in the team's final pool game against England [(the winners of the first Sevens World Cup) Jon Sunday and left the team yesterday morning to fly to N[Z] for surgery –] ...to beat Samoa 45-7 in the quarters then book their final place with a 31-7 win over Argentina, supported by a parochial home crowd... [The No 11], making a rare sevens appearance with Super 12 and All Black commitments taking up his time, was moved to tears after the match. His thoughts were with [the captain] and his team-mates afterwards and [the No 11] typically refused to take credit for the win... The entire day was emotion-charged for the team as they had to farewell [their captain] before leaving for the ground. [The captain], who turns 36 next month, was playing in his last World Cup and has been the driving force behind N[Z] sevens success throughout the 1990s... N[Z]'s next task is the World Series round... in a fortnight.

...N[Z] barrelled Wales 29-0 in the quarterfinals of the Cardiff sevens rugby tournament early this morning to retain their world series crown. N[Z] only had to win to make it impossible for nearest rivals A[US] to catch them on the world series points table... Victory sealed a quest begun by [the] coach... and his [guys] in black last November in Durban, South Africa, where they won the opening of nine tournaments in the series. This morning's victory was marred by personal tragedy for [the coach], whose mother, Adeline, died last Thursday. [The coach] said yesterday that his first thought was to return home rather than stay on... Last year, [the coach] was in South America with the... team when his father, Gordon, died.

...More years ago that many of us would probably care to remember, Rob Muldoon claimed that most people wouldn't be capable of recognising a deficit if they tripped over one. The same dictum appears to be at work when it comes to the magnificent win by the N[Z] sevens team in Cardiff. Some people seem to be incapable of recognising it for the exceptional achievement that it really was. Believe it or not, there have been complaints that this was not the real thing. Sevens, the theory seems to run, is a bit casual and knockabout; backyard stuff, not to be taken that seriously. Some people are, of course, never satisfied. This, they say, is a very poor substitute for the big one and why can't we seem to win that anymore? It's just not good enough to be crowing about winning a tin-pot tournament like this one. Well, the truth is, it is good enough. It's more than that. It's absolutely outstanding. And it was achieved not with a team bolstered by the presence of superstars, but by an extraordinarily focussed bunch of young players on the way up and coached by a shrewd, creative [person] whose name has now become virtually synonymous with that of sevens rugby. It is churlish to under-rate the substance of what [the coach] and his charges have been able to do two years in a row. Notwithstanding some rifts in the Fijian camp, the N[Z]ers have taken the world title very much on merit. Both times. They saw off the Fijians and now they have seen off the A[US]ns who have emerged, perhaps inevitably, as the main challengers. The most encouraging thing, however, is that in spite of all the resources, the technical preparation and the tactical complexity the A[US]ns are increasingly applying to sevens, they are still regularly beaten by sheer, natural running talent. And let us sing hallelujah for that. Sevens still provides enough space for creative runners to embarrass the patterned Brumbies-style with its familiar, patient build-up to the final strike. It takes a lot of ability and exceptional nerve to be able to overcome this kind of calculated onslaught. It takes real defensive grunt, as well as the ability to cut loose, but that is what our N[Z] team have managed to combine and they have done it with style and grace. For the past two years, the... [NZers] have been able to stalk the A[US]ns around the field until their composure snaps and then take off with sidestep, swerve or just a shimmy or two and run them ragged. Long may this golden run continue. Realistically, however, we have to accept that the competition will catch up sooner or later. Will it be the A[US]ns who, by the application of advanced physics and bio-dynamics, find a failsafe way of shutting down the N[Z] tearaways? Please no, not that. Will it be because the Fijians finally click? Somehow, it wouldn't seem so bad being beaten by the Fijians. Theirs is the purest expression of instinctive rugby that there is, and the world of sevens needs them to produce a reminder of what a joyous sight a game of rugby can often be. But for the time being we've got the title and we should enjoy it while it lasts. It might not be the World Cup, but it sure is the next best thing.

...N[Z] is pushing for prizemoney at next year's Rugby World Cup, with the top eight teams rewarded for their efforts. The first three... were run under rugby's old amateur rules[, although the]... last World Cup in South Africa in 1995 made a profit of more than \$45m... [The NZRFU] had not worked on any finer details, but suggested a ballpark figure of \$US3m wouldn't be unreasonable with the winner collecting \$US1m. The IRB has closely guarded the World Cup, but slowly there are signs of some commercial realism entering its thinking... [● The Welsh] captain... could not believe [it] was holding the Deaf World Rugby Cup aloft after his side beat N[Z] 28-14 in the final at Eden Park on Saturday. The two sides had previously met only three times... N[Z] won each of the internationals by big margins. The N[Z]ers were favoured to win but a loss to Wales in the opening round of the competition was a warning... the [Welsh] had to be taken seriously. The final was an absorbing contest dominated territorially by the Welsh but with the result in doubt until a minute from fulltime... [Although their captain] was the outstanding player in the games, Wales' right wing... looked to have extraordinary talent. The profoundly deaf 21-year-old will play for Bath in the English premier competition in the coming season. N[Z] created their own problems by failing to shore up their midfield defence and making errors when tries beckoned. Three times players got clear but were pulled back for forward passes. One such occasion was a last-ditch effort that would have tied the scores.

...Deaf rugby is on the map. That's the call from [the] Deaf Rugby World Championships organiser... after the staging of the inaugural event in Auckland. "It was a great first step for deaf rugby. We're now probably where [gals'] rugby was 10 years ago,"... A crowd of around 2000 saw Wales upset pre-tournament predictions by defeating N[Z] 28-14 in the final of the XV's competition... It was probably the first win by a Welsh side over N[Z] in senior competition since Llanelli lowered the All Blacks 9-3 in 1972. The Deaf Blacks beat A[US] 23-13 at College Rifles Park to go with their 19-17 victory in the Cochlear Cup, held in A[US] before the world championships. N[Z] was disappointing in the sevens event held at Waitemata Park, suffering losses to A[US] and Japan before succumbing to Wales 53-5 in the playoff for third and fourth.

...[a 26-strong NZ] under-19 squad leave tomorrow for Wales, where they will be this country's first side to compete in what is called the World Junior Championship. The 30-year tournament has been organised by the French union in the past, but has now... come under the wing of the [IRB], leading to the N[Z] side's involvement... There are 16 teams in the main draw... Ireland[are the defending champions]...

The NZ] under-19 rugby team showed profound spirit and discipline in beating Ireland 21-15 to book a place in the final of the Junior World Cup... [The NZers, who scored three tries themselves,] never had their line threatened... but... were battered by a staggering penalty count from the...

[South African] referee... The young Springboks drew 10-10 with Wales in their semifinal, but Wales sneaked through on a countback... N[Z] will play Wales in the final in front of more than 20,000 Welsh fans at Llanelli on Monday (NZ time).

...N[Z]'s under-19 side crushed hosts Wales... 25-0... to win the Junior World Cup... final... The teenage All Blacks scored four tries in an utterly clinical performance to win the 30-year-old tournament at their first attempt... [T]he former Waikato [Chiefs] coach who was handed the under-19 job after the disappointment of missing out on a Super 12 appointment this season, said: "We hope this win will prove a boost for N[Z] rugby. We've had a few downers over the last six months or so and hopefully we have helped change that situation... Immediately before the game I got the [team] together in the changing sheds... and I told them I believed in them and so did three million people back in N[Z]. I talked to them about attack, which is our natural game, and self-belief. I felt that self-belief was essential today in front of all these Welsh supporters, when some of our players had hardly been away from home much before this tournament... The boys performed a haka before kickoff but you couldn't hear them because they were drowned out by the Welsh singing." ...Meanwhile... South Africa moved a step closer to a special place in rugby history when they beat a spirited Scotland team 35-10 yesterday for their 16th consecutive test victory... The South Africans are now within one victory of equalling N[Z]'s record of 17 international wins in a row set between 1966 and 1970. They can equal the world record with victory over Ireland at Dublin this weekend and have a chance to beat it [the following weekend] when they take on England at Twickenham.

...England deprived... [the Springboks] of a unique place in history yesterday when they snatched a shock 13-7 victory... The [Springboks] were... looking for a world record of 18 consecutive test victories... [Incidentally, a] few weeks after its apparel contract to supply the All Blacks expired, clothing company Canterbury International has picked up a five-year licence and sponsorship agreement with the A[RU] and the Wallabies. The A[US]n contract with the LWR Industries unit will start on 1 July, 2000... The move returns Canterbury to the top echelon of international rugby...

The Canterbury clothing company has laid a complaint with the Commerce Commission in the latest round of a high-stakes row over replica All Black jerseys. Adidas, the official supplier of All Black jerseys, has given sports stores until next Monday to remove Canterbury's unofficial Invincibles jerseys from their shelves. Retailers who refused would no longer be supplied with adidas-licensed products, the company said yesterday. Canterbury's chief executive... said its lawyers believed adidas had breached the Fair Trading Act and the Commerce Act, which prohibit restrictive trade practices. "It's a pretty aggressive statement by them... It's hard to know where it will stop, but I think most retailers are thinking people and will say 'should adidas tell us what to do in our stores?'" ...several retailers had told him that they were unhappy with the adidas ultimatum and would be backing Canterbury. Adidas' managing director... said the company was simply talking to its distributors, just as it would in the normal course of business. A company found guilty of anti-competitive behaviour can be fined up to \$10 million. But even the lawyers cannot make up their minds about who is in the right... [A]n Auckland lawyer specialising in the Commerce Act, thinks adidas is within its rights in making its demands to retailers. "All we have in front of us is a supplier refusing to continue to supply certain customers and, generally, that is the prerogative of the supplier." Adidas could be accused of being anti-competitive only if it set up an ongoing deal with retailers to sell its products exclusively... But a [nother law firm's] senior competition partner... said Canterbury had a good case to argue... Meanwhile, a N[ZRFU] spokesperson... said the union was reluctant to become involved in what it saw as a commercial matter between two competing companies. But... the union was still pursuing its own intellectual property case against Canterbury... [which] is expected before the courts again early next year.

...The All Blacks have run into problems with their \$180 million sponsor, adidas. The team will be warned today that they cannot afford further sponsorship breaches with adidas after criticism of the new test ball and several clothing slip-ups... "I will be talking to the whole team about the issue of all our equipment," ...said... [t]he new All Black manager... "Brand loyalty with adidas is a significant part of being an All Black."

...*Programming the All Blacks* The All Blacks file into their team room, plug in their laptop computers and call up the data on their international match the day before. [One player] surveys his tackle count, continuity and turnover statistics, and [another] has a look at his linebreaks, passing success and positional play. Unsure about the backline defensive screen in several areas of the field, [a third player] ditches the numerical data and calls up the slow-motion replays. The visual evidence backs up what the numbers have shown. After a solid spell scrutinising their individual contributions to the team effort, the All Blacks are ready for the arrival of [their coach for]... a debrief on the test and discussions about their next assignment. They can talk turkey with some hard evidence. Fictional? Certainly at the moment, but the time may not be far away when rugby players can analyse their own work, rather than waiting for coaching staff to dissect games, piece together the figures and deliver the verdicts. The All Black selectors are already using computer technology to help them to analyse form. As [one] selector... points out: "No one can hide. The computer program allows us to track any individual throughout any game. Then it is a matter of collating the statistics. It allows us to look at players and get the most accurate comparisons we can on a variety of skills. It is a marvellous tool to help us..."

...Rugby historians may need the photofinish camera equipment from Ellerslie Racecourse tonight to judge the 1000th All Black. [A Waikato f]lanker... in the starting 15, will be the 999th to wear the famous black jersey with the silver fern – unless [the flanker] suffers the misfortune of 55 players who were chosen for the All Blacks but never took the field. The magic milestone, the 1000th, should fall to one of the three uncapped reserves... They can be called on as replacements during tonight's test against Samoa in Albany. The trio will be on alert throughout the match in case of a temporary bloodbin substitution or an injury to one of their colleagues. In recent years it has been a pattern for the All Black coaching staff to send several substitutes on at the same time late in a game. If that scheme is repeated it may take a video replay or some other photographic evidence to identify which player crosses the touchline first to become the 1000th All Black. While those scenarios may be played out in the minds of the crowd or reserves during the test, the coaching staff might keep the suspense until next week's test against Argentina... If the 1000th landmark happens tonight there will be no special presentation to the player because the [NZRFU] wants to honour the black jersey rather than any individuals. There will be some promotional celebrations later in the season and special reunions of past All Blacks and councillors during the test against France in Wellington this month. A [n] author... will unveil a book this year which celebrates those who have played for N[Z].

...a huge prop last night became the 1000th All Black. [It] reached the milestone in last night's 50-6 victory over Manu Samoa at North Harbour Stadium. [The huge prop] took the field in the 58th minute, r[unning]... on moments before [a back] but will be classified as the 1000th.

...["Disgrace" is the designation that] has followed... a... former All Black... [during the] years since h[is]... exile from the 1972 tour of Britain. [Yet, i]f anything, the disgrace has been the apathy of N[Z]ers, and the N[ZRFU] for not putting this case into perspective, [and for not] offering to repair the damage [the former All Black] has suffered. The captain on that trip... has often regretted not backing [his team-mate] against the demands of the English Rugby Union and then the decision of [the All Black] tour manager... who had the huge prop banished. [The captain] felt that if the team had not been caught off guard by the decision and had supported [the prop], an appropriate compromise could have been found. Instead, shortly before Christmas 1972, a confused [All Black] left for home alone, swapped planes in Singapore and made his life in the A[US]n outback. Compare [the prop with a] young Wellington loose forward... Both, in the early hours of the morning, celebrating after an All Black test win, punched people. [The prop] was hauled off a team bus, banished from the tour and sent home alone. [The loose forward] was talked to, counselled, guided by the All Black management and then taken with the squad on the trip to South Africa for the opening Tri-Nations test. One was hung out to dry, the other told to chill out. Different strokes for different folks, and certainly an indication of the different times we live in. We have been hearing plenty from the NZRFU lately about the intellectual property of its All Black brand and how it wants to increase its revenue from overseas gate-takings. They are arguments based on the heritage, tradition and success of the All Blacks, the 1000 [athletes]... who have been "[guys] in black." The damage has been done and it appears [the prop] might never have felt comfortable even if [it] had been given an NZRFU apology and offered the chance to

settle back in N[Z. The prop] might always have been trouble waiting to explode, but that was all the more reason to offer assistance. When [the prop] made the headlines again this year for all the wrong reasons... [- the prop] was forced to surface last month to answer a summons to appear as a coroner's witness into the death of a young Aborigine in Tennant Creek[(the prop was subsequently 'cleared of any wrongdoing') -] ...did anyone at the NZRFU consider [the prop] was still part of the family, part of the legacy which made the All Blacks so respected? Did anyone at the Huddart Parker HQ in Wellington (the union is thinking of moving because the building cannot accommodate the growing staff list) think about contacting [the prop], giving him a phone call to see if there was anything the NZRFU could do to... make amends and offer... help? It would have been appropriate if previous NZRFU administrators had emulated attempts like those of [a NZ] *Herald*... rugby writer... or TVNZ some years later, to speak to [the prop] and get his version of events in 1972... The words "former All Black" and "disgrace" which were the historical tags in most reports should have awoken some NZRFU sympathy. Much of its time is spent spin-doctoring and deflecting negative vibes these days. This was a great chance wasted to do something positive... ■ [Yesterday in]CHILE... 14 amateur Uruguayan rugby players... played a match that had been postponed for... decades... The Old Christians rugby team had been on its way to Chile on October 12, 1972, to play a game against the Old Boys, a Chilean school team, when their Uruguayan Air Force plane crashed into the Andes, south of Santiago. Of the 45 people on board... 16 were killed instantly. Another 13 died over the next few weeks – some from injuries they sustained in the crash and an avalanche, some from starvation. Seventy-two days later, long after search efforts had been suspended, 16 survivors stunned the world as they emerged alive from the mountain to tell a story of struggle, pain and drama... [- most notably, being forced] to eat the flesh of their dead friends...

Christians seek conversions... [S]ome top Christian players are hoping... to attract new recruits from that other N[Z] religion, rugby. Two special "Beyond the Try Line" editions of the New Testament have been released... featur[ing]... testimonies from... former [and present]All Black... Wallaby... and South Africa[n stars]. The Bible Society campaign is targeting N[Z] fans because... Christian... players are seen as role models.

...accusations continue following a weekend of violence in international rugby. After mayhem in the Lions' game against the Wallabies and... the Springboks' second test against France, the All Blacks' discipline was under scrutiny when [their]skipper... was sinbinned for punching[during their game against Argentina. In AUS], repugnance and righteousness fought for the headlines after the Lions game. [The Wallabie]s fullback... was sent off for repeated punching and five others were binned during the match. And in South Africa, two Springboks and a French[player] were yellow-carded and [a third Springbok] cited and suspended in a very physical game with the French, who play the All Blacks in Wellington on Saturday. It prompted questions about whether the All Blacks would stand up to any French intimidation... The Pumas felt they had been provoked, especially by [one All Black lock. But the All Black coach] thought the All Blacks had faced up well to some roughhouse Puma work and had held their discipline against a fair amount of off-the-ball intimidation. There was general sympathy for [the skipper], who became the first All Black captain to be sent to the cooler in a test. [The captain] had retaliated against an Argentine facial. [The captain] was disappointed about his punch and the All Black coaches said they did not condone fighting, although there were occasions when retaliation was necessary. "Clearly [the captain felt it] was being threatened," said [the coach] in defence of his captain. There was no similar sympathy for [the]Puma prop... who was banned for three weeks after kneeing [the lock] in the All Blacks 67-19 victory in Christchurch. [The prop] was cited by an independent committee after dropping his knee into [the lock]'s ribs in an off-the-ball incident, for which [the prop] was yellow-carded by [the AUS]n referee... The... All Blacks lost four players to injuries, with [their Wellington loose forward and the lock] the most in doubt for Saturday. An x-ray showed no crack in [the lock]'s rib and after the game [the lock] was moving much more freely[, but]... it would seem most unlikely [the Wellington loose forward] would be risked or picked against France... [□ An] assault of a 12-year-old boy, allegedly by his father and sister after [the boy] missed a... tackle, will be investigated by the Auckland Rugby Football Union's disciplinary committee tomorrow. The boy's father and his 19-year-old sister were charged last week with assault following a junior rugby game in West Auckland. The pair were granted bail after entering no plea in the Waitakere District Court. The couple were due to appear in court again today. The boy was admitted to Starship children's hospital with concussion last Monday and discharged the following day... The committee's powers, which include suspension and fining, cover players, coaches, clubs and members of the public. The committee dealt with all rugby – including secondary schools – under the control of the union. Members of the public found guilty of misconduct could be suspended or barred from attending rugby games under the union's control. They could also be banned from taking part in any rugby club activities... Children, Youth and Family Services said the boy was being looked after by family members.

...Welsh rugby authorities were criticised yesterday following a court case which saw [a]Bridgend prop... ordered to pay £2000... compensation to a rival player... almost blinded in one eye. [The]Cross Keys fullback... had to undergo an operation to save the sight in one eye following an on-pitch attack by [the prop] in a Welsh/Scottish League match. [The fullback] has suffered a 25[%] loss of vision from a detached retina and has been forced to retire from the game. [The prop], a 25-year-old Wales A player, was also ordered to do 200 hours of community service after admitting causing grievous bodily harm. [The fullback] said the Welsh Rugby Union's inaction over the incident forced him to go ahead with the court case.

...The [IRB]... yesterday announced the upcoming Six Nations Championship would trial the sinbin for foul plays and professional fouls. The sinbin is already in place for Super 12... the Tri-nations[and other southern hemisphere test matches]... Disenchanted fans and rugby officials found repeated professional fouling responsible for slowing the game down. The... former international referee who chairs the IRB's laws committee, said the... sinbin will foil cheats. "It's the way to clean up the game, to prevent deliberate cheating and foul play. Teams playing a [member] short nearly always concede a score before [the member] returns." ...The decision is historical. It is the first time experiments of such magnitude have been introduced in the middle of the northern hemisphere[season] in the IRB's 114-year history.

Rugby [Union is a 15-a-side]... form of football played with an oval ball which may be carried as well as kicked. It is named after Rugby School in Warwickshire where it was developed, though the exact date when the distinctive practice originated (in 1823 or later) of running while carrying the ball is in dispute. The oval ball owes its shape to the inflated pig's bladder which was used in ball-games for many centuries before being given (by the 16th c.) a leather outer cover. – *Rugby League*, [is]a... form of the game with teams of 13. It dates from 1895 when a group of northern clubs, exasperated by repeated refusals of the ruling body to allow them to compensate players for money lost by taking time off work to play football, decided to break away from the Rugby Union.

Brisbane and Auckland will usher in a new era for rugby league tonight with intense scrutiny on revised rules and their effect on releasing some of the game's shackles. About \$250,000 has been spent by Super League on the pre-match music and fireworks at ANZ Stadium for the first-round match but there are concerns that the main course will not live up to the entree's promise. League has struggled to get away from what coaches describe as "arm wrestles" and predictable patterns, while rugby union has undergone a style revolution. The two key Super League rule changes... [involving an] extra tackle for kick receivers and the abolition of the "downtown system", which allowed kick chasers to surround the receiver, will help to keep the ball in play and open up running room. Super League referees are also expected to police the play-the-ball far more strictly to prevent delaying tactics by defenders and attackers alike. Brisbane will be hot favourites tonight. Auckland have not been helped by a series of hiccups this week[, including]... having Super League muck up their travel arrangements – they were only due to arrive in Brisbane late last night... Many Warriors' careers are on the line this season... [- especially their British import, who 'wants his contract upgraded' despite being] nowhere near worth his \$600,000-plus annual salary... The club exceeds its salary cap of \$4.6 million... for the contracted 25 players... but [its chief executive] is confident the club will dip under the cap next season.

...The owners of the... Warriors have learned they face a substantial six-figure valuation fee if the rugby league franchise is sold. A sale price of \$4 million would see the Warriors' sole shareholders, the Auckland Rugby League, pay \$180,000... The fee has rocked... [Auckland Rugby League's new chairperson] and his board members, who had no knowledge of a success fee clause in the league's contract with... [an Auckland valuers company]. There was no doubt the [Auckland Rugby League] board approved of[its] solicitor... seeking the... valuation but there is confusion over who approved the contract details with the company and who was aware of its clauses. Under that agreement, the valuers were to be paid \$5000 regardless of whether the Warriors were sold or not. The second part of the contract covers the payment of the success fee to the valuers who completed their report in May last year. The fee is \$100,000 plus 2% of the sale price. Since last year's valuation, the [Auckland Rugby League] and the Warriors – at a cost of \$20,000 – have received a second valuation of the Super League club from Price Waterhouse. [The Auckland valuers company] is no longer involved in the sale process, but its success fee clause would still appear to apply. In the last month, the company said it has re-emphasised this point to [the solicitor]... The timing of... [last year's] valuation was at the peak of the A[US]n Rugby League (ARL)-Super League standoff with Warrior politics meaning it was done under a veil of secrecy. Last year's valuation, produced when the Warriors were performing and the club appeared to be in good heart, assessed the club's worth at between \$11 million and \$28 million but the Price Waterhouse valuation, completed during the present disastrous season, places a value in the region of \$1.5 million to \$3.5 million... [On a positive note, the ARL] and Super League look set to run a joint competition next year, healing the acrimony which split the code. Powerful Super League officials, in Auckland for last Friday night's tri-series clash between N[Z] and Queensland, delivered the most optimistic message yet that an end to the rift is in sight. Similar thoughts were echoed by ARL figures across the Tasman... One source suggested agreement between Optus Vision and Telstra – the two pay television networks and the reason for much of the friction in the game – must be progressing favourably. Once the corporate world reaches its compromise, it will then be up to Super League and the ARL to stitch together the details... But speculation that a compromise announcement could soon be made was wide of the mark, said... [the] executive director of sport for Super League backer News Ltd. "I think there will be just one competition next year... But to say there is going to be an announcement is news to us... It is essential there is only the one competition but as we stand now there have been no discussions between Super League and the ARL." ...The poor performances of the... Warriors could trigger questions about whether the side deserves to be part of a combined competition, but [News Ltd] was adamant that, as far as Super League was concerned, the side must be there... Super League opposed a two-tier competition... The battle for control of the game has been littered by court action. The issue of player loyalty agreements[– between clubs who signed with the ARL and any of the clubs' players who signed with Super League (or vice versa) –] still has to be resolved by the judicial system. One source suggested that both parties were not confident enough about their legal positions and this feeling could hasten compromise talks. Super League's rebel Telstra Cup competition kicked off this year.

...The war of words over the Anzac rugby league test between A[US] and N[Z] took on new impetus yesterday after a newspaper advertisement... called the game the "mother of all battles." The naming of the Sydney clash as the Anzac Day Test had drawn flak from A[US]n war veterans, who argued it offended the spirit of the Anzac Day remembrance. A full-page advertisement in the N[Z] *Herald* for television coverage was similarly attacked. The advertisement read: "Eighty years ago it was side by side. Tonight it's head to head." It was surrounded by spent cartridges... [A] past president of the Auckland Returned Services Association, said: "...They shouldn't use the fallen to publicise this type of thing. The history and emotion of Gallipoli alone would make it offensive." [However, the NZ] coach... said the test was dedicated to those who lost their lives fighting for either country... "We are not trying to exploit the day." ...The A[US]n Super League obtained approval from the A[US]n Returned Services League and the N[Z]RSA to use the Anzac theme to promote the test. It[also] gave \$22,555 to the building of a memorial walkway in Sydney.

...A group of former [NZ Rugby League chairpersons] are demanding answers over the financial state of the NZRL, with suggestions they may even ask[the] current boss... to resign. [The current boss] said yesterday that the NZRL – which has been renamed Super League N[Z] – was likely to have lost \$700,000... in 1996. That will add enormous pressure to the league, which is still trying to recover from the \$1.6 million loss the Lion Red Cup made in its first season, and past administrators fear for the organisation's continued viability... [The group's] concerns include: • SLNZ running foul of the new strict company regulations if it continues to trade while making huge losses. • The NZRL changing its name to SLNZ, and that if the only way out of the financial mess is to borrow money from Super League, it will lose what little independence it has and become totally enslaved to overseas interests... [By the way, the Warriors' British 2nd-rower has pulled out of their game] against... Brisbane... at Ericsson Stadium on Sunday... because of a hip injury meaning for the first time in 53 games, the Warriors will not start an English or A[US]n player. That comes just days after [a NZer replaced an AUSn as the coach (following complaints from sponsor DB about poor results affecting its image – r:p1356, ln17).

...the fit and in]-form Warriors second-rower... has rejected... claims [about his being] ready to quit the club. Reports from England say European Super League giants Wigan... [– who claim to] have first option on their former star... [–] and Leeds are lining up for [the second-rower's] services in the belief [that the British international] will leave Auckland after this season[, even though his contract finishes]... at the end of 1999... Those rumours come at a time when Auckland has yet to secure the long-term future of their other star second rower [and Kiwi international], whose contract finishes this year. [The Kiwi second-rower's] manager... claimed yesterday that an A[US]n Super League club had made a firm offer for him – in apparent contravention of anti-poaching rules – while another two from Europe had inquired about the Kiwi's availability. "The for sale sign isn't up yet... but [my client] isn't going cheap,"... [and may be worth more than the British second-rower, who] was a major beneficiary of the crazy cash cow that rugby league became during the height of Super League's takeover bid. His reported salary of \$600,000-plus makes him the second-highest paid Warrior behind [the captain]. The Warriors have a stream of good backrowers coming through and [the Brit's] massive wages will have to come into question if... [it] ever asked for an early release. [However, the] Warriors chief executive... said yesterday [the club] wanted to keep [the Brit] even though it is understood the club wants to reduce the \$5m players' wage bill.

...[the] Warriors will release[their British] forward... at the end of this season. [The forward, aged] 27... refused to comment last night[, but in the past]... has admitted to some homesickness... [The forward] had a glittering career with Wigan before joining Auckland halfway through their inaugural season in 1995... but has largely been an inconsistent performer and, in truth, the club could invest [his salary] more wisely in other playing areas. Back row is one of the[Warriors'] few real strengths... Their main recruitment target is believed to be a quality centre and there could be added pressure in that position with [the club's first-choice centre] understood to be considering joining [the second-rower] in the European Super League next year if the Warriors do not offer the 32-year-old a long-term deal.

...IN THE modern era of Super League, superstars demand and receive astronomical contracts. But their telephone number deals are prompting questions... Super League... has got itself into a situation where players are paid these huge base salaries and yet very few are performance related... The players certainly couldn't accept reductions without a fight, but I can see the clubs banding together and saying the situation has got out of hand and that the contracts must be performance related. Players paid like stars will be expected to play like stars... Today N[Z] fans have the chance to see at Ericsson Stadium... a player who is beyond reproach. No one gives better value-for-money to his club than Cronulla's [No 1]... A Shark through and through, [who] has also given great service to [the Kangaroo and the NSW State-of-Origin teams, the No 1]... is the type of player who rarely misses a game through injury... In short, [the No 1] is a player worth twice what other superstars receive... [Incidentally, Sydney's Canterbury Bulldogs] rugby league club will introduce video crowd surveillance at future home games following Monday night's crowd disturbance after a Super League game at Belmont Oval. Club officials and police yesterday attributed the melee after Penrith's 28-20 win to a community youth problem... Inquiries had revealed that the majority of spectators involved in the brawling, which led to four arrests and three

police officers being treated in hospital, appeared to be in the 14 to 20 age group. [However, the club's] chief executive... said the incident which triggered the fracas was a police officer being thrown to the ground while attempting to control one unruly fan.

...[a young] Kiwi giant... has signed one of the richest rugby league deals ever offered to a schoolboy. [The Kiwi], who lives in Sydney, this week put his signature to a two-year deal with the Penrith Panthers that is worth around \$100,000 a season to him. But most of the time... the 18-year-old Junior Kiwi star, who migrated to Sydney with his family some years ago... [and] this season... has... developed into a regular in the top-grade side... can't even train with his team-mates... because of school commitments... [In related news, if the Warriors Kiwi second-rower] leaves... at the end of this season... it will be the most telling symbol of rugby league's messy war that Auckland will experience. It is inconceivable that a player the Warriors should treasure might [leave]... I am reliably told the Warriors have offered [the second-rower] a three-year contract, and \$400,000 a season. It is... great money, but [the player] is holding out... [The Kiwi international probably looks at his British international second-rower team-mate], a good player but one who is grossly overpaid, and [wonders why the Brit] earns so much. [The Kiwi] must try to figure out why disaffected rugby union players... could take on the Warriors as a bit of a hobby and line their wallets in the process. It is just human nature. [Their captain] is often described as the Warriors highest paid player, on around \$800,000 a year... [The captain] might, at a pinch, deserve the money. The [Brit, along with the former All Blacks], ended up with some of the money that [the Kiwi second-rower] deserved. And the second-rower, who equates money to status in the game, knows that. • Adelaide are in a must-win situation against the Warriors at the Adelaide Oval tonight as Super League enters the business end of the season. Canberra's last round win over Canterbury means Adelaide's finals hopes are almost gone.

...Rugby league, hit by the damaging split in the game and the Auckland Warriors' poor results, has tumbled in popularity[in NZ] over the past two years, according to poll results released yesterday... The National Business Review-Consultus poll shows that 51[%] of the 750 people questioned were either fairly or very interested in league. That compared with the healthy figure of 65[%] in August 1995, when the Warriors were attracting big crowds to Ericsson Stadium in their debut season... [and] interest in netball, which is a high 62[%] (no figure is available for 1995) despite the Silver Ferns' inability to beat main rivals A[US] and the controversy this year over a change of coach... Meanwhile, interest in rugby [union] nationwide had remained almost constant, falling a negligible one percentage point (smaller than the margin of error) to 74[%]. ■ On Sunday the]... Warriors scored just their seventh win of the Telstra Cup... against North Queensland... which means they have finished in seventh position.

...Brisbane's coach... claims a premiership is worth more than the \$A1 million... prizemoney on offer in Saturday's Super League grand final against Cronulla... Cronulla have promised their players half the cash... while... Brisbane are yet to decide how it would split the prizemoney. The Broncos are also favoured to win the World Challenge Cup in October. Success there would bring another \$A1 million in prizemoney to the club.

...The Panthers play the last round of the World Club Challenge on Monday night against St Helens, who were thrashed last week by Auckland, while the Warriors meet woeful Warrington in Christchurch on Sunday... [□ N]ext Saturday... Wellington will host a historic [gals' rugby league test between NZ and AUS]... The match will be the first between the sides in N[Z]. The second test is in Auckland... [the following weekend. NZ met the AUSn gals' team] for the first time in 1995, returning home unbeaten in three tests.

...Tonight... [a] 21-year-old... will be in the Kiwi [Ferns team against AUS] at Carlaw Park, two days before... her brother... and the [guy Kiwis play their AUSn counterparts] at North Harbour Stadium. The assignments are worlds apart. While the... [guys] stay at one of Auckland's poshest hotels, the [gals] sleep on a sea of mattresses in a room at a Mangere marae. "But I'm proud to wear my Kiwi emblem and it will be great to think... [that my half-brother] [the... rugged... Canberra prop, who is expected to join the Warriors] is]... here watching us play... [My half-brother] had no idea I'd end up playing rugby league. I was just a little girl running around the house in my dresses and with my dolls. [Gals] playing rugby league have been regarded as a bit of a joke by a lot of [guys] but we're getting more acceptance. [My half-brother has] always been really good about it and we're all proud of what each other's done." The "all" brings [her older half-]brother... into the picture. [The older half-brother has represented NZ] in basketball and was in the Auckland Police rugby league team who beat N[SW] this month. Rugby league is in the family genes. Their maternal grandfather... was a Kiwi in the 1930s. And home town Greymouth is a rugby league stronghold... But... "I really want to come and live in Auckland and I think if [my younger half-brother] does join the Warriors, mum and dad will move here as well,"... says... [the sister, who] admits her brother's tough image means people wonder what to expect from her... "I just let the comments slide by... [My bro]'s been hard done by at some judicial hearings, just because [my bro] has appeared before." ...[the sister] began her rugby league career as a mascot for her brothers' teams, and was one of four Coasters on the inaugural... [Ferns tour to AUS] two years ago... The [Ferns won this year's] first test at Petone, 34-26.

...N[Z] completed a 2-0 win in the [gals'] rugby league series with a 40-16 victory over A[US] at Carlaw Park... The result meant the Kiwi [Ferns] remain undefeated in their... tests against their transtasman rivals[– and, best of all, their success seems to be rubbing off on our guys' league team...

Super League AUS's] coach... has called for a return to a traditional representative programme after his side's mauling by the Kiwis at North Harbour Stadium... [However,] the likeable Cronulla coach, refused to be drawn on who could claim the No 1 spot. "People can make their own judgments, although [the Kiwis] were No 1 on this night... [The Kangaroos] have been No 1 for a long time [(they 'haven't lost a series since 1978, and haven't lost a series to NZ since 1953')]]and obviously there were some A[US]n players who could not be in the Super League team. I really believe we should go back to the State of Origin involving just Queensland and N[SW], and then have a three-test series. Then you might be able to answer those sort of questions." ...[the] victorious Kiwi coach... backed [his counterpart], saying... any team in green and gold had the right to claim they were the best in the world. "We were No 1 on Friday night but they are No 1 in the world, absolutely, and I've never questioned that... If we could beat them in a series then that's another matter..." ...The Kiwi's emphatic 30-12 win on Friday could have been even greater as they went desperately close to scoring at least three more tries. N[Z] lost the first test 22-34 in Sydney on Anzac Day, and the question of who can claim to be top dog in international rugby league will remain unanswered, especially if A[US] remains split between Super League and the... [ARL. The State of Origin NZ] side, who could not use English-based players, were beaten by N[SW] and Queensland in the new Super League tri-series... [earlier this year. Friday's effort] has rekindled the test careers of a number of Kiwis... It was also another big step forward for [a young Warrior], whose combination of skill and work-rate appears to give the backrow an ideal balance. The 21-year-old has had a remarkable start to his test career which began with three victories over Britain last year. • The Warriors in the Kiwis came through the test unscathed and [their coach] will have an almost fully fit squad for the Auckland club's World Club Challenge quarter-final against Bradford at Ericsson Stadium [next]Friday night...

The Warriors have chopped ticket prices in a bid to attract more fans to Ericsson Stadium. The number of seats will also be reduced to bring fans closer to the action, after a season in which the stadium has been mostly half empty. "When you are not winning football games, then it is hard to justify charging premium prices," the Warriors' marketing boss... said yesterday. "It is an act of faith in our supporters." ...The Warriors have been drawing an official average crowd of 17,000 this season, compared with 27,000 in their inaugural season two years ago. Against sides such as Adelaide and Perth, attendance dropped to 12,000... The cheaper tickets will take effect for Friday night's... [game] against England's Bradford Bulls... Match seats now costing \$80 will drop to \$50, \$40 seats to \$25 and \$25 seats to \$20. The minimum children's price of \$5 remains, but they will have access to more areas. A premier season ticket will still cost \$500, [while]... other categories... drop... from \$275 to \$200 and \$200 to \$170.

...The best of British were left licking their wounds at Ericsson Stadium again as the Warriors strolled to a 62-14 win over Bradford... [in front of a crowd of 12,500. The] European champions, who were beaten 64-14 in their previous appearance in Auckland... had promised a more committed effort this time but... [by] the end of the match, Auckland were [‘toying’] with their opponents. [The Warriors' captain] attempted a sideline

conversion with his left foot, and [a winger] was given a conversion attempt from in front of the posts, which [the winger] missed... “I kick them from the sideline at training but the pressure got to me,” said [the winger], apparently seriously... The... Bulls coach... said: “It was our own fault they didn’t show us respect at the end. I didn’t expect to win, but I thought we could have been respectable.” ...The result will again raise questions about the W[orld Club Challenge] concept – and British rugby league. [However, Auckland’s] coach... said: “The concept is fine but teams shouldn’t have the right to be [in the quarterfinal] because of geography.” ...Auckland’s victory should set up a semifinal clash against Brisbane, who play St Helens at the ANZ Stadium tonight... [By the way, a] multi-million dollar upgrade of the home of N[Z] rugby league is again being seriously considered. Development plans... [for] Carlaw Park... from several years ago have been dusted off while updated costings suggest a revamp would cost between \$28 million and \$35 million. The result would see a modern 28,000 seater stadium as well as a multi-purpose building on the old No 2 field... [T]he Auckland Leagues Club... building... could also become a lever for the redevelopment... [W]ith spectacular views of the Waitemata, it could well have a \$4m-plus price tag... The vision... is for the park not only to become league’s playing home but also the base for the offices of the [Auckland Rugby League, the NZRL (or SLNZ)], and ultimately the Warriors and space for [a new] Leagues Club... The Leagues Club... president... would be “amenable” to making a move to Carlaw Park if the redevelopment plans went ahead... And a move would make financial sense for the... club... [which is] just “getting by” in the new environment of tougher drink-driving laws and also the advent of Sky Television. Several years ago, the clubs’ membership had dropped to 470 but it has rebounded to 800. This is still well short of the 2000 tally of its heyday. However the Warriors are an even bigger factor than the leagues club... [Its president] firmly believes the original decision to base the Warriors at Ericsson Stadium rather than at [Carlaw] Park was wrong... Rent will be a big factor in any debate on moving the Warriors. Currently, the Warriors pay the Auckland Regional Council for the rental of Ericsson. Moving to Carlaw Park would keep this money in league circles... There would be opposition but at the end of the day the Warriors are owned by the [Auckland Rugby League]. However a Warriors move isn’t a short-term prospect. The Super League side has a 21-year licence (as opposed to a lease) to use Ericsson Stadium... The [Auckland Rugby League] has discussed its plans... [for Carlaw Park] with Auckland City Council representatives... [A] new stand on the railway side of the ground is proposed... [T]he council has just decided to buy land near the railway station with the idea of building a 16,000-18,000 capacity entertainment stadium.

...Fiji used a supposedly ancient rule to help upset American Samoa 21-20 in the Auckland Polynesian league festival at Carlaw Park[yesterday]. The Fijians had 11 Tongan players, which they say they could do because Fiji imported Tongan warriors to fight their tribal wars during pre-British rule. Meanwhile[the]... Mad Butcher... is running buses from all his... stores to the World Club Challenge final at Ericsson Stadium next Friday. Hopefully the Warriors will be there too.

...THE... Warriors – staring down the barrel of a \$1 million loss this financial year – ...[missed] a berth in this Friday’s World Club Challenge final... and a stab at the \$A1 million first prize... [after] they were beaten 22-16... at ANZ Stadium... by... the... home team... [But the franchise] will reap a tidy payout... [of] between \$A150,000 and \$A200,000... from its commendable showing in... [the competition. Furthermore, knowing] they had matched and at times outplayed the best club side in the world was a huge confidence boost[, which is why the chief executive was sure]... the club’s annus horribilis was now a thing of the past... “...If we can kick off next year the way we have finished this season it will be a hell of a lot better 12 months...”

...Super League has set itself up for a hugely embarrassing night out at Ericsson Stadium on Friday as a disappointing season thankfully grinds to a halt. The Brisbane Broncos will line up for a predictable thrashing of the Hunter Mariners in the World Club Challenge final... Some dirty Auckland weather could turn the event into a farce watched by the coaches and those who accept giveaway tickets. If Super League sticks to manipulative form they’ll restrict photographers to the one area of the ground where pictures will show full stands. The embarrassment will be compounded should the lowly Hunter Mariners win. Will [News Ltd’s executive director of sport] hand over the \$1m winner-take-all purse to a club [the director’s] about to close down...? The Mariners upset Cronulla 22-18 at Shark Park on Saturday night, their coach... admitting the Sharks struggled for motivation after a long season in which they’ve already played out the[Telstra Cup] grand final. “The Broncos are almost out of petrol too and the Mariners have a great chance,” [Cronulla’s coach] said... But the big losers are the Warriors. They could have been in Friday’s final had[the] referee... who controlled their... semifinal loss to the Broncos on Friday, been on the ball. [The ref] missed four blatant forward passes despite the Brisbane team’s penchant for pushing that law; at least one of those resulted in a try and the others deserved penalties. [The ref] caught only one, then ordered a scrum. Think back to the season opener: the Broncos versus the Warriors in Brisbane, the score 14-2 to the home team, and [the Warriors’ No 7] scores under the posts. [The same ref] disallowed the try without referring to the video referee, then penalised [the Warriors when their captain] disputed the decision. The fans are... relieved the 1997 season is over, and desperately hoping for one well-managed competition next year. Certainly no one will believe Friday’s Super League finale is the promised “best of the best.”

...Brisbane... will bring their personal cheer squad to Auckland tomorrow, which could almost be called a significant contribution to the crowd... Just 6000 tickets have been sold so far for... an occasion which should have the historical significance of being the last Southern Hemisphere event under the outright control of Super League... The Warriors are shielded from any financial loss from the match... – they have no stake in the gate-takings... The Bronco’s players have donated a significant part of the \$500,000 they shared for winning the Telstra Cup to charities, and are also shouting the club’s... [18] staffers... to the Auckland game... [plus two days] accommodation and meals. “We’ve had staff cuts through the year which has given people added responsibilities and we feel this is a tremendous gesture from the players,” said [the club’s football manager].

...the outgoing Warriors football manager... says the club is heading for trouble if it cannot field a second team in an A[US]n competition after this season. The 52-year-old... who has been cut by [the franchise’s] chief executive... said shortsighted economic considerations were putting the Warriors’ future in danger. Super League has scrapped the reserve and under-19 grades, which they largely financed, but clubs based in and around Sydney are considering creating their own reserve grade[(ironically, the ARL evolved from the original Sydney league clubs’ competition). The chief executive] said joining that [reserve grade] competition was one of three options being considered... “We would fly in and out of Sydney on the same day, but it is a very expensive exercise,”... \$150,000 to \$200,000 a season. “[However, that] is less than the cost of a first-grade player,”... [The other options involved] playing in the national or Auckland competitions[, but these]... could not provide the quality of football necessary for first-graders who had missed out on the playing 17[(13 starters and 4 reserves)], or up-and-coming players... Auckland is no longer regarded as a developing club – teams such as Adelaide will be allowed a first-grade squad of 25 – so will be limited to a squad of 20 under the \$4.7m salary cap, plus three “protected juniors.” ...[following the announcement that an AUSn media] magnate... is prepared to spend a further \$A350 m... over the next five years to unify rugby league in A[US] under his rebel Super League banner[, both Auckland and Adelaide might be more concerned about whether or not they have a protected franchise]... The offer, conditional on rival A[RL] clubs agreeing to join a merged competition with Super League teams, will be tabled at talks between the two ruling bodies... The additional funding would be divided between 14 clubs in an elite league, a condition that, if accepted would force several existing clubs to either merge or miss being left out.

...[a nerve]-racking week faces several... [of] the 29 Warriors who played Telstra Cup football this season... as they wait to hear whether they will be cut by the... franchise. The names of the club’s 20 contracted players and its three “protected, younger” players must be at Super League’s Sydney headquarters by October 24... For borderline players, the situation will become even tighter if the Warriors elect to name only 18... contracted players. All players, who are not named by the various clubs, then go into the Super League pool and can be picked up by other franchises. [The Warriors’ chief executive] suggested it would be prudent to leave vacant spaces so the club could act if it felt a particular pool

player could help boost the club... Clubs such as Canberra... and [Brisbane] were a long way over their salary caps and therefore players would have to go in the pool.

...[the] ARL... chief executive... and News Limited[']s executive director of sport... yesterday re-opened peace talks aimed at a united 1998 competition... Meanwhile, an industrial court has ruled that ARL loyalty contracts are binding on... [a Brisbane team-member and two from Penrith.] meaning they must return to ARL clubs. But... [three other Penrith players, and one from the Bulldogs] are free to remain with their Super League clubs.

...[NZRL, which] had sent a five-year plan to Super League[, indicating]... what was required to fund this... [plan,] wants an urgent meeting with Super League as it attempts to nail down its guaranteed income for next year. As the peace talks between Super League and the A[RL] grind on, the national body... cannot plan... with any certainty – until it knows what income will be guaranteed... All the indications are that the... tri-series... concept will be scrapped next season, especially if Super League and the ARL resolve their differences. The NZRL would favour such a decision. The new series bastardised the traditional State of Origin clashes between NSW and Queensland. However, it was also a big earner for the N[ZRL], with Super League guaranteeing a \$600,000 return... Super League also guaranteed a \$200,000 return from the two tests against A[US] this year... There is no indication whether Super League will continue to guarantee test returns... Super League is [currently only] committed to paying a \$200,000 administrative grant to the NZRL next year... [The NZRL chairperson] said that Super League had never failed to deliver on the money front. However, there must be some unease in national ranks as a result of the speed with which the Perth Reds franchise was ditched and the almost certain demise of the Hunter Mariners. On top of that, the World Club Challenge will become, at the very least, a shadow of its current format, while as part of the peace talks News Ltd originally sought [to have] the proposed company, which would run a joint competition, [take] over Super League's \$342 million debt. News Ltd has evidently now backed down on this requirement, but the picture which emerges is that the days of a bottomless Super League bank account are over.

...There are indications the NZRL may have asked for a funding package... between \$5m and \$10m... for next year... Such a package would allow the NZRL to fulfil commitments to district leagues which have met certain pre-requisites for funding... [Its president feels that previously the] NZRL sold out too cheaply, especially compared to the English league, which is receiving... \$230m... over five years. "We believe when the[original] negotiations were done with Super League they weren't done in a business-like manner,"...

Super League officials are discussing the possibility of switching the Paris franchise to Glasgow for the 1998 European season. The Paris club, coached by[the] new Great Britain coach... narrowly avoided relegation in each of the first two seasons of Super League.

...Super League has begun laying off administrative staff in preparation for a united 1998 rugby league competition... With News Ltd understood to have agreed that Super League's \$A300 million... debt not be imposed on the new company set up by the ARL to oversee a combined competition, it is thought the main problem now revolves around funding... At present, Optus provides \$A1.8 million a season for each of the ARL's 12 clubs, while the 10 Super League franchises receive \$A4.5 million apiece from News Ltd – creating a huge imbalance if those funding levels continued. It is unclear what impact Optus' seemingly successful efforts to derail the proposed merger between pay-TV rivals Foxtel, jointly owned by News Ltd and Telstra, and Australis would have on the peace process.

...[the ARL] chief executive... announced a loss of more than \$4 m... [for] the 1997 season yesterday but... will resume peace talks with [the] Super League boss... today armed with some fresh ideas gleaned from a 10-day business trip to the U[S]. "I hadn't realised before but all major sports in America have been through what has happened to us and all resulted in some sort of merger out of it,"... [In another development, their ex-coach's re-]signing with Wigan will be a six-figure saving for the... Warriors. Dumped as the Warriors' first grade coach in April, [the AUSn] has remained on the... club's payroll. Under his Auckland contract, the [AUSn] was to be paid an estimated \$380,000 a year until next October. And the only way out for the Warriors was if [the AUSn] signed with another club... Wigan was the former giant... of the English scene before falling on leaner times.

...Top English side Wigan claim they will soon be the richest rugby league club in the world after announcing the sale of their ground to a supermarket chain. Wigan, whose financial problems have deepened over the past year, have agreed to a deal worth over £12 million (\$27.72 million) and will abandon their Central Park home in two years... A rival bidder, who wants the rugby league club to share Central Park with the local soccer team, is threatening legal action over the decision... [In local news, the NZRL] president... said indications were that next year there would be a [Super Bowl-type] two-conference system, with the Super League 10 teams playing in one and... 10... ARL... teams playing in another. At the end of the round-robin play the top four teams from each conference would go into the playoffs. The playoffs would be run by a joint ARL-Super League administration, while the game on the whole would be run by ARL, with Super League running the finances... The A[US]n team to tour Britain could now be an ARL-Super League side.

...A FIRST round, Super Bowl-type clash between Brisbane and Newcastle... will be seriously considered if there is a unified rugby league competition next year. Super League favours season openers which would see their sides playing teams which finished in the corresponding position in the... A[RL]'s Optus Cup.

...Next season will see a 20-team united... [ARL] premiership... but there is a general consensus that some clubs will have to go within the next couple of years. Super League is insisting that the premiership be trimmed to 16 teams by 1999, although the ARL is trying to resist this move. Sydney's inner-city clubs – Souths, Balmain and Sydney City – are in the hot seat because they are the teams who have been targeted for either extinction or mergers. The Sydney market is clearly battling to support nine clubs, with most of the city teams struggling to make ends meet. Indeed, the clubs are only surviving through a combination of grants... and handouts from sponsors. [However, the Sydney] clubs believe their tradition and heritage is enough to keep them in the game and are pointing at some of the newer clubs as the teams who should go. And at the head of their list is the Auckland Warriors. "What are they doing in an A[US]n premiership anyway?" one official from a senior Sydney club asked last week. "They have been here five minutes – we have been around 90 years." Fortunately... the move to cut the Warriors is destined to failure because of lack of support from the remainder of the A[US]n clubs... The club's strong supporter base and good track record in marketing has been enough to convince the top [officials] in both the ARL and Super League camps that they should stay. Officials realise league's future strength clearly lies in the one-team towns, as the success of the likes of... Newcastle... Brisbane... and... Canberra... in recent years has shown... [Speaking of Canberra, the team's] players have asked their club to rescind the sacking of [their Fijian winger, who was] dismissed for assaulting three [people], including his wife, outside a city nightclub. A magistrate ruled [the winger] was too drunk to know what [the winger] was doing because of the 28 schooners (425ml) of beer, half a dozen stubbies (375ml) and half a bottle of wine [the winger had] consumed. The ACT Government says it will change the law to eliminate such an excuse; the club will decide next week whether to accept the appeal.

...The number of teams in the united premiership, to be known formally as the National Rugby League Competition, will be reduced to 16 in 1999, with financial incentives to encourage mergers... and by the turn of the century there will be only 14 clubs... [I]t had been agreed that the number of Sydney-based teams would be no fewer than six and no more than eight going into the next century... Yesterday's momentous agreement ended three years of civil war for control of the game and its pay TV rights, estimated to have cost more than \$A800 m... Key features of the deal include: • The immediate demise of Super League's Hunter Mariners... • Guaranteed funding of \$2m a year for each of the... teams in the merged competition. • News Ltd's Foxtel and Optus having agreed to share the pay-TV rights for the competition while free-to-air will be retained by the Nine Network. • The ARL and News Ltd will form a partnership which will be 50% owned by Super League and 50% by the ARL. The competition's new governing company will have equal representation from both parties... • ...a \$A3m salary cap will be introduced from next year.

...In the end, both warring parties needed each other. Here's the picture as the dust settles: **MONEY** *The winners:* The players, their managers and all the lawyers who were consulted in the league war which became a legal war... Some footballers received double their real market value. *The losers:* The News Ltd bank account... It is believed the cost of the civil war exceeds \$900m... **CLUBS** *The winners:* Are there any? Crowds have been down at all clubs... [At least] the Adelaide Rams can claim a small victory in that they have survived the first round of club purgings. *The losers:* The Hunter Mariners and Perth Reds now can only be found in the history books. S[ome] S[ydney]-based clubs – many from the ARL ranks – are losers-in-waiting... Clubs like Balmain... Western Suburbs... and... Souths... look shaky... [‘27 years since they last won the premiership, the Rabbitohs’ rich history will count for little as the future of Souths – who will open their 1998 campaign against the Warriors at Ericsson Stadium around March 13 – hangs in the balance.’ Balmain’s] chief executive... believes his... club should snub a proposed merger with Parramatta to remain the Tigers and play in [Sydney’s] Metropolitan Cup in 1999... **TELEVISION RIGHTS** *The winners and the losers:* Does Armchair Arnie in Otauhu really care? No, not as long as we can see it... Perhaps the... battle of the box is best labelled a draw. - 1997

Foundation club South Sydney have been dropped from the National Rugby League as the league reduced the competition to 14 teams... Auckland, Brisbane, Newcastle, St George Illawarra, Wests Tigers and, it is believed, Manly Norths, are... joining Penrith, Parramatta, Cronulla, Sydney City, North Queensland, Melbourne, Canberra and Canterbury as the 14 teams in next year’s competition... Souths[have]... won 20 premierships – more than any other team – and have contributed more internationals to the Kangaroos (61) than any other side... Born out of a meeting at Redfern Town Hall on January 17, 1908, the Rabbitohs were the third rugby league club formed after Glebe and Newtown. For whatever reasons, Souths, the oldest surviving A[US]n club after Newtown went bust in the 1980s, have never fitted into News Ltd’s plans for the game and are not seen as part of its future by the media empire that now effectively runs the NRL. According to Rabbitohs supporters, the NRL’s criteria for inclusion in next year’s competition were unfair and designed to ensure they were excluded – the club’s rich junior nursery not considered, a \$A2.5 million sponsorship announced last week deemed to be too late, while other clubs profit from massive financial injections from News Ltd. Souths held a rally last weekend attended by up to 30,000, protesting at what they saw as News Ltd’s takeover of the sport. North Sydney was also omitted from the 14 teams but the NRL said they offered to help secure a joint venture between Manly and Norths. Brisbane topped the criteria ranking with 232.25 points, followed closely by Newcastle and Melbourne. South Sydney scored just 73.75 points, with only Western Suburbs rated below them on 53.25 points. However, Wests have secured their future in the competition after merging with Balmain earlier this year. The NRL said yesterday’s announcement completed a... process agreed on by the over-whelmingly majority of clubs, the NSW Rugby League and A[RL] boards...

South Sydney’s battle to be reinstated in next year’s N[RL] competition continues today when the Rabbitohs return to the Federal Court. Souths begin the hearing into their claim for an interim injunction against the NRL which, if successful, would ensure the club’s inclusion in the... competition. The... Rabbitohs claim News LTD and the A[RL] contravened the Trade Practices Act when they agreed to establish the NRL’s 14-team competition. The club have said they were not seeking to stop next year’s competition going ahead, merely to be included when it kicks off...

South Sydney, A[US]’s oldest and most successful rugby league club[– it holds the ‘record for the most wins’ by an AUSn club (a record which is currently under threat by the club’s arch rivals, Sydney City) –]yesterday laid plans to re-enter the national competition after a legal victory it hailed as a battler’s triumph over corporate clout. “We are over the tryline,” declared[the club’s] president... after a bitter... court-battle that cost millions of dollars and further eroded the game’s support base already hard hit by the Super League wars. The club’s green and red flag was immediately hoisted to the top of the masts at the Sydney Cricket Ground, scene of the Rabbitohs’ 20 grand final wins... [The president, a] former South Sydney and test player who has led the fight for reinstatement... saluted [the] people who funded the court case and marched “in droves” at two separate rallies attracting a combined 130,000 people... News Ltd, chief financial backer of the N[RL], said it accepted the court’s decision and... would not... appeal... “We did not set out to target Souths or any particular club... All we sought to do was to create a viable competition...”

...Time to wind up this club with the culture of losing [The Auckland Warriors’ coach] has said on a number of occasions that [it] will resign from his... position... if the team do not make the NRL playoffs this year. It is a frank, honest assessment by a bloke who has been around rugby league all his life. What [the coach] is simply saying is that given the resources the club has provided, if [it] can’t produce the results... [it] is the wrong person for the job. Admirable as this blunt appraisal may be in normal circumstances with a normal team, it is not accurate when dealing with the Warriors. This is not a normal team, nor could the circumstances surrounding the club be remotely described as normal. It isn’t [the coach] who is to blame for the team’s failure... [The team’s first coach a]rrived as a Messiah, [but]... couldn’t get any consistent results, and despite [his replacement]’s best efforts [the second coach] could never get regular wins. It wasn’t as though they were a couple of mugs who couldn’t coach. [The first coach] had won the ARL title with Parramatta and cleaned up all the silverware in Britain with Wigan over a four-year period. [The second coach] took Canterbury league to unprecedented wins over Auckland and has arguably been the most successful Kiwi coach of all time. Apart from his ability as a coach, [the second] is respected throughout the sporting world for his sincerity, honesty and integrity. If you couldn’t play for [this coach when it] looked you in the eye and asked for your best effort, you couldn’t play for anyone. And that’s the point: the Warriors simply can’t play. Not consistently, anyway. For short periods and occasionally even for the odd game they can mix it with the best, but week in and week out for 80 minutes they simply haven’t got a clue. It doesn’t matter who you get to coach them, it will always be the same. There is a culture, a tradition of inconsistency now established at the Warriors that stops the team from achieving. There is no point now in pointing fingers at referees...

CONTROVERSIAL refereeing couldn’t deny the Warriors victory... at Brookvale Oval yesterday. Two crucial decisions tainted a gutsy win for the Warriors. [The No 11] was sent off just before halftime in his first game back from a four-game suspension. His dismissal, on a touch judge’s report... was for a forearm [to an opponent’s head during a tackle]. Replays showed it was a legitimate tackle at shoulder height. A second incident midway through the second half saw[the home team’s] fullback... incredibly let off after tripping [a Warrior. The fullback was only] put on report... ■ [The]... Warriors have lodged a complaint about the sending off of [their] second-rower... “We will lodge a complaint to the NRL expressing concern that a player was sent off on a touch judge’s advice for something that clearly did not happen,” [said the] Warriors chief executive...

The Auckland Warriors face a standoff with the N[RL] over the sending off of [a second-row] forward... with the club in possession of damaging evidence against match officials should [the player] be charged. The drama queens of the NRL were in the thick of it again after their gutsy 18-14 short-handed win over the [weekend]... and will remain there this week as the league’s governing body closes its refereeing ranks. The NRL will shut down access to conversations between the referee and his touch judges during the halftime break because [the] Warriors chief executive... overheard comments about [the] dismissal – comments some in A[US] described as a “conspiracy” between the touch judges and the ref to get their stories straight in order to justify a poor decision... A source within the A[US]n television industry said last night that [it] believed there were matters on the tape of the Sky monitor that should be of concern to the NRL regarding refereeing, but nothing that revealed any anti-Warriors or anti-N[Z] bias. The Warriors chief executive[refused all comment yesterday, saying [the player] had yet to face the review of [the] judicial commissioner... today and [the chief executive] did not want to speak before notification of any charge related to the tackle. But it is clear the overheard conversation is a bargaining point in that, despite threats from [the NRL chief executive] yesterday to get heavy over what [the NRL chief executive] regards as eavesdropping on a private conversation. [The NRL chief executive] told the *Herald* [it] had not listened to the recorded conversation, which was available to A[US]’s Fox Sports and Channel Nine... [A] source within television sa[id] “five or six” others heard snippets or all of [the conversation], including laughter... H[owever, the NRL chief executive]... will not be listening to it or asking[the] ref’s boss... or anyone

else to, either... "The central issue is that... a private conversation between officials... should not have been listened to," ... It's a shame the drama again cornered all the attention because this was a polished effort and a big turnaround from a team on the ropes... [A]ll across the park there was effort, enthusiasm, support for the ball carrier – all things not seen frequently enough this season... They could have been 30 points better with [the second-rower], and reversal of a video ref ruling at the 50m mark that said a [Warriors'] pass... was forward when it clearly wasn't.

...*They're real Warriors now!* THE Warriors celebrated [their halfback]'s 100th first grade appearance with a record 42-nil win over Newcastle yesterday and [the]visiting coach can't understand why the Aucklanders aren't in the NRL playoffs. The Warriors scored seven tries at Ericsson Stadium to record their first victory over the Knights. It was Newcastle's worst loss and put a serious dent in its hopes of a top four playoff spot... [The Warriors halfback and captain], who received a standing ovation from the crowd of 15,000[,] was delighted with the effort, the side's third consecutive win... The Warriors development is pleasing [their]coach... "This team has come a long way in a pretty short time. We've got some great athletes and they're really learning to play tough... For me the biggest satisfaction was the nil next to Newcastle more than the 42."

...THE Auckland Warriors will post a \$1.5 million loss for the past 12 months but the owners are convinced the club has hit bounce-back mode. The NRL franchise is budgeting to remain in the red next year but a profit is forecast by the end of 2001. The latest loss was expected when Rugby League People Ltd – a grouping of Tainui... and [two businesspeop]le – bought the club from Auckland Rugby League late last year... The omens look good for the next season. After dismal and embarrassing mid-season performances this year, the Warriors rattled home at the end of the year. A[US]n imports... sparked the transformation. Two further imports... will boost the club... next season... The club... loss... forecast... hinges on a conservative home crowd average of 9000 fans – last year, it was 11,500. It is understood the Warriors would break even next year if this swelled to 15,000. Ticket sales for next season... at 4500 are 1500 ahead of budget... The Warriors had a solid core of sponsors and [the chairperson of Rugby League People Ltd] said many of the ghosts from the past were disappearing off the books. The club has been paying part of the salaries for nearly 10 former players after severance deals... These payments, where the Warriors continue to pay part of the salaries despite the players being at other clubs – [or in one case,]having returned to rugby[union –] would have been costing at least \$600,000 a year. Only one over-the-top salary remains – the \$665,000 a year package of [the team's ex-Manly fullback]. The Warriors don't want [the fullback] next year but there has been no divorce yet... By last year, the Warriors had accumulated losses of more than \$4 million but this was covered by the Super League severance deal... [The chairperson] said the Warriors would soon control their own destiny. "Anything that happens will be because of decisions we have made."

...Any decision about the future of the Auckland Warriors rests in N[Z, not AUS says the] ...NRL... chief executive... [The chief executive described AUS]n television reports which suggested that the NRL was about to axe the Warriors from the competition as being "irresponsible reporting in respect to the NRL's position." "We remain very supportive of the Warriors. We've just issued a... draw for next season which includes the[m. We're]... giving them time to work through what are obviously very complex and difficult issues," [the chief executive] said... yesterday... The Warriors' future remains unclear as attempts by the majority shareholder, the Tainui tribe, to sell the club, which is \$6 million in debt, drag on.

...The chief executive of the troubled Waikato tribe Tainui has resigned after just four months in the job, blaming board mismanagement of the \$180 million business... Disastrous investments, wasteful spending and internal power struggles have resulted in a failure to build on the initial asset. In the[latest] financial year, Tainui posted a \$40 million asset writedown. In contrast, South Island's Ngai Tahu, which also received a \$170 million settlement package... now has a total asset base of \$370 million... ■ L[oyal]... to the bitter end was the slogan when the Warriors first fielded a team in the A[US]n league competition in 1995... [Today] the word loyal leaves a sour taste in the mouths of players who have not been paid in two months. Cullen Investments and the N[ZRL] have bought the club, renamed it the N[Z] Warriors and appointed Parramatta[s] reserve grade coach... as coach. But... although they bought an operating licence, they did not buy player contracts. "You simply cannot buy people... That means we have to enter into a new sustainable contract with every player on terms that we and they can live by." ...refusing to pick up players' contracts mean[s that] the future of [some of the team's]stars... has yet to be decided... Despite the shambles and overseas offers, a handful of players have opted to stick with the club... [O]ne of 10 players... who have signed... says the past few months have been very stressful and as a result [the No 12] has withdrawn from the Aotearoa Maori World Cup side... [The No 12] says the players received letters two months ago saying they were no longer employed and the Warriors club had folded. "It is hard when you have done the work and I can't see us recouping anything. A lot of the guys have had to go out and get labouring jobs and that to survive. It is going to be hard for the guys to come back and be loyal to the club when the club has not been loyal to them,"... On top of that... [the new NZ] Warriors executive director... has spoken out about the players taking pay cuts – something [the ex-Manly fullback], himself, was against doing as a player. "It is quite ironic," says [the No 12]. "But it is one of those things. We could sit around and be annoyed about it but we have to do what is best for ourselves and best for rugby league in N[Z] even if it means eating humble pie..." In the new Warriors... players will have the opportunity to earn more than previously, based on performance incentives.

...The N[Z] Warriors will be a smaller, slimmer outfit... but management do not see any problems with that, given the end of unlimited interchange. Most of the players remaining after the change of ownership have dropped kilos, with the biggest... down from... 123kg to 113kg... [The f]ormer fullback turned boardroom suit... has been at trainings and rates the squad enthusiastically... [The executive director] likes the swagger of some of the youngsters, recognising a bit of himself, and wonders if in the past there was not too much deference paid to the highly rated stars.

...[the NZ Warriors executive director] has been branded a greedy hypocrite by his former Warriors teammates and bosses. "[The ex-Manly fullback] was really hard work. His relationship with sponsors was appalling," the league club's former chief executive... says in a new book. "[The fullback] was our most recognisable player but his willingness to be involved with anything to do with the club off the field was virtually non-existent." ...[the former chief executive] said his first dealing with [the fullback] was when the Kiwi star demanded a Pajero 4WD from Warriors sponsor Mitsubishi. "[The fullback] didn't like the first one and we had to send it back. Then [the fullback] didn't like the second one because of the way it drove... The poor guy at Mitsubishi was saying to me, 'Does this guy realise that when [a player] drives a car out of the showroom it depreciates \$25,000'. A few days later [the fullback] turned up in an Audi." ...[the fullback] is also savaged by his ex-Warriors prop teammate... in the book *Beleaguered* – which lifts the lid on the Auckland club's backroom dealings... [The prop] was furious at being asked to take a 50[%] cut in his \$350,000 salary when [the fullback] had... earlier... refused to take a drop in his \$650,000-a-season-wage... "Then [the fullback] puts on a suit and everything changes,"... The controversial fullback got \$1.3 million for his last two seasons but played only 10 games. The payment equalled \$1600 for every minute [the fullback] was on the field. But when... contacted in Wellington where the Warriors played the Canterbury Bulldogs last night, [the executive director]said those attacking him were just bitter. "It sounds like there are some bitter pills people have struggled to swallow..."

...THE Canterbury Bulldogs appear to have broken the golden rule – don't put anything you don't have to in writing – after breaking the NRL's salary cap. A note left by a club executive to himself may be their undoing as the league investigates payments to players said to be as much as \$300,000 on top of declared incomes. It's a matter the NRL needs to clear up quickly. If it's true, the Dogs should be penalised, and smartly. The teams below them on the competition ladder would rightly feel aggrieved if the penalty is a slap with a wet bus ticket. There's talk the Dogs will be dropped altogether, although that is unlikely considering the legal options open to the club. The courts would be unlikely to settle matters with alacrity. The NRL's rules allow it to fine a club the amount of the salary breach, which in this case could be as much as A\$1 million, and to deduct

up to four competition points. The Warriors and Broncos would be the two sides to benefit most from that – a four-point deduction... would move them up to first and second in the competition. Executives from those clubs would not comment yesterday on action they would like to see [taken]...

The Bulldogs are cheats and shouldn't be allowed to play in the finals... When Canberra were retrospectively punished by having their 1990 salary cap cut by A\$300,000 after they had breached the limit but won the competition in 1989, no one bar the Raiders and their supporters was happy. Melbourne and the Broncos breached the cap by A\$90,000 and A\$60,000 respectively in recent months and were fined the same amounts – A\$90,000 and A\$60,000. How can the Dogs be charged less than the A\$1 million by which they overspent? The Warriors are the only team in recent history to have competition points deducted – for having an extra player on the field against Wests in their first season.

...Down, out and ashamed in Doggie-land... Canterbury-Bankstown was a Bulldog-free zone yesterday. The blue and white banners were absent. Not a single Bulldogs jersey walked the streets. The district seems to feel the shame and embarrassment of the local league side's salary cap scandal. The local sports store has taken the club's gear out of its window. The official NRL shop said it expected sales to drop from a predicted A\$100,000... to zero – not one bumper sticker was sold this week. Before the decision came out last night, there was concern that too harsh a punishment could provoke riots. Already this season there have been several serious incidents in Bulldog country. There were brawls with rival fans at the Sydney Showgrounds and on trains carrying fans. Gangs of generally Lebanese youths wearing Bulldogs jerseys are the subject of police warnings after reports of standoff tactics and street robbery. The Bankstown police station was shot up by a Lebanese gang two years ago and Asians have been beaten. The gang of rapists whose leader was sentenced to 55 years' jail for pack attacks on A[USn] gals came from the area. All this is leading to nervousness and talk of... lawlessness. There's a feeling the football club has added to the general attitude of ignoring the rules, of snubbing authority, or taking it on... The Bulldogs fan club is running a bus convoy to Canberra for th[is weekend's] game. Police are nervous, planning extra security for the ground. Veiled threats are running between players from each side as the Raiders ask why they should risk injury against cheats. The club found nothing good in yesterday's news. Even before the announcement that it had been pushed from the top to the bottom of the table, an NRL audit turned up evidence that A\$200,000... taken from ratepayers' money given by the Liverpool Council for the grandiose Oasis casino, sports centre and apartment project had been siphoned off for a player payment. The A[USn] Taxation Office said it was reviewing the tax-free status of the Oasis development. The Bulldogs' sponsor, National Telecommunications Group, met the club to discuss its concerns about the scandal, and is believed to be on the verge of withdrawing. [The]Dogs coach... went to NRL headquarters to make a personal plea that the team not be expelled... But... it was to no avail. When the punishment came, it was comprehensive – the Bulldogs lose 37 points... They retain four points awarded to them for byes, and are required to play the remaining three home and away matches so other sides will not be prejudiced. But they will not be in the finals and they will have to pay a A\$500,000 fine[– which, together with the points deduction, constituted 'the harshest punishment in AUSn sporting history']. Bulldogs historians have just completed a record of the club which was all set for printing, due to go on sale after the glorious grand-final win. Now, Volume 2 and possibly a third will be needed, because the fall-out from this is set to run some distance.

...[its c]hief executive... wants NRL auditors to have the authority to scrutinise players' tax returns to avoid a repeat of the Bulldogs' salary cap scandal. The... [chief executive] was seeking the measure under tough new NRL rules to ensure players' earnings equal what clubs claim they are being paid. Future NRL premiers would also be stripped of their title if found guilty of severely breaching the salary cap... The idea of checking tax returns was based on a similar rule adopted by the A[USn] Football League... Auditors will also now go through the books of every club. ['Three other clubs have already been fined this year for breaching the salary cap' – which 'was introduced in 1990 but dropped during the Super League wars, then was re-introduced in 1997.' The Warriors' management has assured local supporters and sponsors that the Auckland club has nothing to fear from an audit.]

...From no-hopers to an historic surge into the top-eight play-offs. That's the remarkable turn-around of the Warriors league club this season and the credit is laid at the feet of a person who is neither a coach nor a player. League fanatic... The Mad Butcher... says the Warriors coming of age is because it has one boss – [the]multi-millionaire... who bought the club after Tainui opted out. Without [the multi-millionaire], the Warriors might have become history. "[The multi-millionaire] has done wonders for the club because [it] has the right people in place and there are no committees... Committees need a consensus whereas what [the multi-millionaire] says goes." ...at the start of the season the Warriors were given no show of making the semi-finals by punters on both sides of the Tasman. "People were tipping the Warriors not to win a game this season, and that was fair enough, because at the start of the year they didn't have a full squad... But the players have... exceeded everyone's expectations... and are on the verge of history..." Even die-hard... critics are finally coming over to the Warriors, with... a... sports broadcaster[– who once wrote that it was *time to wind up this club with the culture of losing* –] one of those impressed.

...If making the playoffs was the highlight of the Warriors' history, then losing 18-30 to lowly North Queensland yesterday was the lowlight, the anti-climax of all time. It was a lacklustre performance, a half-effort, some of the side just not turning up to play and [their]skipper... admitting as much. [The skipper] did not feel it was the big effort in Melbourne [last weekend]that cost them, rather that having one eye on the playoffs next weekend, and the thought that they could score easily against the Cowboys resulted in them over-burning with excitement. "We did some silly things and turned the ball over too much. It was frustrating and disappointing..." The final NRL regular season round produced no changes to the positions in the top eight... At Bruce Stadium, Canberra[']s coach... ended his 16-year association with the club on a positive note as the Raiders produced a 32-6 win over Melbourne[, whose]Kiwi hooker... again led the... defence, becoming the first player to top 1000 tackles in a season. [The Kiwi hooker] was 48 shy of the milestone before the start[of the game in Canberra], but went on to pull off a staggering 52 tackles.

...An upset 40-22 victory by the St George-Illawarra Dragons over defending champions Newcastle not only handed the N[Z] Warriors the National Rugby League minor premiership, but set up a rematch for the two A[USn] clubs in the opening games of the play-off series this weekend.

...The big games are here. Now is the time for the big-game players. Warriors fans can expect to see [their No 7] back from injury and leading his team against the Canberra Raiders at Ericsson Stadium at 4pm next Sunday... The... Dragons did the Warriors a huge favour in dumping the... Knights 40-22... That left the Knights and Warriors equal on 38 competition points but gave the minor premiership, and the A\$100,000... that goes with it, to the Warriors... The Roosters and Sharks have a rematch next Saturday. The Cronulla side [has 'never won the championship in the Sydney club's 36-year history'. The fourth qualifying final matches the Brisbane Broncos with the Parramatta Eels]... All the sides in the top eight are fragile in one way or another. In Newcastle's case it's [their No 7], who has been playing with an injury for a long time and is separated from his wife.

...Brisbane[']s captain... has written off the... Warriors and rates the... Roosters as the team to beat... expect[ing] the Roosters to beat a[No 7]-less Newcastle in tomorrow's semifinal... It was hard to back the Knights without [their playmaker], a player... the... [captain] rated "pretty close to Jesus Christ"... [E]ven the urgings of [the No 7] – a messiah in Newcastle – have failed to lift Novocastrians out of their "mood of depression".

...[Newcastle's No 7] may have won three Dally M awards, but yesterday [it] was dethroned as the world's best league player – by a Kiwi.[The NZ] Warriors halfback... is the Golden Boot recipient for [this year] – chosen by league journalists... [–] only the second Kiwi to win... And the winner of the last two golden boots awards doesn't seem to mind. "Not at all. [The Warriors' No 7] had a stronger season..." [Newcastle's No 7] said.

...The Sydney City Roosters proved "you have to lose one to win one" last night when they applied themselves more professionally to pressure the Warriors into game-deciding errors and take the NRL premiership 30-8... The Roosters' last appearance in the final was two years ago wherein they were beaten 14-6 by the Brisbane Broncos. Their last grand final victory was 27 years ago.

...A total of 2,851,000 people have passed through... N[RL] turnstiles this year, an increase of 33[%] on last season and just 199,000 shy of the all-time season record of 3.05 million... thanks largely to one semifinal and the grandfinal being staged at the 110,000-seat Stadium Australia.

...Picture a new state of the art stadium for the Auckland region complete with retractable roof, a moveable football pitch and seating configurations to host crowds of 5,000 to 50,000. It may sound far fetched and expensive but could it happen? The Auckland Regional Council has given a consortium... the go ahead to conduct a feasibility study into just such a development at Ericsson Stadium. The ARC Chair[perso]n... has been extolling the virtues of a super stadium in the region for many years but the council is adamant that such a development should take place at no cost and minimal risk to ratepayers... While the exact cost of the project won't be known until the feasibility study is complete, estimates put the price at approximately \$175 million. [The chairperson] says that's less than the combined total which could be spent on Manukau's Pacific Arena and Auckland City's Quay Park Stadium if they go ahead. "As a region, Auckland would be far better off pooling its resources and putting them into one multipurpose arena than trying to keep a plethora of new stadiums plus Eden Park and North Harbour Stadium afloat..." [The chairperson] says Ericsson is the best location for such a development, a view backed up by a second international consortium which has... talk[ed] with the ARC.

...the Kiwi Ferns... [are] back home after... victory at the first [gals'] league World Cup in Britain... The Kiwi Ferns were unbeaten in the World Cup competition which also included A[US], Great Britain (a side combining England and Ireland) and an English B side, the Wildcats... [I]n the final against A[US], the Kiwi Ferns won 26-4... The Kiwi Ferns... had to find their own funding to get to Britain[, where their]... accommodation... was a lot less flash than that of the Kiwi [guys'] World Cup squad – who maintained their record of having never won a World Cup ('Great Britain won the first in 1954, and twice since, while AUS has won the rest'). NZ... has dominated... g[als']... world league in recent years – having not lost a test series in its six year history. But [the team's captain says AUS] and Great Britain proved at the World Cup they have come ahead in leaps and bounds.

...The inaugural Tri-Nations league series involving N[Z, AUS] and Britain will be staged on consecutive Fridays from October 15 to November 5. [The Kangaroos] will start the competition against [the Kiwis in Auckland]...

Reigning champions Queensland retained the rugby league State of Origin trophy in torrential rain in Brisbane last night. A 10-all draw in front of a crowd of 40,000... left the three-match series tied at one apiece. It was the first draw in Origin history... However, N[SW] appeared to blow their chance to win the series when they failed to attempt a field goal from close range in the final seconds. The scores were locked at 6-all at half-time... [In local news, a] referee was punched and kicked to the ground for prematurely ending a children's friendly... match... at the weekend. One [adult] faces assault charges and a ban from attending all sport after the incident[, during which the referee]... was bruised over much of his body. [The referee] was attacked, allegedly by supporters of the Ellerslie under-10s team, which was winning easily when [the referee] called a halt to the game, ruling it had become too violent. His 10-year-old son... and the other children burst into tears as they watched him being kicked by several people as [the referee] lay curled up on the ground. Police were called and the children were quickly hustled away to their clubrooms. The Auckland Rugby League, N[ZRL] and the Ellerslie Eagles club will investigate... It was the second instance of sideline violence at children's sport in a fortnight. A 10-year-old league player from St Joseph's School in central Auckland was struck by his father 10 days ago when [the son] refused to return to the field after being heavily tackled. The principal of the opposing May Road School team has demanded action from the Auckland Rugby League. On Saturday... the [under-10s were playing their] last match of the season. The Papakura team was about 60-0 down when [the referee] ended the game a few minutes early. [The referee] had already sent off one boy after two warnings for head high tackles and a half-time chat with his coach. "But the tension built up on the sideline and it started to reflect in the game... The sideline started to get loud and aggressive. They were saying, 'Go out and smash 'em, waste 'em.' It got to the point where it was getting out of hand, [so]I called, 'Time over, you win'." Then, [the referee] said, "the sideline came over, swept me off my feet, bowled me over and punched and kicked me when I was on the ground..." ...Papakura club members and supporters stopped the assault... Despite the attack, [the victim] intends to continue refereeing children's sport, and yesterday was watching [his son] at practice with the Counties under-10 representative team. [The NZRL chairperson]... said such incidents were totally unacceptable. Anyone who attacked a referee "won't have much of a future in rugby league... I had to deal with a parent involved in violent behaviour when I was on the A[uuckland Rugby League board and that parent] can watch league again when [it]'s about 75."

...Ban these sideline thugs... The vicious and cowardly attack on a kids' rugby league referee at the weekend left me feeling sick. What kind of an example were these cave[people] setting for the kids? ...What sparked the incident? [The referee] had called a halt to the game a few minutes early because it had become "too violent"! Too violent? These are nine-year-olds we're talking about – not grown[-ups]... And where are these youngsters picking up their on-the-field aggression? From their sideline mums and dads – the very people who should be teaching them respect and tolerance of others. It's been reported that comments like "go out and waste 'em," and "smash 'em" were being snarled from the sidelines during the game. Sending that kind of message to your kids compares to egging your dog on with cries of "sic 'em boy" when it comes face-to-face with another dog. Subject a dog to such thuggish taunts for a period of time, and it's heading for the pound. These parents exposed nine-year-olds to callous goading and violence once reserved for wrestling and boxing ringsides. Now we have instances where littlies are being urged into sports-ground thuggery – and for what? Nothing more than the spoils of victory – and parental pride[perhaps the pride of the parents of the Ellerslie under-10s will be dented by the club's decision to 'ban the entire team from its upcoming awards ceremony, and prevent those players selected to participate in their regional under-10 representative team from doing so']... Refereeing is a notoriously thankless job. But we desperately need more people [like the referee who was attacked – it]'s been a better role model for these kids than their own parents. What's your view? Email: ...@communitynewsalk.co.nz... [Incidentally, the] Kiwi... coach... has called on rugby league to unify its rules to help continue restoring the game's credibility.

...A coaches' revolt has prevented proposed rule changes that would have discouraged the bomb as an attacking weapon in rugby league. But after a day of tinkering with recommendations put forward by the N[RL]'s rules advisory group, little will change... and the video ref's role remains confusing. The video ref cannot rule on a forward pass, the NRL has decreed. [The video ref] can rule "only on incidents in the final play leading to the scoring of points (i.e. from the previous play-the-ball.)" Why not have the video ref rule on a forward pass if [it] can see ground markings and the ball clearly travels to a player in front of the passer? Nor will the video ref rule on cases where [it] cannot see the clear grounding of the ball, the NRL board has decided, instead handing the decision-making back to the ref. Why have a video ref then? Surely a ref in such a position has to rule a try out, given that [it] couldn't decide in the first place. But the contentious bit is that "in cases of extreme doubt the referee and video referee will give the benefit of doubt to the attacking team." Surely the benefit of doubt should go to the defending team unless the grounding is clear. In the old pre-video days, the ref wouldn't call a try unless [it] and/or his lines[people] saw a try.

...A lot has been written and said about the performance of our sporting whistle-blowers but criticism of referees... is not limited to A[US]. In America, 28 of the 31 team owners in the National Football League have voted in a radical instant replay challenge system to combat the mistakes match officials are making. The recently-completed season was littered with mistakes from officials, so... for the upcoming one[coaches] will be given two challenges a game and the referees will rule on the validity of each from television monitors on the sideline. Coaches will lose a timeout if the challenge does not wash with the ref. [By the way, this weekend sees the annual match between the national gridiron teams of NZ and AUSn – respectively known as the 'NZ Iron Blacks and Australia Outback']

...It's the day the Pro Bowl selections are announced and the members of the Minnesota Vikings, for whom... N[Z]'s only representative in America's National Football League... plays... have eagerly gathered at their practice facility to see who has made it. A record nine of their number have made the annual All Star selection, reflecting the mighty season the Vikings are having[, which could end in the Kiwi becoming]... the second Maori to earn a Superbowl ring [- the first earned] three with the... San Francisco 49ers... in the 1980s... A tally of 13 wins and a loss heading into tomorrow's match at home against the Jacksonville Jaguars is equal best in the NFL and tops in the NFC... [A] win tomorrow... clinches home advantage over the next two rounds to find the NFC's representative... But[, getting back to the Pro Bowl selections, the Kiwi] has missed out. Despite the fact [that the Kiwi is] having what they call over there a career year, the media know-alls who vote in the players have bypassed him. And with it has gone almost \$600,000 in bonuses... Now, if you're going to have a potentially 600,000 big ones slide tantalisingly by, you want to be able to afford it. [The Kiwi, who is] the biggest thing to have come out of Pukekohe in more ways than one, certainly can. At the start of the season, his fifth in the big league, [the Kiwi] negotiated himself a four-year deal worth... a little under \$3 million a season. Not bad for a guy whose main job is to clear holes on the field for others... [A]s a starter at right guard on the offensive line[, it is the Kiwi] who indulges in the mass sumo wrestle at the snap, slamming himself into the opposition's defence to, first, keep them away from the quarterback and, then, clear a path for the running backs. It is a case of immovable object meets irresistible force and the 163kg [Kiwi] tends to end up on the right side of the ledger. It's why... [the] Vikings have committed themselves to him... [and why the Kiwi] earns money All Blacks can only dream of... [The Kiwi] has bought a house in Minnesota, where [the Kiwi] resides with his American wife and three children... At this stage, there are no thoughts of a return to his native land... [for the] 29-year-old... who puts his body on the line for around 18 weeks a year and then spends the rest of it recovering... although it does remain close to his heart. "I'm always cheering for the All Blacks,"... says... the former Pukekohe High School first XV and [All Black] under-19 lock... [that was plucked] from the streets of Auckland by an American college scout who was blown away by the size of the overgrown teenager... [The Kiwi] has made a smooth transition to a game few Kiwis understand let alone play... [and is disappointed about] the Pro Bowl thing. "To be considered one of the best... in the NFL for the year would be quite an honour. But you never know, there's some more years to come." ...[assuming] the banged up body [the Kiwi starts] to feel at this stage of the season[holds up that long]. "...Yeah, it's war out there, a straight head-on collision. You certainly need your summers off. I take all kinds of drugs just to get my body right." All legal of course. The NFL wouldn't have it any other way... [His] is... a position which is likely to see the ball about as often as Halley's Comet comes out to play. But after four years of never seeing the pigskin, [the Kiwi almost] had a touchdown this year. It was a goalline stand and one of the Vikings running backs fumbled the ball going for the score. [The Kiwi] couldn't believe his luck as [the Kiwi] scooped it up and launched into a "rugby dive to touch down like a try. Or at least I thought I had". Only problem was the rules say you can't advance a fumble in the last two minutes of a half and [the Kiwi] was denied his glory and instead merely credited with a recovery... Now [the Kiwi]'s thinking Superbowls and more chances to stock his paypacket. And who knows? Maybe if the ball bounced his way, [the Kiwi]... boy-made-good... could become the first Maori... to score a touchdown in the Superbowl.

For years, diehard... Dallas Cowboys... football fans have worshipped the turf their team walks on. Now they can buy it too. Recently-replaced turf from the Super Bowl Champions' home stadium went on sale last week - at Texas-sized prices. A simple 15cm piece... costs \$US24.95 while \$US100,000 will buy you an entire end-zone.

...THE top running back in American football is [a]Dallas Cowboy... home alone one night recently, minding his own business, [the Cowboy's head was crowded by an]... old picture... again... It was... the former Chicago Bear who rushed more yards than any player in NFL history... This night a torrent of numbers came trailing after the picture, and [the Cowboy] felt compelled to write them down. [The Cowboy] made a note that [the Bear] had rushed for almost 17,000 yards in his career. Next to that [the Cowboy] scribbled the number 9000 which is about how many yards [the Cowboy] has gained since joining... Dallas... in 1990. On the page the difference seemed incredible. After considering the disparity for a while, [the Cowboy] did some simple arithmetic. If over the next five years you gain 1500 yards a season, [the Cowboy] said to himself, that'll give you another 7500. It was still a few hundred yards short of [the] mark. But there was something else to consider. In five years [the Cowboy] would be 31. [The Bear] finished his playing career at 33... "It's a dream until you write it down... Then it's a goal... I can be there... But I've got to get ahead of the curve..." What makes [the Cowboy] run? Why is [the Cowboy] in such a hurry? What, exactly, does [the Cowboy] expect to find when [the Cowboy gets where the Cowboy is going? Today the Cowboy]'ll find a new \$2 million home in Addison... just north of Dallas... To reflect his great good fortune - a \$US3.4m salary matched by endorsement earnings - [the Cowboy] wanted something special[, so the Cowboy]... spared no expense in building the place, for this was to be the home of a [person] who in only six pro seasons had won three Super Bowls[(including a)]... Superbowl MVP performance in '94[)] ...and four rushing titles and who last year set the NFL record for touchdowns in a season, 25... A few years ago [the Cowboy] was earning only about \$500,000 a year in endorsement money. So [the cowboy] gave his agent six months to change things, then fired him. - 1996

An amazing NFL gridiron comeback story ended after one brilliant touchdown catch yesterday... [The catcher], who confounded the experts by working his way back to playing shape just 15 weeks after surgery for torn knee ligaments, was hurt after snaring a 14-yard touchdown pass in the San Francisco 49ers' 34-17 win over the Denver Broncos... Tests later showed a fracture... on the knee... which will sideline... the NFL's all-time... leader in receptions (1057), receiving yards (16,455) and receiving touchdowns (155)... and... one of three active players to be named in the 75th anniversary all-time NFL team... for the next eight to 10 weeks... [The catcher] also holds the single-season mark for touchdowns (22) and yards (1848)... [In related news, attendance at the NFL] in 1996 was down by nearly 600,000 fans from the year before. The... total paid attendance... was 18,648,981, a drop from 1995's record total of 19,202,757, but still the second-highest total in the league's 77-year history.

...In America, as elsewhere, drunken, belligerent and sometimes violent fans have an impact drastically out of proportion to their numbers... In an attempt to keep the violence where it belongs - on the field - the Philadelphia Eagles American football club have opened their own courtroom so unruly fans can be dealt with immediately and hauled off to jail. The Legal Eagle... [who previously worked] in a mobile night court so is familiar with the concept of instant justice... worked his first day last weekend, and while Philadelphia were beating the Pittsburgh Steelers 23-20 the judge went 17-3 against the fans beneath the stadium... [All of the offenders were guys] and most drink-impaired... The [17 found guilty] were fined and rebuked. One threw up, one wet his pants and one admitted to multiple murder - "I killed 12 guys" - but was[only] done for disorderly conduct. [The Eagle's] owner... who pays the judge's wages, declared the experiment a huge success. There have been an average 60 arrests at an Eagles game... The idea was prompted by ugly scenes at an Eagles-San Francisco 49ers game where running fights between rival fans were described in the U[S] as "a bloody imitation of a riotous European soccer match." It was television's showcase Monday night game and having a major brawl screened live across the nation affronted the civic pride of a community that bills itself as "the city of brotherly love." ...□ IT'S a tough game that American football. Just ask [the]Mississippi State noseguard... who had to sit out his team's recent NCAA match against Northeast Louisiana through injury. It's a fair bet, though, his coach wasn't happy with how it was sustained. [The noseguard] was crocked in a fight with a teammate...

Adidas has signed a multi-year agreement with the N[FL] to provide clothing and shoes for players, giving it a presence in three major US sports. Adidas already has licensing agreements with major league baseball's New York Yankees and the National Basketball Association.

...The Super Bowl will be the year's top-rated television show in the U[S], no doubt, but with small-market... so-called expansion... teams vying for the game, sponsors who paid... an average cost of \$1.3 million a spot... for... 50-odd... 30-second commercials are jittery. The big-time football franchises in Dallas, San Francisco and other major cities have already fallen by the wayside. Left in the running are Jacksonville, Florida, the No. 55 media market, Charlotte, No. 28, and Green Bay, No. 71. Only the New England Patriots play in a top 10 market, in Boston (No. 6). Two of those sides will advance to the Super Bowl on January 26. "I'm concerned about a Jacksonville-Carolina matchup," said... [the] national media director for advertising agency BBDO. "That could lead to a loss of 10[%] of the audience." ...For the advertisers, who booked their... spots last year before the commercial time sold out, such a matchup seemed highly unlikely. The oddsmakers considered the chances one in 100,000 at the start of the season. The National Pork Producers Council is one of a handful of advertisers that puts virtually all of its annual advertising budget into the Super Bowl. "I'm not worried," said... [the] vice-president of marketing for the group. "People will tune in at least for a while, even if it doesn't have the same built-in appeal fan support that Dallas or Chicago might bring." But if [the vice-president] had to pick, [the vice-president] would prefer that the Green Bay Packers make it into the final round. The media buyers agreed. "Green Bay has a unique history... Even though it's from a small market, Green Bay is a draw. It's important from a ratings standpoint that they be there." ...But even the worst-case scenario isn't so bad for advertisers, said the media buyers. "...People... tune in every year... regardless of who plays... It's like the Academy Awards..." [Another media] consultant... said that "along with the Olympics, it's one of the few remaining events where you can talk to the nation simultaneously. More importantly, they've managed to make it into an exhibition for advertisers, where people actually watch and critique ads. It's a very interesting media phenomenon." The game has become "the event" for not just football, but also for advertising... While the leading television networks continue to lose market share the rest of the year, demand has remained strong for... News Corp's... Super Bowl...

In the end there was an air of inevitability about America's biggest sports event... Even after the New England Patriots took a surprise lead over the Green Bay Packers at the end of the first quarter of play, there was a feeling it could not last. It didn't: they went down 21-35... It was one of those wasn't-as-close-as-the-score-looks games. At Super Bowl parties all over America a very familiar thing was happening – as the Super Bowl went on people started talking among themselves and otherwise losing interest. Imagine the consternation of advertisers who shelled out \$US1.2 million for the right to air a 30s commercial that took more megabucks to make, only to have a one-sided game, as most of the past dozen or so of these spectacles have been. The Green Bay Packers have been put together over the past few years by some of the top minds in the game, from management to coaches. There is a trick to getting a team together these days because players have the right to sign very short contracts then go test the waters to see what some other team will offer them. It is not unusual to... go to the start of a new season and find your team with a whole new crop of players. That wasn't always the case. It is the result of lawyers for the players primarily, and sports agents secondarily. And nowadays there is the salary cap, an innovation that limits total players' salaries that was agreed to by team owners as a way to make the NFL more competitive... [T]he Packer organisation did a superb job of... building their team like shrewd card players building a good hand. The rest of the kudos go to... a coach who could get them to play together rather selflessly, no small feat in today's age of superinflated sports egos. I... a former *N[Z] Herald* journalist living in the U[S]... can honestly say that after watching a lot of games this season, this was one of the least interesting. It has become such a spectacle that simple, hard, good football gets lost in silly exhibitionism, cheap shots and the players' need to feel they have done something special that will live on in videotape highlight reels. Hence those banal walks and dances that they should have left behind when they grew up. Grew up? Ah, yes of course, now I see... [■] S[itting] out the gridiron season... [was a guy] who believes in his faith... The defensive tackle turned down the Washington Redskins' \$US3.6m contract offer because... "a revelation from God" [said] the team should pay him \$US5m. - 1997

Investors have agreed to pay nearly \$US800 million... for the Washington Redskins football team and... [their s]tadium in the richest deal ever for a North American sports franchise. The price... dwarfs the \$US530 million paid last year for the Cleveland Browns... [While on the topic of North American sports, i]n the days before the fall of the Iron Curtain, the joke was that if the Soviets chose to attack they should do it on the last Sunday in January – the day assigned... to Super Bowl. They would find America sprawled on a couch and rendered... insensible by cold beer and... hubris.

...Supporters of the Green Bay Packers usually form the largest and noisiest contingent when [US] football fans jam into The Sports Bar in New York's East Village every Sunday afternoon to follow their teams on satellite TV... Green Bay is definitely in, not only because the Packers are winners again, but because of their appeal as the embodiment of small-town America, peopled by selfless and community-minded citizens... Green Bay is a mill town in Wisconsin with a population of 96,000, and the Packers make [USers] feel good about themselves. They are unique in that they are owned by Green Bay citizens after shares of the team were sold in 1951 to keep the Packers afloat. This year's share plan, designed to raise \$80 m... for capital improvements to Lambeau [Stadium] and, ultimately, to finance its replacement, has been wildly successful as people clamoured for the 400,000 virtually untradeable shares. Under a bylaw, if for some unimaginable reason the Packers – now valued at \$165 m... – must be sold, the proceeds will go[to] the local branch of the American Legion of war veterans. These uplifting nuggets about Green Bay would matter little if the Packers had not rediscovered the habit of winning. They comfortably beat the New England Patriots in Super Bowl XXXI last January, ending a drought stretching back to the halcyon days of 1967-68, when the Pack won consecutive championships under their legendary coach... after whom the Super Bowl trophy is named, [and] who made the famous remark, "Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing." Green Bay's fortunes withered after [his] departure in 1969. The team became perennial losers and a joke. In the lean years, players – especially black players – shunned Green Bay. It was considered too cold, too isolated, too white... The team's rebirth dates back to 1992, with the arrival of... [a new] general manager from the New York Jets[, who] hired... the offensive mastermind of the San Francisco 49ers... [and] also made a key acquisition in the same year... [of] the backup quarterback with the Atlanta Falcons... [– who] grew up in... a small town in Mississippi next to a waterway called Rotten Bayou, home to alligators that ate three of the family dogs[, and]... had a reputation as a party boy who would rather drink than train, and was considered a foolish choice as Green Bay's pivotal player. But [the quarterback] has curbed his wilder instincts on and off the field, although [it] needed treatment last year because of his addiction to painkillers... While [the quarterback] marshals the offence... an ordained minister... anchors Green Bay's defence... [T]he Minister of Defence, thought long and hard before signing... for \$17 m... for four years. The night before [the minister] made up his mind, [it] got down on his knees and prayed for guidance. [The minister] wanted to go to San Francisco. "When the Lord spoke to me, [it] said, 'Let me ask you a question: where did the head coach[and] the defensive coordinator... come from before they went to Green Bay?' I said, 'San Francisco?' And [the Lord] said, 'That's the San Francisco I'm talking about.'" God, money and [the quarterback brought the minister] to Green Bay in his quest for a Super Bowl ring, and [the minister] fulfilled his ambition after more than a decade of frustration with the Philadelphia Eagles... The Packers... beat the San Francisco 49ers 23-10 in the NFC play-off on Monday to reach the Super Bowl for the second year in a row.

...After countless dry-eyed interviews in the week leading up to the Super Bowl, [the] [famously emotional] St Louis Rams gridiron coach... was finally moved to tears yesterday. [The coach] has a reputation for misting up and his penchant for crying surprised many of his players until they got used to it. So sportswriters were perplexed that [the coach] appeared so in control of his emotions following his team's thrilling 23-16 victory... in the Super Bowl. "I expected to win and when you expect to win it takes a little edge off when you do it," the 63-year-old... said. But when asked if [it] had cried at all the night before, [the coach]'s eyes welled up and the tears began to flow. [The coach] recalled that his mother, who died five years ago, had predicted [her son] would return to coaching and lead a team to a Super Bowl victory before [it] quit. "God... I didn't think... [mum] was... right... but [mum] was." Many football insiders thought it an odd choice three years ago when the Rams hired [the person] who had spent the previous 14 years out of football in the broadcast booth. After all, [this was the person who] practically invented the phrase coaching burnout when

[it] left the game after seven years with the Philadelphia Eagles... [The son] came back to see if [it] could get back to a level where [it] was satisfied with his own performance as a football coach and as a person. Following two terrible seasons in which [the son] questioned his own sanity for returning to the coaching pressure, [it] has finally attained the pinnacle of his profession and must be satisfied – even by his own lofty standards.

...ON A HIGH: The New York Giants [are trying] to win the pre-Super Bowl psychological battle by looking bigger than they are. Tomorrow they play the Baltimore Ravens in... gridiron's main event. All 150 players should get on the field for at least 20 seconds each – 18 of them for dancing.

FOOTBALL, a field game between two teams, played with an inflated oval-shaped ball that is advanced to a goal by running, passing, or kicking[, subdivided under]... the names of American, Canadian, and Australian football. These games... also include blocking, which permits a ballcarrier's teammates to make contact with, knock down, or ward off opposing players seeking to tackle the player running with the ball. The most distinctive aspect of the [North]American... games is the principle of possession. Through a series of plays, or downs, the team possessing the ball can sustain an attack, mixing its plays on the ground and in the air until it either scores or is forced to relinquish possession to the opposing team. In the A[US]n game, play is continuous; the ball goes back and forth between the teams until a goal is scored, a foul is committed, or the ball goes out of bounds. Another marked difference among the games is substitutions – unlimited in the [North]American... games and disallowed in A[US]n play... More than most games... American football... has been subjected to rules revisions as new techniques and tactics are devised to give the offence or the defence the upper hand... The rules and eligibility of players are administered by national organizations... [but] the control of amateurs and professionals is separate. Only on military service teams may amateurs and professionals play together. Amateur control is divided among the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), which numbers among its members all the large universities; the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), to which many smaller colleges belong; the National Junior College Athletic Association; and the National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations. For rules making, the last three are combined as the National Alliance Football Committee. Control of professional football is vested in the National Football League... which merged in 1970 with the rival American Football League... The clock-running time is 60 minutes in professional and college football and 48 minutes in high school games. There are two halves, each divided into... quarters. A 15-minute interval is allowed... NFL rules provide for a “sudden-death” overtime period when games end in a tie[(but even non-tied games often run longer than 75 minutes of real-time due to the abundance of opportunities for clock-stopping by coaches and officials)]... In professional football games, seven officials supervise play... In college games four to six officials are used. A team consists of 11 players[, with]... the use of separate teams for offense and defense... The playing area is 120 yards long from end to end... The offense is permitted a series of four plays... in which to advance the ball at least 10 yards or else relinquish possession to the defense. If the first play fails to produce a 10-yard gain, the next play becomes the second down, with the remaining yardage of the 10 to be gained. Any time the ball is advanced 10 or more yards during a series, and after the ballcarrier or pass catcher is halted, the team is entitled to resume the offensive, starting with a new first down. This allows the team four more plays to gain an additional 10 yards. The ball changes hands immediately, however, if a defensive player recovers a dropped (fumbled) ball, “steals” the ball from the ballcarrier, or intercepts the ball in flight. Otherwise, the offensive team retains possession until it scores or elects to give up the ball (usually on the fourth play of the series) by kicking, or punting, it. The punt is the offensive team's way of exchanging distance for loss of possession... Once the offense loses possession, the defensive team takes the offensive... The prime unit of scoring is the touchdown... worth 6 points... which... occurs whenever either team takes the ball over the opponent's goal line or when the defense recovers the ball in the opponent's end zone. The offense can score a touchdown by running the ball over the goal line... or... by passing it to an eligible receiver... in the end zone... [I]f... the ball... touches the ground before it is caught, the pass is incomplete and the [touch]down is lost... Once a touchdown is made, the scoring team may try for a conversion – that is, for 1 or 2 additional points... [depending on whether the game is using college or professional] rules... The offensive team at any time (except the kickoff) may try to score a “field” goal by kicking the ball from the field over the crossbar of the defensive goal either by placekick or dropkick. Such a field goal is worth 3 points. Another method of scoring is the safety, which is worth 2 points to the team forcing the safety... It is a safety when the ball becomes dead (downed or out of bounds) behind the offensive team's own goal line, provided the impetus came from a player of that team... [F]ootball equipment has undergone many changes through the years. Most of these changes are the result of improved materials and the needs of the players... Each player wears a helmet, usually of unbreakable plastic, filled with a face mask or bar and webbing on the inside to lessen shock[, plus]... pads that protect the shoulders, thighs, hips, knees, and ribs. Some of the pads are sewn into the football pants. The shoe has cleats attached to the sole for improved traction. On frozen fields, players may wear shoes without cleats to aid in traction... Football is generally an outdoor sport, though domed stadiums allow the game to be played indoors... on grass or on a grass-like composition material... Intercollegiate football in the U[S] marked its 100th birthday on Nov. 6, 1969. It grew steadily from the time of the first undergraduate game between Rutgers and Princeton universities... Professional football had its beginnings in small towns of western Pennsylvania towards the end of the 19th century. The local teams were made up of former college stars eager to continue playing the game... In 1920 representatives from 12 teams gathered in the back room of a Canton, Ohio, automobile agency to discuss the future of professional football. This meeting led to the formation of the American Professional Football Association... Franchises at \$100 each went to [each of the 12 teams]... Canton is recognized as the cradle of modern professional football. The Pro Football Hall of Fame, dedicated in 1963, is [t]here... Among the most ancient of ball games and known by a variety of names, modern football divided into two forms in the mid-19th century. One version of the game ruled that the ball could be advanced only by kicking and that all players except the goalkeeper were prohibited from handling the ball. This version was formalized by the London Football Association, founded in 1863 in England, and was known as association football, or soccer. This is the form most extensively played throughout the world... The other version[, which]... permitted touching the ball with the hands – [and from which North American and AUSn football]... evolved... – was... formalized by the Rugby Football Union in London in 1871... It stemmed from a game played at the Rugby School in England, when, in 1823, a [soccer]player illegally picked up a ball and ran with it.

Contrary to what many people may think, the word soccer was not invented by the Americans so they could call their odd, quasi-gladiatorial national game football. In fact, it was the British who invented the word. Soccer, when it first appeared in the 1890s, was spelled socca. The word is derived from... association football, meaning the football played by the rules laid down by the British Football Association. It was spelled socker until the current form... appeared around 1895. The er suffix attached to soccer, incidentally, was often used in late 19th and early 20th Century slang. This can be seen, for example, in the transformation of the word rugby into the term rugger... ■ [Rugger]... is by far our most dangerous – and expensive – sport. The latest statistics released by ACC show a quarter of new sport and recreational claims are for rugby-related injuries. While it is true that rugby has the greatest number of participants... the figure is alarming... [O]ver the last Super 12 season there were 22,000 tackles, causing 40 players to need medical treatment. There were eight tackle injuries per 1000 tackles... Both ACC and the NZ[RFU] have injury prevention plans in place to try to bring down injury numbers... Soccer... [is] next on the list, but... account[s] for just 7[%] of new claims... [(an Auckland] is to receive accident compensation for an injury sustained in a soccer game 10 years ago... when... [it] was a 12-year-old boy... [- t]he original claim was declined after medical advice that the... constant pain... in... the lefthand side of his body... w[as] unrelated to the soccer injury[]).

...The NZRFU] boss... says the time is right to launch an attack on the U[S] market in an effort to establish the game [of rugby union ahead of basketball]as the “number two sport in the world.” A... former soccer player, [the NZRFU chief executive] said the just-finished [soccer]World

Cup... had involved a lot of boring matches... “...out of something like 60 games, there were only four or five really good ones... There are 260 million people in America and while they have been brought up on other sports, I believe we have something to offer them...”

...To... [the] chief executive, NZ[RFU, in reference to your]... article in the... *Herald*... From the No 1... sport in the world, I wish you every success in your quest to achieve the status of No 2 sport in the world. If I can help in anyway, please feel free to contact me... General manager, Soccer NZ.

...*Soccer kicks rugby off roost*... Soccer has become the most popular sport for young N[Z]ers. Rugby, the national game, is now number two. The two codes have always attracted 5- to 17-year-olds in fairly even numbers, but new Hillary Commission research shows around 114,000 of our youngsters regularly play soccer. About 99,500 favour rugby union. It is the first time such figures have been gathered. The balance is tipped by the increasing number of girls who prefer to dribble a round ball, rather than kick an oval one. Fewer girls are drawn to the physical contact of rucks, scrums and tackles... The codes switch places for players over 18... with rugby rating as N[Z]’s ninth most popular sport and soccer 12th.

...[*Soccer*] still No 1 in money game... The silly... season is in full cry with soccer clubs shelling out crazy money to buy players... Arsenal hit the jackpot when Real Madrid paid \$US35.7m for [a player to keep]... the Spanish club firmly at the top of the big-spenders... The [former ‘world record transfer fee’ of] \$US19.92m Newcastle... paid Blackburn... for [an England striker]... still stacks up... as the... biggest fee paid by a British club.

...British soccer fans fought running battles with police... and members of [the local] immigrant community yesterday in the aftermath of a... soccer match between England and Germany... [R]esidents, mostly North African... youths... and English fans played a cat-and-mouse game, with occasional running battles... A police official on the scene said one [person] had been wounded with a screwdriver... Many English fans, revelling in their team’s rare victory over arch-rivals Germany, swigged beer from cans. In one incident, English fans taunted riot police, who responded with tear gas. Riot police with dogs closed in on a group of English fans who had taken refuge in a bar, using teargas to force them out. They were then arrested and loaded on to buses. Calm returned to the city centre in the early hours after police systematically swept through the streets dispersing groups of fans... Police said about 70 people had been arrested, mostly English. That brought to more than 900 the number of soccer hooligans detained in the past 24 hours... One police[officer] said about 3000 English fans were believed to be in... the city... England-Germany game[s have] always been regarded as one of the highest-risk matches... because of the reputations of the hooligan fringe among the fans of both national teams.

...BRITISH MPs are putting the boot into soccer hooligans and passing emergency legislation to stop further violent clashes. The... football (disorder) bill... comes in the wake of hundreds of drunk England fans being deported from... Euro[pe following a game against Germany] last month... A core of English fans have an international reputation for violent and drunken behaviour since 1974 when they rioted in Paris. Last week, England soccer officials blamed hooligans at Euro[pean matches] for the failure to win the vote to host the 2006 World Cup.

...SPRAWLED in the back of a Mercedes on the M1, one of Britain’s most feared football hooligans brandishes his mobile phone to marshal more than 150 you[ths]... for a riot. Known to his followers as “Nightmare,” [the hooligan] tracks the movements of fellow thugs travelling by coach as [it] prepares to telephone the leader of a rival gang with the words: “It’s the Nightmare calling – are you boys ready?” [The hooligan grins as it] boasts of an attack in which a police[officer] was stabbed in the face: “We was laughing at him... [as the copper] said, ‘You can’t do that – I’m an off-duty police[officer].’” An 18-month television undercover investigation has exposed the ringleaders of Britain’s most notorious gang of football hooligans and uncovered evidence of a resurgence of the widespread thuggery associated with the sport in the 1980s. It shows how a small circle of thugs is co-ordinating growing attacks on rival fans... Modern hooligans shun scarves and hats in team colours for plain clothes and baseball caps to shield their faces from surveillance cameras. Many are members of the right-wing group Combat 18 and also have Ulster loyalist sympathies. They generally prefer cocaine to lager. Hidden camera footage of a Chelsea match in Copenhagen last November reveals that [a 32-year-old]... who runs a tyre business in Hanworth, southwest London... is an organiser with [the Nightmare] (35) of the... hooligan gang, the Chelsea Headhunters... [The 32-year-old] tells his followers in a Danish bar: “We’ve come here to have a war.” It was the Chelsea Headhunters who organised an ambush of Scottish supporters in Trafalgar Square during the Euro 96 championship in which 40 people were injured.

A Scottish doctor warned yesterday that England could see an increase in domestic violence if it loses its Euro 96 soccer semi-final against Germany this week... [T]he British Medical Association... secretary... said marital abuse... almost doubled... after Scotland’s defeat by England...

THE Euro 96 soccer championship hosted by England... this year made a profit of \$NZ156.25 million. Around two-thirds of the money will go to the 16 teams that took part in the three-week tournament, with winners Germany pocketing \$12 million. The remaining third... will be ploughed into a special fund created by UEFA, European soccer’s governing body, dedicated to the development of football in the emerging nations of eastern Europe. The announcement caps what was generally regarded as a successful tournament for the hosts both on and off the field, [so it’s a shame some hooligans have dashed] England’s hopes of staging the 2006 World Cup.

...[A] BRAZILIAN World Cup striker... has been dropped again by Valencia... in what many fans are already seeing as punishment for sleeping through a training session... [However, the striker] did not think his arrival 75 minutes late for training on Thursday was behind the decision. The Brazilian, whose salary of around \$NZ5.08 million a year makes him Spain’s best-paid player, threatened to leave the club after being left out of Valencia’s UEFA Cup games against Bayern Munich earlier this season. □... [NEWCASTLE’S] OUT-OF-FAVOUR Colombian striker... says [it] is happy in English soccer and definitely staying at Newcastle... – booting into touch talk of an imminent return to Italy. In Bogota to train with his national squad, [the Colombian said it]... was not about to quit. With... Newcastle[’s former]... world record... signing... and [another British striker] knocking in the goals... [the Colombian], an \$16.7 million capture from Parma, has been used more as a substitute, often as a midfielder [instead of] in his preferred... role... [In addition to being in-form in league matches, the former record signing – who] won the premiership title with Blackburn in the 1994-95 season... [before joining] his home town club... for £15 million... [-] topscored with five goals in the European championships...

[THE] GOLDEN boy... Newcastle fork[ed] out a world record transfer fee for... always had a boyhood dream of playing with Newcastle. That was 21 years ago when, kitted out in the Magpies’ famous black and white strip, the five-year-old learned to kick a ball in the Tyneside streets as his sheet-metal worker dad struggled to support his family. Now that dream has come true... with the... soccer star... receiving a huge welcome at St James Park. But plenty else has changed. The mammoth \$[NZ]30 million transfer deal... mean[t] the soccer sensation could probably buy the factory where his father works. His move from Blackburn Rovers is... earn[ing] him \$60,000 a week, which could be lifted to... more than \$4 million a year... through bonuses. It was reported... [the striker also pocketed] a \$2 million slice of his transfer fee. And... will continue a \$1 million a year sponsorship deal to wear Umbro boots... When [the striker] was 12... the... [striker] queued for four hours to watch his hero’s debut for Newcastle. And... stayed after the match to get [his hero]’s autograph... But... on a cold night in 1983 as [the striker] played for Newcastle City Schoolboys[, it] was spotted by... [someone] scouting for Southampton. [The scout] snapped up the budding superstar from under the noses of Newcastle.

...[the striker] scored from a controversial penalty against his former club Blackburn yesterday to set Newcastle on their way to a 2-1 victory which took them to third in the English premier soccer league. The England striker, who left Blackburn... for a [then-]world record \$33.85 million, smashed home his spot kick after[Blackburn’s] Scotland defender... was harshly adjudged to have handled in the area on the stroke of halftime. Newcastle are now level on points with... Manchester United, who came from behind to beat Nottingham Forest 4-1.

...[shares] in the English soccer champions... have risen to record highs after the club’s chief executive said the club was a probable bid target... The speculation sent [Manchester] United shares soaring to... more than £5 – which valued the club at more than £300 million... The club responded to the swirl of speculation with a statement that its board was not aware of any bid approaches... United shares have risen from below 200p at the

end of January because the club won the coveted English premier league and FA Cup double. The rise had also been fuelled by a lucrative new television deal signed by the Premier League with satellite broadcaster BSkyB that would virtually treble television income for top English soccer clubs[('ticket sales don't cover British soccer's wages bill')]. United were reported – earlier this year – to have rejected a takeover bid from publishing group VCI[, which]... did a deal with United in January to buy the publishing rights to club videos and books... Share analysts said that the huge interest in soccer and the potential growth of revenue from pay-per-view television deals made a bid likely... at some stage in the near future... A *Times* article named brewer Whitbread and media-and-leisure group Granada as potential bidders. - 1996

Football clubs around the world are making more money from franchising and property deals than they are from their ticket sales... The product is far worse than it used to be and inferior to its main competitors. The company office is discreet... Yet it is a place of pilgrimage. Two smiling visitors are asked where they are from. "China," they reply. God apart, only sports teams inspire such devotion. The well-hidden office, and a huge collection of trophies within, belongs to AC Milan which, despite an awful season – ninth at best in the Italian league – is a giant of world soccer... Countless lesser teams in Europe, Latin America and Asia are adored in their home cities. And the game itself has unrivalled worldwide appeal. Even in America, where other sports rule[, the 'people's']... game is played by more children than any other sport... No wonder money is flooding into soccer. Most striking is the advent of pay [TV], which has pushed the price of broadcasting rights skywards. Between 1997 and 2001, the 20 clubs in England's Premier League will be paid £620m... by BSkyB... European football now earns a sum similar to those paid by America's networks to its main sports. Companies want their names on team shirts: Opel, the European arm of General Motors, pays AC Milan 10 billion lire... a season for the privilege, as well as sponsoring Germany's Bayern Munich. One or two firms have even bought their own club... Can football become a normal industry? Almost certainly not... [because] in many countries ownership of two clubs, which could in theory be competitors, is banned. However, there is surely plenty of room for football to become a much more normal business. So, for example, clubs thwarted by curbs on mergers at home are looking abroad. Canal+, a French cable television firm, has majority stakes in both Paris Saint-Germain and Servette, a Swiss club. Servette will probably be used as a testing ground for prospective PSG players. Caspian, owner of England's Leeds United, is said to be considering an equity swap with a Dutch club, PSV Eindhoven. One reason for clubs' newly business-like behaviour is that the game has become riskier as well as richer: winners get more money from television and sponsors but, by definition, there is more for losers to miss out on. Even the bottom... Premier League... team... can expect £3.5m from [TV] rights next season; in lower leagues, there is far less on offer. On May 27 the price of shares in Sheffield United, beaten in a play-off for promotion to the Premier League the previous day, fell by 31[% 18]... British clubs now have stockmarket listings, up from [3] two years ago. In part this is because pay [TV is more d]eveloped in Britain than other markets. But British clubs have also led the way in merchandising... Manchester United... now gets only... one-third of its £70 million-odd in revenues from ticket sales and one-[6th from TV]. The rest comes from sponsorships, catering and conferences, and retailing. More, including a United [TV] channel, may follow.

...Manchester United is set to add to its ever-growing riches with new sponsorship deals estimated at £30 million... a year. Their £5 million shirt deal with Sharp ends... [soon] and United will then look for a deal with at least eight different companies.

...[British soccer c]lubs are compelled by their governing body to make major changes to their jersey designs at least every two years. This is to make money from eager young fans buying the uniforms... British soccer fans have become accustomed to frequent changes in their teams' uniforms... [but s]ome European sides... have resisted the trend. Italian teams Inter Milan and Juventus have refused to make substantial changes... for decades in order to sustain tradition... The latest kit to undergo a transformation is that of [NZ's]national soccer side, the All Whites, who in defiance of their nick-name turned out in a black strip in Sydney on Sunday. Their coach... is pushing for a continuation of the colour traditionally associated with [N]Z... sports teams[, saying]... it would do the side no harm to ride on the All Blacks' success. [A f]ormer coach... whose successful 1982 World Cup side sparked the All Whites tag, has no qualms about a possible permanent return to black... The term had taken hold after [the coach] happened to put his players in a white strip for a cup qualifier... "The media began calling them the All Whites and the name just stuck." ...[the current skipper] loves playing in black, and... says... it's time [NZ]soccer started concentrating on the future rather than always looking back to 1982. A soccer historian... says [N]Z soccer] teams were kitted in all black clothes until 1951 when white shorts were introduced. Those colours remained for the next 30 years. The colour issue is expected to go before Soccer [N]Z's council meeting on Saturday... Last year the Auckland rugby strip... [of] more than 100 years, was given an overhaul... At the time, the Auckland rugby chief executive... said the new design projected a new image for a new era of professionalism[, but] agreed that the jersey was designed to appeal to young people and would be competition for the Auckland Warriors rugby league strip in the marketplace... [B]lack gear was originally left off the kit list for the 1994 Commonwealth Games. There were fears the competitors would turn out in blue, green and white uniforms based on the colours of the team sponsor, The [N]Z Way. But the Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association backed down after protests and the competitors were able to wear traditional black.

...[a 'stroppy' French soccer star has shown] a new face to the world courtesy of some Maori-inspired make-up. [A] moko was sported by the retired Manchester United striker for a cover-shoot for *GQ* magazine. Following the furore when the Spice Girls did an impromptu haka this year, Maori spokes[people] were more subdued about the... cultural appropriation... [The striker] enjoyed a successful, if controversial, career, marred in 1995 by his kung fu kick of a spectator.

...Manchester United's [retired]French footballer... has long been idolised by football fans but a new painting which portrays him as the risen Christ is taking adulation a step too far, according to many clergy in Britain.

...[the striker who replaced the team's French footballer] shrugged off the jeers of fans who used to adore him to give Manchester United a 1-0 English premier soccer league victory at Newcastle... [The striker], who left Newcastle's St James' Park in a £7 million... deal... three years ago, headed the only goal... in the 67th minute, to restore the champions' four-point lead at the top of the table... United... have 43 points and are clear of Blackburn, who beat West Ham 3-0... A further point back are Chelsea, who won 4-1 at Sheffield Wednesday... Newcastle won the corresponding fixture 5-0 last season but never looked likely to repeat that incredible scoreline in the absence of... [their £15 million striker who], according to... University of Lincolnshire... researchers[, is – together with an AUSn pop star – one of]... the two famous figures most hero-worshipped by Britain's youngsters.

...Barnsley's... 20-year-old defender who has yet to play for the first team, [has]tested positive for banned amphetamines at a random training-ground test... [The] first player with an English premier league club to fail a drugs test... pleaded guilty... [and] was given a three-month ban.

...The heat is going on the harmless poppy seed roll after a Brazilian football player failed a dope test. [The]Internacional midfielder... tested positive for morphine after a 4-0 defeat by Santos in the Brazilian championship. [The midfielder] had eaten bread rolls covered in poppy seeds on the morning of the game. Internacional doctors carried out an experiment on four students, who also tested positive for the same drug after eating the same type of rolls. Players have been warned not to overdoughs on the rolls... [Incidentally, if] you like to play a bit of soccer to support your drug habit, it looks like... Charlton Athletic is the place to be. The London first division team sacked... [one defender who had] tested positive for cocaine and marijuana after training. [The defender was] the fifth Charlton player to fail a drugs test. [One of the other four] served a four-month suspension for taking cocaine, cannabis and ecstasy. This is not recommended preparation for a game.

...[A] FORMER England soccer midfielder... is finding it hard to settle at first division English club Middlesbrough because [the player] has to spend more time on the train than in training... [His new manager] said in a radio interview that the former Arsenal player, who has overcome cocaine and alcohol addiction in his career, was feeling the strain of... making a seven-hour daily round trip to attend training sessions... But,

speaking a day after the club sold [its] unsettled Italian striker[, the manager]... rebutted suggestions that [the midfielder] was so unhappy that [the player also] wanted to leave the club... [Meanwhile, Arsenal's manager has] admitted to increased concern about his players' commercial activities after omitting... [a striker -] who... appears in TV commercials, campaigns for the FA, lends his name to a gun amnesty appeal and is involved with books and videos... [but] has not scored in his last four matches... [-] from the side to face Coventry in the English League Cup overnight.

...English premier soccer league is set to sign a three-year deal for overseas TV rights that will bring in around £100 million... This is in addition to the £740 million contract with Sky and the BBC for domestic rights up until 2001.

...[the] American football team has never won a World Cup and, despite its avowed intention of competing in international soccer at the highest level, is many years away from matching Brazil, Germany and England. Yet last week Nike... signed an eight-year sponsorship deal with the US Soccer Federation worth \$194 million. For that, the Oregon company gets the right to supply America's team with kit, to organise Nike-sponsored matches, and to help cultivate the game at its grass roots. Nike sees its [move] as an investment for the time when football takes off in America, but laying out that sum illustrates the inflation gripping the global sports goods market. It also comes just a few days after Adidas, one of Nike's great rivals, piped it to sign a \$73m deal with the... [All Blacks], and a matter of months after Nike signed a record-breaking deal with the Brazil football team, worth about \$324m for 10 years... The spiral of big-money sponsorship deals is being watched by soccer's governing body in England... which is in the process of negotiating a new kit deal... The Nike-USFF deal will raise the FA's expectations... At its most basic, Nike and the other big groups... can throw huge sums of money into sponsorship because of the marketing return they get from being associated with sport's top teams and individuals. Now the market leaders believe the next step will be to get involved in the lucrative business of televised sport and creative rights. Nike took this goal to its logical end... when it acted as a broker in the biggest footballing transfer – the \$52m transfer of [a] Brazilian star... whom Nike sponsors, from Spain's Barcelona to Inter Milan... As well as kitting out Brazil and America... Nike... also supplies Italy, Holland and a clutch of other national football teams. Nike has invested \$1.6 billion in such contracts... Reebok, which spends about \$400m a year on sponsorship, was the market leader in the 1980s until overtaken by Nike... Nike's strategy has been simple. It realised early on that consumers wanted to wear the clothes and footwear they saw on their sporting heroes – even if it was just for a short walk in the park. So it began to sign up the big sports names. Its portfolio now reads like a pantheon of the world's sporting stars – [including]... the world tennis No 1 [and the top US]... basketball player...

EVERY now and then you'll hear that basketball is the [world's] most popular game... It's likely the person telling you will be well over 2m... You also hear from volleyballers that their game is the most popular sport... And tiddlywinks fans are sure their game is No 1 with 100 million exponents playing in a lost city beneath the ocean. All nonsense, of course. Soccer is the world's favourite game. Countries have been to war over it. Countries have postponed war because of it. The Queen hurried out of her... bath to see the slow motion replay of... [England's World Cup] goal against Argentina in 1986... Many theories abound to soccer's success. Mums and dads in the U[S]... love it for [these] reasons: • Their child doesn't have to be super tall, super heavy or super fast to play... it's a game for normal kids. • Their child is active, building co-ordination and fitness, unlike baseball and American football. • Their child doesn't break the bank to be clothed in helmets, pads or ice skates. • Their child can understand the rules. • Their child comes home in one piece... Strangely, soccer has yet to catch on as a spectator sport[in the US] but, hey, we're talking about a country that loves pro wrestling. Elsewhere, people flock to watch soccer... [The] book, *The Soccer Tribe*, suggests that a sport's popularity depends on: *Scoring ratio*: In basketball or cricket scoring is so regular that it becomes devalued. Each score is of little importance. Scores need to be scarce to be valuable but not too scarce as to be boring. A goal every 15-20 minutes is the right balance[(as soccer is 'all low scoring and ties', many leagues have begun to award 3 points for a win instead of 2 in an attempt to discourage teams from playing for draws – worth 1pt – and, as a consequence, encourage them to score more goals)]. *Play/stoppage ratio*: Sports need to flow to be popular. Cricket, baseball, gridiron, etc will always appeal only to a certain, strange kind of individual, perhaps those who are excited by boredom. Some breaks are necessary, just as action movies need occasional lulls, and soccer's 4-1 play stoppage ratio is ideal... *Dimension*: Soccer's one of the few sports where the ball may be passed through 360 degrees, on or off the ground. The options a player has are endless and so is the variety in play. *Technique*: More parts of the body are used to play the ball than in any other sport. Because there are so many skills to master, players can develop a fascination for the ball. Other sports[people] throw, hit, or kick the ball back and forward. A soccer player can amuse himself for hours juggling a football... *Speed*: Play can go from one end to the other in seconds. A near miss at one end becomes a goal at the other with one, long pass... *History*: Soccer, because of its simplicity, has been played longer than any other sport. Cave[people] were kicking mammoth bladders around for... a thousand years before they used tusks as bats and darts... Many sports incorporate a handful of the above qualities. Ice hockey, [the author of *The Soccer Tribe*] reckons, comes close to being the perfect game except that it's played in two dimensions, flat and ice. Ice is scarce in Africa. And the Middle East. Plus, it's expensive to play. I guess fans of all sports could argue that their sport is best. And that's great because for many, the best sport of all is arguing.

...“Only football has the power to solve the problems of international conflicts...” – Outgoing world soccer chief... on the value of the world game.

...FIFA is trying to set up a soccer friendly between Palestine and Israel... “If we succeed we will once more show the world that through football we can reach solutions that neither... politicians, business[people] or diplomats can achieve,”... FIFA[’s new] president... said... ■ In 1970, after El Salvador beat Honduras in a World Cup qualifier, the... countries severed diplomatic relations. A four-day war broke out in which... 10,000... died.

...[a] Costa Rican FIFA referee... claims [to have been] offered \$US50,000... to help the United Arab Emirates beat Japan in [their] World Cup qualifier... [The ref] rejected the offer straight away... The game ended 1-1 but Japan qualified after beating Iran 3-2 in a one-leg playoff while the UAE missed out... [The referee's claims follow an admission that] Belgian soccer club Anderlecht... [paid] \$42,904 to the... Spanish referee... of its 1984 UEFA Cup semifinal against England's Nottingham Forest... [-] Anderlecht won 3-0[, which] gave it a 3-2 aggregate victory and put it into a final it lost on penalties to Tottenham Hotspur[– and ‘a Hong Kong-born professional gambler being found guilty of plotting to sabotage an English premiership soccer match between Charlton and Liverpool last season in a multi-million pound Far Eastern betting scam. The gambler was the London-based fixer for a gang who plunged top English games into darkness by tampering with floodlights.’

...a former] Wimbledon soccer goalkeeper... charged with fixing matches for an Asian betting syndicate, regularly paid large sums of cash into a Swiss bank account after his side lost... [The chief] prosecutor... told a court in... Winchester... yesterday... that[the] Dutch-born... goal[keeper]... had made... deposits totalling £104,000... from October 1993 to November 1994... The prosecution accuses... [the goalkeeper of being] paid by... a... former... Wimbledon... striker... – who it says received a total of more than £250,000 from Indonesian accounts – and[a] Malaysian... All three have pleaded not guilty... [The goalkeeper claimed to have talked to the striker] only infrequently, but phone logs showed the two... called each other countless times during the period in question... [A former] Liverpool goalkeeper... faces separate match-rigging charges, which... the... Zimbabwean-born... [goalkeeper] denies, in the most sensational match-rigging case in Britain for 32 years.

...[for] the first time since 1946... none of the so-called “Big Five” of Manchester United, Liverpool, Everton, Tottenham and Arsenal have reached the fifth round, and it will be the first final without at least one of them since 1975[, as the]... English FA Cup soccer competition continued its remarkable season of surprises... [On Saturday,] second-division sides Chesterfield and Wrexham beat... premier-league... Nottingham Forest and... first-division Birmingham... respectively to reach the quarterfinals. Chesterfield reached the last eight for the first time in more than a century of trying... Premier league aristocrats Leeds also slipped up... beaten 2-3... at home... by first-division Portsmouth, leaving Wimbledon and Middlesbrough as the only top-flight sides definitely through to the quarter-finals... Wimbledon recovered from going behind at home to Queens Park Rangers... while Middlesbrough beat Manchester City... Wrexham... made their names as giantkillers when beating then league champions Arsenal in 1992... In league action, Arsenal missed the chance of going on top when... held to a goal-less draw at north London rivals Tottenham...

ONE of the most common addictions is gambling. I became... a flipball machine... addict... For 2c (a fortnight's pocket money) you flipped the ball and watched it do three circuits of the board before dropping into one of seven holes, two marked "lose" and five marked "win" (if you won, you got the 2c back; if you didn't win, you lost the 2c)... My Saturdays were spent collecting Coke bottles to feed my habit. I'd get the 2c refund on them at the shop with the flipball, wait for the guy to stack them out the back, then "collect" them again for another refund... Another common, but much stronger, addiction is soccer. The losses to the soccer strain of gambling are the same as for any other – money, family and, in the case of the Arsenal fan, credibility. Some people are addicted to FA Cup finals. They wake up every Sunday at 2am in a state of arousal and have to watch a rerun of a past final before they can get back to sleep. Psychologists say the addiction takes 53 weeks to wear off. Of course, a new cup final puts the addict back to square one. Soccer addiction takes many forms. If a [fan]'s "lads" lose (lads [the fan] has never met), [the fan] may shun loved ones until the next game, even if the next game is next season. Any family member stupid enough to say "it's only a game" deserves to be ignored. A young soccer addict is easy to spot. His pyjamas are not covered with Disney characters, but with league tables. In his prayers [the young addict] says "please protect mum and dad and Leeds from relegation". If untreated, the youngster will develop into a full-blown nutter who tattoos the name of his favourite player on to his forehead; backwards, so [the nutter] can read it in the mirror. The addiction leads to people becoming blind. Tottenham [Hotspur] fans truly believe they'll win the league and suffer nine months of torture as they watch their dreams, and money, go down the tube... But the fans bounce back every year, buoyed by the latest signings. Spurs fanatics [had] the double bonus of signing [one player and offloading another], but even at 40-1 they're a waste of money. Arsenal's shopping spree [included a Dutch player] and at \$5.50 the Gunners are good value.

...*"Good enough for the homeless but not an international striker."* [That was the comment of a]Dutch soccer striker... on his proposed £7000-a-week pay increase from Scottish club Celtic.

...[a] Dutch soccer fan died and dozens were injured yesterday in a pre-arranged battle between supporters of rival first-division clubs... Hundreds of Ajax Amsterdam and Feyenoord Rotterdam fans armed with baseball bats, clubs and knives streamed to waste ground along the A9 motorway near Amsterdam for a showdown before Feyenoord's match against AZ Alkmaar... Police said they had known the supporters planned to meet but were unable to prevent the bloodshed because the gangs chose their battleground at the last minute and spread the word by mobile phones... In London, the Football Association has launched an investigation into an outbreak of crowd violence at the first-division clash between... QPR... and Portsmouth. The FA could take disciplinary action against the clubs after some of the worst terrace fighting seen in English soccer in years... stopped... the... match... for 18 minutes as supporters, including children, spilled on to the pitch to escape the trouble.

...A trial has begun... [for] 14 Feyenoord Rotterdam fans charged with aiding and abetting [hu]manslaughter in the wake of a pitched battle with Ajax Amsterdam fans... The fight, involving 150 people, was prearranged via the Internet... If convicted, the[y]... face... six months' imprisonment.

...Two Olympiakos players... were treated for bruises and scratches and a police[officer] was injured during clashes after the away match with Ionikos Piraeus, won 1-0 by the visitors, when angry fans stormed the pitch... In Athens, riot police charged the stands and called off the game between Panathinaikos and Proodeftiki, which finished 5-0... More than 30 fans and riot police were injured... [In related news, a] leading Belgian professor is taking court action against soccer agents and clubs for "slavery" of Eastern European players. "That sort of slave trade in which someone is bought cheaply and sold expensively... totally violates the basic principle that people are not merchandise and labour is not a merchandise." [The]... labour law professor... said these practices violated Belgian law which prohibited the broking of jobs in exchange for money.

...EASTERN EUROPEANS MAY WELCOME the democracy and free market they have imported from their Western neighbors, but there's one import they could do without: football hooliganism. Even as Britain and Germany are finally winning the battle against the thuggery and mob rule that once plagued football matches in the West and made "hooligan" an international word, fans in Eastern Europe are running riot... Freed from the constraints of police-state rule, young working-class fans from Bratislava to Warsaw are adopting the... mindless violence that ruled the terraces of the West in the 1980s... In Bucharest earlier this month spectators showed up for a match between rivals Steaua and Bucharest Dinamo armed with smoke bombs, colored flares and soft-drink cans filled with gasoline. By game time a fire was blazing in the stands and police had to battle some 2,000 screaming fans to clear a way for firefighters. On the same day in Budapest visiting Ferencvaros fans set fire to their section of the Ujpest stadium and tore down perimeter fencing. Police used tear gas to subdue the crowd before the game could be continued... [The East] may... be heading for catastrophes of the kind that cost the lives of 39 spectators at the European Cup Final in Heysel Stadium in Brussels. That tragedy and others brought fundamental changes to the sport. Policies of control, containment and punishment for offenders were superseded by the introduction of all-seat stadia and stricter – and more expensive – ticketing. That prevented troublemakers from forming gangs on the terraces. They also made the sport more attractive to families and the middle class – thereby discouraging the working-class youths who had been at the core of the violence... According to... a researcher at the... Centre for Football Research in England, "there is a kind of consensus in Europe... that hooliganism revolves around youth... and their search for identity." Identification may be at the heart of the problem, but it's also one way to stop it. Police in Hungary are following the British example of using video cameras inside the grounds to pick out ringleaders, and after the street battles in... April[during] the local derby between Polonia Warsaw and Legia Warsaw[which] saw supporters set fire to a rival's clubhouse... 37 police[officers] injured and 10 police cars wrecked... the clubs involved were ordered to introduce identity cards for their fans. International censure has... had limited effect. UEFA... fined Ferencvaros for their fans' racist behavior and regulates stadia where European matches are played, but still the violence continues.

...WHAT did [the blind person] say about the cheese grater [it received for]Christmas? "That's the most violent novel I've read in years." ...*Among the Thugs* [is] a book about the... [author]'s time spent with Manchester United fans on a trip to Italy. Now that's a violent book, certainly more violent than a cheese grater, and perhaps even as violent as a chainsaw. The author, an American, discovers that after spending time with the hooligans, [the author] becomes more like them. The environment, therefore, is largely to blame for the violence associated with European soccer fans. I was at White Hart Lane some years ago to watch Spurs play Coventry. Each side, incidentally, had four black players. We were in the family area of the ground, where mums and dads and kids sat quietly and watched the game. The singing and chanting happened in other parts of the ground. Only one person was getting into it vocally, a burly shaven-headed chap, who I'll call Mowgli because his behaviour suggested [the chap] was raised in the jungle by a pack of pit-bulls. "Break the black (bleep's) (bleeping) leg! ...You black (bleeper). Can't you keep the (bleeping) ball on the (bleeping) park?" The barrage of racist[filth] continued non-stop from first whistle to last, to the obvious discomfort of all around. No one said anything, presumably because they didn't have time to visit the hospital on the way home. In the surrounding crowd were a good percentage of blacks, including two young... boys right in front of Mowgli. Eventually, one [hu]man could take no more and left with his daughter. On the way out, [the human] spoke to a steward and pointed at Mowgli... obviously complaining. Mowgli saw this and was incensed. "Come 'ere you!" [Mowgli yelled as Mowgli] started clambering over the seats. "I'll (bleep) you up!" "Leave him...," Mowgli's girlfriend told him, holding him back. "[The human] doesn't understand football." Then [the girlfriend] yelled after the departing [hu]man, "What d'you fink this is? Bingo?" At that point I realised I didn't understand football either. Not the way these people did. Violence is becoming more and more acceptable in society, and therefore in soccer. People become desensitised to it. In my uncle Jim's day, if you threw a punch you were off. No two ways about it. And you never, ever, brought an opponent down on purpose. Today, a punch might be described as "handbags at 10 paces" and overlooked. If a player drags a striker down, [the player] "had to do it". Or, if a player calls the ref "a bloody disgrace" because [the ref] gave a throw-in the wrong way, the ref allows it because [the ref]'ll be abused if [the ref] takes action... What's the message kids get if they see Wile E Coyote fall on his head from

100m on Saturday morning, then [the Warriors' No 7] speartackled in the afternoon? They'll think "Road Runner can do it, so can the Broncos, and so can I." Thankfully, soccer's nowhere near the level of unpleasantness seen in other codes, but violence – verbal and physical – still rears its ugly head at too many games. The authorities should pretend it's a head poking out the bottom of a ruck and stamp on it...

[Italian] government and soccer officials who met to discuss rising violence at stadiums... are considering... England's methods of combating hooliganism... "The objective is to prevent the problems of Italian society from finding an outlet through violence inside the stadiums." Recent incidents... [included fans clashing] with police at Bologna last week after an Italian Cup semifinal match. Last Sunday, Fiorentina fans threw rocks at the Juventus team bus, breaking four windows. Two weeks ago, metal objects were tossed from the stands during Reggiana's home game against AC Parma. A solution will be found... said... [the] Italian League president... "In England, where there is a violent society, they have resolved the problem of the hooligans... Why shouldn't we be able to do the same? ...I'm also encouraged by the U[S] example, where there is a very violent society, but calm stadiums."

...England will take a record 7000 fans to Rome for next month's World Cup qualifying showdown with Italy, raising a huge security headache for Italian police. The national criminal intelligence service, which monitors soccer hooliganism in Britain, said it will send undercover officers to help Italian authorities to spot any known troublemakers. Thanks to an emphatic 4-0 win over Moldova on Thursday, the English will need only a draw against Italy to qualify for next year's World Cup finals in France.

...700 known English hooligans... – including 60-70 hard-core trouble-makers – ...will be travelling to Rome for Sunday's crucial World Cup qualifier... a high-ranking police official has confirmed... About 10,000 England fans are expected in Rome for the game, which... Italy must win.

...Italian police in riot gear patrolled parts of Rome yesterday to prevent further violence by soccer fans after clashes flared earlier as England and Italy battled it out in a World Cup qualifier match. At least one police[officer] and five English fans were injured... at the Olympic stadium... [as] England booked a passage to the... finals... by drawing 0-0... [in front of] 80,000 spectators... During the game baton-wielding police pushed about 200 English supporters away from a bank of Italian fans after the two groups started hurling plastic chair seats and water bottles at each other. The stadium violence followed pitched clashes earlier in the day when police in riot gear charged into unruly English fans in two central Rome squares... To prevent incidents after the match, Italian fans were let out of the stadium immediately, while English spectators were guarded... and told to wait in the stands for more than two hours... More than 40 English fans have been arrested or detained... Several Italian youths have also been held. Several hundred English fans were returned home on charter flights... [Some of the] arrested English... fans... say Italian police beat them. They also allege that officers forced them to confess to crimes they had not committed... England fans have a fearsome reputation in Italy, where many people still recall the 1985 Heysel stadium disaster.

...[the] families of 78 Guatemalans crushed to death in an overcrowded stadium at a World Cup qualifier last year have received a cheque for \$US6500... each from Fifa, the international soccer governing body.

...FIFA announced in Germany today... [that the] first world club championship for soccer clubs will... include the best team from each continent, the champion of the hosts and the winner of a contest between teams from Europe and South America.

...N[Z] club sides have a sniff of a chance of taking on soccer giants like Liverpool, Ajax and Juventus with the advent of the world club championship. FIFA... has approved the competition, which will have its finals in July 1999. The champion teams from each nation in FIFA's six confederations – Europe, Asia, Africa, South America, Oceania, and the North and Central American area – will play off against their regional counterparts to find the confederation champion side to contest the finals. For example, Borussia Dortmund, as holders of the European Champions Cup, would be Europe's representatives... The Oceania play-offs are scheduled to take place in late 1998. Clubs in the 1997/98 Summer National League will have an even greater incentive to win the competition this time round as they will represent N[Z] in the regional showdown... Initially, N[Z] will have just one team in the Oceania play-offs. But should the Auckland-based entry bidding to become part of the A[US]n Summer League win that competition, then two teams from this country would contest the confederation play-offs.

...Iranian soccer fans have been going wild this week after their team qualified for the World Cup by drawing 2-2 with A[US] in Melbourne. When their return flight stopped over in Dubai, 20,000 ex-pat Iranians turned out to salute their heroes. Thousands of fans jammed Tehran airport on their return and 70,000 crammed into the capital's Azadi stadium to hail the team... According to experienced commentators, the Middle East has not witnessed such scenes of mass jubilation since the invention of the moustache comb.

...[the Socceroos' coach] may be coaching Nigeria in the World Cup next year – and staying as boss of A[US]. An agent claiming to represent the Nigerian FA... [asked him] to coach them for two months for... £500,000. [The Soccer AUS] chief... could allow [his coach] time off to take up the post.

...[an] English soccer star... could be tempted to cross the Atlantic and join the U[S] competition after next year's World Cup. What's the attraction? Fame, of course. [His] reasoning is: "In America, once your famous, you're famous for life. And they make great pina colodas!"

...[a] Brazilian... midfielder... has signed for Barcelona. The Catalan club paid \$40 million to buy out [the Brazilian]'s contract with Deportivo La Coruna, the most expensive transfer between two Spanish clubs.

...Italian football clubs pride themselves on producing Europe's most passionate fans. Now, one year after the Government allowed the formerly non-profit sports teams to make money, they are vying for an equally devoted following among international investors. At least seven of the 18 Serie A Italian football clubs said they wanted to sell shares on the London or Milan stock exchanges... One of the clubs, Rome-based Lazio, has already entered international financial markets, raising 50 billion lira... this week in a global bond offering... The Italian Borsa's new private owners proposed this week to relax the exchange's rule that companies must show three consecutive years profits before listing... Many Italian clubs seeking a stock market listing have... [racked] up losses this year. But they are owned by big companies with deep pockets. The director of AC Milan... said his club, which lost 27 billion lira in the 1997 fiscal year to June, will choose the Italian Stock Exchange once it returns to profit.

...[AC Milan's] president... whose fortune helped build the most successful European soccer side of the last 10 years, was sentenced to 16 months' jail for false accounting. But a judge said yesterday [that the president] would not have to serve the term. Under Italian law sentences of under two years are rarely served. Instead... the former [PM] and one of Italy's richest [people], was fined 60 million lira... later reduced to 10 million lira.

...AC Milan's French international soccer midfielder... wrote off his Ferrari in a high speed crash on Monday night but escaped uninjured... The accident happened on the same road on which [hi]s Milan and French team mate... wrote of [it]s Mercedes last month. [His mate] was also unhurt.

...[its players all came through the game unscathed, but c]ompetition favourites Chelsea suffered an embarrassing 3-2 defeat at the hands of Norwegian minnows Tromso in a farcical European Cup Winners Cup second-round first-leg soccer match deep in the Arctic Circle yesterday. Chelsea failed miserably to come to terms with a terrible pitch, sub-zero temperatures and a second half played in driving snow. Only two late goals... spared the English side a more humiliating defeat. Chelsea are riding high in the English premier league, while... the part-timers from... Tromso face relegation... [A furious] Chelsea coach... claimed the game should never have gone ahead... The second half was barely visible as heavy snow obliterated the pitch markings, but the game was completed, albeit with regular stops to sweep the lines clear.

...NO ONE ever said it was going to be easy being a [gal] managing a top English soccer team... [The 28-year-old who] took over as managing director of Birmingham City in 1993... [says gaining] the players' respect... was [the hardest part]. The first time [it] went to an away game on the team bus... "...a player shouted, 'I can see your tits from here!' I replied 'Oh really? Well, when I sell you to Crewe you won't be able to see them from there.'..." [It] has... received floods of lucrative offers from [guys'] magazines to be a pin-up girl... *Hustler* magazine... offered \$271,500... to do

a series of wet T-shirt and wet-pants shots... "I said... I haven't got any tits, and... I can't be bothered." ...[the managing director, who] is married to a player with rival division one club West Bromwich Albion... was appointed to run the club by its owner, the millionaire publisher... who made his money out of the daily and Sunday *Sport* newspapers which are famous in Britain for their combination of the salacious and the bizarre.

...[a player 'has been thrown out of the Massey University Staff soccer team by officialdom because it is a gal. The ruling was made by Fifa, after a complaint from an opposing team. Fifa's ruling has prompted a complaint from her teammates to the Human Rights Commission. The post-doctoral fellow in Massey's geography department – who came to NZ from Canada 10 months ago after playing top-level gals' soccer for 2 years in Canada – believes it is her right to choose which team to play for, having decided not to switch to the Manawatu gals' league in favour of playing alongside colleagues. A letter of protest was lodged by Marist after Massey beat Marist last month. The letter was passed on to Soccer NZ, who in turn asked for clarification from Fifa. The reply from Fifa's general secretary said: "It is absolutely forbidden to allow a mixed team to participate in an official competition." The Manawatu Football Association president confirmed the Massey team had inquired pre-season about the situation. "I didn't say yes, you can play, I just said there was nothing in the rules which said a gal couldn't play." On a positive note, approval has been given for a] **\$1.2 million soccer academy in Auckland, funded by... Fifa...**

THE N[Z] under 17 World Cup soccer side did everything right. They lived and breathed soccer for the past six months. They had the most thorough professional preparations ever given to a N[Z] youth side. The boys were fitter and sharper than they've ever been in their lives. And they went to the youth World Cup and got their butts kicked... [T]he boys beat A[US], one of the best junior sides in the world, to qualify for the finals. On paper, that result suggested the Kiwis would be a match for anyone they encountered... Unfortunately, soccer's not played on paper. [In NZ it's] played on... muddy pitches like the one in Christchurch, which enabled the heart and guts of the Kiwi kids to overcome the skills and speed of the Aussies[; elsewhere it's played on bumpy], barren wastelands that develop excellent touch and razor sharp reflexes... [or beaches], which develops strong legs... [or sun]-scorched surfaces under searing skies... that cause cold weather players to melt like lollipops... There are so many variables to consider when playing international soccer, and the only way to learn about them is to experience them. Beating A[US] on home soil was brilliant. But Mali, Mexico and Spain, in Egypt, is a whole new ball game. Most of the young [players] the Kiwis encountered last week have played more than 100 international matches. Our most experienced had four, plus a few against such powers as Western Samoa... It's probably for the best though. If the Kiwis had gained a result or two, the authorities from whom the codes ask money to develop their sport would have probably said: "Money? What for? You've just shown you can do it on a shoestring, so here's another one to see you through to 1999... Next!"

...[the former All White's] on-field ability has never been questioned. His naming by... Fifa as its Oceania player of the decade – an award [the player] will receive at a glittering ceremony in Germany early next year – is testimony to his standing among the world's great players. But in naming him as coach of the national under-17 team for the World Youth Cup in 1999, is Soccer N[Z] asking him to run before [the player] can walk? It is a huge ask for [an inexperienced coach] to take over the reins of a team which will be under the microscope and expected to justify Fifa's decision in awarding this country its fifth biggest tournament. Granted, [the player] has already told Soccer N[Z] bosses of his intention to call [on his brother... who has had coaching experience in Europe... [The new coach] will also work with [a former All Whites teammate], who had a hands-on role in getting the 1997 team to their finals in Egypt... Out of the picture is the former under-17 supremo... "Obviously [the former under-17 coach] is unhappy, but [that person is also] contracted as the national coach and the national director of coaching. [That person] can't possibly do it all..." Is Soccer N[Z] heading for yet another of its messy off-field wrangles? ...Hopefully all will fall quickly into place, as N[Z] Soccer must succeed in this project. The eyes of the world will be on [the new coach] and his campaign to prove [the player] can coach as well as [it] played. Great players have not always made great coaches – let us hope [this one] is not being pushed too far, too quickly.

...England have jumped to [4th, 8] places higher than they finished last year, in Fifa's end-of-year world rankings issued yesterday, behind Brazil, Germany and the Czech Republic. However, the rankings throw up their usual inconsistencies. [23] of the 1998 World Cup qualifiers are in the top 30, but the other nine are spread from 31st-placed South Africa to Nigeria... at 71st... [NZ] are ranked 120th among the '192 teams in Fifa's world'.

...yesterday the chairperson] of the World Cup organising committee, said players on two yellow card bookings would be free to play in their country's opening matches in the finals, but those sent off would not. Three other matters were dealt with by the committee yesterday – financial rewards for the finalists, trouble at the Italy-England match in Rome on October 11 and a doping offence – the only one reported in any of the 643 qualifiers. Each of the finalists will receive one million Swiss francs... for every match played in the finals and in addition each finalist would receive 750,000 Swiss francs towards their costs... FIFA's disciplinary committee will deal with [the] Ukrainian... who tested positive... in the match against Croatia on October 29]. The player has already been] suspended by the Ukrainian F.A. until the end of 1999... FIFA also said that "lessons needed to be learned with regard to control of tickets to fans through unauthorised sources" following... the... crowd trouble... in Rome.

...[the] increasingly desperate English [FA] is mounting an undercover operation... to stop hooligans disrupting the World Cup... A senior copper has been appointed to mainstream police infiltration of groups of hard core hooligans. Far be it for me to say they would fit right in... Is that a truncheon up your Liverpool jersey or are you just pleased to see me?

...World Cup fever is building in France, with the 10 cities hosting matches competing to provide the best tourist-attracting logo... - 1997

The possible postponement of the Junior World Cup soccer finals, scheduled to be played in N[Z] in February 1999, could be a windfall for Dunedin... Fifa wants Soccer N[Z] to delay holding the finals until October next year[. However, at this time] accommodation in Auckland is expected to be tight because of the America's Cup, so it's likely Carisbrook would receive more than the six round games and quarter-final planned at present. The world youth finals, ranked fourth biggest sporting event globally, will be televised to millions of viewers worldwide.

...[for an example of what Dunedin and] Auckland need... to cater for major sporting events, day or night and in any weather[, take] a look at Paris' new 80,000-seat Stade de France which will host, among other things, the opening soccer match of the [Senior]World Cup on June 10 and the final on July 12. The first soccer game for the plush stadium is the clash between France and Spain on January 28.

...It was a champagne baptism yesterday for the Stade de France... [France's] President... inaugurated the... stadium and World Cup participants France and Spain tested the tender turf. All eyes were fixed on the dazzling light show and daring trapeze artists. The \$NZ770m stadium boasts all the latest amenities and shopping facilities, but is also well known for labour disputes, controversy over building and other contracts, and for a lack of car parking space. France... beat Spain 1-0... [By the way,] Iran's journey, via Melbourne, to the... World Cup... finals... was promoted from the sports pages after the draw for the first rounds[placed] Iran and the U[S] in the same group. If there need be any reminder of the political heat implicit in such a pairing, consider the comment of American soccer's executive director[who] expects it to be... "the mother of all games." Said an Iranian player: "At the World Cup, we will get what is our right, and help our nation hold its head up high." ...Iran's road to France was not a smooth one. But even disastrous results could not prepare... [most Iranians] for the idea that a... non-Muslim... coach might be hired... to lead the Iranian team... But it came to pass. The Iranian coaching staff were sacked. The Brazilian... who had just parted company with Costa Rica, was hired – and Iran's home-and-away draws with A[US] earned it the place in France that... gave Iranians the chance to see their country associated with a prestigious event instead of terrorism and fundamentalism... If that shows sport as a possible catalyst for positive social relations, recent events in the U[S] send a different message. As the *Washington Post* asks in an editorial, what would happen to any employee who started to choke and threatened to kill a nagging boss before being pulled off by fellow employees – only to repeat the performance 20 minutes later? No surprise that the individual was suspended and, when [the individual] showed little remorse and refused to cooperate with an investigation, his employer

terminated his contract... [Such an event occurred in reality in the] basketball... industry... with a coach on the receiving end of the attention of an NBA player... Basketball's commissioner... banned [the player] for a year. Any other such incident and that would be the end of it – if, of course, the individual did not end up in court on assault charges. Not in basketball. [The player], looking very contrite, holds a press conference, backed by a legal team numbering nine, including the... star lawyer [who successfully defended a black sports star (r:p1414, ln3) charged with murdering two people, one of whom was his wife]. Amazing what losing \$US25 million can do to a thug... No surprise, with such a line-up, that the[legal] team has resorted to allegations of lack of due process and racism ([the player] is black, the coach is white, reflecting the colour of American basketball)...

[The British] Professional Footballers' Association is investigating allegations from [an Israeli who claims to have been] subjected to racial abuse during an FA Cup tie. The West Ham midfielder accused Blackburn players of making anti-Semitic remarks during a 2-all draw 10 days ago. [A Blackburn player], who was sent off in the fifth round match... for elbowing [him] in the face, has threatened legal action if... accused of being involved in the alleged abuse. West Ham advanced to the sixth round... after beating Blackburn in the replay on penalties – no goals having been scored in two hours' play. Favourites Manchester United suffered a shock loss... [Another shock for the club's fans was that a] media magnate, who uses control of sports in his bid for global satellite [TV] dominance, is reported to be paying up to £575 m... for... Manchester United... The *Daily Telegraph* said [the magnate] would take control of the club through his satellite television group, BSkyB. [The magnate] is said to have struck a deal with... Manchester United's chief executive and chair[person], who will sell his 14[%] stake for... £80 m... Manchester United was floated on the London stock market in 1991 for £47 m... Its value on Friday was... £412.66 m... [The magnate] recently bought the LA Dodgers... baseball [team]...

English soccer c[lub] Arsenal have opened talks with media company Carlton Communications about possible co-operation a day after Manchester United... agreed [to] a \$US1 billion... takeover by... BSkyB... London's *Evening Standard* said the two were discussing a possible £275 million takeover[. The claims caused Arsenal's 'shares to rise 38% in value in one day'].

...BSkyB's £623 million... bid for the Manchester United Soccer club will be waved through by the Department of Trade and Industry, but a number of stringent conditions... aimed at preventing [BSkyB's owner from] using new leverage over the game to benefit his broadcasting interests... will be attached... [In the meantime,] English premier league clubs have reacted with fury and frustration to Manchester United's decision to pull out of next season's FA Cup. United will not defend the historic trophy but instead travel to Brazil next January for the first world club championship... [The manager] who steered United to the premier league title plus the FA and European Cups last season, said United needed to take part in January's tournament... [but] the congested fixture list made it impossible for United to fulfill their obligations in each of the domestic competitions... [Derby's] manager... summed up the feelings of the other 19 premier league clubs when [it] said United should take part in the 127-year-old FA Cup. "This is the thin edge of the wedge... It's the first time a famous domestic competition like the FA Cup has been treated in this way." ...United's mid-winter trip to Brazil will mean two premier league matches and a possible League Cup semifinal will have to be rescheduled. The fourth round of the FA Cup was scheduled at the same time as the world club championship... United have maintained the premier league should be reduced from 20 to 18 teams and [the club's chairperson] has restated their argument.

...Manchester United might after all play in next season's FA Cup. *The Observer* claimed that in secret talks with the F[A], United had agreed the club withdraw from the League Cup, play both the [3rd and 4]th round of the FA Cup in December and bring forward some premier league games.

...Man[U – which has confirmed that it won't contest next year's FA Cup – dwarfs] the earnings power of its closest rivals in the Spanish and Italian soccer elite by a clear \$NZ91.32 m... The... club generated \$266m in income from all sources in 1997[. which also makes it the 'most valuable sports franchise in the world']... Of the top 20 clubs, only Flamengo of Brazil in 11th place was non-European... [Incidentally], a small newspaper piece may have slipped by without notice this week. As England and Argentina were heading for their crucial World Cup match at St Etienne, [a former Argentina No 10] felt obliged to set the record straight – even if it was 12 years too late. No stranger to ego-enhancing, and some other enhancing habits since, [the No 10] reportedly told an English Sunday tabloid that [it] was really sorry about his infamous "hand of God" trick which gave Argentina a 2-1 win over England in an equally vital World Cup match at the 1986 World Cup... That was the time when [the No 10 and England's] goalkeeper... went after a high ball and as [the No 10] leaped up the ball just happened to be deflected into the... [goal], without touching anything below his upstretched arm. The stocky No 10 went into his victorious tail-spin, while every right-minded English[person] screamed for justice that never came. Now that [the No 10] has, as they used to say in western movies, fessed-up, the little side-winder may have set a dangerous trend. Somewhere in Scotland, there is doubtless a youngster searching in an attic for a letter from his great-granddad who refereed the Wales-N[Z] rugby match at Cardiff on December 16, 1905... saying... [that it] had been roped into refereeing these colonials while on a Christmas shopping expedition south of the border. At a critical stage of the match, the letter will read, [great-granddad] slipped over ("owing to the fact I left my boots behind I had to wear my street shoes which had awfu' slippery soles")... [and, consequently,] arrived late at the point where one of the [NZers] thought it] had scored a try. [The ref] did not see the act and so did not award the try. The letter will end with [great-granddad] noting that the Welsh said [it] had made the right decision. And was [the ref] short of a gold watch as a Christmas present? ...We can probably also expect an abject apology from [a pair of AUSn] brothers... about that Melbourne mully-grubber – the time they were the only two cricketers in the whole world who thought [that a lower-order NZ batter] would be able to hit a six at the MCG. Why disturb history? These are the quirky things that make sport special, that create yarns and allow some spleen venting. They are the essential part of the human sporting drama. As long as they happen to other countries.

...IT'S probable [that a Manchester United midfielder] is having nightmares these days after his sending-off against Argentina was a major factor in England's second round loss at the World Cup soccer finals in France. The... player, [who is] engaged to marry... [Posh Spice] of the Spice Girls pop group, won't be sleeping any easier with revelations [that the 23-year-old] is England's highest paid footballer, earning \$[NZ]24.3 million a year. [*Stupid Spice*] just nudges out his England skipper [– the Newcastle striker – who earns \$]23.25m... but the pair languish well behind the Brazilian... [quartet from] Inter Milan... Real Betis... Barcelona... and... Real Madrid... [who earn] \$61.5m... \$56.25m... \$53.25m... [and '\$47.55m] respectively. In fifth place is one of Juventus' Italians (\$45.75m); one of Arsenal's Dutch players is sixth (\$41.25m); another Italian, this time from Bologna, is seventh (\$32.25m); AC Milan's Liberian is eighth (\$27.75m); the two English players are at ninth and tenth.'

...The world's highest-paid soccer player, who is] worshipped at his Italian club Inter Milan for his soccer skills, is to appear as Christ on a provocative new billboard. The poster, unveiled by Italian tyre company Pirelli, shows [the striker] with arms outstretched, gazing down on Rio de Janeiro in an imitation of the huge statue of Christ the Redeemer which overlooks the Brazilian city... Pirelli dismissed charges the poster was blasphemous... [The player – who is currently trying to emulate his hero in 'helping Brazil win the World Cup twice' – was unavailable for comment yesterday as his team prepared for its World Cup final against France. In related news, Manchester United's] manager... expressed fears for the safety of [the club's highest paid player] after the midfielder became the target of abuse following England's soccer World Cup exit. And... [the player's father said his son] would consider a move abroad if the abuse carried on.

...[a] British bookmaker has taken its biggest single sporting bet – \$772,000 – on Brazil beating France in the World Cup final in 90 minutes' play. It is an even-money bet, so if Brazil wins, the lucky punter will make \$772,000 profit. The bookmaker, however, will have a lot more to pay out if Brazil emerges triumphant. A Birmingham florist will land \$1.7m, making him the biggest ever winner from a British bookmaker, having staked \$58,000 coupling a Brazil success with Arsenal winning the English Premiership, which it duly achieved in March. In 1994 [the florist] won \$1.2m when Brazil clinched the trophy, having staked a \$41,000 accumulator bet.

...[the] French linchpin... earned his billing as national hero in yesterday's World Cup soccer final, scoring two goals in France's 3-0 demolition of defending champions Brazil... the first player to score two goals in the final since... 1978... After losing three finals in as many years – in the Uefa Cup with Girondins Bordeaux in 1996 and then two in succession in the European Cup with Juventus – [the hero] heard some say that [it] was not a [perso]n for great occasions... [It was] France's first World Cup triumph... In scenes probably not witnessed since liberation in 1944, millions swarmed into the streets to dance, sing and wave red-white-and-blue French flags. More than a million people packed into the Champs Elysees to celebrate what most French fans had hardly conceived possible when the World Cup finals started a month ago... Car horns blared, church bells rang and people danced in fountains across a nation which may not go to bed before Bastille Day, the national holiday today. Others yelled "[linchpin] for President"... France is traditionally reserved about football and its fans were urged by the team to live up in the stadiums. But the nation has surprised commentators with the outpouring of joy over its soccer success and intellectuals are already talking about the victory changing the face of France. Across the other side of the Atlantic, Brazilians wept as the defeat hit hard where there is little but soccer to boost national pride. On Rio de Janeiro's famous Copacabana Beach, hundreds of people clung to each other in pouring rain and sobbed uncontrollably... Brazilians, who have suffered years of economic chaos and grinding poverty... had prayed hard for a fifth World Cup title. The loss in Paris was felt like a jolt across Latin America, where the poor-versus-rich aspect of the Brazil-France final found deep resonance. Mexican radio commentators even wondered whether Brazil had been bought off. "How can such a world-class team perform so badly. Were they paid off?"

...The World Cup... cost Swiss employers an estimated \$US190 million... as workers shun[ned] the workplace for the television, says a study by the University of St Gallen. [Its d]irector... said... "A World Cup is always important to people. It can brighten the atmosphere and raise spirits."

...THE soccer World Cup made a provisional profit of \$165.53 million, [the] French organising committee president... has announced. [The president] believed the profits should go to the 10 host cities with some of the money used to build sport grounds in the suburbs. [However, the] French federation chair[perso]n... argued the profits should be handed over to the federation and kept within football.

...THE just finished... World Cup has underlined the truly global nature of the world's most popular sport... played to international standard in virtually every country... Fiji played for a place in the finals... Jamaica made it to the finals. No other game of football comes close to achieving [soccer's] global appeal... Rugby league is played to international level in just a handful of countries... A[US]n rules, American football, Canadian football and Gaelic football are played in just a single country each... [U]nion is the only other form of football with any pretension to global status.

...Sports fever 'turns the French into cretins'... FRANCE is becoming more stupid and its political life is being destroyed because of... sport, according to a leading French philosopher[, who]... suggests it would be a terrible misfortune if Paris succeeded in its campaign to host the 2008 Olympic Games – a bid launched with great media hype and thousands of car stickers bearing the legend "Paris 2008 – Oui!" [The philosopher] says the impact of sport has been totalitarian and has "impoverished the lives and intelligence of millions of [guys]." A crime has taken place "against society and against political life,"... argues[the philosopher, who adds that]... the 1.5 million people who celebrated on the Champs Elysees the victory of France's football team in the[Soccer] World Cup "gave the impression of having really come alive," but in fact they were all victims – assassinated by the woeful impact of sport. "Political life has been discredited by all the legal cases and corruption, while all the opinion polls put sports[people]... on the summits of collective admiration," laments [the philosopher], an editor at the influential philosophical review *Les Temps Modernes*. Even scandals – the exposure of drug-taking in the Tour de France, footballers with false passports, rigged matches – have not undermined this admiration. In fact, [the philosopher] argues, scandals have become fodder for endless chat about sport... Ever since France won the World Cup... at the Stade de France... the country has become obsessed with sport. Historically, French teams seldom did well internationally – their record in the Olympic Games before 1996 was feeble (in 1976, for instance, France came 18th), but this changed at Atlanta... when the French won 15 gold medals. As a result of such triumphs, sport often dominates conversations in bars and even seeps into the columns of newspapers such as *Le Monde* and *Liberation*, which hitherto gave sport a wide berth. When France's handball team won the world championship in February a headline ran: "Beaux comme des dieux ('As fine as gods')." When a French team won the European [gals'] basketball championship in April, they were feted as national heroes... Ever since goalkeeping existentialist writer Albert Camus picked his last ball out of the back of the net more than 50 years ago, philosophers haven't had much time for sport. [An] Italian philosopher... wrote an essay in which [it confessed it] could not share his country's passion for football. But [the French philosoph]er's diatribe goes much further – his is a detailed diagnosis of how sport has corrupted French life[, drawing]... a parallel with Marx's description of religion as the "opium of the people," arguing that sport is worse than opium. But why shouldn't the rise of sport be a good thing? After all, one of the most symbolic moments in the country's public life came when a French multi-racial team lifted the World Cup... Their triumph took the wind out of the extreme Right's sails and did wonders for race relations.

...[the US] beat China 5-4 on penalties to win the[gals'] World Cup soccer final yesterday after the teams finished the final 0-0 after extra time... sending the crowd of 90,185 – a 'record attendance for a gals' sporting event' – at the Rose Bowl into a frenzy... The victory capped a three-week love affair between the U[S] public and their team. "The whole country is caught up," said[the US] President... who was among the crowd. Brazil claimed third place in a similar result by beating Norway 5-4 after the two sides also played to a scoreless draw in regulation time.

...The African Football Confederation... has acknowledged South Africa's soccer 2006 World Cup bid could be damaged without the support of the entire continent. The CAF wants... Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria and Ghana[, who] have all tabled rival bids... to withdraw and unite behind South Africa... [In local news, our] top young soccer players were reeling last night after learning they had lost their guaranteed place in next year's world youth tournament. The teenagers expected to qualify automatically... But the Youth All Whites lost this right as hosts when... Fifa, suddenly pulled the plug on N[Z] holding the tournament. Chile is now believed to be the host[, which means that] to qualify, the N[Z] team must win the Oceania tournament... The change of venue has been a huge blow to the young players, many of whom left their home towns this year so they could train with the Auckland-based squad [at the new soccer academy]... It is understood that Fifa pulled the plug after the Soccer N[Z] general manager... and the Hillary Commission chief executive... agreed at a meeting in Zurich this week that staging the tournament here in November next year was not in the best interests of the game... N[Z] would not get the crowds if the tournament went ahead at that time because it would clash with the... America's Cup yachting challenge. N[Z] has been offered the 2003 tournament.

...Just when Soccer N[Z] (NZS) thought things could not get worse, they did... [T]he decision not to stage next year's Auckland-based World Youth tournament is a body blow. This was the chance to sell soccer to N[Z]'s public, and to sell NZ as a country to the world... But it has been obvious for some time there were problems... [The] tournament director... said yesterday that the impact of playing the tournament in the Southern Hemisphere for the first time had not been fully understood by the... European nations[, who] wanted to switch the tournament from February-March to November. [NZ]S... agreed, with some provisos, that they would attempt to accommodate such a change... "I said all along it would be difficult to re-position the tournament... Fifa complimented us on our professionalism and integrity. Underwriting the costs, estimated at \$1.3 million [to make such a switch] was not seen as a problem... In the end our honesty [in saying November 1999 might not be the best time to play in N[Z] given the conflict of other sports] backfired on us."

...IMAGINE how a five-year-old feels, waking on Christmas Day, his little heart pounding merrily in his chest, excited beyond words. [The child] rushes into the lounge, expecting to find a glittering tree and a stack of presents wrapped in colourful paper and ribbons. Instead there's his dad laughing: "Fooled you! No more Christmases mate. There's no Santa either. It's all a joke." The little fellow would be dazed at first, then angry, then simply crushed. That's how many people around N[Z] are feeling after the under-17 World Cup was taken from us. But at least there's the

consolation [NZS]'s financial worries are over because[, much]... like... movie stars... are sued for millions if they pull out of a deal to star in a film[, NZS will] be able to sue someone for enough money to clear all its debts... Unless, of course, [NZS] agreed the tournament shouldn't be held here. That's hard to believe... Our blokes in Zurich should have held to [the] position... that... "You agreed to February-March and that's when it'll be."

...Damage control was still very much the name of the game yesterday as N[Z]S... officials continued their battle to ensure the 1999 World Youth Championships would go ahead here... The stand-off continues between... [NZS, whose] chief executive... has been handed a contract to run the tournament... and [a former All White], who maintains... the okay... to organise and run the tournament... was given [to him] last September... It is understood... [that the] Oceania Confederation president... was determined a solution be found without the need to go to this morning's scheduled High Court hearing. [The president] was perturbed to learn yesterday that news of the stand-off had reached Fifa headquarters in Zurich... While [Fifa's] director of communications... was unaware of any "internal difficulties" and agreed... NZS... had "heaps of time" to organise the tournament, [the president] is concerned the chair[perso]n of Fifa's youth committee... would act quickly if... given the opportunity to take the tournament from N[Z] – for a second time... But as boardroom politics have taken over, there has been little news of late of the tournament itself.

...N[Z] soccer continued to bang the drums of incompetence so loudly yesterday that it must be numbing the brains of everyone involved in the sport from the midgets to those who run Fifa. The dispute over who will run the world under-17 tournament... appeared no closer to resolution after a High Court hearing in Auckland. Sources close to the parties insisted the dispute could be settled this week, but as one official commented: "Every day lost working this out is another week lost in organisation." The background seems fairly clear: [a]former All White... claims[to have] a letter from... [the] NZS... chief executive... authorising him to run the tournament. However, NZS wants one of its former chief executives... to run the tournament, [and suggests that the] letter is not a fully authorised contract from the NZS board... Meanwhile the... Auckland-based secretary-general of the Oceania federation, said yesterday: "...It is all very unfortunate. We saw it as a glorious opportunity for N[Z] soccer, but it hasn't quite worked out so far. This is reducing the chances of the tournament being a great success. There is no time limit on it, but if it doesn't get resolved at some point... Fifa will take the tournament off N[Z] again!"

...the] chief executive of the... world under-17... championships, thought [it] was organising a football tournament. Instead, [the chief executive] has become nurse-maid to the administrative stars as [it] tries to find time to balance the finances, meet tournament demands – and organise a banquet, complete with piano, floral arrangements and round tables... Fifa will pay for the invitation-only banquet in the poshest Sky City restaurant, and for the November 8 referees' dinner. "But please," it asks... "could you cut costs elsewhere to ensure your tournament comes in under budget?" "Elsewhere" does not include the limousine service for Fifa[']s boss... and other hierarchy – even though major sponsor Hyundai is supplying 63 new cars. Neither does it include the... four tailors needed for four days to ensure the Fifa uniforms fit perfectly. Fifa even wants a N[Z] multi-plug sent to its headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland... "so they can check their plugs can be used here[," says the chief executive].

...Fifa have postponed until 2003 this year's world club championship... Financial problems and a congested fixture list were blamed for the postponement, a major embarrassment for world soccer's ruling body and its president. The tournament, which Fifa had been planning to extend from 12 to 16 teams... would have involved clubs who have won major championships in Fifa's six continental confederations, plus a host team, Deportivo Coruna. The Oceania representatives for the July 28-August 12 event... in Spain... were to be [AUS's]Wollongong Wolves.

...The controversial soccer semi-final between Napier City Rovers and Dunedin Technical will be replayed tomorrow. Two days of protracted negotiations ended last night with the Dunedin players agreeing to return to Napier and to play at Park Island. The winner of the afternoon match will play University/Mt Wellington in Sunday's Ansett national club championship final at North Harbour Stadium... [The]NZS... chief executive... has welcomed the decision. "[NZS is] happy it has been resolved and that the team to play in the final will be found on the football field... We have agreed to underwrite the cost of Dunedin's travel and will fly them in and out on a charter flight." The Dunedin players, who met behind closed doors for more than an hour before agreeing to the NZS replay proposal, wanted an assurance they could return to Dunedin tomorrow night and, if they win through to the final, fly to Auckland on Saturday for the final. Their concern was the struggle for some players getting time off work for an extra day if they had had to go on to Auckland on Friday as NZS proposed. The replay was seen by the NZS appeal committee as the fairest way to resolve what has been a contentious issue from the time [the]referee... blew his whistle in last Sunday's game. There is no doubt that a breakdown in communication involving NZS, the referees' administration, match officials – both on and off the field – and the clubs led to the confusion. The match should have been decided under the "golden goal" rule – as per instructions issued to clubs on August 14. But [the referee], his fellow officials, [the]referee match inspector... and [the]match commissioner... saw it differently. After the teams were level 1-1 after 90 minutes, the officials decreed that the game should go to two 15-minute periods of extra time and, if needed, a penalty shootout. Tech scored first in extra time, Napier equalised in the final minute, then won the penalty shootout. "We assumed everybody knew what was going on," said... Rovers['] club manager... "but obviously there was a communication error somewhere along the way." Tech[']s coach... said the matter had reached "farical proportions" but remained adamant yesterday that there was no way... his players would have agreed to play the [replay], as originally proposed, this afternoon. "The odds are stacked against us... but we will reluctantly go up and play." Last Sunday's match has been declared null and void, which means the one-match suspension incurred by Napier[']s captain... will be scrapped.

...The longest-running saga in N[Z] domestic soccer got even longer last night before Napier City Rovers clinched the inaugural national club soccer championship 4-2 in a penalty shootout over University/Mt Wellington. The shootout, at North Harbour Stadium, after 120 minutes of tense football had failed to produce a goal, finally ended a week of turmoil – on and off the field. In a game which struggled to get out of first gear at times through the first 90 minutes but came to life under the threat of what would have been a match-deciding "golden goal" in extra time, a penalty shootout was perhaps appropriate as the top two sides from the Ansett national club championship season played each other to a virtual stop. In the end, Napier, who had been taken to extra time and a penalty shootout a week earlier and then played another 90 minutes on Thursday in the controversial replay against Dunedin Technical, fully deserved their win. It was just reward for their persistence and ability to lift themselves when leaden legs had long cried enough... "We did everything but score," rued [the]University/Mt Wellington coach... [One of his players came closest to scoring] when his header, 25 minutes into extra time, was cleared off the line... [Rovers'] former All Whites' keeper... saved University/Mt Wellington's first two penalties... Napier will be back at the stadium this Saturday to square off against Central in the Chatham Cup. It gives [Rovers' captain], and others, the chance of a double-double after being a member of the side that won both seven years ago.

...THE Napier City Rovers juggernaut continued yesterday when they added the Chatham Cup to the league title they won last week. It was the club's third Chatham Cup... and their second league and cup double... In the [gals'] final, Lynn Avon thumped Wairarapa 6-0 with [one player] scoring three goals and setting up another two.

...[a f]ormer Napier City Rovers striker... earned himself a place in FA Cup history when [it] became only the second player... to score 10 goals in a game. His Unibond League team, Stockbridge Park Steels, demolished hapless Oldham Town 17-1 in a preliminary round of the competition.

...Prizemoney is to be awarded for the first time in the English FA Cup... in a total package worth... £30 m... The next winners of the knockout competition, the oldest in the sport, will receive... £4 m... in prizemoney and television revenue. Winners of preliminary rounds will pocket £500.

...Wembley Stadium, the venue of England's FA Cup final and the home of the national soccer team, is to be sold to a trust owned by the FA.

...Expect uproar from... heritage buffs after it was revealed that two of the most famous landmarks in sport – Wembley Stadium's twin towers – face demolition under a \$455 m... redevelopment plan... [T]hey would be in the middle of the pitch of the proposed new 80,000-seater... stadium.

...Wembley Stadium's... twin towers will be demolished next year when rebuilding as a state-of-the-art, 90,000 all-seater arena with a retractable roof starts. They will be replaced by four giant masts soaring 130m into the sky and visible for miles around... The... retractable roof[will be] suspended from the four masts to give a "halo" effect above the stadium... "It is regrettable that no way could be found of saving the towers," the project's architect... said at the unveiling of the £475 million... design for the new stadium[which] will be 57m high, nearly 30m taller than the current stadium... [E]scalators will carry fans to the upper levels of seating... The project... should take two years to complete... It will be used primarily for soccer but also for rugby, rugby league... athletics... and could also stage future Olympic Games... Wembley Stadium was built in 1923 and has staged... the 1948 Olympic Games, the 1966 World Cup soccer finals and the 1996 European championships... [Someone] who played in England's 1966 World Cup-winning team and for Manchester United's 1968 European Cup-winning side at Wembley, said: "You have to progress, and... the new stadium will be the best in the world." ...[the chairperson] of Chelsea and also... of the new Wembley National Stadium company, said: "All of us involved in creating the new Wembley are confident we are building the best stadium in the world. It will not simply be the most beautiful but it will have the best facilities for fans, with outstanding levels of comfort, leg-room and vastly improved sight-lines..."

...[during the 1966 World Cup final England scored a controversial goal when Germany protested that 'the ball hadn't crossed the goal-line.' Now] English soccer's Premier League is set to install electronic goal-mouth sensors to verify disputed goals, especially those when the ball deflects down from the crossbar. FIFA has given in-principle approval for the plan, whereby... [balls] would be fitted with small transmitters which would send a signal to an earpiece worn by the referee... whenever the ball crossed into the goal... [Incidentally, w]ith the grand old [gal] of British sport to be demolished in September, Wembley's owners are about to cash in. For around \$80,000, fans will soon be able to hire the hallowed venue for a 60-minute match officiated by top referees. The two teams will be kitted out in replica England playing strips, receive refreshments at halftime and get two match balls to keep. Completing the footballing fantasy is the chance to walk the famous 39 steps to the Royal Box where a... lookalike... [of the] Queen... will present winners with a replica FA Cup.

...[an import] brought 77 years of history to a close yesterday when [it] scored the only goal after 73 minutes to give Chelsea a 1-0 win over Aston Villa in the FA Cup final at Wembley Stadium. The 29-year-old Italian midfielder... – ...who has sat out most of the season injured... – ...rifled home from two metres out to score the 215th and last cup final goal at the stadium, which is being demolished later this year. It was Chelsea's third FA Cup win and it earns them a place in next season's Uefa Cup final. [The Italian] scored the fastest-ever goal in a Wembley FA Cup final when Chelsea beat Middlesbrough in 1997. [On that day, the Italian] found the net after 43 seconds. [Chelsea's captain], previously a cup winner with Wimbledon in 1988 and Chelsea in 1997, became the last skipper to lift the cup under the Twin Towers... However, the ['72nd' and]last final was another disappointing affair. The two sides, who produced a 0-0 draw and a 1-0 win for Chelsea in the league this season, cancelled each other out.

...Plans to rebuild Wembley Stadium are bound for the shredder after the F[A] said yesterday that they could not finance the project. English football is now faced with the very real possibility that the new national stadium, if built at all, will not be at Wembley. The *Telegraph* understands that there is now a very real possibility that the FA, which owns Wembley, will look to the Midlands for the site of the new national stadium. The British Government, from which the FA demanded £150 million last week to carry on with the project, declined to provide a cheque... A spokes[person] for the P[M]'s office said: "It's important to recognise that this has always been an FA project and it was always the case that they would secure the necessary funding from the City[of London]. The Government cannot simply write blank cheques or act as a national bank for projects which encounter funding difficulties." ...Instead it appointed a committee, headed by... the Home Secretary, to look into the project... This will be the third time in the last six months that the Wembley project has been looked at. If this sounds excessive, even by Wembley's standards, the latest chapter in the fiasco is a combination of the FA developing cold feet and evidently the left hand not knowing what the right is doing. Three weeks ago, when [Wembley's chairperson] briefed Government ministers... there was no suggestion of alarm. [The chairperson] accepted that with Wembley having [already] failed to raise the money from the City, [a] second attempt would be tricky, but [it] seemed confident that J. P. Morgan – the leading bankers – could raise the £410 m... required to finance the £660 m... project. The FA were committed to providing £100 m... of their own money... However, [an]... independent... report... said that, while the banks might be prepared to lend the money, they would expect the FA to take all the risk. The FA would have to put up £125 m... in equity capital. They would also have to provide £55 m... a year for some 10 to 15 years to cover interest and repayments of the money borrowed. In addition, while there was a fixed-price contract of £326.5 m... for the construction, the banks wanted the FA to make provision of another £80 m... just in case there were construction overruns. This report alarmed the FA. Until now, it had been... hoping to capitalise on No 10's well-known sensitivity to football. At several meetings at Downing St between the FA and [the PM]'s advisers... the chief executive of the FA... made the point forcefully that there had been government funding of... the Stade de France, so why not in Britain? ...[the new stadium was to have been] English soccer's showpiece... [had it secured] the 2006 World Cup soccer finals.

...South Korea, hit hard by the Asian financial crisis, has asked neighbours Japan for a \$203 million loan to build a new stadium in Seoul for co-hosting the 2002 World Cup soccer finals. It is unclear whether Japan, which is suffering its own financial problems, will be able to come up with the money... [In related news, Ghanians] have buried 30 people who died in a football stampede that killed 126 people.

...Ghana's police, blamed for sparking a soccer stadium stampede... have apologised for their role in the disaster. Angry mobs have attacked police stations in Ghana's capital, Accra, since Africa's worst soccer tragedy on Thursday, in which police fired tear gas into the packed stadium, starting the stampede... Ghana's inspector-general of police... has set up an internal investigation into the behaviour of the 70-officer contingent responsible for security at the match at the national stadium in Accra between local team Heart of Oak and arch-rivals Asante Kotoko.

...[South Africa's] President... yesterday joined families at Johannesburg's Ellis Park stadium to mourn the 43 people killed in South Africa's worst sporting accident. Bouquets were scattered across the field where last Wednesday (local time) emergency workers had laid out the bodies of the 43 people, including two boys aged 11 and 13, killed in a crush. "Too many in our country die from unnatural causes,"... said... [the President, who] has appointed a judge to inquire into the cause of the accident 33 minutes into the first half of an evening match between the country's top soccer teams, Kaiser Chiefs and Orlando Pirates. [The President] said yesterday that the inquiry would not seek to lay blame, but to ensure that last week's disaster was never repeated. Local newspapers highlighted a growing row over responsibility for the disaster, with police, stadium managers and the clubs trading allegations of negligence. An estimated 15,000 people, some claiming to have tickets, pressed against gates, one of which fell, trapping dozens of people who died as the mob ran over them.

...[the South African] was separated from her brother in the chaos of the football disaster at Ellis Park. The next morning... [the sister] began her search at Hillbrow mortuary, up the road from the stadium where 43 people died a horrific death as thousands of supporters surged into the stadium... "I thought I would start with the worst possibility,"... said... [the sister], aged 33... as [it] waited in the street for a friend to accompany her... [The sister] hoped later to be doing the rounds of Johannesburg's hospitals, where around 90 of the injured are still being treated. Hundreds of people all over this soccer-mad country faced the same prospect. The Kaiser Chiefs v. Orlando Pirates match had been the derby of the year – a must-see for all true lovers of the game, from company executives with hospitality tickets to humble folk who expected, as usual, to buy their 15-rand... tickets at the gate. By yesterday morning... South Africa's disaster machinery had gone into gear. A judicial inquiry was launched... All weekend soccer fixtures were cancelled and a helpline and disaster fund were set up. Very quickly, officials launched a counter-offensive against speculation that South Africa's ambitions to host the World Cup in 2010 were now well and truly scorched... At Ellis Park, scene of the 1995 rugby world cup final, there was a strange sense of futility, masked by a rather distasteful attempt at business as usual – or was it good old-fashioned South African amnesia? The football goals in the all-seater stadium had been replaced by rugby posts and a team of work[ers] had dyed a Vodacom

logo into the grass ahead of this weekend's match between Western Province and the Golden Lions. Two wreaths on the grass, from the "rugby sport lodge" and the management of Ellis Park were the only sign that something was wrong – until you walked up the gradual concrete steps of a ...wide corridor, leading through the red plastic seats up to a tunnel at Gate 4. Halfway up the steps, a metal barrier dividing the passage in two had been flattened. Several of the red plastic seat-backs were bent forwards... On a second level of seating, above the Gate 4 tunnel, the crowd had done similar damage and... up to 16 people fell to their deaths from the upper tier – the equivalent of an eight-storey drop... "The pressure started... 10 minutes before the 8 pm kick-off, when people outside the perimeter area realised they would not get in. Some... had tickets and yet we were instructed not to let anyone in because the stadium was full. It does not make sense that there were people outside with tickets and yet it was full. The Pirates equalised... 10 minutes into the match and at that point, the pressure just soared. There were so many people... We are not armed and could not handle the crush and it took a while for the police to intervene," said... [a] 21-year-old security guard... [T]he financial manager of Ellis Park... insisted that excess tickets were not printed. "The capacity of the stadium is 62,000 but 52,000 tickets were sold. At 7 pm there were 50,000 people in the stadium and 20,000 outside. We just could not contain the crowd. They started physically removing the fence. The more we said it was sold out, the more aggressive they became,"... [33] minutes into the first half, at 1-1, the referee stopped the match. By then, according to players, it was very clear that something was wrong. One witness said the first body was carried away a full 10 minutes before play was stopped. As the... crushing continued through the tunnel of Gate 4, the players, spectators and officials watched powerlessly... "We are simply too small to handle this kind of game," said [the financial manager, who] was asked whether Johannesburg's principal stadium, FNB, which is the Orlando Pirates' home ground and is purpose-built for soccer, would not have been a better choice for the biggest derby of the season. "Kaiser Chiefs wanted to play here... They used to share FNB with the Pirates but they want to establish this as their home ground. We had an operations meeting the day before and everything seemed to be in place. Except that, it has to be said, no ground wants to host a Chiefs-Pirates game." Later, at a hotel in the northern suburbs, [the chairperson]... of... the Premier Soccer League... said 200 officers from the South African Police Service had been on duty at the ground. According to inquiries by the *Independent*, a similarly "high-risk" match in the United Kingdom in front of a crowd of the same size – say Manchester United at home against Leeds United – would generally be policed by 400 officers in the immediate vicinity of the ground, as well as reinforcements at stations. The comparison offers a useful measure of ratio but is unfair in the sense that South Africa has not had the benefit of decades of highly commercialised soccer nor, until now, anything resembling the 1989 Hillsborough disaster and the subsequent... report.

...TWO retired South Yorkshire police[officers] have pleaded not guilty to charges of [hu]manslaughter and neglect of duty resulting from the death of 96 fans in the 1989 Hillsborough soccer disaster. [The f]ormer chief superintendent... ((aged)54) and former superintendent... (57) appeared in Leeds Crown Court on Friday and were granted bail. Their trial is set for June next year... [The pair] were ordered to stand trial after a hearing in July to determine the legality of a private prosecution brought against them by families of the dead. The former high-ranking officers are accused in the deaths of John Alfred Anderson (62) and James Gary Aspinall (18) on April 15, 1989... Anderson and Aspinall were among Liverpool fans who were crushed to death after being herded into an already crowded and fenced-in enclosure during the FA Cup semifinal against Nottingham Forest. Two attempts in 1990 and 1997 to prosecute the case have failed, through insufficient evidence.

...English soccer changed forever as a consequence of the Hillsborough disaster... Although nothing could compensate for the deaths of the 96 innocent fans, killed... as a direct consequence of years of official ineptitude, their passing changed everything... [Today] England's major clubs – and many in the lower divisions – play in modern, all-seater stadiums, in many cases totally transformed from the slums that they had become by the late 1980s... Ancient concrete terracing, laid down in the late 19th or early part of the 20th century, has been ripped away... Liverpool's Kop has disappeared, so has Arsenal's North Bank, Manchester United's Stretford End, Chelsea's Shed, Tottenham's Shelf – so has much of the culture that fuelled the insanity of English soccer that both directly and indirectly brought such a painful and agonising death to so many people that spring afternoon in 1989... "What should never be forgotten is the absolute dereliction of the duties of the football authorities and police in the 30 years that led to the Hillsborough disaster," says... a London-based media consultant... "Football clubs had been only too pleased to take the gate money from fans clearly intent on causing trouble throughout the late 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Instead of kicking those people out of soccer – because all the authorities knew who they were – they erected fences at grounds to stop them coming on the pitch. The fighting never stopped on the terraces – it was perceived to be part of English soccer's 'special atmosphere'. And the innocents who died... [while being] fenced in like animals... at Hillsborough were the ultimate victims of that officially condoned violence..."

...An Argentine judge recently suspended all national club soccer matches in a clampdown on football violence... Argentine soccer followers are involved in shootings, death threats and extortion. After announcing his ruling, [the]Judge... had death threats and was put under police protection... According to the newspaper *Clarín*, there have been 37 football killings in the 1990s, up from 16 in the 1980s... In April, 30 gun and baseball bat-toting fans of the weirdly-named second division club Chaco For Ever entered the dressing room and threatened the players because they were nearing relegation. With supporters like those...

[An Irish soccer player who was] forced to pull out of an international after a sectarian death threat, said yesterday [it] would never play for Northern Ireland again. [The player], a Catholic, withdrew from the "friendly" against Cyprus in Belfast hours before [it] was due to lead his team out as captain on Thursday. The threat was from a Protestant paramilitary group. [The player] said yesterday that "enough was enough" and it would be too traumatic for him to play for his country again. "It's a real pity that it all has to end like this... My parents were pretty distraught. Obviously I can't put them through this every time." The 31-year-old midfielder, who plays club soccer for Scottish champions Celtic, nearly quit when [it] was booed by Protestant Loyalist fans in an international in February last year after his transfer to Celtic... The antipathy between Celtic and Glasgow rivals Rangers mirrors the emotive sectarian divide in Northern Ireland... [The] president of the Irish Football Association... was gutted by the death threat, one of the rare occasions the national team have been targeted by paramilitaries... In 1971, when Northern Ireland's guerrilla war... was at a peak, [Manchester United's]Northern Ireland soccer target... needed police protection after receiving death threats... Drawn in group six, [losing their captain]... would be a major blow to [Northern Ireland]'s hopes of qualifying for the... European championship[s].

...The first soccer match between Catholic and Protestant teams in sectarian Northern Ireland for 28 years ended in a diplomatic and peaceful draw... Police mounted a huge security operation to prevent the two sets of supporters mixing. The crowd was limited to 1500 and about 100 armoured cars lined the streets outside the stadium. But the only trouble happened on the pitch with the sending-off of a Linfield player after a fracas with one of his opponents... The... Irish Football Association president... said the match was "a step forward towards normality."

...Three local residents are putting their soccer-playing robots to the test in A[US] this week, at the world RoboCup championship. The three are part of the five-m[ember] Auckland University team pitting their robots against other countries' creations... The robots, named after the four stooges, are guided by pre-programmed commands that allow them to recognise the different coloured goals and balls. A micro video camera forms the robot's eye, which allows a computer on the robot's back to process the information sent... The Stooges robots bulldoze into the ball to send it nearer their goal. Motorised by batteries, the small soccer players look like little radio-controlled cars... The students are doing a robotics paper at university, and are learning advanced programming techniques. Their budget for the robots is thousands of dollars behind larger countries' budgets, with some other robots worth more than \$10,000 each... But they are the first team to trial a pioneering programming technique. All the other robots at the championship have coloured balls on their heads so they are easily recognisable to other team mates. The N[Z] robots do not have these, and instead the computer gets more of a workout... The Stooges have already played against France, America and A[US] university

robots... The robots play soccer because it is a standard function that is easy to compare to others... The ultimate goal of RoboCup is... [to] develop a team of fully autonomous humanoid robots that can win against human world cup champions in soccer... by 2050... says the RoboCup website.

...So England's professional soccer players are threatening to strike over money? Will you contribute when... the collection plate [comes] around?

...The English Professional Footballers' Association is conducting an investigation into the long-term effects of heading a soccer ball, following studies in both America and Scandinavia that show it can increase the risk of brain damage and may result in illnesses such as senile dementia and Alzheimer's disease... [Incidentally, a Real] Madrid soccer striker... has been suspended for one match and fined \$29,000 for a handball goal against Leeds in their champions league match last week.

...Leeds... had reason to rue the absence of... the world's most expensive defender... from their defence when they were beaten 1-3 at home by Newcastle. And they will probably have to do without... [him] again for tomorrow's FA Cup match against Liverpool. And all because [the defender] spent too long relaxing. Putting your feet up and watching the telly seems a harmless enough leisure activity, but [the defender], bought for £18 million... from West Ham, did it for too long, with unfortunate consequences. "[The defender]... had his foot up on the coffee table,"... said... the club's website. "[His leg was] in a certain position for a number of hours, and when [the defender got up it found it] had strained a tendon behind his knee." The defender is continuing a rich tradition of footballers sustaining ridiculous injuries. Another TV-related incident... came a couple of years ago when [the defender]'s team-mate... was kneeling down to pick up the remote control in his hotel room while on international duty. [The team-mate] felt a twinge in his knee, and although [it] scored the next day for the Republic of Ireland against Malta, the pain got worse and [it] had to leave the field – and ended up having a cartilage operation. [Another player] also suffered remote misfortune. Arsenal's England goalkeeper was at the team hotel... and pulled a muscle in his back while reaching for the remote in order to tape *Coronation Street*... And [a] former Wimbledon goalkeeper... missed a few games for Chelsea after dropping a jar of salad on his foot... [A] Sunderland striker... nearly missed the start of this season when [it] was injured while asleep. The England international woke up in pain having twisted his knee. [Another striker may] have been a championship winner with Leeds, but his finest hour came when [it] put his back out shovelling snow on a neighbour's drive. [One player] loved his new-born daughter until [it] poked the Danish international in the eye, shortly after his move to Spurs, forcing him to miss a few games... Perhaps the most damaging injury was that incurred by... Liverpool's Danish goalkeeper who injured his shoulder doing the ironing. [The Dane] was forced to retire...

Spanish soccer giants Barcelona, stung by two Champions League defeats, are ready to break the bank and offer an \$US85 million... package for [Liverpool's] England striker... according to yesterday's *Mirror* newspaper. The package would comprise a \$US55 million transfer fee, on a par with the record \$US56 million Barcelona received from Real Madrid for Portugal's... European Footballer of the Year... three months ago, and about \$US30 million more for [the striker] himself. Barcelona's reported interest comes after... [the striker – who recently stated that]: "There is nothing going on in the world at the moment that I find distressing or have a view on!" – said it... could envisage leaving Liverpool and going abroad to further his international career... [The striker] sprang to prominence at the 1998 World Cup, scoring one of the goals of the tournament in a 2-2 draw with Argentina, who forced England out on penalties. But... [England's coach has] substituted him in all three matches[since the World Cup. The striker] was on the bench again for last month's friendly against France, but came on and scored in a 1-1 draw. [The striker] is set to partner Manchester United's [striker]... tomorrow... against Germany... [– where] Nike soccer jerseys [were] pulled from store shelves... after a television consumer show report... said... the yellow-and-black jerseys contained tributyltin, a heavy metal compound used in anti-barnacle paint for ships... [(tests have since] found that the jerseys pose no danger to health[) –] ...as both look to inherit the mantle of the now retired [No 9. England's captain] has given England a boost by declaring himself fit for the match... Tomorrow's group nine qualifier will be the last international to be played at Wembley before it is knocked down... [England's captain feels it] has finally won over the England fans who have verbally abused him since his sending-off against Argentina in the World Cup finals... saying: "The fans were unbelievable in our last game against France."

...England's captain... signed a new contract with Manchester United yesterday that ties him to Old Trafford until June 2005. The deal, reputed to be worth a staggering \$[NZ]291,000 a week, follows protracted negotiations between the club and [player], whose present contract was due to expire at the end of the next season... ■ [After]... two seasons in the top flight... Ipswich Town returned to the English first division with their tails between their legs yesterday, relegated after a 5-0 thrashing on the final day of the English premier league season. With Sunderland safe in the top flight after drawing 1-1 at home to Derby County, the defeat at Anfield was immaterial for... [Ipswich], who ultimately paid the price for their poor start to the season... Ipswich... estimate relegation will cost them at least £10 million... Liverpool's win meant they secured second place ahead of Manchester United to claim the second automatic qualifying place for the Champions League behind champions Arsenal, who paraded the premier league trophy after a 4-3 home win over Everton... [Manchester] United drew 0-0 at home to Charlton Athletic and finished... outside the top two for the first time since 1991... United's 0-0 draw was [also] their first goal-less stalemate at Old Trafford in 115 premier league games... Arsenal's victory at Highbury set a premier league record of 13 straight wins, and they scored in every game this season, another record.

...Champions Arsenal... scored in 45 consecutive premier league games, breaking Manchester City's 65-year-old record in the top flight of... soccer... Arsenal... also set a club record of 27 league games unbeaten and equalled Nottingham Forest's record of 22 away matches unbeaten...

London neighbours Chelsea spent more than £110 million (\$311.35 million) on players in the close season in a bid to build an all-conquering team. They should have little trouble overcoming Notts County at Stamford Bridge. The cash-strapped second division outfit, the world's oldest league club, are in administration and have been given [10 weeks]... to resolve their financial woes or be kicked out of the Football League.

...[the French World Cup hero]'s world record \$US66.05 million... move from Juventus to Real Madrid did more than strengthen Real's bid to regain the Champions League title. By waving goodbye to Italy, [the French international] gave a further indication of how the balance of power has changed in European football. The world's top three players... all ply their trade in the Liga, and Spanish clubs have dominated in Europe over the past two seasons. By contrast, Italian clubs have struggled. Serie A has also bid goodbye to another world-class performer with [an] Argentine... moving from Lazio to... Manchester United.

...Soccer clubs in European countries could eventually be stopped from fielding teams made up completely of foreigners[(as Chelsea did for the first time this season)]. The president of Fifa... and the chief executive of Uefa, [have]... met sports ministers from Finland, Portugal and France... Afterwards they said the meeting could prove to be the first step in ensuring that clubs fielded at least six domestic players...

Some of Britain's best-known footballers... are owned by Barclays Bank rather than the clubs for which they play. In a revelation that will raise further fears about the financial strength of British football... increasing numbers of clubs are effectively mortgaging their players to pay spiralling transfer fees. Players thought to have been sold to Barclays... include... the England defender bought by Leeds... for £18 m... who... is the subject of a £35 m... transfer bid by Manchester United. Leeds have sold four... squad members to Barclays, while other Premiership sides including Everton, Bolton Wanderers and Leicester City are thought to have used a similar scheme to buy expensive players... The scheme being used by the clubs is similar to a traditional mortgage... Under the football scheme, a club transfers the "right to use" a player to Barclays in return for a cash payment. The club then leases the player back from the bank for a quarterly fee. If the player is sold or transferred, the club pays off the loan and keeps any profits. To ensure that Barclays does not lose if a player's transfer value falls or the club cannot keep up its payments, the bank takes out an insurance policy with a specialist firm. Because it has this insurance policy, Barclays does not have the right to "repossess" the player if the club collapses or fails to keep up its payments. The bank makes a profit by charging interest on the cash advanced, plus the leasing fee it charges the club. The complex financial deal... allows a club to spread the cost of buying a new player over the length of his contract, rather than... raise all the

money immediately... One director of a leading premiership club said such schemes could lead to further financial difficulties for many clubs. "The fear is that cash-strapped clubs are overstretching themselves... There will be nothing left to mortgage soon." In the financial year ending April last year, seven premiership clubs lost [over] £25 m... In the six months to last December, Leeds, who[']d spent... £90 m... on new players, lost £13.8 m...

Losses huge but team spirit is too... His team had just gone 0-18 down and... the national coach [of]... Guam... thought it couldn't get any worse. Then, an Iranian striker rushed into the goal, grabbed the ball and started sprinting back towards the halfway line, eager to keep the massacre going. [Guam's coach] took a deep breath, raging impotently at professionals taking the pee out of his boys who had suffered enough indignities. [The coach] had always known – from the day [it] turned up for his first training session... and only [7] players trotted out to greet him – that this job was going to be, er, a bit different. But two years later, as [the coach] presided over the biggest defeat in World Cup history – 19-0 – [the coach] realised how painful it could be too. "Well, the whole experience wasn't too pleasant... [48] hours and three stop-overs to travel from the island to Iran, arrived at 8 one night and played at 2.30 pm the next day. I'd got a lot of young kids, some of whom had never even been off the island. They had certainly never seen the snow which you could see on the mountain peaks. In Guam, they're used to a tropical climate which doesn't get much below 25 degrees Celcius all year round. In Tabriz, it was wet and freezing. I warned them about wearing gloves and long-sleeved undershirts, but the only realistic aim was to keep the score below 20 against a team with so many top European-based pros." They succeeded, and two days later they triumphed again. Only 0-16 this time, to mighty Tajikistan... Fifa rank Guam 199th of their 203 nations, so somewhere out there, there are apparently four worse international teams. [The coach] says, actually, they beat an island called Yap, but I couldn't find it in my atlas.

...One-sided scoring romps are doing nothing for football in this part of the world and have led N[ZS] to call for changes in the way Oceania tournaments are run. Concerned that A[US]'s record 22-0 runaway win over Tonga in their World Cup qualifier in Coffs Harbour will not be looked on too favourably by Fifa, the NZS chief executive... has suggested that the Oceania Football Confederation should consider making changes. The record-breaking is unlikely to end there. A[US] play America Samoa in their second match tonight... Tonga are ranked 185th on Fifa's latest list – 18 places ahead of American Samoa (203rd and last) – while Samoa come in at 174, but were still good enough to beat American Samoa 8-0. Tonga earlier upset Samoa 1-0. "We accept the place the island nations have in world football," [the NZS chief executive] said. "Being beaten like that is doing nothing for the game in their country or for the A[US]ns." And it goes much deeper than senior World Cup matches. In recent under-20 matches, A[US] have beaten Samoa 16-0 and the Cook Islands 13-0. In under-17s, A[US] beat American Samoa 30-0... "N[ZS] and, no doubt, the A[US]ns, feel it would be more beneficial for the island nations to play off in their own competitions for the Polynesian or Melanesian Cups as they did before last year's Oceania Nations Cup,"... Those winners would then join N[Z] ('the current Fifa rankings place AUS at 50 and NZ at 49') and AUS] in a four-team play-off, either as a round-robin tournament, or home and away, to find the Oceania winner.

...[the national NZ] soccer team, in Mexico for the Confederations Cup, became an instant hit by visiting a Guadalajara children's cancer hospital. But then relations quickly soured. The local organising committee handed the All Whites[(the team will wear all black in their first match against the US – the first time the teams have met – because that country also plays in an all-white strip)], who entered the country on visitors' rather than business permits, an unexpected "tax" of \$6000 and would not allow them their mandatory training session at the match venue.

...The Big Two of Scottish soccer, Celtic and Rangers, will be invited to join the English Football League this week, says the BBC. The 72 Football League clubs will vote at the weekend on whether to accept the plan, under which the two Scottish clubs would start next season in the English first division. Celtic and Rangers... have expressed interest in competing in the English League, which they believe is more competitive and attracts more television revenue than the Scottish premier league. The two Glasgow clubs have dominated Scottish soccer to such an extent that it is 17 years since any other club has won the title and seven years since they did not occupy the top two places. Relations between Celtic and Rangers and the rest of the Scottish premier league have become increasingly strained after the two clubs scuppered plans for a premier league-owned, subscription-based television channel. After the Old Firm clubs voted against the plan, the 10 other clubs in the Scottish premier league announced their intention to quit the league. If that move goes ahead, it would leave the fierce Glasgow rivals together, but isolated. Even if English Football League clubs accepted the proposal, there would still be several hurdles to overcome. The most notable among those would be opposition from European soccer's governing body, Uefa, to clubs from one country playing in another's domestic league.

...The Football Kings will be scuppered after just two seasons in the A[US]n league if a strongly worded directive from soccer's governing body is enforced... [T]he... Oceania Football Confederation president... received a letter from Fifa['s] general secretary... late last week which, in part, reaffirms "that the inclusion of the Auckland team in the professional league of A[US] is restricted to a two-year period after which the club concerned will be compelled to return to... [NZ]." However, NZS] received a letter from Fifa earlier that said the Kings had been granted a licence [to play in A[US]] for two years or until such a time as a professional league is established in N[Z]. "This is not a Kings issue... It is between N[ZS] and Fifa. Fifa will not talk to any club..." But [the Oceania president] said: "The conditions under which the Kings are to be allowed to play in A[US] were made very clear at the executive meeting in Los Angeles last month. There were four speakers of which three were totally against the move. I was the only one who spoke in their favour but it was obvious to me that two years was the best they could hope for. The Fifa executive saw the granting of dispensation to the Kings as a dangerous precedent. Such a move is not covered in their statutes... They pointed to the Welsh clubs who play in the English leagues and the poor standard of Welsh football to back their thinking." ...The timing of this bombshell could not have been worse... The... Kings[' chairperson]... intends to announce a major sponsor this week, as well as the signing of another couple of players – including at least one on the Confederations Cup All Whites squad[that lost 2-1 to the US, 2-0 to Germany and 2-0 to Brazil (which went on to lose 4-3 in the final to Mexico). The chairperson]... flew to Sydney last Saturday for a meeting of Ericsson Cup clubs at which they attempted to finalise the... draw. "It has not been sorted out yet but I expect to see it within seven to 10 days,"... However, reports from A[US] yesterday suggested the Kings will kick the first ball of the new season in a home game – almost certainly against Canberra – on October 1.

...the Auckland Kings soccer team... start playing in A[US]'s national league in October, but a decision on the club's ownership should be finalised by the end of next month... The Kings must move quickly if they are to be ready for an official launch next month. Time is also of the essence in getting ready for the start of the 16-team competition. Preparations for the Warriors' debut were spread over two years, but the Kings have a much tighter schedule. The Kings will not command the same price as the Warriors did last year. One source suggested a major shareholding could be bought for less than \$1 million. Investors will also be wary of reports which suggest a number of A[US]n soccer franchises are struggling. However, like the Warriors, the Kings will have the advantage of being Auckland's sole side in the competition. The successful bidders for the Kings ownership will be basically buying the club's five-year licence in the A[US]n national league. The club does not have the licence yet, although it does have a written undertaking and last week received the franchise agreement from Soccer A[US]. Depending on who becomes the owners]... the side could be based with the... Warriors at Ericsson Stadium... [or] at North Harbour Stadium.

...TALKING to... [the two] Aussies... you realise how big an impression [NZ's Oceania player of the decade] has made around the world. N[Z]ers don't often realise what [the strik]er achieved in soccer but the A[US]n pair know. Both said [the strik]er was the main reason they signed one-year contracts with the [Auckland side]. "When I went to play in Germany I had never heard of [him]," the 24-year-old... said. "But over there [the strik]er's like a superstar, a celebrity. If you go to any family home they would know who... [the strik]er is." The other Aussie, also 24... met [the strik]er at the recent All Stars game against A[US] and made the decision to sign in two days. "...It was an opportunity to play under someone who can teach you so much." ...The pair[, who played together]... in the 1995 A[US]n World Youth Cup side... aren't household names in soccer circles but are hardened players who know what it takes to succeed. Management at the... Auckland [club]... learned from the... Warriors how important

it is to have those types of players. A third A[US]n... has also signed up... With four weeks until kickoff [the pair are] encouraged by what [they've] seen at training with the likes of [the team's four]All Whites... The [Auckland team] are a fully professional outfit while only two or three A[US]n teams are. This means that playing for the [Auckland club] is a 24-hour-a-day job... At Monday's first official training there were only nine signed players. It's likely others won't be in the country until just days before the first game against Carlton on October 1.

...An Aucklander's footballing fantasy is about to come true... The 24-year-old Kingz midfielder – and All Whites defender – expects to leave Auckland today for his 4 1/2 year stint with Dutch first-division club Roda JC. It could be a week or two before the paperwork is completed, which means his first game might be a league clash... against Dutch giants PSV Eindhoven... – currently second in the championship race. “No pressure,” quipped [the Aucklander] yesterday. “But it is certainly something to look forward to.” This latest footballing odyssey is a far cry from [hi]s first foray into European football when, as a 17-year-old, [it] tried his luck in Croatia. “I’m a lot more experienced and certainly more mature now. I have played a lot of football since then, including the All Whites... I’m sure that all helped in my final trial with Roda.” [The Aucklander] turned up at the club, based in the southern city of Kerkrade – a 2 1/2 hour drive from Amsterdam – after the Dutch league's winter break. “They had a couple of friendlies and I was supposed to play the second half of the first one, but one of their players was injured and I was on after 35 minutes. We were down 0-1 when I came on and we went on to win 3-2. I played well and there was a picture and a nice story in the paper the next day...” The club obviously liked what they saw and offered the former Waitakere City and Central United defender a contract worth around \$750,000 a year on top of a \$100,000 transfer fee... Of that, \$11,000 will be split between N[ZS] and his] former club Central... [The] Football Kingz chair[person said the 24-year-old's] signing was “absolutely brilliant.” “Sure, there were some mixed emotions... Clearly, we are losing a very good player but it shows what the Kingz was set up for. It also shows that the standard of football in the NSL gives exposure to the big European clubs. “We want more to follow.” ...[● The Auckland club] substituted the S in its name with a Z to avoid a copyright battle[with the Sydney Kings basketball club]...

The owners of the Auckland basketball team yesterday confirmed a... push to take a city-based national side into the Aussie league, [with]one of the conditions of entry meaning Auckland will get a bigger indoor stadium. The team, to be named via a public competition as the Auckland Warriors were, will join the 11-team A[US]n NBL for the summer... season if it can meet financial and other criteria... The Auckland entry is dependent on: 75[%] backing from the existing... clubs (Sydney Kings, Western Razorbacks, Brisbane Bullets, Canberra Cannonballs, Wollongong Hawks, Cairns Taipans, Townsville Crocodiles, Perth Wildcats, Victorian Titans, Melbourne Tigers, Adelaide 36ers); purchase of a \$1 million franchise licence (open-ended and able to be on-sold, or sent back for a refund should the team fold); a viable business plan based around solid spectator support... [–] 3500 bums on seats at fortnightly home games[is] the break-even point... – ...and a juniors development programme... [However, the] president of the local basketball association... expressed confidence in their bid being accepted and the NBL chief executive... backed that. “The NBL has always viewed Auckland as an attractive expansion possibility,” [the chief executive] said, confirming the existing clubs were not only supportive but keen, seeing trans-Tasman rivalry as a valuable addition in terms of television audience and therefore marketability... Basketball NZ will have a representative on the board and is a possible shareholder, the new franchise [being]keen for a good relationship with the Tall Blacks national squad... The players will largely be... [NZers,] though they'll probably take the allowable two imports... There was thought from A[US] that the Aucklanders would need an extra import allowance in their playing squad of 12 but... [the franchise's backers] expressed faith in local talent to make the grade... Going up against the Aussies, their [senior guys' team being] ranked fifth in the world, would be a huge challenge[though]... NBL sides work under a salary cap of \$A725,000. The Auckland team will need around \$2.15 million in income a year... The North Shore Events Centre... is the frontrunner as the home court.

basketball, an indoor court game, played by two [5-member teams, 'in which a goal is scored when the ball is thrown into a net fixed on a ring 3m above the ground.' Freethrow (or penalty) goals are worth 1 point; standard goals are worth 2 pts; goals scored from outside the keyhole are worth 3 pts]. It was first developed in 1891-2 by... an instructor in the Y.M.C.A. Training College... Springfield, Mass. Today it draws more spectators than any other sport in the U.S... Also played by girls, basketball has hundreds of thousands of professional industrial, community, college, high-school, church, and pick-up teams which play the year round, though the season[is] usually... Dec.-Mar... Basketball became an Olympic sport in 1936; the U.S. team has always won... The... *National Basketball Association*, league of professional basketball teams,[was] founded in 1949... [T]he N.B.A... is divided into two divisions, E and W, and has teams in all the major cities... The Boston Celtics has been the outstanding team... in recent years.

[The]Chicago Bulls basketball star... [– who] signed a \$US30 million contract to play next season for the Bulls[, and]... is the richest commercial spokes[person] in sports for the sixth consecutive year, taking home \$US38 million... in advertisement payments in 1996... [(h]is first full season after retirement[) – claims to understand]... the frustration of [a teammate], who has hinted at retirement rather than accepting an offer of \$US6 million from the... Bulls. “I know it's very difficult for him because... [my teammate] has more value and better talent than some of the players making \$US14... million... But a lot of those guys have youth and longevity.” ...[the teammate – who this season] served a two-match NBA suspension for using foul language during a television interview... and received a six-game suspension... last season... [after head-butting a referee, yet was asking for] a one-year deal worth... \$US10 million... – ...became a free agent after helping the Bulls to win a fourth N[B]A championship last month.

...The N[B]A yesterday voided the \$US110 million... contract the Miami Heat had signed with [a]free agent... earlier this month. The league contends that the seven-year contract exceeded the room available to the Heat under the salary cap. The matter will be resolved by an arbitrator.

...[A s]uperstar centre... says [it] has signed with the Los Angeles Lakers out of a desire for a change and not because of the record \$US120 m... the seven-year deal is believed to be worth. “It wasn't about money,” said... [the superstar,] aged 24, who was previously with Orlando Magic. “...To me change is good.” ...[the superstar (r:p811, ln11)] will also]bring in... \$20 m... from his off-court entertainment and endorsement deals this year...

The number of... Lakers... season ticketholders has risen from just less than 10,000 a year ago to 13,600 – 600 shy of the season ticket ceiling[– since it was announced that the franchise had]... lured the... superstar centre from Orlando... It doesn't seem to matter that the cheapest ticket at the 17,505-seat Great Western Forum jumped to \$21, from \$9.50, and courtside seats went to \$600... Not even the... returns [from retirement]of... the team's vice-president and part-owner... [– who's nickname matches that of his new signing's old team –] had that much box office impact. - 1996

The future of basketball has arrived and it isn't exactly pretty. It wears a baseball cap turned not just backwards, but inside out, and jeans – big enough for an elephant – slumped precariously down its hips. The future... is... a guard in his first season with the Philadelphia 76ers. Compared with some of the NBA's towering giants, the 21-year-old is just a slip of a thing, skinny and barely tall enough to reach the counter. So why does the future seem so scary? Because [the guard], like some of the other youngsters who are trying to take over the NBA, is impertinent and cocky... Check out this recent conversation between [the guard and Chicago's highest-paid player] during a game between the... Bulls and the 76ers. Chicago's [cross-dresser was looking for another suspension by taunting the guard] for shooting so much, so [the highest-paid player], being the nice guy that [a highest-paid player always] is, tried to take the new kid under his wing. The kid pushed the wing away. [The Bull]: “Show some respect, kid. If you don't respect anyone else in this league, you have to respect us.” [The guard]: “I don't have to show respect for anyone.” And then [the guard] spat on the ground. Now listen in to some of the greats as they slam-dunk... the... baggy pants-wearing adolescents who think that tradition and

history are whatever happened in last night's match... "They are not making the kind of money they are making because of what they have done. They are making it because of what *we* did." The caretakers of the game, the celebrated geniuses who helped to turn basketball into one of the most popular sports on the planet, fear that many of the newer players are more concerned with learning to fly like [the Bull] instead of mastering the fundamentals. Does anyone know how to do a jump shot any more? Of course not. Jump shots don't make the highlight reels or video games. Still, shoe executives fell all over each other in the race to give [the guard] \$US40 million just to wear their sneakers. Never mind that [the guard plays like the guard is] the only one on the court, or that [the guard] can barely dribble the ball without palming it... [T]he NBA threatened to fine him if [the guard] didn't pull up his socks, and ordered him to stop wearing 38-inch... trunks on his 30-inch... waist ([the guard] now wears 36s) – and that means everything to today's Generation X consumers... [When a senior All Star was watching the guard] in this year's All Star Rookie game, his face went sour... as the youngster made a murderous cross-over dribble. "Today's young players are selfish... I hate to say it, but it hurts to watch a lot of these guys because it just gets me upset. What's it going to be like when me and [the Bulls' superstar] and veterans who have respect for the game and its traditions are gone? I'm sitting here and a guy goes by... [who]'s only the best... to ever play the game! I'm running over to get his autograph and most of these young punks don't even know who [that retired great] was. It's a sad commentary on the state of our game."

...THE N[BA] should write... a nice royalty che[que for a certain song-writer], because one of his hits is the theme song for this season. *The Thrill Is Gone*, baby, and it's been gone for quite a while... A month remains in the regular season, but is there any reason the engravers should not get started on the championship trophy right now? Does anyone envisage a scenario... in which the Chicago Bulls... do not breeze to their second straight title and their fifth of this decade? ...This NBA season has been tailor-made for narcoleptics... In a way, the Bulls' cold-blooded efficiency has worked against them. While their effort to break the record for regular-season wins was big news last year – they succeeded with a 72-10 mark – the fact that it took them only one more game this season to reach 50 wins has largely been overlooked. There was more excitement... connected to the Chicago crusade of 1995-96. It was [their highest-paid player]'s first complete season after almost two years away, and fans were eager to see if [the old-guy] was still the game's best player. ([The player] was). It was [his cross-dressing teammate's] first season with the Bulls, and fans were curious to see if [their new signing] would be a cross-dressing virus that would kill the team. ([That player – who]... lost more than 10[%] of his \$US9 million... season's salary for [his latest] suspension and has vowed to give his cheques from his next 10 appearances with the... Bulls to 11 different charities [–] ...wasn't.) ...Even when the Boston Celtics were stringing together 11 championships in 13 seasons between 1957 and '69, there was always a threat in the shadows – ...[the] St. Louis Hawks or... [the] Philadelphia Warriors and 76ers. No one's lurking this year. Chicago isn't significantly better than it was last season, yet the gap between the Bulls and everyone else seems wider... [One player]'s move to the Los Angeles Lakers broke up the Magic. All that seems to stand between the Houston Rockets and mediocrity is one more injury to [its biggest star]. The New York Knicks have several new faces but are still the good-but-not-good-enough Knicks of past seasons... At this checkpoint, then, the most intriguing question seems to be, Is Chicago's supremacy good or bad for the NBA?

...YOU can never have too much of a good thing... [USers] know that and that's why their basketball teams play about a million games a year, and their baseball teams twice as many. The crowds want it so authorities give it to them. Come playoff time, the Yanks milk the occasion to the max. Each round is the best of five, and then it's best of seven for the final... The U[S] is also on to it when it comes to rules. If existing rules slow a game down or hinder spectator enjoyment, they change them. In basketball, ball-handling rules were relaxed to allow more "carrying", so players could perform fancier dribbling manoeuvres. The spectacular alleyoop, once outlawed, was permitted because the crowd loved it. In ice-hockey, the laws prohibiting fighting were relaxed – removed might be a better word – to cater to the American taste. In soccer... [they] have toyed with the offside rule, the penalty shootout, the size of the goal, and anything else they can think of to make the game more entertaining... Of course, they go overboard sometimes. Their love of commercials has reached the stage where they want to interrupt infomercials once every 15 minutes for five minutes of NBA basketball. What would the players do during the 15 minutes? Play five minutes for each of three rival TV stations.

...[Chicago's highest-paid player] has signed a 10-year deal with CBS worth about \$15 m... As a member of the CBS SportsLine team, [it']ll answer e-mail messages from his fans around the world, conduct interviews on a monthly basis, appear in radio and [TV ad]s and provide exclusive content for CBS SportsLine and his official online fan club... [The player], who earlier this month led his team to [its 5th NBA title in 7 years, already endorses]... his own line of... underwear... and... cologne... Last year, [the player] starred in his first movie, *Space Jam*... [In another development, the Bulls' coach] has agreed to coach the... side for one last season for \$US6 m... clearing the way for the [player's] re-signing... Several times during the run to the... championship... [the player claimed to have] no interest in breaking-in a new coach... [F]ans and NBA insiders were surprised by the Bulls' apparent willingness to replace... [the coach, who] was paid \$US2.75 m... last year... [making] him one of the best bargains in pro basketball...

WHAT... NBA COACHES EARN... (*Celtics*) \$7m... (*76ers*) \$5m... (*Pacers*) \$4.5m... (*Supersonics*) \$3.5m... (*Heat*)... (*Nets*) \$3m All figures \$US... Italian sportswear company Fila Holding SpA... signed a [7]-year endorsement deal with... a... Detroit Pistons forward... valued at... \$US80 m...

[The Chicago] Bulls want to sign their bad boy... aged 36... for another season. [The] cross-dresser – and the best rebounder in the... business for the past six years – ...will make... \$US4m... [The cross-dresser] was in trouble for most of the 1996-97 season and it was believed the Bulls might not retain him... [Following] an 11-game league ban in January [*the Worm*] was fined \$US25,000 for kicking a camera[operator] during a game in Minneapolis and was warned in a meeting with [the] NBA commissioner... that his next act of craziness could be his last. [But the Worm] picked up another one-game suspension for a tussle with [a] Milwaukee Bucks forward... and spent the final month of the season on the injured list...

IN CASE you thought that the money being paid to [US] sporting stars these days is getting a little out of hand, think again. It's getting a lot out of hand. Take the Minnesota Timberwolves... Naturally they're anxious to hold on to their star second-year forward... when his contract ends after the upcoming season, and their recent offer reflected that. They scrimped and saved and[came] up with \$US103.5 million over six years, all of which would have made [the forward] – who has won diddly squat in his fledgling career – the second highest paid player in the game... Would have! [The forward] turned it down. And when news surfaced that [the forward] had, the player... threatened to leave the team.

...The Minnesota Timberwolves have put six years' faith and \$[NZ]190 million into a contract to secure [their 21-year-old forward]. The wolves apparently negotiated right up to the midnight deadline to re-sign their 2.11m star... who they hope will assume [the Chicago Bulls' highest-paid player's] mantle as unstoppable shooting superstar. Either there's some magically creative accounting involved, since the salary cap this year is just under \$54 million, or his team-mates can't be getting much.

...The N[BA] season tips off tonight... when the... Chicago Bulls play the Boston Celtics... [8] teams will be playing for new coaches, and a host of players have switched teams. The one thing that has not changed is that the Chicago Bulls are again favourites to win the championship, as they are every year that [their shooting superstar] continues to play. In addition to the biggest single-season contract in NBA history at a reported \$US36 million, [the superstar insisted that the coach] remain the coach, that[another] star forward... not be traded, and even that[the] troublesome resident bad boy and NBA rebounding king... be asked back... [Incidentally, the] hardwood will be graced for the first time by [gal] referees this season...

In an empty Madison Square Garden... the New York Liberty [gals'] basketball team... runs... through a drill... The [gals], who stand six feet tall on average, will never play with the balletic athleticism of the [guys]: when the defences clamp down, they cannot soar to overcome... [While gals] have thrived in pro golf and tennis, they have yet to break through in team sports. Three attempts at basketball leagues have flopped in the past two decades, including one brief inspiration that featured cling unitards and lower baskets. The [latest incarnation of the] WNBA offers a... combination of old and new... Commercially, the league is a brand extension. Wholly owned and run by the 29 teams of the NBA, it is something to

busy the NBA's formidable marketing-and-merchandising machine while the [guys] are on summer vacation... [The star] Utah Jazz forward (who has six front-row seats for the Utah Starzz)[says] – "I decided that it was important for me as an NBA player to show my support... The first few weeks were tough; the ball handling wasn't that great, and the offence suffered a great deal. But things... really picked up... I love the influence the game is having on my girls [aged 4 and 5]. When they watch me play, I don't think they feel like Daddy is doing something they can do. But when... I take them to see the Starzz, they're beaming because... they can see themselves on the court. And that's priceless... to see your children be inspired."

...[the Kiwi who] was born and raised in Wanganui, struts down the streets of Philadelphia like a star. No one recognises her, not even with her Utah Starzz logo jumping out from her jacket. But [the Kiwi is] feeling pretty happy with herself. And why not? [The Wanganui export, who is NZ's] first... professional basketball[er], is]... back at her Philadelphia home now that the first season of the WNBA is over. Waiting to hear if... a summer contract in Greece or France [is available, the] 22-year-old has time to contemplate the past three months of excitement and disappointment. [The Kiwi] has lived in the U[S] for the past four years, after getting a scholarship with Philadelphia college St Joseph's University. [The Kiwi] majored in sociology, putting it to work with shelters for [mothers] and children. Then earlier this year [the Kiwi] heard about the new... national[basketball] league, and was invited to trial for the... team in Salt Lake City. "I went all the way out there without a guarantee I'd get on the team... There were 130 girls – and two spots. I was so rapt to hear I'd made it." But, in the tough world of professional sport, her elation was short-lived. "They needed a 6ft power forward and I was moved down to the developmental side. We practised and did everything with the team but it wasn't the same,"... [However, halfway] through the WNBA season, [the Kiwi] was suddenly "reactivated" – called back into the top side... "The team had been really struggling offensively – my strength is outside shooting. They decided to release one of their big players and I was back again..." First-game nerves were few... even in front of a 9500 home crowd. "It was amazing, though. In N[Z] you'd be lucky to get 50 fans a game." And WNBA games were shown on three big-time TV channels four days a week. And then there's the money... "The top players get excellent money. It's nothing near what the [guys] get, but their money's crazy. The top [gals] get \$US60-70,000 for three months. I was on the lower end of the pay scale. But you have no expenses – they give you an apartment and food allowance... The average age of the team was 27 – we were the youngest team in the league, and I was the youngest player in the Utah team..." [The Kiwi] was the rookie – even though the league was new – and often had to carry the bags and fetch the water bottles... But [the Kiwi] will not be one of the Starzz again next season. Only the top six players in the side – who finished fourth in the western conference – are retained, [so the Kiwi] is available for any of the other seven sides in the league... "If the league takes off the way it started to do this year, I plan to stay... till I'm 30." [Editor's note: Most NZ girls play netball – 'a 7-a-side game introduced to England from the US in 1895 as the indoor version of basketball.' The difference between the two codes is that netballers aren't allowed to run with, or dribble, the ball – it has to be passed between players – who must remain in their position's zone (e.g., defenders are forbidden from standing in their team's offensive zone; centre's can stand in both the defensive and offensive zones but aren't permitted to enter the goal zone, and – unless they are playing 'indoor netball' – can't shoot for goal).

... 'It began as a game played on grass with clothesline props as goalposts and paper bags for baskets. It became NZ's No 1 gals' sport, although the Kiwis virtually isolated themselves from the rest of the netball world for 20 years over a matter of how many people were allowed on court. Netball started in NZ as basketball – but not the dribbling, three-pointer version. The game was born in Massachusetts as a guys' fitness exercise at the School for Christian Workers. A gal teacher in New Orleans soon heard about it, got a few things wrong in translation, and ended up with a game not too much unlike the netball of today. The big difference from modern netball was that it was nine-a-side – three players in each zone. Before WW2, it was a game for single gals. Wives – especially mothers – simply were not picked for teams. In England and AUS, they were playing seven-a-side. But NZ stuck to sides of nine, concerned there would be too many teams and not enough courts if the numbers were reduced. The first NZ team was invited to AUS in 1938, and the Aussies were determined to play seven-a-side. The home team thrashed the visitors by 29 goals on grass, but still the NZers wouldn't be swayed. Ten years later, the AUSns came here and again walloped the NZers, who couldn't adjust to having fewer people on court. It took another decade for NZ to bow to the pressure and adopt the sevens game, after they'd been shunned from international play. Netball (still called basketball until 1970) could finally get serious in 1960, when NZ toured AUS. Every player in the team, which included the current coach, had to pay £100 towards the trip. Only in the past two years has professionalism arrived in netball so players can be paid, though not enough for anyone to give up their day job. NZ lost those tests, but the margins were single-figures – the last test was decided by one goal, setting a precedent for some heartbreaking transtasman clashes in the next three decades. Even then it was obvious there were two superpowers in world netball – although the South Africans and West Indians would now and then throw a spanner in the works. Travel was a difficult venture for the early Silver Ferns. The boat trip to the first world championships in England in 1963 took five weeks, with players training on deck at 5.30 am and sometimes losing balls overboard. NZ again lost to AUS by one goal in those world championships – and lost by the same margin to their neighbours in 1991 and 1995. The NZers have been on the victor's rostrum as well, winning their first world championship in 1967, but had to wait 20 years to do it again. The Silver Ferns battled to get reasonable exposure in the public eye until well into the 80s. In 1969, they were told they could have 10 minutes TV coverage of a test in Dunedin, during the halftime break of a club rugby match. Today they have no such problem getting on the small screen. Live TV made netballers into stars. The Silver Ferns suffered some dark days in the early 90s, struggling to keep pace with an AUSn side who had benefited from years of training at the AUSn Institute of Sport. They finally got on top of the reigning world champions in last year's Fisher and Paykel series, with a team who were touted favourites to win the world title in Christchurch in September. But yet again, like Groundhog Day, the aptly besuited AUSns crushed the aptly-named Silver Ferns by 'scoring in the final second' (although the Silver Ferns missed several chances to win the game during the last minute). ■ Some fans were justifiably upset when the '\$75 tickets for the opening ceremony/game that they'd bought in advance were reduced to \$15 a day or so beforehand as only half had been sold'!

... 'Netball NZ generated a surplus for the financial year despite spending a record amount. The surplus of \$22,590 was returned without having to use special funds as originally planned because total revenue, a record \$4,018,846, was 17% higher than the previous year. Income was boosted by increased sponsorship, particularly from new Silver Ferns sponsor Vodafone, increased grant revenue from the NZ Sports Foundation to assist the Silver Ferns' preparation for the world championships, and increased revenue from gate takings. The result does not include a share of the profit from the championships'.

... 'some of the coaches of the country's top sides are afraid the physical nature of the game is over-shadowing skill.' Netball is also] becoming a game for Amazonian [gals] as the rest of the world try to use height to beat the sport's giants, A[US and NZ. The] Silver Ferns coach... is concerned that netball will turn into a "tall person's game" after witnessing British sides stacking their teams with six-foot-plus shooters. The touring N[Z]ers beat Wales 77-39 yesterday morning, but not before having to overcome two lofty Welsh shooters. "They were both six foot four... One of them was a basketball, not a netballer." England used a... 6ft 3in... shooter... to good effect in the second half of the opening test last weekend. The British seem to be latching on to the idea adopted by the Caribbean and African nations, trying to outwit and out-lob the N[Z and AUS]n defences... "I was speaking to a Scottish coach who told me that they... go to basketball games and try to get players to join netball clubs..." Despite the Welsh ploy, [the NZ coach] was buoyed by the effort of the Kiwi defence... [One] Silver Ferns defender... measuring in at 1.82m, coped well... But... was having to become "a jumping jack" to intercept the big passes... The game served as a shake-down for the Ferns after their sluggish 12-goal win over England last Sunday and before the second test in Birmingham tomorrow... [The Silver] Ferns... beat the English by 30 goals... two years [ago].

...The high life DON'T be surprised if your children turn out taller than you. Or even if your younger brothers or sisters seem to have inherited an extra dose of height. Medical and social research is confirming that people the world over are getting taller – not just with each generation, but

with each decade. Some say the growth is happening too fast to be genetic. So theories about why younger people have a better view focus on nutrition. And better hygiene and housing reduce the incidence of childhood disease, which cut earlier generations down to size. But one N[Z] researcher believes that we are simply reaching our genetic potential, that we might always have been this tall, and maybe taller yet, if other factors had not stunted our growth in the past... The average height of the famous 1957 All Blacks was 1.8m – 6cm shorter than the average height among the 1995 World Cup team[, whereas]... the members of the 1907 All Blacks... averaged 1.77m. Most of our added height is in our legs, which an Auckland doctor thinks is partly responsible for the soaring rate of hip fractures among the elderly... All this growing does not mean that we will all end up about the same height... [T]he human race will simply reach the spectrum of heights it was always genetically programmed to have.

...*Giant... aims high...* [The teenager] is a basketball prospect on the move – upwards. The... [giant] from Huntly has grown more than 6cm since August and now stands close to 2.11m (7ft) in his size-20 basketball boots. [The giant] has been playing basketball for only six months, but his potential has been quickly realised and [it] has been named in a Maori squad to compete in the international Arafura Games in Darwin next May. This term [the giant] is off to board at Church College, Hamilton, one of this country's strongest basketball schools. "Huntly is a league town and I'd never played basketball," said [the giant] yesterday. "Now I really love it. It was always difficult getting football boots to fit. But they have basketball boots my size in the States." Just how big is [the teenager] going to be when... fully grown? [The] doctor... who is in charge of the Maori team's fitness, believes [the teenager] has some way to go. "This kid has an arm span of 2.33m which is probably not too far off his height when [it] is expected to stop growing in eight years time... His potential is exciting as the current Washington Bullets' centre... at 2.30m could not bounce a basketball when... drafted into the NBA. [The centre] is now paid \$1 million a year and leads the NBA in shot-blocking." The Arafura tournament is held every two years and this year has attracted 29 countries, including teams from... China... and... the U[S]...

A) New York Knicks basketballer... had surgery on his dislocated right wrist yesterday and will be out for the season. The 35-year-old... signed a four-year, \$US68 million... contract prior to this season... [In further basketball news from the US,] the champion Chicago Bulls side... ran away from the Miami Heat in the final 10 minutes of their latest NBA match. After the score was tied 72-all, Chicago won the... match 90-80. Miami, however, lead the Atlantic division of the Eastern Conference with 17 wins and nine losses, ahead of Orlando 16, 11, while Chicago are running second in the central division with 18, 9 to Atlanta's 19, 8.

...Only a few weeks after [claiming to be] bored with basketball, [the Worm] is calm, content and committed... [to winning] a seventh consecutive NBA rebounding title and... [helping] the Bulls capture their sixth championship of the 1990s... [The Chicago Bulls defender with] a "smiley" face painted on the orange hair on the back of his head, has only three technical fouls this season... [- the] guy... attracted 25 technical fouls in 1996-97 followed by at least one in each of last season's first 13 playoff games... [-] and hasn't been late for a... game in a month. Could the Worm really be a nice guy beneath all those tattoos and body piercings? ...*"The Bulls put [behaviour clauses] in the contract,"* [his head] coach... said.

...*The... Chicago Bulls head coach...* [- 'a Harley-riding sports philosopher who has woven Zen sayings, American Indian totems and the Lord's Prayer into his rituals with the Bulls' – was] congratulated by his former college coach and Los Angeles Clippers boss... after the Bulls beat the Clippers 94-89 for [his] 500th win in the... [NBA. The coach] reached 500 in 682 games – faster than any other coach in NBA history... [The previous] record of 500 in 684 games... [was held by a] Miami Heat coach... [By the way, when the best player in the NBA] was asked by a Spanish reporter what... [the] Chicago Bulls... legend... thought of... [Brazil's] No 10... soccer star... [who is his Nike stablemate, the basketballer] replied, "Sorry, I don't know who [that person] is." ...*TALK about tunnel vision.*

...*EVERYONE* knows [the Chicago Bulls forward] can play basketball. People know... the great one... [has] flirted with baseball. Now the biggest name in world sport plans to leave his mark on another sport. The Chicago Bull has teamed with ten pin bowling in another huge endorsement[to promote a company's]... bowling products... BUT not everything is running smoothly in [his] ever-increasing... empire of endorsements. There's trouble rumbling from a 1995 scenario when... well into his multi-year contract with Nike which was paying him \$US20m a year to endorse the company's apparel and footwear... [the Chicago Bull] signed a 10-year agreement with sunglass manufacturer Oakley to help hawk its glasses and sit on its board. It was a deal that would pay... \$US500,000 a year plus stock options. But [the Chicago Bull] appeared in print ads wearing the shades [and] also a black beret bearing Oakley's logo last year. Nike sued Oakley claiming that the beret constituted "apparel" and [the basketballer's act of] wearing it was a violation of his Nike contract. In September, Nike was granted a preliminary injunction restricting Oakley to using only eyewear in its... ads[featuring the basketballer]. But the battle will continue and it could get messier considering Oakley is now producing a line of athletic shoes that will hit the market next year and Nike now includes sunglasses in its merchandising line... [In related news, the] NBAs fashion police have been busy dishing out fines to cut the players' short longs back to long shorts (parents of teenagers take note). The Minnesota Timberwolves were stung \$US25,000... and five players \$US2500 each for wearing oversized shorts, and the Portland Trail Blazers and two of their players... were fined for the same violation. The rules state shorts must end at least 2.5cm above the knee.

...*WE* all know [US] sport is a mega-buck business. And it seems the good teams get the travel perks. Take the Orlando Magic basketball team. It has its own plane which flies under the banner of Magic Carpet Aviation. The operation includes a 2229sq m hanger where players can park their cars before take-off. The Boeing 737 carries 42 passengers in leather upholstery... But apparently it isn't the best in the NBA. The Portland Trail Blazers have refused media requests for a peek inside their customised 35-seat Boeing 757... estimated to have cost \$US98m... [● NZ] lost to Italy, 56-70 in an international basketball tournament in Madrid yesterday... N[Z]'s defence was superb, given that the... Tall Blacks... were much smaller than the Italians. They... held Italy to 34-36 at halftime but too many turnovers and the loss of rebounds cost them in the second half... Italy also converted 22 freethrows to N[Z]'s 8]. The Italians were expected to be the toughest team on the two-week European tour for the... Kiwis... and [their] coach... was delighted with the result. "Our guys got something resembling a standing ovation at the end. They are immensely popular,"... The Tall Blacks... now travel to Amsterdam for another tournament, starting with a match against Israeli side Galil Elyon tomorrow. - 1997

N[Z] basketball made a[nother] giant step forward in its quest for international recognition when the [Tall Blacks] beat the world's ninth-ranked Cuba 85-81 to reach the final of the... legendary Haarlem... tournament yesterday. The win gives the Tall Blacks a better world ranking and almost certainly a guaranteed start at the 2000 Sydney Olympics... Cuba was unbeaten this week, but were halted by a... team that hustled them on defence, and shot an outstanding 53[%] from the floor... After losing 86-79 to the Cubans earlier in the tournament, [the NZ] coach... made a tactical change, crowding the... keyhole and forcing Cuba into low-percentage outside shots. [The coach] described the result as... almost a dream come true... This morning the Tall Blacks meet Brazil, ranked in the world's top four countries, in the final.

...*The...* [Tall Blacks] squad had their first day off during their European tour yesterday, taking to the canals of Amsterdam still pinching themselves about their four wins in top competition. The team lost the final of the Haarlem invitation tournament 74-93 to Brazil, who beat them by the same score in a warmup tournament in Madrid... However, [the NZ] coach... said the players had gained invaluable experience... [The Tall Blacks, who] were surprise finalists at the high-calibre tournament, a hunting ground for NBA scouts... had no answer to the high-speed Brazilian game... But... in... the final N[Z]'s shooting percentage let them down, 39[%] from the floor to Brazil's 53[%]. Nelson's NZ representative... was named the tournament's most valuable player and earned a place as guard in the All-Star Five. [The 23-year-old's teammate,] a 30-year-old Canterbury stalwart, took the award for the top three-point shooting percentage... [The NZers] return home tomorrow after a day sightseeing in London.

...Amid frenzied scenes of jubilation, the Tall Blacks secured an international future for their game yesterday with a historic basketball victory over the A[US]n Boomers. The N[Z]ers won 89-78 at Auckland's North Shore Events Centre after being behind for [75%] of the game. It was only the third victory over A[US] in 39 games, with two of those victories in the past three days. The first win was in 1978... It was their first series win and the first time N[Z] had secured an Oceania spot for a world event. The Tall Blacks pack their bags for the world championships in Indianapolis this time next year, now rated one of the best 16 of the 211 national teams under international governing body FIBA... No mean feat. Worldwide, basketball is huge. The international body... claims 400 million players. With 208 associations, basketball has more affiliates than soccer or table tennis, sports generally regarded as the world's most popular... Indianapolis [will be N[Z]]'s first appearance at this level since 1986, when their only win was 77-75 over Malaysia en route to a first round exit... And one immediate spinoff... could already have emerged... [Basketball N[Z]] had heard positive noises from across the Tasman about a proposal for an annual series between the teams, which had previously been a low priority at A[US]n headquarters... Is... [t]he Tall Blacks'... [coach] the best volunteer coach in world sport? ...[the c]oach... and his team are now strong contenders for the Halberg awards as the nation's best when they are announced early next year. Meanwhile... A[US] swept to a commanding 102-55 victory and a 2-0 test series success against N[Z] in the Oceania [gals'] world championship qualifying series in Christchurch. A[US] were too powerful for the Tall Ferns, who battled to make an impression against their taller and more internationally experienced opponents... A[US] won the first test at Invercargill by... 97-61... The Tall Ferns' cause was hindered when they were again without [their] leading forward... whose torn quad muscle had not responded sufficiently to play... The [series] win qualifies the Opals for the world championships in China next year.

...Despite the sweltering conditions... [and having] to adjust to the American basketball rules... the Waitakere under-14 boys... side showed their international opponents a thing or two about the Kiwi way of slam dunking. They won the second World Youth Basketball tournament in Hawaii. Waitakere sent two teams, an under-14 boys team and under-16 girls team to the tournament... The girls team didn't win a game but the under-14 boys caused the upset by beating competition favourite San Francisco in the final 39-29. They... [had lost in pool play] to San Francisco 37-45.

...the... Waitakere Kiwi Boys basketball team adjusted to the hot Hawaii climate to defeat the two-times world champions at the recent world basketball competition... After winning five of its seven games in searing 30°C heat, it had only one team to win over – the San Francisco team, the crowd favourites. Without air conditioning and with different American rules of play, the Kiwis had to adjust quickly to come out on top. They won the crowd over, and locals played Hawaiian music during their warm-up and the game at their request.

...The 18-year-old has cheated death to score a shot at the hoop of basketball fame. A pituitary tumour left the Huntly teenager towering 2.23m... With the tumour removed... the... modest young Mormon[, who] is slightly shorter than [N[Z]'s tallest recorded person –] who is 2.25m... [–] leaves next month to take up a two-year scholarship at the Salt Lake Community College in Utah... [T]he opportunity was a dream come true... [it said yesterday. □ Another NZ basketballer recently left a US university and is certain to gain selection for an NBA franchise (probably the Toronto Raptors) during the next draft of rookies – thereby making him 'the first NZer to play in the NBA.' Furthermore, the NZer has expressed a desire to represent his country, which would make him the first NBA player to play for the Tall Blacks. Speaking of tall blacks, who] is *the world's best sports person of the modern era* – the current Chicago Bulls shooting superstar or a former Brazilian soccer player? According to one commentator, the basketballer] has to be. Six championships this decade... and, baseball apart, it could have been a clean sweep. The NBA is the World Cup of basketball. And held every year. [The basketballer], with his innate athleticism, has become the world's most recognised sports[person]. Even in his mid-30s his brilliance has hardly dimmed... [However, another commentator says the soccer player] has to be the best... We are talking about the world's most popular game and its greatest player... [The basketballer] worked magic with his hands. But [the Brazilian] works magic with his feet, which is even more skilful. [It] led Brazil to two World Cup victories and became the sport's ultimate global superstar. Heck, [the Brazilian] even brought soccer to the U[S].

...From Chicago to the Chatham, [the Chicago Bulls' superstar] is a shaven-headed god in baggy shorts. [The NZ Herald] farewells 'the best there will ever be'... THE WORLD'S most famous active sports[person] is walking away from it all. The Chicago Bulls have won what [the superstar] has said will be his last... [NBA season. The superstar] has already retired once, in October 1993. His father... had been murdered a few months earlier, a random robbery-killing[, and the superstar] had been angered by reports about his gambling. [The superstar] had won three NBA championships and all of its awards. [So the superstar] wanted to try something different: professional baseball. Then [the superstar] came back, 17 months later, having proved to himself and the world [that the superstar] was a far better basketballer than baseball player. A huge poster went up on the main expressway leading into Chicago[when his return was announced. The poster showed his] face and the single word: YES. Since then, the Bulls have won three more NBA championships and the [superstar]'s fame, his wealth, his influence have never been greater, largely because everything [the superstar] does now is tinged with a sense of finality... Having celebrated the Second Coming, Chicago is now braced for the Second Going. It makes no sense. [The superstar] is still setting records[and] started April by passing 29,000 career points. Only two players in NBA history... have scored more... [The superstar holds the 'highest match points total – 69 points (v Cleveland, Mar. 1990)'; and the highest] NBA play-off record [–] 63 points against... the... Boston Celtics. 'God came to the game tonight and played under the name of... [a basketballer,' said one of the Celtics' stars at the time. Only a former heavyweight boxer and a Brazilian soccer player can rival the basketballer] as the most-recognised athlete on Earth... [The basketballer even] displaced the figure most often previously associated with Chicago – gangster "Scarface" Al Capone... [However, a] *New York Times* sports columnist... wrote that [the basketballer has] done little beyond sport to make a stand in society, contrasting him with [the boxer] and his opposition to the Vietnam War... There are finer things for an adult to be doing... There are two things [the basketballer] considers off-limits: his family life... and his golf, which [the basketballer] regards as private time. Golf is more than recreation to [him]. It means competing against himself... [The basketballer] once said that his perfect day would involve two rounds of golf and time with his wife... and his three children.

...Who says money doesn't talk? ...The... basketball living legend has paid almost \$500,000 to become a member... at the exclusive Medinah Country Club in Chicago. The... four-handicapper could have become a member for around a fifth of that if [the Chicago Bull] was prepared to endure the five-year waiting list. But [the basketballer] wanted immediate access to the course which has hosted four US Opens... and so opened his chequebook. Seems... [the basketballer and ex-baseballer – who signed with the] Chicago White Sox... [in 1994 but failed] to impress and[was] assigned to minor league... [–] wants only the best in his quest to get his card in order for an attack on the Senior Tour when [the basketballer turns 50. Incidentally, a]... basic framework for a[n]... NBA... labour agreement appear[s] to be in place following eight hours of talks between... owners and players. But both sides acknowledged they were not yet close to making a deal... The owners are seeking to scale back the players' share of some \$US2 billion... in revenue to 48[%] by the year 2003. Last season, 57[%] of revenue went to pay salaries.

...The... [NBA] and the players' union reached an agreement yesterday to end a six-month lockout and save what is left of the professional season, after a secret, all-night bargaining session. The deal... was struck only 29 hours before the league's board of governors – the committee of club owners – was set to vote on cancelling the remainder of the season... Players are to report to training camp to begin the first week of... a season of about 50 games – compared to the usual 82 – plus playoffs... The union had wanted higher salaries for the so-called lower-class and middle-class players. The players, all millionaires, had been locked out by owners desperate to impose a tighter salary cap to halt an exploding wage bill which was exceeding \$US1.1 billion this year... The NBA is paying each of its 400-plus players an average salary of \$US2.6 million... Players in the N[FL] (who went on strike in 1982)] average about \$US900,000 and major league baseball pays an average of \$US1.45 million... [T]he median N[B]A salary is... \$US1.3 million... and... the... NBA minimum pay rate is... [\$US240,000. Incredibly, the NBA] was prepared to increase[its average salary]

to almost \$US5 million over the next five years but the players fought for more... The lockout was essentially a strike by the club owners... The lockout... caused the NBA to miss games because of a labour dispute for the first time in history... Before this season, the NBA was the only major North American sports league that had never lost a game to a work stoppage. The agreement saves it from becoming the first existing league to lose an entire season to a labour dispute.

...the... basketball world... still... [has] to wait to find out if [its biggest superstar] is returning to the NBA... [The league's highest-paid player had said it] would wait until the end of the lockout to announce whether [it] will retire... Under terms of the new collective bargaining agreement, a grandfather clause allows any player to sign for 105[%] of his previous salary. That means... the [Chicago] Bull... can get about \$US34.7 million...

IMAGINE the numbers... [that might have been produced if the Chicago Bulls' most famous player was] playing one more season. Not just points, rebounds and assists. Dollars and cents too... "Every place [the player] went, they would sell out," said... a professor of sports administration at Ohio University in Athens... "Every piece of junk they put his name on would sell like crazy... The thing about [this player], and it's an emotional issue, is [that the player is] a clean hero... From [the] US President... on down, everybody is shameful these days. Now you're looking at a public that needs someone to admire." ...A [third] farewell tour would have meant one more big payout for the NBA, a last chance to milk the greatest cash cow the sports world has known... Instead, the NBA is coming to terms with the loss of a player who, by some estimates, accounts for 10%-20% of the league's... annual revenue. The projected loss of... [up] to \$US200m... comes at the worst possible time, in the wake of a costly lockout that has the league scrambling to win back fans... His departure is expected to hurt television ratings immediately.

...[the living legend]'s back... at 38, to return to play in the NBA, for the Washington Wizards.

...[the living legend's] return to the NBA has ignited huge interest in the league and already his Washington Wizards have become the hot tickets around the country. Odds on their chances of making it to the post-season have also been slashed. And it seems his rivals are even happy to see him back... "I don't know anybody who doesn't like [him]," said the New York Knicks guard... who will probably mark [him]. It remains to be seen whether, at 38, [the former Chicago Bull] can keep the legend alive.

...[the legend] tested himself and came up a winner yesterday as [it] got down to serious business in his... NBA... comeback campaign. The 38-year-old, five-time league most valued player scored six points in the final 2 1/2 minutes to lead the Washington Wizards to a 105-92 victory over the New Jersey Nets in a pre-season game in South Carolina... – the first time during the pre-season [the legend] was on the court in the closing minutes of a game. The Wizards begin the new season with a game against the New York Knicks on Wednesday.

...WHAT would you pay to see one of the most eagerly awaited sporting comebacks in history? One American sports fan has shelled out... \$US101,300... for a courtside seat... for [the legend]'s NBA season-opener appearance against the New York Knicks at Madison Square Garden.

...Wizard... lacking that old magic... [The legend] returned to N[B]A action... yesterday as his Washington Wizards fell to the New York Knicks 93-91 in the season-opener... [W]earing his familiar No 23 in the unfamiliar dark blue of the Wizards, [the legend] had a chance to tie the game with a long-range three-pointer in the final seconds but his shot clanked off the front rim. The old [version] rarely missed in the dying seconds. "I think we're all surprised," said [the] Knicks coach... "When that three went up, I thought it was in." ...the game's greatest player and world's most recognised sports[person] during his celebrated seasons with the Chicago Bulls, finished with 19 points, missing 14 of his 21 shots from the floor... Thicker in body and slower of step, the team's elder states[person] contented himself with shooting jump shots and dishing off to his young teammates[, so was unrecognisable as the player]... who soared over and around rivals in his title-winning years.

...AMERICAN university basketball fans are being offered the chance to win \$20 million during this season's championship. The catch? Sandbox.com's tease comes with the need to predict every result in the 64-team tournament and it will take a miracle for that to happen. Mathematicians figure that even a college basketball expert with a 70% success rate has only a 1 in 5.7 billion chance of collecting the prize. If you don't follow the sport then your odds may be as high as nine quintillion – that's nine followed by 18 zeros – to one. Good Luck!

...In his book *Playing For Keeps*, [a] Pulitzer Prize-winning writer... describes the incredible rise of basketball since sports television company ESPN began broadcasting college games in 1979. From being shunned by advertisers, who considered it a fringe sport dominated by sky-scraping black [guys] and therefore not great as a sales vehicle, it now rates with American football and baseball.

...With collectors offering \$US100,000... or more, catching... [the Cardinals' No 25]'s historic 61st home run may be like winning the lottery – which is why [the catcher] plans to give [the ball] back to the player... "It will mean more to him and baseball than it will to me," said the 28-year-old catering manager... [who] wants only to meet [the No 25] and get an autographed jersey... The homer tied... [a] 37-year-old single-season record... Meanwhile, [another]... slugger... hit two home runs yesterday, becoming the record third player to reach 50 homers this season. The Seattle star, the American League leader, reached 50 with a grand slam in the sixth inning against Baltimore[, making him]... the third player in the major league to hit 50 home runs or more in consecutive seasons. Babe Ruth did it in 1920-21 and 1927-28, and [the Cardinals' No 25] has done it the past three years... [No 21], of the Chicago Cubs... has 58... [homers this] season...

"I didn't have a sexual relationship with that [gal]." – Swamped by the American media, an 11-year-old boy's cheeky comment [(referring to an infamous quote by the US President)] when asked what his first thoughts were after catching... [the] record-tying 61st home-run ball of the season...

[No 21] of the Chicago Cubs matched [No 25] of St Louis for the Major League Baseball home-run record with his 63rd of the season... on Wednesday... It was... [also] the... Dominican Republic star[']s third grand-slam homer of the year and his career... The ball was specially marked, unlike the 62nd hit by [the No 21] to surpass the old mark set in 1961 by the late Roger Maris, a mark [the No 25] had beaten last week...

In the wake of [the St Louis Cardinals' No 25's] admission that it has been using a testosterone-producing pill for more than a year, major league baseball and the players union have asked doctors to research the... use of the muscle-enhancing supplements... Use of androstenedione is legal in baseball but banned in the NFL, Olympics and the NCAA. It is an adrenal hormone produced naturally in [the human body] and is converted in the liver to testosterone, which is used in muscle production.

...[while the Cardinals' No 25] has been making history in the home run chase with... [the Cubs' No 21, the No 25 has] also been making millions for the pharmaceutical industry. Since [it] admitted to using androstenedione late last month... weekend warriors... have... [been] gobbling the pills at a Viagra-like rate. "This has gone from a \$US5 m... a year industry to maybe a \$100 m... a year industry," says... Met-R Nutrition, a sports nutrition company that has seen sales of its andro products jump by 300%... Health food stores have been besieged... and have struggled to keep it in stock.

...[the Cubs' No 21] grabbed the lead in the historic record-setting home run race... yesterday by crushing his 66th home run of the... season. But it lasted less than an hour... 46 minutes later in St Louis, [the Cardinals' No 25] smashed his 66th.

...THE faces in the crowd are what you remember. It's not just that people are smiling. They're grinning so broadly, talking so animatedly, that you can see their teeth... Everywhere [the Cardinals' No 25 and the Cubs' No 21] play, America's mouth is agape. For the last week, which constitutes both the last days of the baseball season and the final act of the greatest home-run chase in any year... fans have been smiling, screaming, chanting and applauding in packed ballparks from St Louis to Milwaukee... They're having the time, and the memory, of a sports lifetime. They're the lucky ones. And I know just how they feel. Last Friday I was one of them... In a ballpark, you can meet anybody. And, because it's a ballgame, you can talk to them. I bumped into a tall young [guy] followed by dozens of screaming adolescent girls. With this clue in hand, I realised I'd just collided with a Smashing Pumpkin... Now that Harry Caray's dead, they'll let anybody lead the crowd in *Take Me Out to the Ballgame*... Ballgames aren't "destinations", in the current jargon of the travel industry. They are, as they've always been, lazy journeys. It's

all about the process. That's why we don't care "if we never get back". Exactly 100% of the people who love baseball understand that the final score is just more syrup on the ice-cream sundae. It's the game in which the highlight of the day might be a long foul ball... If you want to know how baseball itself feels about... [the No 25 and No 21, ask] the... Cincinnati Reds manager... who has bounced around the game for 49 years... "Aw, this is the greatest... You love to see two good guys, two really genuine people, doing something like this instead of some of the jerks we've got. I loved the way [the No 25] picked up his kid after... [hitting home-run] No 62. And I like the way [the No 21]'s mother is so nervous watching [on TV] back in the Dominican that [mum] can't hold her cup of tea when [her son]'s at bat." ...When the Reds were in Houston last week, and [the No 21] was driving in six runs in TWO innings, in a late game in San Diego, [the manager] held up the Cincinnati team bus so everybody could watch... "This is part of our history," [the manager told his players]. "...Think about how hard you want to work so that, some day, we'll be good enough to have people pay that much attention to us." ...A role model isn't somebody who "puts up numbers," said [the No 25], finding the precise words to make his central valuable point for – who knows – the thousandth time this summer. "A role model is a person who lives his life right. Everybody makes mistakes. People who are role models overcome their mistakes and become good people." Somehow, [the No 25 and No 21] have kept their dignity, their craft, their heroism and their sport, on higher ground for one summer than much of the culture that surrounds them.

...In a fitting ending to a magnificent, magical baseball season, [the]St Louis Cardinals slugger... belted two more homers in his final game yesterday to reach a previously unthinkable 70 home runs... That made it five home runs over the final three games for "Big Mac" as [the No 25] pulled away from [the] Chicago Cubs star... The record will not become official, however, until [the Cubs'] season is over. [The Cub], who did not hit one out of the park in Chicago's 3-4, 11-innings loss to the Astros in Houston, remained on 66 home runs. But moments after the Cubs lost, the San Francisco Giants fell 8-9 to Colorado, leaving Chicago and the Giants tied for the National League wildcard berth... Any home runs [the Cub] hits in today's one-game playoff against San Francisco will count towards his regular season statistics. [The No 25] finished with a dazzling flourish in front of his home fans... drilling a three-run shot off Montreal... into the seats in left field in his final at-bat of the season to lift the Cardinals to a 6-3 victory over the Expos. "This is a season that I hope I will never forget and I hope everybody in baseball never forgets," [the No 25] said in a post-game ceremony on the field honouring him... "It's been one hell of a ride."

...Is [the] record of 70 homers in a season worth the paper it's printed on? YES There's no such thing as a bad record... Sure expansion has diluted pitching talent, but remember, unlike [37 years ago], there are now starters, mid relievers, relievers, setup [pitchers] and closers to contend with... Big Mac... ate 'em all up... NO Many of the pitchers in Major League baseball today can't compare to the [pitchers] who worked magic on the mound... [37 years ago]. Then, only those with stuff got the ball tossed to them. The pitch served up to [the No 25] for his 69th homer was pathetic. [Big Mac]'s a great hitter... [of] soft pitching.

...The baseball... that [Big Mac] struck into history last summer for his... record-setting 70th home run has sold at auction for \$US2.7 m... The price obliterated the previous record for a baseball of \$US126,500... paid last month for a ball hit by Babe Ruth as the first home run in Yankee Stadium. The [70th homer] ball was sold by... a St Louis research scientist who retrieved it on September 27... at... Busch Stadium... [The] creator of the "Spawn" comic book and movie character, is the [village idiot] who paid... for the baseball... "I blew my life savings on this," said... [the] 37-year-old self-described "baseball psycho" who would give up [his] seven companies... for a chance to play centre field for a Major League Baseball club.

A column in June on sports payments was prompted by a four-year pay deal signed by an American baseball pitcher... That \$US8.5 million annual paycheck record has just been buried; [the Atlanta pitcher]'s fellow Braves pitcher... has signed a \$US57.5 million five-year contract.

...UPDATE: [a US baseball player has signed a new contract that will pay him '£337,000 per week']...

SIGNED: A \$[NZ]137m sponsorship agreement between... Adidas and World Series Baseball champion the New York Yankees.

...Chevrolet describe their trucks as [being] tough as... the... [baseballer who] hasn't missed a day's work for 16 years. Last week, the Iron [Hum]an of American sport laced up his boots, tucked in his shirt, tightened his resolve and clocked on again for his 2489th consecutive baseball game. It is an implausible record – an unbroken string of appearances for the Baltimore Orioles that began back on May 30, 1982... In 1995 [the Oriole] passed the supposedly unbreakable record of 2131 straight games set 56 years before by the legendary Lou Gehrig, then [the Oriole] just kept on playing as many as seven games a week, 162 games a season. Interrupted only by a players' strike two years ago, [the Oriole]'s "streak" has become one of the constants of [US] life, a symbol of dependability and continuity. Presidents have come and gone, movie stars have flared and sputtered, athletes have soared and faded but... [the Oriole] was always out there, reliably patrolling the infield with the reflexes and grace of a gazelle. But now [the Oriole] is grey at the temples, and this season [his] 37-year-old body has started to betray his will. The Iron [Hum]an is rusting. From July, [the Oriole] played injured – a disc problem that affected a nerve in his left leg – and... fell into a batting slump, evidence of mortality that has provoked a once unthinkable question: should [the record-breaker] be rested? Baltimore led their division from the first game of the season to the last to take their first title in 14 years. They reached the eight-club play-offs for the World Series, beating Seattle 3-1 but missed out on the finals after going down 4-2 to Cleveland. The Orioles finished the season with [the record-breaker] and the team faltering, and with the whole country, it seemed, involved in a compelling argument. Had preserving "the streak" become a burden, a selfish obsession that was hurting [the player] and the club? In an age where professional athletes make dubious role models, [the Oriole] embodies what are now thought of as older values. [The Oriole] is a wholesome, private, unflashy, single-minded, one-club player who believes in winning through application, improvement and determination. His work ethic made him an unassailable hero in the blue-collar city of Baltimore, and the example of his character and the lesson of his streak – success from perseverance – endeared him to every American parent. Many fans believe that the greed of players is harming sport, but nobody begrudges [the Oriole] his \$6.2 million a year. So what if his form fell away? In a *Baltimore Sun* poll, 65[% said the Oriole] should not be benched. His play was only part of the story, argued his supporters. There was the incalculable value of his leadership, experience and inspiration. At the Orioles [the record-breaker] is considered infallible and although [the] club owner... suggested that everybody needs a day off and wondered whether [the record-breaker] was risking permanent damage by continuing to play, [the team's]manager... made it clear that the decision on whether or not [the record-breaker] stayed in the line-up was... [the player's]. If the manager took him off the team... "I'd get run out of town." ...[However, last year the manager moved the player] from short-stop, a pivotal fielding position requiring sharp reactions and speed, to the less demanding third base – in baseball circles, a drama comparable to moving the Vatican from Rome to Teheran – but [the manager] did so only after [the player] himself had authorised it... Gehrig ended his streak by dropping himself from the New York Yankees in 1939 when... [that player realised it] could no longer play up to his own demanding standards, and just two years later... died of the degenerative neuro-muscular conditions now known as Lou Gehrig's disease. [The Oriole] has admitted that at times his back problems have been so bad "I felt almost not able to play". But in the unrelenting ethos of [a single-minded person that] harder is better, and playing is the entire purpose[, the Oriole says]... "You want to be in the line-up more than ever... You have a responsibility to finish what you started." It is not clear what sitting him down would achieve, and most baseball fans want him to hang in till next season. One day... his long and remarkable demonstration of endurance will finally come to an end.

...[this year] I went out to the Astrodome to watch the Houston Astros play the Milwaukee Brewers. The Astrodome was built some 20 years ago. It was the first stadium of its size to be completely enclosed by a roof. The roof is not retractable like many of the more modern ones, but it is still an extremely impressive construction. They have had enough of it though. The Astrodome is to be bulldozed in the next year and a new stadium

will be built downtown. It will cost around \$250 million. The reason is financial. The Astrodome was built before there was demand for corporate boxes. It has none... A box sells or is leased for \$US250,000 a year. A stadium with 200 boxes will pull \$US50 million a year in sales to box holders alone. It is easy to see why the Astrodome is out of fashion. The stadium will be built by the City of Houston, but it will not get much of the revenue... That goes to the team owner, who will rent the stadium from the City. This sounds a bit inequitable, and it is, but that's the way it works in business. The owner of the Houston Astros is in a strong negotiating position... If [the owner] cannot strike an appropriate deal with the li'l ol' City of Houston, [the owner] might just strike a deal with the li'l ol' City of Galveston, and "those boys surrre are keen to have a baseball team down thar." This is exactly what happened to Houston's football team. The owner demanded a new stadium be built so [the owner] could make more money from his investment. The City refused and [the owner] up and took the team to Tennessee. Now they are the Tennessee Oilers, which is something of a misnomer, given that there is no oil in Tennessee. I don't suppose they can cope with calling themselves the Tennessee Line Dancers yet... Baseball is not what you would call an all-action sport. Things sort of happen in brief bursts, with long periods of changing teams or changing batters or changing pitchers. But that doesn't really matter because there is so much else to do besides watching [guys] in peaked caps wave a bat at a ball as it whistles past. For a start there's the food... And then there's the beer. The game takes three-and-a-half hours, so you have to pace yourself... For the record, the Astros maintained their losing streak in glorious style... [●] I[n]... Cleveland yesterday... [2 locals] hit two-run homers as the Indians pounded out 15 hits on a cold, snowy night to batter the Florida Marlins 10-3 and even the World Series at two games apiece.

...“I just tried to drive the ball, and I got it into the right place in the park. When I looked up, I said, ‘Lord, please guide the ball.’ [The Lord] did it, I didn’t. I’m just his instrument.” – [A] *Cleveland Indians baseballer... on God and home runs.*

...The people of South Florida united yesterday behind the Florida Marlins in celebration of Miami's first major professional sports championship in... years and the city's newest sporting hero, [who is a]Cuban defector... The Marlins, a franchise just five years old, completed a story-book season with a 3-2 win over Cleveland in extra innings of the seventh game of the World Series. [The hero], a 22-year-old rookie who stole away from Cuba's national team two years ago, was named the series' most valuable player... From ritzy Palm Beach to the laid-back Florida Keys, residents popped champagne and beer in... the first... joyful celebration... since the Miami Dolphins gridiron team won their second of two consecutive Super Bowls in January 1974... Officials planned a parade in downtown Miami, a boat parade in Fort Lauderdale and a rally at the... Pro Player Stadium... [The] Marlins owner... who spent about \$US\$9 million... on free-agent players before the season... was jubilant: “It doesn’t get any better than this.” [The Cuban player]’s mother... was given last-minute permission by the Cuban Government to visit her son and arrived in Miami two hours before the start of the game... [His mother, who] had not seen [her son] since the defection... watched from the billionaire owner’s private box at the stadium... Back in Cuba, [her son] is branded a traitor. His half-brother... who [the Marlin] says is a better pitcher than him, works as a sports instructor in a Cuban psychiatric hospital. Known to Cuban baseball fans as “the Duke,” [the half-brother] was banned from playing baseball for life after... [being] accused of planning to flee too. [The Marlin] defected... while with the Cuban team in Mexico... In Cuba, [the player] had cycled to practice, and on foreign trips bought [gals’] underwear to sell in his deprived homeland to raise extra pesos. In Florida, [the Cuban] has a \$US4.5 million... contract, a luxury condominium with an ocean view, and a sports car. His dream, [the Cuban] told the Spanish-language weekly *Exito*, was to bring his mother over to Miami and “build her a palace.”

...Less than a week after celebrating their first World Series baseball championship, the Florida Marlins have begun cutting costs by announcing they will not pick up contract options on... [some players. The] Marlins owner... said... that the team were losing too much money and... would be forced to curb a payroll that exceeded \$US53 million... last season.

...Calling himself “a terrible failure” as owner of the world series-winning Florida Marlins, [the]billionaire... has put the team up for sale for around US\$150 million... [The businessperson indicated that it]’d lost around \$35m this year and couldn’t stand the heat any longer.

...The N[Z] Black Sox softball side cruised to an easy 4-0 win over Auckland last night. The world champion side are in the middle of a tour of N[Z] celebrating their success in Michigan last year. The... Black Sox now head for the South Island to complete their tour.

...[‘The White Sox softball team came from 1-3 down in their last turn at bat to record a morale-boosting win over AUS in Christchurch yesterday. It was their first win over AUS, who are ranked second in the world, since the 1996 Superball tournament in Atlanta (AUS won the earlier game yesterday 6-1 to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the Smokefree Series, having won the first 7-1 and won a warm-up game on Friday 3-1). The White Sox pitcher made a triumphant return in just her third appearance at international level since taking a break from the sport, being on the mound for the full seven innings.’ In international news, yesterday a US major leaguer completed the ‘perfect pitching performance – to out 27 players before they got to 1st base’.

...‘pitcher perfect A NZ SOFTBALL veteran will fulfill her dream of playing at the Olympics. The 37-year-old pitcher missed out in 1995 when the NZ gals’ side blew two chances to get to the 1996 Atlanta games. Despite playing in four world series tournaments a shot at the Olympics remained her ultimate goal. But after losing an Olympic qualifier in 1995 to Japan the “guttred” pitcher put her international glove down. The pitcher continued to play domestic softball but her international absence left a huge hole for NZ on the pitching mound. After her spell in the international wilderness the pitcher was asked by the White Sox coach to see if it would be available for selection for Sydney. That was all the Aucklander needed to seriously consider being available to play for the White Sox again. In his quest to bring home gold the coach wanted the best side it could muster and the Auckland pitcher was an essential part of the plan. “There’s some good young talent out there but they’re just not ready for this level yet.” The coach doesn’t believe the number one pitcher will be affected by the added weight of leading the side. “It’s not a big issue. I’ve used it before when a pitcher led the Black Sox to a world series in 1984.”

...‘Pitching for sponsors SOFTBALL officials will schedule more Black Sox tests in NZ in a bid to attract new sponsors. A shortfall in funding means the 17-strong squad have to pay \$500 each to defend their World Series title in South Africa. The Black Sox beat Canada 4-0 in the 1996 World Series final.’

...softball is a ‘popular kind of baseball game differing from regular baseball. The ball is larger and softer, the bat smaller, the base paths less widely spaced, and the pitcher must throw underhand. Thus the physical dangers of baseball are largely avoided. Softball began to achieve popularity c.1910. In the US there are now 10 million players in over 100,000 amateur teams, playing in thousands of leagues.’ Softball was ‘originally devised (c. 1887) as an indoor game. Baseball, a game evolved from rounders,’ is ‘an outdoor game played by two 9-member teams (probably first played in the northeastern US c.1825). Each of the two major US leagues, the National and the American, had 8 teams, but in 1961 the American league added 2. A team during the regular season plays each of its rivals 22 times. The World Series is played early October between the winners of each league. The American league’s New York Yankees have won by far the most World Series, with National’s St. Louis Cardinals next. There are approximately 50 minor leagues, many owned or controlled by major league clubs, which use them for developing young and promising players. Baseball has become extremely popular in Latin American countries, such as Mexico and Cuba, and in Japan’. Baseball has also] taken a stronghold in Norway with 30 clubs being established there in the past six years.

...“...No N[Z]er has ever made the majors, and that is the big incentive for me[,” said a former Black Sox star (r:p1433, ln7) who]... won’t disclose his sign-on fee but... will be paid pre-tax \$US950 a month, a small part of which will go towards provided accommodation... After spring training for a month in Florida, [the NZer is playing]... for a Braves’ club in that area as [it] tries to go from rookie, through the A, AA and AAA leagues, into the majors... Batting alone will require plenty of adjustments. Instead of dealing with drops and rises, it’s curves and fastballs. Even the bat is different. Baseball takes the metal power factors away by staying with wood bats... Two N[Z] softball] outfielders have returned to Auckland after making baseball attempts in recent years... [One] tried the college system, and [the other] joined the California Angels. But the Braves already have

high hopes for two 19-year-old A[US]ns they signed three years ago... [One w]as at their big league training camp and is regarded as maybe their best pitching prospect. And [the other, an] infielder... who is coming back from surgery on his non-throwing arm, caused a stir when [it was reported that the infielder] was paid a... \$US900,000 sign-on fee. - 1997

Major League Baseball has suspended [the Chicago Cubs' No 21 for 8] games for using an illegal... bat. The power-hitting star had filed an appeal and would continue playing in the interim, the Chicago Cubs said... but... "some punishment is in order"... [The No 21]'s bat splintered last week during a game against the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, revealing a hollowed-out, cork-filled centre. The forbidden alteration is designed to add speed and distance to a hit ball by allowing the batter to swing the bat faster. An examination of 76 bats in his possession found no others were corked.

...[the] St Louis Cardinals slugger... hit baseball home run number 574 yesterday to claim fifth place on the all time list, a bright note in an injury-ridden year for the red-h[ead, who]... was stuck in a 0-for-15 batting slump before hitting the two-run... homer off [the]New York Mets starter to pass [a retired player (who had)573 home runs in 8147 turns at bat) on the career list for homers. Now the 37-year-old slugger has only... (755 home runs in 12,364 turns at bat)... (714 in 8399)... (660 in 10,881) and... (586 in 10,006) ahead of him. [The Cardinals' No 25] reached 574 in just 6087 turns at bat for the highest ratio of home runs to turns at bat of them all... [The slugger] came into yesterday's game batting just .189 (62-for-196) with 19 home runs and 39 RBI... as [it recovered] from knee surgery... [The slugger] left it jubilant. ■ [Another slugger], of the San Francisco Giants, continued his record-setting home run pace yesterday, setting a record for the least number of games needed to reach 50 homers in a season. [The Giant], 37, belted a three-run shot off [a]Chicago Cubs pitcher... in the second innings to also become the oldest player to hit a half-century of homers in a season... [The Cubs' No 21] had been the quickest player to 50 homers, taking 121 games to get there...

[A USer] has millions of reasons to root against [the Giant's] chase to break [the Cardinals' No 25]'s record of 70 home runs in a season... [The USer] paid \$US3.05 million... for [the No 25]'s 70th home-run ball. Yesterday, [the Giant] hit his 69th homer, and... has seven games to go. It was [the Giant's] second homer in consecutive days and came during the San Francisco Giants' 3-1 victory over the San Diego Padres. The left-hander now has 563 career homers, tying his cousin... for seventh on the all-time list... If [the Giant] broke the record, [home-run ball] No 70 would probably fall in value... [Yesterday, the USer] said: "I'm the village idiot, what can I say?" [However, the village idiot] can afford to make fun of himself. A part-owner of the National Hockey League's Edmonton Oilers, the Canadian-born collector struck it rich by creating the comic book and animated television show *Spawn*... and has branched out into making action sports toys... The publicity... gained by buying the prize ball at auction... has... brought him credibility in his sports business ventures... [The village idiot said it] had already had plenty of mileage out of the [70th homer] souvenir – as well as [the Cardinals' No 25's] home-run balls No 1, 63, 68 and 69... plus [the Cubs' No 21's] No 33, 61 and 66 homers from that year... [The Cardinals' No 25] said yesterday that it would not surprise him if [the Giant] did break his record...

The "71" baseballs and banners quickly become outdated as San Francisco's Giant takes the benchmark to 72... [The Giant's] record-breaking homer... [during] the Giants los[s by] 11-10 to the Los Angeles Dodgers... had just plunked into a fan's mitt in the... stands when vendors swept through the aisles at Pacific Bell Park hawking souvenir baseballs embossed with "71" in gold. Less than an hour later, the \$US18... balls already were out of date. [The Giant] broke the record of 70 homers... by... slamming a first-inning fastball... 133m. Two innings later, [the Giant] sent another... pitch over the centre-field fence for his 72nd homer... And no fan got this souvenir. A few fought for the ball, but it bounced back onto the field and was thrown to [the slugger] inside the Giants dugout. [The slugger claimed later to have] no idea what... [to] do with the ball except "just stare at it for a while". [The slugger] started the season 17th on the career list and now is sixth. [It] has one more game to add to his total – at home to the Dodgers – because the Giants' loss eliminated them from playoff contention... And his godfather... was ready for more. "I want him to get to 75. I want him to put it where no one can get there," [the godfather] said in a ceremony after the game... [The slugger], who broke down in tears during the post-game ceremony, said the historic homers had come at a price – a new Mercedes for [a]team-mate... who bet him earlier this year that [the slugger would break the] record. They will also raise the price [the Giant] should command this winter. [The slugger] is eligible for free agency after the season, his ninth with the Giants. As [the]team owner... spoke on the field after the game, fans chanted, "Sign him, sign him".

...[the Giant's] 73rd home run baseball is caught in legal limbo after a judge ordered the [f]an who ended up with the record-setting ball not to sell it until an ownership dispute is settled. [A]San Francisco Giants fan... caught the ball... but lost it after fans piled on top of him... Television replays show [the]... health-food restaurateur from Berkeley, gloving the ball before being mobbed... The ball was ripped from his mitt... Yesterday, [the ball-catcher sued the guy] who wound up with the ball that could fetch an estimated \$US2 million... Lawyers said it was the first time that they were aware of anyone asking a judge to settle a dispute over ownership of a ball obtained from the field of play at a major league baseball game. "This is a free country," [the lawyer for the guy] said. "Anybody can sue[, but what the restaurateur]... is asking the court to do is to get involved in something that happens at every baseball game in the country,"... [The catcher]'s lawyer... said the judge's decision was a victory for baseball fans. "My whole issue is that this is America's pastime... I want kids – big or little – to be able to go to the ballpark and catch the ball with their eyes wide open." ...The Giants[, whose slugger]... became the fourth major league player to hit 600 home runs... [earlier in the season.] have declined to get involved.

...BABE RUTH remains the king of baseball despite the best attempts of modern players such as [the Giant]. Ruth lost three more records during this... season but still owns 40 batting marks and shares four others. On the road to 73 home runs this season, [the Giant] shattered Ruth's single-season slugging percentage mark of .847, raising the bar to .863. [The Giant] also walked 177 times, breaking Babe's mark of 170. [Another player] overtook Ruth's career record of 2062 walks early in the season, finishing with 2141. Among Ruths' remaining records are most total bases in a single season, 457 in 1921. By comparison, in his 73-home run season, [the Giant] finished with 412... Ruth has his own room at baseball's Hall of Fame, in Cooperstown, New York. And his memory travels America in a road show put on by the Babe Ruth Museum. "When you let major leaguers hold one of his bats, they clutch it in awe, like a 12-year-old," said... [the] executive director of [the]museum in Ruth's native Baltimore. "When I visit a school and ask kids how many of them have never heard of Babe Ruth, nobody raises a hand. [Ruth]'s become a cultural icon. I would put him right up there with people like Elvis (Presley) and Marilyn (Monroe)." ■ [The]... Baltimore Orioles... 19-time All-Star who broke one of baseball's most coveted records... closed out his illustrious career before a sellout crowd of dignitaries, politicians and adoring fans... [during] the Orioles' season finale against the Boston Red Sox... [The] Baseball Commissioner... said the [Oriole]... was "one of the greatest players of our generation"... [When the Oriole] broke Lou Gehrig's mark of 2130 consecutive games played in 1995, [the commissioner said it] "became the symbol for the American work ethic and... for the American work[er]." The Oriole... is one of only seven players in history with 3000 hits and 400 homers.

...Legendary baseball star Ted Williams, one of the greatest American hitters of all time and the last to hit .400 for a season, has died at the age of 83. Williams[, who] suffered a cardiac arrest on arrival at Citrus Memorial Hospital in Inverness, Florida... played as an outfielder for the Boston Red Sox, [and]was famous... for sharp vision and fast wrists... Williams contended his eyesight was so keen [it] could pick up individual stitches on a pitched ball[, and also asserted that his nose] could smell the burning wood of his bat when... foul[ing] a ball straight behind him, just missing solid contact. [Williams] was known as a loner and a brooder... Also known as the Splendid Splinter, [Williams] was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1966 and rates among the true immortals of the game... More than anything else, Williams was[a] big hitter... When [Williams] arrived at his first major league training camp in Florida in 1938, Williams said: "All I want out of life is that when I walk down the street folks will say, 'there

goes the greatest hitter who ever lived'." Williams went on to achieve a combination of 521 lifetime homers and .344 lifetime average matched only by Babe Ruth... But Ruth struck out 1330 times in 8399 at bat. Williams fanned just 709 times in 7706 at bats.

...From New York to Los Angeles, the talk was of strikeouts not walkouts, scores not salaries, as fans flocked back to the Major League ballparks yesterday with the threat of a player's strike just a fading memory. The doom and gloom of a ninth work stoppage in 31 years was replaced with calls of "play ball," when Major League players and team owners reached agreement on a four-year deal minutes before a Saturday deadline to avert a strike that threatened to drive away the already embittered fans. But although most fans were wearing broad smiles as they passed through stadium turnstiles, it was clear that not all was forgiven. The owners and players, whose average salary of US\$2.4 million... is likely to rise over the length of the agreement, have put their fans through another emotional wringer... Word that a strike had been avoided appeared slow to reach some cities, as less than 5000 turned out in Miami to watch the Florida Marlins edge the Pittsburgh Pirates 4-3... At Jacobs Field, home of the Cleveland Indians, the spectators made their point by filling vacant seats in the upper deck with "On Strike" signs. "The fans have a right to still yell at us and tell us what they think," said... [the] St Louis Cardinals pitcher and player representative. "That's what the fun thing is about coming to the ball park." In Montreal, where the Expos were about to be contracted out of existence, fans celebrated a reprieve, with the league agreeing not to fold the club over the length of the new agreement... But nowhere was the relief felt more than among those who earn their daily bread on the fringes of the baseball industry, the hot dog vendors, programme sellers and groundskeepers. "They walk and I lose thousands of dollars. It's that simple for me," said... [a vendor] who operates a hot dog cart outside the SkyDome, home of the Toronto Blue Jays.

The winner of three... baseball awards... ended his 13-year run with the Boston Red Sox on Friday by signing a three-year contract worth \$[NZ]35 million to join the Toronto Blue Jays. The deal makes the power-pitching... "Rocket", baseball's highest paid pitcher.

...[THE dictionary defines the word "obscene" as "indecent" or "bawdy". Another should be added. "Obscene" is "that amount of money paid to a pitcher." The much-heralded chucker for the San Diego Padres side recently signed for the Los Angeles Dodgers for \$US105m over the next 7 seasons, making him the highest annual earner in the glorious history of America's national game. His salary isn't only obscene for baseball, but for all pro sport ...

The top US National (ice) Hockey League's career scoring leader, will sign with the New York Rangers today. [The scoring leader] had rejected between \$22 million and \$26 million for three year contracts with other teams. [Editor's note: NZ representative ice hockey teams are known as the 'Ice Blacks.' NZ is, however, better known for producing field hockey players – the national guys' squad winning gold at the Olympic Games in 1976...

'The hockey player kept the biggest secret of her sporting career from her Auckland team-mates. But yesterday the champion team still orchestrated the most fitting farewell to NZ gals' hockey's test recordholder. The Aucklanders blitzed a stunned Canterbury 4-1 in the final of the National Hockey League. After the match they were the ones left stunned when the test recordholder, one of the genuine greats of the modern era, announced her retirement from all hockey. The veteran, whose test career spanned 12 years and 164 internationals, decided on Tuesday the final would be her last match. It steered her personal resolve to win back-to-back titles, but the veteran didn't want her decision to become between her team-mates and their focus on the big finale at the Auckland Grammar School turf. It had been expected the veteran would continue until after the next Commonwealth Games. However, the player who has done so much to lift the Black Sticks from 23rd in the world to their current top six slot, knew it was time to go. The veteran said it had struggled to give 100% to both hockey and her marketing job. The veteran also felt the buzz of playing test hockey wasn't always as it once was. The 29-year-old bowed out in style, producing a signature goal – a magnificent solo effort which saw her dribble around four Canterbury defenders, slot a perfect shot and take the champions to a telling 2-0 lead inside the opening seven minutes. It was fitting Canterbury was the defeated finalist. Yesterday's national title was the veteran's eighth but the other seven had come during her time at the red and blacks. The veteran has now had two perfect farewells. Her last test, against Spain, produced a Black Sticks victory. The Champions Trophy match was where the inside right-cum-centre forward broke NZ hockey's old test record of 163 games.'

...AS a so-called minor sport, hockey struggles to get a decent share of media coverage. So it was welcome that the gals' World Cup, which ended in Perth last night, got time on TV. Despite the similarities, hockey doesn't command anywhere near the same interest as soccer. But that should in no way be allowed to detract from a sport which continues to grow in popularity. The introduction of artificial playing surfaces has done most to lift hockey's profile. The water-based pitches in Perth continued the world-wide trend of ensuring players have a true surface. Boggy grass pitches are but a distant memory in most parts. The abolition of the offside rule was a watershed decision which led to a truly expansive game, even if one still dominated by play on the right side of the pitch. Hockey is not played left-handed – all sticks are designed to be played on the right side of the body. The distance between the top rugby nation and that ranked 16th is huge – not so in guys' and gals' hockey (the 2nd code where Ireland has a united team – r:p1434, ln43). Hockey's advantage rule is infinitely better than in other major sports. Very much a "get on with it" sport, the ball is constantly on the move. The only blight is the number of free-hits awarded when the ball hits a foot, either deliberately or accidentally.' By the way, the 'teenager hit in the head by a puck at an NHL ice hockey game in Ohio, has died. Brittanie Cecil was hurt at the match between the Columbus Blue Jackets and Calgary Flames. It is thought to be the first death of a fan hit by a puck at an NHL game and one of the few spectator fatalities at a US sports event, other than car racing, directly related to action on the field.'

...Golfers be warned: it may cost you money if you accidentally hit someone with a wayward shot. A British judge has ruled that a player who struck an innocent party in the eye when his shot bounced off a tree is liable for damages. It means shouting "fore" for a miscue isn't sufficient warning anymore'...

'Losing balls in the water is one of golf's accepted hazards, but it has landed an enterprising Briton in jail FOR 10 years the Briton made a modest living diving for lost balls and selling them for 15p each. But when police caught him on an illicit midnight expedition, the authorities frowned on his unusual profession and jailed him for 6 months for theft. The severity of the sentence provoked a public outcry, made the 36-year-old father of two a cause celebre of daytime TV, and prompted lawmakers, celebrities and the media to campaign for his release. Police caught the diver, equipped with a rubber diving suit, last August at Whetstone Golf Course. The diver and a colleague, 24, had fished 1158 balls from Lily Pond – the bane of hundreds of golfers playing the difficult par 3 fifth hole. The diver, who made £15,000 a year collecting balls at courses throughout the country, claimed in his defence they didn't belong to anyone. The diver told a jury at Leicester Crown Court last week it even filled out tax returns. But the judge said, "It is obvious you show no remorse and no intention of quitting." The Labour lawmaker who represents the diver's home town of Chorley raised the case in the House of Commons this week and urged the PM to look into it. The diver's girlfriend has appeared on daytime TV and given countless newspaper interviews pleading for his release. "It is amazing. People mug grannies, steal, attack others and get a lighter sentence than someone who is making a legitimate living and hurting no one," the girlfriend told the *Daily Telegraph*. "Rough justice" read an editorial in the same newspaper. "On the scale of human wickedness, the diver's crime registers barely a blip." The managing director of UK Lakeballs – a firm that buys balls from hundreds of divers and sells over a million worldwide every year through the internet – said the 36-year-old had supplied the company for more than three years. The managing director insisted recovered balls were not stolen, but abandoned property and said more than 2000 people had signed his online petition to "Free the Whetstone One". The resident professional at Whetstone said the pair had been caught "accidentally" when an alarm in the clubhouse went off, unconnected to their activities. They had not asked permission to fish out the balls, but nobody at the club wanted to see the diver jailed. "The sooner the diver gets out of prison the better," the resident professional said, adding that the sentence was "ridiculous". Britain's top professional golfer was quoted in the *Daily Mail* as saying balls lost in lakes were "finders keepers".

...Britain's top golfer] is eyeing the [£1m] mark now that [it]'s secured top ranking on the European golf tour's 1996 money list. The... Scot's [4]th place in last week's German Masters gave him an unassailable lead in the money race but [it] is determined to keep up the pace... [with] just one more counting tournament for the year, the Masters... in Spain. "If I win there I'll go over the [£1m] mark... The way I am playing, I can win..."

...[an AUS]n golfer... is ready to defy a broken breastbone and play just one shot in a forthcoming tournament so [it] can collect a bonus of £73,000... [The AUS]n is third in the European tour money-winning list and has been told that to collect the bonus [it] must tee off in the season-ending Volvo Masters in Valderrama, Spain... [The AUS]n broke his sternum in a car crash in Spain 12 days ago and originally planned to make his comeback in the A[US]n Open from November 21 to 24. However, his manager said yesterday: "I've now re-entered him [for the Volvo], even though I doubt... [it] will be able to hit more than one shot. I don't think it's good for golf if someone prevents someone else from playing, then pulls out after one shot. But it's worth a lot of money and... [my client] must think of himself." Bonus money goes to the top 15 players in the tour's final money-winning list... If [the AUS]n drops to fourth [it] would collect £53,000.

...[two NZ] golfers... had lacklustre closing rounds at the Volvo Masters tournament in Sotogrande, Spain, to complete their European Tour commitments for the season... [A Zimbabwean] waltzed away with the tournament, winning by seven strokes... [NZ's No 1-ranked golfer], who began the last round in second place... crashed out of contention with a round littered with bogeys. [NZ's other golfer] struggled as well, dropping four shots after starting even with the card... [The second NZer] finished 31st on the European Tour Order of Merit, with earnings of £172,052... [The No 1 NZer], who next defends his Sarazen World Open title in Atlanta, ended his 11th season in Europe 23rd on the Order of Merit. His career earnings in Europe now total nearly £2 million. "...I've got to work hard in the next couple of days to lift myself for the Sarazen. Then I've got one event in Asia and one in A[US] before heading home for the N[Z] Open." Meanwhile, the... 17th hole at Sotogrande was slammed as "the worst we have played all year," by... [the] No 1... European... golfer[...], who ended the season on '£875,146. The Zimbabwean came 5th (£463,847). In 2nd place on the Order of Merit was a Welsh golfer (£650,423), and in 3rd was an AUSn (£532,143)' – who didn't complete the Volvo Masters due to injury...

The NZ No 1 golfer's brilliant victory in the Sarazen World Open... yesterday has lifted his year's winnings close to \$[NZ]1.5 million. The winner's cheque... was \$487,457 and with fourth placing in the US Masters, eighth in the USPGA and 13th in the US Open[, it] had already earned... [over] \$350,000 in the... [US. In addition, the NZer earned] around \$500,000... on the European [Tour]... and won a \$70,000 reward as part of the N[Z] team who finished second in the Alfred Dunhill Cup. If back problems which have troubled him all season do not flare up the Auckland, now based in England, will be in N[Z] next month to play in the Air N[Z] Open. Incidentally, a sensational young US golfer... has played his last competitive round as an amateur... The 20-year-old Stanford University student won an unprecedented third consecutive [US] amateur title on Sunday and is the most heralded player to come out of the amateur ranks... [in] 35 years... And because times are different, [the 20-year-old] will receive endorsement riches never dreamed of by a golfer. The *New York Times* reported yesterday that [the 20-year-old] had signed a \$US40 million... five-year deal with... Nike. In addition to his enormous talent, [the 20-year-old] is extremely marketable because of his youth, good looks, intelligence and his ethnic background – his father is black and his mother was born in Thailand. [The 20-year-old had] earlier accepted a sponsor's exemption to... the Greater Milwaukee Open, where [the sensation] will play this weekend... and to next month's Quad Cities Open, saying [it had been his intention to] play in both events as an amateur before his junior year in college starts... But... [now] there was little left for him to prove on the amateur level.

...[the latest guy golfing sensation] attributed some of his success in winning his first professional tournament to his outstanding match-play record... [The 20-year-old – who 'finishing 60th in his first pro tour event' – won] a play-off to claim the Las Vegas Invitational title in just his fifth tournament since turning professional... a win that earned him \$[NZ]431,560.

...the 20-year-old arrives Down Under this week to play in the A[US]n Open. The baby-faced superstar is the... first professional golfer in history to average more than 300 yards (275m) per drive... BOOM! ...the latest sensation in world golf, of world sport, the successor to... [the Chicago Bulls' superstar and] to Clark Kent, coiled the upper half of his tall, slim, elastic body, swung his driver gracefully, yet whiplash fast, and fired the ball 302.2 metres down the fairway. It was straight down the middle, but to use the arrow as a simile would be a mistake. The arrow has been long obsolete, just as much as golf, its courses, records and apparent limitations, is in danger of being rendered obsolete by [one golfer]. If ever a single shot fired a warning it was that huge... first... drive... as a professional... at the Greater Milwaukee Open... [USers], being obsessed with statistics, have made a science of... measuring driving distance, as well as a host of other aspects of the game, on the US Tour since 1980... Averages are kept up to date for every player and a top 10 table is published... All 10 register 256m or more, while the average for all Tour pros is 243m. [The 20-year-old] is not yet in the top 10 table because [the 20-year-old] has not played the required 50 rounds. But thus far, after 31, his average is 276.8m. [The 20-year-old] is not just ahead of everyone else... but in a different league. Yet [the 20-year-old] is not even trying to hit it as far as... [possible]. The words of his coach... are truly frightening: "[The 20-year-old] can hit the ball... 310m... swinging at 75% capacity. Believe me, [the youngster] has another 36.5m to call on..." ...Hailed as a prodigy in the Mozart class, winner of three US boys' championships and three times the US amateur championship, [the 20-year-old] was already a multi-millionaire, having signed clothing, footwear and club deals worth \$[US]84.5 million... Some will hail [the 20-year-old] for his precocious wealth and celebrity status, some for his breakthrough as a black in a game largely played by whites, some will see him as an example of sponsorship gone mad (his deal with Nike for \$56.3m, [was] just under the total sales made by their golf division last year). But golfers will mostly marvel at how far [the 20-year-old] hits the ball... Where [the 20-year-old] is exceptional is in his flexibility. At 1.8m, and just over 69kg, [the 20-year-old] is able to complete a full turn of his upper body while resisting with his lower body. His hips hardly turn on the back swing. Such contortion unleashes tremendous clubhead speed. It could also make him a martyr to lower-back trouble, the bane of many golfers... But the advantage... is enormous[... (and, if the golfer does destroy his back but can't find someone to make him a bionic spine, the multi-millionaire might be able to continue playing with the assistance of a wheelchair – after-all, handicapped golfers will soon be permitted to use electric carts during professional tournaments)]. As one fellow Tour player remarked, courses which are par-72 for most are really par-68 for [the 20-year-old, who] has made a mockery of course design. Par-fives which were originally intended to be reached with two long shots and a short shot, and which big hitters might reach in two long shots, can be reached by [the 20-year-old] with one long shot and one short shot. [This ability] has removed a full shot... In the US Tour statistics, [if the 20-year-old had qualified, the youngster] would not only lead in driving distance, but in birdies and eagles and in the average number of strokes per round, the most significant statistic of all. [The 20-year-old] has played seven tournaments and won two of them... [and] is the first [pro] since 1982 to have five consecutive top-five finishes. Yet after the most impressive start to a career in the game's history, [the 20-year-old] merely said: "I haven't played my best yet. I've hit the ball pretty good, but I haven't had the greatest putting round."

...One of the best rounds [at the AUSn Open yesterday] belonged to... the... [right-handed 20-year-old USer], who finished... even with the card and seven-over for two rounds after his embarrassing 79 on Thursday. His total was good enough to make the cut and avoid some humiliation for tournament organisers, who paid a reported \$US240,000 appearance fee to the 20-year-old with rock star status... [H]is fellow golfers have been quick to turn on the 20-year-old following his decision to pull out of the Buick Challenge. [The 20-year-old] initially needed seven exemptions to play the tour this year and try to get his card for 1997. [But it's] already done so well in terms of prizemoney that now looks a formality. "This tournament was one of seven to help him out at the beginning [with sponsor exemptions] when [the rookie] needed help... How quickly [it forgot]."

...an AUS]n won the U[S] LPGA Tour money title with her fourstroke victory in the \$US700,000... Tour Championship in Las Vegas. [The AUS]n clinched the title with earnings of \$US1,002,000 in her rookie season on the tour[... and] is the first [gal] to win \$US1 million in a single season.

...[the NZ] left-hander... had an eagle and two birdies over the final five holes yesterday to hold off [a USer] and successfully defend the Kaanapali Classic golf title in Hawaii, his third since 1990... [The USer and NZer had] started the final round tied at 13 under and traded the lead... But... the

[‘only NZer to have ever won one of golf’s four major championships’ (the 1963 British Open; another NZer came second in the 1978 British Open)] clinched the \$US97,500... first prize... his first victory of the year and his 23rd senior tour title.

...ONE is left handed, the other is right handed. One is white, the other is black. One is 60, the other is 20... Both... deserved the title of youthful phenomenons in this tough and difficult game. [The left-hander] was only 18 when [it won the NZ] Open championship... from a field which included the brilliant... [AUSn] who won the British Open five times, and a younger Aussie... who... won a great deal of money on the U[S]PGA Tour... Yet[. to]... be frank... the... Kiwi golf veteran... as an infant prodigy was not quite in the class of... the game’s latest phenomenon... If [the right-hander] were to sustain his form for as many years as [the left-hander] has done... his earnings... would probably... be able to retire the US national debt. But... it is foreseeable that [the right-hander] may not be capable, physically, of lasting in tournament play. Recently, [the left-hander] and three other experienced professionals joined [the right-hander] at a course in Florida as guests of a group of amateurs... “I wouldn’t dream of disparaging the young [golfer,” the left-hander] told me as [it] prepared for this week’s N[Z] Open at Paraparaumu, an annual engagement [the veteran] has managed to maintain among his hectic schedule. “The lad is polite and pleasant, a most engaging youngster. And ability! I’ve never seen the like! ...[however, without] in any way denigrating or knocking this incredible young [golfer], I keep wondering whether his body will be able to withstand the torque, or twist, which produces his phenomenal power. It’s just a thought. We shall have to wait and see.” Meanwhile, [the left-hander]... who has been playing in the U[S] for 36 years, has returned from a pleasurable and profitable season. In 28 events, [the left-hander] finished first once, second twice... in the top 10 three times and the top 25 21 times. In the U[S] PGA Senior Tour proper, [the left-hander] finished 12th with earnings of \$US760,179. Additionally, in the Super Seniors (plus 60 years) [the left-hander] finished first with \$US266,100... In career earnings on the Senior Tour, [the left-hander] has won \$US7,168,000.75 cents... and... lies second in this statistic... When [the left-hander] set out to conquer the great big world of pro golf, [the left-hander] borrowed £400 from his father on the understanding that, when it was exhausted, [the left-hander] would return to his job at a bank. [The left-hander] never needed the money[, being]... ahead from the start. [The left-hander] is still well ahead.

...*Golf heaven – at a price*... “When God created N[Z] God must have had an 18-hole golf course in mind for this spot; we feel particularly pleased to be able to accommodate his wishes,” [a Taiwanese businessperson] is quoted as saying in publicity brochures advertising his \$100 million development... including... 500... palm [trees]... at... around \$10,000... [each – despite the fact that NZ already ‘has more golf courses per capita than any other country’. The course has been] designed in consultation with... architects with international experience... and... [NZ’s famous left-hander, who claims it] will be one of the world’s top 100... In recent years, [the left-hander] has become keen on course designing. His first effort was a fine nine-hole at Matarangi, a beautiful spot on the Coromandel. Then... followed, at the request of an Asian interest, the designing of the Millbrook course near Arrowtown. This, at almost 6400m, is a severe test. But there are no plans as yet... for the second course [the left-hander] is to design next door. That will be done when the traffic at Millbrook reaches an average of 25,000 rounds a year. Today, it accommodates no more than 15,000. - 1996

[NZ’s left-handed] golf legend... is bringing [a] good mate on the U[S] senior tour... to help him officially open the course [the left-hander] designed – ...Formosa Auckland Country Club... [The pair] will tee up on January 11 with two leading Asian professionals for a skins game carrying total prizemoney of around \$US150,000... The golfers trade strokes for a certain amount of money each hole and if there is no clearcut winner then the cash jackpots to the next hole[(some overseas tournaments have seen golfers ‘playing for more than \$100,000 on a single hole.’ Like the NZer, the USer] is a golfing icon in his own country. [The USer] was the winning [US] Ryder Cup captain in 1991, collected the USPGA Championships in 1970 and 1976 and the US Senior Open last year... [‘With 16-holes-in-one during his long career, the USer may also have an advantage. Any ace will be rewarded with a new Jaguar XK8 Sports Coupe, valued at \$NZ175,990’ (although, in comparison, overseas tournaments have offered ‘\$1m for a hole-in-one’ – but such a prize usually can only be won at one designated hole).] The skins game is likely to be preceded by a pro-am tournament... The new course will first be tested by competitors in the Honda corporate teams final... The members – so far 400 have signed up – will play over the weekend... and it will open to the public on [the Monday]. The membership fee, for 99 years and resaleable, is \$27,000 for individuals, \$36,000 for a family up to four, and \$40,000 for corporates. Green fees will be \$100 for the public[– which is double the previous highest green fee in Auckland –] \$40 if playing with a member during the week and \$60 during the weekend... Lasting the distance on N[Z]’s largest golf course demands the use of some helpful form of transport for all but the super-fit. So... Formosa... will... [have a] 105-strong fleet of electric golf carts... In the golfing world, Formosa will be the focus of the dawning of the new century when it hosts the Millennium tournament on December 30 and 31, 1999 and January 1 and 2, 2000... The winner is expected to take away \$US1 million... with total prizemoney in the \$US4 million range... That sort of money will attract the world’s leading golfers... One source told the *Sunday-Star Times* [that the 21-year-old US golfing sensation] was the tournament’s No 1 target.

...WHEN an artist sees an attractive landscape [the artist] thinks of painting it. When... [the] Taiwanese golf fanatic (and very wealthy business[perso]n)... sees a nice piece of land [it] thinks of building a golf course. Actually[, the businessperson] does more than think about it. The... [businessperson] has already built one golf course in N[Z] – the Formosa Auckland Country Club at Whitford... [–] and is thinking about a second one in Christchurch... [It visits NZ] about 10 times a year, catching up with his son... who lives here and oversees his father’s investments[– including]... a couple of shopping malls on Auckland’s North Shore... Up until four years ago [the businessperson had] never been to N[Z]. Then a personal approach from our government at a time when it was targeting Taiwanese investment got him interested. [The businessperson] flew down for a short visit, liked almost everything [it] saw and whipped out his chequebook. “The N[Z] economy was on the bottom then but what really impressed me was the help I got from government and the council,”... Alongside the kind of free market policies to warm a foreign investor’s heart went a welcome lack of backhanders. “Taiwan ranks poorly... for corruption, but I found almost no corruption in N[Z].” The malls? “I was taken around North Shore and found it didn’t have any large sized shopping centres, so I built two.” Santa Claus in a red golf sweater.

...W[hen the police came to take] away their... ancestral... land, the farmers of Tho Da village invoked a powerful symbol: Ho Chi Minh. Hundreds of them marched across their paddy fields clutching photographs of the founding father of Communist Vietnam who inspired peasants to rise against their colonial landlords half a century ago. The object of the farmers’ unrest this time is their own government, acting on behalf of a South Korean firm that plans to convert the... fields into a golf course. The police came on New Year’s Eve armed with clubs, electric prods and tear gas, but they proved no match for the stubborn farmers, who hurled rocks and set ablaze a truck, a car and an ambulance... In order to develop... Vietnam must convert large tracts of farmland into factories, highways and houses... At the end of last year, for example, Hanoi announced approval of a massive \$[US]2.11 billion suburban city not far from Tho Da... Outside Ho Chi Minh City, work recently began on Saigon South, a \$242 million satellite city of factories, universities, housing and shopping that will eat up 3,300 hectares of farmland. Hundreds of farmers there protested the loss of their land, delaying construction for months. “...you are a farmer, you get a few hundred dollars for your land, but then what...?” ...In Tho Da... a manager for the golf course developer was ready with an answer: “They can be caddies.” That doesn’t sound promising to the 1,800 villagers... “They cut off our irrigation, so now our soil is poor,” said a 44-year-old... [digging] through hard-packed dirt for a few shrivelled sweet potatoes. [The farmer] earns about \$100 a year from growing rice and vegetables. Those meagre wages perhaps made the development firm’s officials confident... they could easily buy off the farmers. But the villagers have learnt it pays to be defiant. Last May, work crews from an Army division were dispatched to dig up the farmers’ rice seedlings... The villagers’ tendency to consider the plots of farmland to be theirs is at the root of the conflict. In Vietnam, private ownership is outlawed... [Yet the] villagers said they had been offered... \$200 for each plot...

Rather than accept the offer... negotiated on their behalf by the local government, they fought with the Army workers. Four people were arrested – at least one is still in prison – and a [gal] from the work crew died after falling into a pond while fleeing the rampaging villagers. In the months following the incident, the developer – a partnership between... Daewoo Group and a local firm – agreed to pay... \$650 to each farmer[, but the]... villagers of Tho Da vow not to relent... Daewoo and its partner... Hanoi Electronics Co... which... is owned by Hanoi's city government... were apparently willing to up the ante. "We probably can give them more money," said the venture's vice director... [who adde]d the project would offer a job to any resident who wants one at the golf course or related facilities and for construction work... [even though most] of them are uneducated and have no skills... Those positions... will pay \$50 a month. "Always the farmers want to get more and more money... but if they receive a big sum of money, they will waste it on casinos and cards and karaoke." As French colonialists and the U[S] military that faced Ho Chi Minh's fighters learned all to well, however, Vietnamese farmers are nothing if not determined. "We will die for our land if we have to," said a villager in Tho Da. "It is all we have." [The story isn't much different over the northern border, where 'the modern world of professional golf and China's land-tilling peasant culture have come face to face over the last four days near Peking. Not far away from where a farmer's son – a rookie Chinese professional, a rarity in itself – finished third in a much more experienced field, an old peasant tilled his small field in the shadow of the Great Wall oblivious to his country's great leap forward on the world's fairways. The old peasant had never heard of the farmer's son, who received a cheque for \$US28,800 – the biggest windfall of his four-month-long professional career – in the inaugural \$US400,000 Volvo China Open. The old peasant did not know much about golf either, but was angry that Japanese entrepreneurs had been allocated so much valuable land and precious water to create the neighbouring Peking International Golf Club, where the farmer's son finished as the most celebrated rookie on the course. According to the old peasant, the loss of so much arable land to an elitist pastime was heartbreaking. China's new breed of golf mandarins call it groundbreaking. The Peking International Golf Club is an oasis in an otherwise dry and dusty valley that lies 45km north of the Chinese capital, along a congested road littered with cyclists, overloaded trucks and broken-down, windowless buses. The peasants knew by the number of imported cars whizzing past their humble village that something big was going on inside the plush club, where a round of golf costs 1000 yuan or about two months local wages, and where members pay \$US50,000 to sit on heated toilet seats at the 19th hole. Not only is a round of golf prohibitive for China's mainly peasant population, but they were prohibited from watching the farmer's son, who like them, comes from peasant stock. Spectator entry to the historic tournament was free, but the local farmers said they were stopped at the gate by uniformed guards who allowed only China's golf-savvy set inside the club gates. One curious old gal who was turned away could not comprehend how anyone could trade a plough for a putter and win the \$US72,000 first prize collected by a Paraguayan. That was more than a Chinese peasant could expect to make in two lifetimes. It did not seem real. Golf was not always so alien to China. The Chinese claim to have invented the game they once called "chuiwan." They even have scrolls showing emperors of summers past playing the game in palace gardens 500 years before Scottish shepherds invented the sport. What is new is golf's acceptance by China's Communist Government, which has embraced the capitalist trappings of what is now deemed a "worthy and worthwhile" sport. The suave secretary-general of the government-backed China Golf Association, readily admits that 10 years ago golf was banned as an "elitist bourgeois decadence". "Developing golf is part of China's new open door policy," the secretary-general said. "The Government is encouraging golf to attract more foreigners to invest in China and take part in joint ventures. As China's economy grows so will golf." A decade ago, the farmer's son was a pauper who left his parents paddy field and did not go back. A natural athlete, his minders gave him the choice of playing bowls or golf when it graduated from the Zhuhai Sports Institute in southern China. The farmer's son chose golf even though it had no idea how to play. With minimal coaching, antiquated clubs and nothing but holes in his pockets, the farmer's son developed into a fearless, compact-swinging player. His first break came when China allowed its motley bunch of leading amateurs to turn professional in December last year, and get some experience on the Asian circuit. His parents watched his triumph in the capital on TV in their new three-storey house, which their increasingly affluent son helped to finance. They moved from their rice farm when their land was re-claimed by the local Zhuhai government for industrial redevelopment. The farmer's son reckons the land would be better used as a golf course. Millions of his struggling countrypeople disagree.']

...Life is so strange. For two decades you are just a guy leaning against a wall... Then suddenly you are the fifth Beatle, and everybody wants to know how you lean against the wall, why you lean against the wall, and can we get a picture of you and the wall together? VH-1 wants to interview [the US golfing sensation's caddie, and the caddie] is about to sign a huge sunglasses deal, and has offers to write a book... Talk about your odd couples. [The golfer] has been alive 21 years, which is exactly how long [the caddie] has been... caddying on the PGA Tour... [The golfer] is like a red Testarossa, the shiniest and smoothest thing on the showroom floor. [The caddie] is like a 1967 VW van with a dragging muffler and a Legalise Hemp bumper sticker... [The golfer works out. The caddie] has *flashbacks* that are older than... [the golfer. The golfer] plays *Mortal Combat*. [The caddie] protested against the Vietnam War. Yet their partnership works. "I think [mine is] the best caddie in the world," says [the golfer], who picked up [the caddie] last August for his first pro tournament and hasn't let him go... "I'm just enjoying the ride," says [the caddie]. You figure his 15 minutes of fame should be up by now... Fame has not changed [the caddie]... "I just want to be a caddie." That's all [the caddie] has wanted to do since... 25. Before that... [the caddie] wanted to be a Tour player[having been] the star of the 1969 golf team at William Penn College in... Iowa... the holder of the record (29-33-62) at the Edmundson course in Oskaloosa and... a two handicapper. But after leaving school, the guy... hitch-hiked around the country, then returned to his home town state and became the assistant pro at Martindale Country Club in... Maine. One day in 1976, when [the 2 handicapper] got lost on the way to a pro-am and decided to fit in 36 somewhere else, the club fired him. That's when [the 2 handicapper] decided to do what [the 2 handicapper had] been talking about doing for years: caddying on the Tour. His first bag... missed qualifying at the Greater Hartford Open. [The caddie] got \$20 and 3% of [his bag]'s winnings, which worked out to be a total of, well, \$20. [His] first full-time bag... made a whopping \$60,045 in his five years on the Tour. One day[another] Tour player... gave [the caddie] a lift somewhere and asked him how things were going... "Well... it gets kind of hard to go out there every day and work for a guy you're pretty sure you could beat two days out of three." Two years into caddying... [the caddie] hooked up with [a golfer who "was living in his car... had this huge beard with lunch from four days ago in it and this old Pontiac and his dog... I thought why not?"] They formed the longest-lasting player-caddie team anybody can remember, 19 1/2 [years] together... Which is what made the events of last (northern) autumn so bitter/sweet for [the caddie]. In the summer [his boss] had hurt his back, which sat them both down. But one night [the caddie] got a call. It was [a 20-year-old] who had won his third straight US Amateur only hours before. "I'm turning pro this week, and I plan on playing the next seven events... How many of those can you work for me?" You could have knocked [the caddie] over with a bong. "Well, I expect just about all of them,"... According to a survey, the average [USer] would pay \$7800 to carry [the 21-year-old]'s bag for one day. If [the caddie] plays things right, [the caddie] could clear about \$40,000 a week. And no heavy lifting! ...If there is any resentment among the other caddies because Destiny came down and French-kissed... a frumpy 49-year-old white... guy... wearing a faded Grateful Dead T-shirt... no one has said anything. "Nobody deserves this more," says... [one of his peers. □ In what could be a precursor of his future, the then 20-year-old USer] received treatment on his back... from... a... chiropractor... during[last year's AUSn Open...

The 21-year-old won] the Mercedes golf championship in Carlsbad, California, yesterday. The 21-year-old... became the fastest player in PGA Tour history to record \$US1 million... in earnings, reaching the plateau in only nine tournaments. His third career win was worth \$US216,000... and a Mercedes-Benz car. [A not-much-older South African] held the previous record, but needed 27 events to reach the million-dollar figure.

...The 21-year-old... agreed yesterday [that it] was a leading candidate to win the US Masters in April at his first attempt as a professional... The... American, who won the Bangkok Classic by 10 shots on Sunday... his fourth title since turning professional... was named by [his South African] rival... last month as the [person] to beat at Augusta... [A]t a news conference before the A[US]n Masters tournament, starting at Huntington tomorrow[, the 21-year-old told the 'hundreds there to record every word' that]... his game... was ideally suited to the Masters layout in golf's first

major of the year... Tournament organisers[, who paid the 21-year-old]... a reported \$US300,000 to play at Huntington... are predicting a record crowd to follow [him] this weekend. A gallery of several thousand watched him at the pro-am warm-up event yesterday. When [the 21-year-old] made his overseas debut in the A[US]n Open... last November alongside[AUS's] world No1... crowds increased 400[%] on the previous year[, and the half-Thai]... attracted huge crowds and massive media and public attention in Thailand in his first tournament as a professional in Asia... Meanwhile, the first US LPGA Tour tournament to be held in A[US] has produced the strongest [gals'] golf field assembled in the country but hopes for it to become an unofficial world championship will have to wait at least a year.

...At Huntington this week [the 21-year-old USer] has turned a tough, par-73 course into a par-69 by reducing all the par [5]s to elementary [4s – but so did 2 AUSns, who]... finished level on 16-under... [The AUSn who won the] playoff to claim the A[US]n Masters... ended... a... [Kiwi]'s hopes of winning [the AUS]n Order of Merit... The... Kiwi... [who] won... the AMP-Air N[Z] Open... at Paraparaumu... started the... tournament with a \$A260... lead on... the... [AUSn], who picked up \$A142,000 for his win compared with [the Kiwi]'s \$A4000 for a share of 35th... The gap between [them] is too great for the Kiwi to bridge, as only the Canon Challenge remains on this summer's tour and the first prize there is under \$A70,000.

...Prizemoney for this summer's British Open... has been increased... to £1.6 m... The winner's share of the record purse was increased by £50,000 to £250,000... [By the way, yesterday's winning] 26-under total... at the Phoenix Open... missed the all-time PGA Tour record by a... stroke.

...BEN HOGAN... died yesterday... aged 84... Hogan had 63 PGA Tour victories, [including 9]... majors... placing him third... on the alltime list... “[Ben] was the best who ever played,”... said [the Senior PGA Tour prizewinning leader, despite one player winning 81 tournaments and another (the ‘Golden Bear’) 70], Hogan's greatest year was 1953 when [it won 3 of the 4] Grand Slam tournaments – the US Open, the Masters and the British Open... It started with the Masters. Hogan won with a stunning 274 – [5] better than the previous record... At the US Open... weeks later, Hogan tackled the brutal Oakland layout and won with a 283, five under par. [The runner-up – the golfer who won 81 tournaments –] couldn't break par... His success was all the more remarkable [as, 4]... years earlier, his legs were shattered in a head-on car crash and his career appeared to be over.

...[a Spaniard]'s return to competitive play this week is both a miracle and a medical disaster after [it spent \$NZ]4.3 m... trying to remedy a foot injury that... was misdiagnosed. The 1994 Masters champion played his last round at the Lancome Trophy in... 1995 before severe foot pain that was originally diagnosed as rheumatoid arthritis forced him away from the game... Now... the source of the pain has been discovered in his back – a hernia between the fifth lumbar and first sacral spinal bones... It ended a period described by [the Spaniard] as “pure hell”. It also ended continual calls and letters from healers and spiritualists. And it... ended those unnecessary medical bills[, which] will certainly take time to recover [from]...

The... awe-inspiring victory by [the 21-year-old USer in the] Masters yesterday was a dream come true for the golfing phenomenon – although it came later than the supremely confident 21-year-old expected. “I thought I could win [the Masters] when I was 19. That's when I first played here...,” said... [the 21-year-old, who claims to have] always fantasised about winning the Masters, although... [it didn't] dream his first victory would be so spectacular – with a record score of 270 and a record winning margin of 12 strokes. “It's a wonderful thing to see someone live up to his dreams,” said his proud father... aged 64... who... underwent cardiac surgery six weeks ago and said the doctors “almost didn't save me.” [His son] said: “I think [my] winning here is going to do a lot for the game... kids will think golf is cool and they'll start playing it.” ...After sinking his par-putt at 18, [the 21-year-old]... who won... \$[NZ]707,000... for his virtuoso, 18-under-par-total... celebrated his victory with his familiar, fist-pumping gesture of joy to wild cheers from the jam-packed galleries... Asked what it meant to him to become the first African-American and Asian-American to win a major championship, [the 21-year-old] said: “It means a lot. But I wasn't the pioneer... [One] early black professional golfer... was passed over for the Masters despite winning on the PGA Tour in the 1960s, and... [another] became the first black to play in the Masters... in 1975... If it wasn't for them I might not have had the chance to be here... When I walked up the 18th, I said a prayer of thanks for those guys.”

...[while] the Masters was all about the... hooplah[over the 21-year-old], there was also tragedy. A business[person] who had been contracted to provide 100 corporate tickets for the great golfing tournament but who couldn't meet his obligations, killed himself!

...[the 21-year-old's win has] opened up a new future for golf as a global glamour sport. The heir-apparent to... [a basketballer]'s title as the superstar of sport lived up to all the hype in a fairytale finish to golf's premier tournament... With a hug for [his black] father and a kiss for his Thai-born mother... [the] boy named for a South Vietnamese soldier who saved the life of his father... took a giant step towards unifying a sport that was once regarded as sport's most[racially] divisive... Also expunged were any last doubts that the promise would not turn into greatness... This should ensure a sizeable core readership for any one of the six... biographies that are now being written... [about him, and viewership for a \$NZ69.95 3-video package entitled *The Story So Far*]. Returning from the war, [his father] purchased a house next to a golf course. By the age of 10 months [the son] was hitting practice shots in the family garage. When... [the son was 3 years old it] was outputting Bob Hope on... National television and being coached in public relations... With a family able to stump up competition costs of around \$20,000 a year, [the son]... was always expected... to... succeed as a golfer... thereby repaying his father's faith. [The father] recently told... *Sports Illustrated* that “[my son] will do more than any other [human] in history to change the course of humanity.” More than [the first black South African President] or Gandhi? ...“Yes, because... [it] has a larger forum than any of them... a sport that's international. Because [my son is] qualified through his ethnicity to accomplish miracles[it is] the bridge between the East and West... the Chosen One. [It] will have the power to impact nations. The world is just getting a taste of his power.” His mother concurs. “[Our son] can hold everyone together... [It] is the Universal Child.” [The son] – who shares some of his mother's Buddhist faith... claims that these expectations are not a burden on him. “I see it as fortunate. I've always known where I wanted to go in life... This is my purpose. It will unfold.” Golf experts scratch their heads in wonder...

A PERSON with more impact than [the first black South African President], more than Gandhi, more than Buddha? Are we talking sport here? ...if you believe the thoughts of [his] dad... the 21-year-old is set to become the most famous and most influential person the world has ever known. [The son] was named sports[person] of the year by the respected... publication, *Sports Illustrated* and it devotes 18 pages to, as it puts it “The Chosen One”. There are some amazing predictions from both [his dad] and the publication itself and they stretch way beyond the manicured fairways of the world's best golf courses. Basically, the vision is to unite the world and it will be fulfilled “because of God's mind”... “Can't you see the pattern?” [his father] asks. “Can't you see the signs?...” ...[the golfer is d]amned good. And... will get better[.] But... to label... [him] as... “The Universal Child” is stretching it a bit. Who, for instance, chose The Chosen One? And since when is a 21-year-old a child, let alone a universal child... No way making a 10m eagle putt, or driving the ball 328m qualifies anyone to accomplish miracles. And no way that donning some green jacket and getting the odd 100 million bucks from companies such as Nike suddenly make ...hi[m] God... Having parents like [his] must be daunting[, but if this guy]... is, as his parents insist, The Chosen One, for goodness sake let's get him out of golf immediately... [The guy] is wasting time on the golf courses of the world if [it] can accomplish miracles. The world needs him elsewhere... Let's get him to all the starving people on the globe... No one seems to talk about his one dimensional childhood. Golf, golf and more golf... [T]here are plenty of [parents like his] out there... “The evil always begins with adults who desperately want to win championships... denied them when they were young. They use children to achieve this dream and, in doing so, pervert the normal experiences of youth. With shocking frequency they destroy the child's interest in further sport, and the outcome of their overly ambitious programmes is apt to be a cynical realisation by the children that they have been misused.” [The 21-year-old] won't be feeling misused just yet, but the jury is still out on how [the golfer] will react when [it] inevitably comes to the realisation that [it] is not The Chosen One. No one is.

...[the 21-year-old's] achievements will be immortalised... [H]is dominating father, has decided to turn the house where [the golfer was] raised... – a single-storey dwelling in Cyprus, California – into a museum. In [the father's] words: "It will be a historic monument to preserve what [my son] has done for history and I hope it becomes a place that will serve as an inspiration to young people." ...*Sports Marketing Letter*... predicts [the 21-year-old] could earn between \$750 million and \$1 billion over the next ten years, which is not bad going for a young fellow still in his first year out of college. And already a punter in England has wagered \$475 on the young golfer becoming President of the U[S] before it] is 50. What is even more remarkable... was that Ladbroke's offered only odds of 50-1 on it happening. "We've just had an actor president, [so] it's not impossible..."

Nike's]... chief executive... can be excused a little gloating. There were calls that his company had overpaid [the 21-year-old] in their \$60 million deal. "I wonder what they are saying now. [The golfer is] making us look smart..." were [his words after the 21-year-old] won again last week... "I find... [all of the] media attention... weird because... I'm a human being... just like you guys... and all I do is chase a little white ball around[," the 21-year-old had said] on the eve of the... Masters... [Incidentally, the 21-year-old] has just signed a \$30 million deal... to endorse American Express.

...[the 21-year-old U[S]er] can do no wrong in the golfing, and business world these days[, recently agreeing]... to a \$US13 million... deal with American Express. Later, [the golfer] became part-owner of the All-Star Cafe, one of those trendy memorabilia restaurant chains. But guess what? At the All-Star Cafe they don't accept American Express.

...Asahi Breweries has signed[the 21-year-old] golfer... to a three-year contract to endorse the company's new line of canned coffee in Japan. The trade magazine *Brandweek* reported the contract is worth... \$US13.5 million... and is the biggest golf endorsement ever signed in Japan[, where canned coffee accounts for 23%]... of soft-drink sales... [In related news, NZ's No 1 golfer, who is] fit again after mysterious... injuries, claimed the biggest win of his golf career... in a playoff at the... Greater Greensboro Classic in North Carolina... yesterday... [The] Kiwi... sank a putt from two metres for par at the first extra hole for victory after... [it and a U[S]er] had tied on 274, 14-under par, in cold and steady rain on the waterlogged Forest Oaks course... [The NZer] received \$US342,000... for... his first U[S] PGA Tour victory... and jumped to 17th on this year's money-list. Although technically a U[S] Tour rookie, it] is a hardened 36-year-old campaigner with five wins on the European Tour, where [it] has played most of his golf for the past decade. But everything [it] has achieved in the past paled beside his magnificent finish yesterday as [it] came from six strokes behind... over the last nine holes... Only last month, [it] pulled out of two successive tour events because of pain in his wrists and shoulders. But a visit to the Mayo Clinic in... Minnesota, just before the Masters reaped a rich reward[and 'reduced the amount of painkillers it used each day.'] Even so, after missing the cut last week, [the NZer didn't] plan to play in the Greensboro until... talked into it by fellow pro[and personal mate, the top South African (r:p1486, ln69). The NZ No 1]... is the fourth [Kiwi] to win on the U[S] PGA Tour... • NZ's senior left-hander won at]... Greensboro... in 1974.

...NZ's most durable golfer... yesterday... [became] the biggest money-earner on the flourishing U[S] senior PGA tour. The 61-year-old... tucked another... cheque into his back pocket after finishing [4th – his 6]th top-10 finish of the year – in the Nationwide Championship near Atlanta. [The left-hander], who continues to defy the playing odds in his 37th year as a pro... calmly compiled his second consecutive par round of 72, to go with his... 66 in the first... for a tournament total of 210 – [5] shots behind the... [AUSn winner. The NZer's] feat in recording [7] birdies on the first day prompted the eventual runner-up, [a 3-times US] Open champion... to say: "[The left-hander] is... my hero [for] shooting that kind of score." ...[the runner-up collected] \$US114,400 to be the first golfer past \$1 m... (in 11 tournaments) on the senior tour this year... [The NZer's 4]th placing earned him \$US78,000... plus the extra \$18,000... picked up the day before for winning his [7]th Mastercard championship of the year (for golfers over 60 years who compete over two rounds). This took [his] total earnings in 11 years on the senior tour to \$US7,079,893[, taking him]... past the previous leader... (now \$US7,048,517)... who... won... 27... PGA Senior events... During his 24 years on the major USPGA tour, [the NZer] earned just \$US458,686 – now his combined prizemoney... makes him the 13th all-time money winner in the U[S]. AUS's former world No 1] heads the list with \$US10.7 m... [The previous senior tour prizemoney leader is 3rd on] \$10.4 m... By producing form, consistency and fitness that belies his age, [the NZer] is still a strong contender as [it] flew from Atlanta to Chicago for this week's U[S] Senior Open, one title that has eluded him. [The NZer] is matching hardened professionals 10 years younger than him because of his driving accuracy, not because of his renowned putting ability. [The NZer] is ranked 10th in hitting greens in regulation... and 13th in driving accuracy... but only 59th in putting with an average of 1.841 putts a hole.

...A frustrated [NZ left-hander] let another chance at a seniors major golf championship slip away over the final day of the U[S] Senior] Open at the Olympia Fields Country Club... The 61-year-old... ended up... [tied] for 18th, after beginning the day in seventh equal place... The 53-year-old... [AUSn], the overnight leader, won his first seniors major... [plus his second tournament in succession,] and his 61st tournament victory worldwide... [A South African was the runner up. ■ NZ's No 1] golfer... went into overdrive on the final day of the Buick Classic, shooting a final-round of six-under-par 65 at the Westchester club in suburban New York, to finish in equal 12th place... following a lacklustre third round of 77... [Yesterday the NZer] attacked the course at every opportunity, shooting the second-lowest round of the tournament to jump nearly 40 places up the field... [His] brilliant surge earned him \$US29,400[, giving him]... total earnings of ...\$[NZ]707,905... on the U[S] PGA tour this year... Lightning stopped play when... his friend – and the tournament winner – ...was 13-under after four holes, having dropped a shot at the third. His two-shot lead had been cut to one... but [the South African] came back to hold... out in a repeat of the US Open final. The win makes [the South African] the world No 1, with [the 21-year-old US sensation] dropping to two and [AUS's top golfer (and the world's leading prizewinner)] to three... The... [other NZer in the tournament continued to struggle by completing] the tournament with a five-over 76 to finish on 14-over...

[The other NZer], with earnings of \$US96,262 from 17 events, has climbed to 140th on the U[S] PGA tour moneylist following his top-10 placing at last weekend's Greater Hartford Open. [The NZer, who is] in his second year on the tour, needs to finish in the top 125 to retain his player's ticket for next year. [The NZer] is just \$11,500 shy of [a]fellow Kiwi... who is 128th... [To retain their playing cards, they] will need close to \$US175,000... [The other NZer has his best chance to improve his earnings when contesting next week's] \$US2.2m... World Series of Golf at the Firestone Country Club course in... Ohio... Meanwhile... NZ's] No 1... struck a watery end to an epic first-round matchplay contest against [his South African friend – who has fallen back to being] the world No 3... [-] in the international playoff of the World Championship of Golf at the Blackwolf Run River course in... Wisconsin yesterday... [P]laying the par-four 18th, [the NZer] hit his second into the water... [The US] Open champion, grabbed the opportunity with a regulation par to win one up and march on to this morning's semifinal against [the]British Open and U[S] PGA champion... The defending champion and [current]world No 2... crept away from [a fellow AUSn] over the final seven holes to win 2 and 1 and now plays another... [AUSn] in the semifinals... In all four matches the margin was never more than two up as the players battled to become the international qualifier for a tilt at golf's biggest prize, the \$US1 million, at the world final [at] Scottsdale, Arizona, in January[next] year...

Of golf's four majors, the... British Open... stands above the others as the championship for the people. Corporate grandstands on course are kept to a minimum and no crowd limits are set... If for no other reason than this, my hat goes off [to the British Open's] organisers... I also applaud their decision to admit under 18s for free. The result was that this year around 200,000 spectators were able to enjoy the proceedings. The other major benefactors of the Open are the local communities. The Open has a roster of eight venues, and as a consequence one of eight communities each year benefit by an influx of an estimated NZ\$30 million. To small, seaside communities such as Troon, this windfall must be a real fillip.

...Planning a quiet Sunday drive? Then take a trip towards the tip of the Whangaparaoa Peninsula. You will be surprised, even exhilarated... Prime coastal land that once housed 300 head of cattle on an 323ha farm is being transformed into a \$500 million seaside community that will accommodate 8000 residents, mainly retired, [all wealthy,]within eight years. The enclave's focal points are the already-developed 1600-boat

marina, the second-largest in the Southern Hemisphere, and the par 72, 6400m championship golf course to be opened... on November 14. A year later, Gulf Harbour has the opportunity of hosting the 1998 World Cup, the Olympics of golf which began in 1953 and is the oldest teams event in the game... The course... designer... went home and raved about the best piece of land [the designer] has had to work with in 20 years of designing unforgettable courses. And so the organisers, the International Golf Association, and the promoters, Parallel Media Group, half-owners of the NBC network outside [the US], put the word to the Gulf Harbour management: "Would you like to host the 1998 World Cup?" Right now, the Gulf Harbour executives are rustling together a financial package of... \$[NZ]3.6 million... – the local contribution to the overall cost of \$US7 million to stage the event, involving 32 national teams, 64 golfers and their caddies, and worldwide television coverage. Parallel organises the remaining \$US4.7 million, including \$US1.5 million in prizemoney, and have global sponsors such as American Express... Gulf Harbour management have approached the Government for assistance and have until the end of next week to say: "yes." If they say "no," the event will go to Morocco... Staging the World Cup at Gulf Harbour would have a three-fold benefit: naturally, it would give the developers a promotional boost; it would truly put the country on the international golfing map; and it would provide N[Z] Tourism with another platform to sell our charms... The World Cup at the Erinvale club near Cape Town... last year was televised to 120 countries and a viewing audience of 250 million. The competition over four days attracted 80,000 spectators including 10,000 from overseas spending around... \$10,000 a person per stay... The South African Government made the most of the exposure by establishing a sports tourism campaign to encourage more people to visit the country.

...A \$2 million golf tournament is being planned in N[Z] to mark the beginning of the new millennium. The aim is to draw a top professional field for an event which... would be the first of the 21st century. The promoters of the concept have lodged a \$50,000 non-refundable deposit with the A[US]n PGA tour to secure the dates straddling the New Year. No firm details have been announced but it is known that the new Formosa and Gulf Harbour resort courses in Auckland have been considered as venues, with Formosa looking the more likely choice. Both... developments are... keen to stage high-profile tournaments... The Formosa Country Club... [owner is especially] keen that his course should be considered as a venue for the... \$500,000 N[Z] Open next year... The idea has been welcomed by the executive director of N[Z] Golf... but... it may be 1999 before the course would be ready... Formosa... is also keen to play a part in resurrecting the N[Z]PGA championship, which was last played – and won by [NZ's No 1] – at Mt Maunganui in 1987... [□ Two of NZ's top golfers (r:p1487, ln9 + 128th, p1488, ln54)] tee off on the Ocean Course at the Kiawah Island resort, South Carolina, this morning on a trek that could take them to Gulf Harbour... playing in front of their home crowd at the World Cup of Golf... [The pair], who make up the latest[N[Z] professional team, are playing... in the first round of the 43rd World Cup... A top performance would put... [them] in a strong position to again represent their country... Though rich in golfing talent over the years, N[Z] has never won the World Cup, the closest was [when NZ's senior left-hander and a partner] finished second in Mexico City in 1967.

...The 61-year-old... [NZ left-hander] has been nominated for the Professional Golfer's Association Hall of Fame... Other nominees include... [AUS's current world No 2]. The latest Hall of Famers will be announced next month at the Tour Championship, the final official event on this year's USPGA circuit. To be selected they have to receive at least 75[%] of the ballots returned by 238 voters. [A golfer] who has just joined the senior tour, was the only inductee from the 1996 voting... At the time of the Hall of Fame selection [the NZer] will be defending his Kaanapali Classic senior title... in Hawaii... After a three-week break, [the NZer] was back on the circuit finishing in a tie for 36th at the Boone Valley Classic in Augusta... yesterday. [The result] increased his year's earnings to \$US525,412... [keeping him] 18th on the current moneylist... enough to contest the rich end-of-year Senior Tour Champion for the top 30 golfers on the moneylist... [By the way, NZ's pair] produced their best form of the World Cup golf tournament to lift themselves to seventh after the third round in South Carolina[, but couldn't maintain their form and finished 'tied 9th'.

...A disappointed 61-year-old[, chasing his third successive Hawaiian title, had to bow to the winning instincts of the U[S] Senior Tour's No 1 golfer... at the Kaanapali Classic in Hawaii yesterday. The defending champion mounted a challenge, after having two early bogeys, by collecting three birdies on the eighth, 14th and 15th, and running second, two shots behind... after 16 holes. But sadly [the NZer] bogeyed the last two holes to fall to fifth place with a one-over 72 and eight under for the tournament, five strokes behind... [the winner. The NZer] was also aiming to become the second golfer to win the same tour event four times. [The Golden Bear] had achieved the feat in The Tradition. But instead [the Senior Tour No 1] maintained his record-breaking pace... collect[ing] his fifth victory in his last eight starts, and his ninth of the year to equal... [an AUSn's] record set in 1985. And [the Senior Tour No 1] pushed his year's earnings to \$US2.13 million – [making him] the first golfer on either the USPGA or Senior Tour to pass \$2 million in a single season. [The Senior Tour No 1], twice winner of the U[S] Open, has now won 13 Senior events since joining the tour two years ago. It shouldn't take him long to overhaul... [the] record of 24 tour victories; [the NZ left-hander] has 23.

...The AMP NZ Golf Foundation coffers have been replenished by another... donation [from NZ's left-handed golfer] following his 12th successful season on the U[S] Seniors tour in which... the... 61[-year-old] finished 21st... The... [left-hander] handed over a cheque for \$US6234... representing [1%] of his official tour earnings this year. The great golfer's total contribution to the foundation... used for four... golf scholarships each year, enabling youngsters to play golf while furthering their education... is now \$117,916... [Incidentally, NZ's] latest golf winner... left his run a week too late to qualify for next month's \$2.4 million Dunhill Cup, though [the golfer] helped the three-[member NZ] side to their best placing of runner-up in the event last year. Following his win in the British Masters, [the NZer who was ranked 31st in Europe last year] leapt 66 spots to 101 on the latest world ranking list, released yesterday, to be N[Z]'s third-highest placed professional, behind [NZ's No 1 at] 23rd and... the [holder of the NZ Open at] 93rd. Early last week... the Dunhill Cup promoters, International Management Group, looked at the current rankings and named the [NZ team of the 23rd and 93rd ranked players plus a NZer] who is ranked 124... [The 101st ranked golfer] was philosophical this time, but last year... was steaming after the promoters picked [a fellow Kiwi (r:p1488, ln54) even though the now-101 ranked golfer] was ranked 30 places higher than him at the time. In the end, [the then 2nd ranked NZer] pulled out, and both [the now-101 ranked golfer and the golfer who was ranked 30 places below him last year joined NZ's No 1] at St Andrews, Scotland, to win their group and lose 2-1 to the U[S] in the final... NZ's high standing on the international scene is proved by the fact that there are seven professionals ranked within the top 210 – [the other NZer (r:p1488, ln50)] is 141st and [last year's 2nd ranked NZer and the ranked 30 places below last year NZer] are floating between 201 and 210... [The 101st ranked golfer]'s ninth career victory last weekend provided him with other incentives. If [the NZer] can finish the latest European tour in the top 20 – [the golfer] is now 19th on the moneylist – [it] will have direct entry in the British Open next year. And if [the NZer] can finish in the top 15 [it] will also receive invitations to the U[S] Open and PGA championships. But [the NZer] has only two more tournaments to achieve those aims – the Oki Pro Am... and the end-of-year Volvo Masters... [The NZer, whose wife is scheduled to give birth to] their first child this weekend... will then... return[home]... to contest the N[Z] Open at Middlemore in Auckland as one of the favourites.

...If confirmation was needed of N[Z]'s status as a golfing power, it came at the Dunhill Cup tournament... Seeded seventh, the team... finished joint third with the U[S] (for which the members of both teams earned '\$NZ75,000 each') after a 1-2 semifinal loss to South Africa yesterday. South Africa won the 16-nation tournament when they beat Sweden 2-1 in the final. N[Z]'s two top-three finishes in two years, and a third in 1990, is the sort of consistency supposedly superior golfing nations like... [AUS, which has] reached the play-offs only twice in the past 10 years... can only dream of... [In Florida, a US golfer] won his second consecutive title in a sudden-death playoff at the Walt Disney World Classic... after waiting for the better part of three seasons to taste victory on the [US]PGA Tour... The... [User, aged 25... who [collected] \$US270,000... also won last week's Michelob Championship in... Virginia, in a playoff, defeating [two others, including the NZer who is currently ranked about 210 in the world.

...the NZer who is currently ranked about 210 in the world], took his earnings... in 27 PGA tournaments this year... to \$US171,860... and will sit around 120 on the money list, with four tour events remaining... [The NZer], the joint leader after two rounds[, picked]... up a healthy cheque of \$US36,400... for his eighth placing with three other golfers at the BC Open in... New York... [The NZer who is ranked 141st in the world] equalled the best round of the day and vaulted into a tie for 23rd... The... \$US10,692... took his year's earnings past \$US234,000. But spare a thought for[a] Swede... playing his first year on the USPGA tour. [The Swede thought it] was out and heading for the December qualifying school, having earned \$US27,144 and lying 226th on the moneylist[, but]... won his first professional tournament, by one shot[, then]... pocketed \$US234,000 and had no worries about continuing the tour – his win gave him a full exemption for two years.

...the 21-year-old... has finally returned to the type of golf [it] likes best at the Ryder Cup which begins tomorrow... [The 21-year-old] gets the chance to play three types of matchplay as the U[S tries] to regain the trophy from Europe at Valderrama... [However, the 21-year-old] was told that all 12 players on the European team felt they could beat him... [- perhaps because it] has not won since the Western Open early in July and... missed a half-way cut for the first time, at this month's Canadian Open... [T]he Ryder Cup... is a competition where there is no prizemoney, where players – who are used to competing for millions of dollars – play for nothing... It's an ingredient that seems to be disappearing from the majority of sports, where many now play for their bank accounts and not their countries.

...[the] European Ryder Cup capt. celebrate[d victory yesterday but revealed it won't lead the]team in future... [The team's preparation this year was marred by a] Spanish golfer seek[ing] compensation from... t[he]... Ryder Cup c[ommi]ttee for being excluded from... [Europe's team. The capt. was responsible for the] allocation of final places in... [the team. The] PGA Tour di[recto]r agrees... future teams should be drawn from world rankings...

N[Z's No 1 golfer] was bundled out of the world matchplay golf championship in London[by a golfer from Zimbabwe], going down 6 and 5... over their scheduled 36-hole encounter... [The NZer] clung on desperately, hoping to peg back his Presidents Cup colleague, but to no avail. [The Zimbabwean] sealed the match and a semifinal spot against [the world No 3 and] defending matchplay champion... [from South Africa. ● In the latest 'world rankings, NZ has six players in the top-150. NZ's No 1 is ranked No 22. An AUSn has regained the overall No 1 position. The 21-year-old USer – the world No 2' –] was yesterday named USPGA Player of the Year, after winning four events in his first full season... [The 21-year-old would seem to be a good bet to eventually equal] the record... o[f]... six awards.

...a... [NZer]'s record stayed intact when... a... Scot... won the A[US]n PGA golf championship yesterday. But it was a close thing. [The NZer] still holds the dubious honour of winning an Austral[asia Tour] tournament with the highest final-round score after [it] fired 80 to win by one shot in the 1979 A[USn Masters. The Scot]'s victory meant [it] has won the tournament on both occasions [it] has entered, following his previous success in 1994.

...[a Swedish golfer] finished the season the way [the Swede] started it, with a win to clinch LPGA player-of-the-year honours for the second time in three years... [The Swede] parred the third hole of a sudden-death playoff... to capture her sixth victory of the season at the LPGA Tour Championship... and... pocketed \$US160,000 to boost her record-breaking earnings to \$US1,236,789... [By the way, the other sex]'s leading golf professionals have been given new incentives. They can strive to qualify for the new World Golf Championships, which begin in 1999 with three tournaments – two in the U[S] and one in Europe. The world series will probably expand to four events in 2000... Each event will carry in excess of \$US4 million in prizemoney... for the top 64 golfers on the world rankings... and money lists from the US, European, Japanese, Southern African and Australasian tours... The catalyst for the World Championships was an attempt by a private promoter, backed by [AUS's]world No 1... to start a world tour of about eight events yearly.

...[the world] No 1... is favourite to win his [6th AUS]n Open... when play begins at the Metropolitan course in Melbourne [this week]. The Queenslander is rated a 9-2 chance... to level with [a USer's 6] victories in the tournament, and one win off... [a South African]'s record of... [7. No NZ]er has ever won the famous 93-year-old, \$A1 m... event and a breakthrough this year seems unlikely, judging by the bookmakers' odds... [■ The NZ No 1's] latest successes... mean... [the world's No 22 ranked player can't] it now commit himself to playing for N[Z] in front of his home crowd in the World Cup of Golf at Gulf Harbour... next November. "If it works in I'd love to play. But I've got a... hunch that something will conflict,"...

Construction is underway on N[Z]'s latest prestige golf resort, the \$100 million South Island Terrace Downs Country Resort and Golf Club... The 6500m course... is a blend of traditional Scottish links and American parklands courses... [D]evelopments such as Terrace Downs, Formosa... and Gulf Harbour were generally positive for all prestige golf resorts in N[Z], as they provided a circuit for international golfing tourists wishing to play at several championship courses... Symphony Group and its partners yesterday launched plans for a \$70 million hotel and condominium resort to be built at the Wairakei International golf course... A \$2.5 million upgrade of the golf course should be completed next year.

...[this year's NZ] open championship... is being marketed around its talented home-grown professionals. Normally the organisers pull out all stops to drag in some overseas stars to maintain the hype... But the pre-tournament publicity for the latest AMP Air N[Z] Open... has centred around whether the country's... [No 1] can win his first national open championship... [The NZ No 1] is the top-ranked golfer in the field and will be the star of the show... When [the world No 22] arrives in his hometown... next Tuesday, [No 22] begins a sentimental journey. It was at Middlemore, or more accurately the Auckland Golf Club, where [No 22] first broke par in competition, and it was also the venue of his first open championship as a 17-year-old amateur in 1977... A year later [No 22] won the national amateur championship... and soon after turned professional to register 12 career victories... Along with [the senior left-hander who is a] four times NZ Open winner... ([and]who is again competing next week), [No 22] is the best professional N[Z] has produced... But [No 22] is not the only homegrown favourite. There... are... [other NZers] who... rank... in the world top 200... Add in... all three members of [the] 1992 world amateur teams championship-winning side... and you have a real Kiwi challenge next week... The N[Z] Open only rarely belongs to a N[Zer. When a NZer] triumphed at Heretaunga in 1976, there was a 13-year hiatus before another Kiwi became champion... [Two Kiwis have won it since then]. In between, the Open went to [USers, AUS]ns and an Irish[person. This will be]... the eighth time the open has been played at Middlemore. The last time was in 1983 when [an AUS]n... won.

...a... Dunedin-born [NZ]er yesterday... picked up his... [seventh] tournament... and his second N[Z] Open... with his runaway seven-shot... victory... a victory that seemed unlikely two weeks before, when [the NZer] hurt his back while helping with renovations to his home in Queenstown... The 34-year-old... who... [took] a one-shot lead into the final round... and... has never lost a tournament [after leading] going into the final round... became the first Kiwi in the last two decades to win the open championship twice... In true champion's style, [the golfer – who earlier in the year was ranked 101st in the world –]also delighted the large gallery with a birdie on the 18th... [to finish] with a magnificent 10-under tournament total[, despite complaining the day before that]... the greens were difficult. "Some were soft, some were firm... You start to lose confidence... Sometimes people on championship committees have the feeling the harder the course is the better it is... That is not always the case... [Local] interest in golf has never been greater and it would be nice to turn on a better show[, but]... unless you really understand the intricacies of what is going on out there... people must look and say these guys aren't any good." ...[NZ's No 1 golfer] agreed... "I have never seen so many players miss so many short putts and everyone can't be having a bad day... I want to see [a] tournament won and not lost." ...[the world's No 22, who] had another up-and-down day... but... [finished] with the memory of birdies on the last two holes... to finish a frustrating tournament at 2 under... argued in favour of playing the course in the way the members do.

...The NZ Open was not only about [NZ's top golfers], even though they were centrestage. It was also about 970 volunteers from the Auckland Golf Club giving up their time, rolling up their sleeves and getting stuck into all sorts of tasks to make the tournament a success. Some of them

collected rubbish, 20 jumbo bins of it over the four days. Others directed cars to be parked in neighbouring King's College... The most impressive performance came from 60 [gals] who made sandwiches every morning from six o'clock to nine. The cynics may sit back and scoff at the privileged members of the Auckland Golf Club, but they showed at the weekend why they have become successful: they work... Huge crowds, beautiful surrounds, wonderful sport, wide media coverage and a local winner were just the ingredients to put the icing on the golf boom... The most pertinent fact in predicting a bigger golf boom was the number of young children and teenagers following their heroes around... [M]ost of them will be wanting Santa to come up with some golf equipment this Christmas... Meanwhile, following... his superb seven-shot victory in the NZ Open last week, [the previously 101st ranked golfer]... is now 77th – his highest placing – and 50 spots behind [NZ's top golfer who is now] at 27... 10 [NZ golfers rank from '108 to 507.' NZ]... is one of five countries to have six players in the top 200, the others are [the US, AUS,] England and Japan whose ratings of 23 golfers is a little artificial because they play mainly on their own domestic tour that is largely inaccessible to foreigners... [While on the topic of rankings, t]hree of the four major championships this year were won by players under 30 years of age... Nine of the top 30 on the money list... were under 30... Four of the top-five finishers on the money list... were 27 or younger.

...[3 NZers are] in the... 1998... European golf circuit... qualifying school finals... [They] must finish in the top 35, including ties, to qualify... [Yesterday an Italian in] the 180-strong field... was struck by lightning... Because of the storm the tournament has been reduced from [6 rounds to 5].

...With the final round played overnight, [one NZer] was fifth and [another] joint 26th... to be well-placed in... the European PGA tour qualifying tournament. The top 40 finishers... will gain full playing status for next year's tour... [The 3rd NZer has] dropped in the reckonings and will need a strong finish... to retain his tour card. [The 3rd NZer] is one of 13 players grouped one shot behind the top 40... The only other [NZer] competing... missed the cut for the final round by three shots.

...[an AUSn] feels like... the world's media[is stalking him]... The 37-year-old Queenslander let his emotions and frustrations boil over yesterday after intentionally disqualifying himself halfway through his first round at the \$A275,000... Coolum Classic... "Why do you guys [media] have to take pictures [of me] and have quotes?" the 1991 British Open champion [and winner of 15 other tournaments, including the 1983 NZ Open,] said after adding another chapter to his celebrated form slump... [It] declared this week was not a comeback, but a chance to have a "bit of fun." But yesterday was more like torture for the troubled golfer, who has been making his income through commenting on the sport rather than playing it. [The Queenslander] worked at the NZ Open in Auckland last week. [The Queenslander], who has made three cuts from 22 events on the A[US]n PGA Tour and won \$A4200... in prizemoney since 1993... had won Coolum in 1990 with a record 16-under total. And his latest outing was his first PGA Tour tournament since [it] shot an opening round of 92 in the British Open at Royal Troon in July. [However, the Queenslander – who was 'once in the top 9 but now isn't even in the top 900' –] plans to continue searching for the game which has deserted him. "What do you want me to do, quit...?"

...[the 37-year-old] may be... disciplined for his actions, which included a two-finger salute, during the Coolum Classic... and... is certain to be fined a mandatory \$A500... for picking up his ball... Thursday's behaviour was completely out of character for the popular Queenslander who has an exemplary tour record and a reputation for being one of the nicest players in golf. There is no disputing [the guy is] under tremendous strain, who is going through hell after one of the most cruel slumps in golfing history. But the Tour has set such rigid standards for its players that it can hardly turn a blind eye, especially when it involves a player with such a high profile... His... unfriendly gesture – seemingly... t[... journalists – was captured by a... photographer and run on the front of Friday's *Sunshine Coast Daily* under the headline: 'Get Lost!' If found to have brought the game into disrepute with conduct unbecoming a tour player, [the Queenslander] could be fined \$A5000... and suspended from tournament play.

...[the AUSn] golfer... has been fined by the Australasian PGA Tour... However, the tour refused to disclose details of the measures taken... - 1997

Go golf, the sport for principled people... Golf is booming... Part of the attraction of golf has to be the etiquette, manners, history and traditions of the game that are invariably honoured by the top professionals. Last year [a NZer (r:p1487, ln9) had a chance to win an AUSn Tour tournament but] penalised himself a shot for an indiscretion no one else noticed. At... [a tournament this year, another NZer (r:p1488, ln50)] called in the referee when the ball [the golfer] was addressing moved in the bunker's sand. [The NZer, who eventually missed coming 2nd by one shot,] was penalised a shot at a critical time in his round. It used to be that cricket had similar etiquette, with [batters] "walking" if they got a nick. Now they are more likely to start rubbing their thigh before mouthing off at all and sundry. Nor do golfers sledge each other... On many occasions recently all sorts of dreadful behaviour has been excused on tennis courts, cricket pitches, soccer fields and rugby grounds with the sentiment that "these young [and offensive people] are under tremendous pressure in the new professional era." Rubbish. No one plays for more money tha[n] the top golfers and no other sport comes remotely near the standards of behaviour and discipline that are displayed by the... [top golfers] of this world. If you haven't done it already, do it now. Go out and buy a second-hand set. There can be few better ways of ensuring that you will learn self-discipline, respect for and of others, the competitive spirit and some good, old-fashioned manners... Throughout Asia, increasing numbers are being attracted through cheaper gear and increased television exposure. [However, the] Asian golfer still faces an enormous problem in getting to play on a decent course and often has to be satisfied with hitting from a multi-level driving range. That is not the case in N[Z], still the country where it is easiest to play on excellent courses at reasonable costs. Not that it is likely to stay that way much longer... In the U[S], a new course is being opened daily...

GOLF is a game renowned for its etiquette and Augusta National, home of the US Masters... must be top of the list of clubs with a long list of dos and don'ts that stretch well beyond its manicured fairways... It has much to do with the fastidious nature of one of its founders, Wall St stockbroker Clifford Roberts... Roberts committed suicide in 1977 but his legacy lives on. Pictures at the club are still hung on two hooks, because crooked pictures drove Roberts to distraction. The golf shop still makes change with new currency because Roberts couldn't stand dirty notes. And have you noticed there's rarely a piece of litter lying or flying around the world's most picturesque course? ...The cups and sandwich bags sold at the club are green, making them virtually invisible to television cameras – another issue with Roberts. As for the green jacket? Well, let's just say that for all its sartorial inelegance, it remains the game's most coveted adornment. According to... a new book, *The Making of the Masters*... late at night after [a 21-year-old]'s record breaking victory in 1997, [his father] looked in on his son and found him curled up in bed, asleep with a smile on his face, his arm wrapped around his green jacket. [● 'Augusta has lost \$7m in advertising revenue following publicity about the club's no-gal policy.']

...A small group of Augusta National Golf Club members plan to seek an internal compromise to end a conflict with [gals'] groups critical of the club's all-[guy] membership. About a dozen of the roughly 300 members... said they were concerned that... the... club chair[per]son... had not taken the right approach. They would seek to have Augusta National admit at least one [gal] member within the next six months or so.

...Controversy over... [guy]-only clubs spread to Ireland yesterday as a [gals'] group demanded the Government drop sponsorship of the Irish Open. The National [Gals'] Council of Ireland said use of... government funds to promote the event... at the Portmarnock Golf Club... was an "insult"... The club allows [gals] to play on the course[– yet hasn't hosted a gal in a PGA tournament, as occurred earlier this year in the US for the first time in over 5 decades (the gal]... missed the cut[) –] ...but not to become members. The protest echoes... the... calls for a boycott of the [US] Masters...

Ten of [guy golf's top] 30 players... said Augusta National should offer membership to a [gal], although no one who responded to a newspaper survey said [they] would boycott the Masters if the golf club remained all-[guy]... Players were divided when asked whether golfers have an obligation to speak out on the issue. Of the 14 who responded, five of them – including [the now 22-year-old former Masters title-holder] – said yes.

...SHAME on the U[S] media and public. The appalling chest beating and abhorrent jingoism that erupted when [a then 21-year-old USer] won the 1997 Masters championship was sadly missing when [a]Fijian... became only the second non-white... in history to win a major golf title. [The Fijian] beat all comers to win the 80th US PGA and although [the Fijian] was given a courteous reception from the Sahalee Country Club crowd, his victory hardly received the same elevation of status that greeted [the USer's] Masters triumph. Then, the U[S] media more or less told the golfing world to move over, their [product] was set to dominate the game like no other before him for the next 25 years... The *Washington Post* last week ran a cartoon of... [the 22-year-old] leaning on a golf club with the caption: "I'm [Mr O'M]." The reference to [Mr O'M] is because it has been [Mr O'M] this year, not [the 22-year-old], who has "changed the course of humanity" and accomplished miracles... at least on the golf course where [Mr O'M] has won two majors in 1998 and finished tied for fourth place at the PGA. And where was [the 22-year-old] in those same majors? Usually in the pack. What happened of course, is what is happening worldwide these days in sport. The media picks up on some prospective superstar like [the US golfer or Brazil's soccer striker] and before their careers have the necessary time to earn the sort of results that distinguish genuine greatness from being just good, the media makes them great. The media fails to give them any chance to prove their superiority and often, like [the US golfer and the Brazilian striker, the sportspeople] are too young to have had the chance to replicate the deeds of genuine legends. [The Fijian] has earned his major title arguably more than most, and probably more than [the 22-year-old]. Being black, both... have had to overcome hurdles others in professional golf have not. But [the Fijian] has been going at it and facing those hurdles considerably longer than [the USer]. The road to stardom for [the] 35-year-old... was paved through a career that took him to almost every corner of the globe to refine his game. His string of titles as a professional would be the envy of many, even [the 22-year-old. And the Fijian] has done it with a humility and calmness, with a lack of arrogance and bravado that [the USer] still has to learn. None of the petulant club stomping after a bad tee shot [for the Fijian]. None of the lower protruding lip when a putt is missed. Just a gentle giant... [who] loves... playing a game... and playing it well. [The USer] might do well to stand in front of some mirror soon and recite after himself: "I'm [Mr Fijian]". The USer could pick a worse hero to worship. [Apart from their colour and success in their chosen career, the pair have another mutual link – the Fijian's father lives in NZ and the 22-year-old recently hired a NZer to be his new caddie.]

...*Kiwi caddie cashes in...* WHICH N[Z]er is making the most money on the world's golfing fairways? [The NZer who] doesn't swing a club[but instead] carries them... THE... [Kiwi]'s caddying job with [the]world No 1... is proving extremely lucrative as the flamboyant American finds himself in the middle of a hot streak which has seen him dominate the professional game this year. [The No 1]'s victory at the NEC Invitation last Monday was his fourth in seven US PGA Tour starts. Including the Deutsche Bank SAP Open in Germany, which included six of the top 10 players in the world rankings, [the No 1] has won five from his past eight events. [The 22-year-old]'s NEC win made him the first[US PGA] player to surpass \$[US2] million in one season. Add his win in Germany and [his caddy] is clearly on a winner with a bag job reportedly worth 7% of [the No 1]'s prizemoney along with salary and bonuses. The Kiwi is closing in on the \$1m mark himself and doing it a lot easier than the likes of [NZ's No 1-ranked golfer]... The pair have built a good rapport. There's little doubt [the Kiwi] has been instrumental in reviving [the American]'s game and helping to make the most of a remarkable golfing talent which was stagnating earlier this year.

...*Million dollar caddie* [A caddie] is thought to be N[Z]'s latest sporting millionaire. The caddie is cashing in on carrying the bag for golf's world No 1... who has won \$[NZ]13.9 million in nine months. [The caddie's] pay is secret but it is accepted caddies get 10[%] of a winner's purse, [7%] of other top 10 finishes, and [5%] of the rest. That means [the caddie] has earned \$1.3m. Caddies also get between \$1000 and \$2000 a week in living expenses. [The Kiwi] does not discuss his arrangement with [his boss] whose last caddie... was sacked for disclosing his earnings. But [the Kiwi] said his life changed forever when [it] joined one of the world's biggest sports stars. Despite previously working with [AUS's former world No 1 and another top golfer, the Kiwi said his current boss] was in a different world. "[My boss i]s constantly in demand and finds it difficult to go out in public without it turning into a circus... We went shopping without girlfriends the other day. I thought in Kuala Lumpur it would be OK but we got to a mall and [my boss] was mobbed. We had to quickly return to the hotel." [His boss] has two burly security guards in KL and they have struggled to cope with the fans. [The golfer] also uses his own back entrance to the Palace of the Golden Horses, leading to a private lift to the Presidential Suite. But... [the golfer] rarely leaves the Palace during the tournament, eating at the suite before arriving at the course as early as 6 am to practise. [The Kiwi flies with the golfer] in his private jet to Hawaii tomorrow for the Grand Slam for winners of the four majors... It is the end of a long series of tournaments which included four consecutive victories[(making him 'the first player to win four consecutive starts since Ben Hogan won five in succession, including the Masters, US Open and British Open, in 1953')]. To break the intensity [the Kiwi] returns to N[Z] to visit family and friends or... races stock cars in America, in which [the caddie] is highly rated... [After the Grand Slam the caddy and golfer leave for the golfer's] own... tournament which... i[s] an invitational matchplay. The first match for the host is against the basketball superstar who plays for the Washington Wizards]...

The best golfer in the world is attracting so much attention that there's plenty to spare for his Kiwi caddie... THERE was only one show in town last weekend and everybody wanted a piece of [the world's No 1 golfer]. Even the autograph of the world's No 1 caddie... – reputed to be the highest-paid N[Z] sports star through his association with [the world's No 1 golfer] – was fiercely sought by the hundreds of children who lined the route along which [the golfer] made his regal way to the course. If anybody needed reminding... [about who] is the biggest star in world sport today, it was there to see in the size of his entourage of three bodyguards, a cluster of officials and a legion of Fife Police, who escorted [the golfer] to the practice putting green. Every move [the golfer] makes is planned like a military operation by the bodyguards, dressed in identical red Nike jackets, black caps and wraparound mirror sun-glasses... [T]he crowd screamed, but [the golfer] already had his game face on and barely acknowledged the crowd as [the golfer] and his caddie walked on to the green... [The pair] have been together since March last year, during which time [the world No 1] has embarked on the hottest winning streak in golf history... The 36-year-old... Aucklander who now lives in Sun River, Oregon, is a rarity: only a couple of the top 100 US golfers have foreign caddies... "[The Kiwi] can just read me, to the point when [it] knows where to say something and when not to say something," [the golfer] says. "And we genuinely like being around each other. I think that is what makes for a partnership, especially one that lasts a long time." ...The young maestro finished his practice session by firing several balls down the practice ground. As [it] made his way towards the first tee somewhere in the crowd the other members of [his entourage], his mother... and girlfriend... were watching. History beckoned.

...AS A TODDLER, [golf's current world No 1] was paraded on American television like some kind of circus freak... It was the sort of start in life that spoke of manipulative parents and unavoidable self-destruction. A gift mishandled. Too much, too soon. Yet walking down the 18th fairway of St Andrews last Sunday was a... [person with] immense composure, shrugging off mental pressure as easily as [it] swings a golf club. [The golfer] was wearing the colour [it] always wears on Sundays – red, his winning colour... After his 19-under par victory in the British Open – the lowest score to par in any major – [the]championship committee chair... said: "[The world No 1] is the complete golfer. The most awesome part of his game is his mental strength. [The golfer] is so focused." That [the golfer] has serenely survived the expectations, the frenzy of interest in his first... years as a professional, and the pressure of winning[another of] the world's four great golf tournaments, makes no sense. Faced with the terrible brilliance of their own potential, [countless other talented young sportspeople have] cracked and... bottled out. [The golfer], so far, is riding the swell. But then [it] has a talent that defies logic. At 18 months [it] was able to count strokes well enough to say, "Daddy, you got a double bogey." At 3 [it] was working out how wind, distance and "sand traps" might affect his shots. It was a prelude to domination. Golf, arguably the most technically demanding sport, was supposed to be as unconquerable as the sea that lapped obediently on the St Andrews shore. Golf was never designed to be

conquered. It is the history of broken spirits. The pack trudges round. One player pokes ahead to win by a stroke or two. This is how it works, how it has worked for five centuries. Human frailty decreed it would always be so. Then came [the Chosen One]. Born on December 30, 1975, [it]... won the Optimist International Junior Tournament six times at ages 8, 9, 12, 13, 14 and 15. While a 16-year-old amateur [it] played his first professional tournament in 1992. His first major championship – the US Masters – came in 1995, making the cut in a PGA tour for the first time... [The] teenager... wrote a thankyou note to the Augusta National members saying the tournament “was like Fantasyland and Disney World wrapped into one. I was treated like a[n adult] throughout my stay and I trust I responded in kind... It is here that I left my youth behind and became a[n adult].” Within months [it] turned professional... In 1997, his first full professional season, [it] won four PGA tournaments, including the top-ranking US Masters.

...[the world No 1's] gritty one-stroke victory in the U[S] PGA Championship yesterday was nothing like his record-setting romp in the 1997 Masters, but it revealed a lot more about the young [golfer, who admits it] is still learning about golf and himself. [The world No 1] had to overcome several of his own mistakes while dealing with a hostile crowd and fending off an incredible challenge by an even younger player who is already known as “the [Chosen one] of Europe.” ...The effervescent 19-year-old Spaniard performed with skill and bravery... in only his second major tournament as a professional... As an amateur [the Spaniard] won just about everything – more than 50 tournaments in all. At 15, [it] was the European amateur champion and... became only the second player in history to hold the British boys and British amateur titles at the same time. The other [person] to achieve that feat was [another Spaniard], who this year took his second U[S] Masters title. It may not be long before [the 19-year-old] matches that achievement... [The Spaniard's effort yesterday] secured a place in the European Ryder Cup team to fulfil one of his greatest ambitions while still in his teens... “It was a tough day,” [yesterday's winner] admitted. “But it's always nice to play with all the pressure on the line.” [The]... world No 1... actually made things tough for himself with a double-bogey and two bogeys within five holes on the back nine at [the] Medinah Country Club... • [The US]... Ryder Cup golfers will have a say in future charitable contributions from the biennial matches after yesterday making their desires clear in a meeting with PGA officials. The [12 team-members] would receive a lucrative tax break from a donation in their names – with charities set to receive \$US17 million from next month's clash...

The U[S] Ryder Cup golf team controversially downed Europe yesterday in the biggest come-from-behind victory in the competition's history. The Americans' win in the 33rd Ryder Cup was marred by a premature celebration that shocked and angered the Europeans. When [a US player], capping a tremendous comeback against [the Spaniard who this year took his 2nd US Masters title], sank what would prove to be the victory-clinching putt at the 17th hole, many of his team-mates ran up to congratulate him – even though the Spaniard still had a putt to stay alive. While the Americans' and their wives mobbed their team-mate, and photographers... scurried about to record it, [the Spaniard] was left standing on the green looking at a long putt... “I think that kind of behaviour is not the one anybody expects, especially when you're playing a match and you know the whole match [for the Cup] is going down to yours or the one behind,” [the Spaniard] said later. “I think it was very sad to see. I think it was an ugly picture to see,” added [the Spaniard], who eventually missed the putt after order was restored... ■ Europe swept the... fourball competition to rally back from a morning setback and establish a 9-7 lead over the U[S] at the Solheim Cup [gals'] event at Edina, Minnesota. After losing [3 of the 4] four-somes matches in the morning, the Europeans, led by... the... world No.1 [r:p1491, ln66]... fought back to win all... the afternoon... matches.

...AT NEWS that the most successful left-handed player in the history of world professional golf... had become a knight, every Kiwi worth his or her salt exclaimed: “At last! About time.” At last, indeed. Because of his extraordinary achievements, not least the winning, in 1963, of golf's supreme title, the British Open Championship, [the left-hander] was made an OBE in 1972. [The leftie] kept on winning, and doing other wonderful things in the game, but a full 20 years were to pass before N[Z]'s Government... advanced him the rank of CBE. But no Kiwi worth a damn was fooled. Not least after his magnificent gesture of donating 1% of his tournament earnings to advancing [NZ] junior golf: the [leftie] must become “Sir”. To be fair, there was a problem. By all the luck in the world, [the leftie's] proposal of marriage, back in the early 1960s, to a [gal] of extraordinary charm and beauty, had been accepted... But for a long, long time, it caused an intractable problem. [The charmer was South African.] and in the dark days of apartheid, when... [members] of Halt All Racist Tours were tearing about the country, rugby offices and grandstands were being burned, golf greens and rugby fields were being sprayed with acid, no sensible politician could risk promoting [the husband of a South African] to about as high a rank as a Kiwi can get... [The leftie] undertakes a strict regimen these days... [involving stretching, lifting] light weights... aerobic exercises... [while sticking] to a diet heavy on vegetables and fruits[, supplemented]... with vitamins and minerals... Small price to pay... Especially when you get tournaments like last year's father and son event which the great leftie describes as the highlight of his... calendar. [The leftie] teamed with his boy[, who]... works for the PGA of America... [running] the seniors PGA and Grand Slam of Golf tournaments, as well as assisting in the Ryder Cup and PGA Championship events... to finish fourth in a star-studded event. Not only did dad love the chance to draw iron with his son, but their effort was a mighty one considering [the son], a four-handicapper, was one of the few non-pros taking part... It is not possible, of course, to pass over the story of Sir [Leftie] without referring to that long period when, wonderful golfer though [the leftie] was, his fellow Kiwis thought him the sourest puss this side of the Black Stump. Only the other day, a dear old lady (who has never met [the leftie]) said to me: “I wish [the leftie] would smile.” During a N[Z] Open at Auckland's Middlemore in 1965, I taxed [the leftie]. “You have a rotten reputation,” I said. “Kiwis who don't know you... give you a bad name.” “I am aware of the public attitude... I would do anything I could to change it. But I can't change my serious attitude to my job. I have to be serious if I want to win.” [The leftie] thought for a moment. “Do you laugh much... when you are writing a story.” “I don't kill myself,” I admitted. Which brings [us] to the moment of absolute greatness in [the leftie's] story. At the 72nd and last hole of the British Open at Royal Lytham in 1963, [the NZer] faced up to a putt of at least 1.5m to achieve a half with a burly American... who, having just holed out, had yelled like a banshee while darting forward to put his hat over his ball in the hole. (The revered British critic... called the [USer's] effort “disgraceful conduct in every possible respect”.) [However, the NZer] holed his putt; and, as was then required by the Royal and Ancient Club of St Andrews, set out to play [the USer], head to head, over 36 holes, and murdered him. When I met [the leftie] at Whenuapai on his return, [the leftie] fetched out a life-size copy of the Open trophy, the immortal claret cup. “Were you mad,” I asked him, “about [the USer's] performance?” The leftie] gazed at me. “What performance?” [Speaking of bad British Open performances, last year a French golfer had a 3-shot lead at the 18th tee. Rather than playing safe to ensure victory, it pulled out his driver (perhaps, being French-born, the golfer felt obligated to win with style?). After getting himself into a not-so-good position after his first shot, the Frog avoided taking the chance to play safe a second time, and was fortunate to get a reasonable bounce off the gallery. Unfortunately, the ball was in such long rough that his 3rd shot landed in a creek not far ahead of him. After delaying proceedings for a while as the Frog contemplated playing his 4th shot from the creek (which included removing and then refitting his shoes and socks), the Frog took a drop and put his 5th shot into a green-side bunker. The Frog, who now needed to get his next shot into the hole to win, then had to watch as his AUSn playing-partner played out of the bunker first – and succeed at putting the ball straight into the hole! After l]eading by 10 strokes heading into the final round, [the Frog] triple bogeyed the 72nd hole to force a three way play off with [an American and a Scot. The latter] became the first Scot... in 68 years to win the title...

[Scotland's No 1 golfer] nearly blew a huge lead but held on to win the Anderson Consulting World Championship of Golf final on Sunday... beating [a USer]... two up in the 36-hole final on the Grayhawk club's Raptor course, in Arizona. [The Scot] was four up with four holes left, but lost the next three... before responding to the pressure with a magnificent three-iron second shot to the par-five 18th. [The USer] also reached the green in two, but after missing his eagle putt... conceded to [the Scot], who collected the \$US1 million cheque, equal to the biggest prize in golf.

...The first golf tournament in the world to offer \$US1 million as a first prize will this year be played for twice that much. At a glittering function at the Sun City resort in South Africa, officials said the move was in response to the proliferation of events offering \$US1 million to the winner. That had hurt the tournament's ability to attract the world's top golfers. The elite 12-[player] event was first played in... 1982, when [the winner] took home \$US500,000 of the total purse of... \$US1 million. The top prize was increased to \$US1 million in 1987.

...[a U.S. golfer, Mr Y.] became only the second golfer in U.S. PGA Tour history to record more than \$US2 million... in annual winnings with a two-stroke victory at the 37th and final World Series of Golf yesterday... his... third victory of the year... The 26-year-old[– who ended last year by 'becoming the first golfer to win his first three tour victories in consecutive starts' – joined the US and world No 1, who] set a single-season PGA record last year with \$US2.07 million. [Two golfers also] eclipsed the \$US2 million mark last year on the Senior Tour...

N[Z] is well placed to win the World Cup [of Golf] for the first time after [its two representatives]... continued to hold their nerve... yesterday. The Kiwis go into today's fourth and final round holding a three-shot advantage over the U[S] pairing of... the No 1... and No 2 [(Mr Y)]... players in the world... Led by [a]Japanese tour regular... N[Z] shot a seven-under-par 65 to retain the lead on 22-under... There is a pack of talent chasing the Kiwis with Japan, Argentina, France and South Africa tied for third, one stroke back of the... Americans, the defending champions... N[Z] has not won the World Cup since the event's inception in 1953 although it has gone close several times, including in Buenos Aires last year when [the world No 27 in 1997 and that year's NZ Open winner – who is 'ranked 27th on the European Tour this year' – represented the country (the same pair 'tied for 5th place with Zimbabwe, 5 shots behind the winners, England, in the 32-nation' event the previous year)]... Today's final round, when the N[Z]ers will be partnered by the Americans in the final grouping, will be foursomes.

...N[Z] chose a stunning location to at first scale and then tumble down one of golf's tallest peaks and concede the World Cup teams event in dramatic fashion in Japan last night. With a snowladen Mt Fuji providing a majestic backdrop, [the Japanese tour regular and his partner (the former NZ No 2 – r:p1489, ln54)] needed to birdie the 474m final hole to win their country's first World Cup title since the event's inception... The par-five hole, considered one of the easier challenges at the Taiheiyo Club at Gotemba City, had moments before coughed up an eagle... to South Africa and would do the same again when [the half-Thai]American superstar... pulled out a spectacular chip and run from off the green. But the N[Z]ers could manage only a par... consigning them to a four-way playoff with Denmark, South Africa and the U[S]. The challenge of second and third round leaders N[Z] as well as the glamour U[S] team... ended on the first playoff hole... South Africa won their fourth World Cup at the next hole. It was a cruel finale for the N[Z]ers, who entered the \$US3 million... tournament considered rank outsiders only to shock observers by setting the pace... Boasting a modest world ranking of 136, [the Japanese tour regular] more than held his end up...

[A NZ golfer, who in 1997 was ranked 141st in the world,] banked the biggest paycheck of his career yesterday... [and] more than doubled his season's earnings, pocketing \$[NZ]396,980 for finishing second, three strokes behind [the]world No 2 and defending champion... in the Michelob Championship in... Virginia... [The Maori (who doesn't travel with a partner – so will avoid media questions like the one put to the white partner of another Maori, the former NZ No 2: 'What's it like to sleep with a Maori?')] started the closing round in third place, two shots shy of [Mr Y], whose \$700,000 winner's purse boosted his season's earnings to... \$5 million as [the 26-year-old U.S. golfer] enjoyed his seventh victory in 12 months... [The winner] was generous in his praise for... [the Maori, who] was a lowly 165th on the money-list and quickly running out of chances to make the top 125... "I can promise you, the pressure [the NZer] was under today was a lot greater than me... In that regard [the NZer] played a better round of golf than I did. I am tickled pink to see him do it. It's a heck of an accomplishment." ...It... catapulted [the NZer] into the top 100... [In related news, a revitalised AUSn has declared himself] on course to return to competitive golf in the next two weeks. The former world No 1... had made a complete recovery from shoulder injury and would tee off in the Shark Shootout in California... [The AUSn] had streamlined his practice routine and was now hitting only about 150 balls a day instead of spending six to eight hours on the driving range...

Who was the longest hitter at the N[Z] Open... yesterday? ...Don't look for him in the list of competitors. The 26-year-old Aucklander paid his \$20 entrance fee as a spectator. But [the Aucklander] could show those pros a thing or two about crushing those drives on the par-fives. [It] is in the top 20 of the world's longest drivers with a personal best of over 400 yards[, and an average of] 353 yards... How does his driving fit with his golf game – "I did once play off a two handicap, but I don't play many rounds now. My short game is no good. I've also been banned from a couple of driving ranges because I hit it too far. I usually use the range at Ellerslie golf course because there's plenty of room." ...[the Aucklander] reached the finals of the world long-drive championships in Mesquite, Nevada, in October from an original entry of 10,000 entrants from 10 countries... The final in adverse conditions was won by... [a] Swede... with 316 yards. [The Aucklander] had one drive of 372 yards in the early stages but did not reach the final group. Competitors have six balls to fire in five minutes and drives must finish in an area 45 yards wide. [The Aucklander] used Integra gear with a 50-inch shaft, six inches longer than normal. The club has a four-degree loft. His next target is a top-30 contest in South Africa in May, where the top prize is \$US100,000... [A] Canadian... holds the official world record with a carry of 430 yards and 10 inches, achieved in thin air.

...Over the past eight years, [a]30-year-old... has chased tournaments in... Canada[, AUS] and the U[S] to grind out a living in professional golf. Since [the NZer] settled on the U[S] Nike Tour in 1995, [it] has been regarded as one of the best strikers of the ball. And it has surprised even his tour colleagues that [the NZer] had not won a major four-round tournament before now. [His] ailing career – with earnings of just \$150,000 in four years on the Nike Tour – hit a low last month when [the NZer] missed the final stage of the qualifying school and lost his tour card. Next year [the NZer] has to rely on Monday qualifying each week to play in the Nike events. But a more confident [golfer] will have the satisfaction of turning up for one of the 14 qualifying spots as the reigning N[Z] Open champion, which at least earns him a place in the lucrative end-of-season Sarazen World Open... [after the NZer], who left Wellington on a scholarship to the University of Oklahoma 12 years ago, fired a... Formosa Auckland Country Club... course-record... eight-under 64 for a total of nine-under 279 to win the 82nd Open and \$90,000 by three shots from[a] Queenslander... who... had a 69 for a total of 282, one stroke ahead of two more [NZers, one of whom maintained the form which earned him a 2nd at the recent Michelob Championship. Unfortunately, the 30-year-old's win was tainted by the fact that NZ's top two golfers, including the defending NZ Open champion, were forced to miss the tournament due to President's Cup duty in Melbourne]...

Kiwis share in golfing nirvana with victory... The International team's victory over the U[S] in the President's Cup golf tournament yesterday will go down as a great sporting achievement, according to [NZ's No 1 golfer. The NZer], who lost his singles match 4 and 2... yesterday, knew the Cup had been won as [it] came down the 16th fairway. As [the NZer] stepped up to play his second shot, [a Zimbabwean] confirmed the victory by making par to score a 2 and 1 win over [the world No 2] on the 17th – all of which was shown on the giant television beside the 16th hole. The International team won 20 1/2-11 1/2. "This is just unbelievable... I've been to every President's Cup so far and after losing the first two this was just such a fantastic experience... The [USers] had a fantastic side, a great side, and to get our 12 guys to play so well together was just phenomenal." [1997's world No 27 and his compatriot, this year's European Tour No 27 – whose place in the International team was questioned by some people –] were major contributors to the victory. They took the scalps of four of the world's best players in their foursomes matches... As the first team out on Friday morning, their dramatic win over [Mr O'M and the world No 2 (Mr Y)] was the catalyst for the International team to take charge of the match.

...[NZ's No 1 golfer has slammed the US] team for their disparaging comments about the remarkable putting and chipping display put on by the International team... [His] massive putt to win the opening match... started a trend... with the International team going on to make some

astonishing putts and chips to win matches. The response of some [USers], particularly a grumpy [senior golfer], was to play down the strokes as lucky or “unbelievable.” When [a portly AUSn] chipped in on the 18th to win a match against [the senior US golfer and his youthful world No 1 partner, the senior golfer] described it as a “goofy” shot. “Personally, I think it’s sour grapes,” [the NZer] said. “That sort of thing happened to us two years ago when they won... and we took it on the chin.” ...The event is only a few years old but the International team’s winning margin... was more emphatic than any defeat the U[S] have suffered in 70 years of Ryder Cup matches against Europe. Looking for answers, the shellshocked [USer]s simply acknowledged they had been outplayed – more specifically out-putted – by a collection of players previously regarded as incapable of troubling the best in the world. [The US] captain... coined the phrase “drive for show, putt for dough” and it is an adage which applied over the [3] days. “Every time I looked around an International player was holing a putt,” [the non-playing captain] said. And they were not short putts, they were from 15 feet and... sometimes off the green – such as [the NZer]’s on Friday... That putt[went] from off the fringe, past the sprinkler-head, down the slope and into the cup... Those heroics were matched by[an] unheralded Japanese star... and his portly[AUSn] partner... Every time they needed a miracle they came up with one... Much has been made of the [USer]s’ lack of knowledge of Royal Melbourne, with its demanding greens and complicated winds. But [the Jap], unbeaten in four pairs matches, had never played at the course before this week. His secret? “I just hit it where Mr [Portly] told me,”... Despite the claims of local knowledge, only [8] of the 12 international players had played at Royal Melbourne before. But [the]Internationals captain... made sure the experience was shared... The seeds of victory for the International team were sown at a small cabin at Lake Manassas, Virginia, two years ago. After their demoralising loss by one point... the team gathered in the cabin... and poured their hearts out to each other... [A Zimbabwean] remembers that day and that mood. “I think... at that time, it seemed to me, the whole complexion of the President’s Cup changed because it was then I realised that you could take a group of 12 people from the four corners of the globe and make them a team. At the first President’s Cup we weren’t a team, at the second one we came pretty darn close, but this time around we are a team.”

...The slight, blond... [teenager] was no infant prodigy on the course, but... it was no real surprise when on Wednesday [the school boy] added the national strokeplay title at Mt Maunganui to the foursomes... won with his Rotorua Boys’ High team-mate... three days before... [The new national strokeplay title-holder] began playing golf as a primary school boy... Each day after school either mum or dad would drive [their son] to the Rotorua or Springfield clubs for a couple of hours of practice. The hard work soon paid off and when [the son] went to Rotorua Boys’ High, [it] joined the school golf team as a third former. Last year the team... won the world collegiate championships in Ireland, with [the son] the leading individual scorer. They... are off to defend their title in England next week, and in June, [the son, his foursomes team-mate and another Rotorua Boys’ High team-member] will join... a... Christchurch golfer... at the world junior teams’ championship in Japan... Despite a heavy playing schedule, [the son] intends to keep up with his books. It will be a test of his concentration. This month [the son] was in A[US] for the Clare Higson Trophy where [it] had three wins and a half in a N[Z] loss... Professional golf is his ambition. But [the son] wants to finish his studies first. An American university is one option, but the recently announced P[M]’s scholarship could provide a home-based alternative. [The son]... pre-qualified for the N[Z] Open this year and shot 75 and 70 to miss the cut by only two shots[and] has already qualified for automatic entry in next year’s event... [A] Bay of Plenty-based member of the N[Z] Golf Association Board, has watched [hi]s career... “...we should treasure him... [The boy]’s a great team [guy.]”

...[t]he... 16-year-old... N[Z] amateur strokeplay champion... became the first player to successfully defend his individual world inter-collegiate crown when his school team won back-to-back world titles in England[(but the team’s winning margin of 28 shots last time was cut to 4 this time).

...a US golfer] captured his third Phoenix Open golf title in Scottsdale yesterday, establishing US PGA Tour records for the lowest 72-hole score and most birdies in a 72-hole event. Winless since the 1998 Honda Classic, [Mr Z] ended his drought in spectacular fashion with a four-round total of 28-under 256. His total eclipsed by one stroke the long-standing record of 257 set... at the 1955 Texas Open in San Antonio. [Mr Z] also tied the US PGA Tour mark of 28 under established at the 1998 Hawaiian Open... “It’s semi-indescribable right now actually,” said... [t]he 39-year-old former British Open champion... who also won this event in 1989 and 1992.

...[an]American golfer... set a PGA Tour record, as well as his third Bob Hope Classic mark, by firing a six-under-par 66 yesterday to reach 29 under par and seize a five-shot lead after four rounds of the 90-hole event at La Quinta, California... with... [Mr Z and another player] tied for a distant second place... [The leader] broke the 36-hole and 54-hole tournament records and also claimed the 72-hole tournament standard, previously held by [Mr Z] in the 90-hole pro-am tournament. Despite reaching 10-under par... N[Z]’s No 1] missed the cut.

...THE first US Open was played on a nine hole course in 1895 for the princely sum of \$335 – \$150 for first prize. It was considered something of a sideshow to the first US Amateur which was played on the same course during the same week. [Some people]... still rate... the US Open as a bit of a sideshow – as far as golfing majors go... A record 8457 players, now whittled down to 156, entered for the chance to add \$1.6 million to their bank account at this year’s event – the 100th... [The NZ No 1], who is undergoing something of a revival after a lean couple of years brought about by injury... came through qualifying last week and has fond memories of the US Open. In his five previous appearances [it] has finished ninth, 10th, 13th, 36th and 40th. The [NZ No 1] is climbing his way up the PGA Tour money winners list and currently sits on 138th... [The NZ No 1] will be joined this week by [a]fellow Kiwi... The 31-year-old[(r:p1494, ln19)] played in the 1996 US Open and remembers [it] did little more than make the cut. “That was in 1996 when I was struggling. I fancy my chances more this time.” It’s hard to argue with four tournament wins this season. His rise up the world rankings saw him climb to 38th last week, up from 465th two years ago and 216 less than 12 months ago. It’s nearing his career high of 27 in 1995. “The last six months have been great,” [the Maori] said from his London base mid-week... “I’ve made the news a few times but I’m not here to make the news, I’m here to win golf tournaments. I believe I’ve got the game to win golf tournaments and I’ve shown that over the last six months.” Some have slipped by, like last week’s one shot loss to [an Irish player] in the English Open... [Earlier this year] the amiable... Irish[player], a 20-1 outsider, [had]prevailed over the world No 1... [– with whom the Irish player] shares... a... coach... [–] in the World Matchplay Championship in Carlsbad, California... [The Irish player] won \$US1 million and jumped five places to 14th in the world rankings...

N[Z]’s richest sports[per]son... believes his [2 1/2]-year-old son is the... reason [the 31-year-old] has risen through the ranks from 108th to 14th in the world and taken some of the sport’s most prized titles. Now... the Maori Sportsperson of the Decade... [(who came 3)rd... at the... 1995... British Open... [– after leading following the 3rd round]] is aiming to be golf’s [No 1] and has another inspiration to help him reach this... goal – a smiling [7]-week-old baby boy... [who] is named in honour of [a Washington Wizards] basketball legend... “I’ve found there are more expectations from people, the media, [nowadays],” the now No 1-ranked Kiwi says... “I asked [the world No 1 how it] copes with it all, and [the world No 1] said you just have to keep your business side, your golfing side and your private side separate...” ...[□ The world No 1] goes into today’s final round of the... US Open with a comfortable four-shot cushion and the knowledge that [it] has won all seven of the major championships in which [it] has led after the third day... [The world No 1] remains on course to become the first player since... 1972, to win the first two majors of the year... and is also still in the frame to clinch the first professional grand slam of all four majors... American amateur Boddy Jones is the only player to achieve anything comparable. [Jones] claimed the “Impregnable Quadrilateral” in 1930 by winning the amateur and open championships of both Britain and the US.

...Now lets see a real Grand Slam. Beyond that, there is not much left in golf to occupy [the world No 1, who]... has cleared the horizon of rivals. History is the last challenger still standing... [However, 10 names still] remain ahead of him on th[e] list of major winners, topped by... 18 titles. The... [world No 1] was already the youngest golfer to accomplish a career Grand Slam. Now [it] becomes the only one in the modern era to hold all four components of the slam – Masters, US Open, British Open and PGA Championship – all at the same time. For the moment, [the world No 1] is

ducking the question of whether that constitutes a Grand Slam. Before now, golf historians have argued that all four majors must be won in a single year. Until now, it was a moot point. "I don't think it's right for me to comment on that," [the world No 1 said as it pocketed \$US1,008,000...

The USer] was... unhappy... despite minutes earlier pocketing \$2.8m for a week's work. It was hot and humid and security lapses had allowed fans a little too close for comfort. But you'd still think the pay day... would satisfy. But to the world's greatest golfer beating mere humans is no longer enough. [Another golfing great once said: 'Winning isn't everything, but wanting to win is.'] But for... the... [world No 1, wanting to win isn't enough. It]... sets his own goals, far beyond just winning... "I was standing at the tee at the 18th. I looked at the leaderboard and saw I needed par to finish with a 10-shot lead over [the NZ No 1]. That's what I wanted... [To] finish with a bogey and... a record nine-shot victory... was disappointing. I wanted double digits." ...So... you focus more on your own targets than on other players? "I'm goal-driven without forgetting the contest is to win." There is no failure in that department. [The world No 1], who rarely agrees to one-on-one interviews, won his 10th title... on Sunday, flew to Hawaii in his hired 747 that night and won his 11th title of the year, the Grand Slam for major winners on Thursday. "It's been a long year and I'm looking forward to a break... We've been going for longer than usual without a break and as you can see it gets pretty hectic... [However,]I'm young and there are still lots of places I'd like to visit and if they can fit into my schedule then they are an option..." No doubt his attendance will rely on another multi-million payout. His fees for playing... [this past week] were four times as much as his prize money despite winning both titles.

...[The world No 1]'s extraordinary... golf season showed the young American won \$US7.68 million... in prizemoney around the world – double his nearest rival, according to his agents... [The world No 2] was a distant second with \$US3.84 million in winnings, according to the list which includes prizemoney from tournaments with a minimum of 36 holes and four players, but no skins and shootout games... [The world No 1] equalled Ben Hogan's winning streak of six tournaments in a row this year and could conceivably eclipse the achievements of any of the other giants of the game.

...[the] American golfer... receive[d] an honorary doctorate in sports science from Bangkok's Kasetsart University[yesterday. The world No 1], whose mother is Thai, was criticised for receiving the honour at his hotel instead of the university where even more Nike workers could have protested about their pay compared to his. [The new Doc] never got his degree at Stanford University so the moral is clear: Drop out and play golf.

...The [academic] burned too brightly for [the current NZ No 1] and the rest as [it] won... in Thailand yesterday. [The world No 1] won his second Johnnie Walker classic and \$US190,729... with a record-breaking 263 – 25 under par at Bangkok's Alpine Golf and Sports Club. It was five shots better than the tournament record and four shots better than his [personal] best, the 21-under... fired in winning at Firestone earlier in the year... Fresh from his course-record 63 in the third round after [it] had bogeyed the first hole but fired 10 birdies on the remaining holes to equal his best-ever round... [the NZer]'s hopes of a second consecutive victory in the tournament – the first on the... European and Australasian tours – evaporated in the middle of his round. In the end, [the Maori] held on for third – seven shots behind [the winner...]

The book] *How I Play Golf* – which will be released in N[Z this week – underscores]... why the American golfer has become the No 1 sports[person] in the world. The 306-page, A to Z guide to the game is a one stop golfing lesson from the youngest Masters champion, the first person since 1953 to win three majors in one year and the fifth and youngest golfer to complete a career grand slam. The beautifully illustrated... book... ([rrp] \$59.95)... shot to No 1 on the U[S] bestsellers' list in the first week after its release and it promises to attain Bible-like status...

The rest of the world's golfers owe [the world No 1] a debt of gratitude according to [the] top Danish player... "[It]'s by far the greatest player I've ever seen... [B]ecause of him, we're all making more money and the rest of us can get down on our knees and thank him for choosing golf." ...But, perhaps, [a] great American sports columnist... put it best... in *Sports Illustrated* magazine. "I would pogo from Bangor to Birmingham to see [him] play. I ought to buy my dad a box of cigars for having me the year [dad] did... We're lucky. All of us. We're alive when the single most dominating athlete in 70 years is at his jaw-dropping best. Bathe in it. Wallow in it. Savour it. Take notes. Save newspapers. Your grandkids will want details."

...Fancy playing one hole with [the] world No 1 golfer... for a mere \$US80,000...? The Mission Hills club in southern China is offering duffers and experts alike a chance to pit their skills against [the No 1 when it plays] one 18-hole round on November 11, with four amateurs at each hole.

...WANT to see [the Chosen One or his European equivalent] in action in N[Z]? Well, keep dreaming. The... N[Z] Golf Association chief executive... said it would cost about \$500,000 to lure [the young Spaniard] to the N[Z] Open. To get [the world No 1] here would be at least \$1 million. "Five hundred thousand is the total purse we [put up]... We are never going to have a huge budget so the opportunity to entice a top 20 or 30 player is that much more difficult." ...[another] one of the reasons for this was the timing... The third week in January has been pencilled in for next year's event at an, as yet, unknown course... While not good for the world's best, it was perfect... timing... for Australasian players. The Open didn't clash with any other event and was perfect preparation for [the following] week's... Heineken Classic in Perth.

...The world's most recognised sports[person]... is coming to N[Z. The world No 1]... will play in a multi-million dollar tournament at the Paraparaumu golf club on January 10. The \$2 million tournament will be one of the biggest sporting events in N[Z] history. "It would be a dream to have [my boss] come down here and play," [his] Kiwi caddie... said. [The world No 1] will be paid \$4 million to play in N[Z. It] visits at least one new country each year. [The golfer has said it] would love to visit and play in N[Z.

...News that the Chosen One] has signed the contract which will bring him to Paraparaumu Beach to play in the N[Z] Open has delighted local golf fans. They will be even more impressed if the brave organisers can afford a field to stretch the talents of the world's No 1 golfer. Kiwis have never been too enthusiastic about sporting exhibitions, preferring the competitive element of real tournaments. And the PlusFore group of Wellington business[people] from the start aimed for a revived NZPGA tournament for [the world No 1] to play in. The decision to opt for an enhanced N[Z] Open instead may have freed some funds to attract some other stars to N[Z]. The International Management Group had apparently intended to boost the Open purse from \$500,000 to \$1 m... even with no [world No 1] in the field and that can now be expected to be a minimum... One of the major attractions will be [the NZ No 1], in the world's top 20 and back on the course where [it won last year. The Maori] has vowed to play each year in the Open without an appearance fee, but it would be unfair to hold him to that when [the USer] will be paid over \$4 m... The course has proved an ideal championship venue for the players and the club should resist any ideas of lengthening it significantly just for [the world No 1]. Better to provide some tigerish rough and rely on the wind off the sea to keep the scoring in check. The par-five closing hole... is perfect for a dramatic finish. [The NZ No 1] won... with an eagle on the last. [A fellow Kiwi] did even better, holing out in two on the way to his Open win.

...The controversy surrounding admission prices to January's N[Z] Open continues, with [one NZ golfer slamming the AUS]n Golf Union boss... [The Dunedin golfer] has spoken out against [the boss, suggesting it] take a hard look at the AGU's own record of running the A[US]n Open rather than criticise him and his fellow N[Z] golfers for deciding to take a stance against ticket prices for the January 10-13 event at the Paraparaumu course. [The AGU boss suggested the Dunedinite and NZ's No 1 golfer] "should be grateful to [the world No 1 for what it]'s done for the game and they should be competing and flying the flag for the locals." [The Dunedinite], twice winner of the N[Z] Open, has now joined [the NZ No 1 and two other] compatriots... in deciding not to contest the event unless there is a considerable reduction in the suggested asking price of \$500 a season ticket. "I don't know what this all has to do with [the AGU boss, but it]'s got the wrong end of the stick," said [the Dunedinite], just before teeing off in the rain-affected Scottish Open at Loch Lomond. "What [the NZ No 1] and all of us are trying to say is that [if] the only way they can afford [the world No 1] is to make it impossible for your normal support base, or average N[Z]er, to go and watch, then you can't afford him..." [The

Dunedinite said it] appreciated, as did [the NZ No 1], that there was still time in the intervening... months to reach an amicable situation with the organisers of the N[Z] Open, but unless there was a backdown in the foreseeable future, the event would go ahead without this country's leading golfers. "At \$500 a ticket, it's turning the Open quite clearly into an exclusive corporate wank,"... [The person who manages the NZ No 1 also] was outraged with [the AGU boss's] comments and was quick to defend [his client's] stance. "This has nothing to do with... the A[GU, and its boss] should have had the decency to contact his counterparts at the N[Z] Golf Association, who are backing [my client's] position... Everyone is thrilled [the world No 1] is competing in N[Z], none more so than [my client], but it has nothing to do with that. The thrust of [my client's] concern is the suggested entry charge..." [The manager] indicated that when [his client] spoke to event organisers from Scotland on Wednesday, they were not aware that the N[Z] Golf Association had long admitted spectators aged under 16 free of charge to the Open. "It seemed that the first time the organisers were ever aware of that policy is when... [my client mentioned it. My client's wish is that policy be kept in place..."

...Wellingtonians are prepared to pay big bucks to see [the] world golf No 1... play in the N[Z] Open in January, a new... independent... survey shows. So sold are most sports fans on seeing [the world No 1], they will splash out more than \$140 to attend one day of the Open at Paraparaumu.

...TICKETS... [for the NZ Open are:] \$40 per day... [for the] *Practice Day and ProAm*... \$105 per day [for Thur/Fri, and]... \$170 per day... [for the weekend. Concessions are:] FULL WEEKDAY... \$240... FULL WEEKEND... \$295... SEASON... \$450... 1000 FREE Season tickets are available to NZGA Juniors. Apply in writing with... NZGA Membership and Club No details to: AMP Golf Foundation... NB: "First Come/First Served" basis.

...[the world No 1's] return to the fairways of international golf next weekend will be, for the first time, without his caddy... The hot Kiwi bag-carrier... [-] who has won 85 events as a professional caddy (believed to be double anyone else in his profession)... [-] has put the world's best player on hold to attend a speedway meet in Tauranga. [The caddy] spent Friday at the... course near Wellington where [the caddy] compiled the yardage book [it] will use for [his boss's] celebrated appearance at January's N[Z] Open. As well as confirming... the [world No 1]... was a definite starter for the Open... [the caddy] revealed his emotional decision to bypass [his boss's] comeback tournament in favour of [testing] the... new Baypark speedway track at Mt Maunganui in his V8 Mustang saloon... [The world No 1] has missed three major events... [and] returns to action... at next weekend's Disney World Invitational in Orlando... [The world No 1], who is receiving close to \$5 m... to play in the N[Z] Open, will have [a] former Stanford University team-mate... carry his bag at Orlando. The... [world No 1] will play in the Tour Championship at Houston starting on October 29 following Orlando and [his caddy] will join him there following his speedway hiatus. They will also play in China... and... Japan... before making their way to N[Z] in January. The caddy... gave the revamped Paraparaumu Beach course the thumbs up after pacing... the 18 holes...

No doubts, [the world's greatest golfer] really is human... Golf has taken its revenge on [the Chosen One]. Tired of being pushed around, the world's most intricate game lured the upstart into the desert with a \$2 million appearance fee and launched an ambush. The dramatic implosion of sport's biggest name at the final hole in the Dubai Desert Classic has cleared the mirage of his invincibility. So [the world No 1] is mortal, fallible, flawed, like us. [The young golfer] knew it, and most of us did too; it was just that an army of Americans given to overstatement talked themselves into believing a god was in their midst. A god who transformed the world's most difficult game into a pageant, destroyed the 129th Open Championship at St Andrews and trashed the comfort zone in which so many cosily-attired golf professionals reside. [The world No 1's] failure to hold on to a one-shot lead... in the final round (and more particularly his double-bogey at the 18th) was a failure not of the body but of the mind: of decision-making, computation and nerve. It shunted America's run-away hyperbole train into the sidings. It punctured the unreality that has grown up around him. Golf is too intricate to be subjugated day after money-minting day. Golf fights back. We knew that, so why the shock when... [the world No 1] surrendered a last-day lead for only the fourth time in 27 events? Because we cannot bear the thought that our heroes are human, and because the metronomic magnificence of [the world No 1] last season led us to believe, wrongly, that a savage game had been subdued. Let us run through it again. [The world No 1] won three majors... and was victorious in... the most... events... since... 1950... One other detail. In September, [the world No 1] signed yet another multi-million-dollar sponsorship contract. It] has not won a Tour Event since... Nobody has dared to suggest that the two are connected, though somebody probably will. Many sports industry experts say that commercial "distractions" are bound to affect his game in the end. According to some reports, [the world No 1] was so upset by his capitulation at the 18th that [it] cancelled a charity putting contest with... the Crown Prince of the United Arab Emirates. This is said to have cost the charity \$150,000. But until we know the full circumstances of [his] dash for the private plane, we ought to remember that the Sheikh, the world's most powerful racehorse owner, would hardly notice if \$150,000 dropped through a hole in his pocket. [The Sheikh] would certainly think twice about risking his back by picking it up. Rich [people] like to play golf with [the world No 1]. They pay big money for the boasting rights. There is some substance to the accusation that [the world No 1] has distorted the economic structure of golf, but we can hardly start chastising him for charging oil tycoons the going rate, particularly when his own charitable foundation puts plenty back. The significance of [his] nine-iron into the pond at the 18th on Dubai's oasis course had nothing to do with money and how it distorts our perspective. With a three-putt in an earlier round and one messed-up finale, [the golfer] took us back to the great... debate about the nature of genius... If [the world No 1] wins three majors again this [season], the same American golf correspondents who are so relieved to see a measure of competition restored to their beloved game will plunder the thesaurus afresh for new ways to portray his brilliance.

...There must be a secret handshake for left-handed golfers on the U[S] PGA Tour, some sort of weird thing going on out there that we right-handed people don't know about. One lefty... is tied for the lead after three rounds of the... [latest tournament] and three others are in the top 45 and will earn decent cheques today... This is a tale of overcoming obstacles that right-handed people will never know about. It is, almost entirely, a tale of technology and how the machine has forgotten the lefties of this world. The power is in the hands of others. "The problem is that there are right-handed people making the left-handed clubs," said [one of the three others], who is at even-par 216. This is how bad it is. When [the lefty who is tied for the lead was 13, it] wrote a letter to [the Golden Bear], asking the legend whether [it] should deny his nature and become what society wanted him to be. A righty. Stay a lefty, [the legend] wrote back. "When the greatest player of all time tells you to stick with it, you're going to do it,"... But then [the leading lefty] had to face the reality that all lefties must face. There are fewer clubs available for left-handed players because there are fewer left-handed people. Companies that make golf clubs do not need to put as much effort into making as many different models for lefties. "Equipment was the biggest problem I had growing up as a player," said [another of the three others], who is two-over after three rounds. "It was very frustrating for me at a younger age to have all this great equipment coming out and not be able to get it for another one or two years. [The third of the three others], who is at two-under 214, said: "I never really felt at a disadvantage, other than as a kid walking onto a pro shop with a thousand clubs and there were only two that were lefty." [The leading lefty said it] had not changed his clubs in three years. Part of that might be that lefties learn never to look around for them much. At every PGA Tour stop, there is a trailer with equipment for players to test filled almost entirely with right-handed equipment... Years ago lefties often had difficulties with right-handed golf teachers who taught mostly right-handed students. The technology now is such that lefties can have their swing filmed and computers can flip the image, allowing a teacher to analyse players' swings as if they were righties. And then there are the golf courses. Most seem to be set up for righties who fade the ball from left to right, but the lefties... say it is not an issue. They have to find ways to get the ball to the hole in the fewest number of strokes, just as righties do. However, Medinah is regarded as a course more accommodating to a left-hander... With millions of people watching, the lefties of the tour yesterday rose up, standing up for the people who refuse to act right... But it is lonely out there, and heroes are hard to find. [A NZ golfer] is the only lefty to win a major...

A Massey teenager amazed golfing professionals when [it] sunk her ball in two swings on a par four hole at Waitakere Golf Club... [The] fourth former at St Dominics College, got the “eagle” on the 10th hole at the recent Honda Nine Golf Fun Day... [The person] who co-ordinates sports at the school, says it was a great achievement. “It’s virtually unheard of for a girl her age.” [The]Waitakere Golf Club manager... agrees. “Very few [gals] I know have had an eagle on hole 10.” [The teenager, who] was a bit surprised herself... has started golf lessons, and is working on getting her handicap down. Handicaps are like grades, so in principle the lower it is, the further the golfer can hit the ball. Over the last year [the teenager] has lowered her handicap from 54 to 23... When [the teenager] tells fellow students [it plays golf, it] often gets a funny reaction. “They say ‘oh, do you play golf?’ like it’s bad.” But [the teenager] does not let this stop her. [The teenager] will be competing in the North Island secondary school girls’ golfing championships this July. [A spokesperson for] North Harbour Golf says the ratio of girls to boys playing golf is about one to 10. Golf is traditionally seen as more of a boys’ sport... But [the spokesperson] has noticed an increase in the number of girls over the last three years... The number of girls participating... [in t]he annual golf fun day started two years ago, and... run specifically for girls with little golfing experience... has risen from 12 in [the first year] to 56 this year.

...Some people reckon it’s a good walk spoilt, but for 100,000 N[Z]ers over the age of 50, bashing what one wag called an undersized ball round an oversized paddock is a pastime that puts a spring in their eye and a breath of fresh air in their lives... Golf... is enjoyed by 460,000 people of all ages on 400 club and public courses throughout the country. More than 132,000 golfers are members of clubs... Club membership can cost from less than \$200 a year to upwards of \$1500 and for the casual player, green fees vary from \$5 a round at some country courses to... \$400 at a top layout... They are drawn to the sport for a variety of reasons including the fact that as well as being good physical exercise, golf is a mentally challenging game that calls for a high level of hand-eye coordination and, unless you want to run out of playing partners, an even temperament. It is also a great leveller. “Thanks to the handicap system, you can compete with anyone,” says... [the NZGA’s] operations manager... “You could have a game with [the world No 1] and still start out on an equal footing.” ...On the tee... you are just as likely to meet a truck driver as a property developer.

...[an AUSn firmly believes it] can win every golf tournament [it] enters, but also knows her freakish results of the past two years cannot go on unabated. Following her six LPGA tournament victories [last year, the AUSn] went one better this year, winning seven times from 22 outings and sweeping a raft of awards. The A[US]n, who will be 26 next month, has made such a habit of winning it was a surprise to hear her talk down her chances of another bag of titles [next year]... The highlights... were undoubtedly the two majors [the AUSn] won, the Nabisco Championship and the U[S] Open... With the British Open belatedly gaining major status following the loss of the Du Maurier Classic, [the AUSn was confident it] could add another major to the three [it] has won so far... As [it] did last year, [the AUSn] won the player of the year award, topped the LPGA money-list with \$US1,876,853... and won the Vare Trophy for the best scoring average of 70.05 strokes a round. [The AUSn] also earned enough points for the golf Hall of Fame, and now needs only to put in 10 years as an LPGA member for induction. [The AUSn] is also within striking distance of taking over... as the leading all-time money-earner on the LPGA tour. [The LPGA’s leading money-earner], who earned only one-third of [the AUSn’s] prizemoney this year, has \$US6.83 million. [The AUSn] has career earnings of \$US6.16 m... [In local news, a] Wanganui golfer... continues to have the sort of year that even the superstars might envy. The 51-year-old made world headlines by holing in one either side of the new ...y[ear] on December 31 and January 1. Yesterday [it] belied her three handicap with a par round of 71 at the Rotorua Golf Club to lead a field of top amateurs in the first round of the Honda national strokeplay championship. On a day when the rock-hard Arikikapakapa course sent most scores soaring, [the 51-year-old’s] closest challenge came from [the]Malaysian champion... on 72, with the next best 76s... [The Malaysian], a graduate of Brigham Young University in Utah, is a member of a government-sponsored squad who do nothing but play golf. The 26-year-old was in N[Z] last year and was runner-up... in the national matchplay championship at Russley. This year [the Malaysian] has played as an amateur on the Asian pro circuit, making the cut in the last two tournaments... Seven professionals were invited to play alongside the amateurs [at Rotorua]and the best round of 76 came from [a local pro. Another pro], now based in England, had a 77... The field will play 36 holes today and the final 18 tomorrow...

[If you see a certain Aucklander in a park it] may look like [the Aucklander’s] aiming a frisbee at a giant beer can – but don’t be fooled. The Henderson Valley [resident] is demonstrating the skills that won him a national title at the frisbee golf championships. [The Aucklander] won the masters division and finished third overall among 40 competitors at the 22nd national champs at One Tree Hill. Frisbee golf – or disk golf – is a professional sport in the U[S] and Europe. It’s played like normal golf except frisbees are aimed at targets – anything from steel poles to trees – instead of balls being hit into holes. A frisbee golfer carries a selection of frisbees as golfers do clubs. “The different frisbees are designed to flow further... You can play with the same frisbee if you like but if you play on a more professional level you tend to have a set of frisbees. [The Aucklander] has played the game for more than 15 years, winning the overall national title in 1997 and the masters title twice... A N[Z] team is being confirmed to compete in the world frisbee golf championships in the U[S] later this year. From the world championships, players can qualify for the world games in Japan next year. [The Aucklander] hopes to get to the worlds but says it really comes down to who can afford it.

...[a NZ]er... failed to make enough money to retain his full U[S] PGA tour card, but... believes [it] has accumulated a wealth of experience to stand him in good stead on the world’s toughest golf campaign next year. The Palmerston North right-hander, in his rookie year among the sport’s elite, finished 11 places outside the top 125 and a guaranteed place on [next year’s] tour. But... will be entitled, as a top-150 player, to at least a partial exemption and the prospect of at least 20 tournament starts... [The NZer] tied for 20th when the last tournament on the calendar, the Southern Farm Classic, ended on Monday. His \$US21,535... share of the pot lifted his earnings to \$US297,912, not enough to make the cut, but a welcome boost to his coffers all the same. With his game solidifying after a sub-par start to the year[– when it]... made only one of the first eight cuts... [– the NZer], though exhausted, wished the tour had another month to run. “I usually play well at the end of the year. It’s sad it’s come to an end, but I’m beat to death,” said [the NZer], relishing the chance of a fortnight off... [before getting] ready to return to the cut-throat tour qualifying school next month. [The Palmerston North golfer] emerged from qualifying last year to become the only N[Z]er with a full tour card and has a exemption through to the finals. “All I can do is better my ranking. If I can finish higher I’ll get more starts...” ...His season’s highlight was a share of [4]th in the Canadian Open. [A c]lose friend and fellow Palmerston North golfer[(r:p1489, ln53) was 2]nd in that tournament, a shot behind [the]world No 1... [The close friend] was the best-performed Kiwi on the tour, earning \$US1,142,789 to finish 37th and earn a spot in the US Masters.

...Guess how much [an AUSn’s] retirement account with the U[S] PGA Tour will be worth – \$A2 million, \$A20 million or \$A200 million? If you answered \$200 million, take a bow. That’s how much [the AUSn] is projected to receive eventually if [it] keeps playing at a high level for the next dozen years or so. “It’s mind-blowing... The numbers are phenomenal. It’s hard to believe they’re possible.” [The AUSn] was one of many players whose jaws dropped when they were presented with their projected future worth at a recent meeting of US Tour players. The 30-year-old Victorian stands to become one of the major beneficiaries of the Tour’s astonishingly generous performance-based pension plan, but even the so-called journey[people] will not be begging for money on street corners. “A guy who just keeps his card, who averages 125th on the money-list [for 17 to 20 years] could get \$US30 million... If [the world No 1] played as many tournaments as me, and kept his record, [it] could have... \$US1 billion, no problem.” The projected payouts for the tour’s pension plan are not etched in stone, it should be noted. [The AUSn], for example, would have to finish an average of about 30th on the money-list for the next 12 to 15 years to be worth \$200 million. Over the past four years, [the AUSn] has averaged better than 30th, finishing 18th, 40th, 25th and 24th respectively... The performance-based plan, which began in 1998, rewards players for their position on the money-list, for making cuts, and for averaging at least 25 tournaments a year, so the more often a player plays, the more

[it] stands to make. The projections assume each player's plan will grow at 8[% annually until each player] turns 60, the earliest [they] can cash in. But even if the projections turn out to be too high, there is no doubt [the AUSn] will be... extremely rich... when [it] turns 60.

...The Tour Players' Association (TPA), which was formed last August and looks suspiciously like a union but claims it is not, wants travel expense compensation for players, among other changes... [I]t seems hard to believe[but] PGA Tour golf players, humankind's quintessential models of the good life, aren't entirely satisfied... To Joe Public, this looks like: • A two-iron to the teeth of every fan, sponsor and unpaid tournament volunteer who has made it possible for 50 players to earn over \$US500,000 [annually]... • Backstabbing the cash cow just when it is on the verge of growing even fatter. The new four-year, \$US650 million... television contract, which is under way this year, will boost purses by at least 30%... Unlike most pro athletes, PGA Tour players are independent contractors. The PGA Tour, a non-profit organisation, runs the business, sets policy and controls allocation of revenues. According to the tour's 1997-1998 annual report to membership, the projected 1998 net revenue... was \$US207.99m... Of that, \$US153m... was allocated for 1998 purses, another \$US26m... for PGA Tour and senior tour retirement plans... [However, since]... the tour's projected gross 1998 revenue was \$US405m... the TPA[– which]... about 50 players have joined... although only half have paid the \$US1000... association fee... [–] wonders whether players are getting their fair share. It wasn't complaining... one of the TPA's organisers... said, just asking. "It's a business, and when you can't see what's happening with it, that's when you're blindly led... I reserve faith like that for religion..." The TPA's lightning rod issue – travel expenses – is not new... [W]hen players come to tournaments, they are required to play in at least one, sometimes two, pro-am events, for which they are not paid. Corporations and individuals are charged thousands of dollars to play in these pro-ams. And yet, come Friday, tour players who miss the cut could actually lose money for the week... What no one seems to know is where this TPA thing is heading... [but] other major American sports like baseball and basketball... took radical strike action and lost favour with many of the fans. Until the TPA gains more weight that's unlikely to happen in golf but the thought of the PGA fairways empty of the pros is chilling.

...[much like their golfing counterparts, the professional tennis players' association for guys (ATP) and its gal equivalent (WTA), rank members – 'the rankings go from 1 up to around 1404' (depending on how many players have just one ranking point; a Cantabrian 'won his first-round match at the Hamilton tennis Futures yesterday, earning him his first ATP singles ranking point'). Incidentally, the ATP might wish it could also gag its members after a former] world No 1... [and] winner of four Grand Slam tournaments... [who] has earned \$US13.6 million... in his 12-year professional career but... is now ranked 77th... said... thinking is bad for your tennis. "Tennis unfortunately doesn't encourage any kind of intellectual development. It actually discourages that... The dumber you are on court, the better you're going to play... I think that's a kind of truism of sports. When you're playing the best tennis, for example, you're in the zone where you're not thinking about anything. It's all instinct." ...Despite his misgivings about the game's intellectual possibilities, and his very quick exit from the... [guys' AUSn] hardcourt championships... in a 5-7 3-6 loss to [a]Czech player... the [No.77] is not yet ready to give up tennis... [The User], aged 28... is due to receive a wildcard entry into the Heineken Open in Auckland next week[, despite the misgivings of locals who think the wildcard should go to a NZer in order to help its development. Since 'A.F.Wilding, NZ's greatest-ever tennis player, who won the Wimbledon singles from 1910 to 1913 – a year when the NZer also won the world hard court title in Paris and the world covered court title in Stockholm – was killed at Ypres during WWI' (Wilding also 'won the AUSn Open twice'), only one other NZer has reached a Grand Slam final (Wimbledon 1984). Confirming NZ's lowly status in professional tennis, the current top NZ gal tennis player has just 'improved her singles ranking almost 200 places to around 750.' In February, the NZer] had a singles ranking of 707 and at one stage it blew out to 1000...

[NZ's top guy tennis player] could finish playing tennis right now. Abandon airline queues, chauffeured cars, hotels, and hitting balls for a living. The husband and father of two could easily wrap himself around his family, tee off on his eight-handicap, revel in his fat bank balance, and not miss for a second the pro tour [the NZer] has been a part of for 14 years. [The NZer], who will be 30 next April, has for a year talked about a too-soon end to a polished career, worn down by having to make his mark from this end of the world. But when the new year comes around, so will [the tennis player], ready to clock in one last season in what [the NZer] regards as a job, playing the breadwinner before his enthusiasm wanes completely. "I don't have anything to do after tennis yet..." However, [the player who is] 96th-ranked... cannot see himself finishing out... [this year. Now that the NZer] is living back in Auckland, [the tennis player] cannot stand to leave his family for long, especially since they grew by one in July with the birth of a] daughter... This year [the NZer took his] wife... and son... on tour with him, but not any more. Instead of relaxing at home, [the NZer] had intended playing doubles in the Eurocard Open in Stuttgart this week in a late bid with [his US doubles partner] to make the ATP world doubles championship... The pair, Auckland champions and quarter-finalists at the A[US]n, French and Wimbledon slams, were fifth in the team rankings for a while and 12th this month, not far off the top eight ATP qualifiers, but a first-round loss in Singapore a fortnight ago helped to kill their hopes... [The pair have now] parted amicably, with [the NZer] unable to commit to the fulltime doubles schedule [his doubles partner] seeks next year. They won't be defending their title together in Auckland in January... [The NZer's] excellent doubles effort – Auckland was his ninth title, the most by a Kiwi in the open era – hurt his singles, in which [the NZer] went without a win at the majors for the first time... and his ranking fell.

...North Harbour's [No 1 tennis representative] has become N[Z]'s latest member of the "200 club" following appearances in finals of Futures tennis tournaments. [The North Harbour player] is the 13th N[Z]er to reach the top 200 since ATP rankings became the official barometer in 1973. [The North Harbour player] was ranked 199th after reaching the final of the Sprint tournament in the U[S]. In reaching the final of a tournament in China his ranking is certain to go even higher. His improved ranking means [it] can move to second-tier Challenger tournaments and qualifying for the French Open at the end of the month. [One player in 1972 and another in 1984] reached No 19 on the ATP list, the highest ranking achieved by N[Z] players. Others to make the top 100, with their career-high and year in brackets, were... (24, 1973)... (31, 1989)... (47, 1983) and... (66, 1973).

...The motorists on Interstate 80 near Pinole, a small town north of San Francisco, could never have imagined that the girl running in and out of traffic yelling obscenities was once one of the brightest hopes of American junior tennis... By the age of nine, this tall left-hander with sandy blonde hair could beat most adults. At 13, [it] reached the final of the Easter Bowl Tournament, a showcase for young talent in America. A year after, in the final of a tournament, [it] narrowly lost to a former Wimbledon champion... [The girl] was called "the brightest... star on the horizon..." Still, [the girl] had a problem. "Her mother worked her about five hours a day on the court," recalls [a friend] who used to hit with her, "then made her run sprints." By the age of 14, [the daughter]'s body was hobbled by over-use injuries. "[It] had shin splints, blisters, stress fractures and bone spurs," recalls... one of her coaches. "There was too much skipping rope, too much pushing." At 15, [the daughter] rebelled... dropped out of school, moved out of home and began to sleep on the streets. [The teenager] became bulimic and took drugs such as PCP... and methamphetamine... dyed her hair, had breast implants, began to work as a lap dancer and was arrested several times for prostitution. Finally... having been released from the psychiatric emergency unit of a hospital, [the teenager] walked into a petrol station, put 23 litres of petrol in a can, got in a truck, poured the petrol over her head and... set fire to herself, sending a 12m column of flame into the air... Ever since Charles "Papa" Lenglen laid a handkerchief on the ground and made his daughter... hit ball after ball until [the daughter] could routinely land it on the little linen square, tennis has been famous for its "sideline warriors": driven, often terrifying, parents who take their children's raw talent and mould them into champions. Such as [the mother] who eased the pain of a broken marriage by drilling her son... on the tennis court. Or... [the father] who dreamed of tennis greatness for his son and threatened to sue anyone who criticised him. Some have been athletes themselves, such as... a former Olympic boxer, who hung a tennis ball over his son[']s... crib and once threatened to break the legs of a tournament director who, [the boxer] thought, had given his son a bad draw. Many... are first or second generation migrants who are determined their children should not have to suffer the indignities they have known. Nearly all begin to chase the dream almost as soon as their children were born. [A German father] began to drill his daughter... as soon as [his

daughter could walk. Another father] drew cartoon characters on tennis balls so that his seven-year-old daughter... could focus better on the 500 to 600 balls [it] served to her each day... [The father of another teenage player to publicly go off the rails – a]t 14, a Grand Slam singles semifinalist, by 20 in a police mugshot over petty theft and drug use... [-] began planning the career that would rob his daughter... of her childhood while [it] was still in the womb. As a baby, [the father] had her doing sit-ups in her crib. By the age of three, [the daughter] rarely had a tennis racquet out of her hand... As money and ambition have become the driving forces of the game, so tennis has spawned more parents from hell. Such as... an ex-convict, who made his daughter... train eight hours a day, hitting balls at her until [the little girl] cried. At 13, [the ex-con] stopped her education and ferried her to tennis tournaments around the US. At 14, [the ex-con's daughter] turned pro and for the next four years, until [it] broke away, her father bullied her and beat her as [it] drove her to pursue wealth and greatness. "[Dad] would slap me if I lost a match or even if I had a bad practice,"... [Her father]'s behaviour at tournaments was so abusive [it] would shout "Kill the bitch!" at her opponents or pelt them with drink cans) that [it] was finally banned and [his daughter] took out restraining orders against him. Then there is [the]... Serbian truck driver and one-time boxer... [that] enrolled his six-year-old daughter... in a tennis school after seeing... [the 600-ball server's daughter's success], who caused a sensation at Wimbledon this year. The All-England Club threatened to ban him after [the one-time boxer] smashed a reporter's mobile phone, made obscene gestures, screamed abuse and, dressed in the English flag of St George, accused Britons of being fascists. [The one-time boxer], who last month took over as [his] daughter's coach after sacking [the coach who is a]tennis legend... keeps a very tight grip on the family's breadwinner. "[The one-time boxer] once told her to stop smiling... [and] not to be friendly on court – you have no friends when you go in, only when you come out." For every one of these high-profile cases, there are dozens of children whose parents want them to be famous and who are subjected to scarcely less abuse. "Everyone says they don't mind if their children win or not," says a former employee of the Bollettieri Tennis Academy in Florida. "Then, when they lose, they take them out to the car park and beat them." "I've seen parents hitting and screaming at children," said... the sports psychiatrist who helped [the former 600-balls-a-day-hitter] after her on-court stabbing in 1993. "I was at a junior match and when this boy's opponent made a point his father would scream at him, calling him a dirt-bag." Tennis is unusual in that, unlike Formula One or football, children can often play the game as well, if not better than adults. This is particularly true in the [gals'] game, where child stars... have risen to the top while still teenagers. In no other sport are children exposed to such intense pressure and so much money... Nearly a quarter of the players who earned more than \$300,000 on the ...WTA... tour last year were under 21. No wonder then that the competition among the financially interested adults on the sidelines is so fierce... Last month at Wimbledon, the top 16 [gal] players banned their mothers from the dressing room amid claims that some mothers were making some of the players uncomfortable, if not intimidating them.

...[the person] at the helm of British tennis fears the first drugs scandal in Wimbledon history has exposed the game to ridicule... [after the offending professional] escaped a mandatory ban... [The] Czech tennis player... who failed a drugs test at last year's championships... [- which] had a surplus of \$90m... [-] successfully appealed against... an automatic one-year ban... by pleading ignorance of the presence of nandrolone in his body... [T]he director of national training at the Lawn Tennis Association... said: "This judgment sends out the wrong message... If I go to court accused of being drunk and submit a plea that I don't remember how I got drunk, does that make it okay? The LTA has taken legal counsel to make sure that British tennis is in line with the rules of the International Tennis Federation and the International Olympic Committee. And we ask ourselves two questions: is that work a waste of time? And where do we go from here?" ...The appeals committee [did, however,] order... the 30-year-old Czech to forfeit his ranking points and prizemoney of around £60,000... from... his... Wimbledon... quarter-final defeat... [The LTA director's response to that decision was]: "We have a good drug-testing programme in tennis, but this case is going to leave a lot of people mystified. [The Czech] has been fined and had points taken away, yet... is not suspended. Is [the Czech] guilty or not? ...this whole episode is quite bizarre." ...[despite his concerns, the director shares the] belief that the positive test does not identify a drug culture in tennis. "I don't think there has been a cover-up... Tennis is not like other sports. If anyone was taking steroids, you'd see it, and anyone who disappeared from the tour for six months is effectively finished because you vanish from the computer." ...[the Czech], at home in Prague before flying to Melbourne later this month to defend his A[US]n Open title, is relieved. "I have been under a big black cloud stretching from here to eternity,"...

A[couple of USers,] ...the two greatest tennis players of the past decade, have criticised [a]Russian... for saying tennis players are not paid enough. "[The Russian] should take his prizemoney when [it]'s done here and go buy himself some perspective," said [one of the USers, the son of a former Olympic boxer and] the defending A[US]n Open champion. "I'd be hard-pressed ever to spend time with a person who thinks that making hundreds of thousands of dollars is not enough." [The Russian], a multimillionaire who uses his own jet to travel to tournaments, raised eyebrows on Thursday when [it] said tennis fared poorly in comparison with some other professional sports. The former French and A[US]n Open champion... who has won \$US18 million... in prizemoney, said many players shared his view. [However, the two USers], winners of a staggering \$US62 million in prizemoney between them, disagreed. "I think we're all overpaid," [the second USer] said. "We play a sport and we get paid very well. I don't play for the prizemoney, I play for the titles." [The second USer] has cut the number of tournaments [it] enters over the past five years to concentrate on the four Grand Slams. "[The Russian] plays every week, so you know what [it] likes,"... In total, the... ATP Tour carries prizemoney of \$US65.5 million, excluding the four Grand Slams... [But p]layers often earn many times more than their prizemoney in endorsements and sponsorship contracts, allowing the best players to live privileged lives... [The defending champion said the Russian's] comments were disrespectful to the game's fans and [it] had told the Russian not to speak on his behalf. "The fans deserve a lot of respect. They pay for the tickets and they come out and they make it possible for us to play tennis for a living." [The Russian said it] hoped fans would not judge him harshly for speaking his mind. [The defending gals'] champion... voiced some support for... [the Russian's claim. By the way, AUS]n Open tennis officials announced a new scoring system yesterday, with mixed doubles as the guinea pig. For the... mixed doubles, matches will be played over two sets with a tiebreak game added if the match is split one set apiece. [A Tennis AUS spokesperson]... said the new rule, dropping a third decisive set, would speed up the game which would help television coverage at the elite level, but also benefit social club players. [Editor's note: Ironically, 'in an attempt to slow down games, a larger ball has been introduced, and players can now legally use either size – the decision is up to the players' (but if they disagree, does that mean they will use one of each size?); note also that in professional competitions, balls are 'renewed after the first 7 games, not including the warmup, then after every 9 games'.]

...Tennis fans love to play doubles. But ever notice how many stream for the stadium exits after a [guys'] singles final, skipping the doubles title match that follows? [Gals'] doubles are flourishing, with many of the big names in singles... teaming up before full houses. But top [guy] players shun doubles, relegating them to the shadows of the professional game. [Guys'] doubles are so much a sideshow that tennis officials, promoters and players' representatives met at the A[US]n Open... this week to debate how to bring fans to courtside, and cash to promoters' pockets. "There are a million suggestions, from the radical to the reasonable. The goal is to find one that works for everybody," said... [the] vice-president of the Association of Tennis Professionals... Officials at the ATP, which runs 68... tournaments annually in 31 countries, declined to discuss specific proposals. But the year-long debate over how to change [guys'] doubles is all about money. [A]South African... said there were many doubles specialists whom tournament directors felt were not bringing in the revenue to justify the prizemoney. [The South African] was seeded No 10 in the singles, and, with [his Russian (r:ln40 above) partner], No 3 in the doubles at Melbourne Park. The South African, along with the workhorse Russian, are rare specimens. [Two USers (r:ln40 above), the top AUS]n and other marquee names focus on singles in an ever-more cut-throat field of competitors... Players and... organisers agree that doubles would benefit if teams paired up more often instead of mixing and matching just before a

tournament draw. "There can be more promotion, but the doubles teams have got to be teaming up more often than a few months a year," said... [the] director of the \$US750,000... ATP world doubles tennis championship last month in Bangalore, India. "People can hang a hat on them and follow them,"... Doubles lost its most famous pair last year with the end of the [AUSn] partnership... who won 11 Grand Slam titles... [■ Yesterday a British player] out-served... the... home hope... in a battle for power. [The British player]'s 7-6 (9-7), 6-3, 6-4 victory leaves the Open without an A[US]n in the third round of the [guys'] draw for th[e] first time since 1969, the first Open of the professional era.

...One of the most memorable tennis matches that [the German umpired was the AUSn Open defending champion]'s thrilling five-set victory over [the champ's compatriot from a broken home (r:p1499, ln66)] in the quarter-finals of the 1989 US Open. "It was an unbelievable match," said... the longest-serving professional umpire in tennis. "The crowd was incredible." [The umpire] has a few less-dignified memories as well. [The son of a litigation-happy father (r:p1499, ln67)] screamed at him at Wimbledon in 1988. [An AUSn] swore and argued with him at the 1991 A[US]n Open. A South African (r:p1500, ln66)] refused to shake his hand after a match last year in Toronto. [Another USer] gestured obscenely at him this month in N[Z]. Now, after a colourful career marked by occasional sparring with the sport's marquee names, the 49-year-old German is on his swansong. [The German] will retire as an employee of the A[TP] when the A[US]n Open ends tomorrow... [The German] has dealt with drama in his last Grand Slam: last weekend, [the AUSn player seeded] No 7... swore at him for overruling a line call in a tense fifth set against [the] eventual winner... The A[US]n was fined \$US2000... [The German], a club tennis player, said [it] had never complained to the umpire about a call. "I know how difficult it is." ...[the German] has been a fixture on the tour since [it] became a pro umpire in 1987, abandoning a career as a civil servant in what was then West Germany. By his estimate, [the German] has umpired more than 4000 matches in up to 40 countries. "I don't think there was any tennis player ranked in the top 300 in the last 15 years that I haven't umpired,"... Starting on Thursday, [the German] will manage the Iphitos tennis club in his home town of Munich and help to organise an annual ATP tournament there. In many ways, the pattern of [his umpiring] career has mirrored that of the players...: the routine of international flights, anonymous hotel rooms, and trying to stay sharp every match. "You have to be good every day... If you're not good enough, there are a lot of young kids who want to take your job. They want to get where you are." The secret to longevity as an umpire is staying neutral by steering clear of the players off-court, [the German] says... Umpiring is a far more professional affair than it was when [the German] embarked on the pro circuit, and the notorious disputes and challenges of old are rare these days. Today's players learn about the organisation of the game at one-day ATP workshops, most notably that no amount of complaining will make an umpire change a point call. The money stakes are also higher now, making it less likely players will expend energy on arguing individual points... Line judges now must pass a 120-question exam on tennis rules; if they get more than five questions wrong, they are out. They take an oral test in English, the sport's international language. Umpires also get help from the Cyclops, a machine that detects serves that fall wide. "The eye is tricky, especially covering the sidelines... A ball can be out by two centimetres and it looks like it's good from the chair." A company in Norway has developed a metal chip that, once embedded in a tennis ball, will signal whether it lands out. But [the German] said the removal of human umpires would make the game sterile. Besides... "with close balls and close decisions, players don't rely on machines. They believe what they want to see..."

They say that second to Hollywood, the tennis circuit is the world's most glamorous lifestyle... After... the... gorgeous... Argentin[ian]... burst on to the tennis scene... by reaching the semi-finals of the French Open at 15, [it] was hailed as the sport's first real sex symbol. The miniskirts [the Argentinian] wore off the court were as hot as the little numbers [the player] wore on it. The sultry beauty from Buenos Aires... also loved plunging necklines and bikinis that show off her super untanned shape. [It] got such a following that the ballboys at Wimbledon began selling the sweaty towels [the Argentinian] used in her matches. "It makes me feel good to be a sex symbol," [the Argentinian] says. "Tennis is only for a few years but looking nice is for the rest of your life. In the end, to look attractive, to enjoy simple things, is more important than anything – even tennis."

...the sixth-biggest money winner in [gals'] tennis history... announced her retirement today... The glamorous, 26-year-old Argentine... turned professional at 14, and was hailed as the rival most likely to challenge [a German (r:p1499, ln70)] for dominance of their sport... Her highest world ranking was No 3 in 1989, 1991 and 1992[, but the Argentine]... won only one grand slam title – the U[S] Open in 1990... Overall, [the Argentine] won 27 singles titles and 12 doubles titles, and earned \$12,497,651.50... In addition to her winnings, [the Argentine] made an estimated \$32 million from a perfume bearing her name, modelling clothes in fashion magazines and endorsements. Her final tournament ended in a first-round, straight-sets loss... It was the second straight event at which [the Argentine] was ousted in the first round, and dropped her world ranking to 31 after a decade in the top 10. Once again, the German was this year's leading money winner for gal tennis players with a total of \$US2,665,706. The 2nd to 4th-placed money winners all made over \$US1m' (however, the 3rd-placed money winner is actually 2nd in the official rankings)...

MUNICH – ...The first British player to contest the \$US6 million... Grand Slam Cup... the richest tournament in the game... [– which is only for the] best performers from Wimbledon and the French, US and... [AUSn Opens –] showed a killer instinct and experience beyond his 22 years to defeat [the] American Wimbledon finalist... in 75 minutes, earning \$US431,250 [(or the equivalent of the year's earnings of the 12th-placed gal tennis player)] in the process. [The Brit], who became eligible for the tournament only after late withdrawals, now takes on[the] local hero and A[US]n Open champion... where \$US812,500 will be at stake. The winner will get a shot at the top prize of \$US1.625 million... The [AUSn Open and] three-times Wimbledon champion took just 58 minutes to defeat [a Swiss player] who came out of retirement to play here. - 1996

Before [Miss Swiss] went off to rollerblade beside the Yarra River... the... 16-year-old... elaborated on the \$US10 million clothing and endorsement contract [the teenager] scored on Tuesday. It splits into \$US1.4 million a year, depending on her ranking[, which last year was 5th]. "If I will be No 1, I will get more, but if I drop, less... So I have to try and stay where I am." A teen with millions in a piggy bank? In tennis, that's normal...

Lord knows, it was bad enough in the shade let alone playing tennis at the A[US]n Open... The day after the biggest one-day slaughter of [gals'] seeds in open-era grand slams, when on-court temperatures recorded 53 deg C, it approached 60 yesterday. It wasn't about tennis, it was about survival... Throughout Victoria, all fires, including welding and soldering, were banned. [The 9th seeded gal, backed by her 8]th seed... opponent... asked for a temporary ban on tennis, wary after seeing their peers need post-match saline drips on Sunday. "We said we don't want to be like this,"... All they got was a 30-minute delay before organisers denied their request[, but eventually the organisers]... got wise... Buckets of ice and fans were provided by players' chairs, and the players brought towels filled with ice and wet shirts... Players' solutions to the extreme heat, exacerbated by a rubber court which sucks it up and spits it back with more venom, have included closing the roof and invoking 10-minute rests after split sets in [gals'] games, as happens in WTA tournaments, and after four sets in... [guys' matches. The No 1 seeded guy (r:p1500, ln46)] got into another of those five-setters [the USer]'s famous for... This time, his tormentor was [a] fearless 19-year-old... whose last name is Slovak for hunchback. There's nothing deformed about his game though. [The 19-year-old] made the biggest leap of anyone into the top-100 last year, from 364 to 77... "The heat is part of playing here and... I don't think anything is going to happen until someone is physically so depleted that their health is in danger. We saw some girls yesterday really suffer. These are the toughest conditions I've ever had to play," said the victorious guy's No 1 seed. Victoria's AUSn Medical Association... representative... has warned tennis players risked extreme dehydration and possibly death on court... with such high temperatures... • [The WTA]... world number one... [and 7]-times Wimbledon champion, who suffered a surprise [4]th-round defeat in the A[US]n Open, is... still [being investigated by German prosecutors. Her]... father was found guilty last week of evading millions of dollars in tax on her...

career earnings[, which] are estimated at more than \$US61m... [The German star] has told tax investigators [that it] entrusted her financial affairs to her father from an early age and had little idea how her money was managed. But... by law [the tennis star i]s still liable for her own tax deductions.

...The huge amounts of money involved in tennis these days are ruining the game, says [a retired US player (r:p1501, ln7)]. The person] behind the Champions Tour (which no doubt provides him with a healthy pension) made a piddling \$14.5 million in his time on the ATP Tour. [The f]ive-times U[S] Open champion... says the joy of playing and quest for excellence have disappeared. "Once tennis turned into big business, I think a lot of attitudes changed and it wasn't that you really wanted to be the best player." [The retired USer] does have a point. [His compatriot and current world No 1, Mr] 'Personality Bypass'... earned \$11 million [last] year (not counting endorsements) for mopping about the tennis courts of the world.

...[an article calls the retired USer] a... mega-brat and a clown and blame[s] him for players becoming overpaid, pampered, pouting pains in the backside. "...we once had generations of tennis players who knew how to entertain by playing tennis like sports[people] – not game-show hosts."

...[a former tennis great withdrew his support and approval for a Swedish TV documentary on his life once it found out the programme was to discuss controversies including his financial woes, and demands for cash to represent his country. The Swedish Tennis Federation was forced to meet its all-time great's demands for \$US120,000 in 1979 for Davis Cup play. Creditors claim the tennis player has owed them \$1 million since 1989, but the player says it is penniless after being tricked out of his fortune in bad business deals, and declares no official income in Sweden from his Masters tour earnings.]

...the retired Swede said recently] on life after tennis... "I lost a lot of money, but that is not a major problem... all I can say is that I survived."

...[Few] sports... these days could survive without a national league... [I]n the draconian days of sport in the 1960s and '70s, few codes [in NZ] had national leagues. Soccer probably started the ball rolling when it kicked off its national competition, and slowly... came rugby, league, basketball, netball. Even tennis decided it required some sort of national league to provide its top players with regular competition during the summer where Kiwi fans could catch a glimpse of the best we had to offer. Today, it is almost unthinkable that any sport would can their national league. Some such as netball and rugby, are continually tinkering or fine tuning their competition. But to dump the concept? Nope, wouldn't happen. Except tennis recently did just that. It took a national league... and tossed it on the rubbish heap. Tennis N[Z] justified the move by saying its top players – whoever they may be – would not be around to bolster the teams and consequently the league was not worth persisting with... [P]erhaps the decision to chuck out the national league was inevitable... [considering the current lack] of... depth... in [NZ tennis]... In reviewing tennis' past national league attempt, though, it is impossible not to wonder if it could not have been done a bit better, or at least been marketed with more zest and expertise. Surely, the tennis public is not so fanatically attuned to two international tournaments in Auckland each year that it refuses to support any other competition of lesser quality. But that appears to be so. Crowd support at national league tennis was pathetic. The promotion of the league was not far behind... Tennis, of course, will move on as it has done so often and so easily in the past. Already announcements have been made detailing some of the superstars coming for the BellSouth Open and the WTA event that follows in the new year. And already a new satellite circuit has been resurrected (an old satellite circuit was dumped several years ago) to allow our fringe professionals an opportunity at home to collect valuable ATP points. In another stroke of genius, Tennis N[Z] has also managed to have its junior nationals become an ITF-sanctioned event, making it part of a world circuit for young players... Perhaps... the national league will reappear in the not too distant future. Perhaps our top players, who aren't so crash hot anyway (our No 1 guy] excluded) can make the time in their busy schedules to be available for a national league.

...[the] Kiwi tennis No 1... [has won] the \$180,000 Slovenia challenger tournament and lift[ed] himself back into the top 100 at No 92... [By the way, f]or at least 25 years, twice a week if the weather's holding, [a guy], aged 83, and [a gal too] shy to admit her age... have been playing each other at the Parnell Tennis Club wedged in hedges beneath the concrete hulk of the Auckland War Memorial Museum. [The guy] initiated their matchup as relaxation for [her, when the gal] was caring for her mother. It was medicine so good that on the day her mother died, [the gal] went and played at Parnell... They've known each other since they belonged to Remuera when that was the club before WW2. The guy] was the 1931 King's College champ[; the gal]... the 1939 Epsom Girls' Grammar champ. When [the guy] returned from the war, [the guy] helped Parnell move by necessity from their original site at the Cathedral to the Domain... It's a club that today winds up their 125th birthday party. They say only a club in Lyon, France is older than theirs. (Wimbledon's only 120). Parnell at 125 are nothing like they were at 100 in 1972. Back then it had a down-home Waltons family feel. The courts were still grass, playable for only four months a year. The bar was a fridge in the corner with a little box for change. In the 1980s the grass was replaced by astroturf and lights came on. The club also got caught up in the greed-is-good ethic of the decade. Parnell opted out of Caro Bowl for a few years when players began demanding too much. They got a licensed bar that put Newmarket publicans in a tizzy and parties there had queues from the door into the Domain. It's still busy... The club turns over about \$800,000 annually from subscriptions and tournament profits. Way back... a second-grade team player and the freelance journalist who's compiled a celebratory newsletter, recalls winning a tournament and earning a couple of balls and a cup. Now, club tournaments can offer cars, jetskis, Wimbledon Centre Court tickets and airfares.

...As Parnell blew out the candles on their 125th birthday cake, their wishes were delivered by their hired guns who reclaimed the Auckland club tennis titles on Saturday. Parnell, losing [guys' and gals'] finalists a year ago, won the ASB Bank Caro Bowl double for the third time in four years. [NZ's] Davis Cup No 2... arrived back from a second round loss in the Burbank Challenger in the U[S] on Saturday to head the [guys'] 4-1 defeat of defending champions Remuera... Parnell's [gals] routed Blockhouse Bay 5-1. [In international news, a USer 'will use her enormous serve to quell a Belgian upstart in the Wimbledon final, just as the black used it to silence a compatriot yesterday. The athletic 21-year-old, who beat her compatriot 6-2, 6-7 (1-7), 6-1, thumped down eight aces and won 74% of points on her first serve to reach her second successive Wimbledon final. The black holds the gals' serving-speed record set three years ago in Zurich at 205km/h, just 22km/h behind the guys' record.' The black had also 'over-powered her compatriot 6-3, 7-6 (7-3) in last year's Wimbledon final. It was her first Grand Slam title and made her the first black gal champ at Wimbledon since 1957 and 1958. The victory gave her family its second Grand Slam title, which is the first time in tennis history that sisters have each won a Grand Slam. Her 18-year-old sister won last year's US Open.' When it was a 17-year-old, the elder sister had become the first black gal tennis player to appear in the final of the US Open in almost four decades.

... 'You've fathered historic tennis sisters, so why not drive a bus with the words "World's Greatest Dad" on the side? The alleged World's Greatest Dad suggested it might buy the Rockefeller Centre for \$3.9 billion and once claimed it had bought the air rights over India, which would "make millions".'

...the gal who was [the... first black... to reach the final of the U[S] Open in 39 years, [has again] showed heradroitness in sidestepping questions about her father's charges... of racism against professional players in the wake of his daughter's semifinal collision with [a] Romanian... "I didn't even read the paper,"... Meanwhile, the [new] world No 1... took [the black] apart with Swiss precision yesterday to claim her third Grand Slam title of the year – only the sixth [gal tennis] player to achieve this. The others... [include last year's No 1 and No 2 (r:p1500, ln19)]. The 16-year-old... extended her extraordinary season record to 63-2 with a 6-0, 6-4 demolition of the... American rising star in a pairing of the youngest Grand Slam finalists in Open-era history... [The winner] made \$US650,000... and became the first [gal] tennis player to surpass \$US3 million... in earnings in a single season. [□ Next year, the 'US Open tennis champs will provide a \$33.48m prize, the largest amount for any annual sports tournament.'

...two of NZ] tennis' most promising players... [have 'current rankings of 403 and 640 after obtaining their best rankings in 1995 of 279 and 327' respectively. In 1993, they] were... the chosen ones – destined for big futures. It seemed only a matter of *when* rather than *if* they would make it. The confidence appeared well placed. [The pair] finished their final junior year as the best age-group doubles combination in the world... [T]he pair won the Wimbledon junior doubles title and the French Open title with [one of them] also being the No 1-ranked doubles (individual) and No 5 in the

singles... [after reaching] the junior singles final at the U[S] Open. His opponent and conqueror that day was... the N[Z]-bound Chilean who hovers on the border of the world's top 10 players... Playing club tennis in Europe is a long way from the 1993 US Open junior final. The German club scene is not where [the NZer] wants to be. But the slog of satellite circuits does not seem to appeal either. "Playing satellites every day is... a hard life...." said... [the NZer who] labels this year a shocker. Whether it's rankings, results, injuries or the April incident where [the NZer] threw a racket which accidentally hit a ballboy, 1997 has been bad news... [The 403rd-ranked guy] is regarded as the most naturally talented Kiwi of recent years. But... if [the NZer] wants to be a successful professional, [it] will have to return to the satellite ranks... [His ranking was] 320 at the start of the year. But [the NZer had] garnered a huge chunk of his ranking points (43) from reaching the final of last year's Perth Challenger... The challenger is on again this week and [the NZer] faces the prospect of another ranking plummet... Unless [the 403rd-ranked guy] can produce form early next year, [the player] will also struggle to crack the [NZ] Davis Cup team for February's tie against Lebanon. [● 'The US has won the Cup 31 times...

AUS has won the Davis Cup for the 28th time'. In further news from across the ditch, an] Auckland bowled out of the quarter-finals in his first tennis challenger at Perth yesterday. [The young Auckland] lost to another unseeded player... but will move his career-high 415 ranking... to 383[rising him]... to No 4 in the national rankings... [and ahead of the NZer who reached the Perth final last year. NZ's No 1 guy] comfortably remains... the... best rated player with a world ranking of 50 in singles, 183 places above... [the No 2 NZ guy. The previous No 2 NZ gal] is rated among the big movers on the 1997... WTA tennis tour in a list of the main "movers and shakers" issued yesterday. [The previous No 2] began the year ranked No 617 in singles and finished at No 420... The biggest mover was [an] American... who started the year ranked No 973 and finished at No 339.

...[the guys' world] tennis No 1... [-] who ended the season as the world's top-ranked tennis player for a fifth consecutive year, [and] was named Sports[person] of the Year by the US Olympic Committee[(making him) the first tennis player to win the award] – crushed AUS's]... US Open champion... in straight sets for a lucrative win in the Grand Slam Cup yesterday. [The USer] made sure of a \$US2 million... cheque with a fine display of attacking tennis... in a one-sided final lasting 95 minutes... [The AUSn] Open and Wimbledon champion, got \$US1.5 million for his victory plus a \$US500,000 bonus for his two Grand Slam wins. [The AUSn], making his debut in the tournament... earned... \$US750,000 for appearing in the final and [a \$US250,000 bonus – placing him 2nd for prize-money winners this year at '\$US2,432,084. The No 1 is 1st at \$3,905,078.'

...the world No 1 'broke the Grand Slam record when it triumphed at Wimbledon this year. His 13th Grand Slam title and his seventh Wimbledon prize elevates him to arguably one of the best tennis players ever. The USer's amassed a staggering \$89,353,818 in career earnings which illustrates the fact that tennis treats you pretty good once you're at the top.' In related news, w]hat could be good about losing 6-3 6-0 in less than an hour to a lower-ranked player? [Fortunately for the guys'] world tennis No 2... [the answer is irrelevant because the Asian-American still has a chance] for a place in the semis... at the ATP Tour World Championship... [if it can win his next round-robin match]. The \$US3.3 million... tournament brings together the top eight...

[The world No 1] was named the best player of the past 25 years shortly before cruising to a fourth title at the ATP Tour world championship in Germany yesterday. [The USer beat the retired Swede and the semi-retired USer (r:p1501, ln9) who won the 1984 Wimbledon final] into second and third places respectively in the vote by 100 present and past players, tournament directors and journalists. "It's very flattering, it really is, to have the respect from people in tennis," the 26-year-old... said after learning of the vote, organised to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the ATP Tour... The elegant American, [who this year equalled]... the record of... [another USer (r:p1502, ln3) -] to end the year in the No 1 spot for the fifth consecutive year... [-] needed just 88 minutes to take apart [his Russian opponent (r:p1500, ln68)]. Meanwhile, the rankings system in [guys'] tennis will change... to an annual points race with players starting at zero in January... The new system, signalling the end of the complicated present method under which the players carry their points from one year to the next, was one of several changes announced by... [the] ATP Tour boss... [A] new super league of seven events – in addition to the Grand Slam – would be launched and the year-end championships... reshaped. All the changes would be introduced from the year 2000. It is also possible that [gals] will be included in super league tournaments and the season-ending event.

...[the outgoing] WTA tour chief executive... says the 1998... circuit will add six... tournaments, increase prizemoney... from... \$US38 m... to over \$US40 m... and try to head off a players coup launched earlier this month... by a number of mid-ranked players... [While on the topic of gals' tennis, the former world No 1] has broken another date with Auckland... The great [German], out of tennis since June when [it] had an operation on her left knee, was set to make Auckland's ASB Bank Classic in January part of her comeback before the A[US]n Open. Germany's second-best fraulein... [who is now] down to No 12 in the world rankings, also wanted to return after falling in the quarterfinals this year, but was swayed to play in the mixed doubles Hopman Cup the same week. After the US Open in September, [the injured German]'s agent told Auckland [that the German No 1] wanted to play here, encouraged by kind words about N[Z] by her brother... who motor-raced here in 1994. Within four days, Auckland met her main requirement of a six-figure appearance fee. But... a month ago [the German] felt the knee was not responding as well as... hoped and became non-committal about playing Auckland. [The German] was also going to play the 1996 Classic but withdrew less than a month out when [it] had an operation to remove bone spurs from her left foot. [However, the tournament] director... was still happy yesterday to announce [3] top-50 players: [the]No 20... No 36... and No 41... Also, [the guys'] No 12... confirmed [his intention to] return for the BellSouth Open... [The] Chilean... will likely be the Open's top seed again. [The Chilean] crashed in the quarters this year but elsewhere... made the US and A[US]n Open quarters, reached [4] finals and won one... [The director] was working on attracting two more top-20 [gals] and the Classic field was shaping to improve on this year's which featured six top-50 players. But [the director] may yet run into [the same] problems encountered a year ago, when [the gals'] tour governors, the WTA, switched [the]10th-ranked... from Auckland to the higher-level but less-popular Gold Coast event on at the same time. Gold Coast are again struggling to attract the [3] top-20 players they're entitled to. [A]Belgian 24-year-old... won this year's doubles [at the Classic]and went on to win the Hobart title and reach the A[US]n Open quarter-finals, beating [the]No 2... and 15th seed[s along the way]. Since late September [the Belgian] has won the Surabaya event – becoming the [7th gal] to win more than one title this year – and was runner-up at Quebec last week. - 1997

[Germany's No 1 gal tennis player] retired yesterday secure in the knowledge [it] had been the greatest [gal] tennis player of her generation... and with all her dreams fulfilled... Still only 30, the pony-tailed blonde with the devastating forehand was only 13 when [it] was the youngest [person] to receive a WTA ranking in 1982. Her big breakthrough came in 1987, when [it] took her first grand slam, winning the French Open. The next year [it] claimed all four major tournaments plus the initial Olympic title. Ever since, the reserved German has remained in the limelight, taking a total 22 grand slam titles and staying in top spot for a record 377 weeks... Life has often been tough on [the German], who was dismayed when a deranged fan stabbed [a]rival... in 1993, aiming to sideline her so the German could recapture the No 1 spot... A chronic back injury... and recurring knee problems started taking their toll in 1997[– the German] was out for 3 1/2 months that year... There were fears then that [the German] might never play again... But [the German] still had plenty to offer, as [it] demonstrated by teaching [the current world No 1] a lesson to win her sixth French Open last June. Then came Wimbledon... where... the German... reached the final before losing...

An Indian punter who gambled a total of \$A60,000... on [the AUSn]defending champion... and [the US]world No 1... winning their opening round US Open matches has bombed out badly. While [the world No 1] didn't even make it onto court, [the AUSn]'s shoulder injury forced him to quit his opening match... Alice Springs bookmakers CentreBet refunded the \$25,000 wager on [the world No 1] who didn't even hit a ball... [Incidentally, NZ's No 1 guy table tennis player] yesterday qualified for his seventh World Cup... event – a record for Oceania – after surviving a countback on wins against [a]fellow Kiwi... The... [gals' representative is an AUSn citizen, who beat the NZ] No 1... in a spectacular match 23-21 21-23 23-21 – with [the NZ citizen] surviving seven match points in the final set before losing her first game in 13 years to another Oceania player.

...[the NZ gal squash player who is ranked 13th in the world] **advanced to the second round of the A[US]n Open squash tournament... yesterday. The second seed will meet [the]eighth-seeded American... in today's quarter-finals.**

...[the NZ pair have won the inaugural world gals' doubles squash title in Hong Kong. In the final the NZers, playing in all-black outfits, beat the top seeds of England 15-4 15-12. The NZers had been seeded third for the event, but toppled the No 2 seeded AUSns in their semifinal. "It sets the pair up as favourites for the gold medal at the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur," the NZ coach said. The NZ guys' pair finished fifth in their event.' The gals' doubles win was NZ's first major success on the international squash circuit since the retirement of the then world No 1 gal squash player, who, 'apart from a brief injury break, reigned from the time the NZer won her first British Open in 1984 to her sudden decision to quit after winning the 1992 British Open' (having lost the final of the British Open for the first time since 1984 in 1991)...

'After a lean period NZ's gal squash players are making a real impact on the international circuit. Following on from the juniors' second placing at the World Championships, the country's leading players won the inaugural World Doubles championship – a huge achievement because this was their first significant doubles competition together. As their world ranking of 13 and 14 suggest, the NZ pair are intense rivals. So it was to their credit that they could put aside their personal rivalry and train and work effectively to produce these outstanding results. Although squash players have played friendly doubles for years, it has only just been recognised as an official competition, as part of world squash's acceptance in to the Olympic and Commonwealth movement. There are a few differences from singles. Firstly, it is played on a court four foot wider than usual which obviously allows more room for four players and it is compulsory for all players to wear safety glasses, a wise move considering the nature of the game. The scoring is American with the service rules differing, allowing each player a serve regardless of who wins the point and the rules of interference are slightly altered, compensating for the number of players on the court' (singles squash resembles *badminton* – 'a volleying game using rackets and a shuttlecock that derives its name from Badminton, Glos., where the game is supposed to have evolved about 1870 from the ancient game of battledore and shuttlecock; from the outset it gained popularity with army officers who took it to India and played it out of doors' – in its allocation of serves and points: a player can only win a point if it had served, although badminton's authorities are considering changing that rule so games will be completed in less time.)]

...**"I have finally achieved something that [the former NZ No 1] did..." A lifetime dream came true for [an emotional NZ] squash star... yesterday when [it] won the British Open from [the]world champion... The 25-year-old [NZer and world No 13 who] won her first major title in Aberdeen... was spurred on by a British magazine article... proclaiming that [the English world champion] would not be beaten by anyone on the [gals'] circuit for the next five years. Then there was the drive to emulate... the last great Kiwi squash player – who was thrilled for [her compatriot] yesterday. "It's particularly good... because it hasn't been easy for her... [The 25-year-old] hasn't had any handouts [and] didn't do it in luxury or style. I've always told her the opportunity was there for her to take. [The 25-year-old]'s come pretty close to the top before, but it's so important to have a title. It's good to see someone [from NZ]doing well in squash again – [locally]it's been in the doldrums, and it needed a champion." It took [the Kiwi] an hour to beat [the]26-year-old... [world champion. The Kiwi] won £4524... but was more captivated with the... trophy fashioned from Edinburgh crystal. "I don't need any more Christmas presents – this is all I wanted," [the Kiwi] laughed. However, the Kiwi] will get another present in the New Year, when... [the gal who] this year... has been runner-up in four major events... [– the Kiwi] lost to the now-retired A[US]n No 1... in the A[US]n, Singapore and Helipolis Opens, before dipping out to [the world champion] in the semifinals of the world championships and the final of the US Open last month... – ...officially becomes the world No 2... "Of course it would have been nice to have won absolutely everything this year,"... The [Mormon]... returns home to Hamilton tomorrow, to take a break until New Year when [it] will play in a summer tournament in Mt Maunganui.**

...[a Pakistani] was so good at squash, [it] squished opponents and it got ridiculous. After winning his first world open in 1981, aged 17, [it] remained unbeaten for five-and-a-half years in more than 500 games. His winning streak was finally broken in 1986 by [a NZ]er... in the World Open final in Toulouse. Indeed it did teach [him] how to lose but the Pakistani great never thought it would be to a [guy] they called Rosco.

Squash [is] a game played with rackets... in a closed court... the word... being derived from the softer hollow 'squashy' ball used... It is derived from the game of rackets... a ball-game for two or four players... [rackets (or 'racketball') in its] modern form developed in England in the 19th c., but its origins may be traced to medieval handball. It was played in open courts in the backyards of inns and taverns; the rackets court in the Fleet debtors' prison in London is depicted by Rowlandson and described by Dickens.

court games [is a general term for] ball games played on indoor or outdoor courts between teams or individuals. Typical are basketball, tennis, handball, squash racquets, squash tennis, badminton, and volley ball... Badminton... is played over a net... Originating in India, it was introduced into England in 1871, and has since become popular in the U.S. Volley ball is a combination of tennis and basketball... The... fairly large inflated ball... must not touch the ground... and... cannot be thrown... being batted across a net with the player's hands, elbows, or head... Handball is played by batting with the bare or gloved hands a small, hard rubber ball against four walls of a court. A similar game was popular in England, 16th cent., under the name of "fives." In the U.S. handball is jointly governed by the U.S. Handball Association and the Amateur Athletic Union.

Denmark... [had a] 33-20 victory over Norway in the [Gals'] World Handball championship final. But the tournament in Berlin will be remembered for the death of two Danish fans who were stabbed, in an apparent drunken row with a German spectator[(who 'didn't remember anything'). Speaking of Denmark, the country]... will join the Netherlands in the 1999 England and Wales NatWest Trophy cricket competition. The English Cricket Board's chief executive... said the inclusion of Denmark gives cricket a firm foothold in mainland Europe. The 1999 competition will be contested by 60 teams – [including] the 18 first-class counties, Scotland, Ireland... and 38 amateur teams representing English county boards.

...THE face of sport around the globe has changed markedly over the last few years... Perhaps the most important of these changes involves the apportioning of power in these modern bureaucracies, for where that power lies will have an enormous effect on where each sport heads into the 21st century. The delicate line to be walked is regarding the influence of "player power"... The major hurdle modern bureaucracies of professional sport have to deal with is balancing the demands of players with the long term interests of the sport, and therefore the interests of the next generation of players. This debate is obviously most apparent in N[Z] in rugby union but it continues in other sports as well. In England the debate has recently been loudest in cricket... [T]he former Tesco magnate... was hired to produce a report as a blueprint to the future of English cricket. This report was deemed necessary due to the dire state in which the English test side has recently found itself. The financial security of England's 18 first class counties and indeed the game as a whole depends on the revenues from international cricket, and England's decline... is... testing the allegiance of even England's most stoic supporters. The... report's main thrust was that the breeding ground of English test cricket, the county championship, had become so brazenly uncompetitive as to be a significant handicap to the development of the test side. Its stated preference was for a two division championship with promotion/relegation of three teams from each division to ensure competitive fixtures all season long. This proposal was thrown out and what amounts to the status quo was reinstated. The stubborn self-interest of the counties – fear of failure rather than desire for success – and the players (who wants a tough competition when you can have a soft one?) ruled the day. Short term interest overruled long term concern. The demise of English cricket, the counties have decided, is rooted elsewhere. Three-day cricket is no good, uncovered pitches, too much one-day stuff, too many overseas players! That's the one I like. "English county cricket has provided a finishing school for overseas players for long enough." Ha! The purge on overseas players began about 15 years ago with the reduction in the number of foreigners allowed

from two per county to one. From my memory this decision coincided roughly with the beginning of the decline in England's status at test level. The second stage of this purge is to ban overseas players all together. That should do wonders for the already generally accepted sub-standard level of the county game. I'm sure the cream of English [batters] will learn much from facing the demon bowling of Durham's 13th best player rather than from encountering the likes of South Africa's [best fast-bowler or Pakistan's best spinner.

...as members of the Fleet St cricket press, we care very deeply that England's cricket team is currently among the worst in the world, if only for the selfish reason that eventually it may stop us travelling the world at somebody else's expense and force us to get a proper job. Then, perhaps, English cricket would get the press it prefers instead of the one it deserves.

...[English batspers] on joins elite... [T]he seventh English player to bat through a completed innings in test cricket... made 94 not out in England's first innings of the third test against N[Z] at Lancaster Park[yesterday]. It was the first time [the opener] has achieved the feat.

...[a N[Z] opening bats[person], has been cleared of showing dissent about his dismissal on the third day of the third test against England... After offering what appeared to be a close-in catch – which had the A[US]n umpire... raising his finger in dismissal – [the NZer] stood his ground... obviously insisting the ball had hit the ground first... After a code of conduct hearing... the International Cricket Council referee, said in a statement that the incident had been examined with video replays, and... [the NZer] did not appear to see the umpire's signal giving him out “and given his unblemished record in the past, no further action would be taken.” ...Footnote: The ICC referee's decision is final. Had [the NZer] been found guilty... [it] could have been fined up to 75[%] of his match fee, and/or suspended for three tests and three one-day internationals, and various combinations of these ranging up to six one-dayers.

...[the NZ opener cleared of misconduct has revealed that it] had to sell his house to mortgage his international cricket future... The 32-year-old... [Northlander] spent a period in the winter of 1996 “on the breadline” as... the Kiwi batting hero... [–] whose mammoth innings of 267 not out in the first test last summer against Sri Lanka was the second best ever by a N[Zer –] ...contemplated long-term exclusion from the N[Z] cricket side. During that time [it] had been excluded from the Kiwi team for the World Cup on the subcontinent and subsequent tour of the West Indies[, which meant the opener] had effectively been “made redundant” and spent a long time wondering how... to make ends meet... But [the opener] was yesterday keen to accentuate the positives of the experience, which included him establishing an employment link with the ASB Bank to provide much-needed stability in his life... [His] fortunes turned when [the opener] gained a belated place on the tour to Pakistan when [the first-choice opener] was forced to withdraw... [The replacement opener went on to head NZ's batting] averages for the '96-97 test campaign with 648 runs at 54.00.

...An Auckland[er] at the centre of sexual misconduct claims involving [an]England cricketer... denies any wrongdoing. The 20-year-old AIT commercial studies student met... [the cricketer] at Auckland's Judder Bar, and accepted the offer of a bed for the night because [the student] didn't want to drive the hour to her Bombay Hills home... The British newspaper *News of the World* has published claims that [the cricketer and the student] took part in “steamy sex romps” at his Centra Hotel room... [P]hotographers and reporters have dogged her since... “It's been blown way out of perspective. All this looks very suspicious, I guess, but nothing happened.” ...in hindsight [the student had] realised that “I was very naive.” [The student claimed to feel sympathy for his wife who] gave birth to the couple's first son... shortly before [the cricketer] left on the three-month tour to Zimbabwe [– where ‘a test was drawn for the 2nd time due to both teams achieving the same scores after completing 2 innings each’ (tests are normally drawn because 4 innings aren't completed in the 5 days allowed; ‘31% of the 163 tests played during the 1950s were drawn – the respective percentages for the '60s, '70s and '80s were 47, 42 and 45, while 35% of tests during the '90s have ended in draws') – and NZ]. Players' wives and girlfriends were barred from accompanying the team... [A photo showed the student] in the England team guest enclosure at Eden Park. The... [student] attended the game after accepting [the cricketer]'s offer of tickets. Asked whether [it] was a cricketing fan, [the student] replied: “Not any more.”

...Eden Park, which [earlier this season] throbbed with cheers for... [a Sri Lankan]'s epic one-day century and during the heroic... [last-wicket stand by NZ] for the first test draw against England, yesterday farewelled the cricket season with boos from irate spectators. The crowd of 5000-odd showed their displeasure when, shortly after 2 o'clock yesterday afternoon, the captains decided that conditions were unfit for the start of the... Sri Lanka-N[Z] one-day international. An announcement over the public address system – after security staff had ringed the field – said parts of the outfield and the bowlers' run-ups were unsafe. However, various newspaper reporters walked over the surprisingly firm run-ups, and neighbouring ground staff members said they were surprised the players did not want to play... [T]he umpire who maintained the field was not fit for international play, responded that [it] did not think the ground staff had enough experience in these matters. There was no hope the match would start as scheduled on Saturday, with heavy rain saturating the ground, but the showers became less frequent as the staff tried to prepare the pitch for play on the reserve day yesterday... [T]here were hopes for a start about noon, then at 12.30 pm and, most promisingly, for a 32-overs-a-side game to start at 1.30 pm[(one-day internationals normally have 50-overs-a-side). The NZ] captain... had been prepared to toss at 1.30, but another shower stopped that... An adult ticket was \$30 and a child's \$15, though many at the ground would presumably have been unaware that fine print in the match conditions limited any refund to half that in the event of no play taking place... [The NZ] team manager, said his players felt sorry for the spectators, especially after they had been so loyal to the... team during the season... [The NZ] Cricket chief executive... was also very conscious of the spectators' loyalty, and NZC would immediately start arranging 50[%] ticket refunds. NZC will itself hurry to its insurers this morning seeking over \$200,000 in compensation... NZC had received over-budget returns from the England tour, and could make a very useful return from the Sri Lankan tour if the gates for the one-dayers at Christchurch (tomorrow) and Wellington (Thursday) were up to expectations. “The incredible thing is that all three one-day internationals at Eden Park have been badly affected by rain. Otherwise we would have had a fantastic season.” The bad luck with rain at Eden Park will not affect future tour planning.

...[a globe]-trotting cricket fan... was hoping a one-day international would provide a thrilling send-off from N[Z]. Instead, the fan] and his girlfriend were left out of pocket and furious... With about 5000 other spectators they will receive just half their ticket price back. Last season patrons were offered full refunds if they paid a \$1 insurance fee. “I think it's appalling... I don't like being ripped off.” ...The couple are mid-way through a nine-month world tour and fly out from N[Z] today... It did not rain after the... game was cancelled around 2.15 pm... Had the match started and gone through 15 or more overs, N[ZC]'s insurance cover would have lapsed.

...[NZC] will give full refunds for tickets to the washed out one-day international between Sri Lanka and N[Z]... The chief executive of the Consumers Institute... said yesterday that the... 50[%] refund... condition – printed on the back of tickets... – ...was not valid unless it had been pointed out at the time of sale. “The responsibility is on the seller... to point out any extra conditions... It is assumed you get to see the game if you buy a ticket. If you don't, then the contract has not been met and you get your money back.” ...Refunds to 6000 supporters... some who went to the ground just minutes before the match was called off... will make a big bite into the \$300,000 insurance windfall from the wash-out game. Unofficial estimates suggest a \$90,000 payout.

...[an AUSn's century has given his country] hope of an unlikely victory in the second cricket test against England at Lord's... [The AUSn] scored 57 runs off 54 balls yesterday and 20 fours in all before being caught on the square leg fence for 112 just before stumps. With one day remaining, A[US] were 213 for [7] in reply to England's woeful first innings of 77. Heavy thunderstorms throughout the morning prevented play starting until 5.40pm and in the 17.4 overs possible A[US] smashed 82 runs... before rain stopped play for 12 minutes. The England players could not leave the field fast enough, while [the AUSn] stood his ground, wanting to bat on. Even the crusty Lord's members yelled “get on with it,” booed and slow-

handclapped. With fewer than 25 overs bowled, patrons were entitled to a 50[%] refund, bringing the total insurance payout so far to £1.3 million...

N[Z] cricketers who take part in the Commonwealth Games in Malaysia next year will not be paid, N[ZC's] chief executive said yesterday. England have decided not to take part in the limited-overs competition being held for the first time at the Games and one of the reasons given was that their players would not be paid... Meanwhile... [s]eeing off their opponents in double-quick time has had its downside for the N[Z gals'] World Cup cricket team in India. While happy to have won through as top qualifiers in their pool and thus avoiding another horrendous early-morning journey, N[Z] are lamenting the limited opportunities for their middle and lower-order bat[ters]... Despite the frustrations of being confined to their hotels for long periods – it is not considered safe to walk about without some form of security – the N[Zers, who]... meet Ireland in the quarter-finals next week... are getting on fine. “Because we are so popular, we are always receiving invitations to social functions...,”... the... vice-captain... said. If, as expected, they beat Ireland in Bombay... [they] will meet the winner of the England v Sri Lanka quarter-final in a... semifinal in Madras.

...N[Z] qualified for the final of the [gals'] cricket world cup after a tense 20-run win over England in Chennai (formerly Madras)... early today. The... team will play A[US] in the final at Calcutta... on Monday. It is the second consecutive final the Kiwis have reached, after losing to England in England four years ago. The English ghost was well and truly exorcised by a superb display of pressure cricket in the field... [after England had earlier restricted NZ to] 175 for six... As a form guide, N[Z] lost 1-2 to A[US] in last month's Rosebowl one-day series and 1-4 the previous summer.

...Even a valiant 79 by the N[Z] batting star... could not give the fighting N[Z]ers a winning chance in their... World Cup one-day final at Eden Gardens in Calcutta late last night. [Like f]our years ago... N[Z] again entered the final undefeated, but... the powerful A[US]ns batted superbly on the easy pitch to score... their fourth world title – while the N[Z]ers still wait for their first... But the stocky [NZ vice-captain] caught the imagination of the crowd of about 40,000 Indian [gals] with her long, lone effort as the back-bone of the N[Z] innings... her 79 from 121 balls[included] one mighty six... [The vice-captain] continued her phenomenal form of... the [previous] six tournament matches... [during which time the batter] compiled 377 runs, including two centuries, at an average of 94.25... [■ NZ] will host the next [gals'] cricket World Cup in the year 2000...

Last year the idea of Disneyworld building a special sports arena and staging tournaments that might attract or fascinate [USers] was picked up by the I[CC] development committee, headed by... [a South African who] immediately realised the vibrations that such a venue would create. It took him some time to persuade other council delegates, who could not envisage staging a full-on one-day international tournament in such an un-cricket environment. But [the South African] is a persuasive [person], and showed that the Disneyworld scheme could broaden the appeal for cricket in the U[S] and give some novelty to the one-day circuit. The promoters were just as eager, and they more or less pencilled an annual international cricket tournament starting in 1998, and mentioned their rich rewards from the pay-television receipts – with the cricket countries also being handsomely paid. The only problem was that the fancy purpose-built stadium which could handle both winter and summer outdoor sports did not exist. The Disneyworld people work on the theory that they create the event and then built the facilities. The... [ICC] does, however, need a lot of money, quickly, to fund the development work it wants in place in the second- and third-tier cricketing nations. So instead of Disneyworld the world cricket elite may be looking instead toward India or Pakistan, now regarded as the television-rights financial basis for all world cricket. The plan is to have the nine test-playing countries... playing a... mini-World Cup... one-day knockout tournament with as much profit as possible going to... development work. Earlier next winter, about April, the N[Z] team will be able to shake another money-tree by playing in the annual Sharjah tournament, along with A[US], India and Zimbabwe. This is the traditional tournament; N[Z] were invited to a special tournament there late last year, where they reached the final... Then, for a pleasant change, the N[Z] players may even appear in club and representative matches before moving into a torrid international programme... against India and South Africa, and leave soon afterward for England and the World Cup, followed by a three-test tour of England. They will be busy, they will be paid... – but it is rather a pity about missing Mickey Mouse... [By the way, yesterday NZC's chief executive] said discussions on a future world test cricket championship [are still] proving difficult. A subcommittee... headed by NZC[']s chairperso[n]... met recently in Singapore and has asked the ICC to revisit several of the original recommendations made on the proposal.

...In recent years the plans gaining strongest appeal involve the test-playing countries having home and away series against each other in a four-year period, with points gained for tests and series won or drawn. It is understood that[another of the] major recommendations... being considered by the... ICC meeting... in Calcutta... is for a test-match tournament spread over two months... two years after every World Cup one-day tournament. The A[US]ns favour this and see their country as the logical trial area, although England and India could offer similar widespread facilities, at different times of the year. The major plan... sees Bangladesh joining the nine test-playing countries in a 10-team competition. This would also involve a pre-tournament series of matches to decide seedings, with... the lowest-ranking test sides... not taking part... An alternative is the playing of a more compact eight-team world championship, and this would put N[Z]'s place at risk. [The lowest-ranking teams, including] Bangladesh... would play one another with the winning team joining the top seven in the eight-team championship.

...[a cricketer] lives just 100km from India[but] has never been there. His parents have never ventured outside their native Bangladesh. With the average Bangladeshi wage around \$50 to \$65 a month that is understandable. [However, the cricketer], who is 22... is [in NZ on] his fourth... trip... with the Bangladeshi cricket team... [One of the other trips was all] expenses paid, to A[US] for coaching at the A[USn Cricket Academy. The test cricketer, who']s spent his recent years at university in Dhaka... studying for an honours degree in anthropology... is... glad to be seeing the world...

A[US]'s test cricketers, disgruntled at their treatment by the A[USn Cricket Board[(ACB)], are prepared to escalate a campaign for a substantial pay rise, [the] players' union boss... said yesterday.

...Tie me bank account down, sport... Outwardly, cricket would still seem to be the pre-eminent sport with the greatest social clout in A[US, and the AUSns] – at test level and in their home Sheffield Shield competition – would appear to be the best, typically confident competitors. However, over the last six months or so there have been signs that... [AUSn] cricket... is not quite as healthy as it might appear... The test players are still winning, even if they made England look rather good in two of the recent... tests in Britain. The home heroes of the Sheffield Shield, especially in Queensland, twice winners of the trophy in recent years, seem to attract attention bordering on adoration. But since the formation of the players' trade union, known as the A[USn Cricketers' Association, the... [ACB] is taking a hammering. The ACA and the ACB are currently engaged in a battle for the high ground, especially in the matter of contracts not only for test players, but for the rank-and-file first class players... The ACA... are basing one part of their attack on the need for the ACB to reveal their allegedly vast financial reserves, and to skim off some of the cream for the rank-and-file state players. The aim, evidently, is to put at least \$25,000 in each player's pocket, and to set up education and vocational services so the players will have some earning capacity after cricket... [However, two famous AUSn] players of the past... simply maintain that the average and younger Sheffield Shield players are not worth \$25,000 each a year. They should be encouraged instead to hold regular jobs outside cricket, and not to regard themselves as fulltime professionals... A[USn] test cricket players are on contracts ranging from \$275,000 to \$500,000 plus, and they are also able to earn money from advertising and promotional work... Eyebrows were raised when it appeared... [that AUS's] leg-spin bowler, turned down a 14-week contract in England in the next northern summer[and] was evidently going to be paid \$500,000 for his work... but decided (and wisely, for his spinning finger will not hold shape forever) to rest at home instead – which raised a cheer amid the ACB ranks... The final word, as the ACB and the ACA were digging their trenches in readiness for a long and grimy war, came from... a fine [AUSn] cricket writer with a nice sense of the nonsensical. In the *Telegraph on Sunday*, [the writer] said... the ACB chief negotiator, offered a young fast bowler a contract. “I

don't care how much it is for, I'd play for nothing... where do I sign?" Perhaps if there is enough of that old attitude left, A[US]n cricket may survive this latest crisis... But even with this in-fighting, it was staggering to find yesterday that the ACB (or its members associations) lost \$7 million on the Sheffield Shield competition last year... [] NZ] cricketers... can hardly match the earnings... of the top A[US]ns. NZC offered 20 players contracts for this summer, compared with 14 last season. The NZC chief executive... has described the retainers as "not a brilliant amount of money, but it is what we think is appropriate in the present circumstances." ...The [NZ]contracts include a basic signing on fee and a match fee which is allied to a bonus for individual performance. On top of that is an increased win bonus... NZC lost \$300,000 in 1995-96 and would appear to have made a \$500,000 turn around last summer.

...Saturday's inept total of 82 became the smallest by [an international NZ cricket team in AUS] this century. In 1913-14 N[Z] scored 89 against Queensland, but things improved during the rest of that match... [This time it] took a 20-run last-wicket stand... to save... N[Z] cricketers from the embarrassment of another grisly record. [The final pair] came together... at 62 for nine wickets, and they soon moved past 64, the lowest innings score by a N[Z] side in AUS – a sad relic of the tour of 1898-99. On that occasion, N[Z] scored 140 and 64, and N[SW], helped by 253 from a talented youngster named Victor Trumper, reached 588. However, [what]... really hurt the Kiwi tourists yesterday was the news that if the A[CA] is to strike in pursuit of the outlandish attempt to hijack the A[CB], they would not bother to include games against the hapless N[Z]ers in their strike plans.

...While the big powers in A[US]n cricket are battling over wages and conditions and declaring strikes and strike-breaking methods, the touring N[Z] squad are sitting in the dark at ringside. An unnamed A[US]n player yesterday leaked to the A[CB] the news that the A[CA] plans strikes against four one-day matches next month. This would stop the one-day internationals: A[US] v South Africa in Sydney on December 4, and in Melbourne on December 9; A[US] v NZ] in Adelaide on December 7; and the A[US] v AUS] A one-day game at Sydney on December 14. The N[ZC] chief executive... is urgently seeking details from the ACB... But... [talks] between the factions broke down last week, when the board said it could not accept the financial plans outlined by the association and its consultant... Sports Entertainments Ltd... The association will send a circular to its members pointing out the legal background and inviting them to sign consent to the strike, looking for a two-thirds majority.

...The A[US]n cricket establishment lost a major war in the officials v players battle yesterday when the test side refused to follow the lead of their skipper... His team-mates had returned to their original stance that unless the talks were resumed based on the use of the Workplace Agreement (for arbitration of disputes) the threat of strike action remained. The players stopped short, though, of signing the "intention to strike" notice the Workplace Agreement requires to be delivered to an employer 72 hours in advance of industrial action... No further... talks [between the skipper and ACB chairperson] are scheduled, and now the speculation is that [the skipper] has been isolated by his team-mates.

...You could never accuse the A[US]ns of being subtle as they prepared the Bellerive Oval pitch in Hobart for the third cricket test against N[Z] starting tomorrow. The newspaper headlines yesterday announced 'Bellerive Ripe for [Aussie legspinner]', and quoted the grounds[perso]n... as saying: "It's definitely a result wicket... it will not hold together for five days... and I think [our legspinner] will rip it severely late in the game." ...This sounds rather like the Tasmanian Cricket Association shooting itself in the foot. The TCA is determined to project Bellerive Oval as a test venue, and there have already been statements that if Bellerive can draw more than the 28,000 who watched the first test at the Gabba, and the 23,000 who attended the second test at Perth, it will remain on the test calendar... However, Tasmanian cricket enthusiasts face the risk that there might not be much action left in the test by the time Sunday – and the expected big crowd – comes along... N[Z] have played only one previous test at Bellerive, in 1993-94, and the loss by an innings and 222 runs does not figure on their roll of honour. But that match remains one of [the legspinner's] fondest memories. The legspinner] had figures of six for 31 and three of 36. And it now appears [that the bowler] who has already taken 13... wickets in the two previous tests of this series, will be presented with another kindly canvas on which to splash his art... Perhaps N[Z]'s only chance is the disruption to A[US]'s preparation caused by the ongoing war between players and their administration.

...If N[Z] slump to an historic 0-3 test series loss to the world's best in A[US], here are some reasons why: [AUS's latest batting sensation (r:p1505, ln66) and two other recent test caps (Mr B and Mr P)] had all scored about 5000 first-class runs before they were picked for their country; [the NZ captain and his team-mates]... all had fewer than 1500 runs before they wore the Silver Fern. [One] fast bowler... had delivered 16,000 balls in first-class cricket before... [playing his] first... test... for A[US; NZ's fast bowler] had delivered around 2500 before... the first of his... tests...

BAD news for N[Z] cricket fans hoping for a return of the golden one... to their ranks. In an interview with the *Independent* newspaper, [the duel-international told a] rugby writer... that the bat and ball game does not hold the appeal for him that it once did. Nor does it have much prospect of fitting into [the All Black No 14's] busy schedule. "When could I hope to play? ...We've been on the rugby field since February and we don't get off it finally until December, so the opportunities for serious cricket are non-existent. Do I miss it? No, to be honest with you, N[Z] is one of the lesser cricketing nations and being a competitive sports[perso]n at heart, I'd rather keep what I've got with rugby and stay shooting with the big guns."

...N[ZC] will trial revolutionary sightscreens that incorporate television replay screens this summer... The TV screens – which will be made up of 20 seamless cubes set in the middle of the sightscreens – will allow advertising opportunities as well as replay action. Sightscreens are now widely used around the world as static advertising hoardings when not in use behind the bowler's arm... Custom trailers are being built for the two screens, making them portable for use around the country. With a flick of the switch they can be made black or white for one-day or test action... The screens cost around \$400,000 and the trailers are in the \$35,000 bracket. NZC will lease them from... Auckland company Monaco Corporation... but should be able to make them self-funding given the advertising opportunities... [In international news, the AUSn skipper] put aside his disastrous one-day form to lead a spirited... fightback on the opening day of the first cricket test against South Africa in Melbourne yesterday. [His] unbeaten 87 and [Mr P]'s 56 not out saw the home side reach 206 for four at stumps after they had slumped to 77 for four... due to some tight bowling from the visitors... The home side managed only 92 runs in the opening two sessions, much to the dismay of a huge Boxing Day crowd of 73,812, the biggest for a day's play in a test in A[US] since 1975. It was also the third-largest Boxing Day attendance ever... The annual Boxing Day test has become a fixture of Melbourne, A[US]n and even world cricket. For decades Victorians have packed their leftover... turkey (plus any remaining cans of beer in the days before it was banned) and marched into the MCG... The first Boxing Day test was in 1950 with 60,486 fans turning up to see the Aussies win a thriller over England by 28 runs. By the mid-1970s the day was already one of the most eagerly awaited on the A[US]n sporting calendar with more than 77,000 turning up in 1974 to see... [AUS's pair of fast bowlers] hurl their thunderbolts at the English. A year later and the record Boxing Day crowd of 85,661 was set as [AUS's fast bowling partnership] destroyed the West Indies to set up an easy... victory. Six years on and the Windies were back... for perhaps the most memorable Boxing Day match of all. After [an AUSn batter] had scored a breathtaking century out of a total of just 198, the delirious Victorians watched [AUS's greatest wicket-taker] reduce the Windies to 10 for four at stumps – the highlight was [a West Indian batting star's] wicket off the last ball of the day. Thousands stayed behind for more than half an hour after stumps chanting [the bowler's] name, celebrating a moment in which many more people than the 39,982 present claim to have witnessed.

...Police arrested 10 people for drunkenness and 161 were thrown out during the [recent AUS]-South Africa one-day international at the MCG... [- when the second of] two collapses against... [South Africa extended AUS]'s lean trot to 10 wins from 31 games in the past 18 months... [-] as troublesome fans threw rubbish when spectators stood up for the Mexican Wave. Police say they'll be more forceful in future.

...Police were not amused to learn that a stalker at the Basin Reserve... during a Shell Cup one-day match... was hired as "entertainment" by Wellington Cricket's controversial marketing division... That was also the game at which the Basin's sound system blared cheeky songs as

Auckland's bats[people walked out to the wicket. The marketing division's maestro] defended the diversion as a success... [However, n]ews of the stunt has angered the district police commander... who... failed to see its entertainment value... [The] Superintendent... questioned how police could identify real streakers if Wellington Cricket turned them on for entertainment. "We would not encourage it at all," [the Superintendent said after the] maestro... confirmed yesterday that [a] stripper... had been hired to run across the pitch clad only in cricket pads and a protective box...

Fancy a game of cricket – with the very best of gear? No problem as long as your pockets are deep or you know a friendly bank manager. The top bats come in at \$499 (10 star willow). Pads \$249.50. Thigh pad \$45. Batting gloves \$119.50. Helmet \$135. Shirt \$45. Trousers \$55. Sweater \$67.50. Shoes \$129. A wicketkeeper can add on another \$135 (for gloves) and \$99.50 (pads). And a bag to put your \$1579 worth of gear in? A snip at \$95. Oh, and a ball [(which in tests can be renewed every 80 overs)]to play with? A mere \$44.50 each to send hurtling at a set of stumps worth \$85. - 1997

A new no-ball law will be in effect during N[Z]'s international cricket games this summer. When a no-ball is called, the batting team will get one run for the no-ball and any runs scored from the ball. Previously, if runs were scored from the no-ball, the no-ball was superseded by the runs scored. The move is being standardised throughout the world to deter the number of no-balls being bowled. [No-balls will still have to be rebowled.]

...The last bastion of cricket umpiring – the sole responsibility to call leg-before-wicket without consulting the third umpire – may be bowled by new computer technology. Massey University has developed a system that shows exactly where a bowled ball would have gone if the bats[person] had not got in the way. Using a three-dimensional reconstruction of the ball's path, processed from video footage of the bowl, a third umpire could make an lbw decision within... 15 seconds, less time than it takes to determine a run-out using slow-motion replays... Such technology would have saved [an AUSn cricketer (r:p1507, ln28)] a fine this week for an out-burst about a [n umpire] who made a controversial lbw decision during a recent Sheffield Shield match... From this season, N[Z] umpires can consult the third umpire for all decisions except lbw... [A former NZ] cricket captain... said anything that improved decision-making should be worth considering. But... if umpires were consistent in their lbw decisions, players could not complain... [NZC's] umpiring manager... said while the Massey project had the [body's] support... the game was not ready for more technology.

...The Aussies wronged us and they know it THE Aussie umpires have shafted us again. [One of them has admitted it] stuffed up when [it didn't give an AUSn opener] out LBW to [my son] in the first over of the test on Thursday. But [the umpire said it] doesn't know why [it didn't give the opener] his marching orders. Everybody in N[Z] knows why. And I'm not going to try to find some nice way of putting it. [The umpire] doesn't deserve it. It was so obviously out there was only one decision [the umpire] could have made. But [the umpire] found – as an A[USn – that it] couldn't give a fellow Aussie out in the first over of a test. [The umpire] had to admit his mistake[because if it can't give someone the finger in that instance, surely it] couldn't give another lbw appeal out. By acknowledging [it stuffed it, the umpire thinks it]'s free to get on with [his job] and all is forgiven. No way. I hope the N[Z] management make it clear [that this umpire] is not to stand in future games between A[US and NZ]. They have to make a stand.

...dark memories end bright career... Five [gals] clapped and one raised her finger in dismissal as[an] international cricket umpire... was driven to jail yesterday after being found guilty of 15 charges of indecent assault. The [umpire], aged 43, pleaded not guilty to 17 charges of indecent assault against girls aged between 10 and 12 while... teaching in a Catholic school in Burnie in 1981 and 1982... [but] was impassive as the verdicts were given. His wife... a former Miss Tasmania, retained her composure in court but later was close to breaking down. During the trial, the court heard that... [the future test umpire], fresh from university, in his first teaching job... used trust and fear to manipulate some girls in his class. [The fresh teacher] also regularly visited some of their parents, winning their friendship and then molesting their daughters... [The alleged victims] gave evidence that [their teacher] put his hand up their shirts or skirts and fondled them in class or other school buildings... Most of the nastiest accounts – including his forcing some of them to stimulate him sexually – occurred in their own bedrooms. On one occasion [the teacher] had volunteered to keep an eye on his victim when both parents had to go out. Another time, when [the teacher] heard her mother approach, [the teacher] told a girl: "This is our secret." ...[the teacher], who has... stood in an A[USn] record of 36 tests, 88 one-day internationals and 68 Sheffield Shield matches... was one of two A[USns] on the I[CC] panel of international umpires. When charged, [the umpire] was about to leave for London to stand in the first England-South Africa test. If [the umpire] was big in the cricket world, [it] was huge in Tasmania where famous people are few. Many knew him... [and the former teacher] was a popular speaker... [However, in] the witness box... [the umpire] frequently did little more than deny any improper touching. To many specifics [the umpire replied that it] did not remember... [The umpire agreed it] was an affectionate person and... was "touchy-feely," but denied ever doing more than patting a girl on the back or shoulder for a job well done. It was a question of whether the jury of nine [guys and three gals] believed, beyond reasonable doubt, the... stories... [which arose at] a class reunion... in... 1997... Soon after, the police started investigations, although they had been approached earlier by one... of the... [victims. In related news,] England's Marylebone Cricket Club, still responsible for the laws of the game, broke with 212 years of tradition by announcing their first 10 [gal members including a] former England captain... [who has campaigned for gals] to be admitted to the previously all-[guy] club since first applying for membership in 1991. And the first officially-sanctioned MCC [gals'] team will play its first match on May 11.

...Big game hysteria can bowl you over for good The sight of [Zimbabwe's opening bowler] tearing down the cricket pitch may strike fear into N[Z]'s batters] – but if you are a sports fan watching today's one-dayer against Zimbabwe, it could literally strike you dead. Dutch medical researchers have found that [guys] are more likely to suffer a heart attack or stroke on the day of big sporting events, probably because of stress. The number of cardiovascular deaths on June 22, 1996 – the day the Dutch football team were knocked out of the European championship – was about 50[%] above average. Increased mental and emotional stress, heavy drinking, overeating and smoking are believed to have triggered the heart attacks, and such factors are often combined when watching big sporting events, say the researchers. [The]NZ Heart Foundation medical director... urged those prone to heart disease to take care. "I imagine if you're at a one-day cricket event, eating a lot, drinking a lot, screaming a lot and getting excited, that group may have an increased risk." The researchers found no corresponding increase in deaths among [gals]. "Either we are more controlled or we get more excited about other things,"... said... [the director. A former NZ captain turned c]ricket commentator... suggested that an electro-cardiograph machine be installed on the boundary... "When you're feeling a bit tense you can go down there and be tested."

...If there is such a thing as the best job in the world, then cricket commentating is about as close as you can get. Consider the working conditions: the commentator is tasked with the most demanding of obligations – watching sport for money. Some sports are so whizz-bang that the commentator switches on... blasts for 80 minutes and that is the end of the matter. In the case of cricket it is all done in slow motion. Nothing ever happens in a hurry... and what with all the interruptions for drinks, lunches and teabreaks, the commentator has more than ample time to catnap during the day, or even pursue another career if... upwardly mobile. Whether on television or radio the commentators are naturally provided with the best view in the ground and are plied with drinks of a rather more robust character than those delivered to the players. Lunches of quality and other delights are available at the click of a finger, while the average punter down below has to forage for hotdogs and eskimo pies at outrageous prices. Besides these attractions are the instant replay monitors, and of course, the ultimate privilege, via the wonders of the audio age, of being privy to the most intimate exchanges between players and umpires, many of which would make life unbearable for the Broadcasting Complaints Authority if, in error, they were unleashed on the public ear. All this is attractive enough, is it not? But there is more. No commentator need be an early riser... The astute commentator can live it up most of the night and still be in reasonable shape by the time play starts... The game starts at the civilised hour of 10.30am and no sooner has it started than it's time for morning tea... Cricket also happens to be very much a fair-weather occupation... When it rains, the commentator is paid to do nothing. It is a bit like working on the railways or for the postal service before the

ravages of... restructuring and silly new words like productivity... and... Rogernomics... began to worm their way into the workplace... The company is good, the humour is always near the surface[and] the chance to wax lyrical... about the setting, the... habits of... seagulls or the idiosyncrasies of some of the spectators picked out by the camera, all go to make for an occupation that can only be dreamed about. Opportunities to score points at others' expense abound. The chance to mock... cricket's more stolid personalities is not to be passed up lightly... Life as a cricket commentator might have a few minor challenges but when you look at it objectively, there is nothing to compare with it. Why can't we all have a job like this?

...[a player] has no plans to quit after becoming the most successful bowler in West Indies test cricket this week. "People have been saying for a while I should pack it in and maybe they will be saying it more now the record has gone," said the 36-year-old veteran after taking his tally to 379 in the opening test against South Africa... [The fast bowler]'s 4-48 haul on the second day took him beyond [his country]'s previous best of 376, reached in 1991... [by Malcolm Marshall, who is now the] West Indies coach... [The fast bowler] moved to fourth on the all-time world list, headed by [an Indian's] '434 in 131 matches. In comparison, the West Indian's total was reached in 103 matches. In second place on the all-time world list is a NZ bowler (431 wickets in 86 tests) and in seventh place is AUS's greatest wicket-taker (355/70)'. The West Indian is the only bowler amongst the top seven still playing].

...IN THE 1980s, Marshall was the most dangerous fast bowler in the world. In 81 tests [Malcolm] took 376 wickets at an average of 20.94 runs per wicket... Until [a]Jamaican... surpassed his mark this year, Marshall had been the [4th-placed]... wicket-taker in the major version of the game... Marshall was a lithe athlete with a whippy action who so impressed the West Indies selectors that [it] was chosen for his first tour – to India in 1978 – on the strength of only one first-class appearance. That was for Barbados against Jamaica where [the debutant] took an impressive 6 for 77 at Bridgetown. From 22 yards away, Marshall, with his sprint to the stumps and his front-on action, was described by [a]former England opener... as "fearsome" and "certainly one of the best fast bowlers I ever faced." Away from the middle, though[, Malcolm] was "one of the nicest blokes you could meet." [The former England opener was lucky it] did not play against Marshall when [the West Indian] was at the peak of his powers. His English counterparts did during their tour of the Caribbean in 1986 and in the series [Malcolm] took 27 wickets for the measly price of 17.85 per scalp. Although never picked for his batting, Marshall was good enough to score 10 half-centuries in tests and averaged 18.42 an innings. But with the ball in hand... Marshall was an indispensable member of a side that be-strode international cricket from the early '80s to 1995. In 16 years, the team did not lose a test series. In England, [Marshall] was an important member of Hampshire where [it] played and coached during 14 seasons. It was his bowling in 1982 for the county that cemented his place in the West Indies test side. During that summer, Marshall took 134 wickets – the most collected by a county bowler in a 22-match championship. His last appearance on the international scene was... when [Malcolm] coached the West Indies. While... [coaching overseas Malcolm], aged 41... had an operation on a tumour, but never recovered and died [last week]in Bridgetown's Queen Elizabeth Hospital from colon cancer. As one report from the Caribbean put it, his death was mourned by [PM]s to post[ies].

...Cricket's greatest ever player... celebrated his... birthday yesterday amid the sort of fanfare usually reserved for royalty. More than 1300 guests attended a dinner in his home town of Adelaide while other celebrations were taking place at his birthplace Cootamundra and the town where... Sir Donald Bradman... grew up, Bowral... [The PM] led the flood of tributes by lauding Bradman as the greatest living A[US]n.

...Sir Donald Bradman... head[s] a list of the best test batting... performances announced by *Wisden* yesterday. Bradman, regarded as the best bats[person] to have played the game, tops the list for his 270 made against England in the Melbourne third test of the 1936-37 series. His innings enabled A[US] to narrow a 0-2 deficit and eventually go on to win the series. Two Bradman innings figure among the top 10. His unbeaten 299 against South Africa in Adelaide in the 1931-32 series is rated fifth in the all-time list. [The current West Indies captain] is placed second for his 153 not out in Bridgetown during the West Indies' 2-2 home series draw against... [AUS two years ago. Hi]s 375, the world record for the highest test innings, made in St John's, Antigua, against England in 1993-94, is 10th... *Wisden*... took the most exhaustive set of parameters ever used in the cricketing world. "The beauty of these ratings is that there is no bias. The only way to get in is to score," [the]... director of *Wisden* Online, said at the global launch of *Wisden* 100 in Mumbai... [Incidentally,] Bradman, who turned 92 last month... has lost an appeal to stop local businesses, including a sex shop, using his name after a bid to honour him in his home town backfired. [Its m]ayor... said the West Torrens council had been forced to reject a personal appeal from Bradman to scrap a plan to name the road from Adelaide's airport to the city Sir Donald Bradman Drive. "The council had very firm legal advice that we would be liable for compensation to all those businesses that have... got ready for the name change and altered all their stationary... etc,"... West Torrens council planned to rename the road to honour Bradman who had a test average of 99.94 runs on his retirement. But the move sparked controversy when a business[person] wanted to rename her restaurant Bradman's Cafe on the Drive. [The mayor said it] believed the move by a sex shop on the road to register the name *Erotica* on Bradman was "the final straw" for Bradman...

DON'S GONE: Donald George Bradman was a... humble... skinny Babe Ruth... with... arthritis. His test batting average was anything but average – 99.94. His skill was such that [the Don] sometimes played with his eyes shut, his hands tied behind his back or standing on his head. On those days[, however, the Don] was dismissed for a duck. "The Don" died in Adelaide last Sunday, aged 92. A[US] is in mourning. Sports Talk is too.

...The golden light of N[Z] cricket has gone out. Bert Sutcliffe, a prince among world cricketers, had been fighting a long illness with his typical good humour and unquenchable spirit. Early yesterday, [Bert] quietly eased off his gloves, tucked his bat under his arm – and left... for [a]higher pavilion... le[aving] us with the memories. What memories! There was the teenager who went to his big cricket matches at Eden Park by ferry and tram, and later the great bats[person] who probably deserved transport to Lord's by royal carriage... There was the left-hande[r]... of sublime and classical style who scored hundreds and double hundreds and treble hundreds like a major symphony orchestra in perfect pitch. That was mirrored by the [person], who, in his later life as a Rothmans representative, told the yarn of what [it] reckoned was his greatest moment in cricket. At Tauranga one Saturday morning, Sutcliffe was guest umpire at a youngsters' match. One late bat[ter] was the bunny who had not scored a run in his first eight matches. [The boy] nicked one. At Sutcliffe's command [the bunny] ran to the bowler's end ([it] was safe, no chance I would run him out), and kept on running, past Sutcliffe, past the boundary, down the road, all the way home, yelling "Mum, I scored a run." The discussions – Sutcliffe was not the kind of person you would argue about – will arise again as to whether [Bert] was the best bats[person] in N[Z]'s 70-odd years in test cricket. Whether [Bert] was a better left-hander in what you might term the modern generation than our own Martin Donnelly...

Tributes to the great N[Z] cricketer... – who died... aged 77, in a South Auckland hospice – ...flowed with the same grace and volume as the thousands of runs... Bert Sutcliffe... scored in a first-class career spanning 24 seasons. Martin Donnelly, who died recently and was often compared to Sutcliffe when argument raged over who was N[Z]'s greatest left-handed bats[person], once said: "If I had to pick a team from all the players I saw, my opener... would be Sutcliffe. Bert was the one player we had who could truly be compared to Bradman." ...one of the many younger players who toured with Sutcliffe, then aged 41, on the arduous six-month tour of India, Pakistan and England in 1965, batted with Sutcliffe in the first innings of the second test in Calcutta. "Bert scored 151 – which was 150 more than I got... I never saw him at his prime but I knew that if [it] could, at 41 years of age in front of a very noisy crowd and with temperature in the 90s, score 150 [it] must have been a great player." ...In *Wisden*... it was said: "Figures alone do not convey an adequate picture of the capabilities of this well-built, good-looking, golden-haired bats[person]. Supremely confident and possessing classic style[, Sutcliffe] was a master of all strokes." ...[the former NZ] coach and captain... who remains the greatest run-scorer in N[Z] first-class cricket with 34,346 runs at 49.70 – compared with Sutcliffe's 17,447 at 47.41... [(i)n his 42-match

test career, Sutcliffe scored 2727 runs... includ[ing] five... centuries... at an average of 40.1[...]. – yesterday said: “People were surprised by his power for such a little guy.” [The top run-scorer and brother of a top NZ golfer] said Sutcliffe used to watch him bat in the Otago Boys’ High School nets when [it] was a third former. “I was a bit young to fully appreciate him. I remember seeing him play at Carisbrook. People were in awe of him as a player.”

...By the time everyone had given up and splashed their way out of Carisbrook, not only a day’s play in the first cricket test had been lost, but a fair portion of good-will as well. For a game yet to start, and being played between two teams yet to be named, this first Bank of N[Z] test between India and the Kiwis has already seen a bit of action. It became more apparent yesterday after the first day’s play was officially declared a washout at 3.20 pm... India, who could never be accused of putting in overtime on this tour, yesterday turned down... [the match referee]’s invitation to play an extra day... (thereby still playing a five-day test)... This was just 24 hours after rejecting an experimental rule which allows for lost time to be made up on following days, and for ground floodlights to be used when necessary. The experimental I[CC] law requires the agreement of both teams before it can be invoked, and while N[Z] were anxious to play an extra day or make up some time over the next four, India were just as keen not to... [The NZ] coach... climbed into the tourists over their refusal to play an extra day on Wednesday... “I simply don’t understand them,”... [it] said of the Indians’ stance. “Why wouldn’t you want to play? They’re the favourites, and I thought they’d be keen to get out there as quickly as possible and exert their dominance.” ...India have been in N[Z] for only a fortnight but have already refused N[ZC]’s suggestion of bowling a minimum of 110 overs a day in[stead of the usual 90. India’s coach]... said... “We want to stick to the ICC test match laws that we’re familiar with... As far as the lights are concerned, our experience in India is that the effect in daylight is quite unreal, and very difficult to cope with.”

...THERE was a little ray of sunshine in gloomy Dunedin yesterday. The most gifted cricketer of our time, arguably the second best in history, spoke publicly for the first time... The little Indian who waves his bat like a magic wand is every bit the class act off the field as... on it. Denied the chance over the first two days at least of this... test, to see the master bats[person] in the middle, the media was blessed with his appearance in front of the microphone... [The] 25-year-old who is revered in India... is a private individual who prefers to let his willow do the talking. But yesterday [it] explained to us ordinary folk a little of what makes up his other worldly gifts... Dressed casually in a T-shirt and cap, [the 25-year-old] sat and talked on a range of subjects, from his thrill at meeting Sir Donald Bradman earlier this year, to the special feeling fatherhood has thrust upon him, to his status as saviour of a nation... The voice is quiet and... well spoken, considered and polite... Yes, the world’s greatest active cricketer, certainly its finest bats[person] of this era, is a nice guy, too. If indeed 1989 at Carisbrook is to be repeated and the test abandoned without a ball being bowled, it will still have been a privilege to be here when... the magician from Mumbai (Bombay) spoke. [The magician] even sympathised. “It’s certainly frustrating,” [the magician] said of the lack of activity on the cricket front. Heavens, at least [the magician] hasn’t been waiting to see himself bat like we have. Already with 16 test centuries to his name among his 4593 runs (average 54.03) the world is at his still young feet. If it is possible, [the magician] is even better in the one-day game where [it] single-handedly wins games. Our [cricketer] with the Midas touch[(r:p1509, lns11-2)], was emphatic we were seeing the arrival of the second finest bats[person] to have played... “[The Indian]’s approaching 5000 test runs, h[a]s got more one-day centuries than anyone else and over the next 10 or even 15 years if [it keeps going, wi]ll beat every record there is except one – and that’s Bradman’s 99.94 average...” As good as this guy is, [the magician] has never scored a 200... But don’t imagine for a minute this [makes him] unhappy... As a youngster [the magician] was inspired by India’s World Cup success of 1983. [The youngster] played cricket in the streets, but watching that successful team taught him something important. “That was the time I really decided that I can do something in cricket. This time [at next year’s World Cup in England] I hope the team will produce the same performance. We’ve played well in the past in English conditions.” But it is N[Z] conditions that concern him now, particularly Dunedin’s inclement weather... [It’s denying him the chance to master an] attack which doesn’t send shivers down the international cricket world’s spine[. Editor’s note: ‘Although the game was widespread in NZ and had a large following, the country’s teams were notably unsuccessful during the first 100 years or so. NZ’s first test win was against the West Indies at Auckland in 1956. In 1960 and 1961 NZ won an official test against the MCC at Wellington, and twice beat South Africa to draw a series there. NZ first beat India at Christchurch in 1968, and in 1969 NZ won its first test series – against Pakistan – winning one test and drawing two. The first win against AUS came in 1974. Since then NZ’s become more of a force in world cricket, especially in the one-day matches developed as television spectacles since the second half of the 1970s.’]

...A bewildered N[Z] team almost produced one of the great turnarounds in one-day cricket... in a cliff-hanger at McLean Park last night... But in the end the Indians – who joined for a world record of eight run outs in a match – scrambled home by scoring the winning runs from the second-to-last ball of the BNZ match to level the series 1-1. Asked by [the] Indian captain... to bat first on the hard and reasonably-grassed pitch the Black Caps quickly went into a giddy spiral... It was a shambles. Only pathetic Indian fielding enabled N[Z] to edge beyond 200. And when [an opener smacked NZ’s opening bowler (r:my son, p1508, lns22)] through backward point to the boundary from the first ball of the Indian innings the pain became even greater. The comic opera then threatened to become a full-blown farce when [NZ’s other opening bowler – who was a replacement for NZ’s injured strike bowler] – hobbled off with a hamstring injury after bowling just 14 deliveries... But this is a resolute Kiwi outfit... and [the game made it] to the last over... with [India needing] eight runs to win with two wickets in hand. [One Indian batter] scored a single from the first. [His batting partner made] a swing and a miss, another swing and an edge for four... A single and then a two and an amazing victory[was achieved] – eight hours and eight minutes after the first ball had been bowled.

...Tuesday night’s [final match of the series] was the 50th ODI between India and N[Z], with 21 now won by the Kiwis, and 27 by India... [By the way, when the Indian team arrive back home they will find themselves at the centre of a religious argument after a] top Hindu priest... asked cricket-crazy India to give up the game, blaming it for the deaths of thousands of cows... [The priest] said cricket balls were made of cowhide and went against one of Hinduism’s main tenets – that cow slaughtering was sinful. [The priest has] called for a national campaign against the offending factories and said manufacturers should find “alternative sources” of leather if the game was to continue in India[(where, when AUS last toured, ground ‘entry at Delhi cost 1000 rupees – which could feed a family of slum dwellers in the city for weeks’)].

...Politics and cricket made an explosive mixture in Bombay this week when a mob of about 70 right-wing Hindus burst into the Indian cricket board office and smashed the fittings, including some of the nation’s prized silverware. The vandalism was to protest against the decision to allow the first test series against Pakistan on home soil in more than a decade. Protesters promise to follow it up by disrupting the first test... next week.

...[an] Indian legspinner... equalled one of the most famous records in test cricket yesterday when [it] took all 10 wickets [for 74 runs] in the second innings of the second test against Pakistan. The 28-year-old computer software engineer [(r:ln49 above)] became only the second player in test history to take 10 wickets in an innings as India tied the historic series 1-1 with a thumping 212-run win in New Delhi... [T]he first... player to have previously taken all 10 wickets in a test innings was [an English bowler] – who snared 10 for 53 against A[US] at Old Trafford in 1956. In the first series between the two teams on Indian soil for 12 years... [the legspinner ended] the match with figures of 14 for 149 off 51 overs... Ironically, his match figures rank just third on the Indian wicket-taking lists, behind... [someone] who took 16 for 136 on debut against the West Indies in 1987-88, and [another bowler] – who took 14 for 124 against... [AUS in 1959-60. On that occasion, the bowler took ‘9-69 in one innings. At least 7 other players have taken 9 wickets in a test innings, including the English bowler (9-37 in the other AUSn innings at Manchester in 1956). Another English bowler holds the 3rd-best record –] 9-28 v South Africa, Johannesburg, 1895-96... [The legspinner], who now has 234 [test] wickets... has taken 10 wickets in a match twice and five wickets in an innings on 12 occasions. “It’s a dream,” the [player]-of-the-match said.

...[for] a decade, a trip to Pakistan by an Indian P[M] has been out of the question. But thanks to the recent India-Pakistan cricket series... – ...referred to by the local media as “cricket diplomacy” – ...relations between the two countries have thawed and... [the Indian PM] is heading across the border – by bus... after an invitation by... [the Pakistani PM. Analysts say the Indian PM]’s trip has raised hopes of improved bilateral relations... [D]espite threats by Hindu militants, the cricket went ahead and a cross-border bus service is to begin this weekend... A team of 35 Indian MPs has also concluded a goodwill tour to Pakistan, the first ever, and negotiations to buy electricity from Islamabad are at an advanced stage.

...A mournful [West Indian batting great and current team manager] revealed his sheer despair at the latest devastation of West Indies cricket yesterday after his once-feared side equalled the worst run of defeats in their history... [The] demoralised team have sunk to such depths that by early afternoon in Cape Town they had succumbed to their fourth consecutive test defeat of the tour, this time by 149 runs, despite South Africa being without [its top strike bowler (r:p1505, ln4)] for the entire second innings. The margin between the teams, given the temporary absence of the world’s leading strike bowler, suggests that the tour will end later this month in the ultimate humiliation, the first 5-0 series whitewash since the West Indies began playing test cricket 71 years ago. A tour which almost had to be aborted before it began when the players went on strike for a better deal has served only to highlight the increasingly bankrupt state of the Caribbean game, especially their batting. The collapsing top order make England’s appear positively stable in contrast... [The specialist batters] have folded with such regularity that not one has made a century in the series and not once in eight innings have they totalled 300... “I hold my head and try not to commit suicide,” [the manager] said, pausing for a sardonic chuckle at the thought of such a preposterous over-reaction... Despite leading a team that terrorised the cricket world like no other since... [WW2, the manager] knows how it feels to lose four tests on the trot. [The manager was the captain] when it last happened to the West Indies, during the winter of 1975-76 when... A[US] won the six-match series 5-1... “When I was playing I could go out there and do something about it... We weren’t a bad side on that A[US]n tour so I wasn’t worried. We were not as professional as we should have been... So we employed trainers and made ourselves more resolute.” Resolute is about the last adjective to be attributed to... [the current batch of West Indian batters (including, during this tour, their captain – r:p1509, ln35 – one of the most resolute batters of all time). The manager] could never have envisaged such nightmare scenarios as those at Newlands which undid the team’s two leading... [batters, one of whom] ran himself out in the first innings by hardly running at all until it was too late and [the captain], of all people, doliied a return catch... [● In AUS, the home side] was in total command at stumps on the first day of the second Ashes cricket test after England... self-destructed... in just 39 overs after being sent into bat... England collapsed to 112 all out on the opening day... in Perth... Only four English[batters] made it to double figures as A[US]’s pace bowlers ran riot... In reply, A[US] was 150-3... England’s total was its lowest ever in a test at the WACA, eclipsing their 123 in the 1994-95 Ashes series. A[US] won that match by 329 runs.

...“I still have a lot to learn,”... [the s]pin bowler... ominously told reporters after... celebrating his 300th test wicket... The... 28-year-old [AUSn (r:p1508, ln17), who claimed]... 11 wickets at the S[ydney Cricket Ground]... is young enough to go on to topple India’s [test wicket] record-holder...

Smoking star’s foul outburst at young fans A[US]N cricket’s bad boy... hit a young Kiwi fan for six after [the fan] snapped a photo of the spinner sneaking a cigarette. [AUS’s second-highest test wicket-taker] – paid \$239,000 last year by a health care company to quit smoking – turned on [the fan] at Thursday’s one-day international in Wellington after the 15-year-old took the photo. “[The spinner] kept asking me what I was going to do with the photo and I said, ‘Nothing’. [The spinner] said, ‘Either you give the camera to me or I’ll get security to take it and smash it’.” [The 15-year-old said the AUSn]... threatened to have him and his friends thrown out of the ground... “[The spinner] was going ballistic, swearing and screaming at us,”... [The AUSn] called one friend... a “cock-head”... [The friends], who both play in Wellington’s Heretaunga College 1st XI, were taking photos of their cricketing idols with a \$20 disposable camera. [The 28-year-old AUSn] was captured having a cigarette in the smoke-free players’ enclosure at Wellington’s \$130 million WestpacTrust Stadium... When play in the match against N[Z] was rained out, [the AUSn] complained to security staff who searched [the 15-year-old]’s bag. But another friend had gone home with the camera... [so the spinner] slung the bag over his shoulder and said: “Maybe I’ll just hold on to this for safekeeping until the camera turns up.” ...[at that stage cock-head’s] father... called the cops... Police took the bag off [the cricketer]’s shoulder and handed it back to [the 15-year-old, who later said it still admired the spinner]’s ability. “But I think... [the spinner’s] a loser. It’s supposed to be a role model, and kids are supposed to look up to him. [It] shouldn’t go around mouthing off at his fans. If [the spinner] hadn’t said anything about it, the photo would just be in a photo album now[– instead of a newspaper –] and nothing would be done about it.” But... yesterday [the AUSn – who has signed a ‘one year deal with English county side Hampshire for £100,000 (the largest deal in county history)’] – [denied verbally abusing the teenagers... It was a “minor misunderstanding,”... In a statement last night, [the spinner] apologised for any misunderstanding.

...Members of our family on holiday overseas were unfortunate enough to share accommodation with [a then young NZ wicket-keeper] and his team-mates on tour, and they told of the humiliation and embarrassment they felt as N[Z]ers offended by their outrageous behaviour. Their rude and arrogant manner upset all the other visitors staying at the hotel. You have to ask how we are supposed to feel proud of [sportspeople]... representing our country when they act like that? Thank goodness his days of representing our country are [soon to be gone]...

THE BLACK Caps wicketkeeper... wants pitches to be doctored for the up-coming [test] series against A[US]. The wicketkeeper says the local groundspeople should prepare slow pitches to slow the pace of [the young AUSn who]... was clocked at 154.1-kmh during his test debut... – 0.21kmh slower than Pakistan’s [speedster (NZ’s all-rounder – r:p1510, ln45 –)] is the fastest Black Cap... at 144kmh... [while the lesser wicket-taker of the retired pair of AUSn fast bowlers – r:p1507, ln60 –] is regarded as the world’s fastest bowler ever, clocking [unconfirmed] speeds in excess of 160kmh[–] ...for the three tests [following the] six one-dayers. “All the other nations prepare wickets that favour their bowlers and we’d be mad not to do the same,”... [The wicketkeeper], who turns 29 today, said snail’s pace pitches would also frustrate A[US]’s free-scoring bats[people] who are used to playing off the back foot on hard, bouncy wickets. Meanwhile... the most successful test wicketkeeper[last year] with 40 dismissals... [– who l]ast month... completed a low degree... [– believes it] has the ability and desire to remain in the Black Caps for at least five more seasons.

...In memoriam: The spirit of cricket, died after a long and painful illness... much loved and sadly missed. If you’re wearing black in memory of the dear departed, then join the club. Forget the umpiring issue for now. The topic is sports[personship. AUS]n failure to allow [NZ’s wicketkeeper] to bat on after a vicious bouncer knocked his helmet on to the stumps is living proof that the pernicious spirit of underarm (and bodyline) is still alive. Match that against the... hoonery of the crowd on the... terraces, then the knife attack on the Aussie buses, and the sad... picture is complete. A once great game is now apparently permanently in the hands of money-mad professionals and idiot fans who mimic UK soccer nutters...

I WAS at the ill-fated cricket international at Carisbrook. What they say is true. The behaviour was a disgrace. Uncouthness, bad language, attempts to maim, abuse, arrogance, obnoxiousness and cheating were all apparent in abundance. The behaviour among the crowd on the terraces wasn’t much better either, but then that’s hardly surprising considering the amount of alcohol that had been encouraged to be consumed. And why should drunken spectators be expected to behave better than international sports[people], we might ask? The authorities have proceeded to huff and puff. No more internationals at Carisbrook they threaten. What exactly was expected, I can’t imagine. The game was deliberately scheduled for orientation week so as to seduce the “scarfies” while they still had cash in their pockets and weren’t hamstrung by study commitments. Add to that the nature of more than [7] hours encompassing a warm afternoon and evening and you have a recipe for shenanigans. I fancy that indignation would have been replaced by the odd tut-tut had there been another 10,000 paying customers. In reality, the most dangerous place to be when the cans started flying was in the corporate boxes. It’s hard to judge the flight of a can as it rebounds off the inside of a plate glass window! But the A[US]ns’ condemnation of the crowd is a bit hard to bear. I happened to be at the SCG a few weeks ago when they demolished the Pakistanis and

noticed plenty of jetsam flying on to the field. [The AUSn captain yesterday] commented: “We put up such a great show, we scored 310 runs and gave 100%. Then as soon as a decision doesn’t go the crowd’s way they try and wreck the game.” Surely [it] didn’t really believe having the home side battered into submission by anyone, let alone the old enemy, was liable to pacify the assembled mob. I shudder to think of the reaction in Sydney if it were the Black Caps inflicting such humiliation upon their... hosts (mind you that is stretching the limits of the imagination a little).

...A[US] became the first team in test cricket to record 12 consecutive wins after trouncing the West Indies by an innings and 27 runs in Perth yesterday. The tourists were dismissed for 173 in their [2]nd innings and slumped to their [2nd 3]-day defeat in as many matches to give A[US] a 2-0 lead in the five-match series. The A[US]n winning streak broke the former record of 11 wins enjoyed by [the manager]’s West Indies team in the mid-1980s... The victory followed A[US]’s innings and 116-run first test win at Brisbane. It was the West Indies’ 14th defeat in 16 away tests and the fourth inside three days in six games. The visitors now face the possibility of a sixth straight series defeat away from home... [AUS’s record run began with a win] by 10 wickets in Harare [over Zimbabwe, followed by 3-0 series win over Pakistan and India at home, then their 3-0 series win in NZ].

...AUS thrashed the West Indies by 352 runs yesterday in an embarrassing mis-match... [The new West Indies’ captain – whose appointment was made to relieve pressure on the team’s star batsperson (r:p1511, ln20 – who made a duck in the second innings of this test, to go)... with scores of 0, 4... 0... and... 17... [in the first two tests) –] admitted after the match that [it] was struggling to cope with the pressures of leading an unsuccessful side... [The West Indies’ captain – who] scored a duck in both innings... [– denied it] was personally intimidated by the A[US]ns, but quickly added: “I can’t speak for everybody in the team. What I will say is that this [playing A[US] in AUS]] is the biggest challenge in international cricket. I think as a player, this is what you should want, to be tested to the limit.” Sadly for [the captain], the bulk of his bat[ters]... are failing the test dismally.

...A[US]’s historic 5-0 demolition of the once-mighty West Indies was just a warm-up for even greater challenges that lie ahead, says [the team’s captain. Hi]s team completed their first 5-0 series win over any country in 79 years in taking the final test in Sydney on Saturday. But the ever-practical [captain] was quick to put a lid on the team’s celebrations. “The West Indies was an important series but the Indian series will be the big one and the one we’ll be judged on.” A[US] in recent years have beaten every major cricket-playing nation in the world both home and away but have not won a series in India for 30 years... Meanwhile... A[US] will play the West Indies and Zimbabwe in a one-day series starting on Thursday.

...Just a day before his moment of truth arrived before cricket’s investigators, [the brother of AUS’s captain] yesterday belted the highest one-day score ever by an A[US]n. His innings of 173 carried A[US] to a massive 338 for six in the second of the best-of-three one-day cricket finals series against the West Indies. His innings surpassed... [an opener’s] score of 154, set in Melbourne against Sri Lanka two years ago. [The brother]’s performance was remarkable given the pressure [it] was under on the eve of his interview with [the AUS]n Cricket Board investigator... over his alleged involvement with illegal book-makers. The 35-year-old will today defend himself against the allegations that have hung over him all summer – whether [it] accepted a \$US20,000... gift from [an]Indian bookmaker... in 1993 to provide team, weather and pitch information. That appeared the furthest thing on his mind as [it] punished the West Indies’ attack with an array of elegant, attacking shots. His runs came off only 148 balls... On the way, [the brother] became the first A[US]n to chalk up 8000 one-day international runs. The only players above him are... [a retired] West Indian... and Sri Lankan[(r:p1505, ln37), India’s captain, plus India’s magician, whose] 9899 runs... top... the list. It was [the brother]’s 17th one-day century[, placing him] equal third on the all time list with only [the magician] (27) and Pakistan[’s] opener... (19) ahead of him.

...A malfunctioning scoreboard almost robbed [a NZ batsperso]n of his greatest moment in one-day cricket. The 24-year-old right-hander blazed the country’s equal-fastest century as N[Z] beat Pakistan by 138 runs in the fourth one-day international in Christchurch yesterday, levelling the series 2-all. [The right-hander]’s unbeaten 102 off 75 balls equalled the mark set by [NZ’s all-rounder] two summers ago against India, and is the equal 12th-fastest in history[(the fastest was in 37 balls by a Pakistani). The right-hander] reached the milestone in a dramatic last over in which 24 runs were scored, including three sixes. But the century was almost missed because the broken-down scoreboard and a misinterpreted ground announcer’s message had [the right-hander] – on 97 after the fourth ball of the last over – thinking [it] had already reached [his century]. After a quick bat-waving celebration, [the right-hander] reverse-swept the next ball for a single, which would have left him stranded on 98 had [Pakistan’s] [off-spinner]... not managed to finish his over with two no-balls. This enabled him to get back on strike and smash the eventual last ball of the innings over mid-wicket for six, bringing up his first century in 83 ODIs.

...Pakistan[’s quirky] off-spinner... is keen to add a match-winning spell with the ball to his record-setting deeds with the bat. The 24-year-old sheikh of tweak was unbeaten on 98 when stumps were drawn on the fourth day of the second test against N[Z] last night, and believes there is a chance to further the home side’s misery when [it] has a bowl today. [The off-spinner], who shared in a seventh-wicket partnership of 248 with [his team’s] double-century maker... as Pakistan pushed on to 561 for seven at stumps, said afterwards there was still an outside chance for a result. “Cricket is a funny game and anything can happen,”... His highest test score allowed Pakistan to build a lead of 85 and reach an unassailable position in the match and the series, which will continue next week in Hamilton with the third and final test... [His seventh-wicket partner] became the second player in the test to post a double-century after [a NZer when it] struck 203, in the process bringing up his highest test score and ensuring that his team would avoid the follow-on mark... The N[Z]er with the unlabelled bat went for another lengthy stroll through the record books as [it] struck an unbeaten 204... [on] the second day of the... test at Christchurch. It was his second double century in tests following his 214 on debut and allowed the home side to post... 476 in their first innings... [and made him] just the second N[Z]er (behind the country’s top run-scorer)] to score two test double centuries... [The NZe]r’s effort was also the highest score by a N[Z] batsperso]n against Pakistan, eclipsing [a former captain’s (r:p1508, ln18)] 175 at the Basin Reserve, and was just the second double-century scored by a N[Z]er at Jade Stadium...

[The right-hander who last month equalled the fastest century scored by a NZer in an ODI] put the icing on the cake of N[Z]’s runaway win over Pakistan in the third cricket test with a world-record batting spree at Hamilton yesterday. Seeking quick runs before the first innings declaration, the 24-year-old... smashed 26 runs off one over from [a] part-time spinner... as [it] blazed his way to 98 off 97 balls in N[Z]’s eventual total of 407 for four. The previous record was 24, held jointly by five players. After [their] skipper... declared, N[Z] bowled Pakistan out for 114...

[NZ’s skipper rates the] record-breaking win over Pakistan as the most complete performance in which [it] has been involved as captain. N[Z] romped to an astonishing innings and 185-run victory in the final test... to square the series, leaving [him] over the moon at his side’s improvement through the year. It was the biggest win in N[Z]’s test history, surpassing the margin of the 1983-84 side, who... knock[ed] England over in a couple of days and w[o]n by an innings and 132 runs... N[Z]’s longest and most successful captain, has now extended his winning record to 13 wins from 36 tests, and was understandably in upbeat mood after his side wrapped up [the] match with a day to spare... [The captain] acknowledged how helpful it was to win the toss. The pitch had played a part in N[Z]’s taking the early initiative. N[Z] were buried in the first test on a turning portable pitch and could gain no advantage on another portable pitch at Jade Stadium, which turned out to be a bats[person]’s paradise.

...The love-hate cricketing relationship between India and Pakistan has come to the boil again with India’s refusal to play against Pakistan for the fourth time ...in [recent]... months for reasons other than cricket. This week, the Indian Government refused permission for their national side to play in the Sharjah Cup next month against Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Now N[Z] have agreed to step in as the third country in the tournament. The angry reaction of the chair[person] of the Pakistan Cricket Board... – who declared that Pakistan would never play India again – is understandable and so is [the Pakistani coach]’s comments that “Indian politicians were using the popularity of cricket to exaggerate the border tension in the disputed territory of Kashmir.” Politics, and not cricket, has sadly dictated India’s decision to sever... their cricket relationship with their neighbour... India... refused to fulfil their commitments to visit Pakistan for [a] test series... and they even snubbed Pakistan’s gesture to play in a

couple of charity games in India in aid of Ahmedabad earthquake victims. Contrary to that, Pakistan have always showed their willingness to mend fences and play India at any venue of their choice. Ignoring a threat by Hindu extremists to disrupt their visit to India, Pakistan embarked on the tour of 1998... [T]he Hindu Prishad's leader, and his followers even threatened to release snakes on the field wherever Pakistan played in India. That prompted the Board of Control for Cricket in India to hire a horde of snake charmers in case the threat was carried out. Pakistan downed India in the first test at Chennai... lost the second at Delhi, when [an Indian] bagged all 10 second-innings wickets, and won the third in Calcutta when, during the final day's play, 60,000 people were evacuated from the Eden Gardens ground after they had set fire to one stand to try to deprive Pakistan of a win. Barring that incident, the Pakistanis were warmly greeted everywhere they played. That, indeed, speaks volumes for the... Indian... crowd's passion for the game... In 49 years of test cricket between the two, there have been 12 test series, comprising just 47 matches. The... ICC's 10-year plan, for each country to play all the others on the test roster, has taken a severe jolt.

...N[Z] umpires are unlikely to stand in home tests from the end of next season. And they may have limited opportunities to be appointed at all under a new system to be introduced... A proposal to develop an elite panel of eight full-time contracted umpires to stand in most test matches could be operating by April next year, says the ICC. At present, independent test match umpires are selected from a 20-strong panel nominated by all test-playing countries except Bangladesh. One neutral umpire and one home umpire stand in each match. The new system would involve a flying squad of the world's best umpire's. They would qualify for the panel on the basis of merit, seniority, status and – not least – marks awarded by test captains. One of the biggest changes would be that two neutral umpires would stand at each venue. Another group of up to 30 emerging umpires would be groomed to eventually join the elite panel... N[Z]'s national umpiring manager, said that it would be more difficult for N[Z]ers to be appointed to tests. It was sad that umpires would be deprived of standing in their own country. But for the good of the game the alterations were needed... "We're in a professional environment now, and anything you can do to cut down error or perceived error must be good for cricket."

...Scene now set for another great battle... Fittingly, having played in the defining test match of their generation, the A[US]n cricketers arrived in Chennai yesterday at the scene of one of the greatest battles waged by a previous generation of [guys] in baggy green. It was here 15 years ago that A[US] and India played in only the second tied test in cricket history – a match that has gone down in A[US]n legend for the fighting qualities of [one AUSn], who batted himself into hospital on the way to a double century in the relentless heat and humidity. It probably will take another performance of that calibre if [the current] team are to realise their long-held ambition of winning a series in India for the first time in 32 years. This team has been all about rewriting history with their 16-match winning streak, but the A[US]ns arrived in the city formerly known as Madras with the distinction of being only the third team in test cricket to lose a game after forcing the opposition to follow-on. And each time it was an A[US]n team on the losing end... as the captains... made what would normally be a safe decision only to see the match taken away from them. [The incumbent captain said it] had no regrets about making India bat again in Calcutta, despite the possibility A[US] were going to have to bat last on a wearing pitch. "I never thought twice about it... India in nine previous innings against us had not scored a big total. If anyone thinks I shouldn't have enforced the follow-on they should have come to see me a couple of days ago." Although his predecessors in the unenviable role both lost narrowly... (1895 v England, lost by 10 runs at Sydney)... (1981 v England, lost by 18 runs at Headingley)... [the current team] were thumped by 171 runs in a test that will long be remembered for its milestones and the way both teams' fortunes ebbed and flowed to extreme levels. On each day there was at least one twist to change the pattern of the game and send the match tilting to one side like an over-laden Calcutta bus. On the first day it was [an Indian]'s hat-trick, on the second it was [the AUSn captain]'s stubborn and emotional hundred to rescue [his side], followed by India's stunning collapse. The third day saw the resurgence of India through [a batter], who finished the day with his second test century – only an inkling of what was to follow as [it] eventually made 281 and with [another batter] (180), added 376 for the fifth wicket over seven hours. On the final day, A[US] may have entertained hopes of winning, despite needing 384 runs off 75 overs but, under the mesmerising twirl of [a spinner]'s hands, India plucked the game out of Calcutta's dusty air by taking seven for 46 on the final afternoon to conjure up a historic victory. [The AUSn captain, seeking AUS]'s 17th straight win, always praised his team's ability to survive tight situations. Yesterday, a hero was not forthcoming for the first time in nearly 18 months... In response to India's stacking their squad with even more spinners for the Chennai match, starting tomorrow, A[US] will probably re[act] by including two spinners in their team... India's selectors have made three changes in naming a 14-[strong] squad for the test.

...As India rejoiced at winning one of test cricket's greatest series, a N[Z]er stood at the eye of a nationwide swell of jubilation yesterday... [The former NZ] captain and test opener – whose CV includes one of N[Z]'s two test victories in India – was a crucial figure in India turning impending disaster into one of cricket's most memorable triumphs. His appointment as India's first foreign coach last year was not universally accepted in a country where off-field political intrigue has long been intertwined with on-field endeavour. Halfway through the second test in Calcutta, with the first match having ended in humiliating defeat and his team following on, [the coach] may have been eyeing his suitcase and checking the airline schedules. Instead, [the coach] sat his team down and delivered a pep talk of such quality that it turned the series on its head. India's manager... himself a former test opener, believed [the coach]'s speech before the third morning's play was the decisive moment of the rubber. That day, [a pair of Indian batters] embarked on their historic fifth-wicket stand of 376, lasting more than a day, and [then] a young bowler... went on to spin A[US] to defeat on a gripping final afternoon. Thursday night's heart-stopping win in Chennai won't have helped [the coach]'s blood pressure, but his stock [in]international... cricket has undoubtedly risen. India's media went into overdrive as the nation rejoiced at the toppling of a team whose last test series defeat was [19 months ago] in Sri Lanka... The *Times of India* in a story titled "[Young bowler] gives Indian cricket brand new spin," said the victory... was being celebrated across the cricket-crazy continent. "Take a bow... [coach, captain] and the boys. We are proud of you," [an]Indian cricket legend... wrote... The mass-circulation *Hindustan Times* said the win would restore confidence in the Indian team, who have been demoralised by match-fixing scandals and slovenly performances at home and abroad. "The match was won. But perhaps more significantly, a lost faith was restored," the newspaper said... The English-language daily, the *Pioneer*, punning on the A[US]n captain's name, headed its eulogies [with a phrase] which phonetically translates into Hindi as "Bravo India Bravo." ...[the AUSn]... captain... has no regrets over [his team]'s preparation for the tour of India, in particular his team's inability to handle quality spin bowling. The only A[USn] batsperso[n] to truly flourish... [– scoring] 549 at an average of 109.80... [–] made a point of practising against spin bowling in conditions that resembled India... While his teammates were dining out in the one-day series at home this summer, [it] was practising his skills against spin bowlers on a specially prepared wicket.

...[THE]INDIAN master bat[ter]... has become the first person to score 10,000 runs in one-day cricket. [The magician] reached the mark in the third game of a five-match series against A[US] in Indoree yesterday... [– claiming] the landmark when [it scored 34. The magician] went on to score 139 as India piled on 299-8. It was his 28th one-day century. [The magician] shared in a second wicket partnership of 199...

In one of the most spectacular collapses in limited-overs history, Zimbabwe were dismissed for 38 by Sri Lanka... [at Colombo yesterday. A] fast bowler... grabbed eight for 19... [from just] 45 balls... and collected the first hat-trick by a Sri Lankan in one-day cricket as... the visitors... were shot out in just 15.4 overs and 87 minutes. Their score eclipsed the previous lowest by Pakistan against the West Indies at Cape Town in 1993.

...[yesterday's ODI was eventually] abandoned because of bad light[– while most of the crowd remained] blissfully unaware of the permutations of the Duckworth Lewis system designed to find the winner in a shortened match. [One spectator], of Hamilton, declares it an "absolute disgrace". "We were sitting on the bank and didn't even hear what the result was. I would love a refund and I deserve a refund. I spent all day here for nothing; no result, no nothing." The Duckworth Lewis method g[a]ve... Sri Lanka the game by three runs. They lead the series four-nil, with the

final game on Sunday in Christchurch... [Incidentally, s]ince the first one-day international in A[US] in 1971, there have been 1176 one-day matches.

...*On-field controversies all in the name of one-day cricket...* The world of one-day cricket was rocked again last weekend when a pitch invasion not only brought a premature end to the one-dayer between England and Pakistan, but also put a Headingley ground steward in hospital. England's captain (r:p1509, ln18-9) conceded the match to Pakistan, who were just four runs short of victory with six wickets and 10 overs to spare when the crowd – many wearing the lime green supporters shirts of the tourists – ran on to the field. Only days after a one-day international between the same sides at Edgbaston was held up for nearly half-an-hour for similar reasons, England cricket administrators are finally cracking down on the practice and have asked Parliament to rush through emergency legislation with stiffer penalties for hooligans. The steward injured in the invasion at Leeds is understood to have been kicked in the head and stomach, and suffered broken ribs and a damaged spleen. [The English] concession was one more controversial moment in an ODI since A[US] and England played the first official match at Melbourne on January 5, 1971. Lest we forget... *June 7, 1975, Lord's*: The opening match of the World Cup is reduced to a farce after India decide they have no chance of overhauling England's 334, and instead use their innings for batting practice. [An Indian legend] bats through the full 60 overs, scoring just 36 off 174 balls. The match ends at 7.30 pm with India's score at 132 for three. *June 6, 1977, the Oval*: A[US] are chasing England's total of 242 when rain begins falling in the 23rd over. Realising there will be no television coverage the following day because of Jubilee Day celebrations, match officials persuade the players to return to the field and finish the game in torrential rain. A[US] win by two wickets. *November 3, 1978, Sahiwal*: Relations between India and Pakistan take another dip when [the]Indian captain... calls his players off the field in protest at short-pitched bowling... The Indians also refuse to attend the official post-match function. *March 12, 1982, Karachi*: A crowd riot spills on to the field during a match between Pakistan and Sri Lanka, forcing the players to flee the field. Following several unsuccessful attempts to break up the disturbance, police fire teargas grenades to restore order. Pakistan win by eight wickets. *October 22, 1982, Karachi*: An ODI between Pakistan and A[US] is abandoned after the crowd pelt the A[USn] fielders with all manner of missiles, including a battery which narrowly misses... "Fat Cat"... [The AUSn captain (r:p1507, ln62)] leads his players off the field, saying afterwards that the rocks being hurled were twice as big as golf balls. *January 17, 1988, Brisbane*: To the astonishment of umpires and players, [the local]curator... sprints on to the ground during the World Series match between... A[US and NZ], shouting "Get off, get off," and proceeds to tear the stumps out of the ground. One minute later the heavens open up and the ground is saturated. *March 22, 1992, Sydney*: South Africa, needing 22 with 13 balls remaining to win their World Cup semifinal against England, are forced from the field by rain, and one over is lost. Because of some absurd weather rules, however, the South Africans return to the field needing 22 off one delivery. England win.

...N[Z's top test-run scorer and former] coach... believes it makes sense for captains to try to "organise something" in rain-affected matches. "Don't call it collusion. Just call it getting together to try to get the best out of a match..." [T]he Otago chair[person] of selectors, was commenting on Thursday's controversy at Carisbrook when part-time bowlers fed runs to Northern Districts to hasten a declaration on the last day of the Shell Trophy match. The second day of the game had been virtually lost to rain and [the chairperson] said it made sense for teams to try to prevent games drifting to tedious draws... Wellington and Canterbury both forfeited innings with little public comment in their rain-ruined first round Shell Trophy match to try to achieve and outright result. That game, too, was drawn. "You didn't used to be able to forfeit an innings, so there's an attempt there to do something." [The chairperson], who played many years of county cricket for Worcestershire before his retirement in 1983, said [it] was "fairly sure, about 20 years ago they actually encouraged county captains to get together to try to formulate results. What are people afraid of? Each captain is representing his own side. We're trying to achieve a positive result." [The chairperson] said Thursday's controversy had a positive effect. "People are talking more about cricket because of the different angles and fascinations that can play a part in it."

...The credibility of... [the NZ cricket p]layers' association chief... was hanging by a gossamer-thin thread yesterday after [it] appeared to mislead radio listeners during an interview on the cricketers' pay dispute. The spokes[person] for the players... found himself in a slightly bigger scrap than one involving money after publicly denying claims that his organisation had suggested removing funds from grassroots cricket... But only hours later it was found that [the chief] had proposed the cuts himself, after travelling to Christchurch [2 months ago and meeting the] NZC chief executive... financial manager... and... Canterbury cricket's chief executive... ■ CRICKET... bible *Wisden*, in its wisdom, nominated another Cantabrian (r:p1510, ln28)... as the second-greatest test bowler of all time... Depending on your view of the way... the... Sri Lankan [ranked No 1] arm twists bat[ters] back to the pavilion, [the NZer] is the greatest test bowler of all time on *Wisden's* calculations... A[Pakistani fast-bowler and a West Indies batter (r:p1507, ln64) have respectively] been named as the top one-day [bowler and batter] by *Wisden*. The... [batter], who accumulated 6721 runs in 167 one-day innings... [holds the record for t]est cricket's highest runscore in a calendar year... 1710... [in 11 matches during] 1976...

Cricket-mad son slain... An Indian... beat his teenage son to death with a cricket bat after... learn[ing] the... 14-year-old... boy had spent his weekly wages on posters of Indian cricketers, police in Calcutta said yesterday... Sushanta had also bought garlands to decorate the posters...

Cricket-mad fans in the West Indies were still celebrating last night, hours after their hero... captured his 500th test wicket... [to put him at the top of the all-time test wicket-taking list. The fast bowler], playing in his 129th test, which is also a record for a specialist bowler[– it has]... made 28,833 deliveries, some 1000 more than anyone else has sent down, to break into statistical territory thought for generations to be out of reach... [–] set the island nations alight when [it] reached the milestone with two wickets in three balls in South Africa's second innings of the second test... [After reaching the milestone, the bowler] ran down the pitch with his arms raised in triumph and was engulfed by his team-mates. It was yet another record for a player[(the bowler also has)]... the world record of 43... ducks in... test[s]... whose achievements owe as much to stamina as they do to natural ability. Although [the bowler] has not officially announced his retirement, it is accepted that the series against South Africa will be his last.

...South Africa's cricket board rocked the game last night by sacking [their test captain after it]... admitted being "dishonest" over match-fixing allegations. United Cricket Board of South Africa's managing director... confirmed that [the]... captain... had been dumped... [The captain] and three other South African players face accusations of match-fixing during... a tour of... India, but [the captain] had strenuously denied the claims made by Indian police that [it] conspired with bookmakers to rig games. Earlier yesterday the South African squad erected a wall of silence... as they met behind closed doors to discuss the... scandal. The players wanted to deal with the issue as a team, then try to put it behind them... [The captain and the 3] other South Africans... have become the first cricketers to face criminal charges over alleged match-fixing... In New Delhi, police said they had new evidence to shore up match-fixing charges... "We believe we now have sufficient evidence in this case but it is for the courts to decide," [the]New Delhi Crime Branch chief... said, describing additional evidence obtained by the police as "clinching." ...[the chief also] said the police were in possession of evidence beside tapes of purported conversations between... [the captain,] a London-based bookie... and his associate... who is now in police custody... The South African High Commissioner to India... called at the Foreign Ministry to request access to the tapes.

...International cricket survived bodyline, and took only a few years to turn [an AUSn media mogul] from enemy to ally – helped not a little by the transfer of A[US]n television right's to [hi]s Channel 9. But the cricket world will face all manner of difficult problems before regaining some balance after the [South African captain] affair lifted the stone and revealed the match-fixing and player manipulation that squirmed evilly below. Bodyline and the... revolt[associated with the mogul] were, in contrast, brief glitches within the international boundaries of the game. The problems were solved basically by cricketers negotiating with cricketers. Now cricket faces a greater peril. The game has now become the plaything of the eastern underworld, of the illegal bookmakers and money-launderers and tax-dodgers of India. The I[CC can't] act against those using the game as

the basis of an... illegal multi-million-dollar industry. The ICC cannot touch those people, the powers behind the foul-smelling empire that can have close to \$500 m... as the jackpot for the recent India-South Africa one-day series – the time when the apparently squeaky-clean [South African captain] threw such a sordid shadow over his own career, his team and the game. [The captain] was dealing in peanuts... taking up to \$US15,000 from a bookmaker... A tight India-Pakistan series can bring in individual bets approaching \$10 m... The ICC can only hope that the Indian police and anti-corruption squads can identify and isolate the ringleaders of this vast empire, for cricket does not have the power to fight crime. Fortunately, the chair[person] of the ICC... is an Indian, of considerable personal fortune, and will already be conscious that the good name of his country as well as his sport is under... serious threat. The ICC will start its crisis meetings early next month. One reason for the habitual avoidance of instant action is that India must first assemble more close-to-the-action evidence before heading for London. In the meantime, a judge will be appointed to lead an inquiry in South Africa. Even so, the ICC must act urgently, and with strength – two virtues that may have been clouded in recent years. A recent N[Z] radio “news” broadcast gave a biased hint on how the ICC was regarded as a powerful law-enforcing body. The senior disc-jockey dismissed the ICC as “people lining their own pockets and flying first class” while the sidekick indulged in a brief but nasty assault on the character of... one of N[Z] cricket’s strongest international allies for the last 20 years. The ICC is a healthier band than that summary dismissal would indicate, but is not yet equipped for hard-nose counterattack against such powerful and hostile forces menacing the game. Only in the past three or four years has the ICC, with a permanent secretariat in London, fashioned a quick-action (by ICC standards) band of chief executives from the major cricketing powers. From the London meeting the ICC must show strong leadership. [The South African] and anyone else found guilty of tampering with individual scores or the conduct of matches must be banned from the game under control of the ICC or its members. The ICC must give the players, and not only those at international level, the old-fashioned (and perhaps amateur) message. Cricket, or any game, is a waste of time if it does not offer dignity, credibility and commonsense conduct within the laws of the game, decent society and the land. It has already made some progress in this direction with the growing impact of international referees and a strict code of conduct. The game, at least at international level, does already have punitive sheriffs, as well as the traditional umpires. But there is a longer, harder trail ahead for the ICC. It must toss aside its traditional, conservative and leisurely conduct of world affairs, a state of mind based on the old-fashioned premise that cricket was a decent game played and administered by decent people. It must now get on the front foot. [The ICC chairperson] must provide the leadership, and the liaison with the Indian law-enforcement people. Perhaps [the chairperson] might even try to persuade the Indian Government to legalise betting on cricket, and thus take the money-making means away from the criminals (or at least from those who can be caught)... Betting on cricket... may... [be] illegal in India but domestic media reports... suggest... Indian players... have wagered while on tour. Meanwhile, the Indian Government [has] vowed to get tough over the match-fixing controversy. “We will not spare any effort to get to the bottom of this,” [the] Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports... told the Lower House of Parliament in a short debate on the scandal. The Government is under pressure to order a federal police investigation, with some alleging Mafia links to the wrongdoings... India’s former skipper[, former]... national coach... and... [former world’s highest test wicket-taker,] has called for a halt to the country’s international cricket until the mess arising from the scandal is cleared up.

...About 70... Indian income tax officials... conducted... raids yesterday, targeting the houses and offices of various alleged bookmakers, as well as... top Indian cricketers and officials... Those raided included [the country’s highest test wicket-taker (a former captain) and another former captain (r:p1512, ln30 + opener, p1510, ln44)]... The former chief of the I[CC] (r:ln6 above) was also targeted.

...In Delhi’s crowded alleys, there is always room for a game of cricket. Small boys dodge cows, washing and rickshaws on their run-ups, crumbling walls cut off cover drives, bare-handed keepers demolish stumps. The dream is to play for India, reaching a movie-star world of fame and fortune. Across town in comfortable hotel suites the big boys of cricket’s seamy side are still in business. Their equipment is a cellphone, a pager and a tape recorder to receive bets. The bookmakers also dream of fortunes and are willing to bribe international players to make them. Unfortunately for the once-lofty honour of the game their advances have not always fallen on deaf ears. It was detectives investigating an extortion racket in Delhi who unwittingly taped a conversation between [an] Indian bookmaker... and a [person who]... turned out to be the South African cricket captain... and the subsequent [fallout] rattled the cricket world. The battle to take cricket back from greedy [adults] and return it to the dreams of boys is now tangled in a series of inquiries and investigations throughout the world... □ [A former]... Pakistan cricket captain... told undercover reporters from the *News of the World* that [it] could fix the result of any match – and had done so in the past... “The players will agree. We’ve all done it before. It’s better than dealing drugs...” ...[the former captain] is the central character in Pakistan’s match-fixing controversy, but has twice been cleared by a Supreme Court judge... [The] former South African captain... has denied actually fixing any matches.

...A conspiracy of silence has surrounded corruption in world cricket, the first report of the I[CC]’s anti-corruption unit said last night. The report, a response to the match-fixing scandal which erupted... when [the] former South African captain... admitted taking money from bookmakers, does not name individuals. But it paints a disturbing picture of corruption and players under-performing to order as betting on cricket mushroomed during the 1980s and [early] 1990s with the proliferation of televised one-day internationals. In the report the head of the unit, [a] former London metropolitan police chief... said match-fixing was still a problem. “Corrupt practices and deliberate under-performances have permeated all aspects of the game... I also... believe that corruption continues to happen and the potential for corruption in cricket remains a real threat.” ...while blatant cases and excesses had been stopped, there remained “a small core of players and others who continue to manipulate the results of matches or occurrences within matches for betting purposes.” ...his investigation had been met by “what amounts to a conspiracy of silence. Players did not want to be branded an informant and risk being ostracised by team mates... Some people were apathetic and thought corruption would always be present. The most disturbing aspect of the tolerance of corruption is the fear that some people have expressed to me about their personal safety or the safety of their families.” ...people... had been threatened, and others... had alleged a murder and kidnapping...

In India, they called him the [guy] who knew too much. Ashraf Patel was rich and well-connected, a regular fixture at Bombay’s glittering Bollywood parties, but it was his connections that may have got him killed. Not his friendships with diamond dealers, shady business[people] or film stars. Instead, Patel may have been shot in a Bombay street because of his love of betting on cricket. Patel, 40, was a successful gem dealer... with distribution rights to brands such as Cartier and Tissot. In Bombay, [Patel] would shower gifts on film stars and cricketers – held in equally high esteem in India – in his hope that they would endorse his products. And they did... [Patel] certainly loved two things: cricket and money. And... knew too much about one of them... [A]fter his murder, an Indian magazine, *The Week*, said [Patel] had become very close to several cricketers and even accompanied the team to tournaments in Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates. Here the cricketing alarm bells started to ring, for Sharjah had become a byword for alleged match-fixing. Organisers admit it has happened there, and the Surrey skipper... was once called there in his hotel by a [person] who offered to “make him very wealthy.” [The Surrey captain] didn’t take up the offer. The alarm bells rang louder still when police discovered Patel had bookmaking contacts in South Africa. That was where the whole match-fixing debacle took its biggest scalp with the demise of... the squeaky-clean captain of the South African cricket team. [Mr Squeaky-clean]... was banned for life, and... [a] former London metropolitan police chief... was appointed head of a seven-m[ember] anti-corruption unit dedicated to weeding out cheating and setting in place mechanisms to prevent it. But his task was enormous. There have been claims and counter-claims of cheating, bribing and fixing in eight of the 10 test-playing nations. In Pakistan, [a former captain (r:ln40 above)] was among two [test-players]... banned for life when they were found to have affected matches for the benefit of bookmakers. In India, [the top test wicket-taker (and former captain then national coach)] has been accused of involvement[– though it denied any wrong-doing in a tearful televised speech – and South Africa’s former captain] told the... inquiry [it] had taken money from a [guy] introduced to him by... [another] former captain of India. [That captain (r:ln31 above)], also banned for life, was questioned by

Bombay police after the shooting of Patel because the two had met two days earlier. The deputy commissioner of police... said. "[The former captain] will be questioned again and again. This is not a small case. We are working on the match-fixing link. It cannot be ruled out of the murder inquiry." [The head of the ICC inquiry] has warned players they can run but they cannot hide, so more may yet emerge. [The head] has recommended increasing players' wages – adequate in England but poor in Asia – to make corruption less attractive. "That's a good idea," said... [the] editor of *Wisden Cricket Monthly*.

...*Cricket's bible confounds the powers of darkness* The forces of darkness seem to be gathering round the grand old game of cricket... But fear not. Amid the deepening gloom there comes a shaft of golden light, a glowing signal that one pillar of the game remains unbesmirched, that 137 years of cricketing history will not be lightly discarded. In the French autumn they make much fuss about the arrival of the first of the season's beaujolais in Paris. But not with half the heart or joy that greets the arrival, in the English spring and other climates around the world, of the latest copy of *Wisden*. The chunky almanac, 1600 pages and weighing at a whisker over 700g, retains all its old virtues and this year two bonuses marking the [imminent] arrival of the new millennium. The first is the election of the five players of the... century, a mammoth task largely organised by... the retiring editor. The second is a free supplement, a separate 208-page softcover book, which contains an extract from every edition over the past 100 years... [The person] who edited the collection, explains that [it] could only provide glimpses of the themes and theories and all the other cricketing interest... But in these days when – if you can find one – a collection of the 137 editions of the venerable almanac can cost about \$80,000, [hi]s saunter down cricketing history is still intriguing compensation. Sir Donald Bradman was picked by all 100 judges, spread round the cricketing world[, to head]... the five players of the century... Another knight, Sir [Midas Touch], was 10th and the only N[Z]er in this illustrious list. Many people have quibbled that "W.G." should have been on the list, but... Grace [(who once refused to leave the crease after being given out for 0 because, Grace barked, "the fans] haven't come to see you umpiring, they've come to see me bat[")]]... was largely a player of the previous century... N[Z] might complain that... the... list of 100 special matches over the century does not include any involving N[Z] teams. As it happened, the smaller book fell open, as I laid it down, at the 1956 section, which dealt with N[Z]'s 26 against England at Eden Park the previous year. And that was N[Z]'s only mention... England's cricket writers lauded [a NZ batter]'s double century... [against England in Christchurch] as one of the greatest test innings, but [*Wisden* didn't feature it among its top 10 innings because of the context of the game in which it was scored. The batter had arrived in the middle with NZ]... in trouble at 119 for three, [and] brought up his eighth test century off a comparatively pedestrian 114 balls before launching a stunning assault, picking up his next 122 runs off just 54 balls... progress[ing] from 100 to 200 in a scarcely believable 39 balls, and by the time [it] was dismissed, sparking fevered celebrations from the English... had hit 11 sixes... and... 28 fours... in an astonishing 168-ball innings... [A f]ormer England allrounder... writing for the *Independent*, rated the innings and the match unique. "Indeed, some of the biggest names of test cricket were present and none could recall an innings where the ball was struck so cleanly, so often. In particular, his treatment of the second new ball was savage and three shiny Kookaburras had to be used after [the NZer] twice lost the original..." ...It was also a game of bizarre contradictions, given that England won after losing their first two wickets of the test without a run on the board, that by far the quickest double-century in 125 years of test cricket was not enough for victory, and not even enough for the [player]-of-the-match award – which went to [England's] first-innings double-centurion. [For the NZ batter], there was at least one record [it] was unable to break and that was the fastest 200 in terms of time, although [it] did manage to come within three minutes of creating more history. The only player to score a faster double-century was Sir Donald Bradman... Perhaps history, or the new [*Wisden*] editor... a N[Z]er, will treat us more kindly.

...*Time to close the book on a rotten era...* Sir [Former Police Chief] "uncovered" enough dirt to fill a mini-series, although it is unlikely that producers will be knocking on cricket's door – there aren't enough heroes in this mess. Has any sport been dragged as low as cricket by these revelations? Unlike some other betting scandals, which were of the sudden-explosion type, this has been a slow-ticking timebomb. You are continually left with the feeling that, however hard... [the inquiry head looked, it was] impossible for him to crawl under ever[y] rock to find every bit of slime, and that some of that slime still exists in international cricket. Cricket administrators have hardly helped by turning the game into a continuous worldwide circus of one-day affairs. And they showed all the reactions of a No 11 bats[person] in dealing with the issue as revelations surfaced. One thing is for sure – many test and one-day results are now treated with contempt by the public... The following list recalls some of the more recent allegations of corruption and some of the more suspicious moments that have marked the modern era. *Lahore, February 15-20, 1975* According to [a] West Indian international [(r:p1514, ln44), the then] Pakistan captain... forfeits the toss in the first test against the West Indies. [The cricketer] wrote later in a book that [his]... captain... returned from the toss with the curious news that despite having made the wrong call, [it] had been advised by [his Pakistani counterpart that it] had, in fact, won. *Calcutta, January 29-February 3, 1980* [Another] Pakistan skipper... allegedly pulls a similar stunt following reports that bookmakers had fielded large bets on the home team's winning the toss in the sixth test against India at Eden Gardens. [A Pakistani pace bowler] would later claim that [his captain] picked up the coin before [the then] Indian captain... had a chance to verify the result – and congratulated him on his success. *Leeds, July 16-21, 1981...* With England following on and close to defeat, [an AUSn batter and AUS's top test wicket-taker] reportedly bet £10 (at odds as huge as 500-1) on their own side losing. England duly complete a monumental turnaround to claim a miraculous 18-run win, and [the two AUSns] collect a small fortune. *Lahore, November 4, 1987* Pakistan suffer a shock loss to A[US] in the semifinals of the World Cup and [the Pakistani pace bowler], apparently no great mate of [the captain it has played with for over seven years], later alleges his team-mate and a range of business acquaintances paid 30 million rupees to members of the home team.

...A... Pakistani speedster [(r:p1511, ln50)] spat blood and vomited in the dressing room after hurtling a 157.3 km/h missile at [an AUSn (r:p1512, ln24)] to become the world's fastest bowler in Cardiff yesterday. [The Pakistani, who bowled the opener] next ball with a "slower" 151.6 km/h delivery that cut the A[US]n vice-captain in half and should have been called a no-ball, was taken to hospital for tests but was expected to be fine.

...*Speedy...* became the first bowler to officially clock 100mph... in international cricket during Pakistan's lost to England... yesterday. In his second over, [the speedster finished]... the maiden... with... a... 161.3km/h (100.23mph)... delivery... [The speedster] bowled 160.2km/h (99.54mph) in a one-day international against N[Z] in Lahore last year. [But the ICC] refused to recognise it because the speed gun was not officially sanctioned.

...*Ducking his way to cricket history...* [A NZer (r:p1510, ln46) broke three] of the more unusual cricket world records during his mind-numbing defiance in the first test... yesterday... [Hi]s feat of not managing to score a run in roughly the time it takes to watch three episodes of *Coronation Street* greatly improved his country's prospects of saving the... test... and catapulted him into sports news headlines around the world. The 27-year-old opening bowler came in as the last N[Z] batter on the third day of the test – with his team in deep trouble at 320 for nine – and left 101 minutes (and 77 balls) later without having troubled the scorers. [The bowler] was protected early in his innings by [his] batting partner... who farmed the strike and forced [the tail-ender] to turn down runs to keep him at the non-striker's end. [The tail-ender] was relaxed enough to salute the crowd twice – first when [it] eclipsed the N[Z] record for slow batting, and again when [it] broke the world record. "It's the only chance I'll ever get to salute the crowd... So I thought, what the hell? It was funny... even the [opposition] clapped." The innings was not only the longest in a test before scoring a first run... It was also the longest without adding a run, taking the record held by... [another NZer], who took 94 minutes against A[US] in 1989-90. And it ranked as the longest duck in first-class cricket history... [The bowler] has taken more first-class wickets (87) than [it] has scored runs (83).

...the Black Caps... wrapped up the series... against England... 2-1 yesterday... when they won the fourth test by 83 runs, in the process becoming the first Kiwi side to win two tests in a series against England, the first to win a test at... Lord's and... at... the Oval and just the second to win a

series in England... [(NZ would've won the series 3-1 if it hadn't rained on the last day of the test in Manchester). The triumphant] coach... a former A[US]n test wicketkeeper... is poised to walk away from both the... team and the game of cricket... when his reputation as coach has never been higher... The... coach... has made no bones about how badly... the... Sydneysider... has missed his family... during his... tenure... The series win against England caps a three-year term in which his side won nine of 26 tests... Under [him, NZ] won a test match in Pakistan for the first time since 1969, beat Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka at home in the same season... and... won the test series against the touring Indian side last summer... His one-day international record is less impressive – 25 wins against 35 losses – but there were some notable highs, including the World Cup semifinal and the World Cup round-robin defeat of eventual winners, AUS]... England's cricket writers mercilessly greeted their... team's new unofficial ranking as the worst test side in the world... The *Daily Telegraph*... even questioned if England were capable of beating non cricket-playing nations... [but also wrote that NZ – who previously were ranked below Zimbabwe by an English publication, even though that country (which has just nine cricket clubs and three first-class teams) has never beaten NZ (which, like AUS, has six first-class teams) in a series –] had climbed ahead of England in the world rankings “entirely on merit.” “For their spirit, as well as their skill, the Kiwis were cities, not just streets, ahead of the lily-livered rabble who have done service this summer as the England team.” [The player] of the series[, who took 19 wickets during]... the series... and... is now the world's third best all-rounder in the latest cricket rankings and... has... moved into fourth position on the all-time list of N[Z] test wicket-takers with 127 scalps... just behind his father... (130)... was singled out for special praise by [the *Daily Telegraph*, which] wrote of ...h[is]... effort at the Oval, when [it]... took five wickets... then rescued N[Z] from almost certain defeat with a swash-buckling... innings of 80: “For sheer gumption, England had nobody within a country mile of... [NZ's] allrounder... it was the most accomplished performance of the summer, and an experience so bracing that the whole crowd, English[people and NZers] alike, acclaimed it with joy.” Otherwise, there was again a distinct lack of credit among the English media for the N[Z] performance... the *Guardian* focused on England's new ranking but at least excused the 11 players who took the field for the final test... blam[ing] the state of English cricket on a nation which “fails to promote physical excellence among its increasingly unfit youth, and denigrates team sports as an assault on individualism. It is equally the failure of a cricketing culture which has been forever reluctant to respond to trends, protects soft club cricket in the name of tradition, and persists with an overloaded first-class structure that dulls the ambitions of many who play it.”

...Officials bowled over by snub CRICKET bosses are stumped by the poor crowds at the Shell Cup. N[ZC] is so concerned it is setting up a panel to investigate and suggest crowd-pulling ideas. *Sunday News* understands it will include a review of ticket prices. Adults pay \$12. Fewer than 1000 fans went to last weekend's clash between Canterbury and Central Districts at Christchurch... The game featured... [eight present and former Black Caps. NZC] rates the Shell Cup a vital part of boosting the pool of players chasing international selection. But the poor crowds have damaged the finances of the six provincial cricket associations. The blow is being softened by grants from NZC. Match payments to Shell Cup players have increased significantly in the past two seasons. In 1997... first-class players who failed to make the N[Z] team earned less than \$10,000. This summer the figure is \$20,000 to \$30,000. NZC's marketing manager... said many cricket fans had a tough choice between international and domestic games this summer. “We've had two full tours this summer... That's five test matches and 11 one-dayers. A[US]n cricket's domestic one-day competition, the Mercantile Mutual Cup, has also been plagued by small crowds. Some have numbered in the hundreds.”

...IF THE image-makers are searching for something to encapsulate N[Z]'s domestic cricket as we head into the new millennium, then they need look no further – an empty stand will do the trick nicely. First it was the Shell Trophy which caught the bug. All of a sudden the cricketing public – the ones who watch domestic first-class games – became as scarce as free hospital treatment. For a while now you've been more liable to get lonely than lively at a four-day Shell Trophy game. It has reached the state where some associations have given up employing gatekeepers because the crowd doesn't cover their cost... At Taupo last week there were a dozen people for a day of the Otago-Northern Districts match. And this was far from an exception... But now the malaise seems to have spread to the premier domestic one-day competition, the Shell Cup. Where once it packed grounds, especially around the holiday season, it too has had attendances cut drastically... The figures are disturbing. Northern Districts reckon they will be lucky to make 30-40% of what they took last year. Canterbury's takings were also down about 60% and Otago's about the same, while Auckland estimates the fall at closer to 75%. Central Districts also reported a significant shortfall, although sponsorship helped offset it. And you don't need to be a member of Mensa to detect the reasons. As well as the range of leisure alternatives for people who have less time, there are cricketing factors. Two high-profile touring teams playing significant series have deflected considerable attention, as has the surfeit of matches shown from across the Tasman on pay TV. Basically, people get more than enough cricket without having to trudge along to a domestic game of dubious standard without leading players. And if they do want the live vibe, they'll wait until the internationals come to town. So, there's a problem. Of the provincial coaches and administrators surveyed, all acknowledged this. Significantly, none blamed N[ZC] for the scheduling of tours. In fact, nearly everyone supported twin international tours and believed success by the Black Caps would have benefits for all forms of the game. The message was the powers-that-be need to work out a way to fit everything in... “We've got two major products in N[Z] cricket and they're competing... we're making people choose. We have to move our premier domestic competition to another window.” ...The Shell Trophy, too, needs close attention. All coaches expressed a clear desire for it to come back to two rounds... [The] Wellington coach... believes one round creates a “Russian roulette” feel with a mad scramble for points and often the best two sides aren't in the final... So there you have it. Move the cup to a new time frame, extend the Shell Trophy, and continue to have two teams touring. Easy. Now about the fickle public...

It has been said of cricket: ‘How many games can you watch for 4 hours where the next ball could be the last ball?’ But how many games can you watch for 24 hours (6 hours per day for 4 days) – or 30 hours in test matches – and not see a result? Actually, if you include the lunch and afternoon tea breaks, test match cricket spectators have to devote at least 7 hours of their day to follow a game that they could eventually watch for 5 days – if they have the time or money to spare – and still not see a result! It may be hard for people who aren't fans of cricket to understand why anyone would want to watch a game which is split into 15 2-hour sessions – with each session being split into approximately 30 overs (or 6 bowls of the ball every 4 minutes) – that often ends in a draw. It isn't hard, however, to understand why TV executives would want to screen a game which allows them to show an advertisement approximately every 4 minutes, with a chance to show more ads on the hour (drinks breaks) and whenever a batter is dismissed – NZ TV producers show negligible quantities of 10-pin bowling and lawn bowls, games which are popular in NZ (and, in the case of the latter, NZ performs well at in international competitions) but involve only an hour or so of playing-time and allow fewer advertisement-long breaks during playing-time.

Another game that spectators *can watch for 4 hours* or more in anticipation of the final piece of action – and often, at international level, enables the competitors to be the focus of public attention for a number of days on end before a result is (or isn't) achieved – is CHESS.

[The w]orld chess champion... has called supercomputer Deep Blue an “alien opponent,”... The best player in the history of the ancient game has suffered the double embarrassment of needlessly resigning to the IBM system at the weekend and then being held to a draw in yesterday's third game of their six-game... nine day... re-match despite the advantage of the white pieces. “The scientists are saying that Deep Blue is only calculating, but it has showed signs of intelligence,” said [the champion], who had no advance information on his opponent... “Suddenly you know it played like a god for one particular moment [in the second game],” an animated [champion] told hundreds of spectators after yesterday's game. It was unclear whether [the Russian] was accusing the IBM team of cheating or just awed by the computer's performance... One point is awarded for a win and a half for a draw... The \$US1.1 million... match is tied at 1 1/2 points each and [the Russian] will have to play with the black pieces in two

of the three remaining games... Playing with white has the advantage of the first move... The revelation that the Russian gave up on Sunday in what was in fact a drawn position dominated and overshadowed the third game... The Russian's remarkable and rare oversight was a reminder to human players that their emotions can be a handicap in clashes with machines. Several leading grandmasters admitted that they, too, had initially missed the continuation that would have saved the day for [the Russian]. Deep Blue's programmers also said it had not calculated the moves correctly during the game, something [the Russian] described as "very human from my point of view." ...Chess experts, almost without exception, described Sunday's game as the best performance ever by a computer... [The Russian] was forced by Deep Blue to defend with his black pieces for almost four hours and looked tired and demoralised. "The computer has an advantage....," said [a]grandmaster... of the U[S]. "The computer doesn't get depressed." Subsequent analysis[, which]... began within hours of the game ending in "chat rooms" run by the Internet Chess Club... showed that [the Russian] could have played a series of moves to force what is known in chess as "perpetual check" – one player repeatedly attacking his opponent's king, ensuring none of his other pieces can make further moves and thus a draw is the only outcome.

...[the world chess champion]'s legendary resolve broke down [after his] defeat by the IBM super-computer... that created chess history – the first time a programme has triumphed over a reigning world champion in a classical chess match... Deep Blue, improved and modified from the one that lost to [the Russian] in Philadelphia in February 1996, pushed the champion to... his human... limits... Under psychological stress... [the Russian] gave up after only 19 moves and just over an hour of the sixth and final game... for a final match score of 3 1/2 points to 2 1/2 points... The humbled grandmaster... was "ashamed" but persisted with his view that the match was essentially unfair because [it had] had no access to the computer's pre-match games or any of the IBM printouts during the contest, worth \$US700,000... to the winner and \$US400,000 to the loser... [The loser], aged 34, lashed out at IBM for programming the computer specifically to beat him. [However, many chess experts] said the champion should have played his usual, swashbuckling attacking style instead of the careful, slow manoeuvring [the Russian] undertook to try to outwit the machine... In yesterday's game [the Russian] blundered by allowing Deep Blue to sacrifice a knight and obtain an overwhelming positional advantage.

...The Deep Blue supercomputer's stunning victory over [the reigning]world chess champion... ushers in a new era in top-level chess and casts [humanity]'s relationship with ...i[t]s silicon servants in a new light. [The Russian g]randmaster... said the computer's superior calculating abilities could eventually take the mystery out of chess, by being able to anticipate the exponentially branching consequences generated by every move. IBM scientists, who celebrated their machine's win at an open-bar party at a hotel near the midtown Manhattan game site, said that Deep Blue is not intelligent by any human standard. "Humans have unique qualities. They are creative, they are psychological beings. Machines are just a tool to extend our capabilities," said... the scientist who headed the Deep Blue team. "This has nothing to do with artificial intelligence." A[n a]uthor... who has written on advanced computers, said Deep Blue's win does not mean the machine is smarter than humans. "When we have a computer chess champion, what we have is a computer that plays superb chess. Period. There is no myth we have that playing chess is somehow the key to human intelligence." Even as chess players, machines still have weaknesses, said [another]grandmaster... They are obsessed with having as many or more pieces on the board as an opponent, even though sometimes a numeric disadvantage can translate into a positional advantage. "Computers are very materialistic... There were some evaluations and mistakes that the computer will never overcome."

...SPEAKING for humanity, I am disturbed about "Deep Blue." As you know if you read all the newspapers, Deep Blue is a 1972 movie about a [gal] with an amazing ability to... Whoops! My Mistake! I meant to say that Deep Blue is an IBM computer that recently defeated the world heavyweight chess champion... causing serious chess fans everywhere to pick angrily at the tape holding their eyeglasses together... This was... a severe blow to human pride, especially when Deep Blue – after telling the media that it was going to Disney World – was seen instead at a trendy Manhattan night club, drinking 400 million glasses of champagne a second, fondling the cash registers, boasting loudly of its victory and making insensitive remarks about [the world's #1 golfer]. The question is: Does Deep Blue's victory mean that computers have now reached the level of human intelligence? And what, exactly, do we mean by "human intelligence?" Can we say that the beeping supermarket computer that recognises and totals our purchases as they slide across the scanner is displaying "human intelligence?" Of course not! The supermarket computer is way more intelligent than humans, because it knows how to add, a skill that most humans have forgotten by the time they get to the Senior Prom. So we have to concede that in some areas, computers are smarter than humans. But there is still hope for us; there is one area where even the most powerful computers so far have been unable to compete with the human brain, and it happens to be an area that is vital to the very survival of the planet: humour writing[– although] the computer industry has tried to "muscle into" this field. In 1987, IBM assigned a team of its top nerds to a 10-year, multibillion-dollar project to develop a world-class humour computer, code-named "Big Yuk." But this task proved to be very difficult, because computers... do not naturally have a sense of humour. Technicians spent thousands of hours programming Big Yuk – typing in a computer transcript of every episode of *F Troop*, putting Groucho glasses on it, giving it noogies, installing a mechanical arm so it could throw pies, etc – but progress was very slow. And then, finally, the breakthrough came: Early on the historic morning of October 8, 1993, after six years of processing data 24 hours a day, Big Yuk came to life and, in an exchange with a programmer, made what is believed to be the first totally computer-generated joke: Big Yuk: KNOCK KNOCK. Programmer (typically excitedly): WHO'S THERE? Big Yuk: MARCEL PROUST Programmer: MARCEL PROUST WHO? Big Yuk: MARCEL PROUST THE FRENCH NOVELIST (1871-1922) WHO WROTE THE 16-VOLUME CYCLIC NOVEL *THE REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST*. Programmer: OH. Big Yuk: GET IT? It wasn't much, but it was a start. The next breakthrough came nearly two years later, when Big Yuk suddenly asked: "WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MADONNA AND A LAWN TRACTOR?" Rushing to the keyboard, the programmer typed in: "I GIVE UP! WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?" To which Big Yuk responded: "MARCEL PROUST THE FRENCH NOVELIST (1871-1922) WHO WROTE THE 16-VOLUME CYCLIC NOVEL *THE REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST*" So we can see that computers have a long way to go before they can replace highly trained humour professionals. Oh, sure, I know there have been rumours that some of us in the humour industry are getting lazy and starting to supplement our own output with computer-generated material. I want to state, for the record, that these rumours are totally false. I write all my own jokes with no help from any machine, despite my heavy travel schedule... [SPEAKING of world heavyweight champions, a boxer] predicts a knockout victory over [the titleholder] in their rematch for the World Boxing Association [(WBA)]... title... "My theory in life is destroy or be destroyed. I'm looking to destroy." ...The two fighters appeared together yesterday, with [the fight's]promoter... to announce the May 3 rematch[, which Apeman won when Apeman stopped his opponent] in the 11th round last November in a stunning upset... [Apeman] reportedly will receive \$US35 million... for the fight, with [his opponent] getting \$US20 million. [Apeman] would make more money than any athlete for any event, beating [his opponent]'s \$US30 million pay day for fighting [another boxer] in 1995 – his first fight after serving three years in prison for rape... [That] 89-second KO... [earned Rapeman \$US]280,898 per second... [Rapeman could join Apeman and a boxing legend] as three-time champions with a triumph. Meanwhile, a U[S] federal judge has refused to toss out insurance fraud charges against [the promoter], clearing the way for a second trial after a jury failed to reach a verdict in an earlier case. [The promoter] was accused of faking a contract with Lloyd's of London to collect \$US350,000 in non-existent training expenses for a cancelled bout.

...On the way to his trial on fraud charges this week, [the boxing promoter] has amassed a string of special awards from national civil rights groups. The NAACP gave him one of its highest honours, the President's Award... [The] Rainbow-PUSH Coalition followed up with its Trailblazer award a few weeks later. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the National Council of Negro [Gals] also have bestowed awards. Civil rights leaders say the prizes represent long-overdue recognition for... [someone] who has donated to their causes over the years, but the timing of the presentation, just before [the recipient] faces a retrial... is being questioned... If convicted, [the promoter] could face up to 45 years in prison

and a \$US2.2 million... fine... [The promoter], aged 66, was convicted of murder in 1967[– although the] charge was later reduced to... [humanslaughter –] was acquitted in a 1985 tax evasion case and has been the subject of three grand jury investigations.

...[The promoter] is the ringmaster in the circus of world heavyweight boxing... who shames the fight game... One of boxing's most pathetic moments in its long history of pathetic moments didn't come when [a boxer] broke down in the ring, crying and lapsing into a seemingly catatonic state during a heavyweight showdown... in Las Vegas... when [the boxer], imprisoned by psychological demons, refused to go to his corner between rounds, or when [the boxer] quit throwing punches and started mugging to the stunned crowd, [then]... wandered aimlessly around the ring, his terrified eyes red and bulging. [The boxer]'s emotional unravelling was disturbing, but... it can't match the pitiful event that followed an hour later, when [the]promoter... sauntered through the Hilton casino, huckstering and jiving like there was no stench engulfing the place. Instead of worrying about his troubled fighter's fate, [the promoter] strode merrily past the blackjack tables, his armed bodyguards in tow, smiling and laughing as incensed boxing fans cursed and taunted him. As far as [the promoter knew, the boxer] could have been off somewhere slitting his wrists, but all His Hairness cared about was hugging [an infamous (r:p1467, ln4)] attorney... and mugging it up for the trailing TV cameras. "You're a fraud..." one punter yelled. "Bless you," [the promoter] replied, and... continued blissfully on his way, leaving a trail of angry refundseekers in his considerable wake... [T]he executive director of the Nevada Athletic Commission... was "absolutely shocked" at [the boxer]'s performance... withheld the fighter's \$US3.1 million... purse and promised a fullscale investigation of what consumer masses perceived as another boxing farce. If [the executive director] and the handful of other people who still had a smidgen of rectitude in this sport had any guts, their investigation would cut much deeper. They would investigate why American boxing had about as much regulation as a fight in a Darwin pub, why the farcical alphabet soup of titles were allowed to exist, and why huge television corporations like HBO keep bowing to the omnipotent [promoter], king of frauds. With so many splintered groups, it's no wonder boxing's credibility has sunk lower than the Titanic. [An ex-]heavyweight champion... was so frustrated with the nonsense his sport had generated, [the ex-champion] threw his belt into a garbage bin. Was it the World Boxing Organisation [(WBO)] belt or the W[BA] belt? Who knows? Who cares? [The promoter] billed the bout... [in Las Vegas] as the World Boxing Council heavyweight title, but in reality it had all the impact of a grade school spitting contest. [The promoter] once told Harvard Law School students that "money is the answer to all things, so go get some money," and that's the only reason why [the boxer], a recovering crack addict, was allowed to step into the ring in the first place... It had been obvious for months that [the boxer] was in no shape to fold his own laundry, never mind fight in front of a worldwide paying TV audience... During the weeks leading up to the [Las Vegas fight, the boxer had] remained in out-patient rehab... was under 24 hour surveillance by his own security force, was monitored constantly in his room and even in the bathroom by a drug counsellor and was forced to take a special preflight drug test. Still, [the promoter] insisted the fight go on because it was filling his pockets with millions of dollars... Now all the parties are pointing their fingers every which way... HBO executives say they never wanted... [the] fight to happen... casino operators say they never wanted it. But any one of them could have pulled the plug at any time, only they didn't. They didn't because [the promoter] was dangling gold coins in front of their greedy eyes, and that was all that mattered. A day after the fight, [the boxer]'s urine test was negative, meaning [the boxer] was most likely clean when [the boxer] went crackers. His trainer... said [the boxer] simply snapped and was subconsciously striking back at the corrupt fight game, and maybe life itself... Everyone is afraid of [the promoter], even the big, powerful fighters [the promoter manages. The promoter] forces them to sign long-term contracts – indentured servitude might be a better description – and doesn't allow them to employ their own lawyers or accountants. [The promoter] scams them out of their rightful earnings, cheats fans by putting garbage fights on pay TV and manoeuvring the boxing ratings and the alphabet codes until they are nothing more than a cruel joke. But if [the promoter] dropped dead today, the game would still be a festering cesspool of crooks and shysters... US boxing is filthy because of the people who [are involved with US] boxing. It's that simple... Unlike every other professional sport, American boxing has no commissioner to set standards and regulations, no union to monitor disputes, no pensions or health plans for its employees. With no one running the asylum, it's no wonder [the promoter] has slimed his way to the top... A couple of months ago in Nashville... [the boxer], while training for another... fight, punched out a Christmas tree in a hotel lobby. Strung out on cocaine, [the boxer] entered a drug clinic for the third time, but that didn't stop [the promoter] from signing him up for another fix er, fight. - 1997

THE dubious union of sport and religion ran into some heavy weather last [November] when... "I've Found the Lord"... outgunned... "the Almighty Allah is No 1"... [Apeman]'s post-fight victory interview sounded more like some sermon on the canvas... with an assortment of statements about his "love of God", "the only God". The new world champ even entered the ring... with Phil 4.13 emblazoned on his warmup gown... Clearly, [Apeman] has his faith... As does [Rapema]n, a devout follower of the... same religion that consumed... a young, loud-mouthed, upstart heavyweight champion... [who won the *rumble in the jungle*. NZ's own heavyweight contender, who] has received a massive endorsement with the Main Events stable [which signed] the Kiwi... for another two years... [– his] original four-year deal, signed after his success at the Barcelona Olympic Games, was worth close to... \$[NZ]2 million... – ...also... continually speaks of God, and the Lord... But all this talk of religion and God, does it actually have a place in sport, or is it important, as one American sports writer suggested, that "sport must be keep clear of flamboyant patriotism and exhibitionistic religion"? ...[Apeman and Rapema]n arguably border on going overboard with such passionate, forceful, almost fanatical public displays of their convictions. [The Kiwi] doesn't, not yet anyway, and... fellows like [the All Black (r:p1422, ln31) who has often been called the 'greatest No 7 in the world'] merely quietly carry on with their sporting lives, fitting sport around their religion, rather than religion around their sport, without any signs of compromising or publicising their faith. Religion has been an obscure part of sport for some time. It is a fact that may surprise many, but as relatively recently as 1973, all but five of the then 26 teams in the NFL... held religious services before their games. Even today, numerous NFL teams – and some other professional sporting franchises – carry their own chaplain with them and, as one NFL team owner revealed, "most always [God]'s a Catholic because they take sport more seriously". It was a Miami... Reverend... who gave what now is hailed in America as "the prayer heard round the nation". [The reverend] delivered it before his town's beloved... Dolphins played a crucial game against the Cincinnati Bengals. In his United Church of Christ, the good reverend prayed: "Creator of God: Father and Mother of us all. We give you thanks for the joy and excitement occasioned by this game. We pray for the physical well-being of all the gladiators who run the gamut of gridiron battle tonight... but, knowing that the tigers are voracious beasts of prey, we ask you to be especially watchful over our gentle Dolphins. Limit if you will, the obfuscations of ...the TV commentator[s]... acidulous tongue, so that [the commentator] may describe this night truly and grammatically as it is... A great game, in our great city, played before your grateful children, on whom we ask peace and shalom. Amen." Boxing, of all sports, seems to turn bloodthirsty pugilists towards God and religion more than most. As[one] boxing writer... once wrote: "Boxing is not a metaphor for life, but a unique, closed, self-reverential world, obliquely akin to those severe religions in which the individual is both 'free' and 'determined' – in one sense possessed of a will tantamount to God's, in another helpless." ...For those that didn't know what [Phil 4.13] meant, it stands for... "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." But... [Apeman (otherwise known as the 'Christian Warrior')] may have jeopardised his long-term chances. [Apeman] made \$US11 million for fighting [Rapema]n, and... Matthew 19:24 is quite clear... □ [The]... Solomon Islands boxer affected by internal bleeding after being knocked out last month, has received a \$33,000 bill from Auckland Hospital. The Boxing Association and the Solomon Islands Government are investigating following revelations that [the boxer] had been injured the week before his fight and might not have been medically fit. An Auckland lawyer representing the Solomon Islands Government... said yesterday that two-thirds of the medical bill could be paid by ACC but [the lawyer] would approach the association and [the boxer]'s sponsor... for the balance.

...[Apeman]’s 11th round technical knockout win over [Rapema]n to win the W[BA title breathed]... life into a sport that was suffocating... The whole boxing landscape changed with... [their November 3] fight. Mismatches went away, and a lot of attractive fights appeared... “People lose,” [Rapeman] said. “Everyone loses... But it’s the ones who come back who really count. When I think about it, I get so much money to fight. How could I not come back?” With the \$US30 m... [Rapeman received for losing, it] has made more than \$100 m... for his five fights since August 1995.

...[*Rapema*]n hits jackpot POUND for pound, in more ways than one... [Rapema]n takes some beating. As the baseball, basketball, football and hockey players of North America put in the hard work for their big bucks, [Rapema]n fought just three times in 1996 and, according to *Forbes* magazine, earned \$US75 million... – more money in one year than any athlete ever. [Rapeman knocked the highest-earning] NBA star... out of the top spot in the... Super 40 list of highest paid athletes. However, [the basketballer], No 1 for four straight years, could be poised for a comeback in 1997. His \$US30m... contract – the largest one-year salary in sports history – will be more than a factor next year. Then there is the box office, merchandise and video income from his movie *Space Jam* that it is estimated could push his earnings past the \$US100m mark for next year... [A] German grand prix racer... who was paid \$US25m... to drive for Ferrari’s Formula One team and made another \$US8m... in other income, is No 3, up from ninth a year ago. The *Forbes* list includes nine basketball players, seven boxers... [(Apeman), who knocked out [Rapema]n for the WBA heavyweight title last month, is No 6... up from No 14 a year ago)]... six football players, five baseball players, four car racers, four golfers, three tennis players and two hockey players. There were... a dozen athletes new to this year’s list... [but again no gals feature] on the list... The salary-winnings figure includes salary, prize money and earned incentive bonuses. Endorsement includes licensing money and appearance and exhibition fees. Income from side businesses and equity partnerships is not counted. *Forbes*... does not say how it treats deferred compensation. - 1996

AS auspicious, propitious meetings go, that in the late 1950s between a... Ohio lawyer... and... the most popular golfer in the U[S – who was ranked 8th amongst all sport earners in 1996 –] ranks as one of the most significant, perhaps the most significant, in sporting history. Their partnership, formed in 1960, changed the shape of sport. [The lawyer], who had been a good enough golfer to play in the 1958 U[S] Open, was working for a large law firm in Cleveland. “I was not enamoured with the thought of spending the rest of my life moving from office to office as people retired or died... I loved golf, I knew... a lot of the players on the tour. I thought if I could figure out a way to use my legal training – contracts, tax and the like – and stay involved with golf, that would be the best of both worlds.” [The lawyer] talked to some of the golfers... about looking at their contracts or trying to get them into exhibitions... “In 1960... [the most popular golfer in the US] said to me that [we should form a partnership because it would] love to have someone take care of all his off-the-course activities, from fan mail to insurance to taxes to estate planning to bill-paying to contracts, so [it] could better concentrate on playing golf,” [the lawyer] recalls. Their partnership, one of the most famous in sport, was sealed with a handshake; it worked instantly and to the benefit of both. [The lawyer] later widened his horizons... [by signing a young Golden Bear,] who was threatening [his first signing]’s standing as the leading golfer in the... [US. The younger golfer] was later to leave... International Management Group (IMG), but by then it was established as the principal sports management group and had set up divisions and branches in many countries. These included China, where [the lawyer] set up the China Premier League in soccer and... owns half the first two Chinese Basketball teams... The success of IMG led to the formation of other management companies, some successful and some not. There was nothing new in what [the lawyer] did. Show business, book publishing and other professions had long had agents, most respected but some seen as shifty, parasitical characters who would get from someone else’s talent what they couldn’t earn from their own. What [the lawyer] did was to extend agency representation into the sports arena, firmly signposting sport as a branch of the entertainment industry. Through his own endeavours, or by the precedents [it set, the lawyer] made sport as “watchable” to millions as anything Hollywood could produce, and made his players (and himself) richer and more powerful. “I’d like to say I had this great vision in 1960[.]” The lawyer... first branched out from golf with [a]skier... in 1968 because [it saw that the skier] had personality and charisma and... skiing, like golf, lent itself to equipment endorsement. In the same year, [the lawyer] moved into tennis... [Today] IMG, which by [now] had branched out from sport and had diverse clients including the world’s leading opera singers, [is] often criticised for being too powerful and for putting its interests ahead of those performers it was paid to represent. This was the price of size rather than of nefarious intent. In many instances, IMG manages the participants, advises the organisers, arranges the television coverage and appoints the sponsors. [The lawyer] runs the world’s biggest agency representing sports stars and the largest independent producer of television sports programming, Trans World International, a company that is also one of the world’s biggest distributors of sports television rights. It is inevitable that conflicts arise. One of IMG’s sponsor contracts is with the Dunhill cigarette company, which sponsors the Dunhill Cup... a tournament between national... golf... teams. IMG also runs the tournament and has a hand in selecting the teams. Selection is based on a player’s standing on golf’s order of merit (a method of worldwide standings devised by IMG) reflecting earnings for the two previous years. But there were complaints in 1996 when players who were not contracted to IMG were not selected, despite having a higher standing than some who were... [As a result of the lawyer’s involvement, golf] went... from being almost a participant-only sport... in the 1960s and 1970s... to being a major spectator sport, with galleries of spectators following the play at competition venues and millions watching on television... [B]ig business discovered golf through endorsements or advertising signage on courses (and therefore on television) and poured money into it. The players benefited, as did their agents... The public gained through this golf explosion by seeing four rounds of high-level competitive golf on television and by having the chance to buy equipment endorsed by the stars. CASHING in on the phenomenon, and on the success of [his original, but ageing signing], a senior golf circuit... was established in 1980 and it was labelled the most successful new sport of the decade. When, in 1987, [a golfer from] Britain received \$NZ243,000 for winning the British Open[, a USer]... won \$119,000 for winning the Senior Open. By 1990, the leading Senior Tour money winner... earned as much in prizes as the biggest winner on the PGA tour... When [the lawyer] first approached the august All England Lawn Tennis Club and suggested that perhaps some businesses might want to be associated with the annual Wimbledon tournament, the club was aghast. In those days, Wimbledon profited by a few thousand dollars a year. [The lawyer] made his proposals, the club accepted them and now Wimbledon makes millions a year... One of the problems with Wimbledon was that it had been promoted around the world by others who cashed in on its prestigious name. [The lawyer] was able to persuade the... club to register its own logo, for example, so it could then charge companies for being associated with it. And, as it turned out, companies were quite happy to pay to be associated with a tournament of such high standing. While [the lawyer] created and exploited a niche in the sports market, [the lawyer] also benefited from two concurrent developments: the sports explosion that followed when leisure hours and leisure spending increased, and the rapid changes in television and technology. The combination rocketed sport into the league of big business. By the mid-1990s, sport was ranked as the 22nd largest industry in the U[S], earning around \$110 billion and outstripping, in dollar terms, the car, timber and air transport industries. Business analysts reported that this upward curve was set to continue; no peak had been reached. An indication of the hold that sport has... was that during the Gulf War in 1990-91, when the purchase of homes, cars, travel and household appliances declined dramatically, television ratings and attendance at sports events kept climbing. During the Gulf War, 780 reporters were accredited by the U[S] military. Two weeks after the war started, 2200 reporters were accredited to... Super Bowl XXV.[The 41st] President... told the N[FL] to go ahead with the game and broadcast it to the troops. Then... retired to the presidential retreat at Camp David to watch it himself... [D]uring the darkest days of the Watergate scandal that led to his resignation in 1974, [the 37th President] was often said to be watching football games on television in the White House. • [The veteran boxer]... who lost the ‘rumble in the jungle’... in Zaire in 1974, is still trying to force-feed the boxing money tree... [The veteran] was... at a news conference on the 106th floor at the World Trade Centre... hustling to

sell tickets to... his next act – an April 26 bout... at the Atlanta City Convention Centre under the sponsorship of Bally's Park Place casino... His latest claim is that [it] is the "linear champion of the world." That refers to a genealogy of the world heavyweight championship that in short means someone can claim the title because [someone is the boxer who beat the boxer who beat the boxer]"... Of course... the... [veteran] leaves out his recent inactivity. After winning the International Boxing Federation and W[BA] titles... with a dramatic 10th-round knock-out in November, 1994, [the veteran] defended his IBF title against [a]German... in April, 1995. But the WBA stripped him of his title, saying [the German] was not worthy of a title fight. And, after many people thought [the German] won that fight, the IBF ordered a rematch. But [the veteran], who... wants to fight at least until... 50, refused and was stripped of that title. Then [the veteran] went to Japan to fight someone... for the little-respected World Boxing Union title. But, "the point is, I know who I am, and... what I've done... And I'm not going to let anyone talk me out of that... I'm really the champion of the world." As [the veteran] says, "You gotta keep selling. If you don't learn to sell, you're probably gonna starve to death." ...[the veteran] doesn't look like [a person who]'s starving to death... But even 106 floors wasn't high enough to avoid stepping in all that fertiliser being spread around... [S]omething called Entertainment, Inc... put a lot of effort... into claiming what this fight and the fighters were not. "[The veteran] is not going to join the Marines after the fight... is not going to stand in his corner crying between rounds, and[is] not going to hit below the belt." ...The... opponent... 31... is "not coming in to just pick up his... \$US500,000... cheque..." insisted... the... promoter... who... would pay the [veteran] boxer... \$US4 million.

...[the boxer who] was an undisputed heavyweight champion in 1973-74, and at 45 became the oldest heavyweight champion when... [the titleholder] was easily outboxing [him until the titleholder] got careless and got caught with the right[-hand punch] to the jaw... weighed in officially yesterday at 114kg for his 80th pro fight. His record is 75-4, with 60 knockouts... [His opponent, who] weighed 104kg... has 30 knockouts on his 36-0 record, but his low-calibre opponents have kept him relatively unknown.

...[a boxer has announced his retirement. The heavyweight who] won gold at the Mexico Olympics in 1968... finishes 29 years later with an 81-5 win-loss record as a professional... [The] son of a railway worker, from a big family and used to a life of crime... has mellowed with age... On to his fifth wife and with nine kids, four of them named [after himself, the 49-year-old will] retire... to Marshall, Texas, to preach in the church... God bless you.

...[a 49-year-old heavyweight boxer, who] announced his retirement after last month's puzzling points-loss... in Atlantic City... can't think of a better way to celebrate the big five-o than getting back into the boxing ring, and is going to ask [the promoter] for a match-up with [another old boxer and, maybe, Rapeman]... "I didn't want to leave the ring with people feeling sorry for me. I don't want everybody saying you were robbed."

...last night... [a boxer] became the WBC light-heavyweight champion while unconscious after [his opponent] hit him twice while [him] was down, leading to a... disqualification... 1m 27s into the ninth round... The stunning ending... left [the loser] with his first defeat after 34 victories, 29 by knockout. The new champion is 27-0 with 18 KOs... [The loser, who] is a former IBF middleweight and super-middleweight champ... earned \$US3 m... [The winner] earned \$US385,000... In another fight... the only US Olympic Games boxing champion from the Atlanta Games, made his professional debut with a fourth-round decision... [in his favour. • Yesterday a boxer who] is reported to be getting a \$US5 m... purse for challenging... the holder of the lightly regarded International Boxing Council middleweight crown... said... money had not prompted his comeback.

...HOW the mighty have fallen. [A former] world heavyweight... champ... put in an application for a job as a school guard in... Maryland. The pay rate was \$10.49 an hour and, with a nickname like Big Daddy, [it must have a chance. In related news, the next WBC]... heavyweight title defence... has been confirmed for Atlantic City on July 12. [The titleholder] will have a part share of a promotion which could net him... £2 m... while the [challenger's] package will be £1.25 m... [In comparison, Apeman and Rapeman] each will receive... \$US30 m... for their... rematch next month... There were reports th[e challenger] would receive \$US5-10 m... less... and... was upset with not receiving parity... [the] promoter... said yesterday.

...[Rapeman's] wife... is pregnant with their second child... "With more fights and... \$US30 million... purses, I'll have another child... Every fight is a different future for my children. I base my life for my financial gain..." [said the boxer who's already] made enough money to last a lifetime...

Boxing hits an appalling new low... The Sound and the Fury? Try the Incisor and the Bicuspid... [Rapema]n couldn't fight back, so... decided to bite back. Even in boxing, this is not legal. If there is any justice, [Rapema]n should not only be docked his \$US30 million... purse for yesterday's travesty, [it should also] be barred from his sport for as long as... [Apeman]'s children keep asking him why his right ear looks like a small pizza with a slice missing. Just when you think nothing more grotesque or perverted can happen in the sport of boxing, along came [Rapema]n to send the elevator down to a new sub-basement. It wasn't just that [Rapema]n ruined a potentially great fight... by being disqualified after three rounds... [Rapema]n also nearly provoked a riot inside the MGM Grand Garden Arena by charging toward [Apeman] after the decision. Two dozen Las Vegas police[officers] rushed into the ring and stopped [Rapema]n, who then exited the arena screaming and sputtering at fans who in turn booed and threw beer on him. Other than that, [Rapema]n should be applauded for his fine humanitarianism... In a short interview afterward, [Rapeman] claimed to be upset because Apeman] had opened a large gash over [his] right eye in the second round with a head butt... [The referee] stopped the fight and warned [Apeman] but deducted no points. "What am I supposed to do? ...I have to retaliate. I have children." My guess is, none of us want to be around when one of them spills milk on the floor... After losing the first two rounds, and frustrated with [Apeman]'s strategy of clutching him to prevent big punches landing, [Rapema]n purposely spat out his mouthpiece early in the third round. The first time [Apeman] went into a clinch, [Rapema]n took a small bite out of [his right ear. Apeman] jumped into the air as if someone had dropped anvils on both feet... [The referee warned Rapeman, who] did the same thing to [Apeman]'s left ear in the next clinch. The round ended. After that, all hell broke loose. One reliable report had a ringside handler grabbing the chunk of... ear and putting it on ice for a trip to the hospital and a possible reattachment[while Rapema]n stormed around the ring, acting as if... [it was him who had] been wronged. Something had snapped in him, throwing him into another dimension. Scarily, this could have been the real... [Rapema]n all along, the street thug who couldn't handle being demeaned... [Rapema]n could not intimidate [Apeman] any more than... in the first fight. And... did not want to risk what [it] perceived as the ultimate humiliation, losing to a better [boxer. • His 'prized possession is a young dog of an exquisite Chinese breed, a shar-pei, with an appealingly ugly puglike face, rippling creases of flesh on her back and a body wildly animated by affection. "In China, shar-peis were used for fighting as well as protection. That's the reason, say some experts, that shar-peis have those wrinkles on their backs," Rapeman once explained. "When an adversary bit into them, they could twist round to keep on attacking."].

...In the aftermath of Eargate, in the debris left over from boxing's ugliest... exhibition yet, the question now is whether that will be the last we'll ever see of... [Rapema]n in the ring. The answer, sadly, is no. "It's over," the disqualified challenger was reportedly heard mumbling in his dressing room after the fight on Sunday. "My career is over." Don't bet on it! When the Nevada State Athletic Commission [(NSAC)] holds its hearing in Las Vegas tomorrow, it is likely to fine [Rapema]n for those cannibalistic chomps... Probably the requisite 10[%] of his purse, or about \$US3 million... It will undoubtedly suspend the 31-year-old... too. My guess is probably for a year. Maybe even two. But they won't make it a lifetime ban. As much as some of us think they should, they won't... [Rapema]n will live to bite another day... Why? Money for the first reason. There is no one else out there who can draw that kind of attention or attract such huge crowds. As much as this sordid sport no longer wants to admit it, boxing still needs [Rapema]n. The second reason has to do with the public's morbid curiosity. It has been more than aroused. It has been turned up to a point where it's practically off the chart. The same folk who slow down or stop to see a bloody accident on the motorway will want to see [Rapema]n climb into the ring again. They'll want to know how [Rapeman] will react. What will [Rapeman] do next? How much more bizarre can [Rapeman] get? I promise you, there will be people ready to fork over big bucks to find out. Hey, if [a basketballing cross-dresser] can get away with

it, so can [a moronic rapist]. The more weird they become, the more fans clamour to see them. And take it from me, it doesn't get much more weird than it was at the MGM Grand on Sunday. Watching it at ringside, the whole thing seemed almost surreal... As if the biting incident had not been bad enough, the post-fight scene... quickly turned sour. Gunshots were reportedly fired, although... some insisted it was the popping of a champagne cork... Whatever the cause... panic ensued, with several people injured in the rush to the lobby doors. Desert Springs Hospital later reported it treated 40 people, although not all of them were from the MGM, where the casinos actually shut down for almost two hours on one of the biggest gambling nights of the year... If [Rapema]n is, indeed, forced from the ring, the MGM will not miss that part of it. Neither will all those fight fans who found themselves suddenly scrambling for cover in the post-fight terror and confusion.

...A contrite... [Rapeman apologised to Apeman] and the boxing world yesterday for bringing shame to the sport... [Rapeman claimed to be] getting psychological help and begged not to be banned from boxing for life... [The boxer, who] would accept any penalty short of a lifetime ban... is still on probation for his rape conviction. But authorities said his actions during the fight and his efforts to brawl with police... would probably not be cause for revocation of his probation... The public outcry over [hi]s bizarre actions have reached all the way to [the US]President... who was "horrificed" by the incident... [Apeman], in Atlanta, said [the] apology was ...a good gesture – but... [the champion] has more pressing matters to deal with[, such as]... overseeing the building of a \$22.38m, 20,430sq m mansion next to his existing home. The new house has 17 bathrooms, three kitchens, a bowling alley, an Olympic-sized swimming pool, two five-car garages and a 135-seat movie theatre. It will be part of the lasting legacy to this popular champion. "It's all concrete and steel so it will last forever," [Apeman] says proudly. "Even after I die, I'll probably still be the guardian angel over that house." ...[■ At] the Hollywood Wax Museum in Los Angeles, [Rapeman's effigy has been] moved from the Sports Hall of Fame to the Chamber of Horrors[, where it] now stands near... the... [c]annibal... from *Silence of the Lambs*... maybe that's just the right spot.

...[Rapeman has] entered... sport's Hall of Shamers. Theirs is a banishment rather than an induction... For some of the Hall of Shamers, their acts are a one-off aberration. [An AUS]n cricketer... is the perfect example. Few feathered the ball through the covers like [this AUSn]. His drives were grace and timing personified. But ask 100 N[Z]ers about their lasting memories of [the AUSn] and 99 will remember him as the... skipper who in 1981 ordered his brother... to bowl the final ball of a one-day international underarm... [when NZ] had needed six runs to win... The delivery was not illegal but the spirit of the game was bastardised. As with... [Rapeman's] bites, there was nationwide condemnation. In [Rapema]n's case, there was outrage from... the White House... Over the... underarm[incident, the then NZ PM] Rob Muldoon frothed and chastised... Ugliness and sport have been a double act for years[, perhaps because sports]people snap mentally... In 1995, [a]... soccer star cracked during a Manchester United-Crystal Palace match in England, jumped a perimeter fence and kung-fu kicked a spectator. [The striker] had been sent off but as [the Frog] headed for an early shower the taunts from the crowd became too much. It was an... incident... which earned the now retired star a court appearance and a nine-month ban from the sport... [The fastest person] on the earth[saw] his career effectively ended when... stripped of the 100m gold at the 1988 Seoul Olympics after testing positive to anabolic steroids. Whether it was greed, his hunger to remain on top or just poor advice remains unclear. But overnight [the sprinter] went from hero to zero. Then there was the... American figure skater[who] pleaded guilty to being involved in a cover up plot of an assault on her arch rival... Sport's recent era doesn't have a mortgage on disdainful affairs. In 1919, the potential for money to corrupt and corrode traditional sporting values surfaced in baseball's great betting scandal. The World Series of that year saw the Chicago White Sox and the Cincinatti Reds square off. But behind-the-scenes a well-known gambler... had done a deal with [the]White Sox pitcher... to fix the series. Eight players were to receive a cut of the \$US100,000 action but the fix was plagued by double crossing and ultimately exposure... [A]ll eight received life bans... [One] English rugby league player... is hardly a household name on the world sporting scene. But what [the rugby league] player did on November 2, 1975, in Swansea, outshames... [Rapeman's] chomps... Wales was playing [NZ and a] Cantabrian... had just scored. [The Welsh player] walked up to the prone [Cantabrian] and brutally stepped on the Kiwi's face, gashing his eyebrow and cheek. [The Cantabrian] required 17 stitches. [The Welsh player] required and got a long suspension. [But this was someone] who had been sent off an estimated 28 times during his rugby league playing career. Before last Sunday's... bout, the brutality of [Rapema]n had been well documented. [The boxer] had beaten up... [his former wife and] served three years in jail for the 1991 rape of a [teenage]beauty pageant contestant. This is a [perso]n of excess who committed excesses.

...A fight in which eight contestants will battle in a... 1.8m high, eight-sided... cage for a \$10,000 prize in Wellington next month has been criticised by an anti-violence group. The executive officer of [Guys] For Non Violence... said there was enough violence in society without organised fights... "glorifying violence." The tournament co-organiser... denied that, saying all contestants had to belong to a martial arts club and pass a health test... The tournament[, which]... would have a one-on-one knockout format comprising a first round, semi-final and grand final... is the first of four planned by X-Treme Entertainment, of Wellington. Prizes include... a fully paid entry to the World Cage Combat Championships in Townsville, A[US], next year... Posters advertising the cage fight[, which]... has been rated R16 by X-Treme... state: "Watch some of N[Z]'s best fighters in a no-holds-barred reality fighting tournament." ...Fighters are[only] banned from biting, eye-gouging or striking opponents in the throat... The area controller of Wellington police district... said... "We would certainly be having a look at it,"...

The Attorney-General... wants to outlaw the controversial sport of cage fighting. "These sorts of spectator sports have no place in our society and only appeal to the baser instincts..." [the Attorney-General] said yesterday. The plans for a cage fight in Wellington later this month received another setback yesterday when the Queen's Wharf Events Centre cancelled the booking after seeking legal advice. Wellington police... hoped to have a final legal position about cage fighting early next week. "It... constitutes a very basic offence which is fighting in a public place. That is an arrestable offence and it is also punishable by a \$500 fine,"... X-Treme Entertainment... is also seeking legal advice. [Its co]-director... said that if cage fighting proved to be illegal in its present form, the company would look at making changes. But there was a limit to the compromises which could be made. The ACC sports injury prevention programme manager... said cage fighting appeared to be "tailor-made" for injury. "It is not something that can be compared to other martial art sports, which have clear rules and use protective equipment such as gloves and headgear,"...

PARENTS from two... of N[Z]'s most exclusive single sex colleges – ...St Cuthbert's College in Auckland and Wellington's Marsden School – ...must sign a good behaviour charter before their daughters are allowed to play sport for the colleges... Although there have been no incidents at either school so far, both schools have adopted the programme to make their sports games fair and safe both on and off the field. The Fair Play programme aims to educate spectators, coaches and players about non-violence in sport. The Hillary Commission provides the schools with information kits and it is up to individual schools to decide how they will enforce the programme and whether spectators will be banned after an incident. It is not known how many schools take part in the programme... [but] the Hillary Commission said the Fair Play programme had been running since 1992, with students being rewarded with certificates at the end of each sports season. The commission's code of conduct for spectators included: Being on your best behaviour, not using profane language or harassing players, applauding good play by both teams, not ridiculing a player for making a mistake, condemning the use of all violence and encouraging players to play to the rules... "The theme this year is 'Cheer Hard, Cheer Fair. No ref, No game.'" ...[the] Auckland Regional Fairplay spokes[perso]n... said basketball is the worst sport for spectator problems followed by soccer and rugby. "For some teams, the school name is so important they will do anything to win..." ['It's generally known, of course, that professional hockey players undergo perhaps the roughest initiation of any athletes in the ways of violence. A professional hockey player for the New York Rangers recalled his early days in the Major Junior A League in Canada: "I wanted to shoot and be a hockey player but the coach wanted me to be the head goon and specialize in beating up people" (*The New York Times*, January 9, 1977). Players attack and retaliate on the ice in disregard of the rules with an openness that delights the fans. So clearly we have a problem. Although millions of Americans fear personal danger, they enjoy and

encourage the thrill of vicarious violence through sports and other entertainment.' A similar situation exists in AUS, where 'the worship of guy-dominated contact sports is fuelling stereotypes of guys as violent and macho, says a physical education expert. The lecturer at the University of South AUS in Adelaide said the prominence given to sports such as rugby, league and AFL football was giving guys a message that there was only one way to behave. "What are the common behaviour patterns of these particular sports? Guys display their masculinity by being dominant, physically superior and punishing the opposition." The lecturer said sports such as diving and aerobics did not have the same aggressive traits, but most guys did not rate them as highly as contact sports. "You wouldn't say it's a natural thing because masculinity is socially constructed. It is not that way in every culture. Masculinity that's portrayed in sport is something that our culture values." The lecturer said the macho attitudes became a serious problem when top players acted the same way off the field. "It's dangerous, especially for young children if they see that as a behaviour pattern. These people are examples to society. They are heroes and it can do terrible things if you get footballers up on assault or rape charges." By the way, Rapeman]... **spent his 31st birthday begging...** "I only ask that I not be penalized for life for this mistake,"... From a distance, the crescent-shaped bite made [in Apeman's ear by Rapeman]'s incisors is barely noticeable. And... [Apeman] has no plans to sue [Rapema]n, who is facing penalties from all directions. "His attitude," says [Apeman], "caused him to lose everything [it had] gathered." Just what "everything" means will be decided this week by the five members of the N[SAC]. The state attorney general's office has recommended that [Rapema]n's boxing license be revoked, a step the state has never before taken... [Rapema]n could apply for a new license after a year, but Nevada law allows commissioners to refuse to grant it as long as they wish. Nevada's decision, whatever it is, will be honored throughout the U.S. [because Rapema]n has already said [that his intention is to] not contest it. All this puts the commissioners in a delicate spot. [The]Nevada Governor... was on the phone to them last week. So were a lot of fight fans... the incredible collection of people and finery known as... rap stars and wannabe rappers; Crips and Bloods; pickpockets and deep pockets... CEOS and CFOS; pimps and whores and others who just want to dress like them... [who are] pro and con [Rapema]n. "This is the toughest thing I've ever had to deal with in my life," says[one] commissioner... Enforcing civilized standards is never easy in a sport where acceptable behaviour is to beat your opponent to a pulp, and where unacceptable behaviour has never been bad for the gate. [Apeman] himself once bit an opponent... during a Golden Gloves bout in 1980... Still, the commission is under pressure to hand down a meaningful penalty, if only to sustain the hope that boxing is an industry that can contain its own pollutants. But driving [Rapema]n out of the ring for good at a time when boxing is desperately short of star power would be very bad for business. Even a diminished [Rapema]n remains an invincible money magnet. The fight with [Apeman] brought in a record 1.8 million viewer buys and \$90 million in pay-per-view revenue for the cable channel Showtime. The previous record holder? [Rapema]n's previous fight with [Apeman]... A U.S. ban on [Rapema]n could be a bit like putting trade sanctions on China for human-rights abuses: if U.S. companies can't enter the market, foreign competitors will. In an age of worldwide satellite broadcasts, [Rapema]n can easily take his saleable furies off-shore... for however long it pays. "We have to do whatever is best for the state of Nevada and for boxing," says... [the NSAC chairperson]. It's a statement open to many interpretations.

...[Rapeman, who was] once the "baddest [guy] on the planet," may have nowhere left on the planet to try to prove it after being banned from boxing yesterday and fined \$US3 m... for biting... [Apeman]'s ears... last month. The former heavyweight champ... was not present when the five-member N[SAC] voted unanimously to impose the maximum punishment and revoke his licence to box in the state, effectively banning him from boxing in the U[S. Rapema]n could fight overseas but under terms of his probation... must ask permission to travel outside the U[S. Rapema]n, who once dominated the sport, can apply for reinstatement in one year but if his application for a new licence is denied... must wait another year to try again... The boxing ban goes into effect when the order is signed – probably later this week – and [Rapema]n has 30 days in which to appeal... [Apeman], on holiday in South Africa, said only "No comment," to reporters when asked his reaction. An aide said [Apeman] had nothing to add to his statement when [the champion arrived in South Africa] on Sunday: that as a Christian the champion had forgiven... [Rapeman. In another development, a] New York financial broker... [has] spent \$US18,000... to purchase... [from] a MGM Grand security guard... [Apeman's] ear chunk... which was found by a hotel worker... after the fight. "I know some people think I'm sick, but everybody collects baseball cards and jerseys,"...

[The disgraced] boxer... had plenty of money left even after his... fine and ban from boxing, so [Rapema]n bought a Ferrari... Wide World of Cars dealership employees in Spring Valley, New York, said yesterday that [Rapema]n bought the Ferrari 456 GT[– that]... has a retail price of... \$US250,000... [–] on Wednesday afternoon. "[Rapema]n was very friendly and signed autographs," one employee said... "Sometimes celebrities are difficult but in his case [Rapeman] was as nice as [any person] could be," said... [another. Meanwhile the WBC] heavyweight champion... retained his title yesterday when [a]fellow Briton... was disqualified in the fifth round... for repeated holding... It was the second straight heavyweight title fight in which the veteran referee disqualified a boxer[– it refereed Rapeman's bout against the WBA]... champion... The... referee... did not want to disqualify the fighter, especially since the sport was already tarnished... but... the 7 1/2-5 underdog was warned several times... and had one point deducted from his score in the second round for holding and refusing to fight... The N[SAC suspended the loser] and held his purse of \$US1 million.

...IT WAS enough to make anyone laugh hysterically: a small single column, two paragraph story which insisted that a proposed heavyweight boxing bout between [the WBC titleholder and a Pole] in Las Vegas in October would be staged to: "Restore the credibility and prestige of... [boxing]." Wonders never cease... Imagine it, [a Pole who is] king of the nutcracker suite, being asked to "shoulder the extra responsibility of putting on a fight" to restore credibility to the sport. Who is kidding whom? This nonsense brings to mind that famous quote: "One of the primary things about boxing is lying". Oh, how true! Goodness knows, there has been plenty of lying. Most of it is boxing lying to itself about itself. The heavyweight division today is... a huge joke. From... [a Kiwi's] misguided dreams of one day becoming world champion; to a convicted rapist being paid \$27 million for biting off a bit of an opponents ear; to riots erupting in the ring; to everyone always praisin' the Lord for this and that success; to champions wearing scripture references on their warmup gowns; to... that fuzzy haired... [promoter], your basic everyday hood, manipulating the fight game like a puppeteer. How can anyone take the sport, or at least the heavyweight division seriously? Basically, boxing sucks. And don't expect some Pole that commonly mistakes testicles for a speed bag to restore any respect to it. For the heavyweight division to return to its former glory days – whenever they were – several things require urgent attention. For starters, it would help if there was just one sanctioned and recognised association... What's the matter with having just one association, one world champion, and a bunch of fighters ranked in order of merit beneath him? What's the matter with some structured system of challenging for the solitary heavyweight title? And what's the matter with boxers actually boxing – not biting... low-blowing... holding... head-butting...? ...Believe it or not, many of us actually enjoy a good fight. When it's undertaken in the appropriate spirit and within the rules. It certainly has been a relatively decent sport in the past, if decent can ever be used to describe organised brutality. Heavyweight boxing boasts a rich history filled with memorable eras... where... they just went out and beat each other to a pulp for a purse. Now, though, things have changed. It's more contrived vaudeville than controlled violence. It's exactly the opposite to how one boxing writer once described it... "The obvious difference between boxing and pornography is that boxing, unlike pornography, is not theatrical..." If all heavyweight boxing can serve up is... a Brit and a Pole, neither great fighters, attempting to fly the flag... give me pornography every time... Meanwhile, [the WBA titleholder will be taken on by the IBF titleholder]... in a heavyweight title unification fight at Las Vegas tomorrow... [The promoter will] share... about US\$30 million... in television rights regardless of who wins.

...[the 6th-ranked] contender... is offering [the WBC heavyweight] champion... \$US20 million... for a crack at the title... [The contender], who lost a close 10-round decision to [the titleholder] in May last year, would fight for free if [the titleholder] agreed to donate \$US10 million to a charity of [the contender]'s choice should the Briton lose... The [Briton's] camp has until October 30 to respond. [However, the Brit] is expected to try to unify the heavyweight titles by taking on the winner of... [today's WBA v IBF]'s Las Vegas bout.

...Britain's WBC champion... and the 35-year-old [American] WBA and IBF champion... have agreed to fight for the undisputed world heavyweight title in Las Vegas on April 25... [T]he unification fight... would carry a purse of between \$US40 to 50 million... It would be the first time the three heavyweight belts have been united since [another old boxer] held them all in 1992. Assuming... [the shamed boxer] regains his licence, [Rapema]n could then expect to meet the winner...

With a unification bout... ruled out for the time being... [after Apeman] and HBO, which has the exclusive rights to [the British boxer's] fights, could not agree on terms[. the]... WBC heavyweight champion... will defend his title against either [the boxer who won this year's puzzling points bout against a 49-year-old boxer in Atlantic City or someone else from outside the top 10-ranked WBC contenders next] March, probably in Atlantic City... [This news is sure to disappoint the Kiwi boxer who dreams of one day becoming world champion and is currently ranked '4th on the WBC contender list (plus 6th on the WBO, 7th on the IBF and 12th on the WBA lists').

...Kiwi boxer] continues to chase his American dream... The hunger is still there, the focus to go for number one still burns[, and 'The Terminator'] is still peeved... [about losing by points to a Nigerian] at a time when [the Samoan] was suffering, literally, from a bone chip problem... [on] his elbow... "It was important for me to keep fighting because it was an important time for my career,"... So is [the Samoan] fit to fight? "No," says [the boxer. "The boxer's] in shape to get in shape," says[his] adviser... The about-to-turn 25-year-old... now weighs in at 113kg, well over his ideal fight size of 102kg... [His adviser] admits his charge was too big when [his charge took on the Nigerian] earlier this year. "We concentrated on building up his strength and the extra size dulled his speed." The fight plan remains the same as it did for the [previous] match: Go in hard and fast; hit the arms and body of the opponent to tire him out; get inside the other guy's reach and deliver that knockout blow. [The Samoan]'s defeat in Sacramento... in June gave [the Nigerian] a 17-0 record, with 12 KOs. The... pay-per-view channel HBO were delighted with the spectacle, which generated a heavyweight record 1,730 punches... HBO's vice president of sports, said the fight would enhance both careers. "Did [the Nigerian]'s stock go up? Absolutely. Did [the Samoan]'s stock go down? Not a bit. [The Samoan] stays a top prospect, maybe even THE top prospect, and [the Nigerian] becomes a top prospect,"... at 1.88m... [the Nigerian had an advantage of] 13cms in height and... 3-4cms of reach... over... [the Samoan. It's something the Samoan and his adviser know the former hotel cook will] be up against from now on – the Aucklander will be fighting uphill and over his weight every time as every other serious contender is physically bigger than him. It's a prospect that doesn't daunt [him]. "I know what I want, I know how to go for it. You can't talk about obstacles," [the Samoan] says with the beginnings of a yankee drawl. "Yeah, I know, I'm trying to get rid of it," [the boxer] says of the twang. There's little chance of that... [His] US fight manager, has told the Aucklander [it] needs to get back in the ring, back on television and to keep a high profile in the States.

...[it] does not seem so long ago that [the boxing promoter] was telling anyone who would listen – and sometimes that's anyone within 100 metres, whether they want to listen or not – that [it] was moving to England to live next door to his mate and partner... Now [the business partners] are suing each other. Two heavyweight legals going at it. [The partner]'s record is 32 wins, one draw, no losses, mostly at libelweight; [the promoter], who has defended at taxweight against the Internal Revenue Service and the FBI, has five draws, no losses and a return match pending in January... [H]ow they became partners... and... how those dealings affect the future of... [a British featherweight, is bound to create] an entertaining round in court. Much has been made of [the promoter]'s threat to scuttle [the featherweight]'s trans-atlantic decider... next month...

Britain's most colourful boxer is expected to be a knockout in the U[S] with his clever mix of words and punches... [The boxer wears] the spots of the leopard and has all the killer instinct of the wild cat... goes by the ring title of prince but some say... was born to be king... fights as a featherweight but talks like a heavyweight. Britain's "Prince"... gets the chance to show if [it] is indeed lord of the ring when [the Brit] embarks on a six-bout deal across the Atlantic, starting with a fight against America's W[BU] champion... at New York's Madison Square Gardens on December 18. The pride of England – Sheffield to be exact – has been touted as the best boxer in any division in the world. The British press talk up the cocky [23-year-old] who now boasts an unbeaten record over 28 fights... Even his... opponent seems to appreciate [the Brit], although with only one defeat in 50 bouts, [the 30-year-old] has paid his dues and is now cashing in for the biggest purse of his career... Although [the Brit] is smaller and less experienced[, it]... should be able to stop the American within six rounds and go on to bigger things. But for all the hype that surrounds him, [the Brit] also has his critics. There are those who feel [the Prince] still under-achieves for a boxer of enormous talent, that [it] has been content to sit back and not do the hard work. So [the Prince] has some proving to do, because [it] has been a letdown since winning the W[BO] featherweight title... in 1995. Soon after that win [the Prince] announced his ambition was to bag world titles at six weights. And... would never let wealth get in the way of his work ethic or let his celebrity status go to his head. [The Prince] has been less than his word, spending the past two years treading water – stuck in Britain at 57kg... and matched mainly against low-rent opposition. [The Prince] was once, perhaps, the most refreshing performer in British sport... arrogant, disdainful of opposition and lacking in any sense of self-proportion. But his flamboyance and brilliance in the ring made up for all the debits. And, after all, [the Prince] was only a kid. Those days, sadly, are over, which is why his [US] trip is so important for the [guy] who kilo for kilo, has more power and natural ability than any other boxer. Some say [the Prince] has evolved into a circus act in boxing gloves yet [it] will earn... \$US12 million from his six-bout deal. [The Prince], a Muslim whose parents come from Yemen, is a teetotaler who never touches drugs or cigarettes, but his frequent holidays, love of nightlife and partiality to junk food have taken their toll. However, it is his extra-mural performance that has been most disturbing. [The Prince] can be nice enough in one-on-one encounters, provided the other person is obsequious. But in public, his... gift has given way to a boring boastfulness – summed up in pet phrases such as, "I'm going to be a legend"... Fans frequently complain of his offhand manner, and this has come out even more starkly during press conferences where every question is taken as a personal challenge... [When] asked by one well-intentioned journalist whether [the Prince thought of himself as being] the best fighter in the world[, the 1.6m Brit] replied, without a trace of humour: "What kind of a question is that? I'd like to give you a right beating." Over the past two years, [the Prince] has... twice been caught driving too fast... [– in either his] Porsche Boxster... Porsche Carrera, Lamborghini, Aston Martin Spider, Cherokee jeep, Wrangler jeep, Jaguar, BMW... [or] Mercedes S Class... [–] was involved in an airport confrontation when [the Brit] told a clerk that if his bag was not where it was supposed to be [the boxer] would sort her out with a shotgun... and... punched [a] fellow boxer... in the mouth... at... Heathrow...

Even before... the... Prince... throws his first punch in the U[S], the boxer... is getting the royal treatment... The... cable television network HBO, [which is] bankrolling the bout... at Madison Square Garden... was reported to be spending \$US1 million to introduce [the Brit] to New York fight fans. His face is on a huge billboard in the heart of Times Square and outside the entrance of the Lincoln Tunnel as well as on posters plastered in bus stops throughout the city. While [the Prince] has been training in New York, pop star[s and actors have] stopped by to visit him... "I love it," [the 23-year-old] said of his celebrity status. "I said before I got here that as soon as I got here that I am going to take over and that's what I have done." ...the... [Prince's first opponent, who is] known by the rather modest nickname "The Flushing Flash", made clear his resentment of [the Brit]'s star treatment. "The first round I'm going straight for that mouth. I've been saving up everything for the bell," said... the 30-year-old... [before resorting] to veiled racial insults, saying [the Prince] could look for work as a cab driver or in a convenience store after... [it loses. In further boxing news,] Zambia's new Commonwealth light welterweight boxing champion... [– who] won the title [despite] being floored twice in the... 12th... [and final round –] is critical in a Lusaka hospital... Neuro-surgeons suspect [that the Zambian] has a clot in a blood vessel leading to the brain.

...Two Taiwanese [guys] had their arms torn off at the shoulder when they became trapped during a tragic mass tug-of-war match... in Taipei. There were 780 people in two teams. As well as the two who lost their arms, another... lost a hand... [Incidentally, boxing's infamous ear] biting...

incident was voted top sports story of the year in a world-wide poll by international news agency Associated Press. In balloting among 50 sports editors from all areas of the globe except the U[S], the bizarre... heavyweight fight was a runaway winner... - 1997

Las Vegas yawning as [Rapema]n comeback nears Rarely have ticket sales for an execution been so sluggish. This is not because Americans are squeamish. Far from it. There is never a seat to be had in a jailhouse whenever the long arm of the state switches on the electric chair... But with only a few days to go until [Rapeman has the chance to fulfil his promise] to terminate the life of [a South African], anything from \$200 to \$1200 can still book you a place in the audience. Maybe it is because the [US] public are no longer certain the [Rape]man can deliver. The condemned [South Africa]n, for one, is unconvinced... “[The tosser] said the same things before his fights with... [Apeman] and look what happened to him in those.” It is a matter of infamy that [Rapema]n lost his world heavyweight titles to [Apeman], then his licence to box for making a real meal out of the champion who calls himself the Real Deal. Now [Rapema]n is back again... Comeback No 1... when [Rapeman] re-emerged from three years in prison... sold out the magnificent MGM Grand Garden Arena weeks in advance. Marketing the 16,000-plus tickets for Comeback No 2 is proving trickier. Las Vegas is a city which likes sinful pleasures in excess but no one in the city, unlike the disgusted reaction in Britain, is treating seriously [Rapeman’s prophecy that his opponent] is about to die in the ring. Furthermore, the executives of the world’s largest hotel are having to temper the customer appetite for horror with a concession to better taste. The MGM, with its theme park full of adventure rides as well as its acres of gambling and 5003 rooms, is in the forefront of the drive to attract families to the Las Vegas Strip as well as gamblers to the strip clubs. That image took as heavy a battering as [Rapema]n when gunshots were fired inside the hotel during a riot which followed one of his fights, causing the MGM to think long and hard about welcoming him back... They have done so only by agreement with the promoters, America Presents, that [Rapema]n is not sold as a monster. The television advertisement shows him training with professional dedication, then smiling benignly from the screen... [while eating] a simple breakfast. This attempt at a softer sell is not having the same immediate impact at the box office, even though [the South African], briefly the IBF world heavyweight champion in his own right, is a more credible opponent than... the Irish-American fall guy for [Rapema]n’s first comeback... [I]t is easier to promote [Rapema]n the Freak to the transient population of Las Vegas. The punters come for thrills, not gentle exercises in social rehabilitation. So the next few days will decide whether the controversial decision of the N[SAC] to recertify Rapema]n as sane to fight will pay off... The likelihood, of course, is that the arena will be packed on the night, with... unsold tickets being given away by the casinos to their high rollers... The Showtime cable TV company’s pay-to-view returns... are expected to be as high as usual from the community of American fight fans...

[Rapeman] will take on South Africa[’s]... 30-year-old self-described White Hope... in a scheduled 10-round bout... today... for a paltry \$US10 million... If all goes well... with no repeat of the near riot that shut down the MGM Grand casino after [Rapeman v Apeman] II and cost the hotel a huge public relations black eye, the hotel is ready to sign... the mother of all fights in November – [Rapeman v Apeman] III... MGM say they knew [the Rapeman v White Hope bout] would not be a big seller... But... Showtime, with its loans to help [Rapema]n keep the Internal Revenue Service and other creditors from foreclosing on his properties... insisted on the date... between New Year’s Eve and the Super Bowl... because it has a schedule for [Rapema]n to keep leading up to... [the fight with Apel]man... □... The... [first black South African president has sent the White Hope] a message of support... [The] president – himself a former boxer – ...said... “I wish you luck in the contest... I believe [that Rapema]n and yourself will play your part to perpetuate the honour and glamour of the world heavyweight championship[.]” The White Hope beat a]... German... in 1995 to win the vacant I[BF] heavyweight title, but was stripped of the crown a few days later for failing a drug test.

...[RAPEMA]N has been sentenced to a year in jail for assaulting two motorists after a traffic accident... [The judge, who said the pugilist] “repeatedly speaks and acts compulsively and violently”... sentenced [Rapema]n to two concurrent two-year sentences but suspended all but one year... fined him \$US5000... and sentenced him to two years’ probation after release from jail... [Rapeman] could have received up to 20 years in jail... [However, the] decision could lead to more jail time... and places the former heavyweight champion’s boxing career in jeopardy... Indiana authorities must now decide whether the 32-year-old fighter violated his probation for a 1991 rape conviction. [Rapema]n was released in 1995 after serving three years of a six-year sentence and his probation was set to expire next month... “We are surprised at the severity of the sentence,” said... a spokes[per]son for Showtime which was to televise [Rapema]n’s next bout... The decision came three weeks after his successful comeback against [the White Hope, and Rapeman] was scheduled to fight on April 24 in Las Vegas against an opponent to be determined... The two victims... settled out of court and were against sending [Rapema]n to jail.

...[Rapema]n will face disciplinary action in a Maryland jail today after a violent temper tantrum that could make it harder for him to gain an early release to resume his career. The volatile 32-year-old... had to spend the weekend in isolation after hurling a television against a set of bars at the Montgomery County Detention Centre... [Rapeman has only] been in the... jail for two weeks[after a] judge sentenced him to 12 months imprisonment for punching a 60-year-old... in the jaw and kicking a 50-year-old in the groin last August... [The NSAC] could revoke his licence for good because of the Maryland incident.

...*Unity bout ends in TKO for boxing* [The]WBC champ... thought [it had won, while the] WBA and IBF titleholder... [looked like a person who] knew it was all over, but the judges scored yesterday’s heavyweight clash... a draw. Commentators were perplexed and the crowd booed when the decision went against Britain’s [boxer], who outclassed the veteran American over 12 rounds in what was billed as the bout to decide the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world. “I knew [Apeman] wouldn’t let me leave with all three belts without some funny business,”...

Britain’s [heavyweight champion outclassed his US opponent in New York] only to be denied the undisputed world heavyweight boxing title... None of the few hard blows [Apeman] landed was as harsh as the one delivered by judges, who robbed [the Brit] of victory in a travesty after a fight where his superior size and reach kept [his opponent] at bay. “It looks like the judges were rigged,” said... [the British boxer]’s trainer. “It was a terrible decision.” [A]South African judge... awarded the fight to [the Brit] 116-113 but [the US] judge... went for [Apeman] 115-113 and[the] British judge... called the fight a 115-115 draw... [Apeman] received \$US20 million... twice what [the Brit] was paid... Had [Apeman lost, his promoter] would have lost control of the profitable heavyweight title and lost much of his power. A near-certain rematch instead will try to milk more money from the unification quest... [The British boxer’s trainer] said the outcome shows how necessary federal regulation of boxing has become. [His charge] raced from the ring seconds after the verdict was read, the joy of an apparent victory replaced by stunned anger and frustration... [Apeman] had landed only 68 punches through seven rounds, barely a third of [the British boxer’s] total, and the ratio changed little over the last rounds... The long-awaited fight left a bitter taste in the mouth of a sell-out crowd of 21,284... The draw now confuses... [an Auckland boxer]’s heavyweight title programme... [The Samoan] was to have been second in line behind... [Uganda’s] WBC No 1 contender, for a contest with yesterday’s winner.

...*Whisper of the week: the... Millennium Stadium in Cardiff... is... tipped to stage [the heavyweight] rematch in September...*

Britain’s [WBC heavyweight champion and America’s WBA and IBF champion] will try again to settle the issue of who is the undisputed world heavy-weight boxing champion on November 13. Each boxer is expected to be paid \$US15 [m]illion... in the second re-unification fight.

...IT SEEMS the fighting career of [the British boxer] has distilled itself into one climatic opportunity. Nothing [the Brit] has done in the past or will do in the future is likely to have more influence on his ultimate ranking in the history of the heavyweight championship than how [it performs against Apeman] today. Practically everything [the Brit] has desired in 10 years as a professional is there for the taking in a fight [it’s] equipped to

win. In addition to the status of undisputed world champion, and the immense financial leverage which goes with it, victory will almost certainly earn him another prize [it] has long coveted but had begun to fear was beyond his reach: the acclaim of the American public. They were unimpressed by his tendency to alternate between demonstrations of violent effectiveness and displays of cautious dullness, and automatically sceptical about any Limey heavyweight. They sniffed at suggestions the athleticism of his 1.95m, 108kg-plus physique, the range and jolting power of his left jab and the anaesthetising capacity of his right hand implied superiority over all other big [boxers] of his generation. They pointed out the jab frequently degenerated into more of a pawing gesture than a declaration of authority and the right was too often a potential rather than an actual weapon, a loaded gun rarely pulled from its holster. Then, with dramatic suddenness, attitudes to [the Brit] in the US were transformed. The change had its origins in one of the most depressing experiences the fighter has endured, the night in... New York, last March when scandalously illogical judging distorted his thorough domination of [the USer] in their first fight into a ludicrous draw. Bad decisions are as basic to boxing as sweat and pain but that one was such a glaring, cruel injustice there was indignation all over the US.

...*Surprise, surprise* More than 30 prize fights, including one involving [the]former heavyweight champion [who lost the Rumble in the Jungle], have been fixed or tainted with fraud in the last 12 years, according to the *Miami Herald*. Some fighters took payments to throw fights while others took dives to avoid injury and earn a quick paycheck. The report cited sworn statements with more than 60 fighters, promoters, trainers, managers, matchmakers and commissioners. [The report comes amid accusations that the IBF has 'accepted bribes to fix rankings', and follows last week's announcement that the '8 month inquiry into the drawn decision at the heavyweight re-unification fight resulted in prosecutions for bribery and corruption.']

...*"What occurred once the 12-round event concluded will surely go down in the boxing annals as the biggest fix in fight history."* – Boxing legend[who won the Rumble in the Jungle (r:p1478, ln49 + p1518, ln63 + upstart, p1519, ln44) speaks out on the re-unification] *fiasco*.

...The Greatest [boxer to ever step in a ring (who has been stripped of his dignity by the ravages of Parkinson's Syndrome) was once s]tripped of his world heavyweight title for refusing to fight in the Vietnam War – "I ain't got no quarrel with them Viet Cong" [it said. The boxer] lost three of his best fighting years. [It] returned, minus the blinding speed and razzle dazzle footwork, yet regained his crown, twice, in 1974's Rumble in the Jungle... then four years later... at the age of 36. Asked once to recite the shortest poem [it knew, the former champion] paused, then: "Me? Whee!"

...[A]MUM-of-three... has beaten [the Terminator] to the punch. The pint-sized fighter is gloving up for the first [gals'] world title boxing match in N[Z]. But the NZ guys' heavyweight champion] is still looking for his world title shot. [The mum-of-three], 36, will take on [a]Dutch boxer... in Auckland next month for the [Gals' IBF] welterweight title. Her three children, [aged]18... 15... and 13, and husband... will be at the fight to support her. "They don't seem to mind me boxing, as long as I win,"... The family moved from Kaitaia to Auckland six weeks ago to prepare for [her] challenge. The fight was secured last week after [a local]construction firm... put up the money to bring the Dutch fighter to N[Z] and the \$US20,000 purse (\$12,000 for the winner; \$8,000 for the loser). "It was fantastic to realise it could go ahead,"... said [the mum-of-three. The] black-belt in karate, has fought in four matches, winning two, drawing one and losing one.

...[the Terminator] has been ordered to turn panelbeater in the biggest bout of his boxing career today. In the early rounds, hammering the body of his unbeaten opponent... is seen as essential if the N[Z] heavyweight is to book himself a world title shot... The victor of the... 12-rounder has been guaranteed a title shot by the I[BF with Britain's undisputed world champion]... Irrespective of the result, [the Samoan] will pocket a purse of \$580,000... [The Terminator's opponent today] has won 22 out of his 29 pro fights by knockout.

...I'm a sucker for a boxer's knockout punch. It's the shortest, sharpest and sweetest moment in all sport. Bang. Instant gratification. All [of a guy]'s basic instincts taken care of. One who has a very good knockout punch is [the Terminator. And now it]'s finally on the verge of getting a crack at the greatest prize in sport, the undisputed heavyweight championship of the world. Yet from my ringside seat most N[Z]ers still seem to be cold on him. In any other country [the Samoan] would be feted as the Great Contender... [and] given the keys to the temple. The consensus here is that [the boxer] is a squat Samoan from south Auckland being manipulated in a snake pit of American intrigue and money. Exactly. It's called prize fighting and N[Z]ers are not comfortable with that. Pro boxing is considered to be outside the norm, beyond the circle. And it's why [the Terminator] has not been paid the respect [it] is due. Board sailors, single scullers, triathletes, netballers, three-day eventers and... discus throwers are much nicer to snuggle up to and shower with our gratitude. Even [a tennis player, when it] had a world... ranking scarcely in the top 100, was given better recognition than [the Terminator]. So stick one on 'em, [I say to the Samoan heavyweight]. I'm in your corner, brother.

...[the Terminator] is set to become the \$7m [hu]man. That is the expected minimum fee [the Samoan] will get to fight [Britain's]world heavyweight boxing champion... The cheque will be boosted by a percentage of profits from the TV rights.

...*Payback time in the ring...* The T[erminator] is standing behind the right shoulder of [his]manager... You can't help but know that... where [the manager is, the Terminator] is too. It's been that way... [since] the 19-year-old kid with a bronze Olympic medal in hand was taken up by [the]n 32-year-old... who had, somewhere at home, a silver Olympic medal stuffed in a drawer... [J]ust in case you did not already know – they will take on [a Brit soon] for the heavyweight boxing championship of the world... [The pair] are finishing lunch. [The contender is teasing his manager], who does not really want to do an interview: "You're a big star." [The manager] has been a big star before. At least [it] might have expected to be one. In 1984, [it] came home from the Los Angeles Olympics with that silver, N[Z]'s first Olympic] boxing medal in 56 years. But his Olympics ended amid a near riot and in one of the great controversies in Olympic boxing history. On that August day [the NZer] was in the ring for a semifinal with the favourite, [America's Apeman. The NZer] was never going to win the fight. [It] was, though, and proudly, going to bring home the bronze. But then came what boxing commentators of the time described as an H-bomb of a left hook. [The USer] landed it an instant after the ref had called for the fight to stop. [The NZer], confused, legs staggering under him, was awarded the bout – and the silver. The crowd erupted in a frenzy of booing and threw whatever was nearest: bottles, coins, beer glasses. [The NZer]'s father, his trainer, was hit by a flying stool and was bleeding from a gash in his forehead as the N[Z]ers left the arena by a back door. [The NZer] says now that [it] did not handle the controversy well. "I found it hard to accept the silver medal. I believe I didn't deserve it – I was losing the fight. I was a proud guy, and I'm still a proud guy today and I never want anything that I don't deserve." ...years on, the memory still jars – and that medal is still tainted. "I had the silver medal put around my neck on the podium, and all the Americans booed. I took it off and I never put it on again." That blunt statement gives an indication of the calibre of [his] resolve. As does his response to the people who[, since the world title bout was confirmed,] are "coming up and grabbing me and hugging me. Yeah, the sheer thrill and excitement for them. They're just so rapt that they think that's how I'm feeling. They say: 'Oh, how do you hold yourself together?' Well... the bottom line is that we have achieved something that we've always known: that [the Terminator] would fight for the heavyweight championship of the world." After all, this time it is personal. "Another opportunity for me to live my experience, and to correct it."

...The... T[erminator] stands to earn more than \$9 m... from the... fight in the biggest payday in N[Z] sporting history... "There is a lot of money involved but it isn't what is important to me. Fighting for... and winning the title is what's important... This is my destiny. It must be fulfilled."

...WHEN [the Terminator] steps into the ring for his world heavyweight challenge... [it] will be following in the illustrious footsteps of another N[Z] immigrant who made good with his fists. [The Terminator] has much in common with Bob Fitzsimmons, who won the title on St Patrick's Day, March 17, 1897, with a round 14 knockout. Both came to N[Z] as children, fought their way out of working-class neighbourhoods, and established themselves overseas despite a size disadvantage – Fitzsimmons in weight, [the Terminator] in height – with devastating punching power. Both reckoned it was their destiny to win the world title... Fitzsimmons' story is better than any fictional account that could have been written. Aside

from his David v Goliath-type victory to end... Jim Corbett's reign as world champ – still rated as one of the best fights of all time and the one that set the tone for the huge paydays and moving pictures coverage – there was wife-swapping with his manager... wrestling with bears, lions as pets... Fitz, as [the NZer] was known worldwide at a time when boxing was the number one sport globally, dropped to A[US]n Jim Hall in Sydney when short of money and with a new family, and lost... to "Sailor" Tom Sharkey when O. K. Corral shootout sheriff [Wyatt] Earp unfairly disqualified him – Earp was later said to have won \$10,000 on Sharkey. And Fitz was famous for quotable quotes: "The bigger they are, the harder they fall," is the best known, though rarely attributed to him. Fitzsimmons was the son of an Irish... [miner] of Helston in Cornwall. [Bob] was the youngest of 11 children. When the mines bottomed out and... [Bob's father lost his job, the] family... shifted... to... Timaru, setting up a blacksmith's forge that was to be run by older brother Jarrett and would become Bob's de facto gymnasium where [the budding boxer] built his chest, upper arms and shoulders to the point where [it] scared opponents just by removing his shirt. After bashing up anyone keen for a go in the South Island, [Bob] moved to A[US], struggled for a quid, and eventually agreed to take a fall to the Aussie middleweight champ, Jim Hall. Hall was to go on to the U[S] to fight for the world title held by Jack Dempsey. Fate reversed the result when Hall broke bones in his hand in a bar brawl after being booked to sail to San Francisco, and the fight backers replaced him with Fitz. New Orleans was the capital of boxing then, and the biggest purse ever offered, \$12,000, was put up for the fight in January 1891. Fitz... thrashed Dempsey, repeatedly knocking him down. By round six Dempsey was... barely able to stand. Fitz asked him to throw in the towel. "I don't want to strike you, Jack," [Fitz] reputedly said. Dempsey's reply was: "Well, I would hit you if I could." It ended in the ninth, Fitz winning the money and American citizenship. Next [Fitz] flattened Hall, then defended the first of his three world titles repeatedly to earn... \$42,000 that year. [Fitz] decided to step up in weight divisions and asked titleholder Corbett for a chance. Corbett announced that [it] was retiring and that his successor was to be... Peter Maher. Fitz was happy to face Maher, too. The fight was set for Dallas, Texas, in February, 1[89]6. But the southern state decided that boxing was an unhealthy pastime and at the last minute changed the law to ban the sport, forcing promoter Dan Stuart to shift the bout over the Rio Grande into Mexico. It was one of the first boxing matches to be filmed. Thomas Edison's kinescope camera was used, and paying customers around the country boosted the purse. Gunslinger Bat Masterton was hired to keep the peace in a roughneck crowd that included Mexican bandits, miners and Texas Rangers... In 1897, Corbett agreed to face Fitz and their fight... was the first championship match filmed, \$15,000 on offer for the winner... Fitz... delivered the knockout blow to the midriff in a come-from-behind win. James Bond made it famous but it was Fitz... who "invented" the solar plexus punch when his wife, Rose... [-] his second wife, his first, Alice, having left him for his manager, Martin Julian... Rose was Julian's sister... [-] yelled, "Hit him in the slats, Bob," from the side of the Carson City ring... Fitz never defended the title, instead taking to the stage for a year, a common course for boxers of the time and one also pursued by... the bigger and heavier... Corbett. In 1899, aged 36, [Fitz] lost the heavyweight title to 24-year-old James Jackson Jefferies at Coney Island... Fitz announced his retirement but the money soon ran out given his high-spending style, and by 1900... was back, beating Sharkey in two rounds to avenge the Earp-induced loss. [Fitz] sought a rematch with Jefferies but the younger [boxer] had time on his side and left Fitz to wait. By 1902, when the fight was set for San Francisco, it was too late for Fitz. His speed was gone and [Fitz] was KO'd in the seventh. Not long after, Rose died of pneumonia. Eventually... [Fitz] married for a third time, divorced, and married again, the period marked by heavy drinking. After the failure of his fourth marriage [Fitz] found God and cleaned up. In 1903, aged 40, [Fitz] won the new light heavyweight division... beating holder George Garner over 20 rounds. [Fitz] defended it twice, then lost it in 1905, but didn't cease boxing ...til... 1914, when [Fitz] fell to new heavyweight contender and subsequent champ Jack Johnson. [Fitz] returned briefly to Timaru and was feted as a hero, despite having several times said [it] had no wish to return there... In 1917 [Fitz] was admitted to a Chicago hospital with pneumonia and didn't come out, passing away on October 22. Boxing writers... in their book *The Release of Power*, have computer-ranked heavyweights over the years and list Fitz at No 5 of those who fought in the first half of [the] century, one ahead of Corbett, the first four being Johnson, Gene Tunney, Dempsey and Jefferies. Tom Heeney is the only other Kiwi to have challenged for the title, losing to champ Tunney when the ref stopped the fight in the 11th round of their bout at New York in... 1928.

...[THE BOXER] WAS known as the Hard Rock from Down Under and it took a super[hu]man to beat him – a super[hu]man in the form of the legendary Gene Tunney. His name was Tom Heeney... the ninth child of poor Irish immigrants, and... the last N[Z]er to challenge for the world heavyweight title... on July 26, 1928, at New York's Yankee Stadium. It was one of boxing's most punishing fights... Heeney[, who] was born in Gisborne on May 19, 1898... represented Poverty Bay against the Springboks in 1921, but boxing was the family passion. His father would give lessons to his boys and neighbourhood, and Heeney's brother Jack later became N[Z] middleweight champion. Heeney turned professional in 1921 and soon made his mark, beating the N[Z] heavyweight champion... Heeney left N[Z] in 1924 to follow his career in Britain... When in Britain, Heeney didn't exactly set the boxing world on fire. Two years later [Heeney] went to the U[S], where the NZer intended to continue boxing to pay for his trip home. Then his fortune changed. H[eeney] won a succession of fights and... worked his way up to fourth-ranked heavyweight and secured a title shot in 1928 after a 10-round draw with future champion Jack Sharkey. Heeney would be matched against... a former Marine who was one of the most scientific boxers who ever fought as a heavyweight... Of the challenger the critics said: "Heeney is the immovable object and onrushing force rolled into one, with the heart of a lion and a jaw of corrugated iron." Even Dempsey was impressed. "Heeney has a better than even chance of winning. Only a super[hu]man can beat him." ...Tunney was guaranteed \$525,000 and Heeney \$100,000. But promoter Tex Rickard lost substantially. From 88,000 tickets printed, only 45,890 were sold. The betting odds of 3:1 in Tunney's favour reflected the general assumption that Heeney was out-matched. Heeney had a professional record of 34 fights with 27 wins (10 by knockout), four draws and three losses. Tunney had fought 62 times and lost only on[c]e... The fight was broadcast in what was described as "the most ambitious radio station hook-up in history." Listeners throughout the world would hear Heeney receive, in the words of the press, "the beating of his life." He[eney] started aggressively and... "almost upset the champion with a right to the jaw... The punch landed almost full in Tunney's face as [the champion] was out of balance and the champion almost dived through the ropes near his own corner." But Heeney was then given a boxing lesson as the champion exhibited all his ruthless skill. Heeney's face was opened up in the fourth round and in the eighth... was nearly blind. He[eney] took a terrible beating for three more rounds and was floored by a left hook at the end of the 10th... Heeney gamely came out for the next round but... [the fight] was so one-sided that Tunney dropped his hands and snapped at referee Eddie Forbes: "How much more do you want him to take?" Forbes stopped the bout after 2m 52s of the 11th round. Tunney was generous in victory, saying: "I have nothing but admiration for Heeney's courage. I found the Hard Rock hard indeed... I saw that it was impossible to knock him out with one punch and so I shifted to an attack that would wear him down." Heeney was resigned in his appraisal: "I can't say that [Tunney] is a terrific puncher, but [Tunney] did to me what no other [boxer] ever did. That tells the story." ...It was Tunney who retired after the bout. Heeney married a New York girl, Marion Dunn, and continued boxing for five years. But [Heeney] was never the same fighter – of his 22 subsequent bouts [it] won only five. He[eney] retired in 1933 and set up a restaurant in Miami, where [Heeney] died in 1984... [The latest NZer to challenge for the world heavyweight title is another boxer whose] toughness ...is... legendary.

...IT'S A big step for a boy from a tiny Pacific atoll to compete for the premier prize in sport but [the Terminator] has no worries, no pretensions, no doubts about his chance of taking boxing's world heavyweight title. [The Samoan]'ll win the two world title belts from [the] Briton... because of his destiny, [it] believes. "Have faith," reads the slogan on the jackets and T-shirts worn by... [his support] team. It's the island background from his hometown of Faleatiu and the childhood upbringing in South Auckland that keeps [hi]s feet firmly planted as [it] lines up his opponent[, the... event sure to stop this country and blitz all television viewer records. [The Terminator] always enjoys two homecomings when back from the U[S] after his

fights, one to Auckland and the second to Samoa. Mixing with ordinary people – his relatives, the boxers with whom [it] grew up and trained, the crowd at the Manukau mall – is all part of what keeps [the Terminator] clean, focused, and realistic... “God put me into something I’m good at,” is his reply to any questions about hurting people... Ask about wealth and [again the pseudo-Christian] has a ready patter: “When you drink the water remember the [guy] who dug the well... So I respect all those that some would call the little people. I don’t believe there are any little people. Everyone has a God-given talent and it’s a matter of making the best of it.” [The father of a 2-year-old boy] remains connected to a congregational Christian church in South Auckland... Out of the ring [the Terminator] is quietly spoken, happy to sign autographs and have his picture taken with fans in a way [the Brit, Rapema]n and others wouldn’t dream of. [The Samoan] watches the antics of the likes of [Rapema]n and the only [boxer] to beat him in 37 fights as a pro, [the]Nigerian... locked up after molesting a room-service girl, and learns. “They’re missing something as a human being, they’re not a complete person. I’m at peace with myself.” ...All pre-fight talk is of [the Brit’s] greater height and reach... “I’m not worried about him. It may not be pretty and it may not be perfect but I’m just going to fight, do whatever [the Brit] does better than [the Brit]’s doing it. I’ll be alright, I’m looking forward to it. I’ll be happy regardless of the outcome. We all want to be winners but there can only be one winner. You have to accept that and be happy that you know you’ve done your best. I don’t believe in regrets.”

...A rib cartilage injury suffered in training and the lack of solid pre-title bouts caught up with [the Terminator] in Las Vegas yesterday, with the champ... untested in defending his crown... The Samoan-South Auckland... proved his stamina, his ability to take a horrific hiding, and his sports[per]sonship. There were no complaints afterwards. [The Terminator] never landed a punch that stunned or hurt the champ[, being unable t]o... get through [the champ’s] reach and jab, his corner later putting much of the problem down to a second round blow... that reinjured the rib. [The Terminator] had been caught by a body shot from [his] sparring partner... six weeks ago... saw a specialist in Los Angeles to check the damage, and believed [it was 100%] going into the fight. But the crack from [the champ] early on shortened up [the Terminator]’s attack and defence. [The Terminator] was restricted in his movement... and could not fully extend his arms. [The Terminator] walked away with the crowd’s respect. The fans had booed [the champ] at times because of his cautious, back-wards approach to the fight, but [the champ did all it] had to do, keeping away from danger. Judges gave [him] the victory by scores of 117-111, 119-109 and 119-110. The statistics tell it all. [The champ] threw 674 punches, 300 connecting; [the challenger] threw 413, 110 landing. It was not the fight plan. [The Terminator] was meant to go in hard, turning the fight into a brawl, but never could and admitted later [it] should have taken more risks... [The champ] did not realise [it’d hurt the Terminator] in round two and was wary of the famed left hook right to the end... [The champ credited the challenger] with a hard head. “[The guy] can take a punch well – ...[but it]’s never seen a boxer like [me],”... Which is true. [The champ] prepared with two 12-rounders with... [Apeman] and early-round knockouts of top-10 fighters... [while the Terminator] knocked out lesser lights... What [the Terminator] did do... yesterday was to prove that [it] was better than... any other[boxer] in the top 10, barring [Rapema]n. The result will not unduly affect [the Terminator]’s rating, his push for another title shot or his earning ability in the [US]. Next up is likely to be a square-off with [Apeman]. The champ will go after a huge payday against [Rapeman].

...the WBC heavyweight’s long-awaited meeting with... [Rapema]n is looking unlikely. [The British camp has] ruled out any possibility of a fight for the foreseeable future. A senior aide to the WBC... champion insisted that the show-down “was not going to happen” because the two fighters were contracted to rival television companies. [The Brit has a]... deal with... HBO. [Rapema]n has an agreement with... Showtime... The [British] camp had suggested on Thursday that the fight be screened on HBO, a proposal which would force [Rapema]n to compensate Showtime out of his cut of the purse. [Rapema]n’s manager... said that [the British boxer’s] demands on the split of television cash were “laughable”, adding that it was “clear that [the Brit] does not want the fight”. A compromise seeing both cable companies screening the fight simultaneously also seems unlikely. “It would be virtually impossible, as there is no financial incentive for the companies to do so,” [a spokesperson for] Multi Channel News said.

...Rocky... had better watch out if [it runs into the British world] heavyweight champ... who thinks the actor and his boxing movies are “a bunch of rubbish”... [The boxer] says, “I’d like to spend a little time in the ring with him to show him what the fight game’s really about.” [The champ] resents the way [the actor] got rich portraying boxers as dummies “when most of us are really very intelligent”... [Incidentally, a] German boxer... has won a US\$30 million... judgment against the W[BC], with a Manhattan jury agreeing [the German] was cheated out of his claim to the light-heavyweight championship. The case began in 1998, when the WBC declared its light-heavyweight title vacant after... the belt-holder at the time, considered abandoning the weight class crown to become a heavyweight. [The German] signed to fight [an]American boxer... for the vacated belt and in March 1998 won a split decision to become the WBC light-heavyweight champion. But when [the former belt-holder] decided to return to the light-heavyweight ranks a few months later, [the former belt-holder] was restored to his position as WBC champion without throwing a punch.

...Judging at this year’s national boxing championships beginning in Upper Hutt tomorrow, will be carried out manually ...a[s NZ] Boxing cannot afford an electronic scoring system... An application for funding... [so] the organisation could afford the \$10,000 required... had been turned down.

...[a f]ormer Waitakere college student... should have been told [it] was barred from competing in the Oceania Championships before [the boxer] got there, says an Auckland boxing official... [The] 22-year-old... found himself in court after punching... [the national boxing coach and an AUS]n boxing official... at the champs in Canberra. [The boxer also] smashed the scoring computer before being arrested. [The boxer was angry because it] wasn’t able to compete in the... tournament because [it] had previously competed in “rebel” or unsanctioned tournaments. A[n A]uckland Boxing Association executive member... sa[id]... “I don’t agree with him hitting them but [the boxer] paid for himself to get over there and I think they should have barred him before... g[et]ting there.” ...To register with the N[Z] Boxing Association you have to see a doctor which can cost around \$40 and then pay a \$25 registration fee to the... [a]ssociation. With the rebels you just see a doctor on the day.

...[the Hawaiian who is] the first foreigner to become a grand champion in the ancient sport of sumo wrestling, is to millions of Japanese the epitome of strength. But after 13 years in the sport, the 31-year-old... known... by his wrestling name, Akebono, was so beat up that [it] could hardly go out for walks with his little girl. His knees just couldn’t take it. Because of sumo’s emphasis on size, its practitioners tend to be notoriously unhealthy. And the problem goes far beyond muscle pulls and bruised backs. Knees, ankles and hips are often left permanently damaged under the weight of bodies weighing 180kg or more. Worse yet, years of deliberately cultivating obesity can mean a slew of chronic health problems after retirement... according to... [the] director of the Sumo Association’s health clinic[(*top sumo wrestlers can earn up to six figures, but it comes at a cost – many die of heart disease in their 40s and 50s)]. Akebono, 2.06m and weighing 230kg, is a good example of the toll wrestlers must pay, although his ailments are limited to joints over-whelmed by weight and the daily stresses of training and competing. Promoted to grand champion in March, 1993, the wrestler from Honolulu held sumo’s highest rank for 48 tournaments, the fourth-longest tenure. But injuries, mainly to his knees and ankles, forced him to sit out more than one-quarter of those tournaments, either fully or partially. [Akebono] wasn’t alone. Only three of the top eight wrestlers completed an entire 15-day tournament in March... and all three grand champions were absent. Akebono sat out the most recent of the six annual tournaments, held last month. Over the past decade, the average weight of wrestlers in the top division – the best 40 of the roughly 700 professionals in the sport – has increased 10kg to 155kg. The average Japanese [guy] weighs less than 70kg. The reason is simple: In sumo, the goal is to push your opponent out of the ring or to make him fall over. But as poundage grows, speed and technical prowess diminish, injuries increase, and the sport loses fans. “The biggest sin of overweight wrestlers is they become slower,” said... [the] editor of *Ozumo*, a sumo magazine. “This goes against what fans want to see – speed... agility and excitement.” The Sumo Association acknowledges that it’s concerned... The association has started collecting and analysing health data for each wrestler and is promoting a more individual approach to training. It has also eased weight requirements for prospective pros, opening the door to lightweights... [By the way, e]ight of N[Z]’s best young

wrestlers get a rare opportunity to test their skills against the best when they compete at the world junior championships starting in Sydney today. Contenders from 43 nations... including superpowers India, Russia... the U[S and Iran (which has '5 million wrestlers') will attend the championships].

...Five west Auckland wrestlers are hoping to book their tickets to the world wrestling champs... in Abu Dhabi in the Middle East next February... after this weekend's qualifier in Sydney... To qualify for the South Pacific event they had to place in the top two at the national trials in Wellington... [One of the five westies] is a five times N[Z] champion, the national cage fighting champion and reached No 2 in the world... The N[Z] team's trip to A[US] is funded by an Arab prince who's keen on wrestling. [The prince i]s also paying for all the qualifying tournaments and the world champs plus putting up \$50,000 in prize money at the worlds.

...[the promot]er... has been bludgeoned with a chair, doused with beer, kicked, spat on and even sexually assaulted – or so it seemed – while recovering in hospital from another attack. And [the promoter]'s loving every minute of it. "Other than being a scientist who finds a cure for some dreaded disease, the next best thing in life is entertaining the public,"... As chair[perso]n and owner of the World Wrestling Federation... [it should know. The owner i]s also one of its most loathed on-screen villains – playing himself. Last year, programming produced by [the federation] was beamed into 120 countries, including N[Z], and was translated into 11 languages, reaching an estimated 500 million viewers worldwide. In the American market the [federation]'s regular Monday night biff-fest Raw Is War is now the top show on cable television. Its sister act Smackdown! is credited with singlehandedly saving struggling network UPN from ratings oblivion and possible closure. And if you think [the federation]'s reach is limited to trash television, think again. The pro-wrestling giant also recently boasted an album on the charts – World Wrestling Federation: The Music, Volume 4 – and a book on The New York Times bestseller list – Have A Nice Day! by [a wrestling] superstar... In November, the [federation] dealt a knockout blow to the huge Star Wars marketing machine when it took over as the most dominant player in the lucrative action figure toy market... But it was in October that [the]54-year-old... played his masterstroke – or as they say in the biz, unleashed his bodyslam – when [it] took pro-wrestling to Wall St with a successful public share offering. Investors keen for a piece of the entertainment giant sent [the] shares skyrocketing on their first day of trading, with the price quickly doubling. [The owner], the dyslexic son of an old-style wrestling promoter [the boy] did not meet until [it] was 12-years-old, walked away that day with a personal fortune of \$2.2 billion... [The owner i]s the ultimate proof that anyone can be a billionaire provided they give the masses what they want. And what the 10 million-plus Americans who regularly watch Raw Is War and Smackdown! want might scare the rest of us. Last year, Indiana University analysed 50 episodes of Raw at the request of current affairs show Inside Edition. It found 1658 incidents of grabbing or pointing at crotches, 157 instances of obscene finger gesturing, 128 episodes simulating sexual activity and 21 references to urination. Swearing is common, as are scantily clad [gals] – routinely treated as objects to be threatened, abducted and even hit. [The owner] himself once "starred" in a scene in which superstar Stone Cold... appeared to sexually assault him with an enema tube. More recently [the owner]'s daughter... was kidnapped by wrestlers who staged a mock crucifixion of the struggling young[ster]... Despite the fact that 14[%] of viewers of Raw are aged 11 years or younger, [the owner] remains unrepentant about the content of his shows. "All I can say is that whoever is criticising what we do would not appreciate the television ratings we achieve. But a lot of America really enjoys what we do... We're entertaining you. These are characters. Sexuality is extremely important. People are very interested in sex, and we will exploit that as best we can." Asked whether [it] ever worried whether his pursuit of ratings was leading to increasingly "trashy" storylines, [the owner] replied: "Too trashy? I think trashy is what the president of America did. We haven't done anything like that." In other words – suck it – as the [federation's] slogan goes. But when Coca-Cola and a raft of other big-name sponsors announced last month they were pulling their... advertising because they were concerned about the explicit content of the shows, [the owner] was forced to take notice, particularly when [the federation]'s stock closed under \$30 for the first time since going public. The first Smackdown! to screen after Coca-Cola's announcement was noticeably subdued. There was no overt violence against [gals] and very little swearing or sexual innuendo. But then, in a plot twist as extreme and defiant as anything screened [by the federation, the owner] virtually doubled the controversial content on Raw, Smackdown's cable-TV cousin. That show culminated in a 12-minute, expletive-soaked "showdown" between villain Triple-H and [the owner] and his daughter... Apparently [the owner] was betting on two things. First [it] could push the envelope further on cable than on free-to-air television, because [the owner] could argue more easily that parents could, or at least should, control what their children were watching on cable. Second, for every advertiser who was scared off... there would be five more lining up for access to its main audience – young [guys] aged 18-34. THE key to understanding [the owner]'s success is to recognise that what [it] has done with wrestling is create the ultimate soap opera for boys – both young and old. While daytime soaps and talkshows deliver a regular audience of older [gals] to advertisers, and nightly soaps do the same with younger [gals], no one had really cracked the magic formula for young [guys] until the owner came along. "The owner"... understands how to tell a great story, which is the basis for all TV-character development, and great ongoing storylines that truly captivate the audience." To tell these stories [the owner] first had to do something that caused consternation in the wrestling world back in 1982. [The owner] had to admit that wrestling was fake... While almost every fight fan over the age of 10 must have known as much anyway, not everyone was thrilled that [the owner] took it upon himself to spill the beans. But it proved to be a breath of life for the industry, which was floundering at the time amid poor production values, cheesy characters and repetitive action sequences. Proclaiming pro-wrestling to be "sports entertainment" rather than a sport allowed [the owner] and his writers the freedom to create storylines as wild as anything seen on Dynasty or Melrose Place. It may yet prove his downfall. [The federation]'s ratings-driven obsession with increasingly bizarre storylines has resulted in increasingly extreme stunts. In May last year, wrestler Owen Hart died after plunging more than 21m to the ring during one such stunt. One sports writer warned it was time promoters such as [the owner] realised "wrestling isn't real, wrestlers are". Hart's wife and parents have filed a 118-page claim against [the owner], his wife and [the federation]'s parent company Titan Sports. When asked what they think of the [federation's] founder, many industry insiders express emotions as contradictory and confusing as the [subject] himself. "The owner] saw the future better than any of us," says [one insider. "The owner]'s the most brilliant and most imaginative [perso]n I've ever met. [It]'s also the most unethical."

...A 14-year-old youth who killed a six-year-old girl while imitating a professional wrestler, has been sentenced to life in prison without parole.

...[NZ's top heavyweight] has told how boxing saved him from jail. Speaking to the *Sunday News*... [the Terminator said it] was heading for a life of crime on the streets of south Auckland. "Boxing was a lifesaver for me... It changed my life completely. It kept me out of trouble big time. I'm very thankful that boxing came into my life when I was hanging out with the wrong crowd. It took me from a road to hell to a road to heaven."

...I SEE that [an]Auckland city councillor... has got her knickers in a knot. [The councillor] hates the choice of [a boxer] to front the council's anti-tagging campaign. [It] said last week, no doubt with a cat's bum, that someone who beats the daylights out of people for a living is a poor role model for the young... Personally I reckon [the Terminator] is an excellent choice. The T[erminator] is a decent caring [person] with strong religious beliefs and [i]s devoted to his family. Sure [it] makes his living out of boxing but what's wrong with that? There are plenty of worse jobs in the world and not all of us win first division in genetic lotto and get born into wealthy families. [The boxer] knows the risks involved in his career choice.

...The punch that robbed [Britain's world heavyweight champion] of his crown looked powerful, but the heavyweight champion probably went down because [it was pooped. The champ's] fifth-round knockout by [a]little-known American... last Sunday shocked the boxing world and came after [an AUSn gal] boxer... was knocked out in a bout in Christchurch. [The AUSn] was in a comfortable condition in hospital yesterday after coming out of a drug-induced coma on Wednesday. Initially, her condition was critical... The bouts have again focused attention on injuries from

the ancient sport. Few studies have been done on punching power and experts say many variables are involved in a knockout punch. How tired a boxer is can be important. The BBC called [the American]’s powerful right-hander that decked [the champ] the “Punch of the Decade” – but it may not be. One caustic commentator of the bout noted that [the champ] looked tired in the second round. “[It] was puffing and panting like a horse on his way to the knacker’s yard.”... An Auckland University biomechanics expert... said the punch that felled [the champ] spun his head to the right. It was the worst kind because it made the brain bounce back and forth in the skull... [A retired] Auckland neurosurgeon... also... said damage to the brain was caused by the head swivelling with the force of a blow. It did not necessarily relate to how strong the blow was. Early in a bout boxers could withstand punches to the head, but when they tired a similar-strength blow could fell them. [The retired neurosurgeon], who wants boxing banned, said the effect of a head punch on the brain was like a bowl of jelly being tossed around. The jelly would break into small cracks. In a similar way, nerve fibres and blood vessels in the brain could be damaged from a strong blow... [The retired neurosurgeon says the blow that felled the champ] would have killed a few thousand brain cells – but the danger for boxers was more from the many bouts they fought. Long term, professional boxers often suffered dementia... They had little self-restraint, boasted and often “talked nonsense.” A recent British study on punching measured small groups of elite, intermediate and novice boxers. An elite boxer applied a mean force of 4800 newtons using the rear hand, while an intermediate applied 3722 newtons and a novice 2381. A [New] Auckland University physicist... said a cricket ball hitting a batsman’s head at 140km/h... would impact about 1500 newtons force, a thumping cricket shot over the boundary 8400 newtons, and a 1500kg car hitting a tree at 100km/h, 1 million newtons... [Yesterday the] NZ Boxing Association president... said amateur boxing’s injury rate was low and overseas studies showed injuries were more prevalent in other sports. “There are more punch-drunk soccer players.” Amateur boxing was safer than professional boxing because gloves were now designed to absorb more of the blow... the rounds were shorter... and... [there were]... better controls of matchups.

...[a] British boxer... defends the ancient code... [by proclaiming:] “Sure there have been injuries and deaths in boxing – but none of them serious.” ...Panama’s Pedro Alcaraz spent much of his last day alive like any other tourist in Las Vegas. [The Panamanian] watched pirates do battle on the Strip, had lunch atop the tallest building in town and fed some coins into slot machines. The night before, [the Panamanian] had taken a beating before being stopped in the sixth round of the biggest fight of his boxing career. Yet now [it] was in remarkably good spirits, joking and laughing, posing for pictures and signing autographs for the occasional tourist. “I know I lost the title, but I didn’t lose everything... I’m going to try to win another world championship for Panama and my family.” Late in the evening, Alcaraz grew tired and said [it] had a slight headache. [Alcaraz] went to bed, knowing [it] had to get up early for a flight back home... A few hours later, [Alcaraz] was found dying on the bathroom floor of his hotel room, his brain so badly swollen that its blood supply had been cut off. Alcaraz had been battered by punches to the body and head, but through tears of dismay complained to a ringside doctor only that his ribs hurt. Two other doctors who examined him in his dressing room found nothing out of the ordinary. Now they’re wondering why his brain swelled as it did so many hours afterwards – and whether his death means doctors have to rethink everything they know about head injuries in boxing. Boxers die in the ring – five of them in the past two decades in Nevada alone. When they do, though, they leave the ring on a stretcher; they don’t die 36 hours later, without showing the usual symptoms... Alcaraz was getting \$US40,000... to defend his W[BO] super flyweight title, a belt lightly regarded most everywhere but in Panama, where a rich history of boxers... has given way to lean times. At home, Alcaraz was known as “Rockero,” a nickname given to him because [it] used to shave his name into the hair at the back of his head... Alcaraz returned to Panama one last time, where [it] received a mournful farewell. Panamanians filed by his open casket placed next to a deserted boxing ring at... [a] gym on the outskirts of Panama City. A year earlier, thousands had filled the gym to cheer Rockero as [it beat a] Nicaraguan... in a split decision to win the WBO title. The fight helped Alcaraz to become boxer of the year last year in Panama, where the sport is second only to soccer. Now his fans and fellow boxers cried together. “I am sad and I am crying because I loved him like [it] were my son,” [the gym’s owner] said. “What happened hurts a lot.” ...[In related news, the] regulatory body of British professional boxing has gone into administration following a court case against them by... a boxer who suffered brain damage in a 1991 world title fight. “In layman’s English, it means they’ve gone bust,” said a spokesman for the administrators. [The brain-damaged boxer] had sought £1million... in damages, arguing that suitable medical facilities were not on hand at the ring during his fight with [the] world champion... and that it took too long to get him to hospital. [The boxer] won the case for compensation in September, leaving the British Boxing Board of Control facing bankruptcy if it loses an appeal.

...[a 28-year-old] remained in a critical condition yesterday but the surgeon who removed a blood clot from the English boxer’s brain was pleased with his progress... The boxer failed to rise from the canvas after Sunday’s title fight against [a] South African... was stopped in the 12th and final round. [The Pom], who was defending his I[BF] featherweight belt, was knocked to the canvas late in the previous round by three vicious left hands. His trainer... defended his decision to send [the boxer] out for the 12th, but admitted it was a mistake. “In hindsight [my boy] should have been pulled out at the end of the 11th. But we haven’t got that gift,”... [The boxer]’s plight prompted renewed calls in Britain for the sport to be banned.

...Subscribers to the theory that the human race is evolving may not have found their cause greatly advanced by the latest calls for a ban on boxing. If history has shown anything, it is that people – given half a chance, a superiority complex, and enough sheep-like disciples to follow them in their moral crusade – will try to ban almost anything. Never mind the colossal failure of prohibition, and the scarcely-believable attempts to ban things such as homosexuality and the Maori language. It seems some of us haven’t learned from our errors and are hell-bent on heading down the same dead-end street. It seems that every time a boxer sustains a serious injury, a clamour erupts from various medical associations and other well-intentioned individuals wanting to ban the sport once and for all... [A] recent incident concerned[an Australian] boxer... who... reportedly suffered serious concussion and was taken to hospital, where doctors placed her in a drug-induced coma. Inevitably, her case has led to calls for a ban on boxing from the A[US]n Medical Association, which appears to spend half its time trying to outlaw the sport. They were echoed by the strong chauvinistic fraternity, who just want to ban “[gal]” boxing. These are the guys who reckon the noble art is being given a bad name by the inclusion of [gals] who, they say, are not as tough as [them] and that it’s not [feminine] to fight. This is, of course, complete tosh. As long as it’s alright for [guys] to smash the living daylight out [of] each other, it must also be okay for [gals] – and, for that matter, paraplegics... if they so wish. On the other hand, medical associations around the world tend to abhor boxing generally and morally. They point out that it is the only sport which requires its participants to knock their opponents’ swede in order to win[– or, in other words, is ‘legalised assault’]. They, at least, have a point in terms of liability and within the environment of blame in which we now live. Today, some poor person must always be held accountable for an accidental death or injury, something British rugby referees have recently found out to their cost. But ban it? No one will ever ban boxing. Send it underground? Certainly. Increase the number of dodgy promoters? Without doubt. Throw away the gloves and go bareknuckle? Every chance.

...Anyone who thinks bare-knuckle fighting is sport, think again. The 1996 world champ... of the US... died... yesterday... after being knocked unconscious by... [a Ukrainian. The USer] never woke up after the injuries... received in a bloody, no-rules contest staged before 6000 spectators in Kiev’s Palace of Sports... “There is nothing criminal about this story,”... the Ukrainian Home Affairs Ministry said. And nothing moral either.

...A no-holds-barred fighting competition that has been banned in both Christchurch and Wellington will take place in Auckland tonight. In what critics call a human cock-fight, contestants will punch, kick... and wrestle each other until one falls unconscious or slaps the floor in painful submission... A senior boxing official is appalled that “Rage – Ultimate Fight Night” at the ASB Stadium is going ahead... [The] Boxing Council spokes[person]... said no-holds-barred tournaments were not sanctioned by the boxing and wrestling fraternity and carried an extremely high risk

of serious injury for fighters... [However, because] such competitions were promoted as martial arts tournaments they were exempt from the Wrestling and Boxing Act. This meant any street thug or bar-room brawler could get in the ring... “We managed to stop this thing in Christchurch three or four years ago but the police really have to step in.” ...police are concerned about such fights [but will only] investigate if they receive a complaint... Police... acted against a... tournament in Wellington... [in 1997, although the NZ] *Herald* has since learned that the tournament went ahead at an undisclosed venue... Earlier this year a fighter was beaten to death in a no-hold’s-barred contest... [The competition’s promoter] said the death in the Ukraine was an isolated incident where an inexperienced fighter had taken part in an unregulated tournament.

Excavations on the island of Crete indicate that boxing flourished there 3600 years ago. Homer’s epics mention the sport, and boxers often participated in matches held in the Roman Colosseum. Interest in the sport grew in England in 1719, when James Figg reigned as champion. Bouts then were bare-fisted... rough-and-tumble... and [often lasted for ‘over 100 rounds’]... Boxing changed after 1865, when the marquess of Queensbury proposed a new set of rules to make the sport more skilful and less bruising. Boxers [now] fight... with padded gloves... in a ring 16 to 24 ft. square, with rounds of 3 min. each and a 1-min. interval between rounds.

IF YOU are a parent with a young sporting child and wish the best financial future for the child, forget golf. Forget tennis. Get the kid... some boxing gloves... or... a basketball... Hoopsters and pugilists dominate the high income bracket of modern sport in *Forbes* magazine’s Super 40 list of the world’s highest paid athletes in 1997. Of the 40... 11 are NBA stars, seven are boxers, only four are golfers, and a paltry three play tennis. The list boasts not a single jockey, rugby player, league player, cricketer, soccer maestro, netballer, triathlete, or bowler... [The NBA’s biggest superstar] easily tops the combined category where salary or winnings are added to endorsements. With his \$US47m off court earnings his total 1997 earnings are \$US78.3m... The top five earners overall were: [The aforementioned basketballer, Apeman (\$US54.3m), another boxer (\$US38m), Germany’s F1... driver... (\$US35m), and... [Rapema]n (\$US27m). These sums of money, of course, are mind boggling to the everyday worker. They become even more awesome when compared to sporting salaries of yesteryear. For instance, 27 years ago, the total salary schedule of the NBA’s Philadelphia 76ers team was just \$US1,070,000. A year later in the NBA, the average player salary was a mere \$US50,000... Today, [the top NBA star] makes four times that much in a single regulation season game... Taken to its logical conclusion, this means that in 25 years basketball players in [his] class will be earning a few million shy of a billion each year. And you want your Johnny or Billy to grow up to be an All Black? Get your head read! Arguably the most interesting piece of information to come out of the *Forbes* list, however, is... that team participants are now well past gaining parity with individual sport competitors. The... rich list includes 23 team sport athletes compared to just 17 individual sport players. Take out the... boxers from the list, because no caring parent really wants their kid to bob, weave and jab for a living, and the team sport dominance of the rich list is even more impressive – 23 to 10[(or 26 to 7 if motor racing is regarded as a team sport due to pit-crews and drivers often competing as a unit)].

...An Italian court yesterday acquitted [a] Formula One team chief... and five other defendants of [hu]manslaughter in the trial over the death of Brazilian driver Ayrton Senna... None of the defendants was in the makeshift courtroom near the Imola circuit in northern Italy where Senna, one of Formula One’s most outstanding champions, died in the San Marino Grand Prix in May, 1994... The trial began in February and the prosecution alleged a poor weld on Senna’s steering column snapped as the Brazilian ace entered the notorious Tamborello curve, causing him to lose control of his car... at 220km/h... Senna’s steering column [had been] cut and re-welded to satisfy his demand for more space inside the cockpit... It was also alleged by the prosecution that the way the track was maintained could have contributed to the accident... [A former] world champ... and... Senna’s teammate in the San Marino Grand Prix... welcomed the acquittal... [and] believed the decision would help to clear up the sport’s image after periods of controversy[, which include a]... *Formula One driver*... [saying:] “My dream is to win the world championship. Then I want to retire, buy a boat and disappear for 10 years to sail around the world... with two girls who I would exchange for new ones at every port.”

...*Melbourne is revving up to host its second Formula 1 grand prix*... Albert Park has been to... Melburnians... for a century or so, a peaceful oasis of water... black swans... and greenery close to the heart of A[US]’s most commercial city. But all that changed when, after a sometimes bitter struggle, Melbourne wrestled from Adelaide the right to host the A[US]n Grand Prix as one of the 16 grand prix worldwide which make up the immensely rich Formula 1 motor racing series. Adelaide’s last grand prix in November 1995 was as well run and well-liked by visitors and drivers as ever, and deservedly won the award as the best organised race of the series. Only [4] months later, with the A[US]n Grand Prix now beginning the series rather than ending it, the grand prix circus was again in A[US]. Against the fierce opposition of some residents, a challenging circuit had been created, winding for... [over 5km]s around the Albert Park lake. Today, as [labourers] erect stands and corporate boxes around the track just [3] weeks before the... Qantas A[US]n Grand Prix is to be staged here, a gleaming trophy in the Melbourne Grand Prix Corporation’s offices close to the park records Melbourne as staging the best run race of the 1996 series. For motor sport enthusiasts, that race... is remembered as one of the most exciting contests of the year. This year’s race... is shaping to be just as memorable. And the 50-strong fulltime staff at the state-funded G[PC] are determined that this year’s race meeting will be even better run, if anything, than the 1996 event. Unlike grand prix meetings at... other... countries, where the big race itself dominates, with just a few support races, Melbourne is again taking the major race as simply the climax to a spectacular series of events over... [4] days... A field of Ferrari sports cars – which contest a one make series in Europe – is being brought in, motor racing greats from the past... will race some of the greatest cars of the 1940s and ’50s. Air force aircraft and aerobatics teams will perform over the circuit each day, there will be dragster burnouts... 400 yachts racing on the lake in the grand prix regatta, full fields of various single-seater, touring car... sports and GT classes, and a rally drawing hundreds of classic cars from around A[US] which will end at the circuit. Last year’s event drew an A[US]n record sports attendance of 401,000 over [4] days, with the 169,000 who viewed the Grand Prix itself making up the biggest crowd ever to attend a sporting event in the sunburned country. The chair... of the G[PC]... who also chairs Victoria’s major events committee, is aiming for a [4]-day attendance of 500,000 this time with up to 9000 part-time workers in special uniforms there to see to the crowd’s needs. “Those silly people,” [the chair] says, referring to the anti-race protesters whose banners hang across the road from the G[PC] offices, “cost us... 40,000 in attendance last time”... [A]ready pre-bookings for the event indicate [hi]s targets could well be met. Corporate box numbers have been greatly increased, there are extra stands, 11 giant [TV] screens, and many takers for the [4]-day general admission tickets at \$266... Flights into Melbourne are heavily booked, with at least one charter flight having been booked from Auckland... and [4] charter jumbos coming from Japan. “But we don’t want to make it too big... To go for 600,000 would kill it.” ...Last year’s race is credited by the economic experts as having won \$106 m... extra spending within the state as well as generating \$7.6 m... in state tax receipts. The event drew 20,000 interstate visitors and 11,000 from overseas, most of them from N[Z]. About 260,000 used public transport, which carries visitors free from the city to Albert Park... “...We have spent a once only \$60 m... on capital equipment required to run a race which each year of the 10 we have rights for will draw a [TV] audience of... 400 million worldwide, equivalent to \$111 m... each year in advertising promotion. In terms of return, it’s the cheapest investment I’ve ever been involved in... Sydney is spending \$888 m... to stage the 2000 Olympics, a 14-day event...” Grand prix racing has already overtaken soccer as second most widely watched sporting event on [TV], behind only the Olympics... How do... the black swans... react to the thunder of 700 horsepower engines close by their normally peaceful habitat...? ...Says a G[PC] staff member: “They simply take no notice of the racing at all.”

...Formula One’s ruling body has given organisers of the Belgian Grand Prix until the end of December to work around a ban on tobacco advertising or lose the race. A calendar released after a meeting in Monaco of the International Automobile Federation also did not include a

French grand prix... A French court ruled this year that all national television channels were entitled to broadcast a race on French soil, which went against Fia's exclusive rights deal arranged with individual broadcasters.

...The British government's stand against tobacco sponsorship in grand prix racing has turned to ashes. Formula One bosses threatened to take six of the nine grand prix held in Europe to the Far East if the EU banned tobacco advertising. The government backed off, saying the sport's governing body should introduce a voluntary code. Sponsorship by cigarette manufacturers – increasingly desperate to get their message across – is worth about £100 million... to F1. Far Eastern markets tend to have little or no legislation affecting cigarette advertising.

...The [Smokefree Rally of NZ] was a big money-spinner for Manukau City, according to a survey. The... rally centred at Manukau, created the equivalent of 77 full-time jobs, generated \$2.6 million in local income, consumed \$10 million of products and services and generated \$4.5 million in added value (value created by labour and capital... [for sectors such as] the transport and hospitality industries...). The... event put Manukau on the map by being televised to around 1 billion people in 112 countries. It attracted 32 rally teams from 16 countries, 50 local teams, 24 sponsors, 108 international media teams and 98 local media teams... Sponsoring the event cost the Manukau City Council \$25,000 in the provision of goods and services and a further \$20,000 in officers' time... The council sponsored the event to generate income and jobs, provide entertainment for residents and promote a positive image of the city. A quarter of the visitors to the free rally show and ticket-only super stage were Manukau residents.

...Wellington's waterfront car race brought \$3.5 million into the region last year, attracting 20,500 paying spectators... [– including an] estimated 8840 visitors from outside the region... [–] on the main racing day, plus another 5000 non-paying spectators in buildings overlooking the track.

...A YOUNG girl was critically injured in an accident at... the Waikaraka Park... speedway track... in Onehunga... last night... The eight-year-old was hit in the head by a wheel which flew over the three-metre-high perimeter wire fence... during the first race of the regular Saturday night event. The girl was walking on a proper track in front of the main grandstand when the wheel somehow came off a car some 10 metres away and cleared the safety fence. [The]Auckland Stock and Saloon Club vice-president... said the race was stopped immediately and the club's own referees and stewards began an investigation. "The car has been impounded and taken away by police who are also investigating the incident,"... An official from the Occupational Safety and Health organisation was expected to begin inquiries at the track last night or today... [T]he track was licensed by Speedway N[Z] and was inspected weekly by local officials. The car driver, who... had been racing at Waikaraka for three years... was badly shaken by the incident. The injured girl's name was not available last night. Twelve days ago, five spectators – including three children – were taken to hospital after a similar accident at the Western Springs speedway stadium on the other side of the city. A sprint car was hit from behind and started to flip end over end, hurtling the petrol tank over the fence into the crowd on the terraces. Most suffered [only]cuts and bruises... The race promoter... said... that the accident was unfortunate but [it] did not believe safety was in question at Western Springs Speedway. The... [promoter] said in all motor sport there was an element of risk. Making the safety fences higher might not have prevented last night's accident.

...Investigations have been launched into an Auckland speedway accident on Saturday night that fatally injured a young girl – the [2]nd accident involving speedway spectators in two weeks... The height of safety fences would be looked at, but higher fences would not stop all flying debris. Once, in Palmerston North, a wheel had flown over a building and out of the park. "In that case the fence would have needed to be 60ft high."

...A 28-year-old... was knocked to the ground when a tyre came off a car and flew over a crowd barrier at Nelson speedway races at the weekend. A St John Ambulance spokesperson said the service was called to the track about 9 pm on Saturday night to attend to the [victim], who had been struck on the shoulder... [The victim] had seen the tyre coming and turned away from its path but it struck her on her side. The [victim] was "naturally distressed because [it] was in a bit of pain,"... Nelson Hospital s[aid the victim]... was treated and discharged. It was the second similar incident in a fortnight. An... Auckland girl, Katrina Le Sueur, died after a wheel flew over a two-metre-high safety fence...

An 8-year-old girl who died... after being struck by a racing car tyre was walking hand in hand with her younger cousin at the time of the accident. *Katrina Anne Le Sueur* took the brunt of the blow when the tyre jumped a 2m-high safety fence... at Waikaraka Speedway... It glanced off her 6-year-old cousin... who suffered a broken arm and grazing. "[My daughter] is an extremely lucky little girl," said her father... reflecting on the centimetres that spared his daughter... [T]he girls' large extended West Auckland family were [still]in shock and grieving for Katrina and were acutely aware how close the accident came to being a double tragedy. [The 6-year-old's father] said the excursion to Waikaraka had been a first for the two families. They had just arrived and were making their way to their seats, with the two little girls walking several metres in front...

The father of a young Auckland girl fatally injured in a speedway accident last month has told the sport to act immediately on Government safety recommendations or shut down... The Labour Department's occupational safety and health division has investigated the tragedy and three other accidents which happened in the past month. Releasing its findings yesterday, it told speedways to review their rules, build higher safety fences and strengthen wheels to stop them flying off. However, Speedway N[Z] said it did not plan to act immediately because speedways were "flat out" finishing the summer season. That has alarmed the Le Sueur family. Said Katrina's father... "Does that mean the rest of the public has to be put at risk? They've had four accidents in a month, one of which killed my daughter. They should stop if they're not going to do something to ensure spectators are safe." The Government has no power to force speedways to take action. The Labour Department said yesterday that it could only make recommendations, and the Land Transport Safety Authority said it could not control speedways because they were "private roads." [But Katrina's father] said: "That's not good enough. It's not going to affect my family any worse... but they have to do something to protect others."

...A stock-car driver has been charged with the [hu]manslaughter of... Katrina Le Sueur... The decision has shocked the speedway fraternity... [The] 25-year-old mechanic from Mangere, was taken into custody yesterday... and... in the afternoon... was released on bail... [The mechanic] was driving his Torana in a race for vehicles in the budget street stock class when the right rear corner of the car smashed into a safety wall. A few laps later the right rear wheel flew... over a safety barrier... and hit... Katrina... in the head. [Katrina] was walking hand-in-hand with her younger cousin, who was not injured... Katrina... died a day later... Police allege that by continuing to drive the vehicle after the crash [the mechanic] failed to take responsible precautions to avoid danger and therefore committed [hu]manslaughter. Katrina's father... said... "I'm sorry it had to come to this. It won't bring my daughter back, but I'm happy that police have done what they see fit." ...[the dad] still had concerns about speedway safety... "I believe all fences should be angled at 45° to avoid tyres bouncing over the top of them,"... OSH... recommended a series of safety improvements in the wake of... [the] death... Speedway NZ[, which]... has jurisdiction over 21 speedway stadiums around the country... had since met OSH officials to discuss the proposals and agreed to some, such as improving scrutineering, but not others, such as reinforcing wheels... The Speedway N[Z] president... was stunned to hear a driver had been charged with [hu]manslaughter... but... Speedway NZ would "get behind him as much as we can." The... [president] was aware of only one other case where a driver had been charged with a spectator's death... about 25 years ago.

...A LEGAL expert has warned of far-reaching implications for sport after a stock car driver was charged with the [hu]manslaughter of a young girl... [The] Auckland University... associate professor of law, explained: "If a guilty verdict is returned we will be going down a very dangerous line. Would it mean a baseball player could be charged with [hu]manslaughter if a ball flew off the bat and killed someone in the stand? It could even be argued that golfers could be negligent if they hit a wayward shot which strikes someone in the crowd." In 1947, a [spectator] lost a civil case against Cheetham Cricket Club in England after [the spectator] was struck by [one of sport's hardest balls]. The House of Lords ruled the club couldn't have reasonably provided adequate fencing and the player was not at fault because [the batter] was doing what was expected of him.

...Western Springs Speedway... [has erected a] new 4.7m high fence... in the wake of the accident... in which a sprint-car fuel tank flew over the old fence and injured six spectators. The speedway... promoter... says the high-tensile deer fencing creates an extremely strong barrier that should

keep debris on the track... Western Springs has also toughened requirements for the mounting of fuel tanks... [But the promoter] admits the \$10,000 fence, almost 2m above the minimum height required by Speedway NZ, would probably not have stopped the fuel tank from flying into the crowd...

[A mother acted instinctively to block a flying piece of race-car debris hurtling towards her sleeping baby at Western Springs Speedway last night. "I saw one piece tracking its way towards us and thought, 'Oh God, that's going to hit my baby'." The mother stretched out her hand to cover her 7-month-old daughter and the metal, apparently a bar that protrudes from the side of a stock car which flew out of a pile-up, hit her palm then landed in the pram at the baby's feet. The Western Springs promoter would not comment on last night's incident, which follows the acquittal of a 25-year-old Aucklander whose loose wheel killed an 8-year-old girl.] In international news, yesterday the] 25-year-old... who won the 1995 NASCAR Winston Cup series championship... became the youngest driver to win the Daytona 500, leading his two teammates across the line in America's biggest stock car race... after a spate of crashes in the closing stages... With 10 laps remaining, Dale Earnhardt hit the wall along the back stretch. His car, hit from behind by [the]defending race champion... rolled and hit... [a Ford. The Ford]'s hood flew into the grandstands, injuring a spectator. After the restart, [the 25-year-old] took the lead... with six laps remaining. A second crash involving 13 cars took place on lap 197, to bring out the caution flag and ensure... [his triumph. Earnhardt – the 8th placed person on the latest]... Super 40 list of the world's highest-paid athletes... [-] continued his frustrations in the Super Bowl of American stock car racing. Earnhardt has won seven Winston Cup Series championships but has not claimed a Daytona 500 title.

...Gusty wind has forced [an]American... to scrub plans for another test of his jet-powered car as [it] prepares for an attempt at the world land speed record. The British team... have also had their plans affected by alkali dust being swept across Nevada's Black Rock Desert. Neither team expected to be on the course today to test their cars on the temporary traffic lanes laid down to guide the drivers along a 25km course of hardpan...

A British car has broken the sound barrier on land for the first time, 50 years... almost to the day... after [an]American pilot... made the first supersonic flight... in the X-1 rocket plane... [A] Royal Air Force fighter pilot, made two runs in the Thrust SuperSonic Car yesterday but narrowly failed to set the first supersonic world land speed record because the runs were 61 minutes apart – one minute more than allowed by international rules... The menacing black car, powered by two Rolls-Royce engines from a Phantom fighter, raced across... Black Rock desert at 1222.7 km/h, about 10 km/h above the speed of sound. Scores of reporters and spectators heard a sonic boom as the car burst through the sound barrier, leaving clouds of dust in its wake... [The driver], aged 35, could not use the car's two braking parachutes to stop it because they had been damaged by heat from the afterburners, and the car came to a halt 2.4km beyond the end of the 21km track. The team of mechanics rushed to get the car ready to run again[in time but failed]. The car raced back up the track at 1216.2 km/h... Thrust set a world land-speed record of 1142 km/h on September 25, shattering the previous record of 1012 km/h... set in 1983. Team members said they would examine the car and, if all was well, would try again soon for a supersonic world record... Conditions... were perfect yesterday after five days had been lost to high winds and rain... Although there was disappointment at the failure to set a record, they were delighted that they had disproved critics who said it was impossible to break the sound barrier on land because the car would take off... Thrust consists of a pencil-shaped fuselage flanked by two huge jet engines. The 9.1-tonne vehicle has the power of 1000 Ford Escorts or 141 Formula One cars... [The British] team leader... and other team members have worked for years on the project[– the team leader had set the previous record in 1983 –] often battling a lack of funding. Team officials will not reveal the total cost of the project but say it is in the millions of pounds Sterling... [A] veteran American driver who is also trying to set a world land-speed record... came out to the track to congratulate... [the British team leader. The User], who has so far set a top speed this year of 850 km/h... planned to try to reclaim the world land speed record[– and the '£5m' prize that goes with it –] for the U[S]. "We're here for the long haul."

...Brit[ain's] Thrust SuperSonic Car, set the first supersonic world land speed record... yesterday, clocking... a land speed record of 1227.952 km/h... one day short of being exactly 50 years after[a] legendary US test pilot... broke the sound barrier in the sky.

...Lamborghini – motoring's symbol of glamour and temptation – has been chosen as the exotic sports car category for next year's A[US]n Grand Prix, adding another \$A15.6 m... dimension to the event. [26] Lamborghini Diablo SV-Rs, each worth \$A600,000, from the SuperSport Trophy series in Europe, will compete at the grand prix at Melbourne's Albert Park circuit from March 5 to 8. [It isn't yet known if the 'first and only NZer' to win the world F1 driving championship, and world president of the Grand Prix Drivers' Association from 1973 to 1975', will be a starter ('4 NZers have driven in F1'), but confirmed] drivers of the Diablos will include A[US]'s most recent F[1] world champion... and[a] Bathurst 1000 winner...

[Holden's premier driver] didn't win either of the Bathurst races this year but his sponsors were still on a winner. The Aussie touring car legend completed only 52 laps of the 161 laps of the V8 classic at Mt Panorama but received \$A948,409 worth of television cover, second only to [the race] winners... with \$A2,114,343 worth. In the run-up to what was to be [the legend's last race, the legend received 35%] of the total air time. A couple of weeks earlier [the legend] finished sixth in the two-litre Bathurst race. [The legend and his] co-driver... still grabbed \$A865,987 worth of television time. [A]Kiwi... and Aussie... were the television time winners of that race with \$A2,304,544 worth of cover. Their subsequent disqualification after crossing the line first[– because 'one of the co-drivers had driven a few minutes longer than the rules allowed' –] probably rated at about \$A5.

...[the retired Kiwi who was a 'six times world champion' is expected to be rated the 'best of the top 100 riders' of international speedway history when the list is announced next week. Meanwhile, an Aussie] is virtually sure of his fourth successive world motorbike championship and [has declared himself] ready to go for No 5 next year – at a price. The Aussie last weekend won his 40th 500cc GP at Assen, Holland... and... now leads the series by 68 points. Many had expected [him] to retire at the end of this season but [the 31-year-old is] still enjoying racing... [The Aussie] is estimated to earn more than \$6 million a year but... could switch from the successful Honda team if another manufacturer offered more.

...In a desperate bid to climb back to the top in 500cc motorcycle racing the Suzuki factory team are preparing to pay A[US]'s four-time world champion... \$US12 million... to ride for them next season. [The AUSn], who last weekend equalled the most grand prix wins in a season with his 11th victory of the year, had already been offered \$US10 million to ride for Yamaha by a [person] who was once one of his greatest rivals on the track... Since his 500cc debut in 1989, [the AUSn] has ridden 118 grand prix for Honda, notching 45 wins... It is known that the Honda team are prepared to match, or come close to the money Yamaha offered... to keep the Queenslander on their machinery. [However, sources say the AUSn] is unlikely to accept [Suzuki's] offer because of concern about the team structure and because [it] would not have the best bike in the field. Suzuki's last world champion was... in 1993. [That rider] retired in mid-1995 but, in their efforts to return to their former glory, Suzuki are reputed to have offered the Texan \$US10 million to make a comeback... [Incidentally, NZ's 4] world-class motorcyclists will be honoured by the Sports Foundation in Wellington today. [The 2 brothers who are]Motocross specialists... and[the 2] Superbike riders... will be recognised for "branding" their country.

...A new A[US]n motorcycle company has challenged N[Z]'s Britten to a transtasman duel of high-tech racing. The H[H]X1R is a similar concept to the V1000 developed by the late John Britten – a big, V-twin with advanced design features – and [its co-builder, who is an] expat Kiwi... is keen to bring two, with top A[US]n riders, to race one or two rounds of the N[Z] championships. The HHX1R... has only just started racing but is already nearly as fast as the factory-backed Ducati superbikes... The team will only come if it is guaranteed the Britten will be competing, especially in the N[Z] Grand Prix at Ruapuna... in December. [The]Britten team general manager... described the proposed showdown as a great promotion, but his small team need to find sponsorship before they can afford to race this season. - 1997

[When a NZer] returns to the Isle of Man early in June... [it will be] as a guest of the organisers in a special... parade of champions. [The NZer] first met the... Manx Islanders in 1980, when [it] was already an international race hero and before [it] won the first of his three Isle of Man titles. "The

organisers sent me a plane ticket and a fellow from the local tourist board picked me up at the airport... On the way to the circuit [the fellow] stopped the car near an old bridge and asked me to come and say hello to the fairies." [The NZer] had been a bit of a larrikin as a young fella, playing rugby and knocking about with mates in Auckland before becoming an apprentice motorcycle mechanic. Talking to fairies, mythical or otherwise, especially under a bridge, was not something a typical N[Z] bloke did... But [the NZer] had seen enough of the world as a champion motorcycle racer to respect traditions. So [it] wandered off to the bridge and said in his best N[Z] accent, "Giddyay, fairies, how ya going?" ...[in early June the NZer]'ll stop near [the] old bridge on his way to the famous road circuit and [again] whisper to the fairies... [The NZer will also] be reunited with his 1980-winning Suzuki bike when [it] and other former champions going back to the 1960s do a lap of honour... The bike belongs to a private collector in Britain. "There are things about the Isle of Man circuit you can never forget... At 29 and 3/4 miles... it's such a long way that it's sometimes hard to remember exactly where you are. There is one part of it where they grow garlic, and you can smell it. So as soon as I got a whiff I knew exactly where I was and what was ahead of me. When you are doing 140 mph... it's good to know what's coming up." ...[the NZer] left Suzuki for... [the] Yamaha-equipped, Marlboro-sponsored team in 1982 and finished second in the world championship. [The NZer] left the European racing scene at the end of 1982 and thereafter made only sporadic race appearances, mostly in Austral[asia]... Through the late-80s... [it] set up a retail motorcycle shop in Auckland and got his pilot's licence. A couple of years ago [it] sold the shop and went flying, piloting twin-engined aircraft on a... North Island... courier run... Now [it]'s back in the motoring business, this time swapping two wheels for four [by] selling Mercedes-Benz cars... and... must be good at it, because [the guy was NZ]'s top Mercedes-Benz sales[person last year]. To say thanks, head office in Germany... invited him to Stuttgart. That trip comes after the Isle of Man, when [the NZer] says goodbye to his old bike and racing mates, and... the circuit[it]... is still in awe of... "I think about it time and time again. You have either got to be silly, stupid or something, to compete on it. I was the first rider to do six laps in under two hours. That was in my first appearance... Actually, going there and doing reasonably well, without having bounced off any walls or crashed, was pretty good. It would be very easy to become complacent around there. You can make a few bucks, but it's extremely dangerous."

...In the 1960s, says [a] Formula One great... "motor racing was dangerous and sex was safe." It was a time when the sport had a mortality rate higher than that among Battle of Britain fighter pilots. If a car went out of control on a circuit it would be confined only by straw bales. If the car somersaulted over these bales – and missed the spectators who were standing by, unprotected – then it might smash into a ditch, or fly into a tree, a telegraph pole, a wall or bank of earth. The driver's helmet gave no protection to his face or neck, his overalls were not flameproof and [it] wore no seatbelt. The car carried no fire extinguishers and its thin-walled fuel tanks surrounded the driver's body. The car's magnesium wheels would flare like fireworks. Most drivers were devil-may-care larrikins... [who] never went near a gym or dietitian. N[Z]'s only F1 champ] best described how they prepared for a race: "We did the usual things the night before – set fire to the swimming pool and hung... police car... wheels... in trees."

...THE new British American Racing (BAR) team may not be making many moves on the F[1] track, but look for it to be a headline stealer off it at next week's Spanish Grand Prix. It will reveal its team motorhome there – all \$NZ9m worth of it. Seems there is something of a competition among the teams to have the most outlandish motorhomes for the drivers. McLaren leads the way but BAR is set to trump it. BAR claimed the only reason it couldn't unveil its new beauty at last week's San Marino Grand Prix was because of a holdup to some of the finishing touches. It claimed there were only two companies in Britain with paint shops capable of housing the bus. Just another example of the ridiculous wealth needed to compete in motorsport's greatest show. □ [The]... British motor racing tycoon... involved in a long-running battle with the E[U] over how the sport is run commercially – especially when it comes to the allocation of [TV] rights – is about to sell up to half of his F[1] empire for around £1.5 billion.

...At the heart of one of the world's most-watched sports, grand prix motor racing, lies a tale of extraordinary secrecy and of the financial dominance of one [perso]n... On June 28, in the offices of the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile in Geneva... [-] a non-profit-making association that regards itself as the world governing body for four-wheel motor sport... [-] delegates from over 70 national motoring associations, who comprise the federation's supreme general assembly, met... and voted unanimously on a single resolution. It was to approve a deal, recommended by the federation senate, to grant the commercial rights for Formula One motor racing until December 31, 2110 – that is, for more than 100 years – to [Mr One Perso]n... There was no auction – Mr [One Person] was the only bidder... The price for such a sweeping concession: \$360 million, payment of most of which the federation has deferred for many years. With this deal, Mr [One Person], through Formula One Management (FOM, the key trading company in his empire), has, in effect, sole rights to negotiate with and collect lucrative fees from the promoters who put on grand prix races. [Mr One Person] also has sole authority to sell tv rights worldwide for a sport whose 17 races a year each pull in around 5 billion viewers... Over the past three months, the *Economist* has examined the extant filings of every British company of which Mr [One Person] has been a director since 1951. It has also followed the flow of the billions of dollars generated by Formula One through... [the hands of someone who cut it]s business teeth selling second-hand motorcycles. Early in his career, [Mr One Person] showed a talent for financial trickery: after... s[elling] his motorcycle business, [Mr One Person] put about £10,000 rightfully belonging to the tax[department] in his own pocket.

...F[1] teams continue to push the limits at no expense. Benetton has unveiled a \$14m new fitness centre at its British base it hopes will help the struggling team regain a healthy position on the starting grid. The Human Performance Centre, is being run by [a] former Royal Marine Arctic survival instructor... who believes it could make a difference to the drivers' performances. The centre boasts a range of equipment tailored for the requirements of F[1], where drivers can be subjected to hefty G-forces and energy-sapping heat for up to two hours at a time... F[1] drivers often collect nearly 4 1/2 G "and when they go into a corner they actually hold their breath... which shuts the oxygen off from the brain. You imagine that kind of continuous pressure and stress on the body – you're talking about 70 laps of that times 15 corners and they are really pushing hard." ■ STILL with F[1]... nearly 58 billion TV viewers from 206 countries watched last year's title race, setting a record for a third straight year.

...\$US500 m... is spent by spectators each year at F[1] motor races held in Europe. A report says the 11 grand prix... were "probably unrivalled in the sporting world for creating economic benefits at the local level." About 83[%] of the money was spent by visitors from outside the local area...

Jaguar's famous leaping cat livery is set to grace Grand Prix racing next season with the Formula One Commission, representing the 11 teams on the grid, agreeing to the change of the Stewart Ford name. Ford own Jaguar and bought the Stewart Racing Team operation in June for £55 m...

TOYOTA [has] said it will now make its Formula One debut in 2[years], forfeiting a \$26.92m deposit to start racing from next year... [In further F1 news, yesterday the Scottish F1 ace] re-signed with McLaren for next season.

...A Malaysian betting ring may have been behind plots to murder [McLaren's Scottish] racing driver... and [a] jockey... in plane crashes, the *Sunday People* newspaper reports. It says detectives are investigating an underworld tip-off that gangsters caused the plane crashes, just a week apart, that could have killed the sports stars. Their deaths would have made millions for shadowy spread-betting gambling syndicates, the paper says... [The] former British champion jockey, suffered a fractured ankle and bruising in a plane crash in Newmarket, England, last month, which claimed the life of the pilot. The crash forced him to pull out of the Derby, a race that attracts some of the heaviest betting of the year. [The] Scottish Formula One ace... was injured... when his plane crashed as [the Scot] headed for southern France just two days before the Spanish Grand Prix. Both pilots died. [The Scot] insisted on racing and ended up finishing second. A senior police source told the newspaper: "It seems astonishing but our informants insist this has happened. We are investigating. We know these gangs have killed people in Asia to pull off gambling coups." The paper said plane engines were tampered with in both cases... Spread betting is a high-risk method where bettors stand to lose fortunes because of the huge stakes. It is also easily corrupted. Bookies "create markets" based on statistical aspects of a sporting event or championship – anything

from how many goals are scored to how many times the stretcher comes on to the field – and bettors decide whether the punter has decided on too many or too few. [The jockey] races horses for [a]Sheikh... and is well known in the Far East. *Sunday People* said a Far East betting syndicate was also behind the mystery of the Rugby World Cup Final between N[Z] and South Africa in 1995[, which NZ]... lost in extra time... with several players complaining of food-poisoning... The[paper] said a private detective had found the syndicate had paid a waitress to spike the All Blacks' drinks... [• 'Ferrari, which had a 1, 2 finish in yesterday's Malaysian Grand Prix, was disqualified after its wind deflectors were found to be 1cm too small.' The team was also reprimanded earlier in the season after the team's No 2 driver allowed the No 1 driver to win a race by passing him in the home straight.]

...Arranged finishes... next season will lead to the team being banned from at least the next race, world motorsport organisers... warn... There was... uproar in Melbourne in 1998 when [a]Scot... moved aside in the closing laps to let [his]McLaren teammate... take victory... F[1] suffered a body blow at the Austrian Grand Prix this year when Ferrari flouted the spirit of racing, ordering [its]Brazilian... to let his team-mate... win.

...[Ferrari's German driver] was in a race of his own again yesterday as [it] rewrote the F[1] record books in a dramatic and crash-hit Belgian Grand Prix. As so often in his 10 years at the top of motor racing, the 32-year-old German was competing against himself and the danger of losing concentration as [it] steered his Ferrari to an almost flawless and memorable triumph, his 52nd in 159 grand prix since his debut on the same Spa-Francorchamps circuit... Typically, too, [the German] admitted to one moment of near-madness when [it] was caught fiddling with the control buttons in the cockpit of his car and almost lost control... Typically... [the German was] looking for extra performance from his car, while winning his favourite race for the fifth time... since his maiden outing with the Jordan team... [The German was] disqualified after winning in 1994... and... also finished second in 1993... The circuit is nearer to his family home in Kerpen than any other on the calendar... The victory, by a margin far greater than that reflected in the 10s advantage... held over [the]second-placed Briton [who drives for McLaren] at the finish, was his eighth of a year in which [the German] has won the drivers' title for a fourth time and hoisted him clear of [a retired French driver] as the biggest outright winner ever... Unfortunately, on a day marred by the serious accident which caused [a]Brazilian driver... to be evacuated to hospital[, the French driver]... was not around to add his congratulations. [The Brazilian] was driving a... car [belonging to the retired French driver when it] slammed into the barriers on one of the fastest and most dangerous parts of the circuit, and the French[driver] was effectively too shocked to comment... Benetton's... Ital[ian driver] was third, followed by [a]Finn... in a McLaren, [then the German's Brazilian teammate. Incidentally, 'Moet & Chandon is trying to ban winners from shaking and spraying their champagne bottles because the company considers such behaviour to be inappropriate and wasteful']...

Flat out talking – the winner is in first place [The British commentator] is known, affectionately, as a motormouth. His commentary has been synonymous with F[1] racing since his first BBC race call in 1978. But [the Brit], whose litany of verbal spin-outs has earned him a worldwide fan club, is only weeks from retiring... [It] will be missed by millions. Few other sports callers are so renowned, and yet so acclaimed, for their mouth running in sixth gear while their brain remains in reverse. Who else, for instance, could come up with: "And I interrupt myself to bring you this...," or: "The lead is now 6.9s. In fact, it's just under 7s." For lap after lap, each word seems an exclamation, his commentary at full throttle, at full pitch, for what is essentially a spectacle of follow the leader. No wonder they call this 77-year-old... the voice of F[1]. And no wonder [it] has several internet websites devoted to his errors. His mistakes are one of the highlights of watching F[1] on TV. Here's a selection of the high-octane ...isms: ■ "We're now on the 73rd lap and the next one will be the 74th." ■ "I'll stop my startwatch." ...■ "There's nothing wrong with the car except that it is on fire." ...■ "[The driver]'s lost both right front tyres." ■ "And here comes [the driver] in the Williams. This car is absolutely unique – except for the one behind it, which is exactly the same." ■ "With half the race gone, there is half the race still to go." ...■ "And the rain came down and washed the circuit dry." ■ "...and [the German] has just completed lap 77 out of 73." ■ "We now have exactly the same situation as at the beginning of the race, only exactly opposite." ...■ "The McLaren is looking as steady as a rock." And just as [it] says this the McLaren slides round a bend. ■ Monaco, 1981: "You might not think that's cricket, and it's not. It's motor racing." ...■ "[The driver] is slowing down, taking it easy. Oh no [the driver] isn't! It's a lap record!" ...■ "And that just shows you how important the car is in F[1] racing." ...■ "As you can see, visually, with your eyes." ■ "Do my eyes deceive me, or is Senna's Lotus sounding rough?" ...■ "I make no apologies for their absence. I'm sorry they're not here." ...■ "And this is the third-placed car about to lap the second-placed car." ...■ "There's a fiery glow coming from the back of the Ferrari." [Another commentator]: "No, that's his rear safety light." ■ "That's history. I say history because it happened in the past." ...■ "[The driver]'s here again for the first time." ...■ "[The driver]'s obviously gone for a wheel change. I say obviously because I can't see it." ...■ "I've no idea what [the driver]'s orders are, but [it]'s following them superlatively well." ...■ "Ferrari won't be developing their car any more this season." ...[2nd commentator]: "How do you know that?" ...■ "I was there when I said it." ...■ Interview with [the F1] boss... "So... in the 17 years since you bought McLaren, which of your many achievements do you think was the most memorable?" [F1 boss]: "Well, I don't remember buying McLaren."

...□ F[1] teams have contributed to a fund for the pregnant widow of Italian Paolo Gislimberti, the track marshal killed by a flying wheel at the Monza Grand Prix. The fund stands at \$370,000. [The]Formula One boss... tossed in \$100,000 himself.

...The death of a race marshal at the A[US]n grand prix yesterday cast a tragic shadow over... [t]he... world champion[']s perfect start to the Formula One motor racing season... his second successive A[US]n grand prix title and his fifth race win in a row... The Ferrari driver completed the 58-lap journey around Albert Park in 1h 38m 26.533s ahead of [a driver from] Scotland, in a McLaren. Ferrari's Brazilian [driver]... was third... But there was no champagne sprayed on the podium and no celebration among the drivers. By then, word had filtered through that a marshal, from Queensland, had died after a crash early in the race, involving [the winn]er's younger brother... and [a]Canadian... Both cars were destroyed in the crash and parts of [the Canadian]'s vehicle appeared to fly over the fence and into the crowd. All four wheels were ripped off... Seven other people were treated for minor injuries after [the Canadian]'s BAR Honda somersaulted into the wall when [it clipped the German]'s Williams while trying to overtake... It was the second time in less than a year that a marshal had died in a Formula One race. Italian Paolo Ghislimberti died at Monza last season... in the first fatality suffered by Formula One at a circuit since the death of Brazilian world champion Ayrton Senna at Imola in 1994.

...A F[1] investigation into the death of a volunteer... at... Melbourne... is understood to have cleared race organisers of blame over the fatality. A confidential report by the... International Automobile Federation found that the marshal was not at his correct position when... struck by a wheel.

...Investigators have concluded that safety problems in the design of the car, and not a broken seatbelt, caused the death of Dale Earnhardt at the Daytona 500. Citing "reliable sources close to the investigation" who requested anonymity, the *Orlando Sentinel* newspaper said the four-month probe essentially confirmed the findings of an expert who determined Earnhardt died of a sudden head-whip when his car hit a wall on February 18... The... leader among active Winston Cup drivers with 76 career victories[who] also had the most wins at Daytona International Speedway at 34... had to be cut out of his car after slamming into the wall on the final turn of the race while... running fourth... [and] fighting for position. [Earnhardt] was taken to... hospital accompanied by his son... who finished second in the race. Known on the track as "The Intimidator,"... Dale... never regained consciousness after the high-speed collision... The accident happened 800m from the finish of the Nascar season-opener... His death comes at a time that driver safety issues were under increased scrutiny. Three Nascar drivers were killed in wrecks last season.

...US... driver Kenny Irwin [has]died in practice at the... international speedway... the second racer killed in the last two months on the track.

...[this season has seen the 'first US drag racing death in 25 years', and now an investigation is under way to establish the reason why an 'inexperienced racer in AUS died after his vehicle failed to stop and crashed into a wall at the end of the drag-strip.' In related news,] **50,000 people turned out yesterday to pay their respects to Northern Ireland's five-time TT motorcycling world champion Joey Dunlop who was killed in a race in Estonia last weekend.**

...in the first race... at Ballykelly in Northern Ireland yesterday[a NZer won]... his first world championship and the 23rd International Motorcycling Federation world crown for N[Z, but only its second]... motocross world title. ■ ...A 10-year-old boy... Kristopher Andrew Tane Sunnex, of Horotiu... has died after the motorbike [it] was riding crashed into another bike on a private motocross track near Hamilton.

...Police are investigating the Patiki Rd speedway motorcycle crash that killed... 39-year-old west Auckland[er]... Colin "Ultee" Tantau... and sent another rider to hospital... Officers involved with the case are keen to speak to witnesses or anyone who filmed or photographed the incident.

...Motorsport enthusiasts are stunned by the charging of four volunteers over an accident at the Queenstown Classic car race two years ago in which two spectators died. The[y]... face a variety of charges, the most serious of which is [hu]manslaughter. Terence Robert Tubman, aged 35, of Queenstown, and James Bruce Mackie, 36, of Arrowtown, were killed when a Holden Torana driven by [a Blenheim resident] ploughed into... spectators. The pair were in a group of six watching the race when two cars clipped each other. The Torana left the road, was launched off a bank and became airborne. A 55-year-old Christchurch company director was granted interim name suppression when [it] appeared in the Christchurch District Court on [hu]manslaughter charges yesterday[(the same location where the organiser of the Le Race bike road-race that resulted in a death – a cyclist, who believed the course was clear of other traffic, collided head-on with a car – was recently found 'guilty of criminal nuisance'). The director] also faces a charge of unlawful injury and was jointly charged with... a 64-year-old company director of Queenstown... a 37-year-old Invercargill mechanic, and... a 68-year-old company director, with criminal nuisance... They also faced a joint charge of failing to ensure the safety of the public at the... event. All four were remanded on bail without plea to appear in the Queenstown District Court on December 11. Motorsport N[Z's] president... and his staff had been helping police with their inquiries for two years and were "absolutely shocked" at the charges... [The president] said police had requested an international circuit inspector to come to N[Z] to help with inquiries. Motorsport NZ was stunned that police had not waited for that inspector to arrive. The decision to proceed before the inspector's report was "exceptionally harsh" on those charged. Some of those charged had worked as... officials at motorsport events for... 30 years... Motorsport, like many other sports, relied heavily on volunteers. "Volunteers are the heart of N[Z] sport. This really strikes at that heart... This case raises serious questions for officials and volunteers in any sport or leisure activity that includes risk to either participants or spectators." ...Motorsport NZ would back the... officials 100[%] and pay all legal costs.

...A leading west Auckland sports administrator warns sports and leisure groups may be crippled by the prosecution of four volunteer officials... Sport Waitakere[']s chief executive... says holding liable volunteers helping out at... events could cripple a sector already struggling to recruit and retain volunteers... A fighting fund of more than \$100,000 has been raised so far from levies of up to \$10 on most motor-sport licences and events...

MotorSport N[Z] was yesterday fined \$5000 and ordered to pay \$20,000 reparation in relation to two deaths in the Queenstown Classic Road Race... The organisation pleaded guilty to a charge of causing criminal nuisance. Similar charges were withdrawn against four volunteer race organisers who had appeared for a depositions hearing in the... District Court. A count of [hu]manslaughter against one of them was also dropped.

...Fifteen spectators were injured when [a Spaniard's] Ford Focus... crashed in the Rally of Great Britain yesterday. [The Spaniard's] car skidded off the road during the 11th special stage in the Brechfa Forest near Carmarthen, west Wales, and hit the fans in the spectator area. Three of them were taken to hospital by ambulance and two were airlifted by helicopter. "The stage was immediately stopped and cancelled," a rally spokes[person] said. "Ford have withdrawn... [the Spaniard] from the rally because of the serious nature of the incident." [The Spaniard, a t]wo-time world champion... who was fourth at the time, was unhurt... Subaru's [driver]... remains on course to become the first English[person] to clinch the world title. With just four stages remaining, [the Subaru driver]... is second, but... is under no pressure to win. [It] just needs to finish in the top four to claim the title. The championship leader... crashed out on Saturday. The flying Scot barrel-rolled his Ford Focus into a ditch after a high-speed misjudgment on the fourth stage while in the lead. As [the Scot] flew back to Scotland, [it]s retirement left the road open for the [person it] least wants to see win the title... "This is the biggest disappointment of my career," said the 1995 world champion after a morning that started brightly and ended sadly with a trip to hospital. "I feel terrible about it, both for myself and for the whole Ford team..." [The Scot] can still win the championship, but only if [the English driver], winner in Britain for the past three years, finishes lower than fourth.

...IT'S easy to tell which teams have the most money behind them. Under the cover of a rail shed are the top three world championship teams complete with up to 60 mechanics, cooks, managers, media personnel and hangers-on. Outside with large tarpaulins and backup trucks in attendance are the serious overseas and local teams. But around the corner and generally out of sight of most spectators are the hack teams who might be lucky to have mum there to make a sandwich and a mate to change the tyres. While few other sports have such blatant extremes of resources even fewer allow any Joe down the street to line up with five past or present world champions in the same event. There's no way [Ferrari's German driver] would take kindly to sharing the road with Joe in a Formula 1 race if his disdain of other F[1] drivers is anything to go by. The world rally championship rates No 2 behind F[1] as the most popular motorsport. In Spain and Italy it's regarded as the No 2 sport behind soccer and in Finland it's the national sport. Two million people turned out to watch the last Rally of England... and 500 accredited media cover each of the 14 rounds of the championship. Accordingly, it's big business. The Ford team, which is one of the largest with three cars... spends \$120m annually on... [its] campaign. The cars alone are worth \$2m and have a new set of tyres every 50km and a new suspension unit daily. Many of the major car companies have teams involved in the championships – Ford, Mitsubishi, Peugeot, Subaru and Hyundai – because car sales at the local yard often mirror success at rally events. They realise their cars are mobile billboards and their drivers travelling sales[people] – albeit well paid ones... The Ford team[']s Scot has]... three houses throughout Europe... and... commands... [an] estimated \$20m paycheck... But the lifestyle of travelling the world can take its toll and [the championship] is considered by many as a young [guy]'s game. "Our guys spend more time together than they do with their wives,"... the head mechanic with the Ford team... said. "But I can't think of anything else I would rather be doing."

...The Paris-Dakar rally crossed the Mediterranean to the Moroccan city of Nador yesterday and plans to enter the disputed territory of Western Sahara, despite threats from the Polisario Front. The Algerian-backed Front, which claims control of the territory, has threatened to end a decade-old ceasefire and resume all-out war against Morocco if the rally enters the Western Sahara. The rally, which includes 113 cars and 30 lorries, was expected to reach the southeastern city of Errachidia, 600km from Nador, late last night. The 276 competitors set off from Paris on Monday for the 23rd running of the race, a 10,000km trek across southern Europe and North Africa to the Senegalese capital[that, 'since its inception, has resulted in 39 deaths.' The]Polisario Front leader... warned in an Algerian newspaper... that race competitors would be at risk if they entered the territory...

One [person]'s hobby has put him offside with neighbours who don't even live in the same city! [The]Whenuapai icon... built a go-kart track for his own and his wife[']s]... amusement on their Kennedy's Rd property, in May... But the venture didn't have council resource consent – which means [the icon] is now belatedly seeking approval for the track. It seems... [hi]s neighbours on Kennedy's Rd have no objections to the hobby racer's actions. But Brighams Creek residents across the water, in Rodney District, are revved up to block... [his application. The] manager for consent services for the Waitakere City Council, says the concerns of the Rodney residents have to be heard, even though they live in another council's jurisdiction. "The effects of the land's use dictate the decisions made – not where the concerns come from,"... The former winemaker, who sold his business to Nobilo Wines a few years ago, says [it]'s flummoxed by the opposition. On the advice of his lawyers, [the icon] declined to comment further. Contacted by *West Weekly* this week, none of the objectors would comment. But the objections are listed as being over noise and

exhaust fumes. [However, the icon] says all the karts have been fitted with additional mufflers and have passed the council's noise level test. [The icon] is only allowed to use the track three hours at a time between noon and 6pm. No racing can take place on Sunday's and public holidays. The interim restrictions apply until the consent application is heard tomorrow night. A 6-month review of the track is likely, even if consent is granted.

...The latest round in the illegal go-kart track war has been won by the track's owners... The track... was granted resource consent in retrospect at a Waitakere City Council hearings committee meeting last Thursday. The decision has enraged residents in the Rodney District... who say the track is noisy and causes petrol fumes to drift across Brigham Creek onto their property. But the consent has been granted with conditions including restricting... use of the track to between the hours of noon and 6pm. The [owner]s are considering appealing this, plus the committee's decision to ban the use of the track on Sunday's and public holidays. If either side appeal the case would be heard in the Environment Court.

...WAIKAKA (pop 78) sits about 10km from the Otago border in Eastern Southland. It is famous for two things: "The best sheep country in N[Z]," says one local; and for that local] himself, says a one-time Waikaka resident, the Royal Hotel publican known to everyone – even the teetotallers in the district. Which is why, when the Mataura Lawnmower Racing Social Club comes to the township for a peculiarly Southland sort of Sunday, [the local] can sometimes be convinced to hop on one of the totted-up mowers for a few laps of the paddock. Along with the... garage owner, the store owner and the headmaster ("when they can get him"), [the local] helps make up the numbers for Waikaka's celebrity mower racing team... N[Z] cannot lay claim to the invention of motor-mower racing, but it is done in Southland with that indomitable Kiwi DIY spirit: give me a spool of No 8 fencing wire and I'll turn it into something that goes fast and makes a lot of lovely noise. In the U[S] motor-mower racing has its own Websites, statewide race meetings and corporate sponsorship. The Mataura club can't quite compete, although... local businesses are supportive of the end-of-year prizegiving to the tune of watches, bottles of wine and fast-food vouchers... Small town N[Z], if Waikaka and surrounding districts are anything to go by, is littered with the carcasses of that iconic beast of suburbia – the motor mower ...w[hich], in its natural state, is an integral part of the great N[Z] weekend. It's up there with fish and chips on Friday nights and Saturday morning rugby. And it has been for 100-odd years, ever since the British company, Ransomes, started exporting its person-powered lawnmower to a country which embraced it immediately and has never let go. When the motor mower made its debut in the early 1900s, it made it with a satisfactory roar – one which signalled that a [guy] was maintaining his castle. The mower was a [guy]'s tool for a [guy]'s country. A well-used mower smelled good and blokey, too – of grease and dirt and petrol. (In California, the Air Resources Board estimates that lawn and garden equipment users inadvertently spill 17 million gallons of fuel every year – more petrol than ended up in the Gulf of Alaska after the Exxon Valdez spill). But N[Z]ers (like their counterparts in lawned suburbs everywhere) have nurtured a love-hate relationship with their mowers – and an emotion verging on the murderous with their neighbour's mower. Because, as environmental health officers well know, the mowing machine can be used as an instrument of torture in suburbia. But unless your neighbour fires up before 7 am or after 10 pm on a weekday, there's nothing a council can do... [if a guy] (and it will always be a [guy]) takes to his lawn five hours a day, five days a week. There is some good news. It is little known that Aucklanders in residential areas are entitled to make a complaint if the bete noir over the back fence starts slaughtering the daisies before 9 am or after 6 pm on a Sunday. That your neighbour can tootle about the back lawn with a machine that spews petrol fumes and makes a noise like a trailbike is testament to a complete lack of regulations governing the use of the mower – or any power tool you care to abuse in the privacy of your own backyard. [A spokesperson from] the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research, says they are simply too difficult to police. "The whole question of, not just mowers, but any off-road vehicles [chain-saws and portable generators come into this category] are basically not controlled – there's no way to control them. And they tend to be very, very horrible." And not just a danger to your blood pressure levels... In the U[S] there are an estimated 89 million pieces of lawn and garden equipment with engines rated at 25hp or less. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that mowers, trimmers and edgers produce up to 5[%] of the nation's air pollution[(and on top of that are the gases 'emitted by cut grass and other clippings')]. Run a 3.5hp petrol mower for an hour and it will emit the same amount of volatile organic compounds (key precursors to smog) as a new car driven 550km... While smog is not yet a problem in most N[Z] cities, NIWA]... has identified three main pollutants created by mowers in thousands of sections every weekend. The sound of the suburban weekend creates a mix of volatile hydrocarbons (VOC), carbon monoxide... and particulates (PM10). On a fine summer's day in Auckland, mowers will emit 2[%] of the total VOC levels, 1.8[%] of CO levels and 1.5[%] of PM10 levels... Small wonder that the neighbours with the push power mower look holier than thou. And how they'd wrinkle their noses at the mower racers. That you can race mowers at all in, say, Gore on a fine Sunday afternoon is obviously testament to the saint-like tolerance of Southlanders. "The poor [guy]'s motocross,"... And, yes, [just like with racing cars, you don't need a licence to compete (even though 'car racing takes a lot of skill – it's almost like an art' – 'NZ is the only country where you can drive in racing cars on a track before you can legally drive on the road')]. But is it better to let [old mowers] burn out or to rust away? It's no contest for... [the] vice-president of the Mataura mower racing club, whose metallic blue, souped-up mower has been clocked at 50 km/h.

...The days when a plank, old pram wheels and a box were all that was needed for a downhill trolley race are ending in Glenfield. The latest craze to grip youngsters in the North Shore suburb is the [US]-style soapbox derby racer. There is nothing about these machines to even slightly suggest soapbox origins. Their pencil-like, moulded-glass bodies and wafer-thin wheels are the product of 70 years of research and development. They can reach 80 km/h and cost \$2000 to import as kits from the U[S], where the... competitive All American Soap Box Derby has been held since 1934.

...Sands of time give up search for speed... From 1924 until 1927, Pendine Sands... [in] South Wales... was the site of one of the most memorable speed battles in motoring history – a sustained struggle between two giants of motor racing, during which the world land speed record was broken five times. The protagonists were Malcolm Campbell, 39 years old and already famous, and 40-year-old John Parry Thomas, a daringly original car designer and, like Campbell, a highly successful racing driver. Campbell wasn't the first to race on Pendine Sands – motorcycle races had been held there since the early 1920s – but [Campbell was the person] who chose it as the venue to challenge the world land speed record... On September 25, 1924, [Campbell –] ...at the wheel of Sunbeam, powered by a 18-litre V12 engine... [–] created a new world record: 146 mph... Campbell was to maintain a clear lead over his rival... for some time. The second time the record was broken at Pendine Sands it fell to Campbell again, who nudged the speed over 150 mph... in July the following year. But Campbell wasn't to hold the record for long. For Parry Thomas had been working on a rival to Sunbeam – a chain-driven monster called Babs, powered by a 20-litre engine. When [Parry Thomas] took to the wheel of Babs on April 27, 1926, [it] recorded 169 mph... demolishing Campbell's record by a colossal margin. The next day Parry Thomas improved his own record, nudging it up to 171 mph... But the last record to be set at Pendine Sands fell to Campbell in a new car called Bluebird. On February 4, 1927, [Campbell] reclaimed his title as the fastest [hu]man on earth with a speed of just under 175 mph... The final tragic chapter to the story did not take place until the following year. Parry Thomas motored down to Pendine on February 28, but bad weather prevented him from tackling the record until his last day at the beach, Thursday, March 3. At first the attempt seemed to be going well, but travelling at great speed halfway along the beach, Babs suddenly skidded and rolled over before coming to a stop facing the sea and catching fire. Quite what happened no one will ever know. But it seems probable that the car's external chain broke and when Parry Thomas leaned out to see what had happened, the chain struck him, killing him instantly. In deference to Parry Thomas, Babs was buried in the dunes until 1969 when enthusiasts won permission to bring the car back to life. Considering that it had been buried for 42 years, Babs was in surprisingly good condition. Now fully restored, Babs returns to Pendine Sands every summer as the star exhibit at the Museum of Speed, which overlooks the beach. Pendine itself may never again witness new world land speed record attempts, but its racing days are far from over. The beach is the site of new speed attempts by a generation of electrically powered cars, driven by... [the] grandson of Malcolm Campbell. On May 21, 1998, [the grandson] set a British record for electric cars with a speed of 116 mph...

While far short of the 245 mph... world record, [the grandson] and his team reckon that if they reach 200 mph... at Pendine Sands in their redesigned Bluebird, they stand a chance of clocking 300 mph... at Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah, which offers a run twice as long as the beach. So... 7[decades after the]... beach... saw so much glory... all eyes are on Pendine once again...

Speed tragedy tomb raised The... blue fin of Donald Campbell's Bluebird had not been bathed in light since the crisp January day, 3[decade]s ago, when it was catapulted to the foot of Coniston Water in the English Lake District. It was afforded a suitably memorable return as it was heaved back to the surface yesterday. The sun pierced mist over... Coniston, catching the fin as it was raised, and the serenity of the moment left onlookers as silent as those who witnessed the chilling crash that killed Campbell. Yesterday, his family and friends saw for the first time the torn wreckage of the boat in which [Donald] perished, achieving his dream of reaching 300 mph... in his last moments. The son of Sir Malcolm Campbell... Donald... is the only person to have held both land and water speed records in the same year. After attempts at breaking water-speed records in his father's boat, K4, Donald... developed his own boat, the K7, and set seven world water-speed records between 1955 and 1964. [Donald] attained a speed of 276 mph... on Lake Dumbleyung in A[US] in 1964... then turned to the land-speed record but crashed badly in a record run in... Utah... Some believed the crash and his long convalescence affected Campbell's health but [late] in 1964, on Lake Eyre in A[US, Donald] was back racing and set a world land speed record of 648 km/h. Three years later, while trying to become the first person to go over 300 mph (482.8 km/h) on water, [Donald] crashed at Coniston. [Donald] achieved a run of 477.8 km/h but when... c[oming] back for the second leg, the boat lifted out of the water, somersaulted and disintegrated... Campbell's body has not been found, and some of his family, as well as many in Coniston, had wanted the boat, too, to be left undisturbed. Until recently, his widow... was adamant that it should be left as a "memorial" to her husband. But his daughter... wanted the salvaging operation to take place. The raising was carried out in conjunction with the BBC, which is making a documentary about the operation... [A] team of 16 divers took more than five hours to winch Bluebird 46m out of its resting place, in a bed of silt... then tow... it in for 2.4km with a 6m crane attached to a barge... A friend of [the widow said the widow] had agreed to the salvage because, with the location known, it would have fallen prey to trophy hunters. [The widow] is also said to have signed a deal with a Sunday tabloid newspaper to share her thoughts with its readers. A few years ago [the widow] released the diaries of her late husband which revealed a [perso]n traumatised by his repeated crashes and racked with dark despair. [The widow] was criticised for releasing the diaries, but insisted the public had [a] right to know the complete [perso]n rather than a sanitised version. The local people of Coniston say nothing will stop them revering the memory of Donald Campbell, or his resting place... The world water-speed record has stood at 511 km/h... since [an AUS]n... broke the 300 mph barrier in 1978.

...[an AUSn's] offshore powerboat Riviera g[o]t... a polish-up from Boat Show officials... at the Auckland Showgrounds today. The \$3 million, Italian-built racer has a top speed of 224 km/h and will compete in the World Powerboat Championships in Auckland next February. It is expected to be one of the star attractions at the four-day show, which is likely to attract 60,000 visitors, drawn in part by interest in the America's Cup.

A single U[S] team challenging for the America's Cup will bring in economic benefit to N[Z] of \$172.1 million plus GST, according to an analysis prepared by the accounting firm Ernst and Young... – \$116.5 million... to N[Z] as a whole... with \$55.5 million... benefit to Auckland... The chair[perso]n of the Auckland Regional Services Trust... says this overwhelmingly... justifies ratepayer and taxpayer spending on a \$50 million cup base at the Viaduct Basin in... Auckland. [The chairperson] said yesterday that [it] understood there were now 13 overseas challengers for the Cup in 1999-2000.

...The public does not want an Aotea Centre-type "cost blow-out" when an America's Cup base is built... [Yesterday, the ARST]'s strategy consultant, said the public did not really mind it putting money into the proposed Viaduct Basin base. After all, the money would not be coming directly from ratepayers' pockets, but from trust trading profits. But, based on letters and phone calls, people were concerned that there not be a huge cost overrun. The trust has set \$25 million aside to put into the proposed development which is expected to cost more than \$50 million. Because the final number of challengers for the Cup is still uncertain, the actual cost is unknown. The chair[perso]n of the trust... has said it may have to put in more although [the consultant]... did not expect the cost to be "significantly" higher than \$50 million. The trust's financial involvement meanwhile depends on the Government and the private sector bearing a share of the cost. The Minister of Local Government... is expected to tell the trust next month whether it can involve itself in the development, ownership, management and financing of the base. [The minister] is also expected to indicate how much the Government will contribute. The Government has already said that the trust has demonstrated that it has the financial and management expertise to undertake the development without being a burden on ratepayers. The mayors of the region will almost certainly agree to the trust being financially involved, but some want that involvement to go no further. Most sit somewhere in between the Papakura District Council's flat rejection of any trust involvement and the Auckland City Council's relatively unqualified support. They agree on the Cup's importance to N[Z], but want to be sure the trust will be spending money wisely. Most accept the view of the Planning and Development Select Committee, which reported on the so-called America's Cup legislation, that it is unlikely that private sector interests would undertake to co-ordinate or fund fully the development of Cup facilities... This month [the ARST chairperson] said: "It still looks as if we will get our money back..." The... [chairperson] was referring to a... study, commissioned by the trust, which concluded that if a single extra U[S] challenger was persuaded to enter because of the superb facilities, it would create a \$172 million economic impact, and about 3530 jobs. Two-thirds of that benefit would fall outside the Auckland region, surely justifying a "substantial Government contribution." This left... [the chairperso]n of finance... [for t]he North Shore City Council... unmoved... [It] had seen similar reports before "and I would not trust them as far as I can kick them."

...Preparing for the America's Cup is expected to take almost \$2.48 million out of the Auckland public purse by the end of the year. The A[RST] yesterday approved increases in its budget to cover the \$2,476,083, excluding GST. The money is mostly for consultants in planning for the \$50 m... cup base... Just under \$800,000... was spent by the trust in the year ending June 30. It is expecting to fork out a further \$1.68 m... by the end of December, which is when it hopes construction will start on the base for the 2000 yachting event. Legal consultants, costing an average \$250 an hour, are expected to be the most expensive of the consultants, at \$847,569 up to December 31. Engineering consultants with an average price tag of \$1055 a day are next in line, at \$793,727. Public relations consultants' fees, at an average \$162.18 an hour, are expected to add up to \$27,759. Construction, property and Maori consultants, and architects, are also being used... Buying from Ports of Auckland Ltd its work towards obtaining resource consents – such as an assessment of environmental effects – cost \$120,000. Auckland City Council and Auckland Regional Council resource consent hearings are expected to cost \$150,000... A study of the likely economic impact of the America's Cup on Auckland and N[Z] has cost \$30,000. Another, expected to cost \$15,000, is planned. It will look at the regional economic impact... The trust expects the \$2.48 m... costs will be picked up by the company it will set up to build the base – assuming the Minister of Local Government... approves the trust's plans.

...Grand plans for the America's Cup base on the Auckland waterfront may be thwarted by irate fisher[s]... and charter boat operators. They... are determined not to be ejected from their home at the Viaduct Basin and are queuing up to lodge protests against the \$58 m... cup base plan. The fisher[s]... say their 900m of berths is guaranteed in law and they will fight to keep it, while charter boat operators who have already been evicted from Marsden and Hobson wharves... are determined not to be forced further out of the city. The A[RST]... plans... to build a base for the 2000 defence of the cup at the viaduct... do not appear to have provided for the basin's occupants. The waters have been muddied even more by the Auckland City Council, which announced yesterday that it, not the trust, should decide who gets to use the basin waterways. Other contenders for control of the waters are a consortium of... fishing companies and Tramco... which has a conditional deal to buy the land around the viaduct from the Ports of Auckland Ltd. The... Auckland Inshore Commercial Fisher... Association... said what was, after all, "only a boat race" was not worth

the disruption it would cause[to] the city's maritime industries. Not only the fishing boats faced eviction. The host of service industries around the basin would also have to go. If the present users of the area were ejected, there was nowhere on the downtown waterfront where they could be relocated... [T]he head of Moana Pacific, one of Auckland's biggest fishing companies... was confident... the problems could be resolved through negotiation. His company had, however, joined other companies in lodging a claim for water occupation rights to make sure they were not forgotten in the planning process. Fishing companies would take legal action if necessary to protect their rights... [T]he Marine Transport Association, said the needs of the 120 Auckland charter boat operators had been ignored in waterfront planning. The Viaduct Basin was their last hope in the central city. If they were forced to go further out they would lose business. [The] operator... of Sunsail N[Z], said his plans to build a charter boat marina on the city side of the Viaduct Basin had been put in doubt by the America's Cup scheme. [The operator] was granted a resource consent for the 20-berth marina last November but feared that his plans would be stymied by the Port of Auckland's sale of adjacent land to Tramco.

...Less than a year ago we Aucklanders tossed the Alliance majority off the A[RST] for fear they would spend up big at our expense. "Trust us instead," the conservative Citizens and Ratepayers candidates said. "We're not like those congenital spend-thrifts of the Left. We'll squirrel away the region's treasure for a rainy day." But how were we to know the rainy day would arrive almost before [the] Citrat leader... and his team... had time to memorise the combination of the trust's bank vault? Now they're about to shell out... ratepayers' money with an abandon the lefties would never have dreamed possible. And it's all destined to be poured into a big water-filled hole called the Viaduct Basin (not to be confused with Auckland's City's rival Citrat money hole called Britomart Place.) Of course, to be fair, these Citrats are victims of a strange force greater than any they've ever previously encountered. It's called the America's Cup. For... a century this nondescript trophy has been sucking vast sums of money out of the pockets of some of the world's most seriously wealthy business[people]. Now it's reached Auckland and is rapidly getting a taste for Kiwi dollars. I'm sure that's why Team N[Z] chief Sir Peter Blake makes his home half a world away in the South of England. How else to protect his own money from the cup's awesome appetites? But our local politicians are not so cupwise. Like first-timers at Harrah's, they're mesmerised by all the hoopla. It's a sure winner, they cry. Can't lose. We'll get all the ratepayers' money back plus some. In May, [the ARST] team came up with a scheme to build an America's Cup base in the Viaduct Basin for \$38 m... "More, more," cried the cup. So on July 2 the Citrats submitted a \$50 m... scheme, of which the ratepayers were to pay \$25 m... "Not enough," said the cup. So six weeks later the offer had grown to \$57.6 m... of which the ratepayers would pay \$37.6 m... and the taxpayers (us again) would pay another \$10 m... Not to be outdone, Auckland City says it'll chip in an additional \$30 m... to tart up the adjacent land. That's \$77.6 m... of public funds already, just for parking facilities for some boats in a single series of yacht races... years away. All in all, not a bad year's work for a team of politicians elected to protect the region's money. After all, more wasteful politicians might have splurged it on things like regional parks... or... improvements to the creaking sewage system...

The National Government's agenda in 1981 was to convince the nation that sport and politics should be separate. In 1996 the same party can't wait to invest in the economic fallout of the America's Cup. Meanwhile, the money to upgrade our education system is extracted from the Minister of Education... like precious blood from a stone. In a time-honoured N[Z] tradition, brains lose out to brawn as \$10 million of taxpayer money is happily spent on subsidising a yacht race. A fancy luncheon and a smiling minister greet... needy yachties while children are turned away at school gates because of overcrowding. The spinoff for private enterprise from the cup will simply give more clout to those in business, clout which is rarely found behind the education and care of young N[Z]ers. The Government... continues to tell N[Z] that educating future citizens is not a priority... That [i]t... has chosen to bully... and patronise teachers... while courting private enterprise, is a clear indication of their backward priorities. - 1996

[A Team NZ bowperson] has no time on his hands – his prized America's Cup victory watch was stolen from his home on Friday night. [The bowperson] was at a T[eam NZ function]... when his Kohimarama home was burgled and the limited edition Citizen watch was taken. The gold and titanium timepiece... has "No 17 of 500" engraved on its back... [In related news, yesterday t]he Royal N[Z] Yacht Squadron's vice-commodore... and commodore... pack[ed] the battered America's Cup for [its] first-class air trip to London tomorrow for repairs by the jewellers Garrands.

...The [Maori] who attacked the America's Cup... yesterday had his jail term reduced by one year and 10 months. The Court of Appeal quashed the two-year, 10 month term imposed... [by the District Court. The Maori] will serve it once [the offender] has finished an 18-month jail sentence imposed in April for other offending. [The Maori had] appealed... on the grounds that... his sentence... was "manifestly excessive"... The court decision said: "The principal reason given in support of the ground of appeal is the humanitarian or political motivation behind the attack on the cup: [the offender]'s motivations were to him idealistic, moralistic and designed to enhance te tino rangatiratanga (sovereignty) of his people... There were also reasons relating to [the offender]'s personal development."

...The America's Cup, symbol of national pride; smashed... [by an] obsessed citizen who took a mallet to the world's oldest sporting trophy in the name of Maori sovereignty[, has been]... rebuilt, and now [is] touring the country under heavy security. But is it the real thing? "No," says... *Boating* N[Z]: people are queuing up to admire a replica. The claim... has enraged the cup's keeper, the R[NZYS]. The squadron's general manager... laughed when told of the "bloody ridiculous" report. Staff at Garrand's jewellers in London also had a good laugh at any suggestion that they had spent three months repairing a copy. [The general manager] said the security on the cup, which is today on display in Taupo and moves to Napier on Monday, was the best available and had cost Team N[Z] sponsor WestpacTrust thousands... "They wouldn't be doing that for a replica."

...The rebuilt America's Cup finally has a new bullet-proof, hammer-proof, alarmed glass home. But you will be privileged if you ever get to see it. Eight months after the silver ewer was battered by a [Maori] wielding a sledgehammer in the R[NZYS] headquarters at Westhaven, a new German-built case has arrived in Auckland. The heavy glass display cabinet now sits on the exact spot where the attack occurred. It was lifted into the room by crane. After four months of restoration work in London costing £20,000 ([plus 'first-class return airfares from Auckland to London for the cup – which had its own seat – and its two RNZYS minders'), followed by a tour round the country], the cup is now waiting in a downtown Auckland bank vault for the alarm and lighting systems to be wired... Heavily laminated, non-reflective glass is used on all four sides of the case, which has 36 lights around the base where the cup will sit, and a mirror in its ceiling. The squadron paid an undisclosed sum to a German company... which makes display cases for the world's rare treasures... The commodore of the squadron... said viewing of the cup would now be "by appointment only." ...The room where the cup will be kept is about to get a revamp, too. The squadron and Team N[Z]... approached architecture students from the Auckland Institute of Technology to design a modern, museum-type "America's Cup room." Meanwhile, the Government has introduced legislation aimed at crowd control on the water during the cup defence.

...Firefighters from Auckland's city station[who] initiated the high-angle rescue team, which was in the public eye for the first time... when team members abseiled to the rescue of two trapped maintenance workers... atop Auckland's Sky Tower are... [now] focusing on a new proposal, a fully equipped fire rescue vessel which could help spectator and racing boats that get into trouble on the Hauraki Gulf during the America's Cup. Their forward thinking has won praise from Fire Service management, but whether the service comes to the party with money is yet to be decided... The estimated cost was \$350,000 which [firefighters] hoped the emergency services and sponsorship would cover... [T]housands of boats were expected on the gulf during the America's Cup and emergencies were bound to happen. "It won't be a question of whether boats sink but how many... [I]f you have rescues underwater you need as quick a response as possible to save a life." ...many firefighters were already experienced divers but they

would need specialised training. There was also a proposal to set up a confined-space rescue unit as an “add-on” to the high-angle rescue team... [Authorities] plan to impose a 12-knot speed limit on Auckland Harbour and crack down on drunken boaties during the America’s Cup.

...*Madness on the water: how can it be stopped... and who will foot the bill?* ...The regatta venue is closer to a substantial population base than any previous cup clash – within easy reach of 80,000 boats. As Auckland’s Volunteer Coastguard Service manager... puts it, this is the first cup setting where spectators can paddle out on a tractor tyre... Police and race organisers face the daunting prospect of coping with a floating city of more than 100,000 people during the America’s Cup... [T]heir powers on the water may be extended by new legislation later this year. Police plan to discourage drunkenness on Auckland harbour by having officers breathtest skippers as they leave public boat launching ramps. Officers in patrol boats will be on the lookout for “boat rage” and drunken driving... Suggestions of spectator-laden barges being anchored near the cup course have set alarm bells ringing at the prospect of mobile grandstands overturning... The Auckland Regional Council intends to supply three or four 8m RHIBs to swell the number of patrol boats... At least 20 patrol boats will be needed to prevent chaos among spectators... The Navy and coastguard may be asked to assist too, although the latter organisation prefers rescue missions rather than crowd control tasks. Police had 262 officers coping with cup spectators at Fremantle 10 years ago. On the spot training for them began two years out from the event... But... police here apparently believe they can manage with a rostered, specially trained team of 150 officers. The police budget for the 1999-2000 cup, which will be spread over five months or more depending on the number of eventual challengers, is likely to exceed \$9 million. For the Auckland team to start training now, the police would need a further \$4 million. ARC staff thought about setting a minimum size for spectator boats but decided against the idea because of policing difficulties and civil rights issues... Any move by the ARC to introduce standard boat identification and registration – \$30 has been mentioned as a possible fee – is likely to meet resistance from many boaties... The proposed 12-knot speed limit – applying from the Viaduct Basin and west of Brown’s Island to the racetrack – will be two knots faster than that imposed off San Diego where Team N[Z] lifted the Auld Mug... [The harbourmaster] envisages scores of marker buoys being laid to set out lanes, exclusion zones and restricted areas to separate spectator craft and commercial ships from those directly involved in the challenger and defender series... Safety worries mean pilots will face strict rules when flying over the America’s Cup course and the Viaduct Basin. Civil Aviation authorities insist that aircraft permitted over the zones will carry observers charged with ensuring no collisions occur. Helicopters rather than fixed-wing aircraft will probably dominate the inner Hauraki Gulf skies... Most syndicates are expected to hire helicopters to monitor their race progress. Other helicopters will provide television and other media coverage. Estimates of helicopter numbers each raceday vary from 10 to 100, depending on the importance of events on the surface below... Council planners[also] fear the... regatta will bring even more traffic problems to the Whangaparaoa Peninsula.

...A rich Singaporean business[person] is the driving force behind the transformation of a prime piece of real estate north of Auckland... The Whangaparaoa Peninsula development, a 40-minute drive... [from] Auckland and framed by the Hauraki Gulf... will contain a mixture of villas, apartments and waterfront homes, many with their own boat moorings, a boutique hotel, shops, cafes... [It already contains] a golf country club... A school and a retirement village will be added later. Even now, Gulf Harbour has become the “in” place to be with a constant stream of weekend sightseers. Gulf Harbour is actually owned by three [Singaporeans – the] business tycoon... with a \$500 million stake... [is] the major shareholder... When [the tycoon] first saw the site in 1992, [the tycoon] was decisive. “Just get it,” [the tycoon] told an offside. “Don’t even bargain. If we lose this, we will regret it.” The site was put into receivership when its previous owner... went bankrupt during the recession. It had been extensively advertised for 10 months throughout N[Z], AUS, the US] and South East Asia, but attracted little local interest because of the struggling economy. By that time, \$54 million had been invested... in... the then 959-berth marina... [The tycoon] and his partners paid \$17.5 million, and over the years, have... turned Gulf Harbour into a Mediterranean-style development modelled on Portofino in Italy and Port Grimaud in the south of France... [The tycoon] spent the first 12 years of his life in a \$3-a-month rented room with his parents, three sisters and a brother. During the Japanese Occupation, his father was jobless, his mother was washing laundry, and his sister was selling soon kway (a Chinese rice noodle cake). The future tycoon] completed only primary education at a Chinese school, then went to Malaysia to help his brother-in-law sell fishing nets. Later, [the future tycoon] tried his hand at producing aerated water, but the business went bust... then became an apprentice at a hardware store. In 1949, [the future tycoon] bought barrels of paint cheaply from the British army and created his own brand... The following year the Korean War started, and with imports severely restricted, [his] paint business boomed. In 1961, [the tycoon] went into a joint venture with Nippon of Osaka, a major paint company... The oil crisis in 1973 forced up paint prices since they contained solvents made from crude oil. “My fortune was built from these two events – the Korean War and the oil embargo. I was lucky,”... Despite his wealth, his Singaporean office is spartan, decorated with lacquered furniture, plastic flowers and a map of the world. The White Rabbit 2 is his only conspicuous extravagance. The \$56 million... 50-metre, four-deck... piece of floating luxury... requires up to \$1 million... a year to keep it shipshape. The yacht has visited N[Z] twice and will be coming again... [when Auckland hosts the America’s Cup. Speaking of which, t]he America’s Cup village has nailed its first sponsorship – to the tune of \$500,000. The money... from Ports of Auckland Ltd... which is 80[%] owned by the... [ARST,] came... out of a... \$2.1 million... purchase payment by the developer, the A[RST], for part of the basin for the cup village. The... trust’s plan entails a new wharf to replace the Western Viaduct built 150m further into the Waitemata Harbour, as well as reclamations within the basin, the creation of an island for public viewing and corporate sponsors’ tents, and another new wharf off Hobson Wharf.

...The rich and famous will be able to berth their luxury yachts in a marina planned for downtown Auckland during the America’s Cup defence. Ports of Auckland will build a permanent marina with up to 30 berths on the western side of Hobson Wharf, catering for local charter boats and private craft of up to 40m... [T]he development would cost several million dollars. International rates for such large berths were \$5 to \$20 a metre a day... The company would aim to charge at the lower end of the scale. The marina will be built opposite the America’s Cup village being developed in the Viaduct Basin and will consist of interconnecting pontoons restrained by piles in the seabed. A floating walkway will run around its edge. A spokes[person] for the Marine Transport Association... said charter boat operators had long seen a need for a central base visible to tourists. Auckland charter boats were [currently] based in marinas all over the region. “We will be able to market the base and combine advertising.” ...Building is expected to start early next year... [and] will take up to nine months to complete.

...Early indications are that between 40 and 70 mega yachts – virtually small ships from 35m to 80m long – will make Auckland their main destination for the America’s Cup summer of 1999. Some will have their own helicopters. Auckland and N[Z] cannot afford the embarrassment of inadequate amenities for this fleet of foreign-flagged boats... That’s a view shared by marine industry planners who have spent months getting to grips with the implications of events in 1999 and 2000. As one observer put it: “If they are not provided for, they won’t come.” The presence of such craft in Auckland and N[Z] waters is likely to have substantial economic impact. Their owners are very, very wealthy. Their passengers are known to be big spenders... “Guests would pay [a total of] \$US50,000 to \$US100,000 a week to charter these boats.” ...The boating industry expects to benefit handsomely from repair and maintenance contracts. Aucklanders in touch with luxury vessel skippers and agents say the owners, who normally alternate their on-board time between the Mediterranean and the Caribbean and both coasts of the U[S], are looking for new “playgrounds.” With Auckland hosting the cup series, the new millennium in the regatta’s midst and the Sydney Olympics being held later in 2000, the South Pacific beckons. Owners and agents of mega yachts tend to plan their global navigation at least two years in advance. Most of the cup challenger syndicates say they want at least two mega yacht sites available for their supporters and sponsors... Auckland charter company Thirty Seven South Ltd plans to bring at least five mega yachts to the harbour for the cup regatta... and... the Fort Lauderdale-based company United Yacht Transport is interested in ferrying large boats to the South Pacific... Anticipating berthage space demand for charter boats and private craft

up to 40m... Ports of Auckland... has announced plans to build a marina for 30 on the western side of Hobson Wharf... Bayswater Marina Ltd has nine berths for 32m to 45m yachts... City Marina Ltd, a charter boat company with rights to 96m of the Viaduct Basin's edge in the midst of cup syndicate bases... plans to spend \$2 million developing its... dock space for six charter mega yachts as well as eight other vessels from 15m to 25m long. Developers are understood to be eyeing the possibilities of a 10-berth mega yacht marina on the western side of Princess Wharf for which resource consent already exists. Such a structure would have to be substantial enough to withstand buffeting winds and tides in a fairly exposed part of the harbour... [A]n... Auckland city councillor who met mega yacht agents in Monaco recently, said: "What I see as a major problem for Auckland is our 12-foot rise and fall in the tide. Therefore any area we designate as suitable has to have a floating platform. The floating pontoons have to be strong enough to cope..." ...Cup Village plans [also] provide berths for eight to 10 mega yachts on the northern side of the new island to be created in the Viaduct Basin. That number will double if the go-ahead is given to dredge the... sandstone hump off the island's southern flank.

...The Department of Conservation has leased out a chunk of Auckland seabed... The A[RST] has a 99-year lease on 1.7ha of seabed at the Viaduct Basin, which will be reclaimed for the village development. The D[oC] said the viability of the lease had to take into account Maori treaty claims. If one of the seven Auckland iwi makes a successful application to the Waitangi Tribunal, the seabed could be given to the trust and the iwi would receive alternative compensation... [In another development, t]he Gulf Harbour Marina's plans to provide bases for America's Cup syndicates got off to a flying start yesterday when approval was given for massive earthworks. The Whangaparaoa Peninsula – on the doorstep of the... regatta course – proposes a \$9 million... development. Deep channels will be dredged for giant luxury yachts and up to four syndicate bases and a fuel jetty... The Hibiscus Coast area committee of the Rodney District Council... cleared the way for the work, imposing[a] special noise level and requiring the removal of bases after the cup challenge. The committee approved the work without public notification and neighbours' approvals. However, permits were notified for coastal works... Three objections had been received by the deadline on Wednesday.

...The America's Cup is losing some of its lustre in... this country... The cup was losing its lustre for me from the day that [the team's leader] declared the defence would be a Team N[Z] monopoly and decided that challenging syndicates should all be berthed in a central development, the bulk of the cost... to be born by ratepayers or taxpayers. It had crossed my mind that too many of the logos on Black Magic at San Diego were producer boards or state corporations but I wanted to believe the cup was... frivolous capitalism, a plaything of private enterprise, an amoral competition of high finance, rule-bending and technology, not sport. But [the team leader]'s designs for the defence would not wait for market-led investment. They bore no relation to the kind of economy N[Z] is today. No domestic syndicate may contest Team N[Z]'s ability to mount the best defence. No marina, of which there are plenty around the harbour and gulf, [will be allowed to provide] the most efficient facilities with the best chance of sustainable returns after the regatta... because [the defender]'s team, with their victory spawning hubris, was set upon a base where syndicates that had previously guarded their design secrets like gold would work cosily alongside one another. The international yachting fraternity could turn the carnival into a sporting event, which might be nice but it might not be the America's Cup. Nor will it be profitable. We know that because no commercial investor, not even the Ports of Auckland Ltd, would finance [the team leader]'s vision in the Viaduct Basin. The A[RST] will stand the risk. Confirmation of the follies of public finance in such projects came this week. [The team leader]'s people always scorned the notion that diverse marinas could cater adequately for challenging syndicates. Gulf Harbour[, which]... reports that it has been approached by a number of prospective challengers looking for an alternative to the prices being asked for berths in the basin... has just surprised them... The trust could have decided to cut its losses when it realised private enterprise might provide. But... [the] trust has cut a deal with Gulf Harbour under which they will not compete. From Gulf Harbour's point of view that was wise. You can't compete with public finance because it is more easily forgiven when it loses money and can easily undercut you... Your money and mine, at the disposal of the trust, will promote the private marina's new facilities along with the Viaduct Basin. And this is just the beginning... But let's hear it for [the] District Court Judge... who... g[a]ve... a sentence that befits the embarrassment [one Maori citizen] brought to us, or some of us. Not since the African boycott of the Montreal Olympics have I felt such national shame. Most international media had never noticed that we had the cup, but they noticed on March 15. Thankfully they didn't pick up the talk from too many [NZers] that really it was only a cup and, much worse, the scarcely stifled satisfaction of those who had always resented the country's rapture in a rich [person's] toy – the same people, perhaps, who were humiliated in 1988 when a NZ merchant banker mounted a successful courtroom challenge to take on the cup holders in an exclusive competition (i.e., one which excluded other challengers) using a huge and expensive monohulled yacht it had built; then felt immense satisfaction when, after losing in the courtroom, the defender's built a multihulled yacht and made no contest of beating the merchant banker on the water (the merchant banker also helped fund NZ's unsuccessful attempt to win the cup in 1992).]

...The proposed America's Cup office has had its brief broadened... [to include] events from early 1999 to 2001, rather than just the America's Cup... and its budget slashed... The new office's budget is \$2.3 million over four years. Its key role is to ensure that Auckland gets the maximum benefit from the events. It will employ six staff to coordinate public and private sector groups and be the contact point for business inquiries from event promoters, America's Cup racing syndicates, owners of visiting "super yachts" and other visitors. It has been approved by the Auckland Mayoral Forum but the North Shore City and Papakura District councils are sticking to their decisions... not to give any money. The Mayor of Papakura... yesterday reiterated that the public was already putting enough into the America's Cup...

As the city gears up for the razzmatazz of the America's Cup and millennium celebrations, pressure... to secure sponsorship... is mounting on dozens of... national and international events scheduled to take place in Auckland over the next three years... Events yet to secure deals include the World Offshore Powerboat Championships... [a] week-long event, which will be attended by teams from... 30 countries, [that] is expected to cost... \$2 million to run... The... Millennium Golf Tournament, which is being billed as the richest golf purse ever offered in... [NZ –] \$3 million in prize money[–] which will need to be met by sponsors... Local sponsors have yet to be signed up for... the... \$3 million... FIFA Under-17 World Soccer C[up]... According to a brochure issued by Tourism Auckland this week, sponsors have also yet to be confirmed for the World Series Jetsprinting[(following calls 'to get away from using facilities for a single motor-sport', 'a NZ speedway track has temporarily been filled with 10 million litres of water so jetsprints, jet skis and other boats can race there; jetsprints burn 9lt of high octane fuel in the minute it takes to do two laps of the course')], World 470 Class Championships (both in February 1999), ITU Triathlon World Cup (March or April annually), and the Rally of N[Z] (August annually). Local events... looking for sponsors include the Auckland Cup, Symphony Under the Stars, the Boat Show, the Hero Parade, the Devonport Food and Wine Festival, the Auckland International Waterfront Festival, and the Ellerslie Flower Show... [In addition, the] organisers of the America's Cup are... looking for two more major sponsors. Team N[Z]'s costs are already covered by an existing "Family of Five" sponsorship deal with Steinlager, Toyota, TVNZ, Lotto and Telecom. However, another... \$60 million is estimated to be needed to cover the cost of staging the five-month long event.

...America's Cup base chiefs have thwarted a revolt by 17 multinational syndicates... after a dash to New York by two... America's Cup Village representatives. The chief executive... and... the company's sponsorship consultant, set out a new base pricing structure. The revised prices are confidential but include incentives to sign by next month. Originally \$750,000 was asked for. [The chief executive] said his visit had been a damage control exercise to counter criticism of Auckland and a perception that syndicates could be ripped off here... About 40 syndicate delegates in the New York Yacht Club rooms were initially hostile. [The chief executive] found himself having to counter claims such as accommodation in Auckland was at a premium, the inner city had no gymnasiums and that a winding up of the A[RST] might affect the cup event. "Some syndicates were thinking of going to places like Hawaii where it's more expensive and staying there until a month beforehand... They were genuinely

concerned that this [regatta] is not going to proceed because of false information that has been spread. I am relieved we got there when we did.” Four of the nine syndicates which met the Aucklanders for private sessions after the meeting were interested in signing up for... Viaduct development... bases in the next few weeks. [NYYC] members were among the four.

...JANUARY 31 is the next important cutoff point for potential America's Cup challengers. [18] syndicates are paid up cup entrants but there are already whisperings of likely casualties. However, [the]America's Cup Challenge Association president... [has] not been told of anyone pulling out[– though it wouldn't] expect to hear anything until the end of January when the syndicates are required to pay a \$400,000 bond. “In past America's Cups, the bond has been a hurdle which some of the teams haven't met.” The bond firms up syndicates' commitment, meaning organisers of the challengers series can be more certain of fleet numbers when they are negotiating for sponsorship... [E]ven though a team posts the bond, it does not mean it will race in Auckland in 1999. Meanwhile, [the]... Government has been accused of risking big selling opportunities overseas because... [it]s America's Cup task force... has been slow to get organised... The director of the[]NZ Trade Centre... has had little feedback on a bid to make the centre a platform to promote N[Z]-made products... The task force is entrusted, among other things, with promoting trade and tourism during the event... So far no details have been released on how funds allocated for trade promotion will be channelled... [The director] had written to the task force proposing that it consider using the trade centre's facilities... The privately run trade centre is located on the waterfront – in place to be the city's export showpiece during the America's Cup... It has on permanent display some 200 companies and receives an average of 50 visits a day... The office of the Minister for Sports, Fitness and Leisure... who is the interim chair[perso]n of the... task force, confirmed the letter had been received. It said the task force was still at the initial stages of setting up... The letter would be referred to the task force and... be considered later.

...Auckland... would be ready for the... America's Cup... series in 1999-2000... says the new chair[perso]n of the cup taskforce... The former chief executive of... Challenge Paper, who... resigned... in November after 27 years with the company... takes up the role in February... However... the... 45-year-old, who is married with three children... admitted it would be a challenge ensuring that all parties involved in the defence came together to optimise their interests... [The 45-year-old] takes over from the Minister of Tourism... who has been interim chair[perso]n since the taskforce was established by the [PM]'s Millennium Board in July... [The new chairperson] has an active interest in sports management and is governor and executive board member of the Sports Foundation[, and] is also on the board of Mercury Energy and Metrowater.

...Auckland travel company Creative Cruising is bringing one of the world's most prestigious cruise liners to the City of Sails for the America's Cup. The ship... is available because her operator... will have her in this part of the world for millennium celebrations. The liner, at 16,800 tons and 155.8m long, carries 296 guests in 148 luxury suites, all of which look on to the ocean. Creative Cruising is bringing her to Auckland as a floating corporate showcase and luxury entertainment platform for the racing... [The ship] will also be used to promote N[Z] wine and food and will feature local entertainment.

...The financial spin-off to the city from the America's Cup could be as high as \$800 m... a new... \$30,000... economic study predicts... The report notes its conclusions are “broadly in line” with a... study conducted for the A[RST]... last year which indicated the regional economic impact could be about \$600 m... Using “multiplier” figures, the study calculates the “ripple effects” through the regional economy of: • Building the cup village (\$58 m...), • Racing syndicates' spending here in the 1999-2000 series (estimate – \$200 m...), • The increased tourism the event will generate (estimated value – \$110 m... from a 5[%] increase...), • Intangibles such as... international exposure (estimate – \$100 m...). The equivalent of between 4200 and 6800 jobs are [also] expected to be created as a result of the yacht races... [– adding an estimated \$140 m to] \$220 m... of... wages...

The America's Cup... may not be the financial bonanza [NZers] expect, according to an international expert on major sports events. The vice-president of the [US] firm Economics Research Associates... yesterday told members of the [local] tourist industry to be cautious about prospects of what people would spend when they visited N[Z] in 1999 and 2000. In a speech at the Tourism Conference in Christchurch, [the vice-president] said his company had assessed the economic spin-off from many sports events and it was not always good news. Some Los Angeles restaurants closed during the 1984 Olympics because they did not get the customers. Nor did the city's hotels do as well as expected. The... academics had predicted that the America's Cup in San Diego would bring in \$US911 m... in fact the 1995 races brought in less than a third of that. But his caution was shrugged off by the executive director of Team N[Z]... who said the America's Cup would be huge for... [NZ. But] the deputy chief executive of the Tourism Board... said [the] advice was timely. It was important not to put too much into a short-term investment... [The new chief executive] of the America's Cup village is [also] sceptical about the expectations of the financial spinoffs the challenge will generate for [NZ]... However... the chief executive... said... the America's Cup village... company, a subsidiary of the A[RST], had sponsorship commitments for... half of the \$10 m... target... from both [local] and overseas companies... None of the 19 yachting syndicates lined up for the cup races had yet signed up for one of the 11 bases to be built at the... Viaduct Basin... but negotiations were “proceeding quite well.” ...one of his first tasks since being appointed last week would be to set up an office at the... basin... Dredges are now deepening parts of the basin. The mud and sediment, some of it contaminated with heavy metals, is mixed with cement to form “mud-crete” and used to fill the reclamations... The cement seals in the contaminants... The first task... was to bless the... site... “We pray that [God] will guard and guide and encourage all who work here, all who are part of this great endeavour.”

...The A[RST] is bracing itself to lose... on its America's Cup base facilities... When... the project's cost was... unveiled last year, [the]... trust expected to get its money back through the operation and eventual sale of the... Viaduct Basin... facilities – although its chair[perso]n... acknowledged in February that it might wear a small loss. Now, the directors of the subsidiary company handling the development have indicated a possible \$12 million net shortfall to the trust on the company's wind up. The forecast tarnishes the sale and purchase agreement for America's Cup Village Ltd, which legally took over the project from the trust yesterday... [■ Fears] of traffic chaos during the America's Cup challenge will delay resurfacing of the Auckland Harbour Bridge... Work on laying a special polyurethane coating on the bridge's two-lane western and eastern clip-ons was to be completed by early 1998. Despite two years of work and disruption to thousands of motorists, the programme is only 40[%] complete. The NZ Herald learned last night that Transit[]NZ now] was not expecting the work to be completed until the 2000/2001 holiday season. - 1997

Auckland City ratepayers will help to bankroll a free inner-city bus service for the America's Cup – but the regional transport kitty may be off limits. The A[RC]... has agreed to put out a tender for bus company's to run an inner-city loop between Queen St and the America's Cup Village... A free service, with buses running every 10 minutes to link inner-city car parks and businesses with the village, would cost up to \$145,000. It is planned for October[1999 to March 2000], partly to overcome a shortage of parking near the cup village.

...Stagecoach has won a tender to operate double-decker buses up Queen St. The A[RC], with Auckland City, will help pay for the service, designed to help people get to the America's Cup Village. It is expected to cost 50c a ride, with two buses running a loop every 10 minutes. [Now that the problem of parking near the cup village has been partly overcome, perhaps the councils will get serious about trying to overcome the shortage of moorings for superboats near the cup village (which would have the potential to help with the *shortage of hotel rooms* in Auckland during the cup series.)

...With a wave of the public relations wand, the Devonport Naval Base has been magically transformed into “Devonport Cove.” The stodgy old name has been swept aside... for the America's Cup – along with memories of toxic paint waste and limping vessels. At a boat show in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Babcock N[Z] has promoted space at the “cove” to superyacht owners and secured two bookings. Babcock is seeking Auckland City Council approval to create 20 superyacht berths in a leased area near Stanley Bay... Part of the base would be fenced off and “tarted up”...

Superyachts – the ultimate status symbol of the world’s wealthy – are set to flood into Auckland’s waters next year. The America’s Cup Village said yesterday that it had all but filled the 80 berths set aside for the 25-60m luxury vessels at the Viaduct Basin. It had taken... 50 non-refundable deposits of \$35,000, and had another 30 bookings, some for up to six months. If all the Auckland berths are taken, the owners of the motor and sail boats, who include Middle-Eastern royalty and American billionaires, may moor in Devonport or on the Whangaparaoa Peninsula... [O]ne American business[person]... worth \$4 b... was bringing 292 “key employees” of his company for three months. The staff would continue running the company from Auckland hotels, using the internet and telecommunications... The Government is keen to make hay while the big boys are in town. Trade officials will try to convince the boat-owners to invest in local properties and businesses. A TradeNZ spokes[person]... said it was a more subtle process than just setting up meetings with the owners. “To use the New York expression, you have to start schmoozing with them and develop a relationship.” Most boats... are crewed by a staff of about 10, including cooks, waiters and sailors... Most... will be the private playgrounds of the owners – although the village is expecting one or two to be available for Aucklanders to charter... But chartering one advertised superyacht, the 58m Princess Tanya, would set you back \$350,000 a week – more than the average Auckland home is worth. The [9]-cabin Princess Tanya comes fitted with a spa-pool, gym, sauna, beauty salon complete with beautician and hairdresser, sailing dinghy... windsurfers, water-skis, jet-skis, wave-runners, satellite navigation and air-conditioning. Optional extras on other yachts include helicopters, roll-on cars, casinos and small nightclubs. One Asian owner coming to the cup has asked the village for space to park four Harley Davidson motorbikes. The village chief executive... said N[Z] had never before catered to the types of people that would come over on the boats... [T]he yachts had become the playthings of the world’s richest people in the 1990s, after private planes lost their attraction. The problem with planes... was they lay hidden away at airports and could not be shown off. But... boats were on display close to the centre of town and could easily be used to impress and entertain guests... P&O Services and McKay Shipping have jointly won the contract to service the boats... “If they want Danish butter for breakfast, we will bring it in. If they want fruit and flowers at four in the morning, we will make sure its done.” ...the village would charge owners \$1000 a day to moor their boats.

...America’s Cup Village Ltd this week announced an increase in berthage charges of 36[%] for... the inner Viaduct Basin, for six months from January 1[, 1999]. No figures have been set beyond June 30... Charter boat... owners fear that much larger price increases during the cup racing could push them out, or force them to raise fares so that race viewing is beyond the reach of ordinary N[Z]ers. A group of six charter boat operators will go to the Environment Court to clarify an earlier court statement which said the inner basin was for the use, in the first instance, of charter boats, ferries and tourist boats. The village operator has told the owners they have no long-term right to operate from the inner basin. The cup village chief executive... said: “These people are squatting here, and somehow they think they have a commercial right. They have no rights, they have no licence.” The... [chief executive] said no charges had been set for the charter boats during the cup... [but] the village was happy to accommodate the owners during the cup, as long as they were prepared to pay the going market rates... [The person] who operates the charter boat American Eagle... feared A[CVL] planned to increase his berthage charge by up to 12 times the present rate during cup racing... [to] force him and other charter boat operators out, so high-paying superyachts could take their place. A further price rise would mean... hav[ing] to double... his present charge of around \$50 a head for charter tours... The [chief executive said the] ideal solution would be for the charter boats to move 50m over into the Hobson Wharf, where they already had signed berthage contracts with Ports of Auckland Ltd... [But the operator said that] was tantamount to asking a Queen St retailer to trade from somewhere else during Christmas. Hobson Wharf was unsuitable for passengers disembarking in bad weather. If there was space there, it should be used for superyachts. The court is expected to hear the application early next year.

...CONSTRUCTION was a fortnight behind schedule when [the project supervisor] joined the Village team in late June, 1997. Scary considering it had been going only two months. His solution was simple – put the contract between Village management and [Challenge] Construction in the bottom draw. “We said to them that instead of putting huge penalties on you for overrunning, and in turn you try to protect yourself by claiming for this delay, that delay, and everything that holds you up, we’ll put the contract aside, pay you to speed up and offer a results-based incentive... Everybody, including the subcontractors, started to look at it differently. The contract envisaged a five-day week. Most of the time we worked six, sometimes seven. The weather wasn’t great but good equipment was used and productivity rates were high...” The chief objective was to... double... the harbour[’s]... depth and width. Sandstone beneath the water’s surface was the major obstacle... “There was a lump of sandstone in the water so large, seagulls would walk on it in low tide. It cost an extra \$1.5 million to remove it. The amount of sandstone dredged out would have made an Egyptian pyramid.” The rubbish found beneath the water was hardly pleasant. “We found lots of old logs (a log farm operated there up to May 1997), bits of old barges and boats that had sunk or been dumped, car bodies, old steam engines, hundreds of tyres, and old car batteries, which created high acidity levels in some parts of the water.” For half a century the region was a rundown semi-industrial area. Aucklanders used it as an uncontrolled dumping ground. It continued right up to the 1970s when N[Z]ers finally woke up to the damage it was causing the environment.

...The [person] who controls the public’s \$85 million contribution to the America’s Cup has resigned suddenly without explanation... almost a year before his contract expires[, although the person who]... was based in the U[S] as head of B[IL] operations in] North America... for seven years, before returning to N[Z]... in 1995... would continue to be available as a consultant... [S]ources say there have been irreconcilable tensions between [the ACVL chief executive] on one side and Team N[Z] and Infrastructure Auckland on the other. The chair[person] of the village board... had no successor in mind but would seek a new chief executive immediately.

...ACVL... staff came under close scrutiny yesterday by anxious Infrastructure Auckland bosses in the wake of Wednesday’s shock departure of the village chief executive... [N]ot only... is... [ACVL] without a chief executive, but its contract with the naming sponsor American Express remains unsigned. While the village PR machine is quick to dispel rumours of on-going management difficulties and sponsorship concerns, city leaders are becoming increasingly concerned at ratepayers \$87.5 million exposure in the village... [Furthermore,] American Cup Village suppliers have concerns with the village management but were reluctant to air them for fear of being shut out of lucrative contracts. “It’s not a village, it’s a telephone box,” one supplier said. “I’ve never seen anyone alienate the corporate community and sponsors as much as ACVL management,” another supplier said[, although the] ACVL public relations manager... dismissed the claims... Recent evidence, however, points to mounting concerns with village entertainment as one of the biggest stumbling blocks since [ACVL and AMEX] announced a partnership... last year. Despite AMEX’s worldwide promotion of its village yacht club and a top entertainment lineup, *The Daily News* understands the village has halved its entertainment budget and all but abandoned its planned international entertainment programme. Failure to secure the Maritime Museum as an additional AMEX venue, coupled with ACVL’s failure to gain consent to build a stage and grandstand within the village has also caused friction between ACVL and AMEX... It was also revealed at yesterday’s America’s Cup Taskforce meeting that the cup security budget had doubled, despite a predicted fall in public attendance. It is understood the budget increase comes on the heels of police concerns they could not guarantee security for superyachts and those staying within the compound.

...Alcohol Healthwatch says Auckland police have “rolled over like pups” by endorsing all-night drinking... [at] the Viaduct Basin... [A Healthwatch spokesperson] says there were problems outside Sky City casino when its bars were open all night and the bar hours there had since been cut... The Liquor Licensing Authority is at present hearing an application by four bars located in the basin that want 24-hour licences.

...Four waterfront bars near the America’s Cup village will be allowed to stay open 24 hours. But hospitality will be strictly indoors from 10 pm Sunday to Thursday and from 11 pm on Friday and Saturday... [By the way, a] Telecom cellphone tower is to share space with some of the world’s most endangered birds on Tiritiri Matangi Island in the Hauraki Gulf so boaties can use their mobile phones during America’s Cup races. The

popular visitor destination, which volunteers spent 10 years re-foresting to restore habitats for N[Z]'s rarest birds, has won international fame as an open wildlife sanctuary and scientific reserve. But the Rodney District Council decided a resource consent required for the 15m tower did not need public consultation... The deal meant Telecom will pay the Crown for use of the site. The D[oC] will recover only its costs... A number of conditions would protect wildlife, and Telecom would upgrade roading on the island... [However, the] Auckland Conservation Board is annoyed it was not consulted about the tower either by the council or the D[oC. A]... member of the board, Auckland's statutory public watchdog on conservation issues, said it was a case of a cartel with multimillion-dollar backing bringing pressure to bear. Telecom had [also] been rude and arrogant in correspondence to the board... [Furthermore,] Telecom had ruled Tiritiri Matangi was the only technically feasible site for the tower without stating whether it had investigated other sites[, and] has provided insufficient information on possible effects of radio frequency radiation on the reproductive systems of wildlife such as the little spotted kiwi.

...The AmericaOne team worried that someone would sabotage the N[Z]-made weather buoy they have been using in the middle of the America's Cup course in the Hauraki Gulf... [to] record... wind and wave data... since they signed up [as a challenger]... The \$250,000 buoy, owned by the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research... has been badly damaged by vandals who removed covers, cut wiring and smashed solar panels. Not only is it no longer working, its beacon light is broken, making it a navigational hazard. Police hope to take fingerprints from the buoy and from a screwdriver found in the wreckage. AmericaOne... – ...[whose skipper won after] being 1-3 down... in the challenger final of 1992 against N[Z –] ...paid Niwa \$220,000 for exclusive rights to data from the buoy... At the time, the deal was controversial because it was seen to disadvantage [the '85-member' Team NZ] against one of the big challengers... Niwa... said it would cost \$50,000 to repair the buoy. But it cannot be removed from the water until strong winds, which have pounded the gulf for the past week, subside... [□ '11 challengers have now confirmed their entry for] the Louis Vuitton Cup[series, including '5 from the US' (with 'New York's Young America syndicate having a budget of \$NZ80m – second only to Italy's')] Prada...

The America's Cup is self-indulgent self-play by a minority of rich white guys and it beggars belief that the rest of us have to pay for it. Why did taxpayer-built TVNZ, Lotto and Telecom pour millions into the cup on the spurious grounds that it attracts tourists, attracts boatbuilding orders and attracts interest in our little country at the bottom of the world? Last campaign, we were subjected to Eskimos paddling canoes with television sets balanced on the bow, Indians walking the highlands with TVs atop their turbans. Give me a break – if they did have television in either place, the last thing they'd be watching would have been a no-account elitist yacht race from the other side of the world. Move outside San Diego and even the people of the country that gives the cup its name don't know what it is. The other original racers, England, have just come back into the fold after an absence of many years... If the Sirs from Lipton to... the clothiers from Prada to Louis Vuitton, [as well as] the world giants of computer technology want to burn on a yacht race amounts that could save the starving of a sizeable African nation, that's their prerogative. Why are the rest of us expected to blindly bow down and follow? ...If it's so good at raising money, so brilliant for international exposure, why aren't private companies, multi-national corporates into it? Is the cup bill the reason Lion Nathan's Steinlager sells at around \$35 a slab while Aussie opposite Carlton United manages to sail its Victoria Bitter over here to sell around \$5 cheaper? ...Why not sell the cup, lock, stock and start-gun-barrel competition? The proceeds would buy plenty of children's educational TV and quality drama for the state broadcaster, pay for suitable programmes to help gamblers with Lotto or other addictions[ironically, 'organisers are upset that the TAB is planning to take bets on America's Cup races for the first time in the cup's history')], and allow an upgrade of telecommunication services... The world hasn't heard of the America's Cup. A Canadian... sports sociologist... based at Otago University since 1991... believes only in a country as isolated as N[Z], whose world view was until recently shaped by one television company, could a group of rich sponsors so successfully manufacture and sell such a non-event.

...*History of the Cup*... 1851 – ...AS QUEEN Victoria... watched the 30 m schooner America leave 14 British boats in its wake around the Isle of Wight from the Royal Yacht, Victoria and Albert, [the Queen] asked one of her advisers, "Who came second?" [The adviser] replied: "Madam, there is no second." The Queen was not amused. At stake was the 100 Guinea Cup trophy, made by the Queen's silversmith. The race followed the first World Fair in London which proved the catalyst for the event. American clipper ships and pilot boats had proved popular at the fair and were regarded as the most seaworthy and speedy craft in the world. Encouraged by its reputation, [a] New York business[person] persuaded John Stevens, Commodore of the recently formed New York Yacht Club, to form a syndicate and commission a yacht to compete against Britain's Royal Yacht Squadron for money. The British were prepared to only put up their cup. Skippered by William Brown, America strolled home 14km clear of the first British boat, Aurora. The cup was heading to the N[YYC] and was renamed the America's Cup, where it would remain for 132 years... FOR SIX YEARS, the trophy had been in the homes of various syndicate members. It was even suggested to melt it down to make commemorative medals. But George Schuyler, the youngest member of the syndicate, returned it to the N[YYC], stating his desire to see the cup at stake for regular international challenges... TWO DECADES and an American Civil War later, Britain was ready to stage another challenge... or so it thought. Ambitious socialite James Ashbury challenged the N[YYC] with a schooner named Cambria. It performed poorly against the American fleet, finishing 10th, 40 minutes behind the winner Magic. Even the ageing former defender America, which served as a blockade runner during the civil war, defeated Cambria. Ashbury claimed a contest against a whole fleet was unfair, consulted his lawyers who studied the deed of gift, then contested that the word "match" should constitute one-on-one races. Schuyler agreed. Ashbury was back across the Atlantic the following year... But the Americans had four boats... and held the right to decide on the morning of each race which boat would defend the cup against Ashbury's Livonia. Although Ashbury again complained, [the challenger] proceeded to race and was soundly beaten in the first two encounters by Columbia. Livonia won the third when Columbia suffered steering damage, before the Americans restored their superiority with Sappho winning the fourth and fifth races. Ashbury never accepted defeat and said the cup was his. This was regarded as ludicrous and the trophy remained bolted to its plinth in the N[YYC]. Ashbury returned to Britain, became an MP, then a sheep farmer in [NZ. In the next two challenges ('1876 and 1881), Canadian syndicates were runners-up to NYYC; British syndicates came runners-up to NYYC in 13 challenges between 1886 and 1958. In 1962, an AUSn syndicate came runners-up then, after a British syndicate came runners-up in 1964, AUSn syndicates were runners-up in the next 5 challenges, until the Royal Perth syndicate won the cup in 1983. A San Diego syndicate won the cup in 1987 (when NZ made its first challenge in the plastic K27), successfully defended it against a NZ merchant banker's white elephant *New Zealand* in 1988, and again in 1992 – when an Italian syndicate came runners-up'].

...I DON'T know about your place, but I know one bar and restaurant in America where they... de[sp]ise... the... America's Cup veteran from San Diego)... The Back Street is a watering hole in Darien, Connecticut, once frequented by [the veteran] and not far from where [it] had a substantial home. It's also handy to the yachting havens on Long Island Sound. Last October I breezed in and out of The Back Street for a couple of days and nights. "So you're a Kiwi on holiday," said a regular hanging on to a Millers Lite. "I hope you guys win the America's Cup. [The American veteran] is just a goofy draper,"... A bigger gust was about to come. It hit at the heart of [the veteran]'s old relationship with the N[YYC] and how the veteran, an ambitious Californian, didn't get along with the refined and genteel sailing set. [The veteran, the Millers Lite drinker] said, deliberately lost the NYYC's cup in 1983 (Australia II beat Liberty 4-3) so [the veteran] could win it back for himself and eventually turn it into a money-making machine from San Diego. This is the stuff American myths are made of. But this fact I know as true. On the Sunday after Team N[Z] lifted the cup in San Diego, [the veteran] flew east and holed up at The Back Street bar. There [it] negotiated with a land agent what was to be the successful sale of his Darien home. [The veteran] has never been back. This [inspires hope that next year's series] is... the last time [the veteran]'ll see Auckland too.

...Their days on the water may be all but over, but N[Z]'s most faithful America's Cup yachts, NZL10 and NZL12, have a new job as cup ambassadors. The twin boats from N[Z]'s 1992 campaign... [(which) are still for sale, and among the interested parties is [an AUS]n cup veteran[)]... now sit above a sea of cars and under a sky of planes at Auckland International Airport. The yachts were retired from Team N[Z]'s stable after the Road to the America's Cup last summer and will now welcome tourists into Auckland during the cup regatta. The first arrivals to see the boats as they were being towed into their cradles in the carpark were members of Team [San Diego], whose new cup boat will arrive in N[Z] this weekend.

...As entries go, it was a terrible mess. But there was still something to smile at when NZL57 – one of the yachts bred to retain the America's Cup – took its first tentative steps into the wide world yesterday. Four hours after being loaded on to a big rig in Glenfield, NZL57 finally arrived at the Team N[Z] base in the cup village, just 7km away. In between, the yacht became stuck in mud, was almost banned from crossing the Harbour Bridge... – ...[f]ive minutes from... a... deadline... [for] getting the load over the bridge before barriers shifted for rush-hour traffic... the convoy was pulled over by police and told the load was too heavy[; b]ut the police waved the procession through, with a warning that the trucking company could face a hefty fine... – ...and then... more strife: the hull became jammed in the branches of a tree when the boat reached the American Express NZ Cup Village... Yet the Team N[Z] guys were laughing. Bad luck, they say, is a good omen for Team N[Z] boats. They remembered a similar start to the life of NZL32 before the 1995 cup when Black Magic I fell off its truck and into the mud as it came out of the builder's yard. But the shaky beginning did no harm: NZL32 went on to win the cup... Today, work starts on attaching appendages and deck gear, ready for the launch... [of] their new star... early next month. By November, the yacht will be joined by NZL60, which is still upside down in the builder's yard... ■... Applying racing yacht technology to inflatable boats has landed a Henderson firm a top-secret overseas defence contract. Lancer Industries, which makes rigid inflatable boats, is producing a James Bond-type 7.3m boat for an overseas military operation. [Lancer's t]echnical director... is unable to say who the boat is for or how much it is worth – [but the director]... is excited about the crossover from America's Cup technology to the defence industry. "It will be lighter, faster and stronger than any comparable craft and we're using America's Cup scene technology..." ...The company's edge... is its American broker and agent Axxess, which has relationships with large shipbuilders worldwide and negotiates spin-off deals for Lancer. Lancer is also about to deliver two rigid inflatable[s]... to be patrol boats as part of a contract with the Philippines coastguard... [N]Z... has 80[%] of the world market in inflatable oil recovery barges. This was made possible by the Maritime Safety Authority giving Lancer its first order.

...[the Frog] is quick to draw comparisons between America's Cup yachting and Formula One motorsport. And [it] should know. Coming from France[, the Frog] has a strong regard for... that country's last F1 champion. But the Frog] also has a strong sailing background including a 20-year involvement in the America's Cup as a French skipper in two challenges in the 1980s and for the past 15 years as head of Louis Vuitton's link to yachting's greatest quest. The French luxury luggage company sponsors the challengers' series. While [the Frog] won't be drawn into talking numbers, it's a fair guess Louis Vuitton's involvement in the last series in San Diego cost more than \$30 million. And it's that kind of money that sits comfortably alongside the riches of F1. But there's more to the analogy. Ask [the Frog] who will win the America's Cup in 2000 and [the Frog] quickly answers: "The team with the fastest boat. It's like F1 racing in that respect – the fastest car is more important than the driver. Of course the two have to complement each other but a fast car or... boat will always start with an advantage. That's where the Kiwis have an early edge. They had the fastest boat last time. Can they build on that and keep ahead of the rest in terms of development?" [The Frog] says the teams with the bigger budgets have a better chance. "But it is still possible for a team on a mid-range budget [around \$20m to \$30m] to be competitive..." [The Frog] is in Auckland on another of his whistle-stop tours[, and] will visit the City of Sails every two months checking on developments before returning permanently from his Paris base in September... then... will... head a team that could number as many as 150 who will organise the media centre, marketing opportunities, and an Internet site expected to be one of the biggest in the world once racing starts in October. "There seems to be a feeling the America's Cup doesn't start until February 2000. But it really starts with the Louis Vuitton Cup...,"... The Louis Vuitton Cup involves three round-robin series with increasing points values before the semifinals in January 2000 between the six top qualifiers who are then reduced to two for the finals series... The winner of the challenger series will have to come through four months of competition and as many as 60 races to claim the right to sail off against Team N[Z] for the America's Cup... [Learning NZ] conditions and adjusting to them will be the key... While N[Z] starts as favourite in its own waters... [the America's Cup is] a continual development programme. Just like F1].

...PETER BLAKE is a conundrum. The N[Z] Sportsperso[n] of the Year who doesn't live here. A boy from Bayswater who is welcome in the homes and on the yachts of Europe's richest playboy families. A symbol of local patriotism who is such a global citizen [it] leapfrogged the French, even Cousteau's own family, to become leader of Jacques Cousteau's legendary Cousteau Society. The leader of our upcoming America's Cup challenge who won't even be on the boat. Don't worry about that, says Blake over the slightly echoing line from England, his role... is even more important than if [it] were on the water. Why? Because Blake is determined that, for the first time in the cup's 144-year history, a non-American defender will hold on to the Auld Mug for a second time. As [Blake] points out, A[US], the only other country to win it in the first place, lost it straight back to the Americans... For the next 16 months Blake is taking leave from his job with the Cousteau Society to focus on the cup. By Christmas [Blake] and... his... English-born... [wife] will be installed in Bayswater near his mother (his father died this year)... while... [his son, aged] 11... will move to Kings prep... [and his daughter], now 14 (who spent much of her early life strapped into a car-seat in the cockpit of Ceramco)... will commute from her English boarding school... Getting to this moment has been a long haul. Fifteen years selling his dream for N[Z] yachting through the boardrooms of the country. Five times round the world in the Whitbread until the final, glorious win on Steinlager 2. An [unsuccessful but orthodox] attempt at the America's Cup [in 1992 with NZ's merchant banker] watching his every move, followed by the fabulous outright win on Black Magic. From the start his timing was impeccable. Even before... secur[ing] the cup for N[Z], Blake and his mates talked the starched New York-based America's Yacht Cup Committee into moving the timing of the next challenge back a year. Buying time... [also] ensured the cup coincided with the millennium. Auckland receives four months of yachting fame just as the clocks tick over into the next 1000 years. There's been controversy. No defender series. No public idea how Team N[Z] picks the crew] who will battle to keep the cup. But the extra year has let a record 16 yachting syndicates slap their \$185,000-\$370,000 entry deposits on the table, making this the largest America's Cup ever. [As] Blake says excitedly, "N[Z] will be on the world stage. We'll be in the spotlight." Today, although "we don't talk about our budget," Blake concedes it will be "more than last time [\$15 million] but not a great deal more. And a lot less than the others." In America's Cup terms [NZ isn't invest]ing a lot of money... [to] design and build two boats, wave test their models in Britain – and pay personnel[(in comparison, a 'US syndicate is investing \$US28m to build one boat')]... That way, assures Blake in his authoritative voice, "N[Z] will be better off, not by tens of millions, but by hundreds of millions of dollars." ...A lean and rangy 193cm, with a problem haircut... and... a shyness that is often mistaken for arrogance[, the]... boy from Bayswater Beach who grew up sailing a P Class from the bottom of the garden... has the rare ability to stand back, plot a course, then set [people]'s hearts on fire. Like an ad [salesperso]n making a pitch, [Blake]'s a guy who can sell a dream. Not just to yachties who crewed with him, but to tycoons like [the head of Lion Breweries. As a] long-time navigator... says, "[Blakey] doesn't have fantastic sailing skills, or fantastic technical skills, Blakey has fantastic people skills... If you've got a strong, charismatic leader it binds the whole thing together." ...His father was a Navy... [guy who] built that first P Class for the kids to muck around in. Later, when... [Peter] and his brother... started building their own Junior Offshore Group yachts in the backyard shed, the neighbours imposed a 9 pm curfew... Without it, they'd probably have gone on... [using their] sanding machine... until midnight... Although... diverted from the sea long enough to become a mechanical engineer after... [leaving] school, by 1983 Blake was putting

together his first big sponsorship deal... and taking the helm of Ceramco[for his first round-the-world race]. It was a stunning – if hairy – performance on the big, radical boat. Broken mast on the first leg. Ten trophies including the Southern Ocean trophy. The N[Z Yachtsperso]n of the Year award. Ultimately, Blake lost the race, and those who knew him knew [Blake]’d be back. Blake’s next boat, Lion N[Z], was built like a battleship. Steady but slow, [Lion NZ] came second. Then in 1987... [the brewery tycoon] confirmed that Lion Corp would pour \$6 million over six years to build three yachts and [Blake eventually] set off for a fifth time on the beautiful, red-hulled Steinlager 2. It was a tough race, slogged out against... [a fellow NZer, who was the skipper] on Fisher and Paykel. Blake won every leg, and after 33,000 nautical miles, the race itself by 36 minutes. Then... Blake moved on to the next challenge – the America’s Cup. The lessons of the Whitbread campaigns paid off. Although... 1992 [was a] summer of discontent[, by 1995 Blake] had the formula. After three years of... negotiating the fiendish America’s Cup politics, eye-balling [his opponent from San Diego], inspiring and energising his team, Black Magic sailed to victory winning the cup outright without conceding one match. Says [one of his assistants], “That showed us two things about Peter [– our leader] never stops learning... [a]nd... never gives up.” [His long-time navigato]r agrees: “Blakey’s miles ahead of his time...” ...[the brewing tycoon], now a good friend, who has poured well over \$25 million into Blake and his boats over the past 15 years, considers it money well spent: “The reason we went in was because at the time we [N[Z]] were struggling to define ourselves. We wanted to help give the community confidence to go forward internationally and we wanted the company linked in the community mind with winners.” And Blake delivered. “Peter’s been a great ambassador for N[Z] in a very nice, modest, competitive way.” ...[Blake]’s done better than that, making the *National Business Review*’s 1998 Rich List, with an estimated minimum wealth of \$4 million and a “bright financial future.”

...Sailing hero Sir Peter Blake last night vowed to come to the rescue of the ailing organisation of the late Jacques Cousteau... [who’s] image... has taken a beating, with allegations that the Paris-based Equipe Cousteau run in his name by his widow is virtually bankrupt... Sir Peter, whom Cousteau personally chose as his successor to carry out high-profile sea expeditions for the society and to teach children about the importance of marine ecology... was saddened by the latest problems. When the America’s Cup series ends, [the Team NZ leader] hopes to launch a radical rescue plan to solve the society’s troubles[, and] also expects to make a few enemies... “We plan to get stuck into the whalers and some companies that are doing naughty things to the oceans.” The weekly news magazine *Le Point* says Equipe Cousteau has been brought to the brink of ruin by excessive ambition, poor management, slack financial controls and declining membership. Cousteau’s death on June 25, 1997, at the age of 87, ignited an open war between [his wife] and... the son from his first marriage... [The second wife] took over his empire after the commander made a deathbed change to his will. Both sides of the Cousteau family stridently claim to be the standard-bearer of his legacy. Further problems were caused by last week’s publication of an unauthorised biography by [a] French journalist... who says... evidence [proves] that Cousteau was a closet racist and anti-semitic... [A] letter Cousteau wrote to a friend in 1941 complained that [Jacques – who]... mistreated and even killed sea creatures while staging scenes for his films... [–] could not find suitable accommodation because the city was filled with refugees, including “filthy Jews... [who should be] kicked out.” Sir Peter... understood the supposed anti-semitic comments were made as a cover for the secret work Cousteau did against the Nazis.

...Big Apple III, a 45-footer... sailed by a Team N[Z] crew, ended up top boat in the fleet for the regatta... [as NZ] scored their biggest offshore yachting victory in more than a decade last night, clinching the Kenwood Cup in Hawaii. Kiwi boats G’Net and Big Apple III finished 1-2 on handicap after three-and-a-half days at sea in the final race, to wrest the cup from A[US]. It was the first time since 1986 that N[Z] had won the Kenwood Cup, ranked only behind the America’s Cup and the Admiral’s Cup in importance in the regatta world... [T]he... skipper at the helm of Big Apple III, described the win as “fantastic.” “It’s the first international offshore regatta N[Z] have won since the Admiral’s Cup in 1987... We’ve had a disappointing couple of years. But we were very fortunate to have two new Japanese-owned yachts to sail this time.” N[Z]’s leading two boats finished well ahead of the three A[US]n yachts in the 376-mile race... at 9pm yesterday, while Cloud Stackeree, the third boat, only had to cross the finish line for a N[Z] victory. While the final points would not be known until today, N[Z] had built up a phenomenal 102-point lead over A[US] 100 miles from the finish – after going into the race with an 18-point advantage. The Kiwis had revelled in the 20-knot trade winds on the last day after the fleet had flapped around in five knots for most of the distance.

...[‘NZ has won back-to-back world regatta titles’. In related news, there have been calls] to implement safety regulations for powerboats involved in small sailboat regattas... [after a capsized yachtie was injured after it] was struck by [a] propeller... A former N[Z] Olympic yachtie... said the risk of such accidents could never be eliminated but... support motorboats... [sh]ould be... require[d] to have protective cages around their propellers.

...All hope was lost last night of finding two sailors washed away in the tragic Sydney-Hobart yacht race, swelling the likely death toll to six. Searches continued until sunset yesterday for a [sailor] swept from a liferaft from the sinking yacht Winston Churchill about 150km off Victoria. But last night rescuers conceded there was no hope that the two [sailors] still missing would be found alive. They had earlier in the day abandoned their search for English Olympic yachts[perso]n Glyn Charles, washed off the Sword of Orion on Sunday night. Two [sailors] were found dead on the Business Post Naiad on Monday and two other Winston Churchill crew[members], swept off its liferaft by a huge wave, were found dead in the chilly seas yesterday. Two survivors had been plucked from the raft in the middle of the night... With tales of tragedy come stories of bravery, too. [An air] ambulance paramedic... was being hailed as a hero yesterday after... [swimming] through boiling seas to rescue four crew[members] on another Winston Churchill liferaft. All 115 boats have now been accounted for. Two missing boats were found yesterday – one carrying two injured crew who were taken on board the frigate HMAS Newcastle. In all, 50 sailors were rescued and 74 boats retired. An inquiry will be held into the disaster by the Cruising Yacht Club of A[US]. The race media director... said it would look at boats’ safety equipment and the rescue procedures. “We don’t think many yachts suffered structural damage. But it will look at the way the boats were handled... Having to steer in these conditions would be horrendous. Few of us... would have ever experienced anything like it.”

...[a seasoned NZ yachtie] wanted only to get his battered crew across Bass Strait alive. The round-the-world skipper, who admitted to being afraid as towering waves swept crew... across the deck, sailed Sayonara to win the tragic Sydney-Hobart race yesterday, just failing to break the race record. But no one had thoughts of the record for two days. The 23-[strong] crew... had been consumed by the deaths of fellow sailors on the boats behind them. [The skipper], who was married last week, described the horror on board the 28m maxi as it was swamped by three-storey-high breakers, injuring three crew. “Waves were smashing over the boat... [O]nly... the leeward rail where their safety lines took up... [stopped the crew being washed] off the deck... Two of the... guys spent a day strapped into bunks, they were so badly bruised... When I was steering the boat I was just trying to make it safe for everyone... This is as tough as it gets... If we had known it was going to be that tough we would have thought twice about being there. Anyone who isn’t scared in those conditions isn’t human.” The boat’s owner, [a US] software billionaire... gave an emotional speech to a subdued welcoming party as Sayonara tied up at Constitution Dock... “This is not what it is supposed to be about. Difficult, yes; dangerous, no; dying and life-threatening, definitely not. A lot of us are very upset...” Race organisers decided to scrap celebrations for the line-honours winner. The fireworks were doused, the jazz band muted and the finishline ribbon reeled in. [The m]edia director... said it was not appropriate to celebrate while the search was going on for sailors missing at sea. [The skipper will now head to England for the start of the Whitbread Round The World Race.]

...“I’ve never sailed in a field of this quality... there are more medallists and world champions assembled in this fleet than any other regatta in the world, including the America’s Cup[,” says the NZer who skippered Fisher and Paykel in a previous Whitbread round-the-world. The NZer’s sentiments are backed up by a new Whitbread campaigner (the leader of the San Diego America’s Cup syndicate):] “I think [the Whitbread] could take over from

the America's Cup. In the Whitbread, the boats are the same... you don't have to spend \$40m on design. The courses are set, you know the budget, and you know how much you can give your sponsor. It's a lot better deal."

On the docks of Southampton, [the skipper of the Sydney-Hobart maxi *Sayonara*] is trying to put on weight, [the skipper of previous round-the-world yachts such as *Fisher & Paykel*] is cramming in sleep and [a senior Team NZ member] is trying to learn about his boat. Yet there isn't the usual last-minute rush to get ready for the first-leg start of the round-the-world race at 1am on Monday (NZ time)... "It's really quiet compared to other starts. If you go back a few races ago, there would be a mad panic right up to the gun, getting your boat ready... This time most of the boats have been ready for a week – it's all so much more professional now. Today, you spend the last week getting your sleep up, calming down and preparing mentally for any curve-balls in the form of protests." ...Maybe that is because it is a race dominated by laid-back Kiwis. None of the 10 boats in the... Whitbread Round The World Race 1997-98... fleet will fly a N[Z] flag. Yet there are N[Z]ers on all but one of the W60 yachts. There are 36 Kiwis in all, and that number will match the N[Z] head-count in the last Whitbread – which had three Kiwi boats – if [a Kiwi weatherperso]n can avoid being sued by former employers EF Language and head for Cape Town on board [the Team NZ member]'s America's Challenge. All but two of the boats are designed by [a NZ]er... and four of his [fellow Kiwis] will helm them – five when [a NZer joins one boat's all-gal] crew for two legs. No one can equal the Kiwis' experience in circumnavigating the globe – [the ex-*Fisher & Paykel* skipper], on Merit Cup, will be sailing his fifth Whitbread... [*Sayonara*'s skipper thought his boat] was ready to go until the race officials pulled him up. It appears Toshiba, the boat [the Kiwi and the San Diego yachtie] will sail together, is 70kg underweight. With the crazy weight-saving extremes the campaigns go to for the sake of speed – no door on the toilet, no covers on the books – the boats must check in above 13,500kg. [The Kiwi] wants to put more lead in his keel – some of the other crews don't want him to. No changes can be made to the hull or its appendages in the final week... [The skipper of] America's Challenge... had never seen the boat... until a little more than a week ago, when [the Team NZ member] finally signed up. There has been a frantic final preparation for the boat since it arrived in England less than a day before the deadline. [However, many] on the waterfront say [America's Challenge] will benefit from the new points system, where time differences no longer matter. A poor start may no longer mean a bad race... [● The] potential ratepayer contribution to the Auckland stopover for... [the] race has risen from \$120,000 to \$170,000. And the Auckland City Council has agreed to run the event, in January and February... next year... because of a lack of interest from the private sector and fear of the city's losing the event. A council staff report says other potential managers were worried by the short time left and because the "returns do not appear to justify the risk." It also says the 1993-1994 stopover was estimated to be worth more than \$16 million to the local economy... [although that] stopover, run by the Whitbread N[Z] Trust, was underwritten by the Auckland Chamber of Commerce, which incurred debts of nearly \$1 million. However, the chief executive[of the chamber] yesterday described this as an "investment to keep the event in Auckland," rather than a loss. The chamber did not want to be involved this time as "we are not an event manager." ...The council expects to spend up to \$600,000 on the event, with income, in addition to its own \$170,000 subsidy, comprising \$250,000 from Whitbread for the village naming rights, plus other sponsorships, commissions and concessions... The extra \$50,000 from the council had been deducted from its 1997-1998 budget for the... America's Cup office, which is now \$450,000.

...Kiwis endeavour to leave world in [their wake. NZ] will have a diluted presence in the global waters when the Whitbread round the world yacht race starts off Southampton tomorrow. But it's a fair assumption a Kiwi will be among the winning crew when the odyssey works its way back to Britain about May next year. With no money on offer in N[Z], leading Kiwi sailors have had to go offshore for sponsorship and crew positions aboard the 10-boat fleet which will be restricted to the Whitbread 60 class. Maxis are banned. The biggest Kiwi effort will sail under the flag of Monaco... Merit Cup contains the bulk of [its skipper's NZ] Endeavour crew which won the 1993-94 epic... [Its skipper, a maxi specialist] now finding his feet aboard the Whitbread 60s, is again among the favourites... The weather forecasts for the start are for light winds and for the first few days the fleet will be sizing up the opposition... A week out from the start navigators will be positioning their yachts for the run through the north-east trades. At that stage the apparent distance to the finish might not in fact reflect the relative position of the fleet... The 7500-mile leg ...to Cape Town... is expected to take 31 or 32 days. [Merit Cup will] have food for 33 days[('Whitbread sailors burn up 5000 calories per day')]. The first leg of this race has never been sailed before. Cape Town has not been a stopover port since 1985 and [the fleet] have never had marks to round before... The... two... marks... off South America... serve to make the leg longer. [Incidentally, anti-smoking group Ash has complained that 'the Whitbread race wouldn't occur without the millions of dollars of sponsorship from tobacco companies' (this year they're funding Merit Cup, Swedish Match and Silk Cut).]

...The round the world race can't be won in the first few days – but it can be lost... [The] skipper of Silk Cut this time, knows that. In 1993, only a day out from the start... [his] maxi Fortuna... fell into the trap of keeping up too much sail for too long in too strong a breeze. It's a temptation every Whitbread skipper faces when there's a good breeze soon after the start. No one wants to be the wimp who reduces sail first. The big wind that took [Fortuna]'s mast... almost took... [NZ Endeavour's] too... Fortuna was chasing [NZ Endeavour] hard and the Whitbread 60s, revelling in the conditions, were disappearing over the horizon... [NZ Endeavour's skipper] had been below only a few minutes when [his watch captain shook him awake to say that the watch captain] didn't like the look of the mizzen mast and... thought [the crew] should shorten sail. [His skipper's] answer: "It's up to you, you're the watch captain." Back on deck [the watch captain] made the brave decision to reduce sail. Three minutes later Fortuna lost her mizzen mast and her race was effectively over. That's a cruel reward for three years hard work.

...Two Kiwis already written out of plot... The drama on the high seas has turned into a soap opera in the first ad break. [A Team NZ member's] victory dreams have been shattered by a Mexican who's run off with the money. [Another Kiwi and his San Diego racing partner] have broken up – but did [Toshiba's Kiwi co-skipper], now in the jungle, jump ship or was [it pushed? Will the crew of Merit Cup] starve when they are put back to sea? It's called *Around the World in 120 Days* and part one is set against the beautiful backdrop of Table Mountain in Cape Town. [Two NZ]ers... have been killed off after the first episode in the nine-part serial. When they were at sea, the worst dramas which befell the Whitbread fleet were flotsam (a floating swimming pool), fauna (an angry whale) and food – lack of it. On shore, all hell has broken loose. Twenty-four hours after [the other Kiwi] let the yachting world know [it had quit the San Diego America's Cup yachtie's Toshiba, the Team NZ yachtie] and his eight Kiwi crew had no choice but to pack their bags when the America's Challenge camp folded. It appears the problems come from an agent who arranged the campaign's four Mexican sponsors. Financial arrangements for the challenge appear to be in doubt. [The Team NZ yachtie] said that as skipper [it] was not privy to the financial arrangements. But [the NZer] was angry about the boat's forced withdrawal. "The whole thing's over, yet this boat had huge potential... The crew were getting on very well and there was an opportunity to win this race." Ten days out of Cape Town [the NZer] knew there were money problems. There are still faint hopes that the camp can be resurrected... [However, the Team NZ member] is booked on a flight to France on Sunday. A few [of his team-mates] are talking with other syndicates who need extra [crew] for the next leg, while the others are heading back to N[Z. Toshiba's Kiwi], meanwhile, has headed off on safari, leaving behind rumours that half-a-dozen crew members had threatened mutiny if [it] had stayed for leg two. In the wake of these drama's, [the crew on 2nd-placed] Merit Cup are debating what to pack for the next leg in just over a week[(EF Language leads the table with 125 points to Merit Cup's 110 – the two remaining US-backed boats, Chessie Racing and Toshiba, are 5th and 6th with 72 and 60 points respectively)]. One thing's for sure – they won't be so stingy with the food again. The crew are having their first days off since arriving in Cape Town. Within a day of docking, they were back on the water testing sails before the boat was hauled out

of the water. They found nothing alarming. Unlike the Toshiba crew who discovered their mast had a “wide-mouth frog” crack – it had almost sheared in two. While many of the American and European sailors have headed home for the break, there are huge teams of shore crews toiling on the boats, like Formula One racing pits. “I can’t believe how much more effort is going into these boats compared to four years ago,” said [Merit Cup’s skipper]. “Every fixture and fitting is being stripped right down. One break at sea can cost you an arm – and the leg.”

...It could be three months before the round-the-world sailors feel their fingers and toes again... as the damaged nerve endings repair themselves... Snow and sleet are pelting the Whitbread fleet as they fly through the Southern Ocean in sub-zero winds, straight off the Antarctic ice. Frostbite is niggling at the digits of the sailors who now do not go on deck with any part of their body uncovered[– but full] face masks, goggles and polar gloves still do not keep them warm or dry enough... [The defending] race champion... says the most popular job on board Merit Cup is making coffee... Spare a thought for... [the Kiwi bowperson] who was dipped into the sea to grab seaweed from around Merit Cup’s keel. Yesterday was a frightening – and exhilarating – day for the boats at the front of the fleet, with less than 2000 miles to the second-leg finish in Fremantle. Leader Swedish Match suffered 24 hours of freak waves, snowstorms and 60 knots of wind. The boat screamed along at 31.5 knots. “We had some really scary rides that we will remember for a long time,” [the boat’s] co-skipper... said... [● A Kiwi who is] usually happy in an Olympic dinghy, is about to sail around the world-non-stop. Thankfully it will be in a boat a little bigger. The 23-year-old is the sole N[Z]er in an all-[gal] crew planning an assault on the Trophee Jules Verne next month. Their boat has already taken a N[Z] crew, helmed by Sir Peter Blake, around the globe in record time... [The 23-year-old, who] had never sailed anything... bigger than her single-handed Europe dinghy before this... has been talking to the [NZers] who sailed the 28m catamaran when it was Enza, and set a world record of 74 days for the round-the-world trip... The record now stands at 71 days and 14h 18m 8s, set by... [a French crew] in May this year... “The guys are telling me it will change my life – but I don’t know if I want that... I know it’s going to be cold. But my biggest fear is whales around N[Z].” The yacht, now 16 years old, has been re-named Royal & SunAlliance and is painted a striking blue and yellow. Her skipper... signed a £4.27 million sponsorship deal with the life insurance group for the circumnavigation attempt. [The Brit] skippered the first all-[gal] Whitbread crew, Maiden, in 1993. The cat’s 11-[gal] crew have already raced across the Atlantic...

[A pair of Kiwis] – when told they were leading the trans-Atlantic rowing challenge – jumped about so much it was feared they would end up in the ocean. The long-distance [rowers]... had no idea of their race position when told off the Barbados coast yesterday morning they were... 800km ahead of their nearest rivals and heading for a world record crossing of 40 days, cutting 33 days off the old time... set... in 1986... [T]he sole member of their support crew, said the [NZers] had gone ballistic... Since the October 12 race start in Tenerife in the Canary Is the rowers had gone 40 days without talking to anyone[else (and at one stage also ‘didn’t talk to each other for 3 days’). While some competitors had computers... and long-distance telephones... which allowed them to know their positions... the [NZers] were the low-tech, low-budget crew in the race. They gambled on a lightweight boat for the mind-bending 2900 nautical mile slog and it paid off... The [NZers] were to finish overnight... Their quick crossing left race organisers scrambling to arrange finish line facilities at the Port St Charles hotel-marina complex... [The race] chief... was in the midst of pacifying his wife in England. On Tuesday, [it] was supposed to be helping his wife shift to a new home in the English Cotswolds... “They have thrown everyone up the bloody spout... – typical of [NZers]. My house move was supposed to coincide with them still being at sea. I had to leave my wife... [who] is furious... back there... [My wife] thinks the race is fantastic but... won’t be here...” ...Race organisers have shouted the [NZ] team three days accommodation at the hotel-marina complex. Their apartment is just metres from the water – and very different to their 7.1m long and 1.9m wide home of the last 40 days... The Hamilton-based [half of the pair] was the driving force behind the [NZ entry. The rower] mortgaged his home to help finance the venture and quit his job... [scraping] together the entrance fee 24 hours after the entry deadline following a last-minute visit to... [a Hamilton businessperson, who] initially loaned the pair money, then indicated they only had to repay half the amount. But before the race start [the sponsor decided they had to repay] nothing... The victory confirms the pair’s grit and determination. At the start line they had been spooked by their hi-tech rivals – ...[they] hadn’t realised outside communication equipment was allowed. The extra weight obviously cost the other racers dearly.

...[the pair of NZ rowers] almost came to grief on the first and last nights of their record-setting... – 41 days, one hour and 55 minutes... – ...trans-Atlantic row... [A]fter just four hours... they were hit by a massive breaking wave which crashed over their seven-metre fibreglass boat and snapped an oar. They had a spare. On the last night, another huge wave swamped their cabin and had them surfing sideways... For about a quarter of the race... the sea was glassy flat with warm starry nights. In the last half, they spent another quarter... worrying whether fork lightning was going to hit them... Yesterday [the NZers] saw the computer tracks of each boat and noted how theirs was the straightest, by far. “We were very vigilant watching the compass...” ...They hardly talked at sea, not out of spite, but because they were too busy keeping strictly to their row-eat-sleep routine... When winds and sea whipped up they both rowed because they believed their competition wouldn’t. Only for three days did they use their sea anchor... The official prizegiving is this weekend, even though the second-placed of the 24 surviving crews is not expected until next week... The[NZers had] loaded up with freeze-dried meals... They did not fish although marlin swam beside them and they were amazed to find, in the middle of the ocean, birds, some of them landing on the boat for a rest. They were disappointed by the amount of rubbish in the Atlantic and... admitted apologetically that they contributed by dumping food and anything else they thought surplus... [One of them] lost 8kg and [the other] 12kg.

...after completing their... victory, [they]... were displaying a healthy dose of Kiwi ingenuity. For winning the gruelling race... the [NZ]ers won a 250 litre barrel of rum. A few days later they won another... when they took out an around Barbados yacht race. The[y] decided to give one... to the people who helped them. The other fuelled a fundraising party... [that] raised \$2000 – a sum which they needed to pay their phone account... [They now] face another heavyweight challenge – the All Blacks. It seems certain the race-blitzing rowers will be nominated for the Halberg Awards N[Z] sports team of the year honour... Without... [the rowers]’ victory, the All Blacks would have been certainties for the award... Some sporting purists may question the trans-Atlantic event, but the Halberg Trust executive director... has no doubts the rowers deserve to be nominated for the teams award. “As a personal point of view, I would put their achievement in the same sort of league as the Whitbread round-the-world yacht race.”...

A[n AUS]n... was saved by his round-the-world crewm[ates] yesterday in a dramatic midnight rescue from the choppy waters of Bass Strait. Innovation Kvaerner’s bow[perso]n fell overboard during a sail change in 24-knot winds and spent seven minutes in darkness in the sea before being pulled to safety. The Sydneysider’s unexpected dip came as the action hotted up in this previously uneventful third Whitbread leg between [Fremantle and Sydney]. Only 20-odd miles separated eight of the nine-strong fleet last night in the final burst to Sydney. The first boat is expected in port tonight but who it will be is a mystery. Kvaerner, the overall race leader, lost little ground during [the] rescue.

...The first of a yellow rubber-duck fleet that will fill the Viaduct Basin during the Auckland stopover for the Whitbread round-the-world yacht race gets a taste of the waterfront today. About 10,000 \$5 ducks will be raced – propelled by winds and currents – to raise funds for Project Jonah.

...Auckland is preparing to welcome the Whitbread fleet to the Viaduct... with four weeks of partying. The first yachts should arrive from Sydney on January 7... but festivities begin on the 4th, with jazz, Polynesian, Latin and Irish music and dancing. T[VNZ] coverage of the Tasman leg... will be shown on a large screen at the basin. The best vantage points for the sprint into Auckland will be North Head... and Tamaki Dr... [By the way, British gal] MPs were given leave from the House of Commons yesterday to farewell... [the] crew... about to make an assault on the non-stop round-the-world yachting record. The all-[gal] crew... will be on alert... tomorrow for a start from Plymouth when the right weather comes along. - 1997

ANYONE have \$21 million to spare? That's what it will take to get[a NZ] ocean racing maestro... on the start line for an event that could reshape the future of sport. Known simply as "The Race", the anything-goes non-stop circumnavigation of the world, due to start at midnight on January 31, 2000, could be the most exciting thing to happen to ocean racing... The cost is "a big ask"... as "that sort of money isn't available in N[Z]". But the Kiwi, who [is currently skippering] Merit Cup... in the... Whitbread, gives the novel race a ringing endorsement... The Race already has 12 "confirmed" participants... [– including an] American millionaire and adventure racing guru... [who] has already unveiled his mammoth Auckland-built yacht PlayStation, at 32 metres the world's biggest ocean-racing catamaran... [–] and 16 "potential" competitors. But [the Kiwi] believes only around six to eight will eventually make the start, in Barcelona, Spain. The Race will finish in Marseilles, France... [The Kiwi] has a busy year ahead. As well as [finishing the Whitbread and] going on the funding trail for The Race, [it] has the... Laser masters (over 35) world championships in Melbourne... and a year's contract with his Merit Cup sponsors which will have him commuting between N[Z] and Europe. Further down the line is another Whitbread campaign... [T]he round the world race could dovetail nicely with the nonstop French event, and [the Kiwi] would love to compete in both... Another N[Zer – whose America's Challenge pulled out of the Whitbread –] is also trying to put together a campaign for the event...

[An 82-year-old] worries about her son... and his wild adventures. [Mum]'s coming up from New Plymouth this weekend to bid him farewell as [her son] sets off on the double-handed Round North Island race from Auckland. Tales of [a French single-handed round-the-world sailor] flipping upside down in the Southern Ocean won't have allayed... [mum]'s worries, either. So what does [mum think of the 49-year-old]'s plan to build a \$US6 million 140ft trimaran and sail around the world non-stop? "Mum says 'I hope you don't get your money'," [the son] laughs. "I don't tell her half of my hare-brained schemes." [The] veteran of three Whitbread round-the-world races, is getting more adventurous. Like[a] fellow Kiwi skipper... who [is currently skippering] Merit Cup... in the... Whitbread[the son]... is devoting most of his days to searching out big dollars... somewhere around \$US10 million... to support his dream to compete in The Race... [His late]st round-the-world race campaign folded after the first leg through dodgy funding, but [the son] was only employed as the skipper, not the fundraiser. "It was disappointing because the boat was very good. But it was an advantage in some ways because I could come home and get this project underway." [The son] already has plans drawn up for his dream boat... An English designer has worked on it with help from French engineers. The French are experts on multihulls... "We could start building this boat in two weeks..." In the meantime, [the son] is keeping his hand in on the water... [by pairing up with a] fellow Auckland... who sailed with [him] to win the 1997 Fastnet race in England[for]... the Round North Island race starting on Sunday... "This race is probably the biggest national event on N[Z]'s yachting calendar these days," said [the son], who first competed in it 17 years ago. Twenty-three yachts will leave Auckland on the first leg to Mangonui in the Far North... [The race will take] eight to 10 days.

...[the '2nd Global Challenge yacht race, during which identical boats sail around the world in the reverse direction – each boat is crewed by a professional sailor and a group of volunteers (who will pay \$100,000 each for the privilege of participating in the 10-month-long event) – is scheduled to stop at Wellington early 2001.' While on the topic of] round-the-world yacht race[s, you]... can't compare the old days of the... [Whitbread] to the race of today. It's like measuring the Paris-Dakar Rally against a Formula One grand prix. No longer is the Whitbread an odyssey for bucaneeers and paying passengers wanting to taste life on the high seas. Today it's a professional venture... It is nothing like the original race 25 years ago, except that the boats still go round the world in the same direction. When the first fleet left Southampton in 1977, they were crewed by military [personnel], using it as part of their adventure training... [although the] boats were decked out with the comforts of home – fridges, stereos, electric flushing toilets. On Lion N[Z] in 1985, the crew enjoyed two hot water showers, a microwave oven and a table to eat from... [The only person] to win the Whitbread twice, would reward his crew from a cache of liquor stored under his bunk. Today, the barren hulls house... [the minimum of amenities]. Crew eat infamous freeze-dried everything from their bunks, hanging from the sides like shelves. They don't wash. If they get wet, they dry themselves with their tee-shirts. No one is bemoaning the new way of life. Doing away with comforts is part of the extremes of weight-saving measures campaigns go to... The first boat to snare a sponsor had a campaign budget of £30,000. Today, it's over £10 million to get a W60 on the water... When the boats cross the finishline in Southampton in June, the Whitbread will no longer exist. A change of name, to the Volvo round-the-world race, will help the masses to understand that the adventure is now indeed, the grand prix of sailing.

...The round-the-world yacht race may sail right past Auckland in 2001 – and if it bypasses the City of Sails, it is unlikely ever to return. Salvaging the stopover could depend on how many Kiwis buy a Scandinavian brand of car... Volvo... has made it clear that all bidders will be in the running as stopover ports. Auckland, the most popular port-of-call on the round-the-world race since 1977, has not been guaranteed her place on the route and some say it is looking shaky... [T]he City of Sails is up against stiff opposition from Fremantle, Melbourne and Sydney for the Oceania stops. In Sydney's favour is the novelty aspect – Volvo are interested in the idea of the fleet joining the Sydney-Hobart race. [NZ's f]ive-times round-the-world veteran[who skippered Merit Cup to 2nd place in the last race], said the threat of the race bypassing Auckland was very real. "Every four years you hear 'the race isn't coming here.' I never believed the stopover was threatened, but this time it really is... Now that Volvo have taken over the race, there's a commercial issue. Whitbread never worried because they didn't sell their beer here. Other countries are making bigger plays for it than ever before, meaning more dollars are being put in. Auckland will have to play that game to stay in the running." Another Kiwi round-the-world skipper... said... "It has to return. Auckland has kept the race alive for so many years... For commercial reasons, maybe Sydney would sell more Volvo cars. But 100,000 people come down to see the boats in Auckland – Sydney last time was a complete and utter flop. Surely the razzamatazz of Auckland must be better for the race?" So far, the Auckland City Council is the main backer for the Auckland bid... "We're arguing that we have a \$120 million purpose-built facility here which we challenge [Volvo] to find anywhere else in the world."

...Encircled by toys in the basement of... [an] Auckland home lies a mass of maps plotting [the homeowner]'s latest round-the-world odyssey with [the skipper of Merit Cup]. This weekend the navigator and skipper will leave N[Z] for France to launch the new catamaran they plan to sail non-stop around the globe in The Race... Club Med – with its two huge hulls and towering 40m wing mast – will be launched [next month]... The yachting world will hold its breath when [the] boat hits the water. So far the other multihulls launched for this race have... crashed... Is [the skipper]... worried? "Yes... There's nothing to suggest that we won't have problems too. In fact, I guarantee we will have. If we don't then the boat is built way too heavy. But hopefully, with the experienced team we have, we can minimise problems." And they can learn from the mistakes of others. [A]British sailor... made the front page of almost every English newspaper last month when the left bow snapped off his catamaran, Team Philips, on the tow out into the Irish Sea. It is under repair... Polish 90ft cat Polpharma-Warta lost its rig a day away from San Salvador, crossing the Atlantic from Cadiz... PlayStation, the Kiwi-built cat owned by[an US] millionaire adventurer... is in Charleston waiting for a second crack at the transatlantic record. In its original attempt, the boat had to turn back to port on the first night when things started breaking... [Incidentally, an Englishperso]n... plans to launch his bid to row solo to South Africa from Bluff, at the bottom of the South Island, in just over six months. The 57-year-old hopes to be the first to complete the 21,000km journey crossing... via Cape Horn, expected to take up to a year... His project started with a budget of about \$1.5 million, but has since been scaled down... [T]he father of two... [recently] completed a solo crossing of the Pacific from Peru to A[US]... The civil engineer... also... competed in the transatlantic rowing race in 1997 in which [the NZ pair]... set a record for the crossing.

...[NZ's] trans-Atlantic rowing heroes... could be rivals in a solo version of the epic crossing. A French consortium is putting together the event, this time across the Atlantic's infamous northern route. The plan is to race from south of Boston to the Bay of Biscay in France in May next year. The Kiwi duo, who rowed their way into N[Z] sporting folklore... have invitations to compete and are tempted to try the next level... [The Auckland half of the duo] was definitely interested in starting should the event check out... "I... would need a sponsor. You're probably talking around

\$50,000 for that..." [The Hamilton half], who is in the process of putting together a book on their double-handed crossing, said the concept was a huge temptation, but one [it] could struggle to fit into his schedule... [The Hamiltonian] confirmed there was interest from the French entrants in the race to buy the... boat[that the NZers used for the southern route crossing. However, several NZ] consortiums are keen to keep it in this country.

...Phil Stubbs died knowing [that the Auckland] was in line for a N[Z] Order of Merit honour. [Stubbs] and his partner in transatlantic rowing... had discussed the forthcoming accolade before Stubbs' fatal plane crash... The pair had been organising separate craft in the[next] rowing race traversing the Atlantic, but were discussing the idea of a two-boat challenge... Stubbs, aged 36, died when the light plane [the Papakura police officer] was piloting crashed after takeoff on Karekare Beach, west of Auckland... Members of Stubbs' family declined to comment yesterday... [Stubbs had] held many national titles for surfboat racing and rescue and had represented N[Z] in surf lifesaving. [Stubbs] had also captained the national dragonboat team to third place at the Vancouver world championships in 1996.

...rowing's equivalent of the Concorde... returned to... [NZ yesterday after] his convincing world championship single sculls title defence in Canada... [The rower and his wife], who was an outstanding fifth in the [gals'] world... single sculls final, received a tremendous welcome at Auckland International Airport... and [a similar welcome] later at a Ranfurly Shield parade at Rugby Park, Hamilton, before the Waikato-Taranaki challenge. [The 24-year-old indoor-rowing world record-holder] damaged both his single sculls boats before the worlds and opted to row last Sunday's final, where [the Kiwi] set a world-best time and blitzed all his Olympic rivals, in his practice boat... Produced by Rout's Kiwi International Racing Skiffs Ltd, the... first... local skiff[raced] overseas... incorporated ideas from [the rower], his wife and the boatbuilder. [The Kiwi] opted for the local skiffs as a result of their comfort and rigidity... But the greatest confidence would have come from the way [the Kiwi] powered away from his rivals at the 1250m mark to clinch back-to-back world titles... [Speaking of NZ rowers, another Hamiltonian] has sailed into stormy seas by revealing in a book that [it] feared rowing partner Phil Stubbs was going to kill him during their record-breaking transatlantic crossing in 1997. The comment has angered friends and Auckland police colleagues of Stubbs, who died... in December... Angry letters and phone calls to the *Herald* yesterday accused [the Hamiltonian] of "picking on the dead" and saying things "in order to sell a book by a [hu]man whose very success has depended upon the person being maligned." In his account of the 3000-nautical-mile crossing, *The Naked Rower*, which went on sale yesterday, [the Hamiltonian] said the relationship between the two got so bad during their 41 days at sea that... "I really had fears for my life at some stages... It may have been paranoia, but I wondered whether Phil was going to throw me overboard... That's how bad things got." A close... friend of Stubbs... said: "To suggest that [Phil] would be capable of murder defies belief..." [The friend] said Stubbs told friends [it] was disappointed that [the Hamiltonian] had injured his shoulder during the crossing through "overuse, which was totally inexcusable in a person who was meant to have trained hard for the event." [The friend] added: "It says much for Phil that [it] chose not to publicise what happened during the difficult days of the row." But... the... Hamilton[ian said it] was only trying to portray his feelings honestly and... was "not having a go at Phil..."

...When [two NZ]ers... arrive in Barbados today, they will make history as the first [gal's] crew to row across one of the world's oceans. After 50 days at sea, [they]... will complete the remarkable feat of rowing across the Atlantic and finishing fourth in a fleet of 34 boats crewed by [guys. The gals] have made the 3000-nautical-mile journey in a "veteran" boat – Kiwi Challenge, winner of the last transatlantic race with Phil Stubbs and [his Hamiltonian rowing partner]. Last night, the [gals] had... 40 miles to the finish, where the race winners – [the NZ guy pair (one of whom was a late replacement for the Hamiltonian, who 'broke his hand – by punching a guy who was assaulting a gal' – just days before the start)] – have been waiting for the past week... There was a tinge of disappointment for the Kiwi [gals], who had hoped to nab third place but were beaten to the line by... Belgian brothers, expected to finish during the night. It has been an intense battle between the two boats throughout the entire race – at the midway point, the [gals] saw the Belgians' mast light on the horizon. [The gals] have been coaxed along by the N[Z] guys' crew, who beat the A[US]ns on Freedom by three days... Unlike the [NZ guys, the gals] have had favourable weather in the final days of their voyage, pushed into port by trade winds which deserted the leaders. The only other [gal] in the fleet, [a] British solo rower... is still 1800 miles from the finish – expected home in late January. The [Brit's rowing partner (and boyfriend)] gave up early in the race, but the gal decided to carry on alone. The [other solo rower in the fleet, [an] English journalist... withdrew yesterday, suffering from exhaustion. His boat was burned at sea.

...Fire ripped through the... world's biggest ocean racing catamaran... yesterday... The extent of damage was unclear last night... [A] tourist catching some sun... heard two small explosions, then saw crew members scrambling from the starboard cockpit and forward hatch, seconds before flames shot out. The crew tried to fight the blaze with extinguishers but were forced back by the heat... [F]irefighters... took... 10 minutes to bring [i]t... under control... then flooded the hull... An attempt to break the record for crossing the Atlantic... may have to be put off because of the fire... putting the immediate plans of the... boat in doubt... In March, [Playstation] set the record for... distance travelled in 24 hours – 580 nautical miles.

...Somewhere in the middle of the Atlantic, [a NZ]er... last night became the fastest yachting skipper on Earth. [The NZer] shattered the world speed sailing record on the debut journey of his new super-catamaran, Club Med. In 24 hours, the cat sailed 625.7 miles – 45 miles further than the existing record... The boat is also well ahead of target to set another record on this trek, following Christopher Columbus' route of discovery, from Cadiz in Spain to San Salvador. The east-west transatlantic record is 12 days 12 hours, and [Club Med] is already a day ahead of schedule to crack it. Club Med's... 30 knot... speed is polled on land through a satellite system – the 24-hour record still has to be ratified by the World Speed Sailing Record Council before it is official... For [the boat's skipper], in his first multihull adventure, the record run was a poke in the eye for "all the doubters who thought this boat couldn't handle it." The 110ft (33.5m) catamaran... has so far suffered only a small crack in the front beam... Among the three Kiwis in the 14-[member] crew is... a... boatbuilder... who will repair the crack... with glue... once the boat slows down a little.

...[an] English skipper... refuses to curse the radical round-the-world catamaran [it] had to abandon in storm-tossed seas – instead [the skipper] is thanking it for saving the crew. Back on land yesterday after being rescued by a ship in the North Atlantic, [the skipper] praised the 38m boat's design. "I have never seen a storm like this before... Team Philips is the only reason that we made it through the storm. Otherwise, we wouldn't have been here, I'm sure." The boat has been heavily criticised for the structural problems which plagued it since it was launched in March... [But the skipper] was adamant that the revolutionary hulls, designed... to slice through waves, kept the seven-m[ember] crew safe... The crew arrived uninjured in Halifax, Canada, on board German container ship the Hoechst Express, which answered their mayday call on Sunday night... The catamaran, which cost \$14 million, is still floating somewhere off the coast of Ireland. [The skipper] said the central pod of the boat, from where it is steered, was almost crushed by battering waves. When the crew became concerned that they could not control the boat and with a second storm on the horizon, [the skipper] sent out a mayday. The boat was further damaged during the rescue, as it collided with the container ship. As is tradition among sea captains, [the English person] was the last [crew-member] to leave his boat... [The skipper], who flew back home to England last night, would not be drawn on the future of Team Philips... In the meantime, the six boats still planning to start The Race... are all at sea... [A NZ] skipper... is driving his catamaran, Club Med, in an organised matchrace with sister yacht Innovation Explorer on the delivery voyage... to Spain.

...The largest sailing superyacht built in N[Z] is finished and awaiting the owner taking possession. The 53-metre ketch Salperton, built by Henderson-based Alloy Yachts, is worth about \$30 million. Alloy's] marketing director... is discreet about who is playing the bill. "It's a European owner," is all [it] will say... The [managing director]... says about 350,000... work... hours have gone into the yacht... [designed] for up to 11 crew.

...Above the waterline, the world's biggest racing catamaran is a blaze of colour... But down below, it is... as dark as night. The... black carbon fibre... interior of the twin hulls has not been painted – paint adds weight... They are sombre living quarters for the crew... [Around 15%] bigger than Enza[, the]... monster multihull built in Auckland for [a US] millionaire adventurer... is hi-tech to the core... Inside there are four bunks in

each hull, two heads [toilets to the uniformed], a galley in the left side, a navigation station in the right. Between the hulls there is nothing but netting – and a 45m mast from which will fly more than 1000 sq m of sail, enough to cover five houses... [One PlayStation NZ crew member] is a 55-year-old software business[person] born in Waikanae but now living in California. [The NZer] has... broken six world sailing speed records with... [the adventurer, who now] wants to make an assault on... The Race, which starts on New Year's Eve, 2000. Yesterday, [the adventurer] was flying in a hot air balloon over Uzbekistan – narrowly avoiding Iraq. But his face was plastered across a row of big-screen televisions at... the [Viaduct Basin]... spouting a pre-recorded message... "The whole process [design and building the boat]... t[oo]k... exactly four years..." ...Construction of the boat cost \$8 million. The programme's budget is somewhere around \$2.5 million – each year.

...The pursuit of one of aviation's last frontiers – flying a hot-air balloon around the world nonstop – was briefly a head-to-head race... In St Louis, [PlayStation's] millionaire adventurer... lifted off from Busch Stadium, on his fourth attempt to circle the globe. And in Rochford, Illinois, [a second adventurer] left in his white balloon from a 91m-deep quarry. "See you in 10 days," [the second adventurer] said. But three hours later [the second adventurer] was forced down when his balloon lost its helium gas... Anheuser-Busch, a US brewery in St Louis, Missouri, has promised to pay \$1.9 million to the first balloonists to circle the globe non-stop. Under the offer, announced in November 1997, the successful claimants will receive \$960,000 and the remain[der] would be donated to the charity or non-profit group of their choice.

...It was tempting to allow the latest round-the-world balloon fiasco to go unremarked because what took place was just a repeat of the same old story: a promising takeoff followed by an ignominious deflationary spiral into the sea. We've seen and heard it all 20 times before and it does not improve with the retelling. But then one of the balloonists, soggy from his unscheduled dip in the Pacific Ocean off Japan, let out enough hot air to re-inflate his crumpled flying machine. "I'm an engineer, I'm not an adrenalin freak," said [the balloonist], fending off suggestions that... his ilk were a danger to themselves and others. "To me the whole challenge was about building something, designing something, using my skills to... make it as safe as possible and to enjoy the experience." [His] admission that around-the-world ballooning is safe cries out for a response because everyone else engaged in this form of balloonacy says it is the last great aviation adventure and adventures are, by definition, dangerous. Circumnavigation of the globe dangling under a canopy of hot air is not a real adventure. It's just an escapade which is a waste of time and money and it's time Governments put a stop to it. But keeping a bunch of balloonatics anchored to terra firma is not as easy as it might appear. Just ask the Chinese. They have repeatedly made it clear they do not want hordes of balloons cluttering up their skies, but the balloons just keep on coming. Perhaps the Chinese have the wrong approach. Rather than trying to stop the balloonatics by edict, what we should do is introduce an element of danger to turn their escapades into real adventures. One possibility would be to attach a heavy ball and chain to the ankles of all those who set off to fly a balloon around the world. It would encourage all those timid souls who like their adventures safe to stay at home. And it would mean that, in time, all of the others would disappear without trace beneath the sparkling waters of the Pacific.

...A Swiss-Anglo team battled slow winds over the Pacific Ocean yesterday as they prepared for a make-or-break gamble to be the first to circle the world in a balloon... The pilots... would likely move southwards to catch a fast sub-tropical jetstream... not far from the International Dateline.

...A Swiss-English balloon team... last night bec[a]me the first... to fly round the world non-stop... "I am with the angels and I am completely happy," said [the Swiss half, who claimed to have been] grateful for the invisible hand that had guided them... [before cracking] open several bottles of champagne... [The English half] would celebrate with a... cup of tea... [Their flight] director... said... "Some people said we couldn't do this. Some people said we would run out of fuel. They were wrong. We have done it... I'm going to have to start believing meteorologists. I have been calling them liars over the past three weeks, but meteorologists have been fantastic. They have taken the balloon everywhere it had to go, sometimes within a degree." ...the pair notched up the feat as they crossed the 9.27° west line of longitude above northern Mauritania, 20 days after their Breitling Orbiter 3 launched from Switzerland... Earlier yesterday, the Breitling Orbiter 3 set a record for the longest distance flown by a balloon... with organisers saying they clocked more than 31,000km... easily beat[ing] the official distance record of 22,910km and the unofficial distance record of 24,466km set by... [a US balloonist and yacht-owner. The English half], a 51-year-old grandfather, has dreamed of bringing down the towering balloon near the pyramids... in Egypt[... but]... winds were now so good that the pair would almost certainly fly on to land today some 200km south of the pyramids... It is [the Swiss balloonist's] third attempt to... [achieve one of humanity's] remaining aeronautical challenges, a distance of more than 40,000km... [The Swiss balloonist's] long-time... Belgian... flying partner, dropped out after Breitling Orbiter 2's failed mission a year ago... [The Swiss half's] father... aged 77, is also an adventurer who in 1960 set the record for the deepest ocean descent by reaching a depth of 10,911m. [His] grandfather... was a physician and inventor who was the first... to reach the stratosphere in a balloon, in 1931, and invented the pressurised cabin.

...It's all downhill from here... Depression [is setting] in among the world's professional adventurers. Every explorer wanting to conjure up a book to sell faces the same question... What are you going to do next? The problem is not a lack of challenges. There are thousands of unclimbed Himalayan mountains, vast networks of caves[and pot-holes], trackless deserts, impenetrable jungles and thousands of Antarctic square kilometres untrod by cellphone-carrying trampers. What is lacking is anything that the public will admire – and to professional adventurers, the public is everything. It is one thing to go somewhere exotic on holiday, quite another to make a living from it. The problem is that consumers associate adventuring with people with backgrounds like their own. Images of Captain Scott scratching out his last diary entry a few miles from safety after his epic journey to the South Pole, or [of a NZer] telling team mates that [it] had "knocked the bastard off" after conquering Everest dominate the national consciousness. The activities are less important than the sense that the nation is somehow aggrandised by them. [The Swiss balloonist] was specific about his motivation. "People need dreams," [the balloonist] said after an earlier unsuccessful attempt. "They need adventure. We need dreams that carry us forward." How sitting in a balloon for weeks carries the human race forward is not clear, but... [it] had a family tradition to keep up. Luckily, [the balloonist] has three daughters who can become the first [gals] to repeat those feats. [The guy] who built the balloon that carried [the balloonist and a]... former Royal Air Force pilot... round the world, is sanguine about the loss of the ballooning world's Everest. "It's never going to be the same again... We'll sit back and congratulate ourselves for a while and then think about the future." [For the builder], who is the British representative on the International Balloon Commission, [thinking about the future means] contemplating a round-the-world race. Several balloonists who had been counting on... the Breitling Orbiter 3 flight... failing are all kitted out with no record to go for. [The builder's] idea is that they will start at the same place. Whoever gets the furthest will win. [The builder] does not believe that the public is fed up with the hot-air crusaders who buy his balloons. "People watch motor-racing year in and year out... Why not ballooning?" [Because the] idea of an aeronautical [F1 driver] roaring into the sky at the controls of a hot-air balloon is unlikely to make it off the graveyard shift on the smallest cablesports channel. But there is no doubting the public's fascination with people who have eschewed the passion for Nintendo and cyberspace for a shot of good old-fashioned reality. Ironically, it is the digital revolution that has given adventure a late 20th-century boost, allowing couch potatoes to track their heroes on the Internet or follow news feeds direct from base camp. Mobile phone calls are made and received on the slopes of Everest, global satellite positioning systems tell explorers exactly where they are, and the National Geographic Channel will narrate the action. The maestro of this new communications revolution... has abandoned his latest adventure in the Arctic, [which was] faithfully reported by the BBC as though it were consequential. [The maestro] made a fortune from glue, then used his millions to stick together old challenges to make a big new one which [the maestro then] sold to national newspapers and the BBC. The "adventurer's grand slam," as [the maestro] called it, involved climbing the highest mountain on each of the seven continents and reaching all the geographic and magnetic poles, north and south. The Royal Geographical Society would rather see more scientific exploration. "The first guys like Ernest Shackleton were expanding our knowledge, and there's a thread there

running throughout exploration that we'd like to revalue," says [a spokesperson for] the society. A more scientific angle would certainly reduce the pressure on explorers to think up new challenges now that most of the obvious ones are gone. Everest has been climbed by [guys without oxygen, gals] without oxygen, old [guys, a one-legged guy] and boys of 17. A [US] mountaineer... even took all his clothes off and streaked across the South Col at 7924m. Presumably [the streaker] suffered no frost-bite – [the USer] recently became a father – but it can't be long until someone has a go at the whole thing naked. And yet there seems to be no lessening of interest in the mountain. While [a knighted British adventurer] struggled to drum up media interest in his latest expedition to a remote and largely unexplored corner of Tibet, a comparatively unknown [person] from northeastern England... has persuaded the BBC to cover his attempt to climb Everest for the second time, becoming the first Briton to reach the summit from both north and south – a fairly meaningless record on a mountain that has seen more than a thousand ascents... Perhaps only when the first nonagenarian pogo-sticks up Everest wearing only a bobble hat will the media family get round to the real stor[ies of life on Earth? Until then]... we will have to get used to what the Americans call "micro-distinction" – increasingly small improvements on the same old records... [The northeasterner], a legend only in the climbing world, hopes to raise his profile and so increase his sponsorship value by snowboarding down the mountain.

...[a gal] has ridden into the N[Z] snowboard history books by winning a World Cup boarder-cross in Sapporo, Japan. The... Wanaka-based... [gals'] national half-pipe champion became the first N[Z]er onto a World Cup podium.

...[an in-form NZ] skier... charged into the top 15 of World Cup slalom skiing after the latest event in Santa Caterina, Italy, yesterday. [The NZer], a former world No 2, was eighth overall in the two races on soft snow and will now join the elite world group of skiers competing for the... World Cup title in Italy next month. [The NZer] has been troubled by viral illness and injury in the past two seasons, but has improved substantially in recent months and is on course to return to the top tier of [gals]'... downhill skiing.

...[a] Swiss skier... was paralysed in the legs after crashing and slicing through safety netting in a [guys'] World Cup downhill event yesterday... The 22-year-old... who had been fastest on the top part of the icy... piste, crashed at an estimated 120 km/h[, and] was given emergency treatment before being flown to hospital... In October, Fr[ance's] world super-G champion Regine Cavagnoud died after a crash in downhill training...

A... COLORADO... SKI racer has been found guilty of [hu]manslaughter after crashing into another skier and killing him... [In local news.] Westie ski-bunnys may have to look no further than their backyard for a good slope – if an indoor skifield is approved for Silverdale. The Snowstar Group is seeking resource consent from the Rodney District Council to build the country's first snowdome sports arena. If given the go ahead the group would start construction of a 11,600sqm snow hall by early next year. Located on East Coast Rd near the Silverdale motorway exit the facility would also offer a snowsport school, dinning[(sic)] and conference facilities... [A] Snowstar Group spokes[person]n... says the plan is to offer Aucklanders a "one-day vacation" at a fraction of the cost of a mountain skiing holiday. While admission prices have not yet been decided [the spokesperson] has hinted they will be similar to mainstream leisure attractions. The project is based on the second-generation snowdome model used in Europe and a strategic relationship has been formed between Snowstar Group and a large snowdome operator in Europe.

...[a 'NZer has won the gals' section of the US professional jetski circuit', and in Europe a NZ w]ater skier... wrapped up his... [latest] event with a second placing in the British Masters behind [the]US champion... The current world record holder... was third. The Kiwi is confident going into the world championships in Milan next week as [it] has a better record than any of the World Cup field, having cleared 10.75m on three occasions.

...[a NZ-based entrant] will defend his overall and jump titles and [a US-based entrant] will chase an eighth consecutive national slalom waterskiing crown when they compete in this weekend's championships at Auckland's Orakei Basin. Back from his US base, [the Kiwi who came second in the British Masters admits it] enjoys the chance to compete in his own championships away from the pressure of the world circuit. N[Z]'s most successful waterskiier with successive silver slalom medals at world championships... is keen to add another national title to his collection. [It] is using the championships as the starting point to another year on the World Cup circuit which starts with the Melbourne Masters early next month. Then follows stops in Canada, France, Italy, Austria and the US before the world championships in Barcelona, Spain in September. The national championships have attracted more than 30 of the country's best... They will be conducted in two divisions – under-17 and open.

...[First there were surfboards. Then there came skateboards and snowboards. Now comes wakeboards – and they're dealing the same blow to water skis as snowboards have to alpine skiing. Wakeboarding is the fastest growing water sport in the world, according to Ballistics. A wakeboard is smaller than a surfboard but larger than a snowboard. Riders stand sideways on the board and use the wake of a towing boat to initiate a spectacular array of aerial manoeuvres. Because the boards have a larger wetted surface area than water skis, as well as being buoyant, riders can be towed by boats as small as 3.6m powered by just 12hp to 15hp outboards. But the real thrill is to be towed behind heavy, old-fashioned fishing boats producing a huge wake. Snowboarders are turning to wakeboards in droves. Boards cost from \$500 to \$1800. The sport now has its own magazines and a professional competition circuit in the US where top riders can earn up to \$100,000 a year. Wakeboarders like dead flat water']...

Young surfers go Bali-stic [Two]local surfers... are riding a wave of success... [following] their impressive performances in the under-16 and under-18 events throughout the country... The pair are in the N[Z] team for the world scholastic championships in Bali in July... [They] are the first Auckland surfers to make the team since 1991 when [two]Piha surfers... were selected... The pair have also made several pro-series finals in competitions held around the country... Both surfers are hoping to compete in the Pro Junior series in A[US next year] which will be a great challenge... "The competition is a lot tougher over there and competing against A[USn]s will hopefully lift our performances,"... Both are thankful for the support they receive from their sponsors by means of boards, clothes, sun glasses and wet suits. However, products alone do not pay for travelling expenses and entry fees so they are looking for more sponsors to help with costs. But for the next couple of months the boys will be training for their trip to Bali. With world titles up for grabs they want to be as well prepared as possible.

...[a NZ] surfer... has won the \$US60,000 O'Neill Surf Challenge world qualifying series in Anglet, France. His victory is the first by a [NZer] in the series and leaves [him] well placed to qualify for the World Championship Tour. Another... [NZer] finished fifth, his best result.

...Daring surfers ride wave of adrenalin... Guts. That's what it takes to ride waves the size of inner-city buildings and that's what those of us watching from the shoreline might expect to see washed up on the rocks. A[n AUS]n... lives for those days when [it] can slide down the face of unstoppable monsters at 70km/h on a life-and-death knife edge as [it] tries to outrun the biggest waves on the planet... [The AUSn], on the world pro-tour for 10 years until 1995 and with a best placing of fifth, is one of around 20 surfers developing the sport with tow-in riding of massive waves using jet-skis. Two riders alternate between towing and surfing, one hauling the other onto walls of water so big they can't be paddled onto – by the time the crest lifts the board it's too late to make the drop. So the surfer skis behind the jet-ski on a special board... [– which] is narrower at 40cm as opposed to 50cm but thicker and with less of a bottom curvature[; the boards also come]... with foot straps [– and] is shot onto the face, the ski staying on the shoulder to retrieve him after the ride. On January 28 last year on what is called "biggest Wednesday" [the AUSn] was one of eight surfers who braved what many believe is the biggest surf ridden. It was an El Nino-generated swell that registered the biggest movement on Hawaii's offshore warning buoys at 42 feet. The swells jacked to produce waves with faces estimated to be ...80 feet... at a reef called Log Cabins 2km offshore from the famous Pipeline... [The AUSn], in Auckland to promote the film *Extreme*... doesn't fear those waves. "People ask me if I'm scared of anything – of course I am. I'm scared of sharks, I'm scared one of my kids will get run over... I'm scared a bit of death but I don't think I'll die in the surf... I wouldn't go out if I wasn't enjoying it. But sometimes you look around and there are other guys in the line-up with fear on their faces and you wonder what they're doing it for, their sponsors or something." ...So far there has been... one loss of life, Hawaiian... Derek Ho.

...Cold water hurled on new craze Kitesurfers have been warned to move offshore at popular beaches before they cause injury to swimmers. Kitesurfing, also known as kiteboarding or flysurfing, is the latest extreme water sport to hit Auckland's beaches. [The Auckland h]arbourmaster... has received numerous complaints about kitesurfers coming too close to shore and swimmers. "It does get potentially dangerous when the weather gets warmer and swimmers start to use the beaches again... Kitesurfers are a major hazard because they concentrate on their kite rather than what's ahead of them. We are not trying to stop them enjoying their sport, rather we want to see them move further off-shore and keep our beaches safer for all users." ...Local bylaws discourage vessels travelling in excess of 5 knots within 200 metres of shore.

...surfers and windsurfers at many of N[Z]'s most popular beaches will have to wear wetsuits or lifejackets or face \$200 fines. The beaches affected include Raglan, Whangamata, Waihi, Paihia and Waipu Cove. Surfers are outraged and their national organisation has criticised the move, which even covers youngsters using boogie boards... The new rules have been introduced by the Northland and Waikato Regional Councils as part of wider bylaws making it compulsory for anyone on a boat to carry a life-jacket. They will be enforced by harbourmasters who patrol beaches and lakes. Regional councils have been given the responsibility for water safety under a Local Government Act law change and have until 2003 to introduce bylaws. They have to meet minimum national rules being drafted by the Maritime Safety Authority... Auckland has not included a clause covering surfers or other board users in its water safety bylaw, saying the move was unnecessary, but some of the beaches affected are popular holiday and weekend destinations for Aucklanders... [The MSA's] legal adviser... told the *Herald* that wetsuits provided buoyancy if a board user was knocked unconscious and helped to protect against the cold if [the board user] drifted out to sea. Water Safety N[Z] supports Northland and Waikato's new rules. [Its c]hief executive... agreed that wetsuits, which cost between \$80 and \$400, provided protection. But [the chief executive] did not think the rules should cover boogie boarders, also known as body boarders. "Five-year-old kids playing in the shallows with their parents on the body board they got for Christmas should not have to wear a full wetsuit. That's taking it a bit far." Surfing N[Z]'s president... said wetsuits restricted movement a[dding that]... surfers would not wear [them] if it was hot and would refuse to pay fines. "It is the dumbest piece of legislation I have ever heard of... N[Z] will be the laughing stock of the surfing world." ...A draft of the M[SA] national minimum guidelines will be released... ne[xt] year and will be open for public submission... [Incidentally,] February's three-match Tri-Nations surf lifesaving series will go ahead, despite a threat from A[US] to withdraw their team. N[Z] and South Africa have agreed to drop Inflatable Rescue Boat racing from the series... in Mt Maunganui... I[nflatable Rescue Boat] racing, commonplace in all three countries, has been banned across the Tasman following last year's A[US]n championships in Perth when insurance and liability issues arose because of injuries suffered in that event.

...[the Coca-Cola NZ surfing championships to be held between January 9 and 16, will include a body board division' for the first time.]

...Surfing and boogie boarding are among the 10 most popular sports for adults aged 18 to 24... according to the Hillary Commission.

...[surfing has more adherents than rugby or fishing, according to the latest Hillary Commission survey on participation in sports and activities. The commission estimates there are 182,800 board riders – stand-up and prone – compared with 143,100 rugby players and 132,500 fishers. The most popular activity in the country is walking with 1,589,800 devotees, followed by gardening with 1,412,300.] By the way,] Whangamata lifeguards' use of a defibrillator in a rescue yesterday has prompted a call for the heart machines to be available on all surf beaches... [A] 73-year-old was pulled from the surf after a heart attack... [and] the defibrillator was used to jump-start [his] heart... with a 350-joule electrical blast. The... defibrillator monitors patient's vital signs and stimulates the heart when it stops. The machines were introduced into ambulances about five years ago. The technology has since "become smarter, more compact and more idiot proof and can be used in many different situations." ...Whangamata Surf Lifesaving Club is the only surf rescue club in the country to have a defibrillator and yesterday was the first time it had been used. The Heart Foundation is keen to see them on every beach... and [in every] office building. The... elderly [swimmer], from Auckland, was believed to have been without a pulse for four minutes... "Never in my 35 years of surf lifesaving have I seen one come back like that," said the... club president... "[The 73-year-old] was a dead body, and then... began to breathe." ...the club was able to buy the \$5000 machine and associated equipment last October thanks to sponsorship by Auckland-based Sovereign Insurance... [Surf lifesaving c]lubs were dependent on fundraising and sponsorship.

...Heartless thieves are ripping off West Coast surf lifesavers while they're out in the water helping people in distress. [One l]ifeguard... had her car stolen from the Piha carpark two weeks ago... The 20-year-old university student also lost her wetsuit and fins... Her patrol captain... says the theft was especially upsetting because the lifeguards had just finished one of their busiest days of the summer. Over 40 swimmers had been rescued from the surf... Two weeks ago [a] Karekare professional lifeguard... had his car broken into... Thieves were advantaged by the fact that the car park at the very popular Karekare is 400 metres from the clubrooms... [The] president of the Northern Region Surf Lifesaving Association, says these two incidents are just the tip of the iceberg. "The unfortunate thing is that all over the region you get instances of people walking into clubhouses and helping themselves to members' possessions." [The president] says thieves will take anything they can find including rescue gear, fins, wetsuits and sun-glasses. "It's just a kick in the teeth. You go out there spending your own money, putting your body on the block to keep others safe and someone comes along and nicks all your stuff. It's an indictment." But [the president] says beach crime was worse 10 years ago. Rescue equipment such as outboard motors were stolen to order for an overseas crime racket, while local drug dealers targeted radio transmitters.

...[sometimes you need a lucky break to succeed in sport, as was definitely the case for NZ's surf lifesaving champion. The NZer, who is now resident in AUS, is back in NZ to defend his title in the national championships in Mount Maunganui this weekend. "There's not a lot of exposure for surf lifesaving in NZ and I think it's more of a summer hobby sport here. In AUS they get 20-30 hours of prime-time television coverage each year and it rates right up there with the cricket. I can make a comfortable living out of it now and if you're in the top three or four, you can make about a quarter of a million dollars a year." But it wasn't so long ago that the NZer was down and out and just about ready to give up the sport. After taking out the national junior Ironperson titles in 1989-90, his first foray into AUSn competition earned him a lowly rank of 88th. "I thought I had some talent but if that didn't knock me down to size then the Gisborne boys back home sure did." The next year the NZer improved slightly to 68th but hope and finances were fading. However, everything turned around when his father became AUS's Olympic canoeing coach. His father had coached the NZ pair who cleaned up the canoeing gold medals at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics but grew disgruntled with the sport's administrators here. The offer of a paid job, a car and a flat in Sydney was too good to turn down and it proved too tempting for his son too. "I was broke, I was winning no prizemoney, but suddenly there was something to fall back on. I used him for all dad was worth but I don't think dad minded." With improved results the NZer moved into the elite Uncle Toby's series and gradually moved up the rankings, from 21st five years ago to 11th last season. As a result the NZer has also signed for the \$7.8 million Foster's Oceanperson series starting in May. The Oceanperson takes the top-20 guys and gals from the Tobys and Nutri-grain competitions to the world's beaches. The concept came from TV's *Baywatch* programme, which is the most popular syndicated show in the world. The NZer was one of a group of competitors selected to appear on the show last August, comparing tanned bodies with the actors. The NZer remembers the experience fondly. "They're cool people. They were trying to act what we are and we were just trying to act. They wanted to have the show's star beat the top AUSn competitor in a race but our sponsors made sure that didn't happen as it wouldn't look good for our credibility. I mean, they don't do any of the action. The show's breast-implanted co-star hardly even makes it into the water."]

...THE annual N[Z Ironperso]n race is a mega-sized event in any context. But forget the 3.8km swim... 180km cycle and... 42.2km run. The organisers also face a marathon effort getting everything in place for the field of 714 competitors in Auckland next Sunday. Take the shopping list. [The] director for the American Express event... certainly needs more than a supermarket trolley for this load. There's 2000 1.5 litre bottles of cola, 5200 litres of energy drink, 4500 drink bottles, 15,000 biscuits, 1600 energy bars, 6000 bananas, 200 bags of ice, 7000 sponges, 8240 litres of water and 800 tins of creamed rice. Oh, and don't forget little things like 30,000 paper cups, 9000 no-stopping signs and 3km of crowd control fencing.

...[“THE high sugar content in some of the energy replacement drinks available these days is wreaking havoc on the European cycling circuit. Sucking furiously from their drink bottles as they cycle, some of the top riders are now experiencing major dental damage.”

...“sports and nutrition experts say some high-energy food and sports drinks could be harmful – especially to the health of children and unborn babies. High levels of vitamins A and D, and chromium, copper and selenium can damage the liver or eyes. The alarm follows news that sports foods and drinks will have to carry warnings that they are unsuitable for children aged under 15 and for pregnant people. The popular sports supplements will also be regulated by the AUS NZ Food Authority, which has developed standards limiting the levels of trace elements, vitamins and amino acids found in such products. Health authorities are expected to approve the authority’s standards within the next month. Sports experts and nutritionists have welcomed the move. A Nutrition Foundation council member said selenium and chromium could be extremely toxic in high doses. Her main concern was when “over-zealous parents” gave their children large amounts of supplements instead of an appropriate amount of fruit and vegetables. Some babies suffer from “rebound scurvy,” a vitamin deficiency when they are born, which is caused by pregnant mothers taking large amounts of vitamin C. A sports medicine expert said the introduction of standards and warning labels showed that such high-energy products should not “be consumed willy nilly.” The senior lecturer in sports medicine at Otago University said: “It’s like any medication – if we tell you to take it according to the instructions then 10 times the concentration is not going to be 10 times as good for you.” The managing director of Hansells said his firm would comply with any new standards.”

...“Canterbury’s medical officer of health is “very disappointed” about drink sharing among athletes in light of a meningitis scare which has rocked South Island athletics. The medical officer said it understood there was a lot of glass sharing at a function following the national athletics championships in Christchurch. As a result the medical officer was launching a publicity sweep of all sports organisations warning “don’t share spit.” Vance Latta, aged 25, a top Otago multi-events athlete who had attended the function at the Pegasus Arms Restaurant and Bar where up to 130 athletes gathered and took part in drinking games, died within hours of being rushed to Dunedin Hospital.’ In related news, NZ’s top guy triathlete ‘is staggered the swim leg of next month’s international triathlon is being held in Auckland’s Viaduct Basin after signs warning people not to swim or collect shellfish there were erected yesterday by Auckland Healthcare. The Basin is high on the list of contaminated waters in the Auckland area with positive tests being recorded for salmonella last year. The move heightens pressure for race organisers to find a replacement site for the swim leg. If there is no switch, images of a polluted Auckland will be taken overseas by visitors, or beamed out on television. Healthcare’s public health protection official wants to meet the race organiser this week to discuss the situation. Healthcare opposed the race being held at the Basin last year, because of the poor water quality, but the World Cup triathlon event went ahead. NZ’s top guy triathlete will line up in the April 27-event, wherever it is held, but is mystified why the Basin, for the third year in a row, has been chosen as the venue when Auckland has other locations. “I can’t understand why we should have to race down there. It is ludicrous.” The NZer has already had overseas triathletes asking if the swim leg is being held at the same venue: “No one is keen to do it there because it is so filthy. This is so frustrating for me because I know we could put on such an awesome race. Instead, we have this bad, dirty course.” Previously, the NZer was reluctant to speak out, concerned about creating a negative image for the sport. But it believes there has been ample time for a course change to be made in the last three years. The protection official has spoken to athletes about their concerns and has met with the Auckland City Council’s environmental health section: “I have also discussed the test results we have with the Ministry of Health. They have confirmed the public should be warned about swimming in the area.” One reason for the signs is that swimmers have recently been spotted in the Basin. Healthcare doesn’t want people thinking they can swim there just because it is the location of the triathlon. The warning signs could remain for three years until the area’s sewer-stormwater separation programme is completed. The Basin was the top priority for this work. It is unclear what action Healthcare will take if the race organisers refuse to change the venue. However, the organisation is taking the issue very seriously and if there is no movement it seems certain to take more direct measures.’

...“NZ’s top guy triathlete upstaged the more favoured AUSns to convincingly win the Sydney triathlon yesterday and become the first person to win two World Cup races this season. Largely written off by the media and many competitors last week, the 26-year-old Aucklander grew more dominant as the race progressed. The NZer eventually finished in 1h 51m 28s, beating last year’s winner and collecting \$NZ16,200 in prizemoney. The win in the 10th race of the ITU series puts the NZer just 55 points behind AUS’s world No 1 going into the world championships in Perth in three weeks. The winner in Perth will score 750 points. The NZer, who took the ninth race in the series at Cancun in Mexico a fortnight ago for his first win in two years, believes it is possible for him to improve on yesterday’s performance. Fellow-NZers pulled off creditable performances to finish 20th and 24th respectively. Christchurch’s 33-year-old former world champion battled a recurring ankle injury to finish ninth in the gals’ race.’

...[NZ]’s 2-time [gals’] world champion... has won an ITU Olympic points triathlon race in Brno, Czechoslovakia. [The NZer] finished... well ahead of several ranked triathletes heading for the weekend’s world championships]. A Frog came 2nd and a USer was 3rd.

...a USer] received his first skateboard on Christmas Day 11 years ago. Now the 25-year-old... is a seasoned professional and about to display his talents on a [NZ stage. The 25-year-old] is one of five overseas skaters and two international BMX stars who will be drawcards at the Vans Warped Tour Concert which is[to be] held at Waihi Beach... The overseas competitors will be matched against some of [NZ’s best. However, the 25-year-old] and his fellow American stars come with some impressive statistics. [The 25-year-old] has been on the Vans Warped Tour for five years and... also contested the last three X-Games. In the past four years [the 25-year-old] has had 14 top 10 finishes in major... events, including winning an international championship in Florida in 1997, where [it beat the skateboarder who is] regarded as the best in the world... [Another one of the overseas skaters] will be making his second visit... having competed here two years ago. [This skateboarder] can add the 1994 British Open title to a list that also includes a second place at the 1995 X-Games... It’s a skating and lifestyle celebration that promises to be quite a party... Action starts at 2pm and, for the first time in the Warped Tour history, will continue into the night...

A[n A]vondale skatie... goes through one board every two weeks, and has had “about a thousand” sprained ankles... With 11 years’ experience under his belt, [the]25-year-old... is... rated N[Z]’s number one skater... [C]heck out his form at the Xtreme Air Games in Hamilton this weekend.

As Hamilton looks set to... join several N[Z] cities and towns, like Rotorua, Nelson, Queenstown, Dunedin and Tauranga... in giving skateboarders the shove, the City of Sails maintains that the trendy pastime is a “good, healthy thing.” Councils in the Auckland region say they have no reason to consider banning skateboarding in the city centres. The Mayor of Auckland... says it’s a way of maintaining good health among teenagers. Pressure from people fed up with skateboarders in the streets of Hamilton could see a tough new bylaw introduced by the city council tonight. But a spokes[per]son for the skateboarders said the “draconian” bylaw would simply add a “new thrill” to their pastime. If it is passed, anyone who skateboards on any road in Hamilton... will face confiscation of his or her board and a fine of up to \$500... The proposed bylaw has been thrown out by the... council twice already this year, but concerns by Garden Place retailers over danger to pedestrians, verbal abuse... and noise have put it back on the agenda of tonight’s meeting... [However], a Hamilton business[per]son who wants the council to build an inner-city skate facility for the youths, [agree]d a bylaw would not deter the thrill-seekers. “They will still skate, and they will go faster than the police.” [The businessperson] said skateboarders were prepared to issue a self-enforced “no-go zone” 5m from shop fronts in Garden Place until they got their own facility. Until then, it was impossible to stop them using Garden Place. “They don’t want to go somewhere out in the backblocks where they run the risk of being beaten up.” There were four council skateboard facilities in Hamilton, at Te Rapa, Chartwell, Melville and Hillcrest, but none near the central city. As well, none [of the facilities] met the requirements for “street skaters,” who preferred a flat concrete area with obstacles to the traditional skateboard bowl... The council was investigating building an inner-city skateboarding facility and had surveyed skateboarders on their needs.

...By early next year young people on the Hibiscus Coast will have no excuse for being bored. A... youth centre is being built at Oweria to provide a place for sports, cultural activities, socials and meeting friends. The patron of the Hibiscus Coast Youth Council... said the centre would start

with around 500 members paying an annual subscription of \$5... [T]he club aimed to be accessible to all young people, and, through a director, would offer activities that they wanted... At the moment youth in the area say there is little to do apart from hang out in the streets, beach, gym or takeaway bars, or catch buses to Takapuna or Auckland city in search of amusement... In the past two months \$200,000 has been raised for the project, with individual donations of up to \$80,000 bumping up the total. However, another \$200,000 is needed to finish the centre... [A] retired builder, is donating his labour to build the facility... [T]he police youth aid officer for the Hibiscus Coast to Wellsford area... was confident the centre would go a long way towards providing entertainment for young people in the area... [The constable] said the local youth population was increasing, and with it the problems of boredom such as graffiti and wilful damage... [While on the topic of bored youths, s]kateboarders lost the streets of Hamilton yesterday, after city councillors approved a bylaw banning the sport from the inner city... From next Wednesday, skateboarding will not be allowed on any... road, in the central city... - 1996

Central Auckland retailers are fed up with the antics of skateboarders and in-line skaters and want them banned from Elliot St and other pedestrian precincts. The Auckland City Council, however, wants to avoid a bylaw [– even though]... furniture installed by the city council was being wrecked by skateboarders riding on it... Design techniques, such as lugs on seat edges and strategically placed rubbish bins, are being used in parts of the city to prevent skateboarders damaging street furniture... [A] jewellery shop owner and spokes[person] for the Heart of the City business association, said... [h]is members want a bylaw modelled on that of Hamilton... [The spokesperson] commended council-funded skateboarding areas and said the association was not against skateboarders[, but]... the speedsters were deterring potential customers from shopping in the central city.

...[a 'Palmerston North resident finished third in the 300m road time-trial at the world speed skating championships in Santiago, Chile, yesterday. The NZer covered the distance in 24.71s, 0.3s behind the winner and just 0.05s behind the second placegetter. His bronze medal was the first senior world medal won by a NZ skater since 1986. It was his first top-three finish at a senior world event, after a fourth placing in the track event this week. An Auckland competing at his first junior world championships finished fifth in the 300m time-trial, but was 0.01s away from a bronze medal.' Another NZer] was starving after winning the world Mistral boardsailing championships in Fremantle late last night. [The NZer], who claimed his second world title of the year... [– after winning] the world raceboard championships in France earlier in the year... – ...was so nervous going into the final day of the Olympic class championships that [it] could not eat a bite for 24 hours. "I was running on empty, it was so nerve-racking," [the NZer] said after clinching the world title in the final race... [Our country also collected] bronze in the... [gals' fleet. NZ's top gal boardsailor] once again had to finish in the shadow of... [her main rival from Hong Kong. The NZer] slipped from the lead overnight as her friend... jumped from third to win the title[(an) Italian... was second[]. The NZer's brother]... and former world champion... [was] 10th in the... [guys' fleet. NZ] scooped three medals on the final day [with a] teenager... winning bronze in his first major world regatta...

[A teenager] never got to hold the bronze medal [it] won at the world boardsailing championships in Fremantle. Within hours of being told... [it had come third] the 20-year-old from Ohope was yesterday relegated to fifth... [It] was in no way to blame for losing the medal. A[n A]rgentine sailor... lodged a protest after the final race in Perth... complaining... [of being] knocked off his board by the downdraft of a helicopter. [The Argentine] won his case and was promoted from fifth to third. [The NZer then] missed out on fourth place by countback to [the previous] world No 1... of Portugal... [The] new world champion... was upset for [the 20-year-old], who had deserved his original placing. "It's a foul-tasting end to the regatta, when it has to go to the protest room... I've never heard of redress being given for interference from a media boat or helicopter... But it's awesome that [the 20-year-old] is in the world's top five. It was so close that I could have sneezed and ended up 10th." ...[Speaking of successful protests, s]kateboarders are free to roam Auckland's inner-city streets after the failure of retailers to have them banned... A bylaw was considered unworkable and a survey of Elliot St retailers revealed that most did not support a ban, preferring measures such as education and the development of skateboard facilities. No accidents had been reported and only three complaints registered from customers about skate-boarders. - 1997

The death of a Wellington skateboarder has prompted police to call for changes to the Land Transport Act. Christopher Wood, aged 22, a Victoria University student, suffered head injuries after falling from his skateboard at the intersection of Kelburn Parade and Salamanca Rd last week. [Christopher] was taken to Wellington Hospital intensive care unit, where [the skateboarder] died on Monday. [A Wellington i]nspector... said Mr Wood's death showed that the act, which took effect on March 1 this year, was not working. The act reclassified skateboards as vehicles but did not state whether they were allowed on the road... "I don't think the legislation has gone far enough." While the act did not directly ban skateboards from motorways, [the inspector] felt they fell within the same area as horses and bicycles, which were prohibited. [The inspector] said police regularly had problems with skateboarders on Wellington streets. Last June, a 21-year-old skateboarder was seriously injured in a collision with a rubbish truck near the Willis St motorway on ramp. On Tuesday night, [the inspector]... had spoken to two 16-year-old youths who had been weaving in and out of traffic on Willis St in the dark. "They were so lucky not to have been hit by cars. Many are not aware of the dangers." [The inspector] said skateboarders were regularly fined up to \$750 for misusing a skateboard under a Wellington City Council bylaw. However, that did not stop skateboards being used on streets. [A spokesperso]n... said the council was investigating whether to ban skateboarders from city streets.

...The Accident Compensation Corporation is monitoring the use of lightweight scooters after a spate of accidents overseas. A [U]S consumer protection agency said this week that nearly 9500 Americans, mostly children, had been taken to hospital this year after scooter accidents. The statistics had prompted the ACC to issue guidelines for scooter use, says a spokes[person]... It had no record of scooter accidents here, and was studying overseas data. "It's relatively new. We have not had a chance to see what injuries are coming through, and whether we can target something specific to them,"... ACC wants users, parents, schools and retailers to try to minimise the risk of injury... Users should follow transport bylaws, and should wear protective equipment such as helmets and wrist guards. Skateboarding was probably the closest activity to scootering in terms of accident risk... In [the last financial year], ACC processed 441 skateboard injury claims and paid \$568,000 in compensation. A Land Transport Safety Authority spokes[person]... said scooters were in the same vehicle category as... in-line skates... and... skateboards... [■ If you worry about your child getting injured, perhaps you should encourage it to ignore its skateboard and instead take up a BOARD game – for example, Monopoly. Then, perhaps, one day your child will become a world Monopoly champion? This year]s... world Monopoly championships [are] now under way in Toronto... Thirty-nine... players, all national champions... – ranging from students... [(including an] 11-year-old, who dispatched her older sister in Puerto Rico's national championships[)]... and bus drivers to computer programmers... an economist... and a horse breeder – are taking part in the three-day competition. It's all for a chance to win \$US15,140... the total amount in play money in a Monopoly game. Invented in the Depression era by an unemployed sales[person], Monopoly is one of the most popular board games in the world. The game, which has been translated into 26 languages, has players navigating a board in a bid to become real estate magnates through buying and selling property.

...[WE'RE not sure if this one qualifies as sport, but it was sure worthwhile for a 30-year-old from New York city. The New Yorker recently earned \$US25,000 for winning the world scrabble championship in Washington, DC.]

...*Grey cells go for gold at mind games* They may lack the biceps of boxers, the thighs of cyclists or the torsos of gymnasts. But thousands of "athletes" at the Royal Festival Hall in London this week excel with a higher part of the body: the brain. The world's first Mind Sports Olympiad has brought together seriously clever people from around the globe to compete in more than 30 exercises in mental skill – chess, bridge, backgammon, crossword and

jigsaw puzzles, gin rummy, etc. Then there are the lesser known games – for example, Owari, Entropy, Continuo, Abalone, Twixt, Skat, Rummikub, Zatre, Dama. The event, which runs until Sunday, was the brainchild of two chess grandmasters and a British memory-guru and motivational speaker who has published 19 books on the power of the mind. “For thousands of years there have been physical championships,” the memory-guru says. “It seemed odd that the world had focused for so long on the body and not on the brain. Mind sports were in danger of being an enclave of those who were intellectually superior, but it’s for everybody. It’s egalitarian. Everyone has a brain.” Leading “sportspeople” in each category are taking part – players from more than 30 countries, including the Mongolian draughts team, the Kenyan Scrabble team and the Japanese Othello champion. Anyone can compete, in one or more events. Mirroring the Olympian pentathlon and decathlon are pentaminds, entering five games, and decamenthletes, entering 10. The top pentamind will win a flight on Concorde as well as a medal. The oldest contestant is aged 88 (in the IQ competition) and the youngest is a girl aged six (chess). □ **If the world’s leading chess federation gets its way, the game will be included in the Olympics – as long as the competitors agree to drug tests. The Federation Internationale des Echecs, the organisation leading the push, has already begun testing for substances banned at the Olympics in a bid to boost its credentials. That has upset some players, who call drug-testing in chess illogical and a logistical headache.**

...Do team sports have a place in the Commonwealth Games? The Games have traditionally catered for individuals, but team sports are taking hold... The 16th Games are the first to have admitted team sports and for many people cricket, rugby, hockey and netball do not fit comfortably into the Games ethos. Their ammunition belts have been stoked by the failure of leading cricket nations like Pakistan, India and South Africa to select all their top players. And England, the home of cricket, has decided not to turn up at all. Why should a sport, which has made a second-rate commitment to the Games, have a future at the event? *...When the decision to admit team sports to the Games was made about four years ago... a long-time [NZ Commonwealth] Games team selector... and another selector... [from NZ] were firm opponents. A major... concern... [of the long-time selector, who] is on the board of the [NZ] Olympic Committee... and... has a long Commonwealth Games history having won two weightlifting bronze medals... was that by having sports teams in their lineups, smaller and poorer countries would not be able to send such a diverse range of competitors... [suggesting] sports such as track and field, judo, weightlifting and boxing could suffer... [The long-time selector] believes Malaysia, in conjunction with the [Commonwealth Games] Federation, moved too far and too fast down the team sports way... The sports programmed for the Manchester Games in 2002 feature only one sport, netball. However, this could be reviewed... [The long-time selector] would support the Games being limited to 14 sports with four positions being reserved for track and field and swimming plus two team sports... The Games were once limited to eight sports plus the regulars of track and field and athletics. Team sports, such as cricket and rugby, do not need the Games. But for smaller sports – like judo and badminton – the competition is an important exposure vehicle. For the smaller sports, which aren’t... [going to be at] the Kuala Lumpur event... it must seem the team sports have gatecrashed the Commonwealth Games at their expense.*

...[NZ’s national] swimming coach... believes his sport is being subjected to harsher standards than others as officials pledge to “get tough” for selection for this year’s Commonwealth Games in Malaysia. In the wake of the [NZ] team’s disappointing display at the world championships... criticism of the sport has come from several corners, including [the] Sports Foundation chief executive... [The coach] was prepared to accept criticism for the [disappointing world championships] showing but... was critical of the inclusion of rugby and cricket at the event, saying neither deserved to be a Games sport. “I’m not going to stand back and watch swimmers not go to the Commonwealth Games when I know they’re taking an under-strength rugby team and a cricket side that is at the bottom of the world rankings... Swimming is a sport that has medalled at every Olympics since ’88 and it’s important we don’t react too harshly to one bad showing.” [By the way, ‘Auckland’s mayor is leaving town for the crunch month of the next local body elections to help to lead NZ’s Commonwealth Games effort. The NZ Olympic Committee yesterday announced its appointment of the mayor as chef de mission for the Games in September and the 2000 Sydney Olympics. The mayor, who reiterated that it intended to seek a fourth mayoral term, said the voluntary games job would keep him away for much of September, “when most of the campaigning is on” for the postal elections in the first half of October. “I will be campaigning with my campaign team, in absentia.” Asked if his planned absence indicated a belief that it could sleepwalk to victory, the mayor replied: “I’m expecting I will have a good campaign team on the ground.” The mayor agreed his absence might damage his re-election chances but added that his involvement in the games might also boost his chances. “It’s 50-50, politically.”]

...“Hello. Is that the Commonwealth Games village? Can I speak to the mayor? The mayor’s not there? Tell him I have to speak to him about Britomart. His campaign’s not looking good.” That may be the sort of nightmare message the Mayor of Auckland has set himself up to receive by accepting the mantle of NZ chef de mission for September’s games in Malaysia. The decision could be the biggest gamble of his political career by taking him offshore for the high point of his fourth battle for the mayoral chain. It could leave him vulnerable to political attacks from a strong contender – assuming one signs up. Election campaigns ignite numerous small fires that demand public responses from candidates, let alone the biggies like, say, if something did go wrong with the Britomart project, of which the mayor is a key supporter. His reputation for avoiding or ignoring the media could worsen. “The mayor could not be reached in Malaysia yesterday,” may become etched into reporters’ computers. His aim to be mayor for the 90s could crumble overnight, with someone else picking up the plum job of leading the Queen City through the America’s Cup, the millennium celebrations and the visit of the US President at the APEC summit. On the plus side of his gamble is the potential for reflected glory from Kuala Lumpur gold – publicity that his campaign budget could never buy.”]

...Wellington’s bid for the 2006 Commonwealth Games looks a shambles, but as [the] National Affairs Editor... reports, it’s not dead yet... The... leader of Wellington’s troubled bid... jokes about assassination attempts. It’s been a tough... year for the veteran Wellington city councillor. A practising midwife, the city’s deputy mayor... is used to broken sleep and fractious council politics, but confesses to “lots of 2am nights” at present because of stress. Not only are the bid’s finances shaky, but... [the] chair of the Games bid... has damaged the bid to an extent still being assessed with widely reported comments on Commonwealth delegates seeking sporting assistance in apparent return for supporting Wellington, and outbursts on a contract for television rights favouring rival bidder Melbourne. On her home patch, last weekend’s messy departure from the bid of [a] highly-respected local events organiser... has sent shockwaves through the capital’s tightly knit political circles, where events and entertainment are becoming big business. If Wellington’s campaign fails, the deputy mayor... stands a good chance of coping most of the blame. [The deputy mayor] can still manage a lovely smile, but behind the scenes the bid committee is this weekend scrabbling for traction. It is seeking corporate donors who were elusive even before the latest troubles, a new figurehead to replace [the departed organiser] and to repair unity among the nine local bodies which comprise the bid. If unsuccessful, a three-year-effort... may collapse for want of a bit of mayoral discipline and perhaps as little as \$150,000... Competition from Melbourne is fierce. The state of Victoria, with a population the size of [NZ], is sports-mad, even by [US] standards. They want the Games if only because Sydney got the 2000 Olympics, and [Victoria’s] Premier... wants them as badly as anyone. Melbourne has an official budget for its bid of \$7 million but its chair... – [a] personal friend of [the Premier and an AUSn] media mogul... – has told Wellington bid participants they have... \$15m to spend. By comparison, Wellington’s bid is led by a band of in-fighting, small-town politicians with a projected budget which was a little under \$1.5m – now [shown to be] less than \$1m – and until last week was being run from an office above [the organiser’s] garage... And where the [NZ] Government has been lukewarm at best about Wellington’s chances, the [Premier’s] administration has thrown the weight of its highly successful Melbourne Major Events Company behind its bid. The MMEC, which pulled the biggest ever crowd to a Bledisloe Cup rugby game in the home of Aussie Rules and stole Adelaide’s Grand Prix, is so fearsomely successful that [AUS]ns joke about Melbourne securing rights to the Sydney to Hobart yacht race. [NZ’s] Tourism and Sport Minister... was so impressed [that it] established Major Events [NZ], “modelled on similar organisations in [AUS]...”. Major Events NZ, however, was barely established when it was tasked with assessing the Wellington bid... [D]elays created by dealing with [MENZ] cost Wellington several crucial months last year... [Then MENZ]’s analysis blew

holes in prepared budgets, predicting a loss of up to \$66m and forcing Wellington to plan a smaller event[(the 'Wellington bid now caters for 3000 athletes compared to Melbourne's 4500')]. With forecasts running from a \$7m profit to a \$24m loss, [the minister] agreed to underwrite losses of up to \$11m, but only on the understanding "risk management of a very high standard" will be required if public money is at stake. However, the suspicion persists that this is not a mega-event the Government wants, in part because official advice suggests the Commonwealth Games[– last staged in NZ at Auckland during 1990 and previously at Christchurch in 1974, but never before at Melbourne (although Melbourne has staged an Olympic Games, which NZ has never staged, and Commonwealth Games have been staged at Sydney in 1938, Perth in 1962 and Brisbane in 1982) –] are almost an anachronism. [Wellington's] mayor... has sold the Games as a showcase for the city's growing potential as an events centre[(the city boasts '12+ venues – all existing')]. "We're looking seven years out and in seven years this city's going to need big events even more than it does now,"... [But] the Games' tradition as a friendly celebration of post-colonial fellow feeling sits uncomfortably in an age of promoters who assess whether they are "an appropriate product for N[Z] in the global events marketplace". For one thing, their financial viability is weaker than many alternative large events, and their focus offers little of the valuable international leverage the America's Cup might be expected to show. We may [have been] happy to spend \$500,000 for... [the Foreign Affairs Minister's successful] campaign to head the Commonwealth Secretariat, but the Commonwealth itself is dominated by African, Caribbean and poorer Asian states. Not much tourist potential there to justify backing the bid for the Games. The Government offered no more than a \$500,000 loan to help the bidding process, and denied Wellington the lobbying clout of... diplomatic posts, which Melbourne has been able to use. Not that the Games are necessarily bad business, especially in A[US], where they outrate the Olympics on [TV]. Aussie athletes habitually clean up[the medals at Commonwealth Games] and fellow citizens lap it up, which explains why Channel 9 has agreed to pay \$57m for television broadcast rights for a Melbourne Games... A[US]n TV rights might drop closer to \$30m[for a Wellington Games], but that still represents half the \$60m Wellington believes it can earn from global TV sales. Most of the rest of the \$150m needed to run the event would come from \$40m in international [TV] sponsorships, \$20m in domestic sponsorships and... \$15m ticket sales. In other words... viability... [isn't] hinged on last-minute ticket sales. Also, the 2006 Games will be the first under a new regime whereby major sponsorship and rights deals will be handled not by the host city, but by an international agency appointed by the Commonwealth Games Federation... Even if Wellington's bid survives the... councils have far to go yet to show they can keep their promise not to leave ratepayers with a fat bill if a larger than expected loss occurs[, and 'the CGF won't make its final decision until 1999. The Christchurch City Council, which last year withdrew its bid to host the games, has agreed to back Wellington's bid (that has an estimated cost of capital works needed of \$16m, compared with the \$26.2m spent by Auckland in 1990'), though most] crucially, perhaps, the N[Z] Olympic and Commonwealth Games Assn] will refuse to endorse the Wellington bid – a formal necessity if it is to go forward to the final vote in October – without stronger guarantees than currently exist for the total Games budget... On the other hand, the... \$50,000 trip by three bid members to a meeting of 17 Caribbean countries next month presents an opportunity to start repairing the damage... [caused by the deputy mayor's widely publicised inducement allegations... Indeed... [the mayor] continues to wax perky because [it] reasons the recent fuss will hardly have penetrated the consciousness of most of the delegates who will make the final decision. "These guys live in places like Jamaica and Guyana. They aren't reading the *Evening Post*..." [The mayor] clings to the notion that smaller, poorer Commonwealth countries will end up being turned off by Melbourne's Olympics-style bid... [as] they may... decide that by plumping for a glitzy Games in Melbourne, the chances of holding them in Kenya... or Jamaica will become a disappearing dream. Like Commonwealth heads of government meetings, the "Friendly Games" will become the preserve of just a few countries wealthy enough to stage them... That strategy is all the more compelling now Wellington is trying to win without actually inviting the 69 Commonwealth country delegates to visit N[Z]. That would have cost \$750,000... [I]f all else fails, there is always a minimalist option – to write a bid and present it... hoping simply the Games will fall into the city's lap. As... the... Wellington Central MP and Act party leader... points out, that is exactly what happened when Auckland won them in 1990. "I... know what a mess the Auckland bid was when they actually put it in (six years earlier, in 1984). They didn't intend to win it. They did it as a trial run." However, African nations liked the then Labour Government's stance on apartheid and rewarded Auckland, creating a scramble to provide the facilities. "Wellington has been much more careful... I say we should hang in there and stop squabbling. I... have absolutely no doubt Wellington could be the best... Games ever."

...Forget the Asian crisis, the plunging ringgit, talk of a [Last] World country or second-rate facilities, the XVI Commonwealth Games will do Kuala Lumpur and the Malaysian people proud. They justifiably boast some of the finest stadiums in world sport... The 90,142-seat Main Stadium, part of the 175ha National Sports Complex (cost \$500 million), is magnificent. There have been concerns that the canopy-like cover keeps the heat on, not off, the athletes but with only scheduled morning and evening competition any problems will surely be overcome. The adjacent hockey and athletics complexes are just as impressive. The futuristic athletics centre... is a state-of-the-art facility... The open sides allow whatever breeze [there is] to help allay the sometimes oppressive heat... A tour of other venues – the air-conditioned gymnastics stadium (13,000 spectators) and the smaller squash venue are also enveloped in the vast Bukit Jalil complex which is within easy walking distance of the equally imposing Games village – underlines the determination of organisers to provide second-to-none facilities for the athletes... 20,000 volunteers [were] chosen from 48,000 applicants... to play a part in "their" Games. Their task? Hour after hour walking the streets leading to the main stadium swishing a spindly broom to keep the roads spic and span... [● A NZer who once had a Games] gold in her grasp... [has died in] Hastings... aged 55...

FOR me as a fellow competitor... SYLVIA POTTS... will be remembered for her evenness of temperament and her willingness to help others, even at the time [when Sylvia] was competing. I was still playing hockey when I started to run 800 metres and [Sylvia] was at her best when I was on the way up. In 1972 when I was at my peak [Sylvia] had gone over the top... [Sylvia] was a 100 to 800m runner – not quite quick enough to be a top-line 400m runner. Sylvia was national record holder for a short time and it was her record I broke in the 800m... Athletics has flamboyant personalities... but [Sylvia] wasn't that type of personality. [Sylvia] was a straightforward, good journey[person] and... did well at every event [the athlete entered. Sylvia] competed in the 1968 Olympics in Mexico, then the 1970 Edinburgh Commonwealths and the '74 games in Christchurch... [when Sylvia] was chosen to carry the baton into QEII Stadium... [Sylvia was also] a good coach, and her contribution to athletics was marked by getting the N[Z] Order of Merit last year and an International Amateur Athletics Federation[(IAAF)] award for her work as an administrator. Everyone remembers that 1500m fall in Edinburgh, of course. It was a fairly new event for [gals. Sylvia] trained for those 1970 Games in Taihape. As you go through the place there's a dirty old rugby field on the way out of town. You're up to your knees in mud all winter long... – there was no going overseas or training at high altitude in those days. So when [Sylvia] said of her fall [just metres before the line while leading] at Edinburgh: "I was absolutely exhausted and I couldn't go any further" there was good reason for that. Everyone can have thoughts about "What if..." or "What would have been..." but [Sylvia] never harboured regrets like that. I knew her for years... socially as well as athletically and as a competitor... and in all that time... Sylvia... never spoke of it. [Gals] didn't go anywhere in those days unless they were with a chaperone. Sylvia and [gals] like her were breaking the ice for the others. [Furthermore, Sylvia] promoted the sport in a fundamental way – just go out, compete and do well... Potts learned in January that [it] had cancer. S[y]lvia... will be sadly missed – but... was too good to be missed for falling on the bloody line in 1970.

...[NZ's 50km walker] remembers little of the last-lap stumble that cost him gold. The Hamiltonian was just four minutes – 1000 shuffled steps – from the greatest moment of his sporting life when his dream of glory collapsed in what was the most heart-wrenching moment of the 1998 Commonwealth Games. But last night, replenished with electrolytes after a quick trip to hospital... [the walker vowed to] see another Games – Manchester 2002 – before ending his career. His dream of Commonwealth gold is as fierce as ever. Looking back at the race [the walker admitted to having] simply made a mistake in the fast pace [it] had set and... would take a lot from that as a learning experience. With three laps to go [the

NZer] was not feeling well and the ice cap on his head and frequent intake of water were not helping. But on the last lap... [the NZer still thought his body could] make it. "I was conscious that the finish line was just around the corner. I had thought my pacing was all right to get me home. Obviously I was wrong." [The NZer] started feeling light-headed, then went blank [– although the walker] remembers collapsing, trying to stand and not having the coordination. "My legs just wouldn't go." ...[the walker] started to think about having another go but accepted [the]NZ chef de mission[']s... help and his decision to call for medical attention. [The walker] was delirious and remembers talking a lot, but not what [was] said. "I've made a few apologies to people. All sorts of things were coming out." Such was his confused state of mind that [the walker thought it had actually] won the gold medal. "I was in the medical tent and I... was going, 'I know what it's like to touch perfection now'." ...Sadly, the athlete described by N[Z] team management as the most professional, focused and well-prepared member of their team was in another world... At the finish line waiting to savour and share victory with his star pupil, [the walker's] long-time coach and friend... was talking happily of the greatest day in his life. A couple of minutes earlier [the coach had handed his pupil] his last bottle, shouting, "Go get it." An official hurried over. "You N[Z]?" the official asked. The coach] nodded. "Your boy has stopped." [The coach] turned white, ran to the tiny television monitor and fought back the tears as, in disbelief and absolute horror, [the coach saw that his pupil], who had led for 49km and who had had a 6 1/2 minute lead, was on the ground... "Why, why?" implored [the coach as it] tried to make sense of the unfolding drama. "My best day has just become my worst." By the time [the coach] headed back down the course, [the walker] had already, thankfully, been pulled from the race at the insistence of [the chef de mission], who had just arrived and was heading to join team members waiting to celebrate N[Z's six]th Games gold. "...The heat had hit him like a ton of bricks... I had to make a decision," said [the chef de mission], "They asked me if [the walker] was allowed to go on or not. I could see... the... 1954 Vancouver marathon drama revisited... all over again. There was no way that was going to happen. His life is worth more than 1000 gold medals..." ...[in 1954 an English athlete had] the marathon gold medal in his reach... [but collapsed] in the stadium... [Yesterday's] gold medal went instead to Malaysia's... [representative], continuing the run of success for the host nation at the Games. N[Z]'s other walker... was the 10th and last finisher.

...Judges have been given the power to disqualify walkers in the final stage of a race even if they have not been warned [for simultaneously lifting both feet off the ground]three times beforehand, the I[AAF] said yesterday. The rule change, adopted by the IAAF Congress... comes into force immediately... [In news from the Commonwealth Games, a director's son has proved it] is one Kiwi who can fly... His 10.19s in the blue-ribbon event of the Games and the 10.17s personal best [it] ran to qualify rank him as one of the fastest Caucasians of all time. [A] Pole is first in that club with 10s flat, run in 1984... [An AUSn] ran a personal best of 10.03s to finish fourth yesterday and may be the first white... to join the 19 [athletes] in the sub-10s club, [which currently contains]Africans, Afro-Americans or Caribbean runners like yesterday's winner... His 9.88s was a Commonwealth Games record... The win meant a lot to the diamond earring-studded 24-year-old, who thanked God and country by first sinking to the track then draping himself in the Trinidadian flag. The sprinter was the first Trinidadian] athlete to win gold for his homeland since the Kingston Games in 1966.

...RED-FACED Commonwealth Games organisers have been giving away free tickets in a desperate attempt to save the Friendly Games from becoming the "Empty Games". Malaysians have stayed away in droves and even those who do bother to show up discover start times and events have been changed at the last minute. Fewer than 50% of the target 1.28 million tickets have been sold, leaving Kuala Lumpur with a record number of athletes and events – ...4208 athletes and 2460 officials... – ...and a record number of empty seats. Even [a Trinidadian]'s... much hyped attempt at the 100m world record failed to excite Malaysians. Organisers claim 58,000 tickets were sold for the Game's top event but only 37,000 turned up... Now in a last ditch face-saving attempt to rouse support before the games close tomorrow, tickets to the athletics... now cover the whole day instead of being sold separately for morning and evening sessions. Entry was free for the semifinals and finals of boxing and the last three days of shooting. With Malaysia hoping for a spectacular Games to support its bid to stage the 2006 Asian Games and later the Olympics, embarrassed officials admit the problem lies with the lack of popularity of Games sports in Malaysia. "There are certain sports which are not popular in Malaysia," said [the]operations director... "I've been involved with track and field for 40 years and we never get more than... 3000 people at an event." Officials have also resorted to juggling figures to play down the games flop, with [the]marketing director... claiming the number of tickets sold was nearer 66%. "Now some events are free we have reduced the number of tickets to 950,000 for sale, out of which 600,000 have been sold,"... It has cost Malaysia nearly \$NZ130 million to stage the Games... A sellout... would have earned around \$18m. The only sessions to have a capacity crowd were the finals for cricket, netball, [guys'] hockey, badminton, swimming and ten pin bowling. There are still hundreds of tickets available for the closing ceremony... Kuala Lumpur[is] the first Asian city to host the Commonwealth Games in their 68-year history... Even hardened boxers have moaned about fighting in the 12,000-seat... stadium devoid of atmosphere with fewer than 50 paying customers and about 200 athletes and officials during the preliminary rounds. "Something has to be done to get more people here," complained [an]England super heavyweight...

[A] GIANT weightlifter... turned into [NZ]'s incredible hulk as [it] shattered Commonwealth Games records and hauled in three gold medals... last night. The 27-year-old Aucklander... cleared a total of 367.5kg in the 105kg division... [to win] the snatch... the clean and jerk... [and combined totals. Earlier a] fellow Aucklander... won two bronze medals in the 105kg class. [The bronze-medallist], previously a triple jump and bobsleigh international, overcame the effects of a painful gum abscess to strike the medals in a hotly contested competition... [The multi]-skilled athlete... lost nearly 5kg as a result of his illness... It was a good day for the Kiwis yesterday... [A shooter] was another multi-winner, adding a bronze medal in the air pistol event to her two silvers... The third-seeded Kiwi... [gals'] badminton pair... were beaten 15-8 4-15 15-9 by the seventh seeded pair... who responded to their parochial home crowd... [in] their doubles semifinal but [the Kiwis] still claimed a bronze medal... [A gal] bowler... hit form yesterday to claim a bronze in the singles. N[Z] took a bronze squash medal [in] mixed doubles... There will be more medal glory today when the... [gals'] hockey team will be in a playoff for bronze after losing a thriller 3-7 to A[US] last night.

...For a disturbing few days it looked as if rugby was going to be the only salvation of N[Z]'s ambitions for gold at the Commonwealth Games. Fortunately it did not quite come to that, but whichever way you look at it, the introduction of sevens was a roaring success. It was, after all, one of the few things that the A[US]ns did not win. It was also a big breakthrough for rugby in a new arena of competition... Sevens will certainly be retained as a Commonwealth Games sport at the next venue... and you can bet on it if Wellington hosts the Games in 2006. All the world powers in sevens are Commonwealth members and that makes sevens a winner in the Games' strategic development. It is probably the only way a country like Samoa or Fiji [– which lost the final to NZ (although at least one Fijian was in the gold-medal winning team) –]will be able to get a medal and that, too, is an important consideration. Having cracked the Commonwealth Games, there is no reason to suppose that sevens cannot become an Olympic sport... [NZ]'s 35-medal haul... was backed up by the usual spate of top 10 finishes, including eight dreaded fourth placings – four in swimming, one... in the shot put, a couple in gymnastics and... [one] in the decathlon. The big disappointment was lawn bowls. From 24 medals at stake they grabbed only one... Track and field too had their share of disappointments with a number of athletes failing to even reach their pre-Games selection criteria. [However, tenpin] bowls was the only one of the 15 Games sports not to win a medal... Cycling and shooting were again the biggest contributors... with seven and eight respectively[, and one shooter]'s bronze taking him to 10 – the first N[Z]er to reach that milestone. It all added up to value for money, according to [the NZ] Sports Foundation boss... "The games gave our athletes invaluable exposure to top-class competition." ...It cost an estimated \$3.7 million from various sources to send 218... athletes and 80 officials to Kuala Lumpur... "Ultimately how a team performs is judged in gold medals and N[Z] finished up with eight, double the number won in Victoria[, Canada,] four years ago..." [NZ's

eight golds placed us sixth on the medal table behind AUS (80 – of 213 – golds and 198 medals in total), England (36, 136), Canada (30, 99), Malaysia (10, 36) and South Africa (9, 35). In seventh place was India (7, 25), followed by Kenya (7, 16) and Jamaica (4, 6).]Besides those who won medals, [the Sports Foundation boss] was encouraged by other aspects... [T]he netballers, who lost the final 39-42... fired a warning shot across A[US]'s bow that they were a force to be reckoned with... It was the same with the [gals'] hockey team, who showed they were definitely top-four prospects for the... Olympics...

The most significant result of the Commonwealth Games for the future of sport in this country has been the debate that has emerged about the amount of funding sport needs if our top performers are to remain competitive on the world stage. On one hand the chief executive of the Sports Foundation... has categorically stated that unless there is increased funding we simply cannot expect our athletes to win medals. On the other hand, the... [PM] has equally clearly said there would be no additional Government funding of sport. It is time sports fans took up the challenge... and made this issue a political one. Our Government hardly pays lip service to sport. In terms of funding, the amount it puts in from the tax take is a pittance... When you compare the amount the Government puts into sport to that provided by the A[US]n and English Governments you cannot help reaching the conclusion that N[Z] politicians do not value sport... [A]n effective sports lobby... needs to... embarrass the bureaucrats... to get sufficient funding to put our athletes on an even playing field with the Aussies and English... Surely some... cash... should be provided out of the health budget. If there were more people actively involved in sporting and recreational pursuits there would be... a host of [articles for sports journalists – such as myself – to continue writing about]... and... less need for the ambulances at the bottom of the cliff in the form of hospital admissions... What is wrong with giving athletes the best possible conditions to achieve their potential? That should be the aim of any Government that allows its young... [people] to represent their country on the sports fields of the world. It is archaic and totally unrealistic to suggest that somehow you are meant to get to the top of the sporting world by working at a full-time job, training in inadequate surroundings, competing without the best of medical and nutritional advice, avoiding overseas competition while all the time slipping into a personal financial mess. I am not saying that we will get to the top of the sports world by chucking money at our athletes. What I am arguing is that this country benefits greatly in all sorts of ways from sporting success and that such success will continue to be haphazard until we make a commitment to sport.

...The doom merchants say N[Z] sportspeople will never be able to foot it with the Aussies until we have an academy like the A[US]n Institute of Sport... The A[IS] has super pill status here – a body which if replicated would immediately resolve many of our sporting ills. After N[Z]'s poor medal tally at... Kuala Lumpur[– the tally compared with those from 'Brisbane and Edinburgh (1986) when NZ sent only 113 and 128 athletes respectively, and trails the 58 medals won at Auckland (224 athletes) and 41 at Victoria (133) in 1994' –] the immediate cry was for an AIS-type setup in this country... By inference, the knockers are also suggesting N[Z]'s 17 sports specific academies are inferior to the A[US]n system. The AIS in Canberra and its satellite state institutes, which tend to specialise in different sports, are a fine network. But they come with a price tag of millions of dollars – sums which only fill the dreams of N[Z] sporting administrators... The Kiwi academies are mainly funded by the... Sports Foundation with some private sector backing... [The recent] injection of \$10m public money, [brings] the Sports Foundation budget to \$15m... Between \$3.5[m]... and \$4 m... of foundation funding goes into the academies each year. Whatever the... [funding levels, however, it is unrealistic to compare NZ's setup] with the Aussie setup. A[US] has had 22 years of sustained sporting investment. The AIS was established after the green and golds failed to win a gold medal at the 1976 Olympics in Montreal... [– which, ironically, were weaker than usual because] the Muldoon National Government... [had] made possible the All Black tour of [South Africa in] 1976, which led to more than 30 countries boycotting the... Olympics... "It is not simply a case of setting up academies and by tomorrow we will have champions... Give it another 20 years and give us sustained funding..." The gap between [AUS and NZ]'s medal hauls is also population-related... As a result of... [AUS having] close to five times this country's population... Kiwis will never close the achievement gap... A[US] is aiming for 60 medals at Sydney 2000 – just short of our total from all Olympics. We have a target too: to better our best medal tally of 13... N[Z] has won 74 Olympic medals, 44 since 1980, and 446 Commonwealth medals...

COMMONWEALTH GAMES meetings had a forerunner in the Festival of Empire in 1911, in London. The first full meet, however, was the Empire Games held at Hamilton in... Canada, in 1930... NZ won three gold medals... four silver medals... but no bronze... At the second Empire Games in London in 1934, the great Jack LOVELOCK won the gold medal for the one mile... NZ also won two bronze medals... NZ won a total of 24 medals at the 1938 Empiad in Sydney – five gold, seven silver... After a break of twelve years caused by [WW2], the Empire Games of 1950 were held at Auckland and the NZ team won a total of 51 medals – ten gold, 21 silver... With the name change to British Empire and Commonwealth Games, the next festival was held at Vancouver... and the NZ team won 19 medals – seven gold, seven silver... The British Commonwealth Games, as they then became known, were held in Cardiff in 1958, and NZ won 19 medals – four gold, six silver... [I]n Perth in 1962... NZ won 32 medals – ten gold, 12 silver... NZ won 26 medals at the British Commonwealth Games in Kingston in 1966 – eight gold, five silver... The 1970 games were held in Edinburgh and NZ won 14 medals – two gold, six silver... In 1974 Christchurch was the host of what are now called the Commonwealth Games. NZ won 35 medals – nine gold, eight silver... The 1978 Commonwealth Games were held at Edmonton... and NZ won 19 medals – five gold, six silver...

RHODES SCHOLARSHIPS... for Commonwealth countries and the US were established according to the terms of... [the will of] a wealthy 19th century, British capitalist and colonial administrator, Cecil John Rhodes... [who was the PM] of Cape Colony in the 1890s, but resigned following complicity in the illegal Jameson Raid into the Transvaal, then a Boer Colony, in 1895... Rhodes Scholarships... enabled [students] between the ages of 19 and 25, selected for all-round ability, to study at Oxford University... [The latest NZ recipient is 'one half of only three pairs of NZ brothers to be awarded the coveted prize. When the 22-year-old Aucklander takes up his scholarship at Oxford University next year, working for a PhD in English and Latin, his older brother will just be completing its three-year stay there. Not content with completing a masters degree and making academic history, the 22-year-old is also writing poetry, drafting a novel and leading NZ's own Aussie Rules team.'] THOMSON, James Allan (1881-1928) was NZ's first Rhodes Scholar... in 1904... On his return to NZ in 1911... Thomson... was appointed palaeontologist with the N[Z] GEOLOGICAL SURVEY... and... later... became director of the Dominion Museum, a post... held until his death from tuberculosis. [Thomson] helped establish the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research... There was mostly one scholarship a year until 1926, since then there have been two allocated in most years. [Gals] became eligible in 1977. Scholars have their transport to Oxford paid, and are given a personal allowance during the term of the award (usually two years). They are chosen by a committee, which is chaired by the Governor-General... [No scholarship was awarded in 1933 or between 1942 to 1945. One of the two scholars selected in 1940.] Murray William Speight, [later]... died of wounds in Italy... [WW1 also affected the scholarships –] Henry Stokes Richards, [selected in 1915, was]... killed before taking up the scholarship... Athol Hudson[(1916) was] killed in action before taking up the scholarship... Among NZ Rhodes Scholars who have later become famous were Arthur Espie PORRITT (1923) and John Edward LOVELOCK (1931)... Porritt was a brilliant athlete. While at Oxford University [Porritt] captained the NZ team to the Olympics at Paris in 1924, where [Porritt] earned a bronze medal for third place in the 100 m final. This was the Olympiad on which the hugely successful film, *Chariots of fire*, focused but Porritt's real name was not used, unlike those of the other 1924 athletes who were represented. [Porritt] captained the NZ team at the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics and managed the NZ Olympic team to Berlin in 1936. [In addition to being a chairperson] of the British Empire and Commonwealth Games Federation, and a member of the International Olympics Committee [(IOC), Porritt – who]... served with the Royal Army Medical Corps in [WW2 –] became... the 11th Governor-General of NZ... the first NZ-born[Governor-General], serving from December 1967 to September 1972... LOVELOCK... (1905-42) was the first of NZ's world-beating middle distance and long-distance runners...

[B]orn near Reefton, son of a battery superintendent in the mines at Crushington... John... won a scholarship to Timaru Boys' High School, another scholarship to the University of Otago where [John] studied medicine and then... became a Rhodes Scholar... [John] was a successful doctor, becoming assistant director of a department of the Manhattan Hospital in New York, which specialised in the treatment of poliomyelitis[, but] was killed when [the retired athlete] fell from the platform in front of a train in a New York subway. Lovelock set a world record for the mile of 4 minutes 7.6 seconds, during a visit to Princeton University, in the US, in 1933... His most spectacular performance was at the Olympic Games in Berlin... when, before 120,000 spectators, [the NZer] won the 1500 metres in 3 minutes 49.8 seconds. This was a world record and... NZ's first track and field gold medal.

OLYMPICS are about winners and losers, records and heartbreaks – and controversy. N[Z], sharing a place on that stage for 88 years, will tomorrow be the first country in the world to celebrate centennial Olympic Day... Driven by increased despondency over what [the French person] saw as invading commercialism... Baron Pierre de Coubertin presided over a congress attended by 13 nations – with the written support of 21 other countries (including N[Z]) – in Paris in 1894. [The Baron] revealed his dreams to revive the ancient Olympic Games as a four-yearly contest between amateur athletes from around the world in selected events. The era of the modern Olympics was born... On July 19 in Atlanta... [athletes will once again] chase a golden dream. [However, commercialism], despite de Coubertin's hopes, has become all-enveloping. It wasn't always like that... The ancient games... were held in Greece from 776BC. There was only one race, a sprint; the prize, an olive wreath. [Gals] were not only forbidden from taking part but barred from watching as naked [guys] chased glory. These games were abolished in AD394. The first "modern" games were held in Athens in 1896 – four years earlier than de Coubertin's plans to host the Olympics as part of the Paris International Exposition. Some 311 contestants (all [guys]) from 13 nations competed in nine sports. The first Olympic champion was... James B. Connolly, from Boston, who hopped, stepped and jumped 13.71m... [– in comparison, the winner of] the Barcelona triple jump gold in 1992... leaped 18.17m. The 1900 Paris Olympics were disappointing, tagged a "comic opera." [A] Briton became the first [gal] Olympic champion with her tennis victory... Among the 19 [gals] of the 1206 competitors from 26 nations was Margaret Abbott – America's first [gal] Olympic champion. Unfortunately, Margaret died in 1955 unaware that the golf tournament [the USer] had won was part of the Olympics. The games were held in America for the first time in 1904 when 681 [guys and 6 gals] journeyed to St Louis. N[Z]ERS were part of the Olympics for the first time in London in 1908 – 14 years after the secretary of the N[Z] Amateur Athletic Association... had met de Coubertin in 1892 and later became N[Z]'s first member of the IOC. NZ's three competitors... were lumped in with the Australasian team... [T]rack walker... Harry Kerr... won bronze in the 3500m... There were another three Kiwis in the Australasian team at Stockholm four years later. Swimmer Malcolm Champion swam in the world record-breaking 4x200m freestyle golden relay team. Anthony Wilding... took tennis bronze... The first really acrimonious Olympic controversy came six months after those Stockholm games when popular decathlon and pentathlon (discontinued in 1924) champion Jim Thorpe was stripped of his medals and trophies. An investigation found that in 1909 and 1910 [Thorpe] had been paid \$25 a week to play minor league baseball thereby, in the strictest definition of the word, becoming a "professional." The second placegetters in both events refused to accept the trophies sent to them by the IOC and in 1983 – 30 years after Thorpe's death from a heart attack – the Olympic Committee lifted the ban and presented the gold medals to his children. N[Z] sent its first stand-alone team... to Antwerp in 1920. Single sculler Darcy Hadfield finished third (behind American John Kelly, Grace Kelly's father) to win N[Z]'s first Olympic medal. The Olympics returned to Paris in 1924 with a record 3092 competitors from 44 countries. N[Z] again had four representatives. The return was the same – one bronze medal, won in... [the guys'] 100m by Arthur Porritt. Lord Porritt, who later had a... 35 year... term as... surgeon to the royal family, was bemused [at being someone who] had achieved so much in his life but was best remembered for "something which had taken less than 11s." N[Z]'s first Olympic gold came four years later in Amsterdam when [a] 22-year-old welterweight (67kg) southpaw boxer... battled bravely with an injured hand to beat [an] Argentinian... on points. The 10,000m gold was the last of a record nine won by Finnish athlete Paavo Nurmi – his first was in the same event in Antwerp eight years earlier... There were solitary medals at the next two Olympics – silver for rowers... in the pair oar at Los Angeles in 1932 and from that epic Jack Lovelock 1500m victory in Berlin four years on [the 'Berlin gold medallists were each given a tree seedling – Lovelock's oak, planted in his old school yard, is one of 17 still growing around the world']. No medals came the way of the seven-strong Kiwi team in London in 1948 but three medals, including a breakthrough gold for... [NZ gals with a] record-breaking long jump, resulted from Helsinki in 1952. The first, and still only, Southern Hemisphere Olympics in Melbourne in 1956 attracted a record 52 N[Z]ers but a total of only 3342 competitors. For A[US]'s nearest neighbours there was double gold – ...in the 50km road walk and Sharpie class yachts... There were 83 countries and 5348 competitors when the Olympics returned to Europe in 1960 when... [two runners gave NZ] sport its finest hour with their heartstopping 800m-5000m double... [A third NZer] completed the three-medal haul with marathon bronze. Four years on three medals became five – again in athletics and yachting – with the redoubtable [800m gold-medallist from 1960 winning NZ]'s first double gold with his Tokyo 800m and 1500m triumphs. [Another NZer] ran third in the 1500m – the only time N[Z]ers have collected two... medals... in one event. N[Z] rowers returned to the dais for the first time in 36 years in 1968 with their coxed four victory in Mexico. N[Z] won bronze in the [guys'] marathon and... one of the same colour with N[Z]'s only Olympic shooting medal. The 1972 Munich Olympics are tragically remembered for the Palestinian guerrilla attack on Israelis in the Olympic village and at Fustenberg Airport. There was some sport, even if staged under a cloak of sadness. Kiwi [rowers] confirmed their standing with gold in the eights and silver in the coxless four. [A NZ runner] surprised himself with the 1500m bronze. Two golds – one expected... in the 1500m... the other one of the biggest upsets of Olympic history... [when] the hockey team... won a transtasman clash 1-0... – marked N[Z]'s appearance at Montreal in 1976... Kiwi rowers continued their medal run with bronze in the eights... [and a runner] grabbed silver in the 5000m... Apart from a token canoeing presence and... this country's only Olympic modern pentathlete – N[Z]ers stayed away from the... 1980 Moscow Games ['because NZ joined a widespread boycott of the event, led by the US, over the Russian invasion of Afghanistan']. They hit back four years later – in another weakened games [caused by a widespread boycott of the event, led by Russia, over the US boycott of the 1980 Games] – in Los Angeles with eight... golds (three for... [one canoeist]), 11 medals in all and an impressive eighth placing on the medal table among a record 140 nations... [An equestrian] followed his 1984 triumph with back-to-back gold in Seoul in 1988... [NZ's canoeists] also repeated their Los Angeles K2 500m victory while [another NZer (r:p1555, ln27)] turned bronze to boardsailing gold. It wasn't as good four years ago in Barcelona. [The boardsailer's] sister... continued a family tradition with her gold – N[Z]'s only 1992 victory. Yachting picked up four of N[Z]'s 10 medals... Only five countries have been represented at every Olympics in the modern era – A[US], Great Britain, Greece, France and Switzerland – and all will be sending teams to Atlanta this year... [along with] upwards of 10,000 competitors from 180 countries[, plus thousands of sports reporters and photographers]... De Coubertin, one of only six presidents of the IOC and who died in 1937, would surely squirm if [it] had ever thought that decisions would be made on purely "commercial" grounds... But that will all be forgotten next month. Let the 1996 games begin!

...IT'S [nearly] time for the Olympics a[gain] and... when you have just about every sport except marbles being accepted into the games, I think rugby should get an invite. I have nothing against sports like beach volleyball and synchronised swimming but you would think either rugby or rugby league would be somewhat more popular, especially when union ranks right up there in terms of being one of the most played team sports. The fact that both rugby and league are professional would not now be a factor with the Olympics already having the U[S] NBA dream team and some of the world's best [professional] tennis players... To me, it's great that people who are recognised among the best athletes in the world are

there. I can think of nothing better than being in an Olympic final and going for gold... I love watching the world's best compete against each other and I think the Olympic Games are a time when everyone allows themselves to get a little bit patriotic. I will be following the British athletes and obviously [Britain's top sprinter]'s attempt to win back-to-back Olympic gold medals in the 100 metres will be a highlight.

...[a] sprinter... ran... "the perfect race"... when [the USer] clocked 19.66 seconds for the [guys'] 200m yesterday. The 28-year-old Texan with the unique upright style wiped out... [an Italian]'s 17-year-old record of 19.72 seconds with a furious curve run at the US Olympic trials. It was the second time in two days that [the Texan] had run faster than [the world] record, but an assisting wind of 2.7m per second had negated a record for his 19.70 second effort on Saturday. The wind today was 1.7 mps, under the allowable 2.0 mps for record purposes. "I just wanted to make a spot for myself in track and field history," said... [the Texan, who] now hopes to become the first [guy] to win the 200 and 400 metres at the same Olympics at... Atlanta... [The Texan] claimed gold in both events at last year's world championships and duplicated the feat in the US trials, winning the 400 metres last Wednesday in the third fastest time ever run, 43.44 seconds... [The Texan had] dropped out of the 1992... Olympics 200-metre semifinals after suffering from food poisoning... [Incidentally, Atlanta's Olympic organisers expect to come] in more or less on budget at \$1.7 billion[('Barcelona's Olympics cost \$1.6 billion, Seoul's cost \$3.1 billion and Los Angeles' \$469 million')]. They promised the Games would not cost the U.S. taxpayer a penny and won huge sponsorship from corporations... Coca-Cola is the major sponsor... in Atlanta. Some industry analysts suggest their bill could be as much as \$2 billion... There will be modest profits [- 'projected at \$30 million (Barcelona made \$6 million, Seoul \$350 million and LA \$250 million in profit)'] - but Atlanta will be left with a legacy of Games-related projects worth hundreds of million of dollars.

...Atlanta turned on a ceremony that did the city proud in launching the centennial of the modern Olympics... yesterday... However, [NZ's]... Olympic team had to put in some unexpected last minute training to get to the... opening ceremony... on time... An organisational hitch left the... team of 103, including the 70 athletes who elected to march, in the holding pen 500 metres from the stadium entrance when their name was called. That meant a sprint through the sultry Atlanta heat to get to the stadium. "It was a real mess-up," said [the] team chef de mission... "They got the timing all wrong and ran short of countries to march on... to the entry gate." ...The highlight of most opening ceremonies is the lighting of the Olympic flame and there have been many dramatic moments. But Atlanta equalled any of them. The flame was passed from [a] quadruple gold medallist... to [the US professional] heavyweight boxing champ... [Apeman, who] ran into the main stadium and then linked arms with [Greece's] 1992 hurdling gold medallist... - linking these Games with the birth of the Olympics in Greece. They ran the rest of the lap and passed the torch [- which, prior to very Games, 'travels from Greece, and ends up in the host city to light the flame that burns throughout the competition' - on to a] champion swimmer... and, at the base of the tower, [the swimmer] passed it to a figure cloaked in darkness. The spotlight descended and the mystery [figure] was revealed - ...the... [heavyweight boxer who] won a gold medal in 1960 and went on to become the greatest figure in sport. But these days, as could clearly be seen yesterday, the 54-year-old is a shell of his former self due to the effects of Parkinson's Syndrome. One hand quivered uncontrollably as [the winner of the Rumble in the Jungle] lit a fuse which climbed to ignite the flame in the Olympic cauldron. His central role yesterday was all the more poignant as [the boxer] had thrown his own gold medal into the Ohio River after being the target of racial taunts shortly after his triumph in Rome. The ceremony was watched live by 83,100 people and by a record world TV audience of 3.5 billion[(some of whom will have taken their annual holidays to coincide with the games)]. The scale of the four-hour extravaganza was staggering. A 22,500 square metre blue rug covered the entire field (the largest rug ever made, spectators were told), the 5500 performers used 1.6 million sequins on their costumes. Baron Pierre de Coubertin... said a century ago: "It is above all through the ceremonies that the Olympics must distinguish itself from a mere world championships." The Baron would have been well satisfied in Atlanta yesterday.

...a few days before the start of the centennial Olympic Games... I hired... a plump, elderly, black Atlantan... outside the Olympic Media Centre... to take us on a half-day tour of the city's much-hyped crime zones... [A]s we pass through the oak-lined streets of up-market Cascade Heights, [our driver] stops to point out the mansion of... "the black boy... baseball superstar... that beat Babe Ruth's home-run record." Only a mile or so further on, we pass a row of boarded-up shacks that until recently were occupied by crack cocaine dealers. Like hundreds of similar haunts in the city, the crack houses have been systematically closed by police in the lead-up to the Games. Some have been stripped of all surrounding vegetation, the bare earth evoking a napalm attack, leaving the dealers and their customers nowhere to hide. In such trouble zones, police or security guards are positioned at almost every corner. It's part of the massive public relations exercise designed to make Games visitors feel safe, with a security force of 30,000... - ...14,000 Army troops... 10,000 private security guards... 4500 public safety personnel with... the State of Georgia Olympic Law Enforcement Command... 1500 members of the Atlanta Police Department... and [about] 1100 foreign law enforcement volunteers... Long regarded as the most enlightened city in America's South, Atlanta is 67% black, yet aspects of the pre-Games "get clean" campaign make some blacks uneasy and others openly hostile... Poor blacks are being penned into their neighbourhoods to keep them out of the public eye... Tumbledown houses near Olympic venues have had a quick spruce up to hide the poverty that exists among 28% of the population... The most controversial is the controlled movement by Georgian authorities of about 15,000 (mostly black) "homeless" people from inner-city haunts to outlying areas. It began months ago with a programme called Homeward Bound, in which fringe-dwellers were offered one-way tickets out of Atlanta... but only if they signed an agreement not to return. When that failed, the homeless were shifted to parts of Atlanta beyond the glare of Games publicity. In a supreme irony - even by U[S] standards - many of those being hustled out of sight came to Atlanta hoping to land [one of] the 85,000 Games-associated jobs advertised in recent months... [At least the] 120 inhabitants of death row in Atlanta... are breathing a little easier; for the duration of the Games, executions have been put on hold. Less than an hour's drive from the gleaming new Olympic stadium, the Jackson state prison, a squat brown fortress surrounded by lakes and parkland, holds Georgia's dirty secrets: [guys] condemned to electrocution on the basis of evidence which would surprise lawyers elsewhere in the world. Not, of course, that most Georgians feel they have anything of which to be ashamed. In the "worldwide capital of human rights," as Atlanta described itself in its Olympic proposal, the hot subject of debate is whether... a murderer, should be allowed to donate his kidney to... the retired Cobb County detective who led the investigation which put him on death row and who is now on a dialysis machine. A body of Georgia opinion - about to be backed with a federal law suit - holds that condemned prisoners should have their organs "harvested" before death, as happens in China. "There is rarely any question about the guilt of these people, virtually none," [the] state attorney-general... insists. "...There aren't any innocent prisoners on death row... That is a myth... I take pride in the fact that the people want the death penalty. Go visit the family of the murder victim, and then write the truth: that these guys on death row are the pits." Guys like... the next in line for execution, who lost his final appeal to the Supreme Court at the end of last month. [The inmate] was condemned for the rape, sodomy and murder of Joy Ludham, a 19-year-old student, whose body was fished from a creek in Houston County... in December 1981. The horror of that crime is matched only by the horror that [the inmate] could ever have been convicted. FOURTEEN days before the discovery of her body, Joy... - who knew [the inmate] - had disappeared. But [the inmate] had an unusual and unbreakable alibi. According to [the person] who conducted the autopsy, Ludham had been dead for less than five days. For 13 days before the discovery, [the inmate] had been under continuous police surveillance. [The coroner then] changed his mind. Ludham might... have been in the water for 14 days. On his revised evidence, [the inmate]'s conviction rests. Yet astonishingly, [the coroner] had no medical training... was merely a crime lab technician used to checking fingerprints, not the state of a corpse. When the athletes go home, [the inmate] will die... The... [state attorney-general] does not accept the proposition that the death penalty is racist. The great majority of convicted murderers are sentenced not to death, but life imprisonment. But in a state which is two-thirds white, 12 of the 20 prisoners killed in the past 20 years have been black. Two-thirds of its murder victims are black, but 85[%] of those on death row have been convicted of killing white victims. After 220 years, Georgia has yet to execute a white person for the murder of an African

American. In 1776, the U[S] Constitution created the world's first codification of human rights. The American way of killing should not be discriminatory, while death penalty trials must meet the standards of legal "due process" – in other words, they must be fair. The reality is that the American debate on crime has ceased to care about such niceties. For poor, especially black poor, defendants justice sometimes seems not so much a lottery, but more a closing steel trap. There is no legal aid in Atlanta: no system by which a [perso]n on trial for his life can expect the state to fund the lawyer of his choice. In even the most complicated cases, defendants without personal wealth must make do with attorneys chosen by the judge – often lawyers with no criminal experience. Their errors are rarely put right on appeal: time and time again, U[S] law makes defendants pay for their lawyers' mistakes with their lives... Often, says... a Yale law professor and director of the Atlanta-based Southern Centre for Human Rights, the death sentence is awarded "not for the worst crimes, but for the worst lawyer." ...Statistically, of course, this remains one of America's most dangerous cities, with a million emergency calls to police a year, and a murder every two days. Yet at every likely area we visit, the vice dens and drug houses have been boarded up, defoliated or ripped down... On Jonesboro Rd, a young black... lounges on a busted sofa outside a dilapidated shopfront. Above him is a sign: "No loitering [sic]. No drugs. No alcohol". [However, teenagers] hunker by the roadside doing drug deals. [Our driver] says we shouldn't leave the car or even stop in these parts, so [my] photographer... has been snapping scenes through an open window. The trouble starts when a group of youths notice the camera as we pass; when we do a U-turn and head back towards them – a dumb move, without doubt – they rise as one and start to move. "They're getting rocks!" [the photographer] calls from the back seat, but by then it's too late. The first one shatters the rear window... FOR A few moments, it's like one of those dreams when you try to run but can't. The cab is littered with glass... and... youths are loping all around it, hurling fist-sized rocks that smack against the bodywork like bullets. "Go!" someone yells, breaking the spell... The driver accelerates for a couple of hundred metres then, inexplicably, hits the brakes. Gasping for breath... [the] gospel singer and lifelong Christian... reaches over and scrabbles at the glove box in front of my knees[, and]... drags out a silver .38 revolver. Then... spins the wheel and guns the old Buick back towards the black kids still clutching at their rocks at the roadside... "No doubt 'bout that," [the driver] says when asked what [it] is doing. "I'm gonna kill that bastard that hit my car." ...[the photographer] and I experience the surreal, time-lapse sensation that accompanies real shock. I remember thinking: "[The driver] can't be doing this – [because the driver is] a gospel singer... one of the... Sunbird Boys!" Then we're both yelling for him to turn up a side street, where several black-clad security guards are visible. The security [guards] listen to what happened for about three seconds then rush off after the youths with an evil-looking Great Dane on a chain. "Stay right there..." one of them yells. "Don't get outta the car!" ...[but the photographer suggests]: "...let's just get the hell out of here... we'll fix up your window, mate." ..."Well... OK." As we drive slowly away, I ask... if [the driver] really would have used the gun. "Oh, for sure..." Minutes later, we're out on the wide bright highway passing the Georgia Dome. Jets from all over the US scream in packed with happy tourists bound for the Games. [The driver] sticks his head out of the window and grins at the sky. "Welcome folks," [the driver yells at the planes]. "Welcome to Olympic City!"

...Angry N[Z] rowers blocked an Atlanta street outside the Olympic village [yesterday] after their scheduled bus shuttle to training did not turn up. The Kiwis had been waiting for 90 minutes and decided something had to be done or they would not get to Lake Lanier, 90km north of Atlanta. They walked out on to the road... and sat down on the hot concrete. They were joined by rowers from other countries, including Russia, Ireland and Italy. Rowing's head body, the International Rowing Federation, said the transport system was in crisis.

...Atlanta scrambled to put its Olympic organisation back on track yesterday after technical problems, faulty transport and huge crowds threatened to bring the world's biggest sporting event to a standstill. The... nightmare Atlanta has feared most since winning the games – traffic chaos – has... come true. Buses serving venues are late or fail to appear at all, timetables are worthless, and at one venue... athletes... confronted police. "The other morning there were 250 rowers sitting out in the road. They just got so frustrated... [– but weren't as frustrated as the athletes who actually 'missed their events because of holdups'],"... City freeways were relatively clear, but Atlanta's subway system [has] struggled to cope... Organisers blamed the city for failing to deal with traffic in central Atlanta... Inside the venues, things were little better. The much touted results service, employing state-of-the-art technology and the central plank in the city's boast to stage the games, was a huge embarrassment. Media organisations said they faced a major crisis because organisers were unable to provide a viable results service. Olympic veterans said it was the worst fiasco they had ever seen. Although results were appearing promptly on scoreboards at the various sports venues, at the main press centre in downtown Atlanta they were either unavailable... or incomplete... [(wrestling) results gave no clue how each bout had finished...], riddled with errors... like boxing results reporting that the referee had stopped the fight in the fourth round, although Olympic bouts last only three... while results for straightforward sports such as soccer were incomprehensible... [In another development, two] Britons have been arrested as part of a massive campaign against ticket touting. They were picked up by police in a full-scale sweep of Olympic city where "black marketeers" have arrived from all over the world with the aim of making fortunes from peddling marked-up tickets.

...the 48-year-old president of the Atlanta Olympic Committee, admits [telling] one white lie when leading his city's bid to be awarded the 1996 Olympics. "I was asked what the average temperature of Atlanta was during July and I told them 71°. I forgot to mention that that's at 4am,"... The temperatures during the day are well in excess of 100°. The other statement... which has proved most wrong concerned price-fixing. [The president] said there would be none of the shameful price-fixing in Atlanta that occurred at Barcelona. But going into the Olympics, hotel prices... skyrocketed. Rooms normally \$174 now go for \$575... and those at \$60 are... \$225. [The president] is on an annual salary of \$US669,112 and has got to meet every important head of state in the world since Atlanta was awarded the Games in 1990. The price: Two triple by-pass heart operations.

...in 1948, the BBC took a fateful decision. It paid a princely £1500 (\$60,000 in today's money) for the right to telecast the Olympic Games to a domestic audience... the first time a television network had paid the I[OC] for the privilege. But not the last. The rights to this year's Olympics raised \$1.3 billion from broadcasters round the world... Sportsfests generate audiences beyond the wildest dreams of television companies... [T]wo-thirds of [hu]mankind... are likely to... watch... some part of the 1996 Olympics... The top eight television programmes in America are all sporting events... Sport has a special quality that makes it unlike almost any other television programme: immediacy. This... has created a symbiotic relationship between sport and television in which each is changing the other. Television and the money it brings have had an enormous impact on the Olympic Games, including on the timing of events and their location. For instance, an Asian Olympics poses a problem for [US] networks: viewers learn the results on the morning news... [USers] are rare in following four main sports... [– gridiron,] baseball, basketball and ice hockey[–] ...rather than one. America is also uncommon in having no publicly owned networks. As a result, bidding wars in other countries, though just as fierce as in America, are different in two ways: they are often fought between public broadcasters and new upstarts, many of them pay channels; and they are usually about soccer. NOTHING better illustrates the change taking place in the market for soccer rights than the vast deal struck this month by Kirch... The... German group... spent \$3 billion for the world's biggest soccer-broadcasting rights: to show the finals of the World Cup in 2002 and 2006 outside America. That is over six times more than the amount paid for the rights to the World Cups of 1990, 1994 and 1998.

...[“did ya hear that tonight people can pay to listen to records being played by DJs, including] DJ Hitler or something...” “Hitler with a HIT space LA...” “[Perhaps]... they just play war movies all the time. Backwards, so maybe the Germans win or something...” “Maybe [they] could get a videotape of that synchronised swimming routine.” “...those stupid synchronised swimmers from France who were doing... an interpretation of Auschwitz in dance.” “Goose-stepping into the pool...” “...what an abomination.” “I saw a videotape of their practise... on CNN... Their nose plugs sat under their nose like a Hitler moustache...” “No! Really?” “I don’t think it was done on purpose but [that] was the effect... We didn’t have a video player set up in the newsroom.” “So we didn’t capture that one... Why didn’t you... that would’ve been the greatest moment in sport, ever...”

...[by giving NZ] swimming its greatest moment, and first gold medal[at an Olympic Games pool, the NZer who won]... the 200m freestyle... put his country ahead of the U[S] on the medal table – for 12 hours at least. If [his] coach... is right, there are more swimming medals to come. Today, [the gold medallist] swims the 4x200m freestyle relay and tomorrow the 200m butterfly – the event in which [the swimmer grabbed NZ]'s first swimming silver four years ago. On Wednesday [the swimmer] will attempt to complete the 200m/400m freestyle double. [The coach] has maintained all along that the 400m might be [his] best event... the victory yesterday... was the ideal 50th birthday present for [his father, although his father] was lucky to be there to collect it. Eighteen months ago [his mother and father] tossed a coin to see who would be in Atlanta. [His mother] won and the house was mortgaged to pay for the trip. [The father] eventually made it to Atlanta thanks to his co-workers and employees at The Warehouse.

...[an] Irish swimmer... won her second gold of the Atlanta Olympics yesterday in controversial fashion, while [a] Turk... broke a world record on the way to making history in the 64kg weightlifting event... [The Bulgarian-born Turk] became the first lifter to win three gold medals in successive games... [A Russian who is] unbeaten in major championships since 1991... became the first [guy] since... Tarzan... to win the 100m freestyle title twice... Johnny Weismuller... went on to star on the cinema screen as Tarzan after winning in the 1924 and 1928 Olympics... [The Irish swimmer] is no Tarzan, but [the lass] is Hollywood material, the classic rags to sporting riches athlete of these Olympics. Unknown before the games, [the swimmer] won Ireland's first [gals'] gold in Sunday's 400m individual medley, a victory that was also her country's first title in the pool. Despite protests from the U[S], Germany and the Netherlands, [the Irish lass] was then allowed by the I[OC] to switch from the 200m to swim in yesterday's 400m freestyle, even though the official entry deadline had passed. Her qualification in the morning heats cost [the US's] winner of four Olympic titles, a place in the final. [The USer] was incensed... "I am someone who plays by the rules... I have learned that life is not fair. Today proved that point." [US] anger was cooled somewhat when [one of their girls], aged 15, won the third [US] gold in the pool in the 100m backstroke... Russia's [guys] also triumphed in the gymnastics hall, winning the team gold... with 576.778 points, a comfortable 1.239 points better than China. The gymnastics crowd can now turn their attention to their "Magnificent Seven" – the [US gals'] team – who bid today to overturn a slender Russian lead after the compulsory routines... The three-way showdown – Romania are also in with a good chance – could provide one of the high points of the games. In the fencing hall, [the] Olympic champion... of France, and [his opponent from] Cuba, decided to indulge in a spot of boxing. They had to be separated by police when they clashed off the piste after the Cuban was ousted from the foil tournament... Courage was required at the yachting venue in Savannah where the Tornado class, among others, was hit by a severe lightning storm in an area recently affected by Hurricane Bertha. Some sailors abandoned ship for safety reasons... The Tornado heats were cancelled.

...And the losers, by unanimous vote, are the Atlanta officials... Olympic Games organisers were reeling under a storm of criticism yesterday as... transport and communications chaos worsened. Angry team managers... from 197 countries... lashed out at the I[OC], which curtly told local organisers to get their act together... Two of the biggest rowing stars at the Games, the Britons... quit the athletes' village in disgust at transport problems. Ukrainian, British and Polish rowers hijacked a bus heading for a hockey venue. Meanwhile, a powerful consortium of 88 European broadcasters said they wanted back some of the \$NZ363.37 million paid for rights to the Games. The European Broadcasting Union said working conditions were so bad it could not deliver acceptable programmes to viewers and listeners. Atlanta has been getting an earful from everybody ranging from volunteer bus drivers housed in condom-cluttered flop houses and spectators crammed into... trains to... workers struggling with a multimillion-dollar results system that collapsed before it even started to work. The bizarre results system awarded Asian records to all 36 weightlifters who took part in the 64kg snatch. The lucky lifters included 10 Europeans, five Latin Americans, two Americans, an African and a Canadian. Even more fortunate were [the lifters from] the Solomon Islands and... China. According to the results they failed to register a lift. But what the heck, they got Asian records too. Atlanta's computerised information service listed [a] Ugandan lightweight... as just 57cm tall. A light-heavyweight... of Sierra Leone, was credited with being just 1cm taller. Not so underplayed was... a Tanzanian boxer... in the light-welterweight division... said to be 6.35m tall... Two athletes had been injured after colliding with rubber-wheel "trams" and carriages in the villages. "Their ankle sprains were sufficient enough to put them out of the Games." ...Local organisers [have] hit back at criticism, saying athletes were to blame for transport woes inside the Olympic village. They accused them of dangerous driving in the golf carts provided to nip about the village... [However, NZ's] swim coach... said... "People don't understand how bad conditions are at the pinnacle of competitive sport, which is what the Olympics are... You've got to sleep in little beds, in tiny rooms. Our 16-year-old girl... swimmers are having to share unisex shower facilities with their [guy] team mates as well as the Kiwi rowing team... It's really hard for these kids, many of whom have never been overseas before... Security is incredibly tight and a lot of these young swimmers don't understand the necessity of all the checks..." [The coach] believes one of the reasons the highly fancied A[US]n swim team have performed so badly is because they have been in the village too long. A[US]'s head coach... was criticised by [his] leading swimmer... for moving into the village... 10 days before the games... N[Z] moved into the village two days before the opening ceremony.

...[the reigning] champ... will start the defence of his 100m track title this week determined to end his career on a high – even though [the Brit] has totally lost faith in the Olympics. [The Brit], who only decided to run just before the games, believes the Olympic movement has sold out. [The Brit] did not take part in the opening ceremony and has yet to set foot in Atlanta after training with the British team in Florida. But the British team captain found himself under fire yesterday – for bothering to turn up at all. [His country's former] national director of coaching... said: "[The defending champ] is not going to make the final... [Furthermore, all] this nonsense about 'will [or won't the runner] go?', it does the sport... and... him no favours. It certainly doesn't do Britain's sprinting youngsters-in-waiting any favours." The 36-year-old[sprinter], who fell out with [the former coach] after a row over Britain's Barcelona relay team, had said last season that... "To be honest, I think the Olympics are losing their ideal... It started off as a great way for athletes to prove they are the best. Now, there is all this talk about paying them... I still think the Olympics should be totally prize or money-free. Once you win at the games, the sponsorship and everything else comes through. They brought in the Dream Team, they brought in the tennis – I think they have lost it." [The sprinter] is not the only one. Britain's 1956 Olympic steeplechase gold medallist... who organises the London marathon, boycotted the games after arguing: "All the freedom of the games has gone now. There is pressure to succeed at all costs..." Few track and field stars can quite put their finger on why the Olympics retains an aura at all... [T]he 1500m world champ... says... "I have never said a career without an Olympic title is a failed career. It's a dream to win the Olympics, you make history – but if you are world champion then no one can take that away from you. I would never say an Olympic title is more important than a world title.[Like it says in the movie *Cool Runnings* (about a team of Caribbean Olympians): 'A gold medal is a wonderful thing but if you're not enough without it you'll never be enough with it'."

...[a] Canadian... crowned a day of drama with a world record in the [guys'] Olympic 100m final yesterday after [Britain's defending Olympic] champion... was sensationally disqualified... [The world champion Canadian cemented] his place as the fastest [hu]man on the planet... [by clocking] 9.84s in a sumptuous showdown between the cream of world sprinters... Eight years after the Seoul Olympics, [the 28-year-old]'s success eased Canadian conscience at having [another 100m gold medallist] disqualified and banned... [Furthermore, his effort broke a dominance of the 100m record that has been maintained by six successive US sprinters since] 15/10/68... It also meant that for the second successive Olympics the U[S] failed to finish in the medals in an event they used to regard as their own. The race was preceded by scenes of confusion with three false starts... [The Brit] broke first... and... [last. The oldest guy] in the field... left the starting line-up only after a protracted period of confusion and remonstrations with officials, [which included] throwing his shoes in a bin... The Briton was later involved in a potentially ugly scene with [the silver medallist after the Namibian]

and other sprinters in the race accused [the deposed champion] of not showing them respect. "I am very upset with [the British runner]," an emotional and tearful [Namibian] said later. "The way [the old guy] behaved affected my race absolutely. If I had false-started twice[– instead of just once –] I would have left immediately..." The scowl on [the British runner's face as the 36-year-old] walked away without defending his title was in stark contrast to [the Canadian's] unconfined joy at becoming the... first [guy] since... 1968 to set a world record in an Olympic 100m final... [The Canadian], one of four Caribbean-born [sprinters] in the final... ignored questions about [his compatriot's 1988 disgrace].

...a 36-year-old grandfather who is set to retire at the end of the season... boasted yesterday that... Britain's biggest track name... was still the best athlete in the world although... [the] British star... had lost his Olympic sprint title through disqualification. The day after... the Atlanta 100m final... [the British runner even denied jumping] the starter's gun. "I felt that I had the perfect start... [However,] I don't just stop being the greatest athlete in the world just because I lose one race..." said... [the] Olympic silver medallist... in 1988... [who] became world champion [in 1993] and has been European champion since 1986. His disqualification... in front of a full house... was vintage... [egotism – the British runner] refused to accept it and delayed the re-start for several minutes until the referee... ordered him from the track. [But the British runner] stayed in the arena, and performed his own lap of honour after the race... [later claiming this act] was for the fans. "They knew they had been robbed of a much better race than the one that went on... For me, I was the people's champion out there."

... "In lane three, the world champion, world record-holder and 1996 Olympic 400m gold medallist... ranked No 1 in the world in the 200m and the 400m for four years, something no other runner has done for even one year... representing the US..." So the planet's greatest sprinter is introduced... on to the stage for the centennial Olympics 200m final... That might have warned [his] seven fellow-finalists, who needed alerting. But they are not worried, though they would be if they knew that [the USer] is... afraid... For six months up to this point, the hype and pressure on him has been... well, [the USer] can't even begin to describe it... [The USer] is afraid of failing, but... thrives on the feeling. The higher the stakes... the better... [the USer performs. The USer] settles into his blocks nervous, but pumped, and switches into what [the USer] calls his "danger zone," when his eyes stare so hard you expect the air to burn, and his mind goes into battle mode. It is able to block out the mugginess, the haze around the stadium from the breaths of a house of 83,100 roaring in anticipation, the two blimps in the black sky above, the fact that this historic attempt was made possible by his pushing the IAAF to accommodate him by changing the Olympic 200m-400m schedule... The PA... comes back: "We've just seen [a French gal] do the 200-400 double, now [the USer] is trying to become the first [guy] to do so." More pressure... Another mighty cheer. The announcer again: "Sssssshhhhhhh." And guess what? 83,100 people hold their breath. Bang. [The USer], in his golden slippers, stumbles from his blocks in a blizzard of flashes... not so much an avalanche gathering speed, but a thunderbolt... [His] legs whirl like a beater and his spine is as straight as an ironing board... [The USer knows his body] is running faster than ever, but not by how much... Fifteen metres from the end... his left leg [begins] cramping, but... his [body]... is flying to the line... the time: 19.32s... [chopping] 0.34s off his world record[(the '33rd world record broken at these Olympics as the human "body is pushed ever closer to its limits")]. His margin of victory is 0.36s, the largest in an Olympic 200m final since his hero, Jesse Owens... [won] 60 years before. [The USer], an everything-has-to-be-just-so kind of guy, skips and leaps in excitement, pointing at himself just to remind you, if you had not figured it out, that [the sprinter is the centre of attention]. Lost in the euphoria is the fact that... the... [Namibian who ended his streak of winning] 21 consecutive finals in the 200m... less than a month ago and was the 100m runner-up last Monday... [came] second in 19.68s... an African record... the 100m bronze medallist... from Trinidad and Tobago... [came] third in 19.80s, and [a Barbados runner came] fourth in 20.14s, [both times being] national records. After walking, not running, around the orange track and embracing the crowd's adoration, [the USer] said: "I wanted history and I got more than I expected. It's unbelievable." It sure is.

... Wesley Methodist Church in Papatoetoe is putting its prayers behind... one of... [its] parishioners... as... the... boxer... takes on[a] Nigerian... in the semifinal of the Olympic super-heavyweight division. [The church's minister] said the congregation members were pinning their hopes on a gold medal. "We had no idea how good [our boy] was... I am very proud that one of our local people is on the Olympic stage." The congregation had supported [the boxer before the giant] left for Atlanta. Tongans back home are also hoping that a major celebration is on the way... [The] deputy editor of the bi-monthly magazine *Matangi Tonga*, said people were feeling excited and proud. "Our people have picked him as a winner all along, even though... [n]o one else gave him a chance. Some overseas sports commentators said [our boy] didn't have a snowball's chance in hell. We are saying that hell has frozen over." Tongan radio broadcast a message on Tuesday encouraging the people to fast and pray for [a] victory.

... It is a long time since I have felt so emotional, choked up, about a sporting victory as I did when [a NZ swimmer] touched in the 200m freestyle... I remember choking up in 1952 when [a NZ gal] won her gold medal long jump at Helsinki. The late Teddy Isaacs was sports editor of the *Otago Daily Times* and... had done so much to encourage [her] to aim for the Olympic Games, recognising quite early that [the local athlete] was a special competitor. I still recall his exultation when [the athlete achieved all Teddy] had predicted. That... [athlete] was no "one-shot" phenomenon. [The gold-medallist] was a great all-rounder who won Commonwealth gold in her specialty event as well as in the shot put and discus, and won representative honours at provincial and Island level in netball, as well as being a N[Z] basketball representative. That was then... now, a young... [guy] has been a paragon of self-denial in reaching for the stars to become the nation's greatest swimmer by topping his Commonwealth and world titles with Olympic gold. In doing so [the swimmer has, like the long-jumper] before him, injected a "feel-good factor" into all of us. We share in the reflection of his glory from Atlanta, and it will carry us along until the next time a Kiwi emerges to write his own and N[Z]'s name indelibly into the international register of athletic achievement. It is easy for we couch potatoes to applaud and to bask in the warmth of victory. But we should not forget those years of early... mornings... at Moana Pool, winter and summer, the gruelling kilometres of conditioning, the gym work to build muscle strength... [plus a] minimal social life because sleep and rest became more important than personal enjoyment. The shortage of funds requiring belt-tightening by... his parents... The... four year... plan was to tour the major swimming meets to build experience against the world's best. It cost a great deal in terms of... cash and sacrifice, but the whole of N[Z] saw the outcome. Yet there is a certain irony in it all. We all... shall remember... [his] swim whenever the Olympics are recounted in future. But once that excitement recedes, cold reality returns. There is no real pay-off from swimming as there is in rugby or tennis... No millionaire status; perhaps an endorsement or two. Little enough to balance the constant training, constant travelling, constant expense. The... recognition becomes a trophy on the sideboard.

... [THE] DOWN to earth Kiwi... doesn't give the appearance of caring too much about the financial rewards that could come his way following his stunning double gold... success in Atlanta. But [the swimmer would] know exactly where [his effort stood if it] came from Asia. Gold medal winners from Singapore will be rewarded with... \$1m. In Taiwan, they'll dish out \$523,000 for gold, \$287,000 for silver and \$161,000 for bronze. In South Korea gold medallists will be paid \$1150 a month for life, while Thailand will pay gold medallists \$345 a month for 20 years... By contrast, every A[US]n who wins gold gets \$57,000... The U[S] will pay athletes \$20,000 for gold, plus \$32,000 for divers, and \$64,000 for swimmers and weightlifters. Britain and Brazil make no payments. And... for her three golds... [an Irish swimmer also] receives... nothing... from her country...

N[Z]'s medal winners, their glittering trophies swinging round their necks, headed the Olympic team as they disembarked from their flight home at Auckland Airport early yesterday. The team was officially welcomed by some of the country's sporting greats... "We're waiting to see our golden boy," said airport staff on the tarmac, forming a second wave behind the officials to cheer their hero... [Later on in the day, emotional] welcome-home festivities overwhelmed the Dunedin Olympic swimming champion... reducing the double gold medallist to tears... during his thank-you speech... in front of more than 20,000 fans... About 12,000 people jammed footpaths or marched through town in a hastily organised civic

welcome to Whangarei's gold and bronze medal winning Olympic [equestrian. Unfortunately, it appears that NZ had]... too many underachievers at Atlanta, reflected in how few actually put themselves into medal contention. [Its total of '6 medals placed the NZ team 29th overall, although the 3 golds meant NZ was 26th on the official medal table, just ahead of South Africa (5 medals) and Ireland (4), which was 8 places ahead of Britain (15 medals but only 1 gold). A total of 21 countries won just one medal, and for 5 of them – Burundi, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Hong Kong, Syria – that medal was golden. The US topped the table with 44 golds (101 in total), followed by Russia (26/63), Germany (20/65), China (16/50), France (15/37) and Italy (13/35). However, the NZ team would have found some comfort in the fact that when the 79 medal winning countries were ranked according to medals won per head of population, NZ was 7th (1:580,000). Ahead of NZ on this table was Hungary (1:490,000; 12th on the official table with 7 golds and a total of 21 medals), Cuba (1:438,000; 8th; 9/25), AUS (1:434,000; 7th; 9/41), Jamaica (1:410,000; 39th; 1/6), the Bahamas (1:270,000; 62nd; 0/1) and in 1st place – due to the silver its superheavyweight boxer won – was Tonga (1:97,000; 66th). When countries were ranked according to golds per head of population, Ireland came 1st (1:1.19 million), Cuba 2nd (1:1.21m), NZ 3rd (1:1.22m), Hungary 5th (1:1.40m), AUS 7th (1:2.00m) and Jamaica 9th (1:2.51m). None of the top 6 countries on the official table featured amongst the top 12 on either of the population based tables, nor did the Ukraine, South Korea or Poland (9th, 10th and 11th respectively in the official top 12).'] Another interesting table might have been one that compared #medals won to \$invested in each Olympic team.]

...HIS new mobile phone keeps ringing... "Every day, they call... They want 250,000 rand (...\$[NZ]85,000) in cash and say they will kill me, kill my wife and children if I do not pay." ...Three months ago [the runner] was living among the poorest of the township poor in a corrugated-iron shack... built[by] himself, doing odd jobs in a coal mine... Nobody told South Africa's first black Olympic champ... that, once [it] took the marathon gold at Atlanta, everybody would want a piece of him – from those who want his time to those who want the money they think [the runner has]... Nobody told him... that this would be part of the price of making history... "I go here, I go there... I have to do this and do that, but all I want to do is run." A few days ago, [the runner] was overwhelmed to meet [South Africa's first black] President... but sounds as bemused by all the adulation from the majority as [it] is alarmed by the threats of the minority. Then there is the unedifying wrangle between those who would control his destiny. So confusing. Could [the runner] have imagined this as [it] stood on the podium in Atlanta, his dream fulfilled? The world wondered who [the runner] was, this diminutive figure who had prevailed in the closest finish in Olympic marathon history. "It was for my country, for my President," [the runner] explained, coming across as the antidote to Atlanta's dreadful [pro tennis players] and Dream Teams. There, this humble, dignified [hu]man told a story to give a feel of that soaring spirit which had seen him, seemingly deadpan and emotionless, crush the will of the world's best endurance runners. Three months earlier, back at home in Bethal, in Free State province, three armed thugs hijacked his van, fired in his face and forced him to jump from the moving vehicle. The scar from where the bullet sliced across his chin was nothing, but the back injuries suffered in his desperate dive from the driver's seat made him think his Olympics had gone. But [the runner] fought back, as astonishingly as [it] had done three years earlier, when the rites-of-passage ceremony through which young Ndebele [guys] have to pass – a form of circumcision using a spear – was apparently so badly botched that [the runner] was left dangerously ill. That [the] runner recovered to father two children was perhaps a greater triumph than any Olympic win. Atlanta should have been the end of this remarkable [hu]man's trials; but it seems to have been the beginning. At first, the celebrations – the all-night parties, the roadshows, even the blood of a slaughtered ox left to run outside his house as a mark of respect – amazed him. Then the exhausting schedule of appearances became too much. [The runner] also discovered that "I won gold for South Africa, but some people in South Africa hate me and are jealous". Stories of undreamt-of riches... had already spread. A smart new home was to be built, far from Bethal, as a gift by the mine that employed him, [the runner] had received a 250,000 rand... hand-out from South African sports bodies... was getting 10,000 rand... for an hour's speaking engagement, a new contract with a major agent... could net him... \$1m in two years. It was all true – but at that point [the runner] had seen little of the money. It did not stop the threats. [The runner] feels they stem from a Bethal business[perso]n who was rumoured to have organised the previous attack on him. One newspaper reported that a gang member claimed [the runner] would be assassinated because "the business[perso]n did not want anyone to be richer or more successful than him." [The runner]'s employers moved him and his family to a temporary safe house nearer the Koornfontein mine... [and] the mine's resources manager... reassured him that nobody is likely to attack an authentic township hero because of the likelihood of bloody retribution, but the country's violent culture has already seen a renowned football coach and a boxer murdered this past year. "They can do what they say," [the runner said. Occasionally, the runner] sounds a bit like a lost soul, in the lucrative new world... encountered in Atlanta, [and it] actually is. Less than 24 hours after his victory, [the runner] had signed a contract for [someone] to become his new agent, apparently having forgotten that [the runner] already had a legally binding, long-standing agreement with a [South African agent. The new agent insists that his intentions were honourable, but the old agent] is among those wanting to know how a semi-literate individual, unaccompanied by any legal representative, could possibly have understood what [it] was signing. Indeed, [the runner] has since signed an affidavit admitting [that it] "did not understand" [the new agent's offer and confirmed the existence of] a "valid agreement" with [the old agent]. But last week [the runner told me the new agent] was his agent. It is a complete mess. Athletics South Africa... the sport's governing body, has set up a temporary group along with officials from the mining company and the government of Mpumalanga – [the runner's] place of origin – to manage his affairs until it hears from prospective agents and decides which should look after him. The ASA insists this shows it has [the runner]'s interests at heart. But [the old agent], who worked happily with [the runner] for five years, insists the ASA is only interested in controlling its prize asset... Could [the runner] be forgiven for feeling [that it] would have been better off never having landed his dream? "No, it has been difficult but I am happy to be Olympic champion,"... Anyway[, the runner]... can see light at the end of the tunnel... Last weekend [the runner] ran a low-key half-marathon in Swaziland, the first race [it] has managed to fit in since the Games. "It is good to run again,"... No bodyguards, no threats, no pressure, just the simple joy of racing. [The runner] has never asked for any more than that. [Editor's note: The 'marathon – the principal event of modern Olympic Games – is named after Marathon in Greece, where the Athenians in 490 BC successfully defeated the invading Persian army; news of the victory was announced in Athens by an unnamed courier who ran all the way from the battle field, a distance of 26 miles 385 yards (42.195 km), and fell dead on arrival.]

... 'A large part of the invading force of Persians sent by Darius the Great had been trapped by a smaller Athenian force under Miltiades; the remainder fled to their ships. Not only Athens but all Greece was saved for the time. The news of victory was brought to Athens by Pheidippides.' Modern-day Athenians are engaged in a different kind of battle – one to win] the 2004 Olympics... [– and their chances of success would seem to have improved dramatically following the publication of a p]etition signed by intellectuals, writers and environmentalists protesting against Rome's bid... [that said:] "The waste, the useless public works and squandering of public money during the 1990 soccer World Cup [in Italy] are all too fresh in the mind."

...Harrah's Sky City has announced a four-year sponsorship deal worth over \$1 million for the Special Olympics Foundation... [to assist with providing] sports training and competition to people with intellectual disabilities and special needs... At a presentation in Auckland yesterday, the Sky City managing director... said an annual base fee of \$200,000 would be given to cover the foundation's costs in national and international competitions... The foundation sends a N[Z] team to the Special Olympics World Games[, which have been] held every four years in the U[S since the games were]... founded... in 1968... Sky City will also underwrite a biannual fundraising national torch relay of Special Olympians and provide promotional material. Its 2500 workers will have opportunities to become volunteers in the foundation's activities... [The managing director] hoped the sponsorship would bring deserved recognition for the 3500 athletes and their volunteers. The foundation chair[perso]n... welcomed the sponsorship, saying it would be invaluable in helping intellectually disabled athletes lead a more rewarding life...

[‘After being born with spina bifida, a NZer was not even expected to walk. However, in Christchurch this weekend, the 35-year-old ran those predictions ragged with a gold medal performance in the 100m sprint for guys over 30 at the National Special Olympics. The 35-year-old, one of 1000 intellectually disabled athletes competing at the Games at QEII stadium, ran for the four-person Waiheke Is team – the smallest of the 41 taking part. “The Games have really given me something to aim for,” the 35-year-old said. “We train for weeks on Waiheke, and it’s really changed my life-style.” Now, the 35-year-old watches his diet and rarely drinks. It paid off, too, with a silver medal in the 50m and a fourth in the 200m. One of his teammates (24) was competing in her first Special Olympics and was “loving it”. With the assistance of crutches, the 24-year-old took part in the 50m dash, 100m walk and softball throw, but was unplaced. Competitors are arranged in ability groups, giving everyone a chance of winning. The 60 top Special Olympians win the right to compete for their country at the International Games in North Carolina’. □ The ‘founder of the Special Olympics for the mentally retarded, and sister to assassinated US President John F. Kennedy, is in critical condition at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. Two weeks ago the founder, aged 79, underwent a five-hour operation that removed a benign pancreatic tumour. Although doctors had expected a full recovery, the founder was readmitted to hospital last week.’

...‘Even before the teams appear, the crowds are hooting, pumped by thumping music and Mexican waves that flow endlessly around the stands at the Olympic Park Dome. They have been queuing for more than an hour, with their NZ, British and AUSn flags, bright yellow Brazilian caps and anything else with colour and flair, stomping their feet as decibel levels soar to brain-hammering limits. As the Wheel Blacks and their German opponents roll out on to the court, tracked by team mechanics with their racks of spare wheels, the roar is deafening. This is gladiator stuff. They may have changed the name from murderball, but the crowd want it all – and the players are ready to give it. The teams file out, high-fiving each other before lining up in mid-court, eyeing each other in the opening stages of the Paralympics wheelchair rugby series. The Germans are expected to fold under the weight of a stronger, faster, Kiwi team, but no one has told them that. As the Wheel Blacks perform the haka, the Germans glare back, rhythmically pounding the wheels of their chairs. No one can accuse Germans of cultural sensitivity, nor are they easily intimidated. The crowd thunder out the countdown from 10 to zero, the horn blasts and within seconds one Wheel Black belts through the path cleared by his team-mates and they go one up. The Wheel Blacks follow with another lightning goal and it’s all on. A German slams the first goal-scorer behind the rear axle, the Kiwi hits the floor and the German is sinbinned for one minute: a few minutes more, and the goal-scorer is over again. This is brutal, and the crowd love it. So does the goal-scorer. It grins broadly, high-fives the German who took him out, and races back into play. Welcome to wheelchair rugby, one of the big hits at the Paralympics and a rapidly growing sport that has already created a semi-professional league in the US and is exploding throughout Europe. It began 23 years ago in Canada as a contact sport for tetraplegics – like wheelchair basketball with punch – involving chairs with rounded armour that protects the legs and at the same time acts as tackling rams. Picked up by the Americans, the sport evolved into a blend of rugby, basketball and American football, accelerating around the court in brilliant spurts of speed, dazzling tactics and chair-hammering tackles. Four players are on the court at any one time, with up to eight substitutes. Players are graded with a level of disability on a points system from 0.5 to 3.5, with a maximum of 8 points for the four players on the court. Balls can be carried, dribbled or passed – but must be bounced at least once every 10s – and goals are scored by carrying the ball over the opposition goal-line. “There’s a bit of rough and tumble, but only a few broken bones,” the Wheel Blacks’ coach says. “Mainly it’s just cuts and bruises and the odd concussion. The equipment is designed to protect the players as well as to support their roles, but obviously it can’t protect them from hitting the floor. They learn how to fall, like rugby players learn how to tackle, and how to absorb a tackle.” The chairs, weighing just 13kg and lightning fast on turns and acceleration, are far more vulnerable: at \$4700 each, they have a life expectancy of 12 months. The Americans have dominated the sport for years through a 1300-player pool and its sponsored league. Three Wheel Blacks have been recruited by the US league, and a fellow Kiwi also plays in the US. The Wheel Blacks won their first matches, against Britain 46-37 and Germany 47-30.’

...‘EARLY IN APRIL 1987, Birgit Dressel, one of West Germany’s finest Olympic-level athletes, felt a stabbing pain in her lower back after shot put practice. Birgit consulted a doctor who gave her a painkiller injection, but the pain persisted. Pills, suppositories and more shots followed over the next day and a half, all to no avail. Her condition worsened dramatically. Birgit was rushed to Mainz University Hospital, where more than two dozen baffled specialists worked desperately to help her – in vain. By afternoon her lips and fingernails had turned blue, and a whitish crust had formed on her mouth. Birgit was transferred to the intensive-care unit, but none of the tubes, blood transfusions or forced respiration had any effect. That night Birgit died, aged 26. The details of her story did not emerge until September. But when they did, the world of amateur sport went into shock. Over the previous two years Birgit had been swallowing, injecting and inhaling some 100 different drugs in her single-minded pursuit of a gold medal in the 1988 Olympics. Her quest had been fruitful up to a point – in that time Birgit had rocketed from thirty-third to sixth place in the world heptathlon rankings. But the miracle of her improvement was mostly chemical, as was her death. Her body poisoned, her blood breaking down, Birgit died a slow, ghastly, mysterious death, which pathologists could only broadly qualify as a “toxico-allergic incident.” Birgit Dressel’s agony was horrifying proof that a major crisis is upon international athletics, and that crisis is drugs. “Drug abuse has become the biggest single problem facing sport today,” says a former British world champion in the 800 and 1000 metres. Indeed, estimates are that perhaps 50% or more of world-class athletes are using illegal substances to enhance performance. The methods, the ribbons and the record books are being stained by chemicals. A NZer who recently retired as a world-class rower has revealed that it was pressured by a sports official early in her career to use drugs to build up her small physique. “I was told that other past and present NZ athletes had already done this.” The rower refused and went on to win two Commonwealth Games gold medals and bronze medals at the world rowing championships. But a West German Olympic runner and one of Dressel’s colleagues, has declared that: “There are some disciplines where it is difficult to qualify for the Olympics without drugs.” Ever since athletes ate mushrooms and other substances at the Greek Olympics in the third century BC, competitors have sought extra boosts. It was only after WW2, though, that chemical science began to be applied to sports. The human cost, though, is often sickness and even death. The director of the Austrian Institute for Sport Medicine estimates that some 70 high-level athletes have died as a result of doping in the postwar period. Until the mid-sixties, athletes who cheated turned mostly to amphetamine-based stimulants. A member of the IOC Medical Commission described the toilets at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics as being “littered with vials and syringes.” Amphetamines, however, are easily detectable in urine samples and quickly became obsolete in international competitions when drug testing was set up for the first time at the Grenoble winter games. So competitors began the search for alternative substances. The wonder drugs they found were anabolic steroids, which work not by pepping up an athlete’s normal body, but by virtually creating a new one. Massive intakes of anabolic steroids or of testosterone helped muscle development in miraculously short periods of time. But as they build up in one direction, they destroy in another – tendons grow comparatively weaker while the muscles balloon. In the worst cases, the result can be burst Achilles tendons, smashed knees and muscles ripping right out of their girdles. So it was for the Swedish wrestler, a regular steroid user, whose back muscle gave way at the Munich Olympics, and the Finnish Olympic weightlifter whose left shoulder muscle burst during a national-level competition in 1975. The effects are extremely hard on gal athletes. Whether natural or synthesized, masculine hormones can make a gal’s body think it is a guy: hair begins growing on the body and face; the voice deepens, the clitoris enlarges; menstruation stops, and with it fertility. The longer-range damage in heavy users may be even worse: liver cancer, kidney damage, heart problems, and, for adolescents, arrested growth. ● In November, a British Olympic silver medallist pleaded guilty in San Diego to taking part in a multi-million-dollar-a-year drug ring in America specializing in anabolic steroids. Other steroids rings were uncovered in Britain, the Netherlands and France. In the same month, three Polish athletes scheduled to participate in the world powerlifting championships in Fredrikstad, Norway, were caught at the city’s railway station with almost 9000 doses of steroids. Their case paralleled that of the two Soviet weightlifters caught by Canadian customs agents with \$9000 worth of steroids in 1984. In late January this year, Norwegian customs officials arrested the very person who had won the Fredrikstad competition. The world champion of Belgium had \$52,000 worth of steroids and testosterone in his car.’

...NZ's] Customs Department... seized more steroids in the first six months of this year than it did for the whole of 1995[, when just two]... bodybuilders were... arrested... [T]wo large steroid seizures had been made... one of 42,000 tablets and one of 45,000 tablets. But that did not necessarily mean more steroids were being brought into the country, nor was customs making more effort to find the drugs... "Because it's not a controlled drug, as far as Customs is concerned, it is not a priority for our investigative resource,"... [Yet] Customs officers expected to intercept large shipments of steroids "reasonably frequently. We would have seized... half a million doses of steroids over the last six years or so,"... The... anabolic steroid tablets Dianabol were available from Thailand for 3c to 7c each, depending in the quantity bought, and were selling in N[Z] for \$2 to \$3 each. The other form of the drug was injectable steroids, mainly meant for veterinary use... That steroids were not... covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act, meant the penalties were less of a deterrent if someone was caught... Steroids are covered by the Medicines Act, and are illegal only in certain circumstances. Customs officials must determine that steroids are being imported "without lawful purpose" before the drugs can be seized.

...[The NZ Herald stakes] out the battle lines... in... the... efforts to detect... performance-enhancing drugs... FROM the benches it may look like pure glory. But from the athlete's perspective, qualifying for the Olympic Games resembles nothing so much as a prison drug raid. "It's tremendously embarrassing," says [a US Olympian]... "You've just given the performance of your life. Your family and friends think you're going off to sign some sort of official documents. But you're headed off to the bathroom so that two international sampling officers can watch you pee into a cup." Drug use is nothing new in Olympic sports; Soviet weightlifters discovered the benefits of steroid hormones back in the 1950s, and the... IOC... has been trying since the late 60s to enforce bans on various chemical aids. In recent years, most sports federations have instituted year-round spot-testing programmes in an effort to keep competitors clean. Yet with every advance in pharmacology, the opportunities for cheating grow richer. The chemical arsenal now includes everything from... stimulants to genetically engineered growth hormone. No one knows just how many athletes use banned substances, but experts use words like "epidemic" to describe the problem. Says [an]Olympics chronicler... "Drugs are the single biggest threat to the Games." [However,]Olympic officials insist they're getting better at catching cheaters. For... Atlanta... the IOC set up a \$4.5 million testing programme, complete with a staff of 400 and the most sensitive mass spectrometer ever used in competition. Unfortunately, the [testing]technology always lags... behind[the drug-making technology]. "Drug testing is a joke," says one steroid-dealing coach who spoke on the condition of anonymity. "The people who are smart and have the money to pay for drugs can easily pass." Indeed, getting around the rules has become an official government mission in some countries. Under East Germany's notorious State Plan 14.25... 1000 scientists, trainers and physicians spent much of the 1980s developing better ways to drug the nation's athletes. Most Olympians suspect that China has since followed suit. In 1992 and 1994, Chinese athletes came out of nowhere to shatter world records in several sports... captur[ing over]... a dozen gold medals. Then international sports officials sprang unscheduled urine tests on the national team and found that 11 stars – including[a]swimming medallist... – were on steroids. The International Federation of Swimming couldn't prove that the Government was involved, but suspicions still abound. Olympic rules bar a half-dozen classes of drugs, but the biggest menaces are the testosterone-based anabolic steroids. Just as a natural rise in testosterone turns scrawny boys into burly [guys], steroids administered by pill, patch, needle or salve can dramatically increase an athlete's bone and muscle mass while reducing fat stores and boosting the blood's oxygen-carrying capacity. Steroids are used in medicine to treat everything from anaemia and osteoporosis to Aids-related wasting... After years of steroid-enhanced training, [a]Canadian... ran 100m in a record-breaking 9.79s at the 1988 Seoul Olympics. Since getting caught and swearing off drugs, [the Canadian] has yet to clock in under 10s. Steroid abuse can be hard to conceal, for testosterone does more than strengthen the body. [Gal] users often develop tough skin, deep voices and beards. A [guy] taking high doses may find his breasts swelling and his testicles shrivelling as the overload tricks his body into stopping production of sex hormones. And any user risks... baldness, a problem that normal testosterone can trigger... Athletes are quick to spread rumours when they see these signs. But busting someone requires a positive urine test, and those are hard to come by. TODAY'S tests are highly sensitive to designer steroids such as Anadrol and Dianabol, which differ chemically from anything the body produces... But the tests can't tell synthetic testosterone from... natural... – and since people's natural testosterone levels vary widely, high readings alone prove nothing. Testers have tried to get round that problem by looking for abnormal ratios of testosterone to epitestosterone, a related hormone. But the smart cheaters know they can spring that trap by taking the two hormones together. Scientists at the Olympic laboratory at the University of California Los Angeles are now joining international efforts to develop a trump card: a test that recognises synthetic testosterone by the amount of carbon 13 it contains. Every Olympian may face that test [in future]... Meanwhile... a research scientist... says... "One can take a good moderate dose of testosterone and not be found positive." Steroids may be hard to police, but the IOC can't even test for human growth hormone (hGH), a natural substance that drugmakers now produce through genetic engineering. Secreted by the pituitary, hGH fosters bone growth and muscle development during childhood and adolescence. Used as a drug, it can combat dwarfism in children. It may help enlarge some adult muscles (along with the heart, liver and kidneys), but it isn't known to improve athletic performance – and a year's supply costs... \$30,000. Even so, experts say the black market is booming. "When we've... busted people for anabolic steroids, we have also found hGH," says one federal drug-enforcement official. Why would anyone take something that is dangerous, illegal and possibly useless? "Because the competition is so high," says... a fellow in sports medicine at Vanderbilt Hospital in Nashville. "People are looking for any kind of edge." ...To reap any reward from testosterone or [hGH], an athlete has to use it regularly, but a new drug called "epo" can serve up a quick blast of superhuman energy just when it's most needed. Cyclists and runners have long known they can get an edge by storing their own blood and injecting it just before a race. By placing more red cells in circulation, such "blood doping" lets the body carry and burn more oxygen. Epo, a synthetic version of the hormone erythropoietin, produced similar effects by speeding the body's own red-cell production to... 10 times the normal rate. Unfortunately, the sudden onslaught of red cells can make the blood so thick that the user's heart stops in the heat of competition. Researchers suspect epo has killed at least 18 Dutch and Belgian cyclists since 1987, but Olympic officials have yet to start testing other athletes for it. Mass screening... [is] costly and impractical, since it involves drawing blood. And because epo breaks down within hours, testing wouldn't catch many cheaters anyway. For now, at least, death is the only penalty abusers have to fret about. These are but a few of the temptations athletes now face. New tests may someday render today's drugs obsolete. But as that happens, the pharmacological arms race will only escalate. "What bothers me most," says... an epidemiologist at Penn State University and author of a book on steroids, "is... it degrades sports into a biochemical challenge." The challenge is to keep the playing field level as pharmacology advances. Foolproof year-round drug testing might solve the whole problem, but that's a distant hope. And until it's realised, the incentive to cheat will remain as strong as a steroid-inflated bicep. - 1996

It was the talk of the Olympics... the drug the testers can't detect... Start with a daily injection, then every second day. These dosages are best taken over six weeks when the athlete is not racing because the stresses of competition combined with the treatments can cause illness. Later, say during the Tour de France cycle race, the rider might have a weekly top up. Returns? About a 10% increase in power and a huge boost in recuperation. A few hours after a 200km stage in the French Alps, watered, fed and massaged, a cyclist on EPO feels ready to race again. Downside? It can kill... Synthetic EPO was developed in 1988 to help patients with kidney disorders and almost as soon came rumours of its use in endurance sports, then of the deaths in Holland of several cyclists... [T]he last N[Z]er to ride the tour, says that although details and names never became known, the story is widely accepted. Dutch riders, so it goes, began experimenting with EPO without the guidance of a doctor. It is easy to get in Europe and can be bought from some pharmacies. "They started getting results and thought that more is better without realising the dangers," says [the NZer] who rode the Tour de France in 1987, '94 and '95... "Years ago you would never have heard of bike riders dying of heart attacks, then all of a sudden

there is one... every couple of months... You can't explain them away through just hard racing." ...As the athlete's heart drops to 35 beats a minute in sleep... this rich dark stain... turns... the blood... to ooze. The heart, recovering from the exertions of the day, must work harder to pump it around. Sometimes it gives up the ghost. [A]French professional... and... a stage winner in the 1992 Tour de France, caused a sensation last October when [the cyclist] told French television use of... EPO... was widespread. [The French cyclist], who retired in 1995, [claims to have been] offered it but refused. "Everyone knows that... today it is widely used by amateurs as well." There was pressure on riders to take it, not just to improve their chances of winning but to keep their jobs. "I'm not saying you lose your place in a team when you don't take it, but in some way you are discredited in the eyes of your manager. You are considered as a rider without a future, who is not sufficiently competitive." [The French cyclist also claims to have been] told by a team director that without EPO there was no hope of breaking into the top 50 riders in the world. [The NZer] agrees and says the widespread use of EPO and of... hGH... was a key reason in his decision to retire last year. After a season in Europe as a 22-year-old in 1987, [the NZer] spent the next seven years racing in the U[S] where the sport's lower profile and corresponding prizemoney meant drug-taking was rare. [The NZer] was shocked with what [it] found on his return to Europe with the Motorola team. "In 1987-88 I could hang in on the climbs with some of those top guys. In the Tour of Switzerland I was going over the top of the climbs with some of the stars. I was right there,"... But in 1994, as a stronger cyclist: "It was like 'phew, not even close...'. No one even uses those gears I was using back then." ...wider use of the hormones... came through the Italian teams where doctors studied dosage, identified the "safe" proportion of red blood cells and modified the athletes regular blood samples. [The French cyclist] says riders take aspirin each night to thin the blood for fear of going to sleep forever, while [the NZer] tells of a news report in Italy about a team doctor who awoke several riders and rushed them to hospital after becoming alarmed at their dangerously high red blood cell counts. "There were other stories where guys would get up in the night and ride the home trainer to get the heart rate up and blood circulating... then... go back to sleep." Because cycling is such a hard sport – and no race is tougher than Le Tour – drugs have long been associated with it. Strychnine was mixed with wine in the early 1900s and cyclists would sniff ether from handkerchiefs during the tour up to four decades ago. Britain's world champion Tommy Simpson is the only rider to have died during the tour from the possible effects of drugs... collaps[ing] from dehydration in 1967. But amphetamines were believed to be the reason [the British cyclist] didn't realise his danger – [it] died with a bottle of water on his bike. The problem is certainly not cycling's alone. The Atlanta Olympics are considered to have been awash with EPO and hGH. That only two positive drug tests were revealed was no surprise. Those hormones cannot be detected in urine samples, the only type taken at Olympics. And *Sports Illustrated*, in its April cover story demonstrated how steroids can be adapted by a simple process to beat the testers... As much was acknowledged by... [the] director of an I[OC]-accredited drug testing laboratory, who told the magazine "the sophisticated athlete who wants to take drugs has switched to things we can't test for". As a result of the EPO furore cycling this year became the first sport to introduce blood tests. A limit of 50% has been set to the proportion of red blood cells in the blood. Trouble is they will now all push their levels to this limit.

...PRE-RACE blood testing for a key drug has helped make the world track cycling championships in Perth a more even contest and particularly boosts the chances of countries like N[Z, the country's cycling] coach... says. In a radical move designed to wipe out the use of... EPO... the International Cycling Union ordered... [the move. The NZ coach] said the results have been obvious with a number of teams, particularly Italy, losing the huge dominance they had at the Atlanta Olympics... "You just have to look at the Italian 4000m pursuit rider... and ask how [it] could ride 4:15 at Atlanta and now... can only do a 4:27... The same with their pursuit team – they have gone from 4.00 to 4.11. It's brought everything back to reality." ...The experimental blood testing used in Perth has been introduced for "health reasons" in that any riders testing positive for EPO would be pulled out of their event in the interests of their health and would not face any long suspension... Riders in the N[Z] pursuit team... finished seventh on Friday... [and the team coach is] expecting a big showing from [a]Dunedin rider... in the 40km... points race tonight. "The... good thing for him is that [the Dunedin rider has got another NZer] in there to help him,"... [The other NZer] earned a start in the race as Oceania champion and will ride solely to assist [the Dunedin rider] by acting as a pacemaker to pull him into contention for the sprints, which occur every 10 laps of the 160-lap race. [The Dunedin rider] finished fifth in the world cup standings after picking up second and third placings in the two events contested. [Editor's note: Pacemakers are often used at athletics events in an attempt to create records – or, at least, ensure fast times – and are even used for distances as low as 800m (which sometimes means that spectators get to see the leading runner drop out of a race while being far enough in front to possibly win it – and raises the question of whether its victory would be recognised if a pacemaker ever decided to continue running until it reaches the finish-line?).

... 'though you may have thought testing of athletes had got on top of the problem, the reality is the cheats still win. The seizure of a small chemist's shop worth of performance enhancing drugs at this year's Tour de France suggests the pro cycling circuit is awash with illegal potions, yet no one in the race tested positive. "We can't guarantee they are clear of anabolic steroids," says the chief executive of the NZ Sports Drug Agency. "All we can say is that on a certain day they were clear." The chief describes drugs as the cancer of sport and believes a small but "significant" percentage of NZers cheat, while overseas the problem is "large scale". A former pro cyclist, who took banned substances, says European teams used drugs that couldn't be detected and carefully topped riders up to the limit for those that could. Some teams used sophisticated machines to test athletes' testosterone. Doctors are well paid, some earning hundreds of thousands of dollars from percentages of their star clients' earnings. The money and pressures of top sport drove it and for that reason, the cyclist believes illegal performance-enhancing drugs will inevitably come to the All Blacks. The challenge for detection agencies is to find tests for the likes of EPO. Work to find a test is ongoing but there is no guarantee one will be available in the immediate future. A recent announcement by AUSn authorities of a breakthrough is overly optimistic. Last year the NZSDA did 994 tests. Nine were positive for stimulants and one for marijuana (tested only in motorsport where it is a safety issue). Of most concern was that a weightlifter and a rugby union player were positive for steroids and have been banned by their sports for two years. The rugby player's sample taken at a Sevens competition was positive for metenelone. The offender's penalty was upheld at appeal though the tribunal accepted that the player believed it was not taking a forbidden drug. Stanozolol was found in the weightlifter's sample, taken weeks after it broke national snatch and clean and jerk records, which qualified him for the Commonwealth Games. Then NZ's expatriate Russian pole vaulter lost his Commonwealth Games silver medal after failing a drugs test, which was followed by the jailing of a NZ Commonwealth Games decathlete for trafficking in Ecstasy. But the drugs cancer doesn't mean clean athletes can't foot it on the world stage, says NZ's triathlon coach. For evidence, the coach says look no further than the recent world triathlon championships in Switzerland at which NZers were 2nd and 4th in the guys' race and 3rd in the gals'. "We say to our athletes that there are things you can do which are just as (effective) as taking drugs, such as altitude training (which increases the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood). You might have to work a little harder at it but there is no need to be intimidated by athletes who potentially are on EPO." This has involved flying across the world for month-long training camps at such places as St Moritz in the Swiss Alps. The use of altitude simulators, where athletes breathe air containing half the amount of oxygen at sea level, is expected to become important because it is cheap and doesn't involve leaving the country. The coach is trialing a machine brought to NZ by a scientist who worked on the Russian space programme. After using the machine for an hour or two a day for three weeks 10 athletes showed an average increase in red blood cells of 4% and a similar improvement in performance. Although this sort of training may be more hit and miss than EPO injections, it is legal and safer. An AUSn's Festina team was chucked out of the Tour de France after managers admitted systematically doping riders. They had no choice. Days earlier, during a border search, the team's masseur was found with 235 vials of banned drugs including EPO. The AUSn cyclist, who has not failed a dope test, denies knowingly taking drugs and after questioning by French investigators signed an admission that the team doctor had given him EPO without his knowledge. The response of other teams to the search was to conduct sit-down protests in the middle of some of the tour's stages. Despite the controversy that erupted when an Irish swimmer, at the

ripe old age of 26, improved beyond the belief of doubters to win three gold medals at the 1996 Olympics, those games were officially the cleanest. The IOC sanctioned exactly two positive drug tests out of a pool of 11,000 athletes of whom 2000 were tested. This compared with five positives at Barcelona in 1992 and the all-time high of 11 at the '84 Games. But it would be naive to believe Atlanta was the cleanest Games since systematic drug testing began in 1972. "There were issues at Atlanta which were troubling to agencies. Several positive tests, uncovered by new more sensitive equipment used for the first time, were not acted on because of concerns about legal challenges. And traces of bromatan, a drug relatively new to testers appeared in the urine samples of Russian and other Eastern European athletes. It has no medical benefit but has long been used by the Russian military to keep troops alert. Competitors were stripped of medals but had them returned on appeal, the athletes successfully arguing the chemical hadn't been properly listed. Testers know "drug gurus" have them beat, a former director of drug testing for the US Olympic Committee told *Sports Illustrated* magazine after the games in Atlanta. "They know how to get in under the radar. Athletes are a walking laboratory and the Olympics have become a proving ground for scientists, chemists and unethical doctors." It takes two weeks for water-based steroids to leave the system. Random tests could be beaten by keeping an athlete's ratio of testosterone to epitestosterone just below the legal 6:1 ratio. This still provides a super-charged athlete – almost all of the population have a ratio of about 1:1. The level was set so high because of the risk of law suits from athletes claiming to be among the 1% who have a natural ratio of 5:1 or higher. Drug agencies are informed by labs only when an athlete fails a test. "There might be a whole heap out there at 5:1 which would be of concern to us. We don't know because the lab is only able to report that as a negative." The Irish swimmer, for example, could have used drugs to boost her testosterone yet kept it within the legal limit. The swimmer passed four tests at Atlanta but innuendo from US swimmers focused on her significantly more muscular body since being trained by her husband – a Dutch shot put and discus thrower banned in 1993 for an illegal testosterone level. The Irish swimmer, who in four years cut an immense 20 seconds off her 400m medley time – an improvement matched by no other world-class swimmer, let alone at an age when swimmers are usually dead in the water – said it was all down to weightlifting, diet, technique, attitude and sweat.'

...the Irish Olympic swimming champion 'plans to challenge a ban received this year after her urine sample was found to be contaminated with whisky.'

■ 'Drug taking in the Olympics has been around since at least the 1904 Games when marathon winner *Thomas Hicks*' handlers kept dosing him with strychnine, brandy and egg white during the race. Hicks was not disqualified, and happily accepted his gold medal drunk.'

...AN AUSN] OLYMPIC swimmer... would vigorously defend allegations [that it] used marijuana, his lawyer... said yesterday. [The swimmer], 22, reportedly tested positive for the drug[, which]... is on the I[OC's] list of prohibited substance[s]. The AUSn]... Olympic Committee... president... said three athletes had returned positive tests for banned substances but... would not name them or their sports... Only yesterday, the [committee] stepped up its war against drugs in sport by ordering its 41 member federations to adopt a universal anti-doping policy. As part of the objective, any doping offences which occur within the Olympic movement will be heard by the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Sydney. Effective from December 1, the maximum penalty for drug use will be a two-year ban. However, because [his] test occurred before the new policy[, the swimmer] faces only a three-month suspension if found guilty... [The swimmer], who won silver in the 100 metres butterfly at last year's... Olympics, was expelled from the A[IS] earlier this year for breaches of conduct. [The swimmer] was also involved in a fight outside a Canberra food outlet in which [it] suffered a dislocated finger and bruised face.

...Quiz time, folks. Question: In one word, who runs the Olympic Games? Answer: Chemists... [T]he drug issue is again becoming the focal point with Aussie's top swimming coach... firing a few shots at the Chinese, and Athletics A[US]'s head coaching appointee... [The swimming coach] reckons the responses the Chinese are getting from their athletes en masse just don't happen in the real world. A couple of years ago China banned four swimmers after they tested positive. Chinese officials said shortly afterwards they had toughened the country's anti-doping rules. [However, what's] happening with Chinese swimmers and the world records they've created over the past couple of weeks could give more than A[US's] swimming coach] cause for concern. Meanwhile, [Athletics AUS's head coaching appointee] has been fingered for being personally involved in systematic athletic doping while... East Germany's throwing coach in 1982-88 and head track and field coach in 1988-89. [The East German] had conceded performance-enhancing drugs were used in the former communist country at the time but denies any direct involvement. Aussie athletes don't want a bar of [him], suggesting any gold medals won by them... would be tainted with suspicion of drug taking. You can work this one out for yourselves, but while [the appointee] was East Germany's head track and field coach at the Seoul Olympics they won the [guys'] shot put and discus, and finished first and second in the decathlon. Their [gals] were first and third in the javelin, first and second in the discus, second in the shot put, second and third in the heptathlon and in 17 track and field events mounted the dais 17 times. A panel of prominent A[US]ns is currently reviewing [his] appointment. While they're at it, they may like to look in their own glass house. [Their Olympic silver] medal cyclist... returned a positive test. [An AUSn sprinter] failed a drug test. [An AUSn gal world] swimming record-holder... also failed a drug test. So did [a] former Romanian, and now Aussie-based former world... discus record-holder[for gals]. And just have a look at the make-up of their weightlifting team – they're primarily East Germans. The drug battle will NEVER be won and only a fool would accept otherwise. I would imagine that world records in most track, and all field events, would have been spiced up with something out of a syringe or a capsule... And what about those times of 10.49 (100m) and 21.34 (200m) of Flo-Jo? Well, if you want to believe in the tooth fairy, then be my guest.

...A[gal] rugby... player was the only person found to have taken banned drugs during the N[ZSDA]'s testing from July to September. The A[US]n, tested after the Bledisloe Cup curtain-raiser at Carisbrook in August, was positive for the stimulant pseudoephedrine. The N[ZRFU] accepted the unnamed A[US]n had inadvertently swallowed the drug in a cough medicine and suspended her for two weeks. The NZSDA made 253 tests, 148 out of competition... up almost 50[%] on... the July-Sept... period... last year thanks to a bigger Government handout... [T]he... sports... tested were... rugby, with 49... weightlifting (28), powerlifting (22), soccer (13), athletics... rowing... swimming (10[each]), cycling (9), boxing... netball... skiing... volleyball (8[each]), aerobics... triathlon (7[each]), badminton... bodybuilding... hockey... judo... league (6[each]), softball... squash (5[each]), canoeing... rollerskating (4[each]), touch... wrestling (2[each]), bobsleigh... ice racing... trampolining... yachting (1[each]).

...NZ] sport's drug testing agency is to beef up its watch on top rugby and rugby league players. And other sports will be surveyed to identify areas of concern. Over the past nine months, the N[ZSDA] has conducted around 500 tests on athletes competing in or training for sports ranging from athletics and canoeing to judo and snooker. Nine positive tests were returned – five for stimulants and three for marijuana, along with one "no show" by a bodybuilder, deemed to be positive. Each test costs about \$600. The agency, funded from the sport, fitness and leisure vote, is keen to push the number of tests to 1200 annually but it needs more money. If government won't pay it may seek funding from individual sports, starting with rugby. N[Z] rugby's clean bill of health – in the face of two recent positive drug tests in South Africa – did not mean testing procedures here were inferior, said [the agency's] director... rising to claims made by the South African rugby authorities. "I have no doubt our procedures are as good as any in the world... We are in the mainstream of testing internationally, whereas there is no independent agency in South Africa and all testing is done by the S[ARFU]. We can test where and when we want." Rugby officials are not sitting back despite 44 negative tests in the nine month[period]... Since then a further 16 [negative] tests have been undertaken... "Our rugby testing has so far been at the highest level... but we hope to expand that if additional funding becomes available... We are having ongoing discussions with rugby officials, who are keen for us to continue testing." ...There were 21 negative tests on rugby league players in the nine month[period]... The agency does not normally test for recreational drugs unless asked to by a sporting body. That was the case when three motorcycle riders returned positive tests for marijuana. "We were approached by Speedway N[Z]... The tests were conducted at a meeting in Palmerston North and I understand the riders have been dealt with." The agency plays no part in the penalty landed down to dopers; that falls to the governing body of the guilty competitor's sport. [The director] is concerned that [an AUSn] cyclist... received only a \$1000 fine after testing positive to ps[eu]doethadrine. "The I[OC] has a maximum

three-month ban for a first offence of this type but a second offence – as in [this] case – carried a maximum of two years... Unfortunately cycling, tennis and football [soccer] did not sign the 1994 agreement [ratifying those bans] with the IOC.”

...there are real concerns the weak-kneed actions by the IOC and IAAF in lessening penalties for drug cheaters will let back the cheats. In halving the four-year ban they have taken away any deterrent factor. Two years is nothing. Athletes will be prepared to take the risk knowing they can be back competing... in time for the next World Championships and Olympics. If they are caught, the money they can now earn is more than enough for them to take their battles to the courts. I refuse to believe athletes who say they don't know how banned substances were found in their system. As well as dealing to the athletes, their coaches and doctors should be put out for life.

...A snapshot of life with steroids has come from a study of 100 users in N[SW] by the National Drug and Alcohol research centre, reported in the University of NSW publication *Uniken*. According to the centre's research, the typical steroid freak is [a guy], employed on a good salary, well-educated – two-thirds are at universities or other tertiary institutions – and began using the drugs in their mid-20s. Despite the horror stories of side effects, typical steroid users are likely to worry about their health, live on strict high-protein, low-fat diets... But they still mould their bodies by injecting anabolic and androgenic steroids... And while the objective is the body beautiful, they are willing to risk anything from baldness and pimples to liver tumours in pursuit of their ideal. The steroid freak can choose from up to 60 different types of steroids, paying between \$A100 and \$A2500 for a course... Injection is preferred because it places less stress on the liver than eating the drugs. Muscle is the motivation. Users... will have worked hard at... [trying] to boost their body size, improve their appearance, and lift sporting prowess... Most will have been weight-training for three years before turning to steroids to push size and strength beyond natural limits. The... researchers say the users live in an unspoken body-image culture supported by gyms, body-building magazines and some sporting organisations which push the side effects into the background.

...Two leading Brazilian... WATERPOLO... players have tested positive for the anabolic steroid nandrolone, the Brazilian swimming federation has confirmed... If the results are confirmed... [the] pair... who together have formed one of the most lethal Brazilian attacks of recent years... seem certain to miss the world championships[. (Note that it's thought nandrolone 'may be produced naturally by the body – especially when under stress.')]...

The Internet site that sells banned steroids and offers tips of avoiding detention of performance-enhancing drugs... will be investigated by the FBI... [But the site's owner] said his business was legal. "I'm not selling anything (department store) Wal-Mart wouldn't sell,"... Androstenedione and other products... Power International of Virginia... sold were "naturally occurring substances" licensed by the F[DA] as food supplements.

...[Lifter still going for gold A NZ resident's insatiable desire for world powerlifting records has him on the road again. The sprightly 63-year-old, already holder of five world marks, leaves tonight for the world championships in Oregon after a year preparing for a hoped-for sixth. In 1974 the lifter, then representing England, won a second weightlifting gold at the Christchurch Commonwealth Games. The lifter came back to live in NZ. His last Olympic-style lifting was at his 1980 national championships comeback. These days his energies remain solely with powerlifting and, in particular, the dead lift. "If I'm persuaded I'll do the bench press as well," said the 63-year-old, who found his way into the *Guinness Book of Records* by lifting 610kg – more than 11 times his bodyweight – in the three powerlifting disciplines. "My bodyweight then was around 53kg. Now it's up close to 60kg." The lifter now spends much of his time lecturing in NZ and around the world on preventing back injuries. This week the 63-year-old gave employees of The Warehouse a lifting lesson.'

...Stretching to loosen up muscles before exercising is a waste of time in preventing injury, say researchers at the University of Sydney in Wagga Wagga. Trials on 2600 Army recruits over a year found no evidence that stretching prevented injury. "We were able to rule out even a quite small effect of stretching," said an Army physiotherapist. The physiotherapist told *New Scientist* magazine that stretching was assumed to prevent injury, "but there is no evidence to suggest it did." The physiotherapist suggested that stretching after exercising could be helpful or if muscles were particularly tight.'

...masses of young body-conscious gals are putting themselves in danger of painful bone disease, fractures and infertility through over-exercising. Medical experts estimate that thousands of NZ gals are at risk of developing osteoporosis because they are hooked into poor diet and strenuous exercise and stop menstruating. Osteoporosis NZ launched a national series of seminars at the weekend to warn gals against obsessive training programmes. An Auckland endocrinologist began the series at the Auckland Institute of Technology North Shore campus, targeting active gals, dancers, sports professionals, teachers, trainers and coaches. About 10% of her patients were aged between 14 and 20, compared with only 1% a decade ago. "There's been a change in the number of young gals involved in sport and training programmes have become more intense," the endocrinologist said. Triathletes, runners, gymnasts and ballerinas often went through vigorous exercise programmes and felt they needed to conform to a lean body shape. A top aerobics champion, who has achieved results in her sport despite not fitting in with the norm, said: "It's very hard in aerobics because the judges have a mind-set about what they think gals should look like. I knew I could never look like that, but I've achieved anyway and that's because I look after my body. If you eat well you can train longer and harder." But the endocrinologist said many athletes strived for low body fat, not realising that their performance could suffer because of insufficient energy supplies. This often led to their ovaries shutting down, lowering oestrogen levels which helped to keep bones strong.'

...Every little girl has fairy-tale dreams of being a ballerina or twirling across the ice on skates bathed in spotlights as millions watch. Professional skating is big-time athletics. Brutal competition, relentless ambition – ambition that can become obsession. Everyone expected fierce competition between two US Olympic ice-queens but nothing like the vicious attack on one that was swift and chilling. A guy stepped out of nowhere, struck her knee a crippling blow with an iron bar and left her screaming in agony. Skating fans were mystified, then horrified to learn the attack had been plotted by the ex-husband of her arch-rival because the ex-husband hoped to back his ex-wife and cash in on the millions his ex-wife would make if it won the Olympics. Many refused to believe rumours the arch-rival was involved. Then came the shocking truth – the arch-rival confessed it knew about the plot and helped cover the plot up. The arch-rival was sentenced to three-years probation, given a \$US100,000 fine and was barred from organised skating forever. Life off the ice has been hell for the arch-rival. Her best job was working as a gardener for \$4.75 an hour. Incredibly, the arch-rival and her ex, who served eight months for his crime, proved once again that they're ice-cold when it comes to making a buck – peddling a hard-core porno tape they claim they shot themselves on their wedding night.')

...It's *not* just a game. Research has confirmed what staunch supporters of sport have known all along. Not only is top sport something to be admired for itself but it can also serve as a model for other sectors of society, especially business... Early results of a study involving some of the world's top sports organisations, including the All Blacks, the A[US]n cricket and netball teams, the German national soccer team and Chicago Bulls basketballers, have identified the... 10... "magic keys to sustained peak performance." ...Uppermost was a passion to win... [T]he study's findings could have major implications for business. Business had long been fed a diet of military models but the researchers, all sports enthusiasts, "really believe that the sport of business is a more attractive metaphor than business as battleground. In sport we surely find peak performance and amazing talent, creativity and stamina,"... The study was presented to a Strategic Planning Society conference in London this week...

I CAN see the loathsome London marathon from where I am sitting. As I write this, otherwise civilised human beings are gasping and straining their way along the ugly tarmac of our capital, trying to prove they are fit... How pointless and wearisome it is... It is our car-borne society's absurd response to the fact that we have designed a world in which we are actually expected not to use our muscles without prior appointment. I know people of my age or younger who react to the idea of a half-mile walk as if [it was] suggested that they... [walk] to the South Pole... I would pay good money to get out of running 26 miles, and my one visit to a fitness gym left me even more bored than the film of *The English Patient*, itself a marathon of pretentious tedium just short of brain damage.

...The New York Marathon has been run and won. But despite perfect conditions the winning times were outside the long-standing race records. Why? Money. For years, marathon records were continually broken as top track runners hit the roads and chased big dollars. Not any more. The

track athletes have become the rich elite... The top track athletes can expect \$100,000 just for starting in four Grand Prix meetings... Television is driving the show. A recent three-year deal worth \$US20 million has guaranteed that – and, sadly, kept the marathon's glamour in the past... I'm sure that among the current crop of middle and long-distance track runners there are some who would be capable of close to a two-hour marathon, but really there is no incentive for them to do so... Why would any top Kenyan, Ethiopian or Moroccan want to flog themselves for 26 miles and 385 yards around the streets of New York in the hope of winning – and marathon running is a lottery – \$US50,000 when they could win \$250,000 and a couple of gold bars in minutes rather than hours on the track? ...The... New York [Marathon's prize]... money now is no better than when [a NZer] won... in 1981. The best time there, 2h 08m 01s, was run by [a]Tanzanian... in 1983 and the world's best – 2h 06m 50s – was run in April 1988 by [an]Ethiopian... In that same nine or 10-year period, the 10,000m track time has come down by two minutes. The best runners of a decade ago would be lapped once or perhaps twice now – if they could even get a start at a top track meet.

...[a 'Kenyan improved her own world gals' best time by 4 seconds to win the Berlin marathon in 2h 20m 43s yesterday. Her compatriot won the guys' race in the 3rd best time ever. The course holds the world's best marks for both sexes.]

...a Kenyan 'set a world best time for the Marathon last night, winning in 2h 4m 55s – bettering the 2h 5m 38s set by a USer at the London Marathon'...

A 'Briton has won a marathon in an astonishing world record time of 2h 15m 25s, beating her own record of 2h 17m 18s set in the Chicago Marathon.'

...yesterday 'in Huangyaguan, a NZ marathon runner claimed the gals' title at the Third Great Wall International marathon, and a former NZ Olympian won the guys' half-marathon. More than 700 amateur runners from 24 countries, including more than 400 USers and about 100 Danes, competed. Runners took in a 4km section of the Great Wall as part of the course.'

...a Napier High School teacher, raced away with the BMW Auckland international marathon... yesterday... [Wearing No 72, his time of] 2h 14m... – ...12 minutes... [ahead of the 2nd place-getter –] heralded what could become the next great era in N[Z] marathon running... In retaining the title [the teacher] won last year and making it [3 from 3] in his attempts at the distance, [the teacher] further underlined his class... In beating 2h 19m, [the teacher] also earned a year's driving behind the wheel of a new BMW... In finishing eighth in 2h 35m, [a former NZ] cycling rep... and Commonwealth Games gold medallist... won the veterans' class by 10m 01s... The [gals'] race was a come-from-behind triumph for [a]48-year-old... who ran 2h 45m 57s – almost five minutes faster than her 1994 winning time... [The Wellingtonian], who stopped counting her marathons after 30 but reckons [her legs have] now run around 80, was aiming for 2h 48m and was overjoyed with both her victory and time as [it] headed off to implore [the]BMW managing director... to relent and give her the keys of a car for at least six months. [The Wellingtonian] was less than four minutes outside the [gals'] target time and pleaded with [the managing director] to "give an old duck a car – think of... the publicity you would get."

...Auckland wants more people to join the jostle on its crowded streets. But just for a day. Oh, and bring your running shoes. The quintessential Auckland event, Round the Bays, has begun a recruiting drive... Yesterday the main sponsor, Nestle, issued the Mayor of Hamilton... a challenge to rustle up... runners from the Waikato. The waterfront run needs 65,000 registered runners to beat San Francisco's Bay to Breakers as the biggest event of its kind in the world, a title [Auckland] last held in 1982. While 80,000 people took part in this year's [race], only 50,000 were registered... Hamilton contributed 140 busloads of entrants. [The mayor, who hasn't] done a Round the Bays, is keen to take part in the... charity run.

...[Worldwide jogging trend all started in Auckland 80,000 adults and children take part in Auckland's Round the Bays. Auckland's favourite fun run has its origins in the glory days when a pair of Kiwi runners won gold at the 1960 Olympics. In 1962 their coach, together with a veteran Empire Games triple jumper, advertised for anyone keen to join a new club – 15 responded and the world's first jogging club was born. From there the craze grew. A US athletics coach visited, was impressed and took the concept back home – and incidentally helped found shoe giant Nike. In 1973 the joggers club took jogging to a wider audience by hosting the first Round the Bays. They were expecting 500 to turn up and were astonished by 1200 entrants. Someone who helped organise that first run remembers that it and fellow race marshals were at the race start to assist handling the unexpected crowd, but they were also needed at the finish of the race. Their only option was to belt along the race course as fast as they could to get to the end ahead of the masses. That first race was 16km, starting from the Auckland Town Hall, down Queen St and to St Heliers. These days, due to the huge numbers, the race starts at Mechanics Bay and is 8.4km long. For years Round the Bays was the largest fun run in the world, but it was overtaken by a San Francisco run that has more registered runners. The call is for all runners to officially register next year. Registration is of added importance because money raised goes to charity. In the last 11 years \$3.5 million has been given to charities. Proceeds from the next race will go to the Starship Foundation. For an entry form see Friday's *Western Leader*, or call into our office or your nearest Mad Butcher store or the internet (www.roundthebays.co.nz). For the best fun after the race join the Mad Butcher Suburban Newspapers team. You get a special team T-shirt, entry to the team tent for a party, with sausage sizzle and refreshments.

...When you jog along Auckland's streets you're celebrating the history of sport. Jogging was invented here. An Auckland journalist is even credited with coining the name "jogging". The journalist was one of the pioneers who helped found the Auckland Joggers Club. The concept of running for fitness was inspired by the supercoach of NZ's gold medal performances at the Rome Olympics. The supercoach believed his training techniques of strengthening the heart by relaxed running could benefit anyone, not just athletes. Businesspeople starting to feel the ill-effects of middle-age spread, smoking and alcohol – and all too many of them suffering heart attacks – began asking for help. The supercoach was always happy to give advice. Then in 1962 on a flight from Christchurch to Auckland, the supercoach sat next to an Auckland city councillor – and later mayor – himself a former Empire Games triple jumper. That's when things really took off. By the end of the flight the councillor was a convert to jogging and quickly gathered together a group of 15 prepared to give it a try. The Auckland Joggers Club was born. The supercoach helped athletes win 18 Olympic medals in different sports throughout his coaching career, but rates his role in creating jogging as one of his greatest achievements. The supercoach says it got more pleasure out of helping an overweight person turn their life around than any of his Olympic moments. A Blockhouse Bay resident is living testament to the power of jogging. It was overweight and inactive when it started jogging in the 1960s. Now at 74 it still runs five days a week, still does half marathons and recently had a medical check – "and I'm A-1", it says proudly. From 15 Aucklanders jogging has of course become international and involves millions. Originally the Auckland Joggers Club catered for joggers only, however over the years walking has become very popular and now walkers form a large part of the club. While the main emphasis is on recreational jogging and walking, many members take part in half marathons and marathons throughout the year. Why jog/walk alone when you can train with Auckland Joggers? Joggers and walkers meet on Tuesdays at 5.30pm and 5.45pm, Thursdays 5.30pm, and Saturdays 8am, at their centrally situated clubrooms in the Cornwall Park Sports Association facility in Puriri Drive (Cornwall Park' being an ideal – and safe – location for both road and cross-country running).]

...A LEGAL letter claims [a NZ]er... was assaulted and defamed during the British cross-country championships. In a bizarre incident, the Wellingtonian was hauled off the course just 15 metres from the finish when... in third place. [The NZer] (27) had been granted permission to compete in the event, but following the race... was offered no explanation for being forced out, though it is understood it may have been because [the NZer] was wearing an Adidas (her sponsor) running strip rather than her club uniform. The race at Luton was backed by rival Reebok. [The NZer]'s father... – a barrister and a senior lecturer in law at Victoria University – has already sent two letters to the British Athletic Federation. [The father] believed the incident amounted to an assault and battery of his daughter, while... her reputation had been damaged with onlookers and athletes having concluded [the NZer] must have done something illegal or improper... Her father said it was also the responsibility of the starter to check that athletes met race regulations, but nothing had been said to his daughter... [The father] has told the BAF that [his daughter] would have the right to claim damages. Unless there was a genuine apology from the federation, [the father] planned to take the matter further. "They have committed civil wrongs... Even the police have limited circumstances where they can lay hands on you." ...The federation's London-based solicitors have said they do not believe there was any substance to the allegation that [the NZer] was forcibly removed from the race. They also dispute the

defamation allegation. But the BAF... [– which is faced with being placed] into receivership with debts of more than \$1.27m... [–] said it regretted the incident and any misunderstanding that had occurred. In a letter, it apologised for the way matters unfolded and how they had to be handled during the race. • **Next Weekend**, [the Wellington mountain runner will represent NZ] at the world cross-country championships in Turin.

...[‘A Napier resident chalked up his 11th NZ running title with an emphatic victory in the gruelling national mountain running championship on the Black Birch Range in Marlborough on Saturday. Running 12km to a summit of 1700m, the winner blitzed the field after halfway to finish in bitterly cold conditions – recording 1h 6m 45s for the journey, which compares well with the world champion’s winning time of 1h 5m 36s on the same course two years ago. The winner, aged 30, will continue his mileage buildup in a bid to make the Sydney Olympics in the marathon. In the gals’ championships it was sweet success for a Christchurch resident, after illness forced her out of last year’s event. The winner had a neck-and-neck race with the 1996 champion in their climb of 1000m. However, the Christchurch resident, who has won the NZ cross-country, 3000m and 2km steeplechase titles within the past eight months, proved the stronger over the closing stages. The junior gals’ winner qualified for selection to the world championships by retaining her title.’

...‘Wellington’s world champion is a strong favourite to win the guys’ section of the world mountain running championships tomorrow in Sabah, Malaysia. Also highly favoured is another Wellingtonian, who was third in the gals’ section last year. NZ has a 15-strong team including 5 juniors’. By the way, a] **Kenyan-born Dane...** [has] slashed the world indoor 800m record for the second time in three days... clocking 1m 42.67s... on Saturday... [The Dane] earned \$US100,000... for his day’s work, getting \$US50,000 for the victory and a further \$US50,000 as a world record bonus.

...[Ethiopia’s star runner] lost two world records within hours in Brussels yesterday after superb performances from Kenyans... [in the] 5000m and... the 10,000m... The records came nine days after three world marks were set on one day in Zurich... The Kenyan[who won the 5000m] earned a \$NZ39,300 bonus for his record... and other athletes took a step towards more money. [A]Namibian... Moroccan... and Romanian... stayed on course for some of the 20 one kilo gold bars, worth more than \$US200,000... which will be shared by athletes winning their events during the Golden Four meetings at Oslo, Zurich, Brussels and Berlin.

...one nation has dominated the world of distance running... [for] more than 30 years... The athletic talent produced by Kenya is quite staggering. In the 1990s alone there have been nine different world and Olympic champions and world recordsetters. The latest star to emerge could be the most remarkable yet... [T]he most inspiring distance runner of 1996... has already signalled with a string of outstanding performances this year that [the 5000m world record-holder] could be a star of the world athletics championships in Athens... [Last year] Zurich saw the... [Kenyan run] the second fastest [10,000m] time in history. A phenomenal world record over 3000m in Rieti, Italy, followed and in Milan, [it then beat the] 10,000m world recordholder... in the grand prix final, a win that netted the richest prize in the history of athletics, a cool \$250,000 as the overall winner of the grand prix series... The 3000m world record... set in Rieti showed that [the Kenyan] was capable of breaking eight minutes for two miles... 40 years ago, it was felt that no [hu]man would ever run one mile in under four minutes, yet here was a [guy] who had the capacity to do it twice, without pausing for breath. And so it proved. A fortnight ago in Belgium, [the Kenyan] set a world best time for the two miles, running 7m 58.61s... [His] phenomenal run came on top of an outstanding effort in Rome in June when [it] became the first [person] this year to run the 5000m in under 13 minutes... It was another indication of the potential of this shy 21-year-old. His reaction was brief but confident. “I think I can go even faster,”...

[Canada’s] 100m world record holder... has declared himself the fastest [hu]man in history and branded “a joke” his... showdown with [the 200m world record holder] to decide who is faster. “I’ve become the fastest human that ever walked the planet,”... the... [Canadian told his opponent] during a televised conference to promote their... 150m match race in Toronto’s SkyDome... “If there was going to be a fastest [hu]man in the world title you would not be part of this race,” taunted... [the runner who reached] a top speed of 43.6 km/h... [during] the 100m... in Atlanta. “You are not even top-10 ranked in the US in the 100m... at 23 miles per hour[(37 km/h).” However, if the 200m runner’s time of 19.32s is divided by 2 it gives an average of 9.66s/100m – and the USer]... covered the second 100m in 9.20 – significantly faster than... [the Canadian’s best of 9.84s/100m (although the Canadian’s time was derived from a standing start). Furthermore, although the 100m runner may have achieved the fastest speed, it was only for a short distance. Being able to maintain speed over a longer distance (e.g., 400m) is undoubtedly a greater test of the body’s sprinting ability. Anyway, they will merely be proving who is the fastest out of the people who are immoral enough to devote their lives to athletics training (i.e., if, hypothetically, every living human had the opportunity to undertake full-time athletics training – and did so – would it be reasonable to assume that somewhere amongst the nearly 6 billion worldwide human population exists at least one person who is capable of running straight, anti-clockwise or clockwise, faster than the Canadian’s 43.6 km/h or the USer’s 19.32s/200m?). In related news,] Atlanta’s maligned organising committee went out of business yesterday with a break-even budget and the unshakeable belief that its myriad problems will not be the legacy of the games. The board closed the books on a \$US1.7 billion... budget... which doled out more than \$US541m for construction of venues and \$US315m on employee salaries. Left is about \$US39m to cover remaining construction projects and several lawsuits. Once those debts are paid, any remaining money will go to the U[S] Olympic committee.

...Whatever happened to the Olympic ideal? The belief in competing for the joy of it has been perverted by greed, commercialism and self-interest. Most of the competition happens off the fields as companies vie for TV rights, naming rights and apparel endorsements while cities desperate to be host venues have turned the selection process into a gravy train for bloated bureaucrats. In the latest episode, Olympic chiefs have struck a deal with the sporting goods industry to avoid sponsorship rows over kit upsetting the Games. One of the biggest problems for competitors – apart from the opposition – is their national team kit sponsor can be a rival to their clothing sponsor. At last year’s... Olympics a [gal] athlete had to strip in front of [other] athletes and officials just before a race because [the athlete was told that it] was wearing the wrong kit. Expect any time to see the Olympic symbol of five interlinked rings become a row of dollar signs atop a Nike ‘swoosh’...

[A US track] star... has parlayed his unprecedented 200m and 400m Atlanta Olympics victories into a six-year, \$US12 million... contract with Nike... that’s \$1 million more a year than Nike gives to the entire US Track and Field Federation... [In addition,] the contract... includes performance incentives that could be worth additional millions. [The sprinter] couldn’t be reached for comment. But in a statement released by [his agent] said: “I have been with Nike all my career, and I am delighted that they have made such a significant commitment to both me and to track and field, giving me every reason to stay with them for the remainder of my competitive career.” [The sprinter], whose appearance fees for races in Europe topped \$US100,000 last summer, made \$US500,000 to \$US600,000 a year under his old contract with Nike. Including endorsement deals with Bausch & Lomb, Coca-Cola, General Mills, Hasbro and Mobil Oil, [the sprinter] made about \$US3 million from all sources last year. That was about twice the \$US1.5 million [the sprinter] made in 1995, and [his agent hopes the sprinter will] double his 1996 income this year. “Of course, that is with the expectation that [my boy] will win the \$US1 million match race...,”... [T]he world record holder in the 200m, is scheduled to race... the Canadian who won the 100m dash in a world record time at the Olympics, in a 150m race to settle the question of who is the world’s fastest...

THE concept is right out of the heavyweight boxing ranks. Two rivals who publicly despise each other... are ready to rumble. Only this battle will be on an athletics track, not inside a ring. Tomorrow in Toronto’s Skydome [the world’s fastest 100m and 200m runners] will burst out of the blocks in a “sprint for a mint”... The fact that the winner will take away \$US1.5m and the loser \$US500,000 is almost a sideshow because there is so much pride and ego involved... Their rivalry burst right out of the sultry heat of Atlanta last year, fuelling the prospect of this race. Both claimed to be the fastest [hu]man around and [the Canadian] was particularly bitter that his 100m effort was overshadowed by [the USer]’s 200-400 double. [The 100m gold medallist felt his effort] was cast aside in America because [the 100m gold medallist is Canadian. His opponent] had the perfect answer: “Let’s forget the fact that [the Canadian] was born in Jamaica. If [the Jamaican] was raised in Canada and trained in Canada, [the Jamaican] would be Canadian. But [the Jamaican] has a home in Texas and benefits from American college coaching. [Therefore this] race isn’t between Canada and the US, it’s between [two Texas residents]...” Ironically the two train about 160km apart in Texas... “I am naturally faster,”

said [the Canadian] during a frenzied press conference in Toronto yesterday. But [when the USer claimed to be] willing to put both appearance fees and prizemoney up in a winner-take-all bet[the Canadian] declined to take the challenge, saying that running was his job now. [The Canadian] also denied reports that [his preparation] was suffering from a knee injury – “I’m bigger, stronger, heavier and faster (than a year ago).” ...[the USer] is probably favourite – [and was confident enough] to concede the inside lane...

The contest between two world-record sprinters in Toronto... has been hailed as the way forward for athletics... The... contest... over 150m... will set a record for hype and prize money. But it gets no marks for novelty. Such confrontations go back at least 300 years. Samuel Pepys wrote in his diary in 1663 about a race on Banstead Downs between the Duke of Richmond’s foot[person] and another runner. Members of the upper-class often arranged such running-matches between their servants. Running for wagers became known as pedestrianism and it was so popular that by the mid-18th century several runners were making a respectable living from it. The biggest purse went to Captain Barclay Allardice, who in 1809 collected the equivalent of \$600,000 for a win at Newmarket racecourse. In the mid-1880s, there was tremendous interest when Walter G. George, a top British amateur runner, challenged William J. Cummings, a Scot invincible in professional athletics, in two series of three races, over one mile, four miles and 10 miles, for \$470. Exploitation was rife. In 1887, a match between two sprinters, Harry Gent and Harry Hutchens, ended in chaos because each of the rival gangs wanted to arrange for their [runner] to lose. The spectators were so angry they set Lillie Bridge stadium on fire. This led to a crackdown. In one case, a professional, who had posed as an amateur, was prosecuted for fraud and jailed for a month, with hard labour. The final nail in the coffin of pedestrianism came in 1906 with the Street Betting Act, which outlawed wagering at sports events.

...A... sprint showdown between Olympic champions... spluttered to an anti-climatic conclusion yesterday when [the USer] pulled up lame... [while his opponent] had a two-stride lead and was still accelerating...

[A US sprinter] earned half a million dollars despite failing to finish, while [an Ethiopian jogger] broke a world record but did not earn a cent in a bizarre weekend of track and field... [T]he 10,000m gold... [medallist’s 2]-mile clash with... the Olympic 1500m... [champ had also] fizzled out early when [the] Algerian dropped out... The winner would have received \$1.4 m... if [the Ethiopian] had broken 8 minutes... The Ethiopian failed by 1.08 seconds... Events off the track at an IAAF council meeting in Athens probably had more significance for the main sport of the Olympic Games. Exasperated by the U[S] governing body’s failure to resolve three outstanding drugs cases, the IAAF announced that it was banning [two named US athletes] and a third American, whose name was not released. [One of the named athletes], a double world champion at the inaugural world championships 14 years ago, has vehemently denied using banned substances... [H]er husband... and lawyer... greeted the decision with outrage. The IAAF said the suspended athletes would not be allowed to compete at the U[S] championships this week, where the team will be selected for the world championships... The seeds have been sown for another prolonged court battle between aggrieved athletes and the[ir]... governing body.

...Thanks to laser technology, fans... at the world athletics championships... in Athens... [-] a city where it can... take half an hour to move 100 metres... [-] will be able to see for the first time what speeds the likes of [the Olympic] 100m champ... and his rivals are hitting. The laser could be an important step in making athletics more attractive to spectators in the stadium and [TV] viewers... It could certainly answer the question about whether [the Canadian or the] 200m and 400m Olympic champion is the fastest human on the planet... Like police[officers] trying to catch speeding cars, organisers have placed lasers at the end of the straights and will aim them at the lower backs of the athletes – the best place for an accurate reading of peak velocity... Until now speeds have been analysed by studying video. The fastest times in the... 100m have been about 12m a second...

For the first time athletics has come of age and broken away from money under the table to openly paying prizemoney. The winners... at the world track and field championships... will collect \$US60,000. Second is worth [half that] and third \$15,000. And we’re talking here of the average athlete. The superstars... can expect much more by the time their bonuses (from shoe contracts) are taken into account. Should [a NZ gal] win the discus [the Polynesian] might not be in the big dollars league but victory would certainly enhance her future appearance fees on the world circuit. With the two best throws this year, [the NZer] deserves to be a clear-cut favourite. Her chances are certainly better now the Eastern Bloc athletes are basically drug free. While world records are continually being broken, the [gals’] discus mark – the 76.80m set by [an] East German... – has stood since 1988. The biggest hurdle for any thrower is qualifying. Ask N[Z]’s best javelin throwers... how difficult they found being restricted to three qualifying rounds at 9am when you are used to six rounds later in the day. Anything can go wrong... Because of their week-long intensity, the world championships are probably harder than the Olympic Games. But athletes are more relaxed and tend to perform better... knowing they have to wait only another two years for another chance whereas many may have only one Olympics. I [- the 1500m gold medallist at the 1976 Olympics –] certainly treated my only world championships as just another meet... With only appearance fees, I did not regard those championships [the first] as significant... [At this year’s championships, NZ] has one of their strongest teams ever and surely the best chance ever of a medal at this level.

...[a NZer]’s discus triumph at the world track and field championships in Athens has... propelled her to new riches: the title clinched a \$95,000 prize, and appearance fees at future international meetings will net up to \$25,000. But those close to her say the 22-year-old Aucklander will keep her feet on the ground... Her coach for the past two years and Mayor of Auckland... said the secret to his protegee’s success was her attitude. “[Her monotonous training schedule involves throw after throw.] seven days a week, three times a day.” The regime slipped yesterday, though... “I said to her, ‘Training tomorrow?’ And [my protegee] said, ‘No way. Retail therapy.’” Her win brought special delight at the N[Z Herald], where the thrower has worked as a part-time advertising researcher for more than two years. The executive director of Wilson and Horton... was impressed by her “presence and charm” when [it first] saw her interviewed on television. When [the executive learnt that the thrower] did not have a job, [it] offered her one. The champion herself hopes that her win will inspire others, particularly Pacific Islanders. “If my win means more Polynesians are encouraged into sport, that’s good,”... said[the thrower, who]... was supported in Athens by her mother... and one of her four aunts. The rest of the family will be at Auckland Airport at noon on Wednesday when the golden girl is due home.

...The long and the short of it is... N[Z has 2] world champ... discus throwers. When [a NZer] won discus gold on one of the great sporting stages... [another] was already celebrating her own victory. The 1.4m Auckland [gal] won 12 gold medals, including the masters discus title, at the World Dwarf Games in England. The 48-year-old draws inspiration from her taller yet younger hero... [who] won with a third round throw... in Athens – N[Z]’s first-ever medal at the... world track and field championships... which is ranked just below the Olympics. Her winning throw... [also] landed her a healthy bonus with the N[Z] Sport’s Foundation. Along with the \$95,000... collected for [her victory, the foundation’s boss confirmed the thrower] will pocket a \$50,000 personal grant. “[The thrower] is... at the top of the world, paying back the faith we have shown in her. As well as her personal grant – spread over four quarterly payments – [the thrower] will have access to the \$620,000 of general funds allocated to Athletics N[Z] by the foundation...” ...the foundation has supported [her since the thrower] was selected for the World Junior Championships in Seoul in 1992.

...COULD I have told you months ago [that NZ’s discus thrower] was going to win gold at Athens? Of course not. So many things must be working perfectly for an athlete to become a world champion – especially [in] the competitive track and field arena. There were a record 200 countries participating at the world champs, making them bigger than the Olympics. The worldwide TV audience was 3.3 billion. Only [the discus thrower] could have known that all was right with her world... could have felt that indefinable sense of lightness and confidence that is present in great sportspeople when they are on top of their game. The Sports Foundation had more than a hunch her best was due to emerge. That is why we continued to support her... despite [her] poor showing... at the ‘95 World Champs... It would have been easy to have withdrawn support and backed someone else... As [the discus thrower] was striking gold... and four other N[Z]ers were finishing in the top 15 in their events, a couple of other Kiwis were having a tougher time of it at Athens... There have been a number of calls in the media for... funding to these athletes to be

reduced, or even cut. But just as it was with [the discus thrower] a year ago, that's not how we read it. They've both shown too much potential to be cast aside at this stage of their careers... [□ The indoor 800m world record holder] shattered the oldest world record in track and field and two more world marks fell at the Weltklasse Grand Prix meet yesterday. While no world records toppled during the nine-day world championships that ended... last Sunday, the rewards on offer at the Zurich meet provided great motivation. For breaking a world record the prize was \$US50,000... plus 1kg of gold... [The] 24-year-old Kenyan-born runner who is now a citizen of Denmark, smashed... [the] 16-year record in the 800 metres with a time of 1m 41.24s... [after tying an English runner's] 1981 mark of 1:41.73 in Stockholm earlier this... [year. Another Kenyan-born runner, who shares the Dane's first and last names but is] no relation to the 800m runner, shattered the 3000m steeplechase record with a time of 7:59.08... [T]he... mark of 7:59.18 held by [a fellow Kenyan has stood] since 1995... a 24-year-old Ethiopian, completed the... gold rush... by bettering his own 5000m record with a time of 12:41.86s, improving on his 1995 mark of 12:44.39... [The Ethiopian], who is also [the] world record holder... in the 10,000m[, had hoped]... to crack the 12:40 barrier... The race was so fast that... [the German] who finished fifth, still set a European record of 12:54.70... [The 5000m] world champion... of Kenya... finished second in 12:44.90, a national record, while his compatriot... was third in 12:49.87. Another world record was nearly shattered by [the] world champion... of Morocco, in the 1500m. [The Moroccan] posted a time of 3m 28.91s, the fastest this year... [An Algerian] holds the world record of 3:27.37 set in 1995. [A USer] fought off a strong challenge from... [a fellow USer, who was] the bronze medallist in Athens... to win the 400m in 44.31s... [A Namibian guy and Jamaican gal] won the 100m dashes, both beating newly crowned world champions and other medallists.

...[while NZers] bathed in the reflected glory of [their discus thrower]'s world athletics championship title... a battle of Olympic proportions was being fought on the playing fields of Greece. Yes, it's on again, the quadrennial bun fight to see which city hosts the Olympics, and Athens... is... in contention for 2004. The athletics championships offered the Greek capital the chance to show itself a worthy contender. It has some opposition. A letter to the *International Herald Tribune* pointed out that Athens was one of the most polluted capitals in Europe, its transport system is tragic and its planned airport would not be ready for a decade. And that was from an Athens resident. From another direction came more arrows: Athens was too unstable to hold the games, it had economic and political problems and the organisers of the athletic championships were "mediocre..." So said the... Italian... president of the IAAF... – and it should come as no surprise that Rome is also a contender... The Greek Foreign Minister, naturally, was not pleased with the Italian athletics supremo. [The minister suggested that the Italian] had "violated the basic rule of athletics by mixing politics with sport." [The minister] would appear to be living in a dream world. The Italians condemned the Greeks for trying to turn the games bid into a national issue: "We Italians deal with the Olympics with great self-control, great attention and a sense of responsibility." Now that really is rubbing Greek noses in their Olympic history. But [the IAAF president] is also dreaming if [it] thinks Italy does not need the games for nationalistic reasons... Three other cities are left in the running – Stockholm, Buenos Aires and Cape Town[– from the original '11 cities. Despite an internationally renowned archbishop throwing his weight behind Cape Town's bid (saying a first Olympics in Africa would give the continent much needed self-respect, and benefit not just his own country but all of Africa) – and the fact that an Olympics has never been held in the continent of Sth America either – all] reports suggest that it will not be Buenos Aires' or Cape Town's day. Stockholm, capital of calm, stable, gentle Sweden – it gave its name to the syndrome that leaves hostages enamoured of their captors – could be a natural compromise between the bellicose Mediterranean states. However, someone definitely does not want Stockholm to have the games. Since May, seven of the city's sports arenas have been attacked by arsonists. In June, the Swedish [PM], a strong supporter of Stockholm's cause, had his home burned and this month a bomber destroyed the press box of the 1912 Olympic Stadium, memorial to Stockholm's previous games... The Stockholm attacks are certainly a more forthright demonstration of disapproval of the games bid than the Athens' letter-writer's method. However, the sentiments of the bombing's claimants are similar: that Sweden, with its welfare state system under pressure, cannot afford to host the Olympics... [H]ow many cities *can* afford the hidden costs of holding the Olympics?

...*War of the rings*... ODDSMAKERS pick Rome. Sentiment favours Athens. Symbolism says Cape Town. Athletes support Stockholm. Geography sides with Buenos Aires... Unlike recent Olympic votes, there are no overwhelming favourites and no obvious losers this time... [but the] contest has been tainted... by mudslinging... and a series of bomb attacks and terrorist threats... The decision will come [next month], when 109 members of the IOC vote by secret ballot at the Beaulieu Palace in Lausanne. Several rounds of voting are expected before a winner emerges. The candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated after each round until one achieves a majority... Athens (1896), Stockholm... and Rome (1960) have all staged the Olympics before. Cape Town and Buenos Aires hope to bring the games to Africa or South America for the first time. [However, there] is strong sentiment for going back to Europe... the cradle of Olympism... after 12 years away from the continent. After... the summer games... in... Barcelona 1992... the last Winter Games in Europe will have been those in Lillehammer, Norway, in 1994... Rome has long been considered the front-runner and remains the London Bookmakers' favourite at odds of 4-6... Rome's chances remain strong... and... the... Italian city may also be hard to beat when IOC members consider where they and their spouses would prefer to spend three weeks. With that in mind, Rome is offering to turn the Via Veneto area – symbol of the Dolce Vita of the 1960s – into a private playground of hotels, shops and restaurants for Olympic officials... Buenos Aires, making its fifth bid, is probably the long shot of the five... [although] Cape Town officials repeatedly point out that Africa is the only continent represented by the five Olympic rings that has never hosted the games. Cape Town's biggest asset is [South Africa's first black] President... who will be in Lausanne to push the bid... But [the biggest asset] will no longer be in power in 2004, raising uncertainties about the future. That could turn away some IOC voters, as could South Africa's high rate of violent crime... Sweden's reputation as a safe country has been shattered... Responsibility for the[bomb] attacks was claimed by a group calling itself We Who Built Stockholm. Saying the Olympics would be a waste of taxpayers' money, the group [has] threatened to turn Stockholm into a war zone and "make the 1972 Olympic tragedy in Munich look like a kindergarten tiff." IOC members have generally been reluctant to go where they don't feel secure. But [the] IOC president... and other members have suggested the violence could actually rally votes in Stockholm's favour.

...Intrigue, speculation and tension escalated yesterday as the five cities bidding for the 2004 Olympics began frantic last-minute lobbying of IOC members in advance of tomorrow's vote. As the... IOC... opened its 106th session... [violence], including a small firebomb attack outside the Greek Olympic Committee offices in Athens on Sunday, has prompted extraordinary security measures... For the first time in memory, metal detectors have been installed in the entrance hall of the IOC hotel in Lausanne... [NZ's] IOC member... is predicting a close race... "Rome does have one big advantage in having a permanent National Olympic Committee staff of 3000. They have a weekly income from soccer each week of six million lira." ...[NZ's representative] makes his own decision... The NZ Olympic and Commonwealth Assn] has no contact with [the representative] or any input into his decision. No country has a representative on the IOC – all members are there as individuals. The National Olympic Committees (including NZ's) have no say directly or indirectly on the decision.

...[Yesterday the IOC], impressed by Greek humility and an impressive resolve to prove their ability to stage an Olympics to meet the standards of the 21st century, awarded Athens the... 2004 Olympic Games... ahead of favourites Rome... Negative campaigning can rebound, and so it proved... Italy's world athletics chief... exploited every chance to decry the organisers... of... last month's athletics world championships in Athens... in a clear attempt to convey to IOC members the Greeks weren't up to staging top international sports events... When the third European candidate, Stockholm, dropped out after the third round [of voting] almost all its supporters switched to Athens. "That was a clear snub by the Europeans to [the Italian]," an experienced Olympic observer said. "They were sending him a message." Rome... may find it difficult to get the Olympics in the near future as few people expect the IOC to vote for another European bid... Many IOC members felt Cape Town could be ready in a few years...

[and even the] president of the Italian Olympic Committee, said: "The 2008 games will be in South Africa." ...There were no sad faces in Greece as the Greeks threw raucous street parties with bouzouki and Latin music mixing with ouzo and champagne to celebrate the decision. Athens came alive, with cars racing around with horns blaring and thousands dancing in squares and waving Greek flags as the city staged a fireworks show. National monuments and city buildings were lit up. Elderly... [people] took to the streets with their grandchildren in an outpouring of national pride... "This is like a dream come true," said... one Athenian frantically blaring his car horn in a traffic jam at the central Syntagma square. "The Games return to where they belong, and Athens is proud to host them." "The Athens Olympics will be a hard answer to all those who want to commercialise the Games. We will portray our culture, which is synonymous with the Olympic ideals of peace and fair competition,"... a housewife said... [The PM agreed, saying:] "This is a great opportunity to give a new spirit to these Games, to avoid commercialism and to restore the noble contest,"... Market analysts said the news... combined with an expected injection of infrastructure investment, should send Greek stocks soaring.

...Greek stocks, bonds and currency markets have risen sharply in the aftermath of Athens' successful bid to host the 2004 Olympic Games. "The market may be overreacting, but we are definitely on the buying side," one broker said. "We are buying banks, information, telecommunications, cement and construction shares, and basically any good company." Investors bought Greek securities in anticipation that the I[OC] decision would bring a seven-year economic boom to the country, [and the city with a 'population of 772,000']... Institutional investors had sold shares in the run-up to the decision... Investors said they expected the stock market to continue to rally, though bonds and the currency market may not... The Greek drachma rose to 283.30 per [US\$1]... Greece's Athens 2004 Committee... said it would handle the Olympics on a budget of \$US1.35 billion... plus \$215 million for emergency spending... ['The organisers will hire 5700 unemployed Greeks on short-term contracts to meet their staffing needs of more than 6000 by the start of the Games. Apart from paid staff, the organisers will also deploy 45,000 volunteers.' In local news, one] of the last monoliths of sports administration, the N[Z] Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association, was last night dismantled into a streamlined working committee... In a historical moment, the association moved swiftly into a more businesslike and professional era when the votes were cast at the annual meeting in Wellington. When the voting was over, the association's unwieldy ruling body of 41 members who represented their individual sports had metamorphosed into a compact seven-strong board operating under the new name of N[Z] Olympic Committee... The restructuring... followed a review of the association's operations over the past three years – with the intent to produce a better decision-making process. Representatives of the 41 member sports will now meet twice a year, as a council, to pass on their views to the executive committee.

...Question: Rugby Union last featured as an Olympic sport in 1924. Which country won the gold medal? Your time starts... now! Sorry, patriots, [it was not us – perhaps because the All Blacks weren't there. It's the US]. The history of rugby at the Olympics is nasty, mean, brutish and short. It was haphazardly present from 1900 to 1920 as an exhibition event, and at Britain's insistence featured on the official programme in Paris, 1924. In the final, France was totally outplayed (well, beaten up)... One French player actually went into shock, but before being carried away managed to leap from his stretcher to avenge himself on an American. The French crowd turned ugly and assaulted the [US] team, who took to their heels and were lucky to escape with minor injuries. Baron de Coubertin decided enough was enough. Interestingly, on the Web at least, the U[S] is still very much involved in the sport... At members.aol.com/wags40/mar.html, meet the Minnesota Valkyries... They... offer a handy "Spectator's Guide to the Ruffian's Game." ...Players of Olympic standard may need to consult Rugby Head Injuries, a South African guide to the boggled brain... My choice for the after-match function is scorpions.simplenet.com/ingoal, the InGoal Rugby Bar in Caracas, Venezuela, which offers "Rugby, Beer, and Something Else," the last item wearing a very low-cut gown. They play rugby videos all night and field their own team... which boasts of "champagne rugby,"... and... outrageous uniforms... But let's return to N[Z] to *Rugby News* (www.rugbynews.co.nz), the Bible of the sport, and the official NZRFU page (www.nzrugby.co.nz), its high altar. Fittingly, this last site has just won a top Web design award for its superb assembly of headlines... action shots, teams, fixtures, results and commentaries... It also offers Terabyte's Rugby CD-ROM, and player posters at \$14.95.

...Ballroom dancing, rugby and surfing have received formal recognition from the I[OC], but they will have to compete with two dozen other sports seeking inclusion in the games. Other recognised sports include acrobatics, mountain climbing, billiards, golf, karate, korfbal, netball, orienteering, roller skating, basque pelota, polo, bowling, racquetball, water skiing and squash. A further 11 sports federations have applied for IOC recognition and 18 others have made initial approaches. The idea of ballroom dancing in the Olympics has been sneered at by some purists. But it has a large following and the IOC considers it a legitimate sport, comparable to icedancing in the winter Olympics... With the programme for the 2000 games in Sydney virtually finalised it appears that the earliest any new sports could be included would be at the... games in Athens. Two new sports, triathlon and taekwondo, have already been added for Sydney and the IOC last week approved the addition of [gals'] waterpolo, trampolining and whitewater canoeing in Sydney – where 'dancesports will be demonstrated'. The... IOC president... is scheduled to meet later this month with various golf organisations... to discuss that sport's Olympic prospects.

...IT IS writ in stone. The 2000 Olympics will be "the most harmonious, athlete-oriented, technically excellent and culturally enhancing Olympic Games of the modern era"... – these... commandments are carved in concrete in the Sydney Organising Committee of the Olympic Games foyer. The committee has put the arts up there with sport and the Olympic spirit. "And that's just how de Coubertin... would have wanted it," enthuses... [the] general manager of Sydney's Olympic Arts Festival... "[The Baron] wrote tons about the Greek notion of mind and body harmony. It's only since Helsinki in 1948 that the arts have been non-competitive." Kicking the tetrad off is Festival of the Dreaming – a celebration of indigenous cultures – which starts today. Next year sees A Sea Change, highlighting the cultural blends created by migration. Reaching the World in 1999 offers A[US]'s artists to the world. Then the Harbour of Life will mix international and local artists. But will anyone notice them? It's been an unfortunate feature of other Olympics that the absolute domination by sport forces everything else to the sidelines.

...A[US] is learning the new face of terror: venal as often as ideological, but always as deadly and frightening. In the next three years, as Sydney gears up for the 2000 Olympics, police and security officials fear this face will become even more familiar. Last Friday terror came as the biscuit giant Arnotts began hauling its products from supermarket shelves in Queensland and N[SW] after threats of poisoning by a criminal demanding action against allegedly corrupt police. On Saturday, a bomb destroyed an empty home in the exclusive Sydney suburb of Woollahra. It was detonated behind the Turkish Consulate-General – reviving memories of the 1980 Vauluse assassination by terrorists of the Consul-General, Sarik Ariyak, and his bodyguard. The problem for police and security forces, which in A[US] work together in a national anti-terrorism plan co-ordinated through the federal Attorney-General's office, is that terrorism has become an open club – anyone can join, with any weapons they choose... Last [month, 'Aboriginal activists threatened to ruin the Games if the federal government goes ahead with an 11% cut in funding next budget']...

'Aboriginal leaders say they'll escalate plans to protest during the Olympics after a leaked Government report said that no more than 10% of Aboriginal children were removed from their families to be raised as whites from the 1920s until the 1960s. "All bets are off," was the response of the Olympic campaign delegate to the Metropolitan Aboriginal Land Council. "Aboriginal people will rise up in this country and show the world how racist AUS is." Before the statement, Aboriginal leaders had said they would draw the world's attention to their plight at the Olympics through a protest embassy. But the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Commission chairperson said the games were now "in jeopardy. We didn't want to target the games but we have nothing to lose now.'" In another development, lawyers representing 'hundreds of US and Japanese band members who'd been invited to perform as part of the Sydney Olympics opening ceremony – until local band members complained – are considering suing the organisers for breach of contract'...

AUS[ns] are whingeing because clever N[Z] companies have already struck gold at the Sydney Olympics. Auckland's Opal Pacific has won a licence to produce official Olympic jewellery. Its submission was "streets ahead of the rest," said... a spokes[person] for the Sydney Olympics organising committee. N[Z]-made Line 7 has been selected for its leisurewear and [another NZ company] has won the right to make official Olympic

keyrings and spoons. But A[US]ns don't reckon it's fair and Sydney talkback radio stations yesterday fielded a barrage of calls moaning that official 2000 Olympic Games jewellery had "Made in N[Z]" stamped on the back. "...We won the Olympics... and companies here should be benefiting," one [caller] complained. Opal miners at Lightning Ridge, Dubbo, are also unhappy to be sending opals to Opal Pacific... But [the spokesperson] said that under CER (closer economic relations) the organising committee had little choice but to use a N[Z] company if it was the best... Another... official said: "It's provoking a bit of a backlash... but we are hoping it will die down once people understand the issue involved."

...Tourism chiefs are worried N[Z] is not doing enough to promote itself to people planning a trip Down Under for the Sydney Olympics. A[US]n tourism is already running multimillion-dollar campaigns in some countries to ensure it maximises tourism earnings from the sporting event in 2000. But N[Z]ers have been slow to cash in... [However, the NZ] Tourism Board... is still in the middle of developing a strategy for promoting big events – like the Olympics, the America's Cup and the millennium celebrations... The N[Z] manager of the A[US]n Tourism Commission... refused to comment on how our promotions compared with A[US]'s, but... said the commission had already launched several campaigns. In one, the commission will spend \$US10 million on luring [US] residents to the Olympics and encouraging them to extend their trip to other parts of A[US].

...Toxic waste exceeding international safety levels by more than 1000 times has been found on land near the... Olympic site. Sydney Olympic officials said yesterday the waste was found in soil contaminated by corroded drums of dioxin dug up during work at North Newington, adjacent to the vast Olympic construction project. N[Z] laboratory tests of the dioxin found a toxic waste equivalent of 1540 parts per billion (ppb), but there was no trace of the most deadly dioxin, 2,3,7,8-TCDD, which had been found previously... The [US] safety level for all dioxin in surface soil is 1.0 ppb, based on its potential to cause cancer. The same level applies in N[SW]... The... site was used as a toxic waste dump from 1949 to 1976.

...Samples taken from an illegal stockpile of toxic waste at Homebush Bay, bordering the 2000 Olympics site, have shown that it contains dioxin contamination 60 times worse than the world's first major dioxin accident 20 years ago... [when, in] Seveso, Italy... a chemical factory blew up... Greenpeace said yesterday... [as it] transferred the contents of the stockpile of 50 drums to chemical-proof containers and then to an on-site storage area made out of converted shipping containers... [that:] "The 'Green Olympics' is beginning to look a distinctly muddy shade of brown... Unless the NSW Government cleans up this area properly, athletes and visitors from all over the world will come within metres of a site which has unacceptable levels of toxic waste." Results of another Greenpeace sampling programme show dioxins are entering the food chain at Homebush Bay. Samples of a common table fish showed dioxin[at] 10 to 15 times the acceptable levels... Last week the games' environmental watchdog, Green Games Watch 2000, which is a conglomeration of environmental lobby groups, issued its first report card... It said Sydney was failing to meet its commitment to stage the world's first "green" Olympics with its audit giving... organisers "barely a pass" at five out of 10. But[the] Olympics Minister... said the NSW Government disputed some of the review's assessments and believed the games were meeting all necessary guidelines.

...When Sydney's planners began looking for an Olympic Games site, the only block of land within city limits that was large enough had been used as a toxic waste dump for close to 30 years. Buried in substandard landfills was household rubbish, industrial waste... and byproducts of the brickworks and abattoir that had occupied some of the site. There were also disused [WW2] ammunition dumps and naval bunkers. Now, the same 760ha site sports an underground rail loop and a variety of stadiums in varying stages of completion. Soon there will be landscaped tracks and gardens, cycleways, an athletes' village, bus and ferry terminals. Sydney is spending \$A2112m on the site, which will be home to all the 28 Olympic sports barring equestrian (Horsley Park), canoeing and rowing (Penrith Lakes) and track cycling (Bankstown). Organisers are expecting 10,600 athletes and coaches – they will be housed in a new 2000-dwelling suburb – and a global media contingent of... 6000 who will take over a warehouse that is now the distribution centre for the Grace Brothers chain of department stores. Already the huge steel arches that will hold the roof over the 112,000-seat stadium have changed the skyline in Sydney's west. The world's largest mobile crane was shipped down from the port of Newcastle in more than 100 pieces to lift the 300m-long roof arches 59m above the stadium floor. A 12m-wide spiral accessway climbs the seven floors to the top of the stadium, allowing wheelchair access for the disabled and vehicle access for supplies of food and drink. Next door, the 12,500-seat swimming complex, the world's biggest, is already in use. The building is so big it cannot be air conditioned because that would alter the water temperature, so each seat has its own unit pushing cool or heated air upwards towards roof vents. Under construction are a 50,000-seat show-ring that will open for Sydney's Royal Easter Show next year and be used as a multi-purpose arena at the Games; a 10,000-seat tennis centre that will become home to the N[SW] Open; a 15,000-seat hockey stadium; ...two warm-up tracks... and... a golf driving range... put in to make money and allow athletes some leisure... The workforce has hit 1200, with the state and federal governments committed to spending around \$420,000 a day for the 1048 days until the Games open on September 15, 2000... The spending has already generated controversy – \$6.2m went on a wharf at Homebush Bay that was designated for use by athletes. Last week it was revealed that the wharf is for VIPs and those regarded as needing extra security, with the only athletes likely to be welcomed ashore there [being] the ones who carry star status, such as... the US Dream Team basketballers. [US TV] networks had their first look at the site recently, and decreed that all telegraph poles and power pylons had to go so as not to spoil the view, the underground cabling adding \$80m to the cost. Sydneysiders have recently been treated to the bizarre sight of bargeloads of huge Moreton Bay fig trees floating down the northern beaches. The trees are being relocated from Brunswick Heads on the north coast to form a 2km-long avenue leading to the Olympic site. And a tiny amphibian, the green and gold bell frog, forced planners to reverse a scheme to fill the old brickworks quarry and instead prompted them to build a tunnel to allow the little breeders to migrate. The endangered species were removed from the quarry to a nearby wetland, but kept hopping back to mate... The planners are hyper-sensitive to environmental issues... Water will be collected from roofs to irrigate the gardens and flush toilets; everything is solar heated, and natural lighting is used wherever possible; wetland areas will filter stormwater runoff before it enters the bay; woodland... areas have been developed with the aim of encouraging bird and animal life back to the area where it was once abundant. There is only one thing they appear to have forgotten – accommodation for the visitors. The state government is calling for tenders for a 250-bed plush hotel but so far that's it. If you're planning to be in Sydney in September 2000, book the friends' and relatives' beds now.

...Visitors to Sydney will be lumped with a 5[%] hotel bed tax from [next month], to help the N[SW] Government pay for the 2000 Olympics. A planned 10[%] accommodation tax, which drew fire from the I[OC], will now be phased in over 12 months instead of introduced in full...

PLANNING to attend the Winter Olympics in Nagano in Japan next year? Be prepared for some major traffic problems. Police are gearing up for what could be some of the world's longest traffic jams, stretching 120km. Because of the many narrow, curvy roads in Nagano, jams regularly reach 60km or more during the ski season but with traffic expected to double during the Olympics, chaos is predicted.

...A record 2593 athletes from 67 countries are planning to compete in... Nagano. The U[S], with 207, said it would send the most... followed by hosts Japan with 166 and Switzerland with 163. Bermuda, Brazil, Iran, Luxembourg and Uruguay plan to send one athlete each. The number of countries attending is equal to the record number of participating nations set at the Lillehammer games... and includes three countries which have never competed in the winter Olympics before – Azerbaijan, Uruguay and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

...PORTABLE phones appear almost everywhere in Japan these days... As of October 31, a total of nearly 34 million various types of portable phones were in use... according to the [Japanese] Post and Communications Ministry... but their use won't be allowed by spectators at the Winter Olympics in Nagano... Portable phones and pagers are on a list of 19 items banned from spectator seats... says... an official of the organising committee. At Olympic sites, the sounds of ringing and conversation could disrupt sports like figure skating, which need silence... Among other banned items... are weapons, dangerous objects and pet animals. [Among items not banned are journalists – '8000' are expected to cover the Games.

...a NZer] can barely remember her last summer. That's not surprising considering it was 1985[, when the NZer] was 12. Since then, life has been a constant calendar of winters as [the NZer] developed from a mad-keen skier into [NZ's premier gal] snowboarder through continuous training and competing in both hemispheres. Last week was no different. When many Kiwis were finally pulling their swimsuits from their drawers, [the snowboarder] was packing her thermals and heading to France where the new World Cup... season starts on Friday... If [the snowboarder] can stay free of injuries and continues to improve her impressive form of the past two World Cup seasons, [it] stands a good chance of lining out in [NZ] colours when the Winter Olympics are held... in... [Nagano. The NZer] is ranked 36th in the world after an injury plagued 1996-97 season[but] needs to break into the top 25 to be in line for the Olympics where qualifiers will be named on January 18. Helping her Games quest is the rule that says one country can't have more than four people qualify, which will eliminate some talented Europeans ([the NZer] is inside that quota on her present ranking). On the other hand, an Olympic season will bring added competition to the slopes of Europe and North America... "It will really hot up this season... A World Cup event usually has 60... racing and... that's a competitive field. To have it trimmed to 25 for the Olympics really turns it into a showcase." [The NZer] has 12 events in France, Austria, Italy and Canada to stake her claim... [A fellow Kiwi recently beat her] to claim the K2 challenge at Cardrona, near Wanaka... but [NZ's top snowboarder] recovered to win her fifth national championship and be named N[Z]'s inaugural snowboarder of the year... While [NZ's No 1 snowboarder] enjoys the highest profile in the sport here, [the No 1] is not alone in her Olympic dream. Several Kiwis, including [Cardrona's K2 winner], will be in Europe battling for those rankings. [The No 1] says just making it to a World Cup startline is a victory in itself, given the money and assistance leading racers from Europe and North America enjoy. Her campaign will cost around \$30,000 for six months. There's little reward for that with only a handful of... racers earning major prizemoney. Still, that's only about one tenth of the costs facing a World Cup alpine skier... Snowboarding's debut at Olympic level will come in two categories. There is the halfpipe in which competitors make radical moves, hanging upside down in the air as they blast off banks in freestyle mode. And there is the giant slalom, the alpine discipline which has competitors racing down a near vertical slope, twisting through gates in a race against the clock... [NZ's No 1] loves to dabble on the half pipe, but the slalom and giant slalom is where her talent lies. "It's important to have work and play – slalom is my work, freestyle is my play although I'll probably do more of that in the future." ...A lot of the sport's public focus goes on the freestylers rather than the alpine racing. Consequently, that is where the money lies, through the exposure of big-selling magazines and videos... In a sport that is only starting to blossom competitively, [the NZer] realises the competition will only get better and, significantly, younger. Some of the leading snowboarders are converted World Cup skiers, now approaching 30. The next crop of leading talent is around 20 but [the NZer] (24), believes the sport's future beyond Nagano lies with the teenagers starting to come out of snowboarding schools and academies in Europe. "...I'm pleased I managed to get in now! The ultimate to me would be the Olympics... Once that is done, I'd look at continuing international racing for another couple of years while at the same time developing a coaching role. I'd like to be involved in that area for the 2002 Olympics." ...A lack of coaching in N[Z] has been a hindrance to the sport competitively. [NZ's No 1] is looking at developing a N[Z] Snowboard Academy in conjunction with Mt Aspiring College at Wanaka which already runs ski programmes.

...IN THE absence of the Olympics or Commonwealth Games, 1997 shaped up as a lightweight sporting year. But that didn't prevent some heavyweight performances by N[Z]ers, both at home and overseas... The Winter Olympics are upon us in February and [NZ's Austrian-born skier] showed in 1997 that [it] will be a real threat there, gaining another World Cup victory in the [gals'] slalom to finish with a world ranking of No 2... Like our yachts[people, NZ]'s equestrians compete under the constant pressure of their excellence. For consistency [one of the group of NZ's international horse-riders] was superb to again finish the year ranked No 1[, while NZ's senior equestrian (r:p1560, ln58)]... claimed the big individual prize at Burghley to wipe out his unfortunate withdrawal from Badminton... N[Z]'s badminton team... whitewashed A[US] in the Whyte Trophy test series... Hockey made significant strides during the year with both the [guys' and gals'] teams qualifying for the World Cup to ensure they are back in the international top 10... N[Z]'s top triathlete... refound his form this year to... finish second in the world championships in Perth and ended the year ranked No 2 overall... [Another NZer] produced a water-skiing highlight by claiming N[Z]'s first world championship medal with silver in the [guys'] slalom... The year ended in style with... a trans-Atlantic rowing record and the Herculean (or should that be Xena-like) performance of [the 22-year-old NZer who clinched] gold in the [gals'] discus at the world athletics championships in Athens... [Discuss is] an event in which athletes tend to peak in their early 30s... [Her] improvement under... a... new coach, [Auckland's mayor, who is a] former Commonwealth Games discus champion, was startling... [This year, the thrower lost] just one meeting and... [won 15. Her] performance was undoubtedly the finest individual effort of the year and will surely be rewarded with N[Z]'s highest sporting accolade when the Halberg Awards are held in Auckland on February 13.

...N[Z]'s world champion discus thrower... has finished 1997 in elite international company – ranked No 6 among the world's [gal athletes. The NZer] gained the honour in a special poll taken by the authoritative international magazine, *Track and Field News*. Regarded as the sport's bible, the [US] publication was rich in praise of... [the NZer. In discussing her] No 1 ranking in the discus, the magazine said: "In an event long dominated by the old Eastern Bloc, what a shocker to see [the NZer] add more than a dozen feet to her old best in becoming only the second Kiwi ever to score in the event (the other was... No 10 way back in '62)... The top 10 achievement is an honour missing from the N[Z] athletics scene since... the 1970s. The magazine named [a NZ middle-distance runner as its best guy] athlete for 1976 following his Olympic gold medal winning effort... Denmark's [Kenyan-born runner, the first guy] to set three world records in the 800m in one year, was the top ranked [guy athlete for 1997]... The magazine's judging panel, made up of 10 astute media and athletics people from five countries, had [a US] speed queen... at the top of its overall [gals' list].

...in tonight's opening episode of *Powerade Blood, Sweat and Fears* (7.30, TV3)... [the commentator says, "Ooh, that athlete] doesn't look too comfortable,"... as the All Black clings to a web of ropes high above ground at an outdoor pursuits centre. But [the commentator] might be describing a viewer confronted with yet another sports/entertainment show full of athletic stunts. This style of television is a growth industry. They're making *Gladiators* in Britain, [the US and AUS]. TVNZ is screening another Aussie import, *Test Of the Toughest*. Next Thursday *Mountain Dew On the Edge* returns to TV2, with (says the publicity) "five athletic Amazons who take on the most adrenalin-pumping adventures ever." The hype is standard. *Blood, Sweat and Fears* – or *BSF* as it's known at TV3 – is "N[Z]'s ultimate sporting challenge." But this show will deliver what it promises, says[its] executive producer... "It's not just people doing bungy jumping. It's a serious search for N[Z]'s best overall athlete. We've got All Blacks, Warriors, Olympians. No Neville Nobodies." ...The athletes earn the "talent fees" they were paid... Full-on and star-studded it may be, but wasn't TVNZ's *Clash Of the Codes* like that? "Perhaps it is a rip-off of *Clash*," says [the executive producer]. "Perhaps it's a rip-off of *Mastermind* and *The Krypton Factor* and *Mountain Dew*. It's a conglomerate of all those shows, taking the best elements and putting them in one show. People who say they are making ground-breaking television are usually kidding themselves. Everyone's stealing ideas." ...[the executive producer] reckons there is now so much sports coverage that viewers don't have time for magazine-style sports shows, hence the canning of TV3's *Mobil Sport* and TV One's *Sportsnight*. (The latter has been absorbed by an extended version of the mid-evening news show *Tonight*, which will devote 15 of its 45 minutes to sport when it returns on February 3.) "People still want to see the athletes off the field, but not necessarily being interviewed about sport... We have to look further afield and push into the entertainment market." ...There are 27 [athletes in *BSF*], three competing in each of nine shows. The nine winners go on to three play-offs, which leaves three athletes in the final... Although there's a sports quiz segment, this is a very physical show. Bowls champions... [– like the guy and gal who are both '3-times world champs in this sport' –] need not apply.

...N[Z] teams have qualified for today's four gold-silver medal playoffs in the Asia-Pacific bowls championships in N[SW].

...*'champ happy despite cash imbalance* NZ's latest world champion was not willing to let one of sport's biggest inequities spoil the occasion as it accepted a crystal bowl for winning the gals' world indoor singles bowling title in Ireland. The winner of the guy's world indoor championship will pocket \$60,000. "That's the way it is," said the 56-year-old after beating her Irish opponent in a five-set final early yesterday morning. While the winner is assured of being invited back next year to defend her title, there is some doubt on how a second NZer will be found to accompany her. Gals' superbowl tournaments in NZ last season were a pay-as-you-go matter, with only nine centres hosting preliminary tournaments. Bowls NZ is considering the future of the event, but is adamant an indoor champion will be found to ensure NZ's double challenge next year. In the meantime, the 56-year-old will put her crystal bowl alongside the medals it has won at Asia-Pacific championships, Commonwealth Games and world championships. It would be nice if there was a cheque to go with it. But gal bowlers have long lived in the considerable shadow cast by their masculine counterparts.]

...In lawn bowls... [people] play well into their 60s... But... after 17 years of bowling, [a 41-year-old NZer has] already amassed "a lifetime" of achievements. [The NZer] was the world pairs champ... and had represented his country at three World Bowls, two Commonwealth Games and two Pacific Championships. Because [it] was playing top-level bowls, instead of working, [his] bank account was getting low and his first child... was soon to be born. "Having a young family, there were other things I had to think about. I was seriously thinking of throwing bowls away and getting back to work. Bowls wasn't paying the mortgage,"... [The NZer] would have – if [it] had not caught the beginning of a new professional wave in international bowls... [W]ith the support of the NZ Sports Foundation, [the 41-year-old] jumped on the bandwagon as more and more money tournaments started up. His career has kicked back into life. Instead of thinking of giving up, [the NZer] can now consider bowling full-time and earning a good living. The... wave takes a bigger leap this month with the staging of the first tournament in a new world singles circuit (called the World Bowls Tour) that could mushroom to 10 events a year. [The NZer] will be... at the... International Open in Preston, England... as a seeded player in an elite field of 32. In the first world ranking list, compiled mainly on singles performances at the last five world indoor championships, [the NZer] has gained a lofty 10th position. And as long as [the NZer] stays in the top 16 [it] will be invited to all the WBT events, in England, South Africa, A[US, NZ] or Hong Kong, and play for up to \$200,000 each time... [There are no other NZers in the top 32, but '7 NZers are in the top 100.'

...It was deja vu for NZ at the world men's bowls championships in Johannesburg as the Kiwis conspired to let the symbol of bowls supremacy, the Leonard Trophy, slip through their grasp. The fours were beaten 23-19 by eventual winners Wales in the semifinals to take the bronze medal, and then NZ's singles player lost his final match in section play. The NZer needed to beat Hong Kong's representative in his final match of section play to reach the semis and secure a historic first Leonard Trophy for NZ. However, after holding an early 7-4 advantage, the NZer dropped a four on the next end to surrender the lead and never regained it – ending NZ's planned party celebrations. In 1988, despite winning the fours and triples and taking silver in the pairs, NZ were pipped by England for the trophy. Ireland beat AUS by seven shots in the singles final. The Irish bowler, who won gold in the pairs in 1996, was too strong for the AUSn, racing out to a 15-3 lead before taking the match 21-14. However, the AUSn's performance in the singles secured the trophy for AUS. It was the first time an AUSn team had won the trophy since the inaugural world championships in Sydney in 1966. Earlier, the AUSn destroyed a Pom's dream of securing a hat-trick of singles titles when it beat the English champion 21-16 in the semifinals. The Kiwis end the tournament with the triples gold and bronze medals in the pairs and fours. In athletics news, a US sprinter failed to fire on the track but[the] promoter... rated the athletic legend's trip to N[Z] a huge success... "I would do it again tomorrow. [The USer] was an inspiration... [and] was the catalyst for creating a fantastic event,"... One of the greatest figures in world sport to come to this country, [the USer] attracted a huge crowd... estimated... at close to 10,000... to the... Classic meeting on Friday night... [However,] the paralysing finish was sadly missing... [from] the winner of nine Olympic gold medals [who has been] rated the athlete of the century... His legs looked heavy and his action rough as [the 35-year-old] headed towards the line in his first race [in four months. The USer] eventually finished second last, clocking an extremely slow 10.76s... As they filed out of the stadium after the 100m, most fans seemed content that they saw the legend even though [it] raced poorly... "The feeling I got was that the result was immaterial. People wanted to salute a real champion." ...Last year's Classic meeting was watched by fewer than 1000 people. "We needed to get athletics back on centrestage and prove to the cynics it could pull people,"... said[the promoter], who is president of the events host, North Shore Bays Amateur Athletic and Harrier Club, [and]... is committed to bringing more big names to future meetings. [The promoter would also] be delighted if [the 35-year-old USer could return.

...a 21-year-old NZ] sprinter... finished a close third in the 100m final at the Sydney Grand Prix featuring... [a] 35-year-old... American Olympic legend... on Monday night. The Dunedin runner clocked 10.43s, behind... [an AUSn (10.37s). The 35-year-old] finished equal-seventh... but left a record crowd of 11,928 cheering for more as [the USer] completed a lap of the track after the race. Despite his disappointing showing... [the USer] felt his Sydney race was much better than his effort at last weeks'... Classic where [it] also finished seventh... The young[NZ] sprinter was happy with his... placing in "a very classy field" and will have a chance to improve at the Melbourne grand prix event next month and at the A[US]n championships later in February. On a good night for [NZ athletes, a NZer won the guys'] javelin with his last throw[, an athlete from]... Christchurch won the [guys'] high jump on a countback[, NZ's]... Olympic long jumper... was pushed into second place in her event... [and a runner who is] Sydney-based... finished third in the... [guy's 400m. Incidentally, as Wellington's] Commonwealth Games Society chief executive... headed to Kuala Lumpur for a meeting of the Commonwealth Games Federation[yesterday], it was hard not to give him a rabbit's foot... Lord knows, with the outbreak of calicivirus, there will now be a surfeit of such feet and [the chief executive] could use his share... to secure the right to stage the 2006 Commonwealth Games... While Johannesburg has pulled out of contention, Melbourne is still in the hunt... Wellington's dilemma is to convince the C[GF] that it is a better venue than Melbourne. Some task that! ...it's not that Wellington isn't capable of hosting a major event. It has staged car street races, test matches and ferry sinkings. All with spectacular success... It's not that Wellington isn't a nice place to host a major international event. It may well be, except for the prospect of... [having] to get there by plane or ferry... [and having] to stay there, what with the wind and foul weather... It's just that... well... [who] in their right mind would want to go there, to visit or compete, unless they had to?

...The Minister of Sport... has taken a bold step in creating Eventscorp, a company through which N[Z] will bid for the great events of the world to be staged here. However, bidding for any event is an expensive business. It is a field fraught with dangers and with the potential to waste millions of dollars, for the occasional win. The key will be how well the country pitches for each event, with its sights [currently] set high on the... 2006 Commonwealth Games... There are, I believe, six or so winning strategies for any group taking on a challenge like that. The first is to use every piece of skill and expertise available from anywhere in the world, to win the bid. Sydney threw its net over as wide an area of expertise as it could reach to catch foreign ambassadors, advertising and marketing experts, politicians, business people, sportspersons – anyone who could improve its chances of winning the Olympic pitch. Sydney had 80 people involved in just putting together the final Olympic presentation in Monte Carlo. The speeches were written and the presenters trained by professionals, while others critiqued and role-played the components of the presentation until it was as good as it could get. The second strategy is to focus purely on those who will make the decision... Get to know them far better than the competition might... Thirdly, decide in advance why you will be appointed and have that fixed in your mind as the strategy for the pitch. Sydney's key message never changed: Professionally organised games for the athletes in the friendliest city on earth... ['The city promised the Olympics' best-ever accommodation to house 22,000 athletes, officials and media, and an environmentally friendly "Green Games"'] Fourthly, win it in advance. Don't rely on the final presentation to win your bid... win major pitches during the bid process. The final presentation is a confirmation of what is already in the minds of the decision-makers... Fifthly, never ignore the emotional. Any bid to bring an event to N[Z] would have to deliver a package that highlights the character of its people, its atmosphere, its creativeness and friendliness, as well as appealing to the rational side of the decision-makers by showing N[Z]'s technical abilities. Most pitches these days rely too much on the rational, while ignoring the emotional. Yet

people buy with their hearts not their heads. That's why Sydney involved schoolchildren and athletes in its bid. The videos, too, were carefully designed to have huge emotional impact... The sixth point is to go two or three steps further than your competitors. Pay attention to every single detail. Sydney created the Monte Carlo presentation room... in Sydney for dress rehearsals... By the time they reached Monte Carlo, the Sydney team had done its presentation four times... Only hours after Canada lost its bid to host Expo 2005 to Japan, [a Calgary businessperson]... consoled a group of Canadian organisers at a victory dinner turned wake atop the Loews Hotel in Monte Carlo... "You made the finals and that's not easy... you should be proud of the way you played the game," [the businessperson] told the emotionally spent team after they got the bad news. His company, QC Data, was Canada 2005 Exposition Corporation's first corporate sponsor and had, earlier in the day, discreetly picked up a \$40,000 luncheon tab at the ultra-exclusive Monaco Yacht Club, where a last-ditch effort failed to convince Bureau International des Expositions delegates that Canada was the better Expo choice... Seven times zones to the west in Calgary, other supporters handled the loss with equal grace. About 2500 people stood in the rain on Olympic Plaza to watch the televised results. And the day after Calgary lost, Air Canada and PanCanadian each placed full-page ads in the *Calgary Herald* congratulating citizens and organisers on their efforts. "I don't want to be too altruistic but what we did, we did for the greater good of the city," says... [the] publisher of the *Herald*, a \$250,000 Canada 2005 sponsor. "If we had to go back and do it all again we'd go back," says... White Iron Productions, which donated about \$85,000... In all, Calgary's unsuccessful bid is estimated to have cost \$C5.5 million... Calgarians believed their vision for Expo 2005 would translate into the city's biggest ever event. Expo 2005 could have netted about \$1.2 billion in economic benefits and 60,000 person-years of employment across the country... On reflection, it seems Canada's efforts to win Expo were doomed from the outset. After losing bids for the 1988 Olympic Games and part of the 2002 Soccer World Cup, organisers from the Aichi prefecture, Japan's manufacturing heartland and home of the mighty Toyota Corp, set their sights on Expo 2005 eight years ago. They used their considerable economic, social and diplomatic clout to win votes. The morning of the BIE vote, persistent rumours circulated that they had offered blank cheques to... delegates to ensure their support. "If there's any bitterness it's at the process and how you have to play the game,"... Still, [QC Data's owner] isn't completely discouraged. [It's already] given a \$100,000 cheque to [the] Canada 2005 chair[perso]n... for Calgary's next Expo bid.

...[Wellington has] 'pulled out of seeking the 2006 Commonwealth Games.' While on the topic of Commonwealth Games, the medal table sagged under the weight of the 87 golds won by A[US]... in Victoria. Host country Canada came a distant second with 40. The sight of this torrent of precious metal flowing A[US]'s way caused an acquaintance to remark: "Well, they've just gone out and *bought* success, haven't they?" Certainly the funding the Aussies began devoting to their high performance sports programmes jumped phenomenally after their poor showing at the 1976 Montreal Olympics. By the 1980s, they had the \$100 million A[IS] up and running, and were pumping a further \$77m annually into high performance sport development. So was my friend right? Is money all it takes? ...Without wanting to sound like an economist, I'll answer that by saying "yes", and "no". "Yes", because money is now an entrenched part of the winning equation. Without money, nothing can even start to happen... [However, money] in itself is no guarantee of success. If it was, Saudi Arabia and Brunei would dominate the sports world... One of the Sports Foundation's over-riding philosophies is to "outsmart, not outspend"... Beyond... this, there are... things like capacity for hard work, passion and guts. And that's where we're lucky. They're qualities that have defined N[Z] champions in the past. I know they'll be there for us in the future.

...Brewing giant Fosters have announced they will spend \$A10 million... to help A[US]n athletes prepare for the next two Olympic Games. The Fosters Foundation will target up and coming athletes, with some money going towards established competitors... [In local news, a n]ational swimming champion... has her sights on competing at the Sydney Olympics, but training costs could price her out of the water. The youngster is a member of one of two Glenfield swimming clubs whose future is in doubt because of a proposed leap in pool user charges. The Glenfield Aquatics Swimming and Synchronised Swimming Clubs say they will have to close if the North Shore City Council withdraws their pool use subsidies – a decision which would force costs up 250[%]. The council said the rise would put the clubs' charges on a par with those paid by other user groups. This would increase the clubs' annual pool hire from \$22,000 to \$74,000... The president of the 60-member [swimming] club... said the jump would put the cost of competitive swimming beyond what parents could afford... [The 16]-year-old... holder of the national 1500m freestyle title[will] face... a jump in training costs from \$100 to \$270 a month[, and] would also have to pay \$20 a week for entry to the pool... The chair[perso]n of the community services committee... said the increase was part of a city-wide review of operating costs of council sports facilities.

...[User charges proposed for sports fields in Waitakere City have received an angry response from sports clubs. Athletics is just one code affected and both regional and local clubs say goodwill between sports clubs and the Waitakere City Council will be lost. Waitakere is the only city in the region that does not charge for sports fields (apart from the Waitakere Stadium). While some might question why ratepayers should pay for others' sporting activities, a member of Lynndale Athletics Club in New Lynn says it goes much further than that. Councils treating sports clubs as a cash cow don't take into account the important social spinoffs sport has for the whole community. "There's a lot of young people around New Lynn and I'd rather have them down at the club on the weekend, doing athletics, than tagging our clubrooms." ● 'Health and safety officers are investigating an accident at Henderson Aquatic Centre where a boy's foot was jammed in the pool's moveable floor. The accident happened while the pool level was being raised. The boy was taken to Starship Hospital with cuts to his feet. Ambulance staff say the injuries were minor. Waitakere City Council's public affairs manager says procedures for changing the pool level are being reviewed. "Floor levels are raised and lowered several times a day. When the level is being altered, people are moved away from the side. In this case, for whatever reason, the young fellow hadn't moved away or wasn't moved away from the side and got his foot caught. We have various policies and quite clear procedures in place that we thought were adequate. Clearly, they were not." More than 5 million people have used the pool since it opened 13 years ago and this is the first accident of its type.]

...The family of a South Carolina girl whose intestines were pulled out by the powerful suction of a swimming pool pump is to get \$US25 m... in damages from the pump's manufacturer. [The girl was 5] years old in June 1993 when [it] lost about 80[%] of her small intestine and... 70[%] of her large intestine, and has since undergone a series of operations. [The girl] was playing in a wading pool at a recreation club when the suction of the pool's filter pump pulled her against the uncovered intake with such force that her father and three other adults could not pull her free... The family has reached separate settlements with the pool club... [In local news, t]he cost of a dip in Auckland City pools is likely to rise... because of mounting costs, including hefty Metrowater charges... Pool operators have benefited from a 50[%] rates remission but w[on't] receive this for the portion now taken out for wastewater... The Tepid Baths' annual water bill is increasing from \$15,000 to \$25,000, plus another \$18,750 for wastewater... The YMCA, manager of the Tepid Baths since September, has asked the Auckland City Council for permission to charge \$4.50 when renovations are completed... This is in line with what other city councils are charging... [with the exception of] Manukau... and... Papakura[– where public swimming pools will still be free to use]... Auckland City Council staff have recommended that the community services committee accept the general 50c rise at its meeting today... It would be the first price hike for adults since 1994. Child, family and other concession charges... [including] senior citizens and community services card holders... would not change... [T]he YMCA aquatic facilities manager... said[their] rates... would remain around \$2... Pt Erin Pool, also run by the YMCA, would continue to charge \$3.50[for adults]. The Newmarket Olympic Pool already charges \$4.50... In a recent customer survey, 80[%] of respondents rated value for money at the pools as "very good" or "excellent," compared with 76[%] in 1996.

...The Auckland City Council would be prevented from selling the Olympic Pool in Newmarket under draft legislation returned to Parliament yesterday. The select committee that analysed the Newmarket Land Vesting Bill, a local bill put forward by the council, said it had been told of

“great concern” about the sale of the pool. It was considered a valuable local asset. [In related news, NZ’s junior water polo team was ‘beaten by their hosts in the final of the International Youth Cup at Sao Paolo, Brazil. NZ beat Argentina 10-5 and Brazil beat the US by the same score in the semifinals.’

...the ‘new junior world champion diver is set to make an even bigger splash on the international scene, according to her coach. It’s been a year since her family moved up from Wellington to enable their gifted 14-year-old to train under the renowned former Chinese national coach. And his pupil has come on in leaps and bounds. “The 14-year-old is a great NZ hope in the future,” says the coach, who coaches at the Waitakere Aquatic Centre. “Maybe the diver has a chance to win a medal in 2004 (Athens Olympics).” High praise indeed for the person who caused a huge upset in the girls’ 14-15 years platform event in Germany earlier this month, beating leading Canadians, Americans and Chinese divers after qualifying second in her heat. The NZer scored 335.65 points in the final – 10 clear of her nearest rival. The 14-year-old is just the second Kiwi to win gold at a junior world championship (the first was 17 years ago). Her coach predicted a bright future for his pupil when it won a gold medal at the AUSn age-group championships in April.’

...‘Yes, the best divers in the world are scared when they stand at the top of the 10m platform, backs to the water, hanging on by their toes and their heels letting them know how much nothingness is behind them. They hit the water at around 55 km/h and they have all blown it often enough to know what happens when you don’t enter with the cut of a knife. It hurts. Hospital treatment is routine. Strained necks, backs, shoulders and wrists are to be lived with. At the Sydney aquatic centre yesterday, the US diving team’s “Siamese twins” were training in preparation for the first competition in synchronised diving. “It’s scary up there,” says one twin. “You know all the time you can get hurt.” The diver ripped a tricep muscle that put her out for months after a fifth at the world championships, but came back to win the US nationals. The pair have collided mid-air and tumbled and entered badly and painfully, but have not broken anything so far. There are eight teams entered in the synchronised diving. Chinese 16-year-olds are favourites for the gals’ gold’...

‘The Sydney International Aquatic Centre has been given the thumbs up from spectators. Since its opening in 1994 more than five million people have been through the centre. The pool has been designed to promote fast times. The minimum depth of two metres minimises reflected turbulence and the water temperature is maintained at 25 degrees by gas heating and recycled warm air. Energy efficient zoned air conditioning keeps air warm at pool level around the athletes and the air cool in the spectator stands.’ By the way, the world of sport has produced a myriad of explanations for positive drug tests, but the three Russian swimmers charged by the International Swimming Federation have come up with a new one. [Russia’s] European 50m freestyle champion... European 4x200 freestyle relay gold medallist... and... European 4x100 medley relay silver medallist, unwittingly ate the steroid metandione in a cake baked by a colleague so the Russian Swimming Federation still intended taking them to... the... world champs in Perth...

China’s top... swimmers and their coaches have revealed their successful formula – gelatin from a donkey’s hide and wolfberries, date soup and ginseng root – to counter allegations that drug cheats are headed for... Perth... in January. Like the... runners and their turtle’s-blood-and-slug-paste tonic, swim coaches said the only stimulants used are based on Chinese medicines. The issue has been hard to settle since only swimmers ranked top-50 nationally are tested and the Chinese have a knack of turning up unranked soup-powered champions.

...[the] US backstroke champion... was one of a large group of the US team whose training... at the Wollongong University pool in advance of the world swimming championships in Perth next month... was interrupted for a drugs test. [The chief] executive of the Perth organising committee... said 500 swimmers would be tested. “We had a very pleasant surprise this morning and I hope they are heading right over to the Chinese headquarters tomorrow,” [the US team]’s head coach... said... [Incidentally, earlier this month a]thletes from 24 Islamic countries... [participated in the gal]-only games... which were dominated by the host country. Iran took first place in the second Islamic [Gals’] Games with 58 gold, 55 silver and 37 bronze medals. More than 1000 athletes competed in 12 sports... during the games, which were watched only by [gal] spectators.

...A furore has erupted over sex-testing Olympic athletes. A campaign to abandon gender testing has upset Olympic officials, who fear it will be impossible to hold separate events for [guys and gals]. One... official said: “Sex is like a weight in boxing. If you can’t be sure that someone belongs in a particular category, you may as well give up the whole difference.” Apparently, some pesky Norwegians are behind the anti-testing push because it’s illegal in Norway to insist on sex tests. About one in 400 [gal athletes tested at the Atlanta Olympics were, according to initial results, guys –] but, reassuringly, all were cleared by subsequent physical examinations. All the heat seems to be going on the [gal] competitors but I’d suggest there’s a few [guy] ice dancers out there who’d have cause to fidget nervously with their sequined trousers at the mention of a sex test. - 1997

...the... granny, is a pretty startling sight. Her muscles ripple, her legs bulge and any self-respecting bricklayer would be proud to sport her shoulders. Her physique is, in fact, so extraordinary for a 56-year-old [gal] it is perhaps not surprising her fellow competitors at the recent World Veterans Athletics Championships became convinced [the USer] must be a [guy]. The rumour mill spun out of control until miffed members of the A[USn and NZ] teams launched an official complaint demanding proof of [her] sexuality. But after an embarrassing physical examination, it was conclusively proven that [the USer] – a mother of two who has been married for 30 years – is not a bloke. This controversy has drawn attention to the bizarre but usually hidden world of veterans’ athletics, but it has also highlighted the huge and ever-growing number of physically active oldies. When I went to the Gateshead International Stadium to meet [the USer], the scene that greeted me was like a weird snapshot of the long-living future. Lycra-clad grannies stalked the arena, baring wrinkled flesh in skintight cycling shorts, while Scandinavian octogenarians scuttled around the running track like demented ants. In person, [the USer] is smaller than [it] seems in photographs, but... sparkles with life, warmth and good ol’ American friendliness. [The USer] worries about how her hair looks and applies frosted pink lipstick artfully. Her legs make me jealous. [The USer] may be nearly 30 years older than me but I would gladly settle for her peachy skin and perfect muscle tone and, although her neck is thick and her upper torso bulky, her manner is very feminine. “I’ve become a bit of a star, haven’t I? ...I hate the reason why this fame came about, but it has probably been the best thing that could happen, because usually nobody would know I exist.” But wasn’t [the mother of two nobodies] upset at having to undergo an intimate physical examination – as bad as being strip-searched – to prove... [her gender]? “Yes, I was very upset... To begin with, I thought they must be talking about someone else. There are [gals] here who are much bulkier than I am. You should see some of the shot putters, they are huge!” Has anyone ever doubted her gender before? I ask a little nervously. “No... never before in my life has it crossed anyone’s mind that I might be a [guy]. My body shape is genetic; my mother had broad shoulders and slim hips, too...” There is an uneasy silence. Then [the USer] says, “Well, I suppose there have been times at the swimming pool” – [it] works as a swimming coach in the summer – “when I’ve had my bathing suit on and... kids – little kids – don’t always know whether I’m a [gal or a guy]. They ask me, or I’ve heard them say, ‘Mommy, is that a [guy]?’ But that’s usually because their mom is big and fat, rather than lean like me.” So is [the USer] admitting that the AUS]ns and Kiwis might have a point? “No, little kids are different...” [The USer] believes the sexuality allegations were made maliciously because [it] is a “new girl on the block” beating some of the more established competitors. “Somebody has got... a grudge, or sour grapes, or... a lack of perspective on what this event should be about... I had been doing rather well, I had gotten bronze in the heptathlon, and set the world record in the 100m. I was running against some A[US]ns – I’m not mentioning any names – and a couple of them were not doing as well as they had thought they would... Friends of mine have sat behind A[US]ns referring to me... and saying that what I am doing is impossible. But it is totally possible – I train hard, about two hours every day. I have been blessed with a good physique. I am just accomplishing things they don’t like. To them it is as if I have just come out of the shadows.” Incredibly, [the USer] did not take up athletics until... [passing] her half-century on earth. “When I turned 50 I made a decision I was going to make my next 50 years the best...” [The USer] did so in style, by attending an event called the Grand Canyon games – “a kind of Arizona state Olympics” – where [it] entered the sprints. “I won three golds... so I thought... that was pretty good... My family were so proud... I was raised to do things a lot of girls didn’t do: I played baseball, I did balancing acts and gymnastics. I was a tomboy... People tell me I could have been an Olympian,” [the 56-year-old] says proudly, but a little wistfully. “They see what I can do now, and they say that I would have

been good enough. I was a very fast runner in my teens. We used to race in the playground and I was always the fastest – I'd beat boys and girls." So why didn't [the teenager] train? "It never occurred to me. If you don't have competitive sports at school, which as girls we didn't, you don't know how good you are and there was nobody to talent-spot me. There were [gal] Olympians, but they were drawn from a very select group of people, not from a high school in a small town." ...[the USer then] tells me proudly [about often being] stopped in the street by young [guys] who admire her muscle tone. "Young [guys today love gals] who look after their bodies and stay fit. Their compliments are a tribute to me... – these young [guys] flatter me by admiring my body." ...We talk for a while about how [gals] with children often tend to neglect their own hobbies or interests. "Yeah... too many... particularly of my generation, do that, but life is too short to be put on hold... You have to shoot for your dreams. Don't just sit back and think, 'I don't have any talents', or, 'I won't be good at it', or, 'It'll be hard'. So what? Try. If you don't have dreams, life is pretty boring."

...A 56-year-old American who set two world sprint records for her age-group at... [the] world veterans' athletics championships has been stripped of her medals and suspended for two years after testing positive for an anabolic steroid. The I[AAF said the USer – who]... was at the centre of controversy during the championships after [N]Z... and A[US]n team officials accused her of being a... [guy (but the mother of two) passed a gender test()] – ...tested positive for methyl testosterone at... [the] championship in Newcastle... The American was stripped of her gold medals and world records for the 100m and 200m[, and] also lost her silver medals in the pole vault and sprint relay and bronze in the heptathlon.

...[a former European gals'] shot put champion who claims the... anabolic steroid Oral Turinabol... pills [the East German] was fed by her trainer and doctor effectively turned her into a... [guy is now suing them. The] transsexual who has legally changed his name... [from] Heidi... is still agonising about whether to undergo the harrowing process of four operations to acquire [a guy's genitalia]...

The trainers[, officials and medics behind the sporting prowess of... communist East Germany have been checking their mail far more than usual lately. Hundreds of them are under investigation for their role in one of the largest pharmaceutical experiments in history – the systematic state-sponsored doping of... athletes, some as young as 10... over a 20-year period... It was win at all costs but the costs are now becoming known in the form of life-threatening medical complaints to the human guinea pigs... The athletes, often... were told the little blue pills they took each day were vitamins. They were, in fact, potent cocktails of anabolic steroids that could play havoc with their bodies... The clandestine programme – known as State Plan 14.25 – was straight from the pages of [a] Cold War thriller... The scale is unprecedented. By 1975... 2000... [athletes] were being given drugs. The... experiments quickly paid off in the pool and on the track – ...the country of just 17 million people... joined the U[S] and Soviet sporting giants in the big time. The side effects read like a horror list of ailments and illnesses... [A]t least 12 [guy] athletes... have had breasts surgically removed. Liver, kidney and lung defects and cancers are also common... In a sickening twist to his case, [one of the mastectomy patients] contracted breast cancer before they were removed... Many of the East's former sporting heroes have remained silent, fearing the scandal could damage their reputations and... even lead to them losing their medals. But others have come forward... [One victim] won her first swimming competition when... six. Quickly identified as a star in the making, [the girl] was sent to a sporting academy where her mentors would hand her boxes of "sweets" filled with brightly coloured pills. "Every athlete had their box with their name on it..." ...Her career was ended by spinal injury when... 14 and now... the... guinea-pig suffers from back pain, breathlessness and infection of her over-sized lungs. Despite the strapping shoulders, her doctors have told... [the girl who, at] 11... could weightlift 29kg... cannot lift anything heavier than 250 grams – "That's a block of butter," [it] says in despair. [The guinea-pig] also blames the drugs for at least one miscarriage. "Like me, most of the victims of this doping programme never stood on the winners' platform... An incredible number of children were sacrificed so that at some point one of them could rise to the top." ...[■ An AUSn has asked an East German who 'cheated her out of her ambition and dream to win gold 25 years ago to hand over the relevant medal.'] British athletes defeated for Olympic gold medals by East Germans found to have taken steroids are [also] trying to have the cheats stripped of their titles.

...An East German swim federation doctor accused of doping young swimmers in the former Communist state has been convicted of causing bodily harm. A Berlin court found [the doctor], 72, guilty of giving illegal substances surreptitiously to 58 teenage swimmers between 1975 and 1984, and handed down a 15-month suspended sentence. [The doctor] was also ordered to pay a fine of 7500 marks... [The doctor] was head physician of the mighty East German swim team that produced an astonishing number of world champions.

...Two days out from the start of the world swimming championships, drugs are top of the sporting agenda... The investigation into systematic doping of athletes in the former East Germany has claimed another victim, with Germany's head coach... [being] banned from attending... [His] exclusion came after a stunning admission that [the coach] had been involved in steroid doping programmes. FINA called [the coach] to appear before its board, didn't like his explanation of events, so immediately revoked his accreditation for the games and ordered him to appear before its doping inquiry panel... In Berlin, state prosecutors this week alleged [the coach] provided banned substances to swimmers between 1986 and 1990 without telling them about, or sufficiently explaining, the side effects... [The coach] expressed sorrow for what [it] had done, but added that... [no coach had] a choice under the authoritarian East German system of the time... FINA was stunned... "[The coach] gave an explanation... [which involved being] forced to do it... which is likely to be true... but still, with the rules we have... should have reported any kind of violation of the doping rules to FINA, and... never did, and... could not do it, obviously," said... [FINA's secretary. The coach] had "broken down" on learning of the FINA decision... "His first reaction yesterday was, 'I will leave'. The team urged him to stay," [a team spokesperson said. The coach] is banned from the world championship venue but might still be able to function as team director... [The spokesperson] said at least one other coach from another country at the eighth FINA world swimming championships... was... [also] under investigation by German prosecutors for involvement in doping of athletes under the former East German regime. "But no one's interested in him." ...[the spokesperson] would not comment on a report that FINA might also investigate the background of... [the swimmer who won] the 1500m at the world champs in 1991, then last year admitted... [to having] taken steroids while representing East Germany... [The] former 1500m world champion... trained with the German squad at the Challenge Stadium yesterday and will compete in the 200m and 400m freestyle events. Meanwhile, A[US]'s head coach... yesterday renewed attacks of alleged Chinese doping. "It's bloody crazy to shut your eyes and refuse to do something, saying 'you haven't proved anything yet'..." China's sudden resurgence in swimming threatens to give the Chinese... a near-monopoly of gold in Perth but the A[US]ns are anxious to avoid a repeat of the 1994 world championships in Rome in which China won 12 of 16 [gals'] events only to have seven of its swimmers test positive for steroids at the Asian Games a month later. In an ironic twist, the FINA Congress in Perth this week is expected to halve its four-year ban for first-offence dopers... [● A f]ormer Aussie coach[']s... attempts to have the new sharkskin swimsuits banned from the Olympics has found no favour with swimming's governing body... [The former coach] believes it is not fair that swimmers from poorer countries cannot afford the \$1500 suits.

...China's powerful team arrived... yesterday and quickly rejected accusations that their stars were drug cheats. [The team] chief... said Chinese swimmers had undergone... 650 doping tests in the past year and a further 460 other tests out of competition... Asked to respond to remarks made by [AUS's chief coach, China's coach] replied: "When we say anything, we should have facts." ...China has always denied systematic doping despite 23 positive steroid tests since 1990... Meanwhile... Fina, has decided to maintain a minimum four-year ban for anabolic steroid offences... following challenges in the courts... Fina had been under pressure to... [come] into line with other major sports... and... reduce the length... to two years.

...The German Swimming Federation yesterday won a West[ern AUS] Supreme Court injunction against Fina's ban on [its] team coach... from poolside at Perth. Meanwhile... continuing his tirade against Chinese swimmers... [suspected] of turning in drug-enhanced performances[, an AUSn]... anti-doping campaigner... has called on the public to turn their backs on winning Chinese swimmers at medal ceremonies.

...Chinese swimmers... either ignored journalists' questions or said they did not speak English when approached for comment on yesterday's customs seizure of suspected human growth hormones from... [a breaststroker]'s luggage at Sydney airport. Test results on the 13 vials of liquid will be known today... The discovery of the vials prompted calls by A[US]n swimming officials and athletes to expel China from the championships... However, [a]... Chinese journalist has angrily defended the team, claiming... the team were very upset with the unfriendly atmosphere in A[US], and the substance found should not have been said to be growth hormone until this was proved... [The journalist suggested AUSn] authorities could even frame China. "...if you take... the thing in the bottle... to your laboratories you can change it, you can frame us..." [A former] Chinese Olympic athlete and now [the US] diving team coach... said Chinese journalists... had told him the substance found was a natural herbal remedy used to recuperate after sickness or over-exercise. "It's made from honey and a quite popular thing,"...

Tests yesterday confirmed that a substance found in the luggage of a Chinese swimmer... was... human somatropin, an undetectable growth hormone used to boost muscle strength... said... a spokes[person for the AUSn] Customs Minister...

The Chinese swimming drug scandal [- which included '4 team members testing positive for banned substances' -] has overshadowed the unravelling of a far more potent doping regime... Fresh allegations erupted yesterday about widespread drug use among A[US]'s top athletes, including those at the A[IS]. Under the spotlight is synthetic insulin growth factor, or IGF1, which is indistinguishable from a substance the body produces naturally. Channel Nine's *Sunday* programme yesterday revealed that A[US]n Federal Police had investigated illegal distribution of IGF1, including allegations it had been bought and used by individual athletes and coaches associated with the institute... [T]he head of the federal government's Therapeutic Goods Administration in Canberra, told the programme there were signs that IGF1 was going to the elite sports market unlawfully. It was also claimed on the programme that up to 80[% of AUS]'s elite athletes took performance-enhancing drugs, some using IGF1... [The] Institute of Sport director... disputed the claims... But... [a] former national sprint champion and 1996 Olympic competitor, who was not identified... gave first-hand knowledge of IGF1 in elite sports. "Just the fact that it was undetectable was like a godsend to everybody, it was a real buzz around the community," said the sprinter who... never tested positive for drugs. "I was just worried about improving my performance," [the sprinter] said, adding that [it] never feared the potential harm of taking the drug... which has similar effects to insulin in stimulating muscle growth... "Leading into the Olympics of '96, almost everyone I knew was involved at some stage with IGF1... especially within the power/strength disciplines." A former A[US]n champion shot-putter... now a trainer, revealed that one black marketer bought IGF1 from GroPep, an Adelaide-based company, which is the only significant manufacturer of it in the world... GroPep's managing director... had heard that up to 1000 athletes might be using IGF1, possibly paying up to \$A1000... for a small vial. But [the managing director] said they were probably being deceived... GroPep made only one gram - about one-fifth of a teaspoon - of IGF1 each year and exported 90[%] to research laboratories outside A[US]... ostensibly for veterinary trials... "The total amount of IGF1 produced worldwide could never support even a tiny fraction of those who claim to be using it. Athletes injecting themselves with what they believe is IGF1 are almost certainly injecting only water with perhaps a small amount of glucose or salt."

...For... years [a US] swimmer... has been seeking vindication for a devastating Olympic heartbreak. At the 1972 Munich Games, a 16-year-old... was unceremoniously stripped of an Olympic gold medal after testing positive for a banned substance that was an ingredient in his asthma medication. After all these years, U[S] Olympic Committee officials said they are "welcoming him back into the Olympic family and recognising him as one of the most gifted athletes ever to represent the US in international competition." The... [16-year-old] won the 400m freestyle... in 4m 00.26s, beating [an AUS]n... by one-hundredth of a second. Two days later, his medal was taken away when traces of the banned substance ephedrine turned up in a post-race urine test. [The] asthmatic... was first prescribed Marax, then a common medication for asthma treatment, in 1971. [The swimmer] continued taking it, unaware that it contained ephedrine, a drug banned by the IOC. Although the youngster duly disclosed his use of Marax on medical forms distributed to all Olympic athletes, US officials failed to relay the information to the proper authorities on the IOC's medical commission. No one on the US staff ever admitted responsibility for the failure. "It was their [American medical officials'] responsibility to let me know there was an illegal substance in my prescription... and either get it cleared or find an alternative. They failed to do it. I was only 16, I relied on those officials to tell me what I could take, but somehow I ended up paying the price. I guess it was easier to hang a 16-year-old kid out to dry than to tell the truth." [The swimmer] thus became "the first American athlete since Jim Thorpe to have a gold medal taken away," [and]... also became the first swimmer to test positive for a banned substance... [In 1972], drug testing in sports was in its infancy and the... Munich Olympics were the first Games with comprehensive doping tests... Several days after [the 16-year-old] was stripped of the gold medal, the ephedrine was out of [hi]s system and [it] swam in the prelims of the 1500m, an event in which [it] held the world record, and qualified easily for the finals. "While we were in the Ready Room five minutes before the race, [my] coach... came in and told me the IOC would not let me swim. [My coach] was crying. I was devastated,"... The following summer, [the asthmatic] competed in swimming's first world championships in Belgrade... In a re-match of the 1972 Olympic race, [the USer] once again defeated [his AUSn rival], this time in a world record time of 3m 58.18s, becoming the first swimmer to crack the four-minute barrier in the 400m freestyle. [The teenager said it] needed to prove to everyone that [it] was "legitimately the best." ...[the swimmer], now... an assistant swimming coach at the University of Arizona, hopes the action will mark the first step on a road that will one day lead to his being recognised as the legitimate 1972 Olympic champion in the 400m freestyle... "What I want is for the IOC to acknowledge its mistake and correct the historical record... There's a medal out there with my name engraved on it, and I'd like to have it back."

...The IOC knows it needs governments to help pay the enormous cost of staging the Olympics. But, for much of its... [life], the organisation has been fighting to ensure that it and its member sports should be able to run their sporting events free of political interference. This week's meeting in Seoul marked another step in the complex relationship between sport and state around the world. At its highest levels, the IOC is acknowledging it needs government help to fight the use of performance-enhancing drugs... [The] IOC president... told an international press conference in Seoul... just what performance-enhancing drugs mean to world sport. "It is... a very big problem... We think it is... dangerous for the future of sport,"... In recent years, [the IOC president had]... been talking about this being the golden age of sport... It is now clear that when [the IOC] holds a three-day conference on the subject in Lausanne in February it will produce a number of requests to governments around the world to pass legislation tightening controls on trafficking in performance-enhancing drugs, to increase co-operation between governments in fighting the international trade in performance drugs and to standardise penalties around the world.

...The president of the I[OC] says that certain performance-enhancing drugs should be allowed in the Olympics. Why the outrage? [The president] was just admitting the fact that without the assistance of such drugs no athlete would be able to compete fairly at the modern Olympics, and the cost of trying to detect these drugs is exorbitant. All top sports are being enhanced by the advances in modern performance drugs. Anyone with a basic knowledge of human physiology and an interest in sports can see the extreme physical developments that occur... Professional contracts include weight-gain clauses which relate to above-average increases in lean body mass, obtainable only if the athlete uses chemical enhancement. The old adage "the team with the best chemist wins" has never been more true and the Olympic Games can be seen as the pinnacle of drug-assisted sport. Controversies like the... Chinese swimmers or... [Canada's twice]-disgraced... sprinter... are classic examples of the hypocrisy that exists within modern sports. The team making the loudest protestations are usually thankful they have not been caught themselves. Only the pharmaceutically unsophisticated get caught... The only sports[person] penalised in this world is the truly honest competitor who wishes to achieve a personal best without chemical assistance and as we know that sports[person] rarely wins gold. The Olympics should be declared a drug-friendly zone, which would openly admit what everyone already knows, and therefore allow every competitor a fairer chance... [□] [T]he world's fastest

druggie[’s hopes]... of another comeback – at the age of 36 – have been dashed after an Ontario appeals court refused to lift his lifetime ban for steroid use... on the 10th anniversary of that notorious run at the Seoul Olympics in 1988...

As drugs are now rife in sport... so too are the excuses given by offenders. Here, then, is a selection of drug cases, and the excuses, in recent years, ranging from the bad to the wacky... The 1992 Olympic 100m champion was caught for ephedrine. [The Brit claimed it] had ingested the stimulant in some ginseng tea... bought in the Far East. [The Brit] got off, then sued a journalist who had alleged [the sprinter] had used drugs throughout his career... The first of our off-the-wall candidates[was t]he British athlete... nailed for a mix of anabolic steroids and clenbuterol. The excuse? [The Brit] claimed it must have been in the *shampoo* [the Brit had drunk. The Brit] was banned for four years, failed another test in 1997, was banned for life, then reinstated on a technicality... The second of our oddball selections[is the] Japanese billiards player... caught with the anabolic steroid methyltestosterone in his system. Quite correct, [the Jap said, claiming it] was taking the drug not to help his potting on the baize but to improve his performance in the bedroom, where [it] was experiencing some problems of a very personal matter. Found guilty, [the bedroom-dud] was booted out of the Asian Games... The most celebrated case of all[is t]he Canadian sprinter rocketing to the tape in a world record 9.79s in the 1988 Olympic final. The following day [the Canadian] was kicked out in disgrace, having tested positive to stanozolol. [The Canadian] claimed an American rival spiked his drink. [The Canadian] returned to competition in 1991, but failed another test in 1993. [This time the Canadian] claimed his stutter may have been responsible for his high testosterone reading. Set aside the fact that [the Canadian] was a cheat, the [1988] Olympic final is still a stunning example of what drugs can do. Try driving your car from a standing start for 100m and see how long it takes... [□ The USer who won] the gold medal in the shot put at the... Atlanta Olympic Games... and[a US] sprinter... have been suspended indefinitely for drug use.

...Triple Olympic gold medallist Florence Griffith Joyner, the [US] sprinter who holds the [gals’] 100m and 200m world records, died at her suburban home yesterday at the age of 38. Police said a post mortem examination would be conducted, but [the retired sprinter] was believed to have died of a heart attack similar to one... suffered in 1996 on a plane bound for St Louis. “We were dazed by her speed, humbled by her talent and captivated by her style,” [the US] President... said in a statement... Griffith Joyner, the wife of [the] 1984 Olympic triple jump champion... and sister[-in-law of a] famed heptathlete... made an incredible mark on the world of athletics, both through appearance and performance, but her achievements will be forever clouded by suspicions of drug use... Before the 1988 season, Griffith Joyner’s best [100m] time was 10.96s – not even in the then best 40 marks of all time... In the quarter-finals of the U[S] trials in Indianapolis in July that year, [Flo-Jo] recorded an astonishing 10.49s... – creaming an unheard of 0.27s off... [a compatriot]’s 1984 mark... There was talk of an illegal wind and faulty gauge – it timed the following wind as 0.00 km/h – but the record stood. Two months later [Flo-Jo] erased any doubts – at least about wind assistance – when [the USer] won the Olympic final in 10.54s, smiling all the way to the line. The nearest anyone has come to it since was... 10.65s this month... In the 200m, [Flo-Jo] demolished the world record not once but twice in less than two hours en route to Olympic gold. Her pre-1988 best of 21.96s did not rate in the top 20 runs on the all-time list. Yet in the Olympic semifinal and final, [Flo-Jo] slashed an outrageous 0.37s off the previous mark shared by [two] East Germans... a world record which had stood for nine years. The awesome improvements, particularly coming days before [a Canadian 100m runner]’s positive drugs test, inevitably raised suspicions... Constantly badgered on the question, [Flo-Jo] said: “I am totally opposed to drugs,” adding that [the USer] supported the introduction of random testing without warning both on and off the track. Discussing Flo-Jo’s muscular physique, [her husband] said: “Someone said my wife looks like a [guy. That person has] obviously never seen my wife.” Certainly there had never been any doubt about her ability to catch the eye. [Flo-Jo] was known for her self-designed fancy running uniforms and long fingernails.

...Flo-Jo’s... death will do more for drug-testing than drug-testing ever did. What are [Canada’s disgraced sprinter] and many others thinking today? When you watched [her] rippling down the 200m track at the Seoul Olympics... in the world-record 21.34 seconds that still stands to this day, you knew the others were not competing on a level playing field... Funny how the developments in training, the extra medical attention, the professionalism[and] the money that is available today have not lifted anyone to do better than Flo-Jo. Split seconds really count in the sprints. These races are over almost before you can say, “The [gals’] 100 metres final at the Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games.”

...A former training partner of... [Flo-Jo] is convinced the sprinter took a cocktail of drugs to make her the fastest [gal] on earth... the... former Commonwealth silver medallist hurdler[who is now the]... British athletics team manager... trained regularly with [Flo-Jo] in the build-up to the 1988 Seoul Olympics... [and] was amazed at the transformation... “I am [still] astonished by the way Flo-Jo, a very good athlete in her own right, changed so incredibly from the slightly overweight, sluggish sprinter I was easily able to beat in training in California... into sub-11s form that... summer... In 1987-88 I met a nurse who... was working in a Californian hospital in what we called the Valley... The nurse insisted that Flo-Jo was coming to the hospital regularly to be given a five-part cocktail of drugs, including steroids and testosterone... When I mentioned it to one of my coaches, who must have been looking out for some quick money, [the coach] contacted the local press and I was told there was at least £25,000... in it for me. That was quite a lot of money to me at that time but I definitely wasn’t interested. I was just an athlete, training hard. I also knew that when it came to drugs of any kind round there you could easily get a hit[-guy] dealing with you and taking you out.” ...Meanwhile, [Flo-Jo’s] brother-in-law and former coach... blasted the media for tarnishing her memory. “It has never been proven that Flo... ever used anything illegally... I blame the media for allowing false rumours to spread and write them as if they are fact,”...

Leave her alone... [say] the defenders... of... [Flo-Jo, who] left this world never having failed a drug test. Unless some evidence crops up in the autopsy, [Flo-Jo] has to be innocent until proven guilty. Sure her improvement looked suspicious... [– it] was faster than the [guys’] record for a host of countries... – ...but if we convicted on that count there would be a lot of innocent people in our jails... However... in his book *Inside Track*, under a chapter headlined Year of The Steroid, [a US Olympic sprinter and long jumper (r:p1578, ln30)] said of Flo-Jo: “...Her physical appearance alone – muscles popping – made a lot of people wonder. Then there was her voice [which] was much deeper than it was in the past.” ...[Furthermore,] a... medical director with the A[US]n Commonwealth Games team, said her death was consistent with the possibility of steroid abuse... But... a long-time proponent of legalising medically-controlled drug use... doubts steroid use would have caused her heart attack at 38, a decade after[her second] retirement... Flo-Jo... who... [had quit running and returned] to working in a bank and as a beautician... [in 1986, having won an Olympic silver in the] 200m at Los Angeles[, returned]... to serious training and [came] second in the 200m at [the 1987 world championships].

...a US] Olympic track star... died from suffocation during an epileptic seizure and there was no indication [that Flo-Jo] had ever used steroids, a pathologist said... [yesterday. In related news, the IOC] boss... is... under pressure to step aside from control of a new body aimed at stamping out illegal drug taking... No delegates were prepared to demand directly that the 78-year-old Spaniard step aside during yesterday’s opening day of a key world doping conference, but it is becoming clear that some leading officials believe the doping body will look more independent without senior IOC figures in charge... [The new body] will help to run random drug tests worldwide, the most effective way of catching cheats.

...The... IOC... leadership suffered a further blow yesterday as... [it]s drug summit foundered in disarray. Credibility of the IOC came under attack for a second straight day at the world anti-doping conference, with athletes and officials questioning its legitimacy... “In Canada and indeed throughout the world, there is a high degree of cynicism... scepticism and... mistrust in the IOC as an organisation,” said... a former world champion kayaker from Canada... “For the first time in the history of the Olympic movement, the voice of the members is very... loud,” said[the] Italian IOC member... Despite the revolt, [the Italian] said the members remain in full support of [the IOC president, who] will put his leadership to a vote of confidence at [an emergency IOC session in six weeks]... At the conference, the IOC ran into... trouble [when officials] backed off on proposals for a fixed minimum two-year ban for serious drug offences. Despite calls from leading athletes for tougher sanctions across all sports,

the conference moved to allow federations to impose shorter penalties in “exceptional circumstances” for fear of being overruled by civil courts. The creation of a \$US25 million... international doping agency was held up by continued wrangling between governments and the IOC over who would control the body... [The] IOC vice-president... said the IOC was ready to give governments a 50[%] role... and... expect[s] them to contribute financially.

...The... [IOC] is threatening to cut countries that fail to agree to drug testing programmes out of the Games financial divvy-up. [An IOC executive] member... yesterday said... “I am not sure you can hold a cheque under their nose and say sign the medical code or else. But you have to have respect, and maybe this is the last chance for good will.” ...[in another development, the AUSn] Olympic Committee president... [declared that the] IOC’s new anti-doping code was defective and didn’t go far enough to prevent the use of drugs in sport[, although the president]... believes the fight against doping... would be compromised if the proposed International Anti-Doping Agency was not set up immediately.

...*Consistency vital in war on drug cheats*... The Kiwis are playing the Kangaroos at North Harbour stadium. We win. The N[ZSDA] officials move in after the game for the random drug tests. The two Kiwi players are clean. One of the [Kangaroos] tests positive for pseudoephedrine. Under the A[US]n policy at the time the Kangaroos’ player received no penalty. But if [the offender] had been a Kiwi[, it] would have got up to a three-month suspension under the N[ZSDA]’s drug policy. Is that fair? No way... In A[US] many sports organisations look likely to follow the model anti-doping policy prepared by the A[US]n Sports Commission. This policy provides a number of exceptions, including cases where the drugs were taken for a genuine medical reason or in cases beyond the athlete’s control. The [NZ] [Hillary] Commission policy does not contain these exceptions. So, in that respect, A[US]n athletes probably have more room to move. N[Z] laws, though, are tough on those who conduct tests – practically any glitch by the tester and the athlete can get off whether guilty or not. The A[US]ns will let an athlete off on a technical glitch only if it raises serious doubts about the accuracy of a test result. And who knows what list of banned drugs might apply? If a sports organisation hasn’t updated its list in accordance with the latest I[OC] list then what might be OK for one team won’t be for the other. Surely when teams play each other the same rules should apply to everyone? Isn’t that what sport is all about? Put everyone on a level playing field and let the athletes’ skills and determination decide the play? ...the... [IOC’s] world conference on doping in sport... [looked] at problems such as those mentioned – the need for “harmonisation”... of sports drug policies and penalties between different nations, different sporting codes and different levels of competition. And a fair application of sports drug policies and penalties. Is it fair that an “over-the-counter” drug has a minimum two-year ban with no other factors considered? For an older pro-cyclist, that could mean the loss of mega-bucks and the end of a career, whereas in amateur wrestling it could mean only the loss of a title and leave enough time to train for the next Olympic Games. The conference on doping heard... from representatives of governments, national Olympic committees and international sports organisations... that it was vital to establish an independent international anti-doping agency... To work properly, the agency would need the cooperation of amateur and professional sports, international and national sports organisations, Olympic, Commonwealth and world championship competitions and everything in between. How could this work in practice? ...there have been calls for independent sports drug tribunals to apply the new consistent international policies (if and when they arrive). That would take decisions on penalties out of the hands of the sports organisations and... presumably... would [also] remove the pressure and conflict from the sports organisations who must often be torn between what is for the good of their sport and what is in the best interests of their athletes... [A] leading academic in... sports law, suggests... the Court of Arbitration for Sport could be such a tribunal. It is independent, competent and there is widespread confidence in its integrity. It could provide unified and final decisions for all sports and athletes: not just those in the IOC. However, the location of the court’s registries and other practicalities means that it would probably only be economic to use it at the international level or for final appeals from national bodies... It is a tough call. It means that sports organisations lose some control over their sport.

...[medical] scientists have scored a major breakthrough in the fight against drug abuse in sport by coming up with a new method of testing for the presence of... hGH[via a pin-prick. By the way, the relevant authorities have begun ‘testing racing pigeon poo for performance-enhancing drugs’]...

It has been called the Magic Potion in some circles... [The NZ Herald] looks at... *the legal alternative to performance-enhancing drugs...* [A]n article in *Sports Illustrated*... estimates that at least a quarter of professional baseballers, basketballers and ice hockey players[in the US] use it, while the ratio climbs to around half for[gridiron] football... at least half the All Blacks are[also] into it. The same goes for the Auckland Warriors. Athletes in the power disciplines lap it up and for any aspiring sports[person] eyeing the dollars of the professional era, it could be the difference between signing on the dotted line or signing on for the dole. It is called creatine... [and] as far as the medical experts can tell, there is not a heck of a lot wrong with it. And it is not new either... Elite sports people have been using the product openly since the early ’90s, with [the British 100m champion]’s efforts at the 1992 Olympics attributed, in part at least, to creatine use. Since then it has spread through the ranks of sportspeople... In many cases it significantly improves performance. It serves up a tasty trifecta for athletes, making them bigger, faster and stronger. They are also able to recover better and to exert themselves in bursts of energy more efficiently... Creatine is a nutrient made in our bodies from a combination of three amino acids and, essentially, it provides our muscle cells with the energy they need for quick release of energy or exertion... What scientists and doctors have found – as far back as 1981 when its benefits were cited in an article in the *New England Journal of Medicine* – is that the body’s natural creatine levels can be supplemented to maximise benefits... But there’s a catch. Creatine supplements don’t work for everyone... “It has a 60[%] success rate so for 40[%] of people it does nothing,”... If your natural creatine levels are already high, it appears that taking it will have little or no effect. But if your natural levels are low, the results are dramatic... [Now] creatine... is... going mass market... According to the *Nutrition Business Journal*, US sales of creatine products were \$US50 million in 1996. Last year that figure rose to \$100m and the magazine expects sales to top \$200m this year... [But] scientific data is in short supply, although all evidence thus far tends to indicate the product is safe... [However, the NZSDA] executive director... would like creatine banned... The agency warns athletes under 18 years against using creatine... “...I wouldn’t recommend it among young players simply because their bodies haven’t finished growing,”... said... [a sports dietitian. Side effects among adult athletes] have included cramping, dehydration, diarrhoea and dizziness, although often these are a result of incorrect dosages and experts say can be diffused by drinking large quantities of water... Creatine is taken usually in powder form, with recommended dosages involving a loading phase of between four and six teaspoons a day – usually for a week – and then maintenance of about a quarter of that... “...It’s just one of the ingredients in the supplements recipe... along with all the other stuff like proteins, carbo fuels and vitamins...” A recipe that, it seems, can take you to the big time... [Editor’s note: Body-builders,] when... training for competitions[, eat]... six or seven meals of chicken, rice, oatmeal, fruit or potatoes a day...

[A NZ r]unning legend... says... one of the saddest aspects of the drugs in sport issue was the attitude of some Americans. “I understand that when some kids were asked that if they could take drugs which would guarantee them an Olympic gold medal – but as a result they would be dead within five years – they said they would willingly take that risk. That’s scary.” ...The triple Olympic gold medallist returns to his home in Dallas... tomorrow after a week in Auckland in which [it] was guest of honour at the... Institute of Sport dinner and fundraising auction[, where t]en young sports[people]... were awarded scholarships... [The legend] twice broke the mile record (in 1962 and 1964) during the 21-year-period it was lowered from [a Brit]’s 3m 59.42s (the first sub-four minute record) to [another NZer]’s first sub 3m 50s... mark... [The legend] does not expect to see a mile run in under 3m 40s in his lifetime. Talk of 3m 30s... is ridiculous. “The body... [p]articularly, the lungs... are not designed to go that fast,”...

[The current guys’] world champion... and... indoor world record holder at 60m... smashed the 100m track record yesterday, clocking a sizzling 9.79s. In a brilliant display, the American took 0.05s off the previous record... set by [a] Canadian... in the Atlanta Olympics final... Inevitably, the new time echoed back to the 9.79s set by [the ex-record holder’s compatriot] at the... Seoul Olympics before the athletics world came crashing round the [compatriot]’s ears. That time was erased from the record books...

Since one of the darkest days in Olympic history, the official world [guys'] 100m record has been... [gradually whittled down to the same mark]. But the 9.79 seconds clocked by a drug-fuelled [Canadian]... in the 1988 Seoul Olympics final, subsequently struck from the record books, had not been bettered... before yesterday when [an American] electrified a modest Grand Prix athletics final with a time of 9.78s... The 27-year-old American is... now unquestionably the fastest [hu]man in history. In 1994, on a grass track, [the American] clocked 9.96s to win the Junior Colleges title, easily a world record for a junior. [The American raced against a compatriot when the compatriot] clocked a world record of 9.85s in Lausanne in 1994... In 1996 [the American] watched from the stands as [a]Canadian... set his record of 9.84s at the Atlanta Olympics[, but]... was in the field when [yet another American's 9.79s was] set... in Athens... [The new world record holder]'s training partner[, the]... Olympic double sprint champion... [who] clocked 10.88s in the... [gals'] 100m race to take the gals'] overall Grand Prix title for the second time, was delighted at her friend's success. [However, the disgraced Canada]n's malign legacy to both the Olympic movement and his sport still lingers. At the end of a week when it was confirmed that a second sample taken from [the]new world steeplechase record holder... was positive, [the gals' sprint champion] was asked about the suspicion inevitably attached to world records. "I think it's really unfortunate... You have such an incredible performance today and you have someone who will immediately suspect something. I think we are all here today to celebrate something outstanding..." [The 27-year-old]'s triumph spoiled the 28th birthday celebrations of Morocco[o's] 1500m world recordholder... as the triple world champion saw the \$US100,000... snatched from his grasp as overall Grand Prix champion. Half an hour after completing his lap of celebration, [the Moroccan] watched open-mouthed as [the American sprinter] soared in to finish equal on points... The American took the cash jackpot on the tiebreak for breaking a world record this season.

...[an Aucklander] is back on her throne after becoming the first N[Z]er to win a World Cup... [The NZer] may no longer be a world champion, but a World Cup discus crown is more than good enough for the Queen... of N[Z] athletics, who] overcame atrocious conditions and a world-class field... in Madrid to earn a pay-cheque of \$64,000 and truly reignite her international career. Competing shortly after a hailstorm saw temperatures plummet, [the NZer] threw a best of 62.47m to push [the]European champion... of Greece, into second and [the]reigning world champion... of Russia, to third. [The NZer] became only the third Oceania athlete to win a gold medal in World Cup history, following A[USn gal]s... who won the javelin [a few years ago], and... the long jump title at the inaugural World Cup in 1977. It marked [the NZ]er's most significant achievement since... w[inning] the world championship in 1997... [The NZer] derived extra satisfaction from her success yesterday due to the struggles [it] had when a ruptured Achilles tendon sidelined her... N[Z]'s world junior champion... 17, coped remarkably well in top company when [it] bettered her own national record to finish sixth in the shot put, beating her previous best of 17.73m on all three of her valid throws... [T]he other N[Z]ers came]... fifth in the [gals'] long jump... ninth in the [guys'] 200m... and... seventh... in... [the guys'] hammer throw...

Four Avondale youngsters have a shot at some of the best athletes in the Pacific region in Sydney next month... [The members of the] Avondale Athletic Club are off to the Pacific school games. All four will compete for N[Z] in the shotput and discus and [one] will also run in the 100m. "They are going there for experience," says [their]coach... More than 250 N[Z] competitors are going to the school games, which draw athletes from 49 countries for swimming, diving, gymnastics, athletics and special olympic events. This year is the first time any of the Avondale club's athletes have qualified... They qualified... after impressive results at the secondary school nationals and the Colgate Games.

...The 12th Masters Games swing into action in Wanganui this weekend with 2099 competitors engaged today and a further 2119 tomorrow. The event runs over nine days and features 57 sports – the largest multi-sports competition held in N[Z]. There are a record 7800 competitors from nine countries, including 174 from overseas. The previous Masters Games record was 7640 in Dunedin... last year. The oldest competitor is Wanganui[s] 96-year-old indoor bowler... who drove his car to the Games village yesterday to officially check in... Notable competitors include [the]twice world rowing double sculls champion[s]... who will row together for the first time since the Atlanta Olympics; [a]64-year-old former Olympic yacht[ie and a]... former All Black captain, coach and manager... who is chair[per]son of the Hillary Commission[, both]... playing golf...

Rivals in struggle... [A Cantabrian] held a 38s lead over [its]arch-rival... after the latest stage of the Mizone Endurazone multisport race yesterday. While the duo crossed the finish line together at Hokitika Beach, for the first time in the 2998km, 28-day race from Bluff to Cape Reinga, a veteran outclassed the younger athletes and led into the transition zone. [The veteran] was in his element on the road cycle and clearly demonstrated why [it] has won the World Masters Triathlon five times. With one of the biggest days of the race under their belt – the Franz Josef Glacier – competitors are now focused on tomorrow's "double marathon" Taramakau run. [The arch-rival] is the favourite for this stage – an experienced mountaineer and serial winner of the Coast to Coast and Kepler Challenge – but [it] is just focusing on one day at a time... [The Cantabrian] was nervous about the Taramakau leg. "I've been trying to create a buffer over the last five days leading into that stage..." [A Canadian] again rode into the transition ahead of... the [gals'] race leader, but [the race leader] came back on the kayak leg and developed a healthy margin over her Canadian rival.

...*Endurance racers battle on* [The arch-rival and the Cantabrian] dominated the storm-swept 18th stage of the multisport Bluff to Cape Reinga race yesterday. [The arch-rival] won the 105km stage from Whakapapa to Taupo after an overnight storm and heavy rain forced a change of course. Floods on the Tongariro River ruled out the river kayak and competitors instead had a 25km mountain bike ride, a 57km road cycle race, a 21km kayak on Lake Taupo and then a final 2km road run. [The arch-rival] won in 4h 19m 7s... That reduced [the Cantabrian]'s overall lead to 21m 42s.

...While most of us are happy watching sport on the box, there is another group of N[Z]ers who love nothing more than pushing their bodies to the limit. Whether it be gruelling multisport events or daring adventure races, it seems we just can't get enough of them. The multisport event from Bluff to Cape Reinga attracted more than 70 competitors who are more than happy to spend a month running, biking and kayaking the length of the country. For those of us who thought the 3km school cross-country was a mission, just the thought of 30 days of exercise is enough to bring on the stitch. But N[Z]'s multisport legend... who seems to live for endurance events, says 2998km of running, biking and kayaking is simply "fun." A seven-time Coast-to-Coast champion, [the Cantabrian] is leading the Mizone-sponsored Endurazone, which... takes in some of N[Z]'s best scenery... "It's the journey that excites me... It's such a satisfying goal." The Coast-to-Coast was the first multisport event of its kind in the world and after 20 years is still the biggest and one of the best. The South Island event starts at Kumara Beach on the Tasman Sea and ends at Sumner Beach on the Pacific Ocean. Competitors cycle 143km and complete a 26km mountain run to cross the Southern Alps and then kayak 67km of the Waimakariri River. The top competitors take 10h 45m to cover the 236km, and the slowest time recorded was 24h 30m. More than 1000 people have already entered for the 20th anniversary race next year. Another event not for the faint-hearted is the Southern Traverse, now in its 11th year. The adventure race, held around Queenstown, is a non-stop, five-day gut-buster, which includes mountain trekking, biking, paddling and abseiling. The main difference between adventure and multisport events is that adventure races tend to be non-stop, forcing competitors to charge on through the night. Intensely challenging, the races are as much a test of will, teamwork and mental discipline as they are a measure of physical strength. The Southern Traverse is now part of an international circuit of adventure races which have been set up to support and provide a qualifying platform for the world championship adventure race. The first world championship event was in Switzerland this year and combined mountain biking, trekking and rafting with glacier walking and abseiling. The concept of adventure racing was developed in N[Z], where]... there are now several adventure races a year, ranging from the Southern Traverse to 20- to 30-hour weekend expeditions.

...Four South Islanders won their second successive Southern Traverse endurance race yesterday. The Propeller-heads team[, which combined people from]... Nelson... Motueka, and Canterbury [– including the seven-time Coast-to-Coast champion –]crossed the finish-line at Lake Tekapo yesterday morning, having completed the 365km trek across Canterbury's icy hinterland in 96 hours 33 minutes. When the Propeller-heads

completed the final 34km kayak across Lake Tekapo... their nearest rival team, Nokia, of Finland, were still at least four hours behind. The remaining 38 teams were left struggling in their wake strung out over 130km. The Propeller-heads collected \$US40,000... for winning.

...BUOYED by his remarkable victory in the Primal Quest in Colorado, [Canterbury's] multisport legend... may base himself in the U[S] next year. While multisport and adventure racing has its roots in N[Z], the sport has begun to take off in the States and [the Kiwi] is keen to take full advantage. [It] led the SoBe/Smartwool team to victory last week against the best lineup of adventure racers for the richest prize offered – \$500,000. They crammed just 3 1/2 hours of sleep into 72 hours of racing, crossing the line in Telluride... nine hours ahead of [US] team Montrail with the A[US]n-Kiwi combination of pre-race favourites GoLite 30 minutes back in third... The big prize and the altitude – the average was as high as Mt Cook – made this the toughest yet for the remarkable Kiwi competitor... [The Kiwi, who himself was] still suffering from a lung infection, said... the other crack Kiwi combination of Team Seagate lost their chance when [two of his *Propeller-heads* team-mates and the person who led the gals' Mizone Endurazone] all suffered from a virus. "With typical Kiwi drive they stuck at it despite being really ill and to come... fifth was amazing." It won't be a matter of resting for [the winner, who] is contemplating another race before returning to Christchurch in [two weeks. It] will then prepare for the Raid of the North, teaming up with [his Endurazone arch-rival and an AUS]n... for the race in the Yukon next month... [The Cantabrian] intends defending the Mild Seven title in China in November with [the AUSn, the arch-rival and one of his SoBe/Smartwool team-mates –] although before that [it] might be tempted to race October's Eco Challenge in Fiji. "...you have to make your own raft – which really appeals to the engineer and inventor in me." [The Cantabrian] has only one regret with arguably the most impressive win in a career littered with success – that [it] could not share it with a Kiwi team. "I missed racing with my Kiwi mates. When you are pushed to the limit it's nice to have familiar faces around who understand you,"...

COME IN [you Cantabrian], your time is up. That is, your time in the wilderness, much as you love it out there. This magnificent [guy] of the mountains, terror of the terrain, warrior of the waterways must finally be acknowledged for what [it is – NZ]'s most accomplished sports person... Period. It's fitting really. Fitting that this powerfully squat, slightly balding, incredibly intense 38-year-old from Christchurch earn the respect [it] deserves. For a [guy] used to battling the waters wild, it's time for him to revel in a place we know as the mainstream... [First it] charged home to his seventh Coast to Coast Longest Day title, and [his] fifth on the trot. To do so [it] beat a champion of champions lineup, including [his arch-rival, who is the] race recordholder... The[y]... were at it again, going head-to-head in the month-long length of N[Z] race... before... they... teamed to claim the Outdoor quest in China... [The Cantabrian also won] events such as the Gold Rush in Central Otago and the Motu Challenge in the Bay of Plenty... And there's more. [The Cantabrian's a guy] who lives and breathes his sport, but speaks his mind. When [a promoter] brought his big-money Eco Challenge to this country and, with N[Z] government money, placed it rudely in the window occupied by our own Southern Traverse, [the Cantabrian] was ropable. Bugger it, [the Cantabrian said, the 38-year-old] was taking his ball of talent and going [on the Southern Traverse]. It was a similar thing with the world championship adventure race in Switzerland. [The Cantabrian] didn't like what they were doing with it, so... said "stuff it" I'll find somewhere else to race. [The Cantabrian]'s a character, too, and his tastefully naked romps with [the] race director... before the Coast to Coast are now becoming standard fare. But, as revealed just recently, [the Cantabrian]'s also compassionate. [The Cantabrian knows when it] crosses that line first, there's equally deserving people following him home. "Now that I've beaten him it's kinda sad," [the Cantabrian said when it] finally reached Cape Reinga to secure victory over... [his arch-rival in the Endurazone. His] accomplishments... of the [p]ast 12 months... as superb as they have been, are nothing that should surprise us. Heck, this guy has been setting a standard in multisport adventure racing and endurance events for years. It's just that for so much of that time, the great Kiwi sporting community has tended to tick that box esoteric, shrug and move on to the athletics, golf, tennis, cricket and rugby they're all so familiar with for their idea of achievement... [The Cantabrian is] a... champion sports[per]son and a champion bloke. A [guy] who deserves to be honoured, for all the esoteric nature of his pursuit, as the best there has been...

The most successful Olympian was [the] Ukrainian gymnast... who won 18 medals between 1956 and 1964. [The Ukrainian] shares the record for the most gold medals – nine – with [a Finnish running legend, an]... American track star [(r:p1583, ln53) and] an... American swimmer...

Golden Kiwis vividly recall glory days... For 20 years after winning the 1500m... in Montreal, [a NZer] did not see the special piece of gold [it] won in that epic final. On his return from the 1976 Olympics, [the first sub-3m 50s miler] consigned his medal to a bank vault for safekeeping. Only recently has [the runner] kept it at his South Auckland home. Occasionally, in the hope of inspiring budding Olympians, [the runner] brings it out "to show young kids." On Tuesday, [the runner] will quietly reflect on the day... when [it] stopped the watches at 3m 39.17s to win his first and only Olympic or Commonwealth Games gold medal. A day earlier... 16 N[Z] hockey players will be just as low-key as they reflect on the day they struck gold in what remains one of the biggest upsets in Olympic history. The hockey players have already celebrated, however, marking... their 1-0 win over A[US] with a nostalgic reunion in Wellington on Thursday. Unlike [the runner], who carried the weight of an expectant nation as [it] took on and beat many of the best – an African boycott in protest at the All Blacks' tour of South Africa that year robbed the field of what some reckoned were his only serious challengers – the... hockey team were the real longshots... [(having had] a rocky ride to the final – the... [NZers] won only one of four pool matches... in a tournament which brought together the great hockey-playing countries such as India, Pakistan, Germany and Holland[, the team beaten 2-1 by NZ in the semifinal)]... Yet, within a 24-hour period, N[Z]ers were twice stopped in their tracks. First, by a scratchy radio broadcast of the hockey final as their team clung to the precious one-goal lead... given [to] them with 28 minutes to play. Second, a day on, came the television drama as [the runner] hung on to win a race which... years on [it] recalls virtually step-by-step[, including]... his... victory lap...

It takes a while to find [the NZ]er's name in the columns of athletes that make up the "Golden Memorial" outside Montreal's Olympic Stadium. But, finally, there it is – sandwiched between Cuba's... 400m, 800m[double-gold winner] and the great... Fin[n, another double-gold winner] (5000m, 10,000m) – "1500m... NZL." The memorial, a circle of flags fluttering wanly above an unspectacular collection of brass plaques, seems a miserly nod towards the finest achievements of the XXI Olympiad – an after-thought put up a full 10 years after the 1976 Games... I had expected something more: a hall of fame perhaps, with photos and sporting memorabilia... Certainly a pin-up of [the first perfect gymnast. But the 1500m winner]... himself is not surprised at this half-hearted acknowledgment. "I would say that it's been a nightmare for the Quebec Government and I think they wish they had never done it [hosted the Games], because they're still paying for it today." That is true. The futuristic stadium, once proudly hailed as the Big O, has become the Big Owe, damned privately and publicly for its ongoing legacy of debt (the Games had been slated to cost \$310 million when Canada won the hosting rights in 1970, but wound up as a \$1.5 billion albatross) and as a sporting venue. Home these days to Montreal's hapless Expos baseball team, the Olympic Stadium was recently described as "arguably the coldest, least hospitable venue in North American professional sports." ...Futurist and high-tech, the "Stade Olympique" was a marvel of early 70s architecture and engineering. But industrial disputes and lack of money meant it did not meet its potential. Its much-vaunted retractable... roof, for example, never really worked...

The saga of Montreal's Olympic Stadium continues with [workers] preparing to replace the Kevlar roof, installed in 1987 and expected to last 25 years, with another made of Teflon. The... [s]tadium was built for the 1976 Summer Games with an original budget of \$154 million, but when the building is eventually paid off in 2006 it will have cost... taxpayers more than \$3.1 billion. No wonder it has always been dubbed the "Big Owe."

...The sports stadium is the secular cathedral of our time, according to one of their foremost designers... [The designer], Brisbane-born and educated, London-based for 20 years, is a visionary for stadium architecture which today is part public sculpture, part civic amenity and largely a magnet for advertisers to maximise their potential audience through the massive television audience. Speaking from Sydney where [the designer] has been climbing over the site of the new... \$A690 million... Stadium Australia, the main venue for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games... and... the

biggest [stadium] in games history... which his company... design[ed] (along with... the... WestpacTrust Stadium in... [Wellington,] the new Wembley Stadium, the stadium which will replace the now demolished Cardiff Arms Park and Britain's Millennium Stadium in London), [it] sees these structures performing a social function as much as a sporting one. They are, [the designer] says, the only places where as a society we come together with 30,000 or 40,000 complete strangers and in those couple of hours bond as a community. "There is no other thing we do where you get that number of people together on any regular basis... Now they are very much part of the sports, leisure and entertainment industry and the money people would spend at a sports event is the same they would have spent if they had gone to Disneyland or a multiplex cinema. When sport was amateur people went or didn't, purely based on seeing the team play and perhaps winning. But a sporting business can't build a multimillion-dollar enterprise on whether a team might win or not, so you have to build a leisure and entertainment business to attract people." As befits a [person] who has written one of the few texts on the subject[, the designer]... traces the history of [sports stadium] development through four distinct generations. THE first simply accommodated large numbers of spectators with little concern paid to comfort or ancillary facilities. Televised coverage in the 50s effectively reset consumer expectation (close-ups and replays, informed commentary in the comfort of home) so second-generation stadiums were obliged to accommodate greater emphasis on customer comfort through improved food and beverage service, big screen replays and better lines of sight. And then came Disney. "That company built a critical mass of facilities... so people would want to come as an entertainment in itself. What they proved was you could entertain an entire family group with all getting slightly different value..." Today we are witnessing the birth of the fourth generation... – and it again will be driven by television and technology. And commercial imperatives... [The designer] cites how it is now possible to access play from Lord's cricket ground in London through the Internet for little outlay. Yes, the digital image isn't that good at the moment, but it's only a matter of time before your home computer will receive pictures as sharp as your television, with up-to-date statistics, various camera angle options, commentaries in different languages... THE big issue then is who owns the image being beamed out, and what value can be put on it. By way of example [the designer] cites a badminton match in the new Wellington stadium which might draw a live audience of only 5000. But broadcast that signal to Beijing or Djakarta where 50 million people may want to watch the games... "The Whitbread round-the-world yacht race, which is a total non-spectator sport, actually had more hits on its Internet site... 474 million... than the Atlanta Olympics..." But if it's going to be so comfortable and informative at home, why would anyone go to the real thing? [The designer] speaks of fourth-generation stadiums having screens on the backs of seats providing action replays, match statistics and headphones to hear commentaries, of Internet facility to access information on players or historical data, of small cards to enable punters to book next weekend's tickets, receive messages... or order from commercial services. It all sounds a bit like flying executive class. It might also be a day free from advertising at the match as virtual advertising – computer-generated product placement which doesn't exist in reality at the ground[grounds prepared for important games often contain so many painted logos that is it difficult for television viewers to follow the ball!]) – starts to become more common. It's a brave new world of entertainment, sport and commerce – and it's arriving already. Which raises a question for Auckland, a city with sports stadiums but shamefully lacking a decent concert venue. Can a city be oversubscribed with stadiums? There's no logic to the numbers, [the designer] says. His company built a 40,000-seat stadium in a city in Malaysia with a population of just under 200,000 and they fill it regularly. And some cities are sports mad. Melbourne will probably end up with more sports stadiums than any other city... The stadiums of the future can do no harm looking at the past. Will these electronically future-proofed sports cathedrals last as long as the Coliseum? "The Coliseum was probably the best and biggest example of a great stadium. Its useful life stretched 500 years, it was... well designed, with a range of seating. They understood the concept of sight lines, had a changing of angle of tier to the seating and even had a closing roof. And you were close to the action. It had a sophistication we are trying to get back to several thousand years later." ...Meanwhile... Wellington's new stadium appears to have priced itself out of the market for league's Tri-Series, with the N[ZRL] kicking the stadium trust's business plan for a Great Britain-Kiwi test to touch. If the October 29 game was played there the N[ZRL] would lose money... and that was not acceptable... Christchurch, Palmerston North and Rotorua remain possible venues.

...A[US] has a four-year plan to use the [2000 Olympic G]ames to fix attention on [the country] as a prime holiday destination, backed by forecasts that the Olympics will attract an additional 1.6 million visitors by 2004... And it is predicted that these visitors will bring with them an extra \$A6 billion... in tourism dollars... With the help of \$A13 million provided in last year's federal Budget for games-related promotional work, A[US] is also bringing thousands of journalists to the country and has launched a "Meet in 2000" campaign to promote the nation as an international convention centre... While the Olympics will be used as a hook for pre-games promotion, the main thrust of A[US]'s international tourism drive will remain the light-hearted \$A150 million three-year campaign that began appearing in N[Z] this year... The campaign, which will reach an estimated 300 million people worldwide, shows A[US]ns as laid-back, golf-playing, koala-hugging, beach-loving and welcoming suburbanites... The promotion started in... [NZ when the] All Blacks... were used... in a campaign... through 140 McDonald's restaurants around N[Z]...

JOYOUS Wallabies lingered... for 30 minutes... in the rain, savouring a... 28-7... victory they never anticipated at Olympic Stadium last night. Not even the optimists in the Wallaby squad were expecting victory but the 21-point margin [– 'a record against an All Black team' –] was like a fantasy for the gritty... under-strength... side that returned from two losses in astonishing style... [(although the Wallabies' score included) a record seven penalties... kicked [by their fullback; both teams scored one try]]... A world record 107,042 crowd... – plus millions on TV worldwide – watched the Wallabies retain the Bledisloe Cup... [I]t was... one of rugby's genuine upset results... [and virtually] a reversal of the All Blacks 43-15 victory over the Wallabies in their... clash at Eden Park last month... [The Wallabies were missing their] star first-five... and [their] skipper... The... All Blacks'... [skipper said his team] were proud to have won the Tri-nations but admitted: "We've got a lot of building to do... for the world cup... in the UK..." ...Last night's game pumped \$18m into the A[US]n economy... The Aussies... offered to pay the NZRFU \$500,000 to play an unplanned third Cup test next year – but... [NZ declined. In related news, the Wallabies' most prolific try-scorer] has accused his former teammates of being too greedy in the countdown to the Rugby World Cup. In his newspaper column... [the ex-teammate] said the Wallabies were too concerned with the bonuses they'll win if they bring... the world cup... home... The Wallabies' players association says the \$600,000 being offered... to... the... 30-[member] world cup squad... by the A[RU] is not enough... The All Blacks will receive \$30,000 each if they win the... world cup final in Cardiff.

...N[Z] lost their mantle as the world's best under-19 rugby team at Stadium A[US] last night. The curtain-raiser to the Bledisloe Cup[and final Tri-nations series] test ended in dramatic style when [NZ's] halfback... was held up over the tryline from a last-minute scrum move. [The halfback had] dived over the line but was rolled onto his back by... [AUS's No 8. AUS] weren't in attendance... [at] the under-19 World Cup in Wales earlier this year... so last night's match was deemed an unofficial final. The [NZers] appeared on course to keep their unbeaten run when they hit the front 16-13 with 25 minutes remaining... But on one of the few times the A[US]n forwards were able to apply pressure, [their] hooker and captain... drove over for the final scoring play of the game with 12 minutes remaining... [Incidentally, the NZ gals'] hockey coach... is not impressed that his A[US]n counterpart... has selected the strongest possible squad for next week's Oceania Cup test... With the exception of the Champions Trophy... [the AUSn coach] has this year been using tournaments to develop players, but has changed tact for the... test against N[Z].

...a NZ] hockey star... can tell the spinal surgeons tomorrow night that they were wrong. Five years ago [the surgeons said the NZer] would probably never play the game again... Tomorrow night, [the] 27-year-old... will earn her centenary cap... against world... champions A[US]. Even though back surgery stole a year from her career, the girl who grew up on a farm in Ranfurly, Central Otago, has become one of the world's favourite hockey players... [V]oted sports personality at last year's World Cup, [the NZer] will play her milestone match in her old home city of Dunedin. In another five years, [her] milestone will be memorable to others only if N[Z] win – it's been 20 years since the Kiwis beat... [AUS. The game is part of] a bizarre qualification process for... [the Sydney Olympics. AUS] are already there – as Olympic hosts and undisputed world No 1.

But still N[Z] have to beat them in the three test home-and-away series for the Oceania spot, or face a second-life tournament in England next March. [Unfortunately, there] won't be any favours for mates... The A[US]ns arrived in Dunedin yesterday with their star line-up[. after] a difficult European tour... "They aren't going to come here and throw it..." [The 27-year-old, NZ]'s top striker, has had a roller-coaster career since... [being] chosen to play her first test as a 17-year-old schoolgirl in 1990... In 1994... lower back pain... got to the stage where [the striker] had to have a discectomy – where two-thirds of a disc in her lumbar spine were removed... [The striker] still gets niggles in her back, but... does an hour of stretches every morning... [The striker] joins her... captain... (109 caps)... [and two other team-mates] (136) and... (138) [caps respectively]... in the small, exclusive club. N[Z] will fly to Sydney on Thursday to get ready for the last two tests in the series, played at the Olympic hockey venue at Homebush... Holland (European Nations Cup winners), Argentina (winners of a Pan-American tournament) and Korea (Asian Games winners) have already qualified... South Africa should qualify through Africa with unfancied Zimbabwe the only team standing between them and an Olympic berth. Should N[Z] have to go to the qualifying tournament, they will be up against teams such as Britain... India... China... and... the U[S]. In other sports news, a Kenyan has broken an English runner's... 18-year-old world best for the 1000 metres – the longest-standing world record in [guys'] track athletics – at a Grand Prix meeting in... Italy. [The Kenyan, who was the] silver medallist over 1500 metres at [the] last... world championships, ran two minutes 11.96 seconds to shave 0.22 seconds off [the old] record in the little-run distance.

...the world's leading athletes have signed a petition to have next week's international meeting in Moscow moved because they fear for their safety in the wake of the country's economic meltdown. [The guys' world] 100 metres champ... [is] among those who also feel that, with [\$]millions... in prize money at stake, it "would be like waving it in the peoples' faces" at a time of crisis... [By the way, t]he Sydney Olympics will cost \$A500 m... more than expected and all NSW government departments will be ordered to chop spending to meet the shortfall. Most of the hidden costs are for extra transport, police, health and other services, details of which were revealed in a report to the cabinet budget sub-committee just before Christmas. The new budget is \$4.9 b... but the Sydney Organising Committee [(SOCOG)] expects to make a small profit on the Games... 50[%] of tickets... would be sold to the A[US]n public in the first six-week allocation... The most expensive tickets are the top-priced Opening and Closing Ceremonies seats at \$A1362... with the cheapest just \$A19 for preliminaries to sports like softball... 70[%] of the Olympic tickets are under \$A60.

...Sydney Olympics organisers expect to raise more than \$A200 million... from ticket sales at the opening and closing ceremonies... More than 80[%] of tickets for the two ceremonies at the 110,000-capacity Olympic stadium will cost \$A1382. The ceremonies are expected to be sellouts and will contribute more than one-third of budgeted total ticket sales of \$A600 million, a record for an Olympics. [A senior IOC] member... who heads the IOC Co-ordination Commission overseeing Sydney's preparations, has described the budget forecasts as "ambitious but feasible." There are almost 10,000 seats in the cheapest category costing \$A105, and less than 9000 in the B and C categories, priced at \$A985 and \$A505... SOCOG has already reported better-than-expected sales overseas, with \$A250 million in orders, although that includes many of the tickets for the ceremonies...

THE highest paid employee of the Sydney Olympics organising committee reportedly received more than \$1.88 million in a Swiss bank account after forged invoices were used in dealings involving an international Olympics sponsor. Documents published in Spain revealed [that the employee], believed to be paid \$536,000 a year for organising the televising of the 2000 Games, received the money in 1991 and 1992 when... doing a similar job for the Barcelona Olympics. [The IOC] president... was surprised by the revelation and would order an investigation if need be.

...[the IOC president] has sent letters to all cities which bid for Olympic Games from 1996 onwards, asking for any evidence of corruption in the bidding process... The national Olympic committees have until February 15 to respond. At a crisis session at its Swiss headquarters last weekend, the IOC's executive board agreed to suspend six members and decided to reform the bidding process in time for the award of the 2008 Games. One of the six members has since resigned but others have vowed to fight the executive committee's recommendation to have them expelled at a full IOC session in March... The Olympic scandal has prompted soccer governing body Fifa to take action to prevent similar trouble. It issued clearly defined guidelines to the eight countries bidding for soccer's... World Cup – with a limit of \$US100... on gifts, but no restriction on foreign travel. Fifa... has urged... [the eight bidders] to show restraint in their campaigns in the 14 months leading up to the vote... Rocked by the... bribery scandal, IOC bosses [also] agreed last weekend to broaden their probe into corruption in the selection of host cities... [T]he Canadian IOC member heading the investigation, said "an indefinite number" of new targets had [already] been added to the probe. The Japanese Olympic Committee [has even] appointed seven of its executives to investigate the bidding activities of the city of Nagano for the... Winter Games.

...Nagano Games officials have been unable to keep the "sacred" Olympic flame burning as it makes its way around Japan in advance of the Games opening ceremony next month. The embarrassment of the repeated snuffing of the flame is front-page news in Japan and television networks have called in experts of all kinds to explain what might be wrong. The guesses range from high winds, to faulty gas supplies in the torches, to runners holding the thing the wrong way... [■ Athletes] competing at the Nagano Olympics will be fed from high-tech lunchboxes that use a chemical reaction to cook their contents. A pasta dish rests on a sachet of liquid – lime crystals and water – that react when a tag is pulled to allow them to mix. The reaction heats the water, creating steam that mixes with the water content of the pasta to produce – eight minutes later – a piping hot dish of pasta with bolognese, tomato, basil or pepperoni chilli sauces.

...The I[OC] has continued its bizarre and increasingly frequent habit of adding unusual minority sports to its programme, yesterday deciding to take the first steps of "recognising" sumo wrestling, body building, speedboating and motorcycling. The International Sumo Federation claims a membership of 78 countries but it's hard to see much global interest in the ritual-steeped fatboy routines. And if they're looking for headlines, body building could be a sport to provide plenty, but will the IOC be happy?

...[from the IOC] pre-Nagano meeting comes news that rugby has little chance of making a comeback at Athens in 2004... "There is a feeling that it is not international enough yet," inside sources said.

...[the All Blacks won't be at the 2004 Summer Olympics, but their No 11] could slice the ice... at the 2002 Winter Olympics... after being approached to power the N[Z] bobsleigh team. "Designer bob teams" are common overseas with nations using high-profile athletes to provide a V-8 motor for their sleighs and also boost the profile of the sport... [The US has used a] former Chicago Bear... and his Dallas Cowboys counterpart... in the past while the British had called up top track and field athletes... [The No 11] thinks the idea is "cool" and "fun" but... emphasised it was early days. The 24-year-old All Black loves action – [the winger already] has a passion for grunty cars and powerboats – ...[so] careering down the curved bobsleigh track would definitely appeal... Bobsleigh is regarded as one of the biggest adrenalin rushes in sport. The approach to [the winger] followed a brainstorming session involving the convener of Ice Sports N[Z, who]... said it would be the ultimate to have the 118kg... [winger] in the bobsleigh[– because the winger] had the physical attributes to be an ideal brake[person]. The brake[person] provides the initial thrust to power the machine off the start line... There is also an important sponsorship link which could open doors. [The winger] has a personal contract with adidas and... the sporting giant... is also a major player in bobsleigh, sponsoring German, Swiss and Austrian programmes and supplying spiked footwear... N[Z] qualified two pairs and a four-[member] bob for the 1994 Calgary Olympics and[has] a pair for the games in Nagano.

...Bobsleigh has been part of the Olympics since the first winter event in 1924 and was developed in search of the ultimate thrill – often referred to as Formula 1 on ice... [Indeed, off]-season sees crews practising with a sleigh running on wheels... Runs are timed to the 1/100th second. Performance during the first 50 metres generally determines the outcome... All crew members except the driver crouch down, reducing air resistance... [The Nagano track,] the first artificial ice track ever built in Asia... stretches for 1,700 metres, has 15 curves and a difference in

elevation of 113 metres. It is the only course in the world to have uphill sections... [Bobsleigh riders will share the track with luge riders.] Lugers adopt a face up prone position, steering with their calves by pressing against the outside of the front runners... As the luge picks up speed, the competitors lie back raising their heads only enough to see ahead... Maximum speed reaches around 120 km/h. Even 1/1000th of a second counts in the luge competition. Every attempt is made to reduce air resistance through streamlined clothing, equipment and the perfect posture... [Ironically, the] Japanese like their winter sport slow and steady. Curling events at the Games are sold out, while thousands of tickets still remain for the "Dream Teams" [guys' ice] hockey tournament that features, for the first time, multimillionaire stars from the American National Hockey League. Nearly 1.1 million of 1.3 million tickets have been sold, but the expected crush for hockey[, which isn't]... played in Japan... hasn't happened.

...Security concerns have won out over divine guidance for IOC officials. A chapel attached to a hotel where they'll operate from Saturday until the closing ceremony... has been turned into a security command post to protect dignitaries. Out go religious articles, in come communications equipment. Out go priests, in come uniformed police... [While on the topic of the Winter Olympics, NZ's] most famous ski champion becomes[a] Constable... from Thursday, swapping the slopes for domestic fights and car chases. The 27-year-old, who put N[Z] on the international skiing map when [it] won a silver at the 1992 Winter Olympics[– becoming 'the first person from the Southern Hemisphere to win a medal in the Winter Olympics' –] graduates from Porirua's Police College this week. [It] began thinking about a police career... [after retiring] from international skiing in 1995.

...The scandal over Japan's successful bid for the... winter Olympics [has] flared up again with reports that there was hard evidence Nagano organisers had spent up to \$12 million on lavish entertainment for Olympic officials as part of its bidding campaign. The Mainichi newspaper story is yet another episode in the widespread and worsening scandal over the Olympic Games bidding process... [● A] British investigative journalist... has written two books in the 1990s on Olympic corruption – *The Lords Of The Rings* and *The New Lords Of The Rings*. The past week's revelations appear to have vindicated his campaign...

WE SHOULD have seen it coming... [T]he sprightly octogenarian whose tough talking traumatised the I[OC] last week, has been threatening for years to shine light into the organisation's darker recesses. In 1991... [the octogenarian] argued IOC members should no longer take relatives along when visiting candidate cities. This was ignored. Ostensibly, [the octogenarian] sought to curb the costs of Olympic bidding. But there was a subtext; [the octogenarian] disliked the way some members exploited bidding cities. [The octogenarian] returned to the theme a year later. Asked if the IOC should fear for its reputation [the octogenarian] responded: "Quite simply, yes." [The octogenarian then] disclosed that "about five" members had accepted gifts which exceeded the limits in the IOC rules and... [it] had "had serious words" with them. This month [the octogenarian] appears to have lost patience with... [the IOC president's] apparent reluctance to clean up the organisation... [The octogenarian]'s attack on IOC "villains" who have "blackmailed" bidding cities has triggered further allegations involving bids from Anchorage, Atlanta, Melbourne, Manchester, Quebec and Sydney. [However, the president claims to be surprised and has] never heard of allegations [that] members of his IOC solicit goodies from cities hoping to stage the Games. All 100-plus of them are, [the president] frequently asserts, "100% clean." ...[the 78-year-old president] has controlled the IOC for 18 years. Perhaps his memory is clouding. Come back with me a dozen years to when the Swedes campaigned for the Winter Olympics. They too got hit by the sleazy demands of IOC members. I know this – and can prove it – because I've been delving in the archives of the bid committee based in Falun in central Sweden. It's a treasure trove for Olympic sceptics. I've heard rumours some IOC members pressure bidding cities to arrange the education of their offspring. One particular [member's] name comes up routinely... Off-record Olympic officials whisper the best interests of... Swaziland's... [IOC member]'s eight children are always high on his list of Olympic priorities. Tucked away in the Falun archive was a copy of a letter, dated February 28, 1986, to [Swaziland's IOC member] written by... the Swedish national Olympic committee. Sweden had lost repeated bids to stage the Games and was desperate to please IOC members – and vulnerable to any shake-down artist... The letter... [reveals] how these squalid Olympic deals are done... "As [we] have some good and friendly contacts in our Ministry for Foreign Affairs as well as in the Immigration Office and in the Ministry of Education, [we will do our] utmost trying to persuade the authorities concerned to accept an application from your son." ...The Falun bid leader during two attempts to secure the Games was... a prominent Swedish business[person] of impeccable integrity[, who says:] "The matter was eventually arranged and [the Swaziland member] was informed... We learnt later that all the bidding cities had been asked the same question." To the best of my knowledge, [the son] did not take up the place. "Perhaps [the son] went to the Sorbonne," joked [the bid leader], revealing his bitterness that Albertville in France defeated Falun for the winter Games of 1992... [The Swaziland IOC member's] lapse bears out one of the many allegations made by [the] dissident senior IOC member... in Lausanne... [However, the octogenarian, who is] as quick of mind as ever, [mainly] railed at his IOC colleagues for soliciting college scholarships from the organisers of the 2002 winter Olympics in Salt Lake City. A confidential document [shows that] around \$770,000 was spent on college places for relatives of African IOC members. Subsequently it's come out[that] visiting IOC officials received \$54,000 worth of secret, free, medical treatment. That was followed by a spate of admissions from cities around the world who've bid for the Games in recent years, that improper demands had been made of them by IOC members. [The octogenarian], who has become increasingly depressed at the unchecked corruption at the IOC, put the blame squarely on his colleagues... rather than on the shoulders of the would-be Olympic hosts, for initiating impropriety... But yesterday [the Swaziland member]'s name was raised again when it was disclosed in Salt Lake City that his son... was given a job at the city hall in 1993 and attended the University of Utah. The scandal has infuriated [the IOC president] who always insists... that any investigation must be confined to the shenanigans in Utah. Back in the Falun archive I found more evidence of unseemly activities by the IOC and of how they have covered them up. The committee flew 37 IOC members and retinues of family and friends to the city at Easter 1985. Their purpose: to inspect the Falun sports facilities. The King and Queen[of Sweden] hosted dinner when they arrived – and next morning two Asian IOC members immediately left for home, declining to view any facilities. There's long been rumours of IOC members soliciting sexual favours from the hostesses who work for every bid. In Falun it became more than a rumour. The IOC caravan moved on to Stockholm where, late at night in the Grand Hotel, an African IOC member approached two of the Falun hostesses for sex. Rejected, [the member] grabbed a third [hostess] in a lift with the demand "Get your clothes off and I'll vote for your city. Don't – and I won't." [The third hostess also] declined but was still in tears the next day. [The bid] leader... reported the incident to a senior IOC member who assured him action would be taken. Another Swedish sports official wrote privately to... [another] senior IOC member, [who was a] member of the IOC's executive board and the [guy who the IOC president] appointed last week to investigate and report on the Salt Lake scandals... [The executive board member,] who negotiated the television deal which has tied NBC, the American network, into an Olympic contract up to and including 2008, worth \$7 billion to the IOC... claimed: "Salt Lake is the only time we ever had that kind of hard evidence available." Like [his president], his memory may also be clouded[– because his] confidential reply to the Swedish official, written in November 1986, can be found in the Falun archive... "It is always with regret I hear some IOC members may have made improper personal requests from candidate cities. I expect if specific examples of this (with names) were reported to the IOC, the IOC could then be in a position to take appropriate steps. Without formal requests, however, it is difficult to do anything. That's a judgmental matter I leave to you." [Clearly, the person] tasked to conduct a searching inquiry in the 1990s, showed scant determination to root out the truth of allegations made in the 1980s. But they didn't go away. Two years later [Sweden's bid leader] published a book about Falun's treatment by the IOC. In it [the bid leader] catalogued the offensive behaviour of some IOC members, including the attack on the hostess. The IOC, expecting the usual panegyric from supplicant cities, had it translated into English. When [the IOC president read it, the president] was incensed. The minutes of the meeting reveal that: "The president requested the advice of the board members as to whether the IOC should compose a letter addressed to the Swedish national Olympic committee, expressing its surprise and

dissatisfaction over the text of [the] book.” Here’s the advice of one of his most senior members: “[The member (who will be investigating Salt Lake City’s bid)] was of the opinion it would be wise to take no action,” says the record. The board concurred. But action was taken. [The IOC president] sent an unequivocal message to the sex monster... [appointing] him to represent the IOC on official missions. Among the countries that has had to roll out the red carpet for him in recent years is Sweden. The problem today is not the IOC members but the IOC itself. It is an anachronism in an age when the ballot box has reappeared from Lithuania to Vladivostok. Flying in the face of this desire for democracy is the IOC. [Its president], who learned his authoritarian ways as sports minister in Franco’s fascist Spain, has sole right to appoint new members. They are not elected from their national sports bodies, and this wealthy, secretive organisation is not remotely accountable to sport – nor the wider world. Recent... appointments have included [a recently deposed Indonesian dictator’s] close crony... worth \$5.7 billion and probably the world’s biggest rainforest logger, and... [the] boss of Korean conglomerate Samsung [– who was] convicted in a Seoul court two years ago of paying bribes to a former state president. We may cherish the Olympic Games – but there’s little need for the IOC. The latest disclosures show it incapable of carrying out its self-appointed mandate to foster idealism. It’s time for a... democratically elected body which makes its accounts and decisions open to public scrutiny and is more attuned to our aspirations for the coming century.

...The I[OC] official who blew the whistle on Olympic corruption said yesterday the 2002 winter Games could be in jeopardy because of the Salt Lake City bribery scandal... [I]t was possible the Games could be moved elsewhere or cancelled if Salt Lake could not raise enough money because of eroding public and corporate support... Salt Lake organisers... [still] need... \$US350 million... to meet their projected \$US1.45 billion budget... [However,] IOC leaders have said Salt Lake City will not be stripped of the Games, and [the octogenarian] acknowledged that it would be difficult to move to another venue only three years out from competition. But... [the octogenarian] noted that there was a precedent. Denver relinquished the... winter Olympics after Colorado residents voted in 1972 against financing the event. The games went to Innsbruck, Austria... Lillehammer, in Norway, site of the 1994 winter Games, would be an alternative this time, or... Nagano, in Japan... [T]he IOC’s senior member... also said two Salt Lake officials who resigned last week apparently tried to cover up cash payments made to IOC members during the bid, although [the octogenarian] again described the Utah city as a victim of a corrupt system.

...[the] bribery scandal... has prompted the I[OC] to offer to throw open its Lausanne headquarters and display all gifts received from bidding cities over the years... In further developments, [the] Salt Lake City Mayor... who took a high-profile role in landing the Olympics, announced that [it won’t] seek re-election for a third term... Another four-year term would have made... [her] the mayor during the 2002 Games. According to Canadian newspaper reports, organisers of an unsuccessful bid by Quebec for the 2002 Olympics plan to sue the IOC for compensation for the \$14.8 million they spent trying to win the Games... Manchester, which has lost two bids for the Olympic Games, has begun a £5 million... compensation claim... [A] deputy mayor of Stockholm... wants her city to claim compensation as well. Stockholm... which lost... the 2004 summer Games... spent about 147 million Swedish crowns (\$[NZ]35.8 million)... A [US insurance] company... is threatening to... protest... [by pulling] its multi-million dollar advertising deal with NBC, the television giant which has the biggest rights contract... with the IOC... The... Sydney Olympics Organising Committee director... said yesterday that [it intends to] resign as a consultant with a hotel owner involved with the 2000 Games. But [the director], who is also one of two A[US]n members of the I[OC], denied that his position as a consultant... constituted a conflict of interest.

...a damning new report on the Salt Lake City bribes scandal... said [AUS’s IOC member and the] Guatemalan IOC member... and their families, made four visits to the U[S], including a trip to the Super Bowl. The trips were paid for by [the] Salt Lake City bid committee president... at a total cost of... \$36,440... The 300-page... ethics panel report... blamed... the bid committee [president and] vice-president... for the scandal...

A city sells its soul for the Games... If you were to go looking for the most wholesome place in the U[S], there is no question that the journey would end in Salt Lake City. Out there, at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, discos don’t serve liquor and politicians proclaim their fitness for office by boasting that neither cigarettes nor coffee have ever touched their lips. Life in God-fearing Utah is purer than the driven snow – the same fluffy, powdered snow that the city’s fathers still hope will make the 2002 Winter Olympics a huge success. That is, of course, if the runaway scandal concerning bribery... and hookers has not already spoiled the celebration of sports[person]ship beyond any hope of redemption. As Olympic sponsors such as Coca-Cola make nervous noises about withdrawing their... more than \$US200 million... [of] financial support for the Games, and the FBI presents evidence of tax evasion and graft to a grand jury, some of the same people who fought for years to bring the Games to Salt Lake are now calling on their city to give them up. “What lessons do our children draw from this? That cheaters prosper? Our city has done wrong. We are disgraced and we must make amends,” said a prominent civic leader. In Salt Lake City... the sense of shock and betrayal would not be much deeper if the Mormon Tabernacle Choir had been caught harmonising in a house of ill repute. And the allegations are indeed disgraceful. In order to land the Games, which officials estimate will pump all of \$US10 billion... into the local economy, Salt Lake City’s organising committee appears to have handed out cash and favours with a recklessness that would put the most daring luge rider to shame. The impression of impropriety starts at the top with... [the IOC president], who jetted into Utah with fellow officials to inspect preparations and left with a pair of engraved Colt pistols and a handsome rifle worth more than \$US2000. When the gifts were revealed last week, [the IOC president] professed his total and absolute innocence. Of course [the president] was aware that no Olympic official was allowed to accept a gift valued at more than \$US150, [the president] said. But it would have been rude to refuse, and anyway the weapons were destined to be placed on display at the I[OC]’s headquarters, not his private gun rack. The embattled [president], who is resisting calls for his resignation with the support of delegates from Ireland and several other sympathetic countries, may well survive the scandal. Other committee members will not. In the five weeks since allegations of vote-buying and graft were aired by... a Swiss delegate and senior member of the IOC executive board, hardly a day has gone by without more dirt spilling into the open. The organisers of the Atlanta Games recalled how IOC officials had dropped aggressive hints about their willingness to accept a little baksheesh. In Sydney, officials told of delegates asking, “What are you going to do for us?” ...And that was just the start. As four separate investigations of the... Salt Lake City... bidding process... swung into action, it emerged that... members of the bid panel had used their official credit cards to hire escort girls for visiting delegates. Escort girls! The righteous locals find it hard to believe that such exotic creatures actually existed in their strait-laced town, one state legislator demanding to be told if the same credit cards had been used to pay for the scarlet [gals’] plane tickets when they were flown in from “out of town... from Chicago or Los Angeles or somewhere like that.” If Salt Lake City can find any comfort amid the wealth of embarrassments, it must surely be that it is not alone. After Barcelona won the 1992 Summer Games, there were widespread whispers that hookers and payoffs had swung the decision. In Holland, where Amsterdam was also accused of enlisting call girls in its unsuccessful quest for the same Games, a cynical columnist suggested that Dutch prostitutes had a lot to learn from their Spanish counterparts. Even as far back as 1964, when the Games were in Tokyo, IOC members were accused of cavorting with geishas. Yet despite all the complaints, the IOC did nothing to clean house until the Salt Lake City affair brought everything out into the light of day. Now, as the cities that lost to Salt Lake mull lawsuits against the IOC, the rot may have spread too far to be cured... [□ Auckland] denied African requests for university scholarships and countered a \$100,000 A[US]n bribe during bidding for the 1990 Commonwealth Games, while... the... veteran Games administrator... who masterminded Christchurch’s 1974 Games, said the only favours they handed out were tiki, which they stressed were symbols of virility, and Kiwi lapel pins... N[Z] visited all the Commonwealth countries in the build-up to the 1970 Games in Edinburgh, where the decision between Melbourne and Christchurch was to be made... “We had a couple of good parties in Edinburgh but that was about it. No one asked us for serious favours. We had a lot of tikis and we sold the story that if you wore them around your neck long enough magic things would happen to [gals and guys] and so forth. These were plastic tikis worth about 10c. So we gave away a lot of them and Kiwi pins. There was one African delegate we gave a few [pins] to in

1966 when we were making an earlier bid for Christchurch to host the 1970 Games. [The African] was in construction and... used to put the kiwis in the concrete basement of every building for good luck.” [Editor’s note: ‘HEITIKI is the most prized of greenstone neck ornaments among Maoris. There are variations in style but the small symbols are basically similar. Often referred to as tiki, it is generally accepted that the heitiki is a fertility symbol. The most popular theory says it is a representation of a human embryo, most probably a still-born child which Maoris consider are specially strong spirits because they have been cheated of life. There is a theory too that the symbol is associated with Tiki, the Maori god of creation. The amount of work and skill involved in making a greenstone symbol with stone and wooden implements and using sand and water as abrasives was extraordinary. Bone and wood heitikis were not unknown, but the greenstone heitiki is by far the most valued, even today when machine-tools are used.’]

...Chinese newspapers gave wide coverage yesterday to the admission that two African nations were promised money by A[US] on the eve of a vote to decide the host city for the 2000 Olympics. It reflected the fact that Beijing is still seething at the... IOC... decision more than five years ago to award the games to Sydney by a slim margin of only two votes. The... A[US]n Olympic Committee president... said at the weekend that the... bid committee offered the two IOC members... [from] Kenya and Uganda... \$A52,500... for use on sporting projects. The *Beijing Daily* focused on Manchester’s threat to seek compensation from the IOC over the failed English bid to host the 2000 Games in light of the bribery claims... Meanwhile... [the] *Times* of London has launched a bitter, front-page attack on [the IOC president], describing him as “monstrously self-aggrandising.”

...The Olympic bribery scandal threatens to overwhelm the most powerful [perso]n in world sport... THE staff of the mayor’s office stood smartly to attention as their visitor descended from the three-car train, chartered exclusively to transport him in comfort to their city... [The president of the IOC], appeared unimpressed, however. Dismissive of the red-carpet reception, [the IOC president] asked to be chauffeured immediately to the Hotel Kokusai 21, where the Nagano Olympic Committee was paying \$5400 a night to put him up in the city’s most prestigious suite. It was May 1991, and Nagano, a city then little known outside Japan, had spent at least \$33 million on its bid for the 1998 Winter Olympics; too much to take chances. During [his brief visit, the president] would be feted with the finest food, offered every comfort and given a \$27,000 Japanese sword... A portrait of a dancing geisha, of similar value, was thrown in for good measure; though the Olympic committee said later this had been “a personal gift” from the artist. [The president] must eventually have been impressed. Nagano won the bid – and a return visit from the president who, during the [Nagano] Winter Olympics, stayed at the Kokusai for 30 days, at a cost to the Nagano Olympic authorities of... \$165,000. It is a style to which... [the] IOC president for the past 19 years, has become not only accustomed but renowned. When [the president] visits Seoul, which hosted the 1988 Summer Games, [it] stays in a cavernous, gilded suite at the Shilla Hotel for \$7500 a night. [The president] has stayed there 17 times since 1985. It is a style, too, which has been adopted by the 114 other members of the IOC, whose membership... is by invitation only... [T]hey do not receive a salary, but receive lavish expenses, often paid for by cities increasingly desperate to win Olympic bids. The Olympic movement has turned into a vast money mill, with cities, sponsors, television companies and ultimately athletes locked into a series of ever-expanding circles of self-interest... To pay for all the extra infrastructure each Olympiad requires, the... successful host city... must attract the large, corporate sponsors. The sponsors, in turn, require publicity – and publicity means television. To gain the global audience that validate the billions paid for the television rights, the broadcasters need to show records being broken. All of which puts tremendous pressure on the professional athletes. They know a record-breaking performance at the Olympics will make their reputations – and their fortunes. Hence the willingness of so many to turn to [performance-enhancing] drugs. The result is a sorry circle of corruption with the IOC at the centre. It is something the world has long suspected, but until recently could not prove... [The IOC president emerged from Spain’s] fascist era with his reputation intact and was named ambassador to the Soviet Union by the post-1975 democratic government before being chosen IOC president in 1980. [The president] has steadfastly ignored calls to introduce greater democracy into the IOC, saying a firm hand at the top was necessary to maintain unity. As [the president] handpicked members of the IOC, [it] invariably prized personal loyalty or aristocratic status – [the president is himself] a Spanish marquis – over management skills or athletic credentials. While [the president steadfastly] claims to avoid personal extravagance, [his] peripatetic first-class travels and penchant for exchanging gifts have forged an enduring jet-set image. Perhaps most of all, his vanity stands out even among the numerous political leaders and millionaires [the president] counts among his friends. [The president] has campaigned openly for the Nobel Peace Prize[to be awarded to himself] and turned the new \$40 million Olympic museum in Switzerland into something of a personal monument exhibiting the gifts and artefacts [it] has collected on travels around the world... [T]here are pictures of... [the president] with the King of Spain, with [the 40th President of the US] and... with the Pope... [The IOC president – who has a fondness for being interviewed by gal journalists] in Barcelona’s proudest department store, somewhere between the... French knickers... underwires and the girdles... [–] had planned to stand down at the time of his 80th birthday... Ever since... [announcing] his retirement date, there have been manoeuvrings by his potential successors... “The key is not that the crisis occurred, but how you deal with the crisis,” proclaimed the person who has managed to project himself strongly as the [IOC member] most likely to succeed... [the president. But] the past month... has been... the time of deepest crisis in the IOC’s 105-year history... As in ancient Greece, the future of the Olympics is in the lap of the gods.

...Everywhere you go there are people with easy, ready-made strategies to save the world from the corrupting influence of the Olympic Games. One of the most popular – advanced by [the AUS]n Opposition Leader... this week – is to hold the games permanently in Greece, thus preventing unseemly competition between rival cities eager to host the ancient event. Without the competition we will be mercifully spared the spectacle of ambitious city officials falling over each other to attract the locusts of the [IOC]... As a bonus we will get the chance to return to the simple, pristine ideals of the ancient Olympics, unsullied by money, politics, anabolic steroids, synchronised swimming or beach volleyball. Instead of corruption and these ludicrous novelty events, we will be able to watch athletes undrugged and unclothed... Rather than receiving gold medals, cash prizes and sponsorships, the victors will be crowned with wreaths of wild olives which will fade along with the memories of their great deeds, thus putting sport in its proper place as merely the transient flowering of youth. Unfortunately, when confronted by a dose of cold reality, idealism like this crumbles faster than an IOC member can snatch a first-class return fair to Salt Lake City. If [AUS’s opposition leader] or any of his fellow Olympic idealists ever rifle through the history books they are in for a few rude shocks. Shock No 1: Money was just as important then as it is now. Athletes and their trainers were professionals and well rewarded by their cities with cash payments, free tickets to shows and free meals. Shock No 2: In 332 BC – 2330 years before [a Canadian sprinter was thrown out of the Seoul Olympics] – an Athenian athlete was thrown out of the games for cheating. Shock No 3: The ancient Greeks were on the lookout for novelty events just like their modern counterparts but instead of embracing twee sports like synchronised swimming, they wanted more brutality. An especially nasty novelty event was the Pancratium... a mixture of boxing and wrestling. The ancients would stand around whoopin’ and hollerin’ while the competitors in this event – often young boys – would beat each other to a bloody pulp. Arrhachion... was so dedicated to the Olympic ideal that... [the] famous Pancratium exponent... fought on until his opponent throttled him to death. Shock No 4: Even with the games in a fixed position people still managed to compete for the right to hold them. For instance, in 365 BC a mob called the Arcadians decided that they, and not the Elians, should control the games. Instead of making their point with a few free dinners and a night at a Grecian bordello, they took up their swords and seized Olympia by force. So all things considered, there is not much to choose between the ancient and the modern. The next time the Greeks hold the games is in 2004. If they’re wise, they’ll make it the last.

...Olympic leaders were told by athletes yesterday that they had lost their credibility in the eyes of the public as they prepared for one of the most important meetings in their history... After three months of turmoil, the whole of the IOC membership is set to vote on whether to expel six members for breaking rules on taking gifts from Salt Lake City... Four other members have already quit over the affair... Each of the six... [from]

Ecuador... Congo... Sudan... Mali... Chile... and Samoa... will be given 20 minutes to defend themselves in front of their colleagues. [The]IOC president... is likely to know in the first hour of the meeting whether [the Spaniard] still holds the most powerful job in world sport... Few seasoned observers believe his job is in any serious danger. Most of the candidates for his position would not want to step into his shoes at such a turbulent time. Meanwhile, Salt Lake City organisers say they have decided to cut back their IOC hospitality budget for the 2002 Games by \$US1 million.

...A Salt Lake City business[person] has pleaded guilty to tax fraud in the first criminal case coming out of the federal investigation of the city's winning bid to host the 2002 Winter Olympics. [The businessperson] admitted helping the son of South Korea's Olympic Committee member obtain permanent resident status by setting up a sham job at his now-defunct communications company... [In related news, the] US Olympic Committee has unveiled a \$US9 million... plan to rebuild its image... [The committee's executive] director... said the new programme, to be launched on a national Olympic Day on June 24, would be aimed at restoring "a trust between the people of the world and the Olympic movement, a trust that is now held up to ridicule by our most popular entertainers." The USOC would focus on past triumphs and future gold medallists to present the best image...

[A former] US Secretary of State... and [the]former Los Angeles Olympics chief... have been picked for a panel... created to help clean up the mess... [left] in the wake of [the IOC's] worst scandal... Such prominent individuals could help convince critics from the corporate world to the US Senate that the IOC is serious about changing its privileged ways... IOC 2000 was set up last month as the committee's primary engine for change after the Salt Lake scandal, in which six members were expelled... The commission will have 20 to 24 members, half from the IOC and half "leading personalities who understand sport". The panel will essentially form a new version of the Olympic Charter, the IOC's century-old bylaws... [The IOC president] will head the commission and appoint its members, two points attacked last month by critics... who felt the panel needed more independence. But with [the former US Secretary of State as] a member, the IOC reform panel gains instant credibility because of his long record of states[person]ship and diplomacy... After leading the... games to athletic success and a \$US225 million surplus that convinced cities and sponsors that the Olympics were a good investment, [the former Los Angeles Olympics chief] served as... the... US Major League Baseball commissioner.

...[IOC] leaders have agreed to lower their age limit to 70 and force members to face re-election as they attempt to clean up the organisation after the biggest corruption scandal in Olympic history. On the first day of a two-day meeting of all IOC members, the committee yesterday voted to drop the retirement age by 10 years for new members despite some opposition. A proposal to make members face re-election every eight years surprisingly sailed through the session, which also voted to allow future presidents to be elected for an eight-year term with the right to stand for a further four years and agreed to add 15 active athletes to the committee... The athletes representatives are expected to come from elections carried out by their peers, although an IOC selection body must approve their candidature. The... rank-and-file [IOC members have, however,] united against overhauling the process for electing Olympic host cities... [by stripping] the general assembly of voting rights... The proposal is due to come up for a vote by an emergency IOC session [in about six weeks. An Italian IOC member said last night:] "It's impossible the general assembly will approve this proposal... I'm sure the executive board will have to find a new solution before then. If they lose at the session, it would be a disaster for the president and the executive board." ...[the Italian added that] an "overwhelming majority" of... other[member]s made a counter proposal: a small group of experts should narrow the field to two or three finalists 24 hours before the vote and let the full assembly choose the winner.

...The [IOC] has decided to make cities pay to bid to host the Olympics. [The]IOC sports director... yesterday said that from the next campaign – the race for the 2010 winter Olympics – it would cost US\$100,000... to apply to stage the Games and \$US500,000 for each candidate that reaches the final stage of the process. The money will be used to fund the IOC's selection procedure... [By the way, when an AUSn IO]C Committee member... was called before the [IOC] to explain his acceptance of \$A60,000 worth of hospitality from the organizers of Salt Lake City's Olympic bid, many believed [the AUSn] would be exonerated. But last week an [IOC] report delivered a "very serious warning" to [the AUSn].

...the AUSn ex-]Olympian and besieged Games official... [who] received a very serious warning for receiving over \$US60,000... in hospitality and gifts from Salt Lake organisers... failed to take his ex-wife into account when [the IOC member] denied having received a gift of jewellery from a Greek business[person] ahead of Athens' bid for the 1996 Olympics. The *Sydney Morning Herald's* front page was yesterday dominated by a photograph of his former wife... wearing the necklace and earrings in question. At the same time the *A[US]n Financial Review* carried photographs of the \$A10,000... jewellery showing distinctive Grecian details. For [the IOC member], honoured at the highest levels by both his Government and the nation's sporting administrators, the pictures seem likely to be the last straw. The pressure on [him] to resign will almost certainly become unbearable if only because some sacrifice is needed to purge Sydney of the stain that its bid for the 2000 Games has left on the national image. The toll on the balding, bespectacled 67-year-old is already apparent: footage of the harried, monosyllabic [IOC member] dodging television cameras or pushing his way through the media press have become nightly staples on the evening news. On Thursday night, as reporters pressed him on the jewellery claims... [the IOC member] was close to tears and said of his former wife's claims to have the jewellery: "I'm staggered... I'm really shattered." It looks like becoming a sad finale to an otherwise distinguished sporting life. In his youth [the IOC member] was... a five-time national surf-lifesaving champion, winner of 26 national canoeing titles and a member of the A[US]n canoeing team at the 1960, 1964 and 1968 Olympics. [It managed AUS]'s Olympic team at the 1980 Moscow Games, chaired or sat on a range of national and state organisations... was the 1980 Sports Administrator of the Year and was appointed a Member of the Order of A[US] three years later[, having]... joined the IOC in 1982... In 1993 [it] was inducted into the A[US]n Sporting Hall of Fame. Until [the IOC member] resigned from the \$A140,000-a-year job earlier this month, [it] was a member of the A[US]n Olympic Committee, and still holds a \$A50,000-a-year directorship of the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympics... by virtue of his IOC membership, although [the member] has suspended himself from the Sydney board. His world has unravelled through a combination of foolishness and flexible ethics, a failed marriage, and lingering animosities from Melbourne's failed bid for the 1996 Games.

...OVERWHELMED Sydneysiders sick of hearing about Olympic scandals plan to be out of town for the 2000 Games, according to a new survey. Constant negative media coverage... has turned the tide of enthusiasm in Sydney, with just 18% of those surveyed saying they would like to attend a Games event. "We hear about the Olympics every day and there can be a saturation point..." said [the]Centre for Visitor Studies research manager... For the first time since the biannual survey began in 1995, the number of people intending to leave Sydney crept above those planning to attend the Games... 20% intended to leave town for the duration of the Olympics, compared with 8% in the first... poll... [Incidentally.] Melbourne city councillors have voted themselves, staff and guests all-expenses paid trips to the Sydney Olympics at a cost of nearly \$A180,000... Two of the nine councillors voted against, saying it was too expensive. A report to the council said the trips aims included promoting business in Melbourne.

...One way ticket... The [person] who copped most of the blame for the Sydney Olympics ticketing fiasco has left the organising body, SOCOG. [The person] was under siege after it was revealed in October that [the person] had kept back from the public ballot 840,000 of the best tickets ...and Reebok boot Reebok International is suing SOCOG in a row over an exclusive deal with the Games organiser. The sporting goods giant said it was terminating its contract with the organising committee for signing contracts with competitors.

...Not a bomb A classic Mercedes-Benz built for German Ernst Heinkel, who developed the Heinkel bomber during... W[W2, will] be... on show in Sydney during the Olympic Games... [I]mported into A[US] in 1989 and bought at auction in 1994 for \$630,000... [t]he car, a 540 K Cabriolet B, powered by a supercharged 5.4-litre V8 engine, was built in 1936, the year that Nazi Germany introduced the Olympic torch relay.

...AT SOME POINT DURING THE Olympic torch's 27,000-km journey around A[US] next year, one of its 10,000 bearers might like to try this: carry the torch upside down... [The] director of Sydney firm Blue Sky Design, which last week unveiled the Sydney 2000 torch, swears the elegant, triple-layered device will remain alight for "at least a few minutes" if inverted. It can also be carried with the flame pointing forward rather than backward, though the designer says that "would look silly." As well, the 1-kg aluminium and stainless steel torch – or, more accurately, all 10,000 torches... [(each worth \$200)]... as each runner will carry an individual one lit from the preceding torch – is wind and rain proof.

...A change in wind direction... would prevent swirling gusts from hounding athletes competing at the Olympic stadium during the Sydney Olympics, the stadium architect says. Athletes who ran at the stadium at the weekend in the national athletics championships raised concerns about wind conditions, which created unpredictable gusts, assisting some heats and hindering others. [However, the stadium's] designer... said the swirling effect was the result of a southerly wind, but [during the month of] September the wind... blow[s] from a different direction.

...[an Olympic] storm is brewing over A[US]'s most famous beach. Residents of Bondi, in Sydney's eastern suburbs, are incensed their favourite stretch of sand will host the popular beach volleyball tournament... claiming locals and tourists will be blocked from using the beach for up to nine months... Bondi Beach was an automatic choice when it came to choosing venues for the 2000 Olympics. Since the N[SW] government bought the beach from private owners at the turn of the century, the sands of Bondi have ingrained themselves in A[US]n culture... When it was confirmed last August Bondi would be hosting Olympic beach volleyball, reaction among locals at first appeared positive. "Bondi Beach is the A[US]n beach," said... the... then mayor... "It's an A[US]n icon. The large majority of our Bondi residents are very excited to have the opportunity to show off their Bondi to the rest of the world." But just last month a large majority of those Speedo and bikini-clad Bondi residents stood on the beach during a protest rally hurling abuse at Olympic organising representatives and vowing to stop the tournament going ahead. The catalyst for this change of heart is the growing awareness a portion of the beach, including its famous surf lifesaving pavilion, are to be effectively annexed by the Olympic family... The plan is to [block] off a four to five hectare section of the beach... [with] a two metre high wire fence[. then]... build a temporary 16 metre high 10,000 seat stadium and centre court as well as eight training and warmup courts... At just over a kilometre long, the narrow strip of beach at Bondi is already fenced in on one side by the surf of the Tasman Sea and on the other by a promenade of restaurants, pubs and hotels... [R]esidents argue the limited space on the beach must be open to all. The trouble for the organisers is beach volleyball was one of the most popular spectator sports at the... Atlanta Games on account of... the fact [that] the only Olympic competitors which wear less clothing are horses. The Bondi residents' solution of moving the beach volleyball tournament 29km inland to a woodchopping venue is the equivalent of asking the Swiss to hold the Winter Olympics on artificial ski slopes instead of their alps. However, Olympic organisers have to tread carefully in the battle for Bondi after a dreadful... year... One solution for Olympic organisers is to appease Bondi residents by offering to spruce up and renovate their buildings with the A[US]n Government footing the bill. A similar arrangement was made with residents near the Olympic sailing venue, who were none to pleased to be temporarily losing use of public facilities. In the best traditions of the modern Olympics, a well placed "donation" or some "financial assistance" should ensure Bondi Beach is indeed a venue at the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

...N[SW] is bringing in tough new fines for littering. One aim is to ensure Sydney is at its sparkling best for the Olympic Games... [The NSW] Premier... said the state Government planned to introduce on-the-spot fines of up to \$A750... Present law allows for a \$A200 on-the-spot fine for all littering offences... [T]he city had been grappling with the problem of littering for some time. An increase in advertising and more reliance on takeaway food had contributed to the mess. The state Parliament will vote in the coming session on a package to crack down on people throwing rubbish on to streets, parks and beaches... Placing advertising material on car windscreens will also be prohibited... \$A1.5 million would be spent on a public education campaign to reinforce the anti-littering push. "It's not related to the Olympics but I would like to see [Sydney] looking fabulous by the time of the Olympics... I would like people to be leaving Sydney saying, 'Those A[US]ns are proud of their country, they keep it so clean.'" ...Under the new scheme, there would be three categories: • Littering with small items such as bottle caps and cigarette butts, \$A60 fine. • General littering with items such as fast food containers or bags of rubbish, \$A200 fine. • Aggravated littering for dropping items such as glass or metal that endangers the community and environment, \$A750 fine.

...Greenpeace has given Sydney Olympic authorities a pat on the back over the clean-up of 400 tonnes of dioxin-contaminated soil recovered from the site of the 2000 Olympic Games... Sydney's Olympic Coordination Authority (OCA) said the soil... should end up clean enough to grow vegetables after a two-stage treatment process... As part of [the] \$A137 million... clean-up... the OCA [is using] a new technique to destroy the dioxin, effectively by reversing the chemical process and returning it to its constituent parts... [A] Greenpeace toxic pollution campaigner... said the treatment system could set a model for dioxin clean-ups around the world – dioxin-contaminated waste is usually either incinerated or put into landfill... Final treatment of the soil will start... today... [In further news from overseas, a] pole vaulter... died yesterday after landing on his head during an indoor athletics meeting in Minneapolis[– raising the number of 'pole vaulters who have died in the US over the past 2 decades to 20 (mostly due to head injuries'). Kevin]Dare was a student from State College, Pennsylvania. Officials will decide today whether to continue the meeting.

...[a young Aucklander] has been jumping for joy after winning four medals at the trampoline nationals held in Invercargill. The 14-year-old from Mt Albert won two gold and two silver medals. [It] was first in the open... section, and first in the synchronised section for his age group... [The teenager] is a member of Extreme Trampoline, based in Henderson. The club has only been going since April last year. But the fledgling team collected 26 medals at the tournament... "We only took 11 athletes as it was so far away, but we still bought home a large proportion of medals,"... [The teenager] started trampolining when [it] was six-years old[after getting] hooked on the sport's adrenaline and energy. "It's really, really different to other sports... It can be kind of scary but that's one of the reasons why I like it." A recent series of injuries has not faded his ambitions to compete in the 2008 Olympics. [The teenager] has a reoccurring back injury, and has been in a neck brace three times as a result of bad landings.

...No need for Sporty kids to be down in the mouth... SOUTH Auckland Health is giving away \$5000 worth of free mouthguards to local sport and schools... [The] group manager of Middlemore Hospital, said that mouthguard sharing has become a problem because sports clubs are getting tougher on enforcing their compulsory use. "A lot of children want to play sports, but many sports won't let them play without a mouthguard... I personally have witnessed children swapping mouthguards at games. It's important that wearing mouthguards is enforced for injury prevention purposes, but this encourages swapping and sharing among children whose families cannot afford them." [The manager] warned that sharing mouthguards can be more dangerous than going without because it can spread ordinary sickness like the common cold and more serious diseases like meningitis... In an effort to stamp out the problem, South Auckland Health and the Mangere Community Health Trust came up with the free mouthguard scheme. They hope their initiative will reduce resource and medical costs for Middlemore Hospital and the South Auckland community... South Auckland Health has purchased about 3500 mouthguards which come with a dental warranty.

...YOU'VE... had to pay the dentist's bill because your daughter forgot to wear her mouthguard for hockey... You've also... had to buy your little son his size six soccer boots. You've queued behind the Japanese golfer at the first tee... [You've paid your gym membership. You've visited the health shop to stock up on pills and powders to supplement your diet, which you've increased to compensate for all the energy you expend at the gym. You've] been in Dunedin on a test rugby day... And there have been plenty of times when you have wondered: "Just how much money is sport worth to our country?" Now it's official – the sport and leisure industry is one of the most dynamic sectors of the N[Z] economy. It now contributes \$1.75 billion... each year... Specific economic impact reports have been done before on one-off events like Bledisloe Cup tests and their value to host cities. But this report, *The Business of Sport and Leisure – An Update*, which was requested by the Hillary Commission, charts the economic growth of the sporting dollar across a broad spectrum from 1991 to 1996. It's an intriguing paper that reflects the importance of sport in N[Z]... And, as... sport

[in NZ] increasingly becomes more professional, there's nothing to suggest the trend hasn't continued since the completion of the report... There's only one downward trend and that, in itself, reflects a considerable economic saving. Claims from sporting injuries against ACC dropped by \$900,000. And sports fatalities fell from 77 to 66. The report suggests the costs associated with these deaths represented a net decline of \$12.8m (from \$44.4m in 1991...). But for sporting tourism, household expenditure, employment and manufacturing the trend was up... An estimated 19,200 people were directly employed in the sport sector in 1996 – manufacturers, importers, retailers of sports goods, greenkeepers, professional players and coaches. And indirect employment – sports journalists, sports lawyers, programme publishers, event organisers – lifted the total to 31,055, an increase of 26% since 1991... 1000 jobs were [also] created in the tourism industry related to outdoor and adventure activities... [T]ourists visiting N[Z] primarily to watch or play sport spend \$120m a year... [though 3/4]ers of all tourists took part in some kind of sport or physical leisure activity. "N[Z] is famous around the world for its sports achievements. Sport gives a strong international brand..." says... [the] Hillary Commission chief executive[. who adds the report]... shows that while sport is largely driven by volunteers, it is also a dynamic commercial sector and great investment for government... [However, w]hile the commercial arm of the sport and leisure industry is booming... [- the] sector... made up 60% of the total contribution for 1996... [-] and the number of jobs in the industry as well as the number of volunteers have increased, the report shows central government's contribution has declined in real terms. Central government expenditure on physical leisure in 1996 is estimated to be \$168m, an increase of just \$3m from 1991. This is considerably less than the... \$340m the sport sector generates each year in taxes... Local government expenditure on sport and recreation at community level has risen by just over 7% in the same five years, to an estimated \$338m in 1996.

[The Labour Party wants central government to] provide \$2 million a year for 200 sports scholarships worth between \$5000 and \$10,000 each so promising athletes can pay for coaching or get overseas experience. [It also wants to boost] the Hillary Commission's annual budget by \$2 million and [give] an additional \$1 million to the Sports Foundation. Announcing the policy package at the weekend, Labour's sports spokes[person]... said the aim was two-fold: to ensure N[Z] maintained or bettered its international sporting achievements, and to encourage participation at all levels.

...[a worker], aged 22, of Bucklands Beach, t[oo]k... a break yesterday on Mission Bay beach. But exuberant youngsters turn[ed] her paddle in work clothes into more than [it] bargained for. Thousands had packed the beach to feel a \$2 million project between their toes. The beach has been transformed with 30,000 cu m of sand from Northland. - 1996

Wellington City Council is considering spending \$4 million on a new beach... a new headland and trees for shelter... at Oriental Bay.

...The long-awaited New Brighton Pier in Christchurch opened yesterday to the praise of the 2000-strong crowd, despite continuing controversy over the \$4 million cost... [■] Two Mangere boys took on big business [recently] to successfully create a \$22,000 playground on an empty reserve. [The boys], aged 13, and... 12, collected signatures around the Cranmere Crescent Reserve, ran raffles and approached the Manukau City Council and businesses for funding. The pair were low-key about their success, but said a lot of people were surprised when the colourful equipment was installed. There was assistance from Youth Resources N[Z], a charitable trust for 10-to-13-year-olds, which helped the boys plan the project and prepare proposals. The trust's district manager... said... "Businesses see the kids and think it's a big joke – 'come back with an adult.' But they have a claim in the community,"... Companies from across Auckland have since donated materials and time. [The boys], who have just finished form two at Southern Cross Middle School, are already planning their next project – painting a bus stop with Maori and Pacific Island designs.

...A NEW sport and business initiative to be launched this week is budgeted to benefit N[Z] codes by as much as \$5m. Sports Plus is a private funding programme based on partnerships between... sports and major corporates... [which] provides a realistic alternative to having to rely heavily on government funding through the Sports Foundation... Squash launches the concept this week but cricket, golf, lawn bowls, gymnastics, swimming, basketball, indoor bowls, touch, netball and softball are all set to follow. The sports will gain commissions when their members purchase certain goods and services from the participating companies... AMP, Telstra/Call Plus, Air N[Z], National Insurance, Caltex, Sport Magazines, Moore Business Systems and NZ Guardian Trust... The commission percentages range from 1% to 10%... [T]he conservative budget... [of] a \$5m input... is based on a 5% penetration of the memberships of the sports who are part of the concept[. which]... will also provide individual magazines for each sport... [In related news, a]fter battling over who would manage the North Shore Events Centre, the North Shore Council has done a u-turn and given the facility to the centre's elated trust board. The trustees have been lobbying for more managerial control so they can get outside grants to complete and extend the five-year-old indoor sports centre. The centre was part of the council's North Shore Leisure business unit and the profits of the debt-free facility went into council coffers. The trustees were stunned at Monday's special council meeting when [a] councillor... proposed to sell the Glenfield centre to a reconstituted trust for \$7 million. The sale would be in the form of an interest-free suspensory loan, which would be written off after seven years if the trust met the council's performance requirements... [The trust's chairperson] was delighted by the 18-to-one vote in favour of the proposal and said ratepayers would no longer be liable for the centre's performance... [The chairperson] said a further 1800 seats would bring capacity to the "magic" 5000 and there were plans to add another basketball and netball court to the current three so national competitions could be held. The extensions have been conservatively estimated at \$3 million. "We've never had access to profit, so it was very difficult for capital expenditure to be planned because we were at the council's mercy,"... However, the one dissenting councillor... said the deal was "irresponsible and lopsided." "What concerns me is this Alice in Wonderland situation where we first give away a \$7 million building, which returns \$372,000 to the council each year, when we can't afford maintenance on the community buildings we keep... But we spend \$180,000 to upgrade it to pristine condition before we give it away and give \$300,000 a year for five years..."

...Top sports[people]... could pocket up to \$250,000 under the latest... Sports Foundation initiative. The foundation will release details of its \$79 million, five-year plan at functions in Wellington today and Auckland tomorrow... The incentives to N[Z]'s best athletes follow last year's amalgamation of the Sports Foundation and the Hillary Commission's high-performance unit. These bodies now sit around the same table with representatives from the N[Z] Olympic Committee as a high-profile funding organisation... Of the \$79 million, \$54 million would come from the public sector (the Hillary Commission through the Lottery Grants Board and a \$15 million Government vote). The remaining \$25 million will come from the private sector, headed by B[IL], Air NZ, TVNZ and the National Bank, who will underwrite about \$7 million needed to cover administrative and marketing costs, and the foundation's 80 corporate members. Sports have been split into four levels, with the Olympic Games, World Cup rugby, cricket and netball at the highest level. Of the available funds, \$22 million... will go to coaches and coaching academies, the same amount to athletes and teams, with a substantial proportion being handed out in personal grants, \$18 million... for international competition and \$10 million... for sports science and... technology. Initial applications must be received by May 2. The first \$13 million to \$14 million to be allocated will be decided on June 20 and announced on July 1 – the start of the foundation's new funding year.

...gifted N[Z] athletes... who want nothing more than to devote themselves to reaching the top in their chosen sports have something to celebrate. The... Sports Foundation's Five Year Plan... firmly shuts the door on the days of attempting to take on the world on the smell of an oil rag. It ushers in an era in which business, sports science and other support mechanisms are all harnessed at unprecedented levels to help our top sportspeople achieve optimum results... [H]ere's how the plan would affect... one of our top cyclists: • Personal grant: Because [the cyclist] finished in the top 10 in the world in her chosen event (...[coming 7]th in the individual pursuit at the Atlanta Olympics), [it] would now be eligible for a personal grant of up to \$30,000 a year... The total value of a package for an athlete like [her] over the next four years could be up to \$150,000. For... athletes in the top three in the world... the package will be nearer \$250,000... The personal grants are performance-based. • Education

Scholarships: [The cyclist] is going through Auckland University with the aid of an education scholarship... the result of a joint venture between the foundation and Maine Investments... Most athletes w[on't] earn a living from their sports, and for this reason providing educational opportunity is vital. The plan aims at nearly doubling the scholarship funding pool. • Sports Science and Medicine: [The cyclist] will be able to benefit, at no cost to herself, from the regional sports science/medicine scheme that will be administered by Sport Science N[Z. The]... foundation will be injecting... \$1 m... per annum into sports science and medicine, and the regional programme helps make it easily accessible to athletes. • Advisory support: The foundation has put in place a service providing media advice, personal and career advice for... athlete[s]... • Employment opportunities: The foundation is working with one of N[Z]'s large corporates in developing an employment programme. Athletes will be offered full-time [jobs] and career development opportunities with time off for training and competition. • Medal Reward Scheme: If [the cyclist] comes home with a medal from the Sydney Olympics, [it] will benefit from a financial reward scheme soon to be put in place. This acknowledges the personal sacrifices that go into such an achievement, and the fact that this success is shared by all N[Z]ers... Without question, this level of funding is a huge incentive for athletes. Coaches, for too long the forgotten heroes behind many a N[Z] sporting success, are the subject of renewed emphasis in the plan. The foundation will encourage and assist sports to employ full time high performance coaches. The target is that by the[end of next] year... 20 sports will have full timers in place. Coaches, like athletes[('750 NZ sportspeople currently receive financial support')], will be eligible for personal grants.

...a record \$16.15 m... from the Hillary Commission and... Sports Foundation... takes the total funding package... to be spread among 58 sports... this year to \$17.5 m... made possible by a grant of \$3.7 m... by the L[GB and an] extra... \$4.2 m... from the Government. The commission[, which] also takes 20[%] of the Lotteries Commission profit... will soon... announce[e] a further \$[1.55 m in]... donations and sponsorships from businesses.

...RUGBY'S reign at the top of N[Z] sport is threatened by both netball and golf... Figures supplied this year to the Hillary Commission by national sporting bodies show rugby's playing membership rose to 123,481 during the last 12-month period. Netball's tally was 118,870, while the combined total for [guys' and gals'] golf was 116,025. The membership totals should not be confused with sports' participation numbers. Many people do not belong to clubs and do not come under the umbrella of national bodies. Golf, with its huge army of green fee players, is a prime example. In terms of participation numbers, survey results indicate it and swimming are the dominant sports, easily outstripping rugby... The other top 10 sports, based on membership figures, are (in order) cricket, soccer, touch, bowls, tennis, basketball and rugby league. League's figure and cutoff for the leaderboard is 42,300. Soccer's fifth placing is misleading. While a sport like netball has counted its youngest players (since last year), soccer's membership numbers do not include players under the age of 10. Soccer N[Z] estimates there may be between 80,000 and 100,000 in this grouping. If they were included, soccer would surge to the No 1 position, while rugby would also profit from better counting of its young and nipper brigade... Touch has been a sporting success story. In 1988, it reported 24,000 members but four years later the code's numbers had swelled to 70,284... The struggling sport in the top 10 is bowls. This year's membership figure was 67,000... In 1987, the bowls' membership was 86,997.

...Finding out the No 1 sport in N[Z] may be academic, but it means a lot... Sport is all about numbers – whether it's the sprinter trying to crack 9.5 seconds for the 100 metres, the All Blacks scoring a converted try and nothing the... points they need to win a test match, or [a cricketer] scoring his first test century. Around the country scoreboards project the drama. But always, behind the tries, the boundaries and the deuces, there is another numbers game being played out. It transcends sporting boundaries – pitting different codes against each other. It is the battle for playing numbers. As with on-field sport, the battle spits out winners and losers. It also comes complete with its own minefield... All sports are required to supply... [numbers of] affiliated... members... to the Hillary Commission, where the numbers are a factor in funding. Unfortunately, the figures paint only a part-picture... A commission sport and physical activities survey last year of 18-year-olds and over suggested... 416,000 had played golf during the previous 12 months, while it projected swimmers – including beachgoers – numbered 773,700. In comparison, rugby fell well short... For most sports, the important consideration is playing number trends. Membership figures, supplied to the commission since 1987, provide clear messages on what is occurring on the countries fields and courts. The gold medal awards go to touch and water polo. At the other end of the scale, the racquet and bat sports of squash, badminton, table tennis and softball have been major sufferers, along with outdoor and indoor bowls. The touch phenomenon is the ultimate dream for the administrators of rival sports... [B]y 1993... membership... had peaked at 85,256 and has settled at an extremely solid 75,000[, but]... there were also estimates of 50,000 people playing the sport outside the system... Undoubtedly, the touch boom is one explanation for the drop in those playing softball. Membership has waned from 36,028 in 1987 to... 20,790. Not only are the sports competing in the same summer period but they also pull players from a similar demographic group. An additional worry for softball is that other team sports are reporting increased or stable membership. Overall, the suggestion is that team sport numbers fell 7% between 1987 and 1997, but the commission suspects figures supplied in the late 1980s were overstated... The comparable drop for individual sports is 23%... Commission research and information... said team sport meant there was more incentive to be part of a club structure, whereas many individual sportspeople obviously preferred the option of competing when it suited... SPORTS with rising numbers appeared to have two major benefactors. The first was television, with its resultant creation of heroes and stars for the young. Rugby league, basketball and ice hockey benefited from this scenario. League, compared to its viewing population, has never been a high-participant sport. But its membership has swollen on the back of high TV exposure over the last 10 years. In 1987, membership was 27,750... In the same period, basketball jumped from 31,500 to 47,244, while ice hockey went from 278 to 1184. A problem for both ice hockey and ice skating – which has also enjoyed a small numbers hike – is getting rink time... The availability of pool time is... affecting [swimming]'s growth. "Some of the clubs have really big waiting lists because they simply can't get the lane space,"... Among the young, there... appears to be a "hip factor" – the second benefactor – especially with water polo and surfing... Badminton's 1987 reported membership of 16,441 almost halved, although... the sport's administrators believed it was healthier than the figures indicate – research indicated the total at nearly 95,000... [B]adminton had a recruiting and marketing plan, and its challenge – as with many sports – was to get players linked to clubs. SQUASH has fallen considerably since the days when [NZ's world No 1 gal and top-10 ranked guy] were regularly in the headlines. Membership is... 20,000 down on the 1987 total of 47,279. One explanation may be the sport was something of an over-achiever and that a moderate falloff was always on the cards. However, the degree of the falloff is hard to explain, with squash seemingly suited to the hustle and bustle of the modern era. A game – a hard workout – is all over in less than an hour. [The sport's new national] executive director... wants to reverse the trend and in the last year numbers rose by... 1600... [T]he sport may have suffered from players not wanting to pay affiliation fees and/or be involved in activities such as fundraising. Last year's commission survey suggested 161,600 adults had played squash during the previous 12-month period. The table tennis slump is dramatic – membership of 51,813 collapsed to 5753 this year... Gymnastics provides an interesting case study... [I]n 1987 it was reporting membership of 63,418... Back then, gymnastics counted children in school programmes. It is estimated... 49,000 (non club members) are [currently] involved in Kiwigym and playgym activities. However, it also appears young girls are no longer growing up wanting to be the next [gal to obtain a perfect 10 score at the Olympics]. Trampolining and sport aerobics has now come under the gymnastics umbrella and should help to boost numbers. Of the middle-of-the-road sports, athletics membership has declined slightly... though there are a number of non-[affiliated] people competing in half marathons and marathons. The sport was undoubtedly hurt by triathlon... Despite N[Z]ers dominating the equestrian stage[– 'after his third place at last weekend's Blenheim horse trials NZ's double gold winning Olympian (in 1984 and 1988) maintains his lead in the world equestrian riders rankings over the second-placed Kiwi, who failed to complete the Blenheim three day event with both his mounts, while NZ's reigning Olympic and world champion is in third place despite being out of action with a broken thigh bone suffered at Burghley' –] pony club numbers have tended to decline while the equestrian fold has been relatively stable. Cost could well be a factor with the former... [but this might be addressed now that the Sports Foundation has announced that it will be investing] \$2m... into equestrian sports during the next three years... Plugging into what

the X generation – the children of today – want was crucial. And flexibility was likely to be a buzz word as sports battled for market share. An example could be club subscriptions. Rather than having a black and white situation of people either belonging or not being a member of a club, sports may introduce a halfway-house scenario where, say, a basketballer or cricketer pays per game. This rate per game would have to be high – to still provide encouragement for people to become club members – but it could help reduce the numbers dropping out of official competitions... [By the way, entries] are now being received for the N[Z] *Herald* junior sports awards, which recognise sporting excellence but also consider athletes who have overcome disability... The awards, which offer five \$1000 training grants and engraved medallions, are open to sports[people]... under 20 and living in the *Herald's* circulation area. A full description of the performance(s) to be considered – up to 400 words – and personal details, including full name, date of birth and address, should be forwarded to N[Z] *Herald* Junior Sports Awards, P.O. Box 32, Auckland... no later than December 31. - 1997

Who would be a hot young sports star these days? [The NZ Herald] takes a look at the pressure being faced by the prodigies of the world's fields, fairways and courts... HOW much peace can \$60 million a year buy. Just look into the eyes of... the troubled 21-year-old Brazilian soccer star who, just before the World Cup in France, appeared to have the world, among other things, at his feet. Not enough is the answer. "How long are you going to chase me? What kind of life is this?" [the No 9] pleads to a camera[person] who tracks him back in Brazil. At a time when [the 21-year-old] should be enjoying the prime of his life, [it] seeks only solitude and escape... Welcome to the world where boys become [grown-ups] before the prying eyes of the masses... It is a sporting story fast becoming a cliché. Young star rises at a giddy rate and is then shot down as... [it] fails to cope with all the attendant pressures and sacrifices that join the ride. Fame and fortune become huge burdens... Sport at its highest level is like the owner of a seedy strip club. It welcomes you eagerly into its fold, it massages your ego and takes you to places you have never been to. And then it strips you bare and places you under the spotlight. The old hands can deal with it. But... the young stars... are unprepared and, inevitably, their careers reach a crisis point... [The Brazilian soccer star]'s crunch time appeared to be... [the] World Cup final in Paris. A billion people held their breath and waited for him to illuminate the occasion, but all they got was a lacklustre performance and a flurry of conspiracy theories... [The star had] had a fit and swallowed his tongue. His coach omitted him from the starting lineup and then U-turned in the face of a player revolt. [The star] had fought with his camera-friendly girlfriend. There was pressure on him to play by sponsor Nike. [The star] had been taking painkillers all tournament[and was] soon to face a major knee operation. All [the star] was saying was that [it] had suffered "a fit for 30 or 40 seconds" and woke up "with my whole body in pain". Its cause is unknown, but the pressure of expectation could be as good a theory as any... [The soccer star's Nike stablemate], too, has found out that becoming the world's most popular golfer, the chosen one of a generation, is anything but a stroll down the fairways... [The young guy] who can no longer go anywhere in public, whose presence is in the midst of a corporate tug-of-war... is receiving messages that his own life may be in danger. What price fame, we ask you? The list goes on, and on. [The]English soccer player... cruelly dubbed Stupid Spice and whose red card may have cost his country its World Cup chances... has [also]received death threats and needs police protection to attend training... In cricket, [the West Indies' captain] certainly had his wobbly moments after becoming, at a tender age by his sport's standards, the greatest bats[person] of all time... Tennis has too many cases to list... In basketball, the NBA is littered with egotistic young stars whose attitude and self-worth have pundits predicting a gloomy future for the world's most popular league. Even in N[Z], the syndrome of the young star has its victims... [I]n the wake of his double gold medal-winning performance in Atlanta, [NZ's most successful swimmer] seemed unwilling or unable to cope with the pressures that followed and has treaded water since, while squash player Jade Wilson is the ultimate tragic example of a young sports person unable to deal with the difficulties [it] faced, taking her own life... [A sports] psychologist... who works both with Canterbury rugby and N[Z] cricket in player co-ordination roles, says the phenomenon occurs largely as a result of sophisticated talent identification thrusting young sports people into roles they are not ready for. "These days we're identifying these people earlier which means we basically imprison them a little bit earlier... [- although our country has yet to become as obsessed with sports success as 'China, which has 2900 sports schools whose pupils were selected at age 4 and 5'] It's probably what every youngster dreams of when they're knocking on the door – gaining superstar status. When they actually get there all they seek is their so-called normal... carefree teenage... existence because they are so pressured." ...[the psychologist] describes a spiralling scenario where these young superstars lose control of their destiny, become public property and a commercial commodity and in many ways have their spirit stifled. "You have to be a pretty strong person to be able to live with it... Not many can... It makes you say thank God I'm Joe Bloggs who can go about my business in the world... The expectations for [the young golfer] are so high that... [everyone] just expects him to win. We are putting something on his back that is probably bigger than [anyone] should actually have. When [the golfer wins, it was] supposed to; when [it] doesn't, people ask: 'What is wrong with [him]?' They might ask: What is wrong with sport? ...[the All Black No 11] is perhaps the closest N[Z] has to a... [figure comparable to the golfer. The No 11] is still the most popular figure in the game but on the field... is struggling to come to terms with the giddy future... mapped out at the 1995 World Cup... The giant winger has so many people pulling him for a piece of the cake his manager... is almost giddy dealing with it. [The manager] fields a dozen offers a week for sponsorship and deals involving... the world's most popular rugby player... and 10 times that for signatures, photographs and appearances... "We're talking big money... [My client] wouldn't have to play rugby if [the No 11] didn't want to... could have just walked away from rugby last year (when [it] had his medical problems). But... [my client didn't. My client] climbed Mt Everest once, [and is] prepared to climb it twice." ...[the manager admits his client] was ill-equipped for what [the No 11] faced, going almost straight into the All Blacks out of boarding school... Throw in things such as his secret marriage[, his subsequent separation] and his kidney problems and already, at just 21, [the winger] has been through the wringer... "[My client is] one of the most natural human beings you'll ever meet, and one of the nicest even-tempered guys. Of course... all... the talkback callers... hurt... him. [My client] pretends to shrug his shoulders but I think [the winger has just] got resolve now. [Having] been knocked down so many times, it becomes a bit easier to accept."

...With the age of professionalism now well and truly established within the realms of many N[Z] sports, the topic of athlete remuneration will only grow as a talking point. For many years now sport has been a business. However, it was very convenient for administrators, event organisers and others to bring out and wave the flag of amateurism. Of course, amateurism for so many sports had ceased to exist decades ago. As we move through our aspiring careers, the reasons for participating change. At first we participate because Mum and Dad make us or, for the lucky ones, because we just like it. Once a level of excellence is obtained we move to wanting to represent our country. Eventually, when we realise that this is our "life" and we are dedicated and committed to it, we seek to make a living out of it. From here, we normally seek sponsorship, extremely difficult to start with, but with some ease as we begin to make the headlines. I have followed with interest the debates that take place about such people as [a former All Black reserve who turned to league] and the payments they receive. Oh yes, it's fine to see him as an overpaid second-grader now but you need to look back a few years and see why [the All Black reserve] was able to command the salary [it] now enjoys... Firstly, [the player] received a large contract because the Warriors management believed they needed him, whether for his football skills or his public persona, to ensure that the fans would come. They also needed the likes of [the team's highest-paid player and a British international forward], to ensure the team would be good and they would be able to sell their reputations to the many and varied sponsors. No sponsors are willing to sign a team for big dollars unless they are able to use the names and reputations of these athletes to promote their products... It's never a gift, they are business professionals looking for a return on their company's investment... Secondly, television rights are a huge issue these days, and in advance the sports group need to be able to say, "We have signed or are signing [so-and-so], etc"... I think a key point that is missed here is that athletes have a right to

some security too. You may say in [the ex-All Black reserve's case that the player] is a television star, so [it is] doing OK and doesn't need his Warriors contract money. But we don't see CEOs of major companies paying us back when our shares bottom out, so why should many expect that [the player] should return his contract payment. It was not him alone who caused the problems the Warriors[faced in the club's formative years]... Unless you are one of the very few [guy] superstars (such as [the recently-retired All Black captain]), the day you are of no value to a company, the day you play your last game or run your last race, you are of an exponentially decreasing value. There is no loyalty out there, it's the big business world, and I have seen many a great athlete struggle long before I have seen major companies such as Adidas, Nike or Reebok go under.

...South Africa's athletics controlling body has become the first federation in the world to offer... athletes monthly salaries. Using \$US1 million from a private sponsor A[SA] will pay 17 of the countries top performers each month and award bonuses based on world rankings... [In local news, NZ] athletes will receive rewards if they win medals at the... Sydney Olympics in 2000. In an incentive package organised by the N[Z] Sports Foundation and the N[Z] Olympic Committee, gold medallists will get \$50,000, silver medallists \$40,000 and bronze medallists \$30,000. There will only be one payment an athlete, regardless of how many medals they win.

...KIWI Olympic winners won't receive cash bonuses. [The]Sports Foundation boss... said the organisation decided early on athletes would... receive financial windfalls[but has since changed its mind]. "Our money is going into helping athletes prepare,"... Instead [of receiving financial windfalls, NZ's] gold medallists will receive a new car from team sponsor Holden. Other country's Olympic winners will receive: ■ A[US]: \$17,500 gold, \$10,000 silver, \$7500 bronze. ■ Barbados: \$100,000... \$53,000... \$32,000... ■ Italy: \$80,000... \$60,000... \$40,000... ■ Spain: \$125,000... \$75,000... \$18,000... ■ US: \$27,500... \$25,000... \$19,000... ■ Romania: New car for gold medallists. ■ Germany: \$34,000 gold, \$23,000 silver, \$16,000 bronze, \$9000 fourth, \$7000 fifth, \$6000 sixth, \$5000 seventh, \$2400 for other places.

...KAZAKHSTAN will reward athletes returning from Sydney with medals – \$242,250 for gold, \$121,125 for silver and \$60,565 for bronze... [Incidentally, a] new study shows that with every shout of "gold... for A[US]" at the Sydney Olympics, taxpayers will have forked out about \$A40 million... People might think that's an obscene amount of money but not the president of Sports Medicine A[US]... who believes Federal Government funding has been incredibly successful at the elite level. The study looked at estimates of Government funding in each sport from the past five Olympics. [Although pleased with the results achieved by elite AUSn athletes, the president] lamented a fall in fitness levels in the general community. "As more and more A[US]ns become participants in sport it improves the health of the nation, but that hasn't happened,"... [The president] called for the Government to earmark extra funds specifically to improve the A[US]n participation rate in sport.

...A rumour around Auckland is that Viagra is becoming available as eye-drops so old [guys] can take a long, hard look at themselves. Nice idea, but last weekend's sport suggested the behaviour of young [guys] should prompt more introspection than that of their elders. I've always enjoyed Francis Bacon's essay "Of Youth and Age," in which [Francis says: "Young guys], in the conduct and manage of actions, embrace more than they can hold; stir more than they can quiet; fly to the end without consideration of the means and degrees... use extreme remedies at first." Reads like a report of a modern football match. A small thing in favour of our rugby and league players is that none is yet as churlish or self-inflated as the top professional soccer players in Europe whose petulance on and off the field is hilarious. Fake euphoria makes them behave like small children. Soccer stars have known for some time what our rugby and league players are just now learning – that behaving badly on the field is acceptable as long as adequate contrition is expressed afterwards. The abjection of their remorse could not disguise the fact that the league and rugby players who lost their heads during last weekend's matches lacked elementary self-control and thus strength of character. The media in Europe encourages, on and off the field, these soap-opera lives in which minor emotions provoke manic gestures, followed by hangdog remorse. Money and media may have enhanced team sport as entertainment, but money and fame have debauched whatever qualities of character it may once have encouraged. I'm not quite sure what was meant by the saying attributed to the Duke of Wellington, "The Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton," but most people I've talked to think it meant that the English dedication to team games developed character in their children. (The saying, by the way, was attributed to the duke by a French writer 40 years after Waterloo, and the Duke's descendants refuted it.) Only a fool would advance the claim nowadays that team sports are character-building. Implicit in "character" are dogged courage in the face of difficulty, self-reliance and self-control, whereas the zeitgeist as the second millennium closes is to express your every feeling as it surfaces and worry about the consequences later; to cry foul when referees miss cheating by the other side but to cheat yourself where there's a chance of getting away with it. Success in individual sports such as track and field, cycling and boxing was once impossible without a depth of character. You couldn't blame anyone but yourself... if you couldn't hold on in the straight with another athlete, or if your punches were too slow... It required guts to hang on and win, or to take a beating with dignity, and with no excuses available. But things have changed in these sports too with corrupt administrators, drugs rife and the extreme tolerance of thugs like... [Rapeman. Concerning old guys], perhaps it's only fair to end with another quote from Bacon's essay: "[Guys] of age object too much, consult too long, adventure too little, repent too soon, and seldom drive business home to the full period, but content themselves with mediocrity of success." ...[□ 93%] of children aged 5-17 in N[Z] are regularly involved in sports... says the Hillary Commission's... 1998 National Physical Activity survey. [The commission's] chief executive... says there is a drop off in participation among teenaged girls (from 94 to 84[%]) but this is much lower than thought – to have that many previously being physically active is world-leading stuff.

...Size does count as big money dished out... RUGBY, netball, cricket and golf are the major recipients with the Hillary Commission announcing grants of \$4.7 m... to national sports bodies under its [annual]funding schemes... part of a \$15.5m spend by the commission. The major investment goes to the... Sports Foundation, with \$10.8m for the coming year. The foundation is charged with turning that money into top international performances by N[Z]ers and will announce its individual grants to sports bodies this week... Meanwhile[the]... Commission general manager... said the \$4.7m grant to sports and leisure bodies was reflective of their management and membership developments... "The bigger sports tend to be well managed and because they have so many members, they deserve some public investment..." ...The allocations were split between 82 national bodies... [with the top 4 receiving grants ranging from '\$320,000 (rugby union) to \$200,000 (both cricket and golf – though golf's total didn't include the \$95,000 handed to the NZLGA), while the lowest grant was \$2500 (luge and dragon boating'). There] were a couple of success stories from the latest round of funding. Karate N[Z]'s grant had risen from \$6,000 to \$20,000. The Gymnastics Association grant had increased from \$86,000 last year, to \$116,000... ['Skiing (\$130,500) came ahead of swimming (\$130,000). Other grants included table tennis (\$40,000), croquet (\$25,500), darts (\$17,000), gliding (\$14,000), archery (\$8000), ice hockey (\$5000) and AUSn Rules (\$4000). Organisations for disabled sportspeople received a total of \$164,500.'

...a NZ] sporting icon... was last night choked with emotion as [it] pondered the future of his fundraising trust to help disabled children. A new sports award, set up by the Sports Foundation, is to start early next year. The winner will be announced about a week before the long standing Halberg Awards. Sir [Sporting Icon] said the rival event would undermine the Halberg Awards, the major fundraiser for his trust. "The proposal is to run the foundation's award before our dinner and there will be huge confusion in the market. If we don't have a good awards dinner and don't run a profit, I know our programmes for our children will be at risk." The trust provides sporting opportunities for disabled children across the country from its revenue of about \$1 million a year. The trust chair[perso]n... yesterday quit her Sports Foundation board position because of the conflict. "I don't think there's room in the market for more than one supreme sports award. No matter what you say, the new award is going to diminish our project,"... [The] former world squash champion, said the timing of the foundation's awards... had to be a battle of the television networks. TV3 was a key supporter of the new awards, whereas TVNZ televised the Halbergs... The trust had invited the foundation to sponsor categories of the Halberg Awards, but that offer has been declined... The foundation chief executive... said the concept could only enhance the

Halberg Awards. The new award was aimed at raising the profile of all top sportspeople and was not meant to be competitive. The foundation... would not release its award details... But information leaked to the *Weekend Herald* reveals they will have a "people's choice" format where the public votes from a list of 20 candidates through an 0900 phonenumber and mail-ins.

...On behalf of the Trustees of ASB Trusts, I am pleased to present the eleventh Annual Report to the people of the Auckland/Northland region. This report of the... Trusts' operations records a vintage year for donations. Total donations to the... region exceeded \$32,000,000 – nearly \$10 million more than last year. The Trusts were able to sustain donations at this level because of prudent investment policies which returned 9.5% on the diversified investments of the Charitable Trust and an increased dividend from ASB Bank paid to the Community Trust... The Trusts have made donations to organisations which address themselves to urgent social needs, provide constructive leisure and sporting activities for young people, and enrich the fabric of life in the varied communities in our region... In the past year [the Community Trust] made... 249 donations totalling over \$6.4 million... to improve local sports and recreation venues, to assist disadvantaged and disabled citizens, and to meet the educational needs of children and young people... [10 donations were for \$100,000 or more, with the largest (\$350,000) going to the] Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra Society Inc... [and the lowest (\$500) going to the] NZ Federation of Accordionists Inc... [Other donations included \$4000 to the] Auckland Bridge Club Inc... [\$13,700 to the] Waiheke Pottery Society... [\$80,000 to the] Houhora Big Game & Sports Fishing Club Inc... [\$29,000 to the] Cleveland Volunteer Fire Brigade... [\$4,160 to the] NZ Society of Genealogists – Howick... [\$1,500 to the] Manganui Community Library... [\$32,700 to the] Whangarei Steam and Model Railway Club Inc... [\$15,761 to the] Glenfield Community Toy Library... [\$35,400 to] Triangle Community Television... [\$20,642 to the] Waitakere Multiple Birth Club... [\$10,000 to the] Boots 'n' Blue Jeans Club... [\$3,900 to the] Camp Fire Club of Glen Eden... [\$1,650 to the] Whangaparaoa Residents and Ratepayers Assn... [\$8,640 to the] North Shore Theatre and Arts Trust... [and \$5000 to the] Hokianga Historical Society... [The Charitable Trust made 378 donations totalling \$26,287,485', mostly to schools, hospitals and community social services groups. However, some sports and arts organisations were included.] Particular highlights have been donations to North Harbour Tennis [\$1,500,000] for their new Tennis Park at Albany... and... to the... Eden Park Trust Board [\$2,200,000] for the new North Stand... [Another two organisations received a donation worth over \$1,000,000. 55% of donations were for \$20,000 or less and a further 18% were over \$20,000 but less than \$50,000]. Donations withdrawn from prior periods [totalled \$429,885]... Thanks to more than a decade of partnership between the Trusts and the community a huge variety of projects has been sustained... Total donations to community and charitable organisations in our region since 1988, when the Trusts began, are now \$184,000,000 to 5,843 organisations. At the same time the capital base of each Trust has increased in value... In order to comply with the requirements of the Inland Revenue Department, the ASB Bank Community Trust and the ASB Charitable Trust must be separate entities... The Community Trust's assets were \$44,000,000 at inception and they now have a book value of \$166,400,000. The Charitable Trust began with \$252,000,000, the proceeds of the sale of 75% of ASB Bank. That sum was invested in funds diversified by asset class and geographical area, and the capital of the Charitable Trust is now \$440,000,000... The Trust's shareholding in ASB Bank Ltd has increased in value from \$142,150,000 to \$163,850,000 being 25% of ASB Bank Ltd's ordinary shareholders' funds... [Furthermore, the] \$100,000,000 general reserve in the Charitable Trust has been maintained... Expenses for the two Trusts were below budget. The ratio of expenses to income for the combined Trusts was 2.8%. Joint expenses are allocated between the Trusts according to the number of applications processed, and each Trust bears its own specific costs... Each Trust continues to inform the public of its activities through appropriate news releases, publication of annual accounts and donations lists, and newsletters. Lists of donations are released every six months... There are no staff changes this year. Enquirers continue to be astonished at the way the Trusts operate, with so few staff. That is due to the quality of the six staff, and... the Secretary Manager. All Trustees appreciate the staff's commitment to the work of the Trusts... Last year... three Trustees... retired... The Minister of Finance reappointed... [two people], and three new Trustees joined us.

...MEMBERS of a West Auckland community grants committee are being asked to consider resigning. The resignation call was made to all 12 elected representatives... [– including 5] who have not yet had the chance to attend a committee meeting... [–] on the Te Aawaroa/Waitakere Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS) in letters from its National Advisory Committee. The COGS committee is one of 41 publicly elected nationwide to oversee the allocation of Internal Affairs funds... There has been disagreement within the committee and the... Advisory... believes the existing committee will have difficulty carrying out its functions... The friction... [arose] when committee members complained about alleged conflicts of interest... [– t]he committee approved grants totalling \$8662 to four trusts registered to [one member –] ...and behaviour at meetings... [In related news, n]ext year will be tough for sports... and community organisations dependent on dwindling sponsorship dollars. Sports without a high television profile are hardest hit as their corporate sponsors cut costs in light of predicted economic doldrums... [T]he executive director of the Swimming Federation... says less sponsorship [already] means swimming is becoming a user-pays sport. Overseas tours that once cost competitors... \$500 each will rocket to \$2000. Training for lifesavers patrolling beaches from Raglan north is also suffering. The general manager of Northern Lifeguards... says prizes and incentives for the under-14s have gone and education and exchange programmes for adult lifesavers have been cut to the bone. Power N[Z] remains lifesaving's main sponsor, but its top billing means other firms are reluctant to provide money. Companies want to see direct benefit now... "The feel-good fuzzies were a thing of the 80s." Arts organisations also view next year with trepidation.

...Oil giants cut arts cashline CASH-STRAPPED oil companies are pulling out of corporate sponsorship, leaving [arts] organisations... without major backers. Shell has just pulled out of sponsoring the Royal N[Z] Ballet after 18 years of funding a dance student and ballet season each year. It has also stopped funding the N[Z] Debating Championships, saying it is reviewing all spending because profits are down. Mobil will not televise the Mobil Song Quest next year, to cut the costs of its most expensive corporate deal. This year, Caltex cut back its sponsorship of the National Opera of Wellington. And the Symphony Orchestra is struggling financially because of flat corporate sponsorship... BP stopped supporting the orchestra about two years ago – hence the demise of the BP Pops concerts... Arts organisations say high-profile events like the America's Cup and the Millennium are competing for the corporate dollar and big companies like B[IL], which also used to back the ballet, are shifting offshore... [The Royal NZ Ballet's] chief executive... said dancers were in mourning after learning Shell was pulling its sponsorship. The ballet has cancelled a programme for next year for financial reasons... [The] Cultural Affairs Ministry chief executive... said [it] was aware the national ballet and orchestra were struggling to maintain their corporate sponsorships[, but] would not reveal if they had sought extra government funding to break even... [The chief executive] said a survey commissioned by the ministry this year assessed cultural sponsorship in view of business changes and high-profile events like Apec and the America's Cup... Of the 70 businesses the ministry surveyed, 42% thought cultural sponsorship would decrease over the next three years, citing the state of the economy, major sports events and the lack of commercial value in backing the arts.

...Sponsorship goes out of fashion... About now Auckland University's School of Executive Programmes was to run a three-day course on sponsorship. But lack of interest killed it. "The market was agog with indifference," says[the school's] director... Arts and sports organisations can only agree as the corpses pile up in the graveyard of yesteryear's popular events because they could not find a sponsor. Here lies the Smokefree Fashion Awards, the... Challenge Ceramics Awards and the [Challenge] Marathon. For the first time in 35 years... Challenge has no sponsorship deal on its books, despite receiving a weekly average of 20 applications. Gone, too, is the Electricity Corporation's involvement in the Katherine Mansfield memorial fellowship, the 34-year relationship between WestpacTrust and Chamber Music N[Z]'s annual school concert, and this newspaper's backing of the Auckland Philharmonia and the WestpacTrust rescue helicopter. Opera in the Park will not go ahead in Auckland if a new sponsor cannot be found to replace Schweppes, which has ended its two-year sponsorship deal worth... \$250,000. [Its p]romoter... says the

decision was made in A[US], “where they don’t know the event.” [The promoter] has approached 35 local firms, which have all turned him down because they expect a tough market next year. Christmas in the Park (Coca-Cola) and Starlight Symphony (Sky City) are still going ahead. [‘However, the Twinings Sky Show – an air and fireworks spectacle that for the past two years has drawn thousands of people to the Waitemata Harbour edge – has been cancelled (a number of air shows have been cancelled in the past few months, with promoters citing mounting costs as the problem – the RNZAF’s 60th anniversary was canned and a big Hamilton event called Flight 97 postponed until 1999’).] *Crimescene* will not be on television next year, N[Z] Insurance having withdrawn its sponsorship... Mobil Oil... can receive up to 50 requests for sponsorship each week. But, faced with price wars, Mobil is slashing its budget. Gone are... the Wellington International Festival of the Arts and the Christchurch Arts Festival. Under review... is the 40-year-old Mobil Song Quest... Similarly, Caltex Oil is reviewing its 6-year-old sponsorship of... the Parafed National Games and road safety campaigns. Mystery surrounds the sponsorship market... A study published this year by Creative NZ estimates... 30[%] of the \$100 million invested in visual arts each year comes from private sources... [A] sponsorship adviser... surveyed the top 200 firms in 1996 and found... half claimed to be sponsors. But a number... gave donations, which is not sponsorship... Both the Hillary Commission and Creative N[Z] have been frustrated in attempts to[do] research... Companies regard... sponsorship deals as commercial secrets. Non-profit organisations receiving... money do not talk... about it either...

TALKFESTS are not everybody’s cup of tea. Some truly are a waste of time. But last year I happened to attend four good ones. For me, 1997 was the Year of the Talkfest. All four talkfests emerged from one big fact of our recent history: during the past generation, N[Z] has become independent. Historians give many dates for the birth of the independent N[Z] nation – 1856 (when the colonial Parliament got up and running), 1867 (when the last really powerful Governor left office), 1908 (when we were promoted from “colony” to “dominion”), 1915-6 (when nationhood was “earned on the slopes of Gallipoli”), and 1947 (when we belatedly endorsed the statute which recognised dominions as independent nations)... The hard fact is that, while we were technically independent from 1908 or 1947, we were economically and culturally dependent on Britain until the 1960s. In 1973, it was not us that left home, but Mother Britain – [who] ran off and joined a Franco-German commune known as the EEC. Even 1973 was only the beginning of the end. As late as 1982, during the Falklands War, the [PM of NZ] (Rob Muldoon) could write an article for the *Times* of London entitled “Why we stand by our mother country.” ...In the past few decades, N[Z] has shifted from economic and cultural dependence on Britain to having its eggs in many baskets. “Muldoonism” and “Rogernomics” are merely aspects of a painful process of decolonisation... The good thing about 1997... is that people are at last beginning to realise it. One talkfest was... a conference on British-N[Z] relations – past, present, and future. It was part of the remarkable “Link” programme, which this year has celebrated 50 years of the British Council’s work in N[Z] by supporting literally hundreds of activities. As I... [– the] Professor of History at the University of Auckland... – ...understand it, the Link did not try to turn back the clock to the days when N[Z] saw itself as the Britain of the South, nor... did it advocate continuance of the traditional brain-drain of N[Z] talent to Britain. Historically, we have had a lot of our people in Britain’s top jobs... I was disappointed when [a NZer] missed out on the leadership of the British Labour Party. Having a [NZer become PM] of Britain would have made a great last line for the book I am working on... What the Link programme did do is recognise that the way forward is not to write Britain out of our past or our future. N[Z] is a joint owner of British history... [T]he... Poms speak some of our lingo and share some of our history, and we are quite used to each other’s funny little ways. It would be stupid not to use these facts to maintain an enriching relationship, as long as it is based on equality and mutual understanding. Scottish devolution raises another interesting possibility. The population of N[Z] is proportionately more Scottish than the population of the United Kingdom. I have therefore suggested to various British authorities that they give us Scotland. So far, this has gone down like a lead balloon. But historians are used to their ideas taking a while to catch on... My second talkfest... was the Population Conference. Born of coalition politics, it may have been the right thing done for the wrong reasons. But talkfesters take what they can get. It was really an immigration conference... Perhaps the most interesting thing about who we think we should let in is who we think we have already got. Some population talkfesters did not seem to realise that N[Z] is already ethnically diverse, and has been for almost 200 years. The first Indian immigrant arrived about 1810... German immigration dates from the 1840s, and a recent study claims that several hundred thousand N[Z]ers have some German descent. Maori genes are quite American, courtesy of 30,000 New England whalers who sowed their oats here in the first half of the 19th century... My third talkfest... was a Foresight Project workshop. The project was recently launched by the Ministry of Science and Technology. It is intended to help them design their long-term research investment priorities and to encourage planning for the future. The Foresight talkfesters painted a dramatic picture of this future, starring an “information tidal wave.” New technology is hugely increasing both the amount of information and the means of access to it. This is not just some computer boffin’s heaven. It will change almost everything, from milking cows to making spaceships. New ideas become conventional wisdom in a couple of years or less. The speed of change is increasing exponentially. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology claims that 80[%] of the systems, processes, services and products that today’s 5-year-olds will experience and use as adults have not yet been thought of. Future-shock prophecies, of course, are old hat... [But try to spend] an hour on the Internet. You can access the equivalent of a thousand libraries in an instant. After a while, you don’t even notice which country the particular database you’re using originated in. There are few borders, few limits. The mounting tide of information and globalisation faces us with a big challenge. Unprocessed, it will drown us. Information, as is, where is, is no use to anyone. To convert it into knowledge... we need to interpret it, understand it, use it. To do this we need to plan and build skills, or “competencies,” of various kinds – surfboards which will allow us to ride the information tidal wave. This is bound up with another challenge: who the hell are “We”? ...MY final talkfest... was a workshop at Te Papa Tongarewa, the new Museum of N[Z], which has risen like an architect’s wet dream on Wellington’s waterfront. Long a victim of the Tall Papa syndrome, the museum is almost up and running, and it’s looking pretty good. With a bit of luck, N[Z]ers will soon start seeing it less as a Wellington advantage at their expense and more as their cultural embassy in Wellington. The workshop issue was whether Te Papa had a responsibility to help make its message through the research and scholarship of its staff, or whether it should concentrate on communicating its message to as wide as possible a public. The conclusion, thank God, was that it had to do both. Heritage is not only about preserving a sense of the past, but about growing it. We cannot afford to have an institution the size of Te Papa standing on the sidelines and communicating knowledge without helping to grow it... NEW ZEALANDNESS is a tangled web of culture, art, slang, sport, heritage, identity and many other things, all of which need to be developed as well as preserved... Looking both ways, we see that there is no time, in the past or the foreseeable future, when New Zealandness... has been more important. Yet how much do we invest in researching and developing it? There are important bits and pieces here and there, but the short answer is: not a lot. Why, some ask, should the public help fund N[Z] arts, television, film, kapa haka, museums and the rest? There are many answers. One is another question. Why should the public fund a N[Z] Government. If we are not prepared to meet the political and cultural overheads of being a nation, we should take our culture direct from California by satellite, contract out the Government... and be done with it. The Treasury may say we cannot afford to subsidise a cultural infrastructure. If things are really that grim let’s contract out the Treasury, and invest the savings in cultural futures. The present is one of the very few great turning points in N[Z] history. The future will have risks, dangers and difficulties... [but] we need to manage it so that all N[Z]ers have a chance of surfing the information tidal wave, rather than just a fortunate few. The good news from the past is that we have survived tidal waves of change before, and come out the other side comprehensively transformed but still recognisably Kiwi. All pasts were futures once. [‘So what are the major political parties offering the arts? They agree that we define ourselves and the world around us through our art and cultural pursuits. Labour: “The arts are vital to our view of who we are and how we see ourselves and the world.” Alliance: “A vibrant and diverse cultural life is an important indicator of the health of a society.” NZ First: “Great

countries have great artists." National is "committed to maintaining and enhancing the excellence of NZ's cultural sector." But despite the fine words, arts policies have a low profile. The Christian Coalition doesn't even have one, though they "support, uphold and encourage the arts." Neither has Act: "The Government's role in people's lives should be reduced. The arts is not a core function of government so it is unlikely that we would increase funding or support.""]

...The arts will develop in spite of politicians As one of the 10 members of the Heart of the Nations strategic working party, my gripe at the Government is probably best expressed in part of a letter I wrote last week to [the Associate Arts] Minister... in which I said how dismayed I was by the response to the report. "It's not that I think for a moment you had any obligation to agree with the report or unreservedly accept its proposals but I do believe its authors were entitled to the dignity of a considered and intelligent appraisal and not just patronising, offhand sniping through the media... I've read press and radio clippings of your comments and nowhere can I detect any coherent indication of where you think the report deviates from the terms of reference, or which figures are supposed to be inaccurate, or where it spends too much time in the past. It would have been good to have the courtesy of an intelligent response before you began your public campaign against the report." And still there's no coherent response. The comments from the associate minister have been largely confined to catchcries. The Government... wanted something "evolutionary not revolutionary." There would be no "restructuring for the sake of restructuring" and "we asked for fish and chips and they gave us a fishing-boat and a flour mill." All very metaphorical... And so, by the end of this week the discussion about the report had narrowed to whether or not it had recommended the abolition of Creative N[Z] and whether that would be a good or bad thing. Yet there is little mention of C[reative] N[Z] in the 150-page document which makes policy and, yes, structural recommendations covering the whole \$10.8 billion arts and culture industry... Many people have asked me whether I'm disappointed by the Government's determination to shelve the report and ignore its recommendations. My answer is that I've been around long enough to be insouciant about this sort of thing and, anyway, I believe the need to develop the arts and culture sector is so economically compelling it will happen anyway. Unfortunately it will now take longer and grow more haphazardly, more Topsy-like, than if the Government attacked the issue more... well, yes, more creatively.

...Hopes for a regional fund to foster major arts and cultural projects in Auckland are all but dashed. Auckland and Manukau Cities remain alone as potential contributors to a regional trust following a decision yesterday by North Shore to pull out of the partnership – a move which has led Manukau to rethink its position. The North Shore City Council voted to keep its... \$1.6 million... share of the \$10 million Infrastructure Auckland released to councils when it replaced the Auckland Regional Services Trust last October. It was originally intended that the one-off lump sum would be spent on "significant projects in the Auckland region in the areas of arts and culture." ...An umbrella group representing 70 arts groups lobbying for the regional fund said North Shore's move was disappointing, yet understandable... Regional arts groups [had] argued that pooling the money would prevent the \$10 million being frittered away. But Government legislation did not allow for this, prompting Auckland[']s Mayor... to seek an amendment allowing local authorities to transfer their shares into a joint trust. Parliament has yet to consider the law change.

...Underfunding has left artists fragmented, dispirited and leaderless, says a new report... commissioned by Creative N[Z] and a Hamilton arts trust and released yesterday... It... says Creative NZ needs to do more to promote local art and artists, and suggests that it forms partnerships with the public and private sectors... Creative NZ receives \$4.4 million a year in grants from the Government and the rest of its income comes from the L[GB]. Last year this was \$20.2 million. The visual arts share of this has fallen from \$2.77 million in 1990 to \$1.72 million in 1996. The... report recommends that the agency increase its funding of the visual arts and give priority to study travel, grants for individuals, capital and equipment grants, workshops, residencies, publications, public exhibitions, marketing initiatives and community projects... It also recommends the formation of a national organisation to develop programmes and initiatives on behalf of Creative NZ... Several categories of artist interviewed, including those in mid-career, craftspeople, contemporary Pacific Island artists and Maori, said they felt alienated by Creative NZ. Artists also... criticised... its plan... [for the new national museum – Te Papa – to absorb] the National Art Gallery... widely perceived as a retrograde step for the visual arts... Artists [anticipate] a deliberate move away from the [gallery]'s tradition role of collecting and promoting N[Z] visual art, a cut in finance available for the buying of contemporary artists and the loss of a venue dedicated to visual arts. In the 1991 census, 1788 people called themselves artists – a 51[%] drop from 1986. But they have few opportunities to exhibit, the report says. Of the more than 600 galleries and museums in N[Z], only 33 larger ones appeared to have an interest in [local] contemporary art, and only seven of those were dedicated to acquiring and showing it.

...I LIKE to think that I'm not a complete barbarian. Certainly some things pass me by. When I visited a modern art gallery in London recently I tried to keep an open mind and thoroughly enjoyed it. Modern art is not my thing – big bosomy blowy [pictures of gal]s and French impressionists are – but most of the stuff was interesting. One piece of art stumped me though. It was a big wall screening an image of a thin, pasty white [guy] with a motley beard dancing to music you couldn't hear... in a bare room with just a tiny purple dinosaur figurine on a ledge in the background. Oh, and [the pasty guy] was naked. Admittedly, his penis was the size of a small dachshund. But a big organ isn't art, it's the luck of the draw. I stood and stared for a while, along with a dozen other people, and tried to look contemplative. But this artistic work's merit still escaped me. I'd hate to think how much they paid for it. And I have to say that Colin McCahon's piece that Te Papa has just bought for more than a million goes right over my head too... [(a) \$3 m... scheme honouring west Auckland's artistic past and future is being launched today[– t]he McCahon French Bay House Restoration and Residency Project aims to restore the humble home once lived in by [the renowned NZ] artist... and his family[; i]t also plans to build an artist's residence and a studio on the same property[)]... Black canvas, white writing. Can I say that if Te Papa can spend that much on art to retain our cultural heritage... can... it... explain why we should be grateful? And perhaps... explain the nude... and the dinosaur too.

...Academics, cultural commentators and those who would know best are often in denial that we most often measure our lives in the detritus of our times... Biscuit tins and cheap royal memorabilia, a pounamu pendant or cartoon characters singing "we are the boys from down on the farm..." may seem inconsequential, but they have cultural relevance and, for better or worse, have shaped us, both as individuals and as a nation. All of which is accepted in Te Papa, where a seemingly tawdry collection of items in a junk shop comes alive while a screen shows a melange of sometimes disparate, sometimes connected, cultural images... [T]his exhibit, perhaps slightly cynically entitled *Golden Days*, whimsically blurs the barriers between reality and fiction, as well as between our lofty self-image and the discomforts of what is more true about us... We will take from these images what we will... We were never "the way we were." That's condescending to our intellectual, social and cultural complexity. Te Papa addresses that. To hear again the hierarchical argument that certain art should occupy privileged positions is to fall for the notion that art is somehow morally uplifting. If that were true our galleries would be staffed by local versions of Mother Teresa and Gandhi. But already in criticisms of Te Papa we are hearing the view that somehow Great Truth is revealed in quiet contemplation of a... [painted drawing] or a Maori carving. Art and artefacts don't work like that. They are more subtle, more full of nuance. Great Truths are rarely Zen-like in their revelation, but art incrementally prepares the mind for other possibilities. A walk around Te Papa – and a word to the wise, put aside plenty of time[(the building, which 'could fit 250 average-sized houses inside and still have room', and was the 'largest project of its type in the world at the time' of construction)] – reminds us of our complexity at a time when most would seek simple solutions or revealed truths. Yes, there are problems with Te Papa: the exterior goes through architectural mood swings and you can't see the coloured glass panels looking good in even five years time. Having seen buildings magnificent and mundane across this planet, most of us won't feel the need for anyone from the Architects' Defence League to tell us otherwise. But given the right light and angle, it makes a marvellous postcard. And anyway, its local competition is a Warehouse and a BP service station... And yes, at around \$315 m... it has been expensive. But, as we all know, money evaporates and within a year few will recall the exact figure. And yes, it is in Wellington. For those in other regions who would have wanted a slice of that multi-tiered money cake that must smart. But

this is the national museum and it is the capital city[, as well as being the central city of NZ]. Get over it Auckland... It also seems churlish to note that the present display on the Chinese in N[Z] looks a little parsimonious and static. But it is no less moving for that and – in the light of last year’s anti-Asian racism which seemed alarmingly easy to foment – an important inclusion. If it looks anxiously inclusive, then so be it. It is better than denying we are as much victims as products of our time. One day we too will look as curious to those who follow us as we do in Exhibiting Ourselves... In 1940 people queued for six hours to see... tacky replicas of the Crown Jewels... Crazy, but... European N[Z]ers can live with that. To some minor extent Te Papa does perpetrate the myth of European soullessness. If our European ancestors look buttoned-down, well, they were. People will find their contemporary spirituality where they will. As someone who... in the late 50s... attended an Auckland boys’ school where we in the lower forms were untroubled by any reference to N[Z] history, I delight in seeing a Hello Sailor single in a museum. It might not have the gravitas of a Maori or Polynesian artefact, but it makes sense to me. National museums are less about what is in them than what you bring to them. And there are things you simply won’t get. Me, I cringe at the sight of a stone dumped in the forecourt which “celebrates the many journeys and identities of all communities and peoples of N[Z].” Uh-huh... So there is no one Te Papa. But then... has there ever been, or is there now, one N[Z]? We cannot fully comprehend the past despite our best intentions; we can only observe it from our own cultural remove. We see this world from our own disadvantage point, as the Treaty of Waitangi display acknowledges. Here... and elsewhere, Te Papa has already, and doubtless will continue to provoke that most knotty of intellectual activities – cultural debate. In that, Te Papa is active as much as... interactive. No bad thing, I would have thought. It’s quite some museum that affords you meditation on a McCahon, the opportunity to follow an immigrant’s story, stand in jaw-dropping awe of a great waka, allow kids to dig for fossils – and still let you say, “let’s do the Time Warp...” And anyway, a N[Z]er wrote that...

[The NZ Herald] finds the German capital redolent with history, full of museums recalling just about everything of note that ever happened there, much of it gloomy... AT 145m, it was the longest tunnel ever dug by the legions of desperados determined to get to the other side of a concrete slab wall. The tunnel, dug at a depth of 12m, took 10 months to construct. And when it was finished, 57 refugees made their escape in a night-time dash for freedom. One [person] hid his fiancé in two suitcases placed next to each other. [The fiancé] had to stay there for 70 minutes while [her partner] made it across the border control. Another [person] converted his car’s large petrol tank to carry a friend inside. An engineer and his family got to the West in a homemade balloon. These and hundreds of other tales are at the heart of the Checkpoint Charlie Museum exhibition on the construction in 1961 and fall in 1989 of the Berlin Wall, and of life in the East and West of that city in between. It is believed that 239 people died trying to escape and more than 3200 were arrested. But 5075 escape attempts were successful. Little remains of the Wall now and it is hard to believe it once cut through 193 streets. At Niederkirchner there is a 200m stretch. Mostly the Wall is marked by two rows of slightly raised stones that wind across the roads following the old route. Many locals, my student guide tells me, miss the artwork that brightened the Wall on the western side... Berlin has about 160 museums and they are not always user-friendly for English-only speakers... Those interested in contemporary art should visit the New National Gallery, which has an exhibition on 100 years of German art. Among the usual suspects you think a 5-year-old could have painted are some striking works... At the Old Museum on the city’s museum island you walk through crowded rooms of innovative art before arriving at an exhibit on Nazi propaganda and the art the Nazis found offensive... At Niederkirchner the Wall borders an old Nazi building where Jews and leftists were interrogated, documented and sent to concentration camps. It is a bleak place of concrete, dirt and brick and, on an oppressively cold, darkening November afternoon, the sheer awfulness of that period of German history hangs over it like a shroud. The gloomy realities of the past are always around the corner. November 9 was a night of celebrating 10 years since the Wall’s collapse but historically it marked the Crystal Night, when Jewish synagogues were destroyed... The hard-edged... new Jewish Museum Berlin in Lindenstrasse won’t hold an exhibition until next year but already is drawing crowds and running guided tours of the remarkable architecture... It is an enigmatic, wilfully obstructive building; you can walk around its angled forms looking in vain for an opening. The entry is in fact next door in the old Berlin Museum, and the visitors start the tour in the basement. What a basement! Space and light are used to manipulate emotions and the overwhelming feeling is one of disorientation. There are three tilted axial corridors with light cutting through the black ceiling slightly off-centre. In the... garden, 49 concrete pillars are tilted at 12 deg angles to project an unconscious confusion. [The architect] has avoided obvious symbols and statements such as the Star of David. The Holocaust Tower is powerful in its simplicity. Holes in the walls let in the outside temperature. A small ray of light peeks from the very top. In strong sunlight the tower can take on a yellow hue. On a dreary snow-laden November day it has a numbing chill...

French follies... – ...France rues the architectural legacy of its latter-day pharaoh... The four 80m-high towers, shaped like opened books, loom out of the sprawling complex on Paris’ Left Bank. Pigeons peck on the ground below... [D]rizzle blows along the River Seine and swirls around the empty expanse. Behind the sludgy brown windows, there is no sign of life. This is the National Library of France, a supposed nerve centre of French culture. But it is a dead and uninviting place, loathed by local residents, shunned by browsers and students alike, a \$3 billion behemoth that gobbles up so much cash in running costs – \$300 million a year – that its desperate managers have had to cut back on buying books. “Look at it. They only finished it two years ago, but it already looks old,” said a local. “It looks like a high-rise council estate from the 1960s.” ...its 36-year-old architect[’s]... idea: four storage towers of glittering transparent glass, with underground reading rooms, rather like monastery cloisters, surrounding an interior pine forest. Doh! As any librarian could have pointed out, books do not like light and heat. So [the architect] was belatedly obliged to install wooden panels behind the windows to block out the sun, making the towers look like dark, unfriendly hulks. After the project was completed, five years behind schedule, library workers found they had to make a 300m walk just to get books from different sections. The work areas are prison-like, cramped and windowless, with harsh neon lighting. Water has leaked into the basement from the Seine, and for the first year of its life, the library’s \$180 million computerised book retrieval system was a disaster, taking hours to deliver books and sometimes even crushing them... Yet the library is only one of a series of architectural disasters bequeathed by Francois Mitterrand, who during his 14 years as President of France pushed ahead with prestige projects on a scale that would have stunned the ancient pharaohs. Mitterrand... – [who] died in 1996 – ...made no secret about his eagerness to leave his stamp on the French landscape and used to the full the discretionary powers of the presidency during his 1981-85 stay in the Elysee Palace. “In every town, I feel like an emperor or an architect,” the President wrote in a book, *The Wheat and the Chaff*... Not since the 19th century, when Georges Haussmann drew up his boulevard system, has anyone left such a mark on Paris... Among the worst Mitterrand bequests have been his opera houses. The Bastille Opera, derided as “the Camembert” or “the Loo” for its shape and use of lavatory-style tinted glass, was supposed to be an arts magnet for the masses. But the cost of building it (\$900 million) and then maintaining it has been so great that productions are few and tickets are way too expensive for the poor. The Lyons opera house, opened only in 1993, was ordered closed this month as an emergency measure after inspectors ruled that its stage and machinery were dangerous. Like its partner in Paris, the building has been swathed with netting to stop chunks of glass or stone cladding from tumbling on to pedestrians... Mitterrand’s biggest scheme was a massive concrete arch on the city’s northwestern perimeter worthy of the ambitions of Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. Boxy, monolithic and with tiny windows, the “Grande Arche” is visible from miles around but is rarely visited by Parisians or tourists. It has suffered fabric weaknesses and disfunctions that have cost a fortune to fix. From the Grande Arche, you can gaze down a long avenue to the Arc de Triomphe, which leads to the Champs-Elysees and finally to the Louvre museum. There, in an imaginative stroke that stirred great controversy but is now almost universally praised, Mitterrand installed a glass pyramid, designed by [an] American architect... to bring light down to a subterranean exhibition space.

...New York’s breathtakingly updated planetarium is set to become an architectural landmark. GET OUT of the cab a little early. Walk through Manhattan’s Upper West Side – ...all rich brownstones... trees and dog runs, bathed in shabby gentility. Then step from the snows of Central Park, turn a slippery corner to your left, and behold one of the new wonders of the world. The Rose Centre for Earth and Space, opened a few weeks

ago, has already been hailed... as “perhaps the purest piece of monumental architecture built in the U[S] since the Washington Monument,” and compared, rightly, to [a US architect]’s Louvre pyramid. [Another US archit]ek’s vision, realised in... six years at a cost of \$US210 million... is a beautiful, astonishing creation, a feast of superlatives. Technically, it’s a planetarium, an upgrading for the rundown Hayden Planetarium that sat on the same site for decades, but that’s like saying St Paul’s Cathedral in London is technically a church. A sphere, the cleverest... in the world, sits, apparently hanging in air, inside a glass cube so thin, so... transparent that it seems, in bright sunshine, not to be there at all. Inside, the American Museum of Natural History has created the most stunning, hi-tech, effective displays of our universe ever to exist... [T]he exhibit designer... wanted to create a “sense of aesthetic awe.” At a time when the language is so perverted that a... sneaker or a perfume is described as “awesome,” [the architect and the designer] have succeeded magnificently, and a quaint, half-forgotten museum is now set to become one of New York’s biggest attractions. The planetarium sphere is impressive enough – the most advanced... supercomputer projector in the world fires a filigree of light at a darkened skin inside the dome, recreating the thousands of stars in our galaxy and beyond... Outside, though, the sense of awe increases. Walking down the “rings” between sphere and glass, calibrated to represent time since the Big Bang – every step you take is 75 million years – and coming to the last step, where the relative longevity of [hu]mankind is represented by a strip the width of a human hair, it’s hard not to find it almost funny.

...It cost \$US405.90 to make the Star-Spangled Banner in 1813 but \$US13 million... from [a French]fashion designer... will help restore the flag that, though tattered and faded, is a powerful symbol of American liberty. [The US]President... and his wife, [while]standing near the three-storey flag hanging in the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History, announced [the fashion designer]’s donation yesterday as part of a turn-of-the-century project to “save America’s treasures.” “Now it’s standing there, a little worse for the wear, but quite ready to be restored,” [the] President... told preservation advocates gathered in the museum’s flag exhibition hall. “And in that sense, it is a metaphor for our country, which is always ready to be restored.” For [his wife], the visit to the banner was the first stop on a four-day bus ride to historic sites in Maryland, New Jersey, New York and Massachusetts to encourage grassroots interest in preserving America’s past. “We’re going to ask every [USer] to help preserve the artefacts, the documents, the monuments, the sites that tell the American story,” [the First Wife] said. The Star-Spangled Banner inspired the patriotic poem by Francis Scott Key that became the US national anthem. Key wrote it after watching the giant red, white and blue flag survive a night of British cannon shot as it flew over Fort McHenry, near Baltimore... on September 14, 1814. The 9-by-12m banner was made of wool bunting and... woven by professional seamstress Mary Pickersgill and her 13-year-old daughter, Caroline. With 15 stars and 15 stripes to represent the number of US states at the time, the Star-Spangled Banner is showing its age. It is deteriorating from decades of exposure to light, pollution and temperature fluctuations... About a quarter of the bottom of the flag has been ripped away. A large red “V” is in the middle of the flag, apparently an “A” that was added to it by the wife of Lieutenant-Colonel George Armistead, who was Fort McHenry commander during the war of 1812 and who saved the flag. The [fashion designer] helping to save the flag now... was hailed as a hero for the... \$US13 million donation – a good part of the museum’s overall goal of \$US18 million for the flag’s preservation. It will take \$US5.5 million and three years to preserve the flag itself. A further \$US6.5 million will be used to renovate Flag Hall and install the new exhibit and the rest will be used for educational programmes and an endowment for care of the flag. The project is believed to be one of the largest single textile conservation projects ever undertaken by a US museum. The banner will be cleaned stitch by stitch. It will be moved in October to a climate-controlled laboratory.

...A Maori cloak begun more than three years ago for a Far North marae remains unfinished because of a shortage of native bird feathers. The caretaker of the Te Huia Tupuke Marae... [is] anxious to see the korowai completed as the Kaeo marae [does] not have a proper cloak. “We’ve only got a tiny one which is used as an ornament on the wall.” More than a year ago [the caretaker] applied for feathers from Te Pataka o Tai Tokerau, the cultural materials committee, but had no luck. The committee distributes feathers which are plucked by volunteers from dead birds in workshops organised by the D[oC]. Maori groups can apply to the committee to obtain the feathers for cultural purposes... [The caretaker] was never told why her application failed... [A] local weaver... had had to make use of the feathers from birds such as turkeys, chickens and pheasants... [However,] another local... had the necessary experience to weave the top of the cloak with a special design to represent the whakapapa (genealogy) of the marae. [The caretaker] planned to reapply for the feathers if her marae committee supported that... “It would be nice to have something from our native birds.” ...The materials committee chair[person]... said repairing old cloaks got priority.

...From a tin shed out the back of Nelson, to an international showcase for Kiwi talent, the Wearable Art Awards have come of age... GAINING permission from the Reserve Bank to drill holes in more than 1000 5c coins is not a typical brief, but that is what one designer had to do for an entry in this year’s Montana N[Z] Wearable Art Awards. Other artists turned to nails, chip packets, human hair and Weetbix to style creations. One used painted silk organza worth \$4000. And spare a thought for the model in the Bizarre Bra category who has to wear a “growing bra” that features something alive. Organisers won’t spoil the surprise by saying what, exactly. One presumes it isn’t a leech. The highlight of the Nelson Arts Festival, the Wearable Art Awards run on three nights... The award’s founder[, who]... ran the first show to promote her gallery... has seen the event grow from 50 entries... to 400 entries this year... and now entrants can win \$50,000 in prizes. Impressed by her efforts, the N[Z] Tourism Board has asked [the founder] to stage similar shows in Bangkok and Singapore. In Nelson, more than 7500 tickets to the... Awards sold out in a week, seven months before the event, with a number of spectators coming from overseas. Despite the title of the awards, whether a creation is wearable is not the point. “They are simply walking works of art,”... [However,] if you’re looking for something you can actually wear, a new category this year recognises a combination of design flair and wearability... [Speaking of wearable art,] Taupo’s annual tattoo expo is... [t]o the unstained observer... a crash course in another culture. The event is one of the largest and most popular tattoo shows in the country, say regulars, who inject thousands of dollars into their vividly coloured skin and can’t wait to expose it. On Saturday, about 900 people filled the smoky bar... [of] the historic Spa Hotel... to listen to Meat Loaf and check one another out. The highlight is the show-and-tell competition, when attendees take to the stage, pulling aside long peasant-style skirts, leather vests and crocheted tops to reveal heavily decorated thighs, biceps, backs, necks, wrists and breasts[(you won’t see tattooed genitalia displayed here, but you can on the Internet). A g]overnment worker... of Auckland, as bright as a box of crayons from his collarbone down to his elbows and knees, is a cheeky entry with his maniacally grinning butt tattoos: Chucky to the right and Chucky’s bride to the left... says about 12 almost fully tattooed [guys] like himself follow the expo circuit and don’t even count the cost of their obsession. And if watching [guys] fondly rubbing cartoon-covered stomachs becomes a little overwhelming, there are other attractions. This year, [a]Japanese tattooist... joins the party, bringing his traditional tools and designs with him... Instead of the noisy machine used by most tattooists, [the Nip] dips metal rods tipped with needles into tiny pots of ink and punctures the skin by hand, using a gentle tapping motion. Forgoing the angry reptiles, voluptuous Native American girls and lurid unicorns offered at other stands, [it] produces serene mountain scenes and Samurai warriors. In another corner, Samoan artists sit cross-legged on a platform and apply traditional armbands, using a sharpened comb made from pig’s tusks. Three [people] work together – two to stretch the skin and one to apply the ink by hand... [Someone] who lies on a mat, arm outstretched as if giving blood, says their method is much less painful than most. But others at the expo like the pain. They say it’s addictive... A[n a]ward-winning A[US]n tattoo artist[’s]... booth sticker reads, “The pain is the passage, the tattoo the rite”. [The AUSn] is working on a Christchurch [resident]... applying a court jester to his neck. [The human-canvas] reclines in a chair, placid and unflinching although [it] was drinking the night before and that has made his skin more sensitive. His composure is impressive, but two teenagers from Hawkes Bay take the prize for pluck. Th[e 13]-year-old... and his 14-year-old brother... are by far the youngest competitors at the show. They may not yet have much in the way of arm musculature but they already sport large, old-school tattoos that demand respect – a shark curled around a skull for [the elder

brother] and a fire-breathing dragon for [the younger brother]. “It’s something we always wanted,” says [the 13-year-old]. “A lot of [our classmates] are very impressed.”

...THINKING of tattooing your toddler? Check out the US website www.babyink.com. “Baby Ink – where we believe that it’s never too early to start expressing your unique personality through professional, high-quality body art.”

...*Laser zaps up egos as it zaps away tattoos...* [The 37-year-old]’s life has changed in the past six weeks – since a laser started zapping her tattoo. The 37-year-old is one of the first people to use a South Auckland service aiming to improve people’s lives and self-confidence by removing tattoos. The Mangere Health Centre received its \$200,000 laser machine six weeks ago and has 1400 people lining up to get their tattoos removed... [(t)he machine was bought with help from the Mangere Community Health Trust and the Sky City Charitable Trust, which gave \$100,000 towards its cost)]... It is the first such community scheme in the country. Doctors at the clinic are experimenting with the intensity of the laser because the majority of their clients are Maori and Pacific Islanders and their darker skin makes it more difficult to remove tattoos without trace. [The 37-year-old] burst into tears when [it] had her first treatment. “There was just this great feeling of freedom – people see your tattoo and automatically make an assumption of what you’re like,”... The clinic’s doctors said... many patients had been unable to get work because employers had not wanted them to have visible tattoos. “It’s an ego trip to help people – it makes us feel really good.” The laser bombards the ink in the skin, breaking it up into little pieces that are then engulfed by white blood cells and carried into the lymph glands. The clinic head... said people with darker skin needed more treatments using a less-intense laser because they risked the laser attacking their high-melanin pigment. [The head] said there was no literature around the world on the difficulty but early results indicated the clinic’s method was working. The average age of people on the waiting list is 40, and most got their tattoos at the age of 16[– many having given tattoos to themselves using crude tools. While on the topic of *self-mutilation*, allergic]... reactions to body piercing have sparked fears of serious diseases caused by an unregulated industry. Piercing enthusiasts risk hepatitis and Aids, and doctors report that dermatitis and skin rashes are erupting because cheaper metals are being used to permanently puncture navels, eyebrows and less visible regions for decoration. The problem has been linked to nickel, which this month’s *New Scientist* magazine blames for a steep rise in allergies. The magazine says that despite E[U] guidelines on nickel levels in jewellery, many of the adornments being worn are causing problems on the Continent. Similar problems are being experienced here. An Auckland dermatologist... said the rashes were due to people wearing studs in areas where skin was more sensitive... Similar allergies resulted when button jeans or suspenders became popular. The rubbing of metal on the skin caused it to become inflamed. A professional Auckland piercer... tried not to use nickel-based metals. Stainless steel and silver leached significant amounts of nickel, so [the professional piercer] tended to use alternatives such as titanium for jewellery. [The professional], from Body Piercing Specialists, said there was a need for laws to govern the piercing industry because of the risk of infection and allergies if piercers had poor hygiene practices. People should be fined for causing injuries or infections rather than expecting professional piercers or GPs to fix up the mess afterwards, [the piercer said. ‘Last October, *NZ Doctor* magazine reported that body piercing might be exposing a new group of people to diseases like hepatitis C. In the US, there has been a dramatic drop in the incidence of hepatitis C among those most at risk of catching the disease – intravenous drug users. Despite this, the incidence of the disease has not dropped and health officials are blaming the growing popularity of body piercing and tattoos. A *Consumer* report says some teens get pierced by friends, at street markets or in shops with poorly trained practitioners, so “contamination is likely”’ (in addition, ‘tongue studs can chip or otherwise damage teeth, and if they come loose can block air passages’, plus they ‘destroy taste buds’)...

‘Walking through the city the other morning I was jolted from a reverie by the sight of a bloke having coffee at a footpath table. A pointed metal spike was sticking half an inch out from the flesh below his lower lip. Above it were other assorted rings and spikes. If the bloke had kissed his mother goodbye when it left home for whatever it does each day between coffee breaks, it would’ve left her with severe lacerations and some loss of blood. The bloke had enough metal in his eyebrows, lips, ears and nose to bring out the lethal deterrent squad at London’s Heathrow Airport if it went through the security gate. Had someone else done to him what it’d done to himself, cruelty and torture charges would’ve followed. I wanted to hear the bloke talk or laugh or put the cup to his lips because I suspected it would sound like a Jamaican steel band. Would the bloke laugh if I had said, “G’day Bo Jangles”? No, probably not. I wanted to ask him how his mangled mouth felt and what it all meant; but his demeanour wasn’t that of a bloke interested in quiet discourse on the psychopathology of self-inflicted wounds. When the bloke looked up with hostile eyes, I moved on. The next day I had met an attractive and personable young gal with a row of rings through her bottom lip as repellent as the coils of razor wire on top of the wall at Mt Eden prison. When I told a friend, the friend said sententiously, “Teenage revolt, that’s what it is,” which is a bit like saying the Hamah is a religious group. Will I ever adjust to protrusions of metal and threads of steel in young bodies? When I was young, tattoos were regarded as a form of self-mutilation. Now I think of them not as offensive in themselves but aesthetically as ugly (most of them) or pleasing (a few). But safety pins through the nose and cheeks and rings through the navel and even more private places is all a bit like thumbscrews for fun or electrodes on the genitals for kicks. It’s tinged with madness. At one time, self-mutilation attracted the blokes with the long-sleeved canvas jacket. They took you away for your own sake.’ •] **AN axe-wielding French artist in Colombia took a swipe at himself, chopping off his pinkie... Images of the artist then using his bloody stump as a paintbrush unsettled the nation when they reached the capital.**

...more than 80 artists [are] challenging the public perception of mental illness through art. [Thei]r paintings... will move around Auckland... as part of Mental Health Awareness Week next month. The... exhibition[, which] has been set up by the Project to Counter Stigma and Discrimination Associated with Mental Health... started yesterday at the Aotea Centre... [A]rt displayed outside mainstream galleries was often considered amateur, but the... exhibition [– which] can be seen later next month at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Parnell and then the South Markets Arts and Crafts centre in Manukau City... [–] aimed to change that notion. “You don’t see these people’s work anywhere and often the artists don’t actually place any value on their own work because no one else has placed value on it,” [a spokesperson for the project] said. “Only through places where it is valued do some people begin to realise their work is of value.” ...Painting helped... [a patient who was s]uffering from depression... regain her confidence and concentration after being made redundant two years ago.

...*Artists come out of dole-drums...* [An Auckland] has sold almost \$5000 worth of art produced while legally claiming the unemployment benefit under a government scheme being extended to other unemployed artists from tomorrow. The government has yet to decide what proportion of the profits made by [the] Auckland... 34, will need to be paid back as it allows developing artists to go on the dole. A[n Income Support] programme means unemployed artists... will not be forced to take other work if they describe themselves as artists or “cultural workers” – a new category covering the unemployed in the arts – and can persuade a case worker they are working on a suitable project. Thousands... could be eligible for the scheme. The department has contracted the Dunedin Higher Trust, which piloted the dole scheme for artists, to decide what net earnings artists can make and ensure they report those. [The] Associate Arts Minister... hoped [the department] would treat artists like seasonal workers, with any earnings broken down over the period they were developing the project rather than on a weekly basis. The unemployed can earn \$80 gross a week.

...Passion and conviction drive [a NZ artist whose]... styles range from personal portraits to Biblical perspectives. [The artist recently] moved from New Plymouth to Titirangi where [it] hopes to hold exhibitions. “I... reached as far as I could in New Plymouth and I... think people need to see this art...” [It] believes God has given her a gift to glorify Him and help others. “When people look at my art, some are moved to tears... and some think it’s pretty controversial.” Her main mediums are acrylic and watercolours and her favoured style is surrealism. With the picturesque surroundings of Titirangi... and... the down-to-earth friendliness of west Aucklanders[, it]... can focus single-mindedly on her artwork, while raising her son...

The City of Angels seemed just like it had been portrayed on [TV] – hazy, big, and with lots of cars driving... very fast, on endless freeways patrolled by CHiPs... Mercifully, with a guide from the Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau and a bus driver who had mastered lane- and

freeway-hopping, we were able to enjoy the tripping about as well as an eclectic array of places to see... One stop couldn't have been further from the madding crowd. We drove skyward to the Getty Centre – a... 44ha campus housing the collections of oil baron J. Paul Getty, and several research and educational institutes set up by the trust which has administered his vast wealth since his death in 1976. I imagined that walking around this beautiful complex... was like strolling around the acropolis... when it was new. Its grandeur was awe-inspiring – and that was even before getting inside. The centre is in the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains and to retain its dominance the trust bought all the surrounding hills. Only a school, built many years ago, breaks up the green background to the white stone citadel. Known simply as “the Getty,” the museum and its 34ha of extraordinary gardens attracted 800,000 visitors in its first six months, after expecting to get 1.3 million in the year. Overseas visitors are advised to book well ahead. Admission is free but visitors arriving by car pay \$5 to park in a seven-floor building. They then board a driverless electric tram for a five-minute ride to a central plaza where they step out on to the fossil-filled Italian limestone called travertine. More than 92,000 sq m... was used as paving and wall cladding, after 290,000 blocks – ...16,000 tonnes – were brought from a quarry near Rome where it had lain for... 80,000 years. The museum consists of [5] two-storey pavilions housing changing exhibitions and the expanding permanent collections of pre-20th-century European paintings, drawings, illuminated manuscripts, sculpture, decorative arts and 19th- and 20th-century American and European photographs. The Getty Trust is so rich that to maintain its tax-free status it has to spend \$NZ4 million a day, making it the envy of art collectors the world over. L[A] has more museums a head than any other city in the U[S]... And like New York... more than 150 live theatres.

...Last week... New York's... wisdom was being called into question by, of all things, the halved carcass of a sliced pig... – a smallish sow sliced from snout to tail by [a] bad boy British artist... and preserved, with all its internal organs on display, in a tank of formaldehyde. A year ago, when it went on display in London as part of a deliberately shocking exhibition of post-modernist art, [the] pickled porker created a furore, as did other exhibits including a dung-splattered portrait of the Virgin in African robes and black face. Now the exhibition has crossed the Atlantic to New York, where it is about to open at the formerly staid Brooklyn Museum. New York's Catholics, who make up by far the largest block of the state's... voters, are outraged that their taxes are being used to support such sacrilege. From St Patrick's Cathedral to the pulpits of a hundred local churches, Catholic clergy have denounced the exhibit in general, and the Virgin in particular, as a calculated affront to their flock's most sacred beliefs. [New York]'s... Mayor... did not miss this opportunity to bring home the [political] bacon. In a series of ferocious public statements, [the mayor] first denounced the museum's board of directors and then threatened to yank \$US17 million in public funding. Finally, as [New York's] Cardinal... sang his praises from the pulpit, [the mayor announced that it] intended to evict the museum from the city-owned building where it has operated for more than a century... It was a weak performance[, however, because 'although US government departments aren't obligated to fund the arts, they aren't allowed to rescind funding because of an official's personal views.'

...since New York's mayor made his statements about one of its exhibits, the struggling Brooklyn Museum of Arts has had record crowds']...

A “surprised” video artist... won Britain's... Turner Prize with a black-and-white silent film tribute to comedian Buster Keaton. His win upset the pundits, as a[nother a]rtist... had been hot favourite with her unmade bed surrounded by soiled underpants, condoms and champagne corks. Her work inspired a protest by two Chinese artists who jumped on it semi-naked and tried on[the] underpants... The organisers of the £20,000... prize claimed th[is year's] event was one of the best in the award's 15-year history. It attracted... 60,000 viewers. The prize thrives on controversy. Last year it was won by [the] artist... whose elephant dung-marked Virgin Mary painting sparked outrage when it was shown in New York.

...a[n a]vant-garde Copenhagen art museum has been fined over a exhibition which gave the public a choice of killing goldfish by liquidising them in kitchen blenders... Ten mixers were lined up on a table, each containing a single goldfish. The choice of whether or not to switch on the current and turn goldfish into cold fish soup was left up to the public. Several fish died when some visitors found the temptation too great. [The creator] explained his art by saying that it confronted people with a fundamental choice. “It asks the question: do you want to kill, in order to show that we are masters at all times to decide between life and death?” The show caused uproar in Denmark... [Incidentally, a] piece of modern art due to be erected in Nottingham could prove fatal to passing pigeons. The highly polished steel mirror sculpture is due to be installed outside a theatre in the centre of the city. Scientists say that when the sun hits the mirror a beam of light will be created powerful enough to “barbecue” birds in flight, blind drinkers in the theatre bar and set light to litter and trees. Planning permission is being sought for a shade to shield the mirror from the sun.

...THE processes of sculpture [(or '3D-art')] are manifold. Sometimes they involve formal relationships, or the juxtaposition of materials. Sometimes a work derives its meaning from the dislocation that occurs when an object is moved... [A] sculpture in this year's Elam Sculpture Show consists of half a sackful of empty cicada shells... [A 3]rd-year student, spent every weekend last summer collecting the shells in the Titirangi bush... “...The work is... about the idea of continuation, change and transience. It's not about death because the cicadas have gone on to something else. It's also... about summers and memory.” [The artist] emptied her sack at the base of one [of] the elegant pillars in the old Unity Hall, the site the students selected to display their year's work. [30] students from first year through to masters level... contributed... to the exhibition, which in itself is a comment on the life of the building. The Sunday School Union was built in 1924 in Queen St above the town hall and its listing – category B with the Auckland City Council and category 2 with the Historic Places Trust – acknowledges the significance of its elegant neo-classical architecture... The sculptures occupy every nook and cranny... [One student] utilised the globe lightshades by inserting shapes inside them. [Another student] has imprinted the white tiles of the... urinal with stamps of hands showing sign language. [A third student] refers both to the building's history and to Ezekiel's valley of bones in her work called *Mother Hubbard's*, which consists of porcelain bones. It fits into an alcove under the stage. Finding [a fourth student]'s meditative branch in a bottle, called *I think it would have been a good idea*, requires climbing a shaky ladder in the wings of the stage. The title is Mahatma Gandhi's response when asked in London what [the little Indian] thought of Western civilisation.

...[Artist creates Indian Dream Machine to deliver message of peace An artist has built a huge plastic motorcycle on a Puketona farm, alongside State Highway 10 near Kerikeri. The model is 4m high and 10m long, and took about nine months work. The artist, 23, intends selling it to raise funds for her next project, a huge plastic wave to be built in the Coromandel. The artist has named the Kerikeri sculpture, modelled on a 1942 Indian motorcycle, the Indian Dream Machine. “I wanted to portray a symbol or message of peace with my work and creative imagination,” said the graduate of the Elam School of Fine Arts at Auckland University. “Peace is about seeing and believing.” Passing motorists stop to look at the arresting sculpture and tourists photograph it. Blue lights inside the motorcycle make it glow at night. The plastic parts were formed in a purpose-built moulding device and assembled piece by piece.’

...‘Why did an artist's untitled work win the premier award in the Visa Gold Art Award Competition whose finalists are now on display at the New Gallery? After all, it is not a painting but a collection of pieces of blanket. The piece is a very worthy winner but, whether we agree with the award or not, we must not be quick to condemn it for not being an oil painting. Contemporary art takes many forms and the found object has a part to play in modern expression. The blankets that make up the work are various shades of pale yellow that inescapably evoke the charitable institutions of past time. The pissy stains on them also evoke the innumerable anonymous, sad and sick people who sheltered between these blankets. Is this enough to make a work of art, to select the right blankets? Each piece of blanket carried the red cross, a symbol with many levels of connotation. The red cross is on the banner the resurrected Christ carried when it descended into the limbo of Hell and rescued the worthy souls there who die before the Redemption. In modern times it has become the international symbol of mercy and help. The crosses on these blankets are not bold red crosses but unassertive fading pale crosses made by stitching. The stitching signifies repair – the repair of rents and tears in material and clothes and, in surgery, the healing of wounds. If we agree that these things are valid artistic expressions then we would agree with the judges that the work deserves the award because it addressed an aspect of the human condition in a multi-layered way. Other entries are more intelligent but less evocative. The show as a whole is a brief guide to the state of art in NZ’...

'*Dreadful load of old tosh* THE frail little catalogue which limps along with the VISA GOLD ART AWARD exhibition – at The New Gallery, Auckland, until the 6th; The City Gallery, Wellington, from the 9th – claims more than 500 artists offered their efforts to the judges, tempted by \$18,000 in prizemoney and a chance to blaze their career paths onward. It's a grim statistic for visual art in this country, because it suggests this scrawny collection represents the best. If so, the worst must be dismal indeed. The shock is not that the winning work is a collection of sparsely embroidered squares cut from old, yellowed blankets, but that so much of the work on display is superficial, poorly made, visually bland and embarrassingly pretentious. In the midst of this, *Untitled 1995-1996* is an understandable, if lightweight, winner. At least it has visual traction, and invites more involvement from viewers than most manage. The theme for the exhibition could be "sightless" so meekly do the works call to our visual sense, with the exception of *Screen*. It displays a level of complexity and sophistication which should be a minimum standard for a trophy of the size of the Visa Gold Award. Just putting stuff in a gallery does not make it art.'

...The world's art market was thrown into turmoil last week... in the wake of a scandal over alleged collusion... by... Sotherby's auction house... with its great rival, Christies... over sellers' commissions... [The US] shopping-centre magnate who holds a controlling interest in Sotherby's, stepped down as chair[person] in one of the worst crises in the company's 256-year history[, and the gal]... who has run the auction house since 1994, resigned as president and chief executive. There was speculation that the resignations might be part of a deal with the U[S] Justice Department...

PM admits art faking – but says others do it too... [NZ's PM says it] is not the only politician to submit a fake painting at a charity art auction. The P[M] was forced to apologise yesterday after it became known that [the PM] had passed off as [its] own a painting by someone else which sold for \$1000 at auction... [However], an art auctioneer with 35 years' experience, said last night that [it] had never known a celebrity painting not to be genuine. [It] had conducted many charity auctions and sold works donated by P[M]s, which were usually simple works. "You don't buy it as investment art but as a bit of fun or decoration." [A]Wellington lawyer... said forgery carried a penalty of up to 10 years' jail... But in the unlikely event that [the PM was charged, it]... would certainly get off with a warning because there appeared to be no intent of personal gain. Another possibility was diversion, which could require [the PM] to paint an authentic picture for the buyer... [The PM was unavailable for comment last night as it was presenting t]he laureate awards[, which]... are among N[Z]'s biggest, and the only private awards to cover a range of art forms.

...[a] Herald Island photographer... has found himself on the other side of the camera after winning a major art award. [The photographer], 58, is one of five artists to get \$30,000 and his own hi-tech website as a winner of the Art Foundation's laureate awards. [The photographer] says previously to be considered an artist, you had to work with paint on canvas. "Now there is a greater appreciation that a serious artist can also use a camera." The award will help [the photographer] finance his new book of 40 photos, to be released in January next year. It is his second book...

Over the past nine years, [the] designer, printmaker and owner-operator of The Green Bay Press, has taught almost 1000 enthusiasts how to make their own books... Some have gone on to market their work. Others have simply made a book as a kind of therapy. Cooks, lawyers, doctors, teachers, writers and artists are among those seizing the opportunity to express themselves... They will often make books for special occasions, like birthdays. They will make a special book for family recipes. Record family history. Or document a journey. [The designer] was first inspired to make a book 11 years ago, when [it] collaborated with 10 poets, illustrating their poems with her own lithographs. There were 50 copies of [t]his book made, priced at \$800 each. The publication, which involved 20 people in all, went on to win an art award. [The designer] was subsequently awarded a study grant to look at similar books in America. For [the designer], who has rarely travelled overseas, the seven-week trip was liberating. [The designer] captured its essence in a book... made for the journey... It contains detailed written accounts and is decorated with travel debris – boarding passes, sugar sachets, postcards, meal tickets, an old gum wrapper, a matchbox, a safety pin. Anything that triggers a memory. "It's the small... pieces of design that have the immediacy of whipping you away and transporting you back. It's evidence. And when things look black later – there is still that evidence that things can be different. They can be better." It took her a week to fill the book on her return. Time that [the designer] regards as an integral part of her journey. "Often you are left with nothing but the book to talk to... And it will talk back to you."

...If you want to make... [a] Cockle Bay... artist... laugh loudly, just tell her about the tagger who marked a street of parked cars, hedges, walls and buildings with one long silver stripe. [The artist who] loves tagging... sees the city as one big book and graffiti as the lovely writing inside. But then [the artist], smiling behind her wire-framed specs, sees books everywhere. [The Cockle Bay resident] describes herself as an artist who works with text. Her passion for packaging words was first revealed eight years ago, when [it] exhibited 92 canvases smothered with words, painstakingly printed with hand-carved blocks. They were created over a frantic 10-month period when [the artist] was a mature student at Elam School of Fine Arts. Her interest continued... later[leading to] a book... made... with chunky plastic pages. [The artist then] went on to spray 104 obsolete reference books with tar and bolted them shut. And right now, [the artist] manufactures angry political posters in her... studio[before] paying professionals to slap them on walls around town... sort of copying the taggers [it] admires so much – and "using the city as a book." Unfortunately for her, some passersby take a fancy to [her] black, white and red posters. They try to peel them off walls and take them home. [The artist], now a post-grad student, does not like that at all. "I want people to be angry... I want to provoke a reaction[," says the artist], who keeps up to 45 ducks in her garden... loves Marilyn Manson "for his violence,"... sees schools as prisons and abhors the abuse of power and corruption of money...

THE first – and lasting – impression of Auckland is no longer the beauty of its harbour – nor the dominance of the skyline by that vulgar tower. What you remember is the mindless visual pollution of every exposed surface by a form of vandalism which the locals call "graffiti". This is the wrong word for it. "Graffiti" (which comes from the Italian word for "scratchings") has a long and honourable history. It is as far removed from what you see everywhere in Auckland as *Shortland Street* is from real drama. If it means anything, it is a testimony to the Polynesian discovery of the aerosol paint can. True graffiti is the street version of the cryptic crossword and as such can be a source of amusement and edification. There was a time in my life when I depended upon it for both. I used to be fascinated by the satire and social comment found on the walls of London's underground... The best work is obviously composite... with a sting in the tail. "Arms for Biafra" or "Arms for Serbia" had a post-script written by another: "Arms for Venus de Milo". A wayside pulpit text carried an interesting addition: "The meek shall inherit the earth", to which was added, "If that's OK with the rest of you". I am told that the best Kiwi graffiti is found in toilets. I am not prepared however, to fossick through the overlay of filth in order to find it. Some graffiti is far from being inconsequential. Take the action of a Roman soldier with a sense of the ridiculous and a gift for irony. [The soldier] scratched upon the gible of a dying rabbi: "Jesus of Nazareth. King of the Jews". It must have been a source of great laughter. The authorities certainly found it very funny. Two thousand years later, the words live on... but nobody is laughing.

...A determined vigilante armed with a paint brush is exasperating... property owners. For the past couple of months... [someone] has been following the trail of taggers in New Lynn and Henderson and splashing over their scribbles with paint. Property owners reckon the coverup job is worse and the Waitakere City Council wants a quiet word with the painter.

...Taggers, who cost Auckland City an estimated \$1 million a year in clean-up expenses, fall into three categories. Some are members of youth gangs and gang prospects. Some are streetkids. And some are merely bored individuals, often from good homes, who can give no reason for their behaviour when apprehended. A community worker in West Auckland describes tagging as "absolute rebellion and defiance of every social system." [The community worker] describes those apparently mindless scribbles as smoke signals from the tribes of a subculture, communicating far more than a simple "I wuz here." ...A new report from the City of Hamilton [identifie]s the motives of graffiti vandals... in a long list that includes "lack of self-esteem, artistic expression, territorial claims, adrenaline, excitement... power and fame." ...Messages and innuendoes, challenges and

roll calls can all be detected in the tags by those in the know... but as soon as the authorities start to catch on, the taggers change their rules completely... There are no easy answers to the problem which [the]Auckland City Council anti-graffiti officer... describes as a “quality of life” crime. “The quality of life of citizens is definitely affected when they have to see their tagged fence every time they leave home and every time they return,”... [T]agging gangs – known as “crews” – of up to 200 youths determined to put their mark on the city[(train) carriages and rail stations were a particularly popular target])... were causing millions of dollars of damage a year when the N[SW] police established a Sydney-based nine-officer graffiti task force in 1988... Besides defacing public property, the taggers were also committing robberies and theft to obtain their paint supplies. The squad met the challenge by taking a pro-active approach to the problem, working mainly on 6 pm to 2 am shifts when their quarry was most active. Suspected crew members were searched on sight and offenders were charged with causing malicious damage. “The maximum penalty is two years in jail, but being juveniles they didn’t really get that,” said[a NSW] Detective... Graffiti infringement notices were also introduced, with fines of \$100 for adults and \$50 for younger offenders... Another move was to provide places where taggers could spray legally – “even the railway stations came to the party by allocating areas for graffiti.” ...But [the squad] was disbanded in September last year after police chiefs decided to make district stations responsible for dealing with graffiti on a local basis. Now just one officer in the N[SW] police crime data section is responsible for gathering intelligence from wall scrawlings around the state, mostly by photographs sent in by colleagues... In California – where cleaning up graffiti is estimated to cost \$3.2 billion a year – state legislators are proposing to make tagging a federal crime. The California Department of Transportation spends \$US3.5 million of its annual budget on removing sprayed slogans from the city of Los Angeles alone... Adopt-A-Highway schemes focus on removing graffiti on roadside walls and fences within a week of its appearance. The programmes seek sponsors to keep sections of highway free of graffiti, usually for a minimum period of two years. The work can either be done by the sponsors or subcontracted to certified state highway contractors. About 60[%] of the sponsorship comes from the community, with business accounting for the remainder.

...*Writing’s on the wall: wipe out graffiti crime*... Graffiti-plagued towns and cities will remain under siege until taggers are made to clean up their own mess, says the Minister of Police... “Graffiti puts people to a great deal of inconvenience and cost... [but it] will be very hard to deal with until we learn to... [give] real responsibility to the kids who do it,”... Communities needed to get together with officials to tackle the continuing urban headache... Authorities in Auckland are now spending more than \$2 million a year scrubbing out the tags and messages left on buildings, bridges, fences – in fact, anything that does not move... The Mayor of Waitakere City... said his council was looking for new ways to eliminate the tags... The best results so far have come from community-based projects where strategies can be specifically designed for conditions. The major police effort has been enforced by community constables supporting these projects. This weekend, two community projects are taking place in Auckland. Taggers are being encouraged to use their artistic talents in a positive way with a “throw up” competition for a road safety logo, to be created on car bonnets, at the Pasifika Festival. “Throw up” is a taggers’ term for creating a tag. In Glen Eden, volunteers are gathering at the community centre in Ceramco Park on Saturday morning and will proceed from there with paint and brushes to white-out the whole area. Removing graffiti as quickly as possible has been identified as the best strategy in keeping the environment tag free. “Removing the tag thwarts the aim of the tagger, whatever their motives,” says [Auckland City Council’s anti-graffiti officer]. “If you leave it, it is in the nature of the game that others will add their tags. And the longer it is left, the more positive the taggers’ feedback.” “Record, report and remove” has become the anti-tagging catch cry. A photograph of the tag can be forwarded to the police when the report is made. Many councils are now offering a hot-line to ring for help, with free paint and even a free paint-out service. “We’ll never get rid of tagging. It’s here to stay. But we’ve got to keep on top of it,” says [the]Northcote and Birkenhead community co-ordinator... In her ward, a fully equipped van and trailer is permanently at the ready, sponsored by local businesses and[operated] by trained volunteers. Most graffiti in the ward is removed within 24 hours. Vehicle maintenance, paint and utensils and safety items cost the community less than \$4500 per annum and the project had achieved a 93[%] drop in evident graffiti. While the van was out six times a week at the beginning, it is now required on average only twice a week. Education programmes have to run hand in hand with the clean-up projects. In Auckland City a Tag Drag video is shown in schools and emphasises the enormous cost of cleaning up after taggers and how the expense eats into resources that could be better spent in the community; the anger in the community caused by tagging and the need for respect for other people’s property; and how young people can better use their creative talents. In West Auckland, a Tag Free Project has concentrated on working with individuals identified as chronic taggers, and on the painting of murals – which invariably remain tag-free. Catching the culprits, who usually work in the early hours of the morning, is not as easy as the nature of their crime – a mark as individual as a fingerprint – might indicate. A tag might be copied by a rival to get them in to trouble, or be made in a different style “to irate” its original owner. Marking out territory, like the average suburban cat or dog, is only the most innocent motive for tagging... “You could draw an analogy there if you want to animalise taggers rather than anthropomorphise the cats and dogs,” says... [a] Lynfield veterinarian... Known taggers over the age of 16 are most likely to be charged under the Summary Offences Act which deals with “low level” crimes like loitering – and urinating in public. The maximum punishment under the act is three months in prison and a \$1000 fine. If tagging activity is deemed to be “a danger to life” such as painting out traffic signs, the perpetrator can be charged under sub-section 4 of the Crimes Act and jailed for up to five years. Those under 16 years are dealt with under the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act.

...[Hard evidence is being gathered on prolific young taggers and parents may be forced to pay for their children’s crimes. Distinctive tags, familiar to many besieged business owners and residents, are being digitally documented and stored in a crime-fighting database by Auckland City Council’s new graffiti prevention officer, who hopes to catch the culprits and make them and their parents responsible for the damage. The council’s law and order committee intends to reduce the cost of graffiti cleanups by making offenders pay and is co-operating with other councils to fight graffiti across the region.]

...[an average 1800 tags a month are now being removed in Waitakere City, thanks to local graffiti-busters, the Tag Out Trust. The trust keeps daily records of the number of tags it removes from city properties. It is working with local police to “bring justice to the offenders.” The trust now plans to attack west Auckland’s rail corridor, where graffiti has yet to be tackled. The Tag Out Trust was founded by ex-Keep Waitakere Beautiful members who both believed the graffiti problem could be beaten. The trust had humble beginnings in 1996 – one employee with a vehicle and trailer (purchased with the help of the Portage Licensing Trust), removing graffiti in residential New Lynn. Success led to a partnership with the Council and the contract for removing the city’s graffiti. The staff later expanded to three: two with vehicles and trailers fully equipped for removing tags and the third working exclusively with young taggers “repaying their debt to society”. The operators cover the city five days a week and aim to remove all new tags in no more than 30 hours. Waitakere is now more tag-free than its neighbour, Auckland City. Residents are asked to paint out graffiti quickly, preferably with dark colours. Planting shrubs at the front of your property also helps. Businesses are encouraged to keep a sample of their paint colours on site for operators to use.] • [The Western Leader is offering a \$200 reward to find out who tagged the primary school, cars and a garage in New Lynn with bright yellow paint.]

...[A dangerous new form of graffiti is appearing in Waitakere. Etching or scratching on glass is an overseas trend that takes graffiti one step further. Vandals scratch names or noms de plume on business windows with tools readily available in most backyard garages. Plate glass windows, worth up to \$20,000, can be destroyed in seconds. Internet sites put up by the scratchers explain the techniques used and document damage caused in attacks. Glen Eden’s railway station is among buildings where glass has been damaged. The problem is also causing concern in Auckland City, where the council’s special law and order committee has been briefed on the issue. Council staff say they have already noticed scratching attacks on glass-walled bus shelters. An Auckland city councillor says etching is dangerous. Deep gouges in large sheets of glass can cause the panes to collapse at any time. The owner of a glass shop is concerned at the potential for damage. “It certainly is a problem when people start scratching glass. If the scratch is deep enough to feel there’s no way of removing it except by replacing the glass.”]

...‘A new kind of tagging is weakening glass windows and raising fears that someone may get seriously hurt. Vandals are using glass cutters to etch tags into windows. West Auckland’s Neighbourhood Support chairperson says the practice, which leaves glass dangerously weak, may be caused by a television programme highlighting the technique used in the US. Business owners are left out of pocket as etching damage is not covered by insurance. A Te Atatu Peninsula shopkeeper whose premises have been damaged says: “I would like to string them up, we should bring back the stockades.”’

...‘Children as young as eight are using aerosol cans as blowtorches to burn graffiti into walls. The Fire Service is worried about the dangerous trend where the spray from aerosol cans is lit. An Auckland fire region youth liaison officer says using a spray can to set a fire or burn graffiti into walls is not uncommon, but a recent increase in the number of incidents and the decrease in age of offenders is a concern. The Child Safety Foundation’s executive officer is not surprised at aerosol cans being used as blowtorches. The foundation had similar concerns about novelty lighters being used as flame-throwers.’

...‘Private detectives staking out graffiti “hotspots” in Auckland have laid charges against an alleged serial tagger, who will be asked to pay more than \$21,000 compensation to the Auckland City Council. Council officers are preparing a “victim impact report” and say the arrested person is alleged to have committed 40 acts of wilful damage in a case now before the courts. Private detectives have been employed by the council for two months after the council adopted a “zero tolerance” for graffiti programme. The council’s graffiti prevention officer believes a core group of about 80 taggers are responsible for most of the graffiti in Auckland. Since February it has caught 27 taggers ranging in age from 9 to 23. Five face charges.’

...The graffiti blight which has scarred Auckland... is under tight control in the tourism mecca of Rotorua. The city, populated by 67,000 people and visited by 1.2 million tourists a year, is relatively tag-free, according to the police... and... tourism bosses... The administration manager for the Rotorua District Council... says it takes a hardline approach by hiring contractors to remove tags from public property... [via] sand-blast... or paint... within 12 hours... costing the council about \$30,000 a year... The community relations co-ordinator for Rotorua police... says... “The youth culture in Rotorua is not as advanced as Auckland. We do not have the night life and all its associated vices. The kids do not have the same idol worship of the black American culture and the mini-gangs’ tied-up bandannas, the clothes, the music and the graffiti.” A smaller population and seven constables with close ties to their community means the police often recognise the taggers’ mark or signature... [B]efore Christmas, three 13 and 14-year-olds were made to remove their own graffiti after police recognised their nicknames.

...[‘ROTORUA’S amateur cycling club captain is heartbroken – tagging is all over the town’s velodrome, which took 10 years to build.’ In further news from Rotorua, the city’s] Maori Arts and Crafts Institute... is being accused of refusing to honour an agreement over financial compensation... [with] its neighbour, Whakarewarewa Village... The Rahui Trust... which represents the villagers... says it was to receive 9[%] of the money tourists are charged to go through the institute and the world-famous Whakarewarewa thermal village... [The chairperson] of the trust... said the institute had rejected out of hand the trust’s claims for payment of arrears estimated at \$331,158... and... the... 9[%] annuity was made null and void... “We had an agreement where we were to receive 50[%] of the gate takings. However, when it came time to sign it was only 9[%]. Now we are being told we will receive nothing.” ...[the chairperson] said it was ironic that it had been the villagers who first started guiding tours around the thermal valley, before the Government established an institute in the 1920s... [T]he institute had offered to finance completion of Te Rau Aroha wharekai (dining room) at Whakarewarewa Village, but that funding would be in settlement of past grievances. The wharekai plays a vital role for the people of the local tribe, Tuhourangi. When a tangi is held at Wahiao marae in the heart of the village, protocol dictates that those who arrive to pay their respects are fed. But in recent years, the villagers have had to use a local art gallery and cafeteria to feed their guests... [V]illagers had recently put a gate behind the village at the back entrance to the institute, and if things got any worse they would lock it to visitors to the institute. [An institute spokesperson claimed to be unable to] comment.

...A \$5.2 million museum is being proposed for the Tauranga waterfront. The Tauranga District Council is worried about the decline in visitors to the Tauranga Historic Village, its rising rates subsidy and the deterioration of artefacts in its damp 17th Ave premises. Six significantly old buildings from 17th Ave would be moved to the new site in Dive Cres, which would house 20,000 artefacts unable to be displayed at the village. Proposed are a Maori cultural centre, a 3D simulator show with a marine ecology theme, and a restaurant.

...A \$750,000 restoration project beginning in Hamilton today is expected to help create a “cultural precinct” in the city. The Hamilton City Council is converting a historic but nearly derelict building in Victoria St into an arts and cultural centre. The former post office, situated next to the Waikato Museum of Art and History and close to popular cafes and restaurants, will house galleries, classrooms and artists’ studios... [Incidentally, a] petition demanding government and regional funding for the financially stricken Museum of Transport and Technology (Motat) has been presented to the Auckland Central MP... About 18,500 people signed the Keep Motat Moving petition, requesting legislation along the lines of the Auckland War Memorial Act which would require the region’s councils to pay the museum a levy. Auckland contributes \$870,000 annually, Manukau has given between \$15,000 and \$20,000 for each of the past three years, and North Shore gave \$10,000 this year. Waitakere, Papakura and Franklin give nothing. The petition coordinator... said the “honed” and efficient museum was just coping on its operating budget of \$1.6 million... Without extra funding, the museum in Western Springs could maintain its extensive collection but could not restore about 30 large containers of other relics, for which it would need a total of 20 staff and a \$3.5 million budget. [The MP is] “disturbed” by the number of deteriorating collections around the country and would present the petition to Parliament for consideration. [Motat could increase its gate prices, but that would have a negative impact on visitor numbers. (Editor’s note: Entry to the Auckland War Memorial Museum is free – excluding special exhibitions.)

...‘A venerable institution emerges from a five-year refurbishment programme Few Aucklanders would know that a single prostitute was once responsible for 4% of all gal crime in their city. Or that drunks used to fall, with alarming regularity, into an open sewer that ran down Queen St. A piece of that sewer – called the “brook of abomination” at the time – has been preserved and is now on display in the spruced-up Auckland War Memorial Museum (constructed to commemorate locals lost in WWI). The sewer and details of the one-gal crime wave can be found in a new exhibition on the history of Auckland called City, one of two permanent displays developed as part of a \$43 million project to redesign the galleries. The five-year effort was capped off on Saturday with a free festival called Real Treasures – Real Tales, which drew one of the museum’s biggest-ever crowds. Saturday’s festival was to thank Aucklanders for their patience while the work was taking place – and to show them that the museum was once again fully open. Visitors praised the improved facilities and new exhibitions. Most of the \$43m spent on the galleries is hidden, invested in discreet beams and buttresses meant to save the relics from earthquakes.’

...‘Auckland Museum has a cultural fortune but no money to display it IGNORE the spray-painted tagging on the metal door and mind the rat poison on the floor. This is the bazaar of the bizarre and the beautiful that Auckland Museum can’t afford to let you see. Stacked up like Grandma’s garage, tenfold, a suburban warehouse contains the millions of artefacts the museum does not have the space to store. Pile after pile, row after row of old things sitting around getting whiffier. Things Grandma wouldn’t want in the house anymore, but couldn’t bring herself to throw out because they are, after all, family heirlooms. Except that Grandma is unlikely to have a slightly smelly stuffed polar bear and a musk ox. Or the world’s most highly developed collection of ancient stone tools from around the Pacific. In one corner of this antique dealers’ treasure trove are cardboard boxes, stamped fragile, containing the country’s pre-eminent applied arts collection. Statues such as a Graeco-Buddhist figure from Pakistan dating back to 300AD are swathed in wrapping paper away from the public eye. There’s enough military equipment to mount a small-scale invasion. Oh, and don’t mind the dripping sound – there’s a leak in the roof, right over the bound volumes of newspapers dating back to the 1900s. But the staff have flung a plastic sheet over them. They’ll be right. Downstairs, through another steel door and past yet another burglar alarm pad, it gets dingier. Just when you thought it couldn’t. Right there on the shelves

by the door, hundreds of preserved fish stare out from jars. It's called the wet fish collection – a school of creatures plucked from the seas around NZ over the past 100 years.'

...a marine biologist... has dedicated 30 years of his life to the Auckland Museum, but fears... [being] among the 28 staff who[are to] lose their jobs today. A draft press release obtained... yesterday said the Museum Trust Board would cut 17 fulltime jobs and 11 part-time jobs, including two of the three marine department positions. The museum has 100 equivalent fulltime staff. The... museum expects the... layoffs... will... bring its operations within budget. That is no comfort to [the marine biologist], who joined the museum's marine biology department straight from Auckland University... [and] never imagined that cost-cutting could some day close down what [it] feels is one of the world's most respected marine collections... The... collection has 700,000 specimens... In his early fifties, [the marine biologist] is concerned about job prospects after specialising so narrowly, but his greatest concerns are for the younger scientists and technicians "with families and futures" and for the collection itself... [- although] the greatest loss would be the knowledge [himself] and his colleagues carried in their heads: "That wisdom is part of what makes the collection live. It takes a long time to gain." ...only 10 to 20 people in N[Z] had his skills. A further 100 could be "brought up to speed." Much of the research funding comes from the Lotteries Board and the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology. The museum funds the 2 1/2 salaries and essential working costs. The museum director... last night... was disappointed that the *Herald* was quoting from a "stolen draft statement." The museum wanted the chance to first talk with its staff. The small marine department was one of 20 being reorganised into public programmes and professional services divisions... to achieve greater administrative efficiency and to enable the museum to apply resources where they were most needed. Records, maintenance and exhibition design would be contracted out, [the director] said.

...The troubled Auckland Museum has put its hand out to the region's local bodies for a... grant to cover unexpected losses and the redundancy costs of 28 jobs. The museum confirmed the request yesterday, but declined to say how much it was seeking. But minutes of a meeting held last Friday by the "college" of local authorities which pay levies to the museum put the figure at \$1 million. The seven councils paid \$5 million this year, but would have to satisfy the new request by cutting spending from their own budgets. This raises doubts whether the museum's bid will succeed as some councils, such as Papakura, may be unwilling to find extra cash for the institution. The funds plea comes six weeks after the museum announced the job losses, which it forecast would save more than \$700,000 a year...

Three key local bodies appear likely to bail the troubled Auckland Museum out of a \$700,000 shortfall this financial year. Auckland, Manukau and North Shore city councils will meet today to consider propping up the ailing facility... However, the Papakura District Council is refusing to contribute its \$26,126 share of the bailout. Its mayor... said the "overspending" of ratepayers' money was deplorable and heads should roll at the museum... [H]is council would take the issue to the Audit Office because the extra levy was the "final straw." ...Draft figures leaked in a report... this week show the predicted \$603,000 loss for the year to June 1997 has escalated to more than \$1 m... The loss [will be] further inflated to \$2.7 m... after \$1.6 m... is set aside for depreciation... The director of the museum... said the... board is also considering introducing... entry charges...

The Auckland Museum is considering charging entry fees as part of moves to keep the cash-strapped facility afloat... If tourist charges were introduced they were unlikely to come into force until late next year... The museum would continue to charge between \$5 and \$12 for exhibitions and was looking at on-selling shows and equipment nationally and overseas. Other revenue-making plans include charging children \$3 and adults \$5 for a special cellphone that provided access to commentaries on displays... The museum was also considering charging for access to photographic and other resource material[... in addition to]... contracting out curatorial expertise to companies such as Watercare Services and to local and regional councils... The museum says local body levies are inadequate for it to maintain its activities... [● Last night representatives from four] out of seven local councils... approved a \$1 million bailout for the... [m]useum... The contributions range from \$441,003 for Auckland City to \$23,275 in Franklin. But the... [\$1m figure includes] Papakura... council's \$26,126 share... Waitakere City is yet to vote on its share, which would be \$106,970.

...Auckland museum supporters are to petition Parliament for an overhaul of the institution's funding. They want a multimillion-dollar endowment and to refocus the museum's scientific mission. At a meeting last night, about 50 of the supporters, who have rallied behind the Auckland Museum since its funding crisis was revealed in July, backed the petition proposed by... a natural historian at the University of Auckland... [The] Emeritus Professor... said the museum had been disabled in some of its core research and public functions by the funding crisis, which could be reversed by an endowment of up to \$200 m... [The] Professor... said allocating some of... the Auckland Regional Services Trust[']s... \$1.8 billion in assets or reserves could leave the museum as a free-standing institution not reliant on funding from Auckland ratepayers. With a professionally managed endowment the museum could be run in the same way as many famed museums around the world. The existing museum board would see the petition as impertinent and unlikely to succeed, but with unity and persistence "we will convert a grim situation into victory for the citizens of Auckland and the museum,"... The meeting heard that the museum had a deficit of \$2 m... [However, the museum] will receive a \$415,000 grant from... the Getty Foundation[... which] is believed to be the first from the Los Angeles-based organisation for the conservation of a historic N[Z] building. The museum's executive director... said the money would help the \$1 m... exterior restoration of the building.

...[Veteran declares war on museum expansion plans] A returned serviceperson who survived 90 wartime air operations is on another mission – fighting what it describes as creeping commercialism at the Auckland War Memorial Museum. The former Pilot Officer – who served with the 75th Squadron as a rear gunner on Wellington bombers – is marshalling opposition to expansion plans that include a rooftop restaurant and events centre with panoramic views of the harbour. The veteran is opposed to any alcohol being consumed at the museum, as it stands on consecrated ground. "The museum is trying to cater for the '5pm entertainment trade. They only want people from the upper echelons. Ordinary NZers are not encouraged to join the museum." But the museum's director says the veteran must be the only person in the world to have concerns over the development. The veteran's claims of commercialism and gentrification are completely misleading and grossly misrepresent both the project and the museum's position. The director says the restaurant and coffee shop are only small parts of the development. "The veteran is conveniently overlooking the fact that there's just under a couple of thousand square metres of collection storage which enables us to bring the most important collections of NZ patrimony from inadequate off-site storage on site where they will be properly cared for and accessible by the public. The veteran also overlooks the fact that all the workshops for the maintenance of the museum's displays and its exhibitions programmes are part of this project. There's educational facilities with classrooms, tutorial rooms, studios for children, plus a theatre for the museum's educational and museum programmes." The museum has applied for resource consent for the \$46.5 million development project. The project is likely to start next year, which marks the museum's 150th birthday. The museum recently completed stage one of its redevelopment, a five-year restoration project that included seismic strengthening, new power, plumbing, drainage, heating and ventilation, and new exhibitions.'

...We had survived the last of the robotic dinosaur attacks. Now 20 of us, white-knuckled thrill seekers, hurtled down a near-vertical 18m drop at the culmination of the "Jurassic Park ride" at Universal Studios in Los Angeles. As the finale, we were all soaked as we bottomed out in a huge shower of spray. I wondered where the boundaries of "the museum experience" now lay, or would lie in the future. Hartlepool, a depressed former ship building town [i]n... Britain, was no one's idea of a tourist attraction. But now we, along with some 200,000 other visitors a year, were thoroughly enjoying a brand-new maritime heritage attraction, the Historic Quay and Hartlepool Museum[– which, thanks to a Tory] Government funding initiative, this formerly barren and derelict dockland has been turned into... This time I pondered the vagaries of government policies that saw a new museum as a political and economic investment, but cut back operational funding for older museums. The viability of the maritime museum that opened in Auckland in 1993... [- which I am] the... director of... [-] was predicated upon attracting 300,000 visitors a year. It was therefore salutary to discover that one of the world's greatest maritime icons, Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar, HMS Victory... attracts 370,000

visitors a year. The target for Auckland was clearly too ambitious. Visitor numbers for other maritime attractions bear this out with perhaps one exception. The relatively new Merseyside Maritime museum, in the revitalised Albert Docks in Liverpool, attracts 450,000 visitors a year, which is a remarkable achievement. What is the key to this success? Firstly, this museum is part of the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside. This means central government funding. Equally important, it means the museum is managed and marketed as part of one organisation that administers eight sites. Considerable efficiencies of costs are clearly achievable. Secondly, this Maritime Museum has created a stunning new exhibition, "Transatlantic Slavery: the African Holocaust." This moving, dignified and challenging exhibition, developed in consultation with the local black community, lifts the lid off Liverpool's role in the slave trade. This exhibition is so important because of the way it explores the great human story behind the maritime artefact. For Auckland, a comparable exhibition we should do would be the... 1951 Waterfront strike, and the story of the generation of conflict between labour and management, the port authorities, the shippers and the suppliers. To a considerable extent, N[Z] history is maritime history. A real challenge for a museum like ours, which receives very limited public funding, is to fund serious and non-commercial exhibitions like these. That is what public funding is for, and we don't have enough. A third strength of the Liverpool museum was its exhibition on... [WW2]'s "Battle of the Atlantic," the story of the convoys and submarines, the corvettes, ciphers and codes. In fact almost every other maritime museum in Britain traded in some way on the... colourful and dramatic story of warfare at sea that every British school child, and many overseas visitors also, already know. What a challenge it is for N[Z] museums, where many of us don't even know our own history, to... exhibit the evidence of this history... As far as I could ascertain, the only special exhibition that really made money was the Titanic exhibition at Greenwich. All other programmes are lucky to break even. You have got to have them, to offer local audiences something new, but unless you are a well-funded museum, you cannot afford them. Museum directors at dinner parties regularly receive the conventional wisdom that "Of course what you need is more interactives, and more virtual reality". So it was with considerable interest that I visited "Nauticus" in Norfolk, Virginia, the ultimate interactive maritime museum/science centre experience. At Nauticus you queue to get into the Aegis theatre, where electronic naval warfare is simulated in a recreation of the command centre of a modern... destroyer. Together with the skilled actors, we sink the enemy submarines, shoot down the hostile aircraft, and identify friendly ships. Elsewhere visitors play at designing ships on computers, and, in my case at least, be told that their design is no good and their ship will capsize straight away. Interestingly, Nauticus has only attracted 20-30[%] of the visitors predicted. It has proved very expensive to run, and has had to be re-funded several times. Coming back to N[Z] from overseas, I am always impressed by how good our museums are, especially when you take account of our population size. Our exhibits address great stories, which are still not as well known as they should be... The voyages of the ancient Polynesians led them to be called "Vikings of the South Pacific" but actually they were the greatest voyagers of all "non-urbanised" societies. The emigrations from Europe to the other side of the world were epic stories of adventure. N[Z] played its part in many great naval battles of the [20th century, while] the flotilla to Mururoa was a modern day crusade. The cheek of challenging for, and winning, the America's Cup is another story that must be told. Pride in our own history and pride in our museums go hand in hand. The National Maritime Museum... is seeking increased public funding to carry out our core functions of preservation, education and furthering of knowledge. The museum could be marketed even more effectively as part of a "National Museums of Auckland," which attracted central government support... [■ AUS]n telecommunications company Telstra has signed a five-year, \$1 million sponsorship of the Museum of N[Z].

...an AUSn pensioner who claims to be a direct descendant of the 19th century Aboriginal leader Yagan is taking the federal and West A[US]n Governments to court to prevent a taxpayer-funded delegation retrieving the warrior's head from Britain. [The alleged descendant] used his own money to have a lawyer lodge an injunction application in the W[A] Supreme court last week... The court adjourned the hearing of the injunction until Friday – days before a delegation of up to 10 Perth-region Aborigines is expected to fly to Britain to ceremoniously accept the... head. [The alleged descendant] said yesterday... "It's a lot of blackfellas making a mockery of traditional law and wasting a lot of taxpayers' money while they're at it... Why does it take 10 of them to pick up a head? Two people would be too many." [The alleged descendant] claims that the British Burial Act 1857 was breached when Yagan's head was exhumed without his permission from the pauper's grave where it had been for 33 years... [According to the alleged descendant] none of the proposed delegates is a direct descendant... and therefore [they couldn't] give permission for his grave to be legally disturbed... Yagan was shot dead by a bounty hunter in 1833. His head was smoked and sent to Britain where it was kept as a curio until it was dumped by the Liverpool City Museum in the pauper's grave along with a Maori head and 20 stillborn babies in 1964.

...A MAORI head unearthed in an English cemetery this month is destined for a life away from the public eye – in a box at Wellington's Museum of N[Z]. Despite this, Cabinet has[given approval for the] Maori Affairs Minister... [to] lead... a delegation to Liverpool to reclaim the head. The taxpayer-funded trip is expected to include at least one of [the minister]'s staff and two Maori elders. The head itself may also need its own seat on the trip back. Believed to be that of a [warrior] in his 50s – the head was found with a mummified Peruvian baby in a box dug up... during a search for the skull of Aboriginal warrior Yagan... Liverpool City Council is legally required to rebury the head but has said that, given the circumstances, it would return it to N[Z]. The Auckland Museum ethnology curator... said it was 15 years since Maori heads had been seen in public. "After the Te Maori Exhibition, we were asked by the Maori people not to display human remains and we haven't." There were four heads at Auckland Museum and probably about 20 around the country. All were kept in special storerooms. About 120 heads are believed to... still... be held in overseas museums... although many[more] are... in private collections... [A] Maori expert, the late Maui Pomare, repatriated 40...

In the gloom of the old national museum's Uru Pa, to the thrum of karakia, the son... [of Maui] Pomare, helped to load boxes of mokomokai, or preserved Maori heads – complete with bared teeth, intricate blue-black moko and thick coarse hair – on to trolleys and wheeled them into Buckle St. [Maui's] daughter... and ...he[r] mother... waited at a specially prepared vault at the new museum, Te Papa Tongarewa. There, in the dark hours before dawn, more karakia welcomed the heads to their final resting place. After journeying the world, they were home at Te Papa – our place. This scene was one of the closing chapters in a complicated drama set in motion by the late Maui Pomare... For 23 years before [Maui] died in 1995, [Maui] had devoted his enormous energy to tracking down and bringing mokomokai back home. Pomare's view had been that the heads, although slain and preserved by his ancestors and freely sold as "trade heads" in return for guns between 1770 and 1840, should be returned to their turangawaewae. Single-handedly Pomare set about tracking them down through... places as scattered as Dieppe in France, to Stockholm, to the Peabody collection in Salem in the U[S]. All the time his affinity with preserved heads deepened[, and once Maui even believed it]... saw a tear trickle down the cheek of a head as it was shut back in a drawer in a foreign land. Over the years Pomare was joined in his crusade by three major players: his wife, who "put him back together" when [Maui] arrived home after tracking and collecting heads; [an] ethnologist and former assistant director of the Auckland Museum...; and ethnomusicologist and film director Dalvanus Prime. After Pomare's death... the three took over his crusade, becoming the guardians of the mokomokai. As [the ethnologist] explains, "The idea was that mokomokai would become 'unknown warriors,' the mana for the museum. Maui called them Te Toi Whakairo [the source of art]." The repatriation of mokomokai was not considered a Government policy. There was no official Government statement of intent on record. Pomare found it difficult to obtain funding for repatriation trips. A documentary... which was to trace the history of the head trade and efforts at repatriation, was repeatedly turned down for funding. But the coalition Government changed that. [The coalition's] Maori Affairs Minister... has links with mokomokai, particularly the head of his ancestor Paraone Kawiti, which Pomare traced to either Austria or Switzerland. [The minister], who was obviously committed to getting it back, wanted to help in a repatriation crusade and had recently planned a trip – with cabinet approval – to London. However, unlike Maui Pomare who had been uniquely placed to persuade museums and private collectors to return mokomokai to his homeland, [the minister] was a newcomer to museum protocol. Pomare, by contrast, had for 14 years been chair[person] of the National Art Gallery and Museum Council, giving him influence at the

highest levels of international museum culture. [Maui was also] a high-ranking Maori and – perhaps more important when it came to obtaining access to mokomokai from royal and great house collections – a descendant of the aristocratic Woodbine Johnston family of England. Woodbine Johnston, who had been sent by Queen Victoria to liaise with Maori tribes, married a Maori. Their daughter, Miria Woodbine Johnston, who became Lady Pomare, was Maui's grandmother. Despite a background that goes back to Sir James Henare, [the minister] had few academic qualifications... [However,] Government backing may well cut down the 12 years of negotiation Pomare estimated it took to get one head back home. Today, after 15 years of effort, just 37 heads from European museums are back in N[Z]... "There are still 127 kicking around in foreign museums and probably another 70 in private collections." ...For hundreds of years before Captain James Cook arrived in N[Z], warring cannibal Maori tribes had preserved the heads of chiefs – both enemies and those of their own tribes... Trade in preserved Maori heads started at the end of the 18th century... Mokomokai became highly prized by Europeans for their beauty and historical value. The going price for two heads was a musket. As an example of its value, a musket was worth two tonnes of potatoes or a shipload of dressed flax. Trade in heads was so lucrative that some tribes got into purpose production – tattooing slaves taken in battle before slaughtering them and drying their heads... [(a) hole was dug in the earth and heated with red-hot stones and then – the eyes, ears and all the orifices of the head, except the windpipe being carefully sewn up, and the brains taken out – the aperture of the neck was placed over the mouth of a heated oven, and the head well steamed; t]he process was continued until the head was completely free from moisture and the skin completely cured[)]... By 1831 trafficking had reached such "scandalous" proportions that Governor Darling of N[SW] put a stop to it by imposing a fine of £40 on anyone trying to sell a preserved head. Nevertheless, it was apparently still possible to collect mokomokai as late as 1865. Before the ban was put in place it is estimated that about 250 heads were sold...

[Northland Maori hope the historic return of two preserved heads from the Auckland Museum will set a precedent for giving back mokomokai around the country. It was understood to be the first time a museum has handed back preserved heads to Maori. Curators have regarded preserved heads as artefacts, but the Auckland Museum Trust Board decided they were human remains that should be returned for burial if their origin was known. The chairperson of the Whatitiri Maori Reserves Trust, who had worked for over a decade to have the two chiefs' heads returned, said it was fortunate that missionary William Colenso and Major-General Horatio Robley had recorded their origin. The chairperson said the homecoming of the Ngati Rua chief Kokou and Ngati Ngiro chief Moetarau to Poroti, 20km west of Whangarei, had been portentous. Just before the entourage arrived about 3 am on Saturday a mist that had enveloped the marae lifted. But the chairperson said there was tension among descendants who felt unhappy at the time it had taken to get their chiefs back. The heads had been stolen 160 years ago from local burial caves. There was also empathy for other Maori who still awaited the return of such taonga.]

...The preserved heads of two Northland Maori chiefs who died in battle early last century were to be laid to rest early today in an overnight ceremony near Whangarei. Hundreds of descendants had gathered at the Maungarongo Marae at Poroti yesterday to welcome the warriors home and agree on the final resting place. The Ngati Rua chief Koukou and Ngati Ngiro chief Moetarau were highly regarded leaders and renowned warriors. They died at a battle at Otuihu Pa, near Opuia, in 1837, when helping to defend the Taumarere faction of Ngapuhi from the iwi's Hokianga warriors. Major-General Robley reported later that the heads were preserved at Te Puna. The heads were stolen from the Whatitiri burial caves, and an iwi member had recognised them in an Auckland curio shop in the 1850s. "But unfortunately they had already been purchased by a ship captain who took them to England." They ended up in the London Royal School of Medicine but were later exchanged for Moriori cranium caps and returned to NZ in 1883. The Auckland Museum had displayed the heads until the 1950s when it decided that was no longer appropriate, and they were stored. The museum director said that while koiwi (human remains) had been returned to Maori in the past, it believed this was the first time mokomokai had been handed back. The museum had another two mokomokai but their origins were not known.]

...*'Ancestor' back where it belongs...* Te Arawa Maori welcomed home their ancestral carving Pukaki in a Rotorua lakeside marae ceremony yesterday – 120 years after its misappropriation. The carving, representing the chief Pukaki with his wife and two children, was returned to Te Arawa by the Auckland War Memorial Museum on advice from the Auckland tribe Ngati Whata. "An ancestor of ours has returned where it belongs," said the chairperson of the Arawa Maori Trust Board... "This is indeed a proud day for us, a day to remember and one we can look on with joy." Originally gifted by Te Arawa tribe Ngati Whataue to the Crown but "diverted" to the museum, the taonga travelled the world in the *Te Maori* exhibition and was a museum showpiece. A thesis on its history by a former Rotorua Art and History Museum curator, [who is also] a descendant of Pukaki, led to its return. The chair[person] of the Auckland Museum Trust Board... said once its history was revealed there was only one thing to do... On hand to witness its return were senior tribal elders, the Governor-General, [the]... Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations Minister... and the Mayor of Rotorua... The carving was carried to the Rotorua District Council building for display. Earlier, a ceremony marking its departure from the Auckland War Memorial Museum was disrupted by a [guy] with a tattooed face who stood in front of the carving and refused to let it be handed back. The [protester] told more than 100 people gathered that it should stay in Auckland. However, [a]Te Arawa kaumatua... speaking Maori and English, calmed the [protester and it] eventually stood aside... Pukaki... was one of the greatest fighting leaders of Ngati Whakaue. His mana was so great that [Pukaki] was represented through carving four generations after his death.

...A new, intimate urban space called Quay Park, next to the old railway station, boasts shallow waters for paddling in, sculptural shapes for a constant visual feast, seats for tired legs, and grass for lazing about on. Opening soon, this \$1.5 m... treat courtesy of the Ngati Whata is an oasis amidst the developments planned on the old railway land recently bought back from the Crown, between Quay St and Beach Rd. A ceremonial entranceway soars 14m, topped by symbolic fishing nets frozen in mid-fling; stylised bone fish-hooks top the four poles and are repeated in the specially designed street lamps. The lake-side seats are serpentine wave forms and others are concentric fragments of the koru form – both seating arrangements allow more social contact than the straight park bench ever could. A shallow stream and lake strewn with boulders will be irresistible on hot days. There's a small stage on the far side of the water for anxious parents to watch from or entertainers to perform on. The materials used in the park are from all over N[Z], including... marble and white pebbles from the South Island. [4] pohutukawa and two totara, all 80 years old and in the way of a new road alongside the old railway station, were moved a couple of hundred metres to the park. For[an] Auckland landscape designer... working on the... park in the heart of the city was the stuff of dreams, particularly as... [the designer, who] has been landscaping for 35 years... was given a completely free rein... His work has been widely published overseas: most recent and most important, a [4]-page feature in the *Harvard Design Journal*, with a photo of his work gracing the cover. "I could earn a hell of a lot more if I went overseas and designed for international hotels or something, but there would be no sense of specialness. This comes from the heart. And it speaks of Auckland..."

...Y[ou're alone]. Well, almost. The footsteps of the pretentious and well-heeled echo around you – but you wait for them to fade before attempting to absorb the first exhibition. An eternity seems to pass. What does it all mean? Finally the curator approaches, and explains that the "post Warholian interpretation of the inherent futility of life" got moved yesterday... [W]hat you've been staring at for... 20 minutes actually *is* the fire escape. Sound familiar? But are Kiwis really so flightless when it comes to affairs of the palette? Could those clumsy potato letters we all painted in primary school be the closest most N[Z]ers will get to understanding the broad strokes of inspiration and gritty passions of the art world? Maybe not. A recent survey by the Cultural Affairs Ministry showed 84% of N[Z]ers consider themselves cultured. But in a snobby twist, the average kiwi considers him or herself to be an intellectual giant – and thinks the rest of the nation are actually boorish dolts; those who took part in the survey believed that only a measly 12% of the country shared their interest in the arts... [Statistically, 6% of the population, or] 200,000 people... visit Auckland city's art gallery every year. [But according to a] senior gallery assistant... quite a few of them turn up by accident... "A lot of people walk around the gallery looking very intently at the plaques beside the works, and end up walking from plaque to plaque rather than

work to work. That's probably one of the big indicators that people aren't quite sure what's going on... they've just wandered in." Wandering out of Auckland this month was *WHITE OUT*, an exhibition of contemporary art that examined "concerns for limited-action processes and ambiguous objecthood, and the shaping nature that social site and architectural space have... through the language of minimalism and conceptualism." ...Only one problem: People couldn't find it. "Some people spent only... seconds in that room – they thought it was an empty exhibition. Mind you, all the works are obviously white as are the gallery walls, so it's pretty hard for them to see what's going on. And, of course, there are no plaques for them to read – just one generic plaque that covers the exhibition. The New Gallery tends to be the more problematic for most viewers... because it houses the contemporary collection, and contemporary art is obviously the one that stumps people the most." Across the road at the main gallery... 60,000 people had no trouble either finding or enjoying Charles Goldie's turn-of-the-century portraits – a statistic [the assistant] says can be attributed to the fact N[Z]ers find it easier to admire "an obvious degree of manual dexterity which isn't always present in contemporary art". But there are still worrying signs that climbing the steps to basic art knowledge is proving too confusing for many. "One incident that springs to mind was when one of the technicians left a ladder in our street-front display area, and somebody came in and asked for more information about the 'ladder installation' in the window. [That somebody] actually quite liked it[and] thought it was part of a series... Another person asked why the ladder kept reappearing, while the other installations were only there once – [that person] knew it was the same ladder, so [had] obviously looked at it pretty hard too." While someone's yet to ask which test match flanker Vince Van Gogh lost his ear in... the staff with one of the largest Colin McCahon collections in the country aren't holding their collective breath for sanity to arrive. "The thing people always say about McCahon is 'My five-year-old could do that'... Hearing visitors describe some of the work as 'it looks like a kid scribbled that' is something we're confronted with on a daily basis. Other questions include what makes it art... or just what is it generally." Not that the visitors are the only ones making the faux pas in this giddy world of form and fresco... "Normally, people don't ask whether works are hanging upside down. The instances when they've done that, they've actually been right... We could tell, because it was the artist who'd come in to tell us, which was a little embarrassing." Spend some time "absorbing" art with... a lecturer in the philosophy of art at Canterbury University, and the mood can be infectious. After 25 years in the game, [the]Professor... says seeing the occasional red-face in the gallery is nothing unusual. "Art is always a bit ahead of the game, ahead of people's ordinary expectations. That's not part of the problem, that's part of the fun. No doubt about it – art loves to hide[(and when art feels bold, it likes to hide buildings and other large objects under sheets of fabric or plastic in order to momentarily create a new sculpture)]! Maybe asking Fisher and Paykel to sponsor that *WHITE OUT* exhibition would have made it easier to find." [The]Professor... says the intention of more avant-garde works has always been to baffle popular audiences. "The ladder syndrome's an ongoing story. My brother put some ketchup on cornflakes, glued them to a piece of cardboard and hung the whole thing up with an exhibit of modern art at UCLA... [I]t stayed up for three days. And that was 35 years ago! These days, those kind of stories and pranks are a dependable part of the art world... The essential point of art is that it gives pleasure. There's wonderful modern art – the trick is to spot it among all the rubbish and dross. Actually, there's no trick at all. It might be intimidating at first, but just walk into your local gallery and see what you can enjoy. Keep your mind open when you're looking – but not so open that your brains fall out – and use your eye to try to identify what parts give you pleasure. Deciding you like something because it's been praised by critics or important people is a very bad idea. In art, as in life, we all have to make up our own minds,"... The alternative? Fake it. "Some people get very good at mimicking art gobbledygook, and there are plenty of points to be scored with curators and naive members of the opposite sex if you can roll out a sentence like... 'I love [this artist]'s paintings. They are diffused with a lugubriousness recognised only as languor, along with a sardonic laconicism sanctifying the destructive authority of Foucault's strategic reversal of the inevitable progress toward aesthetic meaning'. But not everybody's taken in by this balderdash." [A]Wellington critic and collector... concurs... Kind of. "On one hand, I think the art world is something you can inform yourself about and develop more mature opinions on as you move along, but I don't entirely agree with the idea there's nothing more to it than walking in and seeing what you like. There's very few other places where you would assume to do something like that. If you're interested in the sharemarket, you take financial advice; if it's racehorses, you study the form and talk to the punters." One of the surprising reasons many N[Z]ers may feel afraid of art is they already enjoy what they see – they just don't understand what's going on. (Kind of like getting arrested by a really stunning police officer). "Responding to something in terms of how it looks is one of the main criteria for understanding and appreciating art, so it should be visually rich. But it should also be conceptually rigorous, and communicate ideas that you find interesting, even disturbing. I think what people find intimidating about art is they don't immediately switch on to the ideas being conveyed. It's like a conversation. Once you tune into it and hear the things people are talking about, you get really interested. But if you're sitting there thinking, 'God, what is this trying to say? Is this talking to me about death? Existentialism? Am I meant to be getting a spiritual kick out of this?' then the approach itself can often be the barrier." We may, or may not know art in N[Z], but we know what we like. And at the end of the Degas, says [the critic], that's what matters. "The average Joe Bloggs in N[Z] is very interested in the arts and culture in general. It's what we live and move in. [Joe Bloggs] may read about the more shocking stuff in the papers once in awhile, but everyday we're all absorbing the real thing in one form or another."

...[in 1967 an Auckland writer] left his home in Titirangi... on a brief trip to the South Island. In his absence, strange goings-on of the artistic kind were afoot. [The writer] had been muttering for a while now about getting rid of his old bar... However, Colin McCahon disagreed. Now, with [the bar's owner] out of the way, [McCahon] seized the day. Creeping into [the writer]'s home with his paints, McCahon set to work. When [the writer] arrived home, the writer found a genuine work of art where his bench had been. "You can't throw it out now," McCahon told his friend... "I remember Colin saying to me. 'That bar could be your pension one day'," [the writer] remembers. "I'm sure [Colin] didn't realise how prophetic that comment would be." ...for 30 years, the bar sat in a small room at the bottom of [a] Titirangi garden. Now for the first time, the bar (official name: *As There Is A Constant Flow Of Light We Are Born Into A Pure Land...*) will be seen as part of [Te Papa's] *Dream Collectors* exhibition...

Five projects will represent N[Z] in September's Festival of the Dreaming, the first event in Sydney's Cultural Olympiad. The projects have received just over \$390,000 from the L[GB] to feature in the first of four annual cultural events... The largest grant, of \$178,884, goes to the Traditional Maori Performing Arts Committee in Wellington. It will enable Rotorua's Ngati Rangiwewehi, the title-holders from the 1996 Aotearoa Traditional Maori Performing Arts Festival, to present cultural dance items. Auckland's Te Toi Marama Trust receives \$113,879 to stage two outdoor concerts... *Nga Pou Wahine*, a play by [a]Paekakariki playwright... will be performed at the Sydney Opera House by Auckland's Nga Moemoea a te Rangatahi, which receives \$56,810. Toi Maori Aotearoa receives \$21,096 to enable four artists to take part in an artists' camp and literature event, and the N[Z] Film Archives gets \$19,960 for a showcase of Maori film over the past 60 years.

...The Government has no commitment to the future of the arts, says the Labour cultural affairs spokes[perso]n... Her comments followed the issuing of figures showing the Ministry of Cultural Affairs applied for \$7.927 million to finance new initiatives in the 1996-97 budget round – for the Film Archive, Film Commission, Creative N[Z] and the ministry itself. In addition, it asked for \$10.390 million in 1997-1998, and \$14.390 million in 1998-1999. Funding for \$1 million was approved for 1996-1997 and 1997-1998, and \$1.5 million for 1998-1999. "The... Government is unwilling to give any hope to the cultural sector[, which it]... doesn't see... as[being] useful or important... They've decided to give the least amount... they could get away with, and then increase it to \$1.5 million in a year which is, after all, an election year..." [At least the spokesperson has support from the new Minister of Cultural Affairs, who claims that: 'The Government should spend more, business should spend more and the public should spend more on the cultural arts.'

...a former] Minister of Cultural Affairs... [says] arts funding has declined in real terms by 14[%] since 1992... Creative N[Z] yesterday allocated arts funding of nearly \$3 million but says that 80[%] of grant applications are turned down. This compares with a 50[%] strike rate five years ago.

Creative's bosses have welcomed... a ministerial review of funding... announced at the weekend... The review will examine the balance between direct Government funding of the arts body and its main source of revenue from the L[GB]. Annually, Creative gets about \$20 million from the board and \$5 million from the Government. The arts council chair[perso]n... said Creative was pushing for total Government funding because of concern over the grants board's future. Possible deregulation of the gaming industry and buoyant TAB and casino businesses have arts bosses nervous. "We feel very vulnerable... We are gaming-dependent. It's an untenable position. But I'm a wee bit like a Swiss bank. I don't mind where the money comes from." [The chairperson] also wants an increase in Creative's budget to \$36 million, an amount deemed a "proper contribution from the public sector to the arts. Arts funding hasn't kept pace with inflation, let alone with the expectation in the community." The latest round of grants applications will see Auckland's all-[guy] contemporary dance group Black Grace on the international stage. It gets \$72,000 to perform at the Festival of Dreaming... this year and to rehearse a new two-hour dance for next year. Other recipients of grants... include the Auckland Ballet (\$40,000 for *Romeo and Juliet*)... \$55,000 for two new works and an existing choreography... [to the dance group] *The Human Garden*... and... \$35,000 [to an author] for a novel. Last month nearly \$1 million in funding was allocated by Creative's Maori and Pacific Island arts boards.

...Auckland artists and art institutions... have done well in the latest funding round announced by the Arts Board of Creative N[Z]. Grants worth more than \$2.7 million were shared among 224 artists and organisations. The cash covers less than a third of the numerous applications – about 100 more than last year... [At least 11 Auckland artists received] grants of between \$20,000 and \$2000... [while a local fine] art photographer... is one of four mid-career artists to receive the equivalent of a year's salary – around \$35,000 – to enable them to work as fulltime artists next year. The others are [an artist] who works with computers and video[and a] sculptor... both of Wellington, and... a documentary photographer, of Taranaki... [Her] grant will support a project called *The Other Half* in which [the photographer] plans to explore the effects of a car accident in 1977 which left her with severe head injuries... [The Auckland photographer's grant will enable her] to leave her job making prints in a commercial photographic workshop and develop new directions in her work. [The Auckland, who] graduated from Elam in 1982, majoring in photography[, held an] exhibition of more than 10 years of her work... at Lopdell House earlier this year. Much of her work has been of objects and environments, such as the interiors of houses, which [the artist] has created especially for the camera. Her most recent interest is incorporating text into photographs, by photographing written versions of dreams, both her own and those of others, about art and artists. Some have been written in pencil on cardboard and photographed close-up with a large-format camera, giving a very textured result. Others are written directly on to a large negative. Far from being boring – as the cliché about other people's dreams has it – the result, says [the Auckland], is a photograph of "an interesting little narrative with entertaining and funny juxtapositions." ...[the] Wellington lecturer... plans to work on an interactive computer installation and digital video disk called *Space Invaders*. [His fellow Wellingtonian] first attracted critical attention through her series of life-sized ceramic figures called *Nga Morehu* (the survivors). [The sculptor] will use her grant to develop work in stainless steel for a project entitled *The Immigrant Series*... The Auckland City Art Gallery has been given \$30,000 towards the funding of Maori guides to provide interpretation of the history of the paintings of... Charles Goldie... The gallery also received \$20,000 to support artists' projects. Other public institutions to receive funding include [a]New Plymouth... gallery for a commissioned work by [an]Auckland artist...; the Dowse Art Museum in Lower Hutt for a publication about [an]Auckland glass artist...; the Fisher Gallery, Pakuranga, for a body of new work by [an]Auckland fibre artist...; the Auckland Museum for a touring exhibition of stone sculpture by [an]Auckland sculptor...; and [an Auckland] gallery for a catalogue on the work of [an artist] whose new paintings will be exhibited there next month. The A[US]n Centre for Photography receives \$10,000 towards an exhibition in Sydney and Brisbane of contemporary photographic and video art from the South Pacific. A representative of the arts board said that this was because about 50[%] of the artists represented were from N[Z]. Auckland also... scooped the pool... [during the] handout of grants by the Pacific Islands Arts Committee... One of the grants will be used to transform the Pacific Hall of the Auckland Institute and Museum next month. Six visual artists will create a new audio-visual installation using wooden sculptures, water, lighting, flax coverings, performance and sound... Auckland comic duo The Brownies were offered \$14,000 to support a national tour after sell-out performances in four cities this year... Other grants... include: • \$10,000 to Pacific Nation Records to record and release an album. • \$5000 to the Tongan Community Trust to host the National Tongan Talent Arts Festival...

Te Waka Toi... the Maori arm of Creative N[Z]... announced its annual funding yesterday, with most of the money (\$702,290) going to Toi Maori Aotearoa... a Wellington-based national arts organisation which develops and promotes Maori art... and Taki Rua Theatre[, which]... promotes the Maori language and supports and encourages Maori playwrights. Te Waka Toi's chair[perso]n... said they were able to fund only 28 of 102 applications because of the limited budget of \$1,389,242. Other grants were: ...• \$20,000 to Tangata Records, of Auckland, to produce a CD series of Maori music. • \$15,000 to Ngati Kuri Trust Board, of Kaitiaia, to support orators teaching tribal history. • \$3000 to [a Maori] to attend the 25th annual storytellers convention in Tennessee... • \$150,000 for the 1998 Aotearoa Traditional Maori Performing Arts Festival in Wellington.

...Festival combines arts and profits... Making money out of art is a battle anywhere in the world, says... the artistic director of Wellington's N[Z] Festival of the Arts. After almost 30 years in the business, [the director] has plenty of first-hand knowledge. Riding the narrow line between what audiences find popular and challenging (always allowing for the kind of artistic stretch that gets the highbrows along) is what [the director] knows best. His challenge? To woo artists from all over the world to Wellington, which... is no problem. "This is a very, very big and high-quality event – not just in N[Z], but in world terms too." More importantly, "You've got to give the artists' a good time" – give them a reason to travel from the other side of the globe. And this is no problem either, because Wellington, with its natural amphitheatre wrapped round a stunning harbour, provides the perfect setting for a festival. "From about 6 o'clock in the evening there are squillions of people in the streets... [creating] a huge buzz in the city. The artists really enjoy that buzz." Then there's... the system of official welcome – the powhiri which "comes as a shock, but a fantastic experience" for overseas performers. Born in Birmingham, [the director] started his artistic career at the Cockpit Theatre. It was the early 70s, the Cockpit was part of London's exciting fringe theatre culture and the young [midlander] put together a long contact list of some of the most exciting talent in Europe. After seven years [the midlander] decided to take on a challenge and, with [a]friend... created a partnership that brought theatre companies, ballets and even circuses (including the A[US]n Circus Oz) to London. This was when [the midlander] developed the kind of commercial nous so necessary when directing an event like the N[Z] Festival which, after three years of losing money, started making some in 1992. It was particularly successful last year – the first under [the midlander's] directorship... Financially... the... [director]'s challenges are tough. Unlike most arts festivals on the world circuit there is little Government funding here and organisers rely heavily on corporate sponsorship, ticket sales and the culturally-minded Governments like those of France, Germany and England who pay a substantial percentage of travel costs in an effort to export their culture. "We have to sell over 200,000 tickets to break even – basically one to every person in Wellington... And we've done that over the last two festivals." It's also helpful if some of the acts that [the director] chooses can be sold to one of the other arts festivals that fall around the same time, such as the Hong Kong Festival (of which [the midlander] is also international programme director), the Festival of Perth and the Adelaide Festival... [□ Three] crucial reviews under way will have a huge impact on the arts and their funding in [NZ] for the next decade...

On the same day recently that a television commercial assumed, "The world our children grow up in may be harsher than ours..." I read a memoir by[a] novelist... describing London immediately after... W[W2] on her arrival from South Africa... "...what strikes me most about that time... is... the contrast. On the one hand, the low spirits... but on the other, an optimism for the future so far from how we are thinking now it seems almost like the symptom of a general foolishness." That overriding optimism following the Depression and the war lasted through the 1950s here too. Everybody seemed to decide the world needed to be put to rights. But isn't it appalling that at a time when every Western country has

never been materially richer; when more people have more “things” to gratify their vanity and their senses, everyone accepts an inevitability that life in general is to become harsher. So what went wrong? One of the problems was the overly zealous and ill-directed social engineering of the kind of social democracy we had in this country, even if the actual plunge into pessimism was precipitated by the sudden loss of full employment in the early 1970s. My favourite among the many economic absurdities of that time was the egg entitlement scheme which made it illegal for anyone to set up a poultry farm without buying the right to produce a certain number of eggs from someone else who was reducing production by that many. But the great truth extrapolated from the economic arthritis of the 1970s is that any attempt at social engineering is destructive and undesirable. So, the apostles of the harsh new world tell us, we cannot tolerate social engineering. This nonsense could be a subterfuge on their part, a deception, but I suspect it’s a blindness imposed by ideological thinking. For example, a phrase in a recent Arts Council publication tut-tutted at one type of funding as possibly social engineering. Does the council not see that giving any grants to any artists is precisely that?

...Two months ago the Arts Council of N[Z] – rather quaintly known these days as Creative N[Z] – put out a modest document called “In Pursuit of the Arts.” It contains some statistics which should be better known: N[Z]ers (in the year ended March 1996) spent \$1.9 billion on cultural goods and services. Some 48[%] of Kiwis count reading their favourite leisure activity and all of us spend \$3.8 million a week on books. Fully 81[%] of the population states they are interested in culture and cultural activities and 77[%] believe that such activities should receive Government funding. So one can fairly assume that three-quarters of ordinary people are interested in how the Government subsidises the arts... The first... [of t]hree crucial reviews now in the pipeline... is the major review into arts funding announced by the Minister of Cultural Affairs... Compared with other countries, a disproportionate amount of Creative N[Z]’s funding (some 85[%]) comes from gaming... The... report is expected early 1998. The second is an internal review by Creative N[Z] of its strategic plan, the policy document nitted out three years ago. All potential applicants must be interested in the so-called “people goals” and “arts goals” of this document because those dictate how the two arts boards of Creative N[Z] go about making their decisions. The third review, under discussion at arts boards meetings, is looking at the actual process by which grants are allocated. The problems go back to the ideologically driven brave “new environment” imposed with minimal consultation on the arts community by Creative N[Z] three years ago. In the name of accountability, efficiency, transparency and cost-cutting (though this last is not really admitted as such) the “new environment” promised a “cross-disciplinary” scheme that was “bicultural” and “multi-contestible,” based on a new, superior, cheaper and incorruptible method of assessment. The old QEII Arts Council way of allocating so much to literature, so much to visual arts, to music, theatre, dance and so on, vanished. Now we are... pitting, apparently, children’s writer against composer, theatre company against sculptor, orchestra against choreographer against publisher against film-maker. Who decides – and how? Now there’s the rub. The peer panels of old have given way to two ministerially appointed arts boards, doggedly determined to do it all themselves and relying on a suspect marking system and staff in-house advice. We do not have the “peer assessment mechanisms” required by the 1994 Arts Council Act. How can the Society of Authors accept the arts boards as peers qualified to make artistic judgments when not a single member has any discernible knowledge about literature or, indeed, much arts expertise at all? We... the N[Z] Society of Authors (PEN Inc)... argue that as “stakeholders” we should have a part in the selection of assessors for each sector, who should then sit as panels sharing their specialist knowledge. Their rigorously debated judgments should form the basis of the arts boards’ final decision. At present assessors work in isolation marking applications solely on “excellence” on a scale of 25 points (and maybe settling a few scores along the way – it’s possible). At the end the grants lists become public and the arts community makes its own assessment of where the money is going. With four granting rounds now completed, these are the complaints I have most frequently heard from all three arts sectors: The single business model does not work across the board. Literature, visual arts and performing arts need differing policies and mechanisms. Many individuals and organisations are so discouraged by the austere, unfriendly business jargon of Creative N[Z]’s documents and letters that they are not applying at all. New and emerging artists are missing out badly. So are fragile areas like youth performing arts and children’s writing. Funding single projects discourages risk-taking and confidence in forward planning. Creative N[Z] has responded by blaming inadequate funding and the act which binds it, or by implying that the only voices doing the grumbling are those who missed out.

...As envelope-opening occasions go, it doesn’t quite have the impact of the Academy Awards. But for the applicants in the annual Creative N[Z] arts funding round, what was lurking in the letter box yesterday could have spelled either survival or disaster. Many arts organisations were left wondering how they would cope after learning of cuts of... just under 10[%]. A cut had been expected, but of around 5[%] – the amount by which C[reative] N[Z] had reduced its overall budget. Among the hardest hit are Wellington Sinfonia (down \$87,000), Dunedin Sinfonia (down \$56,000), and the Auckland-based company Theatre At Large (down \$51,000). The Choral Foundation is down \$40,000, Downstage Theatre [(\$40,000)], Christchurch’s Court Theatre [(\$40,000), Chamber Music N[Z] (\$39,500), Opera NZ (\$30,000)]... the Museum Director’s Federation [(\$30,000) and Wellington’s Circa Theatre \$20,000... Pressure on funds had been added to by C[reative] N[Z]’s decision to maintain its funding for the Royal N[Z] Ballet to the same level as last year. However, C[reative] N[Z] no longer annually funds two organisations[–] ...Auckland’s Watershed Theatre Trust, [and an Auckland dance company (though the dance company’s choreographer]... got \$20,000 for study trips to New York and Europe[–] ...freeing up \$600,000... The Arts Board also allocated 197 project grants worth \$3.05 million. However, it had received 737 applications for more than \$12.6 million, and many worthwhile projects had missed out... Even those who count among the winners are unlikely to be dancing with unalloyed joy.

...The board’s allocations were, on average, 10[%] lower this year. [But]Auckland Theatre Company got a 19[%] increase... to \$390,000. Artspace, which exhibits new work by visual artists, was allocated \$225,000, and the Auckland Philharmonia received \$1,035,000, up \$3500... Other grants included... \$40,000 to the Rockquest Trust for the secondary school rock music competition. [● The battle of the bands final is on tonight.

...‘A MILLION dollar revamp of Glen Eden Playhouse is set to thrust west Auckland into the theatre limelight. Acts that use Auckland City’s Aotea Centre and the North Shore’s Bruce Mason Centre can now add west Auckland dates. The former town hall and movie palace closed on Christmas Eve after getting resource consent for the major changes. The renovation includes a pit for a 20-piece orchestra, a balcony, a revolving stage, plus new changing and scenery rooms. The Glen Eden players committee has set up a trust board to apply for grants to fund the renovation, with one already from the ASB.’]

...Ares, the Greek god of war, ma[d]e... a brief call on the Auckland City Council last night to put some steel into a plea for a new \$2 million home for drama. Actor Kevin Smith strode before councillors in a costume... to plead for a new venue for the Watershed Theatre. The popular drama group lost its Viaduct Basin stage last December when the building was sold... [In related news, t]axpayers had been told the Museum of N[Z] – ...a museum made... more expensive [because it was built] on an earthquake faultline... – [would]... cost \$280.6 million but latest figures show it will be \$317.2 million. [However, the] museum says there has been no increase in the cost in real terms. The financial controller... said the \$280.6 million was the cost of the building in December 1991 dollars... The difference resulted from an inflation adjustment and inclusion of exhibition costs in the figure. “They are not new costs. They had been budgeted for but had not previously been shown as part of the museum construction costs,”...

The Minister of Cultural Affairs... said Te Papa had been built under budget, and... the... museum’s... chief executive... said in the annual report that during the year Te Papa had a net surplus of \$776,000, about \$1.65 million better than budgeted. Income for the year was \$1.098 m... greater than budget... The building project expenditure was \$6.126 m... under budget and the exhibitions project was under budget by \$4.138 m...

The Museum of N[Z] spent... \$24,000 on its Christmas party last year but rejects criticism from Labour that it was “grossly lavish expenditure.” The party at the waterfront site in Wellington was for 270 guests at \$88 a head, although the Manurewa MP... who sought information on the party, believes only 150 attended at \$165 a head... “Taxpayers do not give over their precious money in order for nameless bureaucrats to have a

boozy knees-up.” However, [the]museum... said last night that no apology was being made for the amount spent. It was part of the museum’s effort to raise... \$49 million towards its costs. It had already raised... \$12 m... so it could be argued that the party cost had come from that budget. “The philosophy behind it is to spend a bit up front at this stage with the view of raising \$49 m...” Anyone familiar with fundraising on that scale knew it was what you had to do to bring in the dollars. The museum was operating in a new environment and corporate fundraising was part of it.

...*Sour words over identity of brand new museum* The... Museum of N[Z] has stamped a new \$200,000 brand on its new national treasurehouse, raising ministerial eyebrows and public debate... The reactions have been mixed. The Minister of Cultural Affairs... was surprised and concerned at the cost of developing the logo... [A] Labour MP... was appalled at the cost of the new brand when it simply abbreviated the official name and added what [the MP] believed was a baffling... message. On the other hand, Wellington designers have approved the brand as a cost-effective investment for the museum. The museum’s chief executive... welcomed the public debate but indicated her own surprise at the minister’s comments. [The chief executive] said the Government had asked the museum board to come up with a combined total of \$49 million to top-up capital and operating costs, and then find \$4 million in yearly revenue. Given such a commercial task [the chief executive] said it was “very interesting” that the minister objected to a proven commercial strategy to raise money. The brand development had cost between \$110,000 to \$120,000 over two years, including focus group research. Another \$80,000 would be spent on introducing the brand to museum stationary. [The chief executive] said the money came from a total marketing budget of \$1 million, and a total museum budget of \$70 million this financial year.

...Virtual bungi-jumping and virtual sheep-shearing[, which] includes virtual blood – if you make the wrong move... [–] are part of the high-tech armoury of lures for non-traditional visitors[to] the Museum of N[Z]... Two... rides will also be on offer. One goes back to N[Z]’s past, featuring Maui fishing up the North Island and being blasted out of the volcano which formed Lake Taupo. The other ride will be a futuristic Wellington. [A special] effects expert... who worked on the hit A[US]n film *Babe*, and[a NZ film] director... have helped to develop the computer-generated exhibit. Time Warp... [is] the only part of the museum to have entrance charges... \$15 for an adult and \$11 a child for both rides. Other features... are the 88m-long natural light gallery on level five. It will host what... the... museum communications manager... said would be probably the most comprehensive exhibition of N[Z] paintings. Maori, Pacific Island, early settler, natural history and kiwiana provide themes of other exhibits, most of which use interactive computer technology. The museum also boasts a 330-seat theatre, a 320-seat conference room, several cafes, a restaurant, and a painstakingly recreated walk through native bush, including artificial caves and lava flows.

...*GREAT EXPECTATIONS*: It is unrealistic to expect 700,000 visitors to the Museum of N[Z] a year, says a Victoria University tourism professor. [The p]rofessor... warned that Wellington must not be over-reliant on the museum as a drawcard... [after s]ome tourism operators... lauded the museum as a tourism windfall for Wellington... “Very few people travel just for cultural motivations,”... Shopping comes before culture for visitors to N[Z], according to a Tourism Board survey for 1996... 86[%] went shopping compared with 54[%] visiting museums.

...BARCELONA’S museums have reported a 30[%] increase in visitors last year. The Picasso Museum is the most popular with 822,674 visitors, followed by Barcelona Football Club’s Museum which attracted 729,000. The Museu Nacional d’Art de Catalunya welcomed 303,000 visitors and its new Gothic gallery, which opened this year is expected to further boost numbers. The Museu d’Art Contemporani de Barcelona attracted 240,000 visitors. Meanwhile, a new \$140 million theme park called Isla Magica, based on Spanish voyages of discovery, has been built in Seville.

...Spain’s new Guggenheim art museum opened to the public in Bilbao last night, offering a symbol of hope to a population weary from decades of industrial decline, soaring unemployment and violence. Spain’s King... officially inaugurated the fantastically shaped building under heavy security on Saturday, just days after police foiled a plot by Basque separatist guerrillas... to bomb the ceremony. As elegantly dressed dignitaries arrived at the gallery, some 500 Basque separatists demonstrated outside the museum they call a symbol of [US imperialism. However, hundreds] of Bilbao residents crowded at the entrance, bubbling with excitement about the international spotlight on the northern Spanish city. Most stopped by a growing mound of flowers and candles marking the spot where ETA (Basque Homeland and Freedom) rebels shot dead a police[officer when the officer] tried to question two [people] unloading flower pots from a van parked near the museum. The pots contained remote-controlled explosives... Many Basques see the museum as a cornerstone of Bilbao’s urban renewal... Others feel the \$US160 million... price tag is too high and the focus is too much on non-Basque culture. The museum’s exotic profile, with undulating walls of shimmering titanium, has electrified the world of art and architecture. Some experts have called the building... the greatest[constructed] this century. Others have likened it to a giant cauliflower. The facade hints at the original snail-shaped Guggenheim museum in New York. [By the way, a gorilla has exhibited and sold some of its paintings. Elephants are also regarded as artists (indeed, many zoos – including Auckland’s – sell elephant artwork as a means of raising funds)!]

...*Portrait of the artist as a young girl* It’s possible those who would serve [the girl] best do her the biggest disservice... [The] agent for this young painter from Los Angeles – still a week short of her 12th birthday – has coined the “Mozart with a paintbrush” phrase, which resonates more for its LA hucksterism than its illumination. And such simplistic boosterism is contagious. Television news here fell into convenience labelling by calling her “a visiting child genius.” Such claims – in part, but not entirely, confirmed by her exhibition at the Downtown Hilton Gallery – obscure what [the 11-year-old] is, a precociously talented painter who happily accepts some critics have noted similarities (not always flattering) between her work and that of Picasso... and [others]. Then there’s the cuteness factor of painting in “magic slippers,” and the fact that her work here – as with the recent exhibition of John Lennon drawings at the Hyatt Regent – is exhibited beyond the critics’ usual circuit. After her appearance in[television] interviews, the Romanian-born [girl]’s self-assurance has been seen as media-groomed, another debit in the ledger which would prefer children to be more inarticulate... (Her work has grossed more than \$NZ7 million and [the girl has] been profiled by *Newsweek* as well as frequently on [US television, so it] is media-aware.) ...Yet, in person, [the girl] is alarmingly charming. Just back from shopping – [where it] bought a jade fish hook – and excitedly chatting about having seen Maori carvings in Rotorua, [the young genius] settles down to answer questions while fiddling with a hair-tie like any other 11-year-old... Her mother... and father... would seem to be the levellers: [mum], down to earth and unassuming, says they have moved their daughter into a private Christian school, not to separate her from her peers but because they... [want her to] graduate with a good grounding in all subjects as well as having a religious framework. While downstairs in the gallery buyers are being escorted around the works by agents, [the girl] sits upstairs sipping juice, fiddling with her jade necklace and talking... about discovering lithograph techniques... sculpture... and... incorporating Maori motifs... They will allow her to expand her style[, although]... seeing other artists’ work – Picasso... and those others in the litany of names most often trotted out – doesn’t directly influence her... And the money being made downstairs? It doesn’t matter to her whether her works sell or not...

A new biography of Salvador Dali reappraises his achievements as an artist but, [the NZ Herald’s critic insists, the artist] was basically a berk thinly disguised as a genius THE world is about to be exposed to... the life and achievements of the memorably eccentric painter and cultural troublemaker Salvador Felipe Jacinto Dali... and his pointed moustache... Again. On the eve of the release of... *The Shameful Life Of Salvador Dali*, and a series of rare films which will screen on the BBC’s *OmniBus* programme in Britain, it’s timely to recall why most serious art observers loathe Salvador Dali. Where to begin? His support of fascism? His love of Franco? His world-class greed? His spectacular immorality? The fact that [the artist] signed hundreds of thousands of blank sheets of paper so nobody will ever again be sure of what is and what is not a genuine Dali? [Someone once] came up with a suitable anagram of his signature – “Avida Dollars.” Personally, I loathed his contrived appearance more than this uncontrived greed. Many artists have eventually sold their souls without making it anything like as obvious as Dali. You could almost argue there is something impressive about his honesty in affairs of the dollar. Dali did not invent the trade in empty signature; [Dali] exploited it energetically. But the dumbly obvious way in which this... awkward boy from Spanish Catalonia deliberately constructed what [it] took to be a fascinating image

for himself had more serious consequences. The silly moustache. The wild-eyed stare. The ridiculous cane. The absurdly macho way of wearing his coat slung over his shoulders as if it were a matador's cloak. This dramatic personal makeover was driven by a shallow belief that geniuses looked a certain way... A society that was still learning always to judge books by their covers – the single most distressing and unhelpful development of the media age – was receiving early and insistent tuition in its bad new ways. The camera adored Dali because [the artist] made its life so much easier. His deliberately photogenic image freed photographers of the need to be any good at their jobs. A chimpanzee with an Instamatic could hardly have failed to take an “interesting” picture of this human photo opportunity waiting to happen. Since [Dali] never went out in his civvies, [the artist] could never be photographed in a state of unpreparedness. Dali made himself into a kind of logo, instantly recognisable in any situation... the Nike tick made flesh. And... the... camera age repaid him by turning to him for illustration and amusement much too often. So why an article on this superficially photogenic fraud, of whose work [a journalist], confronted by a Dali retrospective in his *Postcard from Paris* television show, pointed out: “It was impossible not to burst out yawning”? There are two reasons. The first is that the new biography is written by... [someone whose writing] must be taken seriously... No Spanish writer before him has dealt as directly with [Dali's] failings... Spain is lucky to have this clever Irish [scribe] as its chief cultural apologist in the anglophone world. [The scribe, who] lives near Granada and has been a Spanish citizen since 1984... is a writer with the clout to organise ambitious television programmes to accompany his texts. *Fire in the Blood*, his BBC series on Spain, was a rare... example of a wide-ranging investigation of a foreign culture mounted solely because its author lives there and has clout... The second reason it is important to deal with Dali is because his popularity is of a kind that appears horribly significant at present: Critics hate him, but the public does not. It worships him. If there is one cultural development that absolutely must take place in the art years ahead, it is a bridging of such gaps. We simply cannot afford another century in which the tastes of the public and those of its aesthetic commentators are as dramatically divergent as they have been during the years of modernism. Dali is certainly one of the century's signature artists. Bad surrealism inspired by his example – involving distorted nudes, warped landscapes, sagging watches, mysterious chessboards – is one of the few modern-art styles that can be said to have achieved true popularity. Thus I made myself read [the Irish scribe's] biography with as open a heart as I could manage, and for the first third of it at least I was rewarded with the intriguing story of an artist who was annoying, yes, arrogant, yes, but also fantastically determined and perversely honest... An easy blusher, Dali conquered his own shame by admitting to it shamelessly. The most spectacular example of this confessional freedom was his admission of an insatiable appetite for masturbation. [Dali] made countless pictures about it. Wrote about it. Talked about it. And, I suppose, made it easier for us to accept that everybody does it. (I'm trying hard to be charitable here. My uncharitable view is that admitting endlessly to being an obsessive masturbator was a tried and trusted Dali tactic for gaining attention that withstood repetition.)... Basically, time after time, Dali painted colour photographs of weird dreams. Or what appear to be his weird dreams. Of course, real dreams have none of the sensational clarity of a Dali. Indian restaurant tigers don't leap out of the mouths of throbbing penis fish and attack sleeping nudes with bayonets in real dreams. Real dreams are never as silly as Dali's. They are grounded in less glamorous emotions, in duller memories. Only on the cover of Iron Maiden albums and in the gothic jottings of schoolboys could such contrived ramblings be mistaken for real dreams. [The Irish scribe] is good on the young Dali[, and] points out that [the artist] was what people in Britain would think of as a notably spoilt child, a concept Spain apparently does not share. So young Dali terrorised his household with his whims, and could even be found depositing his turds about the house in places chosen for their maximum annoyance to his mother. Such a child was allowed to grow into an approximation of an adult without the application of any effective correctives. Small wonder... [that Dali] was frozen, unpleasantly, in the perpetual grimace of adolescence... [taking] pleasure in saying, doing and painting exactly what [the artist] wanted without a thought for the feelings of others. His one time mentor, the founder of surrealism, Andre Breton, accused him of “systematic vulgarisation” in the second half of his career. This is, indeed, what happened. Once [Dali] took up with his beloved Gala, another human being so lacking in basic human kindnesses and scruples that earlier ages would certainly have torched her as a witch, there is a noticeable dropping of standards – first moral, then communal, then aesthetic. The two of them cheated, stole, smirked, mocked and maddened in tandem... When Dali finally fell out with his family it was because [the artist] inscribed a picture with the words: “Sometimes I spit on the portrait of my mother for the fun of it.” These are not forgivable acts, and this was not a salvageable career. - 1997

“...there are so many... [things to do] in Auckland right now... [so how] important is it that we come along and see this [exhibition of yours]? ...In your opinion... [why] is it important for us to have art...?” “Tricky. I guess as a cultural... outlet... otherwise you just get commerce and business... it's a way of releasing a lot of ideas out there... in a freer more creative way...” “So... when you talk about getting ideas out, would you say that you believe yourself to have things that the rest of the world needs to see...?”

...what is an artist in this world but a servant, a lackey for the rich and powerful. Before we even begin to work to fill this craving of ours we must find a patron, a rich [person] of affairs, or a merchant, or a prince, or a pope. We must bow, fawn, kiss hands to be able to do the things we must do or die. We are harlots, always peddling beauty at the doorsteps of the mighty.

[The artist – or, to provide a more precise definition in this instance, the cartoonist –] says his job is a full-time holiday.

WHEN [A SINGER]'S latest song, “We Didn't Start the Fire,” and his fourteenth album, *Storm Front*, both hit No. 1 during the same week, it was a rare double chart-topping triumph. Yet [the singer], whose budding musical career in the sixties prevented his completing high school... has had financial setbacks. Part of the problem, the singer/composer admits, is that “artists are historically knuckleheads” when it comes to money... [“The number of highly paid entertainers who have declared bankruptcy is staggering. A community relations director has assessed the situation as follows: “The majority of entertainers can't handle success. They are not equipped for success. You have a situation where the entertainer who is used to living hand-to-mouth suddenly gets more money than it can spend.” Yet, according to the singer: “We (artists/entertainers)] don't do what we do for money. It's because... we don't have high school diplomas, and it's the only thing we can do.”]

Unless the Auckland Symphonia can turn fully professional by next year it is likely to disintegrate. The prospect of full-time employment has helped to keep the players together for the past four years but hopes of attaining that goal are receding. The orchestra has been unable to raise more than about \$19,500 a year locally, including \$16,000 from local bodies. - 1972

A call for the Auckland Philharmonia to receive a fairer share of national arts funding was made yesterday at the orchestra's education programme launch[, when concerts] and workshops designed to give hands-on experience to primary, secondary and university students from Taupo to Whangarei were announced... The Music Works '97 programme, sponsored by the *N[Z] Herald*, will give budding conductors a rare opportunity to practise with the 63-piece... orchestra. Young composers will also gain valuable orchestral experience along with a studio quality tape of the Philharmonia's rendition of their work... The Philharmonia president... welcomed the opportunities provided by sponsors' support, but said that towns like Rotorua and Whangarei deserved more than a once-a-year visit... [T]he Auckland Philharmonia should be allowed to tap into regional touring funds previously reserved exclusively for the *N[Z] Symphony Orchestra*. A 1996 report recommending that those funds become

contestable had been ignored by the Government... “But we are hopeful that the new minister will have another look at that... so... we can go... where the NZSO don’t... go.” Both the Auckland Philharmonia and the NZSO were fulltime professional orchestras, but the Philharmonia received \$1 million each year from Creative NZ while the NZSO now attracted \$13 million... 40% of the Philharmonia orchestra’s income came from the box office...

The past couple of weeks... have been something of a musical trade fair. Both major orchestras have strutted their stuff in showpiece series aimed at attracting subscribers... Four nights of Beethoven with the Auckland Philharmonia verses three nights of Brahms with the NZSO. It’s the sort of battle that could give competition a good name. The best news... is that both bands are... [seeking] to expand the Auckland classical music audience. The Auckland Philharmonia is more adventurous, increasing the number of seats on offer 52.4% – up from 23,100 seats to 35,200. The NZSO is offering a more modest 14.3% increase to 24,000 seats. Together, that’s an additional 15,100 seats on the highly competitive Auckland entertainment market. And given the older age bracket of most concertgoers, a highly priced segment of the market. Strangely, such considerations do not seem to have concerned the NZSO’s marketing experts, who have increased prices up to 43%... compared with the Auckland Philharmonia’s modest 6... to 12% increase. Even odder, the NZSO price rises are most swinging for subscribers to the smaller five-concert series – the one you would expect newcomers, and those most worried about price, to gravitate to... All of which is no doubt music to the Auckland Philharmonia’s ears. A per-concert price for a “premier” seat in the NZSO’s 10-concert series is \$49 compared with \$39 for the same seat with the Philharmonia... No doubt the NZSO puts a premium on its reputation as the senior orchestra. But without entering into the “who is better musically” debate, the reality is the Philharmonia runs rings round the NZSO when it comes to attracting Auckland audiences. The last fortnight’s battle of the bands was a perfect example. The Philharmonia’s Beethoven series sold out weeks beforehand by direct mail. The NZSO, despite the advantage of NZ’s biggest classical drawcard [in NZ’s premier] pianist... and endless advertising, was reduced to offering a free ticket for every one bought... [E]ven then there were plenty of empty seats. In such circumstances, lifting one’s prices so dramatically does seem an odd thing to do.

...As a business[person] I fully appreciate economic reality... Through personal involvement with the Auckland Philharmonia, I [also] know how hard the orchestra works to bring music to many hundreds of thousands throughout the upper half of NZ. I know how limited their funding is compared to that of the Wellington-based NZSO. I know about the hard work of the musicians, many of whom hold down several jobs... With many demands on money and... the ongoing demands of scarce resources... the Government faces difficult decisions... But in Government, as in business, there is a danger of focusing only on dollars: “knowing the cost of everything but the value of nothing.” That danger is inherent in the present debate over funding for the NZ Ballet... The ballet’s dancers work under similar conditions [to the orchestra’s musicians]. And I know about the great efforts they have made to take dance, not just to the major centres, but to smaller cities like Timaru. An important cultural institution like the ballet should not be under threat. Instead, we must all look to the future and consider more than just the financial imperatives... I am not suggesting an open cheque-book. Businesses like ballet and opera companies and orchestras must be efficiently managed and extract maximum advantage from scarce resources. However, our children and our [grand-]children will be badly served if we fail to provide appropriate financial support now to the arts – [as they are already badly served (or are likely to be) by our continuing failure to provide appropriate financial support to educational, medical and other infrastructural services. An advantage for the arts is that funding services which only a minority want to use (e.g., those providing ballet and orchestral or operatic music) is easier – and ultimately cheaper – than fully funding services which everyone wants to use!]

...an old] mate... rang yesterday sounding... glum... Seems [my mate] has spent the winter on a fruitless search for a new major sponsor for his annual Symphony Under the Stars free concert in the Domain. If [my mate] does not come up with a new sugar daddy by the end of the month, [my mate] will have to call the show off. I knew things were serious. Only someone in really dire straits would come to a journalist with their money problems. I thought I had best humour him. What was in it for me if I invested? [My mate] sighed. That was all anyone wanted to know these days. Banks, insurance companies, brewers. Now me. Everyone... was looking for “front-end benefits.” It seemed the brownie points which a big company could earn from such sponsorship in terms of corporate image and warm fuzzies were no longer enough. Not for A[merican] brewers Fosters, which backed the concert for its first four years... All of which is rather a pity. For there is something about these mass feel-good events which really appeals to Aucklanders. No doubt the “free” bit has a lot to do with it, but whatever the reason, we do flock together for them, whether it be... summer musical extravaganzas... the Santa Parade, the Round the Bays jog or in recent years, dare I mention it, the Hero Parade... People who would not be seen dead at the opera or a symphony concert happily flock along with blankets and chilly bins to join their high-brow neighbours. They might number 200,000 or even 300,000. Who knows? It is a lot. Crime around the city apparently plummets for the night, while at the Domain itself, we somehow manage to be as well behaved as a Sunday school picnic, despite large quantities of BYO wine. The first Domain concert came in January 1990 as part of the... [Bank of NZ’s] 150th birthday celebrations. [My mate] received the concert in January 1993 after his plans, as Dragon Boat Festival organiser, for an orchestra in the harbour concert refused to float. [So my mate] came up with Opera in the Park instead. It was a spectacular success. The next year [my mate] added a symphony concert as well, then in 1995 a Christmas extravaganza. Last summer, the opera concert was replaced by a broader-based “Showtime” concert. Now the symphony concert seems doomed, unless a sponsor suddenly appears. [My mate] will not talk numbers but word around town is that each concert costs about \$500,000, of which the major sponsor finds about half. For that, they would get... well... an awful lot of brownie points. And yes, I am sure we would all start shopping with them as well.

...Opera-goers heading for tonight’s extravagant version of *Aida* under Auckland skies are being promised the best performance of its international tour so far. The production... was premiered in Singapore... before going on to Perth. Although those performances won fine reviews, the executive producer... is expecting even better things at Ericsson Stadium. “The cast have come together for their third city, so they feel they’re an ensemble, rather than a group of individual soloists...” [His] upbeat assessment extended to the 450 extras. As in Singapore and Perth, they are local volunteers, many with no theatrical experience. “When you think that, 10 days ago, these people were wandering around the streets of Auckland going about their normal business, it’s quite amazing... The commitment, enthusiasm and willingness to learn quickly among the extras here is the best... We’ve put this show on with less rehearsal time and that’s mostly attributable to the attitude of the Auckland people.” The principals, who include... [a US tenor and a] Scottish soprano... will be backed by 190 musicians and a 200-voice choir. An audience close to 30,000 capacity is expected, and ticket prices range from \$70 to \$190. [The producer also] said there were more “butterflies” this time round, mainly because the performances in Singapore and Perth had been indoors. [But the] forecast for tonight is for a continuation of recent dry... conditions...

The scene is right out of an ancient civilisation – Egyptian statues, pyramids, chariots and giant cauldrons. But the money that 30,000 people paid to witness it at Ericsson Stadium... last night was cold, modern cash – a cool \$3 million worth. While most enjoyed a great night under the stars, for some opera buffs lured to the one-off performance of *Aida*, it was not money well spent... [The NZ] *Herald* received some angry cellphone calls from people seated on the playing field at the stadium[, and the] police confirmed that queues of people besieged the ticket office during the interval demanding their money back.irate members of the audience protested that... [they were unable] to see well. People who had travelled from across the North Island to catch the lavish production abandoned their expensive seats during the interval for the cheaper terraces with a [better] view... One... who would not be named but had paid \$135 for his ticket, said that unless refunds were granted [it was his intention to] take a class action suit to stop organisers exporting the show. “You can’t sell tickets to a show which [patrons can’t see.]” A doctor... had spent more than \$1000 in ticket, travel and accommodation expenses for him and his two friends, who had travelled from Wellington. “Everyone is really hacked off. The cheaper seats on the sides [had] far better views,” said [the doctor]... The promoters could not be contacted for comment.

...The executive producer of *Aida* rejects claims that some people could not see the one-off opera performance... “I... sat in all seats before and during the performance... I defy anyone who says they couldn’t see the show,”... [However, many members] of the audience... [defied him by saying] they could not see... [Amongst them was a doctor who] had spent \$1000 on eight tickets to celebrate her 15th wedding anniversary... [T]he night out was a “terrible rip-off and a disaster.” ...They could see only... 5[%] of the show and gave up their seats during the first act to perch on concrete steps... [Furthermore, a] handful of disgruntled opera-goers received refunds on Friday night, and up to 50 people were given other seats... Contrary to earlier media reports, [the executive producer] said tickets would not be automatically refunded. Each complaint would be considered on its merits.

...*Opera fans keep up complaints chorus*... More than 30 disgruntled fans from around the country... have contacted the *Herald* describing the... *Aida*... event as a scam, fiasco, an absolute disgrace and a rip-off. “Such a scam is the stuff riots are made of,” wrote [a resident] of Mt Eden, who paid \$125 for her seat on the playing field. [A resident] of One Tree Hill, agreed. “The promoters of the concert should go down on their knees to thank the Egyptian gods that I and the rest of the audience on centre field did not rebel on the night and become show stoppers.” ...Most [of the disgruntled fans] were angered by comments by the executive producer... who on Monday rejected complaints that people could not see the show.

...[an e]xtravaganza supremo... was offered ground-level seats to the one-off performance of *Aida* but refused because [it “knew it] wouldn’t see anything.” [The supremo], who designed the Auckland Commonwealth Games opening and closing ceremonies, said that each row of seats on the ground level at Ericsson Stadium... should have been at least 150mm higher than the row in front to give everyone a reasonable view. “I saw it coming... After going to the [Wacko (r:p811, ln28) concert on November 9 last year – which cost me ‘\$75 (it cost just \$4.50 for the best seats in the house at his Wellington Town Hall show in July 1973’) –]I knew we wouldn’t be able to see anything at *Aida* when the seats were on a flat surface. The seats should have been raked... A 300mm height difference between rows would have been perfect...” ...Those [members of Friday night’s audience who are] seeking refunds received support yesterday from the Consumers’ Institute, which suggested that aggrieved out-of-towners might also be entitled to compensation for travel and accommodation... Disgruntled... opera fans should know in the next few days if they will get refunds...

You get what you pay for? Not always, according to a group of people who paid up to \$190 for seats at the Auckland production of *Aida* last month – many claim they would have had a better view in the \$75 “cheap seats.” Patrons who complained after the production that they couldn’t see the action on stage have had their claims for a refund turned down by the producers. Global Entertainment Pte Limited said they should have got a refund while they were at the show. However, a consumer watchdog organisation says disgruntled patrons can take the matter further under the Consumer Guarantees Act. The law says that a service – such as seating at a performance – must be fit for its purpose. “If you buy a ticket to a show and there is no proper sight-line to the stage from your seat, you are entitled to your money back,” says a report in the latest issue of *Consumer* magazine. “This applies unless you were specifically told when you bought your ticket that the seat would have a restricted view.” The magazine advises that the best course of action is to complain at the time and ask to be reseated – but other options are available. “If this fails, take the matter up as soon as possible after the show. If you still receive no satisfaction, you can take a case to a Disputes Tribunal,”... As well as the cost of the ticket, consumers can claim for consequential loss, such as the cost of getting there – a significant cost for those who travelled from as far away as the South Island... The Consumers’ Institute has fielded an unprecedented number of calls from disgruntled *Aida* patrons.

...Disgruntled *Aida* patrons have vowed to mount a legal battle to get their money back after the show’s producers refused any further refunds... The chief executive of the Consumers Institute... said Global Entertainment’s claim that only those who sought refunds at the show were entitled to get their money back was “nonsense.” ...However... [the chief executive, who] was appalled by the way the promoters and producers had handled complaints... advised patrons to battle the Auckland-based promoters, rather than deal overseas with Singapore-based Global Entertainment... Representatives from... [the companies] could not be contacted for comment yesterday. A spokes[perso]n from a public relations [firm] representing the companies, said the *Aida* marketing manager... had “gone to ground.” His telephone was disconnected on Monday.

...[a lawyer has] filed papers in the High Court at Auckland on behalf of at least 1500 ticket-holders who went to the... opera at Ericsson Stadium. ...[an] Auckland sharebroker... isn’t short of a bob. [The sharebroker] could afford to retain the best legal counsel in the land to represent his interests – and doubtless has done so when... [necessary. But when the sharebroker] wanted his money back after a bad night at the opera, [the sharebroker] went, without lawyers, to the most modest court in the country and asked it to find in his favour. And last week it did. The Disputes Tribunal referee... found that the respondents... were “jointly and severally liable”... and ordered them to refund the \$1120 [the stockbroker spent on 7] tickets for... Verdi’s *Aida*... None of the respondents was represented at Thursday’s hearing although the lawyers for Ticketek, which sold... the tickets, had sought to have the matter adjourned. They wanted the dispute heard in the district court or, alternatively, adjourned until the action brought by [a] lawyer... on behalf of some 1888 ticketholders has been heard in the High Court. But the referee would have none of it. [The referee] is allowed by law to proceed “on the evidence available” and so, after trolling through the hearing room and asking aloud whether anyone was there for the respondents... did just that... For... [the] sharebroker with Merrill Lynch and a member of the board of Wilson and Horton, the victory was a triumph for simple fairness. [The sharebroker] had never wanted to be part of the class action being taken by [the 1888 ticketholders’ lawyer], who is seeking refunds and damages on behalf of her clients. “I had no desire to get damages. That was completely irrelevant.” [However, the stockbroker had suffered embarrassment] on the night because [it had] taken several guests – two from Perth – to the performance... Ticketek has argued that it acted simply as an agent of the producer and had no control over the seating arrangements, but [the stockbroker claimed to have] gone to great lengths to find out what the view would be like from various vantage points[and] was told by a Ticketek representative that the seats... eventually bought would have a good view of the stage. “I wouldn’t have gone near the place otherwise... I don’t like being taken advantage of. If they make a cock-up, they should fix it.” This is unlikely to be the end of the matter. The respondents have 28 days to pay... or appeal the order. Ticketek’s lawyer... said his client had appealed against other Disputes Tribunal orders. Part of their argument is that the High Court is the correct forum for the resolution of the disputes over *Aida*. [The stockbroker], for his part, is happy with a pragmatic and legally low-tech solution to a practical problem. “Why should I spend thousands in legal fees to get back a few hundred?” ...Many who have fumed at the law’s delays would sympathise. [The High Court] proceedings had been filed three weeks ago but the case was unlikely to have a result before early next year.

...[an] Auckland opera buff... is still waiting for his \$756 refund for tickets to the much-maligned musical extravaganza *Aida*. [The sharebroker] took Ticketek to the Disputes Tribunal and won. The ticketing agency appealed and [the broker] won again... but “we have yet to see the colour of their money.” Ticketek’s lawyer... said the owners of the production, Global Entertainments, had confirmed they were liable. “Any payment to be made will be made by the promoters.” ...Ticketek has appealed against four tribunal decisions and, including [the broker]’s case, had lost two.

...Global Entertainments is preparing to face the music over the *Aida* fiasco... [A] lawyer acting for Global, said yesterday that the company was legally responsible for any liability arising from court action – not Ticketek... • Through an editing error, Ticketek’s lawyer... was quoted yesterday as saying Global had confirmed that it was responsible. [The lawyer] had in fact said that if there was any liability it would fall on the promoter...

The refund cheques have started trickling out to the people who got less than they bargained for at the... production of *Aida* but... lawyers for the show’s ticketing agents and promoters would rather not talk about it. They deny that’s because they want to stop the trickle... turning into a flood.

...OPERA buffs have the chance to see a series of fine performances in the magnificent Sydney Opera House, thanks to a study tour package from Adventure World Travel and the University of Auckland... Fly Qantas to Sydney, stay at The Castlereagh Inn for a week and enjoy evenings filled with music. The operas you’ll attend are: *Iphigenia in Tauris*, *Werther*, *Madame Butterfly* and *Eugene Onegin*. You will also spend a night listening

to the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. The \$2370 fee includes a pre-trip preparation course, return airfares, shared twin room (single room supplement \$285), breakfast, transfers and concert tickets... [Incidentally, Madrid's] opera house has reopened after a \$203 million facelift. The high-tech Teatro Real now has one of the best acoustics of any opera house in Europe. It also has the latest set-changing technology and can seat up to 1600 people. Tickets for ballet, opera and concerts range from \$10 to \$200.

...A British parliamentary committee yesterday accused the bosses of London's Royal Opera House of mismanagement, saying the Government should take over and appoint a "philistine" with financial skills to replace them. A damning report on the recent management of the opera house praised its high artistic standards but said its board and chief executive were incompetents who should quickly leave the stage... [In particular,] the House of Commons culture, media and sport committee... accused the board of "disastrous misjudgment" in failing to find an alternative venue during a two-year closure period while the Victorian theatre in the Covent Garden district is rebuilt. Since the theatre shut its doors in July, the opera and ballet companies have shuttled between venues where their box-office receipts have been disappointing. The committee also harshly criticised the Arts Council, which distributes state funding for culture and also National Lottery grants, for failing to insist on tighter management before it awarded a £55 million... lottery grant for the theatre's rebuilding. The report dismissed the idea that the theatre should "go private" and run itself without public funds, relying instead on wealthy sponsors and patrons like the Metropolitan Opera in New York. Instead it should lower seat prices and improve access for the public... The committee report urged the Secretary of State for Culture... to step in and assume responsibility for running the opera house. [The secretary] has already launched an inquiry into the future of the theatre, headed by... [a] former director of the National Theatre. [In further news from Britain, 'in a theatre open to London's often rainy skies, a troupe of actors is beginning a risky experiment to discover what Shakespeare's plays were like when first performed 400 years ago. The Globe Theatre, a \$68 million replica of the wood-and-thatch arena which Shakespeare part-owned, is the realisation of the dream of US actor-director Sam Wanamaker, who died of cancer in 1993, just as the wooden framework was being put in place metres from the site of the 20-sided original on the south bank of the Thames, opposite St Paul's Cathedral.']

...The writing was on the wall from the moment *Always* was nicknamed *Briefly* by dismissive London reviewers. This week the A[US]n musical featuring British king Edward VIII's ill-fated 1930s romance with Wallis Simpson lived down to its reviews and closed after just six weeks. Costing \$NZ7.5 million to stage, *Always* had to run 24 weeks to recoup its cost. But it was panned and the audiences stayed away. "Do any of us need the stress of this show in our lives?" asked the *Independent* newspaper. "If Never were a place, you'd want to take it there..." Others called it banal, bland... repetitive and heritage kitsch... [Yet the] producers said in a statement: "We are delighted that our audiences have greatly enjoyed the production and are very sad that we are closing earlier than anticipated." London's theatreland is packed with musicals – 17 are running at present, filling about half the West End theatres. But only top-class American imports and shows... by... [London's favourite producer (responsible for shows such as *Evita* and the reworked *Phantom of the Opera*)] are surefire winners. In 1992 a Norwegian musical, *Which Witch?*, about a young girl denounced as a witch who falls in love with a bishop, closed after 10 weeks after a savaging from critics. "They should have stuck to herring boats," said one.

...A new study confirms what producers have always suspected, and feared – critics can make or break a Broadway show, especially those who work for the *New York Times*. The study, which also examined how factors such as advertising, prices and star power contribute to success or failure, found that a good review from the *New York Times* extended a production's run by 76 performances and increased attendance by over 10,000 adding nearly \$US500,000... to box office receipts. The study... conducted at the University of Georgia's Terry College of Business by [a] marketing professor... found that the *Times*' [most infamous critic] had earned his nickname, the "butcher of Broadway." [The butcher], who reviewed Broadway shows during the 1980s and early 90s, "played a very critical role and had a significant impact over and above the newspaper itself." But there will always be critic-proof shows. [The butcher] rubbished... *Phantom of the Opera*, which is going strong nearly 10 years later. [Speaking of operas, 'five people have received a full refund and 27 have received a partial refund for their *Aida* tickets in the Auckland District Court']

...[a] promoter's ignominious fall from grace was completed yesterday when... [the person who once mingled] with pop stars, the rich and famous... was sentenced to 3 1/2 years' jail... [after being] found guilty of 25 counts of fraud... [for] swindling money off investors to prop up his failing businesses... Today... [the promoter], aged 53... will sit down to breakfast with fellow prisoners... [T]he Serious Fraud Squad prosecutor, had told the Auckland District Court how the [promoter] who... brought top acts to N[Z], including... the Eagles... and... Fleetwood Mac... had carried out a campaign of deception involving more than \$2.5 million... [The defence said its client had] left school aged 15 with no qualifications and set about his dream of making a name for himself in the... world... of musicians and superstars... As a youngster, [the fraudster] learned to play the drums and guitar... but... never went any further than being a session musician... and took up the role of promoter. Things began to turn sour for him in 1993[, the year that the promoter] turned to crime to bail his companies out of financial crisis... "[Our client] was besotted by a dream." ...[By the way, Auckland's] Womad festival... cost ratepayers at least \$750,000 more than planned. Sources told the N[Z] *Herald* yesterday that the Womad – World of Music, Arts and Dance – cost the Aotea Centre \$1 million. Attendance was only half the 45,000 anticipated for the event at the Western Springs park, partly because of a clash with the *Classical Spectacular* concert at the North Harbour Stadium. There was also a blow-out in some set-up costs, the sponsorship target was not met, there were problems with the weather, and some patrons slipped in for free... but the [Aotea Centre's] chief executive... said last night that Womad was a "big success" that had been well received and had "wildly exceeded our expectations in some respects." ...[the chief executive also] said Womad's losses would be offset by the centre's other activities, so it was still on target to stay within its \$4.8 million... budget, provided mainly by the Auckland City Council. His predecessor... who resigned in 1993 amid controversy over a string of production losses... yesterday... was "hot under the collar" about the centre's apparent return to entrepreneurship in staging big events.

...Before the plans are off the drawing board, multi-million dollar venues for sports, theatre and music events are enthusiastically sold to the public. But a little further down the track when the bills are mounting, it is the public who must sometimes bear the brunt of any financial... blowout during construction and operating losses once the facilities are up and running. The latest project to hit the headlines over financial woes is the \$41 million North Harbour Stadium... [Fortunately for North Shore ratepayers] and patrons... the... group of seven members... [that comprise] the North Harbour Stadium Trust... could have liability should the financial standing fail to improve. [However, a] North Shore City councillor... yesterday could not rule out that the council would have to "come up with the goods" after guaranteeing \$12 million of loans for the trust... [But the councillor] did... consider that the stadium had a better chance of "trading its way out" than two council facilities – the Bruce Mason Centre and the North Shore Events Centre... In its first year, the Bruce Mason Centre is heading for a \$117,000 loss, but... with maintenance, depreciation and administration costs, the bill to the council was likely to be about \$700,000... [Furthermore, there] are serious doubts the North Shore City Council will be repaid the final \$2 million of a loan to complete the... [theatre] and conference centre in Takapuna... Seven years after it opened, Auckland's Aotea Centre is still council-funded and would be in trouble without local authority subsidies. While its annual report showed that the 1995-1996 year was the best since the centre opened... Auckland City Council has no plans to reduce the \$4 million subsidy it pays to the centre. Waitakere City Council adds \$77,000 and Manukau City Council \$10,000. The Aotea Centre had budgeted to lose \$3.3 million on its operations before levies and depreciation, but it actually lost \$2.267 million, less than in any previous year. Last month, it was revealed that the... Womad... festival... cost the Aotea Centre – and ratepayers – at least \$750,000 more than planned. The chief executive of the Auckland Chamber of Commerce... said that some facilities provided more than just the events they housed. Every time a venue like the Aotea Centre was full, the cash benefits spread wider – travel, accommodation, transport, retail and restaurants... [The chief executive also pointed out that] the North Shore Stadium was essential for Auckland so that every rugby game was not played at Eden Park and every concert was not on the Auckland side of the harbour bridge... [■ Some

councillors are concerned that the] make-over for Auckland's grand old lady is costing a pretty penny. Restoring the 86-year-old Auckland Town Hall over the past two years has cost \$32.8 million, in addition to an earlier \$1.8 million for the clock tower. It is now in line to have a further \$1.8 million approved for fit-out costs... The restored and refurbished town hall... [- which] comes in three pieces... the great hall, concert hall and, in the apex, the council chamber and adjacent meeting and function rooms... - ...will be formally opened on Friday week...

Over the years I've learnt it's better for the old blood pressure to try to treat the annual rates demand as a positive rather than a negative event. Why overexcite yourself imagining how many councillors you could... toss into the Great Hole of Britomart? It's so much easier to part with your money by pretending it's all destined for a sensible and worthy project like the renovation of the Town Hall. Last Friday, before writing out my cheque, I decided to ease the process by donning a hard hat and persuading the project manager... to show me around the nearly complete rebuild. Just to make sure my \$32.8 million was being wisely spent. Absence, they say, makes the heart grow fonder. And who would have thought at the time the old hall closed just how much we concert-goers were going to miss it. At that stage, years of neglect and the superior creature comforts of its glitzy newer neighbour, the Aotea Centre, had made it an unattractive entertainment space – even though its concert-hall acoustics were much better than next door's. A great sound was all very well. But did it have to be accompanied by skateboarders outside and warm cask wine at the interval in the overcrowded, sauna-like atmosphere of the notorious supper room? Little did we know then just how awful the barnlike acoustics of the only substitute venue, the Holy Trinity Cathedral, would be for musical events... The first thing you notice is how little things have changed – on the surface anyway... It seems my money is being buried within the walls and ceilings – 150 tonnes of steel reinforcing, air-conditioning ducts, the latest in electronic cabling, lighting, that sort of thing. What had to be pointed out were the sound-proofing sheets of glass covering the outside of the hall's stained glass windows and the false, sound-proofing wall on the Aotea Square side... The experts say this will make the hall slightly, but hardly noticeably, more reverberant. Fingers crossed on that one... Orchestral music require[s] a longer reverberation time than speech, which... architectural firm... Jasmax had enabled in North Shore's Bruce Mason Theatre, where the ceiling was made out of hinged hollow core doors, and the space above became part of the room... "That increased the room's volume by about 20[%], increasing the reverberation time from 1.2s to 1.7s, which is considered enough to improve orchestral clarity[.]" said Jasmax's... managing director... As for creature comforts, they're everywhere: bars on every level, foyer spaces, kitchens, lifts which reach to the bottom of the[underground] Aotea carpark and up to the top floor of the hall, and, most importantly to us of the shrinking-bladder generation, plenty of toilets... One feature that will impress [gals] is that they have been allotted more toilets. "[Gals] are always worse catered for. We've done international studies on queuing for toilets and have bettered the building code requirement." ...On that positive thought, I'll write out my rates cheque right now.

...Matching his and hers mayoral toilets at the Auckland Town Hall have been restored to their 1911 glory, but the loos are just for looks: health regulations rule out their use. The mayoral toilet next to the council chambers and the toilet on the next floor were to be demolished, but[the] Auckland City Council conservation and urban design manager... thought the toilets were worth keeping because of their "close association to important bodies." ...keeping them was a novel concept because the main thrust of the... restoration was on increasing utility. Elsewhere in the town hall, a secret [WW2] communications centre has become a storage room. Discovered last year, the hideaway was not recorded in original town hall plans... [Unfortunately,] \$60,000 has to be spent on further sound-proofing work... follow[ing] complaints that the noise of people gathering in the Queen St foyer was disturbing opening-celebration audiences in both the great hall and the concert chamber. As an emergency solution, the magnificently restored tiled floor is temporarily being covered once more with noise-dampening carpet. Signs and recorded messages last night asked people "to refrain from conversation" while in the foyer areas... [S]ound-lock doors would be installed on the foyer entrances of both halls... to solve the problem permanently... Council sources said it had been identified earlier in the project, but both the Historic Places Trust and the council's heritage planner were understood to have vetoed plans to alter the internal doors for soundproofing... The restoration project manager... would not discuss the problem... [of a \$15,000] party on the ratepayers... being planned for workers involved with the restoration... It would be for... staff, and... families, of the main contractor, Downer Construction, and the sub-contractors... 2000 people might attend.

...The Auckland City Council has given the nod for a ratepayer-funded... party for workers restoring the town hall.

...a steeplejack... fell from the top of the... Town Hall clock tower yesterday. Antony Edward John Kiernan, aged 37, died instantly when [the steeplejack] fell about 40m – hitting a balcony on the way down – and landing on the concrete below about 1.20 pm[as people] in Aotea Square watched in horror... There was nothing emergency services could do for him. The Heightbusters employee was one of two abseilers fitting lights to the clock tower for Mercury Energy... It is understood that Mr Kiernan, who has a wife and children, is from Torbay, England, and had been in the country only a few months. Police said [Mr Kiernan] was wearing a safety harness and was trying to attach it to a rope when [the steeplejack] fell. The Labour Department's Occupational Safety and Health division is to begin an investigation today. [A freelance] photographer... did a photo shoot with Mr Kiernan on the tower on Tuesday. "[Mr Kiernan]... struck me as very methodical." ...The commercial abseiling industry is in shock... [In related news, a]bout 40 people were injured when a sound and lighting tower collapsed in a packed stadium at the start of a concert in Santiago, Chile, by British rock group Deep Purple. The band played on.

...After having \$34 million spent on it in two years... [an] airier, less sombre Town Hall is one of the gains as Auckland revives the Aotea segment of its main street... The re-opening of[the] town hall... is... the first of at least four big steps toward creating an entertainment precinct around Aotea Square. Steps to follow include turning the Civic Theatre into a live theatre and Force Corporation's plan to build a... 12 cinema screen... centre between the Civic and the square... Further forward, there are plans to expand the Aotea Centre and a large convention centre may be built, big enough to cater for banquets for 1600 guests and plenary sessions for 2000 people. These plans would offer the precinct the flexibility it does not have with existing facilities... [The] Aotea Centre chief executive... said the changes brought a "virtuous cycle, because one of the big issues in Auckland is security, and if you've got 10,000 people out there, you feel safer walking across the square. There will be about 14,000 entertainment seats in the precinct by the year 2000, compared with... 7000 now, most of which are low-class... You're going to get a different set of economic realities. I liken it to Lygon St in Carlton, Melbourne..." There are two property elements in this vision of the Aotea Square precinct. One is the value and earnings of the various facilities, some of them public, and the other is the spin-off in rising value and the changing nature of surrounding streets. [The CEO] said over the four months *Phantom of the Opera* is at the Aotea Centre, 60,000 formal travel packages (people booking coach or airline travel specifically to go to the stage show) and 90,000 hotel and motel room nights had been booked. "We're filling a couple of hotels every weekend and the hospitality industry is finally starting to understand what it's all about, having these venues..."... Construction cost overruns were a blight on the birth of the Aotea Centre, but stage events such as *Phantom*... and changes quietly implemented at Aotea's Herald Theatre have improved its performance. [The CEO] said the Aotea would probably never recoup its capital cost – but... is more optimistic about getting a real return from the refurbished town hall... Town hall rent will be 5[%] of capital value, and the different way of operating the building should mean it will pay its way. "I'd be surprised if we didn't amortise on a 40-year basis the cost of the capital of the town hall..."... The old buildings up the street from the town hall, excluding the Sunday School Union, are also expected to get a facelift. One of them, the old Classic cinema, will [be the home for] Comedyfest, opening next month... [In another development,] Sky City has a hotel and banquet proposal for its additional site between Federal St and Albert St... [The]Auckland City Council project manager... said these developments would bring "a vibrancy, and an opportunity for a variety of dissimilar events to be held, including free entertainment on the square." ...But perhaps the key to all of these [visions] is the proposal for an exhibition centre backing on to the Aotea Centre extension, with the potential to be used as a stadium. That would bring the kinds of event Auckland misses by not having the appropriate venue to be included on an international

entertainment circuit, such as *Disney on Ice*... [According to Auckland's mayor:] "If you look at all the major cities, you will find when they get to a certain size – about one million people – they tend to build an entertainment centre."

...Entertainment promoters are ecstatic over the suggestion by the Mayor of Auckland... to build a 15,000-seat covered stadium in the central city. An Auckland City Council property committee will meet behind closed doors today to decide whether to invest in vacant land beside the central railway station. [The mayor] said investors would be consulted over a possible partnership for a \$70 million multi-purpose stadium. The council did not propose to build the centre itself. Promoters say such a facility is long overdue and the promoter of the free summer park concerts... said it was a "fabulous" idea. "Of course we need it, and the piece of land by the railway is just perfect... Auckland has a very unpredictable climate and you can't bet on outside events." ...[the] managing director of IMG, which promoted *West Side Story* and *Riverdance*, [claimed to be] aware of shows that would have come to Auckland if a covered stadium was available. "We were looking at the Israeli Philharmonic, but you can't do it in the 2200-seat Aotea Centre. The costs would be astronomical and ticket prices would make it elitist. But with 15,000 seats the price comes right down,"... The council has... a stadium fund and... the site would be split and sold in the next few weeks if the council did not buy it whole... [T]he council must decide if it would create a land bank to enable a year-long investigation. If a stadium did not prove feasible, the land could be sold again later...

[Auckland City ratepayers may help to fund a \$65m entertainment centre adjoining the central railway station. Promoters of the stadium, that will seat up to 14,500 people, want a mix of city council and private funding to underwrite the venture that could generate returns for its owners from as many as 150 events a year. An economic impact report calculated the centre would be worth \$65m a year to Auckland and generate 1266 jobs. The report also estimated the centre would create new city businesses worth \$20m a year and a further 399 jobs. The cinema entrepreneur behind the project, who is investigating stadiums in AUS and the US, said the centre could be configured to handle ice skating, Davis Cup tennis, equestrian tournaments, rock shows, operas, rodeos, moto-cross and Miss Universe contests. Its capacity could be reduced to 4000 with the use of an acoustic curtain without any loss of sound quality. "Most international cities of one million people have centres like this. All we've got is a tent," the entrepreneur said, a reference to the Mt Smart Supertop.]

...The contest to provide Auckland with a 15,000-seat indoor stadium is heating up. The Auckland Regional Council parks committee entered the ring yesterday with a plan for an arena at its Mt Smart Sport and Entertainment Centre. The plan updates a concept outlined in August. The council cleared the way for more work on its scheme after a cinema entrepreneur published a \$65 million, 14,500-seat project on Auckland Railway Station land last week. It is understood that Auckland can only sustain one such venue, but four proposals are under consideration. Besides the railyard and ARC visions are schemes for a cultural centre at Queen's Wharf and an arena at Western Springs. The city council has earmarked \$20 million as a contribution for an indoor stadium.]

...Auckland City Council may take a multimillion-dollar plunge into the stadium industry this week by investing in vacant land beside the central railway station. The mayor... suggested yesterday that the council could put up to \$30 million into a \$70 million... purpose-built stadium. The... [mayor] believed a stadium could be ready in four years. The council has been in a race with the A[RC] for an indoor Auckland stadium. The regional council considers Ericsson Stadium the best location... [I]t has adequate parking and easy access and would not generate noise complaints. But [the mayor] said the railway property had advantages over Mt Smart, with bus and railway services and nearby entertainment options.

...An indoor stadium near Auckland's waterfront is a strong possibility after the city council decided last night to buy 4.9ha of land near the railway station. The council has plans for a 16,000-18,000 seat entertainment stadium, convention centre and car park, but... intends sitting on the land in the meantime while it embarks on feasibility studies for the stadium-convention centre plan... The council... will investigate all its options in the city before committing itself to the site... Other possible sites, such as Ericsson Stadium, will be investigated and the Hillary Commission will be called on for an independent appraisal of the region's sporting and entertainment needs. From there the council intends calling for expressions of interest in the project. By attaching a convention centre to the stadium, council planners believe they can link Auckland into the convention industry. The Aotea Centre will be considered for an extension so it can hold conferences, and Sky City Casino is also in the running.

...The historic Civic Theatre's... upgrade appears to have escaped the Auckland City Council budget knife. The project, after seeming a likely candidate for the fiscal axe, is expected to get \$8 m... when the council pulls together its draft annual plan in the next few weeks. Sources said this would be the first instalment of a \$34 m... council commitment to the 68-year-old theatre's refurbishment. Besides the upgrade, an announcement is expected this month on development of an entertainment complex on land adjacent to the Civic. The sale of the council-owned land helps to offset the cost of the Civic upgrade. The adjacent \$50 m... project for a cinema and entertainment complex was signalled last June, but an A[US]n property investor involved in the Queen St development withdrew. The cinema and property company Force Corporation has remained in the frame, and has pulled its Village theatres in with rival Hoyts Cinemas for the 12-screen development. Confirmation of the Civic funding has buoyed Friends of the Civic, a group which has been lobbying for the restoration of the landmark theatre. But the group remains concerned at delays in starting the refurbishment plan. Its spokes[person said]... that the property would continue to deteriorate while the upgrade was deferred.

...Details of \$34 m... restoration plans for Auckland's Civic Theatre were released yesterday. [The NZ Herald] looks back on the theatre's colourful 68 years... Venture into the Civic Theatre in central Auckland and you will find almost a ruin. Barely two thirds of the artificial stars work, and there are holes in the ceiling where workers have put their feet through the plaster. There's been no fresh paint for... 20 years, and some statues are missing. Even so, it's worth looking inside... [because the] Civic will soon close... When it reopens in 1999 for live shows, some famous features will be missing. Hidden from the audience's view will be the archway and the larger-than-life panthers... Acoustics are a problem... so a new steel-mesh ceiling will replace the "starry sky." ...But the romantic Eastern decoration can be uncovered if users want to use it... Fire and earthquake-proofing, at a cost of \$19[m, is the main expense, and] will include fibrous concrete to replace cracked cement and rusty reinforcing... Apart from the building's deterioration, the Civic's main problem is lack of patronage. The place is full only during the Film Festival or for one-off events... This year's festival was probably the last at the Civic... Using the new-look Civic for a film festival will be difficult... Broadway shows will be staged in the [new-look] theatre, which will feature seating for 2400 patrons... Some patrons will treasure the few remnants of a bygone age... [but if] you have a gold-plated elephant, horse or urn in your cupboard, the chances are it comes from the Civic... and the Auckland City Council would like it back, no questions asked. The... Civic's early shows were extravaganzas, with the Wurlitzer pipe organ emerging from below the stage, followed by an orchestra on a separate platform... "It will take us three times as long to complete the renovations as it did to build the theatre,"... The Civic[which] went up in just 33 days... was built in 1929 by cinema chain proprietor Thomas O'Brien[who] went broke nine months after opening night and left for A[US] – with, rumour has it, a week's takings and a cashier. The cashier bore him four children, and [Thomas] died in Melbourne in 1959. The Civic's heyday was... [during WW2]. After films, bands played in the Winter Gardens nightclub until the early hours while [US] soldiers danced with local girls. It was then that [one local girl] danced naked apart from a feather hat and gold paint. The performer's lesbian lover was murdered by her husband, a musician in the orchestra... The nightclub lasted well into the 1960s, when there was a singles night on Fridays and couples only on Saturdays. Other big events included boxing... [The] Auckland City Council's projects manager... remembers the Civic from his days as a rocker in the early 1970s, watching bands like the Rolling Stones. "You had to stand on the seats to see. That's when they got broken."

...The budget to restore and upgrade the Civic... could be on the verge of a 17[%] increase. Auckland City Council officers have proposed increasing the budget approved... last year to \$39.8 m... This follows the completion last month of the Town Hall's restoration... on budget – but a

fit out budget approved just before it re-opened added a further \$1.8 m... The Aotea Centre... was the council's most notorious recent cost overrun. It cost \$128.5 m... compared with an estimate of \$63 m... when the project began in 1984. Restoring the Civic was expected to cost... \$10 m... in 1993... A council meeting on Thursday is scheduled to vote on... 14 items which account for the extra \$5.8 m... The dearest is an additional \$1.8 m... for inflation and contingencies. Others are a \$1.2 m... acoustic separation of the Wintergarden functions area from the main auditorium to enable simultaneous use; \$1.2 m... for fitting out five bars, a VIP-functions room... and increasing the auditorium's seating capacity from 2150 to 2500... Much of the proposed extra spending... would create more revenue... [for Auckland, which] IS the events capital [of NZ] heading into the new millennium... [] Force Corporation will begin the extension of the... St James Theatre... precinct over Queen St once it has completed its new entertainment centre next to the Civic... Revamping the St James would provide a link through to the art gallery and... library, not in itself a great change in property use, but creating a more interesting and hospitable thoroughfare between public facilities and privately owned retail spaces.

...Concerts in February by [an]English singing star... [- best known for her association with *London's favourite producer* -] will open Wellington's newly refurbished St James Theatre... which is undergoing a \$21.4 million... refurbishment... But it will cost from \$150 to \$300 a ticket to see her.

...Fans of the piano [guys] will have... to... [shell out] from \$80 to \$171... [to see their heroes] share the bill... at Ericsson Stadium, the promoter says. But... [the] co-promoter... says there will be "no comparison" between the[ir]... extravaganza and... the... performance of Verdi's opera *Aida*. The ripples are still spreading from that open-air performance... [T]he 2.5m-high stage will be... three times the size of *Aida's* and will incorporate a huge "thrust" to bring the stars closer to the punters. The scale of a modern rock tour means big audiences (and big ticket prices) are financial necessities and so the question of whether you'll get a good view - or any view at all - becomes particularly pointed. We had no such worries at [the British piano guy]'s first N[Z] concert on October 29, 1971. Clutching tickets which... cost \$2.50 (well, someone had to pay the star's exorbitant \$20,000 fee), we ambled across the infield grass at Western Springs to take our plywood seats in the third row. (We would not have dreamt of sitting in the front two rows: they were reserved for the high rollers who had shelled out \$3.60, but, [seated] barely 5m from the... piano stool, we were laughing.) That was the first of the big outdoor concerts. They expected 18,000 but almost twice that number came, which must have been a relief to [the] promoter... who (as w[as]) breathlessly reported at the time) mortgaged his *home* to finance the show. But [the promoter] took the risk, [it] told us, because [it] wanted to see [the Brit]... "at his peak [*Goodbye Yellow Brick Road* had just been released] rather than in a couple of years."

...Tickets with a top price of \$171 go on sale on Monday for an Auckland concert by two of the world's most popular piano [players - one from England (r:p1172, ln31) and the other from the US (r:p1615, ln53)]... The pair will perform separately and together with their respective bands in a four-hour show at Ericsson Stadium on Saturday, March 7... [The promoter,] Frontier Touring, acknowledges the price is high but said that... tickets for the Eagles were \$110... [and] "for the same show in Sydney, Adelaide or Melbourne, you'd be paying \$240 - and those shows all sold out." The top price is for a reserved seating area in front of the stage... general admission tickets are \$80... In an unusual arrangement two separate touring companies and the artists' record companies will pool resources for the *Face to Face* tour... [The] managing director of Sony Music NZ, said yesterday that [the US piano player and singer] was the company's third biggest selling album act behind Pink Floyd and [another US singer (r:p1617, ln16)]. The US piano player's total NZ] sales of 550,000 copies over his 15 albums suggested one in every two homes had a... album or CD... [of his. The] managing director of Polygram Records NZ, [the English piano player's] record company, said [its artist], who has released more than 40 albums with sales of over 150 million copies worldwide, was its third-biggest selling act, behind [a Canadian rocker and Irish band] U2...

If hubris was a sound, it is the hiss of air between clenched teeth of [US] promoters pushing the world's most expensive rock tour - U2's PopMart. Last week, rumour was rife that the Irish group had cancelled its homecoming Dublin date for financial reasons. Not true, as it happened, but in the U[S], where patchy audiences have been underwhelmed, two shows have been cancelled, and the group's management is blaming "media negativity" for poor attendances. PopMart may be becoming FlopMart. It is not just U2. The deflation of PopMart is sending shivers through the elite handful of mega-rockers, the giant... bankable acts such as REM, and the Rolling Stones - who this week announced plans for a [6 month, 33 city tour of the US to promote their latest album, *Bridges to Babylon*] (their last tour, to promote *Voodoo Lounge* in 1995, reportedly earned them more than \$400 million')... - and Metallica, on whom the industry has cruised. Rock album sales in the U[S] have been flat-lining for the past three years while the new boys of electronica and dance are fast making inroads into the territory where dinosaurs once roamed. The irony is that... U2's lead singer, knows this. *Pop*, their latest album, brought a reinvention of their old bombastic sound, under the alien influence of bands such as the Prodigy and Leftfield. It was courageous - but punters have turned off in their tens of thousands. "There is a reason why rock'n'roll music is not selling the way it used to," [the lead singer] told the *Washington Post* at the beginning of the PopMart tour. "It's boring. There is no surprise. That's one of the reasons we called the record *Pop*, because we were so angry at the word 'rock'. We were looking around and saying: 'What's happening here?' This is 30 years old, this music, and the sound. The feeling coming from all these groups, just seemed so tired." So *Pop* and its son PopMart - ...with its "ironic references" to capitalist excess - is U2's answer. "It's some kind of new medium, hopefully... Is it Broadway? No. Is it a new development? I really hope so." The problem is, it wasn't - and punters just aren't buying it. Despite the impressive, expensive technology, the show treads some familiar paths and the album dropped out of the U[S] No 1 slot as quickly as it arrived. A primetime ABC special on the making of the tour was one of the lowest-rated non-political documentaries ever shown on [US] network television... the *New York Post*'s]... rock critic... believes U2 are victims of their own hype. "They did too good a job in telling people that what they were doing now was drastically different. They hammered it too hard for their long-time fans." ...Observers also suspect the public's appetite for extravaganzas such as PopMart has waned. In the absence of nostalgia-fuelled stadium tours over the past two years, there has been a growing number of festivals at which four or five bands perform for far less than the steep \$57 a ticket that U2 are charging. Lollapalooza, launched on the premise of numerous acts, alternative stages and grunge-counterculture ethics has redefined punter expectation. A similar phenomenon has been apparent in... [Australasia] with the Big Day Out concept. While there will always be a place for stadium rock, increasingly it is starting to look like an anachronism for its target audience. And if it's not cheap to go to, it's certainly not cheap to mount. The \$96 million cost of keeping PopMart on the road for 14 months pays for 75 trucks carrying 500 tonnes of equipment; a 4-megawatt sound-and-light show; 250 staff on board 16 buses; and a Boeing 727. The profits should have been equally monstrous. The accountants had hoped ticket sales alone would net \$240 million.

...grunge is dead: it's time to dance again... It happened slowly, almost imperceptibly. First, record sales levelled out... Soon... the minimalistic rock that reinvigorated the industry in the early 1990s... [-] one of the most influential musical movements since the 1960s British Invasion... [-] had become just another footnote in pop history... "...Of course it had to happen," says... the co-founder of Sub Pop Records. The company's low-key breakthrough came with Mudhoney's 1988 release, *Touch Me I'm Sick*, which many consider the first grunge record. Then Nirvana, from Washington state's rural southwest coast, transformed the musical landscape. Kurt Cobain's tortured lyrics and Nirvana's merciless rhythms tore to shreds the bloated heavymetal and pop scene of the 80s. Then came hits from Soundgarden, Alice In Chains, Hole and the Screaming Trees. Seattle reigned. Trademark flannel shirts, knit caps and torn jeans found their way to fashion runways. Goatees and body piercing seemed ubiquitous. The beginning of the end came in 1994, when 27-year-old Cobain's body was found at his home. Drugs were part of the disintegration. Alice In Chains was forced to cancel a 1994 tour after [the band's] singer... admitted his battle with heroin addiction, a drug that had taken its toll on other Seattle musicians, including Cobain. Another bulwark toppled in late 1994, when... Sub Pop Records... sold 49[% of itself]... to Warner Bros for \$NZ31.5 million. Since then, some of the city's most influential clubs... have closed their doors or changed formats. Then in April this year, Soundgarden shocked fans by calling it quits. The Screaming Trees had folded in March. Alice in Chains has not released an album in two years... "Alternative rock had a good run, but it's over. People want to dance. The days of standing around moshing are long gone."

...The thriller is gone for [the former star of the *Jackson 5* (r:p1621, ln30)]. Maybe the years of tabloid headlines caught up with him, or [the *Peter Pan* of music] made one squeal too many. But the self-proclaimed King of Pop's... quasi-new album [(it contains 5) new songs and [8] remixed songs that first appeared on the 1995 disc, *HIStory: Past, Present and Future – Book 1*)]... is in unfamiliar territory; sinking down the charts past dozens of hotter stars. The numbers aren't pretty. *Blood on the Dance Floor*... debuted at No 24 on the album chart and sank to No 43 in its second week. Right now, it's at No 65. The album has sold 79,000 copies in the U[S], according to Soundscan, a New York company which tracks record sales... And the first single... was only [the]... singer's... second song in the past 15 years not to make the Top 40... It's a long tumble from *Thriller*, the album that sold 24 million copies in the U[S] and made hi's moonwalk and equinned glove cultural touchstones of the 1980s... The young fans who bought *Thriller* grew up and [their hero] did not grow with them, said... [the] senior vice-president of the 97-store Tower Records chain... [The singer], who's a lot more successful overseas these days, blames radio stations and MTV for abandoning him and not giving his new music a chance, his spokes[person]... said. "It frustrates an artist, as far as not being able to exhibit his talent,"... Compare [hi's] slump with the successes of his contemporaries, like the Wu-Tang Clan, the rappers from the New York borough of Staten Island whose double album sold 612,000 copies in one week earlier this month. [The singer] trails the Spice Girls, teenage Jackson 5 imitators Hanson, the Bee Gees and Squirrel Nut Zippers on the chart. Even [a former *Beatle* (r:p1409, ln39) – hi's former duet partner on *The Girl is Mine* –] has been in the Top Ten for two straight weeks with his new album. All the weirdness has been too much for many customers, said... an executive for the New Jersey chain Compact Disc World. There were the accusations of child molestation, the plastic surgery, the quick marriage to – and speedy divorce from – [the daughter of Elvis] Presley, the hasty marriage in A[US to a] nurse... and equally swift birth... of their son[(the 'first pictures of whom they sold for \$1/2m')]... and at some point during the pregnancy, [the singer] was left to deny a report in a London tabloid that the couple used artificial insemination and that [his second wife] was paid \$US528,000... to carry the baby... [The executive] expects to return many unsold copies of [the singer]'s new album to Epic Records... Instead of hyping [their artist], Epic has kept quiet about his album. Many fans don't even know the album's out... [The singer], meanwhile, has turned into something of an expatriate... spending his summer on a concert tour in Europe, where *Blood on the Dance Floor* hit the top of the charts[, and plans to build]... a \$NZ822 million... "world of childhood"... amusement park... [The singer] hasn't performed in the U[S] for several years. The *HIStory* album sold three million copies in the U[S] and 25 million elsewhere... [The singer]'s fans would return if the music were good enough, said... [the] senior talent editor at *Billboard*... [However, his spokesperson] sees the overseas performance as an indication that people like [the singer]'s new music if they get a chance to hear it. "The powers that be have decided that they don't want his records to be played... [in the US]. I guess because of all the adverse publicity... they made a decision that [the singer] shouldn't receive airplay." ...[the singer's chiselled nose was further rubbed in the dirt when veteran] acts the *Rolling Stones* and [a '60s folk-rock idol] scored hits as their latest albums entered the top 10 of the U[S] pop charts. The Stones' *Bridges to Babylon* debuted at No 3, becoming the group's 39th album to make the top 200. [The folk-rock idol]'s *Time Out of Mind* entered at No 10, becoming his first album since the 1979 gospel-tinged *Slow Train Coming* to make the top 10.

...[Why are we not at all surprised that Wacko claims his new album was written by God? The self-proclaimed King of Pop says it feels guilty putting his name on songs and, when writing them, it's in the hands of the Almighty. After everything that's gone before, such talk doesn't move us.]

...[Music fans can breathe a sigh of relief. The King of Pop has announced his abdication. "I've no desire to go on another major tour and I don't want to keep doing album after album." Instead, it hopes to star in his own version of *The Nightmare of Edgar Allan Poe*. Presumably it would need little make-up.]

...Wacko is 'on tap to play Peter Pan, the boy who wouldn't grow up, in a major movie. Is this typecasting or what?'

...[Speaking of Wacko, you know how his nose looks like it's about to fall off any minute? Well, part of it did when Wacko was on stage at Madison Square Garden recently! The night certainly didn't go as the waning superstar had planned anyway, but to have his fans know it wears a prosthetic schnozz because too much plastic surgery's wrecked his own, was a huge blow (no pun intended). Wacko hides the fake bit of nose with make-up, but while dancing, we hear the self-proclaimed King of Pop caught his little finger on his fragile nose, sending part of the prosthesis flying into the audience. Yuk!]

...Wacko 'lives in a \$25m mansion with 120 staff to cater to his every whim. But the besieged Prince of Pop's cocooned and cushioned world is about to come tumbling down. Once rich beyond his wildest dreams, with a fortune estimated at over \$90m, Wacko is teetering on bankruptcy. Next week marks the beginning of an explosive court case between the pop star and his former financial adviser, who says the Gloved One owes him \$21m in fees. The adviser described Wacko as "a ticking time bomb waiting to explode at any moment" and claims that the millionaire has frittered away so much money it is now propping up his extravagant lifestyle with multi-million-dollar bank loans it cannot pay back. Wacko even has his famous Santa Barbara ranch, Neverland, up for sale with a price tag of \$40m. But there are no takers. "It's not that the advice Wacko gets is bad," says one of his bankers. "It's him. Wacko's his own worst enemy. Wacko has simply been spending more money than the singer's been making." Another major drain on his finances are lawsuits. According to one source, Wacko has faced 1500 during his career. Apart from the 120 people Wacko pays to run his ranch – including county fire officers for Neverland's own fire department – Wacko supports a 13-strong retinue to care for his children born through artificial insemination to his second wife'...

Wacko's 'second wife has filed for divorce. The nurse cited "irreconcilable differences" as the reason for the split. The divorce petition said both parties had reached a confidential agreement regarding property and debts. But they did not say if a custody agreement had been reached for their two children'...

'THE news of Wacko's divorce from his second wife has stunned the show-business world. Yesterday, at his heavily guarded mansion, Neverland, Wacko rejected allegations that it had been a sham marriage. When the news of Wacko's shock union with the blond sizzler was first announced, his fans rejoiced in the belief that their hero had finally, and despite the barriers of wealth and fame, reached puberty. "It was the most wonderful moment in my life," recalled a spokesperson of the Ohio Guild of the Official Wacko Merchandising Association, "to think that Wacko had found Mrs Right. Every night for several months I dreamed of my hero bearing his wife over the threshold of Neverland, smothering her from head to toe with his favourite disinfectant, removing his face mask and then, in a moment of the most touching intimacy, presenting her with a test tube of his very own sperm," at which point the spokesperson's face crumpled with woe and it was led away. Yesterday Ms Right herself made a brief statement when cornered by reporters outside a Los Angeles bank. "My concern is with my darling children, junior and the other one – a girl, I think," said the distraught Ms Right, patting at her eyes with a sodden cheque. "But the marriage was doomed. At first I thought I had found true love, but at 37 I was too young." Refusing to comment further, Ms Right retreated into the bank on the arm of her financial adviser. Sources confirm that two children were indeed born to the couple. The children themselves have denied rumours that they lead a bizarre existence of obsessive hygiene. Two-year-old junior, speaking from an oxygen tent, said, "My sister and I lead ordinary, germ-free lives in Neverland. For my own part I would like to add that it is a great privilege to be the son of a 41-year-old who likes playing the same games as I do. I am hoping to take control of his financial affairs soon and, with the help of my lawyers, to meet my mother." Bodyguards then hustled him away for fumigation. The boy's father himself faced the cameras in a hermetically sealed jumpsuit, but explained to the throng of journalists and photographers that it would be making no further statements about the separation from the mother of his children – whom it believed may have been AUSn – because it had important business matters to attend to. A spokesperson for the Association of Overpaid Medical Advisers to Aging Popstars threw light on the issue. "Wacko's marriage was broken by the strains of his condition, a condition caused by a volatile and addictive mix of wealth and publicity. It is exacerbated by his participation in a profession founded on adolescent idolatry." Extensive research has revealed that Wacko's condition has become increasingly common among the idols of youth culture as they reach middle age. Symptoms vary but most victims suffer from severe bouts of inappropriate clothing. Other clinical indications are hair implants, plastic surgery and a pathological delusion that the clock stopped at the date of the release of their first platinum disc. "Many of the most successful artists in the pop and rock business have suffered from this condition. Some indeed have

died from it and in an industry based entirely on image, early death has actually enhanced the artist's mythological status, and guaranteed continuing post-mortem sales."

...It really makes me wonder why any gal would want to give birth to a baby sired by Wacko. I pity his children, and they will undoubtedly grow up without ever knowing how normal people behave, or what the word "family" means to most of us. I wasn't surprised to learn of his bizarre parenting practices, or that the singer is afraid of touching his children for fear of the germs that they carry. Unfortunately, Wacko has the power to control the destiny of these kiddies who will never experience the love of an ordinary mum and dad. It's unfortunate that Wacko has more than enough money to buy himself out of any lawsuit that might be taken against him for custody. Wacko certainly hasn't got the skills to rear any of them.

...Isn't it amazing how Wacko is allowed to get away with the bizarre treatment of his children, whereas if the singer was the average Joe Bloggs, CYFS or the American equivalent would have removed them from his care long ago. Money speaks, but it apparently doesn't save children. What are we coming to when the average family can be torn apart for sometimes quite silly things, but the rich and famous can do whatever they like to whomever they like?

...I think that the way Wacko's bringing up his children is sick. It's bad enough that Wacko does not want to catch germs, but it's truly pathetic that the singer won't even touch his own children for fear of this, as we all know children love to be cuddled and shown how much they mean to us. Children are not dolls, and it's sad to think this is how Wacko's are treated and what kind of sick, selfish people are having his babies and then being paid to stay out of their lives? Who is the crazy person who has just had his third child? I am about to become a new mum, and there is no amount of money in the world that would keep me from my child. People like that do not deserve the miracle of being able to have children.

...the Gloved One's ex-wife has deepened the mystery of his new bub's origins. In a line straight out of her ex-husband's song *Billy Jean*, the ex-wife has declared, "The kid is not my son!" The ex-wife insists it wouldn't breed another little wacko for quids, saying it's been hard enough trying to see her other children. Their mother must give a full month's notice before any visit to Wacko's Neverland ranch, and has to be disinfected before touching her kids. ■ Wacko's other ex-wife's recent nuptials in Hawaii were almost a wipe-out! We told you her actor boyfriend proposed just three days beforehand. Well, turns out it was a re-proposal. Weeks earlier, the couple were on board his yacht off Catalina Island, and Elvis' daughter was sporting a dazzling diamond engagement ring. But they got into a fight over the amount of booze the actor was drinking, and Elvis' daughter tossed the \$130,000 sparkler into the sea, telling her beloved that the engagement was off! Elvis' daughter helicoptered back to LA while the actor hired divers who spent two days searching for the rock, to no avail. The sheepish actor had to pop the question again, and a new (and bigger!) diamond helped seal the deal.'

...*The King's daughter will soon inherit his fortune, but... has to push her mother out of the way first* WHEN [the daughter of Elvis] Presley celebrated her 29th birthday recently, [it] didn't party hard with her famous buddies. Instead, [the daughter spent the day the way it]ll spend her future – surrounded by accountants and business gurus. Gone will be the exotic Versace couture gowns [the daughter] favours for *Vogue* modelling stints. In their place will be sober... suits, as [the daughter] pours over complex documents. This year represents her graduation as heir... to the... Presley fortune. A host of anxious Presley administrators – including her mother... – are holding their breaths to see if the unpredictable young beauty will be able to cope as head of a \$400 million empire. Foremost among concerns is whether [her] devout membership of the Scientology movement could threaten the booming Elvis industry her mother sweated to create... from the \$5.4 million Elvis left behind... "The church demands a lot of money from members, which would devastate the Elvis Foundation... [The daughter has already] paid a lot for renting a luxury suite at the Hollywood headquarters which costs \$2,000 a night. [Unfortunately, you] can't tell her the church is no good." [However, sources say the daughter] was pressured last year into accepting board recommendations that limit the amount of money the trust can give to charities or religions... According to a[nother] deal struck when [the daughter turned 20, her mother] will get \$33 million once the young heiress has control of all \$400 million... "[The daughter] becomes one of the world's richest [people] on her 30th birthday, but now... needs to prove [her ability to] handle it or years of hard work will be down the drain," says one Presley Foundation executive... [While] taking on increasing responsibility within the estate... [the daughter is] also taking steps to smooth her troubled personal life. [Currently, it] is... living happily ever after – again – with her ex-husband... in a new Clearwater, Florida house. The love nest is close to the local Church of Scientology, where the pair are receiving marriage counselling... [The daughter] had originally hoped for a ceremony around Christmas, but that dream was foiled by her [other] [ex-husband... His surprise baby announcement... forced [his ex-wife] to cancel her own plans... On her 28th birthday [the daughter] received \$66 million worth of stock in Graceland Enterprises and The Elvis Aaron Presley Residuary Trust Fund – funds dispersed by the Trust's board of directors. This year, [the daughter] received a second \$66 million instalment... In the past year, [the daughter]'s managed her \$66 million responsibly... [avoiding] lavish spending. Before... [buying the] sprawling Florida property, [the daughter] had paid around \$3.3 million for a mansion – but saved millions by buying in a less pricey area of Los Angeles.

...*Elvis died 20 years ago this Saturday... a bloated victim of a vacuous, kitsch-laden system – but to his millions of devoted fans, the King will live forever* NEWSPAPER headlines regularly scream "Elvis – the truth". And readers murmur "again". The truth about Elvis can be told in one sentence: [Elvis] made black music white and thereby invented rock'n'roll... made a succession of dreadful films, had a lot of sex, took a lot of drugs... [(while... doing his national service in Germany[, to]... keep... troops alert on night-time manoeuvres, army staff handed out amphetamines which, for Elvis, quickly developed into a habit[)]... grew fat, created a Las Vegas cabaret act of excruciating awfulness, and then died... of a "rest-room overdose". Purely as an artistic history, there is nothing to be said after about 1958. John Lennon[, who once said]... that before Elvis there was nothing... rightly said Elvis died when [Elvis] went into the army. By then this "white boy with black hips" as *The New York Times* called him, had combined the urban and rural rhythms of the black South with the country twang of the white West to create the rebellious music of newly affluent white youth. Other, better artists – from [a folk-rock idol] to Nirvana's Kurt Cobain – took the idea and ran further with it... [I]n Presley's ludicrously overcooked ballads, one hears not a genius or "The King,"... yet, in spite of... that, who could deny that Elvis lives? After death the reputation of most artists waxes and wanes, but the King's only waxes. For a start [Elvis] is not, of course, dead. Sightings are reported daily – [Elvis is even] booked to appear at an Elvis festival in Ottawa later this year – and churches have been established to honour the risen Elvis. Is it mere coincidence that when [Elvis] died, seated on the lavatory, [Elvis] was reading a book called *The Scientific Search for the Face of Jesus*? Elvis has become the kitsch Christ of a peasant religion. And, like Christ, [Elvis] was tortured by an ungrateful world. "I believe in my heart," writes... [someone] on the website of the If I Can Dream of Elvis fanclub of Massachusetts, "God was there with him and [Elvis] knew it so [Elvis] went peacefully to his new home in heaven. Lots of bad things were said and written about him but [Elvis] never let anyone down... was always there for everyone, even his enemies. Too bad they did not love him enough to do the same." ...That Massachusetts shrine website lists reasons why Jesus and Elvis are one – Jesus H Christ, to cite one, has 12 letters and so does Elvis Presley. And the First Presbyterian Church of Elvis the Divine – daily prayers and consumption of his favourite banana pudding – is a smart gag. But these sniggering elites also laugh at Christianity. You cannot be this kind of joke to the rich and smart unless you are, first, very serious to the unsophisticated poor. There is no doubt that the conviction that the King lives and the transformation of every rhinestone and every fat cell into a sacred fetish amount to a real popular faith, a mass longing for transcendence through the medium of a [hu]man who, like Christ, is seen as both ordinary and unique, and whose "death" has come to be the prelude for an ultimate transfiguration of himself and the world... Books still pour from the presses – one of the latest is written by... [someone claiming Elvis] was her first boyfriend; another is a hatchet job based on numerous interviews with those who knew him. The Internet is littered with hundreds, perhaps thousands, of devotional sites. His records still sell, every screwed-up out-take having been digitally remastered for CD, while MGM is set to release 18 videos of his films. And... a shop called Elvisly Yours in Shoreditch, east London... acts as a global clearing house for every possible species of Elvis memorabilia. "There was Elvis and the Beatles," [the owner] says, "and that's it. If you don't like Elvis, you don't

like music. His music relaxes you. It makes you feel at home... appeals to all classes and cultures. There are Indian Elvis impersonators and we supply Japan..." It was [the shop owner] who broke the British stranglehold of Memphis-based Elvis Presley Enterprises (EPE) [in a crucial High Court case in which the benignly indulgent Justice... concluded that Presley, neither in life nor death, could claim ownership of his name and appearance. Both belonged to the world... For... [a Dr who] used to teach literature and cultural studies at the University of Mississippi[, and 3] years ago started the International Conference on Elvis Presley... Elvis was the central protagonist of post-war social change... EVEN HIS later Las Vegas period represented a form of cultural innovation. His jump suits, capes and high collars inspired [a British singer] to create Ziggy Stardust and ushered in the sexual ambiguity of glam-rock. Elvis was a post-modernist, a mixer of discourses and signs, who now forms a legitimate focus of highbrow academic attention. "The media made a joke out of this," [the Dr]... says, "but they don't realise how big this has become academically." ...If, as artist... Elvis... cannot bear the weight of all this academic significance then, as phenomenon, [Elvis] certainly can... ON SATURDAY, 43 N[Z]ers will join the tens of thousands making a pilgrimage to ...h[is]... grave in Memphis.

...Thanks to the marvel of marketing, Elvis... is more profitable today than... when [Elvis] died... The grateful town [Elvis] made his home... reckons [Elvis] is responsible for most of the tourist industry's \$US1.8 billion... annual revenues and 37,000 jobs. Graceland, Elvis' home from 1957 until his squalid death in the bathroom, drew 700,000 people last year. There are five gift shops... An exhibition hall and a hotel are planned. In addition, a vast market exists for Elvis books, conventions, memorabilia, college courses, bumper stickers (I brake for Elvis), velvet paintings and other essentials. The newest money-spinner is Elvis Presley's Memphis, a \$4 million restaurant that features memorabilia and southern cooking, including Elvis's favourite: fried peanut-butter-and-banana sandwiches. The place has been packed since opening on July 24 and eight more are planned... How was a fading star transformed into a perpetual money machine? A few hints: • A premature death. Essential. Ageing icons don't sell... but youngish dead ones do [see Marilyn Monroe and James Dean]. • Control the brand. Elvis and Elvis Presley are registered trademarks, which E[PE] protects with a ferocity Disney would appreciate. EPE has contracts with more than 100 licensees, who make everything from confetti to Elvis dolls. Images of middle-aged Elvis are conspicuously absent, and EPE lawyers drive items such as bottles of allegedly genuine sweat off the market. (A British court ruled that names could not be copyrighted, but EPE's trademark remains safe in America, its largest market.) • Tackiness sells. How many people go to Graceland just to see the green shag carpet and the Jungle Room? Lots, and they pay \$18.50 for the tour. The Elvis regalia industry also capitalises on schlock. The world's... 50,000 Elvis impersonators favour the Las Vegas jumpsuit look, particularly in Aloha blue and gold lame. These costumes retail for \$500 to \$3000... not count[ing the] wig, sunglasses, boots and a TCB (taking care of business) choker. • Keep the music coming. Just because Elvis is dead does not mean [Elvis] can not keep recording. RCA, which owns the rights, has released more than 20 albums of Elvis' music since 1977, including a recent four-disc, \$69.95 compilation of out-takes, home recordings and assorted bits and pieces. RCA hunts out such material. It also re-issues, re-masters, re-packages and re-releases Elvis with bewildering ingenuity. In the next four months, it expects to sell \$40 million of Elvis music in the U[S] alone. Not bad for a boy who was born in a two-room shack in Tupelo, Mississippi (admission \$4).

...consider... the boy from a Mississippi shack... who was elected King by popular mandate... Today marks the 20th anniversary of the death of Elvis Presley, a 20th-century icon elevated – or reduced, depending on how you look at it – to fridge-magnet and beach-towel status. [Elvis is so famous that the singer] has ceased to exist in any meaningful way and is now erased of nuance and personality, existing mostly in caricature, parody and a few familiar songs... [although his staunchest fans declare otherwise:] "...we await the second coming. Elvis will be coming back and the impersonators are merely his prophets." ...those Elvis fans have double reason for celebration this weekend. The King's now sold one billion recordings.

...[an 'Elvis Presley impersonator was yesterday shuffling his white *Blue Suede Shoes* in Queen St in a warm-up for tomorrow's entertainment in Aotea Square. "Just seeing the smiles on people's faces makes it all worthwhile. People really lighten up when they see someone impersonating Elvis for fun." The NZer was inspired by watching the AUSn Elvis champion perform. "I thought, 'Hey, I could do better than that.'"]

... 'is there anyone left alive who hasn't done Elvis? Ever since Elvis appeared to die back in 1977, there's been no shortage of impersonators. Even when the resemblance to the king is less than breath-taking, crowds flock to pay homage. Children are presented – perhaps for healing – and for youngsters the king seems to have attained that special status usually accorded only Donald Duck or Mickey Mouse. It's interesting to see how, as time passes, the king has metamorphosed into whatever we want him to be. Elvis himself said, "The world's a stage and each must play a part." And for some, that's not hard to do. "I think it's getting stronger now. Every year we're getting heaps of younger people coming into it – so with them coming in..." Well, it becomes a religion. If only Elvis was still around to see it. Perhaps all this adoration is reaching him, somewhere, and making him less *Lonesome Tonight*?"

... 'Elvis has finally found a NZ home – in the land of Holdens, heavy metal and black T-shirts. West Auckland is to become home to the King when the country's first Elvis Presley memorial is unveiled in Henderson in time for his birthday on January 8. The Auckland-based Memories of Elvis Fan Club has long been frustrated by the lack of a Presley monument and members decided to take matters into their own hands by ensuring that, while the King is gone, it is not forgotten. The club's secretary said: "While NZ has a very strong Elvis following, Graceland in Memphis is just so far away and most of us will never be able to afford to get there. This memorial will give us somewhere where people can go and pay tribute to the world's greatest performer." A fan had donated the money for the project, so it would not cost West Auckland ratepayers a cent. The Henderson Community Board has agreed to let the club put up a 1.7m-high solid granite monument – incorporating a silhouette of Elvis from his *Hound Dog* days, a guitar and a gold record – to the King of Rock 'n' Roll at Cranwell Park. A Waitakere City councillor, who is also a board member, said it was appropriate to let the monument be built out west, given the area's large fan base and numerous unconfirmed Elvis sightings since his death in 1977. "Frankly, I think it'll be a good tourist attraction. It'll be one of those things that will attract people from overseas, as well as those locals who believe they saw him at Pak 'N Save last week," said the councillor.'

... 'Even by US standards, what ELVIS' former doctor is doing is utterly tasteless. The doctor, who lost his licence for giving The King too many prescription drugs, has mounted a travelling exhibition of the pills Elvis was abusing. This ghoulish sideshow has drawn 10,000 people, paying \$12 each'...

Elvis Presley fans can follow their idol into the grave by bidding for an eternal resting place in the crypt that housed his body for 46 days and nights in 1977... The successful bidder will be able to accommodate seven relatives and friends in the crypt... in the Abby Mausoleum in the Forest Hill Cemetery in Memphis... However, the honour will not be cheap. Bidding... starts at \$1.2 million... □ A[n A]merican blues legend [who has more justification than Elvis to use the title] *King* gave his beloved electric guitar Lucille to [the]*Pope*... yesterday, in a gesture celebrating his meeting with the... Pontiff. The 72-year-old artist handed over the guitar, his faithful touring companion of some 50 years at a star-studded audience for singers and musicians performing in the Vatican's upcoming fifth annual Christmas concert... The Pontiff's meeting with [the blues legend comes after the pope met a folk-rock idol] at a concert in September. The Roman Catholic Church once branded rock music a child of the devil.

...[a singer 'may have sold 16 million copies of her album, but only Hollywood holds the power to make her God. The angst-ridden star is playing the Supreme Being in the controversial new comedy *Dogma*. The movie's provoked a storm of protests from Catholics for its violence and anti-Papal stance.']

...*Lock up your parents. The band they love to hate... is coming...* [T]he antichrist superstar... [of rock – also] known as "the God of F***!" [– is an]... honorary member of the Church of Satan. His stage act includes self-mutilation, lewd sexual acts, and occasionally, loss of life for hapless beasts[, and on one occasion the shock-rocker 'accused an audience of not being crazy enough shortly before two people were stabbed']... Outrageous Florida shock-rocker Marilyn Manson brings his controversial band of the same name to Auckland this month for a show that has brought censorship pressure across America from parents and Christian groups. "It just inspires me to try harder," croaks Manson. "We've had extreme

protesting from right-wing Christian and political groups. They've all tried to stop us from playing, and they've only succeeded in making us stronger. Love and hate are equally powerful emotions, so as long as they hate us, our fans love us. The best thing for them to be is apathetic, but they're too ignorant to realise that." ...[hi]s fundamental Christian upbringing and his exposure to his grandfather's perversion – allegedly jerking off to porno movies while playing with his train set – motivated the youth to undergo... a personality transformation. Reacting to the hypocrisy [it] saw in his circumstances, [the youth] renamed himself Marilyn (after the sex goddess idol) Manson (after the notorious psycho-killer) and fashioned a weird and perverse visual image around the [stage] name. Now 27, Manson has lived with his creation for more than a decade, and his group has followed suit. Each member has a monicker that conflicts star icon with serial killer: MC Gacy, Ginger Fish and Twiggy Ramirez. With their potent horror imagery and music equal parts Nine Inch Nails-style... industrial-edged hard-rock, and glam and gothic-influenced, the group have found a fervent audience in disaffected young [guys] who respond to the similar nihilism of groups like Tool and Korn. For all the band's shock value, it doesn't take much digging to reveal the individual Marilyn Manson as a dress-up freak who happens to have his own moral agenda. Shucks, [the 27-year-old] even cares... "My fans see that I'm a person that's seen and done a lot of things, and has experienced a lot of the same problems that they're having, and they see that I've used it to my advantage. Maybe that gives them motivation and hope." ...Tellingly, [the 27-year-old] names his favourite books as... *Antichrist*... *Cat in the Hat*... *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, and... *Devil's Notebook*. Oh, and the *Bible*! "It's something I spent a lot of time learning when I was a kid, and ended up realising that Christianity was more oppressing than it was liberating, so it wasn't really for me... It seems like a good idea to love everyone, but if you do it really cheapens the value of love." As an advocate of social darwinism, [the 27-year-old] says the only really valued attribute is intelligence. "I pick my friends by what they have to contribute. I think artists and writers and anyone that has an opinion and cares enough to speak their mind is intelligent." ...His group's latest album... is "about searching for something to believe in... and in the end... you can only believe in yourself." ...At times [the 27-year-old] looks like the demonic cousin of a character from a Dr Seuss book, with his exaggerated lipstick and strange postures, [and it actually] sees himself as the Antichrist... The word "apocalypse" [also] gets bandied about a lot on the record. What can [the 27-year-old] mean? The end of the world? "The apocalypse I'm looking for is on the mental level. Of course there are times where I'd love to see a physical destruction of the world in some of my more hopeless moods. But the apocalypse that I would like to see is almost a positive one, because it's a killing off of the old ways, a getting rid of the idea of God or the mainstream... To me the idea of an antichrist is about individuality and personality. Christ is really just a figure for all of those things to oppress us..." But isn't Christ the ultimate figure of rebellion? "I think Jesus Christ was the very first rock star. And... [I'm] the very last one." Amen.

...[Can] you believe we have to share the planet with [a] chanteuse... who... frankly declares... "I'm blessed. The Creator is on my side and has anointed this project. I'm a singer, a dancer, an actress, a visual artist, a sculptress and interior designer: these are the things that the Creator has made easy for me. I'm constantly growing and evolving, even during this conversation." ...[Incidentally, a South Auckland] hitmaker... – who appears under the name OMC – has just scored another big leg-up in the difficult world of making it internationally. This week [it] appears on the cover of *Billboard* magazine, subject of a lengthy profile recounting his successes so far, notably his *How Bizarre* hit single. That song... jumped from... 113 to 95 on the *Billboard* top 200 and the album of the same title has sold 83,000 copies Stateside according to Soundscan, the official computer-collated sales chart. It is now 79 on the *Billboard* top 200 album charts, well above... *Blood on the Dancefloor*, which has spent the same amount of time on the... [US charts. T]he single was being played by 137 top-40 stations and a further 22 modern rock radio stations. The video for *How Bizarre* is in "stress rotation" on MTV and medium rotation on VH1, the... most important music channels in the U[S]. OMC also appears on the soundtrack of *Bean: The Ultimate Disaster Movie*... in a version of... *I Love LA*... That song will be the first single released from the soundtrack... and will coincide with live OMC appearances in the U[S]... OMC is scheduled to open for the [US] tour of UB40 after a series of... dates in Canada.

...The... latest sensation... from the... musical melting pot that is South Auckland has... been compared to... [the] Supremes... Their first single, *Show Me Heaven*, was released through Sony earlier this year to an enthusiastic response. Since then they have been playing live almost every weekend... The girls are all Samoan and... their hopes are high. "With God's help we want to get to the top. We want to have successful pop songs, but... [in] five years I want to see at least 100 people that I've brought to the Lord through my music – and if not, I'm leaving," [one of the teenage girls]... who have known each other since intermediate school... jokes. "This is like the Ma-V-Elle ministry." These dreams are echoed by the others and it seems they are pretty determined to make them a reality. "We've gotta be strong these days and stand up for ourselves – we can't trust anyone but God... If we do it in the name of Jesus and delight ourselves in the Lord... then we will be given all the desires of our hearts and may even change the world." • *Ma-V-Elle open for Boney M at the Downtown Convention Centre tonight and... at the Ericsson Stadium on Saturday.*

...The soaring, seductive... biggest-selling [gal] performer of the 90s and one of the most successful recording artists of all time, will tour Australasia... in January 1998 for a series of concerts on the first leg of her *Butterfly* tour, which... includes... [her only NZ show] at... Ericsson Stadium... [on] January 30th... with the average ticket price probably less than \$100... Described as a uniquely beautiful voice, with incredible range, emotion and control, [her] "instrument", has been responsible, in just seven years, for selling over 80 million records. Even before the recent release of the *Butterfly* album... her seventh[... the singer]... had become the first [gal] artist in history to have three studio albums each sell in excess of eight million copies. With Honey, her twelfth [US] number one hit, [the singer] has achieved more chart toppers than any other [gal] in the rock era. In the annals of the *Billboard* Hot 100, only singles have ever debuted at number one and, as the *Billboard* Bulletin puts it, "[this singer] owns half of them". In N[Z], her achievements have been no less startling. Her[first] six albums... racked up a total of 19 platinum plaques, with *Music Box* – one of the all-time best selling albums in N[Z] music industry history – accounting for six of those. [The singer], who drew larger audiences than the Rolling Stones in Japan two years ago, comes to N[Z] at a time when her life, in all its aspects, is undergoing great change. In May [the singer] separated from her mentor and husband of four years, [the] Sony Music president... Shortly after... the 27-year-old... dispensed with the services of [her] manager... and attorney... "I haven't been out much in reality. I was right out of high school [when] I started. I got my record deal and made my album and I haven't stopped since. I've more or less lived in the recording studio, that's where I've grown up. People might see it from the outside and not realise how much work it really is doing this and maintaining this kind of thing... Nobody can make the public buy records. My talent is a gift for which I am grateful and I am lucky to do something I love so much for a living... I started singing when I started talking... It's something I've always wanted to do... Every night I prayed to God about becoming a singer... [but] I had to believe that I could do it or it wouldn't happen..."

...The world's biggest-selling[gal] performer... has cancelled the only N[Z] performance... planned during her Australasian tour. The promoter... said it was necessary to cancel... as the venue was unsuitable. The show is designed for weather-proof facilities but there was no indoor venue available at the planned time... The... Melbourne-based promoter... says... Auckland... [is] in desperate need of an indoor arena that could seat an audience of 12,000 to 15,000 fans... [However, the director of] the Supertop at Ericsson Stadium... disputed that, saying the venue had hosted some of the world's top acts successfully... Ticket refunds were available from point of purchase.

...[It's my party and I'll drink if I want to! The washed up singing star has spent a few days vacation on the island of St Barts in the Caribbean after yet another stint in rehab. The 27-year-old was splashing out with some of the \$NZ97 million pay-out it received from Virgin Records when they dumped her.]

...In the pop charts of the late 80s, no one can have been so lucky, lucky, lucky as... SAW... But six years after they last wrote hits... two members of one of Britain's most successful modern songwriting partnerships are taking the third to court in a multi-million-pound battle... The[2/3rds

claim that the 1/3rd], the business brain behind the phenomenal success of SAW, has not paid them their due as... two-thirds... owners of the recordings and is not properly exploiting the lucrative... back catalogue. The court action is the latest salvo in an increasingly bitter battle between the SAW trio, who produced more than 100 hits in the 80s... for... Bananarama and [a number of other acts – including Britain's 'most famous living Christian (according to a poll of Brits that placed the incumbent pope in second place'), who will shortly be heading off 'on a summer holiday' to celebrate his 40th anniversary in the music business (including a concert at Auckland's North Harbour Stadium on February 7th, accompanied by the NZSO)]... The three members of SAW are reputed to have made more than \$207 million from [the]songs... They were [also]named songwriters of the year three times in a row... [However, one of the 2/3rds], who still write... with [each other], has not spoken to [the 1/3rd] for three years – except through their lawyers... [T]he discord extends to their A[US]n teen prodigies... None of the three has disguised his dismay at the pair's commercially disastrous changes in direction: [the guy half of the AUSn teen prodigies] launched a stage career and [the gal half] adopted a raunchy image that has brought her a cult following among gay [guys]. "It all started going wrong after [the former *Neighbours* stars] left," said one record company insider. The two are long past their sell-by dates in Britain, but international sales, remixes and compilation albums are still thought to generate nearly \$NZ6.8 million a year. Some estimates value the pair's back catalogue of seven albums and 35 singles at \$27 million... The colossal sums at stake in global pop were illustrated last week with reports that 1997's pop phenomenon, the Spice Girls, expect to earn \$24 million by the end of the year.

...The Spice Girls... have taken two of the top honours at the annual Brit pop awards... They took the award for best single of the year for *Wannabe*... *Say You'll Be There*... won top video, with the raunchy quintet telling fans: "We are proof you can win with a little help from girl power." ...The ultimate girl band, who have topped the charts in 31 countries, hit the big time... [after] going to No 1 in America with their first single, a prize that eluded the Beatles... [T]hey had to share the Brit Award limelight at the glittering gala with the Manic Street Preachers, a Welsh rock group making a triumphant comeback after the disappearance of their 28-year-old... alcoholic and anorexic... lyricist[, whose]... empty car was found abandoned on a motorway near the famed Severn Bridge... in 1995... But for the booming \$NZ11.6 billion pop industry, the Spice Girls... [- who] arrived an hour late... and stayed only 40 minutes... [-] were the stars of the night with their raucous, scantily dressed dance routines... Hype abounds in the pop world but this time it has been justified; the Spice Girls headed a bumper year for the industry with album sales topping 200 million for the first time in 1996 and sales heading for a 10[%] rise this year... After 30 years in the pop business and sales that have now topped 100 million, the Bee Gees were given a special "outstanding contribution to music" award. The British-born [AUSns], once kings of the disco famed for their falsetto voices, gold medallions and flares, then treated the audience to a medley of their greatest hits...

THEY are the pop sensation of the decade, selling millions of records since bursting onto the music scene... Since then, it seems, we have learned everything about them. Everything, that is, except what we wanted to know: Could they sing live? Sceptics doubted the hugely-hyped group would ever perform without a backing tape. But they were proved wrong at the weekend when the Spice Girls performed their first live concert... The Spices... were introduced to thunderous applause on the cult U.S. TV show *Saturday Night Live* – watched by more than 20 million viewers... [- and] had the unmistakably raw sound of a live performance but it was, unmistakably, the sound of real talent.

...A new release by the *Spice Girls* has knocked... [the] *Candle in the Wind* tribute to the Princess of Wales off the top of the British singles charts... *Spice Up Your Life*, makes them the first group to reach No 1 with their first five singles and the first to enter the charts at No 1 four times in a row... A year ago they were merely flavour of the month. Today, the Spice Girls' product range reads like a supermarket chain's. The British Patent Office is grappling with... 100 applications for trademarks bearing the Spice Girls moniker – for everything from shaving cream to beer.

...Bootlegging has gone street-legal. In an extraordinary thumbing of the nose at the music industry – and the mightier Spice Girls – a firm of top London lawyers has been hired by a video production company to make an unofficial Spice Girls video. The Spice Girls, who have blocked previous unofficial releases, are furious but appear powerless to do anything about it. *Spice Power*, which sells at £10.99... is racing up the video charts. Its producer, Visual Corporation, anticipates sales of 50,000 copies, but... [the Spice Girls] won't see a penny. Earlier this year the band's management took out an injunction against the release of another video, but this time it has backed down. "They threatened to act, but we told them to bog off..." said [the lawyer] who headed the legal team... The team was hired by Visual to exploit what they believe is a lucrative loophole in the law – the release of unofficial videos which cannot be accused of "passing off," do not infringe copyright and do not require the "performing rights" of the artist. The bigger the act, the more money to be made: already Visual have rushed into the market with unofficial Oasis and Boyzone videos. It is a development that is alarming the music and video industries which have invested heavily in combating piracy. Retailers expressing caution at the legality of selling the videos are being reassured... [by the legal team that they will] not infringe the law. After tracking down worldwide footage of the Spice Girls through news agencies and the Internet... the video producer, sat down for several days with... [the] legal team to watch it. Judging the legality of each second, they produced a 45-minute documentary which... features no performance by the Spices and no songs. What it does have is interviews with a former stylist, with... [someone] who once ran a studio where they rehearsed, a former voice-coach and a Spice astrologist. There is footage of [one member]'s former incarnation as a game-show beauty, courtesy of Turkish television, an extended series of clips from an interview granted to Britain's Channel 5 and footage of the band giving or receiving awards. Perhaps strangest of all, however, is an interview with the former manager of the... football team near London, for which Sporty Spice used to play. The team is filmed in action, but not with Sporty – which would have been a "performance." "We can show one of them walking down a street, or even two of them, but if there were four of them and they broke into a dance step we wouldn't – that might be infringing their performing rights,"... □ *The Spice Girls'* new single *Too Much* has charged to the top of the British charts, leaving the fab five thumbing their noses at critics who had forecast their imminent demise. The[y]... took the... No 1 spot from the *Teletubbies* – a group of cuddly creatures on children's television who were bidding to top the holiday charts with *Eh-Oh*. *Too Much* was released to coincide with the royal premier last week of the Spice Girls' movie, *Spiceworld*.

...*The great rock'n'roll Swindle*... As rock'n'roll enters its sixth decade, Britain's pop stars are rebelling against music bosses who they say are working them too hard. When... Radiohead[']s singer] blacked out and collapsed on stage in Germany a couple of years ago, the physician diagnosed exhaustion, exacerbated by laryngitis. Radiohead had been on a gruelling world tour, promoting [their album] *The Bends* and [the singer], who had periodic bouts of illness, had requested medical help. But... was urged to continue... "The doctor gave me some drugs and said I was fine to play but then I collapsed. Afterwards I found out that the doctor was paid by the promoter." [His] collapse hinted at a phenomenon that is well recognised throughout the industry – that bands are being pushed to their boundaries. Already this year cancellations by Babybird... and... the Verve... have been blamed on illness and the strain of endless touring. Some... like... Placebo, an up-and-coming indie act, accept that to make it in the big time you have to make sacrifices... "[T]hings are moving at a very fast pace now, but if there's ever a time to be moving at a very fast pace, it's now. Perhaps we can relax in a few years." However, in a surprise announcement, the... organisation that represents British music management, has called for a radical rethink of the record industry after complaints from a number of bands and their managers about being... asked to produce what they claim is an exhausting supply of bonus tracks, remixes and alternative b-sides. Heavyweights in the industry... have challenged the record companies' practice of releasing multiple versions of singles, all with different b-sides. They argued that this practice, used to boost the sale of singles, is... leading to sub-standard material and is undermining the credibility of the charts... The [management organisation] will push for major changes in the singles market when it meets officials from the British phonographic industry. It's likely that the [organisation] will try to have the singles market revamped so that there are only two record formats for singles – a CD single and seven-inch single, with one a-side and one b-side each. A separate 12-inch vinyl chart, solely for dance music, is also likely to be proposed. At present, it's not uncommon for the same single to exist in a variety of similar, but distinct formats, including CD-1, a 25-minute CD with 4 tracks, CD-2 – another 25-minute CD with the same

single and three different b-sides, and a 40-minute CD – with the single remixed several times. The same single is also typically released on cassette – with up to 40 minutes of remixes. Bands don't necessarily receive royalties for these b-sides... "When a band gets signed to a recording company, it's typically for albums and singles alone... But with this practice, record companies are getting up to an extra 16 tracks a year free of charge in their catalogue which they can then put out as[a] b-sides album on a box set. Often these b-sides are material that the bands are not even 100[%] happy with." ...Record company sources have defended the practice of releasing multiple formats of a single. They argue that bonus tracks often involve little or no extra work for bands, because "they are often live tracks, interviews or b-sides that have been previously recorded." ...EMI Records argues that record companies[are] issuing multiple versions of b-sides... because of consumer expectations. "The view of the public is that the capacity of the [CD] is such that only giving the public the traditional a-side and b-side isn't giving them value for money." Ironically, singles sales have enjoyed a huge revival in the past two years as record companies have become more sophisticated with their marketing plans and increased efforts to use singles as a promotional tool for album sales. Britons buy more singles a head than any other nation, except Japan, and sales are greater than at any other time except 1982. Last year, there were... 50 million singles sold in Britain, nearly 23[%] more than in 1995... However, the manner for securing those sales continues to be a niggling source of debate within the industry. Rather than based on sales to the public, singles are recorded on the number of sales to record stores. This has promoted the practice of record companies providing record stores with free stock and the record stores slashing the prices of singles... [The] manager of the Brand New Heavies, bemoans this practice. "It means that there's a great advantage to major labels who can afford to give away a large volume of product, but independent labels and less established artists who want their records sold at full price cannot compete." A record industry response to all these allegations is that "bands should realise that no one makes any money from singles. They're just a vehicle, through radio, to draw attention to the album." ...With record companies adopting a different stance, the controversy... could lead to a long and bitter fight between the [organisation], managers, recording artists and record bosses.

...Some of the top names in British music appear in a "hit list" this month... [A] galaxy of rock and roll megastars [have been] forced to hand over... almost \$NZ57 million... to settle tax claims after an elite... Inland Revenue Department... unit successfully challenged a series of tax schemes... to shelter mega-earnings from tax rates of up to 60[%]... The full list of stars targeted reads like a compilation album from British pop music's hall of fame. It could be titled *Now That's What I Call Tax Avoidance*... The pop millionaires were guaranteed confidentiality in return for paying up and the Revenue Special Office team who did the deals were sworn to secrecy under the Official Secrets Act. However, the *Observer* has established the details behind many of these remarkable deals... The largest settlement uncovered, for almost \$6.8 million, was made by the Bee Gees... [One Bee Gee] alone paid \$4 million. The rest was shared by his brothers... At least \$6 million was paid by members of the Rolling Stones... The Stones were targeted after their 1982 and 1990 world tours when investigators received free concert tickets in the line of duty. [The band's drummer]... and bassist... claimed to live across the Channel. [The bassist] emphasised the point musically in his 1981 solo hit *Je Suis un Rock Star* in which [it] declared "I live in France." "Mais non," declared the department... [The band's singer] claimed to live on the Caribbean island of Mustique... Many stars moved either themselves or their savings offshore, especially under Labour when the top tax rate was 98[%]. Non-residents pay tax only on income received in Britain. But in the 80s the department tightened up the rules and taxed anyone with a British property... Almost \$5.7 million was paid by the members of original heavy rockers Led Zeppelin. And more than \$4.5 million was paid by... Genesis members. A \$3.4 million settlement was made by a company owned by... members of Dire Straits... [Two members] of the Who handed over a similar sum... [A guitarist] who won a Grammy award last week, settled for \$2.5 million as did the members of Deep Purple after the department probed \$15.8 million in overseas royalties. The Sex Pistols, the punk pioneers featured in the *Great Rock and Roll Swindle*, handed over \$565,000... Other targets... included the Smiths, whose hits include *Heaven Knows I'm Miserable Now*, the Kinks, whose *Sunny Afternoon* contains the line "The tax[collector]'s taken all my dough", and... [the] saintly founder of the Boomtown Rats... Investigators... were often helped by the stars' ineptitude or mistakes in failing to be paid in accordance with cleverly worded contracts. In only a minority of cases did the tax[collectors] come away empty-handed... Faced by their Special Office fans, the pop stars probably felt like those in the hit musical *Les Miserables*. They were not alone. The show's composer... must have been exactly that when the department claimed up to \$3.4 million from his royalties.

...[the singer who once called himself Ziggy Stardust, and] whose hits in a 30-year career include... *The [Guy] Who Sold The World*... has been named Britain's richest rock star with a personal fortune of £550 million pounds... putting him ahead of... [a former Beatle (r:p1622, ln13)] for the first time... In the first survey of its kind, *Business Age* said the former Beatle had earned £520 million... [and his] wealth continues to grow despite the fact that the Beatles broke up more than a quarter of a century ago... while[a Welsh] heart-throb balladeer... was third with £275 million... Unlike many other rock stars who saw their wealth slip away in a haze of drink and drugs, [the richest rock star, who]... broke new financial ground this year with a \$US55 million... Wall Street bond issue secured against his back catalogue... took firm control of his finances during the 1980s, putting behind him the excesses of his earlier years... The magazine compiled the list by examining the company accounts, record sales and other earnings of all major British pop acts over the past 35 years. [4th on the list was the singer from Genesis (£220m); the British piano player was 5th (£200m); the Rolling Stones' singer was 6th (£135m) – while the band's guitarist was 10th (£96m) and its drummer 20th (£50m); the recent Grammy award-winning guitarist was 7th (£120m); another former member of the Beatles, George Harrison, was 8th (£105m) and the band's drummer was 12th (£93m); in 19th place (£52m) was Britain's most famous living Christian; in 16th place' is Mr 'Da Ya Think I'm Sexy' who married NZ's most famous model.

...[THE] JET-SETTING Kiwi supermodel... and her family have splurged half a million dollars in [less than 12] months on holidays to the most exotic locations of the world. In their latest list of extravagances, [their] entourage has been cavorting in Monaco, the playground of the rich and infamous... The... Auckland-born model... looked hot in her floral bikini, stretched out like a trim tiger on a deckchair at the Beach Club while her husband... – [who]... was one of the highest-grossing live performers in the world last year, raking in \$30 million... [–] amused their children... The Monaco spree comes just days after... [the couple] rubbed shoulders with another royal family... when... [it] was clear the couple was well rested, [having] arrived in London in grand style aboard the floating resort, the *QEII*, having stayed in its \$20,000 penthouse suite normally reserved for royalty and international dignitaries. Add to this "destination everywhere" holiday itinerary the family's wild party trip to Dubai in April and their whirlwind N[Z] visit in February. In December, [the singer also took his wife] and the children to Rome... "They go on a circuit around... the year, taking the cruise, visiting Ascot then going to a Mediterranean destination. The amount of money they spend depends on how many people they take with them, but the *QEII* would have cost about \$200,000 as would the trip to Monaco. And their visit to N[Z] cost them around \$100,000. They always go first class, so it's big bucks every time they go anywhere."

...[NZ]'s own supermodel has joined the ranks of former rock wives. This may have an adverse affect on her children, especially her eldest daughter] who turned five last month and is obviously enjoying growing up with all the trappings of Hollywood[. 'Meanwhile, mum's having problems with her planned nude layout for *Playboy*, having been told the \$2m deal's off until it loses weight and gets toned. They've given her 2 months to shed at least 5kg.'

... 'The idea that a rich and powerful movie star would be besotted with a gorgeous Kiwi supermodel comes as no surprise to anyone. However, the supermodel was quick to let us know that the movie star was not among her admirers. Our cover story last week had a gal purporting to be a friend of the supermodel's discussing the movie star's infatuation. The "friend" went on to explain that the supermodel would have nothing to do with the movie star and was standing by his estranged actress wife, with whom the supermodel shares a passion for protecting endangered animals. The supermodel has contacted us and explained that it has never met the "friend" quoted in the story, nor has it met either of the actors. New Idea will not interview the "friend"

again, or use stories that quote her. We would like to sincerely apologise to the supermodel and any of her family who may have been embarrassed by this story.'

...a Kiwi 'has been falsely linked to drug use by an internet site that dishes dirt on the stars. But the supermodel's NZ agent has begun moves to have the site closed down and its creators sued over the cruel lies. "My client has taken on a couple of magazines before successfully. These lies are so far from the truth. The supermodel would never do anything like that. This internet site would best be described as the contents of a garbage can." The supermodel has also closed down websites before which slurred her. "There was one site where they put her head onto a naked body. This latest site says its claims are 'based on hearsay, rumour and gossip' – that about sums it all up." The site – A List – casts slurs on the lifestyles of more than 100 international celebrities. It attacks their sexuality and makes accusations of drug and alcohol abuse. The agent said the supermodel – who has a young son and daughter from her failed marriage to a British rocker – was into healthy living. ■' The British rocker who dumped his first wives 'reckons long-term relationships are "impossible" and that marriage vows should be rewritten every year, "like a dog licence". Says the rocker, 56, "I think the vows should be changed because they've been in existence for 600 years – when people only used to live until they were 35. So they only had to be with each other for 12 years. Then they would die anyway." The rocker goes on to admit that the most painful moment of his life was when his Kiwi supermodel wife walked out on him. "I don't think anything could have prepared me for the heartache because it cuts so deep. I couldn't even play football with my mates. It was like they didn't exist."

...following 'a false pregnancy scare', a footballing mate of the British rocker 'is engaged to the rocker's former supermodel wife – but the mate has confirmed it was once expecting a baby with an All Saints singer. The mate has backed the singer's claims – in her soon to be published autobiography – that it was once pregnant with his baby but had an abortion. The pair fell in love four years ago, but their relationship fell to bits after the abortion which, says the singer, drove her to the brink of suicide. The couple had been delighted at the prospect of having a baby together. "My partner put his hand on my belly and told me, 'This baby is saving my life'." The singer claims that her manager was furious and told her the future of her band depended on terminating the pregnancy. But, says a friend, "her partner told her they were going to have the child." However, the pressure on the All Saints singer was too intense and it gave in to her manager. Says the friend, "When the singer told her partner, the partner was brilliant and told her it would support her whatever the singer chose. The singer was in New York at the time and her partner flew to be with her." The singer has since had a baby with one of the *Oasis* brothers.']

...not since the 1960s has there been a band as popular as Oasis, which has sold more than 16 million albums in two years. [The wife of the most infamous *Oasis* band member], who, as a teenage actress, said [it was her intention] to become "more famous than anyone and anything," is now almost as famous as the 23-year-old [husband] himself. Her rise from humble beginnings – powered more... by tenacity than talent – has provided some revealing insights into the gritty but glamorous world of the rock wives and their influence, for better or worse, on some of the most enigmatic icons of popular culture. What is less clear is why this intelligent [actress] should have become addicted to the unstable institution of the rock marriage in the first place... [The actress grew up in] the predominantly middle-class suburb of Hounslow, where... her... mother... who... was... resolved to keep her as far from the underworld as possible... sent her daughter to a convent school. [However, the mother, who was] a public relations officer... wasted no time in building [her daughter]'s early career. At the age of four, [the daughter] played... in *The Great Gatsby*. At seven, [the daughter] starred opposite the actress best known for portraying *Cleopatra*; at nine... was the Birds Eye "peas girl", adorning millions of packets of frozen vegetables. A steady stream of exotic modelling jobs followed. So it was that when [the daughter] reached her mid-teens, [the daughter] found herself moving in circles that enabled her to live out the fantasies entertained by millions... [of schoolgirls, culminating in her marriage to a 1960s pop icon]. But marriage to [the middle-aged musician proved to be] a disaster. Undeterred, [the daughter married the] multi-millionaire lead singer of the Scottish rock band Simple Minds, four years later. They lived in splendour and had a son... but the marriage fell apart after two years. By now, [the daughter] had lost all her closest family. Her mother had died after a long struggle with cancer and her brother had mysteriously disappeared. [The daughter] was therefore vulnerable when [it first met her next husband] on a plane in 1994, before Oasis had grown from Manchester pub musicians into stadium stars commanding up to \$7 million for a concert. "I fell for him but [the singer] ignored me,"... says [the daughter, and the singer] snubbed her again backstage after a performance by... The Pretenders, [whose lead singer is another ex-wife of the singer from *Simple Minds*.

...the *Grammy* award-winning guitarist's ex-wife 'has the love of her two new children and a successful business of her own, but the Italian actress still remembers as if it were yesterday the day when her four-year-old son with the rock star plunged to his death from the 53rd floor of a New York building. If it had not been for the tragedy, the actress believes it might one day have rebuilt her relationship with the guitarist. "I think about Conor all the time. It seems incredible that this thing could have happened." But the actress is still angry with the cleaner whose decision to leave a window open cost Conor his life. "We can never be sufficiently protected from the ignorance and incompetence of people surrounding us and, unfortunately, we sometimes have to pay for their shortcomings. But this is a very high price to pay. Not even seeing them dead would give satisfaction. Something happened and nothing can redeem it." The tragedy was especially painful for the guitarist, because it'd recently split up with his wife and had also just begun to appreciate the importance of his relationship with his son. "Conor's dad had understood that a new world was opening up for him, had finally decided to accept his responsibility whereas before it hadn't known how to fit this person into his life. Conor's dad had told me just the day before the accident that it wanted to commit himself to creating a really important relationship." Instead, grief at their loss would create an unbridgeable chasm between the parents. The two parents reacted in starkly different ways to the tragedy. While the mother wept for hours, the father seemed incapable of expressing his emotion, remaining silent and immobile, "like a statue". The one outlet open for the rock guitarist was his music, and his tribute to Conor, *Tears in Heaven*, gave expression to feelings that would otherwise have remained bottled up inside him. Conor's mother has always found the song too painful to listen to, but was impressed by other songs composed by her ex-husband after the tragedy. "I was really struck by the powerful way they transmitted these emotions. But in human terms, the guitarist was zero, nothing. I remember him showing no emotion whatsoever, while I was a lake of tears." The guitarist was not easy to live with. When they met, the guitarist was married to George Harrison's ex-wife. Things weren't helped by the guitarist's fight against drink and drug addiction. The guitarist would disappear into an alcoholic limbo characterised by prolonged silences. The couple split up when the guitarist had an affair with someone introduced to him in New York, ironically, by his Italian actress wife's best friend. The actress, who once featured in a string of Italian sex comedies, claims her ex-husband was also intolerant of the noise and disorder caused by the presence of a young child. And, strangely, music was effectively banned from the house.'

...because they don't have enough staff, UK police let an illegal 3-day rave continue on council land – despite receiving 1000 noise complaints.' By the way, today is the anniversary of] the Noise Control Bill['s introduction to NZ's] Parliament... by the Minister of Health... [The 1982 bill gave police] and local body noise control officers... the power to jointly seize and impound stereo or other equipment creating excessive neighbourhood noise.

...The city that never sleeps may finally offer its frazzled citizens a break. The New York City Council has enacted a new law that triples the fines for repeat offenders of the noise code. Sample maximum fines for some Big Apple annoyances: blaring nightclub music, \$US24,000... dogs that bay at the moon and everything else, \$US525; car alarms that don't quit, \$US750; loud televisions and stereos, \$US1050; and nuisance honking of car horns \$US2625... [In further news from the US, a series] of anti-violence rallies and peace patrols in tough city neighbourhoods are to be launched in the wake of two murders in the... gangsta rap music scene. On the surface, the war between east and west coast rappers seemed to be cooling. A February truce meeting called on a TV show brought together [a]New York record mogul... and [a]Los Angeles rap icon... to call for an end to the bitterness and hatred between the coasts. But on radio airwaves, among record executives and fans, speculation is that not everyone was paying attention. New York rapper Christopher Wallace – whose stage name was Notorious B.I.G. and nick-name was Biggie Smalls – died in a drive-by

shooting [a fortnight ago after Wallace] and his entourage exited a *Vibe* magazine party in L[A]. The 24-year-old's death came almost six months to the day after west coast rap star Tupac Shakur (25) was gunned down on the Las Vegas strip. That killing is still unsolved. The motive for each case is unclear... [However,] Wallace, a self-admitted former crack dealer in... Brooklyn, was considered a Shakur rival. Shakur had accused him of involvement in a 1994 robbery in which Shakur was shot and lost \$57,000 in jewellery. Wallace was angered at Shakur's claim... on an album that... [it] had slept with... Wallace's [partner]... who was then pregnant with Wallace's child... After Shakur was shot, industry observers and fans wondered whether an all-out war was imminent... In the rap world, where stars boast of living the thug life, the killing was "life imitating art"... The beef between the rival coasts centred largely around who created the hard-core style of rap music known as gangsta rap, a genre whose graphic language and vivid descriptions of violence have made it one of the best-selling vehicles in recorded music... The gangsta persona extended to record executives as well. Death Row Records, home to... Shakur, was led by... [a] 136kg... 31-year-old... who built an intimidating reputation among colleagues based on his alleged ties to the Bloods street gang and a barely controlled violence. [The 31-year-old], who was in the car with Shakur when [Shakur] was shot, has been accused of using baseball bats to settle business disputes[, and is currently] serving a nine-year prison term for violating probation on prior assault charges... [M]any thought... gangsta style was on the way out in favour of a new, positive attitude... but... [a guy] who writes about rap for *Vibe*... says Wallace's death will make gangsta rap even more appealing. "People might think this is one more nail in the coffin, but what it does for the kids involved in gangsta rap is it makes... the gangsta lifestyle... even more attractive." ...Others... said the Smalls and Shakur killings had spurred "young people to do their own evaluation: Is being a 'gangsta' that glorious? Is it really cool to be dead?"

...When the Doors' singer Jim Morrison died – bloated and bearded – in a bath in Paris in July 1971 it wasn't the end, it was just the beginning. Instead of a rock band with limited life expectancy, now you had A Legend. A decade after his death, Morrison was on the cover of *I* with the headline "[Jim's] Hot... Sexy, And... Dead" and at the time... Elektra Records, the band's label, was saying, "the group is bigger now than when Morrison was alive. We've sold more Doors records this year than in any year since they were first released." ...Since Morrison's death, on any given day a dozen kids... who were in day care when... Jim... died... gather at his graffiti-covered grave in Paris' Pere Lachaise cemetery, following scribbled signs on the other tombs which point the way to... the... "wild child, full of grace, saviour of the human race"... They drink wine, smoke joints, leave offerings and exchange Morrison rumours; [Jim]'s alive and living in New Orleans... in the Arizona Desert... in Africa with Elvis... [T]hree decades on, one of those best placed to comment is still mystified at the longevity of the Doors... [The Doors' drummer] lives lightly with The Legend, and a formidable legend it has become with Morrison – forever young – cast as the young satyr crippled by his intellect and emotional shortcomings. As [an] English writer... noted in his *Dark Star* Morrison biography, "Morrison... [(who)] assimilated ideas from writers such as... William Blake, Baudelaire and Nietzsche, and took the band's name... from the title of Aldous Huxley's psychedelic voyage *The Doors of Perception*... was the sexiest bookworm ever to pick up a microphone... an inspired lyricist and one of the most celebrated pop icons of the Sixties." But any intelligent reading of the Doors' story reveals Morrison as a great plagiarist... a drunk and an amateur human being in the latter days of his short – dead at 27 – life. As [the writer] says, Jim got out before [Jim] was found out. Morrison is only considered a poet by those who don't read poetry, but belatedly got his wish. His occupation on his death certificate was given as "poet." It's also a curious irony that most of the band's biggest hits (*Light My Fire*, *Love Her Madly*, *Touch Me*, *Love Me Two Times*) were written by... the band's [guitarist. The Doors]... stood outside the rock of their period. They owed nothing to the sunny hippie culture which had exploded out of San Francisco, played rambling blues with none of the economy of bands such as the Rolling Stones and had only the most tangential connection with the dark New York scene. Even their line-up was peculiar... [- a] classically trained... keyboard player; a)... guitarist raised on Chicago blues; and a)... jazz drummer... Today [the drummer] – who... is writing a novel ("about the Sixties, of course")... – ...sometimes goes out with a spoken word show playing drums and reading from that autobiography which is subtitled, in case no one got it, "My Life with Jim Morrison and The Doors." ...The... [drummer] jocularly notes his response to a recent – if hoary – question about the difference between the Sixties and the Nineties in rock. "I said, REM got \$80 million [for a recording contract] and we got \$5000 way back when. But then I thought, money is not evil per se, it's an energy and REM is into Rock the Vote and human rights in Tibet and artists with conscience should have more money, then they can show the business[people] how to use it. But you gotta put your money where your mouth is. So I challenge all you rich rockers out there..." And [the drummer] laughs in the sure knowledge that [it] is one of them.

...[Life's very rich pageant When *Mojo* magazine slammed R.E.M. on the cover of last month's issue it came with the headline, "The Final Act?" And the article's inside piece – under the headline "Be Seeing You?" – noted the band had recently dispensed with its longtime manager, and had come off the *Monster* tour which had almost killed them (in the case of the drummer, quite literally). As the article speculated – what future for this band, and will they gradually turn into the Rolling Stones? Those question marks around the heading and banner proved necessary however because, as Warner Brothers hunkered down at their conference in Anaheim, California, the unspoken topic of speculation was "who will R.E.M. sign with?" Their contract with Warners was up after delivery of the new album and the bidding war had begun in earnest. Amongst the suitors for the collective R.E.M. signature on a contract were heavy-hitters Sony, Capitol and SKG. Another contender was Outpost, the label run by R.E.M.'s producer. Insiders however tipped the front-runner in the bidding war to be DreamWorks, the new label which is helmed by a former Warners chairperson and a former Warners president who had long personal associations with R.E.M. during their Warners tenure. There was a very loud sigh of relief in Anaheim, however – indeed, thousands of delegates leapt to their feet and broke into a standing ovation – when the band's legal adviser walked on stage and interrupted a speech by the current Warners chairperson with a telegram. The band had decided to re-sign with Warners for another five albums. The telegram was very simple: "We've always said we'll only do this as long as it's still fun, and right now, it feels like we're just getting started, so let's keep going." The relief Warners felt must have been tinged with some perspiration however because, if industry sources are to be believed, the band re-linked the contract for a whopping \$US80 million – that's \$US10 million more than the benchmark deal Virgin made with Wacko's sister back in January. Representatives from both the band and Warners naturally refuse to discuss the detail but it seems R.E.M. will be paid a \$US10 million signing bonus, a \$20 million advance against sales of the albums already in the Warners catalogue – plus a 24% royalty rate on the retail sales of each album sold. An Auckland music industry lawyer says this last factor would be the second highest rate behind Wacko's purported 28%. The average rate for new artists is 12% and a good top-of-the-scale would be 18%. If all that sounds pretty hefty, there's more. The contract covers live albums and ownership of the album masters reverts to the band seven years after the contract ends. That means they can renegotiate another contract for the same material which will then be valuable back-catalogue. The contract was apparently struck after two 14 hour sessions. The big question is: are R.E.M. worth it? Well, few of the superstars who have received huge deals in the 90s – notably the Virgin singer, her brother and Metallica – have returned the profits their respective companies hoped for. And R.E.M. aren't getting any younger. They've already whispered they aren't keen on more tours. That said, R.E.M. would seem a better bet than most: they haven't lost touch with their college radio roots while scooping up Grammy awards and their sales record so far has been mighty impressive. Their last three albums collectively sold nearly 10 million copies in the US alone and, in the words of the late Kurt Cobain – "they've dealt with their success like saints." The stability of the band line-up – reinforced rather than ruined by the difficulties of the *Monster* tour, it appears – must be reassuring for the Warners management team also. And perhaps the reason for that telephone number figure lies in the top of Warners. The band was threatening to quit the company – along with other top acts – when the corporate in-fighting prompted the departure of its former chairperson and president, both much respected and admired within the company and industry at large. Within Warners however, the dust has settled. Also, record companies like to have their label leaders, sometimes even if they are expensive and don't offer the returns you might expect. And maybe the R.E.M. figure isn't quite as big as it looks on paper. As

the band's legal adviser says, "there are so many different ways to analyse this. It's not exactly what will be in the final agreement." Other industry attorneys point out there will be hidden provisions that will claw it back from the bald \$US80 million figure. Still – a bald figure is a bald figure. And one of the baldest, R.E.M.'s – "I am world leader pretend" – singer, just got to not worry where his next meal was coming from.' In local news, 'Tadpole's' debut album, *The Buddhafinger*, entered the charts at No 2 a month ago. The cut-off figure from when the band starts making any money will be when about 25,000 units have sold. So far they've sold about 13,000. Their month-long national tour kicks off with an all-ages gig at the Mandalay tonight'.

...NZ's first CD pressing plant is under construction in Auckland and due to begin production in April. The Ponsonby plant will have the potential to press five million CD-Rom and compact discs a year and manufacture new DVD digital video technology. The \$3.3 million project belongs to locally owned Software Images with technical support from A[US]'s Pacific Mirror Images, a division of the... PMP Communications Group. Software Images copies, packs and distributes floppy discs, CD-Roms and CDs for computer, music, education and promotional markets. [The company's m]anaging director... said the plant would mean more control, better service, reduced freight costs and faster turnaround than overseas CD production. An estimated 12 million CDs are generated overseas each year for the N[Z] market and Software Images handles 1.8 million... "If we're sourcing from the U[S] or the U[K] it can take two weeks to restock. It's a guessing game, but with local production there's no guessing involved – you just order when you need it,"... said... [the] A&R manager with BMG Music... But... [the] manager of Stebbing Recording Studios, said Software Images was taking a significant risk. Competing at the right price would be difficult in a market with several established agents and major record companies who had their own plants. [The 'cost of a CD to the local industry is \$2.50' at present, but when the local 'CD maker opens for business the price will be \$2 per unit for a run of 1000' (yet musical CDs typically retail in NZ for \$29.95!). And AUS] was beginning to reach excess production capacity which would drive costs down[even further. However, Software Images' managing director]... said his business alone, with more than 50[%] of the available market, justified the investment in the plant. "And we have a real competitive advantage over A[US]'s labour market. One of their key weaknesses is being trapped into high labour rates for non-standard working hours, whereas we have a lot more flexibility,"... [The managing director] predicted the plant would boost the company's export business into the Pacific nations from \$250,000 to several million dollars annually within three years. And they would be poised to capitalise on the expected arrival late next year of DVDs. DVDs, or digital versatile disks, are tipped to replace video. With a capacity of up to 17 gigabytes, they offer digital quality video with [multiple] features...

Creative Technologies of Singapore, one of the world's largest multimedia card manufacturers, is returning to its core business with new sound card and DVD (digital video disc) products. The products mark a u-turn for Creative after its disastrous foray into CD drive manufacturing which saw the company post a \$US38 million loss for the 1996 year... [A] Creative regional sales manager, described the company's 1995-1996 move into the highly competitive CD drive market as "one of the worst decisions we could have made". Creative invested a lot of money in a manufacturing plant but because of the pace of technological change, was unable to keep up with the innovations and ended up selling CD drives which were far slower than the latest offerings... DVD is touted as the "next big thing" in interactive multimedia because it allows far more data to be stored on a disc the size of a standard CD. A DVD disc contains up to 17 gigabytes, making it a very attractive option for movie delivery and the logical successor to the VCR and video cassette... In performance terms the new DVD can read CDs at the highest 20 speed access rates and is fully backwards compatible with any CD ROM disc... The Creative DVD bundle is priced at \$799 plus GST. - 1997

A combination of the Internet and new technology which squeezes music files down to one-tenth of their normal size is winning an army of fans and giving unsigned bands a chance to market themselves to the world... A number of audio formats have emerged, including RealAudio and LiquidAudio, but the most popular and effective to date is MP3, a compression technology that shrinks sound files for delivery over the Internet while retaining quality. Thousands of Internet sites around the world host MP3 files and there is even an MP3 Top 40. In the US students at some campuses are no longer buying music – they are using fast Internet access to share illegal copies of the latest-release albums and chart-topping songs... Files are downloaded to disc-direct from Web pages... All you need do is type the name of the song you want in a search engine and chances are it will be there free for the taking. Once it is downloaded you need special software – also available free on the Internet – to play the files. Winamp, for example, the most popular music player, has more than five million users. Once files are downloaded they are often e-mailed between enthusiasts or copied in bulk to CDs using computer CD-writers and shared with friends. MP3 compression typically reduces songs from 50Mb to 5Mb, allowing up to 140 songs to be saved on a recordable CD where previously you might only get 15. One of the main perpetrators of the on-line music revolution is MP3.com... which offers over 6000 free songs from 2000 artists... The MP3.com Website is visited by about 150,000 people daily... Pirated material is the major concern... [R]ecording companies have been caught off-guard by the proliferation of illegally copied songs. There is currently no means for the major labels to protect copyright, extract royalty payments for songwriters or maintain control over traditional distribution channels... [T]he Recording Industry Association of N[Z], representing the major record labels here, says it has not licensed anyone in N[Z] to put its music files on the Internet and any attempt to do so is a breach of copyright. It has written to a number of Internet service providers and individuals threatening legal action... In a single session... [an Aucklander] who is setting up his own MP3 site for N[Z] musicians, provided the N[Z] *Herald* with a list of illegally copied material from well-known artists at sites frequented by local MP3 addicts... sites where there were hundreds of people queued up waiting to download songs from Abba, the Beastie Boys, Blur and Bush to the Doors, Marilyn Manson, Prodigy, Queen... and the Village People... Kiwis were regular visitors to such sites and often had 300-400 files on their own hard discs or hosted on their Websites. Unless Internet users develop a conscience or there is a major global blitz by record companies, MP3 will continue to be a growth industry. In fact the format has become so popular that specialised hand-held players have been built. The latest device geared to make MP3 mobile is the Rio from Diamond Multimedia, currently at the centre of a major controversy. The Recording Industries Association of America (RIAA) attempted to sue Diamond Multimedia. It achieved a short-term injunction preventing the release of the small playback device but this was overturned in October. The court ruled it was not a recording device but a computer peripheral. Diamond Multimedia this month counter-sued the RIAA. The first local shipment of \$599 Rio players sold out in two days and Christchurch-based distributor Dove Electronics is now dealing with a major backlog of orders from major retail chains around the country. The current version takes 60 minutes of music on a re-recordable flash Rom disc and a disc capable of two hours of CD-quality music is due out early next year. Earlier this month, the world's major record companies and technology firms announced the creation of the Secure Digital Music Initiative, which will begin work next year on an open specification to protect copyrighted music online. Numerous discussions are under way with MP3 groups and other on-line music formats. After two years of development DMOD (Digital Media On Demand), an independent initiative, has been launched. This allows electronic commerce and encryption for secure purchase and distribution of online music. [Much like the services which allow them to phone up and hear the latest songs (at a 'cost of 10p per song in Britain'), consumers] can listen to a low-quality MP3 stream of songs then download a CD-quality version for about \$1 with 50c automatically transferred to the artist's account... According to the London-based research firm Market Tracking International, Internet-related sales of music will increase 20-fold to \$US550 million... or 1.25[%] of the \$US44 billion total music sales, by the year 2000... The idea of world music is taking on new meaning as anyone, anywhere, has a chance to offer his or her wares but the big labels will still try to transform what appears to be Internet anarchy [– which, 'if allowed to continue, could destroy the music industry' –]into the ultimate proving ground for their next wave of artist investment.

... "Music's one of the only things where people can pay the same for a diamond or a piece of shit," [a singer] growls. "It's mad! It really blows my mind that albums are the same price, regardless of their quality. If it was anything else it would inevitably have a premium attached to it. For that

reason we have to care about what's happening to music..." Judging by his solo effort, *Alone With Everybody*, [the]... lanky 28-year-old... obviously cares enough about his music to have crafted a remarkable collection of rousing anthems. It's an epic album, one that kicks off where the Verve's last album, the seven million-selling *Urban Hymns*, left off. But it also has more solemn undertones, as its main themes of life, love and loss prove... [A]t the height of their success, the Verve... self-destructed, amid rumours of drug abuse, infighting and mental illness, with [the band's] guitar maestro... quitting on the eve of a crucial American tour. Although they soldiered on for a few months with [a] legendary pedal steel guitarist... as a replacement, it was a matter of when, rather than if, they would call it a day. The moment they did, [the singer confirmed it] 'd already begun work on a solo album – a bold move, given his beloved band's premature demise. "Actually, the most difficult thing to adapt to is seeing my name, rather than the Verve, on everything... Coming to terms with that has been weird... It's funny." Despite [hi]s jocularly, it's clear the Verve's untimely end still saddens him. And why shouldn't it? After all, [the singer] devoted most of his adult life to making them the best band in Britain, only to see everything fall apart the moment they began to achieve that. However, his regrets are tempered by the knowledge that going solo has finally given him the scope to make the type of album [it]'s always wanted. "With the Verve, everything was always a tussle. There was always tension. But when I was doing this album, everyone was there to help me create the best record that I possibly could... That meant I could try to make things perfect – not in the classic sense of the word, but in a kind of cracked-lens sense of perfection... I scrutinised everything to a very fine detail on this record... It was important to do that because every little part of it creates the whole, so you have to be aware of all the different parts to understand the finished thing and to create tunes that work on different levels and satisfy different needs – songs that can be banged out on the radio in the middle of the day, or be played at four o'clock in the morning. That's what it's all about... Good bands, good music, and good songwriters making great music, and spinning everything on its head to inspire other people to go off and do it again – go do it better." □... WHAT'S that [Smiths'] song, *We Hate it When our Friends Become Successful*? We don't, actually. Some of us thought it really, really nice that [a] 52-year-old... picked up so many Grammys last week. And it was one in the eye for you youngsters out there (anyone under 40, if these Grammys were to be believed) who reckon you rock out. Sorry kiddies, making great music just ain't what it's about. What you need are powerful friends – and [the 52-year-old] has those. Now on Arista, the... [52-year-old] had the best hype-machine money could buy for his *Supernatural* album, his first for the label. But, like most people who have heard the album, my guess is the awards to [the 52-year-old] were more from an industry saying thanks to... [Arista's] head... honcho... for the good work [it]'d done down the decades and a salute to the might of his marketing machine. And Grammy awards are like that. [A former member of the *Police*] gets best pop album for an album that wasn't that popular? [Sonny Bono's former wife] for best dance recording? Yes, Grammys are suspect affairs. In 1988 they instigated a new award: best hard rock/metal act. As Guns'N'Roses and Aerosmith stormed the planet, they gave it to... Jethro Tull... But what do reviewers know? My comments about *Supernatural*... – which now comes with a gold "nominated for 11 Grammy awards" sticker – ...ended, "too uneven to be hailed as the comeback [the musician] was doubtless hoping for on his new label." Sales of five million-plus units suggest I was wrong. But sales figures are seldom an indication of artistic quality. And Grammys certainly aren't.

...More Grammy filth exposed... Altogether now – *Steely Dan*? Well, if the notoriously out-of-touch Grammy voters thought they were doing something for family values and declining standards by not voting for... *The Marshall Mathers LP*, then the last laugh might go to the winning jazz-rock duo... (combined age 104 years). The pair took their name from that of a metallic dildo in a drug-soaked book, *The Naked Lunch*, by William Burroughs, dead junkie writer and notorious wife shooter. By the way, Steely Dan's winning album, *Two Against Nature*, is to be found in a local bargain bin near you. We say get in – before the revival – and the parental advisory stickers.

...JUDGE YE NOT: "When those people get up at the Grammys and say, 'I thank God,' I always imagine God going, 'Oh, don't – please don't thank me for that one. Please, oh, that's an awful one! Don't thank me for that!'" – U2 singer... in a pre-Grammy interview. The band won three awards (best song, best record of the year and best vocal performance by a duo or group) for the single *Beautiful Day*. Their album, *All That You Can't Leave Behind*, was released too late for consideration, though it apparently still made God's "best of the year" list.

...Can't play the guitar? With a lot of nerve and little shame you still can be a rock star... without playing a chord... [A North Islander] had never been on a plane or travelled abroad. His life changed when his girlfriend put his name up for the national air guitar competition. "I went on stage and just made a complete fool of myself," said... [the] 28-year-old meat factory worker. Within minutes [the father-of-one] was the air guitar champion of N[Z] and got a ticket to compete at the annual world championships in Oulu, a Finnish city about 320km south of the Arctic Circle. Dressed in heavy metal T-shirt, leather trousers and Union Jack-capped shoes, [the 28-year-old] twirled his long curly hair to hard rock band Pantera, winning squeals of delight from the 2500-strong mostly Finnish crowd. [The 28-year-old] came second, conceding first place to last year's winner, [from Britain]... whose simple performance to *Fell in Love With a Girl* by The White Stripes went down well with the jury... The art of playing air guitar goes back to the 1970s, when breathtaking electric guitar solos by bands such as Pink Floyd and Led Zeppelin inspired teenagers throughout the world to grab their tennis rackets and mime their idols, swinging and prancing around their bedrooms... The first air guitar championship was held in Oulu in 1996. The prize is a real electric guitar. Twelve finalists from eight countries contested the final.

...The Avondale College Jazz Combo is standing proud after winning... first place in the group combo category... [of] the London Bar Secondary Schools Jazz Competition... The college's head of performance music... says the win is a great accomplishment because six members had never played jazz before joining the combo... The seven-piece group played... jazz standard[s]... *Blue Bossa*... *Autumn Leaves*... *Billy's Bounce* and... *Chameleon*... g[iving] members the chance to play a good cross-section of jazz styles. "Playing jazz gives them the skills as a reading, improvising musician. When they get into jazz they don't look back. We've had a lot of them [former students] go overseas." Avondale's past pupils include[a] bass player... who lives in New York and has played with jazz greats such as... [*Chameleon's* creator. The group's p]ianist... 15... would like to follow in his footsteps. "I might go to America. But I'm still deciding because I've got two years left at school. I've got lots of ideas of what I want to do."

...University goes top of the pops in degrees... WANT to be the next [international pop sensation]? ...Then Auckland University is the place for you. Next year the university is offering a degree in pop music. The N[Z]-first will give degrees in performing arts and will mix theory and practical so students get to play and develop their music, and learn how to make money out of it. [The p]opular music programme co-ordinator... said pop music was a multi-billion dollar industry with a wide range of job opportunities including reviewers, managers, producers, teachers and festival organisers... The degree also majors in Pacific Island performing arts... Graduates should get both practical mastery, and a cultural and intellectual perspective to develop art meaningfully in a national and international context. It could take 10 years before the degree becomes widely-recognised among employers and although it is new, parts of it are based on similar international degrees and standards... Creative N[Z] research suggested that although technical training in performing arts was available there was a need for more focused leadership across all fields of performing arts. The new Ministry of Education curriculum also calls for more training in the performing arts.

...Who puts the pop charts together and how are songs rated? ...the Recording Industry Association of N[Z] is responsible for compiling each week's Top 50 music charts across the country. The two charts – albums and singles – are compiled slightly differently. Albums are based entirely on sales from as many music stores in N[Z] that wish to submit their data each week. "Because we aim for a wide selection of stores, we believe we get a better picture of what is popular,"... Singles... [charts feature] a combination of both sales and radio airplay. "Singles were very popular, but now most people prefer to buy the whole album, it's a worldwide trend."... Some types of music, such as R'n'B, sell more singles, so the results were skewed toward this type of music until radio airplay was added two-and-a-half years ago. 'Gold' stations, who play classic hits, don't count – after all the top 50 charts would be full of the Beatles and Elvis Presley – but student radio stations do submit their playlists' data. [The compiler] says her job is to feed the numbers into her computer, which does all the calculations for her, and presto – out comes a chart of our favourite music.

...Curiously, NZ was the only country... Afroman's *Because I Got High*... went to No 1... It's up to you whether you regard... this song... as a pro-pot anthem or a humorous anti-drug song but this song must be one of the funniest gimmick songs of the year. Things are looking up for Afroman... who no longer sells his CDs out of a cardboard box on street corners in LA[, and] also no longer smokes dope. "I've got places to go, people to see, shows... I'm content, and I really don't need it now, so I don't smoke it anymore." ...[Incidentally, a Texas resident has been] sentenced to 99 years in prison for killing a musician who didn't know a song. The guitarist was shot in the head when [it] couldn't play... The Turkey.

...*Pop sham led to tragedy* IN February, 1990, the two-m[ember] American pop sensation Milli Vanilli were mobbed by adoring fans in Queen Street, Auckland, when opening a new record store. One lost his glasses in the melee but... wasn't willing to risk life and limb to go back and get them. But the 'manufactured group' who won a Grammy Award the same year for their 14 million-selling album *Girl You Know It's True*, were sharing a terrible secret. The pair... – childhood friends – couldn't sing. Their entire album was recorded by somebody else, although the pair never let on and took full credit for the record's huge success. Their sad downfall is told in *VH1's Behind The Music: Milli Vanilli* on TV3 at 7.30pm, Wednesday. A highlight of the documentary is an interview where [the pair]... recall praying they wouldn't win the coveted Grammy they'd been nominated for, as they were terrified of being exposed as lip-synching frauds. The musical sham finally ended when a lyric tape jammed during a live concert, and the pair couldn't continue the stage show. To make matters worse, their producer then had an attack of conscience and went to the media. The whole sordid story ended up splashed all over the news. Sadly, the stress of the scandal, which spelled the end of... [their] short career in the music business, is blamed for Rob's long bout of drug and alcohol abuse. Tragically... Rob Pilatus... [recently] died of a drug overdose... aged 33. "Milli Vanilli was not a disgrace," says [the surviving member], who is still struggling to revive his career. "The only disgrace is how Rob died – all alone, internally destroyed from the rapid rise then sudden fall."

...*Send in the clones*... The mop tops, Liverpudlian accents and yeah, yeah, yeahs make the crowd jump. But this isn't the Cavern, it's live music at The Playhouse on Aotea Square, and everyone's twisting and shouting to the four-piece band in the corner. It's a glimpse of a trend that's been hanging round the fringes for years, but now is taking centre stage. And it's a sign that rock'n'roll is way ahead of science when it comes to cloning. If you're looking for the ground-breakers in reproductive technology, don't bother fossicking around Italian laboratories or Waikato farms, just head for the pub. Odds on, you'll come across one of the many tribute bands that are constantly being spawned. Over the next month or so, Aucklanders will have the chance to see performers pretending to be... The Backstreet Boys... N'Sync, U2, Pink Floyd, the Bee Gees and... Abba... will probably be knocking around somewhere as well... At times, the duplication goes off in very strange directions, and the line between fantasy and reality blurs. Take the U2 band, Rattle and Hum, playing in Auckland this... weekend. Their repertoire of U2 hits includes *All Along the Watchtower*... and *Helter Skelter*... which makes them, well, a cover covers band. Further, they've picked up on [U2's singer]'s work to cancel [Last] World debt and are fund-raising for the... campaign. Is the next step for the fake [U2 singer] to have meetings with a fake Pope... to gain... fake... publicity for the campaign? It's odd how the aura can flow from the celeb to the clone... By the end of last weekend's Abbey Road gig, some young guys at the front were reaching out to touch [one clone]'s guitar... One of [hi]s theories for the popularity of tribute bands is that people want to feel what it was like to experience the Beatles or Abba... [(the brunette Abba, and 10,000 others born in Norway during W[W2])... were part of [a] nazi programme to create the perfect aryan race using German SS officers and specially chosen Norwegian[s])... "They want to feel like they're back there. They knew all the words and it was like they were back in the 60s for a while... It's no different really than going to Anne Hathaway's cottage, or something, because they wanted to go where Shakespeare lived." ...Once [Abbey Road]... started imitating the Beatles, they began to get more money and much bigger audiences... The tribute bands that work best have an element of unattainability. Either they're super-hip, legends, or broken up... "Tribute bands are very popular these days," says... Showtime Management A[US, which] is bringing the Britney and D'Boyz tour to 23 towns and cities around N[Z] in the next month. "You get to hear your favourite performers' songs and to groove with friends in a fantastic atmosphere. It's surreal." Surreal, and some might say... a little tragic, all this mimicry. Especially of teen popstars whose fame comes as much from their looks and marketing as from their music... In the end, however, it may be just another sign of the unoriginal times we live in.

...IF you have any doubts about the dangers of genetic engineering just look at the latest bunch of teen music stars. Somewhere in the US there is a laboratory churning out clones... The next thing you know, people will be labelling their cds with GE warnings. Aside from a little ab definition, there's not... much between pop princess Britney... and [her rival, the]pop genie... Both are blonde... and have well-choreographed dance numbers to go with their bubble-gum tunes. The boy groups are similarly indistinguishable... Take five guys of assorted hair colour and image and is it Boyzone or Five? G[E] in music isn't new – it's just in the 70s the genes were actually related. There were the Jacksons... Nolans and... Osmonds.

...Oh baby, baby, teen pop sensation Britney... has it all: drop-dead gorgeous looks, a possible royal romance with Prince[ss Di's eldest son], a successful music career and more than \$20 million in the bank. It seems the 18-year-old American dream queen can do nothing wrong. And Britney's proved [it]'s no one-hit wonder, picking up four Billboard Music Awards including the hotly contested ...[G]al... Artist of the Year. "Never in a million dreams could I have imagined all this," says the curvy teen. "All my hard work has paid off. This shows the value of diligence, perseverance and sacrifice." Britney was destined from an early age to become a star. "I began singing when I was a baby – before I could talk even. I was always... belting out numbers with my little hairspray bottle as a microphone..." Her professional career began at age 11 on *The Mickey Mouse Club*, alongside other child star prodigies like... [the pop genie], who is now her bitter rival for the lucrative teen market. After two years on the famous TV show Britney returned to school, but the pull towards her dream of superstardom was overwhelming and before long [it] was signed to a record company and on her way to success... Long gone is the innocent, naive child star, replaced by a sophisticated, raunchy pin-up who projects an image far more worldly than her teenage years. One big topic of conversation among fans is the rapid increase in the size of her assets... But the star will neither confirm nor deny whether [it] has had her breasts enlarged. "This is too personal a question to answer. At my age, a girl's body goes through many natural physical changes, although this is not something I wish to discuss. Besides, I have never thought there was anything wrong with breast enhancement." Nor is [the teenager] worried about flaunting herself. But the girl who made school uniforms and pigtails sexy by wearing them in her music videos has to tailor her appearance to strict rules imposed by her record company... Her hot provocative look, to the dismay of parents, has been copied by teenage girls all over the world, but Britney says just because [the teenager] has adopted a sexy image it doesn't mean [the teenager] is automatically a naughty girl. While [Britney] doesn't necessarily believe in staying a virgin until marriage, [the teenager] does feel that "even if you meet the right person you should wait until you really love him". Currently Britney is hooked up with[an] 'N Sync band member... who ironically was one of her Mouse pals on the Disney show. But [the Mouse pal] could be down the road if [Britain's] dreamy Prince... follows through on his promise of a Valentine's Day date. His Royal Highness is said to be besotted with the gyrating pop queen to the point where his dorm room at the prestigious Eton school resembles a Britney... shrine. After such a whirlwind year, the pace is set to hot up even more for the young star, who is the first teen to sell more than six million CDs. There will be more tours, more songs and... provocative videos.

...*FACT*: Britney... [has] splashed out a whopping \$450,000 on... pressies for her family. Lucky Mum got a \$120,000 Mercedes.

...*Coke wars*... Britney... could well lose her \$220 million deal to promote Pepsi after being caught out drinking Coca-Cola... in Sydney.

...[The Spice girls have dashed predictions of their imminent collapse by signing a new contract with Pepsi worth \$NZ1.3 million. Pepsi has already paid the group \$2.61m for a television advertisement, the rights to distribute one of their singles, and a concert for Pepsi competition winners in Istanbul. The news counters reports that the Spice Girls were about to dive into oblivion almost as quickly as they shot to fame. Newspapers were full of reports they're spent as a marketing force amid rumours of tensions and bust-ups within the group, accusations of over-exposure and attacks on the quality of their album.]

...‘The Spice Girls have topped Britain’s pop charts with the biggest selling album since 1990. A list compiled by industry *Rock Accounts 99* showed sales of their 1996 debut album topped \$62 million. Second was the British piano guy’s soundtrack from the Disney cartoon *The Lion King*.’

...Britain’s piano-playing p[op] legend... is set to earn millions from the world’s first internet pay-to-view concert. The show, to be run in partnership with Microsoft, will take place at Turkey’s 2500-year-old Great Amphitheatre at Ephesus. Web users will pay \$24-\$34 to watch the show live but will require high-speed connections to obtain high picture and sound quality. [The piano-player] is thrilled at the prospect saying, “No TV special gives you access to this kind of worldwide audience and television can’t offer the interactive benefits that viewers can get on the web”. ■ ...It may be a while since they had a number one hit, but the SPICE GIRLS are number one in pop music’s chart of top earners. They raked in more than \$100 million between them last year. The girls obviously have good advisers as they legally saved millions in tax by not having their incomes paid to them directly. Instead, their earnings are paid into a network of interlocking companies.

...THEY’RE bigger than the Rolling Stones ever were and now the Spice Girls have their sights set on knocking [an older singer (r:p1176, ln69) – some people are prepared to pay ‘\$25,000 to obtain tickets over the Internet for her next concert’ –] off her pedestal. The girls who made *Girl Power* the most popular saying among teenagers the world over have made pop history with their ninth number one single[, which]... means they go one better than The Rolling Stones... Another one would put... [the Spice Girls] neck and neck with [the older singer], who has 10. But they’re still five number one singles behind [Britain’s most famous living Christian] and seven short of the Beatles and Elvis Presley – who share the top spot. And the girls hit our screens again this week when they perform live at Earls Court in London.

...[‘*Spicy taste going bland*’ The Spice Girls, whose second album came out last week, have brought “pop-marketing” – a mix of music, publicity and business – to new, lucrative heights in their short history but commentators say they could soon burn out from over-exposure. The phenomenally popular group, Britain’s biggest at the moment, keeps popping up everywhere from television to deodorant ads in what is seen as a reflection of their unabashed bid to market their new album. But it will not stop there. The latest spin-off product’ is a booklet titled SPICE GIRLS THE HOTTEST BAND AROUND (which contains the following quotes: ‘I feel alive when I do mad things’ – Scary Spice; Posh Spice is ‘a self-confessed designer label girl whose favourite pastime is shopping’; ‘Anyone who says they flash at people “just for fun”’ – Ginger Spice – ‘can’t have a lot to say!’; ‘When Sporty Spice was 15 or so, Sporty remembers modelling herself on hair, large dungarees, Reeboks and a dollar sign dangling round her neck. “A bloke’s best chat-up line with me would be an invitation to a football match”’; ‘The other Spices say that although Baby Spice has a totally innocent face, and can smile and dimple her way through anything, Baby Spice is the wickedest of them all!’). ‘To deflect critics who write them off as brainless airheads brought together to sell products to pre-pubescent ingenues, the Spice Girls have also made a pitch to the older generation. They are helping to promote the sale of poppies for Poppy Day to commemorate the end of WW1 and to finance charity work by the British veterans’ organisation, the Royal British Legion. But much of their exposure comes from pure advertising to sell consumer products. A number of companies have scrambled to link themselves with the pop group, who so far have signed contracts with eight firms to promote everything from soft drinks to supermarkets to telephone companies. This promotional deluge, orchestrated by the group’s guru and manager, has reduced their music to almost a secondary role. Though touted at first as embodying a feisty “girl-power” to inspire adolescents as they face the new millennium, the five are seen more now as sexy, made-to-measure instruments catering to all the latest fads. “Has any music property ever been as cynically and wholly exploited as the Spice Girls?” asked an article in *Marketing Week*. With disarming frankness, Ginger Spice for one held out no illusions over how long the group would remain No 1, as the rumours of a possible break-up started to circulate. “Of course we realise it is a fickle world. We’re pleasing ourselves and we always bear that in mind.” The group’s producer, who is one of the top names in England’s pop music industry, was more blunt. “They are well aware of the fact they have a two-year career and are making as much money as they can.”

...‘A week is a long time in the fickle world of pop music, as the Spice Girls have discovered, with a vengeance. One of the hottest British groups since The Beatles started the week by sacking their manager. They were then booed off the stage in Barcelona on Thursday after a row with photographers about being filmed while performing, and suffered a media backlash at home. “All is not well in Spice World” concluded the *Times* at the weekend after the feisty quintet were also hit by disappointing album sales. “Girl Power starts running out of steam,” said the *Daily Mail* tabloid. But the “Fab Five” insisted that the ultimate girl gang with attitude was not finished yet. A romance between their manager – a publicity-shy figure known as Svengali Spice – and “Baby Spice” was believed to be behind the decision to drop him.’ To top the week off, thieves] caused \$3 million in damage in a raid on Ginger Spice[’s]... luxury pad... ransack[ing] the house and nick[ing] \$12,000 worth of jewellery and appliances... The 28-year-old star... was so shaken [it] couldn’t go back to the London flat and is looking for a new home. “It was a truly terrifying experience... You never think it will happen to you...,”...

POSH SPICE... has been dropped by Virgin Records following lukewarm sales of her[solo] singles and self-titled album. The album cost \$15 million to make and sold only 50,000 copies... [However, Posh isn’t likely to be too concerned, having just] sold the rights to her autobiography in a deal that could be worth more than £1 million... – a record for the memoirs of a British celebrity. Penguin... who commissioned the book, said [it] could not comment on a British media report that the company had paid Posh Spice well over £1 million for her story, but predicted the 100,000-word book would be a certain hit. “[Posh]... is probably Britain’s most famous celebrity today. [Posh] is Britain’s new Princess Di... It is a really extraordinary story to read the story of the girl next door who wanted to be famous and made it, but when [it] got there it was a nightmare.”

...[Posh Spice] has ‘fessed up [that it]’s somehow managed to spend over \$150,000 this year just on her hair. Her posh locks have veered wildly between cropped and long of late but, really, how much could hair extensions possibly cost in London these days!

...Famous plumbs[to] new depths... They dangled from the tree like so many coloured bangles. “Hello,” they giggled, as they swung from the tree limbs with the utmost of ease. “What,” the gaggle of pre-teens requested, “do you do for a job?” They learn young, these future party girls, what questions to ask at social gatherings. [The response] was... journalist. This reply caused a cacophony of squeaking which led other passersby to glance up – and to wonder, no doubt, when monkeys postering as small girls had moved into the neighbourhood. “Have you ever,” they breathed, mouths collectively open as though waiting for a tasty nut to be tossed their way, “met anyone famous?” Adept in the art learned at the knee of many a “celebrity” interview, where answering a question means first defensively establishing the context, [the journalist] answered: “Depends what you mean by famous.” They didn’t need to consult: “TrueBliss, of course. Have you ever met TrueBliss?” The answer was no. And that was that. They learn young – these tree climbers of the present, social climbers of the future – how to show utter contempt. Turning your back while up a scrawny, winter-stripped tree is a trick difficult to do with any great elegance; but they managed it. And if they’d had a banana skin handy to throw, [the journalist] had no doubt they would have thrown it... TrueBliss may like this story. Their puppet-masters may enjoy it, too. But I worry about the Blinded-out ones. Especially in the wake of a recent study by two psychologists from London’s Institute of Psychiatry. “Fame: The Psychology of Stardom” contains a lesson in the dangers of your own hype. It deals with actors, particularly soap stars, who suffer from the frighteningly named “possession syndrome,” and can no longer separate their characters from real life. Method actors... get most confused. “They get started by doing this deliberately, absorbing themselves... But it gets out of hand.” ...if the psychologists are really interested in a state of confused identity, they might like to head this way to take a look at the... TrueBliss... phenomenon... TrueBliss... are (at least on the evidence of their having to get weekend jobs) under-paid bit players in someone else’s fiction posing as documentary. It would be nice to think that they, like the Spice Girls to whom they bear absolutely no resemblance except that they are... [five gals,] will... sack their managers. Given that thus far the couple of [gals] on the show with any input (the voice coach who advised them on contracts and the stylist who advised them on shoes) have walked or been pushed... it seems unlikely *Girl Power* is the slogan of this [serial-documentary, which follows the process of trying to create a successful group

by selecting five unknown singers from hundreds of hopefuls – a concept inspired by]... America's answer to the Beatles... the pre-fabricated four... [known as] *The Monkees*... This week we saw them watching us watching them. It's a new low in the definition of "famous." And of manipulation.

...[the singer] has her dad's nagging to thank for her making it into all-girl pop group TrueBliss. The talented singer from Wellington would never have... auditioned for the group, along with 549 other hopefuls from around N[Z]... otherwise... A few weeks later... the assistant manager of a music store... left her job, family and friends behind to move to Auckland, joining the four others who'd made it into the group. The whole process is the subject of the TV2 show *Popstars*. "I never thought I'd get in – not at all," admits... the... Canadian-born... [20-year-old], who's been singing since [it] was little. "There were so many talented [girls] there and I was cynical about the whole weight issue. When I made it down to the last 15, I just thought they had put the token fat girl in." ...[the] size 16-18, says although her weight shouldn't be an issue, it is. "I do have a problem with it, because I have been smaller. I want to do something about it. I stick out like a sore thumb in this situation. I'm quite paranoid about it. I worry people think I'm letting the band down because I'm bigger. People have said, 'Why's [that girl] in the band? [That girl]'s fat'. It shouldn't matter but it does to so many people. Who said all-girl bands have to be skinny?" But what upsets [the 20-year-old] most about her size is trying to find nice clothes which fit – a frustrating battle which has seen her in tears in clothing stores on TV. For the band's media launch, [the 20-year-old] had to get her suit from a [guy]sweat store. "People in some shops make you feel bad because of your size. They look at you like you don't belong there. Why should I have to lose weight to find clothes that look good? It's so frustrating but it's not just me – I represent so many [people]... Something has to change and if I'm the only one who'll stand up and say something about it, then – damn it – I will." [The 20-year-old admits it] hasn't had any pressure from the other girls or the band's management to lose weight. "The only pressure is from myself..." For [the 20-year-old], who has sung in school choirs, church bands and two groups in Wellington, being part of TrueBliss is a dream come true. "This is what I dreamed of doing ever since I was a little[girl]. It's just the best... I wake up and think this is so cool. And if this is the best it gets, that's fine. I'm just going to enjoy the moment. It's something I can relive 50 times with all my children and grandchildren." So will TrueBliss be N[Z]'s answer to the Spice Girls? "If we're anywhere as successful as them, that would be brilliant," [fat girl] says. "We have that potential. So many people want us to succeed."

...[the NZ Herald talks about] *superstardom with... a tanned... Spanish supercrooner... [labelled the] essence of testosterone...* I[t's probably] the kind of phonecall bored housewives from Morrinsville dream about. It's easy to see why. [The crooner] is making me feel like the only [gal] in the world. Sort of [I'm a guy]. "Hello... You're beautiful! How is the weather? Beautiful? Now is the best time of the year, no? You prepare a house for me, I want to live in N[Z]... with my five girlfriends." The heavily-accented English gushes down the phone with all the warmth and exuberance of a vintage red from Spain's famed Rioja valley. Fatherhood (his fourth child, this one to a [25-year-old Dutch model... arrived last September) has clearly been good for [him]. "I have a new baby – you can hear... no? [It] looks very much like the gardener, but it's okay... you're a cutie, aren't you?" I'm blushing before I realise [the crooner] is actually talking to his new baby... But one thing is certain. Had I momentarily been the new love in his life, I would not have been the last. The Latin crooner has built a billion-dollar career on a lifelong passion for wine, [gals] and song, and – some say – little else. "Listen, my critics are over already... What happens is after 30 years – so many albums, so many concerts – they get old... [and] die... But I love them because they teach me in the beginning. When I was a young artist, I didn't know how to sing, and now I'm maybe the best singer ever in my language. And when you are the best singer in your language, you don't give a shit for the critics any more?" Indeed, if it is all built on personal magnetism, critics who label [his] music as "bland" or oozing "suave mediocrity" might be better off asking themselves, "Where can I buy a magnet like that?" Since 1974 the smouldering singer has sold... 200 million records in six languages, received enough gold and platinum records to armour-plate a small aircraft carrier, and is listed in the *Guinness Book of Records* for selling more albums than any other recording artist in history. So why stop charming people? "You have to understand that I was born this way, that God gave me this facility and I took advantage to really provoke (sic) my life as much as I could. I learn through the years like a painter. I'm singing for the last 30 years and... I c[ould] be your father, but I look like your son! It's not easy to make an interview in the telephone, but I love it." And the other things this 54-year-old heartthrob loves most in life? "First – surviving... Second, to be very healthy so I can make love three times a day. In the weekends four! You know what I do? I change myself. I drink more water, I make wee-wee every... one and a half (hours)... like a baby... I discipline my life to the limit, so I will be able when I'm your grandfather to be on the stage still... [Third, I love to sing... It was not always the case. At the age of 19, a car accident shattered the then promising goalkeeper's contract with legendary soccer club Real Madrid, and almost claimed his life. In rehab, a doctor's assistant handed [him] a guitar as a means of exercising his fingers, and entertaining himself on the long road to recovery. Three decades later, his 44th album *Tango* recently spent 14 weeks atop Argentina's charts, and has already gone gold or multi-platinum in 19 countries. "If I wouldn't have a car accident, I would[n't]... be... able to reach 30,000 people in N[Z] now and maybe 30,000 people in Finland tomorrow, you know what I mean? The hardest thing for me is to continue learning, to be better as a singer... I just want to reach a bigger level. I still have 10 or 15 beautiful albums to do." It could just be the bad line... from poolside in the Dominican Republic... but – for one ecstatic instant – you can almost hear his predominantly [gal] fan base breathing a collective sigh of relief. Yet [the crooner] laughs at reports that [it] closes his eyes and thinks of making love with certain [members of the audience when it] sings. "No... what is that? Which paper said that? I'm going to make a legal suit! Forget it! When I close my eyes, it's just a natural thing... [However,] I love when the people go to the concert, and after they make love like crazy with their husband, their wife or their girlfriend – but I'm too tired to be in the middle! ...I'm an artist... don't get confused! ...I'm a good lover too, but I'm a better artist! One thing about the [gals], I love them but I respect them very much. Don't think that is everything in my life..." Singing... consumes him with the unbridled compulsion of a full-blown addiction. "The only problem is I need a cure, and the cure is the people. So I'm addicted, but... [being] on stage is the answer. When I go on stage, it's the best doctor I can have... Probably, when the lights go off, I get a little sick, so I go back the next day to another stage!" Following in Papa's footsteps, his son... (21) has also found solace – and success – on stage as an international singer and heartthrob in his own right. As yet, there are no plans for the pair to release a duet dedicated *To All The Girls We've Met at Parent-Teacher Evenings Before*. "No, [my 21-year-old son is] doing amazing on his own. If I gave advice to him, I might be wrong. One day for sure though, if I am alive! And now I have my oldest son... which is 24 years old, who is also doing a great album. I tell them... [you] have an opportunity to touch [lots of beautiful, young gals] and it gets better 30 years from now." With the next call on his 0900 Frustrated Housewife line about to come through, our time together is nearly up... Like some spell-bound fourth former, I don't want to be the first to hang up. "I don't have much time now because I'm not so young. I'm only 39 years old. How old are you? 25? You are a baby! You have a baby already? You never been married, no? Don't get married, don't be crazy! Okay, I love you... A big kiss for you, a big kiss for N[Z]! I see you in February 14." ...● [The crooner] plays the Christchurch Town Hall as part of *The Festival of Romance on February 12, then stars in a Valentine's Day concert at the Mission Estate, Napier*...

Aucklanders paid \$190 for a seat at an opera they couldn't see, \$170 for a spot on a football field with [two piano players. The NZ Herald] asks why... ONCE, you couldn't get it for love or legal tender. The good old days when the swill 'til 6, the 2.30 gallops and beating the Boks filled in Mondays to Saturdays. When rainy, lonely Sundays in Auckland were for "cutting your throat," as one wretched visiting American writer wrote. This was N[Z], BE – before entertainment, before phantoms at the opera, rivers of dancing and rock'n'roll. But that was then. This is now... and we're spoilt for choice. We're wonderfully awash with amusements, kings of comedy, cheesy crooners, ripened hippies, monumental musicians and Irish dancers. Of course, they've come at a cost – and we're paying more than ever before... Buying a programme can add another \$30 to the price of the night out, though most are between \$15 and \$20. But forget the damage to the credit card. You've got to think value for money. It's all a

matter of feeling the quality, according to the [person] who flogs the most tickets between the Cape and the Bluff: Ticketek[']s general manager... "If you were sitting up front in the \$171 seats... you got something that you couldn't get five years ago – the quality of the sound, lighting and performers... [– so] you're paying more, but... getting a far more refined product." But it's more than just posh production values pushing up the prices. All that overseas entertainment rolling through your town has to be paid in hard currency bought with a soft Kiwi dollar. The... promoter... who gave us [the piano players claims to be] paying a third more to bring American acts to this country than... eight months ago. Other promoters sing the same song. Says Frontier Touring... "When you're talking a million-dollar US guarantee to an artist, a couple of points' drop in our dollar can mean hundreds of thousands of dollars." But pricing a show is a complex formula in which the talent's tariff is only one, if often the most significant variable (between 20 and 50[%] of the cost). While our dollar's dive means more expensive entertainers, nearly every other cost of putting on a show... has also increased. Venues alone have gone from 7 to 8[%] of the cost of an event to between 10 and 12.5[%] over the past few years... It's worse in Auckland. The continued non-appearance of the kind of entertainment centre every major city should have – a covered, seated venue holding between 10,000 and 15,000 punters – means ticket prices in the Queen City can be higher than in other parts of N[Z]... Take... the singer who... [starred in London's production of] *The Phantom of the Opera*... [and] will be putting tears in middle-aged eyes in October. In Auckland top-range tickets are selling at the heart-stopping price of \$150. In Christchurch they're going for \$110. The difference? Auckland's Aotea Centre holds 2000, Christchurch's WestpacTrust Centre holds 7000. The equation is simple... There would be an enormous price advantage if we had a "decent entertainment centre," and it would service up to 85[%] of entertainment needs, says... Pacific Entertainment... [which, with] other industry players... has lobbied local authorities for such a venue for more than three years. "They haven't been able to anticipate the needs of people who like entertainment. I think in the past it's been dismissed as frivolous... and that the be-all-and-end-all to satisfy the market was the provision of a very expensive Aotea Centre. The feeling was, 'Give us the Aotea Centre and our problems are over forever.' Wrong. It's the same old story. Auckland is last as usual." A covered venue has been proposed for the former Railway land on Quay St with a seating capacity of at least 12,000, though it's yet to progress beyond the drawing board. If it happens, Auckland – the equal of Sydney by number of shows and seats sold (as well as ticket price comparable) – will finally have what promoters and the public need. While they wait for the price advantage a large entertainment centre will offer, promoters look to other ways to save money and make a good return – say, 5 to 7[%] of the gross. By shaving 1[%] here and there on deals with artists, caterers, advertising, accommodation and so on, a better profit can be made. If a promoter's lucky (or organised, or aggressive), [it]... could also pick up a fist-full of folding stuff from bank interest earned on fans' money. Though sometimes the artist takes this cash. It works like this: tickets... go on sale six months before the concert. The punters' dollars must go into a trust account which cannot be touched by the promoter until the gig has gone. But the promoter can contract the ticket company to invest the money in an interest-bearing account in the meantime. Hey presto, money for nothing. This particular strategy has recently worked swimmingly for the oldest rock-n-roll band in the world, the Rolling Stones, according to this month's issue of the English music mag, *Q*. By postponing the British leg of their *Bridges To Babylon* tour (claiming, perhaps disingenuously, that punishing tax rates financially disadvantaged their crew), the Stones are set to earn around \$NZ1.35 million of pre-tax interest on the interest from ticket sales. Smell like ro't'n'roll? Well, it's legal, apparently. And it can be used to benefit punters by subsidising ticket prices... ANOTHER method for cutting the final ticket price is for promoters to side-step ticket company charges by selling seats themselves. Ticketek charges a booking fee of up to \$2 on every ticket it sells. For sales made by phone it adds a service charge of \$6 a transaction. However those planning to find peace, love and understanding at the reincarnated Sweetwaters Festival... won't have to find that extra, thanks to the Internet. Nearly 38,000 people have registered interest in tickets by e-mailing the Sweetwaters Website. They will be e-mailed back on Monday asking if they want one of the 40,000 tickets available. Result: [none]... of the \$139 goes into booking fees and service charges because the money changes hands over the Internet. It will be the same for concert-goers who registered interest using the festival's 0900 phone number, though they'll have to pay by ordinary mail. Says... [the] managing director of the three-day, four-night festival: "When we looked at it there was an added cost to the punters of close to \$500,000, if you aggregated it. It seemed like an unnecessary cost." ...So how much is too much? ...a teen act like the Spice Girls would be priced lower to match the pockets of the young audience (and their parents)... But... [i]f it's "quality" it will always sell at a higher rate, says... [a promoter]. And they always sell. That's the paradox, the highest-priced tickets go first. "I've been selling tickets for 23 years and it's always the same..." No wonder. Nothing beats the best seats in a town for trying to forget those rainy, lonely Sundays.

...From the people who brought you the big washout came the big sweat-out at Ericsson Stadium... yesterday. The Big Day Out was welcomed back after a year off with gusto by a 30,000-plus sweaty crowd. There was no escaping the humid temperatures – whether inside the Supertop or the aptly named Boiler Room, or outside on the main stadium pitch. The heat sent large numbers of people into the stands and queues formed for hoses and taps to fill bottles and cups. Meanwhile, the brave and shirtless melted together in front of the stages... It was a far cry from the BDO of '96 where rain turned the dancers' mosh pit into a mud pit. Yesterday's 12-hour feast of local and international bands on five stages brought a crowd of a wider range of ages than past events, from pre-teens to middle-aged. Multi-coloured hair, tattoos and body piercings were de rigueur... But for... a group of ten... friends... an all-over coating of blue food colouring was not just a fashion statement... the colouring [enabled them] to keep track of each other in the crowds. "It works. You stand up in the stadium and look into the crowd and spot the others,"... As with previous [BDOs], tattooing and piercing were a big hit, with 65 piercings in just over two hours. Also popular was... [someone] from Wellington, selling three capsules for \$10. The police, too, took a keen interest in him. But the natural ecstasy... was given the all-clear. "I think the kids want to enjoy themselves and have an experience of high energy and dancing to the music without the risk of drugs," said [the salesperson]. "The police said 'great, sell heaps of it,'..."

Ticketing firm fails to sell... The curtain finally fell on fledgling high-tech ticket agency ETM yesterday after its liquidator failed to negotiate a deal to sell the business to an A[US]n ticketing company. The 10-month-old ETM stopped taking bookings at 2 pm. [The l]iquidator... had tried to sell ETM to Ticketmaster Seven, a joint venture between US-based Ticketmaster and A[US]'s Channel Seven broadcaster... Ticketek... said... [it] made only a few cents a ticket and the market here was not large enough to sustain two general ticket agencies. "The margins are very low." ...ETM[']s chief executive... said the 42 staff had been laid off and were owed about \$200,000 in wages. The company's sole shareholder, UBS Capital of New York, had walked away from a moral responsibility to pay the wages bill... ETM, which had exclusive deals with venues such as the North Shore Events Centre, the Bruce Mason Centre, the St James Theatre and Wellington's WestpacTrust Stadium, had sold tickets through electronic kiosks (most based at Warehouse stores), over the internet and by phone. A concert by Californian rock group No Doubt scheduled for the St James... has been cancelled, leaving about 200 ticket-holders to be refunded... [The liquidator] said there was a 10[%] shortfall, about \$9000, in the trust account holding money from ticket-buyers and promoters[, but the liquidator]... was confident that ticket-buyers and promoters... would not be left out of pocket. The prospects for the company's unsecured creditors was less certain, but... it was too early to put a figure on their losses.

...The Headhunters gang are big losers... Sources told the N[Z] *Herald* that the gang had been hired as security guards for the... Sweetwaters... festival by [a]former... site manager... But when [the organiser] found out, the sources said [it] "hit the roof" and bought the gang out of the contract with a \$10,000 payment and 100 festival tickets worth \$13,900. Following the financial collapse of the festival, now in liquidation, the cheque could not be cashed. A source who knew the gang said they would not be happy. "They are not the sort of people you bounce cheques on." Members of the Henderson-based gang could not be reached for comment yesterday. Their likely loss is small compared with the exposure of others involved with the event. The *Herald* has learned that a group of Tauranga investors hold a debenture for \$650,000 over Sweetwaters and star attractions UB40 could be out of pocket more than \$200,000. [Another British act] is believed to be owed \$180,000. The security at Sweetwaters

was something of an event itself. It was carried out largely by about 200 unlicensed volunteers working for a company called Show Security, which had [the organiser] as sole shareholder. That company is also in liquidation. An Otahuhu company, E'Ventures, was subcontracted by Show Security to provide 79 licensed security guards for the three-day festival, and yesterday said it was owed \$130,000. A company spokes[person said "every guy] and his dog" who volunteered had been allowed to wear the green Show Security T-shirts, and police had stopped several on site for being unlicensed, including one... with a knife strapped to his leg. While there were no serious security problems, the spokes[person] said his staff were not given any food, drink or resting place by the organisers and had to rely on the goodwill of stallholders. The company had seen documents that showed Sweetwaters organisers thought they could save \$50,000 by using volunteer guards... The Manukau City Council said yesterday it would make every effort to recover about \$188,000 owed to it by Sweetwaters organisers for the use and work on the Puhinui Reserve festival site... The festival liquidator... would lodge a formal complaint over the collapse, and... was liaising with the fraud police, police and the Companies Office.

...*Sweetwaters creditors left to face the music* [The organiser]'s deep, resonant voice drips like honey down the telephone, the only venue in which [it] has time to meet. The seductive charm that won him devotees who would have given their lives for him, and luckless creditors who almost have, remains unshaken. And that is despite talk that the Headhunters are among the creditors who want a word with him. There is one simple reason why [the organiser]'s attempt at reviving Sweetwaters lost a lot of people a lot of money – not enough people turned up. A myriad of explanations are offered for that, from his getting the wrong date for Auckland Anniversary weekend to not having a top-billing artist to draw a new generation. Yet Sweetwaters veterans who returned to the festival after its 15-year absence, to see many of the same artists they saw 15 years ago, say this one was the best. But by mid-week the mood on the Puhinui site was ugly. At least one angry creditor punched the wall alongside... [the liquidator's face. The organiser]'s own life was said to be in danger and the talk was, although [the organiser] denies it, that [the organiser] had gone into hiding. Certainly unanswered cellphones – cut at the first murmur of liquidation – fuelled the impression that Sweetwaters organisers were on the run. Estimates of the debt kept rising from \$750,000 to over \$4 million. At least one travel agency said it was \$250,000 out of pocket, Oasis Catering lost about \$300,000... and... the Manukau City Council \$120,000... None has much expectation of being paid... After negotiating through his lawyer... about the story angle (what really happened to turn Sweetwaters... into an unmitigated financial disaster), and whether [the organiser] could see it before publication (no), a late afternoon meeting in her Ponsonby office was substituted for 10 minutes on the phone. Although "trapped inside the legality of what I can and cannot say," [the organiser] promised to be truthful. Yet the details of what must be one of the most public and embarrassing liquidations of recent times escape him... [It] believes 25,000 people were at Sweetwaters, but... does not know how many tickets were sold. [The organiser] does, however, have a clear idea how many [were given] away on demand to artists and their friends – 10,000... [Before Christmas the organiser told a NZ *Herald* writer... that [it] had sold 26,000 tickets and needed to sell 31,000 before [it] could access the trust account. [The organiser now] admits it is a promoter's traditional tactic to create demand by exaggerating sales. Nevertheless, [the liquidator] has found no such trust fund. [The organiser] says there was a fund into which money from ticket sales was deposited. "It was called a trust fund, but it wasn't." ...Yet industry sources say [the organiser] should have known by Christmas that the festival's success was doubtful... [T]he manager of Real Groovy Records, says his shop sold 72 tickets for Sweetwaters, compared with the 2563 it sold for Big Day Out. "When they were telling people they'd sold 26,000 we'd sold none... It was obvious to us it was going down the gurgler." What surprised [the manager] most was that no one from Sweetwaters ever asked him how ticket sales were going. Although [the organiser] originally shunned established vendors such as Ticketek, instead selling through the Internet, Post Shops, compact disc stores and recording companies, by December [it] had changed his mind. Ticketek[']s general manager... says [the organiser] approached him to handle ticketing, but they could not reach agreement because Ticketek insists on exclusivity. What's more, it is Ticketek policy to keep money from ticket sales in a trust fund that is not released until a day after the event. If there is post-party unhappiness, the trust fund is left undisturbed until a court order is granted. Naturally that policy creates problems for promoters needing to access a steady cashflow. And it was in December, too, that a group of Tauranga investors... granted the Sweetwaters company a \$650,000 debenture. As holders of a fixed debenture they take precedence as the lead creditors... [But if] the debenture-holders were contemplating filing for receivership, they were pre-empted by [the organiser]'s voluntary liquidation. The advantage of doing it yourself before someone else does it to you is that you maintain more control of the process by selecting the liquidator yourself. The disadvantage is the suspicion it creates among creditors. Early on, [the liquidator] was accused of being too friendly with [the organiser], and creditors talked about removing him... [However, it] says these situations are usually created by rival liquidators working through creditors to get the job. [The liquidator] suspects a number will be out to get what should be one of the highest profile jobs of the year. Last evening [the liquidator] said the creditors' plight was worsening. Although still unable to provide figures, "the loss is getting bigger and their number is growing." [The organiser] is not wholly unacquainted with his present predicament either. Sweetwaters began in 1980 with a \$180,000 loss, but a profit the following year paid those creditors off. In 1983 its original backers – [the organiser and two others]... – sold the festival to... [the person] who headed the sharemarket darling of the day, Euro-National. [The new owner] registered the company Sweetwaters Festival Ltd. His festival in 1984 also lost money and the event disappeared from the landscape. But last February [the organiser] registered his own company called Sweetwaters Festival Ltd and announced plans for a new event. [The owner] went to the High Court to try to stop him, prophetically, as it turns out, fearing the loss of good will attached to a name [linked to the owner, who] lost in court.

...Air N[Z] was forced to fly Sweetwaters performers home for free after... [the organiser]'s credit card was declined. The... music festival, held two weeks ago... attracted 158 bands... "quite a few" of [whom had flown Air NZ] from overseas and from within N[Z]. The organiser]... opened a cheque account the week before the festival and paid performers and suppliers knowing [there was] no money in the account. [The organiser had] asked bands and the Manukau City Council, to whom [it] was asked to pay an \$80,000 bond, not to bank their cheques until the Monday after the festival because of cashflow problems. All his cheques bounced. [The *Sunday Star-Times* understands [that the organiser] put the airfares on his credit card and Air N[Z] was not aware the payment had been declined until the performers had arrived in Auckland. They were flown home after the festival as a sign of goodwill from the airline... Air N[Z]'s communications spokesperson... said yesterday... "All tickets were honoured... But I'd rather not comment on the financial side of it..." [The spokesperson] added most would have travelled economy, but a few flew business class.

...A security firm already stung by the collapse of Sweetwaters may again be out of pocket... E'Ventures Ltd is owed \$131,000 after the music festival went bust and a further \$40,000 after being employed by [the liquidator]... It has guarded the site since the three-day event ended... The company is refusing to leave, or let anyone into, the festival's Puhinui site until it gets paid... ● Large numbers of music fans attend... music events like the Big Day Out... – a very different concept from the seated concerts of the 1960s... There have been music idols for each generation since radio, film and TV brought music to the masses. However, mass hysteria wasn't witnessed until the 1950s, when rock'n'roll stars like Elvis... came along. His brooding good looks, swivel-hipped movements and catchy rhythms drove fans, many of them teenage girls, wild. They[']d get so excited they'd scream themselves hoarse, become extremely emotional, wet themselves and even faint! Parents watching or hearing about this phenomenon were often outraged. It was beyond anything they had experienced... Rock concerts have long been a source of anxiety for many parents. No one likes to think of... tender eardrums [being] pounded by unbelievably loud music... [or] their child being squashed in a hyped-up crowd...

NINE fans were crushed to death at... a... concert in Denmark... The disaster occurred in muddy... conditions yesterday... [T]he crowd crushed the victims against the open-air stage at the rock festival near Copenhagen. Three others were seriously injured and 26 needed hospital treatment.

...Three Swedes, three Danes, a German and a Dutch[citizen] were crushed and trampled to death on Saturday by a panicking crowd during one of Europe's biggest... rock festivals. Investigators are trying to establish how the [victims – all guys –] died... during a performance by the American band Pearl Jam at Denmark's Roskilde festival... The event continued into yesterday despite the deaths... [However, t]he Seattle-based Pearl Jam, shocked by the event, cancelled scheduled shows in the Belgian town of Werchter and in the Netherlands because of the tragedy, their manager announced... The British groups Oasis and the Pet Shop Boys also cancelled scheduled evening concerts out of respect for the victims and their families... It was the first serious incident reported at the 30-year-old annual festival[, which]... this year attracted more than 90,000 people to watch acts play on eight different stages... Witnesses... described the futile attempts made to control the crowd. "I felt that something was going to turn nasty because lots of people were in a trance and didn't listen to calls for them to behave... It was impossible to contain them."

...["It's on!" *Rolling Stone* announced in a jubilant stop-press. "It will be a little Woodstock and, even more exciting, it will be an *instant* Woodstock." The same message went out all evening over scores of rock radio stations, turning the migrant tide towards Altamont. A few people did not share the general euphoria. "They'll never do it," said the promoter, speaking from his stores of untapped experience. "They should call it off or it'll explode in their faces." Others, casting a horoscope for the event as had been done for Woodstock, were dismayed to see that on Dec. 6, the Moon would be in Scorpio, portending a time of chaos. Exactly who first had the idea of hiring Hell's Angels as a security force, no one can remember now. Some say it was the Grateful Dead's manager. Darkness was falling rapidly. As the cold intensified, fires were lit from the remnants of the raceway fence, or from garbage. A pall of smoke, rancid with singed wax paper and burning Cellophane, drifted up and settled around the still darkened stage. Doctors working in a nearby medical tent asked for extra light, but were told that might spoil the impact of the singer's entry when it came. More than ever on this tour, it'd been the band's habit to delay, piling up the tension, the expectation, the half-adoring rancour at this new demonstration that they couldn't give a damn. Round the stage, a rumour circulated that they were long since ready but the singer wanted complete darkness so the stage lights would show off his costume and make-up to best effect. Backstage, the Stones' helicopter pilot claimed to be too nervous for his machine to wait until the end of their performance, as arranged. However, the Stones' bodyguard promised to hold the pilot there at gun-point if necessary. When the Stones finally materialised, in a demon-red spotlight blaze, so did an escort of Hell's Angels so dense as to be almost obliterating. The singer, wearing an orange and black satin cloak and his Uncle Sam topper, had literally to fight his way to the low stagefront. The Angels were no longer protecting the stage: they had commandeered it for a display of their own power in which the Stones figured only as semi-captive mascots. Half-way through that good tempered Rock 'n' Roll number, Carol, pool cues began flailing among the faces close to the singer's silver boots. Out in the darkness beyond the smoke-red arena, the guitarist's chords were finding their mark. Boys and girls stripped naked in the dank cold, flinging themselves forward against the cracked leather cordon as puny white martyrs, almost begging to be surrounded, beaten, stomped, kicked and, in once case, stabbed to death. In the stage-front area, film-crews, each with an Angel "shotgun" guard, avidly recorded all there was to see. Now came the moment when the singer's intuition deserted him or his vanity became overmastering. Either way, the result was incredible stupidity. Folding his cloak around him, the singer stepped forward in the mincing gait, evolved for this most presumptuous of all his masquerades. "Please allow me to introduce myself," sang Satan across a landscape whose authentic hellishness the singer could not, or would not, see. The effect was as sudden as if the ground had opened up. Faces down to the singer's left collapsed sideways under the tossing assault of Hell's Angel staves. Satan, cut off in mid-verse, grasped for words that would return him to the hippy plane. "Brothers and sisters, come *on* now. That means *everybody* – just cool out." The beating down of pool cues paused as if in answer to his exhortation. "Okay, I think we're cool now. We can groove." A shaky little joke revealed his continued failure to grasp the situation below him. "We always have something very funny happen when we start that number." Something, not very funny, *was* happening, the incidental purpose of which seemed to be to stop Sympathy for the Devil ever from getting beyond its first few bars. "Er – *people*," the singer began again. "Who's fightin' and why? What are we *fightin'* for? San Francisco, this could be the most beautiful event. Don't fuck it up." The Stones' singer stood there, a forlorn, flat-footed figure, punctured with the uncomprehending dismay of finding himself totally ignored by an audience. (The singer has never been totally ignored by the opposite sex. Since October, 1967, the Stones' management office had been in Maddox Street, close to Piccadilly. A small, top-floor suite, formerly maids' quarters in a Georgian house, it was far from the opulence with which the Beatles had surrounded their new business family. It had been the best the Stones' staff could do after weeks of being turned down by landlords all over the West End. They got Maddox Street only by luck, through a friend of a friend, by pretending it was to house a music publishing company, and by scrupulous avoidance, at all times, of the phrase "Rolling Stones". At Maddox Street there would be none of the slackness and promiscuity which characterised the Beatles' Apple workforce. The Stones singer liked to know everyone was doing things – for him, of course – with total efficiency. When, on rare occasions, his eye alighted on a secretary for reasons other than stenographic, the ensuing business was conducted as discreetly as a Bourbon king with a scullery-maid. Only the girl's flushed face and half-unhinged false eye-lashes would give the game away. To Maddox Street, along with the equally-apportioned Rolling Stones fan mail and hate mail, were diverted the frequent ivory-white envelopes, hand-delivered from hotels like the Connaught or Dorchester, and containing fulsome appeals to the singer. It was natural that a spirit as flirtatious as his should enjoy the wooing and being the embodiment of a fantasy at least as potent as Rudolf Valentino'.)]

...The crowds of dusty backpackers who streamed home from the Woodstock... site at Rome, north of Manhattan, caused no trouble, perhaps because they were so exhausted from their revels of the night before. All the same, to anybody over 40, the notion that words like "riot," "dangerous" and "Woodstock" belong in the same sentence remains extraordinarily hard to accept. Old habits break hard, and three decades of myth-making about the original Woodstock have left such an indelible mark not even arson can entirely destroy it. This Woodstock, like the first, was supposed to be about peace and love – not T-shirt vendors being beamed with iron bars, or parking lots full of semi-trailers going up in flames. Even the organisers, unlike the police, had trouble acknowledging what their own eyes had seen. "You can't call what happened a riot," insisted [a]co-promoter... to the press on the morning after... "It was just a few kids acting up at the end. This festival reaffirmed all the values of the original. I'm not going to let this little bit of trouble stop me from regarding [this year's] Woodstock... as a success." And then [the co-promoter] cut off questions before anyone could ask about the trucks that were still smouldering, or the mobile bank looted of more than \$US170,000, or the 21-year-old college student whose spine and legs had been crushed when the mob tipped a mobile home right on top of him. As for questions about gang rapes, [the co-producer] wouldn't touch that one at all. As the smoke clears, the one certain thing... is that the crowd was prepared to honour only one of the original festival's cherished myths – the obligation of youth to trash whatever their parents stand for. In 1969, the Baby Boomers did it with paisley prints and ostentatious pacifism. Last weekend, their own kids did it with tattoos... and... violence... "You don't understand," the news cameras caught an older concertgoer pleading with a knot of youths on that final night. "I was at the first Woodstock and this isn't what it's all about! You're ruining it!" The kids [the older concertgoer] was lecturing seemed nervous at first. This [person] was in her late 40s, old enough to have been one of their mothers and thus due at least a meagre measure of respect. But then they began laughing, first sniggering at her talk of harmony and soon bellowing war cries of incoherent aggression just inches from her face... before the mob danced back to the flames. Perhaps, if [the older concertgoer] had been just a tad more honest about her own generation, [Monday night]'s orgy of destruction might have made more sense. It certainly did to [the]former Who bassist... who played the first festival and returned for the second with his new band. "It was a disaster in 1969, none of this crap about how beautiful everything was. What I remember was mud and delays and overdoses everywhere... I remember a fridge backstage stocked with orange juice that was laced with acid, and nobody bothered to warn anybody about it." Plenty of others, however, continue to prefer the gilded myth to grim reality. Ironically, their numbers include several members of Rome's town council, whose members have been downplaying Monday night's... chaos with almost as much energy as the promoter despite the fact that their municipal budget has been blown to kingdom come by the unexpected costs of coping with 300,000 visitors. "We tried really hard to persuade the Pentagon not to shut the old B-52

bomber base where the festival was held,” said [a local businessperson]... “It’s not a rich area up here, so when the bombers left, it seemed like a good idea to stage a rock festival. We need the money.” It is an irony only an old hippie can love: The town wanted to keep its B-52s, the same planes that rained death and destruction on Vietnam, yet they settled for the direct descendant of the pop festival... [which made a singer] famous for his anti-war song, *Fixin’ To Die Rag*. As for commercialism and the profit motive, those twin bugbears of the 1969 gathering, they helped stoke the fires. At the first Woodstock, only fools paid to get in since it was so easy to jump the fence. Last weekend, the site was sealed from the world behind a 4m cyclone wire fence patrolled by 1200 security guards who seem to have cared not at all what mischief members of the crowd embraced just so long as every single visitor had parted with \$150 for the price of admission. “Ripoffs everywhere,” fumed... a 29-year-old college dormitory supervisor. “All I saw was people making obscene amounts of money. You know, you couldn’t get a drink of water from a fountain because the lines went for miles. So if you were thirsty, it was cough up \$4 for a small bottle of water or pass out. Do you know how much water you drink when it’s 100 degrees and there is no shade?” By Monday night when the trouble started, the festival’s medical area had treated more than 5000 cases of dehydration. At the original Woodstock, the pacific protocols of a stillborn Youth Revolution acted as a brake on the crowd’s worst impulses. Fornicating was fine; fighting wasn’t. On Monday night, those constraints no longer applied. “It was all the young guys who caused all that trouble. They were just awful... Everyone was drinking and the mood was really ugly. These young guys were just roaming around, completely smashed, tearing everything to pieces.” ...“There was a number of situations where there was a total passing around of [gals] in the lines [of guys],” admitted the festival’s first-aid director... “No one was screaming for help... some of the... [victims] were unconscious.” Another witness, a T-shirt vendor, told how at least a dozen young [guys] took turns with a girl “who looked about 16... was out of it... and vomiting, but the guys didn’t care,”... adding that [it] was too busy trying to protect his wares from looters to intervene. One common point shared by the first Woodstock and its successor is the opportunity both provided for right-wing moralisers to lament the rending of America’s cultural fabric. In 1969... [the] then-vice president... cited the nude bathing and drug[-]taking as evidence of the nation’s decline. This time it is [an] ultra-conservative presidential contender... who has been beating the drum. “The belief then was that one chooses a moral code to suit one’s own personality and lifestyle. In the phrase of the day, ‘Do your own thing,’... Well, that’s the way the original Woodstock generation brought up its own kids and the end result isn’t pretty. The sins of the fathers, that’s what we’re seeing.” To be fair, [the presidential contender] is a zealot and for every rampager, there were hundreds... who simply wanted to get out of the way. All the same, it’s hard not to hear echoes of the riot’s soundtrack, the song that came on the PA system not long after the Red Hot Chili Peppers wrapped up the festival’s final set. It was a Gen-X anthem by the band Cracker that boomed through a night fired with smoke and sirens, the song with the catchy little chorus that goes, “Don’t [stuff] me up with peace and love.”

...*All you need is love? Not when it comes to running a record company, the Beatles discovered...* THE Beatles faced a screaming audience for the last time at San Francisco’s Candlestick Park in August 1966. After that they retired as a live band. It was inevitable. As [the drummer] said of their touring years: “It was the worst time and the best time of my life. The best time because we played a lot of good music. The worst time... [because] it was like 24 hours a day without a break: press, people fighting to get into your hotel room, climbing 25 storeys up drainpipes. And it never stopped. If it had carried on I personally would have gone insane.” If they had done nothing else in their lives, their achievements to that point were extraordinary. In America alone they had clocked up 19 million-selling records and 18 number one hits in a two-year period. They were the first artists to sell a million copies of an album in Britain – 64’s *With the Beatles* – and played to 55,000 fans at New York’s Shea Stadium, a huge audience even by today’s standards. But it was driving them crazy, so they retired into the recording studio and the suburbs around London. They took interesting drugs, made even more interesting music (the albums *Revolver* and *Sgt Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* are considered among the most innovative in rock) and... [went] to India for a meditation retreat. The pop world went about its business – the Monkees became ersatz mop-tops – and the Beatles decided to go into business. Well, sort of. In early 68 they announced their own multi-disciplined company... Apple – which had divisions for records, film and publishing – was a spiritual attempt to give power to creative people, not cost accountants. This was capitalism with a conscience – and very colourful clothes. [The band’s richest surviving member]... – germs from a bout of flu that caused him to cancel a recent gig... [are being sold by] a British fan... who claims [it] caught the bug from... [the] former Beatle... when [they]... met this month[; after two]... days on the ebay.co.uk website the germs had received only two bids, the highest for \$5.76... [-] had a phrase for it: “Western communism.” [The member] admitted later... it... had no idea what [the phrase] meant, but it caught the optimistic mood of the late 60s. Apple was launched by John Lennon and [the richest surviving member] at a press conference in New York. They said they wanted talented people to send in their art and ideas and... Actually no one had thought of the next bit. Apple was swamped with manuscripts, films, homemade recordings, ludicrous proposals and begging letters. Hippies and hucksters gravitated to the company’s London offices and all were made welcome. Business decisions were sometimes made by throwing the *I Ching*, liquor and marijuana were freely available, and an American chapter of the Hells Angels turned up for the Christmas party. George Harrison... [- who recently] fought a frenzied knife[-wielding intruder] in his... 120-room mansion in Oxfordshire... “I could feel the strength drain from me[and] thought I’d been fatally stabbed[”] ...summed it up aptly. “Apple became a lunatic asylum.” Within a year the Beatles had tired of it, the accountants returned, and everyone became serious again. Love wasn’t all you needed, it appeared.

...*All you need are 14 songs* The new Beatles compilation album *1* is taken from their 27 U[S] and British No 1 singles. Which got us to thinking: what would be the make-up of the same album based on the N[Z] charts? Well it would be only 14 tracks long, mainly because although there were plenty of radio hit-parades there were no official pop charts before 1966 – the beat boom years when they first stormed the globe, touring here in 1964... Meanwhile, the Beatles are ready to “dot.com together” again for the launch of their first official website[which]... goes live on Monday... They have entered the information superhighway with the world’s top internet designers offering a magical mystery tour around their 27 No 1 hits.

...TALK about a backbeat. Not only are the Beatles’ toppermost of the poppermost yet again with their “new” album going straight to No 1 in N[Z], they’re helping to bring old folks back to the record shops. Their collection of chart-toppers *1* has been on sale for a week and has already gone triple platinum, selling 50,000 copies... EMI NZ... said... “To sell that many in a week is incredible. This could be our fastest-selling album ever,”... The album... notched up 319,000 sales in its first week in Britain. It has gone... No 1 around the world... EMI... believe it will beat the record set by... [Wacko]’s *Thriller*, which has sold 45 million copies. [□ ‘They may’ve split up decades ago, but 1996 turned out to be their most lucrative year to date. Sales of the Beatles albums, *Anthology 1* and 2, reached 13 million copies, while sales of back catalogue albums reached six million copies that year according to the Beatles publicist, who paraphrased an infamous quote from John Lennon by saying: “The Beatles are now bigger than the Beatles.” Gross record sales, TV rights and video sales earned \$NZ1107.34m that year, the majority going to record company EMI. The Beatles’ cut was split between the three surviving members and John Lennon’s widow. *Anthology 3* is due to be released on Oct. 28’, to be followed by an ‘anthology book costing \$NZ147’.]

...The Beatles told the world in the 1960s that *All You Need Is Love* and now the three surviving members of the Fab Four say the song is an appropriate anthem for the new millennium... [The Fab Three have joined each other] in a promotion drive for the relaunch of *Yellow Submarine*, three decades after the classic Beatles’ animated film was made. The film, [which ‘was animated because the Fab Four were contracted to do a set number of movies but no longer wanted to act’, and was] first released in 1968, has been digitally restored, and will go on sale worldwide on home video and video disc mid-September... [T]he group’s drummer and a rare voice on their records, sang lead vocals on *Yellow Submarine*. “That

song's given me a career... Everybody can sing that song; even foetuses know that song." [In related news, 'plans to build a £10 million Millennium wheel in London have been approved. The 150m high project, to be built on the Thames opposite Parliament, will be the world's biggest ferris wheel.'

...*The British PM* has a vision of a vibrant country that challenges and rewards its citizens. Too bad lots of Britons don't live there yet... When [the PM] speaks of "new Britain" as "the model 21st-century nation," [it] does not have Birmingham in mind. The rusty birthplace of the Industrial Revolution... is a post-industrial sprawl struggling to get back on its feet. So when the city hosted the G-8 summit in May, [the PM]... brought new Britain to Birmingham... gave the summit itself the enforced informality of a corporate retreat... treated the world's press to a sleek, high-tech media centre... and... took all his fellow heads of government [plus] their wives to a glitzy concert led by the pop group All Saints. If only for those few days, [the PM] swaddled a bastion of very old Britain in the shiny foil of "Cool Britannia." [But for] anybody who looked closely, Birmingham had an important story to tell... For all his talk about new Britain, and for all the blather from others about Cool Britannia, much of the country remains old and uncool... The tensions that exist in Britain, however subtle, may not say much about [the PM]'s popularity, but they say a lot about the country. Labour's extended honeymoon cannot disguise the fact that an old Britain and a new one exist side by side. Older industries are taking a pasting. Interest rates have risen six times since Labour took power... driving up the value of the pound and persuading foreign customers to look elsewhere... Unemployment is edging up for the first time in two years. Britain remains Europe's healthiest big economy, but its growth has begun to slow. And wage inflation has risen 5.2[%], summoning up the 1970s demon of stagflation, where a recession meets rapid price rises. For good measure, a study published in May... said that output per worker in Britain is 40[%] lower than in America and 20[%] lower than in Germany. "The British economy is experiencing boom and bust at the same time," says [a] Conservative MP... The new Britain is a place of high-tech industries, whopping bonuses in the financial sector, and peppy polenta-eaters alive to foreign influences and making plenty of money in imaginative new ways. All of that can be found in once unlikely places... from Glasgow and Edinburgh to... Bath and Bristol. Still, when Labour's theorists want to typify their new Britain, there is no doubt what place comes to mind. "The image they want to project is very... London-based," says... [the] director of research for the Greater London Group at the London School of Economics. "You can see why London matters so much to new Britain. London may be laid-back, dynamic, multicultural and liberal; the overwhelming majority of Britain isn't." Outside London, the long, and doubtless necessary, restructuring of the economy continues to hollow out old Britain. The number of hotel and catering employees (300,000) long ago overtook that of coal miners (13,000). But old Britain also includes the rural shires, which, like the manufacturing towns, can feel left behind by the talk of prosperity in [the PM]'s speeches, in spite of Government retraining schemes. A perceived urban bent in the... Government's policies has already created a rift between [the PM] and rural Britain. The Countryside Alliance, rallying around such issues as fox-hunting, has managed to organise two impressive recent protest marches on London; the larger drew 250,000 people. Last year farm incomes in Britain plummeted by nearly 50[%], according to the National Farmers' Union. The strength of sterling has hurt agricultural exports and made imports look like bargains. Farmers are quick to blame [the PM] whenever a bit of rural Britannia bites the dust. That was what happened last month when the Banbury livestock market in Oxfordshire went out of business. It was the biggest in the country and had been trading since 1086. The Government could have saved it, says... [the] editor of *Country Life* magazine, but it didn't. "That sort of example makes people think that this Government doesn't really care much what happens outside London." In a way that is beginning to be dimly understood, "London" is turning into a problem. London dominates Britain and yet is the least British place of all. Its economy, driven by the City, is at the heart of an international web. For many Britons, the capital is another country. In London during the first three months of this year, the number of homes that sold for £2 million or more was three times greater than in the same period a year earlier. The price of the average London residence is now more than twice its equivalent in Liverpool or Newcastle. A ballooning service sector – especially in finance – guarantees that white-collar workers in London earn 25[%] more than their counterparts elsewhere in the country... Which brings us to Cool Britannia. Somewhere on the road to modernisation, [the PM]'s "new Britain" project got mixed up with what sounds like an overused ad campaign. [The PM] has himself never uttered the phrase, except to say [that the PM] didn't coin it. "Cool Britannia" turns out to be a dangerous phrase; it can be used to dumb down [the PM]'s whole campaign to modernise the economy, deconstruct the welfare state, adopt constitutional reform and rebrand the nation with a "clear identity and role for ourselves in the outside world." The biggest potential Cool Britannia albatross of them all sits along the Thames in Greenwich, in east London. With a price tag of between £750 million and £1 billion, the Millennium Dome will not only be the world's most expensive building but the perfect monument to [the PM]'s success or failure in moulding old and new Britain into that model nation [it] likes to talk about. Now a giant structure shielding 20 acres of dirt from the rain, the space is meant to house an ambitious high-tech multimedia exhibition. It will be a celebration of... "our past achievements and confidence in the future," as [the PM] said in a topping-off ceremony at the site last month. [The PM] promised that, when its time comes, the Dome will out-Disney Orlando and out-Eiffel Paris – and be "the greatest day out on earth." Birmingham will be watching: it lost out to London in the competition to become the home of the Dome... [By the way, a] survey of... 700... British children... by the Scripture Union showed 10[%] linked the end of the century with... [the pop star who has celebrated his engagement to a NZ supermodel by signing a '4-album deal reportedly worth £80m (a record for the British industry')... and his hit song *Millennium*, while only 1[%] thought it had anything to do with Christianity, said the *Times* newspaper. The results will come as a blow to church leaders campaigning for the millennium to be celebrated as the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Christ.

...Don't believe the hype. [The] Kiwi-supermodel-turned-actress... and the newly crowned king of pop... are still an item. Reports out of London this week claimed [the Kiwi had dumped the singer]... But last week, the 28-year-old held his head up high when [it] returned to the UK for the first time in months in a blaze of glory... ha[ving] just signed a... [£80m 4]-album deal... Britain's biggest ever and... second only to [Wacko's £multi-hundred-million deal]... "I'm rich beyond my wildest dreams," [the 28-year-old] crowed... The... 32[-year-old Kiwi], currently in London working for the Born Free Foundation... linked up with her... boyfriend...

[A Kiwi]'s romance with ...a... bad boy [Brit] looks like it's over, after [the singer] treated her appallingly when [it became convinced the supermodel] was pregnant. Sources close to the couple say [the Kiwi] was visibly upset when [the singer] grilled her on the subject. Finally, [the Kiwi decided it]'d had enough and walked out. According to... [hi]s former right-hand [aide] in LA, the singer was told about [her] supposed pregnancy by an American model... [The aide says that the singer]'s angry reaction finally convinced the Kiwi beauty that [the singer] wasn't for her.

...[NZers are more proud of their country's beauty and its sporting heroes than they are of their culture and heritage, a new survey says. The research, done by the Millennium Office to find out NZers' attitudes towards celebrating the millennium, found 88% of those surveyed agreed they were proud of the country's beauty. But only 36% strongly agreed they were proud of the country's Maori heritage and culture and only 38% strongly agreed they were proud of its European early settler heritage. Other popular themes among those surveyed were the importance of the family, pride in NZ being the first in the world to achieve something and a sense that NZers' achievements were all the more impressive because it was a small country. Millennium events most likely to draw crowds were leisure and recreational events and neighbourhood street parties. Those least favoured were heritage and cultural events and telethons.'

...Wellington, which has 'the largest carillon in the country – weighing a total of over 70 tonnes' – 'may ring in the millennium with the largest tuned bell in the world. A private trust wants people to give 1c and 2c coins, along with donations, to be melted down and included in a bell weighing up to 50 tonnes – 32 tonnes heavier than the world's biggest bell, which is in New York. The NZ Millennium Trust wants the giant bronze bell to give Wellington and NZ a global focus on New Year's Eve. "It's as simple and elegant as possible," the project director said. "The technology has been around for 6000 years. It's long-lasting." The bell, which is expected to be about 4m high and between 4m and 6m at the base, would be made in the US and cost about \$1 million.

The clapper, which strikes the bell, would weigh about two tonnes and may be made in Asia. At a recent meeting, Wellington City councillors were asked to consider a site for the bell. The mayor suggested ringing it from the new regional stadium before moving it to a more permanent site.'

... 'Auckland could celebrate the new millennium with a "simulated eruption" on Rangitoto. This is one suggestion by the Auckland City Council as it tosses up whether to mark the year 2000 with fireworks' – like Sydney, which is planning to spend '\$1m on a New Year's Eve fireworks display' – 'or capital works. The council would need to get approval for the eruption from the DoC. The council has been approached by the organisers of an international telethon, due to screen on CNN, which wants to kick off the 36-hour event in NZ. However, the council had not yet decided on a budget for the celebrations. But the bill for a range of millennium works projects – suggestions included running all city power lines underground and building broadwalks – could total more than \$1m. A laser show was suggested, but the council's promotion manager said that was a sore point after complaints about the Sky Tower opening celebrations. Other options include a flyover by restored military aircraft, and a dawn concert combined with a Maori blessing by Ngati Whatua.'

...the] Gisborne millennium concert looks headed for further trouble this week with a rival promoter considering suing and the concert's former production manager saying the show is doomed. The delay in deciding whether the country's most expensive show will go ahead has put an Auckland millennium concert in jeopardy. Frontier Touring... said it had dropped Portishead... and [an ex-Supreme, along with another US singer, from] its Bastion Point concert because Gisborne organisers, the Year 2000 Festival Company, offered it [Britain's richest rock star (who you can n]ow... bank on [– the]... singing superstar who already has his own Internet provider... has just opened an online bank[, which, a]s well as all the usual financial services... has a hip range of cheques and credit cards emblazoned with [hi]s name and image[] and NZ's most successful band – which is reforming to honour the millennium –] ...Split Enz. However, [the]Year 2000 chair[perso]n... last night denied this. "We have had various proposals put to us in recent weeks, but in terms of that claim, that's not correct." ...Now [the two US performers] would not be coming but Frontier was trying to renegotiate with Portishead. Tickets for the Bastion Point concert had been due to go on sale... [two months ago but were] delayed because of the chance to get [the British singer] and Split Enz. Frontier would now approach the artists directly and would consider its legal position... Meanwhile, [the]... Festival company has put off a decision on the Gisborne concert while it searches for a substantial backer – it is understood it needs \$2 million to continue. If a backer was found, new cheaper tickets would be announced. Tickets were available from Ticketek for \$599, \$499 and \$399 but sales were suspended last Friday... According to figures the Festival company made available to Frontier six weeks ago "just under 800 tickets had sold through Ticketek". The slow sales have raised questions about whether [the British singer] is losing his appeal. The 80,000 [the singer] drew to Auckland's Western Springs in the 1980s is a N[Z] record but many in the industry say the rock icon of the '70s... no longer has the pulling power. When was his last decent song? asked *Pavement* magazine... [Its] editor... said too many middle-aged promoters chose performers they liked and were out of touch with the leading edge of modern music. Young people, who were most likely to endure the discomfort of an all-night concert and travel and accommodation hassles, wanted a millennium party[, but:] "The last thing they want to do is sit around and listen to... old has-beens,"... [The] director of The Sequel which promotes music festival The Big Day Out, [agreed that] the Gisborne line-up was unlikely to appeal to young people[, while the editor of]... *Rip It Up* music magazine... also found it odd promoters originally tried to attract 70% of the audience from overseas when one of its star bands Split Enz was virtually unknown offshore... [Two of the '70s rock icon's] fans who have no doubt about his pulling power – an English couple who paid \$3600 for two concert tickets – [are] outraged they have been kept in the dark as the future of the event hangs in the balance... In May, festival directors flew to London to present them with their... front row centre... tickets in the penthouse suite at... [NZ House. One of them] has seen 118... concerts [by the]... rock god... ■ The... fiftysomething rock legend... looks terrific, his voice is strong, [it]... has a solid marriage with [a]model... and still has millions of music lovers going gaga over his tunes. But... [y]ears of continual drug abuse have ruined his memory and [it] can't remember the lyrics of some of his songs and has to read them from a book on a music stand at shows.

...Gisborne's millennium concert featuring... [the NZ opera singer who performed at Princess Di's wedding, a '70s rock icon] and... Split Enz is almost certainly doomed, says the organiser... as last-minute attempts to find a financial backer had failed. Ticket sales have been slow, with only 2000 to 3000 sales at \$400 each. Late last week, the Year 2000 Festival Company said it would drop ticket prices to between \$100 and \$150... [T]he company had put \$2 million into the concert over several years... [Unfortunately,] the company had contractual arrangements with... the main acts... "Pressure from those acts and those contractual arrangements are heavy and we have only got a few days to satisfy details of those contracts." ...Obtaining a financial backer had not intentionally been left so late, [the organiser]said... "The nature of the whole event was funds up-front to meet commitments, and revenue at the end once the event had occurred." ...the company had not yet talked to a liquidator.

...The... Government is looking at salvaging something from the ruins of Gisborne's millennium concert with a free dawn concert featuring... [the opera singer and the NZSO. The NZ PM] has been asked to step in after... the promoter of a mega-concert featuring the... diva... conceded the event was doomed. [The promoter] is expected to pull the plug today on the concert... [O]ver the next few days the Government would consider ways to guarantee a new centrepiece for Gisborne's millennium celebrations. [It is looking at spending 'about \$800,000.']

...The millennium spotlight is turning on Auckland after the official collapse of Gisborne's mega-concert... It had been envisaged that 35,000 people would see in the New Year at the 12-hour concert on a Gisborne football field... Star acts Split Enz and [the '70s rock icon] now look set to play at Bastion Pt... [where it] is hoped about 35,000 people will see in the New Year at the 12-hour concert on Maori land overlooking Hauraki Gulf. Tickets cost \$330 and \$150 but priority areas in front of the stage will be set aside for Gisborne ticket-holders[, although they]... may want to... get a full refund... [P]lans are being made to shore up the ill-fated concert's third international drawcard... for an alternative concert at Gisborne.

...THE sun is setting on the huge influx of overseas visitors expected to watch the dawn of the new millennium in N[Z]. Gisborne, the main destination for overseas visitors, has scaled down the number it expects to receive after the collapse of the... concert[featuring a British rock icon, a NZ diva and Split Enz]... Gone also are stories of a \$900-a-night motel unit in Gisborne which were bandied around earlier in the year. Few Kiwi accommodation outlets are willing to risk burning their regular holiday-goers with one-off millennium prices... The... Gisborne Motel Association president... said some of Gisborne's 20 motels had raised their prices between 10... to 20% during the millennium. "But certainly it's not the norm." ...Figures from market strategists... predict overseas visitor numbers will rise from 248,200 in the March... quarter to 262,000... The international visitors who do arrive... due to millennium [celebrations]... are likely to go to... Queenstown... and... the Chatham Islands... [However, the] Chatham Islands events manager... said less than a third of the 65 accommodation beds on the Chathams had been booked. "We were expecting everything to be booked up by now,"... [Incidentally, p]olice are working to make sure the party of the millennium does not become the riot of the millennium. No officers will be allowed leave over the New Year and leave for Defence Force staff after December 27 [i]s also... banned.

...Emergency service workers who could find themselves stretched to the limit on New Year's Eve want extra money for the millennium celebration. Firefighters are so far seeking the biggest payout – triple time, a day in lieu and other incentives for working on December 31. While police officers are still deciding what compensation they will seek, health workers want double time over the three days from New Year's Eve, plus days in lieu. The nurses' union has negotiated a millennium payment for workers in Gisborne but said other hospitals were resisting after being told by the Government they should not offer incentives. Northland Health has told the N[Z] Nurses Organisation that staffing levels would be increased on December 31, and "at this stage, our owners' expectation is that premiums will not be paid." [Its] chief executive... had been advised by the Crown Company Monitoring and Advisory Unit that "there would be no extra money to pay millennium payments."

...Employers are buckling under pressure from staff demanding extra money for working during millennium celebrations, with payments of up to \$500 a shift[and 'some Gisborne workers being offered four times their normal rate']. While firefighters and other workers in emergency services are still haggling over extra pay for New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, staff in television, power, water and paper companies have won big compensation payments... [P]ayments of \$200 to \$400 have been negotiated in big paper plants such as Kinleith and Tasman Pulp and Paper... One power company is giving anyone on call a mystery weekend for two, worth about \$1200. A survey in June reported that only 15[% of NZ] companies planned to pay extra, but as the millennium gets closer, more employers seem to be doing deals... In what appears to be the first across-the-board deal in a big company, T[TVNZ] will pay any staff working from 6 pm on New Year's Eve or all of New Year's Day an extra \$375 a shift. And although the statutory holidays of January 1 and 2, which fall on a Saturday and Sunday, have been switched to Monday the 3rd and Tuesday the 4th for most workers, TVNZ staff will get all four days treated as statutory holidays. Although the number of staff needed has not been decided, TVNZ... said it would be a "large number" of the 1400 employees because of the state-owned enterprise's millennium coverage and potential Y2K problems... [I]t had been a business decision. "It's an extraordinary time, and we will be placing extraordinary demands on our staff over that time." ...the broadcast media lead organiser at the Public Service Association who revealed the deal yesterday, called on other employers to follow suit... And... [the] secretary of the Professional Firefighters Union, said it was difficult to understand why firefighters should not receive something similar. Firefighters want triple their hourly rate... and one day's holiday for every shift worked. Nurses want double and triple pay, and a \$500 flat payment for all on-call staff... Hospitals had seemed amenable to payments for support staff, but no agreements had been reached. Rest-home workers were getting double time and a day in lieu... [However,] many restaurant workers were being told there would be no extra payment.

...Battles over millennium pay are set to begin in earnest following news of the first wave of deals... The Council of Trade Unions... warned companies to decide quickly if they were offering incentives... – to stop tales of huge windfalls raising expectations... About half of the 123 businesses which have told the Northern Employers and Manufacturers' Association they would be open had agreed to give workers extra incentives... Some employers... were touchy on the issue... "Companies are trying to keep it to themselves," said the Information Technology Association... about payments to computer staff on standby for Y2K bug problems. "They don't want the market buoyed up unreasonably." Reasonable, in the case of Ports of Auckland, means nothing extra, while at Telecom, [the] communications manager... did not know what specific arrangements had been made. Telecom was a 24-hour business, and staff usually worked public holidays[so it] could not see why New Year's Eve would be any different. Most shop workers are likely to get most of the big night and the next day off, but The Warehouse will be open on New Year's Day, giving workers double pay and a day off in lieu... [Most 'workers in Victoria will also get a half day off while New Year's Eve will be a statutory holiday in Britain.' • A NZ] Press Association report in yesterday's N[Z] *Herald* incorrectly referred to a \$200 to \$400 payment for Tasman Pulp and Paper staff working on New Year's Eve. The company's human resources team leader... said the payment was part of a deal done two years ago to turn the mill into a 365-day operation, and related to working Christmas and Boxing Days. Staff did not get extra for the New Year.

...firefighters [are] threatening to abandon duties during the millennium celebrations after the Fire Service rejected demands for big overtime payments... Prison officers are [also] expected to fiercely contest news they will get no extra payment... However, [the]... Order of St John chief executive... questions why staff, or anyone for that matter, should be paid any extra for working on... New Year's Eve... A survey of other employers has found... McDonald's is closing its Invercargill outlet early on New Year's Eve and flying 23 staff to Queenstown to boost the outlet there. They will stay in the tourist town for eight days, with their accommodation paid. They will also receive a bonus. Like McDonald's, fellow fast-food giant KFC will only have a handful of outlets open late on New Year's Eve... Many restaurants surveyed by the *Sunday Star-Times* will close reasonably early on New Year's Eve. Most say it won't be profitable to stay open because they are too far away from where the crowds will be; they will probably have to pay staff double or triple time; and the owners themselves want to go out and party... Ansett [NZ and Air NZ] have yet to decide what they will do for staff. The Airline Pilots Association is not seeking extra pay, but wants a commitment from employers that they will look after families of pilots on duty if there are Y2K problems... [In related news,] Split Enz have given the organisers of Auckland's Bastion Pt millennium concert until the end of the week to confirm that it is on. The ultimatum follows the withdrawal of [a British] international rock star... from the concert... [The '70s rock icon] is believed to have been put off the Auckland celebration after a planned millennium concert in Gisborne, at which [the icon] was to be the main attraction, collapsed[– although it 'gets to keep the \$200,000 deposit paid to him in advance by the promoters']!

...Two guys] have lost enough money in recent weeks to make grown [guys] cry. Six-figure stuff. "Devastated" is a word readily used by the pair, [who are] well-known in... Ashburton, where much of the finance was sourced for the now defunct all-night millennium concert at Gisborne. They and the other 80 investors from the Ashburton area who put up the bulk of the \$2 million are unlikely to get a cent back. They say it won't impact on their businesses as it has for... [the Auckland businessperson] who 15 years ago dreamt of staging a super millennium-night concert in Gisborne and today is gutted and broke... All three directors feel bitterly let down by government agencies, particularly the Millennium Office[which]... liked the idea of a large concert at Gisborne but wouldn't help financially. "Grating" was a printable word for how [one of the Ashburton businesspeople] felt about the Government's latest move to spend money to ensure [NZ's premier diva] performed at a dawn concert in Gisborne. His company had paid a non-refundable deposit to [the diva to ensure it] was booked for Gisborne. "There was some pressure on us with [the diva] because her organisation told us [it] was considering several American offers. If we hadn't acted when we did we may not have got her at all... We sought \$1m from the Millennium Office last November. We thought we met all the criteria we needed for funding. We would have been showing off N[Z] to the world because we had negotiated international television rights. Our application was rejected. We were advised that because our event was going to be a success, the funding was not necessary." Another approach to the office in April was also rejected. In May, things started to go wrong. A hitch over the \$US1m international television deal meant the company didn't receive an expected initial payment of \$US250,000. The money was needed as a down-payment to tie up [a British rock icon] and Split Enz. Management of those performers became edgy and wanted their money on time; word got out there were problems and the "snowball"... began to roll... By the time desperate attempts were being made... to find a \$2m top-up to the \$2.5m already spent, payments to contractors and to Split Enz... had been missed... It was the beginning of the end of [the] dream... The failure, coming after the collapse of Sweetwaters... is expected to further damage N[Z]'s reputation. Other notable duds include the Mountain Rock festival and Neon Picnic in the late 1980s, which left Roy Orbison stranded at Los Angeles Airport and debts approaching \$1m.

...WANT to get away from the city for millennium celebrations but [a '70s rock icon] was never going to be your cup of New Year's cheer? More inclined to dancing the night (and the day and the next night) away with 5999 of your new best friends? Well there's always the *Gathering*, the award-winning annual festival that's now the pilgrimage-to-Mecca of N[Z] dance music. Tickets for the... event at Canaan Downs, Nelson Bays, go on sale today, the early availability because organisers figure people will be planning what they want to do on New Year's Eve sooner. The... event... goes from midday, December 31, to midday, January 2, and will feature more than 50 live acts and 120 DJs... In Auckland, tickets are available from Marbecks and Soulsonic record stores or can be booked online on the *Gathering* website... which also provides travel and camping information. And organisers promise you won't wake up to some government-subsidised dame and her backing band shouting in Italian at dawn...

Tickets to Rotorua's Lakeside 2000 – a Knight With A Dame concert have been selling fast... By yesterday there were only about 50 of the premium \$120 seats left and about 500 of the 2200 \$90 seats. The 5500 \$45 seats in the stadium terraces were also selling fast. There are also 10,000 \$20 tickets, and organisers are allocating 20,000 free tickets to people on the Rotorua District Council electoral role... [T]he huge demand

for seated tickets meant allocations to sponsors had been reduced... The January 22 event at the Rotorua International Stadium features... [a knighted Maori performer and NZ's premier opera singer – who will be having an extended stay in her homeland following her performance at Gisborne's millennium celebrations. While on the topic of millennium celebrations, t]he sparkling Waitemata could twinkle at night... with plans to light up the Auckland Harbour Bridge. The city icon could glow for the Apec conference, the Year 2000 celebrations and beyond under a millennium project being investigated by a joint-venture group representing councils, Transit N[Z] and Takapuna-based Power N[Z]. A decade after a similar bright idea was sunk by bickering councils and power boards, a report to the Auckland City Council promotions committee signals similar funding hurdles to meet the estimated \$1.6 million cost... A funding request from the ASB Trust has [already] been turned down... [However,] North Shore City has indicated it will contribute \$80,000. Auckland could be expected to contribute between \$100,000 and \$170,000. Transit says it will look at matching the councils' combined contribution. With a lighting company putting in \$220,000 and a base funding of \$300,000 from the Millennium Board, [only] \$600,000 would need to be found from sponsorships... [T]he promotions committee chair[perso]n, said it would be wonderful to illuminate the bridge. But as an Auckland Now candidate who stood on a back-to-basics platform, [the councillor] would be happy for the private sector to pay the cost... [Another group has talked] about decorating the bridge in lights. The chief executive of Tourism Auckland... said lighting up the harbour bridge would be far more beneficial for Auckland than a one-off millennium event. Anything that brought the two sides of the city together would be a good thing from a tourism point of view... Council officials from both Auckland and the North Shore declined to talk about the proposal.

...The Auckland City Council has dropped plans to light the Harbour Bridge... blaming negative publicity about advertising signs for driving away sponsors. The Mayor of Auckland... said last night that [it] had spent hours yesterday trying to persuade the key sponsor, who was promising about \$1 million for the \$1.8 million lighting project, to stay on board. The sponsor, who [the mayor] would not name, declined... The illumination of the... Harbour Bridge [wa]s a millennium project that Aucklanders... support[ed].

...creating an indoor stadium or buying a park are two options being considered by the Auckland Regional Council to mark the millennium. It has formed a millennium project committee to evaluate proposals on the encouragement of the Auckland 2000 Committee and the Government's Towards 2000 Task Force. They want the ARC "to consider some project which will provide enduring benefit to NZers – particularly young people – well into the millennium."

...Plans for an... Auckland SuperDome seating 12,000 were unveiled yesterday. Auckland[']s Mayor... signed a heads of agreement with A[US]n company Abigroup to build and run the indoor arena at Quay Park, in downtown Auckland for 30 years. It will then be handed back to the council. The SuperDome... will be the largest indoor sporting and entertainment arena in N[Z]... Christchurch's indoor arena has seating for 8800 people and the North Shore Events Centre can seat 4700. The giant glass-and-steel structure will have state-of-the-art sound and lighting, a food court and restaurants. It will also be the largest indoor banquet facility in Auckland, with seating for 2500 people. The council has agreed to give \$50 million towards the SuperDome from the sale of its airport shares or a mix of loans and money put aside for the project. Abigroup will meet the rest of the estimated \$80 million cost... Abigroup does not want a repeat of the problems at its A\$200 million... 21,000-seat SuperDome at Homebush in Sydney, which was shut out of hosting top-earning acts. The stadium ran up a \$4 million operating deficit in the first half of this financial year. Abigroup's development manager... said the business plan for Auckland would involve about 100 events a year, including conventions and non-ticket events such as religious rallies, which had been a huge success in Sydney... [Last night the mayor] said the council needed to do more work on a \$77 million convention centre project alongside The Edge[Theatre at the back of the Aotea Centre], but... could see Sky City's new centre filling the gap over the next 10 to 15 years... [However, Abigroup's development manager] said... Auckland should not build an international convention centre until it could compete with Sydney... "[And t]he waterfront should be that place, anchored by the SuperDome." ...All going well, the SuperDome would open in 2005.

...A HUGE sport and entertainment venue proposed for downtown Auckland should not harm the future Waitakere Sports Complex, says [the stadium's] development board chair[perso]n... Plans for an \$80 million Auckland Superdome, with seating for 12,000, were unveiled last week... But [the chairperson] doesn't think the proposed venue will pull business away from the \$21m Waitakere venue which, with seating for 5000, should be built by March, 2004... Auckland[']s Mayor... is unwilling to compare the Superdome with the Waitakere Sports Complex, or the 4700 capacity North Shore Events Centre. "This is a world-class, high-tech venue with all the bells and whistles. It will hold very big rock concerts... and the like,"... [The mayor] hopes the Superdome, which needs unconditional approval by early next year if it's to go ahead, should be finished by the end of 2004. "I'm 95[%] certain it's going to go ahead,"... says[the mayor, who]... is more optimistic than the council's recreation and events committee chair[perso]n... who says that the Superdome is unlikely to make a profit for a decade... "these facilities don't tend to be cash cows".

...Auckland City dwellers facing a 17[%] rates rise pay a "patently unfair" share of the cost of facilities enjoyed by people from throughout the region... Auckland pays more than \$1.5 million a year for the zoo, for example, while the region's six other territorial authorities contribute just over \$100,000 among them. Yet more than 60[%] of the 287,000 local visitors the zoo expects this year will come from outside Auckland City. [The 'Waitakere, North Shore and Manukau City councils each provide an average of 18% of the zoo's annual visitors but only an average of 1.7% of its annual funding.'] "I admit that what exists is patently unfair in terms of justice and equity from the point of view of those who fund regional facilities," said... Manukau[']s mayor... However... Manukau ratepayers were constantly telling his council to stick to funding services within the city, and [the mayor] could not see it spending more regionally while looking at a hefty rates rise... [The mayor of] Waitakere... agreed that not enough was done collectively to fund regional facilities... Of the cities, his contributes the least to facilities over its borders. "We are not stingy, but what we [have], we generally like to spend on ourselves,"... [The] North Shore mayor... said his council and residents helped Auckland City's economy by supplying it with a large labour force... But... a survey of 575 people from Manukau, Papakura, Waitakere and North Shore showed overwhelming support for their paying more for regional facilities even if this meant their facing an extra 4[%] on their rates. "Their residents are happy to fund some of our facilities so it is something the councils have to grapple with in their own budgets..."... said... the Auckland City Council attractions committee chair[perso]n, who... estimates that Auckland City spends more than \$13 million a year on attractions widely used by other councils' ratepayers. Her figure excludes the Auckland Museum, which is financed by a levy on all the region's councils. If other facilities were funded the same way, Auckland would save at least \$7 million. [Other examples of unfair funding are the 'Aotea Centre (Auckland City provides 98.2% of its \$4.44m annual funding but only 31% of its audiences, whereas North Shore City provides 0% of its funding and 21% of its audiences); the Auckland Art Gallery (Auckland City provides 100% of its \$4.9m funding but only 56% of its visitors – North Shore provides 19% of its visitors); Motat (Auckland City provides 97% of its \$987,000 funding but only 33% of its visitors – Manukau City provides 2% of its funding and 23% of its visitors); Youthtown (Auckland City provides 62% of its users and 100% of its funding – although it is used by 16% of Waitakere City's ratepayers); the Auckland Philharmonic Orchestra (Auckland City provides 83% of its \$279,000 funding and 39% of its fans; Waitakere City – 0%/11%; North Shore City – 3.3/26; Manukau City – 13/21').]

...existing professional orchestras are blowing hot and cold over the emergence of newcomer, the Auckland Chamber Orchestra. "We have to get away from this feeling of competition," says... [the] Auckland manager for the N[Z]SO and the NZ] Chamber Orchestra. "It's like cafes or dress shops, the more you have the more patrons you attract – hopefully." But in Dominion Rd, at the headquarters of the Auckland Philharmonia, the welcome, if that is the right word, is through gritted teeth. In the tough commercial world of entertainment, "everything's competition, even a new ten-pin bowling alley," says [the Philharmonia's] general manager... "It's fair to say it's not competition for us at this stage because it doesn't exist

yet. An orchestra doesn't exist until its first concert." [However, the general manager dismisses the ACO] as an "amateur" group competing with the St Matthew's Chamber Orchestra for audiences, not with the Philharmonia whose competition comes... from the NZSO]. The new orchestra plays its debut concert in... [two months as] part of a concert series being promoted by the Edge to encourage audiences to the town hall concert chamber. It enters a battlefield where the fight for sponsorship, public subsidies and audiences is intense... [A]s music director for the past three years of the now defunct Auckland Sinfonietta, [the ACO's conductor] knows this as well as anyone. The death through lack of funds of... [the Sinfonietta] – to be officially wound up... [next week] – was the impetus behind setting up the new group. "The Sinfonietta had nothing planned for this year and I wasn't going to sit still,"... If the Auckland Philharmonia, which performs around 120 times a year, appears to be over-reacting to the news of the [ACO]'s proposed four-concert series, the twitchiness is perhaps understandable. The Philharmonia's audience growth over the past two years has been below expectations leading to a loss for the second year in a row of more than \$100,000. Not significant... on a budget of \$5.2 million unless "you do it too many times in a row." Lurking off-stage is the NZSO]. This year the NZSO... will play 18 concerts in Auckland. And [its] chief executive... is determined to increase the national orchestra's share of the Auckland music market. This means either taking audiences from the Philharmonia or expanding Auckland's orchestral audience. Both orchestras know from experience how tough that latter task is. On the re-opening of the revamped town hall [in 1997], both bands moved from the Aotea Centre to their traditional home... Both tried to entice new audiences with expanded seasons and special deals... The response from Aucklanders has been underwhelming... [A]udiences for the Philharmonia's Thursday-night subscription concerts average about 1100 in the 1550-seater hall. Attendances at the repeat nights of three of these concerts have been "abysmal." A survey of customers last year pointed to the disgruntlement of some with the inferior creature comforts of the newly renovated town hall. This led to a return this year, for four concerts, to the acoustically inferior... 2100-seater... Aotea Centre. The first of these concerts attracted a virtually full house... More than 1700 had booked for the full four-concert series. Next year, [the Philharmonia's general manager] plans to move more of the concerts back to the Aotea Centre... The Aotea Centre costs \$13,000 a night to hire, the... town hall, \$9,000... so economically there's not a lot in it. "Though if you can fill it, it obviously pays to use the Aotea Centre." A year ago, [its Auckland manager] said the NZSO would be staying put in the town hall. "It would be a shame to walk away from it when it's such a perfect venue." Now [the Auckland manager] says that next year the NZSO could also be doing some concerts in the Aotea Centre... [T]he Philharmonia's "brilliant" sales for its Aotea series "just go to show the patrons like comfort above all else." Since the NZSO's return to the town hall "we've had more complaints about the venue than we've had compliments. Acoustically it's obviously the only place to be but when comfort and sightlines and all that kind of thing are included, the Aotea has it all over the town hall." ...The wariness of the Philharmonia towards the newcomer is also historical. The [ACO]'s predecessor... on at least two occasions, threatened to take traditional accompanying work away from the larger orchestra by quoting a lower price for the job. The most recent occasion was in March when... the dying Sinfonietta bid for the N[Z] Ballet's *Peter Pan*. To get the job, the Philharmonia had to agree to reduce its tender price to below cost, then find a sponsor to cover the difference. [The music director] says the Sinfonietta was not to blame for what happened with the ballet. "As I understand it, we gave a quote for a smaller group and that quote was used to beat the larger group..." [The music director] sees his smaller band as providing a service. "If another arts organisation that itself is struggling needs only a 25 or 30-piece orchestra, that's the niche we can help... If someone wants to hire only 25 musicians and we can supply 25 while the Philharmonia price is for 60, is that undercutting?" The [ACO] will be providing work for the city's 100-strong pool of freelance musicians who are paid per performance, "keeping them in form playing serious classical music they can get their fingers and brains into. That's good for music in Auckland... We've got to have lots of music with people talking about it and comparing and having their favourites. Having that diversity of activity is really good."

...The NZSO] has chalked up a \$1.52 million loss for the year ended June... The financial crisis was revealed to players in a letter signed jointly by [the orchestra's] chief executive... and a Public Service Association official. [The chief executive] refused to discuss the crisis except to say "times are tough." However, [the] Minister of Culture... has discussed the problem with [the chief executive and the NZSO board chairperson] and asked them to report back with recovery plans. But a Government bailout is unlikely. "I do believe the national orchestra should live within its... \$14 m... budget," which includes a \$10 m... annual grant... Just three years ago the Government bailed out the NZSO] with a \$1.25 m... handout to cover old debts and a \$2 m... boost to the band's annual grant... "They were told by the Government to go out and get corporate support," says Labour's arts spokesperson. "Well, if its chairperson... with all his huge business contacts and skills, can't get corporate support, I think it's a job beyond anyone and at that point there's got to be a major review of funding." [The spokesperson] said an excellent, international-level touring orchestra was crucial for music in N[Z]. Because of inadequate funding, the NZSO had been in breach of the touring requirements in its act for most of the past 10 years. "If the Government is not willing to give them adequate funding, then the act will have to be changed." [The spokesperson] refused to commit a future Labour Government to increasing the grant, but said: "I can confidently say we will not shirk that responsibility." ...[Ironically,] the orchestra's financial road has been rocky... [since] 1988, when the Labour Government cut the NZSO loose from the umbilical cord of state broadcasting... [I]t suddenly became a state-owned enterprise, told to return a profit and to hustle for extra funds... [A PSA] organiser... confirmed the union was working with players and management in a cooperative attempt to negotiate a "more flexible" employment contract.

...Is there now any need for a national orchestra? ...Listening to the NZSO] broadcasting Beethoven live from a Wellington concert on Saturday night, I couldn't help wondering what... the... founders of our national orchestra would make of its financial crisis. Undoubtedly they would be proud that their dream of a quality national orchestra had been achieved and had survived for more than 50 years. As for the rows over funding, well that would make them feel right at home. After all, the orchestra's inaugural year budget of £40,000... in 1947 did balloon to £100,000 by 1950 arousing much wailing and gnashing of teeth. What, I suspect, would disappoint them, is the dog-in-the-manger attitude that many NZSO supporters take when the issue of state funding of orchestras is raised. Unlike them, [the NZSO's founders]... didn't see the creation of a world-class status symbol as the goal. They saw a national orchestra more as a way of expanding musical education to a nation starved of culture by, among other things, six years of war. It was a vehicle to help to educate audiences and also a training ground for musicians. For many years it was just that. For many, the touring national orchestra was their first introduction to live orchestral music. For me it was a schools' concert in the Auckland Town Hall in the late 50s. I still recall the thrill of recognition when they burst into the march from the movie *The Dam Busters*. But school concerts – outside Wellington, that is – are now a thing of the past, as is much of the old touring programme. When priorities had to be set, the role of educator and bringer of music to the masses [(i.e., the taxpayers who fund it)] no longer ranked. Increasingly the *raison d'être* for the orchestra became that of sacred icon. It was the status symbol that politicians and Wellington bureaucrats – however Philistine their own tastes – held up to overseas visitors to prove how cultured we were. And a fine and enjoyable status symbol it is. But can we afford it? More to the point, is it the best way to distribute the \$10 million of Government funds we spend on it? I suspect not. For a start, a considerable proportion of this money goes not on music-making but on travel costs. In the bad old days players travelled by train, stayed in seedy boarding houses and grabbed dinner after a concert at the local piecart. These days the 100-strong group flies everywhere then dines and overnights in quality hotels. Adding to the cost side of the ledger is the political decision to headquarters a national provincial arts troupe in a smallish provincial town – Wellington – when half your potential audience lives within an hour or two's drive of the nation's main city – Auckland. Fifty years ago a national orchestra made sense. Both financially and artistically it was all the country's resources could sustain. The situation is now different. Good musicians abound and professional city orchestras draw loyal audience support in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. Compared with the NZSO these bands get a pittance from the Government. Yet in many ways they are now doing the educative work the original national orchestra was set up to

do. So where do we go from here? ...A large cash injection would be one welcome – but unlikely solution. Another would be to celebrate the past successes of the national orchestra model but agree it is time to move forward... to the direct state-funding of three city-based orchestras – one each in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Each would serve its city and adjacent areas. The NZSO, shed of its national touring obligations, could become the Wellington orchestra. Opponents of such a revolution dwell on the death of a fine orchestra. But the... Auckland Philharmonia is proof enough that a city orchestra can be first class if it wants to be... A less dramatic solution... involve[s] the full NZSO touring only to Auckland and Christchurch to perform huge, showpiece works that the Auckland Philharmonia and... the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra... do not have the resources for. Complementing this, the NZSO would also have smaller touring ensembles which could travel to smaller centres more economically.

...The multi-talented National Youth Choir won the coveted top prize at the international Musical Eisteddfod in Wales on Saturday. They had earlier won best mixed choir, and edged out three other international groups in the final... [to earn] the title Choir of the World... [Their] manager... said the win showed the 41 singers, aged between 18 and 25, were right up there with the best in the world. It was the culmination of three years' hard work. Since Saturday the choir had been asked to sing in South America, and [the manager] expected more invitations to flood in... The choir, halfway through a five-week tour of Europe, will travel to Vienna before taking part in another competition in Slovakia... The choir took the title with a selection of four unaccompanied songs performed over 15 minutes. First was *Haere Mai*, a Maori welcome piece which included elements of dance and haka... [T]he singers were "a little nervous" before facing the capacity crowd of 5000... A few hours after... taking the £3000... prize, the choir celebrated at the Trevor Arms, a small hotel in the northern village of Rosset. Welsh patrons, especially a group out on a hens' night, were keen to hear their talents. As well as singing some of their choral standards, the choir improvised with popular favourites, including... a rendition of... the Beatles number... *Hey Jude*... But celebrations had to be toned down after guests sleeping in the hotel complained about the noise.

...If you drink and listen to concert music you're a bloody idiot There is one major flaw in the plan of the Edge's supremo... to allow people to drink during concerts in the Aotea Centre and Auckland Town Hall... Only a year or so back we were celebrating as one of the triumphs of the Town Hall renovations the miraculous sound-proofing of the Concert Chamber and the Great Hall. Millions of dollars worth of double-glazing and false walling had been installed so... skate-boarders, unruly drunks and sirening fire engines would no longer disrupt the sweet sounds within. [The supremo] was as enthusiastic about the transformation as the rest of us. Indeed, when it was discovered that because of inadequate insulation noise was bleeding into the main hall from the foyers outside, it was [the supremo] who ensured funds were forthcoming immediately to rip out the faulty doors and build new ones. Having conquered the disturbances from without, it is ironic that [the supremo] is now keen to encourage his audiences to take glassware with them into the auditoriums. [The supremo] argues that it is not a bid to sell more of his awful house wine. Rather, it's an attempt to take the pressure off people caught at the back of the queue at the bar during the interval stampede. Instead of having them knock their drinks back quickly, they'll be able to sup them sedately back in their seats... I can almost accept this sedate supping as being a harmless enough exercise for those nearby, although where they're expected to rest the glasses during the sedate supping is anyone's guess. But it's the disposal of the glassware afterwards that is the real worry. In the movies they have little loops in the back of the seat in front of you to store your popcorn and cola. [The supremo] is suggesting you store the empties under your seat. These are obviously the thoughts of someone who has never sat through a concert in the cramped, creaking and shifting... seating of the Town Hall and Concert Chamber stalls. In that setting, if you don't kick over your own wine glass, the chances are the person stretching their legs in the row behind will. With no carpet on the floors to deaden the noise, a wine glass or three hitting the dust each night is all it would take to ruin everyone's night out... The Edge chief executive... is very surprised that only 15[%] of those polled supported the idea, compared with 76[%] against and 9[%] who said maybe. [The supremo] is also surprised the opposition is evenly spread, with audiences for musicals just as negative to the idea as high-brow orchestra-goers. But [the supremo] shouldn't be. If it was a dine-and-dance or a cabaret evening the audience was after, it could go off to a club or a restaurant with band. We music-lovers go along for the music and the music-making. Part of that music is the silences and the quiet bits. We want to be swept away by what's happening up on the stage, not jolted back to reality by a glass being kicked over. Believe it or not, most of us can even get through an hour without the craving for a glass of Chateau Aotea.

...["I crave amphetamines. Today I'm not taking them and I don't intend to take them tomorrow, but it's something I can't help. The least mood altering thing that I might take my system cries more, more, more. It's like one's too many and a thousand's not enough," says 1960s country music star J. Cash...

In 1952, as an entire country drunkenly ushered out the debris of an old year and festively celebrated the emergence of a new one, the biggest star country music had ever produced was dying on a lost highway going nowhere. Hank Williams was in the back seat of his baby blue Cadillac, cuddled up in a bed of morphine, chloral hydrate and alcohol. Hank was on his way to a New Year's night performance in Ohio, only Hank didn't know it. Hank was very quiet, too quiet even for his chauffeur, who finally turned around to ponder his famous and pathetic employer, but it was too late. The long night's journey to death was over. Aged only 29 years old, the singer had died of a broken heart and an inability to find a livable place somewhere between stardom and mortality.'

...In his autobiography, a celebrated tenor explains the roots of his talents. "I used to go into my room and close the door and, at the top of my lungs sing "La donna e mobile" – in a child's voice, of course. Of the 16 families in the building, 14 of them would yell at me to shut up." The tenor ha[s] got a new left knee after surgery at a New York hospital. The big guy checked into the ward with an entourage of seven, including a private chef, masseuse, manicurist and hairdresser. [The tenor]'s still eating heaps – so let's hope the other knee doesn't give out... [Incidentally, d]espite the \$15 million [the singer/actor who starred in the movie *Funny Girl*] made from her... [latest concert, the New Yorker] wasn't the least bit self-conscious about producing a coupon at a Malibu cafe the other day and getting a free cup of coffee.

...not satisfied with being paid \$24 million for one night's work – [the singer/actor i]s now demanding her house be moved into her dressing room for... [the] concert... And... wants major changes made to the auditorium, including... [it] being reinsulated so the sound is perfect for her big night.

...The SULTAN OF BRUNEI paid [the star of the movie *The Bodyguard*] \$17 million... and [a Canadian singer] \$10 m... to perform in his country...

Labour and National have expressed serious reservations over [the]Internal Affairs Minister... approving a \$35,000 lottery grant for a Maori immersion school to send a cultural group to [perform in]China. The 12-year-old daughter of [the]Maori Affairs Minister... is a group member. His fellow Mauri Pacific MP... also has a daughter in the 10-pupil group from the Hoani Waititi Kura Kaupapa in Glen Eden. [The Internal Affairs Minister], also a Mauri Pacific MP, yesterday allocated \$35,000 from his discretionary fund to help the kapa haka group take up an invitation from the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra. His announcement came a day after [the Maori Affairs Minister] sought to distance himself from suggestions that [it] was influencing the funding bid by his daughter's school. [The Maori Affairs Minister] used ministerial letterhead for a personal letter supporting the \$50,000 bid, but told Parliament... it... wrote the letter because the school deserved [the money]... Labour's... member of the minister's subcommittee of the Lotteries Grants Board, said the grant was an abuse of the discretionary fund. "Very few schools get access to this fund, and most of them seem to be in West Auckland, where... both[ministers] live. Of the \$76,000 granted to schools... in the last year, \$75,000 [w]as... to schools in this one area." ...National's rep... on the... board, wrote to [the Internal Affairs Minister] urging him to decline the application. It was "quite extraordinary" that the school had asked for 100[%] funding for the trip. [The National MP] also noted that personal travel was included, such as a side-trip to Beijing. Asked if the grant looked like local favouritism, [the Internal Affairs Minister said it]... felt \$35,000 was appropriate. "Usually groups are expected to provide some funding themselves, and the discretionary fund is not bottomless. But I am confident the exposure this group will generate to millions of Chinese through its performances and via television and other media will be of considerable benefit to N[Z]." Labour has laid a breach-of-privilege complaint claiming [the Maori Affairs Minister] misled Parliament when [it] tabled the letter

about the funding bid. The Speaker has yet to rule... [Speaking of culture,] a deep and meaningful... [pop star – who performs at Ericsson Stadium on Saturday – believes:] “Entertainers have a prime responsibility to rescue the highest human values and translate them into a message of well-being.”

...music fans... [are furious with a] pop star... The singing star – famous for his hits *Livin’ La Vida Loca* and *Shake Your Bon-Bon* – has left thousands disappointed. [The singer] pulled the plug on last night’s Auckland concert nine hours before... go[ing] on stage. It has been moved to tonight. Fans – including many from the South Island – had to arrange more accommodation and some had to pay penalty fees to switch flights. [A couple from] Christchurch spent \$1500 to celebrate their 10th anniversary at the Ericsson Stadium show. “We’re pretty pissed off because we were due to fly home on Sunday. Luckily, the boss says I can stay,”... [The star]’s record company said the stage was not finished. “Because of [strong] winds we couldn’t risk it,” a Sony spokes[person said. “The star] insists everything is 100[%].” Hundreds of fans turned up at Ericsson refusing to believe the Latin superstar would let them down. “I’m spitting mad,” said [one, aged] 28. “I’d like to chop his bon-bons off if I got hold of him.”

...*Music wild [perso]n leaves big impact...* Who were the friends of Screamin’ Jay Hawkins? Certainly not the record companies, that cut him loose time and again and left him to drift for three decades until [Jay] died virtually penniless in Paris last year. Not the music establishment, which loved his startling R&B hit *I Put A Spell On You* when it came out in 1956, but never warmed to the flaming coffins and cigarette-smoking skull of his stage show – and certainly couldn’t cope with the flamboyant moaning and grunting of later songs such as *Constipation Blues*. His wives were less than impressed, too, as [Jay] married them, fathered their children and then took off for months at a time on the road, tom-catt[ing] his way around the world with every dancer, groupie or vaudeville queen [it] could lay his hands on. [Jay] worked his way through six marriages in the end, and the last two wives are still fighting over which of them should inherit his meagre estate. Hawkins was the original wild [perso]n, a true eccentric who liked to perform in a black cape with a bone in his nose as [it] belted out his darkly humorous, near-unrecognisable reworkings of music-hall and R&B standards. When [Jay] started out, there were rumours [the singer] was a cannibal. When word of his burning-coffin routine reached the broader public, [Jay] was blacklisted by the National Casket Company. But none of this, in the end, is more outrageous than the legacy of his own children. By his reckoning, there were 57 of them. Or maybe 75. Or even 76. Chances are [Jay] didn’t know about all of them, and [certainly] didn’t participate in any of their lives much beyond the initial act of procreation. When [Jay] died suddenly after emergency surgery to treat an aneurism in February last year, not one of his off-spring attended his lonely funeral at the Pere Lachaise cemetery, or accompanied his ashes as they were sprinkled over the Atlantic. Only the three children [Jay] had by his first wife... ever knew each other; quite a few of the others had no idea who their father was at all. Hawkins, nevertheless, did have friends, and one of them, his biographer... decided [it] would do her best to carry out one of his final wishes and get all his children together. [The biographer] set up a website called Jay’s Kids and invited submissions from anyone who thought they might have some of Screamin’ Jay’s wild blood in their veins. [The biographer] flew around the U[S], meeting the most promising candidates, asked them for their birth certificates and spent many hours seeking to verify the times and places where they thought they might have been conceived. Mostly [the biographer] went on gut instinct and the striking physical similarities many of the children bore to her friend and mentor. [The biographer reckons it] has tracked down 33 of his children, and one year after Hawkins’ death... invited them all to Los Angeles for a celebratory reunion. “The funeral was such a sad affair, so we wanted this to be a rollicking good party,”... The party was held in a flamboyantly decorated room at the House of Blues, the Southern Gothic-style nightclub on Sunset Strip that was otherwise almost deserted on a rainy Monday night. Screamin’ Jay video footage played on the television monitors above the bar and his songs blared out over the music system as the guests draped themselves over leopard-spot patterned couches. A preacher was on hand to bless the assembled company, but as [the preacher said, it] wasn’t there to perform a eulogy so much as to encourage everyone to have an unashamedly good time. A disconsolate collection of pale, fattening, middle-aged musicians who once recorded with Hawkins performed a celebratory number (“His seed is running wild, from Kyoto to the San Francisco Bay,” ran the chorus.) The son of... the Cleveland DJ who first put Screamin’ Jay... on the map, was there, and so was... the head of the Rock’n’Roll Museum, who has been petitioned to induct Hawkins into the Hall of Fame. The children themselves were rather reticent. According to [the biographer], 20 of them accepted the invitation. But only five showed up – the five [step-sisters] who have got to know each other best over the past year and who feel most inclined to accept the bizarre circumstances of their entry into the world. “I knew the true test of whether these [gals] were my sisters would be if they made a pass at my husband,” joked... one of... [Hawkins’] original three legitimate children, who still lives in Cleveland. “They all passed the test. Hey, they’re all our father’s children.” [The legitimate daughter], a plump, generous [perso]n who is about 50 years old and drives a night-time ambulance for a living, produced a home-made ragdoll puppet of an R&B singer and proceeded to dance with it to her father’s song *You Made Me Love You*. It was one of those evenings where it was never quite clear if the jolliness was genuine or a cover for some deeper morbidity. [Her] older sister... seemed to be having an altogether less good time and had to fight back the tears as [it] recalled the pain of childhood abandonment. “When I was 5, my dad went out to get milk and never came back,”... And they never spoke again. “I didn’t get the chance to tell my father I loved him...” Almost all of Hawkins’ children were brought up by poor, single parents. In later years, Hawkins could be found wandering the broadwalks in Atlantic City wearing nothing but his black stage cape. [Hawkins] was arrested repeatedly for flashing... in public. It was only thanks to... angels such as... the film-maker who used his music in *Stranger Than Paradise* and his untapped acting skills in *Mystery Train*, [plus the Rolling Stone guitarist –] ...who hired him to open for the Rolling Stones... [– that Hawkins] kept going at all.

...TILES from the pool where former Rolling Stones guitarist Brian Jones drowned are up for sale. [By the way, according to John Denver – the US singer who died last week after the plane it was piloting crashed into the sea – ‘music is the universal language’.]

...Bing Crosby is fighting crime in Wollongong, NSW, from beyond the grave. A shopping complex has discovered that repeated airings of his ancient hit *My Heart Is Taking Lessons* is forcing away gangs of potential troublemakers who often gather outside its doors. Two local councils are now in discussion with police about introducing Bing’s [romantic] crooning into other public areas to keep the local youths from hanging around.

...*A true Love story...* [The frontperso]n of Hole has optioned the book *Bye Bye Baby*, about the 70s Scottish pop rockers Bay City Rollers, with the hope of putting it on the big screen... The widow of Kurt Cobain... also plans to direct [the movie]... *Bye Bye Baby* chronicles teenage obsession with the boy band whose success turned dark. [One member] was charged with reckless driving after killing a 75-year-old; two members attempted suicide; the band’s former manager... was jailed for committing indecent acts with underage teens... Billy Lyall died from an Aids-related illness.

...*Tartan triumph turned to tatters* THE Bay City Rollers, unquestionably the most unlikely pop icons of the 1970s, are the subject of a candid special, *Behind The Music: Bay City Rollers*... [The documentary] traces the rise of the Rollers from their beginnings as working-class lads playing small Edinburgh pubs to their superstardom in the mid-70s when millions of girls around the globe would risk virtually anything for a glimpse of their tartan-clad heroes. *The Bay City Rollers*, who took their name from a city in the U[S], made anything in tartan a keenly sought fashion item. By 1975 they had their own hit television show, *Shang A Lang*. Even today scores of [gals] in their early to mid-thirties are still members of Bay City Rollers fan clubs. [A] Bay City Rollers historian... says the underlying devotion to the band is like carrying a guilty secret. “It’s kinda like herpes... It stays dormant for years then it pops up and you never know when it will.” Yet the fans had deserted the Bay City Rollers by the end of the 1970s, when... punk rock out-charted pop. Suddenly the royalties disappeared and the Bay City Rollers fell apart. *Behind The Music* talks to the band members, who claim they were done out of millions of dollars and left virtually bankrupt. “We have scores to settle,” [says one member]. “People put us through a real hard time.” [The band’s f]ormer manager... describes the band members as “five bitter and twisted [guys]. It] denies accusations of doing the Bay City Rollers out of money and having excessive control over the band members to the point of restricting their personal lives... [The manager, who] was jailed for a year in 1982 for indecent acts against young boys... is now a millionaire property developer...

[‘I bought a record, took it home and put it on the turntable, it made me want to kill everybody in the neighbourhood, burn and rob, not believe in God and quit my stupid job; I went to my mum’s room and I stole all of her jewellery, put it in a paper bag and sold it on a street corner, then bought a lot of drugs and got my sister drunk, stole the family car, stuffed her in the trunk, drove it off the edge of a cliff and stood there laughing; I already had dad’s chequebook so ran to the bank, took out all the money then went across the country spreading fire and disease – it was rock n roll that drove me to the other side’...

‘Next up we’ve got the b-side from *Pink Floyd*’s first single. The song’s first title was something about getting very stoned but they weren’t allowed to put that on the radio in those days so they had to change it to *Candy And A Current Bun*.’

...‘sell your soul for a tacky song like the ones you hear on the radio’...

‘Some people have to have a job, some people have to sit and stare at the same piece of wall paper every day; we get to stand in front of people and play our guitars. There’s something very different about playing in a big space when everybody’s come to see you. If someone buys a CD and takes it home you’re there in their living room, they’re listening to your little idea that you had as you were sitting on the bus.]

...What do stage performers have to do to earn a standing ovation and why, when one stands to applaud a performance, is one made to feel guilty because most patrons remain seated? I don’t get the opportunity to attend live shows often, so what have I missed in live show protocol? I was delighted by a matinee performance [I’d recently attended] but disappointed that the audience did not give the performers a standing ovation. Only three of us appeared to be standing in our section... Would someone please enlighten me?

There are many ways of showing appreciation in addition to clapping (or cheering) – the most obvious one being attending a concert in the first place, then listening to it politely. Obviously, unless members of the audience boo, heckle, leave during the performance or speak to the performers afterwards, the performers won’t know whether or not their endeavours were appreciated (at the extreme end of the scale is the phenomenon of audiences – usually teenage girls – screaming so loudly and constantly that no one in the audience can actually hear the music to appreciate it!). However, surely most people perform for the love of it – or the money – and not because they want the recognition of others; in which case performers shouldn’t expect ovations, or even desire them (if they need to hear clapping they can visit a seal colony). At least – unlike TV producers, who often dub laughter onto comedies for the benefit of viewers who they apparently believe are incapable of recognising when something funny happens – musicians seem to have so far resisted dubbing applause onto their records (excluding recordings of live performances); although, without listening to every record ever produced, that’s a speculative remark – all sorts of obscure and bizarre recordings have been produced, including a ‘12-track CD made out of 1000 baby sounds recorded over a year then marketed as *Jingle Babies*’. Can’t wait the see the video! [Note that if such a video did exist, it would’ve been cheap to produce (‘in NZ, the average cost of making a music video is between \$5,000 to \$10,000; in comparison, the average cost is \$300,000’ in America).]

Technology has dramatically changed the [American]music recording industry. In 1975, 421 million phonograph records were sold for \$[US]1.695 billion, and 110.8 million prerecorded cassettes for \$681.8 million. Compact discs had not yet been invented. In 1991, the sales of phonograph records were down to 26.8 million units for \$93.3 million, and prerecorded cassette sales rose to 429.1 million units for \$3.250 billion. But the sales of both were overshadowed by CDs, which sold 333.3 million units for \$4.337 billion.

NOTHING about... [him] reminds you of his tearaway years with Split Enz in the early 1980s. Greying, mild-mannered and softly spoken, [the musician] looks every bit the company executive with a course clearly charted and a steady hand on the tiller. But don’t let that fool you. Underneath... there is the born-again determination of the “moral crusader.” [The musician] has stayed in the roller-coaster world of the music business, but as one of its backroom organisers. Instead of being out there performing or producing, [the musician] now works on behalf of composers and lyricists everywhere, even if many of them have never heard of him, or of the organisation, APRA, whose [NZ arm the musician] controls. APRA (Australasian Performing Rights Association) has more than 20,000 members, with up to 3000 living in N[Z]. All of them... are being ripped off by well-meaning people who simply don’t know the legal ins and outs, and... it’s his job to stop that. “Public broadcasters give us no trouble... Every time radio or TV play even a 10-second soundbite it’s recorded, printed out, and accounted for. All their figures come straight to us, and we allocate accordingly to our members. With some pride, [the local APRA rep] adds that only 12[%] of the amount collected goes into overheads... Other areas are not so open-and-shut. “It’s background music that gives us the worst problems. Obviously, people don’t think about background music. It’s just part of the air. They don’t realise that they need a licence to play any music in public, even if it seems as though it’s not being heard. Just try opening up a boutique or a hair salon... nowadays without background music, and see how far it gets.” So the jeans place across the road in Parnell, pumping out [a NZ song] at 50 decibels is breaking the law? “Oh yes,” [the APRA rep] says... emphatically. And looking over the busy trading area of Parnell Rise, [the rep] skilfully runs down a liturgy that includes cafes, restaurants, hotels, waiting rooms and parks. Then... counts off the semi-private enterprises that depend on music for their activity, but take it for granted, like aerobics classes, amateur dramatics, dance classes, sports activities such as skating and gymnastics – even the music played at big matches. We were getting uncomfortably close to a Pythonesque “Nobody Escapes the Spanish Inquisition” so I interrupt to ask how so many could come to be breaking the law. “Why does everyone drive in town at more than 50 km/h?” [the rep] counters quickly. “It’s wrong, but everyone does it.” [However,]APRA has been flexing its muscles recently. A nationwide letter campaign last year to offices and shops provoked some abusive reactions down the telephone, with the more repeatable descriptions referring to “white-collar criminals” and “little Hitlers.” Even *Fair Go* put in an appearance, and tut-tutted about the association’s interfering stance. But [the rep] remains happily secure in the knowledge that [his stance] is right. And his sense of “moral crusade” is strengthening because[, having] seen the songwriting side of the game from the inside, [the rep] understands that APRA is the only way most composers will get something back from the work they do. “PROBABLY only 5[%] of our members in N[Z] make a decent living from the contemporary music scene... and the majority of musicians are out of work. Why should songwriters sit in a cafe staring bleakly at their coffee and hearing the overhead speakers relaying their work to everyone for nothing?” And if the cafe owner refuses to buy the licence can [it] be prosecuted? “Sure,”... but... since the annual fee is \$58 maximum, the cost of legal proceedings would be like using steam-rollers to crack nuts. [The rep] puts his trust in an ongoing education campaign, a basic respect among traders for other people’s work and, above all, constant niggling from APRA. Since much of the music played in this country comes from overseas, is APRA not just lining the pockets of others, rather than directly helping the situation at home? “It’s not our job to evangelise for N[Z] music... We share out to all composers on a frequency-of-play basis, no matter what.” [The rep] stops for a moment to think. “But remember, a composer in this country who writes music for something exportable like *Shortland Street* will do pretty well nowadays.” Just as [the rep speaks, the rep] is handed a message which... [the rep] shows me... It says that the recent compilation album from Crowded House is now into its second week as No 1 in the British charts. Point made. But if the play returns from such a high-profile group as Crowded House [– that features another Split Enz member –]are easy to monitor, the task of policing every local trader in the country who puts music over speakers, or down the phone, or simply leaves a radio on, would make even the most hardened bureaucrat blanch. [The rep] puts on his mild-mannered, seraphic look again and explains that, just the same, his returns keep going up over the years and the message is at last getting across. [The rep] doesn’t consider the odds, but enjoys the gradual progress. [■ NZ composers are thought to get about ‘20 to 25c/song.’ In comparison, the latest up-and-coming NZ singer/composer ‘receives \$1.40 for every record sold.’ Editor’s note: DJs used to be paid (and some may still be paid) by musicians – or at least by agents of their record companies – to play their records. Such financial deals are known as PAYOLA.

...tonight DJs will be playing] classic hip-hop, soul and funk at the Brass Bar... That's free. So it should be – they just play records, for God's sake! ...[the story of hip-hop doesn't belong in New York, LA or London. The true story begins in devastation, bad housing, gang wars and desperation']...

There is an excruciating sequence in the first episode of *Dancing In the Street*, the BBC's big (10 hours, \$12 million) history of rock'n'roll. A grinning [white crooner], in shiny jacket and tie, hops awkwardly from foot to foot, moves his hands as if... directing traffic, and sings *Tutti Frutti*. Awopbopalooobop sounds like polite conversation. This looks especially insipid after watching... "...the innovator... the emancipator... the originator... the architect of rock'n'roll,"... – or [the person who]"rattled New Orleans with the force of a hurricane off the Gulf of Mexico," according to the narrator – ...eyes blazing and body popping, shaking his nerves and rattling his brain. [The white crooner] evidently didn't grow up by those rhythmic railroad tracks in Georgia. But then there wouldn't be rock'n'roll without white guys imitating black guys. Fortunately, the racial interaction – which, the series stresses, worked both ways – also led to Elvis Presley... and Buddy Holly. And to the Beatles... and the Rolling Stones... psychedelia and the Grateful Dead; glam rock... and Ziggy Stardust; punk; reggae; hip-hop; techno... and other developments that have left middle-aged white guys behind. *Dancing in the Street*... has already screened in Britain, American and A[US] and been acclaimed as the definitive small-screen history of the music. It's not perfect. The hotel-room-trashing opening sequence is silly. The narrator sounds stuffy and the narration gets overwrought: the torch of rock'n'roll is passed down by generation to generation through decades of revolution. - 1996

Generation X boogies on down to the 70s... More than 20 years after [an actor – who'd previously portrayed a teenager in a TV comedy series whose title included the phrase 'welcome back' –]danced his way to stardom wearing a white polyester suit in *Saturday Night Fever*, *Generation X* is discovering disco duds... Disco gear is making a fashionable return, though this time... there are more forgiving fabrics with a bit of give and stretch... What's fuelling the... [latest fad? Well, apart from] "public acceptance of synthetic fabrics,"... [all] signs point to... [recent] films such as *Boogie Nights* and *Ice Storm*... The 70s leisure suits, bell-bottom trousers and sequined halters could electrify a disco hall. Now they're back – and ready to party like it is 1979. [Having paraphrased 'party like it's 1999', it seems appropriate to mention that a number of 'tickets for Millennium 3 – held at the Auckland Town Hall on December 31st – were stolen. The organisers had to issue new tickets and check the numbers of existing tickets at the door.'

...'dance is an art form in which the human body in motion is the instrument of expression. It developed from prehistoric use of the medium in religious ritual and from natural use of the body to express emotion or enjoy rhythmic movement. The history of specific dance forms rests entirely on evidence supplied by the graphic arts, literary sources, tradition, and analogy from contemporary primitive dancing, because no means of recording a dance pattern was devised until recently when such a system, called labanotation, was invented. Primitive people used dancing as part of a dramatic attempt to win supernatural aid in hunting, making war, or growing crops; such dances were performed by groups, who often evolved specific dances and trained their successors. Hand clapping, drums or other simple instruments provided the rhythm. Although the dance is favorably mentioned in the Bible, it was neglected by the Christian Church, probably due to association with pagan rites. But the Greek religious use of the dance as a component of the drama evolved into the theatrical dance of modern times. There is no history of secular dance before the 16th cent., when the folk dancing long popular in the countryside was adapted to court entertainment, especially in France. It is as a form of entertainment that the dance has grown in importance. Not only are there virtuoso performances of social and ethnological dancing, dancing is an important component of motion picture and television productions, and solo dance and ballet are performed on the stage by companies of great artists'. Editor's note: The 'NZ Ballet Company was formed in 1954 by a former principal danseur with the Royal Danish Ballet. The danseur was at the time conducting a school of ballet in Auckland for the Regional Council for Adult Education. Support for the group was tenuous to say the least, and it would not have survived the 1950s had it not been for the personality and dedication of the danseur, who was the company's choreographer. A national ballet had first been talked about in 1947, when the government made bursary grants to young dancers to study and gain experience overseas. During this early post-war period there was a growth of interest in ballet spurred on by a number of visiting companies, notably the Borovansky Ballet and the AUSn National Ballet Company. Borovansky and other companies included NZers among their dancers. The interest in ballet peaked in 1959 when the Royal Ballet visited and drew enthusiastic and large audiences during a national tour. This enthusiasm led to the funding of the NZ company by the government-sponsored Arts Advisory Council from 1960. The ballet company has had varied success artistically and financially since that time, including periods when it was virtually defunct. Even for the most experienced and skilled, ballet is a precarious living in NZ.'

...*Ballet dances on knife-edge*... Government talk of closing the Royal N[Z Ballet (RNZB)] has left the company under a cloud as it fights for more funding. The Minister of Cultural Affairs... said the ballet had been having financial difficulties and closure was one of several options... [It] wanted the ballet put on a par with the N[ZSO], being funded directly from the Government rather than through annual Creative N[Z grants, but] did not like his chances. The debate about where the cultural dollar should be spent was further fuelled when the Associate Treasurer... [declined to] support extra money for the ballet or the orchestra until "fair and reasonable" funding was made available to Maori Kapa Haka groups. Maori culture was a drawcard for tourists and while [the associate treasurer] did not expect it to get the same amount as the ballet... [the Maori MP] wanted recognition of its value to the country. The funding issue has been sparked by a call from the ballet for an extra \$1 million a year to keep it afloat. It now receives \$1.8 million in funding... The ballet's general manager... said the 44-year-old company had looked at 18 possibilities, including closing, but... did not consider that an option. The present structure and size of the company was right for... [NZ's population,] although an extra \$1 million of funding was needed a year to allow the company to tour a balanced repertoire... [T]he company had pushed its box office and corporate sponsorships as far as it felt comfortable and the only way to make up the shortfall was through further Government funding. "The question is, do... N[Zers] want it and are they prepared to pay? It can't keep going on as it has been, it's been a hand-to-mouth existence." ...the present size and structure of the company could not be sustained and a smaller company would not have the same ability to draw box office sales and corporate sponsorship... [B]allet's 250,000-strong community had to let the politicians know that the ballet was delivering what the country wanted and should receive higher funding. The [person] known for years as the [feminine] half of Mr and Mrs Ballet... said... her husband[and itself] have had a 40-year association with the company. [It] is a former dancer and ballet mistress and her husband has been described as the finest... classical dancer [NZ masculinity] has ever produced. [It] said culture was being cut from all areas of society and... feared there would soon be nothing left.

...Ballet fans have a guaranteed programme into next year despite the R[NZB] battling for its future. The [general manager]... said the company had a programme arranged for the first three seasons in 1998 but could not afford to plan further ahead... [T]he company's 55 permanent employees had been kept up to date on the financial position and the options being considered. And while they realised there was uncertainty about the future, it was practice as usual yesterday as the company rehearsed *The Nutcracker*, which will tour the four main centres in December. The Creative N[Z chairperson]... said the agency was right behind the ballet's quest... [but] wants the Government to make the extra money available through the agency, not directly from Government... as suggested by the Cultural Affairs Minister...

Costs are under control. Sponsorship has increased fivefold since economic crisis last hit the R[NZB] in 1993. Income from box office is running at 50[%] of the total, a rate bettered in the western world only by the A[US]n Ballet, who take nearer 60[%], but operate within a much bigger population. Artistically our ballet company is looking very, very fine. But... [its general manager] is not at all surprised by the current economic crisis... The cycle of financial disaster has repeated itself like clockwork every five years since the 1960s... Any downturn in the economy is immediately reflected in the country's discretionary spending. Tough times at the box office have been compounded, this year, by competition from *Riverdance* and *Phantom of the Opera*... What is really needed, according to [the general manager], is backstop finance of around [7%] of the company's current annual expenses – to cushion economic fluctuations and smooth out the ebb and flow of artistic risk. The A[US]n Ballet

operates with just that sort of financial safety net. [The general manager] is adamant that on \$6 million the RNZB runs a very tight ship. While the... [NZSO] supports 95 well-paid musicians, the ballet company has just 32 dancers, who will receive an average of \$29,000 in wages in 1997. Just one person receives more than \$40,000 and the starting rate is \$22,000. The company has experimented in the past with a troupe of just 12 and then 18 dancers. The trials "proved conclusively" that 32 is the minimum number required to perform works like *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker*, the backbone of the repertoire. The salaries of other people in the organisation are also below market rates for the level of skills they have... and "nowhere near parity with the NZSO." ...Creative costs amount to... 56[%] of annual expenses. Administration costs are \$720,000 (12[%])... and sundries, such as bringing in guest teachers and storage costs for sets and costumes, amount to \$240,000... Of the creative costs, many are fixed by outside factors. Music costs, including hiring the well-funded NZSO, gobble up 18.5[% of the creative costs]... touring costs are also 18.5[% of sales] and marketing expenses are 23[%], theatre hire is 10[%] and equipment hire and other miscellaneous costs make up the remain[der]. "Ballet," says the general manager... "is by nature an expensive art form... But this company... certainly deserves its place and it should be treated appropriately. How that is done now is a political issue." ...[Unfortunately, for the RNZB, some politicians have] a vision for the future of Maori performing arts... A Maori theatre cutting across all tribal boundaries and with all forms of art including kapa haka would have a wider audience than orchestra or ballet, says a leading Maori entertainer... "While the ballet and the orchestra are viewed as national icons they are... not drawcards for overseas visitors because there are much better companies worldwide. It's not an icon, as far as I'm concerned, if it's only promoting a culture that has been imported." ...funding for such a project would prove to be a stumbling block... However... the... associate treasurer... [recently] highlighted the lack of funding for Maori culture and art... The bulk of funding for Maori art and culture comes from Te Waka Toi, the Maori arm of Creative NZ... In the meantime... the... Russians are coming. But[the Maori entertainer will only] need... a couple of heaters to repel this particular [cultural] invasion.

...The *Great Moscow Ice Show* is skating its way here for the first time. With a tent the size of two rugby fields, three 12m containers of costumes and props, and more ice-making machinery than you can shake a popsicle at, the entire logistical exercise alone is estimated to cost over \$4 million... [T]he other major challenge in transit involves people... 23 of the 36 performers [are] aged between 16 and 22... [The NZ] based coordinator, herself from Moscow, says... "You cannot even apply unless you have competed internationally. Those selected then go through three years of training in juggling, acrobatics, trapeze and skating. The talent of these youngsters is incredible – many of them come from a long line of circus and show performers and were practically born on the side of the rink,"... With five of the cast having been awarded the top Masters of Sports and plenty of others set to follow... Kiwi audiences are in for a frosty treat.

...[the husband] drove almost 200km to take his wife... to the *Great Moscow Ice Show* for her birthday – but all they got for their \$70 tickets was a glimpse of the big top through trees. The Whangarei couple and other disgruntled ticket-holders arrived at Western Springs yesterday to find the gates locked and the international extravaganza on ice axed without notice. "I am really peeved," said [the wife]. "We booked and paid for the show last week, [and have got] a hotel for the night as a treat for my 61st birthday. The least they could have done is tell us it was cancelled." The show opened in Auckland on September 26 and was due to run until next weekend before going to Wellington and Christchurch. But the 50-strong troupe of acrobats, jugglers and performers hung up their tights on Saturday and it is not known whether the show will go on. Representatives of the Moscow State Circus Company said bad weather had hindered door sales... and [made] the tent difficult to work in... [The person] contracted to do marketing and advertising, said it had rained every day... The 2000-strong crowd on opening night had been almost a full house, but sales had dwindled since... The decision to stop the show was made "very suddenly" on Saturday and an announcement was made over the radio that afternoon... But scores of contractors said they had withdrawn services because they had not been paid. They had hired a lawyer... [The promoter confirmed] the show was cancelled because... [an electrician who] was owed money... [had] cut the power... The company has assured ticket holders they will be refunded through Ticketek. A meeting yesterday of company representatives, lawyers and financial officers discussed whether the show could reopen in Auckland. The Auckland-based promoter... of Global Trade and Tourism, met officials at Paradise Ice Rink to discuss moving it there... [T]he all-new show, which cost \$4.5 million to put on in N[Z], will go to Wellington and Christchurch as planned before heading to Britain...

The seemingly jinxed fortunes of the *Great Moscow Ice Show* have taken a turn for the better. When the ice skating troupe ran out of money for motel rooms, Rotorua took them under its wing... Black Magic Coach tours and the Rotorua Maori Cultural Centre set out to give the 49 members a roof over their heads at the centre's marae, and the chance for rest and relaxation... The group's interpreter... said the sightseeing and sunshine during their stay had lifted the group's spirits... "Rotorua was just very lucky for us. We are very pleased." ...Last night the troupe thanked the town for its hospitality by giving an impromptu show – without ice or costumes – in... a theatre at the cultural centre... in... return for a \$5 koha [(donation)]... The skaters had performed 18 of 35 shows in Auckland and were paid for just seven, the promoters running into financial difficulties... The skaters' tour continues to Wellington and Christchurch later this week.

...When a major show... is cancelled it affects not just those who have bought tickets... [It was the NZ promoter]'s unfortunate task to announce the cancellation of... *Lord of the Dance*... [– due to the] illness... of... the... [show's] starring Celtic tap dancer... – ...on Sunday after almost a year's work... 75,000 tickets had been sold for the... season due to start on Wednesday, December 10... "It's a significant loss to the city... We were going to be the second-biggest-paid arena show in the country. We're currently running No 4 [behind Dire Straits, [Wacko – both of whom were promoted by his company Pacific Entertainment – and the '70s rock icon once known as Ziggy Stardust]]..." With such telephone-number finance riding on *Lord of the Dance* – ...\$6 million taken in ticket sales alone – it must have been tempting... simply to announce a postponement. Full cancellations such as this are a rarity. "Yes, it's rare, but the insurers have agreed that this is so uncertain it's better to be quite definitive about it. That doesn't mean to say we haven't and won't be inviting [the Celtic tap dancer] back to discuss an earliest-possible rescheduling." Outside of Pacific's financial commitment – for most of which... they have insurance – there were ancillary benefits for the city, which would have seen money from performers and visitors spent in restaurants, bars, and... on... souvenirs... and... accommodation... The... crew alone were taking 90 single hotel rooms "spread across two or three hotels"... Then there was venue hire, casual staff at the venue over the season, franchise holders for stalls, security staff, stage hands and lighting riggers, transport for the performers, cancellation of advertising, the refunding or transfer of tickets to other shows... such as... *Riverdance*, a similarly conceived Irish dance show (which used to star [the ill tap dancer]) which arrives in Auckland in March... "...at least there is *Riverdance* for those people for basically the same price..." ...[Pacific Entertainment's owner] has long been a promoter who believes one show helps sell another... But beyond the immediate demands of the audience exist all those ancillary industries affected... And [the promoter] also notes the stage for the show – the biggest in the country when it is completed – is still being built in West Auckland. "...With outriggers for sound and video it will cost \$200,000 to build... It is being built especially to the specifications of this show but is modular and therefore useable for other shows..."

...Last week... [the] star of the Celtic dance show, cancelled all N[Z] concerts... The cancellation leaves 77,000 ticketholders with... tickets... worth... \$69 and \$79 each... Pacific Entertainment said ticketholders would get their \$6 booking fee refunded on top of the ticket price... Alternatively ticketholders can swap their tickets... This came as cold comfort for [one] Aucklander... who went to Ticketek for a refund and was told it would take up to six months. "We then asked if we could get *Riverdance* tickets and pay the extra \$10 and they said it wasn't possible. We could get... tickets... [to see two piano players] in early March... but not *Riverdance*. We had to kick up a stink before they finally relented. They have our money and I'd like to know what they are going to be doing with the interest if it is going to take them six months to pay out." Ticketek... would not comment and referred the *Sunday Star-Times* to promoter Pacific Entertainment. Pacific Entertainment... [– which had already spent] about \$230,000 in advertising... – ...said it had made it clear through the media that all ticketholders were to send in their tickets to Ticketek with

their details. "The refunds will be processed as soon as possible. If that takes six months, then it takes six months. You have to remember there are about 75,000 of them." [However, the]Consumers Institute chief executive... said it was unacceptable for Ticketek to take six months to refund tickets. "All I can say is that we have 100,000 subscribers and I can get a magazine out in a month."

...Fans who bought tickets to *Lord of the Dance* shows in Auckland will be refunded within two weeks, Ticketek[']s sales and marketing manager... said yesterday. All seven concerts have been cancelled because the show's star... became ill late last month... with bronchial asthma... in Brisbane... [Incidentally, twisting], pogo-ing or just tripping the light fantastic can be dangerous for your health. Statistics for the year to June 30, just released, show 198 people received \$367,000 in accident compensation payments for injuries sustained on the dance floor. Overexertion in the lambada stakes cost the nation more than accidents in bungi jumping (\$11,000 for seven claims in the same period) and parachuting (\$186,000 for 39 would-be skydivers)... Rugby remains the number one sport for injuries, with \$5.6 million of new compensation payments to 5184 players. Professional rugby, which now faces steeper premiums because of its high risk, recorded 52 [ACC claims totalling] \$83,000 in the work-related category. But the new head of the Accident Rehabilitation and Compensation Insurance Corporation... was pleased with a \$1 million drop in new sports injury compensation claims to \$26 million... Dance injury payments [have also dropped from last year's] \$391,000 for 134 people.

...*Sore toes and TUTUS*... [are] not helping members of the R[NZB] in the days before *The Nutcracker* opens in the capital. The Christchurch and Dunedin seasons have been very successful but, at this point, everyone in the company is tired and just a bit flat. It has been a rough year. Administration staff have pushed through grinding months of negotiations for a different – as in secure – financial base. Now they can only wait for the results... But there is no peace in the lull. Opening night in the capital has inconveniently coincided with their moving date, out of the Telecom Dance Centre, home for the past eight years, into new premises next to the St James Theatre. The eyes of the admin staff look alternatively hysterical and glazed as they rush about. The dancers too are calling on reserves of energy. A couple of weeks on tour, three up in each motel room to save money, on top of the unrelenting routine of class, rehearsal and notes, warm-up and performance, and the same again the next day and the day after, is not a glamorous experience. In the dancers' gloomy quarters in the Opera House a distinct odour of wintergreen, from liberally applied liniments, pervades the air. There has been an outbreak of ankle injuries because, [the]ballet master... suspects, of the heavy load of pointe work in *The Nutcracker*. "The relevés [repeated upthrusts on to the toes] of the Snowflakes... are full on!" ...[the guy] who dances the Nutcracker role, lies in the carpeted aisle of the Opera House, rolling about on a wooden massage roller, while... [waiting] to be called into rehearsal, indicating it is not only the girls who are feeling sore... [The master] is also busier than usual with a stageful of children, 18 altogether, from local ballet schools, who form two groups, performing alternate nights. The children, different in each city, are all marvellous, [the master insists as it schools the mice]... "...pick up your feet... Now, where's the other one? Lost behind the curtain? Come forward second mouse. Three big steps forward, not... one... Make it look... as if you travel forward the same distance as you go up. That is not quite what happens. But that is the illusion... it is all illusion." - 1997

My sister took her six-year-old son to the ballet and as [the son] watched the performers dance around on the tips of their toes, [it] asked his mum quite loudly: 'Why don't they just get taller people to dance?' ...[■] Dancers go through at least two pairs of pointe shoes a week, at \$100 a pair.

...*What is your least favourite body part?* [...]...my feet are the worst. I have terrible bunions from all that dancing... I have arthritis in my toes and I'm in pain a lot...['] But such dedication is vital in the competitive world of dancesport, as revealed in the new television series *Battle of the Ballroom*... Dancers... practise so intensely they see more of each other than they do of their own families... [● A] Wellington ballerina... is taking her final curtain call in Auckland this week after 12 years with the R[NZB]. Her last performance with our national company is in... *Seven Deadly Sins*, which runs at the Aotea Centre from tonight until Sunday. The 31-year-old, who took her first dance steps as a toddler, has decided to call it quits after a back injury... [received while portraying] the... Sugar Plum Fairy... [in] *The Nutcracker*... last year... continued to trouble her... The contemporary *Seven Deadly Sins* programme has seen her hang up her pointe shoes and tutu in favour of street shoes and a black trouser suit... "I've always enjoyed the fact that we've done both traditional ballet and contemporary works. You always have to keep doing that or you stagnate, and we're doing a lot more contemporary ballets... [although] surveys show the majority of audiences still prefer traditional ballet."

...*Dancing in sin in a surreal wasteland* Being a choreographer is a mug's game, [one] says of his task of turning R[NZB] classical dancers into contemporary performers for *The Seven Deadly Sins*. "Any other creative artist – a painter, a poet, designer or novelist – can create their own work in their own time, but a choreographer can't because you have to start working at a certain date, do the work from 9 till 5, and have people stand around watching you do it. How contrary is that to the romantic vision of the creative spirit?" [The choreographer] felt a lot of pressure in the lead-up... because [it] had only five weeks to temporarily undo the dancers' classical training and to choreograph the dance, which meant staying till late at night in the studio working out steps for the next day. It's a whole new vocabulary for dancers accustomed to learning standard steps and assembling them into a ballet, [the choreographer] says. Classical ballet demands a vertical spine and is very formal compared with the dives, rolls, stabs and the element of touch which [the choreographer] incorporates. One morning, when... beg[inning] with the dancers using massage, [the choreographer] realised that for many of them it was the first time they'd had physical contact with each other... While the seven sins of pride, envy, anger, lust, avarice, gluttony and sloth can be deadly, [the choreographer] has given each a positive slant as the work traces a universal search for humanity and grace... In this interpretation of a classic story, where Anna travels through America in pursuit of money to build a home, the work has been relocated in a surreal post-apocalyptic wasteland. Passages from a requiem by 17th-century composer Heinrich Schutz are woven into the main score... Dancers will wear clothes from [a]Dunedin designer... with whom [the choreographer] collaborated in his work *The Long Undressing*... As part of *The Seven Deadly Sins* season the company will also perform the lyrical *Protecting Veil*, by the Sydney Dance Company's [choreographer].

...It was meant to be a simple survey about the positive and negative aspects of learning ballet. But some of the answers given by 40 teachers and students to questions asked by [an]Auckland ballet teacher... have had the dance industry, if you'll excuse the pun, in a spin. Claims emerged of glass splinters being put in a dancer's shoes and a young ballerina pushed down the stairs by a rival's mother. [The] research also found some aspiring young ballerinas suffered from lack of self-esteem and felt pressured into losing weight. Those findings were acclaimed as ground-breaking at the Dance and Child International conference in Canada, where [the Aucklander] had been invited to speak. But after they were reported on the front page of the *N[Z] Herald*, there was a huge backlash from other N[Z] teachers. So just what is the truth? Is ballet really a breeding ground for anorexics, swarming with bully teachers and pushy mothers? Apparently, the answer to that depends on who you talk to – and the *N[Z] Gals'* *Weekly* found it hard to get anyone to actually talk to us about it. The ballet world had closed ranks. Several people agreed initially, then changed their minds, including [the Auckland teacher] herself. "I've talked about it so much I feel overwhelmed," [it] said, after being quoted in newspapers here and overseas and speaking on radio to... the BBC. [The Aucklander] added that, while [it] felt some of her findings, particularly the story about the glass in the ballet shoes, had been overplayed, [the ballet teacher] was standing by what [it'd said. The Aucklander] just didn't want to say any more. Next we approached the Auckland Ballet Teachers' Group, which, according to newspaper reports, was furious about [the study. One teacher said it]... didn't want to be quoted due to previous "media misrepresentation" but would fax through a press release. The eight-line release said, while the group accepted there must always be room for constructive criticism within the ballet industry, it refused to take seriously the finding of the study and had written to [its author], asking her to "justify applying her study's findings to N[Z] ballet schools as a whole". The press release was accompanied by a three-page document written by... [the] secretary of the Credo Society, which attacked [the

author's methods of, and reasons for, compiling her research. It used words like spurious, shoddy, farcical, flawed, pitiful, confused, meaningless, biased, contrived... you get the idea. Still none the wiser about the whole ballet debate, we thought we'd try the pupils. The first one we approached, a 16-year-old would-be professional ballerina, said [it]'d be happy to talk, including about the time her shoes were sabotaged. Then [the 16-year-old] phoned back. Sorry, her teacher didn't think it was a good idea. Next attempt: a 15-year-old also keen on a career in ballet. [The 15-year-old] agreed to talk on condition her real name wasn't used. Call me Giselle... Okay, Giselle, so what is the ballet world really like? "I think it depends on the ballet school you go to and who your teacher is... The school I'm at now is cool – they don't pressure you too much. The teachers are a bit harder on the ones who really want to do ballet professionally but I think they need to be. You've got to have the discipline if you want to succeed. At the last school I was at, there was a teacher who gave diet sheets to the girls [it] thought needed to lose weight. [That teacher also] had a few favourites and tended to make everyone else feel useless compared to them. But the other teachers were okay." Giselle reckons it's pushy mothers who are the real problem. "My mum's cool – [mum]'s never cared how well I do in exams or competitions as long as I enjoy myself. But some of the mothers are really demanding and make their daughters feel bad if they don't do very well. One... once said something really nasty about another girl being fat and everyone, including that girl, heard." Meanwhile Kelly (not her real name – [it] also wanted to be anonymous) reckoned ballet was largely responsible for her anorexia. "I might have been that way inclined anyway because I'm quite image-conscious but, when I was 13, my ballet teacher told me I could do with losing weight," said Kelly, who is 1.68m and then weighed about 62kg. [Kelly] cut out junk food and lost... 4kg. "But I couldn't lose any more. Then I got sick and ended up going down to just under 50kg. When I went back to school, everyone said I looked terrible. When I went back to ballet, everyone said I looked great." Kelly (now in her twenties and no longer dancing)... added, "If you want to do ballet professionally you need to be thin. You can't have a chubby ballerina – it's like having a short basketball player. If you're just doing it for fun, your weight is not so important but some girls do feel uncomfortable being in a class with thin girls and seeing themselves in the mirror alongside them." ...The final word goes to a group of pupils at the Auckland West Dance Academy, aged from eight to 11. So why do they do ballet? "Because it's fun," they chorus. What if it wasn't fun any more? They all manage one of those ask-a-silly-question looks. "Then we wouldn't do it," they say. Simple really.

...[a British m]odel... aged 23, married [a salesperso]n... 28, after winning a radio station competition for people prepared to tie the knot at first sight. In defence of this tasteless piece of marketing, the station argued that they were a "touchy-feely" pair who were clearly happy with "the physical side of each other." Apparently they were not touchy-feely enough because the answer to the question on everyone's lips was no, the marriage was not consummated on the wedding night.

...THE TWO strangers who met and married on the same day are embarking on a new life in a new city and are amazed more people don't share marital happiness. A... *Reader's Digest*... survey shows more than a quarter of [gals] and 18% of [guys] wake up wishing they were not married.

...this week... [the] marketing manager of Hamilton radio station The Edge... said the promotion – Two Strangers and a Wedding – was not part of a ratings war. However... the radio research manager at Research International, confirmed that... its twice-yearly... ratings survey was being done in the Waikato. Church leaders have condemned the wedding for trivialising marriage, and station staff yesterday closed ranks after the identity of the groom was made public before Friday's hotel ceremony. A 31-year-old Hamilton glazier... yesterday proposed by phone to [a]28-year-old... on the station's breakfast show. "I would love to be your wife," said the mystery bride, who has her hens' night tonight... The groom's parents, sister and three best friends selected the bride, which has prompted comparisons with arranged marriages in Asian cultures. "[90%] of marriages in the Eastern world work," [the marketing manager said. "50% of Western world] people get divorced today and we thought we could make this work." A retired Presbyterian minister and talkback host... will officiate at the wedding, and security is expected to be tight. The 72-year-old acknowledged initial unease about his assignment, but said the wedding would go ahead with or without him. [The minister] insisted the couple accept counselling from him afterwards. "This couple are anyway probably a lot better prepared than many of those I have married over the years."

...It just got stranger and stranger. In Hamilton yesterday, when strangers... exchanged vows as part of a controversial win-a-wife competition run by The Edge radio station, many of the guests were also unknown to the newlyweds. [A]Tauranga mother-of-two... was one of 15 people to win double tickets to the wedding, and even took a present. [The mother-of-two] says it has been wonderful listening to the on-air romance – "we feel like we know them" – and... did not feel uncomfortable attending the wedding of a couple [it] did not know. Many more thousands caught the ceremony live on radio, television or via the Internet in what is expected to be a ratings winner for the organisers. The celebrity couple have the option of sleeping in separate honeymoon suites at a Rotorua hotel tonight before jetting to Venice for a week-long honeymoon on Monday. [The groom], who shook his fiancée's hand when [it] joined him at the altar, describes his new wife as gorgeous. "I couldn't ask for anything better." The bride... admits [it] is an impulsive person. "It's just probably in the last few months I've decided I'd like to find a lifelong partner – and here [that partner] is." Her parents... say they are comfortable with their daughter's decision. They already have one grandchild and are hopeful of more "further down the track" as a result of the new union... [The m]arriage celebrant... likened the bride and groom to a blind couple who knew each other only through their voices. [The celebrant] told the congregation that millions of people in the world relied on their parents to make the right marriage choice for them. The Edge breakfast show co-host... said [it] would be disappointed if the marriage failed – "when you work so hard for it."

...What's love got to do with it? With many [gals] finding it harder to convince [guys] to "buy the cow" and take their place at the wedding altar, it is timely to see radio using a bit of ingenuity to bring Kiwi couples together in wedded bliss, sight unseen. Actually, this is not a uniquely N[Z] idea because the same gimmick was attempted in Britain... Needless to say, th[at] marriage didn't work. [The groom] had specified a tall, blond, beautiful, sporty type but hadn't reckoned on the whole package – in her case a pretty face housing a non-stop gob. [The bride] didn't realise her tall, dark, handsome, sporty type would sit around watching TV all day, drinking and belching in time to the advertisements. Unlike our prudish Kiwi couple, there was absolutely no talk of separate bedrooms on the honeymoon, and while the bedsprings were creaking and the cash prize being spent, all went smoothly. The stunt – which is exactly what it was for the radio station involved – was skin off nobody's back, except the two mugs involved. Once [the groom] was sleeping on the couch they ended up realising they had little in common and went their separate ways.

...The omens are not good for the couple who married in a Hamilton radio promotion... without having previously met. A stunt radio marriage arranged in Britain... ended in tears three months later with the groom accused of cheating on his new wife. And the couple in a similar marriage in A[US] split after only two months, with the first signs of distaste between bride and groom appearing on their Paris honeymoon. Both weddings were condemned by church and community leaders, but proved winners in the publicity ratings for the radio stations... [One of them,] a Birmingham radio station... set up... a wedding... [between a salesperso]n... aged 28, and [a]wannabe model... 23... The pair, who were picked from 200 hopefuls by a panel of relationship counsellors, including an astrologer, were followed by cameras to their Bahamas honeymoon and within days the strain was showing. [The bride] apparently refused to consummate her marriage until [it] got to know her husband. H[er husband] wasn't too happy about this. The strain was evident when the pair returned, smiling just a little less brightly, from their sunny honeymoon to the apartment they had to live in for at least a year in wintry Birmingham... A Sunday newspaper reported that [the husband] had had an affair with a dental nurse, and his new wife walked out. [The AUS]ns... initially gushed about the attractions of their new partners as they exchanged their vows just moments after meeting. But the flight to Paris for their honeymoon, 24 hours jammed together, proved just a bit too much. "The atmosphere became a bit stressful," [the bride] told the... newspaper. "My humour tends to be pretty sarcastic and [my husband] was not always appreciative."

...six strangers... will have the eyes of the world on them when they shack up together in a Wellington apartment. [Imitating a Scandinavian idea, t]he Edge radio station is locking up... [the six strangers from] Hamilton... Rotorua... Wellington... Christchurch... [and Dunedin, who are aged between] 18... and... 32... in their new \$5 million home at the Terrace Apartments at 6am tomorrow. Video cameras in the lounge, kitchen and bedrooms will broadcast their every move live over the internet. At stake in the radio contest is a \$10,000 cash prize. Each Monday, votes from the internet site and telephone voting lines are collated and the person with the least votes is booted out of the apartment. The last "Inmate" living there wins the cash... [In related news, t]he Ministry of Commerce [is facing] a multimillion-dollar lawsuit from radio stations which claim that rival stations broadcasting from the Sky Tower are drowning out their programmes. Furious FM stations which use the Waiatarua transmitter in the Waitakere Ranges... and the Ministry of Commerce, which authorised the Sky Tower as an alternative broadcasting site despite warnings about potential problems, will meet tomorrow. [The]... chief engineer of the Radio Network... said they... [had] been writing to the ministry in vain for a year seeking to have the power levels lowered before the... stations [that were switching to the Sky Tower] went to air... Hundreds of angry listeners have complained that they can... hear horrific crackling the closer they get to the Sky Tower. Some television sets are also getting interference...

Angry independent radio stations have condemned the Government's announcement of a non-commercial youth network, saying it placed their own futures under serious doubt... [L]ast night, the chair[perso]n of Mai FM... said... the... news... came as a "devastating blow," while... student radio station bFM blasted the move as a cynical ploy by National to grab the youth vote... But... [the] Government insisted the non-commercial youth network would boost the N[Z] music industry here and overseas... National's initiative includes the establishment of a music industry forum... to promote the development of N[Z] music... and an FM frequency for National Radio... [The PM] said in Auckland yesterday that the youth radio network and music forum would be more fruitful than the "dead hand of regulation" which some parties such as Labour proposed in the name of quotas... The youth station... could cost up to \$2 million to set up, although industry insiders insist more taxpayer money would be needed to make it work. [The PM] also pledged to give the industry forum \$200,000 a year of taxpayers' money... [The Mai FM chairperson] said: "Regardless of whether it is commercial or non-commercial, it will take listeners away from us. For a political party that embraces free enterprise, to take on the private sector in this way is quite unacceptable. Mai FM is a small, under-resourced company owned by Ngati Whatua. We have fought for seven years to achieve our position as the number one music station in Auckland, specifically in the youth market. This move not only threatens the company but the jobs of young Maori broadcasters and others." ...The chair[perso]n of the Radio Broadcasters Association... [also] accused National of doing a... free market... u-turn... RadioWorks Networks, which embraces The Rock FM, Solid Gold FM, Radio Pacific and The Edge were equally scathing. The managing director of RadioWorks... branded it a "ridiculous waste of taxpayer resources" and a duplication of stations already in the marketplace... N[Z] already had 68 youth-targeted stations... [The managing director] accused the Government and older music industry figures of meddling in an area they knew little about... The Government would be better to release additional frequencies on to the open market and let operators complete the development of their own networks across the country... [I]n May, the Minister of Communications... had stressed that National did not believe in distorting a level playing field. The minister had added that [it] was pleased the party had headed off a suggestion about a youth radio network. The commercial radio industry in N[Z] "embraced free enterprise," employing 1500 people, had 160 member stations and an annual turnover of \$170 million, said the minister. ■ 'The Ministry of Commerce estimates that in 1996 165 radio stations were broadcasting separate programmes on a continuous basis, compared with 64 in 1988. Of these, 122 were privately-owned, compared with 30 in 1988. New radio formats have emerged throughout the country, including classic hits, easy listening, country music and talkback stations. The Independent Broadcasters Association based in Auckland represents the private companies which operate independent radio stations. There are 54 members with stations in all metropolitan and provincial markets. Stations include both locally operated and network operations. News and sport are provided by Independent Radio News (IRN), based in Auckland. The Crown has reserved AM radio frequencies and UHF television frequencies throughout the country for use by non-commercial broadcasters. AM frequencies have been reserved in all communities with populations of 10,000 or more. Broadcasters may have access to reserved spectrum for non-profit community purposes. In each case, a licence is allocated upon application to an appropriate community organisation which is responsible for ensuring that all interested groups have access to airtime on the frequency. Use of reserved frequencies is restricted to non-profit activities. Access stations provide airtime on a non-profit basis to a range of minority groups in the community. At present there are eight access radio stations operating in NZ. All have been assisted in providing access to minority community groups by funding from NZ On Air (which in 1992/93 was \$1.8m')...

The Government is expected to throw out a Waitangi Tribunal finding that Maori have ownership rights over radio frequencies. But Maori leaders say dismissing the judgment would be seen by the rest of the world as denying a partnership with Maori people. The... tribunal has defended its majority finding – which has held up the sale of mobile communications radio frequencies – as necessary to protect the Maori language. However, it is understood the Government believes the decision must be blocked, as it could open up the way for claims on everything from genetic engineering discoveries to oil and gas reserves... The... Minister for Treaty Negotiations... told Parliament that "the issue is really whether the electro-magnetic spectrum was a valid taonga in 1840." ...[a Maori] Professor said... "The radio spectrum was a resource that existed before 1840 and still exists. The difference is we have found the technology to use that resource in a certain way. It was part of the reality which is subject to a treaty." ...Maori would probably want to have management of parts of the radio spectrum for themselves or joint ventures with the Crown... The Government is expected to rely heavily on the minority judgment... [which] finds the treaty is "a partnership, not a marriage." Therefore... the Crown does not have to share every natural or [hu]manmade asset, regardless of whether it is specifically listed in the treaty or not.

...The Waitangi Tribunal finding that Maori are entitled to a share of the airwaves reflects the principles of the treaty and has nothing to do with whether the airwaves were known in 1840, says... a lecturer in history at the University of Auckland... Asinine anti-tribunal arguments that the electromagnetic spectrum was unknown in 1840 lack grace. They seek to deny developments beneficial to Maori while ignoring others considerably more beneficial to Pakeha. Few 1840 Maori envisaged that signing the treaty would result in three million Pakeha living on nearly all of their land... The Treaty of 1840 was an agreement to share the then known resources and, by implication, those resources that at a later time would subsequently become available. Let's share the airwaves.

Radio was foreshadowed when James Clerk Maxwell predicted the existence of electromagnetic waves mathematically in 1864, and such waves were produced in 1884 by Heinrich R. Hertz. The first practical use of radio was by Marconi, 1895[(the Italian 'wanted it to bring peace, but his wireless was pressed into operation by all sides during WW1 – and, as a consequence, his company prospered; giving him wealth and fame, before consuming his life and family). 5 years after his initial success, other scientists were still puzzled by what appeared to defy their laws of the universe.']Sir John Fleming's invention of the vacuum tube, 1904, and Lee De Forest's invention of the triode tube, 1906, laid the scientific groundwork for the present widespread use of radio for communication and entertainment. The first commercial radio broadcasting station was KDKA Pittsburgh...

1903 [NZ's]Wireless Telegraphy Act authorised the Government to establish stations to receive and transmit messages by the newly discovered method of wireless telegraphy. The Act was so worded that further developments (such as radio broadcasting) were anticipated, giving the government the power to license future use of the airwaves... 1922... [The] owner of the International Electric Co in Wellington, a radio parts dealer, initiated a series of broadcasts to promote sales. [Two months later,] Radio Services Ltd in Auckland began broadcasting, essentially for commercial reasons. Retail customers were attracted by the novel idea... 1923... The Post and Telegraph Department issued a set of Regulations for

Broadcasting. Program content was strictly defined. There had to be a high proportion of local artists, advertising was totally prohibited and religion was to be emphasised during specific times on Sunday. A licence fee was set at 5/-... On Apr 1, 1925, a government scheme to unify existing licensed broadcasters into a national service was implemented. The receiver's licence fee was increased six-fold to 30/- a year, largely to finance administration. There was widespread dissatisfaction among listeners, who demanded a corresponding improvement in program content. On Aug 30, the Radio Broadcasting Co of N[Z] assumed control of the four metropolitan stations acquired under the scheme, with the first formal transmission taking place from a newly installed station at the N[Z] and South Seas Exhibition in Dunedin on Nov 17... Station 1YA in Auckland began broadcasting with a new 500-watt transmitter, a year after the intended starting date... [A month later] 3YA in Christchurch began broadcasting... from temporary studios in an old dance hall... Registered licence holders were increasing at a rate of 15,000 a month... 1927... Station 1YA arranged a program which enabled telephone callers to ask the announcer... questions about international affairs, which [were] then answered and discussed with them. In essence, this was the principle of what was to become known in the 1970s as "talkback"... Station 2YA Wellington, with a transmitting power of 5,000 watts, was opened... [in the same year]... The company's first provincial station, 2YB New Plymouth, was opened in partnership with the North Taranaki Radio Society on Apr 27, 1929. The [company] ceased operations on Dec 31, 1931, its function passing to the N[Z] Broadcasting Board, a government-appointed body... In a notorious incident, a [1935 broadcast by a reverend] from Station 1ZB in Auckland was "jammed" in an effort to prevent what the Government feared would be comment that might prejudice its chances in the forthcoming election... [The following year] 1ZB opened as the first station in the... newly elected Labour Government[']s... new government-owned commercial network. The network was extended in 1937 with the opening of 2ZB Wellington... 3ZB Christchurch... and 4ZB Dunedin... Commercial radio brought an upsurge in the volume of recorded serials... Personalities multiplied with the development... "Aunt Daisy's" program... was a major marketing influence throughout NZ... for... 25 years... 1943 For political and administrative convenience, the... National Broadcasting Service (non-commercial) [- set up in 1936 -]and Commercial networks were combined as a single organisation... [which, in 1946.] was renamed the N[Z] Broadcasting Service (NZBS), and... [after starting] television demonstrations in... 1959... [and introducing a] television licence fee of £4 a year... became the [NZ Broadcasting Corp in 1962]... 1964 The NZBC established a Maori program section... [and the following year] established the Overseas Program Exchange... supplying broadcast material of an indigenous nature to radio stations and organisations in various countries... 1966... [Auckland's Radio Hauraki] began "pirate" transmissions from a vessel... safely beyond the limits of legal retaliation... 1968... Radio and television licences were combined. The fee was \$16... The Broadcasting Authority was created to hear submissions and grant licences to radio stations in this year... 1971... The radio licence was abolished. The television licence fee was set at \$20... In Apr, 1975, NZBC ceased to exist and its functions were divided between T[V1, TV2] and Radio N[Z, though]... South Pacific Television (TV2) [eventually] ceased operating as a separate organisation and became the alternative channel of [TVNZ]... In a further administrative reorganisation on Feb 1, 1977, the Broadcasting Corporation of N[Z came into being and in]... place of the Broadcasting Authority, the industry's watchdog and caretaker functions were assumed by a Broadcasting Tribunal... 1973... NZ's television network changed over to colour transmissions... The colour licence fee was \$35... [In 1975 a] colour television licence... cost \$45, B&W \$27.50]. The fee was collected by the NZ Post Office until the late 1980s, when this task was transferred to a new agency called NZ On Air (NZOA). This transfer coincided with the setting up of a privately owned TV channel - TV3 - which 'started broadcasting on Nov. 26, 1989'].

The broadcasting fee needs to rise by \$25 a head to prevent local television and radio programmes from becoming an "endangered species," NZ[OA] says. The... present \$110 fee, [has remained] unchanged since 1989...

Despite growing use of television and radio content on local Internet sites, N[ZOA] is refusing to open its funding doors to Web developers. [The person] who runs the Radio N[Z] Web site (www.rnz.co.nz), described the situation as "moribund,"... "At the end of the day, it is exactly the same microphones and cameras used on television and radio to create content which we are transferring across to the Internet... My lawyers and the NZ[OA] lawyers disagreed with the interpretation of the Broadcasting Act to cover the Internet as a broadcast medium... [but the] delivery method shouldn't matter. The simple fact that we are using this technology to reach a far wider audience both locally and internationally should be supported,"... Another Web site developer... said NZ[OA] needed "to move into the new millennium[- NZOA] is sitting on its hands while the initiatives to place cultural, educational and entertainment-driven content on the Internet are passing them by,"... The... Broadcasting Act, [which was] first drafted in the 20s, has not been amended since 1989, well before the arrival of digital networking technology... [and, therefore,] specifically excludes alpha-numeric text in its definition of programming... [making it also] debatable if it can be successfully applied to streaming of audio and video material... A spokes[person] for the Minister of Broadcasting... told the... *Herald*: "There are no immediate plans for any changes to the terms of reference for funding in this area. However, there is a watching brief on emerging technologies to see if... changes are warranted."

...ITS VERY NAME IS LIKE A RELIC OF THE Cold War, dusted off and given an Asian sheen. Radio Free Asia, the U.S. government program beaming news and commentary with a pro-democracy flavor into countries like North Korea and Burma, sounds a bit like cranking up a Victrola in the age of WebTV. Yet the strains emitted from this radio network haven't exactly evoked a sense of sweet nostalgia among leaders of the... authoritarian regimes that prefer to orchestrate what information their citizens access... North Korea's Central News Agency condemned the broadcast as "sinister ideological and cultural infiltration," and a Chinese foreign ministry spokes[person] complained: "This action of the U[S] seriously violates the norms of international relations." This is in fact all too normal in East-West relations - and precisely what R[FA]'s supporters in Washington have in mind. After all, it was the program's ancestors, Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, that inspired U.S. lawmakers to redirect the rhetoric toward Asia. If that tactic worked in bringing down communism in Europe, they argue, why not try it in Asia? Better a radio program, says [one member of Congress], than a threat to withdraw most-favored nation trading status, a U.S. negotiating stance that especially irritates China... "The fact that the broadcasts are burrs under the saddles of unelected governments should not concern us greatly. We have to remember that what we want to do is improve our relationship with the people living in repressive societies in that part of the world." It was Beijing's 1989 crackdown on the Tiananmen Square democracy movement that first triggered interest in turning a tool of the Cold War against the Soviet bloc into a means of infiltrating some of the world's most tightly controlled societies: North Korea, China, Vietnam, Burma and Laos. The idea attracted bi-partisan support in Washington from the onset, yet it would be seven years before RFA's first broadcast, a Mandarin program, hit the airwaves last September. Apparent agreement of the ends quickly ran into disputes over the means. The U.S. already funded Voice of America; some in the State Department felt that creating another program was needlessly confrontational. VOA feared it would lose influence and, more importantly, financial backing - in an era of shrinking foreign-affairs budgets. Both programs survive, however, with RFA's staff of 65 in Washington now broadcasting in Mandarin, Tibetan, Burmese, Vietnamese and Korean. Programs for Cambodia and Laos are to be added later this year... Associating with RFA is no doubt a dangerous proposition, so much so that... a prominent Chinese journalist who was jailed for a year after the Tiananmen crackdown, backed out when [it] learned the program would... not... be called... the more benign name originally proposed, Asia Pacific Network... One Hanoi dissident who has contributed commentaries cannot be reached at all. The telephone company told his family it was ordered to cut their phone line... Predictably, the program has had its own internal controversy... and... RFA administrators are worried they will be infiltrated by double-agents working in Beijing. In addition, the network rarely has on-the-scene reports, but instead relies on wire services. Surprisingly, RFA's news content is not always flattering to the U.S. One report in Vietnamese, for example, talked of the lingering

effects of Agent Orange... Whether what they have to say is heard by anyone is unclear. Vietnam concedes that it is jamming the broadcasts and, indeed, the signal has been difficult to pick up in Hanoi. RFA officials insist the signal is getting through, although they acknowledge it is weak. "The first day it came through clear," reports a listener in Dalat. "The second day, there was nothing." Says... [the] general director of the Vietnam News Agency: "We have a lot of experience with jamming. First during the French war. Then during the American war. So we are quite capable." [Ironically,] Vietnam's loud protests have had the unintentional effect of stimulating interest among people who otherwise might not have known the program even existed. "Anything the government criticizes like this must be quite interesting," says a 31-year-old scientist in Hanoi. But in Beijing, there seems to be less of a buzz. Observes a liberal intellectual: "We are already getting VOA and BBC. We can even get onto the Internet. Starting this new radio will only make Beijing more angry and intolerant. They might just jam these other sources of information." Broadcasts into China are apparently not being jammed, and listeners in Burma have said they can hear the program. Transmission has been hampered, however, by a key technical problem: neighboring countries aren't letting RFA use their radio transmitters, so the broadcasts are being relayed from Saipan and the Pacific island of Palau. Even Thailand, which was given a \$5 million transmitter by the U.S. government last August, is not handling RFA, although it has a long-standing agreement to relay VOA's signal. RFA's... executive editor... curiously insists that his service never asked to use the transmitter, probably because Thailand would have refused, as it would have extracted too high a political cost in its fragile relations with China, Vietnam and other neighbors. Is [RFA] here to stay? That will depend on whether it is perceived to be working, whether Congress will keep paying its \$10 million annual tab and whether it survives geopolitical horse-trading. "The better Sino-U.S. relations become, the worse the situation for [RFA]," says a Washington source. "There will be a series of high-level visits this year. The Chinese could propose to the Americans, 'You close that radio station and show goodwill and we'll reciprocate.' The U[S] just may do it." U.S. diplomats in Hanoi have been hampered in efforts to open an information centre, as their Vietnamese counterparts complain that RFA makes government leaders wary of U.S. motives. Says... a government spokes[person]...: "What the [US] could not do with their B-52s and bombs they try to do with their lies and negative information."

...Westinghouse Electric Corp, moving to bolster its CBS Radio network, said on Friday it has agreed to buy 98 stations from American Radio Systems Corp for \$US1.6 billion... in cash and the assumption of \$1 billion in debt. The deal would make CBS one of the U[S]'s largest radio broadcasters with 175 stations, and the top station owner in revenues with \$1.4 billion in annual sales.

...N[Z]'s largest radio company, The Radio Network, is to shed about 130 staff over the next eighteen months. Most will go from provincial areas as the company moves to improve profitability. The cuts were confirmed by... TRN's major shareholder, the A[US]n Radio Network.

...[T]he Radio Network, is considering shedding up to a dozen provincial stations to refocus on its main markets and existing brands. TRN said yesterday it was talking to several groups about the possible sale of 12 stations from Tokoroa to Oamaru. Among stations being considered for sale are two that it has been required by the Government to keep on air as part of a "Kiwishare" deal intended to stop small communities being deprived of a local station. The stations, Radio Waitomo in Te Kuiti and King Country Radio in Taumarunui, were part of the Radio N[Z] commercial network acquired last year by a consortium including Wilson and Horton, and are the only local stations operating in their respective areas. TRN's acting chief executive... said the company had cleared the possible sale with the Government. Any deal would mean the "Kiwishare" obligations would shift to the new owner... TRN has already shed four low-rating stations this year and has signalled that it does not intend to renew its lease of the 1476AM frequency in Auckland, at present being used for airport radio, when it runs out next month. The latest sales would leave it with about 40 stations, mostly in metropolitan and big provincial areas. [The acting chief executive] said the network did not expect to slim any further. The remaining stations were still "very much the critical mass we were looking for,"... Potential buyers will not be required to use TRN's news, sport and advertising services, although... the company was keen to strike such deals. The Radio Pacific chair[person]... confirmed his company might be interested in buying three of the stations, in Taupo, Wanganui and Gisborne. Wanganui is one of the gaps in the talkback station's network. Its subsidiary, Energy Enterprises, might also be interested in expanding into Gisborne and acquiring another station in Taupo... However, it is questionable whether the Commerce Commission would allow the group to buy the Taupo and Wanganui stations, given its decision not to allow TRN to purchase Fifeshire FM Broadcasters in Nelson. Radio Otago, which has recently consolidated in the South Island, is expected to be among the bidders for the South Island stations. TRN's chair[person]... said last month that revenue had not been as good from the radio assets as Wilson and Horton would have liked because of the tough advertising market. But efforts to trim costs were going according to plan.

...Sponsorship for National Radio and Concert FM, and increasing automation at Concert FM, are being considered by a... team[of]... Treasury officials and Radio N[Z] board members... reviewing... future funding of RNZ, which receives \$19.4 m... from the public broadcasting fee... The review was instigated by the minister responsible for RNZ... The... Crown Company Monitoring Advisory Unit... has engaged the Advertising Agencies Association to look at sponsorship on [both stations]... Advertising on National Radio and Concert FM is not allowed under RNZ's charter, but low levels of sponsorship have already been used on Concert FM ('NZ's only fine music network') to help fund an opera series... A team member and senior adviser for the... advisory unit... said it was important that sponsorship did not detract from National Radio's strengths of impartiality and objectivity. But commercial radio operators see the move as state radio encroaching on their advertising base... [T]he Radio Broadcasters Association, said the idea was crazy. "The whole purpose of public radio is to provide programmes that otherwise would not be broadcast... [- due to their limited public appeal (][such as] the opera series) - then make every TV and radio owner pay for them via the NZOA fee.]"

...Taxpayers are to pay \$12 million towards Maori broadcasting in the next six months but no one is saying how the money will be used. The Government's Economic and Fiscal Update... also promises that \$17 million will be spent each year after that... A spokes[person] for the Minister of Communications... [and one for] the Minister of Maori Affairs... [both] said a key issue that had to be resolved was to assess what "arrangements are necessary in order to ensure commitment to Maori language programming, acceptability to Maori generally and accountability for the expenditure of public funds." ...News of the broadcast funds come just months after allegations that directors of Aotearoa Television News went on spending sprees. The [less-than-one-year-old] channel went off air in July and was wound up in the High Court, at Auckland, in September. The promised spending on Maori broadcasting was quietly announced last week - the same day as the [latest] cabinet reshuffle.

...Moves to rein in the troubled Maori broadcasting funding agency Te Mangai Paho are meeting strong opposition in Maoridom. A review of the agency has suggested incorporating it into [NZOA], making it subject to greater ministerial control. The Agency distributes... [about] \$13 million... - mainly to the 21 iwi radio stations, which receive \$200,000 each year. The agency costs \$1.1 million in administration. Its four-year history has been marked by criticism from Maori broadcasters and some politicians, and lingering controversy over the failed Aotearoa Television Network. [However, an] iwi radio station manager... said making Te Mangai Paho part of [NZOA] would be a backward step.

...N[ZOA] believes it has come up with a way to increase the public broadcast but avoid a public backlash. In a briefing paper to politicians, the funding body for local content on television and radio says it needs an extra \$24.7 million annually. NZ[OA] notes: "It is unlikely that the public would accept the 22% (\$24 a year) that is needed to cover the increases in the Consumer Price Index... since the last increase." NZOA suggests politicians increase the fee by \$11 to \$121, providing \$12.1 million. A further \$12.6 million from the fee could be diverted to [NZOA] if the taxpayer took over funding the Maori broadcasting funding agency Te Mangai Paho... In the wake of the Aotearoa TV funding debacle, the future of Te Mangai Paho is already up in the air... [The] Communications Minister... supports a small increase in the fee - \$5 to \$10. However, a spokes[person for the minister] was unable to confirm an increase was planned in this year's Budget... Government politicians, including [the PM

and his deputy], are also looking at a revamp of state television, including a possible cut in advertising from 15 minutes to 10... an hour. [However, NZOA] poured cold water on that idea saying it would benefit TV One viewers who consider there are too many commercials, but it would do nothing to reverse the falling level of local content... TVNZ has said the proposal would cost \$30 million in lost revenue, and [NZOA] says that for the same price it could provide an extra 450 hours of local television. [NZOA's executive director reiterated the point that there hasn't been] widespread opposition to the amount of advertising on television.

...The Government is considering proposals of cuts to advertising on TV1 to 10 minutes an hour... But the big worry in the industry is that politicians won't stop at TV1 and the push for fewer commercials will gain momentum. To avoid intervention, advertising and network chiefs are... planning a voluntary cut... The level of advertising may be a common source of conversation, but the TV networks and advertisers insist, correctly, that there is little evidence of widespread public dissatisfaction. However, there has been no rush by the industry to properly investigate how much dissatisfaction there is, at least not in studies released to the public. A November 1994 N[Z] Institute of Economic Research study on the success of TV policies, commissioned by the Ministry of Commerce, studiously avoided the issue. When questioned, they said there was no evidence of concern. An advertising industry survey was self-serving, couching it as a choice between advertising and paying a high broadcasting fee. The networks and advertisers say there is very real concern [about] the downstream effects of cuts – in either reducing the revenue for TV networks and their ability to make local shows, or possibly increasing the cost of advertising. [The newly appointed TVNZ chairperson says it]... is of a generation that does not like too many ads. "But there are some younger people I know who never even notice an ad. It's important we don't get captured by a few vocal minorities. Profit, in my mind, is not a dirty word,"... The fact is that in business terms, the suggested TV1 ad cuts and "public service" functions have come at a bad time for the channel. Because TV2's younger audience is more attractive to advertisers, TVNZ has been propping it up even more, moving high-rating shows from TV1, such as... *Fair Go*... and N[Z] *Living*. But, as has happened in the past, this has had a see-saw effect. TV2 has stabilised but TV1 is losing younger viewers... In the meantime TV3, with good management, has been slowly increasing its audience in its target audience – the 18 to 49-year-old group. This is the high-consuming group most advertisers want to reach. Five weeks ago TV3 made a breakthrough. TV2 has always dominated the 18 to 49 audience, with TV1 a distant second, and TV3 a close third. For the past five weeks though TV1 has fallen back to third... Last week TV3 attracted 30% of 18 to 39-year-olds, TV2 38% and TV1 24%. The shift illustrates the foibles of N[Z]'s highly commercialised TV system, and that some viewers are more valuable than others. [TV1] – the most popular station that still attracts 45% of our viewing time – is becoming less attractive to the people who count most in commercial television: Advertisers.

...TVNZ is expected to reveal plans this week that will reduce the number of commercial breaks on TV1 from four per hour to three. But instead of cutting the number of commercials it will screen the same amount per hour, with the three breaks being longer than at present... increasing the ad breaks by one minute to 4.5 minutes... The proposal does not affect TV2... Market research has shown that all three networks are breaking their existing self-imposed rules. TVNZ has always said it does not allow prime time advertising and programme promotions to exceed 14 minutes per hour. And TV3 said it did not exceed 14.5 minutes. But... [the most recent research] figures for TV1 showed 14.5 minutes [on average each hour] and TV3 15.9 minutes. TV2 had the most ads... – 16.7 minutes an [hour, or] 28% of its prime time schedule. Figures are not yet available for May.

...THE TV networks have broken their rules against excessive commercials for the second month in a row. The[y]... breached self-regulatory restrictions on prime time advertising in April and... research shows they've done it again in May. After a campaign to reduce the impact of advertising on TV1, the channel came very close to its voluntary maximum... showing 14.75 minutes an hour – a total which included 1.2 minutes of programme promotions. TV3 showed 15.2 minutes each hour, 3.1 minutes of promos. At 17.1 minutes... including four minutes of promotions, TV2 continued to show the most commercials... Both networks have concerns about the validity of the research because they include channel identifications and news updates. TVNZ's marketing boss... said the figures did not match TVNZ's and the company was trying to find out why they differed... [TVNZ has also pulled 'Sky TV ads from TV1 (even though Sky screens TV1 and TV2 as part of its subscriber service – and does the same for TV3, which it also advertises on) – because they were too successful']... Meantime, Sky are planning improvements to the Orange [channel by]... putting more breaks in their programmes to try to drag in advertising dollars. The new policy affects the few... formerly ad-free shows that now have three ad breaks. The bizarre thing is that the breaks are unnecessary. There are no ads. They are solely to promote other shows...

N[Z] viewers endure more television advertising than their A[US]n, Canadian or English counterparts but moves to chop it have drawn sharp criticism. The Minister of State Owned Enterprises... said viewers were fed up with TVNZ's high level of advertising and wanted better programmes. Although [the minister] ruled out an advertising free channel because of funding restrictions, [it] told the TVNZ board that the coalition agreement wanted advertising time on TV One cut to 10 minutes an hour. However, the executive director of the Advertising Agency Association... said [the minister]'s call was "commercially unattainable under the current environment." Fewer advertisements and better programmes would mean a hefty hike in the licence fee or "the Government would have to either put a lot of money in or accept that TVNZ would not make a profit." Television advertising within English-speaking developed countries was highest in America, with 15 to 17 minutes of non-programme time an hour... N[Z] was a close second, with 14 to 16 1/2 minutes. A[US] was about 13 minutes with a maximum of 15 minutes at peak times, and Canada was slightly lower. Britain rated the lowest at about 8 1/2 minutes.

...T[TVNZ]'s ratecard for next year, made public yesterday, shows it is dropping its average rate 4[%] on TV2, while increasing its average rate on TV One just 1[%]. However, businesses willing to advertise on TV2 during October and November are being wooed with official rates up to 10[%] lower than at present... While the move is seen in some quarters as a non-event, as TVNZ already offers huge discounts to most advertisers, the advertising industry has generally welcomed the move... [which] follows years of steady increases in ad rates at TVNZ, despite falling audience numbers. Since December 1995, both TV One and TV2 have lost viewers, with their combined average share of the total peak viewing audience falling from 78[%] to just 69[%]. TV2 has been hit particularly hard as TV3 and TV4 have successfully pulled many younger viewers.

...YOU'RE a babyboomer and of late you've been finding that daily dose of mass media just doesn't satisfy like it used to. There's a sense of unease which, as one of that grand cohort born between 1946 and 1964, you are unaccustomed to... because boomers shape society, not the other way round, right? What has happened? Half the television channels broadcast material that is starting to look a little alien if you wear easyfit blue jeans. Get used to it. Boomers don't set the trends any more – but that part of the population who do aren't easy to nail. If advertisers and media try too hard, they're sussed and discredited damn quick. Last year \$40 million was spent on advertising the teenage dietary staples of hamburgers, pizzas, fried chicken and pies. Another \$14 m... went on promoting the aerated drinks to swill them down. Advertising for records, tapes and CDs came to a cool \$33.8 m... These are all signs that youth culture is far from dead. Movie promotion cost \$7.6 m... and the pitch for the Jaffas (well, "novelty confections") was \$7.9 m... No wonder they need Clearasil for pimples and concealer for dark rings under their eyes – and cosmetics ads in 1996 totalled \$6.4 m... Just Jeans spent \$4 m... and Nike \$3.3 m... Levis trailed a bit, at \$1.5 m... which was just a modicum more than the advertising spent on computer games, like PlayStation, at \$1.4 m... There are 356,000 13- to 19-year-olds strutting their stuff the length of N[Z] and another 272,000 between 20 and 24 years. Just one-third of the younger group are in paid employment and two-thirds of the 20- to 24-year-olds work, more than half of them full-time. They have an influence far in excess of their numbers. But in looking at the "attractive youth market of people with dollars to spend and time to do things," says... [a] strategic planner at Bates Advertising, you have to move beyond the chronologically determined demographic... Kids in the 70s had a benchmark to rebel against... Kids in the 90s still "differentiate" all right but the process is far more sophisticated and subtle... To try to "get inside the head of youth," [her] team talks to the people they consider the real trail-blazers. These are the people who run the night clubs, the DJs, the fashion stylists, the animators and film-makers – and even the likes of the cult preacher who

says “God is the dance party gathering.” “Where these people go, so do youth,” says [the planner]. “So we are interested in them because we want to stay ahead of the youth wave.” [The planner] also consults with young people: students from Selwyn College which [it] describes as “a vanguard school with an overlap of tribes.” And... [the planner] has identified 10 common myths about this post-Generation X... *Myth One*: Youth is a time to rebel without a cause. *Fact*: The need to conform far outweighs the need to stand out... *Myth Two*: Youth Culture is confined to the 16-year-olds. *Fact*: Youth culture now defies age – witness the 45-year-old surfing preacher. *Myth Three*: Youth is cynical and apathetic. *Fact*: ...There are no safety nets under these kids and they know it. They are... the most pragmatic generation yet – because they have to be. *Myth Four*: Destination cyberspace. *Fact*: It is more likely to be the marketing manager who is heading for cyberspace. Youth has a wider reality... *Myth Five*: Anarchy and rebellion. *Fact*: Anarchy and rebellion is merely another style statement, aka body piercing. Youth is not out to change the world – it’s too busy trying to cope with its complications. *Myth Six*: ...Youth is changing the face of the world. *Fact*: [90%] of young people are just as uninteresting as their parents were. Revolutionaries change the world and they come in all shapes and sizes... *Myth Seven*: The big brands call the tune. *Fact*: ...this is the age of pick and mix and it’s simply not cool to be seen to be a brand slave. So even... big brands like Levis and Nike... hav[e] to work harder. *Myth Eight*: ...The trends and the role models all come from overseas. *Fact*: If it’s good they’ll find it here, there or anywhere. They found Hip Hop Pacifica in the backyard... *Myth Nine*: Youth is always looking for the Next Big Thing. *Fact*: There’s never a Next Big Thing. It’s lots of things happening simultaneously. *Myth Ten*: Youth does not want to be a target market. *Fact*: Youth is happy to be a target market.

...The advertising industry [i]s attempting to be more sensitive in advertising to older people. More brands [a]re targeting the over 60s and they [a]re fast learning to market to the age people felt, not to how old they actually were... [By the way, many multinational companies who operate in NZ] tend to source much of their advertising from A[US]. There is much debate about how effective A[US]n advertisements are in N[Z], with evidence suggesting they sometimes miss the mark here... that the Aussie efforts lose something in the translation. “The fact is... Kiwis are simply not the same as their Aussie counterparts, they have different values. I believe for that reason a lot of Aussie ads simply don’t work very well here.”

...WHEN Richard Starkey changed his name, [the drummer] probably never realised what a good investment it would be. Because, in Japanese, [his name] is a kind of apple and the former Beatle has been able to earn... [big] dollars by advertising Ringosutta, a well-known Japanese brand of apple sauce. By appearing on Japanese... [TV ads the drummer] is in very distinguished company. One of the best-kept secrets in Hollywood has been how happy top names have been to risk their carefully cultivated images by appearing in lucrative commercials in Japan... “There isn’t enough money to make it worth a big name’s while to cheapen their image here... [in the US,” says] *Entertainment Marketing Newsletter*’s editor]. “So they do it in Japan, where companies pay enormous amounts of money and swear the ad will never go outside of the country... [Some of them] do voice-overs endorsing a variety of products in the US, but they are never seen on screen. So huge are the sums that the big names... will do almost anything. In Japan, the name... Rambo [or] Rocky... means a leading brand of shrink-wrapped ham... Another action hero... has been paid... \$2m a year to star in ads promoting, among other things, Nissin Cup Noodles. Even [the singer-actor who has had 10 No 1 pop singles], whose whole career has been built on clever manipulation of her image, was paid \$3.1m to endorse a rice liquor named Jun. In Japanese “jun” means “pure”. [The singer-actor], dressed as a Samurai warrior does battle with a dragon, finishing it off with the closing line “I’m pure”. [Not even the Japs could believe that! Other US stars promote] Honda Civic cars, Keri skin-care products... Caffé Latte... Japan Airlines... Subaru Impreza cars... [and] a health drink... “...the average Jap... thinks... everything is bigger and better in America, so by using foreigners an advertising company can make its product look cooler...” One of the most popular actors with advertisers in Japan... earns... \$1.55 m... a year from Japan for just a few days’ work. Asked about how [the actor] felt about selling cigarettes to the Japanese, [it] replied: “Morally, I was torn... for about half a second.”

...In the new tradition of big American stars not cheapening their images by doing U[S] commercials but wallowing in making them abroad, [the singer-actor who has had 10 No 1 pop singles] is reported to have shot a 30-second Mitsubishi ad... for Japanese TV that will earn her \$16 million.

...AMERICA’S big-spending advertisers have a keen commercial eye on the Internet. Around 90% have a Web site and half [of] them sell or intend to sell products or services in cyberspace, according to the US Association of National Advertisers. Typical cost to set up a Web site was around \$238,000 – plus a hefty \$215,000 a year maintenance. But N[Z] Web advertising specialists digital Mediaworks promises building a Web site down-under won’t cause heartburn in company accountants... The one thing we can predict with some certainty about the Internet is that most people involved... [in] selling products or advertising their services... with it... will in time be shown to have been inept and naive in the way they used the Web. This has been a characteristic of virtually every new medium. It is the result of experiences from other media being transferred before users really understand the new medium they are dealing with. When the film camera was invented, it was used to record theatre plays in their entire length, which were subsequently shown to an audience. Similarly, the first radio news programmes consisted of newspaper articles read aloud. It takes time to adapt to a new medium, and come to grips with its unique nature. No one is struggling harder to understand the Web than the advertisers who are being asked to support sites by throwing money at them in return for a banner ad... [L]ittle is known about the impact these banner ads have, and how much business they really generate... Assessing the effectiveness of Internet advertising is clearly still a problem. Banner ads do not come cheaply, with... the *National Business Review* site... charging up to \$2083 per month for an ad in a prime position... Just as they did with radio and film, advertisers and their agencies are going to have to stumble along the Internet for a while yet, learning from their own, and others mistakes. • T[he]... amount spent on advertising in the U[S] alone in 1995 was a reportedly gargantuan \$US277.231 billion.

...Spending on U[S] advertising i[s] expected to rise 6.2[%] to \$US198.42 billion... in 1998. This [prediction] comes on the heels of a 6.6[%] rise to \$186.77 billion in 1997 over the previous year... On the global front... Zenith Media Worldwide [(a media-buying unit of advertising-holding company, Cordiant Plc)] said world ad spending – in major media – would rise to \$317.81 billion in 1998 from \$298.78 billion in 1997.

...THE WORLD’S FAVOURITE NEWSPAPER... READ IN OVER 60 COUNTRIES WORLDWIDE... [t]he International Express is the best of the seven day a week Express in one beautiful weekly, packed with up-to-the-minute news, business, sports, entertainment and Royal reports... Readers can subscribe at the special price of £24.70 for 3 months[, which]... is just a fraction of the weekly news-stand cost of other UK papers.

...While N[Z]ers may be used to a bit of nudity in their advertising, the British are only now starting to see traditionally taboo subjects like sex and death filter through ad agencies. However, the industry there still remains far more timid than in continental Europe, experts say. “British ads are generally pretty reserved about sex but in Europe anything goes,”... [the] global planning director for... [a London-based] advertising agency said. “In France, if you want to see naked bodies you don’t have to go to an X-rated movie. You just watch the ads on TV,”... [The] head of planning at [another agency based in] London, said “the Japanese are into toilet humour and the Swedes and the Dutch take a very honest up-front approach to what they can show in advertising. But in Britain there are a vast number of taboos.” ...taboos in Britain for advertisers included sex, death, “ugly [gals]” and homosexuality. Blood and references to private bodily functions were also non-starters in British ads – a factor that often caused headaches for ad agencies promoting commercials for nappies and feminine hygiene products, such as sanitary towels and tampons. British viewers are beginning to see commercials they never saw in the past, including those promoting products for problems such as thrush and diarrhoea. The appearance of such commercials, however, may not necessarily be the result of greater consumer tolerance, but the growth of products once available only by prescription but now available over the counter... [□ A] television commercial that likened eating chocolate to having an orgasm was “likely to cause serious and widespread offence,” the Advertising Standards Complaints Board has ruled. A [viewer] complained about an advert for Whittaker’s Peanut slab which screened at 9.25 pm during a netball test between N[Z] and Jamaica. The complainant’s grand-children had watched the game. The advertising agency concerned said the commercial had since been withdrawn, for “other reasons.”

...The Commerce Commission is cracking down on a scam which costs N[Z] businesses millions of dollars a year. The commission says crooked publishing companies are preying on small businesses and ripping them off by falsely claiming that the firms had agreed to place advertisements in magazines. The commission is warning businesses to be on the alert for the fraudsters, and to refuse to pay for any advertising that they did not authorise or were misled into approving. The salespeople from these magazines often play heavily on the line that the businesses contracted are making a donation to a worthy cause, said the commission[s] fair trading manager... "Generally, the magazines fall into two categories: those claiming to be published for employee associations or community groups, and those claiming to provide community services, often relating to children and their health, and road safety." The commission had received hundreds of complaints from the community concerning this practice, as did the police, Consumers' Institute and advertising organisations. The commission chair[perso]n... said that as well as costing the businesses that were conned into paying for services they did not want, the scam also cost legitimate publishers revenue. "Money that is pulled away through false invoices is money that does not buy genuine advertising in genuine magazines." • Seven Auckland publishing companies charged with breaching the Fair Trading Act will appear in court next month. The prosecutions follow a two-year investigation by the commission.

...The Automobile Association is threatening to go to... [court] if tyre outlets continue misleading customers. In its latest *Directions* magazine, the association said that prices for new tyres varied widely and customers should "shop around and haggle." Its survey of 50 tyre outlets in Auckland, Tauranga, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch, Timaru and Dunedin showed savings were possible on imported and locally manufactured tyres... One outlet quoted \$110 for a Firestone Commuter... whereas another outlet quoted \$215 for the same tyre... "What happens is that you are quoted a 'retail' price of, say, \$215 and then told there is a discounted price of \$145. On comparison, the so-called discounted price seems very appealing. But, in fact, it is the normal price for that outlet, and probably higher than in other outlets in the same town." The association said it believed such a practice breached the Fair Trading Act. If it found the practice was continuing, it would lodge a complaint with the Commerce Commission.

...The squeeze has been put on Stefan's orange juice for falsely claiming... in advertisements appearing in magazines... brochures and on television... to be N[Z]-made, fresh, and delivered daily. Instead, the manufacturers used A[US]n juice which was... four to 10 days old before it was shipped to N[Z]... and added... preservatives to give it a shelf life of up to 30 days... The Commerce Commission took legal action against Stefan's Fresh Juice Company – an Enza subsidiary – and this week the High Court found the firm had breached the Fair Trading Act... [The judge said] the commission had proved all its allegations and ordered Stefan's to pay the commission's legal costs. However, [the judge] refused the commission's request for a court order forcing Stefan's to publish corrective advertising on the basis that the breaches occurred so long ago it was not necessary. Speaking after the court case, the commission's fair trading manager... said it had taken two years for the case to work through the High Court. In that time, the company had altered its promotional material so it was no longer misleading... [Incidentally, a]s the long-running Arnott's television advertising drama reaches its climax, with the public invited to vote for an appropriate ending to Michael and Jessica's love story, Arnott's itself might be wondering at the huge success of a campaign... initially seen as a mere rip-off of the milk-drinking Anchor family. Then again, the Anchor family... was itself a rip-off – in concept, at least – of a British campaign featuring a coffee-drinking couple trying desperately to sort out their love lives. The Arnott's campaign was created by Bates, whose creative director... inherited the campaign half-way through its 13 episodes when [the director joined the advertising] firm. "I have to admit, it was not my favourite campaign at the time,"... [The director] also had reservations about the Michael character, whom [it] found to be "a bit wet." As it turns out, [the director] was proved wrong on both scores. Research found the Arnott's campaign scored a 92[%] level for brand recognition, the highest recorded for a biscuit advertisement. The target market was clearly [gals], who embraced the Michael character with frightening ardour... "...Here is a campaign that completely changed the image for Arnott's, which was always seen as an A[US]n interloper. You must bear in mind that Arnott's was up against Griffins, a brand that is like mother's milk to most N[Z]ers. Yet it was able to record huge market-share gains." The ad worked because of the extent to which it managed to engage the consumer. To increase the level of engagement, the agency came up with the idea of making the public decide on their own ending, a ploy which added an interactive element. Arnott's opted for a user-pays 0900 number, rather than the free 0800, because it feared the whole interactive thing would collapse under a flood of calls in the first few days. As it happened, calls still flooded in, at the rate of 1000 a day – with 87[%] voting to marry off the two.

...Some people collect butterflies, or stamps, but [one NZer] collects retail adverts. [It] has a file stuffed full with them, some torn out and others copied from newspapers throughout the country. To qualify for... [thi]s file, the ad must be (in his opinion) poorly conceived and executed. And when you are talking about retail advertising, N[Z] has no shortage of ads in that category. [The collector] shows these ads to people attending his regular seminars as examples of what not to do when promoting your product. And yet it is relatively easy to do it right... "I tell those who attend my seminars they can learn most of what they need to know by looking at the front page of a newspaper... Both editor and advertiser have to attract attention, hold attention and deliver a message." The newspapers have, through centuries of experience, evolved a strong formula for getting their articles read, yet most retail advertisements still appear to be missing the basics... No editor would dare use a headline that makes no sense... yet the advertising pages are full of them. Other headlines simply sell nothing. [The collector] points to an ad for a make of caravans, which carries the company logo, followed by the headline: N[Z]'s Most Prestigious Motorhomes, above the picture of a motorhome. The reader's first response... is: So what? Who cares? Where is the benefit to the reader? "Besides, you never, ever put your company's logo in the headline. The place for the logo is at the bottom of the page." This follows research into reading patterns, which have shown that with a print ad, the reader's eye will be attracted by the picture, then will move to the headline for an explanation of the picture, then to the bottom right hand corner of the page to see who is paying for the ad (the logo). [The collector] has rewritten the caravan ad showing the same picture, but with the headline that urges readers to "Explore N[Z]" in the company's "new 5-Star Luxury Class Motorhome" (benefit), followed by a free offer of Best Camping Sites at the bottom of the page in order to connect with the potential customer's travelling frame of mind. Even big companies using big ad agencies could produce better ads... [His] advice: Stick to an uncluttered layout with picture, headline and copy, all of which relate to each other; use sentences in your ads, not bullet points (people don't talk in bullet points, so don't communicate that way); ...tell the reader to do something (hurry now, offer ends! etc); whenever you can, use personal words, connecting the business directly with its potential customer; show product benefit, don't show a lawnmower – show someone pushing it. The last point is the most important... "You don't buy summer shoes – you buy comfort, fashionable looks, and coolness, all benefits derived from the selling points." Many advertisers could improve their own ads enormously by... remembering that last point...

Their offices are the Ponsonby and Parnell coffee shops, where you see them huddled over their cappuccinos, reading an advertising brief or talking on... cell phones. They are the advertising industry's freelancers, offering creative, media and account service skills, who spring into action whenever one of the not so well-oiled cogs of the industry falls off. In the advertising industry, freelancers don't come cheaply. By and large, these freelancers are not in the coffee shops because they cannot find work (although some are), but because they chose to get out of the boiler rooms of a high pressure industry to breathe the fresh air on deck. One of the problems of the freelance industry is that the advertising agencies, who might have one or two favourites to call on, have difficulty knowing what is available and when. The freelancers themselves are not organised in an effective way. It is in recognising this problem that[an] advertising recruitment firm... announced this week it is testing the waters with a new service for freelancers. It has launched a contract division, based on a central register of freelancers that is still being compiled. "Our first priority is to attract sufficient numbers of quality people right across the communications field, and then promote the service on their behalf,"... [The firm's principal] says the number of freelancers has burgeoned in recent years as the dynamics of the industry changed. From the freelancers' point of

view, the high burn-out associated with the business has seen many leave the industry and come back to freelance, and others opt to have more control of their careers. The agencies, on the other hand, have become a lot leaner, with the tendency now to maintain only the core staff needed in creative, account service and media. If someone is sick, or the work load increases, agencies have to move quickly to fill the gap by employing a skilled freelancer. The Employment Contracts Act has also had a major impact on agencies' employment practice... The implications of not being able to fire someone is particularly serious in an industry where winning or losing a client can depend on the skills and attitude of a single person. "Some agencies will employ only on a renewable three-month contract basis because they are worried about things not working out,"...

Radio Pacific has been forced to cut costs, because of lower than expected advertising sales over the next few months. Radio Pacific's chair[person]... told shareholders at the company's annual meeting yesterday [it] was "a little nervous" about the slump in forward sales... The c[hairperson]... believed the slump was partly caused by the fact that Radio Pacific was still finalising arrangements which will see Energy Enterprises handling all Radio Pacific's advertising in the North Island. However, the network also appeared to be suffering from the current gloom that had hit the retail industry... "All the recent economic reports and forecasts are far from positive and that is particularly so for the retail sector. When businesses feel the pinch one of the first budgets they tend to trim is advertising." ...However, [the chairperson]... was still confident the company's recent purchase of the Energy stations and Radio Otago's North Island stations would improve earnings per share.

...Cole Porter was right. Birds do it/Bees do it/Even educated fleas do it. Do what? Advertise of course. Even Concert FM's doing it now. Not actually advertising, but doing "promos" – self-advertising bites that were first invented by t[v] and flash out 30 seconds of forthcoming delights. Promos, we have always been told, are "not really adverts." At Concert FM the station announcers do the voice-overs to these adverts – sorry, promos. They try bravely to zap up their station-master style into universal "advertising" mode but usually only manage to sound alarmed, as though a huge spider had just crawled out of the microphone. You can't blame them for feeling uncomfortable, though. Upfront advertising in classical music has always seemed like a contradiction in terms – food for fun, like when... [someone]e bent Heineken's slogan and claimed that Beethoven's symphonies were best because they refreshed parts the other symphonies couldn't reach. The more serious side is that today's influence of advertising might be so saturated into our lives that any arts, culture or entertainment activity is in danger of harming not just quality but interest itself by associating with the ad-[perso]n's juggernaut. It's not that I think that Concert FM is too musical to touch pitch (so to speak). It indeed should have sponsors and advertise. But before I get torn to pieces by the Friends of Concert FM let me add that any advertising needs to be "reasonable" and "appropriate." It would be really nice, thank-you, if only clever, enjoyable and obviously relevant adverts were used over short periods then replaced by even better ones. But will that happen? Of course it won't... Advertising is naturally pulled towards the aggressive and the blatant. The commercial radio people were right when they admitted recently that it's only the second job of a radio station to serve its listeners. Its first job is to deliver these listeners – in as large a consuming audience as possible – to the advertising sponsors. Are there any limits to the amount of advertising a small country can expect? We hear a lot about the self-regulating effect of the market. Yet even when TVNZ admits it might have overdone things and decides to reduce adverts it also increases promos. And, as [one columnist] pointed out... last Thursday, so-called documentaries are now becoming infected with disguised advertising. Nor can you avoid the ads on t[v] by going to the relatively ad-free cinema (many viewers have been trying this escape route). The cinema's increasing popularity has been spotted and advertising campaigns are at this moment poised to repossess the big screen, bumping off the useless but comfortable slides of dark-looking restaurants you'd be mad to eat in and bombarding you once more with endless strings of glitzy ads. Even in the open air the Big Plug can't be ignored since air traffic planners happily juggle flights to let Qantas and Air N[Z] both overfly a trans-tasman rugby match. But it's not a case of flying the flag for pride. It's more like flashing the logo for free. In a world like this, even classical music resigned itself long ago to having sponsors... Noting the sea of logos on... orchestra and opera companies... programme[s] can be neatly carried out with the same respectful bow the Romans gave to the gods before putting their money on the lions. Perhaps arts and advertisers are not natural enemies. But when advertising gets out of control and starts to seep into everything you find yourself constantly on your guard against whoever may be after your dollar, when the next pitch will be and whether you will be sharp enough to recognise it from the inevitable, built-in concealment. Hardly the best conditions for giving yourself over to enjoyment of either the arts or entertainment. For the sake of every type of performance let's hope that advertising hasn't yet got out of control. But the signs are that it will. • [4]... people... have lived... in a makeshift tent... on [a] platform – known as a human billboard – for the last 96 days. The person who stays the longest will win \$20,000 as part of a radio station promotion... [A 19-year-old gal and 3 guys], aged 26... 31... and... [25 –] have recruited families and friends to bring blankets and hot meals to help them cope with chilly weather... [The] 19-year-old... was not smiling yesterday; her lower lip was swollen after... it... [was] pierced... at the weekend... The 25-year-old has no plans to abandon the platform. "I've been here too long for that."

...The dogged determination of three Aucklanders left them each \$20,000 richer yesterday – and an Auckland radio station at least \$100,000 poorer. The trio, the last of 10 competitors in Radio Hauraki's "human billboard" promotion, climbed down from their perch above Fanshawe St yesterday after 164 days. The competition... had been expected to last a matter of weeks... [T]he Hauraki marketing manager... said it was obvious all three were determined to win and the promotion could have dragged on for a year... [so] the station... had... decided to pay off the three... A doctor and a psychiatrist had been kept on call around the clock, and contestants were medically checked three times a week. Added to the cost was 24-hour security. The station had imposed just a 10-day minimum for the original contestants when the promotion began. An earlier competitor... was disappointed... yesterday... not to share in the winnings. The... [31-year-old still claims to have been] unfairly disqualified... when... [the solo] father... was sure a security guard had told him to take a 10-minute break... [However, the solo father] doubted if anything could be done since it was his word against the security guard's. For one winner, the five-and-a-half-month experience is far from over... [The 26-year-old plans to] write a book about the experience. The screenplay writer... was thrilled to get the payout, but had entered to test his discipline and character rather than simply win the cash. His luck started before the competition even began, when his late application came in, just as another candidate pulled out of the final selection process... [In related news, in] 20 years' time we'll be driving home and see... laser light... billboards in the sky. - 1997

Hi-tech ad era virtually unstoppable... The next time you're at a televised event pay close attention to what's going on around the sidelines and on the pitch. Take a note, in particular, at the advertising hoardings. Then, when you return home, check out a television replay of the event and see if you can spot the differences. You might notice, for example, that your seats have been taken up by a huge advertising sign. Or that the banking billboard that was in front of you on the ground is now promoting a clothing company. Welcome to the world of virtual advertising... a controversial mix of illusions... Using the latest technology, television networks can custom-make the advertising their viewers see, regardless of what is actually at the event. A computer operator transposes the advertising wherever it's required. It can be static, but it also has the capability to include animation. It can be placed on the ground, over the crowd, across the top of a grandstand or on top of existing advertising hoardings. With games being beamed around the world, networks can offer specific advertising for specific countries, considerably multiplying their revenues. The dangers with the virtual advertising are the insensitive placing of ads. A virtual ad for one sporting manufacturer could... be placed alongside a rival sporting company. There is also the concern of a virtual ad being laid over the top of a ground ad... wiping out its TV impact. The first major battle front came when A[US]'s Seven Network and N[Z]'s Sky TV aired the Bledisloe Cup live from the MCG. Included were several virtual ads – at one stage the crowd appeared to hold up a sign promoting Reebok sports shoes. No existing signage was obscured. But it has angered the Melbourne Cricket Club... The problem arose when the MCC demanded a slice of the revenue gleaned from virtual advertising. Sky TV, which had the N[Z] broadcast rights to the game, got caught up in the wrangle when the MCC requested it sign a document handing over

rights to virtual advertising. Sky refused and [its] commentators... were barred from the ground and had to call the game from a Channel Seven suite in downtown Melbourne. The Kiwi TV build-up and post-match coverage were severely limited. The N[ZRFU], the rights holder for any virtual advertising used in All Blacks games, negotiated on Sky's behalf but... could do little. The broadcast (complete with virtual advertisements) went to air without an agreement, but now the battle is on. Sky[']s chief executive officer... has written to the N[Z]... and A[US]n rugby unions protesting the actions of the M[CC], owner of the MCG. Legal action has even been suggested. "The actions were absolutely unacceptable. I am real upset... I would be unhappy if the MCC was used again for rugby. Their actions were unjustified and particularly rude." ...[the MCC secretary claims to have told Channel Seven two months ago that] the new technology would not be tolerated "under any circumstances". Seven countered that the MCC was well aware no existing signage would be covered up. Just hours before the game, the club was threatening to ban the network's cameras from the ground, saying it would rather lose the broadcast than back down. Virtual advertising has already been trialled in N[Z], with team logos being placed over the in-goal areas for the Super 12 match between the Chiefs and the Northern Bulls. And it will be given further trialling during the coming NPC. [A former]All Black... whose company Carnegie Sports International owns the rights to the French EPSIS virtual advertising system, believes it is the way of the future. But... stressed last weekend's fracas showed it needed to be worked through carefully... Across the Tasman, the issue has heated up further in the aftermath to the Bledisloe battle and the MCC has said it would consider banning the live telecast of the AFL grand final, one of the highest rating television events of Seven's year, unless the network agreed not to include virtual ads. There are also doubts over the traditional Boxing Day cricket test at the MCG... [T]he network... said... [it] would not agree to access conditions which gave "non-exclusive licence of copyright" to broadcasts from the ground. The A[RU] was buying out of the argument, saying it was more than happy for virtual advertising to be part of its marketing plan and the problem lay with the MCC trying to change the ground rules at the 11th hour. One result could be that several events will move from Melbourne... This looms as a major blow to Melbourne, which prides itself on being the sporting capital of the world. Its ability to take the foreign game of rugby into the Aussie Rules-crazy state was a financial boom for all concerned... But now it appears any major sport needing to rent facilities in A[US] is going to go where the rental agreements are better, like Sydney. The new Sydney Olympic stadium is not putting any of these conditions on its hire and it has a 113,000 capacity. It could be the big winner out of last weekend's shambles. And if rugby wants to continue to make inroads into Melbourne, then the new Docklands Stadium, now under construction and with a capacity of around 65,000, is a rival candidate to the MCG. The one thing most players in the debate agree on is that the ads, controversial or not, are here to stay.

...Sony Pictures Entertainment has disciplined two advertising executives for their roles in creating a fictional film critic whose ecstatic appraisals were used to promote films released by Sony's Columbia Pictures studio. Company insiders said... [the] senior vice-president of creative advertising, and... [the] director of creative advertising, were rebuked and suspended without pay for 30 days, reported entertainment trade paper *Daily Variety*. [The director] created quotes attributed to [the]bogus critic... which were used in numerous ads for Columbia's... *Vertical Limit*, *A Knight's Tale* and *The Animal*. The controversy has created some discomfort for... the *Nelson Mail's*... American-born... features editor and film reviewer... [The NZ resident], who has reviewed more than 2000 movies... since 1975... has [the same name as the fictional] critic...

Wondered how advertisers get away with those outrageous 'infomercials'? ...[A] *HERALD CORRESPONDENT*... finds a couple who didn't. Being [the Briton] can't be easy. The bright, attractive 32-year-old Briton once enjoyed a millionaire's lifestyle but is now in a Tallahassee jail. [The Briton] is about to spend... Christmas in prison, with the prospect of another 21 to follow and no chance of parole. Her crime was to become wrapped up in the pseudo-glamorous world of "infomercials" – the daytime and insomniac-hour cross between advertisements and shows – in which dubious claims are made and fulfilment of wishes promised. Her only chance of an early release lies with [the US]President... who could include her in a list of people to whom [it] may grant clemency before leaving office... [T]he prominent British human rights lawyer and wife of [the British P]M... has been approached to act for [the 32-year-old. The 32-year-old] and her Mexican-born husband... 34, are the first people in America to pay for not telling the truth on airtime bought from television networks. "I had no idea that what we were doing was wrong," [the 32-year-old] said. "We were selling a product. It was [my husband]'s company and [the company] had lawyers, editors, scriptwriters, bookkeepers and more than 200 employees. It was on national television. If you know you're doing something wrong, the last place you'd do it is in front of millions of people." [Her] story began 12 years ago when [the Briton] met... an ambitious... Florida... business[person] with an idea. [Her future husband] wanted to make money from buying and selling repossessed property and... wanted to make even more from telling others how to do it. [The Mexican] made \$153.75 videos advising customers on how to find ideal repossessions to buy low and sell high[, but] wasn't very successful. His claims to have made it rich were false and few believed him. In 1992 [the Briton's husband] was forced into bankruptcy because [the Mexican] could not pay for the television airtime [it had booked. The husband] had to put his business... into [his wife]'s name, and that is where her downfall began. "I didn't take much notice of the business... and I signed everything that [my husband] put in front of me. Why shouldn't I?" But as the business grew, the deception became more profound. By 1996, when some \$900,000 of videos were being sold every two days, it was one of America's top three high-profile infomercials. [The Mexican] now promised viewers that if they could find the perfect repossessed property, [the businessperson] would buy it and split the profits 50/50. In return, punters had to buy extra courses and videos – now priced at about \$2000. But they soon discovered that the "perfect" repossession had to satisfy impossible criteria – high-value property in perfect condition with at least 50[%] equity ready to be snapped up. "The idea was that [the Mexican] would cover the debts and the previous owners would sign it over to him and pay rent," said... the assistant US attorney who prosecuted the case. "When they defaulted, as [the Mexican predicted 80%] would, they would be evicted and [the Mexican] and his partner would sell the property and split the money. From tens of thousands of customers, only 12 deals were done." Complaints flooded in. In 1997 the Florida Attorney General began to take an interest. The couple's home and business were raided at gunpoint and their assets seized; strangely, the infomercials were allowed to keep running. After a 10-week trial during which [the husband hired the lawyer who infamously got a black sports star off a charge of murdering his wife and her alleged lover,]for himself and a local attorney for [his wife], they were both found guilty of conspiracy, fraud and money-laundering charges. Investigators had found tapes of infomercial out-takes that proved some "satisfied customers" were actors and trappings of [the couple's early "wealth" – a house, a car and a plane – had been rented. Because [the Briton] signed so many papers, [the attorney is convinced it] knew what was going on. [The Briton is adamant it] did not: "I thought actors appeared in all commercials..." [Editor's note: The NZ channels TV1 and TV2 used to broadcast about 4.5 hours of 'home shopping' programming during daytime hours while TV3 broadcast about 3.5 hours of daytime infomercials and TV4 broadcast infomercials between midnight and 2pm. Currently, TV4 broadcasts infomercials and other advertising programmes (e.g., *Teletreader*) between midnight and 3pm at weekends, plus between midnight and 6pm during weekdays; TV3 broadcasts 1.5 hours of infomercials during the day on Saturdays, and 4.0 hours during Saturday and Sunday nights, plus 1.0 hour per day and 3.0 hours per night during weekdays; TV2 broadcasts 1.5 hours during daylight hours on weekdays and between 0.5 and 3.0 hours from midnight to 6am, but none at weekends; TV1 no longer broadcasts infomercials.]

...The Broadcasting Standards Authority has called for a clear boundary to be set between programming and advertising. In upholding a complaint against TV[1]'s *Good Morning* show... over an item on using soy products in cooking, the authority noted there was an increasing tendency to "blur the lines" between programmes which were editorial, advertorial, infomercial and/or advertisements. It said the Television Code of Broadcasting Practice, when next revised, should include a provision similar to those in the radio and advertising codes, which say advertising should be clearly distinguishable from other material. [A Whangarei viewer] had complained about a cooking demonstration by a representative of the International Soy Advisory Board. His protest was that the contrary view of the health-giving properties of soy had not been canvassed, and

that the cook was actually a representative of Sanitarium Foods, which makes soy products. TVNZ said the item was clearly a cooking demonstration, that there were many food products over which there was debate as to their health risks, and that it was satisfied the guest had the authority to speak on the subject of soy products[– although it wasn't satisfied that the complainant didn't have a financial interest in his contrary view! However, the authority] ruled that by failing to disclose the relationship between the nutritionist and Sanitarium, TVNZ had breached the requirement to be truthful and accurate on points of fact. "If an expert is aligned to product promotion, that ought to be made clear," the authority said... The authority also said TVNZ should at least have acknowledged the existence of a controversy over soy. It ruled TVNZ should read a statement approved by the authority summarising its decision... [■ A billboard] of busty blondes is keeping abreast of advertising standards – by air-brushing out nipples. The models in the perky poster for adult videos wear see-through body stockings. But there's nothing to see... "We wanted it to be raunchy but did not want anyone to complain, which may have meant taking the poster down, so... all naughty parts like nipples... had to go," [the manager] of Video Expo told *Sunday News*. "Also, we wanted a billboard that was eye-catching but didn't cause nose-to-tail collisions as people drove by." It's not just video stars who get the brush off. Even [an AUSn]supermodel... had to get her nipples removed for her underwear billboards. The Advertising Standards Complaints Board has no rules on nipples in advertising.

...A billboard outside St Lukes Shopping Centre that features semi-naked [gals] and promotes sex products has incensed an Auckland City councillor who wants it removed... The... council has asked the Advertising Standards Authority to rule on whether the billboard meets the criteria of offensive and objectionable advertising... [T]he manager of the chain of adult shops behind the billboard[– Video Expo –] said the advertisement was quite tame and no worse than a lot of other advertisements. "We could have been far more risque. We are aware that our product is not something that everyone totally agrees with... and we have toned it down quite a lot." [The manager] said the billboard had been set up at two other sites in central Auckland... last month before being moved to St Lukes[, but] would not say where it would be moved to next... [The]Balmoral ward councillor... said [it] was no prude... [and] would probably not be offended by the billboard if it was in one of the city's red-light districts... but it was not right to advertise pornographic videos, magazines and sex toys outside a family shopping centre... [Everyone the councillor] had spoken to since spotting the billboard on Monday, including her teenage daughter, felt uncomfortable about it... "It leaves nothing to the imagination and advertises a website, which means every kid in the neighbourhood can go home and type it into their computer."

...No sex please – we're French... THE CAMERA moves languorously across the tanned bodies of [gals] soaping themselves in the shower, lingering on buttocks and breasts. Only then does it travel down [a] wrist... to reveal a watch-strap. This advert... typifies the trend that has led Fr[ance's] Family Affairs Minister... to threaten advertisers who use sexist imagery with new laws... Although it may be one way of grabbing attention, the rise in sexist imagery in advertising is provoking dissent... The debate on "porno chic" has been heightened by a growing controversy over *Loft Story*, a French TV show... On the first night, two of the 15 contestants confined in a Paris apartment could dimly be seen having sex. The show has been denounced as dustbin... [TV. But many guys] have complained that the live feed on the show's website is not sexually explicit enough.

...Real-life knickers on line AN underwear firm is laying bare the private lives of three young flatmates on its website. More than six million people have peeped into the Auckland house... Live footage is sent to N[Z] firm Bendon's Hey Sister website... via live video footage from cameras in the kitchen, dining room and lounge. A bedroom camera was removed after fears about weirdos getting their kicks from seeing the girls strip off. One of the stars of the website... said [it] no longer noticed the... UNDI CAM[S]... in the house. "We are all completely oblivious to them now,"...

Bad and loving it Advertising campaigns which knock products are pulling in the punters in Britain... Guinness is capitalising on the time it takes to pour a pint by saying: "Good things come to those who wait." Softdrink-maker Tango says of its latest cherry-flavoured drink: "Don't slag it off until you've tried it. Then slag it off." Carmaker Skoda confronts its poor image in an ad that says: "It's a Skoda. Honest." For the first time in Skoda's history in Britain, there is a waiting list for one of its models... While we are talking about... cars[, in]... the land of the free... drivers are queuing up to get up to \$800 a month for carrying advertisements on their [private vehicles]. The fee varies mostly on the type of car – one that turns heads can command more than the average family sedan... Autowraps, has turned about 150 cars into mobile billboards in the past few months. "The car is the king of the outdoors, a natural medium for outdoor advertising," [the company's founder] said. Critics claim... [the e]ntrepreneur... is taking advertising to a new, excessive level. [Meanwhile, back in Britain, a 'London nightclub has installed advertising screens in the guys' urinal']

...H2O a commercial shocker On Sunday October 28, TV2 screened *Halloween H2O: 20 Years Later*. Great movie but it was ruined by all the adverts. It seemed like ads were running every seven minutes and usually lasted longer than the portion of the movie. I think this is a waste of money for companies advertising because people get so irritated by the ads that they really don't pay any attention to them. Maybe companies should pay more for advertising during prime-time movies, which will reduce their number... (Auckland) ● *They do. The bigger a programme's audience, the more advertisers pay. Which is why some series are pulled quickly if ratings are really dismal. They'd be costing the channel big bucks.*

...More ads than race laps My boyfriend and I sat down, like every year, to watch *Bathurst 1000* (TV1...). [My boyfriend] usually does not get out of his chair but did this year because TV1 had so many ads. It was pathetic. When the race started they showed the first three laps, then went to ads. Of the 161-lap race we only saw 89 laps... We were not the only ones cheesed off with this... (Christchurch) ● *One News was cut in half for Bathurst...*

I'm so angry. I sat down to watch an excellent Sunday Theatre, *Impact* (TV1...), which I taped, to find the ending missing, due to sport (Bathurst 1000) overrunning yet again... It's not fair... I realise there are a lot of sports fans out there, so why not a sports channel? ... (Auckland)

...I find the incessant trailers or promos on TV annoying and unnecessary. Many people buy *TV Guide* and newspapers, so are aware of what is on TV and what they want to watch. Seeing clips of... [our favourite programmes] several times a day for a week before an episode screens spoils the enjoyment. Then there is *One News* at 6pm which is previewed every quarter of an hour from at least 4pm. [Next,] promos run through the news every 15 minutes or so until [the programme they advertise] begins at 7pm. What useful purpose do these promos serve other than pack out transmission times? If viewers predominantly watch one channel, as we do, any amount of promos on another channel are wasted... (Napier)...

HAVE the viewing public of N[Z] gone moronic overnight? Then why does TV3 have to remind us throughout most of their programming that we are watching their channel? That 3 logo in the bottom right of the screen has become so irritating and intrusive I just can't get beyond it to enjoy the shows they provide. It's nothing short of graffiti and does nothing to enhance the joy of watching an otherwise good selection of drama. Is this the way of entertainment now? Can we expect to see the Mona Lisa with a McDonald's sticker in the corner of the frame? Go to the movies and expect staff to walk across the front of the big screen during the film holding placards for refreshments outside? Until corrected I think Two will be company, and Three much too crowded... (Glenfield, Auckland)

I DID not buy a 33-inch screen to see the picture ruined by this continual invasion of my enjoyment. It was bad enough when subscription stations started doing it, all but ruining the enjoyment of movies... But now, oh my God, a main network (TV3) has started this outrageous practice. If the rest start doing it, I feel I might as well throw my TV out the window. Most people... know what station the buttons on their remote take them to. Interestingly, the logo disappears while the ads are on. Why? Could it be because the advertisers don't want the impact of their advertising invaded? Advertisers are shown to be more important than viewers. If there ever was a time when a viewer might be confused with what station they were on, I would've thought it would've been during ad breaks since they are on all channels[– who seem to time their ad breaks to coincide with each other (and, sometimes, you can change channels – e.g., to escape an ad – and find it being screened simultaneously on another channel!)]

...NOW we finally know what the Tellydot promotion [– which required viewers to attach a cardboard dot sent to them through the post over the TV3 logo during a particular programme, then return the dot to TV3 in order to win prizes –]was all about. They were conditioning our minds for the introduction of logos. Come on TV3, we know what channel we are watching. Sky Movies tried it a couple of months ago but had to stop it because of viewer dissatisfaction. And don't try telling me it's to promote the channel. If that was the case, TV1, TV2 and TV4 would be doing the same... (Palmerston North) ● We've had many similar letters. TV3's response: "TV3 bugging a signal is a common practice internationally in multi-channel environments and is an important part of TV3's branding strategy."

...Burger King is to withdraw an ad... which... [allegedly] encouraged children to mimic dangerous behaviour. The... ad... showed a [guy] at a barbecue running around with his sleeve on fire before falling into a paddling pool... [T]he Fire Service... said children could not distinguish between a funny advertisement and a dangerous situation. Safety programmes told people to not run around but "stop, drop and roll" if clothing caught fire... A Burger King spokes[perso]n said... the... ad was intended for adults and encouraged people to be careful around barbecues.

...Burger King has been telling children watching Sky TV's Cartoon Network that they will receive a free... Pokemon watch... if they buy a children's meal. But the programmes originate in Hong Kong and often carry advertising not intended for N[Z]. So when... a... North Shore boy... aged 4, went to Burger King this week to collect his free watch, [the boy] was disappointed to find it did not have one. While admitting [it] cannot yet tell the time, [the boy] had still been looking forward to his free gift. "They didn't give me one..." Instead, they gave him what [the boy] called "a purple toy." His mother... has complained to the Commerce Commission, saying that Burger King should not be advertising what it is not able to deliver. Burger King[']s marketing spokes[perso]n... said the company had asked Sky to remove the ad... or add a disclaimer, but had been told it was not possible. Sky TV said that from [the beginning of next month] it would be able to replace the foreign advertisements with something else.

...[Parents of Barney fans are seeing red not purple over the colourful children's character. Hundreds of parents are angry at having to pay \$7 for their under-2s to see an Auckland show when they were told tots could get in for free. A Manurewa father said Ticketek had assured him that his 16-month-old son could get in free if it sat on his knee. But the dad had to pay \$7 at the Logan Campbell Theatre on Monday. And a Grey Lynn mother said a friend had to buy a ticket for her 5-month-old. "It was like holding people to ransom." Most parents forked out more money to avoid disappointing their children, but now want their money back. However, the general manager of toy distributor Hasbro NZ said refunds were unlikely as profits were going to the Starship children's hospital. Hasbro NZ was angry with Ticketek for advising showgoers wrongly. Ticketek said ticket policies were changed after the company was told that everyone needed a ticket for safety reasons, but denied staff told parents that all under-2s could get in for free. The company invited people to write in with their concerns and it would consider refunds on a case-by-case basis. About 18,000 tickets were sold for the purple dinosaur's six Auckland shows.]

...Ad-free TV for kids... Advertising-free children's programmes on... TVNZ and TV3 are envisaged in the Government's push for public service television. [The]Broadcasting Minister... will meet the advertising industry to seek support for a voluntary ban... And, in a more direct move, the board of TVNZ will also be pressed to adopt the policy... The minister, who has been depicted as "Booboo, the fifth Teletubby" in a Wellington poster campaign inspired by her bumbles in the House, was asked in Parliament whether the policy meant no advertisements during *Teletubbies*. Taking the gibe in her step, [the minister] replied: "The [fifth] Teletubby says there is an intention to reduce advertising, particularly around children's programmes." ...TVNZ[']s spokes[perso]n... said broadcasters already followed a voluntary code restricting advertising to 10 minutes an hour during programmes for preschoolers, and from 3.30 pm to 5.30 pm when after-school shows screened. "That is substantially less than during prime time." Broadcasters also made sure commercials met "G-rated" standards too... Parents the *Herald* spoke to said an advertising ban would save them from being pestered by toddlers and older children demanding fast food and toys. The president of the Early Childhood Council... warned parents not to get too excited, however. "They have to remember it's not just the advertising that is the risk, it's the programming too."

...Children seem to be smarter than [the Broadcasting Minister] gives them credit for with her plans for an advertising ban... Eyes fixed to the television screen, a group of boys sits mesmerised by the cartoon in front of them – that is, until a commercial comes on. [The]Pt Chevalier brothers... aged 10 and 8... and their cousins... aged 9 and 8, change the channel the moment their afternoon programmes are interrupted. Their eyes wander around the room for something else to focus on, and [the younger cousin] decides to play with his toy car instead. "I hate ads. I only like the TV ones 'cause I wanna see what other programmes are on,"... says[the 8-year-old. His b]rother... agrees, complaining that advertisements mean [it] is missing the programme. The boys' mothers... do not agree with... [the minister's] proposal to ban commercials during children's viewing times... [One] says her older children do pick up on what products are being advertised, but... does not think her children need to be protected from commercialism. "You can't just block these things from them, because in life they're going to come across advertisements. Why should they be sheltered from it? If they don't see a product on TV, they're going to see it when they walk into a store anyway. It's everywhere you go." ...[the other mother] believes the earlier children learn the meaning of the word "no," the better. "The minister is treating parents like they can't think for themselves... What's next? Are they going to take down all the signs in a dairy about sweets so they don't ask for them too?" ...But... [the chairperso]n of the Children's Television Foundation, said last night that the advertising industry employed sophisticated methods to get its message across. "While some families are doing fine to raise their children to be media smart, you can't be there all the time. A 3-year-old being targeted by a large company can't cope with that kind of pressure. They are not like adults. Things will grab them." The foundation did not think a blanket ban was the solution, but... it would be a good start until changes for more "responsible" advertising could be agreed on... Those who support banning commercials during children's television programmes claim advertisements encourage children to become compulsive consumers...

Does the young television audience exist to be instructed and entertained or targeted by marketers – or both? ...Make no mistake – children are in the crossfire of a battle over freedom of "commercial speech." The fight is apparently an "everlasting" one, in which those who would exhort us to spend our hard-earned dollars on their indispensable products "can never sleep, otherwise the freedom is lost." That was the message issued to the World Federation of Advertisers' congress in Korea... by N[Z]'s delegate, [the] Advertising Standards Authority director... [His] organisation, charged with upholding standards aimed at delivering socially responsible advertising, makes no bones about including children in its un-ending struggle. In this, it invokes the U[N] Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which Article 13 includes freedom to "seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds." The authority's code of practice for advertising to children says this gives our junior citizens the right to receive advertisements along with other information. On the other hand, the authority is quick to emphasise that there are various fetters to that right, in another part of the UN convention that calls for appropriate guidelines for the protection of children from information that might harm their welfare. The authority's challenge is to persuade advertisers and media outlets to regulate themselves rather than wait to have it done to them by state legislators, a distinct possibility under [the]newly reinstated Broadcasting Minister... Sweden has banned all television advertising aimed at children under 12 and is pushing to have this extended to the rest of the E[U]. Which is why a move last week by our two main free-to-air television companies to tighten voluntary guidelines for advertising to children, almost half of whom spend more than three hours a day in front of the goggle box, was not entirely unexpected... Unlike many countries such as A[US], there is no law here restricting the amount of advertising on our television channels other than on Sunday mornings. But the Government does have a policy of working towards banishing commercials around children's television. The self-imposed guidelines prohibit any advertising, sponsorship publicity or prize offers during programmes for pre-schoolers for five hours a week on TV2 and for 10 hours weekly on TV3. For TV2, these ad-free hours are from 8.35 am to 9.35 am from Monday to Friday. For TV3, no advertising is allowed from 8.30 am to 9.30 am, or from 2.30 pm to 3.30 pm Monday to Friday... Paid advertising in

broadcasts for children aged 5 to 13 is limited to 10 minutes an hour, with another two minutes allowed for in-house promotions such as advance publicity for other programmes... For TV2, the restricted advertising times are from 7 am to 8.35 am and from 3.30 pm to 5 pm from Monday to Friday, and from 6 am to 9 am on Saturday. TV3, which screens more children's programmes but with a heavy diet of imported cartoons, restricts advertising from 6.30 am to 8.30 am and from 3.30 pm to 5 pm on Monday to Friday, and from 6.30 am to 9.30 am on Saturdays... Th[e]... Television Broadcasters' Council director... says advertising time limits cost the industry about \$6 million a year and television companies would face a tough time maintaining children's programmes with further revenue cuts. But advocacy groups point to heavy financial support by N[ZO], which spends almost \$10 million a year on normal programming for children. TVNZ will also be under Government pressure to provide for children under its proposed charter.

...Plans by T[TVNZ] to cut the number of commercials it screens late at night on TV One have been applauded by advertising agencies. The state-owned broadcaster will cut both the number of advertisements and promotional clips for its own shows from the end of the month in what it says is an experiment to see how viewers and advertisers respond. The trial, on weeknights only, will cut the amount of advertising screened between 9.30 pm and 10.30 pm from 12 minutes to eight... Promotional clips will be shortened from 90 seconds to 30... TVNZ denied the experiment had anything to do with the... Government. The... Coalition has indicated it wants to make TVNZ less commercially focused and the Minister of Broadcasting... has welcomed the move... According to TV One's general manager... the channel has been discussing the move for more than a year. A report TVNZ commissioned in 1997 revealed the organisation had one of the highest advertising ratios for a state-owned broadcaster in the English-speaking world... [By the way, Income Support] is spending up large on television commercials... The monitoring group Advertising Decision Support says the department spent \$178,480 in the week to July 24, behind only McDonald's, the National Bank, Telecom and Palmolive. [Already] under fire for overspending on staff training, [it] was the only Government department to feature in the top 20 spenders. Labour's social welfare spokes[person said]... "We already know the Government budgeted \$1.3 m... for [the department]'s... ad campaign. These rankings make it clear just how extravagant that is... [The department] is up there with major corporates... in its spending and advertising. It's hard to understand why an organisation with no competitors has to spend so much on branding. Beneficiaries have no choice about using [the department's] services."

...GOVERNMENT bodies spent at least \$35.5 million last year urging Kiwis to pay fines, and taxes, save for retirement, buy Lotto tickets and dob in fraudsters... By far the biggest advertiser is the Lotteries Commission. Its advertising and promotions budget rose from \$19.5m in 1993 to \$22.1m in the last financial year. [A commission spokesperson]... said advertising was crucial to its success in an increasingly competitive market. The... tide of information advertising is rising: five years ago there was no Department for Courts and no Office of the Retirement Commissioner. Now, both are ploughing big money into advertising. In the last financial year, the Retirement Commission spent \$1.2m on television ads and \$102,000 on brochures. Its present print and television campaign is costing around \$2m. The Department for Courts spent almost \$630,000... The vast majority of this was directed toward urging the payment of outstanding fines... Telling viewers about benefit crime cost Income Support almost \$1.3m and it spent \$2.4m on ads and brochures... Of all the agencies approached, only Inland Revenue reported a decline in its advertising budget, from \$1.2m five years ago to \$869,000 in the last financial year. However, that is set to rise in the coming year to \$3.1m. Advertising [by government departments] was seen to bring a variety of benefits, including greater awareness of obligations...

WHY DO THEY ADVERTISE? ...As you read [a newspaper or] magazine, you encounter advertisements that talk to you about the merits of a great number of products and services. If you have ever wondered why so much time and effort – and money – is spent on getting these messages to you, perhaps a word of explanation might be helpful. The basic answer is that *you* are important. No matter how hard the people in a factory work to make a good product, if you, as a possible buyer, don't know that the product exists... and where... you're not likely to buy it, are you? ...And how would you compare qualities or cost... In some way, each product or service you are offered has qualities that none of its competitors has. It is by building those qualities into its products and then drawing them to your attention that the advertiser hopes to get your business... *You* are the final judge. Your decisions spell success or failure for the advertisers... Without advertising, the economy would grind to a halt. And after all, we all advertise. You advertise what you are by the way you dress, the way you talk; how you present yourself to others. Thus, the advertising you see in [newspapers, magazines and elsewhere are] simply an extension of how you yourself behave.

IF YOU THINK ADVERTISERS ARE OUT TO INFLUENCE YOUR THOUGHTS, YOU'RE RIGHT... It's your right to choose. To make a well informed decision you need to know all you can. And advertising makes that possible. *Advertising. That's the way it works.*

That quote and the preceding one were part of a campaign promoting the notion that when consumers purchase goods or services this creates employment.

Approximately 900 people are employed in advertising agencies, and 200 in advertising-related services. Advertising revenue also contributes to the employment of another 9,000 people in the publishing, radio and television industries... Total advertising expenditure (media and non-media) in N[Z] for the year... was approximately \$1.9 billion. Of this, \$1.3 billion was spent on media advertising – television, radio, newspaper, magazines, direct mail, cinema and outdoor. The remaining \$600 million came from production and non-media advertising, such as promotions, and expenditure on advertising production. Forty-five percent of expenditure on media advertising (\$587 million) was made through advertising agencies, with agencies placing around 80[%] of advertising on television... [and] in magazines, 20[%] on radio... and... 15[%] in newspapers... At the end of March 1994, there were approximately 150 agencies, most of which (122) were N[Z]-owned, with the remainder (28... [- up] from 12 in 1983...) affiliated to multi-nationals by total or partial ownership (these tend to be the larger agencies)... The Advertising Agencies' Association of N[Z] is an incorporated body representing the interests of its... 42 member agencies... on issues affecting the advertising industry and agencies.

While advertising obviously *creates employment* within the advertising industry, if advertising manages to create jobs in other industries it can be at the expense of other jobs (e.g., if, due to advertising, a consumer changes brands, they are simply taking work from one supplier and giving it to another). Furthermore, the pro-advertising campaign made no effort to differentiate between the value of the employment it creates (e.g., society could do with the creation of more jobs in the education and health industries; society – and the education and health industries in particular – can do without, or would be better off not having, many of the new products and services currently being advertised merely to create employment)!

If you're interested in selling things [advertising ('the art of arousing the public's attention through various means of communication in order to induce them to buy goods and services or to influence their opinions on issues, people and institutions')] is **great. If you're interested in democracy it's awful.**

Another point worth noting about advertising is that, while it is apparently illegal to defraud, mislead or lie to consumers – especially in the US (yet it is okay in the US to, for example, sell 'sea monkeys' or 'pretend you're tourists wanting a passerby to take your photo when you're actually promoting the camera') – advertisements don't necessarily have to tell the truth (i.e., many misrepresent the abilities of their products or stretch the truth beyond recognition – often in an attempt to be comical – or make comments that are completely unsubstantiated). If every advertisement was required to tell nothing but the truth, those that, for example, portray germs as being scary cartoon-like creatures living under the toilet seat (causing over-sensitive

youngsters to become scared of using the toilet), make statements like ‘everyone’s favourite bread’ or ‘if it’s not Colman’s then it’s not mustard’, would be banned!

Fresh claims that television viewers don’t mind watching lots of advertisements are “the same old lie,” says a media watch group... [A spokesperson] for the “self-appointed watchdog” Media Aware, said the research proved nothing. “...There’s plenty of indignation out there. It’s one of the top 10 topics of conversation. Maybe people just figure it’s not worth complaining because nothing will change even if they do.” ...The... [TVNZ]-commissioned... Benchmarking Public Broadcasters report... says advertising levels have crept up on all three major channels... with commercials and self-promoting trailers now filling about 25[%] of each hour. Despite that trend, the report says “commercial load may not be a live issue with viewers” and quotes recent research in which most participants agreed that advertising was necessary. Most of those surveyed also said they did not want to pay a higher broadcasting fee in return for fewer commercials on TV1. [However, Media Aware] said the research featured loaded questions which elicited “the answers they wanted. They didn’t ask people outright ‘do you resent the amount of advertising on television?’” [The spokesperson] said it was up to the Government to regulate the level of advertising because broadcasters would never do so unsolicited.

...John Smith Pemberton, the Civil War veteran and morphine addict who invented... Coca-Cola... in Atlanta in 1886, might not have understood the Internet, but... would have recognised its power as a marketing and advertising tool. If ever [it] had been given \$25,000, [“I” would... spend \$24,000 advertising and the remainder making Coca-Cola. And then we’d all be rich.” Sadly, no one ever did give him \$25,000. While the product went on to make a lot of people a lot of money... Pemberton ended his life in debt. [Pemberton had] invented the drink as a replacement for a wine based on an extract of the Peruvian coca leaf, which had been found to possess invigorating qualities (not surprising; the extract of the coca leaf was, essentially, cocaine). With the temperance movement sweeping across the southern states, [Pemberton] was certain Atlanta would soon go dry. What [Pemberton] needed was a soft drink which was equally “invigorating.” His solution, a fruit-flavoured sugar syrup which combined the caffeine kick of the kola nut and the narcotic buzz of the coca leaf, was initially designed to be mixed with still water. Only when it was diluted by soda water, and became eligible for inclusion at the fashionable soda fountains of the day, did it take off. In a few years it became as solid a part of the young country’s mythology as the cowboy... Pemberton, seeking cash in 1887 to support his morphine habit... sold his invention to Asa Candler, who turned it into the mass-market product it became, and removed the cocaine along the way... TODAY, the Coca-Cola... formula is still a secret... [T]here may be two recipes. Or... half a dozen. And then again, maybe all the fuss about the secret recipe... is a complete sham. There is no doubt that what is sold in cans today and what... Pemberton mixed up in his lab are not the same. There’s no cocaine in modern Coke for a start. And it’s inconceivable that the company, expanding across the globe... [until its product was] on sale in more countries than belong to the... [UN,] did not eventually have to add enough preservatives to make it exportable. There is also no doubt that the... company has gone to great lengths to protect the very idea of the recipe’s confidentiality. In 1977, they pulled out of India because the Government demanded they reveal what was in their drink. They have defied similar orders in the U[S] and stubbornly ignored furious demands by a German Euro MP, who said customers had a right to know exactly what they were drinking. The secrecy is so much a part of the marketing image, it is too valuable to lose. “I talked to a senior Coca-Cola executive when I was researching my book,”... says... the [author of] *For God, Country and Coca-Cola*... “[who]... said... they couldn’t care less if people handied formulas about. They have spent over a century building the brand and the equity is not in some formula. It’s in the brand image. It’s down to the billions they’ve spent on the advertising.” For... [the] great-grandson of the [guy] who... may not have invented the drink but did name it and design the flowing script which has become the world’s most familiar graphic image – ...[but was] cut... out of the deal [Pemberton made with Candler, meaning] his family has none of the Coca-Cola billions... [–] that may be the ultimate humiliation... [The] great-grandson of the co-founder of Coca-Cola... [claims to have] custody of the recipe... [– although it is among] many issues to be settled in a divorce... [from] his estranged wife... [– yet, apparently, the] company whose secrets [the great-grandson] is trying to flog couldn’t give a damn whether it’s the real thing or not.

...Wars – and rumours of wars: don’t believe TV... The Afghan capital falls, and former President Najibullah is beaten, dragged behind a jeep, and shot in the head. His corpse is strung up in public, his mouth, nose, hands and pockets stuffed with cigarettes and banknotes... The Pakistani newspaper *Dawn* primly observed that “public hangings or other such acts of vengeance will only provide further encouragement to critics of political Islam who let no opportunity pass without equating Muslim militancy with blood-letting and terrorism.” True enough, but that rather misses the point. This sort of savagery is not exclusive to Muslim extremists. In war-torn Sierra Leone, one of the militias took to chopping off people’s arms at random earlier this year: terrorism gone mad. In Sri Lanka last month, as Government troops closed in on the Tamil Tiger headquarters at Kilinochchi, Tamil rebels rigged as human bombs launched a mass attack on the column. As soon as night falls in the hills of Burundi, the reciprocal massacres of Hutu and Tutsi villagers by the two tribes’ army and guerrilla forces resume. Surely the world is drowning in a tidal wave of violence. Surely the pundits who see ethnic hatreds and religious fanaticism as the driving forces of the post-Cold War world are right. Surely the television is right. No. Television has a very small screen, so even the smallest of wars fills it completely. It is what... [is] called a “linear” medium, which means that only a very few wars, genocides and so on will entirely fill its limited space for foreign news. And since every television news editor in the world lives by the axiom “if it bleeds, it leads,” news of war comes first... [T]elevision images overpower any rational analysis suggesting that war is in decline, and the media do not strive officiously to put matters in perspective... The result is that most of the world’s people live with the paranoid delusion that while things are pretty safe around here, the rest of the world is a bloody mess. Even the print media often succumb to this delusion, but at least in print rational analysis stands a fighting chance of competing with the pictures. So let us do some. Ten years ago there were a lot of large wars under way in the world. “Large,” for these purposes, means at least 10 dead a day, or let us say 4000 dead a year. Some of those wars, like Guatemala, Lebanon, Namibia, Eritrea, and Cambodia, were already more than a decade old in 1986. Others, like Sri Lanka, the Punjab, Iran v Iraq, Afghanistan and El Salvador, were relatively recent. But they all tended to last a long time, they were generally internal to one country and they usually killed more civilians than soldiers. The remainder of the list included the long war in the southern Philippines and the even longer war in the southern Sudan; the wars in Ethiopia, Somalia, Angola, Mozambique and Nicaragua; and (just squeaking in under the wire as a “large” war) the conflict in Western Sahara... All but four of those wars are now over. The wars in Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, the southern Sudan and Somalia continue but the first two show clear signs of an approaching end. And apart from sub-Saharan Africa, the only new war of a comparable scale that is raging today is the fundamentalist insurgency in Algeria. There was a rash of short wars in the southern fringes of the former Communist empire in 1992-96, as inextricably tangled ethnic groups living in mostly mountainous terrain sorted out their post-imperial relationships: Croatia, Bosnia, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia v Azerbaijan, Chechnya, Tajikistan. Two of those wars, Bosnia and Chechnya, certainly qualified as “large” at their height. But *all* of them are now over, or at least in long-term remission. There are... other conflicts in the world that we also call wars: Northern Ireland, Corsica, and Spain’s Basque provinces in Europe, Peru’s Sendero Luminoso and Mexico’s Zapatistas/EPR in Latin America; East Timor and Kashmir in Asia. But these insurgencies kill an average of only one person a day, or one person a week, which makes them a qualitatively different phenomenon. Besides, most of them are in decline – and most of them were already under way 10 years ago anyway. This leaves only black Africa, where there have been big new wars in Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The last two wars may now be ending, but the twin Hutu-Tutsi struggles in Rwanda and Burundi, though well below the genocidal levels of last year, continue to take a heavy toll. The rise of wars in the middle belt of Africa is deeply worrisome, above all to Africans, but the overall

conclusion is clear: worldwide, warfare is in steep decline. From eighteen large wars a decade ago, we are down to nine today. And if we omit the middle belt of Africa, we are down to three (of which two may soon end). [95%] of the world's people have never seen a war, except on television. Some three-quarters of the world's people now live in places at least 1000km from the nearest large war. The world is not falling apart. It is more peaceful than at any time in the past half-century. Universal brotherhood will not arrive any time soon, but [if] the television lies[, television] can't help it... [- unless sport continues] changing television. To assuage the hunger for sports, new channels are being launched at a tremendous pace. In America, ESPN, a cable network owned by Capital Cities/ABC, is starting a 24-hour sports news network; in Britain, BSkyB, a satellite broadcaster partly owned by [News Corporation], has two sports channels and is about to launch a third. Because people seem more willing to pay to watch sport on television than to pay for any other kind of programming, sport has become an essential part of the business strategy of television empire-builders such as [News Corp's tycoon]. Nobody understands the use of sport as a bait for viewers better than [him]. In particular, sport suggests an answer to one of the big problems that will face television companies in the near future: how can viewers, comfortable with their analogue sets, be persuaded to part with the hefty price of a new digital set and a subscription to an untried service? The answer is to create an exclusive chance to watch a desirable event, or to use the hundreds of channels that digital television provides to offer more variety of sports coverage than analogue television can offer. In the next few years, the main new outlet for sports programmes will be digital television. To understand how these multiple effects have come about, go back to those vast sums that television companies are willing to pay. In America... total spending on sports rights by television companies is about \$3 billion a year... Advertising revenue is the main recompense that television companies get for their huge investments in sport. Overall, according to *Broadcasting & Cable*, a trade magazine, sport generated \$5.2 b... or 10[%] of total television advertising revenues in America last year. The biggest purchasers of sports rights by far in America are the national networks. NBC alone holds more big sports rights than any other body has held in the history of television. It can, obviously, recoup some of the outlay by selling advertising... [but the] biggest growth in revenues from showing sports will increasingly come from subscriptions or payer-per-view arrangements. The versatility and huge capacity of digital broadcasting make it possible to give subscribers all sorts of new and lucrative services. In America, Direct TV and Primestar, two digital satellite broadcasters, have been tempting subscribers with packages of sporting events from distant parts of the country. "They have been creating season tickets for all the main events, costing \$140-220 per person per sport," says... a Californian consultancy. In Germany DF1, a satellite company jointly owned by Kirch and BSkyB, has the rights to show Formula One motor racing. It plans to allow viewers to choose to follow particular teams, so that Ferrari fanatics can follow their drivers, and to select different camera angles. In Italy, Telepiu, which launched digital satellite television in February, plans to offer viewers a package in September which will allow them to buy a season ticket to live matches played by one or more teams in the top Italian soccer leagues. The system's "electronic turnstile" is so sophisticated that it can shut off reception for subscribers living in the catchment area for a home game, to assuage clubs' worries that they will lose revenue from supporters at the gate... THE logical next step would be for some clubs or leagues to set up their own pay-television systems, distributing their games directly by satellite or cable. If they do, not all teams will benefit equally. In America, football has an elaborate scheme to spread revenues from national television across teams. But in other sports, including baseball, the wealth and size of a team's local market mean large differences in rights from local television. The New York Yankees make over \$70 m... a year from local television rights. At the other end of the scale, the Kansas City Royals make around \$6 m... a year. Not all players benefit equally, either. Television has brought to sport the "winner-take-all" phenomenon. It does not cost substantially more to stage a televised championship game than a run-of-the-week, untelevised match. But the size of the audience, and therefore the revenue generated, may be hugely different. As a result, players good enough to be in the top games will earn vastly more than those slightly less good, who play to smaller crowds. THE lure of money is already altering sport and will change it more. Increasingly, games will be reorganised to turn them into better television... Sports traditionalists resist changing their ways for the likes of... [News Corp's tycoon but, in] the long run, the players and clubs hold most of the cards. The television companies are more likely to be their servants than their masters. - 1996

BSkyB... reportedly has withdrawn a £40 million... bid for broadcast rights to Welsh [rugby] matches. A newspaper report said BSkyB had also pulled out of similar proposed deals with Ireland and Scotland, believed to be worth around £26 m... each... [- perhaps to enable BSkyB's owner.] News Corp Ltd to buy the Los Angeles Dodgers baseball team... for... \$509m... [Incidentally, a] four-year, \$586.16 m... deal[has been signed] between the US PGA and three major [US] television networks.

...Split between three big rivals, A[US]n pay television players have decided to restructure after losing millions of dollars in attempts to dominate the market... Television is well known for its ability to drive people mad. No, not the poor viewers who have to watch endless repeats of M*A*S*H or of fatuous A[US]n soaps. The malady also besets those who own the networks. A decade ago... [it was three prominent businesspeople - including the sailor who won the America's Cup for Perth -] who had a rush of blood and paid a billion or so to buy commercial free-to-air networks. They each lost a bundle - [one] being the only survivor thanks to the strength of his Westfield property empire. This time around the dollars are larger, and the losses, too, will be truly mammoth as... three... new players strive to make a go of it in pay TV... Foxtel, a cable joint venture between... News Corp... and Telstra, has the most subscribers at 200,000 despite having little of its own programming. Optus Vision, merged recently with new age telecommunications carrier Optus Communication, has around 180,000 cable customers and has the option of going satellite. The third is Australis Media, a financially challenged listed entity controlled by an offshoot of [US] cable giant Tele-Communications Inc and [the News Corp tycoon's] homegrown media mogul... [rival]. It has around 105,000 people receiving microwave signals, although it too has satellite ambitions. In the two years that pay TV has been on air, the three groups have lost countless millions. Optus Vision this year will have \$A340 million of red ink, while Australis is running out of money after only late last year having to be bailed out by financiers. Both Foxtel and Optus Vision's... owners are confronted with the likelihood of each making \$A1 billion writedowns. Now the three groups are prepared to concede that it is time to stop being silly. Last Friday, an agreement was reached between the [the mogul's and tycoon's] camps which could kick start an industry-wide restructuring. [The News Corp tycoon's rival] has sold his Australis junk bonds to [the tycoon], giving Foxtel crucial leverage because it can formulate a deal with TCI then the two have enough votes to merge... It seems that [the mogul, tycoon] and Telstra could become a powerful force in pay TV, just as they intended several years ago when the[y all]... formed an ill-fated joint venture... to bid for satellite licences. Australis is a key in any restructuring, despite its poor financial position, because it has a 25-year, \$A4.5 billion programming agreement to supply Foxtel with nearly all its content. Without that, there would be no Foxtel, yet the cost of it is enormous. Australis also has valuable microwave and satellite licences which are handy in the upcoming digital, direct-to-home age. The A[US]n Competition and Consumers Commission knocked back a merger between Foxtel and Australis a couple of years back, but any new proposal would be viewed differently because the industry is now more strongly established. Then, the worry was that Optus Vision would not survive. Not that survival now is by any means a certainty. Core Optus shareholder Bell South is reported to have wanted to liquidate the pay TV business, but instead it is finalising an agreement to sell its 24.5[%] shareholding to equal British partner Cable and Wireless. As of last week, C&W is firmly in control at Optus having installed the former head of its Mercury telephone business in Britain as the new Optus chief executive. The merger between Optus Communications... and Optus Vision... should bring cost savings. The company also is planning to tell its Hollywood movie studio suppliers that they will have to sell their product more cheaply. Optus reckons it can cut its pay TV losses in 1997-98 to something like \$A200 million, which is still a lot even if said quickly. It is planning, however, to become part of the industry restructuring so that it can stem the losses further and eventually bale out of pay TV to concentrate instead on broadband services like video-on-demand, internet, cable telephony and home shopping. The Optus view, which sounds sensible, is for the industry to share infrastructure

– be it cable, microwave or satellite – and compete on programming. That way, the ACCC should have no qualms. And, surely, customers couldn't care whether they had a cable system or a dish on their roof. All that they want is five movie channels, four sports channels and endless re-runs of M*A*S*H and home-grown soaps. The real worry is that, with pay TV currently costing between \$A40 and \$50 per month, the cost will double for those who want the complete package. There is no guarantee, therefore, that it will ever make much money for anyone unless there can be one supplier such as [News Corp] has in the UK with the vastly profitable BSkyB service.

...*Sky comes down from the clouds*... An ill-handled management shakeup at... [BSkyB] just as digital television appears on the horizon and competition regulators are suddenly flexing their muscles... [is why] analysts aren't urging investors to buy... [despite a 23%] fall in BSkyB stock[in the three weeks] since June 17... BSkyB made a stunning turn-around from the brink of insolvency in the early 1990s to become Britain's most profitable broadcaster, but now it and the pay-television industry are at a turning point. "The industry is undergoing tremendous changes, from BSkyB having a monopoly to there being several players in the game... People have to figure out what the consequences of that are." Moreover, BSkyB faces the changing broadcast landscape without its formidable chief executive... who will move to a non-executive board post at the end of the year for health reasons. Also leaving is [the chief executive's] protege and deputy managing director... who will exit day-to-day management to become a consultant to the company. Competitors got a more immediate boost on Tuesday, when British and E[U] competition authorities forced BSkyB to drop a one-third equity stake in British Digital Broadcasting... a digital terrestrial service that will eventually penetrate the 75[%] of British homes which don't subscribe to cable or satellite services. Yet another threat emerged on Wednesday when a consultant's report to the chair[person of British] football's Premier League asserted that the network's £640 million... four-year broadcasting deal represents only one-half of the rights' true value. The consultant's solution: Take back the rights and sell game packages directly to broadcasters. As well, questions abound regarding the influence of [the tycoon], whose News Corp holds a 40[%] stake in BSkyB and whose daughter... [aged] 27, now is BSkyB's programming director. Many investors wonder if the... [tycoon] has dynastic ambitions that might be at odds with their interests. On the positive side, [the] chief executive designate... is highly rated by industry participants... Speaking from London, [the former chief executive] scotched rumours that [it] was set to emerge as an equity partner in... [the tycoon]'s planned buyout of... Sky Network... [The NZer claims to be unaware of what the tycoon]'s intentions were with Sky in... [NZ. His] reasons for stepping down from BSky-B last month... were legitimate, [the NZer] maintains. "I have asthma." ...[his] seven-year reign at BSky-B saw it transformed from a company losing \$33 million a week to one that made more than \$500 million pre-tax profit last year... British industry sources doubt that [the NZer] is headed for retirement though it[is] also considered unlikely that [the tycoon] will want him to join a competitor.

...News Corp has posted an annual profit of \$A720 million... down... from \$1.02 billion last year. The fourth quarter profit of \$274 million was dragged lower by earnings from its [US] Fox Broadcasting network. A dividend of 1.5c was declared, unchanged from last year. News Corp owns 49.44[%] of NZ[']s Independent Newspapers Ltd[, whose]... managing director... was paid \$437,976 for the year... In the previous year his [pay] package was \$457,058.

...From humble beginnings, Sky Network Television Ltd looks set to become the South Pacific cornerstone of [News Corp's] global pay television empire. A deal valuing Sky at \$700 million to \$800 million is expected to be announced by... Independent Newspapers Ltd on Monday. Analysts say INL itself will take a little less than half of the broadcaster. But another [News Corp] company, BSkyB, will take between 5 and 10[%], securing control for... News Corp... Some politicians have claimed the tie-up was timed to pre-empt any move to introduce restrictions on cross-media ownership. The television industry... says a likelier explanation is a coming change of regulations [in AUS]... From July next year, pay television companies from outside A[US] will be allowed, for the first time, to broadcast foreign content directly to A[US]'s 18 million viewers... Come July Sky will be able, with the right satellite connections, to broadcast to both [AU]S and N[Z], delivering a sizeable market for the sports rights on which [News Corp] has spent billions... [News Corp's] satellite empire already extends around the world. In Britain, 40[%]-owned BSkyB, once losing \$24 million a week, now dominates the pay television delivery market, and last year turned in an operating profit of \$770 million. It plans to go beyond the mere broadcasting of scheduled programmes by introducing interactive services, such as internet access, home shopping, and home banking... ASkyB is gearing up for a \$US1 billion launch in the U[S] later this year, and JSkyB will follow in Japan. Deals have been struck with operators in Europe and Latin America. All up, [News Corp's tycoon] has estimated that [his company] will have to spend another \$4 billion on his global satellite dream before [it] starts to get his money back. The vast scale of his ambitions in delivery markets goes hand-in-hand with plans to dominate content. His avowed intention is to tie up the screening rights to major sports world-wide, and to use them as a "battering ram" to break into new television markets. In addition to southern hemisphere rugby, [News Corp] holds long-term rights to screen the [US NFL], English cricket and Premier League soccer, and the Five Nations rugby tournament. Programming is distributed by Fox Sports in the U[S] and Sky Sports in Europe... News Corp will be looking to fit [NZ's Sky TV] into its global plan, detailed by [the tycoon] last year. "Digital broadcasting will enable us to deliver filmed entertainment, television, audio services, and data to hundreds of millions of people all over the globe. This capability has the power to transcend the internet – by delivering data quicker and more cost-effectively through multimedia satellite delivery platforms," [the tycoon] told shareholders. "Once we have established our platforms around the world – a goal which is well within reach – the potential for our company, and our investors, is truly awesome."

...Six months ago, the business community was eagerly awaiting media company... [INL's] interim result. A last-minute delay in its reporting date triggered speculation it was poised to announce an investment in pay TV operator Sky... But it was not to be. Twenty-six weeks on, and there is a certain sense of *deja vu*. Another result, and still no deal with Sky. INL shareholders must be anxious to know what's going on since a Sky stake would expose them to a new medium. The fact it needs a bright new business is shown by INL's latest results. After a dip last year, it has managed to claw back to another record profit... of around \$56 million... but the upside is limited. Its [US] operations, which mostly consist of community papers in Texas and California, again performed poorly, producing a loss. Its A[US]n operations, which accounted for nearly half its revenue, were also unimpressive. However, Gordon and Gotch, the troubled book and magazine distributor foisted on INL seven years ago by its controlling shareholder, News Corp, has been significantly restructured and is expected to perform much better over the next few years. In N[Z], INL has managed to wring a healthy profit out of its businesses, despite weak advertising revenues. It has done this by screwing down costs and benefiting from lower newsprint prices. Its net debt is now down to \$28 million, a reduction of \$38 million during the year. A revaluation of its mastheads has also helped boost shareholders funds to \$921 million, probably in readiness for the Sky deal. With... News Corp no doubt prodding it from behind, INL has always harboured ambitions to get into television. Flush with cash, it looks like it might finally sign on the dotted line. The real question with Sky is its profit potential. It hints at breaking even this year after a \$20.6 million lost last year thanks to its growing subscriber base. But two factors threaten this outlook: looming competition from cable companies and Sky's shift to satellite broadcasting. The latter requires costly investment and the plethora of Sky channels will fragment its audience... If the Sky deal goes ahead, investors will probably need to be patient about a payoff. If [it]... falls through, they will almost certainly demand INL return most of its cash pile to them in a special dividend or buyback.

...[existing Sky TV] shareholders are likely to push for a float when the new board meets following yesterday's purchase by I[NL] of a 48[%] holding. However... the... INL chair[person]... said that... the company had no plans... [to] float... at this stage... [In international news,] Fiji Television Limited, which is run and part-owned by TVNZ[(with whom it)]... recently signed a new \$100,000-a-month contract... for the supply of programmes[]... is under increasing Government criticism with the Acting P[M]... yesterday accusing the network of being insensitive on religious and cultural matters. [The acting PM], who is also Education Minister, said F[TV] had failed to meet its undertaking to provide cross-cultural and

cross-religious programming... [S]o far the only local cultural programmes aired on F[TV] were provided free by the Government's National Video and Television Centre and the South Pacific Commission. "F[TV] has failed to satisfy the agreement... The cultural programmes are provided by somebody else and that's not enough." [The acting PM said FTV]'s... religious programmes... solely involved one religious group from overseas and continued to ignore local organisations... Her comments came after the Government announced it was revoking F[TV]'s exclusive television rights, a clear move to put the network under greater pressure in the face of some criticism from viewers about its programme content... F[TV] was launched eight months ago with an eight-year licence. There was a provision to extend that licence for a further four years. It provides a free-to-air channel and two pay channels. Last week the Government granted a licence for a Fiji Hawaii joint venture, Fiji Vision, to set up a rival service, providing at least 15 pay channels, four of which would be given to the Government free for the purposes of cultural and educational programmes... F[TV] has called a special board meeting next Monday to discuss the Government's action and is also seeking legal opinion.

...[there was anxiety aplenty for the TVNZ broadcaster (r:p1165, ln68 + I, p1017, ln19) who is the host] of *This Is Your Life* last week when... the [show's subject – an All Black who is the *greatest No 7 in the world* –]seemed determined not to attend the rugby awards at which [it] was ambushed. Seems the [No 7] doesn't particularly like formal occasions and had been booked for an engagement in Fiji. When strings were secretly pulled to have the Fiji trip called off, [the No 7] was still resisting pressure to attend the awards night. The producers finally called on [his] All Black coach... to extract a commitment from [the No 7] to attend. Even then, [the No 7] was 45 minutes late. "We were like nervous wrecks," confesses [a spokesperson for] Touchdown Productions. Still, judging by the ratings, all the tension was worthwhile. It was the most watched show of the week, pulling 24[%] of all viewers, and [the spokesperson] is looking forward to more shows next year. A subject has been chosen for the first *This Is Your Life* of 1998... [In related news, a recent] study, *Transforming Government Enterprises*, by Professors... of Auckland University, analyses the formation, or transformation, of the Electricity Corp, CoalCorp, TVNZ, Works, and Government Computing Services... to operate as successful businesses and be as profitable and efficient as comparable businesses not owned by the Crown. They cite TVNZ Ltd as an example of the problems that can arise when that brief was mixed with non-commercial objectives... TVNZ was to have the "predominant objective of reflecting N[Z]'s identity and culture and to encourage N[Z] programming." ..."The problems of continued ownership are most severe for those SOE's such as TVNZ Ltd which, for strategic reasons, wish to diversify and to stay abreast of fast-moving technologies or... need a major injection of risk capital in order to expand into new markets," the study says... However... TVNZ's return on equity between 1989 and 1992 averaged 11.8[%]. Over the same period A[US]n TV companies made losses 37[%] of the time, and averaged a return of 7.7[%] when they did make a profit.

...During the last decade we have experienced the almost complete erosion of BBC-style television broadcasting by T[TVNZ], all in the cause of becoming more commercially competitive and reducing the financial burden on the taxpayer... [A NZ] *Herald*... editorial on this subject... [said] that the retiring chief executive [of TVNZ] would "...sooner taxpayers' money be spent on schools and hospitals and social redistribution rather than making elite programmes for a minority." The present sorry state of television has left this... country's intellectual elite, or anyone who has reached university entrance-level education... with programmes designed for the lowest common denominator, or persons with an average intellect of a third-former. The dumbing down of state broadcasting can probably go no further. Many would agree that now all that taxpayer funding is doing is subsidising TVNZ's principal customers – the advertisers. Let us privatise TV One and Two. The advertisers are wealthy enough to pay their own costs and let us heed [the retiring chief executive]'s advice and use the funds provided by the Government for TVNZ for other more useful purposes. There is no reason why this "elite"... should continue to pay licence fees.

...I sometimes wonder where the television industry was when the brains were handed out. Earlier this year (as with other years) TVNZ and TV3 were placing self-congratulating ads regarding the TV awards they had won, while around the same time, Sky were announcing that they had signed up their 300,000th subscriber, we have every other shop renting videos and recently [the NZ *Herald*] published an article stating that the number of movie visits had increased about 25[%] for the year; i.e. television viewers are deserting in droves. Now we have... Total Media saying "While N[Z] TV carried more advertising than A[US] and the U[S, NZ]ers also watched less [TV]." Did Total Media never hear of cause and effect.

...In several weeks T[TVNZ] will release an interim profit... likely to have its executives running for cover. Suggestions are... it could be... half last year's profit of \$22.9 m... But even with such bleak tidings on the horizon, TVNZ is to spend... \$8 m... on lifting its holding in Sky... from 16.3[%] to 17.49[%]. What's more, the [S]OE can raise its holding... up to 20[%] without ministerial approval, according to a statement of corporate intent tabled with the Government at the beginning of the year. Such a move would cost... \$16 m... based on the \$308.9 m... price I[NL] paid for a 48[%] stake in Sky this week... [T]he shareholding was bought from the [US]-based HKP Partnership of Time-Warner, TCI, Ameritech and Bell Atlantic.

...[TVNZ plans] to spend... hundreds of million of dollars over the next five years on the rights to key sporting events, as competition between the major broadcasters for high-profile sporting entertainment continues to hot up. TVNZ's latest interim report showed it was committed to spending \$291 million on programme rights at the end of June, compared with \$105 million at the same time last year. The nearly three-fold increase is a huge jump on previous years, and comes at a time when the... broadcaster is facing falling revenues from advertising, and is undergoing a major restructuring intended to trim costs and refocus on its core operations... The spend up[, which includes]... rights to the next three Summer and Winter Olympics and the next two Commonwealth Games, as well as local rugby, cricket and netball... has prompted TV3 to question how its rival will be able to justify its outlay, particularly as it is unlikely to recoup the cost of major events such as the Olympics. TVNZ admitted earlier this year that it had made a "sizeable" loss on its coverage of the Atlanta Games. TV3's managing director... believed TVNZ had "grossly overbought" because of paranoia about TV3 and TV4. However, competition with Sky was also to blame... The sort of money pay-TV was able to offer was putting "incredible pressure" on free-to-air broadcasters around the world. At the end of last year, Sky was committed to spending \$219 million on programme rights for various periods up to 2003. In his last annual report, TVNZ's former chair[perso]n... highlighted the escalating cost of sports rights as one of the main challenges facing TVNZ... [● Back in 1972 the chairperson] of the Auckland Rugby Union... [said that rugby would] lose thousands of dollars because of a live network telecast of the... test between... [the Wallabies and the All Blacks, after the then NZ Broadcasting Corporation had] announced it would pay \$8750 to televise the game – by far the highest price it [had] ever paid for a sports fixture.

...SUBSCRIBE to Sky or miss out completely on televised rugby – live or delayed. Analysts have warned that could be the scenario facing rugby fans this time next year... Sky's contract with News Corp gives the pay-TV broadcaster the N[Z] rights to screen all rugby of provincial level and above in N[Z, AUS] and South Africa. The 10-year contract has another eight years to run. Sky also signed a three-year contract with TVNZ that allows the state broadcaster to screen delayed coverage of certain major games. That contract expires at the end of next year. Sky was prepared to make a deal with TVNZ, for an undisclosed but considerable sum, because it needed money to offset the cost of its deal with News Corp. TVNZ was keen to sign the deal because rugby commands such high ratings. But when the contract comes up for renewal... Sky's balance sheet will be a lot healthier[, which means]... the company will have three options... It can roll over the contract in its present form, choose a middle ground with reduced coverage for TVNZ, or slash coverage completely. Which course Sky takes will depend on how it weighs the revenue it stands to gain from extending the contract, against the extra subscribers it is likely to attract if it becomes the only source of televised rugby, live or delayed.

...A phone call from his dad... convinced... [the son that it] needed a new camera. "The All Blacks were playing Scotland in Dunedin on a really windy day. The aerial camera work was atrocious... My dad rang from Wales to check it wasn't me who'd filmed it because it was so bad. I knew then that if people who knew nothing about TV were complaining about it, then it was time I did something." So... [the freelance camera operator] jumped on a plane to Toronto and convinced camera giants Wescan to give him the latest in film technology – a gyro-stabilised camera which looks like a monster golf ball with a black eye. [The son] had the resume to impress the... suits[, having] worked for the BBC and ITV in London before

[being] approached by Sir Peter Blake to sail non-stop around the world with him on catamaran Enza... [His] images from on board during the historic circumnavigation, using a compact video camera, earned him a swag of television awards... [The son] then went to the America's Cup and used the gizmo for the first time, catching OneAustralia split like a banana and gurgled to the bottom of the Pacific, and] used the camera again during the Olympic yachting at Savannah. The latest version, insured for \$1 million, arrived in Auckland three weeks ago... It's a powerful piece of machinery. From 2500ft above Eden Park, [the son] can zoom in on... [an All Black's] bootlaces. The son] has a working relationship with Helicopter Line in Auckland... A similar camera has been brought in from England by... rival Auckland helicopter company Hele-Tranz. The FLIR Ultramedia camera, attached to the nose of a helicopter, was used at the Olympics on the equestrian, kayaking and mountain biking courses. On the first day it was assembled, the camera shot film of a high-speed police chase in Auckland, which was broadcast around the world.

...High bandwidth frequencies, which could be used for national or localised HDTV (high definition television) broadcasting or[sending] high speed interactive data into businesses and homes, go up for auction next week. Six 26 gigahertz frequencies, along with VHF-FM sound, VHF-TV and UHF-TV spectrum licences will be offered. According to the Ministry of Commerce there has been "a fair amount of interest" in the 26GHz offerings – [3] in the 150MHz range and [3] at 500MHz... An obvious candidate would be Clear Communications, which is continually evaluating options to achieve independent access to the local loop currently owned by Telecom... First Media... knew the auction was coming but hadn't put much thought into it. Sky Network executives refused to comment, claiming the imminent float of the company here and in the U[S] prevented it.

...Sky T[V] is tipped to make a... debut on the sharemarket – seeking up to \$150 million from investors. A decision on timing is expected to be made this week but a prospectus has apparently already been prepared. It is likely that a listing of American Depository Receipts – allowing Sky shares to trade in the US – will be sought in tandem with a local listing. Early indications are that Sky's owners will be trying to get the issue away at about a 20[%] premium on the 210c a share... which I[NL] paid in August for a 48[%] stake. Sky]... generates around \$180 million in cash a year... While Sky requires substantial funds for its planned move next year into digital broadcasting, it has recently set up a \$250 million banking facility. At the time INL bought, interest-bearing debt was \$169 million... [But after] years of substantial losses, [Sky] has finally broken even this year with a net profit of \$2.3 million for the six months to June... Sky's other shareholders are T[VNZ] with 17.49[%], Heatley Jarvis Investments with 17.01[%], Todd Communications (9.44[%]) and Tappenden Construction (8.06[%]). Each increased their respective stakes recently when INL bought its 51.5[%] holding from the U[S]-based HKP Partners and quickly sold down to 48[%] so as not to consolidate the holding. While some might sell a portion of their shares, none are thought to be keen to exit completely at this stage. The push to list Sky began... six months ago after the failure of a proposed deal that would have seen INL take an 83.2[%] stake in the company, leaving T[VNZ] as the only remaining shareholder.

...T[VNZ], in an about-turn, is selling shares in Sky Television in an upcoming float. Until now all the indications from the state-owned asset have been that it wants to increase its holding (now at 17.49[%]) in the country's largest pay television operator... TVNZ recently put its hand in its pocket for around \$7.7 million to pick up some of the shares sold by INL... The shares were bought at... the same price INL paid... It is understood that a report by... the global co-ordinator of the Sky float, values the shares at 284c each. Assuming \$173 million of debt, that puts Sky's equity value at \$870 million. If such a price were achievable, TVNZ's total stake would be worth \$152 million. If TVNZ only decided to sell the shares it bought from INL, it would make a handsome \$2.7 million profit for little effort. TVNZ has viewed its holding in Sky as strategic. Both compete for programming, especially live sport... And in a further development, TVNZ is understood to have set the wheels in train for the possible sale of its... transmission arm... BCL[, which]... is TVNZ's most profitable business and has long been touted for sale... INVESTORS excited by talk of Sky... seeking a sharemarket listing... got a[n]... extra fillip... last week... wh[en]... Telecom pulled the plug on its subsidiary, cable TV company First Media, a Sky competitor... Sky's chief operating officer... said Sky had always regarded TVNZ and TV3 as its major competitors, and had not lost subscribers to First Media... First Media would continue to serve its existing customers, as required by their contracts, but would halt its market expansion, which had been mainly in the Auckland area... [I]n a report prepared for INL before the media company took its 48% stake in Sky... investment adviser... Bancorp identified five existing and potential competitors: ...First Media, Clear Communications, Saturn Communications, regional electric power utilities, and A[US]n pay-TV operators. Clear Communications, like Telecom, makes most of its money from its phone operations, but it is 25% owned by British Telecom, which is involved in pay television in Britain. Bancorp noted the company had announced cable trials in selected areas, though with minimal roll-out, and expected Clear to pursue a joint pay TV and telephone strategy. Clear[']s corporate communications manager... said last week the company was not providing cable service, although this was one of many options it was considering... If the threat of competition to Sky from across the Tasman has been lessened, that still leaves Saturn Communications. The Lower Hutt company, with US and Canadian parents, had a fibre optic network accessible to 16,000 homes and 2300 subscribers at the end of June, offering about 40 channels. Saturn plans to build cable – for television and audio – to reach 500,000 homes, or 40% of N[Z] households, over the next few years, according to a report filed with US regulatory authorities... [Sky plans] to launch a satellite service, offering up to 30 channels... next year... In the past six months, more than 10,000 customers have signed up for the satellite service, which offers just two channels at present.

...Telecom's decision... to scale back its efforts with its cable television offshoot First Media have been seen as inevitable and wise in the industry and by analysts... It is perhaps not surprising that the head of one of First Media's rivals in the pay TV market agreed with the rationale behind the move... Saturn's modelling showed that pay TV alone could not be profitable on the kind of network First Media has been building... Telecom is estimated to have spent about \$70 million in the venture. But it will truncate the network once 65,000 homes are passed in Auckland and Wellington towards the end of the year. In a significant shift in public stance, Telecom's chief executive... said this week that the bulk of First Media's business had always been expected to come from high-speed data services such as the Internet rather than the highly publicised cable business. But those services can now be channelled through cheaper new technologies such as ADSL which use existing copper wire. ADSL is on trial by Telecom in the Wellington suburb of Khandallah... And while ADSL is widely viewed as being unsuitable for video, that may ultimately not be the case with trials by British Telecom at present testing ADSL as a vehicle for video... Telecom is confident it will be able to deliver compressed movies... across the country using the existing telephone lines by the end of next year... Nevertheless, it seems likely Telecom would like to quit the pay [TV] business altogether. But in addition to an unspecified number of customers to service, it is believed to be locked into long-term contracts.

...Cable television is... bringing... the choice of the latest feature films at the flick of a switch. In Auckland, Telecom subsidiary First Media is now laying cables in Remuera and Glenfield after hooking up an undisclosed number of customers in Pakuranga and Howick. Customers pay \$15 to \$32 a month and can select films they wish to watch through a service called Near Video On Demand, which starts the film within 30 minutes. The prices are similar to video rentals – \$7 for new releases and \$5 for other films – but the advantage is convenience... The market is even more vibrant in Wellington, thanks to competition from rival cable company Saturn... First Media's programming director... said it was "street warfare" as the companies raced to lay cable and link up customers... By the year's end, 75,000 homes will have cable outside their door if they want it.

...Cable television companies want to add to the number of overhead wires on the... skyline. Rather than burying their business underground and out of sight, the companies are negotiating with... electricity suppliers for the right to put their cables on the existing power poles. The overhead option is considerably cheaper for both power and communications companies, but an eyesore for residents... The visual impact of the cables may become an issue here, as it has in A[US], but the cable companies say the extra lines will make little difference... [However,] First Media... has already run into problems in Remuera, where residents objected to the odd-looking junction boxes it began installing on footpaths. The same boxes are found throughout Pakuranga and Howick, and are due to appear next in Glenfield. A Telecom spokes[person]... said the Remuera project was

on hold... Battles have raged in Melbourne and Sydney as residents complained about loss of views, with television cables strung at different heights to power and telephone wires. As well, some councils have taken steps to bill the cable companies for the use of air rights.

...Channel Seven[’s chairperson]... has accused the Federal Government of making A[US] look like a “media banana republic[]” because]... the Government seemed determined to allow his competitor [– Australis’ media mogul –]to gain control of the Fairfax media group... [and] proposed changes to foreign media ownership regulations threatened the capacity of his Seven network to grow internationally... [By the way, News Corp’s tycoon – recently] dubbed the world’s unofficial Minister of Communications – is making tax minimisation an art, legally. His empire is only paying 7.8c in the dollar in tax on profits, far less than other media organisations.

...In the mid-80s, [the]tycoon... renounced his A[US]n birthright and became a[US] citizen. The move allowed him to comply with [US] law, which prohibits foreign ownership of television stations, and helped extend his global entertainment and media empire – which already included key newspapers in A[US] and Britain – into America. The empire today includes 22 [US television] stations, the 20th Century Fox movie studio, a huge broadcast network (Fox), *TV Guide* magazine and, in Britain, BSkyB. The [US subsidiaries provide hi]s company, News Corp, with the vast majority of its revenue and profit. But... the... [tycoon] has paid corporate income taxes at one-fifth the rate of his chief rivals in the U[S] throughout the 90s, according to corporate documents and company officials. There is no suggestion from [US] authorities of any impropriety in the way[the] 66-year-old has done business. The international tax and accounting strategies employed by News Corp may, in fact, make [him] a model for the 21st-century entrepreneur – a captain of industry who operates under so many flags that it is hard to know where his allegiances lie or how his businesses function. News Corp, in its most recent fiscal year, reported paying \$US103 m... in worldwide taxes on operating income of \$1.32 b... (an effective tax rate of 7.8[%])... By contrast, [US]-based competitor Walt Disney Co’s effective tax rate was 28[%]. Viacom Inc – the parent of MTV and Paramount Pictures – paid 22[%]. Time Warner Inc, a [US] media and entertainment company roughly the same size as News Corp, paid 17[%]... News Corp’s tax rate has averaged 5.7[%] this decade, while Walt Disney, Time Warner and Viacom have averaged 27.2[% to 32.5%. Although the tycoon became a US] citizen in 1985 – and the [person] behind such American staples as Bart Simpson, and... the LA Dodgers – News Corp has remained incorporated in A[US]. Consequently, it is not clear how much – if any – of News Corp’s income tax payment last year went to the [US] Treasury, despite such highly profitable [US] operations as Fox TV. While declining to provide specifics on News Corp’s [US] taxes... the company’s general counsel, said: “We had a lot of start-up businesses in the US that lost money and that creates [deductions and credits that offset taxation]. It has an effect on the amount of taxes we pay.” [The tycoon]’s holdings are many times larger than they were a decade ago and span five continents. Because his publications and television stations influence the culture and politics of dozens of countries, a biography... dubbed him “one of the most powerful [guys] on earth”... Two features particularly stand out in News Corp’s operation, with regards to its financial picture. First, by remaining A[US]n, the company is able to utilise arcane accounting rules which have pumped up reported profits and greatly aided... periodic acquisition sprees. Under [AUSn] accounting practices... News Corp legitimately reported that it earned \$561 m... last year. Under the tougher rules required of [US]-based corporations, however, News Corp would have lost \$155 m... according to documents filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The A[US]n difference helps portray News Corp in a more favourable light to investors. Second, News Corp has mastered the use of the overseas tax haven. The company reduces its annual tax bill by channelling profits through dozens of subsidiaries in low-tax or no-tax places... The overseas profits from movies made by 20th Century Fox, for instance, flow into a News Corp-controlled company in the Caymans, where they are not taxed... Figuring out how News Corp arrives at its taxes is difficult because of its sheer sprawl and complexity. News Corp’s organisation chart contains 789 business units incorporated in 52 countries, including... Cuba. A one-line listing for each operation consumes 10 pages of small type in its annual report. News Corp does not reveal much about these businesses. It is impossible to tell from published documents, for instance, how much profit and revenue each unit generated, even in such major operations as 20th Century Fox and the Fox network. The overall financial picture is further muddled by complex inter-company borrowings. [The tycoon] himself once conceded that the company’s intricate financial interior confused even some of his most senior executives. “One of the things I would never attempt to calculate is how News Corp arrives at its tax rate, or why,” says... a Wall St analyst... “[The tycoon] is perpetually able to have the best of both worlds. [The tycoon] doesn’t tell as much as people would like to know, and... doesn’t have to” – except for meeting minimal disclosure standards required by regulators[in the US]... Some other multinationals adopt similar tax strategies, of course. For example, [US] drug companies for years reduced their... taxes by assigning huge research costs to their [US] operations – and huge taxable profits to tax-exempt subsidiaries in Puerto Rico and Ireland. Inland Revenue Service officials say [US]-based companies face taxes on these subsidiaries if they are more than half controlled by [US] shareholders. But that doesn’t apply to News Corp. As for playing by A[US]n accounting rules, the IRS said it would treat any effort by a [US] company to reincorporate in A[US] as a taxable transaction, exposing it to a massive tax bill... News Corp’s tax structure has, however, drawn interest from governments on at least two continents in recent years. Officials in A[US] have highlighted News Corp’s use of tax shelters to minimise its A[US]n tax bill... Israeli officials late last year went beyond merely studying News Corp. Tax authorities in Jerusalem and Haifa raided a News Corp subsidiary in an investigation into whether it had schemed to evade taxes on \$150 m... in income. News Corp vigorously denies any wrongdoing... [Incidentally, a] consortium of Israeli and foreign companies have agreed to lay a \$US80 m... undersea telecommunications cable between Israel, Cyprus and Italy.

...There will never be a better time for entrepreneurs in N[Z] than at present, as long as they don’t get caught up in their own hype, and can meet the challenges of the ever-changing world of technology... [– where] computers, satellite television, and most importantly chips or integrated circuits, [are]reinventing themselves in an 18 month cycle... That is the word from... [someone] who has probably put more cable television networks together than anyone in the world, and enjoys the thrill of being at the forefront of change... “We used to think in terms of five years to replace things, it is now 15 to 18 months whether its new software or whatever. If you understand the pitfalls... know what to watch for... and have a modicum of skill... you might profit and benefit from what’s happening.” North American born[, the entrepreneur] and his wife... bought a 22ha site overlooking Cable Bay in the Far North in 1990. [The entrepreneur] began to develop a business plan to service the local community with cable television – an undertaking [it] was intimately familiar with, being the 54th cable network [the entrepreneur] has set up. The couple now have permanent residency and a son... who is two years old. “I get a great deal of satisfaction in being on the leading edge of the entire South Pacific. We have more television channels here than anyone in A[US, NZ], or anyplace else south of the equator. You have to go to Buenos Aires to find a cable channel that offers more,”... The family-owned company, Far North Cable TV, provides... television programming for the remote communities of Mangonui, Coopers Beach, Cable Bay, Chucks Cove and Taipa, using nine satellite dishes. [The entrepreneur has] negotiated contracts with content providers for 80[%] of his channels – the rest are free to air. The family has invested \$640,000 in the business and has laid co-axial cable beside 900 homes with about 300 subscribers. As N[Z] becomes more confident with the idea of channel surfing, [the entrepreneur] believes penetration will naturally hit 50[%] over the next couple of years. Subscribers pay an entry-level fee of \$25 a month for 15 channels, 44 channels including two from Sky costs \$75 a month but most take 42 channels at \$50 a month. “It pays all of its operating costs, it pays the interest and the principal of the money we borrowed...” [The entrepreneur] estimates it’ll take five years to pay the bank off. As a pre-teen, [the future entrepreneur and author, who]... has lost track of how many books [it] has written – somewhere around 15... – ...became keen on amateur radio and was “a quick self learner” on anything related to science and technology[, before taking up] an interest in the cable television industry in the 50s when... barely of voting age... But the career path [the future entrepreneur] took for a time was journalism... “On my wall there’s a photograph of John F. Kennedy on the back of

a train – you don't have to look closely to see that's me shoving a microphone in his face. I spent a couple of months with the Kennedy campaign on the road." ...[the future entrepreneur, who had] trained in journalism at the University of California... went on to the American ABC radio and television network.

...Dow Jones and NBC... confirmed they will merge the European and Asian operations of cable channel CNBC with Dow Jones' Asia Business News and Europe Business News. No financial details have been given, but both Dow Jones and NBC will take charges against fourth-quarter earnings because of the restructuring... [In local news, if you've been unable to get up in time for *Telstra Business* on TV One (6.30 am weekdays), now you can pick up bits of the show at more acceptable hours... TV One has added streaming video capability to its Web site... which lets Internet users watch selected daily business news video clips. [The]TV One-Online content manager... said that while the service was still experimental and the quality not ideal, rapid improvements in both bandwidth and video-streaming software would push broadcasting frontiers. "I'm looking forward to the day when we can stream the whole programme,"... The technology used is Real Networks' RealVideo, which comprises a video server hosted and managed locally by ITvideoV Network... coupled with RealPlayer – a video plug-in that works with both Netscape and Microsoft Explorer Internet browser software... About 25 TV stations around the world including Fox News... are broadcasting TV programmes on the Net.

...The Ministry of Commerce believes its new Internet-based auction system could save a lot of time and money – once the bugs are fully ironed out. The bugs were cited as the reason for this week's cancellation of the auction of radio frequencies – although BellSouth had threatened to take the ministry to a judicial review over lack of notification and consultation of the... process. [The auction] project manager... was confident of the system's robustness... "Our system is a very complicated mechanism. It is designed to take a large number of simultaneous hits. The entire population of N[Z] could get on and bid... [Y]ou can put multiple bids in and watch and see what you can afford..." The Ministry... invested \$50,000 developing the system which is based on technology used by the U[S] Federal Communications Commission... for allocating radio spectrum...

In 1995 the Government accepted that the nation needed a well-run public radio service with the Radio N[Z] Act, and gave it security of funding... Audiences have responded with enthusiasm and R[NZ]'s ratings have increased in a very competitive market. The act required public radio to balance programming, broadcasting standards, audience response, social responsibility and business viability. These are all things that should apply to a television channel; however, the channel would need to be in public ownership for social responsibility to be an important factor... The last time anyone [in NZ] tried to get television which paid even token lip-service to social responsibility was in 1987 when the Broadcasting Tribunal... [ignored the concerns of rural] groups... that a third channel could be introduced in Auckland before their areas can receive the... [TV2 signal (the) 100 residents in the coal town of Seddonville, 50km north of Westport... can get only TV1... – between 10,000 and 12,000 [NZers] cannot see TV2... and... [a]bout 2000 people living in small, remote pockets... cannot get TV1) and]... awarded the warrant for a third television channel to TV3. It was to be identifiably N[Z] in character; it was bound under the conditions of its operating warrant to an initial target of at least 26.5[%] of programmes that reflected and developed N[Z] culture and it was a commercial failure. Overseas programme rights were needed and TVNZ had them for 19 of the top 20 British programmes, six of the top 10 from the U[S], six or seven from A[US] and 64 mini-series. Politics can override economics as we saw when the Government removed any limit on foreign broadcasting ownership for the sale of TV3. N[Z], with the population of a city in world terms, has a proud history of both innovation and compromise when it comes to broadcasting... "Television is the only medium that counts for me. It is the biggest platform and you should fight, kick and bite your way onto it." So said Dennis Potter, the English writer and playwright who used television in more innovative ways than any other broadcaster. It mattered so much to the miner's son from the Forest of Deane that [Dennis] was prepared to use violence to get on it. What are N[Z]ers prepared to do for it? ...[the] Professor... who headed [the Iron Maiden]'s committee of inquiry into the BBC's finances and who was a staunch advocate for deregulation, says that there is a case for the preservation of programmes that tax-payers might want, but as consumers might not bring into being. It is the same argument that says the public is willing to pay rates to support public libraries though they may rarely take advantage of them. Good broadcasters can act as trustees of the public interest with a responsibility to broaden and deepen the public taste... [■ T]wo British companies have visited N[Z] this year to look at BCL, while the former]... TVNZ chief executive... is also eyeing the asset for A[US]n telecommunications company Optus, which... [it now heads. NZ] investment company Infratil is also believed to be keen... TVNZ... said yesterday the board... planned to sell its stake in Clear Communications next year... [but one] investment TVNZ has confirmed it is keen to hold onto its share in Sky TV... as it provided mutual benefits for both companies.

...Turmoil in the world's sharemarkets has failed to dent investor enthusiasm for the float of pay TV operator Sky Network... Applications from small investors and Sky customers... closed yesterday. Applications from institutional investors closed on Monday. Broking sources said the... organisers would be forced to severely scale back applications. They said... the firm co-handling the float, was advising other broking firms that the issue had been seven times over-subscribed. Sixty-five million shares... were being offered. Most – 49 million – were new shares, with the remainder coming from T[TVNZ] which was reducing its shareholding. The price for the shares, estimated at between 220c and 240c each, will be set on Tuesday... Of the shares... 70[%]... have been allocated to... overseas... investors.

...Those lucky enough to get shares in Sky Television could find their investment will pay for a year's subscription when it lists today. Despite the shares being issued hitting the top of the pricing range at 240c, demand for them has been such that pundits are picking the shares to list at least at 270c in trading. That equates to a \$300 gain for shareholders with 1000 shares. The unofficial word is that the issue was 11 times oversubscribed. That is even taking into account overallotments, which stretched the issue to nearly 65 million shares. Of that, 6.5 million shares were allocated to the retail market. But, given the level of demand, only Sky subscribers and those with firm allocations from their brokers will get shares. Around four million shares were allocated to brokers. Sky subscribers, scaled back to 1000 shares each, made up the balance. Institutions also got severely scaled back, with some missing out altogether. Demand was such in the N[Z] market that the allocation here was upped to around 40[%]... The balance was to go mainly to the U[S] market... Sky shares began trading on the [US] Nasdaq market at 4.30 am this morning...

A... successful Sky Network... float[has] given investors something to cheer about amid the continuing gloom and uncertainty surrounding Asia's financial crisis... Sky [listed] at a 33 cent – or 13.75% – premium above its issue price of \$2.40... Sky listed first on the Nasdaq exchange last week, and its closing price of \$2.70 was the N[Z] opening price... "The Americans... appreciate... an immediate yield."

...In some parts of the U[S] more than 60[%] of households subscribe to a pay television network. In N[Z] 21[%] of households subscribe to Sky and according to a... survey the[average] audience share for Sky's five channels in these households is 29[%]... – ...Sky Movie Channel has the highest viewing share with 40[%], followed by Sky Sport (33[%]), Orange (12%), Discovery (11%) and Sky News (4[%]) – ...compared with 26... 23 and 19[% for TV] One, TV2 and TV3, respectively. The growth of pay television can be attributed to one main factor, programming. Free-to-air stations depend heavily on advertising and they have to broadcast a wide range of popular programmes over an extended period to maximise this revenue. Pay television, on the other hand, can attract new subscribers by broadcasting one or two "must see" programmes. As a consequence pay broadcasters aggressively compete for these "must see" programmes.

...SKY Television is poised to lift viewing numbers from 300,000 to half a million... I[NL's] managing director... told INL's annual meeting on Friday... [that Sky's s]atellite service, which began operating in June, raised the number of homes able to get the service from 900,000 to 1.3 million. But only analogue services were available at present on satellite, which confined Sky's broadcasts to the Sports Channel and Orange. "One of the first jobs of next month's Sky board meeting is to begin the process of making the transition to digital transmission." ...through digital

transmissions[, Sky hoped to be]... offering subscribers 60 channels of high-quality viewing... by the year 2000... [T]hese developments would also give Sky the chance to move into impulse pay per view, near video on demand, home banking and Internet services.

...As pay television rivals battle to move across to digital technology, the Minister of Communications... is concerned that subscribers here are already missing out on some of the basics. "I'm disappointed that we've had fibre cable for nearly five years and there's been no attempt to provide cable modems. A[US] now offers household connections to the Internet using cable modems, which are massively faster than your normal modem. How is it that they're so different? Why can't we have them here?" ...[the minister] currently has access to 24 channels of television on Telecom's First Media cable TV, including free to air channels. "I am disappointed with First Media since the first trial. It started with the Sky service as well but because of court action over who can do what, Sky still can't come to our house via cable. It's not likely to be resumed even though Telecom dropped its bid to buy Sky. The court injunction still stands... I find it very frustrating – the whole suburb of Pakuranga has fibre into the home and you can't get three or four of the best channels including ESPN and the sports network, unless they get a UHF aerial on the roof," ... The general manager of First Media... believes cable modems are not standardised. "If they are by the end of the year we'll move," ... And while Sky is no longer able to be broadcast across the Telecom-owned cable network, it has already moved to extend its offerings. Sky has used up its nine channels on UHF which it broadcasts to 290,000 homes and has started a new business beaming in digital multi-channel satellite-based pay TV.

...Pay-TV programmes that are heavy on sex and violence appear bound for a late-night graveyard in a revamp of television rules recommended by the Broadcasting Standards Authority. The body, which administers the codes of broadcasting practice under the Broadcasting Act, wants uncut R18 programming on all channels to be screened only after 10 pm. The call has angered pay-TV networks that operate under separate rules from free-to-air channels which allow them to screen uncut R18 content from 8.30 pm. In its review of pay-TV codes released yesterday, the authority said there should be common programming standards for all television in a single Code of Practice. In the authority's view, not allowing R18 programmes before 10 pm is the only way for parents to feel secure that their children are not exposed to adult programming... Ironically however, the proposed stipulation on adult content will also mean free-to-air broadcasters could screen uncut R18 movies after 10 pm, and show R16 material between noon and 3 pm. However, TVNZ and TV3 are also unhappy at being lumped in with the subscriber operations for the sake of achieving one industry standard. Both networks believe they have little in common with pay-TV. The proposal is unlikely to make a difference to overall content on television. The authority says its recommendations will not alter the... Act's requirement for networks to meet standards of good taste and decency. The... country's pay-TV operators, Sky, Saturn... and First Media, vowed yesterday to fight the changes and to support "their customers' right to choose." In a joint statement, the companies said they were "responsible programmers" who carried out their own preliminary qualifying for subscribers, who must be at least 18. Sky said the research for the review "appeared to be a direct contradiction" to findings in its 1997 annual report which showed that of the 206 complaints about programme content in the year to June, none related to pay-television. As well, the recommendations ignored technology such as R18 restriction cards and pin numbers which allowed controlled access to pay services.

...*It ain't broke but they'll fix it* Nice place, the 60s – if you like... clean-cut conservatism and conformity. But why exactly has the Broadcasting Standards Authority, with its pay-TV review released last week, decided to time-warp us back to that not-so-swinging decade? The authority certainly appears to have stepped aboard the Tardis and teleported to local television's days of yore by proposing that uncut R18 material should screen only after 10 pm on all channels – including... pay-TV. Their rationale for revisiting the bad-old-good-old days is the result of two years of consulting and market research. According to the authority's surveys, 73[%] of those questioned believe R18 material "causes" violence in society; 91[%] think adult programming has a "bad effect" on children... But what is the evidence – apart from the views of some thousand respondents to the authority's survey (85[%] of whom have rules about what their kids watch) – that children have been affected by the present regime? Where is the evidence screening uncut R18 material at 8.30 pm on a pay-TV channel is directly injurious to society? ...All three pay-TV operators offer cards or pin numbers which restrict access of adult material. And subscribers can choose every month to cancel their contract if they don't like what they see. The authority's response to this is that only 500 out of 305,000 subscribers use the cards – "possibly" because they block out all R18 programming. Yet the body's research says 73[%] would use such technology. In the end, it... looks very much like the authority is attempting to doctor something that ain't a dud. What it should be doing is trusting the intelligence of viewers to decide when to use the switch marked off.

...*Television exposes children to casual sex, rape, abuse and much else[, but does] it harm them?* ...In the wake of reports that 13 and 14-year-olds are to be charged with war crimes in Rwanda, of the horrifyingly high number of children who are survivors or perpetrators of sexual violence, and a recent research finding that children are entering puberty as young as eight, you can be forgiven for wondering what childhood has become in the late 1990s. Children are no longer young innocents who inhabit the "walled garden" of childhood where they are insulated from the adult world. But was it ever so? In fact, the notion of childhood as a vulnerable and protected state is relatively recent. It arose in the western world out of 19th-century attitudes towards children who were treated as little adults, useful in factories for their small size and pushed to the limits of their endurance in appalling working conditions. In many countries today, this is still the fate of children. But in western countries laws were made to protect children when the "Save the Child" Christian campaign began in earnest, and compulsory schooling allowed the idea of a "proper" childhood to spread. The ideal of childhood as characterised by innocence and dependence became entrenched in the early part of the 20th century and reached its perfection by the 1950s. With the advent of television and the discovery of the child as consumer, and the decline in parental authority and emergence of children's rights, more recently children have demanded and received access to an adult world that had formerly excluded them and held unquestioned power. Despite this, the romantic view of childhood has remarkable tenacity, especially in western societies where adults seek to protect children from a perceived dangerous outside world, to maintain their so-called state of innocence. The mass media are seen by some as serpents in the garden who tempt and corrupt the morals and values of our vulnerable young. Every week-night on television children can tune in to soap operas and sitcoms, both local and foreign, which provide windows into the world of adult relationships, which can involve casual sex, messy relationships, Aids, rape and abortion. Many argue that exposure to such fictional portrayals of adult sexuality robs children of their innocence and shortens the span of their childhood. But it can also be argued that the flip side of innocence is dangerous innocence and that in attempting to protect children adults are in fact denying them autonomy and creating a state of oppression which places them in greater jeopardy. [One commentator] makes the provocative statement that the notion of childhood innocence is itself a titillation for abusers and that innocence is an ideology used to deny children access to knowledge and power, therefore increasing their vulnerability to abuse. It may be very difficult to find a causal relationship between children's viewing of storylines about incest or sexual abuse on programmes such as *Shortland Street* and the knowledge gained making them less vulnerable to abuse, for such an idea challenges popular beliefs about the nature of television's effects and the sensitive nature of the subject matter is bound to incite complaint. Nevertheless, I suggest that when such content is matched with discussion with a caregiver, such an outcome becomes a possibility... [As] a doctoral student of film and television at Waikato University, [I am aware that watching] soap operas and sitcoms is one way in which children gain knowledge about sexuality and in a way in which sensitive issues can be raised for discussion within the family. Many parents appreciate the fact that the issues arise on a television programme, removing personal experience from the equation and inserting fictional characters which can allow for a potentially less damaging or embarrassing discussion. Some caregivers welcome the opportunity to discuss topics like safe sex, monogamy, promiscuity and homosexuality with their youngsters, while others reserve their right as parents to keep such topics off their children's agendas. The middle ground is held by those who will discuss issues of sexuality but draw the line at explaining terms such as "menage a trois" or "slut" to their nine-year-olds. Such discussions represent a delicate balancing act between... the desire to protect children from more explicit sexual knowledge... and... the need to furnish answers to burning

questions... An implication of the later, liberal view is the fusion of adult and child worlds, while the former conservative approach requires that these worlds remain separate.

...Research apparently showing a causal link between crime and screen violence will soon be released by the British Government. The two-year study... could put pressure on ministers to bring in tougher censorship. The report, entitled *The Effectiveness of Video Violence on Young Offenders*, compares the reaction of normal youths with that of violent and non-violent offenders. The 120 youths in the sample were each questioned in detail about one video shown immediately after screening and after three and nine months. The co-author... told the *Sunday Times* the provisional findings showed... [that:] “Videos cannot create aggressive people... [– between 3% and 10%] of young people grow up in violent homes, either as victims or witnesses... [–] but they will make aggressive people commit violent acts more frequently.” [Ironically, another ‘new study suggests that children are not as affected by nasty videos as traditionally thought and that TV news coverage can be more disturbing.’]

...The outrage and disgust expressed by the world, towards the actions of photographers at the crash[that killed Princess Di], is justified, but in my opinion highly hypocritical. Why is it not acceptable for photographers to shoot a person dying in a car wreck when we have images just as disturbing and real on our television and in... video shops? Take for example the rash of “reality television” shows... with such titles as *When Planes Go Down*, *Real TV*, and *When Animals Attack*. One... showed a police[officer] being hit by a car. We were told the [officer] died. These programmes are neither news shows nor informational nor educational. They are deliberately placed in prime-time slots to capture the largest segment of audience, with one objective. To make money. They are supposedly entertainment but there is another term for these – snuff. It seems that if you deliberately kill someone, and film the act, it is illegal. But if you film someone else injuring or running down a living human being and sell that to a “reality programme,” it is not. The exploitative nature of these shows is appalling. Unfortunately not enough people have objected to date – including myself – so they continue. [‘It worries me that TV could fall victim to the all too common phenomenon whereby something truly original is bastardised and homogenised in a coldly calculated attempt to find appeal amongst the masses, thus snuffing out any spark of creativity, leaving the artist frustrated and the public deprived.’] But how do we decide what is acceptable and what is not? And just as importantly, who decides? NZ[OA] funding goes to the stations that broadcast “reality TV” shows and therefore, no matter how much television management deny it, that money indirectly pays for them. The body set up to help decide what is acceptable[on NZ television], the Broadcasting Complaints Authority, did nothing, as far as I am aware, about objections to the show *When Animals Attack*. In fact, shortly afterwards *When Animals Attack 2* was broadcast. *When Animals Attack* was given a later evening slot, after the “goodnight kids” time, but then ads for the programme, showing graphic segments aired during the late afternoon. What’s the point? Either a show is deemed unsuitable for younger viewers or it is not. The slow flow of trash TV has become a current and by indications will soon become a flood. Civil libertarians will say that we should be allowed to choose what we want to view... that any form of censorship is an infringement of human rights, specifically the right of freedom of expression. But when does freedom of expression turn into the proverbial shouting “FIRE!” in a crowded cinema? Where is the line drawn? They will also say, that I have the ability not to watch these shows if I choose[(i.e., I have the freedom to own a television and the ability to choose to never use it – because I don’t like any of the programmes shown on it – although, while I continue to own a television, I don’t have the freedom to not pay for the licence fee which indirectly funds the purchase of programmes I don’t want to watch!). However,] my concern is not just for myself, but for the community at large. What will happen in the future if the community is continually provided with a diet of dross for our minds? We are aware that what we put in our stomachs affects our health, so why do we continue to deny the effect of what we put in our minds? It has been proven that people become consciously immune to images over time, but of the subconscious no one really knows. Consider the example of a jury at a real murder trial. At the beginning police waited nearby to give support to anyone affected by the pictures of the murder scene. There were gasps, cries of shock and some people felt nausea on the first day. But just a few days later jurors were so used to the pictures they could easily pass them around without need of support. The media will sometimes claim that what they show does not have an effect. Well all I can say in response to that is “Advertisers – demand all those billions back cause your ads are not affecting us.”

...If TV2 dies, can we have its gall? It should somehow be punished for the outrageous cheek displayed in the announcement of a new publicly-funded... (...\$1.2 m... of broadcasting fee money)... comedy series poking fun at reality TV. TV2 might not have started the reality ball rolling (take a bow, TV3, for *Hard Copy* and the local trend-setter *Real TV*) but in this year of turmoil at state t[v], it has swiftly become a leading proponent of the clip show quickie. The current schedule reveals *Great Escapes*, *Real Emergency*, and *Strange Universe*. Last week we got a repeat of... *When Animals Attack* while this Saturday brings *The World’s Scariest Police Chases*. Having subjected viewers to such unmitigated trash, it now wants us to have a good laugh... via a show called *Newsflash*. The shows being lampooned are undoubtedly worthy of such treatment, scraped as they are from the bottom of the international t[v] barrels. At a time when TVNZ is desperately interested in saving money, it has bought this trash in bargain lots and then – in a risible attempt to give some of it a local face – wrapped around some “presentation” from[local comic] superstars... But a channel can’t have it both ways: “Watch this, it’s really interesting,” one night; then, “Isn’t this stuff a load of cobblers? Ho-ho,” the next... If TVNZ really wants to start feeding on itself, how about a comedy about a state-owned broadcaster that goes through an excruciating restructuring – ...then leaves... all the bosses in jobs they already hold? Or... a quiz show – *Haven’t Got a Clue!* ...It would be unfair to suggest that the Canadian club over at TV3 and TV4 offers better programmes than TV2. The Mounties themselves couldn’t find a decent show in parts of their schedules. But TV2 has gone too far in expecting us to laugh about having had our intelligence insulted – and having us pay for the privilege.

...[TVNZ’s boss] is probably not [someone who has] regrets, but... could be excused for worrying that a simple phrase might return to hang around his neck like so-much pongy, sea-going poultry. “Great N[Z] Television” was the catchery a couple of months after his April appointment as TVNZ’s head of television and it has since become the title for the state-owned broadcaster’s on-going navel-gazing. [The boss] loves that kind of stuff. Dubbing TV One the “rich channel” and TV2 the “risk channel” was another statement of the obvious offered as what [the 41st US President] famously called “the vision thing.” While such wordplay is part of what leaders do – setting goals in simple terms – there are cynical troopers who believe the whole thing is merely a cover for “Great... Downsizing.” Others who have seen the touchy-feely executive exercises think it’s just a “Great... Load of Cobblers.” But who could stand up and oppose the literal ideal of... GNZTV...? In this year of the wrap-around reality show, most would welcome “Goodish... Television” or even “Doesn’t Suck... Television.” ...quality has little to do with catchphrases from on high and everything to do with clever and committed television makers – producers, writers, directors, crews and actors or presenters – who often work on a shoestring and know that television doesn’t have to aim for the lowest common denominator... For much of the year, TV3’s *Inside N[Z]* documentaries stood as a sometimes lonely reminder that there’s a healthy TV talent pool. Finding the money to keep that base working comes down to tussles at the networks and N[ZOA] where priorities are set and ratings analysed. If [TVNZ’s boss] can pull the right funding levers, and help good television makers through the uncertainties of TVNZ’s restructuring and threatened privatisation, maybe [the boss will] be able to take some responsibility for the next batch of decent local product. But... [if] there’s no improvement over the next year the phrase will not be forgotten, [and] an increasing odour will become apparent as it hangs limply around the neck of its proponent.

...N[ZOA] is threatening to cut money for TVNZ and TV3 documentaries if the networks do not end a scheduling war. The funding agency says it is frustrated by an upcoming timetable clash between the networks’ local documentaries – both of which have been funded by broadcasting fees. TV3’s *Inside N[Z]* series returns first tonight at 8.30, but will go head-to-head with TV One’s *Tuesday Documentary* at the same time next Tuesday. TVNZ says it had the slot first – it has shown documentaries on Tuesdays at 8.30 for the last decade – and has slammed its rival for putting *Inside N[Z]* on the same day and time. TV3 says the slot was the “best environment” it could find for *Inside N[Z]*. The state channel had not been

screening documentaries in the slot since last year, and TV3 had got there first this year. N[ZOA]... is not interested in the merits of the networks' arguments, only in the consequences for viewers. Both shows were of the same genre and attracted similar audiences. "Regardless of which broadcaster is right or wrong, it's not a good deal for viewers. It is frustrating for us, because from the surveys we do, documentaries are the most popular type of programming that we fund. The result is that viewers can only watch, effectively, half the documentaries that NZ[OA funds]."

...NZOA] is getting tough with the TV bosses and demanding more say on timeslots when the networks play programmes subsidised from the public broadcasting fee. The tough new stance to scheduling will mean an end to programme overlaps like the Tuesday night battle of the documentaries on TV1 and TV3, in theory at least. Starting next month, funding contracts will include a clause that the networks cannot schedule NZOA-funded shows against each other. And they will have to play programmes in the timeslot they promise when the public funding is handed out. NZ[OA's] chief executive... said there would be no exceptions... "We have been badly burnt in the past, providing substantial amounts of public money for something to appear at one time, only to find it shifted,"... NZ[OA] stepped in recently when TV1 tried to screen at 3.30pm, the award-winning kids show *Mirror Mirror*. The show was moved to a time when its target audience of young viewers would be more likely to watch... NZ[OA]'s board was also disappointed last year after putting a lot of money into the TV2 drama series *City Life*, only to see it shifted to a later timeslot where fewer people would watch it. The clampdown goes further, and indicated just how soured relations have become. "Levels of broadcaster contribution will be examined carefully to ensure fee payers are not over-subsidising commercially successful programming,"... The new stance marks a turning point for the TV system, where public money is used to finance commercial hits. Until now, the channel bosses have had open slather to take public subsidies while making record profits. NZ[OA] has even kept some details of public spending secret because networks regard the details as "commercially sensitive". Until it adopted the tougher stance, [NZOA's] main influence has been a "politically correct" clause, where they have to insure minorities... are reflected. Now, NZ[OA] is saying public-funded shows cannot be used as fodder for ratings battles. But the networks question whether the rule is realistic... TV3[s] programme director... said NZ[OA] was "in La-La-Land" if it thought there could be no clash of local shows. "How do you decide who has the right to a timeslot. Is it first-in, first-served?" ... "NZ[OA] is sending a strong message," says [the programme manager of TV4 (TV3's rival to TV2)]. "But with an increasing number of channels and the variation of TV scheduling it will not always be possible to comply,"... TVNZ[s] commissioning boss... said for competitive reasons broadcasters should decide when programmes are shown and nobody else[, adding that AUSns and USers] chose between two or three local shows, and competition was a mark of maturity for local TV... [NZOA] may be getting tough with networks over competitive scheduling, but it is toeing the industry line over increasing commercialisation of programmes. Sponsorship and incidental advertising – plugs inserted into programmes to help reduce the cost of making shows – are used by TV3 and TVNZ to help finance local programmes. The savings allow NZ[OA] to fund new local projects while the networks reduce budgets. NZ[OA] insists there is no public disquiet about excessive advertising, sponsorship and a blurring of lines between ads and programmes. [But in] this situation public money is being used to keep the quantity of local shows up, while the overall quality [of] service falls.

...The first credit at the end of Tuesday night's television documentary *Fatal Denial* acknowledged "the assistance of the Land Transport Safety Authority and the Road Safety Trust." That "assistance" was almost 40[%] of the \$200,000 budget. N[ZOA] contributed \$100,000 – it gives more only in exceptional circumstances – and... T[VNZ], whose new boss has promised a doubling of documentary output, chipped in \$25,000 – much of it by way of the facilities it made available to the filmmakers. Who could object to the authority's using its money to fund a hard-hitting documentary about the toll of drunk-driving? Well, the Hotel Association for one. Its Wellington president... says the (authority-funded) advertising campaigns about drink-driving "bully honest citizens" and are "over the top, expensive and probably useless." I'm not going in to bat for the Hotel Association here[, although his] comments put me in mind of... that [often quoted reply when someone has denied everything: "Someone] would say that, wouldn't [someone]?" But it is worth remembering that one person's public good is another person's propaganda. And it's worth wondering whether documentaries deserve the name when they're substantially – or even wholly – funded by interested parties. The flagship *Tuesday Documentary* slot has been filled in recent weeks with films which advanced the commercial interests of an Irish dance show and a British comedian's feature film. And, while no one (except [the Hotel Association's president], perhaps) would question its worthiness, Tuesday's programme was also advancing a cause. *Fatal Denials* producer... says the film was expensive; it needed painstaking research and many stories had to be abandoned when bereaved families had second thoughts about taking part... add[ing] that the L[TSA] sought at no point to influence the documentary's editorial content. The thought never occurred to us, of course. But if the show's researchers had found, say, that the authority's advertising campaign was not lowering the rural road toll, do you think we would have heard about it on Tuesday night? ...the director of commissioned programmes for TVNZ... does not believe that independence is compromised. "Documentaries are not current affairs... They don't debate issues. They're like essays or columnists. They take a point of view." Within limits, of course. Next Tuesday's slot will be occupied by *Rubber Gloves or Green Fingers*... funded by NZ[OA] and TVNZ, which nails its makers' anti-pesticide colours firmly to the mast. It was controversially amended after TVNZ's lawyer feared it might attract defamation suits. That documentary's producer... says documentaries that advance a view belong to a noble tradition... and a point of view vigorously expressed is better than the pretence of objectivity. But we always deserve to know whose view is being advanced – and who's paying.

...God (and sponsors) defend N[Z] News of public funding for an epic documentary series N[Z]: *The Face of the Century* has flushed out another project which aims to look back on our past 100 years. Encouraged by the success of TV One's *5.30 with Jude*, which... has just passed 100 episodes and... incorporates heavy sponsorship, a new company, Documentaries-Are-US, is pitching a historical series which will come at no cost to the broadcasting-fee payer. With the working title N[Z]: *A Hundred Years of Tasty Yeast Extracts*, it will use state-of-the-art digital image enhancement to incorporate sponsors' messages and products into programmes about key moments in the nation's past. [The] producer... formerly with TV-U-Like, is adamant that editorial integrity will be paramount and that viewers will easily be able to identify the sponsors' messages... A travel company (Gallipoli Getaways!) has been lined up to sponsor a segment on... W[W1] and pharmaceutical companies are vying for the chance to offer anti-depressant cures during coverage of the Great Depression of the 1930s. Moving firms have first option on the classic shots of furniture being moved into the first state houses... Digital sound alteration will enable [a mountaineer] to proclaim: "We knocked the bastard off thanks to [my sherpa] accepting payment on this international card." ...[a] rugby great... will be seen to utter that [it] is "absolutely... in need of a scientifically developed sports drink, preferably blue." ...Airlines are keen to cash in on Sir Robert Muldoon's musings on trans-tasman travel and IQ levels and the segment on Think Big is expected to be surrounded by promotions for slimming studios. "It's win-win, really," says [the producer]. "The viewer gets a well-made, informative show and the sponsors are offered a unique chance to be associated with some great personalities and events. Some academics and critics from competing media organisations may quibble about encroaching commercialism, but our research tells us that the viewers welcome a bit of colour and a few familiar products amidst all that boring black-and-white footage..." ...[In related news, NZOA] has sounded a warning about a lack of growth of local programming on our television screens. The public broadcasting funder revealed yesterday that while local content hours had doubled since 1988, the percentage as a proportion of total television hours has "reached a plateau" over the last two years at just under 20[%]... "Programmes featuring our faces... voices and... views on television aren't a luxury, they're a necessity if we want to be a vibrant and informed society,"... the organisation's chair[person]... said. Funding for local content was under rising pressure with more channels operating and the broadcasting-fee collection operating at about maximum efficiency. The fee supports about 30[%] of local television hours.

...You can see more of N[Z] on air. Gays and lesbians are out there – but there are many other minority groups represented on television. N[ZOA] spent more than \$10 million of broadcasting fee money on special interest programmes (which contributed to 85[%] of the cost) during its 1996/97 financial year. These programmes included: • *Agritech 2000* (\$360,000 of broadcasting fee money) • *Asia Dynamic* (\$920,000)... • *Praise Be* (\$556,000) • *Religious specials* (\$162,000) • *Tagata Pasifika* (\$1.1 million)... • *DisAbilities* (\$1 million)...

No one can claim British officialdom is unsympathetic to the disabled. TV licensing regulations state: “A colour licence currently costs only £91.50 for a whole year. If you are registered blind and produce your local authority certificate you pay £1.25 less...”

Remember the *Herald* story (scoop!) about the poor disabled doggy[(r:p1064, ln35)]? Well, a dogfight broke out as our rival television channels pursued the story. We hear... [TV One got to the dog-owner’s] house first... and spirited both [the owner] and dog away to the beach. Things turned sour when the TV3 crew turned up and started filming, to the chagrin of... [the TV One team-leader, who told the owner] that the footage was of no use to [TV One] if TV3 got it as well. Eventually [the owner] decided enough was enough, and departed. No doubt about it, top-flight telly-journos are relentless in the pursuit of cutting-edge current affairs... [By the way, a] Government announcement yesterday that it is proceeding with a scoping study of TVNZ has renewed speculation that either TV2 or... [TV One], or both, could soon be put on the block. In a joint statement,[the] Finance Minister... and [the SOE]Minister... confirmed TV One was not being considered for sale. However, it is understood the scoping study will look at the whole of TVNZ... One industry source yesterday estimated the Government could get around \$500[million] to \$600 million for TV2[– which]... produces most of TVNZ’s profits... [–] based on a figure of around five to six times its operating earnings.

...N[Z] First may have to bow to cold economic logic and agree to privatise T[TVNZ] after a defiant P[M] yesterday flouted the coalition agreement by signalling TV One was up for sale. [The PM]’s intention, presumably it is more than kite-flying, has highlighted dilemmas facing N[Z] First over the future of the state television company. Either the coalition parties stick to their agreement – and watch the revenue-generating capacity and value of T[TVNZ] shrink in the face of exploding competition from UHF, satellite and cable channels – or N[Z] First agrees to realise the current value of the company despite promising an end to such “strategic” asset sales... [The PM]’s “spring-time for the coalition” speech also foreshadowed shifts away from “monopolistic state agencies” towards a greater private sector role in health, education, welfare and accident compensation. The onus is now on him to deliver. TV One could prove a litmus test of the public’s appetite for this agenda. TV2 has long been mooted as a candidate for privatisation, although the coalition agreement suggests keeping it in public ownership, with its management contracted out to the private sector. But T[TVNZ] bosses have warned ministers the two major channels are complementary. Splitting off one would reduce revenue, the sale price and operating efficiency. If N[Z] First still wanted to keep a partly-commercial TV One, it would have to ask the public to swallow a huge rise in the public broadcasting fee. Asked after his Auckland Chamber of Commerce speech whether [it] would sell TV One as well as TV2, [the PM] replied: “We’ve got to look at the lot... should we run television stations? The answer is ‘no.’” Asked again about a possible sale, [the PM] replied: “Certainly [channel] 2 and probably both.” The [Deputy PM and NZ] First leader... refused to comment on those remarks last night, after earlier appearing satisfied with the tenor of [the PM]’s speech notes... [T]he minister responsible for T[TVNZ] also was [not willing to comment. One suggestion was that [the minister] did not want to be accused of upstaging [the PM].

...The NZ] First deputy leader... last night put his branding iron in the ground to oppose the sale of TVNZ[, and]... signalled that any other departure from the coalition agreement, or “contract,” would be vigorously resisted... [Four] other NZ First MPs... expressed opposition yesterday to the sale... However... asked if the credibility of the... agreement was threatened over the possible sale... [NZ First’s leader] said: “...if you’ve got an asset that is one day worth \$1 b... and later on worth \$150 m... [have you] acted responsibly by doing nothing about that?” ...[□ A] TV3... poll last night found... the Government is... out of step with public sentiment in its plans to sell T[TVNZ]... The message from the poll is clear: 54[%]... against either channel being sold... 17[%] support the sale of both channels and 21[%] support the sale of TV2. The remaining 8[%] have no view.

...The public’s preference is to transform TV One into a public non-commercial channel. It may happen. TVNZ is already selling off bits of itself, and the assets of TV2 are by themselves a worthwhile purchase for a private media operator. A public Channel One would be cost-effective by applying the publisher-editor principle – like Britain’s Channel Four, which is one of the world’s newest and most profitable public broadcasters. The channel concentrates on its core business of broadcasting. Overheads are kept low. All programme production is commissioned by editors from independent producers... N[ZOA] allocates \$46 million towards local television production from its \$96 million broadcasting fee income... [If NZOA] allocated the entire \$46 million to Channel One – and not to support private commercial channels – it would contribute 61[%] of Channel One’s estimated annual cost... [of] \$75 million... The licence fee could be increased... to \$144 to cover the estimated shortfall... Such an increase would not be necessary, however, if Channel One accepted corporate sponsorship as the Public Broadcasting Service does in the U[S]. Sponsorship is different from commercial breaks crammed with advertisements. The sponsor buys an association with the programme and gets its logo and message before and after the programme... With revenue from sponsorship and overseas sales, Channel One could soon make a healthy profit. That would keep pressure off the licence fee while giving the public what it wants and democracy what it needs. So, if the public wants this and it is affordable, why doesn’t the Government want us to have it? The answer is political. The small minority of N[Z]ers who want to sell all of TVNZ includes Act’s supporters... Act’s ideology dictates that public television has no place in N[Z]... Now captive to Act for its survival, the Government is playing politics with broadcasting... [W]e need a nationwide campaign for Channel One to get the Government to listen to the rest of us...

[AUS]’s two media moguls... are expected to be among the bidders for TVNZ if the Government proceeds with its threats to sell off state television. [The respective moguls of Australis Media and News Corp] are widely seen as the only investors likely to have pockets deep enough to afford the assets, although [Australis is currently facing financial difficulties. However,] interest is also expected to be shown from some smaller broadcasting companies. Hints by... [the PM] for the public to “watch this space” follow denials earlier this year by TVNZ’s new chair[person that it] had been appointed to sell the [SOE] to the highest bidder. [The new chairperson] is overseas and was unable to be reached for comment. However, TVNZ’s former chief executive... has welcomed as “terrific news” the Government’s hints that it is considering selling both TV One and TV2, along with all of TVNZ’s other assets. [The former chief executive], who left TVNZ two months ago to head A[US]n telecommunications company Optus, has made no secret in the past of his belief that TVNZ should be sold... “I’ve always been of the view that TVNZ should be in private hands. I don’t see it as a public service broadcaster, I see it as a commercial broadcaster and because of that I see it as too risky for governments to hold on to.” While acknowledging there was a “perfectly respectable intellectual view on the other side,” [the former chief executive] could not think of any reason why a sale would not be good for TVNZ. The [SOE] was likely to be a “voracious user” of capital in future, and therefore it was better off not being owned by taxpayers... [The former chief executive] would not be surprised if there was interest from N[Z] companies such as INL... However, it is expected that INL, which has [News Corp] as a controlling shareholder, could face problems, given that it has now secured a majority stake in pay-television operator Sky TV. Canadian media company CanWest, which owns TV3 and TV4 as well as the More FM radio group in N[Z], is also considered an unlikely buyer because of its existing media interests. Media company Wilson & Horton, publisher of the N[Z] *Herald*, has ruled out any possibility that it might be interested in the assets. Wilson & Horton’s managing director... said the company considered free-to-air broadcasting “even tougher” than pay television... “But let’s face it, [the Australis mogul] would be in like a robber’s dog probably.”

...The... [PM] wants the Government out of the television business... But privatisation of both channels will stymie long-held ambitions by public broadcasting advocates that TV One could be converted into a true non-commercial channel. The news has... also... come as a shock to those who

had come to believe that TV2 would likely be sacrificed to keep TV One in state ownership. And it flies in the face of the campaign to keep both channels Government-owned so that profits from the commercial arm could help finance a public channel... T[TVNZ]'s competitor is pleased with the Government's direction... [H]owever... the... managing director of... TV3... could see some sense in the Government retaining an interest in TVNZ, particularly TV One, for the likes of Maori broadcasting. One of the world's best-known state broadcasters, Britain's BBC, is facing problems of its own with debts of some £35 million. Part of the BBC's problem lies with the fact that unlike its competitors, it is a public sector corporation and is prevented by public accounting rules from borrowing to finance its ambitious plans.

...As the N[Z] Government contemplates selling T[TVNZ]... the British Broadcasting Corporation celebrates a notable birthday by trumpeting the importance of public broadcasting... Gentle retirement is the last thing on her mind as Britain's favourite aged aunt turns 75 this month. "Auntie Beeb," as the BBC likes to call itself, is determined to remain the heart and soul of the British media world as it hurtles into a... digital television future... Digital may still mean little to British viewers but its cornucopia of pay-per-view sport and Hollywood movies virtually on demand... is likely to transform the media landscape... BSkyB... plans a 200-channel digital service in Britain early next year. Cable companies are set to offer a rival service while a terrestrial version – with fewer channels but delivered through conventional rooftop aerials – is also likely to begin in 1998... [In response, the] BBC plans additional, free digital TV channels plus joint-venture subscription services based on archive programming. It wants to offer these on all digital "platforms" – satellite, cable and terrestrial... By the end of next year, Britain may have more than 250 subscription channels. Digital compression... allow[s] television companies to squeeze more channels into the same bandwidth... Near-video-on-demand (in which a film plays on several channels at once, allowing viewers to pick a convenient start-time) is the most promising application, but its success is far from certain... Broadcasting an analogue satellite channel costs around £4.5 million. Divide that by 10 for digital. Providing the set-top boxes needed to process digital signals for normal televisions, however, will be costly. Broadcasters expect to subsidise them. Even so, television companies are stepping warily into the digital future. Nobody is really sure that there is much money to be made, but all are scared of missing out... But regulating body Ofcom fear BSkyB's domination means consumers will buy its box and only its box. In theory, BSkyB would then be the gatekeeper, allowing only those broadcasters it wanted into the digital market[, although]... in a few years the set-top box will be replaced by a television with built-in digital technology; [and] European manufacturers and governments have agreed that those integrated television sets will be open to any broadcaster... The BBC, set up on October 8, 1922, continues to be funded by an annual licence fee levied on all households with a television set, and does not carry commercials. The licence costs... £234... and pays for two television channels and five national radio stations. The BBC's critics say the system is out of date in a digital world in which pay TV channels will claim a growing share of viewing. But the BBC argues its unique source of funding will enable it to remain a touchstone of quality as viewing fragments. "We aim to be a trusted guide in the potential confusion of the media marketplace,"... said... the BBC's director of corporate affairs... The BBC vows to remain faithful to the ethos of... its founding father, who wanted a broadcaster able to "educate, inform and entertain" the nation, free from political interference and commercial pressure. It was with that aim that the BBC launched daily radio transmission in London on November 14, 1922. Now led by [a] controversial director-general... the modern BBC is determined the media future will not belong exclusively to commercial giants, such as... News Corp and... Microsoft... In radio, the BBC is spearheading the development of digital services – which should again mean more choice and better quality reception. It is also experimenting with online services, calling the Internet "the third broadcast medium." However, it continues to operate on a tight budget. With licence fee rises closely linked to inflation for the next five years, [the director-general] has vowed to boost efficiency by a further 20[%]. His tough methods have already transformed the BBC's finances in the 1990s through a war on "waste and inefficient practices." The BBC shed 1700 domestic staff last year – around 8[%] of the total. [The director-general] has made enemies who deride him as a [person] who knows the cost of everything but disregards the value of quality programming. Such complaints have been relatively easy to dismiss when voiced by disgruntled former staff. More embarrassing for the BBC hierarchy was an unprecedented revolt last month by leading radio and TV presenters over the corporation's plan to axe editors for individual news programmes. The BBC put the plans on hold following the revolt, which gave it much unwanted publicity on the front pages of British newspapers. The opposition to further cuts lends greater urgency to moves to boost income from BBC Worldwide – the corporation's commercial arm. Worldwide plans to exploit the BBC's huge library to feed the growing global appetite for quality programming. The net benefit from Worldwide's activities was just \$183.2 million last year, against licence fee income of around \$4.7 billion. But the aim is to treble Worldwide's earnings over the next decade. To that end, the BBC will next month launch three subscription channels in Britain. The channels are the first fruits of a partnership with [US]-controlled pay television group Flextech. No licence fee funds go into the venture and all BBC profits will be ploughed back into regular TV and radio programmes. The financial ballast for the deal comes from [US] cable TV giant TCI, which controls Flextech. Worldwide has [already] launched two channels in Latin America in partnership with Discovery Communications, a company in which TCI is again a key shareholder. A BBC-branded channel in North America is also under consideration... The future will present the BBC with many challenges but it has proved highly resilient and adaptable, pioneering television in the 1930s and later weathering the launch of commercial and subscription rivals. It continues to account for more than half of all viewing and listening in British households, a lead which [the director-general] is confident it will maintain. "Every householder will be a major consumer of BBC services in the digital age... The BBC will still be watched and heard more than any other single broadcaster in the UK."

...The BBC's enduring popularity means its 75th birthday has almost taken on the quality of a state occasion. The Royal Mail has issued commemorative postage stamps... The Queen is due to visit the corporation's central London headquarters at Broadcasting House on October 29 to open a new visitor centre... expected to attract... 250,000 people a year... [Meanwhile, production of its] \$25 million... costume drama... series... *Nostramo*... based on [a] novel about a [guy] reopening a silver mine in a... volatile South American town in the 1890s... [is] due to start... this week...

SWORD in hand, charger at the ready, one of literature's most popular heroes prepares to come to the rescue... of the BBC [The network's bosses] are hoping that their new... drama *Ivanhoe* will restore honour to the BBC's historical drama department after the defeat it suffered with the hugely expensive flop *Rhodes*. The three-part *Ivanhoe*... took three years to make and has a cast of more than 2500... Sir Walter Scott's medieval hero[is] a noble young Saxon... influenced by the best of Norman ideas... who returns from the Crusades determined to clear his name and reclaim his lands after accusations of treachery. In his quest, [the hero] wins the love of... [a Saxon princess, who is betrothed] to the heir to the Saxon throne... and the beautiful Jewess Rebecca[, who is]... falsely accused of witchcraft... With Hollywood throwing many tens of millions of dollars at costume dramas such as *Rob Roy* and *Braveheart*, creating an epic for \$15 million has been a major challenge for *Ivanhoe*'s makers... [In local news,] TVNZ should be dismantled or sold and replaced with one public broadcasting channel, says Labour's broadcasting spokesperson. It]... wants one state-funded channel which does not have to return a profit to the Government, with no more than seven minutes of advertising an hour.

...N[Z] First may agree to renegotiate the coalition agreement to allow the sale of TVNZ, with the proviso it stays under N[Z]-owned control and that N[Z] – including Maori – content on screens is guaranteed. That is one of the trade-offs to be considered in the dealing which will have to take place if the P[M]'s push for further privatisation eventuates. And [the PM] acknowledged yesterday what is already apparent: that the coalition agreement is a flexible document which can be varied along the way by mutual consent. The Associate Treasurer... [and member] of NZ First, described the agreement as a "guideline." ...[however, the] policy of no further State asset sales was promoted by [the NZ First leader] as non-tradeable during the election campaign. In the coalition agreement, his party ended up with a list of six strategic assets that would not be sold, including T[V] One. The Minister of Maori Affairs... said yesterday... "I have some concerns about the sale of TVNZ, full stop... It belongs to the

nation. It doesn't belong to some Government that comes in and out. Having said that, I haven't had the opportunity to talk to my colleagues about it..." ...One Network News last night reported an unnamed TVNZ executive as putting the value of the company at over \$1 billion... TVNZ made a net profit last calendar year of \$60.6 million on revenue of \$457.9m... It returned dividends to its shareholder, the Government, of \$62.4m... Immediate speculation on potential buyers centred on... INL... and Australis, [although]the junior player in A[US]'s three-pronged pay television industry, will go into receivership after racking up losses of more than \$A775 m...

Pay television operator Australis Media has filed a writ in the N[SW] Supreme Court seeking damages of... \$NZ2.7 billion... against Telstra Corporation and News Corporation for the collapse of its three-way joint venture to be the largest cable tv operator. Australis [- which had indicated it was interested in buying TVNZ when news that the local SOE might be sold first broke -]is on the brink of going into liquidation.

...[the PM]'s stated intention to sell T[TVNZ]... is extraordinary, unprecedented, and quite out-of-line with broadcasting policy in other Western countries. Every other major democracy has at least one state-owned or supported channel. It is the same kind of cavalier approach as when the National Government suddenly changed the law to allow broadcasting companies to be 100[%] foreign owned. No other Western democracy allows that either. The simple consequence is that our broadcasting heritage is up for grabs to the highest bidder. The media barons... must be salivating in anticipation of the spoils they could acquire. No wonder that certain parts of the media are eagerly espousing the sell-off, with or without declaring a vested interest. Why would our Government, or any Government, be floating a policy so remarkable and so contrary to the national interest? Deliberately or otherwise, the P[M] missed the point in his attempts at justification... [The PM] is right to imply... [that] ministers... should not... be involved in the running of television companies... But the issue is not the running of companies; it is the ownership of public assets, and the purpose to which they are put. Apologists for the sale of TV One will no doubt argue that television is just like any other business... But this is to miss another key point. Television is not like baked beans, or cars or any other business whose staple is consumer products. Television is about hearts and minds, it is about programmes that affect peoples lives and influence how they view the world and their place within it. It provides most of the information people rely on to carry out their role as citizens participating in a democracy. It is true that radio and print are also in the business of hearts and minds. But television has so much more impact as to place it in a special category. If it was necessary to leave National Radio in public ownership when R[NZ] was broken up, it is even more vital that the public retains ownership of a television channel. Yet now [our PM] is apparently contemplating the sale of TVNZ holus-bolus with no suggestion that any new public channel be created to take its place. This is all the more surprising given that TV One is not any old commercial channel. It is really a partly public service channel subsidised by its profitable sister TV2. It is the channel for news and sport, for quality N[Z] and British dramas, for documentaries and special events. Many N[Z]ers regard it as their channel and are not slow to complain when it falls short of their expectations. Some viewers may be lulled into a false sense of acceptance of a sale of TV One by being told that ownership doesn't matter; what you see on the screen won't change. Anyone who believes this is simply ignoring the evidence. Global media tycoons... like to control their interests. Not only do they influence the editorial line their papers or channels take, but they impose strict financial targets unimpeded by notions of social responsibility. The likely consequences of that sort of regime are much less news and current affairs, less [free-to-air]sport, fewer documentaries and quality shows. Commercially marginal programmes... would be unlikely to survive. Then too a commercial operator has no incentive to commit airtime to minorities. A [media mogul] doesn't have to front up to a select committee to justify his schedule. Which leaves bleak prospects for Maori programming, or educational television, even off-peak. There are those... who seem to think that N[ZOA] could be relied on to provide the programmes beyond the limited commercial menu. But N[ZOA], already strapped for funds, is likely to insist on broadcasters paying an increased share of the costs for some programmes, notably documentaries. A hard-nosed foreign owner may well respond by saying they can get cheaper and more popular programming elsewhere. N[ZOA] has no leverage with broadcasters - if they don't want the programmes, they can't be made to screen them. Myths abound as the politicians scramble for arguments. The multi-channel digital future does not mean that TVNZ must be sold - free-to-air channels are likely to prosper into a ripe old age. Only they can provide the sense of national identity and the shared experience relished by so many viewers. Furthermore, TVNZ is profitable enough to manage its investment strategy for digitisation, capital investment that can be spread over a number of years.

...The only way T[TVNZ] can possibly keep up with its private-sector cousins in television the world over is to join the family. The alternative is a future as a dinosaur increasingly unwanted by audiences and advertisers alike. I have just returned from Washington, DC, where I attended the annual conference of public service broadcasters from 25 countries. Confusion and concern for the future were the features of the conference, except for the big two of the industry - the BBC and PBS from the U[S]. This is not a debate about... an outdated concept of what is good for the people or the nation. It is a debate about the allocation of scarce resources owned by us all and about the way we choose to communicate via our most powerful medium[, in which]... the rules... are changing... almost daily. It is absurd for N[Z] to claim our television system has any of the ethos of a PBS which deliberately presents itself as the elitist alternative to the main networks and raises \$US300 million in voluntary tax-deductible donations from its 5.5 million viewers (...4[%] of the viewing audience). Neither can we claim for TVNZ the 75-year-old tradition of the BBC... largely funded by a compulsory inflation-indexed annual licence fee... paid by 20 million households... Right now we rely on the market to a considerable degree to provide the television we want, and can afford, both as a community and as individuals. This will not change radically if TVNZ is sold. However, now is the time to determine what we want from our television operators. This is not a new notion. In the U[S], just this year, the Federal Communications Commission (with the support of [the US]President...) laid down that commercial operators must provide a minimum level of children's television in a day.

...['TV CAN HELP YOUR KIDS We've all been warned that tv is a bad influence on kids - lowering their school marks and turning them into zombies. But haven't we all, at some time, been startled to hear a kid come out with unexpected knowledge gleaned from the flickering screen? An Auckland staff nurse was amazed to hear her 3-year-old learnedly discussing the different ways cheetahs and leopards stalked their prey. 'I'd never talked with her about this. It was obvious my girl had picked it up from the Sunday documentary.' The nurse and her husband have also seen their girl learn new words and numbers by watching programmes like *Play School* and *Sesame Street*. Tv can numb kid's minds - or expand them. Overseas research indicates that youngsters who do best in school watch about 10 hours of tv a week; those who watch more - or less - score lower. NZ kids watch, on average, 17 to 20 hours of tv a week.' ● 'When under-3s watch tv it can affect their natural process of mental development; the risk that they will develop ADD at school age increases by 10%/hour.']

...TELEVISION and... electronic games, particularly those with violence... are being blamed for rising stress levels in children which lead to a new mental disorder. It is known as Stressed Out, Survival-Orientated Humans (SOSOH) and is hitting children as young as four. The symptoms are hyperactivity, disruptive behaviour, learning difficulties and poorly controlled movements. If these sound similar to the widely recognised Attention Deficiency Disorder or Conduct Disorder, you are not mistaken... [A] visiting neurobiologist and author from the U[S] says such]... stress could be caused by inadequate diet or sleep, child abuse, pressures to conform and perform, rigid education systems and poor vision or hearing. However, it is just as likely to be "recreational" stress... According to [the neurobiologist], children's brains respond to events on t[v] as if they were real, causing the nervous system to prepare for a physical response. "Our brains are very sensitive to quick movements, sudden noises and colour changes that might signal danger, so we prepare for fight or flight to protect ourselves... Children are in survival mode in their own living room. One of the immediate reactions is to quit talking because how can you talk when you are being chased by a sabre-toothed tiger?" ...In a stressful situation the body produces adrenalin and a chemical called cortisol, which decreases memory and learning... [C]hildren also have an instinctive desire to imitate observed behaviour without reasoning whether it is right. "They mimic anything, including destructive and anti-social behaviour.

Up through to age four, children cannot distinguish between truth and fiction on [tv].” ...a member of a White House Task Force on Innovative Learning, [the neurobiologist said it] would ban t[v] for children under eight, to give their imagination time to develop... The best thing parents under pressure can do is to become good stress managers and pass that on to their children, [the neurobiologist added]. ● ... Japan was in a state of video shock yesterday after a t[v] cartoon based on Nintendo’s popular “Pocket Monsters” characters triggered convulsions in... children throughout the country. A spokes[person] for the Tokyo Fire Department, which carried out a national survey, said at least 618 children suffered convulsions, irritated eyes and other symptoms from watching the cartoon... About 120 children, aged from three upwards, were still in hospital last night with epilepsy-like symptoms... Doctors who treated the victims said children went into a trance-like state... The blame was put on a scene depicting an explosion followed by five seconds of flashing red lights from the most popular character “Pikachu,” a rat-like creature... The cartoon, *Pokemon*, aired every Tuesday in Japan, has an audience of millions of children and is the most highly rated programme in its time slot... Other children were stricken when they watched replays of the offending scene in news reports of the earlier victims... Executives of TV Tokyo, the network that broadcast the programme, said they had been inundated with calls. “We have to find out all the facts, and find out the actual medical explanation,” they said... [But] an expert on juvenile epilepsy, said bright flashes of light and colour from a t[v] screen could trigger a phenomenon known as “television epilepsy.” Doctors have known that children are susceptible to such seizures since even before the dawn of t[v], but it has become more evident with the spread of t[v]. The seizures, albeit unpleasant, were not dangerous and spontaneous recovery was the norm.

...Outraged Japanese mothers yesterday demanded that television networks adopt technical standards for animated programmes after... [more] than 700 mainly school-age children were rushed to hospitals after watching bright flashing lights on the popular *Pocket Monsters* programme on Tuesday night. “We are gravely concerned at this escalating race, this competition by the television networks to show ever more stimulating images, targeting even children,” the country’s largest mothers’ organisation... the New Japan Housewives’ Association... said... The National Parents and Teachers Association of Japan said the incident would awaken parents to the fact that they must monitor what their children watch on television. The group, which does not object to animated programming per se, said the Government should think about legislation mandating screening devices in television sets, known as “V-chips” in the U[S]. The method allows parents to blank out programmes they do not want their children to watch... An executive at a leading producer of animated programmes said the... incident... probably... would... lead Japan to develop technical standards for animation production[, although]... the... incident would not cure Japan of its animation addiction or lead to a cut in the amount of time devoted to animated programming... Japanese animation is a multi-billion dollar a year industry and cartoons have dominated television programming and movie theatre line-ups for decades. Many Japanese animated films and programmes are popular outside of Japan.

...AFTER hundreds of viewers, mostly children, became sick while watching the same action-packed scene of a television cartoon, [Japanese] broadcasters have agreed to create guidelines to keep it from happening again... [In the meantime,] TV Tokyo has cancelled the programme until the cause of the reactions becomes clear. The network has also urged video stores to stop renting all episodes of the show... [Speaking of cartoons, the] Homer Simpson style of parenting is sometimes not far removed from reality, says a N[Z] school principal. Speaking at the Dannevirke High School prizegiving, [the principal] said that although... *The Simpsons* has its humorous side, the family’s behaviour should also be a warning... [T]he behaviour of the father... in particular should raise concerns. [The principal] cited Homer’s complacency in ignorance, his continual search for the quick answer and his inability to realise life has changed. “Like a growing number of parents... Homer... is willing to skip on his responsibilities as a parent and concentrate on his own pleasures rather than the future of his children... We enjoy his antics on screen but many of us do not realise that [the character] is a parody of ourselves.” ...parents who supported their child’s right to do anything they wanted at school, on the basis of human rights, were not doing their child any favours. “By failing to teach their children that with rights there are associated responsibilities, they are not only selling their children the wrong message, they are setting society on a path of destruction.”

...[‘D’oh! Homer’s a father figure] HOMER Simpson is the perfect dad. The TV character who hangs out in seedy bars with low-lives is a good role model, a British conference on fatherhood was told. A psychologist said many dads could learn from Homer Simpson, who was utterly devoted to his kids and loved watching TV with them. “In many households like The Simpsons, the father is a rather benign figure who comes in from work late at night,” said the psychologist, who also praised Homer’s willingness to chauffeur his children to social events.’]

...There are television milestones, and there are television landmarks. In the first category, you’ve got... “I’m Gay”... though [a comedian’s decision to announce that via her programme i]s more like a millstone. But the new season of *The Simpsons*, which begins tonight on TV2 at 7.30, is most surely the latter. *The Simpsons*, which has defined post-modern television for our generation, has become the longest-running animated series in telly history, replacing that other modern Stone-Age family, *The Flintstones*. Bedrock makes way for Springfield as the ‘toon town of the century. *The Flintstones* ran for 166 episodes between 1960 and 1966, only *Astro Boy* had come close with 104 programmes. *The Simpsons* passed that mark in the U[S] in February with its 167th episode, which will screen here in [about three months time]. In true *Simpsons* style, tribute was paid to Fred and Wilma with the modern show’s own take on *The Flintstones*. So what has been the secret of *The Simpsons*’ success? American television has plenty of families but this may be its only *real* family. Those who work on the show reckon it comes down to other things as well: they never use the same joke twice; every episode is rewritten an average of five or six times; they’ve never hired “sitcom writers”; no network brass allowed; thinking big; not being nasty. Simple things perhaps but, by Homer, it works.

...[‘The second coming of (Homer).] AFTER 10 years of shattering television conventions with *The Simpsons*, its creator has finally set his sights on a new project. Titled *Futurama*, the new animated series is centred around the exploits of three characters who live in the year 3000. There’s Fry, a 20th century guy who has just woken up from 1000 years in cryogenic suspension, Leela, a one-eyed alien with a no-nonsense attitude, and Bender, a kleptomaniac robot with a drinking problem. “Bender is our Homer. The idea is that Bender shoplifts, drinks, smokes, is very corrupt and I thought in this way, parents can’t accuse me of providing a bad role model – because it’s a robot,” laughs the creator, who admits that his vision of the future is in many ways a response to a childhood obsession with science fiction. “This show is an opportunity to both honour some of the conventions of science fiction and satirise them. With *The Simpsons*, it’s this fictional town and there’s the equivalent of Denny’s and stuff like that. On *Futurama* it’s the same thing except we’re doing the whole universe, so it required a little more planning.” *Futurama* has been in development for more than three years. One popular trademark of *The Simpsons* is celebrities voicing animated versions of themselves. You might think being set in the year 3000 would preclude *Futurama* from continuing this tradition, but the creator has figured a way around that. In the year 3000 of *Futurama* there exists the technology to preserve human heads in jars. “Heads in a jar is basically our excuse for being able to use celebrity cameos. Any celebrity who wants to do *Futurama* is more than welcome on the show, but they have to agree to play their disembodied head preserved in a jar of oil that keeps them young in the future.” And the creator remains so optimistic *The Simpsons* will not falter that the creator even has the show screening in the year 3000. Join pizza delivery boy Fry on the ride of his life at 7.00pm, Sunday, on TV2’.]

...One in five [NZ] adults... has problems reading a bus timetable, understanding the instructions on a medicine bottle or filling in a job application... [– skills considered necessary] to get them through everyday life... [– while 30% have] some difficulties with printed material... A Ministry of Education international adult literacy survey... found... [that adults] with lower literacy levels watched more television each day and had fewer books in the home... [Incidentally,] TVNZ confirms it has given 1700 staff a \$150 gift pack to mark new channel imagery on TV2. But a company spokes[person]... has dismissed reports that the gift pack, to mark bulging TVNZ profits, originally included a pair of boxer shorts festooned with the slogan “I Only Wanna Be With Two”. TVNZ insiders say the gift pack would have cost the company \$250,000, although \$100,000 was covered by deals for free advertising time. Well placed sources told the *Sunday Star-Times* boxer shorts were removed before the gift

packs were handed to staff... [after TVNZ's group chief executive... deemed them an inappropriate gift, according to an inside[r]... The decision was made prior to the controversy over the spending spree... of Aotearoa Television in which... [a] NZ FIRST MP... bought an \$89 pair of underpants.

...It hasn't been a good year for community television, what with the fiasco at Aotearoa and the collapse of ATV. One who knows this better than most is... [the] founder and chair[person] of the proposed Auckland community station Triangle Television. In recent months [the founder] has heard every silk underpants joke in the book. But despite all this negative publicity for the concept, [the founder] is hopeful... Aucklanders... will... [be] broadcasting to Aucklanders via Triangle's Sky Tower aerial by next March. With a broadcasting licence already in hand – gained last December to its delight and surprise against the heavily favoured Sky TV – the only obstacle in the way now is the \$1 million needed to buy a transmitter and get the channel up and running. The hunt for new financial members of Triangle's incorporated society is now on. Triangle's plan [– which goes under the slogan 'I am on television therefore I am' –] is for a do-it-yourself style television that sort of grows on you. Any person, or group, who can front up with the cash – \$700 to \$800 an hour, prime time, \$350 off-peak – and a broadcast-quality tape of him or herself can have a go. Triangle will provide the soapbox, and roster programme output, but it doesn't plan to make programmes itself. That's over to those wanting to spread their message. Already there are expressions of interest for around 80 hours of programming a week. From ethnic groups, sports clubs, city councils... even a political satire group. One involves a group of West Auckland schools who are looking at a regular spot to broadcast the work of 150 media study students. Groups will have to produce their own programmes, but can offset the costs involved with up to six minutes an hour of advertising. [The founder has] seen production quotes as low as \$1500 for 30 minutes. If this all sounds a bit like Albert Park in its "Jumping Sundays" soapbox days of the late 1960s, well, why not? ...Television always had the potential to reveal a community to itself... Triangle's appeal is... a tantalising sniff of anarchy. Front up with the hire of the soapbox and you can be in every home in Auckland, telling it your way. Reckon you can sort [the mayor] out over Britomart Hole? Well, line him up, if you can, pay your money, and it's over to you... Of course there is the little problem, in such an environment, of trying to maintain political "balance" within each programme. To cope with this, Triangle is seeking exemption from existing broadcasting standards rules about biased programmes. It will offer right of reply to aggrieved groups, however.

...Media-savvy and cynical sound like cool things to be and that is why I'm a card-carrying member of that generation born in the 60s known only as X... By all accounts, we Gen-Xers – children of the nuclear threat and economic shocks – do not have too much time for the powers that be. We are too busy cultivating the art of knee-jerk irony and revelling in being a tricky target market. The telly programmers are falling over themselves to reel us in with a plethora of new channels, so understanding of our bad surfing habit they have built that quick-flick quality right into the shows. Yet last weekend, this Gen-Xer took a sabbatical from the bright surfaces and giddy personalities of those channels... So what was a signed-up Gen-Xer doing lolling on the couch, the idiot box tuned to TV One, succumbing blissfully to the voice of authority? Lapping up BBC doco *People's Century*, actually, basking in the scholarly tones of the narrator and marvelling at the programme's power to give shape to the morass of events which is history... *People's Century* goes in for the dramatic development – the environment one week, civil rights the next. It constructs a coherent plot from a myriad of sources and draws conclusions. All of which is refreshing for a youth channel refugee. Gen-Xers could be handicapped when it comes to making history. History's first television generation and advertising market from birth sometimes has trouble seeing the subject in terms other than products and what people wore. We loot history on our channels with the best of them, really old stuff like Greek myths and the Celts in the European dark ages. In our period dramas – *Hercules*, *Xena* and the soon-to-start *Roar* – the sexy outfits steal the show. There is local history, too. Take... *The Drum*, for instance, giving us the low-down on the European settlement of Canterbury. Apparently the colonists were inspired by a mania for knitting. [The presenter's] interpretation was not factual but it was instinctual, imaginative and confirmed the obsession with clothing. As a narrator [the presenter] was well accessorised, flapping on about the first ships in a Victorian-style gown. For her real-life ghost stories segment, [the presenter] wore a long white nightie in which to "co-exist with the dead" in the cemetery. But [the presenter]'s quick take on the dead compels me to confess of another retreat into well-researched historical fact – the excellent home-grown series *Epitaph*. The brainchild of [its presenter, who is an] actor... the series is founded on painstaking sifting through archives, a solid base which makes the drama of the retold events all the more powerful. It's television history at its best, stylish without pretension, colourful rather than whimsical and any irony comes from the material, not the presenter. "History is more or less bunk," said Henry Ford. Later [Henry] qualified that cynical statement. Let's hope when Gen-X fades into the distant past, there is someone around with the authority to tell a few true tales of the time.

...Britpop fans rejoice – the new British version of MTV music television is scheduled to hit N[Z] screens from next Wednesday. T[TVNZ] last night confirmed that its foray into youth television will be via the global music network which claims to be the world's biggest, reaching 281 million households through the U[S], Europe, Asia and A[US]. Unlike most other MTV viewers, who receive it via cable or satellite, N[Z]ers will watch it free-to-air on the channels occupied until today by the Horizon regional network. Under a deal finally sewn up only yesterday, TVNZ will insert local advertisements and, in time, local content into the new 24-hour MTV service being generated in the U[K] from Tuesday. Programmes will generally run 12 hours after going to air in Britain. The channel, which is to have its headquarters in TVNZ's old Shortland St buildings, is unlikely to have come cheaply for the state-owned broadcaster; the satellite costs alone runs to \$1 million a year. But TVNZ says broadcasting the networked new channel will be less expensive than running Horizon, with its costs in different regional centres. MTV is a powerful answer to CanWest's TV4, which... had already procured – and promoted heavily – elements of MTV product such as *Beavis and Butthead*. TVNZ's head of television... said that MTV was more than just music videos, it was "a complete youth entertainment channel." ...In addition to a variety of music video programmes, MTV UK also offers style and sports programmes, "rockumentaries" and soaps. Special music shows include *Unplugged*, which puts artists in an acoustic concert setting and *Star Trax*, in which stars reveal their favourite music. MTV launched in the U[S] in 1981... It is owned by Viacom Inc, an entertainment company which in 1995 had revenue of \$US12 billion.

...SKY viewers will eventually have a choice of three different MTV music channels. TVNZ started this week with the British MTV channel and plans to include some local programming in four or five weeks time. But Sky is planning satellite feeds of two American MTV channels – M2, which has alternative music, and M1, aimed at a more mainstream audience. The two Sky services are expected to be up and running on satellite TV next April. MTV bosses told *TV Guide* the aim of the music channels is not so much to have people watching for hours on end, but to dip in and out. They expect the MTV UK service will be popular with Kiwis. "The best American stuff appears on UK and with the great music in Britain at the moment it is a nice synthesis for N[Z] taste... It will depend what local stuff is put on it to appeal to the local market." Meantime, as *TV Guide* went to print, TV4 bosses were going to court to appeal a decision that allowed the new TVNZ channel to screen programmes claimed by both channels. As a result, some shows like *Beavis and Butthead* may end up screening on both channels.

...Did you feel sorry for [an actor] when the embarrassing *2People* folded, leaving him unemployed? Don't. [The actor] was overheard boasting last week [that it]s on such a good retainer with TV2 [it] doesn't need to work again for some time. Presumably his *2People* partner... has the same deal. But why? They are actors who need scripts before they can open their mouths, unlike the natural talent of [the local MTV presenter,] who only needs to engage his brain first.

...NEW YORK executives have the final say for the on-air look of local shows on its MTV youth channel. MTV has 300 million potential viewers worldwide on pay television, and the youth marketing empire has been careful to ensure local content fits with its on-air image and "values". MTV also maintains the right to veto the choice of a presenter for local shows. By all accounts MTV has been pleased with the content of N[Z] shows made with a tiny proportion of the budgets that would be allocated in the US. Still, tapes of local content must be regularly sent to New York.

TVNZ says MTV offers opinions, which are valued, but MTV recognises N[Z]ers were best able to assess the local market. Apart from minor adjustments to local shows *Wreckognize* and *Video Hits*, the only notable comment so far has been that... [the local presenter] is somewhat heftier than the MTV standard skin-and-bones presenters... But the stateside scrutiny is an unusual case of cultural colonialism on a public channel required to reflect N[Z] culture and identity. TVNZ responds by comparing itself... to McDonald's... "McDonald's requires that its franchise holders produce a burger in a certain way in a certain kind of store. MTV obviously wants to protect its brand and its logo, and they have a right to ensure it represents their values." MTV won't be the first or last franchise to demand N[Z] maintains its international brand values. Sky is subject to approval for big changes to its HBO branded movie channel, and CNN has expressed reservations to Sky in the past about allowing competing services on its news channel. But the MTV arrangement illustrates the extent to which TVNZ has been prepared to forsake autonomy in return for access to an international brand, affecting the relationship between broadcasters and their viewers. Elsewhere, organisations with a financial interest are getting a say in what we watch. Advertisers and the government-appointed board of NZ[OA] also have some control in the detail of what we get shown. Nowadays, broadcaster approval for a new show often depends on it having a sponsor upfront, and potential investors are involved in the very creation of a programme, including choosing the presenter. N[ZOA] has used its control of its public purse to influence the content of documentaries. Perceptions of editorial interference led to the breakdown of an earlier arrangement where the current affairs programme *Assignment* sought funding from NZOA. It was also suggested it would be good to have a Maori film crew for an *Assignment* programme about Maori leadership, and to have [a Maori entertainer] as presenter. NZOA points to the Broadcasting Act to justify this intervention. But the role of the funder remains an anomaly in a TV system promoted to the public as independent and ruled by the audience. At the top levels of TVNZ there has been another chink in the armour that ensures the company remains independent. [The]TVNZ board chair[perso]n... and other government-appointed members are banned from direct involvement in decisions about programming. But until a replacement is found for T[TVNZ's] former chief executive, [the chairperson] is acting CEO involved in the minutiae of state television. [Now the chairperson – who is also chairperson] of AMP and a director of Mercury Energy – has chosen to hold the position of "editor-in-chief" of the country's biggest news organisation. There is nothing to indicate [that it] would be anything but an independent arbiter in any issues. [The chairperson stresses her intention to] seek advice from senior news executives if an issue comes up that requires her to act in her role as state television's highest ranked journalist. But after parliamentary accusations last year of political interference, a government-appointed editor-in-chief has raised eyebrows in the newsroom.

...T[TVNZ] says it will run its channels as three separate businesses, but is leaving major activities including sales and marketing as combined operations. A new structure unveiled yesterday by the company's head of television... has TV One, TV2 and MTV as more independent with heads reporting to [the head-of-TV (general manager), who] said there was no suggestion that the channels were being separated for sale... The heads for each channel will be announced during the next week... There would... be overall cooperation for the benefit of the company... [There would also,] however... be a creative tension at times between the ambitions of the channels and the company's broader needs... [In related news, a 17-year-old declares]: "The media has gone out of its way to bring too many new services to the young at one time. They are trying too hard and have made the wrong assumption we will watch anything. MTV, for example, has no relevance to N[Z], and that's why it doesn't appeal to young people the way [Auckland channel] Max does with its strong emphasis on local talent, local shows and being a local station..."

...The plug has been pulled on the Auckland music channel Max TV. Staff of the 4-year-old station were told only yesterday that transmission would end at midnight tonight. Twelve full-timers will lose their jobs following the sale of Max's four frequencies for an undisclosed sum to the TVNZ-owned transmission company... Broadcast Communications Ltd (BCL)... [Max's] managing director... believed TVNZ had a role in forcing the sale of the channel's frequencies[, although]... Max's advertising revenue has fallen since the launch of TVNZ's music channel MTV[, so]... keeping the channel going in an increasingly fragmented market would have taken more capital investment than could be maintained.

...IT was a poignant moment at midnight on Wednesday as [the local]love song *Not Given Lightly* faded out and the screen turned into black and white stripes. Auckland's Max TV had been killed after five lively years of transmission. Its fans – a cumulative audience of around 250,000 – are reeling at the loss. Max set its own standards, taking risks with over-the-edge shows... It didn't patronise and it had a passionate commitment to local content, especially alternative music. Few people know, for example, that the video for Darcy Clay's bent hit single *Jesus I Was Evil* was made using Max's editing equipment. But it's a risky business, being a tiny independent tiddler in a sea of corporate whales. T[TVNZ's] general manager... announced at the launch of the MTV-UK channel that Max's days were numbered. However, even MTV Europe[s] head... admitted at the launch "MTV was chart-driven but Max is hip". But in the end Max succumbed to commercial reality: A lack of capital. Advertisers had drifted away from Max – and its managing director... is bitter about that. "A lot of the agencies are intimidated by TVNZ... [T]here was a lot of whispering going on – don't get offside with TVNZ, forget Max, they won't be in business another month. We were up against it." ...BCL's press release on Tuesday stated it purchased the frequencies "following the decision by Max Entertainment Ltd to close its Auckland-based youth music channel...". "That's absolutely untrue... TVNZ are saying we approached them. That is balderdash... too." However, BCL[s] managing director... says [his Max TV counterpart] is arguing semantics. "To sell the frequency you must have made the decision to close the business down. Yes, we approached him initially, on the basis that we'd heard... there were a number of interested parties and we joined the queue." Says [his Max TV counterpart]: "The reality is I got a phone call from an executive at TVNZ on the Tuesday (the week before last) saying [TVNZ's general manager] wanted to see us so we went in and after a bit of a chat [the general manager] stood up and said, 'What will it take to buy the frequency, what price will you take?' I could have fallen off my chair. We have never given the possibility any thought... but... [how] many months could we have gone on?[" Max's general manager and his partner]... walked away with "a seven-figure" sum... Public reaction to Max's closure has been vociferously anti-T[TVNZ], but... "The villain is the system that gives taxpayers' money in big part to TVNZ and then as a business decision they've used that money to clout the local competition because they've got themselves stuck with MTV-UK, an import that isn't working. They should have bought Max not MTV..." [Max's general manager also] attacks NZOA's policy, which cannot grant funding to a regional channel even when it is screening a high quota of NZOA-funded videos. "We screened in a city which has a third of the country's population... I believe the youth of Auckland should say no to their licence fee." When MTV launched earlier this year, [TVNZ's general manager] said it would carry "the greatest concentration of N[Z] music you've ever seen". However, despite... [shows like *Wreckognize* (whose) hosts were poached from Max] local content will always be limited because MTV is "brand protected" by MTV International... MTV[-NZ's] general manager... says, "We do play a reasonable amount of local music, about 10 clips a day and *Video Hits* on TV2 is very supportive as well. We'll do anything we can to support local music within the restriction." And there's the rub. Max may have gone belly-up – but when it was running, it was "restricted" only by the imagination of those who created it. RIP.

...We don't know how lucky we were... In years to come, sad old Doc Marten-ed neo-youngsters will gaze into their alco-pop and remember the second half of 1997 as a golden age of television. For just over five months they could roam happily between a purpose-built new channel aimed at the youth market (TV4), a state-of-the-art international music channel with some local icing (MTV), and, in Auckland at least, an irreverent, risky local music station (Max TV). And, yep, in our relentlessly commercial television market, it was all too good to be true. With Max gone, it would be nice to think MTV could take its place as a hothouse for young telly talent and a platform for local music. But given TVNZ's trademark defensiveness, its attention will probably shift now to regional television, [with] the scheduled arrival next year of Prime... in Auckland. MTV, which was a cheap replacement for Horizon and a response to CanWest's TV4, is unlikely to command sufficient TVNZ budget to greatly increase

local content in the short term. That's a shame. In *Havoc*, the shoestring MTV operation has created one of the year's success stories. [Its presenter] and his sidekick... are smart enough to know that while the "screenager" market is voraciously interested in happenings overseas, it also takes delight in things New Zild. They'll at least be back on MTV next year as will the locally-fronted hip-hop show *Wrekognize*... Local content has also been disappointingly minimal on TV4, although it too has a worthwhile flagship show. *The Drum* (financed from the broadcasting fee, mind you) is another welcome look at ourselves courtesy of talented new presenters. The cost of making such programmes, however, means that TV4 and MTV will struggle to commit to much more local content. And that's where Max came in. Its "programmes" often tended to be people talking at the camera, interspersed with music videos... Some of those faces... [are] now with *The Drum*... MTV[-NZ and MTV-UK, after being] scouted by the big guys, but all that did was create a chance for another wannabe banging on Max's door. It won't do any good banging there now. And given the constraints at MTV and TV4, there might not be much point in trying TVNZ or CanWest either.

...CanWest yesterday reported net earnings globally increased \$C39.7 million... or a record 38.8[%] in its year to August 31, 1997. Included in it was an operating profit before amortisation of \$C25.55 [million for NZ] operations, up 81.5[%] on last year... [A]ll of the N[Z] profit was from TV3... The CanWest vice-president of global operations... said it had moved to full ownership of TV3... [By the way, media company INL has met NZ's PM] to discuss the possible sale of TVNZ... The meeting took place in [the PM]'s office "a couple of weeks ago,"... CanWest said it had also discussed the matter with [the PM].

...TVNZ] wants to cut 20[%] of its news staff... [The PM] wants to privatise T[TVNZ. RNZ] has already cut its services to the point where[its] chief executive... said in her annual report last week: "Cloth-cutting has left holes in our service, most particularly in the depth of regional and special interest representation." Radio's *Rural Report* has been axed; the nightly children's show *Ears* has been replaced by a weekly programme; the Correspondence School is being banished to Access Radio, although R[NZ] insists that this is not a cost-cutting measure... In both television and radio, the idea of public service broadcasting is weakening as broadcasters emphasise audience ratings and making money... Yet democracy depends on informed voters. People in every part of the country need to have access to free information about political, economic, technological and social developments. They need to have ways to get in touch with one another, and to contribute to public debate, about current issues. These things can be achieved partly without state-owned broadcasting. This newspaper, for example, keeps people informed and provides a forum for them to have their say... But some people can't afford to buy a newspaper every day, N[ZOA] does not fund news, and with privately owned media there is always the potential that material which attracts advertising will squeeze out important information and opinions. So a true democracy needs at least one source of general news that is both free to everyone and not dependent on advertising. We have also made a mistake in selling off community radio stations (mainly to the owners of this newspaper). After next July, when these stations are expected to stop taking R[NZ]'s news service, there will be no free news coverage of local community activities that is not dependent on advertising... If we really believe in democracy, we simply can't afford to run down or sell off public broadcasting.

...TV channels safe but assets up for sale... The coalition Government is being tipped to stick to its original policy of keeping both TV One and TV2 in public hands. But the growing resistance to the sale of a channel is not expected to prevent TVNZ from selling off many of its other assets... The Natural History Unit, based in Dunedin, is understood to be close to being sold... So too, the Avalon Studios in Wellington's Hutt Valley... TVNZ is also trying to sell the assets left over from its experiment with regional television, and has announced it is keen to sell South Pacific Pictures, best known for producing the home-grown soap *Shortland Street*. A possible sale of... its transmission arm... also appears to be back on the agenda, despite the TVNZ chair[person stating recently]... that the business was "certainly not" on a list of assets being reviewed.

...T[TVNZ]'s new chief executive... is promising a more businesslike focus at the state-owned broadcaster when... [the] former chief of Ansett N[Z] and current general manager for Ansett A[US]... takes over the job in February next year... His appointment... as the replacement for [the former chief executive], who left four months ago to head Optus in A[US, comes at]... a time of considerable uncertainty at TVNZ, which is believed to have deterred many of those approached about the job... Although trained as a teacher, [the new chief executive]... did not believe his lack of experience in the media was a disadvantage, given that TVNZ was full of people "who know a hell of a lot about television." ...In the meantime... TVNZ pulls the plug on... [its] 9 am... educational slot... next month... During its lifespan eTV has been something of a graveyard for high-quality programmes... that just aren't, well, sexy enough to hold their own against the competition in or around primetime. But some of us have appreciated at least having one daily slot for programmes that the commercial imperatives might categorise as "worthy but dull." TVNZ says there's not enough money to keep it going and that the Internet, video and dedicated education channels might prove more appropriate vehicles for an educational service.

...T[TVNZ] last year forked out more than \$710,000 to its top-paid employee – but won't name the staff member... The company seems to have set a new record for state-owned enterprises... The number two earner at TVNZ was paid between \$420,000 and \$430,000 and a third staff member received between \$310,000 and \$320,000. The figures include salary, bonuses, payments for projects and programmes production, including cars and superannuation contributions. A TVNZ spokes[person]... said the company paid "market rates" in what was a highly competitive business... Last August the company said its [former] chief executive earned between \$360,000 and \$370,000... Broadcasting sources speculated yesterday that... [the presenter of the current affairs programme *Holmes* was] the most likely candidate... However... [s]peculation that... the... broadcaster... took the biggest pay-package was tempered by the possibility that [it] is not an employee but instead contracts his services to the state-owned company... Neither [TVNZ's new CEO nor the broadcaster] would comment yesterday and TVNZ cited the Privacy Act in declining to name the top earner.

...The right to publish when the myths turn to muck... How much does the public have a "right" to know about the private lives of public figures? The question rides on the coat-tails of Thursday's announcement by [a TV One] broadcaster... that his marriage to [a] former children's t[v] star and now medical student... is over – and that, in his case, a third person is involved... [The] editor of *Metro* magazine, makes daily decisions about what morsels of people's lives are appropriate fodder for readers... [and, speaking from personal experience,] says that if you are in the media then "it is an occupational hazard that your own life will come under scrutiny..." But, "the public's right to know? It's the media's right to publish. It's pretty hard to justify publishing a lot of that stuff on any high moral ground such as the freedom of information issue – what it is, is you are publishing probably for a commercial reason." The result can be painful. Following a N[Z] *Herald* Weekend Magazine profile of his former wife... [in which the former wife claimed the broadcaster] left their marriage as [it] was about to enter hospital[, the broadcaster claimed that his former wife] was mistaken. Whoever is right, once again their private spat is public property... The... editor of *New Idea*, says of [the broadcaster's] decision to issue a statement: "It was right and correct... It not only puts an end to the speculation but [the broadcaster] also has people who care about him and who don't want to be put in the situation of trying to answer questions. People who are in the public eye, who seek publicity as a way of continuing careers, have to expect that people are going to want to know the good and bad about their lives,"... Relationship Services, says of celebrities: "Often we tend to set them up as models and so tend to judge them by a different set of standards – more unrealistically and unfairly..." [The editor of *Metro*] admits... "I've been wrestling with my conscience over some of the gossip pieces [in *Metro* magazine's Felicity Ferret column]. I've been looking at an item on somebody spotted trotting happily out of a colonic irritation clinic... [Y]ou begin to think what is fair and what is not?"

...[a TV1 broadcaster's] new relationship is on shaky ground... after less than four months... [The current affairs presenter and host of *This Is Your Life*] (47) announced in August [that it] was involved with [a] TV journalist... (25) and had separated from his wife of five years... (32). They have two children... (9) and (5)... [The temptress], a Wellington Polytech journalism graduate, was previously a writer with *More* and *Next* magazines and left this year to work for Horizon Pacific Television before moving to TVNZ. [The journalist] still works in the same newsroom [as the

broadcaster] on the breakfast show... [but] moved out of... [hi]s apartment two weeks ago... [The broadcaster], in Christchurch this weekend, was not commenting...

[A TVNZ broadcaster's] former lover... has resigned from TVNZ, just days after details of her soured relationship with the millionaire... were revealed in the media. In a statement from [the journalist] and the network, the reporter... [who dumped the] broadcaster... last month... blamed health reasons for her resignation. [The journalist] has been on stress leave and then annual leave from TVNZ's *Breakfast* show... [The journalist claims to have] developed... the eating disorder bulimia... in the past two months. A letter from [the journalist to the broadcaster] was also published in which [the journalist] asks for a financial settlement from the 47-year-old broadcaster. [The journalist] would not say what [it] would do next.

...a... TV star... ha[s] joined a NZ] supermodel... as new entries to one of N[Z]'s most exclusive groups – the million-dollar-plus club... [The supermodel], whose \$8 million stash doesn't include any of the assets of [her estranged] rock star husband... takes 27th spot on the list – up the chain a bit from [the] actress... (said by the *National Business Review* to be capable of earning more than \$1 million a week from her *Xena* role and endorsements) but a million miles from the richest [perso]n in the land, [the] brewery boss... who's worth \$325 million... It has been speculated that [the actor] earns \$US28,000 a week playing *Xena*. That may sound extreme but think about it: [the star of *Seinfeld*], whose half-hour show hovers around number five in the national US ratings, gets \$US1,000,000 a week... [While t]he cast of *Seinfeld* win ratings behaving like big babies[, the NZer]... works a one-hour weekly show that hovers around number nine[in the US – 'but is number one in Turkey']!

...*'On Top of the world* Imagine life where you mingle with popstars and you're one of the UK's most popular TV personalities. Add a supermodel as a step-sister and you have some idea of the world inhabited by one *Top Of The Pops* presenter. TV Guide asked him: *Is it tough work?* No, it's not hard work. *If you could rule the world for a day, what would you do?* Collect all the money I could and put it in my account for tomorrow. *You wouldn't jet down to NZ for the day?* I'm not coming. I've heard that AUS and NZ are the two places where you find the biggest spiders and most dangerous snakes in the world.'

...*'When aged 16 it left school to become a panelbeater. 3 decades later, it is the richest person in NZ with a fortune estimated at \$1.2b after rebuilding AUSn food ingredient company Burns Philp. The investment magnate has topped the latest Rich List, rocketing from 6th last year. As the country's first individual billionaire, it has nearly double the wealth of his nearest rival, The Warehouse founder, estimated to be worth \$655m. Last year's winner was pushed to 3rd-equal with merchant banker Mr F, each with an estimated \$570m. A supermodel and Xena still make the list, worth \$20m and \$15m respectively.'* ■ *'A survey by an Indian financial newspaper added 22 names to its list of billionaires in rupee terms (\$NZ39m) – taking the total to 110.'* *'The number of millionaires around the world rose to 7.1 million, despite the global economic downturn and difficult financial markets. A report written by brokerage group Merrill Lynch said that although the number of millionaires grew by 200,000 the 3% increase represented a slowdown from other years.'*

...America's] television queen... is staying on as host of the most popular American talk show until the end of the decade. [The queen of talk] made the much-awaited announcement jointly with King World Productions, the company that syndicates ...he[r] Emmy Award-winning... [show], which is watched daily by 20 million people across the U[S]. "I want to use television not only to entertain, but to help people to lead better lives," [the]... talk-show host... [– who] has made a second \$US1 million... donation to... a black [guys'] liberal arts school in Atlanta, to provide students with scholarships [– said as it]... kicked off her show's 12th season. There had been some doubt as to whether... one of the nation's richest entertainers as well as an actress and film-maker... would continue or move on to other projects. Earlier this month, the stock of King World Productions tumbled on rumours that [the queen of talk] would quit... There had been speculation that [the actress] might resume a career in Hollywood... According to *Forbes* magazine, [the queen of talk] earned nearly \$160,000 million from her show last year. Her net worth last year was estimated at \$662 million.

...THERE'S nothing like a hot series to make actors believe they are worth megabucks. Convincing producers, though, is an entirely different matter. Every season, actors in shows flying high in the ratings will threaten to leave if their already fat pay packets aren't further inflated. Their demands for improved fringe benefits, too, can border on the bizarre... Usually, if it's clearly in both parties' interests, there is compromise and the show continues. However, the participants in this game of brinkmanship can get pretty hardnosed. Producers are becoming increasingly adept at countering threats by hinting none too subtly that stars, no matter how bright, are not indispensable. Hence *The X-Files*' Agent Scully's much-publicised cancer experience, which features in the episode on TV2 on Monday... It's a gripping storyline, of course, but at the same time it's hardly a coincidence that Scully's life-threatening experience was written into the show about the same time [that the actor]... was making noises about being undervalued and perhaps moving on to other things. Details of any behind-the-scenes details haven't been made public, but having shown that Scully could be credibly written out of *The X-Files*, it is highly likely that [the actor] settled for rather less than... asked for. And it's also a near certainty that Scully will recover from her cancer.

...[the 'X-FILES' star is suing the show's producers 20th Century Fox for selling repeats of the show to Fox-owned TV stations and cables at below-market prices, cheating the actors out of millions of dollars of percentage profits. The network has no comment on the lawsuit but expect to put up a vigorous defence in court next month. The star has also indicated it won't be returning to the show after the upcoming seventh season.']

...In an unprecedented linking of t[v] and cinema, the \$NZ98.5 m... *X-Files* movie shot this year... will serve as the concluding episode of the TV series. The last [4]... episodes... build up to the cinema version, the plot of which is secret. At the same time... the series['] creator] will publish a novel based on it. In addition, a whole line of other *X-Files* books will be coming down the chute, including a young adult version, two "making-of" volumes, and a scrapbook on the movie. □... Quotes of the day: "I woke up this morning and I was still alive, so I am pretty cheerful." – former *Goon Spike Milligan*, who is 79. "I've had real jobs in my life. This is not one of them. This is not hard." – American actor... about his new sitcom...

[We first saw her in the comedy movie] smash *Ace Ventura: Pet Detective*. Then, on a roll, [the actress] nailed down the top billing in *Friends*, an ensemble comedy revolving around six immature, relatively young adults bumbling through life in Manhattan. *Friends* has become an international smash hit. With the little work-stoppage help from her friends, [it] managed to get a pay raise this... season – going from a mere \$US40,000... an episode to a generous \$US75,000. ["We've seen our pay go from \$25,000 an episode of *Friends*, to \$40,000, and now its \$75,000. We practically went on strike to get the last increase. But when you consider the hundreds of millions the producers make out of this series, we deserve the extra cash."]

...the actress who plays Phoebe in *Friends*] is thinking of leaving to make films... But executives want her to stay and have promised her up to \$150,000 a show. The rest [of the cast] won't get anything near that. [In further TV news, the mogul who produces *Melrose Place* is offering a guest-star 'a colossal \$300,000 an episode. "That's \$100,000 an episode more than the current queen of the show gets," an insider reveals. The mogul has leaked to executives it would be prepared to shell out a \$1.2 million signing-on bonus to secure the guest-star. The producer says: "The actress would walk away with \$4.8 million for the projected 12-episode deal." The show's reigning queen has sworn revenge, warning the mogul: "If the guest-star's in, I'm outta here!"]

...the queen has] renewed with the show for another two years (at a cool \$600,000 per episode!)

Jurors who thought a[n actress]... could portray a sexy vixen while pregnant awarded her... \$US5 million... for emotional distress and wages lost after being fired from the TV show *Melrose Place*. The 34-year-old... contended in her breach-of-contract and pregnancy discrimination lawsuit that one of the producers of the steamy Fox TV show said: "Why do[n't you] just go out and get an abortion. Then [you can work]." The actress, who was fired in March 1996, said the verdict was a victory "for every [mother and] for every child that's not born. I know a lot of actresses who are afraid to announce that they are thinking about having children because they are afraid of being written out or written down, or whatever... I hope it gives other[s]... confidence to know producers are not going to have that ground to stand on." ...Spelling Entertainment[']s] attorney...

would appeal... The producers contended they had a... clause in her contract allow[ing] them to fire her if her appearance changed, and the producers argued that pregnancy-discrimination law carves out an exception for actresses because of the need for dramatic believability. [The actress] was fired before... appear[ing] on *Melrose Place*. [The actress then] returned to her job on the daytime CBS soap *The Bold and the Beautiful*, where [it] plays a sexy psychologist. [The 34-year-old] said the *Melrose Place* producers could have used TV magic, including body doubles and creative camera angles to hide her pregnancy, as they did with the show's star. To underscore her point that [it] could be pregnant and sexy at the same time, [the 34-year-old] – who is in her eighth month of another pregnancy – wore tight mini-skirts to court each day. Her pregnancy barely showed... □ *SEINFELD*'s [three co-stars]... are keeping NBC executives on a tightrope, refusing to close deals for another series before the network announces its new season lineup tomorrow. Reports indicate the... co-stars have sought \$US1 million each per episode – equalling what [the show's] star, producer and co-creator... is expected to receive – more than \$20 million over a year. The last network counter-offer was said to be around \$300,000. While some sources said last week the impasse would be resolved, others reckon negotiations could collapse, sending *Seinfeld* into a spin. *Seinfeld* without Kramer? Unthinkable.

...Salary deals no laughing matter [THE STAR OF] *SEINFELD* is no longer the most popular toy in the box. [Another stand-up comedian] is the new sheriff with a deal for his new season of *Home Improvement* of \$1.25 million per episode, which makes him the highest-paid sitcom actor on television, up from his previous \$750,000 per episode contract and passing *Seinfeld*'s previous record-breaking deal of \$1 million per episode. No word yet on whether *Seinfeld* and company will return for another season, but insiders are predicting it will be a heated negotiation so that one stand-up comedian can beat out the other – in the ratings and the bank! - 1997

...the most successful sitcom in the world, will be broadcast in America for the last time on May 14. For 133 million... [USers,] the hour-long finale... will be the end of an era. For the television networks, it could signal the start of another. *Seinfeld* has long been the jewel in NBC's prime-time crowning glories and, as such, the company has found advertisers happy to pay \$NZ975,000 for a 30-second commercial during the show. However, for this farewell episode, it is seeking a record \$3.3 million for each of the 20 slots. As [the show's main character] would say: "Are they crazy?" Possibly. Advertising slots during last month's Super Bowl – which also drew audiences of around half the population – went for a comparatively meagre \$2.2 million. It remains to be seen whether advertisers will pay the \$67 million NBC seeks from the final *Seinfeld*. But NBC's bullish rate card reflects a trend towards higher prices for rights to popular programmes and sporting events. The NFL is to receive \$30 billion for television rights to eight years of American football, while the medical drama *ER* is making NBC \$22 million an episode for three years. These record sums say as much about the state of entertainment business in America as about the popularity of the NFL, *ER* and *Seinfeld* – which is syndicated to around 100 countries. As fast as TV companies increase their spending on content, their target audiences are fragmenting amid the clutter of channels and competition from other sources of entertainment. In this battle, only the glitziest and most star-studded offerings stand a chance of rising above the crowd – and for this, companies must pay. "There is a tremendous glut of product there, as well as this need to keep spending more and more to exceed the quality standards established by other producers," says [a] New York media consultant... As if consumers are not already overwhelmed by choice, the war for ratings, and the cost of securing them, will intensify as digital technology offers consumers even more choices. In the U[S], cable subscribers get around 75 TV channels. By 2010 it is estimated that, thanks to digital compression, 1000 will be available. For the TV entertainment giants – ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox – this is not encouraging. Their market share and operating margins are steadily dropping and most are marginally profitable or losing money. Similar symptoms can be seen in the movie and music industries. "There are just so many hours in the day and it looks like we've reached saturation point,"... The answer, according to corporate thinking, is to create a brand franchise that becomes a cultural touchstone drawing in revenue for years to come. Advocates of this strategy look to *Lion King*, the animated film released in 1993 that has made around \$5 billion from film, video, soundtrack, TV and merchandising sales. [However, while] spending more on blockbusters... companies are spending less – or nothing – on mid-range fare... How long the entertainment giants can sustain paying more for less is an open question. But for [the star of *Seinfeld*, when asked if it] would continue if... paid \$17 million an episode, the answer was clear. "No, I wouldn't... It's not about the money." ...[Incidentally, an actor] will receive a whopping \$3.8 million an episode to make several guest appearances on *ER* next season – that's twice as much as [the actor got when it] was a regular on the show... [But a 35-year-old] turned down an amazing \$60 million to stay on *ER* as nurse Carol Hathaway "...to start a family."

...ER's... Dr Peter Benton... is laughing all the way [to the bank. The actor who portrays the doctor ha]s just struck a deal with the producers which will pay him a \$[NZ]60 million salary over the next three years. While... his co-star... [is] paid... \$72 million... [In another TV deal, the a]ctors on the show... *Friends*... are now getting \$2 million a week as part of a massive pay rise.

...ALL THE WAY TO THE BANK... THE news this week that the cast of *Friends* have signed a... contract renewal, with each earning \$US750,000... an episode... [(the stars) had asked for... (more)] got us thinking – what exactly do they do for the money? So we sat down with the... abacus during this week's episode and counted. Here's the breakdown... Number of lines the six said during half-hour (actually 24 minute) show: 161 Number of lines each: Joey (26), Rachel (44 – high count due to scenes with visiting sister Jill), Monica (22), Ross (29), Chandler (26), Phoebe (14) Word count of all their dialogue: about 2600 Which means the average number of words per character is: 433 So, average dollars earned per word: \$US1,732 ...number of canned laughter outbursts per episode: About 105... Costs this many dollars per laugh: \$US42,857 Oh and remember to roughly double it for Kiwi dollars. Nice work if you can get it huh? And these people want to be in movies?

...DESPITE the *Friends* cast's burgeoning film careers, [the show's] creators... reckon there's no reason the Central Perk gang can't keep on amusing viewers until they're old and grey.

...It all nearly ended in London for [a] *Friends* star... (who's there to do a play) when [the actor] made the mistake common to most Americans, looking the wrong way as [it] stepped off the kerb. [The actor who portrays Chandler on the popular comedy show] was struck a glancing blow by a bus that skidded to a halt. Concerned folks gathered as [the actor] groggily got up to explain [it] was okay.

...MORE THAN FRIENDS... Fireworks lit up the night sky over the Malibu coast yesterday as [a movie] heart-throb... and [a] *Friends* TV series star... celebrated their wedding in a \$1 million ceremony. [The bride], aged 31, and [groom], 36, were married under a white tent at the beachfront estate of [a] producer... It was the first marriage for each and they have been together for 2 1/2 years... A who's who of young Hollywood... were invited to the glittering ceremony... [An actor], who co-starred with [the groom] in *Fight Club*, attended the wedding with [an actress – who is set to do a movie with the actor who portrays Chandler –] as his date... Most of [the bride]'s co-stars from *Friends*... were present. The... [bride received an early wedding present when, a]long with other key members of the cast[, it]... renewed her contract at a reported \$US750,000... for each episode... A bidding war immediately erupted to secure the exclusive rights to the superstar nuptials, with the couple vowing to give the money to charity.

...May 4 is deadline day for the cast of *Friends*, who'll find out if their demands for \$[NZ]3 million a week for a seventh season are met.

...It's an offer they can't refuse – but the pressure's on [Rachel] A megabuck scheme to save the hit sitcom *Friends* could see the demanding cast pocketing \$[NZ]240 million in a secret reunion deal. It's well known that the comedy that made... [the six co-stars] household names is coming to an end because the cast feel they have outgrown the "twenty-something in the city" series and wish to spend more time on their personal lives and film careers. But in a bid to keep the... series going, NBC and Warner Bros have come up with a tempting offer for the six cast members... "Don't believe all the hype that this is the last series of *Friends*. There's already a secret deal that's going to bring them all back for another two years – that's so over-the-top they can't turn it down. They've offered the cast a little bump, and it's double what they currently make!" says an insider.

"The offer is for six hour-long shows spread over the year, not the 24 episodes they're used to cranking out. Since the shows will be special two-episode double partners for syndication purposes, this means just under \$6 million for each hour-long show. With residuals and such, that's almost \$40 million each a year for a third of the work they're doing now. It's an incredible offer – anyone who turns it down is a fool!" Given the enormity of the offer, there's unlikely to be a repeat of the carnival that surrounded the last *Friends* contract extension, which ended at the close of year six when the cast refused to make a deal until a mere 36 hours before the network had to announce its autumn schedule. Because of all the drama surrounding those negotiations and the non-enjoyment the cast are getting out of working on the show, no-one expected an attempt to do a[nother] season. But with a resurgence in public popularity, thanks to... [the] character Rachel being pregnant, producers and writers have new exciting storylines to give the show a fresh perspective. While a pregnancy may have saved the dwindling ratings of the show, ironically, a baby on the way could also destroy any chance the stars have of getting their hands on the huge packet. The whopping \$240 million deal will become redundant if one of the stars has to pull out and with [the actress who portrays Rachel] planning to start a family with her husband... the actress now faces the pressure of conceiving right away or having to wait another two years, until the renewed series has been completed. "[The actress i]s not yet pregnant, but they're trying like mad to get her so," says an insider... [The actress] would like at least two children, while [her husband – the star of films *Seven* and *Seven Years In Tibet* –] wants seven... Asked... just last week... whether [Rachel]'s TV baby was making his wife clucky, the \$20-million-a-movie star remarked, "I can deal with clucky." [His wife] has always laughed off any speculation about a pregnancy, but with a big cash windfall for all her colleagues at stake, this time the actress is wishing the rumours were true. "It's a now or never situation for [the couple]..."

...Earlier this year, [the] *Friends* star... picked up a gossip magazine and read that her marriage... was on the rocks. And that seemed strange because [her husband] was there, right in the same room, as... [t]he good girl... was reading the article. "Gossip is... hard to stomach... I can't help but get infuriated when it messes with something sacred, especially with my marriage. The press said we were separated and I was living in a hotel. I was like 'Aaargh!' But [my husband] was the voice of reason, which... t[he] actor... is most of the time. [My husband] said, 'Just wait three weeks and, when we're still together, they're not going to know what to do.' And sure enough three weeks later I read that we'd rekindled our love!"

...**PUSHING THE FRIENDSHIP...** *If they agree, all six can have a huge fee to do another season, but that could wreck more than one marriage* Some say money can't buy love, but it seems everyone has their price, and the stars of TV sitcom *Friends* are no exception. They're currently being tempted with \$300 million plus to sign up for one more season. And at least two marriages could be in for a rocky ride as a result. It appears... [the six friends] are being forced to choose between fortune and fame, and their personal relationships. Under the terms of the \$300-million agreement, all six stars of the show must agree to the new deal. This would mean breaking the pact they had previously made, agreeing to complete the current series and quit as a group. If the stars agree to the new deal, both... [Rachel and Monica] will have to put on hold their most precious wishes to start a family with their respective [husbands. Rachel and hers soon]... will be separated... as [the actor] heads to A[US] to shoot *The Fountain*... [The actor] is said to have real estate agents searching for a house in Sydney where [it] can live during shooting, in the hope that his wife will join him. It seems the handsome [actor] is hoping the relaxing atmosphere away from Hollywood will help the[m]... to conceive the child they so dearly want. After two false alarms this year, the couple have begun to look for help from in-vitro fertilisation... But there's still a chance they'll be able to conceive naturally. There seems little doubt [the actor will ask Rachel] to make the break from *Friends* and instead concentrate on their marriage and... baby plans. Meanwhile, [Monica and hers] are in weekly counselling sessions after a miscarriage this year. Tensions are heightened by [her husband]'s lack of starring roles and the new *Friends* offer has made things worse. Close friends say [the husband] has even moved into his own bedroom at their... Malibu home. Rumours suggest [it] is envious of his wife's income, as his career appears to have been locked into minor parts or leads in alternative films, such as *Stealing Sinatra*, a telemovie based on the 1963 kidnapping of Frank Sinatra Jr. [It] also stars in the horror movie *Eight Legged Freaks*, about giant spiders. With the latest offer – a bonus of \$10 million each for a[nother] season, on top of the \$40-million pay cheques they won in contract negotiations... – the producers of *Friends* have well and truly put the cat among the pigeons. To complicate things, they have also thrown in a catch to rock their stars' egos – if the full cast won't agree, they'll snatch away [the] 39-year-old... for her own Phoebe show. "Everybody said this would be their last season and at the time, they meant it," says a *Friends* insider. "But money talks. NBC, which distributes *Friends* in the US, wants another series next year, but they insist all the cast must agree to appear. They're willing to pay more... If [the cast] doesn't accept, the network has offered [one actress] her own series based on Phoebe." When [the actress who portrays Phoebe] told her famous castmates of the offer at a... party at [Monica's house, Monica and Rachel] immediately responded, "Does that mean we can't get pregnant?" Our source says... the show's six stars fear there's a real risk of bitterness and jealousy developing in the close-knit group if some turn down the new offer, especially as [Phoebe] has been chosen to have her own spin-off series. "[Phoebe] isn't the most popular person among the *Friends*," one acquaintance admits. "[Phoebe] hardly talks to anyone and there's long been friction between her and [Rachel and Monica]. The other girls are already envious of how [Phoebe] juggles her TV work... movie[s], hubby and kids." Phoebe herself said recently... "I... sometimes wonder why so few of my friends want to play with me."

...Hugh... has rubbed his latest screen conquest up the wrong way. Hugh had some heavy kissing scenes with [a] Brit TV star and film novice... on the set of *Love, Actually*, leaving her with a shocking case of stubble rash! So much for [hi]s clean-cut image... Charming Hugh... has [also revealed how it] almost underwent needless surgery after suffering pain in his testicles while on holiday in India. "I saw the top testicle [doc] in all of India, [who]... said, 'You have a twist in your testicles and they will have to be untwisted'." Hugh was unconvinced, however, and sought a second opinion from a doctor in London... "[The British doc] said, 'On no account go anywhere near an operating table. If you had a twist you'd be in the most diabolical pain of your life.' It turned out I had no more than a strain from playing golf – a syndrome I now call 'golf ball'." ...Surprisingly, Hugh has missed out on the year's biggest screen lover part – all puns intended. Word is [a US actor] will play rather well-endowed porn star John Holmes in *Wonderland*... The movie is about Holmes' involvement in a very real 1981 quadruple homicide on Los Angeles Wonderland Avenue... For those unfamiliar with the late John's resume, [the stud] made 2000 blue movies and slept with 10,000 [gals before it] died of AIDS at age 43. In a surprising piece of casting, *Friends* sweetie... [Phoebe] is set to play Big John's wife... It's a meaty role, but the timing could be tricky for [the actress] – hot goss says [Phoebe] recently told the *Friends* cast [it]'s pregnant again. The sitcom's producers won't write a pregnancy into the show and will just shoot around her, but *Wonderland*'s makers may not be so flexible... Speaking of mothers-to-be (and isn't everyone these days?), [*Sex and the City*'s star]... has big plans... as if that isn't obvious. We know her bub's due next week, but [it]'s just revealed her long-term goal – the US presidency... Is this just crazy mum-to-be hormones talking? Maybe [her] fellow preggers *Sex and the City* star... would like to be Queen...

I LOVE *Sex and the City*, the television show based originally on... Manhattan society... tidbit... columns in *The New York Observer*. I love it because... those sex-crazed... [gals] Carrie, Miranda, Charlotte and Samantha are such successful, busy, professional[s that] they only ever have time to meet for breakfast, brunch, detoxifying body-wraps, lunch, manicures, an afternoon snack, massages, cocktails, pedicures, dinner and nightcaps... and then breakfast again, after being shagged silly all night. I think they may be workaholics.

...*The Real Sex and the City* (TV3 tonight), is a reality series about four New York [gals]...

GET ready guys – a hot new TV show is matching single girls with their ideal m[ates]. Four successful Sex In the City-style [NZers] will move into an Auckland city apartment for seven weeks while they search for the perfect partner. TV2's new series *Single Girls* will give them free guidance and expertise, and film them on their ...hunt for Mr Right. Communicado, the production company behind *Single Girls*, held auditions this month. More than 100 hopefuls applied to take part in the programme... "These [gals] have got the career and the car, now all they need is the

companion,” said [the]producer... “We’ll be looking at all kinds of ways to find a partner for each of the girls. Personal ads, a few blind dates, consulting astrologers and personality experts. It will be lots of fun but serious too, and the girls will be treated with the utmost respect.” The four... [contestants,] aged 25-35, will produce an identikit of their ideal [guy], including a personal profile. This will be compared to the partner they end up with after six episodes. The four couples then travel to an exotic location for a romantic holiday and hopefully a future together.

...It’s not easy being the new chick on the block but [a]22-year-old... is taking the whole kiwiflatmate internet experience in her stride. “It’s like being in a huge time warp,” laughs the Pukekohe youngster, who entered the mansion during a flood of controversy, which saw [one gal]flatmate... lose the plot when asked to leave after getting the least amount of votes and [a guy flatmate] doing a disappearing act at 2.30 in the morning. “It feels like you’re on a plane that’s just not going anywhere[,” says the new chick], an aspiring opera singer[who] says the cameras in the house don’t worry her, even the ones that capture life’s most intimate acts. “It’s just part of life,” says the gorgeous blonde. “We’re all born naked.” In fact, [the chick] reckons the shower is the best place for her to showcase her singing talents. “You get great resonance in the shower, great clarity in your voice and I figure if people see me singing in the shower then it might inspire them to do it too.” Check out her lungs on www.kiwiflatmates.com.

...been dying to find out what’s been going on... at kiwiflatmates.com but can’t afford to log on to the website? TV2 is offering viewers a chance to go behind the scenes of the Auckland mansion where five Kiwis have been living... under the constant gaze of cameras. A one-off documentary this week looks at what drives the participants and creators of the latest reality experiment. The five... don’t pay rent, their bills are paid for them and they have access to a fridge full of alcohol. In return their every move is recorded on one of 20 cameras in the house. Only the toilets are a safe haven and the cameras have no night vision... [(]Internet viewers... pay \$40 to gain access to the bedrooms...[)]. The [l]andlords... put everything they have into the project but it’s turned out to be more costly than they’d thought. Their goal is to create an international flatmates website.

...[TWO] KIWIFLATMATES... have found romance among a web of deceit on the net. [One], 22, appeared as the good girl on kiwiflatmates.com – an internet stunt [in which the antics of] five young Aucklanders... were broadcast 24 hours a day over the net. Viewers voted for the most popular flatmate, who won \$4000. A documentary screened last week on TV2... showed [the 22-year-old] winning the cash. But the doco also showed the flatmates constantly feuding. They also argued with the landlord after the girls showered in their bikinis rather than let viewers see them naked. The programme showed [the 22-year-old’s new partner], 24, urinating on his contract and walking out of the flat after a row with the landlord. But the flatmates’ “bad boy” [– who also did an early morning disappearance –]clicked with... the [winner]... “We were buddies straight away,”...

STUDENTS are baring all on the internet to win free rent for a year. The Vodafone Flatmates competition has put cameras into four student flats – with some revealing results. Two flatmates were so desperate to win, they ripped off their clothes to get extra votes. Net surfers all over N[Z] – as well as Brazil, Puerto Rico, France, Germany and South Africa – have logged on to the website in the past two weeks. Internet viewers vote without music, TV or books. Every burbling thought and childish spat caught on hidden cameras and microphones and beamed into our homes – including the week in review and late night screenings of the naughty bits. Even George Orwell – who came up with the original concept of a big brother dictatorship – couldn’t have envisaged a future as horrible as this. Who are the producers exploiting? I suppose you could say the contestants and their greed for \$250,000. But they knew what they were getting into. If they didn’t they are too stupid to suffer much. The sadistic producers use quite sophisticated psychological techniques to exaggerate the emotions and twist the reality of the morons trapped in the flat from hell. I could not believe they wept watching a video from one member they had cheerfully voted out the week before. Earth to flatmates – hello? Voting people out is a cunning device. It plugs into everyone’s worst primal social fears of being unpopular. Hang on. Maybe it’s an extremely clever sociological experiment and can be justified to [the Broadcasting Minister] as a vitally necessary educational programme on the effects of psychological pressures on small groups. Then again, maybe it’s just a load of completely meaningless bollocks.

...OK I’ve really tried to ignore it but if I don’t say something I’m going to explode. I know its proudly brought to you by[my employer the] *Sunday News* but *Big Brother* (TV2, 6.30pm Tuesday to Saturday) and its eviction special (6pm Monday) truly suck. It’s the pits. The worst. Can TV sink any lower than this disgracefully crass piece of exploitative voyeurism? I doubt it. A bunch of bored youths and bimboes stuck in a house without music, TV or books. Every burbling thought and childish spat caught on hidden cameras and microphones and beamed into our homes – including the week in review and late night screenings of the naughty bits. Even George Orwell – who came up with the original concept of a big brother dictatorship – couldn’t have envisaged a future as horrible as this. Who are the producers exploiting? I suppose you could say the contestants and their greed for \$250,000. But they knew what they were getting into. If they didn’t they are too stupid to suffer much. The sadistic producers use quite sophisticated psychological techniques to exaggerate the emotions and twist the reality of the morons trapped in the flat from hell. I could not believe they wept watching a video from one member they had cheerfully voted out the week before. Earth to flatmates – hello? Voting people out is a cunning device. It plugs into everyone’s worst primal social fears of being unpopular. Hang on. Maybe it’s an extremely clever sociological experiment and can be justified to [the Broadcasting Minister] as a vitally necessary educational programme on the effects of psychological pressures on small groups. Then again, maybe it’s just a load of completely meaningless bollocks.

...We have a new role model. It is one of the housemates on the recently concluded reality show *Big Brother*. Her name is [not worth mentioning here but I think the gal] is a phenomenon. Bold and brassy to some, vulgar to others, [the gal] nominated six times for eviction by her flatmates but saved [each time]by popular vote... is fondly remembered for her “bum dance.” Reality shows have been a brilliant development for commercial television. They take ordinary people and lock them up. You don’t have to pay them, other than wave the carrot of a prize for the survivor and dramatic tension arises out of the pressure cooker effect. They can be funny, nasty, petulant, flirt, tease and wobble their bottoms. Is this a sickness? Or is it just a perfectly natural development in which instead of speculating about what goes on in other people’s lives, we get to watch it actually happening. Why have state-of-the-art peephole cameras and sound equipment which can record rats mating, if we don’t use them to capture the essence of human existence? Set aside then any notions of the dumbing down of TV and accept the fact that reality TV makes money and people watch it. Add to this the corrupting effects of directing and makeup... and you can see the problem. Quality television outdid itself and viewers are not going to put up with it anymore! There is a new name for this new brand of TV: Bum Dance Television. Do we really want a polished news duo delivering seamless news stories? Or would we rather watch a normal premenstrual [gal] suffering a bad hair day and a bloke so pissed [it] thinks that a story about a senior public servant’s aversion to breasts is that funny, [the drunk] falls on the floor laughing? The latter quite clearly. The presentation of the weather is a contentious matter. Every town insists that its temperature is taken in the wrong place. Bum Dance Weather would... involve... beat[ing] out a compromise. Sports are already pretty well given over to Bum Dance with news stories of rugby players hitting everything from ranch-slider doors... to members of the public... We’ve seen film of [an All Black winger/centre] wobbling around and the every action and reaction of our sports heroes are analysed, dissected and ranted about on talkback radio. There is a notion that when it comes to current affairs, there are two sides to every story. But the audience demands more. If we have learned anything from reality TV it is that life is such a meaningless jumble of push and shove that order can only be brought about by voting the worst story – the weakest link – off the news. Let the public decide whether Bosnia makes way for the octuplets, or Nancy the Performing Pig stays while Russia goes. The biggest sighs of relief will come from TV management and the office of [the Broadcasting Minister]. You don’t need a charter if television is a canvas on which every bum has its day... [While on the topic of bums,] like many other viewers, I spotted a blooper in the first instalment of *Pioneer House*... A roll of toilet paper could be seen in the loo, but around the year 1900 rolls as we know them today, had not been invented! The normal household practice, although it may seem primitive today, was to cut up newspaper into squares. I believe it was quite some time later until toilet rolls were introduced.

...JOURNALISTS love knowing other people’s business – it’s why they become journalists. The only way the public can stick their noses into other people’s business – from the comfort of their own homes at least – is via reality TV. We get the unadulterated version of other people’s lives in *Life on Tape* (TV2). It’s rather like watching the neighbours through the curtains – and it’s almost as sad. Ten Kiwis get [a] video camera to record special moments in their lives. [A y]oung mum... weighs 113kg and wants to lose weight... [One couple] earn \$37,000 between them and are entering any competition they can that might help them towards a deposit on a house. [Couple two, who] had to give their adopted baby back after 10 months are... travelling to Russia to adopt another child. There’s also the attention-seeking [gal] who spent hours filming an argument with her

boyfriend. It's hardly riveting stuff. You have to spare a thought for editors who had to hack the series down to watchable segments. It might be unadulterated, but *Private Investigations* (TV One)... follow[s] private eyes at work... [and] features more adultery than you could shake a stick at.

...I DID it. I watched the final episode of *Temptation Island* (TV3, 7.30pm Monday). I must be a masochist. It would be less painful to be hung by the privates and whipped with a bamboo cane by a [perso]n named Madam Lash than sit through another such hour-long rancid dollop of awful American adolescent angst. Thank God it's over. They rounded up one of the most egotistical and neurotic collection of himbos and bimbos ever to leave America. Then they separated the couples and subjected them and their tempters to various ritual humiliations. And then the producers brought the frustrated lovers together again so we would watch them cough to being "intimate" with someone else, cry a lot, and then profess undying love for each other. It was truly demeaning and relegated human emotions to the status of tacky entertainment.

...I'm starting to get sick of 'adventure island' shows. We've had *Survivor*, *Temptation Island*, *Internet Island*... *Treasure Island* and a couple more. The first one was quite good, actually. The second was alright. But by the third it started to get boring. Please make *Internet Island* the last...

Stranded in purgatory MAROONED on an island so harsh that human life disappeared long ago, the quest is one of survival. The 36 hardy souls on this uninhabited, unforgiving place are acting out a dubious fantasy: to be Robinson Crusoes for a year. And one has already fled. The rest are fending for themselves, battling against the elements, far from the comforts of the real world. But not from the glare of cameras. This, after all, is the [age of reality TV] and it just wouldn't be right if their every move wasn't caught for what the makers have dubbed the ultimate fly-on-the-wall television documentary. Welcome to *Castaway*... an expensive flagship project from the BBC which is charting the real-life stories of a motley crew of strangers who applied to be stranded on the tiny island of Taransay, off the far north-west coast of Scotland, for... 365 days... The official blurb talks about how it is a fantastic social experiment in sustainability and interaction. Which is all very worthy. But in TV land, ratings are God. And the reality is that viewers want the "MacTruman Show" to provide all the usual range of emotion – sex, violence and the full spectrum of human suffering. Who's sleeping with who? Why have they fallen out? Just how hard was [the assault victim] punched? That's just for starters. This really is a castaway documentary with a difference. A[n author]'s characters in *The Beach* found splendid isolation in a sun-soaked paradise. The BBC, on the other hand, has uncovered a landscape so brutal that when the winds blow hard it is impossible to stand up. If some of the locals on the neighbouring island of Harris are to be believed, the producers have bitten off more than they can chew[... while]... one of Scotland's most respected journalists and broadcasters, believes the project is dangerous and stupid. "This is going to go wrong, and badly... You cannot flirt with nature on this particular Atlantic frontier and not expect to get comprehensively ravaged by her. These poor sods with their suburban escapist fantasies are being shamelessly exploited. Despite the assurances, I simply do not believe they know what they're letting themselves in for. The first drowning or death by exposure will presumably bring the 'experiment' to an end. It is a shameful, disgusting business and it should be stopped before a tragedy is allowed to occur at the behest of the lowest common denominator television." ...though there is evidence that settlements existed on Taransay during the Bronze Age 4000 years ago, the population reached its peak in the 1830s, when 16 crofting families called it home. The last family left 60 years ago, and... the island [i]s now watched over by some sheep, a small herd of goats and a pair of golden eagles. When the new arrivals first stepped onto the island... the *Castaway* project had already been dogged by controversy, and a degree of bad luck, which no doubt had the makers rubbing their hands with glee... Just before their guinea-pigs set foot on their new home, the producers expressed the hope that no one would have to leave at any time during the year-long stay. But after just two days many had been struck down by flu and were taken to hotels and self-catering accommodation on Harris to recover. Some have complained... the accommodation is completely unsuitable for children, and four... castaways were left with no belongings when a helicopter dropped their crates 60m onto rocks on another island. And, yes, all the castaways have been shocked by the severity of the weather. Some newspapers have had a field day, branding the... exercise an unqualified disaster and a waste of TV licence-payers' money. But this is a project where the success lies in interpretation. Problems like flu and roofs becoming detached in high winds are what this kind of programme should be all about. Real people experiencing real problems in extraordinary circumstances... Judging by... [show]s so far, most of the group are at each other's throats all the time... □ *Castaway*... began screening on the BBC [two months ago]. So far there are no plans to show the series on N[Z] television.

...*Survivor* spin-offs can be very lucrative. According to [a]bongo-playing waitress... no sooner had [it] been booted from *Survivor II: The A[US]n Outback*, than [it] was sought by *Playboy* to drop her gear for an undisclosed sum. [The waitress] had already turned down a paltry \$10,000 to bare her breasts on [a talk show]. Meanwhile, Queenslanders are up in arms after *Survivor* castaways were filmed nicking coral from the Great Barrier Reef to give to other contestants. There's a \$100,000 fine for this indiscretion, but the episode showing the theft topped its ratings time slot...

THERE is already betting on who will win the A[US]n outback series of *Survivor*. Favourite, at four to one, is... a 32-year-old army intelligence officer from Texas. A US TV reporter who got close to the set told the *Today Show* that while the contestants might have been doing it hard on wombat stew and reptile relish, the 230-person crew had their own tent village with games, TV and bar.

...There have been thousands of applicants for A[US]'s own version of *Survivor* and Network Nine is eagerly sifting, hoping to get the show on the road as quickly as possible to cash in on the format's huge popularity. In the meantime, *Survivor II: The A[US]n Outback* addicts are holding their own survival parties to help them overcome the loss of their favourite programme. Party hosts have organised *Survivor*-style games, bush tucker nibbles, witchetty grubbs, snake lollies and trivia nights to fill in the gap left by the series... [Incidentally, one viewer has expressed] disgust at *Fear Factor* ([US])... when contestants had to consume an egg with an unborn chick inside. A[noth]er viewer asks did]... contestants really eat roaches...?

...Questions are being asked about how real the reality shows are following revelations body doubles were used in *Survivor: The A[US]n Outback*. [The] producer... who always maintained the show was completely real, admitted 16 stand-ins were used during the... shoot. These included "pick-up shots" to capture wide-angle views after the fact and a swimming race in the Herbert River was later re-staged with body doubles so a chopper crew could shoot uncluttered aerials. [The producer wasn't] embarrassed about the trickery and it had not affected the million-dollar victory of [a 40-year-old]nurse... "I couldn't care less – I'm making great TV," added [the producer as it] headed for Kenya to start on *Survivor 3*. Meanwhile, Network Nine is in a quandary about taking *Survivor 3* in case the dates clash with its home-grown *Survivor*, already off the drawing board and into packaging... Nine's offering... [is] the most expensive produced here and... [shoul]d... outrate the [US] version because Aussies like to watch Aussies.

...*Reality check*... Forget *Survivor* and *The Osbournes* – get ready for the next wave of reality programming as networks prepare to revive television classics as reality hits. In development is a *Green Acres*-style show, with a rich upper-class family being relocated from their luxurious city life to a more basic, middle-American existence. With no bank accounts or Bentleys, the cameras will follow the former socialites as they try to land jobs and buy their own groceries. "There's going to be wonderful humour in this show, as there is with anyone who's a fish out of water;" [the] executive producer... says... Also in the works is a series tentatively titled *The Real Beverly Hillbillies*. The concept will see a lower-middle-class family move into ritzy Beverly Hills, and each week the cameras will follow them as they try to blend in with their rich and famous neighbours.

...This week we dedicate this column to a post-*Survivor* special. Look, *someone*... watch[ed] it, according to the ratings, and they may like to know what's happened to all those resourceful, likeable, not-in-the-least-bit-annoying Americans since [a guy known as] Rich... finally nabbed the million bucks... The now respectfully named Richard (millionaires have certain standards, it seems) has had numerous marriage proposals from [members of both sexes] and, amazingly, only two pieces of hate mail. But the police made a proposal as well – stop abusing your 9-year-old son or we'll lock you up. Seems that when Richard got back from the island the lad had put on weight, so [dad] had him out jogging at 4.30 am. When the child wanted to stop, [dad] allegedly roughed him up. [Dad] was arrested, but the charges have been dropped. [Richard] has had another downer with a

\$US500,000... book deal falling over. To be titled *Survival Skills For Life: An Owner's Manual*, the book got vetoed by CBS under the terms of the strict contracts the Survivors signed up to. More happily, [Richard]'s doing the talk-show circuit, had his home renovated, appeared on the Emmys and the MTV Awards and is part of an advertising campaign for milk. No, we don't get the connection, either. What of the other Survivors? They've all sprouted agents and new careers. [One] has a fishing show on ESPN and a guest spot on *Jag*, [while another i]s introducing videos on VH1 and appearing on *Nash Bridges*, and [a third] will appear on the soap opera *The Guiding Light* and is medical correspondent on a TV magazine show called *Extra*. Sad ol' [survivor four]'s just after the money – friends are asking fans to “send a... buck to [our mate].” Perhaps the weirdest spins-offs relate to the show itself. A spoof movie of *Survivor* is already being planned; the lead singer of the rock band Survivor (remember *Eye of the Tiger* from *Rocky III*?) is suing CBS for breach of trademark; and the series mastermind... is planning a new reality series in which volunteers fight for a place on the Mir space station, culminating in the winner being launched into space. No, we're not kidding.

...[Britain's v]eteran interviewer... has launched a vitriolic attack on reality television shows, vowing never to interview any of their participants. “God knows what's happening to TV,” [the interviewer], 67, snarled last week. “It's something I'm totally in despair about. We'd never dream of having a *Big Brother* person on the show or any of those cheap and silly entertainers there are now.”

...How much more reality can we take? It's cruel, it's voyeuristic and humiliating. That opening introduction leaves no doubt to where the BBC's *Panorama* programme wants to take us in the rise and rise of reality television. How far is television prepared to go to keep us tuned in and turned on, asks [one] reporter... We hear from media experts, psychologists and lawyers that it has already gone too far. “The problem is not just in damaging contestants, but us as viewers,” warns a boffin from the University of Stirling. [America's r]eality TV king... sums up the opposing viewpoint: “This is only television! My God, there are other issues in the world.” The British reality programme *Big Brother*, which did not screen in N[Z] (presumably, TV2 thought the AUSn version – which included a Kiwi – would have more relevance for local viewers)), made celebrities out of its contestants, and two of those... want to set the record straight and let us know that their television selves were really evil twins manipulated in the editing suite. “At the end of the day we were just pawns in a game,” says [one]. “The public thought it was real... it was just a game show.” [The other says it] wanted to disappear from view after her 15 minutes of fame. “I think the term reality television is totally misleading. It is a production, it is highly edited... it is *not* real.” [A spokesperson for] Endemol Entertainment International, the maker of *Big Brother*, is asked if [it or the company i]s concerned for the safety of people in the long term. [The spokesperson] points out that the programme is a big commercial success and that it would not be in the company's best interests to endanger people. [The reporter] crosses the Atlantic to show how damaging reality television can be. [The reporter] talks to a lawyer in the case of [the person] who shot a [gay it] found out was his secret admirer during a “television ambush” on... [the king's] afternoon... talkshow. In typical US fashion, a civil case was brought by the dead [gay]'s family against show owner Warner Bros, and they netted \$US25 million... The court agreed there was a link between [the killer]'s action and the embarrassment [it] suffered on the talk show, although at his criminal trial the prosecutor declared that people are responsible for their own actions. [The king] offers his thought of the day on the attack against reality TV. “Television cannot go into the area of censorship.” Then [it turns on the reporter]. “When you are doing this interview you never gave me the questions ahead of time. You never figured out if this story would hurt my feelings. At some point we have to stop passing the blame. People have to be responsible for their own behaviour.” Perhaps it's not a case of how far television will go, but rather when will viewers tire of watching ordinary people fight, fall in love or play mind-games with their co-contestants on tropical islands?

...Evidence is mounting that guests on a BBC daytime television chat show were bogus, and a newspaper has interviewed “guests” who claimed they were not what they seemed to be. Britain's state broadcaster has launched an investigation and suspended two producers and a researcher after the... *Mirror* reported two incidents, one in which an unmarried actress claimed to be a battered wife and another when two “sisters” in a feud were strippers who had never met. Each received around £75... for appearing on the show after being supplied by an agency in West London... The BBC said two agencies had been used to provide guests on four items for the show, contrary to guidelines. The claims are just the latest in a string of embarrassing disclosures for broadcasters after other well-publicised cases of faking... [By the way, police] were called to a Brisbane house after neighbours complained of a savage domestic dispute. But on arrival they found a 30-year-old... alone in his ruined home. Questioning revealed the [30-year-old] had destroyed his house after becoming enraged with a television game-show contestant who had given the wrong answer.

...A[US]'s first interactive drama series is about to be filmed for Austar's 400,000 pay TV customers. It's called *Fat Cow Motel* and will be shot mainly in Queensland. The 13-parter is described... as “a ground breaking entertainment experience with the audience set the task each episode to solve a whodunit style murder mystery”... The \$2 million *Fat Cow* is aimed at 16-39-year-olds and is believed a world first... Austar audiences will also be provided with clues via their... digital radio... mobile phone... e-mail, [or the] Internet...

PERVERTS are using Pokemon to lure kids ...to hardcore internet porn sites. *Sunday News* discovered several sick websites listed during searches for Pokemon details. The cute TV, film and computer game characters are loved by thousands of Kiwi kids. One site included obscene photographs of adults indulging in sexual activity. None of the porn sites had any official link to Pokemon. The search also revealed hate sites for people who loathe Pokemon. These featured bad language, racial slurs and threats against Pokemon fans. Many of the sites were American. Pornographers based outside N[Z] cannot be prosecuted by our Internal Affairs department.

...Turkey's broadcasting watchdog has ordered a TV channel to stop airing the popular cartoon series *Pokemon* after two children leaped from balconies, believing they had superhuman powers. The Radio and Television High Council also penalised the private television station with a one-day blackout in response to a Health Ministry complaint, a council spokes[person] said. A 7-year-old girl and a 4-year-old boy were injured in falls from high-rise buildings in separate incidents last month. The ministry linked their accidents to the Japanese series.

...An eight-year-old girl in Shanghai, China, broke her back in a fall from a sixth-floor window while trying to fly like a popular television character... who has superhuman powers... [The girl was] the third child injured in the city this year trying to imitate Princess Huanzhu... [In related news, the US] President raised... \$[NZ]3.6 million... for Democrats at a star-studded Hollywood gala at the weekend after calling on the entertainment industry to limit the violence children see in movies and on television. “There is still too much violence on our nation's screens, large and small,” [the President] said in his weekly radio address to the nation... noting that experts estimated that by the age of 18 “the typical American will see 40,000 dramatised murders.” ...[then it] said all Americans needed to search for ways to prevent a repeat of last month's tragic massacre by two teenagers at a Colorado high school[, and]... also chided the Republican controlled Senate for approving a gun control measure... “riddled with new loopholes” and[inadequate] to... control firearms[, before asking]... the movie industry “to re-evaluate its entire ratings system... [and urging] movie theatre operators and video storeowners “to enforce more strictly the rating systems on the movies they show, rent and sell.”

...WITH the heat on between *One Network News* and *3 News*, television ratings figures have never been watched more closely. But did you know if 677,000 N[Z]ers switch on to *One Network News* during a particular week, or 246,700 turn on to *3 News*, those figures are based on data received from 440 PeopleMeters distributed throughout the country? That's a maximum of 1050 people aged [5+]... People who live in caravans, boarding houses, motels, hotels or institutions cannot be included. That also means if there are thousands of people watching the Melbourne Cup – in pubs or the TAB – it's not measured. PeopleMeters are installed in a home for a maximum of three years; the distribution... is based on census information. PeopleMeters, owned and operated by [the research company] which contracts the data to the networks on a daily basis, have been used since 1990. Before that, methods such as a personal diary system were used and in the days of a single-channel broadcast the then-N[ZBC] conducted its own research. PeopleMeters are a strictly quantitative measurement, used by broadcasters to assess and predict audience behaviour

with the aim of enticing advertisers... The essential information... is not the *numbers* of people watching a programme but *audience share*... [M]eters do not measure enjoyment of a programme and there is no system in N[Z] for doing that. In Britain, the BBC also measures “qualitative” ratings through the British Audience Research Board to gain feedback and information for schedulers – not advertisers. There are four components in a PeopleMeter: • A monitor which sits on top of every TV in the household to show who is watching and what signal the set is tuned into... • A VCR “smartprobe” which measures what TV programmes are taped by the household (the VCR info... is not used in the ratings). • A data storage unit and modem which collects the data from each monitor. • A remote control handset with buttons for each person in the home plus guests, so if four family members are watching... they will each push their identification button. The... system can only work if participants use it honestly. They must use the remote when they switch on and off. Based on “coincidental surveys”, [the research company] records a 91% compliance factor. But the system is not foolproof. The figures were distorted in a famous incident last year because the “bunny ears” on a PeopleMetered TV set in Northland were moved and pointed to another transmission mast, falsely registering the viewers were watching TV4 instead of TV2. The result: *Ice TV* had unusually high ratings in the 5 to 9-year-old demographics – as did the infomercials. Just that one household made the difference between a real reading of 0.9% and a false one of 2.7% – or 2709/8127 viewers. That’s quite an anomaly for advertisers. Calls have been made for an increase in the number of meters but as advertisers have pointed out, who would pay? The other question commonly asked is: do you know anyone with one?

...I am studying at Waikato University and recently discovered the way TV channels find ratings. For those who don’t know, about 470 households hold the key. Their TV set is monitored. However, you must be a house owner to be eligible for this. Already that draws out hundreds of thousands of people. I know lots of people who loved *The West Wing* and hate how it has been scrubbed, just because the people in those 470 households didn’t watch it much. A new method has to be thought up in order to have proper ratings and therefore popular programmes won’t get scrubbed or be moved to horrible slots... • *Your information is incorrect. Renters are included in the survey panel, which is supposed to be a ‘mini-NZ’ – covering the country’s demographic of ages, sex, ethnic groups, incomes and the like. New households are added to the panel as others are rotated off. The survey base is proportionally larger than say Britain’s but the organisers say even doubling the number of peoplemeters would barely reduce the margin of error which is 3[%]. In any event the networks [only] go with the peoplemeters as a measuring guide.*

...Time to take a stand on TV for the sake of our children... A year ago, when I was teaching media studies in the U[S], someone sent me an article about a conference on cultural imperialism at Canterbury University. Scholars and students from universities all over N[Z] had come together to discuss the issue of whether, having so recently shrugged off the colonial bonds, we were once again becoming colonised by the aggressive penetration of world culture. I was reassured to learn that we were judged to be in no immediate danger. True, the participants agreed, our media were now saturated with [US] programming and our children, most of whom had never played a game of basketball, were wearing Nikes... and Chicago Bulls T-shirts. Our choice of a Friday night take-out was more likely to be K[FC] than fish and chips. But it was all harmless fun, more damaging to the waistline than the national psyche. Uniformly, our academics came to the comfortable conclusion that, as usual, good old Kiwi ingenuity was shining through. N[Z] youth were not buying these cultural products hook, line and sinker, but were “appropriating them” – a fancy academic term for pirating them and transforming them for one’s own harmless enjoyment. You can imagine my surprise when I came home last year to find that, in my absence, the place had turned into a little banana republic. I can’t put it more bluntly. Or, as my 14-year-old son says: “What’s the point of coming here? We could be back in Ohio... and it’s cheaper there.” The Government is talking about the challenge of digital t[v] and the prospect of endless channels. There is a perception that the media is expanding, but the truth is that we are seeing less and less of ourselves... [– though tv] cameras may for the first time show the Youth Court at work, after recommendations for expanding media coverage... In the early 1970s, when I was working in the media here, there was a tremendous surge of creative energy and national pride. Today, the local media has been largely co-opted for the service of the global free-market economy. Why struggle to create a local identity when you can buy one for half the price? Why? Because our youth are at risk. The potent messages our children are receiving are absorbed at an age when identity-forming is of prime importance. Do media make a difference? I once worked on an ad... for the household cleaner Vim that involved smearing a bath with Marmite and wiping it off. Within a week the sales of Vim... doubled. I have been travelling around the world now for 25 years and I have no doubt that there is a direct relationship between the health of a nation and the percentage of positive, life-affirming messages in its media... Before I left N[Z], Kiwi pride was developing. Like many post-colonial nations we were in the process of defining ourselves by our differences – as in we are not British, we are not A[US]ns and we are certainly not [USers. 12] years later all the bets seem to be off. Our media have become saturated with cheap, bottom-of-the-barrel [US] reality and tabloid shows, and local production that mistakes sensation for sophistication. The cost is cheap but the price is high. In a fascinating experiment in media effects, [a]sociologist... surveyed parents of young children about their perception of danger from strangers within their community. Uniformly the parents believed that it was no longer safe for their children to play outside. Instead, they stayed isolated in front of t[v] sets watching scenes of violence and brutality that only reinforced their sense that the world was a dangerous place.

...We may have known about homeless children in Brazil, or girls forced to work as prostitutes in Bangkok, but the worldwide abuse, neglect and exploitation of children has many forms. If there’s one thing *Innocents Lost* (TV3 tonight) highlights, it is the myriad of ways in which the world’s most vulnerable citizens are robbed of their childhoods, their innocence and, in some cases, their lives... [J]ournalists... travelled 112,000km to 21 countries and spoke with hundreds of oppressed youngsters. It’s as bad as you could imagine and then worse. In Guatemala City... [the biggest threat to] street kids... apart from glue-sniffing, is the police who routinely torture and kill. In the Ural Mountains, 14-year-old boys... on remand... [or] serving prison sentences for petty crimes... are... kept behind bars 23 hours a day... in a former gulag... In Greece, children with disabilities are tied to their beds in institutions. Some are there simply because in traditional Greek culture a genetic defect in the family can harm the marriage prospects of siblings. In the United Arab Emirates, boys sold or kidnapped from Bangladesh are forced to become camel jockeys. Often they are... not given enough food – smaller jockeys mean faster camels. They will usually be working in the stables of a multimillionaire. When they grow too big they have to leave, but if they manage to get back to Bangladesh they will no longer be able to speak the language. Some were so small when they were taken that they don’t remember their families. Deeply affecting is the plight of many children in Africa forced into domestic slavery – because they have food and shelter they are ignored, but they lead lives of neverending work and misery. Most are beaten by their masters. In Ghana, girls are enslaved by priests of the local religion, who are the arbiters of justice. Many are paying for a crime in the family, sometimes generations before. They become a “wife” of the priest and must stay forever. Sexual abuse is rife. Costa Rica is now the destination for many [guys from the US] who want sex with young girls. Most seem to think the girls are prostitutes by choice but as one youngster, who is supporting her mother and 11 siblings, says, “Necessity wears an ugly face.” All of these countries are among the 191 that have signed the U[N] Convention on the Rights of the Child. Throughout *Innocents Lost*, children state articles of the convention, but even the most basic of its aims would have no meaning to the children interviewed. That is the question not asked by the documentary-makers. If the convention is so ignored by governments around the world, what good is it? ...[■ At 11.30pm tonight TV1 is screening] BEWARE: PICKPOCKETS AT WORK[. a o]ne-off British documentary about the world of pickpockets and the people whose job it is to stop these crimes. Former pickpockets divulge how they make thousands a day.

...Thousands of violent young offenders... [held in British] prisons and residential units... are being fed a constant diet of... video nasties to keep the inmates occupied... fuelling further generations of aggression. A British forensic and family psychologist... said video violence was dangerous when viewed by those with aggression – and often copycat – tendencies... [P]eople who had grown up in violent families had distorted ideas about physical confrontation and provocation. Video nasties merely reaffirmed and reinforced those ideas, justifying aggression as normal... “They bring

R18 movies to show these offenders, often despite their age, so the group is kept quiet... [These are] the most vulnerable people, already with distorted ideas, and... [we] wonder why they offend when they come out." [The psychologist] expected that many institutions, including those in N[Z], had a similarly flawed practice... [N]ew results from a British study... [show that some 64%] of... violent offenders preferred aggressive videos, compared to 11[%] of... non-offenders... One of the most important considerations from the research was the availability of violent images to those already known to have committed violent acts... The copycat syndrome was always a real danger. One offender had made a clawed glove, similar to the one on *Nightmare on Elm St*, which was found with blood on it. The victim was never found. Another violent youth picked up from a video the idea of slashing victims' Achilles tendons so people could not run away. "[The offender] thought it was a good idea that [the offender] had never thought of. That shows you the influence these movies have on some people."

...The entertainment industry loves to say it influences people... But when it comes to the influence of violence in some movies, television, music and videogames on behaviour, the [entertainment industry gets] prickly. In the wake of recent atrocities, the industry has turned typically defensive... [The chairperson] of Viacom International Inc, raised the battle cry at a conference of cable-TV professionals in June. "I'm outraged by a lot of what we hear blaming the media for what's going on... I don't think we have anything to be ashamed of." Now some entertainers and executives say this armour is starting to come down. In private, they are willing to talk about an evolving sense of responsibility. "I am more sensitive than a year ago because of what is in the air," says the head of one major film studio. "Not that I believe [violent entertainment] causes street violence. But there is validity to the idea that it is a contributing factor, along with guns." A recent Writers Guild conference devoted a panel to discussing the recent carnage. They called it "Guns Don't Kill People, Writers Do." This hand-wringing coincides with... [the release of a report by the] Centre for Media and Public Affairs... estimating viewers... in the US... see one scene of serious violence every four minutes while watching feature films and TV series[, plus increasing]... pressure from the U[S] Government and the public. In a new *Newsweek* poll, 78[%] of respondents said violence in the media deserved "some" or "a lot" of the blame for the recent mass shootings, a higher percentage than blamed the increased availability of guns (70[%]). The Federal Trade Commission is investigating the marketing of violent entertainment and games to children. "I don't want to take on Washington," says one studio head. "We've passed on three projects recently that were too violent." The Motion Picture Association of America is pressing all its members to staunch the gratuitous flow of blood. Beside rating films, the trade group approves all advertising, including trailers and Web sites... The board occasionally bounces ads for showing too much blood... The public's appetite for destruction may also be waning. In the mid-1990s... an orgy of blood... filled summer screens... But as the movies got dumber, audiences turned elsewhere. Only the cyberpunk hit *The Matrix* carries a high body count this season. Hip-hop... has taken a step back from the brink... today's thugged-out MC offends more with sex than violence. The makers of violent videogames are building in parental controls. Parents can now set the ultrabloody *Kingpin: Life of Crime*, for example, to run at a lower level of brutality; children need a password to change levels... This urge to purge violence could have an aesthetic downside. The violent benchmarks of the '90s – ...*Reservoir Dogs* and *Pulp Fiction*, the cinematically graphic raps of NWA – have been some of the decade's most bracing and relevant art. They were unsettling. But the alternative, so far, has been soulless sex movies like *Eyes Wide Shut* and... bland pop... Of course, the cleansing may not be permanent. "Everyone is pulling back for a while, letting the politicians claim victory over Hollywood," says one producer of art-house movies. "Then it's back to business as usual." The real reason there are no *Diehard*-style gunfests this summer, says... a box-office analyst, comes down to two words: *Star Wars*. No studio wanted to put its potential blockbuster against... [a] sure thing. The market for mayhem... is cynical. [A] French director... once said, in response to a complaint about gore, "No, that's not blood; it's red." After the recent brutal events, such nonchalance comes harder, both inside Hollywood and out. No one wants to look like the cigarette manufacturers, who testified that their product did not cause cancer. The public is calling the media carnage blood. And they are seeing red.

...DUE TO SOME VIEWERS' CONCERN ABOUT THE VIOLENCE IN THE REAL-LIFE DOCUMENTARY WHICH WAS TO SCREEN AT THIS TIME, IT HAS BEEN REPLACED BY OUR USUAL PROGRAMME OF FICTIONAL VIOLENCE, WHICH YOU CAN ENJOY WITHOUT HAVING TO CONSIDER REAL-LIFE CONSEQUENCES!

...Those "real" t[v shows of US] police raiding homes and making arrests which rate so well on N[Z tv] are in trouble. New... rulings mean their makers may have to can some of their more sensational footage. The US Supreme Court has ruled that the police violate peoples' privacy rights when they take t[v] crews or other journalists along... during arrests or searches... [T]he justices said that... "Even the need for accurate reporting on police issues in general does not justify allowing journalists to accompany police onto private property." The American Civil Liberties Union hailed the ruling and said the police must be guided by the Constitution and "not by the demands of the infotainment industry." The association backed a Montana couple who sued [the] Government... for violating the Constitution's Fourth Amendment ban on unreasonable searches... after... agents took along a CNN camera crew while raiding their ranch. Here in N[Z a] prominent Queen's Counsel and long-time civil libertarian... said the decision was probably a timely reminder of what was "fair and reasonable" in the circumstances. That in itself changed with public attitudes as to what they were prepared to accept and what was over the top... In the Montana case... agents were seeking evidence of the poisoning of bald eagles by [the couple] when they broke into [the ranch]... CNN aired the footage although [the couple were] later convicted only on a minor charge of improper use of a pesticide... But the justices ruled that [Montana's Government and agent]s... cannot be sued because it was not clearly established when the raid... occurred that such media access was unlawful... [P]roducers... expect the next push by the Criminal Defence Lawyers' association will be against street-arrest sequences... [T]he *Washington Post*, said the... Supreme Court... ruling... did not restrict reporters' rights to join police officers at work, or photographers' rights to take pictures in public places such as streets, parks and government buildings.

...It came to mind recently as I wandered through a couple of U[S] Supreme Court decisions that there is an occupation... totally beyond my understanding: t[v] programming. A hunt down the local ratings for police programmes that in my humble opinion are class acts is doomed to disappointment. There languishes *NYPD Blue* at 97, while *Homicide, Life on the Street* is notable by its absence from the top 100. Yet a programme based on pointing the camera in the right direction and hoping for action attracts viewers in droves. Our very own *Police* regularly rates in the top 10, sometimes reaching as high as 3. Programmers know best. That is why *Police* wins a 7.30 or 8 pm slot and the crafted police dramas I would have on at peak time usually coincide, for most viewers, with the call of the pillow. But *Police* and its genre raise some unsettling issues. Last July, its producer described the purpose of the programme as being "to demystify the work of police... and exalt the work done by them." That is very similar to the line presented to the... Supreme Court during hearings recently. Media organisations stated that their role in what are described as "ride-along" ventures with police showed the public "the difficulties and dangers facing law enforcement officers, the legal restrictions that confine their discretion, and the social ills they seek to redress." Cynics, of course, might suggest that such claims are a... load of rubbish... They might suggest that programmers have seen the ratings and have cried, "...give me more." ...[how]ever, the news organisations at the centre of the Supreme Court cases were not from the entertainment side of the industry. One case involved the *Washington Post*, the other CNN. In the first, police executed an arrest warrant on a Maryland residence. A reporter and photographer from the *Post* accompanied police... The scenario went something like this: the police and *Post* staffers turned up before dawn at the home of the parents of an alleged probation violator. The door was opened by their 9-year-old-daughter... her father, still in his underwear... was confronted in his living-room by three plainclothes officers with guns drawn. They forced him to the floor. His wife then entered the room, dressed only in a negligee. The... [*Post* staffers] took it all in, including photographing the [father] with an officer's knee in his back and a gun to his head. As it happened, their son was not at his parents' home. They were dusted off and left to contemplate the experience – and the pictures were not published... Late last month, the... privacy amendment won over the freedom of speech amendment. There has naturally been some comment suggesting that real t[v] will never be the same again. For sure, major

ethical questions revolve around the balance between the right of privacy and the freedom of the press. But I keep coming back to the picture of the innocent [citizen] on the floor with the gun to his head – amid all the pandemonium in that room. A good time to have media witnesses.

...The local t[v] juggernaut rolls on – okay, so maybe it's a Mini and it's... heading for the off-ramp, but let's enjoy it while it lasts. Speaking of things vehicular, one local production that has appeared almost unheralded is *Motorway Patrol* (7.30 tonight, TV2), a fly-on-the-cop-car series about the work of Auckland's officers out there every day on our busiest roading network. Now, most "reality" shows are the devil's spawn as far as I'm concerned. What earthly reason is there for watching helicopter footage of a runaway crim colliding with a truck on a [US] highway? None. It's not funny and it's not clever and I don't know who they think they're impressing... [A]nother annoying aspect is that they give the good ones a bad name. I... missed a BBC series last year called *Crash!* because I thought it was going to be a load of old reality rubbish. Turned out it was an excellent history of the car and its inherent dangers. In Britain, things have got out of hand with reality shows, with much controversy over faked scenes in so-called documentaries. Fines have been paid, film crews run out of town. I... thought *Motorway Patrol* would be another fruitless, low-cost exercise. What would it tell us? That it's busy on Auckland's motorways? (yes), that there are accidents? (ho hum), that there are a lot of jerks out there? (oh, boy...) And I realise that the rest of the country is probably sitting back in their comfy chairs and laughing as the traffic outside rolls slowly by on their wide, clean streets... But for Aucklanders, with our love affair with cars 'n' motorways, this programme is like a romantic dinner for two followed by a night at the hotel of our choice. We all know about traffic chaos and all of us have cursed the council and the horse it rode in on, but the system can't always be blamed for the level of human folly on display here. Lies, impatience, stupidity, drunkenness – usually... before the [first break for] ads. It's rare for anyone to say to the officers when they get to the scene of an accident, "I lost control," although one sorry young [driver] did last week after his too-heavy trailer jackknifed on the Southern Motorway. I think there was something in that for all of us... [Be] honest. And make sure your trailer's not too heavy for your car... Whether it's the influence of the cameras I can't be sure, but the officers remain remarkably calm as traffic backs up from Harbour Bridge to breakfast. One even took an irate father aside to tell him now wasn't the time to be "laying into" his daughter, who had just had a minor accident. You forget, too, that accident scenes are one great big whodunit when the patrol arrives. The confused, shocked and guilty may not reliably relay the events. Thankfully, and no doubt due to its 7.30 time slot, *Motorway Patrol* hasn't gone in for the serious accidents. There's quite enough of that next on *Middlemore*, which I've only managed to watch for 10 minutes through half-closed eyes. Maybe... there'll be... more peace, love and understanding out on the motorway. Now, where's that bus timetable...

REGARDING *Motorway Patrol*... on TV2 on Monday... I am absolutely disgusted with what I witnessed. I can't believe TVNZ had the audacity to televise such a meaningless act of cruelty to animals. In the very first segment they showed a cow being shot dead because it was supposedly a hazard to Auckland's southern motorway system. However, the animal made its way to a suburban cul-de-sac and was trapped, where I no longer believe it was a hazard. The police and the animal control officer found it necessary to shoot the animal. I would like to know why such an extreme measure had to be taken. Doesn't this country have tranquillising guns or ropes to lure an animal safely back to its home? I am very angry and upset with the police who joked about it being a steak dinner, and Animal Control who pulled the trigger on a defenceless, non-aggressive animal. With this on prime TV, it doesn't teach children a very good lesson on how to treat our animals. If gun-happy animal control and police officers can go around shooting them, then kids won't care about their welfare either. ANIMAL LOVER (Auckland)

...What on earth is TV2 thinking by [broadcast]ing *The Chimp Channel* at 5.30pm, Saturdays? Wasn't there enough cruelty to chimps with the tea parties of the 1960s? *The Chimp Channel* is blatant cruelty to animals. One chimp had two lit cigarettes in his mouth. Are we trying to give them lung cancer, too? What sort of message are we sending to children – certainly not respect for animals? I have written to the Broadcasting Standards Authority and urge others to do the same until this disgusting show is taken off... Regarding *Plastic Surgery Ruined My Life* (TV1...): Why is it in this country there is a law that if a [guy] exposes himself in a public place it is a punishable act yet if [the guy] undoes his trousers and exposes himself on TV in front of thousands of viewers it is not unlawful? It may be said that the excuse is that you have been warned. What an excuse. Is there one law for the country and one for TV1? What next will they show under the guise of a health documentary?

...Just yanked from TV in the States after a public outcry, despite sky-high ratings: *Confessions*, a show in which serial killers and rapists confess their crimes in grizzly detail... ■ [A]... film version of... *M*A*S*H*... was banned in US military installations for 'reducing war... to total idiocy'...

Back in the 70s, when [US] TV networks knew to a moral certainty what was good for the public, [a] comedian... built a routine... by lampooning "the seven words you can't say on TV." ...the networks still won't permit those... words to contaminate the airways... [but the] industry's once-sacred codes of conduct have been eroded by changing times and tastes... "People used to complain that television was aimed at the mind of a 12-year-old. Now it seems aimed at the hormones of a 14-year-old[," says]... Washington's nonpartisan Centre for Media and Public Affairs... [Incidentally, television] starts in US, 1939[; placed 9th on the]... TOP 10... Events of the 20th C... [1st = US] drops atomic bomb, 1945[; 2nd = people]... first walk on the moon, 1969...

[The mini-series'] \$50 million cost makes... *From the Earth to the Moon*... the biggest project filmed at Disney's central Florida studios... [In related news, r]eferring to her lead role in the \$US25 million... mini series *Joan of Arc*, [the actor] said, "It's the first time that somebody who is still a virgin will actually play Joan of Arc, queen of the virgins." ...One thing is sure, [the actor] has so far avoided the common career pitfalls of her peers. [The actor] hasn't starred in a formulaic teen slasher flick or a "cool" sitcom. The 1.75m-tall... [actor] is instead carving out a career as a sophisticated alternative screen figure for America's youth. So far [the actor has] witnessed the end of the world in last year's blockbuster *Deep Impact*... and can be seen in... *Eyes Wide Shut*... The 17-year-old was picked for greater things this year by *Vanity Fair* magazine in a story that looked at 14 actors whom the writers thought most likely to eclipse [the current brightest young stars] at the box office in a year or so.

...Film-makers have long had a fascination with Joan of Arc, for her story is compelling on almost every level. Convinced [it] was acting under divine guidance, this peasant farmer's daughter led the French army to a monumental victory over the English at Orleans in the 15th century, only to be betrayed by her king, captured by her enemies, declared a witch and burned at the stake at the age of 19. Pronounced innocent 25 years later, [Joan] was canonised a saint by the Roman Catholic Church only in this century... With the exception of Carl Theodor Dreyer's 1928 masterpiece, *The passion of Joan of Arc*, [the]... French film director... [- who made the \$NZ\$60 million-plus... film, *The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc* [- says it]... was dissatisfied with how film-makers have depicted Joan, including the recent CBS miniseries *Joan of Arc*...

WHO issues these 'poets' with their 'licenses'? ...the mini-series *Joan Of Arc*... did not make clear how carefully Joan was examined (physically, as her chastity was all-important to 15th century minds and doctrinally) before being entrusted with troops for Orleans. Regnault, the Archbishop of Rheims, disliked the business but "went along." When Joan became an English prisoner, the Duke of Bedford's wife ascertained that Joan was still a virgin... [T]he English did not arrange a rape so that [Joan] would be discredited... Oddly[; although]... France's greatest heroine and long reviled in England, [Joan] really saved England. France had four times the numbers and wealth of England so had the kingdoms stayed united there would be no English language today and[, perhaps, no soccer]...

The \$NZ\$2 billion bid by... BSkyB television group to take over... the "Red Devils"... could be overtaken by... the mega-rich Travelers Group – which is reported to be preparing a rival offer of up to \$2.3 billion... Whatever happens to Manchester United, [News Corp's tycoon] has certainly started something. Britain's Sunday newspapers claim Japanese electronics giant Sony Corp has targeted... Newcastle United in a \$730 million takeover bid.

...The \$2 billion takeover of English soccer club Manchester United [by a media tycoon] is all part of his grand plan to buy control of the television rights to the world's most popular sports, according to A[US]n analysts... News Corp Ltd would recover the high cost of buying Britain's most

successful soccer team in recent years by broadcasting their games across its BSkyB, Fox and Star television systems globally, the analysts said... [The media tycoon] owns about 30.5[%] of News Corp's voting shares and News Corp owns 40[%] of BSkyB... In March, News Corp's Fox television network bought the Los Angeles Dodgers baseball team... and in April bought a stake in a new Los Angeles sports arena that gave it the option to buy stakes in the Los Angeles Lakers basketball team and the LA Kings ice hockey team. Fox already owns 20[%] of the New York Knicks basketball team. In A[US], News Corp owns the Brisbane Broncos... and has stakes in four other rugby league teams... Up until the last two years, [the tycoon] has been largely content to negotiate with a sport's governing body to buy the rights to broadcast the sports. In January Fox paid \$US4.4 billion to broadcast the N[FC] games for eight years and Fox also has the local broadcast rights for 22 of the 30 major league baseball clubs in the U[S]. BSkyB paid £647 million two years ago to renew its broadcast rights for English soccer's premier league, and in 1995 News paid \$US550 million to broadcast rugby games played by the dominant Southern Hemisphere sides until 2005. But analysts said the escalating prices paid for these rights has forced [the tycoon] to try to buy the teams granting the rights to buy leverage in any negotiation.

...[in AUS this month, the tycoon's] heir apparent... was being feted as "the prince of print". His father... had just given the clearest indication yet that his eldest son would succeed him by appointing him senior executive vice-president of News Corp... putting him in charge of [US] print operations. "Congratulations," I say... when I meet him at his office in Sydney. "Or commiserations," [the son] retorts with mock gloom. As chair[perso]n and chief executive of News Ltd, the A[US]n arm of News Corp, [the son (aged 27)] is already working without let-up. [The eldest son] insists the appointment means nothing in terms of succession. His elder sister... is head of BSkyB and his younger brother... is deputy publisher of *The New York Post*. [Their father] is thought to be racing the three against each other... before deciding who should take the reins. [The eldest son] denies any rivalry... Would [the eldest son] like to succeed his father? "It is probably one of the best jobs in the world... but I have to say at the moment I am so busy that I am just taking one day at a time." ...[the eldest son] may have been parachuted into a role of extraordinary power by virtue of his surname, but... appears to have acquired the self-assurance to go with the position, albeit combined with his own maverick style... [The eldest son] has shaved his hair to within a centimetre of its life and his shirtsleeves are rolled up to reveal a tattoo of a rock-climbing gecko on his left forearm... [Furthermore, there] cannot be too many business executives who burn joss sticks in their offices... "I'm a bit stressed out and I need it to relax me," [the eldest son] explains. The stress is not caused by his new appointment... but by an attempted burglary at his home the previous night. A few weeks ago his garage was ram-raided and his BMW stolen. This time they were after his Ducati motorbike but triggered the alarm... [The eldest son] has a reputation for being as driven as his father. After a day in the office, [the eldest son] rushes to business dinners and then continues with international business calls until the early hours. Although [the eldest son] loves sailing and won last December's notoriously tough Sydney to Hobart race, which claimed six lives, [the eldest son] rarely has time for it these days... [Is the eldest son] missing out on his youth? "Sometimes I'm tired and I'm driving home on a Friday night to change for a business dinner and I see people my age going out to nightclubs and having fun and I think: 'Gee! What am I doing?'" Nevertheless, [the eldest son] cannot imagine life any other way. "Our [the children's] personal life and business have been so interlinked since we were born that it is really hard to say where one starts and the other finishes." [The eldest son] grew up in New York and remembers the tables strewn with newspapers at meal times. From a very young age, the children were drawn into discussions about layout and content and encouraged to express their opinions. "We were always having debates and arguments and if someone didn't storm off upset, then it wasn't a successful dinner... I was studying a lot of Greek philosophy – which was probably a mistake – and one of the key questions in Aristotle's ethics is: 'What is the telos, or purpose, of a human being?'" I decided it was to take on responsibility." So [the eldest son] began work in the A[US]n branch of his father's empire, fast-tracking through the ranks to become chief executive at the age of 24... "I enjoy the opportunity to lead and I don't take it lightly,"... Is [the eldest son] ruthless enough? "Ruthless isn't a word I use so much. Sometimes you have to get angry, but you don't have to throw things at people every day." ALTHOUGH [the eldest son] idolises his father and ends every telephone conversation with him with the words, 'Love you, Pop', [it] has no illusions about his father's popularity. "I always knew [pop] was controversial. You had to have a pretty thick skin from an early age about people slagging off your dad." Does [the eldest son] always approve of what his father's papers are doing, even the more sleazy or intrusive investigations carried out by his tabloid newspapers? "It doesn't bother me." ...[the eldest son] is engaged to... the A[US]n Wonderbra model who lives in New York. The couple met nine months ago and are planning to marry at the end of April... Once married they will divide their time between New York and... Sydney... Recently, [the father] has found his own life the subject of scrutiny after splitting from his wife and, it is rumoured, becoming engaged to [a 31-year-old... who works for [his] Star TV in Hong Kong.

...Heaven only knows how the Vatican looks upon the spectacle of [a]papal knight... canoodling in the autumn mists with an employee young enough to be his daughter. Such is the Church's regard for decorum that an embarrassed stammer was the only official response from the prince of the church who invested the media tycoon earlier this year with the highest lay honour of the church. But while Wall Street analysts and [the tycoon]'s own executives trade gossip about the media magnate's ruptured marriage and the new, much younger... [mistress, a spokesperson for the] Cardinal... of Los Angeles said only that [the tycoon] would not be required to surrender the papal order's sash and medal, which are bestowed on people of "unblemished character" in gratitude for their good deeds and generosity... But lesser lights in the church... [are upset]. "There was a lot of comment at the time – a quiet controversy – that [the tycoon] was not a suitable candidate," said a priest who witnessed the January 11 investiture ceremony at the St Francis de Sales church in... Sherman Oaks, where [the tycoon and his] wife... were both anointed members of the papal order... "...Her good works, character and generosity are of the first order. So I guess the deal was that if [the wife] became a Dame of St Gregory, [her husband] became a knight." Another witness recalled that initial misgivings about inducting [the tycoon] were heightened at the ceremony's end. It was then that [the tycoon], raised a Presbyterian, lined up with the faithful to receive Communion, which the church says can be given only to practising Catholics free from mortal sin. "It put the priest in a difficult and embarrassing position... What was [the priest] to do? Send an honoree back to his seat[and kiss goodbye to a potentially large collection plate]?" Perhaps the incident made an impression on [the tycoon. Perhaps it] repented. How else – other than hypocrisy – to explain a stinging editorial that appeared just two months later in his *New York Post* when[the US] President... a Southern Baptist, received Communion during a visit to South Africa? Assailing the President for carrying on with [someone] other than his wife, the newspaper railed against "scandalous behaviour" and cynical "photo-op spirituality." ...[While on the topic of the tycoon, a]n Internet company plans to offer 42... channels in competition with[News Corp's] pay TV broadcaster Sky from next month. The Auckland-based Internet Group, known as Ihug, has spent 18 months and \$2 million developing a satellite-based package called StarnetTV. Subscribers will be offered access to the Internet along with the television channels, some of which are already offered by Sky. Ihug has... 400 subscribers to a "fast" Internet service and hopes many of its 60,000 standard subscribers will convert across with the lure of the television channels. "We try to out-technology our competitors because we don't have the marketing power Telecom and Sky have," said[the group's] managing director... StarnetTV will initially broadcast six channels to the Auckland area from the Sky Tower. Another six... will be added next year along with 30 pay-to-view movie channels. The package will cost \$88 plus GST a month. Sky has signed... 40,000 customers for its digital TV service, which is expected to include 20 channels by the end of the year[at a cost of '\$9.99/week plus a \$299 joining fee', and now has '260,000 and 90,000 subscribers respectively for its aerial and satellite' services]...

This week's question... asks: "Why do I lose the picture on this new-fangled, state of the art digital Sky TV at the most inopportune moments?["] ...it's a sure bet most of us have felt the fury of "rain fade". It has an uncanny knack of happening in the midst of extreme tension, such as a prolonged All-Black attack camped just outside the opposition goal-line, or extreme emotion, that tragic break-up between star-crossed lovers that

has you reaching for the hankies. “Rain fade” occurs when the signal from the satellite, which orbits 24,000kms above us, cannot penetrate storm clouds or heavy rain – or any other dense atmospheric condition. As the signal is digital, any significant corruption of the signal will render the picture unwatchable whereas ‘analogue’ signals (UHF, VHF) can transmit the image with whatever effects it is hit by, such as a passing plane. Sky TV... says rain fade is a situation that is hard to fix, although the equipment does normally self-correct after... a few minutes... [P]hone lines at Sky hot up with irate callers every time a storm passes through, but these are normally from people who haven’t previously experienced the problem.

...Sky has lost its right to replay rugby World Cup matches after a TVNZ decision to screen all the games live. The rights to the cup have always been held by TVNZ, but the company is said to have stepped out of an “understanding” with Sky under which TVNZ would have shown live only the All Blacks games, the semifinals and the final... It has also withdrawn permission for Sky to run a special rugby channel for its digital service... [A spokesperson said Sky was disappointed but] had not lost any money with the new arrangement. “We’re just pleased everyone can see the games live.” TV One[’s] assistant programmer... said that no one in a position to comment was available last night.

...T[TVNZ] had no agreement with... Sky over shared coverage of the rugby World Cup, says the state broadcaster. The network had always planned to screen live all games in the World Cup competition and had no “understanding” with Sky over rights to minor games... “We have for the past four months been running newspaper and television ads telling everyone that every game will be live, free and uninterrupted on TV One,” [a spokesperson] said. Sky’s decision to can the coverage was a commercial one... [By the way, nine] New York... bars have the facility to take a live world cup feed[and, to] recoup their costs [will] charge \$40 per person.

...The... Welsh [Rugby Union has]... suspended its ticketing manager and his assistant after a series of blunders that embarrassed Rugby World Cup Ltd... [Observers are predicting that fans may be] locked out of... [some stadiums] despite empty seats inside... because of ticketing dramas... [The latest drama meant] 75,000 tickets printed for the second semifinal had to be pulped because they had the wrong date on them... [Sales for] the 67,000-seat Murrayfield [currently] average... 7000... That is not surprising with tickets at \$120 to \$150 and carparking at \$60 to \$100.

...*Thieving rat-faced dregs?* “IT IS said that rugby is a game played in heaven and unfortunately your love of it has landed you in hell.” – ...a... magistrate... fines four English[people] caught trying to sell fake World Cup merchandise.

...THE secret scandal behind rugby’s richest contest has been revealed. Rugby bosses will make a staggering \$210 million from the 1999 world cup. Yet children... are... [employed by] Indian factories... to make match balls used in the tournament... [for a company which] boasts a \$30 million a year turnover... At the Solo International factory in the suburbs of Jalandhar City... our reporters found the first link in the Gilbert manufacturing chain... Much of the work is done by illiterate children from... the lowest rung of Indian society known as the Untouchables... They work in appalling conditions... in slum workshops next to open sewers in stifling heat, their hands covered in calluses... stitching plastic laminate and cotton balls together. Others handle dangerous chemicals – including zinc oxide, sulphur and acids – as they prepare the bladders... “The chemicals are highly dangerous. Some of them will kill you.” The finished oval segments are sent by rickshaw to another factory, Savi International... Inside... one boy – who looked about 10 – was at the end of his 12-hour shift and struggling to stay on his feet. In the last three months Savi has made a million Gilbert rugby balls. [The factory’s owner] said: “It amazes me that the balls for the World Cup are made in India and we do not play rugby. But it’s God’s will that Gilbert has made me what I am – rich.” ...The children train for up to two years by stitching third quality, non-match and non-replica Gilbert balls for seven rupees – 30 cents – a day. A novice eight-year-old would struggle to complete two balls a day. For trained children, the going rate for stitching match balls is... 75 cents... Replicas are on sale... for \$150... Ironically some of the Gilbert balls carry a UNICEF logo which pledges the eradication of child labour... The boss of... Gilbert Ltd [claimed to be] unaware child labour was being used... and... has promised to investigate... [In local news,] TVNZ is considering legal action against Sky TV as its public battle with the rival broadcaster hots up. The network’s chief executive... confirmed yesterday that the... [network] was talking to its lawyers about Sky’s decision to strike a deal with TV3 for the free-to-air rights to prime rugby games... Another possibility it was exploring was whether Sky was operating as a monopoly under the Commerce Act... TVNZ was deeply concerned it was forced to spend huge sums on sports coverage that could otherwise be spent on local programmes “in a market where a single player can effectively have a monopoly position on key sports properties”. Sky has cited TVNZ’s plans to get into pay-TV as the reason it decided to snub the State-owned broadcaster over the rugby deal... Ironically, the public falling-out between TVNZ and Sky comes just a few weeks after TVNZ stressed the two players needed to stay on-side, for strategic reasons.

...New battle lines have been drawn in an escalating television war which will be watched with the fascination and intensity that are the trade marks of the best soap operas... Over the years I have received payments from TVNZ, TV3 and Sky. Currently I remain host of [a show] on Sky, a half-hour in-depth interview with top performers in the world of sport. I was involved in interviewing and presenting on TVNZ’s “Sportsnight” for three years while previously having appeared quite regularly in the “Sin Bin” segment of TV3’s Mobil Sport. All of which has given me an insight into the workings of the various television networks involved in sport in this country. Unquestionably, the decision by Sky to make TV3 its free-to-air broadcast partner for the upcoming domestic seasons of cricket and rugby is the biggest blow that TVNZ sport has ever suffered. Quite simply, without the rights to rugby, cricket and league, TVNZ sport is stuffed. Most N[Z] sports fans want to talk, view and read about their stable sporting diet. In winter 80[%] of that diet is rugby with league getting perhaps 10[%] and all other sports a share of the other 10. In summer cricket has a similarly dominant position. I’m not arguing the rights or wrongs of this situation. I am simply stating the facts. Ten years of taking sports talkback on radio have indoctrinated me totally in the twin belief “rugby rates,” and “cricket gets calls.” For variety, and the host’s sanity, my radio programme occasionally deals with other sports but sadly the moment that happens the talkback lines go dead. TVNZ retains the rights to th[e]... rugby World Cup, motor racing and netball. The first two of these events will carry them through to March and then for the first time they will face the reality that has very nearly crippled TV3 in the past. No rugby. The knee-jerk reaction by TVNZ... [of] complaining about a “secret deal” and “two overseas-owned television moguls deciding what the N[Z] viewer can watch” was predictable and pathetic. TVNZ has had the high ground for so long that it lost touch with reality. The moment TVNZ and Sky failed to agree on telecasting the World Cup rugby matches, a clear split emerged. TVNZ’s stated intention of getting into the pay television business meant this split quickly became a gaping chasm which is now... the size of the Grand Canyon... TVNZ aren’t about to throw their hands in the air and surrender. Once they have finished throwing insults they will run to the government seeking a change in legislation “in the interests of the N[Z] viewer” or some similar equally meaningless platitude. What they should do is sit down and accurately evaluate the N[Z] sporting scene, something they have arrogantly avoided doing for decades. In the short term three of the four big sports have slipped from their grasp. Now they have to think laterally and innovatively about what is left for them and get on and do the business. Some minor sports should be the major beneficiaries. Meanwhile TV3 have their first real opportunity to challenge the major free-to-air broadcaster. If they use their rights to rugby, cricket and league as a basis for novel, fresh and innovative sports programmes they will quickly gain a sufficient group of viewers who will then stay with them to watch news, current events and other programmes. And what about Sky? At the moment they are virtually in control of sport on N[Z] television. They would be wise to look back at how they got this powerful. If they become arrogant, lazy, bureaucratic and out of touch with their viewers in time they too will lose the No 1 slot.

...No doubt it’s hard for sports-obsessed state television to see the loss of rugby broadcasting rights – coming on the heels of losing cricket – as anything less than the end of civilisation as they have created it for us. But we may hope that when the tantrums are over someone within the organisation will notice that there is more to civilisation than sport... [A]s we witness what seem to be the death-throes of free-to-air sport on TVNZ, there’s a chance for state television to go cultural instead – if only to make use of all those redundant outdoor broadcast vans... Mothballing them seems senseless when other opportunities beckon. [The redundant rugby commentator] bringing us Opera Live from Aotea Centre, with [his

sidekick] down in the auditorium bringing us crowd reactions. Well, maybe not. But... [all that TVNZ]’s masterminds have to do to get an idea of what I’m on about is to tune into our very own free-to-air grown-up television channel... Triangle and... [the channel which] comes from A[US] – Prime. On Friday, for instance, Prime had a 65-minute documentary on [a musician that was] part of an on-going weekly arts spot. This followed the sixth part of a documentary series on the Great War... But it was the [art] show which got me all nostalgic for the bad old days when state television saw itself as a public service provider. Those were the days when the arts counted, when local performers were allowed to show their faces on the telly... There were even talk shows and current affairs programmes where topical issues were debated live. But I won’t go down that trail here. The [music-based] documentary jogged my memory back to the days when state television showcased our own national orchestra... [T]hese days we see an orchestra about once a year on state TV and that’s only as back-up artists for the Mobil Song Quest. Even that concession to culture is ruined by TVNZ’s decision to drown out the middle of each aria with chatter about the contestant from [the] host... We’re told made-for-television drama is prohibitively expensive. If so, why not film live performances from Sky City Theatre and Downstage and the Court Theatre? And why not the same for local bands? TVNZ... say they can’t afford it... [but] why don’t they put together the sort of sponsorship package for the arts that they organised for the America’s Cup and round the world yachting? [□ ‘The AUSn Broadcasting Authority, under pressure from the film and television industry, will appeal against a court ruling allowing AUSn commercial television networks to include NZ programmes in their domestic quota’ – ‘the AUSns are scared that their culture is under threat of improvement’]

...when asked why it screened *That 80s Show* (aimed at older teens) at 7.30pm then *Malcolm in the Middle* (aimed at younger teens) at 8pm, TV3 replied that ‘viewer numbers would be adversely affected if *Malcolm in the Middle* was shown first’!

...IT’S teenage television at its best – a case of back to the future for The Tribe. While the futuristic kids-in-power storyline has seen the show develop a cult following the fashion is catching on too. Next year... the producers of the hit TV4 show... plan to launch their own fashion label with a parade in Wellington. Modern tribal clothing like that on the show will be sold in a line of chain stores in February.

...N[Z tv] channels are rejecting locally made children’s... programmes that are earning international acclaim – and millions of overseas viewers... *The Adventures of Swiss Family Robinson* and... *A Twist in the Tale* are two series produced by Wellington-based Cloud 9. The company also makes *The Tribe*, which screens on TV3. [Cloud 9’s c]hief executive... said *A Twist in the Tale* had sold in Japan – “an almost impossible market to crack” – where it was screened by the state broadcaster. The programme, aimed at teenagers and young adults, pays homage to classic television programmes such as *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*... and *The Twilight Zone* in telling supernatural and paranormal stories which have an unexpected twist. *Swiss Family Robinson*, filmed in Wellington and Fiji, had sold around the world, including to the Disney network. [The chief executive said] it was “eccentric” that the programmes were not shown locally. Local broadcasters, especially TVNZ, should support and champion local talent. TVNZ’s head of content... said there was nothing wrong with the programmes, but they were not considered “must-have.” ...they were simply not the type of programming TV2 was looking to acquire.

...N[Z] sees less of itself on air than other countries. A survey measuring the levels of local content on television... – including news, drama and children’s shows – ...in 11 countries placed N[Z] last on the list... [L]ocal content accounted for 24[% of NZ television, just ahead of]... Singapore 24.5... while in Ireland the level was 41[, in AUS 55], in Britain 78 and in the U[S 90. The other]... countries studied were: Canada 60, Norway 56, Finland 55, South Africa 48, Netherlands 40... Seven of the 10 overseas countries surveyed had yearly licence fees similar to the system dumped by our Government last month[(funding will ‘come out of general taxes in future’)]. The fees ranged from \$51 a year in South Africa to \$303 a year in Britain. The researchers found that, unlike N[Z], European countries and South Africa had some form of regional content quotas, and a number of countries ensured diversity by having quotas for independent producers. The authors... said N[Z]’s small population and economic base meant we could never emulate public broadcasters such as the BBC. But our situation is similar to Ireland’s... The... head of the NZ Broadcasting School and co-author of the report, [which]... comes a decade after NZ[OA] began... said it would be timely to review how deregulation was working. The study showed N[Z] was alone in its hands-off approach to the industry... Authorities needed to consider carefully how they would handle the future... [because we are] in danger of being left behind in the multi-channel, digital age of television.

...[NZ’s] Culture and Heritage Minister... has promised to investigate introducing a quota system to bolster the amount of locally made television programmes... [during] a ministry review of cultural content on radio and television... [The minister claims to have] an open mind as to whether such a system would work. “I am very disappointed at the low level of local content[, although] am not sure the significance of local content is appreciated by N[Zers.” The minister]... blamed the poor showing on a historic degree of cultural cringe as well as the high cost of making local productions... An overseas drama could be bought by a television network for about \$10,000 an hour, whereas a local production cost up to \$500,000 a hour to make... [T]he managing director of South Pacific Pictures, welcomes the review. “Everywhere around the world, people prefer to watch their own product...” [Ironically, the promise of a review comes as g]overnment-established organisations are blaming each other for the plug being pulled on 57 years of broadcasting news in Maori on National Radio. The three daily Maori news bulletins had their final airing last week after finance ended by the... funding agency, Te Mangai Paho[, whose chief] executive... said... “We said we would provide some financial assistance for a period of one year only... For [others] to lay what has happened at our doorstep is mischievous. We gave \$5 million for 21 iwi stations while National Radio has \$22 million funding.” The programme development manager at National Radio... said that... it was looking at other ways to ensure the Maori language was retained. “There is now the opportunity to widen our current programmes with a bilingual format...” [A] veteran Maori broadcaster... [bemoaned] the loss... “It breaks my heart to see what has happened to what was a world-class service.”

...A survey finds younger viewers are turned off by too much Maori culture in programmes... Young viewers voiced their opinion of local television through a \$30,000 survey designed to help N[ZOA] develop a strategy for young programming... The results indicated... boys wanted action shows with violence and “overtly sexual girls,” while... girls prefer programmes that feature... “cute boys,” love relationships and murder mysteries[, plus]... the type of clothes they like to wear and strong role models... NZ[OA] said the survey showed where youth television was working and where kids were dissatisfied. It found most children were turned off by too much Maori language and culture in a programme. One teenage Maori boy said: “Too much Maori and I change the channel.” Both Maori and non-Maori said they wanted to understand what was being said... NZ[OA]’s television manager... said 27[%] of the funding authority’s budget went into programmes for children and young people. The authority wanted to find ways of doing more children’s programming, but this would require more Government funding or the television networks assuming a bigger share of production costs. Programme makers said the funding issue was causing them to lose talented animators, editors and presenters.

...Child’s play big business for TV... ANYONE who thinks pre-school children’s television is the low-rent end of the TV industry hasn’t seen the kind of dosh that the big overseas TV networks are prepared to pump into new shows these days. Take, for instance, the new BBC series, *Tweenies*, which debuts on TV2 on Monday. This new show, designed as a follow-on from the younger-age-group *Teletubbies* series, had a budget of some \$23 million for the production of 260 episodes. It is serious money by any standards, but a broadcaster as big as the Beeb is willing to put up that sort of stake knowing that the rewards, in terms of both ratings and merchandising, can be significant... Ironically, *Teletubbies* screens here on the rival TV3... and was accompanied both here and overseas by a storm of controversy about the Tubbies’ speech. That show answered its critics with its huge success with its target audience. “Children are much more sophisticated these days... The respect for the pre-school audience is growing all the time and they’re a lot closer to us than we’d like to admit.” When you see some of the stuff adults are prepared to watch, it is hard to argue.

...T[ele]tubbies helped... BBC earn a record \$220 m... from overseas sales of [kid]’s TV programmes last year. *The Tweenies* are selling even faster than the *Tubbies* and are poised to become... BBC’s most successful show ever. In [8] months since their launch, the cuddly stars... raked in \$45 m...

Is the BBC a meanie as the Tweenies go up against the Greenies? The Tweenies are the latest children's television craze, but behind the scenes an Auckland[er]... has accused the BBC of stealing the idea from her. [The Auckland] believes the BBC has ripped off her characters, the Galatic Greenies, and have fine-tuned them into their own show, the Tweenies, which is making millions world-wide. The graphic designer has sought legal advice about suing the BBC for breach of copyright – but the BBC has denied stealing her idea. [The Auckland] now faces an agonising dilemma. A successful claim could win her millions, but the cost of taking the mighty BBC to court would be enormous... [The Auckland had] approached the BBC to make a show based on her characters... The BBC wrote an encouraging letter back to her, explaining the corporation was assessing her proposal. They urged [her] to send in further material... so [the Auckland] sent in a full storyline to back up her idea, involving... aliens with a mission to clean up planet earth. About five months later, the BBC again wrote to [the Auckland], rejecting her idea. Just one year later... the Tweenies were launched and immediately won the hearts of little children around the world. And [the Auckland] claims the Tweenies... are a direct rip-off of her own idea... point[ing] out many similarities between her own characters and the Tweenies. 'They have the same wave, are wearing big basketball boots and their proportions are the same. If the Tweenies were wearing baseball caps, they would be the same... Plus the Tweenies talk about creepy crawlies, and my story has a character called Creeping One Claw. All through the episodes there are little things that sound like my story... When I first saw the Tweenies I recognised them straight away. When I saw they were from the BBC, I just felt cheated.' [The Auckland] had not patented her... idea, because it would have cost thousands of dollars. The talented Auckland[er]... first developed her idea... in 1996, and... hired an artist to draw the figures for her. In a bizarre twist, [a] celebrated... clairvoyant... warned [her]... that someone might try to steal her idea. '[The clairvoyant] said they would go world-wide, they'd be on TV... [However,] someone might steal my idea, but make a few changes to it first.' After this warning, [the Auckland] was careful about who [it] approached about her great idea and would get potential producers to sign documents before revealing her story. But [the Auckland] failed to take the same precautions when dealing with the BBC. 'I really thought I could trust the BBC. They seem above-board and an old institution. So I was quite relaxed about giving my stuff to the BBC.' [The Auckland add]s that of the people [it] sent her idea to, the BBC staff were also the only ones who did not return her pictures and stories. [The English-born Auckland] now believes that no-one will pick up her own idea for the Galatic Greenies, because they are too similar to the Tweenies.

...THE Battle of the Bobs has broken out on kids' TV. In the TV3 corner, wearing overalls and brandishing a hammer, is cute animated handy[person] Bob the Builder. Taking up the challenge for TV2 and sporting a pair of unusual square pants is cartoon character SpongeBob. Both are big hits overseas – SpongeBob in American and Bob the Builder in Britain – and have been snapped up by the rival channels. SpongeBob, on TV2's Saturday morning show Squirt, is a square yellow sea sponge who lives in a pineapple in the subterranean city of Bikini Bottom... [(this cheerful but)] innocent yellow sponge who works as a fry cook... makes me feel the world is not such a bad place after all... Bob the Builder, TV3 weekday afternoons, is a cheerful work[er] who lives in a cottage in an English village... SpongeBob has a thrill-seeking surfer-girl squirrel pal called Sandy Cheeks, while Bob the Builder has nice, reliable Wendy working in his office.

...ROBOT WARS[, in which t]eams compete to build remote controlled robots which then battle it out against each other[, rescues tonight].

...They're the consumers' champions and they're donning battle gear for another season but this time they have a rival... A second front has opened in the battle to defend the innocent consumer against dodgy dealers, sharks, shysters and cons. Until now, TV One's *Fair Go* crack troops were the only division in the field of television consumer advocacy. Now a bunch of rookies are muscling in on the action on rival channel TV3's show, *Target*. The *Fair Go* team have topped up for the occasion of their new season launch before. But 1999's look, with the combatants all decked out in military uniforms, is by far the most serious. [The *Fair Go* General... the show's most seasoned campaigner, says the dressing-up is just a bit of fun playing on the team's mission as "battlers who go out and fight for people." But yes, the image also has an underlying message. "The context is that it's the first time there's a battle on for the consumer slot." *Target*, with its product advice and hidden camera tests of trades[people] at work, takes a different approach from the classic *Fair Go* style of tackling rip-offs and seeking justice. Although it's pulled enough viewers since it began last month to make it a top-rating TV3 show, it's a babe-in-arms compared to the ever popular local telly institution *Fair Go*. Still, [the General] isn't about to dismiss it lightly... Competition may be the best guard against complacency but [the General] is proud of last year's efforts made when the show still had the battleground to itself. "There were so many good, solid, strong and interesting stories. We've had years with funnier stories, we've done some sillier things in the studio but last year we had really strong journalistic work." Others thought so, too. The show won international honours last year – a bronze medal for community service programming at an international film and television festival in New York. After 22 years in the business of exposing rip-offs, the formula is a tried and true one. But with the arrival of *Target* on the scene, will there be any changes this year? Evolution will occur, [the General] confirms, in the *Fair Go* manner of minor alterations. The set has been given a make-over and the theme tune's had a jazz up... And like all happening people and outfits, it now boasts a Website, which will detail the cases. Another new addition will be sub-titles for the hearing-impaired. Time to ask the perennial reporter question to the ancient and venerable. [The General] has been on *Fair Go* for 15 years. What does [the General] hold as the secret to its long-running success? "The most important thing is it's an honest programme..." ...And it's remained unpretentious, avoiding pomposity and bogus sleekness. True, the *Fair Go* philosophy is not corporate-mission-statement slick: "Investigation, confrontation, humour" but it certainly sums up its willingness to go out there and irritate the bad guys. Once the show has decided to sink its teeth into a cause, it keeps on biting. Justice may not prevail but this doesn't mean cases are shelved... The rules of battle have changed over the years, however. "The public relations industry is much more sophisticated, so companies represent themselves much better than they used to. It's much harder to get to the bottom of issues, it's much more controlled." But... the public are also more aware of their rights. "*Fair Go* is almost part of the nation's psyche. There's nobody who doesn't know what it is and how it operates. And people trust the show." As for the villains, [the General] believes the Kiwi sense of fair play means they can escape damnation – if they make a true confession. "Kiwis are very accepting of people who make mistakes if they sort them out..." [The General], who turns 50 this week... is more committed to the show than ever. The satisfaction [it] gets from being a crusader on a telly show of real social service value makes the job. "There's the dimension that *Fair Go* helps people. It's five people whose working life is aimed at sorting things out for the consumer – with the help of a powerful TV show, the only thing that can take on big companies... I... see no reason why it can't be around in 10 years' time, the ratings and letters coming in suggest it will."

...The *Fair Go* reporter... is a [gal] on a personal crusade to rid the country of a black knight... [It] has vowed to put an end to... [t]he... serial scammer[']s... shonky schemes... "*Fair Go* has revealed eight scams in the past year... and they just keep on coming." Top-rating *Fair Go* returns for its new season this week... and [the reporter]'s continuing battle with [the serial scammer] kicks off the series. It's become more than just another story for the 36-year-old award-winning journalist... "I can't believe so many people have been ripped off and yet the authorities seem powerless to stop him. It's heartbreaking to hear the countless stories of people who've lost money and have no way of getting anything back." *Fair Go* first exposed [the scammer] early last year with a scam selling dodgy Levis jeans. Trusting consumers were completely caught out... Next were fake Italian cosmetics, business shirts, laptop computers, home PCs and running shoes. The... consumers either got nothing for their money or sub-standard goods. [The scammer] has a history of scams dating back to... 1990... The flamboyant entrepreneur financed his high-rolling lifestyle with schemes involving bogus airfares and advertising. At one point, [the scammer fled NZ for AUS, where it] was soon up to his old tricks, conning Aussies out of millions of dollars in scams which ran from theatre tickets to dodgy Sheridan bed linen. When A[US]n authorities cracked down on him, [the scammer] headed home and set up shop again. [It]'s now been banned for life from trading in N[SW] but Kiwi consumers are still at risk. Just this month, another scheme, this time pushing digital cameras and Sony PlayStations, hit the market... As the list of scams grows, the show is

campaigning for stronger consumer protection against rogue traders. “Why should the [black k]nights of this world get away with ripping off people and not be held accountable?” asks [the show’s] new producer... “If it hadn’t been for *Fair Go* continually warning about these scams, more consumers would have been stung.” ...The *Fair Go* team is promising more bite this season. [The team]... will be joined for the first time by their new canine mascot... The Bouvier des Flanders is a great icon for the show... “...the kind of dog you’d wouldn’t want to mess with but with winning charm – the perfect consumer watchdog”. Benson will be on screen with the rest of the team, Wednesdays, at 7.30, on TV One.

...Would you leave a tradesperson alone in your home after seeing the shocking behaviour of some of them on TV3’s *Target*? The makers of the... consumer show *Target* hoped spy cameras hidden in homes to test tradespeople would uncover examples of shoddy work and unprofessional practices – and they did. But... also caught on film, to their surprise, were workers indulging in some dodgy – and, in some cases... deviant – activities while left to their own devices. TV viewers have been appalled at some of the things tradespeople... got up to... [– s]ome of the worst acts involved rifling through underwear drawers, sniffing knickers and masturbating... [–] and even industry leaders agree something must be done...

Power of ‘Awful Truth’ Truth No 1: Superman was the superhero who was supposed to fight the never-ending battle for truth, justice and the American way. Truth No 2: ...the lardy, scruffy bloke found on TV4’s *The Awful Truth* on Monday nights at 9.30, ain’t no Superman but... is a superhero. Truth No 3: There’s more truth, justice and the American way in this loopy, liberal journalist’s half-hour of t[v] than... well, than in anything since the last time [this guy] was on our screens. It says much that his new show – which is a cross between *Fair Go* and Monty Python... – seems so refreshing, surprising and edgy. What that means is... t[v]’s become such a predictable, sanitised medium that *The Awful Truth* looks and sounds more dangerous than it probably is. What it certainly is, is funny. From the title sequence, which declares one of the world’s five media moguls to be the antichrist... to the two short stories (which last week variously stuck it to Washington hypocrisy and a private health insurer’s duplicity), it has you hooting. But... the second story suggested the show has real guts. [The journalist] took *The Awful Truth* into bat for a young father... who was about to die because his health insurer, Humana, wouldn’t pay out for a life-saving pancreas operation. Using blackly satirical humour (including a mock funeral complete with bagpipes and mourners) and foot-in-the-door, ass-kicking reporting, [the journalist] delivered a universe of embarrassment to the company involved and a pancreas operation... For once, a studio audience’s cheering seemed appropriate. But if [the journalist] has a message “we believe in freedom of the press, we just don’t own any of the presses” – [it] also has a formula just like any other TV producer/presenter. [It] knows how much most of us hate politicians, big business and media manipulation. [It] knows, too, that they’re soft targets that don’t take much to make them look stupid. But what [it] really understands is the power of the camera. People might be able to ignore people, but people can’t ignore the unflinching eye of a TV camera. At least [it]’s using that power to fight the good fight. Truth No 4: *The Awful Truth* is awfully good, if only because it reminds us that t[v] can be a tool for good, not just a place for not-so-good entertainment.

...Why dive deep into the shallow? SOME Americans have a propensity to analyse mundane aspects of their culture and elevate them into “social signifiers” or anoint them with some lofty psychobabble. Mostly this is harmless stuff. Once someone starts applying paradigm shifts and pan-cultural symbolism to pet rocks or bulimic supermodels, you might as well let them get on with it. They’ll go away or grow up soon. [But some don’t – like, for instance, t]he mastermind behind that cornerstone of afternoon television for 35 years, *Gilligan’s Island* [who] says the reason critics and CBS executives didn’t like his show initially was because they didn’t understand the cast of seven were “a social microcosm” of America. At this you cry, “Enough, already!” A microcosm? Lemme see, there were elderly uppercrust sophisticates, an actress, a whitebread girl-next-door, a handsome young professor, the gruff but lovable Skipper... In [the mastermind]’s world view no blacks, Hispanics, veterans of foreign wars or Jews need apply, obviously. [The mastermind] offers his alarming opinion – with all the eyeball engaging certainty that it is fact – in a tedious documentary *Gilligan’s Island: Underneath the Grass Skirt* (TV3 tonight, 7.30). If the original show wasn’t insulting enough to your intelligence, then this look at the making of the show, the casting, the stars’ backgrounds, their subsequent careers, the movie-for-television and so on, certainly will be. It’s a long self-indulgent hour and much of what is said is utter nonsense. High ratings are interpreted as meaning critics who savaged the show were somehow wrong. (No, it’s rubbish, it’s just that a lot of people like it.) Or that it was somehow an escape from the nightly news footage of carnage from Vietnam. (Oh, c’mon, we’re getting close to it being a social signifier if we go down that route.) Yes, [the actress] was a serious actress who caused trouble on the set because [it thought it] was the star, and yes ...Gilligan... was busted for marijuana possession. [The actor] should have been arrested for wearing that silly hat into his 60s... If there’s anything worth sticking around for in this trivia programme about a trivial show (which ran for three seasons, it just seems like more) it is near the end when we are told [the mastermind] wants to remake the original series “with a multiracial cast.” I’m surprised [the mastermind] didn’t call that a paradigm shift.

...NOSTALGIC LOOK AT THE MONKEES IN the 1960s, a manufactured group not only piled up hit after hit on the record charts, but delighted television audiences with mad-cap adventures. The Monkees popularity was so high that at one time their albums were outselling The Beatles and Rolling Stones combined... [The cast] are interviewed about their life and TV career in *Hey Hey We’re The Monkees*, on TV4 at 8.30pm, Sunday.

...Has life been true bliss for the Aussie version of the Popstars telly-created music biz phenomenon? ...THIS WEEK, the five girls of Bardot have been entrenched in an inner-city Sydney rehearsal studio practising for their first full-length live concert. Their performance will be filmed for a one-hour *Popstars* special to be screened in A[US] tomorrow night and N[Z] on Tuesday week. The day after sees the release of their album *Bardot* and with advance orders of 100,000, it will no doubt, like their single *Poison*, rocket straight to the number one position on the A[US]n charts. When it comes to the pop charts, a “sure-fire hit” is often promised but seldom delivered. When it comes to *Popstars*, the formula is undeniable – wide TV exposure through a voyeuristic docusoap equals huge record sales. The N[Z]-born concept has proved once again it works but what Bardot have yet to prove, and what their N[Z] counterparts True Bliss are struggling to achieve, is longevity. But from the glowing praise Bardot have been receiving from a mostly fawning media, and in the opinion of their minders and masterminders Warner Music... Bardot could well be on their way to international, not just parochial, success. They are already counting the N[Z] success of the show as exhibit one. There’s also hot interest for the show and the band in South-east Asia, and the TV production company, Screentime, is flogging the show to other overseas markets. While the initial 13 episodes... have been extended by two more (the last episode will feature the girls travelling to N[Z]...), the show will wrap up within a month in A[US]. Then the hard work begins to keep the momentum going without the benefit of an average 2.4 million viewers glued to their TV sets every Sunday night watching the girls. Warner Music[s] managing director and *Popstars* selector... goes so far as to claim Bardot could single-handedly save the A[US]n music industry. “CD sales are low. We are experiencing a very soft market at the moment. What we needed was a phenomenon that brings people back into record stores. Bardot have done that,”... But the machinations were well in place to ensure the success of the *Popstars*. As well as Warner Music... looking after the music and management side, tabloid magazine *New Idea* was given exclusive access to the band to build the ongoing hype and Austereo (A[US]’s largest FM radio network) were also enlisted in the project, ensuring radio play. The objective was to have not only a successful TV show but a world-class music act as well. “I think we learnt from the N[Z] show. They were recording a song a day but we’ve had a lot more time to prepare the songs and spent time in the recording process to get the quality we needed,” says another of the *Popstars* selectors, now their manager... The ongoing juggernaut will include a national concert tour, a promotional visit to South-east Asia, upcoming TV specials, video package releases and licensing products, including a Bardot clothes label... The first album isn’t even in the stores but a second... is already being discussed with the likely inclusion of song-writing efforts from the girls themselves (they are signed to a three-album deal). “*Popstars* is a TV programme, but Bardot is an act and we are treating them in that way. We weren’t going to sign an act that wasn’t worthy... There was a lot more to the audition process than was shown on TV – we really assessed their character and... ability so we would get it right. But obviously for one we got it wrong.” [The director] is referring to [an] original member... who was dumped in

controversial circumstances. “[That girl] came across as such a confident person. We didn’t spot the problems until [it] started working and living with the other girls.” [The original member]’s ignominious departure may have caused a ratings surge with many media speculating it was staged deliberately, but [the director] felt it put the whole project at great risk... *New Idea* broke the story that [the original member] was caught pilfering money from the purses of the other girls. [The magazine’s e]ditor... stands by the decision. “It was the story and we had to report it. Our lawyers cleared it so we ran with it,”... While [the original member] denied the claims in a TV interview [it] has not sought to clear her name or take action against *New Idea*. In fact, [it] has used the incident to propel her own solo career, recording demos and scouting her own record deal. Which may be the point, or the irony, of the whole *Popstars* exercise. While the chosen five bathe in the glory, those who did not quite make the cut are utilising their brush with TV fame. The five who were not chosen from the final 10 have already formed their own band, Poptarts, and appear regularly on a weekly TV comedy show, *Good News Week*, to great acclaim. Rival record company Festival Mushroom Group utilised the TV audition process to scout their own band. They have brought together three of the hopefuls... (all early rejects), to form a group called Tatu. “We chose them according to their vocal talents, not their popstar looks or their dance moves,” says A&R[’s] director... Their first single, already recorded and released, is appropriately titled *Imperfect Girl*. It seems Andy Warhol was right. Everyone gets their 15 minutes of fame. Or, in some cases, their 22 minutes plus ad breaks.

...NEVER have I seen a TV show as unnecessarily cruel as *A[US]n Popstars*... When phoning some [contestants] to tell them they had not made it to the Sydney audition, the camera was kept on until the [contestants] cracked and started crying. The judges took a delight in saying humiliating things about the contestants. No doubt all the [contestants] were made to sign a form promising not to sue for defamation of character in exchange for the dubious honour of being allowed to audition. The judges were extremely hypocritical in pretending they were not judging [the contestants] on their looks when they obviously were, as classically goodlooking [contestants] who couldn’t sing were chosen over larger [ones] who could. Why pretend it wasn’t a beauty contest? NZ *Popstars* was bad enough, but this was shocking.

...*FLOP STARS*... THE girls from Kiwi show *Popstars* are reduced to singing in pubs while the brains behind the top-rated programme stand to make millions. Two of the TrueBliss stars... have been performing in a karaoke bar while spin-off versions of the show are sold worldwide. Producers are negotiating to sell the format to America and Europe in million-dollar deals. But [the karaoke singers] say they are living “on the bones of our arse”. [The smaller of the two karaoke singers], 21, said: “We were stupid enough to sign away certain things at the beginning because we wanted to be out there singing. We didn’t realise we were entitled to certain things. We feel like guinea pigs.” ...[the karaoke singers – plus the] other band members... – each signed a two-page contract saying they would not benefit if the show’s format was sold overseas. [The show’s p]roducer... sold the format to TV company Screentime, which then made the smash-hit Aussie version. [The larger half of the karaoke pair, also] 21, said: “We did feel a sense of betrayal... We thought [our producer] could have tried harder to sell us to A[US] rather than the concept. But, then again, A[US] wasn’t that interested in a Kiwi band. The Aussie girls get a hell of a lot more say about what goes on – which we didn’t get.” ...The A[US]n offshoot, Bardot, has been enjoying star status and members have been showered with gifts... [The smaller half of the karaoke pair said it] and her band members felt manipulated. “We were so easy and open, bending like a piece of Playdough,”... [But the singer] didn’t want to be bitter and would rather concentrate on recording TrueBliss’s second album later this year... [although the group is still] waiting for record label Sony to give them the nod – and the money – to go ahead. [The karaoke singers], who rent a flat together, [and] have been singing in a friend’s pub on Auckland’s North Shore... have spoken out against rumours circulating in the music industry that the label had dropped the group... and... w[ere] tired of media reports about divisions between the group and its managers... Besides... the... band members were now concentrating on TrueBliss as a group in its own right and separate from the *Popstars* documentary concept. “We are trying to be... positive, and sometimes we just want to tell the media to stop trying to ruin things.” ...Meanwhile, [the 3rd member]... has rejoined her old band[, and a 4th member has]... scored a job hosting TV2 music show *Ready To Roll*... [The 5th member] now lives in Dunedin where [it] had returned to hair-braiding... and... has married [an] All Black...

The All Black tour at the end of [next] year could screen live in as few as 24,000 homes after Sky was outbid for the broadcast rights by a pay television company a fraction its size. TelstraSaturn is expected to announce the deal today, while TVNZ says it is negotiating with the pay TV operator for the free-to-air broadcast of the test matches... Sky Television said it had pulled out of the bidding once the price rose to \$2.93 million for a package of the All Black tour, the six nations competition and the European rugby club championship. TelstraSaturn has 24,000 pay television customers, solely in its Wellington region, compared with Sky’s 392,000 subscribers for its satellite and UHF-based services. Under the existing setup, only those 24,000 TelstraSaturn customers would see the games live.

...Rugby fans will have to buy another “set-top box” if they want to watch [next year’s] end-of-year All Black tour live on television. TelstraSaturn, which has won the rights to the tour, is pinning its hopes on a joint venture satellite service with TVNZ to get the November games into more N[Z] homes. A decoder to receive the signal would cost viewers at least \$200. “We are examining with TVNZ a direct-to-home satellite platform which we hope to launch in April,”... The company’s 24,000 Wellington customers pay \$31.95 a month for access to its cable service. It plans to start an Auckland service late in the year. THE NZRFU yesterday expressed concern that many viewers would miss seeing the... matches live. TV One will screen delayed broad-casts of the test matches... Sky TV... pulled out of the bidding for the games when it reached \$3 million.

...Will... the cricket matches in Sharjah [be] too hot to handle? Sport can be a soap opera... say academics, but it is one melodrama that [gals] do not want their [guys] to watch. The battle of the sexes is increasingly a sporting contest. Couples in a new British survey have cited time spent watching sport on television as a major source of matrimonial upset. Half of those surveyed for *Total Sport* magazine said they argued with partners about the amount of time spent in front of the box, and N[Z] relationship guidance counsellors agree that sport-watching causes similar clashes here. [Guys] derived pleasure from watching sport because they felt included and thought of players as mates, explained... an Auckland University film and television lecturer. “...[guys] feel the same involvement with sports as [gals] do about soap operas.” But with up to 10 hours of rugby and nine hours of league on the main free-to-air channels on a typical winter weekend – and 24 hours on Sky Sport – [gals] are crying foul... [over repeatedly hearing: “]Not tonight, darling, the game’s starting...” ...[a spokesperson from the Guy]’s Centre said it was a common complaint that [guys] did not communicate because they were watching too much television.

...Watching too much television may increase the lifetime risk of teenage girls succumbing to breast cancer later in life, according to recent American research. The study of sixth grade girls found that those who watched more than 13 hours of TV a week and did less exercise had earlier periods than those who watched less than 9.9 hours a week. ‘There’s evidence that getting periods under the age of 12 slightly increases the risk of breast cancer,’... [the] executive director of the NSW Breast Cancer Institute... agrees... ‘Obesity also increases the risk of breast cancer. Although these are slight, there’s no doubt our children’s lifestyles are worrying when you compare them to lifestyles of 20 years ago. Back then, kids played on bikes, went on walks and spent a lot of time doing physical activities outdoors. But today, many of them spend a lot of time watching TV and video games, eating junk food and surfing the internet.’ ...● [It’s estimated that during its life the average person spends] 12 years watching television.

...In Rome, one is advised to do as the Romans. In New York, where emulating the ways of seasoned locals can sometimes land an un-schooled visitor in trouble, the safest way to take the measure of this city is to switch on the television and view what N[Y]ers view. This could be said of any culture, of course: sheep dog trials and darts tournaments probably tell you as much about how the Brits take their pleasures as *Baywatch* does about those things which excite American imaginations. But what makes Gotham City so different, even from the rest of the country, is the sheer

and bizarre breadth of offerings piped into your living room via the squat black boxes of integrated circuits that sit atop almost every TV. The shows make it to air because, many innocent years ago, City Hall insisted that the system's operator reserve a certain number of slots for "community access." What they had in mind were broadcasts of school meetings, and local worthies pushing uplifting causes in the name of the common good. What they... ended up with is rather different. Here is a random sampling of the stranger shows that aired at 2 am on N[Y]'s non-profit community stations on one day last week. Channel 72: An unchanging picture of a waterfall accompanied by religious music and an unseen narrator urging viewers to remember that extra-terrestrials are God's creatures, too. ("If you are involved in an alien abduction, please make every effort to have your host accept Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour.") Channel 69: A home shopping network for knife collectors... featuring a [gal] in a bikini wielding a battle-axe while her... co-host urged viewers to remember that a display of crossed claymores "adds a touch of class to the entry foyer of any home... even if you don't have a foyer." Channel 67: An overweight drag queen in sequins sitting on the toilet with a cat and ranting about herpes. Channel 66: Another drag queen, [this time] in a leather G-string and a pendulously breasted 60-something former stripper debating whether [the US President's daughter] is gay. Consensus: [The daughter] isn't but her mother might be. Channel 53: A [guy] squashing Barbie dolls with a lump of wood. Channel 51: An artist explains why [it] has festooned a hotel room with drippy, glistening stalactites of melted cheese. Channel 42: Grainy news footage, repeated over and over again, of a Japanese boar hunter being gored on a hillside... Channel 35: Graphic massage parlour ads, including one starring a fat, near-naked [guy] in a dog collar being whipped by a [gal] wearing a Nazi cap and not much else. Channel 34: Two gay and greying film buffs wondering why they've never read about [the former *ER* regular]'s girlfriends. "You should give him a call..." said the first. "[The actor] might have a soft spot for flatulent old fags!" ...In between, there were specialist commercial stations, each devoted exclusively to one of the following: romantic movies, science fiction flicks, recipes, faith healers and Latin American beauty contests. There is even a channel populated by jolly [guys] in plaid shirts hauling fish from sylvan lakes... [T]he philosopher and futurist... who predicted that [t]v would shrink the world to a global village... had it almost right: But it's hard not to conclude that N[Y]'s programmers regard every citizen as the village idiot... [Incidentally, actors in US] TV shows are being told to speak faster to make their characters appear more intelligent. Scriptwriters' have upped characters' word count... [a]nd producers... have hired dialogue coaches to help actors keep pace with the increased word rate.

...IN AN episode of *A Cook's Tour*, the series in which [a] swashbuckling New York chef... travels the world in search of the perfect meal, [it] sits down at a restaurant in France to tuck into what looks like a great steaming bowl of soup. After the first taste [the NYer] looks none too impressed, but manages to eat it graciously before his hosts. Just what the steaming slop was, I couldn't make out. "Oh, that was tete du veau... It is a classic French dish, and is usually a delicacy... God, I was so ill on that trip – the worst I have ever been..." It's quite an admission. After all, [the NYer] is unlike any other television chef... more likely to be eating a poisonous blowfish in Japan or roasted sheep testicles at a tribal camp in the middle of the Moroccan desert... [than to] pose prettily in [its] kitchen... creating picture-perfect dishes... *A Cook's Tour* is about going to the ends of the globe to discover the rarest, strangest, and often most unappetising cuisine possible... In an interview with Viva, the 47-year-old... executive chef for N[Y] restaurant the Brasserie Les Halles... says most of his roving culinary experiences are positive, although there are those [it] would prefer to forget, including the tete du veau moment. [The NYer] had passed the restaurant which featured the dish on its menu for three days before... din[ing] there. Each day the restaurant's sign declared the dish of the day was tete du veau, which meant the dish on special on day three was the same one as on day one, so the ill effects were... not surprising. Still, eating dodgy veal in France is nothing compared with dining on the still-beating heart of a cobra sliced from its chest in front of [the NYer], who then had to drink the bile mixed with wine... in Vietnam, a country [it]'s mad about.

...And now, [our roving] *Herald correspondent*... samples the lousy playing but saucy cheerleaders of... [the] XFL. One of the few joys of a cold, bleak American winter is that every year, just when the days are shortest and the weather at its most miserable, something nice happens – the football season finally ends. For couch potatoes who cannot get particularly excited about the spectacle of large [guys] in crash helmets running into each other, it is a blessing. At long last, after four months of saturation coverage, the TV networks are once again free to cover comprehensible sports – like basketball and, sigh, golf in warmer climes. Even BMX... racing, monster truck rallies or curling, which some of the harder-up cable channels broadcast when they can find nothing else to fill the screen, make a welcome change after the N[FL] season has reached its limp climax with the Super Bowl's annual gush of mush. Now, unfortunately, that has changed. Last weekend, amid a blitz-krieg of ballyhoo, the [person] who made professional wrestling America's highest-rated TV sport kicked off his own football league: the XFL – the X standing for nothing in particular other than canny marketing. Sports fans were warned to strap themselves into their recliners because, with the NFL season just concluded, they could expect a whole new ballgame. The [person] behind the XFL is... trying to put the full nelson on professional football, which would seem to be even more vulnerable [than professional wrestling] to a predator bold enough to tear up the rule book. To understand why, consider the Super Bowl, which sums up the sad state of the sport these days. It was won two weeks ago by the Baltimore Ravens, who walked all over the hapless New York Giants. But it would have been more entertaining to watch meat rot. For six ad-choked hours, commentators tried to inject some excitement into the interminable pauses, time-outs, penalty reviews and countless other interruptions that are the game's most prominent feature. During the course of the entire afternoon, the ball was in play for just 16 minutes. When the TV ratings were released, it came as no particular surprise that the game had drawn the second-lowest viewership in Super Bowl history. Even more discouraging for advertisers, who paid up to \$3 million for a 30-second spot, the number of [guys] under 50 who tuned in was pitiful. They are the people who drink beer, buy cars and use razors – the very customers all those sponsors wanted to reach. One week later, [the person]... who has described himself as P. T. Barnum's heir... unveiled his version of gridiron. On the field, eight teams with names such as the Memphis Maniax... the New York Hit [Guys] and the Chicago Enforcers tackled harder, played longer and talked dirtier than their NFL counterparts. The XFL's other big draw was bouncing on the sidelines, where [the heir] assembled cheer squads of silicon-enhanced strippers, who periodically ventured into the grandstands to be pawed and slobbered on by the crowd. If that wasn't enough excitement, giant screens also flashed the news that the cheerleaders would shower with the players after the game. As for the action on the field, anyone could tell the teams were made up of second-raters at best. There were dropped passes, waddling defenders, receivers who could not move fast enough to catch a bus let alone the ball. Will it matter? Probably not. After all, everybody knows [the heir]'s weekly wrestling show is a scripted put-on, but it has been pulling more viewers than Monday Night Football for most of the past three years. True, last weekend's ratings were not as high as [the heir] and NBC, which owns half of the XFL, would have liked. But there is plenty of time to whip up interest. Anyone for letting the cameras follow those cheerleaders into the showers? Bet on seeing it sooner than later... [] Four members of a Bulgarian state television camera crew have been fired because they were so busy watching scantily clad... performers in a nearby field... that they missed last week's historic total eclipse of the sun. As the moon closed over the sun's orb at the dramatic moment of totality... television viewers throughout Bulgaria saw nothing but a blank screen... The television chief issued a public apology.

...Red-faced Thai airport officials apologised yesterday after hundreds of people were shocked to see a pornographic video on televisions throughout Bangkok's domestic and international terminals. [The] airport manager... said heads were rolling after live coverage of Thailand's Southeast Asian Games football final against Vietnam switched suddenly to a 20-second clip of a... [couple] engaged in their own horizontal sporting event... [T]he official responsible at the firm which delivers the airport's television entertainment [has] been sacked and... seven others had... their pay cut... [By the way, US] television changed on the night of January 25, 1996, and it's only now becoming clear how much. It was a Thursday. The CBS network needed to schedule something for a... graveyard shift, so it aired an independently produced special called *World's Most Dangerous Animals*. The show collected film clips of horrifying moments from nature documentaries – an elephant stomping on a trainer, a bear attacking a [human], sharks swallowing prey. They built toward a punchline endorsed by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals: that

people are most dangerous for what they've done to nature. In his Los Angeles office the next day, [a]Fox executive... scanned a printout that showed nearly one-fifth of people watching television the night before had tuned into *World's Most Dangerous Animals*. Those are hard numbers to ignore. That day, Fox ordered its own special of the most visceral video, minus the message. *When Animals Attack* aired four months later, and a television genre was born. Reality shows, which appeal to Hollywood's love for cheap thrills and the just plain cheap, are the hottest and most controversial form of television on today. Its makers are Hollywood's renegades. Shocking! Deadliest! Scariest! True! The titles of many reality shows scream like headlines in a tabloid newspaper. Some are more entertaining than the programmes: *World's Deadliest Swarms* or *When Good Pets Go Bad*. They are truly the first... shows created with the remote control in mind. What channel surfer would click away when... [it] sees a building collapsing or a [guy] putting his head in an alligator's mouth. The most dramatic segments share characteristics with forbidden fruit and horror movies: you shouldn't be watching, you want to cover your eyes, but it's too hard to resist. A car races through an intersection, trailed by police. An officer ducks behind his cruiser door to avoid gunfire. A soaked survivor dangles above raging floodwaters on a rope ladder suspended from a helicopter. A [gal], thinking no one is watching, urinates on the desk of her boss... People gather in living rooms with their friends to watch [Fox's] specials, just as they would a football game... "We're basically tapping into people's emotions – adrenalin, fear, excitement," [the executive] said. "I think it's what all of television does, whether it's fictionalised or whether it's reality." ...Fox is also familiar with *When Critics Attack!* No one admits to respecting the shows and they make many people angry. [An]NBC executive... called Fox's video of animal attacks "one step short of a snuff film." "They're reprehensible," said... a Temple University professor who studies violence on television. "They exploit the worst fears and nightmares of people." [The Fox executive claims to simply be] trying to entertain. "If I were doing news, then I would have some sort of social responsibility,"... Lines between news and entertainment had already been blurred by shows like *COPS* and *A Current Affair* when the present crop came in vogue. The roots stretch even deeper through the lowbrow entertainment of tabloids and freak shows. *Candid Camera* was a television ancestor, as well as those home video shows in which dad plays catch with his son and gets smacked in the head by a baseball. Now they've been turbocharged for the late 1990s. "What are the worst of these shows but a carnival barker trying to get you into the tent?...", said [the person] who runs Termite Art Productions in Hollywood. [It's] worked for years on the fringes of Hollywood, producing documentaries for MTV and VH1. Now, because of shows like... the upcoming *Redhanded*, where acts of revenge are caught on tape, [the person is] in demand. His company made *World's Most Dangerous Animals*. [The person responsible is] still proud of the show, and happy to deliver a progressive message when most prime-time television avoids politics. But [it's] distressed by what came next. "I feel like I opened up Pandora's box with *World's Most Dangerous Animals*... I've been trying to put it back in the box for the last few years." [The person responsible] doesn't even want to be described as a reality-show producer. Too many shows are exploitative, clips just designed to shock. [The person responsible] worries about shows desensitising viewers to violence. Shock them so much they'll become numb to it all – in real life and on television. "You've got to ask yourself what are the consequences of your actions,"... The omnipresence of video cameras has made life easy for reality-show producers. Cameras are everywhere. They secretly watch the movements of office workers, supermarket shoppers and ATM users. All of these cameras provide a mother-lode of material... The... programmes are pulled together from many sources... [T]he industry's leader... negotiated with prisons for video of inmate riots that [were] made into *Prisoners Out of Control*, then [worked] with security firms for the workplace scenes in *Busted on the Job*. Researchers employed by [the industry leader] comb the Internet for strange stories and investigate whether anyone has a video. Hollywood agents peddle compelling video for ever-increasing prices. The most frequent sources are the libraries of local news stations... Often, producers take news events – tragedies – and repackaged them as entertainment months later. [The industry leader] used footage shot... on a beach vacation that caught an offshore plane tumbling and crashing into the water. "When I started to watch that, I had no idea what was going to happen... A lot of television, with comedy or dramas, you know what's going to happen. This is what television isn't – it's unpredictable. It's more dramatic than anybody could write dramatically."

...[a s]hamed British TV star... is fighting back, throwing himself into getting fit again whilst staying in the world's most expensive hotel, the seven-star Burj al-Arab in Dubai. While there, [the TV star] spoke publicly for the first time since the inquest into the death of Stuart Lubbock in a late-night drink and drugs orgy at the presenter's mansion. [The balding presenter] gave an hour-long TV interview in which [the TV star insisted it] never gave the victim cocaine and claims new evidence shows the [victim's] horrific anal injuries were inflicted after [Stuart] was taken by ambulance to hospital. "I can't be any more sorry about what happened. But I am not responsible for his death. I know I can live with myself." A former drink and drug addict, the 50-year-old has been dry for 18 months and says [it] wants to make a TV comeback. But [the TV star who has separated from his wife and now has a NZ boyfriend,] accepts that may not be what the public wants saying, "I cannot force people to love me."

...[A] CORONATION Street beauty... has told of her five years of hell at the hands of a celebrity-stalker. Her ordeal was revealed as [the stalker] appeared in court on a harassment charge. Police had repeatedly warned [the stalker it] would be arrested if [it] continued pestering stars. His victims include seven other Street actresses... [The deluded stalker, who] refused to comment after being remanded on bail... believed that all the babes [it] bothered were in love with him. When police went to his home [the stalker] begged them: "Please don't arrest me, I won't do it again. I know I will be locked up this time." Manchester city magistrates heard how [the stalker] would wait outside the soap's Granada Studios for [the beauty] to arrive and then throw his arms around her and beg for a kiss... Earlier this year [the stalker] was accused of writing spooky letters to [the actress] who plays 13-year-old schoolgirl Sarah-Lou – and of stalking [the actress] who plays Torah Battersby. [Torah], 19, received a love letter... telling her: "I would die for you." [The 19-year-old] spoke out after 20 people from the soap held a meeting... to discuss their fears about [the stalker]. Police were told of their concern and confronted him at the Granada TV gates and warned [the stalker it] could face five years in jail unless [it] left his idols alone. Last year [the stalker] sneaked into the memorial service for Bryan Mosley – who played Alf Roberts – and sat leering at the stars. His most infamous moment came when [the stalker] lunged at... Spice Girl... outside a hotel. When confronted [the stalker] said: "The stars really love me. They really love the attention. I'm just an autograph hunter. I've been doing it for 21 years and I can't see what the bother is."

...A GAY TV show featuring explicit paedophile scenes has shocked Christian groups. [The]Christian Heritage leader... is calling for a boycott of TV4 series *Queer as Folks*. [The leader] also wants Christians to refuse to buy any products advertised during the show, which starts next month. *Queer as Folk* is about two gay friends from Manchester... and what happens when one gets involved with a youth and the other with an older [gay]. The pilot episode caused an up-roar when it screened in Britain because of its explicit gay sex scenes [involving] a 15-year-old boy... [AUSn TV] channels and TVNZ would not broadcast the eight-part series... But TV4[']s communications manager... said the series was an honest portrayal of gay relationships... TV4 would[, however,] be reducing some of the sex scenes to comply with [NZ's] broadcasting standards authority. [An authority spokesperson] said the onus was on the network to decide what scenes were appropriate. "But I am aware that our counterpart in England... received... complaints about the show," [it added]... ■ THE British public is just like *The Royle Family*, according to a new survey... 60[% of Brits] tune in for an average five hours a day... [Brits who] live to the age of 70... spend 20[% of that time or]... 14 years of their lives glued to the TV...

A *Reader's Digest* survey [found] that... characters... in the UK Channel 4's *Brookside*... live to an average [age] of just 24. That is 14 years younger than in Sierra Leone, the country with the worst life expectancy in the world... Most [characters] in... *Eastenders* can expect to live to 45.

...The slaughter of cast members on *Shortland Street* appears to have become a massacre, with another nine actors tipped to go from the top-rating show. The sweeping changes have occurred after maker South Pacific Pictures brought in an A[US]n consultant to assess the show. Th[e actor]... who has played Nick Harrison since the show first aired in 1992, will stay, along with [the actor] who plays ambulance officer Rangi

Heremaia. Also to escape the cuts [is the] Auckland actor... who plays coffee shop owner Waverly Wilson. One insider who was at the West Auckland studios the day the cuts were announced described the [redundant] actors as “quietly horrified” and said they would have difficulty getting the kind of regular, well-paid work that *Shortland Street* represented. They would also take a spectacular drop in salary from the up-to-\$3000 a week paid to some core cast members. Actors who play smaller, temporary roles receive \$325 a day. But those in front of the camera are not the only ones to get their marching orders – at least one storyliner was told to leave last week. Storyliners link up plots. One source said the new-look *Shortland Street* would be based “on the bones” of the programme that viewers had become familiar with. Most industry insiders... said South Pacific Pictures wanted to make the soap grittier and put more emphasis on the medical dramas at the clinic. The company yesterday denied that staff had been told the changes were being made as a result of a fall in ratings... [B]ecause episodes are filmed 12 weeks in advance[the sacked]... actors would continue to appear on the TV2 soap for a “considerable time.” ...*Shortland Street* is one of N[Z]’s most successful home-grown dramas, with about 700,000 viewers tuning in each weeknight. It grabs a healthy 15[%]-plus of the viewing audience aged 5 years and over and regularly hits 20[%] and over in the key 18-39 demographic.

...Here comes [the P]M... on a white charger promising change. “Quality TV” is on its way, and the “crassly commercial” can head for the door. We all nod sagely. That’s what we want. It’s time we had it. But do we agree on what this “quality TV” is? ...an American academic working at the University of Canterbury, is wary of the term “quality.” ...[the] author of a book on “tabloid TV” about to be published in the US, says that when politicians talk about “quality TV,” they are usually talking about ensuring that television reflects their own middle-class values and interests. The dominant definition of quality is also a generational one... and part of the furore over “dumbing down” is related to the growth of programming for young audiences. “Often, this is programming older audiences simply don’t ‘get’ – their kids understand it much better than they do. I do think a lot of so-called quality television is very good,” [the academic] concedes. “But I get very suspicious of the term when it’s used to discredit other forms of popular taste.” Entertainment verses education is a core part of... [the Broadcasting Minister’s] position on the “quality” issue. “Quality, whether in fiction, comedy or documentary, is what makes you stop and think, preferably from another perspective,” [the minister] says. “Have we had it in N[Z]? Some TV programmes have made me sit back and think, but there hasn’t been very much.” [The minister] also wants local programmes to cover a wider range of subjects. “We should broadcast a range of programmes that reflect our diverse interests... In N[Z], many people love brass bands. Yet rarely does such music get a slot on TV. That is what we mean by diversity. It’s not what I might watch. But it is one part of a range of interests – gardening, opera, science, history, architecture, mechanics... We also have to make sure there are programmes that tell N[Z] stories, play N[Z] music, feature N[Z] talent – programmes that celebrate who we are and which reflect us back to ourselves.” This may be music to the ears of TV2’s general manager, [who]... is among many in the industry who are waiting for a fuller explanation of what the Government might mean when it says TVNZ should produce more quality programming and less of the crassly commercial... Soap operas, for example, have not been regarded as “quality.” But [the academic] argues that shows such as *Shortland Street* should be, because they often cover crucial issues about personal relations, sexuality and race relations, and sometimes even public policy issues such as the privatisation of health care. Of course *Shortland Street*’s N[Z] origins and focus mean it is likely to flourish in the new environment heralded by [the PM and the Broadcasting Minister]. The planned TVNZ public charter will place a strong emphasis on N[Z] culture, heritage and artistic achievements... Many other academics have a more traditional view of what constitutes “quality,” and their views are more likely to match those of [the PM and the Broadcasting Minister. The]... head of the Masters of Communication programme at the Auckland University of Technology, believes most viewers can identify what is quality TV and what is not. “Most people can discern between programmes that have depth and merit and programmes that are merely distracting or formulaic,”... And most viewers could see the “inherent worth” of a... wildlife series as opposed to *Baywatch*. “Almost all know that from the wildlife series we’re getting more than distraction and entertainment. It’s TV at its most powerful – it teaches people something.” ...[the] chief executive of N[ZOA], also sees a difference between programmes that merely distract their audience and those that engage and educate. “[However, s]ometimes people do want to [just] ‘blob out’ – watch things that don’t require a significant mental commitment and involvement,” [it add]s. “They’re happy to sit back and watch... *Mitre 10 Changing Rooms*...” ...TV2’s top six programmes last year were *Dream Home* (local), *My House My Castle* (local), *Shortland Street* (local), *Veronica’s Closet* (American), *Motorway Patrol* (local) and *Weddings* (local).

...Just how low can you go with television programmes? *Who Wants to Marry a Multi-Millionaire*, shown recently by the Fox network in the U[S], must have come close. That was the one in which [a blonde], aged 34, was selected from 50 potential brides, who preened and paraded in front of a self-made millionaire who watched hidden from view. The [contestants] introduced themselves, were asked some *Dating Game*-style questions, after which [the blonde] found herself married to [a] San Diego comic and real estate developer, [aged]... 43. The show attracted massive criticism, a big audience and produced a stampede of future applicants to the Fox Website (which crashed). It didn’t last of course... [The] bride... went on a short expenses-paid holiday with her husband then annulled the unconsummated marriage... Pretty soon it emerged that a former fiancée of [the groom] had taken out a restraining order after claiming [it] beat and threatened to kill her. A... critic described the show as a cross between “spin the bottle and a cattle auction.” And the candidates who missed out... were also relieved when the millionaire hove into view on their backstage monitor. The room erupted with “Whew. God forbid it was me,” one contestant recounted. Such tacky shows (to be shown on TV3 [next Friday] at 7.30 pm) are blamed by the big [US] networks on the need to try to stop their audiences drifting to racier, no-holds barred offerings on a multitude of cable television channels... [Incidentally, AUSn] band Savage Garden... became an unwitting player in the fallout... from the American TV programme... [The] controversial show... used the US chart-topping Savage Garden song *I Knew I Loved You* without permission of the band. The group’s manager... says Savage Garden will be seeking absolute breach of copyright from the TV show [it] describes as “train-wreck television”.

...THE MADE-for-TV marriage that hit the headlines in the American *Who Wants To Marry A Millionaire?* hit the rocks not long afterwards. Cue for the *True Hollywood Story* team to enter the picture with... *The Million Dollar Mistake*, screening on TV3, 7.30pm Saturday... [The groom] proposed... in front of 33 million TV viewers. But the newlyweds returned from their honeymoon to a media firestorm, as restraining orders... surfaced, his status as a multi-millionaire was questioned and [the bride] came under fire for falsely portraying herself as a Gulf War veteran.

...TVNZ is preparing to give away \$1 million to a quiz show contestant in a local version of the international hit *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*. The show, to screen on TV2 next year, will be made by Touchdown Productions, sources say. But the million-dollar question is whether the Government will consider the contest jackpot a wise use of company money under TVNZ’s new brief to make shows that reflect N[Z] culture. It is understood that TVNZ backed down from a \$1 million offer for the rights to the first All Black test match against France next month after [the P]M questioned the value for money. Sky is thought to have paid half the amount offered by TVNZ. TV3 confirmed it would screen delayed coverage of the... test... TVNZ is among the more than 70 countries that own the rights to make *W[ITBAM]*, which ha[s] screened in 30 countries. Contestants must answer a series of multiple-choice questions to move up the ladder of prizemoney towards the jackpot. TV One starts screening the British version of the show on Sunday week. Ten people worldwide have won the top prize: six from the U[S] and one each from France, South Africa, Portugal and Israel. The show screens weekly in the US and Britain, while A[US]’s Nine channel has screened its version intermittently...

IT began with a “vague idea” scribbled down on a scrap of paper. When it was developed and went to air, however, *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?* created all sorts of television history. The British quiz show, which begins on TV1 at 8pm, Tuesday, was an immediate sensation, so successful that it has been licensed to dozens of countries around the world. At the heart of *Millionaire*’s appeal is the £1 million prize for answering 15 questions. The show doesn’t rely on celebrity guests or novelty stunts. More than 10 million phone calls from would-be contestants were received when the super-prize contest was announced. Up to 19 million viewers a night watched as hopefuls faced the challenge. It has been

acclaimed as the most successful quiz show in TV history. In the planning stages, however, the risks for the producers were huge. There was no money in the bank, contestants weren't to be seen until they arrived at the studio and there was an unprecedented decision to transmit the show on successive nights on prime-time television. It could have been a recipe for disaster, but the "vague idea" was a winner and has already gone into its seventh series.

...[someone who]'s newly rich... reckons [it] has never been much of a risk-taker. [It] may decide to change that, however, after the gamble of a lifetime paid off – to the tune of \$[NZ]3.4 million. A cousin of [the Prince of Wales]' special friend... the... 58-year-old garden designer... is the first to win the top prize on the hit... show *Who Wants to Be A Millionaire*, and... is still in shock over her new-found wealth. But as soon as the news broke, viewers criticised the win, saying... [her] background and wealth make her less deserving of the prize money. The [designer]... won her fortune... [by] correctly telling... that King Henry II was married to Eleanor of Aquitaine. T[he t]eetotaller... who kept her cool throughout the competition, clasped her hands to her mouth as... [the show's] host... told her [the answer was correct]... Throwing her arms around her tearful daughter... who was... in the studio, [the winner] said, "It's amazing. I feel wonderful, I feel rich." Her cousin... is... "amazed and delighted" at her relative's win... [The designer] rang the show's hotline 75 times in a bid to become a contestant – the calls costing \$3.40 each. "After a few weeks British Telecom called, telling me my phone bill had rocketed. But I carried on thinking that even if I won only a small amount it would pay the phone bill."

...*Major scandal*... The strange case of the *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?* winner caught cheating is revealed in a Prime TV documentary... this week. Early this month, [a]British army major... 39... and [a]lecturer... 52, were found guilty of conspiring to defraud the show's makers, Celador International, of the show's top prize... The episode featuring [the major]'s... win was never aired because of suspicions all was not well. The cheque was cancelled the next day. The[y]... were arrested... after Celador alleged that [the major] had won via a "coughing code" with [his]accomplice... who sat in the audience and signalled correct answers... A[US's] *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?* host... backgrounds the case in *Who Wants To Steal A Million?* (at 7.30pm Thursday...), followed by the first airing of the one-hour show featuring [the major]'s co-called winning performance.

...*Courting fame*... *STREET LEGAL* may have been screening only for a few weeks, but already [the]co-star... who plays rookie lawyer Tim O'Connor, is getting used to being recognised in the streets. [The actor] is pleased, however, that it is the more laid-back kind of public recognition that you get in N[Z], because having recently returned from New York, [it] has seen first-hand the kind of idol-worship that any showbusiness personality in America can suffer. "I watched the lead singer of... just an average band... walk through Times Square... and here's some little guy covered in tats with his little cap, swaggering through the square – and [it] was absolutely, totally mobbed. It was amazing." [The actor] concedes that N[Z] does not have the population to form such instant mobs, but... is still happy with the fact that even an international star like [the British singer of hit songs like *Angels* and *Millennium*] could walk down Queen Street recently with no more hassle than some friendly Kiwi greetings.

...[the] Government has gained the rights to film the first dawn of the millennium from Mt Hakepa on the Chatham Islands. Through the Millennium Office, the Government was the last cab off the rank in seeking the rights but the... [local] families last week struck a deal allowing host broadcaster TV3 to film from the mountain. The Office expected to announce the deal any day but family... [sources] confirmed a one-off payment of \$200,000... It allowed the landowners to negotiate deals for still photography and Internet images and explore with TV3 selling access to the hilltop to other television companies... The money is to be paid into the Bevan Lanauze Memorial Charitable Trust for the benefit of the 55 inhabitants of Pitt Island. Bevan... died in a fishing accident... [T]he money would be spent on education and community projects. There may be a few hitches yet. London-based... Millennium Adventure Company have said they have agreements giving them first access to Pitt Island. However, the... family consider those contracts null and void due to non-performance.

...TELEVISION One and Telecom don't want Kiwis to put their millennium messages in a bottle. Instead they'd much rather Kiwis put them on home video and send them in to TVNZ as part of the Telecom One N[Z] Challenge – and the sooner the better. Messages, memories or greetings will be screened as part of a marathon 30-hour broadcast from 6pm on December 31st to midnight on January 1 2000. As well as playing the home videos, TV One will have cameras around the country to capture the New Year's celebrations. TVNZ[']s chief executive... says the aim of the Challenge is to get as many N[Z]ers on television as possible. Ideally the message will be between 5-30 seconds long – and can be funny or serious.

...YOU WERE BORN TO BE ON TV. You have a talent that no-one else in the world possesses – An attitude that can't be manufactured, a skill that can't be taught, a quality that can't be reproduced. It is the ability to be yourself. Only you, a N[Z]er living right here, right now, can fill this role. Perhaps the greatest role ever created. To become part of the most ambitious television event of all time. The Telecom One N[Z] Challenge will take the lives of all 3.8 million of us and put them on screen in a world record breaking, live 30 hour television special. It's a celebration of who we are and what we want to be in the future. A snapshot of what we think and feel. A permanent record of our nation at the turn of the millennium. During the... night of the broadcast more than 60 camera teams will be in operation throughout the country, so you can participate no matter where you are. That's our challenge, to get every single N[Z]er to take part. It's a challenge we know you'll rise to. We'll give you more information about your starring role over the coming weeks, so, as they say in the world of television, stay tuned.

...Immortality beckons. The Telecom ONE N[Z] Challenge is giving everyone who sends in their Millennium home video wish the chance to win the starring role of a lifetime. One N[Z]er, or group of N[Z]ers will go down in history as being the first to welcome in the new Millennium on TV ONE. So when people ask 'Where were you at midnight on Dec 31st, 1999?' you might be able to say 'I was on TV, representing the whole of N[Z].'

...the Use[r]... who plays psychiatrist Frasier Crane, is the highest paid comedy actor in television history, reaping \$[NZ]1.97 million an episode for another three seasons of the show... *Frasier*... that won 16 Emmys in its first five years... [The actor] who plays Frasier's brother... is paid \$1.38 million an episode while [the]British-born actor... who plays Daphne, has joined the ranks of the world's highest-paid TV stars with... \$500,000 an episode.

...Just how much are TV presenters worth? In the case of [one presenter], the figure her agent suggested had network bosses spluttering over their salads in the restaurants of New York. "This can't happen – [it] wants more than we pay movie stars," said one executive. [The presenter] had been co-host of America's oldest and most-watched breakfast programme, NBC's *Today Show*, for 10 years when her contract came up for renewal. [The presenter] had been talking about the grind of early morning TV, the 5 am alarm, and how [it] wanted to spend more time with her two children. [The presenter also] had other suitors, from rival network CBS to... Dreamworks, which was promising to turn her into the next [US queen of talk. The presenter] could name her price – and her agent did. The deal agreed on, even by the inflated standards set by [US] news anchors down the years, is staggering: \$US65 million... over four and a half years. It makes the 44-year-old the highest-paid news journalist in the history of television, giving her £2 million a year more than... ABC's... acknowledged "queen" of current affairs... In television, only... [the] star of *Frasier*, and [two]talk show hosts... can match or exceed [her] new pay packet. As a transatlantic comparison, [an interviewer (r:p1684, ln10)] recently signed a three-year £3 million... contract with the BBC to present and produce programmes – a deal for which the BBC was heavily criticised as extravagant. There were no such complaints when NBC announced its agreement with [the 44-year-old, who said it] intended to stay with *Today Show* for the duration of the new contract – "God willing and the creeks don't rise". It was a typical folksy response from [the presenter], and one which left others to tackle the bigger questions raised by the deal: is [the 44-year-old] really worth it? Is any... journalist really worth... \$US16 million a year? The *Today Show* is about to celebrate its 50th anniversary. It was America's first network breakfast show and, for most of the past 10 years, by far its most popular. The programme has a familiar format, kicking off with news and current affairs at 7 am before shifting into a

softer mix of lifestyle features and celebrity interviews over the course of three hours... [The 44-year-old – who] isn't the prettiest person on the set, or the most illuminating interviewer... – ...shares hosting duties with... a handsome but bland talking head who in another life might have played the lead in a daytime soap[, plus] a newsreader... and a jolly, fat weather[perso]n... The most commonly used phrase to describe [the 44-year-old] is, "...so ordinary". Yet her life and career have been far from ordinary. Born into a wealthy family in Virginia, [it] graduated from university in 1979 and went straight into journalism, to the then-fledgling CNN, as a newsdesk assistant in Washington. [The assistant] got her first on-air experience a year later, when one of the newsreaders didn't show up. [The assistant] volunteered to stand in and, by all accounts, was terrible. "I never want to see her on the air again," her boss said. Undeterred, [the assistant] moved to an NBC affiliate in Florida, where [it] spent two years as a reporter, before moving to a Washington DC station where [it] won an Emmy award. [The reporter] landed a job as NBC's deputy Pentagon correspondent before graduating to the *Today Show*... when the programme was trailing its competitors in both influence and ratings. The turnaround was slow but inexorable. *Today* has led the morning ratings for seven years and [the 44-year-old] has won countless awards, notably for her campaign to increase awareness of colon cancer after her husband... died of the disease, aged 42. These days [the widow] is dating... a television producer... worth \$US600 million. But perhaps her greatest talent has been to subsume her obvious drive, talent and ambition beneath a veneer of ordinariness. "[The 44-year-old] is great because [it] is able to be the serious interviewer in one segment, talking to senators or the President, and to be Peter Pan in the next,"... said [the]... president of NBC News... after her pay deal was announced. As one of the NBC executives who brokered the deal, [the president] was hardly likely to come out and say the network had been roundly screwed. But the fact is that NBC couldn't afford to lose [the 44-year-old]. "The *Today Show* is... one of NBC's crown jewels. This was about protecting one of your crown jewels with one of your major talents," said... [the] producer of CBS's rival morning programme. Who knows, perhaps NBC did spend \$65 million for emotional and symbolic reasons, but most people doubt it. You don't need a business degree to work out that the real driving forces behind [the] deal were money and power. NBC had the former, [the 44-year-old] the latter. The *Today Show* generates an estimated \$250 million in advertising revenue for NBC each year, making it the most profitable programme in television news, if not the whole of television. A recent, admittedly unscientific analysis suggested that [the 44-year-old] was worth \$70 million of that \$250 million. In recent months, however, the gap between the NBC show and its competitors has been narrowing, largely because of improvements made by the other networks. For NBC to lose its star at such a critical juncture would have been damaging, financially and in terms of morale. No one is indispensable in television, but [the 44-year-old] has come close.

...TVNZ's newish newsreader... is off air... and the network is refusing to elaborate on why. Speculation on his future fronting *One Network News* is rife, though the company refuses to discuss the matter. It is understood that [the person] who stepped in last night, has been asked to be co-host for the week. [The newish newsreader]'s daughter... read the breakfast news yesterday and was expected to screen at noon, but left work suddenly shortly beforehand. Staff at the network have been told nothing... It is [the newish newsreader]'s second absence since [it replaced TVNZ's oldish newsreader last month]. Two weeks ago [the newish newsreader] was off air with what was described as a stomach bug. Rumours prompted TVNZ lawyers to warn the media against speculating that anything other than illness was behind his absence. Since [the newish newsreader] took the job, T[V] One's news ratings have dropped. Last week 52[%] of viewers watched its 6 pm show, down from the 58[%] in his first week... The drop is thought to have cost millions of dollars in advertising revenue... TV3's news rating stood at 28[%] last week, up from 22[%].

...TVNZ last night sacked... [its newish newsreader – who] has retaliated with threats to sue over the dismissal. The astonishing public brawl follows three days of silence from both sides... since controversy erupted over [the newish newsreader's] return to TVNZ – and the dumping of... [the oldish newsreader, who] looks set to return to weekday bulletins as the channel battles its unprecedented public relations and ratings disaster. In what some insiders are calling the biggest climbdown since its about-face on the scheduling of *Coronation St*, TVNZ is understood to be sending out an SOS for [the oldish newsreader]'s return. And the management jobs of those responsible for the... debacle might be on the line. "[The oldish newsreader] can add a couple of noughts to his salary package," said one source. "If [the oldish newsreader] came back the viewers who left us should come back with him." [The oldish newsreader] is refusing to be drawn on speculation [about his] return. "At the moment I am continuing to read weekend bulletins and doing my *Assignment* story,"... The strength of viewer reaction against [the oldish newsreader]'s sidelining has surprised TVNZ staff and [the oldish newsreader, who] said the support... was "fantastic and I'm grateful for it"... Asked if [the oldish newsreader] would relish the chance to rejoin [his former newsreading partner, the oldish newsreader] said: "I will think about that when I'm asked." But colleagues say TVNZ has no choice but to recall him. They say [his former newsreading partner] cannot be teamed with a younger anchor on a permanent basis. "You look at news teams around the world – it's always an older [guy, younger gal] tandem. You can't have an older [gal] with a tomboy," said one. [The newsreading partner] is the linchpin of the bulletin and would not be too happy for her partner to highlight her as older." [• In 1981 the former newsreading partner and the newish newsreader were presenting partners, fronting the regional news programme *Top Half*. Since the birth of TV3, at 6pm weeknights, the pair were broadcast into the country's living rooms from different channels. The pair had an "unwritten rule" not to discuss their respective channels but they couldn't help a friendly dig now and then. "My old *Top Half* partner would ring me up and say, 'Why did you lead with that rubbish about the royal family? What a load of garbage,' and I would have found out TV One would've led with it but didn't have the pictures in time." In 1995 the newish newsreader was excited about his job, laughing off rumours it could be joined by a presenting partner – "for now, I'm a one-guy band.""]

...TV's dream team became a nightmare... A report last week said [that TVNZ's newish newsreader] felt cold-shouldered by colleagues angered by the treatment of... [the oldish newsreader. "The newish newsreader is] used to being adored", said [one] source. But insiders say they do not believe the team at *One Network News* would be overly and consistently hostile towards [their newish newsreader. Others say the newish newsreader] was never happy in the new job, for which [the newish newsreader] is said to receive a salary of \$400,000, and this translated to his demeanour in the newsroom... [They say that the newish newsreader] found the more journalistic role of the *One* anchor's job beyond him. [The newish newsreader] has never trained as a journalist, but was required to do more of his own writing at TVNZ... [and] control business graphics on screen... The... [newish newsreader] has also been shocked and depressed by the reaction of viewers, who have voted with their remotes, dropping the news' audience share... from about 65%... Friends and family have been reported as being concerned for [the newish newsreader]'s health over the pressure to perform in the face of the plummeting ratings... TVNZ started chasing [the newish newsreader] for its 6pm news slot as far back as 1991 when [the] then-programmer... pushed for him to move from the late-night news to pair with [his former *Top Half* newsreading partner – and oust her oldish newsreading partner. However, the news] and current affairs boss... got [TVNZ's] chief executive... inside in his fight to retain [the oldish newsreader. TVNZ's former late-night newsreader] was wooed to TV3 in 1994 – and a star was born. [At TV3 the newish newsreader] went on to win Best Presenter gongs at the Qantas Awards and the *TV Guide* Film and Television Awards. His relaxed professionalism and off-the-cuff humour also won him scores of fans... [Unfortunately, however well-liked the newish newsreader] was at 3 *News*, the ratings remained static – around 5%. Last February, TV3 decided to lift its game by pairing [the newish newsreader with a co-anchor. The newish newsreader] quit the day before the new partnership was due to go on air... reportedly reluctant to be part of a two-headed act because [the newish newsreader] was "upset that TV3 would concede its only point of difference" with *One Network News*. Legal discussions followed over [the newish newsreader]'s breach of his employment contract, which was eventually settled out of court last July. The doors began to creak open for [the newish newsreader]'s return to the mother ship – and [the oldish newsreader] to be cast out as the alien. But his arrival... [back at TVNZ exposed its viewers'] strong sense of loyalty and fair play.

...AN EXHAUSTED [newsreading anchor] has broken her silence over TVNZ's presenter reshuffle, saying the last few months have been among the worst in her life. "We have all suffered terribly," [the anchor] said of the three month public furore... [The anchor] was speaking out exclusively to the *Sunday Star-Times* in an effort to end the "dreadful misinformation and misconceptions" that have dogged the affair and to pay a public tribute to both her screen partners. "I want to lay some ghosts..." To be fair to TVNZ, [the anchor] said, its intentions in reuniting her and [the newish newsreader] had been good. "They wanted to get on board someone who was so popular and to keep [the oldish newsreader. 'The Top Half partnership'] kept coming up in their research. They genuinely thought this was what people wanted and were blown away when it wasn't the case." ...[the anchor has] tried to support both [her newish and oldish newsreading partners] through the turmoil – as they had supported her in the past. "I love them both dearly... I owe [the newish newsreader] a huge debt... [The newish newsreader] helped me enormously when my confidence was at rock bottom when I was on *Top Half* [TVNZ's Auckland regional news service from the 1980s], while my newsreading partner under the nationwide news format (which replaced the regional format)... and I were mates at the NZBC in Christchurch a long time ago. [The oldish newsreader] was a surrogate godfather to my daughter... and [the newish newsreader] is godfather to my son... I admire him for turning up night after night and enduring a barrage of hatefulness and criticism,"... But... "I would really like to correct that impression [that the newish newsreader] had a hard time from other staff. People bent over backwards to make him welcome..." [The anchor] had been in touch with [him] since his sacking last week and [said the newish newsreader] would "get through this"... [As for the oldish newsreader: "That person] has performed brilliantly for so long and has had an unwarranted hard time from people who've said [the oldish newsreader is] lacklustre and no-talent; really cutting, ruthless stuff – just a bunch of nasty people venting their spleen for no good reason. Maybe they thought [the oldish newsreader] was an easy target because [it is too] unassuming and shy... [to fight back." The anchor confessed to being] deeply hurt by criticism of her as "nice", too emotional, weak or "flim-flam". "It does hurt enormously and I don't think I will ever come to terms with that sort of thing. However, if you are out there you have to expect some people will loathe you on sight." ...[the anchor also] wanted to bury the "media myth" that [it] was the linchpin of the presenting team. "I do not accept that I have been the star. We are a team and you are only as good as your partner."

...[NZ TV]'S newsreading phoenix... hesitated before agreeing to return to his old job. [The oldish newsreader], who started back on primetime bulletins last Monday, after six weeks in the weekend wilderness – and immediately triggered a long-awaited ratings surge for *One Network News* – says it was not an immediate decision. "In my mind I had moved on... I was looking ahead..." But ultimately... it was loyalty to TVNZ, the viewers who supported him, and his colleagues, that brought him back. [Didn't the oldish newsreader] feel the urge to ratchet up his contract or rub their noses in [his bosses'] embarrassment – make them suffer? "Not one little tinsy bit. There is no point in being bitter. This was a business decision of theirs and I never took it personally[– though] I thought they were wrong and they have been proved wrong. They have admitted they made a mistake and I accept that in the spirit in which it was said." And yes, [the oldish newsreader] IS getting more money than before. But no, it is nowhere near the "one or two noughts" some colleagues suggested... could [be added] to his package... Some sources suggest, however, his package reflects the fact that TVNZ bosses have been forced to recognise that [the oldish newsreader] – for years regarded as lacking the X factor – now has real star status.

...TVNZ's board is gloating about the organisation's first boost in total audience share for its two free-to-air channels... since the industry was deregulated... more than a decade... [ago, as rival] *3News* has continued to suffer from [the oldish newsreader's return to *One Network News*]... TV One's overall viewer share now stands at 57[%]. In addition... the overall performance... has soared. Yesterday, the company announced that its [annual] profit... rocketed to \$45 million... An improved profit will also see the Government get a bigger dividend this year... A final payment of \$21 million will take the... total dividend... to \$31.5 million. It was \$21 million in 1997.

...[NZ's PM] lashed out at media and Opposition "double standards" as [the PM] faced pressure over [its claim that a] broadcaster... received \$1 million when [the newish newsreader] left TV One. [The] Labour leader... accused [the PM] of turning Parliament into a farce as the [PM] dodged questions yesterday about why [it wanted the newish newsreader]'s settlement made public but would not disclose the amount paid to [the] former Fire Service chief executive... [The PM] was forced to apologise on Tuesday for [its claims about the newish newsreader], who is still negotiating with T[TVNZ] over his departure... [The newish newsreader]'s lawyers requested an apology and discussed the wording with [the PM's staff. The PM] told Parliament yesterday that [it] had made the point that the same rules should apply to exit packages for all staff of [SOEs]. The Government was going to "fix" the issue of exit payments for state sector managers and directors, the details to be released in three weeks. [The PM] had earlier said [that it] got the detail regarding [the newish newsreader] wrong but was right about the principle that... TVNZ and R[NZ]... journalists... should have their employment deals subjected to the same scrutiny they demanded from others... [The PM's] comments came as [the] J[Tourism Minister] confirmed that two former Tourism Board directors would repay \$340,000 in unlawful exit payments which they received last December – but would then receive new, lawful payments... [B]oth... had suffered losses "and it seemed reasonable to negotiate a fair settlement to address those costs." A settlement would save taxpayers the cost of a legal battle... [The minister] expects to make public within days the settlement... [A TVNZ spokesperson] could not say whether details of any payment to [the newish newsreader] would be made public once the affair was settled.

...You can always tell when [PM]s are in trouble. They start blaming the media. Then they start blaming state-owned television and radio for not toadying to the Beehive. [The PM] was displaying these symptoms during another awful week. But the best indicator of how much [the PM] is struggling were the glum faces of National colleagues in Parliament yesterday. They sat in silence, lending their leader no support and leaving [it] to wilt in the face of Opposition ridicule during [the PM's] bizarre question-time performance... [The PM] tends to self-destruct at the most crucial moments. On Monday morning [the PM] reshuffled... cabinet, joking that if there was any more trouble of the kind bedevilling [the] Government in recent weeks, "I'll want to know why." By late Monday night [the PM] had created sufficient trouble on [its] own by wrongly alleging that [a newsreader] had picked up \$1 million from T[TVNZ]. That mistake ruined an otherwise perfect performance on *Crossfire*, T[V] One's new current affairs programme. Beehive speculation is that[, being *Crossfire*'s debut, the PM] simply got carried away. [The PM] has suffered previously from overconfidence in the heat of battle... The problem is that having stumbled, [the PM] finds it difficult to get off [its] high horse. In the belief that attack is always the best form of defence, [the PM digs itself] deeper into the mire, a weakness Labour happily exploits. Yesterday's example was [the PM's insistence that the newsreader] disclose to taxpayers how much [it] eventually gets from TVNZ by way of any compensation. But then [the PM] u-turned and refused to tell Parliament how much [a former chief executive] got as a golden handshake when [forced to] resign... from the Fire Service... That [the PM was breaking its] own rule and thus undermining [its] own argument did not even dent [the PM's] self-righteousness.

...Parliament's Speaker has thrown out another privileges complaint by Labour against the P[PM]. It was the second related to [the PM's] erroneous claim that TVNZ had paid out \$1 million to [a] newsreader... Labour claimed that a personal explanation read [by the PM] to the House on Tuesday contained errors and that [it] misled the House. [The PM] said that at no stage had TVNZ contacted [it to verify its] version of events before running a report on Thursday last week saying [the PM] had privately said [it] made up the figure of \$1 m... The story had been run on [Independent Radio Network] bulletins earlier in the day. [The PM] was asked by many parliamentary reporters at a press conference an hour before the TVNZ *One Network News* at 6 pm whether [it] had, in fact, said [it] made up the figure. No fewer than 15 times [the PM] refused... simply saying [it] did not intend to comment further... Parliament's Office of the Clerk says that in the past 40 years, only six cases involving allegations of deliberately misleading the House have been referred to the privileges committee and none has been upheld. Meanwhile... the country's highest-paid broadcaster, has received a pay rise of... \$140,000 from T[TVNZ]... His latest pay rise, which brings his income from TVNZ

to nearly \$770,000, is revealed in TVNZ's... annual report. In it, the company records the salary bands of its top staff but not their names. However, it is no secret [that the broadcaster (aged) 48] is the company's top earner... [A] TV One news presenter [(r:partner, p1698, ln41), aged] 47... is believed to be the country's second highest paid broadcaster earning between \$500,000 and \$510,000. Industry sources suggested TVNZ offered [its highest paid broadcaster] a pay rise in part to dissuade him from seeking the... \$91,570... Auckland mayoralty – a move that caused much internal strife last year between [the broadcaster] and his television bosses... The TVNZ pay rise takes [the broadcaster] into the \$1m-plus pay bracket, including his salary for hosting the ZB network's nationwide breakfast programme. It is understood his pay from the radio station comes to at least \$400,000 in a package including his new Jaguar sports car. [The broadcaster] is in a unique position in N[Z] broadcasting, holding down two extremely high-profile jobs, both of which give him considerable bargaining power when his contracts are renegotiated[– despite neither job requiring the host of *This Is Your Life* to have much personal knowledge, even though one job involves fronting the country's only primetime current affairs show (a position which enabled him to over-promote his family name by simultaneously displaying it in three places on the screen during a 1997 Anzac Day special)!] As one source said: "For many, the salary from just one of those jobs would be quite enough to get by on..." TVNZ's annual report also showed it had 72 staff earning more than \$100,000 last year, including four earning between \$280,001 and \$540,000.

...The... TVNZ [news-anchor] saga has taken a dramatic new twist. The parties have failed to reach an out-of-court settlement and are heading for arbitration. [The newish newsreader] is suing TVNZ for terminating his \$400,000-a-year contract after [it] had read the TV One news just 24 times. A statement of claim has already been lodged at the... high court. If the case is settled the parties are likely to sign confidentiality clauses.

...The job of T[TVNZ's] boss... is on the line after the multimillion-dollar payout to [a] former newsreader... The TVNZ [boss]... is understood to be taking legal advice on his position as chief executive as [it] scrambles to defend the decision to dismiss [the newish newsreader], who has been awarded compensation thought to be as high as \$6 million. [The TVNZ boss, who] is under fire for his apparent failure to consult the board... did not want to comment last night... [The] Broadcasting Minister... yesterday stepped up her criticism of the salaries paid to broadcasters... [The newish newsreader] quit his \$400,000-a-year job at TV3 after the network decided to pair him with [a] co-anchor... and went to TVNZ, where his contract was reportedly worth \$700,000 a year. But after 24 days the state network bowed to viewer demand and reinstated [the oldish newsreader, whom the newish newsreader] had replaced. TVNZ's [other newsreading partner] earns about \$560,000 and her co-anchor, [the oldish newsreader], about \$500,000, according to TVNZ sources... TV3[']s newsreading [duo]... are said to earn around \$150,000 a year. [The minister] said the salaries of presenters were out of control and [it] would be asking questions about the "bidding war" between networks for celebrities. "We're making gods of people who are actually human beings. Instead of spending money on news stories and deeper analysis of issues, we're spending it on presenters." [The minister said it] had "reasonable confidence" in the TVNZ board. "I don't actually have to have confidence in [the chief executive] – it's the board that has to have confidence in [him]." The chief executive... has pointed the finger [of blame] at former TVNZ head of television Neil Roberts, who died of cancer in November 1998, for the original contract with [the newish newsreader]. In a statement released at the weekend, [the chief executive] said the deal was "driven" by Mr Roberts and that the board and management "had some time ago put in place systems and procedures to ensure that a commercial presenter contract of that magnitude on those terms could not be entered into again." ...a lawyer and former wife of Mr Roberts, said [the chief executive's] statement was "deplorable and very unfortunate" and seemed "a very convenient way of passing the buck."

...TVNZ[']s chief executive... threatened to use all the resources of the state-owned broadcaster against [him], the newsreader claimed last night. And as the bitter battle between [the newsreader] and TVNZ intensified, the network responded to his exclusive interview with the *Herald* by threatening to take out an injunction against the newspaper... [The newsreader's] comments came as papers on the arbitration case were made public by a High Court judge who said there was "serious public interest" in the documents. TVNZ is challenging an arbitrator's ruling giving [the newsreader] \$5.25 million after [it] was sacked by the network. The arbitrator's ruling revealed that [the newsreader] was taking anti-depressant drugs, including Prozac... Speaking from his home in Epsom, a relaxed [newsreader] said: We had a six-year contract. They chose to break it." ...TVNZ said it sacked [him] for non-performance... [The PM] said last night that the TVNZ board would be called to account by the Government. "Millions of dollars have gone up in smoke in the settlement and now more will be spent on legal fees and public relations smoke-screens."

...New [newsreader] twist TVNZ bosses will attempt to get out of paying [a] dumped newsreader... by saying [it] was sick. Sources say the network wants to use details of his medical records – including information about prescribed drugs and treatment – in an attempt to overturn the \$5.8 million settlement. "This is an extraordinary story of what happens when someone is sick and won't take sick leave," an insider said.

...The [sacked newsreader] case took a new twist last night after lawyers for TV3 served papers on TVNZ. They ask a series of questions about the sacked star's \$750,000-a-year contract with the state-owned enterprise. TV3 bosses are considering legal action against TVNZ – and also against [the sacked newsreader] – if they find the newsreader was "enticed" into leaving them. [The newsreader] quit TV3 in February 1998, refusing to co-anchor the news[, then signed to co-anchor the news]... for TV One... TVNZ is appealing against an adjudicator's decision to award him \$5.8 million. The money is his full salary for the six years of his contract – rising from \$750,000 to \$850,000 per year – plus legal costs and interest. The High Court in Auckland ruled on Thursday that \$5.2m must be paid into a bank account for [the newsreader] despite the appeal.

...HOWZAT for a heavenly hourly rate? [A newsreader] scored \$241,000 for every hour [it] read the TV One news between 6pm and 7pm. That's more than the [PM]'s annual wage in 60 minutes... TV insiders say it will take 650 primetime 30 second adverts to pay for [his] \$5.8m settlement.

...THE final cost of the [sacked newsreader] affair will top \$10 million... The dumped newsreader will get \$6,537,000 from TVNZ. But [his] old bosses at TV3 are determined to go to court. They want \$3.2 million from TVNZ, claiming the state-owned broadcaster induced the newsreader to break his contract and switch channels. [The newsreader], 52, has pledged to give \$1 million to charity if TVNZ pays his legal fees. Last night that looked in doubt... The \$6.5m payout means [the newsreader] earned \$270,000 an hour at TVNZ.

...TVNZ's secret payout – possibly up to [\$0.5m] – to rival TV3 over its unlawful enticement of... [a newsreader brings] to nearly \$7 m... the cost of the state broadcaster's ill-fated dalliance with the former newsreader. TVNZ... yesterday confirmed a settlement but refused to reveal the amount.

...TOP stars are threatening to quit TVNZ as a bitter row over their pay escalates. One popular presenter said: "It's not a good environment at the moment. We're being slapped in the face." At least eight TVNZ personalities... have each had their pay slashed by between \$20,000 and \$40,000... [A weekend newsreader, who's wife – the] Breakfast host... – is expecting their second child... said: "I'm not prepared to comment." But another TVNZ source said: "I know [that newsreader] is pissed off and is considering his future with us... The reductions are a slap in the face for those who have worked hard to build up their credibility." One TVNZ insider claimed the staff were paying the price of the [newish newsreader] fiasco. Sacking the former news anchor... cost the network \$7 million... "TVNZ's divide and conquer plan has worked. People resent the pay differences and there is dissent." ...TVNZ's two main newsreaders... are protected from the wage round because they have long term contracts.

...AN[angry broadcaster] is consulting lawyers after his \$150,000 pay cut was made public – apparently by his bosses. The broadcaster blames TVNZ[']s chairperso[n]... for leaking details of his salary cut from \$780,000 to \$620,000... claim[ing the chairperson's] conversation with a reporter was a breach of contract and demanded a public apology from his boss... "If a company doesn't feel obligated to honour a contract it has signed what is the point of having a contract?" [The broadcaster said it] and other presenters who have taken 20-30[%] pay cuts were "paying for the [sacked newsreader mess]. The chairperson said it... had discussed payments to presenters with a reporter... But insisted [it] had not named names. "If you read [the NZ Herald article] carefully you'll see I don't ever refer to [the broadcaster as such]." The chairperson refused to apologise... saying: "I didn't comment on his salary. I'm quite adamant." [The broadcaster then said it] would talk to his lawyer tomorrow. "The impression from the

article is I believe at odds with that view. I give TVNZ my unreserved loyalty. I have with my colleagues for 12 years produced a five-nightly peak-time current affairs programme that has continued to be popular and remained relevant to a wide N[Z] audience. It has earned TVNZ, a publicly-owned asset, tens of millions of dollars. I don't think it's unreasonable for me to expect loyalty and discretion. It's not the money. It's the principle. It's the privacy."

...The demise of two high-profile A[US]n television presenters this week has highlighted once again that – [the US]President... apart – office affairs can harm your career. Channel Seven[’s] current affairs host... and[the network’s] designated Olympic Games anchor[perso]n... face an uncertain professional future after the fallout from their relationship. Their case has also raised questions about privacy and whether morality or simply ratings was responsible for their fall. The pair’s romance apparently blossomed when they were assigned to cover... [a story together] in Greece in May. It became public only two weeks ago, when it was revealed that [one presenter, aged] 36, had left his wife and three young children to move in with [the other presenter, aged 34. The adulterer] fronts the *Today Tonight* show that immediately follows Seven’s primetime news bulletin. The problem for him and Seven, which has the most mainstream audience of the three commercial networks, is that [the adulterer] had been promoted as a rugged family [bloke]. Any extramarital controversy now, therefore, would smack of gross hypocrisy. Furthermore, [the presenter] has form, having previously left his wife briefly for another [lover] before returning home. As soon as the affair was made public, *Today Tonight*’s ratings dived, by about 12[%] in a week. That was enough, sources say, to convince Seven’s boss... that the affair was commercially damaging. [The adulterer] was taken off air. His final show... was last Monday... On Tuesday, when [the]fill-in host... fronted *Today Tonight*, ratings recovered. The following day, after a meeting between [the boss and the two lovers], the network issued two terse statements saying the pair’s roles would be reviewed. For [the 34-year-old], it meant being removed as a “Face of the Olympics” for the network, and [has thrown] Seven’s Olympics coverage plans into disarray... Seven bought the A[US]n broadcast rights for \$US45 million... and had groomed [the 34-year-old] for the past two years to be one of their three Games anchors... “[The 34-year-old] is one of the three major hosts of the 27th Olympiad,” a Seven source said... As part of the buildup, her face [has]appeared on the side of 2500 city buses... “Then there is the logistics, all the... magazines printed and the publicity shots taken of her.” Other insiders said the problem was not so much the liaison but that it had become public. At first the story appeared mainly in the tabloid press. But the broadsheets followed, with even the weighty national daily *The A[US]n* joining in. The newspaper’s Sydney chief of staff... told how [it had] popped into a local supermarket for milk and bumped into the couple. Was [the chief of staff] to ignore them, or try to get a photo to match one [it] knew another paper would publish the next day? [The chief of staff] grabbed a \$A22 disposable camera from the shelves. “I took a couple of pictures, then introduced myself and apologised for doing it, thinking they might understand that we’re all in the same business and they’d say, ‘Oh well, you’ve got your pictures, that’s fine.’ But [the adulterer] became abusive and accused me of invading their privacy.” Late last week, [the lovers]... remained defiant. Sources said they had not been sacked but had quit Seven in anger at being offered lesser roles, and had hired a lawyer. But [the adulterer] has his backers, including [a]fellow Aboriginal and boxer... “[The presenter]’s done nothing wrong by his own culture... I mean, polygamy. Aboriginal [guys] are allowed to have more than one wife.” [Editor’s note: The 34-year-old is unrelated to the NZ broadcaster who shares her surname (but whose office affair – like the US President’s – only affected his marriage and relationship with his children).]

...I SWEAR there are two [sides to the broadcaster]. One is charming, witty and entertaining, while the other treats his audience with much less respect than they deserve. The contrast was striking on recent consecutive nights of his TV programme. On the first occasion [the broadcaster was with the Queen’s daughter’s divorced husband’s NZ]-born daughter and her mother discussing pictures of them – apparently taken without their knowledge – that were published in a [magazine. The broadcaster] fulminated for about a quarter of an hour, denouncing the magazine and photographer for violating people’s privacy. This from [someone]... who has had countless unwilling subjects under the spotlight on his show! To cap this hypocrisy, the... cameras kept zooming in on the photographs, blowing them up to screen size. If the pictures were as embarrassing as mother and daughter said, they must have... felt a lot worse after this exposure. Next night, [the broadcaster] interviewed the very funny [actor who appeared on TV in *Mork and Mindy* and] was in non-stop mode and seemed willing to do the whole show on his own. [The broadcaster] handled the situation with aplomb, even when [it] came under severe time pressure. It was a delightful interview[, exposing the side of the broadcaster] I prefer.

...I WRITE in disgust at the shocking behaviour of [the host] on *Holmes* (TVI, [7.00 pm Tuesday, two weeks ago]. The broadcaster was interviewing NZ First’s leader[, along with a much misguided retired brigadier of the army, on the subject of whether the youth of today should have 12 weeks in military training upon reaching 18... Personally, I would love to see the plan work again, as today’s youth never seem to have learned the words ‘discipline’ and ‘respect’. Lives could really be turned around and many helped in so many ways. [But I digress. The broadcaster] was so rude, arrogant and lost his cool when his salary was mentioned by [the politician], who knew how to put the gabbling, ill-mannered [host] in his place... [□ The MP wa]s mistaken when [it repeatedly claimed the broadcaster]’s salary is funded by taxpayers... It clearly is not... *Holmes*... receives no NZ[OA] funding. Its sole source of income is from commercial advertising from car companies and other businesses. It is this revenue which pays for the production... Taxpayer funding does not enter into the equation – unlike [with the MP], who is paid from taxes, via the State Services Commission.

...WHAT do a supermodel, a top creative talent at... the Metropolitan... one of the world’s famous opera houses, and a... Xerox executive... who survived a hostage crisis in Yemen all have in common? ...[they] are all successful Kiwis living in the Big Apple and part of a new documentary series *Coming Home*. [Funded by NZOA and m]ade by Auckland production house Touchdown, the series looks at 24 N[Z]ers who have made a name for themselves overseas, and their relationship with the land of their birth... The series’ line-up... includes... [a]Hollywood film director (we count him as a N[Z]er although his place of origin is... [AUS];) head of the International Federation of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent for southern Africa[; the]... boss of the City Corporation, the body which runs London’s financial district[; and the]... creator of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*... All of the subjects, with the exception of a couple, are filmed on a trip home to N[Z] as well as overseas... Some of the episodes have a geographical base, others look at people linked by similar fields of endeavour. But the point is what the big fish all have in common – their origins in the same small pond. “The basic thing in terms of their trip home is to try to explore their past – what sort of qualities about the way they were brought up that contribute to what you would say is a N[Z]ness, if that has anything to do with their success in their field, and to visit the friends, family and places that are important to them.” You can take the high achiever out of N[Z], but not N[Z] out of the achiever. The dictum is proved true, [the person]... who directed four episodes and produced the series... says, although each individual has his or her own way of saying it... While the series is a “celebration of Kiwis,” [the producer] concedes that the sample of interviews was, in a sense, self-selecting. Those who do not feel strongly attached to their country of origin, or resent the place, naturally did not want to take part. But most of the refusals from people approached were because they were too busy... [A]mong those who did take part, one common attitude stood out. “One... trait that seemed to go with success overseas was... a kind of humbleness. They were almost laconic about where they were and about their success, certainly not the kind of people to blow their own trumpet. And you could see that from friends and colleagues they had overseas, they’re just about all admired for those qualities. That was pretty standard.” While overseas recognition is probably always going to be a benchmark of success in N[Z], the producer says several of those interviewed were considering returning to base themselves here. [The producer] himself has spent 23 years as an ex-pat Kiwi working in London, for the BBC, ITV and Channel 4 networks. Although [the producer], like many in the programme, returned regularly for a “spiritual recharge” in clean, green N[Z], eventually the urge to stay home was too strong to ignore. Communications have made the world smaller

and it is now possible to base his international career in N[Z]. But the main reason for his return was pure Kiwi. “I got sick of London... [and, in particular,] the Northern Line. I just decided I was wasting too much of my life sitting on the Underground.” ...*Coming Home* [screens on]TV3... Wednesday, 8.30 pm.

...*Life trials of the rich and famous* [NZ's greatest diva] didn't do any opera on last night's *Holmes Special*... [but the primetime current affairs programme's host] sure laid on the Oprah. The... newly sponsored [broadcaster]... followed the model of... [the US queen of talk who] specialises in fawning interviews with the stars... as [it] quizzed our greatest diva. Of course [the opera singer] is a great “get” for any interviewer and – especially given her reputation for public prickliness – [the broadcaster] could be excused some nervousness. But there was something unusually starstruck about [the broadcaster] and that, with [the diva]’s own edginess (“You’re going to be nice, aren’t you?” wasn’t really a question), made for some squirmingly clumsy exchanges. Maybe, as a [guy] supposedly in touch with ordinary television watchers, it was right that [the broadcaster] be in awe of the [diva]... Then again, what would those folks in the heartland have thought of that tortuous banter about... Armani, money and houses? “You’re richer than me,” [the diva] claimed in one of a number of utterances which seemed to keep [the broadcaster] on the back foot. An early wander around her London residence had him... leading viewers to the star’s kitchen (drawing the revelation that nothing is ever actually cooked there) but we kind of hoped [the broadcaster] would hit form in a more settled chat out on the patio. Unfortunately, even in the fresh air and [following]fortified cups of tea, [the broadcaster] struggled to find the right tone, at one point lapsing into incoherence over whether [the diva] had become “posh” or not. To be fair, this remained a fascinating interview. [The diva]’s marriage bust-up seemed to have softened a persona which so often... tended towards the haughty... [The diva has] been reading a few of “those” books and offered such platitudinous pearls as “life is not a dress rehearsal”... Good interviewers will use whatever they can to win the confidence of their subjects but references to [the broadcaster’s] own personal trials proved a rather distracting counterpoint. [The diva] had found that the early evening was the worst time during the trauma of her break-up. [The broadcaster]: “I find that, too.” Did we need to know that? [However, the broadcaster] must have been doing something right[, because the diva] treated him to a visit to St Paul’s... and even a respectful chat with [Britain’s most popular musical producer], who said nothing very remarkable. [The broadcaster] also drew from her discussion of that dreadful dress [the diva wore when the diva] sang at the wedding of... [Princess] Diana (it’s destined for Te Papa – let’s hope it doesn’t scare the children) and of how nervous [the diva] was that famous day (“peeing-myself nervous”). The final duet in the park didn’t quite work. [The diva] was in fine voice but maybe [the broadcaster] was peeing-himself nervous.

...[the broadcaster] sits in his rented Takapuna flat surrounded by the trappings of material success – and tormented by angst. The satiny blue-green sea rolls on to the beach out front, the fabulous red XK8 Jag convertible with its walnut dash, and seats that hold you like a hug, waits in the garage below. The coffee tables are carefully arranged with copies of brainy British weeklies like the *Spectator* and *Economist*. The walls are thick with paintings – a Colin McCahon (“the last in his Titirangi series”)... – alongside photos of his kids... in various poses, and, a couple of... himself... Although the shrieks of kids at play drift alluringly through the open doors, you get the feeling the Armani-suited [broadcaster] doesn’t stroll the beach much. “Yes it is rather idyllic isn’t it?” [the broadcaster] says, loosening the shiny, fat-knotted tie. “But it’s been a big adjustment to come to live in a little flat when you’re used to having a nice big family home. It’s a difficult adjustment to make – to come home to an empty flat with no kids asleep in bed, no one to talk to...” Obviously this gleaming dream eyrie doesn’t come near making up for the anguish of his separation from [his cheated-on wife] and children... Or the public humiliation and betrayal [the unfaithful husband] suffered at the hands of [a]25-year-old former television journalist... – a person [the broadcaster] still can’t bear to talk about. It was an upset that could have cost him his job. A few [people are very disappointed it didn’t – especially during the mornings when the broadcaster] barely held his Newstalk ZB show together after the late nights, the drinking and emotional exhaustion. [The broadcaster] is more appealing off-air. The spot on his nose doesn’t seem so big, his gold-splashed green eyes (one blind after a long-ago car accident) are alternately more mischievous and soft... And then there’s the vulnerability. The need to be liked, to be popular – which translated into such a readiness to believe that even adulation-cum-calculated-love was made so real [the broadcaster] risked his marriage for it. Like [the US President, the NZer] made the huge mistake of thinking that his sexual vulnerability and need was safe with a very young [gal. And, like the President, the NZer has] lived to regret it... The young-girl-with-famous-[guy] phenomenon comes with the territory. At 48, [the broadcaster] is probably the most identifiable [guy] in the country... For more than a decade [it] has fronted two of the highest-rating news/comment shows in the country. His Newstalk ZB 6 am-8.30 am radio slot rated 19.4[%] – the most popular in the country – at last count. On television... [his] show (TV One 7-7.30 weeknights) scored 10th most popular programme overall ([although, interestingly, that rating drops] to 60th among 18-39-year-olds). At the time of his affair [the broadcaster] owned a mansion in... Remuera (government valuation \$3.37 million)... [H]is TVNZ salary... [is higher than anyone else at the network, yet when] TV One wanted someone in London in a hurry to wangle and charm and talk their way through the palace red tape surrounding the death of [the]Princess of Wales, it... [got instead someone] interviewing children stacking their bouquets outside St James Palace. And if [his television and radio jobs weren’t enough, it] also writes a weekly column in this newspaper, and a month ago clinched an unheard-of[-in-NZ] \$200,000 advance for his memoirs. Despite the schedule, [the autobiographer]’s already up to chapter 13.

...THE BEST place to start... the... \$44.95... autobiography of You Know Who... is on page 34, the beginning of chapter [3, where the broadcaster] starts the story of his... childhood... It’s... wonderfully evocative of provincial life in N[Z] in the two decades after... [WW2. The You Know Who]-haters – of whom, I’m astonished to find, there are many – may find things to satisfy themselves in the stuff about his work and his more recent private life, but genuinely interested readers will find much to admire... The story is put together adroitly, with flashbacks, clearly demarcated, mixing his work now and his adventures during the years... spent in the U[S, AUS] and Europe, which are... engagingly recounted, the word pictures about life in foreign cities well painted. “Drinking was always a factor in my life... I hated my father drinking and here I was doing it myself. At university we all drank excessively on Friday and Saturday nights but, even then, I knew I drank differently from most other people. I drank until I fell over and spent most of my early adult weekend life wondering... where I was when I woke up and resorting to alcohol heavily when love went bad.” As the book progresses, though, [the broadcaster] too often strings adjectives together, glibly, to describe people. And in one of the occasional, sudden explosions of purple rhetoric, about fame being a “Bitch Goddess,” that will exasperate even the most admiring readers, [it] dabbles in such infelicities as “everybody wants to be famous,” which is from the same stable as “everybody wants to be rich.” The famous and the rich patronise us and make themselves feel better by assuming we are all fiercely ambitious but have failed where they have succeeded. If fame were everybody’s priority, there would be no priests, no poets and no peace in the suburbs... [T]he best place to stop is at page 240, the end of chapter 20. Sadly, the parts of this book that will be most closely read – the beginning and the end – are those that are the least skilfully written and do him least credit. Chapters one and two, about the [infamous]1987... interview with [the San Diego skipper of the successful America’s Cup challenger *Stars and Stripes*], are bloated by hyperbole and self-importance: “We had been responsible for the biggest television moment since televised broadcasting began...” From chapter 21 on, the story is sad with the sense of his loneliness... [T]hese last few chapters are very shabby, not because of his behaviour – we’ve all behaved badly – but because [the broadcaster] writes of deep intimacies with others whether they like it or not, as though it’s so important that his life is opened up for our appraisal, that his version is somehow authorised. If there is some value in telling about his fumbings in cars with a [gal] half his age, I can’t identify it. The danger facing this... media [personality] is that his unremitting lust for the limelight, his yearning to strip himself in front of us like a beseeching lover, is so insatiable that [it] becomes a mere celebrity. It’s starting to happen as fame lacquers over his sensibilities... It’s not enough to tell us what [the broadcaster has done,] thinks and how [it feels – it] has to remind us of his large virtues and small vices... Celebrities cease to have a sense of self... Like [kids, they]... are defined by what others think of them, by

audience response... Adulation means approval... Criticism is chastisement... Thus [the broadcaster] now bridles when journalists ask perfectly legitimate questions, and... patronisingly puts down anyone who expresses dislike for him or his performances. [It] claims to be wise: "By the time I got famous in N[Z] I had acquired wisdom." ...Writers for centuries have said, in one way or another, that a [person who thinks it is] wise can never be.

...The All Blacks superstar, who yesterday scored three tries against Scotland, has been offered... \$3 m... for a tell-all book... by a British author... [Yesterday the winger]’s manager... confirmed the offer but would not name the author. [But it does say his client] has also been offered big money from N[Z] publishers to tell the remarkable story of his life... Last year [an]English journalist... wrote an unauthorised biography – *Blood and Thunder* – on the rugby giant. The book sold well in Britain, where [the winger] is adored by rugby fans. His rugby status is such that last month [his]... website took more than 200,000 hits... [In related news, America’s First Wife] reportedly agreed to accept a \$US8 m... advance for a memoir about her... scandal-fraught and politically tangled years in the White House. The *Washington Post* said yesterday that the advance... was just shy of the record \$US8.5 m... Pope John Paul II got in 1994 for his book *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*. Citing a source close to [the First Wife], the report said the book would include “a dignified discussion” of her marriage and her husband’s impeachment... Simon & Schuster[, which] beat Talk/Miramax and Penguin Putman in a bidding war for the... memoir... has published three of [her] other books... *It Takes a Village*; *Dear Socks*, *Dear Buddy*; *Kids’ Letters to the First Pets* and the recently released *An Invitation to the White House*... All... profits from her previous... books... went to charity... Her White House memoir is[n’t] expected to be published [until 2003 as its subject is currently hoping to make] the transition from [First Wife] to US Senator... [The wife] is not covered under Senate ethics rules until... [it] takes office, and under those rules book advances are not limited by restrictions on outside income. But the sheer size of her book contract has sparked debate about the propriety of the deal.

...[the US President i]s expected to be “exceptionally frank” about his affair... and the other sexual indiscretions of which [it ha]s been accused in his newly completed memoirs. And why wouldn’t [it] be – they’ll bring in at least \$[NZ]20 million in badly needed cash, much of it still owed to lawyers who defended him in the impeachment trial.

...[the fact that the US President could receive a ‘record £6.5 million advance’ for his memoirs suggests there is lots of money to be made in the biography business, yet NZ’s] leading biographer says [it] will be forced to abandon his chosen career because of a lack of funds. [The biographer], who this year won four awards... in the Montana Book Awards, including the Montana Medal for non-fiction, said [it] was unlikely to “commit biography” again because of the lack of financial support for such writers. [The writer], 56, has written seven biographies over the past 25 years, [but says]... producing such books had always been a struggle and [it] no longer had the stamina [it] possessed in his 30s and 40s. [The 56-year-old] said it took three to five years to research and write a full-length, professionally-constructed biography. “In N[Z] there are no literary fellowships that last more than a year. And, at what euphemistically could be called mid-career, I have had and exhausted all the one-year fellowships for which I am eligible.” More than any other factor, the lack of two, three, or even four-year fellowships restricts the ability of N[Z] authors to produce histories and biographies written to the highest possible standards. “Such multi-year fellowships exist as a matter of course in countries such as A[US, the US] and the U[K.]” The 56-year-old]... had turned down potential commissions to work on biographies about non-N[Z]ers because his passion was to write about N[Z] history and culture... Last year [the biographer] applied to Creative N[Z] for funds to research a biography of [a NZ]-born sexologist... who has lived and worked in the U[S] for the past 50 years. “It was my first application to C[NZ] for a major grant. I asked for \$36,000 which, if I lived very frugally, would have supported one year’s research in the U[S]. I thought that with my track record, I had some chance of success, particularly because they have given this amount of money previously to biographical projects that did not need research as extensive as this one. They gave me \$18,000, which would barely have funded six month’s work out of the five years required.” As a result... the project... [was] abandoned... “I’ve accepted an invitation from the University of Waikato to go on salary for two years as a senior research fellow to write a history of that institution.” ...[the biographer] is disappointed university and National Library fellowships would not fund individual writers more than once.

...The National Library’s right to free copies of every N[Z] book, magazine and newspaper is under challenge. A[n A]lmany publisher... is defending charges that it failed to supply copies of 10 books as required under the National Library Act... The legislation requires publishers of all printed material to “deliver at that person’s own expense” three copies of their book, magazine or newspaper to the library... The company is arguing, in the Auckland District Court, that the law requires it to pay only for delivery costs, and the Government should pay for the cost of producing the books... [The p]rosecutor... said the bulk of N[Z] publishers complied with the requirement, which was not a large cost per book[– whereas each]... charge, brought under the... Act, carries a maximum \$1000 fine... [The] challenge was a test case and could have international implications because other countries, including A[US] and Papua New Guinea, had similar legislation... [The] Judge... reserved his decision...

SO you thought readers were quiet... types totally absorbed, utterly alone and all curled up on the couch. Not necessarily so. Reading has sneakily evolved into a group activity. It’s become a team event. Book groups are flourishing. And though some readers liken them to a modern-day... Sewing Circle, they do come with a highly-polished, sophisticated aura of approval. Indeed, any serious reader who is not cosily in with a group of book worshippers may well feel like that poor little match girl, who died shivering in the snow. These groups of avid readers can demand and get special attention. Dymocks Booksellers... has risen to meet continuing requests for information from new book groups by publishing a special newsletter. It launched [two months ago] and already goes out to 30 clubs. Groups buying in bulk get a 10[%] discount and the retailer promises not to lead readers astray over duds on the bestsellers’ list. “...We won’t advise... an average read. We don’t want to waste their time. We... would recommend *Angela’s Ashes*, for instance, but not *A Monk Swimming*.” The backbone of this trendy, monthly, my-sofa-or-yours activity, however, is the Workers Educational Association (WEA) in Christchurch, which supplies reading programmes and lends books at minimum charge to book groups all over the country. The scheme began 25 years ago, copying a similar Melbourne programme. And it is unfailingly popular recording a growth rate of 10[%] a year. The surge in book groups is not confined to the Southern Hemisphere. Readers in the U[S] and Britain are also keen to get together and talk about books... “When you have read a book you don’t want to waste it. You want to be able to talk about it... People come across lots of ideas and concepts when... reading and they want to thrash them around...” WEA’s readers... are predominantly [gals]... Each group member pays \$30 per year. In return the group is sent a list of 540 titles, mostly fiction. They include the latest Booker Prize winner and hallowed classics. The group then chooses 25 titles and is sent 10 for the year. Each member receives a copy of each title – along with book notes to aid discussion at the monthly meeting that follows. Other non WEA book groups operate differently. Some buy the same book, read, then discuss it. Others read different books and share their thoughts on them at meetings... [A w]riter... belongs to two book groups. One began as a share group... in 1985. After the share crash, 10 members stopped investing \$40 a month each in shares and turned their minds to a loftier subject. Books. They began with the WEA. “It was quite good, it gave us focus.” Now, however, they are on their own. Each member takes her turn buying a couple of books to build up the group library... [The writer] sees her... groups as no more than “a fun reason to get together.” It’s also a welcome opportunity to break out from the rather solitary life [it] leads as a dedicated writer and reader. And [it] can do so without walking away from her books.

...FROM time to time, after hearing reports of the booty to be had from writing for Mills & Boon, my friends and I have dreamed of knocking out a few quick romances then sitting back to enjoy the good life. But so far none of us [has] succeeded. In my own case, I’ve got no further than discovering the marvellous address of the[publisher’s] English headquarters... – 18-24 Paradise Road, Surrey. The truth is, writing romances is hard yakker that demands a steady, disciplined approach... disciplined enough to produce two or three books a year... The rules for a Mills & Boon book are as strict as those for a sonnet – 50,000 to 55,000 words, told in the third person from the heroine’s point of view. Plots must focus, of

course, on the sexual tension between an attractive [hero and heroine]. How explicit the sex is depends on which series you're writing for – Mills & Boon Enchanted is more decorously worded than Silhouette Desire. But love-making is never to be taken lightly. Emotional commitment is essential. No bed-hopping tramps, thanks... By common consent, the world's reigning champion of the romance genre is Cheshire-based... [The champ] has produced more than 100 books in the past 20 years – and sold more than 50 million copies... Her stories have been translated into 28 languages and sell in at least 100 countries... "I've always been a romantic, I've always liked reading romances and however unrealistic the expectation might be, I genuinely do like people to live happily ever after." [The champ will visit NZ] for the first time this month to attend the Romance Writers' Annual Conference in Auckland... where [it] is a keynote speaker[– something the writer is] a little nervous about... "In common with a lot of other writers, I don't really have much confidence when it comes to public speaking. I haven't travelled much either. At heart I'm a real homebody." Home... is not a cosy little bungalow, however, but an impressive 14th-century yeoman's hall (a timbered country house, once the retreat of a royal courtier). Still, [the writer]'s not at all stuck-up... [coming] across in conversation as a practical, helpful, down-to-earth type... Apart from her success as a writer, [her] biography is unremarkable... in her early 50s, happily wed... for the last 26 years, childless ("by choice") but surrounded by... dogs and... cats. [The writer] was working as a secretary in the late 1970s when... the Mills & Boon company was looking for new writers. So [the secretary] decided to give it a go... [Her] latest book, *The Perfect Sinner*, is part of a series... It's easy to get the titles mixed up. Earlier novels in the series include *A Perfect Family*, *A Perfect Lover*, *Perfect Marriage Material* and *The Perfect Match*. I confess I'm hopeless at sorting out all the characters and their relationships to one another... How does [the writer] manage to keep everything straight in her head? Can [the writer] still remember every character in every one of her books? [The writer has] given birth to more fictitious people than Charles Dickens. "No. I can't remember them all... My readers are much better at that than I am – and occasionally they'll catch me out..." What about burn-out? After 100 books, isn't [the writer] just a little tired of the genre? "I did go through a bit of a burn-out phase a few years ago... But in recent years I've been concentrating on... [going] beyond the immediate love interest and delv[ing] deeper into the characters' background and psychology... I think that's helped to keep my writing fresh. Overall I haven't lost my enthusiasm..." ...[the writer is] keen to tell me about a N[Z] connection from her past. "When I first started reading romance fiction as a girl, there weren't any Mills & Boon books. I used to follow the serials in... magazines. One of my favourite writers when I was young was... Essie Summers. I guess [Essie]'s been a big influence over the years." [Essie Summers was the pen-name of Hawke's Bay author Ethel Snelson Flett, who died last September at the age of 86.] ...N[Z] has some of the world's top romance writers, with readers lured by passionate tales set in a South Pacific paradise. But that doesn't mean budding writers can simply weave yarns from between the sheets, add a few *kia oras*, submit the script... and expect a pay cheque... Having published 26 books, including novels, poetry books... and non-fiction relating to the Web world[. a]... Wellington writer... once turned her hand to romance writing. Her script was swallowed up in the 30,000 unsolicited manuscripts... Mills & Boon receives annually... [A]round seven new authors are found each year... [The Wellingtonian says a writer from Auckland] is one of the top dozen... Mills & Boon authors in the world... [The ex-journalist Napier (her pen-name) had her first book published by Mills & Boon in 1985 and her 28th will be released soon... "I was looking for something I could do at home because my second son had just been born... I knew if you had a book accepted by Mills & Boon you sold internationally... so I deliberately sat down to write a Mills & Boon romance." ...it took her 18 months to write the first one, an art... now pared down to 3-4 months... Napier is one of three top Mills & Boon authors in the country with another dozen or so writing for... Mills & Boon... The Romance Writers of N[Z] association has 250 members and groups in the four main centres and offers advice to... budding romance novelists... • *Romance Writers' Conference... includes two lunches, morning/afternoon teas and two tutorials... \$125 (no door sales)...*

Not all inventors are mad scientists, says [a] TV personality... who's putting together a book with a friend on N[Z] inventions What do marshmallow Easter eggs, bungy jumping... disposable syringes, tranquilliser dart guns, childproof bottle lids, silent burglar alarms... heat detection cells for fire prevention... and tricky manoeuvres on the rugby field have in common? They're all things [a presenter on] *Ice TV*... can talk about at length since... [starting] work on a new book... celebrating our homegrown inventions. "The idea is, N[Z]ers can invent resourceful stuff from basic ingredients... The book will be full of the things we're proud of being ours – and things we didn't even know were ours." The book's title, *Number Eight Wire – 100 Examples of Kiwi Ingenuity*, is based on the concept just about anything can be knocked together with enough imagination and a supply of number eight fencing wire. "The irony is it isn't a N[Z] invention, even though it's the mother of so many N[Z] inventions... It's just a kind of wire which is used all around the world. But nowhere else makes marshmallow Easter eggs." [Hi]s personal foray into inventing has been less than successful. "I did try to invent the no-study exam technique while I was at university... Strangely enough, it didn't work. [However, I]ve discovered all inventors go through phases when they have little success..." More recently, [the presenter] had an idea while out on the golf course – [it] decided a portable computer which could record and analyse scores would be the perfect way of improving his handicap and putting him on the way to earning his first million. "Then my friend pointed out... [that] there was already one of those in existence. That's the problem – you have to get in early, like the 1880s,"... [The presenter] was happy to play the mad scientist for our photo shoot, [but] has discovered eccentricity isn't necessarily a characteristic of every inventor. "They're all guys who have some ability with their minds and hands; who, in the process of doing the things they enjoy, find a better way." The fact [that the pair] have only found [guy] inventors so far is a situation they want to rectify. "We want to hear from [gal] inventors too... There must be some out there." Dividing his time between *Ice TV*, his job at Channel Z and writing the book means [the presenter] has little free time. So [the presenter is] looking forward to the day [the presenter] sees the book on store shelves. "It will be a difficult birth – like all inventions," [the presenter] says. • ...William Shakespeare, picked as Britain's [hu]man of the millennium, was hailed yesterday as an international superstar, but scientists felt Charles Darwin or Isaac Newton should have won. The choice of the playwright in a poll of BBC radio listeners – [Shakespeare] just pipped wartime leader Winston Churchill... [while] Darwin... came only fourth, just ahead of... Newton... – provoked a heated debate about his perennial appeal... [A biologist] said: "What Shakespeare really did was tell us what we already know but in a very beautiful way, whereas Newton and Darwin transformed the way we thought about the world." ...[in response, one] Shakespearean actress... said: "[William Shakespeare] is known in our house as the [person] who pays the rent." ...[the] Royal Shakespeare Company spokes[person]... said: "The Japanese see more Shakespeare and put on more productions of his plays than we do in Britain. [Shakespeare is] a better international currency than the euro." The *Guinness Book of Records* now ranks Shakespeare as the most filmed author with 309 versions of his plays.

...THE TERM coffee-table book takes on a whole new meaning with the launch of an enormous book of photographs from the king of sin, [who shares a famous surname – but that's all it has in common with Isaac] Newton. *Sumo* which weighs in at 30kg, is 70cm tall by 50cm wide and comes with its own stand... (you can't buy it separately, either). Fashionistas, fans of photography and fetishists will get to see this publishing phenomenon when it is launched at Dymocks stores... next Wednesday... [T]he German publisher, is quoted as saying [it] took on the enormous challenge because "I wanted to build a monument to the most important photographer of the 20th century." A copy of that monument, signed and numbered (out of only 10,000 worldwide) will set you back \$3800. [The actor married to the actress who plays Rachel on *Friends*] has three... The 480-page book covers every aspect of... [the career of the photographer], who is 79... ranging from fashion shoots to celebrity portraits. If you balk at the cost consider this: a single print by [the photographer] costs between \$7000 and \$22,000 with some fetching \$150,000, depending on the image and its size.

...Thought up on a train and scribbled into life at cafe tables, boy wizard Harry Potter has become the hero of children worldwide... Y[ou can't] plug it in, it doesn't beep or produce simulated explosions... Yet this particular product has the children of the late 1990s – often said to have the

concentration span of gnats – queuing to buy it so they can go home and spend hours in quiet, focused solitude... What's going on? ...*Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, [its author's]... first book... appeared in 1997 and changed, as if at the touch of a wand, the landscape of children's bookselling and reading. Since then children aged about 8 to 12 have been wandering around with a *Harry Potter* book pressed to their face when, according to parents, previously they would have carefully ignored any encouragement to read for themselves. Stories of this kind multiply like mushrooms once you start looking for them. [One boy], aged 9, loved being read to but simply wouldn't do it for himself... until [it] came across *Harry Potter*... Now there's no looking back and [the 9-year-old] is ploughing his own way through *Lord of the Rings*... Parents and even some non-parent adults [also love *Harry Potter*], to the extent that the publisher, Bloomsbury, has brought out an "adult version" – same story, more sedate cover – for adults to read while maintaining their dignity. The books tell the adventures of the eponymous Harry, who as a baby was orphaned under extraordinary circumstances and brought up by his beastly aunt and uncle (who make him sleep in a cupboard under the stairs). Harry eventually discovers... [his parents were] famous wizards... and begins attending Hogwarts, the boarding school for young wizards... Throughout the stories... good and evil are at loggerheads, and the threat of the ultimate personification of evil – Voldemort, whose name many wizards dare not speak – looms over Harry, who is a kind of Chosen One for the forces of good. The second... book, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, arrived a year after the first... and together... have sold around 800,000 copies in Britain and the Commonwealth, with deals set up for sales in the U[S], Germany, Italy and Japan. Both... won gold Smarties Children's Book Awards, which are voted for by schoolchildren across Britain. The number of copies sold and the sums paid for the various publishing deals vary from report to report, but suffice to say that where *Harry Potter* is concerned, the numbers always contain a lot of noughts... Britain's *Daily Telegraph* comments... [that the] 34-year-old... stands to be a millionaire by the time... [the author] is 40. Now No 3 has arrived in the bookshops. *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* has been the subject of a hyped marketing campaign by Bloomsbury which has become a news story in its own right. The *Daily Telegraph* had it on its front page on... the day the book was released at 3.45 pm (the time was supposedly chosen so that children wouldn't be tempted to play truant from school to get their hands on it as early as possible). Advance orders for... *Azkaban* were so high that the book was printed eight times before it was even released – that's 3,000,000 copies, compared to the average British print run for a children's book of 20,000 – and, thanks to advance orders over the Internet, it pushed... [itself into] the No 1 slot on Amazon.com... before the new *Harry Potter* had even been read by anyone. This week the... books occupied the top three places in the U[S]'s bestseller list. *Vanity* magazine dubbed the fictional hero "the most powerful kid in Hollywood,"... However, the author herself... has bowed out of the hype. Refusing all interviews, [the author is probably] sitting in an Edinburgh cafe ploughing on with *Harry Potter* No 4... [Having] signed a contract to produce seven *Harry Potters* altogether, with one appearing each year[, it's]... under extraordinary pressure... [The author] was, by her own description, "a swotty little git with National Health spectacles" who went on to get a degree in French and Classics at the University of Exeter, worked with Amnesty International in London, lived in Manchester with a boyfriend, and went to Portugal to teach English and get married... On leaving her husband, [the author] went to stay with her sister... in Edinburgh[, where]... followed... six months of writing in conditions of poverty. Eventually [the author] got an £8000... grant from the Scottish Arts Council[, which enabled her to complete]... the 80,000-word manuscript... [and send] it to Bloomsbury, which offered her an unprecedented £62,000 advance – an extremely percipient move as [the author] has cast a spell over the fortunes of the publisher. Where Bloomsbury used to be at number 20 in the list of top children's publishing imprints, by the second half of last year it had rocketed faster than a speeding broomstick to number 10... Inevitably, more and more people are wanting a slice of the pie. [US] rights to the novels were bought by Scholastic, who paid a six-figure sum for the first one alone. It then changed the book's title to the dumber *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, which the *Times* in Britain called a pointless change. "What next?" it asked, adding, "Warner, that's what." Warner Bros has indeed snapped up the film rights to the first two books for a reported seven-figure sum, against intense competition from other companies. Sometime within the next [fe]w... years the books will be turned into live-action movies, probably with a[US] boy starring as Harry. Fans worry that the entire story will somehow be transported to an un-British set, something the film's producer has not discounted. This is hard to imagine, as the entire series is a clever pastiche of British society, mores, schooling and character. But Hollywood, of course, will do what[ever it wants to]. Needless to say, Warner also controls all merchandising rights... [The author] has expressed the wish that as many people as possible would read her books... [W]ith her rags-to-riches story, [the author] must truly have a fairy godmother, because this wish... is coming true... ■ A first edition of... *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, has just sold for \$22,000. [When the book was first released] it... cost... around \$30.

...How wrong could they be? ...Nine publishers including HarperCollins, Penguin and Transworld, turned down... [the] first *Harry Potter* book... [However,] *Lorna Doone*, the novel by RD Blackmore, received 18 rejections before it was finally printed in 1869. It has remained in print ever since... [T]he author of *M*A*S*H*, the book which was made into the hit TV series and film, suffered 21 rejections... James Joyce's *Dubliners*, one of the great works of modern literature, was rejected by 32 firms before it was published in 1914.

...It is a scandalous premise for a book: [the lead character] was white, widowed and middle-aged and [the other main character] was a very young girl. The novel is called *Lolita* and was recently voted the fourth best book published this century. It tells the story of Humbert Humbert and his doomed lust for an ingenue. Some have called it a paedophile's fantasy. I make no judgment save to note that it was a good book that I enjoyed reading. So did the panel of authors from the Modern Library, who placed it up there on a list topped by James Joyce's once-banned *Ulysses*. *Lolita*'s author... had to battle the censors in 1955 but I believe the task might have proved impossible had the book been written today. Consider [the recently made] film adaptation of *Lolita*, which is banned in the U[S] and unlikely to screen here because people are scared of the story's paedophilic overtones. Such is the public fear, verging on hysteria, surrounding teenage sexuality and adult predation that the merest hint of impropriety is enough to awaken the inner censor in conservative and liberal alike. It was all so different in the 70s for a 9-year-old boy dressed in grey school pants and a purple Goofy T-shirt. Imagine this picture of childhood innocence at a talent quest singing... *I Don't Know How to Love Him*. Remember the words? Let me refresh your memory: "And I've had so many [guys] before in oh, so many ways..." What could I have been thinking? At least I was only nine, but what were my teachers thinking? I imagine they thought it was a bit of a giggle, as back then paedophilia was not a constant threat to be guarded against. Today, parents and teachers might take a sinister view of a little boy singing... [a] musical exploration of sacred and secular sex... Sex is a hard topic for parents to broach with their children, yet society's desire to protect its most vulnerable members seems to have created a morals monster that is running amok. Much is made of the Internet as the new threat to childhood innocence. But the *Times Literary Supplement* recently reported that the monitoring of 3.5 million computer users turned up only 40 examples of children having sex. Also *Time* magazine published an apparent expose of kiddie porn that was fatally flawed. Ostensibly conducted by a team of researchers from Carnegie Mellon University, it was actually the work of an electrical engineering student. Despite all the hysteria, our children have not lost their innocence. But have we lost the plot? ...[By the way,] the enormously successful *Harry Potter* children's books... [are coming] to the big screen. *The Sorcerer's Stone* looks set to be the first of the adaptations, and it will have a mammoth budget of between \$250[m] to \$300 m...

Precious little magic for the Potter fans as police, press and parents fight it out... Parents fought, children wept and the author proclaimed herself "amazed." "Think of a stronger word and double it," [the author] said, shaking her head in disbelief at the mayhem. London's King Cross station had never seen anything quite like it. Two fathers, with weeping children clinging to their shoulders, bayed blue murder as they wrestled for a place near the crash barrier. Police rushing in to subdue the squall upbraided them: "If you don't cut this out, you'll have to leave before [the author] arrives." An immediate, snarling peace was established as police restrained a mother determined to get her child a better view by dangling him precariously from the bridge, 9m above the railway. Welcome to "Platform 9 3/4" – for Potterites the place where their young hero boards the

Hogswart Express at the start of each school term, heading for adventure armed with nothing but half-baked spells and an insipid group of friends who drive some critics to distraction. But what should have been the happiest day in a month of book-publishing Saturdays descended into farce as... 300 children watched in dismay when the press formed a scrum and trampled both them and their bemused parents underfoot. "It's a shame," said [one mum, who'd come with her 7-year-old son... "This should be an event for the kids, but it's full of people rushing around with their mobile phones. Where's the fantasy and magic in this?" A disappointed [7-year-old] whispered: "I thought there would be flying owls." The waiting is over and Harry Potter is back. The frenzied speculation of the past few weeks has woven its witchcraft: many of the initial 1.5 million... [copies of] *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*... printed have already been sold, and every child in Britain and beyond with a taste for magic and three-legged dogs called Fluffy is agog with excitement to learn which of Harry's friends dies, which girl [Harry] has a crush on, and whether the new Defence Against the Dark Arts professor lasts longer than the last. [When the author finally arrived at Kings Cross by dismounting] from the trademark light-blue Ford Anglia of Harry's cruel uncle with engine oil on her calves, [it] set off instinctively towards the bank of keening children. But [the author] was jostled instead towards the baying scribes and snappers... "I suppose [the author]'s just a normal person anyway, just like anyone else,"... sadly concluded... [another 7-year-old, who'd been too excited to sleep the night before but now [was] perched on his father's shoulders and staring glumly from the back of the crowd... [The author] had the look of someone who had been outfoxed by her press office. Each time [the author] tried to move towards her small fans, [it] was pulled back by the press pack, surrounded by flashing cameras and gesturing sadly towards her young readers with frustrated goodwill. "I'm sorry," [it] called to a group of children who had left... Durham at 5.45 that morning... "I'm not allowed [to come and talk to you] – the police... told me." The police... surrounding her looked ashamed, and the one who had his book signed moments before tried to hide it... [A girl], 10, was frantic. "It's ruined," [the girl] sobbed. "The book won't seem nearly as magic now." Reasoned her mother: "[My daughter]'ll get over it. It's all been a bit too much. [My daughter knew it] probably wouldn't get her book signed, but... did hope to get a smile." [A boy], 9, avoided the madness and retreated behind the ticket office to read his new book in peace. "[The author]'s just a normal person. Harry's my hero, not her," [the boy] said gloomily. As the train chugged away, heading to the next press call in Didcot, [the author] leaned out... and waved for all [it] was worth. "Oh God, I'm sorry....," [the author] called unhappily. "It was nice meeting you all." "And you," called one polite little voice...

From *Chekhov to Alice in Wonderland and The Simpsons*, N[Z] is the literary equivalent of Timbaktu... From Jules Verne to Aldous Huxley... international authors have long been fascinated by this small Pacific nation. N[Z] is... where long-lost uncles arrive from and friends of the family are sent to. It's exotic and strange – but we still speak English and take milk in our tea... Andy Warhol, in January 1987, declared N[Z]'s arrival – one of the emblematic pop artist's final acts before... d[ying] from complications after a gallbladder operation. "People are out. Countries are in," Warhol told *ChaCha* magazine. "You want to know how to make a country like N[Z] famous? You don't need to. I hear about N[Z] every night on TV. The America's Cup. I watch the races. N[Z] is a very 'in' country." Warhol also told the interviewer that [it]'d heard there were "lots of pretty girls in N[Z]. In New York it's hard to tell the difference between girls and boys." ...In 1949, not long after the first use of the atomic bomb acutely demonstrated the fragility of human existence... Huxley let us off the nuclear holocaust hook. *Ape and Essence* is set in N[Z] – one of the few countries to escape "that judgement"... "Such nice people! And the civilisation they represent – that's nice too... in a quiet provincial way, thoroughly cosy and sensible and humane." Early opinion on N[Z] varied. In 1840 English essayist Thomas de Quincey predicted the country was, "destined to a giant's career. It is a youthful Hercules that will throttle the snakes about its cradle". Russian writer Anton Chekhov begged to differ: "It's barbarity! It's New Zealand." And when Alice plummeted down Wonderland's rabbit hole, [Alice] found herself speculating on the exact location of the "Antipathies": "But I shall have to ask... is this New Zealand or Australia?..." ...Even Superman once battled a giant moa... "Incredible," exclaims a 1973 Superman. "The moas of yesteryear were flightless... but this one stays airborne by thrashing its feet at super speed." ...In recent years, Homer Simpson in... [a] *Simpsons* comic... has crowned himself the prime minister of N[Z] (and declared war on Australia)...

BOOKSTORE WARS: WILL CONSUMERS BE THE WINNERS? ...When Borders opens its doors today, it may well change the face of book and music retailing in Auckland... – although ask its competitors and there is a great deal of suspended judgment... Borders, an expansionist [US] chain, is a big market player with a reputation for creating what retailers refer to as "a destination store," a place you go to just to be there... Borders Group Inc, headquartered in Michigan, claims it is the world's second-largest retailer of books, music and other informational, educational and entertainment products." The company has around 280 super-stores across the States and, increasingly, around the world... Borders keeps long hours – 9 am until midnight every day – and the Auckland store, located... beside Aotea Square and with extensive Queen St frontage, will have high visibility... Borders is not a heavy discounter but is competitive, says... Borders' operations director for the Pacific Rim... But Borders doesn't come without some local scepticism and the belief it will simply transplant its [US]-style operation into this market. As the manager of a Queen St music store says bluntly, "...there's a corporate arrogance which comes [with mega-chains] but they'll learn we're not a 51st state of the... [US]." Knowing the US or AUS[n] consumer is no guarantee of knowing the N[Z] one... Compare bestseller lists here with those across the Tasman or in the North Pacific and, local content aside, our tastes can be quite different... But Borders will certainly make its rivals up their game... Yes, retailers admit, Borders' arrival means a sharpening up and they will watch the longer hours it operates – but none are considering changing to counter them... – and everyone is curious about how events-based Borders can be this far from the international-author-and-artist circuit... Borders is good, they say, but they've seen big companies come here before. And where are they now, they ask rhetorically... One inner-city record retailer recalls the experience of HMV and Brasch music stores: the former from London, the latter out of A[US]. Both thought they knew this market and came in making huge promises and some threats... [N]either... survived... Border is of that ilk... says [the retailer]. Incidentally, 'in 1990 2 billion books were sold in the US at a cost of \$US19.043 billion. General retailers sold almost half the units, with college stores, schools, direct mail, and libraries accounting for the balance. The percentage share of subject categories has remained virtually unchanged over the years, with sociology and economics leading and followed by juveniles, fiction, medicine, science, technology, religion, history, literature, biography, philosophy and psychology, and business. The average price of a hardbound book rose from \$24.64 in 1980 to \$39.91 in 1990, and of a mass market book from \$3.36 (in 1985) to \$4.47. The number of titles issued annually peaked in 1989 at 53,446, declined to 41,223 in 1991, then rebounded slightly in 1992 and 1993.'

...Sponsors] called it a magazine launch, but in many ways the debut of *Talk* magazine was more like an elaborate striptease. Fuelled by a... star-studded and controversial party and the polarising celebrity of its creator, the new magazine became a national media sensation – days before anyone had a chance to read it. "I've never seen so much advance attention paid to a publication," said [a] New York publicist... The mood was upbeat at Monday's sumptuous reception for *Talk* – held at the foot of the Statue of Liberty – and who could blame the corporate backers, Disney's Miramax division and the Hearst Corporation, for feeling cocky? Once again... the queen of spin... is the talk of the town, much as... [the] editor... was at *Vanity Fair* in the 1980s and then the *New Yorker*. This time, however, [the editor is] inventing a product from whole cloth, hoping to create a mass circulation, general interest monthly blending pop gossip and literary culture... "There is a sense... [that] those two worlds can't be brought together... but... that's what we aim to do with *Talk* – to admit we all like to picnic, that we can take the time to read a serious article on page one, then turn the page and escape with a photo essay about a movie star. We want to convey this high-low culture." Ultimately... it was a game of seduction. "There are so many ways to get into someone's head now, with TV, radio, the Internet and e-mail, you've really got to create magazines that cater to all of this distracted attention span and competition." In an age of ever-increasing niche marketing, this is a daunting mission, and experts say [the editor] will need more than buzz to conquer the already glutted magazine market. Professional reactions to *Talk* are mixed: some praised its edgy gumbo of celebrity news, splashy graphics and thoughtful writing, while others panned it as a confused jumble not likely to connect with readers. The first issue was a busy 254-page melange of photo essays, celebrity chit-chat, political analysis and trend stories. Leafing

through *Talk* is a bit like surfing the Internet: in a flash, you move from [the First Wife]'s views on adultery to a picture of [a scantily clad actress] with a whip and then on to a scathing piece about [US] foreign policy in Iraq... [The editor] decided to print the magazine on thin paper to have an informal European feeling, but *The Sunday Times* of London said *Talk* had a strangely dated feel in trying to emulate mass magazines like *Life* and *Look*, both now defunct. The *New York Observer* remarked that the magazine "is sometimes dull, sometimes even laughable..." The knives are out... [but as] celebrities and star-gazers munched shrimp and pate on Liberty Island, [the editor] had the last laugh. While [the First Wife] didn't attend, paparazzi and cultural critics alike were fascinated by the presence of more than 1200 VIPs... And the fallout from [the First Wife]'s discussion of her husband's infidelities continued, filling news pages, dominating talk radio and providing fodder for late-night TV shows. "It's all been terrific," [the editor] said with a wry smile. "And it shows that some celebrities are unifying characters, at least in the way we pay attention to them..." The magazine's main goal is to reach a base of 500,000 readers, of whom 300,000 or more would pay \$5.50 for it. The first issue may be newsworthy, said [a] rival magazine editor, "but can [*Talk*] keep doing this month after month"? ...[In related news, British celebrities] dodging tax on payouts from glossy magazines will now be scrutinised by six special investigators. Stars can charge up to \$3 million for exclusive stories.

...N[Z]'s magazine industry is celebrating some circulation turnarounds. Sales took a hammering in the middle of last year, with analysts blaming everything from the Asian crisis... and... the death of Princess Di... to... a flood of overseas publications on local shelves. But some titles are bouncing back – including... *Metro*, which had seemed in terminal decline. While the latest Audit Bureau of Circulation figures reveal the A[US] *Gals'* *Weekly*, *Cleo* and *Time* are still among the circulation drifters, the NZ [*Gals'* *Weekly* and *Listener* have risen in the past six months – although they are still behind figures of a year ago. The new Qantas-award winning magazine... *Grace*, has taken a knock, dropping from a circulation of 25,692 in December last year to 19,125 in June[– comparable to *Metro*, whose]... 19,556 circulation is still short of the 21,044 it registered a year ago... *New Idea* continues to rise – up from 59,039 to 67,070... its [7]th consecutive audit increase. Also on the increase are lifestyle magazines, including... INL's *NZ House and Garden*... It now sells 57,892 a month. *Boating NZ*... reach[ed] a new high of 15,128. [TV *Guide* remains the highest-selling weekly, though its] latest figure of 241,356... is... down from last year's 258,806... [*Gals'* *Day* has regained... lost ground, with an increase of 3732 [to make] its... circulation... 165,914], while the *NZ Gals' Weekly* remains 3rd with its circulation virtually unchanged at 126,640. INL magazines... says the way of the future is "niche" magazines. But [an] Auckland University lecturer... warns the industry will have to fight to keep its market share in the face of competition from t[v] and the Internet. "I'm not sure people will have... money to buy magazines in the future,"...

Readership figures sometimes lie If you're a magazine that's selling like hot cakes, you probably try to ignore them. If you're a magazine that's not selling like hot cakes, you probably quote them regularly. Readership figures – long a source of bitter debate – are under fire again after an attempt by the country's biggest-selling computer magazine to clarify why its readership numbers went horribly wrong. Concerned at what it perceived as confusion in the market, IDG Communications, publisher of N[Z] *PC World*, earlier this year pushed for changes to the way readership surveys are carried out. However, it admits to being more than a little annoyed at the results, which supposedly show the U[S] edition of *PC World*, which sells a mere 350 copies in N[Z], is equally as widely read as the local edition, which sells around 13,000 copies. *PC World* has now had to be withdrawn from the latest list of readership data. "The whole thing, instead of becoming less confused, became more confused," said IDG Communications... "Obviously we're... not particularly happy that it's had to be pulled out, on the other hand, it's not in anybody's interest to have unreliable data out there." The chair[person] of the joint industry committee set up to oversee such research, [the] Newspaper Association Bureau chief... agreed readership data remained a contentious issue in the industry because of the big effect it can have on advertising rates. While most publications were reasonably happy with the way circulation figures were collated, many were less happy with the pass-on rates ascribed to their titles. Two of N[Z]'s biggest-selling weekly magazines, [*Gals'* *Day* and the *NZ Gals' Weekly*, have been battling for years over pass-on rates, and business weekly *The Independent* also continues to complain long and loud about its pass-on rate compared to rival the *National Business Review*. [The chairperson] had little doubt people surveyed by research companies did sometimes get titles confused. The joint industry committee was working with research company AC Neilson-McNair to try to lessen the confusion... But meanwhile, publishers are welcoming the possibility of further competition in the field. [The company] which conducts the most widely quoted readership surveys in A[US], is attempting to boost its profile in N[Z] by pitching a new range of products to advertisers. The company, which has twice lost out on winning the contract to supply newspaper and magazine readership data in N[Z], is at this stage playing down its intentions in the media market. However, the [person] currently managing its N[Z] operation... confirmed the company intended to bid again for the contract when the tender comes up for renewal in two years.

There are over 2,300 magazines available in N[Z] on a regular basis. Of this number, 58 are listed with the N[Z] Audit Bureau of Circulations as being either published in N[Z] or NZ editions. Most of these local magazines (34) are published monthly, 11 are published on an alternate month basis and six are weeklies... [Speaking of the local publishing industry, the NZ] Press Council, like its counterparts in A[US] and the U[K], is now a member of the World Council of Press Associations which was formed in 1992... The N[Z] Press Council is a self-regulatory body set up in 1972... The council has six scheduled meetings each year, with special meetings held as required... It has as its primary duty, the investigation of complaints against newspapers and ruling on these complaints... Over the... years the council has adjudicated on more than 550 complaints against newspapers... A great number of complaints concerned disappointment by correspondents that their letters have been among those not selected for publication [in a] 'letters to the editor' column. In this respect the council has reaffirmed in a number of occasions that it upholds the discretion of an editor to choose what letters to publish as long as that discretion is reasonably applied... Under its constitution the council exercises jurisdiction only in respect of publications which are published by members of the Newspaper Publishers' Association... and of the Community Newspapers' Association. Each newspaper which has a complaint against it upheld is obliged to publish the council's decision in full. The council does not accept complaints against other publications although there is a possibility of an expansion of its coverage in future.

Christchurch's newspaper war in 1934-35 was the industry's toughest. The *Star*, an evening paper, began in 1868 in opposition to the four-year-old *Mail*, which the *Star* disposed of with a price squeeze. By the 1930s' Great Depression, the city had two morning papers – the *Press* and the *Times* – and the afternoon *Sun* opposed the *Star*. On Nov 19, 1934, the *Star* halved its price to one penny, a move copied by the *Sun* with its next issue and by the morning papers on Jan 1, 1935. All four papers increased their distribution areas to boost sales and most South Island papers were forced to cut their prices to meet the competition. On June 3, the *Press* and *Times* increased their cover prices to two pence. Intense mediation brought a settlement leading to the *Sun's* demise on June 29. The *Times* stopped publication on the same day. The *Star* bought the goodwill, copyright and business of the *Sun* and the *Press* did the same with the *Times*... [While on the topic of NZ's publishing history, a] love story which used the backdrop of early battles in the N[Z] wars is regarded as NZ's first novel. Called *Taranaki*, it was written by Maj W Stoney and published in 1861 by W C Wilson... ([who] later founded the *N[Z] Herald*.) The second novel set in NZ... was published the following year. [The novel was written by an English gal] who never visited NZ but corresponded with immigrant relatives... N[Z]'s first native-born writer to earn an international reputation, Katherine Mansfield was born Kathleen Beauchamp in Wellington on Oct 14, 1888... As... the third daughter of... a wealthy business[person, Katherine]... was sent, at age 14, to Queen's College, London... to complete her education. [Katherine] returned to NZ three years later but sought eagerly to go back to England[, and] left her homeland for the last time when... 19. But memories of her N[Z] childhood were to provide the settings for most of her work. After a brief marriage to a singing teacher... soon after her return to England, Mansfield ([Katherine] had taken her maternal

grandmother's maiden name as part of her pseudonym) married an editor... [WW1] and the death of her brother... profoundly affected her writing and ill health led her to spending much of her later life in Italy, Switzerland and the south of France... With a belief that her failing health had spiritual causes, Katherine entered the Gurdjieff Institute for Harmonious Development of [Humanity, where Katherine] died three months later in 1923... Samuel[Butler] (1835-1902)... must be regarded as historically the greatest literary figure associated with this country... The most celebrated product of his life in NZ was *Erewhon* (1872), a utopian novel whose setting was a mythical land beyond the mountains behind his sheep run... in the western foothills of Canterbury... [Butler] also wrote a series of works of scientific controversy – *Life and habit* (1877), *Evolution old and new* and *God the known and God the unknown* (1879), *Unconscious memory* (1880), *Luck or cunning* (1887) and *The deadlock in Darwinism* (undated). [Butler] held the belief that Darwin was wrong in banishing the concept of 'mind' from the universe, and... maintained the transmissibility by heredity of acquired habits – a view discounted then but gaining intellectual ground today. Butler wrote travel books, a life of his grandfather, commentaries on Homer (whom [Butler] claimed was a [gal]) and Shakespeare, translated the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and in 1901 produced *Erewhon revisited*. His autobiographical novel, *The way of all flesh*, was published post-humously and remains his best-known work.

...A *Dictionary of NZ Biography*... was published in two volumes by the Internal Affairs Department... [in 1940, the same year that the] Jessie Mackay Poetry Award was inaugurated by PEN. Early winners included... James K Baxter... [– 'widely regarded as the most gifted poet NZ has produced' –] the grandson of... a foundation professor of Canterbury University College... [and the son of Millicent and Archibald (the author of) *We Will Not Cease*], which] was a... book for a new generation... []. James Keir] Baxter... died in 1972.

Born in Dunedin on June 29, 1926, James... was the son of... a legendary conscientious objector during WW1[– Archibald suffered] imprisonment, confinement to a mental hospital and torture by "crucifixion" (being bound to a post between the front lines in France)... This symbolic martyrdom became part of family legend... In 1937, the family left for Europe... settling briefly in France before [James] and his older brother... were sent to Sibford boarding school in England. At Sibford [James] suffered "undesired sexual enlightenment" and other "barbarities of the dormitory" at the hands of what [James] described as "amateur sadists and sodomites"... That "private hell" continued in 1940, when [James] enrolled at King's High School in Dunedin. As the son of a well-known pacifist in a country dominated by patriotic warmongering, [James] experienced violent bullying... James[, who 'began to write poetry at the age of 7',] ...was haunted by inner demons and an urge for self-destruction which saw his dreams of a Utopian community... [– at] the... Jerusalem... mission station on the Whanganui River... – ...collapse amid allegations of drug use and immorality.

Local poet steps into international fame It's a big buzz for [a]Glen Eden poet... to see his work in print as part of an international poetry book... [The ecstatic poet] hopes his poem could launch a writing career... [Hi]s poem *Sanctuary* was chosen to appear in... *Between Darkness and Light*... as part of a poetry competition run through www.poetry.com... As a semi-finalist [it] is eligible for a grand prize of \$10,000. The creative writer has written many pieces of poetry but this is one of his shortest... "I normally write quite long poems but there was a word limit for this competition... In my youth I wanted to change the world, but with the dawning of wisdom I realise I can only change myself and *Sanctuary* is the compass I used to guide me through the seas of confusion and self doubt... This poem is a reflection of my inner quest for equity, freedom and peace..."

Th[is year's] Nobel Prize-winning... poet... aged 73... [– the 4]th Pole to win a literature Nobel... [–] has been described as the "Mozart of poetry" who combines "the fury of Beethoven"... Her works range from socialist realism to comparing Josef Stalin with the Abominable Snowman... This year's... prize was the richest since it was first awarded in 1901 – ...[NZ]1.63 m... The award will... also... reap a rich harvest for her... German publisher, [who]could barely contain his glee at the world's biggest book fair in Frankfurt... "Sales are bound to go up. They always do with a Nobel winner,"... When [a poet became Ireland's 4]th Nobel literature prize-winner last year, his publisher reported... \$1,132,246... worth of extra sales in the first three months afterwards. "[The Irish poet] sells better than a winner of the Booker Prize (Britain's premier book award). That is pretty amazing for a poet..." said... [the] publishing director of Faber and Faber... [A US publisher who] boasts 20 Nobel prize-winners among his authors... agreed that an author's path to literary glory could be paved with gold after landing the world's most famous literature prize. - 1996

...best known for his first book, the 1948 Pulitzer Prize winner *Tales of the South Pacific*, which became a Broadway musical and film... James Michener, the author of a long list of bestselling books, captivated his readers one last time when a note [it] wrote shortly before his death was distributed at his funeral yesterday. In the typewritten message... Michener assured his friends that [it] had lived a full and happy life and was not afraid of his impending demise. [James] died at his Austin home last Thursday at the age of 90 after choosing to stop life-sustaining kidney dialysis treatments the week before. "It is with real sadness that I send you what looks to be a final correspondence between us. The medicos have left little doubt that this present illness is terminal. I approach this sad news with regret, but not with panic... I savour every memory as they parade past. What a full life they made. And what a joy they bring me now; what a joy your recollection of them gives me now. It is in this mood that my final days are passed," [the letter] concluded. Michener was remembered yesterday as an author who wrote prolifically about the world and the people [it met as it] travelled to virtually every country on the globe... "Michener's deeds have enriched the world and thousands of people in it. [James] exalted ideas and possibilities and... did it while pursuing far-ranging interests all over the globe, his only navigator his own curiosity," said[the] University of Texas vice-president... Michener, an orphan adopted by a Pennsylvania Quaker family, rose from humble beginnings to become one of the giants of American popular literature. During a career that spanned 50 years, [James] wrote more than 40 books that sold 75 million copies.

...IT'S been a disappointing year for celebrity authors... [One actor] who was paid \$5 million for his follow-up to *Couplehood* – which stayed on the *NY Times* bestseller list for 30 weeks – saw his new book *Babyhood* drop off after only seven weeks. [An actress], who was paid \$6 million for her first book, unimaginatively titled *Book*, saw it disappear after only three weeks on the list... The only winner, it seems, is [a comedian], who has already lasted six weeks on the bestseller list with his book of comic observations, *Dirty Jokes and Beer*, for which [the comedian] earned \$3 million.

...[the comedian] has an apology to make... Flanked by the rest of the cast [of his self-named comedy series] at the Warner Bros lot in Hollywood, [the comedian admits to being] a big fan of *The Full Monty*, the hit British film about six [guys from] Sheffield... who do striptease to beat the dole. "I've seen the movie three times and it could have been set in Cleveland. It was so right on with the working-class sentiment and everything, so I wanted to do a tribute – rip it off, actually." [So the comedian] and four other [guys] talk on the show about doing a striptease "like they did in *The Full Monty*." And yes, [the comedian] confesses, "We went totally nude. Sorry," says the overweight [comedian] with his trademark crewcut... "My apologies to everybody in the world who has to see my naked ass." ...lanky Lewis on the show, and a regular on... [the] British improvisation comedy series *Whose Line Is It Anyway?* – confesses, "And it's the first time I had been totally naked since we originally cast the show." That's [the type of comedy the Warner Bros cast do] – recklessly rude and straining at the shackles of sitcom's formula. It's what you'd expect from a creator whose first book, released this year, is called *Dirty Jokes and Beer*. "They gave me such a big advance [\$NZ4.5 million]... [that] I'd have to outsell the *Bible* for them to make their money back." [The comedian says the character it] plays in the show is the person [the USer thought it] would have become if [it'd] never become a stand-up comic. "I'd end up being in this dead-end job and taking whatever [rubbish] people fed me. But thankfully I got a little ambition and set some goals in my life, so I didn't have to end up like the guy on the show." ...[In related news,] America's foremost magicians are locked in a bitter feud that has each wishing [it] could make the other disappear... [The pair] have sued each other over the

two things most important in their world of smoke and mirrors: The secrets of their tricks and their credibility. No magic wand seems capable of easing their hurt feelings as [one accuses the other] of a “malicious” and “vicious” vendetta and [the other] calls his rival a crass publicity-seeker. The bitter potion was mixed three weeks ago when [the other] filed suit in Florida accusing [one] of causing a breach of contract between him and his publisher. For good measure, [the other]’s \$75 million suit also names Lifetime Books, which published his *All the Secrets of Magic Revealed*. Faster than you can say “abracadabra”, [one] pulled his own legal rabbit from a hat, naming [the other] in a \$67 million defamation suit against *Paris Match* magazine. [One said the other] was behind an article that alleged [one]’s romance with [his German] supermodel... fiancée... was a sham... for the publicity.

...A[n A]uckland author... pulls no punches: his latest work is crushingly, mind-numbingly boring and [it] swears readers will fall asleep within 20 minutes. *The Cure For Insomnia* is the tongue-in-cheek title of a collection of what [the author] calls some of the most boring works on earth. From the Linwood North School Committee report from pre-decimal currency days, to... Hegel’s *Concept in General*, the book was “completely ridiculous but absolutely necessary for the time,”... However boring, the book does offer helpful, although hardly apocalyptic advice. Example: Pears’ *Dictionary of the Toilet* tells us a [gal] looks taller in stripes and according to the same principle, a stout [one] should avoid plaids... [The Auckland] said the book is really one long joke and the guarantee of a cure for insomnia should not be taken seriously. The insomnia cure is likely to get a better test drive across the Tasman. Most of the first print run have been sold to A[US], with only a few hundred ordered by N[Z] bookstores.

...After a Canterbury University survey found many students lacked general knowledge, questions are being asked: Just what are these kids reading at school? ...Apart from a rotated list of Shakespeare plays for [7]th-formers there is no set reading list for N[Z] secondary schools... In some cases the books selected depend on the pupils who attend the school... The... New Plymouth Girls High School acting head... said... “...as a traditional girls’ school, we still use the classics [like] Austen... and Shakespeare particularly *Romeo and Juliet*...” At Otago Boys’ High School, books reflect traditional and modern texts. [7]th form students this year are reading *Slaughter House 5*... *Once Were Warriors*, and *A Clockwork Orange*... The [6]th form list included... classics such as *Of Mice and [Guys]*... and *Brave New World*... Auckland’s Hillary College has a roll of 400, all of whom have Polynesian heritage, so the English works taught have a Pacific flavour... The elite Senior College of N[Z], a private school which has dedicated itself to excellence, has a range of... [works by NZ authors, including] *the bone people*... [which won a] Booker Prize... While most schools say they want to increase their number of... [NZ writers, with] the price of novels... at a... \$20... minimum... cost is a barrier to some... “...most... would have contemporary fiction from the last 10 years but it is getting harder... economically... for schools especially the smaller country ones...” ...[furthermore,] New Plymouth Girls High and Otago Boys both mentioned the expense of replacing books as hampering the number of Kiwi authors taught... “[But there] is more interest in our own culture – the emotional ties to England and English literature are being lost.” ...it would be a pity if N[Z]ers studied only local texts without doing wider reading of English and U[S] literature... said... the... Education Advisory Services secondary English spokes[person, though NZ]... secondary schools... are years ahead of their A[US]n counterparts in recognising multi-culturalism.

...[the writer] was just an average North London school teacher until his novel *Fever Pitch* catapulted him to literary and cinematic stardom. Now Hollywood is in million-dollar bidding wars over rights to his books about the lives of ordinary guys... [By celebrating] the disappointed dreamers, the unlikely lads who, in the ’90s, have come to an understanding of their weaknesses and failures[, the writer]... has found a way into the modern consciousness that others have missed... Bright, but with no great immediate ambitions, [the writer] drifted into teaching after graduating from Cambridge University... [The writer] contributed occasional pieces to London magazines, which brought him into contact with the capital’s literary set. But that was it. By the early ’90s [the writer] found himself, like so many [guys], headed for middle age and nowhere much else. [The writer] seemed to have already got where [it] was going in life. [However, a] friend remembers how [the writer] announced one evening that [it] was going to write a memoir about football. “It didn’t really register. I mean, we were all busy writing and it didn’t seem a particularly good subject.” ...Published in 1992, its slightly seedy... autobiographical account of life as a football... fan who would rather see Arsenal win the league than himself win the pools, caught the public mood... The project, however, was not merely football. *Fever Pitch*... was also about [guys] in a post-feminist world... In the view of... [the] editor of *Esquire*, the *Fever Pitch* phenomenon would not have happened in the ’80s – the decade of the yuppies. It required the more reflective climate of the ’90s. “Suddenly this book comes along and people think. ‘I don’t have to be thrusting, successful and dynamic’. Historically, British [guys] have never been encouraged to admit that they have weaknesses. For many... this was the first book that said, ‘Don’t worry, it’s normal to be confused’.” ...[the writer] achieves that effect by holding up a mirror to the crowds, allowing them to see themselves as they really are, while granting a form of literary absolution. With [the writer] at your side, you can still swill lager, roar on the lads at Highbury, play old cassettes of the Stranglers and eat chicken tikka masala straight from the container – yet still be a sensitive, caring [guy], yearning for a grown-up relationship that continues outside the bedroom, prepared at least to address the issues of responsible parenthood... It was such a telling admission that [the editor], for one, thinks [the writer] is well worth Hollywood hammering on his door with millions.

...[a publisher] says it has signed [the] best-selling horror writer... to a three-book deal that bucks the trend of multi-million-dollar advances. “[The terror-monger is] taking a much smaller advance for a bigger share of the profits,” said a... spokes[person for the publisher], without elaborating. Sources close to the publisher said [the terror-monger] signed for almost... \$[NZ]3.25 million... per book and a 50[%] share of the profits. The deal... calls for [the terror-monger] to deliver a novel, a collection of short stories, and a nonfiction book on the craft of writing.

...*NOVEL FEAR*: ...the best-selling horror writer... fears people imitating the horrifying scenarios in his books – particularly a 1977 book... “If there’s anything that I regret in my career, it’s publishing the novel *Rage*... Never crossed my mind at the time, but it’s a story about – ...I’m even hesitant to speak of it.” In the book, written under [hi]s pseudonym Richard Bachman, a... student brings a gun to school and kills his teacher.

...I AM very worried about people who read a LOT of [the terror-monger]. A non-stop diet of *VIOLENCE* and *BLEEDING CORPSES* and possession by *EVIL SPIRITS* could lead to severe literary malnutrition. Not that this possibility will concern [his] millions of fans. Unlike [many other novelists, however, the terror-monger] does not believe because [it’s popular it]’s also great. In fact, [the terror-monger] has modestly and accurately said of his works that they are like Big Macs... [The l]atest McKing burger... *DESPERATION*... [will cost you \$NZ]44.95. - 1997

“GOD MADE ME the kind of person who wanted to write stories,” [the terror-monger] says. “There’s... a simple and egotistical idea at the bottom of it all, one that has sustained artists from time immemorial. It’s the feeling that ‘I’m great... I’ll be rich and famous and never suffer again.’...”

‘You came to talk about the play... Let me discourage you... It isn’t literature, it doesn’t mean anything... It was written to entertain. Like horror [stories]...’ - The Crying Of Lot 49

An apparently empty town in the Nevada desert... inspired *Desperation*, in which supernatural evil has run amok disguised as the local sheriff. *The Regulators* superficially takes the same set of characters, including the supernatural being, and transposes them to suburban Ohio, in which the killing agents come straight out of Saturday morning merchandising cartoon sci-fi and cable reruns of *Bonanza*... Despite his attempts to give both books different personae, the... double act’s genius remains in the conjuring of evil out of ephemera, of a malevolent universe lurking behind the Walmart shopping trolley banality of everyday, small town America, a world in which ancient, bloodthirsty demons crack... jokes and sing... tunes.

Weird. But then that is his business... Popular fiction's most prolific terror-monger has had a hell of a year. Not only has... [the terror-monger] brought forth, in his own expression, twins... but... has... just completed a "death row" serial thriller – *The Green Mile* – released in six parts, *a la* Charles Dickens, to gross more than any of his megabuck-earning single books...

WHEN the novels of Charles Dickens first appeared in monthly serialisations, it was not unusual for crowds to gather at the publishers, anxious for the latest twist in the tale... As a device for maintaining suspense, the serial has since transferred to the screen, via the cliffhangers of Saturday morning picture shows to the never-ending drama of the weekly soaps. Now one of the written word's biggest money-spinners... is attempting to resurrect the serial as a novelistic genre. The biggest cliffhanger in *The Green Mile*... is whether [the terror-monger]'s legion of fans will feel swizzed at having to cough up £1.99 a time for a mere 92 pages. Of course, in the end they get the full novel at rather less than the cost of a hardback, but it is still almost twice the price of a paperback... "The green mile" of the title is the walk along death row to the electric chair. The most notable characters are an illiterate, improbably gentle giant, sentenced to fry for the rape and murder of two young girls, and an intelligent-seeming mouse... [The terror-monger] modestly declines to compare himself with Dickens, though I am not sure [it] really needs to, given his own commanding position within modern popular fiction... Dickens was ever a populist... And... also shared another quality with [the terror-monger]: appreciation of a nice little earner[– although only the terror-monger has been able to earn from having his stories turned into screenplays]

...*'a script doctor is getting rich by telling writers how to get rich.* It's the stuff dreams are made of: the average original screenplay fetches upwards of \$US250,000 from Hollywood studios. And a college professor for 21 years considers it his mission to help new writers develop that stuff and those dreams. Part of the challenge is making them understand what Luke Skywalker has in common with Malcolm X. "Every movie is about the same thing," the professor declares. "Identity." Legs together, arms half upraised, the long-haired, bearded professor is like a modern Messiah giving the Sermon on the Movie as it stands before about 40 people who have each paid \$US225 for his two-day seminar at the New School in Manhattan. The professor also received hundreds of unsolicited screenplays from writers requesting critiques. The professor used to charge nearly \$US5000 a script. "Now I charge substantially more. I raised my fees because I thought it would chase people away. But I've actually gotten busier." The 53-year-old, who *Variety* once described as "the Jewish mother of screenwriting," isn't adverse to sex and violence in film, as long as they advance the story.' □ 'Hollywood stars are living proof that money can't buy brains. And now their stupid antics are revealed in *Movie Stars Do The Dumbest Things*. The book's author says, "Face it, being a movie star ain't rocket science. Hollywood's stars have huge egos, huge salaries and huge amounts of free time – the perfect recipe for doing the dumbest things."']

...They're the so-called video paparazzi, or in some circles "stalkerazzi," who earn a living hounding stars and selling footage to an ever-increasing slew of tabloid television shows. "Celebrities are the ones out with their new boyfriends or girlfriends and they don't like to be caught while they're doing that," says [one] freelance videographer... "That's too bad. That's part of life. They have to expect that." Enter... [the star of the] movie *Batman and Robin*... [The former] *ER* TV hunk... simply doesn't want to take it anymore. [The actor] has refused to do interviews with *Entertainment Tonight* and *Hard Copy*, both shows produced by Paramount Pictures Television Group, after *Hard Copy* aired a segment about his girlfriend... [It] was particularly angered because the segment broke a deal the actor had with Paramount[']s... president... to keep him off *Hard Copy*. "I understand I'm a celebrity... I make a good living, I don't ask anybody to feel sorry for me and I don't expect anyone to. But I think that we all should be afforded certain civil rights and some of them you can't put bounties on people's head and have people try to jump in your window for \$300,000 to get a picture of you and your baby,"... [His] boycott of *Entertainment Tonight*, which unlike *Hard Copy* relies on celebrity co-operation for its interviews, has gathered steam. Lots of it. [A number of actors and at least one high-profile director]... have... all... signed up. Such shows, they say, have gone overboard. Following telephone conferences with [the hunk] and other celebrities, Paramount executives implemented guidelines for such coverage. The executives said their shows would reject footage in which the subject was harassed solely to provoke a reaction, footage that shows the celebrity's home address, unauthorised footage of celebrities or their children in the privacy of their own homes, or footage known to have been illegally obtained. And now [the hunk] has taken it upon himself to be the TV tabloid watchdog. Every night... [the actor] videotapes the show to watch its use of paparazzi video... While [his] campaign targets *Hard Copy*, [the actor says it] would like to see tabloid TV in general clean up its act. "The point is, you fight a war basically one battle at a time and that's the only way you win and get inroads,"... But will his efforts make a difference? "The truth is, I... honestly don't know... At least the people who are involved will be able to say, 'Hey, we gave it a shot.' That's all you can do." ...What, if any, effect [Paramount's new] policy will have on *Hard Copy*'s coverage won't be known immediately. Paramount officials refused to comment beyond the news releases. But [the videographer], who has sold his footage on a regular basis to *Hard Copy* – including an infamous videotape of [a couple of actors] arriving home with their new baby – says [it] has followed those rules anyway and that they won't affect the way [it] nabs celebrities. "I don't break the law..." In the [baby shots case, the videographer] hid inside a van parked across the street from [the couple]'s house. The videotape showed [the husband] approaching the vehicle, spraying shaving cream on the windows and smearing them. The altercation that followed was not videotaped, but [the videographer says it] was punched in the nose and kicked on the ground. Jurors acquitted [the actor] of assault charges. Like most freelance videographers, [this one] seeks clues to stars' whereabouts from daily trade magazines. [The videographer] picks his prey, keeping in mind that exclusivity is the key, and hunts them down. Video in hand, [the videographer] shops it around to his regular contacts at *Hard Copy*, *American Journal*, *Entertainment Tonight* and, before it was cancelled, *A Current Affair*. While [the videographer] won't reveal how much h[is type] earns a video... it's anywhere from hundreds to thousands of dollars.

...*The top earners*... [#1] is at the top of her profession and knows [that means the actress is at the] stage where they will pay her almost anything [the star of *Basic Instinct*] wants or, as [#1] puts it: "They'd pay me to play Lassie." They are supposedly paying her \$9 million for her latest film *The Last Dance*... And[, nowadays, #1] gets to say no to nudity and to pick her co-stars – that's power! [#2, aged] 33, is purportedly the most bankable [gal] star in Hollywood. In the business they call her "Gimme" Moore. [Gimme] employs the largest team of assorted staff in the business and runs her own powerful production company... [Her husband (#3)] can pull \$20 million a picture, but [the wife]'s power is such that [it w]as... offered \$14 million to show all in the [box-office flop *Striptease*. #4], 28, queen of the SSS (sex-symbol syndrome) came from nowhere. [#4] originally wanted to be a vet, but Steel Magnolias brought her an Oscar nomination for best supporting actress the same week that Pretty [Gal] exploded at the box office. Her star waned for a while, but [#4] will command around \$16 million a film in 1996. [#5], 29, is an opera singer's daughter who became Hollywood's sweetheart with *Speed* and *While You Were Sleeping*. Asked if [it] was getting \$8 million for her next movie, [#5] shrieked with amusement and replied: "What paper do you get? I read this morning that I was getting \$12 million!" In fact, for her first project of 1996 *In Love And War*, [#5 will] rake in \$16 million! [#5 has, however, 'fessed up to being hooked on – wait for it – massage and acupuncture. The body indulgences are costing her \$3850 a day and while the perky actress admits her obsession is selfish and decadent, who's surprised to hear it's got no plans to stop or scale down her lush treatments.'] ...Once a supermarket checkout girl, [a 38-year-old] is much more than a pretty face... [and, therefore, will] make about \$9 million a film next year, and... get to call a lot of the shots. For instance, if the script calls for nudity, [#6 can] say no – and the scene goes, not... [her. #7], 33, began her career at the age of three as the bare-bottomed poster child for Coppertone sunscreen. A two-time Oscar winner, [#7] is a Yale graduate, has directed her own films and is a Hollywood power with her own company Egg. Price: \$8 million. [#8], 34, hit the big time with her famous extravagant sexual scene in a restaurant in *When Harry Met Sally* in 1989. Beneath the sweet blonde looks is a steely, some say ruthless, [person who] has a degree in journalism from New York University, is married to... actor[#9], and heads up her own company Fandango Productions. Her box-office rating is worth \$9 million a film next year. [#10], 42, is the original Hollywood fantasy: the small-town girl who wins a beauty contest and becomes a film star. Often described as a "pout on legs", [the 42-year-old – who's actor

husband once hit a stalkarazzi for videoing their baby –]reportedly receives \$5 million a movie... [#11], 38, is a feminist spirit in the body of a bombshell[who] has her own production company Genial Pictures, which [it] runs with her third husband... a... Finnish director... [#11] changed the face of [gal] buddy-buddy films with *Thelma And Louise*, is a member of Mensa and is politically active. Her rate is around \$8 million. [#12], 46, was the first black actress to command a superstar salary. Born in New York, [#12] has a past that includes poverty, drugs, single-parenthood, abortions and work as a cosmetician in a funeral parlour and as a bricklayer[before it] got an Oscar nomination for *The Colour Purple*... For... a grandmother... to receive \$10 million for [a film] was unheard of... [before] *Sister Act II*... but you'll be hearing plenty like it again. [#13], 31, has a multi-million-dollar international company that includes advertising, television and merchandising divisions. The supermodel Body from Down Under has moved into firms and fronts *The Fashion Cafe* chain in the US... and has just signed an ad deal with Miller beer in the US... The Sirens star's latest role is... in *The Mirror Has Two Faces*... [for which the Body is expected] to earn \$12 million... [#14], 46, dominates serious film roles as no actress has before. The dual Oscar-winner is a throwback to what used to be called "a classy dame" and has been a Hollywood leading star for almost two decades. But... still commands top fees – about \$7 million. After the success of *Clueless*, [#15] has been given a two-picture, \$13-million deal with a studio for 1996. The dewy-cheeked star says: "I've worked like a dog all my life and I've earned it." [#15] is just 18 years old. [They're 'Hollywood's richest gals, the stars who spend \$thousands – without batting an eyelid – on gowns they'll wear once. They're so rich they need entire rooms to house their wardrobes. And when they say they're going home, they could be talking about any one of five or six opulent houses' ...

The 'sci-fi hit *The Fifth Element* pulled in so much money worldwide that our favourite platinum blond will collect \$25m for his next *Die Hard* movie.' ...the husband of the most bankable gal star in Hollywood – and star of films like *The Fifth Element* and *The Sixth Sense* – 'may be receiving a whopping \$NZ35 million to make another *Die Hard*.' However, another actor (r:Another action hero, p1655, ln27) 'will be making *Terminator 3* for \$45 million'!

... 'They may want to reconsider the *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* star's involvement, since his agents don't consider asking for a \$75m fee anything like a joke.' By the way, a colleague of his 'was paid \$25m to play the US President in *Air Force One*, 100 times the annual salary of the real President' ...

An actor] has signed a... \$22 million... deal to play a[n adulterous] Southern governor said to be modelled on[the current US] President... *The New York Post* said... the movie *Primary Colours*[is] based on a novel of the same name... [which] was loosely based on [the President]'s 1992 campaign.

...The ultimate showbiz triumph could be a celebrity with healing powers. Well, if you're among the gullible, you may believe [the star of *Primary Colours* claim to be able to] heal with his hands. [The actor apparently] learned the art while studying at the controversial Church of Scientology – and has cured a flight instructor and several movie co-workers of minor ailments by laying on his hands. "I've really learned how to heal... I can transfer my spirit and power to others." Now, could this be a publicity stunt for his new movie, *Phenomenon*, in which [the actor] plays a guy with healing powers? The thought of St John of Hollywood doing miracles is too much to stomach!

... "The movie people told us it was going to be great for business, but they lied..." ...In the film... [the actor] plays a small-town garage owner struck by a blinding light on his 37th birthday. [The character] suddenly develops super intelligence, but his new genius soon creates problems when the townspeople turn against him. And people in Auburn, northern California, where *Phenomenon* is being filmed, are certainly turning against [the actor] and his movie colleagues for "destroying" their livelihoods while the film is being made. For while [the actor] will be paid a staggering \$25 million to make his newest film, the people of Auburn claim they are going broke. Many shopkeepers are complaining that filming has totally disrupted their lives and businesses. They claim that security guards employed by the film production company have been heavy-handed and turned away customers during filming... "The shoppers can't get into my store because the security guards won't let them in. It's outrageous. It's as if they are imposing a curfew. They are deciding who can and can't walk down the street. This is the worst month I've had since I've been in business. When the Disney people asked for permission to film here, they never said it would be like this. They haven't apologised for the inconvenience they are causing..." ...sentiments [that] are echoed all over the picturesque old gold mining town... Meanwhile, the usually high-living... [actor] has abandoned his luxury life-style and settled into small-town life to shoot his... film. - 1996

[The star of *Phenomenon*'s real-life wife] has won a court order to keep away a [fan] who wrote her a letter laced with sexual innuendo and references to her husband. A judge ordered [the letter-writer] to stay 150m away from the actress, despite his contention that the letter was a satirical joke that backfired... [The actress] broke into tears at reading the letter, which was delivered to her on... a Miami Beach set of the Disney movie *Holy Guy*].

...in *Pulp Fiction*, [the husband of the *Holy Guy* actress] twisted his way back into the big time... [However,] *Saturday Night Fever*, which is doing the rounds on Sky's movie channel, [proves that the actor] always had a dynamic, seductive way of moving... But neither of those astonishing gyrations predicted the brilliance of his little sequence in *Michael* [– a film about a smoking, bed-hopping archangel – in which the actor] seems to be radiating sexual power. [Michael] may represent God on earth, but [it has also] got the devil in those hips. • *Michael opens next month*...

Two new movies unmask contrary aspects of the American psyche... [The star of *Phenomenon*] trips the light fantastic as an angel in *Michael*... while... [the] *Blue Velvet* director... [– who says, "I see films more and more as separate from whatever kind of reality there is anywhere else, they are more like dreams]" –] ...continues to walk on the wild side in *Lost Highway*... Neither may make much sense – but they're a buzz to watch. [Speaking of which, 'for those that haven't seen the year's biggest movie *Independence Day*, do so now. For those who have, see it again']...

According to *Variety* magazine, the... [m]ajor movie studios earned \$8.2 billion at box offices in 1996... [The] top-grossing movies were: *Independence Day*, \$456m; *Twister* \$361m; *Mission: Impossible*, \$271m; *The Rock*, \$201m; *The Nutty Professor*, \$192m.

...In 1977, *Star Wars* cost \$US9.5 million... and raked in... \$322 m... in the U[S]. This year, *Speed 2: Cruise Control* cost \$145 m... [while] *Batman and Robin*... carries a Gotham-size price tag... [S]tudios are betting they can make a killing from mega-budget films. But some studios... get killed themselves. With costs soaring and the market saturated, profits on most expensive films are shrinking, depressing the earnings of the huge media companies that back them. "Making films this expensive is bad business. You can't keep living on less and less profit," said... [the] president of worldwide production for... 20th Century Fox, which made both *Star Wars* and *Speed 2*. This... summer's blockbusters must break through record clutter: 54 films released on 800 screens, compared with 51 last summer. While those films' \$4 b... price tag is 11[%] higher than last year, the total domestic box office for the period will grow just 5[%] to \$2.43 b... The cost explosion is driven by the public's appetite for expensive special effects, rising pay for top stars and costly marketing... The results can be disastrous... Cinergi Pictures is being liquidated following flops including *Judge Dread*... and *Evita*... Carolco Pictures' \$90 m... bomb *Cutthroat Island*, which earned just \$9.9 m... at the box office, helped drive the studio out of business... News Corp will not go out of business if *Speed 2* crashes, but it could lose \$50 m... once the theatre owners' take, as well as production and marketing costs, are sliced from its expected \$128 m... in revenue from theatres, home video and television... However, News Corp and Viacom may have spared themselves the summer's biggest bloodbath by postponing the release of their disaster movie *Titanic* until December. With a record production and marketing budget of about \$245 m... the film will take a huge loss unless it becomes one of the highest-grossing films ever.

...THE SILLY SEASON The new action films in the U.S. are big, loud and dopey, near exhaustion if not extinction... Melodrama at its best involves conflict between intelligent good and cunning evil. But it's easier just to have smart people do dumb things. The noble intentions of *The Lost World*'s team of scientists – trying to protect the dinosaurs from a group of papacious hunters – are undercut by some laughably inane fieldwork... [For example]; they kidnap a *T. rex* baby to mend its leg while Big Mama prowls closer. It's knaves vs. fools in the Jurassic jungle... Even the otherwise canny Disney cartoon *Hercules* has an isn't-it-funny-that-a-whole-Greek-marketplace-falls-down scene... Something is wrong with Hollywood if the answer to every story problem is a crash... What [modern films] lose in personality, they make up in body count. In these

sociopathic action films, the hero has a bad case of blood lust. The psychos, like the... serial killer in *Con Air*, are comic, sympathetic characters... [Interestingly,] movie stars didn't always have to act like commandos to assert their machismo. How many bad guys did Clark Gable or Cary Grant kill in their careers as Hollywood heroes? Precious few, because life – even a villain's life – was held more precious then. Maybe the old movies were naive, but we'll take naivete over the thoughtless, numberless carnage that makes the modern action film a Bosnia for fun and profit... Jokiness is the current handmaiden of brutality. Violent death provides the punch line for the string of gags that is the modern action movie. And when the stars aren't killing off the supporting actors, they are cracking wise – lamely. All right, nobody goes to *hear* an action movie, but the verbal humour in *The Lost World* didn't have to be so stilted. In *Con Air* and *Batman & Robin* the lines have the rhythm of wit but not the content... But Hollywood hardly knows what to do with its human stars. [#5] became one as the resourceful bus driver of *Speed*, yet in the sequel... can only squeal, hide and get kidnapped... [for] \$NZ22 million. In *Batman & Robin* the guest villains are... Poison Ivy and... Mr. Freeze. [The actress playing Poison Ivy] has sexy fun with her villainous eco-freak, but [the actor playing Mr Freeze – the star of the *Terminator* movie series –] is encased in an icy truss of a costume that obscures his rippling charisma. Memo to the *Batman* team: next time you pay a star \$25 million, let us see him.

...Welcome to the 90s movie: more celebrity names above the title than you can shake a script at, enough toys and T-shirts to fill a Warehouse, an advertising budget to keep a [advertising executive] in lunches for a year. At least. Taking it to new heights is *Batman and Robin*... which... has, as they say in [gals' magazines, the former] *E.R.* hunk... as the dark and hooded one[; another gal magazine favourite] as the troubled teen Robin with the ultimate Valley girl[(#15)]... as his sidekick Batgirl; [plus the two] guest villains... With all this star-power, you expect a plot too? ...Aw shucks, you don't watch *Batman* movies for the story. You watch 'em for the really bad puns and the special effects.

...*Tinseltown loses its shine* HOLLYWOOD is waking up to its own real-life disaster movie as a succession of some of the world's most expensive films have been released to indifferent reviews and dismal box office returns. Hailed as the beginning of the year of the blockbuster, the opening of the traditional summer season of Hollywood's biggest and brashest offerings has instead brought mixed fortunes, with some studios likely to lose millions of dollars. The biggest casualty so far is *Speed 2*... The most expensive summer release, it cost 20th Century Fox \$217 million and has recouped just \$46m. Other disappointments include Sony's *Fifth Element*, a sci-fi thriller... which in more than a month has taken \$90m but cost \$134m to make. Many film... [studios] are attracted by big-name stars and lavish special effects because they believe profits are guaranteed, despite huge outlays. One example of that seems to be the latest *Batman and Robin*, starring [a former *ER* hunk] as the caped crusader. Despite poor reviews, the film has taken \$63.4m towards its production costs of \$180m. Warner Brothers still hopes it will join the others in the *Batman* series by eventually moving into the black. ['With a worldwide average of 1-in-10 films breaking even it's a risky business' – yet the] conventional wisdom is that overseas returns and videos compensate for a poor reception in the US. Nevertheless, box office revenues for the first four weeks of summer are down 7.5%. The competition for cinema-goers is also worse because this year 11 films with budgets of more than \$102m are being released, compared with just four in 1996... The crushing success of some films has also elbowed out weaker rivals... [The] dinosaur epic *The Lost World*, the sequel to *Jurassic Park*, has taken more than \$300m and is still in the top five after more than a month. Costing \$104m, it is the only summer release so far to have recovered its costs. Studios have also been careful to avoid coming up against *Hercules*, the new Disney cartoon based on the Greek myth, which is expected eventually to recoup its \$112m cost five times over. The total bill for this summer's releases comes to more than \$1.5 billion. It would have been higher but for a last-minute decision by Fox and Paramount to switch their hugely expensive and troubled thriller *Titanic* to a December opening. The impact of too many blockbusters is likely to be on the kind of films we will see next year. Heads are turning at the unexpected success of *My Best Friend's Wedding*, a romantic comedy that has revived the fortunes of [actor #4]. It cost only \$61m and, with a \$34m opening weekend, is certain to be one of the models for next summer... [But the big-action genre should receive a boost next summer with the release of the special effects-laden *Matrix*. The star of *Speed* has] graduated to the \$10 m... club... [with] *Matrix*, which puts him in the same league as the biggest stars in Hollywood. The script for his new film, about a futuristic world created by a computer, also raised eyebrows with its \$1 m... price tag...

Hollywood writers have lost the thrill of the chase scene – but they have few choices in a studio system that loves fast action and special effects. "Sometimes I want to thumb my nose at the system, but I always wind up liking what I'm writing," said [the person] who is working on the screenplay for *I Dream of Jeannie*, a film based on the popular television series. [The writer], who wrote speeches for [the current US] President... in 1991 and 1992, joined other screenwriters at the Writers' Guild forum where many complained about the lack of character and plot development in films which have dominated the box office this year. [However, while] writers scoff at the big-action genre, industry insiders admit such films are hard to turn down, especially when studios pay writers as much as \$NZ9 million a script... The Writers' Guild minimum rate is \$60,000 for a low-budget movie costing less than \$6 million and \$130,000 for movies that cost above that amount... [The problem is compounded,] many writers say[, because] there is very little middle ground between huge blockbusters costing more than \$225 million and low-budget independent films. Modest, middle-budget films costing \$35 million to \$90 million are becoming extinct... Meanwhile, opportunities for scriptwriters are shrinking on the small screen as NBC and CBS both recently opted to drop one of their two movie-of-the-week slots. "TV movies are marginally more expensive to make than episodes for a series," said... a Writers' Guild board member. "This is an economic move by the networks and it will cost a lot of writers work and tension. At the same time, it may improve the quality of TV films." ...Agents, who help writers to secure contracts[for a 5-10% share of those contracts], bear some responsibility for the state of affairs, according to... a partner of the United Talent Agency. "Due to the competitive nature of the business, agents are afraid of losing a client [writer] [– so they avoid] telling clients the truth about projects. That's why we're getting such lousy movies..." [The person] whose writing credits include the critically acclaimed *My Dinner with Andre*, in which [it] also starred, said: "Most movies should never have been made because most movies are evil and horrible." ...[In related news, the NZ actor who starred in *Jurassic Park*, the AUSn actress who starred with her husband in *Eyes Wide Shut* and an AUSn Oscar winner... have attacked A[US]n Government plans to drastically cut film funding. A letter to... [the AUSn PM] signed by actors, producers, directors and industry bodies said the proposed cuts would have a crippling effect on the industry. The Government is expected to almost halve its annual \$A140 million... funding.

...The Film Commission chair[person says NZers]... will continue to occupy "a cultural [last]-world status" in their own country unless funding is boosted for film-makers. N[Z]ers saw more films each year than A[US]ns or any European nationalities... yet N[Z] films took less than 1[%] of home box office receipts. That compared with 50[% for French films in France. NZers]... are the world's fourth-keenest movie-goers[per capita], with more than 8.1 million movie tickets sold between January and June... [– or] more than \$46.5 million... [in] revenue... excluding GST... – ...says the Motion Picture Distributors' Association. This compares with just over six million... [tickets and revenue of] \$36.1 million... in the first half of 1996.

...N[Z] movie-makers should forget short films and focus on features. That's just one recommendation... from... [someone] whose mission is to help turn ideas into reality... With the Film Commission's decision to pursue the idea of no-budget films... many in the industry were keen to hear [someone speak] at this month's Screen Producers' and Directors' Association conference in Wellington. Droll, informed and with the incisive pragmatism of the lawyer [someone] trained to be, [someone] brought opinions which sometimes bordered on heresy in some circles of the N[Z] film industry. But as president of Next Wave Films, which provides finishing finance to low and no-budget English language features, the New York-born, Los Angeles-based [someone] was the one to listen to... "Shorts will help your craft, but they don't necessarily help your career. Feature films get seen by critics, get into festival programmes and so on... [Y]ou can win at Sundance with a short and still be back in the same place a year later looking for finance for a feature," [someone] said, referring to an annual film festival in the U[S] which has become an important forum for film-makers... [Someone] is amused by comments about non-payment for services on some small N[Z] films. "There aren't really union

issues on no-budget films in the States because, aside from a few actors who might be members of the Screen Actors Guild, nobody's in unions. But then when I'm in N[Z, AUS] or Canada they're talking about exploitation! I thought exploitation was where people had no choice and had to work in horrible conditions or for lousy wages. But these are completely voluntary campaigns to get a movie done for nothing. It's also different in the US because there's no Government funding, so when film-makers decide they're going to make a movie, they may not know what budget they're going to make it at, but come hell or high water they are going to make this movie. Here, there's a nurturing and a supportive structure, and as a consequence of that... film-makers will sometimes write a script and go to the funding bodies, and they'll say 'No.' So they'll go away and write another script. In the US they are going to make that movie and they don't care who says no." [Someone] tells of a film-maker and his friends back home who have "so far spent maybe \$US180,000... on this movie and have maxed out 57 credit cards... [B]ankruptcy is chasing the guy down the block and... his movie [still isn't done. However, someone] scorns the notion of film-makers changing projects to suit financiers, or by trying to second-guess the market potential... A series of articles [someone] wrote for *Filmmaker* magazine advanced the case of no-budget films based on the successes of *Laws of Gravity* (made for a mere \$NZ59,000), *El Mariachi* (\$11,290) and *Clerks* (\$43,085). These titles validated the no-budget approach, but... [someone also sees] the need for some finance to get such films to completion, so mooted the idea of a reviving fund which would allow film-makers finishing finance of up to \$100,000. [Someone] approached investment bankers and, on March 2 this year, Next Wave Films was launched. Already they have received 225 films through their door... Next Wave can [only] financially assist four films a year, but just as important they have an extensive data base which allows them to put various creative people in touch with each other, provide ideas for promotion and marketing, offer advice on how to get films into crucial festivals and, where necessary, tell film-makers their project has no life-expectancy at all... [Someone] sees enormous potential for the Internet. "One of the biggest problems right now is distribution... The Net gives film-makers the opportunity to interact with audiences directly. You could put examples of your movie on the Net, [people] see... them and send... \$15 to buy a cassette – and all that money will go to the film-maker." [Someone] also notes people in their teens and twenties are Web-literate. The question is how to get them into cinemas. *Clerks*, aimed at that demographic, wasn't successful theatrically, but once it went to video "people saw it and told their friends and had parties and watched it – and it sold 60,000 cassettes on video... [T]he wholesale was \$60 per cassette... That's a lot of money!" Into this global village comes Next Wave with advisers in... England... A[US and NZ]. "We're on a mission here," says [someone], "and we're going to change the world!"

...A Bombay film-maker who held up an express train... recently in a... rail station... in the state of Rajasthan... allegedly... to shoot an action-thriller in its passenger cars... appeared in court yesterday. The magistrate stayed the arrest of... the [Bollywood] film-maker, and granted him bail, but ordered other actors and actresses to appear next month to face trial.

...When the movie *Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love* premiered at last year's Toronto International Film Festival, someone remarked to its director and co-writer... that this picture would either get her thrown in jail or make her very rich. [The director] just smiled: the former prediction very nearly came true during the filming of what its maker calls "an ancient modern love story" when [the director] was working on location in India. "One night I had a dream that I'd been arrested. I came downstairs, bleary-eyed at four in the morning to go to the next day's shoot, met up with my production team and said, 'Guys, I just dreamed I was arrested. Isn't that hilarious?' They shuffled their feet, looked down and then replied, '...it's not a joke, because yesterday five [officials] came for you'." Although [the director] had received permission from the Government of India to film *Kama Sutra* there, [the director] and her crew were subjected to a constant campaign of harassment from bureaucrats and officials who, in an effort to extort money, threatened to have her arrested for making pornography. According to [the director], however, it's the Indian cinema and its hypocrisy that is pornographic. Nudity is forbidden on screen there. Lovers can't even kiss. Instead there are [scenes of "guys and gals] dressed in weird mini-skirted Western garb [who] endlessly ride the air in overt references to copulation". To Western eyes these films have a campy and surreal charm, but [the director] isn't having any of it. "Their indirectness makes these films even more deadly and pernicious... I just lament this." In search of an antidote, [the director] went back to that third century Indian classic... The original *Kama Sutra* was not just the "popup manual" of sex positions that made it popular among self-consciously liberated Westerners three decades ago, [the director] tells us. The text was also a source of wise counsel in the politics of love... It was essential to the success of her picture that [the director] found exactly the right actor for the pivotal role of Maya – a servant girl whose sexual assurance sets off a plot whose tangled complexities rival one of those erotic Hindu sculptures where limbs and bodies intertwine so exuberantly it's difficult to tell just whose hand is on whose shapely, chiselled haunch. Finding Maya was rather like the search for Scarlett O'Hara, except [the star of *Gone With The Wind*, the director] says laughing, didn't have to take off her clothes quite as often... [The director] looked at up to 700 Asian [gals] in Canada, New York and London. ([It] ruled out using an Indian actor because of the nudity.)

...Once, the public couldn't get enough of [Gimme] Moore. Now... they've seen too much... Two years ago... [Gimme] was basking in the glory of being the highest paid actress in movie history. Today her latest film, *GI Jane*, has had its release delayed – because the star is too unpopular. The decision, by Disney, is unprecedented and a chilling reminder of how the mighty can fall so fast in Hollywood[– where the 'average career is five years (and only 1% make it'). Gimme], who shaved her head for *GI Jane*, had much of her own money tied up in the \$NZ125 million production. It is the story of the first [gal] to try out for the U[S] Navy's crack Seals unit. It was to have been Disney's key entrant in the northern summer holiday blockbuster stakes at the box office. Now *GI Jane*, for which [Gimme] was paid \$12.5 m... will not be seen until next year – by which time the studio hopes her stock will have risen with the public. [USers currently] think the 34-year-old mother-of-three has become a flagrant exhibitionist who shows too much of her body too often. This has contributed to the failure of her three last movies – *The Juror*, *The Scarlet Letter* and *Striptease*... The actress who had Hollywood's moguls eating out of her hand because [#2] could do no wrong has suddenly become a bit of a joke in the business. Last year [the actress] pocketed \$18 m... to star in *Striptease* – far more than her husband... was earning for huge hits like the *Die Hard* series and *Pulp Fiction*. But *Striptease* bombed and [its star] was ridiculed for her stripping and her figure... [The actress] was asked to re-shoot scenes at a cost of \$1 m... after preview audiences criticised her... [However,] *Striptease* was voted the biggest turkey of the year and made [its star] a three-time loser – a fate worse than death in success-or-bust Tinseltown... Critics [had also] voted... *The Scarlet Letter*... the Worst Movie of the Year... Now [Gimme] Moore is being called "[Gimme] Less" with the news that [it is making her next] picture – for a \$17 m... pay cut! ...Even if topped as Hollywood's highest-paid actress... [#2] vows: "I will never stop acting." The past 18 months have been less than kind to [her. Before *Striptease*, Gimme] was secretly photographed on a beach showing thighs that had clearly sold out to cellulite. The photo went around the world and an appalled [Gimme] began a frantic fitness regime – emerging with thighs shaped like a power lifter's. Critics put her figure under the microscope and decided [Gimme] has changed shape several times. It was reported [Gimme had] had liposuction on her thighs, stomach and bottom, pockets of fat removed from behind her knees and had her first breast implant in 1992. [Gimme] now has a 36C bust. In *Ghost*, made eight years ago, [Gimme] was soft and feminine with a pear-shaped bottom and chunky legs. In *Indecent Proposal*, [Gimme] was slim with shapely legs, the result of strict dieting... Psychologists believe a childhood sight defect which left [Gimme] blind in her left eye made her hate books and obsessed with improving her image. [Gimme] has never been afraid to show what [it has] got... Born... in Roswell, New Mexico, [Gimme] became a wild child, hanging out with strange characters and posing nude for girlie magazines... [More recently Gimme] appeared... on magazine covers where her modesty was protected once by body paint, by [an] Aucklander... There was also that famous naked and pregnant pose on the cover of *Vanity Fair*.

...G[oodness, Gimme] Moore is small! When you meet her it's like peering down the wrong end of a telescope. You expect a muscle-bound giant and in prances this child. How on earth did [Gimme] get to be a star? I mean, [Gimme] has some obvious disadvantages: her skin is... not very good;

her... famous green eyes... are more piercing than beautiful; her build is almost freakish... at 35, [Gimme] really is like... an anorexic 12-year-old with a very large and rounded bosom. So here's a Hollywood sex goddess, which goes to show how weird the movie business is... Is [Gimme] a great actress? Or has sheer determination propelled her to become Hollywood's best paid actress over the past decade...? ...[Gimme] turns out rather refreshingly to have plagues of insecurities about almost everything, including her looks... personality and body. Conversely, [Gimme] is pathologically determined not to fail... [and] particularly seems to like parts that reflect this determination (her director in *Ghost*... memorably observed that "[Gimme] doesn't like to smile on screen") and her latest part of Lieutenant Jordan O'Neil in *GI Jane* is undoubtedly remarkable in that respect... Two years ago [Gimme] admitted in *Rolling Stone* magazine that... [it considers herself] "kind of a plain Jane." ...[Gimme] had feelings of "self hate" about her body... which makes you fear for her eating habits. In *Vanity Fair* it emerged that [Gimme] was horribly sensitive about her lack of education and had been in the past afraid to buy a book "in case it was the wrong book." (When I asked, [Gimme] looked at her PR [person for inspiration before saying, "I'm not] reading anything at the moment... my frame of reference is all the movies I've seen." Most depressing of all, [Gimme] once told the... magazine *McCall's* that when younger, "I had an essence in my life that I was nothing." This may all sound a bit dramatic and even grovelling, but [her] childhood justifies this level of insecurity. It had all the horror of a modern-day Cinderella. [Gimme] was born... to teenage parents. Her father... was an advertising sales[person who]... moved the family roughly twice a year in a bid to escape his debts... When... 12, [Gimme] developed a crossed eye which required two operations to correct. At 13, [Gimme learnt the salesperson] was not... her father... When [17, her step-father] committed suicide. Her mother, meanwhile, developed a drinking problem and [Gimme], as if in sympathy, followed suit. They were poor... So: grinding poverty, cross-eyes, suicide, alcoholism, misplaced parents, constant upheaval. With this baggage, it is extraordinary that [Gimme] is able to hold down a job at all... At 18, [Gimme] met a 30-year-old guitarist... and married him... The relationship lasted four years, during which [time Gimme] made her first, embryonic moves into acting. [Gimme] beat 1000 other wannabies for a part in *General Hospital*, then slogged her way through some truly terrible films... [until] 1984... the year [it] was cast in the brat back film *St Elmo's Fire* and was finally on her way. The story of how... [Gimme] was cast... adds to the Cinderella quality of her tale. Her fairy godmother was the director... who happened to walk past her in a corridor at Universal... "...I told my assistant to follow her and find out if... this incredible-looking... racehorse... was an actress."

...It's tough at the top for Hollywood's brats... It can't be easy, after all, getting up every morning with only a maid, a personal fitness trainer, a chef, two make-up artists, a masseur-cum-therapist, two wardrobe aides, four security guards and a personal astrologer to help you make it to breakfast. Ordinary people don't realise it, but stars acquire responsibilities, on account of their being so interesting and beautiful. It is easy to mock. Who didn't snigger when[an] actor... demanded, while filming *Ace Ventura 2*, that his studio supply him with a special cook to prepare lettuce and gnats for his pet iguana? [Although an actress once complained that her lettuce was the "wrong sort of green", when it comes to fussy eaters, the star of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* takes the cake by insisting on being the first on a film set to eat – which, considering the star is often late, makes for some angry and anxious staff!] What ordinary people also forget is that [actor]s work very hard... [Well, some] work four months a year. Often, they... stand around all day while stunt[people] get blown up and dropped off high buildings. No wonder [Gimme's husband], after a long day snarling at a camera, needs a couple of helicopters to get him home to his wife. Why two...? Well, the first one might break down. Or its colour might clash with his shirt. Obsessed with their own importance, most stars are now too self-absorbed even to pretend to be nice to their public, or to the media upon which their careers ultimately rely... [Gimme's husband] is currently the undisputed champion of celebrity cheerlessness. During the Cannes film festival this year, his new film, *The Fifth Element*, opened with modest success in the U[S], but nobody would ever have known it from [the actor's] fixed scowl. Invited to talk about negative criticism of the film, [#3] bluntly announced that "nobody up here pays attention to reviews... most of the written word has gone the way of the dinosaur". No it hasn't...! Here it is biting you in the butt! ...Defenders of Hollywood hedonism often claim that star demands are no more outrageous today than... [in the past]. Yet few stars of old flaunted the contemptuous, unsmiling narcissism that seems to have become routine today. [The star of *Ace Ventura*, who also starred in the film *Dumb and Dumber*,] may have been joking when... [demanding] an extra cook for his iguana, but the saddest part of modern celebrity is that so many demands are utterly serious.

...Now it's stupid and stupider... America might be the land of the brave, but Hollywood's got to be the home of the dumb. What a history of halfwits the old town has: Abbott and Costello, Gilligan, Gomer Pyle, Wayne and Garth, Forrest Gump... This list goes on and on, proving that stupid is as stupid does, but also that morons make moolah. And now (although they're four years late here)... [we can watch] the latest line in Hollywood pinheads, *Beavis And Butt-Head* (8.25 tonight, TV4), apparently the most retarded heroes of all time. There's no doubt they are America's most wasted... If only their show wasn't half as dumb as they are. Some critics have labelled it a post-modern poke at its MTV audience (and so, one would assume, TV4 viewers), saying it's 30 minutes of uncivilised amoral fun. It isn't – it gives the idiot box a worse name. While a show like *The Simpsons* offers dumb – Homer especially – it also serves inventive satire which smart-bombs its targets with cleverly layered humour. *Beavis And Butt-Head*, on the other hand, is cudgel comedy, with no foil to its antiheroes' inanities... Now... there... is... more than gob and "naked babes" on the mind of its creator... [after his decision to] make... a... *Beavis And Butt-Head* [movie]... "Hey, isn't there a word for when something happens when you like don't expect it," said Butt-Head... last week... "You mean ironic,"... "No way..., it's like an English word." "Cool?" asks Beavis. "[No]... stupid," blurted Butt-Head. "It sucks too," whined Beavis.

...the Oxford-educated father of two is laughing all the way to the bank with the worldwide success of... [his] film, *Bean – The Ultimate Disaster Movie*. Get ready for his sequel, *Bean – The Ultimate success story*... [H]owever you measure success, it is remarkable that [a] young-looking thirtysomething is listed in *Forbes* magazine as being worth \$NZ125 million... [after] his black superhero Spawn begat a line of top-selling action toys, an animated television series that aired on the U[S] cable network HBO this year, and a live-action film... As the film tells it, Al Simmons... is a highly efficient assassin working for a secret government agency. When [the assassin decides that it] wants out his superior... has him killed gruesomely by being torched. Five years later, in a shadowy existence in a netherworld, the hideously disfigured Simmons makes a pact with the Devil: in return for being allowed to return to Earth once more to see his wife[. Al]... will lead Hell's Army in the Armageddon. After his return home Simmons is equipped by his new master for his ultimate task[. and] becomes the immortal superhero Spawn with a living suit... But Spawn... doesn't like being told what to do[. wavering]... between his instructions from the Devil's messenger, Clown... and his advice from Cogliostro... an emissary of the forces of good. It's a dark vision. But... his creator... says Spawn has become popular because [the character] is flawed. Establishment superheroes like Superman, who always make the right call, have created a hunger for something closer to the ambiguities of real life... *Spawn* the franchise is a success, [its creator] believes, because "a lot of people are like me, just got bad attitudes, but they're locked in a system and too afraid to do anything. I think most people are frustrated at their job, they don't trust the Government. And so *Spawn* taps into the Generation X mentality and the youth in us. You can be 65 and be youthful: it's an emotional thing, not a physical thing." [The creator agrees that Spawn represents himself. "Yeah, Spawn's got a bad attitude, so... I'm just like him. [Spawn] doesn't care about... heaven and hell... just wants to get back to his wife... [who is named after] my wife... It's not by accident... [Spawn] doesn't care about being a superhero. I don't care about being rich and famous. I just wanna send the message that the Cinderella story can still exist out there." In this case [the creator] isn't only Cinderella, [but is someone who has] achieved that quirkiest of 90s culture roles... [– being able to] sit in your room all day drawing comic books and become a millionaire. Suddenly the world seems a much stranger place.

...[the] movie machine... garnered the top spot on the *Forbes* business magazine's Top 40 list of the world's highest-paid entertainers, earning \$US313 m... in 1996-97. [The director], ranked No 1 in 1994 and 1995, fell to No 2... last year... below... [the queen of talk, who's] talk show empire put... [her] at No 3... in... 1996-97... with gross income of \$US201 m... The release of the *Star Wars* trilogy earned [its] producer... who wasn't even ranked last year, a... total of \$US241 m... [The figures are] based on a two-year running total of earnings... Coming in... [4th after being] ranked 10th last year... was [the] author... whose books on dinosaurs gone amuck were turned into the [director's] hit... films... The Fab Four came in fab-fifth... moving down two spots from last year's No 3 ranking. [The comedian who starred in] *Seinfeld* moved up from 11th place to No 6... [after taking] in \$US94 m... Rounding out the top 10 are [a] magician... with \$US85 m[(r:one, p1709, ln3); the horror-monger] author... (12th last year) with \$US84 m...; [the actor (r:p1167, ln52) who stars with his wife in *Eyes Wide Shut*] (17th last year) with \$US82 m...; and [the actor who played Mr Freeze] (7th last year) with \$US74 m... [● A fan] obsessed with... Hollywood's top director, who's currently filming *Saving Private Ryan* in Ireland... allegedly planned to stalk, handcuff and rape him, according to prosecutors' statements released yesterday. [The] Deputy District Attorney... made the allegations during secret... grand jury proceedings against [the accused], aged 29, who was caught several times at... the... director's... Pacific Palisades residence... [After the movie machine] heard about the stalker his immediate reaction was "disbelief." But later, "...I became completely panicked and upset and very afraid..." ...[the director's] stepped up security for his [kids while they're] sightseeing and going to school in London."

...Hollywood[']s top] film director... faces the threat of industrial action over pay rates. British broadcasting union BECTU will shortly ballot its members on the... set of the... \$NZ110.45 million... movie *Saving Private Ryan*. Members are [also] complaining about... the use of inexperienced staff and unsafe working practices which they say are putting lives at risk... "...we had 1000 [extras running around with] guns and firing blanks,"... Strike action could... [put their careers at risk, because the Malaysian PM], a sharp critic of Western values, is in Los Angeles seeking Hollywood's support for his vision of his country becoming a media and entertainment hub for Asia... □ [The movie machine is]... one of the hottest creative trios in Hollywood history... [at] DreamWorks, the studio started almost three years ago with \$US2.7 billion... in private backing... In DreamWorks SKG's first film *The Peacemaker*, which opened in the U[S] this week, the former *ER* actor... plays a military intelligence officer trying to rescue New York from a terrorist's nuclear bomb. His bigger role may be to help save... DreamWorks[, which] has been anything but a winner, delivering duds such as the cancelled television sitcom *Ink*... the slow-selling album *Older* [by the wanker/singer... and poorly-received computer games such as *Someone's in the Kitchen*. The studio is betting big... [and the] stakes are high. DreamWorks plans to spend around \$500 million over the next 15 months to release nine films... The studio faces a long battle... Analysts... question whether [the] *E.R.* television series idol... – whose other film efforts, *Batman and Robin* and *One Fine Day*, were box-office disappointments – can ever carry a hit... *The Peacemaker* cost \$50 million to make... *Prince of Egypt*, a \$70 million animated feature about the life of Moses... is an even bigger gamble. No Hollywood studio other than Disney has ever produced an animated feature-length box-office smash. [Furthermore, because] of the film's biblical theme, DreamWorks may not be able to count on merchandising tie-ins with fast-food chains... DreamWorks executives also have said they expect the film's... audience to be children over 12 and adults – two groups that no studio has ever relied on to support an animated film... Of course, DreamWorks has been hurt by some nagging and costly distractions for its top brass. [One of its trio of directors], for example, is feuding with former employer Disney, which [its former employee has] sued for \$250 million... his [alleged] cut of the Disney animated films [the director] helped make. And... Hollywood's most successful director, has spent much of the past three years fulfilling a contract with... Universal Pictures, finishing films such as this summer's \$228 million box-office hit *The Lost World*... Management is also wrestling with finding a permanent home for the studio, as plans for a high-tech headquarters on a \$6 billion seaside project stalled because [the] developer... ran short of money. For now, DreamWorks operates out of [the most successful director's] production headquarters at... Universal Studios. DreamWorks officials could not be reached for comment. [However, the] studio's backers, such as... Vulcan Ventures, say they are not worried... DreamWorks also attracted investments from Microsoft Corp... and Korea's Cheil Foods & Chemicals. For all the early mis-steps, nothing bolsters the confidence of DreamWorks' backers as much as the track-record of the three [shareholder's] represented by the SKG in the company's name... "They have never failed, and they're not about to start now," said... [the] president of Creative Artists Agency and [the most successful director's] agent. DreamWorks investors can only hope... [the agent is right. The big-S], who directed films such as *Schindler's List*, *Jaws* and *E.T.[: The Extra-Terrestrial]*, will direct about a third of DreamWorks' features in coming years, studio executives say... [The big-G], meanwhile, made a fortune managing top[music] acts... and producing film hits such as *Interview With The Vampire*... [The big-K] – who as Disney studio chief produced the highest-grossing animated film in history, *The Lion King* – is overseeing *The Prince of Egypt* and planned animated films such as *Antz*, *Shrek*, and *El Dorado: City of Gold*.

...The Broadway version of *The Lion King* has won over the public and even sceptical critics. The public appeal of the Disney production – which cost up to \$NZ32.5 million, the largest budget in Broadway history – was predictable after the 1994 animated movie netted \$1.2 billion worldwide. But the musical has surpassed even Disney's expectations. "It's very rare, very satisfying and very humbling,"... the head of Disney's animation and live action division, told *USA Today*... [S]ales for the weekend's four shows yielded a record \$6 million, according to *Variety* magazine.

...Almost a decade after the release of the ground-breaking *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, where toons and real-life actors cavort together on screen, Disney is mulling over a sequel to the film. But sources quoted by... *Variety* say the new movie will be no mere follow-up *Roger Rabbit II*. The story instead will [follow the latest studio strategy (prequels) by recounting] what happened before – in other words, the rabbit's long journey to fame and stardom on the silver screen. The original film cost \$US55 million... and brought in \$US400 million... In other movie news, [an AUSn actor] will give the writer of his last film a chance to direct him in his next drama, titled *Parker*... [about] a tough loner seeking justice after being wronged years before... [The actor, best known for his roles in *Braveheart* and the *Lethal Weapon* trilogy,] has agreed to team up with [the] *Conspiracy Theory* writer... – who also wrote... [the] up-coming film *The Postman*... Meanwhile, [the actor claims its]... role as a paranoid, maniacal cab driver in... *Conspiracy Theory* wasn't all research. "I know what it's like to feel paranoid," the A[US]n... says. "I've had my phone bugged. I have people who want star gossip. They follow you around, stake you out. They eavesdrop on your life. It's not always so nice." ...[However, something which might compensate is having a \$NZ]58 million... pay day. That's what [the actor will] be getting for the long-anticipated fourth instalment of his *Lethal Weapon* movie series. [The Catholic actor] has long resisted the idea of resurrecting his role as [an] on-the-edge cop... but for that sort of money...

The money's rolling in now for... [one actor] but... to celebrate the success of his latest movie... [its] told the world about his flirtation with heroin... and... confessed [to previously being] a rent boy... "I didn't set out to hustle but this guy offered me such a massive amount of money – it was like a year-and-a-half's pocket money..." ...[once it]d "got the hang of it," [rent boy] had "all sorts of clients" and relied heavily on the work... "Acting is a bit like being a prostitute,"... [the actor says. By the way, i]n the new No 1 movie in the U[S], *Jackal*, one of the stars of *Pulp Fiction*] kisses a gay guy – then later kills him. The smooch was [3's] brainchild, says *USA Today*... Universal Pictures... people want to make it clear that [the] character, a wily assassin... doesn't shoot the guy... because... [it is gay but] to avoid detection. The film was re-edited to make that clearer.

...[an actor] once described himself as "a [good guy] in a bad guy's body". [The actor] is still best known for his role... as Mr Blond in *Reservoir Dogs* – slicing off a cop's ear while poncing about to the strains of *Stuck in the Middle with You*... And here [the actor] is to meet me at the bad guy's hotel, the Chateau Marmont in Los Angeles... Now [the actor is] revisiting, promoting his new movie *Donnie Brasco*... It's a mob movie set in the 1970s, graphic and hard but with an emotional dimension – a kind of love story, about the bonds between [violent guys]. Even so, in one scene [his character] Sonny Black... saws the feet off fellow gangster Sonny Red... which, I tell him, is a little gruelling if you're in the front row. Not in the least put off, [the actor] enthuses: "In real life when they chop their feet off, they throw one in a bag down the river and another in the dumpster so

it's impossible to get all the parts back together." ...The film... is meant to demystify and deglamorise mob life... [although:] "I've been invited to become involved in organised crime should I give up acting," says [the actor], who grew up in Chicago... "People identify me with the characters I play. They forget I played the father in *Free Willy*, and that I killed a monster in *Species*. I've played a lot of good [guys], but they'd rather see me beat the shit out of someone[.]" says the actor who... was brought up a Catholic... [but, if it] hadn't gone into the movies... would... "be in prison"... "One of the first things I ever stole was a stereo from the youth lounge in the church during service..." Did [the actor] feel guilty? "No. I had some tunes in my bedroom, which was nice. Besides, the priest was hitting on my mother and I knew it... Growing up, I was never in the same place for long. I was always a new kid at school, always the outsider, so I tended to hang out with outsiders, underdogs and losers. They were a bad crowd, but more fun than the class president... But by the time I was 21, I had figured out that getting into trouble was a one-way street..." ...[however, his new] friends are Hollywood bad boys... [and the actor] seems to find a comfort in their renowned wildness... [The creator of *Reservoir Dogs*] is another friend, although after *Reservoir Dogs* they fell out. [The actor says the creator] wrote Vincent Vega in *Pulp Fiction* for him. "I'd been asked to play a part in *Wyatt Earp* and I really wanted to do a western, so the *Pulp Fiction* role went to [the actor who had starred in *Saturday Night Fever*. The role resurrected that actor's career – leading to roles in *Phenomenon*, *Primary Colours* and *Michael*]. If *Wyatt Earp* had made \$500 million within five seconds of opening, everyone would have said I was a genius. I think I made the right choice. Nobody else does... But we're [all] friends again now." There is now some talk of a follow-up movie [with the creator] – *The Vega Brothers* – starring [himself as one brother and "Michael" as the other brother Vincent.

...the brother who came to acting via singing, the *Independence Day* and *Guys* in *Black* star... is Hollywood's newest \$US100 million [Black Guy]... The much-in-demand actor... has already signed film deals that will net him \$48 million before the end of the year... And [the actor is] humble, too. "I owe all my success to God..." says [the actor], who reads the Bible... ■ [The big-S 'is rumoured to have optioned the rights to *The Bible* for \$1,320,000,000. Wonder if the big-S will be playing God?]

...*Black for more* After lengthy discussions, Sony has given in to Black Guy's demands for a whopping \$100 million paycheck for the sequel to *Guys in Black*. Although the original movie grossed over \$1 billion, its producer the big-S scooped \$220 million. Black Guy was left fuming when studio bosses refused his demands for more cash on top of his \$10 million fee. With merchandising and video sales on top, his paycheck could double, making him the highest-paid actor in history.'

...often described by his peers and co-workers as an actor with relentlessly boyish enthusiasm, the description that causes Black Guy the most laughter is the one offered by his *MIB* co-star, who calls him "not only the perfect co-star but Jesus-like". As comfortable as it is playing movie star, the actor's passion for music will never wane. "There's nothing in entertainment that compares to being on a stage when someone recognises you for your music. *Nothing* compares to that – except for boxing and knocking someone out. I love the ability to go back and forth. My music always informs the next couple of years of films. When I get back in the studio, producers and writers know that they're on the forefront of fashion, of slang, of technology".'

... 'It's a show. We perform for you, like monkeys in the zoo'.

...A team of eminent Chinese scientists have intensified their search for the legendary half-human half-ape Bigfoot (known as "Yeren" in China) after verifying reports from a hunter who says it sighted the Yeren in the wild. Hundreds of other people have also reported sightings of the mythical creature during the last several decades. State media reported that a team from the prestigious Chinese Academy of Sciences has focused its search for Yeren in the remote forests of Shennongjia Nature Reserve in central Hubei Province. The group found 40cm footprints, brown hair and gnawed corncobs in the same area where the hunter spotted the beast. The Yeren was described as being 2.5m tall, having long, red hair and moving rapidly.'

...A controversial] piece of film, which for 30 years has been regarded as the most compelling evidence for the existence of Bigfoot, the North American "abominable snow[perso]n", is a hoax, according to... "a makeup secret only six people know"... [The person] behind the *Planet of the Apes* films and the elder states[perso]n of Hollywood's "monster-makers", has been named by a group of Hollywood makeup artists as the person who faked Bigfoot... The claims contradict the findings of a forthcoming study by the North American Science Institute, that the creature is real. It has analysed the footage and detected the movement of skin over muscles which could not be duplicated by the wearing of an artificial costume... "Very high computer enhancements of the film show conclusively that, whatever it was, it was not wearing a suit..." ...[the elder] (75), who won an Academy Award for his ground-breaking ape masks in the *Planet of the Apes* feature film in 1968, is now in frail health and lives in seclusion in a Los Angeles nursing home... refus[ing] to confirm or deny the reports... Bigfoot hunter... Roger Patterson... emerged from the wilds of northern California with the celebrated film... that turned Bigfoot into a worldwide cult... The film was hailed as positive proof of Bigfoot's existence by British and Russian scientists and expeditions were organised to try to capture the creature. The episode turned Bigfoot into the world's favourite monster and even spawned the popular *Harry and the Hendersons* TV comedy series[and film. A film recounting Bigfoot's discovery was also made]... Patterson died in 1972 convinced [that the hunter] had filmed a real Bigfoot. But... Hollywood's KNB Effects Group... told a Bigfoot investigator...: "It was like a gag to be played on the guy who shot it. The guy never knew it was a hoax his friends played on him." [The investigator], editor of *Strange* magazine, who studied the background of the Patterson film for a year, said [the elder] created monster suits for the *Lost in Space* television series of the mid-1960s which look very similar to the creatures in Patterson's films... [E]xperts say that only [the elder] possessed the knowhow to create a suit which... [they] have termed a masterpiece... [Furthermore, the elder] was also known to have participated in another Bigfoot hoax: the Burbank Bigfoot – a 2.2m carcass painstakingly built over a plaster cast of the actor... best known as Jaws in the James Bond films.

...In his second outing as 007, [the latest incarnation of James Bond] shows a caring, sensitive side[– despite]... the inevitable bed-hopping... As [the incarnation] fields questions about his latest Bond movie, *Tomorrow Never Dies*, it seems an odd dichotomy that [it] has made his fame and fortune playing a macho [guy] who started life 35 years ago and is stuck in a time warp. But [the actor insists that it] does not play James Bond as a cartoon character... Critics are hailing [him] as one of the best reincarnations of 007... [In his latest mission, Bond is up against] a mad media baron intent on world domination using worldwide satellite links to manipulate and manufacture the news... [– including] fooling the British into believing the Chinese are threatening war. The film has all the Bond ingredients: gags, gadgets, eye-watering stunts and gorgeous girls. The dashing secret agents' 18th outing follows [the latest incarnation]'s debut in *GoldenEye*, the most successful Bond film, earning \$NZ830 million worldwide.

...MOVIES offer plenty of choice over the [holiday] period... For adults and older teenagers *Devil's Advocate*, *Tomorrow Never Dies* and *The Jackal* are three of the big movies during this month... *The Jackal*... [is about] a ruthless assassin who has been hired for \$70 million by international cut-throats to eliminate a top person in the U[S] Government... *Tomorrow Never Dies* is... a hi-tech account of what happens when media power is in the wrong hands... [while] *Devil's Advocate*... is... about the eternal struggle between power and weakness and good and evil... For lighter entertainment, children and their young-at-heart parents can sit back and enjoy Disney's... *Flubber*, a modern version of the 1961 comedy, *The Absent Minded Professor*. Another movie destined to be a big hit... is *A Simple Wish*[, about]... a young girl who desperately needs some magical help... The big one for teenage girls is likely to be *Spiceworld: The Movie*... The \$NZ44.8 million film is the biggest project yet from the feisty pop phenomenon... The film, shot on closed sets in and around London during the summer, reportedly tells a glamorised story of the... Spice Girls' rise to stardom... For those aged 15 or older, *Titanic* is predicted to be a winner... *Titanic*'s writer-director... spent five years researching the vessel and the story of its sinking.

...[the director] made his mark with films such as *The Terminator* and *Aliens*. But with *Titanic*, [it] took on a monster that spun out of control... *Titanic* is the costliest movie of all time. Originally scheduled to open in July, the release date was shunted back again and again as [the director]'s

story of the doomed oceanliner was delayed because of problems with the optical effects. Estimated to have cost \$285 million, with the interest charge for the six-month overrun at... \$10 m... Paramount put up \$60 m... and has the US distribution rights, while Fox is shouldering the rest... and has been given the foreign markets. The December release date has to be troubling for... Fox because the studio had several big productions on tap for the end of the year: the animated *Anastasia*, the sci-fi film sequel *Alien Resurrection*, *Home Alone III* and *Great Expectations*. Fox also faced a tough decision on whether it could release *Titanic* in foreign markets on the same date as the movie opens in the U[S]; it is actually opening in N[Z and AUS] one day ahead of America. Sources said [the director] offered to deliver the picture for an August US opening, but Fox officials took [hi]s side and fought with Paramount officials to allow him to make the movie [it] really wanted... *Titanic* was shot over eight months (about two months longer than scheduled), in locations in Mexico, Nova Scotia, England and Los Angeles. Its budget swelled from an already hefty \$110 m... A large portion of the money allocated... went to build a new studio in Rosarito Beach, Mexico[, including]... a replica of the ship – a 90% scale, five-story-high reproduction of the ill-fated luxury liner. Many of the... massive... cast and... crew of 800 people – 80 electricians, 30 lifeguards, and 100 stuntpeople in one scene alone... – ...have spoken of the ordeal of making the movie, describing it as about as strenuous as filmmaking ever gets, citing 90-hour work weeks (with actual shooting done mostly at night to simulate the late hours of the disaster)... On hand were about 50 medical and emergency personnel and the production was beset with accidents... and one “prank” when the crew were fed PCP (angel dust – a drug that once led to a ‘guy’s death after the user became convinced it was a mole and buried itself in its backyard’)). “These people are getting banged up horribly,” [the director] admitted to a reporter as they watched one scene that resulted in two broken ribs and a sprained ankle. Extras had to be tied down to make sure they weren’t washed away by the hundreds of gallons of water. “I wish I could do that in every scene,” [the director] was heard to mutter. “Tether them so they can’t go to the bathroom.” ...The stars, normally molly-coddled on a shoot, expressed shock at [the director]’s behaviour. “If anything was the slightest bit wrong [the director] would lose it,” [the film’s fictitious heroine] told the *Los Angeles Times*. “It was hard to concentrate when [the director] was losing it, shouting and screaming.” [The English actress complained of suffering] hypothermia and nearly drowned twice. [The director], who frequently dived into the water to shoot scenes himself, was unimpressed. “We’re in combat mode here.” Toward the end of the shoot... [the director was] jabbing injections of B-12 vitamins into his legs and swigging back shots of livid green wheatgrass juice to sustain his unrelenting stamina. But some of those who have seen footage from the film, including excited cinema owners, say [hi]s single-minded obsessiveness may have paid off. “It’s an epic in the scope of *Braveheart*,” says the composer. “The sinking is almost secondary to the romantic story...” According to crew members, [the director] sees the film as his *Doctor Zhivago*, a “four-hanky tear-jerker” set against one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th Century. [The director] has high Oscar hopes for his film and won’t be too troubled that... it cost so much. At the very least, *Titanic* is unlikely to receive the critical drubbing that... Universal Pictures’ *Waterworld*... – ...[the] previous record-holder... – ...received.

...[the] director... appeared to go into the production of *Titanic* with long blond hair last year[but] emerged with decidedly less on top, much of it now grey. Considering that *Titanic* is the most expensive film in Hollywood’s history, it’s probably understandable. The follies of some Fox executives have probably taken a similar battering because of this high-risk project. The whole thing drips with irony. Here we have a film... about a supposedly unsinkable vessel, that in fact sunk[, by a director who]... is no stranger to upping the ante with each of his spectacular special effects creations. After his ground-breaking *The Terminator* in 1984, his last venture into deep sea sank badly with *The Abyss*... And while... [the 23-year-old actor playing the hero] (an Oscar-nominee for *What’s Eating Gilbert Grape*...), is now considered a box-office name in Hollywood, the same can’t be said for the other half of the screen romance that has been put at the heart of the saga – [although locals will recognise the heroine from her]... big screen debut [as a 16-year-old in the NZ-made] *Heavenly Creatures*, playing... the real-life teenager who murdered her friend’s mother[, and the actress was]... Oscar-nominated for her role as the hapless Marianne in *Sense and Sensibility*... [This time the] English actress... plays a bored rich girl travelling upper class, [while the hero is] a poor young artist in steerage. [The director] at first was hardly sold on the idea of [using the 22-year-old English actress – the director] had... in mind... young Americans like [the hero’s co-star in the most recent version of] *Romeo and Juliet*... Yet the British actress knew [it] was destined to play Rose, the beautiful Philadelphia aristocrat of [the fictitious part of the director]’s story – even if... [it meant dying] her hair red. It was her determination that won her the role. But it was probably a tougher role than [the actor] expected... *Titanic*... proved to be a... production full of horror stories of ego clashes, creative differences and logistical problems... [including constructing a] five-storey-high reproduction of the liner... to sink into a 77 million-litre seawater tank in northern Mexico. Not to mention the two difficult dives by special submarine to the real wreck under 3660m of water in the North Atlantic... The real *Titanic* sank on the night of April 14, 1912, taking 1522 people with it. [The director] has been obsessed with the story for years[– perhaps even before the first film about the disaster was made! The director] says it was like the end of an age of innocence and absolute faith in technology. “It’s a metaphor about the inevitability of death. We’re all on the *Titanic*,” [the director] adds. Metaphors aside, [the director] has chosen to make the romance between... [the hero and heroine] as central to the film as the ship itself... A lot rests on the idea of these two being in love amid awesomely pending doom... “They’re teenagers, and it’s about the slaughter of innocence,” explains [the director – in case we missed the point of it all. *Titanic* hits cinemas] nationwide... next Thursday...

Titanic... took... \$NZ77 m... at the U[S] box office over the weekend, giving it the top spot and boosting the chances... it... will return a profit... By comparison, M[GM]’s latest James Bond film, *Tomorrow Never Dies*, took [2]nd place, grossing \$27 m... during the [4]-day holiday weekend. Time Warner’s post-apocalyptic epic *The Postman*... opened to just \$5.3 m... cementing Warner’s Bros most disastrous year at the box office since 1990.

...Why size ain’t everything... The end-of-year launch of *Titanic*... [wa]s the film industry’s biggest gamble yet at a time when the money-making potential of low-budget movies has never appeared higher. Once promotion and publicity are added to the... production cost, the... disaster epic will have to clear \$517 million before it turns a profit. Critical reaction to the opening around the world was mixed. Jokey allusions to shipwrecks and watery graves were not lacking. By contrast, the story of six unemployed steelworkers in one of Britain’s murkier provinces who become male strippers to make ends meet has had blue-collar workers in the American Midwest standing on their seats and cheering. *The Full Monty*, which could probably have been financed out of *Titanic*’s drinks budget, has cleared \$260 million worldwide... [C]osting in the region of \$9 million to make[, it] is well placed to emulate... *Trainspotting*, named by *Variety* as the most profitable film of 1996 in terms of its investment. Yet it owes much of its success to [US] backing, financed by Fox Searchlight and distributed by Miramax, the Disney subsidiary... In its resemblance to television drama it could have been produced by Film on Four, the feature film arm of Channel 4 Television which has contributed massively to the renaissance of the British film industry with – in addition to *Trainspotting* – such titles as... the \$8.6 million... *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *Secrets and Lies* and *The Crying Game*, all money-spinners in the U[S]. The last two years have seen a huge increase in British film production: 128 films were made last year at a cost of just over \$2 billion, up 84[%] on 1995. The most significant contribution came from [US]-produced films made in Britain, a total of 25 films for an input of \$1.2 billion... Other evidence of the thriving market for small-scale features was... the \$70 million taken in the U[S] alone by AUS]’s \$6 million *Shine*... [T]he 1997 Academy Awards were dominated by *The English Patient* and other modestly-scaled, independent features... Meanwhile, Hollywood continues to place its faith in size and special effects... The titles – *Titanic*, *Volcano*, *Flood* – convey the trend... However... *The Lost World* took more than \$1 billion worldwide... The agreeably tongue-in-cheek [Guys] in *Black* – continuing, along with *Contact*, the space invasion theme set by last year’s *Independence Day* – came a close second with \$950 million, while at least eight other films covered their costs with over \$345 million.

...One Miramax movie is among the most beloved romantic epics in years and swept the Academy Awards. The other Miramax title is a bloody low-budget slasher film whose biggest prize was an MTV movie award. By all accounts... *The English Patient*, which cost \$US27 million and has grossed \$US77.9 million... should have clobbered *Scream*, and yet the grisly thriller is proving far more popular in [US] cinemas and video stores.

In fact, *Scream* is more profitable than almost any 1996 movie except *Independence Day*, on the basis of cost against return. With a reported \$US100 million... theatrical gross and the number one spot on the video rental charts, *Scream*... cost about \$US15 million... has resuscitated the horror genre, nearly moribund a decade ago. And it has further established Miramax's exploitation film label, Dimension Films, as one of Hollywood's biggest surprise stories. Once a purveyor of crummy B-movies such as *Children of the Corn 2* and *Hellraiser III*, Miramax's violent sister label is now turning out relatively sophisticated scary movies worthy of critical attention, including the rampaging mutant cockroach movie *Mimic*, opening in the U[S] next week... Dimension's first release was *The Crow*, a movie several studios passed on following actor Brandon Lee's accidental on-set death[after being shot by a bullet that was supposed to be a blank].

...Everyone is shooting Versace in Miami. Up to eight different film projects are competing to put the life and violent death of the Italian designer on the screen... Film companies are sniping at each other over different conspiracy theories and the merits of each other's productions. They are competing to sign up relatives and friends of Andrew Cunanan, the gay serial killer blamed for the murder. The houseboat where [Andrew] committed suicide has already been snapped up by a film producer, who has bought the rights to it until 2000. Filmgoers will not have to wait that long... The scramble to be first to the box office has been accelerated by the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, who... [had attended] Gianni Versace's funeral... [but industry] experts believe the "feeding frenzy" to make the first Versace film will produce a wave of tacky box-office flops... [The] chief financial analyst at Yeager Capital Markets in Los Angeles, said: "I can't imagine we are going to see a seriously theatrical film. Even [the alleged murderer]'s father is developing a script in which his son is a saint – a saint who murdered five people." ...ABC... has commissioned a television film that is also sympathetic to Versace's slayer... The makers of the first film into production admit it is not an artistic effort... "It's important to be the first movie out. I don't care if everyone thinks I am an exploitative sleaze – the curiosity factor has got to be immense." ...Others are not far behind. Seiko, a Japanese/Filipino production team, is talking to Cunanan's father[, who] believes the mafia used his son to kill Versace. A dead songbird, the symbol of a mob slaying, was supposedly found near the designer's corpse... [● It's often said that c]elebrity can kill you... [T]he poster boy for America's great cautionary tale for writers... is... [Truman] Capote (1924-84), the uneducated arriviste from Monroeville, Alabama, [who] sneaked into the postwar jetset as court jester, raconteur, father confessor, partygoer and giver, scandal-monger and manipulator. And decades before gay liberation, [Truman] wore his homosexuality like a flamboyant badge of honour... The author of the lapidary *Other Voices, Other Rooms* and the innovative *In Cold Blood* and host of the party of the century (his legendary Black-and-White Ball of 1966) died a pill-popping alcoholic, his literary reputation in decline, deserted by many of the prominent friends [it] had publicly betrayed... [T]he prince metamorphosed to frog in 1975 when instalments of *Answered Prayers* appeared in *Esquire*. His thinly veiled portraits of people who had regarded him as a friend took malice to new lows... Lying, of course, is what fiction writers do for a living, but Capote notoriously tarted up the facts about real-life people into a more alluring confection... [His] dearest friend... suggested that "[Truman] makes things the way they should have been"...

John Lennon's [Japanese] widow... is about to sign a contract with Columbia Pictures for a... film on her life with the former Beatle... [who was] shot down in New York in 1989... [The wife is even] prepared to cede Columbia the rights to Lennon's songs *Imagine* and *Give Peace a Chance* as part of a contract that would add at least \$100 million to her fortune, put at \$600 million, the British *Sunday Times* said. The... version of Lennon's life put across by [the wife] may well arouse controversy, as her detractors have accused her of being responsible for the break-up of the Beatles. □ [A s]upermodel... reported by Britain's *Sun* newspaper to be "dying to break into films,"... has landed a \$1.2 million deal to star in her first film... a futuristic drama called *Woundings*. The London-born waif is believed to have secretly enrolled in acting classes to further her ambition.

...Aspiring actors seeking a meteoric rise to stardom are lining up for an intergalactic first – a made-in-space film shot aboard the creaking Russian space station Mir. Forget the *Star Wars* trilogy, let alone *Star Trek*. This would be shot by real astronauts with an out-of-this world backdrop of, well, space. The idea is the brainchild of [a] Russian movie director... who already has a galaxy of stars in his sights. [The director] has asked, and been turned down by, [a British] Oscar winner... and... also hopes to approach big-name Hollywood actors such as [the star of *Michael* and the star of *Forrest Gump*], who at least can lay modest claim to other-worldly experiences in the film *Apollo 13*. [The director] is planning to have the film shot next year on a... budget of \$NZ130 m... [and claims to have] received take-off permission from the Russian space agency. "We already have... 20 applicants, all... Russian, who are all undergoing medical tests" to assess their suitability for space travel... For cost reasons, professional astronauts – normally more used to dicing with death on the ageing Mir station in between serious scientific tests – will look after the cameras, lighting and sound. [The director]'s repertoire to date has been rather more earthbound, with films about cops and robbers. The latest plot is hardly space-age either, although it has been based on a 1994 science-fiction novel. A scientist flees to the security of outer space to warn an unsuspecting world of an imminent catastrophe, and when the Russians and Americans send a glamorous TV [presenter] up there to kill him, they fall in love.

...*God Bless American propaganda*... Here's proof positive that it's going to take more than the collapse of communism to stop America fighting those damn Russkies. Its makers would defend it as being simply a high-altitude, high-octane thriller which it certainly is. But (and notwithstanding its star's feeble-minded disclaimers in these pages last week) the depressingly simplistic political subtext makes it also a rather unsubtle piece of propaganda for the supremacy of the values of middle America... [T]he presidential plane (known as Air Force One) is the setting for the entire drama. Hijacked by Russian zealots after a visit to Moscow, the aircraft and its passengers are held hostage by terrorists (Russian ultra-nationalists... replace the commies of [the 40th President]'s "evil empire") to force the release of their leader. There are no prizes for guessing who takes the bad guys on (or who wins), but what's interesting is the characterisation of the President[, who is] joined on board by his wife and teenage daughter (the film's First Family [even] has more than a passing resemblance to the [current First Family])... This President's jaw juts resolutely when [it] promises in a speech to root out political terrorism. But, when... defending his family, his lower lip trembles just enough for us to know that [the President] really loves them. So when the hijackers begin executing hostages we're invited to be less worried about mourning the dead (the film has a high body count but is not very explicit) than the danger to Mrs and Miss President. In this sense, the aircraft is an airborne version of Hollywood's all-American home. By extension... [the President]'s triumphant "Get off my plane!" is not just a signal that the good guy won: it's vindication of apple pie, the Little League, the constitution and McDonald's. No one would deny that *Air Force One* delivers action by the planetload. But for all but the most simple-minded, all the excess baggage may make the flight a rather bumpy one.

...[an AUSn actress and her US actor husband (r:p1715, ln8) have bought a] \$20 million Gulfstream G3 jet aircraft, which seats 10, costs around \$15,000 an hour to fly and has marble bathrooms and a registration that includes the family initials. But the [aircraft is] not the only getaway investment the [couple] have made... They've also invested a slice of the profits from [hubby's] mega-hit movies *Mission Impossible* and *Jerry Maguire* in a \$5.25 million holiday home in sunny Seaside, Florida[, and in a]... spectacular \$635,000 luxury 15m cruiser, complete with \$250,000 worth of extras including a \$10,000 state-of-the-art sound system[, which] is now bobbing in Sydney Harbour, awaiting the arrival of [its new] Captain... and first mate... Sources say [the captain] bought the boat for [his first mate], to moor in front of their... \$4.2 million... harbourside mansion and grab a front-row seat for the 2000 Olympics... [Hubby] spares no expense to make his family comfortable[, spending]... around \$4.4 million renting a Notting Hill mansion and on other costs for their stay in Britain during the filming of *Mission Impossible*.

...[#4.] best known for her role as a prostitute in *Pretty [Gal]*, is to star opposite [the Brit best known for being arrested by LA police for receiving a blow-job from a prostitute in a vehicle, Jin] in a new romantic comedy set in Britain... [about a US] actress who falls in love with a seller of second-hand books... who owns a shop in Notting Hill... The author of [Hugh's other] starring vehicle *Four Weddings And A Funeral*... which earned... \$600 million worldwide... has produced the scrip but... insists it is not a sequel... *The Notting Hill Film*... is expected to cost... \$50 million... [Incidentally,

#10] felt strongly enough about playing Lynn Bracken, the Hollywood call girl... in *LA Confidential*[, about]... Los Angeles Police Department detectives running amok in the early '50s, that... [it] was, almost literally, willing to lose her head. "The part called for me to be a platinum blonde... And back in those days... Grace Kelly[and] Marilyn Monroe... couldn't just use highlights the way I usually do. They had to dye it solid... so at the end of the movie, it was in such poor shape that I just shaved it off." ...*LA Confidential* presents a fearfully corrupt police force the world thinks is a model of decorum, characters who believe in "doing what they do for justice" no matter how savage and even murderous their acts may seem, all operating in a city that likes to pretend it's paradise on Earth when it's really seething with corruption... When the film was screened... at the Cannes Film Festival, *Newsday*... wrote... it "has aroused [US] filmgoers' spirits here in the same way *Pulp Fiction* did (at the) 1993 (festival)."

...*Rocky*... has done a number of talk shows in which [it]'s been praised endlessly for his performance in *Cop Land*... a character piece in which [the actor] plays a paunchy, half-deaf and slow-witted New Jersey sheriff who goes up against a coven of corrupt New York cops... *Cop Land*, of course, is not the first time [Rocky] has attempted to reinvent himself. For years, [Rocky] tried to get a version of *The Godfather, Part III* off the ground with him in a lead role. In 1983, [Rocky] directed a musical, a sequel to *Saturday Night Fever* entitled *Staying Alive*. It was even gaudier and almost as badly received as *Show Girls*. And there was that disastrous period in the early 90s when [Rocky] tried comedy with *Oscar* and *Stop! Or My Mom Will Shoot*. That final public failure prompted... [his decision to] go... back into what [Rocky] did best, no-apologies action films. [Rocky] signed the biggest personal contract of all time with Universal, \$94.5 million, for three pictures specifically required to be big-budget action films. "But then I got on the set on *Daylight* [the first film of the deal, which had him leading trapped commuters out of the Lincoln Tunnel], and I wasn't comfortable at all. Whatever I once had that made me enjoy doing that, I had lost it." ...So... the... Miramax co-chair[person thought of him when it] received the script of *Cop Land*... [– although Rocky] originally resisted the idea... "Here's somebody offering me one of the best roles out there, and I'm arguing against it..." But his fears were calmed by... [the script-writer, and Rocky] quickly agreed to put on the 15kg that... [the role] needed.

...Hollywood's middle-aged macho brigade – [the star of the *Rocky* series of movies; the star of the *Diehard* series; and the star of the *Terminator* series – have] been invited to a birthday bash in Austria celebrating Harley-Davidson's 95 roaring years of motorbike-making. The tourism board of the lakeside resort of Faaker See said the movie-star owners of the growling [US]-made bikes had been asked to come to the \$US40 million... party along with... 25,000 other Harley owners and a[n]... expected... crowd of 250,000... at the... shindig, being organised under the banner "Where the hell is Faaker See?" ...[In related news, the star of the *Terminator* series] didn't have much trouble convincing a Vancouver shop to send its customers out the door pronto so [the actor] could spend big bucks in private. After 45 minutes, however, all [the actor] had managed to part with was \$96.30... And [the actor] wasn't the least bit sheepish about the huge disservice... just done the store manager.

...A looming rent rise is behind the decision to move Auckland's oldest china shop out of Queen St – its home for the past 120 years. [The shop-owner]'s annual rent would have tripled [to] around... \$187,000 under the new landlord, Force Corporation, which is developing a \$75 million entertainment complex on the block between the Civic Theatre and Aotea Square... [T]he rent had previously been below market prices because of a six-month renovation/demolition clause... In the Force plan, back streets Myers Lane and Bledisloe St will be built on and the new structure will contain 12 cinema screens on two levels, a 450-seat giant screen Imax cinema, a Planet Hollywood restaurant and merchandise shop, an interactive games centre and restaurant "boulevard." Planet Hollywood alone is forecasting a million visitors a year and the forecast for total visitor numbers is three million... Rent would total \$6.5 million, including the return from Force's joint-venture multiplex operation with A[US]n cinema operator Village Roadshow... Force... had the capacity to carry out the Queen St project at the same time as its Argentinian expansion on six locations, after a cash issue in April... The Queen St project will extend to the Aotea Square border and incorporate a new visitors' centre... [The architect] said the development... would include the latest material and technology, but in sympathy with the scale and detail of its neighbours... After the Civic block project, Force will turn the St James Theatre opposite into a live theatre and rebuild on the site of its other cinemas there... Planet Hollywood, owned by and featuring some of the world's biggest movie names, [including *Hollywood's middle-aged macho brigade*.] was started in 1991 and has 66 restaurants. Imax, which has a cinema screen 10 times the normal size, is a Canadian venture that evolved out of Expo '67 in Montreal.

...Giving a new dimension to the big screen... It's 3D cinema... but not as we know it – the tacky cardboard glasses have gone, replaced by electronic headsets intended to take viewers "as close to reality as you can get." At least that is the claim being made by A[US]n company Cinema Plus, which will shortly begin building N[Z]'s first Imax giant-screen cinema. The company... has a 10-year agreement with Imax which is likely to see six to eight giant-screen cinemas built in A[US and NZ] over the next five years. And when they say giant, they mean *giant*... Imax screens are generally around 25m – or eight storeys – high. Its Auckland screen... will be 25m across. A normal cinema screen is just 7m wide. Invented by an A[US]n and developed by a Canadian, Imax technology has been around for 30 years but has only recently become a commercial success. The biggest Imax screen in the world opened in Sydney last year, pulling in more than 600,000 customers in its first nine months. Although the number was lower than... predicted, business had since picked up and, according to... Cinema Plus[s] managing director... was performing ahead of expectations. A Melbourne cinema is due to open next March, with one in Adelaide later in 1998 and in Brisbane in early 1999. The Auckland cinema, which will cost roughly \$5 million to develop, is expected to open either late next year or early in 1999. Wellington and Christchurch are also being eyed. Although Imax films are extremely expensive to make (the cost of an average 45-minute film is around \$11 million), there is no shortage of stock. More than a dozen new films are now being made each year, featuring such spectacular sights as the burning oil wells of Kuwait, the view of Earth from the Mir space station and breathtaking aerial shots from the top of New York skyscrapers. The latest Imax documentary, due out early next year, records N[Z] climber Rob Hall's tragic expedition to Mt Everest last year and is already being hyped overseas. Just last week, Sydneysiders got their first chance to see a 3-D Imax film, *New York 3D: Across the Sea of Time*. The 3-D projection technology has its origins in military technology, which Imax has adapted for commercial use. The headsets, worth \$650 each, contain liquid crystal lenses to create the illusion of three dimensions... Once... investors were dubious about the future of such technology. But with 160 Imax cinemas now established throughout the world, the company believes it has achieved the critical mass necessary to be taken seriously. In the last three months alone, it has signed deals for 36 more cinemas... [J]ust over a third of Imax's customers are tourists... School groups are expected to make up 6 to 7[%] of... Auckland's... customers. [The screen will have up to six films on rotation and 13, one-hour sessions a day starting at 10 am].

...The old may make way for the new in Auckland's inner-city movie market. The future of the St James and Mid City cinema centres seems in doubt, their owners having joined forces to run a planned 14-cinema development next to the historic Civic Theatre... Force Corporation has... b[ought] land and buildings adjacent to the Civic for a \$76 million retail and entertainment centre... The only certainty was that the historic St James lyric theatre would be retained, because it was legally protected. The Hoyts N[Z] Cinemas general manager... refused to comment on whether its four-screen Mid City centre would close. Council officials have predicted there is room for only one cinema multiplex on Queen St.

...Force Corp... is negotiating with the Auckland City Council to build a multistorey car park in Mayoral Drive for... its... patrons... [– a]lthough... it would be available for general public use... No decision had been made about how many parking spaces would be provided... The managing director of Force Corp... said the car park... would certainly be convenient, but... was not essential.

...last week... [Force Corp's executive chairperson] talked about the 1987 crash and his days as managing director of one of its biggest casualties, Chase Corporation. The notoriously media-shy [executive chairperson] was worth \$75 million before Black Tuesday... But most of that wealth was on paper, and most of it went west. Chase, which had a market capitalisation of \$1.4 billion before the crash, was worth less than \$20m two years later when it went into receivership. "We were funding things at 16% that were yielding 8%..." ...The company made the *Wall St Journal's* early 1988 list of the world's 10 worst companies... But it was fun while it lasted... [and] as the crash and its aftermath slammed one door shut, it blew

open another. This time for... [his] private company Force Corp. The post-crash financial troubles of the country's two cinema chains, Hoyts and Pacer Kerridge, meant they could not cash in on the trend to multiplex developments... Village Roadshow was looking for an entry to the N[Z] market which Force, with property in suitable locations, could deliver... Chase shareholders had long memories, so how hard was it to re-enter the public gaze? "I was very hesitant... But it was a way to grow the company... It's nice to know you can come back again, to see you can still do it... The market will really punish you if you make a mistake today. Before, if you made a mistake, inflation would look after you and you could still sell the site for more than you paid for it three months later." ...Today, Force... has no debt, money in the bank and exciting expansion plans... Force operates 46 wholly owned cinema screens and 18 in which it has a financial interest, in Auckland and Hamilton. That gives Force about 38% of total box office receipts. Hoyts, which has a more even geographical spread, has most of the rest. Force has no plans to move south of Hamilton and attack its rival. The local market [- which has 'more cinemas per head of population than the US' -] is too mature and the capital costs of setting up cinemas too high... Once the... \$75m entertainment centre [next to] Auckland's... Aotea Square... is completed, along with the expansion of the company's Rialto arthouse movie chain, there won't be many domestic growth opportunities left for Force. Hence the company's move into Argentina and... Fiji, where it has a stake in a six-screen multiplex in Suva... The Latin American foray is by way of a joint venture with Village Roadshow and... [a Latin American businessperson], in which Force has 25%. It was sparked by a tip from a [US] studio rep, who suggested the Argentinian market was due for revitalisation... Argentina had simply lost the cinema habit. In 1985 the country had 70 million cinema admissions; last year it had dropped to 20 million. In a country with 10 times N[Z]'s population, Argentinians go to the movies 0.6 times a year, compared with four times for N[Z]ers and six times for [USers]... Last December, the joint venture opened its first complex, a 10-screen multiplex in provincial city Mendoza, and plans to open another six complexes, four... in Buenos Aires, with a total of 74 screens, by December 1998. Force's share of the cost is estimated at \$48m.

...The trial of the Pacer Kerridge Corporation executive chair[perso]n... on fraud charges involving \$15 million opened yesterday... The jury was empanelled last Thursday after a mammoth four-and-a-half-hour session. Six hundred people were written to by the court and more than 200 attended for the empanelling process before the final 12 were selected. A few dozen more were kept waiting on standby over the weekend in case some of the chosen 12 found a reason to be stood down. One juror's employer, which... the judge... called "a large commercial organisation" and which is understood to be a bank, sent the court a letter asking for its staff member to be discharged on work-related grounds. [However, the] judge said it was not possible to discharge jurors on work-related grounds. Jurors could [only] be discharged if they found they had some connection with the case, or parties or witnesses in it. [The judge] said the employer's letter, stating its employee's job was in jeopardy, was "an entirely unacceptable approach for an employer to take. It at least borders on contempt of court." ...[the judge] expected a letter of apology to the court... [from] the unnamed organisation... The trial is scheduled to last 12 or 13 weeks and is unusual as a white-collar case for having a jury. Other big cases arising out of the 1980s, such as the Equiticorp criminal trial, were heard by a judge sitting alone.

...[a former] child movie star... [has backed] a call from Actors' Equity for legal safeguards to protect young actors from exploitation. The actors' union is upset that its attempts to introduce legal protections have failed so far, while a new code of rights is pending for animal actors. [The former star (aged] 26), who has been acting since... [aged] two, said there were no guidelines covering chaperones and hours of work when [it] started out. At nine [the actress] shot to fame for roles in [the locally-produced] films, *Smash Palace* and *Scarecrow*, and hosting a TV show, *Kidsworld*. By 12 [the actress] had already spent a year in Los Angeles, trying her fortunes in Hollywood before returning to Auckland... [It] was not uncommon for her to be filming until 3am or 4am, then be back on the set for work later that morning. "When you are young you can deal with it. But there needs to be some rollover clause so that actors get an eight hour break... It is in the interest of people making films to look after the actors because if they are exhausted they are not going to perform[very well.]" ...now an Auckland University fourth year law student, [the 26-year-old said fame] and falling behind with schoolwork were harder to deal with. "As a child you are less resourced to deal with that... and you lose your childhood..." [An] Actors' Equity organiser... said it was ironic animals... were to have new legal safeguards, while child actors didn't have the same protection. "It's outrageous. Pets have vets on the set... There are general requirements for children under 14 to be supervised at all times, but they are not always supervised by the most suitable person." ...Chaperones for child actors on set were recommended in union guidelines, backed by actors agents, but they were voluntary... The union had [also] complained that a loophole in child labour regulations, which included a ban on work between 10pm and 6am for those under 16, meant they did not cover child actors. This was because actors were usually classified as self-employed contractors, rather than employees, even if they were only 11 or 12 years old. "It is not hard for production companies, if they are audacious enough to do so, to work child actors unreasonably long hours and for minimal rates without breaking the law... We don't want a ban on night work. We accept that children might have to work late, but not at the expense of getting a full night's sleep..." Actors' Equity, a division of the Northern Distribution Union, has kept a dossier of cases of substandard working conditions. They include an 11-year-old... and a 9-year-old [who] worked from 1pm until 8.45pm. The only food provided was a chocolate biscuit each. [The] 11-year-old had soiled her pants because [the child] was too intimidated to ask the film crew where the toilet was. In another case, the chaperone of a child away filming on location for three weeks did not notice the actor's bed did not have sheets. The union is also investigating a complaint a child contracted hypothermia while on a film shoot last year. Actors' Equity has tried to introduce an enforceable code... but... the... [talks] broke down because the Screen Producers and Directors Association could not accept the maximum hours recommended by the union, which varied from seven to 10 hours, depending on age. [The association's] executive director... said her group was keen to settle the issue, because it was holding up a new "pink book" of guidelines over engagement of performers... However, [both]... parties admit they have reached an impasse. The union has also asked the Labour Department to amend its Health and Safety in Employment Regulations to cover all workers engaged as employees or contractors[but a department]... adviser... said... "If they want... the regulations changed they need to put pressure on the Government to tell us to change them;"... Production companies were still obliged under the wider implications of the Health and Safety in Employment Act for the welfare of workers and associated people.

...Special effects scenes of [an actor] travelling through space to meet an alien civilisation in the Hollywood sci-fi adventure film *Contact*[, which]... is based on a 1985 novel... were made in N[Z]. Local audiences] will be able to see the scenes when the \$US90 million... film begins its run through the country [in a fortnight]. Weta Digital, the Wellington special effects company that worked on *The Frighteners*, *Heavenly Creatures* and many episodes of the television programme *Hercules* and its spin-off series *Xena, Warrior Princess*, spent about 3 1/2 months working on *Contact* earlier this year... While *The Frighteners* involved 570 special effects scenes and a staff of about 50, the 48 scenes on *Contact* provided work for about 20 staff... The Warners Bros film was rushed to an early release in the U[S] soon after Weta finished its scenes... "It was amazing how fast they got the film into theatres. It was a matter of less than two weeks after the effects were completed,"... Weta's effects producer... said[, adding that] hopefully the scenes would "open up people's eyes" to the N[Z] special effects company, which... collaborated on the film with Hollywood special effects heavyweights Sony Pictures and Industrial Light Magic... *Contact* is also remarkable because[the incumbent US] President... has protested about the use of footage of himself speaking at a news conference about space aliens... [and] interacting with some of the characters in the film... The scene[s were] made possible through the use of digital imaging technology that allows actual television footage... to be spliced into the film.

...Hollywood is compiling a list of the top 100 [US] movies to celebrate the centennial of the silver screen. "This is a landmark moment for... the great art form of the 20th century," said... [the] director of the American Film Institute... at an institute news conference to announce the project - "100 years... 100 movies." Ballots were sent to a "blue-ribbon panel" of 1500 people involved in movies... from actors, directors and cinematographers to screen writers, distributors and exhibitors... Four ballots were sent to[the US] President... and his wife... and[the] Vice-

President... and his wife... A team of the institute's historians came up with a list of 400 films from which the top 100 will be chosen... The list includes... [the] 1941 classic *Citizen Kane*... [the]... 1968 masterpiece *2001: A Space Odyssey*... *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), *Psycho*... 1960, and... *ET: The Extra-Terrestrial* (1982). *Ben Hur* (both silent and sound versions), *Casablanca*, *The Birth of a Nation*, *The Godfather*, *The Searchers*, *Star Wars* and *Chinatown* are also on the list... *Ishtar* is not on the list of candidates for movie greatness[, but one of its stars]... appears in seven of the nominated films – from his 1967 debut in *The Graduate* to 1988's *Rain* [Guy. Two]... movie icons... appear... in nine of the 400 films... The top 100 feature films will be selected on the basis of critical recognition, major awards won, popularity over time, historical significance and cultural impact... "American film-makers set the standard for the world,"... [was the reason given for why] the list was restricted to [US films].

...[44] countries have submitted films in the hope of being among the five Oscar nominees for best foreign film at the 70th... Academy Awards... one short of the record 45... in 1994 and include... Democratic Republic of Congo, Luxembourg, South Africa and Ukraine... for the first time. - 1997

To Oscar winners go the spoils: box-office gold and a slingshot effect on the careers of those who climb the stairs of Hollywood's pantheon at the Academy Awards on Tuesday night (NZ time). The best picture can snare an extra \$35 million post-Oscar from intrigued movie-goers, though if it is *Titanic*, it may not get as big a boost since it has already seriously soaked the box office. "There are lots of awards, but the Oscar is the big one," says... [the] American Film Institute's creative director. "People feel they have to see the winner, because that's the one everyone is talking about." Previous winning films got box-office boosts immediately after they received their Oscars. *The English Patient* climbed 175[%], *Braveheart* 178[%], *Forrest Gump* 127[%] and *Shindler's List* 89[%]. Even Oscar nominations are written in gold, with audiences pouring in to see best picture contenders the week after they were announced on February 10... *L.A. Confidential* got a whopping six-fold bump in revenues, *The Full Monty* 158[% and] *As Good As It Gets* 48[%]... For the principal actors and directors, being nominated has probably improved their lives already, and their boost gets even bigger if they walk off the stage with a golden statuette.

...Big is back in Hollywood. And nowhere will that be displayed more brightly than at the Oscars tomorrow, where big stars and big-budget movies will overshadow last year's darlings, the independent filmmakers. The 70th annual Academy Awards... also marks the comeback of several once-fading stars such as... [one who] found fame 30 years ago as the dope-smoking Captain America in *Easy Rider*... [A]n influential film critic at the Chicago Tribune, predicts [Captain America], aged 58, will take the best actor Oscar for his portrayal of a [n] aging beekeeper... in *Ulee's Gold*... But [the 58-year-old] faces stiff competition from [the star who won an Oscar for *The Graduate* and this year is nominated for its work o]n *Wag the Dog*, his *Easy Rider* co-star... for *As Good as it Gets* and [another]... neglected favourite... that... wrote, directed, financed and starred in... [the] luminous small work... *The Apostle*... But [the star of *As Good as it Gets*] is a Hollywood favourite, and his role as the neurotic writer is the strongest [the actor]'s had in years. The best supporting actors also have their comeback tales, starting with... a top draw of the 1970s who once posed nude in *Cosmopolitan* magazine, had a failed marriage and a career that fell into near obscurity. *Boogie Nights*, pulled [him] back into the limelight for his portrayal of a porn movie director who takes on a father-like role for his troupe of actors. It was a part [the actor] shunned when it was first offered to him, but one that earned him a Golden Globe award as best supporting actor in a drama... In 1997, the independent film *The English Patient* swept the Oscars with nine awards, but this year the billion-dollar blockbuster *Titanic* is expected to win a boatload of honours. When *Titanic* last month won its Golden Globe for best drama, [its]director... asked the awards show audience, "Does this prove once and for all that size matters?" The answer tomorrow from Oscar-voting members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences is expected to be a resounding yes.

...The Academy Awards will be announced this afternoon. Major studios have plastered the usual giant vote-persuading bill-boards around Tinseltown to attract the attention of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences' 5722 members. Some estimates put the spending on advertising as high as \$US50 million... Movie magazines have run full-page ads in the lead-up to the awards... N[Z]ers have put about \$18,000 on the Best Actor race with Centrebet... In the U[S], betting on the Oscar race is illegal in some states, but that has not stopped bookies from giving the odds for fun... [One] Las Vegas odds-maker... has been handicapping the Academy Awards for more than 25 years.

...Last year's Academy Awards honoured the independents. Today, the 70th Academy Awards are likely to mark a return of the major studios to Hollywood's rite of spring, with the shipwreck saga *Titanic* favoured to win big. But as trends come and go, one Academy Awards feature never changes: Price Waterhouse – the accounting firm that year after year delivers "the envelop, please." Price Waterhouse began counting Oscar votes in 1936. There was no sealed-envelope secrecy in those days. The results were given to reporters before the ceremony even began. But in 1940, guests arriving at the gala event were astonished to read about the winners in an early edition of the *Los Angeles Times*. Oops. After that, a veil of secrecy descended on the balloting, and it has yet to be violated... Sometimes the race is close... "In that case we recount the ballots to make sure of the results. Once we had a tie." That was for best actress of 1968... Price Waterhouse makes sure the ballots go to the 5371 eligible Academy voters, then six to eight employees count the ballots... It's curious that in this computer age the Academy ballots are counted the old fashioned way. "We've often talked about whether we should computerise it," says... [the person] who retired last year after 21 years as the firm's [representative] at the Oscars... "For reasons of security, we've stayed away from it. [But e]ven in a computerised system, you still need to touch each ballot once..."

...[the actor] whose arched eyebrows and sardonic voice have made him a Hollywood legend, walked away yesterday with the third Oscar of his extraordinary career. [The actor] has been nominated on 11 occasions, the most for a [guy. The] star... who won as best actor in 1975 for *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and as best supporting actor in 1983 for *Terms of Endearment*, is now tied... among [a pack of] performers with three Oscars. Only [one actress], with four, has more Academy Awards. At the end of his acceptance speech yesterday [the latest three-time winner] dedicated the Oscar to a list of dead people... His personal life could have come from a screenplay... At 37 [the actor discovered the person it] thought was his mother was his grandmother and his two older sisters were really his mother and aunt. Known as a party animal and rogue about town, [the actor]'s... 17-year relationship with... [an actress] ended unhappily... after [the actor] fathered a child with... [someone] young enough to be [his] daughter... For someone who started his Hollywood career as an errand boy at MGM, [the actor] has become a legend since his breakthrough in *Easy Rider*, which coincidentally also starred... one of [his] rivals for this year's Academy Award. Before *Easy Rider*, [the Oscar-winner] spent a decade making second-rate horror and motorcycle movies and seemed destined for a career as a B-movie star. Since then his trademark smirk and no-nonsense acting have made him a popular favourite. As well as critical acclaim [the actor], who has just turned 60, has been a shrewd business[person]. As Batman's Joker [the actor] reportedly netted \$US50 million for his share of the profits... [His] co-star in *As Good As It Gets*... proved that an actress can go from television to the big screen and reap the respect of her Hollywood peers. [As] the only American actress nominated for best actress at the Academy Awards, [the co-star] took home the Oscar for her role as a salt-of-the-earth waitress... The win came on the same day that... [her] TV series co-star... announced that they would both be back next season for their hit show *Mad About You*. Each is expected to make about \$US1 million a show and be given time to do film work. [The actress], who... is involved in three films in development at Sony Pictures Entertainment... [and] has won two Emmys for her performance in *Mad About You*, was convinced from the outset that [her Oscar-winning character] was a dream role and fought for it. [*Titanic* collected Best Director – prompting its director to declare: 'I'm the king of the world!']

...The most expensive and most profitable film in cinema history... climbed to the top of the Academy Awards' roll of honour, winning 11 Oscars, including the award for best picture. *Titanic*, which this month passed \$US1 b... worldwide at the box office... [-] the movie... had generated \$US516 m... in foreign business on top of its \$US402 m... take in Canada and the U[S, and]... steamed past former first-place holder *Jurassic Park*, the 1993... thriller that earned \$US913 m[-] ...now shares with 1959's hot ticket, *Ben Hur*, the distinction of being the most Oscar-honoured film...

The success of *Titanic*, a Paramount picture, is widely seen as a sign of a resurgence of studio power, a signal that the members of the Academy who vote on the Oscar winners are keen to honour their own again after several years in which smaller independent films and foreign, often British, stars loomed large in the list of winners. [The director]'s films – which include the two *Terminator* titles and the disastrous *True Lies* – have never been seen as Oscar material except in the technical areas where budget has always played as big a role as skill in ensuring award success. But *Titanic* changes all that... [The star of *Terminator* (who recently) killed the family labrador by backing over it with his Humvee military vehicle... PS: [the best actor Oscar winner has also been] having pet disasters, having... nearly killed his son's pet Shih Tzu... when [the star of *As Good As It Gets*] accidentally caught it in a swing while driving golf balls from his lawn[– t]he poor little dog needed 57 stitches[)... joked at one point that *Titanic* "may actually show a profit that no accountant can hide" – a reference to the creative bookkeeping by which studios routinely show a hugely successful film as having made a loss for tax purposes... The 70th awards ceremony paid due tribute to Hollywood's long and glorious history. [One old-timer] was given a special Oscar for lifetime achievement for his elegant musicals such as *Singing In The Rain* and *An American in Paris* – and... accepted it in style, snuggling up to the statuette and singing... *Cheek To Cheek* from the 1935 musical *Top Hat*. • In strictly mathematical terms, *Ben Hur* remains the biggest Oscar winner in history. It won 11 of the 12 awards for which it was nominated; *Titanic* won 11 of 14.

...When the film industry's biggest names rolled up to the Academy Awards, stepped from their limousines, offered a few soundbites and showed off their designer threads, many might not have realised that their days as top-billing stars were numbered. Blinded by the paparazzi's flashbulbs, it may be difficult for Hollywood's old guard to recognise that a shift is under way. The actors, directors and producers who have driven the industry for a generation are getting old. Who bought the tickets that propelled *Titanic* to billion-dollar box-office takings? Who ensured that *Scream 2* and *I Know What You Did Last Summer* each took in twice as much as... *The Postman* and... *Mad City* [– co-starring the actors from *Phenomenon* and *The Graduate* –]combined? Teenagers. Stars and executives, many in their 50s, are terrified. Cinema audiences are no longer dominated by their generation, part of the largest demographic boom the world had known. An even larger crop of consumers is taking over. In the U[S] alone there will be 50 million teenagers by 2005. And whatever they want, it will probably not be what their parents want. An annual survey by the industry weekly *Variety* shows that the number of so-called "A-plus" stars capable of "opening" a block-buster film has dropped to four: [the star of *Mission Impossible*; the star of *Braveheart*; the star of *Air Force One*; and the star of *Forrest Gump*]. And even they are more a hedge against failure than a guarantee of box-office success... Teenage movie-goers... don't demand \$30 million stars, and... will go to see the same film again and again. Hence *Titanic*'s billion-dollar take. By comparison, older movie-goers – the baby-boomers – are tricky to please. They're less available, more susceptible to critics... The shift in Hollywood was clearly illustrated recently when Planet Hollywood, the troubled "eatertainment," signalled that it was searching for younger, upcoming stars to take over as celebrity boosters from [its three] action dinosaurs... But it's hard to see the "baby [actors]" ...taking on the thankless task... [When the three dinosaurs] made their way up the red carpet for an evening of back-slapping and schmoozing, it was not for the last time – but their auras may seem fainter. "It's the way of the world," says one Hollywood producer. "The people who thought there would never be another culture look around – and find that there is." ...So Hollywood is concentrating on mega-budget, effect-laden flicks... with plenty of merchandising opportunities and international appeal, or buying up smaller, independently made films which carry less financial risk and offer big profits if they score. *The Full Monty* and *Mr Bean* are the envy of the industry, having both taken more than \$300 million for an outlay of about \$25 million. Though *Titanic* has now sailed past the... \$NZ3.6-billion... mark it will make no more money for its principal backer, Fox, than... *The Full Monty* will make for its subsidiary... – about \$150 million. A full 215 days after its [US] run began, *The Full Monty* still took almost \$750,000 last weekend in the States alone – and, to the delight of the studio, there are no big name stars raking off a percentage of the profits.

...[a NZer is after a % of the film's profits, claiming it's 'a ripoff of his *Gals Night Out* – a play that toured Britain before *The Full Monty* was made.' Speaking of touring, when] *United Travel Getaway*... went to Los Angeles, home of celluloid celebrities, [the crew visited]... Tinseltown, where people can experience what it's like to be a star – complete with Oscar awards, limousine, red carpet, fans and paparazzi. "It was... kind of cheesy but great to pretend and experience the glitz and glamour... the fake fans screaming they loved your last movie, and photographers snapping away..."

...Oh, Hollywood! How dost thou love thyself? Let us count the ways! Last year, the entertainment industry bestowed a whopping 3182 trophies on itself at 332 separate ceremonies – nine awards handed out every day of the year. Still, at least it's a fine excuse for a spot of over-the-top glamour... [T]he latest backpatting ceremony [was] the Screen Actors' Guild Awards. [Incidentally, 'people often say to me, "What's Los Angeles really like?" They say, is it really all palm trees, pink flamingos and people in leather shorts and people saying, "Let's do lunch," or is it, as a lot of people suspect, actually full of a lot of illegal immigrants working for next to nothing, who are deeply discontented, and the answer is, of course, that it's both.']

...We have all heard that everybody gets their 15 minutes of fame at some time in their lives, but in LA that just ain't enough. People here want it all day, every day, and if they can't have it themselves, they'll make sure they're standing damn close to someone who does.

...*HOLLYWOOD'S little helpers*... [Personal assistants are] sherpas to the climbers of the entertainment peaks and granters of wishes to the too-rich and too-famous. It might be sushi at 4am. It might be a private plane to Tibet by tomorrow. It might be exotic animals or a party, or prostitutes for an afternoon. It might just be laundry. But it's always something... "You take care of their personal lives. You work ungodly hours – you don't have a personal life. But that's okay." ...The average job pays about \$65,000 a year, although more difficult stars have to pay more.

...in Hollywood 80[%] of the celebrities divorce; incompatible schedules, ambition, career pressure, endless rumours, alcohol abuse – these are the reasons Tinseltown couples have been splitting like atoms in a nuclear reactor... [● The new] French... movie... *Le Divorce* is about contrary French and American standards for marriage, adultery, divorce and affairs... The 23-year-old beauty... [who portrays] Isabel... freely admits that after three months filming *Le Divorce*... in France, [it] was heartily sick of Americans... "Sometimes I[d] be walking down the street and... hear some American and... just go, 'Of course they hate us, of course they can't stand us. We're the most annoying, boisterous creatures in the world.'..."

...*HOLLYWOOD* [is] hooked on happy pills *HOLLYWOOD* is feeling no pain... as a deadly... drug craze sweeps the movie industry. Prescription painkillers, so-called happy pills, have replaced cocaine and heroin as addictive drug of choice for the rich and famous, turning the town into the Valley of the Dolls once again. The hottest new drug is Vicodin, or "vikes" as they're called on the street. But if they're not available, Percodan or Percocet, called "perkies" of course, are just as powerful... [(Vicodin is not available in N[Z], nor are any pharmaceuticals containing its main ingredient, hydrocodone... perkies are made up of oxycodone)]... Vikes give a feeling of euphoria without any telltale nose twitching, residue powder or needle tracks – and there's no drug paraphernalia needed to ingest them. And, unlike alcohol, there's no hangover. From superstars to supermodels, bus boys to business executives, thousands are popping pain pills – getting high at parties, at home, even at the office... The drug problem is Hollywood's worst-kept secret. During the Golden Globe awards in January, [one] presenter... asked ...a... film funny[guy and cast-member of TV's *Just Shoot Me*]... whether a joke [the *Melrose Place* star had] made had hurt his feelings. [The funnyguy] shook his head and quipped: "Anyway, I found 10 Vicodin in my gift basket." And it was an industry inside joke when Homer Simpson revealed on the kiddie cartoon show *The Simpsons*, of all places, that [it]d once been happily hooked on pain pills. In image-conscious LA, the painkillers are a perfectly acceptable means of getting "wasted", America's popular term for being drunk or high... Vicodin, and another brand, Lortab, known as "pinkies", are the most prescribed pain drugs in the US, costing about \$50 for 100... tablets. That's 50 cents a tab, although addicts pay street dealers \$3 a pill... On the Hollywood party circuit, vikes are in much greater demand than ecstasy tabs. And the hip crowd even throws "Vicodin Sunday" soirees, where bowls of the drugs are left out on the coffee table like Pebbles. A Tinseltown party veteran says: "Painkillers are more acceptable than other drugs. They're talked about openly. You wouldn't tell somebody you're doing heroin. But if you say you've just popped a couple of

vikes, nobody bats an eye.” ...an addiction-recovery specialist for the MusiCares foundation, which handles drug-addicted rock stars, says: “They’re safe, they’re legal – that’s the appeal.” But [the specialist] warns they can become very addictive, adding: “Vicodin detox is harder than heroin detox. It stays in your system longer.” ...About 12[%] of patients who begin using painkillers for legitimate purposes become addicted. The figure is much higher for those who first take the drug just to get high... These synthetic drugs are called opioids and deliver a sedative effect and a feeling of wellbeing similar to opium. Excessive opioid use can cause kidney and respiratory problems and destroy the liver. And 10[%] of all overdoses in America involve hydro or oxycodones... There are many hidden dangers... Common side-effects include dizziness, vomiting and constipation. But at its more severe stage, Vicodin can lead to blood disorders... and even death... Last year, an overdose of vikes killed millionaire playboy Guy Snyder. And Don Simpson, [a]... high-profile drug abuser... [– “s]ex, food, drugs, [Don] had a compulsion for them all[; Don] was a garbage can[” –] ...who produced blockbusters such as *Top Gun*, died in 1996 of a heart attack induced by a cocktail of drugs... Some diehard addicts mix diet pills with vikes or perkies for a pharmaceutical cocktail equivalent to a dangerous speedball. Anxiety drugs like Xanax, Ativan and Valium, consisting of benzodiazepines, are also in constant demand among the film jet-set, although they don’t carry the same euphoric high and are under stricter drug controls. Pill-poppers build up tolerance... and can end up popping... 30 tabs a day. Although three at once would knock out a normal person, regular users need larger doses to feel “right”. Prescription drug abuse hasn’t been so widespread in La-La Land since it was raining Qaaludes in the ’70s.

...*Addicted to excess*... HOLLYWOOD is known for its excess. Excessive wages, excessive budgets, excessive awards shows. Now the drug problem that has long bedevilled the entertainment industry is causing concern not just on account of its excess, but for being unstoppable. The result, as the Hollywood bible *Entertainment Weekly* reports, is that “recovery from addiction has practically become LA’s second-biggest industry.” ...Actors’ careers in jeopardy is only one factor. The other is Hollywood’s growing realisation that rehabilitation is now a routine part of life for many of its recidivist drug users[; including the star] of *Frasier*... and... *Friends* star [Chandler]... Centres such as Malibu Promises... are the immediate refuge for fallen stars. The 30-day treatment at Malibu Promises begins with detox, then a daily regimen that includes group and individual therapy as well as physical workouts... “I think rehab is just absorbed into the culture,” says... [the] author of *Blow*, the non-fiction book about how Hollywood met cocaine, which has been made into a film... “The cycle seems to be: you do a little rehab, you go back to work, the rehab didn’t take, so you go back to drugs, you do a little more rehab... That’s going to be our next story – that rehab doesn’t really work.”

...*As Hollywood studios brace for strike action, a new book reveals their bloody history of union-bashing and the often incestuous relationship between studios, unions and mobsters*... THE studio chief did not like the idea of one of his stars dating a black singer, so [it] asked a mobster to bump him off. The mobster refused and also declined requests to blind the singer. If it sounds like something out of the movies, that’s because it is out of the movies – but it is real life, not a script. The studio boss was Columbia’s Harry Cohn, the s[inger]... Sammy Davis jun. A book has just been published... in the U[S] that looks at the extraordinary history of the film world and the... relationship between studios, unions and mobsters. It zooms in on the bloody union battles of the past, when pickets set cars on fire and reds were seen under every studio bed. The film industry strikes of the 1940s had a resonance that echoes today. At stake was nothing less than control over an industry that was essential in forging people’s consciousness... The same holds true now. Already, the mere possibility of an entertainment industry shutdown is getting about 10 times the press coverage an actual strike in any other sector would receive. This time around the... writers are still at loggerheads with the studios, but the battle has become one of payment for cable and internet rights and intellectual property... But there may be lessons for both sides from the previously unpublished material about the bitter Hollywood strikes of the 40s... One movie that Hollywood has never produced and probably never will is the story of its own unionisation... It would be quite a movie... [Ironically, the threat of strike action in LA comes as the BBC is planning] to compete with Hollywood... The BBC’s new director-general... [want]s to transform it into a world-beating producer of big-budget films. The BBC’s director of television... will be put in charge of a new unit to produce films which could compete for Oscars... “This is a logical way for the BBC to develop... to deal with the most important players in the film world,” a senior BBC executive told... the *Sunday Telegraph*... yesterday... [The director-general] is expected to announce the formation of the new unit today as part of the BBC’s broadcast review. [The director-general] also intends to remove entire levels of bureaucracy and create a more streamlined managerial structure... 500 [to] 1000 jobs are expected to be cut... The *Sunday Express* said the BBC would probably cut several key political programmes, which might anger the Government. Last week, [a Government spokesperson]... wrote to the BBC and complained about the quality and volume of the BBC’s coverage of the E[U] summit in Lisbon. The restructuring plan for the BBC follows demands from [the] Culture Secretary... that the corporation make savings of £1.1 billion... [In local news,] Planet Hollywood, ...one of... the... biggest drawcards... [to] Auckland’s newest entertainment complex... still [needs] to find a local partner to join... its... celebrity co-owners... The Auckland franchise... is on the market for \$2.8 million... The... chain... of... 87... restaurants... worldwide... [made] a \$100m profit in 1997.

...[one of Planet Hollywood’s celebrity co-owners – #3 –] has put his hand up to open[NZ’s first] Planet Hollywood restaurant... [“The star] wants to come down here because [the star’s been to AUS] and loved it so much but never got a chance to get to N[Z].” However, because the star no longer loves his wife so much, Gimme is unlikely to accompany him! By the way, a planned]... \$80 m... merger of cinema operators Hoyts and Village Force has been put on hold by the High Court after objections from the Commerce Commission. The two A[US]n-based companies are planning to merge their overseas interests, including those in N[Z], as part of a cost-cutting measure in response to slowing industry growth. However, the move raised strong objections from independent cinema operators here, who feared a merger would create one dominant player which could dictate terms of supply to film distributors and freeze smaller operators out of the market. Between them Hoyts and Village operate 132 of this country’s estimated 290 cinema screens, but account for... 80% of box office takings, which last year totalled \$110.6m... But in spite of the size of the planned merger, neither company sought Commerce Commission clearance for it to proceed, as they maintained it would not lead to any lessening of competition. That prompted the commission to launch its own investigation... As a result, both [operator]s... have agreed to a deed of undertakings, which effectively puts the merger on hold until a full hearing is set down to determine the matter, which could be several months away.

...The... Planet Hollywood... restaurant planned for the Force Entertainment Centre on Auckland’s Queen St will open, despite the chain losing... almost \$US250 million in the last three months... Bosses say... the restaurant chain... can’t pay off its debt... [However, it is] trying to introduce a crop of younger shareholders, among them [the black star of *Guys In Black* and the guy star of] *Titanic*.

...The head of the N[Z] Motion Pictures Distributors’ Association... said *Titanic* became the biggest earner in local history on Tuesday, when it passed \$7.5 million at the box office. It now leads *Forrest Gump* and *Once Were Warriors* as the most successful films in N[Z] cinemas. The most attended film... is... still *The Sound of Music*, but... the industry long ago replaced admissions with revenue as the main measure of a film’s success.

...Just months after ramming a schoolboy’s head into a fence post... after youths set fire to a sign outside his house... [an] actor... has told A[US]n magazine *Sunday*: “In real life, I never get angry”. [The actor], who escaped conviction after accepting diversion in the North Shore District Court, told the magazine [about finding] it hard to switch off the brutal energy required to play Jake the Muss in *Once Were Warriors*.

...*Jake goes straight* [The actor] was the villain of the piece for *Once Were Warriors*... Cook the [guy] some f...g eggs, [wife] – it’s perhaps the most famous line from a N[Z] movie and one which has haunted [the actor since it] played Jake The Muss... Jake orders his wife to make his friend those eggs and when [the wife] refuses, lays into her with the full force of his temper and fists. Seven years on from *Once Were Warriors* the line is still whispered behind [the actor]’s back and shouted out by the guys collecting his rubbish. It is, [the actor] says, irritating. So when [the actor] had the chance to play the hero in the Kiwi movie *Crooked Earth*, you would think [it] would have jumped at the chance to shake off Jake’s bad image. But

[the actor] hesitated when the producers asked him to play a war veteran and town saviour. [The actor] wanted to be the bad guy – again. It took some persuasion on the part of the production team, which included [the *Once Were Warriors* producer... to talk him into tackling his first lead role as a good guy. Described as an action-packed saga, *Crooked Earth* takes a classic theme – conflict between two brothers – and reworks it with a N[Z] twist... It is [hi]s first home-grown feature since... repris[ing] Jake for *What Becomes of the Broken Hearted*... [The actor] has jetted all over the world to appear in Hollywood films like *Barb Wire*, *Speed II* and *Six Days Seven Nights*[... allowing the Kiwi to sample]... the Hollywood good life – even if some of those films haven't exactly been blockbusters material... After *Crooked Earth*, it was quickly back to the bad guys roles and the Hollywood lifestyle. [The actor] travelled to A[US] to play bounty hunter Jango Fett in *Star Wars: Episode II* which will be released next year.

...This year saw the loss of one of N[Z]'s most prized treasures. Television and film star Kevin Smith lost his life... in China leaving his childhood sweetheart... a widow and their three boys, [aged] 11... nine, and five... without a dad. Sadly, Kevin was on the brink of international stardom at the time of his death. After 13 years in the industry, the 38-year-old had scored a role in a Hollywood... movie *Tears of the Sun*... alongside [#3].

...*One of God's better people* The country mourns the death of actor Kevin Smith, on the way to becoming N[Z]'s next best thing in Hollywood... As the leather-clad, bicep-bulging Ares, God of War, in the TV series *Xena: Warrior Princess*... Kevin... won worldwide fame after years of acting with little recognition outside his home country... Right now Kevin should have been snatching some time with his family and preparing to go to Hawaii to start filming the blockbuster... [Guy] of War with [#3]. Hollywood had finally beckoned the boy from Timaru. It was, quite literally, a dream come true. [Kevin ha]d come close to landing some big roles in the past but always narrowly missed out. Yet Kevin kept on knocking on Hollywood's door. "I'm incredibly happy but there will be unfinished business if I don't try Hollywood again," [Kevin] said back in 1996. "I'll always be wondering 'what if?'" ● ...Friends and colleagues... will pay their respects at a memorial... in the Aotea Centre, Auckland, tomorrow. Smith... died on February 16 after... falling from a three-storeyed... film-set castle in China... Members of the public are welcome to attend.

...A... plea for extra shields to stop movie-goers plunging... from escalators at Auckland's Force Entertainment Centre has been shunned. The Occupational Safety and Health Service... fears the barriers on the escalators – which criss-cross up... 20m through the centre of the new complex – are not enough to prevent a fatal fall to the marble floor below. The service is particularly worried about teenagers fooling around on the escalators or riding the hand-rails four floors up. The escalators meet the national building code, but four months ago[an] OSH inspector... wrote to Force Corporation strongly recommending that it consider installing extra protections. A complaint from a Manurewa [resident]... that a teenager had almost fallen from one of the upper escalators while fooling around with friends sparked OSH's inspection, but the incident was outside its jurisdiction because [the complainant wasn't] an employee. [The inspector] cited two accidents at the Finance Plaza in 1991 and 1992 and another at the Sky City Casino where people riding the moving handrail on escalators died after falls. Plastic barriers were installed at both buildings after those accidents. Although [the inspector] agreed that people should not ride the handrails... "unpredictable human behaviour" coupled with its being an entertainment venue could cause a similar accident... Her branch manager... was disappointed guards had not been put in place... Force[']s managing director... did not respond to requests for an interview... on Tuesday and Wednesday. Last night [the managing director] refused to comment, saying it was important to speak to the centre's architect this morning... [The] Auckland City Council... building development manager... said the escalators had just been issued with a compliance certificate and [it] was comfortable that Force met the building code... "I do not believe it is really an issue," said... [a council] building inspector who also checked the escalators... "[But y]ou can't legislate against stupid people."

...A group of high school students tried to catch their friend Danial Gardner as [it] fell backwards over a barrier at the Imax cinema complex. But their desperate lunge was too late and the 16-year-old fell five floors to his death in front of his horrified friends, who had been waiting near the ticket counter to see *Scary Movie* at 4 pm on Friday. Now his family want answers after being told the Force Entertainment Centre in Queen St was "an accident waiting to happen." Danial's father... said his son, a fifth-former at Sacred Heart College in Glen Innes, was celebrating the start of the school holidays and a friend's birthday when the accident happened. "Danial moved backwards to lean against the barrier and... just disappeared over the side..." Danial fell 30m and landed on a table at Borders bookstore. The table remained untouched yesterday, with books scattered on the floor. A bunch of white lilies marked the ledge where [Danial] fell. The death follows a[n] OSH safety inspector's plea... for extra shields to stop moviegoers falling from escalators... Despite Friday's death, it seems unlikely Force will be prosecuted. OSH... officers examined the scene on Friday night but an investigation was unlikely because it was not a work-related accident and therefore not within the service's jurisdiction... [Danial's father] has not been inside the Imax complex himself, but has heard bad safety reports from mourning family and friends who have visited the family's Papakura home since the accident... "If Danial's death can prevent this happening to someone else's child, then it has not been in vain." ...the autopsy showed no sign of alcohol and drugs, "as we expected. [Danial] was just a normal kid, sensible and someone who cared for others... I haven't looked upon Danial as a son, but as a gift... [Danial] was more than a son. [Danial] loved his mother... cherished her. I don't know how [Danial] would handle it if [Danial] could see the way [his mother] is suffering right now." ...A Force spokes[person] said all handrails and barriers within the complex complied with standards but [it] expected that management would review that today.

...The ledge in the Imax cinema complex where Danial Gardner fell to his death may be below the legally required height. Three experts have told the *Herald* that the building code regulations say that a barrier between a change of floor levels in a non-residential building must be at least 1m high. But a check by the newspaper yesterday showed that the ledge at the Queen St centre is only 94cm high... The new measurement has prompted a change of thinking by... OSH... officials, who previously said they had no reason to investigate Danial's death, just over a week ago. But a council spokes[person] said last night that the council still believed the building complied with the Building Act... No one from Force Corporation could be contacted yesterday. The company had previously said that it would not discuss the accident until an investigation was complete.

...Danial Gardner's shoes remain on a shoe rack outside the front door of his south Auckland home and his room is just as [the 16-year-old] left it... "For a change, it was actually a bit tidier than it normally is," his mum... says with a wry smile. But Danial will never be coming home... Danial's parents... and his sisters... (18) and... (14), are still coming to terms with the shocking loss of their much loved son and brother. The lounge of the family's Papakura home is full of flowers, cards and letters from family, school friends, teachers and even strangers touched by Danial's death. A photo of Danial's Ardmore-Marist under-17 rugby team stands proudly alongside numerous other pictures of the teenager, a self-confessed sports fanatic who was always ready with a smile or a joke... The Gardners are composed and dignified as they speak about their love for their son but [his mother admits it] is not ready to accept Danial won't be returning to his room in the basement of their home... The family was overwhelmed by the support at Danial's funeral. More than 600 mourners farewelled the popular student, who excelled academically. Most were young people and the Gardners were touched by the anecdotes of their times with Danial. "I think it was a tribute to Danial so many young people were there, especially as it was the school holidays... We found out [Danial] was a lot more popular with the girls than [it] let on,"... Now all the Gardners want is to ensure other families are not touched by a similar tragedy. [His father] says the shock is slowly being replaced by anger, especially at the reaction of the cinema complex's owners and government agencies to his son's death. "...nobody wants to take some responsibility for making such a dangerous place for young people... The attitude of people, from Imax to OSH... and the council – all ducking for cover, hoping this will go away – makes me angry. Unless something is done, it will lead to another child's death..." ● OSH... says it is investigating the incident. As we went to press Force Corporation began work to raise the barrier.

...Safety inspectors cannot lay charges over the faulty installation of a loudspeaker that fell on a child in an Auckland cinema. The speaker fell 4m, striking [the] 12-year-old... on the right shoulder as [the girl] watched a movie at the Force Entertainment Centre... Its wires also scratched her left arm. O[SH] has just completed its investigation into the... incident... [I]nspectors found the wall bracket holding the speaker was “not fastened as well as it should have been.” However, the actual cause of the speaker’s fall and whoever was responsible could not be established... Even if someone was found to have broken the law, it was too long after the installation of the speaker for a prosecution to be made... [P]rosecutions under the Health and Safety in Employment Act must take place within six months of an offence... [T]he act required all practicable steps to be taken to ensure safety and any breach carried a maximum fine of \$50,000. The building’s safety was cleared by the Auckland City Council and OSH did not think it practicable to expect building operators to check every fixture and fitting after receiving a building warrant of fitness. The acting group manager of Auckland City Environments... said checking the fastenings of the speaker was not part of the council’s inspection process. The chief executive of Village Force Cinemas... said all speakers in the theatre were removed and reinstalled soon after the incident... [In related news, the Civic Theatre]’s place in the hearts of Aucklanders was reaffirmed yesterday, as... [u]p to 25,000... passed through... [it]s doors to view the results of a... \$42 million restoration... After tomorrow, the civic will be open only for performances and will not be open to the public during the day... Entertainment yesterday on the main stage and in the downstairs Wintergarden area was reminiscent of the Civic’s heyday in the 1930s and 1940s.

...the property company behind Auckland’s new \$75 million entertainment centre, has decided to bail out N[Z]’s first Planet Hollywood restaurant after a fruitless... two-year search for a local investor. The hunt was thwarted by serious financial problems facing the [US]-based company which founded the chain... The chain plans to close up to 20 of its... restaurants after losing more than \$US243 million [in a single] year. It confirmed yesterday that it would restructure to try to stave off bankruptcy... Work finally began on the interior of the[Auckland] restaurant yesterday... In May, Planet Hollywood Asia dropped its asking price for a half-share of the franchise... to \$1.8 million, and agreed to waive its franchise fee, during talks with... [a local investor], who pulled out at the last minute[... allegedly]... because the Singaporean company wanted too big a slice of the restaurant’s sales... However, [the]... broker... handling the deal, said: “[The local] was offered a fantastic deal but the reality [is it] was pipped at the post [by Force].”

...The Force will soon be with us – that mystical, other-worldly power to convince otherwise sensible earthlings to trade billions of dollars of hard-earned dollars for hats, toys, T-shirts, games and myriad other paraphernalia linked to the *Star Wars* movie phenomenon. By next month *The Phantom Menace*, the first episode of the much-anticipated *Star Wars* prequel trilogy, will be omni-present. The images will be on Pepsi Cola cans and Frito Lay crisp bags, in Pizza Huts, in toy shops and computer outlets, in bookstores, even on sheets, towels and blankets. Oh, and you can watch it all pass before your eyes in the movie theatre, too... distributed by... 20th Century Fox... In the U[S], tens of millions of dollars will already have been made by all those with a piece of Hollywood’s most lucrative licence, even before cinema doors open... “It will be a very expensive year,” promises the editor of... a popular Internet Website devoted to *Star Wars* memorabilia collectors. “But it will also be an exciting one.” ...Internet traffic is jammed on some 300 Websites as aficionados trade gossip about plot lines, light-sabre technology, action sequences, even computerised special-effects techniques... November’s release of a teaser trail saw millions of grown[ups] queuing up for the box-office loser *Meet Joe Black*, purely to get a two-minute glimpse of [the advertisement]... In New York, there were reports of whoops and cheers at the mere sight of the [director’s production company’s] logo; in Los Angeles, audiences for *The Siege* jumped 1147[%] the day the trailer was shown... [S]ince the first *Star Wars*... merchandise built around Luke Skywalker, Darth Vader, R2-D2, Princess Leia and Obi-Wan Kenobi has grossed \$US4.5 billion[... or]... four times the box-office take of the first three movies. Although there is never a guarantee when it comes to predicting what toys and games children will demand from their parents, retailers and licensees of the new *Star Wars* merchandise are betting princely sums on that past performance. The... toy giant Hasbro and its newly acquired sister company Galoob Toys beat competition for the exclusive [US] licensing rights from rival Mattel by paying... [the director’s] production company... some \$US610 million. Industry insiders expect Hasbro will earn \$US5 billion of sales from *Phantom Menace* and the other two prequels... Much of the new merchandise remains a fiercely guarded trade secret... [The director] has forced... his staff... and... all licensees – and every would-be buyer who saw some of the goods during February’s American International Trade Fair in New York – to sign strict confidentiality agreements. The media haven’t got a look in. Nor have retailers – and if they try to sell the new merchandise before the official... starting gun, [the director (who)]... raked in a cool \$800 million... for... the... year[)] ...has warned, they will be permanently banned from selling any *Star Wars* products.

...Well, it didn’t take long for *Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace* to be pirated. The first popcorn was still being munched at its preview when CD-sweatshops in Macau began distributing digital copies over the Web. Downloading, though, involved more commitment... than most of us possess – more than 24 hours by satellite was the experience of one dogged techie I know who was determined to be the first geek in N[Z] to view it. A VCD version is also available... which takes about 16 hours... [E]lectronic cinema arrived last month when the low-budget *Dead Broke*... was premiered simultaneously in a theatre and on the Net... The site featured [a] 30-minute movie *Peephole* earlier this year.

...Being a fan [of a movie star once] took dedication and persistence... Weeks later, if you were lucky, back came the reply... to... [your] letter... – it was a signed photograph with “love always...” ...Today, you can express your adoration in a matter of seconds on the Internet. Suddenly, the stars are clickable. The stuff of dreams is as close as your keyboard. You may be the girl [the star of *Titanic*] has been looking for all his life, so go pledge your love right away at www.celebrityemail.com/celebrityemail/index.htm, where you will find him along with [his *Titanic* co-star, the star of *Phenomenon*] and 100 others. If there isn’t a known e-mail address, *Celebrity E-mail* will redirect your message to the most appropriate Website... or send it by snail-mail via US Post. And it’s not just screen-stars you can click on to – you’ll find writers, politicians and sporting legends on the Net as well... [T]hey also have an “Inhuman” category... Search by name, location or claim to fame – from a high of 734 (politicians) to a low of [3] (crime fighters)... Don’t just yearn after the supermodels seen in the glossies – you can pester them in person at *Supermodels... Realms of Magic*... or the *Actress Archives*... where the icons of the present... mingle with the gorgeous ghosts of the past... Lest we forget, kneel with me beside the tomb of the immortal Sarah Bernhardt in the cemetery of Le Pere Lachaise in Paris... From one end of the spectrum (*Babemania*... which despite its cheesy name is a good guide to celebrity sites) to the other (*Famous [Gals]*... which emphasises cleavage rather than accomplishment), the girl of your dreams is on the Web. As for the boy of your dreams, try [Guy] *Celebs on the Web*, where [the star of *Mr Bean*] rubs shoulders with [the star of *Meet Joe Black*] – although you won’t find those legendary if somewhat disillusioning pool-shots of [the star] which are floating round the Net.

...The... 23-year-old... has starred in 12 films, though most cinemagoers know only the [3] most recent – *Titanic*, *The [Guy] in the Iron Mask* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Yet by this month 11 biographies will have been published... In addition... fanatics can browse... 400... websites [dedicated to him].

...the latest] Hollywood heart-throb... feels that his celebrity image is at times out of control and wishes [it] could escape to a secret island. “Sometimes I have no control over all this,” [the young actor] said after a weekend screening of his new film *The Beach* at the Berlin Film Festival. “This image is separate from me. I try to detach myself from it as much as possible. The force of “Leomania” in Germany was on display at the 50th annual Berlin Film Festival, where more than 1000 teenage fans crowded behind police barricades for a glimpse of the star of the 1997 blockbuster *Titanic*. A news conference with [him]... was broadcast live on television, and a tabloid newspaper offered \$NZ1040 in a front-page challenge for any Berlin girl who managed to steal a kiss from the American... In... [his latest] film, based on... [the] 1996 novel *The Beach*, [the actor] plays a bored American backpacker addicted to electronic games and devoid of values in search of adventure. [The American] and two fellow travellers learn about a secret island in Thailand unspoiled by tourism... But the paradise on the island doesn’t last. The evil sides of the characters emerge in the second half of the film – [the American] even kills a fellow tourist – to give the dark edge that... the director of *Trainspotting*, is

famous for. [The role] – as an unfaithful, spoilt, self-absorbed ingrate who coldly helps eject an injured friend from the beach community – is a far cry from his starring role in *Titanic*. Furthermore, the film is an original – unlike his other *most recent* films, all three of which were remakes].

...*Hollywood's secondhand dealers revive old shows* How do you remake a film or TV series that has been a hit without alienating those who loved the original? It's a tough call but there are plenty of studios and producers ready to have a go. This year a host of vintage television hits [have been] remade into feature films – including *The Mod Squad*, *My Favourite Martian* and *The Wild Wild West* – featuring the black star of *Guys in Black*. We've just had *Lost In Space* and *Mission Impossible* and there's going to be a *Mission Impossible 2*... *The Birdcage* showed how to do a remake well. But Disney's updating of the 1949 gorilla-comes-to-America hit, *Mighty Joe Young*, didn't set the box-office alight[, while the] almost scene-by-scene remake of... *Psycho* bombed and so did [#1's] attempt to emulate... [a] classic role in a reworking of... *Gloria*. Horror stories are one genre that hasn't been overdone as far as remakes are concerned. Universal has high hopes for *The Mummy*... to be followed by *Frankenstein*, even though... [another version of] *Frankenstein* fizzled in 1994... Hollywood... [is also currently] reworking *The Thomas Crown Affair*... and... the 1963 British hit *The Haunting*, this time titled *The Haunting of Hill House*... Even Mickey Mouse, who turned 69-years-old in 1997, is due to receive a makeover 'to reflect the edgier times and become a harried 90s creature.' ...The new animated movie... *Tarzan Of The Apes*... by Disney has just been released... Edgar Rice Burroughs's novel... was first printed in 1912 and there are some 43 movies of the same name.

...The [superstar currently making] the second *Mission Impossible* movie... [-] given the streamlined moniker of *M:I-2*... [-] in and around Sydney, [has]... sued a porn actor for \$US100 million... charging that the... "erotic wrestler"... spread a false story that [it and the superstar] had a gay love affair that wrecked [the superstar's] marriage to a [n AUSn a]ctress... "There is not a germ of truth to this vicious, self-promoting story," the lawsuit says. "While [the superstar] thoroughly respects others' rights to follow their own sexual preference, [it] is not a homosexual and had no relationship of any kind with [the porn actor] and does not even know him." The... [superstar] filed for divorce... in February, splitting up one of Hollywood's hottest couples and providing grist for tabloid newspapers, which have speculated on the cause of the marital troubles.

...[a superstar] has won a whopping US\$10 million judgment in his recent lawsuit against a gay porn star who says [it]... got down and dirty with the actor. [The d]efendant... admitted... lying and said [it] wouldn't actively try to defend himself in the lawsuit. This is the second judgment [the superstar] has won to quash rumours that [it was gay after the porn star] had told a French magazine, *Actstar*, that his hot and steamy homosexual love affair with [the superstar] led to the demise of his marriage with a [n AUSn a]ctress... and their eventual divorce.

...Money isn't everything, right? Fame together with money is. Or so *Forbes* figures. Using a formula that combines the two, the magazine says [the superstar] tops its latest Celebrity 100 list. Hollywood stars and athletes dominated the... third annual... list released this week... In its latest [list], *Forbes* first determined who made the cut by totalling up top celebrity earners in 14 categories. Then media attention and other "metrics of fame" were factored in. Last year's No 1, [#4], fell to No 15 despite her hit movie [about a crusader (r:p771, ln19)] and being the odds-on favourite for the best-actress Oscar... ["The actress] just didn't make as much money this year..." said... the senior editor who oversaw compilation of the list. Noting that *Forbes* considers itself a capitalist tool and not a pop-culture bible like *Entertainment Weekly*, [the editor] said: "Money gets the priority weight." [The editor] also said the rankings were not meant to suggest that [this year's No 1] wielded the clout of studio heads. [The superstar], who starred in... [the] box-office success, *Mission: Impossible*... vaulted to No 1 from last year's No 20. Not only did [the superstar] earn much more money... than in the year before (\$US43.2 million versus \$US27 million), but his media exposure increased dramatically... [The superstar] racked up 11 cover stories and 139,000 Web hits as opposed to one cover story and about 27,000 Web hits... Recently, [the superstar] has been making news because of his marriage breakup... ■ [The]... star of *Hannibal*... is poised to play... [the] boss in the upcoming *Mission Impossible 2*, pocketing \$10 million for just five days' work. And this was the chap who only six months ago said [it] was permanently through with acting.

...WHAT a feast! *Hannibal* has devoured all competition at the American box office after opening last weekend on 5000 movie screens – the biggest release ever. It didn't matter one shred that [the] *Silence of the Lambs* director... had bowed out because [it had deemed the]... best-selling sequel too violent, nor that [#7 – who co-starred in *SOTL* –] disapproved of the violent ending... *Hannibal* is a mega-hit. But perhaps the biggest factor in its success is Hannibal himself. [The actor] is superb. Again. "I was mildly disappointed that [#7 and the director] were not up for the sequel, but I didn't go out of my way to persuade them," says [the actor], who... did not complain either when the book's ending was changed for the film. "I liked the ending of the book, but I trust the decisions of the director, writer and producer. I don't get involved in the politics... of film-making... I'm too mentally lazy for that." ...But isn't [the actor afraid that it] has joined the pantheon of movie legends by playing a cannibal? "I don't care what I'm remembered for... I don't give a hoot." [The actor] is nevertheless fascinated that audiences are attracted to the dark, bleak side of the human condition. "It's more stimulating for audiences to see evil on screen... It gives us a thrill. I realise it's not everyone's taste to experience someone else's nightmare, but this film has excited a lot of people. Being safe, or... politically correct, that's the greatest cancer of all."

...HANNIBAL "The Cannibal" Lector is back – badder and more brutal than ever. Ten years after *Silence of the Lambs* [the actor] returns as everyone's favourite people-eater. And as in *Silence of the Lambs*, audiences will be shocked by the film but still cheer the character doing the shocking. Disembowelment, a shootout involving a mother and baby and [hu]man-eating pigs all feature this time. [The actor] is quick to defend the film. "...What do we want? ...to see Houdini not get out of the box. That doesn't make us sick people... It's like watching *Psycho* or *Jaws*..."

...*Jaws* took terror to a new level on its release... and has been blamed for dumbing down Hollywood... The theory goes that before *Jaws*, the 70s was a golden age for American movies, high-lighted by the subtlety and maturity of such masterpieces as *Chinatown*... and the *Godfather* films. After *Jaws* came a... steady decline. Movies were reduced to slick "concepts" and special effects, with quality diving, squealing out of the water.

...IT'S NOT just something in the water. It's something in the era – horror is hot again. Moviegoers have already had cheap *Jaws*-hand-me-down thrills with the recent *Lake Placid* (crocodile eats resort) and *Deep Blue Sea* (franken-sharks give new meaning to "scientific digest"). As well, there's been panto-horror *The Mummy* (Behind youuuu! Oh, never mind). But that's only the beginning of what is shaping up to be a severely scary millennium countdown at the multiplex... While those special effects-driven monster flicks are going for the adrenalin gland – or trying to bite your arm off – there's another batch of horrors designed to scare us in deep and meaningful ways, and already they've cleaned up at the U[S] box office. That success suggests there's an appetite for horror that's psychological, supernatural and beyond the grave, or involving pre-millennial twists on matters religious and apocalyptic. This movie annus horribilis has been spearheaded by two films from different corners of [US] film-making. *The Blair Witch Project*... has ridden an Internet-generated hype all the way from Web page to national magazine covers since its... [US] release. The mock-doco, about three students who go into the woods to unravel a witch legend, and which cost its makers just \$US40,000... has already topped \$US138 million in stateside earnings. The other horror phenomenon has been *The Sixth Sense*... which stars [actor #3] as a child psychologist with a patient who claims paranormal powers connected to an afterlife. The film, which has kept its star a low-key presence in its marketing, has grossed \$US225 million in the States and looks likely to become second most popular movie of the year to *Phantom Menace*... [B]oth *Blair Witch* and *The Sixth Sense* suggest that mainstream audiences don't want their horror films winking at them any more or pouring on the gore, but some other films of the late-90s horror season would seem to be putting the fear of God into us... [One actor] stars in two of them... in *Stigmata*... [the actor is] a Vatican investigator... searching for an answer to why [an] atheist... is suffering the wounds ascribed to Jesus on the Cross. And in *End of Days*... [the actor] is playing Satan himself, who arrives on Earth and must bed a virgin before millennial midnight to take over the rule of heaven and hell... Somewhere between *Silence of the Lambs* and *Seven*, serial killers wore out their welcome as 90s horror movie monsters. But the slasher-flick, the psychological horror film's bloodied brother, has undergone a post-modern reinvention in recent years... [The]

Scream series, which will soon unleash its third instalment, yucked it up with its knowing hey-this-is-like-being-in-a-horror-movie references and spawned the forgettable likes of *Urban Legend*, *The Faculty*, *I Know What You Did Last Summer* and its sequel.

...BURNING questions... confront us on the edge of the millennium: who... are all these kids... that [our] kids go to see at the movies? ...They're the products of the starmaking machinery which [News Corp's tycoon] perfected and which runs like a Beverly Hills version of a Detroit assembly line these days. Take a half dozen cute teenagers. Put them in a show on your TV network, like *Party of Five*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Sabrina*. Write them up in your TV guide and supermarket tabloids. Make a record too, because with modern technology they don't have to be able to sing, and put it out on your label. All of a sudden the kids are stars and you can put them in movies. Which helps when you own a studio like, say, 20th Century Fox... The formula worked so brilliantly that the fairly routine teen-slasher flick *I Know What You Did Last Summer* was a box-office smash for Columbia Pictures and a sequel was only a matter of time. *I Still Know What You Did Last Summer*... reunited the cast a year after the first movie... This movie was made for an audience and that audience will love it. But if you're old enough to [not be a part of that audience], you're not the person who should be watching *I Still Know What You Did Last Summer*.

...You're a major Hollywood executive working on a film that contains some violent scenes. It could be a cheap horror movie... But it's a film whose violent content restricts it to an adult audience. And just once in a meeting, in a phone call, a memo, you mention that the film might go down well with kids. Months, years later, when you've completely forgotten the conversation took place, you could find yourself questioned by federal investigators or called before the U[S] Congress to explain exactly what your words meant. There's even a chance that one day you might face charges or be sued. Until a couple of weeks ago, this was just one of the many measures being debated in Congress in the panic that followed the Littleton high school massacre. Then[the US] President... stepped in and ordered the Federal Trade Commission and the Justice Department to investigate whether film, record and video-game companies are secretly targeting teenagers as the audience for "adult" products. The President's instruction to the entertainment industry was plain, "Don't make young people want what your own rating system says they shouldn't have." As American teenagers are Hollywood's biggest audience, [the President]'s speech threatened to turn the business upside down. In the short term, it's hard to see Hollywood having any choice but to play along. There's tough talk, of course. "These films that people say are so violent are also being watched in Japan, Europe and everywhere else in the world," says... [the] president of the Motion Picture Association of America, which provides films with their rating certificates... But concessions have been made. The season's finale of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* was postponed because it involved violence at a graduation ceremony, leaving the audience stranded in the middle of a two-part story. Still, for Hollywood to turn its back on violence, it would have to reject its own past: all the Westerns, gangster movies and horror movies. And where do war films fit?

...Plunging to new depths... It's been nearly 20 years since... *Das Boot* went dive, dive, dive into the canon of classic war films. It was something rather rare in the genre. A German production for starters, it was a beautifully realised depiction of war. How it dripped with lip-biting tension, breathless claustrophobia and anti-war sentiment. How it told you so much more than you ever wanted to know about fighting a war in a tin can beneath the sea's surface. Evidently [the director of *U-571*] was watching – just not very closely. In his tribute to the Yank submariners who served in... W[W2], the American writer and director... is plainly seeking to deliver an American *Das Boot*, but instead rather hopelessly paraphrases [the German director]'s superior work. This is gung-ho film-making about gung-ho subject matter at its GI Joe worst, employing minimal subplotting and entirely no subtext to tell it like it in fact wasn't. It is a fictionalised account of a rather important turning point during the war, describing an attempt to snaffle a Nazi "Enigma" machine, a code generator which proved extremely difficult for the Allies to obtain and successfully break. The year is 1942 and battle is raging in the shipping lanes of the North Atlantic. Allied – particularly American – freighters are being sunk in vast numbers by German submarines which are able to communicate and target the good guys' shipping in secret, thanks to Enigma. In an opening sequence that sets the tone for the film, the title's German u-boat enjoys and suffers, in rapid succession, the success and disaster of submarine warfare. After sinking a freighter, U-571 is in turn crippled by an Allied warship and the Germans are forced to dispatch a please-help message home. Despite no Enigma, the Americans work out what's going on and dispatch a submarine to intercept U-571 and snatch its Enigma machine and code settings before a German support submarine can come to the u-boat's aid. America's S33, a... W[W1]-era sub, has the mission and heads out to sea... Of course, S33 finds U-571, then there's success, then failure, then success, then failure, then... well, inevitably it all leads to a death-or-glory proposition that is so entirely implausible it must be Hollywood... We know America conquered Burma with a little help from Errol Flynn. We assume most Americans now know their navy captured the enigma code from U-571, despite the caption at the end of the film... ● [The w]riter/director... says [it] based U-571 on several historical events – the capture of an enigma machine from U-110 by the Royal Navy in May, 1941... [(t)he U-boat had been depth-charged by a British destroyer; t]he Germans had opened the sea cocks and the submarine was sinking; t]he Royal Navy sent a boarding party who retrieved the code machine[– unfortunately, o]ne rating went down with the sub[marine)]... the British seizure of a short weather enigma cipher from U-559 in October, 1942, and the capture of U-505 by the US Navy in June, 1944.

...U-571... [is an e]xciting... suspenseful action flick based on the real-life capture of [the] Enigma code machine – which changed the course of W[W]II. Pity... the American's had to appropriate it from the Brits... I now am waiting for the next epic, 'how the [US] won the Battle of Britain'.

...When... [the] 16-year-old nephew... [of the director of the war film *Saving Private Ryan*] enrolled at a private school the staff and pupils were thrilled – until they learned that "[little-S]" was not quite what [it] claimed and "Uncle [big-S]..." was furious... IN THE spirit of forthright benevolence for which [it] was justly renowned, [the]... headmaster of Paul VI Catholic High School, a mildly illustrious establishment 32km south-west of Washington, DC, sat down at the end of last year and dictated a letter to the film director... It warned [the director] that his 16-year-old nephew, Jonathan, a pupil at the school, was squandering his privileges. Not to put too fine a point on it, wrote the head, the boy's work was extremely poor, and his attendance record was deplorable. While the headmaster appreciated having such a famous name on the school's books, and acknowledged [the director]'s generosity in paying the... \$12,000-a-year fees, the fact was that Jonathan would have to shape up or go. The letter was intended to give [the director] a timely jolt, and it did. The next day the film-maker's office telephoned to point out that [the big-S] didn't have a nephew called Jonathan, had never heard of Paul VI Catholic High School, and was dispatching his head of personal security to investigate. Which, in a nutshell, is how the slight, mop-haired figure of Jonathan... previously... of Tehran, came to appear in... the old courthouse in Fairfax, Virginia, charged with forgery and aggravated misrepresentation... [T]he best that can be said at this early stage is that, so far as hoaxes go, Jonathan[']s... seems to border on greatness. Although [the Iranian] spent an entire year in a class of teenagers, his real age may be closer to 27. And his show-business antecedents extend no further than a cameo role in a 1996 porn film, in which [it played]... a blonde-wigged transvestite cruiser in a Los Angeles lesbian bar. Young [Jonathan] is currently at liberty on \$15,000 bail. [Jonathan] lives with his mother... in Fairfax Square, a fashionable housing development close to the town centre, but when I hammer on his door early one morning there is no reply... [even though] his BMW is still sitting in a corner of the carpark. I notice that something has been finger written on its dusty flanks: "Give [little-S]... an Oscar."

...[the big-S says: 'The star of my movie *Saving Private Ryan*] is the most moral [perso]n I have ever known.' ...[the Oscar-winning star of the movie *Forrest Gump*] had two children... [with] his first wife... before they split up in 1985, and today... has been happily married for 11 years to... the... actress... mother of his two [younger] children... nine, and... four. "People ask us what's the secret," [the actor says when talking about the person it] met on the forgettable comedy *Volunteers*. "I think liking each other is a really good thing, along with respect, a sense of humour and Chinese food every Sunday!" Along with [an] unstable childhood came a fascinating exposure to diverse religious beliefs. "OK, hold on to your hats here... I was Catholic for a while and lived with an aunt who was Nazarene. My second stepmother was into the Mormon church thing, which my dad didn't care for too much. Then all through junior high school, my best friends were Jews and then I was a born-again Christian through high school, and

I went to the Episcopal Church for a while and now my wife is very much a Greek Orthodox, so I'm the U[N] of religion! Ultimately, God and the universe is a mystery to me and I'm totally happy being in the dark as far as what that mystery is... If anybody comes up to me and says they've solved the mystery of the universe, I just think one thing – you are the stupidest fool I've ever come across!" ...[While on the topic of religion, in the] new movie *Bruce Almighty* [the main]... character... rages against God... God responds by handing over his job to him.

...A doomed ship, space rocks, combat and comedy combined to propel Hollywood to a record year at the box office, pulling in nearly \$US7 billion... in North America alone... That... total was an increase of more than 9[%] over last year. Attendance also jumped more than 5[%], to 1.46 billion tickets sold, according to Exhibitor Relations Co Inc. Since 1988, domestic receipts have surged 56[%], while the average ticket price has gone up just 16[%]. Attendance has increased 35[%], while the population has risen about 11[%]... movie executives cited changes in exhibition, particularly the increasing number of megaplexes that offer dozens of screens, cleaner lobbies and more comfortable seats. "Finally, the excellent motion picture has the opportunity to play in the excellent theatre," said [the]Disney distribution head... [T]hree of the top five movies... had the studio bosses laughing all the way to the bank... Paramount and Disney had more than \$US1 billion each in domestic grosses, while 20th Century Fox topped \$US730 million and Sony and Warner Bros each neared \$US700 million... The boom in movie grosses, however, is being offset by increasing costs... [and, with the exception] of *Titanic*, which was actually released in late 1997 but raked up \$US448 million in 1998[, only]... one movie passed \$US200 million – *Armageddon* with \$US202 million – though *Saving Private Ryan* came close with more than \$US190 million... Other movies joining the \$US100 million-plus club were *There's Something About Mary*... *Doctor Dolittle*... *The Waterboy*... *Deep Impact*... *Rush Hour*... *Lethal Weapon 4*... *The Truman Show*... and *Mulan* ([Disney's cartoon about a Chinese girl who pretends to be a boy in order to become a soldier]).

...*Boom times in Hollywood*... It's official: last year was a record-breaking... one for Hollywood. Domestic movie box offices rang up... \$US7.7 b... Unlike recent years, movie attendance also rose to an estimated 1.49 billion... slightly ahead of the... modern-day high for movie attendance of 1.48 billion admissions... Two young talents and a veteran were the hardest-working people in movies last year, reports *USA Today*. [An actress, 32, an actor, 23, and... the... [veteran], 71, each had major roles in five films. [The AUSn actress also] somehow found time to have a boy with her writer-husband... ■ [Having received]... a Golden Globe for her lead role in *Moulin Rouge*, [a]34-year-old... [recent divorcee (r:p1726, ln23)] is about to be crowned the new Queen of Hollywood after an amazing... offer to star in a movie version of the Broadway musical *Rent*. The deal will make her the world's highest-paid film actress ever... [A] source close to the negotiations... says... "[The actress ha]s gone through the toughest 12 months of her life. Her career's red hot, but her private life has been a disaster. But [the AUSn proved it']s a fighter who comes out on top, no matter what..." With talk of a possible Oscar nomination for *Moulin Rouge*, [the actress] says, "It would be really nice to be able to go to the Oscars on my own, because I've always been on [my ex]'s... arm. That would be nice, to earn it." ...[the actress] also hit the pop charts with her duet *Somethin' Stupid*...

Movies aren't stupid. They fill us with romance and hatred and revenge fantasies. *Lethal Weapon* showed us that suicide is funny[, and]... I never thought there could be a bomb in my toilet, but now I check every time... Movies... [are] my only escape from the drudgery of work and family...

Conspicuously devoid of charm or grace, [the]... generally witless retelling of the story of [an]Irish crime boss[, *Ordinary Decent Criminal*]... is most remarkable for having been made at all, particularly since it went into production within weeks of the premiere of... *The General* which tells the same story. But where that film – a flint-edged black-and-white drama by the [perso]n who gave us the 70s classic *Deliverance* – was a textured and morally ambiguous drama, this treats its subject matter as a jolly jape (the title is inspired by a line in which the lead character contrasts himself with the snarling thugs of the IRA)... It's the third feature to chronicle the exploits of... a psychopathic Dublin thug, which makes it easy to understand the outrage in England that 20[%] of its budget came from a lottery grant... The extraordinary conceit of the entire enterprise is encapsulated in its choice of painting for the art robbery – Caravaggio's *The Taking of Christ*. In a running gag, [the lead character] imagines himself as one of the painting's figures – and it ain't Judas... [In another new release about psychopaths,] one of the sexiest [gals] in Hollywood... must explore the mind of a demented serial killer to find clues to the disappearance of one of his victims... in the science-fiction thriller *The Cell*... The sultry actress and singer – who last year insured her body for \$1 billion[–] takes on the role of a child psychologist... [The actress admits] the movie is extreme and may have audiences holding on to their stomachs. "There are days when I'd think, 'Are we going to get away with this stuff?' It's very extreme... We're going to get a lot of stick for this. People are going to vomit,"... Despite [her] doubts about how audiences will react to the film, [the]... 30-year-old... says [it]'s waited for years to play a role like it. "This character is... the type of role I'd never seen before. I read it a long time ago when I was doing TV – when no-body would do a movie with me." ...■ *The Cell* [and *Ordinary Decent Criminal* both]open... on Thursday.

...[the sexiest gal in Hollywood denies it]'s got her curvy figure insured for \$US1 billion... P.S: [Is a Chinese actor]... the greatest action hero and biggest movie star in the world? His films trounce the likes of *Titanic* in Asia. And in his autobiography, [the actor recalls how it]... once scoffed to an American reporter: "There are billions of people in Asia... America is a very small market." ...[the actor] was born Chan Kong-sang (which means "born in Hong Kong" Chan) in 1954. As a burly toddler [it] became known as Pao-pao, or cannonball, the first of many sobriquets. At the Chinese Opera School, where [it] underwent 10 years of punishing physical training (but no education), the nickname Big Nose stuck. After his parents moved to A[US], Pao-pao was briefly anglicised to Paul, but... preferred... the name [it] was given when... on a building site in Canberra.

...A[n AUSN] comedian, writer and film-maker... has only been in N[Z] a matter of hours, but already [it]'s learned two things. That his first name is pronounced like "part of the body between the head and shoulders," and that we have a similar sensibility to A[US]ns when it comes to his film *The Wog Boy* and how it deals with those sometimes testy issues of culture and race... "The major markets are nervous and standing behind political correctness... but to me it's very encouraging that we in A[US and NZ] have a healthier sense of humour." ...[the] Melbourne-born and bred... Greek... tells of an interviewer from the *Washington Post* who "couldn't believe how free we were to make jokes about religion and race. And I said, 'isn't that what a free society is all about?' Of course, over there you can't make fun of anything, least of all someone's culture or religion. They could probably sue you." ...[however, the comedian ha]s been surprised no one from his own community has told him to tone things down. "That's the scary thing. I've been waiting for it but it hasn't happened, it's given me free licence. I want people to disagree, but everyone totally understands, like a whole nation of people in on the joke..."

...Q: What do you call [an actor] in a helmet? A: Hardwood. Yes, there are better jokes in *The Replacements*, which stars [the actor (r:p1712, ln36)] as a "couldabeen" American football star who gets a second chance at the big time, but not enough of them to live up to its formulaic clunkiness. There's certainly not enough to sustain all those seemingly looped scenes of on-field action – 39-hut!, throw, crash, bang, wallop, touchdown! And repeat until injury time, something this movie has half an hour too much of... It's not helped by a semi-concussed script or a soundtrack which can sound like a jukebox in an earthquake in its attempt to keep the stop-start sports action ripping along in between the speeches about teamwork, pride, second chances, oh, and teamwork. Not a lot of discussion about the politics of pro sports, though calling this *The Scabs* probably would have caused some problems in marketing. There is, however, some irony available if you consider this movie's attempts at commenting on rich sports stars who have traded their passion for the game for seven-figure salaries and lost touch with the fans. You could say the same about those who waste their handsomely rewarded talents making movies as bad as this.

...[if it wasn't for his marriage problems, one actor would be] having a very good year... [T]he former bartender is set to take home a cool \$100 million for his work this year... [due to] his \$20 million salary for three films and 10[%] of the gross of *The Sixth Sense*, which should guarantee him \$50 million... And then there are the future video sales of that film, which are estimated to add another \$10 million to his bank account. That should put the former *Die Hard* star above [the actor] who previously held the one-year record by scoring \$70 million the year [it] also won an Oscar for *Forrest Gump*.

...[Gimme Moore's estranged husband has] received a whopping \$165-million bonus for his smash hit film *The Sixth Sense*...

'AT the end of the day, it's really silly how much we all get paid,' said [#4] recently... Her current movie, *Stepmom*, netted her a thoroughly silly \$US17 million fee. Two years ago [#4] took home a mere \$US12m for *Conspiracy Theory*, so things are looking up. Not yet up enough, however. [#4] and a few choice colleagues – led by [#7 and #8] – are involved in a race to be the first [gal] to nail a \$US20m fee for one movie. Naturally, out of decorum, none acknowledges the race. But in an industry where earnings are viewed as the overwhelming mark of status, it's safe to assume that the figure is more than a passing concern for the contenders... In 1926, following the completion of *Flesh and the Devil*, [a Swede – who 'is considered by many the greatest of all film actresses' –] got the hump and went on strike to protest against the shortage of decent scripts and her measly \$US750-a-week salary... Greta Garbo demanded a raise... to \$US5000... When [Greta] did not get it, [Greta] went to Sweden and sulked for seven months until the studio changed its mind... After the Oscar success of *Kitty Foyle* in 1940, [its 'dancing queen' star]... went on to pull about \$US500,000 a picture – America's highest-paid actress in the 1940s... In... 1942, [an actress (r:p1177, ln12)] signed her first contract with MGM and was immediately put to work on her first feature, *Lassie Come Home*. [The actress] was paid \$US100 a week for three months. (Lassie, meanwhile, took home \$(US)300 a week.) ...In 1959 [the actress] demanded \$US1m for *Cleopatra*. [The film's producer] complied. The film bagged four Oscars but was a notorious flop and [her] handsome payday hardly helped a beleaguered Fox studio... The "calling" to convent life in 1992's *Sister Act* has never been so lucrative. [Its star, #12], whose big night is now hosting the Oscars, prayed and fasted for \$US9 m... and God answered – in abundance... [On a positive note, another movie queen (r:p1707, ln1) who can also]command millions per film... happily accepted a measly \$15,750... the actors' union minimum wage... for her starring role in the movie *Duets*. Daddy... was [the]director... While actresses' fees have improved... they are still lagging behind those awarded to their [guy peers. The young star of *Titanic*] recently entered the \$US20m-plus pay bracket (for *The Beach*), joining Hollywood's Big Six – the [star of *Mission Impossible*; the star of *Braveheart*; the star of *Air Force One*; the star of *Forrest Gump*; the star of *Phenomenon*; and the comedian who starred in *The Truman Show*]. Careless talk of telephone-number take-home pay always provides good betting-shop copy. But underlying all the hoop-la is a more serious issue. Why has it taken so long for actresses to finally hit the symbolic \$US20m mark? After all, \$US20m is strictly "old money" to [the comedian]. It was way back in June 1995 that Columbia Tristar[']s chief... announced that his studio would be paying [the comedian] the then record-breaking sum for *The Cable Guy*. After that, it was open season: a gold rush for the testicle-owning gender, as every action hero worth his vest pushed for the Big Two-O... According to industry lore, in response to [the comedian's jackpot, the star of *Phenomenon*] immediately demanded 20 million and one dollars for his next part. It's thought that this macho one-upmanship may well have lost him the vote from fellow actors in the Academy when Oscar nominations were divvied up for *Get Shorty*.

...it's not all fun owning mansions and hideaways all over the world. Ask [the star of *Get Shorty*], who can't just buy one copy of a CD [it loves – the star] has to buy no fewer than 12 copies so [it] can enjoy the music in all his homes, planes and cars... [(which makes us wonder how the star coped when his 'plane was grounded during a holiday in NZ, forcing him to hire a limousine for the 187km journey from Queenstown to Invercargill?). Incidentally, the actor]'s building a new home that not only accommodates his family but also has room for his Boeing 707 jet.

...Didn't realise [hi]s career was still flying high, but it seems [the actor] can afford a new \$22-million home to accommodate his personal 707 and his Gulfstream jet... [The actor]'s about to start building a new house in the exclusive Florida community of Jumbolair, where the plane-obsessed star-turned-pilot can fly home from a hard day on a movie set, land on one of the world's longest private runways... [–] where the rich can park their jets at the front gate upon landing... – ...and just saunter to his front door. [The actor, his] wife... and their... kids... will move in late next year.

...[a wife] will be screaming in silent agony when [it] gives birth to [an actor]'s baby later this month. Her only relief during the hours of labour will be to clinch her husband's hand. Both [the wife and the star of *Get Shorty*] are staunch Scientologists and follow the church's teachings about child birth, which include a strict no noise policy in the delivery room. "It's called quiet birth," says [the actor], who explains that it's important to avoid having the baby hear words because, "as [the kid] grows up and hears these same words, it stimulates memories of the pain of birth."

...[a r]etired film toughie... has wed in secret and is starting a new family – at the age of 77! "We're having a baby and [my partner] is as excited as I am," says [the]bride... 36, who comforted the star when his wife Jill Ireland died of cancer in 1990. [The actor] adds: 'Guys like [the actor who starred in the TV version of *The Odd Couple*], who had kids later in life, were thrilled... I've got the money to make sure our child will be taken care of if I pass away in 10 years or so.' [□ The TV actor, aged 77, and his wife, 27, had their second child in June' last year.]

...Celebrity magazines *Hello!* and *OK!* are battling for the first pictures of [an actor and actress]' new baby. The bidding now stands at \$2 million.

...[an actor and actress] were paid a reported \$[NZ]1.8 million for pics of the[ir] baby which a glossy British mag has run over 21 pages.

...N[ewlywed actors] are to receive \$3.5 million for selling their wedding photos to *OK!* ...The deal is the result of a bidding war between *OK!* and its rival celebrity magazine *Hello!* The Hollywood couple[, who] are worth an estimated \$750 million... received \$21,000 for photos of their baby...

IT'S just two weeks since the[ir] \$6 million New York wedding... [– t]he cake was 1.5m tall, had 20 layers and took 10 cake makers a month to complete... [–] but instead of heading off to some romantic destination for a honeymoon, the pair are individually taking part in a press day to promote their up-coming drama *Traffic*, in which they do not even share a single scene together! "[My *Welsh beauty*] and I have been on a honeymoon for about 18 months..." [the love-struck actor tells me] with a chuckle. "So we joke that we kind of like to do it all in reverse – first we do the honeymoon and then we... get married and then, of course, what we really like to do two weeks after we get married is a press junket!" The 56-year-old Oscar-winning actor and producer is clearly on top of the world. [It]'s been tipped for an Oscar nomination for not one, but two critically acclaimed films: *Wonder Boys* and *Traffic*... has married one of the most beautiful actresses in Hollywood[, and t]he couple also welcomed their son... into the world...

Is that 25-year age difference between [the spoilt Welsh beauty and her actor husband] beginning to be felt? They're reported to be snapping at each other and the root of the problem seems to be that [daddy feels his wife] is away too often, concentrating on her career. Recently [the actor] was left alone in Majorca [– at the house the former *sex-addict* gave to his previous wife, but gained shared custody of as part of their '\$85m divorce settlement' (much to the disgust of his new wife, 'who loves the house and doesn't want to have to share it with her hubby's ex') –] looking after their baby... while [mummy] was absent. Nor is [the husband] (who wants to be doted on) too delighted about her plans for more babies... [By the way, #1 – who starred with the husband in *Basic Instinct* –] caused more than a storm in a teacup when [it] demanded Beverly Hills hotel staff drain a swimming pool dry after her diamond ring went missing. Hotel executives knew better than to argue with the demanding diva, and at huge expense flushed thousands of litres of water down the drain – but to no avail. The devastated star of the new flick *Muse* fled to her suite in a flood of tears, only to find the sparkler where [the actress] had left it – beside the bed.

...TV GUIDE'S Los Angeles correspondent [revealed that late last year it] found herself caught up in a piece of [#1]'s 'Christmas generosity' which left the actress with a red face. [The correspondent] was one of 82 voting members of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association sent a \$400 Coach watch by [the actress] just days before they filled in their ballots for the Golden Globe nominations. "I, along with every single one of my... colleagues, promptly sent the watch back explaining... we could be held up to scrutiny if [#1] was nominated (and [it] was, for best actress in the comedy *The Muse*) and this could be misconstrued as a bribe... [N]ews of her gift was leaked to the media and [the actress] is now feeling a little mortified about the whole situation..." ...Meanwhile, [the actress] says that so far [it] has turned down the script submitted for... *Basic Instinct 2*... and will only reconsider if [it] sees a whole new script. "The studio is trying to force me to make up my mind and they say they've gone to [Gimme] Moore... to which I told them to go for it!" ...On a lighter note, [the correspondent] got to keep the *Bicentennial* [Guy] watch, marking the release of

th[at] movie, which garnered no nominations, and the giant orange papier-mache model of Kenny from *South Park* is still... in her garage looking for a home!

...The off-beat animated TV show... has been turned into a movie. [7Days] talks to its eccentric creators... THE TIMING of *South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut*... seems to be off. After all, the show's [US] ratings have halved in the year since it was hot. But *South Park*'s creators... say the timing couldn't have been better... [After all], the film took a year to make... And as for the ratings plunge, they say that's to be expected. *South Park* is made for a small cable channel, the Comedy Channel, and not everyone who has cable gets it. When it made the cover of *Newsweek*, *Rolling Stone* and *Spin* in the same month, the buzz drew a huge audience of viewers curious to see what it was all about. Half of them decided they weren't fans. But those who liked what they saw in the rude and crudely animated show continue to give *South Park* an audience 10 times the normal Comedy Channel audience and it is still one of the highest-rated shows on [US] cable. The movie is coming out while the [US] is still wringing its hands over the Colorado school shootings and politicians are pointing the finger at the influence of the entertainment media on young minds and coming up with ways to curb it... [Its creators] wrote *South Park*, the movie... well before the [Colorado school] shootings and its subject is censorship. Cartman, Kyle, Stan and Kenny, the 8-year-old cartoon stars of the television show, scam their way into an R-rated... (no children under 17 unless accompanied by an adult)... film starring Terrence and Philip, a flatulent and foul-mouthed Canadian comic duo. The kids mimic the dirty language used in the film, their mothers blame the film, its perpetrators' country, and [the US] President declares war on Canada. It's also a musical, with hilarious Broadway-style numbers such as *Lame Canada*... "We really wanted to do something other than just a 90-minute episode... and we thought making this a musical would be a way to justify it being a movie." It has rough menstruation and abortion jokes, and intimate... body parts take on a disembodied life of their own. Kenny, who gets killed in every episode of the TV show, is followed beyond death, ends up in hell and finds other residents include not only Hitler but also Gandhi and beloved comedian George Burns. And Satan is gay and having an affair with [the President of Iraq]... To get a commercially viable rating, they had to change the original title, *South Park: All Hell Breaks Loose*, because... titles have to be G-rated and the board told them they couldn't use "hell." When the Motion Picture Association of America board gave them a list of other no-nos, like bestiality jokes, "just to brass them off, we made them 10 times worse and five times longer, resubmitted it and we get it back with the comment, 'Thank you. That's much better'." ...The point of the movie, [says one of its creators], is that protecting the young is up to parents. "When I was 12 years old, my dad let me see pretty much anything I wanted because I was a pretty good kid. I could hear some dirty word and my dad would be like, 'That's a dirty word,' and if I was in public, or I was with the family, and I said that word, I got in trouble. It was something between me and my parents. It wasn't my parents fighting to keep those words away from my ear... because they're never gonna do it. What this is really all about is when Kyle says to his mother, 'I got in trouble and you just immediately went off and started war with Canada. You blamed Canada. Deal with me. I'm the one to blame. Be my mom.'" One of [its creators'] favourite jokes in the film is when the kids log on to the Internet, strike a warning about a Website's content saying "You must be 18," and the eight-year-old with his finger on the mouse button goes, "okay" and immediately clicks his way into the site. "There's your kid at home... and that's exactly how hard it is."

...Box-office gross-out... Gee, one of the characters on *South Park* is a pooh. Eewww, gross... *Scary Movie* [which] has out-grossed *Scream 3*, one of the genre which it parodies... starts with a fart joke. Later a [guy] gets his head penetrated from ear to ear by a penis and there are jokes about, and simulations of, oral sex. *Big Momma's House* opened with an remarkable display of flatulence by a [gal] with gastroenteritis... *Me Myself and Irene*, directed by [the] brothers who brought you *Dumb and Dumber*, included references to anal sex, erections, lactating... dildos – and there's a [guy] with a chicken shoved up his rear end. In the sequel to... [the] phenomenally successful *The Nutty Professor*, which has just started here, Ma Klump takes out her false teeth and goes... You can guess the rest. All these are big grossing movies. And pretty big on the "eewww gross" front... Because extreme violence barely raises a flicker of interest these days and truly distasteful stuff like *Hollow [Guy]* (nasty enactments of rape and voyeurism) passes without a murmur, offensiveness appears to be the new frontier. "Pushing the envelope in terms of sex is one way to shock the audience," says... Warner Brothers' entertainment president [who] might have added bodily fluids and excretions as well. Look around: the semen scene in *There's Something About Mary*... drinking diarrhoea in *The Spy Who Shagged Me*... urinating in *Big Daddy*... Some suggest there's nothing especially new in any of this... [The] cowboy parody *Blazing Saddles* in 1974 raised a small skink when bean-eating cow-pokes relaxed their sphincters around the campfire [the]... 1978 lowbrow fraternity house comedy *Animal House* has become a cult favourite and, stupid though they were, there were seven *Police Academy* movies made from 1984 onward. This is an irony-free area – much like Hollywood's America. "What sells today seems to be defined neither by irony nor by subversion, but by explicitness," says [the] screenwriter... who wrote *Trading Places*. Some might cite the line from [a] singer... at this point: "The trouble with normal is it always gets worse." If normal was *Blazing Saddles*, the argument goes it got worse with *Big Momma's House*. Perhaps if it wasn't for [a director's] parodies (*Blazing Saddles*, *Young Frankenstein*) we would not have had... *Airplane!* and consequently no *Scary Movie*. Of greater significance, however, is that the target demographic for Hollywood is moving relentlessly downward. Teenhood isn't just a phase that kids go through, it's a whole new market for exploitation. Appeal to them and you'll appeal to those who'll bankroll your project. Kids like fart jokes, everyone laughs when the fat [person] falls over, oral sex is something you can talk about now because the president was caught with his pants down. We should remind ourselves the phrase "semen-stained dress" entered the public domain not through a gross-out movie but the nightly news. Have Hollywood's morals gone down with [the president's] playmate? If so, it's a blow for any parent trying to tell their 12-year-old who liked the *Scream* series why they can't see *Scary Movie*. Or will the kids who hooted through *Nutty Professor* see Ma Klump take out her false teeth? Do they want to? That perhaps is the greater question: if movies are being made in this manner, who is driving it? "Money doesn't talk, it swears," said [a folk-rock idol]. Now it's saying "poo-poo" and people are laughing it up. No one... has ever lost money by underestimating the intelligence of the great masses, said [an] American journalist and social critic... – wisdom that Hollywood movie comedy-writers now have as a screen-saver. Whether such gross comedies are harmful is another matter. Many rightly point out it's not the end of the civilised world, but simply bad taste and low humour. We've had a little of it here: our soon-to-be-most famous movie director... had a notable early outing called... *Bad Taste*. And few would argue that *Meet the Feebles* gave Oscar Wilde a run for his money in the wit stakes.

...Hollywood's Kiwi lord of the reels When [NZ's top locally-based director was 10 years old it] pin-pricked holes in the celluloid of his Super-8 film *The Dwarf Patrol* to create the illusion of gunfire flashing from rifle barrels. The three films based on the classic fantasy trilogy *The Lord of the Rings* which... begins shooting next May will be worked on in his studios in Miramar, near Wellington's airport, by sixty special effects technicians deploying an array of computers more powerful than any in the country apart from Telecom's. The scale of the undertaking, to be made entirely in [NZ], beggars belief. At \$NZ264 million the budget is bigger than Te Papa's and represents... two thirds of our revenue from kiwifruit exports. It will, incidentally, propel the 36-year-old... to near the top of the country's rich list. Industry observers... joked that maybe the habitually dishevelled Wellingtonian will be able to buy some new clothes. The production, the largest ever undertaken south of the equator, is proof that the Film Commission's talent-priming role can pay off bigtime, not to mention a tribute to the perseverance and dedication of a [person] who can barely remember a time when [it] wasn't going to make films... [His interest started when it was 5] and... went to see the [original] film version of the television series *Batman*. "There was a moment in the movie when Batman and Robin slid down their fire... pole... Halfway down there's a jump and they suddenly transform into their bat costumes. It amazed me and I vividly remember asking my cousin who was older than me how they did that. [My cousin] didn't really know, of course, but... just said, 'Special effects' and I thought, 'Wow!' That really was the seed of fascination that

you can do extraordinary things with film that take you outside the normal world.” At 8... his... parents got a Super-8 camera for Christmas and the young [director] commandeered it. “I grabbed it straight away and got friends of mine and we made W[W2] movies and horror movies and I made little monsters out of rubber and plasticine...” Spurning sports and parties as a teenager, [the budding director] transformed his bedroom into an animation studio... So the 25-year-old who made the low-budget 16mm splatter picture *Bad Taste* was already a self-taught veteran. *Brain Dead* and *Meet The Feebles*, which followed, were in the same bloodstained mould, though boasted bigger budgets... [B]y the time [the director] made *Heavenly Creatures*... [it] was clearly a film-maker of some mastery. That mastery attracted the attention of... the maker of the *Back To The Future* films and *Forrest Gump*, who backed [the NZer]’s first Hollywood outing – the witty and ironic ghost spoof *The Frighteners*. Despite indifferent success at the box office it was enough to convince Hollywood there was a talent in Miramax worth going round the world for. [The NZer] had been slated to direct a remake of *King Kong*... but Universal, unwilling to enter a three-way race with Columbia’s *Godzilla* and Disney’s... *Mighty Joe Young* (about a 3m gorilla) pulled the plug. Eight months’ work came to nothing, but [the NZer] had “Plan B and it wasn’t a bad sort of Plan B.” Yet *The Lord of the Rings* nearly didn’t make it either. [The NZer] and his co-writers... had always planned to tell the story at epic length and the original producers, Miramax, had agreed to two three-hour films. Then, only six weeks ago, Miramax got cold feet. They said they wanted a single movie – three hours at most. “It would have meant literally cutting... half the script and doing a *Reader’s Digest* version and I wasn’t able to deal with that... I told them I couldn’t be on board even though it meant they would have to get someone else to make it. I would have spent the rest of my life regretting it.” Miramax... gave [him] three weeks “to find someone to make the film that you want to make.” A knuckle-whitening round of doorknocking in Hollywood followed before New Line (whose track record includes... [the] *Friday 13th* films... *Mask*... *Wag The Dog* and *Lost In Space*) made a suggestion beyond [hi]s wildest dreams: three books should make three movies. The rest, as they say, will be history.

...With planning for... *Lord of the Rings* well under way in Wellington, Warner Bros Video has released an earlier movie of J.R.R Tolkien’s trilogy... [M]ade... in 1978, [the]... animated version of the fantasy saga... tell[s] the early part of the battle between good and evil in the realms of Middle Earth and the struggle to claim the magical ring which gives its owner great powers. □ 7Days has 10 copies... to give away. To be in the draw, simply write your name and address on the back of an envelop or postcard and send it to... the... N[Z] *Herald*...

Fifty million copies of *The Lord of the Rings* books have been sold in 25 languages... Just as *Star Wars* is the defining myth of the technological age, so *Lord of the Rings* was central to the generation before it. Both are epics on the scale of the *Odyssey* or *Beowulf*, sharing the same combination of narrative force and spiritual grandeur. Darth Vader is merely the Dark Lord wielding a light-sabre. Voted “Book of the Century” in 1997... Tolkien’s immense saga is at last on its way to the screen... Wingnut Films will shoot for 18 months, post-produce for another 18. It will involve 33 principals, 1500 extras and 1200 computer-generated creatures. Adjusting the size-ratios of its army of extras alone – 183cm [humans], 122cm dwarves, and 100cm hobbits – will need endless skill and patience in the editing booth. Intense secrecy – paranoia even – surrounds... preparations. Miramax in Miramar has become a Black Hole from which no news can escape... Locations are similarly shrouded. By a happy accident of plate tectonics, N[Z] possesses the geographical extremes ideal for *Lord of the Rings*, a cinematic alteration of starkness and plenty. From the rugged magic of the Remarkables to the pastoral cosiness of the Waikato, this country might have been Middle Earth itself... But will *Lord of the Rings* translate to the screen? One thinks of movie disasters which failed to capture the essence of their subject – *Watership Down* springs to mind... [A] former International Mastermind, [current] Judge... of the District Court, [and] author of *Song of Middle Earth* for Unwin, Tolkien’s publisher[,] ...seems convinced the *Lord of the Rings* movie will realise the sweeping vision of its creator... As the [hu]man who knows more about *Lord of the Rings* than anyone else on Earth, Wingnut naturally consults him from time to time.

...Fantasy role attracts star... [A top] actress... has confirmed [it] will be in N[Z] in June to star in... *Lord of the Rings*. In an exclusive interview... [the actress (r:p1728, ln19) said it] would be in the country for six weeks to play the elf Galadriel, the wise queen of Lorien. “I believe they will be doing something interesting with my ears,” said [the 32-year-old], who read the JRR Tolkien book... at school. [The actress said the director] approached her to play the role in the \$360 million trilogy and... accepted it almost immediately. [The AUSn] was excited about working here for the first time. [The actress] had heard about the beautiful landscape, but admitted [it] knew little else about [NZ]. The blonde siren, who was nominated for an Oscar and who won the Golden Globe and Bafta best actress awards for her title role in *Elizabeth* last year... almost came here for a holiday and to see friends... None of the stars have yet spoken about their roles because they have been hushed by contracts... Meanwhile, [the NZer]... who shot to fame at only 15 years old playing a schoolgirl in [the director]’s docu-fantasy *Heavenly Creatures*... [is back in NZ for] the world premiere of her new Kiwi movie *Snakeskin*... [The actress] is enjoying being back in the country [it] still calls home, despite having lived in Britain and Los Angeles for the past six years. “I love N[Z]. I’m always heartbroken when I have to leave,” says the 24-year-old, who always makes the most of her visits back home with her mum... dad[, three brothers aged]... 22... 17... 13, and 10-year-old sister... “It’s the most beautiful country in the world and the people are so normal.” ...finding genuine people in Tinseltown is hard work and definitely the downside of what... the doe-eyed actress... considers her perfect job. “It’s a whole different culture in L[A]. People are so in to themselves and everything centres around success... When you’re working it’s the greatest place in the world – people like you and there is heaps going on – but when you’re not working it’s a whole different place.” ...Maintaining her dignity and individuality is important to [her], especially in LA where silicon-implemented, size-six, blonde actress-wannabes are a dime a dozen. “I once accepted a role then the producers told me I had to lose weight,” says... [the] size 10-12. “I basically told them to stick it. I said... I was this weight when they hired me, and I wasn’t prepared to change.” ...Her latest Hollywood project is set to be her biggest yet... Yet... [the gal who co-]starred... in *Ever After*... considers the low-budget road movie *Snakeskin* just as good, if not better, than her [US] films. “I think *Snakeskin* would... be one of my favourite movies, if not the most favourite movie I’ve done... You just don’t know where it’s going next.”

...Hollywood studios have approached N[Z] scriptwriters as possible strike breakers in case their own writers and actors bring Tinseltown to a halt. A prominent film and television writer... was “scoped out” by producers concerned about strike action... according to the N[Z] Writers Guild. The guild last week hosted an annual international conference attended by delegates from the Writers Guild of America, which, along with the Screen Actors Guild, is threatening strike action unless studios offer writers better pay and greater control over their work... The US delegates told the *Weekend Herald* that the quantity and quality of movies and television shows coming out of the States would be affected... The last time writers went on strike, in 1988, their action continued for 22 weeks and crippled the Hollywood film and television industry. Studios are looking overseas for writers, stockpiling scripts and fast-tracking film and television projects in anticipation of industrial action... [The NZ] Writers Guild chief executive... said the local writer... did not want to be identified, but was standing by the guild’s pledge of solidarity with its American colleagues.

...THERE will be spinoffs for the already buoyant N[Z] film industry from its counterpart across the Tasman, flying high last week at the opening of... [the] 24.3ha... Fox Studios, the \$585 million movie-making and entertainment facility owned by [News Corp’s] media giant... The facility is expected to significantly reduce the cost of film production for local and visiting overseas companies, including those from N[Z]. It is the largest film studio outside of the U[S], and will compete with Canada and Mexico for film production... Fox Studios A[US]’s chief executive, told the *Sunday Star-Times* in Sydney the company was already looking at the South Island very seriously as a location for a feature film set in the Korean War. “N[Z] is a very strong contender for the location. An announcement will be made soon,”... [The chief executive] also believes Fox will increasingly want to cross the Tasman to make movies... [The chief executive] also predicts Kiwis and their families will cash in on the closeness of Fox’s funparks, instead of travelling further to places like Disneyland... ● [The Fox Studio]... theme park includes a *Titanic* ride and a virtual reality *Simpsons* set and is said to be pretty cool. But Aussies are reeling at the entry prices – close to \$45 for adults and \$27 for kids.

...The country's "biggest film studio" is to be built in Waitakere City in a bid to cash in on N[Z]'s growing appeal as a film-maker's mecca. In a closed door meeting this week, council unanimously endorsed a decision to spend \$3m-plus to buy the former Enza cool storage sheds on Henderson Valley Rd and convert them into an 11,000sq.ft, multi-million-dollar facility, to be called the Auckland Film Commission Studio. "We are aiming to make the local film industry not only bigger but substantially bigger; a place where the [biggest director]s of this world would want to come on a regular basis," [the]Mayor... says. "It truly stacks up as one of the best investments we can make. Even if the movie business fails after five years we could flick it back to the private sector and double the amount." The 4ha site, used extensively to film popular television series *Xena: Warrior Princess* and *Hercules*... is already booked for three major film productions – one worth as much as \$130m... In the... heyday before *Xena* and *Hercules* bid farewell to television viewers, Waitakere helped reap \$203m of the country's then \$290m industry coffers.

...An absence of big-budget N[Z] feature films last year saw overseas investment in the industry slump almost 80[%]... Of the \$91 million pumped into the film and television industry by foreign investors, just 2[%] went to features... Feature films have previously made up around 50[%] of total foreign spending, including an exceptional \$46 million figure in 1996 when [the *Lord of the Rings*] director... made *The Frighteners*... [However, his] deal to make *Lord of the Rings* over the next two years would show a sharp rise in overall figures in coming years...

It's just as well we bought those F-16s. The might of N[Z]'s armed forces is about to repel an invasion of goblins. Military staff will be called in to fight as extras in battle scenes in... [the] *Lord of the Rings* movie... The Minister of Defence... said... members of the armed forces would be paid at normal commercial rates for the two or three days' work... [but] rejected suggestions that joining forces with hobbits on screen to save Middle Earth might not be the best advertisement for N[Z]'s armed forces, which are still blocked from war exercises with the U[S]. "If the media want to play silly buggers with it, well they can... but there's a much more serious purpose behind it and that's about jobs for N[Z]ers." ...The exercise was part of a Government attempt to help business projects with benefits to the country. Help was also planned with immigration of cast and crew...

For 404 days [the director], cast and crew... [will] simultaneously shoot... the three films, *Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers*, *The Return of the King*... Seventeen hundred people figure on the LOTR payroll[, including 145]... computer wizards... employed by... Weta Digital. Ten terabytes of computer power will be at their use as they create about 350 shots per film... Ninety eight per cent of those [1700 people are NZers. The film has s]eventy seven speaking parts... Two hundred thousand dollars worth of coffee [will] be... drunk each month by the LOTR production. Two hundred thousand dollars was spent on building the fortress of Cirith Ungol, including labour, one thousand cubic metres of polystyrene, thirteen thousand nails, thirteen thousand square metres of timber, one thousand kilos of plaster, and two thousand and forty litres of paint (and that's just one set among many). Forty gold rings were made by a jeweller in Nelson, and nine hundred suits of armour were forged in Wellington... A number bigger than, um, six hundred and forty-five million is the estimated budget in NZ dollars, not that anyone is letting on... Impressed?

...The family of J. R. R. Tolkien have been split by a feud over the long-awaited movie version of *The Lord of the Rings*... [O]ne of the late author's three surviving children, has severed contact with his eldest son because of a long-standing dispute sparked by the making of the £210 million (\$[NZ]719 million) film trilogy. The 77-year-old opposed the project. Now the eldest of his three children... has told how [it] was cut adrift from family affairs and banned from the board set up to protect his grandfather's estate after daring to suggest the movies were a good idea... Tolkien signed away the film rights to *The Lord of the Rings* for just £10,000 in 1968, five years before his death at the age of 81. Since then, the loss of what was destined to be a lucrative franchise is said to have been a consistent source of irritation to [the 77-year-old]. In stark contrast, [the]... 42-year-old criminal barrister... [grands]on, who recently finished writing his own novel, a courtroom drama, has actively embraced the making of the movies. [The grandson] met their director... two years ago, and will be attending next [year]'s London premier of the first part, *The Fellowship of the Ring*...

Fun ways to make money from home... Ever feel like you're stuck in a rut? Maybe the kids have started school and you've got time on your hands? If you're looking for ways to earn extra cash, read on... N[Z]'s film and TV industries are on a high and you don't have to be a whiz with a camera or a make-up brush to get a piece of the action. Movies like *Lord of the Rings* and *The Last Samurai* need hundreds of "extras"... the people with no acting experience and heaps of patience who sit around for hours on set waiting for their turn to be a face in the crowd... *The Last Samurai*, is being filmed in New Plymouth early next year so there's a good chance a few hundred ordinary Kiwis (especially those of Asian appearance) will get to... work... with [the star of *Mission Impossible*. The job]... suits people who have lots of spare time as extras are often needed on set for 12 hours a day. The pay is around \$12.50 an hour and usually includes a supplied lunch. "You get to see the stars, you learn a lot on the set and if you are really lucky, you might get one speaking line," says... [someone who] recruits extras for movies, commercials and TV series like *Shortland Street*... Renting out your home as a set for film or TV is another way to cash in on this growing industry. As a location manager, it's [one pers]on's job to find houses to use as sets and [that person]'s always looking for new properties. "Generally big, open-plan homes work well,"... With anything from 20 to 60 people working on a set, space is one of the biggest considerations... But it's the director who makes the final decision and often it comes down to whether a home has the right feel. Crews will move furniture around or bring in their own, hang pictures and generally create a bit of a shambles so a relaxed attitude to your home is important. "You need to be fairly flexible... about what's in your house,"... although commercial cleaners will generally sort out any mess the next day. Homes are most sought after for commercials and these usually take a day to shoot and a day either side to set up and clean up. Production companies pay from \$500 to \$1500 for the shoot day, depending on the budget, and about half of that for the other days. If the days are going to be particularly long, the company will often put families up in a hotel for the night. The best way to get your home known is to go direct to the production companies, who keep suitable houses on file. If the movie industry isn't your thing, how about weddings? Celebrants are in hot demand in N[Z] as more of us choose civil rather than religious ceremonies. It's a job that allows you to be self-employed, choose the hours you work and take as many holidays as you like... Good communication and listening skills are a must, as is compassion. Pay varies throughout N[Z] but a wedding can be worth anything from \$50 in a rural area to more than \$200 in Auckland. Apart from weddings and funerals, celebrants are used for naming ceremonies for babies, 21st birthdays, divorce... eldership and wisdom ceremonies and house moving rituals. For more information contact the Celebrants Association of N[Z]... With longer working hours a part of life, busy businesspeople are desperate for help with household jobs. This can include anything from cleaning and ironing to collecting mail and watering plants. If you've got a couple of hours to spare each day... why not set yourself up in business walking the dogs in your neighbourhood. Not only will you get fit but at \$10 a dog, walking three dogs at a time, you'll make money too... And finally, for all those exhibitionists out there, there's always a demand for models for life drawing classes... Any size or shape is okay for life modelling and in fact the bigger, the better... The pay is around \$20 to \$27 per hour and a heater is usually provided. Go direct to universities, polytechs, community centres and schools if you think you've got what it takes. ● [Obviously, there are a number of illicit ways to make money from home (e.g., home brew, homegrown), but – though fun – we can't be seen to condone such activities.

...a local director] doesn't know what's going to happen with his next movie, *Homegrown*. "Evidently they're having some trouble releasing it because it's about pot, which is really weird... They do movies about heroin... and... murder..."

...Thousands of mourners paid a tearful tribute to beloved Colombian comedian Jaime Garzon, calling his murder a national tragedy... Accompanied by many of the trappings of a state funeral, Garzon lay in state in Bogota and was honoured with a Mass in the vast Plaza Bolivar square outside Congress. Garzon, aged 39, who made his name with scathing parodies of politicians, died on Saturday when... hit by five .38-calibre bullets fired by two motorcycle-rid[ers]... Bogota is one of Latin America's most violent capitals, with 3500 homicides a year. A[n assassin] can be hired for less than \$100... The Government has offered more than \$560,000 for clues leading to [Garzon's] assassins... Garzon's death

sparked an outpouring of grief by rich and poor, reflecting the comedian's cross-class appeal in a nation that is deeply divided... About 80,000 people, including several Government ministers, gathered in the historic square waving white banners with the slogan "No More" and chanting for... an end to the long-running civil war... that has cost 35,000 lives in 10 years. In a tragic development, two people died and nine others were hurt when a footbridge over a highway in northern Bogota collapsed as scores of Garzon's admirers crowded for a view of the cortege bound for the cemetery.

...[a z]any Hollywood comedian... arrived in Auckland yesterday and received a President... style airport welcome in the form of a powhiri. Although here for the [NZ] premier of his latest movie, *Bicentennial* [Guy, the comedian]... was looking forward to sightseeing in both islands, fly-fishing and mountain-biking. The star of *Good Morning Vietnam*, *Dead Poet's Society* and *Mrs Doubtfire* said [it] had always wanted to visit N[Z] because of its "exceptional beauty." ...The 47-year-old actor said [a N]Z... film director... had convinced him to come for a holiday while the two were working on *What Dreams May Come*, the tale of a [husband] who visits hell to be reunited with his dead wife. "[The NZ director] told me N[Z] was the closest thing to Heaven on Earth..." [The comedian]... arrived by private jet from Sydney with his wife, children... and a group of friends...

[A comedian] stood before thousands of theatre owners at the annual ShoWest convention in Las Vegas... They knew who... [the comedian was: the star of films such as] *The Waterboy*... *Happy Gilmore*... and... *Big Daddy*... one of the few stars today who can guarantee sold-out theatres. But... the... comedian... introduced himself anyway. "My name is Adam... I am not particularly smart. I am not particularly good-looking. And yet, I am a multimillionaire... [whose] fiancée... is a... dark-haired, statuesque model..." The crowd laughed. They loved him. But not everyone does.

...Sonny... is a law school graduate who does not want to grow up[- Sonny] works in a toll booth one day a week, watches television and eats takeaways for the remaining six. Then, in a misguided attempt to impress his girlfriend... adopts Julian after the five-year-old is dumped on his doorway and pretends to be his biological father. His girlfriend promptly ditches him in favour of an older [guy] with "goals and a five-year-plan." As an act of rebellion against his own father, Sonny adopts a freestyle approach to bringing up Julian, and allows him to do whatever... [The star], who also co-wrote *Big Daddy*, seems to be carving himself a niche in mindless comedy for the masses. But there is no humour in watching a five-year-old, who has just lost his mother, wet the bed only to have the wet patch covered with newspaper and the child forced to sleep on top of it. Nor is it amusing to watch a youngster being taught to throw a stick in the path of rollerbladers so they injure themselves, or to urinate in public. Call me old-fashioned but this is not funny - it's cruel.

...[the star of] *Big Daddy*... is... glad to make movies. "I work hard on my movies, I put all my time into them..." ...Though the film may indicate [a] readiness for parenting, [the star] says it is not yet the time. *Big Daddy* is more an ode to his father. "My father as a parent was very involved in my life... would study with me and play ball with me and tell stories to me all the time. [Dad] was basically my best friend... We were the kind of home where you were only happy if someone in the house was laughing, so... [we] used to watch a lot of... comedy... movies... My father would call me in at midnight to watch them on TV - I was the only kid allowed to stay up past 12 o'clock..." ...On the subject of [his] \$US25 million... pay for writing, producing and acting on *The Wedding Singer* sequel, [the comedian] says: "I don't know what to do with that money. It helps me feel that any time a family member or a friend needs money, I can help them out. And that's a nice feeling... I ask my father what I should do with it and [dad] says, 'Give it to me.'" At 17, [the son] had no idea what [it] wanted to do with his life. [However, the son had] always been the class clown, so when [it] took to the stage of a Boston comedy club and was an instant success, performing seemed natural... His success in the movies was not swift... [appearing], almost unnoticeably, in the failed comedies *Coneheads*, *Mixed Nuts* and *Airheads*. The breakthrough came with the golfing comedy *Happy Gilmore*, which had enormous rentals on video and paved the way for the success of *The Wedding Singer*... and... *The Waterboy*... [The comedian] is still very much a big kid... "By not growing up I think I'm just trying to be happy. I'm in search of happiness... That's my goal."

Happiness, we have seen, is the ultimate goal of human striving, for the sake of which everything else should be sought and to the consummation of which everything else should be ordered. It is the complete good, the whole that includes all other goods as its component parts... Hence the... pursuit of happiness is not a selfish individual interest... It is true that individual members of a society are parts of a whole. It is also true that the good of a part can be sacrificed for the good of the whole. But it is not true that individual[s]... as members of society are parts of that whole in the same way that arms and legs are parts of a human body. The critical error here consists in converting a metaphor into a literal truth... Residual difficulties remain for anyone who tries to solve this problem simply and neatly... [T]his is confirmed by the [history of religious movements]...

scientology... movement on the fringe of Christianity, developed in the USA [by science-fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard (1911-86) during] the 1950s, which strives to open the mind of adherents to all great truths and to self-determination[, and 'seeks to develop the highest potentialities of its members' (who sometimes canvass strangers on the street in order to have them sit a form of IQ test after which those deemed suitable are invited to join the cult)]. Jesus is seen as one of several important teachers. The Church's scientific and religious claims have given rise to much controversy, as have its methods of financial management, and in the 1980s it defended several lawsuits in the USA. Nevertheless it has a wide following.

Scientology is used in over 80 countries all over the world. It has the solutions. Scientology works because Scientology is about *you*... Read th[e] new... \$24.95... book *What is Scientology*[, which]... will reveal the priceless knowledge that helps you be successful. [Here's some comments from satisfied readers:]"Scientology is the only way to survive in this life." "I realised that I didn't have the tools to help me in my life. Scientology gave me those tools." You can continue with your problems... [or] find out how to handle life... The choice is your's...

"Scientology is a religion of the 20th century, and it teaches you how to help yourself," says... [a NZer who, soon] after chatting to an actress... joined the controversial Church of Scientology... [The NZer] knocks criticism that the church - with its star-studded congregation... - is a sinister organisation bent on brainwashing and extracting money from its members. "The money I have spent I feel I have got back a millionfold..." [The NZer] has bumped into Hollywood A-list stars at the Celebrity Centre. "The joke in Hollywood is that if you are not a Scientologist you are working with one..." ...Although [the NZer misses her home country, it] has no plans to return here. "N[Z] is a wonderful country... but there are only so many roles I'm going to be considered for."

...IN Hollywood these days... [the star of] *Mission: Impossible*... is God and... [another actor], who plays an angel in his latest hit movie[*Michael*], ranks among the Apostles. Beyond an ability to fill cinema seats, what they have in common is membership in the Church of Scientology, the aggressive, high-tech religion that occasionally gets into fights with governments and law enforcement agencies. So when Germany tried to crack down on Scientology, Hollywood rallied around the faith of its box-office winners. Late in January, 34 non-Scientologists from the American movie industry lambasted the Germans in a full-page advertisement in the *International Herald Tribune*. Addressed to [Germany's] Chancellor... the open letter claimed that Scientologists suffer "organised persecution" in Germany. "In the 1930s, it was the Jews," said the ad. "Today it is the Scientologists." Many Germans were outraged by the comparison to the Holocaust... Were [the ad writers] moved by principle or profit? "You mean," said one signer, "do we all want to be in business with... [the Scientologists], and would we sign a letter just to make them happy, make them like us? What do you think?" Other signers said Germany was morally wrong... [In] Germany... Scientologists are not allowed to be members of the major political parties and some states won't allow them to join the civil service, a move which [the] Chancellor... wants to extend to the Federal level... "This is actually persecution... [A]lso as part of [the German Government's] 15 point plan you have prevention of street canvassing.

Isn't this just thoroughly undemocratic?" "...not at all... Scientology... [is] an organisation that's near to organised crime, and we wouldn't... [permit] canvassing in the street [by] the Colombian drug mafia..." ...Scientology... [is a] religion without a god, it aims at spiritual growth through a rigorous series of self-improvement courses that can cost new members thousands of dollars. It claims to heal psychic scars through the use of a simple lie detector called an "E-meter," and it tries to promote a more effective form of thought called "going clear." The church has often been accused of brainwashing and fleecing its members and of intimidating its critics with threats and lawsuits. The church, which denies such charges, claims 8 million members worldwide, 30,000 of them in Germany.

...[the star of *Michael* 'has not suffered from the controversy of his upcoming movie *Battlefield Earth*, written by Scientology founder Ron L Hubbard. While anti-cult fanatics have started a website which claims the movie is nothing more than a recruitment vehicle for the religion, the actor denies this and has moved on to his next project *Swordfish* – in which it plays a bad guy who is the world's most dangerous spy hired by the CIA to coerce a computer hacker recently released from prison to help steal \$6 billion in unused government funds.' ■ Hollywood's "God" loves playing the action hero in movies – and in real life. Starring in movies such as *Top Gun* and *Mission Impossible* has given him a need for speed – the actor has his own \$50 million jet, \$180,000 stunt plane, \$45,000 motorcycle, \$144,000 Porsche and \$2 million yacht. Of course with a fortune estimated at \$450 million, it can afford to spend like a *Top Gun*. "I live my life the best way I can," says 'the 1.7m ex busboy from New York who's a rampant Scientologist.'

...*'BLINDED BY SCIENTOLOGY* Dressed in jeans and a T-shirt, perched on the sofa at her father's modest California home, there is little to link the British-born solo mother with an AUSn actress. The Brit has never been to a showbiz party but shares something far more fundamental with the ex-wife of the star of *Mission Impossible*. According to her friends, the actress, who was raised a Roman Catholic in AUS, has become disillusioned with Scientology – in which her husband is so active – and her desire to distance the couple's two adopted children from the Church's teachings is cited as one of the main reasons behind their marriage break-up. It is a view the Brit (22) understands only too well. It is adamant her 2-year-old daughter will not be raised according to the doctrines of Scientology's founder. "I just want my daughter to have a normal childhood and make her own decisions in life." The Brit was a Scientologist for 19 years, spending much of her childhood in the Church's strictest order – the Sea Organisation – and her story provides a rare insight into the workings of Scientology, which numbers some of Hollywood's biggest names among its adherents. Her views are shared by a 42-year-old who works for a Florida-based organisation which vehemently opposes Scientology. This person was a Scientologist for 20 years, working for the Sea Organisation in the Scientology school (Scientists denounce outside schools as places full of "wogs" – their word for non-Scientists). "I didn't teach. The children had worksheets and I just checked them and helped them look up a word if they had difficulty with something." If her pupils still had difficulties they would be sent to attend "ethics" sessions and be hooked up to a machine called a "learning accelerator", similar to a lie detector. The children would hold two electrodes while answering questions. The meter detects small amounts of electronic resistance and an unbalanced needle would indicate the child did not understand something. The 22-year-old's parents were Scientologists. Her mother's parents were members of the Church's British headquarters in East Grinstead, West Sussex. Her father joined the movement as an idealistic 24-year-old, fresh out of university. "I was approached in the street in San Francisco, where I was on holiday, and became interested in the promises they made," says the father. "They tell you that past experiences are holding you back and, when you reach the upper levels of Scientology, you will know the secret of life itself. I'd split up with my girlfriend and had not found satisfactory answers to the meaning of life. Scientology seemed to provide answers." Back in Britain the 24-year-old took a Scientology course in London and met his future wife, who already had a son by a previous marriage. The couple soon wed and had the now-22-year-old. "If I fell over, Mum would do a contact assist, which means that whatever part of your body you hurt, you must press against the object which hurt you. You keep repeating this until the pain goes away. Mum made me do it in public, which embarrassed me. If I was ill, my Mum would give me a touch assist. I'd lie down and mum'd touch me with her finger, saying, 'Feel my finger'. Mum wouldn't stop until I felt better so, to stop her prodding me, I'd say I felt better." When aged 5 or 6, the daughter started going to church for "auditing", a form of counselling which is the basis of Scientology's teachings. "It was like a drill where I was told, 'Look at the wall, walk to the wall, touch the wall, walk away from the wall'. Other times, I'd be told to follow someone's hand movements with my eyes. It was supposed to calm you and help you see the world more clearly but really it was hypnotic." When the family moved to Florida, the mother joined the Church's strictest religious order, the Sea Organisation. Members dedicate their whole life and the next billion years, because they believe in reincarnation, to Scientology. Their mission is to convert the world. "I hated it. Mum and Dad did not get home until 10pm and we had to do chores after school under the supervision of a Scientology nanny. We had to clean the kitchen and mop the floors." Eventually her parents marriage buckled under the strain of long working hours and the father's increasing disaffection with Scientology. Under custody arrangements, the daughter stayed in California with her father, where it began attending a Scientology course at the] **Celebrity Centre in Hollywood, a massive replica 17th-century castle. "The founder... set up the centre to protect the artist because [Ron] believed the artist is who will save the world..."** - 1997

Many children – particularly those who are unhappy – dream of becoming a famous artist of some description or sports star when they grow up. Although most will never attempt to fulfil their dream, some will be able and willing to devote their teenage years and adult lives to pursue it, and a few will succeed in achieving their ambition of winning an Oscar for best actor, or gold in an Olympic event, etc. Their success raises a valid question: if they had always dreamed of saving the world instead of dreaming about achieving personal glory in an unimportant event, would they also have been successful at achieving that ambition? This question raises another: since, clearly, no one has yet managed to *save the world*, does this mean that no child has dreamed of doing so (or no one has been willing or able to devote its teenage years and adult life to the pursuit of that ambition) – or those that did were unsuccessful?

It was stated previously that individuals who attempt to divert the public's attention from God's ultimate spokesperson (in a human form) to themselves can be classified as ANTI-CHRISTS. This, and the previous question, suggests that a child who dreams of saving the world and succeeds should be classified as the CHRIST. It has also been implied that the most god-like human (i.e., Christ) can be considered the wisest human. *Socrates believed that an enlightened person is happy because it acts in the right way*. Although the same thing can be said of a wise person, could such a person – or a Christ – be happy today while it knows that in the time it takes to smile: at least one child would have died due to starvation, a preventable disease or accident, or physical abuse; at least one adult would have been raped, tortured, murdered or killed in a fight/war; x animals would have been slaughtered, y trees would have been cut down, and the world would have become more polluted?

...though... my life was so divine... can I be free from crying [when]my whole world is dying...

...I cried until dust appeared... and it feels like I'll never smile again...

...I couldn't begin to smile Because I can't even laugh or cry... If it was so easy to be happy Why am I so down? All I can do is sit and wonder if it's going to end Or... wish that I could just die...

There's nothing worth living for tonight Tell me that there's something worth living for tonight Don't let me down don't let me drown...

...before I drown in my sorrow well I just want to say how will it laugh tomorrow when I can't even smile today... - Suicidal Tendencies

HOW?

In the past few years there has been a great increase in interest in the future. The main reasons for this are a realisation that many of our present problems are a result of bad decisions taken in the past, coupled with the faster rate of change which is now occurring due to the cumulative effects of advances in science and technology. Also, there is a growing awareness that the future is not necessarily immutable, but to some extent we can choose the kind of future we have, and make value judgements on what we consider most desirable... Perhaps we will have to shed some of the things and ideas that we now consider essential, but in the process we may, in a sense, become more human... [However, it] is only when there is a large enough body of informed opinion, actively seeking change, that we will start to steer away from our present helter-skelter course – towards, perhaps, more desirable goals. - Understanding Futurology

Our Jewish forbears, the prophets and the old Chinese sages understood and proclaimed that the most important factor in giving shape to our human existence is the setting up and establishment of a goal: the goal being a community of free and happy human beings who by constant inward endeavor strive to liberate themselves from the inheritance of anti-social and destructive instincts. - Einstein

...the redressing of the oppressions and grievances of... [the past includes] the billions of dollars' worth of reparations that the current generation of Germans has paid to the Jewish victims of the Nazis' holocaust. Similarly, we see the same principle at work in the social bills now coming due for the past exploitation of the environment, the unconscionable exhausting by four generations of industrial citizens of the planet's 60-million-year endowment of petroleum, not to mention the grim legacy of radioactive wastes... [T]he new politics of reconceptualization is typified by the slogan of the Values Party, in N[Z]: "We do not inherit the world from our parents, we *borrow* it from our children." ...It is our children and grandchildren that will... suffer the social, physical, and genetic consequences... [if we fail to address t]he increasing public costs of maintaining environmental quality, clean drinking water, and breathable air. We face the cost of cleaning up mountains of waste and the additional cost of necessary government regulation to prevent more pollution. Indeed many of our most thoughtful scholars now believe that this type of industrial society is creating problems faster than it is able to devise cures for them. - The Politics of the Solar Age

More and more people are feeling that in the next thirty or forty years the human race must break through to a new kind of future. Failure will mean disaster; success will mean an important upward step on the ladder of evolutionary progress. Many of us see this breakthrough as the central project, the historic task, for the two or three generations living at the present time – the task which gives meaning to our lives. We sense that a threefold era is now ending: first, the age which began with the industrial revolution [200] years ago; second, the age of European ascendancy which began with the Renaissance and Reformation [500] years ago; and, third, the age of the successor civilisations to Athens, Jerusalem, and Rome which began roughly... [2000] years ago. This suggests a historical perspective, and a measure of our task as midwives to a new future. Recognition that [hu]mankind is at a turning point is now fairly widespread... enough... that it is possible [to] start to make it happen[– once we have decided]... what kind of... future... we... [want from amongst all] possible visions of the future... [W]hile talking about our present situation and future possibilities with many people in Britain, Europe and North America... I have become aware... that... a [‘forecaster must be cautious about writing off visionaries based on the arguments of conservatives, especially established experts. It is important to remember that visionaries have been responsible for many of the developments that have fundamentally altered the shape of the human world. And “experts” are very often wrong’]... In general, if we leave the experts to think about the future for us, we thereby choose a certain kind of future – a future dominated by experts. So we have to clarify things for ourselves... Practical thinking about the future involves a mixture of the following: predicting what is likely to happen, forecasting what would happen if..., deciding what we want to happen, planning how to help it to happen; and acting accordingly[(Aristotle allegedly introduced the notion that: ‘First we must identify WHAT we want to do; next, HOW we will do it; then we can DO it’)]... There are five distinctly different possibilities for the future... (1) *Business-As-Usual*. This view holds that the future will be much like the present and the past. There will no doubt continue to be many changes and crises, alarms and excursions, as there always have been. But the main problems of the [First World] countries... and of the world as a whole, will not change dramatically. Nor will the best methods of handling them. Nor will most people's general outlook and attitudes. This view can be presented as the only realistic approach to the practical problems of keeping things going in reasonably good order. It appeals to placid and pragmatic people, good operators, successful trouble-shooters, moderate reformers, people who are content with their present position or their future prospects in the existing system. It also appeals to defeatists, cynics and worldly wise[people], critical of the present state of affairs but convinced they cannot change it and not prepared to try. (2) *Disaster*. This view holds that things are beginning to break down catastrophically. There is no realistic alternative to nuclear war, and increasing unrest, famine, pollution, poverty, misery, disease and crime on an national and international scale. This view, too, can be presented as the only realistic view of the future. It is held by calm and thoughtful people, who have worked out the possibilities carefully, and who see no point in kidding themselves and others. It also attracts pessimists; hell-fire merchants, preachers and doomsters, who enjoy making other people uncomfortable and who like the limelight themselves; and people whose personal experience of failure has left its mark on their thinking about the world. (3) *The Totalitarian Conservationist (TC) Future*. This view agrees with the previous one that risk of disaster is very real, but holds that the best way to avert it is to accept an authoritarian system of government. People who hold this view point to the emergence of authoritarian regimes at previous crisis periods – Julius Caesar and Augustus after the collapse of the Roman Republic, Napoleon after the French Revolution, Hitler after the Weimar Republic in Germany, Stalin after the Russian Revolution – as evidence that people turn towards authority in times of chaos. They say that worldwide shortages and population pressures are creating a situation in which too many people are competing for too few resources. The only solution to this ‘tragedy of the commons’... in which uncontrolled individual greed destroys the common good, is a TC solution on the lines proposed by Hobbes in his ‘Leviathan’: we must give up our freedom to a sovereign power, which will enforce law and order and distribute the limited resources fairly to us all; otherwise our lives will be poor, nasty, brutish and short. This view also can be presented persuasively as the only realistic approach to the future. It appeals to people who think they have more to lose from disorder than from dictatorship; to people of an authoritarian, dominating temperament; to people who take a low view of other people (‘you can’t change human nature’); and to people who think themselves as belonging to the governing, rather than the governed, class. (4) *The Hyper-expansionist (HE) Future*. This view holds that we can break out of our present problems by accelerating the super-industrialist drives in [First World] society, and in particular by making more effective use of science and technology. Space colonisation, nuclear power, computing, and genetic engineering can enable us to overcome the limits of geography, energy, intelligence and biology. This view appeals to optimistic, energetic, ambitious, competitive people for whom economic and technical achievement is more significant than personal and social growth. They are often [guys], and are likely to be toy-loving and over-cerebral. For many of today's opinion-formers... this is the only conceivable view of the future – and also an exciting one... [But is] it a law of nature that compels us to make more and more *things*, including many that are harmful or useless, before we can attend to the needs of *people*? ...[Furthermore, while] the basic needs of billions of [Last W]orld people are not yet met, will it be possible for the [First World] countries to concentrate on creating a high technology future? ...[In addition, the] fixed dimensions and finite resources of planet Earth cannot allow economic growth to continue indefinitely... (5) *The Sane, Humane, Ecological (SHE) Future*. This view holds that, instead of accelerating, we should change direction... [T]he key to the future is not continuing expansion but balance – balance within ourselves... between ourselves and other people... between people and nature... [T]he important limits and the important frontiers are... not technical and economic[, which means future]... expansion will be psychological and social...

The only realistic course is to give top priority to learning to live supportively with one another on our small and crowded planet. This will involve decentralisation, not further centralisation. This is the only way of organising that will enable most people to fulfil themselves. We should aim to create a learning and planning society, a 'trans-industrial society'[, which]... would place greater emphasis on the durability of manufactured products. Repair and maintenance and servicing would be relatively more important than they are today... This view appeals to optimistic, participative, reflective people, who reject each of the first four views as unrealistic or unacceptable and believe that a better future is feasible. It is only fair to say that it also appeals to quite a large number of crackpots. Of these five views, Business-As-Usual is the only one which holds, in effect, that we do not need to concern ourselves with the future; and Disaster is the only one which holds that catastrophe is inevitable. The last three share a serious concern about the future and a common belief that disaster is avoidable. But they disagree with one another about the most effective way of avoiding disaster; and they disagree about what kind of future is most desirable. TC recommends clampdown; HE recommends breakout; and SHE recommends breakthrough... We need to understand all these different views, because the actual future will almost certainly contain elements of all five...

The Theosophists spoke of five successive human races; both they and Nietzsche called for [humanity] to leave behind traditional limits and acquire new powers... [A] leaflet entitled "An Open Letter to the Whole World,"... read, in part: ...Humanity isn't born yet... Nietzsche's... teachings... propounded the idea of Super[hu]man, a new mode of humanity, and Orage said it was [humanity]'s task to define [it]self anew... Robert Owen had... publicly declared in 1816 that... [the] cotton mill... reformist... knew how to design a society so that it would function without crime, poverty, or misery... but much of... Owen's project was essentially aimed at disciplining the poor, remoralizing the Lower Orders as [Owen put it]... Tolstoy's Preface to *The Quest for Merlin* ends with a quotation from the Russian mystical theologian Nikolai Berdyaev. "History stands still and settles in the past. Only a prophetic vision of the past can set history in motion: and only a prophetic vision of the future can bind the present and the past into a sort of interior and complete spiritual movement.

Western culture has witnessed at least three grand historical epochs of seeking – each with a dominant spirit, enduring spokes[people] and distinctive problems. We have gone from the "Why?" to the "How?", from the search for purpose to the search for causes... THE FIRST EPOCH, OUR ANCIENT HERITAGE, was an age of individual heroic seekers, of inspired prophets and philosophers... The special problem of the seeker in the age of prophets was revealed in the celebrated life of Job. And the Job Syndrome would carry a warning for all over-confident seekers to come. The story of Job is a parable of how [a hu]man makes his own problems in his search for purpose... This familiar story became the classic epic of human suffering – and the suffering of the innocent... Job was... virtuous and prosperous... in the form of a rich farm, a beautiful family and the respect of his neighbors. Satan suggested to God that Job's virtue and piety were motivated only by his desire for earthly reward. Satan urged God to test Job's faith. If God took away everything from Job, Satan insisted, Job would curse God... Job's cattle were stolen, his sheep struck by lightning, his children killed in a desert storm. And finally Satan covered Job's body with sores. Still Job did not curse God but extolled [God's] wisdom... The Lord... blesses Job with greater prosperity than ever before. Now Job has seven sons and no other [girls] are as beautiful as his three daughters. Why is Job not told why [Job] is made to suffer? ...This problem, one that [the Judeo-Christian person] had created for himself by his belief, has haunted Western thought for millennia... Not until the 18th century did Leibniz give a name to this troublesome problem – Theodicy, from the Greek *theos* (God) and *dike* (Justice). If Job and others had not set out with a belief in a benevolent God, would they have been so puzzled by the suffering of the innocent? This question has not equally troubled people everywhere. Religions in the East have provided plausible theological explanations for divine punishment and retribution in the concept of *karma*... and the work of Kali and other destructive divinities.

[It has often been said that 'the most dangerous person in the world is the person who believes they know what's best for other people.' For humanity]'s greatest suffering at the hands of [other people] we can thank the ideologues and the religious zealots. These people are certain of their righteousness and are eager to impose their will on others... Thus we have reached the present, often floating on seas of blood while still seeking the shining promise, our Garden of Eden... As unfulfilled dreamers we shall pass to succeeding generations the eternal torch of hope shining in the oceans of despair... Is the future yoked to the past? Do the cycles of history have to repeat themselves? Will we ever escape from our circle of despair? ...For two million years our ancestors in different sizes and shapes learned to kill better than their competitors, and so set themselves apart from the rest of the animal kingdom... The physical and spiritual combined to carve out empires, to build Babylon, Persepolis and Rome to extend the faith... ['So long as there is hope for a better future, people will slog on under very adverse conditions'. So faith] went on enslaving the living to strive for deferred promises of fresher pastures, the greener grass for future generations[– and, as a consequence, humanity] was never satisfied. This is how it was through millennia as empires came and went, and new faiths destroyed older ones, making yesterday's truth a present heresy. The great religions followed one another, each taking its toll of human suffering in the name of its gods... [until the] twentieth century saw whole continents mobilized in orgies of blood-letting in the name of ideological nationalism... The intention should be to steer away from disaster and to keep hope alive, not to determine a destination in some idealized Utopia... Predicting the future of technology in any definite sense is impossible... In short, to speak predictively of technology more than a few years ahead, the forecaster would need to combine the inventive genius of a Leonardo with the business acumen of a Ford and the moral insight of an Old Testament prophet. For this reason you should be sceptical about forecasts that purport to tell you what *will* happen... You are on safer epistemological ground if you let experts speak imaginatively about possibilities and then say what *you* think *should* happen. Everyone is entitled to his or her opinion... But... chances are that one's opinions are either banal or mere wishful thinking; if they are not, then one may be seeking to impose upon other peoples and other generations a Utopian update of one's own local and temporary way of life... If this period of turbulence is to be one of renewal for our societies, this renewal must be based on a new conception of growth, new attitudes towards the purposes of growth, and a re-structuring of the system of incentives and penalties which motivate the growth process... The transition to the 'new growth' society implies some profound changes in our traditional notions of the distinctions between private and public rights and responsibilities... ['It is possible to find a wide body of support today, summarised by *The Limits to Growth* and *Small is Beautiful* evangelists, for a belt tightening effort among the rich and fairer shares of the limited available resources. If we are now approaching the limits to growth, and must rest content (or at least make do) with a smallish global cake then clearly, in the interests of self-preservation and avoiding global conflict, we should share what little we have. But this implies an enormous strain on existing world systems, at least in the First World countries. Standing still, a no-growth situation, is one thing; but actually taking a cut in living standards, however worthwhile the reasons, is quite another. The hazardous implications of this kind of future world are spelled out in detail in *World Futures*. Here, it stands as "obvious" that this is a situation of the last resort, only to be countenanced if all else fails.' However, new growth does not mean a retreat to a more primitive or less desirable standard of life or to a static economy. Indeed, it should be seen as an advance towards a more qualitative, humanly satisfying lifestyle... But... today, most political leaders are so overwhelmed by the number and complexity of issues confronting them that they are less and less able to deal with immediate problems effectively, let alone consider seriously the fundamental changes that are necessary to secure the future of their constituents. Industrial societies are on the verge of becoming virtually ungovernable under the present system. And there is no new body of economic and political theory which they can [use to] construct new political platforms. Both Marxism and Keynesian theories have been shown to be largely obsolete and no new body of ideas has yet emerged. We desperately need such a new body of ideas – a new synthesis.

We are guided in economic, political, and international questions by principles that were suitable... three or five thousand years ago but are directly opposed to our present consciousness and conditions of life... A [hu]man of the ancient world could believe [it] had a right to avail himself of the good things of this world at the expense of other people, causing them to suffer from generation to generation, for [the ancients believed that humans] were of different breeds... that [humans] are not equal... Not only did... Plato and Aristotle, justify the existence of slavery and demonstrate its lawfulness, but even three centuries ago when describing Utopia – an imaginary society of the future – [its author] could not imagine it without slaves... [Even ‘the idea of disciplined, neat, orderly utopias seems old-fashioned now, partly because of crimes committed by would-be utopia-makers; also because of new emphasis in people’s thoughts and discussions about better ways of living’. Humans] of our time do not merely pretend to hate oppression, inequality, class distinctions, and all kinds of cruelty not only to [other humans] but to animals – they really do hate all this, but do not know how to abolish it or cannot make up their minds to part with the system that supports it all but seems to them indispensable.

...[a] biologically based account of human history... asserts that ‘Happiness... and... liberty... depend upon changes in our... strategies of human... development.’ ...The... author draws our attention to the fact that... there are paths which avoid... goods and services which add little to either our dignity, our happiness or our potential for survival: conspicuous consumption in the form of energy-intensive possessions like sophisticated weapons and motor cars are obvious examples... [– and the author even] goes so far as to suggest... a revised attitude to material possessions in which we cure ourselves of a morbid craving for extravagant gadgetry...

Everyone wants a world safer and happier than the present one. That humankind can choose its destiny is a proposition that follows from history – in particular, from the history of the present half century. It can be seen now that history has had a plot: the tool-making species has been making itself. The arrow of its history is the accumulation of objective knowledge. From age to age, as history went on repeating itself, that enterprise has pointed the direction of time... The economy of growth, it is now clear, must give way at last to the economy of equity[– which]... has special relevance to the long-range future of the human species... The moral questions implicit in this ultimate transition have been lurking in the subconscious of economics ever since Adam Smith delegated them to the invisible hand.

But all too often such debate focuses on specific issues without the problems ever being related effectively to an overall vision of where the world is going and how it is going to get there.

What is our desirable future? How can we make it happen? ...the Foresight Project[is] an ambitious attempt to galvanise... thinking about our future... We don’t... know what [technological]developments the future will bring. However, [some] trends... are global: the revolution that completes the transition from nomad-hunter to agrarian to industrial age to knowledge age is happening right now. Its effects are likely to be greater and more compressed than that of the industrial revolution that made capital and labour king.

What, then, are the real possibilities? Will the future approach a static condition (“steady state”), or will change be never ending. Does our hope for humanity lie in forging better social organizations, or will technology evolve so much that it will allow us to solve certain problems without becoming wiser or more selfless? ...The modest and gentle nineteenth-century tract writer Edward Bellamy turned his pen to prophecy in *Looking Backward: 2000-1887*, a utopian vision “...intended in all seriousness as a forecast, in accordance with the principles of evolution.” *Looking Backward* shares with George Orwell’s *1984*, written sixty years later, two identical assumptions. The first[is] that developments in technology can be ignored... [and the second is] that socialism will sweep humanity to a universal, irreversible static condition... From those two identical... [but] definitely wrong... assumptions, Bellamy and Orwell derive future worlds that could hardly be more different. Bellamy’s novel is an idyll: by the year 2000 socialism based on the “solidarity of race and the brotherhood of [humanity]” has brought about an ideal world free of warfare... Gone, too, is the concept of money, and college education is free to all. Crime has disappeared, and with it the jury system and lawyers. In Bellamy’s world neither insanity nor suicide remain, and the world’s citizens look forward to the “eventual unification of the world as one nation.” - 2081: A Hopeful View of the Human Future

Looking Backward 2000-1887 is a detailed description of an ideal state which exists in the USA and most of the rest of the world in the year 2000, as contrasted with the conditions... in 1887... For most of the 20th century the USA has been a communist state, with all... workers – of whatever trade, grade or age – receiving the same wage, paid as credit. This credit allowance is generous but is exchangeable only at a public store. There is no private manufacturing of any sort, so no competition or advertising exists... There is a universally high standard of living, with full employment, good working conditions, retirement on the same high income at the age of forty-five, magnificent housing, free medical treatment, and a host of other improvements... there are [even]no personal servants: these have been replaced by machines for household cleaning, etc... The rise in standard of living is claimed by the author to stem from greater efficiency of production (because there is no competition), lack of waste (because all... [of the citizens –] who choose their occupations according to natural ability and personal preference – ...are working for the common good and because all demand for goods is accurately known), no monetary system to complicate matters, and no government administration to consume a tithe of all production – technological innovation is *not* cited as a reason... There is a hierarchy of command, the most efficient... being promoted, but the author seems to think that an entire nation can be run smoothly and efficiently by a relative handful of supervisors... without the help of a bureaucracy. Obviously Edward Bellamy’s fictional 20th century did not produce either Parkinson’s Law or the Peter Principle... People like to dream of (or read of, in the fictionalized versions of others’ dreams) better times than their own. They like to read of a future when there is no poverty or hunger or unhappiness, when all drudgery is left to fully automated machines... when [hu]mankind is healthier and longer-lived, when human traits like aggression and dishonesty have disappeared... Perhaps the most satirical of all dystopian novels (prior to 1945) is *We* by the Russian writer Yevgeny Zamyatin, first published in an English translation in 1924. This is a particularly elliptical novel set in the highly advanced and strangely alien future of the... 30th century. There is a totalitarian regime – the One State – and everybody lives in a single large city where everything is purposely artificial. A wall of glass, the Green Wall, keeps nature at bay. “The wall is, probably, the greatest of all inventions. [Humanity] ceased to be a wild animal only when... [humanity] had built the Green Wall.” Indeed, all walls in the city are of glass: there is no privacy or secrecy; the One State knows all and controls all. Brief periods of privacy are allowed for the purposes of sex, but prior permission must be obtained. Names have disappeared and citizens are designated by numbers preceded by a letter (a consonant for [guys], a vowel for [gals]). They are even referred to as “numbers” rather than “people”. Families, too, have disappeared, and all are sexually available to all. Perhaps most horrifying is that the inhabitants seem content with their lot, unaware of any better existence... *News From Nowhere* (1890) by William Morris is a noted satire on... the shape of a utopian future. In some respects it is a parody of... *Looking Backward 2000-1887*. The narrator... is miraculously transported into the future while asleep (by about two hundred years, although the exact date is not mentioned) because the [narrator] has been musing on the development of society before going to bed. The future... is in every way very different from the world of 1890. For a start, everyone

is happy, because society is aimed at individual happiness... Yet this is a true socialist state, with everybody working because they want to (idleness, fortunately, is now extinct) and consuming what they need. Money has disappeared, even as a notional store of value. - The Shape of Futures Past

It is just as psychologically naive to believe that doing away with money will solve all of [hu]mankind's problems as it is to think they can be resolved by putting a million dollars in everyone's pockets.

We may not have found the best way of using [money and,] in our civilization, it is hard to see how we could manage without it... But... Egypt became a great civilization and a great empire without the benefit of money as a convenient way to exchange and trade.

...the Egyptian *deben* (raw copper weighed out in pounds) was a measure of exchange, but neither token nor payment-medium.

An alternative monetary system to using the N[Z] dollar is being explored at the National Green Dollars conference in Upper Hutt, which started yesterday. An organiser... said green dollars was a bartering system where people traded goods and services rather than money. People paid a joining fee and were given a computerised account. If they used their skills to do something for someone else in the green dollar association, such as housework or gardening, their account was credited with green dollars[(or 'trade dollars')]. They could then use their credit to buy goods or services from someone else in the organisation. Businesses and tradespeople could also join... [T]he bartering system worked well for people normally unable to afford luxury items. One of the aims of the conference was to attract new members to add to the 2000 already involved. - 1996

It would be ironic if a system of bartering such as green dollars (the 'commercial "green dollars" credit card now handles \$180 million worth of transactions annually') was to be introduced throughout NZ as a solution to the problems caused by the monetary system – because the monetary system originally evolved as a solution to the problems caused by bartering (the main one being how to correlate respective values of different goods and services without the aid of a common denominator – e.g., does 30 minutes of carpentry equal 30 minutes of farming, or 60; does one wooden chair equal 1kg of grain, or 10?)!

Economic system still the world's best despite flaws... [C]apitalism is underpinned by a moral basis and its efficiency... Capitalism is a dynamic system in which the nature of work continues to evolve. Some people lose their jobs but more jobs are being created elsewhere. Human ingenuity enables more of us to figure out ways to achieve more productivity for less effort... The main alternative... was communism, which was a disaster...

Pure capitalism (i.e., when everything is paid for) doesn't yet exist in any of the major nations but each year many of them get progressively closer. It was implied previously that 20th century capitalism and communism – and its associate, socialism – aren't *on opposing sides*. It is true that in theory capitalism supports private instead of communal ownership, but in practice both have been based on an economic system (r:p13, ln27). In order to properly oppose capitalism a system would, in addition to practicing communal ownership, have to be non-economic (i.e., a moneyless society – which is not the same as a *cashless society*, where every monetary transaction is made electronically). Although a moneyless society won't *solve all of humankind's problems*, it can solve most of them (and, without the distraction of economics, it will become easier to address any remaining problems). One problem a moneyless system will never be able to solve is natural inequality among individual humans (e.g., some humans are taller than others, or heavier, are more intelligent, skilful, attractive, are healthier, live longer, etc.), but it can remove unnatural inequalities (e.g., social position due to birth, material wealth, distribution of resources, etc.). Removing money would also mean that products and services will be valued for their usefulness – and, as a consequence, useless products and services would become obsolete.

If the Kingdom of Heaven is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace, neither is civilization the multiplication of motor-cars... cinemas, or of any other of the innumerable devices by which [modern people] accumulate means of ever-increasing intricacy to the attainment of ends which are not worth attaining... In order, however, to escape from one illusion, it ought not to be necessary to embrace another... SO to criticize inequality and to desire equality is not, as is sometimes suggested, to cherish the romantic illusion that [people] are equal in character and intelligence. It is to hold ['that all members of the species are equal in the sense that, and only in the sense, that none is more or less human than another'; that], while... natural endowments differ profoundly, it is the mark of a civilized society to aim at eliminating such inequities as have their source, not in individual differences, but in its own organization, and that individual differences, which are a source of social energy, are more likely to ripen and find expression if social inequities are, as far as practicable, diminished... The individual differences... in... characters and capacities... will always survive... But their existence is no reason for not seeking to establish the largest possible measure of equality of environment, circumstance, and opportunity. On the contrary, it is a reason for redoubling our efforts to establish... social institutions... [which] stress... lightly differences of wealth... birth and social position, and... meet common needs, and are a source of common enlightenment and common enjoyment... in order to ensure that these diversities of gifts may come to fruition... The important thing... is not that... equality should be completely attained, but that it should be sincerely sought... The sage who defined his Utopia as a society in which any [perso]n can say to any other, 'Go to hell', but no [perso]n wants to say it, and no [perso]n need go when it is said, may have been crude in expression, but h[is reasoning] was sound in substance... And a society which is convinced that inequality is an evil need not be alarmed because the evil is one which cannot wholly be subdued. - Equality

The Bible says that 'the love of money is the root of all evil' (I Timothy 6:10) – which implies that evil can be eliminated, or at least subdued, by eliminating *the love of money*. Furthermore, the book is clear about rich people being unable to get into heaven (e.g., St Luke 6:20-4), which has been interpreted by some as meaning that there is no money in heaven (r:p1013, lns5-6). This interpretation is supported by the notion that money – along with violence and suffering – didn't exist in the *Garden of Eden*. Therefore, if human society was to become moneyless, it would mean that humanity is literally reverting to its original state – in biblical terms, not primitive.

revolution... 1. the forcible overthrow of a government or social order, in favour of a new system... 2. any fundamental change or reversal of conditions or ideas. 3. revolving; a single completion of an orbit or rotation...

Our task... is nothing short of recycling ourselves and recycling our culture.

...but how? The answer... might just turn on... sidestepping... this question... and asking instead: *who* is best placed to bring about social change?

1: CHILDREN?

...you won't fool the children of the revolution...

Do... you ever question any of the things... taught... at school. And... [say,] "Oh my teacher why do you take me for a fool?" ...Wake up... all they do is... deceive you... Don't let them take away your future. Rise up... the time has come... to liberate this human race... a better place has... to come...

...if children ruled the world it would be a better place...

There is a spirit in each generation that calls us to build a better way, to make life safer and much easier to control, more peaceful and... refined...

Many... students... and other young intellectuals – who are certain to play a major role in the coming ideological reconstruction – ...candidly admit that they feel let down by the preceding generation, who they believe have a clear duty to provide more intellectual assistance. And they ask this question: 'If our elders have shown themselves unable or unwilling to articulate viable non-Communist alternatives... to Communism... doesn't that imply a certain intellectual bankruptcy?' ...No wonder the youth are disappointed!

While the conflict between the idealism of the young and the pragmatism and cynicism of their parents is nothing new, the protests of the youthful counterculture of the sixties reached epidemic proportions... Many young people, observing their parents' drive to get ahead financially and to accumulate bigger houses and cars and bank accounts and more expensive furniture, decided the struggle for money wasn't worth the effort and dropped out... For a long time... [rebellion] against parental demands and values... has been considered a normal part of growing up – an aspect of the rites of passage. It was generally accepted that children were, for the most part, moulded by their parents, became adolescents and rebelled against their parents, then quit rebelling and became part of the adult establishment. Over the years, however, a strange transformation has been taking place. Parents and other adults have not only been *listening* to the younger generation, they have been looking to it for guidance. The young lead and the elders follow. Young people are setting the styles in hairdos, clothes, music, automobiles, housing, and moral values.

Don't be scared... kids... just want to change the world THE... middle-aged naturally resent the young, whom they suspect of having more energy, better looks, more enjoyable sex and a great many more years ahead of them. Such feelings are, perhaps, only to be expected but we should realise that, in the absence of war, this is one of the toughest times for youth. In the Sixties and Seventies to be young may not have been heavenly but you could leave school and not only be certain of a job but be able to choose the sort of job you wanted. All this has changed. A child can do its homework, pass incessant tests from nursery school upwards, collect a dozen A-levels and a scholarship to university, end up with a first in modern languages and then, after writing hundreds of letters, perhaps land a job packing shelves in the supermarket provided that the over-qualifications can be kept secret. If you're a talented young actor or a dancer and work hard for the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts or a ballet school, you'll be told that such talents for the arts (our most successful industry) don't deserve a grant and you should instead have nursed a lifelong ambition to be a chartered accountant. If you're not one of the bright ones, if you went to an overcrowded, rundown school with frightened teachers, if you didn't bother too much about lessons because you knew you'd never get a job anyway... you can look forward to being cracked down on, tagged, curfewed, imprisoned at an increasingly early age, perhaps banged in a hospital with middle-aged psychopaths and generally regarded as an enemy in what politicians call the war against crime. How long will it be, I wonder, before... we know that our children, our friend's children, the young people we meet every day, are behaving with admirable courage, common sense and tolerance for middle-aged politicians who have made such a mess of things. All right they wear their caps back to front, they take little notice of dire warnings about smoking and enjoy music so deafening that you can't hear the words but, in spite of all discouragements, they haven't lost their faith in the future and their longing to improve the world they live in... A study of teenagers from schools in Northumberland, Birmingham and Brighton, carried out by the British Psychological Society, found that half of them engaged in some sort of campaigning or volunteer work. "A great deal more than a similar group of adults,"... Many of them worked in charity shops, helped with charity raising, youth clubs and hospitals and visited old people. It is to be hoped that, from time to time, the old people return the visits... A tenth of those studied were paid-up members of campaigning groups like Amnesty International, Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, while 89[%] had given money to charity and many of them had signed petitions and campaigned for local causes... It doesn't really need the British Psychological Society to tell us what should be obvious about a new generation. The students on University Challenge could easily defeat a team of Government ministers... The alarming part of [the British Psychological Society]'s findings, though, is not the good news about the young but the sad news about us... [- the] middle-aged, middle-of-the-road voting society to whom all politicians are at present on their knees... We have... persuaded ourselves of a "negative stereotype of a self-interested and disaffected youth culture" in our midst... What we need to do is to stop being afraid of them... After all, the youth in baggy shorts and dirty trainers coming towards you smoking something which smells suspiciously of old carpets, is probably not armed. [The youth] just wants you to... sign a petition for civil rights in China.

...A[US]n teenagers know what is important to them. Their list of the top 10 requirements for good citizenship defined in a survey for Youth Studies A[US], embraced respect for the rights and property of others, equal treatment for all regardless of gender, disability, race, age or religion, honesty, safe driving and protection of the environment. They [also] want, according to other studies, a better future that values cooperation, community and families... a more equal distribution of wealth, a return to more traditional standards... and a job. What the majority expect is a new century more likely marked by crisis than by peace and prosperity, one in which the quality of life at home and abroad may well decline, crime and violence will increase, and the gap between rich and poor will widen... The *Medical Journal of A[US]* reported this year that the nation's 15 to 24-year-olds suffer more psychological disorders, have less trust, are more cynical and are more pessimistic than their baby boomer parents and their... W[W2]-vintage grandparents. Behind this lies the end of certainty, marked by a series of social indicators that are reflected across the [First World. NZ] teenagers would have little trouble identifying with their transtasman peers.

...*Tomorrow's children*[: OUR] *BEACONS OF HOPE* LITTLE girls of six with gonorrhoea[(sic)], babies shaken so hard their brains are pulped, social workers who insist it is better for a child to return to an abusive family than go into care. Children with TB, rheumatic fever, asthma. Kids who commit suicide either slowly, at the end of a glue bag, or fast and savage... [T]he debris of a lost generation... proves... [that NZ] – once the model for child rearing – has fallen so far from what it will accept as a society... Fortunately... [it is still possible to] find... some fragmented signs of salvation... Every day, while some kids play truant, are sexually, physically or emotionally abused and go to school with cold feet and empty bellies, another, much bigger group will get out of a warm bed, eat a reasonable breakfast, brush their teeth, kiss Mum or Dad goodbye and go to school. Lots will have fun. Most will learn to read and write. And... [some – like] the second-fastest... 12-year-old girl... over 200m in the country... [- will]

want... to be a doctor or lawyer because... [they aim] to help people with their problems. [However, will such 12-year-olds have the same aims in another few years? This is a valid question to ask because although 'a survey of Britain's "Millennial Generation" – young people who will be around the age of 21 at the turn of the century – portrays them as having great respect for doctors and teachers but little for politicians and even less for journalists, it also found some 48% want to run their own business and 43% list becoming a millionaire by the age of 35 as a career goal.'

...the richest 12-year-old in the world 'will inherit the legendary Onassis fortune on January 29. But rumours are it could inherit peanuts – originally estimated at \$5.3 billion, her fortune has been frittered away by her pharmaceutical father and the four Greek "Onassis Mafia" guardians of her inheritance. What started out as a fairytale has turned into a Greek tragedy. The tragedy came to a head when the girl and her father closely escaped a kidnapping attempt by "Israeli terrorists". In fact, the thugs were paid by members of the Onassis Foundation, as Swiss investigators later suspected. On Jan. 29 auditors will finally announce the true value of her inheritance – now estimated at a mere \$800 million. A family friend says the teenager "intends to use her money to do good, to help her native Greece and to build a name for herself as a businessperson to reckon with."

...*Young & loaded* These stars are small on years, big on bank balance! Currently seen on TV as the star of *Malcolm in the Middle*, the 16-year-old also has a slew of films to his credit – all of which help him pull in \$6 million annually. When a rapper started out it was known as Lil Bow Wow. Now that the rapper's 15 it has a new grown-up moniker – Bow Wow – to match his grown-up income of \$14.9 million. Remember the youngest girl in the sitcom *Full House*? Well the twins who jointly played the adorable little scamp are all grown up and building their own massive empire. Starring in sitcoms, films and TV movies since they could talk, the 16-year-old beauties now have their own range of fashion and lifestyle products. Their merchandise is sold through the US retail mega-chain Wal-Mart and it's expected the twins will be worth a huge \$1.8 billion by next year. ■ The Onassis heir 'collected US\$2.7 billion on her 18th birthday'...

'In a recent US Youth Poll, 64% of the teenagers questioned said that they hoped their lives would be different from those of their parents. This included having more money. They're not so much concerned about global issues like overpopulation as they are about the high cost of living.'

...Teens in the US spent an estimated \$US103 billion... in 1996, a 4[%] increase over 1995, according to a recent study at Teen Research Unlimited. Teens are also among malls most eager shoppers, spending an average of \$40 each visit, according to a survey conducted by the International Council of Shopping Centres. The ICSC survey, which looked at the habits of... teenagers between the ages of 14 and 17, found that teens make nearly 40[%] more trips to the mall than other shoppers. "Teens are among the nation's most brand-conscious and selective shoppers,"... [the] vice-president of research at ICSC, said. The 13-to-19-year-old consumer group is expected to expand until at least 2009, according to the U[S] Census Bureau.

...*Children rule the world* KIDS want everything. The right clothes. The right Christmas gifts. The right car to be driven to school in. Because so many kids seem to want so much so often, it is kids who have become wanted... by virtually every major company in America. As customers. For life... There's no kid-glove protection from this effort. Just a grinding need for new customers that forever has changed the way many of the biggest marketers treat kids as young as preschoolers. Once upon a time, kid marketing was limited to toys and breakfast cereals. Now, marketers realise kids as young as two can influence everything [including] where the family will vacation... By age two, kids are nagging their folks for the latest gizmo they saw hyped on TV, says... the... author of *What Kids Buy and Why*. And this is just the beginning of kids' struggle for control over what once were solely parental decisions. It should be no surprise that many of the biggest marketers are siding with the kids. Until now, it was believed that kids were spending or influencing about \$[US]150 billion annually. But in 1997 that figure is believed to have grown to \$500[billion.

...an] American music legend [(r:p1730, ln54)] says the idea that young people can change the world, the theme of one of his trademark anthems, is unfortunately no longer valid of today's youth. The singer who gave the world... *The Times They are a-Changin'*, says the feeling of having influence was important to the young people of the 1960s, even though it may not have been true in practice. "In the 60s people had the idea... that... feeling... one could act was more important than acting itself... But today that feeling is missing." [The legend], once hailed as the poet-singer of a generation, also... does not believe his work had ultimately had any real influence. "If I had wanted to influence society, I would have done something else: I would have gone to Harvard or Yale to become a politician or something like that."

...[I read the letters on your page and I think, "Oh how sweet. Youth culture. These children think they're so clever and that they can change the world, but when they get out in the real world they sure are gonna think different."

...A friend in his 40s, for whom I used to babysit, enjoys regaling tales of his now almost self-sufficient kids who are in their early 20s. One is in Edinburgh on the start of her OE and the other in the prime of his young adulthood living in the luxury of the family home. Like most parents the friend boasts about their virtues, somewhat relieved that they have emerged from their teenage years intact. And like most parents the friend lives in the charmingly naive fantasy that his kids enjoy the same sort of fun it and his wife did in their "crazy" youth, turning a blind eye to clear signs indicating that his offspring may have taken things just a few steps further. That was until my friend received a misdirected e-mail from his daughter destined for his son which leaves him in a confused state somewhere between laughter and manic hysteria. It opened "Hello my favourite boy" – a dead giveaway that my friend was not the intended recipient and then followed 20 lines capturing the essence of her OE escapades – "had a bikkie and went to a club doing lines and drinking overproof rum till 7 am. Took a slight detour to the pub, sat drinking jugs of Pimms and voddies all day, went to a local curry house but was so pissed I fell off the chair. Nearly got kicked out for being so obnoxious, wicked, awesome etc." My friend later received the sanitised designed-for-parents version, just five lines of the "having-a-great-time, things-are-very-expensive-here, meeting-lot-of-new-people" variety. The big OE. They say some things never change. Sowing your wild oats and only ever giving your parents half the story. This all happens before you supposedly buckle down and get serious. But the question is – will today's early 20-somethings follow this pattern set by their parents? Baby boomers who pioneered the OE experience have been infamous for their liberal parenting. They are the generation who truly believe they are mates with their children. Boomers pride themselves on honest communications with their kids, leading to lame comments such as "look if my kid was doing that sort of thing it would certainly tell me," and "deep down I know they are sensible kids." But deep down is a concern that their kids have had it all too easy and might never get serious (on one hand parents rabbit on about life being harder these days for young people and then complain about how good their kids get it on the other!). Parents worry about their kids' general lack of responsibility and laissez-faire attitude which show no signs of abating. They worry over the "rude awakening" these kids will get one day when they find out how tough life really is, but wonder if this day will indeed ever come.'

...*The rising generation apparently thinks too much about looks and too little about life*. The first generation to reach adulthood in the new millennium will be streetwise, with bulging closets and little ambition, says a report. Researchers from an advertising firm interviewed urban teens aged 14 to 18 over 3 years to find out what they want out of life. What they discovered was a generation with few goals, no real understanding of the world beyond these shores and a near-obsession with appearance. "They are very much into themselves," said the firm's national planning director. It's really quite disappointing because there's no real depth there." The 250 teens from Auckland and 50 from Wellington who took part in the study overwhelmingly chose designer duds over bargain buys, viewed drugs as relatively harmless fun, thought cellphones were essential to daily life and saw education simply as a means to a high-paying job. They have pride in NZ but think we put ourselves down too much, and are too close to AUS and too far from anywhere else. They want to remove the Union Jack from the flag, replacing it with a silver fern or Maori symbol. In five years they want to be overseas on their Big OE. Teens the *Herald* approached agreed with the report's main findings but did not resemble the self-absorbed youngsters with a short attention span it described.'

...IT'S HARD TO JUDGE A GENERATION BY ITS STATISTICS. FIVE years ago, my generation of [USers] was a group of over-stuffed slackers; today we're corporate raiders. An unlikely transformation. But there's at least one statistic that resonates: more of us are taking a full five years to get through college. Most [US] parents look at this as a sort of slacker ritual – the obligatory year of coffee drinking and... reading

[beatnik authors] before graduation. But there's another way to regard that extra year: as a peace dividend. A generation ago, in the midst of the Vietnam War, the idea of a year off from college was dangerously ridiculous. Leaving school meant a ticket to Saigon. Two generations ago it was Korea. Three generations ago, war-torn Europe or the inferno of the Pacific. My generation has had the blessing of growing up in peaceful times, and it has made all the difference. That fifth year of college has given us, in the best sense of the cliché, a chance to find ourselves. It is premature (also probably unlucky) to call Generation X the peace generation, but the evidence is mounting. No generation in [US] history has had less traffic with war or its brutally congruent demands for sacrifice and faith. And because we haven't had to fight, we've been free from the conformist pressures of a nation at war. We've found our own, unique identity as a generation that thinks and does as it pleases... Technoliths like Microsoft and Nike are earning their spectacular growth on the backs of twentysomething executives who work overseas and are fighting not only for the cause of their chosen company but also to propagate a belief system that has served us well... The globalized, interconnected economy we are helping to create is likely to be our best insurance of a peaceful world for our children... Around the world the ineluctable algebra of economic and political liberalization (less war = more money) is catching on... As a friend told me over dinner in Kuala Lumpur last month, "Age isn't the issue. Ambition is." And with nearly 50% of the world's population under 30 years of age, with great ambitions for themselves and their countries, prospects for the two essential ingredients of peace – capitalism and democracy – seem better than ever... It is easy, of course, to imagine a wonderful future when all you've known is tranquillity. But... is this the start of a thousand years of peace, secured by a certainty that what we have now is forever worth keeping? Even the most cynical historians... now seem to agree with us: freedom, tolerance and curiosity are more than slacker slogans. They are also ingredients of peace. - 1997

In the 1960s there were hippies, in the 70s there were punks and in the 80s there were yuppies. Now, in the closing decade of the 20th century... there has emerged a new social group commonly referred to as "slackers." Like those before them slackers are distinguished from other people by what they wear, say, watch, read, eat and listen to – in short, by what they do. So what do slackers do? Well basically, nothing. Slackers are, by definition, inactive, unproductive, uninteresting, apathetic and, above all, unambitious. Slackers have no career goals and no dreams of making the world a better place. To borrow a phrase from the archetypal generation-X movie *Reality Bites*, slackers are masters at the art of time suckage. Or alternatively, to borrow a phrase from... Bart Simpson, slackers are underachievers and proud of it. Now you may be tempted, particularly if you belong to an older age-group, to pour scorn on these young hooligans, chastising them for their lack of a good work ethic and so forth, but before you do you should bear this in mind: it is my hypothesis that the slacker lifestyle can be seen as an understandable response of young people to the society that confronts them... today... [O]ne of the fundamental tenets of... the philosophy that underpins the state-enforced curriculum of today's schools... [is that individuals are] powerless to control [their] own destiny, that a person's lot in life is predetermined by factors beyond his or her control (race, sex, socio-economic status). Confronted with that, it is easy to see why young people conclude that it is futile to try and do anything. After all, you can't fight fate.

Truth be told the world's a disgusting place, dad. Since we're helpless to do anything about it, we've decided to embrace its many horrors.

We wanted to reflect that this generation is the first generation who can't expect to do better than their parents... - *This Life*

My parents' generation had... this... great delusion... that our comparatively prosperous, free and just way of life, in North America... was heading for even greater prosperity, freedom and justice. Even in its imperfect state, this way of life seemed to provide the norm to which all other nations would aspire. Depressions, dictators and nuclear weapons were seen as regrettable swerves only... with[in] the cybernetics of the system.

filial piety, loyalty to and respect for one's parents. Parental respect is fundamental in Jewish and Christian tradition as one of the Ten Commandments. However, its importance is perhaps greater in Oriental cultures. In China and Japan it is one of the cardinal virtues of the Confucian Canon... According to the Canon, parents are to be revered in death as well as in life...

The concept of respecting live parents is based on their role as a child's primary provider (of shelter, food and knowledge) until the child reaches adulthood – and, in return for that respect, the child trusts its parents to perform this role to the best of their ability. However, if a parent fails to do so – because it is either incapable or unwilling – then it has broken the unwritten contract between parent and child, and doesn't deserve any respect (recall Socrates' belief that a *parent has no claim to obedience* from its children *unless [it] is wise*).

The fictional cartoon character Homer Simpson is widely – and rightly – criticised for his lack of parental skills, yet Homer is an adult who isn't ashamed to admit to his 8-year-old daughter that 'since the time you learnt to pin your own diapers you've been smarter than me.' It is reasonable to expect each generation of humans to be smarter than the previous one – because human knowledge, like technology, has increased progressively. This theoretical improvement, which has been accentuated by the acceleration of real improvements coming in the fields of human knowledge and technology during recent decades, could be called the GENERATION GAP. Since 'differences of opinion or attitude between different generations' (the common definition of a *GENERATION GAP*) ought to be an expected consequence of that theoretical improvement, parents can largely be blamed for any conflict between themselves and their children – especially if the elder generation fails to acknowledge (due to vanity, perhaps) that the younger generation probably has learnt things they never did, and what the younger generation has learnt may have rendered the elder generation's values obsolete; absolutely if the conflict is a result of a clash between the younger generation's desire to improve the world and the elder generation's apathy towards improving the world (or if the elders support the belief that *feeling one could act is more important than acting itself* – because anyone who isn't part of the solution is part of the problem!).

It has been said that 'if the kids are united they will never be divided'. Chinese children were once united enough as the Red Guard to 'kill – or drive to suicide – 1 million teachers.' They were inspired and 'encouraged by Mao' (an adult communist who believed that 'revolution is rebellion and violence', and who merely used the Red Guard to advance his own ambitions). Many of the Red Guard's members have, however, grown up to embrace capitalism; and, as line 4 of the previous page shows, modern youth is not united in its desire to create a moneyless society – let alone a better society (r:p1655, ln8)!

The elder generation could try to defend its apparent lack of concern for the future of its children and this planet – seemingly confirmed via its willingness to choose producing more products (many of which serve trivial purposes) over producing less pollution and not wasting resources – by arguing that, because the children have most to gain from the future, they should be responsible for creating a different future (if that is what they desire) when they have become the generation with the power to do something. However, even if they were united, is it fair to expect the next generation in power to be responsible for fixing the mess made – or, at least, contributed to – by the current generation in power?

You can blame history You can blame politics You can blame nature You can blame [their parents and grandparents] You can blame God But you can't blame the children – unicef

2: GALS?

I STAND in my sunny kitchen, opening my mail, the kids running in and out, biscuits baking in the oven. I sort the letters: a birth announcement from an old friend, a note from my mother, and more bills than I can pay. And the appeals for help. I flip through them swiftly – the dying children, the exploited working mothers, the endangered wildlife refuge. They come every day, these tragedies and terrors, into the peace and chaos of my kitchen, and every day I hesitate before I throw them in the rubbish. If I look at them it breaks my heart, and just now I can't afford to have my heart broken – I've lost my job and I'm a single mother. So I harden myself against opening them at all. Then I watch my own healthy children playing, and think again. Do I want them to grow up turning their hearts and eyes away from people in trouble? Do I want them to think it is someone else's responsibility? If they see me throw away a request without considering it, will they learn to be callous? I want to teach my children that helping others is a necessity, not a luxury... that their actions and informed opinions can matter.

...mum's gonna fix it all soon mum's coming round to put it back the way it oughta be...

"I always knew some day mom would... rise up a[gainst]... our... oppressors." ..."At the risk of editorialising, these... [mums] must be dealt with in a harsh and brutal fashion otherwise their behaviour could insight other[s]... leading to anarchy of biblical proportions. It's in Revelations people!"

...in... Athens... there was distress, fear, and discontent. How deeply the people felt the pressure of the long war is uttered in the comedy of *Lysistrata* or "Dame Disbander" which the poet Aristophanes brought out at this crisis. The heroine unites all the [gals] of the belligerent cities of Greece into a league to force the [guys] to make peace.

...basically, what's wrong with humanity is [guys].

...[gals] have the darnedest way of winning arguments without arguing.

...sisters you've got the power now use it.

...the... movement... wants a shift in priorities such that those who interfere with the environment should have to justify doing so, rather than having the onus of justification rest on the environment's defenders. A precondition for this... is an awareness of the 'soft' boundaries between ourselves and the non-human natural world. I pointed out... that in this connection deep ecologists are presented with a formidable problem of persuasion – most people simply do not think like that and it is hard to see how they ever will. Ecofeminists, though, suggest that there are millions of people thinking like that, or at least potentially on the brink of doing so – [gals] themselves... 'The identity and destiny of [gals] and nature are merged'... and... [since gals] are closer... to nature... than [guys, they] are therefore potentially in the vanguard as far as developing sustainable ways of relating to the environment is concerned... Ecofeminists... usually... simply identify some... positive... traits that they argue most [gals] already have... and then suggest that... we... and... the planet would be better off if... all of us... adopted such traits: Initially it seems obvious that the ecofeminist and peace argument is grounded on accepting a special feminine connectedness with nature or with peaceful characteristics, and then asserting this as a rival ideal of the human (or as part of such an ideal).

mother goddess [refers to the] mother-figure deity (also called the Great Mother), goddess of the entire complex of birth and growth, commonly a central figure of early nature-cults where maintenance of fertility was of prime importance in the religion. Such a figure is found in pantheons all over the world; Isis, Astarte, Cybele, and Demeter were traditional mother goddesses in the eastern Mediterranean.

...[St] *Teresa of Avila*... (1515-82), Spanish Carmelite nun... [known for her] strong character, shrewdness and great practical ability... Her importance is twofold. As the reformer of the Carmelite Order her work has survived in the great number of discaled monasteries which venerate her as their foundress... As a spiritual writer her influence was epoch-making, giving a description of the entire life of prayer from meditation to the so-called 'mystic marriage' or union with God. Her combination of mystic experience with ceaseless activity as a reformer and organizer make her life the classical instance for those who contend that the highest contemplation is not incompatible with great practical achievements.

...Mother [Teresa] (1910-), Roman Catholic nun, born in Yugoslavia, founder of an order (Missionaries of Charity) which is noted for its work among the poor and the dying in Calcutta, India, and throughout the world.

Wanted: Saint To Work Slums... M[other Teresa was once asked if it] would ever choose a successor to run her Missionaries of Charity, the mighty order [the nun] founded in 1948 to help the world's poor and neglected... "If [God] can find someone as small as me," [Teresa told a biographer, "then God] can find someone even smaller." [The biographer marvelled: "Mother Teresa actually considers herself] so ordinary that anyone can replace her." Someone will have to. Last week, leading nuns of her order began gathering in Calcutta to undertake the extraordinary task of picking a new Mother Superior-General. Suffering from acute back pains and still bed-ridden after a heart blockage in November, Mother Teresa, 86, has disclosed that [it] is stepping down as head of the order, which has about 5,000 members in 120 countries and receives millions of dollars a year in donations... [I]n December... the order... summoned its 96 most senior nuns to Calcutta. They will spend next week cloistered in two local retreats, meditating and praying before starting the process of selecting a new Mother Superior-General... The ceremony is similar to the Vatican's way of choosing a new Pope from among Cardinals... [except that elections] for Mother Superior-General are held every six years, but only once in the order's history has anyone cast a ballot against... Teresa staying on. That was... Teresa herself... Though widely admired, [all of]... the forerunners for the job... lack the founder's easy warmth. "We don't have anyone with... Teresa's special love and powers of attraction," laments one nun. For that reason, the most beloved [gal] in Christendom will likely stay on as the order's titular leader until her death. At the order's headquarters... the sisters are busy shooing away hundreds of well-wishers and trying to dissuade... Teresa from doing any work. Even using a wheelchair these days is painful, and [Teresa] is losing her ability to speak... ■ Mother Teresa and [the] Pope... get more fan mail than any other celebrity.

...*Tiny nun shared special relationship with Pope* MOTHER TERESA... was perhaps the only [gal] ever to enter the "popemobile" with [the] Pope... The episode on February 3, 1986 – a day [Mother Teresa] called the happiest day of her life – was one which showed the Polish Pope had a special affinity with the tiny nun because [the Serb] was a living symbol of grassroots Christian charity. The vehicle, which usually transports only the Pope, his private secretary and the local bishop, had just arrived outside her home for the dying in the teeming, fetid Kalighat slum. Without thinking about protocol, the Nobel Peace laureate hopped in and spontaneously hugged the Pope, who kissed her head... After the emotional visit the Pope came the closest [the pontiff] has in public to calling Mother Teresa a holy person... Two years later the Pope decided the world centre of

Catholicism needed more examples of Mother Teresa's charity[and] allowed nuns of her... religious order to open a soup kitchen inside the Vatican walls to help feed Rome's growing list of homeless and destitute. The Pope believes Mother Teresa was one of the greatest ambassadors of Christianity in modern times because [the nun] opened her door to everyone... in a non-judgmental way... [The nun,] who... had planned to spend yesterday holding special... inter-faith prayers at St Thomas'... for Diana, Princess of Wales... died in Calcutta on Friday night... [Teresa was unable to] attend Diana's funeral because of [her] fragile health... The... [US] President... linked the two... in his weekly radio broadcast.

...*World grieves for two saints*... Perhaps the two most famous [gals] in the world... died within a week of each other, and British civil and religious leaders, including the Queen, were quick to draw parallels between them... The two had met on several occasions, the last time in June in New York, when they walked hand in hand and prayed together. Di... had also visited the Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta in 1992. They represented a strange alliance – the young, tall, fashionably dressed Princess from the English aristocracy and the wizened, increasingly frail, Albanian-born missionary, clad in her trademark white and blue uniform. Yet they recognised in each other a concern for others. Mother Teresa... had been “shocked” by the Princess' death, according to a spokes[person] in her order. The... head of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, said: “It is rather lovely to think that Mother Teresa, who was very friendly with Princess Di... should have gone so soon to join her.” Both had “in... their own ways... given us a wonderful example of how we should all be concerned for each other and serve Christ in each other.”

...*LIVING saint Mother Teresa*... died of a heart attack... on the eve of Princess Diana's funeral... only months after staging a miraculous recovery from debilitating illness. The Indian icon... would be kept at St Thomas Church... in south Calcutta until Wednesday for public viewing, authorities said... The body... would be buried later that day under the chapel in her order's headquarters... [The] Pope... was “deeply moved and pained” by the death of Mother Teresa and had retreated to his private chapel to pray, a Vatican spokes[person] said. India's... President... described her as “an angel of mercy”, adding: “Such a one as [Teresa] rarely walks upon this earth.” [The]US President... praised the tiny nun as an incredible person and one of the giants of our time... [The] French President... said there was “less love, less compassion, less light” in the world after the death of Mother Teresa. Hundreds of grief-stricken followers of the [nun] who was called “Saint of the Gutters”... gathered outside Mother House, the order's headquarters, as news of her death spread... Mother Teresa was born Agnes Goixha Bejxhiu... in Skopje, in what was then Serbia... on August 27... 1910... [In 1928 Agnes entered the] Loretto Abbey in Ireland... [H]er divine call to work among the poor had come in 1946 and [Agnes] opened her first Calcutta slum school in 1949[, then] took the name Teresa, after France's Saint Therese of the Child Jesus. In mainly Hindu India, [Teresa] was simply “Mother”... When told... [about winning] the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 for bringing hope and dignity to millions of unwanted people, [Teresa] said: “I am unworthy. The poor must know that we love them,” was her simple message... The world disagreed, showering more than 80 national and international honours on her. In... [1980 Teresa was awarded the] Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award[, then in 1983 received an] honorary Order of Merit from Britain's Queen... [Teresa narrowly escaped death in 1986 in a] Tanzanian air crash... [Last year Teresa was granted an] honorary American citizenship – only [the]fifth person ever... [A NZ]er... who worked in orphanages in Bombay and Manila run by Mother Teresa's order... and... met... her... several times... said... [“Teresa] was very slight but... had the most incredible power, humanity and love in her which [the nun] would show to everyone [it met. Teresa] would never turn anyone away who wanted to see her... [often staying] up to two or three in the morning to take in the queues of people who stood outside the gates...”

...*MOTHER TERESA* was a worldwide symbol of untiring commitment to the poor and suffering, but like most of the world's icons... also drew criticism. [Teresa] was the target of some unflattering comments for her conservative beliefs and alleged tolerance of suffering. A 1994 British television documentary that questioned the worth of Mother Teresa's charity work in India's slums was perhaps the sharpest attack on her actions. The controversial programme, called *Hell's Angel* and aired on Britain's commercial Channel 4, called the media myth around her a mixture of “hyperbole and credulity”... It... accused her of preaching the message that the poor must accept their fate, while the rich and powerful are favoured by God. “[Teresa] lends spiritual solace to dictators and to wealthy exploiters, which is scarcely the essence of simplicity, and... preaches surrender and prostration to the poor, which a truly humble person would barely have the nerve to do,”... Mother Teresa's supporters around the world rose up in... [her defence. The] leader of Britain's Catholics, said the documentary was a grotesque caricature. “[Mother Teresa] represents what ordinary people everywhere acknowledge as genuine holiness,”... For decades, television helped to spread Mother Teresa's message of hope for the destitute and brought the image of her tiny, stooped, birdlike figure into homes across the world. A 1968 BBC television interview helped publicise the diminutive nun's charity. Despite her apparent frailty, [Teresa] was seen rushing to Armenia after an earthquake, to Ethiopia during a famine and to Cambodia and Lebanon during war. But the 1994... documentary and, later, published comments by some Westerners familiar with her charity work, said her homes provided haphazard medical care and lacked basic medicines like painkillers... *The Lancet*, a leading British medical journal... wrote... “Mother Teresa prefers providence to planning.” The Missionaries of Charity... did not hide the fact that it was an order of nuns before a group of healers. A yellowing script outside its Calcutta headquarters quotes from a 1977 interview with Mother Teresa: “We are first of all religious; we are not social workers, not teachers, not nurses or doctors, we are... sisters[who] serve Jesus in the poor.” ...The Missionaries of Charity now feeds about 500,000 families each year, teaches 20,000 children in its schools and treats 90,000 lepers in its clinics.

...Reflecting Mother Teresa's ability to touch rich and poor, the thousands of mourners who walked past her body yesterday included barefoot paupers, Government leaders, a former beauty queen and an Indian musician... Mother Teresa's funeral on Saturday will be held in the 10,000-seat stadium where [the]Pope... addressed the faithful during his 1986 visit to India... The Indian [PM]... has called for a state funeral, meaning Mother Teresa will be given the full military honours normally reserved for heads of state. That also makes it likely Presidents and P[M]s from around the world will attend... No decision had been made last night on who would represent... [NZ. Mother Teresa made] only one visit to N[Z], in 1973... More than 20 cardinals and bishops from around the world will join the 90-minute Mass.

...Mother Teresa, whose message of peace and compassion went beyond the boundaries of creed and nationality, will go to her burial place on a gun carriage, draped in the Indian flag. The military trappings of Saturday's state funeral might clash with the image of the Nobel Peace laureate – but church leaders said yesterday that it was the Government's way of giving ...her... its most prestigious farewell... “People might think of war when they see a gun carriage, but this is not the way it... should be taken.” ...[● A long-time friend of Teresa] cannot remember the dates, but... clearly recalls a lot about the young nun who had a strange request. “Father Vandexam kept asking me whether I knew of a room in a mud hut with a mud-tiled roof,” [the friend]... aged 89... said yesterday, speaking of the priest who was seeking accommodation for... Teresa[– “who] wanted to live amongst the poor.” ...Teresa... [eventually] settled for the first floor in [the friend's] house, but lived austere... “Look, there the sisters used to play tug of war – and [Teresa's] team... always los[and fe]ll down on the floor.” But the humour did nothing to stop the nun's inner spirit...

Yesterday... the Catholic broadcaster Telepace aired a humorous conversation which took place in Rome in May between Mother Teresa and[a] Vatican cardinal... in which Mother Teresa was asked what would happen when [the nun] met St Peter in heaven. The founder of the Catholic Church, said Mother Teresa, would probably complain. “St Peter will tell me: ‘But what have you done, Mother Teresa, filling up paradise with all your poor people?’” ...The cardinal then suggested that St Peter “would line up all the people whom you have sent him down the years.” Mother Teresa replied: “There are 50,000 of them and they all died with St Peter's ticket [a smile on the face].”

...With their charismatic patron gone forever, many... workers and children... at... the orphanage that Mother Teresa ran in the Calcutta slums... were wondering about their future... One member of the order, speaking on condition of anonymity, said it would be difficult to go forward without Mother Teresa to inspire others to help and donate funds... [Her] order's finances are not public, and there are no reliable estimates on how much it takes to run its more than 500 missions... [Incidentally, people] the world over considered Mother Teresa... a “living saint” but years or

decades may pass before the Catholic Church can elevate her to sainthood. Despite a person's reputation during his or her life, the process that leads to sainthood cannot begin until after death. And whatever Mother Teresa did during her lifetime, two miracles after her death have to be recognised by the Church in the complicated and sometimes controversial process of getting a halo. If a person has earned a "reputation of sanctity" among the people, the local bishop can begin the process but... must wait at least five years after the person has died. When the prelate begins the cause, the candidate for sainthood receives the title "Servant of God." A "postulator" is appointed to help gather information from people who knew the candidate, seeking evidence of holiness. The evidence – usually amounting to many, many volumes – is sent under seal to the Vatican's Congregation for the Causes for Saints. A "relator" is appointed. His job is to evaluate the evidence and make a recommendation. If the investigation ends positively, then begins the long process towards beatification and ultimately sainthood.

...some in Calcutta say they already know the answer. "[Teresa]'s already a saint, we don't need the Vatican's word," said... a business[person]... Since her death... the Vatican has been flooded with requests to waive the five-year waiting period before the process of canonisation begins... [However], the Vatican's authority on doctrine, said it was unlikely measures would be taken to quicken the procedure... Mother Teresa... dedicated her work to God, saying [it was possible to see God] in every suffering human being... But... [to] name her a saint, the Vatican must be convinced Mother Teresa has performed miracles. Such miracles can come after death, such as curing an ill believer or answering a supplicant's prayers. Church leaders said they were waiting for evidence of a miracle. "It is a sign from God that we wish for; we pray for that,"...

THE shelling of Beirut had just reached its peak in 1992 when Mother Teresa decided to head right into the thick of it all to rescue 60 severely retarded children who were without water and power in a bombed-out hospital. A saintly mission it was, but completely insane, several priests told her: Her life would be at risk... [The nun] eventually persuaded the US ambassador to allow her to go to the children in Muslim West Beirut if there were a ceasefire. "I'm certain there will be a ceasefire tomorrow," [the nun] told him. The next day the bombing stopped, and Mother Teresa and a caravan of hospital workers carried the children, one by one, to safety... And that was her life's philosophy – to help one person and love one person at a time, no matter how hopeless their situation, and then go on to the next one.

...[a professional golfer] was once in a tournament in the Philippines when Mother Teresa and [the]Pope... were there together. A government official asked... which one [the golfer] wanted to meet. [The golfer] said Mother Teresa. "We'll have other popes." ...Mother Teresa's niece is quoted in the documentary *Mother Teresa*... as saying that as a child the [person] many now consider a saint was "mischievous, playful but no goody-goody"... Mother Teresa was criticised for focusing on giving people a dignified death instead of focusing on trying to make them healthy; for being satisfied with changing lives "hovel by hovel" instead of devising large-scale programmes to wipe out poverty; for preaching Catholicism's opposition to abortion instead of helping India cope with the problems of overpopulation. [A]British journalist... who turned a caustic eye on Mother Teresa in his 1995 book, *The Missionary Position: Mother Teresa In Theory And Practice*, accused her of deepening fatalism in the hovels of [a] city of 13 million. "I think it is very beautiful for the poor to accept their lot, to share it with the passion of Christ. I think the world is being much helped by the suffering of the poor people," [the journalist] quoted her as saying... [H]er life in Calcutta's slums "illustrated something that the high priests of development often overlook: in order to pull people out of poverty, it is important to first empower them with the hope that change is possible," [another]commentator... wrote in a recent *Newsweek* column.

...THE rag picker lay on the road in the shelter of a parked bus. Her body racked by fever and respiratory disease, [the rag picker] lay huddled under a thin blanket on an old sack... [B]ehind her stood the closed doors of the Home for the Destitute and Dying in Calcutta... It seems a surprising story. Mother Teresa was a global icon of... compassion, but since her death, entry to her home for the destitute has become increasingly restricted... [T]he No 3 in the order, has denied in local papers that sick people have been put back on the streets... [though, according to No 3, most] beggars "are much more comfortable on the streets than inside a room full of beggars". From the middle-class streets of Lake Range, 8km away, emerged another... story. Two weeks after... Teresa died, people looked out of their windows to see a Missionaries of Charity van pull up. The doors were opened and an 80-year-old... was placed on the pavement. Witnesses claim [the 80-year-old] was half-paralysed and visibly distressed. Police were called but nobody could get any sense from the [80-year-old] who merely babbled and sobbed. They returned her to the Missionaries of Charity where [the 80-year-old] was readmitted, barely an hour and a half after being abandoned... [T]he Nepalese-born convert from Hinduism who has become... Teresa's successor, has denied that [the 80-year-old] was treated badly. The missionaries could not accommodate everyone, [the successor] said... After... Teresa's death, [the new No 1] declared the poor would always be poor. "Our job... is to provide comfort and help them put on a brave face." ..."I am afraid there may be a little less charity these days," says... the Catholic priest who led prayers after... Teresa's death.

...[GAL] of the WORLD... It was early in 1985 and [the US] president had just given Mother Teresa the Presidential Medal of Freedom in a Rose Garden ceremony. As... the... saint in a sari... walked down the corridor between the Oval Office and the West Wing drive... I could not help it: I bowed. "Mother," I said, "I just want to touch your hand." [Mother Teresa] looked up at me... and... pressed into my hand a poem... written[by herself]... I took the poem from its frame the day [its author] died. It is free verse called "Mother's Meditation (in the hospital)." In it [Mother Teresa] reflects on Christ's question to his Apostles: "Who do you say I am?" [Mother Teresa notes that Christ] was the boy born in Bethlehem, "put in the manger full of straw... kept warm by the breadth of the donkey," who grew up to be "an ordinary [guy] without much learning." ...We think saints are soft, ethereal, pious and meek. But some saints are steamrollers – great organisers, great combatants in the world... You have to be a pretty tough character to organise a universe that exists to help people whom other people aren't interested in helping.

...[the new US] Secretary of State does not claim to be a great strategic thinker, but [does claim to be] a tough power broker...

The most powerful [gal] in the world... was already trying to influence people's views of foreign policy when... in ninth grade[the] recent refugee with a funny accent and the wrong clothes... decided to start an international-relations club and make herself its president. Now, 46 years later, [the refugee] is poised to become one of the most influential foreign policy powers in the arena, in large part because her voice carries further than anyone else's – right into the White House. When [the President] was mulling his choices for a Secretary of State... [it] soon acknowledged that no [gal had ever held the position and, luckily, no] one was more skillful, or colorful, at explaining U.S. foreign policy interests than his outspoken U[N] ambassador. While her critics caricatured her as a loose cannon, without the heft and discretion to be a careful diplomat... those who worked with her in private knew that those lively broadsides that made such great bites on the evening news had been carefully scripted and well rehearsed... The test... is whether [the former ambassador] will be able to make her case for U.S. foreign policy initiatives as effectively with foreign governments as... with [the President. And gal] foreign-policy officers, noticing that [their new boss] hasn't appointed any [gals] to prominent slots so far, are grumbling that the glass ceiling may now be reinforced as the floor beneath her feet.

...GIRLS ON TOP... IF [guys] want jobs in future, they better learn to be... assertive... ambitious... and... bossy like a [gal. More gals] are breaking through the glass ceiling to become bosses, although slowly, and those still being thwarted by not gaining the promotions they deserve are leaving to set up their own companies and doing it better than [guys]. How much of their success can be put down to a "[gal]'s way" of doing business is a matter for debate – many say it's personality, rather than gender. But researchers agree that the traditional macho culture lingering in senior management, where being one of the boys can be as important as competence and experience, is a major factor in the painfully slow progress of [gals] to the top of the career ladder. A 1994... survey of 188 organisations found that only 5.7% of [gals] employed in the private sector held management positions, compared with 11.4% of [guys]; and only 4.6% of [gals] working for public bodies were bosses, compared with 19.3% of [guys]. Those who did reach senior management were paid 85% of what their [guy] counterparts earned. Those passing over a [gal] to give a [guy work]mate a job, prompting her to leave to become her own boss, could be doing their company a disservice... [because gals] are 49% more

successful in starting up their business than [guys]. At the end of their first year, [gals'] companies have an 85% success rate compared with an overall rate of 50%. [Gals] are also becoming employers at a faster rate... [and.] in 1993, three-quarters of their employees were [gals. NZ gals'] success matches that of their sisters in other [First World countries – in AUS, gal] business owners are responsible for about half of private sector employment creation; in Britain, nearly a third of people who set up firms are [gals]; and in the U[S], the number of [gal]-owned businesses has increased by 78% since 1987[(when 'there were 4,114,800 firms owned by gals, representing 30% of all US firms in number and 17% of the total receipts). The percentage of gal-owned firms in the US was highest in social services (83%), apparel (55%) and personal services (53%'). A US] survey found that [gals] do a better job than [guys] in 28 out of 31 key management areas, including identifying trends, maintaining productivity and keeping promises. A study of 22,000 French firms found those run by [gals] were twice as profitable and growing twice as fast as those run by [guys]... So after centuries of discrimination and restriction to the home, what has made [gals] so good at business? ...a Massey University management systems lecturer... thinks it is the very conditioning that girls still receive – to be empathetic, flexible, and take into account the needs and opinions of others – that has made them more suited to the work environment of the '90s. They are the qualities recognised as reaping a better, more productive response from staff, and that best cater to those wanting, and often needing, to better balance home and work. If a manager does not provide a “family friendly” workplace to take into account childcare arrangements, the desire for parental leave and so on, [it]... may find good staff leaving and difficulty in attracting replacements. Then there's [gals'] inherent abilities at organisation, efficiency and thinking of a number of different things at once, developed from generations of raising children, supporting partners and running households... In another study, by Auckland University, more than 80% of [gal] bosses said their main way of dealing with poor work was to “talk it over”... and in response to a question about how they went about firing someone, 42% said “we don't”. IT MAY be that [gals] feel compelled to take the consultative approach because to appear too aggressive and pushy can work against them... In contrast, a recent British study found in tough economic times, when redundancy is more of a threat, [gal] bosses adapt for survival by becoming more aggressive and dictatorial. And – contrary to the supportive, nurturing atmosphere that survey respondents claim is created by most [gal] bosses – some... can appear mysteriously intent on destroying staff morale... [The] founder and former editor of *Fashion Quarterly*... freely admits [it] is not easy to work for, “but then I've never needed to be liked.” ...[it] doesn't think her lack of background in journalism was a hindrance in running the magazine. “...I can't write, but I hire people who can...” ...[By the way, NZ's] Business Roundtable is set to get its first [gal] full member... when[the Mobil NZ] chief executive... joins.

...N[Z]'S Parliament has earned a pat on the back for having the sixth-highest proportion in the world of [gals] in power... with 29.2%... N[Z] led the Pacific parliaments, ahead of A[US] on 15.5%, and was behind Sweden (40.4%), Norway (39.4%), Finland (33.5%), Denmark (33%) and the Netherlands (31.3%)... And while the country's [gal] politicians have welcomed the... Inter-Parliamentary Union ranking... [amongst] the world's 179 Parliaments... they say they will not be happy until [guys and gals] are equally represented in Parliament... [The former Gals'] Affairs Minister... said... “[Gals] are 52% of the population so it's not unrealistic to think we can improve our position. People think we've got there and that's it, but we have to keep fighting the battle. Do we have enough [gals] in Cabinet or as select committee chairs?!” The new Minister of Gals' Affairs, who is NZ's only remaining gal] Cabinet minister... and [the Labour Party] leader... also said the result could be improved on. [After all, NZ has yet to have a gal PM – a situation the Labour Party leader hopes to rectify when the country holds its next parliamentary elections.]

...Pakistan's Supreme Court upheld the dismissal of [the country's former PM (r:p200, ln68)] yesterday... “There is enough material to establish corruption, nepotism and misrule,” [the]Chief Justice... said at the end of a hearing... into [the former PM]'s appeal against her dismissal by[the] President... on a range of charges. [The former PM] denies them all. The... [former PM] said the court verdict was part of a plot to drive her from politics... [In local news, three] out of four N[Z] First Cabinet Ministers are relaxed about any change in National's leadership, and say it would not trigger a collapse of the coalition... if [National's 5th-ranked MP – the current Minister of Gals' Affairs –] took the reins. Their comments will reassure some nervous... backers[of the 5th-ranked MP], who fear replacing [the incumbent PM] is a high-risk strategy because it could lead to the dissolution of the coalition and an early election. [The 5th-ranked MP] has recently tried to build bridges with NZ First... [by saying that it] would be happy to be part of a National-NZ First [coalition] after the next election. [However, the NZ First cabinet] ministers' comments are at odds with the fourth NZ First cabinet minister, [and]party leader... who has indicated to [the 5th-ranked National MP] through intermediaries that the coalition deal would be off if [it became PM. The NZ First leader] has a close working relationship with... [the incumbent PM. However, the] NZ First deputy... would be happy to work with anybody. “I don't give a toss who the leader of the National Party is, as long as the coalition agreement is stable,”...

When dreams are shattered people will say the strangest things. Take [the leader of the Labour Party]. In the aftermath of [a gal]'s takeover of the leadership of the National Party, and undoubtedly disappointed at having lost the opportunity to become [NZ's first gal PM, the Labour Party leader said it] still hoped to become the first... [elected gal PM of NZ. Which reminds me: the person who has stolen her opportunity] recently... told... a story... about... when [NZ's first gal Governor-General] went into a school and a little boy said, “Oh... do you think a [guy] will ever be Governor-General?”

...the... “freshness” that [the Minister of Gals' Affairs] yesterday promised to bring to National's line-up looks like prompting a clean-out of the party's eight-member front bench. But the cabinet reshuffle to follow [the 5th-ranked National MP]'s coup is still a month away because [the incumbent PM] will not formally step down until after [it] returns from China... [The PM]-in-waiting... may opt for a staged reshuffle, making initial changes next month before unveiling a pre-election cabinet makeover when some ministers have made their retirement intentions clear later in the New Year. Her problem, however, is that her back benchers do not have an abundance of “fresh” talent, unless [the PM-in-waiting] takes the unlikely step of elevating someone from the 1996 intake.

...When [the PM-in-waiting first] came into politics [it said: “I'm] determined to serve three constituencies: those who passionately believe in private enterprise and who create wealth so we have jobs and social services...; those who cherish freedom and believe in taking responsibility for themselves and their own before looking to others...; and... those whose interests are not easily heard in the corridors of power and, in particular, [gals.” On]... the shelves in... [her] office was a sign of the times: “Whatever [gals] do, they must do twice as well as [guys] to be thought half as good. Thankfully this is not difficult.” ...yesterday... the... reminders that [National's 5th-ranked MP] is likely to become the country's first [gal PM] were in the flowers colouring the otherwise-bland surroundings of her Beehive theatre press conference, and her comment when asked if it would be difficult being a [gal] in the post. “I have to tell you walking over t[v] cords in high heels is, I suspect, more difficult than for my [guy] colleagues.” In the House, [the PM-in-waiting] made her entrance a fashionable few minutes late, and glided in her stately fashion to her seat next to the deputy National leader for now... In the snap debate that followed, [the PM-in-waiting] adopted her distinctive combative stance, an imperious, arms-spread-on-the-desk delivery. [The PM-in-waiting] rode out most of the opposition derision but they slipped a few in under the guard. When [the PM-in-waiting talked about the outgoing PM]'s incisive ability to read politics, particularly over the past few days, [one Labour MP] interjected that it was easy to notice a “knife stuck in our back.” At the end of her speech, [the outgoing PM] paused on his way out for a brief handshake with his successor[who, not long ago, did not want to be accused of upstaging the PM. Her husband didn't]t want to talk publicly yesterday... [but] in 1991... said... “Ages ago I could recognise that [my wife] had excellent skills, and I'm enough of a capitalist to say people should use their skills.”

...[an MP]'s strike for the leadership of the National Party caught blue-ribbon supporters off guard... “There has not been wide consultation within the party. A lot of people within the party feel the timing is all wrong.” The [5th-ranked MP's]... caucus supporters... ran the risk of dividing the party and handing the reins of government to “a coalition of Labour, the Alliance and left-leaning N[Z] Firsters.” A former... National Party national executive member... said the caucus should remember [the outgoing PM]'s standing within the party. “[The outgoing PM] is a very

underestimated politician – [someone who] has got a lot of qualities people do not recognise...” ...[the outgoing PM, who agreed to] step down... last night... had led the party for 11 years...

Six years ago [a National Party MP] was being burned in the streets. Protesters roasted her effigy after [the MP] introduced the 1991 benefit cuts as Minister of Social Welfare. Now [the same MP will become NZ's first gal PM]. It has been a painful transformation from most unpopular politician in the country – a position [the MP] still holds unchallenged with many voters – to double-figure support in opinion polls. Even this figure has to be seen in perspective. Her latest 12[%] rating was three points below the [outgoing PM]... But her growing fan club, inside and outside the National Party, believe [the gal from Gore] has the intellect, the determination and, above all, the strength (a word you hear often about her) to lead the country... [The representative of] Ashburton (now Rakaia)... has been talked about as a future P[M] almost from the time... [the mother of two, a former primary school] teacher, farmer, playcentre representative[and] county councillor... entered Parliament in 1987... As Health Minister, [the Ashburton MP] spent three years defending National's... health reforms... But despite the intense unpopularity [her] positions brought her, [the Ashburton MP] never backed away from defending the party cause. Colleagues and opponents alike were amazed at the way [the MP] seemed to invite confrontation on issues – a trademark, many believe, of her unwavering self-belief... [The MP] was... the second of four daughters of a Presbyterian minister. Former classmates... have described her as an undistinguished student who scraped through school certificate but failed to get university entrance... *Enemies call her: Tank-Commander* [or] the perfumed steamroller...

Business leaders are comfortable with the news that [the Minister of Gals' Affairs will] take over the leadership of the National Party. Senior business executives spoken to yesterday said leadership was the vital ingredient missing from the coalition Government... On the question of... [her] suitability for the job... the... chief executive of the gas company Enerco [NZ said the new PM] appeared to have a pragmatic and forward-looking approach to business... [Asked what qualified the new PM for the job, one of her colleagues said that it 'has been a good mother.' The good mother] sees herself as having the skills to do the job rather than having the philosophical approach of standing for a view at a certain time... [To work, her] leadership must change the public impression of the coalition as a tired, two-headed... beast. For that reason, [the new PM] may not be worried if N[Z] First splits and [its leader] leaves the coalition – as long as enough of its MPs are prepared to help National govern with Act and United Party support... to ensure a 61-59 majority. There was no indication last night if and when [the outgoing PM] will step down from Parliament. However, [the outgoing PM] said it was his strongest wish that the coalition agreement remained in “good health” – a sign [outgoing PM] will stick around.

...[the outgoing PM] had been thinking of retiring for a while before... [being] ousted... this week, say family members... [One of his eight siblings] jokingly... planned asking his big brother if [the outgoing PM] wanted a job in his real estate firm... [The outgoing PM] will lose many – but not all – of the perks of office... His drop in pay will depend on his new job, which will probably be as a minister[, but if it]... heads for the back benches his salary will drop more than \$100,000 to \$72,000.

...When top-level visitors come half-way round the world to see you, they naturally expect you to go to a bit of effort to entertain them. But... [the Netherlands PM and the US] Deputy Secretary of State... got more than they expected when they arrived in Wellington in time to see a [PM rolled. The User] is on an Asia-Pacific tour and having met [the outgoing PM] at the Beehive on Monday had to race back to Parliament yesterday morning to meet his replacement... before... [flying] out to Canberra yesterday afternoon. [The Dutch PM] was guest of honour at a state banquet at the Beehive last night, hosted by [NZ's outgoing PM]. The Minister of Foreign Affairs... [– who] is not expected to survive... [for long in the new regime –] said both visitors were “lapping it up... They feel tremendously pleased and a little humble even that we didn't just shut them out and say, ‘sorry, we've got a big political problem here, stay away’...” However... the distinguished guests realised they would be swimming against the tide if they expected much media coverage of their visits and both cancelled press conferences... Financial markets were virtually unaffected by [the coup]...

The election of [a *conservative farmer's wife* as PM]-designate after a bloodless coup places the centre-right economic agenda firmly at the forefront after months of policy drift. In [the PM-designate], business finally has a leader who will “talk the walk” as well as “walk the talk” and strongly champion... [the] free market... Greater self-reliance will become the... National Party's catchcry in competition with the... Labour Party's embrace of dependency and the politics of grievance. This latter stance has aided Labour's rise in the political polls but does nothing to ensure [NZ dis]continues its transformation from a welfare state to an independent, entrepreneurial nation... According to [herself, the PM-designate] grew up in a poor but secure family... There is a strong tone of moral superiority in [her] claims that proper attention to family life can prevent social disintegration and family distress, and that being poor is not the explanation... Having myself been a Presbyterian congregant while growing up in the 1950s, I know that ministers' families, while modestly paid, enjoyed... status in communities. Her minister father would have had a house provided by the church, not market rentals and, unlike modern industries, there are no redundancies from God. [The PM-designate] cannot know what it is like running a home in the era of the Employment Contracts Act, when both parents must work, and when the hours of work and wage packet are unpredictable... There is a danger in taking one's personal experience as the norm, or worse, holding it up as the exemplar for others... [In recent days, the PM-designate] has grown in stature. Her manner is more composed and assured, her smile more beneficent, and her voice as smooth as oil... This sureness of outlook verges on smugness, an unattractive quality emanating from one so privileged... Of course [the PM-designate] can afford to look confident because currently everything is going her way[, although]... an absurd clause in the coalition agreement enables N[Z] First to have three more of its MPs appointed to Cabinet next year. So unless that agreement is renegotiated, [as the PM-designate]'s backers want, National will ultimately have... more... instability... Clearly players like [the outgoing PM, his party deputy, the] Attorney-General... and even the able Finance Minister... are on the way out, no matter the language of appeasement proffered yesterday. All are able cabinet ministers but most are set to become casualties of [the PM-designate]'s need to produce a rejuvenated administration... In [the outgoing PM]'s case, a senior diplomatic posting to Washington and a key policy role in negotiating a free-trade agreement with the U[S] have been mentioned. A Commonwealth role for [his party deputy] and various quasi-government roles for other potential retirees have been suggested... 10 of the 18 staff in the office of the [outgoing PM could also] be out of work... [The PM-designate]'s credentials as a fiscal conservative arise from her stint as Minister of Social Welfare during which [it] implemented benefit cuts announced in the “mother of all budgets” brought in by the other half of the “rottweiler twins,”... On further state asset sales, [the PM-designate] is seen as one who would sooner the Government was not involved in trading businesses, at least where competition is possible... Privatisation of roads, with their monopoly characteristics, was... however... ruled out early in the review of roading which, as Minister of Transport, [the PM-designate] has been overseeing... Some kind of corporatisation of the roading administration is expected, modelled perhaps on the airport companies... Such a change would raise questions about the need for further amalgamations of rural councils, much of whose time and much of whose rates revenue is devoted to roading. On ACC, [the PM-designate] is understood to... favour some competition, though that was not on her agenda when... [taking] up the portfolio... In her eyes, producer boards' export monopolies – where they survive – are also something which have had their day, especially if removing them turns out to be the price of a free-trade agreement with the U[S].

...NZ] First wants a guarantee... that [the PM-designate] plans no lurches to the right before it will consider committing itself to a coalition Government with her... The party's MPs harbour resentment that their support was taken for granted in her leadership coup. This was made all the more galling for them because the coup was propelled by anti-N[Z] First sentiment within National ranks... [The PM-designate], who is said to be surprised by the degree of unhappiness in NZ First, extended the olive branch yesterday... [by saying that it] did not plan to renegotiate the

coalition agreement... The possibility of [NZ First's leader] collapsing the coalition and supporting a Labour minority Government with his own party and National in Opposition has not been ruled out and was canvassed by him at yesterday's caucus. But his own performance in Parliament yesterday, including a bitter attack on Labour, reinforced its unlikelihood. The Labour leader... also put paid to it, saying to change Governments like that in the circumstances would be "inappropriate."

...An assertive [PM-designate] had her first face-to-face meeting yesterday as National Party leader with [the NZ First leader]... Neither was commenting on the content of the talks, but [the PM-designate] is likely to have repeated her assurances that the coalition agreement would not be changed without the parties' mutual consent. Earlier, [the PM-designate had] dropped the delicate diplomacy of the past few days to contemplate a government without [NZ First by saying that NZ]ers wanted a coalition majority government as their first option but, in apparent reference to a single-party minority government, said National had other options... And [the NZ First leader] signalled a subtle but significant change in his resolve not to change the coalition agreement, a position [it] has taken since... [the leadership coup. Yesterday the NZ First leader] suggested... the clause allowing three more N[Z] First MPs to be promoted as ministers by next October... was open to question... Outside Parliament [the NZ First leader] also reiterated his willingness to reassess the sale of assets protected under the coalition agreement... But... [the] coup has given [the PM-designate] and National an instant boost, according to a snap poll of 500 people... for *One Network News*. National is up seven points to 37[%] and Labour is down seven to 45[%]. The PM-designate] doubled her popularity as preferred [PM to 21%. The Labour leader] is on 28[%].

...Electing the head prefect is an exercise fraught with difficulties. Do you vote for the person you like, the sports champion or the one who won't do you in for smoking behind the bike shed? Whatever the outcome, you welcome the process and the chance to have your say. But as this week's Beehive coup has shown, secrecy is more important than consultation in the creation of a new leader. Grass-roots party members have been forced to accept – yet again – that consultation on such high matters of state is a luxury, not a right... Most divisional heads and party members contacted by the *N[Z] Herald* this week said they would have preferred greater consultation by MPs about the decision to replace the P[M], but understood that secrecy was paramount... [as] consultation... would have generated unwelcome publicity.

...The arrival by coup of N[Z]'s first gal PM has enabled her to be] likened to the Iron [Maiden. The replacement of NZ's PM]... received widespread coverage on the international pages of broadsheet newspapers internationally... [-] though there was little cover on television or in tabloids... [-] and prompted an editorial in the *Times*... [which] said the scenario of a coup while a leader was overseas was all too familiar, [although NZ]'s first experience of a coup had appeared civilised... While the paper said [the outgoing PM] had over the years proven to be a doughty fighter and curiously suggested [the outgoing PM] had borrowed policies from [AUS, it said the outgoing PM] had recently grown careless. The report said [the outgoing PM] might have kept his job if [the outgoing PM] had just attended the Commonwealth summit in Edinburgh [rather than staying] away too long by going on to France. It made no mention of his earlier stopover in London to meet [the British P]M... Meanwhile, an editorial in yesterday's *Sydney Morning Herald* said the failure of the N[Z] First leader... to rise to the challenges of Government had caused [the outgoing PM]'s downfall.

...THE [person] once tipped to be A[US's first gal PM has]... sounded a warning... to our own [gal PM]. "I'm always pleased when [gals] achieve significant office, but the scenario has a somewhat familiar ring about it,"... The question must be, have [our PM-elect]'s colleagues stitched her up with a job no-one could make a success of? Is the task of turning this government around one that only a naive politician would take on? A cynic might think so, if it were not for the way [our PM-elect] has survived other portfolios intended to bury her. The graveyard shifts in social welfare and then health were ones her colleagues may have thought [the gal from Gore] would never emerge from, but did... [Her] chief opponent at the next election will not be [the leader of Labour], it will be a mood for change... By the time the 1999 election rolls up, National will have been in office for nine years... Last week's coup saw National position itself for the first state of rejuvenation that is its only antidote to the cyclical wave of change... Instead of facing many more months of debilitating speculation on leadership, the party now has up to two years to remake itself after the tidiest of coups... But... [renewing] a government while in office is one of politics' most arduous feats... The model National is eyeing is that of the last A[US]n Labor government, which transformed itself in office effectively enough to hold power all the way from 1983 to 1996... [- although an] Opposition in serial disarray helped too. The difficulty facing... [NZ's PM-elect is that the] generational change which has seen the baby boomers move into the dominant positions in National, as they did in Labour as long ago as the early 1980s... must do more than bringing forward fresh faces and a fresh vision. Most of all, [the new regime] has to respond to the strongest element of the desire for change, the desire for a swing back to centrist or centre-left policies. For National, that is a tall order, for [the PM-elect], near impossible... her advocacy of self-reliance does not gel with a public looking for a more reassuring face on government... [Furthermore,] a large section of the public believe her to be a harsh and judgmental [person]. The double jeopardy in... [her] mission from hell is that [the PM-elect] must not only bring her own party back to life, but must find new ways of limiting damage from National's unpredictable coalition partner... However, [the PM-elect]... has ambitions of making the coalition work for a while at least, and that will mean currying favour with NZ First and its leader at times, just as [her predecessor] had to.

...The PM-elect... is constantly compared with... [Britain's Iron Maiden – who once declared that: "T]he international conservative position is sound because there is no need for a fundamental rethinking of basic principles, as had to happen in the '70s[" –] ...and in economic terms the comparison seems apt. But [our PM-elect] has none of [the old leader of Britain]'s open brutality. "Attila the Hen" was constantly belittling, insulting and sacking her colleagues: [The Iron Maiden] once entered the cabinet room and told the Chancellor of the Exchequer to get a haircut... [On another occasion, the Iron Maiden proclaimed that it] didn't care how much her ministers talked, as long as they did what [the Iron Maiden] said... But officials are full of praise for [our PM-elect]... "I don't find her a cold sort of person at all," says [one official]. "I find her a sensible, large-size mum." ...The critics have a different view. For them, [our PM-elect]'s voice is as sweet as a razor and as calm as the crypt... [A former spokesperson] for the Public Health Coalition, a fierce opponent of National's health reforms, found her patronising and dismissive. In early 1994, the then Health Minister lectured a health delegation as though they knew nothing about the issues, "and we couldn't get a word in edgewise." And... [a former chairperson] of the Medical Association and a leader of the [health coalition], says while the minister may not be cold and heartless, "her policies are." So just how far to the right is the new PM? In some ways [our PM-elect] could be seen as more radical than... [the Iron Maiden. A] professor of public policy at Wellington's Victoria University says [the Iron Maiden] "never challenged universal free health care; ...never challenged free tertiary education". The top personal tax rate under the Conservative government was reduced to 40p in the pound, while "we're down to 33c in the dollar..." [Our PM-elect] advocates lower taxes and more targeting of benefits, and is... a more determined advocate of the shrinking state than the Iron Maiden... "[Our PM-elect i]s clearly on the market end of the spectrum. Her views would be regarded as very radical if not extreme in many democracies around the world." ...there is a paradox. [Our PM-elect] knows about poverty and life on the benefit. Her father was... [in] a notoriously low-paid profession... [The] Presbyterian minister... died suddenly when [the PM-elect] was 18, and his wife... had to move out of the manse and on to a widow's benefit... As Minister of Health [the PM-elect] was... forced to defend some wildly unpopular policies: Her image as a flint-faced budget-crusher was confirmed. When [the current Minister of Health] became her understudy... his motto was "don't defend the indefensible". [His mentor's] approach, on the other hand, often seemed to be just that. Certainly [the PM-elect] could never win the political argument over heart-break cases like... the pensioner who was billed more than \$50,000 for the hospital care of his wife... [who] had been in a long-stay public hospital bed with Alzheimer's. [The then Minister of Health] said charging those who could afford to pay avoided discrimination against those who paid for private care, or were cared for at home. No matter how calmly... [the politician who] somehow... averted... the crisis... [which] threatened her home electorate... [by scrapping] plans to downgrade the services at Ashburton Hospital... might argue

the point, however, the public remembered only the terrible television pictures of a dying pensioner and the minister who said no... One part of the politician has got lost in all the odium: Her liberation on matters of sex. In this [our PM-elect] differs crucially from the laced-and-corseted Victorianism of [the Iron Maiden. It was while Health Minister that our PM-elect gave gals] the free contraceptive pill, for example, a decision which got international media coverage but has failed to dent her hard-right image at home. When the YWCA published *Sisters*, a sex education guide for young [gals] which included frank discussion of masturbation and lesbianism, the moral majority hit the roof... [while] the impeccably conservative farmer's wife leaped to its defence... [The farmer's wife] has also been a reforming Minister of [Gals'] Affairs, and was responsible for ground-breaking legislation on domestic violence... [The] executive director of the YWCA, says [the PM-elect] "was terrific help in getting government funding for a self-defence programme that the YWCA was running for girls in intermediate schools"... [Our PM-elect's services to NZ gals] are in quite a different category[to the Iron Maiden]... A poster for [the Iron Maiden, recalls the executive director], proclaimed "Mrs T's message to British [gals is]: Tough!" ...Those close to [our PM-elect] say the public will get to like her as they see her more often. They say that her cool manner, which can seem both patronising and chilling, is a mask which all [gal] politicians have to wear. "Any [gal] who shows emotion," says one close associate, "is condemned as being weak." That is why, [the associate says, gal] politicians so often adopt the same... style... [as their guy counterparts. Her Opposition counterpart] had to do so to protect herself from the [guys] in the Labour Party... [However, during] the last election, [the Labour Party leader] managed to crack her mask of ice, and shot up in the polls. There is an odd symmetry between the leaders of both the major parties. Both are cool and both photograph badly. Both have an image problem. [But Labour's leader] has improved hers, and the polls suggest [the PM-elect]'s is improving as well. Partly, this goes with the job: new P[M]s suddenly look prime ministerial, and their ratings go up. The real test comes after the honeymoon.

...as a role model for... [gals the PM-elect risks alienating gal] voters if her job is to move National further to the right, warns a political scientist... based at Lincoln University and responsible for establishing the National [Gal] in Politics Network... [R]ecent Auckland University research confirmed overseas studies that identified a gender gap between... voters... [Gals] were more likely to support the concept of a welfare state and increased spending for education, health, childcare and the elderly. They were also less likely to strongly support monetarist economic policy. While [the new] prime ministership would mark the start of a new and exciting era, "we should be cautious in our expectations of what a [gal PM] can achieve (for [gals]) at the moment. The entry of an individual leader does not mean the interests of [gals] will be advanced." Many [gal] politicians found it difficult to "speak for [gals]" because there was not one [gals'] view. A more useful indicator was... the critical mass of [gals] in the party... With [gals] leading the two biggest parties – not a first because Norway... previously had four [gals] leading its major parties – and taking significant roles in... smaller parties, that "critical mass" was growing. "This means we can actually get more gutsy debate." ...Having a leader who talked about post-natal depression instead of rugby signified how great a shift was being made... [The gal] leadership and management style... is increasingly being recognised as desirable... Britain's [Iron Maiden] held power for years, with immense popularity, and Ireland's president[– who will soon be] ending a seven-year term to become the U[N] Human Rights Commissioner[– i]s "widely judged to have been spectacularly successful"... [The gal who] led... Norway... through the 80s, retiring earlier this year[, also]... had huge respect and was being tipped as the next head of the W[HO. Indira Gandhi (the 'daughter of independent India's first PM, and herself PM 1966-77 and again from 1980, dominating Indian politics for nearly 20 years before her assassination in 1984'), Pakistan's former PM] (now leader of the Opposition) and [the]Bangladesh president... – the country's second [gal] leader – were all examples of influential Asian [gals. The] Sri Lankan president... took a lead from her mother, who was that country's first [gal] president. There were '15 gal leaders of the world in 1994. All are out of office today, but the world now has 27 gal leaders.' However, their politics reflects the view that there aren't any] notable differences between the way [gals and guys ruled. 'Gals are just as capable of repeating stupid things as guys.']

...Whenever... our first chick leader... passes on telly, I sit bolt upright with my arms and legs crossed and my back very straight, like at kindy. Know who is in charge, I always say. However, I have given this First [Gal PM] business substantial thought on your behalf this past week... Being a girl, two politicians suddenly running our largest political parties is interesting. My girlfriends and I have talked much of it. After all, much of [our] life is still about ascertaining how powerful we really feel. When a [gal PM] emerges everyone immediately wonders whether other [gals] feel similar achievement is more possible for them... but... [gals] fall into two groups in my opinion. Group one: Those who are consistently confident in their right to contribute. Group two: Those who pretend they are. Our new leader is of the first group. I'm of the second. So are most [gals] I know. I say this because much [gal] conversation still centres round telling each other we have a right to impact. We like the idea of power, kicking blokes about, etc, but I honestly believe we still struggle to maintain the necessary confidence... and this does affect delivery... Now, don't get me wrong – I believe in our right to succeed... – ...[but] let's be frank... political success is considered dubious, even... an indication of a personality slightly beyond the everyday, ie, slightly inhuman. And [our new leader] does not strike one as an ally. I realise *60 Minutes*, etc, have done their Christian best to portray her as a cuddly bunny, but when I see her coming, I still assume the crash position.

...MUCH has been made of N[Z] having its first [gal PM], 104 years after [NZ gals] gained the vote. I wonder what those suffragists who fought for [gals] to gain the vote would have made of [our first gal PM]? The legislation allowing [gals] to vote was part of a move towards a more socialised state which included the old age pension and greater regulations of the standards of public hospital and health care, but the suffragists were not all liberals. They included... arch capitalists and outspoken opponents of anything remotely smacking of socialism. Personal calamities were the responsibilities of individuals and their families. Feminists holding these views would have applauded... [the PM-elect's elevation. The PM-elect] has only ever supported [gals'] concerns when it did not conflict with the New Right agenda of her Government... Where [gals'] concerns cut across the general thrust of government economic policy, [gals] came a very definite last. We have not heard [the PM-elect] speak up against market rentals which have reduced poor families in high-cost urban areas to doubling up in beds, with a resulting surge in diseases of over-crowding and poverty, such as meningitis and tuberculosis. Neither have we heard... [her] on the issue of early discharge of new mothers from hospital, on falling breast-feeding rates or a lack of post-natal care. At the U[N] conference in Beijing, China, to mark the end of the Decade of [Gals, our Minister of Gals' Affairs] paraded National's more market policies as opening opportunities for [gals. Yet the same person] has been silent on the recent sudden slide in [gals'] average wages as a proportion of [guys'], the first such downturn in years... The "less state" policy of recent years has thrown new burdens on to [gals] who are expected to care for the sick, disabled and old as the state gives up on providing their care... The increasing gulf between the rich and the poor in society in general is mirrored by a widening gulf among [gals]. The 1996 census showed that of the 32% of the population that earned under \$15,000, 61% were... [gals. Unlike their PM-elect – who is living proof that] it is possible to point to a small elite group of high-flying [gals] who are doing well at present... under the free market... [-] these poorly paid [workers] are invisible and voiceless. Will [their PM-elect] speak for them? Hardly. Their pauperisation is a direct consequence of government policy, and poverty is a necessary ingredient of international competitiveness. Giving [gals] power if it is used to push right wing agendas is hardly an advance. It doesn't feel any better getting your benefit cut when a [gal] does it, rather than a [guy]. People disabled after accidents who are about to get work-tested and transferred onto the unemployment benefit, will not feel grateful that these draconian measures were introduced under a [gal]... In fact, it may feel worse... The quality that distinguishes [the gals] of the New Right is their impermeability, their unquestioning devotion to their theories [- a quality for which our PM-elect] is an exemplar. The message of the last election was that people had had enough of restructuring. Since then, what has [our PM-elect] promoted? More state asset sales, toll gates on roads, and further erosion of the social contract of ACC. Leadership by [gals] has in the past been

doubted on the grounds that [they] will not be able to take the “tough” decisions, that they will be too soft and be swayed by emotion. [The Iron Maiden] put that myth to rest and [our PM-elect] has so far proved similarly bullet-proof. This being the case, I see nothing to applaud in having a first [gal PM]. Policies and actions count more than a shallow emphasis on gender.

...MOST people believe [the new] administration will make the rich richer, the poor poorer, and leave beneficiaries worse off. That’s according to the findings of a poll commissioned by the *Sunday Star-Times*[, which also]... found that only 27% of those surveyed wanted National... to continue with the coalition government... The largest number, 42%, thought National should call a snap election.

...[the] Queen Bee... does not want to move to the Beehive. The new National Party leader... has floated the idea of foregoing the Beehive’s cramped ninth floor and keeping her more modern and comfortable office space in nearby Bowen House... where her present 18th-floor office offers a sweeping view over the squatting Beehive to Wellington’s harbour and the peaks of the Tararua Range... [Her] Bowen House office is not big enough as a prime ministerial space, but other floors could be taken over.

...[the PM-elect] looks likely to bow to tradition and move into the Beehive... next week... [from] her high-rise office building across the road... [The PM-elect]’s taste for the commanding heights extends to her own penthouse apartment atop an inner city Wellington office tower. No date has been set for [the PM-elect and her] husband... to shift to Premier House, set in park-like grounds five minutes walk from Parliament... [■ The PM-elect] held more talks with the [NZ] First leader... over the weekend. The pair talked by telephone and will have at least one face-to-face meeting – and possibly more – in Wellington today, in advance of a caucus decision from N[Z] First on whether to remain in the 11-month-old coalition... Widespread predictions that N[Z] First MPs will stick with National... [because] they will not want to give up “the trappings of power” have aggravated some to the point where they are determined not to be seen leaping back with National.

...Patience with N[Z] First will start to wear thin if it delays its decision on the coalition much longer, says National’s chief whip... The public and the National Party “will not be tolerant like they were at the last election...”... Yesterday... the... N[Z] First... leader said [it] was “in shutdown” and refused to answer questions about the talks or why [the Deputy-PM] is now demanding assurances from [the PM-elect] that TV1 will not be sold – having entertained such a sale when it was proposed by the outgoing... [PM – but the PM-elect] was confident of the outcome of their talks. “I’m sure that understandings can be reached that will meet his and my needs,” [the PM-elect] said on breakfast television. However, their relationship has not got off to a roaring start: it is understood that last Monday, in the midst of the coup, [the PM-elect] slipped up on protocol by telephoning [the NZ First leader’s] deputy... before him. And then on the *60 Minutes* television programme... said, “this country will not be run over a whisky bottle” – apparent reference to [the outgoing PM and Deputy-PM’s] reputation for burning the midnight oil together.

...N[Z] First prolonged the coalition impasse yesterday, saying it still needs further assurances on health policy before committing itself to a government led by... [the gal from Gore. Speaking of impasses, the PM]-elect... has issued a statement and reassured Parliament that her Government has no intention of reviewing the ban on nuclear-powered warships. [The PM-elect] moved swiftly yesterday after her first foreign media interview resulted in the *Sydney Morning Herald* headline: [Mrs Built-like-a-ship] would consider end to nuclear ban.” The article reported her as saying [that as PM-elect it] would be prepared to propose an end to the 12-year ban... but only in extreme, strategic circumstances. [The PM-elect] said yesterday that... the... [article] was “misleading and incorrect”... In a transcript of the interview, provided by the Sydney paper, [the PM-elect says]... “If... ever I thought as a minister or [PM] that it became strategically important, of course I would raise it with the population... But the advice I have received in technical terms is that that is extremely unlikely so I do not expect that it will be a political matter that will be raised again... [I]f... you go out to the streets you will find it’s not even an issue...”

...N[Z] First stuck between a rock and National’s hard place It is one thing to know you don’t really have a choice. It is even more annoying to get constant reminders. The prevailing view across the country is that N[Z] First – despite its bluff and delay – is in such a weak position it’s only viable option in the two weeks since... [the] coup has been to acquiesce and stick with the ruling coalition. N[Z] First MPs, however, are prone to a “get stuffed,” circling-of-the-wagons mentality. They take unusual strength from one another – [the former Minister of Customs/deputy-Minister of Health] excepted – through being “staunch.” It is against this backdrop that the caucus meets privately this morning during the party’s annual convention in Christchurch to canvass options for the last time and make up its mind whether to stay in or not – and what provisos to put on staying. Such is the ridicule, antagonism and inference of political impotence, the MPs may feel they have been almost goaded to quit the coalition. [But an] atmosphere of mutual hostility is not conducive to running any kind of government, coalition or otherwise. Increasingly, the question of N[Z] First pulling the plug has become one of when, not if... Logic dictates staying: self-respect has pushed feeling the other way... Adding to the mix is [the NZ First leader], a perverse politician who likes to prove everyone wrong... National MPs are generally relaxed about N[Z] First having... the “gift of time” to make up its mind... “They got caught off guard. They could not be seen to be lap-dogs,” says one minister. “They want to show they are in control of their destiny.” ...Says [another National minister: “Our PM-elect has given her inherited Deputy-PM] just enough rope to hang the remnants of his credibility.” ...[the PM-elect] has been very careful, avoiding pushing [the NZ First leader] into a corner publicly or looking desperate to get his endorsement... But the danger in the hiatus is the public will view the post-coup stand-off as coalition “business as usual” – and [the PM-elect]’s honeymoon will be over before it has begun... N[Z] First, anyway, does not put much store on assurances from [the PM-elect] on policy and the coalition agreement. The pretext for the talks may be policy, but no one is fooled. [The NZ First leader] has been using them to suss out [the PM-elect]’s attitude towards him – and assess exactly how much leverage and influence [the Deputy-PM] retains under her stewardship.

...Dear Mr [NZ First Leader], Thank you for your letter... I agree that the announcement of the change in National Party leadership gives cause for deep concern about what is in the best interests of the country. Labour is of the view that the change was made for a reason and that the reason was to take the National Party in a more extreme direction... Labour believes that the National Party’s new leader does not have a mandate to lead the country in the direction National is foreshadowing[, but it]... would not be credible for Labour to attempt to lead a government on the terms you suggest... We believe that there should be an early election to test who does have the confidence of the country... The people of N[Z] are indicating... that they are overwhelmingly dissatisfied with the Coalition Government. The course of action I propose offers the most sensible and democratic solution... Yours sincerely, [the Labour Party leader.

...the NZ First leader’s approach to the] Labour leader... was a desperate measure which has badly damaged his credibility, according to political scientists[– one of whom]... said yesterday that [the Deputy-PM] was now like a cornered rat. Previously, “people could think with some justification that N[Z] First was deciding its own destiny... But the letter... [(in which NZ’s First leader] asked if Labour would be prepared to govern within the \$5 billion new expenditure cap, maintain budget surpluses and accept tax cuts) let people know that NZ First is lost – it doesn’t know what to do.” ...Whatever [NZ First’s leader thought it] was doing when... [sending] his overture to [his Labour counterpart, what it] was in fact doing was putting his own neck in a noose. And [his Labour counterpart – who, ironically, became leader of her own party via a coup –]pulled the rope. What makes the offer even more inexplicable is that it was clearly not sincere... It also gave the whip-hand to [the PM]-elect... “If I were [the PM-elect, I] would seriously think of cutting him adrift,” said [one political scientist. “NZ First’s leader has] shown that his first loyalty is not to the coalition... And [the PM-elect] doesn’t need him.” ...[However, although NZ First’s leader took the PM-elect] by surprise with his offer to support a Labour-led government, [the PM-elect] insisted yesterday that [it] still wanted to hold the shaky National-NZ First coalition together... Either way... [his] willingness to contemplate pulling out signals a new, volatile relationship between the two parties which will damage the coalition even if it survives this weekend.

...In going to see [the leader of Labour on Friday the leader of NZ First] **did exactly what** [someone in his position] **should have done under MMP**. Desperate as it looked, the move has shown [the PM-elect that her party] **can't count on N[Z] First support**. If [the PM-elect] goes too far to the right her coalition partner may be willing to commit suicide, if necessary, in order to bring down the Government. That is exactly what a minority Government party should be willing to do. But obviously suicide is an extreme step, so it is not surprising that N[Z] First has pulled back from it for now. The main reason [why the majority of NZers] voted for MMP in 1993 was to restrain governments. [Many people were] outraged at the way that first Labour in the 1980s then National... after 1990 campaigned on one thing at elections then turned around afterwards and did the exact opposite. Both parties were able to give the fingers to the people who elected them because the old system gave them, once elected, absolute power. A ruling clique in either party that controlled the party caucus... through persuasion or patronage, could do what it liked. That was not democracy; it was elected dictatorship... No party has won a majority of the votes in any election since 1954 although, admittedly, recent polls suggest that Labour may do so again at the next election.

...The Minister of Finance... yesterday moved to extinguish financial market concern about the robustness of the coalition Government's financial pledges... [by saying that] the recommitment of the NZ First leader... and the P[M]-elect... to the coalition agreement should be a confidence booster for business... However, in doing so, [the minister] raised the possibility that his time as head of the exchequer might be limited... Reaffirmation of the coalition drew a muted response yesterday from financial market participants although some had made a trip into their offices. "I think it will be business as usual," one dealer said, then added, "[But if the Minister of Finance] resigns, then that would be interesting."

...[the outgoing PM] is being tipped to step down from politics altogether and pack his bags to become N[Z]'s Ambassador in Washington. If [the outgoing PM] did suddenly quit politics, [doing so] would leave his successor... the unpleasant task of facing a byelection in his Taranaki-King Country seat, which would test the level of anger and disapproval of the coalition Government. There is no suggestion National would lose the blue-ribbon rural seat – [the outgoing PM] has a 10,214-vote majority – but the pattern of by-elections is a vote against incumbent Government.

...The outgoing P[M]... yesterday told *Breakfast* television [that it] had not made any decisions about his future but a job overseas was among his options... [P]eople had been kind enough to suggest a number of positions... Asked specifically about a story in yesterday's N[Z] *Herald* tipping him to quit politics altogether for the Washington post, [the outgoing PM] did not rule it out... "When I've got something to announce or say I'll say it." ...in Parliament yesterday... [a challenge from the PM]-elect... to the Opposition... set the scene for a raucous free-for-all... The opportunity came during the weekly general debate, an hour during which everyone focused on last weekend's political events – or at least everyone except [for an Alliance MP], who wanted to talk about special education. [The PM-elect] began her speech by telling all other political parties in the House "to put their programmes and their policies on the line and show us that they can do more for this nation than the coalition can do in our own right." If the other parties had taken up the suggestion, it would have killed the debate, but none did, giving [the PM-elect] an early lesson that just because [the gal from Gore is the PM-elect] does not mean anyone will do what [the gal from Gore says. And the PM-elect] was scarcely choosing her words well when [the gal from Gore] issued the challenge to Labour to "say what you're going to do, don't keep talking about it." The N[Z] First leader... was in vintage debating form... even challenging Opposition MPs that if they wanted to hear about sleaze, "I'll give you sleaze." The promise earned [the NZ First leader] the only quiet period of the debate as expectant MPs looked to him to reveal something truly disgusting, or at least expensively defamatory further down the line, but unfortunately [the Deputy-PM] failed to deliver... THE MORE you observe politics, the more you've got to admit that each party is worse than the other... [a US] humorist, remarked... Still, as one courageously optimistic government MP put it: "From here, there is only one way forward, and that's up".

...[her parting shot as ACC minister was] to crank up worker accident compensation levies by five times the recommended amount. [The PM-elect] – who is due to ditch her [ACC] portfolio in the next few days – ...announce[d] radical increases... w[hich] mean those on the average wage... paying an extra \$175 a year... [Her] office would not comment... [but the PM-elect] last night offered a glimpse of her social policy agenda... [It wants NZ]ers to think hard about their personal responsibilities and obligations... [T]here had to be new understandings about the relationships between what the Government could guarantee and where people should be responsible for themselves. [NZ] had to be "disciplined", with each generation confronting issues... not deferring decisions... Whether [the PM-elect] can impose that kind of discipline on the rest of her party remains to be seen.

...The P[M]-elect... has sought to pack far more punch in Parliament, revitalising the coalition's front bench in a cabinet reshuffle which is otherwise conservative and minimalist. Despite the caution displayed in the reshuffle yesterday, [the PM-elect] has put her ministers on notice of a further rejig next year by indicating they must meet performance goals which [it] will have a big say in setting. [The PM-elect] is also demanding team-work to package and promote the coalition's policies effectively, rather than allowing ministers to run isolated, individual fiefdoms... [The PM-elect] has shifted a few portfolios and shunted existing ministers up and down the rankings, compensating for the absence of new blood with a front-bench clean-out and demoting or dumping five out of National's eight senior ministers. Crucially, [the PM-elect] has pushed the health, education and social welfare portfolios onto the front bench... By keeping the [gals' affairs portfolio, the PM-elect has tried to] remedy the absence of other [gals] in the cabinet... The main casualty of the cabinet reshuffle... the Attorney-General and Minister of Defence and Corrections until Monday... may become High Commissioner to London midway through next year.

...TOMORROW... [the PM-elect] will at last stride to the head of the Cabinet table... Perhaps we are getting nearer to the view expressed by the American poet WM Ross Wallace who, in *What Rules the World* in 1845 wrote: ...the hand that rocks the cradle Is the hand that rules the world... In spite of having been a leader in giving [gals the vote, NZ] became somewhat slower in... first... elevating [gals] to parliamentary status (...1933) and to Cabinet (...1947). It has been claimed Guy Fawkes was the only [guy] who seriously tried to raise politicians to a higher level. Certainly, when [the Iron Maiden became Britain's first gal PM, it] tended to keep her largely [guy] Cabinet in line with her ever-ready handbag. Indeed, *The Guardian* reported in 1985 the anecdotal story of the time [the Iron Maiden] was joined at lunch in a London Restaurant by some... Cabinet colleagues. [The Iron Maiden] ordered steak and kidney pie. "And the vegetables?" inquired the waiter. "Oh, they'll have the same," replied [the Iron Maiden]... In an interview with the [NZ Herald, our first gal PM] indicated a fresh attack on "welfarism" was at the top of her agenda. [The PM-elect] also talked about what drives her as a politician, describing the love and support... the... 45-year-old mother-of-two... draws from her own family and her Christian faith... Her... faith, which [the PM-elect] does not often talk about publicly, is very important to her. "I couldn't do what I do, I couldn't sustain the pressure or the criticism or indeed the burden of the challenge I face without it." ...Although [the PM-elect] was happy to be seen as a role model for younger... [gals, it] described herself as "a pretty ordinary N[Z]er." ...The second of four daughters of a Presbyterian minister in small South Island towns... believes... love is lacking in many families today and Government benefits and intervention is no substitute. "What concerns me is when I see people asking Governments to do what they're meant to do for themselves. That worries me greatly because I know children who are nurtured and loved and cared for will be wonderful citizens in the future – it's as simple as that." Governments could not deliver people a sense of self-belief... "I've often heard Maori leaders – and they've gone to the heart of this issue – say that welfarism has destroyed the spirit of Maoridom. And I think that's insightful but a very sobering sentiment..."

...Maoridom has suffered another blow with the death of one of the country's most respected Maori rights matriarchs, Eva Rickard. Her passing follows the recent loss of Matiu Rata, Sir Hepi te Heuheu and other tribal elders... Mrs Rickard had a long association with controversy through her stand over Maori land rights[, and] successfully waged an 11-year battle with the Government over the return of the Raglan golf course. When it came to tribal politics, [Eva] was not slow in letting her tribal elders know if [Eva] thought they were wrong. The Minister of Maori Affairs, [the

NZ First deputy-leader], yesterday paid tribute to Mrs Rickard, saying that all of Maoridom would feel the loss. "...Eva... was a role model for a number of us." ...Her long time friend and legal adviser... yesterday described Eva... as "one of the greatest Maori [gals] of the century, and a warrior in the same mould as... Dame Whina Cooper." ...When Eva... heard that [a Maori elder] intended welcoming the touring Springboks in 1981, [Eva] said that traditional Maori would have too – then cut their enemy's throats. The tactic appealed to the grandchild of a survivor of the Battle of Rangiriri... Mrs Rickard used to recall her grandfather walking from the Waikato River to Raglan with a bullet in one shoulder and his little sister on the other. [Her grandfather] settled in a ponga hut on land that later became the Raglan Golf Course... Eva Kereopa grew up a member of the Tainui Awhiro tribe. Her mother spoke to her only in Maori, but her daughter responded in English, saying ["I] reject... all... that bloody Maori humbug." The only Maori girl in her class, Eva was taken out of school at the outbreak of... [WW2] and put to work making bullets in a munitions factory, while her Pakeha classmates remained at their lessons. This education disadvantage was later to rankle, especially when it came to securing work... It was only in her thirties that Eva... began to take an interest in Maori land issues and language. [Eva] had watched her mother's lone battle against a state push to vacate her house, and saw her finally win from Parliament "paper access" to her home – a concession lost when [the mother] died in 1954. On her death bed Eva's mother begged her daughter to return to her people's values... [H]er mother's words stayed with her, and... [in] the late 1970s Mrs Rickard, a mother of nine and noted for her services to the community, took up where her mother had left off... [becoming] deeply involved in the dispute over the Raglan Golf Course, Tainui Awhiro land taken for an emergency airfield during... [WW2] and never returned... Eva[']s struggle to regain the land... was criticised by radical Maori for using the Pakeha court system, and [Eva] received hate mail and death threats from Pakeha. [Eva] always regretted the divisions caused... Mrs Rickard devoted her latter years to helping young people... [although Eva] also found time to act in the film *Mauri*, and to float the idea of setting up an independent Maori republic in Raglan... But the outspoken kuia ([gal] elder) never lost her sharp tongue, this year calling NZ First's Maori [guy] MPs "miserable leaders."

...The MP for Te Tai Hauauru... has hit out at his tribal elders for their "hypocritical" stand in refusing [gals] the right to speak at Eva Rickard's tangi... [The MP] found it ironic that the very people who ignored pleas from the late Maori rights activist for help during her fight for the return of land now sat in judgment on the very land for which she had fought to regain... When Mrs Rickard was buried on Wednesday, the next generation of activists gathered around her to say their farewells. The kaumatua gave them permission but warned that only [guys] could stand to speak. In the style of Mrs Rickard, [one gal activist] rose to speak. [It] was told to sit down but stood her ground to have her say, in which [the activist challenged the guys] to respect the mana of [their opposite sex].

...The family of the late Maori activist Eva Rickard are upset that someone is going door-to-door in Hamilton supposedly collecting money for ...a... headstone... [to commemorate the person who once said her sex] held the key to leadership... but were shut out of Maoridom's "brown table."

...The large wooden table on which N[Z PM]s have been thumping their fists since the 1940s may face the chop under [the new regime. The new PM] sat behind the desk for the first time yesterday... and appeared to take an immediate dislike to its vast expanse. "I find the size of this desk thoroughly intimidating and I wonder what we will do with this, despite its history and importance?" ...The desk was first used by the second Labour [PM]... Two years ago, it was one of the few pieces of furniture to survive a \$105,000 refurbishment of the... office. Meanwhile... [at] Government House... the... [deposed PM] continued to honour his pledge of no bitterness, at least not displaying any. Now ranked No 22 out of 24, [the deposed PM] took his place at the end of the long table among the N[Z] First ministers outside cabinet... [● In the latest NZ] *Herald-Digipoll* survey... [of the public's preferred PM, the deposed PM has risen slightly to 4.9%. The new PM's rating is also] up from 17.7[%] support to 18.3[%]. But backing for [the Labour Party leader] has continued to surge in the past month, from 32.2[%] to 34.7%. The Deputy-PM and NZ First leader... will take no comfort from his lowly ranking. His level of support as preferred [PM] has dropped from 2[%] to 1.3[%]. But there is some hope for the coalition. Two months ago, 90.3[%] of those polled said they were not satisfied with its performance. In the latest poll, which carries a margin of error of 3.6[%], that level of dissatisfaction has dropped to 86.2[%].

...Speaking on the eve of the coalition's first birthday, [the new PM said, "NZers]... in my opinion want good government which puts people's interests first... We must ask what can and should the Government do for N[Z] and its people... We are not alone in seeking answers to this vexed question. Most... nations are searching." ...[the new PM] was readying herself for whatever... Labour chose to throw at her on her first[official] day in Parliament as P[M]. But the Battle of the Boadiceas, the Clash of the Xenas... – pick your cliché – turned out to be Girl Power without the Spice. Labour had executed a tactical retreat in advance, postponing Parliament's eagerly awaited [gal-leader-to-gal]-leader confrontation. Labour did not target any of its four parliamentary questions at the new P[M] yesterday, deliberately singling out other ministers in a business-as-usual assault on the coalition's weak points instead. The reasoning? Why give [the new PM] a platform to generate more "warm fuzzy"-type headlines while her MPs cheered her along? The risk? Having called [the new PM] a "wimp" last month, [the Labour leader] could not afford to look one herself. The "wimp" label should have been fired straight back... yesterday, but [the new PM]'s supposedly fresh front bench were as inert and speechless as showroom dummies. A relaxed [Labour leader], however, took the precaution of piggy-backing on other MPs' questions, asking a couple of supplementaries just to show [that the leader of the Opposition] was not chickening out. Sarcasm was her chosen weapon to break down the austere [new PM], who displayed her nervousness while listing the coalition's "many" achievements, saying at one point there were now "more people receiving additional rent to pay for their accommodation supplement" when [the new PM] meant the words to come out the other way round. [Labour's leader] acidly responded by questioning why [the new PM] had "assassinated"... the [previous PM] if the coalition's record was so magnificent. The response was unexpected. Parked on the backbenches, but still carrying a folder marked "Prime Minister", [the former PM] beamed a smile from there to Washington, giving [his ex-opponent] the big thumbs up.

...Why are so many [gals] who win power at the national level spectacularly hard and uncompromising? You can be banished from polite society these days for suggesting that [a gal] is deadlier than [a guy], but in politics it is the plain truth. Take... [NZ's first gal PM]. The coup in which [the new PM ousted the old PM] as leader of the ruling National Party was a classic act of political treachery: [the gal] collected signatures of support while [her leader] was away in Scotland... and bluntly told him [that his leadership] was finished when [the leader came home. The gal] even looked like [someone who] enjoyed doing it... The total numbers are too small to make good statistics, but they suggest that politics at the more exalted levels positively encourages the rise of [gals] whose public persona has all the warmth and charm of a contract killer... And since these are intelligent people who are professionals in the image game, one presumes that they see some advantage in doing so... But what possible advantage could there be in being seen as a tough, unfeeling, ruthless pit-bull of a politician? Very little, if you happen to be a [guy] politician in a country at peace. But if you are a senior [gal] politician with ambitions to climb to the very top of the greasy pole, then toughness may be an essential part of your credibility, proof that you are not just a "typical" [gal], all woolly warmth and sympathy. There are many exceptions to this rule, of course. Over half the [gals] who have made it to the rank of national leader in democratic countries did not do so entirely under their own steam. They were either compromise candidates who were briefly put into office to take the blame for a worn-out government – Canada... and France... both fit that paradigm – or their power is essentially hereditary... In the... four biggest industrialised countries... – ...America... Russia... Japan... and German[y –] ...it is virtually impossible for a [gal] to get elected president or [PM. (The US] might manage it one of these days, but I wouldn't hold my breath.) And[, while the US President]... can be as caring and vulnerable as... [the guy likes,] in the middle or smaller [First World] countries, many of which have had one [gal] leader by now, the price of power is still very often that [the gal must] prove herself to be more "masculine" than her [guy] rivals.

...A group of six high-powered [gals] have been dubbed the *Spice Girls of international politics*... Their detractors call them The Sisterhood. Others describe them as the most exclusive club ever. But the six who lead the world's most influential development agencies say recognition of [gal] leaders is long overdue on the international circuit. For the first time since the end of... [WW2, five gals head UN] institutions and a sixth is a respected member of the European Commission. The decisions they make in European capitals and in New York mean the difference between life and death for millions. The Spice Girls of international diplomacy are in perfect harmony when it comes to discussing the empowerment of [their own sex]. Yet they rarely have time to get together, because of the conflicting timetables and pressures of their jobs. [Gal] foreign ministers – there were 10 at the last count – are easier to convene because for one month in the year they attend the U[N] General Assembly in New York. This year the U[S] Secretary of State... seized the opportunity to invite seven [gal] ministers to dinner. As this other exclusive club was sharing a cosy evening... the European commissioner for fisheries, consumer affairs and human rights – one of the six “Spice Girls” – was trying to argue her way out of a jail in Kabul. [The commissioner] had organised the distribution of more than \$320 million in humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, but was taken into custody by the country's religious police because her team took pictures of unveiled Muslim [gals] at the Central Polyclinic in Kabul... Her peers include [the] former Irish President... – who has just taken her new job as head of the U[N] Human Rights Commission and has been succeeded in Ireland by another... [gal (a former)] journalist-presenter with RTE, Ireland's national television network... and... a staunch Catholic, [who] is against abortion but supports the idea of [gal priests, and] was strongly critical of the Church's handling of a rash of child sex abuse cases involving priests[] – the... Unicef director... the... [head] of the world food programme... the [head of the UN] population fund... and... [the UN] high commissioner for refugees... [The commissioner for refugees, a] 70-year-old... of Japan, who was first appointed in 1991... is... [the] doyenne of this group... [The doyenne] is in charge of a budget of \$1.6 billion a year, intended to cater for the needs of 22 million refugees worldwide. “[Gals] are the key to development,” said... the Unicef chief who has been on a working visit to the Middle East. “Unless you involve [gals] you don't get development. These are life and death issues, not theoretical ones. You don't want to be boxed in doing the [gals'] thing, but if you don't raise [gals'] issues, no one else will.” ...As executive director of the world food programme... a rising star in the Republican Party in the U[S] and a former Assistant Secretary of State for Agriculture... has a budget of \$1.9 billion a year and a task force of 4000 employees in 45 countries. [The executive director] and the other “Spice Girls” acknowledge there is an inevitable overlap in some of their activities, another reason for direct telephone contact and sometimes the occasional face-to-face meeting.

...Girl Power has struck in California: [girls]... can now sit on whichever side of the bus [they like. A] 10-year-old had been fighting a 50-year-old policy that requires girls to sit on one side of the bus and boys on the other in the San Pasqual Union School District... “Today I got to sit... on the left side and then the right... It felt pretty good,” said... [the 10-year-old. By the way.] Britain's pop superstars... have made it to stardom in Toyland. Spice Girls dolls will be on sale in... time for Christmas[. The ‘27cm dolls cost \$45’].

...IT WAS the best of years, if you were in the business of making chewable... Mummy Spice... dolls, and the worst of years, if you were in government... It was a year of high farce and low drama, of political circuses, backroom plots, and a coronation... Politicians on all sides agreed... [the] year of girl power... had been a draining year. Trust in our elected representatives sank to new lows, MPs on all sides of the house were seen more than ever as greedy and unaccountable, and faith in the new electoral system was spent faster than... [an MP's] taxi chits... The [5th-ranked MP] spent much of the year... giving bold, visionary speeches and cosying up to National's backbench. By the time [it wheeled her leader's] guillotine into place, National MPs were in a state of high excitement over how this fresh, young leader might disentangle them from the sullied clutches of NZ First. But far from starting a shootout with [the NZ First leader, the new PM] is now purring reconciliation. Now [the new PM] wants to work with NZ First more closely, believing [it] will get more credit for uniting the large and dysfunctional coalition family than for tearing it apart.

...[the new PM] wants brakes put on pay rises and social spending in 1998 so the Government can increase the pace of economic rebuilding in a low-tax environment. In a pre-Christmas state-of-the-nation speech to the Auckland Chamber of Commerce, [the new PM] called on employers not to agree to higher pay unless employees' productivity or performance merited it. “I think we've got to be careful in N[Z] in the next two years... [Our] economy is totally dependent on being a successful exporter, and if the domestic economy overheats and then gets out of kilter, we simply face a correction at some stage in the future.” Her comments were greeted with disdain by the unions. [The] Council of Trade Unions economist... said: “It means the workers suffer again.” Under a “Tory Government,” there was always a reason never to have a pay increase. “The point is, when productivity does go up, they say you shouldn't reward it because you have to improve profitability...” ...only politicians... are allowed... to have a rise without an increase in performance... and their employers (the taxpayers) have no say whatsoever... During her speech, the [new PM] promised business leaders a new style of management that would cut the Government imposed costs of doing business... [T]he Government would put its own house in order with a Regulatory Responsibility Act in May, which [the new PM] likened in importance to the Fiscal Responsibility Act and the Reserve Bank Act. It would aim a blow torch at bureaucratic red tape and force officials to justify red tape. Two laws were singled out for early scrutiny to see if their costs outweigh the benefits – the Building Act and the Human Rights Act... [The new PM also] hinted that a further three N[Z] First MPs may not be appointed to the cabinet next year... [Incidentally, j]ust three weeks after... [going f]rom Crown Prince to backbench bullfrog[, the deposed PM has received]... the country's top award, member of the Order of N[Z]... in the New Year honours... Among the nearly 180 others honoured are... the... 1992-95 All Black coach... [and] Doug Dibley, the country's last Gallipoli veteran... who... is honoured posthumously.

...[“Being the editor of] *Metro*... you have to keep your eye on the nation, of course. What sort of things do you predict for next year?” “...how can it get any more dramatic than it did in '97? ...I predict that nothing will happen again... we had a whole year where there was sort of chaos and... underwear stories... but nothing happened. You know what I mean, in terms of policy and laws... it's all concerned now with who's up who, and who's not paying in Parliament[, with]... the money... or the favours that change hands and, in fact, very little governing is really done...” “...do you think that there'll be a snap election?” “Umm, no... that would require [the leader of NZ First] sort of committing suicide... [T]hey're all too greedy, you know... they're not going to pass away 150 grand a year... and a car and all the perks... so, no... they'll cling on to power as long as their... little fingernails can keep them there.” [“Changing the subject, did you hear about the ‘46-year-old South African immigrant who died after being strangled by his tie when it got caught in a large shoe sanding machine about midday yesterday at the Orthotic Centre in Ellerslie’?” “No. But I recently read an article from the US by a gal]... author and journalist... [which asked: If guys] can run the world, why can't they stop wearing neckties? How intelligent is it to start the day by tying a little noose around your neck?”]

The moment I get up... I get shaved and set up (The moment I wake up... I put on my make-up)... While combing my hair... And wond'ring what tie (dress) to wear now I say a little prayer for you... Forever, forever you'll stay in my heart And I will love you forever and ever We will never part, oh how I love you Together, together that's how it must be To live without you would Only mean heartbreak for me My darling believe me For there is no one but you Please love me too I'm in love with you Answer my prayer...

NEWSPAPER ADS are replacing traditional matchmakers among the literate classes in India, where brides and grooms rarely choose their own spouses. Every Sunday, newspapers are filled with classified advertisements inviting inquiries about “well-educated, professional boys” and

“beautiful, homely, university-graduate girls.” Homely in Indian matrimonial-ad English means someone who would make a good wife, mother and housekeeper... [The] chief of advertisements at the *Hindustan Times*, says, “We run more than 4500 such advertisements a month, and the number is increasing. Very few ads are repeated, an indication that the success rate is high.” - 1992

[Gals] are three times more likely than [guys] to be admitted to hospital... perhaps because of hormonal factors... □ Long-term use of talcum powder around the genitals has been linked to increased risk of ovarian cancer. U[S] researchers found gals] with epithelial ovarian tumours were significantly more likely to have regularly used talc powder around the genitals than a control group... They... say their findings suggest [gals] should be discouraged from using talc as part of daily genital hygiene. - 1993

Cross your legs and prepare to squirm... There is, it seems, a steady trickle of [gals] requesting cosmetic surgery on their genitalia. No, having a “vag job” isn’t some freaky Californian fad[like getting a ‘Brazilian bikini wax’ (which ‘removes all pubic hair except for a thin vertical line’)]. It’s an option that’s taken the suffering out of sex, sport and showering for more than a few satisfied customers. The main operations of this kind (some of which, if seen as medically necessary, may be covered by Medicare) are: removal of excess labia tissue from the... inner lips of the vagina; “perineorrhaphy”, tightening of the vaginal wall; repairing the hymen; and liposuction of the mons pubis... Naturally, self-consciousness prevents many patients from finding out about genital cosmetic surgery but, because such procedures are gradually becoming more publicly known, feelings of embarrassment or shame are being eroded. According to the A[US]n Society of Plastic Surgeons, the overall demand for genital cosmetic surgery, particularly the kind that involves trimming of the labia, has been growing slowly but surely during the past few years... Those of us with “problem free” genitalia may feel more than a little cynical about the suggestion that the demand for surgery of this kind will increase in the future. Could it, for instance, signal the beginning of another unwanted beauty boom that has us running to have our vagina tightened because we don’t want to feel baggier than our partner’s ex? Or might the dimensions of our labia end up giving us the same kind of hang-ups that [guys] suffer over the size of their penises? On the other hand... who’s to say that changing the appearance of your labia is any more bizarre than having a nose job? ...But there is always the danger of making what is essentially a psychological problem into a non-existent physical one. One leading Sydney gynaecologist says that occasionally a... [gal who] has entirely normal and healthy genitalia... will come to him for genital surgery... In such cases [it] will try to dissuade her from undergoing surgery, and... gently explain that her problem has more to do with her poor self-image than her genitals. Counselling can be the best form of treatment in such instances... The surgeon also speculates that many more requests for genital plastic surgery have already been avoided by patients’ GPs, who have managed to reassure the [gals] in question they are perfectly normal... [However,] there are some... who genuinely need genital surgery, particularly of the labia. Says... [the] chief of plastic surgery at Sydney’s Concord Hospital: “Many [gals] have functional problems with their labia. They may experience pain or tenderness during sex due to the excess labia tissue rubbing; they can be unable to wear normal underwear and cannot wear tight jeans because of problems with chafing. Of course, surgery may also be requested for aesthetic reasons,” [the chief] continues. “Some... with large labia are extremely embarrassed and so are prepared to go to surgical lengths to have the problem fixed and to avoid a potentially embarrassing situation with a future partner.” Also, reconstruction of the labia may be requested following disfiguring cervical cancer surgery. According to the... gynaecologist, the benefits of this type of surgery may be only marginal and are often not lasting. In some cases, re-operating in this area can make the disfigurement even worse due to recurring scar tissue. [Furthermore, although t]rimming of excess labia tissue is a relatively straightforward operation, performed under a general anaesthetic[, b]ecause the area is moist there is an increased risk of infection and occasionally bleeding can be a problem during surgery... [P]erineorrhaphy... is usually performed on sexually active [gals] whose vaginal wall has been stretched during childbirth... and say that this has meant less pleasure during sex, for themselves or their partner... Occasionally, though, a perfectly normal [gal] may have been told by an insensitive or spiteful partner that [his lover] has a problem... [Such a gal] will be advised against surgery and steered towards finding a new boyfriend rather than a cosmetic surgeon. Perineorrhaphy usually involves a two- to three-day stay in hospital. The patient... can start having sex again after four to six weeks... Probably the most cosmetic of all genital nip and tucks on... external genitalia is liposuction of the mons pubis... “The [gals] who wish to have this done are usually obese. They have [requested liposuction of their] tummy and therefore... it is necessary to perform liposuction on both areas so that the mons pubis isn’t left protruding,” says... [the] Sydney cosmetic surgeon... who introduced liposuction into A[US] in 1983... however... two or three[of his] patients... have had liposuction on the mons pubis alone. These have been young... [gals] who have a large mound of venus and are embarrassed by the fact that it draws attention to their pubic area when they are in swimwear or tight clothing... There is usually little question in the minds of [gals] who want to have their hymen repaired about whether they should have the operation... “Most... are young Muslims who have had sex with someone who is not destined to be their husband. They later regret the act and want to have their hymen reconstructed so they can be confident they will appear to be a virgin on their wedding night.” While some surgeons feel hymen reconstruction is a worthless operation because most [guys] aren’t necessarily able to tell whether a [gal] is or isn’t a virgin... [(in some gals the hymen) tissue is so elastic that it can stretch during intercourse and not necessarily tear[, ‘or they can remain intact even after childbirth!’]; therefore an intact hymen may not mean that a [gal] is a virgin... [- and], in some cases, the hymen may have ruptured without sexual penetration[; ‘hymens can be broken through strenuous exercise in pre-teen years’)]... most treat requests for the surgery sympathetically... Technically, the procedure is a fiddly one but is quite simple to perform... If a [patient] has only had sex once or twice, repairing the hymen is simply a matter of sewing the slits of skin back together, thus recreating the lip... But if a [patient] has had sex on many occasions, it’s likely that her hymen is pretty much beyond repair. In such cases, surgeons can trim a flap of skin from the back of the vagina and attach it to the front, thus creating an artificial hymen. This is one procedure you won’t be able to claim on Medicare.

...[the lead singer from *Hole*] was a former A[US]n boarding schoolgirl, stripper and small-time musician when [it] decided to pursue Kurt Cobain, lead singer of grunge supergroup Nirvana. [The small-timer] chased him for months, even chanting daily for “the coolest boy in rock ‘n’ roll” to be her boyfriend. Finally [the small-timer] persuaded an eager-to-please prospective manager to give her tickets to a Nirvana show so [the singer] could meet the object of her obsession. It wasn’t love at first sight, says an observer: “I didn’t see sparks, but they did go home together.” In the end, [the small-timer got her guy]. They married three months after meeting but didn’t go on a honeymoon because[, the small-timer] says: “Life is a perennial honeymoon right now – I get to go to the bank machine every day.” ...Linda McCartney was a receptionist at *Town & Country* magazine in New York... [who] stole an invitation to a yacht party with the Rolling Stones from her boss’s desk. Young Linda... decided to pass herself off as a staff photographer. When [Linda] arrived, there was only one space on the boat for a photographer and the Stones voted for the blonde, miniskirted Linda. From then on, photography was her ticket to the rock world. With her shots from the party, [Linda] managed to get herself appointed house photographer for a club. “I didn’t get any pay, but I got access to everybody – The Who, Jimi Hendrix, Jefferson Airplane, The Grateful Dead. Most didn’t know anyone in New York, so I’d... become their unofficial tour guide... Some of them were boyfriends, on and off, but I’m not saying which ones.” Linda gave up photographing bands when [Linda caught a Beatle]... “I slept with Brian Jones of the Rolling Stones a year before [the band’s founder] died,” says... an ex-groupie. “I slept with The Who’s Keith Moon a couple of weeks before [that drummer] passed away. Jimi Hendrix, I had him too, before [that guitarist snuffed it in ‘1970, aged 27’]. You’d think all that would have put me off the whole rock star thing, but it didn’t. I was still chasing Black Sabbath and Pink Floyd in 1975. What made me knock it all on the head was when I found myself sucking off a Wishbone Ash lighting [operator] just to get access to the group.” Now 40, the glamorous blond... works for the government and lives

with her English husband. But the stories [the 40-year-old] tells of the good old bad days confirm everything we believe – rightly or wrongly – about groupies. That they are sexually depraved[and] wild... drunk on spunk and wicked to the soles of... [their] shoes. “I’d go through the members of a band, one after another, without thinking about it,” [the 40-year-old] reminisces, with obvious regret that such behaviour would now be little short of suicidal. “Nowadays, with AIDS and all that, you don’t know what you’re going to catch. You’d have to be soft in the head to be a groupie.” That may well be true, but there are still no shortage of volunteers – including... [her] 19-year-old daughter... “I know [my daughter]’s at it... Just like I was at her age. I can’t stop her doing it, but I say to her, ‘...it’s all different these days’.” But is it? [The daughter]’s methods are essentially the same as those of her mother 20 years ago. When one of her favourite bands is touring, [the daughter] bluffs her way backstage with the sole aim of making it with her most fancied group member. In 1968, [the mother]’s dream was to sleep with her hero, Jimi Hendrix. [The daughter]’s burning ambition is to bed the skinny drummer from Nirvana. The bands may change, but the song remains the same... [A]nother second-generation groupie who... is... Sydney-based... shares [the 19-year-old]’s obsession with Nirvana... With her dry, bleached hair and nicotine-stained teeth, [the gal who is]... only “about 20”... could pass for her mother – who hit her groupie peak in the ’70s with bands like AC/DC... before falling pregnant... With a wardrobe that wouldn’t look out of place in a Kings Cross doorway and serious drink and drug problems, [the Sydneysider] is the badlove groupie cliché personified. Born too late, [the Sydneysider] yearns for the days when the stereotype was established, a bygone era when [guys were still primitive], groupies were groupies and both were sluts. “Musos are so straight these days... Either they’re gay or they’re so scared of catching something, they wear two condoms and a roll of Glad Wrap even when I just give head, which is basically all they want.” And in the AIDS-ravaged, neo-conservative ’90s, a lot of band’s don’t even want that. But while [the Sydneysider] may look and behave like a walking drug flashback, [the Sydneysider] is very much the modern high-tech groupie[– having] just bought herself a laptop computer, so [it] can be on “the network”. This is an international database that provides the itinerant muso with instant keystroke access to groupies across the globe. Details of their numbers, addresses and particular talents may be dialled up via modem from any motel phone by such roving rock gods as... an acknowledged network pioneer and lead singer with Los Angeles band Porno for Pyros (and another of [the Sydneysider]’s targets...). Such pragmatism is common among groupies. With backstage security ever tighter, it takes planning, ingenuity and determination to get at bands these days... [T]wo British groupies[who are] just 15 and 16... have been on the scene for about six months, but already they talk like seasoned campaigners. “Usually we’ve worked out which member of the group we’re going to sleep with... and we don’t often settle for second-best... We’re quite fussy, I suppose. You get these girls who’ll sleep with anyone they’ve seen in a gig guide... [but we] have standards. We have to like the music... When we started, we’d waste a lot of time hanging around after a show, trying to get backstage. Now we go to sound checks in the afternoon, which is dead easy. Then we’ll ask the blokes in the band if they’ll put us on the guest list... A lot of groupies are still treated badly by the groups... But the blokes we sleep with treat us well because they can see that we’re not dirty slags.” ...In Los Angeles, five topnotch groupies banded together in the ’70s and called themselves GTOs (Girls Together Outrageously). One of them... went on to marry a musician... before writing *I’m With The Band: Confessions Of A Groupie*... The GTOs put out their own album... but, sadly, it was no meal ticket to immortality: within five years two were dead from drug overdoses... The Chicago-based Plaster Casters, friends of the GTOs, were so named for their practice of taking plaster moulds of rock stars’ erect penises... Reportedly the biggest trophy in their collection belonged to Jimi Hendrix... [A] musician who knows all about groupies from the other side of the mosh pit[– the] guitarist with Adam & The Ants in their early ’80s heyday[– claims to have] slept with more than 700 [groupies] in a four-year period. “I wanted it all and I got it all... But it was a two-way thing... If anything they were chasing me. I wonder if I’m going to annoy feminists here, but I’m sure [most gals] have always been as excited about sleeping with musicians as the other way around.” This is precisely the attitude that marks a new generation of groupies. Rather than ever-ready sexual dumpsters, they act as temporary, no-strings-attached girlfriends to peripatetic band members who crave attention... on the road... But even with these “modern girls”, the question remains: why would an intelligent, self-respecting [person] want to make herself available as the sex-toy of any bloke who just happens to make music for a living? “Don’t believe it’s anything less than romance, because true groupies are nothing if not romantics,”... a privately educated computer data analyst... and... self-confessed groupie... from Melbourne... says, adding that in contrast to the notion of the groupie as a desperate [person] fuelled by self-loathing... “It’s actually got a lot to do with self-esteem. All the groupies I know have very high opinions of themselves. It’s why they’ve got the guts to talk with musos in the first place... [A] true groupie wants... to make him notice more than just... [her] tits and... hole.” ...Morally, [the Melburnian]... has no qualms about betraying the girlfriends of the guys... “Their steady [girlfriends] know it’s going to happen, so why pretend it doesn’t? At least I don’t try to steal their [boyfriends] away.” ...To experience the full benefits of being a groupie – the limousine rides, shopping sprees, parties and celebrity openings – it takes more than being able to perform well in bed, according to [the Melburnian]. To be a member of the groupie elite, they need to be able to initiate conversations as well as erections. “It’s one thing to go up to someone in a band and tell him you really love his music. Anyone can do that. You’ve got to be able to tell him why you like his music; or better still tell him about the bits you don’t like...,”... [A] model for a Roxy Music album cover... soon after began to date the band’s lead singer... The couple lived together for two years until one night they went backstage at a Stones concert and [the model] was instantly attracted to [the Stones’ singer]. Nothing happened that night, but soon after [her partner of two years] was unlucky enough to go on a tour to A[US and Japan alone. The model] admits, “What can I say – I was fickle.” [So was her new partner and eventual husband – much to the model’s dismay. However, Mr and Mrs Fickle stayed] together, on and off, [until Mr Fickle ‘fathered a Brazilian model’s baby.’

...Why beautiful gals] make lousy lovers... I once had a friend... [who announced] one morning, in the cafe where [my friend] used to have breakfast, that [it] had just slept with his 90th [conquest]. It seemed totally unimaginable: how could anyone have slept with 90 [different partners] before their 25th birthday? Still, we believed him because... while not beyond keeping score, [my friend] would never have fabricated it. Besides, his special talent was for a leisurely and dogged pursuit. No challenge was too great for him. No [gal] was too sophisticated, too beautiful, too married, too rich, too remote. Sooner or later each one yielded to his invitation as naturally as accepting a glass of water. In a small way [my friend] was something of a legend, but... found no joy in this because [it] was a disappointed [person. My friend] could never understand why his conquests were so unsatisfying and why [the prolific lover] often felt an indefinable bleakness as [the 24-year-old] went through the elaborate motions of his love-making. It took... wise counsel... to analyse the difficulty: “Your problem is quite simply that all of your [sexual partners] are too good-looking,”... “What do you mean, too good-looking? There’s no such thing as too good-looking,” [my friend said. His counsel explained: “Beautiful gals] are never good in bed because they are so used to being admired. Sex is merely an extension of the admiration they have received all their lives. In her heart, every beautiful [gal] believes that it’s enough just to let a [guy] near the adored form of her body. Beyond that, they think they have no responsibility.” As [my friend] listened, you could see his world collapsing before him. [My friend] couldn’t begin to imagine any other way of life, yet... knew that what [it] was being told was true. [Indeed, my friend] confessed that only a few weeks before, [my friend had] seduced a beautiful model whose behaviour had borne out all his [counsel] was saying. While... making love to her, [the model] angled her body so [the model] could watch herself in the mirror. Just as [my friend] was building to the crescendo of his performance [the model] craned her neck, went rigid and squeezed the flesh around her hips, asking him if[– in his opinion – the model] had put on any weight. It seemed... that the only enjoyment [the model] gained from him were his tireless reassurances as to her gorgeous looks. [My friend] recalled the questions [the model] would ask during their nights together. “How much did you want me when you first saw me? ...Which part of me do you like best? ...Am I the most beautiful [gal] you have ever slept with?” I don’t know what happened to [my friend, or whether it] truly understood the connection between beauty and passivity

in bed. But that conversation stayed with me because it seemed to contain a fundamental truth. Beautiful [gals] never have to try to get [guys] into bed and so do not learn that, once there, they should give as much as they receive. In bed, their behaviour resembles that of an artist's model and they become the lifeless subjects of living scrutiny... [Furthermore, life] is a great deal easier for the beautiful, which means that their personalities never quite develop the features that make people profoundly attractive... A fascinating combination is the relationship between an ugly [guy] and a beautiful [gal]. It is the sort of collaboration which suits both parties, but it's especially telling about beautiful [gals]. A pretty gal I know, who once slept with a famously unattractive journalist whose work [the pretty gal] had long admired, had only this to say: "I'll bonk anyone that writes and talks well." But it's the obvious contrast between these looks which provides the most satisfaction. The [gal's] beauty becomes that much more obvious beside her companion. This is a form of narcissism in which the [gal] looks into the face of her partner and sees in his adoring eyes the effect of her own good looks. It goes without saying that these are hardly optimum conditions for love-making because good sex requires that the relationship should be equal: equal in desire and affection, and without the complications that exist in the association between mistress and slave. It is widely believed that beauty is a handicap in [gals], but this is a misunderstanding. Just as someone who is charming becomes less so the moment... [that someone] is aware of their charm, so beauty is damaged by self-consciousness. It's not beauty that is the problem, but the admiration it inspires. This, of course, is extremely difficult to avoid because the world craves beauty, and heaps praise on those blessed with it... Some interesting research has been carried out in [US] colleges, where it has been discovered that [gals] who are widely accepted to be good-looking by their peers sometimes despise the attention they get. Researchers [also] say that... good-looking [gals] often mistrust affection, believing people never really appreciate them for themselves. It is... beauty in childhood and adolescence that's the real curse. [Gals] who blossom in adulthood are the ones we should envy, as they have all the advantages of good looks but are rarely spoilt. Moreover, they do not regard going to bed with someone as a big favour. Since the days when I listened to... [my friend's conversation], I've come to realise that it is [guys] who are mostly to blame for this state of affairs. They will never understand that obvious good looks do not always equal sex appeal, and that the pursuit of standard beauty and proportions leads to inevitable disappointment. The point is, true sex appeal is quite frequently a hidden quality which is gradually revealed by conversation... [My friend] represents failure of imagination and also patience. [My friend] could never see that the young art students who hung out in the same cafe as [it] did, though less glamorous, were far more promising than the trail of models and hard-faced socialites [it had] bedded. - 1994

[‘Being attractive is the most important thing there is. If you want to catch the biggest fish in your pond you need to be as attractive as possible’ – which, for some gals, means making their most obvious attractions bigger! Speaking of breast enlargements,] a **topless dancer...** [who now has] a **bust size of 56FF...** [and] whose stage name is **Chesty Love...** was recently allowed to deduct her US\$2,088 breast implants as a legitimate business expense. **Now that's inflation...** [and] **two more good reasons to keep receipts.**

...[an acquaintance recently told me: ‘The best thing about my husband is his butt.’ It reminded me of a recent cartoon which highlighted the plight of middle-aged guys who get sore tail bones due to having flat buttocks. Their problem was solved with silicon pads inserted into their trousers. It also got me wondering if any guys are having their butts surgically enhanced by silicon to make things easier, or to attract a partner – or please an existing one. I can deal with some guys being small-minded enough to think that a bigger butt or member will make them more attractive, or that bigger breasts make gals more attractive – but it fills me with despair that many gals share the same mentality. They're as bad as those spinners that claim they have a special connection with nature because they happen to be a one-out-of-every-28-gals who's period coincides with the full moon!]

...**BY SOME FREAK OF nature**, [gals] who work together will often find that their menstrual cycles converge. Here at CLEO, in an office of 16 [gals,] this makes for one very interesting week each month and one very tolerant [guy] Chief Sub-Editor. In fact, as I sit at my desk writing this story, I want to hit someone, then burst into tears. I hate every single thing about my life even though it's exactly the same life I had yesterday when the world was a happy place. Yes, I'm suffering from PMT, the very same syndrome that affects approximately 90[% of menstruating gals in AUS]. PMT occurs some time between ovulation and menstruation; it can strike anywhere up to a fortnight before your period and may last just a few days or up to two weeks. But if you're suffering from PMT, your symptoms (there are more than 150 recognised symptoms, though no-one has them all) will usually subside when your period starts. While there is no all-purpose PMT cure, there are still many things you can do to attempt to alleviate your symptoms. In a bid to find the best treatments, we spoke to doctors, dietitians, naturopaths, herbalists, aromatherapists and PMT experts, and were pleasantly surprised by their recommendations... **Doctors and naturopaths agree that diet is the most fundamental of all PMT treatments... EAT MORE Complex carbohydrates...** [(‘Raising low levels of the neuro-transmitter serotonin may well alleviate many of the emotional aspects of PMS, says a research scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The only effective way to make more serotonin is to eat carbohydrates – but don't eat protein and fat with the carbohydrate snack, since these create other metabolic reactions that negate serotonin's effects. Limit caffeine, which can cause irritability, anxiety and moodiness even for those not prone to PMS. Like alcohol, caffeine seems to have a more pronounced effect on those with PMS. According to one theory, exercise balances hormone levels over time. “It decreases oestrogen,” says an obstetrician and gynaecologist. Regular exercise also causes your body to release endorphins – natural chemicals that elevate mood, fight fatigue and manage cravings. Bright, white light can reduce some symptoms of PMS, according to an unpublished study by an associate professor of psychiatry at the University of British Columbia. His research indicates that exposure to the equivalent of early morning outdoor light for 30 minutes a day during the two weeks before periods can lessen symptoms by 60%. Another study has similarly suggested that administration of a bright light in the evening can reduce symptoms of PMS.’)] **CUT DOWN ON: Salt...** two weeks before your period is due... *Best if you have: mood swings, anxiety, fluid retention, bingeing, pimples, breast tenderness...* Head for your local chemist or health food store and you'll find several bottles claiming to be especially formulated for the needs of... PMT sufferers. These tablets usually contain varying amounts of calcium, iron, vitamins B1, B2, B6, B12, D, E, folic acid, zinc, ginseng and manganese. They're widely considered to be a good way to supplement your diet without overdosing on any particular vitamin or mineral or spending a fortune on individual supplements. Zinc will help your skin, B6 your moods and everything else helps stabilise your system and prevent cravings... Naturopaths have found two herbs that help PMT. The first, Dong Quai, is a Chinese herb that “normalises the... reproductive system and is also beneficial to the nervous system”... The other herb that can help is Vitex Agnus Casus, better known as the chaste berry, responsible for normalising progesterone levels in the body. Both are available in pill form from health food stores... *Best if you have: emotional symptoms such as anxiety, depression, mood swings... AROMATHERAPY...* is easily the most pleasurable form of PMT treatment... [and is *best if you have: migraines, headaches, mood swings, teariness, vagueness, depression...* [‘Chiropractic spinal manipulation and massage eases the symptoms of PMT, a three-year Melbourne study has found. Symptoms were relieved in more than 40% of the 30 PMT sufferers studied.’] **The medical profession frequently dismisses evening primrose oil...** as having no beneficial effect whatsoever on PMT, pointing to clinical studies to prove the point. But try telling that to the thousands of A[US]n gals who insist it] has changed their lives... However, [evening primrose oil] is fairly expensive (\$20 for a two-month supply) and it's not an instant cure... [One advisor] points out that incorporating some practical skills into your life is crucial in treating emotional PMT symptoms. *Acceptance* Instead of fighting your moods, accept that you feel awful and go with the flow. Remind yourself that it's only temporary. *Get some space* Focus on your own needs; even if just for a couple of hours. Give yourself permission to opt out without feeling like you've failed in your role as wife/girlfriend or mother/daughter. *Go easy on yourself* Take the line of least resistance. For example: get takeaway for dinner[or get someone else in your household to cook], postpone a social arrangement, forget about chores for a few days. And say to yourself: “I do not have to be super[gal] today”. - 1995

[I had to smile the other evening when I heard on television someone refer to an MP and some of her contemporaries as the “supermums of the 90s.” Huh! They should have seen my mother in the 1920s: five children and a husband of his time – brought up with the idea that running a home and managing the family of seven was entirely “the wife’s work.” Mother was up before 4.30am every day, seven days a week – on weekdays to cook Dad a hot breakfast and get him off to work, then a little later to cook five more hot breakfasts as it prepared us children for school. In the winter mother cooked three rounds of hot meals a day on a coal fire. Candles were her only lighting. Her only hot water for all cleaning and baths came from a big, black kettle which weighed a ton and sat permanently on the coal stove. All the clothes Mum washed by hand in a tub in the back yard, winter and summer, including sheets and blankets which were put through a mangle – a piece of equipment the modern-day supermum would not be able to turn on its own let alone turn with a thick blanket passing through it. Washing for seven under those conditions was a whole day’s work; just lugging the water through the house was a job in itself. And, of course, there were still the three hot meals to cook for seven people plus all the polishing and cleaning. No car, of course: all the shopping was carried home by hand and on foot through muddy streets with no footpaths.’ Convenience products (e.g., sanitary items) were less convenient, and PMT was less recognised. ‘Supermums in the 90s? There is no such thing.’ ■ **ONE feature of... [NZ government] is... that a great deal of drinking is done in Parliament. This is the only explanation I can find for much of what I hear in the debating chamber. Alcohol deludes the [guy MP] into the belief [that it] now has Churchillian gifts of oratory. Before slumping into deep sleep his slurred and meaningless interjections are seen (by himself) as shafts of great wit. [Gal MPs] are different. Under the minimal influence of alcohol their voices become shrill and piercing. Their strange passion for the accuracy of irrelevant detail destroys the logical sequence of any argument. With the merest whiff of a cork they feel compelled to fill every minute with 60 seconds of empty verbiage. This doesn’t mean that I have anything against [gals]. Indeed... I have found the married specimen particularly useful for cooking meals, ironing shirts and going to bed with.**

...I see that *Tatler* has up-dated its “little black book” of Britain’s most “eligible” people. I also could not help but notice that, once again, I have not made the grade. Why not, pray? ...my overdraft is under control, my gums are just about maintaining their grip on my teeth. Was I blackballed because I do not have a trust fund, or a nebulous career in “interior decoration?” How does one get to be thought of as eligible anyway? ...They say it helps if one steps outside the front door, occasionally, puts oneself about, as it were. This may be where I am screwing up. My social life mainly consists of sprawling on the sofa in my pyjamas, drinking mid-range plonk, keeping a beady eye out for “nice [guys] on the telly.” ...For a period, I also developed a taste for drinking too much in the company of like-minded reprobates but I would not recommend this strategy to any [gal] who wishes to appear eligible. Sadly, all it did was make me a magnet for [guys] who were only after one thing – namely, an all-night bar. Few single [gals] are thought of as eligible anyway. Most people just view you as desperate. I know that whenever I’m single, friends see it as a cue to suggest the most unsuitable of suitors: real creeps – not a brain, a car, or a shred of beauty among the lot of them. When one responds, as one must, with loud retching noises, they then complain that you are “too choosy,” which is a polite way of saying: “Get real.” The way I see it, there is no point in being an eligible gal about town if you wind up being saddled with Mr No-Jokes, or worse, Mr Ugly-But-Nice. I accept that holding out for... someone particularly dishy... may be a bit unrealistic but one must maintain standards. I have a public out there: friends, neighbours; the couple at the corner shop. They would be disappointed if I suddenly acquired a boyfriend who was just as inadequate as I am. It seems to me that, fortune hunters aside, [guys and gals] have entirely different notions of what makes a person eligible... [However, it also seems likely that this particular difference could soon disappear – because, having first] learned that young [gals’] bodies are becoming more like those of [guys, we are now told that gals’] minds are going the same way. Psychological testing of almost 1000 British people has revealed personality traits once thought the exclusive preserve of [guys] are appearing in young [gals] – and vice versa. [The latter] have acquired... arrogance, leadership qualities and a tendency towards dishonesty, according to the study now being analysed by the Oxford-based psychological profiling company.

...VIOLENT offending by [gals] almost trebled in the last 10 years, but society and the justice system are excusing and ignoring the problem... Violent [gals] were far more likely to be treated leniently by the courts. They were seldom given custodial sentences, even for serious offending, and when they went to jail, they tended to get shorter sentences. And [gal violence – especially]... assault... of... their partners... – ...was grossly underreported... “We expect [gals] to be kind and nurturing. Sure, [they] can be like that, but the door swings both ways. Like any human being, [gals] can be... nasty.” ...violence by [guys] tended to be “territorial”, protecting their status or “[guyhood]”, while [gal] violence was most often directed at their children, their lovers and their lovers’ lovers. “[Guy] violence tends to be more cold-blooded, while [gal] violence tends to be highly emotional.” ...a Canterbury University sociology lecturer, said... [gals] often offered excuses for their offending, such as being victims of abuse themselves, or suffering emotional or hormonal problems... “[Guys] unfortunately can’t draw on that sort of cop-out, but [gals] do and they are believed... We are developing a cult of victimhood where it is OK to do anything if you are a victim. It just perpetrates the myth that [gals] can only be the victims, not offenders.” Courts demeaned [gals] by not taking their violence seriously and not demanding that they take responsibility for their actions. “Treating [violent gals] like recalcitrant children is not dealing with the problem.” ...[In related news,] according to a report released this week... [gals’] refugees face a shortage of volunteers, while at the same time their workload is likely to increase. Th[e report]... says the number of domestic violence cases handled by refugees is likely to increase by 11[%] in the next two years... because of the effects of Social Welfare and police documentaries and advertising campaigns, more referrals from other agencies, police family violence policies and the Domestic Violence Act... [P]rotection orders had increased by 70[%] since the Act became law... [The spokesperson for the] National Collective of [Gals’] Refugees (which ‘every year helps more than 15,000 mothers and children escape a life of family violence’)... said refugees were concerned they won’t be able to provide services because finding volunteers was getting harder. “Ours is the least glamorous to work for and the most dangerous.” ...if volunteers had to choose between working at a refuge, a Citizens Advice Bureau or Life Line, they would usually avoid the refuge option. Most refugees employed only one full-time and one part-time worker and relied on about 30 volunteers. The report estimated that if the volunteers were paid, it would cost \$5.5 million a year... Refugees’ annual costs were also likely to rise from about \$12 million in 1995-96 to up to \$13 million in 1996-97... But the Government contributed only \$3.6 million... It was hoped the report would convince the Government and corporate sector that more funding was needed.

...Battered [gals] looking for shelter at refuges could soon find there is no room at the inn. A surge in the number of victims... has left refuges full to overflowing... Refuges say the worst has still to come as demand usually peaks... over Christmas... and... the New Year... A spokes[person] for Auckland refuges... said staff were already asking [people] to look elsewhere before coming to a refuge. “...If they have some money, then we advise them to stay at a motel. We try to never turn anyone away... but we are getting to a point where we may have to say we can’t take any more.” ...the nine refuges in Auckland offered about 70 beds although demand was much higher than that... An option was to transfer [people] to other regions but this was not always suitable. Most of the refuges in Waikato were overstretched, with the Te Awamutu home full for the first time in many years... Refuges in Hamilton, Thames, Whangarei and Rotorua were also full... The Hamilton co-ordinator... said it was a huge relief a YMCA facility still existed to take any overflow... The YMCA announced earlier this month that the house would close because of a cash crisis, but an anonymous donation would see it run until February. A Wellington refuge co-ordinator... said staff were hectic giving advice on protection orders and the differing forms of abuse... [since] the Domestic Violence Act... came into force in July[. • ‘Nationwide there’re 51 Gals’ Refuge safe houses’]...

America’s uglies launch war against... the latest “ism”... In a country already battling racism, sexism, ageism and heterosexism, [a 36-year-old] has added another exotic “ism” to the list – “looksism.” From the remote Utah house... share[d] with her married sister, [the 36-year-old] is embarking on an extraordinary national crusade. It may sound like the latest wheeze dreamed up by the gauleiters of political correctness, but it is no joke.

Instead [the 36-year-old] has opened a debate that not only touches on American popular culture – from Disney to... presidential election[s] – but also on universal questions of equality, evolution and lust. [The 36-year-old] is daring to challenge the way people look at each other. For [the 36-year-old], it is a personal battle... [The 36-year-old] is ugly. No doubt about it... Her long, crooked nose, her thin, pale lips and the purple blotch of a birthmark above her right eye all say it as clearly as the children who once taunted her with cries of Pinocchio and Wicked Witch... As a child [it] was so ashamed with her looks that [it] hid in a cupboard when visited at home by strangers. In adolescence [it] spent long nights at home while her peers were out dating. Once [it] was at a bus-stop when a [father]... told his attractive young son: “You’re the beauty” before turning to her to add, “And you’re the beast.” “If all your life you’ve had taunts and insults behind your back and to your face, you’d have to be pretty foolish to believe you’re as attractive as average people,”... For a while [it] thought things were improving. [It] fell in love, but the [object of her love] – a devout churchgoer – eventually broke off their relationship, telling her that “in all Christian honesty[I]” couldn’t marry a [gal] with a “defect.” The defect was her ugliness. [The 36-year-old] recounts this unemotionally and winces only when you try to suggest that [it] might not, in fact, be ugly... “I’m ugly, but that’s okay because I have a beautiful soul,” says... the U[S]’s first pioneer for the rights of the “appearance-impaired.” ...Her point is that it should not matter. That is why [the 36-year-old] has formed a group called the Pinocchio Plot, whose mission is to roll back what might be the last acceptable prejudice: judging people by their looks. Pinocchio... is a classic product of a culture that equates beauty with moral goodness and ugliness with evil. Because the little boy lied, his nose grew long; his face literally became as ugly as sin... [The] group wants children to read new fairy stories – *Sleeping Ugly* is on their recommended list – in which princes can be short and bald, and wicked stepsisters are not always pocked with warts and bent features. “Cinderella got stretch marks, Snow White wrinkled, and Rapunzel’s golden tresses greyed,” is a favourite slogan. Nor is there much patience for tales in which the unattractive triumph, such as *Beauty and the Beast* or *Ugly Duckling*. After all... the characters are only redeemed when they change their looks... “Ugly ducklings don’t have to become beautiful swans... And why can’t the Beast stay ugly?” The problem is as great now as it has ever been, says the anti-looksist movement. Just look at Disney’s most recent offerings. In *Pocahontas*, the Indian girl and her English lover John Smith are painted as impossible lovelies: [her] with a narrow waist, endless legs and a full bosom, h[im] with a chiselled torso. Yet historical accounts suggest Smith was plain, if not cosmetically challenged. But in the movie the only ugly character is the wicked English colonist, Governor John Radcliffe – his chin pockmarked with moles. *The Lion King* irritated [the 36-year-old] even more. Not only was the good lion shown with a healthy golden mane, while his evil brother was bony and dark – the villain was actually named after a physical blemish: Scar... [The 36-year-old] fears children are being raised to believe that a facial flaw indicates a bad character and that “what is beautiful is good.” What has boosted [the anti-looksism movement] – 400 letters of support from across the U[S] in just two weeks – is a flurry of fresh evidence that goes to show that looksism is not confined to fairy tales or even romance. On the contrary, the latest research suggests that looks-based discrimination affects every aspect of our lives... Studies show that when identically qualified candidates apply for the same job, the better-looking one always wins... Once they have the job, lookers fare better too. A 1993 study by the University of Texas and Michigan State found that good-looking people earned 12[%] more than their less comely colleagues; intriguingly the difference was larger for [guys than for gals]. “It is a non-conscious process,” says a psychologist... who has studied the power of beauty. [The psychologist] believes bosses are not even aware of their own bias. “They assume that more attractive people have an array of valued characteristics.” Researchers have found similar thinking even in acts of charity. If a dishy [gal] needs help on the roadside, motorists stop in seconds, some screeching to a halt and plunging into reverse. When volunteers are shaking collection boxes for charity, the attractive ones bring in up to 50[%] more. This is serious business... [An] unprepossessing... Senator... from Texas, said his run for the White House earlier this year represented a challenge: “Can an ugly [guy] be elected President?” The voters swiftly delivered their verdict: [the] Senator... was knocked out in the first round, losing to the rugged and permanently tanned [candidate]... Lawyers, too, know there is no tougher obstacle than a physically unattractive defendant. [One] Boston trial attorney... says overweight or unappealing clients start with a disadvantage, but when the accused is attractive, a trial can be a breeze. “Juries find it hard to believe that such a nice-looking person could do such a heinous crime,”... Even children are victims – and perpetrators – of looksism. Researchers have found mothers pay more attention to babies when they look nice, and can be inattentive when the child is plain[, while ‘teachers give more attention to beautiful students’.] But it is a two-way street: [youngst]ers prefer pretty teachers to plain, believing they are kinder and cleverer. Babies as young as three months linger much longer on photographs of beautiful people, and show signs of distress when... faced with less attractive images. That evidence cuts straight to the argument [the 36-year-old] faces every day: preference for the beautiful is a basic, unavoidable human instinct. Evolutionary science has recently buttressed that view, revealing that all cultures at all times have valued certain key physical traits, all of them indicators of biological health. [Guys look for gals] with a good waist-hip ratio because that is a sign of fertility. [Gals covet guys] with symmetrical features; they are more likely to be strong, athletic and a good bet for fatherhood. None of this interests [the 36-year-old, who] does not care if it is nature – genetic impulses telling us to shun the ugly – or nurture – Hollywood and the glamour magazines – that is to blame. If it is inbuilt we should overcome it... just as we try to curb the urge for violence. If it is learned behaviour, we should unlearn it.

...Have I missed something? A new insight into feminism perhaps? I *must* have done. After all, there was the lovely Miss N[Z] telling a reporter on *Holmes* this week that if we don’t respect her decision to enter Miss Universe we’re obviously not pro-[gals]. Nice try, love. Unfortunately you’re talking drivell. What are you trying to say – that beauty pageants are no longer sexist or demeaning, simply because you *choose* to enter the competition? What, were contestants dragged screaming off the streets in the 60s? If you truly believe beauty contests signal [gal] empowerment I can only say that you have very modest aspirations for your sex. You don’t need an IQ through the roof to realise that beauty pageants are about as pro-[gal as AUSs’ One Nation MP] is pro-Asian. They’re not a celebration of [gals], they’re not about beauty, or even charity, they’re about *sex* – and [gals] as *sex objects*. Frankly I think it would be far kinder to everyone involved if the Miss World and Miss Universe pageants were simply amalgamated into one big wet T-shirt competition. At least it would be honest. Still, I understand not everyone holds my view on this. I met a bloke at the weekend who rolled his eyes in exasperation at my comments and ordered me to lighten up. “Look, beauty contests are a bit of fun, that’s all... and no one forces the girls to enter do they?” Sadly, [like Miss NZ, that particular bloke] has a point. It seems remarkable, but [last] year’s Miss World boasted a record number of entrants – 89 to be exact. Wearing smiles tighter than their hotpants, and breasts hoisted up to their ears, the contestants collectively giggled, preened and paraded themselves like market slaves out to attract the highest bidder. Yet to these girls the end obviously justified the means. A tiara, a title, travel, fame – all good reasons to have some “fun” and give the beauty business a go. I do understand the motivation but I’m afraid I can’t respect it. To my mind, entering a beauty competition inevitably trades off individual gain against moral responsibility. There’s a loser every time, and that loser is the [gals’] movement. Perhaps when [gals] can boast equal pay and work opportunities, unbiased media coverage, legal equality in all countries and an end to sexual violence I can afford to take a kinder view of these unfortunate pageants. Until that time, Miss N[Z], believe me when I tell you I’d rather be judged as a bearded old feminist any day than a beautiful hypocrite.

...Miss Universe pageant organisers have denied ordering their reigning beauty queen, [Miss] Venezuela... to lose weight or give up her title... [I]n a statement released in the resort town of Las Cruces, New Mexico, where [Miss Universe] is attending the Miss Teen USA pageant... the... president of Miss Universe Inc... said Miss Universe officials were “extremely happy with [Miss Venezuela] and feel that their reigning beauty queen] fulfils her obligations... exceptionally well.” Officials of the Miss Venezuela Organisation had claimed on Tuesday that [Miss Universe] had been given an ultimatum by Miss Universe organisers to lose 12kg in two weeks... [Miss Universe] was 1.73m tall and weighed 51kg when [the Latin beauty] became the fourth Venezuelan to win the crown in Las Vegas in May[(the country has also collected ‘5 Miss World and 29 other international

beauty contest titles during the past two decades’)). But yesterday Venezuelan pageant officials backed away from their earlier comments, with one official saying: “[The reigning Miss Universe] obviously has a weight problem which affects her swimsuit contracts but this does not mean [our girl] will be stripped of her crown.” Those close to... [her] said... the beauty queen... has a weakness for pasta and cakes.

...Suicide threats by feminist protesters and race rows with the media have angered would-be Miss Worlds competing in India, where the beauty pageant has attracted more controversy than ever before. A [gals’] activist group is threatening to upstage the crowning moment on November 23 by infiltrating the crowd in Bangalore’s Chinnaswamy cricket stadium, taking cyanide and setting their silk saris alight. “I just hope everything will turn out alright. This threat of burning themselves makes me mad and sad,” said Miss Venezuela... the favourite to take the title. One [person] died by self-immolation last week in a protest against India hosting the beauty contest. The suicide sent shudders through the Miss World camp at the luxury Windsor Manor hotel in Bangalore. “This is the land of Gandhi, the land of peace. How can they take such an extreme step. Everybody has a right to protest but not in this form. I am very concerned,” said Miss Costa Rica... an aspiring journalist. To add to the controversy, the African contingent among the 88 competitors say the media is shunning them because they are black.

...Beauty contest threatens to set India alight Beauty killed Suresh Kumar, or else it was the exploitation of [gals], or else the assault on Indian cultural values. It all depends on how you look at it. In the countdown to the coronation of the next Miss World, to be held in India for the first and – given the degree of opposition it has met – possibly the last time, it seems there are countless ways of looking at an event that ordinarily seems so divested of meaning. Weeks of protest and fears for the security of the contestants reached crisis point last Thursday, when Mr Kumar, a 24-year-old tailor, doused himself in petrol and set himself alight at a bus stand in the city of Madurai, 430km south of Bangalore... Witnesses said [Suresh] was still muttering anti-contest slogans on the way to the hospital where [the protester] died. Not everyone in India, of course, shares Mr Kumar’s views of Miss World... The hotel where the[contestants] are staying has become a magnet for rich Bangalorans – the coffee shop is packed with ogles anxious for a glimpse of the beauty queens, whose days are filled with rehearsals for the gala extravaganza. Provided the protests don’t force a down-scaling of the grand-finale, it will feature 60 decorated elephants, several hundred dancers and a candle-lit map of India... Miss World 1996 is only the latest in a series of Western imports to have caused a furore in India. Like the other new arrivals – fast food restaurants, the fitness craze and U[S] soap operas like *The Bold And The Beautiful* – the pageant has become a convenient symbol for a whole range of Indian organisations that are not usually on speaking terms... Will... others... tak[e] Mr Kumar’s path? ...the... leader... of the... Hindu right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party[which] has been at the forefront of the protests... think[s] so. “This is only the beginning[,” the leader said last Friday]...

Protests fail to disrupt contest... [Miss] Greece was crowned Miss World at the end of a heavily guarded beauty contest overshadowed by protests and threats by militant[s]... to commit suicide by immolation. The 18-year-old professional model won the title after... [s]ome 10,000 police and paratroopers... had detained more than 1500 protesters in the southern Indian city of Bangalore. Scattered clashes throughout the city left at least seven police[officers] injured and clouds of tear gas before the pageant started. But inside the fortress-like cricket stadium, the three-hour spectacle passed off without incident... In deference to Indian mores, the contestants wore long transparent skirts around their swimsuits.

...Beauty contestant’s action raises storm in a ‘C’ cup... A young model and beauty contestant is suing her surgeon for \$38,500... [-] the \$5500 cost of the surgery, legal fees of \$3000 and \$30,000 in punitive or exemplary damages – ...after an implant operation left her with smaller breasts than [the model] had hoped for. The 22-year-old Hillsborough student had expected to have “C” size breasts instead of the more modest “A” bra cups size [it] ended up with. Her lawyer... told... the Auckland District Court this week: “...it was marvellous surgery but it didn’t produce the desired results. [The doctor] didn’t fill the implants [with saline solution] to the requisite size... and that’s our argument.” The... doctor’s lawyer... yesterday applied to have the [student]’s action struck out... The [Auckland student], aged 20 at the time, had modelled and taken part in beauty pageants in the U[S. It] apparently discovered that other contestants had boosted their chances of winning by having breast implants and decided to do the same... The doctor gave her various sizes of implant to try for size in her bra and eventually [the student] elected to have 210cc prosthesis implanted... in March 1994... The [student]’s statement of claim alleges that the doctor breached the Consumer Guarantees Act 1993 by not achieving the size of breasts [it wanted, and] is also claiming for humiliation and breach of privacy as a result of having to have remedial surgery. When [the student initially] complained, the doctor allegedly flippantly told her that [the student] could have the bigger implants when [the student] won lotto, as [the student] had no money at the time. Or, alternatively, [the doctor] was alleged to have told her... it... could do [the remedial surgery] at a reduced cost when [the student] had her appendix removed as [the student] would already be paying for the hospital theatre.

...[a US singer has] become a plastic surgery junkie, having had all kinds of plastic surgery: face, legs, breasts, hips and arms. One operation to enhance her buttocks left her unable to sit down for weeks! ...[now the] 50-year-old country star... is in hiding after... [undergoing] a \$30,000... laser surgery... procedure to get rid of wrinkles by burning away the skin on her face. Medical sources say the risky operation could leave[the semi-plastic] Dolly with discoloured skin and... scarred for life.

...A CHILLY development expert has criticised a new glossy magazine based on the world-famous... doll, Barbie. The A[US]n publishers plan an inaugural N[Z] edition of *Barbie* later this month, targeted at girls aged between five and 12... [The] associate professor of education at Auckland University, said the magazine was full of stereotypes about the roles of [gals] to look good and be popular. “This is exactly what Barbie has been criticised for in the past. In fact, it’s worse,”... The magazine includes stories on the environment and after-school fashion tips. It also has an article about a child TV star, a profile of a nine-year-old A[US]n lifesaver and a short story about Barbie and friends in a fashion pageant... [The associate professor] was also concerned by some of the poses of young girls in the magazine. [However, the magazine’s editor] said there had been no negative feedback after two issues in A[US]. “I’ve had mothers ringing me up saying it’s brilliant.” - 1996

A crying, walking, sleeping, living doll [An Aucklander] is, on the face of it, a fearless sort of [bloke]. For one thing [it] allows himself – without the slightest protest – to be arranged on the grass in a public domain surrounded by Barbie dolls, to have his photo taken by a N[Z] *Herald* photographer and a passing German tourist, and to be gaped at by a clutch of passing kids. But... [the] department manager for a textile company, admits having a couple of consuming fears. The first is that [it] will be struck about the head by disgruntled doll owners whose beloved Barbies don’t make the cut when [the manager] finishes judging at today’s Barbie in the Park outing. The second is that by touting himself as someone who’s bonkers about Barbie [it]’ll be seen as some sort of “loony.” Not that [the manager cares, really. The manager] is a serious collector of “vintage” Barbies ([it]... can “walk past a shelf of Barbies at The Warehouse with no interest at all”) and a champion of a doll [it] reckons has had a “rough deal.” Barbie has... “possibly been a bit misunderstood. [Barbie]’s lived the ideal life, has the most amazing figure, amazing legs and wonderful clothes – [the doll]’s had everything basically, and of course it’s totally unrealistic.” But what appeals... about Barbie is the way [the doll]’s changed with the times. “[Barbie]’s been given a lot of changes over the years. The role of other dolls developed in the 60s was of a [gal] who stayed at home and cooked. But Barbie’s been out there doing things. I really admire people who go out and do things, so good on her.” [The manager] has only been bonding with Barbie for 18 months, but [the doll]’s been... “within my psyche for the last 30 years.” As a child growing up in the 60s [it] was fascinated by a neighbour’s dolls which were the antithesis of “those awful sleepy-eyed baby things your sisters had. I suppose I always wanted one but it wasn’t done in those days to give boys dolls. About 18 months ago I thought, ‘Why the hell not? Why shouldn’t I do it?’ and started buying the odd one off the store shelf.” But the Barbie buzz [the manager ha]d been expecting didn’t happen. It was, [the manager] realised, the Barbies... from his childhood that held the allure... [The manager now] has a special Barbie room at home where the dolls, some still in

their boxes, are definitely off-limits to anyone of any age who thinks toys are made for playing with. The closest [the manager] gets to toying with his collection is when dolls arrive in “basket-case condition” and need loving restoration. [The manager]’ll spend hours washing, conditioning and styling their hair or removing any ink marks with Clearasil (a trick of the trade) and a bit of a sun bathe. Despite his fears that people will think collecting dolls is a peculiar pursuit, [the manager] has yet to experience any flak. Perhaps, [the manager] says, everyone understands nostalgia. “It’s all just longing for something you had as a child,” – or in [his] case, for something [it] never had. And, of course, attitudes have changed as much as Barbie’s looks over the years. [His] mother... offered to buy him a Barbie doll for Christmas. But [the son says it said no because it’s got plenty] already... His first vintage Barbie is still his favourite: Ponytail Barbie from 1965 wears a red bathing suit and cat’s eye glasses; but [the manager] now has 60 Barbies (including an array of “bitch Barbies” from the 60s who look... “decidedly frumpy and unapproachable”).

...LITTLE-KNOWN fact no.99 from the file on that all-American, all-plastic icon of [gal]hood – the Barbie doll: even Barbie gets cellulite. Barbie cellulite is known by those in the know about such matters as “weave marks” and is the reason serious collectors of the leggy one prohibit Barbie from such activities as riding Horse Dancer, Equestrienne Barbie’s elegant plastic steed. Galloping is a no-go because the doll’s soft vinyl legs absorb marks from the fabric of the jodhpurs which reduces the value of the Barbie in the eyes of the collector, to say nothing of tarnishing her image as the babe with the perfect bod. Not that you’d imagine a smidgen of cellulite would matter to the millions of little girls (and boys) who do things to Barbie that would make a serious collector like [a middle-aged textile manager] (see story on [page 1759, line 55]) feel seriously queasy. Still, there are more than enough Barbies around the world to ensure that the breed survives the odd occasions of dismemberment or decapitation at the hands of tots who like to play rough. The organisers of today’s Barbie rally... hope that there is a fair percentage of survivors left to turn up outside the Auckland Museum for an afternoon of “Barbiemania.” They can probably be assured that there are: Barbie dolls roll out of the shops by the million. Barbie’s surrogate parents, the giant toy company Mattel, estimates that American girls in the target market – three to 10-year-olds – own an average of 12 Barbies each. No statistics are collected from N[Z] sales but Mattel... believes we are probably on a par with the A[US]ns, whose young... [girl]s are estimated to own between five and eight Barbies each. Is that a lot of curvy dollies? Well, it translates as a lot of lovely lolly: more than one-third of Mattel’s nearly \$NZ6 billion in [annual] toy sales comes from Barbie and associated products. Barbie was born in 1959. At 37 [Barbi]e’s hardly aged at all; [the doll] has, though, rolled with the fashion trends over the decades. When Jackie O began sporting bee-hive hairdos in the 60s Barbie wasn’t far behind and, bizarrely, [the girl with] the impossibly achievable bodily proportions turned up in a McDonald’s uniform sometime in the early 80s. And the buzz is that Barbie has indulged in that most American of leisure pursuits – plastic surgery: the pointy little ski-jump nose which adorned her countenance in the 60s has been rounded off to provide her with a perfect snub. A new Barbie is released every month; the hot dolls of 1996 were Jewel Hair Mermaid Barbie and Ocean Friend Barbie (put your wetsuit-clad Barbie into a bowl of warm water and [it] emerges – ooh, aah – in a bathing suit). All this and still there are those who claim Barbie is... an advertisement for anorexia; a fantasy figure which encourages sexist stereotypes. Barbie, in fact, is a positive role model for young girls, a spokes[person] for Mattel, NZ unsurprisingly claims, pointing to a series of “aspirational” dolls which feature Barbie as, for example, a teacher, a pet doctor and a people doctor ([the doll] has also been a presidential candidate and an astronaut). Then there’s a recent addition to the Barbie household, baby sister Kelly – from interacting with the sister dolls girls can, apparently, learn a lot about caring for young children. But wait, there’s more. Barbie’s can teach kids subliminally the things mums have spent years attempting to drill into their young... What you won’t find the folk at Mattel waxing lyrical about is a series of “anti-Barbies” which have reared their less-than-peachy complexions in a little shop in San Francisco. In-Jean-ious stocks a Trailer Trash Barbie who dangles a cigarette from her lips and a baby from her hips and whose platinum coiffure sports dark roots. Dyke Barbie comes with a pierced nose, Hooker Barbie’s accessories are a negligee and condom and Drag Queen Barbie is Ken parading in a wig and frock. The shop owner... has been asked by Mattel to stop selling the dolls in original boxes – the corporate logo has been retouched to read “Motel” – but the big surprise has been the demand. It’s payback time for those who grew up with a symbol of oppression... • Barbie[’s manufacturer]... Mattel is hoping to hook girls into the multimedia game market – 80[%] of the \$7.5 billion global market for computer games comes from cyber toys for boys.

...Companies target girls for growth... COMPUTER game companies are scratching their heads for ways to open up the potentially massive [girl] market. Computer and video gaming is [boy] dominated, with girls accounting for less than 35% of the market. But 12 months ago they accounted for less than 25%. Much of the increase can be attributed to the success of a 40-year-old doll named Barbie... Until a few years ago, one of the best-selling games among [girl] players was the Russian puzzle game *Tetris*. Broderbund’s huge hit *Myst* with its educational adventure game series based around *Carmen Sandiego* also attracted their share of girl gamers, but they were gender neutral rather than specifically aimed at a [girl] audience. When Mattel announced it was going into the electronic games market and was going to produce *Barbie* games, the reaction was mixed. But the move was a huge success and the *Barbie Fashion Designer* program was one of the biggest sellers of the year. Players could design clothes and print them on a special fabric packaged with the game. This year, Mattel will release several new *Barbie* titles, including a hairdresser CD that allows users to design their own hair-styles. Mattel will also release an underwater adventure game starring Barbie. The company’s success has encouraged several other companies to continue their efforts to crack the market... Girl Games had success in the US last year with a CD-Rom called *Let’s Talk About Me*. The CD deals with issues of interest to pre-teen and young teenage girls, such as make-up, relationships and keeping diaries. The sequel, *Let’s Talk About Me Too*, will be released in N[Z] later in the year. Like Barbie’s hairstyler CD it includes a hair design utility. Users will be able to scan their own photograph and use the digitised image of themselves as a mannequin to experiment with hundreds of hairstyles and hair colours. [Girl Games] also will produce a game version of the TV series *Sabrina the Teenage Witch*... In the US, Her Interactive released a five-CD set called *McKenzie & Co* that features young actors in mini-games and comic scenes about romance, friends, school, part-time jobs and shopping. The game, which is aimed at 10-year-olds and up, is packaged with a small lipstick.

...IT’S ironic that Barbie, a 38-year-old... bimbo... beloved by seven-year-old girls and tolerated by feminist mothers, has created a techno revolution for young [gals]. Thanks to Barbie’s CD-Rom success, game makers are creating titles for girls. The trend is dispelling notions that girls fear technology and lose interest in computing as they get older... Retail buyers were apprehensive when Mattel showed its *Barbie Fashion Designer* computer game last year at the International Toy Fair... Their big fear was that girls would not buy software. But within seven months of... showing up in stores in October, sales topped \$[US]26 million, according to PC Data. So far this year, it’s the 10th-best selling computer game. In comparison, *Diablo*, the current best-selling computer game, has generated sales of \$19.7m since December. Before *Barbie*, game makers assumed girls didn’t play on computers. But... 60% of 12 to 13-year-old girls told Gallup pollsters they wanted to know more about computer advances. Until they are 10, girls spend more time on home computers than boys do, according to a 1995 survey... Research[also] shows girls don’t like playing against the clock or keeping score. They like working with others and communicating via e-mail... Violence doesn’t offend girls, research shows, it simply bores them. “They will do those kinds of games for a short while,” said... Girls Games. “And then they say, ‘Now what?’” ...Some new games for girls focus on beauty, like *Cosmopolitan Virtual Makeover*, which encourages girls to perform on-screen makeovers of their faces. *Purple Moon*, a spinoff from Interval Research Corp, has launched two series of [girl] games. Its *Rockett* games explores life in school; *Secret Paths* helps girls overcome common fears. The games will be tied in with an Internet site and chat rooms... [● A]ccording to a study at East Anglia University, England[, girls]... would have a brighter future if they played with “boys” toys such as chemistry sets and Meccano rather than “girlie” ones like Spice Girl or Barbie dolls... It suggested that toys such as Barbie hold girls back by conditioning them into thinking they are fit only for stereotypical [gal] roles.

...EVERY second of every hour of every day, two Barbie dolls are sold somewhere in the world. Do the maths and that works out at more than 63 million new Barbies churned out each year, with about 200,000 of those sold in N[Z]. And Barbie's maker... goes through so much fabric each year to clothe those new dolls and supply new outfits for existing ones, that it ranks as one of the largest clothing manufacturers in the world. The reason for Barbie's continuing popularity with young girls and older collectors alike, is the same. Barbie has always aimed to appeal to the social aspirations of its target market of three to 10-year-old girls. The style of Barbie constantly changes to reflect their changing tastes and styles. To sell, Barbie must represent the way girls want to be when they grow up... The dozens of Barbie variations which are produced each year provide a valuable social commentary on the way generations have seen themselves. And fertile ground for collectors with an interest in mid to late 20th century social history. Barbie's origins go back to 1945 when [a US] couple... founded Mattel... and started making picture frames in their garage. A sideline developed when they started making doll house furniture from the offcuts and this, in turn, led the company to expand into the toy business. [Mrs US Couple] got the idea for Barbie watching her daughter... play with cut-out adult paper dolls. Up until that time, most dolls were made to look like babies – an adult-looking doll was almost unheard of. Mrs [US Couple] believed there was a market for a three dimensional doll through which little girls could act out their dreams of growing up, and the first Barbie, fashionably attired in a zebra-striped one-piece bathing suit, hit the shops in 1959. It was not an immediate success. Most retailers did not see the doll through little girls' eyes, and few ordered it. However Mattel tried another tack. They advertised Barbie on the fastest growing entertainment medium of the time – television. In a classic marketing coup that was to rewrite advertising textbooks, little baby boomers pestered their mothers for the dolls, and the company was swamped with orders. It took several years for supply to catch up with demand... The first Barbies of the early '60s were cast as teenage fashion models, with their outfits influenced by the Paris-based couture houses which dominated the fashion scene at the time. In 1964, Barbie's hair was literally let down as [the doll] adopted the Carnaby Street look of the swinging '60s, and... was made even more mod with a resculpted face and new wardrobe in 1967. In the '70s came California Girl Barbie, with a deep tan, sun streaked hair, granny frocks and glittery disco outfits. In the high flying, fitness crazed '80s, Barbie was variously an aerobic instructor, credit card carrying executive and TV soap-inspired fashion victim... Barbie was not commercially imported into this country until 1971, and even then only in small numbers, as [Barbie] was considered expensive by N[Z] consumers. This puts [local] collectors of vintage Barbies at a considerable disadvantage to those in the US, where there is a huge and thriving market for old Barbies and her accessories. However the trade in the dolls is now international, with many dealers providing lists of their stock in collector magazines and on the Internet. According to... [the] president of the Barbie And Sindy Collectors Club of N[Z], the market in the US is so well developed that virtually any model of the doll or its accessories can be bought, at a price. The original 1959 model Barbie will cost anything from about \$7700 to \$15,000 depending on its condition. Collectors grade Barbies according to their condition, with the most valuable being graded NRFB – never removed from box... A '70s doll in good condition will sell for around \$100 in N[Z], and many can still be found at flea markets, garage sales and the like, although most business is transacted privately between collectors... There are also collectors who specialise just in Barbie clothes or accessories... Mattel has also developed a number of Barbie spin offs, such as... several younger siblings... and... boyfriend Ken... However, [the]... brand manager for Mattel NZ, said Barbie will never have children of her own. Barbie and Ken are strictly "just good friends".

...Barbie's battle to keep her virginity... AS the world's billionth Barbie doll was sold this week, a song called *Barbie Girl* stood poised to top the [US] pop charts. Mattel Inc... insists its cult product has nothing to do with sex. Aqua, the Danish bubblegum group responsible for *Barbie Girl*, doesn't agree. Neither, it seems, do the millions who have bought their record, reported by record store staff to include "kids as young as six." Aqua – so bad they make the Spice Girls sound like Schoenberg – landed in the U[S] last week to begin a tour promoting a dreadful debut album called *Aquarium*. They were surprised to find that *Barbie Girl*, a dialogue between the doll and Ken, her beau since 1961, had caused such controversy. "I'm a Barbie girl in a Barbie world/Life in plastic, it's fantastic/You can brush my hair, undress me everywhere," sings Barbie. To which Ken replies: "You're my doll, rock and roll/Feel the glamour and the pain/Kiss me here, touch me there, hanky panky." Mattel's objection to the song is not the obvious one – that it is a load of drivel – but that it implies that Barbie is... a sex symbol. Lawyers for the company and for MCA Records were "locked in talks for the best part of the week," with legal action not ruled out... The song, however, is not at the centre of the ongoing debate about Barbie and her sexuality – that position belongs to Barbie herself. Her origins leave little room for debate. In 1952 a cartoonist in Hamburg... launched a comic-strip character called Lilli which was then turned into an "adult dolly" – an undisguised masturbation aid. In 1957... [the] co-founder of Mattel, was touring Europe and after purchasing three Lilli dolls came up with an idea: Barbie... a toy which would represent the innocence and effervescence of childhood... [The co-founder] was fired from Mattel some years later... [The] author of a book about Barbie, said the doll was "aggressively coded for wholesomeness to overcome the fact [i]t... was inspired by a quasi-pornographic gag gift." Initial market research showed parents to be appalled and hostile but Mattel appealed to little girls who wanted a doll which didn't need a nappy-change or a bottle so much as a date... Barbie's blue eyes nestle beneath carefully arched eyebrows[and above] bee-stung, ruby-red lips. Her figure, transposed to human scale, is a reality-defying 36-18-33. Her legs are long, lean and perfect and her hallmark shoes are open-toed and stiletto-heeled... [L]ooking to improve on its \$[US]1.7 billion in revenue last year... – ...95[% of US] girls between the ages of three and 10 own [a Barbie –] ...Mattel has tried to meet the serial challenge of a thoroughly modern... though sexless... Barbie. Feminists objecting to the bimbo image were appeased by various career Barbies: an astronaut, a surgeon, "Firefighter Barbie" and a Barbie... with a lap-top computer which can actually be connected to a child's real word processor... Mattel let... plans for the next Barbie... out of the bag last week... "Biker Barbie" will come complete with leather jacket and a monster Harley Davidson – likely to get Ken horribly over-excited. Earlier in this over-eventful year for Barbie, Mattel came up with what it regarded as a coup de grace in the caring society: "Share-a-Smile Becky" is the latest addition to Barbie's miasma of saccharin relatives and friends – whizzing about in a bright pink wheelchair. But there's a hitch: Becky cannot visit her friend because Barbie's "Dream House" has no wheelchair access ramp... But Becky has a great figure, great face, great hair, great legs and great attitude. "Fat Barbie" is still a way off.

...FAT is a growth industry. Those who have squeezed through the cracks in their diets are demanding to be catered for. No more are the fuller-of-figure being forced to wear cheerfully coloured dresses that do a good imitation of two-[person] pup tents. They are sick of being treated as asexual and unintelligent. They're standing up for their rights – and manufacturers, advertisers and media are listening. They realise it may be possible to, literally, live off the fat of this land. A reader survey by the new fashion and lifestyle magazine *Bella*, which caters to "plus-size [gals]" found its audience – aged mainly between 36 and 55 and wearing size-20 clothing – has a healthy average income of nearly \$40,000 a year. Obviously there is potential for the fuller figured to fatten a few wallets. During the past three years the number of retailers selling... fashion clothing in sizes larger than 14 has more than doubled. Most are in Auckland, where the number has ballooned... to about 40 stores now. Christchurch has gone from three to around seven... As a result... [a] photographer... has set up Models Plus, N[Z]'s only agency specialising in larger [gals, and] eventually hopes to start touring catwalk shows around the country. It's not just the fashion industry paying attention to our larger citizenry. [An Aucklander]... has started organising Big Sister Bali Tours, holidays just for plus-sizers. Also this year, the Body Shop cosmetics chain store imported its Self Esteem Revolution campaign. It's led by a chubby version of a Barbie doll known as Rubenesque Ruby who advocates positive body image. Posters featuring her read... "Celebrate yourself and others will follow". Even Mattel's Barbie doll is joining in. Her impossibly perfect curves will alter during the next few years to possess a slightly thicker waist and smaller breasts. The toy's maker say it has nothing to do with any desire for political correctness...

Food for thought on the body 'beautiful'... The trend is already showing signs of waning but The Body Shop founder... for one, will be glad to see the back of it. [The founder] even has a phrase for the super-thin super-models who are being made up to look as though they have been badly beaten or smacked out of their minds on drugs: "glum cow disease." The internationally renowned business[person] flew in to NZ this week to talk to staff and lecture audiences in Auckland and Wellington on business ethics. At a business breakfast... yesterday, [the founder] could not resist taking a swipe at the beauty industry, which [the founder] has criticised for years for its use of animal-tested products and for what [the founder] sees as unrealistic images of [her own sex]. A recent campaign featuring a far-from-slim Barbie-style doll... enraged... Mattel. [The founder] admitted there were now "tense discussions"... over the issue. Posters featuring the doll... have been displayed in The Body Shop's 13 NZ stores... but anyone wanting to buy the doll will be disappointed... the image was computer-generated, and the company had not really thought about making a real... Ruby Rubenesque... [NZ and AUS] have been two of the most successful countries for The Body Shop over the past year... both sales and profits increased 5[%] – a bigger increase than any other region. But don't expect to see native plants included in Body Shop products just yet. Three years ago, the company talked with local Maori about using manuka, or teatree, oil in the chain's skin and haircare products. [The founder] said yesterday that the idea had come to nothing, partly because teatree was readily available overseas, but also because the people [the founder] was talking to did not seem overly enthusiastic about the idea.

...[the User didn't] realise how closely her friend had come to resemble her until one day, while shopping together, they picked out the same dress and an assistant asked if they were twins. [The User], who grew up in Ohio is 42. Her friend... a legal secretary from London, is only 29. Their Barbie-doll look is largely the creation of their plastic surgeon. In the past [9 years, the elder twin] has spent \$140,000 on 27 operations, including two nose jobs, an eyelift... [3] facelifts, breast implants and a reduction, and a procedure that required her jaw to be sawn apart and secured with titanium pins to reduce the jut of her chin. [The younger twin] saw her on television, liked the look and sought her advice. Two operations costing \$15,000 gave her almost identical features... put... down to the surgeon's style rather than a deliberate plan. "[The surgeon] has a favourite profile [it] likes to create..." According to [the elder twin], no fewer than six [gals] have become virtual clones of her through the same surgical techniques. Their similarity is the extreme manifestation of a startling trend[that includes a 'Beverly Hills clinic which specialises in turning people into the mirror-image of their favourite star' (this may enable them to gain work as the star's 'double, like the person hired to be 007's stand in on *Die Another Day*', or as celebrity lookalikes – thereby taking work from the people paid to imitate stars they naturally look like; surprisingly, when one star 'couldn't make it to a galpal's recent birthday bash due to a previous engagement, it did the next best thing – hired her "twin" from a special Hollywood agency that specialises in celebrity doubles!)]]. Little more than a decade ago, a mere handful of "aesthetic" cosmetic surgeons were operating in Britain. There are now about 300, and the number of... [Brits] submitting to the knife, laser and suction hose has soared to 65,000 a year. Whether this trend is the symptom of healthy self-esteem or an increasingly obsessive preoccupation with superficial image, nobody has given greater impetus to the "plastic fantastic" revolution than [the 42-year-old]. An artist, photographer, socialite and rock singer in her time, [the 42-year-old] now devotes herself to a commercial advisory service on cosmetic surgery. While conceding [it] looks "bimboesque"... the... [42-year-old] is keen to emphasise her IQ of 148, membership of Mensa and success in business. [The elder twin] embarked on her own transformation after the death of her father, who... gave her little affection but left her enough money to seek out the best surgeons. The look [it] created was based partly on Leonardo da Vinci's theory of the classically proportioned face. [It] also wanted the... slim figure of a teenager which... would make her irresistible to [guys]. The strategy clearly worked. [The 42-year-old] delights in the story of a Romanian baron who ended their brief romance 20 years ago when some of his friends compared her jutting chin to that of Punch. [The baron] wooed her again after failing at first to recognise the "new [Punch]"... But as... the... [42-year-old] braces herself for a fourth facelift, [it] might be wise to realise that not even her looks can last for ever, and the style [it] has created may not endure. As... a leading surgeon, explains, trends change. "I see former models who had Marilyn Monroe bobbed noses done in the 1960s. Now they're coming to me and asking for their original nose back." ...Next[week], the computer quest... to create the... world's most beautiful face.

...MY NIECE fronted up the other morning with a thick pile of scientific papers. "My parents should have given me plastic surgery," [my niece] stormed. "Would have been far more useful than a good education." Her mid-20s' crisis was triggered by new research from the University of Queensland, where [a]psychologist... showed that we consider a beautiful face is actually a symmetrical one. The visually balanced tend to do better than the facially irregular. The guinea pigs for [the psychologist's] work were a group of identical twins. Judges rated them for attractiveness and, more often than not, those deemed good-looking had the best match between their left and right sides. I explained how beauty was in the eye of the beholder. In the remote highlands of Papua New Guinea... platinum blond hair evokes images of dead grass. And as for... breasts – blokes prefer them long and pointy up there. "Yeah right, uncle. I'll remember that on my next expedition. But how do you explain this lot?" The first report... was a study showing that more attractive kids tend to find it easier to make friends... Another study... was... the crooks-and-plastic-surgeon paper. Facial reconstruction was found to be more successful in preventing criminals from returning to prison than social and vocational rehabilitation were. "Okay looks may offer some advantages. But what sort of personality are these spoiled pretty boys and girls going to end up with?" I asked. The answer was in front of my nose. People who are beautiful on the outside are also lovelier on the inside. Even as youngsters they're far less aggressive... So if you're looking for someone to father or mother your children, steer clear of the symmetrically-challenged.

...[a] sassy... member of the *Melrose* cast... is hooked on... the lip-plumping procedure... [of] collagen injections, and her super-swollen lips are the alarming proof... Now her much-talked-about oversized lips have become ultra-sensitive and one side of her mouth is much bigger than the other.

...a 24-year-old New Jersey resident... suffered from scoliosis, or severe curvature of the spine, until [it] had a rod implanted in his back several years ago. The rod stopped him from working out to get the body [it] wanted, so ...[the New Yorker]... flew to Beverly Hills to have... pectoral implant[s]... His reaction to his new look? "Completely ecstatic. People have noticed I have a chest. When they ask if I have been working out, I just say, 'Yes, I joined a gym'." ...Being flat-chested in Hollywood has always driven would-be starlets to the plastic surgeon. However, it is no longer only [small-breasted, small-minded gals] who are desperately seeking surgery. Years ago, [guys] would send away to Charles Atlas for his exercise equipment. In Hollywood today though, a [guy] who wants to develop his chest is more likely to seek out a qualified physician, go under the knife and... after a couple of weeks rest, face the world with a new set of pecs. In fact, pectoral implants are the fastest growing sector of plastic surgery in America... A[n]... actor, who got his new chest two months ago, says the implants have helped him get roles, but... warns that choosing the right surgeon is the key to the operation's success... The operation takes place under a general anaesthetic, beginning with a three centimetre cut under the armpit. Through the opening, [the surgeon] inserts three tapered pieces of silicone, each about seven centimetres long, under the existing chest muscle. These are then fanned out to simulate the natural contours of the chest. Because the patient's own tissue encapsulates the implants, holding them in place, there is no danger of the silicone moving... The operation takes about 90 minutes and costs around a mere \$15,000. There are now an estimated... 3000 [US guys] walking around with brand new "twin pecs". Most of this surgery has been carried out for amateur bobybuilders. A... spokes[person] for the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, says the operation is considered safe. However... the implants could shift over time in some cases, if the person is very active. Other doctors caution that the procedure hasn't been proven safe over the long-term.

...[a NZ lawyer says a] court ruling in the U[S] is a positive step for [gals] seeking compensation for problems caused by breast implants... But... it did not speed up the litigation brought by about 1600 [NZers from amongst the 'estimated more than 5000 gals in the country who have had

implants’]... In the first class-action trial over silicone breast implants, a Louisiana jury has found against Dow Chemical Co. The jury ruled that Dow was negligent in testing silicone for use in human implants, withheld information and made misleading statements about safety. But it did not rule on whether the implants cause disease. That stage of the trial begins [in five weeks]. Dow Chemical owns half of Dow Corning Corp, the largest maker of breast implants... Dow Corning filed for bankruptcy in 1995, when a proposed [\$NZ6.75 billion] global settlement of implant claims involving all [43] manufacturers fell through... The verdict was the first stage in a complicated legal process aimed at winning damages for 1800 [US gals]. But Dow Chemical contends that the ruling applied to only eight of the [claimants] and has asked for another court to rule on that point.

...[NZers] taking legal action over silicone breast implants have filed objections to a settlement offer made by Dow Corning... The \$US2.4 billion... settlement offer is part of a plan to bring the company out of bankruptcy and would apply to 150,000 [gals in the US] and 50,000 others worldwide.

...A settlement has been reached in a lawsuit brought by 11 [gals] against Bristol-Myers Squibb over allegedly defective silicone gel breast implants. The settlement was announced in [the] Brooklyn Federal Court... but the amount the [complainants] received was kept confidential.

...With all her efforts to stay young for [her] hubby... and keep their love alive, [an actor] must be exhausted. It’s a wonder [the actor] finds time to make movies between setting up romantic weekends to celebrate special anniversaries, buying her [hubby] costly works of art such as a Picasso painting, and checking in for dollups of cosmetic surgery[that have made her look worse, not better – if I was the actor, I’d be suing my surgeon!

...‘Though the “cosmetologists” of Beverly Hills consider it heresy to say so, expensive beauty treatments can make you look older. If they don’t want anyone to find this out, then they should come up with a way to keep the Picasso-buying actor at home. Recent pictures of the 45-year-old reveal a gal whose essential good looks are caught up in a no-win battle with her beauty treatments. Her forehead is too smooth, her lips are plump but oddly misshapen, while her skin looks reddened and patchy. There is a weary look too in her eyes, and a strange dissonance between those parts of her face that have been “fixed” and those allowed to take their own natural course. The odd thing is that only a few months ago the actor was vowing to give up her very public struggle to look 10 years younger.’ Incidentally, the person] who works at the Premananda Memorial Leprosy Hospital in Calcutta, arrived in N[Z] on Sunday to promote the work of the worldwide Leprosy Mission which has several branches in this country. [The Indian doctor] is also here to learn about plastic surgery procedures that will help to reduce the deformities of lepers... [Photos of the Indian doctor] with two of the world’s most famous [gals] belie the behind-the-scenes work that goes on in the battle to help people with leprosy... [The Indian doctor] met the Princess of Wales in 1992 when [Di] visited the leprosy hospital where [it] has worked for the past 20 years[, and the doctor] had ongoing contact with the late Mother Teresa... Now aged 48, [the doctor] works at the Calcutta hospital part-time and spends the rest of the year co-ordinating surgery and treatments for leprosy sufferers around India. While around 500,000 of his countryfolk have leprosy, only 20 cases have been diagnosed in N[Z]. Leprosy for him, is not posing with sick children for photographs – it is about relieving pain and reducing deformities. “Most of the patients try to hide their deformity... Any treatment gives importance to appearance and function.” ...Much of his surgical work is to help people with drop foot... and glove fingers...

Finger on the pulse... [The] practical side of perfume is explored by [the NZ Herald]... “ODOURS have a power of persuasion stronger than that of words, appearances, emotions or will. The persuasive power of an odour cannot be fended off, it enters into us like breath into our lungs, it fills us up, imbues us totally.” (From *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer*...). You want to buy a new perfume and you want it to suit you. The last one you bought, at horrendous expense[(‘gland cells in the nectaries of flowers produce fragrant oils, or attars, that are blended with other ingredients to make perfumes; it takes many thousands of pounds of flowers to produce an ounce of flower oil – this is one reason for the high cost of perfumes’)], has been down-graded to a mere ornament. It smells great in the bottle and great on your best friend, but it changes into something weird and unpleasant as soon as it touches your skin. You’re too annoyed about the whole situation even to be gracious and give the perfume to your best friend. This is what you need to do. Sashay confidently up to the perfume counter. Do not allow yourself to be intimidated by the attendants, those overly-maquilled maidens with glossy pony-tails and pseudo nurse uniforms. Tell them you are looking for a new perfume for yourself, and tell them of any previous perfume successes. They can then work out the group that fell into – oriental, floral or citrus, for example – and suggest something along those lines. Sniff-test no more than three a visit sprayed on to sample cards, and if there are one or two you like then have a sample sprayed on each wrist... or inside your elbow. Allow 10 minutes for the scent and your skin to develop a meaningful relationship before making your decision. If your skin is sensitive and you’ve had problems with perfume before, [an] Auckland dermatologist... recommends leaving a test patch on your forearm for two days, covered with a sticking plaster. “Many people have reactions to perfumes, either a stinging sensation which happens immediately... or one of several forms of dermatitis, hives, or multi water blisters. That will usually show within two days of using the product, but it can take months or years. And then it can be very difficult to track down what’s actually causing the problem.” Most [gals] also use several perfumed skin-care products, which can confuse the issue... (Even hypo-allergenic products, which may appear scent-less, often have a masking scent to cover the fatty smell of the base.) These products may contain up to 20 ingredients, many of which are potential allergens – perfume is not the only culprit... some [gals] with sensitive skin may be fine with perfume until they go out into the sunlight. Then they may get blisters immediately or over several years a dusky pigmentation may develop on the skin, especially on the sides of the neck or cheeks. It ought to be enough to put us off using any cosmetic which we haven’t freshly whipped up in our own kitchens from ingredients harvested in our own organic gardens. But most of us will never have a single hive or watery blister from perfume – and who’s got the time for crushing rose petals these days? Now that you’ve chosen your perfume: Wear it on pulse points and on the nape of the neck, but not on your throat – the skin is too delicate. Keep the bottle out of heat and light, tucked away in a drawer or in its box if you must display it. Use it regularly and the last spray will be as delicious as the first. Don’t expect it to last more than, say, 18 months. If someone is offering to buy you a gift of perfume, ask for body lotion, talc or shower gel from your favourite perfume range. Layering makes the scent last longer.

...PERFUME has always been a special gift for a [gal] and now it can be just as special for a... [guy]. The] cosmetic manager at Smith & Caughey in Newmarket, s[ays his s]taff will take the time to help you make the right choice for the [guy] in your life. An Aramis gift set, exclusive to Smith & Caughey, is a 100ml bottle of eau de toilette priced at \$98 and comes with a superb tortoiseshell rollerball desk pen... Another exclusive... is a Clinique Daily Skin Essentials gift set... great buying at \$62... With greater awareness of the effects of sun on the skin, the major cosmetic houses have developed a range of products for [guys], often fragrance-free. Lab Series by Aramis is very popular. When making a purchase you can join the Lab Series VIP Club or why not give a gift voucher for a Lab Series facial in... [the] discreet beauty therapy room upstairs in the... Newmarket store... According to... Clinique... “You can never have enough quality product for your skin. Skin care has no age barrier. Whether you are 16 or 80 a gift like this is going to encourage you to take better care.” The Newmarket and Queen St stores[also] have quality shaving sets in wood, gold and chrome. Teamed with a magnificent shaving brush (from \$20 to \$200) they not only make a lasting gift but a lovely accessory to your bathroom.

...*Perfume: a fashion accessory...* PERFUME is a classic... gift... Days are gone where you would only wear one fragrance, according to... [the] cosmetic and fragrance buyer at Smith & Caughey in Newmarket. “[Gals] wear different fragrances for different occasions now.” ...[nowadays t]he major houses put together gift sets offering very good value... For that very special gift Estee Lauder has brushed 9-carat gold zodiac powder compacts, one for each star sign. At \$100 you are buying a collectable piece of artwork which is practical, beautiful and exclusive to Smith & Caughey... Another really fun idea... [is] a sizzling Hydra Mousse which literally fizzes on the skin giving a calming cooling effect... in summer.

...The bizarre cosmetic secrets of the supermodels and the Hollywood stars are being exposed by one of their own: ...a fashion model and television chat show host. Her book, *The World's Best Kept Beauty Secrets*, has sold more than 100,000 copies in the U[S] and three publishers are vying for world wide publishing rights. After 30 years on the catwalk, [the author] has compiled a compendium of tips that sound like an initiation rite in a girls' dormitory. Puffed eyes in the morning? Rub some haemorrhoid cream around the lids. Dirt in the pores? Mix some porridge to use as an exfoliant... [or mix] sugar with a little olive oil... One strange tip was passed on by... the wife of [the Rolling Stones' singer who] rubs lard over her body to avoid stretch marks... [A couple of ancient] actress sisters would take a banana and allow it to turn black and full of potassium before putting it on their face as a mask. Then they would put it in an old bra and wear it to firm the breasts... "[One sister] told me, 'Darling, [guys] love breasts. No boobies, no rubies.' And [the sister] wore a lot of jewellery." ...[a] supermodel uses her coffee grounds to massage her legs to... get rid of cellulite... Hair lacking lustre? ...reach for the Smirnoff: A rinse of vodka adds shine... [T]he hair stylist on the programme... *Friends*... uses a special concoction of 30 mashed aspirin in a bottle of shampoo to prevent dandruff in... [Rachel's hair. The author] claims people are far better off going to the supermarket than the cosmetic counter when they have a problem with their appearance[– a piece of advice which would seem to be supported by the 'AUSn researchers studying the effectiveness of anti-ageing creams containing AHAs who found one that retailed for over \$100 which had ingredients costing 50c, and many were no more effective than moisturisers because the active ingredient wasn't present in a high enough concentration.] "The make-up industry hates me but I am sick of people being ripped off. They think they have to go and spend all this money when famous people are using home-based concoctions taken from the... refrigerator... The stars cannot talk about this because many of them are under contract to leading cosmetics companies, but I can. I have been my own guinea pig and tried all these secrets myself and they work." ...[the author also claims to have] discovered that some salons charging expensive fees for "herbal wraps" using mud from the Dead Sea were actually using a formula created from cat litter... "...I have worked with the most fabulous celebrities who swear by [this] kitty litter facial, including top make-up artists. Although they love this facial, they know that their clients may be a little reticent to try such an unorthodox facial. So they pour the kitty litter into an attractive container. You might want to do the same at your house to avoid strange looks." ...Skin care experts in Britain... were... wary of allergic reactions and urged caution before applying untested lotions [– especially] to the face... [However, a] consultant dermatologist at the Royal Free Hospital in London said: "...These things do cleanse pores so there is a logic to it. As for haemorrhoid cream, it does have some effect on blood vessels but as far as I am aware there is no proven value in applying it to the skin."

...British [gals] 've found a "miracle cure" for wrinkles by using creams for treating piles... [M]odels... use it to give an instant lifting effect ...for... fashion shows. So great is the demand for anti-pile ointment that pharmacists have reported the trend to the National Pharmaceutical Association.

...[in the] belly of a society mansion, afternoon tea is being served behind drawn blinds. The [gals] of this opulent Remuera, Auckland, coffee clique are gathered in the half-light of the room focusing intently on a slide show being screened on to a wall. This particular slide show isn't boring snapshots of a family holiday in Tunisia... these are slides of... faces – before and after. We are at a virtual plastic surgery Tupperware party. A dozen or so [gals] float about sipping hot drinks and admiring surgical enhancements as they would a lettuce crisper. "And here, in this one," Q-Med's product manager... says [while flicking] to the next slide, "you can see how [the patient] looks after the chemical peel." The [gals] "ohhh", and "ahhh" appreciatively as [the product manager] runs through the list of treatments and therapies: There are the dermal fillers to "polyfills" in those wrinkles and furrows, including Collagen and a newcomer called hyaluronic acid... Both are temporary, requiring top-ups after about six months. (Approx. cost: \$200-\$500)... there is sclerotherapy for erasing veins, the Surgitron for removing warts, moles, "lumps and pumps"... (Cost: Less than \$100 for a mole)... Botox which paralyses isolated face muscles thus preventing the face from forming wrinkles from, say, frowning... Injections are required every six to 12 months. (Approx. cost: \$200)... and there are the chemical peels – generally using TCA acid – which peel off the surface of the skin leaving it as pink and new as a baby's bottom... Skin will look sunburnt afterward and take 10 days to heal. (Approx. cost: \$150)... [Laser resurfacing] emits an invisible light beam that can be aimed at minor lines and wrinkles to erase them. The skin will feel sunburnt for one or two days and takes 10 days to heal. (Cost is dependent on procedure, around \$3000 for the entire face)... [Lipo-sculpture transfers] fat... to plump out hollows or wrinkles. Your own fat can be taken from another part of the body, such as the abdomen, spun out using centrifugal force to eliminate everything but the fat cells, and re-injected where needed. Cost [is] dependent on procedure... [Tumescent is] where large amounts of fluid, which includes a numbing anaesthetic, are injected into the body as the fat is removed. (Approx. cost: \$2000 for initial treatment, although it can cost far more.) [Ultrasonic is] liposuction in which ultrasound "loosens up" the fat, making it easier to suck it out of the body. This technique is said to make body sculpting procedures easier and more precise. It is more costly than traditional liposuction... [The product manager packs] away the projector and wheel[s] out the surgical chair... "[My demonstration patient] here is over from A[US]. We're going to freshen her up with a little hyaluronic acid." ...[the patient] reclines in the chair as [a surgeon] dons surgical gloves and fills his syringe... [The surgeon] confides... to the party... "I can't say I like doing this sort of thing,"... his colleague... attempts to arch an eyebrow in agreement – but... can't right now. Botox injections have paralysed the [colleague's] brow muscles and [the colleague] can no longer look up. "I can only see this far," [the colleague] demonstrates for me, raising his eyes to the curtain pelmet. "But I can still use my neck," [the colleague] jokes, rocking his head back. [The surgeon and his colleague] aren't used to doing surgery as performance art in a party environment; they prefer the peace and quiet of their practice rooms... Still, this event is for a good cause – the doctors are members of the Appearance Medicine Group, and this outing is an attempt to raise the profile of their newly established society. The [group, which] consists of GPs who aim to specialise in the superficial – the science of beauty... [–] is positioning itself in a market gap somewhere between the beautician and the plastic surgeon... They are motivated by the fact that the market for services such as Collagen injections and chemical peels is skyrocketing... Once the domain of... movie stars, plastic surgery is becoming commonplace among average [gals]... Traditional plastic surgeons also report a rise in clientele. "All I can say is that it is an extremely, extremely, extremely busy time for me right now," says [one Auckland] plastic surgeon. The reason for the increase in business is twofold, [it] says. "There seem to be more people out there seeking improvements as people see new techniques, and some of the old misgivings about plastic surgery seem to have disappeared... it's just a trend as the culture becomes more sophisticated." ...America, of course, is the heart and hotbed of plastic surgery. It is also the place where things can, and frequently do, go horribly wrong. After 18 related deaths, California finally regulated its cosmetic industry. Yet even laws don't make for a foolproof setup. There was the recent case of Tammara Cotton who popped into an LA doctor for a spot of "lunch-time lipo" using the tumescent... technique. [Tammara] was dead soon after... Tammara... virtually drowned in her own body fluids. At the time of death her body had been bloated with 19 litres of fluid... Doctors... stress all these techniques can go wrong if the wrong person is doing the job. In N[Z], the cosmetic surgery industry is unregulated and is likely to remain so.

...Keeping up appearances... THEY remove... wrinkles, buff... lips and send varicose veins packing, but now the doctors who fix the imperfections are meeting to fix their own. For the first time, 15 A[US]n and six N[Z] doctors practising what they call "appearance medicine" have joined forces to decide on a code of practice for their industry. At an inaugural conference in Auckland this weekend, the doctors looked at operating standards, treatment claims, new treatment evaluations and ethical dilemmas affecting their field. The doctors previously worked under their own guidelines but decided to form the Appearance Medicine Society of Australasia... Appearance medicine, which has been available in N[Z] for less than a year, describes a range of treatments which are less severe than cosmetic surgery but more intensive than beauty therapy... The society maintains its techniques are safer, more affordable and supported by N[Z] psychiatrists. But... the... Medical Association chair[person]... who had not heard of appearance medicine, said [it] was concerned about the ethics of such surgery and whether there would be adequate follow-up care.

...“A bush girl” [from Ngaruawahia has taken] me very vigorously to task for a little harmless bit of pleasantry as to the country yokels and the bush girls making their appearance in the town for the... holidays and how they comported themselves. My fair correspondent shows so much spirit that [I feel it] is entitled to make her defence of her class: Dear Mercutio – in reading your last Saturday’s contribution, my indignation was aroused at the pitying way you spoke of the country yokels’ visit to town and “how the bush girls were easily picked out through their disregard of the fashion plates.” Now, sir, as one of the poor bush girls, I would like to tell you that I am sure we would all be very sorry to think that we were only able to study the fashion sheets and dress accordingly. Where would our work go? We most humbly apologise for overstepping the bounds of prudence by “gazing at the shop windows and flattening our precious little noses against the window panes.” We could easily have avoided the latter had we wanted them flattened as there are always plenty of Maoris handy who would be glad [to oblige]... Could those who study the fashion plates do much else? Last week I had occasion to go to Auckland and from what I can gather all these city girls converse about was dress and mashers – quite nonsensical to a country girl. For hospitality the so-called “country yokel” stands far superior to the city swell.

...AFTER a month of planning [one city swell] was determined to succeed at the *Sunday Star-Times* Fashion in the Field competition... at [the Ellerslie racecourse] on Friday... “But when I got here and saw the other girls – and they all looked so beautiful – I didn’t think I had a chance,” said... [the] sometime model who won the under-25 category at race days in 1994 and 1995 and who eventually claimed the Supreme Award [this year]... There was elegance and glamour aplenty as every one of more than 300 contestants catwalked before the judges, three fashionable A[US]ns – a) make-up artist... clothing designer... and talent agency director... The trio had the difficult task of narrowing the field down to eight finalists. The Auckland finalists were then joined by four regional winners, who had been named best-dressed at their own provincial race day. There was stiff competition. Among the 12 was... [someone] from Levin who won thousands of dollars worth of prizes at the Melbourne Cup in November[, and] wore that same outfit – an aubergine suit with avocado trim... There was also mother-daughter rivalry... [The daughter] had won at the Te Rapa races in an outfit designed by her mother... to automatically go into the finals in Auckland. So as not to compete with her[daughter, the mother] entered the Ellerslie Classic [Gal] category – but ended up a candidate for the Supreme Award anyway. It was the other way around for [another mother and daughter. The daughter] did not enter this year. Instead, [it] brought her mother a stunningly elegant black and white Moschino suit which eventually won the Classic... prize. The selection of... [the] overall winner was unanimous. “We noted [the city swell immediately. The city swell] looked comfortable and had chosen the outfit perfectly. It wasn’t too old for her, nor was it too flirty[– although, we confess, the city swell] reminded us very much of [the prostitute] in the movie *Pretty [Gal]*.” When the Supreme Award winner had]... collected off her first bet on the first race... [it] told her friends this might be her lucky day. [The winner] was right... and... drove away in a new \$54,000 Rover MGF convertible...

The arrest in Malaysia of three Muslim beauty contestants who paraded in swimsuits has touched a sensitive nerve in a country whose official religion is Islam but whose laws are secular. The move occurred against the backdrop of a controversial government ruling that a course on Islamic civilisation would be made mandatory in universities... The beauty competition row erupted when religious officials raided the Miss Malaysia Petite contest finals in Selangor... and arrested the trio before TV cameras and a gasping audience. [The part]-time models... were fined \$NZ225 each. The law against “indecent” dressing in public was passed by Selangor in 1995, but was not widely known. It had not been acted on until the arrests... Muslims themselves are split over the... ruling. “Muslims should support the action as a way to guard the purity of Islam and a step to stop social ills...” [one] student... was quoted as saying in *Harakah*, the newspaper of opposition Islamic party PAS. Others, including the [PM’s] outspoken daughter, were livid. “What worries me is, what next? What constitutes indecency in Muslim [gals]? ...Excuse me, but did the Taliban infiltrate our country?” ...Certain Malaysian government leaders were embarrassed at what they saw as a setback to years of hard work convincing people at home and abroad Islam was a moderate religion.

...A Muslim beauty who won the Miss Croatia title this month and then was stripped of it amid allegations of religious prejudice, has failed to regain it in a rerun of the original beauty contest. The same jury that chose [the Muslim beauty], aged 22, for the title two weeks ago ditched her when asked to judge again in favour of the 17-year-old former runner-up... [In local news, l]egal threats are flying and confusion is rampant as two [people] are paraded as the country’s most beautiful [gal]. In one corner is... Miss N[Z]. And in the other is... the Miss Counties representative in last year’s Miss N[Z] contest. Miss Counties] did not figure in the top five but has been “given” the title of Miss World N[Z]. The troubles began when a new promoter took over the Miss World franchise in N[Z] from the organisers of the Miss N[Z] contest, and chose [Miss Counties]. And when Miss Counties was identified in a television interview this week as Miss [World NZ, Miss NZ] was furious... “I’m just trying to build up the profile [before the Miss Universe competition...] but it is very hard when someone else is going around taking the credit.” ...[Miss Counties] got the chance to go to the Miss World pageant in India last November after [a]model agent... took over the... franchise. [The model agent claimed to have chosen Miss Counties because it] fitted the criteria for the Miss World pageant perfectly... “...The girl who goes to Miss World has to be intelligent. Miss World is beauty with a purpose.” [Miss Counties], who holds a degree in dairy science, said people would get used to the idea of there being two distinct titles[and added that] being Miss World N[Z] had been “wonderful.” “I have had a chance to travel and meet a lot of people,”... Next year there would be a full contest to find a Miss World N[Z].

...NZ’s runner-up Miss World has left a dodgy start to her modelling career far behind. International modelling offers are pouring in for [the NZer], who came second to Miss India in the Miss World pageant in the Seychelles at the weekend. It is the kind of future the 18-year-old could only dream about two years ago when, as an aimless Waikato teenager, [it] went to Christchurch looking for a job. Her proud dad, [a]Te Aroha laundry owner... said her modelling career kicked off with a dodgy work proposition from a photographer [the teen] met in a Christchurch chemist shop. When [the teen checked the photographer’s credentials through a local model agency, the agency made an offer of their own... [The NZer] beat 84 others to take the £5000... runner-up title... [Her agent, the] Spotlight Model Agency director... said the second placing was ideal – it would carry prestige and cement her lucrative modelling career, without tying her up to a year of Miss World commitments... Her outfit by [a Christchurch]-based fashion designer... also won the best gown section... N[Z]’s only other runner-up in the Miss World contest was... in 1963... [NZ’s Miss World] came third... in 1990... The country’s only other major international beauty contest winner... took the Miss Universe title in 1983.

...Rumours that Miss World would lose her title because of connections with two of the contest judges were rife in the Seychelles yesterday... Observers in the Indian Ocean islands where the beauty pageant was held over the weekend said that Miss India might be forced to step down in favour of the runner-up... But... the organiser of Miss World N[Z]... was surprised to hear there were any doubts about whether [Miss India] would keep the crown. “Perhaps I should be delighted for the N[Z] girl to step into the position... but Miss India was the true winner in my opinion.” ...Miss [India]... works for BMG Crescendo[, which]... is linked to the main sponsor of the 1997 Miss World, the Dolphin Group, whose chief executive... was one of the judges. Another judge, the former President of Seychelles... was described in the Government newspaper *Nation* as a “special associate” of the Dolphin Group... Meanwhile, N[Zers won’t] see the event on t[v] because neither TVNZ nor TV3 bought the programme.

...A once shy and awkward Waikato teenager has fulfilled her dream of becoming a beauty sensation... [The] runner-up in the Miss World pageant... drifted through... three Waikato high schools before dropping out in the fifth form to take up modelling work in Christchurch. After two years under the tutelage of Spotlight Model Agency... [the Waikato teenager] was crowned Miss World N[Z] two months ago]. Newspaper and magazine reports at the time labelled her a rebellious urchin, sent to stay with an aunt in the South Island while... [sorting] herself out. Her father... denies the claims, which... have hurt the family of five... [His eldest daughter] spent the first term of her fifth-form year at Te Aroha college. The college’s principal... said that during a couple of discussions in his office after her outspokenness had landed her in trouble with her teachers, [the

laundry-owner's daughter] told him it did not matter how [well the daughter] got on at school because [the 5th-former] knew there was a successful modelling career ahead of her.

...More than 100 family, friends, well-wishers and awe-struck young girls greeted the... Miss World runner-up... at the airport... in Christchurch yesterday... The [first] things on her agenda were a McDonald's meal and a walk by the beach with... her boyfriend... [The runner-up] was in a way relieved not to have won the Miss World title because... [it would have meant putting] her modelling career on hold for a year. But [the runner-up] was prepared... to take over the crown if rumours proved true and the winner... was forced to step down.

...[the girl] just wants to congratulate her big sister for being named the second most beautiful [gal] in the world. But [her big sister] has refused to return her 13-year-old sister's calls and has not spoken to any of her family since [becoming the] runner-up Miss World... at the weekend. "The whole family is just devastated," her father... said last night. They blame the Christchurch model agency who they say has seized control of their 18-year-old daughter and isolated her from the family. But... [her agent] told TV3 last night that... [the] Spotlight Model Agency... had given [the 18-year-old] a fresh start at a low point in her life... The family spat became public yesterday when the beauty queen's mother... arrived back from the Seychelles[and] spoke of her dismay at not being able to speak to her daughter after making the long and expensive journey to the final. [Her eldest daughter] blamed the contest's tight security, but her family believe they are being kept away from her... Last night [her father] pleaded for his daughter to contact the family within the next 36 hours. [The father] said his daughter had a very important decision to make: "Is [my eldest daughter] going to listen to people who are going to be there for her whether [it] loses or succeeds, or is [it] prepared to listen to someone who won't do that?" But [his eldest daughter] said, in reading from a prepared statement on television, that [it] was disappointed her parents had spoken publicly and... urged them to respect her wishes. "I just wish they would want the best for me and appreciate all that [my agent] has done to help me instead of going to the media and causing a lot of corruption."

...[the Miss World runner-up] is being urged to sort out her very public family squabble... An agreement between the contest organisers and [the runner-up] stipulates that her title can be removed if [it] brings the pageant into disrepute... [However, the] founder of the Miss World beauty competition... said from London last night that the runner-up in last week's pageant was unlikely to lose her title. "That really only applies to the winner,"... [The runner-up], and her agent... have bickered all week with the model's family... The model lives with the [agent's] family in Christchurch and goes out with her mentor's son...

The first steps in healing the rift between [a] beauty queen... and her parents may have been taken. [The beauty queen contacted her] parents... on Wednesday but the couple – still reeling from media interest in the spat – are keeping details of the conversation private... The rift between the family hit the headlines late last month after [the beauty queen] became the runner-up Miss World... Until this week [the beauty queen] had ignored appeals from her Waikato family to contact them... including her proud young sister... who... is staying with her grandmother... [Their father] did not know whether [the beauty queen] had yet spoken to her sister... [T]he licence holder for the N[Z] Miss World competition... had not been contacted by [the beauty queen] and did not want to comment.

...[NZ's] Miss World runner-up... has made up with her family and is going home to the Waikato... The beauty queen also says [it] has split with her manager... although... they still communicated professionally and [the beauty queen] continued to have a relationship with... [her former manager's son. The beauty queen] looked in danger of losing her title after a two-day television sideshow last month in which [the model], her mother... and [her manager] slugged it out verbally... "I love my family and they love me, and I am going to visit them... It was a shame that my private life was kind of thrown around all of N[Z]." The beauty queen also said that stories... about her wayward past had been exaggerated.

...[NZ's] premier beauty queen hasn't visited] her family... The... runner-up in Miss World last month, had picked up some lucrative modelling work overseas and needed to save money... However... mum and dad are happy.

...While her parents... issue tearful warnings on television that a crazed killer is on the loose, police and public officials in the affluent city of Boulder, Colorado, insist that no such person exists. It is now more than three weeks since the millionaire... climbed the stairs from his basement with the body of his six-year-old daughter in his arms. Earlier that morning his wife... had discovered a three-page ransom note on the kitchen steps and an empty child's bed upstairs. JonBenet had been thrown into a windowless room... her mouth sealed with masking tape and nylon cord tightened around her neck with a wooden handle. Police had tried the door to the basement while searching the house on Boulder's millionaires' row earlier, but found it jammed. Almost from the beginning it was clear that this was much more than a kidnapping gone horribly wrong. Forensic reports soon revealed that JonBenet had been sexually assaulted, with a number of newspapers reporting that her skull had been fractured. Police first discovered that the ransom note had been torn from a legal note pad in the \$US750,000... house, then, last week, uncovered a draft version in which the author had apparently attempted to disguise his or her handwriting. The ransom demand, for \$US118,000... was oddly precise as well. The cloud of suspicion that hangs over the case stubbornly refuses to clear. But even the most sceptical admit there is nothing to suggest that this is anything other than, as her parents claim, a horrific intrusion into their picture-book family life. In the aftermath of the murder, [JonBenet's grand]mother described the Colorado house where the family has lived since 1991 as a hellhole. "Our friends are as mad as hell," [the grandmother] told a Denver television station. "All America is as mad as hell." So why then have husband and wife retained the services of different high-powered criminal attorneys? They have also hired a private investigator and offered a \$50,000 reward. Above all, why has [JonBenet's father], the president of Access Graphics, a billion-dollar computer equipment subsidiary of Lockheed-Martin, engaged the services of... one of Washington's biggest media consultants and a former spokes[perso]n for the Justice Department. "We are a Christian God-fearing family," a weeping and red-eyed [mother]... insisted to CNN... "We love our children." That love apparently included turning her daughter into a rising star on the child beauty pageant circuit, a bizarre passion of America's Old South, in which little girls, caked with make-up and with elaborately coiffed helmet-hair, pirouette before judges in clothes that suggest a sexuality well beyond their years. Videotapes endlessly replayed on network t[v, which show]... the vulgar pageants where [JonBenet] would parade in a white cowboy hat and matching boots, [have]... gripped America with a blend of heartbreak and revulsion. Not since the day when [a black sports celebrity] fled down the freeways of Los Angeles in his white Ford Bronco has a murder investigation so captured the imagination of the public. The fascination with the case is fed by constant rumour and innuendo.

...Most of the readers who wrote to us about the unusual world of pint-sized beauty pageants... damned the idea of tots' participating in them... [A reader from] Indianapolis, Indiana, stated firmly, "I cannot think of anything less important or good than the values espoused in these events, where contestants are coached to be competitive and self-absorbed. The tapes of poor JonBenet Ramsey are truly disturbing." ...[a reader from] Berkeley, California, agrees that pageants emphasize the wrong values. "It's sad enough that grown[up] gals] are subjected to and pressured by standards of beauty, but that they are being instilled in children so young is heartbreaking." ...[a 12-year-old reader from] Penfield, New York, is also no fan of such contests. "When young kids participate in these pageants... they learn how to be vain, how to put on makeup and strut their stuff. Parents say this improves self-esteem, but I think it inflates the winners' egos and makes the losers feel awful."

...Playmates and mothers are joining forces to make girls as young as nine go on diets in a futile bid for popularity, British researchers said yesterday. Two studies presented to the Third London International Conference on [E]ating Disorders showed that girls who are just a little heavier than their peers are much less popular... Although none of the girls [in the first survey were] clinically obese, and most did not even look fat, the heavier they were, the more likely they were to be on a diet. The second survey showed mothers... who dieted and were concerned about their weight also urged daughters whom they saw as fat to diet. Meanwhile researchers say they may have found the Holy Grail of dieters the world over: a pill that would provide the same metabolic benefits as exercise... but... [don't] break out the chocolate yet... [because] this elusive "exercise

pill[“] could still be years in coming. ■ ‘Dozens of websites that show pictures of anorexics and offer advice on how to starve and what drugs help you lose weight have been closed by an internet service provider. Yahoo! closed the sites this month because the numbers had increased dramatically. But many other similar sites, run by people who have anorexia nervosa, remain on the internet, to the alarm of NZ eating disorders services. Nearly 400 websites worldwide contain hints on how to suppress appetite, what drugs help weight loss, and exercise routines. A coordinator at the Eating Disorder Service in Auckland said secrecy went hand in hand with anorexia, which meant it was difficult to tell how influential the sites were. “There might be times when family would not know if people were accessing these sites or not.” Anorexia was like a psychiatric illness. Overseas figures showed it affected about 1% of the population. Many factors were involved in the complex disorder, including personality, family dynamics, social factors and history. This made it difficult to treat’]...

British researchers say that the brains of young people with anorexia show measurable differences, which could mean there is a biological factor which predisposes people to the illness... London’s Great Ormond Street Hospital found that a number of anorexic children had a reduced blood flow to areas of the brain believed to govern visual self-perception and appetite – the anterior temporal lobes... On average the blood flow was 10[%] less than normal, but in some children it was as much as 30[%] less. “...when we look at ourselves in the mirror, normally we’d see what we really look like. But the abnormality distorts what we see.” Anorexics, who can starve to death, often believe they are too fat even when the scales and their thin bodies say otherwise. Singer Karen Carpenter died of heart failure brought on by anorexia... [The researchers, who presented their] findings to an eating disorders conference this week... hoped the findings could lead to a treatment for anorexia, which afflicts one [gal] in 5000 in Britain and is becoming more common in industrialised countries... But they warned that the studies were very tentative and said a variety of factors could be involved, including genetics... peer pressure... and [‘over-protective mothers – a study by British psychiatrists of girls with the eating disorder showed many of their mothers had been anxious during pregnancy and the child’s early years, and a quarter had had a previous stillbirth or miscarriage (they remained so distressed about the loss of their first child they had difficulties allowing the new one to mature and become independent’)]...

Samantha Kendall died late last month, bringing to an end a tragedy that seemed as inevitable as it was futile... [T]hree years ago, her twin sister... [also died from] anorexia... SAM... was weary of being wheeled out like a circus freak, forever known as the “anorexic twin”. [Sam] was tired, too, of playing piggy in the middle between her mother and grandmother who vied for the limelight her dubious fame brought the family. Most of all... [Sam] was worn out by the stream of experts who pontificated on her condition and debated cures. “Everybody wants to say: ‘I got Samantha Kendall better’ ...I want someone to help me not because I am... [a] celebrity anorexic, but because I’m a girl who is ill... I will probably die from anorexia.” It is exactly two years since... that tragic prophecy... Samantha, like her sister Michaela before her, died weighing less than 31kg. Since the day in 1981 when the 14-year-olds began a race to see who would lose most weight in six weeks, there was a macabre inevitability about how they would end their lives – as emaciated, exhausted, clinically depressed and confused [people] who had lost the will to overcome anorexia. Samantha[’s]... life was a complex meld. [Sam] railed against her celebrity status, yet courted publicity... pleaded from her “death bed” for money to finance a controversial cure in Canada, yet shunned all offers of medical help in Britain... lauded the Canadian’ clinic’s treatment, then accused it of using her as an advertisement to attract patients... [and even swore to] live for her sister, yet starved herself so much that her liver failed. [Sam] had tried every treatment – force feeding, electric shock therapy, medication and counselling. At times [Sam] seemed to be winning and would begin another round of press conferences and photocalls. But her last years were a lingering death played out in public. As one former doctor warned, [Sam] had become addicted to life as an anorexic. “Given the choice between being the most famous anorexic in the world and an ordinary Brummie, it’s a difficult choice for her,”... When the Kendall’s were chubby seven-year-olds their grandmother... nicknamed them “the trifle twins” because of their fondness for sticky puddings. “Perhaps that’s why mum and dad left, because we are fat,” Samantha told her twin. When the girls were born their father was in prison for burglary and by the time they were four [their father] had deserted their mother... Unable to cope, [their mother] farmed them out to her mother, who brought them up. By her own admission, [their mother] had little maternal instinct. “I’m not very stuck on babies... I have always had an affinity with animals.” Like many anorexics, the twins’ earliest experiences were dominated by comments on their size. At 11, when both weighed 70kg, Sam... recalled a visit to her aunt who said: “Oh my God, they’re bloody enormous. What are we going to do with them?” An uncle weighed them, saying: “God, girls, look at the size of your backsides. It’s disgusting.” By 14 and weighing 76kg, they were singing with their mother at the... clubs where [their mother] performed. Inevitably, attention was drawn to their size. When a boy called Michaela a “fat mess” [Michaela] hit him. Believing they would win affection if they were thinner, they began their dieting pact. Each lost 19kg in six weeks, eating just two boiled eggs and a Crunchie bar a day. Flattering remarks followed and the twins revelled in the attention they received. If we become thinner, they reasoned, we will be even more popular... Last week 30-year-old Samantha’s ashes were buried beneath a magnolia tree in her mother’s Birmingham garden – beside the twin whose legacy [Sam] could never shake off. Their pact is now complete... When Samantha died, alone, [her mother] was heartbroken. “Why couldn’t someone have helped them when it all started to go wrong,” [the mother] wept. The likely truth is there probably never was any chance of helping the twins – save excising a childhood that bred physical self-loathing.

...[*HOW I BEAT anorexia* When the girl from Te Puke felt hungry, it would watch somebody else savour her favourite food. If that didn’t make her feel nourished, it would turn to her scrapbook filled with pictures of moreish meals. The girl wasn’t trying to stick to a diet, it was deeply absorbed in anorexia. The girl started dieting at 14, when 65kg. Within a year it was a skeletal 39kg – the average weight of a 10-year-old – and so thin that her natural defences had covered her whole body in hair to keep her warm. Sleeping without several duvets on her mattress gave her bruises, yet lying around was all it had energy for. “I forgot what being hungry was all about. People think anorexia is a physical illness but it’s not, it’s mental. It wasn’t started by peer pressure, it was all about control. It was the only thing I could control without people forcing me to do things and making decisions for me. I could see my bones, I knew I wasn’t fat. It started as a good, healthy diet. I ate fruit and veges and lost a little. People started saying, ‘You look really good,’ so I carried on and lost more weight. When I got down to 58kg I started cutting out anything fattening. Within 3 months I was just eating one piece of fruit or some dry toast and water all day.” To avoid the pressure from her mum, an office administrator, and schoolfriends encouraging her to eat, the girl moved to Rotorua, where it enrolled in a hairdressing course. “When I moved to Rotorua, I had guys dripping off my arms. Then I thought that if I put on weight they wouldn’t want to go out with me.” All the while, her mum was desperately trying to get her to see sense – to no avail. “I had a call from her tutor saying they’d asked her not to come any more, as her being there was upsetting the other students too much. I’d try to entice her to eat, but my daughter got so clever. It would put a mouthful in and chew for ages, but had only eaten one mouthful. I spent \$6000 on dietitians, psychiatrists and psychologists. Drug addicts and alcoholics get so much support, but I didn’t know where to turn. It would have been nice if there was another mum I could relate to.” The daughter agreed to weekly weigh-ins with her doctor. But another trick it used was to drink litres of water shortly before being weighed. One day, doctors called the mother to say her daughter – who was now only 36kg – hadn’t turned up for her weigh-in. “I cried my heart out all the way to Rotorua. I had so much hope this would be a turning point. I wanted them to put her in a unit, but I knew we couldn’t do it without her cooperation. We took her to the unit, but my daughter just looked at me and said, ‘I do not want to stay here, Mum’.” It was only the death of her friend Kirsty Robinson – who a year earlier survived a boating accident that claimed the lives of Kirsty’s father Ross, cousin Tim and their friend John Lim – in a car accident, that made her think about her health and how it was killing herself. The 17-year-old – who was 34kg when it attended Kirsty’s funeral – vowed to stop letting anorexia rule her life, and began eating again. Now, a year on, it is a healthy 60kg and can start planning her future. It has a part-time job as a retail assistant and wants to get into modelling. “It’s hard to get a job because I left school at 15 and have no qualifications. But I finally feel beautiful and I am such a strong person. My personality is awesome. I want to warn others, but nothing I say can help them, it’s got to come from within.” The long-term effects of her anorexia are still

being accessed. "My kidneys are stuffed. There's a chance I won't be able to have children. I didn't have a period for three years. I'm terrified I may never know what it's like to be a mother. I didn't realise the pain I was putting Mum through. Thank goodness Mum stood by me." • Anorexia] and bulimia rates are surging in fashion-conscious Argentina... leading to alarmingly high death rates from eating disorders. "According to recent studies, one out of every 10 teenagers in Argentina is bulimic or anorexic, triple the rate of the U[S. And 9] out of 10 [are girls]," said a report by the National [Gals'] Council released yesterday... Argentina[ha]s... a mortality rate of 10% among victims of serious eating disorders, it said... The report blames the country's "narcissistic or 'barbie-doll' culture" for imposing impossible standards of beauty on adolescent girls. "Dolls used to have the face of little girls; now they look like a miniature version of [a super]model," said... the... organiser of the council's first national seminar on bulimia and anorexia last year... The council said it would seek to encourage a public debate and national policies aimed at altering advertising bias and fashion designs so as to include [girls] of all sizes.

...*Sexless, skeletal slaves to fashion...* IT'S AN indictment of our communal apathy that a cross-dressing cop has to draw attention to the poor deal [gals] get from clothes shops. If a dedicated transvestite can't find the right size frock... what chance has ordinary Ms Kiwi got? ...My cross-dressing contacts tell me that most of the clothes they try on these days are designed for a mythical creature more than 1.8m tall and proportioned like a starving greyhound. The explanation for this blind failure of clothing manufacturers to match supply with demand is on the catwalks and in the magazine photoshoot studios, where couturiers pay handsomely for [models] who look as if they've just staggered through the gates of Belsen into the arms of Allied soldiers in 1945. These skeletal creatures, all with down-turned mouths signalling the fashionable mixture of petulance and personal tragedy, are not even remotely feminine. They are sexless travesties of humanity. Their only significant contribution to the late 20th century is anorexia nervosa, the frightful disease of the mind that turns physically normal young [girls] into compulsive starvelings because their images in the mirrors of suburban bedrooms don't match the photographs airbrushed into glossy magazines. Magazine publishers would not know what you were talking about if you suggested they were being anti-social by throwing practicality out the window and encouraging anorexia. Choosing clothes according to fashion is something some of our fellow humans have always done, unfortunately. It is a mark of a very limited intellect to feel that you can't wear sensible, practical clothes because they are unfashionable. But peer pressure is unrelenting and irresistible.

...Japan's Education Minister reports that the average weight of schoolgirls there has declined for nearly all ages this year, the first such drop in more than 20 years. Officials suspect a growing number of young girls are going on strict diets to look like a bone-thin pop star... [In further news from Japan.] Tokyo is known for sex joints, featuring naked [gals] in acts that range from coy to raunchy. A favourite [Japanese guy] practice is to dine at clubs where sushi is served with a naked [gal] as the platter. But at J.men's, it's [guys – mainly from the US] – who strip to G-strings for the entertainment of Japanese [gals] who come here by the busload, some three or four times a week. "This is the best... I never get tired of coming here," says... a 20-year-old college student who pays the \$42 cover charge as many nights as [possible. The 20-year-old] knows all the dancers by name. "It totally changes my mood. My life is so boring otherwise." J.men's is Tokyo's first [guy] strip joint, and the nightly crowds are proof some Japanese [gals] are sick of sitting at home while their husbands or boyfriends are out on the town... Some of the dancers lean over and kiss [gals] in the audience. Sometimes they drag a shy one onstage for a dance or nuzzle. A hug from a big strapping guy... goes a long way here, judging from the giggly, giddy responses. At no time are the performers completely naked (though they come close). The hook is young [non-Japanese] guys... singing and dancing in decidedly American garb. Besides sports uniforms, sometimes they are in top hat and tails, or full US military uniforms.

...THEY ARE known, for obvious reasons, as screwdrivers. Usually blonde, often tanned and always sleekly beautiful, they are as dedicated to their task as the Formula One drivers they seek to enchant. The drivers' wives call them paddock ponies because they understand the intentions of the glamorous [gals] who waft around the paddock and the hospitality tents of grand prix racetracks. Their aim is to bag a driver, and preferably one who is young and unattached... The ability to speak several European languages helps, and any screwdriver worth her salt knows that Monaco, Argentina and the Italian circuits are the most accommodating to overt glamour. Once inside, the experienced screwdriver is never shy and, as [the experienced screwdriver] knows, if the single-minded drivers don't bite, there... is an even more blatant approach: Slipping the driver a phone number; or pushing a photograph of your naked self (with phone number) under his hotel door. Drivers are not immune to such attention – [a Scottish driver] once signed a girl's pair of knickers while [the screwdriver] was still wearing them. Neither is it unusual for [gals] to be passed from one driver to another, each hero competing for the most glamorous catch as fiercely as [the hero] manoeuvres for the chequered flag... If necessary, they are prepared to share... [A] team owner, recalls two... girlfriends... [of a] flamboyant Brazilian ex-world champion... almost scuffling. "It was a big thing to carry your driver boyfriend's racing helmet as [the driver] came off the track. At one grand prix each girl grabbed a side of his hat and tugged with their teeth clenched. It was hilarious." Last summer, [one girlfriend] watched serenely as a gaggle of luscious [screwdrivers] wriggled around her lover, the Scottish driver... "There are always girls around," [the girlfriend] said with a pretty shrug. "But I trust [my Scot]." Today, however, the blonde and beautiful [girlfriend] is alone after four years of highly public attachment to [the Scot]. With the economy of one accustomed to swift changes of gear, [the Scot] disengaged her in one phone call. Recently, at the San Marino Grand Prix in Imola, another blonde and beautiful model... was "comforting him at the trackside". Now, to suggest that [the model] is just another predatory screwdriver would be unkind and untrue. [The model] works at the London office of IMG, the management company. But there is no doubt that glamorous... [screwdrivers] are an essential part of the intoxicating, dangerous and egotistical world of F1. Risk and sex are always easy partners, and as the sport becomes richer and more high profile, grand prix groupies intent on manoeuvring for pole position are becoming ever more numerous. And as [the Brazilian] once famously observed, grand prix is no place for ugly [gals]... But it's not just the girls who are getting in on the F1 act. Racing's social profile is rising ever higher – last month Britain's *Tatler* magazine endorse[d] motorsport as "the new A-list social priority" – a thrilling successor to polo for the financially well endowed... Growing numbers of the spectating rich, famous and socially elevated is, of course, even more of a pull for the screwdrivers. As is F1's spectacular political incorrectness. Seething with machismo, sexism and undiluted pulling power, this is a world where [guys still call gals] "birds" and where [gals] worship a cadre of chiselled and immensely fit [guys] who risk their lives in a high-octane gladiatorial struggle. Some aphrodisiac... Screwdrivers, it seems, are far from being on the last lap.

...SOME fascinating stories have surfaced in the wake of the resurgence of stiletto heels, which are making a comeback in N[Z]. So far they're significantly present only in Auckland, but it's only a matter of time until the country cousins catch on. The feminists are furious. Stiletto heels epitomise what the New[-age Gal] must never stoop to: Appealing to [guys'] lecherous desire to see good legs look even better; admitting that good legs tend to make sex lives more abundant and satisfying by attracting the pick of the studs. This is why bearded [gals], even those who have good legs in spite of themselves, never wear stiletto heels, and hiss in frustrated fury when they see them in shop windows. I feel sorry for them. Here they are, having gone to all this trouble to get into their thick-soled bover boots and layers of unironed grey and brown garments, trying to look as much like self-propelled haystacks as possible, and Godammit, someone's sprung stiletto heels on them again! It is impossible to be a sound anti-[guy] feminist in stiletto heels. To remain upright in them a [gal] has to alter the relationship between various bits of her anatomy, redistributing her weight in a way [guys] find attractive. All this is anathema to feminists. Being squat, lumpish and undesirable is all part of the campaign to wipe good sex off the map, replace it with artificial insemination from a sperm bank and eventually abolish [guys] altogether. Stiletto heels are naughty, like black lace. Take the Internet, which has some limited uses but in large part is no more than an easily available forum for all the worst aspects of human character – from laziness, to mindless preoccupation with the unimportant, to bestial criminality. We now find that among the many delights the Internet browser, surfer or... heavy breather can extract from his electronic wonderland are animal snuff movies, in which [gals] wearing stiletto heels stamp on small animals such as hamsters and mice, squashing them until they are dead. This makes the results of the latest

survey of top [gals'] magazines easier to understand. It found that today's power [gal] is selfish and superficial... This is no surprise, but many will be taken aback to learn that [today's power gal] rarely thinks about anything much, unless it involves sex. That survey was all right as far as it went, but it neglected to find out why these top [gals] of today favour stilettos – spiky heels that in a few seconds destroy the hard work of thousands of husbands using floor-sanders and polyurethane to restore to their kitchens and hallways the marketable look of the Victorian floors of their great-grandparents. Although local [gals'] magazines disowned the survey, chorusing that N[Z gals] aren't Like That, their protestations sounded hollow. Of course N[Z gals] are Like That. And that's appalling news for feminists. After their conscientious campaigns, after all the bra-burning and boot-wearing of 30 years of Empowerment, after all that effort trying to pretend that biological urges don't exist, look what they've ended up with: A hard core of influential [gals] who not only have not gone off sex, they actually never think of anything else!

...Selfish, superficial and obsessed with sex – that's the unflattering image of British [gals] that emerges from some of the country's leading [gal] magazines. "Today's British [gal] has no children, cares or responsibilities. Her life is a round of tawdry indulgences. [The modern British gal] rarely thinks, except of sex... enjoys drunken pranks once associated with adolescent boys and calls this 'girl power.' Her only moral value is being non-judgmental; [the average British gal of the '90s]... is reluctant to make an effort in any cause except the gym... that temple of self-adoration..." said the survey by the Social Affairs Unit, an independent research and educational trust... [which] looked in detail at 11 magazines with a combined circulation of more than 3.7 million, which are aimed at 20-40 year old [gals]. It found the picture that [gals] portrayed of themselves was unflattering... and... trivial... Children were hardly mentioned in some magazines, personal tragedy was treated as entertainment and relationships appeared to be purely about sex[– but]... sex had no meaning apart from transient pleasure and no consequence apart from disease and abortion.

...The swinging '60s chicks grew up in a time of free love, flower power, mini-skirts and the Pill... The result is... [that an] overwhelming majority of ['90s British gals] believe a refrigerator is more useful than the [guy] in their lives, according to a survey carried out on behalf of the frozen food industry... 87[%]... reckoned their fridge was more indispensable... Some [even] thought their fridges [were] more versatile than... their partner... using them to store tights, [CD]s, candles and money as well as food. The cold is reputed to increase the quality of [CD]s, prevent runs in tights and increase the burning time of candles. What it does to money is not known... Pre-Pill, the world was a place where pregnancy happened frequently, and was swept under the carpet... The Pill was supposed to liberate [gals] and change the sexual mores of the new generation. But... the principles of free love prove[d] to be a double-edged sword. "The Pill had liberated [gals] but it didn't compensate with any security," says... [the author of] *60s Chicks Hit the 90s*... [A] new problem sprang up as [gals] were suddenly portrayed by [Playboy] and co as air-brushed and randy. "With the Pill there was no excuse for not doing it... it was almost as if this pseudo-liberation had deprived you of choice, rather than giving you choice,"...

If given the choice between having sex and going shopping without having to pay... 57[% of gals] said they would prefer... to shop, according to a survey... conducted by the British condom-maker Durex... [By the way, a professor] at New Jersey's Rutgers University said... about the new orgasm pill... "I suppose one day you could just take a pill that would simulate a steak dinner, but wouldn't you rather eat the steak?" This sounds like typical [masculine] vanity. One would have thought the average sex life was comparable less with a steak dinner than a dog's one. An orgasm is merely another bodily reaction like yawning, sneezing or going to the loo. If scientists can invent a pill for it, there is no reason why a [guy] should be involved at all. Most of the [guys] I know are, in any case, pills.

...["Guys are visually stimulated, making them easy to manipulate. All you have to do is dress up in a sexy outfit. Guys are sort of stupid that way," says the star of *Dark Angel*. "Most gals have power over guys, but once you start to abuse it you become lame. The secret to using that power is not to use it."]

...[gals] seem to make good spies. Maybe it's because [guys] are putty in their hands; maybe it's because they are believed to be duplicitous anyway; perhaps the reason is best left to psychologists. [Gals] have entered the second oldest profession from such diverse areas as Hollywood film sets, smoky French cabaret bars and... the first [gal] spy at MI5... was recruited while playing clock golf at a Conservative Party fete: that's how it was done in the 30s... Espionage is an equal opportunities employer (even if [a] former CIA station chief... won \$550,000 from her old employers after exposing the career obstacles faced by [US gal spies]). Gals have spied and died for their countries... have run spy organisations and they have betrayed spy organisations, just like their... [guy counterparts. One gal] ran MI5, and... [another] left it to reveal its secrets and the way it kept tabs on peaceful and legitimate protest movements... Helen Kroger, an American, was the [gal] half of the Soviet spy team that posed as N[Z]ers while being involved in the Portland spy case of 1961. Their passports were issued with minimal checking by the N[Z] embassy in Paris in the 50s... A Dublin-born Quaker, Lydia Darragh, was America's first [gal spy]... In 1776... during the War of Independence... Sir William Howe, commander of the British forces, took over a room in her house to plan an attack. Darragh hid in a cupboard, listened through the keyhole, took notes and passed them on to George Washington's top spy at the Rising Sun tavern. The American army was saved, and the rest is history. Similar ingenuity was shown by... the American singer and dancer... who passed secret information from occupied Paris to the Allies in the 40s by copying it on to her sheet music in invisible ink. A cruder style was shown by the beautiful Mossad agent, apparently calling herself Cindy, who posed as an air hostess to lure [a] nuclear whistle-blower... back to Israel by means of the age-old "honeypot" technique... The Germans called Mata Hari "a dud shell" because [Mata] couldn't remember her [WW1] pillow talk with French officers. But the French recruited her as a double agent, then accused her of treason and executed her. [Mata] cried, "Harlot, yes, but traitor never," and blew kisses as the firing squad took aim.

...16-year-old... best friends... became the first [gals] in Britain to fight in an officially approved amateur boxing tournament[last weekend, and gals]... in the British armed forces will be able to shoot to kill from next April as artillery gunners... [In related news, gals] from more than 100 countries on Friday presented a petition of 100,000 names to the UN General Assembly to get all countries to reduce their defence budgets... [T]he petition demands governments cut 5% each year... They then want them to spend the funds on health, educational and job programmes... The [gals] hope the campaign will snowball like the grass roots organising against landmines... Signatures will be collected until the year 2000. "War has to be put on the table for discussion," said... the... private US group... International Peace Bureau... which originated the campaign.

...Colombia's top military chief... thinks [it] has an answer to 30 years of violence and bloodshed between leftist guerrillas and right-wing extremists: [gals] should withhold sex from them. "I am serious. We have too much violence. If [gals] would deny sex to the [guys] who commit violent acts, the pressure on the [guys] would be so strong they would seek peace,"... [The] General..., a sometime philosophy student, recalled the drama *Lysistrata*... in which the [gals] of Athens boycott their husbands to end a war with the Spartans.

...Hundreds of thousands of black [gals] thronged Philadelphia yesterday for the Million [Gal] March, a mass rally aimed at building political, economic and social unity within black communities in the U[S]. In the largest gathering of black [gals] in US history, crowds of mothers, aunts, sisters, nieces and daughters stood shoulder-to-shoulder in... drizzle to sing... pray and listen to an all-day programme of inspirational speeches. As a sea of marchers filled a mile-long boulevard stretching from the huge Greek-style Philadelphia Art Museum to City Hall, the turnout appeared to surpass that of the Million [Guy] March in Washington.

...A Greek Cypriot... sentenced to 15 months in jail for negligently giving the aids virus to his British lover has boasted that [the fisherperson] slept with up to 1000 [gal] tourists in Cyprus... [according to] the *News of the World*... "I have done everything and your British girls are the easiest. Local girls want us to promise that we will marry them before they invite us to their bed. But that is nonsense. Why wait when we can find some less careful foreign girl for a good night? We know they are easy and then two weeks later they go home and we can forget about it."

...a 20-year-old infected with the virus that causes Aids, apparently kept careful count of the [gals with whom the USer] had sex. "This guy is some kind of storekeeper[who] seems to take delight in keeping records," said... [the] health commissioner in... rural Chautauqua County... [The 20-year-

old,] who is now in jail in New York City on charges of selling crack cocaine, had unprotected sex with at least 28 local [gals], the youngest of whom was 13[, and] infected at least 10 of them. But last week it became clear that [the 20-year-old] had not confined his sexual activities to this western New York County. At Rikers Island jail, [the 20-year-old] told investigators the names of between 50 and 70 [gals the 20-year-old] had sex with in New York City... The phenomenon of a highly promiscuous Aids carrier who allegedly ignores explicit warnings about having unprotected sex and who adds up his victims is “the first of its kind” in the U[S], according to... a professor at Georgetown University Law Centre who advises on Aids policy and the law... [O]ther health law experts said the... case raises vexing questions about how communities can protect themselves from disease-carrying sexual predators, as well as when police should be allowed to breach the confidentiality barrier protecting Aids patients to arrest someone who is knowingly endangering the public. [The 20-year-old] was publicly identified on Monday only after a judge issued an order invoking the “imminent risk” exception to a six-year-old New York law that guarantees the confidentiality of Aids patients from police. That was the first time the exception had been invoked... Meanwhile... serving a seven-year prison term... in Mt Eden... [is the African musician who made NZ] legal history in 1994 when... convicted of endangering the lives of five [NZ gals] by having sex with them when [the musician knew it] was HIV-positive... [The musician, who arrived in NZ] in 1990 on a false passport... was taken back to Mt Eden last week after spending time in a Herne Bay hospice... [H]is lawyer, says it is inhumane to send such a sick [person] back to prison... “We want the Justice Department to release him totally... Prison is not the place for someone like that. They... should release him – [because I believe my client is no longer] a danger to anyone.” ...it is understood authorities will activate a removal order when [the musician] is released from prison... after serving two-thirds of his sentence.

...[a US] study found that 17[% of gal] college students had been raped as defined by the researcher... Yet three quarters of those students did not think they had been raped, and nearly half of them went on to have sex again with the [guy] who had supposedly raped them. This... researcher visited N[Z] for a rape conference last year... and advocated a broadening of the definition of rape so that if the [gal] who consented was intoxicated[, that gal] is regarded as not having given free consent. “I have concerns about broadening the definition that far,” says... [the spokesperson for the NZ] Casualties of Sexual Allegation organisation... “It belittles [gals] because it says they are not responsible for their actions.”

...I HAVE some professional advice for [the gal] who has taken over as national spokes[perso]n for Rape Crisis. This is Rape Awareness Week, so it's a good time to set [the spokesperson] on the right path. If [the spokesperson] wants to get anywhere at all [it] has to face one fact Rape Crisis has never accepted: There are varying degrees of rape... [T]he rape of... a 70-year-old... sexually assaulted by a masked intruder who wakes her in the middle of the night and bashes her senseless to shut her up... is a thousand times worse than the rape of... a randy [young gal] who goes to a party in a mini-skirt, accepts a lift home, then changes her mind as soon as... the randy party-goer... gets her gear off in his flat – but the bloke doesn't believe [the randy party-goer] means it when [the randy party-goer] says “No”... Rape Crisis insists... that when it comes to rape all... have the same right to inviolability. The fact is, of course, that the randy party-goer has contributed at least half the responsibility for the rape... In most cases, of course, the randy party-goer keeps her part of the bargain and they have sex. Even when [the randy party-goer] changes her mind and says “No” at the last minute, there's a good chance [the guy] will accept her decision. On the rare occasion when [the guy] won't take no for an answer... [her] misleading behaviour does not... excuse him... But the [randy party-goer] has forfeited her right to the support of Rape Crisis. [The randy party-goer had not only] let the side down – given [her sex] a bad name... [– but] has made it harder for [gals] who get raped, even though they haven't issued any false promises, to have their stories believed. If [the spokesperson] has any sense, [the spokesperson] will... drop the policy that it is not [gals'] responsibility to modify their behaviour; that the responsibility is all the [guy's because the guy] is the one who does the business... [The spokesperson] also needs to get real about the tales told by [gals] who, for a variety of selfish reasons, say they have been raped when there's been no sex at all involving the accused. Rape Crisis in the past has remained silent about such [gals], alienating thousands of people who would otherwise be supporters... In the High Court in Christchurch I once watched a young [gal] tell the jury a sailor [it] met at a party raped her, then in cross-examination admit [it] had initiated the sex, which took place under the open windows of a mental hospital nurses' hostel, after excusing herself to go behind a tree to remove her menstrual equipment. [The accuser] acknowledged the accused, until that time a virgin, confided to her afterward [it] had “never thought [it'd have the nerve to **** a sheila”... (Editor's note: ‘Three guys in prison for the 1996 pack rape and sodomy of a gal have had their petitions for a pardon rejected, despite written admissions by the accuser that it had lied. The three accused, two brothers aged 26 and 29, and their friend, 29, who were sentenced to between 8 and 8 1/2 years in prison, had appealed for mercy on the grounds that the charges were fabricated. The Justice Minister said yesterday that the Governor-General had rejected their application. Their lawyer said her clients were naturally disappointed and at a loss to understand why the petition had failed. The case raised significant concerns about access to justice in NZ when a miscarriage of justice was complained of, the lawyer said. The approach in this case, that of a limited investigation without consultation and with no opportunity for the applicants to comment, was in contrast to how Britain handled such matters. The lawyer has received instructions to take what further steps are possible for the prisoners to pursue their case. The lawyer will consider the Privy Council and a judicial review as possibilities. Their claims of innocence were strengthened last year when the accuser and her partner accused two Upper Hutt guys of a similar attack, allegedly after the accuser had been drugged senseless. Those accused were able to convince Upper Hutt police that the claims could not be true. Police have confirmed that they saw videotape evidence that the four had a history of consensual sex. In this latest set of claims, the accuser signed statements before an Upper Hutt justice of the peace, confessing that it had made up both sets of allegations of rape, that the sexual activity had been consensual – and that at the time it had been having “strong sexual fantasies” involving rape. The accuser also confessed to a “very serious drug addiction problem” and “occult influences.” The accuser subsequently phoned a newspaper to say it had been forced to sign her confessions. However, the justice of the peace has said on several occasions that the accuser was relaxed and believable when it came to his house for his signature.”) Any gal] who knowingly makes such a false accusation should be pilloried without mercy. Instead, the [gal] who falsely accused[a] Waikato student... had her name suppressed, thanks to the efforts of Rape Crisis, when by rights [the false accuser] should have gone to prison for a long time. It was all right for [the Waikato student] to have his name smeared, in the view of Rape Crisis, because all [guys] are rapists... The [spokesperson]... will have to rid herself of the idea [that all gals] can be relied on to tell the truth.

...THERE's a very simple way of reducing violence in the world: Just get rid of [guys]. How many war-mongering [gals] grace the pages of history? How common is it for [gals] to punch each other up at the pub? You don't need an in-depth analysis of prison statistics to see [that guys] are responsible for most of society's physical brutality. With the rapid advance of genetic engineering maybe the time will come when blokes will have to justify their existence. Members of the fairer sex could produce the next generation by cloning themselves. It would mean the human race would become an all-[gal] affair, but they might see that as the price that has to be paid to live in peace and harmony. Knowingly conceiving a [boy] child might even be branded an irresponsible act. Like pit bull terriers, [guys] have been bred for violence. Mother Nature has carefully honed our aggressive traits. Our species had to cope in the rough and tough survival-of-the-fittest world for almost all of human history. But according to[a] US neuro-scientist... there's no need to burn the jockstrap just yet. Research shows [guys] are not as prone to physical savagery as is often thought... Violence, [the neuro-scientist] suspects, has more to do with the social environment... So do away with society's customs, not with [guys].

...Violent guys] really do come from planet of the apes... OF ALL the unanswered questions in science, there is none more intriguing and relevant than those regarding human nature. Are we inherently evil? Is it only [guys], obeying hormonal and genetic orders, that are born to commit vile and violent acts? In an ideal culture with an ideal government would there be an end to violence? Is there hope for humans and human culture? *Demonic Ma[tes: Apes and the Origins of Human Violence]* is an excellent and easy read, but it takes us down some uncomfortable paths. While

learning how evolution shaped who we are as primates, we're confronted with the origins of human violence in our biology. Primarily examining [guy] primate... strategies of control through violence, it also helps us understand [gal] coping strategies. The latter include subterfuge, defiance and, sadly, complicity. It's troubling to see [gals consistently selecting mates] who display "demonic" tendencies, thus contributing to their own oppression... [C]himps not only share most of our genes, but also our behaviour – they, too, murder, rape and batter their own. Comparing this behaviour with our own (and other) species indicates that we are, indeed, born to violence. And thus the danger. When will the first sadistic murderer be acquitted after reputable expert witnesses advise the court that the... offender was simply acting out his genetic imperative? The converse to this depressing scenario is another near relative, the Bonobo chimpanzee. In an ecological niche that allows them security of food supply even in lean years, the Bonobos have developed a culture that gives [gals] the chance to bond and network in larger parties. The [gal] subculture effectively constrains, rather than oppresses, the aggression of the [guys. The gals] and babies have a degree of security and stability that other chimps and humans don't have. So while it's the vagaries of the evolutionary lottery that have produced our own ecological niche and our behaviour, a hope emerges – culture can and does supersede our genes[. After all, because humans supersede chimps by an estimated 9 million years, perhaps the correct phrase is that: violent humans not only share most of a chimp's genes, but also a chimp's behaviour...

In the] perilous urban jungles of America, a new predator is stalking the streets. Young, armed and vicious, teenage girls are delivering a blow to recent government euphoria about a marked dip in the surge of violent crime that once threatened to swamp the... [US. Over] 700,000 girls aged under 18 were arrested last year, according to the Justice Department... The arrest rate of teenage girls is now twice that of teenage boys... In some regions, girls account for nearly 25% of... juvenile... murder, robbery with violence – even rape... In Washington girls account for 40% of those in juvenile detention. What fuels their drive to offend, say juvenile crime experts, is a combination of anger, revenge, the lure of easy cash and a wilful disregard for human life... At the core of the crisis are home lives where violence, sexual abuse and drug taking are commonplace. "There's a whole lot of violence directed towards them, and this is their response," said [a] Sergeant... of Little Rock police in Arkansas. "They perceive that they need to protect themselves." ... "Girls are imitating boys. They are using violent [guys] as role models," said... a... Boston... criminologist... "For the slightest reasons, a dispute over a boyfriend or a challenging glance, girls will get into violent confrontations where they used to be verbal." ... The breeding ground for these violent young girls is America's bloody gang culture. Ten years ago girls were followers, subservient to [guy] gang members. If girls wanted to join a gang, they used to have to submit to sex. Nowadays they prefer to get "beaten in" to their membership, enduring the punishment to demonstrate their courage. Often they will start all-girl gangs of their own, like the Bloodettes or the Bitches in Charge... Sociologists say girls have been the forgotten element in the criminal justice system for too long... As crime statistics soar, the system has proven slow to deal with the challenges presented by the growing number of young girls flooding the courts, with little resources for prevention.

...MOVE over, boy racers. [Gals] are more likely to experience feelings of "road rage" than [guys], according to a British government road safety adviser. Tests show most [gals are also more likely than guys to] feel higher levels of stress... and... anxiety... when confronted with traffic... Such stress can lead to irrational behaviour... [A] retired teacher from Birmingham, has given up driving after [the 53-year-old] was shocked to find herself repeatedly driving into a pensioner's Rover because [the pensioner] swore at her for blocking a box junction. [The retired teacher] only stopped ramming his car when [the pensioner] suffered a minor heart attack and [the 53-year-old] was forced to help him. "I could not believe it when I looked at the damage to both of our vehicles. I lost my mind for a few seconds and ended up destroying both cars and nearly killing him. My capacity for violence was horrendous,"... [The offender] was asked to pay \$10,000 in compensation but escaped a custodial sentence... [A 29-year-old] model booking agent from South London admits... [that it] wanted to kill a motorcyclist who overtook her on the inside... [In another case,] a computer business[gal] terrified a disabled mother and her two-year-old son by driving closely behind and later threatening her with a metre-long steering wheel lock... Experts have... noted many of those convicted of road rage are middle-class professional [gals, and]... the Automobile Association, said... "[Gals] are facing new challenges in the workplace and home and these... all... bring... pressures." ...■ A... [number of] recent studies, particularly from the U[S.], have shown that [gals] can be as violent as [guys] in relationships... – ...2.7% of [guys in NZ say] they have been assaulted... by their partner... – ...but a new study carried out by the Otago University Injury Prevention Unit has found [gals] are much greater victims. They get hit more often and they get hurt more... 15% of N[Z Gals'] Refuge residents have a permanent disability as the result of battering... "Previous work has asked people: 'Do you bash your partner or do they bash you?' The trouble is they haven't asked: 'How many times did they bash you and how serious was it? Did they bash you with a feather or a sledgehammer?'" Another good question to ask would be: "Why did you have a relationship with someone who you either knew to be violent or didn't know enough about beforehand?"

...For 16 years a [NZer] was viscerously beaten by the [guy it lived with. Her partner] beat her four or five times a week (sometimes using an axe and a baseball bat) to the point where [the NZer] was hospitalised twice with broken bones, half her teeth were smashed and her eyes were so severely blackened that [it] could not open them. Pregnancy did not stop the beatings. When their child was born, [its father] beat her when the baby cried. After the first year, as one judge put it, there was "nothing less than a long series of rapes." ...[the partner] stopped her from seeing her family or friends... did not take on parental responsibilities... contributed nothing to the running of the house they lived in. Nor did [the partner] share his earnings but forced money from her. Threatening her with a shotgun, [the partner] repeatedly promised to hunt her down and kill her if [the NZer] left him. The NZer] believed him... At... times [the NZer] went on a domestic purposes benefit to maintain herself and her child, signing declarations that [the beneficiary] was not living in "a relationship in the nature of marriage" with her child's father. Despite her appalling situation, the Department of Social Welfare prosecuted her for benefit fraud on the basis of these declarations. Last year, the Court of Appeal held – by a majority – that [the NZer] was not in a relationship in the nature of marriage. It stated that marriage involves both mutual willingness to provide financial support if the other partner has no income or inadequate income... and mutual emotional commitment. These elements being missing, her appeal succeeded. The court went on to hold that battered [gals'] syndrome was available to be taken into account when considering whether a marriage-type situation existed. The Coalition Government's recent Social Security (Conjugal Status) Bill aims to overturn this decision. Under the bill, the D[SW] will not need to establish that the parties to an alleged marriage-type relationship are willing to be mutually financially supportive or share emotional commitment... Only where a relationship is so violent that the person subjected to violence or threats cannot decide whether, or how to, escape will a means-tested emergency benefit be paid – and then only for six months. With closely limited exceptions, the legislation is retrospective... [A] former Minister of Social Welfare now Minister of [Gals'] Affairs, is a keen proponent of the bill. [Now also the PM-elect, it] claims that the proposed legislation improves the situation of [gals], who will be "case-managed to help [them] move out of the violent relationship." ...[However, the] Labour welfare spokes[person]... said the... bill's intention was to prevent battered [gals] claiming benefits, rather than helping them to escape violent relationships... [Indeed, the current] Minister of Social Welfare, has emphasised the perceived fiscal impact of the court's decision. Crucially, [prosecution]... of the victim of violence would actually be easier under the proposed changes, particularly since the department will be precluded from considering violence until it is mentally paralysing... Ultimately, the Court of Appeal's decision was about how a democratic state defines marriage for its most vulnerable citizens. In the court's view, marriage... excludes violence. Here the court quoted with approval another judge's view that "In the late 20th century, it is no longer appropriate that the definition of... a relationship in the nature of marriage includes violence as an accepted ingredient." In reversing this approach, the Coalition Government's bill probably represents the first attempt by a democracy to enact legislation implying that domestic violence is consistent with the marriage relationship for social security purposes.

...Mum always told you to keep your room tidy – but from the state of ['90s gals'] hotel rooms it seems [guys] were the only ones listening. A Novotel Hotel study overturns the popular view that [guys] are slob. When it comes to leaving hotel rooms clean, [guys] are the tidier sex, say housekeepers. Other hotels quizzed about their guests' cleanliness backed the survey's finding that [guys] can hold their heads high when it comes to tidiness... The exceptions were rugby players because they had been known to clean their boots with bed sheets... [Gals] generally stuffed more into their bags when they went on holiday and often struggled to keep clothes and makeup under control when in hotel rooms. One hotel said [gals] enjoyed a break from cleaning and were less likely to clear up after themselves... The Novotel survey found that while [guy] guests usually left their rooms spick and span, a hotel stay... also... seemed to be their opportunity to break out of the shackles[– but in their case it meant] drink the mini-bar dry, make a lot of noise and watch skin flicks.

...[gals] who live as [guys] In the remote villages of the Albanian Alps... a select number of [gals]... cling to a tradition as old as the blood feuds that have resurfaced in Albania since the fall of communism[by choosing]... to forfeit sex, relationships and their femininity in return for the freedom and respect that comes with being a [guy]... Known as Avowed Virgins, they obey a strict but unwritten code of conduct after taking a *bess* (a vow of obedience) and forfeiting their [gal]hood... In a country where [the fair sex] are considered inferior, the Virgins are revered by their communities. They drink and mix with [guys, dress like them, do "guy"] jobs, come and go as they please, even carry guns... On special occasions, like weddings, funerals and village meetings, [they socialise with the guys while the other gals] serve the food and drink and sit together in a segregated area... But in return, they're forbidden to marry, have relationships, sex or children... From an early age, village girls have little interaction outside the home and wives are the property of their husbands, with no prospect of education or independence. Being born [a girl] condemns one to a life-time of servitude that includes collecting firewood and washing the feet of [guys]. In contrast, boys are educated, allowed to socialise freely and travel. It's the ultimate irony – to gain freedom as a [gal, the Avowed Virgins] had to become [guys]... In reality, the Avowed Virgins are only marginally more sexually restricted than their sisters... According to legend, during the Ottoman conquest of the country in the 14th century... Nora of Kelmendi... stabbed to death an enemy official who wanted to marry her... then fled to the hills, but later reappeared – dressed as a [guy] – to lead a revolt against the invaders. The custom, insists [one Avowed Virgin], started there. In truth, the Avowed Virgin tradition was a product of necessity. For hundreds of years, in the isolated hamlets of southeastern Europe, an archaic system of blood feuds prevailed and neighbours frequently slaughtered one another over matters of honour and land ownership. Consequently, villages were drained of their ma[sculine] heirs. To compensate, young virgin [gals] were chosen as replacement heads of households. - 1997

[A couple of NZers] believe love can survive without sex – and they have had a lifetime of celibacy to prove it [The wife] and her husband of 34 years are like any happily married couple, except in one respect – they are virgins. And though [the wife] desperately wanted – even expected – to have children of her own, [it]'s never been able to bring herself to have sex with her patient partner[, who it met when aged]... 22. The good-looking 29-year-old with blue-grey eyes came into the bookstore where [it] worked and... invited her out. Her mother eventually agreed... and after their first date the pair became inseparable... Two years later, they married. But their wedding night was a disaster. "I had no idea what to expect... I hadn't dared ask my mother... [- who] always told us being intimate with a [guy was dirty -] ...what a couple did on their first night as husband and wife." When [the groom undressed, the bride] was horrified. "I screamed and covered my eyes... [Though I had an] older brother... I'd never seen a naked [guy] – and I didn't like what I had just seen..." [The groom], a farm worker, believed [his bride] would soon get over her initial fear... "But the weeks turned to months and I still couldn't bring myself to do it,"... [The husband] remained sympathetic even when the months turned to years and the couple's families and friends started to wonder why they hadn't started a family... [They] are not the only couple to experience a loving but totally sexless marriage. No doubt they would be surprised to learn just how many couples... seek help for inability to consummate their marriage. Countless others keep their lack of sexual activity secret even from their doctors because they feel ashamed... [T]hanks to a lack of education, and negative programming during childhood[, the wife]... is suffering from a condition known as "sexual aversion"... a difficult disorder to treat.

...While most girls her age are willing to surrender their virginity for a vodka and 20 cigarettes, Britney... has just turned down a whopping \$22.5 million for her maidenhead. In a deal that makes [Gimme] Moore's indecent proposal look like peanuts, a besotted American business[perso]n offered the money to the blushing teen in return for one wild night of passion. "It's a disgusting offer," stormed a distressed [Britney]. "That guy should go home and have a cold shower. It's outrageous and totally unacceptable."

...*The waiting game*... VIRGINITY has never been so fashionable. For a long time the (usually) maligned condition simply seemed to disappear from popular culture's horizons. But now sexual purity is popping up all over the place, with musicians, movie actors and other celebrities declaring they're saving themselves for true love. American pop star Britney... we are told, is "waiting." The pneumatic teen dates boys – in fact... lives with one from boy band, N'Sync – but... insists they only kiss. Britney's virginity is such a big deal globally that in December the Church of England hailed her as a "great ambassador for virginity," the Irish Government is using her in a pro-virginity campaign with the slogan "Do A Britney," and some sleazy U[S businessperso]n recently offered her more than \$250 million to lose her virginity (yes of course, [Britney] turned it down). [A]Britney look-alike... is also "waiting," despite the fact that [it]'s been with her boyfriend, a member of boy band 98 Degrees, for two years... If you find it hard to take... [them both] seriously when their music videos depict them sprawled on satin-covered, double beds, dressed revealingly or singing to all the world that they're "not that innocent," then consider... the more likeable lead singer of British band Boyzone. Behind the syrupy tunes, [the]... hard drinkin', laugh-a-minute Irish[perso]n... saved himself for marriage... too[, marrying]... his childhood sweetheart... when... 21 years old. Then there's [the]Emmy Award-winning adult actress... [who plays] Phoebe in the sitcom *Friends*... "I was very uptight and really nervous about my sexuality... I decided pretty early on I should stay a virgin until I got married. My virginity was something I had decided was very precious." [The actor] married a French advertising executive in 1995, at the age of 31. And of course we mustn't forget our very own "ice queen,"... who stayed stylishly pure until [the host of such TV shows as *Ice TV*] married her very own camera[perso]n recently... In Britain, [the Labour] Government has embarked on an ambitious campaign to convince adolescents that it is cool to be a virgin, in an attempt to curb high teenage-pregnancy rates in the country. More than £2 million... is being spent on an advertising campaign that is to include titillating posters asking: "Sex: Are You Thinking About It Enough?" There'll be no hint of official involvement and the Public Health Minister who is organising the campaign has given the advertising agency instructions to use a hip and groovy tone that will go down well with the kids. All of which led one respectable British newspaper to write: "Virginity is now as covetable as a Prada bowling bag." In some international cases such persuasion seems to be working. A... poll by *Playboy* magazine found that American college students were abstaining from sex in increasing numbers... Grabbing headlines in America is the True Love Waits movement. More than a million students have signed a document stating: "Believing that true love waits, I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, my friends, my future mate and my future children to be sexually abstinent from this day until the day I enter a biblical marriage relationship." On Valentine's Day... hundreds of thousands of these enthusiastic American teens will be signing and mailing cards on the Internet supporting their stand. Late last year an A[US]n evangelist... caused a media furore when [it] came to N[Z] to sell the kind of videos that the True Love Waits lot watch and to encourage school pupils to sign a similar pledge.

...*True Love Waits, but what about Britney?* ...YOU could almost hear the sound of [teenage boy] fantasies chomping their way through the dust. Asked about her vow of virginity – made public four years ago – pop sweetheart Britney... turned a violent shade of red. "I wish I'd never said anything about being a virgin," [Britney] muttered, her answer compounding rumours [the singer enjoyed]... more than heavy petting with [her]...

former boyfriend... w[ho w]as cheating on her during their relationship with a[nother] singer... Legs crossed, lips pursed, [Britney] closed the matter: "That's private." I can't be the only person who is relieved [Britney] finally seems to have misplaced her cherry. Since pouting through school halls in the video for her first hit, *Baby One More Time*... Humbert Humbert-like studio bosses have played endlessly on [her] virgin-whore status, dollar signs shining in their eyes. Since then [Britney] has become the poster child for the confused sexuality of her generation, combining explicit provocation with implicit innocence. Parallel to her rise, a trend for pledging abstinence emerged in America. True Love Waits, set up by the Southern Baptist church in 1993, was the first and most famous of its kind and one [Britney] openly supported. The evangelical road show is said to have convinced... a million young girls to save themselves for marriage. Since then, secular abstinence programmes have taken off in schools. In 1996 the [US] congress made abstinence messages a requirement for the public funding of sex education. At the same time contraceptive information has been fading fast. One of the most interesting aspects of the programmes is most aim specifically at girls. This reflects the sexual polarisation of [US] life. Moving to California a few years ago I had imagined the culture would be similar to Britain where, if you like someone and they like you, you sidle off to bed when you're ready. Rather than viewing sex as enjoyable, the Californian [gals] I met used it as a bargaining tool. All adhered stringently to the rule sex be withheld until at least the fourth date, often seeing a clutch of [guys] and dumping each after their third dinner. Sex for these [gals] was the ultimate poker chip. Last year a study found girls who had pledged abstinence between the ages of 15 and 17 stayed virgins for at least 18 months longer than their peers. But another part of the study noted those who had pledged virginity were far more likely to have unprotected sex when they kissed celibacy goodbye. Perhaps even more worrying is the fact teenage attitudes to sex... seem to have warped in the past few years. Another recent survey of 3000 boys aged 15 to 19 found [2/3]rds had experienced oral or anal sex. Having been taught to place such a high value on virginity, teenage girls are eschewing vaginal sex in order to remain intact, justifying other activities as abstemious. The boys did not realise anal and oral sex could put them at risk of STDs. Teaching at a... camp one summer I was upset to hear a 13-year-old girl had been giving oral sex to much older boys in return for cigarettes. Similar stories have been spotlighted in recent American magazines. Articles have focused on schools where teenage orgies have become the norm and young girls have been performing oral sex in their lunch breaks. Given this sexually charged atmosphere, it seems not just ridiculous but also potentially fatal to deny teenagers clear information about contraception.

...*"I keep forgetting about contraception..."* ...So many things demand your attention every day. But your contraception needn't be one of them. Depo-Provera is an injection you get from your doctor every three months. It's over 99% effective. It's discreet. And it has been used with confidence by over 30 million [gals] around the world... Depo-Provera does not protect you from... AIDS (HIV), Hepatitis B and C, genital herpes, genital warts, syphilis or gonorrhoea. *What are the possible side-effects?* Change in weight, irregular menstrual bleeding, no menstrual periods (amenorrhoea), headaches, nervousness, abdominal cramps, dizziness, weakness or fatigue, decreased sexual desire, nausea, vaginal discharge or irritation, breast tenderness, depression, insomnia, acne, hair growth or excessive hair loss. If these or any other problems occur, discuss them with your health professional... *What if I want to become pregnant?* As Depo-Provera is a long acting birth control method, it takes some time after your last injection for its effect to wear off... [Y]our periods will, in time, return to their usual cycle, but this may take up to 18 months.

...Nearly half of all [gals] live with period pain. For one in 10, it's severe enough to interfere with work and other activities... [Gals] with painful periods are known to have higher prostaglandin levels. Prostaglandins are chemicals produced by the endometrial lining in the womb during menstruation and, when released, they constrict blood vessels in the uterus to make it contract. The result? Painful cramps. *Treatments...* Alter your diet to keep oestrogen levels down because oestrogen causes the endometrium to thicken, which increases the amount of prostaglandins produced. Cut down on fat, which drives oestrogen levels up, and avoid all meat, fish, dairy products, salad dressings, margarine, chips, crisps...

[Guys] *just don't GET IT do they?* The reality is, periods are a pain. That's why Naprogesic goes further than traditional treatments like paracetamol. Because it works on the cause of period pain, it doesn't just help relieve cramps, but also nausea, headaches, lower back pain and other symptoms that give you the monthly blues. So don't just make do. For fast relief that lasts up to eight hours, ask your pharmacist about Naprogesic... Do not exceed 5 tablets in any 24 hrs. See doctor if pain persists.

...*Doctors say the dreaded PMT – and even menstruation itself – are no longer necessary...* An end to the misery of pre-menstrual tension is possible, say two... doctors who suggest that the fertility cycle, regarded by many as central to [gal]hood, may be eliminated by modern drugs. As the focus of medicine moves from curing diseases to improving the human condition, family planning experts say there is no reason why the contraceptive pill should not be used to free [gals] from the monthly menstrual cycle that causes discomfort, emotional disturbance and pain to millions. Writing in the *Lancet*, [the two]... authors, from the Population Council in Mexico... say: "It is simplicity itself to eliminate menstruation with safe, inexpensive and widely available oral contraceptive tablets... This is surely an anomaly in modern medicine. There can be no other condition that affects so many people on such a regular basis... which is not prioritised by health professionals or policymakers." ...add[the authors, gals]... who want to be rid of their menstrual cycles should be provided with continual supplies of contraceptive pills – normally discontinued for one week in every month to allow a period – which... are now available with such low doses of oestrogen that almost all [gals] can benefit from them... [T]he authors... cite Viagra, insulin and fluoridated water as examples of the use of modern medicine to control conditions ranging from the life-threatening to matters of personal preference. "Suppression of menstruation is no different." Marketing executives are accused of having designed the traditional pattern of contraceptive pill use, believing the monthly bleed is psychologically important to [gals] – even though there is no medical need for it... Prehistoric [gals] menstruated far less than their modern descendants and there is evidence that avoiding the sharp changes in hormone levels associated with monthly periods will lead to improvements in health[. 'When faced with extreme cases, doctors sometimes prescribe gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH) agonists, which block pre-menstrual symptoms and medically induce menopause']...

For centuries, European [gals] have used Black Cohosh root as a remedy for joint, muscle and nerve pain[,]hot flushes, palpitations, night sweats, anxiety, mild depression... [and other] symptoms associated with menopause... As ovaries age, unbalanced hormone production can cause an increase in [these symptoms]... Yet, like many medicinal herbs... Black Cohosh root... had variable potency – until a respected German company found how to guarantee a consistent dose with each tablet[to create a] top herbal product for [menopausal gals]. Remifemin has been sold in Europe for over 40 years: over 6.8 million packets in Germany alone last year. And it's successful in the U.S. and A[US]... Thousands... have taken part in clinical studies. In one, 80% felt improvement after 4 weeks; another recorded more relief from Remifemin than from estrogen. No side effects, interaction with prescription medication or weight gain have been recorded... Ask about a 1-month (60-tablet) pack of Remifemin. Because a proven, natural product is the first one to try... Remifemin. The natural choice for a natural change of life.

...Expensive face creams that promise to turn back the clock could instead be adding to wrinkles. Experts believe anti-wrinkle creams containing acids found in fruit and sour milk may make skin more likely to age. The European Commission is consulting scientists on the additives, called alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs), as evidence emerges that they render skin more vulnerable to the ageing effects of sunshine – claims backed by the US Food and Drug Administration. AHAs speed the shedding of dry, dead cells from the skin's surface. Dermatologists have been using AHAs for more than 40 years to treat dry and scaly skin and to reduce acne scarring. They are used in skin creams at concentrations lower than 10[%]. At this level they are unlikely to cause damage. But at concentrations of 20 to 70[%], they become "peeling agents." The revitalising properties of AHAs have been used for thousands of years. [Gals] in ancient Egypt bathed in sour milk, while those at the court of Louis XIV washed in old wine.

...*It took forty years to get it. And ten minutes to do something about it.* You stress. You squint into the harsh sun. You concentrate. And over time, those expressions leave their mark on your face. Until today, there wasn't a lot you could do about it. But now there's BOTOX. A simple, non-

surgical procedure that can dramatically reduce your toughest wrinkle within days. One ten-minute treatment – a few tiny injections – relaxes the muscles between your brows that cause lines to form. And keeps them relaxed for four months or longer. BOTOX has been widely tested. And now it's approved by the US FDA. So it's really up to you. You can choose to live with wrinkles. Or you can choose to live without them.

...*Botox beauty fad to get big lift*... Watch, and marvel, as America goes bonkers for Botox. It should happen this northern spring, when the Government is expected to acknowledge what [gals] all over Manhattan's Upper East Side have known for years: nothing beats the ageing process better than Botox. More than a decade has passed since Botox was approved by the... FDA... for neurological and ophthalmic uses. By deadening the muscles temporarily, it was useful in treating patients with bad twitches, in the shoulder for instance, or lazy eyes. The FDA apparently did not see the connection between Botox and beauty. Or, rather, vanity. Now it does... And the Botox Big Bang will be ignited... Many expect an even more extravagant television campaign for Botox than was unleashed for Viagra. The procedure does not sound promising. The patient sits upright while the doctor injects into the forehead tiny quantities of a solution related to the killer disease botulism. The effects wear off after about three months and, in what doctors call the Dorian Grey effect, the wrinkles return. Yet customers are queuing in their thousands in America, and in Britain too, where a single treatment costs about £250... Publicity for Botox, whose generic name is botulinum toxin A, has been driven underground. There has been no regulation prohibiting physicians from using the drug to help [people] smooth out their faces, but advertising its anti-ageing effects has [previously] not been permitted. Yet, without a single television advertisement or a pamphlet in the doctor's waiting room, the drug has a huge following. In [the latest 12-month period for which statistics are available], Botox injections accounted for 19.1[%] of all cosmetic procedures in America. That compares with 3.5[%] for breast implants. Botox used on facial wrinkles renders the top half of the face almost entirely expressionless. Hollywood directors and producers are among those who have grumbled that too many [gals] aged 35 or over have turned to Botox... "Their faces can't really move properly." Interfering with nature has become almost de rigueur among television personalities in America.

...What d[o America's top TV] stars carry in their handbags? Tiny tubes of the latest instant facelift miracle, TNS Recovery Complex. The key ingredient is material taken from the foreskins of newborn infants. A small tube costs... \$300 and, says an LA dermatologist, "It definitely seems to de-age skin. It's all the rage." ■ If you think that's yuk, one cosmetic company offered sweaty stars a \$1600 underarm quick-fix botox injection to paralyse their sweat glands... ■ They cause bunions, corns, knee strain and backache – but high heels also make a lot of [gals] feel great. In fact, many regard them as an everyday accessory. Yet, doctors warn, [they] are walking straight into health problems as a result. Problems can show up after just six months of regularly wearing heels. The trouble with high heels is that the body's weight is thrown on to the ball of the foot... the body compensates by tilting the pelvis unnaturally... calf muscles tighten and the toes grip or are squashed. The average [person] takes 5000 steps a day... Wearing a 7.5cm heel concentrates double the body's weight on to the ball of the foot. So a 57kg [gal] could be taking the pressure of 114kg... on the ball of [each] foot 2500 times a day! Podiatrists advise wearing sensible shoes and saving your high heels for the occasional big night out.

...High heels make your legs look longer but if the heels are more than five centimetres high, they can throw your body out of alignment. If you wear high heels, try to counteract this by stretching your Achilles tendons. When sitting at the dinner table or at your desk at work, slip off your shoes and extend your heels out so that your feet are flexed, toes pointing towards you.

...*High price for sexy style*... N[Z] chiropractors applaud the warnings that a Brazilian shoemaker now issues on the company's packaging detailing the health hazards of wearing high heels. Via Uno, which distributes and sells shoes worldwide... offers a warning on the shoebox lid of its footwear. "Any piece of footwear higher than 4cm may be harmful to one's bone structure and back and should, therefore, be worn moderately," it reads. And the Via Uno website confirms the high heels' reputation as sexy but impractical. "In the daily office routine, if you wear stiletto heels and pointed-toed shoes, you can expect to excel with seduction, but, on the other hand, you will definitely lack a smiley face and that good mood to get down to work. Add some comfort to your day by choosing thicker (but by no means less fashionable) heels[– excluding 'platform shoes, which often cause broken feet due to the wearer losing balance', and are also a 'known cause of permanent spine, pelvis and ankle problems'."

...[gals] wearing wide high heels are not necessarily better shod than those sporting stilettos, recent research shows. A study in the *Lancet* medical journal showed that [gals] wearing shoes with high but broad heels were even more likely to develop knee arthritis than those who wore stiletto, narrow-heeled footwear. "Both types of shoes exaggerate the normal varus torque [joint pressure] in the knee by 26[% and 22%] for the wide-heeled and narrow-heeled shoes respectively," US researchers at the Harvard Medical School and Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital said. "These findings may have particular importance with respect to the development of knee osteoarthritis, insofar as [gals] tend to wear these high-heeled dress shoes routinely and for longer periods of time," their report added. But stiletto wearers were still more at risk from falls, ankle injuries and foot deformities... From Chinese foot-binding to today's wedge and stiletto heels, exaggerated styles have always been a part of fashion.

...Poor-fitting fashion or sport bras may... put... too much stress on... muscles and bones, leading to breathing and digestion problems – even irritable bowel syndrome. 'Breathing problems and muscle stress can arise because sports bras restrict expansion of the rib cage, while long-term use of ill-fitting bras can cause cancer by restricting the removal of toxins from the body'. It is estimated that '70% of NZ gals wear the wrong size bra'.

...the l[ate]st craze to hit the underwear fashion world... [is the p]ump up bra... Increase your bustline with just a few pumps of air! This special bra contains two removable pockets with valves that you can fill... using the pump provided. They sit inside the cups of the bra, and when fully inflated, can increase the appearance of your bustline by several cup sizes. The special valve release prevents any air from escaping. You can deflate the cups using the pump valve release end. Exquisite looking... with embroidered and lace detailing, you'll love the way this bra will make you look and feel... Only \$59.95... [it c]omes in 4 sizes: 32, 34, 36, 38 – in A and B cup.

...Do you want your bust to have more lift without expensive surgery or special bras. Well now you can... [Our] silicon breast enhancers are the simple way and safe way to enhance your bust. And you don't need to worry about them not feeling natural as they [have artificial nipples and] feel, weight and bounce just like normal breasts... [Y]ou can wear them inside your bra or even swimsuit. They sit just underneath your natural breasts so that the appearance from the outside is that of a larger bust size... Only \$49.95... [they are a]vailable in three sizes – Small, Medium and Large.

...THERE'S always something we'd like to change about ourselves. It might be that your hips are too big or your boobs are too small. Or it could be that your legs are too short or your nose is too big. It's a girl thing. For those whose biggest hang-up is their buxomness – or lack of it – help is now here. It's a boob job but it won't cost thousands of dollars and there's no risk of leakage. Silicon Valley – a new bra in the... Intimates range, boasts a \$50-boob-job-in-a-bra. It's the first Kiwi-designed push-up bra with silicon gel sacs that give the look of more cleavage without going under the knife... It's every flat-chested girl's dream – a bra that will increase their bust by up to two cup sizes. Push-up bras have been a rescue remedy for those who need a bit more oomph. But padding can be uncomfortable and at times resembles stuffed pockets of tissue paper. Silicon Valley gives the push but still feels real.

...*REVOLUTIONARY BREAKTHROUGH FOR [GALS]*... Introducing ERDIC, a natural plant-based food supplement uniquely developed to help support full, firm, beautiful breasts. It is a non surgical tablet programme that you are in control of and which lasts for 6 to 8 months... [or] longer.

...Available for the first time in N[Z], Volupta can help you maintain full, firm, beautiful breasts. Start now. Ask your pharmacist for Volupta capsules[and have more lift without special bras or expensive surgery (and the associated worry about leaks)].

...At least two N[Zers] have experienced leaking or pain from soya-bean oil breast implants... The Ministry of Health says 40 N[Zers] have received the Trilucent devices, which are favoured over silicone and saline implants because they do not obscure breast x-rays. The... Department of Health in Britain banned the implants on Monday after receiving 74 adverse reports, including rupture, leaking and inflammation. A[n

Auckland surgeon... had used about 15 sets of the implants in the past two to three years and in one patient the implant lost the soya-bean oil filling and collapsed. The oil had completely dissolved and had caused no... [problems. The patient] had asked for another Trilucent implant. [Another Auckland] surgeon... stopped using Trilucent implants 18 months ago because of his concerns about the company manufacturing them... Swiss company Lipomatrix... [O]ne of his patients had had some pain and [the surgeon] might consider taking the implant out.

...An Auckland[er] who had leaking breast implants removed in 1992, says compensation will help acknowledge years of pain and discomfort. "Carol", who did not wish to be identified, had implants inserted in 1969 as a result of pressure from her husband. "At the time I'd just had three children close together and it came down to self-esteem. Looking back, I know that was a bad decision." Over the years, the implants became "as hard as rocks" and caused burning sensations and pain. "It was just awful. I felt unwell all the time." [The wife] also had numbness in her toes and fingers. Compensation moved a step closer last week, with an announcement that American company Dow Corning had agreed in principle to set up a fund of about \$70 million for around 6000 A[US]n and N[Z] gals... but any cheques were still up to 18 months away. A Palmerston North [resident], "Mary", who... had her implants removed three years ago... [and] also did not want to be identified, said [it wondered if it]d live to see any payout. "I'm pretty ill with an auto-immune disease. Things have gradually got worse over the years. I'm in a lot of pain and I get so exhausted... I just want to be around when the compensation happens, but I'm frightened I might not be." ...But no amount of money would make her healthy again... [The Palmerston North resident] opted for breast implants 22 years after surgery to remove non-cancerous lumps.

...[gals] with breast implants have been warned of a new hazard linked with the cosmetic enhancement... A study of 3500 [gals] who had implants over a 28-year period found they were [3] times more likely to kill themselves than those who were content with what nature had given them. [Gals] who have cosmetic surgery are known to be prone to psychiatric problems, and the researchers say this link is likely to explain the high suicide rate rather than any effect of the implants themselves. The... finding adds to the risks of implants which have been debated for more than a decade.

...SILICONE breast implants have had a lot of bad press, but this week's British documentary *Storm In A D Cup* (Prime TV, 9.30pm, Thursday) looks at evidence that suggests breast implants can actually be good for [gals]. Feminists are not so happy with this news and neither is the significant number of [gals] with implants which they blame for everything from rheumatoid arthritis to chronic fatigue syndrome. But some recent research suggests that not only are the implants safe, they can also help prevent breast cancer.

...Most patients would be overjoyed to hear their doctor say the words, "you don't have cancer". When a specialist told [a Christchurch resident that last] July, her first reaction was one of relief... - [it]... didn't have a potentially fatal disease[, so it] wasn't going to die. But, as... [the patient (]who works for Statistics N[Z)] ...left his office, another emotion welled up - anger. It started to sink in that, if [the patient] didn't have cancer, her surgeon had removed her breast needlessly. "My sister had taken me to the doctor and I got in the car and said, 'I don't believe this'," says [the patient] who'd had a mastectomy the previous week. "I said, 'You mean to tell me they've put me through all of this and I don't even have cancer?' I was in a terrible state." ...[it] had had a lump in her breast since... her early twenties. [It]d earlier had another lump removed, which turned out to be benign. When the second one appeared, [the patient] was told it was also harmless and wouldn't need to be removed. "From time to time, over the years, I've had it checked but it was always all right." But, in June[last year, it] noticed the lump was sore and her breast was swollen... and was referred to a specialist on July 5[, when it] had a mammogram and an ultrasound, then a fine needle aspiration, which involves removing cells from the lump with a needle. "I went back the next day for the results and the surgeon told me malignant cells were present. I also saw an oncologist and they both agreed I needed a mastectomy. I asked if they could just cut some away to do tests on that before taking the whole breast but the surgeon said there was a risk of the cancer cells getting into the blood stream and spreading... As well as removing her left breast, the surgeon also took out her lymph glands, in case the cancer had spread to them... (Tests have since confirmed [the patient] had mastitis, an inflammation of the breast.) ...[the patient says it] has heard the medical profession believes a rate of 10[%] for misdiagnosis is acceptable. "How can any misdiagnosis be acceptable? I was never told this before the operation. In my opinion, every surgeon should ensure all possible avenues have been completely exhausted before removing a breast... To reconstruct the breast, they took skin and a muscle from my breast and pulled it to the front. I have to live with this for the rest of my life. To me, this breast is just a thing - it's very hard and it feels alien." ...[□ London d]octors and psychologists yesterday condemned plans by the parents of a 15-year-old... girl to pay £3250 to give her breast implants as a 16th birthday present... [The parents] insisted that the operation to surgically enhance their daughter's breasts would boost her self-confidence and improve her quality of life... [The mother], aged 40, who has had two breast enlargements as well as other cosmetic surgical procedures... said: "I want [my daughter] to feel confident about the way [it] looks and if that means having breast implants... I will support her... [My daughter] has the same shape and build I had... tall with a small chest and... out of proportion... and I know just how [it] is feeling..." ..."I had thought about having my breasts enlarged when I was 12, but when I was about to turn 15, I saw so many people having it done that I wanted mine bigger as well. Every other person you see on television has had implants. If I want to be successful I need to have them too[," the daughter said]... Her parents run their company, Grosvenor House Centre for Plastic Surgery, from their farmhouse home. Neither is a plastic surgeon, and they refer clients to doctors for surgery to be carried out. A Harley St psychologist who counsels [gals] about the effects of having cosmetic surgery... was... worried that the teenager wanted the breast operation so that [it] could be successful. "That is a very disturbing belief for a 15-year-old girl to have, and also a false one." ...a consultant plastic surgeon, said: "I find it hard to understand why any 15-year-old girls need surgery. If they do not like their self-image, a quick-fix solution is not the best answer." ...the consultant [the] family want to carry out the operation also expressed doubts. "At 16 the breast isn't matured enough and there are also a lot of psychological implications. If it doesn't change at 18 or 19 then we can think about it." [The mother] said after his comments: "If [our consultant] says 16 is too young then we will respect that and [our daughter] will have to wait until [it] is 18." A[n A]uckland plastic surgeon and reconstructive surgeon... said it was unlikely that a breast implant operation would be carried out on a 15-year-old girl in N[Z]. However, it also said there were no rules or laws to stop such a procedure going ahead... [with] parental consent...

A TV documentary showing teens getting breast enlargements on hire purchase has come under fire... [from the] Christian Heritage Party... [for sending] out bad messages... "Teenagers see shows like this and they just get ideas in their heads. They are very impressionable..." ...Reel Life: Perfect Breasts screened on TV One last week. It featured several British teenage girls talking about how they were saving for new breasts and how they were sure the surgery would bring them happiness. "You can get your boobs done on HP, or pop down the road in your lunch break, get a loan, make the appointment and have new breasts within a month," said one post-op teenager.

..."I didn't want to be bigger. I just wanted my breasts to look the way they did before I had children"... When [a cosmetic surgeon] enlarges your breasts, your own wishes will be a major part in deciding • your new size • the type of implant • the surface nature of the implant... • whether your implant goes under or above the chest muscle... • the site of insertion, knowing that you want the smallest scar possible... Sites for inserting the implants are... the areola (the dark skin around the nipple)[;] under the breasts - this site will usually produce a very obvious scar and is therefore the least popular with patients[;] the axilla (armpit)[; and] the umbilicus (belly button). These last two methods leave you with no scars on the breasts, therefore no evidence of having implants. The implants are put in place using [an] endoscope, the latest aid to accuracy and safety... Breast [s]urgery does not treat breast lumps or cancers - [practitioners] specialise only in breast enlargement, reduction and lifting.

...[of the Kiwis] who... opted for B-cup... implants in the 1980s... most now want C-cups. The average size of an implant in the 1980s was 200ml. It is now 350ml... But... while... those who want to be bustier believe even bigger is better[, more Kiwi gals]... want smaller breasts rather than bigger ones... There are 1000 breast reductions done each year in N[Z] - and only 300 breast enlargements.

...EXCESSIVE breast development is a problem that afflicts a significant number of [gals] and – to a lesser extent – [guys. Large-breasted gals] classically suffer from chronic back, shoulder and neck pain, muscle strain, tension headaches, deep strap marks, poor posture, skin irritation, breast discomfort... difficulty exercising and fitting clothes. They are also subject to humiliation and harassment, resulting in low self-esteem, depression and a reluctance to participate in many social activities. Heavy, pendulous breasts will aggravate osteoporosis, arthritis... and respiratory conditions, such as asthma. An effective surgical solution will dramatically change... lives. A common response after breast reduction... is, “This is the best thing I have ever done.” It is often followed by “I just wish I had done it sooner.” ...reduction mammoplasty, takes... two to four hours to perform... The operation takes place under general anaesthetic and most patients are discharged the following day. There is only mild to moderate discomfort for several days and approximately two weeks convalescence is recommended before returning to work... Complications such as infection, bleeding, delayed wound healing and loss of sensation, are uncommon... Breast feeding is possible after reduction surgery so [gals] should not be discouraged from having this operation before starting a family. The overall costs for breast reduction surgery vary from \$7000 to \$8500[in NZ, where h]ealthcare insurers... have difficulty recognising mammary hypertrophy... as a reimbursable medical condition... except where a balancing procedure is required after breast cancer surgery. These same companies, however, have no difficulty granting cover for [guy] breast enlargement or swelling of the scrotum (hydrocoele)... It is important to choose a qualified plastic surgeon who is familiar with various breast reduction techniques... The latest development is the use of an ultrasonic probe to remove the excess tissue through very small incisions.

...Hollywood folk are asking whether [the former *Baywatch* co-star (r:p1553, lns65-6)] had her brain size reduced together with the much publicised bust reduction. Their questions follow her decision to reunite with [the]abusive rocker... who did four months in prison for beating... [her. “The abusive rocker] loves me with or without the implants,”... coos[the actor who, ‘while in her early teens – and still a virgin – was raped by’ a trusted acquaintance]... The pair are living together again – and plan a second marriage ceremony... a wacky millennium wedding to be held at midnight, New Year’s Eve 1999... on the beach and in the nude... [W]edding guests will [also]have to be naked. [Incidentally, ‘a bride had to cut short her honeymoon after a breast implant moved out of place’...]

Gals] with breast implants should be banned from driving cars, said a German insurance company. When [one gal’s] implants burst from seatbelt pressure in an accident, [it] sued the driver of the offending car. □... Up to a quarter of [gals] seeking saline breast implants for cosmetic reasons end up having replacement operations within five years, U[S] federal health advisers have been told. The F[DA] will put the failure rate in brochures given to patients before surgery but the advisory panel... urged makers of the implants to better monitor their performance... 20[% of gals] seeking breast augmentation sought a second operation... because a hard capsule had formed around the implant. [Recipients] also requested new implants because they wanted to change sizes, or because of leaks and deflation...

There was a time [Hole’s] rock grunge chick... craved a more [bosom]y look too, but after a recent change of heart... had her breast implants removed. It might have been great news for the feminine cause, but proved a blow for animal protection – [the singer] brought the implants home as “souvenirs” and her poor dog ate one and died! ...■ [Since]... breast... implants... made of silicon... were revealed as a health hazard in 1995[, recipients have]... claimed silicon had caused them pain, fatigue and auto-immune connective-tissue disorders such as lupus...

Silicone breast implants do not cause serious diseases such as cancer, lupus, or other chronic disorders, but they are not entirely safe either, according to a report... by the Institute of Medicine, the medical arm of the non-profit U[S] National Academy of Sciences... “It is essential that [gals] fully understand these risks before they decide to undergo this surgery.” The most serious documented problems came from the tissue around the implants contracting, the implant rupturing, or an infection developing. Many [patients] had alleged that the silicone in the implants, which makers say is chemically inert, leaked and caused illnesses... But the Institute... committee failed to find any hard evidence to support them... “Syndromes of the type ascribed to implants generally involve symptoms that are nonspecific and common to the general population.”

...At least 3000 N[Z]ers have breast implants and a Wellington researcher is keen to find out how they feel about them... why they have implants and how they deal with conflicting information about the risks... [A] Health Services Research Centre study... will interview up to 25... [patients but won’t include any transsexuals, who] also provided a significant demand... Meanwhile... a cosmetic surgery junkie... [– who has endured] 35 operations... and... [says that:] “If you analyse [the]money over the time that I’ve spent it, it’s less than I spend on my hair every week... [(which is)] \$100 a week... because I have dark curly brown hair and I like to have it straight and blond[”] – is trying to increase demand in NZ)... On August 7, [the junkie will] be bringing her brand of surgically enhanced beauty to... a symposium at Auckland’s Stamford Plaza... [If the junkie was] a normal fee-paying client, [it] would have run up a bill of about \$80,000... [The junkie gets to spend less than normal clients because it] works as a sort of mobile showroom for... Clinical Beauty... travelling around A[US] and the world displaying the benefits of going under the knife. The clinic acts as a liaison between potential patients and cosmetic surgeons... “If any other organ in your body breaks down you don’t have any problems with replacing or repairing it. So why not? It’s not possible that people stay young without any assistance. It’s just not possible.” What about growing old gracefully, I suggest weakly. “It’s simply no longer realistic... We live in such an appearance-conscious society. I don’t even think of myself as being 52...” ...So what does the future hold? According to... the... president of the N[Z] Foundation for Cosmetic Plastic Surgery... in 100 years plastic surgery will look “incredibly primitive” because scientists will be manipulating the ageing process chemically and genetically. Expect significant developments in the next 10 to 15 years... [I also ask him] what’s wrong with holding on to our money and growing old gracefully? ...“We never have... All that’s happened is that technology has caught up with desire.” ...[● Tonight’s documentary.] PLASTIC SURGERY: GAMBLING WITH YOUR LOOKS... shares the shocking experiences of people who have gambled with plastic surgery and lost.

...A [Miami resident] has died after a botched underground plastic surgery operation to make her buttocks bigger.

...[last night] TV1’s *Reel Life* series... plung[ed] fully into the world of weird... with a piece on people who have plastic surgery to look like animals.

...Plastic surgery is not just about improving the looks of film stars... The last thing[the] hill-climb enthusiast... clearly remembers is gunning the “Rotary Rocket” into a sharp left bend on the Maramarua unsealed track. “But... I wasn’t scratched apart from my right arm which went out the window and got mashed.” That is an understatement. More descriptively it was “squeezed like a tube of toothpaste,” according to [a]Middlemore Hospital plastic and reconstructive surgeon... The injury was so severe that amputation could have been the outcome. But... [the] arm was saved by a combination of cosmetic and endoscopic surgery techniques in the first free tissue transfer of muscle done in N[Z]. The surgeon] and his team took muscle from [the patient]’s back and stitched it into the gaping forearm wound, using microsurgery to restore vital blood flow... Plastic surgery is sometimes scoffed at by the public, mainly because it’s associated with movie and TV stars having facelifts or breast augmentations. “But you have to first master the cosmetic to learn the reconstructive skills because form and function go together... We can now remove disfiguring lumps from a child’s face, for example, leaving little or no scar... I suppose that’s cosmetic in one sense, but... it changes and brightens lives.” [● ‘Plastic surgical techniques, total removal plus skin grafting, and tattooing have been used successfully to correct birthmarks (or *nevus*) – a skin blemish present at birth or appearing shortly thereafter that usually disappears without treatment. Such marks are either moles which may contain brown pigment, or an accumulation of small blood vessels called port-wine stains or hemangioma.’ ‘About 10% of babies have them on their bodies (they are more common in premature babies). Once their growth has peaked, the blood vessels begin to reduce in size and usually reduce by 80% by the age of 8 years. In some cases steroid injections can help reduce the size of a haemangioma. Early treatment may be necessary if the birthmark interferes with vision, breathing or feeding.’]

...THREE months after his face was bashed to pulp by a mallet-wielding “unhappy” client, [a]plastic surgeon... is still shaken by the memory... With two-thirds of his time spent on reconstructive surgery, most of it at Middlemore Hospital where [the plastic surgeon] is clinical director, and

the balance in private cosmetic work, [the plastic surgeon] was brilliantly placed for the best sewing and reconstruction job in town. And... got it... Today, just 12 weeks later, [his] ordeal is almost wiped off his face. Despite seven blunt blows to his head, causing blood to spatter all four walls of his surgery, only one scar is visible. And, within another couple of months, that will probably fade away, too. After his session on the other side of the scalpel, [it] is well placed to talk about a new no-holds-barred consumers' guide... published late last year by the N[Z] Foundation for Cosmetic Plastic Surgery... The beautifully produced book covers all aspects of plastic surgery... "It's really important for people to know that these procedures are not like nipping into the... hairdresser for a tint and blow wave. Cosmetic surgery can't be undone... Surgeons use knives. There's bleeding. People can die under the anaesthetic." Given the downside, and the commitment of ethical local practitioners to expose it, it's not surprising that N[Z]ers are cautious about taking the surgery option... However, say hairdressers in Auckland's more affluent suburbs, the tell-tale face-lift scars secreted in their clients' hair are... [becoming increasingly common]. "They're there all right – they just don't want people to know about it. And yes, it's a great idea. I've never had a client who didn't look a million dollars [after a lift] and I've never had one who was unhappy. It gives people their self-esteem and morale a really big boost. Clients say to me, 'I get up in the morning, look in the mirror and feel great'."

...There is a way for [gals] who are undergoing radiation or chemotherapy to do so without suffering a loss of control over the way they look. *Look Good... Feel Better* run workshops all over N[Z] to give these patients the products and techniques to face their treatment and the world with confidence. For many... it can be a turning point in their treatment, helping them face their therapy with renewed strength and willpower. *Look Good... Feel Better* is free to [use]... It is the charity of the Cosmetic, Toiletries and Fragrance Association, whose member companies donate over \$2.5 million worth of product annually. It helped over 1500 N[Z] gals last year and would like to help many more.

...Around ten years ago in the U[S], the daughter of the owner of one of the big cosmetic companies was diagnosed with cancer. When the side effects of the treatment started to affect the way [it looked, the daughter] felt as if [it] was losing her identity. Then one day, the people at her father's cosmetic company gave her a makeover, concealing the effects of the treatment and boosting her spirits immeasurably. [The daughter wanted other gal cancer patients] to feel the same surge in confidence [it] had felt, so independently approached the other large cosmetic corporations and *Look Good... Feel Better* was born... If you know someone dealing with these treatments, it can probably help them.

...My two-and-a-half-year-old grandson was watching me apply face cream. "What does that do?"... "Makes me beautiful," I replied. [Grandson] stood looking for a moment. Then... answered, "Well, it's not working, Nana." ...■ Make-up was first used about 100,000 years ago for camouflage.

...[Covering pimples with make-up can be tricky when you don't have zillions to spend. The problem is that if you have pimples, you also have oily skin and make-up doesn't adhere well to oil. Pimples are the result of a sensitivity to hormones, particularly testosterone, which both sexes have. When the hormones are released, their skin produces too much oil. The follicles in the skin can't deal with the extra oil and get blocked. Doctors believe this sensitivity is inherited. Washing your skin all the time isn't the solution, say beauty therapists, as the skin compensates for the lost oil and makes more! Dermatologists are skin doctors who have a range of treatments to solve your particular problem. Antibiotics and vitamin creams can be used effectively.]

...[antibiotics, x-rays, diet, and scrupulous hygiene of the affected areas are among the many methods of treatments for acne] – 'inflammation of the skin's oil-glands, producing red pimples.'] Speaking of p[imples, the daughter of a US singer (r:p1633, ln10)] is in danger of becoming a... pain. The six-year-old loves wearing make-up and has told Mummy [it] wants to start her own kiddie cosmetics line. M[ummy] thinks it's a great idea and is in talks with [a] pal... to make it happen. Spare us!

...*GROWING UP too fast* Remember when [the] child actor... of *Harry Potter* fame was a fresh-faced little cutie-pie? Now, at just 12 years old, the starlet has already morphed into a slinky young minx. At the world premiere of *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*... Hermione Granger... appeared more seductive than innocent schoolgirl... [(despite the director's) determination not to make the same mistake with the three young stars of the *Harry Potter* movies... [as it did when it introduced another child actor] to the world in his blockbuster movie *Home Alone*...)]... But if you think [the 12-year-old i]s looking too grown-up too soon, spare a thought for [a singer]'s daughter... At just six years old, [it]'s already a jet setter with her very own stylist who plots every clothing item from the hairclips down. Lately there's even been talk... [the] Little Material Girl... may soon launch her own clothing and make-up range. Then there's Britney[']s... little sister... Only 11, [s]is i]s already a navel-flashing show-off who never faces the camera without make-up. Just like her big sister the [11-year-old] has a growing army of young fans who want to imitate her... provocative clothes.

...Nowhere in the world are physical appearances more important than in Hollywood, where even the most beautiful can feel insecure about how they look. The glamour squad given the task of keeping the desired ones looking desirable are the hairstylists, make-up artists, fashion stylists and wardrobe assistants. It's big business. And it... has gone crazy with greed, say film studio executives. The... [people] who blow-dry, tease, style and paint the stars have become so rich and powerful, some of them make more money than their clients. Angry film studio bosses say they're now demanding star treatment for themselves. "It's extortion,"... By the way, [the gal star of *What Gals Want* had]... an \$11,000 make-over before fronting up to the premier... ([it] could've had surgery for that!)... The Oscar winner... wanted Paramount Pictures to pick up the tab – and they did. [Editor's note: 'globally, the beauty business is worth \$287 billion a year'...]

British gals 'collectively spend £3 billion each year on beauty products', and 'in Beirut gals spend 75% of their income on their looks.'

...*Cleopatra's mind much sharper than her looks*... In a satisfying modern twist to an ancient tale, it seems Cleopatra's legendary beauty owed more to her alluring personality than physical assets. An exhibition at the British Museum un.masks the first-century Queen of Egypt – long idealised as a stunner with lustrous hair, luminous eyes and a comely figure – as a stumpy, chunky [figure] with a hook nose and flaring nostrils. The exhibition, which opens next month, explodes one of our best-loved myths with a collection of ceramics, paintings, bronzes and caricatures which reveal a ghastly set of brown teeth, rolls of fat around the neck and an unusually prominent lower lip. Eleven sculptures, initially thought to represent less-attractive queens, have been identified as Cleopatra... The unflattering sculptures make Cleopatra look more like Cinderella's stepsisters than... the screen goddesses who portrayed her on film... They bear no resemblance to the ruler described by Roman historian Dio Cassius as "a [figure] of incomparable beauty," and by Plutarch as an irresistible charmer: "Her appearance, together with the seduction of her speech[, and]... her character, which pervaded her action in an inexplicable way, was utterly spellbinding. The sound of her voice was sweet..." ...According to [modern] historians... the Romans, embarrassed by Cleopatra's romantic success with their great leaders... created the legend of her looks, believing it made her accomplishments less impressive. Centuries later the plain Queen with a spectacular brain is settling the score... A clever leader, Cleopatra was expert at manipulating her image. [Cleopatra] was the only member of her family, the Ptolemies from Macedonia, who bothered to learn Egyptian so that [it] could talk to her subjects. [Cleopatra] left a trail of potent lotus perfume wherever [the Queen] went, and travelled the Nile river in a golden barge with red sails and silver oars. But... Cleopatra... was best known for seducing the Roman Emperor Julius Caesar and his general Mark Antony before killing herself in dramatic style by forcing a snake to bite her breast.

...Historians, scientists, moviegoers, lovers and dreamers can't seem to get enough of Cleopatra. More than 2000 years after her death in 30BC, [the]... Queen of the Nile... rules... [again] in... a two-part mini-series simply called *Cleopatra*... The movie is based on... the... novel, *The Memoirs of Cleopatra*... [by a gal who,] as a nine-year-old... developed... a "fatal fascination" for both... Egypt and... Cleopatra... This *Cleopatra*, [the author] says, will be the most accurate depiction brought to the screen. "I think... as a political leader, the flighty aspect of her is basically Roman propaganda that then got picked up by Shakespeare, where you have scenes where [Cleopatra]'s sort of idle and lying around eating grapes. In real life... [Cleopatra] wasn't really like that – although [it] was obviously very appealing, very charming..." Shot on location in Morocco and on London sound stages, *Cleopatra* has "the most lavish and largest" sets ever built for a TV mini-series. One tonne of copper was used to make the jewellery

and costumes... “Every scene we did in Morocco was massive. We used 13,000 extras over six weeks, 7000 horses, two kilometres of cloth...” [The actor who plays]... Mark Antony... thinks this film, like those before it, will offer up a Cleopatra seen in the light of the times. “[The original] version was about a modern vamp – a 30s post-suffragette, a liberated [gal. In the 1960s’] version, I think there’s a sense of the politics of the time, of U[S] foreign policy... and the blind reverence that was given to the Roman Empire... and here we are at the end of our century, a breath away from 2000, perhaps psychologically most prepared to deal with the metaphysical implications of this tale – the notion of channelling a goddess like Isis.”

...GOD, nature, fate – whatever you may call the force that drives our lives – seemed extraordinarily unkind when it decreed that the fine, broad mind of Iris Murdoch, novelist, philosopher and polymath, should crumble slowly in the grip of Alzheimer’s... Murdoch was in many ways a person of her generation. [Iris] was an active member of the Communist Party at Oxford, marched and spoke for nuclear disarmament at the big rallies in the 1960s, and was enormously influenced by Sartre and existentialism... [Iris] was a neo-Platonist, a respected moral philosopher, a popular and lively lecturer on the subject whose *Metaphysics as a Guide to Morals* (1992) is the best known of the four books on philosophy published after her first work, *Sartre, Romantic, Rationalist*, appeared in 1953 (revised and reissued in 1980 as *Sartre, Romantic, Realist*)... [Iris] wanted to put Plato “into a modern context as background to moral philosophy, as a bridge between morals and religion, and as relevant to our new disturbed understanding of religious truth.” A critic said her thought was “unique as a creative re-imagining of Plato in the late 20th century.” ...In a separate career, [Iris]... became... one of the most admired serious novelists in the second half of the 20th century, with a large and committed readership throughout the English-speaking world, despite the length of her stories and their often labyrinthine plots... Murdoch was born in Dublin in 1919 and moved to England a year later, but returned annually through her childhood to Ireland for holidays. [Iris] was plain, shy, an only child, and had no children herself – a recipe, one would have thought, for lifelong loneliness. But [Iris] had... a warmly companionable husband for 43 years... a professor of English Literature at Oxford... MURDOCH began writing fiction regularly at age 9, inventing people... to fill her lonely life. [Iris] wrote five unpublished novels before her first book, the work on Sartre, appeared. After that came 27 novels, including *The Sea, The Sea* which won the Booker Prize in 1978. [Iris] was... “involved in various causes.” Her greatest cause, doubly pursued in her twin roles as novelist and philosopher, was the pursuit of truth... “The novelist must serve society and tell it truths, do people good, open up imaginative reflection... We must preserve and cherish a strong truth-bearing everyday language, not marred or corrupted by technical discourse or scientific codes; and thereby promote the clarified objective knowledge of [humanity] and society of which we are in need as citizens and as moral agents.” ...[Iris] died this week.

...A tragic psychological disorder is making beautiful [gals] believe they are too ugly to continue living... For more than 30 years, Gina was hooked on the sight of her own reflection. But it wasn’t narcissistic vanity that drove her to spend up to six hours at a time gazing at her face in the mirror, looking for signs of even the slightest flaw. Gina* is one of just three per cent of the population known to suffer from a rare and little understood psychological condition called body dysmorphic disorder (BDD). The disorder triggers an irrational preoccupation with some aspect of her appearance and compels Gina to repeatedly check herself in mirrors... By her 40s – and with two broken marriages behind her – Gina had become so obsessed with her appearance that [Gina] even resorted to do-it-yourself face work, using tweezers to surgically remove bumps, or using needles to pop spots and pierce sores... ‘Over the years I created a lot of scar tissue, which I hated because I thought it would attract more unwanted attention. So I’d remove that too – slicing giant pieces of skin from around the area, leaving gaping wounds that required stitching. Amazingly, I didn’t feel any pain while I was doing it – I was too absorbed in what I was doing. But I’d feel really guilty or embarrassed when I had to explain my wounds – I’d blame them on car accidents or say that my cat had scratched me.’ ...The actual cause of this rare disorder is a chemical imbalance in the brain. While some sufferers of BDD are so revolted by their imagined ugliness that they can’t bear the sight of themselves and develop phobias of mirrors, others, like Gina, become addicted to them. And while some sufferers might develop an exaggerated dislike of some particular feature of their appearance, others become preoccupied with their entire body image – adopting bizarre and elaborate disguises... Most often surfacing during adolescence, aspects of BDD include anxiety, depression, panic attacks and sometimes suicidal tendencies... Tall, blonde and willowy, 20-year-old Carly has looks to die for. Yet the striking-looking student’s looks have almost driven her to suicide on three separate occasions. For when Carly* looks in the mirror, [it] doesn’t see the flawless complexion and picture-perfect smile that everyone else finds so attractive. Instead, [Carly] sees the face of a monster – shocking enough to make motorists crash their cars and ugly enough to reduce observers to tears. ‘I’m a monster – I was born that way and that’s just something I’m having to learn to accept... When I walk down the street, I know people are shocked to see something so ugly... They can’t believe someone like me would have the nerve to show my face, because such ugliness is confronting.’ This unshakeable belief has been Carly’s nightmare since [it] was 14... Carly is currently battling an urge to splurge on a costly make-up addiction, which condemns her to spend hours a day in front of the mirror, performing rituals to improve her ‘flawed’ face. But now [Carly] has found the courage to tell... her tragic story, in the hope that [the student] might encourage other sufferers to get help before it’s too late... and everyone involved in the story, including the photographer and reporter, can attest to the fact that [Carly] is a strikingly attractive young [perso]n.

...How to find out if you’re hot or not... Dare to expose yourself to the ultimate truth? It is horrible, strangely addictive and a phenomenal success. The insecure need not apply. “Am I hot or not?” is the latest internet sensation, a new website created just over a week ago by two unemployed Californians... [that] offers people the chance to be judged for attractiveness... or lack of looks... A series of anonymous pictures of [guys and gals] are presented to the viewer who is then invited to vote on their attractiveness on a scale of one to 10. Over a thousand people of all ages have sent in their photographs to the virtual beauty pageant and watched their scores fluctuate as complete strangers assess their looks.

...If you’re a [guy], at some point a [gal] will ask you... “How do I look?” ...You must be careful how you answer this question... Because you will never come up with the right answer... Most [guys], I believe, think of themselves as average-looking. [Guys] will think this even if their faces cause heart failure in cattle at a range of 300m. Being average does not bother them; average is fine... This is why [guys] never ask anybody how they look. Their primary form of beauty care is to shave themselves, which is essentially the same form of beauty care that they give to their lawns. If, at the end of his daily beauty regimen, a [guy] has managed to wipe most of the shaving cream out of his hair and is not bleeding too badly, [it] stops thinking about his appearance and devotes his mind to more critical issues, such as the Super Bowl. [Gals, however,] do not look at themselves this way. If I had to express, in three words, what I believe most [gals] think about their appearance, those words would be: not good enough. No matter how attractive a [gal] may appear to be to others, when [that gal] looks at herself in the mirror, [it] thinks... that at any moment a municipal animal-control officer is going to throw a net over her and haul her off to the [dog-]shelter. Why do [gals] have such low self-esteem? There are many complex psychological and societal reasons, by which I mean Barbie. Girls grow up playing with a doll proportioned such that, if it were a human, it would be 2.3m tall and weigh 37kg, of which 24kg would be bosoms. This is a difficult appearance standard to live up to, especially when you contrast it with the standard set for little boys by their... action figure... dolls... Most... that my son played with... were hideous. For example... Buzz-Off... was part human, part flying insect. Buzz-Off was not a looker. But [Buzz-Off] was extremely self-confident. You could not imagine Buzz-Off saying to the other action figures: Do you think these wings make my hips look big? But [girls] grow up thinking they need to look like Barbie, which for most... is impossible, although there is a multibillion-dollar beauty industry devoted to convincing [them] they must try. I once saw a show... wherein [a] supermodel... dispensed makeup tips to the studio audience. [The supermodel (r:p21, ln16)] had all these middle-aged [gals] applying beauty products to their faces[, while stressing] how important it was to apply them in a certain way... [The studio audience] dutifully did this, even though it was obvious to any sane observer that, no matter how carefully they applied these products, they would never look remotely

like [the supermole], who is some kind of genetic mutation. I'm not saying that [guys] are superior. I'm just saying that you're not going to get a group of middle-aged [guys] to sit in a room and apply cosmetics to themselves under the instruction of [the star of films such as *Seven Years In Tibet*], in hopes of looking more like him. [Guys] would realise that this task was pointless and demeaning. They would find some way to bolster their self-esteem that did not require looking like [the instructor]. They would say to [the instructor]: ...what do you know about LAWN CARE, pretty boy? [Ironically, if a guy was to try and pretty himself up with make-up, most gals would consider him undesirable!]Of course, many [gals] will argue that the reason they become obsessed with trying to look like [a supermodel is that guys], being as shallow as a drop of shit, WANT [gals] to look that way. To which I have two responses: 1. Hey, just because WE'RE idiots, that doesn't mean YOU have to be; and 2. [Guys] don't even notice 97[%] of the beauty efforts you make anyway. Take fingernails. The average [gal] spends 5000 hours a year worrying about her fingernails; I have never once, in more than 40 years of listening to... [guys talk about gals, heard one say that a particular gal] has a nice set of fingernails... Anyway, to get back to my original point: if you're a [guy, and a gal] asks you how [it] looks, you're in big trouble... [even if the gal] suspects that you're not qualified to judge anybody's appearance... because you have shaving cream in your hair... Obviously, you can't say... bad. But you also can't say... great, because [the gal will] think you're lying, because [it] has spent countless hours, with the help of the multibillion-dollar beauty industry, obsessing about the differences between herself and [a supermodel]... The best technique is to form an honest yet sensitive opinion, then collapse on the floor with some sort of fatal seizure. Trust me, this is the easiest way out... • A psychological study in 1995 found that three minutes spent looking at models in a fashion magazine caused 70[% of gals] to feel depressed, guilty, and shameful.

...Did you know... • The models in the magazines are airbrushed – they're not perfect! ...• [Models have been known to 'swallow tape-worms to stay thin']... • Models 20 years ago weighed [8%] less than the average [gal]. Today they weight 23[%] less... • The average western [gal] weighs 65kg... and wears between a size 12 and 14... • Marilyn Monroe wore a size 14... • If shop mannequins were real... they'd be too thin to menstruate... • If Barbie was a real [person, it]d have to walk on all fours... • One out of every four university-aged [gals] has an eating disorder... • There are three billion [gals] who don't look like super models and only eight who do.

...Today [the waif] can earn \$20,000 a day and has a fortune worth more than \$6 million[, plus]... homes in London, Paris and New York... [The waif] appeared in her first Klein campaign at the age of 19 and almost single-handedly sold CkOne and Obsession to the difficult younger market. Within a year CkOne had outsold every other perfume including Chanel No 5 and... Opium, which [the waif] also promoted. This month C[k put "her] of cheekbones-to-die-for" into... denim... The jeans... are, as you would expect, baggy, but that's more a reflection of the current penchant for low-slung styles than her physique. [However, at] the Paris Fashion Show last week[, the waif] looked stunning in a cocktail dress of wet-look sequins as they flashed and clung to her curves – yes, curves. And... [the waif] also... sported a tan. Even this was healthy – it came out of a bottle.

...In 10 years of modelling, [the waif]... never walked down a catwalk sober. Talking openly... about the drug and alcohol problems that forced her to check in... to the exclusive... £300-a-night... Priory rehabilitation clinic, the 25-year-old... said [it] and... fellow models would smoke cannabis and drink from dawn to dusk... "In France and London we... smoke pot all day, but things got out of control... I kind of lost the plot there a little bit..."

...Last week British supermodel [the waif] admitted to a decade of drugs and champagne. This week [the waif] has ended her lucrative contract as the face of C[k. The waif] and the fashion giant decided by "mutual agreement," after six years of catwalk appearances and advertising campaigns, not to renew her contract. Her agents insisted [the waif] had not been fired for her party-girl lifestyle.

...Supermodel boss bares fangs and quits... It was not so much a case of biting the hand that fed him as wrenching off the whole arm and sticking it in the mincer... [The chairperso]n of the biggest model agency in the world, has announced his resignation with an interview in a French magazine denouncing all models as arrogant spoilt pains surrounded by idiots and leeches. The fashion industry is no stranger to the odd temper tantrum but... [the g]uru's outburst... was greeted with disbelief at the weekend... [The guru] founded Elite in 1971[and] was... famous for attracting big names to his company, including... [the supermole,] by flattering their egos and making them feel special. But... [the guru told VSD it] disliked all the supermodels and no longer had the patience to suck up to them. [The guru] admitted that his decision to step down was partly based on a documentary about the agency which led to the resignation of... [its] European president, after [the president] was filmed propositioning a reporter posing as a model and offering her money for sex.

...TWO model agency bosses have quit after a TV inquiry into an under-age sex and drug scandal. Elite[']s... European president – the ex-husband of [a]supermodel... – and one of his senior executives... quit after a BBC documentary team went undercover... [The president] was secretly filmed offering [a]BBC reporter... who posed as a model, around \$1000 for sex... The fate of at least two other Elite executives lies in the balance. Another agency depicted in the report tried to stop the programme from being shown... [A t]op British model, [aged]... 20, has been suspended by the Paris agency Marilyn after being captured by the film-makers taking cocaine... The film, which will be shown on TV One's Assignment tomorrow, also showed [the president saying it] planned to have sex with girls wanting to become models, after a fashion contest in France in which the average age of participants was 15... The director of the Elite Model Look beauty contest... has also quit.

...All's fair in Latin beauty factories... [The] 23-year-old architecture student... who will represent Chile in the Miss Universe[beauty] pageant on Wednesday, spent much of [last month] dashing back and forth between English classes, wardrobe fittings, skin cleanings and massages. When... [the 23-year-old] was not running to the beauty salon, where a machine squeezed toxins out of her legs and into her bladder, [it] studied videos of earlier pageants. [The 23-year-old] spent other days getting fitted for the short two-piece dress – made out of Chile's No 1 export, copper, and weighing 12kg – that [it] will wear. The contest will take place in Trinidad and Tobago. If organisers have their way this will be the last year Miss Chile winners will have to scramble to prepare for the Miss World and Miss Universe pageants... [A] 36-year-old public relations head for a local plastic surgeon, is coordinating the creation of the Miss Chile Agency, which will seek to compete with "beauty factories" in other countries – primarily Venezuela. The agency, which will cost about \$1.5 million a year, will... accept about 25 [beauties] a year who are between 18 and 25 years old, single, childless and at least 1.65m tall. It will not charge them. In fact, it will pay them, and will even provide free plastic surgery if they want it. The plan is based on the practice in Venezuela, where being a beauty queen is considered a profession and where plastic surgery is the norm, not the exception, for contestants... [As one Miss Venezuela plastic surgeon put it: 'A plastic surgeon doesn't play God, but was created by God to fix His imperfections, the things God didn't get right first time round.'] Venezuela holds more international beauty crowns than any other country, the Miss Venezuela Organisation says on its Internet Website. The organisation selects [prospects] from modelling schools and whisks them away to a boot camp of strict diets and runway classes. Dental and plastic surgeons nip and tuck to produce a creation that fits that year's concept of beauty. Venezuela's annual national beauty contest is one of the country's most watched televised events. Some winners go on to careers in entertainment, such as... Miss Venezuela 1996, who entered the soap opera scene. In March... Miss Universe 1981, won the governorship of oil-rich Venezuela's prime tourist spot, Margarita Island, in the Caribbean. "Venezuela is the master. We are still students," [Miss Chile Agency's public relations head] said. But Chile has a good start because it prizes beautiful [gals]. It is a country where young [gals] in high heels and elastic dresses that are shorter than the span of daylight in a north Alaskan winter serve coffee to [white-collar guys] standing at counters surrounded by mirrored walls.

...“I'll do anything,” [the former beauty queen pleaded with a] super-producer... while auditioning for a TV job... “Just don't ask me to jump out of helicopters!” [Her] plea was soon deafened by the roar of rotor blades as [the former beauty queen] sat at the door of a chopper 300 metres aloft with a bungy cord tied to her ankles. Jumping out of that helicopter helped the former beauty queen land the role of daredevil presenter on *Mountain Dew On The Edge*. Now, as [the former beauty] celebrates clocking up 300 episodes on Sky 1's *Lion Red Sportscafe*, it's hard to remember a time

when [her face] wasn't on our screens... "It's been a long time... But it's been a good time, because I haven't had a really high profile or anything like that, it's just been a job. I've only been calling it a career in the last five years." Once upon a time, [the gal] worked as a PA for a car dealership. A career in TV seemed like a dream reserved for the famous and fabulous. All that changed after [it] entered Miss N[Z] in 1988 – and won. "I was so shocked... Then someone sat me down and said 'listen, here's an opportunity. You've got to run with it. Make of it what you will because if you don't do anything, nobody's going to do it for you.'" When *Sale Of The Century* arrived as our first five-nights-a-week game show, [Miss NZ 1988] came with it as a TV model. But [the former beauty] wanted more. When *Wheel Of Fortune* came along, [it] won the role of co-host... "That was the year that I learned that hassling was the way to go... T[V] was not necessarily about talent and academic skills, it was about being in the right place at the right time and hassling the right people. I'm the first to admit that my first couple of years in TV were just horrendous. But I learnt and grew, and now I've done some awesome things in my life." On *The Edge* kicked off a string of out-and-about shows... Having earned her sporting reputation, [the former beauty] landed her role on *Sportscape*... Strangely, after 300 episodes, [it] claims never to have watched herself on the show. No doubt [it]'s seen her bio on the show's website, which includes the comments: "Position: Navigator. Special Talents: Quite obviously. Qualifications: Not knowing or caring about drift defences." [The former beauty] says *Sportscape* needs someone who isn't necessarily an expert on sports. "I'm sort of there as the girl who doesn't know everything, because there are a lot of people watching it who don't know... So you really do need to simplify things, and to me that's quite an important role." ...These days, [the former beauty]'s as busy as ever... [– in addition to being] a member of the *Sportscape* team [it's] ja... presenter of the *Lipstick Lunch* on Radio 91ZM. And just to make sure [it]'s on her toes, [the now married former beauty] is also mum to [two boys, aged] three, and... one... "I... tell you what, I'm the best ideas person in the world but I'm the laziest dog ever. I'm one of these people who wakes in the middle of the night and jots things down on my pad – but taking that into fruition, making something come of it... well, it's just a [case] of... being content with where I've been for the past 12 months, which is part-time work, part-time mum."

...[NZ's LATEST] BEAUTY queen... is on a mission from God. The[reigning] Miss World N[Z] is a devout Christian and Sunday school teacher. Despite having no modelling or beauty contest experience, [it] scored a miracle win at last month's national pageant. "I know that it's God's plan for my life... I had never thought about entering before and didn't tell anyone except my family and a few close friends. I was amazed when I won." ...[the] Auckland law student and keen netballer, will compete in London for the Miss World contest... TV2 will screen the contest. The 1.76m beauty queen, who lives in... South Auckland, is already sharing her faith with other contestants. "When I went away for a week with the Miss World NZ pageant, I shared a room with two other girls... My bed was by the light and every night I refused to turn the light off until I had read aloud from the Word for today. When I go to the Miss World contest, I will be with 80 or 90 other [girl]s. I might be the only contact they will have with a Christian so it's an awesome opportunity to share my faith."

...A beauty queen stripped of her title amid rival allegations of religious bias and rigged voting will represent Croatia after all at this year's Miss World beauty pageant, the organiser said yesterday... before describing the affair as a circus. "We have got enough real problems in the world trying to fight hunger and so on, without worrying about two beauty queens." ...[following] a compromise solution... the contest's original runner-up... will represent Croatia at the pageant in 1999... [However, the] matter may not even rest there. [The stripped beauty queen] is now considering going to court to have her title reinstated, her lawyer said.

...It's a sham, says disillusioned Miss World N[Z] of her prize... "[Last year's Miss NZ] was given hers in one lump sum. I've been given half and I won't get the rest until the end of my 12 months, provided I've not breached my contract... Last year's winner... was at the centre of a family feud... and I'm paying the price for it. I don't resent her but a lot of controls have been placed over me. [The Miss NZ franchise owners] are on the defensive now." The [franchise owners] say they are deeply hurt by [her] accusations. They've only held the franchise... for two seasons. Their introduction to the world of national beauty pageants was marred by the fracas surrounding [last year's winner] – and now this. "[This year's winner thinks it's] under this cloud. I don't know what [it] expects – to be in the media spotlight every day? ...We... feel very betrayed... We are really and truly doing the best we can... We were asked to give financial backing but we decided if anyone was going to go broke, we'd go broke ourselves... We're \$30,000 in the red... We're looking to promote our girls as ambassadors for their country more than beauty queens. Why is nobody interested any more?" ...If [this year's Miss NZ] had been crowned 30, 20 or even 10 years ago, [it] would have been a much happier beauty queen [(although, since being loaned a car, fashionable clothing and jewellery by various companies – after complaining on *Holmes* that it hadn't been rewarded enough – this year's Miss NZ is a bit happier now). The Miss NZ's of the 1960s and 1970s were household names. They toured the country doing shows and taking part in charity events. They made the covers of magazines. Miss N[Z] 1963... remembers, "...When I was crowned, I was sent to Miss World and Miss International. The runner-up went to Miss Universe... I travelled with shows throughout the country and people flocked to them. I did fashion parades at department stores and there were hundreds of people waiting outside the doors. I still have people come up to me today and say, 'You're [Miss NZ 1963]'. But in 1963, I don't think there was TV in N[Z] so people flocked to live shows. Today, people can sit in their lounge and watch beautiful girls on ordinary TV programmes any time they want. I don't think people losing interest has anything to do with feminism... But I think there are too many Miss N[Z]s around now. There should be just one..."

...[the 20-year-old who was] runner-up in the 1997 Miss World contest, is engaged to... a Latin multi-millionaire 30 years her senior... "It's the perfect relationship," [last year's Miss NZ] told *Sunday News* from Milan... "Love has no age, so the age difference doesn't matter as far as I'm concerned." ...The pair, who met in Christchurch 18 months ago, divide their time between... palatial homes in England, Italy and the south of France... [The 20-year-old], who had the modelling world at her feet after her pageant triumph, has turned her back on the industry... [In related news, the] new Miss World... was raped while in Italy for a fashion show last month. British newspapers reported yesterday that the owner of a travel agency had been charged with the attack.

...Miss World, an 18-year-old Israeli... has gone public to encourage other rape victims to come forward. The assault took place... nearly two months before [the 18-year-old] was crowned Miss World in the Seychelles. But [full] details were only released yesterday after a suspect was detained in Israel and a court lifted a gag order. The suspect... has not been formally charged and has denied the allegations[, but]... an Israeli judge refused to release him while the police continued investigations... [The suspect], aged 43... runs a travel agency in Milan, while his wife and three children live in Israel[, and] was arrested last weekend at Ben-Gurion International Airport when... [trying] to enter Israel... In [her statement, Miss Israel claimed to have been] in Milan last autumn to audition for modelling jobs, but decided to cut short her stay. [Miss Israel] asked the suspect to arrange a flight back to Israel. [The suspect] told her that there were no flights from Milan to Israel and that [the 18-year-old] would have to catch a plane in Rome. The suspect then told her that trains to Rome were booked and offered to drive her to the capital... [T]he travel agent stopped the car outside Milan, pulled a knife and raped her in the back seat of the car... then tied her up, taped her mouth shut and tried to suffocate her with a plastic bag and a rope. "I struggled with him... and finally... [the rapist] released me and asked me not to contact police,"... Once [they reached Rome, the 18-year-old] filed a complaint with Italian police and upon her return to Israel, also notified Israeli authorities who issued an arrest warrant and began extradition proceedings. After [the 18-year-old] won the Miss World title, an Italian reporter remembered that an Israeli model had filed a complaint with Italian police, checked the name and discovered... it was [the same person]. Stories about the assault also appeared in British newspapers. But the case was not reported in Israel because of a gag order... [The new Miss World] wanted to serve as an example. "[Gals] who are assaulted must react to the crimes committed against them, even at the price of some public exposure, so that these

incidents do not become an accepted, routine part of our lives.” [The 18-year-old] dismissed rumours that those involved in the Miss World pageant had been aware of the assault and granted her the title out of pity. “I won the Miss World title in my own right, and not as a result of charity.”

...a nice pair of legs has triumphed where years of meaningful debate have failed. The Miss Israel pageant last week sparked a spirit of camaraderie between the country’s Jews and Arabs when [a] 21-year-old became the first Arab... in the pageant’s 49-year history to win the title... Stressing that her crowning had nothing to do with politics... [the] Muslim... declared, “The judges picked me because they thought I was the most beautiful.” Others saw deeper meaning... [The PM said her] selection was a “manifestation of equality and cooperation between Jews and Arabs in Israel.” Note to U.N. delegates: “When all else fails, try an evening wear competition.”

...MISS WORLD – YOU DECIDE. For the first time, viewers can vote to crown this year’s Miss World (via international phone numbers given during the broadcast)... [during] next week’s pageant in Sun City, South Africa.

...Miss World makes history [A] Nigerian... has been crowned Miss World, the first black African to take the title. From 93 contestants, [the Nigerian, aged] 18, took first place ahead of... [the contestants from] Aruba, and Scotland... The pageant, held in Sun City, South Africa... was beamed to a projected global audience of 1.2 billion. “I am so happy. It’s a wonderful feeling and it’s indescribable... I know back home they were all watching out for me and I am happy I made them proud,” [the Nigerian] said... adding that [it] would continue her studies as a computer scientist as well as carry out the functions of one of the world’s most beautiful [gals]. Before being crowned [Miss Nigeria] said with a smile “black is beautiful”. There have been only three winners from Africa – two were white South Africans. The third was from Arab Egypt. For the first time China had an entrant... ■ [IN] NIGERIA... Unarmed village [gals] holding 700... workers inside a[n]... oil terminal let 200 [workers] go yesterday, but threatened a traditional and powerful shaming gesture if the others try to leave – removing their own clothes. “Our weapon is our nakedness,” said... a representative of the [group] involved in the extraordinary week-old protest at ChevronTexaco’s giant Escravos terminal. Most Nigerian tribes consider displays of nudity by wives, mothers or grandmothers a damning act of protest that shames those at whom it is aimed. About 600 [villagers] are holding the facility... The takeover began when 150 [villagers] managed to sneak into the... pipeline terminal. They have blocked the airstrip, helipad and port that provide the only exit routes from the facility, which is surrounded by rivers and swamps. The [villagers], most from the nearby communities of Ughorodo and Arutan, want the oil giant to hire their sons and use some of the region’s oil riches to develop their remote and run-down communities, most of which lack electricity. The occupation has halted the facility’s oil exports, estimated at nearly a half-million barrels a day, which account for the bulk of the company’s Nigerian production. The company says it will not affect production quotas... About 100 police and soldiers are at hand to protect the facility, but are under strict orders not to harm the [protesters].

...Hundreds of unarmed [mothers and grandmothers] occupying a ChevronTexaco oil terminal agreed yesterday to end their eight-day siege after the company offered to hire at least 25 villagers and to build schools, electrical and water systems and other amenities. But the[ir]... representatives said they would wait until the verbal agreement was put in writing and signed before they withdraw from the... facility in southeastern Nigeria.

...[NZ’S NEWEST] BEAUTY queen... will fly to the Miss World pageant in Nigeria... [The beauty queen] was criticised for wanting to attend the pageant when [a] Nigerian... is to be stoned to death for having a child out of wedlock. But [Miss NZ], 18, has decided to go, saying [it] will achieve more... that way. “I... believe we can make our voices better heard by attending Miss World and speaking out publicly on her behalf. But I will not be going with empty hands...” [Miss NZ] has... set up a website... containing a petition [it] plans to give to Nigerian officials... [Incidentally, a South Africa actor who’s n]ot known for her heavyweight acting talent... [ha]s surprised Tinseltown by scoring a role A-listers would, er, kill for. [It]’ll play the lead in *Monster*, about real-life serial killer Aileen Wuornos, a lesbian and prostitute who boasted of bedding 250,000 [guys. Aileen] killed seven truck drivers in a nine-month spree, and was executed last month.

...[NZ’s P]M... rejects any suggestion that next month’s Miss World pageant in Nigeria played a role in saving a Nigerian... from death by stoning. On Saturday, Nigerian officials lifted the death sentence... The reigning Miss World N[Z]... had earlier rejected demands to boycott the... pageant, saying [it] could do more to save the [Nigerian by attending. The NZ PM] said the pageant organisers could not claim victory. “I personally don’t think the Miss World contest going ahead has been terribly helpful. The international publicity has been very damning.” ...N[Z] was one of many Governments which made formal representations. The Nigerian Government’s pledge to spare [the 31-year-old]’s life is designed to placate international opposition and prevent any more contestants from joining the nine who have threatened to pull out in protest at the death sentence.

...It was 50 years ago this week that Eric Morely came up with the idea for Miss World – as a one-off publicity stunt to promote the Festival of Britain. [Eric] died last November, aged 82, but his widow... is still full of energy. “I’ve been rushing around trying to get the company back on its feet again... We have developed a new concept for the show and we’re discussing ways we can do something positive for the contestants’ education, with scholarships.” ...It may come as a surprise to hear that the [perso]n who married Eric Morely in 1960, and who has been heavily involved with Miss World since 1969, should have harboured such dreams to change it. For years, [Mrs Morely] was the “mother hen” who protected the girls from the press, made sure they were chaperoned, who, while her husband was announcing the results “in reverse order,” operated backstage with military precision... [D]espite having been number two in charge of a competition long accused of being a sexist “cattle market,” M[rs M]orely has always supported [gals] behind the scenes... [The] former model... coined the phrase “beauty with a purpose;” ...banned the revelation of the contestants’ vital statistics; and when the tabloid newspapers splashed a reported affair over their front pages... spoke up for [gals] everywhere, saying: “I figure that a [gal, like a guy], is entitled to have a private life.” Now M[rs M]orely says that although [it] had “enormous respect” for her husband’s wisdom, their aims did differ. “I didn’t feel comfortable with swimsuits on stage. Not because I thought there was anything wrong with them, but I thought that you don’t generally feel comfortable if someone’s interviewing you in a dinner jacket and you’re in a swimsuit.” Miss World was very much of its time when it was invented; very much the brainchild of one [guy]... There were 23 girls in th[e] first contest... No one from African or Asian countries was represented... The prize money was £1000 and the bikinis caused a storm. A year later, an American organisation started Miss Universe, and Morely vowed to continue with Miss World so the Americans could never say they got there first... In 1970 history was made at London’s Royal Albert Hall. While Bob Hope was busy making sexist jokes on stage (“it’s been quite a cattle market – I’ve been out there checking calves”) a group of [gals]’ liberationists prepared for action. A football rattle resounded through the hall, loud and untraceable. Hope, halfway through a sentence, looked up from his mike, suddenly startled. At that moment, from behind him comes a bursting flour bomb. H[ope] turns around, like a rabbit in headlights, and runs for the wings. There were stink bombs and tomatoes thrown too, though they are invisible in the grainy images of the archives. In fact, the physical sabotage looks rather low-scale, but as a piece of activism it was a triumph... The 1970 demonstration did not have an immediate effect on Miss World, in the sense that the contest continues to this day.

...[the contestant] from the N[SW] Central Coast, was last night chosen as the last Miss A[US]. The winner was crowned at a gala ball at Melbourne’s Crown Palladium. The Miss A[US] quest, which began in 1926, has been wound up, with its organiser, the A[US]n Spastic and Cerebral Palsy Association, deciding it is no longer relevant.

...BEAUTY pageants are losing their shine as fewer [girls] line up for the chance to wear the winner’s crown. The Miss N[Z] pageant... to be announced in next week’s *Sunday Times* has only seven entries for a national competition of regional finalists. It’s a huge decline for a pageant that normally boasts double that figure... When Miss N[Z] was televised in the days of frosted hair and puffball skirts it was every girl’s dream to become a beauty queen and parade the catwalk, a glistening diamond crown atop, smiling her American smile while draped in a sea of sequins. In the early 80s the pageants were the stepping stones to a career in the limelight. Some of our most well-known TV faces... are... former-beauty queens who made their debuts on the catwalk. [The contestant] who made the top five in the Miss N[Z] 1988 pageant, doesn’t think beauty pageants

do... any harm, so long as they're not judged on... looks alone... The Miss N[Z] pageant launched... her... career. The organiser of the show, then an executive at TVNZ, told her they were always looking for new talent and to get back to him. "And I did. I kept calling for six months. Eventually something came up... [when t]hey made the show Sale of the Century. [The runner-up] eventually got the job hosting Sale[– taking over from Miss NZ 1988, who is now]... host of TAB Sports Cafe... [–] and hasn't looked back... Miss Mount Maunganui[, who]... made history in 1983, when [i]t... became the first – and only – Miss N[Z] to ever be crowned Miss Universe... has had her own modelling agency, grooming school and image consultancy and has recently written a book – *Beauty: The truth about fashion, beauty and image*... Since TVNZ cancelled televising the show... they've suffered... [T]he Miss N[Z] franchise... owner... hopes TVNZ will come on board again, restoring popularity and enthusiasm to the pageant.

...*Beachgoers still flock to beach beauty pageants as though [feminists] had never burned their bras. Family fun or a tragic relic of days that should have gone by?* ...PICTURE a provincial beach resort, late December, early January. Peak holiday season. Yet the camping ground's deserted. Row upon row of empty caravans... Shift focus to the nearby park, domain or sound shell. Suddenly the air's pungent with sun-screen, throbbing music, shafted with wolf-whistles. Every [father, mother], child and red-blooded youth in the area is revelling in that quintessential element of... coastal culture – beach beauty pageants. Political correctness has [been] dealt a body blow... Yes, there are girls in bikinis. So? What would you expect to find at the beach – girls in moon suits? ...Beach pageants are many things to many people; a fund-raiser for the service and community groups who present them, a fine family day out. Possibly a smart career move. Certainly a perverting opportunity. Something to do. To people of a certain age, they're a nostalgia trip. The music's the same; the instruments in other hands... It is an "electrifying" experience for the girls. But for organisers, the business of rounding up prizes, judges and contestants demands about six months of "full-on hard work"... [However, the] only sandflies in the ointment that [one] organiser... can recall have been the few feminists who once went "round the back" and failed, even there, to make a nuisance of themselves; and the lads who compromised the integrity of a Hairy Legs competition by exhibiting their backsides to the sound shell. That category was introduced after young [guys] began expressing an interest in entering the Miss Mt Maunganui contest proper[(a guy recently won a major beauty contest for gals in AUS!)]... The current Miss Mt Maunganui is [a] 19-year-old business studies student... of Auckland[who]'s won or been placed in most of the competitions... since joining the circuit about a year ago. "I just enjoy them... But a lot of the girls do them because they can earn money." A[n] Auckland dental assistant... is such a one... "I don't think there's any other reason I would do it... I'm not an exhibitionist." At 21, [the dental technician is] getting "a bit old and a bit past it," but at the height of the season... can still make an easy \$1000 a week. Last year, [the dental technician] won \$12,000... However, most of her prizemonies came from nightclub bikini contests, a far raunchier and generally better remunerated kettle of fish than your seaside pageant. "The beach contests are a lot more wholesome. You... try to look sexy because it's all part of wearing a bikini, but you don't cross the line. You have to respect the fact that there are young kids in the audience."

...The big question in Thailand's offices and bars is, "Who is more beautiful – the new Miss Thailand or Miss Tiffany?" Most say Miss Tiffany... wins hands down. The fact that [Miss Tiffany] is the 18-year-old winner of a... transsexual and transvestite beauty contest proves that looks are only skin deep, and has led to public debate about the position of the "third sex" in Thai society. Suddenly offices, factories and universities are awash in gossip about gays, gender and cross-dressing. [One u]niversity lecturer... said: "My colleagues have all been talking about how a [guy] can be more pretty than a [gal] and just what a [gal] is these days. In Bangkok it all seems to be getting rather complicated." ...an analyst for a hotel chain, has no doubts about Miss Tiffany's appeal. "Miss Thailand is pretty good but Miss Tiffany is much more beautiful. Her face and skin are perfect, probably because of all the operations. I'm not gay but if [Miss Tiffany was a gal] I would approach her." Miss Tiffany would argue that [it] already is a [gal] thanks to a series of sex-change operations. The gender debate has hit the headlines because for the first time Thailand's Miss Tiffany Universe contest, featuring 40... contestants, was aired on national TV. Millions watched... the... finals[, which] were deliberately timed to steal the limelight from the Miss Thailand... contest and its 60 competitors. Held the previous day, the Miss Thailand pageant is traditionally massively popular. Feminism has made few inroads into... Thailand and most Thais are proud of the worldwide reputation their [gals] have for their looks. The pageant is enshrined as a national institution. The new Miss Thailand, ...a medical student, not only won \$40,000 but gets to keep the \$15,000 diamond necklace, her crown, a car and household goodies. Winners are guaranteed fame for life, with previous Miss Thailand's slipping into jobs in the Army or on TV as presenters, models and actresses. But this year the Miss Tiffany Universe contest was every bit as spectacular as its rival. Organisers kept a lid on the contest's traditionally camp and cabaret elements to give the pageant a more mainstream appeal. The judges were told to select winners on the basis of how feminine they were, both in looks and personality, with the winner going to Miss Gay Universe... in the US for the first time. [A gay] rights advocate, lecturer and contest judge... said extra care had been taken to select a winner because the country's international reputation was at stake... The publicity is now forcing Thais to consider how they view and treat the country's increasingly open transvestite and transsexual community. Most Thais call crossdressers... katoeys – a disparaging term... They are typically the butt of cruel jokes, typecast by most TV soap operas as screaming and hysterical, or forced into the sex industry to serve homosexual sex tourists. Hundreds work in the cabaret industry, which offers transvestite shows in all the major tourist resorts. Dozens of others have met foreign [guys] and now live abroad. Western visitors to Thailand are often shocked by the number... of Thai transvestites and gays and the apparent femininity of many Thai... [guys, who] think nothing of wearing hairbands, lipstick and long varnished nails in public. The numbers have variously been attributed to the high value placed on tolerance in a Buddhist society, the absence of sexual taboos, or even the lack of fathers in family life. In Patong, Bangkok's raunchy red light district... customers are often warned by fellow sex tourists to establish the sex of the "bar girls" before using their services. "These days the only give-away is the size of their hands and feet, even their Adam's apples can be sorted out with an operation... Stories abound of [tourists] hopping into bed with a girl only to get a rude surprise." The country's most famous Thai kick boxer... has also been doing his bit to promote the blurring of the genders. Last year the reluctant transvestite told his supporters: "I don't want to fight any handsome [guy]. I just don't want to hurt him." But [the transvestite] would typically kick and punch his opponents into submission before giving them a peck on the cheek. Doctors have so far refused to perform the sex-change operations [the kick boxer] wants, telling him to wear [gals'] clothing first to see if [it] really wants to become a [gal. The kick boxer] is not being welcomed for a forthcoming exhibition match in straight-laced Singapore, where the country's police say his transvestism could have an "undesirable influence" on children. Bangkok, on the other hand, has no such scruples. It is the sex-change capital of the world. A complete set of sex re-assignment operations can be done for as little as \$12,500 at a host of hospitals. One doctor has performed more than 1000 such operations over the past decade. However, the lack of centralised record-keeping means no one knows how many [guys] have switched sex... Despite such openness towards transsexuals and transvestites... [the] country's new constitution, which affords [guys and gals] equal rights, has not yet been tested by transsexuals. The Interior Ministry has yet to tell its registration officials if transsexuals are permitted to change their[sex on] ID cards... This means they are not given protection afforded to [gals] under Thai law.

...*'Miss France' splits fraternity*... Once [the person in question] was a warrior, a doughty defender of freedom. In a short time, her fate will be sealed: [the person in question] will become a supermodel, perhaps a game show hostess. A symbol of anorexia or the autocue: it's a pity the [person in question] herself wasn't consulted on her own future. The [person] in question is Marianne, the effigy of the French Republic for the past two centuries. The mythical figure, a common feature of French life, is facing a remodelling as the new millennium dawns – and at the same time... is igniting a raucous debate over who or what should embody the ideal French[gal]. The face of Marianne adorns French stamps; her bust is in every town hall; and her figure is used as shorthand by artists whenever they need to represent France in a cartoon. [Marianne] is best known abroad through the... painting in which [it] is portrayed as a bare-breasted, rifle-toting combatant leading the people to liberty. Marianne fell in and out of

political favour during the upheavals of the 19th century, when the republic alternated with the Napoleonic dynasty and the restored monarchy. But [Marianne] staged a comeback in the early 20th century, sometimes stripped of her revolutionary headdress, the Phrygian bonnet, and with her dress and features changing with the times. Thirty years ago, the authorities seized upon the idea of using a star for the head of Marianne to make the figure more popular. The first sculpture... evolved... in 1978, and... [again] in 1985. Now, in... deference to the spirit of democracy, the country's 36,000 mayors have for the first time been able to elect their choice directly. But the shortlist of five candidates drawn up by their association unleashed a torrent of accusations that French [gals] risk being portrayed as pouting, insipid and brainless... The row over the millennial Marianne is unfolding against a wider debate on the role of [gals] in France.

...Until last week, Palestinian [gals] had played only supporting roles in military and terrorist operations, though the Koran states jihad – holy war – can be carried out by [gals] as well as [guys]. But... after the first [gal] Palestinian “martyr” of the intifada blew herself up in Jerusalem[, dozens of Palestinian gals]... have begun volunteering for military operations against Israel... Wafa’a Idris, a 28-year-old Palestinian medical assistant, killed an Israeli pensioner and wounded more than 100 others when a bomb [it] was carrying detonated in one of Jerusalem’s busiest streets... The bombing appears to have ended a social taboo and even the most conservative Islamist groups have come to appreciate the propaganda benefits of fem[inine] recruits. Idris’ attack was carried out in the name of the Al Aqsa Martyrs, a group affiliated to [the PLO leader]’s moderate Fatah faction. At her local Fatah headquarters, an official said: “There is no doubt that this is a turning point. It has given [gals] a burst of enthusiasm to join the fight...” Investigators now believe Idris accidentally detonated the bomb while carrying it to a [guy] colleague and had no intention of killing herself. According to the Koran, on the day of judgment a shahid, or martyr, of either sex will face no reckoning and will be guided into paradise by a beautiful nymph. Some Muslim clerics also preach a martyr will be looked after by 72 houris, the beautiful virgins of paradise. The promised bliss has no sexual connotations. [Gals] who put themselves forward to become martyrs say they would be content with being in paradise and expect no specific reward. The changed mood has caused chaos at military and police checkpoints. [Palestinian gals] have rarely, if ever, been searched in the past. But at Kalandia checkpoint between Jerusalem and Ramallah, soldiers have been attempting to cope with the new threat. When a young Palestinian [gal] refused to open her jacket for inspection, a [gal] soldier was summoned, arriving an hour later. More than 2000 Palestinians, including hundreds of [gals], poured through the streets of Al Amari refugee camp in Ramallah last week to join a symbolic “funeral” for Idris... [by] following an empty coffin draped in a Palestinian flag... [A local gals’] activist, said: “What happened is liberating for us. There have been many [gals] who had the intention to do this before now but they were afraid that society would not accept them. Now they feel they can do it because Wafa’a has shown the way.”

...Carried away by history’s current... It was Friday afternoon in the Kiryat Hayovel neighbourhood of south Jerusalem. At the Supersol market, the Sabbath rush was on. Shoppers pushed their carts past shelves stripped of bread and matzos for the weeklong Passover holiday. Inside the entrance, a middle-aged security guard stood, carefully searching bags. At 1.49pm, 17-year-old Rachel Levy... stepped off the bus from her nearby apartment on a quick trip to buy red pepper and herbs for a fish dinner with her mother and two brothers. At the same time, another girl – strikingly attractive, with intense hazel eyes – walked towards the glass double doors. The teenagers brushed past each other as the guard reached out to grab the hazel-eyed girl, whose outfit may have aroused suspicion. “Wait!” the guard cried. A split second later, an explosion tore through the store, sending bodies flying. When the smoke cleared and the screaming stopped, the girls and the guard lay dead. Ayat Al Akhras and Rachel Levy never knew each other, but... grew up less than 6km apart. One had spent her life in the grim confines of the Dehaishe refugee camp outside Bethlehem, a packed slum where 12,000 people live in poverty and frustration. The other lived in the shadow of a sleek mall filled with cinemas, cafes and boutiques. In another time and another place, they could have been schoolmates, even friends. But the intifada cast them in the role of adversaries and, ultimately, executioner and victim. Mostly, the world has been accustomed to one kind of suicide bomber – the angry Islamic [guy] driven by visions of paradise who martyrs himself as [it] kills infidels. The story of Ayat Al Akhras may signal a new and terrifying phase – the spread of suicide bombing to all levels of society. Ayat, 18, was raised hearing stories of Israeli aggression and Palestinian flight. Her mother... and... father... grew up in a tent camp in the Gaza Strip, where their parents had fled from Arab villages near Tel Aviv after the 1948 war... Like many Palestinian girls her age – even smart, ambitious ones – Ayat was eventually drawn to the cult of martyrdom. For the first year of the intifada, suicide bombings were the province of Islamic radicals, who accepted only [guy recruits]. Gals could not become suicide bombers, the Hamas and Islamic Jihad leaders maintained, because a [gal] travelling out of home without her husband, brother or father breached Islamic law. The rule was ironclad, though Hamas['] spiritual leader... conceded: “We will start using [gals] when we have run out of [guys].” Last year the secular Al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades embraced suicide bombings as well, believing they would inflict far more pain on the Israelis than guerrilla warfare, hastening an end to the occupation. They started a unit for [gal] recruits. Wafa Idriss, a divorced, 26-year-old ambulance worker from a Ramallah refugee camp, became the first [gal] suicide bomber. Many girls in the Dehaishe camp rejoiced that [gals] were playing a role in fighting Israeli occupation. Even the youngest children were affected. “Since last Christmas, the girls don’t want dolls,” says... a professor of psychology at Bethlehem University. “All they want are guns and tanks.” Ayat’s anger peaked when Israeli forces rolled into Dehaishe... On the evening of March 8, neighbour Isa Zakari Faraj and his daughter were playing when [Isa] was shot through the window by Israeli troops. “When Ayat saw me and our cousin carrying Isa past the doorway, [Ayat] screamed out in pain,” says her brother... Isa died in their arms. Faraj’s death had a powerful impact on Ayat. Soon after, her friends believe, [Ayat] either sought out or was approached by... Al Aqsa... Experts say her self-discipline and intelligence made her a natural candidate. [Ayat] probably needed little psychological preparation, which helps to explain why [the 18-year-old] did not vary her daily routine in the weeks before her death. As the hour approached, though, [Ayat] made little attempt to hide her hatred of Israel, or what [it] saw as Arab passivity. Days before her operation, [Ayat] secretly met at least one accomplice from Al Aqsa who videotaped her final message and dropped it off at a Bethlehem TV station after her attack. Backlit, with her head wrapped in the black-and-white checked kaffiyet of the Fatah movement, [Ayat] reads from a prepared statement in strong monotone: “I say to the Arab leaders, ‘Stop... failing to fulfil your duty. Shame on the Arab armies who are sitting and watching the girls of Palestine fighting while they are asleep.’” ...On... Thursday night, March 28... Ayat’s fiancé dropped by as usual, spending an hour having tea and talking with her family before returning home. Ayat, her father said, stayed up all night, apparently studying in her room. Palestinian schools are normally closed on Fridays, but the students in Dehaishe had lost two weeks during the Israeli Army’s March incursion. At 7.30am, Ayat gathered her books and hurried out to school. “[Ayat] said, ‘Please wish me well on my test today’,” her mother remembers. “Then [Ayat] waved goodbye.” At the end of classes that morning, Ayat’s closest friend... was struck by her parting words. “[Ayat] said, ‘I’m going to pray in Al Aqsa. I won’t see you any more.’ I asked her, ‘Are you going to do something, are you going to do some operation?’ But [Ayat] said, ‘No, no.’” Ayat went along footpaths and through fields, skirting Israeli checkpoints and crossed unnoticed into Jerusalem. Palestinian sources believe an accomplice was waiting in a car. [Ayat] was given her belt of explosives and driven to a dropoff point near the Supersol market. [Ayat] was so composed that [the 18-year-old] shooed away two Palestinian[s]... selling herbs and scallions in front of the supermarket. Then walked purposefully toward the door, where the security guard may have attempted to block her path. At that moment, Rachel Levy brushed by. Ayat pressed the detonator, blowing herself in one direction and Rachel in the other. [Rachel’s mother] knew something was wrong when [it] heard sirens... immediately phon[ing] her sister, who switched on the radio and relayed the report of a bomb at the Supersol market. [Rachel’s mother] screamed, “My daughter is there!” and rushed with her son to the scene. Hours later [Rachel’s mother] identified her daughter’s remains at the morgue... The first Ayat[s]... family knew of her deed was when Palestinian guerrillas gathered outside their home to fire their guns in her honour... Though convention calls for a martyr’s father to express pride in the act, [Ayat’s father] seemed as

overwhelmed by grief as [Mrs] Levy. “Words cannot express the pain I feel,” [the father] mumbled, staring down at a studio photograph of his daughter taken in front of a fake cityscape of lower Manhattan, the Twin Towers above her head. Ayat’s fiancé seemed as uncomprehending as her father. “If [Ayat] had just told me what [it] was planning, I would have stopped her,” [the fiancé] said softly. “May God forgive her for what [Ayat] has done.”

...Deadlier sex Iraq[’s] dictator... uses hit squads of seductive... agents to kill his opponents abroad, says the British Foreign Office. The assassins, chosen for their looks and loyalty to the regime, are sent from Iraq to home in on their targets – the so-called honey trap. Many of the [assassins], who have been sent from Iraq to Britain, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden, were originally belly-dancers and actresses...

THIS story absolutely stunned me – I still can’t believe it’s true... [T]he British army is paying for 12 of its soldiers – fem[inine ones], presumably – to have breast enhancement because the soldiers hate their small breasts. It’s true – 12 of them at around \$8000 a pop. Apparently the army is prepared to cough up for the ops because unhappy soldiers don’t make good soldiers. Maybe not, but surely self-obsessed tarts with hang-ups about their hooters don’t make for very good soldiers either. If they’re that focused on their chests, they’re going to be easy to crack if they’re captured, aren’t they? ...This would have to be the most irresponsible use of a defence budget I’ve ever heard. And now I’m told that as well as adding a bit here, they’re prepared to pay to take a bit away there. Breast reductions are also funded because – as any big girls can tell you – they get in the way... Could it be that someone out there working on the British tabloids is pulling our tits with this storm in a b-cup story? ■... [the AUS]n Defence Force chief... has again backed the principle of [gals] serving in combat units, saying the focus should be on individual capability... [The] Admiral... said combat effectiveness and performance in the field related to the physical and mental competence of personnel, regardless of gender.

...[US gals] have been challenging [guy] domination of the political and business establishment for decades. Now they have begun to infiltrate another, far more contentious bastion of [guy] power: the Ku Klux Klan. A report from the Southern Poverty Law Centre – a respected and well-funded group that tracks racist groups in the U[S] – says that the role of [gals] in the far-right movement is changing. From compliant helpmates, cleaning, cooking and stitching the white robes and caps of their [guy]-folk, they are taking on leadership positions themselves. Eventually a [gal] could gain the dubious distinction of becoming the first [gal] Grand Wizard... One reason for the trend is that [gals] now comprise 25[%] of the membership of far-right groups and up to half of new recruits. [One leader], who started the [Gals’] Frontier section of neo-Nazi group, the World Church of the Creator, 15 months ago, is cited by the law centre as saying: “For years it seemed that a white [gal]’s role in the racial movement was to write to lonely prisoners and stand behind their boyfriends without much of an opinion about anything... Everyone is starting to realise that if we are going to overcome this struggle we are going to have to do it together – [guys and gals] – side by side.”

...A new book paints a grim picture of life as one of the girls in the gang... BEING abducted and gang raped by eight [guys] in 1980 began 10 years of hell at the hands of a local gang for a young South Island[er]... “Pansy”. Intimidated into silence by threats [Pansy] and her family would be killed if [it] spoke out, the 17-year-old failed to report the rape and was soon to become property of the gang. Repeatedly raped, beaten and degraded, her body now bears the scars of burns and the tattoos of gang insignia. Eventually [Pansy] tried to escape for the sake of her baby boy, but was caught, hacked with a machete and left for dead. “There were times when I could have committed suicide. I didn’t want to live any more. I had no hope. You become cold. It’s like... someone’s cut your heart out,”... Her harrowing account of life in a gang is one of 10 in a new book, *The Girls in the Gang*, by [a]Christchurch researcher... and University of Canterbury sociology lecturer... w[ho] is uniquely equipped for the task: in 1972 [it] married an associate of a bike gang, whom [it] now calls... The Bitter One. During their years together [the wife] suffered regular beatings with fists, sticks, an electric cord and knives, as well as being kicked with steel-capped boots... In 1991, [the wife] ended up in hospital bleeding profusely from the head, covered in bruises, with a perforated eardrum and more than 30 cuts to her feet where he[r husband] had stabbed her with a kitchen knife. [The wife] swore not to return home and moved into a [gals’] refuge. Her husband was committed to a psychiatric hospital under a compulsory treatment order. Her determination to understand what had happened led her to enrol at university in 1994 and [it] also became an accredited worker for Stopping Violence Services. [The lecturer] hopes writing about the effects of gang violence on [gals] will bring greater public understanding and support for both [guys and gals] wanting to leave gangs. “With [gals] from gangs or violent relationships, the focus is on why they stayed. I think that’s wrong. Let’s celebrate the [gals] who get out and make such profound changes. Let’s look at how they make those changes and what they have learned about themselves in the process. These [gals] are so brave – they are survivors,”... Pansy’s partner was charged with her attempted murder. In spite of gang attempts to stop her testifying in court, [Pansy] did so and helped send him to prison. [Pansy] still fears gang reprisals but has formed a new relationship and is optimistic about the future. Most of the [gals] in the book – often propelled by a combination of broken family upbringings and drug and alcohol problems – chose life with a gang voluntarily... [The lecturer] said most of the [gals] in her book were pulled towards gangs because they provided a sense of identity and purpose – they were a substitute family. Once involved, the[y]... tended to accept beatings and abuse because they had seen so much of that at home. That was “just the way life is”. “It’s an indictment on families and society at large that our young kids would choose that sort of life or choose to be a street kid or glue sniffer.” The gang culture [the lecturer] describes is one where [gals] are totally subservient to their [partners]. “Lily”, whose mother was a heavy drinker and prostitute, dropped out of school in the third form and fell in with a member of an ethnic gang. [Lily said the gals’] main roles were to cook, look after children and provide sex. “You had to practically keep your mouth shut,” said Lily. “You see nothing, you say nothing.” ...[the lecturer] is the first to admit not all gang members and associates treat [their partners] badly, and some gangs had changed in the past 10 years. “Gangs have become more business-orientated and, by and large, [gals] are treated better and gang rapes are less frequent than they once were – in some gangs, rape was banned.” However, [the lecturer] believes the gender dynamics of gang life are fundamentally still the same... [The gals’] refuge chief executive... said while gangs might say violence against [gals] was lessening, her perception was her organisation was seeing a growing call on its services from [gals] with gang affiliations. “And the ones we’re seeing are just scratching the surface – what about the other ones out there living lives of misery?”

...Ten [gals] interviewed about their involvement – for between two and 35 years – with gangs say that even if they leave, reporting the violence to the police is not an option. Nor can they go to some [gals’] refuges for help, in case they are tracked by gang members and put other [gals’] safety at risk. The [gals’] accounts of their involvement have been documented by [a]Christchurch Stopping Violence Service facilitator... who spoke at this week’s Beyond Violence conference in New Plymouth... In her study the [gals’] names were changed to those of flowers and all contact details destroyed after the interviews to ensure [the participants’] safety... “It doesn’t matter where you go or what you do, there are too many... gang members... they’re everywhere,” said Pansy. “You can’t hide.” Even police have “a degree of cautious respect” for some gangs’ intelligence operations, and their ability to find people. [A]Christchurch gang liaison officer... said some gangs had complete dossiers, including photos, of their enemies. “Christchurch gangs are crack researchers and are able to find information on almost anyone. They are very good at using publicly available information to track people down,” [t]he... Detective... said. Some of the [gals the lecturer] interviewed said the hardest part of gang life to handle was the emotional abuse from other [gals – some of whom] are also used to set... up [victims] to be “blocked” – gang raped.

...[Gals’] groups are outraged that a jury let a [guy] off a charge of murdering his partner because [it] provoked him by complaining to the police about being beaten up. The case in the High Court at Wellington has brought calls for a change in the law to stop what the Labour justice spokes[person]... described as a “travesty of justice.” “It seems to me absolutely to defy common sense that a person... beaten so badly that [it] was taken to hospital, who then complained to the police, could have that complaint... used to reduce the seriousness of the offence and the length of the

sentence.” Rape Crisis also condemned the decision... as incomprehensible... sa[ying] it sent a dangerous signal to [gals] agonising over whether to go through the right avenues in response to domestic violence. [However, the] Minister of Justice... [said] the Government had no plans to review the law on provocation... The judge... did not question the jury’s decision, but... said... the verdict itself involved “tempering the law with mercy”...

How do some [guys] violate a fundamental [human] value and beat the [gals] closest to them? ...The answers may be disturbing, because the justifications and excuses employ some commonly held beliefs and values. One particularly strong influence on some [guys] who use violence is that of a certain masculinity epitomised by the “macho...” image... Participants in... studies indicated that to be... “macho...” meant that the [guy] had authority in the home... was the breadwinner (whether... earning or not), the protector and that what [the guy] said was right. If any member of the family questioned his authority [the guy] had the right to exercise his authority over them[and] claimed legitimacy for his superiority because of his greater physical strength. We would like to think that such traditional values went out with the 1950s but they are alive and well among various members of the community and they can sometimes influence unwittingly the actions of [guys] who strongly support fair treatment for [gals]... Before we condemn such thinking... consider this: the exercising of violence for disciplinary reasons has only just been removed from our schools and it is still widely endorsed by many adults as a means of controlling children. When... [guys] use the justification of “discipline” for violence against their partners, they are simply positioning their partners as children and employing a socially endorsed excuse for violence... Another socially endorsed excuse for... violence against [gals] is that of provocation. Provocation is endorsed by the courts as a fair excuse for violence... In our research, some [gals] who have experienced violence from their partners noted the[ir partners] used violence against them if they thought they had glanced at another [guy. A gal’s] sexual power was construed by some [guys] as a provocative threat... and a powerful incentive to isolate the [gal] from contact with others in the community... Furthermore, because provocation is seen to be a legitimate excuse for violence this justification creates sufficient ambiguity about the circumstances of the [guy]’s violence to silence any questioning of his actions... Another excuse commonly used... to justify... violence against [partners] is “it takes two to tango.” This little commonsense statement hides a mass of myths and erroneous assumptions. It assumes an egalitarian relationship in which exchanges are of equal influence... Secondly, “it takes two...” assumes that a [guy]’s violence occurs as a result of escalating conflict with his partner. It became very clear from the [gals] we interviewed that their partner’s violence was often quite unpredictable. Indeed, some [guys] said their violence was sometimes an act of revenge for a transgression they considered the[ir partner] had made some days earlier... Thirdly, just as with provocation, “it takes two...” assumes the [victim] holds some responsibility for the violence. The assumption of her responsibility is often the very thing which holds [victims] in the relationship. They are intent on providing the “perfect love” – exhausting all their own actions which might be interpreted as causing the violence in order to return the [guy] to the loving, non-violent person [it] seemed to be at the outset of the relationship. The hope of change is a powerful binding influence on the [victim]. When we assume the [victim] holds some responsibility we collude with the [guy] in his expectation that [his partner] should be the one who changed, and in his avoidance of his responsibility for his actions... These are a small sample of the social values and supports used by some... to protect the [guy] from acknowledging the harm... done, not only to his... partner but to the children who experience, witness or hear his violence.

...Domestic violence is a cruel reality for many families. I’m sick of seeing and hearing it around neighbourhoods. I’ve tired of ringing the police over the past year at the request of a victim of domestic violence who is equally violent to her own kids. Her husband often beats her and the kids. Then the wife beats him and yells at him for beating the kids. It’s been a month since I last intervened in one of their fights. The sight of their domestics always paralyses me and I can only help by calling 111 at the victim’s request. Each time is scary and I did a lot of deep breathing the last time. That experience, plus knowing other [gals] over the years who have stayed in violent relationships, has made me rethink my ideas about domestic violence. My new way of thinking is that [gals] who stay in violent relationships are as culpable of the violence as the [guys] who commit the abuses. I’m not in any way absolving the [guys] who kick, punch, beat and mentally torture their other halves. They are the lowest common denominators in our communities. But I don’t believe it’s simply a case of victim and perpetrator. Granted, it does start off as that. But as a relationship evolves gradually and the violence continues, I’ve noticed how the abused spouse and the abusive spouse start to feed off each other. Somewhere in this feeding frenzy, the abused spouse starts to look less a victim and more a partner in their violent struggles. At that point, the only victims I see are the children. I asked a friend who is a family law solicitor if [gals] who stay in violent relationships are as much to blame as the abusers. “It’s a difficult one. It’s not that clear-cut. A lot don’t have financial means to leave, especially if they’re on a benefit. There’s usually so many other factors to consider like the children, their home, money...” But what about the [gals] I know who have left violent relationships and agreed with my new way of thinking? “It’s easy to say that when you’re out of that situation. But when you’re in the middle of it, it’s hard to see that you do have a choice, that you can do something about it.” Maybe in many cases, but not all. I still maintain that there are [gals] who knowingly “enjoy” the violence at a deeply sick level, and stay as long as the sex is great, irrespective of the damage to their kids... [□ F]igures, revealed in a N[Z] Herald-DigiPoll survey, reflect a problem that has seen convictions for assault on [gals] increase by more than 150[%] in the past 10 years... At the same time, the survey of 860 people taken this month found that nearly one in eight [guys] had been on the receiving end of violence from a partner. Although all the evidence shows that it is invariably [gals] and children who suffer at the hands of [guys], an Otago University study indicated that young [gals] are more likely to strike the first blow – out of frustration and because they are victims of previous domestic assaults... Confirming A[US]n research showing that [guys] hit to gain control and [gals] to express frustration, the Dunedin study found [gals] who hit first were 10 times more likely to have been victims in the past. Conversely, [guys] who had initiated violence in the past were 19 times more likely to be struck first in the next row. The Dunedin authors believe that [gals] think less about the consequences of hitting because they know these will be less severe. [Gals] are unlikely to cause injury, and therefore the [guy] is unlikely to call the police... The results mirror American studies that were bitterly contested by [gals’] rights activists... The... manager of the Saftinet service for domestic violence victims, fears these statistics will be used to trivialise the experience of the “splattered [gal] it] sees daily. “Who’s frightened of whom?” [the manager] asks.

...*When home becomes a battlefield* The most violent place in N[Z] is not under an All Black ruck or late night in a dangerous bar. It is the family home. From 1988 to 1997, convictions for what police call “[guy assaults gal]” – domestic violence – increased by 168[%]. Last year 5054 [guys] were prosecuted for domestic assault, and 1000 more faced less serious family violence charges. Family Court applications for protection orders have averaged 616 a month for the past three years – 154 a week... Mostly it is [guys] – often fuelled by alcohol – who perpetuate violence, but [t]he... police family violence coordinator for Waitakere, North Shore and Rodney and a veteran of scores of domestic violence call-outs... has arrested [gals. The coordinator has also] found solo mothers living in fear of their own children, and recalls one... who had locks on her bedroom door to protect her from her violent children. [The]Senior Sergeant... is part of an industry which picks up the pieces of damaged lives and broken families. Frontline workers include crisis teams with welfare, health and family skills. Behind them are hundreds of volunteers who answer emergency calls, make late-night visits to victims or attend to children’s needs. The services all complain of being stretched, and believe the country ignores this epidemic at its peril. The police response has stiffened in the past few years. Officers arrest where once they might have warned, and intervene when they might have backed away. The latest trial initiative involves trying to stop the cycle of violence, where youngsters exposed to abuse go on to commit violence... Police National Headquarters, says there is solid evidence that domestic violence has long-term effects on children. N[Z]’s Domestic Violence Act makes it an offence to allow children to witness physical, sexual or psychological abuse in a family setting. The one major N[Z] investigation in this area revealed that 75[%] of children in [gals’] refuges who had seen their mother abused had severe behavioural problems. Last year 10,000 children, mostly under 10, spent time in refuges, sometimes returning again and again.

...*REFUGE FACTS IN 1997*... • Refuge received 299,079 telephone calls about our services... • Refuge made 45,545 contacts with [gals] and children (up 14% from 1996). • Refuge filled 123,061 beds throughout the country. • 7,274 [gals] asked for Refuge's help. • Refuge helped 10,331 children deal with violence in their homes... • Refuge workers travelled 1,266,308 kilometres to bring [gals] and children to safety... • Refuge advocates... worked 177,579 paid... [and] 410,048 unpaid hours... N[Z]'s fAmILy ViOLeNcE StATiStiCS ArE ENOUGH tO MaKE yoU SiCK. ArE ThEy ENOUGH tO MaKE yoU GiVE? Please post your donation today. No collector will call. Donations can also be made on our \$20 Appeal Line...

[Teenage girls] are heading in increasing numbers to Auckland [gals'] refuges... in attempts to escape from troubled relationships... Speaking of [troubled relationships, the wife of the President of the United States] is embroiled in yet another sex scandal – but... can't blame her husband... For this time, the love affair which has been so painfully exposed is her own. According to [a] former live-in governess... the [person] who is now America's First [Wife] had a long-term relationship with a married [guy], Vince Foster. Some say the affair began soon after [the First Wife] was hired by Vince's law firm, in 1977. Certainly, it became known by the mid-1980s among aides... It finally ended on 20 July, 1993, when Vince took an antique pistol to a suburban park and shot himself. "Everything about this is a horrible story... But from the dreamy looks [the First Wife] gave Vince and the way [it] talked about him constantly, I guess [the First Wife] was in love with him, in a way [it] never was with... [her husband. The First Wife makes herself out to be] a passive little wife... but has a much stronger personality than [her husband, who the wife] saw... as this big, old mound of moulding clay – someone [it] could boss around and get elected from his little-bitty state to the Presidency. "If [the then Arkansas Governor's wife] hadn't had that ambition, I'm sure [it would] have pushed Vince to get a divorce... I remember once, we were in the car... and [the then Arkansas Governor asked his wife] a question about the Supreme Court. [The wife] snapped, 'You ignorant son-of-a-bitch. Vince would never need to ask me that – Vince is an intellectual.' [The First Wife despised her husband]. But, I think, early on... made up her mind... to have it both ways – to keep the marriage to the [person who] was going to [become] president and to keep her lover. [The First Wife] is a great manipulator and seemed to expect everyone, even Vince's wife... would go along with the arrangement..." In 1993, [the First Wife] persuaded Vince to move to Washington and accept a top job at the White House. [Vince agreed, leaving his wife] in Little Rock. But shortly after his appointment, [the First Wife] was incensed when Vince was unable to cover up a White House embezzlement scandal. For three weeks, [the First Wife] refused to see him or take his calls. [The former governess] believes this is what plunged him into his final black despair. "Vince wasn't the kind of machine [the First Wife is. Vince had] made this huge sacrifice, moving to a strange city for her sake. It must have been unbearably hurtful to him to be dropped by her." [Vince's wife] refuses to be drawn on her late husband's affair with [the First Wife]. "If they did, who cares now?" is all [the widow will say. But the governess] believes, since the First [Wife] is now campaigning for a seat in the US Senate, people have the right to know. "How can [voters believe that the First Wife] wants to do great things for them when [it is] so cruel to the [people] in her own life? I think the only [person the First Wife] cares about is herself."

...[I was] sitting on a plastic swivel chair in an office-come-storeroom littered with coat hangers, cigarette packets and snaps of waifish [models. The guy] was sitting opposite on the floor with mohair jackets and sparkly, cocktail numbers hanging around him. It was the first time I'd been 'out the back' in the clothing store and it was under slightly undesirable circumstances. Slightly? Well, highly undesirable and embarrassing circumstances actually. This meeting was the appendage to a fling, which lasted all of, well, one week. The subject for discussion was STDs. I was adamant about my own cleanliness, so if anyone had caught anything, then it was *I* from *him*. I felt quite righteous in the knowledge that if there was an aggrieved party it was *me*. [The guy] had originally sold me a dress for my birthday party: the dress was so nice I decided to invite him along to the party. Living out of the city [the guy] ended up crashing at my place and the next day we drank coffee and nursed each other's hangover. We talked on the phone during the week and I popped in to see him at work. On the Friday we had drinks and [the guy] stayed over, by Monday [the guy had decided it] was more committed to his girlfriend in A[US than it had] realised. I'd scurried off to Family Planning after [the guy had] said: "Hey, let's just keep this as a casual thing", and the results were pending. Funnily enough, when I told him this, [the guy confessed that it had] also made a little trip to the doctor to get checked out. "I'm all clear... Last week I just had a passing urine infection, that's all". When I told him about my symptoms [the guy] went pale and started getting edgy. In a warped sort of way I liked the power I had in the situation. When you've been dumped, it can be nice to know you can still impact on your dumper emotionally. Very warped, I know, but there's nothing like being jilted for bringing out the desperado in me. His eyes narrowed suspiciously as [the guy] inquired as to how regularly I got tested. As it happened, I hadn't caught anything. My results also pointed to a minor urine infection. Phew. When I went to get my results the only disturbing thing was that the nurse who gave them to me was the mother of an old school friend who hadn't let her daughter play at my house because I'd been labelled "a bad egg". The sales assistant's relief was palpable... [upon hearing] I'd been given a clean bill of health. So was mine. It was the first time I'd found myself in this sort of predicament. Despite the vague irony and odd humour I found in the proceedings, leaving myself open to a STD was a serious wake-up call. Best just restrict these casual encounters to *Ally McBeal*-like drooling, rather than face the consequences of 'the morning after' in a poky storeroom.

...[yesterday a new mum proudly showed] off her three miracle babies – born as a result of a one-in-14 million chance. The tiny girls are the survivors of N[Z]'s first identical quadruplets. Now [the new mum], 27, faces a 24 hour wait while tests discover which of her two lovers is their father. "I don't care which is their real dad," the Tauranga mum told *Sunday News*. "I'm happy for them to have two fathers and twice as much love." The paternal puzzle began when [the mum] and her husband... 28, who have three other children, split last year. [The mum then met and had a] four-month relationship... [with a 31-year-old]. "I don't know who the dad is... [because the] girls were conceived at the time I was splitting up with [my ex-lover] and getting back with [my husband]." The ex-lover... said: "I'd love to be the father but I want proof." Even if the girls were his, [the ex-lover] would be happy for them to be raised by... [the husband and wife. The husband said: "If the ex-lover] is the dad, I want him to be in the babies' lives..." ...[the wife said: "My husband] doesn't earn much as a cleaner and... is staying at mum's house. We hope to get another place to live before... [the babies (who were born) 12 weeks early] come out of hospital." The wife also]... says the tiny babies will help overcome her grief at the loss of her son, EJ, a cerebral palsy sufferer who died last year at age six. The tragedy led to her separation from [her husband]...

NZ's miracle] mum... has moved in with both the possible dads. Blood tests last week failed to reveal which of [her] two lovers fathered her three tiny daughters... [The ex-lover and husband] were found to have the same blood type, which is also identical to the three babies... [Her] husband... and ex-lover... have decided not to take more accurate DNA tests. Instead, they will live... as one big family in [the ex-lover]'s Tauranga home... "We don't want to know who is the dad, because it would be awful for the one who was not... [My husband] was a bit worried when [my ex-lover] asked us to stay with him, but it feels normal and we are all very happy about it now. I still care about [my ex-lover] but there is nothing between us..." ...[Her husband said,] "I would do... more tests... if... the girls... wanted to find out later on..." ..."We are as happy as hell," [the ex-lover] said.

...*Unhappy families* A DREAM of happy families for miracle triplets with two dads has turned sour... [The little triplets] lived with mum... and both their dads. But [the Tauranga gal], 27, is now a solo mum to the tots... after rows split the family... Despite blood tests, [the mother] had no idea who had fathered the triplets, now four-months-old. Instead of taking more detailed DNA tests, the three shocked N[Z] when they moved in together as one big happy family... But the joy turned to tears just one month later. [The husband], a contract cleaner, moved out after a row with [his wife]. The next day, [the house's owner] rekindled his affair with [the mother]. Last week, the couple argued over the triplets and [the 31-year-old threw the mother] and her babies out. [The 27-year-old and her girls] are believed to be living with her mum in Tauranga. "[The mother] and me

were lovers all the time we were living together with [her husband] and the girls... When [her husband] went to work, we would get together. Sometimes I had love bites on my neck, but [her husband] didn't seem to notice. We got together properly after [her husband] left. I think living together got too much for us." [The 31-year-old said it] wanted DNA tests to prove [it] was the triplets' dad so [it could fight their mother] for custody. "I'm sure it's me but I don't have the money to get the tests done... There's a really strong bond between those babies and me. I don't want to lose them. I still have feelings for [their mother] but we will never get back together." [The triplets' mother and her husband] were unavailable for comment.

...The parents of murdered six-year-old beauty queen JonBenet Ramsey, who have not spoken publicly in more than a year, break their silence in a British documentary to be screened this week. According to *Newsweek* magazine, the [parent]s proclaim their innocence in the interview and say they are worried the killing of their daughter may never be solved. "The American public has been led to believe that we... brutally beat JonBenet, sexually molested her, strangled her, went to sleep, got up the next morning, wrote a three-page ransom note... then I... called the police... and was able to act distraught... Help me understand that... The killer could never have guessed that [it]... would be so lucky as to have the resulting investigation conducted by such closed-minded police," the father said in a letter to news organisations. "We don't fault you for initially including us under your 'umbrella of suspicion,' but we will forever hold you accountable for following a theory rather than the evidence." [The father] said the police "had decided they had solved the case on the very first day by reaching the incredible conclusion that because the parents were in the house, they must have done it..." The parents[, who] have since moved to an Atlanta suburb... have denied any involvement but refused to talk to investigators until last month. It is not known yet whether their 11-year-old son talked to the investigators...

JonBenet *The mystery deepens*... JonBenet's killer remains at large but, as the grand jury in Boulder, Colorado, begins winding up its 10-month investigation, the finger pointing and rumour mill has once again gathered force. This time, public suspicion is aimed not at [her] parents... but at... their now 12-year-old son. In late May, [the son] appeared before the grand jury, triggering rumours that... [it] was the one who'd killed his sister and that his parents were now involved in plea-bargain negotiations with [the]Boulder District Attorney... However, in an interview with *The A[US]n Gals' Weekly*, a spokesperson for the DA[] denied US tabloid reports that [the brother] was a suspect... [The spokesperson also] said: "Grand jury matters are secret and, true or false, we do not comment on them." The rumours... though, gathered momentum with the release of the book, *A Little Girl's Dream*, by [the person] who ran the Li'l Darlin Beauty Pageants in which JonBenet competed. [The author] claims that JonBenet was murdered by a boy her own age who knew her well and, thanks to her... the police are now looking in a different direction – away from the parents to... a boy with the same cherubic face as his sister and the same wide, pale blue eyes. The organiser of the Li'l Darlin pageants says [the brother] was jealous of his sister and gives a detailed scenario of the killing, which occurred, [it] claims, after JonBenet received more gifts than her brother and yet again wet her bed. But few are taking the theory seriously in Boulder, pointing out that... Li'l Darlin Beauty Pageants are deserted, and no longer bring in an income of \$US1 million a year – a sensationalist book is a good way to recoup the loss, some say. Nevertheless, the US tabloids are using [the author]'s claims for their headlines and, in mid-June, for the second time since their daughter's murder, the [parents] moved house... To any outsider, [JonBenet's family] were the ideal American family. Handsome and rich, [JonBenet's father] was a former naval engineer, who founded his own software business and became a multi-millionaire. Previously married and a father of three, [the former naval engineer met his] 14-years-younger[-wife-to-be] in Atlanta. Her dream was to be Miss America, but... was pipped at the post for the title of Miss West Virginia in 1977. Disappointed, [the wife-to-be] refused to give up and, despite falling in love... continued to chase the Miss America crown, entering pageant after pageant. Finally, in 1980, [the dreamer] gave up and married [her lover], saying her dream now was to have five children. [Her son] was born in 1987 and, in 1990, JonBenet arrived. But there would be no more children... The family that seemed to personify the American dream was about to enter a Gothic nightmare. First there was news that [the father]'s daughter from his previous marriage had been killed in a car crash. Then [his second wife] was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. [The second wife] battled it bravely and emerged from chemotherapy with an all-clear, but discovered that the treatments had left her sterile. That was when [the second wife] began entering her daughter in beauty pageants across the US. The idea was that JonBenet would win the children's pageants and then go on as an adult to take the crown that had eluded her mother. Her hair frosted and streaked, JonBenet wore coloured contact lenses to make her eyes even bluer and was made up for each event by a professional make-up artist, who charged \$200 an hour. In one year alone, [the mother] spent \$30,000 on JonBenet. Encouraging this madness, [JonBenet's father] named the family yacht *Miss America*... To many, the sight of a small child with dyed hair... real diamonds... gold... and make-up posing flirtatiously as a miniature adult is grotesque, but [her parents] insisted JonBenet loved it. Why, then, did six-year-old JonBenet suddenly begin wetting her bed? Was this, along with her chronic nightmares, a sign of stress and a reaction to her mother's impatience when [JonBenet] didn't win a pageant, but came second or third? Either way, it was an increasingly bizarre life for the little girl, and perhaps it is this that makes her story so compelling and so tragic. After two-and-a-half years of investigation... the mountain of evidence points as easily to the... parents as it does to JonBenet's brother. A case can also be made, however, for... [the parent]'s claim that the killer was an intruder, who slithered through a broken window in the basement. But it is hard to get past... [the parents]. Why would a couple whose daughter was murdered refuse to talk to police, but instead, hire not only their own lawyers, but their own public relations officer, and then go on national television to tell the world they were offering a \$100,000 reward in a bid to find the killer? Also troubling was the retired FBI profiler they hired to come up with a psychological profile of the murderer... Then there is the ransom note. Written on a... legal pad ...owned[by the parents]... there was not one note, but several drafts, which after rambling for two pages, demanded the peculiar sum of \$118,000 – which just "happened" to be the exact amount of the payout bonus [JonBenet's father] had received that week from his business. [The mother claims to have] found the ransom note on the stairs at about 5am, but it was 7am before the house was thoroughly searched. Although the police helped with the search, they left before the body was found. It was [her father] and a friend who found JonBenet and carried her from the... basement room where [JonBenet] was killed, disturbing vital evidence... Added to this came the news that JonBenet was clubbed by a torch, the imprint of which matches the torch [the mother kept by her son]'s bed. Then came reports that a stun gun was used. [The father] had been given a stun gun by a friend a short time before. And what about the broken paintbrush used as part of the ligature that strangled and killed the little girl? Investigators matched it with a paintbrush in [the mother]'s own box of watercolours. Graphology tests on the ransom note have ruled out [the father], but remain inconclusive for [the mother]. Then there's the emergency call, with [the son] speaking in the background at a time when his parents insisted that... [the brother JonBenet would] go to... for comfort... [after waking from] a nightmare or wet[ting] her bed... was asleep. Which brings us back to [the brother]. Are his parents trying to protect him, aware that [it] is the killer? Before the grand jury can say yes or no, a match must be found for DNA evidence on JonBenet's underwear and under her fingernails. Forensic investigators have not been able to match it to anyone in the... family. Neither can they match up palm prints and footprints found in the basement. Which all suggests the killer was an intruder. But why were no footprints found in the snow? And why... a[t a time of year] notorious for break-ins, were the... burglar alarms turned off? If it was[the brother, the brother] cannot be prosecuted. Under Colorado law, a nine-year-old cannot be charged with murder. But the hard fact is there may not be enough evidence to convict anyone. The death of... JonBenet may remain a mystery forever.

...THE tombstone at the St James Episcopal Cemetery in Marietta, Georgia, is a simple granite plaque, set so low only a child need not stoop to read it. It carries just [a girl's] name... and date of birth... Had [the girl] lived, JonBenet would have been nine last Friday, celebrating with party games and a cake. Instead, for two years and eight months the question of who killed JonBenet has mesmerised America. It has ruined a score of lives, crippled careers, broken friendships and captured headlines in every continent. If the small girl from a small town has found peace of a kind

in her quiet grave, it eludes almost everyone else touched by the case. And yet a resolution of sorts is approaching. In... Boulder... a grand jury investigation is nearing completion... When they... speak... it will trigger the greatest media feeding frenzy since the [criminal trial of a black sports star for the murder of his estranged wife Nicole and her companion Ron Goldman]. Authorities in Boulder are cautioning its citizens to brace themselves for an invasion that may number in the thousands. Attention has focused on the parents... Many sniggered at the couple's opulent taste, which included a Christmas tree in every room, and an 18th-century piano converted to play electronically. Almost from the moment [JonBenet's father] staggered from the cellar at 1.10pm on Boxing Day 1996, carrying his daughter's body in his arms, the couple – despite or possibly because of a lack of any direct evidence – have been the popular choice as suspects for the murder... It seems unlikely they will ever agree voluntarily to appear before the grand jury... WHAT seems to have damned [the mother] in the eyes of many was the revelation her daughter had been a... budding star on the child pageant circuit, whose titles included Little Miss Colorado and the National Tiny Miss Beauty. Photographs and videos, endlessly replayed and reprinted across the world, showed JonBenet disturbingly transformed into... an unwitting parody of adult sexuality. And it is this aspect of the story, unsurprisingly, which has been most exploited by the... tabloids. They have devoted and continue to devote pages to [the wife]'s allegedly dubious record as a mother... Some wildly speculated it was JonBenet's continued bedwetting which might have been the breaking point... According to this scenario, JonBenet's death might have been an accident, covered up to look like a... murder. Other accusations about the [parents] as a couple have included everything from sexual abuse to torture... The FBI says it has never encountered a case where a parent has killed his or her child in such a brutal manner. BUT the idea an intruder was responsible also has its problems. The doors and windows to the house were locked that night and there were no signs of a forced entry... [W]hen detectives examined... the... broken basement window... it... was found to have an unbroken spider's web across it. Much effort has gone into consulting arachnid experts, who have concluded[that despite the layer of snow outside] it was perhaps mild enough that December for the spider to have come out of hibernation and repaired the web before the police noticed it. Whoever killed JonBenet [had to know] the house well enough to find his or her way up a spiral staircase to her bedroom, and came remarkably ill-prepared for the deed... The failure of police to resolve... an investigation lasting two and a half years, has led to widespread criticism. JonBenet's murder was the first in Boulder, a prosperous middle-class university town, for two years... ONE of the defining characteristics of the inquiry has been bitter feuding between the police and the district attorney's office... In January this year an open letter... was published in the *Denver Post*, accusing... the DA... of creating the appearance of "impropriety, professional incompetence and a lack of objectivity" on the part of the police... However vehemently they criticise [the DA], though, the police must themselves take their fair share of responsibility for the failures of the investigation. From the first moment, Boulder officers made extraordinary mistakes – not the least of them failure to find JonBenet's body hidden behind the basement door when they searched the house... Thereafter... they failed to address the case with any coherence. The detective unit fragmented into pro and anti-[the parents] camps. The parents[... continue to protest their innocence... Earlier this year, when... JonBenet's brother, was questioned by the grand jury, tabloid headlines announced [the brother] was now the prime suspect. But [the DA] quickly denied this was the case, prompting a rare retraction by the publications involved... The couple are expecting little good to come from the grand jury's final report. If, as expected, the jurors cannot point to a suspect, the [family] will remain under a cloud of suspicion. There were fresh flowers on JonBenet's grave on August 6. But the prospect of her ever being mourned in peace seem remote.

...JonBenet's parents... have filed a \$US25 million... lawsuit against the *Star*, alleging the tabloid libelled their son with stories calling him the prime suspect in the killing of his sister... The federal lawsuit said the stories, published on May 25 and June 1 but later retracted, were false and defamatory, and subjected [their son] to "public hatred, contempt and ridicule." ...The... May 25... story ran a front-page photo of the two children under the headline "JonBenet was killed by brother..." ...The June 1 article said prosecutors were "closing in" on [the brother, who]... had a "sad, twisted life" because [it] was never able to compete with his beauty-queen sister... The *Star* said it would vigorously fight the suit and it would give the tabloid a chance to "conduct a complete investigation of the murder, pursuing avenues of inquiry that were not available to state investigators."

...It looks like the interest in poor JonBenet's tragic life and wardrobe will never die. Of course, one suspects the parents murdered her. Well, they were certainly guilty of a heinous crime the moment they put her on the stage.

...A former lead detective in the JonBenet... murder case believes the murdered girl's mother wrote the ransom note that was in the family home in Boulder the day her body was found. In an interview to be broadcast on ABC's *Good Morning America*, [the lead detective], who resigned in protest at what [it] called the lack of aggressive prosecution of the case, said... [that o]f 73 suspects whose writing samples were analysed by experts, only [the mother] could not be excluded as the note's author... [It interrogated the parent]s four months after the slaying and was a lead detective until... resign[ing] in August 1998, saying [the]Boulder County District Attorney... sacrificed procedure for politics. [The lead detective] has written a book called *JonBenet: Inside the... Murder Investigation*[, and] is scheduled to appear on ABC programmes this week to promote it.

...JONBENET's... [parents] have decided to write a book about their daughter[']s... unsolved murder. It's tentatively titled *The Death of Innocence* and will focus on the six-year-old's life beyond beauty pageants and the[ir]... faith in God.

...A retired detective throws new light on the savage killing of a child beauty... [The district attorney], embattled and frustrated, had hit his limit. In March 1997, three months after the brutal murder of 6-year-old JonBenet... the Boulder, Colorado, district attorney decided to get help in solving the crime. [The DA] turned to... a seasoned Colorado Springs detective who had recently retired. [The retired detective] had a reputation as a dogged investigator who often solved complex murders after others had given up. His job was to examine the police theory that one or both of JonBenet's parents... were involved in the killing. As [the retired detective] began reviewing the evidence, [it] instead became convinced that someone had broken into the house and murdered JonBenet while her family slept. At odds with the police, who continued to pursue the parents, [the retired detective] was kept to the sidelines and resigned in protest in September 1998. Loyal to the cop's code never to talk about an investigation, [the retired detective] refused to share the theory that led him to his "intruder theory." But now [the retired detective] is breaking his silence. Even so, his theory does not solve the case. [The retired detective] still cannot answer the key question: who killed JonBenet? And his theory cannot disprove the police case against the [parent]s, who remain under suspicion and have just come out with their own book, *The Death of Innocence*. When [the retired detective] first began looking into the murder, [i]t... too, thought the parents were the likely culprits. But as [the retired detective] examined the evidence, including police crime-scene photos and video, [it] began to wonder. A basement window was open, and the window-well outside showed signs of fresh disturbance. But the police inexplicably rejected an officer's request to bring in dogs to find a possible scent trail. [The retired detective] noticed leaves and debris, including foam packing peanuts, outside the house in the window-well. Inside the basement, [it] saw similar leaves and foam nuts, including one 20m away in the room where JonBenet was found – a possible sign that an intruder coming through the window had tracked the debris through the basement. "The wind sure didn't blow those in there,"... says[the retired detective, who] also saw a fresh print from a Hi-Tec shoe, a brand no one in the family owned. Examining autopsy photos, [the retired detective] noticed unusual sets of abrasions on JonBenet's back and face. [The retired detective] wondered if they had been made by a stun-gun, an unlikely weapon for a parent to use on a child. [The retired detective] measured the marks and discovered that they matched a brand of stun-gun called the Air Taser. [The retired detective] began to believe the killer might have used the stun gun on JonBenet as [the girl] slept, then carried her to the basement. Another key part of the police case that JonBenet was struck on the head, then strangled to confuse investigators, also failed to add up in [the retired detective]'s view. The autopsy showed signs that [JonBenet] struggled while being strangled, something [the girl] could not have done if [it] had been dealt a skull-crushing blow. The massive skull fracture barely bled, a sign that [JonBenet] was already near death from strangulation

at the time [it] was hit. What is more, the garrotte used to strangle her, made of rope and the broken end of one of [the mother]'s paint-brushes, was an elaborate instrument of death, an unlikely tool for the [parent]s to have fashioned in the panicked minutes after allegedly striking her. [The retired detective] discovered a splinter, apparently from the brush handle, on the carpet just outside the room where JonBenet was found. Police found fibres from the same carpet on a baseball bat in the bushes outside the house, leading [the retired detective] to believe the killer used it to bludgeon JonBenet. DNA found under JonBenet's fingernails and in her underpants was ma[sculine], but did not match [her family's DNA. The retired detective] believes the police were right to focus on the family at first. But... is dismayed at their reluctance to investigate alternatives. [The retired detective] thinks the killer spent time inside the house before the murder, getting familiar with the layout. [The killer] may have broken in while the family was out earlier that night, giving him time to write the ransom note on [the parent]'s stationary. State officials cleared [the father] of writing the note, and a Secret Service examiner concluded there was "no evidence" that [the mother] had written it. [The retired detective says it] continues to pursue a list of more than a dozen possible suspects – "This old detective hasn't given up yet." [The retired detective] may be the last one who hasn't. [The DA has announced it] will not seek another term – the latest life shaken by the death of a little girl.

...*Money goes round JonBenet*... Last week, at checkout counters across America, every shopper had the chance to know more about the murder of JonBenet... than the detectives who have investigated the case since... 1996. Not to mention the FBI, a grand jury and a legion of hired consultants that now includes forensic document examiners, fibre classifiers, psychological profilers and experts in the web-spinning habits of Colorado house spiders. As usual, just as it has been ever since the 6-year-old beauty queen's bludgeoned and strangled body was brought up from the wine cellar of her parents' Boulder home, the latest scoops were served up by America's scandal-sheet tabloids. JonBenet's painted face graced all their covers, as it has hundreds of previous editions of the *Globe*, *Enquirer* and *Star*. A tiny trollop angel, [JonBenet] floats weekly by the cash register to look over and protect the boisterous, thriving industry that has sprouted from her grave[(which a graffiti-artist has defaced with the words 'NO JUSTICE IN U.S.A.'). The grubbier tabloid, the key-hole peeping *Globe*, provided the best example of what makes this death cult so unique: Week after week, in magazines, on TV, in bookstores and on the Internet, JonBenet Inc., grows larger by feeding on its previous sins. Scurrilous "scoops" become gospel truths, while myths transmute through repetition into "facts" that no amount of qualification can dispel. Everybody points the finger – and makes a very pretty penny for their pains... On a normal week, the *Globe*'s circulation hovers just shy of one million copies. With JonBenet on the cover, figures compiled by an independent circulation audit agency demonstrate that sales can rocket by as much as 50[%]... "Gotcha! [JonBenet's Parent]s' Three TV Blunders Destroy Alibi," shouted the *Globe*'s [latest]front-page headline... At the heart of *Globe*'s latest limp tale was an interview with [a]"noted psychiatrist"... who explained how the [parent]s unconsciously betrayed their guilt during a recent blitz of TV interviews to promote their own book about the slaying and its aftermath. The first "blunder" was [the mother]'s eagerness to talk of her battle with ovarian cancer, something [the psychiatrist] interpreted as the ravings of a [perso]n so possessed by egomania that [it] could kill her own daughter in a fit of homicidal jealousy. And when [JonBenet's father] begged off taking a lie-detector test, [the psychiatrist] decided it was because [the father] "would probably fail." [The psychiatrist] is the author of *A Mother Gone Bad: A Psychiatrist Looks at [JonBenet's Mother]'s Secret Confession*. One of the 20-and-counting books about the murder, [the psychiatrist]'s tome attempts to analyze the ransom note the couple claim to have found on the staircase of their home. The book's greatest flaw is not the author's dreadful prose but its lack of original research. Accepting the falsehoods of earlier books and newspaper reports, it leaps to a conclusion that is even further removed from the few hard facts. Last week, as [a]former lead detective... was pushing his... book, [it quoted the psychiatrist]s' dubious insights. Thus do the wheels of the JonBenet factory spin... Given that a fruitless \$US34 million has been spent so far on the probe, perhaps the only real truth is the killer may never be brought before a jury... All the lies, half-truths and confusions make for an irresistible mix, especially when the leading characters include a computer-biz mega-millionaire and his family – a billionaire to the ever-flamboyant tabloids – with a private jet and full-time pilot. Set the mystery in chic Boulder, an idyllic town once described as "14 square miles surrounded by reality," and the formula produces a classic whodunnit. One need not be a confirmed cynic to suspect that those screaming loudest for the [parent]s' blood would really prefer if the case stayed unsolved. While there would be a bit more money to be wrung from a trial, any conviction would derail the JonBenet gravy train for ever after. Take... for instance, an author who became a charter member of JonBenet Inc., after [a black sportsper]son's acquittal left him high and dry. Before Nicole Brown Simpson's body was found on the doorstep of her Brentwood home, [the author] had enjoyed an acquaintanceship with... [her violent husband]'s close friend, lawyer and business manager. So when the retired grid-iron star ran short of cash, [the author] suggested a first-person book in which [the guilty celebrity] could protest his innocence. The result was *I Want To Tell You*... which generated \$US1.7 million to pay the Dream Team's prodigious legal fees. For signing up a ghost writer and editing the final draft, [the author] bagged a quick \$US100,000. Then the nimble [author] switched sides and penned his own book, *An American Tragedy*, the best of all the many accounts of [the celebrity's criminal trial (at the celebrity's second, 'civil trial, in 1997, the jury found him liable on all eight counts and ordered him to compensate Ron's parents with \$8.5 million for his wrongful death; the fact that the estate of Nicole did not file a wrongful-death suit leaves open the possibility that either or both of her children, when they come of age, may sue their father for their mother's wrongful death'). Hi]s was a smart, sharp piece of journalism good enough to earn him an invitation from... *New Yorker* to take a look at JonBenet. [Hi]s compulsively readable account of the case, *Perfect Murder, Perfect Town*, hit the stands last year and became an instant chart-buster. Earlier this year, with [the author] as its screenwriter, the book became a well reviewed television movie that earned [him] yet one more fortune... On [one presenter]'s TV show the [parents of JonBenet] are always guilty. [The presenter] assembled a motley collection of spin doctors and paid flaks for a mock trial that found the couple guilty as charged. Staged during ratings week, it was [the presenter]'s most-watched programme of the year and helped him lock up a \$US30 million extension on his contract. If that episode broke new ground in the media's fixation with JonBenet, her parents' efforts to promote their own book pushed the envelope even further. Last month the couple came out of seclusion to promote their memoir, *The Death of Innocence*, which answers none of the vital questions while blaming the murder on a conveniently unknown intruder. It is now high on the bestseller list. Another JonBenet fortune, this time falling into the laps of the prime suspects. In Boulder there is little sympathy for the couple, partly because they moved to Atlanta within a week of the murder and also for naming former friends as suspects. "JonBenet is really symbolic of the greed, the degradation, the selling out of principles in this country," said... a Boulder nurse who has organised candlelit vigils every Christmas Eve, the anniversary of the murder. "In this feeding frenzy, they forget they are feeding off a little child." ...[By the way, at 7.30pm on TV2 tonight, *Painted Babies* goes to] the Southern Charm Beauty Pageant in Atlanta, [where]parents enter children as young as six months old. This documentary follows the children and parents as they compete against each other for the title of Supreme Queen...

Getting started modelling [A little girl has] won her first modelling competition and doesn't plan to stop there. [The girl], from Ranui, has just turned six and won the Miss T&T Westgate competition, judged by [the Massey resident] who was recently crowned Miss N[Z]. The girl's mother says her daughter] has been asking to model for a while and [it] thought the competition would be a good place to start... About 15 girls entered the competition, organised by [the manager of the children's clothing store. The six-year-old]... won a voucher from the shop and all other entrants also won a prize. [The manager] often organises events for the shop including bringing in live chickens for Easter. "I thought it would be nice to do something for the girls," [the manager] says. "They were so excited and the place was really busy." ...[By the way, in] April, *Business Age* magazine estimated [the Body]'s wealth at \$70 million and placed her at the top of the supermodel earners, just ahead of [the supermole].

...*Who's the biggest catch of all?* ...[NZ's top supermodel (r:p1679, ln8) – i]f you managed to have [her]... sign a coloured photo of herself when [the model was last] here, it could be like money in the bank[; on]... the US market... [a] signed glossy colour picture of [her] was \$150, but now has

taken a hike to \$300() –] ...could be lined up against [AUS's the Body] to see who is the biggest catch. Aussie-N[Z] celebrity rivalry will be the angle of [the new 13-part] TV show *Big Fish Downunder*. Famous Kiwis will be pitted against their A[US]n counterparts in a weekly battle to catch the biggest fish... in resort locations in both countries.

...WHAT do an Auckland dental nurse, a Havelock North nanny and a radio newsreader from Hamilton all have in common with each other? They all want to be [an All Black flanker]'s girl... more than 40 [of his] fans have written to *Sunday News* after we revealed his hunt for a dream date... [A] blond paramedic reckons [it] can help ease the player's... pain. "I've just completed a case study on concussion in rugby and I was impressed... [that the] 28-year-old... was unafraid to make an individual decision to wear headgear,"... [The] newsreader with the Edge radio station in Hamilton, was smitten by [the flanker (r:p1430, ln69) when it] met him in a restaurant. A photo of that moment is her most treasured possession... [One respondent from] Dunedin... turned down a dance with [the flanker] once and hopes to turn back the clock... [Another respondent, aged] 26, of Timaru, shares [the flanker]'s passion for surfing... [The flanker even] planned to quit the All Blacks if rugby bosses insisted [it] stop surfing. The N[ZRFU] began making threatening noises about [his] off-field passion during the 1997 Tri Nations series and... wanted to introduce a special surfing-related clause into the Otago flanker's contract... The trouble occurred when the All Black suffered a facial gash after being struck by his out-of-control surfboard. The wound was nasty and required 15 stitches, although [the flanker] still played the next international. While [the player]'s sponsor Nike was happy when the scar healed into the shape of its swoosh logo, the NZRFU... was upset.

...*Beast's age offers Beauty no guarantees...* Surely such a gorgeous [gal as the Welsh beauty who starred in such films as *Entrapment*] deserves better than marriage to... the confessed sex addict of [Wall St fame. The Welsh lass] is beginning a career in Hollywood. [The sex addict] is a has-been, growing jowls and living off the faded glory of his role in *Wall St*. It was a tedious movie and as far as anyone can tell, [the sex addict] is a dull [individual], attracted to roles in which [his character is] a sexual weakling and... [claims to] suffer... from the same problem in real life. On the birthday they share, September 30, [the Welsh beauty] will turn... an age at which young [gals] traditionally begin to acquire common sense. [The sex addict will] turn... an age at which [guys (like the singer who married NZ's top supermodel – only to receive some of his own medicine when the Kiwi left him – and who performed the song *Tonight's the night*, about an older guy seducing a virgin on her 16th birthday; the singer from the *Rolling Stones* and the US President)) traditionally lose theirs. Yet there's a strong rumour they'll [stay married]. Why's that such a lousy idea? Because there's something unpleasantly canny and calculated about [guys like the sex addict], who share the "problem" of their incessant randiness with the... readers of popular magazines. It's a great way of advertising their uncritical availability (despite advancing age, apparently) to any [gal] not covered in smallpox pustules, while claiming to be morally confused. It's their way of warning in advance they take no responsibility, because they're driven by a affliction – a bit like eczema, maybe – outside their control. [Gals] just throw themselves at them and they're too weak to resist. (Yawn.) Where's the fun in conquering a [guy] who flabbily declares [himself to be] anybody's, anytime. A [guy] anybody can have can only get that way because nobody really wants him. But apparently [the Welsh beauty], who's enthused in the past about how much [it adores older guys (and, before it had ever met her future husband, told a friend that it 'wanted to marry him'), thinks it has] got herself a catch. What does [the Welsh beauty] see in him? Presumably the traditional trappings of older [guys]: wealth, experience of the world, tolerance, and the idea they offer grateful unstinted admiration.

...*It's all in the size... of the wallet* OUT-OF-CONDITION [guys] take heart. The size of your wallet will give more of a chance of a long term relationship with a beautiful [gal] than the shape of your stomach, according to new Canterbury University research. The study has found that an extremely good-looking and sexy [gal] will in the first instance almost certainly seek an equally good-looking [guy] for a partner. But the [extremely good-looking gal] will be prepared to compromise those standards if [it] can attract a mate who has high status or wealth, or if [it believes the guy] has the potential to achieve them. While a good-looking mate might be ideal, a [gal]'s natural instinct is to seek security, which means a wealthy [mate], no matter how ugly, will always be preferred from a long-term point of view. On the other hand, the research has found [guys] are the opposite and are less likely to compromise on looks, even if they can attract a partner who is exceptionally warm and loyal.

...*Lessons in snaring a rich mate...* Don't waste your time looking for love. Go ahead and marry for money. This is the advice dispensed at a class entitled, simply, "How to Marry the Rich," one of the... best-attended and longest-running... adult education courses in New York City. "Don't feel guilty. The rich will marry somebody. Why not you?" [the] teacher... tells the standing-room-only crowd in the... four-hour... seminar... [held] every few weeks. Her students, most of them [gals], nod in assent and jot down notes... Approaching the topic with the fervour of a revival preacher and the calculation of a business planner, [teacher] suggests setting your sights with care. Try rich heir[s], often found at charity events or art classes, risk-taking entrepreneurs who are known to propose by the second date or rich guys who feel guilty about their money and are most likely to marry [a gal] with children... And that is only a taste of what [teacher] delivers in just the first 15 minutes of the class. Still to come are tips on crashing posh parties (check notice boards in exclusive hotels), dressing the part (natural fibres beat synthetics every time) and practising good manners (getting out of a limousine gracefully is an essential skill). As in buying real estate, the three most important factors in finding a RM are location, location and location. Find a rich mate through a job (try a Wall Street broker), religion (Jewish synagogues and Episcopal churches are best bets), a newspaper (read the obituaries), a neighbourhood (move within 16 blocks of an affluent part of town) and even a parking lot (always park next to the most expensive car). Keep at it... "Date anyone who is sane and breathing." But demand top-drawer treatment. "If someone says they love you and they don't spend money on you, it's a lie." ...As the energetic [teacher] spews out suggestions in her honey-coated Texas drawl, her diamond-laden left hand gesturing with a long-stemmed rose painted gold, the class pays rapt attention. After all... they have shelled out \$US35... apiece to hear it... "Let's face it," said one, a nursing graduate. "[A guy who is] rich and... a jerk [is] easier to love than [a guy who is] poor and... a jerk." "At least with a rich one you get compensated," added her friend, a computer software designer... [Teacher also] offers private consultations outside the classroom starting at \$US175 an hour. Longer sessions cost up to \$US1500... [Teacher's] husband... is rich, of course... a successful oil-industry executive. They met and married 14 years ago. The Houston-based couple share five divorces. They married after a courtship of less than three months. Their wedding day was just two days after his last divorce became final. "I like her straightforwardness about money," [hubby] wrote in a foreword to her book, also called *How to Marry the Rich*. "As [teacher] has said, a gold digger is the only perfect mate to the gold owner,"... added... [someone] who thought up the idea [exploited by teacher], who... taught classes in flirting[before] turning her skills to the topic of marrying the rich.

...I DO hate a blonde joke, especially when it's real life. And somehow you just knew that... a former *Playboy* pin-up who appeared in the news this week, is both – a blonde, that is, and a joke. [Anna Nicole]Smith married an old, old [guy when it] was at the height of her marketability, just five years ago[when Smith was 26 and the groom] was 88. J Howard Marshall III did what ancient billionaires will do: [get] married to have a warm body to cuddle up to, a girl who'd commit whatever indecencies would set his old ticker racing. [This particular ancient billionaire] wanted to go out with a grin on his face... It was a 1950s fantasy, of course... *Esquire* featured cartoons about this unlovely theme regularly at that time: lissom lovelies with enormous knockers perched [o]n high stools in jewellery shops, waving mega diamonds around while white-haired old [guys] handed over wads of cash; pretty, pouting secretaries perched on old [guys'] knees to do dictation; nurses with white uniforms straining at the buttons over buxom bosoms taking the pulses of excitable geriatric squillionaires. The captions were always the same and they told an old, old story. Times were simpler then... Cash was cash. A girl... had to negotiate a high price and was respected for it. Minks, diamonds, real estate: a young girl deserved it for letting an old [guy] twang her bra elastic and dribble over her delectables. Girls held out for marriage if they could...

Marriage meant decent financial compensation for those girls for all those tedious indecencies. The money set a girl up in a hat shop, ready to woo a good-looking gigolo and make up for lost time. Divorce – in due, swift course – was one way out of such marriages. But the preferable one was death. (His). There were many more cartoons in the '50s of lissom, busty widows dressed in black... in lawyers' offices as wills were read... Smith... wasn't yet born when those cartoons were the stock-in-trade of the [guy] magazine world. And that's the shame. Marshall, you see... popped his clogs and left her not a cent of his enormous fortune. Even though [Marshall] promised her... half! Picture the innocent sweetie as [Smith] trotted into the lawyer's office, hankie in hand, sobs stifled, to hear the good news about the year of hard yakka... put in giving the old boy his moments of joy. Picture the show of puzzlement as the lawyer asked her for the front door key to the mansion... the keys to the Porsche... and... handed her the bill for her credit cards, which the estate would not pay. Picture the moment of utter disillusionment, of realising that there is no God who'll reward you for hard graft in this world with a bit of temporal loot. Imagine the gutted and filleted feeling. And imagine the old codger cackling in his coffin, his last ruthless contract complete. Smith, naturally, did not have a pre-nuptial agreement. Time was passing, no doubt, and it would have looked so... crass. [Smith] trusted and was undone. And now [Smith] must sue. Oh please, let her have a handsome and suave lawyer who will take his payment in kind, because I'm sure we all feel sorry for [her. The pin-up] has learned the hardest of all lessons...

Anna Nicole Smith has joined a dating agency to try to find a new ma[te]. The ex-*Playboy* model says [it]'s desperate to find a new ma[te] following the death of her billionaire husband, 90-year-old J Howard Marshall... The former stripper[, who]... was awarded \$170 million[(which equates to '\$420,000 per day for their 14 month marriage')] from the estate of her husband and has applied to the court for another \$60 million... [ha]s already been out on her first date. "[The date] was... very nice... [It] worked for a company or... owned the company I'm not sure which... [The date] brought me a bunch of the products over, they were swim suits. Apparently [it] somehow got my size beforehand because they all fit."

...[when a 10-year-old boy's sexual curiosity prompted him to suggest to a girl who lived on the next block the usual, "I'll show you mine if you'll show me yours", his request was met with "I'm going to tell your mother!"] But the boy found it was able to "buy a look" when the boy offered her a dollar. Much like power-grabbing manipulators, some love sellers seem to be lacking in anything resembling a guilty conscience. They view the love buyer as a "sucker" or a "pigeon" and show no remorse about taking such a person's money. There are wives who are loyal and loving to their husbands while the money flows and who seek a good divorce attorney when the husband declares bankruptcy. It is no doubt difficult for the very wealthy person to become involved with others without feeling that money is partly responsible for the involvement. The late J. Paul Getty, for example, received thousands of proposals of marriage from gals Getty had never met but who knew of his financial status. Many even stated that they would be willing to waive the formality of marriage and overwhelm him with love and companionship provided appropriate financial arrangements were made beforehand.')

...*Mistress meter soars on Wall St* ONCE you've got the swanky Manhattan apartment, the splendid beach house in the Hamptons and, still, your stock market dough keeps piling up, what do you invest in? A babe. If the tabloids and the divorce lawyers are to be believed, mistresses have become as integral a part of Manhattan's dizzying bull-market affluence as \$300,000 Lamborghinis, \$1000 bottles of wine and \$28,000 Hermes crocodile leather purses. Indeed, one Wall St hedge-fund trader recently demanded at the end of an affair, that his mistress give back a Hermes purse. [The mistress refused. As one] prominent New York divorce lawyer... explains: "Mistresses are a direct function of the economy. There is no question about it. I can tell you how the economy is doing by how many mistresses come into my office looking for justice." ...The mistress meter of economic good times went through the roof last week as New Yorkers were treated to another in a series of front-page tabloid tales about a "leggy" young mistress, a "Wall Street sugar daddy" and how their good times have come to a heavily lawyered end... In the lawsuit filed in state court, [a] former model... (28), alleges that [an] advisory director... (66), kept her as his mistress for more than two years while making a number of lucrative promises. "The defendant agreed to pay plaintiff the sum of \$500,000 if [the model] would not work, and would remain at home so that the defendant could meet her at lunch time, or after work, for sex," according to court documents. While charging that [the 66-year-old]'s "appetite for sex was insatiable", the court papers say that [the 66-year-old insisted that the model] "come to his house so that they could engage in wild sex in his wife's bed". The suit also claims that [the 66-year-old], who... has two grown children, impregnated her twice and then persuaded her to have an abortion each time. The legal grounds for the suit, according to... [the] lawyer for the jilted mistress, is that [the 66-year-old] "breached an oral contract... to pay my client \$500,000..."... Divorce lawyers agree that a jilted mistress almost always faces a steep climb in trying to extract money from her former lover – especially if [the lover is married. The 66-year-old]'s wife, interviewed at her posh home in Connecticut... supports her husband and [accuses the model] of trying to "ruin my family".

...[a] divorcee... has put a judge in the dock over his comments about Remuera housewives... in his High Court ruling on a divorce proceeding... [The] judge... ordered a politician to share his fortune with his wife... [and] said: "This is nothing like a case in which an Auckland corporate wife with a Remuera bob haircut, a 3-series BMW, nannified and private-schooled children and no idea of what a balance sheet is, let alone how to read one, seeks half a commercial empire after 20 years of nothing more than bridge, tennis and Earl Grey tea." ...The author and former model agency boss says it is hard work being a corporate wife... Those husbands often demand that their spouses stay at home and look attractive... "What the hell is wrong with that? They work very... very hard to look good,"... [A hair]dressing magnate... says Remuera's wealthy residents no longer favour the bob haircut. They prefer a tousled, scrunched look, a style... which "looks just like you have run your hands through your hair."

...[a country music star (r:p1759, ln43)] has decided that her big bouffant wigs are old hat and has invested in 30cm hair extensions. The vivacious country star pays \$3000 every three months for about 500 natural platinum blond extensions to be glued and woven into her hair over 12 hours. But [the singer]'s undecided about the fate of her 600 wigs, worth a staggering \$900,000.

...[a British actor] – *EastEnders'* Peggy Mitchell – has revealed how her hair fell out after [it] had extensions fitted by a dodgy crimper. [The actor], 62, suffered cuts, burns and irritation after the \$1500 hair-do in west London. [The actor] had to rush to another hairdresser, who spent 12 hours carefully removing the extensions. The original hairdresser, who was featured on TV consumer show *Beware: Rogue Traders*, is still working despite having more than \$100,000 of outstanding County Court judgments against her.

...*the naked truth: Ginger's a brunette* Nine years old and desperate for nude pictures of Ginger Spice...? Just nick \$2.95 out of mum's purse and run down to the local newsagent because that's where you'll find them. Or at least that's where a sharp-eyed *Herald* photographer elbowed primary school competitors out of the way to get his copy. Never mind numbers and social studies, feast your eyes on the Ginger, formerly known as a brunette, as [Ginger] prances naked through the forest wearing nothing but a nice pair of court shoes and a floral headband. And that's not all you'll see of the girl power group slowly losing their power. There's enough to oggle there to get you through school C biology. Somehow I don't think mums and dads (okay, probably just mum's) will be too happy to find the *Spice Girls Poster Magazine* under their tiny tots' pillows although, looking on the bright side, at an original price of £2.50, it's a real bargain over here.

...THE Spice Girls have already proven that even if you have no talent, no singing or song-writing ability, you can still get... worldwide fame – and loads of money to go with it. Now they have just proven that even if five ordinary girls are photographed by one of the top fashion photographers in the world... – surprise, surprise – they'll still look ordinary. Reassuring, isn't it? [The lensperson who is] more used to spending weeks on a few high fashion shots, had to capture the... loud-mouthed advocates of Girl Power in more grown-up Gucci gear in only a day. Plus a journalist had to interview them at the same time. The accompanying story eventually concludes that Baby and Scary are the most naturally pretty, all of the girls... a[re] 1.65m... they all have nice eyes and... all wear glasses when not working. None of them – except Ginger Spice, who turns out to be the leader – are all that bright. And – having made two albums, a movie and just come off a world tour – they're all exhausted. The photo shoot took place on a day they would normally have had off but they sacrificed it to do the *Vogue* cover. Ah, the price of fame and fortune...

Critics are labelling it the Curse of the Spice Girls. How could five such famous [gals], once envied worldwide, have become such a sad, sorry lot? Once the hottest act in the world, now every member of the Spice Girls seems desperately unhappy – unable to cope with the way life has panned out. Posh... has turned into Panic Spice... “When you’re famous it carries a risk of attack or kidnap. I can’t take this any more... No-one can really imagine what it’s like to be recognised wherever you go.” And the other Girls have their own demons to battle... [One m]usic guru... believes the Spice Girls are past their use-by date... “But, hey, I don’t feel sorry for them! How can you feel sorry for anybody worth tens of millions? They played the game and they had fun.” But now the fun is over. And it seems no amount of money can ever buy it back.

...A CUNNING plan to save the Spice Girls... will answer a tantalising question that is debated whenever two of their fans meet: who is the spiciest singer of them all. The all-girl band, whose individual voices have until now been submerged in their close harmony style, have decided to perform solo tracks when they start recording their third album this week. Virgin Records, which has issued writs against newspapers that suggested it was unhappy about the pregnancies of two of the singers, regard the “semi-solo” album... as a satisfying solution to the attractions of solo careers while maintaining the lucrative Spice Girls brand. The Spice Girls could afford to retire tomorrow. *Q* magazine recently estimated their fortunes at \$39 million each... Yet, like so many pop sensations before them, the foursome want musical respect and they are more confident about winning it since... [Ginger Spice] left the group... The band have already defied the “Monkee law” – named after the [US] “teeny pop” group created to counter the Beatles in the 1960s – by not only surviving longer than three years but also producing a second album... that is set to outsell their debut. They have had seven No 1 singles, and despite [Ginger]’s departure, their recent 14,000-seat Madison Square Gardens show in New York sold out in 12 minutes and won over even their most curmudgeonly critics. But can they actually sing? ...Fans believe the battle of the voices will be won by Sporty Spice... who... recently sang... [without her mates at a] Planet Hollywood restaurant. “[Sporty] has the lungs but whether [Sporty] knows what to do with them is another matter,” said an onlooker.

...The cover of [Scary Spice]’s new solo album is definitely “hot” but while her surgically-enhanced assets will certainly help to shift more units, they’ve come at a heavy price. Her estranged husband... claims her plastic surgery marked the end of their marriage. “I was... against it because it meant [my wife] would no longer be able to breast-feed [our baby]. I was very, very angry. It was the beginning of the end of our sex life...”

...*Magazine sex loses gloss in quest for perfection*... [Gals] are being misled by life-style magazines into thinking that perfect sex can be achieved simply by “pushing buttons,” says an expert. Magazines such as *Cosmopolitan* set impossible goals and take no account of what happens in real relationships, says [a] sex psychologist. Their emphasis on performance and technique gives [readers] a false idea of what good sex should be like and helps to foster a negative self-image. [The psychologist] and two colleagues from University College London studied 26 sex articles in 63 magazines... All promote a “prescriptive” recipe for sex which sets out the technique skills necessary for a [gal] to acquire, the study says. The primary focus is performance rather than pleasure. No account is taken of the importance of communication between partners, or the possibility of relationship problems, it says... [Guys] are assumed to be proficient and confident about sex, despite the fact that an estimated 31[% of them] have sexual difficulties... The study also finds the same three experts, all of whom have written books, are constantly being quoted in the magazines. One of them is [the]... author of *The Joy of Sex*, whose advice was apparently sought even though [the guy is dead. The psychologist] says advice aimed at helping [gals] to hide unattractive aspects of their bodies during sex is potentially damaging. “There’s an assumption that your body will not be perfect, so you have to use clothing, make-up, blindfolds – anything – to stop him seeing your deficiencies... Sexual positions are recommended that make your legs look thin or hide cellulite. Worrying about these things reduces so many avenues of pleasure and makes a person feel crap. It’s not going to help someone with a negative self-image at all... These articles are not empowering... and they don’t allow people any room to ask if they have a problem. Sex is seen as a serious activity to perform alongside all the other activities in a busy [gal]’s day.”

...*Hedonistic [gals] behaving very badly*... They go out when they want, they drink as much as they feel like and they stay out until 4 am because they are free to do so. No, we are not talking about twentysomethings – we are talking about [gals] in their 30s who are determined to enter middle age disgracefully. A British study has shown that record numbers of [gals] aged 30 to 45 are smoking and drinking heavily and doing no exercise, and their numbers are increasing faster than in any other age group. The survey... said “ladettes” were staying single well into their 30s, prolonging their “live-for-today lifestyle.” “We are the late-60s generation, the first generation of [gals] who have freedom,” said one fun-loving thirtysomething. These [gals] have the money to do what they want. And they also exist in N[Z]. Just ask... the... owner of Lime bar in Ponsonby and the Hobson St Lounge in central Auckland. Fun-loving career [gals] are the target market for both venues. At 7 pm on a Thursday night the Hobson St Lounge is full of them – they started early, said [the] manager... “The older bracket” came in on Friday nights, but also through the week, especially after work... They were dressed up and were “definitely professionals.” But their biggest giveaway... was what they drink – either good wine or cocktails. And did they drink a lot? “Sure, they get tipsy... They have been there, done that and have nothing to prove. They know how to have a good time and do it pleasantly.” ...While there may not be N[Z] statistics on the phenomenon, a sample survey of N[Z]ers’ drug use showed an 11[%] increase between 1990 and 1998 in the number of [gal] drinkers who felt drunk at least once a month... Wealthier [gals] drank more than the less well-off... On one side of the phenomenon was a group... who were single or divorced, were fed up that they could not find a partner, or had just left one and were saying “to hell with the whole thing,” rewarding themselves with things they enjoyed... It’s the Bridget Jones syndrome. On the other side were married [gals], for whom the pressure of work and home life was growing all the time. They were struggling to live up to media icons such as the domestic goddess who has a top career and a home life. In a time-starved world, booze and fags were a way of dealing with the troubles of the day. One 35-year-old... who would not be named, is all too familiar with the thirtysomething scene. The Hobson St Lounge is often her last stop on a big night out, but still only one of many... [The 35-year-old, who] runs her own public relations business... is single... But the intention of a night on the town was not to meet a future match... “You know you are not going to meet your future husband at a bar at 3 am.” ...[it] could have married at 28 but chose not to. “There is so much else to do in the world. We can do what we want to do and have the money to do it. We are the ones making choices...” ...[a 32-year-old] is also single. “I have taken advantage of being single and make the most of it. I enjoy going out and drinking and no one will stop me. It is fun.” [Another ladette], also 32 and single, said... [gals] such as her no longer had the same mentality as they used to... [Gals] in their 30s [just] wanted to have a good time... [This 32-year-old added that it] had been tied to nothing for the past 10 years...

[‘There are girls who want to be a deb. That’s like wanting to sweep the road. I wish they would sweep the road – that’s useful!’ Of greater concern, perhaps, 93[%] of teenage girls... say that store-hopping is their favourite activity...

CAN YOU imagine life without Band-aids, Tampax, tupperware, ice cream, condoms, Pampers, vaseline, Bic pens, Levi’s jeans? How would your kids get on without their Lego, rollerblades or Barbie dolls? [The] book... *WHY DIDN’T I THINK OF THAT?: Bizarre Origins of Ingenious Inventions We Couldn’t Live Without*... chronicles the origins of 50 famous inventions. Depending on your point of view, some of these are more essential than others. I can’t say I’ve ever had a great need for Silly Putty. Neither did the world’s scientific community who wrote to [the Scottish inventor] in 1943: “This is interesting material, but we are unable to find even one functional use for it.” Well, with the right marketing and packaging, more than 200 million Silly Putty eggs have been sold since 1951 when [a] marketing whizz... took a chance on the gooey substance... Astronauts took it to the moon to relieve boredom. [The marketing whizz] made a fortune of more than \$[NZ]140 million. The inventor of Tampax... received no monetary rewards for his efforts, although the London *Sunday Times* named him one of the “1000 Most Important People of the 20th Century”. (In fact, [gals] have used a variation of tampon since ancient times. Egyptians used softened papyrus and Romans used wool.) [The inventor of Tampax] sold the patent to... [a businessperson and physician, who] had a few problems with [US] religious groups who feared that

Tampax would encourage young [gals] to masturbate. Undeterred, [the physician] hired nurses to give lectures... and took on a smart partner. A full-page, four-colour ad in the *American Weekly* depicting young [gals] dancing, playing tennis etc... demonstrated that with internal protection a modern menstruating [gal] could be active. Other fascinating facts: ...Ken's nether region used to be as smooth as Barbie; later [her boyfriend] was given a "little bump". [Incidentally, 'for \$100,000, AUSn doctors will turn you into a Barbie doll lookalike if you are a boy'; a US gal whose 'ambition was to become like her childhood idol, achieved it after 27 operations' and a similar cost.]

...Start on the journey of a lifetime... with... *Barbie*... the... little girls' best friend! ...Let Barbie teach you all about the wonderful world we live in! Impress your friends with your new-found knowledge! Be the smartest as Barbie shares her beauty secrets with you! ...Barbie shows you how to put on make-up, step-by-step... Barbie has many talents and hobbies... Understand what Barbie does at work... Barbie Fact Files are divided into... great colour-coded sections: [e.g.] ...Barbie the ballerina... lead[s] you into the graceful flowing world of classical ballet... *To become real dancers, you have to be supple, graceful and good humoured*... Get all 36 cards for only one dollar... plus \$1 postage and handling... Send for your 36 BARBIE FACT FILES within 10 days and you will receive a poster... – ...CELEBRATING FORTY YEARS OF DREAMS... – ...absolutely FREE! ...Don't miss out! ...DON'T DELAY, REPLY TODAY! ...• Offer valid in N[Z] only... From time to time, we pass on to our customers news about products and services which may interest them. If you do not want to be informed, please let us know by ticking the box.□

...Set in Ireland during the 1960s, when [gals] in the US were burning their bras in a feminist fervour... *The Magdalene Sisters*... is the story of three young [gals] who are sent to the Magdalene Laundries by their fathers because one was raped, one had [a] child out of wedlock and the third girl, an orphan, was too pretty and spirited. We witness how the girls survive, adjust and eventually escape this painfully hypocritical environment run by the dictatorial Sisters of Mercy for the Catholic Church. The [girls] in them were little more than slaves, spending 364 days a year working in the laundries, never seeing a penny and atoning for their sins... *The Magdalene Sisters* is a fascinating movie when you consider the fact that the last laundry closed only seven years ago... □ [40%]... of nuns in the U[S -] ...some 34,000... nuns... [-] have been sexually abused, according to an independent study... The national survey was conducted by researchers at St Louis University and paid for in part by several orders of Catholic nuns. It was completed in 1996 but kept under wraps because some Catholic officials feared the information would create a scandal.

...[the] Pope... has waived the mandatory wait of five years after death to begin the process towards sainthood for Mother Teresa... Two miracles have already been attributed to Mother Teresa and forwarded to the Vatican for verification. One of these happened in the U[S] where a French[person] broke several ribs in a car accident, but her injuries miraculously healed when [it] wore a Mother Teresa medallion around her neck. Another reported miracle involved a Palestinian girl suffering from cancer who recovered after Mother Teresa appeared in her dreams and said: "Child, you are cured." ...The Archbishop of Calcutta... hoped the Catholic nun would be declared a saint in 2000, when the Vatican celebrates the start of the third millennium of Christianity.

...Until recently [the Indian] was not even a Christian, let alone a Catholic. [The Indian] cannot read, does not know her precise age, and comes from one of India's most backward and downtrodden communities. But... [the] tribal... mother of five... is about to play a starring role in the most compelling posthumous inquiry to hit the Vatican in decades, if not centuries. A tribunal of Vatican theologians will shortly begin to consider whether Mother Teresa should be made a saint. [The]Pope... has already put the Albanian nun, who died in... 1997, on a "fast track" to canonisation. Two years ago the Diocesan Church in Calcutta began the onerous task of gathering evidence that would support her claim to sainthood. The 34,000 pages of material collected by investigators has been sent to Rome. The investigators were especially keen to authenticate a miracle performed by... Teresa after her death... And in [the mother-of-five], they appear to have found one. In May 1998, [the mother] was suffering from a painful, gigantic tumour in her uterus. Leaving her husband and... children behind in her village, [it] hobbled into the home for the destitute run by the Missionaries for Charity... in the West Bengal town of Patiram. "For two months I had severe pain... and I was crying. I was not able to sleep; I could lay only on the left side and I couldn't stand straight. The sisters gave me medicine but the pain was still there. I was always praying to... Teresa, whose picture was on the wall just opposite my bed." After [the mother] made several unproductive trips to hospital, two of the nuns caring for her... decided to take matters into their own hands. On... the first anniversary of... Teresa's death... the nuns tied a silver oval-shaped medallion to [her] stomach using a black thread. The medallion had been placed on... Teresa's body after her own death. [The mother] then fell asleep while the sisters prayed – and wept – holding her stomach. When [the mother] awoke the next morning the tumour had miraculously disappeared. [The mother] became well enough to start helping in the garden and eventually went back to her village. Diocesan investigators subsequently interviewed [the mother] and talked to a series of doctors who confirmed that the tumour had indeed disappeared. "The probe found the miracle to have met the essential requisites of being organic, immediate, permanent and intercessionary in nature," said the Archbishop of Calcutta... But the excessive secrecy deployed by... Teresa's order, and her successor... has raised more questions than answers... in [the mother]'s case... All the nuns involved in her treatment have refused to discuss publicly what happened. And [the mother]'s name has never previously been revealed – in fact, the Missionaries of Charity have gone out of their way to prevent it from coming out. When the *Observer* newspaper turned up outside the Missionaries of Charity home for the destitute in the town of Raiganj, close to where [the mother] was treated, the nuns refused to emerge. "Obviously what happened is an objective-miracle. But the sisters don't want to give different versions as that would spoil things," Raiganj[']s bishop... said. The witness statements given by the sisters also reveal several inconsistencies. [The mother], who is about 30, claims [it] was being given medicine only for pain relief, but the sisters confirm [it] was also treated for TB. Before the "miracle", [the mother] was taken to five doctors – an extraordinary number for a poor resident of a Missionaries of Charity home. Once [the mother] had been "cured", the nuns encouraged her sister... to write to their Mother House in Calcutta, the order's HQ, informing them of the miracle. [The sister] refused and so the nuns reluctantly put pen to paper themselves. Despite the doubters, including local doctors, there are many who believe that... Teresa was a saint and deserves official recognition. The Vatican's chief investigator... who headed the diocesan probe, said last week that [it] had been overwhelmed by the findings, which included several hundred miracles attributed to... Teresa. Confirmation of a miracle is required for beatification, while a second miracle is required for full-blown sainthood. But [the chief investigator] is confident: "I don't think there will be any obstacles."

...WHEN the Holiday Inn hotel chain asked... 5000... Americans to identify the smartest people of the... century respondents came up with some interesting replies. Microsoft[']s chairperso[n]... was crowned the smartest business[person]... As for the overall smartest person, Americans picked... Einstein... President Roosevelt, who led the [US] through the Depression and W[W]II, beat John F. Kennedy... and Dwight Eisenhower for smartest president. Mother Teresa was smartest humanitarian... The hotel... used the... survey to highlight itself as the "smart choice" for travellers.

...[the singer] has just seen Africa afresh. You might think the ex-Boomtown Rat and hero of famine relief had already seen all a [perso]n could of the continent that cried out for Live Aid... [H]is raw, straight-to-the-heart appeal raised an awesome \$150million to feed the [Last] World's starving. When [the singer] got together a Who's Who of pop... to make that historic Band Aid single, [it] turned up the amplifier – way beyond max – on global giving. Factory workers across Europe worked free over weekends solely to press his record *Do They Know It's Christmas?* A newlywed couple sold their house for the cause, and old [bird]s queued to give their wedding rings. "That's all they had to give away – an extreme sacrifice that represents all the love they'd had in their life," says [the singer], whose humanitarian efforts won him a knighthood and a Nobel Peace Prize. But this time round [the singer] was seeing Africa through the eyes of his children, first-time visitors to the continent [it] finds "the most beautiful and intoxicating in the world". "Before their trip, the kids – like most people – only knew the Africa of horror, of decay,"... But on safari

close by the Sabi River, [his children]... saw the Africa that dreams are made of. It's the Africa that we all wish existed without the fear of famine, debt, divisiveness or early death from AIDS – all the problems that [the singer] (an impassioned spokesperson with ideals way above party politics) continues to speak out against and battle. For the girls, big game by day and vast starry skies by night were the pay-off for their dreadful immunisation jabs, producing what [their father] describes as “a minor typhoid outbreak in Battersea”... On safari, [the singer] was as mesmerised as the children by the ongoing parade of wildlife beyond the veranda of Exeter Lodge. [The singer] tells of being terrified when charged by an elephant (luckily on a walk without the girls), of stunning sunrises and the odd sundowner of colonial pink gin, as well as an Easter egg hunt in the bush – “with monkeys and children competing for the best chocolate”. But for [the singer], ever the restless, multifaceted, must-do mover and shaker, there was a more serious side to the visit. [The singer] makes it plain that [a noted humanitarian] couldn't be in Africa without work on his agenda. There was some record promo to attend to – advance publicity in Cape Town for his... album *Sex, Age And Death* (“It's that time of my life!” [the 46-year-old] quips). But the meetings arranged with two Presidents, past and present, of South Africa were the real working purpose of his trip... [The singer] has already met, and made a TV documentary with, [the past President]. “The nice thing about being me... is that I can get to meet these extraordinary people.” ...The admiration's mutual: [the past President salutes the singer] as a “fellow guerrilla fighter”... [The singer] keeps endlessly busy because [it]'s easily bored – and boredom, [it] says, is a slipway to depression. [The singer is, it] says, a natural-born worrier, “melancholic by disposition”. Yet droll and dry, his company is also the ultimate *craic*. Who else, in a couple of hours, can move through memories of canning peas in Peterborough (“It was good money”), building the M25 (“Very good money”) to arguing with Mother Teresa? Says [the singer: “I thought Mother Teresa] was an amazing old bird. Willy, very media-hip, very strong. In the plight of Africa and so many people dying, [the nun] saw the suffering of Christ while I saw the denial of Christ. [The nun] saw famine as God testing us; I couldn't see how humans let other people go through that. In the end, [the nun] said: ‘I can't do what you do. You can't do what I do. But we both have to do it.’” ...From ...his... urgent sense that [it] should write a song – “because that's all I CAN do” – the extraordinary history of Live Aid unfurled... It's ironic that at the end of that incredible Live Aid day, [the organiser] eventually found himself alone in the stadium, having to hitch a ride home in an unknown family's Volvo. And that for all the funds raised, [the singer] then found himself almost broke and obliged to write – with some misgivings – a best-selling autobiography that, to his retrospective relish, became a set book for Oxford University English Lit exam entrants. His book was called *Is That It?* – which, of course, it couldn't be... The very next year, while... recording in LA, [the singer] was asked to clear the studio for a private word with the British Consul General. Expecting some formal Band Aid business, [the singer] only half-heard the words addressed to him – “medal” and “British Empire” – and said, chancing his luck, that although this sounded very nice, wasn't there something to offer that wasn't a medal? “But you don't see, you'll be a Knight Commander,” pressed the honourable messenger. “Oh,” said [the singer], understanding at last. “Ah! That's really cool. Thanks very much.” On his great day at the Palace, [the]... Queen told... him... his title was a small token for the work [it]'d done. “Believe me, Your Majesty,” said the new knight, “it wasn't nearly as hard as getting into this morning suit.” ...If they had to choose, it's hard to believe that the four girls would really prefer a conventionally suited father with golf club membership and social expectations to match... “Normally... the girls... are embarrassed by me – ...‘Why can't you be like other dads?’ they say.” Maybe they're too... young to grasp what [their father] has achieved by being different. Have they watched the video footage from Live Aid beamed worldwide to two billion people? Actually, says [the singer], they haven't – but then neither has [their father]. “It's not their time... only one... was... born... And being kids busy with the present and their own lives, they don't really see it as their story.” Of the [ir father's] story – or at least its dark side – more than enough for comfort has already been said. It's a cruel irony that [the singer] woke up the world to unbearable loss in Africa but then faced unspeakable pain at home. The loss of his wife, Paula Yates, first into the arms of INXS singer Michael Hutchence and then through her tragic death from a drugs overdose[– following Michael's apparent suicide in AUS –] makes his role as a single parent to their daughters all the more delicately demanding. But... [the singer] shrugs off any suggestion that his decision to take on... Paula's four-year-old daughter by Hutchence, was either noble or tough... [The singer] claims to have a poor, selective memory and so to think little of times past... “But what really stands out in my memory more than anything... was the realisation that we are not in the end powerless in the face of monstrous human events.” ...As an outsider, it's hard to grasp quite how [the singer] left his Dublin school without any qualifications ([it] concocted his own school reports to appease his academically ambitious Dad), yet rose from abattoir work to pop stardom and on... to global acclaim. To [the singer], however, his life though “episodic” and “unplanned”... seems “all of a piece”. There was a defining moment of boyhood romanticism when his father took him outside to watch the first Sputnik pass over Blackrock... After that cosmic “connectedness”, it was natural enough... to perceive Africa was only around the corner – and thus to believe in the real possibility of “throwing an electronic loop around the planet and bringing people together in their lingua franca, which is not English but pop music”.

...[it is an event that brings people together across Australasia, and this year a NZer became the first gal] trainer to ever have a winning horse in the historic race. “I believe that everything I've gone through was fate,” [the]... Melbourne Cup winning trainer... t[old *Gals'*] *Day* from a Victorian paddock as the A[US]n media wait[ed] restlessly in the wings... [to interview] the new darling of the Australasian turf... “Out of every cloud is a silver lining. You definitely have to survive the hard times to enjoy the good times. Now I plan to enjoy every moment of this win. I don't want to come off this cloud for a long time.” ...Ever since her husband... trained 1988 Melbourne Cup winner Empire Rose, [the wife] has dreamed about winning the world's most famous horse race. But not even a Hollywood script writer could have thrown up so many hurdles along the way. After a fall 10 years ago when riding in an amateur race in Gisborne, [the wife] was in a coma for eight days, and doctors feared for her life. Her speech slurred from brain damage, [the wife] was sent to a “mental home”, and [that] was the scariest time of her life. “They thought that's where I belonged because I was having trouble talking, but I knew I was OK. I just couldn't tell anyone. I remember the movie on the TV the first night was *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. It was like a nightmare. It was a mixed ward, too, and I was petrified the guys were going to rape me. They were that scary. Fortunately, I made a remarkable recovery over the weekend and I was out of there on the Monday.” Despite medical opinion that [the wife] would not be able to ride again, [the mother of two] was back on a horse three months later. But it was two years before [the teenagers' mother] fully recovered... “After everything I've been through, this win proves that you can do anything you put your mind to – don't let anyone say you can't.”

...[Telecom has] a... new head... The 37-year-old, who will next month start collecting a pay packet that others can only dream about... has realised a dream harboured since... [becoming] the 17-year-old dux of McKillop College in Rotorua: becoming the chief executive of a top... [NZ company. Its outgoing chief executive] is convinced that Telecom, which searched the world for his replacement, has the right person for the job... [His replacement] has hardly come out of nowhere. Her current position as head of Telecom's services has her in charge of half the company's staff and 90[%] of its \$3.4 billion revenue... No details have been revealed of her new annual salary package, but... the... departing Telecom chief executive... is nudging \$2 million and there will be few above her on the N[Z] corporate earnings ladder.

...Now the girls rule the roost... As a [gal], I was delighted to see the line-up of illustrious [gals] who were at... [the] swearing in of... N[Z]'s new governor-general... It's great that so many [gals] are at the helm of the SS New Zealand. There... was the governor-general, the prime minister, the chief justice and the leader of the opposition – powerful, intelligent babes, the lot of them. It made me proud to be a N[Z]er.

...TVNZ] has sold its Saturday morning 7 am to 7.30 am slot on TVOne to an A[US]n evangelist who preaches that having fem[inin]e leaders is a sign of the devil. [The e]vangelist... sought a broadcast time later than 6 am on a Saturday when his message would be screened “among children

and young people.” His mission begins... with two programmes reserved for the topic of our “fatherless generation,” a sad state of affairs “reflected in the fact that we have a fem[inine PM] and... Leader of the Opposition.”

...[the Opposition leader] has a vision: the audience knows this because [the Labour Party leader] has told them five times... [Labour’s leader is passionate: and] has said so three times. The audience gratefully inhales the great Labour themes – fairness and security, sickness and the pension, unemployment and catastrophe... [Labour’s leader] is leading a crusade: [the leader] says so repeatedly and whatever a politician says three times is true. Certainly it works for these loyal Canterbury folk on a balmy day... They clap and cheer her out into the sunshine. In 1999, Labour is going big with the vision thing. It’s policy pledges, on the other hand, seem small and modest by comparison. [Labour’s leader] concedes that they are careful, even conservative. Will this visionary frugality, this crusade to nowhere-very-promising, do the political business? [Labour’s leader] says it will. The focus groups, it seems, are telling Labour two things. 1: Things are bad and we want to hear that they can get better. 2: Don’t give us any horse-dung about Paradise Tomorrow. “People say ‘the health system is completely stuffed!’ And they’ve all got a story. And then when the question is thrown in, ‘Is it too late? Do you really think Labour can do anything?’,” people say, ‘Oh no, it’s not too late. You’ve got to start somewhere,’”... But they don’t want to be told, [Labour’s leader] says, that everything can quickly be fixed. “They wouldn’t believe us,”...

Some business leaders were last night calling for an early election, as the coalition Government plunged deeper into chaos in the wake of a fundamental disagreement over the sale of Wellington airport. Frustration at the ongoing political uncertainty has prompted some business leaders to call for National to pull the plug, with at least one business representative saying... voters would reward National for saying “enough.” ...● Cabinet resolved in principle last night to proceed with the sale of the Government’s 66[%] share in Wellington airport.

...*FINALLY, THE END... Just the last rites remain...* The coalition Government is now all but dead after [the Deputy PM] led his four fellow N[Z] First ministers out of last night’s emergency cabinet meeting. An angry [PM] described the walkout as “unprecedented” in N[Z] politics and... regarded it as “terribly serious.” But an early election was not being considered at this stage. Instead it was [the PM’s] intention to continue to govern as a minority Government should the breach in the coalition prove irreparable. [The PM] has called the National Party president... to Wellington this morning to begin special coalition dispute resolution procedures. This involves the leaders, deputy leaders and presidents of both parties... [E]ither party can give seven days’ notice to terminate the coalition agreement... The... walkout came as the cabinet was discussing the sale of... Wellington International Airport... [The leader of] NZ First... said NZ First would not sell public assets into foreign control and “nor will we sell our principles and beliefs purely for the positions of public office.” However, National MPs remain convinced that [the Deputy PM] is motivated more by politics than principle and... wants to collapse the coalition because [the NZ First leader believes it] can better revive his party’s flagging fortunes out of National’s shadow... Soundings by National this week had persuaded it that if [the leader of NZ First walked, the Deputy PM] could take his caucus with him, at least at the outset. However, National strategists believed that as many as 10 of the NZ First MPs could later be enticed back into the fold and went into last night’s meeting prepared for every eventuality, including collapsing the coalition if necessary. [The PM’s patience with the Deputy PM] was exhausted before [the NZ First leader] managed to irritate her even further in Parliament yesterday when... [likening] remaining in the coalition, whatever it did, to “the Nazism and fascism of the 1930s and 1940s.” Her spine has been stiffened by a growing demand within her party, her caucus and among her ministerial colleagues[, as well as from her ‘five to eight media advisers’, to cast the Deputy PM] adrift. They see him as an electoral liability and have always known that [the NZ First leader] would break away from the coalition before the next election... but National sources were suggesting last night that the fallout from the Asian crisis might have brought the timetable forward. The N[Z] *Herald* understands that the revised economic and fiscal forecasts now being prepared by the Treasury make gloomy reading and there is doubt in National circles about whether [the NZ First leader] is prepared to front the hard decisions the new figures may require.

...*Electors sold out from day one...* The public has never forgiven [NZ First’s leader] for going into coalition with National after campaigning to get rid of the National Government... After the election, NZ First voters rued their polling-day choice... For nine weeks, [the party’s leader] spun out simultaneous coalition talks with National and Labour, and then spun out the public announcement that NZ First had chosen National as its coalition partner... Labour was gutted and the vitriol that followed never allowed NZ First to pause and take breath. It was straight out of Civvy St and, in some cases, straight into cabinet for NZ First MPs, who stumbled from day one... N[umerous] turbulent months later and the public odium towards [NZ First, and its leader] in particular, is as strong as ever... Like a headless chicken that keeps running in circles, the Government was pouring out messages of stability last night... No one was really paying attention though, because they were all wondering whether the Government still existed.

...*The future of the Government rests with 14 NZ First MPs cast adrift after the sacking of [their leader]...* National is cautiously confident that it will get enough N[Z] First votes to survive [the NZ First leader’s] revenge at being dumped as Deputy P[M]. The NZ First leader is expected to go into Opposition, taking his hardcore loyalists with him. However, National needs to peel off eight of his 15 MPs... to maintain a majority in the House. First in the gun are the seven NZ First ministers. The P[M]... is prepared to allow them to continue to hold their warrants provided they give her a “personal commitment that they understand the obligations of collective responsibility.” [The PM] has written inviting each to meet her individually over the next few days to discuss their futures. [The NZ First leader], who has also been sacked from the Treasurer’s job, was talking tough yesterday, saying his people could not be “bought off... for 30 pieces of silver” or for the privileges and perks of office. However, [the NZ First leader] must surely regard it as ominous that so far only [one of his MPs] has declared his hand – and... has said that [the PM has the MP’s] “unwavering support.” ...the Associate Treasurer... says his boss... was making “increasingly irrational decisions” and had to be sacked for the good of the Government and the economy... Where the others will jump is anyone’s guess but [their leader] would be unwise to rely upon their following him into the wilderness.

...[the sacked Deputy PM] took his last ride in a Government limousine last night as his cabinet privileges ran out. Stripped of his minister’s warrant, [the NZ First leader also]... took a severe pay cut – from \$151,000 to between \$82,000 and \$91,500, depending on how many MPs stay in [his] party... On top of the ignominy, [the NZ First leader] heard news of his dumping not from his boss, but from his hosts at a lunch function in an Auckland hotel. It fell to the chair[person of the NZ]-China Trade Association... to tell [him what the PM] had not... “I said, ‘Haven’t you heard the news?’ [The NZ First leader] said, ‘What news?’ I said, ‘The P[M] has replaced you as Deputy PM and Treasurer,’” [The NZ First leader] said, “That’s very interesting,” and... went and sat down and... asked his assistants to find out more details. I joked I was a strange emissary.” [The NZ First leader] was unimpressed... “Seldom have I ever been to a meeting where the host welcomes me and says: ‘Look, your designation has been changed,’”... It would have been nice to have been told by the person who claims to be responsible.” [The PM said it was sorry about not being] the one to bear the bad news... [The PM] had tried to speak to... [the NZ First leader] for 45 minutes before... [announcing] her decision to a... press conference... after noon... The staff member who accompanied... [the sacked Deputy PM] said... both had been tied up on the phone between arriving in Auckland and arriving at the function.

...[NZ First’s] leader... created history... [by being] sacked from the cabinet, [a]constitutional expert and former [Labour PM]... said yesterday. “...to my knowledge... [NZ First’s leader] is the first politician... in [NZ] history... who has been dismissed as a cabinet minister twice for breach of collective responsibility,”... [NZ First’s leader] was also dumped from the cabinet in 1991 when, as a National MP, [it] was Maori Affairs Minister.

...[as the] Electoral Office is starting to push through some election preparations in case of a snap election... Labour has increased its lead over National in the latest *National Business Review*-Consultus poll... According to the poll... Labour now enjoys 43[%] support, up two points over a

poll a month ago, and National is on 32[%] support, down one point. The poll was conducted between... the week in which Labour[']s leader... was given a resounding welcome to the Alliance's annual conference. The Alliance itself fell one point in the poll to 10[%], Act fell two points to 7[%], and NZ First was up one point to 3[%]. Translated into an MMP Parliament, and assuming NZ First did not win any electorate seats, Labour would have 56 seats and the Alliance 13 – enough MPs to form a majority coalition government... National would have 42 seats and Act nine.

...The P[M] will today pitch for the votes of MMP opponents by promising referendums on the voting system in the next parliamentary term... [The PM]'s speech today will also repeat the view [it] first expressed in January... [that] MMP could be strengthened through constitutional mechanisms such as a ban on snap elections... [Meanwhile, the PM is still] canvassing the possibility of giving people in same-sex relationships normal legal rights in matters of matrimonial property, adoption, inheritance and immigration... No country as yet gives same-sex couples the same rights to marriage as heterosexual couples. In 1997, the Court of Appeal refused to grant marriage licences to three lesbian couples. One option could be to follow Denmark, which allows a same-sex couple to complete an official "registration of partnership." This gives the couple the same legal rights and responsibilities – with some exceptions – as a heterosexual couple. The Danish exceptions forbid church weddings, adoption of children and state-funding of artificial insemination for a lesbian couple. Speaking at Saturday night's Hero Parade in Auckland, [the PM promised to] put... the legal recognition of same-sex relationships on the Government's agenda... A landmark High Court ruling last week upheld a [lesbian]'s right to child support from her former lesbian lover. The [lesbian mother] later admitted the couple used a loophole to claim welfare cash. They could not do so because their relationship was not recognised by the law. Repeating her election pitch of providing security, [the PM] said that theme included rights in personal relationships. But any legislation is unlikely to be introduced before [the next] election. The parliamentary programme is already full. Labour's human rights spokes[person described the PM's] statement as empty words.

...In January of last year the *Herald* published on this page my accounts of the Blokes Liberation Front, its objectives and the steady moves our society has been making to ensure their implementation. Recent events have provided even further evidence that the BLF's philosophy is gaining more acceptance and now seems an appropriate time to examine these issues and, in light of the front's success, its plans for other major areas of development... [such as a flat tax] rate of 100[%] on all income, with everything else free... [T]he key point of our policy statement accepts that while blokes have been in charge of society for the last 20,000 years or so, things have been a fair shambles and it is time we got out of the business of being boss, stayed home to watch the rugby... and the cricket... and let the sheilas get on with the business of running the whole show. After all, we argue, they can scarcely do a worse job than blokes have managed all these years. What a thrill, then, swept through the BLF when... we saw our principal doctrine accepted and indeed put into place by the senior partner of the coalition Government. How our hearts beat with joy and our heads swelled with pride when [our PM] finally saw the light, got out of the big time and handed over the reins to [his former No 5]. How delighted we were that a [gal of the former No 5]'s stature, compassion and intellectual breadth would become our country's first [gal PM]...

By the end of the 1970s the [feminist] movement could no longer claim to be the United [Gals'] Front. Abortion, race and sexual preference separated and divided the ranks. Sisterhood, it seemed, could be selective. But there would be one unifying movement in the '80s that would bring together... all liberated [gals]... under one banner... [When] the 1981 Springbok tour ripped [NZ apart, gals] called a truce to their infighting and protested the tour together, and this time they had a new ally – [guys]. "Because by that time I think anyone with half-a-brain realised that this simply wasn't... about rugby, it was... about oppression. And so the sort of things that [gals] had been saying for a decade had finally percolated through into the [guy] consciousness of this country, and they bonded. More than they'd ever bonded previously."

The current social revolution, spearheaded by... the feminist movement, is... heavily involved in economic change. In contrast to the industrial revolution, however, one of the primary forces behind the present upheaval is a desire to exchange dependence for independence. Among the feminists, for example, many of the demands for equality have to do with money – equal pay... equal job opportunities, and pay for [gals] who stay home and keep house. Books on advising [gals] on how to handle money are almost as common as cookbooks... Old stereotypes of [guy and gal] behavior no longer hold true in relation to money any more than they do in other areas.

Gals constitute 52% of NZ's population and more than 50% of the population in other nations where they have a longer life expectancy (excluding, perhaps, those where it isn't uncommon for parents to abort girl foetuses or murder baby girls) which, if they were to unite politically, means they should be able to achieve their aims – at least in the so-called democracies – with or without the assistance of guys. It would, however, appear that few gals are united and even less are interested in aiming to create a moneyless society – especially amongst the political gal leaders (who have largely proven themselves to be the equals of their guy peers when it comes to lacking sound solutions to the problems their societies are facing). Non-political gal icons who promote concern for the poor (e.g., Princess Di) invariably undo any good which could come from their charitable principles and deeds by flaunting an extravagant and image-conscious lifestyle, while those who humbly live like or amongst the poor invariably undo any good that comes from their actions and example by their promotion of unsound beliefs (e.g., Mother Teresa). Gal philosophers are a rarity, and gal philosophers who aren't simply riding on the pack of someone else (e.g., Plato) are even rarer. The apparent lack of gal philosophers – at least ones of substance – could be related to the historical oppression of gals (i.e., few gals have thought about wider social issues in the past because their position in society didn't require it, and most were too busy coping with personal issues – e.g., trying to find a husband who could support them because it was near-impossible to support themselves, then organising households once they had found a husband – to bother getting involved; 'it was an age when gals were valued for their appearance, their ability to run the household, and their capacity for lively small talk') but, given the freedom and opportunity to expand their minds, most First World gals have chosen to devote mental energy to engaging in *lively small talk* or worrying about their physical looks and their menstrual cycle instead of worrying about the future of their own society or the plight of their Last World sisters. The majority of gals were oppressed historically because the majority of gals did nothing to alter their situation, and they will continue to be oppressed while their gender is predominantly unwilling to contemplate a world without wealth and shopping malls!

If I had to give a definition of capitalism I would say: the process whereby American girls turn into American [gals].

An American [Gals'] League felt called upon to protest against Einstein's visit to their country. They received the following answer[:] Never yet have I experienced from the fair sex such energetic rejection of all advances; or if I have, never from so many at once. But are they not quite right, these watchful citizenesses? Why should one open one's doors to a person who devours hard-boiled capitalists with as much appetite and gusto as the Cretan Minotaur in days gone by devoured luscious Greek maidens, and on top of that is low-down enough to reject every sort of war, except the unavoidable war with one's own wife? Therefore give heed to your clever and patriotic [gal]-folk and remember that the Capitol of mighty Rome was once saved by the cackling of its faithful geese.

3: THE POOR MAJORITY?

Social War, also called ITALIC WAR, or MARSIC WAR (90-89 BC), rebellion waged by ancient Rome's Italian allies (*socii*) who, denied the Roman franchise, fought for independence. The allies in central and southern Italy had fought side by side with Rome in several wars and had grown restive under Roman autocratic rule, wanting instead Roman citizenship and the privileges it conferred. In 91 BC the Roman tribune Marcus Livius Drusus tried to solve the problem by proposing legislation that would have admitted all Italians to citizenship, but his program aroused heated opposition in the Senate, and Drusus was soon afterward assassinated. The frustrated Italian allies then rose in revolt. The peoples of the hills of central Italy formed the heart of the uprising, the Marsi in the north and the Samnites in the south. Neither the Latin colonies nor Etruria and Umbria joined in. The Italians began organizing their own confederacy; they established their headquarters at Corfinium, which they renamed Italia, created a Senate and officers, and issued a special coinage; soon they had 100,000 [soldiers] in the field. In 90 BC Roman armies were defeated in the northern sector, while in the south the Italians were equally successful and burst into southern Campania. Only by political concession could Rome hope to check the revolt: the consul Lucius Julius Caesar thus helped pass a law granting Roman citizenship to all Italians who had not participated in the revolt and probably also to all who had but were ready to immediately lay down their arms. This move pacified many of the Italians, who soon lost interest in further struggle against Rome. Roman forces... soon inflicted decisive defeats on the remaining rebels and captured their strongholds. The back of the revolt was now broken, although some resistance continued among the Samnites for a short time. Further legislation was soon passed that reinforced the allies' newly won rights; one law regulated the municipal organization of the communities that now entered the Roman state; and another dealt with Cisalpine Gaul (probably granting citizenship to all Latin colonies). Thus the political unification of all Italy south of the Po River was achieved, and Romans and Italians, hitherto linked by alliance, could now become a single nation.

...in England (1381)... widespread unrest, caused by poor economic conditions and repressive legislation, culminated in revolt among the peasant and artisan classes, particularly in Kent and Essex. The rebels marched on London, occupying the city and executing unpopular ministers, but after the death of their leader, Wat Taylor, they were persuaded to disperse after the young king Richard II had granted some of their demands. Afterwards the government went back on its promises and rapidly re-established control.

After the failure of the revolutions of 1848, [Karl Marx – who]... studied history... economics... and philosophy... [-] withdrew to London, where [Marx] lived in poverty with his family the rest of his life, supported primarily by friends, studying and writing on economics and history, and assisting in organization of various working class movements... Regarding all value as the product of human labor, but observing that historically this value accrued primarily to... nonlaboring classes in the form of capital, while the labourers received little more in wages than their subsistence, Marx believed the economic struggle between these two groups was the motive force of history... Marx prophesied the imminence of [Procrustean] revolution, by which all class distinctions would be destroyed, and the state, which... served only to defend the capitalists... eventually wither away. [Marx] felt revolution would come to Russia last.

...Derived from a widespread, spontaneous loss of faith in the social, economic, political, and military structure of Russia, Nihilism sought the complete destruction of tradition to allow the reorganization of society. Toward the end of the 19th cent. Nihilists participated in numerous assassinations and other acts of violence, but their lack of central organization and program caused them to be overrun by the Social Democratic and Social Revolutionary movements. Turgenev gave the movement its name in his sardonic novel *Fathers and Sons* (1862).

Throughout U.S. history, mass violence has been infrequent, despite what some people have claimed. No nation in history has had such orderly change and growth. Those that have resorted to violence have been a lunatic minority. *Until recently!* Today, tens of thousands are willing to... [fight] for their cause. Various racial, social, and economic groups have risen from the bottom of our society... and they are carrying the resentments of their former low estate. But now they are acquiring... power, and the attention of the media. - 1974

Even more seriously, perhaps, the industrial-era paradigm contains no rationale or incentive for more equitable distribution of the earth's resources between the [First World] nations and the [Last] World countries. The seeds of worldwide conflict lie in the enormous and growing disparity between the world's rich and poor peoples... Disparities between rich and poor nations are not new, of course. Several things *are* new, however. One development is that communications media now reach the poor masses and continually remind them of the disparities. Another is the worldwide revolution of rising expectations and the mood of self-determination that is replacing the attitude of submission among those who view themselves as oppressed. A third development is the increasing vulnerability of our complex society to disruption. The elements of society are so closely coupled that damage to one halts the activity of many elements, thus making it possible for small dissident groups to apply pressures, through terrorism and sabotage, far greater than those they could muster politically or economically. We must face the possibility that threats to the world industrial system, ranging from raw material embargoes to nuclear blackmail, may be used to force the industrially developed world to transfer large amounts of wealth to the poverty-stricken world. Such actions become a credible eventuality precisely because they may be the only way that poor nations feel that they can hope to remedy their condition. - 1976

The basic reason for poverty in the poorest countries is not that the wealthy countries refuse to share, but that the peasants in question refuse to change their ancient ways... [Conversely,] setbacks of ideological movements that once attracted such hopeful enthusiasm have left vast numbers of people, especially in the West... groping for something to believe in... [M]any people are left psychologically high and dry... with little to cling to.

...The situation at present is that civilisation is observably advanced by the efforts of relatively few individuals, some of whom may end up with a greater-than-average share of wealth as a result of their efforts, while... there is a real need for some kind of ethic, or perhaps ethos, which can define acceptable routes to desired goals... One... long-term goal is with us in the apparent desirability of raising the standards of the [Last] World to that of the [First]: as a practical proposition we had better put it aside for a while, for the materials and energy are just not available – and, even if they were, the pollution burden incurred under the present way of doing things would be unacceptable. We will be hard put to maintain our own standards for very much longer without attempting to raise those of others. What is needed, of course, is some kind of system that will gradually share out the wealth so that we eventually come to some more equitable distribution... Partly the problem has been created by the poor wanting what the rich observably have, and in many cases attaining it in relatively short time... It is a truism that what the rich have in one generation the poor expect to have in the next... or at least shortly after. This... could be used as an argument for not having rich people, although it could equally be used as an argument for a different set of expectations for the poor... To extrapolate and say that within fifty years everybody should have a private aircraft is not realistic; even if achievable it is not desirable... Similarly, we cannot extrapolate and say that every person on the globe should have an automobile, because the number of square kilometres of road and parking space required would seriously threaten agriculture,

while the fuel base on which automobiles run would probably not last as long as the expected lifetime of an automobile in any case... Perhaps the best alternative would be to design a society where one reduces the outgoings of the average person... and maybe reducing the working week to four days... At present it may seem crazy to try to interest the average [hu]man in such presumptuous ideas as the life-time of the species when all [the average human] is really concerned about is where the next meal is coming from. The quick answer is that, in the [First World] at least, the average [hu]man need not worry too much about the next meal... but if [it] does not get some reasonable idea of the future [it] may have to, pretty soon... [Humanity] is not merely pushed forward, like toothpaste out of a tube – there is at least an equal amount of pull from [its] visions and... dreams... Most people would prefer to think that they were contributing in some way to an advance in society, and that our human values of justice, love and a greater understanding of the natural world were in the ascendant, even though one might be in a difficult patch at the present time. These are the kind of ideals that give people cohesion and enable them to work together... It is better to live in a society that at least *thinks* it is going somewhere, even if the view is a little fuzzy round the edges... Once vision is lost one ends up with a free-for-all where everybody tries to grab what they can, only to discover that the division of the parts ends up as much less than the sum of the whole... The point at which [humanity] tips from being driven by what has happened to being pulled by what might be made to happen is perhaps a watershed in human development. The only way we may make the transition is by a greater knowledge of the future. It has been said that knowledge is power; better yet, it may be freedom... Another factor is that people do need some kind of security.

...Threats to group security that lead to intergroup conflict may be real or imagined. They may involve threats of physical violence or financial destruction. Most threats, however, are to the status, reputation, or ego of the group. Those who have money often see those who have less as a potential threat to their “superior status” and they fear being “dragged down” to the level of the poorer group. This leads to feelings of hostility and antagonism toward those who are at a lower socioeconomic level... Conflict between groups, with resultant fear, hostility, and distrust, is likely to be increased as group membership is restricted. An organization which anyone can join and from which anyone can withdraw is not likely to arouse much resentment. Where membership is limited, however, group identification becomes intensified and barriers develop between those who are members and those who are not. As barriers increase, communication between groups lessens and suspicion takes the place of understanding... Generally... the wealthy people in a community use their money to separate themselves from less affluent community members. Differences become barriers and the more different the wealthy group becomes in dress, housing, language, customs, moral standards, and the like, the more it alienates itself from the majority and the more resentment and hostility it is likely to attract... It would seem easy to understand why people who are born into poverty and see no legitimate way of getting out, while others around them have an overabundance of wealth, might rise up in rebellion and turn on the privileged few. It is much harder to fathom why the sons and daughters of the very rich would do the same thing. Yet that has been a common trend in the U[S] during the past decade or so. - 1979

...Socialists... consider themselves far superior to all class antagonisms. They want to improve the condition of every member of society, even that of the most favoured. Hence, they habitually appeal to society at large, without distinction of class; nay, by preference, to the ruling class... Hence, they reject all political, and especially all revolutionary, action; they wish to attain their ends by peaceful means, and endeavour by small experiments, necessarily doomed to failure, and by the force of example, to pave the way for the new social Gospel... For how can people, when once they understand their system, fail to see in it the best possible plan of the best possible state of society? ...and to realise... their... castles in the air... – ...[such as] their social Utopias... “phalansteres”... “Home Colonies”... “Little Icaria”... [and other] duo-decimo editions of the New Jerusalem – ...they are compelled to appeal to the feelings and purses of the bourgeois... They, therefore, violently oppose all political action on the part of the working class; such action, according to them, can only result from blind unbelief in the new Gospel... [However, it is] evident, that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society... It is unfit because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery... Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society... What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, above all, is its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable... In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all... Of course... the first step in the revolution by the working class, is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy.

...Civilized communities have always employed force and violence, tempered at times by fraud, to hold their members together against the inequities that divided them. Inequity has had its historical role as well, freeing a few members of the community for larger enterprises when there was not enough to go around[, but t]he enormous forces and the violence now at the disposal of national states makes this way of organizing society and going on with history suddenly fatal. At the same time, by exercise of the same supremely human capacities that made the weapons of mass destruction, our species has brought another future into sight. Understanding and control of nature have shown how to secure enough... material goods to permit the admission of every [hu]man into full membership in [hum]ankind. - 1983

There has... been some discussion of the general issue of agents for change... Two suggestions... [are:] the potentially central role of the ‘new social movements’, such as feminism, the peace movement, gays and so on[; and]... that of the middle class as the instigators of change... [In 1986 a thesis presented] a classic formulation of the [second] position: one must of course acknowledge that the post-industrial revolution is likely to be pioneered by middle-class people. [According to that thesis the] reasons are simple: such people not only have more chance of working out where their own genuine self-interest lies, but they also have the flexibility and security to act upon such insights... If [the author of the thesis] means simply the questioning of current social and political practices and the presentation of alternatives, then the middle class clearly has a central role to play. If, however, [the author] sees the middle class as the engine of actual social change then... [the author has failed to see that the] middle classes are deeply implicated in present political practices, and in most respects their ‘self-interest’ as they perceive it lies in preserving them. Moreover, there is little sign of them being persuaded that their ‘genuine’ self-interest... lies in founding a sustainable society. A further problem with [the 1986] thesis is that it seems to fly in the face of one of [its author’s] own central maxims... ‘I do not believe that the majority of people will change until they believe it is in their own interests to do so... A reinterpretation of enlightened self-interest is therefore the key to any radical transformation’... This is a reasonable position, but the conclusion that the middle class will therefore be the pioneers contradicts one of [the author]’s earlier observations: one thing is clear[–] even if we continue to think in terms of working class and middle class, it is not the latter that has the most to worry about in terms of the current crisis. [The thesis goes on to say:] It is the middle classes that have the flexibility to weather traumatic shifts in social and economic patterns; by and large, they are not the ones to suffer most from mindless jobs, dangerous working conditions, a filthy, polluted environment, shattered communities, the exploitation of mass culture, the inhumanity of bureaucrats and the mendacity of politicians. On this reading, and taking into account [the author]’s self-interest thesis, it is the working class and not the middle class whose interest lies in shifting away from present social practices.

A fundamental transformation must occur in all areas of society. This can be achieved only by means of a movement from below, from those affected who recognize the necessity to take further developments into their own hands. - 1990

Many have criticized the Greens in the U[S] for being slow. Slow to get in there and do it. Slow to organize. Slow to develop a political message and direction. But the Greens have sought to get back to the basics of sound organizing. The more they have done this, the more they perceive the need to build from the ground up and... that the ground one stands on must be worth standing on for its own sake. This takes time... Building for a revolution, especially a revolution that is transformative and nonviolent, one that strives for internal democracy within the movement as well as external democracy in society... requires new models. These are not discovered or applied overnight... We, the revolutionaries in a new key, must learn to unite those seeming opposites, soul and calculation, spirituality and strategy, and become the Green Warriors for a new society... What we must guard against is... that our anger... [towards the rulers –] for... not only... screwing[society] up but for persisting in the policies and practices that perpetuate and intensify the crisis... [– does not] turn to hatred, which would... only... inspire them with even greater hate... that they will staunchly resist substantive transformation to the nth degree and to the end, growing rigid and ultimately stupid in the defense of their power and privilege.

...the success of the Chinese revolution [can] no longer be denied. In [a] few years, one quarter of the world population had moved on from long-arrested development in agricultural civilization into industrial revolution. Today, 20 years later, China is crossing the... industrial... threshold... and achieving status as a world power in fact... The success of the revolution must be attributed in no small part to the homogeneity of the Chinese people. On a subcontinent the size of the [US]... a billion people speak the same language and share the same 5000-year history of high civilization. This is in contrast to the diversity of language, history, and culture in Europe... Further, in contrast to other... countries awaiting the industrial revolution, China had a large cosmopolitan urban population, a source of leadership in the minor nobility of the Mandarin civil service... and... a substantial cadre of [European or US]-educated intellectuals... It was to them that Mao Zedong addressed his injunction: "Serve the people!" Under firmly imposed economic and social equality, the political revolution entrained the old order in industrial revolution. The people to be served were the villagers. It was no doubt lucky for the course of the Chinese revolution that its urban intellectual[s]... had to share the hard life of the peasants... [But] the... revolution in the villages was not bloodless. Landowners and moneylenders were lynched by their fellow villagers... Stalin's troops had massacred muzhiks and kulaks alike, and the word *mir*, in its meaning of village, was erased from Soviet vocabulary[, but the] Chinese revolution preserved the village and... villagers compelled the regime to back off its promotion of such extremes of collectivism as communal cooking, dining, and child rearing... The Chinese farmer... embrace[d] the new technology supplied from the center and proceeded to produce the agricultural surplus that made possible the... industrial revolution. Increase in the production of food proceeded steadily (except in 1959)... In 1959, a bad farming season... and the distractions of Mao's "great leap forward," which enlisted 90 million villagers in [stupid] industrial enterprises... such... as the building of back-yard blast furnaces, brought on a famine in which as many as 20 million people may have perished. - 1992

China's revolution had been a two-stage one. The first stage had been a democratic revolution which triumphed with the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949, after 30 years of war and civil war. Right from the beginning Mao had proclaimed (and continued to proclaim) that when the first stage had been completed the revolution would be continued into the second, socialist stage. Because of the correct strategy and tactics followed under Mao's leadership, the... stage turned out to be shorter than anticipated, the basic socialist ownership of the means of production being completed by 1957. In fact, in 1952, Stalin, who had earlier been suspicious of the Chinese revolution, declared in his pamphlet: 'Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR,' that China was a socialist country. And while the socialist camp lasted that view was held by all the socialist countries. But it became evident to Mao that in China a new revisionist grouping existed in the Party and state, and [Mao] became increasingly concerned that it might usurp power in China as in Russia... [– where], even in Stalin's time, a new bourgeoisie had been growing... comprised of highly-paid bureaucrats, managers of state enterprises, professional people divorced from the masses, and a labour aristocracy based on excessive incentive payments[(t)his privileged stratum constituted the social basis of Khrushchev and his revisionist clique() –] ...and restore capitalism there. [Mao] launched the Cultural Revolution in China in the mid-sixties with the aim of rearing a whole generation of Marxist-Leninists who would bar the road to revisionism. This Cultural Revolution was a vast, turbulent movement which eventually involved the great mass of the Chinese people, though beginning with the youth. After great difficulties this movement enabled the exposure and defeat of the revisionist bloc within the Party, but... I don't agree with... claims that Mao made no mistakes, that the Cultural Revolution was an unqualified success... [T]he Cultural Revolution did not achieve its object... While a form of working-class power was established after the Cultural Revolution, its leaders lacked experience, made mistakes, and this together with the reaction against the upheavals during the Cultural Revolution enabled Hua Guo-feng to manoeuvre his way to power through a coup d-etat against the so-called 'gang of four.' H[ua] was soon joined by Deng Xiaoping who quickly ousted Hua and seized power himself... In refuting Khrushchevism, Mao pointed to the importance of the contradiction between the imperialist world and the oppressed peoples as being more and more important in the scheme of things... Of course, China never claimed to have *completed* building socialism. Mao pointed out often that the struggle between the socialist road and the capitalist road would last a very long time before it was decided – perhaps one or two hundred years... [W]orld... control and power... [is currently] headed by US imperialism. But it doesn't alter the fact that imperialism is... a system in decay. That means that new revolutionary forces are *certain* to arise... Lenin once wrote an article not long after W[W]I entitled 'Backward Europe and Advanced Asia'. By this [Lenin] meant that revolution had begun to make great strides in the Asian world and there were many signs that there were going to be new... revolutions which would have very different characteristics from the revolutions that had hitherto been the only ones considered, namely in Europe. We are facing a situation today where in fact the centre of world revolution is not Europe. It's quite obvious that revolution in Europe is at a low ebb. What we see is a predominance of revisionism and opportunism where there still exists some sort of labour movement... The main revolutionary movements of today are... in the [Last W]orld... and... as the crisis develops and the imperialists twist the arms of the [Last W]orld countries through the IMF and the World Bank, they will move the masses closer to revolution... Of course, when I am referring to the revolutionary developments in the [Last W]orld, I don't mean that that is a separate part of the world revolution. No, it is a definite part of the world proletarian revolution which will in due course link up with the revolutions in the [First World] countries as they too develop because once the supply of superprofits from exploitation of the dependent countries in the [Last W]orld... diminishes so will the ability of the imperialists to maintain themselves in power in the major [First World] countries and they will be compelled to force down the living standards of the mass of the [ir own] workers. That will mean that there will be growing resistance that will eventually culminate in [the worldwide proletarian] revolution. - 1993

...the Resistance is... meeting in secret locations... away from the eyes of oppressors... the message is perfectly clear... now is the time for action cause actions speak louder than words...

...rise Aborigine... rise African rise native tribes off[North] America... rise South America... original people of the land... rise against materialism [and] capitalism take what is rightfully yours...

Thousands of hippies, punks, communists and middle-class leftists ended a conference in the Mexican jungle at the weekend pledging to support their... hosts and reviling corporate America. From more than 40 countries as diverse as France, Japan and Iran, supporters of the Mayan Indian rebels converged on [an] impoverished village in the remote southern Lacandon rain forests for the Zapatistas' Conference for Humanity and

Against Neoliberalism. The conference ended with the 2000 or so participants pledging to help one another fight the world's prevailing free-market economic policies, resist the International Monetary Fund and spread the Zapatista gospel of Indian autonomy through modern channels like the Internet. The rebels' leader... described the event as a meeting for the world's disfranchised, those left behind in capitalism's unforgiving search for profit. - 1996

Indians find salvation in return to their tradition Working amid cars and pickup trucks glinting in the evening sun... a soft-spoken 28-year-old from Alberta's Blackfoot Indian Reserve... pieced together the brightly coloured fabric, beads and feathers of his ceremonial Indian dancing costume... [The 28-year-old] was transforming himself into an explosion of red, yellow and black to dance at the opening of this year's Buffalo Days Powwow at Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, 175km south of Calgary. Taking a break from the laborious process, [the 28-year-old] said his return to ancient traditions was his salvation from poverty and alcoholism, which have long plagued Canadian Indian youth... "One of the reasons I come to this powwow is it is a big tourist attraction," [the 28-year-old] said before the brightly coloured dancers padded their way into the opening ceremonies. "It helps the world... [to] have awareness of the native tradition here." ...Indian drummers and dancers of all ages from Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan provinces and Montana across the US border gathered for the weekend to compete for prize money and pay homage to their ancestors on a stage surrounded by pine boughs and painted teepees. Alcohol was forbidden... That is not surprising given the site, which is sacred to the region's native population. Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, where Alberta prairie meets rolling Rocky Mountains foothills, is one of the last and best-preserved of several buffalo killing cliffs used by Plains Indians for about 5000 years... Today, the cliff - minus the buffalo herds since the late 1870s, when European settlers and sport hunters almost brought the huge North American bison to extinction - is designated as a World Heritage Site by the U[N] Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation... The customs have spread beyond North America. Conspicuous among Indians readying the site for the evening spectacle was... a 30-year-old German from Berlin who had lived on the Peigan Reserve for a month... [A] house renovator who was attired in homemade buckskin clothes, [the 30-year-old] is one of thousands of Germans who have embraced Indian customs and spirituality in an attempt to get back to the land. The spread of ancient customs beyond the reservations was seen as positive amid social ills and tension pitting the tribes against Canada's majority population and its Government. That tension, over such issues as land claims and the right to self-government, has exploded into violence in the past few years, with recent armed standoffs occurring at Gustafsen Lake, in British Columbia, and Ipperwash, Ontario.

...The Canadian military dishonoured its proud legacy by torturing and killing civilians during a peacekeeping mission in Somalia in the early 1990s according to an independent commission of inquiry. The inquiry's damning report on the 1992-1993 mission also accuses the Government of trying to cover up the atrocities... On March 4, 1993, Canadian soldiers worried about looters shot two unarmed Somalis in the back as they fled, killing one of them. Twelve days later they tortured to death a 16-year-old Somali boy named Shidane Arone. The commission found excessive force was used in the shooting incident and that it was immediately covered up by the Defence Headquarters in Ottawa... The incidents and their immediate aftermath, which are known in Canada as the "Somali Affair," occurred under a Conservative Government, which was defeated in a 1993 election... Impugning the reputation of officers right to the top of the military chain of command, the three-[perso]n commission welcomed the fact that many senior officers had left Canada's armed forces and suggested that others consider resigning. "It's time for a new leadership to emerge in the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces and it is time for that new leadership to carry the forces in a new direction,"...

The only force that can and should change N[Z]'s economic and social direction is the organised force of the people themselves.

...Two armoured personnel carriers rolled into place in the siege of the Texas secessionists as their leader's lawyer warned of another Waco if officers move in for an arrest. "There's the potential for a lot of killing and that's what we want to stop," said... the lawyer for... the self-proclaimed ambassador of the Republic of Texas. [The ambassador] and 12 followers have been holed up in the rugged Davis Mountains since Sunday, when they took two neighbours hostage in retaliation for the arrest of two followers. They released both hostages on Monday in exchange for one of the jailed comrades, who had been arrested on weapons charges. The armoured personnel carriers[, which] arrived from Tyler, 473km across the state... joined nearly 100 state and federal officers at the standoff... The group has demanded the release of the other jailed follower, a [gal] arrested on contempt charges. [The ambassador] has also demanded a state referendum on independence for Texas... Government agents were locked in a 51-day standoff with the Branch Davidians cult near Waco before launching an assault that ended in a fire in 1993. Cult leader David Koresh and about 80 followers died.

...SHOW OF UNITY[Yesterday] marchers protesting against the torture of a Haitian immigrant - allegedly at the hands of police - descend[ed] on a New York City plaza during a Day of Outrage Against Police Brutality and Harassment. Four officers have since been charged...

WHEN JEAN BERNARD CHARLES was shoved to the ground in handcuffs four months ago in Port-au-Prince and shot to death by four Haitian police officers for no apparent reason, his family's troubles were just beginning. They complained that Haiti's police should not be in the business of murdering civilians. This, they quickly discovered, was a mistake. First came the warnings: if the relatives didn't shut up, they might suffer the same fate. Then came the threats: one afternoon a few officers caught up with Charles' cousin and said [the cousin] was going to be arrested. When [the cousin] fled, they shot at him. Fearing for their lives, Charles' cousin and brother finally did what many Haitians are doing these days when they find themselves abused, tortured or terrorized by the police. They paid a visit to the offices of... the Human Rights Fund. The group offers a number of services, including a special protection program for people... savaged by police officers whom the U.S. recruited, trained and turned loose on the streets of Haiti in July 1995. Of course, this does not come cheap. But fortunately there is a ready source of cash. That's because, like the officers who commit these crimes, the program to shelter their victims is funded by U.S. tax dollars. Up until now this program remained a closely held secret within the community of [U.S.] and U.N. officials who administer Haiti's billion-dollar reconstruction effort... "It's sad," an... official told TIME. "Here's a force we invested \$65 million in, and from the same account, we're now using money to protect people from it." This is certainly not what the [U.S.] Administration had in mind in September 1994 when the U.S. military invaded Haiti to reinstate the country's first freely elected President... Shortly after [the Haitian President]'s return, the U.S. created the first civilian police force in Haitian history. It was to be the cornerstone of Haiti's new democracy. With trustworthy police, U.S. officials predicted, Haiti could finally begin to deconstruct its dictatorship, reconstruct its economy and build from scratch all the judicial, political and civil institutions necessary for a working democracy. Unfortunately, the timetable for this impressive goal was rather tight. At the time, there was immense pressure in the U.S. to pull out the 21,000 [U.S.] soldiers as swiftly as possible. When it was decided that most of those troops would leave by March 1995, the schedule for assembling the police force had to be compressed accordingly. So after only four months of training (rather than the 12 months that experts had recommended), 5,000 ill-equipped rookie cadets were deployed. Looking back, a U.S. official sums up that approach as follows: "We were stupid." It didn't take long for trouble to surface among a number of the new officers. Their behavior ranged from the sadistic (beating a prisoner to death and dumping his body in a latrine) to the idiotic (blindly firing after a car and killing a seven-year-old girl)... Last month a Human Rights Watch/Americas report... indicated that the police have slain at least 46 people in the past two years, and... almost none of those killings could be remotely construed as a legitimate use of deadly force. In one notorious example, on Nov. 5, 1996, police shot and killed five [guys] on a busy downtown street. One of the victims was in handcuffs... [I]n the spring of 1996... U.S. officials... started casting about for a way to protect [civilians]... The solution was the H[RF]. The... group has paid for the funerals of 11 people killed by the police in the past seven months and for the

medical care of another 60 who were beaten or wounded. The fund has also enabled witnesses to disappear quietly by providing them with safe houses, legal aid and a stipend for living. Sometimes, however, this protection is not enough. Shortly after one of... Charles' relatives moved into a safe house that the H[RF] had rented for him, four [guys] forced him into a white Nissan pickup truck (the same type of vehicle driven by the Haitian National Police). They took him to... a remote field where the former military used to torture people. There... [they] broke both his knees and razored his back. When officials of the H[RF] arrived at work on Monday morning, the [cousin] was slumped on the front steps. One ear was hanging from the side of his face... U.S. officials admit that the police have serious problems, but they insist the Haitian government is taking corrective measures... "If you look at the overall situation... they have made progress." Perhaps. But [at least one citizen] might take issue with that statement. Early last month, [the citizen] took part in a demonstration in which 150 people, many carrying candles, marched in front of the National Palace to protest Haiti's economic problems. It was more of a vigil than a demonstration, but despite the peaceful nature of the gathering, a Haitian police officer fired a "Flashbang" grenade at the protesters. When the canister exploded, it blew off [the citizen]'s right hand... Three weeks later, a bandage still covers the stump at the end of his wrist. "I'm trying to learn to write with my left hand now... I'll have a second surgery in a few weeks, and then I'm going to try to get a prosthesis." [U.S. officials told him] they would like to cover the cost. Angry at the police and their sponsors, [the citizen] refused the offer.

...It is 6 am in the Constitution railway station and a long-haired teenager on his way home from a nightclub has just been shot and killed by a drunk. The killer takes refuge on a train and is surrounded by police. "Cool it, I'm a cop," [the killer] shouts, flashing a badge... The story is told by... a lawyer for pressure group Coordination Against Police and Institutional Violence, set up to document illegal killings by police since democracy was restored in Argentina in 1983. Amnesty International has documented "dozens of murders by police in circumstances indicating extra-judicial executions," and human rights lawyers at the Centre for Legal and Social Studies list 153 fatal victims of police violence in greater Buenos Aires alone last year... Four officers were indicted for a 1994 anti-Jewish bomb attack that killed 86, entire drug and fraud squads were sent down for extortion and drugs, and newspapers were full of beatings, rapes... and... torture... by the boys in blue... Crime by police has become so endemic it has spawned a new genre in journalism among crime reporters no longer able to distinguish the cops from the robbers. It is no surprise that opinion polls show... 90[%] of Argentinians have little or no faith in... Argentina's largest security force... The 47,000 members of the... Buenos Aires Province Police... force, which is larger even than the army... [and] far outnumbers the 31,000-strong Federal Police... are under orders to carry their revolvers even off duty... The new Security Secretary... said the province has purged 1000 officers from the ranks this year and at least 100 more will follow. When [the secretary] set up a police complaints hotline... it could not cope with the influx of calls and collapsed in 48 hours. One of his first jobs will be to review a police code drawn up by the late Police Chief Ramon Camps, an infamous figure of the 1976-1983 military junta's "Dirty War" in which thousands of people, possibly tens of thousands, were killed... [Camps was] convicted of 214 kidnaps, 120 torture cases, 32 murders, two rapes, two abortions provoked by torture, 18 robberies and 10 child kidnappings... Surprisingly, the police's best friend may be... a 56-year-old lawyer... [who] organises human rights training for police who... are desperate to improve their appalling public image. "They can't bear their reputation and being criticised even by their own kids. If society attacks the police... and only thinks about how to put them in jail, what sort of police force will we have? Can we have a state without police?" ...[In related news, f]ive ex-police[officers] have asked South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission for amnesty in connection with the 1977 death of black consciousness leader Steve Biko. Immortalised in the Hollywood film *Cry Freedom*, Biko died after being savagely beaten and then transported unconscious 1000km in a police Land-Rover.

...Former South African security police officers... [- including a] Colonel... and... a... Lieutenant Colonel... [-] have confessed to killing leading anti-apartheid activist Steve Biko in 1977, the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission said last night... Biko led South Africa's black consciousness movement and died in police detention a month after being arrested in the Eastern Cape city of Port Elizabeth... on the Indian Ocean coast... His family say they do not want amnesty for his killers, but justice. Biko became a martyr for black South Africans and for anti-apartheid activists around the world... Biko, aged 30, died on September 12, 1977. [Biko] had... apparently... been... beaten... At his funeral, pictures of his battered body were widely distributed and later published around the world. [Biko] came to symbolise the victims of apartheid brutality... "It was a great tragedy that [Steve] was killed, but his death had enormous impact overseas,"... said... a white former newspaper editor whose friendship with Biko was depicted in the 1987 British film *Cry Freedom*... Soon after, the U[S] imposed an oil and arms embargo on South Africa... No one was convicted in Biko's death, although an inquest concluded [Biko] probably had received fatal head injuries while being questioned by police. - 1997

September '77... it was business as usual in police room 619... you can blow out a candle but you can't blow out a fire... the eyes of the world are watching now... for all those still being tortured... and... for all prisoners of conscience... - Biko

South Africa's... Truth and Reconciliation Commission... has rejected amnesty for four former security police[officers] involved in the death in custody of Black Consciousness leader Steve Biko in 1977. The... commission... said the police appeared to have attacked Biko out of "ill-will or spite," and had not testified truthfully.

...A British police weapon smashes down on N[Z] teacher Blair Peach's head. His skull is severely fractured. In four hours [Peach] will be dead. The police's Special Patrol Group had charged at Peach during a Southall, west London, protest on April 23, 1979. An inquest ruled it "death by misadventure". Police never accepted liability, although they did reportedly pay his family \$75,000 in 1988. Now, under New Labour, his... 53-year-old... widow... has launched a campaign to get access to still-secret police comments on the case and to meet [the British]Home Secretary... who as a young MP backed a call for a public inquiry into the death. [The Home Secretary] has previously met the families of three death-by-misadventure victims. In two re-opened cases, police investigations were found to be lacking. Victoria University graduate Peach, then 23, moved to London for his OE[, and] immediately found work at Phoenix School in east London. [Peach] taught disadvantaged children to read... said [his widow], a social worker in north London. Together they helped found the Anti-Nazi League in 1976 and were prominent campaigners. Even as a schoolboy growing up in Napier, Peach abhorred racism and had written for his school magazine on Maori rights. [His widow] says: "The National Front set up its HQ in Hackney and we were very involved in a successful campaign to close it." Then came a National Front election meeting in Southall, the traditional heart of London's Indian community... [P]rotesters were met by 2750 police officers who had sealed off much of the area. As they dispersed, hundreds of protesters were arrested and attacked. Forced down a side street, Peach suffered head injuries following a charge by the... SPG... An Indian family took him into their home and called an ambulance. A single blow had fractured his skull and caused severe internal bleeding. During an emergency operation, half a pint of blood was drained and pieces of bone removed, but [Blair] died on the table. Medical evidence said the weapon involved was either a weighted rubber cosh, a police radio or a truncheon. Afterwards, police closed ranks... "They said [Blair had] been hit by mistake by other protesters. Not until the inquest did we get real information." That inquest began in November 1979, but was adjourned because the judge did not want to call a jury. In a precedent-setting decision, the High Court ruled juries must be called in all suspicious death circumstances. By the time of the 1980 inquest, [a]... police investigation had narrowed the person who struck the killer blow to six officers. The *Sunday Times* named them... And SPG members' lockers had been raided, netting a haul of illegal weapons. They also reportedly found a homemade leather cosh, which fitted the description of a possible killer weapon. Yet nobody has ever been charged or

disciplined for Peach's death... [(b)etween 1969 and 1999, over 1000 people died in police custody in England[; n]ot one police officer has ever been convicted of any of these deaths[), and]... it seems unlikely the police will ever own up... Despite pressure for a public inquiry, the government refused. So the Council for Civil Liberties put together a prominent panel, headed by an Oxford University professor, which... decided: "At least one police witness is untrustworthy." ...Eleven [civilian] witnesses gave evidence... [that police] appeared to have attacked stragglers and innocent bystanders in a vindictive way... Peach's legacy lives on in several forms. A school, in Southall, [h]as been named after him, despite local Conservative attempts to change it. An organisation called Inquest was started... It deals with suspicious deaths in police, and other Government body, custody. Last year it looked at 303 cases. A 20th anniversary committee is planning various activities, including an education conference, Blair Peach Lives! ...a concert... and... a demonstration that hopes to pass the site of his killing. The actual anniversary... has been declared by the committee to be Blair Peach Day, "when the meaning of Blair Peach's teaching will be remembered and practised in schools across the country." But it will be up to [the Home Secretary] to decide Peach's real legacy: whether London's Metropolitan Police are willing to face the fact they have blood on their hands.

...the Special Patrol them a murderer... we can't let them get no furtherer Them kill the teacher... the dirty bleeders Blair Peach was not an English[perso]n Him come from N[Z, where police] wouldn't kill a[n unarmed citizen for protesting against racism (although they probably came close during 1981; some 'clowns got \$10,000 for a beating – but what did the police officer get who was isolated and beaten to death in a separate incident – the grateful thanks of the Rugby Union?; the press went to great pains to try to identify the Red Squad but how much effort went into trying to trace a police killer? TV journalism is very biased sometimes')])... All ye people of England great injustices are committed upon this land How long will you permit them to carry on Is England becoming a fascist state? The answer lies at your own gate and in the answer lies your fate.

Governments assert that armies are chiefly needed for external defence, but that is not true. They are needed first of all against their own subjects... 'State violence can only cease when there are no more bad [people] in society,' say the champions of the existing order of things, meaning that since there will always be bad [people], violence can never cease. And that would be correct if what they assume were true, namely, that the oppressors are always the better people and that the only means of delivering... humanity... from evil is by violence. Then indeed violence could never cease. But as, on the contrary, it is not the better who do violence to the worse, but the worse who do violence to the better, and as there is another means of putting an end to evil besides violence, which never puts an end to it, the assertion that violence can never cease is incorrect. The use of violence grows less and less and evidently must eventually disappear, but not (as some champions of the existing order imagine) by the oppressed becoming better and better under the influence of government (on the contrary that influence only makes them worse) but because as [people] in general constantly tend to improve, so even the worse people who are in power will become less and less wicked – and the last so good that they will become incapable of using violence... If some people say that freedom from violence or at least a diminution of it, can be gained by the oppressed forcibly overthrowing the oppressing government and replacing it by a new one which will have no need to employ such violence and such enslavement, and if some people try to do this, they only deceive themselves and others and make the position no better but rather worse. Such people's activity only increases the despotism of the governments. Their attempts at emancipation only afford a convenient pretext for the governments to intensify their power. Even if... as in France in 1870, a government may be forcibly overthrown and the power transferred into other hands, the new authority would be no less oppressive than the former: on the contrary – defending itself from all its dispossessed and exasperated enemies – it would be more despotic... Other [people] would be enslaved and... the violence and oppression would be the same or even more cruel, since hatred of one another would be increased by the struggle, and intensified forms of oppression would have to be devised. This has been the case after all revolutions, all attempts at revolution, all conspiracies and all forcible changes of government. Every conflict merely strengthens the means of oppression in the hands of those who for the time being are in power.

If tools such as the Internet are taken into consideration, and the suggestion that the poor and oppressed are incapable of *replacing the current system with a new one which will have no need to employ violence and enslavement* is ignored, it is possible that the poor and oppressed majority could organise their superior numbers to defeat the rich and ruling minority (and their legalised terrorist organisations – the politically-sanctioned, taxpayer-funded, police and armed forces) in a worldwide war. Unfortunately, the problem with large-scale wars is that they not only tend to create suffering and death on both sides, but they can seriously damage infrastructure, which can affect the ability of the post-war society to function. The potential for damage to food supply, health and utility services, and loss of skilled workers, etc., caused by a potential WW3 – even an non-nuclear confrontation – could backfire on the poor and oppressed (i.e., the world that they win control off might not be worth having, and the people at the very bottom of society – the poor and oppressed of the Last World – are likely to end up being hurt the most if it takes a while to rebuild the infrastructure). The poor and oppressed from the Last World may feel like they have nothing to lose and everything to gain from creating a moneyless society (i.e., they already hurt the most, so can't comprehend things getting any worse; they mostly already live in a semi-moneyless environment, so changing to a completely moneyless society would be a small step for them) – and they largely lack adequate infrastructure anyway – so they may be prepared to risk their future. However, the poor and oppressed living in First World countries not only constitute less of a majority, and maybe a minority in some of them, but they might be less willing to risk what they have already in the hope of gaining a better society for themselves, or at least for their children (i.e., many could be expected to believe that they personally have nothing to lose and everything to gain by maintaining the economic system). This suggestion appears to be supported by contemporary Maoris, Aborigines, and native American Indians, whose ancestors operated generally successful moneyless societies up until a century or two ago, yet the descendants seem more interested in gaining ownership of land and marketing the materialistic aspects of their traditional culture to tourists or casino punters than promoting a viable alternative to the economic system! But, as with children, and gals collectively, it isn't the *responsibility* of the poor to ensure that the means of fixing society is instigated.

4: THE LEADERS?

The Master said, Only if the right sort of people had charge of a country for a hundred years would it become really possible to stop cruelty and do away with slaughter... "Promote [citizens] of superior capacity." Jan Yung said, How does one know a [citizen] of superior capacity, in order to promote him? The Master said, Promote those you know, and those whom you do not know other people will certainly not neglect. - Lun Yu

The Master said, Govern the people by regulations, keep order among them by chastisements, and they will flee from you, and lose all self-respect. Govern them by moral force, keep order among them by ritual and they will keep their self-respect and come to you of their own accord. - The Analects of Confucius

Laws are a means of government. But only to a limited degree do they bring results... Example is better than law. For where the laws govern, the people are shameless in avoiding punishment. But when example governs, the people have a sense of shame and improve. - Confucius (translated)

"Generally people desire their personal good. A few desire the good of their own people. But only the servants of God desire the good of every one." The servants of God cannot subscribe to the politics of this or that party. Certainly theirs is not the politics which makes for disunity and dissipation of energy. They have their own kind of politics... meant for uniting and strengthening all. Th[e]... stage is now being set for the rule of all by all... [which doesn't] mean voting rights for all, but a sincere co-operation emanating from the unity of hearts. The age is approaching when the truth, "One in all and all in one", will rule the world. If we put ourselves on its side, we will share the credit... If not, it will come in spite of us.

An ingrained myth from the past, aided and abetted by generations of modern liberal scholars, journalists and politicians, has it that government by the people means that every person, no matter who, must be involved in public affairs on a steady basis. Failing that, there must be something wrong with government by the people. The early democratic theorists tended to think of it in those terms. Their critics, who called themselves revisionists, also thought of it in similar terms, thinking that therefore we should settle for some retrenchment of democracy. And the critics of these critics, in turn, the anti-revisionists and protagonists for a full participatory democracy, have also thought of it in these terms. The equation of "real" democracy with perpetual participation by all is now a kind of conventional wisdom among liberal-minded scholars and large numbers of the attentive public. The conventional wisdom does not ask the decisive practical question: if everybody is working at politics all or most of the time, when will the work of the family, the school and the productive economy be done, and who will do it? In other words, politics not only appeals to a relatively small number in the general population, but politics is also to some important degree a specialized activity. Just as any of the professions, such as parenting or teaching or engineering or running a business.

Some tasks are basic enough to be performed by all able-bodied and able-minded humans (e.g., street-sweeping, farm labouring), while others are only able to be performed by people who have particular skills or training (e.g., designing bridges, medical surgery). A surgeon could be expected to cope with being forced to assist on a farm at a moment's notice, but a farm labourer would not be expected to satisfactorily cope with suddenly being forced to perform a heart transplant. Neither the surgeon nor the farm labourer should be expected to simultaneously perform their own work and the task of leading society (i.e., having the final say regarding important decisions that concern every member of the society, and ensuring that the important decisions are implemented – which includes directing the tasks of other workers). For this reason at least one member of a society is chosen to perform the task of being leader, thereby freeing itself from other tasks, and enabling other workers to perform their tasks minus the added burden of leadership. Therefore, in theory, leaders are supposed to serve the best interests of the majority of their society's members. If the leaders of every late-20th century country were interested in what is best for the majority of their fellow citizens, and in proving themselves to be worthy of the title LEADER, all of them ought to be interested in creating a moneyless society. Unfortunately, the majority of the leaders of late-20th century societies serve only themselves and a minority of their society's members. Furthermore, many contemporary leaders weren't even selected by the members of their society (e.g., they inherited leadership; they forced themselves into the position of leader). The lack of suitable leaders is, however, not the major problem facing late-20th century society. The major problem is lack of unity among humans on a worldwide basis. Human society is currently divided into about 200 countries. Some of these countries have effectively existed as a united society for thousands of years (e.g., China, Greece, Egypt), while others are relatively new (e.g., USA, AUS, NZ). Some can be called NATURAL countries because they are completely cut off from others by water (e.g., AUS, NZ), while others can be called UNNATURAL because they share the same land mass but are divided by artificial borders. Yet, despite sharing the same land mass, the same ancestry, the same planet and often the same language or religion, the members of such countries generally consider themselves to be different to the people who live outside their borders. Indeed, many have considered themselves different enough to go to war with their national neighbours!

...Imagine there's no countries It isn't hard to do Nothing to kill or die for and no religion too Imagine all the people living life in peace... Imagine[having] no possessions I wonder if you can No need for greed or hunger A brotherhood... sharing all the world... You may say I'm a dreamer but I'm not the only one I hope some day you'll join us and the world will be as one... - John Lennon

On the day when we can fully trust each other there will be peace on Earth.

...we[']ve got to get... together sooner or later because the revolution's here and you know that it's right...

...gather in together... every creed... build a world... in union a world as one as it's time to reach our destiny a new way has begun... it's a victory for all...

Our job is only beginning, for now we have to put the world in order. It will be a long and complicated struggle, but we have the unity of a common cause and a common knowledge.

In the beginning there were two hemispheres. Now there's only one[sphere].

Egypt has been aptly described as a land having length but not breadth. The description is not quite accurate, because the Delta area is certainly extensive; but south of Cairo, Egypt really consists of two strips of irrigable land on either bank of the Nile, with the desert stretching away on either side. The land consequently divides into two distinctive parts: Lower Egypt, comprising the delta area, and Upper Egypt, formed by the long narrow Nile valley. The fertility of the land depends absolutely upon the annual flooding of the Nile and the careful control and conservation of its life-giving waters. This entails the construction and maintenance of elaborate irrigation works. Consequently a strong centralized government, uniting Upper and Lower Egypt under one rule and able to direct the country's labour resources, has always been essential to the economic and social well-being of the people. Such a government was first established about 3000 BC by princes of This, in Upper Egypt, and the achievement was so important that the Egyptians looked back on this union of Upper and Lower Egypt as the starting point of their national life.

When humanity was in its infancy there were no countries – and Earth's artificial international borders can't be seen from outer space – so creating a united human world isn't just advisable, it's logical.

Pictures of the Earth from space... have had a powerful effect in promoting the idea of the planet as a single system... - Changing face of Earth

When [a human first] walked on the moon and looked upon the world, what [it] saw was oneness. 'Earth rise' was an image of unity; and now satellites daily confirm how small and vulnerable, but essentially how whole, the planet is – how the clouds and storms and gases that assail it take

no notice of the separateness we sustain below, almost in defiance of nature. This wholeness of our global society must be, I believe, the dominant assumption of future political realities, whether or not it finds expression in the kind of formal relationships that show up on the political maps. Even today, in our politically disparate world of customs ports and passports, a frontier is increasingly an expression of contiguity no less than of separation; borders are crossed by trade, by transport, and above all by people, playing their part in the ever deepening process of human integration. [One writer] reminded us that 'Heaven gives its glimpses only to those not in a position to look too close'. Perhaps Earth-bound [people are] too close to discern [their] oneness. We talk of 'balkanization' in pejorative terms – the axiomatic nonsense of a fragmented society, but we live with a 'balkanized' world that so contradicts the glimpse from space. Yet there are glimpses of our one world here in our confused present. We have lived for so long in a world of separate worlds that we find it hard to admit, sometimes even to recognize, the oneness of our world. Over the millennia, our separatism fed on differences of tribe and race, of language and religion; it fed on division of class; it fed on human aggrandisement and lust for power; it fed on an adversary system which our model of the nation state moulded and our concept of sovereignty sustained. It might almost be said that separatism, disunity, antipathy even, was [humanity]'s natural condition. And yet, over the centuries, we have been moving away from our primitive instincts, our loyalties evolving from family to tribe to nation to region – always towards a sense of oneness, an awareness of belonging to steadily enlarging groups... Interdependence is not new. What is new is the intensity and variety of the economic relationships that have emerged... and the actual recognition, in many quarters, of the elements of mutual interest in them. And what is new, as a result, is that we have lost the option of ignoring our interdependent state – of ignoring the reality that we have become one world. All this is a positive gain. That the world has become more interdependent must not be seen as a process of decline and fall. It should be a source of reassurance as we contemplate the political map of the future and the future of the world. Responsive to the practicalities of interdependence, we must move from a system of international relations characterized by reliance on force and fear to one based on co-operation and mutual benefit. In doing so we will almost certainly find that we have also moved towards a more peaceful world, not because we have avoided conflict, but because the realities of interdependence... provide incentives for the resolution of conflict otherwise than by return to force and threat. How palpable today those mutual needs! How obvious the need for a global coalition of survival to rescue our world society – our one society – from collapsing into economic chaos or sliding to self-destruction!

The world's people know that the human race is able to do better; they are conscious that there must be higher purposes and nobler pursuits to which societies must aim; from whatever regions they come they are looking for a vision of the future that they can share in good conscience with the rest of the human race... As the concept of the one world comes to signify more clearly a single human community rather than a coterie of states, we shall better understand the need to trim the edges of sovereignty, to move away from an adversary system of international politics... These perceptions must begin to inform our conduct, for, in the end, human interdependence is not a matter of dialects, but of destiny.

Historically, human development can be viewed as many local experiments at creating social orders of many varieties but usually based on partial concepts; i.e., the social orders worked for *some* people, at the expense of *other* people, and were based on the exploitation of nature. Furthermore, they worked in the *short* term but appear to have failed in the *long* term... [A]ll experiments of local and partial human development based on these short-term exploitations, have been failures in one way or another when seen in a planetary perspective. Today, we know that such societies are impossible to maintain and that the destabilization on which they have built themselves are now affecting their internal governmental stability and the global stability of the planet... Increasingly, we see the denouement of the nation-state as a viable unit of governance; becoming too big for the small problems of its own local populations and at the same time too small for the big problems of global relations and ecosystems... [A]n editorial... in the *New York Times* (January 12, 1980) entitled "The World's Hidden Leaders." ...quoted [the] French President... "We are living through one of those periods when world balance depends on the level-headedness of a few [people]," and added that we do not even know who those... [few people are. However, the editorial] does not question... the basic paradigm: that it is indeed *possible* for one [hu]man to be "in charge" of any of these complex multidimensional societies and ever-more-interactive global situations. Our common sense tells us that the whole concept is untenable and an illusion. Yet the illusion is embraced beyond reason by most "leaders" and "decision makers"... A new type of planetary coalition... based on agreed-upon global principles and uniformity of constraint... must emerge to undergrid the pervasive aspirations in [First and Last] World countries for the new world order: composed of all people tyrannized by monetization and other arbitrary definitions of political boundaries.

If... there is no commonly held image of what is worth striving for, our society will lack both motivation and direction.

Kant believe[d] that there should be a world state in which everyone can participate, and a system of international law regulating relationships between various nations or states.

The attitude of... those who see a means of escape from wars in international diplomatic measures, is very well expressed in the report of the last Peace Congress in London... that appeared in No. 8 of the *Revue des Revues* for 1891... [H]aving collected letters and opinions from learned [people] all over the world, the Congress... arrived at the following resolution...: '...The Congress affirms its belief that the brotherhood of [humanity] involves as a necessary consequence a brotherhood of nations in which the interests of all are acknowledged to be identical... The Congress proposes to the Inter-Parliamentary Conference that the utmost support should be given to every project for the unification of weights... measures... and telegraphic arrangements, &c., which would assist in constituting a commercial, industrial, and scientific union of the peoples. - Tolstoy

Tolstoy flatly denied the "moral imperative" of nations and nationality. Citizenship, [Tolstoy] said, was in modern times so mixed an idea – invoked by so many interest groups – and was so much the product of manipulative propaganda, that "being French" or "being Russian" could not mean any value worth living by. Patriotism and citizenship [Tolstoy] considered an ideology of slavery, fostered by governments and facilitated by newspapers. But public opinion, which supported governments, could also destroy them. Let one [hu]man begin to speak the truth, said Tolstoy, and all the opposition would melt away. Even more aggressively, in the following year, 1896, [Tolstoy] wrote "Patriotism or Peace?" ...Nowadays, [the essay] said, patriotism could not be counted as a virtue. It had been useful in the past to weld groups of [people] into states, but now that work was done. Tolstoy's essay... admitted that the patriotism of an enslaved nation (like Poland then, India in Gandhi's time, our own contemporary equivalents) is more pardonable, although still an evil.

"...national consciousness... means... a contribution by every individual to a definite constructive national work[," wrote Gandhi]... "The better mind of the world desires today not absolutely independent states warring one against another, but a federation of friendly interdependent states... Interdependence is and ought to be as much the ideal of [humanity] as self-sufficiency. [A hu]man is a social being. Without interrelation with society [it] cannot realize its oneness with the universe or suppress his egotism... Real disarmament cannot come unless the nations of the world cease to exploit one another... If there were no greed, there would be no occasion for armaments... In this age of democracy, in this age of

awakening of the poorest of the poor, you can redeliver this message with the greatest emphasis... If you want to give a message to the West, it must be the message of love and the message of truth... The way of peace is the way of truth. Truthfulness is even more important than peacefulness. Indeed, lying is the mother of violence. A truthful [perso]n cannot long remain violent. [The person] will perceive in the course of his search that [it] has no need to be violent and... will further discover that so long as there is the slightest trace of violence in him, [it] will fail to find the truth... [it seeks. A person] cannot do right in one department of life whilst [it] is occupied in doing wrong in any other department. Life is one indivisible whole... What I want you to understand is the message... the... wise [figures] of the East have left to us, and if we really become worthy of that great message, the conquest of the West will be completed. This conquest will be loved by the West itself. The West is today pining for wisdom. It is despairing of a multiplication of the atom bombs, because atom bombs mean utter destruction not merely of the West but of the whole world, as if the prophesy of the Bible is going to be fulfilled..."

One... observes that nuclear weapons have made the nation-state obsolete, and humans will want out (is that the expression?) when they realise that belonging to a nation-state exposes them to danger rather than giving them the traditional protection.

WE ARE CAUGHT IN A SITUATION in which every citizen of every country, his children, and his life's work, are threatened by the terrible insecurity which reigns in our world today. The progress of technological development has not increased the stability of the welfare of humanity. Because of our inability to solve the problem of international organization, it has actually contributed to the dangers which threaten peace and the very existence of [hu]mankind... A permanent peace cannot be prepared by threats but only by the honest attempt to create mutual trust... The development of technology and of the implements of war has brought about something akin to a shrinking of our planet. Economic interlinking has made the destinies of nations interdependent to a degree far greater than in previous years. The available weapons of destruction are of a kind such that no place on earth is safeguarded against sudden total destruction. The only hope for protection lies in the securing of peace in a supranational way. A world government must be created which is able to solve conflicts between nations by judicial decision. This government must be based on a clearcut constitution which is approved by the governments and the nations and which gives it the sole disposition of offensive weapons. - Einstein

Einstein once believed peace could be achieved through the formation of a COMMISSION DE CO-OPERATION INTELLECTUAL.

This commission was to be strictly international and entirely non-political, whose business it was to put the intellectuals of all nations, who were isolated by... W[WI], in touch with each other. - Ideas and Opinions [of Einstein]

However, after WW1, efforts to unite the world were primarily entrusted to the LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Nationalism, like the nation state, is a modern phenomenon, having developed as a cause and result of the state's growing role in economics, social, and political life since the Middle Ages. It has been also a rallying point for cultural minorities within an empire who desire independence... [US] nationalism grew strong during the Revolution. Nationalist allegiance in France ripened during the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, which also served to light the fires of German nationalism, destined to grow rapidly. Italian nationalism... was strongly anti-Austrian and anti-papal. Other nationalisms developed in Europe during the 19th cent., the revolutions of 1830 and 1848 being strongly nationalist. In the 20th cent... [WWI] created like sentiments, with strong anti-Western feeling springing up in the U.S.S.R., Africa, the Near East, and Far East. Also, during the 20th cent. the contrary spirit of internationalism has grown up... and has found concrete form in the League of Nations... an international organization to maintain world peace, established by the League Covenant, part of the Treaty of Versailles, in 1919. Its formation was suggested by Pres. Woodrow Wilson in his Fourteen Points stating Allied peace aims. On Jan. 10, 1920, the League began functioning officially, with headquarters at Geneva... It consisted of an Assembly, in which all member nations were represented, and a Council, including permanent representatives of Britain, France, Italy, and Japan, later joined by those of Germany and the U.S.S.R. Other members were later elected by the Assembly for three-year periods. Originally a place was provided on the Council for the U.S., but the U.S. Senate's refusal to ratify the Treaty of Versailles containing the League Covenant prevented U.S. participation. The Assembly made recommendations to the Council, which made the decisions. These had to be unanimous; any member nation could exercise veto. Attached to the League were a Secretariat, an international Labor Organization, a Permanent Court of International Justice, and a number of special commissions and inquiries. Under the Covenant, the members pledged themselves not to use force in the settlement of disputes with one another until they submitted them for arbitration, and to respect each other's territorial integrity and political independence. Aggressors were to be punished by sanctions. The League registered treaties and issued mandates... Of the 63 nations that were at one time members of the League, 16 withdrew at various times, particularly important being the withdrawals of Japan and Germany (1933) and Italy (1937). Russia was expelled in Dec. 1939 when [it] attacked Finland. In general, the League was effective in dealing with the problems of lesser powers but was unsuccessful in regard to those of the major powers. It failed to bring about disarmament...; it failed to prevent the Japanese aggression in China in 1931, the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, the German and Italian intervention in the Spanish Civil War of 1936, Hitler's annexations of Austria and Czechoslovakia, and the aggression against Poland...

It was only with the greatest reluctance that I decided to resign from the committee; and even I cannot be certain that I acted correctly. But once my faith in the League as a whole was shaken, it became impossible to participate further in any of its activities. Its chief defect is not the lack of real power behind it; rather, what I find most discouraging is that, by its silence and its actions, the League functions as a tool of those nations which, at this stage of history, happen to be the dominant powers. Thus, the League not only fails to uphold justice but actually undermines the faith of [people] of good will who believe in the possibility of creating a supranational organization. - Einstein On Peace

By the outbreak of... [WW2] the League of Nations was little more than a helpless spectator, and the war itself destroyed it entirely... [The *United Nations* was] an international organization of countries set up in 1945, in succession to the League..., to promote international peace, security, and co-operation, with its headquarters in New York... Administration is by the Secretariat, headed by the Secretary-General. The chief deliberative body is the General Assembly, in which each member State has one vote; recommendations are passed but the UN has no power to impose its will.

The delegates of fifty-five governments[('representing about 80% of the inhabitants of the Earth')], meeting in the second General Assembly of the U[N], undoubtedly will be aware of the fact that during the last two years – since the victory over the Axis powers – no appreciable progress has been made either toward the prevention of war or toward agreement in specific fields such as control of atomic energy and economic cooperation in the reconstruction of war-devastated areas. The UN cannot be blamed for these failures. No international organization can be stronger than the constitutional powers given it, or than its component parts want it to be. As a matter of fact, the U[N] is an extremely important and useful institution *provided* the peoples and governments of the world realize that it is merely a transitional system toward the final goal, which is the establishment of a supranational authority vested with sufficient legislative and executive powers to keep the peace. The present impasse lies in the

fact that there is no sufficient, reliable supranational authority. Thus the responsible leaders of all governments are obliged to act on the assumption of eventual war. Every step motivated by that assumption contributes to the general fear and distrust that hastens the final catastrophe. However strong national armaments may be, they do not create military security for any nation nor do they guarantee the maintenance of peace. The time has come for the UN to strengthen its moral authority by bold decision. First, the authority of the General Assembly must be increased so that the Security Council as well as all other bodies of the UN will be subordinated to it. As long as there is a conflict of authority between the Assembly and the Security Council, the effectiveness of the whole institution will remain necessarily impaired. Second, the method of representation at the UN should be considerably modified. The present method of selection by government appointment does not leave any real freedom to the appointee. Furthermore, selection by governments cannot give the peoples of the world the feeling of being fairly and proportionately represented. The moral authority of the UN would be considerably enhanced if the delegates were elected directly by the people. Were they responsible to an electorate, they would have much more freedom to follow their consciences. Thus we could hope for more states[people] and fewer diplomats. - Out Of [Einstein's] Latter Years

The UN needs to become more consciously a chamber for consensus and less an arena of conflict... Above all, the U[N] must recapture the faith of its constituency among the world's people. A generation ago young people in particular looked to the U[N] as the embodiment of all that was noblest in international endeavour. We need more practical reminders that it still is, so that as the world's people become more committed they will in turn help their governments to return to belief in the U[N] as an institution through which they can work collectively to find the accommodations they must make for survival... [G]uided by the... beacons of principle and practicality... it [is] possible... to develop a convergence of view on where we [a]re as a human society, on where we ha[ve] to go and how we might get there.

Pressures on the world economy are many and varied... As the number of independent countries in the world has grown, particularly as a result of the European withdrawal from empire, so the nature and extent of global problems has changed... High on the list... [of] these problems... is the question of inequity, especially in economic terms... [and] particularly in terms of resource rivalry... As a rough guide, the world may be divided into the "rich" countries... and the "poor" countries... producing tension as the former use their wealth and power to impose their own terms of trade. Although this has yet to produce violence on a large scale, the potential for... conflict undoubtedly exists and efforts must be made to ensure a more equal distribution of wealth if it is to be avoided. Up until now, these efforts have not enjoyed success... International problems demand international solutions, and the... [UN is] a potential source of such solutions. The record is not impressive, for the U[N] inevitably reflects the tensions between its members, but the fact that it exists as a forum for debate does offer at least a glimmer of hope for the future. If attempts are not made to solve the problems of the world, they could become overwhelming... It is in part because of the shrinking of the globe, because of the phenomenon of "interdependence" (the extent to which one country depends upon the next, particularly in terms of trade) that conflict is so marked. Years ago people hoped that an interdependent world would make for less strife... [T]his has... not... proved to be the case in the post-1945 period... "That we have this Charter is a great wonder" [the]President... of the U[S] told the First Session of the... UN... when it met in San Francisco in 1945. It is perhaps an even greater wonder that the U[N] has survived for over 40 years, and that it has developed to a point where it represents the interests of 159 (out of 167) states in the modern world... The U[N] was created to act as the highest international authority for resolving disputes... [I]ts Charter requires its members to settle conflicts by peaceful means, and to refer them to a Security Council of major powers if they cannot reach agreement. On occasions, the Council has acted on its own account, dispatching peace-keeping forces or applying sanctions... against regimes in breach of the rules. It has proved less successful in punishing governments for abusing human rights or dealing with terrorist groups who have often drawn upon the support of its own members. The Charter had to be highly flexible in order to reconcile the different ideological beliefs of the two superpowers, the U[S] and the Soviet Union, who soon found themselves at odds after the defeat of Germany and Japan in 1945... The members left for future discussion the task of raising a military force. This was indefinitely deferred after the U[S] and the Soviet Union failed to reach agreement at the London Conference of 1946... Anxious to provide the new organisation with some authority, the original members... gave the Security Council some powers but required the unanimous consent of the five permanent members (the victors in 1945: the U[S], Soviet Union, Great Britain, France and China)... Since 1945, the Security Council has been increased to 15 members – the additional 10 are chosen from the rest of the members of the U[N] on a rotational basis. They serve for a period of two years but do not enjoy the right of veto... From the start the U[N] has been criticised as an institution that has failed to live up to the aspirations and hopes of the founding members. It is possible to argue that it has not achieved much, that the superpowers have used the U[N] as an arena in which to compete rather than resolve their differences. This contradicts one of the... main functions [of the UN to act] as "a centre for harmonising the actions of nations" (Article 1(4) UN Charter). But unlike its predecessor, the League of Nations... it has not been ignored... [- although, in] the first 30 years of its existence, the General Assembly passed 3,500 resolutions, the great majority of which were totally ignored by the Council... [-] and that perhaps is the most important contribution that it has made to the resolution of conflict. It is precisely because the U[N] is of value to the superpowers and their allies that it has been used by them... The support the United Kingdom received [from the UN] in the run-up to the Falklands War in 1982 did much to restore the [organisation's] reputation in parts of the... world. Somewhat to its own surprise, perhaps, Britain received almost unanimous international support when Argentina occupied the Falklands in April 1982 after years of negotiations between the two powers had failed. The Security Council roundly condemned the occupation and rejected out of hand Argentina's claim that the requirement under the UN Charter to settle disputes peacefully did not apply to quarrels that predated the Charter's adoption. As the British representative noted, had this been accepted, the world would have become a more dangerous place. The Council went on to reject a further Argentinian claim that it was entitled to resort to force because of the strength of its legal claim to sovereignty of the islands, a claim that had been endorsed on many occasions by the UN Committee of Decolonisation. Instead, the Council insisted that the only justification for force could be self-defence. Although it did not condemn the invasion as an act of aggression, by demanding Argentina's immediate withdrawal (Resolution 502) it was making it clear that Argentina's actions were illegal. Some weeks later a British Task Force retook the islands. Even if the U[N] did not resolve the conflict, it created circumstances in which Britain's use of force could be seen in terms of the defence of international law... [T]he world in which the U[N] has operated was not one [its founders] could ever have imagined... But... [as] long as the U[N] exists and is taken seriously, even as nothing more than a forum for debate, the world is a safer place... Since 1945, the role of the U[N]'s forces has been a subject of some controversy. After the experience of Korea (1950-53), when UN troops were committed specifically to fight an aggressor, many countries refused to allow further deployments unless in a non-fighting capacity. Out of this emerged the idea of "peace-keeping" rather than "peace-making".

The U[N] has been committed to international peace-keeping since its inception, through two instruments – Observer Missions and Peacekeeping Forces. In recent years UN peacekeeping activities have increased dramatically, with more operations launched in the last five years than in the previous 40. Numbers of UN military personnel deployed have risen from 10,000 in 1987 to 70,000 in 1993.

The U[N], teetering on the verge of bankruptcy, has announced staff cuts of 10[%] through buy-outs, attrition and outright sackings. The aim is to cut \$US250 million... from costs through staff reductions of about 1000 as well as new efficiency programmes like publication and fellowship cuts...

The reductions were forced... by a zero-growth budget and the failure of members, particularly the U[S], to pay dues or peacekeeping debts in time.

...*Crisis for UN*... Like Banquo's ghost... the... Secretary-General['s]... future hovers over the 51st General Assembly session of the U[N], where few countries are expected to mention publicly the subject of his re-election. But, unlike the spectre in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, [the Secretary-General] is invited to the proceedings, defying the U[S] by declaring his intention to seek another five years when his current term expires in December. With kings, presidents, prime ministers and foreign ministers gathering at the U[N] for the next three weeks, no one knows who will lead the world body next year or what the nearly bankrupt organisation is supposed to do. For Washington, how the U[N] operates, rather than what its tasks are, is foremost, beginning with the search for a new secretary-general who would concentrate on restructuring the world body... Most delegates believe opposition to [the Secretary-General] is politically motivated, and the council last month rebuffed efforts by [the]US Ambassador... even to discuss the issue. According to... many analysts, [the ambassador] apparently believes Congress will never agree to pay the \$US1.6 billion... in arrears the U[S] owes to the UN without some radical change, such as a new secretary-general. Conversely, with Congress' refusal to pay the huge debt crippling the world body, American authority has been so undercut that other U[N] members are ready to turn down many initiatives suggested by Washington... [The Secretary-General] himself is philosophical about the direction of the U[N]. "In our case, we are still at the beginning and the member states don't know what role they want... Now we are living in a crisis of the U[N] – its ups and downs."

...[a journalist]'s new book... about her experiences in Somalia, reveals a... U[N] in dire need of reform... David Morris, the N[Z] caterer murdered in Somalia last year, liked to tell journalists that [it] was nuclear capable. [Morris] would drink half a bottle of vodka and tell them [the NZer] was gunrunning, or drug-smuggling, and that, if they printed it, [the caterer] would haul them through the courts. [Morris] also told them that when [it] found his son's killer [the caterer] planned to throw him from a helicopter. Grief and alcohol exaggerated certain aspects of Morris's personality; Somalia magnified the whole package. When his catering company won the contract to feed U[N] personnel living in this African ammunition box, the twitchy entrepreneur found his element. In the midst of a disintegrating UN mission, [Morris] stitched deals together over a trip-wire and got away with it. His ego ballooned. "Somalia suited David down to the ground," says... the N[Z] 60 Minutes journalist who interviewed Morris when [the caterer] returned to Mogadishu after his youngest son was murdered there in 1993... [The journalist] spent several months living in the Morris Catering compound at Port Mogadishu, filing stories for 60 Minutes, CNN and others. *Blood Money*, her account of her experiences in Somalia, is the story of two disasters arrived at from different angles. David Morris hurtles along one narrative like a car heading for a wall; his death at the hands of Islamic extremists is the inevitable crash-point. The other disaster, that of the UN mission in Somalia (Unsom), has no trajectory – it is a story of paralysis. In the face of increasing hostility to its presence, the UN simply bunkered in and did as little as possible. When it did respond, the situation got worse. [The journalist]'s 60 Minutes piece conveyed a sense of things falling apart. The footage of Somalia civilians screaming for American blood after marines shot up a food distribution centre was early evidence that Operation Restore Hope had lost its way. *Blood Money* goes further, describing a UN riddled with corruption and a mission in Somalia run by yes-[people] and incompetents. "We're looking at career bureaucrats here," says [the journalist]. "We're not looking at people who can make decisions and run it by the seat of their pants; they panicked and they froze in the face of a failing mission." For David Morris and his staff, this botching and duplicity was more than an annoyance: at times the mismanagement in Somalia threatened their lives. [The journalist] describes in her book how dangerous things became when the UN refused to pay Morris Catering what it was owed. With the troops and support staff preparing to pull out of the country, the company could not pay off its local creditors, who had started turning up at the compound brandishing machine guns to reinforce their demands. The joke doing the rounds of Mogadishu – that Morris and his [staff] would be left waving goodbye as the UN pulled out – began to stick in people's throats. The UN might have screwed Morris Catering, but it did little better by Somalia, according to [the journalist]. The peacekeepers arrived with the best of intentions... but they underestimated the bitterness in a country that "runs on historical rage". Their attempts to pick winners and losers from among the warlords simply stirred things up and, by the end of the mission, the troops who had been welcomed ashore as rescuers were preparing to stage a fighting withdrawal. For [the journalist], one incident symbolised this failure... *Blood Money*... describes a pall hanging above the desert as peacekeepers burnt truckloads of household and office furniture: beds, tables, chairs, cabinets. [The journalist] took photographs as Somalis fought soldiers to get to the burning items. "It was appalling, to watch all that equipment being destroyed... When you looked at the poverty in that country and they didn't leave a thing." [□ 1996 is the 'UN year for eradication of poverty'.]

...*Utopian dream a 'disaster'*... The new world order – a philosophy proposing a single global religion, economy, education and legal system – would be a recipe for conflict and the antithesis of peace, a visiting international lecturer says... [T]o many such an ideal, if it were achieved, would usher in utopia. "But such assessment ignores the lessons of history,"... The persuasive argument that the achievement of such aims would dispel poverty, make an end of armed conflicts and eliminate religious bloodbaths does not stand up against thorough investigation, [the Melburnian said. "The US]... and many other[countries] testify to the fact that... squalor and abject need lie side by side with affluence..."]

...[a USer] suspected of sending parcel bombs to a newspaper and several television stations was arrested yesterday and appeared in court where [the suspect] was ordered held on bail of \$US4.5 million... [The suspect], who allegedly mailed the explosive devices in the name of... "The Messiah," had threatened "explosive destruction" if his demands were not met... None exploded. A Los Angeles police spokes[person]... said the author of the letters wanted "to become secretary-general of the U[N], in order to create Utopia on Earth."

...[the US] is threatening to investigate any use of U[N] personnel or funds directed towards the re-election of... [the current UN Secretary-General. A spokesperson for the US] ambassador to the U[N]... said Washington's opposition to a second five-year term for [the Egyptian] was "irreversible." ...Since... [the Egyptian announced his intention to] run for a second term... the U[S] has made it clear that it would use its Security Council veto to block[him, while the current Secretary-General] has made... equally clear that... it... will use his support among [Last] World and non-aligned countries to fight to the bitter end... Washington blames... the current Secretary-General... for the U[N] failure in Bosnia, and believes that a change in leadership is needed to reform the U[N] bureaucracy and cut costs... The U[N] is in the throes of a financial crisis, and is owed \$4.5 billion by member states. Roughly half is owed by Washington which has been withholding funds until wide-ranging reforms are implemented.

...The U[S] intends to pay... \$660 million to the U[N] to bring its 1996 dues up to date and make a dent in its debt for peacekeeping ventures.

...*Money isn't all that the U[N] lacks* The new president of the U[N] General Assembly wants an end to delays, long lunches and tortuous unfocused speeches, an end to "business as usual." [The new president] might as well seek an end to the institution itself. And perhaps [the new president] should. Last session, the U[N] gave itself a 50th birthday present: working groups representing a range of member nations to look at changes in the organisation's structure and financial status. As a bad omen for this 51st session, the groups reported back empty-handed. Their members had acted true to form; their groups collapsed in disagreement. What the organisation is short of is unquestionable. It needs its members to pay their dues, particularly the countries that have left the kitty nearly \$3 billion in arrears. But that is just money and money never bought political will. What it really needs is an intelligence network that is an early warning system of potential trouble. It needs an arbitration system to handle negotiations. It needs sufficient independent military capability to respond to any degeneration into conflict. It needs law and order units to ensure stability in any aftermath. It needs administrative units to provide expertise in rebuilding political stability. And it needs all those, not just the one or two that are convenient. The U[N] itself has proved that they are not effective in isolation. What is Afghanistan now after the U[N] mediated the withdrawal of Soviet forces? Politics of the superpowers rendered the U[N] impotent during its first 40 years. Now the 90s have

provided a raft of examples that ram the point home that the U[N] cannot operate in isolation. What events of this decade have created is a credibility vacuum filled only when the U[S] wants to do something. Tangle with [the Iraqi President], protect relief supplies in Somalia, deal to Haitian hoodlums. With pleasure, said the Security Council. But when France wanted to intervene in Rwanda, U[N] approval was lukewarm indeed. And let's not talk about Bosnia. Liberia is an example of what the U[N] does and doesn't do. Last month a U[N] World Food Programme consignment of medicine, beans, oil and sugar reached an area 70km from Monrovia that had been closed by fighting since February. The agency reported more than half the 30,000 inhabitants suffering from extreme hunger and hundreds of skeletal children on the verge of death. This was after six years of civil war that has killed more than 150,000 people. But where was the U[N] six years ago? Embroiled in the Gulf. For Liberia, no one outside Africa cared. The world body can feed one day but it cannot defend in the face of the violence of the next. That limitation threatens to make its humanitarian operations exercises in futility. So if no one gives a dime about the Liberias of the world, the U[N] is unlikely to live up to the expectations of those who see it as a solid foundation in a volatile community. This is particularly so when geographical changes have triggered communal strife of less perceived international import than the national conflicts that encouraged the creation of the world body. The limitations of the U[N] are undermined when the country that claims to being the land of the free, the world's greatest democracy, threatens to reject any majority decision on who should lead the organisation. It waves its veto over the head of [the UN] Secretary-General... If the U[S] uses that anarchic power in such a fundamentally democratic matter, what chance is there for the Security Council to be effective when the issue is guns and lives? ...There may be answers hidden in the world body as it is now constituted. However, they are so buried by the weight of the organisation's failings that starting from scratch has considerable attraction.

...[the UN] Secretary-General... whose re-election the U[S] vetoed yesterday, faced up to the challenges of the post-Cold War era dominated by one superpower before being sacrificed on the altar of [US domestic politics. Hi]s independence from the U[S] during his five-year mandate proved his undoing, as Washington continued to be the dominant player at the U[N] despite widespread criticism for failing to pay its [UN dues. "The Egyptian] wanted to be a world leader. It was in his psyche..." says one Asian ambassador of the... Coptic Christian... who in his native Egypt played a role in negotiating the landmark peace treaty with Israel signed in 1979... The assassination of his grandfather by Islamic fundamentalists while [PM] under the British protectorate is an... event that marked [him]... According to U[N] watchers, the great powers expect the [Secretary-General] to be the obedient servant of the... Security Council, but [the Egyptian] was often in conflict with the council on international security issues, engaging in sterile "buck-passing" on who was to blame when things went wrong. Critics also say that the... small and wiry figure now aged 74, failed to bring a moral dimension to his post at a time when the world was grappling with new ethnic conflicts breaking out after the collapse of the communist bloc and the end of [US]-Soviet rivalry in far-flung regions. [However, after] taking over as secretary-general in January 1992... [the Egyptian] called a series of global conferences confronting the issues of the day, including the landmark 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro... then turned to reform – too belatedly in the U[S]'s view – to tackle the 185-member world body's bloated bureaucracy. Other achievements under his mandate include the creation of war crimes tribunals for Rwanda and former Yugoslavia, and electoral monitoring arrangements in fledgling democracies. Success stories include... involvement in peace moves in El Salvador, Guatemala, Mozambique and South Africa.

...The U[S] opposes the Egyptian's re-election] for a second term as U[N] chief because it says [the Secretary-General] has been sluggish in promoting reform. But his champions call him the greatest reformer in U[N] history. Who is right? The question is pointless, U[N] officials, diplomats and others familiar with the U[N] say, because the real issue is that Washington doesn't think it can work with [him. The US] cast the lone vote against... [him] in the Security Council. And talks continue on who might succeed him when his term ends on December 31. During his five years as... Secretary-General, [it] often crossed swords publicly with Washington: • When the international community was slow to respond to famine in Somalia, [the Secretary-General] complained that the West was preoccupied with a "rich [person]'s war" in the former Yugoslavia. • ...resisted demands by Washington for airstrikes against the Bosnian Serbs during the Bosnian conflict. • Over [US objections, the Secretary-General] released a report... which implied that Israel intentionally shelled a U[N] compound filled with civilians in south Lebanon. • ...clashed publicly with [the US's] UN] Ambassador last December after... recommend[ing] that Nato take over peacekeeping operations in Croatia. The [US] Administration feared that would complicate efforts to win congressional approval for the Nato mission in Bosnia. Most of the... member states do not share Washington's stance that the 74-year-old... must go. But the U[N] is no democracy. The U[S] wields enormous power in the organisation and is the biggest U[N] contributor, even if it owes more than \$US1 b... The organisation can survive without [the Egyptian] but not without [US support. US officials say the Egyptian] resisted many... reforms and agreed to [others] only under pressure... Washington[also] has resisted reforms backed by many other nations, such as reorganising the 15-member Security Council or reducing the power of the five permanent members...

A[US]'s failure to win a fifth term on the Security Council... has left observers feeling some dismay if little surprise. While the failure has provoked an urgent post-mortem across the Tasman, former N[Z] diplomats say the failure points to the need for key reforms in how the Security Council membership is decided. Criticism centres on the five regional groupings from which the 10 non-permanent seats... are elected, groupings that were determined in the middle of the Cold War in 1963... "The regional groupings from which the membership of the Security Council is determined is a quirk of history that don't reflect the present makeup of the UN." ...The present makeup... reflects what the two experts, who served as diplomats in the U[N] when N[Z] won a Security Council seat in 1992, characterise as a Western European bias. The election this week left four European... members, Portugal, Sweden, Britain and France on the 15-member council. [NZ and AUS] are members of the Western European and Others regional group of 26 countries that can elect two seats every two years. Sixteen countries in the group are, or soon will be, members of the European Union, which means... that they share common trade and diplomatic interests. In our regional group, the "Others" are N[Z, AUS and the US – the latter] in an "ex-officio" capacity. The Asia and Africa regional groups contain greater numbers of countries, which affect an individual nation's odds of election to the Security Council... [One of NZ's former UN diplomats, who is now] director of Victoria University's Centre for Strategic Studies... has suggested that the Security Council electoral groupings could instead be based on nine truly regional groupings of 20 nations. Each group could elect two members, which including the five permanent members, would create a Security Council of 23 nations, with a fairer geographical representation... "The Security Council has a tendency to operate on its own as a little group of 15 in a smoke-filled room and forget about the outside world. This is especially true of major powers. The role of smaller powers is to bridge that gap." ...[the director says AUS]'s failure is a pity for N[Z]. "It would have been good because through diplomatic liaison we can get across our point of view on issues where our interests are at stake." ...N[Z] diplomats did lobby actively on behalf of A[US]'s seat, a bid that reportedly cost more than \$500,000. A[US] and Canada did the same for this country in 1992, an obligation discharged as members of the loose co-ordinating group CANZ. The ballots are secret so diplomats cannot easily assess the success of their work. The *Sydney Morning Herald* described the... loss as a "sandbagging." Potential council members have to be elected with a two-thirds majority. A[US fell just] short with 91 votes in the first ballot in which Sweden won outright. In the second ballot for the remaining seat, A[US]n support dribbled away to 57 votes, with Portugal gaining 124. By contrast, when N[Z] ran against Spain and Sweden in 1992, Spain won the first ballot, but... N[Z] diplomats, who say Western Europe provided little support for this country's bid, had convinced Latin American and African countries to support N[Z] in the second ballot, which this country won with 99 votes to Sweden's 74.

...N[Z] has pulled off another diplomatic coup at the U[N. NZ]... and France were elected to the two spare seats on the advisory committee on administrative and budgetary questions at the expense of the U[S], whose bad record at paying its dues cost it votes. The Minister of Foreign

Affairs... said it was the first time N[Z] had been represented, on what... was one of the most sought-after committees... The 16-strong body has been dominated by the larger powers, but... the outcome reflected N[Z]'s standing as a leader on U[N] reform. The committee examines and reports on the U[N]'s accounts and peacekeeping budgets and the administrative budgets of specialised agencies... [A diplomat], who was a member of N[Z]'s team during its 1993-1994 term on the Security Council, was elected to the committee for three years from January 1.

...Two rounds of unofficial balloting for the post of... secretary-general have ended inconclusively, with all four African candidates getting at least one potential veto from a permanent member of the Security Council... [The UN] undersecretary-general for peacekeeping, led in the more important second round of informal voting and was the only candidate to get more than the nine votes required. But [the Ghanaian] received one negative vote from... France, which prefers candidates from its former French-speaking colonies... Diplomats suspected that the U[S] and Britain cast negative votes against all candidates except [the Ghanaian]. It is not known how many straw polls the council will take or when official voting will begin for the race, which is still deadlocked.

...The new secretary-general... [outlined] his vision for the future to the U[N] General Assembly yesterday... The soft-spoken 58-year-old... [Ghanaian] won the support of all 15 Security Council members last Friday after France dropped a veto threat... ["I think reform and change are possible, but the process has to be managed and we will need to work with the member states... to pay their contributions on time. I would also want to be able to energise the staff and get them to work in a cohesive and a productive manner. After months of cuts and reform they have been demoralised. I think I can turn them around and I would also work as a team with my colleagues at a senior level with judicious delegation to get things [done] quickly. Delegation does not mean abdication. I would ultimately be responsible... We need to look at the U[N] system as a whole. We need to see what we can do to avoid duplication and to get the U[N] system working as a system. Of course when it comes to alleviating poverty there are other big players that we need to co-ordinate our efforts with and here I mean other institutions, the role of the private sector, NGOs. We need to find a way of getting all of them to work in a co-ordinated way... I don't think the membership is ready for a standing U[N] army. It poses all sorts of legal issues, traditional questions of funding: who's going to pay for it? I'm known to have said I think it obviously would be ideal if we had an army we could send out. The way we are asked to operate is a bit like telling the City of London, yes, we know you need a fire station, but we will build one when a fire breaks out. That's more or less what peacekeepers are asked to do. What we are trying to do is to work with the member states and introduce measures here at our headquarters which will permit speedier deployment of the U[N] forces to conflict areas. It will not be as fast as the U[S] or the UK doing it, as we do not have the capacity to do it, but it will reduce the lead time from four months to probably two or three months... We have made some mistakes. Not all of our operations were successful. But... I hope we have learned some lessons also..."]

...UN learned lesson from bloody fighting in Congo... No wonder the West is cautious about military intervention in Zaire. The U[N] tried it 36 years ago, and the organisation suffered 250 deaths, including its own secretary-general... His plane crashed in the darkness near the Ndola airport... in Northern Rhodesia, now Zambia[, while on a mission]... to negotiate an end to the conflict... In July 1960, the U[N] dispatched peacekeepers to... Zaire, then known as... the Congo to quell the unrest that broke out as Belgian colonial rule ended. At the time, it represented the largest and most difficult peacekeeping operation the U[N] had ever mounted... Thirty countries offered troops for the operation, which reached a maximum strength of 19,800[, but the]... mission was beset by problems from the beginning. A few days before the U[N] approved the force, the southeastern province of Katanga rebelled and declared independence... In the midst of the confusion... a former journalist, Joseph Mobutu, [who had been]... appointed... as Army chief of staff... [by the new PM], Patrice Lumumba... staged a coup against... the President... and... Lumumba[, who]... was captured by Mobutu's forces and executed a few months later... Six months into the mission the U[N] troops were authorised to use force if necessary to prevent civil war... But many of the national contingents lacked equipment, weapons and ammunition... When the... peacekeepers left four years later, the country was still unstable, and still governed by some of the same people who were in charge when the U[N] arrived. The bloody experience... taught a generation of future U[N] leaders the risks of trying to impose peace, and sparked a longstanding reluctance to use force in missions such as Somalia and the former Yugoslavia.

...Bloody clashes on the ceasefire line in Cyprus underlined the difficulties facing mediators seeking an end to the island's division and threw a question mark over the role of U[N] peacekeepers there. The violence, the worst in many years, erupted when hundreds of Greek Cypriot motorcyclists defied an order by Cypriot authorities and pushed across the U[N]-policed Green Line yesterday to protest against Turkey's presence in the north. A Greek Cypriot was killed and 41 were injured by bullets, stones and air-rifle shots in the ensuing clashes, police and hospital sources said. Authorities in the north said 12 Turkish Cypriots were also wounded... Witnesses said... [the dead Greek Cypriot], Mr Tassos Isaac, aged 24, a restaurant owner... who leaves a wife five months pregnant, fell on barbed wire and was trapped in the buffer zone where [it] was beaten in the head by demonstrators from the other side. The violence undermined the failure of a succession of international attempts to find a solution to the Cyprus dispute, which is a major source of tension between the Nato partners Greece and Turkey. Greek and Turkish Cypriots have been separated since Turkish troops occupied the north in 1974 in the wake of a brief coup in Nicosia engineered by the military then ruling Greece. Efforts to reunite the island as a federation have had no success.

...[a Ghanaian statesperson and former President of Ghana, 'Kwame Nkrumah, tried to assume leadership of the emergent countries of Africa and spoke often of establishing a United States of Africa. But other African leaders generally rebuffed these proposals.' By the way, another Ghanaian statesperson], the newly chosen... secretary-general... [of the UN, said yesterday that it] would speak to the U[S] Congress if that was what was necessary to get Washington to pay its debts. "I think it will be necessary and I am prepared to do so... I hope that I'll be able to work with the [US] Administration and through them to Congress to get the U[S] to pay its arrears and to pay its dues because without a stable financial basis, it is extremely difficult to carry on reform,"... As the first secretary-general from sub-Saharan Africa, [the former]... undersecretary-general for peacekeeping... said his achievement was an honour not just for Ghana but for Africa as a whole... Asked why... the Ghanaian... wanted the post, [the 58-year-old] replied, "That's a good question. Someone had to do it and it turns out to be my lot... [A] friend of mine described it as a job from hell." ...[the Ghanaian] will be formally appointed today by the 185-member General Assembly.

...a 58-year-old U[N] career official from Ghana... was sworn in yesterday as secretary-general... [and] said nations should "make this organisation leaner, more efficient and more effective, more responsive to the wishes and needs of its members." Mindful, however, of both Washington's \$US1.3 billion... debt, which is bankrupting the U[N], and its demand for reform, [the new secretary-general] said in his acceptance speech: "Applaud us when we prevail; correct us when we fail; but, above all, do not let this indispensable, irreplaceable institution wither, languish or perish as a result of member state indifference, inattention or financial starvation." Change, [the new secretary-general] said, was necessary for the U[N] as well as the rest of the world... [The former secretary-general], in a farewell address, delivered a thinly veiled jab at the U[S] for its arrears to the world body, saying the financial crisis was not the result of bad management, but the refusal to fulfil a treaty obligation.

...[in a Reuters photograph, a] Hutu refugee guards his family's cooking pot in a pause on the trek home to Rwanda. Beside him is a tin of cooking oil supplied as aid through the U[N]... I do not say with Nietzsche, "There are whole peoples who have failed" and close my eyes. But I do say this humanitarian aid business is in danger of becoming something of an industry where amplification of human need in order to rouse public opinion and government action walks a fine dividing line with the more self-serving motives of keeping the aid charities fully employed. Aid agencies as corporate bodies are not disinterested actors in human tragedies, even if many of their heroic personnel often are. The institutions' very existence depends on regular disasters. Since... [WW2], there have been only three major occasions of mass genocide: one in Cambodia, one in Burundi and

one in Rwanda. Each time the horror has led the aid agencies astray in the aftermath... *The Quality of Mercy*, a very precise if disturbing dissection of what happened in Cambodia in 1979, reveals the misrepresentations and incompetence of many of the world's charities. They range from the reputable, such as Oxfam, which refused to accept the word of their local [person] on the spot who said people were poor and malnourished but not dying of hunger, to the idiotic, like La Leche League, offering to send in a plane loaded with lactating [gals]. The truth was the hungry refugees who massed on the Thai border were not, as claimed, the tip of an iceberg. Most Cambodians, although deprived of rice, found they could live on fish, roots of lotus flowers and fruit. The refugees on the Thai border were, in fact, as the genocidal Khmer Rouge saw it, an army-in-waiting being fed and tended so that they would be enabled to live and fight another day – the same story as with the Hutu in eastern Zaire. Two years ago I wrote a column saying stop feeding these Hutu refugees (children and the infirm apart) and they would break with their political and military masters, the instigators of the genocide against the Tutsis, and head back for home in Rwanda. Now the Tutsi militias of eastern Zaire have done the job by warfare. In the Cambodian case the Thai Government and probably the U[S] played politics with the aid agencies. It was in the U[S] and Thai interests to support the murderous Khmer Rouge since they were now fighting the Vietnamese-installed regime... In the Rwanda/Zaire case Western politics also has dangerous undercurrents of the Machiavellian. The French, usually the major outside influence in this part of the world, have been sidelined by the Anglo-Saxons. The French military intervention in 1994, which undoubtedly saved lives, is widely seen to have helped the Hutu perpetrators of genocide escape to Zaire. The U[S], supported by the British and, to a lesser extent, the Canadians, has thrown its weight behind the Tutsi regime in Rwanda. While this is difficult to fault on honest humanitarian instincts, it does appear to be part of a grand strategy to wrong-foot the French in the region. By the discreet use of military aid the U[S] is building up in east Africa a chain of friendly states including Eritrea, Ethiopia and Uganda, which will join the bid to topple the ultra-Islamist, terrorist-supporting regime in Sudan. However, the big prize in this modern-day “scramble for Africa” is Zaire... But... Zaire has been a quagmire for outsiders ever since the Belgians gave it independence... The aid agencies should resolve once again never to hype the need for instant compassion, however jaded they think our consciences have become. And Western governments should realise the only way they will succeed in helping Africa is not by being ridiculously competitive but by working together closely. Right now they need to help the authorities in Rwanda and Zaire round up the ringleaders of the genocide for trial. If an outside intervention force is still necessary this is the job it should concentrate on.

...Has the world outgrown the need for groups such as Greenpeace? ...a founding member of the Values Party... recently appointed executive director of Greenpeace NZ, who]... has extensive experience in not-for-profit organisations including five years as national development director of the Foundation for the Blind... gives an emphatic “No.” ...For 25 years Greenpeace has focused... public concern... about the environment... and brought the reality of environmental destruction home, helping to shift opinion and build public determination to take action. Blowing the whistle to expose polluters and bearing witness to environmental crimes are still integral to Greenpeace. [But] over the past decade we have expanded our role... Our distinctive protests are just the tip of the iceberg: 80[%] of our work is rarely seen by the public – scientific research, the development of solutions, lobbying for environmental protection, submission writing, educational projects, dialogue with industry... promoting clean technologies. Greenpeace remains fiercely independent, relying wholly on donations from individual members of the public and refusing corporate or governmental sponsorship... But one cannot work without the other. The environmental movement has been remarkably free of ideological dogma, and it is false to label some of us, or our strategies, “new” or “old.” The reality is more complex. Environmentalists will have to continue to both confront and collaborate with business if we are to keep getting results... Greenpeace will be necessary for the foreseeable future to provide the conscience, the hope and the sheer determination to take on the vested interests that drive environmental destruction. We will be needed to campaign for solutions to be implemented, and to beat back the “inevitable” degradation of our planet with humour, courage and creativity. - 1996

What if they held a protest and no one came? ...ONE of the boldest, most theatrical environmental groups in the nation had struck. Greenpeace USA, the self-appointed action team of environmentalism, managed to block an oil-drilling platform from leaving an Alaskan harbour. It was late last month and the activists faced down the massive platform in tiny inflatable dinghies and a small ship – a classic Greenpeace eco-stunt. Almost nobody paid any attention. The nationwide yawn may help explain why Greenpeace USA is undergoing an overhaul as dramatic as its past raids and protests... Mismanagement and explosive growth have played a part in crippling an organisation the public had long perceived as “juvenile delinquents for a cause”, said [a] former executive director... But there are other problems. Critics, and even some members, say the group's goals grew diffuse and its members grew bored with its activities. The organisation that draped a banner over Mt Rushmore to protest about acid rain and blockaded whaling ships in the Pacific Ocean simply hasn't kept up with the times. In an age when chemical companies tout their good deeds for the environment and when politicians profess deep concern for the Earth, its traditional role of screaming bloody murder about environmental catastrophes seems dated. However, Greenpeace looks tame compared with the new eco-terrorism groups that destroy fishing boats and, at risk to workers, place metal spikes in trees. It's a sad comedown for what was once one of the most influential of the environmental or “green” groups. In the 1970s, its US activists gained international renown – and condemnation – for putting themselves between whales and harpoons. Greenpeaceers sprayed baby harp seals with dye to foil fur hunters, chained themselves to barrels of toxic waste and interfered with nuclear tests. Such campaigns helped ignite public outrage and change laws. At its height in 1991, Greenpeace USA boasted 1.2 million members and an annual budget of \$60 million. But while the direct mail drives attracted members by targeting a sympathetic audience, the organisation couldn't keep those new members involved... Greenpeace had already begun laying off workers. In 1993, it cut operations 25%. And in the past three years, two offices in California and one each in Texas and Arizona have shut their doors. This year, US membership fell to 420,000. Contributions sank to less than \$25 million in 1995, but rebounded slightly last year... How could an organisation have squandered widespread public support so quickly? Greenpeace loyalists say other environmental groups have been struggling, too. True. But none of them have crashed on such a grand scale... [Furthermore.] membership is up and finances are stable... [at] Greenpeace International, the umbrella organisation for 43 chapters around the world... Greenpeace USA's leaders have been reluctant to discuss problems. But other environmentalists think Greenpeace simply became less relevant... The sense of doom it capitalised on... [during the] '70s... faded as laws and policies changed. As it got bigger, it also lost its original focus... Other green groups take corporate and government money. But Greenpeace USA does not, making it especially vulnerable to drops in membership. Another hindrance may have been the group's own culture of rebellion. “We are activists primarily, and we're not looking at the long-term picture...,” said... [a spokesperson. Greenpeace NZ membership has also] halved from the boom times in the... wave of exposure and sympathy following the Rainbow Warrior bombing in 1985... to around 30,000 today... Greenpeace [NZ now employs] 15 staff – about half the 1990 number... Its annual budget was around \$1.6 million. Each Greenpeace organisation [is] a separate entity and no funds [are] transferred between them... [Greenpeace NZ's] executive director... said the problems in Greenpeace USA were “historical and have been going on for some time – they are now having to deal with them. There has been better financial stewardship in NZ –] ...we have no fancy furnishings and only one administration person. The majority of the money we receive is spent on actual campaigns.” ...Greenpeace NZ's direct actions were comparatively rare, well planned and were always part of overall campaigns... After the French announced it would resume nuclear testing on Mururoa Atoll in 1995, the Rainbow Warrior II sailed to the atoll in protest. It made international headlines after it crossed into the 12-mile test exclusion zone and was boarded by French commandos. Last year during an anti-chlorine campaign against the Tasman Pulp and Paper Mill in Kawerau Greenpeace members were arrested after scaling a 60m tower to unfurl a “Chlorine Kills” banner and clamping 200-litre drums to railway lines. Last month, four members were arrested at New Plymouth in a campaign to reduce carbon dioxide emissions at the new Stratford power station after boarding

the Jumbo Challenger, which was delivering turbines at Port Taranaki... [While on the topic of protest groups,] Amnesty International has accused the U[S and EU] of protecting violators from the scrutiny of the UN Human Rights Commission... China is likely to escape censure for the seventh year running at the U[N] forum, which opens on Monday, because Washington and Brussels have been lax in lobbying support for a resolution, says the London-based group. It named five states – Algeria, Colombia, Indonesia, Nigeria and Turkey – for scrutiny at the forum... And it called for the main UN human rights body, whose 53 member states hold their six-week session in Geneva, to be reformed. “The message is: trade and human rights are linked” said Amnesty’s legal director... “We see a range of ‘untouchables’ – countries that won’t be touched, even though there are severe human rights violations[‘there would be no refugee problem if human rights were respected’] – because of the economic and political interests of the big powers and others in the commission.” ...On Turkey, Amnesty said that it had avoided international scrutiny through solidarity with... Western countries, despite documented cases of torture and other abuses against Kurds... The... human rights situation in Colombia has worsened since the last annual UN session. “Extrajudicial executions, ‘disappearances’ and torture by members of the security forces and their paramilitary allies have persisted and, in some areas, increased dramatically.” Amnesty called on Indonesia to halt its “crackdown” on non-violent, political, human rights, labour and other activists. It urged Jakarta to address violations in East Timor and allow groups, including itself, access to the area.

...Will chest-thumping by Western nations clamouring for the global moral high ground push human rights up the international development agenda? Perhaps not, according to [a former UN] diplomat... Instead... the... director of N[Z]’s Centre for Strategic Studies... warns that... [in] Asia, where governments are under constant diplomatic and trade pressure to conform to Western concepts of humanism, the campaign may even hold the potential to backfire. Since the end of the Cold War... the world has witnessed a “veritable crusade of universal dimensions” led by the U[S] and other key [Western] countries, designed to spread good governance, free trade and human rights throughout the world. “Democracies, so the argument runs, do not go to war with one another... [However, democracy] is certainly no guarantee of stability...” In East Asia... nations have within 25 years achieved a degree of modernisation and development that Western Europe and North America took more than a century to accomplish. The accompanying presumption is that the pace of economic success based on convergent liberal free market policies will produce similar convergence with the West in ideals, values and democratic practice. “It is forgotten that North America and European experiences of modernisation were accomplished over several decades by a conspicuous absence of genuine democracy or human rights, by child labour, slavery, theft of intellectual property and similar misdemeanours... Asia is not, however, to be permitted the same period of grace. The assertive presumption that Western values are indeed universal values is producing among Asian politicians and thinkers fairly negative reactions... The ideals, values and principles embodied in the U[N] and in the human rights covenants were, and are, the ideals, values and principles of that group of UN founder nations, the so-called West. A modern and successful Asia will expect that its ideals, values and principles should find some expression as well in the body of international normative behaviour. Asia’s attachment to the international system overall will be clearly affected to the extent this does, or does not, occur.” ...[Incidentally, the] UN human rights committee has condemned serious human rights abuses in Sudan including the crucifixion of convicts, slavery and the press-ganging of children into the army.

...With righteous Italian anger of the radical variety... the E[U]’s commissioner for humanitarian aid, has turned on the institution of which [it] has long been a passionate supporter. The UN, [the commissioner] said last week, faces being tarnished for ever by shame for its role in the Congo. “The saga of the commission of inquiry into the massacres has surpassed the degree of ridicule it has already earned.” [The commissioner], who directs the world’s biggest budget for humanitarian aid, had better be listened to... [because it] is right. We need to know what is going through the minds of the new UN Secretary-General... and the new High Commissioner for Human Rights, the former president of Ireland... How could the UN just decide to buckle and pull out its human rights investigators when the [then new leader] of the Congo, Laurent Kabila, told them to? The UN human rights team was dispatched to the Congo in June to investigate reports that Mr Kabila’s rebels, in the battle to topple the long-time dictator, Mobutu Sese Seko, massacred Rwandan Hutu refugees. When these UN human rights investigators were first deployed it was with the acquiescence of Mr Kabila. But no sooner were they on the ground than they were obstructed and denounced at every turn. Reports from human rights and intelligence sources make it clear that all this was a stalling tactic to give time for the mass graves to be exhumed, the bodies burnt and the evidence scattered to the wind and rivers. Witnesses have been intimidated and jailed... The UN has two serious problems to overcome. Firstly, its failed credibility as a human rights organisation... and its fading seriousness as a peacekeeper, for which the [US] Administration’s wimpiness in the face of the anti-UN hostility of the chair[perso]n of the US Senate’s foreign relations committee... has been largely responsible. [The UN]’s human rights weaknesses are something the secretary-general can do much to repair himself, since it has deep roots in the culture and more so the institution itself, and had a willing supporter of the take-it-easy approach during the tenure of his predecessor... This was expertly documented in a report written two years ago by Article 19, the London-based International Centre Against Censorship. It showed in enormous detail how governmental manipulation of UN human rights committees had led to the suppression of a “substantial number of allegations of abuses in the five veto-wielding countries.” ...It [also] showed how UN operations in the field have often failed to report publicly human rights violations. In ex-Yugoslavia essential information that would have helped relatives trace missing victims during the ethnic cleansing was withheld. Most serious of all was that the UN forces in Somalia violated the Geneva Convention by refusing to disclose crucial information about the casualties they inflicted on local people. Not surprisingly, Canadian and Italian units of the UN peacekeepers from that operation have been accused of brutality and cruelty. The UN’s problem with peacekeeping is that its authority, finances and reach have been so mangled by consistent opposition from the US during the [42nd] presidency that it does not have the spine to stand tall. A new secretary-general is not enough. The rot has gone too far... We are now paying the price for this in a number of arenas. There is a blunting of sensibilities following one televised ethnic war after another, in which the world community seems politically helpless. It also affects issues like the aftermath of the Gulf War where there is growing unwillingness by rank and file member countries to support the continued and intrusive monitoring of Iraq’s war machine by the UN. [The Iraqi leader]’s gain here is going to be America’s big loss. Intellectually, this state of affairs does not add up. With the end of the Cold War and with the number of smaller wars declining dramatically each year, this should be the time for great UN activism in pursuit of helping the world peace process along. Instead, this quite unique historical opportunity for a great peace and the advancement of universal human rights is being wasted and frittered away.

...Famine focused world attention on Somalia seven years ago, causing governments and aid organisations alike to rally relief teams and send out aircraft to deliver food to the southern Juba Valley. Today, a new call for help is receiving slow and sparse response. Heavy rains have beaten down on the valley for three weeks, causing the Juba River to pour over its banks... 130 people have drowned and... 300,000 Somalis are without homes or food. The faction leaders who rule this nation of seven million in the absence of a central government – the same ones who forced out UN peacekeepers in 1995 – are appealing for aid. But bitterness left over from that disastrous mission has governments and relief agencies reluctant to mount another large-scale effort. “The governments fear there may be [a return to the] chaos of 1992. It’s been proven that large amounts of aid attract looters,” said... a spokes[perso]n for CARE International. The anarchy of Somalia made a fiasco of the two-year relief mission. More than 100 peacekeepers died and... \$US1.66 billion was spent before the U[N] finally pulled out the last of its troops... [In related news, a Wellington] company... founded in 1875... which hit international headlines... in 1991... [when it won the UN] berets contract... closed yesterday with the loss of 60 jobs.

...The U[N] still owes N[Z] \$3.5 million for peacekeeping work in Bosnia. N[Z] sent three contingents of peacekeepers to Bosnia between 1994 and 1996... The Army sent the UN a bill for \$13.5 million to reimburse mission costs. Of that, \$10 million has been paid. The UN has certified \$1.5

million of the outstanding amount for payment when money is available. The Chief of General Staff... said the Army's wait was not a serious concern and did not affect its operations. "We're effectively borrowing from the Defence Force against it."

...The U[N], in debt for more than \$US2 billion... is limping along by not paying states... who contributed troops to peacekeeping ventures, says its chief financial officer. "One group of member states finances another,"... Because of a continuing shortfall for day-to-day expenses, mainly because the U[S] owes it more than \$US1 billion... the U[N] has to borrow from peacekeeping funds, which means not paying those contributing troops. Highest on the list is France, owed about \$US135 million, followed by Britain at about \$US80 million. The Netherlands, Pakistan and India come next, followed by nearly every country that has contributed troops to the U[N] since 1990, including N[Z]. The US President has proposed a)... \$US1 billion payment for arrears... But conservatives in Congress are far from approving the monies... [and, if] the money is allocated... a U[S] debt of \$US362 million would still remain...

[The US] President... and the Republican-dominated Senate have called for the prompt payment of... arrears to the... [UN. T]he arch-conservative chair[person] of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations Committee, announced after... meeting the new U[N] chief that... legislation providing for the payment... would... [be submitted – but also] made it clear that payment, which would be staggered over a period of time, would be linked to progress by the U[N] in carrying out specific reforms... a linkage with which... the... new secretary-general... appeared uncomfortable... "If the reforms are piecemeal, or if the status quo persists, then you will have a very difficult time" getting the money... said... [the senator]. In another development concerning the UN, n]ine of Taiwan's allies ha[ve] submitted a proposal... calling for Taiwan's representation in the world body.

...Cambodia's U[N] seat will stay vacant for the time being after a UN committee deferred any decision on the credentials of two rival delegations... After a closed-door meeting of the General Assembly's nine-member credentials committee, members said the issue had been shelved indefinitely... Meanwhile... Japan will not even consider increasing its contributions to the U[N] unless the Security Council is quickly reformed to give Tokyo a permanent seat, according to a senior official. "I'm sure the Japanese taxpayer will not be happy if Japan is continuously asked to pay more and... at the same time we don't have a permanent representation on the Security Council,"... Japan[is] the second-largest contributor... This year Japan will contribute 15.65[% of the UN]'s regular budget. Tokyo is unhappy about a U[S] drive to cut Washington's contributions to 20[%]... especially given that Japan's gross national product is around half that of the U[S].

...US] slammed for dictatorial arrogance... THROUGH the eyes of much of the world, the resurgence of the U[S] and its ascendancy as the world's only superpower has been one of the most dramatic developments since the Cold War. Historians who once warned about America's decline now gush about an age of unrivalled dominance. But over the past few months, irritation and anxiety have begun to overshadow sentiments of admiration among America's closest allies. Across Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa, convictions are growing that the US's political, economic and cultural clout is breeding an arrogance that is unpleasant and dangerous. "Never before in modern history has a country dominated the earth so totally as the U[S] does today," said the German news magazine *Spiegel* in a recent cover story. "[US] idols and icons are shaping the world from Kathmandu to Kinshasa, from Cairo to Caracas. Globalisation wears a 'Made in USA' label. The Americans are acting, in the absence of limits put to them by anybody or anything, as if they own a blank che[que] in their 'McWorld'. Strengthened by the end of communism and an economic boom, Washington seems to have abandoned self-doubts from the Vietnam trauma. America is now... obtrusive[and] intimidating." The US is discovering its behaviour has come under sharpest scrutiny from friendly nations that no longer feel prevented by Cold War loyalties from expressing their disagreements with Washington. At the U[N], allies such as Britain and Germany have not shrunk from excoriating America's refusal to pay as much as \$1 billion in past dues, its reluctance to increase spending on foreign aid and its rejection of a ban on land mines... Washington's efforts to compel other nations to isolate Cuba, Iran, Iraq and Libya have also provoked annoyance... [The US President]'s officials say the US was bound to be condemned whatever it did – overbearing when it asserts its will and indecisive if it allowed others to take the lead.

...After hearing that Iraq was probably still concealing details of clandestine weapons programmes, the U[N] Security Council yesterday maintained the stiff economic sanctions imposed on Baghdad since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. "Getting Iraq to comply is like pulling teeth from somebody who doesn't want to open his mouth," [the US's] UN ambassador... said... The Security Council decision was made during its regular 60-day review of Iraqi Gulf War sanctions... • [The US – which 'has maintained about three bombing raids per week since its most recent military campaign in Iraq ended 10 months ago (and shows no sign of letting up even though US military officials admit that the continued bombing has had no impact on Iraq's military capabilities and Iraq says the raids have killed 200 civilians') –] ...has formerly asked the U[N] to lower its dues from 25 to 20[%]...

The British envoy to the U[N]... has sharply criticised the U[S] for failing to pay its UN dues, calling this "indefensible." "The amount owed by Washington is the equivalent of the whole of the UN regular budget for one year,"... It accounted for two-thirds of the \$US2.1 billion... in UN members' arrears for budget dues and peacekeeping costs... In unusually pointed criticism of a close ally, [the envoy] asked: "How can the UN put itself to rights in such an ignominious predicament?" In a speech prepared for a meeting at the UN of members of the British-American Chamber of Commerce, [the envoy] said personal respect and affection for individual [US] diplomats and public servants "inhibit many in this building from speaking frankly. The truth is, failure to pay legal dues... causes great anger and exasperation, even among friends and allies. It poisons the working environment. [US] exceptionalism cannot mean being the exception to the laws everyone else has to obey. What a reputation to risk, for a nation of such traditional vision and generosity." Alluding to repeated US calls for UN reform, [the envoy] said if an ailing patient needed surgery, "we would make sure [the patient] had normal blood pressure before operating, perhaps even given a quick transfusion," especially if [it] was expected to return to work the next day. "With the UN it seems to be different: the pulse is feeble, blood supply is down, no blood donors in sight. But self-appointed medics pronounce chloroform and the scalpel a cure for overweight. A smarter remedy might be: restore the blood supply to normal and recommend more exercise." In... [further UN news, Tuesday] was the day diplomats at the [world body] have anticipated for months with dread and disdain: The day they had to start paying their parking tickets. The city of New York's new policy, backed by the State Department, of refusing to recognise diplomatic immunity for parking violations has prompted more impassioned rhetoric here in the last few days than most issues of war and peace. Equally controversial have been suggestions that diplomats who want to avoid tickets for illegal parking try using public transportation to get to work. [The secretary]-general... took time out... [from] trying to end the bloody civil war in Zaire... to call for calm on all sides and a return to civil dialogue. But the UN committee in charge of housekeeping issues threatened to bring the dispute before the General Assembly... Cuba's UN] delegate... said it was an effort to "protect our rights". The delegation collected 1208 tickets last year on its 30 diplomatic vehicles. "Diplomatic immunity is like virginity. Either you have it or you don't," added [the diplomat] who represents Brazil (3351 citations on 35 cars). In the end, the committee put off a decision until [next week]. Some members were ready to continue lobbing verbal grenades at "the host country", but the translators on duty were ending their shift and the session was adjourned to avoid paying them overtime. But no one in Tuesday's debate scaled the rhetorical heights reached earlier in the week by the French, who may not have been this convulsed since a Californian cabernet sauvignon first topped Bordeaux in an international wine competition. [The]French legal counsel... fulminated that maybe the UN should move its headquarters to more civilised Geneva or Vienna... where police were more accommodating. Last year, [New York] city officials say, 116,345 tickets were issued to UN diplomatic cars, with 17,936 more given to consular vehicles, which also are subject to the new rules. Russia received the largest total – 31,388 on 178 vehicles – and North Korea averaged the most per vehicle, with 38.3 a month.

...The effects of globalisation and the dark side of "identity politics" are among the major challenges facing the U[N], says its Secretary-General... [H]is first annual report to UN member states... warns of the dangers of the unfettered proliferation of small arms to conflict areas where the U[N] is attempting to build peace. [The report] also says that the international community needs to "address and resolve" the problems posed by an

ominous new trend, in which civilian populations and humanitarian workers have become the targets of combatants. The Secretary-General, in a break with UN tradition, is due to present the 25-page report to the... General Assembly... when world leaders gather for the opening of the general debate... which always takes place on the third Tuesday in September. [His] aides say that by taking the podium moments ahead of leaders such as [the] US President... the Ghanaian UN chief intends to place his reform agenda firmly at the heart of the debate... In an attack on traditional General Assembly procedures, [the Secretary-General] appeals to member states to allow him a freer hand, saying that “the current situation serves neither party well.” ...[while being] “prudently optimistic” about the future, [the Secretary-General] makes it clear [that it] expects member states to do their share, notably in solving the world body’s financial crisis, which [the Secretary-General] describes as “unprecedented and debilitating.”

...with an eye on the... [US Congress, which has] vowed not to pay the \$US1 billion Washington owes the world body until it... [is satisfied with his reform programme, the] UN... Secretary-General... yesterday proposed eliminating staff and cutting \$US123 million... from the budget as a first step... 1,000 jobs his predecessor... left vacant would be cut completely... [The Secretary-General] also proposed merging some... departments, creating a code of conduct for its employees and cutting... administrative expenditures, now 38[%] of the budget... by a third by the year 2001.

...sometimes you need to have change imposed upon you... WRITING about neoliberal reform programmes... a co-director of the Centre for Rationality, Ethics and Society at the University of Chicago, says because restructuring tends to be painful, with significant social costs, reforms tend to be initiated from above and launched by surprise. Significant change is enacted by fiat and rail-road through so that the compromise that might result from public consultation need not be made.

...[the] president of the U[N] General Assembly has presented a key resolution to enlarge the Security Council that could allow Japan and Germany to become permanent members but without veto power. The document from... [the Malaysian diplomat] would expand the 15-member council to 24 seats and is considered the first serious attempt to reform the body after years... of fruitless discussions. But it does not necessarily resolve the controversy quickly... Any council changes would have to be accepted by a two-thirds vote in the 185-seat General Assembly and by the current five permanent council members. They would also require a revision of the U[N] Charter, which would have to be ratified by two-thirds of members’ national legislatures... [By the way, US] Army units backed by helicopters were yesterday trying to extract three remaining U[N] police officers still trapped in the... town of Brcko after a day of violence... The rest of the force of 257 U[N] police officers had been rescued from Brcko in often chaotic scenes... [as the US] Army units of the Nato-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR), together with teams of U[N] international police task force officers, formed groups to snatch U[N] officials from houses in which they were besieged by Serb mobs... “There’s just no law now on the streets of Brcko,”... said... [a UN spokesperson, who added that] at least 25 U[N] vehicles had been destroyed in the attacks, and many more damaged, with some U[N] police officers fleeing for their lives after being attacked by stone-throwing mobs... In the afternoon, with mobs still rampaging through the town and no sign of Serb police... [US] Army troops opened fire at a checkpoint on the bridge over the Slava River... after... a television crew from Associated Press... [was] attacked and assaulted... [by] an angry mob... Meanwhile, the Western-backed Bosnian Serb President... [was holding] an inauguration ceremony in her Banja Luka stronghold.

...Peacekeepers in Bosnia will use deadly force if necessary against mob violence, Nato’s top general said yesterday... Stone-throwing Bosnian Serbs have confronted [US] troops in Bosnia several times in the past week. Two soldiers were injured by clubs in one incident... The... General... said SFOR was striving not to take sides despite clashes with Serb hardliners, who support... the... indicted war criminal... and... former Bosnian Serb president... against... “...the constitutionally elected president of the Republika Srpska,” as Serb-controlled areas of Bosnia are known. [The General also] suggested peace-keeping troops in the former Yugoslav region might try to disarm [the former president]’s armed bodyguards. “If there are specialist police who are protecting him... they won’t legally be able to...”

...Eight years on from the end of the Cold War we seem to be mired, even entrapped, in a seamless web of failures on the international scene. U[N] peacekeeping, once the flagship, has been holed below the waterline and is sinking fast – it doesn’t even try to put in a port call in bloody African conflicts these days. Start 2 (the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) meant to cut the over-large US and Russian nuclear arsenals, first held hostage by [the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee’s chairperson,] is now a prisoner of the equally chauvinist Russian Duma. The [US] Administration’s energies have been deployed almost exclusively on the expansion of Nato – there are not many beads of sweat to be seen in Washington from the pushing for Start 2, much less Start 3. Elsewhere, [the Iraqi President] is still trying to build weapons of mass destruction, the Middle East peace process appears to be dead in the water... But is this all? It is not, though to find a mention in the press of another side of things is a laborious and unrewarding task. The media appears to revel in its melancholic view of life. Last week the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute held its annual press conference to launch its 830-page yearbook. Admittedly, it is a complex read, but is that a good enough reason for ignoring the remarkable revelation made in its first chapter that for every year since 1989... the number of wars has fallen? In 1989 there were 36 major conflicts... and last year... it was down to 27, of which all but one, between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, were domestic in nature... The evidence appears conclusive that it was the Cold War that was the greatest single stirrer of conflict... Last year... witnessed the end of the post-Cold War period... With that out of the way it probably doesn’t matter so much if the [US] Administration still spends on defence at Cold War levels or Russian and [US] missiles stay nuclear-armed in their silos. Since America and Russia are no longer engaged in proxy wars it doesn’t any more weigh on the rest of the world, only on the [US] and Russian taxpayers who should wake up and ask what it’s all for. We are now living in a very different kind of world than humanity has long been used to and the question is can we keep it that way? Can the momentum of declining conflicts be sustained? Africa and an arc of instability around the Russian periphery remain the most troubled regions. But who can help them? The most single successful arbitrator of disputes, for all its setbacks in Somalia, Rwanda and ex-Yugoslavia, remains the UN. These days, however, the Security Council remains shy of launching new initiatives. UN peacekeeping continues its dramatic decline and all the remaining large-scale UN operations are set to be terminated this year. Yet, even though it is a truism to say it, peace must be struggled for continuously. A small band of UN enthusiasts, determined and skilled diplomats and, increasingly, voluntary organisations carry on with their unremarked upon good works of arbitration and interposition. No other generation in humankind’s history has been so close to a worldwide peace. Are we going to go for the final push or are we not? Why on earth at just this moment are we losing our nerve?

...Human security does not come out of a gun barrel... Unlike traditional military security, human security is much less about procuring arms and deploying troops than it is about strengthening the social and environmental fabric of societies and improving their governance. To avoid the instability and breakdown now witnessed in countless areas, a human security policy must take into account a complex web of social, economic, environmental and other factors. Although there is much that governments can do on their own to promote human security, national policies need to be complemented by improved international cooperation. This is true, for instance, in global environmental governance – where the gap between rhetoric and action is widening. The 1995 World Social Summit in Copenhagen recognised – rhetorically, at any rate – that poverty, unemployment and social disintegration are closely linked to peace and security issues, and that there is urgent need for a new global commitment to reduce deep inequities that breed explosive social conditions, fuel ethnic antagonisms and drive environmental decline... Since many contemporary conflicts arise within countries, promoting more democratic forms of domestic governance and facilitating the emergence of more pluralistic, accountable societies is crucial. While far from being a panacea, the tremendous rise in the number of non-governmental organisations is on the whole an encouraging development. [But the] broad availability of arms means that disputes can easily be transformed into violent conflict. It is time all governments made strenuous efforts to reverse course. From permissive and careless attitudes towards developing, producing, procuring and trading arms, we need to move towards constraint. This means adopting meaningful limits on new production, but it also means

undertaking an effort to collect and destroy as large a portion of the arms already in circulation as possible... It is time to strike a new balance in our security investments – a balance that curtails the excessive reliance on traditional military means... and corrects massive social and environmental investment deficits... Devoting greater resources to demilitarisation, environmental sustainability and social well-being may be regarded as incurring unwelcome expenses. Yet they constitute a set of highly beneficial, mutually reinforcing and long-overdue investments. Put simply, the choice before humanity is pay now or pay much more later. The cost of failing to advance human security is already escalating... [Currently, building] an alternative security system – based on far-reaching disarmament, demobilisation of soldiers, conversion of arms factories, more effective peacekeeping and non-violent conflict resolution – might require some \$US40 billion annually. The global social and environmental investment needs – encompassing such areas as preventing soil erosion, providing safe drinking water, eliminating malnourishment and providing adequate shelter – will take a larger amount, perhaps some \$US200 billion annually for several years. [However, this] compares with roughly \$US800 billion spent each year on military budgets... [■] The Republican Congress has come up with a brazen approach to squaring the [US\$ UN] debt – threatening the U[N]. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has approved legislation that would pay \$US819 million of the debt over the next three years, but only if the U[N] complies with a long list of conditions, including... a reduction in future U[S] dues. However, U[N] members may reject the deal... “I don’t think anyone expects that Congress can take decisions and impose them unilaterally on the other 184 member states,” [the UN’s leader] said... The secretary-general stopped short of condemning the plan... calling it a product of “tough and delicate negotiations.” Officials in the [US] Administration “felt this was the best deal they could get under the circumstances and considered it a breakthrough,”... [The] Administration participated in drafting the bill and is supporting the basic thrust, acknowledging that it could be the only chance to win congressional support for repaying much of the... debt... The bill, written by [the] foreign relations committee chair[perso]n... is the latest and perhaps most serious salvo from Congress in a long-running effort to use money power to compel reforms and bend the U[N] agenda more to the U[Ss’] liking... But the... approach is a risky one that U[N] officials and congressional critics contend could produce a backlash from countries that resent heavy-handed U[S] dictates. While many member countries agree that the U[N] bureaucracy has become bloated and wasteful, there is also indignation about the U[S] withholding dues... it has promised to pay and periodically leaving the institution short of funds.

...[Entertainment tycoon] finds a spare billion for the UN... [The vice-chair[perso]n of Time Warner Inc, said yesterday [that it] would donate \$US1 billion... to a fund for U[N] programmes over the next 10 years and would ask other wealthy people to do the same... Such a fund would have to have a new structure because individuals could not contribute money directly to the U[N] to make up for dues and other debts of governments. “The U[S] still has to pay up,” [the vice-chairperson] said... Speaking... on CNN, [the vice-chairperson confessed]: “I only got the idea 48 hours ago. One billion is a good round number.” ...[the] strong supporter of the U[N] and a critic of the [US] Government for its \$US1.5 billion debt to the world body, first made the stunning announcement at a dinner in New York... “I’m not poorer than I was nine months ago, and the world is a lot better off.” Asked about the reaction of... his... actress... wife, [the vice-chairperson] said: “It brought tears to her eyes.” [The vice-chairperson] quoted her as saying “I am proud to be married to you.” ...U[N] officials have welcomed [the] US media mogul[’s promised donation]... as a boost to the morale of the world body, which is frequently under attack by US politicians.

...Beware tycoons bearing gifts for purposes that are the responsibility of governments... At its foundation the U[N] was the second attempt this century to achieve peace by structured debate among nations. Its agencies range from the children, refugee and environment programmes to the food, agricultural, health, cultural and scientific organisations... They are the creations, and remain the responsibilities, of member governments... They should not be funded directly by outsiders, whether tycoons or corporations, without the mandates which official representatives enjoy. One of the unsubtle aspects of global privatisations and resulting lower corporate tax rates is the increasing public relations gestures of corporates to be seen to be “green” or socially conscientious. Having refused to operate in higher tax jurisdictions they have often escaped to the lower wage and environmental standards of [Last World] countries where their excess profits can become available for acts of generosity. Of course, governments might welcome largesse which relieves them of their responsibilities of U[N] membership. Most seriously, their receipt of donations allows them to abdicate responsibility and hence power. Moreover, it amounts to an exchange of power whereby no government will hereafter find it easy to insist on codes of conduct for transnational corporations with economies far greater than [most countries] or to require U[N] scrutiny of their attempts to defeat U[N] initiatives such as reduced carbon dioxide emissions or the prevention of mining in Antarctica... Of course, the U[N] is short of funds. It is always expensive keeping the peace as a bureaucracy as is the continued support of, for example, orthodox medicine and farming. However, that expense is governments’ expense and should not be captured by private interests. If ever the level playing field cried out for implementation it is now when the subsidy of the world body by business and industry risks us losing the century’s greatest achievement – the U[N] and its agencies. Rather than “saving” it, this gift (and maybe others) could place the world’s great debating forum in great jeopardy. Non-governmental organisations around the world, whose identity depends entirely on there being governments of the people and not of corporate interests, should demand that the U[N], to which they are accredited, not accept the money unless by trustee allocation to international non-governmental charities such as the Red Cross or Oxfam which work with the U[N] in achieving those ends of education, relief and environmental restoration.

...A spontaneous act of good-natured philanthropy or a carefully calculated publicity stunt? ...In an autumnal mood, [a US media tycoon] springs a \$1 billion gift on the U[N] – and unabashedly challenges other rich guys to cough up, too... “I’m putting every rich person in the world on notice... They’re going to be hearing from me about giving money away. If you want to lead, you got to... blow the horn and get out in front of the parade.” ...As [the tycoon] tells it, his life’s thrilling new mission was revealed to him in the form of a net-worth statement. [The tycoon] was flying to New York to receive an award from the U[N] Association and] was in an upbeat mood. The evening before, [it had] cheered his beloved Atlanta Braves baseball team to a come-from-behind victory. Sculptors from Madame Tussaud’s Wax Museum had been in, measuring him with calipers for a statue. [The tycoon will] turn 60 next year, and, just that day, [had] mused aloud about the challenges of age, even for billionaires. “You get more conservative in life... You are not as colourful as you were when you were younger.” For the [guy] who colourised the movies, drab is death. But in a life of dramatic acts, what do you do for a grand exit? The answer lay in the dry document on his lap in the Cessna. As of December 31, 1996, his monthly financial statement read [that the tycoon] was worth \$2.2 billion. By last week the bottom line had ballooned to \$3.2 billion – a vast hunk of new wealth created by the rising price of his shares in the Time Warner media empire. The [tycoon decided to give the] “extra billion”... away – and make the largest single pledge in philanthropic history... Talking to reporters the next day, [the tycoon] said, “There is no greater joy in life than giving to worthy causes.” [An entertainment tycoon becomes the] world’s leading Sister of Charity: it was an astonishing and, to some, annoying idea. This is, after all, a legendary cold corporate tough guy who once fired his own son... a guy who can’t help but be self-promotional... a [guy] who can sense a momentous trend and embody it with purposeful mischief and a gap-toothed sales[person’s] grin. The tycoon] shrewdly has ridden successive waves: the sun belt’s rise, the communications revolution, the globalisation of commerce, the unabashed entrepreneurialism of the 1990s. Now [the tycoon has] caught the next one, giving (some of) it away... This is a guy who, when you look at the fine print, isn’t selling a single share of his Time Warner stock, but is merely promising to set it aside to use as collateral to fund his pledge. [The tycoon will] get tax benefits, while retaining his voting power and the value of any further appreciation. As [the tycoon himself noted, the tycoon is] still at least as rich as [the tycoon] was on New Year’s Day... [The tycoon] is, for now, one of the world’s loudest and richest corporate pensioners... [who] views himself: as a [guy] dangling above the chasm, always at risk. [The tycoon came] by his insecurity the hard way, through a tyrannical father who beat him severely before committing suicide when [the tycoon] was 24. A manic-depressive, [the tycoon]’s mood swings and suicidal tendencies were calmed a decade

ago by lithium and psychotherapy. [The tycoon] remains on the drug and on the wagon. But his chief source of calm and comfort is [his wife], who... made philanthropy an organising principle of his life well before last week. A sailor and hunter, [the tycoon is] a proto-environmentalist. The [tycoon's] Family Foundation, started six years ago, is run by a former head of Greenpeace USA, and all of... his five children... are on the board. It is expected to spend \$25 million next year... In the last year, in public and private, [the tycoon has] only half jokingly offered to assume the entire [US UN] debt – and then sue Congress for full compensation... In Hong Kong, the beehive of billionaires, the [offer] won admiration for its bold impetuosity.

...Con... leaves UN pondering a billion-dollar embarrassment... [The person who] stunned delegates at a UN conference in Melbourne last Friday... [with his pledge to donate] \$US1 billion... to the U[N] to fight poverty was discovered yesterday to be a failed A[USn] businessperso[n]. Describing himself as an exiled Borneo prince and wearing a white robe and tricolour sash, the middle-aged... [AUSn's] pledge followed a] US cable-television king[']s... \$US1 billion offer of UN aid, but the only people who said they knew "His Royal Highness..." were his... rural A[USn] family. The AUSn... still owes them \$A10,000... his brother said. "If [it]'s that bloody rich [it] can send us some money,"... [The AUSn], a failed builder, went overseas 19 years ago, leaving his wife and their seven children... The Australian newspaper... quoted his family as saying. The self-styled prince[, who] could not be contacted yesterday... received a standing ovation at Friday's UN Conference on Secure Infrastructures for Electronic Commerce...

With his recent \$US1 billion gift to the [UN, a media tycoon] bought respect around the world. With another half billion or so, could [the tycoon] buy the presidency of the U[S? The tycoon has]... defied many bigger risk-reward ratios in experiments in business... [A] Democratic political consultant, said: "[The tycoon] is one of the legitimate visionaries of this century. If [the tycoon] wants to give [a billion dollars] to help people and then run for president, more power to him. [The tycoon] seems to be the kind of guy we could use." However, another political consultant cautioned: "Money does not buy happiness or the presidency. The graveyards are full of the corpses of candidates based on money alone." ...critics say [the tycoon] has a low boiling point, a quick temper. Actually, his boring point is lower than his boiling point. A few years ago, after [the tycoon] successfully got CNN up and running against great odds, [the tycoon] was bored and talked about running for the US Senate. Now, [the tycoon is] bored playing second fiddle at Time Warner. And both [the tycoon]... and his wife... are getting bored with raising buffalo in Montana. Don't be surprised if that boredom and all their bucks lead them to the risky but richest experiment ever in politics.

...[The UN] can do nothing against law of the jungle[, which]... suggests that the [organisation] will never be a forerunner to world government... In a recent Herald article, [a former UN diplomat] noted that there is such close agreement between the A[USn] and US governments that the former diplomat can detect "no chink of light between [their] respective positions or interests" regarding Asia-Pacific security issues. In particular, this displeases [the former diplomat] because the recent A[US-US] ministerial communique "nowhere acknowledges the security role of the U[N], nor peacekeeping and related activity, and the need for member countries to strengthen U[N] capacities for ready response, conciliation or good offices." It is hardly surprising that Canberra and Washington excluded the UN from their security deliberations. What surprises is that [the former diplomat] really expected they might do otherwise. Why does [the former diplomat] believe that any nation-state, not to mention a superpower, would entrust its national security or its vital interests to an organisation that has failed so miserably to deter aggression, end civil wars, halt terrorism, and prevent genocide? How many times must the UN demonstrate its impotence as a peacekeeper or peace-enforcer before people recognise this painful reality? Surely this is one question where the evidence speaks loudly and clearly for itself. Civil war raged in Bosnia from 1991-1995, and over 200,000 people were killed while UN peacekeepers monitored the situation and allowed the carnage to continue. Similar calamities occurred when the UN tried to prevent mass murder in Democratic Congo and Rwanda. Punitive UN success stories in Afghanistan and Cambodia went up in smoke when the Taliban militia in the former and the armed forces loyal to [one of the two ruling factions] in the latter brushed aside UN personnel and simply killed or terrorised their political opponents. As for the human disasters that occurred in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Sudan, Uganda, and Burundi, the UN might just as well have never existed... [A] Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, sums up the reasons for the UN's feebleness as an international peacekeeper: "[T]his post-cold war version of the UN as the new major player on the block is a hallucination. Why? Because the UN is a fiction. Yes, it has a Secretary-General, a bureaucracy and a building. But it has no army, no taxing authority, no independent will. Because it is a creature of the sovereign powers that control it, its sovereignty is an illusion." The only way to alter this situation is to compel the great powers that control the UN to relinquish their power to the UN and authorise it to maintain peace and order throughout the world. However, sovereign nation-states believe that their primary obligation is to use the power at their disposal to preserve national security... Because a great power like the US would never surrender any of its sovereignty to an international organisation like the UN unless it was confronted by a superior military force, it is safe to say that, given the awesome military power possessed by Washington and its European and Asian allies, this will never occur. No one can deny that the UN is worthwhile... But... the UN is never going to be anything other than the sum of its parts. We must not forget that we dwell in the real world of nation-states and power politics, that world government is nothing more than a utopian dream, and that the law of the jungle counts for much more in today's world than the rule of law.

...It was ironic... that Plato, Socrates' editor, ghost-writer and perpetuator, should become the patron saint of pure, changeless ideas and author of *The Republic*, the prototype and most influential of all Utopias, a terminal portrait of the perfected community[, because]... Socrates could hardly have been any more content in Plato's Republic than [Socrates] had been in his own Athens... [Yet] Plato's *Republic* would claim to be the static end of seeking and the need for seekers. "Although all the rulers are to be philosophers," British mathematician and philosopher Bertrand Russell once objected, "there are to be no innovations; a philosopher is to be, for all time, a [hu]man who understands and agrees with Plato." ...In recalling the story of our human search for meaning, we have been inclined to remember the courage, initiative and imagination of the messengers and forget the message. The Hebrew prophets... sought purpose in the word of the God for whom they spoke, the... Greek philosophers... sought to free the wondrous instrument of reason within everyone... THE NEXT GREAT AGE OF SEEKING... sought purpose not in the vision of individual prophets or the personal revelation of reason within each person. The appeal was... society[] itself. Communal enterprises in the great age of discovery, beginning in the late 15th century, signalled a turn to experience – to shared experience – and dramatized the power and possibilities of community. The European exploration of America showed how much of the world the Europeans still did not know, and how community enterprises of discovery could open opportunities for nations and individuals. Out of this experience and the vitality of the Renaissance... came a new sense of seeking as a communal endeavour. There emerged a new way of describing the communal search that had great influence in succeeding centuries. "Civilization" would suggest the meaning and purpose of community. The word in its modern sense does not enter our language until the 18th century. On 23 March, 1772, James Boswell... tried to persuade British lexicographer Dr. Samuel Johnson to admit the word "civilization" into his landmark *Dictionary of the English Language*. Johnson could not be persuaded, and insisted instead on "civility", to which [Johnson] would only give a technical legal meaning. But in the lexicon of Voltaire's French enlightenment, "civilization" was coming to be the name for the enlightened state of which all [humans were] capable. In France, Voltaire had seen a climax of civilization... In the Russia of Peter the Great [Voltaire thought it] was seeing the process by which civilization would come to other countries. Civilization then, according to Voltaire, was no monopoly of France or any one people or language. It was people in community seeking the perfection of their society and its achievements.

...Our global family ties How the world is shrinking. If global events of 1997 offer any insight, it would be confirmation, on the back of the Asian financial storm, of how interdependent states have become... Asian states more than most are traditionally disinclined to embrace multilateral cooperation. Face often takes precedence over pragmatism. But, as... demonstrated by the smoke from Indonesia's forest fires, national borders are

decidedly porous when faced with international challenges... Even the single most significant political event of the year, the handing over of Hong Kong by Britain to China, had about it a symbolism in keeping with the shrinking of the global village. Such a peaceful exchange of land was in itself a nod to changing times. But... if there was one story during 1997 that contributed more than any other to providing evidence of the way in which the international community is contracting it was the worldwide reaction to the death of the Princess of Wales. An industry may have grown out of explaining the reason but there was no doubt that the grief was genuine and that the hole her passing left reached beyond national barriers. The images of a world grieving together confirmed a world living together... ● [A second joint AUSn-NZ]... embassy is being proposed... as part of on-going attempts by the two countries to cut diplomatic costs. A spokes[person for the NZ] Foreign Affairs Minister... said the two countries had shared facilities in Vienna for several years and were negotiating amalgamating their individual embassies in Geneva... Vienna was the U[N] and the International Atomic Energy Agency base, while Geneva was home to the World Trade Organisation... A recent article in A[US]'s *Bulletin* magazine said joint embassies with A[US, NZ] and Canada were being mooted by the A[US]n government as part of public service restructuring proposals. [The minister's spokesperso]n said there were no immediate proposals for other joint embassies at this stage but the issue was kept under regular review with both parties. "We are... always looking for sensible options for our representation." N[Z] had nearly 50 overseas embassies.

...Welcome to Austzealand and have a nice day. Several times this century it has been suggested that the north and south islands of N[Z] should simply become the seventh and eighth states of A[US]. The British statute of 1900 which created the Commonwealth of A[US] expressly contemplated the possibility that N[Z] might be added to the federation. Haven't wars been fought over such takeover notions? In 1988, the A[US]n and N[Z] attorney-generals signed an agreement which some commentators believed would lead to a common currency, harmonise criminal and corporate law and ensure unhindered trade between the two nations. It was suggested this would, in fact, make N[Z] a de facto state of A[US]. The idea died in the Darwin sun shortly after the ink dried. In 1989, [the NZ P]M... predicted the A[US]n and N[Z] economies would merge, with the two countries likely to be negotiating a joint currency by 2000. Not likely then, not likely now. More recently, A[US]n and N[Z] politicians have taken to trading insults rather than negotiating an empire... And that's the way it should be, because the trans-Tasman rivalry must live on. - 1997

...[if NZ and AUS were] to... become one[country, d]efence, foreign affairs and all similar national responsibilities would pass to the capital in A[US]. N[Z] would be represented in the federal parliament – with the weight of being the federation's fourth largest state – and would retain its own state parliament with responsibilities for health, crime, local government and the like, and would receive funding from the federation. The new state of N[Z] could keep its flag, as the A[US]n states had. But Australasia would have a new federation ensign and the Treaty of Waitangi would become a fundamental part of a new state constitution. The referendum was close – an overall majority in A[US] of 57 per cent... – but... in N[Z]...

NZ]ers have delivered a resounding "no" to the suggestion of hopping into bed with A[US]... More than eight out of 10 people polled... said they did not want the two countries to join under a common Government... and the answer was the same across the board: age, gender, income and geographical boundaries did not alter the view[– although gals]... were less keen on the A[US]ns: just 9% said they wanted our Governments to merge, compared with 19[% of guys]... Only Alliance voters wanted to turn the A[USn-NZ] pact CER... into ECER (Even Closer Economic Relations). About a third of people who supported the Alliance were... keen on defying the watery boundary between us... People felt so strongly that only 4[%] of those surveyed sat on the fence and said they were not sure.

...*Swiss decide UN way to go...* Switzerland basked in a rare moment of international solidarity yesterday, after voters abandoned centuries of political isolationism and narrowly agreed their neutral country should join the U[N]. But leading politicians and analysts said it would be a mistake to over-interpret the referendum as a sign that the country had decisively rejected its perennial outsider role. The "yes" camp won 54.6[%] of the popular vote and 12 of 23 cantons, a double majority required under the Swiss system of direct democracy. The cliffhanger vote came down to the final canton... Although Switzerland was already deeply engaged in UN activities and hosts its European headquarters in Geneva, its fierce neutrality and independent-mindedness had kept it from becoming more than just an observer... "If there is a winner in this election, then it is our country because we can now bring as much as possible our values, our traditions, and our good services into the UN," [Switzerland's]Foreign Minister... said in Berne... The verdict leaves the Vatican as the only state not a full member of the world body.

...[yesterday the world's s]how business elite joined[the UN] Secretary-General... for an 11-hour transatlantic concert that united music and the Internet to fight global poverty. NetAid – organised by the U[N] Development Programme and Internet networking company Cisco Systems... which... has provided about \$US22 million in NetAid and advanced the project a[refundable] \$US5 million... to cover the costs of the concert... – was watched or heard... on television, radio and on a Web site that organisers hoped would lure millions to see the show... [Although] it was the largest Webcast thus far, surpassing the previous mark of 12,500 simultaneous viewers via the Internet[, the volume of hits never threatened] the system's capacity of 125,000... The concert was staged in three venues hosting overlapping performances, starting at Wembley Stadium in London and later moving to the Palais des Nations, the home of the U[N] in Geneva, and finally to Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey, outside New York City. Musicians included re-united English rock duo The Eurythmics, who opened the show in London, ...Catatonia... U2... the Fugees... and South African band Ladysmith Black Mambazo. Despite a feel-good atmosphere, some artists warned against a "We are the World" naivete that their efforts would reduce poverty overnight. That movement by top musicians spawned a hit record and raised cash in the mid-1980s but was unsustainable. "Nothing cataclysmic and positive is ever simple," said... the... [lead] singer... of REM. "But I think it is a great idea and perhaps we can get there." [The Secretary-General], speaking from the Palais des Nations, invited virtual viewers to click on "give" to make an online donation... Soon... "nearly half of... the global village will... have to survive on \$US2 a day or less... There are no more excuses. Let's bring on a new day."

...In space no one can hear you scream, but in cyberspace they can. The human rights group Amnesty International is just one of the charities and voluntary organisations that have discovered the power of the Internet in coordinating campaigns around the world – and responding rapidly. In Sri Lanka, security forces were preparing to torture a human rights lawyer they had just arrested when they were told to stop. The lawyer... is alive today only because within hours of her arrest, messages began arriving from Amnesty supporters demanding her release. [An Amnesty u]rgent coordinator... says such quick response is essential. "It is during the first few hours or days that someone is likely to be tortured and killed. Part of the battle is getting information to supporters quickly so they can put their concerns to the relevant official as quickly as possible. Using the Internet, we can respond within minutes of a violation." This month, Amnesty in Britain will join companies such as Tesco and Nationwide in stepping up from merely having a Web site to becoming a full-scale Internet service provider... The charity hopes to see a big increase in use of e-mail among its 150,000 members, who were offered the service earlier this month. Christian Aid was the first charity to become an ISP – in January it teamed up with Global Internet to launch SurfAid. Subscribers pay £7.50... a month plus sales tax for the service, and the charity gets £12 for each sign-on. The move has brought in £9000 so far. The Internet is also a very effective marketing tool, as Christian Aid discovered in May when it asked 10 of [Britain's] top Web sites... to run a banner for a week advertising its Sudan famine appeal. The Internet campaign raised £3500, just for the cost of a few phone calls... But... urgent action... e-mail... campaigns [are only] effective in countries where the Internet is widely used...

INDONESIA faces mounting pressure over political violence in East Timor. The U[N] led condemnation of Indonesia's handling of militia violence in the troubled territory[, while]... Amnesty International has accused Indonesia of failing to honour commitments to stamp out violence by its supporters in the run-in to the... U[N]-supervised ballot... More than 450,000 East Timorese have registered to vote in t[he] election, when they

will be asked to endorse or reject a proposal for autonomy within Indonesia. If they reject autonomy, [the]Indonesian president... and others have suggested the territory could be granted independence. Renewed violence late yesterday left two unidentified people dead and 10 houses torched in the E[T]ese town of Maliana, about 75km southwest of the capital Dili. Before the latest incident, the head of the UN Mission in E[T]... slammed Indonesian police handling of a militia rampage which left six dead. "All that we witnessed suggests that it was the militias carrying guns, weapons, and that once again heavily armed police failed to intervene when that militia violence was carried out in front of them,"... [In reply, the] Indonesian ambassador to the UN... blamed pro-independence groups for the deaths of four people on Thursday[, and] said it was "deeply regrettable that pro-independence supporters carried out acts of provocation against pro-integration members". [Last night AUS's] foreign minister... urged Indonesia to take action to maintain security in the lead-up to the ballot. "The behaviour of a bunch of thugs on the streets of Dili or in other towns... should not stop the people of E[T] being able to exercise democratically their own wishes and to determine their own future,"...

Freedom could add to Timor's grief... Indonesia's suggestion of independence for E[T] may well add to the misery that has long been the norm in the impoverished territory, some analysts say. But it offers Indonesia a chance to rid itself of one issue that has repeatedly blackened its name in the eyes of the world at a time when it desperately needs the international community to help it through its worst economic crisis in 30 years... "This confirms what we have heard from many sources of that regime: that there is a prevalent point of view in Jakarta that Indonesia has lost the battle over E[T]," an ET]ese Nobel peace laureate... told a Portuguese radio station. But [the laureate] was sceptical, saying... Indonesia could later retract or amend the proposal. Analysts said that in the short term E[T], one of the poorest parts of Asia, would be unable to cope on its own. They said there would almost certainly be increased violence between those who wanted to stay with Indonesia, possibly backed by the military, and those who wanted to go it alone, which is probably the majority of the population... "It is impossible for us to become a country in a short time... [To give independence now] is like saying they want to kill the E[T]ese," said... an E[T]ese... member of the Indonesian human rights commission. "We need at least 10 years." The... state-appointed human rights commission says at least 50 people have died in the past six months and thousands have fled their villages after fresh violence this week... Indonesia's invasion of E[T], with the tacit backing of the U[S], was justified as a fight against communism... All but ignored by Portugal during its 300-year rule, E[T] was taken over by Indonesia with almost missionary zeal, determined to give it a leg up. But it turned into an ill-starred venture that brought death to E[T]ese on a genocidal scale and to Indonesia, a notoriety that continues to haunt its image in the international community... "E[T] has become a noose around their neck, an albatross,"... one Asian diplomat said... Since the downfall of [the]former President... last May... Jakarta... has... vehemently refused independence... [The new] Indonesian President... had promised the withdrawal of troops... shortly after[becoming] President... but that had not happened yet... This month A[US], one of the few countries to recognise Indonesian rule there, said Jakarta ought to consider letting E[T] go it alone. But the process should be gradual, it said... Though yielding to outside pressure, analysts say Indonesia now believes that an independent E[T] would not spark other parts of the huge and diverse archipelago to go it alone, despite the growing unrest since [the former President]'s downfall. "...with the possible exception of Irian Jaya, and they feel they have that under control,"... The resource-wealthy Irian Jaya is recognised by the U[N] as part of Indonesia, although there has long been a simmering independence movement there.

...WHEN the door to the cell slammed behind me, the first thing I noticed was the stench of urine and human excreta. Then I saw... bodies lying packed together on the filthy concrete floor. It was one in the morning. Someone handed me a cardboard box so I'd at least have something clean to lay my head on. The police had taken me into custody the previous day and grilled me for nine hours, because... I had taken "political photos" of pro-independence ceremonies, ostensibly not permitted by my tourist visa. So there I was, in a cell with about 40 others. Among them were 26 members of the Satgas Papua, a militia of the independence movement which had established posts throughout Irian Jaya, also known as West Papua... At 4.30 am... noise from the guardroom penetrated the stuffing I'd put in my ears to help me to sleep. At first I thought the guards were doing some rhythmic gymnastics, but it also sounded like blows landing on a body. My fellow prisoners were wide awake and they tried to hold me back when I went to the entrance of our cellblock. The upper part of the door was merely barred, so I had a view of the guardroom. What I saw there was unspeakably shocking. About half a dozen police[officers] were swinging their clubs at people lying on the floor. Oddly enough, they did not cry out. At most there were only soft groans. After a few long seconds, a guard saw me looking and struck his club against the bars of the cellblock door. I quickly went back to my usual spot, from where I could see the clubs, staffs and split bamboo whips at their work. Their ends were smeared with blood and blood sprayed the walls right up to the ceiling. Sometimes I saw the police... hopping up on benches and... jumping on the bodies. By about 5.15 am things quietened and I heard the sound of a hose. But then the orgy of torture resumed, apparently with another lot of prisoners. At one point a guard came into our cell and indicated to me that the beatings were the normal retribution for the death of police[officers]. Other prisoners told me that a police post had been attacked at 1.30 am in the suburb of Abepura, and two police[officers] and a private guard had been killed. At 7.30 am the torturers went outside for morning muster, so I looked into the guardroom again. The floor was covered with blood, like a slaughterhouse. Some of the prisoners were ordered to clean it up. Shortly before 10 am noise broke out again. The cellblock door was opened, and with the ends of their staffs the guards drove about three dozen new prisoners in. Their hair had been striped white from a spray can, like sheep marked for shearing. The newcomers were jammed into a single cell. Then the cellblock door was opened again and one after another they were tossed into our already crowded cells, some more dead than alive. Most remained motionless where they fell, either unconscious or utterly exhausted. One of the[m]... was almost blind and had to be led by another prisoner. Now and again the faces of the guards appeared at the barred window, looking impassively at the tangle of maltreated bodies. The last prisoner was a large [guy] who fell over the bodies on the floor and lay there groaning horribly... In the back of his head was a coin-sized hole through which I believed I could see brain tissue. After nearly an hour and a half of groaning and spasmodic movement, [his]... suffering visibly neared its end... [H]is powerful body raised itself again and his head struck the wall. A final laboured breath, then his head dropped to the cement floor. At last his agony was over. Later I learned that [his name] was Ori Dronggi. I saw a picture of his body in the newspaper *Cenderawasih Pos*. The story said that three dead Papuans had been brought to the morgue and police had said they "died in the fighting." ...All the [people] arrested after the attack on the police station outpost were freed after 36 hours. Dronggi was one of 18... from the highland town of Wamena who were arrested in a dormitory near the university in Abepura. [Dronggi] quite probably had nothing to do with the attack and the same was true of the 35 other[s]... who had been tortured... Throughout my imprisonment not a hair on my head was touched. In fact, the otherwise sadistic guards went out of their way to be nice to me. But mistreatment of other prisoners was continuous... After 12 days Jakarta officials ordered my deportation. The arrival of a Swiss Embassy official from Jakarta was one of the reasons I came out unscathed. But dozens of less privileged prisoners remained in the cells, among them the Satgas militia. Though the extreme violence continues, their spirit remains high. Each morning the Indonesian national anthem is broadcast throughout the prison. In defiance, the Papuans in their cells counter it by singing their independence anthem.

...Almost 20,000 people gathered in the capital of Indonesia's huge and remote province of Irian Jaya yesterday to watch the hoisting of a separatist flag and demand independence. The far eastern province joins a growing number of Indonesia's regions wanting to break free of what many see as decades of oppressive Jakarta rule, threatening the disintegration of one of Asia's biggest countries. The "Morning Star" flag was raised first and then the Indonesian flag at an early morning ceremony in front of a Government building in downtown Jayapura... There was no violence during the ceremony... The "Morning Star" was also raised in other parts of Irian Jaya, on the western side of the giant island of New Guinea, where the Free Papua Movement has for years operated a low-key rebellion against Jakarta. Irian Jaya joined Indonesia in 1963 after massive diplomatic pressure and a threatened invasion by Jakarta... Meanwhile, a top Army official in Indonesia's troubled Aceh said yesterday

that separatists were in control of the province... Military chiefs have been lobbying hard for martial law in Aceh, ahead of Saturday's anniversary of the rebel Free Aceh Movement's founding... [T]he military would resist any attempts to fly the banned Free Aceh flag on Saturday.

...Separatist rebels and student leaders in Indonesia's restive province of Aceh are warning of more violence after the start this week of the Muslim fasting month... [D]uring last year's Ramadan... locals had kidnapped security forces in revenge for past human rights abuses there... The warning came a day after security forces opened fire on protesters... during the rebel anniversary, wounding at least 11 people... Saturday's shooting marred an otherwise largely peaceful celebration of the 23rd anniversary of the Free Aceh rebel movement... [A rebel] said it was the military which would most likely try to provoke an upsurge in violence. "The Indonesian military always pushes us... [Y]esterday they took down our flags and we did not do anything. From that you can see they are always trying to provoke us,"... Although there were no reports of violence yesterday the major highways were still painted with the word "referendum," which growing numbers of Acehese demand so that they can choose whether to set up an independent state. The Government says they can have a referendum on the introduction of Islamic law but has ruled out independence... Meanwhile, at least 31 people have been killed in... clashes between Muslims and Christians on an island in Maluku province...

Indonesia's military, struggling to contain bloody unrest on the island of Ambon, has sent in 3000 troops with orders to shoot rioters on sight and had sacked the local police chief. [The a]rmed forces... commander... told reporters the troops would take tough action to restore peace to the spice islands, where more than 200 people have died in communal fighting since mid-January... Despite having thousands of police and soldiers on the ground, ABRI has been unable to halt the violence, largely between Christian Ambonese and culturally and ethnically different Muslim migrants from elsewhere in the vast archipelago.

...HEADLESS bodies lie in the streets after brutal ethnic clashes on Borneo Island. The death toll has risen to more than 200 after six days of fighting between Dayak tribes[people] and Madurese settlers... Homes of Madurese settlers who fled the Indonesian-controlled area... of Sampit... were being burnt to the ground and thick smoke was reported to be rising in several areas... As many as 11,000 Madurese refugees are sheltering in government offices... waiting to be taken to safety... Two navy ships... were heading up the Mentayan River towards Sampit... More than 600 extra police and soldiers were being sent... and another crew of 650 soldiers was on its way. Borneo Island has been the scene of ethnic violence in the past. Attacks on Madurese by Malays backed by Dayak tribes[people two years ago] left 3000 people dead and tens of thousands displaced.

...In the courtyard of a village head[perso]n's house, a dozen Dayak headhunters sat smoking pungent clove cigarettes, revelling in mass murder and plotting more. "I felt so strong, so powerful," said a 21-year-old veteran of last week's massacres of Madurese settlers in the Indonesian province of Central Kalimantan. "For seven days, I didn't sleep or eat... I just stabbed and slashed and cut off their heads. I don't know how many I killed, but it was at least 10." The wild [guy] of Borneo is alive and flourishing... If the minority Madurese refuse to leave their homes, they will be decapitated, the headhunters insist. But to foreigners, the killers display a timid charm. "Would you like to come along?" they ask... A[nother] 21-year-old... had recently returned from fighting in Sampit, where an estimated 400 migrants from the distant island of Madura were slaughtered last week. The... young... kill[er]... did not follow the ancient Dayak custom and bring home any of his victims' heads as souvenirs... but some of his brethren did, and buried them with their ancestors' bones to act as their servants in the afterlife... For the next proposed attack on a small village, two hours downriver, a witch-doctor will be required as the 50 Madurese there have two guns... "Our fighters will need a spell to make them immune to bullets,"... explained the head[perso]n... In many other countries, [the]... 73-year-old... might well be arrested for aiding and abetting murder, but in Indonesia, [it] will remain a respected figure and continue the campaign to purge his homeland of the Madurese. Out of 100,000 Madurese in Kalimantan, about 20,000 have been shipped out this week and a similar number are waiting in a squalid refugee camp in Sampit to follow... The Sampit rampage followed the murder of a Dayak by settlers during a gambling row in December in a nearby village.

...Indonesian police have begun shooting rioters in Borneo to halt a wave of ethnic violence that has killed hundreds... [The] Inspector-General... threatened to prosecute any officers who failed to take tough action to stem more than a week of savagery... "Police have shot five people who were involved in disorder,"... [The Inspector-General] did not say if those shot were Dayaks, descendants of feared headhunters, who have been killing Madurese immigrants and burning their homes at will, often beheading the victims and ripping out their hearts. The rampage has forced some 30,000 Madurese to leave their homes. Many have fled to Java or their island homeland, Madura, just off East Java, where they face a grim future.

...Top Indonesian security officials yesterday headed to a ravaged Borneo district where 270 people have been slaughtered in a week of ethnic bloodshed and spear-carrying gangs still roam the streets. The visit marks the first serious response in Jakarta to the violence... that has created some 40,000 refugees... It was unclear if there had been fresh bloodshed... The grisly massacres... underscore the mess Indonesia finds itself in... after plunging into political and economic chaos.

...E[T], according to Indonesia's President... is "nothing but rocks." And if this impoverished region chooses independence, it faces the daunting task of building an economy from rubble. Most of its 800,000 people are subsistence farmers. The landscape is mountainous and infertile and 23 years of often-brutal Indonesian rule has done little to foster an educated workforce. Most important jobs are taken by Indonesians... Most discussions of [ET]'s future centre on oil. An independent E[T] would take Indonesia's place in the... treaty with A[US] which shares out the oil and gas wealth in the Timor Sea. But for the foreseeable future, the prospect of significant oil earnings will remain a dream, as last year Indonesia and A[US] received just \$US1.1 million in royalties... E[T]'s best hope is coffee. The country produces an average of 6000 to 7000 tonnes... a year, much of which is marketed as high-quality organic coffee... [T]otal coffee exports were currently worth about \$US15 million a year. Over five to 10 years, with improved techniques and more planting, this could be doubled. But while coffee is likely to be the main plank of the... economy, it cannot be the sole foundation. Other exports that have been mooted include marble – the territory has an impressive supply – and sandalwood, although much of this has already been plundered. Tourism is an alternative, and some have even suggested turning E[T] into a gambling haven for visitors from Indonesia, where gambling is banned. But E[T] lacks even a basic tourism infrastructure at present... In the meantime, [the]... economy is deteriorating, shaken by the uncertainty hanging over the region... Several pro-Indonesian militias have sprung up, sparking clashes that have caused thousands to flee their villages, traumatising the rural economy. In the towns, the Indonesians who controlled the bureaucracy, health, education and trade are leaving. Shop inventories are running down. Many shops have closed. Food and spare parts are scarce.

...An exodus of medical staff and an increasing shortage of drugs may result in the deaths of hundreds in E[T] each day, say foreign medical experts... "The Indonesian Government is not sure of the future of E[T], so things are paralysed... the usual bureaucratic obstacles to things like the import of medicines are getting worse,"... said... an American volunteer...

The B[ritish] Labour Government is exporting more guns and military equipment to Indonesia than its Conservative predecessors, a British newspaper has revealed, despite Indonesia's illegal occupation of E[T]. A report in the *Sunday Times* states that the [Labour] Government has permitted the export of twice as many small arms and machine guns to Indonesia as were approved in the last year of [the last] Conservative Government. The [Labour] Government has also allowed the sale of howitzers, mortars and flame throwers, the report said. The increase in arms sales to Indonesia runs contrary to [the] British Foreign Secretary's... pledge to introduce an "ethical" foreign policy... The Foreign Office stated that the situation in E[T] had improved, following the Indonesian Government's commitment to E[T]ese autonomy.

...PRO-INDONESIA paramilitary groups have threatened to "sacrifice" an A[US]n diplomat or journalist to punish A[US] for its policy switch on E[T], says the A[US]n Foreign Affairs Ministry. "The threats were received by fax on Friday night and passed on to the Indonesian Ministry for Foreign Affairs," said a ministry spokes[perso]n in Sydney. The names of the groups were not disclosed... On Friday, 10 A[US]ns drove overland to West Timor... the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported yesterday... Six A[US]n citizens – two journalists, a priest and three political

activists – had elected to stay in Dili despite an upgraded A[US]n consular warning... Eleven officers from the A[US]n government AusAid programme have also left. The death threats come after A[US] received permission to reopen a consulate in Dili which has been closed since 1971... After being the only country in the world to recognise the incorporation of E[T] into Indonesia in 1976, A[US] changed its stance last month.

...the shock announcement that there would be no transition from 23 years of military rule – should E[T] reject Indonesia's undisclosed offer of autonomy... within the republic – has provoked new fears of civil war. For months the Indonesian military has been arming locally recruited militia and paying them to fight on the side of integration... With more than 16,000 Abri troops stationed on the half-island territory to control a population of about 800,000 and to fight the 300 or so pro-independence Fretilin resistance fighters remaining in the mountains, it is hard to see a military justification for arming a paramilitary force. "It seems that the Government and military apparatus intends to pit opposing groups against each other, and then allow one group to kill the other group," said... the Indonesian National Human Rights Commission [member]... The Dili-based human rights organisation Kontras... has detailed the disappearance, shooting and torturing to death of dozens of E[T]ese by pro-Indonesian militia and said yesterday that it was considering legal action against military commanders who have armed the groups.

...Reports from the countryside of kidnapping, killing and torture continue to reach Dili as the U[N] Security Council sits down to endorse the size of the UN mission in E[T]. The latest, from Catholic church sources in the Ermera region south west of Dili, outline a combined operation by pro-Indonesian militia groups and Indonesian military, coordinated by units of Indonesian military intelligence... which... attacked... [e]ight villages... The report tells how in each village all the inhabitants were rounded up... and their hands tied behind their backs. Those suspected of working with Falintil pro-independence guerrillas were shot... A local guerrilla commander yesterday detailed atrocities in the same villages.

...Pro-Indonesian militia opened fire in the E[T]ese capital of Dili yesterday, a day after they charged through the city killing advocates of independence and burning their homes. At least 12 people were killed on Saturday, and the Indonesian Government has admitted its responsibility.

...E[T]'s paramilitary forces, trained and armed by the Indonesian military, are out of control and the territory has reached a very dangerous point, say regional analysts. After more bloody attacks by pro-Jakarta militia in... Dili... analysts said the armed forces... lacked the political will to stop the violence. Indonesian media, quoting police and military officials, said more than 20 people died... on Saturday... [The] head of South-east Asian studies at Sydney University, said... the paramilitary groups were nothing more than local criminal gangs involved in gambling and prostitution and with no real political agenda in E[T]. "They are not going to be able to take over the local administration in Dili. They are nothing more than crude intimidators. Where do they go from here?" But... [the] director of the A[US]n National University's Asia-Pacific programme... disagreed, believing the paramilitaries had a definite political agenda to remain a part of Indonesia... "I think... [t]he security situation... in E[T]... has deteriorated dramatically in the past four to six weeks." [The director] said the paramilitaries' aim was to wreck a UN-sponsored ballot... to decide whether the former Portuguese colony wants independence or simply more autonomy. "They are cranking up the fear and intimidation prior to the ballot because they realise if there is a free ballot they will lose, because the majority want independence."

...[the militia chief], aged 68, calls himself the chief organiser of E[T]'s pro-integration armed forces – but, depending on who you ask, [the 68-year-old is] also known as a killer, a fascist, a ruiner of young [gals], and a shining example to all E[T]ese. The 68-year-old seems to relish his reputation as a ruthless militia leader using violence to keep E[T] a part of Indonesia... [The 68-year-old] explains his strategy: for peace to exist, there must be one side that is strong enough to frighten its enemies into submission. "Why should I be the one who is scared of them when they can be scared of me?" ...But with the UN presence in E[T] firmly established to oversee the vote, E[T]ese have become bolder in fending off militia attacks. Militia leaders are feeling the pressure that a vote for independence could mean a public backlash against them, including trial for past human rights abuses... [A h]uman rights lawyer... has been collecting evidence on [the 68-year-old] and several other militia chiefs. [The lawyer] says the Indonesian military is almost always at the root of their careers... [A] 27-year-old militia commander responsible for the [recent] Dili and Liguia attacks that killed 35 people... admits [that it] was converted in prison, after serving time as a pro-independence rebel... [The commander, who once] publicly urged integration supporters to capture and kill, if necessary, independence supporters... says not a drop of blood should be spilled during or after the ballot... Asked if [the commander will leave E[T] if autonomy is rejected, [it] waves a hand at his wife and shrugs. "In some ways, it's better to have the ballot just so we can see who is on which side once and for all... But I am afraid that there is clearly no government in Timor. Without law, we will kill one another after the ballot. Especially if autonomy is rejected..."

...The [NZ] Government will spend \$25,000 on flights to Sydney for 16 E[T]ese living in N[Z] so they can take part in an independence vote. They were flown to Sydney this month to register and will go again to vote in the U[N]-run ballot on August 30. The Act leader... has condemned the expense as a "feel-good" gesture than elevates the value of an E[T] vote above a N[Z] vote. The Government would not pay a dollar for any N[Z]er's travel costs to vote... "If you try writing to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and saying to him, 'Look, I'm in Afghanistan. Could I have a free ticket to fly to New Delhi to cast a vote in the nearest embassy?' the answer would be, 'Get off the grass.' If I'm not prepared to pay for a N[Z]er, why should I pay for someone from E[T]?" The Minister of Foreign Affairs... who returned yesterday from an 11-day goodwill tour of the Pacific, was unwilling to answer any questions last night. But [the minister] said through a spokes[person] that financially it had been a very difficult call to make. "But there was no alternative. The N[Z] Government tried to get the U[N] to set up a polling booth in N[Z] but they wouldn't allow it." ...The UN was sticking strictly to the terms of the May tripartite agreement between itself, Portugal... and Indonesia... The deal allows for four voting centres in A[US], which has a large expatriate community, but none in N[Z]... The U[N] also would not allow a polling officer to come to N[Z] to register potential voters... The costs would come out of the \$200 million aid budget... • [Yesterday in Dili, pro-independence]... leaders... raised the flag of free E[T] for the first time in public, as thousands danced and sang in the streets. The emotional early-morning flag-raising ceremony marked the opening of the new headquarters of the National Council of Resistance for E[T] (CNRT) at a seafront bungalow... "This symbol... is the sign of our suffering, our struggle, our crying," said [a] council official... as [it] raised the blue, white and green flag with golden crossed swords and star symbol in the corner. At the base of the flagpole was a cement map of E[T]. A smattering of officers from the U[N] Mission in E[T] were on hand for the ceremony, which was marked by the blowing of bugles, marching school children and patriotic songs.

...Anarchy in Dili... Dili resembled a war zone last night as hundreds of anti-independence militia... took control of the E[T]ese capital, sealing off roads, setting fire to houses and laying siege to the main U[N] compound... In the pro-independence suburb of Becora, militia... were searching house to house for independence activists. As night fell, dozens of militia [members] were seen running into a housing area firing at random... UN officials said two groups... teamed up in the late afternoon to attack the suburb where hundreds of people had taken refuge in a schoolyard after an attack the previous night... One UN civilian police [officer] had a gun pointed at his head and was told to go away or be killed... Indonesian police, who are supposed to [be] maintaining security in the territory before its future is known, stood by and did nothing... [However, about] 100 heavily armed Indonesian riot police were firing at Aitarak militia in defence of the U[N] compound, where 300 UN officers, 60 international journalists and 500 pro-independence refugees were sheltering... Police said one boy had been killed in Dili, and unconfirmed reports said that another four people were killed in the militia-controlled town of Hera... The [post-ballot] violence prompted renewed calls for international peacekeepers.

...A[US]'s Foreign Affairs and Defence Ministers... yesterday ruled out A[US]'s participating in any non-U[N] force in E[T]. Earlier, the N[Z] Minister of Foreign Affairs... was quoted from Wellington as raising the possibility of intervention by a group of like-minded countries in the event of a "worst-case scenario" of absolute chaos by the end of the week. [The minister] was reported... as saying the chances of getting a U[N] mandate for intervention were very low. This might make non-UN intervention possible, [the minister] said, listing A[US], NZ, Japan, the U[S] and possibly

members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations as potential participants. “We cannot go on hearing about this bloodshed the way it is now and not engage in some sort of a support base,”... [However, a spokesperson for his AUSn counterpart] said last night... “[The NZ Foreign Affairs minister]’s office reassured us that non-UN intervention... is not an option that is being promulgated by N[Z] because of the self-evident complications associated with it...” [The AUSn Defence Minister said his country] was prepared to meet any need for evacuation from E[T], but added: “Troops from A[US] will not go in unless it’s at the invitation of the U[N] with the sanction of Indonesia.” [AUS’s Defence Minister] said the post-ballot period had... so far gone “relatively well,” better than the pre-ballot lead-up... “There have been some wild times [in E[T]], but the polling day itself went well, and I think the Indonesians should be congratulated on that,”... 98.6[%] of 451,000 registered voters... [- 20% of whom] were non-Timorese... [-] cast their votes in Monday’s ballot on the territory’s future...

Migrants flee the future... For Indonesian migrants, an E[T] vote for independence offers a frightening future. Thousands of autonomy supporters have packed up their belongings, locked their homes and fled across the border into Indonesian West Timor fearing renewed bloodshed and violence... “We have been told we will have our throats slashed,”... a Javanese-born school-teacher in the capital... said, clutching his 5-year-old son... “We can’t leave – my job is here. If I go we can’t eat.” ...Human rights groups and senior UN officials said the [migrants] comprised mainly family members of Indonesian military, police and militia officials but also included civil servants and small business folk. In Dili, many of the shops remained closed, their owners either fled into the mountains or joined the cross-border exodus... Tens of thousands of Indonesians... have come to the eastern half of Timor island since Indonesia invaded... in 1975... [T]he influx of migrants[, who]... dominate the public service and business sector... in... [a region where u]nemployment is chronic[, has]... caused strong resentment among E[T]ese, many of whom rely on subsistence for survival. Despite... promises of peace and reconciliation... from pro-independence leaders, fearful migrants... remain sceptical... “I don’t believe them,” says... a bank worker who migrated from Java four years ago. “After the [Indonesian] security forces go, who will protect us?”

...waiting for the aftermath THE new front line in the war for E[T] was a bare kilometre outside the capital, Dili, last Wednesday. On the same afternoon as thugs of the anti-independence Aitarak militia would fight a pitched battle outside the headquarters of the U[N] mission to this troubled province (UNAMET), battle lines were also being drawn on a hill above the ramshackle town. On commanding heights affording a view of Dili and the coast to the east, pro-independence villagers were preparing for war. The rumours are that killings of pro-independence supporters will start in earnest straight after the results are known of last Monday’s independence referendum, some time in the next few days. They were not waiting to find out if the rumour was true. Across the twisted asphalt track leading up the ridge was a roadblock of spindly logs and stones. All across E[T] such roadblocks have been thrown up. Travel is not only impossible without armed escort, but murderously dangerous. Most roadblocks are [patroll]ed by militia members who are drunk or stoned by early afternoon. They are looking for trouble and they hate foreign journalists almost as much as... UNAMET. In the town of Hera, below to the east, Aitarak murdered a school teacher and his wife the night before, apparently for being pro-independence. We tried to drive there. The town was eerily deserted, oil drums blocking the road. At a post [patroll]ed by an Indonesian Army... officer and Aitarak, we were turned back. This, too, is the same all over E[T] – deserted villages, fearful residents hiding in the hills. Only if they have to do they emerge. Last Monday was such a day, when... voters trudged for hours in almost Biblical procession to vote over the disputed half-island’s best chance at a peaceful break from 23 years of brutal, military rule from Jakarta. Up on the hill the mood was friendly. Unlike the sullen menace of the militia, foreigners are welcomed by pro-independence [ET]ese... What worries them, apart from the constant threat of militia attack, is the threat of mass departure – the scurrying flight of journalists as tensions mounted last week, the talk of evacuation by the UN, the loss of the eyes of the world. It is easy to see why. While they may have weight of numbers, the pro-independence camp is hopelessly outgunned... “It would be relatively easy for the Indonesians to close the militias down... The withdrawal by the army of support and armaments from them would achieve that almost immediately. They, meaning... the people in Jakarta, have chosen not to.” What is happening here, in other words, is state-sponsored anarchy... [ET] was colonised, exploited, and neglected by Portugal from the 1400s, before being invaded by Indonesia in 1975 and annexed a year later. Indonesia improved the roads – they wanted to move troops around with greater ease – but the positive legacy of both colonising forces is so scant as to offer one immediate explanation to the [ET]ese impulse for independence. After all, could it get any worse? Could the desperate poverty and endless violence... be deepened much further[?] Depressingly, the answer is yes... A Reconciliation Commission compromising leaders of both sides has been established in recent days under UNAMET auspices. But even as it met for the first time, pro-Jakarta front parties for the militias were already announcing their withdrawal from the process and cranking up their widely doubted allegations of election day frauds. If the rumour mill is correct, this is all scene-setting for the coming wave of blood-letting. The referendum outcome will almost certainly be for independence, and the losers are expected to retaliate, violently and spitefully. E[T] is rife with reports of death lists in every village and reliable eye witness accounts of the distribution of M-16 assault rifles and grenades by... [the] Indonesian Army (TNI)... to local militias. In one inland village, locals told observers on polling day TNI soldiers had gone from house to house telling independence supporters before the ballot: “You can live till Monday...” So complete is Indonesia’s web of security over the territory it is dangerous to name either the town or the source. Militias are equipped with radios and jeeps intended for the Indonesian police (POLRI), so when UN police officers lodge complaints about militia activity, police lack resources to follow through. So far, the threats have not been widely acted upon, although the death toll of anti and pro-independence supporters continued to mount last week. However, the climate of fear is pervasive and, because there was no provision for an international peace-keeping force in last May’s referendum deal between Portugal and Indonesia, there is little to counter it. Most fearful are the UN’s local staff. For them, the murder in Atsabe of 49-year-old Joel Lopez Gomez after polling closed was an early down-payment on the threats made against all 4000 of them. The army, police and the mobile police are responsible for security in E[T]. But to spend a week there is to discover what a joke that is. When black-clad louts from Aitarak can walk into the Dili airport departures area... shake hands and exchange warm greetings with police, set off the metal detectors and go unsearched, you know it is a joke. When they can stop three [ET]ese families from boarding the flight on which their luggage is already loaded, when you see th[ose families] begging to be allowed to go and being refused, you know that things here are very, very wrong. As usual, UNAMET and other observers responded in the only way open to them – with more angry words and reams of paper... [L]iving in E[T] at present is like having the Mongrel Mob in every suburb, with the vital difference the police don’t arrest them. They egg them on. Sometimes, they even emulate them. During voting in Namoleca, in remote hill country, police alleged voting irregularities as a pretext for entering the polling place with firearms presented, in flagrant breach of election protocols. When challenged by the UNAMET returning officer, the police commander reportedly got angry and revealed the extent of Jakarta’s humiliation by this referendum, saying: “This is our country. You can’t tell us what to do.” ...The N[Z] observer delegation was aghest after meeting with a spokes[perso]n for the Indonesian Government’s Commission for Peace and Stability in E[T]. “The situation] was Orwellian,” said... one of the [delegation’s] five MPs... “It was a straight confrontational and bitter statement that this island was just a heap of rocks. [The spokesperson]’s attitude was verging on racist and showed an absolutely vindictive side that if the ungrateful bastards decide to take independence, they’ll get nothing from [the Indonesians, who]’ll take everything. The power will go, the petrol will go. They’ll have nothing left. There will be no infrastructure.” ...There is deep army opposition to giving up the 27th province of the republic, not only because of the heavy casualties suffered there by its soldiers, but also because... on the army’s mind is its loss of control over much of the E[T]ese economy, which extends far further than in most parts of Indonesia. The TNI owns hotels and coffee plantations and controls imported foreign goods, to name a few. There is a natural alliance of economic interests between the army and local leaders who control the militias, who also fear they will lose everything with

independence. However, others in the policy elite see the world will judge Indonesia harshly if it fails again in E[T] and is seen to trigger a new and nasty civil war there. One of three Indonesian ambassadors overseeing the referendum... told the N[Z] MPs Indonesia was a “pariah state” because of E[T], and openly sought... a peace-keeping force. Similarly, the head of the TNI... and the Foreign Minister... have begun to make noises about accepting peace-keepers. But what if the peace is not there to be kept? No peace-keepers can arrive quickly enough to fill the vacuum which yawns after the result is announced this week.

...I HAD an hour to go before the special BBC plane left E[T] on Friday, loaded with journalists and other foreigners who couldn’t hack it any more. Just time for one more stupid risk – a photo in the street where the Aitarak militia has its headquarters. The photographer, a Bangkok-based American freelancer and I grabbed a couple of “ojek” (motorbike taxis) and took off for a last blast through the cruddy streets of Dili... Through the crazily unmarked one-way system we went, past the warehouse where the Indonesian Army houses the coffee it exports and the A[US]n beer it imports for the thirsty foreign hacks who were that day fleeing in droves. Every time we bought a can of Fosters, it helped fund the army, which helps fund the militias which are turning the would-be independent 27th province of Indonesia into an ungovernable hellhole... Past the white-washed Governor’s Palace, giving on to the pretty bay with the wharf where dozens of E[T]ese were summarily shot and dropped into the water during the Indonesian invasion in 1975. Six A[US]n journalists were murdered in that invasion. Last week, the militia was spreading death threats targeted again at the A[US]n media. Past the boarded-up Chinese merchants’ houses, their owners out of E[T] till the coast is far, far clearer. Past the Indonesian police... squad lounging uselessly on the waterfront, waiting for the next outbreak of mob violence to which they could respond too slowly, too half-heartedly. Some are surely in on the deal which allows the militias to run rampant with minimal control. But a lot of these baby-faced guys from Java and Sumatra would much rather be anywhere else. Like Bali, two hours’ flight away and the gateway to Timor. There, the background noise at night is not gunfire but the crooning of over-fed tourists at the karaoke bars. Around the gates of the UN Assistance Mission... It was here I ran from gunfire for the first time in my life. It is unreal. Since you’ll never see a bullet coming, the instinct to take shelter is oddly blunted. Well, that’s what I found. Past the wrecked headquarters of the Council for Timorese National Resistance... trashed by Aitarak in an internationally televised riot on the day I arrived, a bare eight days earlier. It feels far longer, although reporters who’ve spent months in E[T] say it’s like being in the movie *Groundhog Day*, where everything is repeated every day. A militia parade here, an attack there, a death by hacking, gun battles, burning houses, burning cars. Only the scale and extent change. Except for last Monday, when a wonderful, utterly unforgettable thing happened. The people of E[T] voted in droves... Many were in their Sunday best. All were determined to be at the polling station early, partly to stymie attempts to disrupt polling, but also because many had walked miles and miles to be there. At one polling station, a... menacing bloke carrying a new POLRI walkie-talkie, driving a new jeep, was illegally checking everyone’s voting papers as they arrived. A member of the Mahidi militia in the Ainaro district, [the bloke left when NZ]’s UN observer team first photographed and then interviewed him. However, for that day at least, the intimidation was mild. Now, it looks as if the real payback will begin. Earlier on Friday, [a UNAMET spokesperson]... came close to imploring the international media not to conduct a mass exodus. “Now is not the time to leave,” [the spokesperson] declared. We had been crucial to the process by observing and bringing to the world the awful truth of this lawless place... I could not have saved the world by staying on my scheduled extra two days, but I helped create an image of intimidation and flight by leaving early. When the charter plane landed at Dili, someone let out a whoop and clapped. No one else joined in. This was an awful way to leave.

...N[Z] police arrived home from E[T] late last night as the territory erupted into violent chaos after the UN declared it had voted to throw off Indonesian rule. Seven of 10 N[Z] police officers in E[T] to oversee the ballot were overwhelmed by their experience and relieved to be safe. They were greeted by family, [the]Police Minister... and assistant police commissioner... at Auckland Airport. The remaining three were due to return today. The tearful officers were at a loss for words as they struggled to describe the violence. “I thought I had lived a bit of life before this and experienced most things with the N[Z] police, but going through this has got to be the worst there is,” said [a]Timaru Sergeant... In E[T], within hours of the UN announcement... [by the] UN Secretary General... in New York [that]78.5% of... voters had opted for independence... anti-independence militias took to the streets, resuming a campaign of terror[, and]... world applause at the result soon turned to dismay as security unravelled... The UN said... in one hotel, where a number of UN officials and journalists are based, militia... fired at people on the roof... And... it had evacuated five militia-ruled towns, using helicopters to fly out more than 140 local and foreign staff... Indonesia[’s] President... last night called for calm. But... [the President said that it] understood many... Indonesians would take the outcome bitterly.

...Hundreds of E[T]ese are feared dead after pro-Indonesian militias attacked unarmed refugees and set Dili neighbourhoods ablaze. Independence supporters were decapitated and their heads mounted on sticks lining roads out of Dili, [ET]ese resistance leaders in A[US] have been told, after a second day of rampant violence... Militias and the Indonesian security forces were [also]said to be trucking people out of E[T] last night. U[N] officials in Dili said the forced evacuation appeared to be on a large scale. The UN has [itself]evacuated all non-essential staff from E[T] amid mounting pressure to send in peacekeepers... [Militia] fired on convoys of foreign observers and UN personnel trying to reach the airport... [T]he Indonesian armed forces chief and Minister of Defence, visited the territory on Sunday... They spent less than three hours inspecting the chaos. Despite repeated reports that security forces have joined the militias in a systematic campaign of murder and intimidation, [the Indonesian armed forces chief] described the problem as “an emotional situation where civilians are using arms.” Militias toting traditional weapons and security forces with automatic weapons attacked the home of E[T]’s foremost spiritual leader and Nobel Peace Prize laureate... yesterday. Church sources said more than 2000 refugees sheltering within [the bishop]’s compound were quickly marched off at gunpoint to an unknown destination. The... Bishop... flew by helicopter to Baucau... [and] was reported to be safe. Some of the refugees had [previously]been moved from the nearby International Red Cross offices. An official said the militias had trashed the Red Cross compound... [and] communications are down in most areas... Thousands of residents were said to have fought one another in a mad scramble to board aircraft and boats leaving... [ET. A NZ] UN worker in Dili... said militia leaders told him on Saturday: “If you release the results, we’re going to fight you.” [The NZer] had told them the result could not be held up by threats. They said, “Then it’s war.” Just hours after the announcement, militias made good on the threat... • A fresh contingent of N[Z] police is scheduled to go to E[T] at the end of the month, but their deployment could be reviewed. Ten Defence Force personnel remain on the island as UN military liaison officers.

...[a NZ] Labour MP... who has just returned from Dili, said last night that pressure had to go on Indonesian politicians so they understood the costs to them of standing aside and doing nothing to help the E[T]ese.

...NZ’s Government] is relying on the U[S] to flex its immense diplomatic muscle and pressure Indonesia to halt the bloodshed... The Minister of Foreign Affairs... yesterday indicated that international efforts to halt the militia-inspired anarchy in the territory now depended on “big power” involvement. “If you have not got the U[S] involved in some way, [however,]sometimes things don’t move as rapidly as you would like them to,”... [The minister noted that the US] President... who will [soon be arriving in Auckland for] this week’s Apec summit, had admitted [that it] was under firm domestic pressure to withhold financial assistance to Indonesia’s basket-case economy. [The minister] has so far preferred quiet diplomacy and has limited his denouncement of the carnage... to phrases such as “totally unsatisfactory.” [The minister] is keeping in reserve the option of hauling in the Indonesian Ambassador for a ticking-off. [The minister] has also dismissed calls for N[Z] to suspend training of Indonesian military personnel as “utterly irrelevant.” ...[his] restrained language shows [the minister] wants to avoid alienating the Indonesian delegation before Thursday’s Apec trade and foreign ministers’ meeting, which [the NZer] will co-chair. At this stage there is no suggestion that[the Indonesian] President... and his

Foreign Minister... will shun the summit, but N[Z] does not want to offer them an excuse... E[T] is not on the official agenda for Apec, because the regional forum technically handles only economic issues, but the fate of the territory will be discussed “at the margins.” Those discussions will gather strength as foreign ministers hold bilateral meetings with one another on their arrival in Auckland from today... [NZ’s Minister of Foreign Affairs] said it was a good sign that Indonesia was supporting a UN Security Council decision to send an emergency mission to Jakarta to press for a halt to the violence. However, the credibility of the UN was now on the line.

...Troop plan in pipeline... A formal proposal is being developed to seek U[N] approval for an international military mission to E[T], if Indonesia does not take immediate action to restore order. Key UN diplomats said yesterday that the proposal could be ready to be put to the UN Security Council as soon as this week. However, under the terms of the UN-sponsored agreement on E[T], Indonesia would have to agree before international troops could be sent. The diplomats also cautioned that an international force going into E[T] would have to serve alongside Indonesian soldiers, who have been blamed for orchestrating the attacks on civilians... A group of about five Security Council members, headed by Britain’s UN Ambassador... was expected to leave New York today for Indonesia. The original plan... was for the group to visit Dili, but the Indonesian delegation said its Government would only agree to meetings in Jakarta. A high-ranking UN official said the proposal for an initial military mission to E[T] was being developed outside the UN umbrella... [T]he plan is for a “modest” force to go in first and for the UN to gradually build up the presence into a peacekeeping force of between 10,000 and 12,000 soldiers... The U[S] has said it could provide transport for military machinery needed for the mission, but not troops... The UN has been developing contingency plans for a peacekeeping mission once the Indonesian Parliament formally ratifies the poll result in E[T], which may not be until November. The objective now is to bring forward those plans to progressively introduce the troops from early next month. Portugal has told A[US] that it would be prepared to foot a large part of the bill for the [initial] mission, which would not receive UN funding... [The ET]ese resistance leader... said outside the UN chambers last night that financial restrictions should be applied on Indonesia until it complies with its obligations to protect the E[T]ese people... The UN has defended its decision to allow Indonesia to retain full control of security in E[T], saying there would have been no chance of an independence vote if it had not done so.

...More than 600 demonstrators marched on a cabinet meeting in Melbourne yesterday calling for the A[US]n Government to halt the violence in E[T]. Led by local E[T]ese community figures, the crowd urged [the AUSn] Foreign Minister... to honour assurances that A[US] would stand by independence supporters in E[T]. A local ETese leader blamed the violence on elite units of the Indonesian military, which... had been trained in A[US]. The Communications Union said a ban would be placed on postal and telecommunications at all Indonesian businesses in A[US], including the embassy. A call for workers to stop work tomorrow to join another rally was made by several unions. Meanwhile... Indonesian students burned an A[US]n flag in front of Canberra’s embassy in Jakarta to protest against the country’s... contradictory foreign policy towards E[T]. AUS was the first Western country to formally recognise Indonesia’s 1976 annexation of the former Portuguese colony. Few nations have ever recognised the takeover. But this year, A[US] pressed to allow the territory to determine its own future.

...Indonesian police keeping... a... Kiwi ‘guest’... in protective custody in a remote E[T] town wanted to make the right impression by offering him a treat. But the former Aucklanders were aghast when they produced UN rations, which the Kiwi could only conclude had been looted from burned-out quarters abandoned by UN staff... [The] 24-year-old student based in Japan, was stranded in Ainaro, southwest of Dili, on Saturday, the day the UN announced that E[T]ese had voted overwhelmingly for independence. Militias immediately started to shoot at and then burn the UN base in the town, which was next to his hotel. But its occupants were able to flee to Dili by helicopter. [The student] was not so lucky, and had a militia [member] point an assault rifle at his head. “It was touch and go – the guy cocked the weapon, called me an A[US]n and started kicking me... [The militia guy] was very angry, but then I could see that [the guy] wasn’t going to shoot me.” [The student] found shelter in a police station, where [it] stayed for three days, getting to know the Indonesian police officers and watching their dealings with the militias. “They are just poor people from villages in Java who have been given a uniform and gun and sent to E[T]... They have been there for three or four years, and their morale is really low.” But his suspicions of high-level Indonesian complicity in the... crisis were confirmed when militia... and police arrived at the station together to hand in firearms, which were then checked off a list... [The student] was eventually taken by helicopter to the besieged UN compound in Dili.

...[the UN Mission in ET] leader... and his team of observers... were hailed as the heroes of the... crisis yesterday when they refused to evacuate their posts and leave... refugees to the savagery of rampaging militias. They were outraged when the U[N] decided they should pull out because killing and looting were continuing after Indonesia imposed martial law. “A petition was going around... against their forced evacuation from Dili,” said [a member] of the International Federation of Journalists, from inside the compound. The observers fear that once they are out of the way, the militias will have a free hand to attack local UN staff... and the 2000 refugees sheltering in the compound[, many of whom had originally]... sought refuge in an adjoining schoolyard... People panicked as a 15-minute burst of fully automatic rounds splintered into the school. Between the gunfire and the UN compound stood a razor wire fence. Terrorised mothers threw children over it, some of them breaking bones. Older children chose deep cuts to their legs and hands to climb over the wire. Within minutes UN guards had thrown open the complex and hundreds of refugees were streaming in... A[US]n Associated Press reported from inside the compound that terrified refugees felt a mixture of terror and anger at the prospect of the UN evacuation. “It will be like the Holocaust. They will simply kill all of us here as soon as you leave,” said a... student leader... [H]alf of the... refugees sheltering inside the besieged... compound... have [already] fled into the mountains... [T]hey left through the back fence under the cover of darkness... But early today the UN said the refugees still in the compound were being taken to the nearby town of Dare under escort.

...E[T] received no solace from a meeting of the world’s most powerful Foreign Ministers in Auckland yesterday, with any peacekeeping force unlikely to arrive in the ravaged territory for at least three more weeks. At the closed-door meeting in the Auckland Town Hall, only A[US, NZ], Canada and Britain were willing to contribute troops to an international force. Even then, Britain’s offer only matched N[Z]’s – a reinforced infantry company of 250 to 350 soldiers. Initially the U[S] offered only logistical support and humanitarian aid but last night it told Indonesia that it was suspending the military relationship between the two countries... The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that the gesture was of major symbolic significance. Not only would it deny Indonesian officers access to US staff colleges and other forms of cooperation but it could also signal further measures, including economic sanctions... Apec sources conceded there was nothing the outside world could do in the meantime to stop the bloodshed, as no one was willing to intervene unilaterally and risk a drawn-out battle with 35,000 Indonesian troops on the island. The special meeting of Foreign Ministers held alongside the formal Apec agenda succeeded only in aggravating East-West sensitivities in the 21-member Asia-Pacific free-trade body, with seven countries refusing to let their ministers attend. The dissension over criticising Indonesia meant the vexed issue was simply referred back to the U[N], where the heavyweight diplomacy will resume. The chair[person] of the special session, N[Z]’s Minister of Foreign Affairs... said afterwards: “This issue is much bigger than this ministerial meeting, this issue is much bigger than Apec. The whole issue belongs in New York and Jakarta.” ...[NZ’s PM] is anxious to shift the weekend leaders’ summit from the Timor crisis[and, consequently,] is refusing to allow it on to the formal agenda. Rumours that Indonesia’s President... had been toppled in a military coup, then that [it] had resigned, peppered the day... [Indonesia’s] military chief... who is considered to hold real power anyway, was reported as saying the rumours were “baseless.” In a new twist, the Indonesian Foreign Minister... who is not in Auckland, suggested last night that some parts of the country’s Army were out of control in E[T]. The minister conceded that rogue elements of the military could have caused some bloodshed and said they would be shot.

...There's something slightly surreal about the press conference after the [foreign]ministers... met to discuss the crisis in E[T]. In the Aotea Centre, the stalls are sprinkled with journalists, photographers and television crews... Everyone seems relaxed as Dili burns. There is no air of urgency or even of expectation, perhaps because the waiting media have been through it all so often before. They understand some mysterious law of international diplomacy that is about to be demonstrated for the zillionth time: the higher the stakes and the more urgent the need for decisive, unambiguous action, the vaguer, the blander, the more indefinite the pronouncements... The ministers appear separately and serially – 10 minutes apart. No one seems to want to explain why, just as no one offers an explanation for the absence of the US Secretary of State... Deciphering the significance of such behaviour... may seem the business of “seasoned diplomatic observers.” But in the light of what follows... [– when both NZ's Foreign Affairs] Minister... and the British Foreign Secretary... seem hellbent on saying as little as possible... [–] it seems hard to ignore... They emphasise the wide representation at the meeting (...“three-quarters of the world's GDP was represented around the table,” though it is unclear quite what that was meant to prove other than the weakness of will which only wealth can confer), but listening between the lines... you could hear the faint echoes of disunity behind closed doors... It's easy to draw false conclusions, but when what's said amounts to so little, what's not said starts to sound awfully loud... Asked whether [the British minister] sees any “sinister method in the apparent madness” of the murder in E[T], the Foreign Secretary claims to] see... nothing rational in it, but is quick to return to his main theme about “the courage of [Indonesia's President]... Indonesia is entitled to respect for... giving the people of E[T] a ballot and accepting the result.” Later, across Aotea Square, beyond the metal detectors and security cordons... the leader of the local E[T] resistance, will shake his head in weary puzzlement. “It's not a prize we are given. It is our right, and Indonesia has stolen it since 1975. It makes me very sad. Talking is not needed, but action.”

...Just hours after getting the call, a [RNZAF] air crew was on its way to Darwin for possible duty in Dili. The 10 crew members expected to land at the Tindall A[US]n Air force base, near Darwin, about midnight. [The]Group Captain... said their Hercules was capable of carrying up to 100 people and could form part of an “air bridge” between Tindall and Dili. Flying time is less than two hours, but the runway at Dili is not lit, and could not be used at night. It is one of only two airstrips in E[T] capable of taking the Hercules... No Army personnel are flying with the Hercules, and the crew are not armed... [I]t was unlikely that the N[Z] crew would leave the airfield at Dili. It was thought that A[US]n troops would secure the airfield and go into the city to escort evacuees to the planes... Meanwhile, the frigate Te Kaha, now on exercises near Singapore, has been sent to the waters off E[T] and is expected to arrive within three days. [The NZ P]M... said the frigate would assist the A[US]n Defence Force should evacuation from E[T] be needed. In another development, Britain has directed the guided-missile destroyer HMS Glasgow to E[T].

...no one will rush to the immediate rescue of the [ET]ese and halt the Indonesian-sanctioned killings. Despite the presence of four out of five permanent members of the Security Council, the emergency summit of Foreign Ministers in Auckland foundered on the impotence or apathy of its participants and shoved the problem off Apec's informal agenda... The official line is that [the] meeting, by the very fact it took place, has strengthened the UN's arm by presenting a unified regional face to an intransigent Indonesia. Unified? The meeting could not even agree to issue a formal statement of its position. [The so-called] “coalition of the willing” appears as stillborn as E[T]'s independence. To put it crudely, Apec is split between an occasionally bellicose-sounding white [guy]'s club and financially weak Southeast Asian nations nervous of getting offside with an unstable neighbour. At [the] meeting, those Asean nations warned that external pressure on the intensely nationalistic Indonesians would only prove counter-productive. A[US] already knows that, having discovered that years of patient bridge-building with Jakarta count for nothing when it really matters. A[US] quietly argued that it should be allowed to send in some troops to protect its consulate and the U[N] compound in Dili. The Indonesians refused point blank. That left one big unanswered question... does the assembly of an international peace-keeping force in the region foreshadow intervention without Indonesia's consent? Senior officials, speaking on the understanding they were not identified, said the chances of that happening are zero and there is nothing the international community can do. With between 25,000 and 35,000 Indonesian troops on the island and the U[S] refusing to commit troops, no one else will go into E[T] without Security Council endorsement and Indonesian agreement. Neither is likely... What diplomats do not know is whether the Indonesian military intends keeping E[T] within Indonesia and is eradicating all elements of opposition – or whether it will allow independence once it has burned and pillaged everything in sight. Officials are cautioning that something might happen in volatile Jakarta to alter this bleak picture. But they admit securing E[T]'s independence now depends – as it always has – on sustained diplomacy which carefully mixes persuasion with pressure.

...International economic sanctions... – including a freeze on an urgently needed \$88 billion I[MF] aid package – ...may be imposed on Indonesia to accelerate Jakarta's acceptance of the “inevitable” U[N] peace-keeping force in E[T], the AUS]n Foreign Minister... said yesterday... [Jakarta's acceptance isn't expected until] approval of E[T]'s independence vote [is endorsed]by the Peoples Assembly, due to meet on October 1. “What we would like is for an international force to be able to move in immediately,” said... [the minister, adding that AUS] was prepared to commit up to 4000 troops... [B]ut the international community felt no further action could be taken until the UN mission to Jakarta had reported to[the UN] Secretary-General... and the Security Council, probably at the weekend. “If there is clearly a continuation of the appalling situation we have seen in E[T] over the past few days, if the report... is... very negative... then obviously it will be easier to encourage other countries to contemplate some of the sorts of measures that are being canvassed.” In other developments... Indonesia had turned down a request to arm staff at the UN compound in Dili so they could defend themselves.

...The [guy] in the Apec hotseat for Indonesia last night bared his soul on E[T] and promised that his country would not go back on independence for the province. “As a human being, I'm very sad to see the situation in E[T],” the... Minister of the Economy, Finance and Industry, told the N[Z] Herald. The minister] has found himself having to defend the uncontrolled carnage across E[T] after the Indonesian] President... and Foreign Minister... decided not to come to the Apec forum in Auckland. The savvy and charming 58-year-old father of four says that if N[Z]ers are mad and angry about events in E[T] “we are madder and angrier.” But [the minister] makes it crystal clear that Indonesia is not angry enough with the roaming militias and duplicitous military in strife-torn E[T] to accept an international peacekeeping force... Indonesia was capable of restoring law and order, although [the minister] could not give a timeframe for doing so... [The minister] said Indonesia believed the U[N] should not pull out of E[T]. And speaking as a finance minister, [the 58-year-old] said it would be uncalled for and unprecedented if economic sanctions were imposed on Indonesia. This... would only worsen the situation in E[T].

...the UN] Secretary-General, looked tough on Tuesday when... [giving] Indonesia 48 hours to quell the violence. But where is the threat? It is as if you phoned up your psychopathic neighbours and said, “Listen, stop murdering your house guests, or by golly I'll ask you to invite me over to protect them!” The A[US]ns are doing more than most to gear up for action. But they are wringing their hands, too. “You can't go into the territory of another country without that country's approval,” says [the AUSn PM]... Wait a minute. I didn't notice [the Serbian President] sending invitations to Nato warplanes. Plainly, respect for other countries' turf is a big deal at international law. Equally, plainly, it's not the end of the story. As conflicts in Iraq and Serbia demonstrate, sometimes it's okay to attack without permission. Not that those being invaded always agree. But international law is often less about lawyerly arguments based on clear rules than about power and sales[person]ship. What do I hear for our latest-model justification for invading Panama? Yes, sir, that's right, it is missing a wheel, but we prefer to think of it as substantially similar to other cars and, anyway, look at that fine roof rack. But there is no need for shonky justifications in E[T]. Seldom in modern history has there been a more compelling case for intervention. For a start, there is strong evidence of genocide and other gross and widespread human rights violations, abuses that trump most other international law considerations. Humanitarian concerns like those were enough in many experts' eyes to justify

bombing Serbia. Next, there is the E[T]ese right to self-determination. The right of geographically and ethnically distinct peoples to govern themselves has long been regarded as fundamental at international law. Arguably, Indonesia is squelching that right. Having voted overwhelmingly for independence, E[T] could plausibly be called a state-in-waiting. All its recognised leaders have called on the international community to come to its aid. The world could legitimately answer that call. Alternatively, Portugal could lead the way. The UN... regards Portugal... as the rightful administrative power... of E[T]... Portugal could assert its sovereign right to call for international help to restore order in E[T] and manage its transition to independence. So, if the world wants to rescue E[T], international law doesn't necessarily insist on approval from Indonesia. On the other hand, who wants to pick a fight with a well-equipped, multi-million-soldier, rogue Army? No wonder we're looking to the UN. And true enough, the Security Council has the power to approve the use of force against a country to maintain international peace and security. But will it exercise that power? Not a chance. China, which can veto any decision, has its own E[T]s, and it doesn't want Tibet and Taiwan getting more uppity ideas about independence. One thing might entice the Security Council to approve a peacekeeping force... – Indonesian agreement. Back to square one. Alas, no one has the stomach to face down Indonesia over a puny little dirt-heap like Timor, no matter what the death-count, unless the U[S] weighs in. We can wail and posture and mobilise our 350 soldiers and argue Apec protocol all we like, but without [US] military clout and political leverage, the E[T]ese are doomed. If only the UN had listened to Portugal... and everyone else who pleaded for a contingency plan to deal with the predictable bloodbath around voting time. If only the countries now righteously condemning Indonesia hadn't so readily supplied it with arms while it slaughtered and starved 200,000 E[T]ese after the invasion. If only we could live up to the trust of those who walked long distances in their Sunday best to cast their votes, believing that at long last the world was going to help set them free. E[T] is not the only thing being shot to pieces. So is the credibility of the Indonesian Government, the UN and our leaders' strategy of diplomatic engagement.

...Indonesia's military leaders are accustomed to getting their own way. And when it looked yesterday as if [Indonesia's] President... might be tempted to give the green light to the early arrival of foreign peacekeepers in E[T], the generals decided that enough was enough. After a daylong meeting with his senior commanders, the Defence Minister... called on [the President] to make it clear that the Army would not accept that outcome under any circumstances... The next day's headline in the daily *Kompas* newspaper said all that needed to be said. "The Generals Meet [President. Defence Minister says: 'It is not true there has been a coup d'etat.'" That was true enough. But in the opinion of one senior Indonesian source, "It was a quarter-coup... It means the military have the upper hand." ...The Indonesian military has installed... [a] new military commander of E[T], heading up Security Restoration Operation[, and the]... Indonesian Foreign Minister... asked the world to give Indonesia time before passing judgment on the imposition of martial law in violence-racked E[T]... "Now the Army is moving, and not the police..."... [T]he military now had the authority to declare a curfew, stop people, disarm them on the street, shoot on sight if they violated curfew hours, arrest people for 20 days without warrants, and enter premises without search warrants... Meanwhile, [its]... Defence Secretary says... that... the... US... is not the world's police[force], and Timor does not qualify [as a destination for US troops] under the selective criteria for American involvement.

...with proven oil and gas reserves, a growing coffee industry and strong tourism potential, [ET] could be an economically-viable independent nation. U[S] companies like Starbucks and Phillips Petroleum already have an interest in the region... An independent E[T] would take over rights to... one of the world's richest new energy-producing areas... now administered jointly by Canberra and Jakarta, where royalties are split 50-50... [A]n Indonesian expert at the Centre for Strategic Economic Studies at A[US]'s Victoria University, said... there was also evidence of significant deposits of gold, manganese and marble... although Indonesia had conducted little exploration during its rule. But [the expert] predicted that tourism would eventually become E[T]'s biggest earner of foreign currency. The territory offers stunning mountain vistas and a coastline with pristine beaches... Beans from E[T] are increasingly in demand because the trees have not been exposed to pesticides or fertilisers as a result of years of neglect... [However, more] than half this year's bumper crop may not get to market... No estimates are available of the damage done to E[T]'s economic infrastructure by rampaging anti-independence militias and Indonesian troops, but it is likely to be hundreds of millions of dollars... [Incidentally, the] Indonesian Army... came into being after Indonesia's own proclamation of independence in 1945.

...Secret recommendations that Indonesia support militias in a "scorched earth" campaign in E[T] have been fulfilled almost to the letter. The proposals were contained in a series of leaked Government documents... which predicted a pro-independence victory in the recent referendum and called for action by Indonesian authorities to support the pro-integration side... "We cannot ignore the attitude of the indigenous E[T]ese militias... They are the heroes of integration." ...Embarrassed by the revelations, the Indonesian Government at first denied the document's authenticity. But it is now clear that the militias and their military backers responsible for the carnage in Dili are implementing a planned blueprint of terror.

...We've got blood on our hands THE persecution of the people of E[T] is a blight on the global conscience... [and t]he UN has been exposed as a toothless tiger. [UN o]fficials exhorted the people to get out and vote, and then when the festering violence erupted they proved powerless to protect the people. They had no idea things would get so bad, according to a cringing press release. Excuse me, but that's bullshit. Violence and human rights abuses have been going on in this country for the past 25 years, and if the UN officials couldn't see the writing on the wall following a pro-independence vote, they're not worth the American dollars they're paid. Now N[Z]ers are screaming for the Yanks to come and save the E[T]ese from extinction. Quite a few of the N[Z]ers who support the E[T]ese cause are no-nukes supporters as well. So we ask the Yanks to come and deal to the Indonesians, but they can't refuel in our ports? I don't think... [we] can... have it both ways. Some N[Z]ers are saying we're too small to do anything. We have to leave any military initiative to the Americans. Translated that means we don't want to see any Kiwi lives lost but we're happy to see American blood spilled for the most worthy causes. It's an ugly, ugly situation.

...It would seem that all over the Western world peace-keeping forces were on standby and arguably, in many cases, still are. My question is relatively simple – why have they been placed on standby in their own countries? ...The peacekeepers should surely have been in E[T] two weeks ago setting themselves up and making it abundantly clear that the rest of the world wasn't going to tolerate the abuse of innocent civilians... Instead, despite the clear warning signs, we all sat back and watched and waited. Regardless of the diplomatic reasons for not acting the rest of the world should be ashamed for allowing this situation to develop. The U[S, AUS, NZ], Britain... – we're all responsible and we all have blood on our hands. Yes, I know it may sound dramatic but my heart bleeds for the innocent people of E[T]. It's too late to send in peace-keeping forces after the event. I know we in N[Z] don't exactly have the resources to sort it out on our own. But we should have been at the forefront of pressuring others to join in and get things stabilised before the event, not applying band[-]aids after it!

...INDONESIA looks set to allow peacekeeping forces into E[T] but wants to choose the countries involved. Indonesia's army chief... told a UN delegation yesterday [that it] would recommend to [the Indonesian]president... that a peacekeeping mission be rushed into the violent province... [Asean m]embers... and countries to which Indonesia had sent forces, "like Egypt or South Africa", were suitable... The breakthrough over peacekeeping forces came as... [the US president, in NZ] for the Apec summit, said... a development... [was] expected... within days. His comments came after almost two weeks of intensive diplomatic negotiations... [Yesterday the US] suspended military sales to Indonesia... [while m]any of Indonesia's other aid donors and trading partners warned of sanctions and arms embargoes. And [the US president]'s security adviser... made it clear that [US] pressure was being applied on... the Indonesian military[and its chief. Asked why the US president] had not telephoned [his Indonesian counterpart directly, the security adviser] said: "We have focused on where we believe the decisions are being made..." But [Indonesia's president] gave a t[v] interview to dismiss such reports. "I'm still in charge," [it] told Britain's Channel Four. [■]AN erie silence greeted a UN Security Council team as it toured the ruined capital of E[T] yesterday... Entire neighbourhoods were burned to the ground... and... there was only

sporadic shooting around the UN compound... [where] 1000 refugees... were... still... [sheltering. Hundreds more] were assembled in makeshift camps throughout the city... Thousands of pro-independence supporters have been slaughtered and as many as 200,000 more... have been... forced to flee...

Piles of bodies were burned on the streets of Dili at the weekend... just before a high-level UN Security Council delegation arrived... and tens of thousands of people fleeing the militias and the Indonesian Army are starving and without water. Some had already died and many more were expected to die within three days if urgent attempts by the U[N] to arrange airdrops of water and food out of Darwin failed, the UN... said... The UN yesterday took over a large warehouse on Darwin's waterfront and was trucking in tonnes of rice, tuna, medical supplies and water... The UN was aware of tens of thousands more refugees forcibly deported by the Indonesian military to West Timor and they, too, were in grave danger because of inadequate supplies... As fears of catastrophe built yesterday, fresh reports of atrocities flowed into Darwin... [P]riests, nuns and other clerics were still being targeted by militias and the latest to die was the Acting Moderator of the E[T] Protestant Church, Francisco Vascon Cellos. Along with 100 sheltering refugees, [Cellos] was forced from his church in Dili and trucked to Bacau. During the journey [Cellos] was pulled from a truck and executed on a roadside... [T]here were persistent reports from Dili of ships leaving the harbour loaded with forcibly deported refugees, and then returning empty after a short time... Timor Aid... feared people were being thrown overboard en masse. [The UN spokesperson] feared the Indonesian militias and the Army had embarked on a "final solution" for E[T] that echoed Nazi Germany.

...The world has got what it wanted out of Indonesia, or at least it thinks it has. The demands on it to accept the deployment of a peacekeeping force to E[T] have been heard and accepted. But now, a new and equally urgent chapter in this tragedy begins. The focus will be on... the Secretary-General of the U[N]. It is his job to persuade national leaders to move on from expostulations of disgust, to delivering personnel and equipment... Historically, this is a difficult transition to achieve. The UN has bitter experience of countries baulking when asked to put money where their mouths have been. And even if the political will exists in capitals to contribute to a peacekeeping force, the details of assembling it and deploying it will be ferocious... Expelling all of the Indonesian soldiers to make way for the UN deployment is not likely to happen. The UN appears ready to accept that some [TNI] soldiers will remain to work with the incoming force. The reason for this is partly political – excluding the national Army would deepen the humiliation of Jakarta. However, the UN appears anxious... that Indonesia should not escape all of the responsibility for making the peacekeeping mission work... The UN Security Council must also pass a resolution laying out the force's mandate. It is too soon to calculate how long all of this will take. In theory, an all-A[US]n force could enter E[T] today. That, for now, is not at all what is envisaged. Indonesia has not agreed to an A[US]n invasion. The force will... almost certainly... be... dominated by troops from Asian neighbours such as Malaysia and Japan... A senior UN official said that even under the best of scenarios... assembling and deploying the force was likely to take three weeks. More probably, it would take a month or six weeks... There is also the task of evacuating the roughly 1000 refugees still inside the compound of Unamet... Once those refugees are gone, the remaining vestiges of Unamet will leave Dili. The compound will [then] be transformed into a planning centre for the peacekeeping mission... [By the way, when] they woke up on Saturday, a little tender-headed after a late-night reunion with their returned colleagues... a detective from Hull in England... and friends sat down in a hotel in Darwin and began to draw up a list of the [people] who are responsible for the slaughter in E[T]. The detective... and his colleagues are known in UN-speak as CivPols – civilian police[officers], all of them evacuated in the last few days from doomed UN offices all over E[T]. In exile they have found a job to do – in the words of one CivPol, "to nail [them down], record exactly who did what, where, who they did it to, and who gave the orders." ...The witness accounts and the grisly forensic evidence of the kind collected at mass graves in Kosovo are, for the time being, inaccessible. But... the evidence at hand points exclusively to police and Army collusion in acts of violence... In Liquisa, for example, a [Unamet] convoy was riddled with bullets, three of which passed through an American police[officer – who] miraculously... survived. UN witnesses recognised the [assailants], who wore the uniforms of the local militia – a few days earlier they had been guarding the [Liquisa UN] compound in the uniforms of the Indonesian special police.

...Anzacs told stay away from Timor... [L]ast night... deep divisions emerged over the shape and leadership of an international peacekeeping force. The head of Indonesia's parliamentary defence commission... said: "Those without neutrality on the E[T] problem, such as A[US, NZ], Portugal and the U[S]... do not deserve to be involved. We have to reject them." The call will further bolster a besieged Indonesian Government already receiving support from [Asean] members... for its bid to shape the peacekeeping force, despite [US] warnings that Jakarta will not be allowed to dictate terms to the U[N]. The row, which could delay the arrival of up to 8000 peacekeepers, erupted as [NZ's PM] prepared to recall Parliament to ratify N[Z]'s largest expeditionary force since Vietnam... Six senior officers flew to A[US] on Sunday night to plan an Anzac contingent that will include as many as 500 N[Z] troops, supported by an armoured unit, C-130 Hercules aircraft, the frigate Te Kaha and the tanker Endeavour... [The] UN Secretary-General... has asked A[US], which will supply most of the troops for Timor, to coordinate and lead the operation. Britain, Canada, France, Japan and the U[S] have also pledged varying degrees of support... China indicated last night that it might send troops. [Its] Foreign Minister... said Beijing was studying the proposal, which would be a major departure from its firm policy of non-interference in other nations' affairs... [The] Philippines President... said a meeting of Asean leaders in Auckland on Sunday had agreed with the Indonesian view that Asean soldiers must dominate the force. "It is not really for the West [to dictate terms], and the Indonesian Government has the right to request Asean [to provide most troops]." ...The Asean chair[person, who is also the] Thai Foreign Minister... flew from Auckland yesterday for talks with Indonesia's President... carrying a conciliatory message for Jakarta. "Everyone in the Asean family would like to be supportive and helpful to our friends in Indonesia," [the message said. But the] US President... declared: "They [Indonesia] should not be able to say who is in, or not in, the force, and what structure the force would be, otherwise it will raise all kinds of questions about whether there will be integrity in the force and will also delay the implementation." ...before leaving Sydney for the UN Security Council... A[US's] Foreign Minister... declared that A[US] should lead the operation... [while AUS's PM] has made it clear that [the PM] expects Canberra to be in charge, although [the] Indonesian Foreign Minister... is expected to argue strongly against this in New York. Anti-A[US]n sentiment has grown in Indonesia, with reports yesterday of up to 1000 people attacking a Western A[US] Government office in Surabaya... Indonesia's second-largest city...

Three decades of painstaking bridge-building between Canberra and Jakarta has collapsed with the pillage of E[T]. As Indonesian students burned crude homemade replicas of the A[US]n flag, AUS's PM... accepted the inevitable. "We have tried over the years to build a relationship [with Jakarta] and it's very important that we go on doing that... But obviously we can't remain silent or inactive or paralysed when something that is so clearly wrong is going on." ...[the PM] clearly indicated that important though it is, friendship with Indonesia is not beyond price... Relations between Canberra and Jakarta are now at their worst since the military confrontation of the 1960s, when A[USns, NZers] and Britons fought Indonesians in the jungles of Borneo and planned airstrikes against Java. The Indonesia-N[Z] thermometer has also plunged, although the damage is not so great because of Wellington's more moderate language and lower-profile diplomacy. But deep and disturbing uncertainties about the government that will emerge in Jakarta following the Timor crisis cast long shadows across both countries... No one knows yet what is happening in Jakarta and what kind of administration will emerge from the painful transition to democracy, or even how complete that transition will be... Indonesia's pending political transition during the presidential elections in November is another concern, since all negotiations on E[T] are being conducted with a Government that may well be replaced in less than two months... Nor would the [possible election of Indonesia's] opposition leader... as President... necessarily ease the path to reconciliation. [The opposition leader] is a strong nationalist in a nation of prickly nationalism, a member of the elite that has governed since the end of colonial rule in 1949, and the daughter of the President who led the nation to the brink of war with A[US] in the 1960s. Whoever takes charge will rule a country deeply affected by the language of A[US]n anger – in

diplomacy, the media and on the streets – and whose deep and powerful national pride has been stung by the backdown forced upon it by Canberra's actions. [The AUSn PM] would like to let bygones be bygones, once the heat has subsided. But the opinion of analysts and the experience of history suggest Jakarta will not easily forgive and forget... • [The crew]... of the... frigate Te Kaha were horrified to see the glow of... fires still raging 25 nautical miles away in Dili... as they rushed... through the Wetar Strait... to join the multinational peacekeeping mobilisation... The ship's Phalanx close-in weapon system, a computerised Gatling-style gun for shooting down sea-skimming missiles, was loaded while its operations room kept track of several Indonesian warships in the area. Its boarding party has also stepped up small-arms training. With food supplies low after 47 days at sea, the frigate is due to spend 48 hours loading stores in Darwin before joining A[US]n, British and U[S] warships off Timor. Te Kaha was diverted at short notice from military exercises off Malaysia, from where it was originally due to sail to Singapore en route to Iraqi sanctions enforcement duties in the Gulf. The Navy tanker Endeavour, meanwhile, left Singapore yesterday to join Te Kaha... Endeavour has fuel both for warships and their helicopters, ready to support whatever operation the U[N] decides to launch... A N[Z] Hercules has already flown UN refugees from Dili to Darwin in an A[US]n-led operation, while another waits on 24-hour standby to join it from Whenuapai Air Base...

N[Z] aid agencies are ready to help clean up the human carnage in E[T] but are worried their arrival may be delayed by arguments over the terms of the... peacekeeping mission. And [ET's] independence leader... who is in Auckland to lobby world leaders to end the bloodshed... said Red Cross planes needed to take off within 24 hours. About 3000 troops from A[US, NZ] and the U[S] were needed immediately to settle the situation before peacekeepers from other countries were sent in, [the independence leader said. The Nobel Peace Prize laureate] did not expect any confrontation between the militias and a multinational force. "The militias will wet their pants when the troops arrive. They only know how to kill [gals] and children, and how to attack churches." N[Z]'s Red Cross spokes[person]... said the agency always sought security guarantees before going into trouble spots... Three International Red Cross delegates planned to go to Dili today to assess the situation... [A spokesperson for] Unicef, said the agency's staff of about 10 were in West Timor "waiting to go back in." World Vision is setting up a supply base in Darwin, and has specialist aid workers on 24 hours' notice to return to E[T]... Caritas... Tear Fund... and... Unicef... are running appeals for relief operations.

...After Timor, everything is changed It started out as an economic forum, but... Apec... has developed into much more... The crisis over E[T], and the even greater issues that it clouded, banished the quaint mythology that, in such a gathering, trade and economics can be quarantined from the wider complexities of regional interaction. [The US]President... did not come to Auckland to talk about abolishing export subsidies or the details of world trade negotiations... [but] came to talk to [the]Chinese President... in the hope of repairing the damage done to Sino-US relations by a series of mishaps, mistakes and miscalculations, capped by the almost impossibly stupid, if unintended, bombing of Beijing's Belgrade Embassy... Apec offered the chance to meet as a byproduct of a broad regional conference... Security can be discussed at official and ministerial level at the Asean Regional Forum, but there is nothing like Apec, with its private programmes of off-the-agenda discussions, cocktail diplomacy and corridor wheeler-dealing. Apec is also developing, as E[T] has shown, as a valuable platform for regional crisis management... [It] was... hundreds of encounters in Auckland between leaders, ministers and officials – in person and on telephones – that helped to force a turning point in the E[T] crisis... Timor was never on the agenda – but it was handled on the peripheries through the ability of leaders, ministers and officials to meet and make decisions face to face, collectively and separately. The US arrived with no intention of becoming involved. China did not want to know. Indonesia's neighbours and fellow members of... [Asean] would brook no breach of their tradition of non-interference in one another's affairs. But in a remarkable achievement, A[US], with help from N[Z] and Canada, used the intimacy of Anzus and a history of loyalty to the US to turn American indifference to outrage and action, brought Asean into a coalition demanding the acceptance of peacekeepers, and won China's involvement. Had the leaders of the region not been together in Auckland, it is doubtful if such a weight of influence could have been assembled... World leaders might be reflecting today on what they can achieve when they commit themselves to placing practical muscle behind condemnation.

...The tragic fiasco in E[T] once again shows the impotence of the U[N]. It reinforces once again the need to reform its structure, starting with the Security Council. The first major conflict the UN faced was the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians 50 years ago. That tragedy goes on today with 3.5 million UN-registered refugees still awaiting a solution and some form of right of return. Since then, conflict after conflict has involved the UN and the results have been poor to disastrous. As in Rwanda, Bosnia and Kosovo, E[T] has become a horrific tragedy, which should and could have been prevented. Sanctions, embargoes and peacekeeping forces are all processes that are used injudiciously and usually too late. Let E[T] be the last such disaster. The UN needs to be given more power to act in such cases... All we have is an impotent U[N, and a group] of nations periodically rounded up by a self-appointed sheriff (the U[S]) to mete out "justice" to those who threaten the perceived interests of the sheriff and [it's] buddies. All this is done (in this post-Cold War world) with or without the blessing of the UN. This is rule by posse, not by law.

...I remember just recently the pacifist theorists saying there is no need for defence forces in N[Z] with the argument: "Where is the threat, who is our likely enemy?" Now, right out of the blue N[Z] forces could be in armed conflict with the Indonesian Army and police. The Indonesians have sophisticated weaponry and plenty of it. N[Z] has offered troops who will have to be transported by air, requiring fighter aircraft cover. They will require logistical support requiring a support ship which in turn will require frigates for protection. No need for defence forces?

...As the Anzac advance guard – likely to include 40 [NZ]SAS soldiers – prepared to land this weekend... [in ET], a militia leader [said militia members] are volunteering to attack and kill troops of the multi-national force... "If necessary we will go to A[US] and have guerrilla warfare with the white people there." ...But... [AUS's PM] said any attacks... would bring a more powerful response from the U[S], which has so far committed around 200 support troops to the mission. The Pentagon has said that number could rise if A[US] wants more help... The risks N[Z] troops will face were voiced yesterday in a sombre four-hour parliamentary debate which unanimously backed the... decision to send up to 1000 military personnel to E[T] over the next few days and weeks... handing the Government the multi-party backing – and therefore the minimal political risk – that it was seeking by recalling the House for the special debate... This time, unlike our Gulf War involvement in 1991, no protester leaped into the debating chamber splattering animal blood around. Nor was there any objection from Opposition leaders to the intervention – UN approval saw to that... When [the]Greens co-leader... rose to "fully support the decision" to send in a force which includes the SAS (which the Greens want to disband) and the frigates and their support ship Endeavour (which they want to get rid of) universal backing was assured. In the circumstances, [the Greens' co-leader] chose not to hark back to her party's view that "the only Asian invaders we are likely to face are pests like the Japanese gypsy moth." Surrounded by plaques on the walls of the chamber commemorating previous battles – the Somme, Egypt, Messines – [the]Defence Minister... said: "If Indonesia was on our doorstep, then it was in A[US's] porch,"... as his rhetoric threatened to get a beachhead on his logic... Movingly, [the minister] mentioned the personal pressure of being the minister who would send young troops off to war... □ [The crew]... of the frigate Canterbury set sail again last night for what could be their most dangerous mission... a three-month [assignment in ET]... More than 250 people gathered at the Devonport naval base to farewell the... ship[– which had] been back in port only a few days, after finishing its last three-month mission, exercising off the coast of A[US]. Many of the... 245[-strong]... crew had planned leave and holidays with families, partners and friends, but this was cancelled soon after their arrival. They are now unlikely to be home for Christmas. "Bye Daddy" was squealed out across the water by one small girl as the ship was towed out by a tug into the Waitemata just after 7 pm. One father learned for the first time yesterday what it was like to say goodbye to a young family before heading to a war zone... "I am a bit nervous, it is my first deployment..." [The]Surgeon-Lieutenant... was a GP... before joining the Navy last year. "It is not a very nice feeling," said [his wife while] comforting their children... aged 5, and... 1... on the dockside[, "to send] your husband off to... [ET] – going to the Gulf would have been better." ...A week ago, [one wife] was among

hundreds of Aucklanders marching in support of an independent E[T. Last night the wife] found herself making an even greater commitment to the cause by farewelling her husband... a chief petty officer. While pleased [her husband] would be part of the international operation, the issuing of neck tag identification labels to all crew drove home the danger faced... [The Canterbury's] Commander... acknowledged that his... 28-year-old frigate... was "out of its warranty" but the Navy brushed off suggestions by some crew that its engines might not get it back up north. Two Air Force Hercules left Whenuapai without a repeat of an embarrassing breakdown which forced one of the 33-year-old fleet to abort takeoff before flying troops to the Gulf last year.

...[NZ military] planners left without a proper troop ship have chartered a Dutch civilian vessel to trundle elderly Army equipment to E[T]. The Army has disclosed that the Edam Gracht, the only available ship, will arrive from A[US] next weekend to load 25 Vietnam War-vintage armoured personnel carriers and other heavy equipment. Government leaders said on Thursday that a giant US Galaxy or Starlifter aircraft would help to carry troops and equipment to Darwin, but defence officials were last night uncertain about that... Unlike in Bosnia, the... armoured... personnel carriers would not face a threat of landmines... [but they are still] likely to be severely tested by E[T]'s rugged terrain, with similarly old and less-than-reliable radios on board to call for help if they break down. This will put great pressure on the Air Force's contribution of four Iroquois helicopters, which are also well into their 30s. But [the] Wing Commander... in charge of 100 Air Force personnel preparing yesterday for E[T], said they had been substantially overhauled over the years and performed very well in Bougainville.

...120 PNG Defence Force soldiers... stationed on the island of Bougainville who claim they have... not received food supplies... and have not been paid their duty allowances... [for three months] have threatened to disrupt peace on the island unless the Government addresses their plight... Some of the... soldiers... are also reportedly ill but there is no medicine for them. The soldiers are supposed to spend three months on the island but have been there on duty for seven... [In related news, m]ilitants in the Solomon Islands have agreed to lay down their arms in return for the police ending their "brute force" approach. [The] Acting Police Commissioner... will meet the[m]... today to discuss a new form of "community policing" while the paramilitary units will be pulled out... The contract of the former... commissioner... who previously worked in South Africa, expired last month. Diplomatic sources say [his] methods may have been the kernel of many of the problems... Next month a... former Auckland police commander... will become commissioner... Militant indigenous people of Guadalcanal, have tried to drive out settlers from neighbouring Malaita. The death toll in the conflict which began late last year has never been formally established but about 10,000 refugees have passed through Honiara.

...Senior N[Z] diplomats were last night trying to avert a full-scale civil war in the Solomon Islands by talking directly to the armed [militants] who staged a coup in the capital, Honiara, yesterday morning... [A] Ministry of Foreign Affairs troubleshooter who helped broker peace in neighbouring Bougainville, and the N[Z] High Commissioner in Honiara... had face-to-face talks with the coup leaders lasting up to five hours. Along with A[US]'s High Commissioner, they pressed the coup front[person]... to release [the P]M... and resolve the crisis using the country's parliamentary process. Diplomatic sources said the meeting did not produce any breakthrough, although [the frontperson] appeared to take that message on board. However, it was unclear whether [the frontperson] could persuade others involved in the takeover to do the same... The coup occurred while a high-powered joint A[USn-N]Z... diplomatic mission... was in Honiara trying to strengthen the Commonwealth's police assistance group, which is being put in place to calm ethnic friction. That 50-strong force comprises Fijian and Vanuatuan officers led by a... former district commander of the Auckland police[, who] is at present in Brisbane recovering from a minor operation. During an earlier afternoon meeting... a lawyer who acts for the Malaitan Eagles... told [diplomats] the coup is... being justified on the basis that the P[M] had failed to resolve the ethnic fighting and refused to step aside... About 220 N[Z]ers live in the Solomons, most of them in Honiara. They are not considered to be in danger.

...The Government has not yet made any plans to evacuate the 220 N[Z]ers living in the Solomon Islands... However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has warned travellers to stay away from the islands. Many N[Z]ers in the Solomons work as business consultants – some for banks and others for the Honiara base of the South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency... [A]t least 12 N[Z]ers worked at the Honiara base of the University of the South Pacific until earlier this year, when unrest forced them to shift to Suva. Other N[Z]ers work as missionaries for Solomon Island churches... [A few NZ]ers are involved with small hotels or run tours around the islands, although tourism is a relatively minor industry in the Solomons... [H]undreds rather than thousands of N[Z]ers visit the Solomon Islands every year, mainly to dive at reefs and... W[W2] shipwrecks renowned for their clear water and fish life. The islands also boast pristine forests and the South Pacific's largest lagoon, about an hour's flight north of Honiara... Tourist numbers have dropped since Solomon Air stopped direct flights from Auckland to Honiara about a year ago...

[NZ's Foreign Affairs] Minister... is scheduled to fly to the strife-torn Solomon Islands this morning after rival militias agreed to a temporary ceasefire to enable a Commonwealth mission to get into the country. The mission will reinforce efforts to get the warring Malaitan Eagle Force and Isatabu Freedom Movement to start negotiating a peace deal... The capital, Honiara, was quiet yesterday as the A[US]n Navy ship Tobruk continued to load expatriates and tourists wanting to flee the country. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade confirmed last night that 23 N[Z] passport-holders were on the ship... The Tobruk might delay its departure if the ceasefire holds and Honiara airport is reopened to international flights this weekend. That would enable evacuees to be transferred to military transport planes. Two R[NZAF] Hercules and a Boeing 727 would help with any airlift. Meanwhile, an outcry from expatriates fleeing on the Tobruk has scuttled A[US]n Foreign Affairs Department plans to charge... every one rescued – A[US]ns as well as N[Z]ers – \$A717... an adult, \$A480 a child and \$A72 a baby. Many in the Solomons denounced the escape fees as blackmail, especially as they had to sign IOUs and face the threat that their passports might be confiscated if they did not pay up. But after a public outcry in A[US], the Navy beat a hasty retreat and agreed that the... [e]vacuees will now be taken to A[US] without charge... The second coup in the South Pacific in just over two weeks was conducted by the Malaitan Eagles militia plus elements of the local police...

Copycat coup waiting to happen... [T]he Solomon Islands P[M]... knew to expect the worst. Early this year, just after the Malaitan Eagle Force launched itself by seizing high-powered police weapons, [the PM]... feared for his life. "I'm very vulnerable... They tried through a vote of no confidence, and now what they can try is to kill me." Last week... [the spokesperson] for the Eagle Force, gave an even sharper warning of what lay ahead. "Law and order can no longer be upheld where there is a breakdown in the police network," [the spokesperson told AUS]'s ABC television. "The situation will give rise to criminal elements and the two militant groups taking control of their relevant sectors. In the end we will have a major confrontation between the two. So a civil war... is a probability." Yesterday, as the PM] reportedly sat with an Eagle Force gun to his head, both... prophecies were within a hair trigger of fulfilment. Like Bougainville, Fiji and a string of embattled Indonesian provinces, the Solomons have collapsed into violence fomented from long-brewing local disputes and the hangover from colonisation. The conflict is between the people of Guadalcanal, site of the capital, Honiara, and immigrants from the poorer island of Malaita. A[n A]uckland University Pacific history expert... says tension has been rising for months. "People there have long memories. Every action gets a reaction; every hurt is reciprocated." Solomon Islanders are all too aware of precedents... Bougainville, with its insurrection against rule from Port Moresby, is a short boat ride away, and Fiji]'s previous coup leader]... was much admired when... [the] Major-General... went to the islands to broker peace. [The latest Fijian] coup in Suva... almost certainly encouraged the Eagle Force to act... "The young [guys], or the hot-heads, think, 'Well, we want some action'. It's the [Fijian] coup leader thing – the latest Fijian coup leader] just seemed to cut through all the theatre of protocol. I rather fear that's what has happened now in the Solomons." Amnesty International's N[Z] executive director... says the human rights group feared the Solomons would blow up while the Pacific was watching Fiji... [The] head of political science at Canterbury University, wonders if the absence of the police commander... may have sparked action. "For a time it's been suspected that the police are sympathetic with the Malaitans. The police force in the Solomons is made up mainly of

Malaitans, and they have not been very effective in attempting to arrest the Malaitan group.” Now, with the Malaitan militia apparently controlling Honiara, and a large and reportedly well-armed opposing force of native Guadalcanal guerrilla fighters encircling it, yet another island state is on the verge of war. There is, as 18 months of failed peace attempts have shown, little chance of an early, lasting solution. The two sides are locked in by economic as well as tribal jealousies, and bound almost as firmly by internal political schisms that have allowed [the PM], a Malaitan, to be taken captive by his own people. There are even widespread reports that the P[M] had raised his own paramilitary force, called the Seagulls, to combat both the Eagle Force and the Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army (GRA). According to other reports, [the PM], disappointed at N[Z and AUS]n reluctance to intervene, this year sought unspecified security assistance from Cuba. The approach, said to offer new diplomatic ties and possible mineral concessions, alarmed A[US], but it was a measure of the P[M]’s desperation. A reformist who has ruled since 1997 with wide support, especially in impoverished rural areas, [the PM] had become hopelessly enmeshed in the mounting violence between the people of Guadalcanal and Malaita. Malaita has long been, in Solomons terms, rich in people but poor in arable land, home to a people who had been taken for virtual slave labour in Queensland canefields and to plantations elsewhere in the Solomons group. The main island of Guadalcanal, in contrast, has fewer people and far more agriculture. In the later stages of... W[W2] it also had the Americans, who poured their vast wealth into huge military facilities, including Henderson Field, now Honiara’s international airport. The advantages of an instant city of roads, hospital, buildings, port and the like were immediately obvious to the British after the war, and they made Honiara the new capital. For the people of Guadalcanal, this was bad news. Thousands of newcomers, mainly from Malaita, descended on a city that became stretched beyond the limit providing housing, education and healthcare. Malaitans came to dominate the economic and political life of Honiara. And in 1998 tensions found their expression in the creation of the GRA – initially a disorganised and ill-equipped band of unemployed youths but now a formidable and well-armed force of up to 2000... [When Guadalcanal’s] provincial premier... demanded that the Government pay millions of dollars in rent and compensation for the unconstitutional resumption of traditional land for Honiara, and for the victims of alleged rape and murder[, t]he GRA backed his demands with beatings and bloodshed. By June the violence had forced 2000 Malaitans to flee rural areas, and the GRA’s policy of cleansing Guadalcanal of outsiders by terror and violence had left up to 55 people dead. As many as 20,000 Malaitans fled to the relative safety of Honiara, or to their home island. Young Malaitans, from an island with a warrior history which had resisted British control, refused to be cowed. After seeing their families safely back on Malaita, they... overran a police station in the Malaitan capital of Auki, stole high-powered rifles and declared themselves openly in Honiara... [when they] returned to Guadalcanal to fight under the banner of the Eagle Force... “The Malaitans are very resentful about being pushed off Guadalcanal... They lost a lot – many of those people had been born there. It was home. They didn’t have much to lose in fighting back.” Repeated efforts at brokering peace have failed, including two attempts by [the Major-]General... the 1987 Fiji coup leader, who was sent to the Solomons as a special Commonwealth envoy... ■ [Fiji’s latest]... coup leader... was last night holding on to his hostages... “There’s a good chance they won’t be released this weekend,” [the coup leader] said... and claimed they were all in good health. They were getting fed, had accommodation and access to a doctor... The 30 hostages, including Fiji’s first ethnic-Indian [PM,] ...have been held for 17 days. An agreement to free them and for [the coup followers] to surrender their weapons was to be signed at noon yesterday but talks broke down... [The coup leader, who believed it] had the “overwhelming support” of... the indigenous Great Council of Chiefs[, said]... it... would abide “unequivocally” by any decision... the council... made – possibly tomorrow or on Tuesday – on the administration of Fiji. After that... the hostages could be released... The [coup leader]... and his rebels stormed the government in the name of indigenous Fijians... The former business[person] wants civilian rule, with him serving as PM.

...A WEBSITE by Fijian journalism students was disconnected after it ran foul of coup leaders... The... Pacific university’s website... ran a transcript of an unflattering interview with... [the coup leader. S]tudents were providing coverage of events in Fiji before the website was closed.

...A Fiji Website reported that t[housands]... of Fijians danced and cheered outside Parliament as [the]coup leader... and his squad of nationalist[s]... continued to hold the country’s first Fiji Indian P[M]... and his cabinet prisoners. However, early this morning it was unclear how much support the rebels had... The President... [has] labelled the coup “unlawful” and “unconstitutional” and declared a state of emergency with a dawn-to-dusk curfew. But Radio Fiji reported that the curfew seemed to be having little effect, with youths burning kiosks around Suva’s central bus station. Later reports indicated that 100 looters had been arrested. [The President – whose daughter, the] Tourism and Transport Minister... was... among the hostages – pleaded with [the rebels] to disband, return to their homes and pursue their concerns in a lawful way.

...[the c]oup leader... has been dismissed by many Fijians, including his own step-mother, as nothing but a criminal holding the country to ransom. [The coup leader], a supremely confident – some would say arrogant – part-European with a string of shady business dealings in his murky past, does not appear to have the support of the [people] in the street, and has a tenuous hold on power. Since the siege began, [the coup leader] has revelled in the attention of the world’s media... h[olding] long press conferences, at which [it] asked journalists their names and chatted casually, and has also wandered out of the parliamentary compound to mix with a small band of his supporters, once drinking kava with them [until] 5 am. While [Fiji’s] P[M]... has collapsed at least once from exhaustion, [the coup leader] remains calm, impeccably groomed and seemingly unaffected by the rigours of the hostage drama... When... his band of thugs... stormed Parliament, many stunned Fijians were asking “[A son of] who?” “A son of Fiji” prepared to die for his cause, came the answer from... himself. Certainly [the coup-leader] has an impressive Fijian pedigree to go with his European heritage... com[ing] from a long line of wealthy Fijian land-owners, and his grandmother is a member of the respected Waimaro clan, traditional warriors of the village of Bau. His father... is an MP who left Parliament House shortly after the hostage drama began. But not everyone accepts [hi]s claim to be a son of Fiji... [The son of the] Social Welfare Minister... who is one of the hostages, said [the coup leader] could not even speak the language... Indeed, many are asking whether [the coup leader] is a warrior hero or a self-centred fraud... Aged 43, [the coup leader] studied commerce in A[US] and the U[S], and also served in the Fijian Army, [before coming]... to some prominence in A[US] in the early 1980s after the Wattle Group, an A[US]n investment company of which [it] was a director, was accused of unfair dealings with investors and was eventually wound up. On his return to Fiji, [the coup leader] went into insurance broking and under the Government of [the]1987 coup leader... was appointed head of the state-owned Fiji Hardwood Company. [Fiji’s first Indian PM] sacked him soon after the Labour Party won last year’s general election. The *Fiji Times* reported that [the 43-year-old] was an undisclosed bankrupt who had pleaded not guilty to exchange rate charges and extortion when [it] appeared in the High Court in Suva [just before his coup]. It also alleged [the 43-year-old] was a director of an A[US]n company that siphoned millions from A[US]n and Fiji citizens’ life savings. [The 43-year-old] stormed Parliament with [7 supporters] armed with a variety of weapons, including Israeli-made Uzi submachine guns, Russian AK-47s and [US] M16s... That the rebels have at least one Uzi suggests they may have links to the disbanded Counter Revolutionary Warfare Unit – similar to the British SAS – as that was the only unit issued with Uzis. Crates have been trucked into the compound at night and it has been suggested they contained more weapons... In [local news]... Fiji’s coup came to Auckland yesterday with a mass protest... Thousands of Fijians, mainly of Indian descent, crammed into Aotea Square after marching from the... Domain. They presented a petition to [the Foreign Affairs] Minister... calling for democracy to be restored and [the]coup leader... brought to justice. [The minister], whose Roskill electorate has the highest population of Fiji Indians in [NZ], told the crowd the Government “unequivocally” supported [Fiji’s PM. A]... Papatoetoe mechanic... wait[ing] at Auckland Airport for his family to arrive from strife-torn Fiji... was worried his family might not arrive because [it] recalled that after the 1987 coups, Fijian passport-holders were sometimes prevented from leaving the country.

...The firepower of N[Z]’s military and police elite remained firmly in the Government’s holster last night amid fears international intervention in Fiji could result in bloodshed. The Minister of Foreign Affairs... said last night it was “unlikely” specialists such as the S[AS] or police anti-

terrorist unit would be dispatched to Suva to help end the hostage crisis. Instead, N[Z] would maintain diplomatic pressure, supporting the constitutionally elected Fijian Government and ensuring authorities were aware that any suggestion the [Labour Party] Administration might be deposed would result in severe consequences... N[Z] has offered to send a team of police negotiators, but Fijian authorities... declined the offer.

...A bare-chested, muscle-bound [rebel] carrying a submachine gun wanders out of Parliament Buildings and swears at the gathered throng of journalists before shouting a bizarre order at one of his [mates] – “walk straight – like a snake.” It’s 2 am yesterday, and this is Fiji. The [rebel], with his drunken gait and love of expletives, is a rare glimpse of one of the people who have held Fiji to ransom since [his leader] arrived at Parliament... with a minibus full of hooded and armed accomplices. [The coup leader seized the Fijian P]M... and members of his Coalition Government, handcuffing the Premier and humiliating him by making him kneel in the centre of the debating chamber. Since then, the face of Suva has changed. With 20 stores burned out and 167 looted during a rampage after the coup... [- t]he courthouse and a school were also set alight, and youths stoned the police station... [-] it is a very different Fiji to the cheerful holiday destination that is a haven for thousands of tourists every year... Fiji has not had such an influx of the world’s press and TV since the first coup in May 1987.

...International journalists were forced to dive for cover last night when shots were fired as they entered the grounds of Parliament in Suva – scene of the ongoing Government hostage drama. About 20 foreign reporters and photographers, including two from the [NZ] *Herald*, huddled nervously after a volley of shots rang out just as they were being escorted inside Parliament Grounds... No one was hurt. The shots came as the crisis go-between[-] ...the... Major-General... [who led the 1987 coup -] said the President... had signalled [it] was prepared to step down providing a request came from the Great Council of Chiefs, which is due to meet tomorrow. There were fears last night that the shots signalled a deteriorating relationship between the armed rebels... and the soldiers and police officers [stationed at] roadblocks around Parliament Grounds. The shots seemed to come from the submachine gun of one of the rebels... hiding in bush about 30m away. There were several theories about who fired the shots and why. One Fijian journalist suggested the rebels were trying to frighten the police while [the rebels] said it was an accident. [The coup leader] himself suggested the shots were fired by “third parties” intent on “creating a situation against the honourable intentions of non-confrontation” but... did not say who they might be. [The coup leader] also talked of apprehending journalists [it] suggested had deliberately filed “emotional reports” aimed at “stirring up confrontation.” ...At his first meeting with journalists [the coup leader] denied... threatening the media. It is clear [the coup leader] wants them close by so [the coup leader] can send his messages to the world. [The coup leader was furious when] the police had ordered reporters and photographers to move about 1km from their established position outside Parliament.

...Fiji’s captive] PM... has been sacked to end bloodshed after three people were shot. Fiji’s president... dismissed him... last night in a bid to end the... crisis... The sacking came hours after [the coup leader]’s supporters stormed a road block. Dozens of shots were fired and... two soldiers and an English camera[person]... were injured... They were taken to Suva’s hospital. The soldiers eventually abandoned the road block and fled.

...Fiji teetered on the brink of chaos last night as a mob of [the coup]’s supporters rampaged through the streets of Suva. Gunshots rang out and Fiji’s main television channel went off the air. Unconfirmed reports said [coup] supporters had firebombed the Fiji TV station and cut power to the central police station. Auckland’s Fiji Indian station Radio Tarana reported that... [a] police officer was also shot when driving in his car. Suva’s Colonial War Memorial Hospital confirmed [the officer] was admitted and said his injuries were not life-threatening. Earlier, nine journalists, including N[Z]ers... were rescued by their colleagues after being held in the parliamentary complex against their will... [The journalists] were covering talks between [the coup leader]’s group and the Great Council of Chiefs when about 200 [of hi]s supporters silently walked out, grabbed rocks and headed for the streets. The journalists hid with a group of Fijian[s]... However, they were found by a security guard who took them to the normally secret coup control room, where they... were made to hand over their cellphones and were not allowed to leave – supposedly for their own safety – or make phone calls... The journalists were eventually allowed to go when a group of their colleagues... walked in and demanded their release. Only hours earlier, [the coup leader] said the hostages could soon be released after “fruitful discussions” between his group and representatives from the Great Council of Chiefs. “Not 24 – say 48 hours...” However, [the coup leader] has cautioned that the release of the former P[M]... and his ministers, rests on the removal of the 1997 constitution and the President. His claims follow [the President]’s decision on Saturday to sack [the P]M... and his democratically elected Government... • [A]... Northland Maori leader has spoken out in support of Fiji[’s] coup leader... and his armed hostage-takers. A spokes[person] for Ngapuhi, [the Maori leader] said yesterday that [it] had received many calls from some factions of the Northland iwi who disagreed with the N[Z] Government’s stance on the political crisis in Fiji. “We don’t support what [the NZ P]M... is saying, that all N[Z]ers are against that guy... We support any indigenous people who are fighting for their independence. [The PM] talks about a constitution – we had a constitution in N[Z] in terms of Maori and that was what was taken away from us by the point of a gun. Then they became civilised and used a pen to remove our independence.” ...[a] Maori rights campaigner... said the political crisis should be resolved by the Fijians themselves. Maori must support indigenous Pacific peoples who want to protect their sovereign rights but N[Z] as a nation must mind its own business, [the America’s Cup smasher said. An] Auckland theology lecturer... said most Maori... were sympathetic to the stand taken by the rebels but did not support the use of arms. Rubbishing reports that Maori could also resort to violence, [the lecturer] said the conflict was a legacy of a colonial regime. [The]Maori Council chair[person]... urged Maoridom to stay out of the conflict... [A] Labour MP... plans to holiday in Fiji this... weekend – flouting... Government... warnings to avoid non-essential travel... But [the Maori MP said it] might not go if the situation worsened.

...Army takes charge in Fiji... Fiji is today under military rule as the Army attempts to end the hostage crisis and impose control in a country reeling from mob violence. Announcing martial law late last night, the head of the armed forces... said: “All the nation has been saddened by the extent to which the country has fallen during the last week. I have therefore, with much reluctance, assumed executive authority.”[Fiji’s] President... who two days earlier had appointed himself interim ruler and dismissed [the elected P]M... quit before martial law was imposed... Yesterday evening, soldiers enforced a 48-hour curfew, putting up barricades and taking up positions on the roofs of key buildings as scores of people began to flee Fiji. The Army, almost invisible in the early days of the crisis, cracked down after a 200-strong mob of rebel supporters armed with guns and knives rampaged through Suva, killing a police[officer]. The officer, Filipe Seavula, was shot several times in the back... The curfew has forced the *Fiji Times* newspaper to stop production. On Sunday, a mob descended on Fiji Television offices, smashing millions of dollars of equipment, putting the station off air... Radio reports that Fiji Indians had been warned especially to leave Suva were last night denied by police chiefs... The N[Z] Government yesterday issued its strongest warning yet to the 2700 N[Z] tourists in Fiji to leave as soon as possible.

...[last night the coup leader complained] the military had “changed its stance” and was insisting on staying in power for three months instead of allowing tribal elders to decide the country’s fate. “We do not believe it is necessary that the commander of the military should retain executive authority of Fiji,”... The military took over on Monday after a rash of violence including the murder of a police[officer. The coup leader]... has demanded an amnesty for himself and [six followers] but the military said an amnesty would not apply to crimes committed since the coup...

Compassion arrives in a plastic bag in the hands of a gun[-holder]. As the ordeal of Fiji’s political prisoners drags on, the only relief they receive from the outside world are packages of food, books, clean clothes and hand-written messages from home. Each day at 10 am, [the]Red Cross director... visits the more than 30 hostages... to check on their wellbeing and drop off individually named plastic bags. What follows is a bizarre ritual: bored supporters of [the]coup leader... gather around [the Red Cros]s truck in the parliamentary complex, eager to help unload it as a way of breaking the monotony of their days. [The director] and a nurse see the prisoners, but [the director] will not discuss any specifics of their condition – fearful the rebels would stop him visiting the hostages, or, worse, would harm them... Since the coup began... the captives have been

subjected to psychological harm. Unconfirmed reports say many of them, including [the deposed P]M... sit in silence with heads bowed all day long. [The coup leader]’s public comments hint at the trauma they must be going through. “Look, I could easily have shot all these people, okay,” [the coup leader] told a press conference late on Sunday. “Don’t forget the cause for which we have acted. I’m talking Fijian to Fijian and I don’t expect European journalists to understand that.” If that is what [the coup leader] tells the world’s media, what is [it] saying to the prisoners in private? But at the same press conference [the coup leader] went to great lengths to convey the image of a reasonable [perso]n being kind to the MPs [it] kidnapped... Quite what is going on inside the hostage quarters... is a mystery. By [the coup leader]’s own admission, they know nothing of the progress of talks between him and the military. To them it must seem there is no end in sight. To them it must seem a lifetime ago that they and not a [guy] with a gun were running the country. No doubt, the captors would have told the hostages the unfavourable news from the outside world, such as the trashing of the home of [the deposed PM]’s son and private secretary... on Friday. Just as likely, they would not have been given the messages of support that flow from those in Fiji brave enough to speak out...

Fiji’s political crisis deteriorated to the point of a showdown last night, with [the]hostage-taker... digging in despite an Army ultimatum... The military ruler... told [the coup leader] to forget any deals or aspirations of power and pulled the plug on further negotiations. [The]Commodore... turned directly to the people of Fiji to signal his new hardline attitude, addressing the nation to make his stand clear. “We will not entertain any more demands by [the coup leader] and his m[ilitants],” the military ruler said in a speech on radio and television. It ended a charade of conciliation with the rebel group and showed the military had heard international threats of isolation loud and clear. But behind the gates of Suva’s parliamentary complex... [the coup leader] lashed out at the Army and said [it] would remain firm in his resolve to install a racially biased government of his choosing. “I can wait here for as long as I have to and if the Army doesn’t come on side, we’re not too concerned about that... I’m not in any corner – [the]Commodore... is the one in the corner.” [The coup leader] said his group would shoot hostages if the Army forced its way into the compound, though [it] was confident that would never happen. “I do not believe that the hostages’ lives are in danger. That is not the issue.” The Army confirmed it did not want bloodshed either. “We are not here to battle anyone – we have not even considered the military option as a means of freeing the hostages,” the commodore said. Quite how the standoff would end was unclear last night.

...PRO-COUP supporters have seized a Fiji town and taken 30 soldiers, police[officers] and civil servants hostage. They also threw up roadblocks... Around 100 villagers seized the police station in Korovou. Dozens of [villagers] armed with M-16s and knives roamed the streets, taking ethnic Indians off buses and holding them in the street. One protester claimed the[y]... were relatives of [the]coup leader... whose home town is Korovou. Other roadblocks were thrown up by [coup] supporters near Suva, and 60 villagers blocked the road to the international airport in Nadi. Fiji’s main power station is in rebel hands, leading to widespread power and water cuts. [The coup leader] said there would be more unrest until the military gave in to his demands. “It is going to escalate,” [the coup leader promise]d... As the protests escalated, America recalled [its]ambassador... and threatened action. America repeatedly said it could take steps that would have a “serious impact” on Fiji.

...village mourns a patriot... “It’s OK to die like that – for the Fijians and in Fiji.” [The villager] is talking about Kulinio Tabua, who died yesterday in Suva’s Colonial War Memorial Hospital from gunshot wounds. The 24-year-old was one of six [people] wounded in the shootout last Tuesday between the military and coup supporters at the parliamentary complex in Suva. Mr Tabua, a cassava farmer and father of one, is the second person to have died since [the coup leader] and his rebel[s]... stormed Parliament... Seated in Mr Tabua’s home in the tiny village of Nakorolevu, [the villager]... told the *Herald* why his friend’s death was not in vain. “When they [Fijians] die in Lebanon or Bosnia to keep the peace there, it is not like this. It’s better to die here, this way, because we are fighting for our rights.” Mr Tabua, his father and several other villagers left Nakorolevu soon after the takeover to join [the coup leader]’s supporters inside Parliament. His father remained at Parliament yesterday... The dead [villager]’s namesake, Nakorolevu village[’s leader, said the coup leader]... had the village’s support because his actions signalled a positive future for indigenous Fijians. “We are thinking of our children. What [the coup leader] did was for the country, for Fiji, for tomorrow.” Mr Tabua[’s father] blamed the military for the death, labelling them “liars.” “They [the Army] came to us on Monday and spoke to us and they never said anything about fighting. They said everything would be solved by meeting, not fighting. The next day they did it. What they said and what they did – it’s different.” ...[an Army spokesperson]n... said the shootout happened after [the coup leader]’s supporters mistook a two-m[ember] Army patrol as a strike. [The coup leader] yesterday said Mr Tabua’s death “marks a point in Fiji’s history. [The 24-year-old] was shot and killed by the military – another example of the military misusing and abusing its power.”

...The Fijian hostage crisis could be resolved in three days under an agreement signed last night between [the]coup leader... and military leaders. If the deal lasts, 27 hostages held at gunpoint by... rebels for seven weeks will be freed on Thursday. Both sides have agreed in writing that the Great Council of Chiefs will meet that day to nominate a new president and vice-president for Fiji... The coup leader has pulled out of several previous commitments to end the 53-day-old hostage crisis. But this is the first time [the coup leader] and his rebels have made a deal... Under the agreement, the... interim Government will be dissolved and the rebels and those responsible for other uprisings around Fiji since the coup will be granted amnesty... The agreement is likely to make Fiji an international pariah. Governments, including the U[S] and key trading partners N[Z, AUS] and the E[U], have threatened economic sanctions unless Fiji returns to full multiracial democracy.

...The [perso]n who held Fiji’s Parliament hostage is now facing the death penalty as the nation calls him to account... Fiji[’s] coup leader... has been charged with two counts of treason... One charge of treason and another of conspiring to commit treason were read in the Suva Magistrate’s Court. It was alleged [the coup leader] “intended to levy war against His Excellency the President of Fiji...” The charge carries the death penalty, but no one has been executed in Fiji since it became independent from Britain in 1970. [The coup leader]’s security adviser... media adviser... political adviser and his younger brother... were among 10 others also charged with treason... The [coup leader]... and the other accused will not enter pleas until... a hearing in Fiji’s High Court in four weeks, after which a trial date will be set... Earlier, [the coup leader] appeared for a bail hearing on five minor charges relating to his raid on Parliament. The hearing was deferred for a week. [The]Chief Magistrate... ordered that [the coup leader] and 12 key supporters be returned to the prison island of Nukulau, off Suva, until Friday for the bail hearing... [The coup leader, who says it] was injured in military custody, appeared in court with a small bandage on the back of his head. [The coup leader] was arrested... at the start of a military crackdown, during which about 450 of his supporters were arrested. [The coup leader] and his supporters held... Fiji’s first ethnic Indian P[M], and most of his multiracial cabinet hostage for 56 days in a bid to end the political influence of ethnic Indians. Indo-Fijians make up 44[%] of the country’s 800,000 population and dominate the important sugar and tourism industries. [The coup leader] won a series of concessions before freeing his hostages. A military-backed interim Government... made up almost entirely of indigenous Fijians will rule for up to three years... [NZ’s PM] has welcomed the decision to charge [the coup leader] and his supporters with treason... “It is important that a clear message is sent that displacing a constitutionally elected government at gunpoint is a treasonous act which will be dealt with very seriously,”... said [the NZ PM].

...last month the NZ] Immigration Service... Suva office posted out... 1505 resident application forms. For the same time last year, the figure... w[as]... 45... One family able to flee the unrest arrived on Saturday. The [family] had an emotional reunion with relatives when they arrived at Auckland Airport... [The head of the family], who was a public servant for the former... Government, said his family lived in constant fear that they would be attacked... during the coup... Some nights [coup] supporters pelted their home with rocks... [The former public servant] said his family would never return to Fiji. When they had left their village, several hundred fellow Fiji Indians had come to farewell them. “They pleaded with us

to ask the N[Z] Government to relax immigration policies to allow Fijian Indians to escape. These people need the support of N[Z]ers.” ...many Fiji Indian families were being forced off their land, had no money to rebuild their lives and were going without food as many factories had closed. [The former public servant said that the coup leader] had to be heavily penalised for his actions so that a message would be sent to all Fijians that overthrowing the Government would have serious consequences. “If the message is not clear, then this will continue to happen. There will be another... [coup],”... The Fijian Bureau of Statistics said that more than 900 people left Fiji in the two months to the end of [last month]. More than 90[%] of them were Fiji Indians, prompting fears of an exodus like that which followed the 1987 military coups. About 67,000 Fiji Indians left then, creating a vacuum in business and bureaucratic leadership which took more than a decade to fill. Almost a third of those who left in [the latest two month period] held professional, managerial or supervisory jobs.

...REBEL soldiers are being urged to give themselves up after a failed Fijian mutiny. Fijian authorities say they are closing in on the last of the heavily-armed rebel soldiers from the counter-revolutionary warfare unit, which staged an uprising at Fiji’s military HQ. About 14 rebels are still thought to be on the run after escaping from jail while Fiji’s military dealt with the mutiny. Thirteen have already been caught. Eight soldiers – including five rebels – died in bloody gun battles at the barracks on Thursday. More than 20 people were injured during the fighting, including seven civilians hit by stray bullets. Two regular soldiers are in a serious condition in hospital. [The m]ilitary-backed interim [PM]... is pleading for calm. [The interim PM] said Fiji’s post-coup recovery had been set back by the killings, but it wouldn’t stop the government recovery programme. The mutiny came at a bad time for Fiji’s battered economy, [which]... was just starting to recover from the... coup... [The m]ilitary commander... said [it] was convinced... the country’s forces were united... □ T[he part-time *NZ Herald* columnist], of Whangarei, w[ho w]as part of the last team of international observers to be evacuated from E[T] last week... remains [convinced that the]... TNI... must not be allowed the obscenity of continuing to operate in E[T], adding that NZ]... has been refurbishing Indonesian military aircraft in Blenheim, with the assurance that the planes would not be used against the E[T]ese (they had been used for bombing villages in 1981). Yet two fighters roared over Dili during the [observa]tion period...

A N[Z] firm is continuing to refurbish Indonesian attack aircraft, unhindered by the Government decision to halt military ties with Jakarta. Safe Air, a Blenheim company owned by Air N[Z], has staff in Indonesia completing a contract to refit and repair two military Skyhawk jets. The contract went ahead with the approval of the Government, which is now under pressure from Opposition parties to step in and require the work to stop. They say it conflicts with the decision 12 days ago to suspend military cooperation with Indonesia in response to the E[T] crisis. But a Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokes[person] said last night that the ministry had granted a licence which covered only the export parts of the deal, so the Government’s role was complete once the Skyhawks left in May. “What they are doing in the way of maintenance and support is a commercial arrangement between the Indonesian Air Force and Safe Air.” The Skyhawk project manager for Safe Air... said from Jakarta yesterday that the company had gone through the proper channels and it had no concerns before embarking on the contract.

...the arrival of the international force is the best hope E[T] has for peace and normality... [without] question... But any relief was overwhelmed by dismay at how uselessly late the troops are – a crisp white bandage painstakingly applied to an already-amputated limb. All last week, there had been growing anxiety in A[US] about what the force would meet on its arrival, but the landing itself was almost eerily smooth. Shooting had been heard in the... morning[as AUS]n SAS troops in helmets and goggles scuttled from the first plane. But the few soldiers of the Indonesian Army... on the ground displayed only friendly indifference towards the “invaders.” “So far we’ve been benignly and cordially accepted by the TNI,” said the force’s... commander... sounding almost grateful. The impression of goodwill went no farther than the airport runway... The airport offices have been comprehensively looted, of furniture, computers, even lightbulbs. The departure lounge smells like a sewer, with a coating of human filth spread evenly over its white tile floor. But even here, there are signs of the sinister control that lurks behind so much of E[T]’s devastation: the VIP terminal, through which visiting Indonesian generals arrive and depart, remains untouched. The road into town is worse. In the suburb of Comoro, barely one house in three remains unburned. The flimsier dwellings are piles of ash and corrugated iron. The sturdier ones remain standing, but sooty marks stain the concrete above the windows. We passed the gutted shops, gutted offices and the burned shell of the Toto Nito restaurant where journalists and UN workers used to dine on Portuguese steak... The handset of an office telephone lies in the middle of the road, a few metres from the crushed carcass of a dog... In the harbour stand two large ships: a passenger ferry... and a low, grey barge. Lining the railings, clambering on board and huddling on the quayside are Dili’s remaining refugees... It seems strange for refugees to be leaving now, just as the international community promises peace. “But they are not leaving because they want to,” said [a Catholic] Father... “They are leaving because they are being made to leave, by the Army and the militias. They wear the T-shirts of the Indonesian side... [(pre-election gifts distributed freely to the people of ET, together with] instructions to vote for... [continued autonomy within Indonesia]), but they do this as insurance because they are afraid.” Where are the militias? ...Officers of the peace force reported seeing them carrying homemade guns and, all afternoon, you could glimpse young [guys] in the black T-shirts of the Aitarak militia, huddled in groups of two or three or zipping by on motorbikes. Once, as we were trying to talk to a group of refugees, one of them rode up and barked at them in Indonesian. We heard the words “journalists” and “Aitarak.” As [the militia guy] left, the refugees shrank away from us. “There must be some militias still around,” said [the AUSn] Major-General... “But I can say clearly at the moment that none of the troops have had brushes with the militias.” The truth remains, however, that E[T]ese are still being deported by armed thugs under his eyes. It is harder than ever to work out what is really going on. A senior UN official said on Monday that... it was all over – the Indonesian military had bowed to international pressure and acknowledged that the game was up. But the international force has hardly begun its job; its personnel are holed up in a few secure bubbles scattered across Dili: the airport, heliport, the UN compound and a couple of hotels. Outside is the rest of E[T], and it is still in darkness.

...Dancing... tears of joy... and... [chants of] “Viva Timor l’este,”... greeted A[US]n troops yesterday as... refugees began pouring... into Dili, now safely under the control of foreign peacekeepers. The tension of Monday’s occupation of the ruined ghost-town was replaced by the cheers of jubilant citizens who flashed “V” for victory signs at peacekeepers and mocked Indonesian troops... Unfortunately, [the]... fact that our assistance and goodwill have gone hand in hand with oversimplified views of Indonesian politics may harm future relations in our region. The consequences will work to nobody’s benefit. There has been little acknowledgment of the fact that many Indonesians also have serious concerns over human rights abuses in E[T] and accept the legitimacy of E[T]’s decision in favour of independence. [Now], in the increasingly polarised diplomatic environment of the past few weeks it has become... more difficult for them to express their concerns for fear of appearing anti-nationalist or, worse, subversive. Even more concerning is that some political and military elites... may use “anti-foreign” sentiment, portrayed as defence of Indonesian nationalism, to support calls for a return to a more authoritarian style of government which, in the lead-up to Indonesia’s elections, appeared to be on the wa[ne]. Incidentally, leaders]... at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in South Africa... are expected to... start the clock on a two-year deadline for Pakistan to return to democracy or face expulsion from the association... [following] a military takeover last month.

...Friday’s [CHO]G meeting welcomed former dictatorial pariah state Nigeria back into the Commonwealth family fold... Nigeria’s military [leader] turned democrat, urged Pakistan and Africa’s military regimes to restore democracy... ■ [IN] NIGERIA... the... riot-torn city of Kaduna was under curfew as contestants for the Miss World pageant left Nigeria... last night after more than 200 people died in violence provoked by the contest. Relieved beauty queens slipped out of their luxury hotel to board a chartered Cameroon Airlines Boeing 747 flight to London, the new venue for the event... [L]ast week, Nigeria[’s] Information Minister... stood on the tarmac of the airport serving the capital, Abuja, and proclaimed: “Welcome to God’s own country,” as the Miss World contestants stepped off a plane... The collision of two worlds – the beauty queens bathed in glamour and glitter and poor African Muslims... – was enough to make trouble inevitable... In other violence, an explosion ripped through the

cargo wing of Lagos airport yesterday, killing at least one person and trapping others inside... Religious tensions were still running high in the... northern city of Kaduna, where most of the violence has taken place, despite the decision to move the pageant from Abuja. More than 4000 people have fled their homes, according to the Red Cross, and about 1000 have taken refuge in a local brewery compound guarded by soldiers. Saturday's decision to abandon Miss World Nigeria followed a third day of Muslim-Christian blood-letting in Kaduna, site of previous religious violence... The rioting began on Thursday as a protest against an article in a national newspaper that offended Muslims because it said the Prophet Mohammad would have married one of the Miss World beauty queens were [Islam's founder] alive today. Disappointed Nigerians watched the beauty queens leave from the windows of the hotel lobby. "This is a very sad moment. It is Nigeria's biggest international disaster," one spectator said... The... head of the Miss World Organisation, blamed the foreign press for the uproar because they "deliberately tried to tear Nigeria to pieces" over sharia in the run-up to the event. "You pulled Nigeria down and you allowed Nigeria to be humiliated," [the head] told reporters. In particular, [the head] took exception to stories which appeared in the international press about the use of amputation as a punishment by Islamic courts in northern Nigeria... The largely Islamic north of Nigeria has witnessed deadly eruptions of sectarian and ethnic clashes since about a dozen states began implementing strict Muslim sharia law... [-] a six-day clash two years ago between Christians and Muslims left 2000 people dead...

POLICE are too scared to remove the corpses of the victims of Nigeria's ethnic riots. Charred corpses lie where they fell in the aftermath of the slaughter which has killed at least 45 people. The clashes between Nigeria's two biggest tribes, southern Yorubas and northern Hausas, are the latest in a catalogue of bloodshed since [the country's] president... took office in May. His leadership marks the end of 15 years of crippling military rule in Africa's most overcrowded nation.

...Nigerians are fleeing potential racial flashpoints after riots in Lagos killed 50 people and triggered fears of a backlash in other areas. Hundreds of terrified people packed into trucks heading for northern Nigeria at the Mile 12 market, where violence erupted last week between immigrant Hausas and Yorubas, whose homeland lies... around Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital... 26 rioters had been arrested but adequate evidence... ha[s] not yet been forthcoming... In Hausa-speaking... Kano, police were on standby last night to prevent trouble with the expected return of Hausas from Lagos bearing tales of horror... [as] resident Yorubas tried to move out of districts where scores died in July when rioting flared in response to clashes in the southwest... Nigeria has been the victim of numerous upheavals in the past, with a population of more than 108 million divided into at least 200 distinct ethnic groups and about evenly split between Muslims and Christians... [In related news, f]resh religious riots rocked eastern Indonesia's Ambon City yesterday as a lawyer for the local Christian community accused security forces of shooting dead 16 people, including unarmed bystanders... [A further 56 Christians] suffered gunshot wounds... The lawyer... accused Muslim extremists of a co-ordinated campaign of attacks against Christians to drive them out of the once-idyllic spice islands... "They were all shot by the security forces... [who] used Army trucks and went from house to house. People who were standing in the street and did not know anything about the riot were shot to death. I saw it." ...Responding to [the] allegations, a military spokes[person] said yesterday that it was true soldiers had shot some people, but denied they had favoured either group. "We tried to stop the groups but then one of our soldiers was shot dead by them. It's true that we shot at them but we did not aim at a specific group... We did not discriminate and we did it for protection." Human rights groups say more than 1000 people have died across the archipelago in religious fighting this year.

...[the violence in ET is threatening] to spill over into the volatile West Timorese capital, Kupang, where resentment is mounting against abusive behaviour by armed militia groups... Kupang was the scene of serious unrest last November when Christian and Muslim gangs clashed on the streets, sparking an exodus of local residents.

...Indonesia said yesterday that it had handed over security control for E[T] to the UN] force in the territory... at a meeting with the UN force (Interfet) commander... and that only about 1000 Indonesian troops would remain... but the... commander denied there had been any transfer of power... Only two hours after the meeting, [the AUSn]... Major-General... said Indonesia was still formally in control of security... adding that his force's UN mandate barred a transfer of power until Jakarta had given E[T] independence. Dili was quiet yesterday, but some fires were still burning in the charred city and tensions ran high... People who fled the city during the bloodshed have... return[ed], only to... recover what belongings they can and return to hiding places in the hills. [The US] Secretary of State... demanded that the Indonesian Army stop "colluding" with militias against E[T]ese in West Timor refugee camps and warned that US aid would remain suspended until the situation vastly improved.

...British Gurkhas [have] freed more than 2000 E[T]ese hostages after a brief gunbattle with their militia captors... The freeing of the hostages in the northeast of the island was the first... [time] international peacemakers have returned fire. U[N] troops also seized two truckloads of heavy-calibre ammunition hidden by the militia, including 12.7mm machinegun rounds, rockets, detonators and hand grenades. As events accelerated after the lull since the first peacekeepers landed two weeks ago, soldiers disarmed seven Falintil pro-independence fighters, and a militia suspect was badly beaten on the streets of Dili. The... suspect... had his jaw broken in a brutal attack by members of the Commission for Timorese Resistance, the political body that will form the nucleus of an independent E[T]. The dramatic rescue of the hostages was effected... near Com... where N[Z] SAS soldiers this week swept down on a militia arms cache. Gurkhas leading a humanitarian aid convoy to Banchu and Lospalos sent a platoon into the bush near Com when they were told that militiamen were holding more than 2000 people at gunpoint. The Nepalese found a unit of 12 militia... with assault rifles who fled to the hills... Two... were arrested and the rest later tried to broker a surrender through a priest and community leaders during a stand-off that degenerated into a fight among the militiamen and another run for the hills. Pursuing Gurkhas captured one more... before driving on to the badly damaged towns where they were met with banners and cheering crowds. In the west, the push from the town of Balibo... will take the A[US]ns into the island's most dangerous region, with the possibility of further tension with Indonesia. They have been told to remain strictly on the eastern side of the border, ruling out pursuit into Indonesian West Timor... Meanwhile, it was reported that seven church workers, including two nuns and a priest, have been killed by Indonesian troops in the eastern part of E[T].

...the UN] was yesterday accused of presiding over a whitewash, as it emerged that an investigation into crimes against humanity in E[T] will be carried out in co-operation with Indonesian politicians and generals... The resolution also calls for participation of Asian experts, likely to be from neighbouring countries traditionally deferential to Indonesia. "It's an absolute joke..." one furious UN official said... [Furthermore,] the evidence of crimes against humanity is literally rotting away because of inadequate forensic resources. [Today UN CivPol officers] will... work on a maggots-filled well in Dili where an unknown number of bodies lie.

...The wailing begins as a low, sobbing moan as... [the NZ military police officer]'s trowel scrapes away the last of the dirt to expose a head wrapped in patterned red cloth. [A British police officer] crouches beside the E[T]ese villager, a hand on his shoulder in mute sympathy as the mourner rocks gently on his haunches... The small tragedy played out in an overgrown field in Liquica has become an everyday part of life in E[T]. Official AUSn estimates suggest the toll from militia atrocities is between 500 and 1000, a figure supported by N[Z] investigators. Only 160 deaths have been confirmed by the discovery of bodies... Bodies are being found throughout E[T], usually in single graves and most killed with a single shot to the head, but sometimes in groups of two or four, and in a disturbing number of cases mutilated or dismembered. One victim had been staked by the hands and feet and buried alive; another was a witch-doctor whose remains were found next to an altar on which the bodies of two young children had been placed. Others have drifted in from the sea - some, investigators say, possibly from the reported dumping of truckloads of bodies in a ravine west of Liquica after a massacre in the Catholic church in which more than 40 people are thought to have died. Liquica... a ravaged and broken town, has already yielded horrors. [A NZ]Corporal... was part of the team called to investigate a report of 57 bodies in a

village well 9km west of Liquica. In the well... they found 11 bodies... victims of brutal machete slayings by the Besis Merah Putih militia that laid waste to Liquica. [The]Corporal... says more bodies may have been in the well: at about 5m investigators hit the water table of nearby Maubara Lake, preventing further excavation. N[Z] soldiers at Suai, on the southern border with West Timor, live with similar horrors: in addition to the regular discovery of bodies, they daily pass the ruins of the Church of Nossa Senhora de Fatima, and the bamboo scaffolding-clad shell of Suai's uncompleted cathedral. Indonesian soldiers and local militia... herded thousands of people into the church compound shortly after the August 30 independence referendum, most of them [gals], children and the elderly. The massacre began on September 6. Fathers Hillario, Francisco and Tianto were pulled from their presbytery and slaughtered. Others were hunted down and killed where they hid in recesses in the nave, or on the mezzanine galleries of the cathedral. Zig-zagging bullet holes show where more were gunned down as they scrambled up scaffolding. [Gals] were hauled from the church classroom, raped and then killed. Others inside – including children and nuns – were butchered en masse before the militia set fire to the church. In the courtyard outside, flowers still cover skeletal remains; a hank of long black hair falls out from beneath petals.

...The dark of streets left... without illumination by the militias' systematic destruction is broken only by the sharp bark and growls of the oddly squat dogs that prowl constantly through the debris and human campsites. And by roosters... The only human movements are the Army patrols quartered in the city, the distant growl of armoured personnel carriers, or the... chop, chop of military helicopters. No one moves in Dili at night unless they have to. The terror the militias used so effectively to drive people from their homes into dangerously inhospitable mountains still governs after dark, even in the tent city that has sprung up under the guns of Interfet soldiers and in the sports stadium housing a growing number of people returning to Dili... 15,000 people a day have come down from the hills over the past few days and... 70,000 more may return over the next few weeks. That will push resources to the limit as aid and medical workers try to feed, clothe, shelter and care for... so many people in a city that effectively has nothing to offer except what is shipped in from Darwin. The World Food Programme is launching a food-for-clean-up programme under which rice and other essentials will be distributed in return for labour to purge the city of the debris and filth of war. Later, this will become a food-for-building programme, switching the effort to the reconstruction of E[T]. It is a task far beyond the new nation that will emerge after the Indonesian Parliament's ratification of the independence vote. World Vision estimates that E[T] will be among the poorest nations on the planet with a per capita annual income... below that of Bangladesh. "The poverty here will be comparable with sub-Sahara Africa,"... The desperation is already emerging. Twice in the past week the main food warehouse near the A[US]n consulate has been looted by locals who brushed aside civilian guards and took what they could carry... "When a child cries for food, who cares about morality?"... says... [a] World Vision worker... At the sports stadium, where several hundred people now live, registration for rice rations this week disintegrated into a stampede as people tried frantically to collect the 50kg of rice a family World Vision is distributing... World Vision is [also] searching for 2000 sponsored children and their families who were helped into rudimentary village enterprises... But even as the urgency grows with the approach of the wet season, and the need to provide housing and sow crops, the terror that emptied the streets at night continues as a noose around humanitarian relief. Most of the people who pour down to the sports stadium for food and company during the day will return to the hills before dark, their health steadily sapped by hunger and emerging disease... In the village of Motalaran, at the foot of the mountains outside Dili, eight out of 10 children have the warning signs of marasmus, the saggy skin, pale nails and eyelids that precede by only a few weeks the more serious protein deficiencies of kwashiorkor, the precursor to malnutrition... In... Dare... the National Commission of Timorese Resistance reported... 30 children had died in the past few weeks...

For 25 years they fought against Indonesian soldiers to free their country and then, on the verge of victory, they had to stand by and watch it destroyed. To hear the guerrilla fighters of the Falintil speak in the resistance stronghold of Waimori, it was the hardest thing they had to do in their long struggle... Falintil forces were ordered not to fight by their leader... to prevent E[T] descending into a full-scale civil war – an outcome the Indonesian military tried to provoke... "It made me feel mad. I felt so sick and sad when I saw what was happening, but I must obey my commander..." [a]Falintil officer... said... While Falintil was careful not to be drawn into a full-scale civil war, it did occasionally respond in its strongholds outside the capital... In towns such as Laleia and Manatutu, Falintil fighters... engage[d] the militias and the military... to try to save the population. "We went in there and they surrendered their weapons. The Indonesian police gave us all their guns without a fight and we let them leave from Laleia... But we were too late. The town was destroyed and most of the population had left." ...Falintil... now control all of the area east of Dili, except for Baucau and Los Palos where Interfet are... Food is still in short supply. The soldiers and refugees exist on one meal a day... Under guard in a sweltering grass-and-bamboo hut are 16 former militia members who admit to burning their own town on the orders of the Indonesian military... One of them is... a farmer. "The... Indonesian... soldiers... gave us 20,000 rupiah (\$NZ5) and told us that they would pay us more when we got... to Atambua,"... said[the farmer. The militia] were told they would be transported to Atambua in West Timor, where they would be given weapons to come back to fight Falintil. But 16 of the 300 locally recruited militia did not make the trip. "We heard they were separating the [guys from the gals] there and killing the [guys], so we hid," said [the farmer.

...the commander of] the Blood of Integration militia is giving a tour of the sprawling Tenuboot refugee camp in West Timor, with an M-16 donated by the Indonesian military across his back... [– which constantly reminds us that during] a UN visit in September, militia... stoned foreign observers and threatened to kill any other "white faces" that dared to enter the camps... In a few hours [the commander] will lead a foray over the border into E[T], hoping to gather extra food and weapons in preparation for cross-border attacks against... Interfet... Despite warnings of retaliation from A[US] and the U[S, ET]'s pro-Indonesian militias are plotting to launch a guerrilla war under cover of West Timor's crowded refugee camps, hand-in-hand with sympathetic Indonesian military units. Pausing to greet Indonesian soldiers laundering their uniforms with other camp residents, [the commander] says, "We have no official plans to engage them yet, but we are ready and we have support. We are on the border waiting for orders from our leaders and that is all. They want a war and that's what they'll get." Nearly 200,000 E[T]ese... fled for the marginal safety of West Timor... where the very people that helped destroy E[T] now provide food and shelter in exchange for a teeming pool of recruits for their cause... [Al]though the military denies forcing any of the refugees to leave... [ET, most] were trucked in by military and police convoys... "They're not refugees; their hostages," says one relief worker. "The militia and the military – you can't make a different any more – are in complete control. And the Government can't do anything about it." ...Residents spend sleepless nights listening to soldiers vent their anger by firing off bursts of automatic gunfire... One refugee who refused to give his name said: "The scariest is at night when the militia drink and sit at the gates watching everyone who comes in. No one dares step out after 5 pm for fear they will be shot, just for fun." "Everyone here is pro-integration because all the pro-independence people have been kidnapped and taken away to who knows where..." whispers [a]young refugee... At the end of the tour, [the]Commander... dons a red beret to complement his surplus Indonesian Army uniform and hikes his gun on his hip for photos. One militia member nudges visitors to have their picture taken with the commander. "Then you... can say 'I knew... the pro-integration hero'. When the war begins, you will have something to remember us by." ...[I prefer to remember the photo we got back in ET that shows a] young... girl in front of the bars protecting an Indonesian Army landing ship which has been loaded with looted goods for selling back to the people.

...The Indonesian Government wants to set up a border buffer zone between East and West Timor to prevent accidental clashes with Interfet troops... [A]n Indonesian police[officer] died in a clash at the border village of Motaain in an incident which both sides eventually agreed to blame on miscommunication between the two forces... Meanwhile, [a]... large militia army of up to 15,000... continues a brutal reign of killings, beatings, kidnappings and sex slavery in West Timor, a new report by A[US]'s combined aid agencies says... [S]ince October militia... have... abduct[ed]... as many as 1000... young [gals]... from the northern border area of Betun alone, reportedly to be raped or forced into prostitution or marriage... The... report [also] says many refugees continue to be deterred from returning to the east by threats and intimidation – including attacks on UN staff –

and by propaganda alleging rape of returning [gals] by UN soldiers, continuing war in the east and helicopter gunship attacks on refugees attempting to cross the border... The report... came as the flow of refugees across northern border crossing points was stemmed by a militia attack on a 15-truck convoy carrying E[T]ese home from camps in the west, prompting condemnation from the U[N] High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva. A UNHCR statement said the attack was the worst involving refugees since the UN started repatriations from the West Timorese area of Atambua, close to the border, last month. The report for the A[US]n Council for Overseas Aid... says that while Indonesian officials estimate the total number of refugees in the west as about 270,000, other estimates place the number as high as 400,000, living in 135 camps or sites. This could explain up to 200,000 E[T]ese still missing. "It is not clear to us where these people are," N[Z]'s senior military officer in Timor... told the *Herald*. "It has become a bit of a mystery." ...While food supplies are adequate, the health of the refugees is deteriorating: diarrhoea is killing children – up to 100 a day, according to one report – and endangering... the... pregnant... and... elderly. Many camps do not have adequate sanitation or clean water, and up to 30,000 refugees are facing a wet season under trees without blankets or tarpaulins.

...cancer-causing asbestos found in ruined houses across the territory is complicating the job of rebuilding[ET]... "There is a lot of asbestos in the roofs and walls of these houses and now that material has been burned and broken... the asbestos... [dust is becoming airborne." By the way, g]un crews on HMNZS Canterbury jumped to action stations as an unidentified aircraft ignored urgent inquiries and warnings and flew towards the frigate in the tense waters off E[T]. It was potentially the most dangerous of 10 approaches by aircraft since the Canterbury began protecting ships heading for the troubled island and patrolling off a coast still held by hostile militias. As the ship went into action stations, the aircraft – possibly an Indonesian Nomad on coastal patrol – veered away, about 15 nautical miles from the Canterbury[, which]... is now on its way home...

[ET's foremost] independence campaigner... returned home yesterday after spending 24 years in exile... [The Nobel Peace Prize laureate, who fled ET] in early December 1975, just three days before the Indonesian Army invaded... stepped from a C-130 U[N] plane which arrived at Dili Airport to be met by the deputy commander of the Falintil resistance fighters... in a devastated land. • Jakarta... appears to be abandoning the militias that razed E[T], despite continued training, intimidation of refugees in the west and threats of guerrilla war. Last week N[Z] troops protecting the southwest corner of E[T] were on heightened alert after reports and rumours of a planned militia assault across the border. The predicted attack... was supposedly timed to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the Indonesian invasion of E[T]. Its failure to eventuate, linked to tighter control of the border by the Indonesian Army... and other indications, suggests that Jakarta wants to rid itself of a force that has become both an international embarrassment and a burden to an Army with too many other problems on its plate.

...Pirates and marauders will rule what are now Indonesia's territorial waters if the country disintegrates, increasing security risks to the whole region, says Jakarta's Minister for Maritime Exploration... His warning comes as Indonesia faces growing calls for independence from several provinces, in particular Aceh at the northern tip of Sumatra, the gateway to the strategic Straits of Malacca... Staunchly Muslim and resource-rich, the proud Acehese are resentful at Jakarta siphoning off the natural resources while most of the population remain poor. Acehese are also angry at the Government's failure to make the military account for its human rights abuses. An estimated 2000 people died during a nine-year military operation from 1989... [Aceh, unlike ET,] has not received any international support[, but]... Aceh's calls for independence have increased since the Government allowed E[T] to vote to break away in August. On November 8, more than half a million people flooded Aceh's capital Banda Aceh to demand a referendum... Analysts worry that a breakaway Aceh will trigger the disintegration of Indonesia. "If this country breaks up, these archipelagic seas would become internationalised. Anybody could come in and it will be a battleground between various interests," said [the minister]. "...It would be more dangerous for anyone to venture into these waters... they would be harassed, pirated." The International Maritime Bureau reported that the number of actual or attempted pirate raids worldwide surged more than 25[%] to 180 in the first nine months of this year... More than a third of the attacks took place in Indonesian waters. In August, a department of the U[N] called on Southeast Asian nations, particularly Indonesia, to respond immediately.

...The [UN] chief has outlined a plan for the UN to take control and protect E[T] with a 9000-strong peace-keeping force... [which] would replace the A[US]n-led force... The UN is to assume civilian and military control... after Indonesia's Parliament ratifies the results of the independence referendum... But because of the precarious humanitarian situation in the province... the UN civilian authority must immediately take charge of infrastructure, including water, electricity, hospitals, courts and some public offices... [the Secretary-General] said... In many ways, [his proposal for ET] is similar to his plan for Kosovo after Nato ended its bombing campaign and Yugoslav forces withdrew from the province... But unlike Kosovo, there will be more need for international experts to run those public sectors... [However, with a US] debt of \$US1.7 billion... the U[N] has few funds to pay for operations in Kosovo this year, much less new ones in E[T], Sierra Leone or the Democratic Congo, says a senior UN finance official. "The U[N] is running on empty with many miles left to travel,"... the... undersecretary-general for management, said yesterday... [I]n December the world body would have an estimated cash balance of around \$US727 million, but all except \$2 million of that was owed to countries which fielded peacekeepers and were never paid. The operation in Kosovo... had received only \$US35 million of the \$US200 million requested and the \$US135 million approved by the General Assembly... Officials estimate the new mission in E[T] could cost half a billion dollars next year... [The undersecretary-general spoke after the official and the] Secretary-General... made presentations to the assembly's finance committee, where the US arrears were sharply criticised. [The] US Ambassador... insisted that the UN must observe "budget discipline" and sound management principles as well as lowering the US dues from 25[%] to 22[%] of the organisation's budget. "A UN budget that is sensible and lean, a scale of assessments that is fair, is not something the U[N] can just hope to do. It is what the UN must do," [the ambassador] said. No one else agreed with him. Britain's [UN ambassador] said his country, not the U[S], was the largest "net creditor" because of funds owed to it for peacekeeping... A typical comment came from Singapore's deputy representative[, who]... described the situation as "most bizarre" because the US, unlike other debtors, was not a "failed state" or one that was not doing well economically. At the same session, [the Secretary-General] complained that member states were adopting resolutions for meaningless administrative tasks without "responding effectively to real problems and the needs of real people."

...The US has paid \$US151 million... to the UN in the past six days – enough to save its vote in the General Assembly. UN officials in New York confirmed the payments and said the new funds had put Washington \$US43 million over what it needed to fulfil conditions in the UN Charter and keep its vote in the 188-member assembly. They said the US debt was now down to \$US1.17 billion – until January 1, when it would be billed for new dues... • N[Z]ers are being asked] to donate to famine appeals... The UN estimates that some eight million people are threatened with starvation in Ethiopia, and a similar number face famine in neighbouring Horn of Africa states... After hearing a report by a special envoy to the area, EU foreign ministers... urged coordination with the U[N] to ensure the efficient and speedy delivery of international aid.

...As the desert sun began to dip towards the scorching horizon, Bashir Ahmed Abdi died. The 3-year-old had spend his last day unconscious in a tiny hut built from sticks and sacking, in the middle of a barren, red-earthed plain. His mother fed him a little water and food around noon. It was all there was. [His mother] was the only one to notice when the emaciated boy's shallow breathing stopped. Only when her shoulders began to shake with tight, constricted, coughing sobs did her husband realise that his youngest child was dead. [The father] touched the boy's hollowed cheeks and then slowly pulled a faded blanket over his body. The blanket covered everything but the boy's feet, still cut and callused from the 10-day walk that had brought the family to this place. His legs rested on the rim of a wicker basket that has, in the last week, been a funeral bier for three of the couple's five children. The... family's hut is at the edge of a settlement of 9000 starving people that did not exist a month ago. Now it swells every day as more of southern Ethiopia's desert farmers stagger in from the bush... Some have trekked 240km, mainly at night to avoid the heat. They have abandoned their villages, now empty but for dead livestock... Famine has come again to Ethiopia... [In 1985,] news reports brought

the desperate scenes in the hunger camps into the living rooms of the Western world and sparked the Live Aid appeal, [but now] people are dying again. So far, the deaths are “only” in the thousands. But a catastrophe is imminent... Since the last famine and the fall of the Soviet-backed Marxist regime... the new Government has worked hard to guard against a repeat. But the country’s population has nearly doubled since then and Ethiopia is deeply in debt... Although the E[U and U]S... have pledged nearly a million tonnes of aid, little has reached the capital... let alone the remote regions where people are suffering the most... [The] deputy head of the Government’s Disaster Prevention Planning Committee, said all the aid pumped into Ethiopia after the last famine has done little to stave off the present crisis. “Most of it was spent on emergency provision, not long-term development.” Although some roads were built with the international cash, the logistics facing aid workers are still huge. Even getting food into Addis Ababa may be impossible. The continuing war between Ethiopia and Eritrea has sucked up valuable funds and limited access to the small independent port of Djibouti. There are no planes to mount the huge airlift that might be the lifeline to save thousands more from starvation. The new roads that do exist are in appalling condition. Some areas remain inaccessible to vehicles altogether. Bandits pose another threat. An aid worker in Ogaden was killed this month [during] a robbery... Many say it has taken the international community too long to react... “We have been screaming about this for a year,” said one World Food Programme adviser. “It seems it takes dead people on TV to get anything moving.”

...Why did we let it happen again? ...I am kneeling on the ground, crouching so my eyes can look directly into his. Down here, in this children’s world, in this forest of adult legs, [the boy] looks just as bewildered as [it] did from above... [The boy] is what we have come looking for... the classic famine child... His arms and legs are distressingly thin and his stomach is distended. [The boy] is four but looks as if [it] weighs less than a 1-year-old. The flesh has shrunk to nothing around his face, giving him the highly defined cheekbones that slimming Westerners crave. But his jaw has shrivelled to a ghastly point. By contrast his head has remained the size that nature intended, as if to signal that here, in the seat of his consciousness, his personhood remains undiminished. We fix each other’s gaze. I am looking into the eyes of an equal. Above us his mother is telling the rest of the press pack their story... The notebooks close, and the legs step back so the photographers can let off their motorised cameras, shooting frame after frame of the famished boy. It is an eerie compact between his mother, the media, the Government officials and the aid workers. Everyone knows that without pictures like this there will be no food aid. Everyone consciously conspires in the indignity, except the little boy. We have been here before... [In 1985] there was famine on a terrible scale in Ethiopia. Then I walked through the refugee camps in Korem, Kobbo, Kembolcha and a grim litany of other places that remain with me still. I saw thousands of little boys and girls like Abdifata. So, thanks to the television cameras, did [a British singer]. His indignation became the irresistible force that created the biggest fundraising event the world had ever seen. A billion people watched the Live Aid concert and gave the largest amount ever raised for charity. The world would make sure, we said, that this would never happen again. So how have we come back to this? The first thing to say, however, is that we are not back in the same place. Abdifata may be dead by the time you read this. His mother will be forever scarred by the events of these past months. Yet, thankfully, her anguish has so far been repeated here hundreds of times rather than hundreds of thousands of times as it was in 1985. For today, though things are grim in the Ogaden, they are not yet beyond hope in the rest of the country, most particularly in the highlands where the vast majority of those at risk live. It is still not too late to save the 8 million people estimated to be at risk of starvation throughout the land. Throughout Ethiopia things are different from 1985. Then, millions of people abandoned their homes and congregated at food distribution places that swiftly became swills of dirt and disease; today, most people are still at home, surviving – just – on food aid rations... The Government context has changed, too. In 1985 the country was run as a Soviet-style command economy by a blood-thirsty dictator... (now being sheltered... in Zimbabwe). Today there is a democratic Government (up for re-election next month), which has followed a more market-led approach. In the bad old days there was no incentive for farmers to produce a crop surplus – even if they could – because they were forced to sell it to the Government at a ludicrously low price. Now farmers are free to sell on the open market – and they have lifted production to such an extent that in 1997, for the first time in its history, Ethiopia became a net exporter of grain. But most significantly the Government has set up an effective early warning system, which monitors rainfall, along with crop and livestock conditions, and prices of both in the marketplace. Alongside that it has established an emergency food security reserve and built stocks to 300,000 tonnes, which it began to hand out last year when the third year of drought began to bite. So what has gone wrong? The chief problem lies with us in the Western world. Last year the developed countries promised deliveries of cereals to replenish that dwindling food reserve. We promised, but we didn’t deliver. That reserve is now down to a critical 35,000 tonnes. It will run out [soon]... And although donors, like the U[S and EU] – shamed by the pictures of dying children on our TV screens – have promised to deliver the amount of food needed, there is no saying how long it will take to arrive. In the past the notoriously bureaucratic EU has routinely taken five months to deliver. On some occasions, as in Cambodia, its food actually arrived when the crisis was over and the vulnerable had died. To cover their embarrassment at having ignored the early warning – which they insisted be set up – Western donors have been blaming Ethiopia’s war with Eritrea, which invaded its territory in 1998. Self-evidently it would be better if the country were not trying to repel an invader at the same time as coping with the threat of famine. But the war is a standoff with skirmishes rather than a fullscale battle, and present defence spending is only a third of what it was in 1985...

It is the kind of thing you thought just did not happen any more. The young conscripts were told by their superiors that it was time for the big push. They were to go over the top and run upon the enemy trenches. Out they climbed. As instructed, they... advanced at a slow running pace upon the bunkers of the foe. The machineguns spat. From one end the khaki conscripts began to fall, like a line of dominoes. But behind them came another wave. Tens of thousands died that day to capture a short stretch of mud... It ought to be a fading recollection of the pointless horror of... W[W1]. But it is an account from survivors of a war which is being fought today. The world’s silliest war, between two of the poorest nations... “It is like two bald [guys] fighting over a comb,” said one Western diplomat. But what is it actually about? No one seems really to be able to explain, for the nominal issue – a tiny disputed border region of no value – seems too preposterous. The war had taken its toll on the two economies before the drought set in... Businesses are suffering and economic growth has taken a dive. Revenue from the ports which served Ethiopia has dried up. The oil refinery in Assab is shut. [Yet, i]n the past 18 months, both sides have spent large sums on arms and ammunition. Eritrea has bought MiG 29s and Ethiopia has bought Sukhoi 27s, Mi 24 helicopter gunships, and Mi 8 cargo helicopters, all from Russia. Ethiopia has also bought arms and ammunition from China, and tanks from Bulgaria. Ethiopia will not launch another offensive in the next few months with famine looming. And neither wants to fight in the rainy season... But come the autumn the world’s most senseless war could all too easily recommence.

...the recently rearmed Sierra Leone Army and the pro-Government Kamajors – a militia made up of traditional hunters – ...drove rebel forces further from the capital [yesterday] as the Government moved to head off a feared guerrilla offensive on Freetown. The... fighting near the town of Newton, 40km east of Freetown, came as U[N] peacekeeping troops and pro-Government forces geared up for a possible Revolutionary United Front... advance on the nervous capital, where thousands of frightened villagers have sought sanctuary in recent days. The battle near Newton... [did] not involve... UN peacekeepers... said... a UN spokes[person] in Freetown. They did[, however,] come under rebel fire... along a key highway at Port Loko, 105km to the east of Freetown. No UN casualties were reported, but there were unconfirmed reports some rebels were wounded... In Washington, [the US] President... dispatched... a special envoy to the region in an effort to halt “a return to all-out war.” The President also directed American military officials to hasten efforts to ferry in more international peacekeepers... Chaos swept Sierra Leone after a Nigerian-led regional intervention force – which had been in the country along with UN peacekeepers – pulled out last week. Angered by efforts to disarm them, the rebels – who were to share power with the Government under a peace accord signed in July – began seizing peacekeepers. By week’s end, they held more than 500 UN personnel... The UN wants to speed deployment of additional peacekeepers to bring its 8700-strong force up to its mandated strength of 11,100. [The UN Secretary-General] suggested that the peacekeepers may need to take on a more active military role to enforce

the country's peace accord. Britain signalled that crack paratroops sent to Freetown on an evacuation mission at the weekend might stay for another month – far longer than the timeframe of a week as previously announced. But B[ritain's]... Government, worried that public opinion is against any "mission creep," repeated that the troops would not take part in combat... [– although the] Foreign Secretary... repeated a warning to the rebels that if British troops came under fire, they would hit back and hit back hard. Russia said it was considering sending a helicopter unit and paratroopers to beef up the US force and two Jordanian parachute companies were expected to fly to Freetown within 48 hours. Canada, the Netherlands, Russia and the U[S] were to help ferry in more troops from Jordan, India and Bangladesh.

...As fighting spilled outside the Freetown home of... the main leader of rebel forces in Sierra Leone, diplomats in New York struggled with a conundrum that is pivotal to the prospects for peace in the country. What should they do with this [rebel leader] whom they know to be a beast? No one at the U[N] questions that a trial of [the] former Army corporal and TV camera[-operator] who took control of the ...RUF... in 1991, would end with his conviction [for] some of the worst human rights crimes ever seen. But would such a trial now help Sierra Leone? It was... July's Lome peace accord, which was meant to bring an end to... years of civil war, that ensured [the RUF leader]'s continued influence on his country. In return for a pledge to disarm, [the rebel leader] was given a cabinet position as well as an amnesty from prosecution for him and his followers. "Everybody knows the truth that [the RUF leader] is totally to blame for the violence at the moment," one senior Western diplomat at the UN commented. "In a normal world that would put him beyond the pale." ...The crimes committed by the rebels during... [the] civil war have been documented by groups such as Human Rights Watch. In a brutal quest to suppress all opposition in the population, they routinely hacked limbs from civilians and raped [gals]. Children as young as 10 were forced to fight with the rebel militia. As many as 10,000 children, some given cocaine and scarred by the initials RUF carved into their flesh, were pressed into fighting. [The RUF leader] kept discipline by ordering the execution of any commanders who challenged him. Officials in New York estimate that only about a quarter of the estimated 16,000 rebels under his... command have entered UN disarmament camps and handed over their weapons. And most of those have been in areas far away from the country's diamond mines. Nor is there any reason to suppose that the RUF has honoured the agreement to suspend mining of diamonds until full peace has been restored. Whether or not the UN Security Council will seek to remove [the RUF leader] from the picture entirely and attempt to impose justice on him, perhaps through a court dedicated to unearthing the crimes committed in Sierra Leone or a commission of inquiry, is unclear. The guerrillas are armed by renegade leaders of surrounding states, motivated purely by greed for diamonds... [The] RUF has, in the past two years, received at least five large plane loads of weapons from eastern Europe, channelled through Burkina Faso... The shipments were in breach of an international arms embargo.

...Time once more to whistle up the dogs of war? ...The U[N] debacle in Sierra Leone has reopened controversy over the role of "mercenary" teams – or as they prefer to be called, private military companies – in suppressing rebels in countries racked by civil war. Both Britain's Sandline International and South Africa's Executive Outcomes have operated in Sierra Leone in the past on behalf of... [the Sierra Leone] Government. Senior figures from both firms say that using private military companies could have prevented the present crisis. "...the RUF, are not soldiers; they are criminals and should be treated as such," says a former senior officer of the Executive Outcomes force that routed the rebels in 1995. "They are no match for highly trained, properly equipped soldiers whose commander has a clear mandate. The problem for the UN is that they do not have a clear mandate. You cannot sign an accord with rebels in this situation. That is why 500 soldiers have been taken hostage." [A c]olonel... of Sandline, agrees: "It's the standard problem for the UN. They have no standing military structure, no commonality of equipment, no common training or language. All the fabric that makes up a professional fighting force is missing." Writing in *Business Day* magazine, [a]South African journalist... called for Executive Outcomes to be allowed back into Sierra Leone. The Sierra Leone Government was forced by the World Bank to disperse with the firm's services at the beginning of 1997 because of the cost of the contract... In 1995, it took an Executive Outcomes force of 300 troops supported by four helicopters two months to suppress the rebels at a cost to the Sierra Leone Government of \$US1.7 million a month plus some mining concessions. After the main operation, it required just 90 soldiers to keep the lid on the rebels at a cost of \$US55,000 a day... [T]he UN has just increased the number of [peacekeeping]troops in Sierra Leone to 11,000...

Is Sierra Leone the end of UN peacekeeping? ..."So far, we have had no offers," said... [the chief UN spokesperson of his Secretary-General]'s call for the major military powers to send experienced troops to bolster the crumbling UN peacekeeping operation in Sierra Leone. [The spokesperson] should not hold his breath. The U[S] offered to airlift Bangladeshi troops to the devastated West African country, but none of its own. Britain initially sent 800 paratroopers to secure Freetown's airport and evacuate Western civilians who are threatened by the rapid advance of... [RUF] rebels. Russia promised to fly in some Indian and Jordanian soldiers earmarked for the UN force, but said nothing about sending Russian troops. "We would have liked to see some of the governments with capacity, with good armies and well-trained soldiers, to participate," said [the Secretary-General] mournfully. "But they are not running forward to contribute to this force. We have to take the forces we get." A few thousand Western ground troops, backed by all the high-tech weaponry that the US can rapidly deploy, could quickly halt [the RUF leader]'s advance on Freetown and destroy the bulk of his... forces. They are, after all, mostly drug and drink-sodden teenagers with much experience in chopping off the limbs of helpless civilians, but few real military skills. But that would involve killing lots of those teenagers. It looks bad on television when heavily armed white [adults] slaughter ragged African kids – even drug-crazed, murderous ones. It plays even worse with the Western public when some of those same Western troops die on live television, and the reality of ground war is soldiers get killed. So there will be no Western troops for Sierra Leone, even if Freetown is overrun by the RUF again as it was in January... (when around 5000 civilians were butchered in a few days). But there should be no need for Western troops anyway. The... UN troops already in the country, if properly equipped and led, should be more than a match for... ill-disciplined thugs. Some of the UN troops, like the Zambian soldiers who make up most of the 500-plus UN troops being held hostage by the rebels, are poorly equipped and a bit out of their depth in Sierra Leone. The bulk of the force, however, is made up of Indian, Nigerian and Jordanian soldiers whose military skills are not in question. Indeed, the situation in Sierra Leone was fairly much under control until a regional peacekeeping force dominated by the Nigerian Army handed over to the UN less than two weeks ago. The problem is the UN. The UN bureaucracy is capable (barely) of running a classic peacekeeping operation where forces are deployed into a static situation and a ceasefire is already being observed. It is ill-fitted to command a real-time military operation where the bullets are flying and hard decisions are needed. And it gets worse. The UN system is almost congenitally incapable of ordering troops under its command to shoot people, even if killing them is the only way to save the lives of far greater numbers. The bad guys know this, and regularly take advantage of it. It's not just Zambian troops who fall victim to this phenomenon. Remember the Western soldiers serving with the UN in Bosnia whom the Serbs seized and tied to stakes in 1995 in order to deter Nato air attacks? There is a useful contrast to be drawn between Bosnia in 1992-95, where mainly Western troops under UN command failed miserably to prevent a Serbian genocide of the Muslim population, and Kosovo... where Western forces under Nato command nipped a similar situation in the bud by using limited military force against Serbia. A similar contrast can be drawn between the brutally effective regional intervention force (Ecomog) under Nigerian leadership that routed [RUF] forces and imposed a ceasefire in Sierra Leone, and the UN force that has now replaced it. The Nigerian troops shot first, looted freely, and rarely took prisoners, but they did bring a kind of peace to the country. The UN troops are much better behaved, and the slaughter has started again. The UN hasn't actually got worse since the end of the Cold War. It's just that the tasks have got a lot harder. If the job is to stop a genocide or to halt a civil war, perhaps it is best left to regional security organisations (like Nato in Kosovo) or coalitions of the like-minded and willing (like... [Ecomog]). There would still [be]the problem of providing these alliances and coalitions with legal cover from the UN Security Council (which Nato conspicuously lacked in Kosovo)[, and t]he Western powers, in

particular, would remain reluctant to commit their ground forces to combat... But at least there would be some chance that the job gets done properly.

...The bodies of nine rebels lie piled up under reed mats after being carried from the spot where they were ambushed and shot. A Sierra Leone Government soldier raises a long stick and brings it down on the chest of one of them with a sickening thud. "We have killed the rebels here," [the SLA soldier] says triumphantly, though the wreckage of the town of Masiaka says little about victory and much about the appalling destruction of almost a decade of civil war. Masiaka is a ghost town and the road to it is a scary drive through jungle and bush deserted of everyone except gun-totting soldiers. Its streets are littered with cartridge casings... and its buildings are collapsed and burned-out shells. The town straddles a vital crossroads on the main road to the interior from the capital Freetown. After fierce battles this week it was at last firmly in Government hands. The capture of the town, still deserted by all its previous inhabitants, is a victory for the current U[N] and British strategy of fighting the rebels... The plan seems to involve providing the planning expertise and logistical back-up to allow the Sierra Leone Army and its allied militias to fight the war. It is working and a string of villages and towns have fallen to the Government... But the UN, and also Britain, have chosen strange allies in their fight against the fearsome RUF. The road to Masiaka, about 64km from Freetown, is punctuated by roadblocks [patrol]led by excitable troops, especially those from the Civilian Defence Force militia, also known as the Kamajors, which means "powerful ones" in the local Mende language. At one roadblock SLA troops are already gulping down plastic sachets of powerful gin, despite the fact that it is only 10 o'clock in the morning. At others, scruffy soldiers armed with assault rifles angrily demand gifts of cigarettes, bread or drink before allowing vehicles through. In many ways it is hard to tell the Kamajors, who are full of teenage boys, from the RUF, whose use of drugged child soldiers is notorious... The battles ahead lie on the road that leads out of Masiaka and towards the RUF stronghold of Makeni and beyond that to the diamond fields far to the east. About 4.8km beyond Masiaka, SLA and Kamajor fighters closed on an important bridge held by the RUF. However, it will take weeks and maybe even months for Sierra Leone's conflict to be settled on the ground, which is precisely what the UN mission to the country was meant to avoid.

...Sierra Leonean rebels appear to have released the last of more than 500 U[N] peacekeepers they took hostage almost four weeks ago when a peace accord foundered. "We are optimistic that the release of the hostages signals a positive change of direction by the R[UF] in coming back to seek a peaceful settlement," said... the UN spokes[person] in Freetown. The last group of 85 hostages – all Zambian apart from a Gambian observer with a broken leg – returned to Freetown from the Liberian capital, Monrovia, yesterday. A further group of 223 Indian peacekeepers remain surrounded by rebels in two eastern towns... But what happened at a mission run by the Catholic charity Caritas in the town of Makani in the past few days is an ominous sign that the rebels are returning to a full-scale drive of forcible child recruitment... The Makani mission had in recent months become the home of around 240 former children at arms and girls used as sex slaves, all from 16 to 18. Some had been sent by RUF commanders after the country's fledgling peace accord... Almost all had been weaned from the drugs and alcohol which had fuelled their murderous rampage with the rebels. The mood of the RUF in Makani began to turn ugly as the war reignited and their leader... was captured. Last week the rebels suddenly turned up at the mission and demanded back its former soldiers. None wanted to return to the life spent meting out and watching death and maiming. Some of them tried to fight their former masters with kerosene bombs and stones. It was an unequal fight quickly over, and the rebels departed with 54 chosen children crying and pleading to be let go. The next few days were spent in fear that the rebels would come for the others. The staff and the older children decided the only option was to attempt to flee... They walked for 17km through the bush, the staff and the older children hushing the crying little ones as they dodged RUF patrols. But [at] the first village they went into, Mamudu, their luck ran out when they came upon a rebel unit. The children and the staff were lined up and the staff thought shooting would begin next. The RUF did not fire but they took all the money and food, and some of the clothes. When they were told the younger children would not survive without food and water, the rebels said that would save bullets... [T]he rebels... wanted to take the boys away, but in the end decided on only one, Kawutu... The rest of the party continued towards Freetown... Yesterday, after a three-day trek of 86km... 83 children and 27 staff from the mission arrived at another Caritas centre at Mahera, near the capital... The children's injuries were treated and they wolfed down 122 tins of rice and beans. They also discovered that Kawutu had escaped and made his own way there, following their trail.

...Fresh reports of murders, rapes and amputations by the rebel forces in Sierra Leone have emerged as British aid workers in Freetown go on red alert for fear of a rebel hit squad seeking "soft" targets. The British Department for International Development warned aid agencies to get out. One aid agency source said the department had received "credible intelligence" that a rebel assassination squad... may be in Freetown. Christian Aid has withdrawn its team while the Red Cross said it and other agencies were reviewing security. [Britain's] Foreign Office warned Britons to stay out of the country. The nature of the intelligence is unclear, but the threat is believed to have come after [Sierra Leone's] President... who is backed by Britain's military presence, announced that [the captured] RUF leader... would soon stand trial. The security fears follow the RUF's killing of two reporters last week. Outside the capital, fresh evidence of atrocities by the RUF have been reported by Human Rights Watch... A team from Human Rights Watch last week interviewed refugees from... Lungi who fled to the capital. One victim of the RUF was a 10-year-old girl who had been captured outside a village with her parents and 10 brothers and sisters... The... tiny girl[, who]... was flogged, then raped... said... [t]he rebels grabbed her sister... aged 20, the mother of a young baby. "They cut off both her hands and a foot," said the girl. "Then [my sister] died..." When Government troops attacked the rebels, [the girl] made her escape... [The 10-year-old] walked through bush roads to evade danger... One morning [the 10-year-old] saw a young girl and a [guy] lying by the side of the road. The girl's hands had been cut off, as had the [guy]'s right foot. Both were still alive, but barely breathing. These are the first reports of amputations that Human Rights Watch has heard for a year... The group's spokes[person]... said: "What we are most concerned about is the possibility of another Kosovo or E[T] happening behind RUF lines..."

...An Indonesian general is warning of the possible consequences of legislators' plans to question senior officers over the military's human rights abuses. "Who would not be offended if their father, or their leader, is treated like that...", [the general]... who heads the Kostrad Army elite force, told the *Media Indonesia* daily... [The] Lieutenant General... said plans by Parliament to summon several top generals over alleged rights abuses may... lead... soldiers... to act "wantonly." "If that happens, then pity the innocent people." ...the criticism of the generals was mostly the doing of "a few people who always make statements and corner TNI..." and had already exceeded "the limits of fairness." Several senior Army officers have been indirectly accused by the state-backed Commission of Human Rights Abuses in E[T] of orchestrating and supporting the violence in the territory that followed the vote for independence there on August 30. The commission plans to question [the] former armed forces commander[, who]... has denied the charges... [His] special team of lawyers plan to gather their own data and evidence in West Timor, and E[T] if possible, to counter the allegations. A member of the Indonesian commission... said in Dili that the military and police collected, dumped and buried bodies from massacres. They also cleaned the crime scenes to hide evidence... [L]ists... found of pro-independence people targeted for death... had been... termed "indications of genocide policy." And in Geneva, a U[N] commission of inquiry into human rights abuses has evidence that Indonesian troops and militia groups were involved in acts of terror in E[T]. "Witnesses gave evidence that intimidation and terror was systematically used... They also spoke of... sexual abuse and rape." These attacks extended to UN staff who went into E[T] after the Indonesian forces had withdrawn... The team were sent to E[T]... by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights... Members of the commission – from Costa Rica, Nigeria, India, Papua New Guinea and Germany – urged that investigations into atrocities continue, to bring those responsible to justice. On the basis of their report, [the] UN Secretary-General... will then have to decide whether to recommend the creation of an international war crimes tribunal for E[T].

...[the] American ambassador... has told Indonesia's military to bring those behind the violence in E[T] to trial. Suspects could face an international tribunal if Indonesia did not start proceedings, [the ambassador] said... Meanwhile... the... UN High Commission for Refugees... said

last night it was shocked by the growing number of deaths due to disease... in West Timor refugee camps... “More than 200 people, mostly children... have died of various illnesses over the last week in the Indonesian-run camps for E[Tese,” a UNHCR spokesperson] said. The UNHCR has limited access to the camps but is attempting to send in disease control experts to report on the deaths. Sanitary conditions at the camps have deteriorated due to flooding from the monsoon rains, which have led to growing problems of disease and hygiene. An estimated 100,000 E[T]ese refugees remain in camps in West Timor. [The UNHCR spokesperson also] said militia activity was a serious worry.

...Villagers in E[T]’s mountainous central southwest have again fled to the forest afraid for their lives, while others have organised vigilante groups to defend themselves against possible militia attack. The exodus to the mountains of 1200 people from the... village of Maununo, roughly 40km from the West Timor border, is the first time people have felt compelled to leave their homes since international security forces arrived in... [ET. T]he militia killed 12 people in Maununo in one of the worst single massacres recorded in the central southwestern region. The town’s entire population is now camped in the open air along a river not far from the village. “I will not return until the peacekeeping force send some soldiers to live in the town,” said... a mother of six, who is camped in the same patch of dirt... her family inhabited for a month... before the arrival of peacekeepers... Portuguese peacekeepers based in Ainaro, 10km north of the village, were reluctant to base soldiers in the village...

Indonesia’s reformist President... yesterday apologised for Jakarta’s often harsh 24-year occupation of E[T], but his landmark visit was marred by gunshots and angry protests. U[N] peacekeepers from Portugal fired two warning shots to calm a waiting crowd... of... 5000... as [the President] drove into Dili from the city’s Komoro Airport. [The President] closed his brief visit by laying wreaths at Dili’s Santa Cruz cemetery, the site of an infamous 1991 massacre by Indonesian troops... [-] when... up to 250 people... on a funeral procession... died... [(I)Indonesian authorities put the number at more than 50] [-] ...and at a neighbouring cemetery where Indonesian soldiers who died in a long guerrilla war are buried... It was the first official visit by an Indonesian leader since Jakarta gave up its claim to the territory... Just after declaring [it] felt “at home” in Dili soon after his arrival, [the President] was forced to shelter in the governor’s palace, which now serves as offices for the interim UN administration. Around 300 protesters noisily demanded Indonesia reveal the truth about the deaths or disappearances of resistance fighters during its 24-year occupation.

...The A[US]n Defence Force denied yesterday that a specialist team had been sent to E[T] to curb the growing number of illegal weapons discharges by A[US]n peacekeeping troops. A report in yesterday’s *Sunday Telegraph* said one senior Interfet officer had narrowly missed an enlisted [soldier] when his weapon fired accidentally. The paper said... experts had been brought in after more than 65 cases of unauthorised firing by Interfet troops. The problems were reportedly related to cutbacks in the length of basic infantry training from 10 to six weeks and budget cuts which reduced the practice time for troops with the standard issue 5.56mm Steyr assault rifle. Defence authorities were said to be concerned about the possibility that troops may end up seriously wounding or even killing one of their own number. In A[US]’s Somalia deployment, Lance Corporal Shannon McAlinney was shot and killed after an unauthorised discharge. But in... Dili, [an Interfet spokesperson]... said the latest reports were inaccurate. “There’s no expert team, never has been...” ...Fines for troops found to have unlawfully fired their weapons include two weeks’ loss of pay and a black mark on their records.

...A hail of bullets over... [the squadron leader]’s head didn’t stop him helping a shot colleague on to a helicopter in an emergency evacuation at an E[T] village. The West Harbour [resident]’s actions in the week leading up to the independence referendum in E[T]... earned him... the N[Z] Gallantry Decoration for acts of exceptional gallantry in situations of danger. [But the squadron leader says it] didn’t think of the danger when protecting frightened E[T]ese and his own colleagues from militia. “...although it’s scary, it’s a buzz at the same time.” ...now [stationed back at]... Whenuapai air base[, the squadron leader says it]... empathises... with W[W]II veterans who didn’t know how to communicate with people when they arrived home. “I didn’t have to do any one on one combat like those guys but it’s a different reality.” • ...A donation of 3000 pairs of shoes to E[T] has been stopped after most were found to be either high heels or white wedding shoes – not the most appropriate attire in the war-ravaged state. Sandals and jandals are the footwear of choice in E[T] since many roads and footpaths are still being cleared after the violence which accompanied independence from Indonesia. The shoes were to be loaded in the Royal N[Z] Navy frigate Endeavour, but the aid agency World Vision found most of them would be impractical... [The] director of communications at World Vision... said the only possible place where high heels could be of use in the future in Timor was in the capital, Dili... [The director also] said the supplier who donated the shoes wanted to remain anonymous[, then added that]... the shoes were not useless and would be sent to other countries... [such as] India or Cambodia. Th[e]... Lieutenant-Commander... from the Endeavour, said: “I think they realised that last season’s shoes with high heels were not the most entirely appropriate footwear for Timor.” ...The Endeavour sails for E[T] on Wednesday... laden with diesel, aviation fuel, clothes, water pumps and computers.

...Army medics battled in vain to save a N[Z] soldier who was critically injured during a road accident in E[T. His]... Unimog utility truck rolled down a 6m bank on Tuesday... Warrant Officer Tony Walser... had been transporting a load of gravel and was following another truck when the road, believed to have been weakened by monsoon rains, collapsed under his vehicle. The accident happened 8km from the border with West Timor... An Army inquiry is under way... Walser had been in the Army for 16 years and was with the second wave of N[Z] soldiers to be deployed in E[T]... Walser’s body is in Darwin and will be flown to N[Z] once formalities are completed. The 37-year-old father of three is expected to be given full military honours, although the decision about the style of funeral rests with his partner... Last night [the P]M... offered her condolences to his family over the tragedy. “I know the thoughts of every parliamentarian will be with his family. They can be proud of hi[m]...” ...Walser was the first N[Z] soldier to die on operational duty in 28 years. The last was Private Kenneth Horomai Harding, who was killed in Vietnam in 1971.

...As mourners filed past Leonard Manning’s grave, many paused to let fall a poppy – or a tear. Private Leonard William Manning, aged 24, was laid to rest on Saturday at Rangiriri, near his hometown of Te Kauwhata, after dying in combat a week ago today... the first N[Z] soldier killed in action [since 1971]. About 800 mourners had earlier attended his funeral service at his old school, Te Kauwhata College, to comfort his grieving family. They included [the P]M... Army Chief of Staff... and [the AUS]n High Commissioner... During his leave [Manning] planned to visit the A[US]n Army recruiting office... [because] the \$27,000... earned in the N[Z] Army would rise to \$41,000 with the A[US]ns, and all money earned in E[T] would be fax free. The P[M], visibly shaken at the beginning of her eulogy, had stern words for the killers and the Indonesian Government. “What we all share is absolute repugnance at what happened to Private Manning. NZ has conveyed that strong message to Indonesia. We want the militias disbanded by Indonesia and we want Private Manning’s murderers tracked down and brought to justice.” ...Among the most moving tributes was one in uncertain English from the schoolchildren of a small E[T]ese village, Bobonaro. “We were greatly distressed hearing of happened. We wish to express our greatest sympathy.” Private Manning’s 22-year-old sister... said during the service: “There are no words on this Earth to do you justice, Leonard. You were always the best you could be, and I am so proud of you – I always have been, you know that.” Private Manning’s mother... read out her son’s last letter home.

...WHEN the letter arrived, it brought more tears from a family who thought they were all cried out. “Dear Mum and Dad,” the note read. “Hope this letter finds you well and you’re not missing me too much.” The letter was written by Private Leonard William Manning 11 days before his murdered and mutilated body was found in E[T]’s rugged mountains. It reached the family home three days ago. Private Manning[, who]... was shot twice by pro-Indonesian militia... was laid to rest with full military honours in a service attended by... a host of... dignitaries. His body was taken to the Rangiriri cemetery on a gun carriage escorted by three Maori warriors and an honour guard with weapons reversed. Three volleys were fired – the ultimate mark of respect for a fallen soldier – and, as the mournful notes of the Last Post hung in the still air, Pte Manning was

lowered into the ground. As Pte Manning's comrades farewelled him with a haka, [his parents]... were presented with memories of an army career that meant so much to him. They received the N[Z] flag that draped his coffin, his U[N] medal for service in E[T] and the pale blue U[N] flag.

...On November 4, 1918, The Great War had a week to run when the then Lieutenant Curly Blyth and the New Zealand Rifle Brigade were ordered to rout the German soldiers occupying the small French town of Le Quesnoy on the border with Belgium. With artillery support the N[Z]ers could have achieved the mission with little or no loss of life. But the centuries-old ramparts surrounding the town were too precious and historically significant to destroy, the villagers told the Kiwi soldiers. Would they please not use their big guns. The N[Z]ers obliged, fixing their long bayonets to their .303 Lee Enfield rifles and going over the top, eventually capturing the town after fierce hand-to-hand fighting. The cost to the N[Z]ers was high – 200 killed or wounded – but the victorious N[Z]ers were embraced by the villagers with a warmth that has not faded in 8[decade]s. Four years ago Blyth received France's highest honour, the Legion of Honour, not only for his role in liberating Le Quesnoy, but also for his tireless work in keeping the bond between Le Quesnoy and N[Z] alive. In Le Quesnoy, the N[Z] flag which flies every day at the Town Hall was at half mast last week... Blyth's indomitable and irrepressible spirit was with him until the day [the]... Lieutenant-Colonel... died... A stroke robbed Blyth of his speech several years ago but his wit and awareness were never dulled... His death last week brought a tribute from [NZ's P]M... who said it was nearly the end of an era with only one W[W]I survivor remaining. Blyth will be farewelled with full military honours at 2pm tomorrow at St Mary's Church in Holy Trinity Cathedral in Parnell, Auckland, in a service [Blyth] organised several years ago... A volley of shots will be fired from the honour guard as Blyth's casket is carried from the cathedral and placed on a 25-pound gun carriage... The last time the gun carriage was used was for the full military funeral of Private Leonard Manning, the N[Z] soldier shot dead by militia in East Timor in July...

In a brazen show of force yesterday, about 1000 militia... gathered for the funeral of one of their commanders. The unexplained murder on Tuesday of Olivio Mendosa Moruk is said to have triggered Wednesday's rampage against... a refugee camp in West Timor... [when] 20 people... were... massacred... [There is] no information so far about the [number of] wounded... As well as the deaths, 69 houses were reportedly destroyed and about 100 cattle slaughtered... near the town of Betun, just south of Atambua where three U[N] relief workers were brutally murdered... Betan is a stronghold for the militia... who razed E[T] after it voted... to end Indonesia's military rule and who fear returning to their homeland, now under UN rule. Although details of ongoing violence were sketchy, it appears law and order has broken down in the... border... region...

A DOZEN air crew from Hobsonville are recovering after an heroic rescue mission to West Timor. Three Iroquois helicopters from 3 Squadron based in E[T] lifted 43 U[N] workers to safety after four of their colleagues were murdered by militia. About 50 west Auckland air force staff took part in the rescue, [which included a]... helicopter... from A[US]... After landing at Atambua, 5 kilometres inside West Timor... soldiers patrolled the landing zone while the helicopters carried the UN workers back across the border in two trips... [N]o air force crew were hurt in the rescue... ■ [NZ's]... Defence Minister... has told Parliament... [that] [l]egislation to reverse a decline in the number of territorial soldiers will be introduced soon... A[n A]ct MP... claimed yesterday that the territorial service was at the point of collapse, after a steady decline in the number of people participating in it. Statistics... showed that in the past 10 years the number of territorials had fallen from 5332 to 2467. Army territorials were down from 4615... to 1920 at the beginning of this year... Territorials were praised by the Government for their contribution to the E[T] peacekeeping force. A survey of the 108 territorials who went to E[T] as part of NZBatt 3 found half had resigned from civilian jobs because they could not get paid or unpaid leave. There was another embarrassment for the Army when some territorials returning home from E[T] were sent letters saying they had been overpaid... and... threatened [the] soldiers with court action if amounts of up to \$4700 were not repaid... The Army quickly apologised...

KIWI soldiers in E[T] are set to get a pay rise after their brave rescue of U[N] aid workers from rampaging militia... World leaders, including [the US] president... praised the courage of the Kiwi peacekeepers... But the Kiwi troops are the second-lowest paid of the multi-national force in E[T], with a daily danger allowance of \$96 – a third of the A[US]n allowance. Disgruntled squaddies are looking to quit and join the A[US]ns. "Something has to be done," [NZ's PM] told *Sunday News* from New York where [it] has been at a UN security council meeting... Braving hundreds of gun-toting, machete-wielding militia – who had already butchered three UN workers – the Kiwi soldiers flew into the killing zone in three Iroquois helicopters and rescued 43 UN workers. Eight... soldiers and two medics guarded other UN staff until the choppers returned to airlift them to safety. [The PM] wants the N[Z] peacekeepers to get more money as an acknowledgment of their courage and as a tribute to Kiwi private Leonard Manning... "One of many sad things at the funeral of Leonard Manning was his mother reading his last letter that said [Leonard] was thinking of going to the A[US]ns because they get more money. If a young [NZer] is putting a lot on the line, including his life, for quite a low salary then we have to look at it." Even Pakistani soldiers get more than the Kiwis. Brazilian troops get twice as much a day and only the Canadians get less.

...Slaughter on a distant patch of soil, not for the first time, has trampled on the best-laid plans of [the UN Secretary-General, who]... had not meant to open the [UN] Summit with talk of tragedy. But [coming so soon] after the murder of three UN staff workers in West Timor, a rosy evocation of peace and light for [hu]mankind would have been tasteless. It is hard for any Secretary-General not to take loss of life in the UN family personally. The emotion felt by [the Secretary-General] was visible in his face as [it] stood at the podium of the General Assembly and asked a solemn favour of a hall filled with the world's most powerful people – to rise with him and to observe a minute of silence. Those 60 seconds of quiet among so querulous a group was an exceptional tribute. The prime ministers and the presidents and other sundry leaders all bowed their heads together. The deaths did more than just puncture the mood... [T]he British P[M] was one of those to make explicit what many in the corridors were already observing – that what happened on Indonesian territory was one more vivid reminder of the inadequacy of the current arrangements for UN peacekeeping. Yesterday, world leaders on the Security Council voted to overhaul peacekeeping operations to provide better trained troops that would respond faster to crises... Britain has already offered to establish a training school... Neither [the British PM] nor any of the other leaders needed the latest atrocity to drive home the need for peacekeeping improvements. Peacekeeping activities in the past weeks, months and years have supplied [the Secretary-General] and his organisation with enough humiliation and catastrophe already. The worst has been in Sierra Leone, where 500 UN blue helmets were taken hostage... and where even now six British soldiers are being held in captivity... One of the blackest days came in Rwanda in 1994, when seven Belgian soldiers serving with the UN died trying to protect the country's P[M]. Reform is always a sluggish business at the UN but the will to make peacekeeping work better has gradually grown... "Increasingly, the U[N] has been called into situations where brave people seek reconciliation but where the enemies seek to undermine it," [the US President] said, citing UN peacekeeping operations in E[T] and Sierra Leone. "But in both cases, the UN did not have the tools to finish the job. We must provide those tools..." ...[the US President], however, has always found it easier to offer encouragement to the UN – and there is no reason to doubt his personal commitment to the UN ideal – than to deliver any material help, thanks to hostility to the body among Republicans on Capitol Hill. No delegates at the U[N] can listen to a US President without recalling the... back payments... that Washington owes... [□ NZ] peacekeepers in E[T] are being armed with heavy duty machineguns... Kiwi infantry have been carrying Steyr 5.56mm rifles and machineguns. But they can't penetrate the thick jungle so more patrols are being given 7.62mm guns – capable of firing through small trees killing anyone hiding behind... The soldiers are being given the bigger guns after the death of private Leonard Manning[, who]... was carrying the only 5.56mm machinegun in his Bravo Company patrol – who were out-gunned by the militia... "In the jungle you want as many big ass guns as possible. It is a sad lesson to learn from the death of private Manning,"...

The Kiwis have also changed procedures. Rather than going into the jungle to track down the enemy they are setting up posts and letting the militia come to them.

...A U[N] investigating team has found that N[Z] peacekeepers were justified in killing an Indonesian soldier last month. The finding came just hours after [NZ's P]M... dismissed new concerns raised by the Indonesians about the shooting as "different levels of the Indonesian system speaking at different places". Initially, the local Indonesian commander was reported as accepting responsibility for the gunfight, but last week the Indonesian Government issued statements demanding investigations into the "unprovoked attack"... [NZ's] Foreign Affairs Minister... said Indonesia had made a "formal and strong" protest to Untaet (the transitional authority in E[T]) calling for an investigation... The... 21-year-old sergeant, was shot dead... in a clash with about 30 N[Z] troops. The soldier, out of uniform, fired at least two shots at the peacekeepers from the Indonesian side of the unmarked border before they returned fire[– hitting him with bullets '22 times'. NZ]... had indicated its regret but remained confident the N[Z] troops had acted in accordance with the UN's rules of engagement. There had been no indication the incident would upset our relationship with Indonesia's new Administration[. The PM]... said yesterday that the issue was not between Indonesia and N[Z], but a matter for discussion between Indonesia and the UN... [Incidentally, another NZ] soldier has died in E[T]... Private Dean Russell Johnston, a 20-year-old movements operator, was found dead near the U[N] Obrigado Barracks in Dili at 3.45am yesterday. The U[N] military police are investigating, but do not believe [Dean] died as a result of military action or that anyone else was involved... Johnston was not on leave and it was unknown when [Dean] was last seen... N[Z] Joint forces would not elaborate on the circumstances surrounding his death... [which] brings the number of N[Z] service people] deaths in E[T] to five since troops were committed. [The other four are:]■... Warrant Officer Tony Michael Walser... ■... Staff Sergeant William Edward White[– who] died when the Unimog truck [it] was in plunged down a 30m bluff in Suai. ■... Private Boyd Reagan Henare Atkins, a 19-year-old infantry soldier,[who] died in a swimming accident while at a military recreation centre near Dili... ■... Private Leonard Manning...

THE militia[ember] suspected of murdering... Leonard Manning in E[T] has been found dead. Jacobus Bere was the leader of the Laksaur militia group. U[N] officials suspect Jacobus] led the ambush against Manning's Bravo Company... It is believed [Jacobus] was slain by [a]rival militia... But UN troops are still hunting about 10 others suspected of being involved in Manning's killing. They are thought to have fled to West Timor. Military sources told *Sunday News* Kiwi troops wanted revenge and would attack the suspected militia if they were found in E[T]... The UN is conducting a homicide investigation into Manning's death. "If we find the people responsible for the killing of the N[Z]er then we have the right to arrest them and bring them to court for justice," [a UN spokesperson] said. The N[Z] defence force report into the killing is due in about two weeks... [I]t is expected to focus on how Bravo Company came to be cut off from support...

No saving Private Manning... Private Leonard Manning's comrades tried but were unable to recover him immediately after [the Kiwi] was shot by E[T]ese militia... an Army Court of Inquiry has found... The report, made public yesterday after Private Manning's battalion returned to N[Z], says there was no opportunity for the out-numbered patrol to recover his body, because of the dominating position of the threat group and the lack of cover. "One of the patrol members attempted to make contact with Private Manning, but because of the way [Leonard] was lying and his lack of response, it was believed [Leonard] was dead." The soldier was able to rejoin the group, which had withdrawn after the initial militia volley. The six-m[ember] patrol had been tracking the group of what is now believed to be nine armed militia since the previous afternoon. It had seen the group the night before but the commanding officer was reluctant to follow at that stage, uncertain of its size. The soldiers set up an observation post, and during the night heard voices less than 100m away. A trip wire was also set off... The next morning the patrol came into contact with the group, which "held the upper hand tactically..." A militia sentry fired at the soldiers. "The initial rounds were directed at Private Manning, who was fatally hit by one of these shots." His body was recovered five hours later, with weapons and other kit missing. His throat had been cut and his ears removed after [the NZer] died, the report confirmed. It says the patrol members believed the militia sentry had opened fire because [the sentry] felt threatened by the proximity of the soldiers. The Army inquiry has found that nothing could have been done to prevent Private Manning's death. The Army has refused to make public complete details of the inquiry... The summary of the report does not mention that the patrol's Steyr rifles jammed during the firefight, as a group of soldiers in E[T] claimed last month in an anonymous e-mail. But [the]Defence Minister... said the claim was unfounded and the rifles did not jam. Meanwhile, forensic investigators are looking for the remains of five Western journalists, including a N[Z]er, murdered in E[T]... during Indonesia's occupation. [A]Darwin police investigator... is leading a team of four in the painstaking task of looking for proof that the five... died in the border town of Balibo while trying to cover the Indonesian attack...

U[N] investigators have sought international warrants to arrest three [people] – including a former Indonesian Government minister – for the slaying of five journalists... at Balibo on October 16, 1975... The international investigators in E[T] believe they have gathered enough evidence... to prosecute the three... the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported... The source said investigators had asked the UN Prosecutor-General in Dili... to organise the arrest of [the]former cabinet minister... another Indonesian... and an E[T]ese citizen]... At the time of the killings, [the minister] was allegedly an Indonesian Army captain commanding an elite unit called Team Susi involved in the covert invasion of what was then Portuguese Timor. [The other two suspects] were members of the unit... It was not immediately clear where the [suspects] are now... A[U]S]n investigators and the Indonesian Government have said the[journalists] were caught in a firefight between Indonesian troops and E[T]ese defenders. But former resistance fighters testified that the journalists were put to death... Investigators recommend they be charged with crimes against humanity under the 1946 Geneva Convention. If convicted, they face a maximum sentence of life imprisonment... [In related news,] Cambodia laid charges against[a] Khmer Rouge chief... yesterday, making him the first member of the murderous leftist group set to answer directly for the deaths of almost two million of his country[people]. Thought to be one of the Khmer Rouge's most brutal cadres, the [guy] they called "The Butcher" will be charged under a 1991 law banning the radical group, a military prosecutor said... The law stipulates up to life in prison for members of the Khmer Rouge, whose 1970s "killing fields" regime remains one of the century's most atrocious legacies... The one-legged... 72[-year-old] was arrested on northern Cambodia's border with Thailand on Saturday and taken to Phnom Penh, where [The Butcher] has been kept under heavy military guard... Diplomats and regional experts said any domestic trial would undercut any attempt to convene an international tribunal... U[N] legal experts have recommended that an international tribunal be set up to try 20 to 30 top Khmer Rouge members for crimes against humanity and genocide...

In a steady voice that echoed around the gilt-and-marble courtroom, a skinny young [guy] from Rwanda recounted the day his father, mother, younger brother and baby sister were murdered. "They lined us up and told my mother we had to die because we were Tutsis and had no right to live..." [the 21-year-old] told the jury, the unfamiliar syllables of his Kinyarwanda language relayed in French by a translator... [The 21-year-old] is one of 60 witnesses flown from Rwanda to Brussels for the trial of the factory manager and neighbour accused of ordering the murder of his family. [The manager], two Catholic nuns and a physics professor stand accused of complicity in the 1994 genocide that killed at least half a million people – mostly Tutsis, along with some moderate Hutus. They have pleaded not guilty. Like UN tribunals in the Hague, the Netherlands and Tanzania, the trial in Chamber 34 of Brussels' Palace of Justice is breaking new ground. A hairdresser, truck driver and 22 other Belgians are the first civilian jury to judge people accused of war crimes in another country. "This is a really important step forward for the principle that justice has no borders," said... Human Rights Watch. "It shows every country has the right and the moral duty to try the worst crimes." The trial began... under a 1993 law that allows Belgian courts to try alleged violations of the Geneva Convention on war crimes. The four are among thousands of Hutus who sought refuge in Belgium, Rwanda's former colonial master, after Tutsi-led rebels gained control of Rwanda... After fleeing Rwanda,

the nuns found sanctuary in a monastery in southern Belgium. [The factory manager] lives in Brussels. [The professor] has been working at a university south of the capital... Trying them is a colossal task. [The i]nvestigating magistrate... and lawyers are sifting through the minutiae of mass murder to determine whether the defendants were among members of Rwanda's majority Hutu community who joined in killing their Tutsi neighbours in the 13-week rampage... The nuns... are alleged to have helped the Hutus who massacred thousands of Tutsis seeking refuge in their convent in the southern Rwandan town of Sovu... [The professor] is accused of whipping up anti-Tutsi sentiment and drawing up lists of families for death squads[, and] is also alleged to have taken part in the slaughter personally. [The factory manager] is charged with helping plan and execute the genocide to head off a deal between the Hutu Government and Tutsi rebels. His match factory in Butare was allegedly a hotbed of militia activity.

...Three Bosnian Serbs yesterday became the first [people] convicted of using mass rape and enslavement as a weapon of terror, as they were found guilty of torturing or assaulting girls as young as 12. The historic ruling in the The Hague came at the end of one of the most harrowing cases to be heard by the war crimes tribunal, the first in which sexual assault was prosecuted as a crime against humanity... The... commander of a special reconnaissance unit of the Bosnian Serb Army, was sentenced to 28 years, while... one of the subcommanders of the paramilitary police, was given 20 years. The third defendant... another subcommander of the military police and a former waiter, will serve 12 years in jail... The three... were key figures in a vicious series of events which followed the capture of the town of Foca, southeast of Sarajevo, in April 1992... The length of the sentences delivered yesterday reflected the sheer brutality of the attacks. Victims were often threatened and taunted, told they would become pregnant with Serb babies, that their limbs would be cut, that the[Muslims] would be taken to church to be baptised... [The commander] not only abused [gals] personally but organised their transfer to the "rape camps." ...The judge said the participation of a military commander in this "nightmarish scheme" made it "even more repugnant." By day, girls held captive were enslaved and forced to perform household chores. By night they were subjected to systematic sexual abuse. One of those was a 12-year-old who was raped repeatedly over several weeks and... was later sold by [the paramilitary subcommander] for 200 marks (\$216) and... remains missing. In sentencing [him, the j]udge... said his treatment of the girl illustrated his "morally depraved and corrupt character." His captive was, the judge added, "a helpless little child for whom you showed absolutely no compassion whatsoever... You sold her like an object..." The judge also noted how [the other subcommander] had raped a girl of 15 – the same age as his own daughter – after threatening to kill her mother. The defence did not deny the occurrence of widespread rapes in Foca but argued that the [victims] who testified had been willing partners... After the verdict... the lead prosecutor, said that justice had been done and commended "the bravery of the victims who came forward to tell their stories." However, many of the perpetrators have never faced justice. The indictment has references to rapes by "unidentified" soldiers and not all charged were brought to The Hague. Of the eight [Bosnian Serbs] originally accused in the Foca rape trial, one was killed when troops tried to arrest him and another blew himself up. Three others remain at large.

...A U[N] war crimes court has handed down a 40-year sentence, its most severe yet, to a Bosnian Serb who styled himself the Serb Adolf Hitler and enthusiastically killed and tortured Muslims and Croats. "The crimes that you have committed shock the conscience of [humankind,] the [the] presiding judge... told... [the] farm mechanic... The International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia convicted... [the] 31-year-old... on 31 counts of torture, murder and plunder at the Serb-run Luka prison camp near the northern Bosnian town of Brcko in May 1992. But it acquitted him of the gravest charge of genocide because the prosecution had failed to prove the intent to wipe out an entire ethnic or religious group.

...The skeletal torsos and lifeless expressions of [guys] lined up at an iron-ore mine turned into a Bosnian prison camp were chillingly reminiscent of the emaciated Jewish survivors photographed at the close of... W[W2]. When war correspondents discovered starving Bosnians at Omarska camp in 1992, the news footage jolted the world's conscience and prompted calls for intervention to stop Balkan "ethnic cleansing." Yesterday, the images were shown to judges at the Yugoslav war crimes tribunal, where Serb police[officers] who allegedly ran the camp went on trial in a UN court set up in The Hague after the global outcry to punish the perpetrators of Balkan atrocities. It is the... tribunal's first case to deal directly with what prosecutors call a system of concentration camps within a deliberate strategy to rid northern Bosnia of non-Serbs. Three defendants... are accused of running Omarska as commandants and shift commanders. The [fourth, a] taxi driver... is accused of torturing and murdering prisoners. If found guilty, the[y]... face life imprisonment in a European jail. All four have pleaded not guilty... Defence lawyers are expected to claim their clients are scapegoats for the tribunal's inability to apprehend the architects of that strategy. Despite repeated calls by the tribunal for the arrest of the most senior figures on the Serb side – [the]... former Bosnian Serb leader[, his]... military chief... and the... Yugoslav President... – [not to mention America's offer to pay a multi-million-dollar reward for the latter's conviction (the US has also given his 'election opponents \$US77 million'), the three] remain free.

...a murderous despot... has successfully clung to power for more than a decade. Now, that long reign may be coming to an end. [The]Yugoslav President... is playing for time, denying outright victory to the Opposition after Monday's election. The Opposition launches a five-day campaign of strikes and civil disobedience today, with the threat of more to come, hoping to force the President to quit. When [the President] does go, peacefully or otherwise, [it]... looks set to remain an enigma. Certainly, nobody can doubt that [the President] is marked by his family history: an adored uncle shot himself; his father, a defrocked priest and then Communist Party member, was the next to commit suicide; his mother hanged herself from a light fitting. With such a heritage, a balanced and stable character would be little short of miraculous. For many years, [it] did nothing that would mark him out as unusual, let alone a murderous despot. The real turning point – perhaps the moment at which the disintegration of Yugoslavia itself became inevitable – was in 1987, when, as Serb Communist Party leader, [it] visited the Albanian-majority province of Kosovo to deal with protesting Serbs. Instead of seeking to calm emotions, [it] suddenly decided to do the opposite. In a phrase that became famous, [it] told the protesters: "Nobody shall dare to beat you any more." Overnight, [the Communist Party leader] became a popular hero. For the next two years, [it] was adored. Serbs held his image high, and chanted his name. In 1989, on the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo Field – which Serbs see as a defining point in their history – [it] made a triumphantly nationalist speech, even while representatives of other Yugoslav republics looked on aghast. By 1990, disillusion had begun to set in, not least because of the disastrous state of the economy. There were huge demonstrations in March 1991, which were crushed by riot police and tanks. From then onwards, the pattern became dismally familiar. Unpopularity, followed by a war, which brought a temporary revival in [hi]s fortunes; then comes resentment and disillusion; then another war. A few months after the 1991 demonstrations, [it] unleashed a war against Slovenia and then Croatia. Then it was Bosnia's turn – for three bloody years... Theoretically, [the Yugoslav President] was uninvolved. In reality, [the]... leader of the Bosnian Serbs, would have got nowhere without [the Yugoslav President] – a point which the West, eager to have [the Yugoslav President] "onside," consistently failed to understand. [The Yugoslav President] would, one senses, be unfazed by any lie-detector machine. When I had a long meeting with him late one evening in 1992 – as I guiltily sipped the large whisky that [the President] insistently pressed upon me – [it] cheerfully denied the undeniable. [It] declared his enthusiasm for the idea that war criminals might be brought to trial – and looked at me in astonishment at the suggestion that [the President] himself, already responsible for so much bloodshed, might be included on such a list. [The President]'s family is a powerful part of his story. Like Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines or Nicolae Ceausescu in Romanian, the role of [hi]s... Marxist sociologist... wife... is a key element in the equation. The couple are clearly close; equally, few doubt that if it ever comes to a [husband vs wife] difference of opinion, it is [the wife] who gets her way. Like Ceausescu, [the Yugoslav President] has a playboy son for whom no rules exist – profitable smuggling rackets of various kinds are generally reckoned to be [the son]'s main line of business. Part of [the President]'s strength has been his unpredictability. [It] has also succeeded in making power a portable commodity... When... Communist Party leader, the presidency was an empty vessel. When [it] became Serb President, the Yugoslav presidency was irrelevant. Now that [it] is Yugoslav President, that is all that matters. And nobody knows what comes next. It is merely a question of how angry the protesters will be,

cheated of what they believe to be rightfully theirs. It is also unclear how much violence [the President] is still capable of unleashing in his determination to cling to power. Any democratic Government would feel obliged to deliver [him] to [the war crimes tribunal] in The Hague. [The President] knows that, everybody knows that. The chances for compromise seem few; and the likelihood of a violent ending seems high.

...West gambling on nationalist... [The guy] the West is relying on to break... [the President]'s hold in Yugoslavia, is a fervent Serb nationalist who blames Nato as much as the regime for Serbia's present woes. According to his own statements – although they may have been tailored to a domestic audience – [if it becomes President it] will refuse to turn [the incumbent President] over to the Hague War Crimes Tribunal or allow Montenegro independence. [It says it] will also demand that Nato forces leave Kosovo and Serb forces be allowed to return. The mild-mannered and soft-spoken lawyer who wears drab grey suits and drives a battered Yugo was even photographed last year in the Serb-held enclave of northern Kosovo brandishing an automatic gun, paramilitary-style. Critics say the West has been blinded to his faults by their burning desire to oust [the incumbent President and that it] may prove equally intransigent, albeit less malign. Western diplomats, whose countries have poured millions of pounds into his campaign, explain away such flaws by saying [it] is forced to play the nationalist card to win over... voters. Serbian analysts reject this claim. “[The lawyer] has been consistent in his views since the very beginning,” one said. For most Serbs, [the lawyer]'s nationalism is seen as a political plus and even most pro-democracy activists find no problem with his views. Supporters say [the lawyer] is a refreshing change from other Opposition leaders who have won themselves unenviable reputations for corruption and compromise with the ruling regime... In the late 1980s when [the President] was seeking nationalists to replace the remnants of the pro-Tito nomenklatura, [the President] offered the lawyer a job. The lawyer refused and formed a small political party... Perhaps the West's best hope is that if [the lawyer gains power, it] will change his spots.

...Flames of freedom burn in Belgrade... As dusk fell on a Serbia with its institutions going up in flames, crowds of smiling people promenaded on Belgrade's main boulevards, crunching on broken glass, coughing in the thick black smoke and wondering at the revolution they had begun. The tear gas of the early afternoon had been replaced by an overwhelming euphoria. For the Serbs, whose history has been a litany of internal divisions, it was a rare moment of unity. Outside the federal Parliament, people carried away bits of furniture and souvenirs rescued before flames engulfed much of the building... At the state television building nearby a dozen cars were burning or burned out. The building housing the hated television station, which broadcast [the President]'s vitriolic propaganda... was also in flames. As in all revolutions, news was transmitted by mouth. The electricity supply came and went. The telephone networks went down. They came back on... The revolution was a people's protest, joined by Serbs from every walk of life, young and old, poor and rich. Professors, workers, students and just ordinary Belgraders were all in it together. It started that way, too. Serbia's revolution began to arrive in the streets of Belgrade early on Thursday in a convoy of filthy buses. By midday, workers and miners from the opposition towns of the south were beginning to mass, their grimy faces a testament to the roots of this revolution. They were deadly serious and very determined. The workers of Cacak had brought a bulldozer on the back of a lorry, and said they had used it to crush police barricades on the motorway. As hundreds of thousands of demonstrators poured into the city, Belgraders could not believe their eyes. One... with a baby in her arms burst into tears. “I can't say anything, I'm just too overwhelmed,” [the mother] said. The federal Parliament building was a prime target. The [protesters] lined up outside, buoyant with expectation... Officials from inside the Parliament came out behind the police to look at the crowd. They were whistled at. “Red bandits, Red bandits,” the crowd chanted... Nearby a Volkswagen van with a red flashing light played *The Clash's Should I Stay Or Should I Go?* A few minutes later outside the Parliament, a fight broke out between a demonstrator and a nervous riot police[officer]. Protesters began to pound the street with stones, then three [guys] in full combat gear dashed out from the building and began pumping tear gas grenades into the crowd. Middle-aged [gals] and children were crying from the gas. But the crowd regrouped. About 20 minutes later, drummers led the protesters back towards the Parliament... “We are not scared any more of the gas,”... said... [a gal], aged 50... wearing a red and white track suit and Reebok trainers... “We want to see this through to the end.” ...The revolt gathered new life shortly after 3.30 pm. Young... students broke through police lines and began running towards the Parliament building. The police were confused, then ran for cover inside. As they mounted a rearguard defence, salvo after salvo of tear gas was fired into a crowd... But the gas did not deter the hard [guys] at the front as they threw wave after wave of attacks against the building. Then the football fans from Partisan Belgrade stormed the building, apparently from the left. A roar went up from the crowd: “Serbia, Serbia, Serbia, Serbia.” The tear gas began to bite again, but nobody wanted to run this time... People were now flooding into the space in front of the Parliament from every direction. The huge Bulevar Revolucije was jammed. Protesters began to throw papers out of the first floor windows of the Parliament. A [protester] clambered on to one of the green domes on top of the sandstone Parliament and changed the flag... wreathed in smoke from the fires below. Burned paper from the Parliament floated gently through the air, suspended by the rising heat... One young [protester] pointed at the setting sun as its last rays fell obliquely on the ravaged square and said: “You see, there is sun over Serbia for the first time in 50 years.” ...There was no official word on the whereabouts of [the President], but Serbian opposition sources said yesterday that [it] was under heavy guard in a bunker in the village of Beljanica, about 80km from Yugoslavia's border...

End of road for Butcher of Balkans... [The] Yugoslav President... was in hiding last night after losing control of his country in a popular uprising on the streets of Belgrade. As rumours swept Serbia that [the President] had fled the country, three Antonov transport planes left Belgrade's military airport. But the Opposition claimed [the President] was holed up in a bunker at Bor in eastern Serbia, protected by 92nd light infantry brigade and other Army troops. Sporadic confrontations with security forces firing teargas and stun grenades gave way to a carnival of freedom as hundreds of thousands of Serbs turned on the... [person] who had led them through four failed wars and into international isolation. Riot police took off their helmets and danced with jubilant protesters waving the Serbian flag... [The main] challenger in the presidential elections, addressed the crowds with the words: “Dear liberated Serbia... I am now President. [The former President] has fled his home. Serbia has risen.” Opposition leaders said they had begun talks with the Army to take power. [The self-proclaimed President] called on world leaders to lift sanctions, but added: “We do not need Moscow or Washington; we are ready to liberate Serbia by ourselves.” The scenes were reminiscent of the “people's power” uprisings that swept eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall and Western leaders demanded that [the Yugoslav President] bow to the inevitable and give up power... [The British P]M... said. “Go before any more lives are lost, before there is any more destruction.” [The US] President... said: “The people of Serbia have made their opinion clear. They did it when they voted peacefully and quietly and now they are doing it in the streets because there has been an attempt to rob them of their vote.” Western leaders were quick to hold out the prospect of Yugoslavia's reintegration with the international community... The E[U] and the US said they were ready to respond to [the lawyer]'s request for an end to sanctions... [T]he director of studies at the Royal U[S] Institute in London, said that [the Yugoslav President] was unlikely to survive. “[It] will end up like Ceausescu. Everybody has an interest in having him dead; [it] knows too much.” But yesterday, all resistance from [the President]'s regime appeared to have melted away... [After the recent presidential election,] Opposition leaders had given [the President] who had ruled them with an iron rod... an ultimatum: [it] must step aside. But then state radio announced that the Constitutional Court had annulled the... presidential election and ordered a new vote to be held at the end of [the President]'s mandate, effectively leaving him in power for another eight months. But [the President] had not calculated on the overwhelming desire for change at every level of Serbian society. This time the great magician had fatally underestimated his people's determination to see the massive mandate the[y gave the lawyer] respected.

...the master manipulator who finally ran out of cards to play... Psychologists will no doubt make much of his parents' suicides. [The son] is branded both the “beast” and the “butcher” of the Balkans. But the truth is that [the Yugoslavia]President... soaked in the blood of thousands of

his fellow citizens, was as much puppeteer as psychopath. His trouble really began only when [the puppeteer] ran out of strings. It is little more than a decade but it seems a lifetime since the baby-faced apparatchik with the shapeless commie suits and shoebrush hairstyle manoeuvred his way to the top of Tito's crumbling federation. Even his many enemies have to admit his record for survival would make Machiavelli – who believed 'love of country transcends everything religious and moral, so that one may even lose his own soul for his country's sake' – proud. When... elected President of Serbia, the first of many titles [it] held, Yugoslavia was a beacon for Eastern Europe. With its blend of Western consumerism and wishy washy communism it was the half way house between East and West. Romanians under Ceausescu risked their lives to reach Belgrade. It had a McDonald's and real cappuccinos, and even petrol without queues. That affluent Yugoslavia was an illusion. The characters with long beards and khaki... W[W2] uniforms peddling nationalist Serb trinkets in Belgrade gave a more accurate guide to the health of Tito's old state. As Eastern Europe in 1989 threw off the shackles of tyranny, Yugoslavia was moving the other way. It was two years earlier... that [the son] broke the old Yugoslav taboo on nationalism when [it] delivered a rabble-rousing speech to hundreds of thousands of Serbs in Kosovo. In that instant [it] paved the way for the break-up of the old collective presidency[, and] also unleashed Yugoslavia's old nationalist furies that cost hundreds of thousands of lives in the 1940s and would do so again... It should not be forgotten that many of those baying for [hi]s blood in Belgrade yesterday had eagerly fought his wars. The violence distracted Serbs from the implosion of the economy. The wars also tapped the historic Serb victim mentality which dates back to the defeat by the Turks in 1389. [The son] perfected the old Soviet art of ruling from the shadows. His was the world of corridors and cabals. Thus [the son] brazened out street demonstrations in 1991 and 1996, and thus... hoped no doubt to see off the resurgent Opposition. But in 1996 [the son] could count on the support of the state media and the police. And [it] still had the Kosovo card to play. Now the only puppets left are the Serbs' kins[people] in Montenegro. But even the most red-blooded Serb would have balked at taking on their own. Serbs have a bloody history of butchering their leaders. Now, after a decade of quiescence, his people have finally risen and [it] will be lucky to avoid his predecessors' fate.

...Days before [the Yugoslav President]'s regime fell, vast crowds were still supporting him. Or were they? ...[the Butcher of the Balkans'] Yugoslavia was extraordinary in many respects. It was brutal, paranoid, resentful. In particular, however, it had an unparalleled shamelessness in telling lies. Other regimes make at least a token effort not to get caught out. [The Butcher's regime] scarcely bothered with such pedantry. They lied in your face – and defied contradiction. Often, that sheer insolence succeeded. One photograph neatly sums up the attitude: never tell the truth, when a lie will do as well. Published on the eve of last month's elections, it stands as a testament to the [Butcher's] madness. The *Vecernje Novosti* newspaper took a photograph of a pro-[President] rally, discovered that the crowds were too thin, and – employing techniques reminiscent of those used by Hollywood special-effects units – multiplied the numbers with a tweak of the mouse. Why have that snowy-haired [supporter appear] once, when we could see him twice? Why should the [gal] with long dark hair appear only on the left, when [it] could be on the right, too? In short, why have half a crowd, when you can have twice a crowd instead? When opponents... spotted the lie, the editors insisted simply that there had been a "technical error." It could have happened to anyone[, they proclaimed. However, i]t was part of a pattern of brazen, institutionalised deceit that in recent weeks had been reaching new heights of absurdity. Football matches were being broadcast with falsified soundtracks, because the favourite chant on the terraces had become: "[President], save Serbia and kill yourself." And when, as part of the national protest campaign at the Government's refusal to acknowledge election defeat, a university boycott was announced, the television news none the less managed to broadcast pictures showing row upon row of eager-looking students – which would have been more impressive had the same pictures not first been broadcast last year. When Serb state television, RTS, was short of admirers, it simply invented them. To my lasting shame, I myself was once roped in as an alleged fan. Three years ago, I interviewed the editor-in-chief of RTS for a report commissioned by the E[U. The editor] told lies; I argued a little; above all, I did what I needed to do: I took notes. That evening I turned on the television news to see pictures of my politely nodding head – and hear a report about how impressed the [journalist] from the *Independent* was by RTS's impartial coverage. I raged, and demanded a retraction. It was, of course, to no avail. RTS regularly broadcast a familiar farrago of lies in which the main elements were always the same: [the President as the statesperso]n (receiving foreign guests, smiles, handshakes); Serbia's booming economy (a red ribbon being cut for yet another new building project, even while the real economy plunged further into the abyss); venal, brutal, and mendacious Western Governments (stories from the foreign press, plus some invented conspiracies); and approving comments from foreigners (Chinese or North Korean, or misquoted journalists like me). [The Butcher] seized control of the media when [it] first came into power, and used [the media] with great effect to create a climate of xenophobia and fear. Serbs learned to think of themselves as innocent victims, and were taught that only [their President] would stand up on their behalf. When [the President] suffered defeats – such as the expulsion of Serbs from Croatia in 1995, or the humiliation in Kosovo – the public were told only about victories. They did not quite believe; but their senses were deadened by propaganda. Above all, they were repeatedly assured that Serbs had done nothing wrong. At the beginning, the stream of hatred against Albanians in Kosovo meant that [the President] was adored. But the crowds supporting [the President] soon shrank, while those supporting the Opposition grew. But there was too little solidarity to achieve the necessary change. Beaten down – and incessantly lied to – the Serbs lacked self-belief. During the winter of 1996-97, when a series of demonstrations threatened to bring [the President] down, people in Belgrade hung out their windows at 7.30 pm every evening, banging saucepans to drown out the RTS lies. But the propaganda ground on, unabashed. And despite the heartening din, the truth was that too many Serbs believed at least part of what RTS told them... [A] classic essay *The Power of the Powerless*, talks of the change that becomes possible when societies start to believe in themselves – in [the essayist]'s phrase, "to begin living in truth." Citing the example of a single greengrocer who makes his own... small revolution by confronting an official lie, [the essayist] concludes that the knock-on effect of confronting lies can be dramatic, creating a "complex ferment" inside the regime. "By the time it finally surfaces into the light of day as an assortment of shocking surprises to the system, it is usually too late to cover them up in the usual fashion." [The essayist] wrote those words 15 years ago. [It] might have been writing about Serbia in the past few weeks. Following last month's election, scores of journalists – hitherto loyal to their President – joined the protests against [hi]s refusal to relinquish power. They began demanding, and soon realised, the right to report freely. I will never forget the glorious moment 10 days ago when I came in off the revolutionary streets of Belgrade, sat down in the friends' flat where I was staying and switched on the television. Even after all that I had seen outside, I could scarcely believe my eyes. Simple truths began to replace the lies that had oozed from the screen only hours earlier. As one Serb friend said: "That was the moment at which we knew that nothing would be the same again." ...In future we may reasonably hope that a photograph of a crowd will be just that. That is an important beginning, which can allow much bigger truths to be spoken – and heard.

...Gangland bosses in Serbia are vying for control of the black-market economy in the power vacuum left by the flight to Moscow of... the son of the ousted dictator. The full extent of [the son]'s violent crime network emerged last weekend as his rivals began competing for dominion over an empire of smuggled arms, petrol, drugs, people and goods such as tobacco, with an estimated worth of £500 million... Two of Serbia's most feared gangsters are battling for his crime interests, leaving Serb citizens in fear that warfare between underground gangs will spill on to the streets... In a further threat to Serbia's economy, gang leaders are thought to be shifting vast sums in assets abroad in the wake of the change in Government. An estimated £300 million has been salted away... While Switzerland has blocked £57 million in assets in about 100 bank accounts linked to the... [ousted dictator's family – Serbia's] criminal circle included most members of his family... [–] Croatian police allege that [his son] used Liechtenstein to stash millions from his vast empire in contraband cigarettes. [The] known cocaine-user... aged 25 [– who] paid no tax on his string of glamorous "legitimate" businesses, which included an internet cafe, two duty-free shops on the Hungarian and Bulgarian borders, bakeries and cosmetics and electrical stores... a radio station, a theme park called Bambiland and a nightclub named Madonna, and profited from trading the wildly fluctuating national currency, the dinar, against the German mark... [– is also] known to have siphoned funds to Lebanon and China... The... family

is believed to have £100 million hidden in China, the intended destination of [the son]'s failed escape attempt last week, where a large and liquid banking system facilitates money laundering... Today Bambiland is closed[. hi]s discotheque... has been ransacked by angry citizens[. h]is perfumery in Belgrade, Scandal, where [the son] sold cut-price smuggled scent, is a shattered wreck, daubed with the graffiti: "Daddy, they smashed my shop." Insiders say it was inevitable that sooner or later [the son] would have clashed with Arkan, the paramilitary leader and gangster. Serbia's shrinking economy was not large enough to support two [gangsters] with such powerful egos and greedy business interests. When Arkan was gunned down in the lobby of a Belgrade hotel in January, informed insiders said [the son] was responsible. Underworld rumours speak of a reward of several hundred thousand pounds put on [hi]s head by Arkan's Tigers... [T]he director of the crime prevention unit at Keele University, Britain, and an authority on eastern Europe's mafia, said that rooting out corruption would be an impossible task for [the]new President. "Serbia is underpinned by organised crime, which is about the most adaptable of institutions in times of political change. The same characters are involved behind the scenes; they will just update their political contracts with the new administration. [The ousted dictator] came up through a corrupt political apparatus, where allegiance to the local kingpins and black marketeers facilitated his rise to power."

...[dictator set] to rise again... S[erbia's ousted dictator] has returned to the political arena, denouncing his opponents as Western spies and traitors, as his Socialist Party re-elected him its leader weeks before crucial elections. Without a word of regret about his... [past, the dictator] pledged at the weekend to wreak revenge against his enemies, who[. it claims.] ousted him simply by chance. [The dictator] and his socialists said [the]new Yugoslav President... and his 18-party pro-democracy alliance had brought only violence and lawlessness since taking over from him... The rhetoric was strikingly reminiscent of phrases [the dictator] used in leading the country into four Balkan wars and economic decline... There have been calls for [hi]s arrest, both in Yugoslavia and abroad. But [the dictator] and his closest allies have been buoyed by [the new President]'s refusal to hand him over to the UN war crimes court. The UN court has indicted [the dictator] and four of his associates for atrocities committed in the war in... Kosovo.

...The end for [the]former Yugoslav President... came in the chilly pre-dawn hours. Bundled into the back of a police car, the former Balkans [tyrant] was whisked away from his Belgrade villa to prison to face corruption charges arising from a decade of iron rule. His arrest came after [the tyrant] twice repulsed heavily armed black-clad masked commandos who stormed his compound and waged a gunbattle with the former President's private guards. [The tyrant], who had boasted that [it] would "not go to jail alive," surrendered to avoid a bloodbath, said one of his Socialist Party associates. Although [the tyrant] was put behind bars on suspicion of abuse of office, [it] is also wanted by the U[N] war crimes tribunal to face charges of crimes against humanity... Nato, the E[U] presidency, France, Britain, Germany and ex-Yugoslav republic Slovenia led an expected flood of international reaction welcoming the arrest... "This is very welcome news to all those who have struggled so long to bring peace and justice to the Balkans," said Brit[ain's] Foreign Secretary... Belgrade newspapers ran special Sunday morning editions. "It's Finished, [Butcher] is Arrested!" read one headline. The arrest followed U[S] threats to suspend \$US50 million... in aid if [Yugoslavia's new]... Government did not show cooperation by midnight Saturday... on the UN charges.

...the former dictator, could be in a cell in The Hague by tomorrow after the Yugoslav Government yesterday cleared the way for his extradition on war crimes charges... Pro-democracy members of the cabinet of [the new]Yugoslav Premier... forced through a law for cooperation with the tribunal by cabinet decree after [the dictator's]former allies from Montenegro refused to back the Bill in Parliament. [The dictator]'s extradition is a Western condition for Yugoslavia to receive billions in aid money. Previously, his extradition had been blocked by Yugoslav law. [Yugoslavia's new Deputy-P]M... believed there were indictments against 16 Yugoslav citizens including [the dictator] and they would all have to be handed over. "There will be no bargaining about them. The Hague will demand the extradition of these people and we will have to do it,"... [The dictator], who has been in Belgrade's central prison since... [being arrested on charge]s of corruption... would be the first former head of state to be brought before the court... The decision on extradition of war crimes suspects... has become increasingly urgent ahead of a key aid donors conference on Friday in Brussels. However, [the dictator] remains defiant... "My destiny is linked with the destiny of the state and the nation. This case against me was faked," [the dictator] was quoted as saying by one of his lawyers... "I have done everything for benefit of the nation and the state and it was difficult to make decisions but I have always been inspired by our glorious history. I hope that history will make the final judgment."

...How the mighty evil are fallen... A... 'saviour'... has been sent to face justice for his numerous war crimes on a day that is full of dark portents for his native Serbia. [The former dictator] was flown to The Hague yesterday, the anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, which is... also the day, in 1914, that a Serb nationalist assassinated Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand, an act that sparked... W[W1], and on that same day in 1989... [the dictator] made an inflammatory nationalist speech to a crowd of Serbs... that [is regarded] as the spark for the four Balkan wars and the atrocities that took place... During his decade of power [the dictator] achieved misery, not only for the rest of the Balkans but for Serbs as well. Estimates of the number of dead in the wars vary, but it seems certain there were more than 275,000. The term "ethnic cleansing" brought chilling reminders of the Nazis as three million people were driven from their homes. And there were massacres the like of which Europe had not seen in nearly 50 years. One... turned the name of the Bosnian town Srebrenica into a byword for horror. The wars had a devastating economic effect as well. In 1990, Serbia was part of Eastern Europe's most prosperous and vibrant economy. But after the wars, eight years of punitive international sanctions, 11 weeks of Nato airstrikes and a decade of systematic graft, its economy is in a shambles. Half the population is jobless or on indefinite leave from obsolete, bankrupt or bombed industries... If found guilty [by the war crimes tribunal the dictator] faces life imprisonment... [The dictator] has been taken to a special section of Scheveningen prison in The Hague. His 3m by 5m cell has an en-suite shower, coffee-maker and television offering a range of satellite channels, including some from the Balkans... Prosecutors may yet lay... other... charges... At present [the dictator] is charged only over massacres and the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of people during the Kosovo conflict, the last of his wars.

...Yugoslavia has been plunged into political turmoil after a major Government split over the decision to extradite [the former President] to face charges before the UN war crimes tribunal. The snap transfer of [the ousted dictator] to The Hague has been met with international applause and pledges of more than \$3 billion in vital aid at a donors' conference in Brussels. [The dictator] will be formally arraigned tomorrow on counts of war crimes... The handover is being hailed as a breakthrough towards cleaning up the Balkans and a triumph for global justice. But it also casts a long shadow over the future of the federation linking Serbia and Montenegro... "The federation is in a deep crisis,"... Serbia's P]M... told German ARD television... [The Yugoslav PM], one of the leaders of the... Montenegrin Socialist People's Party... immediately resigned, which under Yugoslav law means the whole federal cabinet must step down. However, Belgrade analysts said the crisis could be defused as Yugoslav[ia's] President... has no deadline for naming a new Government line-up. That means the Government can continue as a caretaker until a durable solution is found. Analysts said federal elections were unlikely as voters had already been to the polls twice in the past 10 months, and little had changed in the various parties' manifestoes... Meanwhile, forensic experts have exhumed 74... bodies from two mass graves in eastern Serbia... Some of the decayed bodies had bullet wounds. Experts from the UN war crimes tribunal monitored the work. A Belgrade court said last week that at least 36 bodies in civilian clothes were exhumed from another mass grave found in a police compound near Belgrade. They were believed to be bodies of Kosovo Albanians brought to Serbia in a freezer truck during Nato's... bombing campaign on Yugoslavia to halt Belgrade's repression in the province. The truck was later found in the River Danube. Serbia's new authorities last month linked [the dictator] to the case, accusing him and top aides of covering up evidence of possible war crimes in Kosovo. In Belgrade, police fired in the air yesterday in a bid to disperse several hundred nationalist thugs who stoned and beat gay activists taking part in the first-ever Gay Pride parade in Yugoslavia. At least four activists... were injured...

One Serb was stoned to death... yesterday when Serbs and ethnic Albanians fought a running street battle in Kosovo... Tensions between the ethnic Albanian majority and Serbs still run high across Kosovo in the wake of years of Serb repression and Nato's bombing campaign to drive Serb forces out of the province. Hostility is particularly intense in Mitrovica, which is divided by the Ibar river into Serb and Albanian areas... Rioting flared in the northern city of Mitrovica when thousands of mourners spotted Serbs in cars on a main road after a funeral to rebury about 20 ethnic Albanians... [who were] kidnapped... by Serb paramilitaries during Nato's bombing... and... whose remains were exhumed from a mass grave last month. The Albanians stoned Serb cars and threw petrol bombs at a Russian armoured personnel carrier and vehicles were set ablaze. Around 10 Serbs and about the same number of K-For troops from French and Russian contingents were injured.

...Russian troops marched to within 2km of Grozny yesterday as federal forces tightened their grip on the Chechen capital. With a Russian pincer movement closing in, an official in Grozny said the rebel leadership was ready for "constructive talks" with Moscow. But Russia's PM... flatly rejected any possibility of negotiation until the Chechen rebels had been crushed. "We will not let up in the slightest..." [the PM] insisted on television after meeting [Russia's President. The President had summoned the PM] and the foreign and defence ministers to the Kremlin to discuss last week's European security summit in Istanbul, where Western leaders assailed the Chechnya campaign... State-run RTR television confirmed the advance, adding that Chechen fighters were mining public buildings as they retreated into Grozny. Russian troops are now closer to the city than at any time since the disastrous 1994-1996 bid to snuff out Chechen independence in which about 80,000 people, mainly civilians and Army conscripts, died. On the ground, Russian commanders brushed off the criticism and turned up the heat on Grozny, blasting the western Zavodskoi and Staropromyslosky districts with multiple-rocket launchers... Kulari, Alkhan-Yurt and Urus-Matan were also blitzed... Urus-Matan is widely seen as the centre of the lucrative hostage-taking trade which has plagued Chechnya since the end of [the]1994-1996 war, which left the republic with de facto independence from Russia. Moscow has used the rise of rampant crime to justify its new crackdown in the lawless republic, which [the PM] has branded a "huge terrorist camp."

...The perennially unpredictable [Russian President] astounded the world one last time last night by announcing his early retirement from the Kremlin to make way for his anointed successor, [Russia's P]M... The resignation came into effect immediately... [The President's] announcement caught Russia by surprise, and is likely to launch his country into yet another political crisis as parties scramble for position... Under the Russian constitution, presidential elections must be held within 90 days of the President's resignation... [The PM] will act as President until... [the elections. The PM], a virtual unknown tapped for the P[M]'s job barely five months, has risen to unprecedented public approval levels and appears fully in charge of Russia's Government, military and security apparatus.

...Rebel forces battled Russian soldiers amid the wreckage of bombed homes and factories in southern Grozny yesterday as federal artillery pounded the Chechen capital from all sides... [A] senior Chechen commander in Grozny, said that rebel forces had repulsed six Russian ground attacks in the north and southeast of the city during the past 24 hours. But the Russians were still attacking... [The commander] claimed that 111 Russian soldiers had been killed and 18 others were taken prisoner over the last two days, while saying Chechen losses were minimal. There was no way to independently confirm the claim and both sides routinely exaggerate each other's losses... Despite heavy and indiscriminate Russian artillery fire, the Chechen fighters appeared to be holding their own. The Chechens are fighting from bunkers in buildings wrecked by Russian bombing. Such positions are difficult to capture, requiring costly infantry attacks. Plumes of black smoke rose over the city's devastated centre as salvos of Russian shells screamed overhead, exploding in bright flashes of red and orange. The streets were deserted, with nobody daring to move outside. Chechen units were still fighting Russian troops around the city airport, which the Russians claim to have captured. It was not clear who, if anyone, held the shattered facility... There are some 7000 rebel fighters in Grozny... But rebel groups outside the city are finding it difficult to send reinforcements and supplies through the Russian lines encircling Grozny... Russian authorities repeatedly have told civilians to clear out of Grozny in preparation for a major attack on the city... Up to 40,000 civilians are believed trapped in the city, many too old to make the dangerous journey through Russian shelling out of the capital... 86 civilians had been killed in Grozny by Russian shelling during the past 10 days.

...Russia's military, clearly stung by Western criticism, denies having ordered the residents of... Grozny to flee the city or die, and says their ultimatum had been aimed only at rebel fighters. But despite the more conciliatory language, Russian planes and artillery kept up their bombardment of guerrilla targets in Chechnya... Earlier this week, Russian planes dropped leaflets on Grozny urging the estimated 40,000 people trapped in the bombed and burning city to leave by Saturday or be destroyed. The leaflets said a safe corridor would be provided them. Western criticism was swift and particularly harsh. Canad[a's] Foreign Minister... said Russia was "crossing the line into potential crimes against humanity." But Itar-Tass news agency quoted Russia's chief commander in Chechnya... as saying the move had been intended to make Islamic militants fighting Moscow's rule in the North Caucasus think again and lay down their arms. "This is a warning to the bandits – a week's grace has been given to them,"... However, [the]... General... did not explain how the Army intended to wipe out the "bandits" while saving the lives of the civilians. [The General] said the plan was: "minimal losses on the side of the federal forces and civilians and maximum destruction of the international terrorists." Russia's Interior Minister... also cast doubt on the initial ultimatum, saying a checkpoint being organised outside Grozny would operate beyond Saturday... Russia's Emergencies Minister... gave a list of 23 Chechen villages, including some close to Grozny, ready to accept refugees from rebel-controlled areas. Russia is trying to persuade some of the more than 200,000 refugees in the adjacent region of Ingushetia to return. Russian troops control most of central and north Chechnya.

...Moscow's *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* is normally a good newspaper, but this week it carried a picture of a city in ruins, with the caption: "This is not Grozny, but Pristina after the Nato bombardment." It expressed the almost universal feeling in Russia that foreign protests about Moscow's military offensive in Chechnya are mere hypocrisy after the Western alliance's air attacks on Serbia and Kosovo... The picture lied, of course: Pristina was knocked around a bit in the Kosovo war, but the damage did not remotely compare with the Stalingrad-style ruins of central Grozny after the first Russian attack on the city in 1995, let alone the wholesale destruction of the entire city now being wrought by daily torrents of rockets, bombs and shells. The Russian Government has plainly said that its aim is to erase Grozny (which had 300,000 people in 1995) and start again elsewhere with a new capital for Chechnya. From there, it was a short step to the chilling decree issued by the Russian high command that all those who did not leave the city would be killed: "Those who remain will be treated as terrorists and bandits... There will be no talk. All those who do not leave the city will be destroyed." Never mind that it's a 25km walk under Russian air and artillery attacks from central Grozny to the designated checkpoint at Pervomaiskoye. Never mind that the city still contains tens of thousands of innocent civilians too old, ill or poor to leave, or that about one-third of these civilians are Russians. Never mind, either, that there is a yawning gulf between Nato's precision weapons and its largely successful efforts to minimize civilian casualties in Kosovo on the one hand, and Russia's free-fall bombs, unguided missiles and indiscriminate targeting in Chechnya on the other. Never mind even that the campaign is being waged mainly for domestic political reasons. The patriotic fervour it has unleashed in Russia is meant to boost the... President's... Unity Party (founded only two months ago, but already second in the opinion polls) in next week's Russian parliamentary elections... But... is... there any moral equivalence between what the Russians are doing in Chechnya and what Nato did in Kosovo? Those in the West who opposed the Kosovo campaign now insist that there is. So do the Russians, rejecting mounting Western criticism of the war as cynical meddling in Russia's affairs. They fail to realise that in this comparison, they are not playing Nato's role – they are the Serbs. In both cases, a small Muslim subject people, conquered by a much bigger Slav Christian nation generations ago and treated so brutally over the years that they now desperately want to break away, has been savagely punished for its ambition.

...Chechnya has suffered 250 years of Russian aggression. Last century Iman Shamil led the Chechens in a 25-year struggle against Tsarist armies. Said Bek led another campaign of resistance against the occupying Red Army in 1920. Stalin resolved that conflict with promises of internal sovereignty and autonomy if the people of the Caucasus joined the Soviet Union. Those promises turned to dust during the forced collectivisation of the late 1920s and early 1930s. Some 35,000 Chechens were arrested, including the leaders who had supported Stalin's deal, charged with "bourgeois nationalism" and disappeared. That sparked a new wave of anti-Soviet guerrilla warfare, which intensified with the onset of... W[W2]. Russia's response was to deport 1.5 million north Caucasus people in cattle trains, including 800,000 Chechens and their close neighbours, the Ingush. When Khrushchev returned them to their homelands in 1957, fewer than half had survived. In 1991, with the old Soviet Union breaking apart, the Chechens made another bid for independence. The National Congress of Chechen People... held hurried parliamentary and presidential elections, formed a "National Guard" and seized key Soviet assets. Attempts at reaching a compromise with Russia failed. The Kremlin refused to entertain Chechen independence and the Chechens refused anything less than an interstate treaty. [The then Russian President], ignoring calls from other Russian politicians for a referendum on Chechen self-determination, declared a "state of emergency," which drove the sides further apart and set them inexorably on the path to conflict. The Russians seeking to take advantage of splits in the Chechen leadership sent a tank column into Chechnya, which ignited the disastrous war of 1994 to 1996. As many as 60,000 Chechen civilians and several thousand Russian soldiers lost their lives. Russia has learned from that experience. The latest campaign of destruction is sophisticated, systematic and brutal, with no expense spared. The Chechen capital of Grozny will likely fall in the next few days. So why is small, beleaguered Chechnya so important to Russia? Russian justifications that the imbroglio is to prevent the spread of radical Islam in Central Asia, Chechen involvement in Dagestan and that the Chechens were responsible for a series of bombings, are insufficient. The real answer lies in Chechnya's strategic position astride the pipeline that links the oil-rich, land-locked republics of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan on the Caspian Sea with the Russian port of Novorossiysk on the Black Sea. In 1995, Azerbaijan signed an \$8 billion oil deal with a consortium of Western oil companies to build a new pipeline skirting Russia to the Black Sea. Other important deals were also signed between Kazakhstan, Russia and other consortiums to develop the giant Karachaganak natural gasfield, and to develop vast oil fields. All told, these Western deals with Central Asian states bordering Chechnya total \$28 billion. Originally none of the deals included Russia. However, Moscow demanded a share in all energy export deals by its former republics and secured a percentage share in each one signed. Cash-starved Russia stands to gain more if it controls Chechnya and the pipeline running through it. The war began after Russian-Chechen agreements to share the pipeline collapsed because of mutual mistrust, theft of oil from the pipeline and mismanagement by the Russian pipeline company Transneft. In an era when the West has ousted Iraq from Kuwait, bombed Serbia out of Kosovo, and forced the Indonesian Government out of E[IT], there seems little we can do for the Chechens. Militarily, the West cannot act but it can suspend IMF funding. It is perhaps no coincidence that the 1994 invasion corresponded with an IMF grant of \$11 billion to Russia.

...THE west has been urged to intervene in Chechnya after video footage showed soldiers piling bodies into a mass grave in the troubled province. "The West can no longer sit by on its hands issuing strong statements but not backing that up with action," said... Human Rights Watch. "The film looks extremely authentic... and raises a lot of very, very serious questions about the treatment of said Chechen prisoners of war." Germany's N24 television yesterday released footage showing what appeared to be soldiers dumping dozens of corpses... into a rectangular pit and covering them with clumps of earth. Many of the dead were in military uniform, suggesting they were Chechen rebel fighters. But some had been tied up, suggesting they did not die in combat. Others were mutilated... Russia said its military was investigating but the E[U] and a top human rights group demanded an independent inquiry... [and] autopsies on the bodies. If Russia would not do this, an international body needed to look into the allegations... Russian officials, who have strongly denied previous accusations of abuse, said they doubted the tape.

...A human rights group says it has medical evidence that Russian troops tortured Chechen civilians, the latest charge to taint Russia amid a new wave of international criticism of the Chechen war... The Russian Defence Ministry has... denied the accusations. Moscow was still smarting from television footage at the weekend that suggested Russian soldiers had committed atrocities against Chechens. Preliminary findings from a random survey of refugees by Physicians for Human Rights reveals systematic abuses of Chechen civilians, including summary executions, illegal detention and torture. The Boston-based volunteer group interviewed 326 Chechens at refugee camps in Ingushetia... Nearly half said they had seen civilians killed by Russian forces... In Moscow, [the]Council of Europe human rights commissioner... met Russia's human rights commissioner... who expressed concern about exaggeration of rights abuses in Chechnya. In Chechnya, rebels penned in the southern mountains ambushed Russian troops in an attempt to break out of their last major stronghold, the town of Shatoi, but the military claimed to have pushed the militants back.

...It is the first large city to be destroyed by military action in Europe since 1945. Two months after the Russian Army captured Grozny, the capital of Chechnya and once home to 400,000 people, its ruins look like pictures of Stalingrad or Dresden... I re-enter Grozny sitting on top of a Russian armoured personnel carrier. Its driver manoeuvres between the heaps of rubble and the deep bomb craters that puncture the road. For kilometre after kilometre not a single building is intact. The only place I have ever seen this level of destruction was the frontline in wartorn Beirut. Grozny is much worse. It is not just the frontline, but the whole city that has been torn apart. I was last here... when it was still held by the Chechens. Then... saplings and grass sprouted from the tops of the walls of wrecked buildings. Now the foliage that colonised the wreckage is shrivelled and burned. The devastation even extends below ground level: penetration bombs have torn up water pipes, which stick out at crazy angles into the air, like the guts spilling from a corpse... Russian soldiers are standing close to where the Chechens queue for their rations, but this does not stop one old [gal] speaking out. "The Russian Army must go home... We support the rebels. We just want to live peacefully." Other Chechens speak bitterly about their own leaders. "Both sides are responsible," says [another gal]... A group... sweep the roads with broomsticks in a bid to clear lumps of concrete that would take a dozen bulldozers a week to shift. A little further on... [o]thers sit on scaffolding to apply... plaster to the front of the once-pretty 19th-century station building. One track of the railway is, in fact, working, but is used exclusively by the Russian Army. "We are rebuilding so people can come back to the city," says... a burly Chechen... who once worked on the railways... Neither [the ex-railway worker] nor the other workers are being paid but they hope to receive money from the Russian Administration. It may be a long wait... [Asked if it] expects anything from... the Chechen President now hunted by the Russians in the mountains, [one says: "No, our President] is a dead loss." Nothing angers the Chechens so much as to hear that... the Russian President-elect who this week met Brit[ain's P]M... and the Queen in London, claim that the war, of which [it] is the architect and beneficiary, is directed against "terrorists" and not the Chechen people as a whole.

...More than 100 people are feared dead after troops stormed the Moscow theatre where Chechen rebels held 700 hostages. The dead included 34 of the 40 Muslim terrorists. But other casualties include at least 67 hostages. The hostage-takers – including leader Movsar Barayev... the nephew of the ruthless warlord who killed Kiwi Stan Shaw... and three Britons... [before himself being] killed last year, allowing Movsar to take control... of... the gang... [for which n]o tactic was too bloody... in their fight to gain Chechen independence from Russia... – were gunned down when elite Russian troops stormed the building to end the three-day siege. Special forces used sleeping gas then burst in after the terrorists shot four hostages – two fatally. "We could no longer sit and wait," said [a]federal security service spokes[person]... As many as 75 foreigners – including A[US]ns, U[Ser]s and Britons – were among those being held... A[US]n diplomats said they believed none of the dead were tourists... The[]rebels had] promised to release the hostages if Russia[']s President... declared an end to the war in Chechnya and began withdrawing troops. [The Russian President] said preserving the lives of the hostages was his only concern but negotiations broke down and the rebels threatened to kill the hostages. They laid explosives and some strapped mines and grenades to themselves. About 60 hostages had been let go but [an]eyewitness... said conditions in the theatre were terrible. "There was a big bomb in the centre of the hall. The stage was mined as well as all the passage ways... They had to use

the orchestra pit as a toilet.” [A]Kremlin official... said authorities had not been worried by the threats to kill hostages. “We thought they were overdramatised and exaggerated,”... [Russia’s President], whose tough line against Chechnya helped propel him into office, has always vowed not to negotiate with Chechen rebels unless talks focus on disarmament... [Movsar] appeared in a video that Al-Jazeera TV said was taped before the raid. “Each one of us is willing to sacrifice himself for the sake of God and the independence of Chechnya... I swear by God that we are more keen on dying than you are on living.” Last night his wish came true...

In the end it was a frightened little boy who triggered the climax of the Moscow siege, shouting, “Mummy, I don’t know what to do any more!” Then... threw a bottle at a Chechen... guarding him and fled towards the exit. For the terrorists it was too much. One casually raised his Kalashnikov and fired, missing the boy and hitting a row of hostages... For the Russian special forces monitoring the unfolding drama from the tunnels under the theatre, the killing was the signal to begin the assault which left 117 hostages and 50 rebels dead... Doctors said that several hostages had died choking on their own vomit, a likely effect of the knockout gas... Of the 646 surviving hostages, 45 remain critically ill... [H]eightened security meant that many Russians could not get to see relatives being treated in hospital for the effects of the gas... [P]olice stepped up checks yesterday and distraught relatives begged for information about loved ones, hoping they survived the siege by Chechen guerrillas whom [Russia’s]President... called “armed scum.” Police in Moscow... checked cars, passengers and luggage to prevent a feared repeat attack.

...A senior Russian general said Moscow had lost 1864 troops in its six-month campaign against Chechen separatists, including 25 soldiers killed in the past week. [The g]eneral... also said 5338 soldiers had been wounded. Throughout the conflict, casualty estimates issued by the two sides have differed greatly and proved impossible to verify by independent sources... An estimated 12,000 Chechen civilians... [were] killed or wounded...

The [Paraguayan]Government said three people, all civilians, were wounded by gunfire[during]... a night of chaos in Asuncion, where... [a] Paraguayan Army barracks rose up in support of a fugitive coup leader... [B]ut just hours later the rebels were persuaded to lay down their arms, the Government said last night. “The situation is totally under control. We are going to be relentless in applying the law to all those who have violated the law and the constitution,” P[araguay’s P]resident... told a local television channel. Hours earlier a group of light tanks filed past Congress in the centre of the capital... and blew a hole in the building’s facade. A burst of light arms fire was then heard before the vehicles withdrew. A group of retired colonels and low-ranking officers who support... [the] ex-General... seized control of the Army’s biggest armoured unit, helped by guards at the base, according to [the]Defence Minister... Speaking while the revolt was underway, the Defence Minister said Air Force planes would attack the rebels if they did not surrender... A police unit also joined the revolt aimed at toppling the Government in the notoriously corrupt country. Paraguay’s weak economy is bolstered by an enormous smuggling industry. An anonymous rebel officer read a communique over the radio calling for [the President] to step down to allow an immediate presidential election. It was the third time in four years that Paraguay’s weak democracy has seemed threatened with a relapse into military rule. Each time the former Army chief... has been near the centre of events and each time the U[S], Brazil and Argentina have exerted pressure to ensure democracy survives. During the tense hours before the revolt ended, the U[S] and Paraguay’s neighbours Brazil and Argentina condemned the violence and warned that any Government arising from the coup would face international isolation.

...After suspending foreign debt payments, Argentina’s new populist leader drafted plans yesterday to... effectively... print cash. It was a bid to help cut the poverty and unemployment behind the bloody riots that toppled his predecessor last week. The Interim President... wants to end a gruelling four-year recession... by... [creating] the “Argentino”, a new third currency to circulate alongside Argentine pesos and US dollars. The Government hopes to create one million new jobs with the currency... after riots and looting over Government austerity plans left 27 people dead.

...Thousands of protesting Argentines banged pots and pans yesterday in a baptism of fire for [the country’s]new Peronist President... [–] the fifth President in two weeks after bloody protests sparked political chaos... [– as it] aimed to end a four-year recession and appease social protests... Despite rapturous applause from the Peronist-dominated Congress that elected him, voters were harder to convince amid one of the worst crises to have hit Latin America’s third-largest economy... People are angry at politicians – widely seen as corrupt and incompetent – as recession continues to erode confidence in the courts, Congress and Government officials. Several thousand gathered outside the presidential palace. It seemed a smaller protest to the massive demonstrations that helped topple two Presidents last month... Two law-makers served as provisional 48-hour Presidents... [T]he real test could come when the Government explains how it will save the economy from near meltdown. In a population of 36 million, around 2000 people a day fall below the poverty line and many are so angry at politicians they have insulted and spat on legislators and Government officials in the street. But political analysts say [the new President], elected to the Senate in an impressive victory in mid-term congressional elections in October, may be the only politician with the ability to garner legitimacy and popular backing. Sources close to [the new President] said the new Government might be preparing a devaluation in the one-to-one peg of the peso to the U[S] dollar, the axis from which Argentina’s inflation-free economy has spun for more than 10 years. This could be accompanied by the transformation of dollar debts into pesos. That would stop widespread bankruptcies as most Argentines earn in the local currency but have debts – such as mortgages – in the greenback. Fear of a devaluation already caused a run on the bank late last year, forcing... the unpopular [then]President... to restrict cash withdrawals to \$US1000 a month. The unpopular measure was a major reason for his downfall. In his inauguration speech, [the latest President said it] would end free-market policies and appeared to continue... his Peronist [predecessor’s]... policy of suspending payments on the Government’s \$US132 billion debt. “My commitment from today is to finish with an economic model that has brought desperation to the vast majority of our people.” But some analysts worry about the track record of the former Governor of Buenos Aires province, which racked up debts during his tenure. Fears persist that Argentina’s collapse could spread to other emerging markets, as well as hurting US, Spanish, Italian, French and British companies with investments there. Political turmoil has been constant in Argentina for decades as the country tumbled from the world’s seventh-richest nation in the 1930s – comparable to Canada – to what many now see as a [Last] World pariah in global financial markets.

...Two Argentines were shot dead yesterday, [at]... least 15 people were injured, two seriously, and 50 people were arrested... as hundreds of demonstrators fought pitched battles with police in the worst riots since [the last] elected government was toppled... Argentina’s [current President, who is] at the bottom of polls and fighting for his political future, had vowed a get-tough approach on protests as [it] struggled to convince a sceptical International Monetary Fund to grant an aid pact vital to stem a spiralling social crisis and four-year recession. The riots came just as [the]Economy Minister... flew to the U[S] to meet senior IMF officials and try to get talks on the pact rolling. But things look bleak... One in four of Argentina’s workers is out of work, [‘bank accounts have been frozen by the Government’ and the country has]... a... \$US140 billion... public debt pile... The riots were the latest chapter of violence and protests this year against Latin American Governments as they grapple with mounting economic problems in a region also affected by chaos in Peru and financial jitters in Brazil. Peru has been hit by major riots against privatisation plans, Venezuela was rocked by a failed coup and neighbouring Uruguayans have gone on strike against IMF austerity policies.

...[Venezuela’s] paratrooper-turned-President... sent soldiers into dilapidated schools and hospitals across the country at the weekend as part of a huge effort to combat decades of Government neglect. Ten years to the day after troops massacred 360 people to put down the country’s worst riots in recent history, soldiers swapped their automatic weapons for brooms and screwdrivers to lead [the President]’s war on the collapse of public services. Battalions swept school yards, regiments sold cheap food in local markets and armies of barbers were called up to supply free haircuts to the homeless, who were removed by the busload from the capital’s streets. A total of 70,000 troops took part in the nationwide action, along with 80,000 civil servants, unemployed people and community volunteers. “In 25 years of public service this is the first time I have seen anyone hold out their hand to us like this,” said... [the] headmistress of a huge inner-city school in a poor district called Prado de Maria. “Even if they manage to do

half of what they have promised, that will be something.”... The populist [President], who was jailed after leading a failed coup but went on to win the presidency in a landslide vote... wants to integrate the military into civilian life as part of his war on poverty and social disintegration... The 1989 uprising – sparked by sudden price rises – and its brutal suppression are widely interpreted as the beginning of the political transformation in Venezuela that led to the rise of... [the former coup-leader. ■ Across the border,] Colombia’s mayors and judges are under threat of death or kidnap after a rebel deadline for the officials to resign passed last night. The threat by the country’s largest rebel army is the biggest offensive against civilian authorities in 38 years of guerrilla war. In a mountain-top interview outside the capital, Bogota, a Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Farc) commander said the rebels aimed to destroy the state from the bottom up... [T]he elimination of mayors and all municipal authorities was the first step. “The Government has declared total war against us, and our response is to politically disregard the state, its representatives and... laws,” said the... commander of the rebel army’s 51st front. “A new grassroots power must be built by the people... The birth of this new power will not recognise old institutions,” [the commander] added, clad in camouflage and toting an Israeli-made Galil assault rifle... [The rebel’s] offensive followed the outgoing Government’s “unilateral” decision four months ago to scrap peace talks with the Marxist rebels. The Farc previously threatened about 120 mayors, but the newest threat extends to officials in all 1097 municipalities of the war-torn nation.

...[a former US] President... symbolically placed the Panama Canal into Panamanian hands yesterday with the simple words, “It’s yours.” The ceremony gives the tiny Central American nation sovereignty over all its territory for the first time since its birth in 1903[(‘the 81km canal across the isthmus of Panama, connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, was begun by Ferdinand de Lesseps in 1882, abandoned through bankruptcy in 1889, and built by the USA in 1904-14 in territory – the *Panama Canal Zone* – that was ceded in perpetuity from the Republic of Panama’; ‘the U.S. acquired the necessary lease of land following its support of a revolt in which the state of Panama won independence from Colombia, Nov. 1903 – Colombia did not recognize Panama’s independence until 1914 – and U.S. personnel began to occupy the leased land, May 1904, to construct the canal that accommodates all but the very largest of ships, saving inter-ocean traffic the long trip around Cape Horn, thus giving it great commercial and military importance’). In what the 39th US President] and Panama President... called a pivotal moment in the history of the hemisphere, the two leaders signed a symbolic accord... Under the 1977 Panama Canal Treaties brokered by [the peanut-growing 39th US President], the US will officially relinquish control of the famous waterway on December 31. “At last we have reached victory; the canal is ours,” [Panama’s President] said, framed in the backdrop by the canal boat *Atlas*, decked in festive maritime bunting... Outside the locks, demonstrators burned an American flag, rejecting any future US presence in Panama and protesting against a plan to flood indigenous and peasant communities to increase the canal watershed.

...Constructing a canal to link the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans was the largest, most expensive project ever undertaken at the time. Battling disease and incredible hardship, 100,000 workers took on the challenge of the century. [Estimates of the number of ‘worker deaths – often due to malaria rather than land slides, dynamiting accidents (23 black labourers were killed in one explosion when the charge went off early) and other mishaps – during construction range from 5,000 to 22,000. The canal’s locks were the largest concrete structures of the day – it takes enough water to last a city for two days to raise or lower each lock. Today the canal is being widened so the largest ships can pass each other and save the 30-day trip around Cape Horn.’

...At the beginning of 1988, the ‘US sent its Assistant Defence Secretary to urge Panama’s military commander – who had been indicted by the US for converting Panama’s government into a “criminal enterprise” (the general then accused the US Administration of preparing drug charges after it refused to co-operate in a plan to invade Nicaragua, alleged CIA involvement in the 1985 murder of a politician, and called for the US to end its presence in Panama) – to step down and allow free elections. In February, Panama’s President dismissed the general, who refused to leave office despite the public’s joyful reaction to his sacking. Neither the military nor the legislative assembly backed the President’s moves. A replacement President was named and sworn in (the US continued to support the former President but ruled out intervention – other than withholding payments for the operation of the canal). In March, Panama witnessed an abortive military coup as thousands of anti-government protesters wreaked havoc for three successive days. In early 1989, as details were revealed of the US President’s involvement in a CIA plot to oust the general, polls showed the latter’s lack of support among voters in the run-up to presidential elections. After the election, the poll count was suspended as both sides claimed victory amidst reports of widespread corruption. The US was among countries who condemned the general’s manipulation of the election result, before the general declared the elections null and void. The US ridiculed the naming of the general as head of government. The killing of a US officer by Panamanian Defence Force soldiers – Panamanian forces had earlier condemned the US decision to send more personnel to the area – resulted in both sides being put on a state of alert (the US feared an emerging pattern of violence against its service-people may have been linked to the general’s declaration of being in a “state of war” with the US). Invoking the UN charter to justify its action, the US President ordered his troops to invade – offering a \$1m reward for the capture of the general. Three foreign journalists were killed by US troops in a controversial shooting incident. The general surrendered to a Vatican diplomatic mission in Panama City; Cuba offered him safe haven. Results of new presidential elections were officially recognized. A new Panamanian President was sworn in, ending 1989’s post-invasion “Sugarloaf” government’.]

...last week’s referendum... reinstated [Iraq’s dictator] as President for another seven years. All 11.5 million eligible voters apparently cast their ballot for him, an improbable 100[%] “yes” vote. There... [were ‘500 people sent to jail for voting “no” seven years ago’ – although, if they are still in jail, they will be released under the President’s ‘general amnesty for prisoners to celebrate his victory.’ D]espite the dictatorship, poverty and corruption they endure... [d]istrust of America runs deep among ordinary Iraqis... [One] is trying to study the great works of American literature in her rundown classroom at Baghdad University. [The Iraqi] used to be fascinated by American culture, but lately the 23-year-old postgraduate student has had a change of heart. Her library stocks a handful of copies of the Steinbeck texts [the 23-year-old] needs, but not a single work of literary theory or criticism. “I tried sending letters to American universities to ask for help. But I got nothing back... I know they don’t want to help us, but now they want to attack our country again. I just don’t understand why they hate us.” Life for many Iraqis under the [dictator’s] regime... has been unbearably harsh. No one will say so in public, but few would mourn his departure after a US and British attack. But... years of sanctions and... American-led bombing raids have significantly changed attitudes towards the West. Iraqis are well aware of the imminent return of U[N] weapons inspectors... and the threat of war. Yet many appear concerned about America’s intentions once the promise of “regime change” has been achieved. “We will not submit to American demands. This is just not fair,” said... a... 32[-year-old]... student of English literature at the university. “Our people want to live in safety. Why do they consider us all guilty? Why do they want to force themselves on us? [The US President] behaves like a teenager, not the leader of a great country.” Most believe Iraq’s oil, the world’s second-largest proven reserve, is at the heart of the problem. “Our oil is the most important strategic item in the world,” said... a Turkish and Russian business translator. “America and Europe need our oil. It is that simple. Saudi Arabia is helpless because there are so many American bases there...” Last week, Spain’s top diplomat in Baghdad resigned, saying [it] felt under increasing pressure to toe a pro-Washington line. “The official position is so markedly pro-US that, if you don’t support Washington’s policy, it is as if you are working against your own Government... The way the situation is presented, you are asked to choose between [the Iraqi and US Presidents], and I won’t side with either.” [The dictator’s] propaganda machine has helped to fuel Iraqi anger at America. In a rare speech, televised nationwide, [the dictator] accused Washington of trying to deceive the Muslim world. “The Americans want to conceal their true thinking from the Arabs. When the Americans show their ugly face, only then will people realise what they are doing.”... Many Iraqis are too frightened to speak their minds for fear of [the regime’s] ruthless Mukhabarat intelligence agency. But there are whispers of dissent... There are... grumbles that the state is sending money to support Palestinian families while Iraqis live on the breadline. And there is anger that an elite has made a vast fortune from illegal trade throughout the embargo. Illegal oil sales are put at around US\$1 billion... a year and the fruits of the trade are obvious. The shops in Baghdad’s Arasat St reek of the opulence of corrupt [Last] World elites. Wide-screen televisions... are on sale.

Supermarkets sell foreign cigarettes and under-the-counter Cuban cigars at US\$150... a box. Every other car on the road is a new BMW or Mercedes-Benz. All this in a country in which UN sanctions have supposedly limited imports to humanitarian goods alone.

...Imagine you lived in a country where... the land is rich in exportable oil, but money was worth nothing, and you traded basic foods for shoes and clothing. Where, if children died before they reached school age – and one in seven were doing that, many in hospitals lacking the most basic drugs – you didn't let the authorities know because the dead child's ration book was a lifeline for those who lived on. And all because the leaders of what we call the "Free World" don't like your head of state. [One person] doesn't have to imagine. [It] remembers Iraq, the land once called Mesopotamia, where Saladin fought the Crusaders. Where ziggurats like the Tower of Babel dotted the fertile landscape. Where the Hanging Gardens of Babylon scented the air. [It] lived in Iraq for a year after his boss, the U[N] Secretary-General... sent him to coordinate UN humanitarian relief. In September 1998 [it] resigned and quit the UN altogether. The reason: his heartfelt view that the trade sanctions against Iraq, designed to break the will of [its] President... are destroying a nation and killing innocent civilians and not reaching into the dictator's gilded fastnesses. They are, [it] says, "both illegal and immoral and they fit the definition of genocide." His resignation uncorked a fizz of discontent. In February, his successor... quit too, lamenting that the civilian population of Iraq was being "exposed to such punishment for something they have never done." Two days later, [the]... head of the World Food Programme in Iraq, threw it in as well. For much of the... [time since it] ended a "fantastic" 34-year career, [the former coordinator] has travelled the world, knocking on doors throughout Europe... and North America, trying to drum up support. As luck would have it, [the coordinator] was in Wellington this week when our Government became the first in the world publicly to denounce the sanctions. [The Foreign Affairs] Minister... said blanket trade sanctions were "a blunt instrument" harming ordinary Iraqis but not the ruling elite. "They could cause devastating suffering and long-term degradation to civilian populations." [The coordinator] might have wanted to amend that "could cause" to "are causing," but... was too gracious to say so. N[Z]'s stance, though largely symbolic (we are bound by the UN Charter to adhere to the sanctions regime), meant a lot to him. "N[Z] has a reputation in the UN which is out of proportion to its size... It has the capacity to lead others in a coalition of member states who know this ain't working." ...In October, [t]he... tall and elegant Irish[person]... went back to Iraq with [a] crusading journalist... and a television crew. The physical decay made his blood run cold. Because Iraq is a rich – and energy-rich – country, its infrastructure is highly electrified... "They had money and they went first class. Irrigation systems, hospitals, clinics, food processing, incubators, the whole gamut. But even when I was living in Baghdad – and I was living in a good part of town – I was invariably driving through sewage. They're still [only] getting about three or four hours' electricity a day where the temperature routinely goes above 50 degrees." The official death rate of children under 5 is 131 per 1000 live births – ...but... the figure is almost certainly higher. Particularly in country areas, babies die before being registered as born, so their deaths are not recorded. Give or take a few tiny lives, it means that a couple of hundred Iraqi children will die by this time tomorrow. Half a million in eight years. These deaths, [the coordinator] is keen to remind us, are not occurring because of some cruel accident of climate, a biblical plague, a civil insurrection. They are the direct and demonstrable result of a sanctions policy hammered out at the UN. [The coordinator] wrestled for six months with the idea that [it] might have to quit a job where the need was so great. But in his time in Iraq [the coordinator] did make a difference. The doubling to \$US8 billion of the "oil for food" programme... occurred largely at his instigation... And sometimes [the coordinator] was able to focus on the little picture, too. Inspecting Baghdad Hospital with the head of the W[HO, they] came across four children with leukaemia, certain to die for lack of basic drugs. "I told him to get me the drugs and I'd pay for them... [The head] got the drugs, imported them directly, illegally, outside the sanctions framework. Of course by the time we got them, two of the kids were dead already." When [the coordinator] went back in October, only one was alive... [The 12-year-old] smiles tentatively from a photograph her saviour always carries in his briefcase. [The coordinator] smiles wistfully, perhaps at the naivety of the question, when asked why the sanctions persist when their failure is so widely documented. "Those who are in charge understand very well that they are on the wrong track. But that's not what rules the decisions of states. The politics of oil, the need to control Iraq, th[at's the crux]... There is no democracy in the Security Council. It is totally manipulated by the U[S]. The problem when you have one superpower is that nobody's going to stand up against it. The Russians aren't going to stand up too high because they don't want to be embarrassed about Chechnya, the Chinese are sensitive because they want to get into the W[TO] and they are embarrassed about Tibet." ...writing in the *Guardian* of his October trip to Iraq... [the coordinator concluded]: "The Iraqis are more sophisticated than we are. They can come up to you and me and say: 'I like you as an individual; your Government is the problem.' We don't do that. We blacklist every Arab in town, they're all terrorists." A one-time Quaker ([it] describes himself as "lapsed"), [the coordinator] says conscience, not faith, drives him now. "I couldn't sleep with myself if I didn't do what I am doing. I've got to stick with it until something changes."

...*Sea of Galilee sticking-point for summit*... Watchers of the Arab world have... suggested that... Syria's President... is becoming more forgetful by the day. But [Syria's President] has kept one memory intact... [- swimming] in the Sea of Galilee and ca[tching] fish in its waters. No matter that this was more than 30 years ago, when the sea's northeastern shores were controlled by Syria, before the land was lost to Israel in the 1967 Arab-Israel war, along with the Syrian Golan Heights. Last week, it became clear that the chief reason for the failure of the summit in Geneva between [Syria's President and his US counterpart] was a fundamental disagreement over the Sea of Galilee (also known as Lake Tiberius and... the Israelis[call it] Lake Kinneret). The Syrians want the Israelis to withdraw to the positions held on June 4, 1967 – the day before war broke out – by returning the occupied Golan Heights and restoring to Syria the lake's northeastern shores. Syria has the weight of international law on its side through UN Resolution 242, which calls for a withdrawal from all territories seized during the 1967 war. Anything less would compromise, in Damascus' view, the loss of what is legally Syria's. It emerged during the Geneva negotiations that the Israelis are now willing to leave the Golan, but not to withdraw to the exact line of June 4, 1967. They want to keep a 100m-wide strip of land along the lake's eastern edge to block the Syrians from having access to the water itself. The lake provides 40[%] of Israel's water and it is feared that Syria would pump water for its own purposes or pollute it. Syria has said this would not occur and has guaranteed not to use the water, so long as Syria got its part of the shoreline back. But Israel remained unconvinced... Syrians see a deal that leaves the lake's shores in Israeli hands as peace without honour. They point out that every child in Syria knew that their forefathers bathed in the lake... So the process is in trouble again. [The US President] has, in effect, blamed the Syrians for Geneva's failure, although [Syria's President] simply stuck by the letter of international law. Happy in the knowledge that [it] can blame Syria for scuttling the talks... Israel's premier... seems set to withdraw Israeli troops from the Lebanon occupation zone by July without an agreement – despite the risk that this could lead to more bloodshed and instability.

...*The ultimate price of peace*... WHEN the first Irish U[N] force came to Lebanon in 1978, I found an Irish Army Air Corps Captain... sheltering under a truck as Palestinian[s]... shrieked abuse and the French Foreign Legion fixed bayonets 50 feet away. Recalling his country's bloody experience in the Congo, [the Captain] asked me a question very matter-of-factly from beside one of the truck's axles. "Could this be the same?" It was worse. In all, 48 Irish soldiers were to die in Lebanon... and this St Patrick's Day – the last for the UN's Irish battalion – there was talk of how they hoped their one unrecovered body might go home too: [the Private who is] missing presumed dead after being kidnapped by dissident Palestinians in 1980. One more battalion will be sent to southern Lebanon and it will close down Camp Shamrock... The Irish will then leave behind a land that looks like County Mayo, in which they have been loved, harassed, insulted, murdered and maligned. But their peacekeepers... [- armed only with] personal weapons and light armour... [-] stayed on through the worst shellfire and the most deliberate killings. In the town of Tibnin, the Lebanese speak English with Dublin accents. In the village of Bradchit, they have Galway accents. In Haddata, the Lebanese speak like Waterford [residents]... It may be apocryphal, but legend has it that... [an Irish] scholar, historian, UN diplomat, government minister and

supporter of Israel, turned up at the village of Beit Yahoun and told the local kids to leave him alone. “Emshi” (“go away”), the eminent Dr... is said to have told them. To which a small Lebanese boy answered in a perfect Dublin accent: “Emshi, me bollocks!” ...At their... last... St Patrick’s Day parade... the Irish debated what to do with the memorials to their dead. Should they stay in the land where the... soldiers died? Or should they be freighted back to Ireland? The mission of the U[N] Interim Force in Lebanon was supposed “to confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces” after Israel’s 1978 invasion and help the Beirut Government restore its sovereignty across southern Lebanon. But the Israelis continued to occupy the southernmost part of the country – 10[%] of Lebanon... If “interim” can now be [re]defined... much of [the Irish Army’s] time has been made ferocious by Lebanon’s militias, by Israel’s murderous little proxy army, the South Lebanon Army and – on one terrible occasion – by an Irish soldier who turned his gun on three of his own comrades. The Israelis insulted the battalions as “Johnny Walker Irish,” infuriated because Irish troops, whose sobriety has never been in question, refused to retreat before Israel’s proxy [army] in 1980. In the village of At Tiri that year, the Irish went into battle to prevent the South Lebanon Army taking over. They killed one of Israel’s Lebanese allies and lost one of their own... In revenge, one of Israel’s militiamen... murdered two Irish soldiers... in an incident that might be regarded as a war crime. But [the Israeli militiaman] now lives in safety in the U[S]. The Americans – otherwise so keen on hunting terrorists – have shown no interest in arresting him. Then there was Lieutenant Aonghus Murphy, one of Ireland’s most promising young officers, deliberately blown up in a mine explosion by the Hizbollah in August 1986. The guerrillas were angry that his [squad] regularly cleared a road upon which they had planted mines to kill Israelis. The [person] held responsible was a Hizbollah official... now one of 19 Lebanese held illegally in Israel. His release is demanded by the Hizbollah, and his Unifil (U[N] Interim Force in Lebanon) liaison officer... was sitting as a guest of honour at this year’s St Patrick’s parade. What, I wondered, would St Patrick have made of that? ...■ IN BRIEF... The Israeli Army has admitted that its troops shot and killed a U[N] official on the West Bank. Some Israeli radio stations said Briton Iain Hook, who UN colleagues said had been calling Israelis to try to arrange a ceasefire during a gun battle on Saturday, was shot when soldiers mistook his mobile phone for a weapon.

...A new book is about to cast dark shadows over Anzac mythology... [T]he taped recollections of a trooper of the Light Horse, one of A[US]’s most hallowed units... held at the A[US]n War Memorial in Canberra... described the... slaughter of... [a]s many as 120... villagers... at the Palestinian town of Surafend... shortly after the end of W[W]I... as the A[nzac]... and British troops prepared to go home after a long campaign against the Turks. The... Anzacs had exhausted their patience with the “treachery of the natives” and... their frustration with their “constant thieving” came to a head when a NZ machine-gunner was shot and killed by an intruder. Angered further by the failure of British officials to respond adequately, the troops took matters into their own hands... “The native [gals] and children were first put out of harm’s way, and then the [troops], fired by hate... entered the village... A Bedouin camp situated nearby was treated in a like manner.” ...the massacre highlighted the moral complexity of war and how otherwise-good [guys] could do terrible things. “The Anzacs were not... mono-dimensional heroes...” [the author] says.

...Kiwis are highly acclaimed internationally for their work in clearing land mines. Not many people know that, nor how wide-ranging the activities of N[Z] soldiers overseas are. The documentary, *Keeping The Peace*, on TV1 at 10.35pm, Tuesday, aims to put the record straight. Shot before N[Z] forces were called to E[T], the programme shows how experiences gained in dozens of different war zones in far-flung corners of the world have prepared the soldiers for their current assignment. The film crew... caught up with a Kiwi corporal in Mozambique leading a group of Americans on a world tour teaching them about mine-clearing techniques. But our soldiers... are[also] seen... observing cease-fire lines in South Lebanon; ...rebuilding a school in Bougainville; ...driving main battle tanks... driver training and testing soldiers... [plus] doing environmental protection work... in Sinai... and running Nato’s reconstruction programme in Bosnia.

...There is more than a little irony in the fact that we refer to the years since 1945 as the post-war era. It took only four years from the signing of the Japanese surrender... before N[Z]ers were again under arms in the Malayan Emergency, fighting against communist insurgents. It would prove to be a 12-year campaign, involving two N[Z] infantry battalions and the S[A]S, that was to establish the Kiwis’ reputation as jungle fighters. A year later we were fighting under a U[N] mandate in Korea in one of the bloodiest wars in history... Our casualties were comparatively light – 41 dead... Contrast our losses with more than 580,000 U[N] and South Korean dead, wounded or missing and the estimated 1.6 million communist casualties... [In addition, over] a million South Korean civilians had been killed and several million more made homeless... Given those statistics, it is somewhat shameful that my only childhood memory of the Korean War is being told that it created such a demand for clothing and blankets that N[Z] woolgrowers were in clover. The average wool price a pound jumped from 38 pence in 1949-50 to almost 88 pence in 1950-51. However, that war gave rise to the institution that moulded N[Z] foreign policy for the next 30 years – the Anzus pact... In 1963 we again committed troops to assist Malaysia fight a border war with Indonesia. Dubbed, euphemistically, “confrontation,” this undeclared war involved more than 11,000 Commonwealth troops over a three-year period. It saw our infantry and SAS deployed in some of Asia’s most inhospitable jungle. When it was over our unit did not come home. The First Battalion of the Royal N[Z] Infantry Regiment was more at home in Asia than in N[Z] and maintained its base there until the late 1980s. While confrontation with Indonesia was still being waged, N[Z] became involved in the most divisive war in its history – Vietnam. Our ties with the U[S] were beginning to carry a price... Vietnam had a cathartic effect on N[Z] and on N[Z] politicians who would think hard and long before committing us to another war. So, with the exception of a numerically small commitment to the Gulf War, N[Z] has become a peacekeeper, reluctant to fire a shot in anger and “protected” by the blue beret of the U[N]. It has been our principal protection in places like Mogadishu and Bosnia. And as I write, a bright young [guy] I have known since [it] was a schoolboy is somewhere in E[T]...

As the sun rises over the dusty lands of E[T] this morning, it will be a new dawn for the world’s newest nation... Yesterday thousands of its 850,000 people... knelt in the dirt to pray for a better future, as celebrations of their independence as the world’s 190th country began... In a ceremony that began at dusk with a solemn three-hour mass and scheduled to end with a pageant of fireworks, thousands witnessed the formal birth of a sovereign nation. A weekend show of military strength by former occupying force Indonesia did not quell the spirit of the... [ETese. L]ocals and international visitors poured into the celebration site... 8km from the capital... to watch the U[N] flag come down and the E[T]ese flag go up at midnight... [The] UN Secretary-General[, who was] given the task of handing over authority for the country’s administration to the Speaker of the E[T] Parliament, described plans by Indonesia[’s] President... to briefly attend, despite domestic critics, as a “wise and courageous decision.” ...The UN Security Council on Saturday voted to extend its presence in E[T], with the support of the new Government... The 8000 peacekeepers will be phased down to 5000. N[Z]’s last battalion of 621 left for duty this month... [After winning 82%] of the popular vote... a... [Nobel Peace Prize laureate] was installed as... [ET’s first]president... More than 90 countries sent delegations to celebrate independence, putting enormous strain on Dili. Guests included [the AUSn and NZ PMs. NZ]... has pledged E[T] \$10 million over the next four years.

...ON THE far-flung atolls of Tokelau some 3000km from Auckland, the N[Z] flag flies high in the gentle Pacific breeze. It is no visitor to those shores, and it is no stranger either. Our ensign belongs as much to the inhabitants of those palm-lined islets as it does to so many [thousand]s of kilometres to the south. “Colony” is not a fashionable word these days, so Tokelau... is, in the politically correct diplo-speak of modern politics, a non self-governing territory... N[Z]’s last dependency... has not always been bound to us. N[Z] inherited the three atolls... from the British in 1925. And in 1948 the territory, with its land mass measuring less than 13 sq km and never wider than 200m, was formally made part of N[Z] with the passage of the Tokelau Act... The aid N[Z] gives to the fewer than 1500 people of Tokelau – \$6.5[million] in 1999... – makes up four-fifths of its budget. Most of it goes into grants to the Tokelau administration to fund transport, education and health. The rest goes into scholarships, telecommunications, power, village development and sanitation. Tokelau also receives U[N] development programme money and generates about

\$1.5 m... itself in income tax, levies, duties, and selling off-shore fishing licences. But the U[N] wants change. Several years ago it named Tokelau as one of 27 nations worldwide it wanted to see become independent by 2000. We, too, are happy to help if our dependent chooses to be independent. With N[Z]'s aid, Tokelau is working towards drawing up its own constitution and taking a further step towards independence by considering an act of self-determination. Yet when it goes, colonisation will have left its indelible mark. For... Tokelau's oldest resident... one of the evils of modernisation has been the introduction of Western food... Despite never having dental care, elders... have a full set of teeth. However, today children as young as 6 have rotten teeth... Each atoll is literally built on coral rubble so, unlike other Pacific islands growing export crops is almost impossible. More significantly, the tourist dollar is a rare visitor... The nearest big island is Western Samoa, which lies 480km to the south. Without an airport only one or two hardy visitors are keen to brave the 32-hour boat ride from Samoa. Once there, the island hospitality is renowned, but life is basic. There are no hotels, no bars, no restaurants. Tokelau is believed to be the last country in the world to get a phone service (in 1997), and the generators mean power is only on several hours a day. Many families still cook on open fires and almost all use open "latrines" or toilets on stilts above the water. Space is also in short supply and the villages are congested. The 1996 census found an average of 123 people living on each square kilometre. Fakaoka, one of the most densely populated, is so crowded that its population of several hundred pigs... [- which along with] breadfruit... and... taro... have been introduced... [-] lives on the reef because there is nowhere else to put them. When the tide comes in, the animals swim or scramble on to the rocks. They are hand-fed by the families who own them and forage for shellfish, seaweed and fish... Like neighbouring Tuvalu 1000km to the west, the atolls of Tokelau are gradually sinking at a rate of about 1cm a year and the highest point above sea level is 5m... That is the present for Tokelau, but the past has seen worse. As a little boy, [the elder] remembers hearing stories of the Peruvian slave ships that came ashore and captured almost half the able-bodied [guys] on Tokelau. The 252 taken were sold at the markets in Callao in 1863 and only one returned home... [O]ne of the new faces of Tokelau... won a scholarship which enabled her to do her Sixth and Seventh Form at Wairarapa College, then on to Waikato University where [it] completed a Bachelor of Arts and a law degree. Although many other Tokelauans graduated from university before her, [it] was the first to be admitted as a barrister and solicitor of the High Court in Waikato last year. Married to a Fijian resident, also a lawyer, [it]... made the hard decision to return to Tokelau to give her skills back to her people... Although there is no need for a lawyer on Tokelau (there are three police officers but virtually no crime), [it] works as a senior policy advisory officer for the Office of the Council of Faipule, the island leader... Tokelau will need her. When N[Z]'s flag is lowered for the last time in these tiny atolls, the challenge will be to replace it with the standard of successful self-determination... "My hope for the future is that the next generation of people will have the best of both worlds. That they will never forget our heritage, but can use their education for the betterment of our people," says [the elder].

...Waitakere City has been named as N[Z]'s very first Peace City, and now has its own little haven of peace in the heart of Henderson. The award comes from Waitakere City and Henderson Rotary Clubs in the form of a special peace garden, gifted to the city as recognition of its work in conflict resolution. That work includes the restorative justice pilot scheme and Living Values. "It provides a focal point for what Waitakere City stands for," says [the]mayor. The... \$6,000... circular, paved garden[- which] can be found in Falls Park on Alderman Dr, with a breathtaking vista of the new Falls Bridge... [-] features Chicago peace roses, and has been professionally landscaped in a design resembling the Rotary Club's distinctive wheel logo... The garden is dedicated to the memory of Rotarian founding member and past president Don Page, "a [hu]man of peace"... "The objective is world peace and understanding, so that when people come and see the garden they'll take that away with them," says... Rotary's immediate past president. "Peace is more than stopping bombs, it's about working towards the resolution of conflict in general as a community," says Rotary's district governor. "That means stopping bullying in schoolyards, domestic disputes, and road rage." There are... 24 official Peace Cities around the world, a project started in 1991 by the Wagga Wagga Koorringal Rotary Club in N[S]W... The project involves promoting peace through a wide variety of activities, particularly those focused on youth. Rotary is involved in many school leadership programmes like Reaching Forward and Reaching Out, peer support, a mock U[N] assembly, and is looking forward to celebrating World Peace Day on February 23, 2000.

...Is it possible to write a history of [hu]mankind spanning... the past 1000 years? The first impulse is to grin at the folly of trying to encapsulate so much and so many in a single work. But [one] Oxford history don... is a [perso]n not troubled by lack of confidence in his own intellect. His succinctly titled history *Millennium* captures 1000 years of civilisation as a shifting pattern of settlement, technology advance and conquest. But it was not a history that saw events as a continuous parade from that most powerful of cities in 1000, the Sung capital Kai-feng in northern China, to Washington DC, seat of government for the world's greatest superpower at 2000. Instead [the don] synthesised history as a series of flashes illuminating those moments when civilisation struck a new paradigm and through technology or political power developed a significant and novel world order that overturned what came before. Taking that concept a step further is *Millennium: A Thousand Years of History*... While it cannot have the depth and brilliance of the work it was based on, it takes [the don]'s template and through images matches the flashes of word and deed that [the don] settled on to capture moments in the past 1000 years, when all would never be quite the same again. The millennium begins with the Century of the Sword, a time when China was the most advanced civilisation on the planet... We know about gunpowder and porcelain, but there are so many other... technolog[ies]... which to this day continue to form the basis of our civilisation: the mechanical clock, the magnetic compass, paper money and printing with movable type, (yes, three centuries before Gutenberg) used to publish a 1000-volume encyclopaedia in 1006. This century belonged to the East - China, the Islamic states, India and Japan - where great knowledge... was amassed. The next century belongs to the Axe, not in the sense of a weapon of war but a means to subjugate nature. In 1124 the Chinese census claimed 20 million households. Forests and wilderness gave way to cities. The path of urbanisation began in earnest. In western Europe Italian city states arose, based on the Roman ideal of a city republic, fiercely proud of sometimes imagined Roman origins or sites of Christian significance that brought the mini-republics a sense of allure and power. Today we call it branding. The 13th century belonged to the Stirrup - a symbol for the wild... Mongols. Their territory peaked as the largest continuous land empire the world has known. Their great ruler, Genghis Khan, controlled an empire that ran from the Pacific in the east to the Danube in the west. His very name meant "World-ruler" and this was no boast, just a fair description. At its peak the Mongol empire could transmit information at a rate of 300 miles... a day and its trade routes offered safe passage for goods to move freely between east and west. Yet those same trade routes made the next century a time of great suffering. The 14th century belongs to the Scythe - symbol of death - because the... Mongol... trade routes... were the means for... transmitting the Black Plague that crushed the advances of the eastern empires. If the symbolic Scythe halted civilisation's advance, the next century can be called catch-up time, the Century of Sail. It was marked by China's failure to realise the potential it offered... The illustrative example is Zheng He, admiral of the emperor Yung-lo. As the 15th century began Zheng He sailed armadas of up to 300 ships, crewed by some 30,000... Some reports suggest Zheng He reached the southern ocean and A[US], but without doubt [H]e did sail to the furthest reaches of the Indian Ocean. It was a crucial decade. Chinese technology could have ruled the waves, but influential Confucian scholars decided the outside world offered nothing to China. One scholar wrote: "Barbarian kings should be treated like harmless seagulls." They were wrong, as the Portuguese and Spanish, among other European states, discovered. For them the 16th century can be symbolised as the Century of the Compass that made it possible to envisage the world as a globe whose emptiness was quickly filled as colonial European powers extended their reach. That territorial conquest was sheeted home in the 17th century, which can be dubbed the Century of the Telescope. For the first time in the millennium, western science and technology began to outpace the Far East's. The [perso]n who symbolised the century is Galileo, because [the Italian] reordered the world by deducting that the Earth was not the centre of the universe. But [Galileo] was forced to recant by a Church that could not countenance what it saw as heresy. The 18th century, dubbed the Century of the Furnace, is another figurative description. It refers to the fervent of ideas that shook the century as the Enlightenment became ascendant in Western Europe, a

movement that persists today. The world was now ruled by forces that could be rationally explained using scientific laws. Everything could be measured, catalogued and set in order. So it is entirely logical for the 19th century to be the Century of the Machine. European countries doubled their populations, but still needed more sheer [hu]man-power to satisfy colonial ambition. Technology again provided the solution with the steam engine, the repeating rifle and the first successful explorations of electricity and magnetism. The century was marked by another paradigm-buster as important as Galileo. Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species* sold out on the first day of publication. His research and theory of evolution and natural selection turned belief upside-down. In... h[is book Darwin] wrote: "...from the war of nature, from famine and death, the production of higher animals directly follows." Nothing could be the same again. And so the millennium draws to a close with our own time which can surely be called the Century of the Globe. True global powers arose in the Soviet Union and U[S] and with them pretensions of a global culture. Again technology let humanity take another step: this time into space. For the first time in history we could look back and see the globe that we had formed from science, deduction, exploration and conquest. It is a heady sight to contemplate as the third millennium arrives.

...The U[S] has been soundly defeated in a fresh bid to cripple a draft anti-torture treaty that has been a decade in the making, paving the way for the pact's final UN approval next month. The UN General Assembly's Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee approved the draft treaty by a vote of 104 to eight, with 37 abstentions. The US said... that opening prisons to international inspections would violate states' rights under the US Constitution... and... the pact would divert UN resources from other, more efficient, anti-torture mechanisms...

The U[N] has been hit by an unprecedented wave of fraud, waste and corruption. Officials at its anti-fraud investigation unit say they are expecting to have to run more than 350 inquiries by the end of the year – nearly twice the total for 1998... Thousands of staff, contractors and consultants have been interviewed in scores of countries... The alleged crimes being investigated by the unit, the Office of Internal Oversight Services, range from the petty – such as employers using... UN planes for personal travel – to the huge, such as million-dollar frauds... In one major success this year a former UN official was jailed for three-and-a-half years for embezzling \$US770,000 while working in the former Yugoslavia... In another case, \$US700,000 was recouped after it had been misdirected into a private individual's account by a bank. Other investigations have been into false claims of living allowances and education grants, the payment of \$US6 million for sub-standard supplies in Angola, mismanagement of a number of conferences and alleged fraud by... contractors. Peacekeeping operations are a focus of criticism. One recent independent report alleged that troops provided by member countries for peacekeeping missions were often inadequate. "Some countries have provided soldiers without rifles, or with rifles but no helmets, or with helmets but no flak jackets... This must stop." A former UN official said the UN had "an absurd and unaccountable system of abuse, embezzlement and ineptitude." [The former official] described a series of cases that included assistants to a senior official based in another country not realising their superior had died for more than a year, and an official report on the human rights situation in Czechoslovakia which "cut and pasted" a report from Colombia... about guerrillas and narco-traffickers... [The former official] also criticised "an addiction to perks and luxury." ...The revelations will embarrass... the UN Secretary-General, who hosted national leaders to the Millennium Summit in New York this week. The summit was the biggest such meeting in the UN's history and [the Secretary-General] was hoping to convince sceptical heads of state that the UN has provided value for money and that its role should be expanded.

...[the US President] arrived in Seattle early today to... attend the... W[TO] meeting to set the agenda for a new round of negotiations aimed at reducing trade barriers in sectors ranging from agriculture to electronic commerce... Earlier, [the President] acknowledged that addressing labour and environmental concerns in trade talks was "not going to be easy" because many [Last World] countries saw concerns about environment and labour standards as a way to "keep them down." ...[the] UN Secretary-General... echoed [the President]'s comments... in the speech [the Secretary-General had] prepared for the conference but... was unable to present because... protests forced him to stay in his hotel suite. In it, [the Secretary-General]... said, "it seldom makes sense to use trade restrictions to tackle problems whose origins lie not in trade but in other areas of national and international policy." ...[□ Last night r]iot police broke up a violent protest... by hundreds of anarchists who ignited a fire outside a major London train station in a demonstration against capitalism and the WTO summit in Seattle... [A]t about 7 pm local time... up to 2000 protesters... brandishing placards saying "Kill Capitalism" and "WTO equals World Thieves Organisation" started ripping up paving stones and guard rails just outside... Euston Station... In a two-hour rampage the anarchists overturned vehicles and disrupted London's evening rush-hour commuter travel... Kings Cross Station and several other stations in the area were... closed to ensure the violence did not spread... A similar protest on June 18 turned into London's most violent for a decade as protesters burned cars, smashed offices and battled with police.

...**BATTLE OF SEATTLE**... Seattle is under dusk-to-dawn curfew and the National Guard is patrolling the streets after violent protests... In scenes reminiscent of U[S] civil rights and antiwar protests of the 1960s and 1970s, police in riot gear sprayed teargas and shot rubber bullets to disperse demonstrators who had blocked access to the convention centre where the W[TO]... director-general... and... delegates... tried to begin their millennium round yesterday... Masked protesters broke shop windows, set fire to rubbish bins and hurled teargas canisters back at police. They vandalised stores as they retreated. Seattle police admit they were taken by surprise... "It was a calculated strategy of major, active and threatening disturbances." ...The protesters – some peaceful... – were an unlikely alliance of anarchists, watersiders, animal rights activists, punk youths, senior citizens and students. But what they had in common was a belief that the WTO is a tool of big business... "This is an unprecedented convergence of ordinary people from different sectors of U[S] society who have decided to take a stand against the corporate takeover of the planet and the assault on family farms, forests and endangered species," said [one] demonstrator... "It's an unarmed civilian insurrection on the streets of Seattle at the brink of the millennium," said the member of a Californian activist group called the Resource Centre for Nonviolence. More than 16,000 unionists marched through Seattle demanding that the WTO put jobs ahead of free trade and profit. A dock-workers' union temporarily closed ports along the US West Coast in sympathy... At the... Westin Hotel, where [the] US Trade Representative... and her Japanese counterparts were staying, guests were told to go to their rooms for fear that demonstrators would storm the building... Undeterred by the protests, Trade Ministers representing the 135 WTO members went ahead and delivered dry speeches about their vision for the global trading system.

...[the former NZ Labour Party PM] is making a good impression... [as the new WTO] director-general... amid the protests at the Seattle conference... Protesters demanding the WTO's destruction are working against poor people and developing countries, [the NZer] told a news conference in a voice brimming with emotion. "To those who argue that we should stop our work, I say: tell that to the poor, to the marginalised around the world who are looking to us to help."

...*Globalisation has made most of world poorer*... There has been intense media interest in the demonstrations at the World Economic Forum meeting in Melbourne last week and some people have been critical of the Green Party's decision to send [another MP (r:p1384, ln47)] and myself as representatives. To understand why we felt it necessary to support the demonstrations it is important to understand exactly what was happening in Melbourne last week. The World Economic Forum was a meeting between hand-picked representatives of the 1000 richest corporations and individuals and guests from the Government, academic and media elites of the world. Essentially, the meeting was to give the world's wealthiest people unparalleled access to global decision-makers and Governments around the world. The meeting was to discuss how "free trade" could be sped up and how a "global economy" could be further advanced. Against the backdrop of this meeting, let's consider these basic and indisputable facts, the clear results of globalisation: • The world has around 500 billionaires, whose combined assets are roughly equal to the combined annual income of the poorest half of all people on the planet. • The collective assets of the world's top three billionaires equals more than the combined gross national product of the 600 million people in the least developed countries. • The world's 200 richest people more than doubled their net worth between 1994 and 1998 to more than \$1 trillion. • The richest fifth of the world's population has amassed around 86[%] of the world's

wealth. The poorest fifth gets just 1[%] of that wealth. It was the economic elite of this richest fifth who were represented at the... Forum. Despite the talk about improved prosperity for everyone in the world, we should not forget it was the 1000 richest who were invited to attend. Neither the Green Party nor I have a problem with people making profit from work or enterprise, or having a comfortable existence. We recognise that N[Z] is a trading nation and that some trade is essential to our economic prosperity. However, we also recognise that there are limited resources on Earth and if a small group of people own or control big chunks of it, there is less for everybody else. The accumulating wealth of these people and companies comes at a price – not only through deprivation of resources and wealth for smaller developing nations, but also through environmental degradation and the exploitation of people who make the goods and supply the labour to create these profits. The Green Party deplores the sweatshops of South Asia where Chinese workers earn 23c an hour and Bangladeshis [considerably less] an hour, with no union or human rights. N[Z] has unfortunately been a world leader in the ideology of globalisation. We have removed nearly all protections for local production and have sold off or privatised huge chunks of our economy to foreign interests. These changes have led to lower wages, increased unemployment and the absurd situation where we import goods which we should be making ourselves – such as pet food, biscuits, clothing and footwear. N[Z] production plants – Bendon clothing factory, Matarua paper mill, car assembly plants – have closed as global competitiveness squeezes prices to see who can produce goods the cheapest and secure entrance into other markets. The drive to produce the cheapest goods means cutting corners. Producing environmentally friendly goods and looking after the environment are all viewed as costs and, as such, the environment has been a huge loser from globalisation... [But p]eople around the world are waking up to how this system works and who runs it and why. They are rightly angry... I hope the day will come – and I believe it will come soon – when the majority of people in this country see the work of some of us now as work for a more equitable world economy.

...Sweden's police chief insisted yesterday that his officers had done a "fabulous" job patrolling a E[U] summit in Gothenburg, despite two days of rioting in which three people were shot and wounded. Around 20,000 protesters took to the streets again on Saturday... staging a peaceful march in contrast to earlier rioting which turned the city centre into a war zone and left one [protester] fighting for his life after police shot him. "I readily admit there have been things happening on the streets of Gothenburg that no one wants to see," [Sweden's]National Police Commissioner... told a tense news conference. "But if you compare the outcome... with what could have happened if police had not done their job, I think the police have carried out the task in an absolutely fabulous way." Sweden witnessed its worst street violence in memory on Friday as rioters smashed and looted shops and lit a huge bonfire in the area's main avenue. Protesters stoned police and pulled mounted police... off their horses, forcing the terrified animals to gallop riderless back into police lines, skidding on the cobbled streets. The activists, from dozens of anti-EU, anti-U[S] and anti-globalisation groups, descended on Sweden's second largest city, greatly outnumbering police... 4000 police – a quarter of Sweden's total force – had been deployed to control the protests. But police, unfamiliar with the corralling and isolating of troublemakers, could not cope. Under Swedish law neither water cannon nor teargas are allowed to be used – leaving the police with either heavy batons or their guns. The shootings are said to have taken place when one police[officer] in a group of five fell in front of an advancing crowd. Anxious to protect a colleague, one of the other officers is understood to have opened fire... Police chiefs said police had opened fire in self-defence, but declined to give further details or answer questions on why guns were used, saying an inquiry was under way... Police said 500 to 600 people were detained during the protests. Most were later released, with around 100 issued with formal arrest warrants... Sweden has declared a temporary exemption from the EU's Schengen open-border accord to re-impose frontier controls in a bid to stop further protesters arriving.

...Hundreds of Italian anti-terrorist police fought masked anarchists yesterday as the Genoa summit of wealthy industrialised nations ended. The anarchists were seeking revenge for the death of 23-year-old Carlo Giuliani, who was shot dead when tr[ying] to attack a police vehicle with a fire extinguisher on Saturday. The 20-year-old police[officer] who shot him was in hospital in shock. [The officer faces hu]manslaughter charges. The new battles in the historic city came as more than 150,000 mostly peaceful protesters staged a sombre and nervous march. The marchers – campaigning on issues from debt relief to fair trade – sought to distance themselves from the worst anti-globalisation violence in 18 months. The violence overshadowed the Group of Eight summit and left the city in shambles. The fury of the anti-capitalist protests shocked the G8 leaders. Many of the marchers chanted "murderers" and "assassins" at police as they passed the spot where Giuliani, an unemployed squatter from Rome, was shot in the head. The leaders expressed "sorrow and regret" at the killing, and urged demonstrators to reject violence. But anarchists ran amok, smashing shop windows and hurling paving stones at riot police, who then responded with teargas. The Corso Torino, the main route of the march, was a scene of devastation. Shops and offices were wrecked; cash machines pulled from graffiti-daubed walls... The scale of the devastation – estimated to have cost the city millions of dollars – hastened a decision to slash the size of summits in the future. Canada wants just 400 delegates at its Alberta conference next year. In Genoa, the U[S] alone had 900 delegates... Japan had 600... Secure behind kilometres of fences and protected by 20,000 police, the G8 leaders promised to draw poor nations into the world economy and make globalisation work. "Those who claim to represent the voices of the poor aren't doing so," [the]US President... said during a picture-taking session with [the]French President...

'Death' summit spells end of era... The "Death in Genoa summit," tragically marked by the first death of a protester in two years of attacks on international economic gatherings, drew to a close, with world leaders shaken by events of the past three days. Their final act was a communique drawing together results of deliberations over the past drama-filled days which put the very concept of G8 meetings of the world's richest nations under the microscope... "Virtually everyone agrees these protests grew out of people's real concerns linked to policies [by Governments,]" [the] Russian President... said. "People lack confidence." [The]French President... said: "We were of course traumatised by the events that occurred around us." ...by comparison, h[is] US counterpart said it... was determined hardcore troublemakers would not win and stop international leaders having legitimate discussions. "Those who claim to represent the voices of reform aren't doing so. Those protesters who try to shut down our talks on trade and aid don't represent the poor as far as I'm concerned." Anxious to shed the image of the G8 as a club of rich nations exploiting poor economies, the leaders announced they had set in motion a new deal to alleviate poverty. They would appoint personal representatives to liaise with African leaders in drawing up a concrete plan to be approved at the next G8 summit in Canada, they said. The partnership covers questions of hunger, conflict, democracy and health, including Aids, corruption, private investment, and boosting trade.

...The Italian Government bowed to international pressure yesterday to look into "fascist" behaviour by its police force, as protesters arrested at the G8 summit in Genoa left with accounts of... brutality... Across the Continent reports emerged of protesters being beaten, tortured and deprived of their legal rights. One German politician likened the police's behaviour at the summit to the old military junta in Argentina. An Italian senator claimed the force had been infiltrated by fascists... [A] Green Party Senator representing Genoa, said: "We have heard stories about police... singing fascist hymns and threatening people with rape and with further violence, and we do think this behaviour has no place in a democra[cy]..."

...Pragmatic Mob gets back to running everyday business... IN the past, the Mafia tried to influence elections with unequivocal messages, such as a calf's head left on a doorstep in the night. But times have changed and so has the Mob. The Mafia has cleaned up its political act enormously in the past decade. It no longer kills politicians and judges. It even no longer kills its own kin. It has a new "chief executive officer" – ...a calm, calculating [perso]n who favours a truce with the State instead of all-out war, the self-destructive strategy relished by his mercurial predecessor... What hasn't changed is the Mafia's aim: to do business. And like any corporation that wants to thrive in tough times, the Mafia knows it has to influence politicians. As Italy's... general election approaches, officials say the Mafia has no real preference between the two main blocs, centre left or centre right. Anyone willing to do business is fine, thank you... "The Mafia has never had problems about who is in power,"... says... [the] secretary-general of Sicily's regional parliament... "It has always tried to cuddle up to those in charge because they are the ones who control the purse strings

of public financing.” ...One of the Mafia’s traditional ways of making money is by trying to influence the awarding of public contracts and steering them to companies it controls... Italy’s fight against the Mafia has made great strides since the twin killings in 1992 of magistrates Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino galvanised officials. [The predecessor] was arrested in 1993, a raft of top bosses and small-fry lieutenants have been nabbed since then and several times police have come close to arresting [the Mafia’s current ce]o. A truce... may give the crime organisation more opportunities to reforge political links. [In the last] three general elections in Italy... – in 92, 94 and 96 – ...the Mafia fine-tuned its political strategy each time. “Under [the predecessor]’s leadership, the Mafia tried to get [people] it controlled elected... Today, the Mafia can reorganise its relations with the political world in a more traditional way, a relationship of an exchange of favours.” ...[By the way,] Italy... mobilised 2700 armed forces to patrol land, air and sea... at the [recent] ...G8... Summit... in... Genoa... The port was closed – scoured by minisubs and divers to prevent a terrorist attack – and customs officers at border posts turned back suspected protesters. Fences 4.5m high sealed off the 4 sq km “red zone” around the Ducal Palace, the 13th century venue for the summit. But the pattern of peaceful protest was broken on Saturday... when a 5000-strong group moved in to “liberate” the red zone.

...FOR the first few hours, it looked like the usual fare – if a bit more fierce. Like a regular weather pattern, so-called anti-globalisation protesters have descended on every major economic meeting since Seattle. Genoa, too, was engulfed in tear gas and shouts of rage, in hailstorms of rock-throwing at police. Surging crowds of demonstrators, many wearing helmets and masks, engaged in a game of attack-and-retreat with police. But when 23-year-old Carlo Giuliani hoisted a fire extinguisher to throw at a police vehicle, everything changed. [Caught on film, a]n officer inside aimed his 9mm Beretta 92 service pistol and fired twice. Giuliani fell, shot through the head. The driver jammed into reverse – running... [Giuliani] over. It was the anti-globalisation movement’s first blood, and the radicals’ first martyr. Some protest leaders denounced the death as murder, yet most other demonstrators were appalled by the violence – and were determined to make the movement’s first blood its last. Genoa may thus mark a turning point for the [anti-globalisation] protest movement. What began as a motley, if united, collection of causes – from save-the-Earth greens to labour unionists – could well now rupture into a permanent schism, pitting moderates who seek constructive debate against radicals who seek only confrontation... The anti-globalisation movement, it seems, has lost its innocence. ■... Three Italian law enforcement officials lost their jobs yesterday in the first action taken against police since last month’s violence-marred Group of Eight summit... Reassigned from their posts were... the deputy chief of police in charge of the G8, [the]... head of the anti-terrorism department, and... [the] police superintendent of Genoa... The decision was announced by I[Italy’s] Interior Minister... who was the focus of a parliamentary confidence vote this week over allegations that police used excessive force... Police have been particularly criticised for a pre-dawn raid on a school that was housing demonstrators. Allegations of police brutality from officials and demonstrators in other European countries have embarrassed... [Italy]’s new Government.

...Communism and Nazism are gone. But nationalism, fundamentalism and globalism still have to sort themselves out. Mister Dooley, a fictional newspaper character at the last turn of the century, described a fanatic as someone who viewed himself as “doing what the Lord would do – if [the Lord] only had the facts.” The century that followed was beset by just such grandiose fanaticism, and it became the bloodiest in human history. Will we see a sequel in the century to come? Communism and Nazism are gone, but their suffixes remain. The biggest of the big political questions is whether other malignant “isms” can be held in check. The health of the new century hinges on the answer. The mother of all isms is utopianism, the belief that some belief structure can bring a perfect world. This has proved to be history’s greatest mirage. We’ve learned the hard way that ideologies imbued with great certitude tend to be dangerous. That’s not an argument against firm convictions or even against spreading them. But it does suggest that the world is safer when we are moderating ideology rather than imposing it. The big struggle ahead is between globalism and nationalism, with fundamentalism the wild card. So far, the best logic for the eventual triumph of global thinking is technological – cyberspace knows no borders. Just as 19th-century national technologies such as the transcontinental railroad aided nationalism, so 21st-century international technologies... will aid internationalism... The isms that would seem most directly threatened by the Internet are nationalism and its economic face, protectionism. If history has proved anything, it’s that the economic case for erecting barriers is weak. But for many nations, the political case remains strong. If you’re trying to hang on to power... [from] Russia to the Middle East, stirring up nationalist fervour is still a good strategy. If nationalism reflects the urge to preserve common heritage, fundamentalism is about spiritual longing in a sinful and materialistic world.

The people of the earth having agreed that the advancement of [humanity] in spiritual excellence and physical welfare is the common goal of [hu]mankind; that universal peace is the prerequisite for the pursuit of that goal; that justice in turn is the prerequisite of peace, and peace and justice stand or fall together; that iniquity and war inseparably spring from the competitive anarchy of the national states; that therefore the age of nations must end, and the era of humanity begin; the government of the nations have decided to order their separate sovereignties in one government of justice, to which they surrender their arms; and to establish... this Constitution as the covenant and fundamental law of the Federal Republic of the World. Preliminary Draft of a World Constitution, 1948. – A vision of the future

Because there are *about* 200 national leaders and even more multinational leaders, human society is currently being pulled in hundreds of different directions. If the world was united under one political system, that system would be able to take humanity in one direction – and make its members see themselves as being human first, regionally or culturally specific (e.g., Chinese, Indian, German, French, English, Maori, American) second, instead of the other way round.

The failure of the UN to achieve most of the aims for which it was created could be attributed to inadequate leadership within the organisation, or to the fact that its leaders have been forced to deal with so many unqualified leaders from outside the organisation (though few if any of them, be they national or multinational leaders, consider themselves to be unqualified to hold their positions of responsibility) – or their representatives – plus their conflicting ideas of how human society should be managed and where it should be heading. In its present form, however, the UN could be converted into a world government without too much difficulty. After all, it already has departments that run programs dealing with most areas of society (e.g., those handling human settlements, social development, environmental concerns and children), and specialised agencies which cover most of the remaining areas (e.g., food and agriculture, energy, labour, civil aviation, maritime, education, science, industry, postage, health, meteorology). Alternatively, the UN, the national and regional political bodies, plus the multinational and non-government organisations (including Amnesty International, Greenpeace, etc.) could all be disbanded and replaced by one network. As alternatives to the FRW (*Federal Republic of the World*) or the UCS (United Civilised States – r:p154, Ins13-4), such a network might be called the WUS (World of United States) or the USE (United States of Earth). If this new government needs a charter or constitution, something like the following might be suitable: OUR AIM IS TO GUARANTEE THAT EVERY CITIZEN RECEIVES WHAT IT GENUINELY NEEDS TO HAVE A HEALTHY AND HAPPY LIFE; TO RESPECT THE EXISTENCE OF THE OTHER LIFEFORMS WITH WHOM WE SHARE THIS PLANET; AND TO PUT THE NEEDS OF THIS PLANET AHEAD OF THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS, THEREBY ENSURING THAT THE HUMAN SPECIES CAN LIVE ON IT – HAPPILY AND HEALTHILY – FOR AS LONG AS THE SUN ALLOWS THEM. This aim can be achieved by creating a new style of moneyless system (as opposed to those used by many past cultures – e.g., pre-European Aborigines and Maoris) – one that works worldwide. But, in order for such a system to be properly implemented, the first step is for human society to complete a process that it has long promised – unification.

The next chapter contains an explanation of how a worldwide government can be set up and operate, while the remaining chapters contain suggestions on what a worldwide moneyless society could be like and how it might be achieved.

RULE

Be wise... ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. - Psalms 2:10

“Why do we live in a town where the smartest have no power and the stupidest run everything...?” ...“Where’s the mayor?” “[It] skipped town.” “Really? So who’s in charge?” “Well, that’s a good question. Let’s take a quick look at the town charter... According to the charter, should the mayor abdicate, a council of learned citizens may rule in his stead...” ...“...Today we embark on a new era of intellectual governance... With our superior intellects we could rebuild this city on a foundation of reason and enlightenment. We could turn [our city] into a Utopia!” “A new Athens!”

Aristotle... says that [a hu]man is basically a political and social animal and... must exist in some society in order to fulfill [it]self... Aristotle’s state would be tightly controlled either by a monarch or a group of [people] intellectually and morally superior. These would guide the rest of the people... [Plato had said] that the ruler of the state must be a wise [person] (philosopher king), or a group of wise [people]... Plato... equates political activity with moral endeavor, and... believed that the perfect state should be organized in such a way that [citizens] can strive for the ideal... In a perfect society, each individual functions to his best capacity according to his natural abilities. This leads to the most harmonious type of society.

...ethics was the chief occupation of Socrates, for the interests of human life and its perplexities entirely absorbed him. In the history of ethics his position is supreme; [Socrates] was the founder of utilitarianism.

Utilitarianism is among those moral theories, often called teleological (concerning ends or purposes), that derive judgments about right or wrong from judgments about the quality of certain states of affairs – e.g., the quality of people’s lives... [A]ction is held to be right if it tends to promote happiness – not only that of the agent but of everyone affected by his act... Some of the strands of Utilitarianism, especially hedonism and consequentialism, are traceable to ancient Greek philosophy; but Utilitarianism in its full sense, with its emphasis on impartial utility maximization, is an essentially modern theory... The leading proponents... were the English philosophers Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill.

Although... Bentham... was in many ways a strict individualist, the test that Bentham applied for the... conduct either of the individual or of the government was *social* usefulness or, in his often-quoted summation of his philosophy, “the greatest happiness of the greatest number.” Bentham himself acknowledged his indebtedness[not to ‘Epicurus (the Greek philosopher, b. Samos, 341BC, for whom happiness consists in pleasure or, rather, in the absence of pain; but people need a correct idea of the nature of pleasure – intellectual pleasures are superior to those of the body’) but] to Joseph Priestley who wrote in his *Essay on the First Principles of Government* (1768) that “all people live in society for their essential advantage, so that the goodness and happiness of the member, that is, the majority of the members of every State, is the great standard by which everything relating to the State must finally be determined.” The significance of Bentham’s theory, and that of his forerunners and followers, lies in the fact that they based their system on a doctrine that claims that the ethically good can be ascertained and proved, not by dogma, or outside prescription but by starting from the elementary motivations of human nature – namely, the evident wish... to obtain happiness, or pleasure, and avoid pain... In other words, the Utilitarians claimed to have answered the most perplexing questions: What should be the guide for individual conduct? What should be the functions of government, the main organizational aspect of the community? And how can one’s interests be reconciled with opposing interests of others and of the community as a whole? According to Utilitarians, the pleasure-pain principle not only answers the first two questions, but it also proves that there can be no clash between individual and group interest, because if the conduct of both is based on “utility,” the interests of both will be the same. This holds true for every field – for example, in... education, the administration of justice, or international affairs. As long as the criterion of usefulness is applied, there will be harmony between private and public and national and international interests. To be sure, Bentham realized the need of defining “pleasure.” ...As far as the individual was concerned, the Utilitarians saw a main problem in making people aware of what pleasures they should seek, of understanding their true interests. Hence they insisted on the need for more education and were confident that a well-ordered society would disapprove socially harmful conduct. (Bentham was among the first to demand public instruction and was one of the founders of the University of London.) Through education and social disapproval, the individual will learn that evil action – that is, action causing pain to others – is a “miscalculation of self-interest.” During his long life, Bentham initiated many, and became prominently associated with most, of the reforms that changed the face of England and, to a large measure, of the world.

Kipling greatly overrated our ability to carry out political reform and greatly underestimated the endurance of nationalistic rivalries. In his world of 2000, war has gone “out of fashion” in a manner never described. [Kipling] guessed that by then all nations would have abdicated sovereignty to the “Aerial Board of Control,” A.B.C., a panel of “a few dozen” wise, unselfish sages, who would administer for the good of us all a world remarkably free of bureaucracy... In his *Shape of Things to Come* (1933)... H. G. Wells... foresaw... that... all national governments would collapse and banking would disappear... Well’s... vision of technology and economics in the future was spotty at best... but his... foresight was remarkably clear when it focused on emotional and intellectual issues...

...recently the world of learning has become afflicted with a vicious specialization and compartmentalization. With few exceptions one sees a remorseless fragmentation and trivialization of knowledge. Moreover, the specialist who knows more and more about less and less finds [it]self in an unassailable status position. No matter how inconsequential the particular narrow slice of knowledge which [a specialist commands, the specialist] ranks as ‘the expert’ who can lord it over the hapless lay[person] even if the latter possesses much more in the way of genuine wisdom. A Scottish or Vermont farmer may manifest a far more rounded and balanced philosophy of life than that exhibited by the high-salaried, high-status expert. Commonly it is the former, not the latter, who has a better insight into the durable verities which should govern the conduct of human affairs.

[Some] people... argue forcibly that, for the sake of humanity, [USers] and Europeans should reduce their standard of living, stop buying luxury goods, and restrict their consumption levels to “essential needs”... Yet... [who] is to decide on priorities. Presumably the state would, in the end,

have to undertake to define human “needs” and to determine whose needs deserve to be met. Such an all-powerful state... would therefore have to take over all means of production... This can only be done by transfer of all... decision making to the state...

It is self-evident that an effective image of a humane high-technology society, congenial to the new image of [humanity], will have to be constructed... Adam Smith, in *The Wealth of Nations*, justified capitalism by claiming that when the entrepreneur “intends only his own gain... [the entrepreneur] is... led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention... By pursuing his own interest [the entrepreneur] frequently promotes that of the society more effectively than when [the entrepreneur] intends to promote it.” By now we know the reverse may frequently also be true because individuals often choose on the basis of their own short-term, imprudent self-interest instead of long-term, enlightened self-interest. Accordingly, the invisible hand clearly needs a little help. Such help has existed for years in the form of government control via antitrust laws, commerce regulations, Keynesian manipulations of the money supply and interest rates, and so on. Yet the basic management dilemma worsens. The fundamental problem is not simply a matter of tradeoffs – it is that the tradeoffs seem to grow steadily more intolerable. As one cartoon caption described it, “There’s a pricetag on everything. You want a high standard of living, you settle for a low quality of life.” An obvious solution would be to select desired macrodecisions and derive microdecisions from them. This is logic appealing. It would seem possible to select appropriate national and planetary goals that are in accord with the best available knowledge regarding human fulfillment, and then determine what types of microdecisions would be necessary to achieve those goals. But there is a catch. The *means* used to obtain those necessary individual actions have to be compatible with the ends... The microdecisions necessary to actualize the chosen goals have to be guided primarily by an understanding of the linkages among them... The example of environmental protection will help to clarify the issue. Changing public awareness during the decade of the 1960s resulted in the macrodecision to place a somewhat higher priority than before on the preservation and enhancement of the physical environment... Environmental deterioration is directly related to the rate of use of energy and resources, and that in turn to economic growth. The decision to preserve and enhance the environment implies... in the longer run, decisions to evolve toward a more frugal kind of civilization, which may involve changes in consumer patterns and life-styles, industrial processes and products, agricultural methods and the rural way of life, population distribution, and social goals. All aspects of individual life will eventually be affected. For all this to take place... requires a collective and voluntary redirection of the whole society, with widespread understanding of the implications of the macrodecision and willingness to make individual microdecisions in accord with the overall social choice. It also requires institutional changes for effectively employing widespread citizen participation at local, regional, national, and global levels... Citizen participation in decision making is one of the most effective ways of stimulating socially responsible behaviour – far more so than imposing restraints by means of governmental regulations. When given such responsibility, even quite ordinary individuals may be moved to broaden their horizons – to weigh seriously global as well as local concerns, future as well as present consequences. - 1976

In the... future... it [is] possible to imagine an eventual dissolution of centralised power... As a general rule, each country, each region, each district... would aim to be rather more self-sufficient... in food production and energy, and to be less dependent on traded commodities and traded manufactures... But... [this general rule ignores] the idea that progress involves greater... interdependence... [and the fact that] the French tradition of strong central government has facilitated the development of continuing, organised arrangements for... planning[for the future]. In the USA, on the other hand, where strong central government is traditionally anathema, national... planning has not existed. Britain comes half way between France and the U[SA]: ...planning has not been ruled out, but it has been fitful and half-hearted. In Japan, as in France... planning appears to have been successful. But in Japan as compared with France, the role of government is more limited. By coordinating different interests it can help a consensus to develop. But unlike the French government it cannot exercise real leadership, except when this arises from a consensus with business leaders... [However,] thinkers... who have lived through the last thirty years in countries like Britain and France... find it... easy to perceive... that the practical limits to centralised state control are quite quickly reached, and that decentralisation then becomes necessary... [A] study of business civilisation in decline... concluded that the demise of the business system is likely to proceed by... insensibly altering a civilisation that can be called ‘capitalist’ into one that, whatever we decide to call it, will be very different... – such, for example, as is implied by utilitarianism... It will be a society which reflects the dynamic equilibrium of ecological systems in nature. - 1978

It has to deal with the mutual causality of all relationships... [B]ut in order to deal with these awesome global interdependencies that we have created, and to deal with the first law of ecology – “everything is connected to everything else” – we must... reintegrate ourselves... The first thing that has to go is linear economics, which is based on competition, rather than cooperation. For years, economists have used the concept of “externalities” to explain those social costs of production that they did not want to include in their balance sheets and accounting... Now we have come to the realization that these “externalities” – the social costs of a polluted environment, disrupted communities, disrupted family life, and eroded primary relationships – may be the only part of our GNP that is growing. We are so confused that we add these social costs into the GNP as if they were real, useful products. We have no idea whether we are going forward or backward, or how much of the GNP is social costs and how much of it is useful production that we intended... [T]he planet calls for new models of organization, governance, and decentralization... [– while maintaining] lots of feedback in all the diverse views and groups, which can help prevent spectacular disasters... – and... wherever possible, the localizing of production, consumption, and participation, together with the democratic formulation of planetary agreements, declarations of principles, and the rights and responsibilities of all people. This “thinking globally, acting locally” formula, the theme of the first Global Conference on the Future... can inform local action with the understanding of the requirements of planetary interdependence and limits. - 1980

...[using] a computerized study... sponsored by the Club of Rome... a book, *The Limits to Growth*... predicts that the industrial revolution will end in catastrophe within the next hundred years as the result of resource depletion and pollution. The catastrophic conclusions of the *Limits to Growth* study are serious enough, but even more serious are its recommendations: that all of humanity should make the transition to a globally managed static society (the... [authors] refer to it as a “steady-state” society), in which the individual could only move and use energy and materials within tightly circumscribed limits; those constraints would bind not only those of us alive now, but our descendants to the end of time.

...[at least one writer] has drawn the logical conclusion from accepting the ‘limits’ work at face value: ‘only two outcomes are imaginable – “anarchy” or “totalitarianism”’. It says something of the despair induced by taking these computer models as gospel that [the writer] then accepts totalitarianism as the lesser of the two possible evils, and there are many who would agree with him... And there is, still, another face to the problem which appears more welcoming but which could mark a... dramatic... development of our future world: disarmament. Preparations for war have been a part of human society for so long that what we now like to call ‘defence’ activities have become an integral feature of the structure of society... If ‘defence’... continues to be a major use of resources, then sooner or later, by accident or design, war must come... [W]hile we may hope that all-out war can... be avoided, how long can preparation for war continue without war? - 1981

In *The World in 1984*, the physicist... said that his idea of federating all nations under one world authority will not be achieved before the end of the century, but that the role of scientists as peacemakers would meanwhile grow... Yet you only have to listen to scientists wrangling, on professional

as well as nationalistic lines, to doubt this concept of scientists as all-wise troubleshooters... [Furthermore, the] President of the US National Academy of Sciences... had high hopes for big civilian science, in space and in the oceans, for example, which have been disappointed; except in high-energy physics, the big projects are mainly military... I recall the anguish of the French chemists... writing in *Unless Peace Comes*: 'The question may arise: is all science damned? We must either eliminate science or eliminate war. We cannot have both.' - 1983

...because the League of Nations was not and the U[N] is not a government with a monopoly of authorized force, neither can be regarded as an instrument for establishing and preserving genuine peace... The lesson to be learned should be patently plain. If government is the indispensable means for establishing and preserving genuine peace wherever it is found on earth in the plural peaces that exist (however small or large their extent may be, varying with the size of the domain and the population that is governed), then it inexorably follows that genuine world peace requires world government. The obstacles to the establishment of world government are many and various. The probability of its being realized can be estimated in terms of the difficulty of overcoming those impediments... But the improbable, in whatever degree, is never the same as the impossible. However improbable may be the establishment and preservation of world peace by the institution of world federal government, its possibility remains untouched – for, since world government is *necessary* for world peace, and world peace is *necessary* for the survival and welfare of [hu]mankind, both must also be *possible*... Since it is plainly contrary to the law of nature... that the privileged few should gorge themselves with superfluities while the starving multitude are in want of the bare necessities of life... [it is] one of the most important functions of government to prevent extreme inequities of fortunes; not by taking away wealth from its possessors, but by depriving all [citizens] of means to accumulate it: not by building asylums for the poor, but by securing the citizens from becoming poor... You ask what is the proper limit to a person's wealth? First, having what is essential, and second, having what is enough.

...The indelible fact of life is that most people, most of the time do not provide surpluses of income in the right amounts on the right occasions to permit them to provide themselves and their dependents with sufficient supply of the personal services of opportunity, learning, care, security and employment. The task of provision must be a shared task and co-operative and collective contribution by the community has been the greatest single source of individual emancipation of our century. It has not diminished vitality, it has increased fitness. It has multiplied not eroded talent. It has not frustrated inventiveness; it has given the inventive the facility for development. It has not subordinated peoples, it has stimulated their self-confidence.

...When we asked people... if they would be more inclined to vote if they could vote on national *issues* as well as candidates, a significant number responded yes... In other words, people don't want to shirk their responsibilities as citizens. They just want a more direct voice in government – a purer form of democracy than we have now... A majority of voters back a proposal to use search committees to seek out the most highly qualified candidates. This approach would follow the procedure used by large corporations, foundations, and universities in filling top-level vacancies. - 1984

A common theme of powerlessness – and consumer disaffection – came through to us in the submissions we received. People clearly felt unable to influence the system – even to find the right person caused considerable difficulty... Our investigations convinced us that the present administrative structure is overcentralised and made overly complex by having too many decision points... The administrative system should be simple and uncomplicated with as few layers and sectors as practicable. There should be no duplication of services and no services overlapped or paralleled by others. To the greatest extent, the same management structure should overlay all sectors of the system. - 1988

The Greens advocate not only smaller units of domestic government but also smaller countries, which they refer to as regions... and they suggest that cultural and ecological boundaries could determine the regions. There are many such regions in Europe, usually determined by a shared dialect... At present, there are fifty-four regions within the EEC that form administrative units... [T]he newsletter of the E. F. Schumacher Society of America... expressed a position that closely parallels the philosophy of the German Greens: We finally comprehend that if there is to be salvation for this world, it will come through the development of bioregions into fully empowered, politically autonomous... self-sufficient social units in which bioregional citizens understand, and control, the decisions that affect their lives.

...Despite Green politics often being identified with... self-sufficiency... my understanding is that Green politics is most generally seen to be organized around principles of self-reliance rather than self-sufficiency. What is the difference? Self-sufficiency can be described as 'a state of absolute... independence', while self-reliance is best understood as 'a state of relative independence'... There is nothing in the theory of self-reliance that forbids trade, but it certainly aims to shift the onus of justification away from those who would reduce it and on to those who would maximize it. It would be wrong, then, to characterize Greens as recommending complete... independence – they are perfectly aware that 'There are always goods or services that cannot be generated or provided locally, regionally or nationally'... The ground-rule, however, would be that 'self-reliance starts with the idea of producing things yourself rather than getting them through exchange'... However, if... Greens demand long-term policies, we might argue that they will have to be planned and coordinated... But... who is to do the planning and coordinating if not some supra-community political agency? ...Moreover... dealing with the environmental problems that the Green movement has identified requires the kind of planning that can only be provided by centralized political structures; and... such structures are needed to organize the redistribution required by the Greens' egalitarian project... Until individuals and groups accept the unpalatable news that stateless, decentralized, moneyless, small-scale communes or other informal alternatives are not viable without the complex administration and social structures necessary to guarantee democratic participation, civil rights and egalitarian co-ordination of... resources, there is not much hope of... [achieving] an... ecologically enlightened... post-industrial society... - 1990

In *Crochet Castle*, [a]... roman `a chef satirizing various contemporary ideologues, the reader was told that the... New Age... figure "will have neither fighting nor praying; but wants to parcel out the world into squares like a chess-board, with a community in each, raising everything for one another, with a great steam-engine to serve them in common." ...Or we might cite... Wells's book *Anticipations*... "all experience shows that [humans] need organizing as much as machines, or rather, much more."

...[and humans] need to coordinate... the... structures at inter-local, inter-regional, and inter-national levels... so that they can learn from one another and apply to one locale the lessons of success and failure discovered in another... The more territorially inclusive structures must, in this world-conception, serve the interests of the less territorially inclusive, and on down to the grassroots... Greens... take strategy out of the context of power-over and into a context of power-with or next-to. Instead of talking about "up" and "down," Greens have begun talking about "inward" and "outward." In this new way of looking, the... grassroots is not at the "bottom"... It is more... correct that each local is at the center. Concentric circles are then seen to range outward from this center, regionally, inter-regionally, globally, and on to the farthest reaches of the universe. - 1992

Sometimes it is declared that... any additions made by happy [human] lives to the goodness of the universe would somehow have reached an upper limit in the early twenty-first century... [Meanwhile, t]orture would be worse and... there... [would be] more people who suffered... Astonishingly many professional philosophers... recognize no moral call to keep the human race in existence: if waving a hand were enough to guarantee the

existence of a trillion happy galaxy-colonizing humans, they would see no duty to wave. And scores of others... allege that the utilitarian who urges us to... work for the happiness of others by making... minor present-day... sacrifices... put[s] the happiness of future generations at tremendous risk... [because] things like pollution control might have to be imposed undemocratically or in defiance of 'rights'... and so forth... Having thereby dismissed utilitarianism with suspicious ease, they find all manner of curious reasons for... declar[ing] that... 'we are not obligated to future others' – so... nobody can feel sympathetic concern for people who haven't yet been born. Besides being almost as silly as trying to prove that nobody really likes beer, this is an instance of a... conclusion that we ought therefore to work hard to end the human race (its continued joys being worthless duplications of what had come before, whereas each new instance of misery added negative value)... Other... contemporary theorists... emphasize that love for one's grandchildren can be logically linked to a wish that they too should have the joy of having grandchildren. - 1996

It is often claimed that human evolution has ended because technology cushions... us and our descendants... from disease and death; and, equally often, it is claimed that human... adaptations... tell us about long-lost worlds in which our ancestors dwelt... And this enduring thread of humanity reminds us that, however novel our environments, their most salient feature... is other human beings like ourselves... Like ants and bees, we cannot live outside of a communal society. We have become so dependent on divisions of labor that nobody could conceivably feed, clothe or shelter himself entirely by his own efforts. Many people regret this and yearn to rediscover the virtues of a simpler age of self-sufficiency. But there never was such an age for our species. Anthropologists are gradually discovering that trade, which is an expression of divisions of labor, started in the Paleolithic, before the Neanderthals were extinct in Europe... We are fairly sure that human beings have been exchanging food between the sexes (meat for plants) for millions of years. We suspect they have been exchanging artefacts for almost as long. Now, with globalization, we see such exchanges taking place on a worldwide scale. But probably the most ancient form of exchange is also the latest to go global: the exchange of information... If society is to consist of specialists, dividing labor between them, then a mechanism for exchanging products is needed. We are, in fact, obsessed with exchange, deals, contracts, bargains, fairness and reciprocity... because it is through exchange between specialists that we make society more than the sum of its parts... Far from regretting the division of labor, we should celebrate it as the cause of cooperation in society... It is no accident that the other animals capable of rare instances of elementary reciprocity are the ones that live in stable communities... Reciprocity, though, is only part of the story. To behave reciprocally... ("You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours") requires each individual to be able to recognize and remember others...

"India, like N[Z], took too long to recognise that a state command economy – socialism – had done its day. I have nothing doctrinally against socialism. But in N[Z] we screwed it up because it just became a monster and made us all terribly lazy and we weren't really producing and developing. So in 1984 we woke up to it... But it took... 10 long painful years to turn it around... How much longer is it going to take India, who has 27 million bureaucrats...? ...Most Westerners... are coming into Delhi and Bombay and saying to the Indians: get real, the only way forward is to... let... economic rationalisation take its course, let the economy flower and blossom... But at what cost? If you are sitting in the P[M]'s office, and you have 300 million people under the international poverty line it's a difficult question..." In India... the path to reform has been erratic and slow, dictated by population size... and... uncertain leadership...

The criticism I hear most relates to leadership or more accurately the lack of political leadership... Where are our leaders? I've been talking with them. They're in your factories, offices and boardrooms and their positive leadership will do more... to meet the challenges... of the... many... issues putting pressure on our... [society] than that of politicians. [Incidentally, 'of the 18.369 million public employees in the US in 1990, 3.105 million were in the Federal government, 4.503 million in state governments, and 10.760 million in local governments (there were also 4,094 political action committees: 1,738 were corporate; 338 labour; and 742 trade, membership and health organizations). In 1989 there were 17.879 million public employees. There were wide variations among cities in the number of employees per 10,000 population – ranging from 776 for Washington D.C to 66 for San Jose, California']...

Employment in the [NZ] public sector dropped from 55,000 fulltime jobs in December, 1990, to 47,600 by last June... [In related news, t]he Act leader... says the ideal cabinet would have 12 ministers and four under-secretaries – and... says a law should set the limit. - 1997

The [NZ PM] has called for a radical down-sizing in the state bureaucracy from 38 Government departments to as few as 15... They would be overseen by a director-general or chief executive providing overall policy and management advice... Any reduction in the number of departments would lead to a strong debate about reducing the size and structure of cabinet. However, it appear[s that the PM]... is backing off the idea of cutting Parliament from 120 MPs to 100... [□ The] Auckland Regional Council chair[person thinks]... the idea... of a Greater Auckland Council to replace the existing seven local bodies[is] "absolutely wonderful... At the moment we have 380 local body politicians in Auckland. That's more than the US Congress." ...Auckland's problems – like traffic and stormwater disposal – did not stop at artificial council boundaries... The 1989 amalgamation of the city's 29 local bodies into [four city councils and three district councils] made an "enormous difference" in the way the region was administered, "but we can do better." ...Most mayors believe a change to the way Auckland is run is inevitable – but they do not want a single super-city... The proposal for a single city did find some favour, however, with the Mayor of Papakura... provided local communities could be safeguarded. [The Mayor of Papakura], who this year visited Taipei, which has a unified city council... had traditionally been opposed to "super-cities," but the growth of Auckland's clout through the Auckland Mayoral Forum and seeing the system in action in Taipei convinced him it could have merit.

...An informal poll of Northcote residents by [an] MP... shows support for a single city for Auckland. Of 19,400 questionnaires delivered to households in his seat, 4000 were returned and two-thirds said they supported further amalgamation of Auckland's seven local bodies. [The MP], who proposed a single city to the Auckland Region Community Boards Association last month, said the existing bodies should be amalgamated into one super council of 25 representatives. Councillors should be elected from wards based on the city's parliamentary electorates. [● Back in 1997, when Auckland's mayor was the Minister of Local Government, the idea of creating 'a super-city covering metropolitan Auckland – by divided it into 12 wards represented by a total of 36 councillors – was put to the minister as a way to gain "a huge saving to the ratepayer and give the opportunity to synchronise staff services."']

...Here's a parable of our time. And if you're a ratepayer, then there's a message in it for you. Once upon a time, during her reign as Mayor of a Great City, [the mayor]... had a dream which [it] shared with a group of her trusty liege[people]... which involved a great and mysterious scroll of law called the Local Government Act. It was, they all agreed, too long and too complex for ordinary citizens – or even City Fathers – to understand. And that, they said, was not good. "Let us," they said, "shorten it and bless it with simple words and laws." And they did, working sometimes long into the night, even calling on the wisdom of a goodly knight and once-powerful leader of the land... who had deep knowledge of such things. Once complete, the new scroll was rolled up with reverence and sent post-haste to Wellington, where [the dreamer] had once sat at the Great Table of Decision. But there the precious document fell into the hands of sorcerers called Bureaucrats, who worked their will upon it. They touched the parchment with what they believed were their magic wands and mesmerised the Minister [of Local Government] with their ready words and opinionated views. When they released the ghost of the once-proud short scroll, it did not find favour with those in faraway Auckland – or in many other places in the country for that matter – but particularly among those who had laboured long and well on what they called "The Amendment". They now cursed heartily and long when it was returned to them in its new form. "It is not shorter and it is not simpler", they said. And indeed they were right. They abjectly pleaded for change. But the Minister, under the spell of the Bureaucrats, was unmoved, saying: "Let it be so". And so it is. The Local Government Act, which is the product of this epic saga, has grown under the tutelage of the Wellington word

wizards from 28 pages to 173. For example, it now requires local bodies to engage in tedious consultation, particularly with Maori communities, on virtually every aspect of governance. Local body leaders fear it will spawn a tidal wave of reports and commentaries, will slow the already laborious patterns of decision-making and call for new, highly-qualified and equally highly-paid expert staff. Already, councils beginning their long annual plan process are budgeting on rate rises of 3 to 5% to cover the cost of the new bureaucracy and the methods it will require. The body I have close knowledge of talks of nearly \$800,000 more, plus five high-cost new staff. Early versions of the projected systems are said to have cost Christchurch millions. When MPs were warned of these likely costs during select committee submissions, they waved the complaints aside. "These are the price of democracy," they said. Which is probably how some now justify their new jobs in a government executive in which more than every second MP has cabinet, near-cabinet, or minister-in-training status.

...Cost of shifting We, the ratepayers will be paying for this stupid idea that moving the [Waitakere City C]ouncil into a new building in Trading Place is going to increase business – how? We will not only have to pay into the 21st century but into the 22nd as well. The council should be made to have a public vote on this by way of a pre-paid, single page questionnaire (not a 10-page load of hog-wash). The present council building is quite modern in appearance and can easily be extended on three sides and upwards one to three storeys. Also of course the number of staff and councillors should be reduced. This would help pay for the alterations and if sufficient floors are built upwards they could rent out spare space to help the ratepayers paying for it.

...Waitakere residents may go to the polls under a new voting system at the[next] local government elections. The council is considering the single transferable vote (STV) system, which it is able to adopt under the updated Local Electoral Act... Eight of N[Z]'s 86 local authorities have[already] decided to use STV in [the next election]... Under the STV system voters choose candidates in order of preference. If the preferred candidate has more than the required number of votes to be elected, or so few as to have the least chance of being elected, then the elector's vote is transferred to a second or subsequent choice. The new legislation makes it mandatory for district health board elections to be carried out under the STV system. City and district councils can stay with the first past the post system... Waitakere City Council's democracy and support services manager, says the council's decision must be publicly notified... [The manager] says there are advantages and disadvantages in both systems and the public is likely to welcome consultation. The council does not have to consult Waitakere residents and can pass a resolution to adopt STV. But people can still demand a say. A petition by 5% of registered electors in the city can force a poll on the issue. The council can voluntarily hold a poll to let Waitakere residents decide which voting system they want. Councillors will hold a meeting to discuss STV and its implications for Waitakere City.

...The sacking of the Rodney District Council was yesterday called a stern warning to all councils who get into political strife. [A l]ocal government expert... said most local authorities had never considered that they could be "biffed out" before the Government replaced the council with a commissioner on Monday. "But now the Government has broken the mould. When other councils get into serious political strife that threatens their work, they will remember what happened to Rodney." [The p]rofessor... said local bodies were not laws unto themselves and were a subordinate part of the nation's government structure. No Government could waive its right to intervene if a local body failed to carry out its statutory duties. [The p]rofessor... approved of the way the Minister of Local Government... had handled the issue, which had no modern precedent. [The minister] had given Rodney a nice, clean break by arranging for a commissioner... to start work the day after [it] sacked the dysfunctional council... [The p]rofessor... said the minister had been astute and sensitive towards local democracy by saying the commissioner was a holding measure until fresh elections by next March at the latest. The election gave former councillors the opportunity to convince voters they were unfortunate victims of the need to dismiss the council. Four out of 12 former councillors said yesterday they would stand at the next election... But... [one f]ormer councillor... said yesterday that [the former MP]... had not intended serving more than one term... [and has already] sold his property in the district. His work as an investment adviser, and as a part-time policy adviser to [the NZ] First leader... takes him out of the district.

...[for the former Deputy-PM], it will be a nerve-racking nine days until the special votes are counted. The election-night tally left the N[Z] First leader holding Tauranga by a slim 323-vote margin over National's [candidate]... If the specials go against him, [the NZ First leader and former National minister] will be out of Parliament, as will his five top list colleagues. For the Greens, high spirits gave way to a heart-sinking loss on Saturday night as their 4.86% of the nationwide party vote and [the party co-leader's] 114-vote loss in Coromandel left them with only a slim chance of seating six MPs. To reach the 5% party-vote threshold for seats in Parliament, the Greens need 6% or better of the remaining 208,000 special votes... Alternatively, [the co-leader] could overturn National's... election-night majority when about 3500 special votes are counted... In Tauranga, as many as 3000 special votes could threaten [the NZ First leader's]... majority and wipe him and his... team-mates from Parliament. And the seat may be subject to a judicial recount, whichever way the specials go... [The] National list MP who is trailing [the NZ First leader] and has missed out being re-elected from the party list, confirmed that [it] would discuss the possibility of a recount with her team today, but said no decision would be made until the special votes were counted. [The NZ First leader] hinted on election night that [it] might also challenge if [the career MP] lost narrowly – as [it] successfully did in Hunua in 1978. NZ First polled below 5% on Saturday, but if [the leader] holds Tauranga the party can claim its 4.3% share of the seats in Parliament... Last election, more than 3000 special votes were cast, heavily favouring [the NZ First leader]...

There was a quiet note of smug self-satisfaction during National Radio's recent coverage of the A[US]n election results. Across the Tasman, our commentators repeatedly pointed out, the winning Liberal-National Coalition actually won a smaller percentage of the two-party first preference votes than the losing Labour Party. Labour won just over 51% of those two-party preference votes while the Coalition won just over 48%. And yet the Coalition won a small majority of seats in the Lower House of Representatives and will stay in government. The implication was clear to all, or should have been. N[Z], with its MMP voting system, one of the most proportional in operation anywhere, has a fairer, more just system. National Radio listeners did not really need to be told that their instincts tended more toward fairness and justice than those of A[US]ns. Most of them pretty much take such things as self-evident truths. Meantime, National Radio continues quietly to like MMP, even when polls show an ever-growing majority of the rest of us disliking it and wishing it gone. So let me explain why, in fact, the A[US]n Lower House elections employ what is, in my view, the best voting system in the world... The A[US]n Lower House electors employ a preferential voting system. This requires voters to vote by ranking all the candidates, from first to last in their constituency. To determine the winner in a constituency, the first step is to count all the first preferences. If any candidate were to receive over half of these, [it] would be the winner. This, though, is incredibly rare... [T]he next step is to take the candidate who got the fewest first preferences... and look at the second preferences of the people who voted for him... If there is still no candidate with more than half the votes, the next-to-the-bottom-placed candidate is out and again his supporters' second preferences redistributed. Eventually, one of the candidates will get over the 50%-plus-one hurdle and be elected. More importantly, the winner is often not the one who polled the most first preferences... This is not inadvertent or a flaw in the system. It is the explicit, deliberate goal of preferential voting systems. The system was designed to measure voters' dislikes as well as likes[, whereas] FPP measures only whom you most want elected... Frankly, I think th[e AUSn version] accords with human nature pretty well... To be provocative then, we can say FPP is "fairer" (whatever "fairness" means) than MMP. And by improving on FPP, as I think it does, preferential voting systems are better still. Indeed, they're the best on offer. But don't tell any A[US]ns. You see, they're rather backward when it comes to that sort of thing. •... Next year's presidential election in the U[S] may provide an opportunity to pioneer yet another use for the Internet – voting for political candidates. At least two state political parties are considering using the Internet for primary elections... And the... Government plans to allow up to 350 members of the military stationed overseas to vote via the Internet... Internet voting has already been used by companies holding shareholder votes, including fast-food giant McDonald's. In the Government arena... election officials are tempted by the Internet's promise of faster vote tallies and increased voter participation...

At the University of Princeton in New Jersey, one of the four oldest and among the wealthiest and most prominent in the U[S], a traditional week's holiday is given to students immediately before a presidential election so they can do their own campaigning before voting. But whereas once the week had vigorous debating and protesting between campus Republicans and Democrats, very few students even bother to take part any more, and many won't even vote. Positions for setting up physical barriers around the campus to control mass student protests during more politically tumultuous years have fallen into disuse. Reasons offered for this apathy – considered typical of students throughout the major American universities – include that most are the children of the middle and upper socio-economic classes, complacently content after a decade of prosperity... Another reason offered for apathy is a sense of powerlessness, a belief that politicians don't listen to the young, that money and professional persuaders dominate election campaigns and that the country is always run by an establishment and nothing they can do will affect that. Whatever the cause, the sense that politics is irrelevant to the young seems to be confirmed by an MTV... poll that says a quarter of Americans between 18 and 24 cannot name both presidential candidates, and that only one-third of those polled would vote, compared with just over half in the last election. More than 70[%] could not name the vice-presidential candidates and only 30[%] said politics was of any interest to them. My own view is that young people are responding to the surreal condition of contemporary politics. The right has a misplaced arrogance that it has appropriated and defined truth and is impatient with those who resist it, just as communists did 30 years ago. And in an age of absurd accretions of wealth by individuals, business leaders with their cynicism and hubris believe simply that the standard measurement of personal worth and morality is money. So most young people – and many not so young – who understand that these pretended philosophies are simply conceits, have turned their backs on politics and drifted into caring only for themselves and their own satisfactions... University students might show no interest in the presidential campaign, but primary schoolkids sure do. [The Democratic candidate touched]... hands with enthusiastic youngsters at Jefferson Elementary School in Des Moines, Iowa[, yesterday]... By the way, the... environment Avondale Community Board chair[perso]n... spent four days... at the Democrat party conference in Los Angeles earlier this month. As a guest of the International Leaders Forum [it] watched the political machine wind up into a frenzy of support for [the party's]presidential candidate... and... [his] deputy... "The atmosphere was awe inspiring and just being there I was certainly infatuated with the whole thing,"... [The councillor] says the TV images of banner-waving crowds of thousands as speakers deliver news soundbites is exactly the conference [it expected. The councillor also]... says the overt corporate sponsorship is something which N[Z]ers may have to get used to and [it] has come back with some fundraising ideas. "Every lunch, every telephone, every suite, everything had a corporate sponsor... I think we are driving in that direction." ...there's a definite style to American politics some of which N[Z] can adopt without losing its own uniqueness. And his prediction for the election? [The Democrat], by the skin of his teeth.

...THIS ELECTION IS MORE CONTENTIOUS THAN USUAL BECAUSE... WELL, NO ONE REALLY LIKES EITHER CANDIDATE... SO THEY'RE ARGUING OVER WHICH ONE IS THE LESSER EVIL[.] "SURELY YOU'RE MISTAKEN, MOM... THE POLITICIANS ARE THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST OF THEIR GENERATION! THEY'RE PUBLIC-MINDED SAINTS WHO SACRIFICE PERSONAL GAIN FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL CITIZENS... WHY ARE [YOU LAUGHING?" "NEVER MIND. JUST ENJOY THE FANTASY OF CHILDHOOD...

Americans wait for a result in their closest-ever presidential election The race for the White House hung on 987 votes in Florida last night as the American presidential election remained too close to declare a winner. In a night of trauma, see-sawing fortunes and miscalled results, the election took an extraordinary turn when [the]Vice-President... conceded the race, then 90 minutes later retracted his concession... as the state of Florida balanced on a knife-edge. As... supporters outside his headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee, chanted "recount, recount," [the Vice-President's campaign chairperso]n... told the throng the campaign would continue until [the Democrat] was officially declared the winner. But [his Republican counterpart]... told crowds in Texas: "They are still counting. I am confident when all is said and done we will prevail." Under Florida state law, a margin so close automatically triggers a recount. As the long American election night dragged towards dawn, [both candidates]... abandoned their speeches until official results in Florida had been declared. After 18 months of intense campaigning, the two candidates were deadlocked in the popular vote. [The Vice-President] edged ahead of [his rival] by 269,904 of the 95 million votes cast... The Vice-President received 47,788,828 votes and [the Republican candidate 47,518,924. The] Green Party candidate[s] 2.5 million votes could have made the difference. Control of the White House came down to a few of the nearly 6 million votes cast in Florida for its vital 25 Electoral College seats in America's indirect voting system. The race for Florida was so close that American television networks called the state twice – once for [the Democrat, once for the Republican] – and twice retracted. An official recount is being made today. The knife-edge vote leaves both candidates short of the 270 electoral college votes needed to enter the White House. Last night, [the Vice-President] had 249 electoral votes to [his rival]'s 246... Before the late night drama, [NZ's PM said it]... expected no fundamental changes to the N[Z]-US relationship. "In a congratulatory message[to the Vice-President], I have told the President-elect that N[Z] is committed to the launch of a new W[TO] round, an issue which is also a priority for the U[S]," the PM] said.

...To students of American history, it all sounds familiar... Election 1879, when Rutherford B. Hayes won 48[%] of the poll, but wound up with 185 votes in the then-smaller Electoral College, one more than his rival, Samuel J. Tilden who won a majority of 254,000 in the popular vote. That was the last time that the... U[S] election system produced different winners in the public vote and the Electoral College... It also happened, less contentiously, in 1888 when another Republican, Benjamin Harrison, was the beneficiary. There are similarities between the late 19th century and [today]... Once again... a Republican... stands to gain; once again there are objections that the will of the people is not being respected. But in other respects circumstances have been transformed. Television, newspapers and the internet mean the entire country... can follow every development... virtually as it happens. And America is a far more legalistic and litigious country than it was then, meaning there is a far greater risk of the controversy becoming ensnared in the courts, instead of being handed off to a smokefilled room in Washington DC. The margin between victory and defeat is unprecedentedly narrow. By early yesterday, [the Vice-President]'s... lead in the popular vote had shrunk to less than 100,000, or 0.1[%] of the total. Absentee, overseas and military votes could further reduce, perhaps even eradicate, this lead. If so, what happens? The obvious risk is of lawsuits. But unless fraud is proved, these are unlikely to succeed. The Palm Beach County ballot paper – now surely the most famous document of its kind in history – may not have been a model of clarity, but so far, no one has been talking of fraud.

...Mobs of angry voters are demanding that Florida officials sort out a growing election mess that could leave the U[S] in limbo for weeks. Crowds of... supporters [for both candidates]surrounded the Palm Beach County election offices yesterday, chanting angry slogans as the battle to lead America narrowed... Banner-waving voters in Palm Beach were especially furious at a confusing ballot paper that forced officials to throw out 19,000 votes that were double-punched. The ballot's design apparently made some [Democrat] supporters vote for [the]right-wing Reform candidate... by mistake... "Something happened that shouldn't have happened," one [Democrat] supporter yelled in the face of a [Republican] voter. "What happened was absolutely stupid," the placard-toting [Republican voter] yelled back... It was all part of another day of chaos in which[the] Vice-President... flew 50 lawyers to Florida, talkback hosts mocked everyone involved and officials admitted they would take at least another week to sort out who had won. The premature declarations by news organisations claiming that [the Vice-President] had won Florida have come under Congressional scrutiny, with claims the early call may have discouraged voters elsewhere from going to the polls... The election result is even less clear now than it was on Tuesday night, when figures had [the Republican candidate] winning by 1784 votes in Florida... Last night, estimates from 66 of 67 Florida... counties put [the Republican]'s lead at 327 votes... The 67th county, Palm Beach, is to recount today. The disarray in Palm Beach, which includes one of the wealthiest communities in the US, is causing the most problems. Three people have already filed lawsuits about the confusing ballot paper, although no election challenge has succeeded in Florida since 1974. The ballot paper had candidates' names lined up on the

right and left of a thin strip. Voters had to punch holes out of the strip to show who they wanted for President – but many people said they were confused and punched the wrong hole. The problem is exacerbated by a Florida election law, which says candidates' names must be to the left of the holes. Meanwhile, thousands of votes trickling in from overseas have yet to be counted. Florida[']s Secretary of State... said it would take at least until Friday, US time, for the results to be certified. That is the deadline for overseas votes. But even then, legal challenges are likely to extend the drama. [Democrat] officials yesterday called for a recount in four Florida counties and maybe even a new election in Palm Beach. But [Republicans, who]... are considering challenges to results in Wisconsin and Iowa... said that that would "politicise and distort" the electoral system.

...All the pent-up tensions of America's unresolved presidential election exploded into the public arena yesterday, as representatives of the two candidates traded legal and personal invective over the conduct of the vote. With the most powerful job in the world at stake, the U[S] was plunged into a political crisis of the first order – one that called into question the soundness and durability of some of its most fundamental institutions. Even the vote recount in Florida... was subject to controversy... The [Democrats]... requested... 1.78 million ballots be hand-counted in Palm Beach, Volusia, Broward and Miami-Dade counties. Eight lawsuits challenging the results were filed in state or federal court... – ...six in Palm Beach... and two in Tallahassee, where race discrimination was alleged. As the recount progressed through the day, the... Vice-President[']s... camp... made an extraordinary public intervention. Announcing that the Democratic Party would back legal action by aggrieved voters in one Florida county, [hi]s campaign manager... threw down the gauntlet to the rival camp... "We are taking steps to make sure that the people's choice becomes our President." [The manager]'s words amounted to a direct appeal to the American people, past all legal and constitutional niceties. It also contained an implicit challenge to the current system, where the vote of the 538-member Electoral College, and not the popular vote, decides the victor... In the cooler atmosphere of the previous day, [the]... past Secretary of State, respected lawyer and sage, who is [the Democrat] representative at the Florida recount... had dismissed talk of any Constitutional crisis. There were no such denials yesterday... Just two years after... a... Judge... released a report which almost toppled [the]President... the fate of the White House could once again be in the hands of judges and lawyers.

...As the drama of a presidential vote recount in Florida played in every town and city in America, lawsuits challenging the results in one key county could lead to an unprecedented order for a new vote there. Law professors specialising in constitutional and election laws say the cases filed in Florida are particularly compelling because the state's laws allow challenges to election results if there is evidence the wrong person, through irregularities, somehow received more votes. There are at least two suits filed in state court by Palm Beach County voters who allege a confusing ballot caused them to mistakenly cast... votes for [the]Reform Party candidate... instead of [the]Vice-President... The ballot used in Palm Beach County was the only design of its type used in Florida. The 3400 votes cast for [the Reform Party candidate] in the county, were far more than [the candidate] received in nearby counties... In addition, Democrats also say 19,000 voters in Palm Beach County were invalidated because the ballot design prompted voters to double-punch their cards, voting for both [the Democrat and the Reform Party candidates. A]... professor at the University of Chicago... said that... the Palm Beach voters... "do not have to make allegations of fraud or that the confusion was intentional. It is not required by the statute. People can vote wrong all the time. But the question here was whether this was systematic and it appears that it was. It looks like something was seriously wrong." ...a professor at Harvard Law School said: "The only remedy that makes sense is to redo the election in the precincts where the ballots were confusing. A new election could be held quickly if the courts act quickly."

...Election officials in Palm Beach... last night ordered a laborious hand recount of hundreds of thousands of votes. Their decision came after a manual recount of a small percentage of ballots showed a net gain in ballots cast for [the]Vice-President... But... [the] Republican Party has sent the presidential race into the courts by requesting an order blocking the manual recounts from continuing in Florida's improbably close vote. A federal judge has set a hearing on the [Republican] application for today in Miami... Further complicating the outcome... police were yesterday looking after two locked ballot boxes found days after the election – one in a downtown hotel and the other in a church – but they may contain just supplies, not votes... Police had not opened either box and were keeping them in a safe place... until election officials came to claim them.

...Florida officials won approval to forge ahead with counting presidential ballots by hand yesterday as [the Democrat candidat]e had requested, but lawyers for [the Republican candidate]... claimed the state did not have to include them in its final total... The recount had been in limbo since Florida[']s Secretary of State... a Republican and co-chair[person of the Republican candidate]'s Florida campaign, announced that the state would not accept any recounts that occurred after Wednesday. The Florida Supreme Court said yesterday that Florida counters could continue manual vote counts but that hardly ended the legal battle that was being played out in the state and on the Federal level in Atlanta.

...Republican[s]... cited "clear and compelling evidence" of serious irregularities in the manual recount of presidential votes in Florida yesterday but Democrats dismissed the charges as partisan politics. The Texas governor's campaign took a newly aggressive tack in challenging the hand recounts in three heavily Democratic counties, calling them "fundamentally flawed,"... In a preview of the arguments [the Republican candidate's] lawyers will put to the Florida Supreme Court later today when it decides if the manual recounts should be added to the state's official election tally... a... Republican... spokes[person]n... called them "completely untrustworthy." ...Although [the governor]'s lead over [the Vice-President] in Florida widened to 930 votes after the overseas absentee ballots were counted yesterday... Democrats... had succeeded in having as many as 1,100 of the votes, many from military personnel, thrown out. "No one who aspires to be commander in chief should seek to unfairly deny the votes of... [service people it] would seek to command," [the Republican spokesperson] said... "I am very sorry to say, but the Vice-President's lawyers have gone to war, in my judgment, against them [guys and gals] who serve in our armed forces,"... Montana's Republican governor... said.

...Florida Supreme Court pondered the issue of hand recounts yesterday and county workers soldiered on, examining thousands of ballots, in the U[S] presidential election that refuses to end. The seven justices of the state Supreme Court studied arguments made by competing lawyers seeking to clear the way to the White House for either [the]Democrat... or Republican [candidate]... The panel's decision on the legitimacy of hand recount tallies in three... Florida counties could come at any time – and could finally resolve the... election... [t]wo weeks after Americans went to the polls...

After the Florida Supreme Court makes its ruling, legal manoeuvring in the long-running presidential race could continue... "There may well be further legal challenges – what they would be, one can only speculate," said... an expert on the presidency at the Brookings Institute in Washington. "You're entering an area in which we don't have any very clear precedents." One possibility is that if the Florida high court rules that the hand recounting of votes should continue and should be included in the final Florida tally, the [Republican] camp could appeal to the Federal Appeals Court in Atlanta. If the Atlanta appellate court ruling favoured [the Republicans, the Democrat] camp could appeal the matter to the US Supreme Court in Washington... [A] professor at Cumberland School of Law in Birmingham, Alabama, said there could be an even more direct path to the highest US court... [– either candidate would just] have to allege violations by Florida authorities. There are other questions that also must be settled... But practically, one [Democrat] adviser said, the questions would conclude with the Florida Supreme Court's decision. [The professor] agreed, especially if the Florida court favoured [the Republican camp]. "I think at that point the political reality would tend to favour [the Texas governor]... The public would simply be out of patience with any challenges."

...Voters' patience running out... A... poll due to appear in *Newsweek* magazine this week[found that t]he percentage of people who still support the continuing legal process rather than a speedy resolution to the affair has dropped from 72... two weeks ago to... just 52[%] this week... An increasing number of adults – 55[%] – ...expressed disapproval at... [the Vice-President]'s handling of the dispute. Some 53[%] said the Democrat] should concede the election now... [However, 64%] did not think the country would be seriously hurt by a delay in the presidential transition...

Litigation rules, no surrender A deadline seems merely a milestone on the tortuous path that is the presidential election... [Democrat lawyers say the Vice-President] will contest election results from Florida's Miami-Dade County and won't concede defeat, even if [the]Texas Governor...

remains ahead in votes to be certified... at 11 am on Monday... Meanwhile, [hi]s lawyers argued in a brief filed with the US Supreme Court that the high court should stay out of the Florida election controversy, saying such interference would “diminish the legitimacy” of the presidential election. The brief was in response to a request by the [Republican] campaign that the US Supreme Court bar the consideration of hand-counted ballots from two predominantly Democratic Florida counties. In court papers, lawyers for [the]Democratic candidate... called the request by [the]Republican candidate... a “bald attempt to federalise” Florida’s legal and election process... Adding to the election drama, [the]Republican vice-presidential candidate... was reported to be recovering in hospital from a “very slight” heart attack – his fourth. [The Republican presidential candidate] earlier also filed suit in a Florida court asking 13 counties with heavy military populations to count overseas ballots. Hundreds of ballots, many from military outposts, were rejected last week when Democratic lawyers urged county boards to scrutinise them.

...[the Vice-President’s] bid for the presidency has been boosted by a ruling for a fresh recount. The Florida supreme court has ordered the recount of more than 12,000 disputed ballots in the southern state, but it may be challenged by... the... Republican... [candidate], who is still clinging to the lead. The ruling came little more than an hour after two trial court judges rejected a bid by Democrats to throw out 25,000 absentee ballots in Seminole and Martin counties. A month after voting closed there is still no official announcement about who will hold America’s top job.

...A divided U[S] Supreme Court, throwing out the latest bombshell into the... presidential election debacle... yesterday halt[ed] manual recounts of the vote in Florida, freezing the battle between [the Democratic and Republican candidates] until it can hear arguments tomorrow... The[Supreme Court] also voided an order by the Florida court that had reduced [the Republican]’s lead from 537 to 154 votes... The decision, possibly robbing [the Vice-President] of his best hope of victory, means that the... justices of the US Supreme Court could well decide the winner of the... presidential election... Seven of the nine... justices were appointed by Republican Presidents... The state court... judges were all appointed by Democrat Governors...

Just weeks after legal experts questioned whether the U[S] Supreme Court’s decision on Florida voting might have been political, the Chief Justice said [it] hoped the US court system “will seldom, if ever” become embroiled in another presidential election. [The chief justice]’s annual report... on the US Judiciary did not try to defend the 5-4 ruling that... gave the election to [the Republican candidate. But the chief justice] said the election “tested our constitutional system in ways it has never been tested before...”

...*Just when everyone thought the counting was over...* Newspapers appear close to winning the chance to review contested Florida ballots... in an effort to see whether [the Republican]... received more votes than [the]Democrat... in the decisive state... On Wednesday, the US Supreme Court ruled to effectively prevent a recount of disputed ballots, leaving many Americans in doubt over which candidate received most votes in Florida. The court’s ruling prompted [the Democrat] to concede and ended the fight for the state’s 25 Electoral College votes... For five weeks after the... election, backers of [the]Vice-President... claimed reviewing the “undervotes” was necessary to certify those not picked up by machines due to chads not punched all the way through, and also to decide which ballots had no markings for either candidate. But [Republican] supporters objected to recounts, charging voter intent cannot legally be determined... The... Republican Party would... no[longer] object to the count.

...When this unbelievable American presidential election... finally assumes its place in history, what image will best convey its madness? The security vans under police escort ferrying ballot papers from Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties to Florida’s capital Tallahassee, with TV news helicopters in pursuit...? Or... Florida’s secretary of state... whose award of her state’s electoral college votes to [her Republican mate] in retrospect sealed the final outcome? Or the... sad spectacle of the Supreme Court of the U[S] split on political lines, as it delivered the first ruling in its history that would determine the result of a presidential election? ...In the end time simply ran out for [the Democrat candidate], whatever his inextinguishable conviction that [it] had won the election. Ultimately, the national yearning for political closure was too strong. The world’s dominant country, so fond of lecturing others on the conduct of their elections, made a farcical mess of its own. Other countries have managed to resolve desperately close elections without a legal brawl. Most other countries would have employed a single, easily understandable method of voting, and managed to count those votes in a reasonable time. This election proved that a passion for democratic accountability can be too much of a good thing. The vigour and combativeness of the American system is due in large part of the fact that so many officials, judges and administrators are elected and thus have, or are perceived to have, a political allegiance. Which is all very well – providing you have humble but unimpeachably impartial Westminster-style returning officers as well.

...It was Winston Churchill who branded democracy the worst of all political systems – except for every one of the alternatives. Had [Winston] lived to see the cavalcade of low farce and high comedy that has consumed the U[S] these past five weeks, [the former British PM] may well have developed a belated sympathy for totalitarianism. From the night of the [Democratic]... victory, that became a... [Republican] victory, that spawned a stalemate, that finally spat [the Texan Govenor] on to the doorstep of the Oval Office on Thursday, there is hardly a face in the pantheon of American politics not now covered with egg to one degree or another... [T]he Florida fiasco has produced no winners whatsoever. And that applies particularly to [the Republican candidate], whose newly resurgent smirk must surely speak of innocence rather than eagerness for the task of leading a riven nation... At every point along the tortured road to the final resolution, the experts called it wrong... Having spewed one wrong prediction after another, the punditocracy has been reduced to noting that there have been no riots or military coups, and that Wall St, while a tad wobbly, remains sound. Americans are never shy about singing their own praises but, taken at face value, the combined tonnage of barf-bag boilerplate on the nation’s editorial pages does not amount to much more than a celebration of the fact that the US is more stable than Serbia, its military is better behaved than Pakistan’s, and the country’s financial institutions are more reliable than those of Russia. On the whole, not much to boast about... And the final absurdity? After five weeks of blaming everybody but themselves for the confusion in Palm Springs that cost [the Democrats] so many votes, a local party official finally admitted that evil Republicans might not have been to blame after all. It seems the real reason so many elderly Jews voted for [the wrong candidate] was because local Democratic functionaries handed out thousands of erroneous how-to-vote guides that instructed recipients to punch the wrong hole. Given his reluctant enthusiasms for democracy, Churchill would have had a big laugh over that one.

...[Labour’s leader] is finding life tougher than expected... as British P[M] – and... is nervous about the arrival of his fourth child next month... Although... more popular than any recent... [British PM, the PM said i]n an interview... [that it] had “lost some of his optimism, some of his bounce... The reality... [o]f being P[M]... is different from anything you might have anticipated... It is more intense and... endless... and there are things that come along and knock you about. You get things like Ireland that are just a constant and terrible frustration... But I am not regretting it – not yet.”

...Another week, another nightmare. Spare a thought for a hard-working father trying to come to terms with the demands of a 2-month-old son. Sleepless nights? [The father] must know them only too well. But what must [it] think about in those long, lonely, dark hours? Crying baby? A Government falling apart? Does [baby]’s nappy need changing? Are colleagues plotting against me? Maybe [the baby]’s hungry? Don’t voters like me any more? Is [my]... 16-year-old son... out getting drunk? Leaks, leaks and more leaks? Crisis? Oh no, not again! Yes, these days [the British PM] has plenty to keep him awake. Whether it has been in his role as a father or British P[M], you could say that [the Labour Party leader] has enjoyed better times than the beginning of the 21st Century. Cast adrift on a sea of spin, his Government, populated by unelected advisers and shadowy spin-doctors, is reeling in a public image that is plummeting faster than the Titanic. According to his own advisers, a British public who loved him dearly is now on the verge of filing for divorce and jumping into bed with a bald rival who sounds constipated every time [it] opens his mouth... In the last couple of months, [the PM] has looked a tired [perso]n, a shadow of the youthful, enthusiastic leader who took power in 1997... [Incidentally, the PM’s mate, the out-going] US president... is set to become a TV star after signing up with a top Hollywood agent. And... has

already won his first role – in American show *CSI* (Crime Scene Investigation). Producers expect to see ratings soar when the silver-haired states[person] joins the team.

...[the out-going US President has] pardoned... one of the world's richest [people] from prosecution on more than 50 counts of racketeering, wire fraud, tax evasion and illegal oil trading with Iran. The conviction of [the rich person] and his business partner for evading more than \$US48 million in taxes was the biggest fraud case in U[S] history. The *Washington Post*... said the... fugitive financier[']s ex-wife]... who lobbied... the... President... to pardon her former husband... has donated... from \$US400,000 to \$US1 million... to [the President]'s presidential library fund since 1998... The Government Reform Committee will this week issue subpoenas for donor lists for [the] presidential library fund and for [the wife]'s bank records... [The wife], who has also given hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Democratic Party in recent years, refused to answer 14 written questions submitted by the committee, claiming constitutional protection against self-incrimination... [The President's attorney said his client] would fight a subpoena for the library donor list, because it would be "flagrantly violative of the First Amendment." The... [President]'s library foundation... hopes to raise \$US200 million to pay for building [hi]s presidential library in Little Rock, Arkansas. A tax-exempt organisation, it must file an annual financial disclosure form with the Internal Revenue Service, but unlike politicians and political parties it does not have to reveal individual donors. Republicans... called the pardon "sleazy" and questioned the influence of the donations on [the President]'s decision. The bank records, while helping determine the amount of the library donations, could also help investigators determine whether any of the funds originated with [the pardoned fraudster], who fled to Switzerland 17 years ago. Meanwhile, the *Washington Post* has revealed that [the President] and his wife... started shipping furniture from the White House to their new home in New York... despite questions about whether they were entitled to some of the items... According to the *Post*, the White House counsel's officer told... [the] White House chief usher... that the items... were personal gifts received by the [First Couple, who]... have now returned the... items to the White House... All the furnishings had been designated official White House property by the National Park Service in 1993... ■ The out-going President's wife] triumphed in her historic quest... to become the only first [wife] ever elected to public office... The campaign, which pitted her against a powerhouse New York City mayor and then a lesser-known Republican Congress[person], was the longest and costliest race in the state's history... [The first wife and the Republican] spent a combined \$US58.6 million... With the \$US19 million spent by [the New York mayor] added in, the race became among the most expensive Senate campaigns in history.

...The phone was answered after only a couple of rings – just the sort of efficiency you would expect in the office of a legislator whose friends once liked to describe her as The Smartest [Gal] in America... "How can I help you?" asked the voice. Real easy, I began, explaining how selling crack cocaine to inner-city teenagers seemed like such a lucrative business, I'd decided to grab a piece of the action. "So, what I need to know, is this: What sort of discount is [the new New York senator] offering if I pay for a pardon in advance? You know, if I get busted like... that guy in LA her husband let out of jail?" The response, which began with an excremental obscenity and ended in a procreative one, wasn't an example of the civility [the senator] herself was urging last week as [it, the soon-to-be-]ex President, and assorted members of their families tumbled deeper into the pardons-for-sale scandal. And with that, the line went dead. It's something that also has been happening to plenty of other telephones lately, most notably the hotlines that once led from the White House war room to the apparatchiks who spent most of the past eight years attacking [their leader's] critics and defending the indefensible. The Big Jerk, as [a former White House trainee] memorably described the [person] now holed up in suburban New York with an army of news[people] besieging his front gate, could always count on those supporters. They were there no matter what. If [the President] ravaged the White House help, the toady legion would rise to argue that, hey, Kennedy did it, too. When [the President] solicited contributions from drug dealers, Mafia associates and pornographers, another squad of talk-show apologists would take the field to blame the campaign-finance system for forcing a good [person] to hang with people [it] would rather not. The scandal was immaterial – Whitewater, Zippergate, suicidal aides, cattle-futures scams, whichever reeking stink du jour it happened to be – the flacks and flunkies were always there to smear their idols' enemies with "opposition research" collected by the [President's] private eyes and other, even more odious allies. "This is war," snarled [one presidential]strategist... who actually expressed a willingness "to die for the guy" if it would help to preserve the President's political viability. Lose your power, lose your friends. It's a lesson that a savvy duo like [the out-going First Couple] should have known. And perhaps they did – once, before so many escapes convinced them that they were untouchable. Now they're revisiting that wisdom in spades. With every day's sordid revelations – rules broken, propriety trampled, grasping relatives enriched – the pit into which they have cast themselves grows that much deeper, the ranks of their friends so much thinner... [By the way, i]t is barely a year since massive upheaval erupted in Argentina, one that seemed to herald the end of a decade of IMF-sanctioned policies that sent unemployment soaring while creating pockets of near-starvation... Four leaders came and went in a fortnight, and a nation imploded... But when Argentinians go to the polls next weekend to elect a new president, their most likely choice is the [guy] whose policies are held to have caused the downfall in the first place[, who]... the *New York Times* report[s]... may have received US\$10 million from Iranian intelligence... Said [one]taxi driver... "In a country ruled by rogues, the only way out of this mess is to vote for the top rogue."

...A New World Order Is Coming! ...While the world is absorbed in sport, pleasure, revelry and money-making, powerful [people] are quietly organising the future. On the surface their remedies appear to be a solution to the world's problems. Others are uneasy at the massive centralising of political, economic and religious power into the hands of a few elitists... The U[N] and the I[MF] are playing a major part in committing every nation on earth to a New World Order... The IMF and the International Bankers have every nation committed to export and import, so they can be easily controlled. The nations plead with these financial institutions to obtain credit in order to pay the ever-increasing interest-bill, and to keep their economies rolling. Their requests are met, but the conditions attached to the loans usually require actions which, four or five steps down the line, add-up to that nation losing its sovereignty... Politicians are passing New World Order legislation into law, without a mandate from the people who voted them into power... For years this movement was veiled in utmost secrecy, but now that it is nearly fully established, it is no longer veiled behind their semi secret organisation such as:– the Council on Foreign Relations, Skull and Bones Society, the Tri-lateralists, Bilderburgers, and other secret societies. They have moved out of the woodwork as the following statement from the then U[S] President... reveals:– "It's a big idea: a new world order, where diverse nations are drawn together in common cause... Only the U[S] has both the moral standing and the means to back it up." State of the Union Address, *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 18, 1991... [Now his son is about to become] THE STRONGEST M[ANAGER] ON EARTH

...for a huge tranche of America's governing elite, the frenetic times start now. After every presidential election, and especially at the end of the maximum... term that the Constitution allows... there is a huge clearout of offices in the... capital. The transition has been described as the single greatest display of patronage since the Medicis. During the... days between... [the] election and inauguration... 6000 jobs will be allocated to people from all over the country. These vary in importance from the Secretary of State to the deputy assistant director of the subcommittee on purchase management in the Department of the Interior. But they all have three things in common: each is a presidential appointee, each is a stepping stone to something grander, and each is desperately coveted by dozens of people. It is at this time of every... political cycle that people in Washington begin to talk about the Plum Book... in which each of the jobs, or "plums," up for grabs... is laid out in detail. Every Administration-related job has a serial number and a brief job description. No one in town and no one attached to the winner would dare to be without the Plum Book until [it]... has plucked a sinecure from its pages. To the uninitiated coming in from outside the Beltway, the eight-lane highway that isolates Washington DC from the rest of the world, a serial number is not much to go on when it comes to choosing that particular stepping stone that will help them on the

road to riches and fame. That is where the Prune Book comes in. This unofficial volume, thicker than its orthodox cousin, contains proper detail on which job does what, whom the holder answers to, what career progressions might be offered and warns of potential dead ends. Most new Administration employees will jockey for position to get their names mentioned to someone who has been appointed to the coveted presidential transition team. In fact, a place on that team is the surest way of getting a plum and not a prune. For instance, last time out, [the]... head of the transition team... coincidentally pulled out the plum of plums when the President chose him as Secretary of State... History suggests that the victory of a Washington insider is as likely to lead to a clearout as of an outsider. The bloodletting after [the President-elect's] father won in 1988 was almost as complete as [his successor's] four years later. Before the [41st] Administration, no Vice-President had stepped up to the White House since the 1840s, so no one knew what would happen. In the event, when [the then]President-elect... sent out demands for the resignation of all [40th Administration] appointees, no one took it seriously. Only when a second letter went out did they realise that the new broom was going to sweep clean.

...[the out-going US] President... brought down the curtain on the scandals that marred his presidency after reaching an 11th-hour agreement to end all risk of prosecution for past crimes. [The 42nd President] agreed to admit that [it] “knowingly misled” the court when... g[iv]ing evidence in the sexual harassment case brought against him by [a]former Arkansas state employee... [The 42nd President] had faced the possibility of prosecution after [it] left office for allegedly lying under oath about his relationship with... [a]White House trainee... That threat has been lifted, as have all other judicial investigations... Judicial forgiveness was not a one-way affair, however... All told, [the 42nd President] pardoned 140 people and commuted the sentences of 36 others. One of those pardoned was [hi]s 44-year-old half-brother... a musician who served a year in jail on a drug offence... A presidential pardon – providing official forgiveness for criminal wrongdoing – gives convicted criminals benefits enjoyed by full citizens, including right to vote... After... attending [his successor's inauguration, the 42nd President] left the Capitol by motorcade – his last helicopter ride scotched by bad weather – heading for Andrews Air Force base and then his new home in New York.

...one of the new Administration's most pressing considerations will be an overhaul of the voting system that has turned the world's mightiest democracy into a laughing-stock of incompetence. Many voters... were forced to record their choices on fiddly bits of cardboard that were then read by out-of-date machines of dubious accuracy... In most elections, even large numbers of discarded or inaccurately read ballots don't make much of a difference. But this was not most elections, and the sheer closeness of the contest... exposed the rottenness of a system that should have been fixed years ago. [‘A system that was designed in the 17th century has failed’ at the end of the 20th century.]The punch-card ballot is based on early 20th century technology and was never intended for use in elections. A 1975 study conducted for the Federal Election Commission showed the accuracy of punch-card reading machines at only 99.5[%], a margin of error that would translate into 30,000 votes in Florida. Around 37[%] of voters in this election used punch cards. Another 20[%] used an even more antiquated system of mechanical lever machines. Also, the autonomy granted to local counties leaves states bereft of any kind of organisation with the authority or the financial muscle to make meaningful improvements.

...World's front pages mock paragon of democracy... The world's newspapers are revelling in the embarrassment of the American political system, making comparisons with... “spaghetti westerns” and the endemic corruption of Indian and Italian politics. The most caustic mockery came from countries whose democratic failings have been criticised by Washington. For many writers America was receiving its comeuppance for holding itself up as a model for others to emulate. Nepotistic dynasties, a dead [perso]n elected and scandals over ballot boxes were not just confined to the [Last] World, they said. A “great victory for democracy, desi-style [Indian-style],” the *Times of India* gleefully described the debacle... *La Reference Plus*, published in the Democratic Republic of Congo, said the chaos in [America's presidential election] only encouraged African dictators. “If this happens in the U[S], how do you want everything to be clean and transparent in the poor African countries?” it asked... Italians, who have had 58 post-war Governments, enjoyed a field day. The Rome daily, *La Repubblica*, ran the mocking headline: “A[n election] worthy of a Banana Republic.” German newspapers were more sanctimonious, with several arguing that America's electoral system was outdated and undermined the legitimacy of the eventual winner.

Once admired as the seat of democracy, the U[S] has reached a point at which it is actually regarded as an enemy of social progress by many liberals within its own borders and by most intellectuals [outside them (‘US political life has lost its centre and now pits two irreconcilable opposites – increasingly unhappy even about living together – directly against each other in a winner-takes-all election every four years; the solution: don't move the people, just move the border as the blue parts of the US all lie along the Canadian border or next to other states that do – at the global level, everybody else would be quite happy with a bigger Canada and a smaller US’)]... One of the burning questions about the future is whether democratic government as we know it can or will survive the wrenching challenges ahead. If not to which form of government will the hitherto democratic nations of the world turn?

The Country That Works Perfectly... [– where s]treets are clean, crime is rare and everyone prospers. But what about democracy? AS MY TAXI drove along the palm-fringed roadway from the airport, I looked out onto what may well be the cleanest, safest and most efficient country in the world – the prosperous, futuristic Singapore. Amid the clutter and chaos of urban Asia, this nation of 2.9 million people at the tip of the Malay Peninsula is a refreshing oasis. Here, everything not only functions but usually works perfectly: the streets are clean, potholes are fixed within 48 hours, and water can be drunk straight from the tap. Impoverished just two generations ago, Singapore today boasts gleaming new office towers, planned suburbs, broad boulevards – and a degree of middle-class prosperity that almost any city in the world might envy. Suddenly I heard chimes from the taxi dashboard. “What's that?” I inquired. “Excuse me, sir,” the driver apologised. “I was speeding.” The chimes... w[ere] a reminder to me... that if Singapore is a brilliant economic machine, it is also a place where behaviour is rigidly monitored by the state. Fines can be draconian: as much as \$500... for littering, smoking in public places, or for failing to flush a public toilet. The government may even impose up to \$2200 in fines for something as seemingly innocuous as importing chewing gum. (Technically, it's illegal to chew gum in public in Singapore.) Singapore's mix of prosperity and social control has made it attractive to countries such as Vietnam and China, which hope their own authoritarian rule might survive capitalist-style reform... It is not hard to see why. Under pressure to liberalise, they see a nation that has grown rich while still maintaining tight control and having the same ruling party for 36 years... Yet, if increasing numbers of Singaporeans have their say, the tiny republic may ultimately become a model of democracy instead... The growing proportion of votes for opposition candidates clearly shows that Singaporeans want a more open society. And the coming transformation of their country into an “Intelligent Island” will make controls over free expression irrelevant: it is meaningless to restrict sales of a newspaper when anyone in the country can get all the information [they want on their] home computer.

The Internet could be used to enable societies to become 100% democratic – all of the arguments for and against, plus any other information relevant to the issue or legislation to be voted on, can be posted on the Internet; citizens would be personally responsible for reading that information then registering their vote over the Internet (the modern telephone system and pin numbering can also be used to enable ‘each citizen to take a personal part in deliberations’ – in which case the arguments and relevant information might be published on TV, radio and in newspapers). The obligation to participate will be on individual citizens (i.e., the majority decision should prevail even if only 1% of citizens bother to vote). However, such a political system fails to address the main problem with democracy – that the majority of citizens only have average intelligence or less, which makes their opinion less valid than the

minority who have above average intelligence; yet, in an election, it is the opinion of the majority that prevails). Furthermore, even if it were possible to raise the intelligence of every citizen to the same level, the issue of whether the average citizen has time to study all of the relevant information remains – and new problems may be created because such a system eliminates decision-making government bodies (especially cabinets). The solution ought to be obvious – a political system that gives every citizen an equal chance to prove their worthiness to participate in government while allowing only the most-worthy to do so.

Most contemporary political systems have ministries which attempt to control the activities of various industries. These ministries are headed by a cabinet minister, who is selected by the governing party (or coalition) from among its MPs. Each minister is meant to solve conflicts of interest between the various competing factions within the industry it represents, and between its industry and other industries or the public, while trying to implement government policy. This means that each industry effectively contains numerous decision-makers – those who are employers (who could number in the thousands) and a minister (who may once have worked in the industry, but not necessarily – and, even if a minister has worked in the industry, that doesn't automatically mean the minister knows enough about the industry to be making major decisions concerning it). Employers generally make decisions according to self-interest, while ministers are supposed to make decisions according to the interests of the industry, its workers and the rest of the community. Unfortunately, ministerial decisions may come too late: because ministers often have to learn what is going on in their industry first – by listening to their own advisers, the employers and other lobbyists, or via commissions of inquiry – before making a decision (which may involve another time-consuming process – introducing new legislation), by which time the decision (or new legislation) may be out-of-date, or the employers (who often have an opposing agenda to the ministry) have already worked out how to circumvent it (a scenario that might require the minister to repeat from the beginning the process of making a decision)! An alternative to this situation is where all of the workers employed in an industry are united under one ministry (hence they would be co-operating instead of competing with each other; and the minister is the person who leads the industry instead of being someone who merely chases its tail).

Most industries employ both skilled and unskilled workers. The unskilled are thought of as being at the bottom of an industry's decision-making process. It logically follows from this that the MOST skilled worker should be at the top of an industry's decision-making process (i.e., be the industry's minister). Political systems of this type are called MERITOCRACIES. Any political system based on the premise that every worker within an industry has a theoretically equal opportunity to prove itself worthy of becoming the leader of that industry, would be far more democratic than simply allowing each worker to vote for members of parliament from candidates who have been selected by political parties or by themselves. It also removes the process of holding elections – unless the unlikely situation arises where two or more candidates are equally qualified to become an industry's minister (such elections can be limited to relevant people within the industry).

Properly qualified, trained and conscientious workers require little supervision. However, even if every member of a group of workers performing similar tasks are all properly qualified, trained and conscientious, one of the group would be expected to ultimately prove itself slightly more qualified, etc., than the rest (e.g., one member could have worked in the position for a longer time than its peers). Furthermore, the members of a group performing the same tasks should be able to identify their most qualified co-worker. The most qualified co-worker ought to become the group's SUPERVISOR (or FOREPERSON) and be the link between the group and the next level up of the industry's decision-making structure (it is responsible for ensuring that the group performs the tasks set by the next level) – and be chosen on merit by a member (or members) of that next level, or by its own peers.

If all of the workers of a particular industry within Auckland, for example, were united in their efforts, the industry would have x groups of workers. Depending on the type of industry, these groups might all be performing the same tasks but at different locations, different tasks at the same locations, or different tasks at different locations. This also means that there would be x supervisors in Auckland. The next level of the industry – lower management – would be the one which is responsible for organising the activities of the groups (and, therefore, the person a supervisor links with could be called an ORGANISER – as opposed to being called a LOWER MANAGER). Because of Auckland's size, there are likely to be so many groups of workers at the lowest decision-making level of each industry that each will require y organisers (with each handling the activities of groups from one suburb or a number of adjacent suburbs, or groups performing a set of different but related tasks all over the Auckland region). Each organiser should be selected – on merit – from the supervisors it is responsible for (either by the supervisors or by the member, or members, from the next level of the industry's decision-making structure – the upper management level, whose members could simply be called MANAGERS). Because of Auckland's size, each industry is still likely to require more than one manager. Each manager should be selected – on merit – from the organisers it is responsible for (either by the organisers or by the member, or members, of the next decision-making level). Some industries may not require both a lower and upper management level, but all require an overall leader. This leader would be the industry's MINISTER and should be selected – on merit – from the industry's managers, or by an outgoing (e.g., retiring) minister. The minister, however, may need at least one assistant to perform its role properly. The promotional system would operate more smoothly if the primary assistant (a minister's office might also require additional secretaries) was the candidate identified to replace the minister. This would enable the assistant (or deputy) to become familiarised with the role before obtaining it, and to serve as a stand-in minister whenever the actual minister is sick or on leave. Likewise, each manager, organiser and supervisor could have a deputy (when a deputy is promoted, if its former boss isn't also being promoted, the former boss might temporarily become its deputy until the new boss is settled into the role – or until a suitable replacement deputy has been identified and is able to take up the position). Promotions won't be forced upon anyone who doesn't want added responsibility.

A minister would be responsible for ensuring that its managers perform their tasks, while the managers act as advisers to the minister (although the minister ought to be a source of advice rather than someone who needs to seek it). However, if the managers are capable of performing their tasks, there should be little for the minister to do that relates directly to the activities of its industry. Instead, the minister will primarily be a link between its industry and other industries. Each industry is responsible for meeting certain needs of the community, but an industry can't operate in a manner that adversely affects another industry's ability to fulfil its responsibilities. Furthermore, most industries require the assistance of other industries to perform their work tasks. Therefore, the various industries have to cooperate with each other to enable the society to function properly. The role of ministers is to ensure that such cooperation is maintained. In order to do this, they would need to form a council (or cabinet) which meets at regular intervals (e.g., weekly or monthly) and whenever the region is facing an adverse problem (e.g., a natural disaster). This council can serve as a local (or district) government.

The world should be divided up into districts of approximately equal size (in population and area), with each district government being responsible for meeting the needs of citizens from within their district. However, few if any districts could be expected to be completely self-sufficient (e.g., because they lack certain material resources). Therefore, it would be necessary for some trade between districts to be maintained. In order to facilitate trade between districts (whereby one district permanently provides a product or service to another in exchange for a product or service that it can't provide for itself; whereby a number of districts temporarily set aside a percentage of their production in order to provide for a district whose productive capacity has been affected by a natural disaster), they should be grouped into states. A state minister for each industry can be selected – on merit – from its district ministers, to serve on the state government along with representatives of the other industries. Finally, representatives need to be selected – on merit, and from amongst the state ministers of each industry – to represent each industry in a world government.

Although the world government would essentially function in a similar fashion to the state and district governments, there is one major difference – the activities of district and state governments are overseen, and answerable to, a higher authority, whereas there is no human authority higher than the world government. Although there should be no problems with the quality of world ministers – if the system is operated correctly, they ought to be the WISEST, or BEST AND BRIGHTEST, most moral, energetic, able and respected members of their industry – it would be sensible to have more than one minister represent each industry on the world government. Ideally, each industry should have 3 world ministers – because that would mean any decisions which the

world ministers of an industry make in regard to their industry will be decided unanimously or by a 2-to-1 majority. In addition, it may be hard for one person to know enough about its own industry to handle the responsibility of being a world minister, but not three people whose knowledge is being combined (and, if their industry is divided into more than one sector – e.g., the Education industry can be divided into pre-schools, primary schools and high schools – it might be possible to have each minister come from a different sector). Furthermore, having 3 world ministers (who could have equal standing – although one ought to be designated as a chairperson of the trio; the position of chair could be rotated) may remove the necessity to have deputy world ministers – because, if one world minister retires or has to be replaced for another reason, there would still be 2 experienced world ministers (who should be able to cope while a new world minister settles into its role, as well as helping the new world minister to settle in). They ought to be able to cope because, assuming that all of the state and district ministers are qualified to be in their positions, the necessity for the world minister to make decisions – once such a system is up-and-running – could be extremely limited (i.e., apart from participating in periodic meetings with the co-world ministers of their own industry, and with the world ministers from other industries, plus keeping up-to-date with any developments within their own industry – via their state ministers – or developments in other industries which affect their own industry, world ministers may only need to be on-call in case they are required in the event of a disaster or to give advice to a state minister, and contribute to the occasional process of selecting replacement state and world ministers).

In order to start up such a system, it might be more ideal to initially have 5 or 7 (r:p605, ln56) world ministers for each industry instead of just 3 (but this doesn't mean that it should then be called a POLYARCHY – a 'government by many persons'). Initial world ministers would have to clarify what their industry's responsibilities are (both to individual citizens and to other industries) and work out how to turn a presently disunited industry into one which is united and capable of fulfilling those responsibilities on a worldwide scale, as well as selecting the initial state ministers. This would be far more complicated than simply maintaining the system once it has been operating for a while, and the initial system may require many adjustments before it is able to operate with little interference from the top – so having more than 3 world ministers will reduce the workload. Once the system is up-and-running, the number of world ministers in each industry can be reduced.

There are said to be 15 *industry groups* (r:p604, ln16 + p1858, ln41). Therefore, assuming each industry is going to initially have 7 world ministers, human society needs to find 105 suitable candidates. Fortunately, there are currently about 6 billion people, which means – in this example – finding approximately one candidate from every 57 million people. That shouldn't be as hard as it might sound – especially when organisations such as the UN are around to assist the selection process (note: recall that the Bible suggests there are 144,000 worthy candidates). Candidates could be nominated by each industry, and the UN General Assembly – or a UN department affiliated to an industry – can choose the initial world ministers from those nominations. The most suitable candidates ought to be able to converse in the same language and might be those currently serving as consultants, advisers to politicians, chairpersons or chief executives of multinational corporations, and the heads of UN departments. The UN should also be responsible for dividing the world into states – which would need to occur before the initial world ministers can begin to select the initial state ministers (although initial state boundaries may need some alterations before being finalised) – then the body of initial world ministers could supersede the UN plus existing national and state governments.

The initial state ministers can select initial district ministers, who would be responsible for implementing the unification process as specified by their world ministers. When an industry has been unified within a district, the district minister will know what the industry can and can't provide for its citizens from within the district, and what it can provide in excess in order to use as trade for whatever it can't provide. The state minister will then be responsible for arranging trade between its districts. In some instances, a state may be unable to provide all its needs, in which case trade between states would need to be arranged by the world ministers.

World ministers would also be responsible for seeing that information – especially regarding successful initiatives – is shared between districts (r:p1857, ln62-3). Wise people tend to make less mistakes than unwise people (because the wise think – and learn – about what they are going to do before doing it) but, while the system is being set up and initial ministers are gaining experience, those ministers could be forgiven for making some mistakes – unless they repeat mistakes made by other initial ministers (but if information regarding mistakes is *shared between districts*, it shouldn't be possible for a mistake to be repeated). Sharing information ought to enable the whole system to gradually become more perfect, until it eventually reaches a stage where it seems unable to be improved any further (i.e., a *steady-state* or societal equilibrium). Once this has been achieved, humanity could be said to have built *heaven on Earth*.

The length of time it takes humanity to achieve *societal equilibrium* will depend on how much effort current generations put into doing so. If we assume that their lifestyles and ambitions proves the current older generation would be unwilling to adjust to a new social philosophy, it might not be possible to achieve societal equilibrium until all of those older people have died off. That could take at least 40 years (r:p1736, ln23)! Furthermore, although the current younger generation may be willing to adjust, most of them have been so mis-educated that they may be unable to properly raise their own children. Therefore, it might take until a properly educated generation reaches adulthood to achieve societal equilibrium. If, as part of setting up the new system, the Education industry is overhauled to educate human children properly, societal equilibrium might not be achieved until the children of the first properly educated children become adults – which again means taking *at least 40 years* before humanity as a collective has evolved ('developed as a species').

A child has been *properly educated* if it is able to reach its full potential. For a human, reaching full potential could mean becoming the Messiah! Obviously, not every child can be the Messiah – but if every child was taught what a Messiah would have to learn, might they all grow up to behave like one?

Working out what a Messiah needs to learn may prove to be problematic. However, if it is assumed that a Messiah is the most god-like of all humans (r:p1734, ln55), and the only way a human can be like God is to be wise, it logically follows that a Messiah would have to be the wisest of humans. Working out what a child needs to learn to become wise is less problematic – because past generations have produced examples of people who have been called wise, so their personalities and lifestyles can be compared to find common characteristics (note that few if any figures from the past have been completely wise according to contemporary definitions – e.g., unless Einstein became domesticated in his latter years, the wisdom ascribed to him is less than the wisdom which can be ascribed to anyone who shares his characteristics and has also lived through, or since, the sexual revolution; r:p282, ln64 + p1212, ln24).

According to Paul... Jesus... surpasses Adam in a positive way... Jesus is the perfected Adam, the first human being as [it] was truly intended to be.

If it is assumed that a human has reached full potential by being wise, it follows that being unwise means being less-than-human, sub-human, pre-human, primitive, Neanderthal, ape-like or *beast-like*, B- or 2nd-grade. As an alternative to those phrases, however, the unwise could simply be called HUMAN BEINGS (i.e., human beings are humans being something other than being human) – after all, it makes no sense for people to use a two-word phrase to name something if the first word of that phrase used on its own denotes exactly the same thing! For the remainder of this thesis, the phrase HUMAN BEING will be abbreviated to HB and used when the editor is referring to a person who isn't wise (or god-like), and the word HUMAN will be used when referring to someone who is.

...you see it's true an ape like me can learn to be human too...

LEARN

About 2.5 million years ago, global temperatures fell, initiating a... shift toward more open, savannalike habitats in Africa, resulting in the appearance of many new animal species and spurring the evolution of early humans... Their small brain size indicates that early humans did not have the prolonged period of juvenile dependency that allows modern children to develop their mental abilities.

The accumulation of objective knowledge began, the evidence suggests... in the Great Rift Valley of southern Africa[, where s]tone tools have been found... At first, this tool-making advantage had to be conveyed to the next generation by genetic inheritance... Later in our biological evolution came a time when an innovation in toolmaking achieved by one generation could be conveyed to the next by the extragenetic procedure of teaching.

Concerning education, it is stated in *The Republic*: “The soul of every [hu]man possesses the power of learning the truth and the organ to see it with... Hence there may well be an art whose aim would[n’t] be... to put the power of sight into the soul’s eye, which already has it, but to insure that, instead of looking in the wrong direction, it is turned the way it ought to be.” ...In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle writes: “Moral excellence is concerned with pleasure and pain; it is pleasure that makes us perform base action, and pain that prevents us from acting nobly. For that reason, as Plato says, [humans] must be reared from childhood to feel pleasure and pain at the proper things. This is proper education.”

Believing that play materials, practical occupations, and songs were needed to develop a child’s real nature... Friedrich Wilhelm [Froebel, a] German educationalist... open[ed] a school in his native Thuringia to put his theories into practice... when his two brothers died [leaving him in charge of] the education of their children... In 1837 [Froebel] opened a school for younger children, naming it the Kindergarten (= children’s garden), and later developed a system of specialized training for teachers. In the reactionary period after the 1848 uprisings, however, his reforms fell into disfavour, with the result that his schools were closed by Prussian authorities in 1851[, a year before his death.

...‘EDUCATION in NZ was at first a matter for the churches and some private secular organisations. After the Constitution Act of 1852 had divided the country into provinces, provincial councils were given responsibility for education. Many opted for providing financial help for denominational schools rather than the establishment of public schools. The first move towards free compulsory education at secular schools was the Education Act of 1877. The real momentum towards a comprehensive school system, however, came under the leadership of George HOGBEN who was Inspector-General of Education from 1899 until 1915. Hogben was energetic, progressive and established an intelligent, modern curriculum and examination system that gave education a national coherence and purpose that it had always previously lacked. Hogben’s enthusiasm for secondary education created the climate in which the new Labour government in 1936 made free education up to the age of 19 available for all pupils who had gone through primary school’]...

In the 1930s... [John Dewey] observed that most[US] schools were proceeding along traditional lines and failing to take account of the findings of child psychologists or of the needs of a changing and democratic social environment, and argued strongly for learning by experience and necessity rather than through authoritarian instruction...

The only rational way of educating is to be an example – of what to avoid, if one can’t be the other sort... But... [t]he most important method of education... always has consisted of that in which the pupil was urged to actual performance... [Unlike the procession of] intelligent and well-meaning [commentators from the past and today who] have dealt with educational problems and have certainly repeatedly expressed their views... I cannot lay any claim to being an authority... [when it comes to] educational matters... However... knowledge must continually be renewed by ceaseless effort, if it is not to be lost. It resembles a statue of marble which stands in the desert and is continuously threatened with burial by the shifting sand. The hands of service must ever be at work, in order that the marble continue lastingly to shine in the sun. To these serving hands mine also shall belong... It is “society” which provides [individuals] with food, clothing, a home, the tools of work, language, the forms of thought, and most of the content of thought... It is evident, therefore, that the dependence of the individual upon society is a fact of nature which cannot be abolished – just as in the case of ants and bees. However, while the whole life process of ants and bees is fixed down to the smallest detail by rigid, hereditary instincts, the social pattern and interrelationships of human[s]... are very variable and susceptible to change. Memory, the capacity to make new combinations, the gift of oral communication have made possible developments among human[s]... which are not dictated by biological necessities. Such developments manifest themselves in traditions... in literature; in scientific and engineering accomplishments... We... have, therefore, to admit that we owe our principal advantage over the beasts to the fact of living in human society. The individual, if left alone from birth, would remain primitive and beast-like in his thoughts and feelings to a degree that we can hardly conceive. The individual is what [it] is and has the significance that [it] has not so much in virtue of his individuality, but rather as a member of a great human society, which directs his material and spiritual existence from the cradle to the grave... [A hu]man acquires at birth, through heredity, a biological constitution which we must consider fixed and unalterable, including the natural urges which are characteristic of the human species. In addition, during [its lifetime, a human] acquires a cultural constitution which [it] adopts from society through communication and through many other types of influences. It is this cultural constitution which, with the passage of time, is subject to change and which determines to a very large extent the relationship between the individual and society... But... in... the present day economy... [t]here is no provision that all those able and willing to work will always be in a position to find employment; an “army of unemployed” almost always exists. The worker is constantly in fear of losing his job... Technological progress frequently results in more unemployment rather than an easing of the burden of work for all... Unlimited competition leads to a huge waste of labor, and to [a] crippling of the social consciousness of individuals... This crippling of individuals I consider the worst evil of capitalism. Our whole educational system suffers from this evil. An exaggerated competitive attitude is inculcated into the student, who is trained to worship acquisitive success as a preparation for his future career... [My solution – *the establishment of a socialist economy* (r:p283, lns42-3) – must be] accompanied by an educational system which would be oriented toward social goals... The education of the individual, in addition to promoting his own innate abilities, would attempt to develop in him a sense of responsibility for his fellow [citizens] in place of the glorification of power and [material] success in our present society... The school has always been the most important means of transferring the wealth of tradition from one generation to the next. This applies today in an even higher degree than in former times for, through modern development of the economic life, the family as bearer of tradition and education has been weakened... Sometimes one sees in the school simply the instrument for transferring a certain maximum quantity of knowledge to the growing generation. But that is not right. Knowledge is dead; the school, however, serves the living. It should develop in the young individuals those qualities and capabilities which are of value for the welfare of the commonwealth. But that does not

mean that individuality should be destroyed and the individual become a mere tool of the community, like a bee or an ant. For a community of standardized individuals without personal originality and personal aims would be a poor community without possibilities for development. On the contrary, the aim must be the training of independently acting and thinking individuals, who, however, see in the service of the community their highest life problem. As far as I can judge, the English school system comes nearest to the realization of this ideal. - Einstein

If every individual were reared in conditions as favourable to health as science can make them, [and] received an equally thorough and stimulating education up to sixteen... the most shocking of existing inequalities would be on the way to disappear. - 1964

Excessive equality makes for cultural uniformity and... [hence,] investment in education... becomes very close to being the basic index of social... progress. It is... investment in human as distinct from material capital. - 1977

One problem is that... in... any school there is a sector of the population that is there only because it is required to be so by law. These young people are in fact detainees because there are no jobs outside – or, if they did find jobs, they would decrease those available for the adult population. Naturally, this breeds resentment which leads to behavioural difficulties that throw an increasing burden on the rest of the structure, reducing its efficiency. Worse still, it is beginning to breed resentment also on the part of those who *want* to learn. Thus a system of compulsory, equal education for all, designed to reduce social tensions, may well have exactly the opposite effect... - 1979

On the subject of warfare, Wells is most restrained[, perhaps because Wells]... looks forward to greater unity between nations and to the gradual development of a “New Republic” – a peaceful and mature world state formed by the... Efficients, who are a heterogeneous group “applying the growing body of scientific knowledge to the general needs”... [Wells also] forecasts the expansion of the English language to the extent that it will be understood by “the whole functional body of human society” by 2000. - 1980

With the advent of social structure and language, a significant change in the mode of evolution occurs. Previously the only significant transfer of information from one organism to another was genetic. There was no reason for the brain to be able to store and process more information than could be encountered in one lifetime. The knowledge gained by a genius chimpanzee died with the chimpanzee. But with language, a significant fraction of the knowledge of the community could be passed to a new member. Knowledge could thus grow rapidly. To a large extent evolution becomes an evolution of societies rather than an evolution of organisms... In important ways, societies and technology seem to evolve together. In our history we can trace this from the development of agriculture (which made cities possible) to the present explosion in communication hardware that makes the entire world available to individuals in advanced civilizations.

...high-quality educational programs such as “Sesame Street” have taught many preschoolers to read. Unfortunately, when those same children reach primary schools they find only the traditional educational methods that have changed little over the centuries. Within a year or two many of them become bored, lose interest in learning, and turn to the easy distractions of television and social life. New developments in communications, aided by computers, can stop that tragic loss of talent and keep students interested. It’s an established fact that the very few naturally gifted “born teachers” are enormously more effective than the great mass of those in the teaching profession who teach with care and attention and even with good new ideas, but without the charisma and flair that distinguishes the best teachers as well as the best actors. In my ideal school of the future, children would assemble... in a private room in one-on-one interaction with a “tutor,” the realistic, holographic presentation of... one of the rare, inspiring, one-in-a-thousand superbly gifted teachers... [L]ectures would have been staged as carefully as a dramatic movie and would have been preserved on video discs. With computer-generated responses, apparently coming from the... tutor, there would then be an amusing rapid-fire give-and-take, teasing out answers... and always stimulating thought and reinforcing memory. - 1981

Education during the next century is certain to center around the learning of skills rather than the accumulation of abstract information. Rote learning of historical dates and facts, for instance, will be useless, since it will be much simpler to demand the information from a computer... Although English will remain the prevalent global language, the need for an international computer language will become a pressing concern. - 1982

We still need to find out how the individual features of a stimulus are “combined” to produce unified perceptions of whole objects and scenes... The essential nature of the memory trace, whether it is localised to a few specific nerves or widely distributed in the brain, is still a mystery... One of the greatest challenges facing psychobiologists is to understand the brain processes responsible for such higher cognitive activities as thought, language and conscious awareness.

...Modern neurophysiology has shown that, beyond doubt, the capacity of the human brain to establish connections (synapses) between its cells (neurons) is virtually infinite; but the number of such connections actually made is decidedly limited. If one accepts that memory and the power of rational thought are in some way correlated to the number or quality of the networks of these synaptic connections (which is probable) then it follows that [our species] has by no means yet reached the limits of [its] potential intellectual capacity. It is easy to jump unjustifiably from this conclusion to a further one, namely that because of the undeveloped capacity that is latent in everyone, all children are capable of far more intellectual achievements than they exhibit; and that the reason for this failure to achieve lies wholly in the environment... As educationists we can in any event do nothing to modify genetic determinants; but we can, and should, do all we can to try to make the environment of development approach the ideal... Most people agree that, whatever it may be... that ideal environment... should be made available, as far as possible, to everyone. In other words we should aim not only at an ideal environment; we should also aim at equality of opportunity... But... [o]ne cannot compensate for the differences between parents in providing opportunities for their children unless one wholly eliminates the family unit; and even then one must replace it by the creche where the qualities of those adults chosen to look after the children will vary as greatly as do the qualities of parents... In all that I have said I have taken it as axiomatic that ‘education is a good thing’. I do not subscribe to the view that society would be happier with less education. Even if it were true... that the uneducated manual worker of the past was more content with his lot than the semi-educated one of today, the communication explosion has made retreat to such a situation quite impossible. Society will go on being informed, society will go on being concerned about what it is informed about, and society will go on coming to the wrong conclusions and taking the wrong actions about these matters of concern unless we can, by educating each member of society to this limit of his or her capacity, produce a really dramatic change... This leads quite naturally to the most fundamental question of all, namely ‘What is education for?’ or ‘What are we trying to achieve by our educational programmes?’ It seems to me that educational theorists who have tried to answer this question in the last two decades have nearly all framed their answers in terms of satisfying the needs of the members of a modern society... It seems to me, however, that there is a gap in all this theory, a gap that is the root cause of many of our current problems, a gap that is extremely difficult to fill. There is seldom any mention of educating people to have values. Indeed we have, as a society, torn down and abandoned all the values that formerly provided the principles on which human behaviour in societies was founded... I am not arguing that we were wrong to abandon all these values; I am, however,

arguing strongly that we were wrong to abandon them unless we had something else to put in their place. Those of us, and I was one, who, as adults, embraced humanism as a basis for an ethical code – the Mr. Do-as-you-would-be-done-by philosophy – failed to appreciate that it is a sophisticated concept which cannot easily be taught to young children. It has neither carrot nor whip to attract or compel acceptance. It is essentially based on self-discipline... I would therefore answer the fundamental question... by saying that we aim (a) to instil a set of values (b) to develop innate creative talents and skills (c) to develop intellectual capacity as far as possible (d) to instil a knowledge of the customs and structure of society (e)... to select and train for a vocation[.] For several years... people in many countries have come to realize that the pace of acquisition of new knowledge is not only very fast but is accelerating. All sorts of figures are quoted to dramatize the situation; as, for example, the calculation that more new information emerged last year than emerged in the whole of recorded history up to 1900. This sort of statement is easy to make and impossible to prove or disprove; but it indicates well enough the dilemma that we face. It follows that the traditional idea that the initial education that a child is given can be a preparation – and an adequate preparation – for the whole of his or her working life is simply no longer tenable. The average American, it is now stated, changes... career twice and moves house fourteen times during ...[t]s active life. Much of what [a person] learns at school, college and university will be out-of-date not just before [it] retires but even before [it finishes its] initial education. It thus seems sensible to consider whether a period of initial education that *averages* sixteen years is any longer sensible. Clearly education must continue throughout life... - 1983

Thomas Jefferson warned that “if a nation expects to be free and ignorant, it expects that which never was and never will be.” In a similar vein, one of the earliest foreign observers... on life in America... Alexis de Tocqueville, commented, “The universal and sincere faith that they profess here in the efficaciousness of education seems to be one of the most remarkable features of America.” It’s still a cherished American dream that through education we can perfect the individual; then, through the individual, we can go on to transform society... [A] recent article... sums up this belief quite well...: We face many insistently urgent problems... To solve these problems, we need resourceful and innovative leadership. For that to arise and be effective, an educated populace is needed... Achieving peace, prosperity, and plenty could put us on the threshold of an early paradise. But a much better educational system than now exists also is needed, for that alone can carry us across the threshold. [“A Revolution in Education,” *The American Educator*...] ...After W[W]II... the key word in education became cooperation. To further this value, a system of education called core curriculum became very popular. It was based on the concept of progressive education developed by John Dewey and [other progressives]. The progressives believed that the curriculum should be built upon practical problems and experiences of contemporary life, with less organization of courses by subject matter. They stressed the development of the total child through “activity-centered” teaching... Simply stated, core curriculum was a system in which one subject became the focal point, with all other subjects subordinated to it. For example, the class and teacher might choose to study about American Indians. The reading, mathematics, writing, spelling, music, art history, and geography lessons would then all be related in some way to the topic of American Indians. Using this basic approach, children were also taught how to work in committees and share their various reports and research. In this postwar period, problem solving by committees was seen as the wave of the future. The U[N] was held up as the prime international example of this way of thinking... In other words, the classroom became a training ground for what, with typical American optimism, many supposed to be taking place in the world at large. But then the world began to change dramatically, and the educational system failed to measure up... Progressive education... no longer seemed to be the solution to existing world problems. Consequently, an educational philosophy supported by a group called the essentialists came to the fore and offered a new set of answers... They demanded a return to the traditional methods of teaching with emphasis upon systematic training in subject matter and upon more rigorous academic standards for all learners. Also, they... paid more attention to discipline... In the early 1980s, the school system moved into still another phase of this ongoing cycle. “Our nation is at risk,” proclaimed [the US] Secretary of Education, in May, 1983. “The education foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity. If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war. We have, in effect, been committing an act of unthinking unilateral educational disarmament. History is not kind to idlers.” These tough words... came after... the U.S. Education Secretary... reviewed a rather alarming two-year study on the state of American education... which was issued by the eighteen-member National Commission on Excellence in Education... (the commission noted that in England, many students spend eight hours a day, 220 days a year in high school, while in the U[S] students typically face only 180 six-hour days); [and another survey which showed ‘average SAT scores were 87 points lower than they had been in 1963’]... To solve those profound, far-reaching issues of war and peace, crime and punishment, or hatred and love among human beings, our schools can certainly help. But we must also look back to our families and to other institutions that serve as repositories of our cultural values.

...Twenty-five centuries ago, Socrates asked, “Can moral virtue be taught?” [Socrates] argued that it cannot be... His reasons boiled down to three things. First, moral virtue is a habit formed by free choice on our part... A second point made by Socrates... concerns the role of prudence as an inseparable aspect of moral virtue. If moral virtue were identical with knowledge, it could be taught, but it is not identical with knowledge. We are acquainted with instances, in our own life and the lives of others, where individuals know what they ought to do and fail to do it, or do what they know they ought not to do... In the third place, Socrates calls our attention to facts of experience with which everyone is acquainted. If moral virtue could be taught, why do virtuous parents, who make every effort they know how to inculcate it in their offspring, succeed with some and fail with others? ...To my knowledge, no one has successfully countered the arguments advanced by Socrates in Plato’s dialogues... However... I firmly believe that the educational reforms that must be accomplished to provide all with the kind of schooling needed to inculcate the intellectual virtues requisite for a good life and a good society can be achieved... in the foreseeable future. - 1984

One of the major questions that confronts developmental psychologists is how to characterize the nature of change across development. Some theorists view development as a continuous process, whereby each new event or change builds upon earlier experiences in an orderly way... Others view development as occurring in a series of discrete steps or stages, with the organization of behaviour being qualitatively different at each new stage or plateau... Are there *critical periods* in which the child must experience certain kinds of social and sensory input if development is to proceed normally? In recent years hospitals have allowed mothers and infants to have close contact in the minutes and hours immediately after birth in order to permit bonding... to take place. It was assumed that the emotional attachment between mothers and infants would not develop adequately if the mother was deprived of this opportunity for contact with her baby during this early critical period. [However, c]areful evaluation of the bonding notion has yielded little support for the necessity of early mother-baby contact... The human mother-child relationship is malleable and plastic, and opportunities at a variety of time periods can promote good parent-child relations. Similarly, if the child is deprived of many opportunities for normal social and cognitive development in infancy, the effects are not necessarily irreversible. In... 1966... a classic study... found that infants who were reared in a very impoverished orphanage, but later transferred to a stimulating adoptive home, grew up without any identifiable intellectual deficits. Those who continued in the orphanage grew up to be retarded... The issue remains a controversial one. Some behaviors may be more open to modification at certain periods of development. We can think of these as sensitive, rather than critical, periods. Other behaviors may be highly plastic and open to change across all points of development... Earlier biological extremists argued that biology is destiny and development is merely a matter of maturation... At the other extreme, some early theorists... placed their emphasis strictly on the environment... Most modern viewpoints recognize that both biological and environmental factors are influential, but there is disagreement over the

relative importance of these factors for development... The question for modern developmental psychologists is to explore how biological and environmental factors interact to produce developmental differences in various children... Some developmental psychologists... [believe c]hildren are assertive or shy largely as a result of parental childrearing practices. Delinquency is caused by being associated with an antisocial peer group. Children's interest in history and geometry is the product of a talented teacher. Others sharply disagree with this view... Instead of assuming that children are only passive recipients of environmental influence, they believe that children are often active agents who shape, control, and direct the course of their own development. Children are seen as curious information-seekers who intentionally try to understand and explore the world about them... Children are constantly seeking to adapt to the world by relating new experiences to their existing knowledge and by modifying their knowledge base... Moreover, in the social world the child is not simply molded by socializing agents such as parents, peers, or teachers. Instead, influence is a two-way process, with children actively modifying the actions of their parents and other people that they encounter in their daily lives... Some researchers have as their goal the provision of a description of behavior and how it changes across development. For example, the description of how children's play changes or how many words children can remember or when children learn to crawl, sit, and walk are all of interest to child psychologists. This information is valuable in developing norms... Norms provide important guidelines against which to measure the individual child's progress in relation to other children of similar age. If developmental delays are detected, interventions to correct the problem can often be instituted... Children who grow up on a farm in China, on a kibbutz in Israel, or in a village in Peru have very different kinds of experiences from children who spend their childhood in a suburb in the U[S]. Developmental psychologists differ in how they view the importance of culture. Some argue that culture-free laws of development can be discovered that apply to all children in all cultures. Others argue that the cultural setting... will have a profound influence on the laws governing development. Between these extreme views is one suggesting that development proceeds in the same orderly fashion, but the rates at which children in different societies progress may vary. In some cultures, children are encouraged to walk very early and are given opportunities to exercise their new skills. In other cultures, infants are carried or swaddled, which reduces their chances to walk until they are older... Cultures are, of course, constantly undergoing change... Theories differ considerably in how seriously they take these kinds of changes into account, but all recognize that these changes may play a part in influencing the child's development... Television is [now] available to 99[% of US] households... Can children learn new intellectual skills from watching television? To answer this question, "Sesame Street" was introduced to millions of American children in the late 1960s. The show aimed to improve the cognitive skills of preschoolers so that they would be better prepared for elementary school education... And it has worked... Children who watched "Sesame Street" showed a marked improvement in a variety of cognitive skills; more important... as viewing became heavier, the amount of improvement increased... Perhaps one of the most interesting outcomes is that reading skill improved, even though this was not specifically taught on "Sesame Street." These results leave little doubt that... TV can be an important educational tool... According to... *social learning theory*... children learn not only through classical and operant conditioning but also by observing and imitating others... In... 1977... a series of classic studies... showed that children's aggressive behavior could be increased by exposing them to another person behaving aggressively. Nursery school children watched an adult punch, kick and pummel a large inflated... doll. In contrast to children who had not see the model, the children who watched the adult assault the doll were more aggressive when given the chance to play with the inflated toy. Moreover, many of the bizarre and novel responses that the adult model had exhibited were accurately reproduced by the child observers... Imitation is not automatic; children are selective about which behaviors they imitate, and they don't imitate every behavior they observe... [But i]n order to imitate, children must be capable of remembering the behavior the model is displaying and those who use active strategies in trying to recall, rehearse, and organize the behaviors are more effective learners... [Unfortunately], development does not always conform to a previously prescribed schedule; unexpected events often intervene to push development in new directions. Life span theorists term those *nonnormative events*, since they neither happen to everyone in the normal course of development nor follow any preset schedule... Divorce, job loss, or residence change are events that may have a profound impact on the child, but are not part of the normal, expected occurrences... In addition... according to the life span perspective, a [further] set of factors influence development, namely cohort effects. Cohort is a term used to describe a group of children who were born in the same year... or the same general period... As cohorts develop, they share the same set of historical experiences that are unique to each group born in a particular era... Development may be different for different cohorts... Therefore, the historical context is an important source of influence on the developing child... If you look at newborn infants in the nursery of a maternity ward, one of the things that is most striking is their diversity... not only in their physical characteristics but also in their behavior... Before birth, and, according to some researchers, even before conception, the transactions between a vast array of genetic... and environmental factors begin. These genetic-environmental transactions make the individual unique and continue to shape development throughout the entire life span... Human development is the process by which the genotype comes to be expressed as a phenotype... An individual's *genotype* is the material inherited from ancestors which makes the individual genetically unique. With the exception of identical twins, no two individuals have the same genotype. An individual's *phenotype* is the way the genotype is expressed in observable or measurable characteristics. The expression of the genotype is modified by a variety of experiences. Whether or not a child's genotype for high intellectual activity is manifested in school performance will depend in part upon whether or not the child's parents stimulate and encourage the child in intellectual pursuits... Heredity does not rigidly fix behavior, but instead establishes a range of possible responses that the individual may make to different environments... These genetically based variations of an individual's responsiveness to environments are called the *range of reaction*... The genotype thus sets boundaries on the range of possible phenotypes within which individual characteristics may be expressed... Some kinds of genotypes are more difficult to deflect from their genetically programmed path of growth than others... The term *canalization* is used to describe the limiting of phenotypes to one or a few developmental outcomes... A characteristic that is strongly canalized is relatively difficult to modify even by what might be viewed as widely divergent or extreme experiences. For example, infant babbling is strongly canalized since babbling occurs even in infants who are born deaf and have never heard their own voices or the speech of others... In contrast, intelligence is less highly canalized since it can be modified by a variety of physical, social, and educational experiences and will be manifested in a wide range of problem-solving and adaptive behaviors... Socialization is the process whereby an individual's standards, skills, motives, attitudes, and behaviors are shaped to conform to those regarded as desirable and appropriate for his or her present or future role in society... [T]he parent socializes the child by serving as a model for the child to imitate... and rewarding or punishing the child's behavior... Parental warmth is regarded as important in the socialization process... [because] the child is likely to wish to maintain the approval, and be distressed at any prospect of the loss of love of a warm parent, and therefore the need for harsh forms of discipline to gain compliance is often unnecessary. In contrast, the threat of withdrawal of love is unlikely to be an effective mechanism of socialization when used by hostile parents who have little demonstrable affection to rescind. What has the child to lose? Even on those occasions when physical punishment is utilized by warm parents, they find it more effective in limiting their child's behavior than do hostile parents. Again, this is probably both because the child wishes to conform to the standards of warm parents and because these parents are more likely to provide information about alternative socially desirable responses available to the child... Parental love alone is not enough to lead to positive social development in children. Some degree of parental control is necessary if children are to develop into socially and intellectually competent individuals. However, it should be kept in mind that the ultimate goal of socialization is self-regulation rather than regulation by external agents... Although socialization is certainly occurring in the first year of life, it seems to become more conscious and systematic with the occurrence of greater mobility and the beginning of language in the second year... [By the end of the second year, the brain has already reached 75% of its adult weight, and the infant's active vocabulary may reach 250 words. One of the key reasons infants can produce

more sounds is the developing larynx, or voice box, which “descends” between the ages of 1 1/2 to 2 years.’] One of the most outstanding of the child’s developmental achievements is the mastery of language. Language is one of the most complex systems of rules a person ever learns, but children in a wide range of different environments and cultures learn to understand and use language in a remarkably short period... Children very early become aware of group hierarchies. Although preschool children’s perception of their own position of relative dominance may be somewhat aggrandized, their accuracy in perceiving their own status increases rapidly in the early school years... [E]ven in the preschool years... children form “pecking orders,”... Young children seem to differentiate the status of peers on the basis of toughness, the ability to direct the behavior of others, leadership in play, and physical coercion. In contrast, in older children such status structures are more likely to be based on appearance, leadership skills, pubertal development, athletic prowess, and academic performance... Dominance and status affect social interaction as well. A number of researchers, observing nursery school children in free play, found that dominant children are looked at and imitated more than nondominant children... In addition, children are more likely to conform to the opinions and behavior of high-status peers... Most of the social interchanges of peers occur in the setting of play, and children spend more of their time outside of school playing with friends than they do in any other activity... [However, p]robably no other institution has as much opportunity as the school to shape the developing child. After the first grade, an increasingly large proportion of the child’s life will be dominated by the school... Children attend school for more hours each day and more days each year than ever before. Children in the U[S] now go to school an average of five hours a day, 180 days a year. In 1880 the average pupil attended school about 80 days each year... Even outside of school hours, the demands of the school through homework assignments, the social obligations and ties of school clubs and activities, and the ways in which school structures children’s social networks make the school a salient force in the child’s daily existence. The school differs from the family as a socializing institution in several important ways: it is more impersonal; the contacts and relationships between adults and children are short-term; the child has contact with a range of adults who offer views different from one another and different in some ways from those of the parents; and evaluation of performance is comparative, public, and recurring... Schooling teaches an abstract symbolic orientation to the world... that allows children to develop the capacity to think in terms of general concepts, rules, and hypothetical events... [Yet s]chools are not all the same even within the same neighborhood or district. Some are integrated, others segregated; some are coed, others single-sex; some are parochial, others secular; some are large, others small. Moreover, they differ in their social climate, educational ideology, extracurricular activities, and a myriad of other ways. These variations within and across schools have an important effect on children’s emotional and social adjustment as well as on their academic progress... Not all children learn at the same pace or in the same way. Some... learn faster than their classmates; some are blind or deaf or in a wheelchair. A major issue of the 1970s was the question of whether these “special” children should be placed in separate classes or whether they should be integrated into regular classrooms. In the world of special education, this shift toward including children of all abilities in regular classrooms is known as “mainstreaming,” and in the 1970s it became a law. Supporters of this legislation... argue that mainstreaming will result in higher levels of achievement, both academically and socially... [The supporters] suggest that this move away from special isolated classes to a regular school setting “does a better job than a segregated setting of helping children to adjust to and cope with the real world when they grow up”... [The supporters] assume that exposure to a wide range of children will help normal children understand individual differences in people and that it will also help to diminish the stereotyping of children with various types of handicaps or disabilities... In spite of the legal fact of mainstreaming, there are skeptics... Elementary school children express less liking for retarded children than nonretarded children, and increased contact through integrated classrooms leads to increased rejection of the retarded... Just as there are special problems in organizing the best type of education for retarded and handicapped children, similar problems exist for exceptionally talented children... Should these extremely bright children be accelerated and be permitted to begin school early, skip grades, and graduate ahead of their age-mates? These are controversial issues. Some argue that acceleration is necessary to maintain interest and motivation. Critics retort that the accelerated child’s intellectual needs may be met at the expense of the child’s social and emotional development. Since the accelerated child is with older peers, [it] may be socially isolated. However... very bright children often seek out the company of older children and of adults... Other educational alternatives for gifted children include enrichment programs, which avoid accelerating the child’s grade level. These include extra work on the same level of difficulty... A second type involves “irrelevant academic enrichment,” which consists of setting up a special... activity meant to enrich the educational lives of some group of intellectually talented students... Another form of enrichment is “cultural” which involves supplying opportunities in the performing arts... creative writing or offering instruction in foreign language. - 1986

In 19[86, over one] million students were enrolled in foreign language courses... [- including] classical languages courses[, such as]... Latin... and Ancient Greek[- in the US]... The... most chosen language[- with over 50% of enrolments -] ...was... Spanish... followed by French... and German...

[The people of the Soviet Union cannot] do without a common means of communication. The Russian language has naturally come to fulfil this role. Everybody needs this language, and history itself has determined that the objective process of communication develops on the basis of the language of the biggest nation. For example, though representatives of many ethnic groups came together in the United States, English became their common language. Apparently, this was a natural choice. One can imagine what would have happened if members of each nation moving to the US had spoken only their own tongues and refused to learn English! The same applies to this country, where the Russian people have proven by their entire history that they have a tremendous potential for internationalism, respect and good will to all other peoples. Experience has shown that two languages should be studied (apart from a foreign one) – one’s mother-tongue and Russian – so as to communicate with others. - 1987

ENGLISH IS the most widely used language in the history of our planet. One in every seven human beings can speak it. More than half of the world’s books and three-quarters of international mail are in English. Of all languages, English has the largest vocabulary – perhaps as many as two *million* words – and one of the noblest bodies of literature. Nonetheless, let’s face it: English is a crazy language... Sometimes I wonder if all English speakers should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane... You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out and in which your alarm clock goes off by going on... [Furthermore, ‘when you wind up a watch it starts, but when you wind up a speech it ends’.] In what other language do people drive on a parkway and park on a driveway? ...Have noses that run and feet that smell? How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise [hu]man and a wise guy are opposites? ...There is no egg in an eggplant, neither pine nor apple in pineapple and no ham in hamburger. English muffins weren’t invented in England or french fries in France... while sweetmeats... aren’t... meat... [but] confection... - 1989

We have been fed the false notion that the purpose of education is to ensure that the needs of the industrialized and capitalist society in which we live are met. In other words, the primary function of the modern education system is to ensure a continuing supply of workers and managers, with appropriate skills in appropriate numbers, for corporate capital needs. Children are taught that the purpose of education is to prepare them for a lifetime of paid employment. We compartmentize our children at an early age, expecting them to make decisions that direct their future work patterns at the age of 16 – in some cases as young as 11[(‘under Britain’s Education Act of 1944 children were examined at age 11 – the so-called eleven plus – on the basis of which they were assigned either to grammar schools, which prepared them for higher education, or to secondary modern schools, which they usually left at the minimum leaving age, often without having passed public examinations or having been awarded a certificate; in

1964 the Labour government abolished eleven plus in many areas, and reorganized secondary education on comprehensive lines – that is, each school accepted pupils of all abilities; the Education Reform Act of 1988 laid on the secretary of state a duty to establish a national curriculum, applicable to all state schools’)]. Recognizing the dangers of early specialization Greens state, ‘We wish to see developed a broad, holistic type of education and, although later specialization may be necessary, we should strongly advise against the dangers of students becoming blinded, by that specialization, to the wider implications of the subjects being studied... [E]ducation should result in the development of each individual personality and of the potential, which all possess, to serve the community in a variety of ways’... Thomas Huxley, talking at the South London Working [Perso]n’s College in the 1860s, stated, ‘We allow education, which ought to be directed to the making of [humans], to be diverted into a process of manufacturing human tools, wonderfully adroit in the exercise of some technical industry, but good for nothing else.’ A century on from Huxley all mainstream... [education] enforces dependence; we learn to become subservient so that we will fit comfortably into our future social niche. By contrast, cooperation and self-management are the qualities that are necessary for an ecological future: schooling has to be changed to meet the needs of a new society based on empowering the individual. It has to invite pupils to question, challenge and contradict. Teachers need to understand why they are asking pupils to undertake certain tasks and to be prepared to justify their own actions and demands... The idea behind a uniform is to deprive children of individuality by forcing them all to look the same. Many teachers argue that without school uniform discipline would be unmanageable, pupils would forget their ‘place’ and there would be competition in the fashion stakes. The argument that uniform abolishes class distinctions is false, as it ignores the difference between patched and pristine clothes... Students [sh]ould emerge feeling that education is a life-long process, not a fifteen-year indoctrination. The child who has a free spirit and refuses to be cannon fodder is often labelled ‘difficult’ by today’s educators and is thus marked for life... The wasted potential in our schools is a national scandal. Operation Babynsatch illustrates that wasted potential. In the 1960s an experiment at the University of Wisconsin demonstrated that special attention given to babies born to [mothers] who were socially disadvantaged could turn those children into what is commonly known as ‘gifted’. Forty babies were ‘snatched’ from their mothers, taken to the university centre, played and sung to and generally stimulated. Later, tuition was given in small groups. By the age of 4 the children were scoring a mean IQ of 128 on one test, 132 on another. They were brighter than the average child from a traditional middle-class home. Forty children who had not received special attention scored IQs of 85 by the age of 4... No wonder so many of us long for the radical transformation of the education process.

...questioning of the value of the examination system is not new. Arthur James Balfour, speaking as Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh, said in May 1907: ‘[I] do think it of importance that we should have present to our minds the inevitable evils which examinations carry in their train, or the system of competitive examinations as it has been developed of recent years... The truth is that a book which is read for examination purposes is a book which has been read wrongly. Every student ought to read a book, not to answer questions to somebody else, but to answer his own questions. The modern plan... is really a dereliction and a falling away from all that is highest in the idea of study and investigation.’] Recent research into the value of examinations as a method of obtaining knowledge has revealed that many pupils, after receiving a good grade in maths O-Level, have quite forgotten the techniques only months after sitting the exam. The conclusion must be that in the rush to pass the exam the concepts are not mastered, the necessity for passing the exam... far outweighing the necessity for proper understanding. Other research shows that exam... results rarely predict subsequent performance, and examples abound of individuals who failed at school but excelled in later life. - 1990

TRY [this simple] test on your child – and yourself. A laundry dryer contains ten black and eight navy socks. Without looking, how many socks must you take out to be sure you have a matched pair? Or explain the meaning of this formula: $36b + 52w = 88k$. In the first example, the correct answer is three. As for the second... it’s a shorthand description of a piano – 36 black keys plus 52 white. Neither example calls for academic skills. Both demand the ability to think, to stretch the mind beyond the obvious. And thinking is an area where our children need help. “We fill students full of data,” says... [the] director of a centre for critical thinking. “But the essence of education is to use information to address new situations and questions. We’re neglecting that.” Consequently... kids can’t apply reasonable thought to everyday situations. “A kid is much more likely to choose a bicycle by its colour or by what model a friend has than to think out more relevant considerations like price, durability or performance.” More ominously, says [an] educational psychologist... some problems, including drug use, may occur because young people have not learned to measure actions against consequences... Young people don’t develop the habits of logical thought overnight. “It’s like tennis,” [the director] says. “The first time you play after lessons, you may forget all you’ve learned and just swing away. But eventually the lessons will become part of you. Thinking takes practice... but it’s worth it.” - 1991

Socrates, Plato and Aristotle are making their mark on the minds of Auckland youngsters. The ancient Greek thinkers feature on school timetables as part of a drive to introduce children to philosophy... Under the programme, philosophy is stripped of its forbidding language; it becomes a mixture of ideas and the discipline of logic... Through... novels... [which] focus on fictional children who inquire about a range of topics... children in the classroom [are encouraged] to think about the subjects and offer opinions and questions... The programme has been designed for children of different age groups... In one exercise from the novel *Pixie*, eight to 10-year-olds discuss what is real, and what only seems to be real... The novels canvass more complex ideas as the children get older and start demanding more complicated reasoning... The... novel *Lisa* asks 12 to 13-year-olds to consider the ethical dilemma of whether you can both love animals and eat them... According to research in the *U[S]*, children exposed to philosophy classes do better in all school subjects within two years... The use of philosophical questions to improve the thinking process of schoolchildren was the brainchild of a... philosophy professor... [t]wenty years ago... Since then, philosophy classes for children have spread to 30 other countries, including A[US], where the programme has been... further developed... by introducing a kit suitable for preschool children. - 1994

WHAT’S YOUR earliest memory? Do you remember learning to walk? The birth of a sibling? Kindergarten? Adults rarely remember events from much before kindergarten, just as children younger than three or four seldom recall experiences. Psychologists have floated various explanations of “childhood amnesia,” but the prevalent theory holds that, since adults do not think like children, they cannot access childhood memories. Now[a] psychologist... of the City University of New York offers a new theory... that children don’t form lasting memories of personal events until they share their experiences with others and learn to use someone else’s description to turn their own fleeting recollections into permanent memories. In other words, children have to talk about their experiences and hear others talk about them.

...IT WAS a strange sight, a [professor], standing before a fountain, watching the falling water and tilting his head from side to side. Drawing closer, I saw [the professor] was rapidly moving the fingers of his right hand up and down in front of his face. I was 11, visiting Princeton University with my science class, and the [professor] at the fountain was Albert Einstein. For several minutes, [Einstein] continued silently flicking his fingers. Then... turned and asked, “Can you do it? Can you see the individual drops?” Copying him, I spread my fingers and moved them up and down before my eyes. Suddenly the fountain’s stream seemed to freeze into individual droplets. For some time, the two of us stood there perfecting our strobe technique. Then, as the professor turned to leave, [Einstein] looked me in the eye and said, “Never forget that science is just that kind of exploring and fun.” Nearly a half century later, I’ve spent an entire career trying to impart Einstein’s words to adults and children all over the world: science is exploring, and exploring is fun. Sadly, very few schools make the subject appealing. Science courses introduce more new vocabulary than foreign-language classes. Textbooks are as dull as dictionaries. As a result, too many children think science is only for people as

smart as Einstein. The irony is that children start out as natural scientists, instinctively eager to investigate the world around them. Helping them enjoy science can be easy... You only have to share your children's curiosity... By sharing your child's curiosity, you can give them a valuable lesson that extends far beyond the realm of science. They will learn that it pays to persist, to experiment, in the face of difficulties. And they will clearly see that learning is not drudgery or something that happens only in school. - 1995

The job of a science teacher starts early in the morning by sorting out the gear, inspecting the bunsen burners, fixing the batteries in preparation for the lessons to give to the six or seven classes which will file into the lab during the day. Lunch is a sandwich in the lab while repairing a microscope. Hours after school closes test tubes need to be cleaned, pulley systems disassembled, rags disposed of and fresh ones cut. Since 1920 when... [a] professor of education... stated that the arts and the humanities were the heart of education, the sciences were... [s]queezed into a narrow time-slot... Gallons of useful knowledge didn't fit the pint-sized time allotment... [so] the sciences didn't flourish. During the 1930s N[Z] imported... from England: "general science," a concept... to present the sciences no longer as separate... sub-subjects like heat, light, sound, motion... electricity... metals, acids, salts, plants, animals, the human body, the planets and the stars... but as a coherent whole. Marvellously and seamlessly all the sciences were put through the mincer to be served in one helping as a not very tasty stew. The sad mixture was responsible for overworked teachers, confused and bored students. The mission impossible of teaching general science in a satisfactory way has been demonstrated since. While we combined, the schools in other parts of the world diversified making more study time available for plastics, lasers, microchips and suchlike; a wide variety was accepted as a guarantee to retain the interest of the students. A weekly schedule for a secondary school in an overseas country may indicate: physics, three hours; chemistry, two; electricity, two; plants, animals, mechanics and cosmography, one each... maybe a few hours of practical as well, a[l] taught by specialist teachers each in their own lab assisted by trained amanuenses and with assistants in charge of the gear and the storerooms. That's at least six staff for the work the N[Z] teacher is supposed to carry out all by him or herself single-handedly.

...Primary school classes should get bigger, not smaller, says a visiting British academic... [(NZ's 'state primary schools have a teacher-pupil classroom ratio of about 1:25; the ratio for secondary schools is about 1:18' - 'the second worst teacher-pupil ratio in the OECD'). The] dean of the new initiatives programme at the University of London, [who] addressed 230 principals at the Auckland Primary Principals' Association[(APPA)] conference... this week... favours larger classes in which teachers receive help from teacher aides. "Schools need to become like hospitals, with teachers like doctors. Specialist doctors don't do everything - they tackle the core issues, supported by a team of nurses and volunteers... The future of the teaching profession will see fewer... teachers, responsible for core subjects, with more learning done outside the schools, in museums, for example,"... [The dean] said his ideas would give teachers more time to cope with new areas such as electronic education and computer competency.

...THE... post-primary school teachers' negotiator[, who is]... in his second two-year term as president of the 14,500-strong PPTA... points out that every secondary school teacher in effect has a double career - a degree of some form applicable in the private sector or, in the case of technical teachers, a trade such as metal work, engineering and the like. They can readily "go outside" although they may not get the same leave provisions or the same job satisfaction. Then again they probably won't have to work as long. A Massey University survey found that teachers, on average, worked up to 500 more hours a year than those in outside industry. Estimates are that the country will be between 3500 and 18,000 teachers short by the turn of the century, with half the shortfall in secondary schools... [The negotiator says s]omething has got to be done to meet that gap, and it's money that will do it... [The negotiator] won't wear an increase in class sizes as a temporary answer, bumping the average form size from 25 to 30 pupils. "Parents are not going to accept that these days. They want a fair go for their kids and that's why they pay their taxes. They want smaller classes, not larger ones... Teacher retention is the only answer and the wherewithal to do it... is... [paying enough] money to hold people..." ...THE annual loss rate is between 13 and 14[%]... If this loss rate could be cut to about 8[%] it would mean about 800 to 900 teachers would be retained. "...While we agree that it's important to get recruitment right, we've also got to knock the loss rate back. We know that 60[%] of teachers say they'd get out if they could." Pick [him] up on the point "if they could" - that teachers are being precious, that well-paid jobs aren't that easily come by - and [the negotiator] asks what the country wants in terms of education. "It only takes a small shift of 5 or 6[%] to get quite a big disaster occurring in teacher availability. The difference between teaching and some other markets is that you have to have an oversupply of teachers. You can't get into a situation of the kids turning up and there are no teachers. You can't have waiting lists like there are in public hospitals. We know the baby bulge starts in secondary schools next year and continues for another decade or more. What are principals and boards to do - hire the first person who comes along regardless of qualifications? That's the scenario of the 60s. It was unacceptable then and it's even more so today..."

...SCHOOLS in N[Z] have few means of measuring teacher performance and cannot guarantee that their pupils are getting the best quality teaching, says the Education Review Office. In a report titled *Supplying Teachers for N[Z]'s Students* the ERO says... the current system, where teachers are rewarded with higher pay for qualifications gained and years of service, does not guarantee that those teachers are, in fact, good at their job. "The overwhelming evidence is that the quality of teacher performance both among, and within institutions, varies markedly," the report says... [M]ost schools rely on minimum standards of competence, which may not be reliable. The report [also] says institutions that train teachers are worried they have reached the limit of their ability to attract top students... It adds that trainee teachers are supposed to demonstrate strong personal qualities but there is little incentive for providers to enforce this. "It is far from clear that a training institution could actually decline to pass a trainee who met academic requirements on the basis that... [the trainee] had not demonstrated one or more of the required personal qualities." ...The report says that since the Department of Education was abolished in 1989 no one has held a watching brief on teacher training. There is little central control over course content and staff quality and little competition [for] the main colleges of education... [The] Education Minister... says the report adds weight to the Government's commitment to a review of teacher training and for the introduction of criteria to measure performance in schools... But teacher unions say the report contains inaccuracies and seems to be unaware of current practices in schools... "Principals are required to have a process for annually determining the objectives for each teacher and for determining that those objectives have been met,"... [a spokesperson] from NZEI Te Riu Roa said... "Teachers are required to be competent before passing through the pay scale and, to reach the final pay step must be 'highly competent' and have 'proven initiative in the performance of classroom duties'..."

...Teacher training will soon undergo a Government-ordered review to make sure all new graduates are ready for the classroom. The Minister of Education... said yesterday... [m]any principals had told him that new teachers often lacked practical classroom knowledge - a criticism of training echoed by the new teachers themselves... [T]eacher training also needed updating for the new technology available in schools. The review is also expected to challenge the dominance of colleges of education by encouraging the trend for other organisations, such as polytechnics, to run courses. Unitec in Auckland already plans to train 60 primary and 40 secondary teachers next year in a one-year programme designed to meet Government pressure for shorter courses. The Auckland College of Education is responding to the competition by launching a full teaching degree. The course could take student funding from Auckland University, which is understood to be planning its own move into the teacher training market.

...Unqualified teachers will be forced to seek official licences to teach... for 12 months at a time... under new legislation reviving compulsory teacher registration. The new law... will require all teachers to be screened by the registration board to ensure their qualifications and character are suitable for the classroom. Supporters concede it will not stop teachers taking advantage of vulnerable pupils in the classroom, but a centralised checking system is expected to help to ensure teachers meet professional standards... [T]he legislation requires qualified teachers to demonstrate they are still competent to teach every three years... The return to compulsory registration, abolished by National in 1991, is a step backwards for

school boards which for the past five years have had the power to employ a teacher, notwithstanding registration... The head of the Teacher Registration Board... [estimates that] up to 1000 teachers... have been able to work in schools for the past five years without any official licence to teach... Schools were able to offer teaching positions to people with specialist knowledge, such as fluent Maori speakers or experts in information technology. Others found it easier to employ relief teachers... [In related news, the] Minister of Education... yesterday announced initiatives with an emphasis on bringing more young people into the profession through 1500 extra training places next year and a \$900,000 advertising campaign. The extra teachers are needed to cope with rapidly rising school rolls, mostly in primary schools next year but feeding through to secondary schools... Alongside the extra training places, the Ministry of Education will also step up its efforts to bring former teachers back into the classrooms. But [the minister] acknowledged that the size of the projected shortfall next year – estimated at 880 primary and secondary school teachers – would require overseas teachers in the short term. “The simple reality is that it takes time to train a teacher, and to fill the gap when you haven’t got that time, your only option is to bring teachers from overseas.” ...600 overseas teachers... [–] double the 300 overseas teachers brought in this year... [–] are being sought for the next school year, many for Auckland... schools... which... are responsible for almost half the national growth... Information videos and \$1300 “finder’s fees” for recruiting agencies will be used to bring more teachers... from countries such as A[US], Canada and Scotland... Foreign teachers were permitted to work in N[Z] schools for up to three years... a spokes[person] for the Ministry of Immigration’s office said... Immigration policy allowed overseas recruiting for any jobs which could not be filled by N[Z]ers.

...The front-page photograph was ineffectually sad: the principal of Elm Park School in Pakuranga... sat at her table at a “recruitment fair” organised to lure one of a few unemployed South Island teacher training graduates into South Auckland schools. “There are so many of us,” [the principal] lamented, “and so few of them.” In a turn of events which would have been bleakly funny if it were not just bleak, desperate principals made job offers to our reporter as [the reporter] moved among them. To say, as a ministry spokes[person] did in our report, that it is “a graduates’ market” is a piece of civil service understatement worthy of *Yes Minister*... When our kids sit in classrooms without permanent teachers; when principals sit forlornly behind tables hoping their folders of photographs will attract an applicant; when vacancies are filled by applicants recruited wholesale overseas, it is not just an applicants’ job market, it is a crisis... At times like this, as schools prepare to [take another] break... I sometimes think wistfully of a job which gave me 12 weeks’ holiday a year. But I come down to earth with a thump when I remember the soul-battering stress I endured as a classroom teacher – and it doesn’t take much imagination to recognise that the job is a good deal tougher now than it was in the 70s when I was at the chalkface. Teaching other people’s children is the hardest job I ever did, apart from raising my own. If market forces were the ultimate economic truth, of course, teachers would be earning as much as surgeons. But there is little chance of that and... I know I’d need to be offered twice what I’m earning now to go back. Worse, there’s ample anecdotal evidence that many teacher trainees are not going into teaching at all, and that training colleges are functioning as finishing schools to create management cadets for private industry.

...Principals should take tertiary-level courses which train them how to manage their schools, says the E[RO]. A report to be made public today... says many principals take on their jobs with very little training in management... It was especially necessary for some principals aged 45 or more who had done virtually no outside study or training since their teachers college days. The report [also] says many principals rely too heavily on each other for advice, which does not encourage innovative thinking... [Incidentally, a] South Auckland primary school is deliberately breaking the law by turning away new students because it does not have enough teachers. Manukau View School in Manurewa will today close its roll to stop its bigger classes growing beyond 34 children... As a junior primary school taking five to eight-year-olds, it is supposed to have an average of only 23 children in each class... It is the first school to carry out a threat by the A[PPA] three months ago that new pupils would be turned away if the teacher shortage continued, but the association does not expect it to be the last. The school is also protesting against a loophole in the Education Act which lets schools stop taking children if they do not have enough classrooms – but not if they have a shortage of teachers. Its decision follows Papatoetoe Central School’s refusal to accept four new classrooms from the Government this week. The overcrowded school said more classrooms without extra toilets, car parking and office space would only make its problems worse.

...The primary teacher shortage in Auckland and Northland may now be worse than the 564 vacancies found in a survey last month. “There are still resignations happening right now...,” said... the president of the A[PPA]. The shortage was extremely serious... Recruitment agencies had about 1000... teachers... from overseas on their books and moves must be made quickly to hire them... [but there seems to be] a... reluctance by some schools to recruit from overseas.

...Agencies are trying to recruit [overseas] teachers for British schools that are virtual no-go zones for local teachers... [U]p to 200 teachers [are needed] to fill vacancies and provide substitute or “supply” teachers to fill a gap in mainly inner-city schools. They are advertising in N[Z]... and A[US], as well as seeking teachers from those countries who are living in Britain. But... the national secretary of the teaching union, said N[Z]ers did not know “what the discipline was like in these schools[.]” ...where there are problems with violence, drugs and gangs. Often inner-city schools also have a high proportion of immigrant families, and children sometimes do not speak English. Large class sizes are also common because of teacher shortages... “They aren’t being told, because if they were they wouldn’t come. British-trained teachers are not prepared to work in these schools... and who can blame them?”

...Travelling 14,000km... to teach... in Auckland was a sensible career move, says... [a] 25-year-old first-year teacher from Windsor, Ontario, [who] graduated from college last December in the middle of a local job shortage. [The Canadian] was eventually offered two positions, one in Canada’s North West Territories (temperatures minus 34 deg C) or teaching English in Korea. [The 25-year-old] chose Korea but then decided [that what it really wanted was] a school job in an English-speaking country. The first embassy [the Canadian tried was NZ’s, where the 25-year-old] learned that this country urgently needed teachers. Her inquiries led to seven job offers, including Edendale Primary School... Since about a third of the children speak English as a second language her English teaching skills have come in handy. [The 25-year-old] is one of four overseas teachers at the school. Two are from Canada, one is from A[US] and one is from the U[S]... For the 22-year-old... from Dallas, Texas... whose second language experience... is limited to a few words of Spanish, the language barrier found in Auckland schools came as a shock. “I have 10 in my class that speak hardly any English... I have to say ‘tree’ and point to a tree – that’s very basic. But there’s a lot of help in the school.” The main complaint from both teachers is the lack of classroom resources – books, pencils, paper, art materials and basic technological aids such as overhead projectors. They are also surprised at the cost of living in N[Z] on a teacher’s salary. Both estimate they are paid at least \$10,000 a year less than they would be at home and echo N[Z] teachers’ resentment at the low status of teaching here compared with other professions... “To me it seems a sales position is more respected... I know someone who’s getting a company car, a cell phone and \$40,000 a year to sell pet food,” said... [the Texan, who] came here... on a teacher training programme organised by her university, whose education dean was a fan of N[Z] reading programmes.

...*Righting Reading*... [The] co-ordinator... wanders the streets of east Papakura looking for care-worn houses with kiddies’ trikes and other tell-tale paraphernalia scattered about the section. [Upon finding a target, the co-ordinator] spends a couple of minutes screwing up her courage... Then... knocks on the front door, introduces herself to the mother and asks if [it] wants to help her child succeed at school. Most say yes; there are a few noes. The negative response always saddens... [the] co-ordinator of the Hippy programme attached to the Kelvin Rd Primary School, who has been rounding up “customers” for more than a year. [The co-ordinator knows Hippy can help] disadvantaged children and save them from becoming more of South Auckland’s “statistical failures.” [So far the co-ordinator] has 89... disadvantaged... four- and five-year-olds... improving their language skills and concentration in a two-year course which requires only 15 minutes’ instruction a day. [Local p]rincipals... enthusiastically endorse the programme. They say the Hippy kids demonstrate an overall readiness for school and expectation of success compared to those from

similarly dysfunctional families with no preschool preparation. “I would hope within the next decade there’s a Hippy programme nationwide,” says... [the principal] of Kelvin Rd... “There are many children who are just not getting the right start... Some politicians and report writers blame the school which is so unfair. The truth is we’re totally under-resourced. As teachers we’re overwhelmed by the social problems of the underprivileged. But Hippy can do so much... I know the[re] are 89 kids who aren’t going to... [be] unable to cope, falling further and further behind, until they get to intermediate and secondary schools where reviewers write them off as social misfits destined for life at the bottom of the social heap.” Hippy is short for Home Instruction Programme for Preschool Youngsters and is an Israeli concept, devised in the late sixties, which spread to Europe and the U[S]. It was introduced here four-and-a-half years ago and Kelvin Rd school was the first to adopt it. Now there are Hippys attached to [another nine] primary schools... Six share about \$270,000 from Social Welfare. The other four depend on charity funding... Hippy was introduced to N[Z] by the Pacific Foundation’s executive director... The programme... [which includes] instruction manuals and the salaries of co-ordinators and part-time home tutors... costs the service \$1300 a year a family. That’s not cheap and may be the reason for a bureaucratic lack of interest... The idea behind [Hippy] is to keep the parents involved in their child’s first year at school in the hope that they will continue to take an interest and make sure the children don’t drop out... Hippy tutors’ instruction includes child development, behaviour management and dealing with wider social issues which they may find in a family. They role-play with parents and rehearse details because some parents are only semi-literate. Every second week parents are got together for an hour-and-a-half and this helps break barriers, shyness and loneliness. Many of the families... live in rented accommodation, and don’t know anybody [else in the neighbourhood] until they join Hippy... [By the way, a Nepalese mother, aged 35... nearly lost the use of her eyes after her illiterate daughter... (13)... mistakenly put superglue in them instead of... medically prescribed... eyedrops.

...THERE has been no official study of illiteracy in [NZ] primary and intermediate schools but the E[RO] has sharply criticised the language ability of some South Auckland secondary pupils. Poor-quality teaching is blamed for illiteracy reportedly as high as 80[%] among third formers at Hillary College and Tangaroa College in Otara... [The latter school’s] principal... agrees the level of literacy in his school is below the national norm. Part of the problem is absenteeism and the transitory nature of the Otara population... There was a 50[%] roll turnover between [last year]’s third form and the fourth form this year... [■] Papakura has just lost its remedial teaching programme. After 18 months the money provided by the Ministry of Education to run the programme for 50 children from various schools has run out. Appeals to the Minister of Education have failed.

...[teachers] secretly use phonics during reading lessons because of the failure rate of the accepted “whole language” method... “I have a lot saying ‘When no one was looking, we did our phonics’ or ‘As soon as the door was shut, we could get on with it’,” said [a] British-based... phonics teacher and author... who has... been running seminars for N[Z] teachers in the past week. The whole language approach in most schools uses the “look and say” method of reading teaching, assuming that children learn by recognising the shapes of whole words. Using... phonics – which went out of vogue as long ago as the 1950s... [-] children learn letter sounds and then build up words gradually... Children could begin learning to read by phonics from three... “And at least, using phonics, they know where to look up the words in the dictionary.” ...In N[Z], 28% of children taught by the look and say method need reading help. Teachers became desperate at the results... “And so they should be with these failure rates.” ...whole language often failed because it did not teach children how to break the alphabetic code. Some children worked it out but others, who had poor memories or difficulty hearing word sounds, never could... The education system leaves behind a child unable to read and write fluently by the age of eight... Children could have high IQs but struggle to read – and knowing they were failing made them feel far worse than those with lesser intellects.

...PONDER THIS SCENARIO: As the parents of children aged nine and five, you think you’ve done your best to help them develop their minds. You started reading to them as infants; you bought them educational toys and took them to the library. Now they’re doing well in school. But should you take credit? According to some scientists, your children would have done just as well without your zealous efforts. For example... *The Limits of Family Influence*... from the University of Arizona maintains that parenting styles have no influence on a child’s intelligence... After years of being told how important it was to stimulate their children’s intellects, many parents have understandably become quite confused. Are efforts to improve their kids’ academic skills just time down the drain? No, say many researchers... Your attention won’t necessarily create an Einstein, but it remains a vital ingredient in your child’s intelligence... [E]ven such a simple activity as playing *peekaboo*... helps construct the complex brain circuitry essential to a child’s intellectual development... A infant is born with billions of brain cells... Some are wired to other cells before birth to regulate the basics of life, such as heartbeat and breathing. Others are waiting to be wired to help the child interpret and respond to the outside world. Their experiences dictate the hookups. As the child matures, cells reach out and set up pathways to other cells needed to determine a behaviour... Each time an experience is repeated, the pathways are strengthened. The first two years of life are an explosion of brain growth and connections. By the time a child reaches two years of age, the brain has over 300 trillion connections. At the same time, cells that aren’t being connected or used are being discarded. There seems to be a timetable for this programming of the young brain – “windows of opportunity,” as one neurobiologist puts it – when specific connections may be made... If you miss a window of opportunity, will your child be handicapped for ever? No, because opportunities abound throughout childhood... Consider the process of learning a foreign language. While preschoolers pick up an unfamiliar tongue more readily than nine-year-olds, nine-year-olds learn more readily than high-school students or adults.

...[the n]ine-year-old... is studying school certificate English, as well as Japanese, music and science[, and even] uses her free periods at Freyberg High School, in Palmerston North, to study extra mathematics. That is when the fifth former is not doing two Massey University mathematics papers, with calculus... As a fourth former, [it] gained a B-pass in bursary-level mathematics with calculus... [The child] went straight to high school at the age of seven, after skipping standard two and standard three, and now... is “really happy.” “I’ve just got a whole lot of assignments and tertiary results back, and I’m delighted with how things have gone,” [the nine-year-old] told *Campus News* at the University... While some nine-year-olds would feel intimidated in a classroom of 15 and 16-year-olds, [the daughter of] a university lecturer, and... a doctor[, claims to be]... at ease with the situation... although... [sometimes the nine-year-old] found it hard to understand their topics of conversation, and... was occasionally teased with “Shorty,”... Next year [the child] hopes to progress to the sixth form, and take in another extramural Massey paper in operations research, and one paper a semester in mathematics. The year after that, [it] wants to study... at university... mathematics... music... chemistry... and Japanese...

With examination season starting... dozens of tiny tots at Tomu Young Children’s School in Tokyo[are] set for their first taste of Japan’s educational ratrace... Entrance exams are a rite of passage in Japanese education, where destinies are largely determined by tests to enter high school and college and serious students attend after-hours “cram schools”. But the mounting competition for top schools has pushed the cramming craze to new extremes... Many schools now train infants from six months old to pass entrance exams for kindergarten and elementary schools run by private universities. Acceptance puts children on the elite fast track. A browse through a Tokyo guide turns up dozens of cram schools. Two major chains have 500,000 preschoolers enrolled throughout Japan, says [a] Tokyo University education professor... [The professor] and other experts fear youngsters are pushed by parents to meet high expectations before they can handle it emotionally. “To pressure kids who can’t even express themselves yet to do something they don’t want to do will end up warping Japanese society,”... Some mothers are wooed by scientific studies – highlighted in Tomu’s advertising – showing almost all the brain’s capacity is determined in the first few years. “While his brain is still flexible, it would be good to give him a chance for intellectual stimulation,”... says [the mother of a] three-year-old... [His] hour-long class, which

students take once a week, is lively, with the children eagerly introducing themselves at the start of the lesson and shouting out answers to [their teacher]'s questions. But it's clear there is a right and wrong way to do things. "Have you ever seen a pink apple?" [the teacher sceptically asks a three-year-old]. The toddler protests, insisting her grandmother recently bought her pink apples. But [the girl eventually follows the teacher]'s instructions to colour in her unorthodox pink apples with a red crayon. As [the girl] hands in her work, [it] whispers: "This one might not be that delicious."

...IN THE high school class of his dreams, [a]philosophy teacher... picks a line by a famous thinker and lets students wrestle with its meaning. In real life, there are no such classroom debates. Instead, [the philosophy teacher] lectures hour after hour, racing to cover the facts that will help his students leap the hurdle that will decide their destiny: University entrance exams. What goes on in... [his] classroom at Osaki Metropolitan High School in Tokyo – and others throughout Japan – is at the centre of a national debate on how to overhaul one of the most lauded education systems in the world. The Japanese way, with its rote learning and rigorous entrance exams, has long been considered a key to economic success and a lesson in how to mass-produce smart, capable and dedicated workers... Japan's education system has its similarities with the country's automotive industry... But just as economic pressures and dramatic social change have forced the factories of Honda and Mitsubishi to review operations, the education sector is also in a state of flux. The Japanese are opening up to new teaching methods and more variety in what students learn. But as assessment remains rooted in tough, old-style entrance exams, these changes remain cosmetic at best... Exam results can determine a student's entire life. Once streamed into academic, commercial, technical or agricultural high schools from age 15, the chance of making it into a top university and then a top job from anything other than a top school is limited at best... The pursuit of excellence means Japanese teenagers lead the world in literacy, numeracy and scientific knowledge... As an added attraction, all this comes relatively cheap, as teacher salaries, per-pupil spending and teacher-student ratios are low by international standards... Until recently, classes of 40 were the norm, with six-day weeks... [while p]upils often come to school with a dinner box as well as a lunch box because they... do not get home until 9 pm... But... [the] Ministry of Education, Science and Sports and Culture (Monbusho) aims by early next century to get class numbers in the low 30s, Monday to Friday. Also up for change are the very teaching methods responsible for drumming facts into teenage minds... The attitude of "the nail that sticks up got hammered down" (those who are different are forced to change) [still]permeates Japanese society... [However,] Japanese education is now promoting the rise of the individual... "[M]oral education" – encouraging students to work together, participate fully in school life and broaden their learning horizons beyond the classroom – is a goal in more and more schools... [F]oreign language teaching has led the charge... spurred by an ambitious – and costly – programme importing native-speaker assistants into classrooms... N[Z]ers account for 214 of the 5000 young graduates on the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme this year... [They have] one-year renewable contracts... While enjoying the experience... [they are] not regarded as a "real teacher." "I am not treated seriously. I am not given any responsibility. I tried to start a touch rugby club. All these problems came up – no space to practise, no one to supervise me. I canned it – too much hassle[.]" says one NZer]... Then there are the students themselves. Motivation in... agricultural schools can be low – "in a class of 40 students, 12 may be sleeping." [In further news 'from Japan comes this new twist to the school curriculum – public schools near Tokyo are offering three-year go-kart courses for "slow" pupils of wealthy families. It is to make up for the under-achievers having to attend other lessons like maths' and English.]

...English-language instruction is a multi-billion-dollar business. In most of continental Europe, the British version prevails: students learn to write "theatre" and "offence," not "theater" and "offense." In... most of Latin America, American style has the edge. Each style has its strongholds in South-east Asia. Canada has its own distinct, sometimes confused style that employs both [US] and British usage. Just look at the 1995-96 pre-season guide-book put out by the Toronto Raptors. It mixes... "favorite" and "favourite." One player... won college MVP... "honors" in his junior year and MVP "honours" the next. If there is a trend, experts say, it is probably in favor (favour) of the [US] style. American usage dominates on the Internet and other online networks, and multinational corporations tend to use [US] spellings. "In sheer numbers, there are more [USers, and the US] is a bigger economic machine, so people tend to gravitate in that direction," said [a]Professor... of Duke University, who is an expert on the American dialect. However, the British are not ready to take a back seat in promoting their own language. The Government-supported British Council, which runs 90 language schools worldwide, has launched a global programme called English 2000 to defend and increase Britain's share of the market for English-language instruction: British English, that is... In Japan, occupied by [US] troops for seven years after... [WW2], American usage dominates, and the British Council there is realistic. "The more people who speak English of any variety, the better for us," said... [the] deputy director of the council for Japan. "That being said, we do seek to promote the study of modern British culture, including British English." Germans who study English at school are taught British spellings, but are made aware of American usages... [A] Scot... who teaches at a German high school... points out[to her students], for example, that [USers] say "sidewalk" while the British say "pavement." But students are less interested in grammar and spelling differences than in... films, music and other aspects of [US] culture... "They are more interested in America than England..." British English is dominant among older Russians and in formal settings like universities, in part because of old teaching materials. But in everyday life, especially among younger people, American English tends to prevail, showing up in widespread popularity of [US] films, television, music and products.

...More than half of Britain's primary school children failed standards tests in English and maths last year, the... Government said yesterday... [T]he results were an absolute disaster for the country's future and underlined the need for new policies to raise the standards and cut class sizes. "That change is more urgent than ever before..." All 600,000 11-year-olds in England and Wales took National Curriculum tests last year for the first time, with 52[%] failing to make the grade in English and 56[%] in maths. The... [t]eachers' union leader... blamed the poor results partly on an overloaded curriculum. "Teachers just don't have the time to teach the basics,"... [Incidentally 'a study by a NZ researcher shows that teenagers in England are less intelligent than a generation ago. IQ scores for the average 14-year-old had dropped by more than two points. For those in the upper half of the intelligence scale, average IQ scores were six points down. The study contrasts with the researcher's previous work, which suggested that intelligence has been consistently rising among all age groups in industrialised countries. The researcher thought a growing tendency in schools to "teach to the test" was affecting youngsters' ability to think laterally, but also suggested that today's pervasive youth culture dumbs down teenagers'...

NZ s[t]udents look set to be graded again with major changes tipped for the qualifications system critics say leads to a "dumbing down" of education... The system – plagued by problems since it was set up in 1989 – previously allowed only for a pass-fail indication in units of learning... The Minister of Education... was sympathetic to the idea because the lack of grades had been one of the system's most controversial aspects... One of the leaders of school opposition to the system... has previously said that students would lose motivation without recognition for excellence... Even strong supporters thought one of its weaknesses was its inability to offer any merit award to students... The P[PTA] has commissioned an inquiry into the framework. Its convenor[, who]... has recently returned from a year studying standards-based educational assessment in Britain... greeted the idea of a competency scale with cautious optimism.

...Plans for sweeping changes to the education qualifications system have vanished well over the... horizon. The Minister of Education... has set up a lengthy consultation round – due to report back in mid-1997 – on post-school qualifications. It follows an official slowdown on changes at secondary school level announced [two months ago. The minister] said yesterday that the consultation was necessary because universities had made it clear they would not break their degrees into nationally approved units of learning, known as "unit standards." ...Debate over unit standards has bogged down plans for a national qualifications framework for the last seven years.

...During previous debates about the lack of incentive for more advanced students the N[Z] Qualifications Authority has suggested these students could work on unit standards at a higher level than others and rack them up at a faster rate towards a qualification. At the same time slower learners are able to chip away at qualifications by working towards them at a piece, or unit standard, at a time... Two weeks into the job, the new... [NZQA head, who] was previously deputy-director of the Canberra Institute of Technology, and before that head of the School of Management, Human Resources and Industrial Relations at Queensland Institute of Technology... has done his homework on N[Z]'s qualifications framework aided by educational debate in A[US] over some of the same matters that are under the microscope on this side of the Tasman. The education systems are similar in their search for a range of education pathways... but... A[US]ns have gone further in examining the gap between academic and vocational education.

...Eighteen months as principal of Bader Intermediate, Mangere, has exhausted [him]... "You need to be a missionary to teach in South Auckland,"... said... [the principal who disputes an ERO] claim that poverty is not the cause of low educational achievement in South Auckland. "Before you can teach that one and one makes two you have to make sure that your students aren't hungry, that they haven't got headaches, that they haven't been beaten up the night before, that they have pencils to write with. In other areas you don't have to worry about things like that. You just teach." According to his surveys, 76[%] of his students come to school without lunch. [15%] live in homes which do not contain a single reference book, not even a dictionary... "[Mind you, the school's] library hasn't seen a new book in years. And we haven't got the equipment to properly implement the technology curriculum." ...Annual school fees of \$20 a family have been paid by only five families this year and working bees attract only one or two parents... [The principal] goes to a fleamarket every weekend to buy cheap socks for students... gets shoes for "next to nothing" from a caring manufacturer and writes to stationary companies in an effort to get free supplies... [His] strategy is to build pride in his pupils... by promoting sport and cultural activities and updating the uniform.

...[yesterday the US President] launched a campaign, aimed at school districts in the U[S], to encourage the wearing of school uniforms to foster unity... contribute... to a sense of pride... improve... attendance... and to stop children killing each other over expensive jackets and shoes.

...THE trouble with [guys] appears early: at school. Though [guys] take up half or more university places in most countries, at primary and secondary school girls are increasingly out-performing boys. In... the U[S] boys are much more likely than girls to be held back a grade and twice as likely to drop out of high school... In... England and Wales girls score higher than boys in tests conducted at ages five, seven, nine and 11... In some subjects at some ages boys do better than girls, for example, mathematics at the 16-year-old level. Traditionally, boys have done less well than girls before puberty, but have caught up. What is new is that boys are no longer catching up... A standard measurement is the percentage of children who achieve grades A, B, or C in five or more... GCSE... subjects; 48.1[%] of girls achieve this compared with 39[%] of boys. The pattern is repeated throughout Europe. Because jobs are increasingly "knowledge based," this disparity is bound to be reflected in employment once today's schoolchildren become adults... Moreover, the job market is already moving the girls' way. Western surveys show that for the foreseeable future job growth will be in work typically done by... [gals -] residential care, computer and data processing, health services, child care, and business services... [(t)heir share of employment in them ranges from 51 to 79[%]].

...BOYS do less well than girls in N[Z] schools because they "muck about in class," says... [the] director of a recently completed study which followed 1250 Christchurch children from birth to 18 years. The study, carried out at the Christchurch School of Medicine with funding from the Health Research Council, measured students' reading abilities, their academic achievements and the ages at which they left school. The results show that there is no point in their school career where boys do as well as girls, and they have twice the rate of reading delays. But the report makes it clear that these differences cannot be explained by intelligence because boys and girls had very similar IQ test scores. Gender, [the professor] emphasises, is not the issue – it's behaviour in the classroom. Boys are much more likely to be inattentive and disruptive. The results of the Christchurch study also reveal another anomaly: the persistence of a concept that girls are disadvantaged in education – despite the reality that they do better than boys. "It is of concern... that we've gone for a decade without acknowledging what was happening." While these differences exist, they are not large. "We don't need another social revolution," [the professor] says, referring to the influence of feminism during the 1970s and 1980s. Data collected by the Ministry of Education shows the same evidence as the Christchurch study... [The p]rofessor... will present the findings of the Christchurch study at a seminar at the Auckland Institute of Technology on Thursday. Titled "The Shaping of N[Z] Boys," it will look at gender differences in violence and antisocial behaviour, childhood sexual abuse as well as gender and educational achievement... • [Despite their]... academic success, disparity in the status and income of [gals]... in the labour force continues. Many of the growing occupations – sales and service workers – offer low rates of pay ([gals] earn about 20[%] less than guys), poor job security, and little opportunity for advancement. But a different pattern is emerging in some professions. At the Auckland Medical School this year's intake of first-year students has 46 [guys and 67 gals], and throughout the school's six-year course there are 326... and 321 [respectively]. The nursing profession is still largely one for [gals], though, with... only about 4[%] of them being guys]. The discrepancy is also strong in teaching: at the College of Education where teacher training takes place the proportion of [gal students to guys] is 80 to 19.2. - 1996

Primary school pupils are at least four times more likely to have a [gal] for a teacher than a [guy]... Although the number of primary school teachers has increased by more than 2000 in the past seven years, the number of [guys] teaching dropped by... 6.7[%]. Guys] make up just over 20[%] of all teachers, when the large number of [guys] in principal or deputy-principal positions is included... [However,] a lot of schools were now staffed entirely by... [gals] and even had [gal] caretakers. But at a time of increasing social problems, children often went through their young lives with no positive [guy] role models... The Minister of Education... said highly publicised sexual abuse cases had generated "dreadful PR" for [guy] teachers of younger children, and many told him that the social stigma was one of the biggest issues they faced... [T]he Principals' Federation... president... said low pay was the main reason keeping [guys] away... There are [now 7.2% fewer guys] teaching secondary school students... than in 1991...

ONE of the great mysteries of N[Z] education over recent years is closer to being solved: Why girls do so much better than boys in the crucial area of reading and general literacy... The last major... survey of N[Z]'s reading performance comparing 32 countries was carried out by the International Association for Educational Achievement in 1990. When the results were published in 1993, N[Z]'s overall average was good. Fourteen-year-olds ranked fourth in the survey and nine-year-olds sixth, but... NZ had the second largest "gender gap" between boys and girls in the 9 to 14-year age group... "Two-thirds of pupils who attend reading recovery are boys, and when they get to secondary school, reduced reading skills are obviously a debilitating factor in learning," says [the person] who supervised the IAEA survey in this country. At the time... [the] educational researcher at Auckland University... suggested the large gender gap might be partly attributed to the fact that 76% of primary teachers were [gals], and young boys often don't identify with them at the crucial first stages of learning to read... Now... [the researcher has] come up with some hard research data explaining... that the gender gap in reading and literacy isn't worse in classes taught by [gal] teachers. It is in fact smaller... [R]esources and books in the classroom... are vital. But ironically classes which were well resourced often showed the biggest gender gap. [The researcher] believes this shows girls are more mature and more adept at using what is available and more willing to read. "Teachers just have to concentrate more on getting boys into reading,"... There were also concerns that NZ started teaching boys reading too early at five when most other countries started at six or later... However, [the researcher]... says there is still much we don't know about why girls do so much better than

boys in language learning... [□ In '1982 the outgoing president of the NZ Federation of University Gals believed girls needed to be given more opportunity in science. "NZ can't continue to ignore the potential of 50% of the population."'] However, the] **large number of girls who made it to the finals of [NZ's] school science and technology fair... suggests science will not be a [guy's] world for much longer. Of the 35 finalists from schools across the country, 21 are [girls]... The overall winners of the annual event, which is sponsored by the Electricity Corporation, will be announced tonight... The two premier awards offered are educational scholarships and trips to the First Youth Science Festival of Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation in Korea.**

...Girls can do anything, but boys are still just being boys – so much so that the nation's teachers are starting to worry about their lack of aspiration and inspiration. The gender gap is so obvious in schools that teachers are looking at ways to turn around the negative attitudes some boys exhibit... [M]uch research had been done overseas on boys' achievement and one factor was that schooling was seen as "feminine." ...An associate professor with the [Auckland U]niversity... education department... said... "There is a huge emphasis on how we can meet the needs of girls and [gals] in society and in that climate it is very difficult to ask what's best for boys." [Editor's note: Anecdotal evidence suggests that 'girls do better in single-sex classes (because they aren't distracted from their studies by boys'), whereas boys tend to do better in unisex classes (either because they dominate the teacher's attention while girls are more submissive, or because they want to impress the girls) – although it is also said that a 'boy + after-school job = car; boy + car = girlfriend; boy + girlfriend = distraction, no homework done, under-achievement'!]

...Girls will be accepted into Mt Albert Grammar School, but its staunch... tradition means mingling in the classrooms is out. The school board of trustees has approved the establishment of a complementary girls' secondary school on the site, almost four years after the Ministry of Education asked the board to consider taking girls... If it proceeds, the girls' school will be controlled by the same board but run separately... [I]t was yet to be decided if there would be a principal for each school or one central principal and an assistant in charge of each school... Sports facilities, playgrounds, the library and hall would be shared... [The board chairperson] said the school was anxious to build on its 75-year-old, single-sex tradition, rather than "impact" on it by making the school unisex... New buildings would be built on a field below existing buildings... Nothing will be built before 1999. Senior boys are on study leave and unaware of the decision... [However, the] president of the old boys' association... said the old boys backed the decision.

...CHILDREN were once judged on the intellectual prowess of their families and treated accordingly at school. Bright parents were thought likely to produce clever children: the offspring of dim parents were never expected to be high-flyers. For years, the gifted few were creamed off the top of classroom rolls and nurtured in special programmes to reach their maximum potential. But a new book by... a Christchurch teacher of 40 years, explores the theory that every child is gifted and it is up to parents and teachers to unlock their potential through creative teaching. "All children deserve a programme of gifted education... I strongly object to these programmes being made available to only the chosen few. Gifted programmes should be the norm." *Every Child is a Gifted Child* is based on the concept that children want to achieve, both for themselves and to be parent pleasers. "They can always do far more than we think they can. But because they want to please us, children often achieve at the level we expect of them." ...her... book... explains... [that the ways] children learn and develop may be just as varied as their personalities. Patterns of learning, behaviour and personality are directly related to how an individual's brain is laid out and how effectively the brain's chemistry allows messages to be conveyed... [Y]our child... will... [either be] more right or left-brain dominant... Brain dominance helps us identify each child's learning style and develop a learning environment that best suits that child... Many gifted children go unrecognised simply because they are operating with a brain dominance at odds with their parents and teachers... Logical, verbal, organised left-brain dominants (many of our teachers) find many right-brain characteristics are sloppy, careless, irrational and unfocused. So thousands of highly gifted, creative, original, very clever children are labelled as lazy, limited and "just average". For really effective learning and living, we need to use the functions of both sides of our brain, integrated and working together. We know that the left brain organises information in clear, logical fashion so that the right brain can then explore relationships and patterns leading to an expansion of thinking. The left brain then organises the expanded information and so the process goes on... In the early years, while language and muscle control are still developing, children operate mainly through their right-brain talents, which means they need plenty of visual and active learning. Getting the brain "up and working" in this way inevitably leads to the above-mentioned information swap between the two brains... We can support brain linkage development with fun activities. You and your children will get a lot of enjoyment from exercise sessions... Exercising both sides of the body... fosters healthy brain linkage because each side of the brain controls movement in the opposite side of the body... This becomes particularly significant for children who have sight or hearing problems with one eye or ear. For instance, left-ear information goes into the right side of the brain and gets processed first. I wonder if repeated ear infections in one ear can influence brain dominance? Motor development and brain linkage go hand in hand... Each child needs to move through the stages that precede some stage of motor development, such as walking... Parents often encourage babies to walk as soon as possible and use walker trainers to speed the process, but I do not support this. Walker trainers cut short the crawling activities essential to your gifted children's very important stage of brain linkage development. Good brain linkage is strengthened by the appropriate physical cross-movements (left, right; left, right) that babies do naturally when crawling... GIRLS tend to have a heavier brain linkage system than boys. Thus girls relay more messages back and forth between right and left brain. Boys may not express their feelings or ideas so readily in words, because they... tend to focus an activity on one side of the brain – right or left – at one time. Many little... boys... like to move a lot (they have trouble sitting still)... but very few classrooms accommodate such behaviour... However, [some]... little girls are always on the go... [while some] little boys speak early and fluently... and [boys] have a well developed area of spatial understanding which enhances maths ability.

...['Sex-role typing is the process by which children acquire the values, motives, and behaviors viewed as appropriate to either guys or gals in a specific culture. Systematic attempts to communicate sex-role standards and to shape different behaviors in boys and girls begin in earliest infancy and have been described as follows: "Sex-role differentiation usually commences immediately after birth, when the baby is named and both the infant and the nursery are given the blue or pink treatment depending on the sex of the child. Thereafter, indoctrination into masculinity and femininity is diligently promulgated by adorning children with distinctive clothes and hair styles, selecting sex-appropriate play material and recreational activities, promoting associations with same-sex playmates, and through non-permissive parental reactions to deviant sex-role behavior". Some mothers and fathers and other adults are quick to discourage such behaviors. Nevertheless, boys and girls do develop distinctive patterns of interest that are consistent with sex-role stereotypes. A 1985 study of 2000 US children from 7 to 11 years old found boys like guns, boxing, wrestling and karate, team sports, and fixing and making things more than do girls. In contrast, girls prefer dolls, sewing, cooking, dancing, and looking after younger children more than do boys. Many psychologists believe that traditional ideas of masculinity and femininity have been socially and psychologically destructive. We have been speaking almost as if people are either masculine or feminine in their interests, attitudes, and behaviors when we know in reality that most people possess a combination of characteristics viewed as masculine or feminine. Any person, guy or gal, can be tender and nurturant with children, a competitive terror on the tennis court, professionally successful, and a good cook. Many people are *androgynous*; they possess both masculine and feminine psychological characteristics. However, it is important to recognize that not only do gender-related traits such as expressiveness, nurturance, instrumentality, or assertiveness vary across individuals of both sexes but individuals will vary across situations, settings, and tasks in the extent to which they display these characteristics. It would seem constructive to facilitate the development of desirable characteristics such as social sensitivity, nurturance, open expression of positive feelings, appropriate assertiveness, and independence in both sexes. Some contemporary parents are working toward this goal and some schools have effectively reduced the degree of sex typing. In open preschools where the staff consciously attempts to minimize sex stereotyping, children spend more time in mixed-sex groups

and less time in conventional sex-typed activities than children in traditional schools. Attitudes towards sex roles and acceptable behavior for guys and gals are slowly changing, but it is clear that there is no single formula for the appropriate behaviors for either sex. Individuals, families, and cultures vary widely and no single script for sex roles will suit these many variations.' Yet now n]ewspapers are claiming research explains differences between the behaviour of [guys and gals].

...The co-discoverer of the structure of DNA... has much to answer for... Stop collecting insects and fish, [the co-discoverer] ordained – only molecular biology, the study of DNA, can teach us about life. We must learn about animals from genes, not vice versa. It was a mighty imperative. "...having risen to historic fame at an early age, [the co-discoverer] became the Caligula of biology," says [a]Harvard biologist... in his biography *Naturalist*. "[It] was given licence to say anything that came to his mind and expect to be taken seriously." Serious is not the word. Molecular biology has become an intellectual steamroller that threatens to flatten all before it. This month good sense became its latest victim. Researchers reported finding behavioural differences between Turner syndrome patients who carry a piece of their father's DNA and those who inherit their mother's. One group was found to display less "social cognition" – an ability to measure nuances in other people's voices and behaviour – than the other. The team hoped their work might explain symptom variations in sufferers of this chromosomal aberration, but they added a tentative remark that it might also account for some social differences between [guys and gals] in general. That was enough. "[Guys] are born lacking a factor responsible for [feminine] intuition," reported the *Telegraph* newspaper. "Boys are born with no social skills at all," claimed the *Mirror*. "It's the gene that explains feminine intuition." "It's the gene that explains why you can persuade adolescent [guys] to attack a machine-gun emplacement," said the *Independent*. "In fact it's absolute crap," said [a]Cambridge University psychologist... [who was] one of the researchers. "We didn't say a word about fem[inine] intuition." So I told her how a *Telegraph* hack had been greeted with waves from friendly London schoolgirls but with unfriendly gestures by building workers – thus demonstrating [guys'] innate nastiness. "Oh, God, what twaddle," [the researcher] moaned. (Being innately intuitive, I decided [to] not tell her the *Telegraph* also thought [they] had found the gene that shows why [guys, not gals], light barbecues.) To be fair, journalists were merely following a lead set by [a]Professor... of London's Institute of Child Health. "Being rather less empathetic is an advantage if you are going out to kill someone," [the professor] told a press conference. "If you wanted to recruit boys into an army, hunting party or a football team, it is an advantage to have those boys socially unskilled so the dominant [guy] in the group can impose a set of social mores." Thus [guys] let themselves be slaughtered at Gallipoli, whereas [gals] gain protection through their instinctive social skills. It is, of course, a vast edifice of nonsense, an intellectual enterprise that holds together the way a brick floats. For a start, the research concerned Turner syndrome patients, individuals who lack an entire X chromosome. "All sorts of other abnormalities associated with this condition could be skewing results,"[an] Oxford University geneticist... pointed out. "It is dangerous to make links between it and normal individuals." Then there is the existence of "the gene" that was so hyped by the *Independent*. No gene of any kind has been discovered, or even traced. It is utter fiction. All we have is a chunk of chromosome that seems to produce slight behavioural modifications within a condition that itself produces profound behavioural problems... Having traced genes for cystic fibrosis, breast cancer, and other conditions... too many geneticists... think they can do the same for human behaviour just as easily. Didn't [the co-discoverer] tell them that they could? Well, they can't – not when dealing with the complexities of the human brain and the intellect of Homo sapiens. Yes, our behaviour has a strong genetic component; but, no, it will not reveal itself in such simplistic ways... The whole business is a farrago of half-baked assumptions that discredits an otherwise sound research report. It is reminiscent of the claims made two years ago on equally unsupportable evidence that geneticists had discovered "the gene for homosexuality."

...['intelligent guys get their brains from their mothers. If a guy wants to have smart sons, the guy should marry an intelligent gal, said an AUSn geneticist in the medical journal *The Lancet*. Her research says that intelligence-determining genes are on the X chromosome – the only chromosome a guy inherits from his mother. It is paired with the much smaller Y chromosomes from his father. Therefore an intelligence-enhancing X gene has more of a chance of becoming the predominant gene, determining the guy's basic intelligence, looks and character. It also works the other way. If the predominant gene is not as strong as it should be, the guy is more likely to suffer mental retardation. The AUSn concludes: "If the gene is the one that increases intelligence then its full effect will be seen in guys, while in gals the benefit is less pronounced. This explains why some guys are extraordinarily intelligent." "Guys should temper hormones with logic when choosing mothers for their children and go for brains rather than good looks but gals are free to choose mates on their looks as they can be assured the brains come from' themselves. By the way, s]chool terms and holidays at [NZ']s]state schools are to be standardised nationally this year. Primary schools will have four terms of about 10 weeks, while the fourth term for secondary schools will be seven days shorter.

...I'm going on holiday for two days. Before you laugh cynically and say, "And the rest of it!" remember that principals are on employment contracts, just like other managers, and four weeks' annual leave will be specified in most of those contracts. (After 40 years working, and 25 in managerial positions, I don't think that's excessive, myself.) But what about teachers in general? Well, the problem is they don't have employment contracts which guarantee them annual leave, or even restrict the number of hours they can work in a week. Consequently they can be called on to work 60 hours a week or more, including evenings and weekends and so-called "holiday" times, and get no credit whatsoever for their labour, let alone overtime pay. I know teachers who haven't taken a proper week's holiday in years, because the needs of their students are so great that they often spend most of their waking hours (often at the expense of relationships and family commitments, as well as their own health) trying to create new resources, offer out-of-school and holiday programmes, and visit families. Needless to say, such teachers burn out, eventually, and the profession loses them. Of course there are teachers who disappear at 3.30 pm some days (when there is no compulsory staff meeting, that is) and even go away with their children during their children's holidays. But many of them work till midnight most nights, and clock up several hundred hours a year beyond the normal 40 hours a week for 49 weeks. As for those teachers who are at school only when they have to be, do little outside school hours, or are cynical or bullies or incompetent, they don't last long with today's young people, or today's performance management systems, competency proceedings and the E[RO]. And a good thing too. No, my main concern is not the number of lazy or incompetent teachers in the profession. My concern is the number of exhausted, poorly paid teachers working their guts out for young people and being reviled by ignorant or stupid non-teachers who judge today's teachers by what they experienced themselves at school 20, 30 or 40 years ago.

...A just released report shows that principals' administrative work has increased substantially since the Tomorrows' Schools reforms of 1989... [While t]eachers report an average working week of 48.3 hours, up two and a half hours since the reforms were introduced... [p]rimary principals' workloads have increased by an average 10 hours a week to 59 hours, according to the Council of Educational Research. Teaching principals work an average of five hours longer a week in an attempt to balance the different parts of their role. Many schools are not adequately funded to allow the principal to delegate this work, and rely heavily on voluntary work by their boards. While many principals enjoy the challenge, only half of those interviewed described their morale as good or high. Of those surveyed just 16[%] expected to still be at the same school in five years. Another 24[%] said they would probably retire... or change careers. The report says the increased workload and paperwork, combined with inadequate support, may be discouraging people from the job. Just 9[%] of the teachers surveyed said they were interested in becoming principals. Only half the deputy principals wanted promotion... This study also... points to the urgency of an independent review of the reviewers[(the ERO)].

...About 10 years ago a school principal took up his first major appointment in an Auckland city school. On his first day [the new principal] was visited by the inspector of schools. "You have real problems here," commented the inspector. "We need a youngish person like you to resolve these." The new principal was then given a description of all the staff in the school, including one who was shifted from another school because [the

teacher] shouted excessively at children and “mentally harassed them.” ...One staff member was placed in [her] classroom... to induce a “fishbowl” effect so that [the teacher] would not be tempted to hit or shout at the children. Some weeks afterwards the young principal began competency proceedings against one of the teachers. It was clear from class observations that the teacher’s class programmes were not up to a reasonable standard and that [the teacher] had a bad influence on children. Although the principal was able to bring competency proceedings, [it] was unable to dismiss that teacher. At that time, before Tomorrow’s Schools, a teacher was appointed by the education boards. The education board called on the school’s inspector to make a recommendation on the future of the teacher, and asked for the view of the principal... The teachers’ union was also invited to enter the debate. After some months of this approach it was agreed by the inspector that it might be better to find another school for this teacher because [the teacher] obviously was not fitting in well... It was felt that another school could give that teacher a further opportunity with a new group of children and parents to start afresh without the problems which had been shown at her present school. Over time that young principal removed many teachers from that school, most of them shifting to other schools. At no point was a teacher dismissed, although clearly there was abundant incompetence within the school as correctly diagnosed by the inspector on the first day. There were no differing views on that point: only differing views on what should be done. Two major flaws emerge from the pre-1989 accountability systems. The first was the powerlessness of the principals and the community to carry out any disciplinary action against someone on the staff. The education board, as employer, was the only body that could sack a teacher and it was rare that it did. Education boards were reluctant to act because their members were not teaching professionals and they found it difficult to comment on a teacher. In most cases they did not even know the teacher by sight. There was, in short, no line of accountability. A second issue was the “moving around” of teachers. It was common practice before 1989 to give teachers another chance and it was known that there were instances of teachers who... [were given third, fourth and more chances]. There was also a recorded case of a paedophile being moved to another school in order to be given a fresh start... Tomorrow’s Schools... brought with it new accountabilities and new responsibilities. Central to this was the school’s responsibility for the employment of staff. School boards and principals were therefore responsible totally for all that happened within their schools, including the work of all staff. The E[RO] was founded in order to inspect the schools. The office reported on its findings of the effectiveness of the board, principal and staff and reported these findings to the community of that school. These public documents have been frequently aired in the local media... [Consequently, t]here has been a purge [of bad teachers] over the past eight years... Children are the big winners in these reforms. Although criticised, it is nevertheless true that the E[RO] is responsible for reporting on the effectiveness of learning programmes in schools according to national education and administration guidelines. These guidelines are law and it is right and proper that schools should be obliged to comply with them. Over recent years there has been a growing awareness in schools of effective teaching practices. There has been a huge improvement in teaching and in the measurement and reporting of progress. This is a direct result of the changed employment practices and the reporting procedures of the E[RO]. Schools exist solely for children. Children who are to shape the world in the future for themselves, their families and for the nation deserve the very best that can be provided for them. N[Z] has an international reputation in education which must be preserved at all costs... The strength of the nation’s education system depends on the review office’s ability to maintain critical, intelligent analysis of the work in our schools today.

...Students at Marcellin College are suffering because of poor teaching and management, says the... [ERO. School Certificate] pass rates were “significantly” below the national average[(‘for a pass each candidate is required only to obtain 30% in the compulsory subject of English and a total of 200 marks in four subjects including English, scores of under 30 in any other subject – there are 31 optional subjects – not being counted’)], with students falling up to 18[%] behind in some subjects... It has given the management six months to fix “longstanding problems” at the integrated Catholic College... [which has] had six principals in seven years... The office said it was concerned that issues raised in its 1995 report... were not resolved... [T]he board chair[person] rejected criticism of the board[, claiming]... many of the problems arose because the board’s relationship with [last year’s] principal had been inadequate when the principal had been off work sick much of the time.

...More than one in 10 schools reviewed last year had bad teachers and bad management, the E[RO] said yesterday... Last week... [after being c]hallenged to put figures on how many teachers were good, bad or indifferent... the office chief... said [her office] did not have such statistics. Teachers were not assessed individually.

...Figures from an analysis of 350 people granted a limited authority to teach by the Teacher Registration Board show at least 30[%] of them have no qualifications, a number have skills only in coaching sports and a small number have no relevant skills or experience... The national president... said... [every] parent should have confidence in their child being taught by a properly trained and qualified teacher... [Yet] some school boards had no option but to employ whoever was available... The board director... said 855 applications had been approved up to the end of last week.

...The Minister of Education... has conceded some teachers are incompetent but says it would be “heroic” to expect perfection. His comments follow a claim by the head of the E[RO]... that significant numbers of school teachers are incompetent. [The head] told Parliament’s education select committee this week that... “There are some very good teachers and there are a large number of reasonably competent teachers, whatever that means, and there are a large number of... teachers who should not continue to be employed at schools.” ...and schools would be better off not hiring anyone to fill vacancies... Angry teacher unions challenged [the ERO head] to prove her claims. The acting president of the NZ[EI]... said: “By making such unsubstantiated and sweeping claims [the ERO head] casts a slur on the whole teaching profession.” The P[PTA] laid the blame for the problem with the Government[, which]... caused the teacher shortage by failing to plan adequately for a population bulge moving through schools.

...Secondary school teachers fear a generation of young New Zealanders is at risk because of new proposals which aim to change the way staff are trained... The proposals are contained in a Government green paper “Quality Teachers for Quality Learning” released yesterday... The paper envisaged the establishment of a professional body – separate from teachers’ unions – responsible for the development of nationally agreed standards and the registration of teachers... It also recommended... that schools should be bulk-funded for teachers’ in-service training... If the proposal is adopted, schools will be able to pick and choose between training courses. Previously the Ministry of Education entered into contracts for in-service training with colleges of education. The president of the trustees’ association... said some schools might want to put money meant for teacher training into other areas. “Whenever money goes into the pot, and it has to be prioritised... there is always a risk [of that happening]...” ... The president of the P[PTA]... said: “Kids deserve more than experiments. The Government must provide hands-on quality teachers in front of classes each year.” ...a wave of 80,000 extra students[is] expected to hit secondary schools during the next 10 years.

...High-quality education for all students is seen as “unrealistic”... says the E[RO]. In its annual report the office says many... educators and members of the public... feel the standard set by the office is unattainable, especially where students are socially or economically disadvantaged... Some schools appear to have low expectations of students from disadvantaged family backgrounds... Schools are often reluctant to help students whose problems fall outside the expertise of teaching staff, and there is resentment that other agencies have failed to help schools with those problems... The debate over how involved schools should be in the welfare and emotional support of their students is not helped by a lack of clear specifications from the Government on what schooling is there for... While dealing with the barriers students have to learning is a specific responsibility of boards of trustees, there is no definition of what those barriers are or the extent of the board’s responsibility. The... report describes barriers as factors within the school, such as inadequate curriculum planning or bad classroom management, or those brought in from beyond the school gates. However, it says, regardless of the type of barriers, schools have a responsibility to address them so all students have equal educational opportunities... The office says it has previously avoided defining “such critical elements in education” because it is not part of its responsibility, but greater definition is needed to improve schools’ performances... [Incidentally, NZ s]chools will have 16,000 more students this

year, taking the total to 712,000, says the Ministry of Education... There are 18,000 primary teachers and 15,000 secondary teachers... About 10,800 of the year's 65,000 new entrants start next week.

...Schools which are short of teachers may turn away... new entrants [or] call in parents to take classes when the new term begins... People untrained and unqualified to teach could be employed with "limited authority" for up to a year... classes could... also... be combined, and principals returned to the classroom... Schools would be closed only as a last resort. The Ministry of Education estimates 200 primary teachers are needed for Auckland schools before school resumes on January 28. Firm figures will be available when principals return from holidays... but the 404 teachers needed last month has been halved by overseas recruits. The Minister of Education... yesterday played down the shortage, saying it was "not greatly at odds with what happens each year." ...[the minister] would not comment on what options were open to schools with too few teachers. A spokes[person] for the ministry... was "hopeful" enough teachers would be found to effectively staff schools... [The spokesperson] said schools usually began each year with extra teachers because new entrants trickled in during the year as they turned five... [T]he head of the Auckland School Trustees' Association, last night... warned that... [it was] illegal... to... turn... away... new pupils... and... close... schools... but said schools might have little choice... The N[ZEI] Auckland council chair[person]... hoped parents would not be needed in schools. "...However, the options of children staying at home aren't that palatable either."

...Figures obtained by Labour's education spokes[person] show 44%... of Auckland secondary schools now have enrolment schemes. Forty primary and intermediate schools in Auckland – or 42[%] – had schemes which determined which students were accepted or rejected. This compared with a national average of just 18[%] of primary and intermediate schools using such schemes to prevent overcrowding. Official figures show 14 schools in the Auckland area have adopted enrolment schemes in the past year, while three have abandoned them. Zoning was abolished in 1990 to let parents choose freely. As a result, popular schools had applications from more students than they could take. In the past year, students turned away from schools in Auckland or living... between zones have hit the headlines... [while at] least two colleges have caught parents supplying false addresses to meet enrolment criteria... [The Labour MP] said... the latest figures showed the use of such schemes was "getting out of control"... [-] schools were using... [them] to pick students who were intelligent or good sportspeople and turning local children away... The Government has promised to change the law... but... [the] Minister of Education... said the election stalled draft amendments to the Education Act... [The minister also] said the planned legislation would not amount to a return to zoning. No children would be denied access to their local school, but parents would [still] be entitled to send their children to another school if they wished. That decision was made at a Government caucus meeting in early 1995... [In related news, s]tate schools are illegally charging fees and threatening to turn away students who cannot pay. Lawyers from the Youth Law Project in Auckland say they have fielded 10 complaints in recent weeks from parents facing fee bills of up to \$254... State and integrated schools ['in the period 1973-75, discussions and conferences were held on the issue of state aid to private schools; from these, a working party produced a report which, it believed, "provided an acceptable formula for the integration into the state system of private schools which wish to integrate" – most private schools have chosen to integrate, thus gaining access to some government financial support')]could only legally ask parents for a donation... [However,] a lawyer with the project, said... school[s] could legally require parents to pay part of the fee – \$34 attendance dues – but the remainder was illegal. Integrated schools can legally charge attendance dues to bring buildings up to standard and all schools can require fees for extracurricular activities... A parent... [who faces] fees of \$68 a term for each of her two children... said facilities at the[ir] school were not good enough to justify paying fees. It had no swimming pool and the grassed areas were "like a wilderness."

...A flying squad of teachers will fill shortages at Auckland schools as part of a \$230,000 Government rescue package announced yesterday... [40] primary school teachers from A[US and NZ] will be flown in this week, ready to cover... 200... vacancies when school resumes on Monday... The teachers would stand in for up to four weeks in schools that could not find enough staff, or where overseas teachers were expected to arrive late... The Government would foot the bill for the groups' accommodation... and for transport, meals and "other support" until February 21... but the money [will come] from the existing teacher supply budget... Meanwhile, the... Ministry of Education... [has] issued advice to principals who might return to work today to find that a teacher had quit unexpectedly. It urged them to try regular relievers, contact teachers' colleges, ask colleagues for help, advertise or contact agents and the ministry. Uncertified teachers should be considered until a certified one was found and staff could be "reorganised" to cover any gaps... Each year one in four young primary school teachers downs his or her duster and leaves the chalkface behind.

...trained and qualified primary teachers... say they cannot find jobs in Auckland, despite an apparent shortage in the city. The Ministry of Education has a list of 33 job seekers, many of whom have just moved to Auckland or have recently returned from overseas... Two teachers who contacted the *Herald* claimed they had been told by a major recruitment agency that the only job on its books was in Westport... [A f]ormer primary principal... would go "door to door" today to find work after moving to Auckland from Palmerston North. [The former principal] had applied for only six jobs since last November but... had had a "fairly laissez-faire attitude" because of the supposed shortage... However, [the former principal] has been offered just one scale A position – a basic teaching job. [The former principal] only applied for jobs in central Auckland but thought with her experience and the shortage [it was possible to] be "picky." "I'm sure if I went and tapped on a door at Mangere I would have had a job yesterday,"... A Waikato teacher with 24 years' experience... resigned from Raglan Area School last year after deciding [his life] needed a change... [and thought that finding] another job... would... [be easy], but after applying for 200 jobs... now believes [that change could mean becoming] unemployed... it was cheaper for schools to hire newly graduated overseas teachers rather than him because of his higher grading. "A... school has to pay \$47,000 for me, but probably only \$30,000 for them." [A]Ministry of Education spokes[person] disagreed money was behind the appointment of overseas teachers... Meanwhile, the Maori Principals Association has launched a recruitment campaign in a bid to reduce the Maori teacher shortages faced by kura kaupapa, or Maori immersion schools, and other schools. [The association's p]resident... said it hoped to attract up to 600 people into teacher training and would target senior secondary school students later this year.

...[last year's] school-leavers keeping a sharp eye on the mail for examination results this week are probably under no illusions that the grades they get represent more than a doctored approximation of their real scores. Until a dozen or so years ago the education authorities did not often admit that they falsified public examination results. Since about the mid-1980s they have been downright lyrical in confessing the fact at every opportunity. The change came when education was seized by the idea that formal written examinations were just a memory test and altogether less informative for all concerned than a school's assessment of a pupil. Exams as we knew them became easily attacked on the score of the outrageous method of marking them. It did not seem to matter that those leading the attack were the very people who insisted on marking them that way. They want pupils' results to show a consistent spread around a predetermined median across subjects and from year to year. If the actual scores awarded by the markers do not fall into the desired range, the reason is assumed to be that the exam was too difficult or easy that year, or the marking was too tough or lenient. So the results are "scaled" to order. The marks finally given thus have meaning only for ranking pupils against others in their year. They give no objective measure of any individual or of educational standards overall. By the mid-1980s educationalists, parents, employers, unions, National, Labour, academics, curmudgeons had all joined in condemnation of a system that was designed to fail a fixed proportion of pupils every year. The Opposition education spokes[person]... used to say that if 100 of the world's best mathematicians sat the [5th form School Certificate (SC)] paper half of them would have to fail. By the same token, of course, if our mathematics standard had seriously declined (as a recent study suggests) we would never know. Half the [SC] candidates would still be passed. About that time the Minister of Education... had lunch with a couple of Auckland journalists to explain why [it] was trying to abolish failure. We readily agreed that the school system should not turn out youngsters with nothing to show employers or nothing to take to further education. But the system, we thought, should

be honest with pupils, employers, tertiary institutions and itself. Why not abolish scaling, let subject teachers agree on internationally respectable standards and give pupils honest marks? Could it be done? [The minister] did not know off-hand. [The minister] asked his education adviser sitting alongside. It was not that easy, [the adviser] replied. Within a few years [the minister had abolished 6th form University Entrance (UE)] and scholarship exams and [the adviser] was heading a newly established Qualifications Authority which set out to define standards that schools could recognise without the need of national examinations. After 10 years trying it has not succeeded. Unenthusiastically it continues to administer [SC and 7th form] bursary, though it has been ordered to cease scaling [SC] results. The practice persists for bursary, evidently because universities want pupils ranked for selection to restricted courses. Beats me why they could not use genuine scores for that purpose.

...A blunder in processing last year's bursary biology marks meant some students failed when they had actually passed... The errors caused some students to change their tertiary plans, thinking they did not meet the required entry scores for the courses they had hoped to enter... The headmaster of Auckland Grammar... said [3 students] were significantly affected, including a sixth form student who went up from 38[% to 78%...

I – the] headmaster of Auckland Grammar School... – ...was delighted that the acting chief executive of the N[Z] Qualifications Authority... has declared in print that “exams are here to stay” as part of the new national qualifications... However I have sat through enough NZQA information sessions to know that what might seem a clear statement of position by the authority may be modified and amended many times within a short period. I am not a cynic by nature, but constant contact with the qualifications authority over three years has taught me to carefully analyse and question whatever is said by it. For example, it may well be Government policy to have two external examinations but their role and influence in the framework is not clear. Initially, while claiming to retain exams, the authority tried to marginalise them by placing both [SC] and university bursary outside the framework. Neither exam counted as credits on the framework and there would be little incentive for most students to sit them. There was also talk of reducing the number of subjects examined. Now the authority is working on some “credit exemption” scheme for exams. Until we see details of this it is impossible to pass judgment. It is however easier to pass judgment on standards-based assessment, which amounts to an educational revolution because it represents a fundamental and far-reaching shift in what counts as knowledge. Knowledge is no longer viewed as an end in itself but is reduced to a set of exchangeable credits or a currency of skills. [The acting chief executive of the NZQA] talks of parallel developments in other countries. It is worth noting that there is no successful model of standards-based assessment as a main form of assessment anywhere in the world. The experiment in N[Z] is more far-reaching than any overseas because it attempts to unify all academic and vocational assessment methods. The authority believes that there should be no difference between the way a student studies, learns and is awarded qualifications in hairdressing, horticulture, history or other disciplines. I believe there are fundamental distinctions between vocational and academic studies which carry important implications for learning, teaching and assessment. It is a major concern that the experiment uses the U[S] “new standards” project as an example of a parallel development. There is no doubting that public examination in the U[S] is in a bad way. It was reported in September, for example, that “almost half the entering fresh[persons] in the California state university system in 1994 required remedial instruction in reading or maths or both – the fifth straight year in which this number [h]as increased.” Our youngsters deserve better than that. Like all education reform movements the world over NZQA says that they are reforming the system to help raise standards... Like all revolutionary movements there is no doubt that the new order will turn out to have as many or more problems than the old. The only way to really improve education significantly is with a more powerful curriculum in the hands of very good teachers who are trained to teach better.

...“Those who can, do,” runs the old saying, “and those who can’t, teach.” When I was training to be a teacher we used to chuckle at our training course lecturers by developing a third line for the maxim. “Those who can’t teach, teach teachers,” it ran, and made us feel fearfully clever and superior, which is the main purpose of life when you are young. It took me a few years to realise that the nation’s children would be better off if I wasn’t in their way. Now I gaze with unalloyed admiration at most teachers, but particularly at those who seem genuinely to enjoy the daily challenge of scraping the crust of adolescent disgruntlement off teenagers and trying to uncover the gleam of potential beneath. One of these is a[n]... acquaintance... of mine... Her students include trainee teachers most of whom will (soon, chillingly soon) be standing in front of the nation’s primary schoolchildren. [My friend] devotes some of her time to remonstrating with her students about their essay-writing: [and] is sometimes close to tears after hours of reading sentences uncomplicated by punctuation marks, untrammelled by the rules of syntax and with spelling most charitably described as inventive. When time permits [my friend] will give a brief unsolicited lesson in, say, the use of the apostrophe. The students roll their eyes and sigh in exasperation. In a “course assessment,” one student concluded that my friend had “a personal problem” with spelling, punctuation and grammar and... “should not bring her personal baggage into class.” The assumption underlying the comment is that clear thinking and self-expression are obscure irrelevancies, even when you’re about to embark on a teaching career. That is scary in the present environment. Central to Government proposals for education reform... is the idea that students, and not institutions, should attract funding. In this model, the students can spend their education entitlement wherever they want. The inescapable corollary is that they can withdraw it from teachers who make demands on them. If you believe that the customer is always... right, you should look at the essays my teacher friend has to mark. It is worth wondering whether the customer in education does know best... When students can dismiss a teacher’s requirement as personal baggage... it makes you wonder why they want to have teachers at all.

...Auckland schools may not have enough teachers again next year, after half of the teacher training courses in the city failed to fill first-year places. Five of the six rival courses were offered for the first time this year after the Government funded an extra 1500 equivalent fulltime student places... Figures showed... that 957 students enrolled for 1075 first-year places offered by Auckland trainers[, including]... a maximum of 630 new students... [at t]he country’s biggest trainer, the Auckland College of Education... Nationwide, just 1736 of 2015 extra teacher training places were taken... [Furthermore, e]xtra secondary school teacher trainees may not meet demand in some subjects... [– which] include Maori language... [(the subject experienced a 400% increase, but) the total number of trainees was still only 20...[)], maths, sciences, and some technical subjects... [–] and could create gluts in others... The number of English teachers being trained... this year[had increased by 155%], yet there was no real shortage of English teachers. Trainee numbers in social studies increased 146[%] and history and geography 129[%] – also areas where there are no shortages... [M]oves to attract former teachers back to the profession could be stepped up... and... [m]ore overseas teachers could be brought in...

A group of overseas teachers say schools are discriminating against them because of their accents and names – and colleges of education are backing up the claims... Principals claim they have to refuse applicants jobs if their accent makes it difficult for pupils to understand classes... The Race Relations Conciliator... said principals could reject applicants who could not be understood but could not refuse people jobs simply because they had an accent... This week the Immigrant Teachers’ Association will discuss its fears about racism with the Auckland College of Education.

...The principal of Avondale College... says that last year a sixth form student competed against the school’s head girl to gain entry into the Auckland College of Education. The sixth former, who had one pass in dance studies, got into the college but the head girl, with passes in several bursary subjects, did not... [The principal] said it indicated selection boards did not see academic ability as important for teachers... [O]ther principals had rung him yesterday to discuss similar cases of bright students not getting into teachers’ college; a common theme was that students from white middle-class backgrounds had not been offered a place. The headmaster of Auckland Grammar School... knew of a case involving a student who wanted to become a physical education teacher. The student was refused entry into teachers’ college after saying that pupils from Pacific Island and Maori communities should not get extra help unless it was needed. Every pupil should get help if they needed it, no matter what race they were, the applicant had said. “That did not go down very well at the interviews... I would love to know who is on the interview panel... I’ve certainly never been invited.”

...teachers... would be better at their jobs if they learned their craft in school rooms instead of at teachers' colleges, says the Education Forum... An apprenticeship system... modelled on similar schemes in Britain... – whereby trainee teachers learn their skills in the classroom – is being promoted by the chair[person] of the... group of businesspeople and educators who want more input into education policies... [The chairperson], who is also the principal of Avondale College... said senior teachers were keen to teach student teachers in the classroom. The courses would... concentrate on practical experience... [S]enior teachers would act as mentors for the trainees and that feedback would be emphasised so trainees learned how they could have improved classes. "The thing that really teaches a teacher to be a teacher is to be in the classroom." But the director for secondary education at the Auckland College of Education... said teachers' college courses allowed teachers to gain practical experience in a variety of schools. A spokes[person] for the Ministry of Education said schools would need accreditation from... the Teacher Registration [Board]... and... the N[ZQA]... before they could offer classroom training.

...The N[ZQA] is plagued with internal staffing conflicts over policy and is losing support from educationalists, an independent review has found. The review has also drawn attention to tension between the authority's board and the Minister of Education, and the potential conflict of interest between its accreditation and audit functions... The review recommended that staff be made fully aware of the reasons for the Government's education policies.

...The Government yesterday signalled a move back to basics for the country's qualifications system... from the hard ideological line pushed by the N[ZQA]... Universities, polytechnics and school examinations have not hooked up with the [NZQA qualifications] framework because it was viewed as too rigid. But some secondary schools, industry groups, Maori and private providers had embraced it, believing it enhanced courses on offer to students and courses which matched the needs of employers... In releasing a discussion document on the framework yesterday, the Minister of Education... said the future role of the N[ZQA] would be as guardians of the quality of the country's qualifications, and of an increasing "internationalisation" of [NZ's] qualifications. "□ The academic performance of NZ students has generally been very good in international comparison, with high standards of literacy and numeracy throughout the school-age years, while about 30% of the population have attained some tertiary education (NZ is in the top four OECD countries in this respect). NZ belongs to a number of international agencies working in the field of cross-national indicators in education. It co-operates closely with various overseas ministries of education, though the closest links are with those in other English-speaking countries.]

...Bad luck, kids. It turns out your parents may know more than you do, after all. A senior tutor at the University of Auckland... said this year's batch of [5th form] English students would flunk the 1966 [SC] exam. The exam of yesteryear was a rigorous test of the basics – grammar, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary... "Kids now have a very, very different experience of what English is, it's being redefined,"... The paper their parents may have sat began with a warning: "Neatness, spelling, handwriting and setting out are all important." ...Comprehension passages left students to decipher phrases such as a "chaos of rock" and "a tangle of foliage." "They had to chew through some pretty dense stuff there... I know a lot of our stage one students at university wouldn't have a clue." In 1966, however, [SC] was not necessary to get a job. Only the academic students sat the national exam and it was tailored for them. Today, it was an "absolute minimum" qualification, so students who were less able, and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds took the exam. Also, an increase in immigration in the past 30 years meant more students with English as their second language were sitting... [SC. F]luency now seemed to be more important than accuracy. The 1996 exam also steered away from directly testing the "mechanics" such as grammar and punctuation, and included more colloquial vocabulary. It stretched the boundaries by including a production and critical awareness section in which students can choose to write about film or video production, newspapers, radio, debates and speeches. Students were also asked to comment on a piece of spoken language – a transcript of an interview with [a contemporary] movie star. So any 1966 [SC] students "stuck in a time warp" would probably struggle with last year's exam paper, [the tutor admits. But it]... is convinced that the new philosophy driving [SC] is asking students to run before they can walk... [A] lot of the students who pass [SC] arrive at university two years later unable to spell or punctuate properly. "I am convinced that they haven't been taught those things. And do they need to be taught? Well, yes I think. Without... punctuation and good spelling strategies you can be misunderstood. I'm not a prescriptivist, but I do like good communication."

...[School starts tomorrow for our latest batch of new entrants. The] Parents Centre national director... says preparing children for school is a huge issue for parents. [The director] advises getting children into a pattern of attending a preschool, playgroup or kohanga reo regularly in the months leading up to their fifth birthday. "I've known a number of kids who think, after they've been to school for a day, that's it, that's school, they've done it. They don't want to go back for a second day. [However, t]hrough regular, organised activity, they accept this is going to be a regular part of their lives. You should make sure your child has a regular, early bedtime and is used to getting up in plenty of time so there's no great rush in the morning." But... parents should relax about trying to teach their children to read and write before they start school. "People get really hung up about reading and writing and put a lot of pressure on their children to get them off to a head start. [Yet s]chools use quite specialised methods of teaching these days and, more likely than not, your child will have to unlearn what you've taught them. If you want to teach children something before they start school, teach them skills like being responsible for their own clothes and belongings... Don't condemn their first days to failure by promising they'll learn to read and write. Children often expect to pick it all up on their first day and are disappointed if they can't read to Mum when they get home... And remember, don't sabotage your child's success by horrifying them with stories about how dreadful your own school days were..." ...In general, children are ready for school if they: *Educationally* ✓ Can draw people with three or four recognisable features. ✓ Can write or almost write their own first name. ✓ Can talk in sentences, using understandable speech. ✓ Can remember parts of favourite books. ✓ Can repeat some nursery rhymes and songs. ✓ Enjoy looking at pictures and listening to stories. ✓ Can count their own fingers. ✓ Know basic colours and shapes. ✓ Can follow two simple instructions given together. *Socially* ✓ Mix happily with friends at preschool. ✓ Can go to preschool or parties without tears. ✓ Can stay within boundaries. ✓ Can share and take turns. ✓ Have friends and talk about them in conversation. ✓ Can talk to adults other than parents and family members. ✓ Are toilet trained. ✓ Can dress themselves, including doing up their buttons. ✓ Can open food packets and unwrap plastic-wrapped lunches.

...Remember your first day at school? Mine... was in the 1970s when there was no shopping around for schools – I went to the one down the road. Parents and caregivers have more choice in the 90s. With zoning stripped away... parents are able to consider a wider range of schools to find the one that best suits their child's needs. The E[RO] has helped to make the decision easier with the release of a booklet titled *Choosing a School for a Five Year Old*. The booklet suggests parents start with a list of possible schools their child could attend, taking into account transport arrangements, proximity to home or parents' workplaces, how safe it is to walk there from home, and where the child's siblings and friends go to school... Other factors when assessing different schools include what sort of classes the school has for new entrants – purely new entrants, for instance, or a composite class of five and six-year-olds. Smaller schools could see five-year-olds in classes with six, seven and eight-year-olds, and in one-teacher schools new entrants could be part of a class of students aged from five to 12. The report encourages parents to ask questions of principals, staff, and board of trustees members, and to read any material available on the school, including prospectus, charter, and any E[RO] reports. Parents should also talk to prospective schools about what their child will be learning, and what objectives are set for pupils. Other key questions to ask include what fees or donations the school asks for, how the school day is structured, what will happen if the child is sick, and what action parents should take if they are worried about their child's progress. However, the report points out that choosing the best school for your child does not automatically mean there will be a place for them...

Two primary schools in west Mt Albert will be bulging at the seams and having to turn pupils away unless a new school is built. One of them is already the largest primary school in the country... Gladstone School's roll of 731 pupils was well above the... Ministry of Education[']s... preferred maximum of 520... and its roll is expected to mushroom to more than 830 by the end of the year... Two kilometres away, Owairaka Primary School is close to the maximum, with a role of 512... [B]oth schools have enrolment policies... "You've really got to question whether it's good to have so many children in a school..."... said... the... MP for Owairaka, [who is the leader of the Opposition. On a positive note, a]... Ministry of Education survey released yesterday... said... 98.3% of the country's primary classes will be fully staffed... The P[PTA] president... said... an injection of overseas teachers seemed to have had some effect on teacher supply. But... warned that this could be a short-term result. "...our concerns are about quality and quantity of teacher supply in the longer term..."

...Schools with high concentrations of Maori students also have the highest percentages of overseas teachers, the... N[ZEI] said last night... "Of the 1190 overseas teachers in our schools, 576 are teaching in schools where the rolls are between 20 and 80[%] Maori,"... said... the NZEI... national president... "Regardless of their competence in other areas, overseas teachers simply haven't got the cultural background to enable them to be effective teachers of Maori students. Using young, inexperienced overseas teachers will do nothing to lift Maori achievement in our schools..."

...Teachers from overseas are set to become an on-going fixture in N[Z] schools... Of 1100 overseas teachers surveyed by the Ministry of Education, 37[%] had already gained residency, and a number of others said they planned to apply. Government estimates show a further 3851 overseas teachers will be needed during the next three years.

...More Asian teacher trainees are needed to keep up with the influx of Asian students in [NZ]. More than 60,000 Asian students study in [NZ – or 5% of the school population]... But the Ministry of Education... said Asians made up just 2[%] of teacher trainees... [By the way, s]econdary school teachers will decide on a campaign of action at stopwork meetings this month over their claim for 1000 extra teachers.

...Threats of strike action by secondary school teachers have "perplexed and disappointed" the Minister of Education... Teachers have voted "overwhelmingly" to authorise the P[PTA] to call two days of strike action next [term].

...I love to teach more than anything in the world... [so] I returned to secondary teaching late last year after some two years' absence... What did I find? Unit standards have arrived. "Fine," I thought "just another variation; I should be able to teach basically the same." How wrong I was. First I was given two large volumes for my subject full of the most revolting gobbledygook I have ever read. It could have been translated into plain English and condensed to 10 pages. Each subject is divided into units which roughly correspond with the old [SC] syllabus. However, there is no guidance as to how long a unit should take; it could be two hours up to several weeks. The crux comes in the testing. Now 30 years of teaching experience does not fit me to give a test. Oh no! Nor does the fact that I was one of the group which originally wrote the syllabuses for fifth, sixth and seventh form. (In fact the fifth form economics course ultimately emerged from a programme devised by [another teacher] and myself at Rotorua Girls High School to improve on the then inadequate commercial practice course.) Our principal, bless her, not only trusted our judgment but encouraged us to be innovative – which is more than can be said for the N[ZQA. Anyway], back to my test. Six weeks before I intend to give it I must send it off to a moderator here in Auckland who... will keep returning it to be altered... if [the moderator] does not like what I have written... Then, because head office does not trust [either of] us, everything must be further moderated in Wellington. Or, of course, I can give the example test in the big fat volume... So they sit the test and here comes the fun: I must not write on the students' papers, not tell them where they have gone wrong, just that they have not achieved the standard. The poor souls do not even know what the standard is. It is an axiom of all teaching and learning that one does not waste time learning what one already knows but concentrates on those things one does not understand. Of course the students cannot do this because they do not know what they don't know... In a normal class probably four students will have achieved the standard, the rest have failed... even... [if they have made] only one small error... Oh, I must not call it "failed"; they have just not achieved. But we must move on to the next unit because time is of the essence and we will not cover the course in time... I can see disillusionment setting in very quickly. A 15-year-old who has... not achieved[for] three units in succession will not have faith in the system or the teacher... So we have a class with everyone at different stages and no one, including the teacher, making any real progress... [T]his is a recipe for disaster... It seems to me as a practical teacher, coming back with clear eyes, that the... concept [of] unit standards is flawed... A... lecturer at polytech used the example of hammering in a nail: A hits the nail three blows and lo it is hammered in, neat and true. B has about 25 hits and only succeeds in bending the nail into a half loop. After much effort and 10 wasted nails, one is finally hammered in, a bit crooked maybe, but still in. Both have achieved the standard, but who would you want to build your house...? [● NZ]... had the highest percentage of discontented teachers in the 26 countries of an international... study.

...teachers aren't losing their desire to educate the next generation. But they are losing something just as important – the time in which to do it properly. A teacher's day used to be devoted mainly to lesson preparation, classroom teaching and marking – the necessities. Then on top of that, most teachers would also volunteer to take a sports team or a drama-group or some other extra-curricular activity. That's not happening any more. A number of recent developments have been robbing teachers of the hours needed to do justice to essential tasks. One of these changes is the endless succession of meetings and administrative duties that have been thrust on teachers by Tomorrow's Schools and the Curriculum and Qualifications reforms. Another is the increasing number of disruptive students that are entering our schools. Still another is the fact that, while most other OECD countries have reduced their required number of classroom teaching hours the opposite has occurred in this country. N[Z] currently has the third highest statutory requirement for student contact in the OECD. Does it make... sense to stretch our teachers' workloads to new limits? Only if you think it makes... sense to put limits on what our children can get out of school.

...A national search for a "lost generation" of schoolchildren has found more than 100 not enrolled at school... Figures obtained by Labour show that the Ministry of Education was told of 1071 children who were believed to be "missing" in eight months last year. The ministry's truancy service – launched last May – found half enrolled in other schools, exempt from attending school, or living overseas. A further 110 who were illegally not attending school have since been enrolled or properly exempted from doing so. Files on 169 children missing for more than a year where the "trail has gone cold" have been closed... [– some files] were up to eight years old... [–] and the search continues for 141 more... [In international news, the] State of the Union speech... [by the US] President... said yesterday that improving education would get top priority. The televised address before the House of Congress... appealed for a "national crusade" to raise education standards to a level competitive with other [First World] nations. "The greatest step of all – the high threshold to the future we now must cross – ...is to ensure that Americans have the best education in the world..." [The President] proposed... a 20[%] increase over current... education... spending, to pay for... [his crusade. But hi]s speech was thin on grand, large-scale initiatives...

[The US President] will have struck a chord worldwide when [it] puts a priority on education. But [it] will have also struck a less positive one in the U[S]. Presidents before him have set their sights on achieving high standards of learning. That[this] President... feels the need to do the same is a measure of their lack of success. And the idea inherent in his proposed 20[%] increase in education spending next year, that money is the answer to education ills, is a sign that [this President] will struggle to achieve much more than his predecessors. [The President] has a problem when... address[ing] education issues with almost religious zeal. His call for a "national crusade..." bears a depressing similarity to his intended pursuit of medical reform signalled at the beginning of his... term. At least in setting his new target the President is challenging less powerful vested interests than when [it] set out to change the healthcare system. However, even in his priority redirection [the President] is expected to have to confront teacher unions identified as opposed to changes in a system that worldwide comparisons frequently suggest has not done the U[S] proud. ■ The heir

to the British throne]... caused outrage yesterday when [it] criticised the country's "failed" education system and said his charity had to bail out students who were victims of trendy teaching methods. In a BBC television interview to mark the 21st birthday of his Prince's Trust charity, [the Prince of Wales]... spoke about the discipline needed to succeed in life and which seemed to be lacking in[modern] education. "I... don't believe it's served young people well at all... [E]ducation needs to rediscover those important features which have been abandoned in the last 30 or 40 years..." His comments angered education officials, who claimed... the king-in-waiting... had not got his facts right and that members of the royal family should not be meddling in political matters.

...[the British] Opposition... leader... left state school at 16 and leads a Conservative party run by an elite educated in private academies... [The Labour PM] went to Fettes College, the select Edinburgh school known as Scotland's Eton, and then to Oxford University – the classic route to establishment power – before taking control of a party committed to equality in education. Given this, it is hardly surprising that differences between Labour and the Conservatives on education have shrunk... "Labour is trying to be as much like the Conservatives as it can," said... a former head of research at the Labour-affiliated Fabian Society think-tank who quit after a row over school policy... In a country whose middle-class grew wealthier in the 1980s, only to be gripped by insecurity about the future in the 1990s, education has become a key political battleground. [The Labour PM] has vowed to make education his priority... [and] told BBC television [it was his intention] to pursue education reform with the same vigour as that with which [the Conservative's Iron Maiden] overhauled Britain's union laws. After 18 years in the wilderness, Labour need[ed] the middle-class votes that ha[d] given the Conservatives four consecutive terms. To win them over [Labour's leader]... shredded old dogmas... by vowing not to kill off schools that select their pupils by competition. In another U-turn, [Labour's leader] agreed schools should have more control over their own affairs, an idea championed by... [the former Conservative PM. Even Labour's education spokesperson.] a left-winger dedicated to equal opportunity, fell into line. To wrest control of traditional Conservative rhetoric, [the Labour PM] has pledged to sack substandard teachers, close poor schools, set minimum homework requirements and punish parents who fail to control their children... [However, his] campaign on education has won him possibly more enemies than in any other policy area. They have homed in on his decision to send his son to a school which has opted out of local authority control... His political control did not waver when his social security spokes[person]... sent her son to a school with a competitive entrance policy... Her open defiance of party policy against pupil selection led to hundreds of Labour faithful sending back their membership cards. But... [the biggest] casualty has been Labour's traditional, cosy relationship with the teaching unions.

...The Government is responsible for the education of its citizens, including the very young, so the argument goes... However, there is another argument which has had little mileage here, in spite of extensive research overseas. In recent weeks, for example, both *The Age* in Melbourne and the *Sydney Morning Herald* have carried articles on the place of pre-school education and childcare in western culture. The claim can be made and supported that the success of the childcare industry, insofar as it attracts significant government support, relates less to the desire for good social practice than it does to pressure from ideological feminists and employers... that most [mothers] are needed in the workforce or that they want to be in the workforce... [T]hese claims are doubtful. Much of the paid work that [mothers] do is necessary to meet the family budget. Many of these jobs are low-skilled and could be done readily by young N[Z]ers who have no paid work at all and whose unemployment rate is three times the national average... [Furthermore,] there is mounting evidence there is no advantage – but certainly disadvantage – for infants being looked after by paid workers; certainly to the age of three and probably to five... For example, one exhaustive analysis of research in a range of countries during the period 1957-1993 was published recently by two Canadian researchers... Their findings said... young children... suffered... social... physical and psychological disadvantages... when deprived of continuous maternal care. According to an A[US]n child psychiatrist who summarised the Canadians' research... there is robust evidence of social-emotional and behaviour outcomes. These findings, "give no support for the belief that high quality day care is an acceptable substitute for parental care". [The psychiatrist] added "boys in particular are at risk"... Would not most children be better at home with their own parents? Should the state be helping to create an environment which is likely to be counter-productive to the welfare of children? What should a government do? S[upport]... programmes that separate children from their mothers, or... that help keep them together? ...institutionalised care of children under five is sold to parents as a means of teaching social skills. But the overwhelming evidence from research suggests that it might have the reverse effect. Children do not learn to socialise from contact with other children but from contact with adults, especially parents. Staff in institutions are less motivated than parents are and the children are in an environment where they have to compete for attention. According to one English researcher and writer... children do not learn the social skills necessary to resolve conflicts when exposed to large groups of other children. It is reasonable to suggest that a socially responsible government, in the light of considerable evidence, should examine ways to keep children under three under the care of their mothers.

...Mrs S... works about 50 hours a week, while Mr S... clocks up about 40 hours. This means [their young child] is in the care of a nanny for much of the day... [Mrs] S... readily admits [it] "didn't have a clue" about being a parent. The arrival of her son... has forced the finance director to balance childcare with a high-pressured job. Despite being well-educated and successful in her career, [Mrs S] said the birth of [her son] 19 months ago threw her into the realms of endless unknowns and uncertainties. "Looking back it's quite frightening what we didn't know." Her husband... said they did not have much experience with children, as many friends were yet to have families. This made the Ponsonby couple feel even less secure about their parenting skills. A friend told [her] about... the Government's... Parents As First Teachers programme... when [Mrs S] was about to return to work full-time... The monthly visits and developmental checks by a programme educator offered much-needed reassurance that their son was making correct progress... "Every time they come round there's an expectancy that you are going to move on to something new and you see the progress... Without PAFT we would have left it all up to the nanny and probably would have always wondered if [our son] was doing okay." [● Little Miss Five was driving her mum to distraction with her constant questions. Finally mum could stand it no longer and asked her, "Why are you always asking so many questions?" The daughter replied, "Because I'm only five and I haven't been around long enough to know the answers."]

...First-time parents are to get more help in child rearing through a growth spurt planned for the Parents As First Teachers programme. The pet Government programme, launched as a pilot in 1992 to encourage better parenting, will this year put on weight from 6000 places to 9000. Auckland will get most of the new places, allowing up to 1000 new families to join the programme. The Ministry of Education, which funds the programme, expects to spend about \$9 million on the scheme this year through the massive expansion... Quarterly satisfaction surveys will also be done to ensure that public money is spent soundly... "Parental skills are not dependent on income or education. We are getting [new mothers], 40 to 45 years old, who have been incredibly successful business people, who are absolutely quaking in their shoes with a baby[.]" says the[... programme's national co-ordinator... "It's a really scary thing to walk into, and older mums haven't got the same energy levels as our teenage mums." Key parts of the programme include: ● Monthly visits by parent educators and developmental checks on the child. ● Monthly parent group meetings to discuss experiences and concerns. ● A link to health agencies for formal screening of overall development.

...Do you believe the ages of three to five are vital to a child's development? The [NZ] Government obviously doesn't... [–] it rammed through legislation that removed kindergartens from the State Sector Act. In effect, the Government has stepped back and washed its hands of its only real commitment to quality early childhood education. Kindergarten is where public education begins. Our kindergartens are the only early childhood institutions that are uniformly run by trained teachers. The legislation was introduced without warning... No one was consulted. The Government has just decided that dismantling the public education system is what's best for N[Z]... This latest development is the next step along the path our health system has already been down... The... Government's action is not simply hurting a small, underpaid group of teachers. Anything that damages the development of N[Z] children will be felt by every school in the country.

...Until two and a half years ago... the... Auckland... kindergarten association... had its teacher's contract negotiated for it by the State Services Commission and its teachers were treated like primary and secondary school teachers are today – that is, no differently whether they worked in Auckland or Ashburton. Auckland left when the talks broke down... We received delegated authority from the commission to negotiate our teacher's contract directly. As a result, last year when we faced a severe teacher shortage we were able to offer substantially better pay. The Auckland association gave its teachers pay parity with primary school teachers and had the best-paid kindergarten teachers in the country. We had to do this... We were short of more than 55 teachers whereas today we are about 18 short. We had to compete or face closing kindergartens though waiting lists were, and still are, at an all-time high. Auckland should be treated differently from the rest of the country. The teacher shortage was caused partly by the fact that, because of the Government subsidy on all preschool education facilities, our qualified and skilled teachers were in demand in the private sector. Because these other subsidised organisations charged fees, some of their patrons could claim an Income Support benefit and many teachers left for the better pay. Auckland is a very competitive labour market and let us not forget that living expenses in Auckland are far greater than elsewhere. Our teachers have also had to cope with a number of problems caused mainly by the Government's immigration policy. In the past two years more children, now 23[%], are arriving at kindergarten speaking little or no English. Less than half the children at kindergarten today are of Pakeha descent: 18[%] are Polynesian, 11[%] Asian and 10[%] Maori. Over 90[%] of Auckland kindergartens have eight or more nationalities. Just under 50 languages are represented... The real issue is that the Government does not want to be involved in kindergarten. This latest action is a chance to distance itself further and to ensure that kindergarten never becomes part of the compulsory education sector... If the Government is heading towards a system in which all children pay fees to get a preschool education, the biggest losers will be the children... Is an early education a child's right which should not be limited by ability to pay? If so, the Government must be urged to support kindergarten and build new sites so that the 6000 children in Auckland on waiting lists get the chance they deserve...

More state help for children with severe disabilities and "hardcore" behaviour problems has been cautiously welcomed by schools. Plans for specialist teams to work in classrooms with students with severe behaviour problems were announced yesterday by the Minister of Education... Where the specialists failed, students would be sent to special centres for short-term programmes geared towards children with behaviour problems. New programmes for students with speech or language difficulties and extra help for special needs children at preschools were also outlined. But... [kindergartens] in some low-income and rural areas may be forced to close as a result of [a] bill rushed through Parliament last week, says a senior researcher at the N[Z] Council of Educational Research. The bill, which infuriated kindergarten teachers, removed the State Services Commission from any role in negotiating employment contracts with kindergartens and was passed without public consultation... Critics say because negotiations will now be in the hands of more than 30 associations, the Government has divested itself of any responsibility over regional differences in quality which will result from the move... The bill was a retrograde step because a feature of the service kindergartens had offered was their ability to improve the educational opportunities of socio-economically disadvantaged children through quality education by quality teachers. This was ironic because it was the group the Government said it wanted to help.

...Parents trying to get their children into overcrowded nearby schools will have a better chance under new legislation introduced in Parliament this week... The Education Legislation Amendment Act is the most significant piece of education legislation since 1993... The bill also aims to make suspensions fairer and to give boards and principals more flexibility when disciplining students... Other areas addressed by the bill include... [affirming the ERO's] power to review home schools. Reviews of home schools, which catered for 5151 children in 1996, will begin next month... Students with special needs will get more funding next year but the IHC says... that while the organisation wanted vastly improved education for students with disabilities all the scheme would deliver was more teacher aide time and not the specialist teacher support called for.

...The theme of this year's Deaf Awareness week is fairness of educational access for all those who are deaf or hearing-impaired. There is no fairness at the moment, says... [the] chief executive officer of the National Foundation For the Deaf. N[Z] lacks the services and facilities widely available in countries with a similar standard of living. "The deaf and hearing-impaired are normally intelligent people who must be given the same opportunities as every other member of society." ...Being deaf really does set you apart, says... one of 8000 profoundly deaf N[Z]ers (410,000 are hearing-impaired). "I try my best to get involved in a range of interests and I see a lot of deaf mates at the weekend," [the]... 23-year-old art student... said. But after nearly four years at Auckland University's Elam School of Fine Arts, there is still no easy rapport with fellow students. [The 23-year-old] is the only deaf one among them... – ...[it] is one of only a handful of deaf people who go to tertiary studies[(d)eaf students need interpreters and note-takers to be able to take part in lectures and tutorials, and there are... only 20... available... in the Auckland region() –] ...and perhaps that makes them feel uncomfortable. "I have never gone out with them to cafes like other university students. We talk with pen and paper." [The student] got used to this as a child. "My hearing friends couldn't do sign language so they wrote to me, and it's stuck." The frustration with writing everything down is the time it takes. "I can say everything I want to and it is no problem to understand. But my thoughts go much faster than I can write. It's rather a disadvantage that I can't lip read that well... But the Elam staff are great people. They are used to communicating with more than speech, they understand there are other ways than speech to show what you are thinking." So does her family... With family and deaf friends [the student] uses a combination of Signed English, N[Z] Sign Language and other gestures to communicate.

...DEAF kids used to learn their language behind the bike sheds. For 100 years, N[Z] Sign Language was stigmatised and suppressed. Hearing people called it a variety of names: Deaf English, Pidgin English, Pantomime, even Monkey Talk. It was a second-class tongue, like Maori. Now the deaf have their own taonga, *A Dictionary of N[Z] Sign Language*. This elegant tome, with its 755 pages and 4000 signs, codifies and celebrates a unique indigenous language. It also represents a triumph of human communication over officialdom. The official policy in N[Z]'s deaf schools was to teach lip-reading and spoken English. Sign language, the natural means of communicating between deaf people... was deemed inferior. The parallel with Maori, says the dictionary's general editor... is clear. English was best both for the deaf and the tangata whenua. "This wasn't evil or bad, it was benevolent paternalism. It was thought that they would do better if they knew English. And so you get the... stories – and you'd have to say some of them were apocryphal – of children having their hands tied behind their backs at school so they couldn't sign. In the same way Maori children were supposedly strapped at school for speaking in Maori instead of English." ...Signing is at least as old as human speech; Plato writes about sign language in ancient Greece. But learning to speak is agonisingly difficult for the deaf, and lip-reading is wildly inefficient. "Lip-readers make a lot of mistakes – they confuse '15' and '50' because these words have the same lip movements... There's a... lot of potential ambiguity, and you have to sort of get by by guessing." Lip-reading depends on prediction... on being able to guess what is coming next... But if you don't know the language, you can't guess the word. "When you're born deaf, how can you possibly learn to lip-read a language...?" ...[N[Z]'s] policy was developed by Julius Vogel... who in 1880, as N[Z]'s agent-general in London, attended an international conference in Milan on deaf education. This state-of-the-art meeting of experts deemed that speech and lipreading were best, and Vogel was duly impressed... The hearing have always been ready to treat the deaf as "dumb"; for Vogel, the language of the deaf was only for the stupid. So N[Z]'s deaf schools, started in the 1880s, were committed to... [teaching] "deaf children... a language they could not hear, through a medium which created the maximum difficulty for them." The result was an educational disaster: Generations of deaf children who did poorly at school. It is only in the past 10-15 years that signing has taken its proper place in the education of the deaf... The deaf have borrowed the kohanga reo idea from Maori. In Wellington this year, the first Deaf Nest opened. Here, sign language rules. Parents often feel bad about their child's deafness... and may be reluctant to learn sign. "But even if the parents learn only a little bit, it makes a huge difference to the child. 'They're trying to... communicate with me and it's okay for me to sign.'"

...[an AUSn] academic has attacked N[Z] teachers' colleges for promoting left-wing courses and says children's education will suffer because of teachers' biases... "A very disturbing feature of teacher education in N[Z] is the extent of ideological capture by groups holding views which are almost certainly not shared by the majority of the population." ...The... research fellow at Flinders University in Adelaide... also draws attention to the problem of how complaints about courses – especially those in Maori... – are dealt with by lecturers.

...*Kohanga Reo* (language nests)... provide a fun, home-like environment for children under the age of five, where they are intensively exposed to the Maori language. Paid staff are a mix of elderly Maori speakers, usually grandparents, and younger teachers.

...['Some Kohanga Reo aren't doing their job, according to the ERO. It found more than a quarter aren't meeting the language standards. Some aren't teaching Maori at all.' Editor's note: *Maori* is an 'Eastern Polynesian sub-group of the Eastern Austronesian (Oceanic) languages, spoken in the Cook Islands and NZ. Since the Maori Language Act of 1987, it has been one of the two official languages of NZ. Estimates of the number of Maori speakers range from 100,000 to 150,000. As one of the marginal eastern Polynesian islands, NZ was one of the last of the Polynesian islands to be settled (about AD 800). Since that time the Maori language has developed independently of other Polynesian languages. European Christian missionaries developed Maori as a written language, and the first printed material in Maori was published in 1815. The language contains 5 vowels (each of which can be either short or long) and 10 consonants (h, k, m, n, ng, p, r, t, w, and wh). Reduplication is frequently used, generally as a modification of intensity. Prefixes and suffixes are relatively rare, and the plurality of nouns and verb tenses is usually indicated by the syntax of a statement.']

...WILL the Maori language[– which is currently spoken by '4.45% of the NZ population' –] survive? Even Latin, with its great history and literature, became a dead language after it lost its economic usefulness.

...According to the first Global Language Register... a 1600-page tome by [a]linguist... more than 10,000 languages are being spoken in the world today... Papua New Guinea is the nation with the greatest number of languages... it has 750... [The] study... put Nigeria second with 400... The Register includes all languages in the world this century. Some have died out and others, especially among Aborigines in A[US], now only have one speaker left.

...A [GROUP] WITH A DOZEN MEMBERS OF the native American Tlingit (pronounced klink-it) tribe... is gathered at the community center in Klawock, a town of some 800 people on the eastern fringe of Prince of Wales Island. In the Gulf of Alaska, some 40 km off the Alaskan coast, Prince of Wales Island still survives in a state of pristine natural beauty. But this idyllic stretch of land is home to at least one endangered species: the Tlingit language... [A] 33-year-old schoolteacher... and his fellow tribes[people] meet every other week in sessions like this to learn their native tongue before the last fluent tribal elder dies... Forty years ago, the entire tribe was fluent in the language, a guttural tongue that relies heavily on accompanying gesture for its meaning. Now it is spoken by only a handful of people throughout southern Alaska and portions of Canada, nearly all of whom are over the age of 60. Since Tlingit was not originally a written language, [the schoolteacher] and company are trying to record as much of it as possible by translating just about anything they can get their hands on into Tlingit, from Christmas carols like *Jingle Bells* to nursery rhymes such as *Hickory Dickory Dock*. The plight of Tlingit is a small page in the modern version of the Tower of Babel story – with the plot reversed. The Old Testament describes the first, mythical humans as "of one language and of one speech." They built a city on a plain with a tower whose peak reached into heaven. God, offended by their impudence in building something to rival [God's] own creation, punished them by scattering their single language into many tongues and scattered the speakers. Today... telecommunications technology and the Internet are providing people from Peru to Pennsylvania with access to identical information and entertainment, while consumers from Bangkok to Brussels go to the same shops to purchase the same products from the same multinational corporations. All are conversant in the universal language of popular culture and commercial advertising. Much of the world, it seems, is coming to resemble a... cozy little global village of common understanding. And there is hard evidence that the number of languages in the world is shrinking: of the roughly 6,500 languages now spoken, up to half are already endangered or on the brink of extinction. Linguists estimate that a language dies somewhere in the world every two weeks... Languages, like all living things, depend on their environment to survive. When they die out, it is for reasons analogous to those that cause the extinction of plant and animal species: they are consumed by predator tongues, deprived of their natural habitats or displaced by more successful competitors. In this type of linguistic natural selection, though, the survival of the fittest is not determined by intrinsic merits and adaptability alone; the economic might, military muscle and cultural prestige of the country in which a language is spoken play a decisive role. A language's star rises and falls with the fortunes of its speakers. As the only remaining superpower, the U[S] is now at the zenith of its economic and cultural hegemony. English therefore thrives as the world's *lingua franca* while minority languages – like Tlingit – succumb... But the death of a language such as Tlingit means more than simply the loss of another obscure, incomprehensible tongue. It marks the loss of an entire culture. "Just as the extinction of any animal species diminishes our world, so does the extinction of any language," argues... an expert on endangered languages at the University of Alaska at Fairbanks... [The expert] says that "Unless we wake up to the problem, we stand to lose up to 95% of our languages in the coming century." ...The European empire-building expeditions of the 16th and 17th centuries heralded the beginning of the end for thousands of languages in North and South America. As the continents were colonized by the European powers and their original inhabitants marginalized, indigenous languages vanished along with their native speakers. In Brazil, for example, an estimated 75% of all the languages once spoken in the country have perished since the arrival of the Portuguese in 1500. Of the 180 native tongues that remain, only one is spoken by more than 10,000 people, out of a population of 160 million... Among the Krenak in southeastern Brazil, only a handful of elders among the 70 or so tribes[people] still speak their mother tongue. Originally a tribe of hunter-gatherers, the Krenak were expelled from their land and herded into reserves by government agents intent on making more space for farming. Up until the 1950s, Catholic missionaries forbade them to perform rituals or speak their own language... But languages can be remarkably resilient. When empires crumble, suppressed tongues have a way of sprouting up again through the cracks. The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 provided the Krenak with an unexpected opportunity to mend some of the broken links in their oral tradition... In 1993, during the period of *glasnost*[, a]... Hungarian linguist... stumbled across the manuscripts of... a Russian anthropologist who trekked across Brazil at the turn of the century, in the archives of the Ethnography Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg. During his travels, [the anthropologist] recorded traditional Krenak narratives, rituals and songs in both Russian and the native Krenak, thereby preserving a trove of words, expressions and stories the Krenak believed were gone for good. By translating from Russian into Portuguese, and then cross-checking with... [the anthropologist's Krenak, a Krenak] tribal member and head of the Nucleus of Indian Culture, a Sao Paulo-based organization that promotes Brazil's cultural diversity... is working to recover more of the tribe's lost language and return it to his people. "Discovering these words, stories [and] songs is to recover the path of... our dream." ...In... the 1950s... the... Soviet Union... program of "Russification" for indigenous populations scattered along the southern, northern and Pacific borders... inculcate[d] native children with Russian culture[via] boarding schools, or *internats*... where children as young as two years old lived in a completely Russian environment for nine months of the year. *Internat* students routinely lost interest – and proficiency – in their native tongues. This policy of linguistic and cultural repression created a generation estranged from its own language and traditional way of life. One branch of the Nenets tribe, a group of some 20,000 reindeer herders living in the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Region in the Arctic Circle, has been luckier than most. Although they were subjected to the *internat* regime and lost their pasture lands on the Novaya Zemlya to the Soviet nuclear testing program in the 1950s, they were spared the first Siberian oil and gas boom in[the] 1970s, which ravaged the lands and traditions of neighboring tribes. In the treeless expanse beyond the wooden barracks of Salekhard, a town founded by Russian fur traders 400 years ago, the Nentsi lifestyle hasn't changed much for hundreds of years... But with the discovery in the late 1980s of huge natural gas beds on the Yamal Peninsula, the Nentsi way is threatened. Foreign companies are lining

up to exploit the fabulous wealth lying below what has come to be known as the “Nentsi Emirates.” ...even if ecological destruction is averted, many Nentsi might be tempted to trade their traditional lifestyles and language for jobs with the gas companies. Why should young Nentsi bother with their mother tongue when their futures will depend on being able to speak Russian? ...When white settlers first arrived in A[US] in 1788, the continent supported some 250 Aboriginal tongues. Today, only 20 are considered still viable[(‘the 2000-strong Martu people – that Western AUS’s Government has agreed to hand back a slice of desert more than four times the size of Belgium 50 years after they were driven out; the 136,000sq kms of mainly arid sand dunes and scrubland is the biggest piece of land to be returned to Aborigines – speak up to 12 distinct languages within their small group, which follows a traditional lifestyle, hunting kangaroos and bush turkeys’). AUS]n Aborigines endured a policy of cultural and linguistic assimilation similar to that of the Nentsi... To make sure Aboriginal children are not deprived of their linguistic heritage... a language coordinator at the bilingual Yaporinya school in Alice Springs... helps organize a program through which students... spend two days a week on cultural excursions into the surrounding area with local tribal elders. Aboriginal languages are distinctive for the rich vocabularies they use to describe the natural world... But the value of Aboriginal languages does not lie in their poetic beauty alone... Botanists are discovering new species of flora by researching the different Aboriginal names given to seemingly identical plants. The study of these languages can also shed new light on the migrations of early populations and the origins of cultural innovations... For much of this century in N[Z], the decline in fluent Maori speakers was drastic and seemingly irreversible. From an estimated 64,000 in the early 1970s, the number fell to around 10,000 in 1995. There was almost no language transmission from Maori parents to their children during the 1960s and 1970s. But since the first [Kohanga Reo]... were established in 1982, this downward spiral has been halted... There are now over 800 language nests across the country, which have introduced more than 100,000 Maori children to their native tongue. Maori was made an official language of N[Z], alongside English, in 1987... Today, almost 60% of all [NZ] schoolchildren – Maori and non-Maori alike – study the language to some extent. But an even surer sign of Maori’s renewed vigor is the fact that N[Z] English is dotted with Maori words and expressions. The most common, *kia ora*, an all-purpose salutation, is generally used instead of “hello” both in general conversation and when answering the telephone... “The more Maori is used to pepper N[Z] speech, the more it becomes a unique language to... [NZ,” says the] head of the Maori Language Commission... In the coming struggle for linguistic survival, native peoples like the Maori may yet have the last word... THE WORLD’S... TOP TEN LANGUAGES... [ARE (IN MILLIONS):] 1. Mandarin Chinese 726 2. English 427 3. Spanish 266 4. Hindi 182 5. Arabic 181 6. Portuguese 165 7. Bengali 162 8. Russian 158 9. Japanese 124 10. German 121... [HOWEVER,] BY THE YEAR 2000, AN ESTIMATED ONE-AND-A-HALF-BILLION PEOPLE – A quarter of the world’s population – will speak English... [as] their first... second or third language... English is increasingly becoming entrenched as the language of choice for business, science and popular culture... In 1898, when Otto von Bismarck was asked what in his opinion was the most decisive event in modern history, the German states[perso]n replied: “The fact that the North Americans speak English.” ...But why is English rising so far above the babble of the world’s other tongues? There are no clear linguistic reasons for English’s global dominance. The grammar is complicated, the pronunciation eccentric, and the spelling peculiar, to say the least. But, as... [the] author of the *Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* and the just released *English as a global language*... points out, logic does not necessarily apply when building a lingua franca... “Wave dollar bills in front of someone... and they will learn complicated spellings and grammar.” Another key factor is flexibility... “English is a kind of vacuum cleaner of language – it sucks in vocabulary from any language it can get.” [The author] estimates that there are now words from more than 150 other languages incorporated into standard English. Spelling and pronunciation are so capricious – and so frustrating for non-native speakers – precisely because the language has been quick to take on these foreign influences... But English may yet be suckered by its own success. As the language spreads among non-native speakers, it... could fragment into mutually unintelligible spoken forms, the way Latin fragmented into French, Spanish and other languages some 1,500 years ago.

...An A[US]n university is heading back to the books after setting too easy an English exam... The University of N[SW] Educational Testing Centre yesterday admitted that the exam... was too easy for the 9 and 10-year-olds who took it. A... spokes[perso]n said the centre had also sent out a “badly worded letter” telling pupils that they were the top of the class, but failing to mention that hundreds of other children also got top marks... About 70 N[Z]... and 100 N[SW] children scored 100[%]... Almost half a million pupils in N[Z, AUS] and the Asia-Pacific region took the test.

...Hong Kong’s new Chinese administration is pushing the territory’s schools to teach Cantonese[. But] parents are still so convinced their children should learn in English – the language of their former rulers – that 100 schools have had to be exempted from a new Chinese language teaching policy. Soon after Hong Kong was handed back to China... the new administration announced a policy aimed at seeing all local schools teach their students in Cantonese, the first language of more than 95[%] of people. But parents... swamped the few schools determined to continue teaching in English with applications for places. Although the education policy is threatening fines, loss of subsidies and other sanctions against schools defying the change in language of instruction, 124 schools applied to continue teaching in English. However, 24 of those schools were refused permission. They were told their students “did not have the ability to learn effectively in English” and would thus have to switch to studying all subjects in Cantonese. This was probably a sensible move. At many schools students struggle so much to understand complex subjects being explained in English that their teachers, who may also have poor English skills, resort to a varying mix of English and Cantonese. But parents and teachers see the rejection of those schools as a move toward an elitist system where the top schools teach in English while poorer quality schools are forced to teach in Cantonese, making parents and teachers devalue their own language.

...Quebec’s so-called language police usually keep busy fighting the spread of English in the French-speaking province, but a new target has been added: Chinese signs on businesses in Montreal’s Chinatown. Letters have been sent to Chinatown merchants and restaurant owners alleging that many signs violate a provincial law requiring that French be the dominant language on outdoor commercial signs. Earlier this month, language inspectors issued a warning to a Jewish gravestone maker because five Hebrew characters on his business sign were too big. The warning was withdrawn after news accounts portrayed the inspectors as overzealous.

...IN LAOS they held a French spelling competition. In Minsk they showed French films. In Moldova they hosted a tribute to... [a French] writer and states[perso]n, and in Belgrade there was a week of French plays. From Phnom Penh to Dar es Salaam, France went on a cultural offensive last week designed to bolster its standing around the world. Behind the celebration of the language is anxiety in Paris that even in the Francophone world where the tricolore was once revered, French values are under threat. It is a source of horror to French officials that in some former colonies French is no longer spoken. What has caused such a sad decline of Frenchness in France’s equivalent of the British Commonwealth? According to the most extreme exponents of French cultural superiority, there is only one target for blame: America. And a passionate desire to thwart the spread of American values is pushing the French to ever greater international efforts. “What have they brought the world apart from B-movies, Coca-Cola and those dreadful clothes?” asks... a French aristocrat and former civil servant who... wears a bow tie and... wholeheartedly embraces campaigns such as the *semaine de Francophonie* as an opportunity to take on America... [The aristocrat] is the founder of the Centre for European Study and Action, a Francophone lobby group famed for floating the idea that the U[N] should move from New York to Paris, the “centre of the world”. [The aristocrat] speaks nine languages, including Danish and Russian, but not English – “It’s too difficult,” [the aristocrat] claims. A more likely explanation is his hatred for America. Arguing that French should be the single official language of the E[U], the aristocrat rejects English on the grounds that “we cannot build Europe around the language of America.” [The aristocrat] sees America not as an ally but as a competitor... The French see language as the tool for defending their interests and like to quote[a former French] President... on the subject: “It is through our language that we exist in the world other than just as another country.” The amount being spent by the foreign ministry on teachers, educational

aids, textbooks and student grants around the world proves the point, surpassing the total sums spent by many western countries on development aid. However, the enormous expenditure on the 49 countries that make up the Francophone community, most of them former colonies in Africa and the South Pacific, does not make them immune from America's cultural encroachment. France may be looking for strength in numbers... [-] the minister for overseas territories, proudly announced this month that Albania had applied to join the Francophone club. There were sniggers. Albania's problems make it desperate to be a member of any international club prepared to accept it. Albania's application will be voted on at the Francophone summit in Hanoi in November. Armenia is also considering joining. The only country to be refused membership was Israel, which has one million French speakers. Its application was vetoed by Lebanon. There was great excitement recently at the foreign ministry when Nigeria announced it would make French a compulsory subject in schools on the grounds that so many of its neighbours and trading partners are former French-speaking colonies. Another reason may have been an attempt to get back at the Americans and the British who have complained about the country's human rights record. One blot on the Francophone landscape is Belgium, where there have been growing calls for a boycott of French produce following the closure of a Renault factory with the loss of 3000 jobs. The dispute cast doubt over events that had been planned there for last week's celebrations, including... fake telephone booths in which people can listen to recordings of French jokes. Another serious concern for France is the insidious invasion of the English language through the Internet. The overseas territories department recently hired 10 staff to develop French Web sites and newsletters. Young French-speaking people all over the world were asked to take part in an Internet quiz featuring questions about the Francophone world. The lucky winner will get a free trip to one of the furthest parts of the French empire, Guyana – a little corner of the Latin American rainforest that will be for ever France.

...“OH, my goodness, look at that SPOON! It's such a big blue SPOON! It's almost as big as you are!” the mother says to her baby, holding up the spoon. This kind of baby talk... is not merely a cute way to address an infant. When a mother speaks like this, [the mother is]... using speech that gives her baby the building blocks of language. And this kind of talk is used by parents in the U[S], Russia... and possibly the world over. That's the conclusion of a study headed by... a University of Washington speech researcher who has spent 30 years examining how we learn to talk. The study expands knowledge of how we acquire language: in particular, the importance of “parentese,” the exaggerated, sing-song language used to talk to babies... The mothers stretch... out the vowel sounds, which [the researcher] described as “hyperarticulated.” With the vowels more clearly enunciated, it was simpler for the babies to understand speech. The parents did not use exaggerated vowel sounds in ordinary adult conversation. Infants are so attuned to this type of speech that by 20 weeks of age they produce their own versions of the three vowel... sounds: the “ee” sound in bead, the “ah” sound in part and the “uu” in boot. Those vowel sounds are found in all languages... The infants figure out how to articulate vowel sounds because parentese provides them with many instances of the same vowel... A baby's vocal tract is only about one-quarter the size of an adult's and lacks the same frequency range... To reproduce the sounds that parents make, an infant must experiment with his or her voice and find ways to transform adult sounds to frequencies a child can use. How do we learn to speak parentese? [The researcher] believes it evolved along with human communication, and is instinctive... [A] professor of brain and cognitive studies at the University of Rochester, New York, said [the] study is especially interesting because it shows that parentese is apparently a universal language. Just how important it is at teaching an infant his family's language is still unknown... because “no one has done a study to determine whether this actually makes a difference.” It would also be next to impossible to design a study that would show whether we learn to speak parentese from others or whether it has instinctive, biological roots, [the professor added. Incidentally, since]... adopting their controversial Ebonics policy last month, Oakland school officials have been blasted on radio talk shows, grilled by reporters across the country, and shocked to hear some of the most respected black leaders in the country label their decision “a travesty” and “a cruel joke.” But there is an up side to the furore over the district's acknowledgment of black English: it has focused nationwide attention on the failure of the [US] school system to meet the needs of thousands of African-American children – and has fuelled debate over how to improve the students' performance... The disheartening statistics in Oakland – most black students are in special education classes, have been held back a year and have been truants or suspended – are mirrored in inner-city schools across the nation. A report by the Department of Education found 17-year-old black students had the reading level of 13-year-old whites. The average scores for blacks in 1993 were far lower than those of whites in verbal skills and even worse in mathematics... The study concluded that minority students were more likely to attend impoverished and segregated schools, learn from ill-prepared teachers and take less challenging courses... [The] outgoing president of the African-American Parent Coalition at Silver Creek High School... conducted a study of the East Side Union High School District in San Jose and found that of all the grades handed out to African-American students in the 1995-96 school year in the core subjects of English, maths, science, foreign language and social studies, 49[%] were Ds and Fs. Only 8[%] got an A grade and 17[%] got a B. Latinos fared only slightly better, with 48[%] Ds and Fs and 28[%] As and Bs. By contrast, 42[%] of the grades received by whites were As and Bs, with 32[%] Ds and Fs. But the biggest gap was with Asian students. [60%] of the grades they received were As and Bs... “Something is going on culturally and academically within the Asian community that is not going on in the Caucasian, African-American and Hispanic community,”... an educational consultant who works with the [coalition]... said. “Those kids who are succeeding know the game and probably have a lot more parent involvement.” ...Although some black leaders fear the Ebonics policy will lower standards and allow the teaching of street slang, Oakland district officials want to train teachers in the unique language patterns of black students so they can use that language – without denigrating students – to help students learn standard English.

...Some momma... writes me and ax why I don't write no column in Ebonics. I tells the hoe that be wack because I Don't know how to talk Ebonics. I talks Honkyonics. But I wisht I do know Ebonics because I likes hearin' it. It be cool. And it saves words. Like if you see a car. And it be a car that belong to Joseph. Most honky peeps say: Look, there is Joseph's car. Or there is a car that belongs to Joseph... But in Ebonics, you... says: “Dat Joseph car.” Or “Dat Joseph wheels.” See? You digz? So what be so bad talkin' so you saves words. A word save be a word earn. Now these teachers who be in Oakland and Los Angeles, they no fools. They wanna ax the gov'ment for bread so's they can learn how to talk Ebonics. Then when they learns to talk Ebonics, they gonna teach the bro from the hood to talk like the anchor dudes on the TV. Then the bro from the hood get job. But everybody gets mad. They says it be bad. White folks, black folks, they say Ebonics ain't no fit language. What they know? They don't know squat, that what they don't know. Even... [a famed black preacher (r:p1106, lns15 & 26 + p1413, ln66)] say it just gutter talk... Then some teaching mommas in Oakland, they talk sense to [him]. They tells him, “Preacher, we knows you a leader. But you dissin' us. And what you sayin' is just wack.” And [the preacher] think on all that bread and... say, Yo, maybe these Oakland mommas know sump'n. So all the peeps who been dissin' Ebonics gotsta chill. If they smart, they ax the government for some bread to have their own onics. You go some hoods in ChiTown and you hears the homies there talking in Polonics. That be the way some Polish honkies talk... And down South, the rednecks gots their onics. Everywhere you goes, peeps talkin' in some kind of onics. Now, if'n all the peeps doin' the moanin' weren't ignorant, dey'd know that lotsa great stuff been writ in Ebonics. Like Shakespeare. When that Hamlet dude... say: To be or not to be? That be the question. It be Ebonics. And lotsa peeps pay good bread to hear some English dude talk it. So if Hamlet can talk Ebonics, why's the squawk about Oakland? I knows why. Cuz peeps are all bored... with Croatia and Serbia. Peeps are all bored with the regular news. But Ebonics give em' somethin' talk about, even if they don't know nothin' 'bout what they talkin' 'bout... Don't make no sense to me. Can't nobody learn nothin' 'cept they understands what each other's sayin'. Yo, dat's dope.

...The bitter debate over whether Ebonics... is a language that should be used to teach urban black children has reached the Senate. Members of the Oakland... school system testified in defence of the decision... to embrace Ebonics... which one senator at an appropriations subcommittee hearing called an example of political correctness run amok... [The North Carolina senator] said Ebonics was just one more foolish plan by educators

who should know better... A resolution has been introduced in the House of Representatives to deny federal funds for Ebonics programmes, which... are also offered in several other school districts... [A] Pennsylvania Republican who chairs the sub-committee... recalled... [growing] up in a Yiddish-speaking home, adding "and I have been trying to lose my Kansas accent all my life." Some linguists trace the speech patterns of inner city blacks to languages spoken in West Africa, others to English and Irish dialects and others to Caribbean or Creole dialects. Linguists also differ on whether these patterns are a distinct language or merely a dialect.

...If you're the sort of person who might say "between you and I," look out. [A US] newspaper columnist... is spearheading a campaign to help stop "personal-pronoun abuse," which may not be as serious a problem as, say, drug abuse, but which has ramifications nevertheless. "The situation has gotten out of hand," [the columnist] writes on her Web page Stamp Out Bad Grammar. "If we don't stop it now, this travesty will become part of the standard language." If [the columnist] and her fellow grammar cops seem a little touchy these days, they've got good reason. People are out to get them – or at least ignore them. "Most of the grammar rules are already dead or dying," says... a professor of English and linguistics at the University of Chicago. Students' language skills in general seem to be on the downswing... "I used to say that every year, but I never really meant it until the last few years." ...[the] executive director of a chapter of the American Modern Language Association, predicts the demise of the apostrophe within 50 years. Today's students... can not get the rules straight. "It's incomprehensible to them where and when to use them," [the executive] says. Traditionalists will wring their hands but if standard English mutates beyond recognition in the new millennium, not everyone will mourn it. "A lot of rules governing good standard English are just folklore," says [the professor]. Many of today's grammatical conventions are relatively recent inventions, anyway. Shakespeare's name, for instance, used to be spelled a variety of ways with little fuss. After all, language is not like physics – there are no incontrovertible natural laws that govern it... Complaints about the erosion of grammar are "really tiresome,"... says... a retired UCLA English professor... Even so, [the retired professor] cannot suppress wonder at the fact that... students manage to "use 'like' between every third word." ...It is hard to accept, perhaps, but someday such verbal tics may enter even the written language. In years to come, the two strongest forces for change in English – as in just about everything else – will be globalization and technology. Around the world, English is already the Windows of languages – you need to have it because everybody else does. And as English continues to spread, it will inevitably develop new wrinkles. Already, says [a] University of Georgia professor emeritus... 90[%] of the words in an unabridged dictionary are "loans" from other tongues. As Emerson put it, "The English language is the sea which receives tributaries from every region under heaven." The Internet... is not only increasing the flow of those tributaries; it is also a driving force behind the colloquialism that purists detest. E-mail begs for a less formal style than traditional written communication and is blurring the distinction between writing and speech... [C]onsider what might happen over the next decade or so, as computers become more adept at transcribing speech. Suppose we dictate everything? "The English community is totally unprepared for this," says... a Georgia Tech professor who studies the role of technology in language change. "This will make it much more difficult to teach writing." And perhaps impossible to police it.

...this entire column is really just a note to [my son's] English teacher to say: please excuse [my son for being] unprepared... I BELIEVE that we must encourage our children to become educated, so they can get into a good college that we cannot afford. I try to help my son... with his schooling, but over the years this has become more difficult. Back when [my son] was dealing with basic educational issues such as... what a duck says, I always knew the correct answers... But when [my son] got into the higher grades, [his class] started dealing with complex concepts such as the "hypotenuse," which had yet to be invented when I was a student. So these days I'm useless as an educational resource, except on those rare occasions when [my son] is studying a topic I'm familiar with. For example, last year, in history class, [my son] studied The Sixties. That's right: The Sixties are now considered a historical period, just like the Roman Empire, except that as far as modern kids are concerned, The Sixties featured stupider haircuts... "What did you do during The Sixties?" [my son] asked. "None of your business," I informed him. Other than that, my main contribution to his education is to provide encouragement. For example, the other day I asked him if [his class had been given] any homework, and [my son told me they] had to read *Beowulf*. "Yuck!" I said, encouragingly. I was exposed to *Beowulf* when I was a student. If my memory serves me correctly (and I believe it does, because I am copying this directly from the encyclopedia), *Beowulf* is an Old English epic poem concerning a hero who freed the court of the Danish king Hrothgar from the ravages of the ogre Grendel and Grendel's mother and thus became king of the Geats. This raises some questions, including: who are "the Geats?" ...Nevertheless, I stressed to [my son that my son] should make his homework his absolute highest priority, allowing nothing to come ahead of it, but that first we would go out for Italian food. I like to do this with [my son because my son] always orders pizza. I am not allowed to eat this because it contains cholesterol, but it is a scientific fact that your body will not absorb cholesterol if you take it from another person's plate. [My son] drove us to the restaurant. I like to let him drive because it improves my circulation by causing my heart to beat 175,000 times a minute, although this particular trip was fairly relaxing right up until [my son] made the rookie error of actually stopping at a red light, rather than accelerating through it as is customary in Miami, the result being that we were rammed by the car behind us. The other driver, as required by local law, was uninsured and spoke no English. This gave us an educational opportunity to brush up on our Spanish by engaging in a dialogue with the other driver, which went like this: US (pointing to the light): Rojo! (Red!?) OTHER DRIVER: No! Amarillo! (No! Yellow!?) US: Like heck-o! ("We disagree!") OTHER DRIVER: Que son? Guitos? ("What are you? Geats?") It took two hours and two police officers to sort it out, with the outcome being that the other driver was given a ticket-o. Fortunately, my car sustained only superficial damage... [However, b]ecause of this delay, we were late getting back from the restaurant, but [my son] would have had time to do his homework, except that – this is true – the police had set up roadblocks around our neighbourhood and were not letting anybody in. An officer told us there had been several reports of shots fired, and police were going house-to-house with dogs... [My son] took it well. I think [my son] was hoping that one of the dogs would eat his copy of *Beowulf*. The police never found the source of the shots... But we had to wait at the roadblock for over an hour, which meant that [my son] did not start reading *Beowulf* until after midnight.

...IT'S never too early to start reading to your children. Even babies, who may not understand the stories, love the sound of your voice as you show them bright pictures. They will gain a love of books if they're read to from their earliest days. There are some beautiful collections out... that will bring youngsters pleasure for years to come. They are of such quality they could become family heirlooms for future generations.

...A new study finds that 20[% of NZ] school pupils have reading problems... [but] a visiting educator... claims to have part of the answer... Sandwiches are common fare for schoolchildren, but with glue in them? [A v]isiting education psychologist... uses the recipe as a successful method for teaching reading and spelling. [The psychologist] presented the programme, called Wordwork, to a School of Educational Psychological Studies seminar last month as part of his programme as a University of Auckland Foundation Visitor. The glue sandwich is part of what [the psychologist] calls the brand-new, high-tech terminology of reading... The method has three components. The first is a set of tools for helping children understand that words are sandwiches made up of consonant/vowel/consonant. What [the psychologist] calls "articulatory instructions" enable them to analyse how they produce consonant sounds, and they spend 15 to 20 minutes three or four times a week practising and exploring tongue and lip positions. A bonus is that the exercises enable children from linguistically impoverished backgrounds to learn to articulate sounds and pronounce words correctly. "Numerous studies have shown that students are more likely to become competent spellers if they have an awareness of speech sounds,"... Research also shows that students learn consonants with little difficulty; the vowels are the challenge, but they become more comprehensible when their function as glue letters are explained. There's nothing fundamentally new in all this. Generations learned to read using similar phonics-based methods. The difference is in the presentation and in the move away from rote-learning... In the second stage of the programme... children each become a letter, with cards around their necks showing the letter they represent[, and]... simple words are built as the

children stand next to each other. In the third part, children gradually learn a list of about 150 frequently used, irregularly spelled words, called “handy words,” such as “done,” “come.” Later they learn to recognise idiosyncratic groups of spellings, such as words ending in “ight.” [The psychologist] has been researching reading for more than 30 years and is Professor of Education and Psychology at Stanford University. [It describes NZ]’s... reading methods... particularly the “whole language” method, as having a “particular influence” in California. [The] approach gave children a rich involvement with literature which replaced reading materials that until then were typically dull and sterile. One of its drawbacks was that it left some children unable to spell. What they wrote was not only not conventional spelling... it was also unreadable. His research led him to develop Wordwork, which takes... the most useful aspects of whole language learning and combines them with phonetic learning.

...Few educational issues generate as much heat as children’s reading. This is entirely understandable because... language skills, and particularly reading skills, are basic to all learning. Unfortunately the heat generates much smoke, and flames are notoriously indiscriminate about what they singe. Journalists and editors show a singular mathematical ignorance in their headlining of statistics about the proportion of students “below the norm.” Surely it is obvious that wherever you establish norms you do it by dividing results into groups and ranking those groups from highest to lowest. You can’t have a norm-referenced system without, by definition, having some students below and some above a notional midpoint. The Ministry of Education affirms the high levels of reading ability in N[Z], against international standards, and it is right. But I am one who believes that our standards are not high enough and that we are capable of ensuring that all our children are capable readers, not just a proportion... Some of those deemed “below average” for their age are in fact only “below the average for their age in English” and have substantial skills in their first language... These students... [could] be superior bilingual academics in due course. However... the... majority of these students are not functionally literate when they enter secondary school – [and] many are certainly not sufficiently literate in English to cope with the curricular demands and texts needed for successful secondary and tertiary education. There is a great deal of knowledge now available on how to extend the English skills of such students, but most of the teachers working with the[m]... were trained before the knowledge was widely available... All good teacher education programmes emphasise the need for using a wide range of methods, including the sounds and structures of words as well as shape and context clues, in helping children to learn reading. And all would benefit from a systematic involvement of family in supporting children’s reading development... at every step... But what is really needed is a systematic programme of research to establish the actual language skills (in English and their other languages) of our students at each age level... Moreover, there must be a coordinated and sustained professional development programme for all teachers in multilingual settings, using the best of international knowledge as well as our considerable local expertise.

...[last week the ERO] criticised the teaching of reading in primary schools... While we need to address the problem of literacy in schools we have to recognise that schools are not the only place where solutions are required. Many businesses in N[Z] have serious difficulties as a result of low literacy and poor English language among their workforce – people who have been educated in N[Z] as well as migrant workers... While some larger companies may be able to provide literacy and language training, many small and medium-sized companies find it a complex and costly task with little assistance... Partnerships of the Government and business, education and employment are required... [□ T]he Ministry of Education is... participating in an international study which will produce the first national data about the literacy skill levels of the [NZ] adult population.

...In the mid-1970s when... the now-defunct National Coalition of Adult Education calculated that between 50,000 and 100,000 [NZ] adults had reading ages of less than 9.5 years, [their] estimates were publicly and privately scorned. Now we learn that, in the words of a research report on adult literacy just released by the Ministry of Education, “over a million adults are below the minimum level of competence in each of the three domains (prose, document and quantitative literacy tasks) required to meet the demands of everyday life. Within this group, 20[% of NZ]’s adult population was found to have poor literacy skills.” Even those figures are probably well on the conservative side, given the 75[%] response. Refusals usually include a disproportionately higher number of literacy difficulties. The report’s findings are important because they confirm what adult literacy practitioners have long known: the issue is real and extensive. People in the field have long been hamstrung by a lack of hard-nosed data on the nature and number of adults who experience literacy difficulties in their everyday lives. Unlike their colleagues across the Tasman and in most other western countries, N[Z] specialists in adult literacy have had to rely on hearsay and a few small-scale studies (on untypical populations such as prisoners and the unemployed) to try to convince successive ministers of education of the issue. The lack of policy and low levels of funding are testimony to how ineffective that has been... So what are the implications of the study? While we still await the full report, due in the middle of next year, it will be useful to encourage a full public debate, especially one that can avoid slipping into a school-bashing and school-defending exercise. In the interim, there are a number of obvious implications from the report. First, while the question of how literacy is tackled in schools is undoubtedly important, the adults who have these difficulties have already left school. They are parents, workers, citizens. The solution(s) therefore lie in... adult education. While there is some contribution from the Government, employers and the community (especially in thousands of voluntary hours given to running literacy programmes), their efforts do not make even a modest dent in the problem. At best, there are probably about 20,000 to 25,000 adults in literacy programmes provided by community providers, employers and training schemes. So the gap between the need and the provision is vast. Adult literacy merits explicit recognition on the educational map, where it has been woefully absent to date. Secondly, a wide range of groups need to scrutinise the report for its implications for the groups they represent. People working with the elderly, for example, should be concerned about that group’s very low levels of performance in document literacy tasks and work for more user-friendly documentation and awareness of the issue among those issuing forms.

...Imagine going into a panic every time you have to write, every time you try to read something. Routine trips to the bank or the doctor become a nightmare; filling out a job application, sitting a driver’s licence[, reading]... a bus timetable... the price tag on a piece of clothing... or writing a letter, impossible. Yet this is reality for thousands of adult N[Z]ers – and these are English speakers, not migrants struggling with a foreign language. “If someone says, ‘here, read this form,’ it’s a panic situation,” says [a 29-year-old... “And as soon as I panic I can’t do anything.” [The 29-year-old] has struggled with – and hidden – problems with literacy since primary school. “You work so hard to cover up. I’ve had a complex since I was 10 and a teacher really had a go at me about the way I had written something down; and once you’ve got a complex you’ve got a problem.” At high school [the illiterate] just sat quietly at the back of the class. “As long as you weren’t disruptive you got away with not doing the work.” [The illiterate] sat English, maths and clothing for... [SC.] passed only clothing, left school, and worked as a seamstress. Her brother “flew through school,” but her father, who built up a highly successful business, “couldn’t even fill out his own chequebook... Mum became the company secretary.” Now a mother herself, and into the second year of a part-time pattern-making course at AIT, [the 29-year-old] wants to improve her literacy skills. Writing and spelling are especially difficult... [but the 29-year-old] wants to do other courses... “And I want to be able to help... [my son, who] will be two in February... I don’t want always to have to say, ‘Wait until daddy gets home’.” [The 29-year-old thought about doing] a programme through a high-school. “But there was nothing there for me – only classes teaching foreigners. Then one school told me about this course at WEA.” It is three weeks since [the 29-year-old] went to her first night class with the Waitakere WEA Adult Literacy Centre. “It’s great. All of a sudden you don’t feel alone. You don’t need to feel embarrassed or ashamed. There are people high up in business, people with average jobs and people with no jobs and we are all in the same situation.” ...The Waitakere WEA adult literacy classes, like many of those run throughout the country, come under the umbrella of ARLA, the Adult Reading and Learning Assistance Federation. ARLA’s 2000 voluntary tutors work with more than 6500 adults. “This is a major issue which the country as a whole needs to wake up to,” says [a spokesperson for] ARLA.

...The International Adult Literacy Survey results released this week show that more than a million... [NZers] have insufficient English skills... While this figure included people for whom English was a foreign language, English was the first language of most respondents... Only about half of the adult population made level three – regarded internationally as the minimum required for individuals to meet the complex demands of everyday life and work... only 20[%] demonstrated a high level of literacy, with another 20[%] lacking basic skills... However, N[Z] is not too far out of step with countries like A[US, the US] and Britain. We are better than most at reading prose, but fall behind when it comes to deciphering a document... Contrary to popular opinion, our literacy standards are not slipping, the report says. Those under 50 performed better than those over 50... Yet... learning... to read is as easy as learning to speak... And a baby, of course... will both learn to speak and read at the same time... English has more words than any other language – about 550,000. Fortunately, as with most languages, only around 2000 make up 90% of most speech. And amazingly only around 400 make up most written books... About half the words in English are phonetic – you spell them roughly as they sound... Only about 70 sounds make up all the languages in the world. Every baby babbles in all those sounds – that's where language comes from. But English uses only 44 of them. If a baby hears only those 44 sounds, [it] will quickly learn to speak English, but has great difficulty later in learning a new language... So try to expose your infant to as many foreign languages as possible...

ALMOST everyone can learn almost anything... I've videotaped children around the world who can speak three languages, read fluently, write well, do basic mathematics and develop perfect music pitch – well before starting school at five or six. And I've taped... primary school children up to five years behind in their reading who have caught up in only 10 weeks; others at secondary school who have compressed a three-year French course into eight weeks. But now, major breakthroughs in two fields should make these achievements commonplace. • We now know how to store most of the world's knowledge and make it available instantly to almost anyone anywhere. • ...we also know much more about how the human brain works. And that shows we are using only a small part of our potential ability to learn... This dual revolution has the potential to turn most schooling upside down and inside out.

...Ingenuity has always been an asset to teachers; in many schools it has now become a necessity... [While] primary and intermediate schools' spending... rose from \$25.53 per pupil in 1989 to \$28.71 in 1995 – an increase of 12[% – s]pending by secondary schools on books has declined significantly since the introduction of Tomorrow's Schools... [I]n 1989 the total average spending per pupil on library books and for books used in the classroom was \$59... by 1995 it had declined to \$43.20 – a 27[% decrease. Even]... secondary schools in more affluent areas can't always afford to update textbooks... The state of flux of the... curriculum, and uncertainties as to how the qualifications framework will be worked out, have also contributed to schools' reluctance to invest large sums in books which may quickly become inappropriate... Even foreign language departments – an area less subject to change than others – no longer buy the large textbooks which used to form the basis of teaching.

...a leading children's publisher says... the Government ha[s] whipped the funding away from information technology programmes for primary schools, and without that, only the rich schools could prepare their pupils for high-tech... jobs. "Our politicians go on about wanting a skilled workforce, but if you don't actually... create the skills you're not going to have a skilled workforce. And there's no use starting when these kids are in high school. If you wait till then it's a total waste of time." [The publisher], whose Sunshine learn-to-read programmes are in classrooms of more than 23 countries, said Singapore and the US... are... committed... to the task of teaching primary children to become computer literate because otherwise they will not be employable in future. Both countries have targeted children from less affluent families... [S]chools in less affluent areas were the ones who most urgently needed assistance b[ecause] they could not afford computers. "Children at the richer schools mostly have computers at home anyway. But at the lower socio-economic schools, some kids don't even know how to turn a computer on." The Ministry of Education funded an information technology contract for three years, halving the available funds after the first year and then halving them again after the second year. [The]Associate Education Minister... said the Government was working on a policy on computer literacy but it was unlikely that would surface within the next year.

...A NEW generation of schools is being built with the latest technology. The Ministry of Education has plans for up to 40 new schools over the next decade... These schools of the future are linked to the world with fibre optic cables... The latest to open is Hibiscus Coast Intermediate... north of Auckland. Each of the 16 classrooms has at least two computers, which can access the Internet and communicate with each other via e-mail. Each class also has a telephone on the teacher's desk... In the information technology classes, the teacher plugs a laptop computer into a machine which projects the work on to a large screen for all the class to see.

...Expect a bold vision for the use of information technology in schools... this Thursday... In hushed tones, [the]Treasurer... will speak of the dawn of a new revolution in education, and unveil an ambitious plan to have every school connected to the Internet and its vast world of knowledge by the end of 1998... A 1996 Ministry of Education survey shows that only 32[%] of our schools are connected to the Internet and the ratio... is... one computer for every 10 high school students and one for every 19 primary school students. The 1996 survey did not, however, discriminate between computers used by pupils and those used by teachers and administrative staff... A ratio of 1:5 is... [needed for NZ] to "become one of the most highly skilled nations in the world"... [The Treasurer will] stress that technological literacy is a must for our children – how preparing them for a lifetime of computer use is as essential as teaching them reading, writing and 'rithmetic... that using a computer should be as natural for a 5-year-old as reading a book... There will be other noble goals too: equality of access for all... technology training for teachers and a national infrastructure to administer the curriculum and educational resources... The House will give... a standing ovation. Sorry, just kidding. Don't expect any of the above.

...Parents worried about their children missing out on the three Rs at school are turning to educational software to fill the gaps. Sales of computer learning programmes for youngsters are leaping ahead as disgruntled mums and dads take on the role of teacher. "The family computer is playing an increasingly important role in early childhood education," said... [the] Asia-Pacific managing director of The Learning Company. "There is a growing dissatisfaction with education systems around the world. Parents are not confident their children are gaining basic learning skills. They want to take some control... Parents buy education software for two reasons... Their child is falling behind at school and needs help with reading or maths, or the parents are highly motivated to make sure their child achieves his or her full potential." The... Learning Company claims to be the largest independent education software company in the world. It has more than 500 software products... Top of the pile is the *Reader Rabbit's* CD-Rom series (\$59.95 each) which caters for tots as young as 18 months through to preschoolers and early primary school years... The Learning Company's education titles... are researched for six months before development begins. Two cameras – one focused on a youngster and the other on the computer screen – record reactions during child testing. Programs in development are constantly revised to improve segments where a child might get bored or frustrated. Children find software easier to use than adults, [the managing director] said. "They have more patience to explore, are very methodical and have no concept of making a mistake."

...All fifth form[ers]... will be sent a card this month setting out a study programme for [SC], and the Internet address to download an interactive revision programme. Passing Potential is the brain-child of... [the] managing director of Birkenhead-based Textus Publishing... A team of teachers and writers was put together to prepare revision modules on the most popular subjects... "They needed to write with the mind set they were in a class talking to kids, second guessing the kids' responses, even... silly ones, and having a back-up explanation." The initial subjects downloadable... [ar]e English, math, science and accounting, with a special course available on Macbeth. They include questions, answers, background explanations and a copy of last year's exam paper for students to work through... access to discussion groups for teachers and students, and quick repair of any mistake or omissions... Courses on history, geography and economics should be ready by early next year, and Textus is considering more senior

titles, business training and life skills topics... [- but] it was not economic to design revision packages for subjects taken by fewer than 10,000 students... [However, while the immediate market is N[Z], “much of what we have produced will be internationally applicable. The science could be picked up in A[US], Britain and the U[S]... We just don’t know how big this can get.” ...[Textus] has been unable to find any similar products on-line... The software is stored on a Florida-based server because of the relative costs. Downloading will take an hour for each subject, and students will be advised to wait for off-peak times. Each subject costs \$45, payable on-line by credit card. That buys the password, specific to the PC onto which the encrypted software has been downloaded. Users will need Windows 95 or Windows 3.1. A Macintosh version was considered but dropped because some graphical question formats weren’t supported... [In related news, i]nteractive video-conferencing lectures could save... time and money by reducing travel costs and bringing remote expertise into the classroom... [says the] director of Caltech Capital Partners... – [who] recently gave his first remote lecture on venture capital from the boardroom at ECNZ in Auckland to a class at the School of Management at Waikato University in Hamilton... [However, e]vidence is accumulating in the U[S] that high-tech classrooms cause more harm than good...

Across America, school districts have been cutting traditional programmes to lavish scarce time and money on computer education. In New Jersey, the state cut school aid then spent \$15 million on classroom computers. “Shop classes,” where the exercise of making things out of real objects has long taught important building and creative-thinking skills, have been almost entirely replaced by “technology education programmes.” Music classes have been computerised. In Massachusetts, a school district dropped proposed teaching positions in art, music and physical education, then spent \$500,000 on computers. (Ironically, a half-dozen scientific studies have suggested that music and art classes build the physical size of a child’s brain and its powers for subjects such as language, maths, science and engineering... far more than computer work.) Schools in many communities consider themselves backward unless their computer gear is state-of-the-art, causing them to not only invest in costly multimedia computers but also in fancy devices such as video-conferencing systems. While such equipment is often donated[(e.g., some companies give their old computers to a local school after purchasing new computers)], schools are left with the long-term responsibilities – system maintenance, constant teacher training and software upgrades[(‘the Year 2000 bug is a “back breaker”’)] – which generally costs far more than the initial hardware and software combined. A widely-circulated business study has concluded that, over time, these burdens account for 86[%] of a computer system’s costs. And that’s before the thefts... [Yet the] majority of educational... programmes encourage laziness. [In addition, students] often spend hours adorning papers with glitzy computer graphics or haphazardly grab material from the Internet that is seriously flawed and that neither teachers nor students have the skill or time to evaluate... A few sophisticated programmes, particularly for older students, can stimulate learning but... most programmes... [especially those for] the very young... are little more than video games. Reader Rabbit, [which is]... used in more than 100,000 schools, was found to cause a 50[%] decline in children’s ability to think creatively. Older students often end up racing through computerised maths drills and other exercises in a guessing frenzy. As teachers rush about attending to computer glitches, the lessons at hand can be ignored. Some teachers mourn the move away from “hands-on” learning materials, such as beans or coloured blocks. This is the stuff, child-development experts believe, that deeply imprints knowledge into a child’s brain by transmitting the lessons of experience through sensory pathways. Some developmentalists are further concerned that the computer screen’s flat, mechanistic nature overly stresses the brain’s left half, where sequential thinking occurs, while the right brain, engine of impressionistic thinking and creative analysis, gets short shrift... The notion that computers boost teaching and learning grows out of a ream of studies compiled by [the US President]’s technology task force. The problem is that the bulk are highly unreliable. Study conditions were artificial and not easily repeated; negative findings weren’t included; or, most frequently, subtle but important biases polluted the attempt at scientific control... Arguments that classroom IT is vital for tomorrow’s high-tech job market are even hollower. I’ve spoken with employers in a broad array of firms including high-tech businesses. All of them said that when new employees arrive they can be taught the necessary computer skills in a matter of weeks. What employers want... is a broad base in liberal arts and in real-world experience. As a dean at the Iowa school of engineering used to say: “The best engineers were the farm boys” – because they knew how machinery really worked. There is a move away from the educational traditions that encouraged students to rely on their brains and five senses, and developed their abilities to communicate with people. And it’s a move toward reliance on a machine, which too often dumbs down children’s thinking rather than expand it. Computer promoters argue that they don’t want to lessen attention to fundamentals and real-world creativity; they’re simply adding one more skill. In the real world, however, this vision is unrealistic... But schools have been down this road with educational technology many times before. In 1922, Thomas Edison predicted that “the motion picture is destined to revolutionise our educational system and... in a few years it will supplant largely, if not entirely, the use of textbooks.” Decades later, similar hopes were floated for the portable radio, then again for “teaching machines” in the late 1950s. Each round of technology was backed... with research proving its academic value. When each failed to deliver, it was blamed on teacher resistance, or school bureaucracy, then finally on the machines themselves. Schools were then sold on the next generation of technology, as is occurring today, and the lucrative cycle started all over again.

...Computers will not hinder learning for N[Z] school pupils providing there is a balance between their use and other lessons. That is the message from those involved in teaching, most of whom felt N[Z]’s experience differed enormously from the U[S]. A lecturer at the University of Auckland’s School of Education... said... Kiwi teachers tended to have a “pedagogical” approach to the use of computers – making pupils use them as part of an overall learning process... Computers had been relatively scarce in our schools until recently... and that had allowed the use of computers to be integrated into the rest of the school curriculum... The principal of the Auckland College of Education... said the rate of technological change had forced the College to alter the way it teaches computers skills to its own trainees[, while a] Christchurch College of Education lecturer... said teachers needed to keep up with technology or students would outgrow them.

...A new generation of “haves” and “have-nots” could result if students’ access to computers in schools remains uneven. An E[RO] report on the use of [IT] in schools said it had the potential to improve student performance but only if well managed... Those who missed out on the “increasingly essential” knowledge and information skills were less likely to find jobs, which could add to the cycle of disadvantage for some families. However, the report said there was no apparent link between the use of [IT] and a school’s socio-economic status, with the barriers more likely to be with the board and staff understanding of and commitment to computers. While some of the country’s schools had had computer equipment since the mid-1970s, many boards still did not feel confident or knowledgeable enough to choose and invest in the technology.

...Schools must upgrade classroom furniture to prevent a legacy of neck and back pain for students, say medical experts. Some pupils, particularly those taller than average for their age, experience discomfort with standard chairs and desks... A study by [a] Tauranga osteopath... of children at a Bay of Plenty high school found 95% complained of back pain. A survey of 500 Hamilton students discovered 50% of boys and 30% of girls showed signs of a degenerative spinal cord before leaving school. “There were no sporting factors. It was because of their sitting positions at school... These people have an increase in more serious back problems later in life.” ...At least one school, Carey College Christian School in Auckland, has children measured twice a year and furniture modified accordingly. A physiotherapist also spoke to the 50 students about sitting correctly... An Ergonomics Society taskforce had succeeded in stalling a new standard for school furniture, saying it was already outdated... [The osteopath] challenged the Education Ministry to take responsibility and provide more money to improve furniture... [Currently, boards of trustees] decided what priorities they spent [school] budgets on.

...School boards of trustees say they will fight any move by the Government to strip them of their powers and effectively make them the school committees of old... At present the school board is the employer of all staff, but under rumoured changes boards would employ only the principal,

who would then be responsible for the hiring and firing of other staff... However, many... principals also taught and would not be able to cope with the extra workload the suspected changes would create.

...THERE is a certain quiet evangelical air about [the]Timaru Girls' High School principal[, who]... has a clear idea of the professional role of a secondary principal, a role that is all about seizing the moral high ground. [The principal] stepped down from the top job last week, four years after refusing to do so in one of the most bitter public educational rows the country has seen. But [the principal] has no regrets. Even in retrospect, [the principal says it] would not have veered from the determined path [it] trod in 1993 after being dismissed by the then Board of Trustees, which sacked her after a series of intense internal wrangles over how the school should be run. The slightly built and quietly spoken principal fought back, taking the board to the Employment Court for unjustified dismissal. It was one of the longest hearings in the court's history, running for 45 days, and made headlines across the nation. The June 1994 decision by [the court] was overwhelmingly in [the principal]'s favour, awarding her \$62,500 in compensation and reinstating her position. The board promptly resigned, a temporary commissioner was appointed and the school was left with legal costs of \$400,000. That has been paid off from school reserves and a suspended loan courtesy of the Ministry of Education.

...The playing fields stretch away from the classroom blocks... It's possible to see where the tall wire fence previously separated two schools; a concrete line through the grass marks the boundary. Little kids in bare feet run past groups of teenagers... a trio of girls walks past: "Kia ora, welcome to Southern Cross." Te Taki O Autahi, the Southern Cross Campus, is a collection of three schools, the former Nga Tapuwae College, Mangere Intermediate, and Southern Cross Primary. Since the beginning of the year they have co-operated as one... to provide education... for... 1100... [students while] calling themselves Southern Cross junior, middle and senior schools. It has been a quiet, behind-the-scenes amalgamation. The schools agreed there had to be a better way to deliver education in Mangere. Two of the schools had hit rock bottom. Nga Tapuwae was rocketed into public attention in 1994 when it received a scathing report from the E[RO] suggesting it be closed. It is 21 years since the Mangere high school opened to cater for a rapidly expanding population. For at least half of its existence the school had been split by in-fighting, reports of violence and threats, power struggles, communication breakdowns, poor educational achievements, and truancy. At the beginning of 1995 the board of trustees was dismissed and the school was handed over to a commissioner, [a]former Auckland Grammar School principal... who was given six months to prove why the school should stay open. [The commissioner] said the issues [the former principal] was sent to resolve involved massive exaggeration, perceived problems and personal agendas. Once the communication lines were re-established, it became obvious the factions within the school wanted the same things, especially when it was pointed out that the school was there for young people, not as a grandstand for personalities... [The commissioner] said while his teaching career had never taken him to South Auckland that was an advantage, allowing him to look at situations in an independent way... Staff at the school were asked to think laterally, brainstorm and come up with ideas of how education could be delivered in the area. The campus idea was born. Originally staff had envisaged combining with neighbouring Mangere Intermediate School and going from form one to seven but just down the road at Southern Cross Primary another commissioner... was also looking at the challenge of education in South Auckland. The grandfather, former business[person] and chief executive officer of the Spirit of Adventure Trust... knew little about education but believed strongly in young people. After all [the second commissioner] was one of the children people had written off – a kid from a solo-mother home, who found school boring, failed [SC] and spent PE classes smoking in the bush. It was through his work with the ARK Trust for at-risk children that [the second commissioner] began to formulate the ideas that would lead him to his role at Southern Cross... As with Nga Tapuwae the situation at Southern Cross had degenerated to a power play between personalities, to the point where there were numerous personal grievance claims against the board when it was dismissed by [the]Education Minister... The... [second commissioner] says Tomorrow's Schools was doomed to fail in South Auckland. "It is a recipe for disaster. Schools are educational businesses with multi-million-dollar budgets." Schools in the area have smaller pools of parents with financial expertise than their counterparts in other parts of the country... Three schools combining on one campus had never been attempted before, and the [Education]ministry did not have systems in place to deal with the nuts and bolts... A facilitator... is credited with doing a lot of hard and tedious work... "There are no simple solutions but it will work. That's the bottom line, not what will happen if it doesn't work – it has to work." ... "One school, no excuses" is the philosophy. When children enter the school at age 5 and don't leave until they finish seventh form teachers cannot pass onto other schools students who have not met the educational requirements... There is educational continuity and less chance for kids to fall through the cracks during the transitions from one level of education to the next. There is also a whanau feeling, where big brothers and sisters can look out for their siblings and where families can develop loyalty, commitment and pride in one school... [The former Auckland Grammar principal believes that c]urriculum, outstanding teachers, structural discipline, a caring environment and pastoral care lead to a quality time in the classroom. "If you make that your number one priority, curriculum and quality of delivery resolves most of the problems, but if that is boring then all the behavioural negatives kids bring to the class are made worse. Get that right and 80[%] of the youngsters are fine; they don't need counselling and constant care. Having said that there are some very sad youngsters who get massive help from Southern Cross... but... the solution is quality teaching and curriculum." ...Getting a consistent curriculum in place for five-year-olds through to seventh formers is under way in each subject, and for the first time the schools have firm statistics on where the students' abilities and weaknesses lie... [The commissioner] agrees with comments by [the]Chief Education Review Officer... that there are some incompetent teachers in most schools... and those who can't be upskilled should be persuaded to look at a career change... But... says the majority of teachers at the three schools have devoted their careers to teaching in South Auckland and... that the staff work "hard as hell." "I've always believed in the X factor and teaching going the extra-distance and I've seen the results of that time and time again." [Editor's note: The commissioner wasn't seeing too well the day the then 'principal criticised another school for the unruly behaviour of its students at an Auckland University performance of Shakespeare. The offenders were Auckland Grammar students who had told concerned officials that they were from Green Bay High School'!]

...Parents have demanded the resignation of the board of trustees at a... school which has had five chair[persons]... in six months. If board members at Island Bay School refuse to go, the parents... will petition the Minister of Education... to appoint a commissioner to run the school.

...The chair[perso]n of the Tolaga Bay Area School board of trustees... said Tomorrow's Schools and self-management had not done the... East Coast... any favours... [His comments follow those of] a teaching professional... [who] says... Tomorrow's Schools had left schools with little support, and the idea they should be self-managing had not worked on the coast[, where some]... schools may have to close if education in the area is to improve... While an E[RO] report highlights the dismal education received by the coast's 1350 students, it does not suggest closing schools. But the former principal of Ruatoria's Ngata College... who is now an educational consultant and a member of the panel reviewing the review office, said... some schools [were] within 10 minutes of each other and while communities were deeply parochial about their schools, sometimes it was at the expense of their children's education. The E[RO] report, released this week, says that at least 65[%] of the coast's 20 schools are failing and the Government needs to take urgent action to improve the situation... [In related news, p]rimary and secondary teachers are pushing for school boards to be given the power to dump trouble-making trustees. The [NZEI and the PPTA] want the trustees' code of conduct given teeth so that boards can discipline members who breach it. The unions have received numerous reports of trustees escaping any action after causing major problems in schools. The Minister of Education can sack an entire board, but no one has power over individual trustees... "If a teacher or principal does something wrong, the board can discipline and fire them. Board members should also be in this position,"... said... the president of the [NZEI].

...Rathkeale College's practice of hard labour as a method of discipline has won the support of several Auckland schools. Boys transgressing Rathkeale's rules have had to hump rocks from a local river into the school grounds, where they are used for landscaping, since the private Wairarapa school was founded in 1964. But the practice has recently raised parental ire and the families of two pupils forced to invest 90 minutes

of adolescent muscle power in the rock-lifting exercise, have complained to the Commissioner for Children and the E[RO]. "I can't see any problem," says... [the] principal of Glenfield College. "It's good healthy exercise. It depends on the spirit in which the punishment is given. But if it is done in an avuncular way and not as a public humiliation, then no one's tender sensibilities should be damaged." ...Students are no worse now than they have ever been, [the principal] says... but they do have a new attitude to rights – especially their own... [The] principal of Avondale College, declares that Rathkeale is "on the right path with the rocks" and "the only thing to fear about discipline is the lack of it." Avondale College pupils who break their school's behaviour standards with a serious misdemeanour also find themselves facing tasks involving physical labour. Verbal or physical abuse, for example, earns a three-day suspension from lessons in favour of a work detail, lasting from 8 am to 4 pm for each of those days. Trimming edges, weeding and digging over gardens or a spot of painting and common activities, carried out under the watchful eye of the school caretaker. "One of the most amazing results is that the kids feel very positive about completing physical and necessary work... [S]ending pupils home for a period of suspension is just a waste of everyone's time." ...Work projects within the school grounds also play a part in the disciplinary process at Massey High School... At St Stephen's School for Maori boys, in Bombay... [- where, a]gain, the end result for an erring pupil is physical work and odd jobs... [-] considerable work has been done on discipline since a disastrous ERO report in 1995... [By the way, t]he principal of Te Kao Area School... has defended her professional leadership and denied verbally abusing teachers in the wake of a damning report on the isolated Far North... composite area school (new entrants to form seven)...

Te Kao Area School does not look "unsafe." Two huge palm trees at its entrance give the spacious, clean school the appearance of a tropical resort. Tucked among rolling green hills in a valley just 46km from Cape Reinga, the school is adorned with students' vibrant art work. They seem happily engrossed in their class work and the lunchtime scene seems much like that at any other school in N[Z]. But the ERO... says it found evidence of adults physically and verbally abusing students, low levels of literacy and exam pass rates, poor attendance and bullying... Its principal... said: "We're still in shock. We can't believe the report... our education standards are adequate." ...However, some members of the Far North community agree with the concerns highlighted in the report and believe the ministry should intervene... Senior students complained to review officers about disruptive classmates, cancellation of classes, inconsistent delivery and a lack of challenge in the school's learning programmes... At least two of its... 76... students think the school lacks discipline. The [NZ] *Herald* found them joy-riding around a local beach instead of sitting [in a class. The]... twin brothers... say students see the school as a free ride. "If you don't want to go, you just stay home. If they were a bit tougher we'd probably try a bit harder,"... Both boys, whom a teacher described as once "extremely bright and full of potential," now plan to drop out and go on the dole as soon as they are old enough. "Our younger brother is doing all right, though... Mum sent him to Mt Albert Grammar in Auckland to get a better education." Other students are also bypassing Te Kao. Some take the... hour... long bus trip daily to Kaitaia College... A Far North educator, who did not want to be named, said many parents put money aside so they could afford to send their children to other schools. "Te Kao's main problem is that it[s]... small roll makes it hard to get subjects that the children want, so they go elsewhere."

...A Northland principal says [it] is prepared to go to jail to stop the Ministry of Education removing eight "surplus" classrooms from his school. But the ministry believes that Bay of Islands College in Kawakawa actually has more than 20 surplus classrooms and that the school is lucky not to be losing more. "The school has 537 students and 51 classrooms," said the ministry's Northland district property manager... "...all we want is eight to give to other Northland schools that desperately need them."

...A Northland school sent a class home for three days last week because of a teacher shortage... despite a warning from the Ministry of Education that such moves were illegal... About six parents rang up concerned about the situation, but they were supportive of the school stand... A teacher aide supervised one pupil who could not stay home... [T]he 239-pupil school was one short of its entitlement of 12 teachers which, combined with winter illnesses, had put the school under pressure.

...Schools are facing a severe shortage of relief staff – particularly in South Auckland... The president of the N[ZEI]... said the shortage was worsening as... winter illnesses took their toll... Bairds Mainfreight School, in Otara, was forced to double up classes and cancel remedial lessons when it could not find a relief teacher this week. The principal... said the pool of 30 relievers regularly used by the school had dried up as many had found long-term work or permanent positions... But the Ministry of Education says it has 700 unemployed teachers on its books and not enough schools are applying for incentives to attract staff.

...Aussies are being invited to teach Kiwis a thing or two, in a move to entice more... teachers across the ditch. "New Zealand" needs "Six Hundred More Teachers" at both primary and secondary level, say Ministry of Education advertisements placed in big A[US]n papers at the weekend... The... ads played on the light-hearted rivalry between the countries... The difference in accents has long been a source of amusement, with "Sex" being the word most Kiwis hear when A[US]ns count past five. Graffiti on a Bondi overbridge stated "N[Z] sux," and someone had added "A[US] nil." While A[US]n teachers are paid more than their N[Z] counterparts, a survey shows that for A[US]ns already teaching here, the chance to travel and gain experience, and a lack of positions at home are stronger motivators than money. About 200 A[US]n teachers joined N[Z] schools in the 18 months to April... The ads are the first in a \$100,000 campaign also targeting teachers in Britain and Canada.

...Two Auckland schools were left in the lurch by overseas teachers breaking contracts to take up teaching jobs back home. The Northern Hemisphere new school year starts about this time... The principal of Matipo School in Te Atatu... said a Canadian teacher at his school gave 3 1/2 weeks' notice before leaving to take a job in Canada. The school... felt ripped off given the time and effort staff had put into the teacher's professional development. [The principal] has acted as a recruitment officer for Canadian teachers and said six of the 46 teachers [it] signed up had already returned. Overseas teachers are reimbursed up to \$3000 for their costs when they arrive and provided they stay longer than 20 weeks do not have to pay the money back... Te Atatu Intermediate also had a teacher leave at short notice recently to return to work in Canada. The principal... said the teacher was caring and enthusiastic during his time there but his premature leaving had created a lot of headaches. "Of course we wish him the best but [the teacher] really did suit himself." [The principals] questioned whether the Government should hold over part of the teachers' relocation expenses until they completed the contracted time. However... the senior manager for TeachNZ at the Ministry of Education, said that would not work because not all teachers are guaranteed a year's work by schools.

...The appeal of home is being sweetened by a \$3000 grant in a bid to lure back N[Z] teachers travelling in wintry Europe. As the Northern Hemisphere days get colder... the Ministry of Education is hoping more teachers will succumb to the temptation of a fully paid trip home... The Ministry of Education will [also] spend about \$50,000 in the next two days to bring South Island teaching graduates to the North Island. Seventy-three teaching graduates will fly to Auckland today and meet school principals keen to lure them into a job.

... "I wish they needed teachers so badly in Christchurch," said [a teaching graduate while scanning] a map of Auckland to find Bucklands Beach. Other graduate teachers from the South Island echoed the feeling as they booked in for interviews with principals from 35 Auckland schools yesterday... Many spoken to viewed Auckland as a last resort if they could not get work on the Mainland... [P]rincipals at the recruitment fair were confident that the teacher shortage was easing. Unlike last year, the graduates outnumbered the principals two to one... There were 320 vacancies in Auckland schools last week, 200 fewer than at the same time last year... The manager of... TeachNZ... said teacher recruitment was under control[, and] attributed it largely to foreigners, particularly Canadians, staying longer than expected... [But one] principal who was looking for four teachers... preferred to hire N[Z]ers because it was a waste of the country's resources to train them and not give them a job.

...a[n] a]cademic expert says N[Z]ers are becoming numerically inept because of a chronic shortage of math[s]... teachers... Concern about N[Z]ers' poor abilities at maths... come as the... Ministry of Education... prepares to release more details about the third International Maths and

Science Study. Initial details of the study, released this year, showed that N[Z] 9-year-olds were only average in maths... The director of the University of Auckland's School of Mathematics and Information Sciences... said the shortage was causing difficulties in schools. "Many principals are... putting anyone in front of their [maths] classes." An associate professor at Victoria University's Mathematics and Science Education Centre... said... "If it's your child in the third form getting the PE teacher for maths, then you're not pleased. Some replacements are wonderful but some see it as a real drag and that's when kids start switching off." ...The shortage was partly caused by private-sector employers nabbing maths scholars as they graduated... [M]aths was becoming more important, especially in the manufacturing and processing industries, which had become computerised.

...AUCKLAND University's Medical School has changed its entry criteria for school leavers. From next year the school will drop its minimum entry level from 400 to 385 bursary marks and... all school leavers will be required to have studied at least one arts subject at bursary level... The decision... [is] in response to concerns that incoming students to all faculties were not competent in English and were specialising too early at secondary school... [A] study noted that in 1993 only 48 of 115 medical students enrolled at... [the medical s]chool had completed English to bursary level... [T]he change in criteria... means some students with poor communication skills will not get into medical school despite having higher marks.

...In N[Z], where students are now taking loans to finance their tertiary education and arguably finding those a deterrent to tertiary education participation... and where there are unemployed graduates... employers are resorting to immigration to meet skill shortages... We have a crude labour market where prospective employers and employees use little more than the spot market of newspaper ads to meet their needs, while tertiary institutions churn out graduates irrespective of market needs... [They should, instead, be d]elivering graduates the market really wants... An example from a country where funding of education comes from the ultimate customers might illuminate. In Japan it is common for employers to reach agreement with education providers, even at high school level, to deliver certain numbers of graduates in specific courses this year and over a number of years into the future. The employer guarantees these graduates further training and ultimately employment. The high school gets funding for the year from this source... [Incidentally, a]n education lobby group is pushing for changes to legislation that dictates how schools run their day. The Education Accord said the 70-year-old half-day system was out of date and should be replaced by an hourly one to give schools more flexibility in how they ran their classes. Schools at present have to operate classes for at least two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon to constitute a full school day. The accord wants this changed to a minimum four-hour teaching day. [■ Since '1996, students have had a six-week summer holiday and three two-week breaks between each of the four terms – whose lengths vary between 9 and 11 weeks. Some schools may have Ministry of Education agreement to vary their term dates.']

...Despite secondary school teacher pressure to change school term dates, the Minister of Education... has announced school terms for next year that differ little from this year's. [The minister] said... the secondary teachers' union had pushed for the dates of all terms to be set to fit the needs of the senior stage of schooling where preparing students for exams was important. "To design the whole system to suit just one subsection would be unfair to others..." [the minister] said... Next year primary schools must be open for 394 half-days and secondary schools for 380 half days... Meanwhile, [the Act Party]... has set up an education taskforce to... tour the country seeking ways to reverse the "tumbling of standards..." ...in 1972 N[Z] topped the world in reading. "Since then, we have toppled from first to fifth, sixth, eighth... in maths and science we are now around 24th..." ...New maths and science curriculums had been introduced since 1993 [so] it was not yet known whether they had improved the standard.

...It has been more than 35 years since the last social studies curriculum was introduced to primary schools. Yesterday its replacement, which will cover from primary through to secondary, was launched by the Minister of Education... It has taken five years to develop, been through two drafts, was on hold for 15 months and has been the subject of 370 submissions... The curriculum is broken into five strands of learning: social organisation; culture and heritage; place and environment; time, continuity and change; resources and economic activities. The processes used in the learning are inquiry, values exploration and social decision making. Students will look at issues in the settings of N[Z], the Pacific, Europe, Asia and other locations. They will also examine topics from bicultural, multicultural, and gender inclusive perspectives, and examine current events and future issues. The curriculum will be introduced over the next two years... One of the main changes in the new curriculum is to state clearly what students should learn at school and what they should achieve. "Students will be taught to critically question the world and the way it works. They are not asked to memorise dates and capital cities, but are instead taught skills and processes of thinking through issues and understanding the reasons for doing things." The curriculum would also allow students to examine their own values and the collective values of society.

...When people start talking about turning the core focus of schooling to "values education," it might be considered woolly stuff. Begin suggesting that the traditional subjects like maths, science and English each give up a period to make room for it and you are asking for opposition. But that's what the country's private schools are hoping to do as they... seek half a million dollars in sponsorships and donations... to introduce a values curriculum over the next three years... The values education envisaged would be more than human development, sex education, drug and alcohol education and health studies rolled into one. It would teach the core values of the school's community... The director of the Independent Schools Council... said that while many of the independent schools had a church focus, the values would be those at the heart of the world's different religions and cultures – "things like honesty, integrity, loyalty and love." ...The initial conference on constructing a values education programme was held last weekend... Key speakers included... a British expert in youth and education policy, and... a clinical psychologist at the Centre for Adolescent Health at the Melbourne Royal Children's Hospital[– who]... linked values education with the prevention of youth suicide, saying schools needed to equip young people with skills to help them "survive on life's battlefield." ...[the British expert's] main message was that as well as teaching the traditional "three R's," schools should add a fourth, relationships. "Schools should be about teaching young people to construct a life, not just to get qualifications. Although those things are important, there is no point in having all the degrees in the world if you are lonely or can't form a stable relationship with anyone else or can't communicate with your parents or kids or can't be a good neighbour." [The British expert] said if schools were prepared to allocate 15[%] of curriculum time to serious human relations and values education by taking time from the traditional subjects, the achievement in those traditional subjects would also improve... [T]he productivity of the nation depended on the "personal sanity" of citizens. If people felt they knew themselves and were valued, they would make informed decisions on what they studied, the areas they worked in and the people with whom they chose to have relationships.

...interactive [IT], especially the Internet, has totally deregulated teaching and learning on a global scale. The result is that much of what is happening now is downright confusing for teachers, students and parents... Meanwhile... the market force madness in the tertiary sector[means] universities, polytechs and colleges of education [are] chasing each other's tails without any sign of Government intervention... As chair[per]son of the Education Forum until this year I have strongly supported choice, independence and deregulation in education but never the total abdication of the state in strategic leadership and sensible intervention where necessary. In the midst of this massive, often confusing, change there is a greater search for the meaning and principle in life. Having been to independent school conferences in A[US and NZ] this year I am more than ever convinced that one word, "values," will be a key word of the future in education... Let me give two examples of what I am getting at, because "values" can so easily equate with vagueness... One prime educational value is vigour of learning. I take my example for that from a study released this year by the Public Agenda Foundation in New York entitled "Getting By – What [US] Teenagers Really Think About Their Schools." It is clear from that study that most youngsters – black, white, Hispanic – agreed that the public schools demand little of them and that they had a hunger for structure, discipline and more rigorous standards. Many felt insulted with the minimal demands placed on them; many stated unequivocally that they would work harder if more were expected of them. By contrast, students in independent schools had a far more positive

attitude about their schools and were far less likely to complain about the absence of challenge. A key reason for that is parental support... A second prime educational value is clarity of moral guidelines. My example here comes from a story told by the Governor-General... in a speech in August this year. At a New Jersey High School, a [girl] student found \$1000 in a purse and turned it in. The next day a guidance counsellor led a discussion of the incident with a group of students. The counsellor asked them what they thought of the girl's actions. They concluded that the girl had been foolish to turn in the money. The students then asked... what... the counsellor... thought of the girl's action. [The counsellor] told them that [it] believed the girl had done the right thing, but... would not try to "force his values on them." [The counsellor] later commented: "If I come from the position of what is right and what is wrong, then I am not their counsellor." That is a grotesque example of the philosophy of moral relativism which has bedevilled the last third of this century. As the Governor-General said: "This philosophy asserts that what is right and what is wrong is a matter of private taste and individual opinion only. We cannot be judgmental." Plainly that philosophy needs to be exposed up and down the country for what it is – rubbish! ...Education deals with adolescents' hearts as well as their minds and society at large is sending out too many mixed messages. If the family is in trouble, who is going to teach the importance of good parenting? ...As [a]Professor... said at the recent N[Z] Herald-sponsored independent schools conference on values education: if core values are not taught in schools we shall merely be producing "clever devils" – people who are high achievers but lack the values framework for their personal development.

...[I have a mantra borrowed from the Governor-General's speech to the Values in Education summit. "Adults must not ask young people to do what they do not do themselves, nor can you ask a school to stand for values the wider society ignores – history is built around the gap between what we claim and how we act." Values education in schools enables children to understand their own values and the values of others, and to develop a meaningful and positive code for living. The aim is to show that all of us, adults and children, make our values conscious and examined and live our lives by these. This is living with integrity. And integrity is an extremely powerful partner in life's journey. In an ideal world, our children would grow up surrounded by teachers and parents – indeed every adult they come in contact with – who would consistently and lovingly model truly positive values. Nurtured thus, our children would develop into confident, courageous, compassionate citizens, contributing to their family, community and society in responsible and constructive ways. A noble vision this for our imperfect world. Values education, like every other type of education, is a journey towards improving our human condition. How do we get real about it? How do we quit wishing that our children can jump in the car and drive without lessons because they've sat in the passenger's seat and watched one or two good drivers? Let's stop the wishing and hoping that good citizenship will come out of the children's environment that includes superb adult role models. This is fantasy. Values education will not happen in our schools without deliberate planning, the widest possible sharing of ideas, experiences and knowledge, and without the obvious commitment of curriculum time, teacher training and resources. The Living Values Project, which provides schools with planning models, takes inspiration from the Unesco report that recommended the direction education must take in the 21st century.'

...the 'teacher bursts into the library of Te Papapa School in Onehunga, her blue eyes bright with enthusiasm, her hands clutching a dozen stamped orange slips. These are powerful pieces of paper, indicating a shift in attitude at the school that is beginning to influence the way our education system works. They are called "chances" and they are given to children whose behaviour embodies the values of the school – "be kind to ourselves, be kind to our environment, be kind to each other and be in the right place." It's a simple idea that has the children hooked – as much for the books they have a chance of winning at the end of each week as for the encouragement and recognition. Schools have always taught values, most of them implicitly and with varying success. But like dozens of others, Te Papapa School has decided they are too important to leave to chance. It is one of 20 public and private schools testing the Living Values Project, which helps schools to determine the values children need to learn so they know how to live together. Teachers are too busy to decipher vague school instructions about good values, educationists say. While schools are required by law to teach subjects and skills, it is not mandatory to promote values. But the ERO wants a clear series of statements on values teachers can use. Since 1993, the Ministry of Education's curriculum framework has instructed schools to reinforce values such as honesty, respect and non-racism. The Education Minister supports incorporating values in education but is making no promises yet of further support for programmes such as LVP, which is running out of money. The debate for incorporating values into schooling has been around for decades. Its supporters believe the idea's time has come – they just need to convince the lawmakers and the rest of the country.'

...The headmaster of King's College writes that "values" will become a key word in the education system in the future – that students should be taught that some things in life are right and others plainly wrong. [However, someone] who has studied philosophy for many years, doubts that schools can impart clear moral values to their pupils: "Determining right from wrong is too hard and irrelevant." ...The curriculum review of 1986 states: "Some of the desirable attitudes and values the community mentioned most frequently in their responses were: A sense of fairness, concern for truth, honesty, self-respect, self-discipline, respect for other people and their cultures, beliefs, opinions and property, responsibility for one's own actions, trust in other people, love (aroha), hospitality (manaakitanga), spirituality (wairua), tolerance and adaptability." These do not sound too hard, too complicated, or irrelevant. I have been engaged in "values" teaching for nearly 20 years to form 1 and 2 classes[(11 to 12-year-olds)]. Children are very practical and logical. They have a strong sense of justice and can very quickly see the concept of cause and effect when it is applied to everyday situations. I have always been amazed at their ability to grasp the logic of a situation and reach their own conclusions as to what is right and what is wrong... *The Religious Experience of [Hum]ankind* states: "The great faiths display considerable agreement on what is right and wrong..."... Very basically, "wrong" can be seen as any action that harms people or their environment, and "right" as an action that helps people and their environment without harming others... A few years ago I sent an article to the school journal for possible publication... [The article was about] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a... pastor hanged by the Nazis... for his part in plotting the assassination of Hitler[. Dietrich had been] questioned about his violence by some of his religious contemporaries. His answer was along these lines: "If you saw a drunken driver endangering a crowd of people, would you wrench the wheel out of his hand, or stand by to comfort the bereaved and bury the dead?" ...It was a modern fable (a short story which attempts to convey a lesson in, or observation on, manners, behaviour or morals). It was returned with the usual regrets, the specified reason being that "the children would feel it had been written to teach them something." ...but fables have been used for thousands of years to "teach something." ...There are truths about human behaviour and its consequences that do not change. A good teacher is not dogmatic, but presents relevant facts in an interesting manner and encourages the pupils to think for themselves. The biggest problem in teaching in this area is that after weighing up the arguments, and considering the probable consequences of the various choices of actions, children reach a conclusion as to what is right or wrong in a certain situation – then realise that the actions of their parents, neighbours, teachers or community leaders may not measure up. This is confusing for them... especially when they see clearly actions which are harming people or their environment... How much tolerance can our generations expect from them? ...To avoid teaching any guidelines, or aiming at any standards because we are not perfect ourselves, or because credit is not specifically given to our culture or religion, may be the easy way out, but this... lets... children... make mistakes which could have been avoided, and allows the general standards of society gradually to become lower and lower... Children are happier when they know where reasonable guidelines are, and happier still when their friends recognise the same guidelines. Will experts go on arguing over shades of "right" and "wrong" while our children are in danger? Or can we agree on simple principles, standards and guidelines that will keep them safe until they have enough experience of life to choose for themselves, and to accept the consequences of their actions? ...I suspect human nature will always be like mercury, a puzzle to grasp. No matter how much of the physical universe we fathom, what makes us quintessentially human eludes us to some degree, because it's impossible for a system to observe itself with much objectivity.

...[someone who] claims to have studied philosophy for many years... suggests... that there is no definitive answer to what is right or wrong... [This someone] speaks of force-feeding a student with values and antiquated concepts of right and wrong but fails to inform us what those antiquated concepts might be, except that what is within the law and what is outside it is straightforward enough, a view that I find difficult to accept since it would seem to preclude him from saying as I do, that sometimes the law is an ass... One doesn't need to be a student of philosophy to... [be] able to detect that... children who come from an environment of neglect and abuse are likely to be abusive and cruel themselves. If determining right from wrong in that situation is too hard or irrelevant then I hope that [this someone] will excuse my temerity in suggesting that that is nonsense.

...Two twenty-something [guys] – one with blue hair, the other purple – live on top of... [a 6-year-old's] house and get about in a jumbo jet-powered car. The “little friends,” who are less than 30cm tall, moved in several years ago and have been playing with... [the] 6-year-old... since, visiting him at school and parking themselves at his dinner table... Only [the boy] can see them. But his mother, through regular conversations with her son, has come to know them pretty well too... A third member of the troupe... was also on the scene but, according to the boy who knew her best... has now gone. Still around, however, are the little friends' pets – sharks, mice and dolphins. Enter the world of imaginary friends, where someone is always there to play with, to talk to and just hang around with. Make-believe mates are not the rare creatures they may seem to adults – studies show that as many [as 65%] of preschoolers can have them. And grown-ups who can remember their imaginary friends do so with fondness. [A NZ] *Herald* writer... won't hear a word against Tommy Wilson, the concocted friend [it] played with when... his family were living in a caravan in Scotland. Looking back, [the writer] reckons the fact that his family moved around may have had something to do with Tommy's appearance. Once they settled in N[Z when the writer] was 7 or 8, [it] can't remember Tommy being there. Seems [Tommy] never emigrated, was possibly no longer required. His family were relaxed about Tommy's presence, never had a problem with him, and years on the Wilson boy became a bit of a family joke. Another *Herald* staffer, who preferred not to be named, admitted to two imaginary friends: Widdling By and Boo. [The actor] who plays Chandler in television's *Friends*, once reportedly [confessed to having] had an imaginary friend who his parents preferred to him. In some homes, however, a companion created in a child's mind is scorned and many have been kept secret from parents and siblings. But contrary to a once-held misconception that the appearance of imaginary friends could be an indicator of problems, children with them have been found to be more sociable, less shy and have more real friends. They are also thought to be more creative and to participate in more family activities. Just because an adult cannot remember a relationship with a make-believe friend doesn't mean... [it] didn't once banter away to someone that no one else could see. There could be about 20[%] of young adults who can't recall having such mates, according to [an] Associate Professor... of Auckland University, who has surveyed students on their childhood companions... [The associate professor], who can't recall having a little friend himself, is not entirely sure why companions emerge and become such an important part of some children's lives[, but generally]... first children or only offspring have such mates... Imaginary friends tend to arrive when a child is two or three and last for a few years but they can hang around until teenage... [The associate professor] cautions parents not to be alarmed when an imaginary friend moves in. Be aware of the friend... but don't panic. “Kids seem very happy to talk about imaginary friends... Go along with it, accept it.” That, of course, may mean setting an extra place or two at the table... “Some [of those surveyed] said that at a certain point, their imaginary friend decided it was time to leave. They were all getting a bit too old and not having so much fun...” They appear to take two forms: invisible people, or the assumed personalities of stuffed animals... Imaginary friends are no strangers to literature, song and film. Remember *Drop Dead Fred*, a movie about the make-believe mayhem-maker... who returned to a young [gal]'s life when real-life people were no help? ...[While on the topic of children's playthings, look] away from the mainstream toys and you'll find a fascinating array of more educationally-based p[roduct]s that are still fun and often cheaper... [The owner of the] Auckland store, Mainly Toys... is a member of Educational Experience, a group of independently-owned toy stores throughout the North Island. A mother of two and a former kindergarten teacher, [the store owner] can offer advice on what sorts of toys provide the most fun and learning for children of different age groups. Toys are important tools of learning from a child's earliest weeks. “From 6 weeks of age babies start focusing on objects and following them... Black and white toys appeal because of the contrast... They also find music soothing and relaxing...” From 4 months of age babies start to grasp toys and put them in their mouths. “Mobiles are good for visual stimulation and hand-eye coordination and rattles and toys strung across a cot or pram help to develop the manipulative skills of reaching, grasping and swiping. They also encourage sound discrimination and develop the sense of touch.” The introduction of bath toys from 6 to 8 months of age helps your baby learn about water properties... This is also the age at which lightweight balls and rolling toys will help to develop manipulative skills such as... picking up. If the toys make a sound, children can also learn about controlling noise... Between 8 and 10 months babies' fine motor skills develop rapidly and they start to learn about cause and effect. Activity centres help develop hand-eye coordination and the fine motor skills of pressing, twisting, sliding and winding. The 10-12 month stage sees children learning to walk... Stacking cups are good to introduce at this age as children start to learn mass concepts such as size discrimination and colour variation... A build up peg board... is a great first birthday present – at first the child will have fun simply grasping the pegs and pulling them out of their holes. Then they learn to stack them on top of each other and to create sets and patterns with the different colours. It can also be used like an abacus to introduce counting. From 18 months to 2 years a child's vocabulary develops so books and tapes or toys that play songs are helpful. They also encourage listening skills and concentration... Children aged about 3 years will start to enjoy art and craft activities such as drawing, painting, dough playing and constructing shapes. Sand and water play with buckets and spades becomes fun, as do games with cars, dolls, train sets, tea sets and dress up... From ages 4 or 5 children accept the concept of taking turns, so board games such as Snakes-and-ladders are good to introduce to them. Five and 6-year-olds are developing their coordination, reasoning and abstract thinking, so will enjoy toys such as a gyroscope... which works with gravity and balance; the Orbiter... spinning toy that creates visual and audible effects; and the Odyssey Scope kaleidoscope... into which users can insert their own objects. The creativity of 7 to 9-year-olds develops in leaps and bounds, so provide them with art equipment and musical instruments. They will also gain a lot from games that require logic and strategy, such as chess and card games... Ten to 12-year-olds love science equipment such as microscopes and chemistry sets... Juggling is great for coordination, balance, and using both... sides of the brain...

TEACHING the music of Mozart or Beethoven to children as young as three can improve their academic performance, new research has revealed. Scientists have proved children who practice for as little as 10 minutes a day on the piano score dramatically higher results in intelligence tests. The researchers have shown that playing music at this age, when brain connections are formed more easily, produces a long-term improvement in how a child reasons and thinks. The... Professor of Physics at the University of California, Irvine... tested the abilities of 78 children aged three and four by recording the speed and accuracy with which they put together a four-part jigsaw of a camel. The children were then divided into three groups. One group was given piano lessons, the second had computer lessons and the third group received no training at all. After nine months, the children's abilities were tested again. The... scores... [of] children who had taken piano lessons... leapt 35% compared to little or no improvement in the other two groups. Although the benefits of teaching children music have long been suggested, this is the first evidence that music training actually improves intellectual ability... [However, at] Wells Cathedral school, in England, which educates children aged four to 18, teachers have noted that musicians show better exam results than other pupils. “In general, our musicians achieve a grade higher at A-level than those who are not studying it,” said[the school's] director of music... [But s]ome education psychologists [say that the public should be wary of generalisations made by people whose opinion may be biased, and the professor's research only proved that teaching music is better than teaching computer lessons or teaching nothing, while others even] dispute the conclusion... [“]There was no accepted proof that music training is hard-

wiring the brain,” said... a psychologist from Keele University. “I think it is much more likely that the increased motivation and confidence from being able to play an instrument is the reason for their improved test performances,”...

The N[ZQA] recently defended its performance by noting that, of some 1500 examinations since its inception in 1990, “...only two examinations have caused any significant public comment and debate.” I suspect that remarkable record was achieved because most people don’t read their children’s examination papers with any degree of critical acuity. Or people feel that there is little purpose in trying to object, insofar as little change appears to result from submissions to most government agencies. I wonder if the NZQA has ever actually asked for critical reviews from the public in the past? Let us take a critical look at one of the recent NZQA-set examinations papers – the 1997 modular science reference test sat in June for [SC] by Form 5/Year 11... [Because] this test has included material on earth science and astronomy consistent with the 1993 introduction of the new science curriculum, allowance may be made for possible examiners’ lack of competence in those fields. However, flaws go beyond the excusable. Earth scientists at the University of Canterbury looked at the test over morning tea and found problems with almost every question within the planet Earth and beyond section... Information provided in several questions was inaccurate. In Question 19 – N[Z] is NOT on the boundary of the Indian and Pacific Plates as stated and as sketched; it is the A[US]n or Indo-A[US]n Plate... Other questions are very poorly worded, if not misleading... A more fundamental flaw to the test, in my opinion, is that none of the questions actually appeared to require any prior knowledge of Earth science/astronomy... If one sets a test and it does not examine the knowledge of the student in the subject matter involved, what is the purpose of the test? The setting of such questions demeans not only the teaching of subjects, but the committed students who studied for the test – they might as well have played rugby. There are other problems with this particular test... Take the example of Question 22, where the resource material shows a pH scale from 1 to 14 with labels showing the acid, neutral, and basic ranges – the question asks students if a pH of 6 is acid, neutral or basic... I suspect that similar results would be apparent from critical analysis of other NZQA test papers; how many examples are necessary to demonstrate that there are major problems with the tests, particularly about the purpose of questions? It is pertinent to ask whether tests like these accord with the NZQA’s stated goals for “good assessment”: “Has a positive impact on learning; provides meaningful results; has a clear purpose; is fully understood by the students; is close to learning; provides students ample opportunity... to show their best work” (1995 “Standards’ Based Assessment for the National Qualifications Framework, Biology”, p.21)... [Incidentally, s]chools are lobbying for the E[RO] to stop sending its reports to the media because of the damaging nature of subsequent news articles... The School Trustees Association has asked that reports be supplied to the media only when requested... The president of the N[Z] Principals’ Federation... said principals also wanted reports to be held back from the media. One suggestion was giving schools a confidential copy of their reports before they were sent to the media so they could start making changes. However, the call to change the present practice does not sit well with the Commonwealth Press Union, which voices the editorial concerns of newspapers. Its honorary secretary... who also represents the Newspaper Publishers’ Association, said... [education] was one of the most important investments a country made and the public had a strong interest in how schools and early childhood centres were performing...

The Minister of Education... has told officials to get on with the job of evaluating the troubled... Auckland Metropolitan College, a small alternative school... The college is operating under the threat of closure after faring poorly in... [ERO assessments], which found students were skipping class, playing poker and studying beer-making and astrology... [However, a] senior ministry official said the review office would visit the school early next year... [T]he ministry’s manager of national operations, said the officials did not want to call on the school when students faced end-of-year examinations... The Mt Eden school, which takes students who feel misplaced in mainstream classes, has had its roll shrink to 90... [because] of... the threat of closure... [By the way, the] Correspondence School is quitting the airwaves after being bumped from its slot on National Radio. After 66 years, the radio institution will make its final broadcast next month. The associate director of the school... said it was decided to axe the broadcasts after R[NZ] said the weekday programme would have to shift from 1.07 pm to 6.40 pm and be revamped... [T]he school was unhappy with an early evening slot for a programme with a student-based audience. “It would be highly unlikely it would be much use.” The educational broadcasts... also attracted a casual adult audience who would probably be watching television at the later hour... The chief executive of R[NZ]... said the shift was necessary because research showed the programme was not reaching its target audience, causing core listeners to switch off... On latest survey figures, 85,000 people tuned in for at least eight minutes of the 1 pm to 1.30 pm slot over a week. Of those, 25,000 were aged over 70 and 1000 were between 10 and 18.

...the name Correspondence School is almost a misnomer, though students still receive posted packs of lessons... and occasionally hand-written notes from teachers. With a roll of more than 21,000 students and 558 staff, the school is not in decline. It even enjoys a small growth industry – the ever-swelling number of correspondence pupils who have been suspended or expelled from regular schools stands at 387... There are now only 5000 traditional, full-time, home-taught pupils. Most of the students are now part-time adult[s]... and school pupils taking correspondence courses in subjects not taught at their schools. Adult students can do school-level courses, special-need courses, or job qualifications courses. Most of them... live in urban areas; some opt for Correspondence School distance learning because they do not want to attend night classes or because the fees are modest. For school pupils who are forced to study at home (for reasons of geographical isolation, expulsion from school, disability or illness), new technology... [means s]tudents can communicate with teachers by fax or telephone (an 0800 number). Audio and video tapes accompany lessons. Interactive television programmes received by satellite or the Sky movie channel have been trialled. The teachers now have e-mail addresses, and next year classical studies and accountancy courses will be taught through the Internet. “We will encourage students to develop chat networks and chat rooms,” said... [the school’s] associate director... “Chat rooms,” for those mourning the imminent loss of radio broadcasts and not yet comfortable with cyberspace jargon, allow those logged on to the Internet to hold group conversations... and solve problems together... in “real time.” ...Many... older N[Z]ers... will miss the 1 pm 20-minute... daily radio broadcast... when it ends next month. The programmes have been a feature of our national airwaves since 1931, nine years after the Correspondence School was founded to cater for just 100 isolated primary school pupils. The first broadcasts were simply talks by the school’s teachers, but by the late 1930s these had become more closely integrated with the school’s courses. Eventually the broadcasts became lessons in themselves, with references to the pupils’ text books. Until the mid-1970s they were broadcast live, but in recent years they have been pre-recorded. Today’s broadcasts are no longer course-linked lessons... [–] the disadvantage of using radio for instructional purposes is that you cannot assume every student is tuned in... – ...but “enrichment programmes.”

...A group of kids is introducing one another to their new teacher. “This is Peter and [Peter’s] an alien,” says one. “Peter lives on Mars and his mother lives on Jupiter and they visit each other sometimes.” “That’s impossible!” pipes up another. “If [his mother] lived on Jupiter the gravitational force of the planet would make her completely flat.” Someone else points out that the planets are too far apart for visits to be feasible. “But within the theory of relativity there’s the possibility for a worm hole in space,” someone else triumphantly points out, “which would allow instantaneous travel across the dimensions so they could see each other.” This, obviously, is no ordinary classroom and these dozen kids are no ordinary 9- and 10-year-olds. They are very bright. Each Tuesday, instead of going to their regular schools all over central Auckland, they come to the One Day School... and learn voraciously... [The] director of the One Day School since it opened in May last year, is keen to dispel the accusations of elitism that plague most programmes dedicated to gifted children... But... they do have different needs which are rarely met in the classroom... “If the class work is too easy and they are not extended, they don’t develop good work skills like commitment, and they learn not to persevere.” ...One Day School also operates centres in Howick, Pukekohe, North Shore and Hamilton, with a total of 170 students this term. The North Shore branch[’s principal]... says there is a clear need for the [centres]... “There are a lot of bright kids around who rarely get the

opportunity to work with their peers. This increases their confidence because they're able to express themselves in an environment that's responsive, with kids who think along the same lines." ...settling back into normal school is not usually a problem, because the[y]... are happier, more confident and more able to cope... [with] managing their own time... [-] gifted children often finish their work before the rest of the class... – ...working without supervision, setting problems for themselves and evaluating their own work by their own standards... "There are no government subsidies: parents pay fees of \$45 a day..." [The director] has requested funding of \$150,000 a year (enough for one full-time teacher at each of the... centres; fees would be reduced and resources increased), but encouraging noises from the Ministry of Education have yet to be substantiated. - 1997

DEAR Nasa, wrote [the] six-year-old... please tell me what the sun is made of. I think it is made of molten rock like the Earth. The... space agency wrote back to the Glenfield youngster saying that the sun was made of gases. [The 6-year-old] doesn't believe them[, so is] sticking with his molten rock theory until someone proves [him] wrong. Like many gifted children, [the 6-year-old] will not accept something simply because [the 6-year-old has been] told it's so. It is a trait which could lead him to make a scientific discovery that alters our way of thinking. It is also one which could have him finishing school unable to read and write – and with little confidence in his abilities. Last year [his] parents were told that after 13 months of school [their son] could read only three words and could hardly write the alphabet. [Their son] was also difficult in the class, often refusing to obey the teacher's instructions, and spent hours in a dream world. His parents were stunned. [Their son had] never seemed to be a slow learner at home and [had] always read his school books to his mother. An assessment by an educational psychologist found that, rather than being slow, [their son] is gifted. But like many gifted children... has trouble learning by conventional methods. [Their son] is in the top 3[%] of the population when it comes to verbal skills – anything which involves listening, thinking and speaking... [A]s a toddler [their son w]as... able to understand complicated explanations about the world and is fascinated by anything to do with science, nature and engineering. His performance skills – involving solving problems without words, such as pictures and puzzles – while in the top 25[%] of the population, are slower. [The boy] becomes frustrated when his body can't keep up with his mind and is inclined to give up if [it] doesn't master a skill instantly... [Furthermore, the boy] refused to be bound by the rules of handwriting (who says e can't have a curly tail?) and was so thrown by the idea of thousands of silent letters lurking in the language that [it] found spelling nearly impossible. HIS artwork – more schematic drawings than picture-book likenesses – drew derision from other children. His picture of a car was unrecognisable until [the boy] explained that it was viewed from above, the circles were the tops of people's heads and the line through the middle was the driveshaft. [His] confidence crumbled and [the boy] retreated into the imaginary world of the Planet Steelin, where [the boy], as the Cat of Steel, didn't have to do reading or writing... [The boy] didn't have much success outside the classroom either. Few children his age could follow his reasoning, while [the boy] had trouble playing their physical games. Now, with [the boy] due to turn 7 in a few days, his school career has turned around. [The boy] was lucky enough to be assessed by an educational psychologist before too much damage had been done. His mother spent an hour a day for six months helping him to catch up with his reading, writing and spelling and his teachers now know how to deal with his abilities. But perhaps the most important thing for [him] is that the self-confidence which [the boy] lost in a year and a half of schooling is returning. The boy who used to say [it] wasn't the right sort of person to read, draw or even ride a bike spent much of the summer holiday telling his parents that [it] couldn't wait to get back to school. COMMONSENSE dictates that bright kids should do well at school. But hidden among some of the dropouts, the kids who fail school and leave without learning the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, let alone the skills to hold down a job, are people who could be shining stars with the right education. Experts say the needs of the gifted have never been recognised in our education system. They put this down to the good old Kiwi knocking machine – if you're bright you don't need, let alone deserve, extra help... That may change. Intense lobbying by parents, professionals and a politician... [- who wants the Education Minister] to authorise the Special Education Service, which presently concentrates on the needs of children with learning disabilities, to extend its activities to the gifted... [- has prompted the] Education Minister... to order officials to assess the needs of the country's estimated 35,000 gifted children. No accurate figures are kept but experts believe about half these children... will leave the school system without having had their abilities recognised and developed... [A] Waikato University senior lecturer in education... says that children could be gifted in such a wide range of things that it was often difficult for teachers to recognise their talents and deal with their idiosyncrasies. Failure to recognise the gifts of these children and to develop their talents not only caused society the loss of their potential contribution, but could also severely damage the lives of the children. Research shows that people, in whatever walk of life, who fulfil their potential, lead fitter, healthier and more satisfied lives.

...a brilliant... cognitive psychologist and head of the International Centre for the Enhancement of Learning Potential in Israel, sits on the stage of the Centra Hotel ballroom, chic black beret firmly in place, smile twitching at the corners of his lips. Despite a thick Romanian accent, [the head] commands pin-drop attention from his audience of teachers and parents. At 76, [this]... teacher of a boy who had half his brain removed ("[it] now operates at IQ 120") and Down's syndrome children ("one of my students is now a doctor of dentistry") has transformed the worlds of thousands of so-called intellectually handicapped children. Without [his assistance], these kids would have been written-off as virtually unteachable. Instead they're now at university, in the Israeli Army, working with the elderly and infirm – solid, useful citizens. Just as exciting for parents who watch, disbelieving and impotent, as their obviously able offspring fail to learn to do basic things like read, is that [hi]s methods can transform difficult-to-teach kids into outstanding students. As [the head] says, "It's all in the way you teach them to think." ...His method lets children reason their way to knowledge, rather than relying on rote methods that merely feed their heads with often-unrelated facts. [The head] calls it "Instrumental Enrichment" and promises that... [hi]s 300-hour classroom-taught Instrumental Enrichment programme... will endow children with tools for learning... "to create, shape and modify their environment." [Hi]s genius, which won him the Humanitarian Award from Variety International a couple of years back, is rooted in his own early experience working with children of Holocaust victims transported to Israel after... W[W2]. A survivor of Nazi labour camps in Bucharest, from which [it]d escaped to Israel in 1944, [the head] knew what they'd been through. "These children had seen their parents exterminated. What they'd seen was indescribable... My question [was] how to help them? Would I indulge them with compassion or help them use their thought processes to try to make them think about themselves as being in control." Working for Youth Aliyah, a service run by the Jewish agency for children orphaned or separated from their parents by the Holocaust, [the head] deduced that these children had gaps in their cognitive abilities. They were virtually unable to make comparisons between different objects and events, particularly over any period of time; had poor spatial orientation to materials – they found it impossible to follow or give instructions either in a classroom exercise or in the outside world – and a complete failure to link, with any degree of sophistication, cause and effect. They were the passive victims of a disordered reality, rather than creative and effective users of information. The mass of different stimuli these children received from the world was not organised into any stream of experience which could be recalled to assess new situations and solve new problems. Their usual response to problems was blind impulsiveness or passivity... "I taught them philosophy, art, music and thinking, I taught them that by helping others they'd be much more helped than by crying with them... I developed a method – the learning potential assessment device – which enabled us to say 'Oh, this individual is functioning at a very low level, but... is able to change and I know how to change him.' ...The ability to change is not age-dependant... The brain is forever developing... it's a lifetime experience..." ...Problems that [hi]s methods can sidestep include chromosomal disorders, autism and brain damage, plus behavioural syndromes like dyslexia, attention deficit disorder, over-impulsiveness and low motivation. Barriers that prevent learning... can be overcome in two ways: first, by measuring intelligence (and therefore potential) differently; second, by teaching children to use the cognitive (that is, perceptive) abilities that have been disregarded in educational circles over the past several decades.

...the Institute for the Achievement of Human Potential[, which]... was founded 33 years ago by a physical therapist... has two quite distinct functions. Its programmes for well kids... are in fact a spin-off from its main business, which is treating brain-damaged (or hurt) children and helping them to lead normal lives... In the course of [his] work with hurt children, the [founder] made an astonishing discovery. Almost all the brain-damaged children whose parents had attended the education programme... entitled *What to do about Your Brain-Injured Child*... [– in which] brain-damaged children... were treated and educated at home... – ...were learning to read at a younger age than so-called well children. One was as young as eight months. If brain-damaged children were reading at such an early age, [the founder] wondered, what was wrong with well children? So, in 1976[, the founder] created a special sub-division of the institute... to teach the mothers of well children how to teach reading. Before long, [the founder] was providing well children with all sorts of fast-track education courses as well as physical fitness programmes (it is integral to the institute's philosophy that mental agility in young children depends on their being physically agile too). Finally, at the end of the '70s the [sub-division] – colloquially known as the Better Baby Institute – opened its own fully fledged school, a small fee-paying in-house establishment, which takes children from birth to 13... The teaching method for academic subjects is dead simple: it involves showing children endless bits of intelligence: words, numbers and pictures, all printed on white flashcards. As I watched... [a] few demonstrations, I couldn't help but think of my own three children back... [home]. What were they up to? Reading an encyclopedia? Or maybe indulging in a little French horn practice? Forget about it – more probably they were sitting in front of *Barney* on the television, eating cookies. [The first demonstration child] was... a cute 11-month-old... [who] had no trouble picking the card with 32 dots when his mother asked him to add 19 red dots to 13 red dots. Next came... [a 3-year-old who] accurately stuck the nine cardboard planets on to a large poster of the solar system... And then it was the turn of [a girl], aged five... Until her demonstration, I had been sitting there convinced that the whole performance was some kind of freakshow. [The girl] approached the stage carrying a large white card under her small chubby arm. "Today I am going to do a demonstration of conic sections and the Cartesian plane," chirped the little girl, her Barbie-blond hair glinting in the spotlight. People in the audience turned to their neighbours and mouthed, "What?" and "Seriously?" I struggle to describe her demonstration because, frankly, it was way above my head... I wouldn't have minded so much if [the girl had] been a brat. But [the girl] was a good kid. I watched her in the break. [The 5-year-old] lay on her tummy writing a story, and minding her sister... – who at two years old could already, needless to say, read and write. Talking to her mother... made the whole thing even harder to take... [Both girls] are educated by her at home. They come to the institute only on Fridays, when the girls attend specialist classes in Japanese, swimming, ballet, gym and etiquette, and [their mother] goes to "mother school"... Next year when [the 5-year-old] turns six – provided [the girl] can read, write in paragraphs, play a musical instrument and speak in a foreign language – [it] will be able to attend the institute's school... I refrained from suggesting that, after six years at home with mum, [the girl] was already prepped for Harvard. Of course, hothousing is nothing new in America. Yuppie mums here have long played their babies Mozart in the womb and stocked the nursery with challenging, eye-catching mobiles... Private tutors for children under eight have overtaken personal trainers as the status symbol of the '90s. To the experts, much of this effort by parents to accelerate their children's progress smacks of over-stimulation. [A spokesperson from] the Association for the Education of Young Children, says hothousing exploits children's natural desire to please... "At that age, we should be asking, 'Are they well adjusted? Do they have friends? Are they stressed out?' not putting them through early learning programmes." The sort of thing that goes on at the institute and other places devoted to the creation of a master-race leads... to "trophy kids who burn out, tune out and turn off." [The spokesperson] admits, however, that much recent academic research into the cognitive development of children's brains tends to confirm what the [founder has] said all along. Children can be made smarter and this can happen at an earlier age than usually considered possible. And as I watched [the 5-year-old girl], the pet phrase of [the founder] – "Every child born has, at the moment of birth, a greater potential intelligence than Leonardo da Vinci ever used" – rang tormentingly in my ears... I... headed to the Better Baby Bookshop to stock up on course materials. The key to the Better Baby, I worked out was a Truly Terrific Mother. I had wasted five years of mothering, and had a lot of ground to make up... HOME I went, lugging a *How To Teach Your Baby To Read* kit I'd bought. On the train back[to Washington], my head was buzzing with excitement. In just a few weeks, my three children would be reading! I couldn't wait till morning to get started. After a healthy breakfast of porridge I made the children sit in a circle on the floor. I opened the Better Baby box and started taking out bundles of flashcards... "Where's our presents? This isn't a present," said my five-year-old son. "When daddy comes home [daddy] always brings real presents." I started to explain that this was better than a present. I was going to spend all my time at home teaching them when they weren't at school... A look of horror crossed my son's face. [My son] stood up and kicked the box of flashcards across the room, then walked over to the television and turned on *Sesame Street*... Without looking at me, the other two children followed him, and the three of them sat in a row, rapt on the sofa. Over the next few days, I took out the flashcards twice a day, but my children never showed the rage to learn I'd heard about at the institute. Eventually, I gave up. Who was I kidding. This professional mother thing may play in Philadelphia, but it sure doesn't work for everybody.

...IT's a battle parents wage against recalcitrant teenagers every night. There's the sullen one stretched out on the bedroom floor, ghetto blaster booming centimetres from his ear, half-finished homework and junk food leftovers strewn from doorway to unmade bed. The parental response is predictably ugly... [An] Austrian-born, Auckland-based education expert... fought for years with her own academically gifted but underachieving daughter until [the Austrian] discovered "learning styles". Her message is simple: everyone has a distinctive way of learning, thinking and working. Trying to force people to adapt to a different style is a recipe for failure. Mother and daughter had a style mismatch... The same is true of couples – while opposites attract, the different styles can drive partners to distraction... Learning style differences used to be broadly categorised as "left brain" or "right brain" dominance. Until brain researchers got in on the act and pooch-pooched the description – and the theory. "It's not an organic thing... it was simply a way of labelling the differences." Now that label has become "analytics" and "holistics". Analytics, broadly speaking, are reticent, obsessively organised, accurate, competitive, perfectionist, stressed, logical, serious, single-minded individuals, while holistics are motormouths who are generally sloppy, easily distracted, easy going, untidy, intuitive, fun-loving, disorganised types who do a number of things at once but can never make up their minds. Preschools and primary classes tend to have the unstructured environment and slight air of chaos that holistics thrive in... The problems start in the more structured high school environment. Despite this, dozens of primary schools have already embraced the learning style analysis developed by [the Austrian]'s Creative Learning Company. A computer programme that assesses the styles of students and teachers... provides a computer generated personal profile which enables both to recognise and control how they work. It allows teachers and students with like styles to be grouped together... [The Austrian], who has been introducing learning styles to N[Z] schools for the last six years, has built on the research of [a couple of] New York-based educationalists... [who] identified eight different learning styles of underachievers compared to those who are successful at school... [The Austrian] believes learning styles are an important key to the underachievement of boys, who tend to be "tactile" learners. "Boys need to use their hands and body in learning and our school system doesn't allow it[, which makes boys use up]... their mental energy trying to suppress what they want to do... Girls can sit still for longer periods..." Girls are[also] more likely to do as they're told and often find other ways to learn while boys will rebel, switch off, and turn attention elsewhere – often to sport.

...*Movement is the key to learning* A high percentage of children underachieve at school. The critical years for gaining skills for learning are from birth to five years. Gymbaroo offers... education centres where parent and child from three months to five years attend a weekly 45 minute (age related) sessions under professional guidance. The role of Gymbaroo is the encouragement of Early Childhood Development through parent and community and the early identification and prevention of immaturities' in development which may interfere with later development and/or later learning... Gymbaroo has found that... children show clear indications of a looming [learning] difficulty at the age of three years, if not before...

Parents rarely have any idea of the influence restricted physical activity – a by product of modern living – has on the developing child. They do not know because they have not been told! At Gymbaroo centres, parents are not only taught about development, they experience with their child activities designed to promote these developments. The equipment at Gymbaroo is designed to provide a wide range of movement experiences which enhance body and space awareness, balance, directionality, gross and fine motor control – all important prerequisites for learning... Gymbaroo centres are for ALL children, as the ‘at risk’ for underachievement are rarely identified until they fail to learn at school.

...Two profoundly deaf students will be head prefects next year in a first for west Auckland... [One] will be head girl of Kelston Girls High and [the other will be head boy] of Lynfield College. The 17-year-olds say they’re humbled and surprised by the appointments. “I felt inadequate and blown away,” says [the boy]. “I was thinking it can’t be true, it can’t be me,” says [the girl]... Both students have spent some time at the Kelston Deaf Education Centre, which is delighted with their appointments. [A d]eaf teacher... says it shows deaf people can really lead and take on responsibility... There are about 20 students in the deaf unit at [KGHS and next year’s head girl] thinks it’s important their needs are recognised.

...Schools and parents have anxious months ahead as special needs units for disabled students face closure under new Government policy, an Auckland principal warns... [The] head of Manurewa Central School, said the Ministry of Education had closed his school’s unit, which catered for 25 children from the wider community... [and] another Auckland school, Belmont Primary on the North Shore, would close its unit... [in the next week or so. But the principal] disagreed with claims that severely disabled students were being kicked out of schools because of the forced closures and said many of the children would be mainstreamed at their local schools.

...[‘21 is normally a celebratory time for the able-bodied, but for anyone who is severely intellectually handicapped, the milestone brings pain and loss. Someone who was born with a virus similar to rubella and is a spastic quadriplegic, had to leave Green Bay High School last Friday because the Government stops funding special-needs students when they turn 21 – two years later than non-adult students in mainstream schools. The 21-year-old has spent the past six years in a special unit, Te Aratika (The Right Way), attached to the school, where the quadriplegic has made friends and participated in lessons with mainstream students. The quadriplegic, who was not expected to live beyond the age of 12, cannot speak and is confined to a wheelchair but his mainstream education has helped him make choices and learn non-verbal skills. His mother said the school was one of the only education facilities to offer inclusive education for students with severe intellectual disabilities. Backed by other parents, the mother is approaching health and welfare agencies for funding for a special unit to be set up on the site for severely disabled adults like her son, estimated to cost \$150,000-plus. “We parents feel that it’s hard enough having a child like this without having to continually battle for funds to give our children access to what others take for granted.” Yesterday the school received an IHC award for its programme in recognition of the opportunities it offered the 21-year-old and eight other students.’ ● T]he new Green Bay high student rep... [– chosen] from four candidates... [by] Year 10 to 13 students... [–] is a year 12 student with a keen interest in sport. Last year, [it] captained Auckland’s under-16 soccer team and trialled for the N[Z] under-16s. During the summer, [it] is a lifeguard at United North Piha. G[BHS] does not appoint prefects, instead all year 13 students are expected to set an example for younger students. The student rep’s job includes attending board of trustee meetings, chairing the school council and going to public functions which head prefects would usually attend.

...Last weekend I attended the 25th anniversary celebrations for G[BHS]... As a founding staff member, I was proud to be part of a team led by a principal with a vision for secondary education in N[Z] – a vision of schools as non-coercive, community learning centres, empowering all within them to become life-long learners, seeking excellence in every sphere of their lives. We had struggles in the early years with some children who saw the absence of uniforms as the absence of discipline, or the absence of the cane as a weakness. There were difficulties in later years, in an increasingly predatory social and educational climate, with families who thought that force equals discipline, or that examination league tables show leading-edge education. But... in spite of the pressure to succumb to the norm – the mediocre... [– GBHS] has continued to treat its students as people who matter and in doing so it has increased their competence, pride and compassion... Consequently, G[BHS] continues to be a school that makes a difference for the better in our society. Henderson High School, where the late Ian Kahurangi Mitchell was principal, is another West Auckland school where principles matter. Ian had a deep sense of justice, and a passionate personal commitment to making the world a better place. [Ian] was profoundly bitter about the failure of successive Governments to listen to the pain of the children and families with whom [Ian] worked, and for whom [Ian] cared so deeply. [Ian] did his best to build up... a school that was struggling, in spite of opposition from some of those responsible for its failure. [Ian] sought help from academics and the business community, and helped Henderson High School... [to become] a place where young people could learn to succeed, to take pride in themselves, and to care for others. Ian was the founding chairperson of Cave, the Campaign Against Violence in Education, which eventually succeeded in making it illegal to hit children in schools. [Ian] was also a leading member of the Citizen’s Association for Racial Equality... Ian died in Indonesia last week. [Ian] had sent me a card at the end of November, full of wickedly witty comments on N[Z] politics and politicians, and interesting reflections on East Timor. There was also a cry of deep pain and rage about the current state of N[Z]. “Those potentially great but actually nasty little islands are like an in-grown toenail turning the end of the earth septic,” [Ian] wrote. I have no doubt that one of the causes of his premature and tragic death was his grief at continuing poverty, racism and violence in a society that should, by now, know better... [Incidentally,] West Auckland’s biggest school is grappling with parking problems. Massey High School is overflowing with cars – and has nowhere to park them. The school has 2200 pupils and 100 teachers – seven of whom were employed at the start of the year to cope with the increase in enrolments... [I]t doesn’t help that the[school is situated] on Don Buck Rd – a no parking street... In a bid to beat cramped conditions the school laid concrete gobi blocks on the grass berm outside its English language Centre. The centre has a staff of 10 and no proper parking facilities. But this has put them offside with the Waitakere City Council – parking on grass berms is illegal. Council parking officers ticketed staff until the school called in the help of the Massey Community Board. The school has now turned to the council and the Ministry of Education for financial assistance with a proper carpark. But [its]principal... concedes the school will probably have to fork out for more carparking itself. “The language school is our business, so the ministry... probably won’t do anything,” [the principal] says... “Unless we get more land this will not improve.” A science lab, due to be completed at the end of the year, could make the problem even worse.

...West Auckland principals believe the case of a North Shore student threatening his school with legal action could set a dangerous precedent. The former Rangitoto College pupil claims [it] was unfairly disciplined and has gone to [the]Privacy Commissioner... to have his school records turned over... [T]he school has 21 days to produce the files... Kelston Boys High School[’s] principal... says... “It would be dangerous if schools were dragged into litigation. Our role is education, not going over things from the past. Basically we’re required to follow the law and this is an interpretation of how the law stands by the Privacy Commissioner. You certainly wouldn’t want children to have indiscriminate access to their files. But if there was a legitimate reason I wouldn’t be averse.” ...if the case makes it as far as court it could affect what information teachers put on a student’s record... Waitakere College[’s] principal... doesn’t have a problem with students accessing their files. But... says schools already have enough problems with compliance costs without the threat of legal compensation. “The more time schools have to spend dealing with this type of thing the less time they have to deal with lifting achievement. That is the concern – that a lot of energy would not be spent on our core business.”

...A centre to get at-risk west Auckland students back into schools has opened in Henderson. The Centre for Extra Support is the initiative of nine secondary school principals hoping to give a second chance to students with learning and behavioural problems. On Monday kaumatua from Te Whanau o Waipareira blessed the Pioneer St building which is the temporary home for the programme. [The centre’s] director... says they already have their first three students. “The next challenge is getting all the furniture, equipment and getting the staff on board... We need to work together for our young people and we need to ensure that we do our best to enable them to have a successful life.” Twenty short term places will be

available on the programme which is an extension of those already running in schools. The programme, based on education and therapy, will be tailored to meet individual needs and will take a holistic approach. The aim is to reintegrate students into school, although some may leave the programme to start work training or work. Massey High[']s principal... says the centre, one of the first of its kind, is a great model for the rest of N[Z]. "It's going to serve the needs of some of our students more appropriately than what we have been able to provide in the mainstream,"...

Long-term childcare is being blamed for bad behaviour of young children. A... study, which involved 1300 children throughout the US since 1991, found that 17[%] of children in childcare for 30 hours a week or more were aggressive and defiant... The... study also indicated children would probably develop future behavioural problems from long hours in childcare. Researchers said the results held true, regardless of gender, parental income or the type of daycare provided, including in-home long-term care from nannies... "...the nanny has less of a linkage with the child and may not give the [necessary] time to the children,"... said... [an] Auckland University education professor... [B]oth parents worked in 80[%] of N[Z] families, which suggested many N[Z] children were looked after outside the home. Social interaction was important for young children and more likely to occur with mum or dad who thought their child was "the most wonderful person in the world." A child would get less of that interest with one person responsible for many children because they would be competing for attention from the supervisor... But... the... director of the Children's Issues Centre in Dunedin... said... [local] teachers had not noticed a difference between children who had been in care and those who had not[, adding that]... the quality of childcare in the U[S] compared unfavourably with other countries. N[Z] research suggested that childcare out of the home – even during infancy – did not appear to harm children and could benefit them in some ways, such as improved performance in school.

...Children who are breast-fed longer do better in school and right through adolescence, according to a new study published... yesterday in the American *Pediatrics* journal... The report, from researchers at the Christchurch School of Medicine, was based on a survey of... 1000 children born in 1977[, and confirms research performed]... at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology... Some... had been breast-fed for less than four months, some for four to seven months and some for eight months or more. And some were not breast-fed at all... The authors said the findings proved valid, even considering that the breast-feeding mothers surveyed tended to be older, had above-average standards of living and did not smoke during pregnancy... [S]ome previous studies had suggested that fatty acids in breast milk improved children's cognitive abilities. In another article in the same journal, researchers at the University of Bristol in England reported that putting infants to sleep on their backs – as is recommended to avoid crib death – had no lasting impact on development. A study of 10,000 children born in 1991 and 1992 uncovered some evidence of reduced motor and social skills and diminished developmental scores at 6 months among back sleepers. But this effect had disappeared by 18 months.

...throwing beanbags in a circle all those years ago... [didn't] mean much to... [him]. "I was talking about it with a mate recently. We laughed when we remembered some... things they made us do." Now, four months short of his 26th birthday, [his]... understanding of what those tests were all about... [is clearer. Due to being] born in Dunedin's Queen Mary Hospital between April 1, 1972 and March 31, 1973, [the 25-year-old] is "one of the most studied people in the world." It's all [his] mum's fault. Shortly after [being]... welcomed into the city's only obstetric unit... [his mum volunteered him] for the Development Multidisciplinary Health and Development Research Unit study. "Some of the mothers were anxious. They thought they were being spied on... th[a]t they were judging our abilities as parents," says [his mum]... The parents of 1037 children born in the prescribed time period at what today is a scarfie hostel allowed their babies to become guinea pigs for a study that has been full of surprises for the medical world – if not the participants. "We get a newsletter about what they found after we're interviewed but I don't take much notice..." says [the 25-year-old]... While some of the participants may be vague on what they have actually contributed to... the unit's director... who started the study in 1972 is in no doubt... the major benefits have been in the form of publications and reports. [Ove]r... 181 authors have produced over 550 reports and publications detailing the progressions of children from birth to adulthood... contribut[ing] to a greater understanding of health and development issues affecting children and how their upbringing can be less traumatic... Research into blood pressure led to a recommendation against mass screening for hypertension during childhood after the study found screening would be fruitless given the lack of stability of high blood pressure in children. A study of childhood injuries preceded the establishment of the Injury Prevention Research Unit at the Otago Medical School and dental research confirmed the value of fluoride. An educational psychologist[, the unit director] launched the study to look for links between complicated births and later problems in childhood. But his researchers outgrew those early parameters long ago. A massive archive already exists that covers everything from the children's favourite soft toy to their academic results, from kindergarten tantrums to lost virginity. The study members were first examined at birth, followed up and assessed as three-year-olds then every two years until 15. They were next seen at 18, then 21 and now the intervals are carried out at five-year intervals. This month, Phase 26... begins. Over the next 14 months, at the rate of four a day, the[y]... will again have an eight-hour assessment at the research unit... Planning has already begun for the next phase... when the study members are 31. The beanbag throwing days are history but the study sample will again be asked about matters such as their emotional well-being and behaviour... Fewer than 20 participants have dropped out... or died. [The rest remain] happy to continue telling [their] life story, warts, allergies, drinking habits and all to interviewers or via computer when confronted with... personal questions – the stuff [they] wouldn't even tell [their mums]... The study's flow of fact and insight has gained international attention and praise. In 1993, the *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* described the Dunedin researchers as "the pacesetters, the ones the world watches for innovation and enterprise"... and this year four of the study components are financed by the American National Institutes of Health... Much of the early literature focused on what influence the parents have in child-rearing... Among other things, the study has confirmed many common-sense elements of parenthood – such as the importance of love and affection. Nothing earth-shattering there but findings have also contradicted other long held beliefs of childhood development, reducing the oft-quoted Jesuit estimate of a child's formative period from seven years to three. In 1984, researchers... discovered many suspected causes of problems in latter life such as forceps deliveries, caesareans and premature birth actually had little long-term effect, contrary to opinion at the time. Instead, they found low birth weight in full-term babies had an adverse effect on later intellectual growth and behaviour, leading to new vigilance among doctors in the way they treated pregnant [people]. After nine years research the study team found breast-fed babies are no better adjusted than their bottle-fed counterparts, although they tended to be brighter... Thumb-sucking and bed-wetting, both thought to indicate anxiety, actually have no tangible effect on a child's progress. Also, the study debunked the popular myths that: • Children of working mothers suffer behavioural problems because of their mother's absence. • Left-handedness contributes to delinquency. • Children born later into large families have lower intelligence... Inconsistent discipline, they found, almost ensures problems in late childhood and teenage years. Children from broken homes (61% of the children grew up with both biological parents) are not necessarily disadvantaged, nor is wealth an important factor in raising a happy child... The study concluded, however, that children can struggle to overcome a poor start. This belief convinced the Government to launch Parents As First Teachers... in 1992. The scheme continues with educators visiting 8800 families of pre-schoolers once a month... So the parents of the guinea pig children have enabled future generations to take a smoother path between the school gates and beyond... As many of the participants are now parents themselves the study now explores the impact of parental knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of members on their own children. For the first time this year, study members will be asked to recount any unpleasant sexual experiences, outline how they have thought about physically hurting themselves... [- a] third of the [subjects] suffered a mental disorder between the ages of 15-18 with depression worryingly prevalent... [-] and give a blood sample to determine the extent of the herpes simplex virus in young N[Z]ers. Blood will also be requested to build a new DNA bank to be used for future scientific studies. Their backs will be photographed to assess

moles, and therefore better understand how melanoma develops. None of this daunts them... But... no one is looking forward to the dental check. Some things never change.

...*New book says old ways don't work* A NEW book about trouble-making teens says schools need to turn their entire discipline systems upside down – and detentions, time out of class and trips to the principal's office should be first to go... The book outlines a range of early-intervention options and finds that boot camps and the majority of school or family-based programmes are ineffective... The book, *Adolescent Reputations and Risk*, is a collation of hundreds of studies, including dozens conducted by the authors, in a 15-year investigation into what makes teenagers go off the rails and what can be done about it... The[authors'] key finding is that when children are in their early primary school years (or perhaps even at preschool) they make a decision that can shape the rest of their lives – to either follow the rules or break them. The book says as rule-breaking children grow up, it becomes increasingly difficult to change the trajectory they have chosen; and its authors are calling for further research to focus on what feeds into each child's decision in the first place. They have already isolated certain factors (including a high IQ and self-esteem, and a positive family climate) that predispose children to choose the conformers' ladder. The good news for parents is they can help keep children on track... [-] talking, listening, showing your child you are trustworthy and that they are loved unconditionally are crucial. The "conforming" children who follow the rules grow up striving to meet goals such as being nice, behaving and getting good marks. This is how they become more popular. The "non-conforming" children who decide to break the rules also strategise and set goals – but this time they aspire to things such as baiting the teacher in class, or stealing cars. They relish public punishments because this is how their "achievements" get noticed, and each time they are noticed they go up a rung on the "non-conforming" social ladder. Teens in the studies said detention helped them make new friends. Time out, or getting sent out of class, became a game of who could be sent out the quickest and stay there the longest. And they enjoyed being sent to the principal because other students saw them and knew they had done something bad... A worrying third group of children – loners – is also identified. Children in this relatively small group don't seem to care about having an audience and their rule-breaking tends to be more violent.

...A Glen Eden teacher has come up with an idea to help keep youngsters on the right side of the law. [The teacher] suggests expanding the Parents as First Teachers programme to include primary schools. The move would see teachers visit homes and show parents how to help their children read and write. [The teacher] believes schools would spend a lot less money on special programmes with a similar outcome and enhance relationships between home and school[('the education of the child is the joint responsibility of the home and school and for the best results there should always be the closest co-operation between' them)]. The suggestion was made to [the]Minister of Corrections... who visited Glen Eden Primary School as part of a national tour aimed at turning people away from crime and reducing reoffending... The minister says... prevention starts with children.

...N[Z] parents talk less to their teenagers compared to other OECD countries, says a newly released study. The Programme for International Assessment (Pisa)... study included research about the impact family has on 15-year-olds' reading, mathematics and scientific literacy. N[Z] was one of 32 countries that took part in the first triennial Pisa study... Results showed that both boys and girls in this country reported a level of social communication with their parents well below the OECD average... Avondale College[']s principal... says a parent group is starting at the school soon. [The principal] says family support is important to teenagers and can be seen in students' attitude to school. "There's a fine line[, however,] between being interested in your youngster and interrogating them. Most teenagers need more space..." Many Auckland schools hold seminars for parents throughout the year. Parenting with Confidence is a national organisation that organises such events. [The organisation's d]irector... says the highest barrier to parents' frequent communication with their children is stress and lack of time. [The director also] says parents need to reclaim their ground. "The... parent of the... new... millennium [will be] a coach. You've got to be passionate about your team."

...*Parenting: a job no one can perfect...* There is no such thing as the perfect parent and each year thousands of people decide they want to make a better job of it. Last year, more than 5000 people attended one of the 467 courses run at Parents Centres around the country. Most go of their own volition for a little help and support. Others are referred by Child, Youth and Family Services. Aside from teaching people the A to Z of what to expect with the birth of a child, the centres also explain how to cope when parents feel they are sliding out of control... [The] president of the voluntary organisation set up in the 1950s for parents by parents, says informing a couple of what to expect can take the heat off once the child arrives. Having no idea what to do – say, if a baby will not stop crying – can lead to situations a parent may regret... By empowering them and giving them control it gives them a really good start to life with the new baby..." □... Parents are being urged to swap their babywalkers for stairguards. Plunket's west Auckland safety co-ordinator... says babywalkers can cause injuries and limit children's physical development. "Children that use babywalkers are between four and nine months old... They can scoot round and reach power points, pot plants and hanging jug cords." ...Plunket threw its weight behind a major campaign to ban babywalkers earlier this year. Although unsuccessful... the campaign raised awareness of the dangers posed by babywalkers... On Friday, to mark the start of the fifth KidSafe Week, Plunket is giving away 30 free stairguards bought with a \$500 grant from the ACC. To get one, drop off a babywalker from 10am to 3pm at Plunket, 93... or 199 Lincoln Rd...

Children learn to speak more quickly when parents use single words in isolation, rather than in sentences, a study has discovered. The findings challenge theories that infants rely heavily on picking apart sentences into their individual words... [A] computer scientist at Washington University in St Louis, used portable tape recorders to analyse the conversations of eight mothers with their children in the home... "We found that mothers instinctively used quite a few words in isolation and that about 9[%] of their utterances are single words. Many of the words babies learn to use before the age of 15 months are words their mothers have said to them in isolation." Giving a child a basic grounding in simple words speeds up the learning process later when children have to learn how to break down sentences. [For example, a] child who knew the word "red" early on would be able to break down the phrase "red ball" into two words more easily, [the computer scientist] said. "However, this does not mean that parents should purely use monosyllabic speech to their babies."

...They seem helpless at birth, little more than a bundle of needs that is often ugly. But the apparently random waving of arms and gurgling of newborn babies represent a complex system of highly intelligent communication. What might seem an unseeing stare or inconsequential movement of the arms has been revealed as a highly deliberate... attempt to study their new world, understand it and interact with it. From the time they leave the womb, they have almost all the adult emotions and are actively communicating them. Their only problem is that most adults don't understand what they are saying or why... *The Social Baby*... (...which is... not available in N[Z] is)... the product of more than a year's research, documenting every movement of more than a dozen babies, from birth to three months. Within a minute of birth babies can identify their mother and are more comforted by her than by a stranger. Within two minutes they are straining their neck to study her face. Within 15 minutes, the baby is studying the father's face and actively imitating his facial movements. Within half an hour, the baby can recognise one abstract pattern of dots as more similar to a human face than another – and prefers to look at it. [The co-author, a] professor of developmental psychology at Reading University... says: "Infants are motivated to engage with other people from the moment they are born. There is a wired-in programme to help babies lock into those that are caring for them... Now we know the ability of a baby to communicate is extraordinary, and few people understand that. It's such a revelation." The book has proved an eye-opener for the parents who took part. "[Babies] know an awful lot more than we give them credit for," says [one parent]. "We feel far more in tune with [our latest baby], and feel more comfortable... [with] him... than with our other babies."

...we've always known that behind those solemn, unblinking eyes and blank expressions, babies' brains are racing along faster than at any other time in their 80-odd years ahead – absorbing experience like a fine sea sponge... [A] New Plymouth paediatrician with a passion for child

development, explains the incredible power of interaction, specifically new experience encountered in a safe environment, in her new book *Brainy Babies*. After 22 years of working with children and [raising] three – ...part-reared by a variety of nannies... – of her own, [the paediatrician]’s knowledge of her subject covers clinical, physiological and practical angles. [The paediatrician] brings a distinctly local approach to a subject that until *Brainy Babies* had not been covered in N[Z]. And, as... the... [paediatrician] says, the message is vitally important: simply, stimulation, love and nurture make a baby’s brain grow. “A touch, a cuddle, an embrace. In this wonderfully interactive dance of cues and responses, thousands of immature brain cells in the baby’s brain are provoked into action... The repeated, consistent, nurturing physical actions of the parent (or guardian) provide the sensory experiences for the baby, driving the repeated, consistent electrical activity of the brain cells needed to secure the pathways and the connections that will stay in place for the rest of life.” By eight months a toddler has around 500 trillion brain connections... By age 3, roughly 85[%] of the neurobiological structures for future functioning have been laid in place. They are also almost impossible to reactivate. “The experiences of these tiny children can add to their understanding and change behaviour, as they can at any age... But unlike any other time of life they are additionally charged with permanently wiring the brain... through this, influencing the boundaries of their capabilities, competence and coping skills as adults.” In other words, babies, aided by stimulation and protected by a nurturing environment, learn things. Fast. Which does not, assures [the paediatrician], mean that mothers must be the exclusive caregivers – and that working mothers equal brain atrophy. What [the paediatrician] does strongly recommend, however, is that babies get lots of regular, stimulating interaction, preferably with a one-on-one caregiver who has the time and experience to know about the importance of his or her role. Long periods of creche-style daycare with little time for cuddling and stimulation are a poor substitute. “Babies’ brains wither because they can’t go anywhere suitable but are parked in a corner in some awful creche,”... [The paediatrician] is especially disturbed by two factors. First, the large number of single mothers raising children, largely unsupported; second, the growing number of gaps in the care of children. “I see it more and more – kids who spend hours alone after school – and we can do nothing about it. That’s why people in power should understand the vital importance of early brain development. The country needs to sit up and provide the kind of quality daycare that’s needed. We’re dealing with a timebomb.” □ ...according to recent research... by two... British... psychologists... the quality and type of care given to young children was crucial to later development... [However, t]hey also found... [that c]hildren who attend childcare centres or pre-school are nearly five times more popular in later life than those cared for at home... [because] children who regularly mixed with other children and systematic learning activities developed better networking skills.

...Salvation angels are coming to the rescue of west pre-schoolers and their frazzled parents, by battling money woes and regulations to set up a licensed early childhood centre. Escalating childcare costs mean the Salvation Army’s centre is a godsend for solo and working parents struggling to cope. The... centre had been running as a creche for some time but couldn’t apply for a Ministry of Education licence until a new ablutions block – costing \$30,000 – was built. The Waitakere Licensing Trust came to the party and the centre can now run as a licensed premises for two-hour sessions. The... West MP and Minister of Youth and [Gal]’s Affairs... says the access to and affordability of early childhood education is an issue which needs attention in the west, given our large number of young families. “We know that children from Maori and Pacific families, sole parents and low income families have lower levels of education than other children, and they represent a significant chunk of west Auckland’s... growing population,”... Around 35[%] of Pacific three-year-olds miss out on early childhood education compared with only [10%] of non-Pacific youngsters.

...MANY Pacific Island preschoolers are missing out in vital early education. [The]Youth Affairs Minister... says most [NZ]children get early childhood education, but there’s a big gap for Pacific Island toddlers. Among Pacific Island children, about 20[%] aged four... don’t get any recognised early childhood education. That compares with just 2[%] of non-Pacific Island four-year-olds... [The minister] used an open day visit to Henderson’s Mafutaga Aoga Amata Centre... [– which] started in 1989 in a Henderson church hall before moving to its own building at Henderson High in 1992... [–] to highlight what Pacific Island children are missing. “Many have more family support than others but they’re missing out on education values from centres like this... One of the big issues with these centres is getting trained staff who are bilingual. The Government has provided 40 scholarships for Pacific Island language speakers to go to teachers training college to get early childhood diplomas... [■]Literacy experts are worried that teachers are not being properly trained to teach children to read and write. A group of academics and researchers advising the Government-appointed Literacy Taskforce wants more research into teacher training – to find out if graduates are up to the job.

...parents should be worried... [about some] teacher-training organisations... accepting substandard trainees... says the secondary school teachers’ union... [The PPTA] president... said a shortage of quality applicants was tempting trainers to take unsuitable candidates. Some were not even interviewed before being given a place. Last year, a third of trainees pulled out before the end of their course, a sign that some should not have been accepted... There are now 21 providers of... teacher training... compared with the original six colleges.

...Eight of west Auckland’s future teachers had their first day of training in... primary schools this week. They are among a record 35 students enrolled in the Massey University graduate primary teacher programme this year. As a part of the one year programme, the trainees will spend every Thursday in three... local... primary schools to gain practical experience. Marina View Primary is taking on 12 student teachers overall this year. [The school’s] co-ordinator... says they are looking forward to having trainees in the classroom. “We’ve taken them because it’s very good professional development for us as a school, but also to offer the school to students so they can get experience,”... says the c[o-ordinator, who adds that the c]hildren love having trainee teachers in the classroom... [One t]rainee teacher... from Helensville already has two degrees in education but is taking the Massey programme to help her move into the field of special education.

...Eight primary schools have employed novice teachers as principals and there is concern about the pressures they face. Two are straight out of teachers college and the other six have had a year’s teaching. [The]Principals Federation president... said it was sad to see beginning teachers employed as principals, which was probably a reflection of the difficulties of finding staff for some small schools... [(a)]l eight were employed in... schools, with between 6 and 93 pupils[)]... “They have a lot to learn in terms of straight teaching and curriculum delivery before taking on added responsibilities of community liaison and school governance.” ...[the]Auckland College of Education spokes[perso]n... said graduates of teacher-training courses were trained to be beginning teachers, not principals. [The spokesperson also] said first-year teachers would need a lot of support to make the jump to principal... A Ministry of Education... spokes[perso]n... said the principals were receiving one-on-one support from the ministry and mentoring or training. [● ‘While the department makes a substantial investment in initial and refresher teacher training at pre-school and school level, principals receive no more than a few days training on taking up their leadership role.’]

...This week the 34-year-old, youngest-ever Minister of Education effectively made his debut in the job, with a wide-ranging speech setting out his new agenda... [while giving] him a golden opportunity to repeat one of National’s favourite mantras – that Labour MPs in government will do whatever teachers tell them... [The minister] dumped the Government’s plans to test all primary school children in maths and English, attacked teachers’ colleges as “bastions of political correctness,” criticised mainstreaming policies that force schools to take severely disabled students and hinted at a significant boost for computer education. Not bad for starters, but still relatively low-key by his own standards... By his own admission... [the minister] is blunt, outspoken and sceptical about the ideological purity that has driven National for much of the past... [The minister] is also widely regarded as stubborn, unpredictable, quick-tempered and willing to scrap in public. Education is in for a boost in profile... [The minister] spent a day in the classroom during his first week in the education portfolio, in keeping with previous roles – [the minister] has tended to announce conservation policy at the foot of Mt Ruapehu or corrections policy outside Mt Eden Prison. In one bizarre radio interview, [the minister revealed it] was speaking from a kayak in Wellington Harbour, in preparation for a Cook Strait crossing attempt... But despite colleagues’ accusations of contrived headline grabbing and some hits on easy populist targets – such as his recent decision to tap prisoners’ phone calls – [the

minister] has never shied away from hard issues. In his nine years in Parliament, the Nelson MP has taken on some long-running tough causes, including a family's custody battle with members of the Exclusive Brethren church and the financial woes of the Druids Friendly Society. During last year's Lake Waikaremoana occupation [the minister] ignored coalition sensitivities and threatened to resign unless [the]Maori Affairs Minister... stopped negotiating with protesters over his head... This week's scene-setting speech was a typical... mix of pragmatism and cliché – “in the smorgasbord of education, this year's main courses are literacy and information technology,” and unexpected policy changes... [The minister has already said that it wants to scrap his predecessor's plan to introduce] national tests for primary school children because they would... be... too time-consuming for teachers and too inflexible for schools. [The minister] favours giving parents similar information through internal assessment, with checks to ensure national consistency, although [the minister] admits this could be challenging. The abrupt decision is a slap in the face for his predecessor... who launched the major policy change less than a year ago. And at first glance, [the new education minister] seems to have given up an easy political platform. Promising... to test children on the 3 Rs would be the educational equivalent of tougher sentences for home invasion – it may or may not work, but at least it looks like firm action. But a rare political consensus suggests that [the minister]'s description of testing as “a bureaucratic monster” is in touch with the public mood... [The minister]'s next big challenge could erupt from rising tension over bulk-funding... In the past few months a Hawkes Bay board and a Christchurch principal have resigned, amid claims of teacher intimidation when their schools agree to the system... which gives schools a total budget for all expenses... So far [the minister] has walked a fine line between condemning teachers who stop schools from adopting bulk-funding and avoiding... calls to make the system compulsory, which could tip public feeling against the Government. Despite some concern that it could be cast as the bully if this happens, National is confident on the bulk-funding row. It believes there will be limited public sympathy for teachers who make schools ungovernable... [The minister] has also signalled that improving teacher quality is one of his priorities. In a *Listener* interview last month [it] said: “My preliminary view is the teaching profession is not good enough and it's time it had a shake-up.” The new minister now claims [to have] a high opinion of teachers in general and that the quote was taken out of context... [Yet, i]ncompetent teachers at dozens of South Auckland schools are still hindering the learning of children, according to the E[RO –] which two years ago called for them to be removed... The office recommended in 1996 that schools get extra money to pay out bad staff, but specific money had not come through... The chief reviewer... said many school boards needed to bite the bullet and consider sacking incompetent staff... The... new report... found that some boards were devoting significant time and money marketing themselves. They generally felt the effort could better be put towards learning programmes but considered they had no choice... The Minister of Education... said... “We are addressing the problems that have developed over many, many years. They cannot be turned around overnight, but I am pleased with the overall progress being made.”

...TEN years ago this month, [a NZ Labour PM] and Education Minister... launched a 45-page yellow booklet. Seldom has so small a document promised so much for a public sector, a generation, and indeed a nation. According to [the PM], Tomorrow's Schools: The Reform of Education Administration in N[Z] was “one of the most important proposals for education reform ever announced by a N[Z] government.” Its aim was no less than to make all schools good schools. The booklet had its origins a year earlier... when... [someone who had gained] experience on the Auckland University Council, the Auckland Technical Institute Trust, and in social welfare... received a phone call asking him to head a task force to review the country's education system. [The receiver] was startled: “Hey, I'm just a grocer,” said the former head of Progressive Enterprises, owner of Foodtown. “I haven't got any university qualifications.” ...At the time, the education sector was in danger of sinking under the weight of its own bureaucracy. It was also being torn apart by a schism between liberal and conservative approaches to teaching. Some stressed the importance of traditional subjects and academic excellence; others pushed for social engineering topics and fostering self-esteem. The debate raged. Parents felt powerless, especially if they disapproved of the local school. Their only options were to move or go private. The bureaucracy was all powerful and cumbersome. [The grocer] recalls an “enormous amount of duplication.” ...In their 137-page report, *Administering For Excellence*, [his] task force recommended reducing central administration, giving schools more control over their own destinies and parents more control over schools. [The PM]'s Tomorrow's Schools did not adopt all of [the task force]'s report, but it promised “more immediate delivery of resources to schools, more parental and community involvement and greater teacher responsibility.” ...It created the E[RO] as education's police force, and it imposed business disciplines on principals... Significantly, it endorsed [the task force's] plans for self-management of schools. The Education Department (primary) and Education Board (secondary) were replaced by parent-dominated Boards of Trustees, one for each school... These days... [we] call them “Today's Schools.” So are they what was promised? ...What have been the costs? And, most importantly, is education now any better or worse than it was before the... revolution...? ...Every morning, [a]15-year-old... rises in time to cut through the back streets and catch an ageing school bus as it reaches Kingsland, having threaded its way through cafe-lined Mt Eden village, Balmoral and Sandringham. By the time [the 15-year-old] boards, the bus is almost full with “heaps of friends” who travel “out of zone” to Western Springs College on the other side of Auckland. Why make the trip when highly sought-after Auckland and Mt Roskill Grammar Schools are so close? ...“We like... the more liberal co-ed education of Western Springs more than the highly disciplined all-[boy] culture at Auckland[and Mt Roskill] Grammar.” ...This is a fragment of the picture made up by Today's Schools in action. Eight years ago, before the Education Amendment Act... removed the zoning that forced parents to send their children to local schools, [the girls on the bus would have gone to Auckland Girls High or Epsom Grammar while the boys] would have been at Mt Roskill, Mt Albert or Auckland grammars. Now they are part of a snakes-and-ladders-like process that takes place every school day as children commute to the school of their choice. Abolishing zones was supposed to create a perfect education market... [Instead, it has created] a lopsided, sometimes ugly picture. A system that was supposed to give parents absolute choice to pick good schools has instead given good schools the choice of clientele... Typically, schools in the richer areas have enrolment schemes. Those schools which the buses bypass don't... Most, but not all... enrolment schemes... include a proximity clause. Those that don't have sparked headlines when children living next to the school gate have been turned away, prompting [the current]Education Minister... to draft a loosely worded bill which, if passed, will give children the right to attend a conveniently close state school. While the top schools flourish, those catering for the poorest and most disadvantaged children in the country are struggling... Look no further than Auckland's Tangaroa, Tamaki and Mangere colleges and their single-figure [SC] passes. They are under enormous threat as families bypass them for their slightly more affluent neighbours... More than 3000 local students went to schools outside the area... What is the reality in the “sink” schools they leave behind? ...[a] former principal of Tamaki College and a passionate spokes[person] for equality in education, talks about potential damage to society as a whole if we allow polarisation to continue. “Education is not a business but a community activity in which we're all vitally involved... education [is] a force for social cohesion [not division.” The]... energetic former principal of Western Springs College, spent three years trying to work his magic on Tangaroa. Despite “the most dedicated, excellent teachers” the roll is still under pressure as students who can afford the bus fare bypass it... and remember that funding is tied to student numbers – once the downward spiral begins, change comes hard... Many of the mostly Maori or Pacific Island students... don't have anywhere to study when they get home – let alone reference books, computers or educated parents to help... [T]heir parents want them to be educated but do not understand the requirements of high school, such as having to study at home at night. Looking after younger children, cooking, working for money or fulfilling their duties for the church often consume all the teenagers' after-school time... Pacific Island children are also taught not to question authority, so they do not ask questions in class. When something goes wrong their parents do not front up at the school demanding action, because that would be disrespectful... Often families cannot afford even minimal school fees, and are unlikely to have the time or expertise to sit on the school board either.

...Nationally, while Pacific Islanders make up 7[%] of students, their parents comprise only 2[%] of trustees... Maori make up 20[%] of the students, [but] their parents represent only 13[%] of board members, and a large number of those have been coopted rather than elected. Not only

are they outnumbered on boards, but they tend to lack the professional skills required to have an effective voice... When they do speak out, they feel they are not listened to... As a result, two reports this month from Te Puni Kokiri (the Ministry of Maori Development) record a distressing level of failure and alienation among Maori students and their families... The second report from the consultation process that followed last year's discussion paper, Making Education Work for Maori, describes how [adult] Maori continue to feel that because their own experience of school was demeaning they are reluctant to become involved as parents... [A] senior lecturer in Auckland University's Maori education unit... believes Maori are best educated whe[n] their culture is valued. Which is why [the lecturer] is a founder of the... immersion units where Maori are taught in their own language and English is taught as a second language. Although they predate the reforms, the new policy has encouraged the[se units. The lecturer]... attributes the success of kura kaupapa Maori in part to culturally sensitive teaching and parents being given autonomy. INSTILLING pride in their Maori identity fosters in children a willingness to learn and achieve, [the lecturer] says, and because the system works as a whanau the economically advantaged help the disadvantaged. Less enamoured with the kura kaupapa Maori is the head of the E[RO]... who has "a conspicuous number of concerns" about the level of professional and managerial training among the people running them... The... reforms have failed to address these complex but fundamental issues, [but] they have in a sense freed... committed educationalists... to find local solutions, without the interference of rigid bureaucracy... [However, under] the old system... schools and boards were better supported... [Furthermore,] self-management means there is no structure for the lessons from... successes and failures to be shared locally or nationally.

...[until now, a SC] result in the mailbox was the first indication parents had of how their children were doing on a national level. The announcement by the [previous] Minister of Education... of national tests for 9- and 11-year-olds may have thrown teachers and principals into a spin, but [the minister insisted] that the tests are what parents want. A pilot scheme involving 10[%] of schools will see the two age groups undergo three tests – in reading, writing and numeracy – next year. Schools will be asked to volunteer for the pilot study... half will get the new national tests, while the rest will use existing information to assess children's skills. Next term, all parents will be sent a pamphlet explaining the system, based largely on one in Victoria. There, parents receive a report showing how their child compares with others in the same age group from around the state... [However, NZ parents] wanting to see at a glance how their child's school compares with the one down the road will be disappointed, as [the minister] ruled out such comparisons, as well as the publication of league tables ranking schools... The president of the School Trustees Association... was aware that assessment varied across schools. "Parents notice... the different standards... if they've lived in one area, and then shifted, and the kids go to another school..." A Ministry of Education report found that schools were hiding underachievement from parents, in some cases to protect both parents' and children's self-esteem... Critics say the tests will measure a meaningless aggregation of skills and knowledge on a particular day, and will not tell parents how their child has improved. Some teachers are concerned about children suffering stress. In Canada, some needed tranquillisers, and school boards handed out guidelines on alleviating stress. The primary teachers' union said there had been international opposition from parents. In Scotland, England and Victoria, parents refused to send their children to school to sit the tests.

...A new, independent proposal to test schoolchildren could salvage a widely unpopular Government testing plan that teachers have threatened to boycott. The E[RO] today launches its own proposal to nationally check and compare children's progress at primary level... The review office said national testing would provide much-needed information for parents who often did not know what standard their child had reached during primary years... The review office suggests pupils between the ages of 7 and 10 be tested at three curriculum levels, rather than at three class or age levels... Although teachers and principals said it was a vast improvement on the Government's model... most remained extremely sceptical about testing limited aspects of early learning... Tests would focus on elements of reading, writing and mathematics.

...After her son failed his mid-year maths exam... Mrs J. G. asked The NumberWorks if they could help "bring him up to speed". We heard from her again the following year, by way of a letter in which... [the parent commented: "Before my son] came to you [it] had a real 'block' with his maths. You helped him turn the corner and become really confident. Many many thanks." ...We learn best when the learning experience is fun and when rewards are immediate. This is the message from... [the] Professor of Human Development and Education at the University of Chicago, who also serves on the Child Labor Advisory Committee of the US Department of Labor, and the Centre for Giftedness of the Federal Department of Education. These findings come as no surprise to the creators of The NumberWorks, the rapidly expanding after-school maths learning programme that is sweeping N[Z, AUS] and now rapidly moving into Europe. Developed over a decade ago and proven by the success rates of thousands of children, boys and girls, from Year 1 through to Year 11, NumberWorks aims to make maths learning fun... The NumberWorks concept is so powerful that students often try to stay on well after their weekly one-hour lesson has finished. Anticipation is high for their next class also... The combination of the conventional school classroom maths teaching and NumberWorks coaching support has proven to be a very effective method of maximising learning and minimising the risk of failure... Call your nearest NumberWorks centre to arrange a free introductory lesson.

...*Improve your recall ability*... Have you ever been introduced to someone and immediately forgotten their name? It's embarrassing isn't it? ...According to [the creator of]... *Mega Memory*... there is no such thing as a good or bad memory, only a trained or an untrained memory. With *Mega Memory*, you learn to access the part of the brain that never forgets, the same place that stores your phone number, or the alphabet. After just a few short hours with this program, your memory dramatically improves. Just imagine how an improved memory will provide you with an amazing advantage in both your personal and professional lives... A better memory will improve everything you do. But it isn't taught at school or work... it's up to you, and *Mega Memory* is the revolutionary program that will get you started. *Mega memory* is based on techniques first discovered in working with blind and mentally handicapped children. [The creator] adapted these techniques so anyone can release their own instant recall ability. Over one million people have already benefited from this home study system! and it's suitable for all ages from students to the retired... Only \$129... "If your memory hasn't sufficiently improved within 30 days, return for a full refund"

Learn to read at record speed! With revolutionary techniques, *Mega Speed Reading* can double or triple your reading speed... Developed by... the world's fastest reader, the... \$129... programme contains 6 audio cassettes and 1 video tape plus a workbook... [The developer wa]s joined by [the creator] of *Mega Memory* fame and together they've provided] the expertise which elevates *Mega Speed Reading* above all other similar products! ...*Mega Speed Reading* only takes a few hours to learn unlike many other speed reading courses that can take weeks or even months to master.

...Now ReadingMaster is here, a superior sequential learning programme, devised to help your child read before they reach school. But it's more than that. It will also teach them about the world and build learning skills... [in 'just 10 minutes a day'. The devisers] researched the teaching methods of leading educators and fine-tuned them into a practical, step-by-step learning system, specifically for N[Z] children... Education professionals are impressed... "This system is a unique blend of effective methods produced in an outstanding format. The quality of the information and the lovely illustrations... [- commissioned from an] award-winning artist... [-] make these books a must." ...If you want the best for your children call now... and ask about receiving ReadingMaster at a great price[of just under \$300]...

If you want the best for your son, daughter or grandchild, then now is the time to act. You'll dramatically increase your child's chances of success in education and life when you give them the gift of reading. It's your child's first step in receiving the best education, getting the best job opportunities and achieving their unlimited potential... You can start your child on the road to success with ReadingMaster. This simple to use system has already helped children right across N[Z] learn to read before they've even started school... "...now five, [my son]'s just started school... and they're surprised at his general knowledge." "Most of my friends... aren't aware that you could actually teach your child. And I didn't actually teach her, it's the programme that actually teaches them." When you order your ReadingMaster system you'll receive 5 SOUNDS FLASHBOOKS. They introduce all the basic sounds of English, enabling your child to easily sound out words. Plus... 10 SOUND READERS. These stories contain

colour-coded sounds for super-quick recognition. You get 8 FLASHBOOKS with clear, uncluttered pictures, that are packed with information about your child's world. There are also 4 FLASHBOOK READERS. This set of special stories are ideal for parents to read with their children. In all, the set consists of 27 easy to learn books, all beautifully illustrated... But there's more! You'll also get the 3 ReadingMaster videos. They bring the whole system to life in your home. There's also the CD-Rom to turn your ReadingMaster system into a truly extraordinary multi-media event.

...If you are a fluent reader, you have probably never given a thought to the typeface in which your printed material is delivered. But for dyslexics, everything from the font size to the colour and quality of the paper can make a difference. They frequently experience visual distortion when reading... [T]his month... se[es]... the launch... of Read Regular, a typeface designed... for [the 1-in-30] people with dyslexia... ■ Today is national dyspraxia day... Dyspraxia is when some of the connections in the brain are not working properly. That makes it hard for your body to do what your brain tells it to... About 7[%] of children have dyspraxia... It shows up as having trouble speaking clearly, writing, concentrating... Try to teach [kids with dyspraxia] something new and [they] will struggle. But give [them] a chance to practise and [they] can learn.

...The reading debate is back under the spotlight... An international back-to-basics swing in education has... [governments] pondering what to do about children who do not learn to read... The British Government has introduced a... programme in schools this term[that gets pupils to] spend a "literacy hour" each day on reading and writing tasks... [T]he British Education and Employment Secretary, said it was the first time in a generation that "tried-and-tested" methods for teaching literacy and numeracy were being used in all primary schools... While areas like California and Texas have turned literacy teaching on its head by bringing in a system of extreme phonics, in N[Z] we are anxious not to throw the baby out with the bath water. Before the 1970s phonics was the way we learned to read in N[Z]... The '70s and '80s brought a revolution towards the whole language or holistic approach... [Now] researchers at Massey University are saying that we have the balance wrong and it could be causing reading problems that see between 20 and 25[%] of students enter Reading Recovery at age 6... But overseas we are still seen as "a lighthouse for the teaching of reading across the world." Teachers from the US still stream to N[Z] to do courses; so do Scandinavians, Swiss, and Canadians, and in 2000 N[Z] will host the International Reading Association world congress.

...N[Z] programmes for literacy, reading recovery, and junior science and mathematics have created a lot of interest overseas and our children's books are in hot demand... At least 445,000 children have gained benefits from the Reading Recovery programme since it was introduced to the U[S] in 1985... Reading Recovery... has [also] been adopted in A[US, Britain]... and Canada... This month, a group of 20 teachers, principals and administrators... [from] Denver, Colorado... is visiting our schools to observe and teach literacy the N[Z] way. While the system in Colorado allows teachers to teach literacy any way they see fit... the visiting educators are blown away by the strong, consistent model in N[Z] schools. They say our common philosophy on what is taught, high expectations of all students and our national English curriculum are enviable... "N[Z]'s system emphasises teaching for meaning... they encourage children to become independent readers, and they use brilliant literature." ...Teaching individual students at the level they are at, rather than at their year level, is another factor that has the Americans hooked... The situation was different in Denver where students at each year-level were given the same book to analyse "day after day," whether they had read it two years ago or could not read it at all, leaving students feeling bored or frustrated... [In related news, t]wo high profile members of West Auckland's "immigrant community" are at loggerheads over a tough new stance on English language entry requirements. Those seeking entry in the general skills category are now required to speak English well enough to study at university. Government lifted the standard from 5 to 6.5 last week. A language test now applies to longterm business visa applicants as well. Their level of English competence has risen from four to five. [A] Massey Community Board member and Chinese business[person]... says the new tough measures was a hasty response to comments by an irresponsible politician, [the] NZ First leader... But [the] Waitakere Indian Association president... says the changes are good as N[Z] will now attract only immigrants of the highest calibre... Waitakere City's Asian population is 11[%], compared with the rest of N[Z] at 6.6, according to census results.

...the highest court of British lexicography has finally delivered a verdict on "pants." The new online supplement of the... *Oxford English Dictionary*... dates the contemporary slang definition of the word, as meaning "rubbish or nonsense," to 1994. "Pants" joins "bad hair day,"... "six-pack" (of muscles), "clubbing" and "ladette" in the quarterly update of the electronic OED... [The] chief editor of the dictionary, commented: "My job is the perfect excuse for watching action films, soaps, quiz programmes where the language is busy just now." Yet "clubbing" in its modern form turns out to have started in the World Cup summer of 1966, when the Kinks' *Sunny Afternoon* stood at the top of the "hit parade." ...Oxford University Press also trumpets the "huge file of correspondence, queries and attributions" that lie behind the new OED online discussion of "the full monty." The dictionary agrees with most of its competitors in stressing three likely origins for the phrase that, after the 1997 film, came to signify total nudity. They are the 45-card version of a Spanish card game, monte; the full breakfasts scoffed during... W[W2] by Field Marshal Montgomery; and (favourite among language experts) the three-piece, Sunday-best suits made by tailors Montague Burton... For subscribers to the electronic OED, the full monty consists of an annual subscription of £350... plus VAT. Each quarterly update contains more than 1000 new terms and revised entries... Behind the lexicographers' eagerness to show off a knowledge of street argot lies a tough battle for command of the multimillion-pound global trade in English dictionaries, where the OED is traditionally the market leader... But... competition in recent years from rivals such as Chambers, Collins and Encarta... has [become] fiercer... These houses have been fighting hard for a larger share of the lucrative lexicographical action. Hence the regular, media-friendly parade of today's colloquialisms... Edited for decades by the great Victorian word-hound James Murray, [the OED] was finally completed in 1928 after almost 50 years of research. The second edition came out in 1989... The constant labours of a 50-strong staff (as well as an army of volunteers) means that OUP will probably not release a new printed edition until at least 2015.

...With what is probably the first product to quit cyberspace and move into the real world, the universe's richest [person] is making a bid to join the pantheon of great lexicographers. And it's all our idea. Three years ago, a dynamic London-based Kiwi... proposed that the billionaire release the *Encarta Dictionary*, part of Microsoft's encyclopaedia software suite, in hard covers. Since then, more than 320 editors and consultants in 22 nations have not been getting a lot of sleep. Due shortly, *Encarta World English* is the first... dictionary... to use the Net to research, compile and edit its definitions. "Microwave," "e-mail" and "Internet" itself will officially exist at last. The result is intended as a complete guide to global English. It tries to pin down the protean nature of our language, its subtle shifts as it moves from one shade of meaning to another in different parts of the world... A project so ambitious would have been almost impossible before the electronic revolution... Mind you, the labour of compiling a dictionary tends to tell on the lexicographer. Dr Johnson's behaviour was downright bizarre (<http://neuro-www2.mgh.harvard.edu/TSA/AboutTS/johnson.html>), and [the head of Microsoft] is already known to rock obsessively to and fro in times of stress. One can only hope that the strain of *Encarta World English* doesn't push him over the brink... [T]he *Oxford English Dictionary* (291,500 references to *Encarta's* 400,000) may no longer seem an authority but a relic... Seemingly blind to its peril... the *Oxford English Dictionary*... tries to enforce the morocco-bound subscription model with which *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (www.ebig.com) almost destroyed itself. There will soon be nowhere for its weighty tomes to rest – as furniture, the bookshelf is doomed... Gorgeous graphics notwithstanding, the Net has become a Web of words, a natural theatre for the quirks of human speech. At www.facstaff.bucknell.edu/rbeard/diction.html, a Web of Online Dictionaries, you will find languages you've probably never heard of – Mandinka, Warlpiri, Vulcan – and the links to specialised categories are even better... There are dictionaries for space... rhetoric... *Star Wars*... even trainbraking... while the cyber-challenged will need Net-Lingo... to make sense of everything.

...a... new edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* [is on its way]. Lexicographers are completely revising the 20-volume authority on the English language – which contains 500,000 entries... – and are appealing to English speakers around the globe to offer contributions. An Oxford spokes[person]... says new words, including the language of the Internet, have yet to be included, while other words, phrases and descriptions have

become antiquated... [The] editor of the *Oxford Dictionary of N[Z] English*, says one of his favourite local expressions is “electric puha,” used in Northland to describe cannabis[, because]... it is witty and combines Maori and English nicely. [The editor] hopes the *OED* also considers including “chateau cardboard” – cheap, boxed wine – and “chocolate fish,” which has gone beyond its culinary meaning to encompass any sort of booby-prize. [An orator and former NZ Labour PM] says one of his favourite obscure words is “solipsistic,” used to describe people who believe the solar system revolves around them[– but adds that] it may not be adequate to describe [a former AUSn PM]... who believes the universe revolves around him.

...[after taking ‘6 years to produce’, the] *New Oxford Dictionary of English* arrived recently in a torrent of populism, lashing out in defence of the split infinitive and political correctness, announcing itself as “the most important new English dictionary for 100 years” and gaining plaudits even in the tabloid *Sun* newspaper. And, for once the publicity is justified. This is an important book. It breaks traditions. It is a political act. Cultural conservatives will find it very unsettling; the rest of us should cavort through its story. It may seem odd to describe a dictionary as political, or as telling a story, but almost all of them have been. The great lexicographers set out to change the world, not merely to clarify language. And, mostly, their history has been about national self-consciousness. Samuel Johnson’s heroic task between 1746 and 1755, when [Samuel] completed from a cramped garret off Fleet St his famous *Dictionary*, happened in the aftermath of the Jacobite rebellion, at a time when British self-consciousness was being forged in opposition to France. His dictionary was intended to bring stability and order, based on a mass of native literary quotation, to the English language... Noah Webster, the father of American English, is another obvious example. From his best-selling *American Speller* of 1783 to his final *American Dictionary* of 1828, Webster was engaged in rebellion, using philology instead of artillery... The Philological Society of London decided that a great empire needed a great, scientifically-based dictionary. James Murray eventually got going in 1879 on what would become the *Oxford English Dictionary*, thinking it would take his team 10 years. Five years on, they had got to “ant.” The project long outlasted poor Murray... Language had to be purified and corruption eradicated. For two centuries nationalism and lexicography, blood and spelling, marched together. Until now. Whatever the *New Oxford Dictionary*... is about, it isn’t purification. It is being marketed on the neologians now incorporated – Prozac, coolth, ebonics... saddy – which are heavily American in origin; and on its political correctness (“spinster” is offensive, avoid “handicapped”) which is also an American phenomenon. But that’s just the start. As one delves into it, this ceases to look like an English dictionary at all. Gherao is a form of Indian workers’ protest, you learn, before flicking up to Gheg, an Albanian tribe, or down to... ghibli, a North African wind. There’s mestiza, which is South American Spanish for a [gal] of mixed race, and shikar, which is an Urdu word for hunting... There’s also jachcha, chup, doek, picong, kahuna and tchotchke. Oxford used a worldwide team of compilers; and dictionaries have always had foreign words, including slang. But the proportion here is new, the effect radical. This isn’t really an English dictionary. It’s the first draft of a world language dictionary. There is a commercial decision here, no doubt, but a political one, too. This is a book that leans out, almost recklessly, into the future. Its publication marks a moment when “English” is no longer primarily the language of the English... By accident of history, we have been spared the fate of millions of minority language speakers. English is the language of world politics, big business,[air traffic.] science, the Internet. Ambitious Chinese spend their meagre savings to learn it; it has colonised Japanese and French. In a worldwide race, it has won. This dictionary describes a language eaten into from all sides, a turbulent, mongrel language changing shape at great speed... in another century it may be barely recognisable.

...A Titirangi language fanatic has finished a dictionary with a difference – N[Z and AUS]n words translated into esperanto, a manufactured ‘international’ language... Esperanto sounds like Spanish, is about 60[% Latin, 30%] Germanic languages, and 10[% Slavic languages. The fanatic, aged 70, who]... started the project eight years ago... has spoken Esperanto for well over 50 years, and used to wear a little green star to identify himself as one of the estimated 100,000 people who speak it worldwide... However, a little like the language, the badge has gone out of fashion.

...What is the real value of teaching Maori language? As often happens with educational proposals, supporters of compulsory Maori communicate enthusiastic good intentions rather than convincing, detailed answers to the usual questions: Who benefits, in what ways and by how much? Will the intended means achieve the intended ends? Are the means proportional to the ends? Are the same ends achievable by other, more efficient means? How and when will we know... this policy has achieved these ends? What happens if it does not? Benefits recently suggested... include our national identity, racial harmony, bilingual communication, cultural survival and identity, self-esteem... and mental development... Of course, we should encourage mental development, but what will Maori offer which is now missing from the existing curriculum, or other languages spoken by N[Z]ers? Obviously, knowledge of the Maori language, but how much is needed to be able “to think beyond the bounds of an English vocabulary” – a course in key Maori concepts or full language competence? A five-year secondary school language option takes about 550 hours of teaching time... National identity inspires some, but... it is also the first refuge of the scant-of-argument... Perhaps no particular language should be compulsory and we, not the state, should choose our languages as we choose our religions or our music. Of course, it would be a poor education which left us entirely ignorant of all languages, religions and music other than our own. A correspondent linked compulsory Gaelic in Ireland with national pride. In fact, the policy is so unpopular that after decades of persuasion, compulsion and inducement, the 1991 census returned only 32.5[%] of the... population as Irish-speaking. Small-scale studies suggest that many who claim Irish as a language are neither regular nor proficient users. Yet Irish culture flourishes. Are language and culture as inseparable as some believe? If the Irish experience has a message for N[Z], it might be that people who do not strongly value a language for affective or instrumental reasons are unlikely to learn it, despite compulsion and high-minded moralising by the righteous and enlightened... Compulsory Maori does have benefits but it is no panacea; its proponents are overselling it with dubious evidence, a distorted vision of our society and extravagant claims. [■ In order ‘to maintain the purity of the French language, France has an academy which meets each year to make up new words to replace any English words which have been adopted by its media or population’!]

...AS a giant clock on the Eiffel Tower ticks away the remaining days of the 20th century, French lobbyists are scrambling to ensure that cyberspace doesn’t leave their language in the dustbin of history... [The] vice-president of Defence of the French Language[, which]... has successfully sued companies for using English while advertising in France, maintains that the laws aimed at preserving the French language should apply to Internet sites as well. Though his group has been involved in only one Internet-related court case... – ...when they brought a 1997 lawsuit against the Georgia Institute of Technology’s campus in Metz... for creating an English-language Website... [– the] retired technologist... foresees further action... [His] group taps into a common sentiment in France... But some people feel his group is going too far. “The Internet is accessed by people around the world and to impose a language on it would be stupid and a pity,” says... a Website designer for Accriens Productions in Paris. Many people also point to a need to be practical, noting that English is the dominant language on the Internet and that [the group’s] approach risks isolating France. The... past decade has seen a slew of legislation intended to protect the French language and entertainment industry. In 1994 a law made the use of French mandatory for advertising, labelling and instruction manuals for all products and services sold in France. TV and radio commercials cannot be aired in a foreign language... Government commissions also preside over an ever-growing list – now almost 120,000 – of English words or terms that are not allowed in official French documents. Rather than “fax,” for example, the word “telecopie” must be used. At least 40[%] of TV programmes must be of French origin, and a... minimum of 40[%] of songs played on the radio must be in French, 20[%] of which must be fresh talent. On both TV and radio the ratio must be maintained at prime time... [Incidentally,] Clark Gable opened Hollywood’s door to profanity in 1939 by declaring, “Frankly, my dear, I don’t give a damn.” Now... [a word that] starts with “f” and ends with “k” and [which] most people still think of... as the ultimate expletive in the English language... is as commonplace in the cinema as any other swear-word. Maybe

more so. And not just in gangster movies. It's become the casual coin of the realm in action flicks, thrillers, dramas, coming-of-age movies. Even in romantic comedies, you're a lot more likely to hear the F-word than "I love you." Why? The answer used to be shock value. But for most regular filmgoers, the shock has worn off. Something else seems to be going on. Where profanity is concerned, there's a generation gap between young people and their elders. Teens and 20-somethings frequently use language their parents seldom used – except in private – or that their grandparents never used at all... So Hollywood presents characters who talk the way many young people talk. It uses the F-word as a sort of signal to attract the audience it wants: The 15-to-25-year-olds who rush out to opening weekends and put a movie on the map. If these films also attract older folk who like to think they're young, so much the better. That's certainly the case with Oscar-nominated *Good Will Hunting*, the popular comedy-drama. Made by, about and for young people, its screenplay features the F-word 85 times... *Kissing a Fool*, a lightweight romance that would have aimed for a PG or PG-13 film a few years ago, features F-words galore... Then there's *The Big Lebowski*... in which the F-word shows up more than "the" or "and." ...This film goes a step further by poking fun at the profanity. As its cowboy narrator... pointedly asks [the film's leading character], "Why do you have to use so many cuss words?" ...The F-word has a long and, in recent years, studied history. "It's our worst word, at least of one syllable, and maybe our strongest," writes [a commentator] in his foreword to *The F Word*, a scholarly 1995 book... "It's one of the best things we can do with someone, and one of the worse to someone," notes [the foreword]. The word, which has German roots, first surfaced in the 15th century. But it was considered such a taboo that it "was never written down in the Middle Ages", writes [the *The F Word's* author]... It's been suggested that the F-word's new acceptance may, in part, relate to its universality: It's not associated with a single cultural or ethnic group... [and is understood] by everyone... Interestingly, ethnic slurs – particularly the N-word (nigger) – have replaced profanity as the taboo words of today.

...All right, so the Tao Te Ching says that a journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step. But if 91 years went by and you could see where you'd started by looking over your shoulder... wouldn't you wonder whether it was time to rethink the expedition? Not if you belong to the Simplified Spelling Society, whose newly appointed N[Z] representative... wrote seeking our support for his organisation's campaign to "upgrade" English spelling... [His] letter was judiciously sprinkled with rather cute simplifications of our system of recording words on paper: ..."fonics"... leaped out of the page, which had his "fone" number at the top. [The representative] told us that [it] edited the group's newsletter, which rejoices in the title *Simpl Speling*. But his concern about the inconsistencies of spelling was, well, inconsistent. [The representative] was happy to use the word campaign (which, presumably, wants simplification along with reign, rain, rein and mane) and to allow the last syllables of committee and society to be spelled differently, even though they sound the same. [The representative] says the society, founded in England in 1908, has a N[Z] membership of six and rising and that its adherents worldwide number some 140. They believe that English spelling is a "major barrier to literacy learning" and that we all need to get behind a reform of the spelling system so that we don't bequeath to posterity the legacy of failure we inherited from our linguistic forebears. Given the manifest terrors of English spelling, I find it easy to sympathise with [the society]'s concerns. Any language that can spell rough, cough, bough, through and though as if they rhyme deserves ridicule... But ridicule is a long way from reform... A dozen simplified spelling systems (with names like Spelriet and NuSpel) are to be found on a quick brouse through the Internet and they are not notable for having arrived at... solutions to problems. How could they? If cough is better spelt cof, why not... kof or koff? Who would decide? And who would make anybody take notice? [The representative] rightly points out that we don't use shew as a verb any more and we don't spell fantasy phantasy as we once did. But these are changes that have occurred organically, not by decree. The plan of reform touches on a deeper matter, though, which has to do with a uniquely modern fear of the difficult. If we are failing to teach our kids to spell properly – and there is good evidence we are – we let superstition take the place of science if we start blaming the stuff they have to learn. To propose a reform of spelling is... a betrayal of the polyglot heritage of every English word we speak and write. [The representative] attached a league table of the literacy levels of 13 countries. It showed that, after Poland, five of the bottom six were the major English speaking countries. Funny thing is, the table alongside showed an almost identical ranking for numeracy skills. Is anyone planning a campaign for an overhaul of the way we count?

...Those teachers who advocate a drastically simplified spelling system, take note! The E[U] Commissioners have announced that agreement has finally been reached to adopt English as the preferred language for European communication, rather than German, which was the other possibility. As part of the final negotiations however, Her Majesty's Government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a five-year phased plan for what will be known as EuroEnglish (Euro for short). In the first year, "s" will be used instead of the soft "c." Certainly, sivil servants will resieve this news with joy. Also, the hard "c" will be replaced with "k." Not only will this kleanup konfusion, but type-writers can have one letter less.

...[a simplified speller] advocates, among other thoughts, omitting the "u" from "quack." I have no qalms about making spelling easier; this is a good start. Qantas, of course, led the way... Let's go American and then we won't shudder at "cheep sox 4 sale" and U can C it saves time... But why just gravitate to American spelling? Why not follow the well-known song *Anything Goes*? Then we will never have spelling errors...

N[Z] children write vivid and creative stories – full of spelling mistakes... [While] many students' attempts at writing were impressive... [their] inability to spell has been identified as a major concern, after just 2[%] of 8-year-olds spotted all 12 mistakes in a piece of prose in a national writing test. [6%] spotted none of the 12 errors, while 60[%] spotted between 4 and 9. [21%] corrected mistakes that were not even there. And of a group of 12-year-olds asked to punctuate a piece of writing with commas, full-stops and speech marks, at least half inserted less than half the 16 corrections. More than half made incorrect changes. The research... [was] part of the National Education Monitoring Project[(NEMP)]... The first round of tests – on art, science, and graphs, tables, and maps – was carried out in 1995... The new set of results completes the first cycle of monitoring reports... The project team issued three reports – on writing, listening and viewing, and physical education and health.

...Research shows... 12-year-olds in our schools are not coming to grips with techniques of "viewing" – while they can extract basic meaning from a visual image, they cannot, in the main, explain ideas or justify their meaning. Nearly 70[%] of 12-year-olds who watched a soft-drink advertisement could give only a vague or limited answer to the question of how they were being persuaded. This lack of success in looking beyond the obvious has disturbed a national forum of educational experts analysing the results of surveys carried out under the N[EMP]... This month... a... Professor... of the University of London Institute of Education, visited N[Z] and said teachers of English had to move with the times. Images were becoming increasingly dominant, and the lines between visual and written communication blurred. More attention should be paid to the "banal messages" of life, which influenced people's taste. Young people should be able to understand these messages and the way they connected with each other. The president of the N[Z] Association for the Teaching of English... agreed... [children] need to develop skills that help them to absorb details.

...Burning the midnight oil before exams or interviews can drive knowledge away, says research that suggests sleep is needed to allow memories to be "downloaded" into the brain. A good night's sleep within 30 hours of trying to remember a new task is necessary for effective recall in subsequent weeks, scientists have found... "We think that getting that first night's sleep starts the process of memory consolidation," said... a sleep researcher at Harvard Medical School, who conducted the study. "It seems that memories normally wash out of the brain unless some process nails them down. My suspicion is that sleep is one of those things that does the nailing down." About one in five people say they are so short of sleep that it affects their daily life. But the study highlights a less understood side-effect of insufficient sleep, serious memory impairment. Volunteers found it easier to remember a task if they were allowed to sleep. For others who were kept awake, no amount of subsequent sleep made up for the initial loss... Other research at the Medical University at Lubeck in Germany showed that memories are laid down in two stages during the night, first in

the deep “slow wave” sleep that occurs in the first half of the night, then in the less important stage of dreaming, or “rapid eye movement”... If people are deprived of sleep during the first half of the night, their capacity for memory consolidation appears to be almost the same as if they had had no sleep at all. Being deprived of REM was found to be less detrimental to memory, yet important in “implicit learning,” in which performance does not depend just on the ability to remember.

...European researchers say dreaming may be the brain’s way of replaying experiences and lessons so that they are fixed in the memory for use later on. The[y]... used advanced imaging technology and found that the same regions of the brain that are buzzing while we learn a new task are also active while we dream. This heightened activity was observed during the brief but active stage known as... REM, sleep... However, [the]... team could not identify the precise cellular mechanisms involved. Nor were all memories consolidated only during REM sleep... [By the way, h]aving class in a cafe is all part of the educational menu for Laingholm Primary pupils. Kidz Cafe... [- where the pupils] devise menus, buy groceries... cook and serve food for staff every Tuesday lunchtime, at a reasonable price... [- was] organised by... a pupil’s mother, [and] is part of the school’s expanded curriculum designed to capitalise on children’s special interests. This year’s classes range from cooking and crafts to languages and fishing – all topics picked jointly by pupils, staff and the community. [The p]rincipal... says the interest classes... are becoming very popular. “Most schools look at children’s weak points and spend a lot of time addressing them, but schools should look at their talents and abilities and promote them,”...

“Children need goals and ambitions to achieve. To have the opportunity to venture out into the wider world is an exceptional adventure[,” says a Rangeview Intermediate teaching]... co-ordinator... Earlier this year... Asian students discovered how the Te Atatu school worked and stayed with Kiwi families... There was a renewal of friendships when... 23 Rangeview students and four teachers... visited Singapore and Japan[last month]... Singaporean and Japanese schools are planning a return visit to Rangeview next year.

...[a] Henderson artist... was shocked by the standard of education in N[Z when it] arrived here from Colombo, Sri Lanka four years ago... “N[Z] has all the facilities for children to have a good education, but some children are still lacking. I come from Sri Lanka so I know how hard the children there are struggling to do well... Auckland could be the best [educational centre] in the world, because you have all the different cultures here...” ...A desire to promote learning inspired her award-winning entry to this year’s Telecom art awards... Her multi-cultural painting features a young[ster] with a pile of books, being encouraged by his parents... ■ [A]... new book argues that the extent to which children resemble their parents is determined by genes not upbringing.

...PARENTS are about to be made redundant. According to *The Nurture Assumption*... psychologists have had it wrong for 100 years – a child’s character is influenced not by parents but by other children... Children do not see their parents as mirror or model because they are looking the other way. [The book’s author] is not a trained psychologist. [The author] is a grandmother from Middletown, New Jersey, a writer of textbooks with no PhD. [However, the author] sent her theory... to America’s most respected academic journal in the field, *Psychological Review*, and it accepted it. Most parents would recognise that there is something in what [the author] says and concede that children are influenced by their friends, but usually not before they hit their teens. [The author’s] controversial idea is that parents themselves have little impact at any stage of a child’s life... [J]ust look at their behaviour... says... [the author]. Children always seek out other children in a social setting, even as toddlers. Their interactions in school can be profoundly different from their behaviour at home. How often do parents hear a teacher’s report on their child and wonder aloud: “Are we talking about the same kid?” ...Many parents will see [the author’s] theory as a welcome let-out clause. But her theory may be part of a backlash, since parents have got the flak for their children’s problems. [The author thinks that her book reassures adults who] fear the responsibility... but... [whose genes] “could be contributing very useful and fine children... If they knew that it was OK to have a child and let it be reared by a nanny or put it in a day-care centre, or even to send it to a boarding school, maybe they’d believe that it would be OK to have a kid. You can have a kid without having to devote your entire life – your entire emotional expenditure – to this child for the next 20 years.”

...TO the guilty parent who frets over the latest advice about quality time, instilling values or toilet training, [a US] author... offers this relief: mum and dad, you don’t matter that much. Hmmm, is that good news or bad? It’s certainly controversial, and... a northern New Jersey grandmother, is already feeling the heat from psychologists and child development experts outraged by her views. “I seem to have hit a nerve,” says... [the] textbook writer kicked out of Harvard’s psychology department four decades ago because the chair[perso]n thought her graduate work lacked originality and independence... With no academic affiliation or doctorate beside her name, her ideas might be easily dismissed, but [grannie] has done some serious research in psychology, sociology and anthropology, backing her theory with dozens of articles and studies. (Her reference list takes up 31 of the book’s 460 pages.) ...“My position is that teenagers belong to the same species as the rest of us,” [grannie] writes on adolescents in one chapter. “But one cannot help but wonder. If they are equipped with the same sort of brain as the rest of us, why do they so often give the impression of having forgotten how to use it?” ...Her own daughters behaved so differently from each other when they were growing up, it made her question her own influence on them. Her oldest... was an achiever. The younger... who was adopted, dropped out of high school. [Grannie] spent much of her [own] teen years stuck in bed, disabled by an autoimmune disease that has systematically attacked her internal organs, leaving her weakened and often homebound. But [grannie] (60) is adamant her own experience, while instructive, was not the basis for her theory, and... resents how some writers have already exaggerated her ideas and dissected her own life... Despite the controversy, [grannie]’s ideas have received some impressive endorsements, most notably from... a well-regarded Massachusetts Institute of Technology psychology professor who writes in the book’s forew[or]d: “I predict it will come to be seen as a turning point in the history of psychology.” The book’s release coincided with the American Psychological Association AGM last month in San Francisco, where [grannie] was honoured for a recent paper. It included an irony [grannie] savours: her award was named after the Harvard professor who kicked her out so long ago. But even [grannie] concedes that in her parents-v-peers argument, [it] has overstated her case at times with some “extreme statements”. [Grannie] calls them partly a “literary device” to draw in lay readers... [The] director of child and adolescent psychiatry at the Johns Hopkins Children’s Centre in Baltimore, says her all-or-nothing stance on parental influence is reminiscent of nature-v-nurture arguments over IQ. Almost everyone in the child-development field believes the truth lies between the extremes. “Yes, some theorists have placed too much emphasis on parenting... It’s also true [that grannie has] placed too much emphasis on peer groups.” [Grannie] brushes aside most of the criticism of the academic establishment – if only because most of them have not read her book[, which, since]... it landed in [US] bookstores last month... has sold more than 50,000 copies and should soon make it to the best-seller list... [- but grannie also brushes aside any problems with her theory, and society, by saying:] “Parents are provided by nature with instinctive behaviour on how to raise children. We did it for hundreds of thousands of generations without guidance from experts, and they turned out OK.”

...Moments after giving birth, concerned well-wishers were advising me to “put her name down at Dio.” “You have to put her name down now!” they cried. I was bewildered. Not only had I never set foot in the school, I was still trying to get the hang of breastfeeding. Surely the thought of schooling was years away. But every couple of months it would happen again. “What are you zoned for? ...Don’t leave it any later...” ...It’s the new middle-class obsession – getting your kids into a good school. And the obsession is not just reserved for high schools; the primary school dilemma is just as serious. What constitutes a good school seems fairly debatable. Most go on word of mouth, like the selection of a good restaurant. They get the application forms without having visited the school or meeting the principal. They know, and sometimes talk about, the... ERO reports but don’t get around to getting a copy to read. Simple rule of thumb: private is good, religious is good (Clayton’s private schools), and then there are a smattering of state schools with the coveted “good reputation” – all based on word of mouth and unread ERO reports. Families regularly shift houses to get in zone for one of the few state schools that have been deemed a chosen one. And if that’s not extreme enough, I heard of a family who

had quickie baptisms, changing faith in the progress, to improve their chances of getting into a pseudo-private Catholic school (“Hop in the car kids; I’ll tell you about the Pope on the way”). Then there’s the reference fiasco: which referees will impress the judges? Usually it is a mix of a famous rich person met once at a dinner party and a neighbour’s brother-in-law with old-school connections – obliging strangers who are faxed details of the kid in question. Our parents didn’t face the schooling dilemma. They never questioned the system of sending their kids to the school they were zoned for. And if the kids didn’t like it, guess whose problem it was? Certainly not the parents’. So survival and social skills developed naturally. Were kids tougher back then or are things just out of hand today? A mixture of both, but we can’t ignore a third factor – parental angst. Although teenagers are often miserable creatures anyway, middle-class parents have a determination to make sure they are consistently happy at their chosen school. If their teen is a little sullen, the solution is simple – “the school just wasn’t him” and the surly teen is moved elsewhere. One wonders if some teens’ progress would improve using the good old clip around the earhole strategy. While some kids do indeed blossom at other schools, often the real issue is skirted. The “good school” obsession could be devaluing the quality of some of our solid and dependable state schools by default. My sister seems to classify all people on whether they got into Macleans College or not (“I am seeing my friend Cheryl-whose-daughter-got-into-Macleans tonight”; and “you know John-whose-son-didn’t-get-into-Macleans”). What happens to the poor kids-who-don’t-get-into-Macleans? Do they turn into axe murderers at some other school? We’re caught between complaining about the competitiveness and pressure on teens, yet wanting to prepare them for the inevitable ratrace. Which parent will deny their child “the best education that there is around” and “a natural head start in life”? But somewhere lurking underneath all of this is parental guilt. So many parents feel they might be falling short on the parenting stakes, so the least they can do is send the kids to the best school they can. They want these schools not just to teach but to discipline, teach lifeskills and provide a sense of belonging and security. If the kid turns out a loser, the parents can say, “We did all we could, we sent him to the best schools, blah, blah, blah,” which is interpreted, “Well, I did my bit.” We all want our kids to get into a great school. And the best way for this to happen is to help them to be great kids. And that’s our job as parents. I tell a friend about the column I’m going to write: “What! Are you crazy? You’ll jeopardise your chances of getting her in to a good school.”

...New zoning rules are preventing two Manurewa brothers from going to the same school, despite anecdotal evidence that splitting siblings up in such a way could be harmful. [The younger brother], who... attends a kindergarten next to the school... [and] will be five in September, wants to join his six-year-old brother... at Clayton Park Primary School. But under... enforced... zoning regulations... Clayton Park has created a “home zone” for new entrants. It ends one street away from the... family’s Mahia Rd home. Out-of-zoners wanting to attend the school must submit to a ballot process. However, the school principal... said a ballot, which would give priority to siblings, was unlikely to happen because the school was full. The boys’ mother... was angry and frustrated that appeals to the Ministry of Education had got her nowhere. “The attitude was that there was nothing they could do,”... It was important that the children were schooled together for practical and safety reasons. The only options... [the parents] could see were... to move the family from its rented house to another in the home zone... or... to pull [the older brother] from a school where [it] was happy to send him elsewhere with [his sibling]... Educationalists say that such a situation could be harmful in terms of both socialisation and education.

...*Failure dogs pupils who swap schools*... Hundreds of primary school pupils are failing because they switch schools too often – in some cases five times a year. Principals say children from poor families are set up to fail because their parents shunt them through too many schools... [Some] students were enrolled for as little as two weeks, before their parents withdrew them, often without warning. The Ministry of Education has no way of tracking the students, leaving teachers to phone around schools in search of them... The problem mostly affects cities, where families may be more likely to move around seeking work or to avoid being caught for benefit fraud or overdue rent... Families with children aged 5 to 7 were the most likely to be transient, especially those who lived in caravan parks... Six South Auckland principals the *Herald* spoke to said families had become more transient, causing children to fall behind. Manurewa East Primary [School’s] principal... said it was the number one problem affecting learning at primary schools. Seventy per cent of transient pupils were thought to fail. [The principal], a member of the Auckland Primary Principals Association... had spoken to at least 50 principals from a wide range of schools who had complained of the “horrendous problem,” especially in low-income areas. Manurewa East has had 129 new enrolments since the start of the year. But during that time 80 students have left the school, which has a roll of 260... The high turnover of pupils also affected staff, who had to spend more time processing enrolments and settling new entrants in... Papatoetoe South Primary [School’s] principal... said a 6-year-old pupil had attended eight schools in the past two years.

...An Auckland boy attended 23 primary schools and 36 pupils swapped schools more than 10 times in eight years, a study on transient children has found. The study’s author... a... learning and behaviour resource teacher, found... such children often had major behavioural problems and learning disabilities. This week, six Auckland principals said it was the number one problem affecting student learning... The study, paid for by the NZ Educational Institute, found that Maori children were the most transient. Twenty per cent of them had attended more than three schools in any one year... [Overall, 10%] of boys and 16[%] of girls had attended three or more schools in any one year by the time they finished primary school.

...Single-sex state schools fear that education law changes will force them to take students of the opposite sex. They believe that the special character of single-sex schools – among the oldest and best-known in the country – could disappear if schools have less power to refuse entry to boys or girls they do not want... The topic was one of the main subjects of discussion at the secondary principals’ conference in Wellington... More than 100 principals have signed a letter to [the] Education Minister... seeking clarification of proposed changes to the Education Act which would remove protection for single-sex schools. But [the minister] says schools would still have the right to refuse entry to students of the opposite sex despite the law change... [They can call] on an exemption in the Human Rights Act 1993 – section 58 – to stop students of the opposite sex enrolling.

...The recent *Herald* article on how single-sex state schools fear that education law changes will force them to take students of the opposite sex reminded me of... *The Snark Syndrome*. The title was inspired by the Lewis Carroll poem *The Hunting of the Snark*, which contains the words “I have said it three times, so it’s true.” The article quoted the principal of an Auckland girls’ school as saying that research showed girls did better academically in single-sex schools. The Snark syndrome, of course, means that everybody knows that. In other words, if something is repeated often enough, it becomes true... As [the author of *The Snark Syndrome*] has pointed out, most of this received wisdom has no empirical base, the substantive primary literature does not support it, and some of it isn’t even common sense. [The author – who] was brought to N[Z] in 1994 by the Ministry of [Gals’] Affairs in recognition of her involvement in a major, federally funded A[US]n study of [gals’] access to and progress in science and technology in higher education... [–] came with a background of long participation in education and gender issues, including work as a full-time consultant to the E[U], in which capacity [it] prepared the first research-based report on sex equality in education. One of the Snark myths which [the author] has sought to expose is that single-sex schools advantage girls. [The author] examined assertions such as the one that [all-girl] schools produce more... physicists, and revealed that the evidence came from Britain, the U[S, AUS], France... and Ireland, where all of the single-sex schools surveyed were private, elite, fee-paying... and academically selective. The fact that such outcomes are a function of class and ability, not a function of single sex, has been upheld by subsequent major N[Z] research... Given that the conventional wisdom is so clearly false, it is interesting to consider the issue of other reasons some families might feel compelled to encourage girls to flee from coeducation. It certainly seems to be strange that it is still occurring... Our own experience at Western Springs College is that girls not only sustain an academic focus throughout their coeducational years at secondary school but also develop a very important set of personal and social skills during their time here. The result is that they are better equipped for living and working with [guy] counterparts, whether as fellow plumbers... or physicists. Parents who intend to protect their daughters by sending them to a girls’ school are misconceiving the situation. Certainly, adolescents are put under enormous pressure

by the constant media barrage of messages about sexuality. Yet surely the absence of members of the opposite sex in everyday situations serves only to increase anxiety for young people about contact when it does occur and about the nature of appropriate relating. At our school, I see strong, assertive girls mixing easily and confidently with students of different ages, races, socio-economic backgrounds and with boys. They enjoy friendships with many boys and girls; very few are isolated in relationships. Every day in a coeducational setting, students get to know each other beyond the skin-deep level of superficial stereotypes. They are able to expand their sense of what it means to be [a boy or a girl]. When our girls are asked if they think our college is a good school for girls, they respond with an enthusiastic "Yes." They point... [out] that everyone has an equal chance in the classroom. They argue that dominant personalities are just as likely to be fem[inine as masculin]e, and that the vast majority of boys do not dominate... For us, coeducation is all about providing a natural and healthy learning environment where girls and boys are given the opportunity to develop mutual respect under the influence of excellent same-sex and opposite-sex role models. Any remaining sceptics should scan the academic results achieved by... coeducational schools in N[Z – w]hether... large or small, high or low decile, rural or urban...

After 20 years in girls-only schools, none of which was "private, elite, fee-paying... or academically selective," I spent last year in a co-educational secondary school. I concluded that girls are disadvantaged, especially if they are less able, and particularly in Years 9 and 10. These classes are often disrupted by boys and the teacher spends much time on the behavioural management of the boys, to the detriment of the learning of the girls. Yes, the girls learn the skills that make them "better equipped for living and working with [opposite-sex] counterparts." They learn to be quiet, ignore the boys and to accept [guy-dominating behaviour. Although "repeated studies in NZ, AUS and England show that students from co-ed schools do better at university than those from single-sex schools (and students from state schools do better than those from private schools'), p]ast pupils of the school I t[ought] in, who attend university, tell me they notice girls from co-ed schools are more willing to bow to [guys' opinions] while they are more forthright. Behaviours that would be considered bullying in a single-sex school are accepted by girls in co-ed schools since they are viewed as a form of sexual interplay. In particular, the level of inappropriate language between students is much greater... The advantages of single-sex education are underrated... The physical environment of a girls' school is more pleasant because it is not being destroyed by testosterone-filled [boy]s displaying their mating skills to the opposite sex.

...The talented teen topped last year's bursary and scholarship exams for accounting with 96[%]. Now the[... accounting whiz... 17, is at Otago University studying for two degrees – in science and commerce. [The 17-year-old] is one of thousands of Kiwi girls beating the boys in subjects they traditionally topped. More [girl] students are graduating head of the class in medicine, law and science. But researchers say behaviour, not brains, is turning Kiwi girls into A-grade students. A 21-year study of more than 1200 Christchurch kids has revealed girls are increasingly doing better at school than boys. [The h]ead researcher... said... because girls... concentrate... in class... they learn better... [The researcher added that] tests on kids at eight and nine years old showed boys had higher IQs... [The 17-year-old] reckons gender has little to do with doing well at school. But... admits that, having attended single-sex Carmel College in Auckland, her last experience of a mixed class was at primary. "But there are disruptive girls at school too,"... [The researcher] said boys tended to catch up with girls at university...

Boys are not the perennial underachievers they have been made out to be. New research shows ethnicity and the socio-economic status of a school have more influence on student achievement than gender. In a major review of 450 N[Z] and international studies, Wellington researchers... found there were more similarities than differences and what was good for girls was good for boys. The study contradicts the prevailing view that boys lag behind girls in academic achievement. Last year, the E[RO] promoted special measures to improve the achievement of boys and recommended that schools run boys-only classes. But [one of the researchers] said while boys-only classes were not always a bad idea, the review did not support the need to do things differently for boys and girls. The Ministry of Education plans to use the information as part of a "stock-take" of the curriculum.

...FROM the moment a child is born, the cry of "It's a boy" or "It's a girl" marks its most basic label of personal identity. But our understanding of sex and gender is undergoing profound and surprising changes thanks to insights gained from biology, sociology, medicine and technology. When it comes to the differences between [boys and girls], what once seemed black and white – or pink and blue – now seems a shifting zone of confusion. For starters, there's evidence that [boys and girls] are hard-wired from birth to differ in subtle and intriguing ways when it comes to behaviour. In effect, children may be born sexist. More than a few feminist mothers, for example, have been forced to concede defeat in trying to deter their own sons from rough play, wanting toy guns and risk-taking. It is well documented that boys and girls segregate themselves and learn different ways of interacting socially early in their lives. [A] distinguished American developmental psychologist... contends that nature usually gets too little credit for that process of separation. While [the American] agrees that gender is largely a product of cultural forces, [it] argues that ma[sculine-feminine] distinctions come into play so early in childhood and are so universal that they must be deeply grounded in our biology. The tendency to prefer same-sex playmates becomes progressively stronger through the preschool years, until by primary-school age it is powerful indeed, says [the American] in her landmark book, *The Two Sexes: Growing up Apart, Coming Together*. Tellingly, this happens in societies across the world, virtually regardless of individuals' social experience, family background and the degree of gender segregation that happens in the adult world around them... Children raised by single parents and lesbians or consciously raised in a gender-neutral way from birth exhibit the same gender stereotype. Most children can distinguish the sexes by the time they start learning to walk and talk, within a year of birth... [The American] believes that gender is not so much an individual trait as a property of social groups. When individual boys and girls are alone, their behaviour does not observably differ all that much... but when they gather in same-sex groups they differ radically. Boys in groups focus on competition and pecking orders, with lots of shows of bravado and confrontations, whereas girls in groups tend to collaborate as equals, with more empathy and cooperation and, often, more talk of feelings. Boys who try to socialise with girls are quickly noticed and pressured not to do so by other boys, who monitor the boundaries of their groups. Girls who try to socialise with boys are often repelled by rough, self-centred ma[sculine] play styles. They may learn at least some of their gender segregation from older children. Adults seem to have little initial influence, although parents, teachers and popular culture can probably temper or reinforce these trends as children grow older. If it sounds far-fetched to suggest that children may have a special sexist culture to match their sexist biology... a contrary message is emerging from genetic studies: they suggest that [boys and girls] have much more in common than they have differences. So far as we know, out of the estimated 31,000 genes in the human [body], the only genetic differences between [the sexes]... are found in the two sex chromosomes – known as X and Y – and even then only a few dozen genes seem involved.

...WHAT are little girls made of? Some of the brightest minds in the West seem to be devoted to discovering the exact recipes for combining sugar and spice and all things nice, or, on the other hand, for slugs and snails and puppy-dogs' tails. Flick through the latest issue of *New Scientist*, for instance, and you see page after page of the sugar'n'slugs brand of scientific inquiry. Each one purports to uncover some eternal truth about why boys must be boys, or why girls must be girls. One claims to show that gossiping is more important to [gals] than it is to [guys]; and so suggests that... gossiping originated in "prehistoric times." Another claims to show that [gals] feel prettier when they are ovulating than at any other time of the month; and so suggests that attractiveness is all to do with fertility... The methods of these researchers aren't always the most impressive thing about them. The research on whether [gals] feel more attractive at the time of the month that they ovulate is based on dairies kept by just 27 American [gals]; not a particularly impressive sample, given that such studies tend to be used to support the idea that gender behaviour remains static across cultures and epochs. And none of these studies will silence doubters by the sheer force of their arguments. Take the study on gossip... The researchers discovered that... [guys] would not back off if they were threatened with violence unless it was by a group, whereas [gals] would back off if they were threatened by just one violent person. They also discovered that [guys] were fearful of a lone gossip, while [gals] were only

scared of gossip if threatened by a group. Still with me? This difference exists, so the researcher claimed, because, in those much-quoted prehistoric times, while [guys] relied on violent confrontations, [gals] used gossip as “a powerful weapon that could be used to out-compete their rivals for precious resources,” and so [they] forged their alliances based on gossip. It remains a little obscure why this survey provides a direct link to prehistoric times rather than just showing how [guys and gals] feel right now. This fuzzy logic is a constant in these sorts of studies. In so many of them, evidence drawn from a survey now – often the sort of survey that reminds me of the quizzes I used to fill up in *Cosmopolitan* in school breaks – is seen as proof, not of some obvious practical explanation, but of some reproductive advantage that such behaviour would have given [guys and gals] in millennia gone by. And this unquestioned link between our responses now and in previous millennia produces a vision of human behaviour as something unchanging, written in stone long ago... Nothing is too trivial for the evolutionary psychologists, who have managed to study everything from why [guys], apparently, can't find butter in a fridge (because they evolved tunnel vision on their hunting forays) to why [gals], apparently, can't read maps (because they always sat in the caves). But anything that might kick against the basic tenets of evolutionary psychology is ignored. And the basic tenets tend to belong to the most banally conservative mindset; that [gals want good guys] who stick around, while [guys] want to sow their seed and run; that [gals] are cave-dwellers and nurturers, while [guys] are hunters and fighters. Nothing bears this out more strongly than a study published last month that tries to prove that an act of rape is more likely to result in a pregnancy than consensual sex. For their study, the researchers deliberately chose [gals] who had been raped between the ages of 12 and 45, and compared rates of pregnancy resulting from their experiences with rates of pregnancy among a group... who had one-night stands. From these samples, they found that the raped [gals] were more than twice as likely to become pregnant as the consenting [ones], and so could conclude that rape might be seen as a “successful reproductive strategy in evolutionary terms.” Once this conclusion is reached, rape begins to look like just part of the masculine genetic inheritance. And that makes the idea that [guys] can change, and that [gals] should try to change them, seem hopelessly over-optimistic. Yet a study of rape as a survival strategy that deliberately excludes the prevalence of rape of pre-pubescent girls and post-menopausal [gals] is clearly looking for a particular answer. These researchers are not just interested in the bewildering number of [guys who rape gals] who have no possibility of bearing children. Nor do they choose to look at [guys] who rape... in gangs, who would be, in their terms, providing competition for their own genes. No, they are clearly looking to define rape as a behaviour that confers survival advantage on [guys], in order to suggest that rape is laid down in ma[sculin]e genes. This is bad science used in the service of prejudice. Maybe all this wouldn't matter so much if evolutionary psychology were confined to the dottier realms of academe. But, on the contrary, this is the boom area of contemporary psychology. The old ideas of how we came to be as we are – Freudian ideas about the power of childhood experience, or feminist ideas about social conditioning – have been jettisoned in favour of ideas that emphasise the power of the genetic inheritance. It's odd, isn't it, that just as [gals] are escaping from the most restrictive patterns of femininity and just as [guys] are beginning to feel fine about admitting to behaviour that their fathers might have found curious, this cultural backlash is trying to squeeze [guys and gals] back into little boxes marked “sugar” and “puppy-dogs' tails” all over again. All those popular tomes on relationships – [*Guys are from Mars, The Rules, The Surrendered Wife* – rely on the ideas of the evolutionary psychologists... It's a far cry from the heady days of the 70s, or even the 80s, when sex roles seemed fluid and there was an optimism about how [guys and gals] might be able to try on, and even enjoy, one another's clothes. “Boys will be boys,” say the evolutionary psychologists with a shrug, and almost everyone in the media, politics, education and television seems to be joining in, “and girls will be girls”. Welcome to the new Victorianism.

...[Guys are being targeted by a] \$250,000 advertising campaign to lure [them] to primary teaching... Newspaper and television adverts beginning in [two months] will emphasise the rewards of teaching and the important contribution that [guys] can make... The... Education Minister... said [guy] teachers sent a message to boys that education was not sissy... [The minister] was buoyed that [gal] teachers had raised the concern that 55,000 boys were growing up in households without a ma[sculin]e role model, and being taught only by... [gals. In another development, t]he length of the school day and school year is under review. The Government has formed an independent working party... to consider the issue, including the appropriate times for learning the curriculum... A discussion paper would be sent to schools at the beginning of next month... [and the working party] will make its final report to the Government late this year... The length of the school day might change but the working party had not yet seen any evidence to justify making it longer... [– although the person chosen to head the working party says:] “It's about maximising learning time to get the best quality education.” The review is a response to three factors... • Last year's E[RO] report, Open for Instruction, which showed substantial variations in the length of the school day and year. • A ministerial survey in 1996 that resulted in the implementation of the four-term year... • A drive by some primary schools to synchronise their school year to that of secondary schools... [Last year 39] primary and intermediate schools... [were] given approval to run for longer hours but fewer days, bringing them in line with secondary schools. The schools, mostly in rural areas... open between 10 and 30 minutes longer each day, a move backed by parents and teachers... One... school was Manurewa Intermediate. Its principal... said starting the day 30 minutes earlier, at 8.30 am, would shave a week off the school year. By matching term dates with the two local high schools, parents would be able to plan holidays with ease... A further 529 schools are eager to follow suit. However, the Ministry of Education says they have failed to meet its requirements, which include having the support of 75[%] of parents.

...The review of the school day and school year is a farce based on contrived and biased research, the secondary teachers' union says. P[PTA] leaders have called for the dismissal of the working party conducting the review because of “serious flaws” with the research used in its discussion paper, which the public have been asked to respond to through a questionnaire... One of the more contentious aspects for teachers was the suggestion that their work time, preparation time and holidays be specifically defined, with the report citing three overseas examples of countries where teachers have five or six weeks' annual leave. N[Z] teachers have around 12 weeks' holiday, but unions say most already use time off for professional development and course planning.

...TEACHERS everywhere claim they're overworked, underpaid and not appreciated. Their critics claim they have it sweet – look at the holidays – and if the namby pambys running the system just brought back daily thrashings then young people would come out of school better citizens than the flabby lot being produced now. There's nothing new in the PPTA bemoaning the lot of teachers. What is new... is that they now have an authoritative study that proves our teachers carry a heavier workload than any other country in the [First W]orld... The report also shows that brand new teachers are paid less than the OECD average and that our teachers teach for the longest hours. Pretty damning reading. If, as the report says, student to teacher ratios are an indicator of the resources devoted to education, we're only paying lip service to the idea that educating our kids equips them with the best chance of making the most of their lives. Before another retired soldier calls for the cane to be introduced, how about introducing more teachers. [• ‘Teach NZ has introduced \$10,000 grants to encourage NZers to train as teachers.’]

...A survey by the... PPTA... found... [o]ne-third of all... new secondary school teachers [employed at the beginning of last year] had either quit teaching... for other careers or... left the country by the start of this year... “We're really worried that new teachers are being put off teaching, especially when we're at the beginning of a roll bulge,” says... [the] president of the PPTA. The [president]... said the country was facing a teacher supply crisis and secondary schools could not afford to lose any more new graduates. Overseas schools were “aggressively” recruiting N[Z] teachers, offering them better wages and working conditions. But Teach N[Z]'s national manager... said new graduates had always travelled overseas to gain work experience. This applied especially to secondary teachers who wanted to work in the UK.

...The UK is... below average for the number of children staying on at school after the age of 16, with 82[%] going on to higher education... [(in the EU, o]nly Luxembourg and Portugal are worse)] a)... research institute report sa[ys]... And in terms of what children learn at school, the report

found that while Britain's 14-year-olds scored well in sciences, in maths just under half achieved the basic national average, with mental arithmetic seen as the biggest problem. About half of British 13-year-olds could not calculate 6000 minus 2369 and their average results lagged significantly behind those of their peers in Austria, Belgium, France and the Netherlands... [C]hild welfare campaigners were hoping that next week's budget would bring more family-friendly policies and cited both Germany and France, where measures to improve the lives of both children and their parents were well established.

...British parents disillusioned with the state education system are subjecting their children to selective testing at an increasingly young age... [In further news from Britain, m]ore than three-quarters of a million children... could be given drugs to control their behaviour – against their wishes and those of their parents. The spectre is raised by legislation planned by the Government to give increased powers to psychiatrists. Mental health workers are warning that the new legislation is being drawn so widely that doctors will be given the right to drug children just because they have a difficulty with maths or spelling. The concern over the legislation follows alarming evidence that tens of thousands of schoolchildren with mild behavioural problems are being given the mind-drug Ritalin... In England, the number of prescriptions... has shot up from just 3500 in 1993 to 126,500 in 1998. A report last week in the U[S] showed that... one in 30... children... were now... given Ritalin, with [some]... being... as young as 2...

Too many losers in [New York] schools... It wasn't the metal detector at the school door, or the uniformed guards, or even the unintended irony of the ill-worded sign that proclaimed "No weapons policy." Nor was it the knot of teenagers milling beneath a cloud of smoke in the park down the block, or the spectacle of a 16-year-old mum kissing her babies goodbye on the front steps. No, this is New York, where schoolyard violence, teen pregnancy and a little reefer before class don't raise too many eyebrows. The real shock for this visitor came a... few minutes after the bell when... 23-odd kids, all around 15, were slouched in plastic seats for the first class of the day in their Brooklyn high school. I was their teacher's guest, an emissary from the grown-up world who had come to deliver a little talk about the business of newspapers. It was an easy invitation for a reporter to accept. Over the past year, through a series of front-page scandals, the woes that beset New York's schools have come to seem absolutely hopeless. No sooner has one shocking incident or act of mayhem defined the wretchedness of an educational system that swallows one million kids every day than another outrage comes along to top it. "So," I begin: "Who has read a newspaper today?" No response. Try another tack. "Did you know this town once had seven daily newspapers, not three like... today?" Still nothing. Push ahead. "That was back before TV, when... W[W2] was going on and everybody wanted to read about the fight against Hitler and Japan." The silence remains unbroken. "So, who can tell me when the war was?" An arm uncurls, rising slowly to a point, the first shy sprout in a silent garden. It belongs to a girl who wears a beaming grin beneath a mat of corn-rows, each thin plait tipped with its own rainbow of ceramic beads. "The Sixties!" [the girl] announces with confidence, adding quickly that her daddy "went off to fight in it." As the class progressed the students were a revelation. On the one hand, there seemed to be almost no sense of history and timelines, of how all of us got here from there. But on the other hand, there was not the slightest suggestion of the horror stories that have figured so prominently on New York's front pages these past few months. The kids were polite, if uninvolved. And while only one or two bothered to express an opinion, the rest remained orderly and relatively quiet. I had expected something rather different – a glimpse of the blackboard jungle. To judge by the headlines, entire squads of detectives must be constantly arresting teachers for molesting their pupils. More than a dozen have been led away in handcuffs in... the past six months alone. Incidents of teachers being punched, slashed or threatened with guns occur every two weeks or so, which might explain why some teachers have taken to repaying the terror in kind. One was arrested recently for packing a handgun, two for beating students with chairs, and a 50-year-old [gal] for bending a child's finger until the bone cracked. School officials generally make light of those and other incidents. What they haven't been able to dismiss so glibly, however, is the very latest scandal to rock the 400-strong school system – a widespread cheating scam. Except it wasn't the kids who were breaking the rules but their teachers. Two years ago, when New York's Governor... imposed a series of standardised tests on every school in the state, the results for New York City's students were appalling. Almost 90pc of high schoolers failed mathematics, and the figures for English and science were only slightly less dire. [While some people joke that teachers tell their students: 'Remember class, the worse you do on this standardised test the more funding the school gets, so don't knock yourselves out', t]his year, the test results underwent an almost miraculous improvement. In fact the rise was so sharp that a squad of former police detectives attached to New York City's board of education decided to take a closer look. In less than a week they discovered that teachers in at least 54 of the worst schools had improved their pupils' scores by rubbing out incorrect answers and pencilling in the right ones. "You expect some students to cheat on exams," said... the education board's chief investigator. "But for teachers to do it just so they can look good is a betrayal of a scared trust." Not that it has been the only betrayal. [The detectives] also learned that many schools have been padding their attendance rolls with phantom pupils in order to get more funds. In one Bronx school, a boy dead for almost three years was listed not only as a current pupil but also as one of the school's most promising students... "It costs an average of \$US14,000... per year to educate a child in a New York Public school," a mayoral aide lamented. "That is... four times more than it costs to send a child to a comparable Catholic school, so the teachers' union argument that city schools are starved for funds doesn't fly." [The state's new senator] disagrees. When... officially announc[ing] her Senate candidacy, it was in front of an invited audience of teachers' union shop stewards. "You are doing a great job," [the former First Wife] said... "And we'll do much better when we send more people to Washington who will make sure that our schools have all the financial support they need for every child to excel." Just so long as nobody takes an attendance roll, or gets too hung up about teaching the events that shaped our modern world, it should be a piece of cake.

...A [gal] who rescued two violent and failing schools in Harlem and the Bronx has been advising N[Z] principals on leadership... for two weeks... One of the schools, in Harlem, had closed because of underachievement and violence, but [the gal] turned it into one of the most successful schools in New York... [The]Harlem-raised principal... believes N[Z] schools can learn from her experiences in some of the toughest parts of New York... [The adviser] said schools in Harlem and the Bronx were not always as violent and drug-ridden as they were portrayed, but "some are." "A lot of good things happen, but not enough to rescue all the schools that need rescuing." ...it was important to improve opportunities for disadvantaged children, whether they were from Harlem or South Auckland. "I come from a background very similar to children at the bottom of the achievement ladder, here and everywhere in this world. A good school in Tanzania looks like a good school in South Auckland. A bad school is a bad school anywhere. You can smell it, you can taste it, you can tell as soon as you walk in the door." [The adviser] said schools in the U[S] and N[Z] faced similar challenges. Raising literacy was crucial, teaching needed to be made more attractive, principals needed more professional development and N[Z] businesses should give schools more support. "Important groups in the N[Z] education system are consistently underachieving, and changes need to be made if the country is to turn these areas around... The clock is ticking on children's lives, and every minute counts." Schools could change children's lives for the better, and it was up to principals to create an environment of disciplined creativity.

...Only nine in 100 children at N[Z]'s poorest schools get a satisfactory mark in S[C] – and zoning rules are blamed for their underachievement. The statistics have been revealed by the Minister of Education in response to a parliamentary question from [an]Act MP... who said the figures were proof that the zoning scheme... stopped parents from seeking a better-performing school elsewhere. "Nine out of 100 [kids] at decile one... schools got an A or B pass... last year... At the richest schools, half the children got an A or B mark. S[C] is the bare minimum our children need to succeed. And yet at the poorest schools, 70[%] of the kids are destined to get a D grade." Zoning... was "robbing bright kids of any future by forcing them to go to poor schools that perpetuate a cycle of failure. What hope do they have?" Maori and Pacific Island students were particularly disadvantaged because one in five Maori and four in 10 Pacific Islanders attended decile one schools. In contrast, one in 100 Europeans attend decile one schools.

...New Lynn Primary School[’s]... new principal, back in a teaching role after working in the U[S] as an educational consultant... says inequalities in US schools made him realise how good N[Z]’s education system is. “Children will get as good an education in this system as they will in any system... I think sometimes teachers in N[Z] get a lot of flak for what is seen as not working hard enough.” But [the principal] says the criticism is unwarranted. [The former consultant] says being New Lynn Primary School’s principal gives him a challenge. “This job is an opportunity for me to work in a low decile school that is strong, with a strong history. I’m proud of the school and I’m proud of the community.” ...[the new principal believes his school] will have one of the most modern computer systems in the region by the end of the year... The project... [to] upgrade... its computers... is an example of his vision for the school. “We’re not going for mediocrity, we’re going for the very best... We’re getting state-of-the-art computers throughout the school...”

Rutherford College[’s] principal... says the school will have to look at increasing its use of computers if a teacher shortage worsens. “I believe good teachers in the future will have to teach more kids and will have to rely on things such as computer-assisted learning,”... Computer-assisted learning sees students given a subject overview by teachers before being left to pursue the topic with the help of a supervisor and computers. Teachers will then shift their focus to other students in other classrooms... [The PPTA regional chairperson]... agrees there is a shortage of teachers. But the fact that [Rutherford College’s principal] is looking at increased use of computer-assisted learning is disturbing, [the chairperson] says.

...PUPILS in three South Island schools [have] this year be[en] studying bursary economics with Kings College students through computer-based training and the internet. The scheme is a pilot for a wider offering of internet-based courses which Kings plans as part of its new academy, due to start in 2001. [The h]eadmaster... says interactive learning will suit smaller or remote schools which want to offer classes in subjects for which they would not be able to get enough suitable students to hire a specialised teacher. The scheme was piloted last year by three pupils at Amuri Area School in Canterbury. Five students from Diocesan School in Auckland also used the course material to extend their classroom studies... Students receive a CD-Rom containing a study guide, a complete set of notes with exercises and model answers, tests and a glossary... This year it will be picked up by two Otago schools, Oxford Area School and Catlins Area School. Kings intends to charge schools \$1000 for the service. “That’s a 50th the cost of a teacher,” says [the person] who teaches economics as well as looks after Kings’ IT programme... Kings has had computers... since 1990 and all senior students have had Apple laptops since 1996. That has meant staff have built up considerable knowledge on how computers can be used effectively in the classroom... When the academy is developed, students will be able to stay at Kings during school holidays for face-to-face contact... The material will also be available on line... The CD includes links to the course home page on the Kings web site, where students can get class news, e-mail other students, contribute questions or answers to class discussions... read about the state of the N[Z] economy... or... find links to internet sites which relate to the bursary economics syllabus...

Teachers beware. [The]Education Minister... is driving the new e-Government initiative and... wants you to log on. Launching the strategy in Parliament this week, [the minister] lamented that thousands of teachers were replicating preparation for classes rather than dialling up Te Kete Ipurangi – the ministry’s resource-rich website. [The minister] had even jested with PPTA negotiators that teachers have their pay docked unless they log on to the site three times a week. Those keen on keeping their pay packets might like to check out: www.tki.org.nz □... This year’s NetDay... could be the last, with the programme’s success making such a focused effort unnecessary. Since it started as an initiative by the 2020 Trust and 30 Wellington area schools five years ago, more than 500 schools have been wired up with computer cabling during NetDays. Sponsors – led by Telecom and equipment supplier Tyco Electronics – have come on board and the Education Ministry subsidises networking activity... “The majority of schools now say they have networks or are on that path,”... the Telecom NetDay... national coordinator... says. “Last year 600 schools did some form of networking, but only 140 of those did it on NetDay. That’s giving us the signal it’s time to move on. We’ve succeeded in raising awareness and giving people confidence to get started. We’ve also been able to put a bit more information into schools, so they are able to manage the quality of what other contractors are doing outside of NetDay.” ...The NetDay model is being applied to other 2020 Trust initiatives, starting with the Computers in Homes scheme being piloted in Panmure Bridge and Cannons Creek, where 25 families in low-decile school communities have been given recycled computers and internet connections for six months.

...We have free visits to the doctor for toddlers, free immunisation against disease, and CYF... to protect kids from physical and emotional harm or neglect, but the Government continues to allow the infestation of headlice. When I was at school 20 years ago, a health nurse visited regularly to check our heads. If pests were found, our parents were alerted and we were sent home with treatment information. By the time parents get wind of the problem these days, their kids are badly infested and have already passed on the lice to classmates and siblings. Schools can only warn against headlice and give out information, as the Human Rights Act prevents them from taking further action. Treatment is costly, so parents should check their kids’ hair every day. Parents, kindergartens and schools should hold fundraisers then negotiate a bulk-buy discount for headlice treatment.

...It looks more like the head office of a girly magazine than a teenage boy’s bedroom. Pictures of [models] in bikinis, about 20 of them, decorate the walls... And at the centre of them all, the 15-year-old high school student sits at his desk each night tackling homework. “Um, they help me study,” says... [the] fifth-former at Rosmini College, of his inspirational glamour gallery. Despite [hi]s preferred study aid, his North Shore school would no doubt be pleased to hear that, as recommended by his teachers, [the budding voyeur] knuckles down to two hours’ homework each night. But if [the 15-year-old] were to enrol at Mangere College, a secondary school in South Auckland, two hours of homework just wouldn’t cut it. There, fifth-formers are expected to complete around three hours of study a night. A... survey of more than 50 North Island secondary schools has revealed wide variations in the amount of homework schools expect from their students each night. Students could be expected to juggle from 30 minutes to more than three hours’ homework a night with after-school jobs, sporting commitments, family obligations and social lives, depending on their school’s study policy... Kaitaia College[’s] principal... said getting students to do their homework was an uphill battle. Rural students often had to travel long distances to get to school, and some left home at 6.30 am. The Ministry of Education’s senior manager of learning and evaluation policy... said there was no point in teachers setting homework unless the work was relevant to what students were learning in the classroom. It was vital that teachers also checked the work and gave students feedback. “We know that homework that is not checked is not worth the doing.” The ministry has no policy on homework, although it does receive correspondence from parents, about their children’s homework... [The manager] had received letters from families worried that schools expected them to provide computers and offer tutoring support when they were not able to do so. But is homework a help for children or a sop to parents eager to see them getting ahead? The debate about whether homework does, in fact, improve children’s performances has raged for more than 30 years. One educationalist who is convinced of its importance is the director of the Christchurch College of Education’s secondary programme... “Classrooms are useful for being introduced to new ideas with support from experts and interaction with peers... But students also need time for personal reflection. Well-set homework requires a child to rethink ideas, fit new information into current ways of thinking and practise skills which they can then become confident with. To achieve that, it has to stimulate the kids and have a creative element so students are motivated to complete it.” While homework might be a worry for some parents, it affects students – like [the 15-year-old from Rosmini College] – the most. “It’s a bit of a drag really... I just do it so I don’t get blasted by the teachers.”

...Up to \$2 million will go into homework centres next year, in primary and intermediate schools in poorer areas. Mountain View Primary School[’s] co-principal... said the centres would help to target education needs in poorer areas, but... stressed there would need to be adequate resourcing and staffing. The Mangere Bridge school has run for a year an after-school programme, which includes homework. It is financed mainly by parents and has some Government funding. “Some of our children come from homes that they share with the wider family and so quiet space can be a problem for them.” In [related news, a]... new classroom at St Mary’s School in Avondale is the answer to a prayer. After steady roll

growth... the building was needed. Special guests, students, parents and staff shared in opening and blessing celebrations for the classroom last week... "The children... are really enjoying the space and extra comforts of the room," [their]... teacher... says. "It is great to work in a class... where the architect has asked for input from teachers, resulting in a room very conducive to learning." Year 1... children were the first occupants...

Thousands of [NZ] children... went to school for the first time... this [year]... But in some European countries, [those children] would have a further year at home. In N[Z], children are not legally bound to begin school until they turn 6, but there is, says... [the] principal of Portland House Montessori School, strong social pressure for them to add their name to the classroom roll the moment they hit the big 5. If [a child] had attended a Montessori preschool, [it would] be... moved into the new-entrants classroom "at the time of readiness" based on an emotional and academic assessment rather than a birthday. The Montessori method of education (it emphasises free but guided learning with tools designed to encourage sense perception and mental stimulus) is an advocate for what they term "multi-aged" classrooms. While a Montessori education adheres to the National Curriculum, [it] is loathe to place emphasis on a path where "bench marks" are the only indications of a child's progress. The point of a place of learning where individual tuition is balanced with a wider grouping of ages is... to enable a child to "see the whole process", according to the principal. "Many children need more time to repeat certain activities; others can move quickly ahead. There's nobody saying, 'You can't do that, you're not old enough,' or 'That's baby stuff.'"

...From A to Z – an Auckland teacher and a Zambian teacher are swapping notes in a bid to help students in their classrooms... [The] teacher at West Auckland's Massey High School, visited Zambia in April with seven other Kiwi teachers as part of the ChildFund Global Schools programme. Under the scheme... a group of teachers from N[Z] travels to developing countries, where they offer local teachers different teaching techniques, then those teachers come to N[Z] to see Kiwi classrooms first-hand. [The Zambian] is a teacher at Shimbizhi School and is now being hosted by [the Aucklander] at Massey High School this week. Yesterday, [the Zambian] spoke to a group of year 9 students, acknowledging the many privileges which pupils in N[Z] have, but take for granted. "You are lucky here. Each student has his[or her] own chair. But in Zambia, it's different. Up to 60 or 70 students have to sit on the floor, no matter how cold it is... [and] the floors are broken. Here you have enough and different materials... If you go to Zambia... the main teaching aid is the chalkboard – at times the teacher has to sacrifice to buy books,"... [The Zambian], who teaches history, mathematics, English, social development studies, creative art, civics and physical education, said [it] worked up to 17 hours a day planning and teaching. [The Zambian] acknowledged the hardships that many children in her country have to go through, but said all were determined to learn... "They're dedicated, they're eager to learn because they recognise that this is the way they'll get out of the situation they're in. They have huge... pride and... respect... At times they come and they're hungry, they're tired and there's a loss of concentration... you force a child to learn with no concentration – it's hard." [The Zambian] said being able to see the situation that other students in the world were in, was heartwarming and heartbreaking... "I want the children here to compare themselves to the other children who do not have as much as they do..." ...Massey High School is now helping to raise \$15,000 to go towards improving the quality of education in developing countries... [Incidentally, approximately] 275 million children worldwide are not in class or will leave school unable to read or write, says the global relief agency Oxfam.

...figures, issued yesterday in response to a written parliamentary question, show that 1818 15-year-olds got a certificate exempting them from having to stay at school until they turned 16... last year because it had been decided there was little point in their staying... The previous year 2049 were allowed to leave early... [By the way, 17% of our kids st]ill leave school without a qualification – though that's nearly half the number in 1980.

...Over the next two weeks more than 90,000 students will sit 49... school certificate or bursary exams... at nearly 500 locations, including overseas centres, prisons and hospitals... But the process to get the[exams] to students' desks began 16 months ago and will not finish until certificates are issued next April. In August last year, the Qualifications Authority appointed subject experts as examiners... In some subjects there is also an assistant examiner, and the number of specialist people in the team may vary depending on the subject, such as science, which has biology, chemistry and physics strands. At [SC] level the examiners are generally specialist teachers and at bursary level a mix of teachers and university lecturers. All have training in the processes for setting exams. The examiners, who have a three-year cycle, look at past exam papers to set a similar style, format and level... [assisted by] a prescription of what can and cannot be tested... Throughout the writing of the exam a moderator, who may be a former examiner, looks at its appropriateness... Between March and May the exams are submitted on computer discs, transferred to the [NZQA] computer system and editors go over the paper looking at grammar, spelling and for ambiguous language or sections that may offend different groups... The first proof is sent back to the examiner and the moderator for checking. The paper is then sat by a checker, who tries to do it as a student would. Checkers suggest improvements to the examiner and moderator, who generally act on most points. The exam then goes through a number of proof-reading stages and is set out in a way that should make it easier to sit... In bursary, however, the exam sorts students for tertiary study and the paper must include more difficult parts to achieve that... A proof copy is printed and examiners are given a final chance to check that nothing is wrong before the presses roll. The papers, some of which have print-runs of more than 60,000, are printed between July and September and stored in a secure, secret location until they are sent out to schools and exam centres[in November]. Mistakes discovered after printing are dealt with in a number of ways. In severe cases, or if there are several mistakes, the paper might be reprinted. That would cost a further \$25,000 for an exam such as [SC] maths, which is this year's biggest exam... If it is realised that a word in a paper can be interpreted two ways, then markers are instructed to recognise both. A less-preferred option is for exam supervisors to tell students of the changes before they start the test. About 3650 managers and supervisors run the exam centres. Arrangements are made for students needing special conditions, such as readers or writers. Last year, 2500 students required such help. The centre managers report to the [NZQA] on any issues that may have affected the performance of students, such as suspected cheating, a fire alarm going off or the death of a schoolmate. After the exams, more than 1000 markers swing into action. Typically, the markers, experienced teachers or lecturers, receive about 350 papers each to mark against a detailed schedule. The idea is to have all markers thinking like the chief marker, who is often the examiner who set the paper. Papers are labelled with code numbers rather than names so that students are anonymous. Teachers cannot mark their own school's papers. On five occasions the markers send in samples of their answer booklets for the chief marker to check... From there, the markers have until just before Christmas to finish their task. Over Christmas and the New Year [NZQA] staff collate marks and scale results for bursary... After the results are processed, internally assessed marks and exam marks are combined and the result notices are printed. This year they should be with students by January 22. The marked answer booklets go back to students to give them a last check. They can ask for a review, which is basically a recount and free of charge, or a re-mark, done by the chief marker and costing \$25. Once the appeals are over, certificates are issued.

...The [NZQA] has defended a decision not to pass on any of its \$11 million surplus last year to parents through lower school examination fees. The Government decided in November [last year] to make the authority replay the surplus but did not cut fees the authority collected for this year's [SC] and bursary exams. At the time, [the] Education Minister... accepted arguments that the money was needed to run a new qualifications system, which starts in 2001... The authority's communications manager... said it was normal for the authority to budget for a surplus in school examinations, in case of extra costs. This had happened in 1991, when a major mistake in the English bursary exam meant many papers had to be remarked. It could also be argued that any savings should be refunded to last year's students, which could be difficult, rather than given out as discounts on this year's exam fees. Last year, 64,320 students sat school certificate, paying up to \$187 for six subjects, and 27,399 sat bursary, at an average cost of \$137 for four subjects.

...Students will no longer pull [SC] or bursary certificates from their letterboxes... The exams will stay in name but will change in format and become levels one and three on the new four-level National Certificate of Educational Achievement. Very able students will be offered a new

scholarship tier at level four, while sixth-form certificate will be axed and replaced by a combination of internal assessment and nationally set tasks, such as a portfolio of work and research[for level two]... The move will do away with the unpopular way of assigning schools the number of sixth-form certificate grades they can give students based on the [SC] grades students achieved the year before... Scaling of bursary exams is... out... bringing it in line with [SC]... Higher school certificate is also out... The new system, dubbed Achievement 2001, will restrict unit standards to non-conventional subjects and bring in new achievement standards for the traditional subjects... The Minister of Education... says the system is a “well-constructed middle pathway.” However, schools that banked on the Government’s dumping the old exam system for a total credits-based qualification scheme say years of work have been wasted.

...WEST Auckland secondary school teachers will follow up a national strike [next week] with industrial action... The protest surrounds increased workloads brought on by government plans to introduce a National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA)... The P[TA] is claiming a \$2500 pay increase for each teacher for each of the next three years, to compensate for extra workload anticipated... It [also] wants a clause in teachers’ contracts to guarantee staff work time outside of the classroom. Until then, teachers say they will refuse to take classes for one hour a week in a bid to catch up with the extra work they say is already starting to accumulate. “Members are telling us quite clearly that one of the things they need to implement the NCEA is time,” says [the] association junior vice president... “If the Government won’t provide it, we’ll take it.”

...[A] READER... has come up with a reasonable justification for the cruel and unusual punishment that is NCEA. “It is simply a way of stopping the brain drain. By ensuring that we have no recognised qualification, the Government is guaranteeing that we will not be able to be employed in any professional job overseas – no one will want us. As a result, more ex-students will stay in the country... My apologies if parts of this note don’t quite make sense to you, but I am a student... and am not being properly motivated or academically challenged at school.”

...A University of Auckland plan could turn south Auckland schools into “ghettos”, Otahuhu College[’s] principal... fears... There are two types of N[CEA] qualification, unit standards and achievement standards. Schools can offer either qualification or both. Auckland University says students with unit standard qualifications applying for “oversubscribed courses” like medicine, law, engineering and architecture may be rejected.

...The headmaster of Auckland Grammar School [has] been an outspoken critic of the proposed... NCEA... which is to replace S[C] and Bursary in 2002. [The headmaster], who also chairs the Education Forum – the educational equivalent of the Business Roundtable – says it will result in the dumbing down of academic standards and create a system that “eradicates challenge and demotivates effort.” [The headmaster] has gone further, revealing that Grammar has signed an agreement with Cambridge University in England to offer its A-level entry qualification to students who wish to sit it. [The headmaster has] written to 35 other schools about the plan – 24 have expressed interest. Surprisingly, perhaps, his idea came under fire this week from three [gals] one might have expected to be among his stauncher allies. The principals of three elite girls’ schools, Epsom Girls Grammar, St Cuthberts College and Diocesan School for Girls, jointly backed the new national assessment in a piece on the *Herald’s* Dialogue page... If [the headmaster] is galled that the principals of what might be seen as Grammar’s sister schools have broken ranks... the goalkeeper... [who played in] 14 internationals for the All Whites... in the 1970s... shows no sign of it. [The headmaster] remarks, without naming names, that two of the three have asked to be kept informed of how the Cambridge proposal develops, and says their opposition has “at least brought this matter into public debate.” “It’s never been debated... We believe in externality, national standards, accountability, consistency. It works for us. I’ve never said it should work for everyone, but the whole tenet of Tomorrow’s Schools was diversity and choice, and now we have a... Government trying to take us back to a ‘one-size-fits-all’ mentality.” Critics of Grammar’s announcement have ridiculed the notion of N[Z] kids sitting English A-level exams designed by blazered, upper-class twits in boaters. But, [the headmaster] explains, the exam concerned is the International A-level, which is administered throughout the world. It will cost students \$45 to \$60 a paper and will, [the headmaster] says, be an improvement on the alternatives: the N[Z] Education and Scholarship Trust, a privately funded exam set up when the University Scholarship exam was abolished, and the International Baccalaureate, which imposes compliance costs of up to \$100,000 a year on schools and entry fees of up to \$1000 for each child. [The headmaster] admits that the “Englishness” of the Cambridge exam will pose some problems, but says there is “potential” for teaching local content; local courses, validated in Cambridge, would be marked here and sent across the world for validation. [The headmaster] takes issue with criticism that it sounds a lot like the internal assessment model being used on an international scale...

The noisy education rumpus over the Auckland Grammar plan to adopt the Cambridge A-level exam system is a reminder. With it comes recall of what I regard as a significant exchange during a spell of fulltime journalism tertiary teaching some years ago. It was a board of studies briefing on a new definition of “outcomes” – what teachers should aim to achieve from students. A previously sought-after level of mastery of a subject had been changed, we were told. (I suggested downgraded.) Among the illogical reasons, “mastery” was a sexist term...! (This despite the fact that students on graduation would carry bachelor or masters degrees.) No more mastery. Instead, teachers should aim for student “competency” in their subject. No amount of argument from me on the obvious difference between mastery of a subject and mere competence in it swayed the discussion. Mastery was out. Competency was in. Perhaps, in some ways, deep teacher and parent concerns over this difference in theory and practice lies behind the planned introduction of A-level exams... Its advocates see... this as a necessary grounding for students in a small country at the edge of the world, an education for the young with ambitions to become major players in world commerce, politics and the arts. Or simply better educated adults. The Cambridge system is advocated to provide a global and internationally competitive, recognised education. Allowing its graduates to see the entire world as a source of knowledge, to operate in a world environment – or at the very least remain here and still be conscious of what it involves... Advocates... describe it as a step forward into the 21st... [century. Critics] label it a step back to the 19th century.

...It is one of the biggest days of anyone’s life. Months of anxious waiting finally come to an end as school exam results pop through the letterbox. Tears or celebrations follow. But in Scotland this summer there have been mainly tears. And anger. Many certificates did not arrive on time. Then it got worse. Pupils were given pass marks for exams they did not sit, while others got no results for tests they had taken. More than a week later some teenagers are still waiting for their certificates. And as universities start filling courses, their places are under threat. Today every one of the 147,000 Scots pupils who sat this year’s Standard Grade and Higher Still exams doubts the validity of their results... An inquiry has been launched to check the validity of marks, with Scotland’s Education Minister... pledging unlimited resources to sort out the fiasco. However, Opposition parties and teachers unions want him sacked... It has been branded the biggest crisis in the history of Scottish education, and has come after this year’s introduction of the Higher Still exams which are the main qualifications Scots need to get into university. Teachers and exam officials have been warning for more than a year that the system was not ready to cope with the new tests.

...Changes... to... [NZ] school examinations should mean the end of a confusing and mismatched system of external exams and internally assessed standards... Schools have been waiting five years for a decision and would have to wait until 2001 for the system to get under way, but it would give them time to adapt... Schools are expecting a compromise which would see the best of both programmes. It would align [SC] and bursary exams within a four-tiered system that will accommodate unit standards and recognise excellence... “There is no doubt that employers and parents still want to know how their child, or the person they are considering employing, stands up against others throughout the country. These two groups are not going to accept that there will no longer be any kind of national exam to give them comparison rates,” said... a senior lecturer at Massey University’s College of Education... But as times have changed so have employers’ reliance on exams such as [SC] to tell them what prospective employees can do... “On the whole, the idea of an outcomes-based set of qualifications which actually give some meaningful reporting on what a student has achieved and can do has got to be better than what we have traditionally relied on.” ...the education spokes[person] for the Employers and Manufacturers Association, said employers hired few school leavers these days as the levels of experience, maturity, skills and qualifications

required at entry-level positions were higher... Groups such as polytechnics and trade organisations have established unit standards for courses, the idea being that students have a seamless system of assessment at school and tertiary level, going on to get further units after they leave school.

...Students will be steered away from subjects such as accounting and law as the Government tries to increase the number of science and maths graduates. [The]Tertiary Minister... said the country's economic development was at risk because at present it relied on the choices of tertiary students... 30[%] of tertiary students [a]re enrolled in business, commercial and legal courses, causing an oversupply of graduates. As part of an overhaul of tertiary education to be announced this week, the Government plans to take a role in determining the number of graduates across a range of courses... On Wednesday, the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission (Teac) will release a report recommending... that funding is withdrawn from some tertiary education providers to cut course duplication[, and suggests there also be]... a cap on the number of courses available to students in areas where graduate numbers vastly exceed local industry demand.

...Drop in on a meeting of manufacturers and you will quickly get a chorus of: "We can't find people with the skills." Who is to blame? A variety of factors, says... an A[US]n consultant on workplace training, speaking at a conference... organised by Skill N[Z], the Government agency that administers what is now called "workplace learning" (industry training) and sponsored by Business N[Z] and the Council of Trade Unions... It's not just the Government, even if you could sometimes be forgiven for concluding from the perennial business grumbles that manufacturers – and a lot of other employers – think the taxpayer owes them trained workers, much as the unemployed think the taxpayer owes them a living. Perhaps it does, in a sense. A constant refrain at the... conference was that schools are not turning out pupils with the "soft", "generic" skills business needs – most important among them the indispensable ability to read, write and calculate but also a keenness to learn. The... chair[person] of the Industry Training Federation, put it bluntly at the conference: "The faster the rate of change, the more advanced our fundamental and generic knowledge skills need to be. Young people leaving our schools, polytechnics and universities need a robust knowledge base and a generic set of skills to make lifelong learning possible and if this comes at some cost to some of the vocational curriculum it is not an unacceptable trade-off when you look at the long-term benefit." But what can teachers do if bored or unmotivated students sentenced to the classroom till their late teens simply won't ingest the generic skills [the federation] wants? How do you motivate them? Over coffee a secondary school principal at the conference told me at length of the success of a programme that sends his school students out to work a day a week. Seeing what's needed in the workplace brings home to them the relevance of the generic skills and they become more willing classroom students. The Government's Gateways programme is aimed at that and evaluation of the pilot suggests it is working... ■ [West Auckland schools are participating]... in a fledgling project, Partners Waitakere, [which]... aims to close the gap between what is taught in schools and skills needed in the business world... Partners N[Z]'s national co-ordinator... says businesses and schools are in the same community, but have different languages and cultures. By bringing these two together there will be a greater understanding of the needs of each community?... Eight schools are teamed up with west Auckland businesses.

...West Auckland sixth formers got the chance to... ask... role model[s]... about making smart career choices... last Tuesday... Around 74,000 students in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch have taken part in TMP Workchoice Day since the event was launched in 1995. The one day expo helps them learn about different careers by visiting up to 450 companies in action... Today's young career[-minded student] can't help but look up to [a]retired Silver Ferns captain... After holding down a job as a full-time teacher, leading her country on the netball court, and becoming fluent in three languages, [it]'s certainly qualified to give advice... [A TV] personality and sports[person who]... is another... role model... says there are some things about growing up that you don't get told at school, and these things are often learnt the hard way. Workchoice Day helps students to avoid some of those pitfalls by giving them relevant information... • [It has now been two years since]... the National Government unveiled its plans to corporatise the country's universities and polytechnics and force them to compete within a consumer-driven tertiary education marketplace. Millions of dollars were wasted on developing a policy that those who understood tertiary education knew was fundamentally flawed. Last month the Minister of Tertiary Education... announced that the proposed legislation will not proceed, effectively conceding that the market cannot be relied on to deliver tertiary education needs in the 21st century... Ministerial speeches now insist that the country's future rests on bringing together education, science and industry... For opponents of the policy, this is a bitter-sweet victory. The mantra of the market has been replaced by the equally vacuous notion of the "knowledge economy."

...[the] Government's plans for a "knowledge economy" have been cautiously welcomed by business but panned by most education groups. A line-up of 10 ministers in five cities... launched National's "five steps ahead" package – optimistically renamed Bright Future – with all the razzmatazz of a Budget presentation or election campaign launch. But the Government kicked for touch... long-delayed reforms of the tertiary education system... The main focus was on a range of new scholarships from school bursary student to post-doctorate level... The Government's plan has been criticised by university students and academics as piecemeal[, while science teachers say the]... package... is missing a crucial element – a way to plug gaps in their numbers... Auckland secondary school students... say that... a \$500 [scholarship]... to encourage those with the most potential to study science and maths at tertiary level is no incentive to switch career paths.

...Bright Future... is... [a] strategy... to convert N[Z] into a "knowledge economy." Ireland and Finland are seen as pioneering models... [but the] concept of a knowledge economy is ambiguous and [political]... strategists are probably fully aware of that. It is difficult for potential critics to oppose a knowledge economy. Few of us would own up to preferring an "economy of ignorance." ...Political proposals to create a "knowledge economy"... however, are as much attempts to privatise knowledge as to expand it. This is to happen on two dimensions. The first is the creation of a "knowledge elite" within N[Z]. Knowledge is to be rationed to those most equipped to profit from it. This is not a matter of creating scientists instead of entrepreneurs... [T]he Minister for Enterprise and Commerce... wants to create applied scientists who sell for high prices the products of patented knowledge. Creating a knowledge elite is a matter of picking winners, which means picking losers. [The minister] would like four of our seven universities and all of our institutes of technology to do less research, not more. Those outside the elite three, as "teaching universities," would be spoon-fed only the knowledge that is deemed good for them. The second dimension of the policy to exploit privatised knowledge is for N[Z] Incorporated to gain market share in the world economy by being more knowledge-rich than are N[Z]'s rivals. This view – of the opportunistic nation state – fails to appreciate the nature of globalisation... The solution that is best for the world as a whole, and therefore best for each nation in the world, is to treat knowledge as a free public resource. Knowledge creation would be understood as a component of social investment...

N[Z] is trailing other [First World] countries in the number of people with university qualifications... [11% of NZers] aged 25 to 64 have university qualifications, compared with an average of 13[%] for countries in the OECD... More than a quarter of people in that[age] group in the US have graduated from university... and 15[% of AUSns. A]... University of Auckland pro vice-chancellor, said the figures were alarming and low university participation would hinder the Government's plans for a knowledge economy... [(u)niversity vice-chancellors threatening fee increases next year have reaped pay increases of more than 40[%] since 1997... State Services Commission figures show[])... However, the number of N[Z]ers with other tertiary qualifications was slightly above the OECD average and ahead of A[US], Britain and the US.

...A NORTHLAND chemistry teacher is facing two charges for allegedly using bogus qualifications. And police say there could be more charges... The right of [the unqualified teacher], a Fijian-Indian immigrant, to stay in N[Z] would be assessed if [a conviction was forthcoming. Universities]... in Delhi, Suva and Auckland... have denied awarding him with masters and bachelor degrees in science and education. In 1989, [the immigrant] began teaching at Auckland's Penrose High School and later taught at Mt Roskill Grammar and Glenfield College before moving to... Bream Bay College, 25km south of Whangarei... in 1995. [The immigrant] was on a salary of \$47,100. [The immigrant] was sacked from Bream Bay after...

fail[ing] to show at two disciplinary meetings which were convened after [it] failed to respond to requests to authenticate his qualifications... “[This imposter has] robbed hundreds of students of their education... and has also fleeced the taxpayer...,” said... the... Minister of Education...

AN ESTIMATED 50 teachers are working in schools illegally because they do not have a teaching licence. Last week it was revealed [that the]... Teacher Registration Board... had no record of... [a] teacher... working at Northland’s Broadwood Area School... being registered. Teachers must register every three years, at a cost of \$60, so the board can check they are of good character... [The board’s] interim director... said the E[RO] discovered about two unregistered teachers a month, sometimes more... “But it’s almost always an oversight rather than a deliberate act,” said [the interim director], who had just written to a “prestigious” school to tell them they had two unregistered teachers. Meanwhile, [the interim director] has written a “please explain” letter to Broadwood Area School asking why it had not checked [the registration of the 26-year-old teacher – who]... was sacked for allegedly having a... mutual sexual... relationship with a 17-year-old... pupil... [The interim director] said the problem appeared to fall on the principal... because [it] did not make sure [the 26-year-old was registered. The principal said it knew the 26-year-old] was not registered and had asked her to register. But [it] had not made sure [the 26-year-old] had done so. “I was remiss,” said [the principal, who added that it] had just found out a part-time junior school teacher at the school was also not registered and was putting in her application. [The interim director] said the board could not deregister [the 26-year-old because it] was not registered as a teacher. The school could face a \$2000 maximum fine for having an unregistered teacher. Under the new Teachers Council brought in next year it will be \$5000. However, the board has never fined a school for having an unregistered teacher. Schools in the past have been sent a warning. [The]School Trustees Association president... said schools must be meticulous and ensure their teachers are registered. “But in country schools that’s an easy statement to make. The reality of actually finding someone who will teach out there is another story,”... [The] Secondary Schools Principals’ Association president... said [it felt sorry] for schools caught out with unregistered teachers. “It’s easy to forget. With the best will in the world this can [still] happen,”...

If the Education industry was united in its efforts, individuals holding false teaching qualifications would only be employed with the collaboration of corrupt officials – but, if the ministry was properly organised, and administrative staff were carefully selected, it should be impossible for unqualified people to deceive the system. If each district had one teachers training college, which was directly linked to the rest of the education industry within that district, it should not only be possible to ensure that only qualified (and competent) people are employed as teachers, the college could also stream course numbers to meet the district’s teaching needs (e.g. it can prevent there being more language teachers than required while there aren’t enough maths teachers). Until every district has its own teachers training college, trainees may be sent out of their home district to study; and, until every district has enough qualified teachers of its own, there will continue to be a need for teachers to be traded between districts (qualified single people might volunteer to temporarily, or permanently, move from a district if it has an excess of teachers). However, wherever possible, communications technology (in particular, TV, radio, Internet or video-conferencing) ought to be utilised instead of sending some teachers to train or work outside their home district.

To assist its management process, the Education Ministry could, for example, contain the following departments: preschools – catering for pupils aged 0-5; primary (or elementary) schools; secondary (high or senior) schools; teachers – handling teacher training, placement and related activities; one that handles curricula development (or maintenance) on behalf of those departments, and special activities (e.g., educational research); and a department that stores and distributes material resources. If the Education Ministry was united worldwide, it could access the various teaching methods being used in schools in order to identify and eliminate the least successful methods, and promote the most successful ones (including, perhaps: speed-reading, Mega-Memory and systems that teach children mathematical shortcuts or ‘to type without looking at the keys in an hour’ – if it is as easy to improve a person’s keyboard, maths, reading or memory skills as advertisements proclaim, then every child should be given the opportunity to benefit from them).

Excluding humans and domesticated animals, the offspring of earthling species are either born with all of the innate knowledge they need in order to survive in the wild, or they are born with some innate knowledge while their parents and personal mistakes teach them the remainder. If the parents of the second group fail to teach their offspring properly (i.e., if their offspring predominantly learn by making personal mistakes), those offspring – or the next generation – are unlikely to survive in the wild. Fortunately for most earthling species, their existence is so unsophisticated that their offspring don’t need to learn a lot. A human could survive in the wild without having much knowledge – as long as that knowledge is relevant to living in the wild – but, in order to survive in modern human society, young humans have to learn a lot more (after all, innate human knowledge is only likely to be relevant to living in a society that is no different to previous societies). Humans are born with some innate knowledge and, in addition to their parents and personal mistakes, can also be taught by schools, books, TV, research, etc.

According to one source: ‘Lamarck proposed that characteristics acquired by parents during life could be passed on to their offspring, and Darwin too believed that this was possible, although it is now known not to be the case.’ However, if ‘at the moment of conception a baby inherits a unique combination of its parents’ personalities’ in addition to their physical attributes, why aren’t ‘inherited memories passed down generationally at a genetic level’ (r:p945, ln27 + p1708, ln9 + p1867, ln8 + p1868, lns23-4 + b, p1869, ln4 + p1875, lns43-6)? ‘When a gal is born her ovaries contain about 400,000 eggs, all that the gal will ever have in her life (although only about 400 will ever be released’), which means a mother can only pass on the innate knowledge that it (and its mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, etc.) was born with – but sperm have a chance to be programmed with new knowledge and skills (note that the younger a father is, the less innate knowledge or skills its sperm would deliver; ‘our brains aren’t fully developed until the age of 25’). If sperm can provide additional innate knowledge and skills, human children could be expected to quickly understand much of what their natural fathers try to teach them, and easily imitate many of their natural father’s skills – because they are simply being reminded of things they already know (although, if after the time when its body produced the successful sperm the father had learnt anything that caused it to modify its beliefs, this might cause personality clashes between the father and child). Ironically, this theory implies that if a father’s brain contained every piece of human knowledge a month or so prior to the time of conception, the resulting child would subconsciously know whatever the father knew even if it never gets to meet its father! The theory suggests that human society should predominantly focus on teaching children the knowledge acquired by present generations – because they should already know most of what was learnt in the past. If most of the members of current generations appear to be unaware of what their species learnt in the past, that could be attributed to the lack of proper education received by the majority of foreparents: their having lived in the past doesn’t mean that they knew anything about it! The theory also suggests an explanation for alleged recollections of past lives (i.e., the person has accessed the memories of ancestors stored inside its own genetic makeup).

It would be a shame if the knowledge and skills (or characteristics) acquired by fathers prior to conception can’t be passed on to their offspring, because recent history suggests human society has accumulated so much knowledge that it isn’t just extremely difficult – if not impossible – for human parents to teach their children all of it, the same goes for the education system. However, some information can be classified as ESSENTIAL for every human to know, and the rest classified as INCIDENTAL (or TRIVIAL). The aim of the Education Ministry should be to concentrate on teaching pupils the information and skills which are basic or important to the human species (and to avoid teaching inappropriate information and skills: note that while performing fitness exercises during an episode of the preschoolers’ TV programme *Teletubbies*, one of the main characters properly touched the floor by bending at its knees while the other three touched the floor by bending at their hips – a practice that can cause sore backs; ‘don’t use your back as a crane’; *Teletubbies* is made in Britain – where ‘back pain brings misery to millions of sufferers and is the cause of a staggering 150 million days off work each year’), which would also mean that once a course’s curriculum has been worked out – according to the new emphasis (curricula ought to be standardised worldwide, but there can be latitude for each district to include information which is only relevant to their own citizens) – it will only require minor alterations, if any, in future. The ministry can’t control what young humans learn outside of school hours, but if it is confident that pupils are learning what

they should while at school, it wouldn't have to be too concerned about what they are learning (or recollecting) at home – with the exception of what they are taught during their preschool years.

It is advantageous for their classmates, teachers and themselves if a child is able to communicate and socialise adequately, and understands the basic concepts of reading, writing and mathematics, before commencing school. The Education Ministry should be informed of births so that it can offer parents assistance with their child's early development. The ministry can store a supply of age-related learning materials which parents could borrow then return when their child is ready to move on to the next level. The main concern of the Education Ministry at this stage should be to identify children who don't perform to an acceptable standard, thereby enabling the industry to provide additional assistance to their parents or attempt to identify and deal with any learning problems that the child may have. Each child should attend a local (i.e., the nearest) preschool at about the age of 3 – depending on its development at that age (a child could commence preschool at a later age if deemed necessary – e.g., if it still isn't toilet-trained – but, regardless of its level of development, there shouldn't be any justification for a child to attend before turning 3) – even if they only attend for one day a week. Preschools should only be the size of one classroom, so there could be a number of them spread evenly within each suburb. The primary purpose of attending preschool would be to familiarise children with the classroom environment. It will also present an opportunity for the industry to check the development of individual children so it has another chance to correct any problems before a child moves on to school at the age of 5 or 6 (preferably, a child should commence school on the first day of the new school year following its 5th birthday – instead of joining a class during the year, and missing classwork).

Educational resources – be they teachers or equipment – should be distributed evenly between pupils (i.e., if two schools have an equal roll, they should be allocated the same amount of resources; larger schools should receive a proportionately larger allocation of resources than smaller schools), although some pupils may require extra resources if they have a disability. When commencing a united Education industry, each district would have to find out what resources its schools currently have, and arrange to collect a portion from schools that have an abundance of resources so they can be transferred to under-resourced schools within that district. Educational equipment should only be sent out of a district if every pupil within the district has what the industry deems that it needs and the district has equipment to spare (in the early 1990s, because 'their under-15 populations were in decline, China and India had classrooms in excess', which suggests that they also had other school equipment in excess – it might be impractical to transfer classrooms and anything written in Mandarin or Hindi to other parts of the world, but the same does not apply to desks, chairs, writing implements, etc.). When every district in the world has enough educational resources, each could accumulate a slight excess of its material educational needs so that lost or damaged items can be quickly replaced. This would also allow the industry to periodically check that every pupil is using a correctly proportioned chair, and replace it if not – which, hopefully, would assist in reducing the incidence of back problems they suffer as adults.

In a moneyless society, principals wouldn't have to devote any of their time to accounting or fundraising activities (which means they can devote all of their energy to fulfilling their roles as Education Ministry organisers or managers). More importantly, there would be no financial barrier to how many teachers the industry could employ – the only barrier would be how many workers the district can afford to employ as teachers (with a primary consideration being how many workers are required by other industries). Having more teachers could enable classes to be made smaller than the current NZ average (e.g., each teacher would look after less children in a more intimate space). Alternatively, the recommended class size of about 25 to 30 pupils could be maintained but each classroom would have two or more teachers. Three teachers per class might be an ideal ratio: it would allow each class to have one senior teacher and two assistants; or each teacher could be a subject specialist (e.g., one handles language studies, another maths, and the 3rd something else) and hold seniority whenever its subject is being taught. Having more teachers in a class would not only increase the knowledge base available to the children of each class, it will mean that if, for example, two students are having problems with an exercise and stick their hand up at the same time, each can simultaneously receive personal assistance instead of having to wait their turn – which should also enable the class to move from one exercise to the next in less time (meaning schools could operate for less hours annually than now but still cover the same territory as current curriculums, or they could operate for a similar total of hours as now but cover more territory). Trainee teachers should still spend time in classes as part of their college courses (and would also benefit from having more than one practicing teacher to observe or gain personal assistance from). Another advantage of having more than one teacher per class is that it would be easier to maintain educational standards – because each teacher can observe the skill level and classroom behaviour of the other two (which should also mean that the industry no longer has to employ classroom inspectors) – and keep the pupils under control (i.e., teachers wouldn't need to have 'eyes in the back of their heads').

A moneyless society would still need to be able to differentiate between school-leavers for employment purposes (especially when selecting candidates for specialised training), so classes should contain pupils who are of the same age – give or take a year. This practice gives pupils a chance to be surrounded by people their own age (pupils generally get to mix with differently-aged children – e.g., siblings, cousins or neighbours – while not at school, and they can mix with differently-aged children in the school's playground during breaks). It also allows the industry to produce age-related study programmes in video form, which can be viewed separately by classes (i.e., when one class or school finishes with a video, it passes the video to another class or school) or simultaneously (e.g., the industry could broadcast the video via a TV channel so every class of the target age-group can tune in to it).

Most primary schools arrange for pupils to have new teachers each year while some make teachers remain with a class from new-entrants until their last year of primary school – then start over with another class of new-entrants the following year. The first practice enables teachers to specialise in teaching children of set ages, while the second practice means that teachers are more familiar with the needs and abilities of individual pupils. The second one also means that teachers are more familiar with what each class is due to be taught in future years (and what each class has been taught in the past), which should be more advantageous than if they only know what a particular age-group is being taught – so it ought to be the preferred practice.

The aim of primary school education should be to develop a pupil's language and maths skills from preschool level to a proficient level (i.e., a level that enables a human to cope with living and working in a modern society). If children understood the basics of these subjects before commencing primary school, it should be possible to construct primary school curricula which enable the ground currently covered between the years 5-17 to be compressed into fewer years – especially if unnecessary exercises are eliminated. This is especially relevant for maths – because the majority of humans will never need to use most of the information they are taught in maths classes. It might not be possible for every 9-year-old to be able to master university-level calculus, but anyone who understands the major mathematical concepts before leaving primary school should be able to cope with learning more complicated maths if they eventually train to become an engineer or physicist, for example – and any pupil who is proficient and has an ambition to work in an industry that uses complicated maths could undertake extra-curricular studies during normal maths classes or outside of school hours. Learning a second language could also be classified as an extra-curricular, or outside of school hours, activity – unless that second language is one which has been designated as UNIVERSAL.

Nothing has ever united the young of the world so firmly as pop. Mention Elvis Presley... Beatles or Beach Boys, Who or Led Zeppelin to a Russian youth, a Japanese girl... an Eskimo or a Zulu, and each one of them will have some knowledge of them... It has also made the English language a universal language, because pop music magazines the world over print the words of the most popular songs in the language they originated in – English. Although each country may have its own version of the hit songs in their own language, the original English version is usually more acceptable. Even songs originating in other languages become more popular in English. It is also significant that in many international song contests, singers from... European countries often sing in English. Popular vocalists in Germany, Japan, Italy, Yugoslavia and other countries are all expected to sing in English and mostly do so perfectly.

The Indian nation is... insecurely united, divided on many lines of ethnic, religious, linguistic, and even persisting tribal identity... The Hindu 65[%] of the population is divided into numerous language communities. Some shed blood to reverse the adoption in 1964 of Hindi, spoken by 30[%] of the people, as the national language. To bring peace and unity, the government of India undertook, in 1967, to publish its documents in each of the 13 languages spoken by more than 10 million Indians – including English, the nation's *lingua franca*.

Among all available literatures, the Sanskrit *Vedas* of India are the oldest on earth...

'Hundreds of alphabets exist today and have existed in the past.' The oldest letters are said to be the 'ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, from which developed Sinai script, that split into Ethiopic (south Semitic branch) and early Phoenician (north Semitic branch). The latter split into 4 groups; one producing Arabic and modern Hebrew, another Samaritan, the 3rd Sanskrit and the 4th archaic Greek, which evolved into the modern Greek, Slavonic and Roman alphabets.'

Among the most significant offshoots of [the 24-letter Greek alphabet] were the Cyrillic and Etruscan alphabets. The Cyrillic became the script of the Russian[which has 31 letters plus a 'hard sign' and 'soft sign'], Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Serbian, and Belorussian peoples, while the Etruscan evolved into the Latin alphabet. Originally, the Romans borrowed 21 of the 26 Etruscan letters. Two more, the *y* and the *z*, were absorbed following Rome's conquest of Greece in the first century BC. The *j* and the *v*, which had previously been written interchangeably with *i* and *u*, respectively, came into being during the Middle Ages. With the addition of the *w* from a Norman source, the Latin alphabet was brought up to its present complement of 26... The Hebrew alphabet is read from right to left. It has no vowel graphemes, although 4 of the 22 letters are used to indicate long vowels. The remaining vowel sounds are represented by the use of 16 diacritical marks placed above, below, or to the left of a consonant... Like the Hebrew alphabet, the Arabic is virtually vowelless. Only 3 of its 28 letters are used for long vowels, with 14 diacritical marks supplying not only other vowels but distinguishing between consonants and serving as noun and verb modifiers... [In] Chinese... each word is graphically represented by a separate individual symbol or character or by a sequence of two or more such characters... Character writing is laborious to learn and imposes a burden on the memory. Alternatives to it, in addition to alphabetic writing, include scripts that employ separate symbols for the syllable sequences of consonants and vowels in a language, with graphic devices to indicate consonants not followed by a vowel... There have been several attempts at a perfect alphabet which would ideally use one and only one symbol for each sound of a language. The most notable of these efforts resulted in the International Phonetic Alphabet, invented at the close of the 19th century.

Alphabetic script developed as a consonantal system in the Levant during the second millennium BC and had assumed a linear form composed of twenty-two signs, known as 'Phoenician', by the 11th c. BC, before it was transmitted to Greece. With the introduction of the first full vocalic system, the earliest Greek alphabet of c.750 BC achieved the final structural development of writing which passed back to the Semites and thence to the rest of the world, remaining principally unaltered to the present day. The alphabet is the most flexible method of writing ever invented, passing from one language to another with minimal difficulty; it is hard to over-estimate its importance... Chinese script is ideographic; the characters were in origin pictographic, with each sign standing for an object, and they gradually gave way to non-pictorial ideographs representing not only tangible objects but also abstract concepts. Despite its complexity the script makes written communication possible between people speaking mutually incomprehensible dialects... There are many dialects, including Mandarin (based on the pronunciation of Peking), and Cantonese (spoken in the south-east and in Hong Kong)... Traditionally Chinese books were arranged in vertical columns and read from right to left, but they are now usually composed horizontally. Until the beginning of the 20th c. the greater part of written Chinese was in a style which imitated that of the Chinese classics, most of which were written before 200 BC, and this written style became far removed from current speech. A reform movement was started to make the literature available to the masses, and many simplified characters were introduced. A system of spelling (*Pinyin*) using the Roman alphabet has been officially adopted, in stages, since 1958... Chinese... a tonal language with no inflection, declension, or conjugations... is a member of the Sino-Tibetan language group... French is... a Romance language which has developed from the version of the Latin spoken in Gaul after its conquest in 58-51 BC. A number of dialects arose, but... since Paris became the French capital, the northern dialects have gained ascendancy... In 1635 the French Academy was founded... determining what should be considered correct French... Its functions include the compilation and periodic revision of a definitive dictionary in the French language... [The academy has] a constant membership of 40... membership is accounted a high literary honour and is coveted even by unorthodox writers who continue to experiment with the language... A feature of French which began in the Middle Ages is the nasal pronunciation of certain vowels, found in no other living West European speeches except Portuguese. From the 11th to the 14th c. France was the leading country in Europe. Its influence and language spread, and in most European countries it became customary for the upper classes to learn French. From the 13th c. until well into the 20th c. it was the language of diplomacy, used for international negotiations... French is the international postal language (whence the use of *aerogramme* on air-letter forms) – a status that it has held since a decision of the Universal Postal Union on its foundation in 1875... Despite the influence of French, the Germanic nature of English has been maintained in its syntax and morphology... Its history can be divided into three stages: Old English (up to 1150), Middle English (1150-1500), and Modern English... Old English is usually said to have begun with the settlement of Germanic-speaking tribes... in Britain in the mid-5th c... Old English was essentially a spoken language, but by the time of Alfred the Great something like a standard literary language was emerging... [T]he primitive (unrecorded) language of the Germanic peoples[was] a branch of the Indo-European family of languages... These different languages reflect an original dialectal split into West Germanic (English and German), North Germanic (the Scandinavian languages for which the oldest evidence is that of Old Norse) and East Germanic, which has died out but for which Gothic provided the oldest evidence... The name [*Indo-European*] has become established as a technical term, but it must not be supposed to include all the languages of India and Europe... Considerably before 2000 BC there must have existed a relatively small tribe speaking a language which we may call 'Proto-Indo-European'. No records of it survive, nor is there any evidence that it could ever have been written, but its existence can be inferred from a comparison of its daughter languages, and most of its phonology and morphology and some of its vocabulary can be reconstructed with some degree of certainty... [Apart from] the Germanic languages... [the] main divisions into which it split up, in the course of time, are the Indo-Iranian... group, the Hellenic group... the Italic group... the Celtic group, the Baltic languages and the closely related Slavonic languages. In addition to these, Albanian forms a distinct member of the family and so does Armenian. Two important discoveries of the 20th c. have added to the family the ancient Anatolian languages (from the 2nd millennium BC: Hittite is the oldest attested Indo-European language), and Tocharian, which flourished in Chinese Turkestan more than 1,000 years ago. Recognition of the breadth of this language family is only relatively recent and was first reached when a number of European scholars started studying Sanskrit in the late 18th and early 19th c... *lingua franca* [refers to] a language used by speakers whose native languages are different; a system for mutual understanding.

international language, sometimes called universal language, a language intended to be used by people of different linguistic backgrounds to facilitate communication among them and, incidentally, to reduce the misunderstandings and antagonisms caused by language differences. An international language is usually intended not to supplant existing mother tongues but to play a secondary or auxiliary role as it furthers

international communication. There are several kinds of international languages. These include artificial tongues... An artificial tongue is an idiom that has not developed in a speech community like a natural language but has been constructed by human agents from various materials, such as devised signs... It has been estimated that since the 17th cent. several hundred efforts have been made to create... artificial languages. Some philosophers of the 17th cent., among them Francis Bacon... Descartes, and... Leibniz, proposed the construction of a so-called philosophical language that would consist of a system of communication based on classification according to logic rather than on human speech. It would therefore use signs to represent matters to be communicated. Several such systems were subsequently devised, but they turned out to be too difficult for most people to use and had, as well, the serious handicap of being unsuited to conversation. Another type of artificial language that has had more popular success is the kind formed from elements or modified elements of existing natural languages. The first artificial language of this kind to have some prominence was Volapuk. Introduced in 1880, it was created by... a Roman Catholic priest of German extraction. Schleyer worked out for Volapuk an alphabet, a grammar, and a vocabulary based chiefly on Latin, the Romance languages, and the Germanic languages. Although Volapuk had a great vogue at first, it rapidly lost ground when it proved to be difficult to learn and use. ESPERANTO, another artificial language, was... first presented to the public in 1887. It has enjoyed some recognition as an international language, often being used, for example, at international meetings and conferences. In fact, an estimated 8 million people are said to speak it. The vocabulary of Esperanto is formed by adding various affixes to individual roots and is derived chiefly from Latin, Greek, the Romance languages, and the Germanic languages. The grammar is based on that of European languages but is greatly simplified and regular. Esperanto has a phonetic spelling. It uses the symbols of the Roman alphabet, each one standing for only one sound. A simplified version of Esperanto is Ido, [which]... was introduced in 1907... but it failed to replace Esperanto. Still another artificial language, known as INTERLINGUA, was created in 1951 by the International Auxiliary Language Association. Interlingua is derived from English and the Romance languages in both grammar and vocabulary. It has been used at medical and science meetings. Since so many artificial languages have their vocabulary and grammar based on those of the Indo-European tongues, speakers of non-Indo-European idioms find them difficult and even distasteful... A modified, greatly simplified form of an existing national language has also been suggested as a possibility for an international language. One noteworthy example is *Latino Sine Flexione* ("Latin without inflection")... Also called Interlingua, it is essentially a very simplified form of Latin... Latin... was a universal language in Europe during the Middle Ages and Renaissance. French was once known as the universal language of diplomacy, and English today is often said to fill such a role in world commerce... More recently, Basic English, a dramatically simplified form of English, has been proposed as an international secondary tongue. Developed between 1925 and 1932... it has a reduced vocabulary of 850 words and an uncomplicated grammar. The vocabulary is composed of 600 nouns, 150 adjectives, and 100 other words that include verbs, adverbs, prepositions and pronouns. Basic English has several features that make it suitable as an international auxiliary tongue. It is easy to learn[('reasons English is so hard to learn: the bandage was wound around the wound; the farm was used to produce produce; the dump was so full it had to refuse more refuse; the soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert; when shot at the dove dove into the bushes; I had to subject the subject to a series of tests; they were too close to the door to close it; after a number of injections my jaw got number'; row – as in argue – roe, row your boat)] and adequate for satisfactory communication; in addition, it is a simplified form of a widely used, and therefore very familiar, world language... Like other languages, English has changed greatly, albeit imperceptibly, so that an English[person] of 1300 would not have understood the English of 500, or... that of today... French words, such as *castle*, began to come into English shortly before the Norman conquest. After the conquest, Norman French became the language of the court and of official life, and it remained so until the end of the 14th cent. During these 300 or more years English remained the language of the common people, but an increasingly large number of French words found their way into the language, so that when the 14th-century vernacular revival, dominated by Chaucer and Wyclif, restored English to its old place as the speech of all classes, the French element in the English vocabulary was very considerable... Since nearly all of these French words [were] ultimately derived from Late Latin, they may be regarded as an indirect influence of the classical languages on the English vocabulary. The direct influence of the classical languages began with the Renaissance and... Latin and Greek roots are the chief source for English words in science and technology... During the last 300 years the borrowing of words from foreign languages has continued unchecked, so that now most of the languages of the world are represented to some extent in the vocabulary. English vocabulary has also been greatly expanded by the blending of existing words (e.g., *smog* from *smoke* and *fog*) and by back-formations... whereby a segment of an existing word is treated as an affix and dropped, resulting in a new word, usually with a related meaning... (e.g., *burglar* from *burglar*)...

During the period of exploration and the spread of English to the colonies (including America), and with the rise of international trade, many new objects were encountered for which the language offered no name. It became the pattern to adopt the native word, in anglicized form. From India come "bungalow, pariah, pyjamas"; from Arabic, "algebra, alcohol, zero"; from the A[US]n aborigines, "kangaroo, boomerang"; from the American Indians, "tomahawk, teepee"... American English, which has come to be recognized as a separate language since [WW2], is richer in vocabulary than its counterpart in England, but its grammatical structure has weakened considerably during the 20th century. Despite modern communications, it is impossible to keep two even so closely related languages from developing in their distinct ways... Since the dawn of history, the origin of language has been a matter of conjecture, and as there is yet no way of proving any hypothesis beyond a reasonable doubt, it continues to remain so... The many scientific and pseudo-scientific experiments, such as rearing new-born children in silence to observe their speech development, or studying the noises of anthropoid apes, have all netted inconclusive results. Languages may generally be classified as being one of three kinds: agglutinative, isolating, or inflecting. Agglutinative languages, like Turkish or Eskimo, build relatively long words by the compounding of root words that undergo little or no change of either form or meaning. Isolating languages are those, like Chinese, whose words are strung together in the sentence without change of form; the use to which the word is put (subject, object, verb, etc.) depends upon a strict, prearranged order... Inflecting languages are those, like Latin, employing roots of words, to which are added prefixes, suffixes or infixes, none of which would normally be found in isolation... Most languages are not clearly examples of one or the other type, but rather a combination of two or more, and display an over-all tendency to one type... English is a composite of all three types, but most nearly conforms to the isolating structure... Many languages have lived and died and were never recorded. This is particularly true of the unwritten languages of history which we call today the proto-languages, or parent languages of extant tongues. It is to the great credit of modern scholars... that many of these proto-languages have been virtually reconstructed... It has been estimated that nearly half of the languages of the world... are still unrecorded. Many governments, including that of the U.S., are presently actively engaged in assuring that these languages do not die out without a trace.

HBs see themselves as being members of tribes whose cultures and uncommon languages must be maintained in order to preserve their personal identities; humans see themselves as being members of a species and, therefore, support the notion of establishing and teaching a common language. Although it isn't essential for every human to understand a common language, it would be ideal and practical (e.g., news and information can be assimilated faster, because it can be transferred around the world without having to wait for translations, which also eliminates a field of employment – translators; Educational books, videos, etc., only have to be produced in one language, which also reduces the amount of raw materials that need to be used in producing such items – i.e., one video will suffice instead of two or more). It is impractical to create a new worldwide language because, apart from the fact that, initially, no one would be able to use and understand the new language, new teaching resources would have to be produced for that language – whereas, if an existing language is

adopted as the language of humanity, most if not all of existing human knowledge and literature would already have been written in it, or translated into it, and a large volume of teaching resources will already be available.

According to many US movies and TV programmes, English is spoken throughout the Universe! There are, however, plenty of genuine reasons for why English should be the *language of humanity* – the most obvious one being that it virtually is already, with the next best reason being the ability to use Basic English as a means of introducing the language to non-speakers. But before the English language becomes the Human language it needs to be thoroughly revised. The Education Ministry ought to go through the latest edition of the most authoritative English dictionary and eliminate anything that is superfluous. A word should be considered superfluous if other words or phrases can be used to mean the same thing (e.g., *superfluous* could be deleted from the language because people can say ‘beyond what is enough: unnecessary’ or ‘more than is required; not needed’). Deleting everything that can be replaced by an alternative word or phrase would, perhaps, be overzealous, but there is no need for one word to have more than one meaning (e.g., *abode* means ‘past of *abide*’ and ‘a dwelling-place’ – the first description might be worth maintaining but, because of the existence of words such as home, house, etc., not the second; *right* doesn’t need to be used to mean both ‘the opposite of *left*’ and ‘the opposite of wrong’ – because the latter phrase can be described by *correct*); for two or more words to be pronounced the same but be spelt differently (homophones); for a word to be pronounced in different ways to give different meanings; or for one word to mean different things in different parts of the world (e.g., in the US *fanny* is used to mean ‘buttocks’ but elsewhere it is used to mean ‘a girl’s genitals’ – although there is no reason for the word to be used as either because when the *f* is capitalised it becomes a girl’s name). Furthermore, spellings should be standardised (e.g., it shouldn’t be possible to write either *standardised* or *standardized*; everyone should write *center* instead of *centre* – because, after all, the second spelling is correctly pronounced as *sen-tree* or *sent-ree*). While the English language is being condensed in the above fashion, other languages should be checked for words that don’t have an English equivalent. Non-English words can also be added to the language if an English word has been used to mean more than one thing but some of those meanings can’t automatically be deleted because no other English words have the same meanings. When adding non-English words, the Education Ministry could try to use those which will increase the range of phonetic sounds that English uses. If this isn’t possible – because no combination of Roman letters can be formed to make the sound – the ministry could get young children to practise the 26 non-English sounds (r:p1892, lns10-1) as vocal development exercises. If the whole world was to refer to the same dictionary – instead of having multiple companies publish their own version – it may be possible to keep the language *from developing in distinct ways* in different parts of the world.

It is harder for children to learn English if their families and neighbours are non-English-speaking. However, if all of their peers are learning English, those children will be able to practise on each other, and they will be able to help their own offspring learn it. Schools in non-English-speaking districts can initially continue to teach their native language as a 1st language and use it as a medium for teaching non-language subjects. Basic English should be taught as a 2nd language, although pupils could opt out of such classes if they refuse to learn English – in which case the pupil would study a 2nd language of its choice (e.g., the 1st language of its parents if that is neither English or the district’s 1st language), as long as the pupil is able to work without direct supervision (although one of its parents, or a relative – e.g., grandparent – might be able to go to the school to act as its tutor while its teachers are preoccupied with giving Basic English lessons); or undertake other studies (e.g., extra-curricular maths). In a couple of generations it might be possible for those districts to teach non-language subjects in English and their native language (or other languages) as a 2nd language, or not teach non-English languages at all (i.e., if a parent wants its child to learn a 2nd language, it can do so outside of school hours). Schools in English-speaking districts could continue to teach a 2nd language (e.g., Maori in NZ schools) but, alternatively, they could insist that 2nd languages be taught *outside of school hours*. It is often pointed out that learning two or more languages helps develop a child’s mental abilities. However, if the time devoted to a non-English language was instead used to teach history, science, social studies, art or music, etc., the child’s mental abilities are unlikely to be less developed. The 3rd teacher (r:p1921, lns31-2) may be responsible for all of these extra subjects; or, if classes have just two permanent teachers, whenever the class is studying another subject a specialist teacher would join it (then go to a different class after the lesson – perhaps wheeling a suitably-equipped desk between each class). Alternatively, the extra subjects can be taught via TV (r:p1921, ln47; TV could serve as the *3rd teacher*) – using pre-recorded material or live footage.

If curricula are well-structured, and class-time well-organised, it shouldn’t be necessary for schools to set homework. This would enable pupils to use their spare time in whichever way they see fit – be that pursuing extra-curricular studies or couch-warming. In addition, it shouldn’t be necessary to allocate any class-time to sporting activities – especially if school playgrounds have facilities that pupils can use before school, during breaks and, perhaps, after school (e.g., jungle-gyms, fields and basic sports equipment – such as balls and bats). Ensuring that children get proper exercise is a parental responsibility. But if parents want to reinforce what their children have learnt at school each day – by asking them what they studied and getting them to discuss different applications of the knowledge to those raised in class, to ensure they understand what they’ve been taught – that would be an ideal substitute for homework.

A varied and well-organised school day should be able to prevent pupils from becoming bored and, if pupils expect to learn something interesting every day, they would be less inclined to play truant. Interested pupils are also more likely to be better behaved. A minor misdemeanour could be excused with a verbal warning and a request for an explanation – but a repeat of the misdemeanour should warrant a reaction. Physical punishment is unsuitable because it teaches that violence is acceptable. Getting pupils to perform caretaker-supervised physical labour, gardening, cleaning or other school maintenance activities are suitable – but not if they are performed during class-time (i.e., they should only be carried out in break times or for a brief period after school-time – or before school-time). Many pupils might enjoy doing a bit of gardening, so activities like cleaning toilets (which would be ideal to perform after school-time) should be preferred – after all, it might be good training for future employment! If a misbehaving pupil (i.e., one that is preventing other pupils from learning) has to be sent from a class for time-out, it could go to a cubicle that is able to be electronically linked (e.g., via closed-circuit TV) to its class so the pupil doesn’t miss any lessons – although, if the pupil isn’t interested in learning anything, there would be no compulsion for the pupil to follow any lessons. The Education Ministry should be concerned about such an attitude, but – if it is satisfied with the learning environment it has created – its primary concern has to be for the pupils who want to learn and are disciplined enough to conform to accepted standards of behaviour. The needs and safety of such pupils must always take precedence over the rights of continually disruptive or violent children – even at preschool level. However, that type of pupil should not be suspended or expelled from the education system – even if there is an adult at its home to supervise it. What the Education Ministry can do is have a system for properly handling those pupils (e.g., the pupil could be sent to a special centralised school which has the facilities and expertise to deal with a group of problem pupils). The aim should be to facilitate a return to normal classes – but only when the ministry is satisfied that the pupil isn’t going to be disruptive or violent again (if a pupil has to be kept at a special school for the remainder of its education, so be it).

If the Education Ministry is recording births in order to assist parents with their preschooler’s development, it could use that information and home contact as the foundation of a department which is responsible for child welfare. If the department identifies a pupil’s home environment as the cause of its disruptive or violent behaviour, the department could endeavour to assist the parents in creating an improved situation. However, if the situation fails to improve, or if the initial situation warrants such action (e.g., if the parents clearly aren’t interested in assisting with the development of their offspring, or are incapable of doing so), the department ought to have the authority to remove the pupil from that environment and place it in a foster home – or a boarding hostel attached to a *special centralised school*. By the way, there should be no justification for having any other kind of boarding schools. Any pupil whose parents live in an isolated location but can’t be home schooled with the assistance of communications technology, should board with relatives or a family who live near the closest school and return home for weekends. Preferably, people should refrain from living in isolated locations if they have children. Anyone who chooses to live in an isolated location, sends its children to boarding school, or abuses (or neglects) its children, can be called an HB.

The Education Ministry could have another department that keeps a record of each pupil's progress through the school system (including preschool). The industry needs to know how primary pupils of a particular age from within a district compare with each other (e.g., to check the educational standards of different schools; to compare the educational abilities of an age group with its age group from previous years), and standardised tests are the easiest method. However, it takes a lot of organising to arrange simultaneous testing of an age group, so the curricula department should just create tests for the compulsory topics that make up a curriculum and each class could sit the relevant test after completing a topic. If curricula require little in the way of alterations, these tests wouldn't need to be altered much either – they just need to be changed slightly from year to year so pupils can't cheat by obtaining a past test (although the tests could easily be changed slightly for each class – e.g., a computer programme ought to be able to make minor adjustments to a sample test and print out a new version for each class). Any time that a pupil sits a test or has its classroom performance assessed (e.g., end of term reports), this information would be added to its personal record. Teachers could also add special comments at any time (e.g., if the child has been commended or reproached for its classroom behaviour). Such records should discourage misbehaviour, but their main purpose would be to assist the process of matching school-leavers to employment training programmes (and, later on, to assist the selection of managers).

Pupils shouldn't be placed in classes according to common ability (although they could be grouped according to their *learning styles* – r:p1901, ln50). Having pupils of different ability in each class makes it easier for teachers to compare pupils when writing reports, etc. It also presents opportunities for faster pupils to help their teachers assist slower pupils – which gives the faster pupils a chance to develop leadership skills (note that, because first-born children have opportunities to look after younger siblings, they are more likely to develop leadership skills than their siblings), as well as an appreciation of the problems faced by less-intelligent people. In addition, classes should be co-ed so pupils of both sexes are encouraged to develop the skills needed to successfully mix with either sex in adulthood (note that HBs accentuate the differences between the sexes while humans accentuate the similarities).

Standardising education and educational resources, and spreading them evenly among schools, should mean that children can gain as good an education at their closest school as any other – therefore, unless a child is ill-disciplined, it would normally attend the closest educational facility to its home (it necessarily follows from this suggestion that there would be no such thing as *foreign students* – unless they are adults enrolled in employment training courses). However, pre-schools ought to be grouped so that all of their pupils go on to attend the same primary school (i.e., a child will attend the relevant primary school even if another primary school is somehow closer to its home).

In addition to aiming to develop a pupil's language and maths skills from preschool level to a proficient level, primary schools can also be responsible for teaching history, science and social studies. If there are no intermediate or middle schools (r:p1920, ln30), pupils could attend primary school for at least seven years. However, if primary schools cover some ground currently done by secondary schools (e.g., in maths and subjects like history, etc.) they may need to cut into some of the time currently allocated to secondary school studies – meaning pupils might have to attend primary school for eight years (in that case, allocating one half of the fields to pupils who are in their 1st to 4th years of attendance and the other half to the older pupils ought to be common practice – but having completely separate schools for the younger pupils and the older pupils should be regarded as an impractical option).

There should be one secondary school per suburb, fed by the primary schools of its suburb – and, ideally, be located in the middle of the suburb. But if secondary schools no longer have to teach maths (though pupils may get opportunities to apply maths in other fields of learning) and some other traditional subjects (e.g., history, science and social studies), what purpose would they serve? Well, they could teach philosophy, environmental studies (covering topics like ecosystems, pollution, meteorology), nutrition (including basic food preparation) and first-aid – to give pupils the general life-skills that will assist them in adulthood. Primarily, though, they would be a fundamental link between the Education industry and every other industry. They would teach pupils about the different industries operated by society so they understand what each does, why it does, and how its activities relate to – or affect – other industries. The purpose of teaching pupils about society's industries is to help prepare them for becoming members of the workforce, and to help industries select members of their workforces. Collectively, the human species possesses a wide range of physical, mental and social skills; individually, a human's ability to perform each skill can vary from non-existent to perfection personified. Many industries already know what types of skills are best suited to the tasks their workers perform, and any industries that don't should quickly be able to identify those skills. While studying a particular industry, the pupils could perform mental and physical tasks (and perhaps aptitude tests) that are designed to find out which of them have the skills required by that industry (and they could also go on field trips to industrial sites). Their performance can be added to their school records.

NZ pupils are currently expected to complete at least three years of secondary education. If secondary education is properly organised, three years might be more than enough time to cover the coursework suggested above. Pupils could devote one period per week per subject to covering philosophy, etc., and spend the remainder of the week – plus the next week or so – learning about one particular industry, then move on to another industry (instead of having every secondary school in the district study the same industries at the same time, different schools can be studying different industries – which would enable specialist lecturers to move from school to school; and industrial site field trip visits to be spread through the year – rather than having all of a district's first-year pupils, for example, arrive at the same site on the same day). For the first year, the information covered – and the tasks set – could be fairly basic; for each subsequent year, the information covered should become more in-depth and the tasks more challenging. Secondary schools could have large theatres so all of the pupils from a year can attend the same lectures (if secondary school education is spread over three years, each secondary school may need to have three lecture theatres – four if secondary school is spread over four years; alternatively, each secondary school has just one or two lecture theatres, utilised at different times of the day by different age-groups), although they still ought to have standard-sized classrooms so pupils can do follow-up work in smaller groups – assisted by one or two teachers (who could be called tutors). By the time a pupil has completed secondary school, it should know what type of job it would like to do and, more importantly, what type of job it is best suited to – which, in some instances, will be an unskilled position! Tutors could help pupils identify a suitable career. Any pupils who decide what career they want in the first year or so of secondary school, or before entering secondary school, would have a chance to work on improving their skills in the relevant areas before those skills are tested. However, pupils might not always be able to train for their chosen career. If the number of training positions in any of its courses are limited, an industry will have to review the school records of applicants and select those whose skills best match its requirements (and, if there are still too many applicants, eliminate those whose records show that their characters are less disciplined, less organized, etc.).

WORK

It has been objected that upon the abolition of private property all work will cease, and universal laziness will overtake us. According to... the bourgeois, the disappearance of... property is the disappearance of production itself, so the disappearance of class culture is to him[or her] identical with the disappearance of all culture. That culture, the loss of which... bourgeois society... laments, is, for the enormous majority, a mere training to act as a machine. - Marx & Engels

There is hardly a [hu]man today who fails to see both the uselessness and the stupidity of collecting taxes from labour[ers]... for the enrichment of idle officials... If fifty years ago both a rich and idle [person] and a poor and illiterate one were alike convinced that their respective states (of continual holiday for the one and continual toil for the other) were ordained by God... now (in Russia as well as in the rest of Europe owing to mutual intercourse and to the spread of education and reading) there is hardly a... rich or poor[person] who does not from one cause or another doubt the justice of this state of things. Not only are the wealthy conscious of being to blame for the very fact that they are rich, and try to expiate their guilt by donations to science or art (as they formerly atoned for their sins by contributing to Churches) but the greater part of the working people openly regard the existing order as a false one, bound to be changed or destroyed. Some religious people... consider the existing order unjust and ripe for abolition on the basis of the Gospel teaching as taken in its true meaning; others consider it unjust on the basis of socialistic, communistic, or anarchistic theories, which have now already penetrated to the lowest strata of the working people. - Tolstoy

The law, that to live [a hu]man must work, first came home to me upon reading Tolstoy's writing on bread-labour. But... [the] divine law, that [a hu]man must earn his bread by labouring with his own hands, was first stressed by a[nother] Russian... T. M. Bondaref. Tolstoy... gave it wider publicity. In my view, the same principle has been set forth in the third chapter of the Gita, where we are told, that... who[ever] eats without sacrifice eats stolen food. Sacrifice here can only mean bread-labour... (By M. K. Gandhi)... ['Let your reward be in the actions themselves; never in their fruits' says the *Bhagavad-Gita*.] My idea of socialism is that every one should get the same wage. A lawyer, a physician, a teacher... or a sweeper – all should get equal wages... [Notes of a talk with Gandhiji]... [S]ince money has no stable value, it is wrong to assess the value of labour in terms of money. Such a method of evaluating labour is unscientific... Village needs led to the rise of the artisan class; where they could not be created locally, they were invited from other places. The same needs brought the mere agriculturalist under the control of the trader. A few persons with greater intelligence or cunning than others of the agricultural class also took to that profession. They did not require to abandon their lands. They were cultivated first through labourers and then through lessees. Thus came about a division of labour. But in the division of earnings, the merchant claimed a share both in the produce of the land and the labour of the artisan, while [it] admitted nobody's share in the earnings of his trade. Similarly, the landlord claimed a share in the yield produced by the artisan by giving him no more than just sufficient for bare existence, while [the landlord] himself gave no share to the latter from his earning from other lands or occupations... The reforms now attempted aim at eliminating the landlord and the 'middle[person]', (that is, the shopkeeper or the agent), making the artisan and the farm-labourer 'free' classes and enabling them to take a due share of the fruits of their labour... "A Government has to deal with... human material and not only benefit it but make it... participate in the doing of... work. The odd thing is that it will only benefit the people if they benefit themselves. You cannot benefit them by giving them doles. We want greater production and there are people who are unemployed, doing nothing. On the face of it this is illogical. A person who is unemployed should produce somewhere because [it] is a consumer anyhow... The person who is unemployed... can always do some productive effort by himself or in a group in his village or wherever [that person] may be. The economist will tell you that this [person]'s work is not very little, because that work multiplied by a million becomes very big..." This is a very important idea and is... an exponent of the *Sarvodaya* philosophy... The Sarva-Seva Sangh... is an all-India institution of experts for planning and executing programmes of work.

In my opinion, the... development of industry and machinery has made the struggle for existence very much more severe, greatly to the detriment of the free development of the individual. But the development of machinery means that less and less work is needed from the individual for the satisfaction of the community's needs. A planned division of labour is becoming more and more of a crying necessity, and this division will lead to the material security of the individual... In such an economy, the means of production are owned by society itself and are utilized in a planned fashion[(r:p283, lns43-4)]... I do not believe that the remedy for our present difficulties lies in a knowledge of productive capacity and consumption, because this knowledge is likely, in the main, to come too late. Moreover the trouble in Germany seems to me to be not hypertrophy of the machinery of production but deficient purchasing power in a large section of the population... The natural remedies for our troubles are, in my opinion, as follows: – (I) A statutory reduction of working hours, graduated for each department of industry, in order to get rid of unemployment, combined with the fixing of minimum wages for the purpose of adjusting the purchasing power of the masses to the amount of goods available. (2) Control of the amount of money in circulation and of the volume of credit in such a way as to keep the price-level steady... - Einstein

A key concern for the future is what work people are to be involved in when only part of the population, and only a fraction of those individuals' time, will be necessary to produce all the goods and services that the planet can tolerate and society can use... Basically the thrust of industrial and technological development over the past two centuries has been to substitute energy-driven equipment for human labor, thus eliminating jobs. But new products and services were continually being generated, thereby creating new jobs as old ones disappeared. In recent decades massive advertising promoting consumption and waste has been needed to create sufficient demand for these new products and services. Now, however, we are encountering environmental and resource limitations that push us in the opposite direction, toward conservation and frugality... If human[s]... basically sought to escape from work, industrialization might be considered a success... since it has made possible the elimination of so much work that humans once had to do. But both from observation of worker behavior and from the findings of psychological research, there is ample evidence that persons seek meaningful activity and meaningful relationships. [A hum]an thrives not on mindless pleasure, but on challenge. Thus, although full employment is no longer needed from a production standpoint, full participation is essential from a social standpoint... When people speak of "meaningful work" they do not mean that the task itself is necessarily exciting and challenging every moment, but rather that the larger project of which it is a part has meaning... If there is a central project in which people believe – such as conquering the... technological frontier, or building a new society or a world democratic order – then even routine tasks take on meaning. On the other hand, if there is no central project that enlists the loyalties and commitments of... citizens, even a technically complex and challenging task can become stultifying and meaningless. - 1976

...until the share of the ordinary [citizen] in the product is increased, ...[t]he incentive to increase production... is slight or nil. - 1977

...the nature of much of the work available in the form of jobs discourages people from doing it well. It is pointless and boring, if not worse, and it is alienating in the sense that it is being done for someone else – often an impersonal organisation. People no longer feel compelled to work hard at jobs which they dislike or which fail to engage their interest. The work ethic, at least in the sense of taking pride in one's work and wanting to do well, cannot survive the increasingly widespread introduction of the kind of work which the development of an institutionalised economy involves. A new sort of work ethic may be beginning to emerge... Trade unionists are beginning to campaign not just for the traditional right to work, but for the right to work on socially useful products. [Ironically,] while the institutionalised economy fails to create enough work in the form of jobs and compels many people to do unsatisfying and pointless work... much important work is not carried out at all. This includes especially the kind of work which would improve the quality of life – the creation of better surroundings and amenities, and the provision of personal care and attention to people... Should the policy-makers encourage work-sharing? Should they aim to reduce the working week to four days or possibly three? - 1978

There will still be people who work seven-day weeks, no matter how short the legal work week, because that will still be the way that creative and ambitious people who enjoy their work can stand out above their colleagues. But there... is a natural distribution of talent and intelligence, and millions of people have the bad luck, through no fault of their own, to be born with less than an average share. We've made it virtually impossible for people at the lower end of the intelligence distribution to find employment in a productive, rewarding, peaceful occupation. - 1981

A small group of comfortable white-coated technocrats can control the whole of a manufacturing process while primitive methods of truck loading and unloading remain, increasing the gulf between the skilled and unskilled groups of workers. While the highly skilled worker, and to some extent the semi-skilled, will begin to approximate towards the consciousness and function of the pure information worker, the unskilled could easily remain at the bottom of the heap, their role undisturbed by the technological revolution. It is extremely difficult to imagine the robotization of garbage collection although various microprocessor-aided devices might relieve some of the burden. Those tasks which require unremitting physical labour at present, however, are the ones least likely to be eliminated and this is an obvious area of future social discontent... Over millennia or centuries, [the] progress... of discovery and invention... was substantial; in the lifetime of a [human], however, it brought no appreciable increase in the product of his labour. Population tended always to increase faster than production, maintaining a constant equilibrium of scarcity... The inexplicit premise of scarcity is stated plainly enough in the plan of the ancient cities. Invariably it shows the palace, the temple, and the garrison within the ruin of the walls and, outside, the traces in the soil of the hovels of the slaves. Thus [4/5]ths of the population was made to render up the surplus necessary to sustain [1/5]th in the new enterprises of high civilization. Put the other way around, agricultural technology and the social arrangements it sustained made it possible for some people to explore the protean potentialities of the biological endowment the human species had acquired in the long journey of evolution. For the small fraction of the population to whom such enterprise was open, it can be said that they made the most of the possibilities and opportunities. History is first and foremost the story of their extraordinary lives. They gave impetus to the advance of invention and discovery; they explored new realms of aesthetic experience... and... they led... bold adventures in politics, war, and conquest. Of the 80[%] of the population who were excluded from history – except when war loosed murder, famine, and pestilence on the land – history has little to say. It has even less to say about the underlying inequity of the social and economic institutions – whether slavery, serfdom, helotry or other forms of pseudo-speciation – that laid the burden of history on their backs. Laws were passed to regulate the treatment of slaves and serfs, but the gross immorality of these institutions was never called in question until modern times – not until, that is, the inexplicit premise of scarcity itself had been overturned and its annulment had made these arrangements morally as well as technologically obsolete. - 1983

Evidence available from the new generation of mini computers based on the silicone chip indicates that these are mainly labour displacing rather than job creating. They include robotics in industry and word and data processors in services. It has been forecast by... [analysts] in Britain... France and... Germany that between 30 and 40[%] of services employment in typing, data processing, clerical, design and related staff could be displaced by these technologies within the next ten to fifteen years... This would be a devastating contraction of employment overall granted that in the post-war period, it has mainly been public and private services which have absorbed those workers displaced by technical progress in industry... A report prepared for the Central Policy Review Staff of the British government in 1978 predicted that within thirty years Britain could produce all her projected material needs with only 10[%] of the existing industrial labour force if robotics were extensively applied... This report has been criticized on various grounds. Trade union opposition, management inertia and other factors could well offset it. But its message is none the less striking. Some of the reaction to these forecasts is simply ostrich-like, claiming that such displacement of labour has never occurred before. But in fact it has occurred, throughout Europe and the U[S], in the key sector of agriculture. From being the dominant employment sector in Britain, employment in agriculture by the turn of the last century was down to less than 15[%]. In the EEC countries, agricultural employment was still as high as 25[%] in the 1950s, but now is less than 10[%]. In Britain the sector now accounts for only 2.5[%] of total labour and in the U[S] only slightly more. While it is possible that the new products such as mini-computers and data processors may create new employment opportunities on a significant scale, it also seems unlikely that they will create significant net employment. Major technological unemployment now appears more clearly on the agenda than when Marx wrote of rising technical and organic composition of capital in the 1860s... In a clear sense this makes a radical response to the current crisis more than ever relevant... It also necessitates negotiation of major changes in the economy and society: shorter working time... In December 1982, while three million people were already out of work, British manufacturing industry worked 9.66 million hours of overtime. In December 1983, this figure had risen to 11.36 million hours, whilst the incidence of short-time had fallen from 1.61 million hours at the end of 1982 to 0.46 million at the end of 1983. If it became magically possible to outlaw overtime, a quarter of a million new jobs could be created overnight. The number would increase as working hours were reduced. In 1981, the TUC adopted a motion... instructing the General Council to campaign for a limit on the number of hours worked annually, reducing the working week 'by statute to a maximum of 35 hours', providing a 'minimum holiday entitlement of six weeks per annum...' and reducing the 'qualifying age for retirement pensions to 60 years'... [S]upport for this case... showed that engineering workers in Sweden were, at the time, working 1,500 hours annually, while... 'the British engineering worker is working 1902 hours a year.' ...It was [also] pointed out that Europeans enjoyed far better holiday entitlements than British workers... In... Germany 90[%] of workers get six weeks' annual holiday, or more... Introducing... longer paid holidays for working people... [in] some... industries and services... may mean a 35-week year such as that enjoyed by many academics in higher education institutions... These proposals obviously raise vital questions about pay. How can living standards be maintained and improved if working hours are reduced? ...There is a strong case... for arguing that children should be looked after by [mothers and fathers] equally... Cared for almost exclusively by [their mothers], children grow up with a limited picture of the respective characters and capacities of [guys and gals]: this is one of the main ways in which sex stereotypes become rooted in people's minds. While [fathers] continue to segregate themselves from children, they are cut off from a range of experience which would broaden their understanding and no doubt alter their political priorities (and which they might even enjoy)... We need... to

re-organize paid employment so that parents of both sexes can spend equal time with their children... It would help... to create the conditions in which... [both parents] could participate equally in domestic work as well... - 1984

It is important to remember that parents have a relationship with each other as well as with their children. Parents serve as sources of mutual emotional and physical support and comfort. There is considerable evidence that nonworking mothers of young children are among the least satisfied and most depressed group of adults. This is in large part attributable to the task load, restrictions, and constant demands placed upon them in their caretaking role and is reflected in the mother-child interaction. These stresses can be reduced by the support and appreciation of a spouse. High mother-infant involvement and sensitive, competent, affectionate mother-infant relationships have been found when fathers were supportive of mothers... Even successful maternal adaptation to pregnancy and low maternal distress during labor and delivery are related to the responsiveness and support of husbands. Dual participation in household chores and caretaking can free both parents for more playful and pleasurable interactions with their children and relieve some of the burdens often experienced by parents, especially mothers... - 1986

Vital to the creation of a workable and fair economy is the concept of work sharing. If [technology means] fewer people are needed to produce the same quantity of goods, it is better to redistribute work instead of creating a huge underclass of people who have no access to employment. T[he]... book *Abandon Affluence!*, argues ambitiously that we could make a green economy succeed on no more than a one-day working week... The 1980s have seen the substitution of full-time mass employment by part-time, low-paid work. A green 1990s could see the introduction of secure and properly paid part-time work for all. Much of what is known as the 'black' economy needs to be made legal. Unemployed people who do a little work but not enough to support themselves totally are criminalized by the Department of Social Security and forced into working covertly. - 1990

About 60,000 of... [NZ]'s beneficiaries will now have to find work to keep their benefits or face tough penalties. The changes, which come into effect today, [affect] people on domestic purposes and widows benefits and spouses of unemployment beneficiaries... The Alliance's social security spokes[person]... said the start of work testing for beneficiaries would be the biggest assault on the poor since the benefit cuts of 1991. Over the next 12 months, people on the DPB and widows benefits whose youngest child is aged over 14 will have to register with the N[Z] Employment Service to find part-time work or training. Those with children aged between seven and 13 must attend a yearly planning meeting with Income Support to discuss their plans for getting work. Married or de facto spouses of people on the dole have to find fulltime work when their youngest child is aged over 14. Those with children aged between 7 and 13 must also attend a yearly planning meeting. Beneficiaries who fail to attend the annual meeting or who fail to attend a job interview or take up a job offer, will have their benefits cut. The cuts range from 20[%] for up to four weeks to a complete stand-down for 13 weeks. Around 115,000 people already on the unemployment benefit will also be affected by the penalties from today if they fail work tests. Today also sees the stand-down time halved to 13 weeks for people who leave a job voluntarily or are dismissed.

...The Government wants to amend the Employment Contracts Act to prevent employers being tripped up on procedural issues in dismissal cases if the dismissal is fair. The Minister of Labour... wanted the fairness of the decision to be "the dominant issue." ...[it] had heard of "one or two" Employment Court cases where the employee had "nicked a fair sum of money" but the dismissal had been found to be unjustified because the proper steps had not been followed. Earlier, in a speech to the Government to Business Summit in Wellington, [the minister] said the... Government's work-for-the-dole scheme will not be fully ready to begin until late next year. Even then, the targets for getting long-term unemployed people off the dole and back into the workforce will be cautious. The Minister of Employment... made it clear yesterday that planning would not be rushed and targets would not be over-ambitious. It would, for example, be too ambitious to expect that most of the 15,000 unemployed for more than two years would be back in the workforce by the end of the parliamentary term. Under the scheme... [- modelled on the AUS]n Government's... work-for-the-dole plan... - ...unemployed people will be paid a "community wage" equivalent to the dole for prescribed work or training, with the top priority being the long-term unemployed... [The minister] hoped that regional employment commissioners could be appointed by the end of this year, consultative committees appointed after that and legislation passed by June next year. [The minister] outlined his timetable for the scheme at [the] business sector conference in Wellington. [The minister told delegates] that no work approved for an unemployed person under the scheme would displace other jobs. Later [the minister] said it was "absolutely critical" that private-sector employers be involved in the regional groups, which would determine which jobs and training qualify, and where other employment funding should be spent. [The minister stressed that it] would never support a time limit for a person receiving state support. "That has never been raised as an option." The aim was a continual reduction in the length of stay out of work... until "we might have a situation... where we have no one registered unemployed over a year."

...A programme run... to help sole parents into work is to be expanded. The Minister of Social Welfare... said the Compass programme, aimed specifically at domestic purpose beneficiaries and recipients of the widows benefit... was at present working with about 10,250 people. Evaluations had shown it was successful in getting many sole parents off the benefit and into work or training... Income Support would now expand the programme to include about 16,000 people nationwide. The cost of running the programme was partially offset by savings from benefits.

...Beneficiaries may have to abide by a contract setting out what is expected of them in return for a benefit under a new "code of social responsibility." ...The Treasurer... described the individual plans for beneficiaries as a contract between them and the taxpayer.

...THE POLITICIAN[SAID: "I'M INTRODUCING A CODE OF CONDUCT BETWEEN BENEFICIARIES AND THE TAXPAYER."] WE THOUGHT:] WHEN ARE WE GOING TO GET ONE BETWEEN POLITICIANS AND THE TAXPAYER?

...IT'S ALL very well for [NZ's PM] to run around talking about a great new dawn of socially responsible welfare, quoting... [the British PM]'s plan for compassion with a hard edge, but [NZ's PM] should think hard about the curse of the two-income family[, which]... is in many ways responsible for social problems from... gangs, widespread rape and murder to... rampant paedophilia... There is a... significant social malaise caused by having mum and dad both away at work. Pre-school kids have a right to expect one or the other parent to be always at home, and later they have a right to expect a secure, welcoming home to return to at lunchtime or after classes. The end of the old-fashioned home, thanks to two-income parenting, is the real reason for the breakdown of the family unit and its deplorable consequences... The two-income, under-parented home... produces armies of unhappy, insecure kids, who grow up misfits unable to form proper relationships with one another or with society. Hard to face, but it's a fact... As for unemployment, too many couples taking a job each are a significant cause of it. Even a small reduction in double-income families will mean plenty of jobs for all who want them.

...IT has been called "the pretty addiction" and "the best-dressed problem." But mostly it's been called nothing at all. Workaholism isn't a recognised disease, such as alcoholism or drug addiction. Some employers even revere it... But to... [a professor from] the University of North Carolina-Charlotte... work addiction is the unheralded family crisis of our generation. Not just because some people work too much: but because of what a workaholic lifestyle could quietly be doing to their kids. "Outwardly with workaholics, everybody and everything looks great,"... Workaholics often earn comfortable incomes; their families appear to have everything. But when a workaholic's kids reach adulthood... their emotional framework often collapses like so many matchsticks. According to... research, adult children of workaholics often end up in therapy with failing marriages, depression or a sense of anger they can't identify. At the heart of their troubles, [the professor] believes, was a well-meaning but absent parent who unconsciously taught them that you are judged by what you do, not who you are... ALTHOUGH statistics are hard to come by,

[the professor] acknowledges, most therapists who focus on work addiction believe that 30-40[%] of working adults qualify as workaholics... The toughest problem is convincing those who have crossed the line – from enthusiasm for a job to a pathological desire to work – that they may have a problem. In a success-oriented society, few workaholics see themselves as dysfunctional... [but if] you are regularly choosing to work more than 40 hours a week other than for financial reasons, you are probably suffering some kind of job insecurity or low self-esteem... BURNOUT is often the result of working too hard... It has three common features – emotional exhaustion, de-personalisation (seeing other people as numbers or objects) and a lack of satisfaction in your achievements. Common symptoms include irritability, aggression, poor organisation, low concentration and no sense of humour. Grumpy bosses are often suffering chronic burnout.

...Researchers at Wellington School of Medicine are seeking volunteers for a study of chronic fatigue syndrome. They will be testing a theory that the condition... [– whose] main symptoms were loss of energy, aching muscles after exercise and loss of appetite... [–] may be caused by problems with the body's involuntary nervous system... [I]f a link could be proven, it may give a handle on how to manage the syndrome. To test this theory, the school needs 50 people aged 10 to 25 who have or have recently had glandular fever... Volunteers and a test sample of healthy people will have tests on their blood pressure and nervous systems before being tracked for about a year to see how their condition develops... [V]ery little was known about chronic fatigue syndrome. It was often dismissed as a psychological condition and treated with anti-depressants... Recent reports from A[US] and England indicated it was a real condition, which had huge costs in terms of productivity, because sufferers were often unable to work.

...There is a lot of stress about. Whether staff are more stressed than before the economic reforms began in 1984 or whether their employers are readier to seek help for them and thus it *seems* as though there is more stress is not... clear. But... a human resource specialist and now general manager of nationwide EAP Services, a company that specialises in de-stressing staff, believes it is the latter. "We've seen a change in attitude by employers to employees... They realise... staff are a real asset and... losing one is expensive because they have to recruit and train a replacement." Nevertheless, today's workers are generally expected to do more and to do it better. The result, say... human resource consultants... is the dreaded burnout. "It has become an enormous problem in the nineties,"... According to research by [human resource consultants in AUS], employees "are working 30[%] longer with tremendous increases on workloads." For this, partly blame modern telecommunications. Pagers, faxes, laptop computers, multi-line phones: It is a conspiracy to put the office wherever you happen to be. Managers aren't immune either... Indeed... [m]anagers might need a stress de-tox more than their staff. Further... [AUS] research shows that firing an employee can be more stressful for managers than losing their own job. "Management training doesn't prepare you for sacking people," says [the specialist]. "It is highly stressful, can result in weeks of sleepless nights, tears, the usual stress releases such as alcohol, coffee and exercise." ...In order of angst, the... most stressful situations are firing staff, losing your job, mergers and acquisitions, strikes, starting a new job, the end of the financial year, customer irritation, workplace change, introduction of new technology, deadlines, performance reviews, the omnipresent telephone, working to a budget and, at the bottom of the scale, working to quality standards... Managers can generally tell when something is wrong. The tell-tale signs are lateness, erratic and mistake-filled performance, moodiness, drinking, indecision and procrastination, aggressiveness and impatience. But managers are generally ill-equipped to provide counsel on personal issues and haven't got the time anyway to play nursemaid. Additionally, staff don't necessarily want the boss to know they are struggling. "It is best to tackle problems before they draw the attention of management," EAP advises staff. To make it easier for staff to make contact with counsellors, some companies have signed up to a self-referral service... Given the opportunity, staff aren't slow to seek help. At The Warehouse, most of the staff who contact EAP did so through the confidential... 24-hours-a-day... help line... Humanitarian considerations aside, there is a bottom line in a happy workforce... According to EAP... every dollar invested in successful counselling gives \$6.60 back in employee-related costs such as sick leave. Timely counselling can also reduce staff turnover... A lot of stress originates outside the office. EAP... has isolated about 80 categories of disorders ranging from personal relationships and especially domestic tensions – a category which is on the rise... [In related news, c]ouples in which both parents work argue more than couples with one breadwinner, according to a Belgian study.

...FRANTIC efforts to juggle work and family commitments are creating unbearable stress in the workplace. Both parents work in more than 50% of N[Z] households, and in 27% of families there is just one parent. Three years ago, 12% of unemployed [gals] and 3% of [guys] had left jobs because of family responsibilities. Many [workers] are caught in the double squeeze of having children late in life and also having to care for elderly parents. Invariably, something has to give in this exhausting tug-o-war. "There's no point managers pretending staff are not affected by family pressures," said... [the] executive director of the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust. "They don't stop caring when they turn up at work." The [EEOT] launched the Work and Family Network in April last year, to highlight and provide information on areas where work and family intersect... More employers are getting the message that family-friendly work-place policies were good for business... Overseas, workplaces with family-friendly policies were rewarded with increased loyalty, quality staff, less absenteeism and fewer resignations. A commitment to flexible working hours could have a huge effect on workplace moral and efficiency, [the executive director] said. In one simple example cited by the trust, machinists were encouraged to phone home after school to check on youngsters. Errors were immediately reduced and productivity increased because staff no longer fretted about their children. "It's much easier to recruit if you are known as an organisation that allows staff to balance paid work with family commitments... [and o]rganisations can't afford to lose highly trained people because of inflexibility on parental leave, working hours and holidays. It costs 50%-150% of a person's salary to replace them."

...Do you fancy the idea of teenagers watching videos in the office? How about using the company computer for homework or even giving the chief executive officer a demonstration of the latest technology? It is not as far-fetched as it sounds, says the [EEOT], which is widening its campaign on family-friendly workplaces to include the needs of workers with older children. The... most practical solution was encouraging workers to spend time with their teenaged children – even if that meant bringing them into the workplace... They could also be employed during school holidays and after school to do tasks such as filing, photocopying and answering the telephone, freeing adult staff for other duties.

...Breast is best for baby – but it could be good for business too. A group promoting family-friendly work-places is advising employers to encourage [workers] with babies to feed them at work. The idea is being welcomed by the Employers' Federation and the Minister of [Gals'] Affairs... who says it will help get [gals] into responsible positions in the workforce. The EEO Trust... says that bosses who take such an approach will be rewarded in the bank: an American study has shown that absenteeism among the parents of breast-fed babies is one-seventh of the rate among parents of bottle-fed babies. The disparity is put down to the fact that babies fed on breast milk are usually healthier, allowing parents to spend more time working and less time caring for sick children. The trust's executive director... said that providing facilities for breast-feeding could also encourage [mothers] to return to work, saving employers the enormous cost of recruiting and training replacements. Ideally, working mothers would pop into the company creche to feed their babies... Where it was not possible to provide day care, employers could help... by encouraging nannies to bring babies to the workplace to be fed and by providing a clean, comfortable and private place for them to be fed in.

...[NZ m]others are no longer breast-feeding their babies because financial pressure forces them to go back to work too early, says a top health official... A Plunket survey... showed that rates had dropped by about 10[%] in the past three years. Breast-feeding is regarded as one of the best forms of health protection for babies... The Transitional Health Authority's new maternity manager... said mothers had to give up because they could not afford to stay at home on a single income and found it too difficult to breast-feed at work.

...Workers [in NZ] have a low awareness of parental leave entitlements, according to a Labour Department survey. The industrial relations service poll shows that 45[%] of mothers and 83[%] of fathers did not apply for parental leave before the three-months-pregnant deadline required

under the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act. Only 5[%] of mothers in the survey said they experienced problems in their application for parental leave. But 16[%] did not have an agreement to return to the same job, which is their right under the act. The survey found 13[%] of mothers had changes they did not agree to imposed on them after they returned to work, while 40[%] of employees surveyed believed they had no parental leave rights or did not know what they were. At Parliament yesterday, members of the 12 Weeks Paid Parental Leave group chose Labour Day as the obvious time to highlight their campaign. "It is the day to remember hard-won employment rights and paid parental leave is an employment right that exists around the world and should be enshrined in our legislation," said a spokes[person]... The group promoted it as a social insurance scheme funded by the Government through employer levies. [An] Alliance list MP... has a member's bill before the House seeking 12 weeks' leave through an amendment to the Parental Leave Act.

...[the amendment to legalise s]tatutory paid parental leave for... [NZers] who temporarily exit the workforce to have a child probably has the proverbial snowflake's chance in hell[of being passed]... In fact, a recent case before the Employment Court showed some new mothers wanting to re-enter the workforce are still having to fight hard just for more flexible hours, let alone pay while they're off work... [A] trust manager with NZ Guardian Trust in Auckland, had to battle for half an hour's lunchbreak (and not the usual hour) so [it] could get home 30 minutes earlier to fit in with childcare arrangements. On a more positive note, one big employer – National Mutual – has just developed initiatives to encourage... employees... who leave to have babies to come back to work. "[90% of our gal employees]... (who comprise 58% of the company's workforce)... having babies have taken parental leave, but only about 40% have come back to us... We want to improve that." The reasons... had [as much] to do with corporate culture and values as with concern for the bottom line. But with competition rife in the financial services industry, some figures just out of the U[S] are probably having their own effect. In the US, researchers... had found that the cost of a liberal parental leave policy was far less costly than replacing a pregnant employee – 30% of annual salary compared with replacement costs of between 70% and 150%. What constituted a "liberal parental leave policy" in the US was not stated, although that country shares with [NZ] the distinction of being practically the only two countries in the [First W]orld not to have a form of statutory paid parental leave. A[US] has a maternity allowance for all [mothers], which is a one-off payment of around \$800 that is paid whether or not the mother was in the paid workforce before taking parental leave, and irrespective of whether her employers gave her paid parental leave. Most liberal in paid parental leave are the Swedes... [whose] provisions include up to 12 months of wage replacement, with a quota of payment for both parents. In Britain since 1994, most [employees] who leave jobs to have children are entitled to a statutory maternity pay of 90% of their salary for the first six weeks, and a payment of £54.55... for the next 12 weeks. But... there is no requirement for employers to make maternity payments to their mother-to-be employees... although... around 37% in fact do so, according to a survey by the [EEOT]. The length of paid leave varied from two days (for super mums!) to six months. However, said the trust, there may have been some confusion among respondents between paid and unpaid leave. It is the latter that is guaranteed by law. Both [mothers and fathers] are eligible for unpaid leave of up to one year. Unpaid leave is also given in the form of maternity leave, granted... for up to 14 weeks from the birth of a child, while two week's paternity [leave] can be granted for [fathers]. The former, where it occurs, is often a continuation of the provisions in some public sector collective agreements that provided 30 days salary as an ex gratia payment to [employees] who temporarily leave jobs to have children.

...[career-minded gals 'who put off having babies until their mid-30s can find motherhood a huge financial struggle, say researchers. Every year more gals ignore the "ticking body clock" and postpone having a family because of other priorities, such as work and travel. But when the time is right for children, they are not prepared for the expense. Although they may have been in the best position to save by working for 15 or more years without baby expenses, they also had the least incentive. They are more likely to have spent their income maintaining their lifestyle and put off saving for their future, just as they put off having babies. "Couples who delay having children are in a more complicated situation, fraught with potential financial problems," said a lecturer in the Otago University education department. Couples suddenly have to reduce their spending or they will not have enough money to raise their children, the lecturer told the inaugural child and family policy conference in Dunedin. "This unanticipated reduction in spending can be extremely painful and stressful because people tend to become dependent on their current spending levels." The lecturer and her husband have tracked the lives of nine career gals in their transition to parenthood. The subjects, all over 35, either chose to postpone pregnancy until they were financially secure, thought they were not capable of having children or met their partners late in life. The saving they expected to do in their 40s, at the height of their careers, gets postponed – at a time when money is needed most. Mothers coped by cashing in pension funds, adjusting their mortgages or withdrawing term deposits to "fund" their babies. When returning to the workforce they hit the "maternal wall" of slotting back into their jobs, while leaving their babies in someone else's care.] ■ Where you work and what you work with has been blamed for everything from insomnia to heart attacks. Now the threat to fertility is becoming another occupational hazard... [T]he invisible threats to baby production lurking at work are spelled out in draft guidelines for employers published by the Occupational Safety and Health Service. Because more [gals] are working through their pregnancies in a wider range of jobs they were potentially exposed to more hazards, said [the guide's] co-author... They were also returning to work earlier after giving birth, exposing themselves to chemicals that can get into breastmilk. "The reasons for that could be economic or because the child-bearing years are also the most career advancing years... But we are saying that employers of [gals] of child-bearing age should take account of the risks to new and expectant mothers as part of their hazard control." OSH is pushing for employers to treat reproductive hazards like any other danger in the workplace and to warn staff of child-bearing age of the potential risks... "The onus is on the employer to identify all the hazards and to manage them." Although some dangers to new and expectant mothers – such as radiation – were well known, others were less obvious. Jobs that cause vibration through the body, such as driving off-road vehicles or operating industrial sewing machines, had been associated with miscarriage, prematurity and some birth defects – apparently because the vibrations interrupted the blood supply between mother and foetus. Machines causing hand and arm vibrations – hair dryers, mixers and chainsaws – could also contribute to occupational overuse injury during pregnancy because expectant mothers had more elasticity in their joints through increased hormones, plus lower fitness levels... A noisy workplace could contribute to raised blood pressure, stress, fatigue, early miscarriage, prematurity and stillbirth... damage to the foetus could occur at levels as low as 70 decibels. Ordinary conversation was 60-65 decibels... and street traffic about 85. A mother's tissue did not screen out noise by more than 10 to 15 decibels. Children had three times the rate of high frequency hearing loss if their mothers were exposed to hazardous noise levels in their first three months of pregnancy. Heat was another risk for the mother-to-be and the unborn child. [Gal]'s metabolism rates increased during pregnancy and they were less able to tolerate heat or humidity... [Pregnant gals] doing heavy physical work outdoors in summer might be susceptible to heat stress. In extreme cases, such stress could decrease the blood flow to the womb, override an expectant mother's natural protection and result in premature or deformed babies... Toxic substances... could also... cause development problems in the foetus... The guidelines warned pregnant workers to avoid contact with pesticides...

NEARLY four years ago, a happy event for [a]... Christchurch couple... – the birth of their [first child] – turned to devastation. [Their]... son... was born with a double cleft palate and no eyes. A Christchurch City Council parks worker for eight years, [the mother] blames the serious birth defects on alleged exposure to a fungicide, Benlate. Former council workmates had similar reproductive problems. One baby was born blind because the optic nerve failed to form and another suffered severe epilepsy. One worker was found to be infertile. Du Pont, the U[S] chemical giant which manufactures Benlate, has rejected any link with birth defects. A city council report found no evidence chemicals were to blame, but it stopped using Benlate when the allegations arose. In the [Christchurch couple's] case, tests ruled out genetic or chromosomal causes. Since leaving her job, [the wife] has had two more babies, [both]... born without disabilities. [The wife] hated using sprays herself, but worked in areas close to where spraying was carried out. A possible connection between Benlate and birth defects was discovered by British researchers several years ago.

Last year, a Florida family successfully sued Du Pont for \$6 million after their son was born without eyes. Du Pont is appealing the Miami jury's verdict. The [Christchurch couple] have hired an American lawyer and are preparing a law suit again[st] Du Pont, while awaiting the outcome of the appeal. [The husband] said a \$6 million payout was not a huge amount considering [their son]'s quality of life. "At the moment [our family] gets a \$29 a week handicapped allowance from Income Support Service. [W]e would get that if [our son] had bad nappy rash." ...[the husband] said OSH guidelines on productive hazards would at least make people aware of potential dangers in their environment. "Because chemicals are such invisible things, people think nothing will happen to them. You walk down the street and see people spraying their roses without any protective gear..." ...THE RISKIEST JOBS... for pregnant [workers]... that can lead to physical abnormalities[in their babies]... often before a [worker knows it] is pregnant... are... 1. Laboratory workers, chemical processors and manufacturers... 2. Radiator repairers, car battery manufacturers, renovators and painters... 3. Car park attendants, testing stations, fire fighters, emergency workers attending smouldering fires, warehouse staff working with diesel or petrol-powered forklifts... 4. Theatre nurses, surgeons and anaesthetists... 5. Cleaners and nurses... 6. Radiologists and radiographers... 7. Divers and hyperbaric chamber workers... 8. Laboratory staff... vets and others looking after animals and dealing with animal products... [including f]arm workers... and... zoo staff... 9. Early childhood workers, school teachers... 10. Food processors and handlers.

...[A handicapped adult] has been testing... voice recognition software that could put him back in the workforce. The 38-year-old from Dunedin was a qualified fitter and electrician felled 11 years ago by a karate blow that left him unemployable. Nerve damage and pain means [the 38-year-old] cannot sit down or work with his arms – or do much of anything that means the slightest flexing of his spine, except stand and walk. IBM brought him to Auckland for yesterday's launch of another version of its OS/2 operating system, Warp 4, previously codenamed Merlin. One of the features aboard OS/2 Warp 4 is the latest version of VoiceType, for dictation and control of the operating systems and programs... From his experience with VoiceType so far, [the 38-year-old reckons it] can start planning a return to work – ...[a]s a qualified counsellor – since [it] can walk or stand wearing a headset while working the computer by dictating information, commands and managing files... So far VoiceType appears to work reasonably accurately with normal speech, even though the version [the 38-year-old] spent the weekend learning was one tailored for American accents... It was not quite able to cope with fast continuous speech, but could cope with fast speech as long as each word ended crisply... [The 38-year-old] believed that with the addition of a scanner (...[it can't] hold a book or pages up to read) and help to scan written notes and files [it] could be self-employed.

...About four in 10 N[Z]ers have some sort of disability or long-term illness... Do we see only the amputation, the blindness, the mental illness? Or do we see the whole person and make sure opportunities for rewarding work, education and personal development are within reach? N[Z] has made remarkable progress in opening doors for people with disabilities in the past decade and we are at the vanguard of change internationally. We have moved well away from dependence and segregation and are hot-footing it from discrimination as fast as we can... Given choice, opportunity and appropriate resources, people with disabilities can achieve both the ordinary and the remarkable... Workbridge Inc... [has] worked with some awe-inspiring achievers... One... was born with no arms and one leg. However, [One Leg] is equipped with an intelligent brain, good coordination with her multi-functional foot, mouth, chin and shoulders and has lots of "toes-on" experience. [One Leg] is studying for a bachelor of arts in social sciences and hopes to go on to criminology... participates in a drug education programme in schools... [and] has scaled the second-highest peak of Mt Ruapehu, one of N[Z]'s highest mountains... [Workbridge assisted her] into an office manager's job by organising a specially adapted telephone system, a table and chair. [One Leg] beat 119 other applicants. But 10 years ago, [One Leg] worked in a factory, run by [Workbridge's] predecessor, the Rehabilitation League. There her jobs included collating labels, soldering holes into pushchair straps and putting plastic ends on to curtain weights. Obviously, her potential was far greater. A labour market approach means [Workbridge gets] people with disabilities into real jobs – not sheltered workshops. They earn real money, can develop skills, enhance their self-esteem and get long-term job satisfaction... [Workbridge now has] 27 employment centres throughout N[Z], each employing a team leader and up to four placement coordinators. Last year [Workbridge] placed more than 3500 job-seekers in jobs, and almost 5500 into training opportunities. [Workbridge has] had some 55,000 job-seekers on [its] books... The... organisation... [has] workshops and initiatives for different groups facing additional barriers: Maori and Pacific Island clients... By developing these specialist areas... Workbridge... [has] vastly increased the numbers of these groups registering with [it] and getting jobs. More doors are opened with new technology. [Workbridge currently] has two clients who can only move their hands. A voice-activated computer enables one to study at university and the other is now able to write and perform music with a computer and synthesiser. If getting a job relies on having an adapted sewing machine, for example, or a specially designed chair, [Workbridge provides] funds through the Ministry of Employment.

...The manager of the Royal N[Z] Foundation for the Blind library has accused North Health of discrimination in a row over funding for special technology. [The manager], who is blind... may have to resign because [it] can no longer carry out her duties on her employer's upgraded computers. [The manager] and five other blind staff applied for about \$60,000 from North Health, which funds employment aids for disabled people. They wanted to buy special technology... [such as speech synthesisers so they] could hear what was on... [their computer screens, which would allow them to continue] to do their job, but say they were turned down... [The manager] and her colleagues [claimed they] were being unfairly treated because they worked for the foundation. "Had we been working in any other place in town, we would have got the funding." ...But North Health's manager for disability support services... said the foundation should have approached North Health before deciding to switch computers. "This is public money and we're not going to make any hasty decisions." A long waiting list of people wanted funding... Every application would be judged on merit, and no organisations or individuals were discriminated against. "We recognise the foundation is an important charity, but we've got a tight budget."

...The "traditional" N[Z] employee – young, white, able-bodied[and the] heterosexual... head of a nuclear family – is becoming rare. But most employers, although they may be getting that message, are not acting on it, says the E[EOT]. Results of a survey conducted for the trust will be made public at its national conference in Wellington today... They show... [that m]ore than a fifth of the adult population (22[%]) describe themselves as having a disability, 10[%] are gay, and 18[%] of families are headed by single parents... The survey [also] found more than two-thirds of the employer respondents still have no documented plan to put policies in place. "There is quite a lot of awareness that this is an issue, but when you translate that into meaningful activity, like holding managers accountable for performance in this area, it's not quite happening," said... the... trust's executive director... [E]mployers... who did not promote equal opportunities... in the workplace... risked costly litigation and losing staff and market share... Just under 1800 organisations, mostly with 50 or more employees, were surveyed about child-care facilities, work and family information, flexible work arrangements, anti sexual harassment policies and bias in recruitment... □ ON the subject of... [recruitment, employers] and job seekers can now list or apply for job vacancies on the Net. The N[Z] Employment Service web site at <http://www.nzes.govt.nz> has information on how to get a job and services offered to employers. There's also a handy map of NZES offices around the country.

...STRANGLER budgets make it tempting to go it alone when hiring new staff. When specialists ask 15%-20% of the successful candidate's gross annual salary, many organisations decide to sidestep the recruitment agencies. They probably figure, how hard can it be? Place an advertisement in the newspaper, wait for the resumes to roll in, arrange a couple of interviews and they've landed a new receptionist or manager. And saved a bundle in professional recruitment fees, right? Maybe not... [according to the director of an] executive search and selection company... "Companies who recruit internally, often... try to judge job applicants from resumes only, to avoid being inundated with phone inquiries. This short-cut recruitment can lead to disaster down the track. The in-house approach, unless you have experienced recruiters, doesn't necessarily save costs..."

The cost differential between... do-it-yourself... recruitment... [and outside] participation in finding new staff... is insignificant. But there's risk of getting it wrong and having to bring in a professional recruiter to repeat the exercise. That doubles the cost."

...SO, THE new manager has turned out to be a highly-paid dud, but you're stuck with him. [The new manager] seemed the perfect fit for the job during the interviews. What went wrong? Most likely a wobbly selection process, according to... an industrial organisational psychologist at Waikato University. Too many organisations still treat the job interview as just a chat, [the psychologist] said. "Interviewers are not clear what they want from a candidate and bring a heap of bias to the interview." ...when [the psychologist] arrived here from the US in 1989... [it] was common in a traditional interview for different applicants to be asked different sets of questions based on the interviewer's personal preference... "My guess is, around two-thirds of large organisations now use some form of structured interview. But many managers still take shortcuts. They skip a few more hours' preparation and throw away the opportunity to get the best person for the job." ...Ideally, candidates should be interviewed by the person to whom they would be directly responsible... "But research shows that most people over-rate themselves as interviewers. Around 20% of people are skilled at interviewing, but everyone thinks they are in that 20%. Without training, it is easy to fall into legal and ethical pitfalls, such as privacy issues[...]" ...said... a human resource consultant at Lampen Group. "Traditionally, most interviewers... ask the wrong questions and fall into the trap of not comparing apples with apples." Snap judgments, usually based on appearance, were made when a candidate walked through the door. Other blind alleys for untrained interviewers were being influenced by factors not related to job skills, such as old boy networks and mutual interests... The structured approach to assessing job candidates sought to create consistency, and a fairer, more objective appraisal... "With structured interviewing you get 'predicative validity' – a better match for the job," said [the consultant]... The first step in structured interviewing is to thoroughly analyse the job role and identify core competencies. Next, suitable standard questions are devised based on what's required of the job, and to probe relevant experience. Questions will typically include posing hypothetical job situations for the candidate to respond. Other questions are designed to evaluate skills such as analytical thinking... "The theory is past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour,"... Questions must be unambiguous and clearly job-related... Loaded questions such as "what would you have done differently?" or "what would you say is your greatest strength/weakness?" had no place in structured interviewing. "Why would anyone admit to doing something that was not successful or highlight a weakness when they are trying to impress?" ...A pre-determined rating scale to measure answers, generally 1-5 points, and a system of evaluation must be agreed by the interviewers before candidates were seen.

...JOB interviews are useless for selecting the best person... says... [a former] human resources consultant, Commonwealth Employment Service manager, and union official... In his diverse roles... [the AUS]n... has observed hundreds of interviews, most of them disastrous... Most interviewers are hopeless and nearly all applicants stumble trying to sell themselves... Even some excellent sales people were terrible at selling themselves... No wonder so many excellent candidates flunk the interview test... His conclusion: Traditional interviews only get the right person for the job by coincidence. "Studies have shown that there is no correlation between interview performance and job performance,"... [The AUS]n has passed on insights of how to play the interview game in his best-selling book *The Secrets of Getting A Job*. "I wrote the book out of frustration... The interview process is illogical. It's a competition that requires applicants to use skills they will never have to use again. But there is a game to play and job applicants have to learn the rules." The first three minutes of the interview are the most important. Interviewers form an instant opinion through clothes, general appearance, how you handle the introductions... "Most interviewers will spend the rest of the interview either confirming or refuting this initial opinion,"... One constant observation the author found most unsettling was there was only a loose connection between what the interviewers said they wanted from an applicant and the person they choose for the job. And the least asked question was about the job itself. "This is because the interview is not, and never has been, about the best person for the job, or about ability skills or the desire to work... It can't be: There is no way of knowing from an interview who is the best person for the job." Interviews... could only be about who appeared to be the best person for the job... The trend to put job applicants through psychological assessment [is also] nonsense. "Psych testing for jobs is voodoo, a notch above horoscopes... I know people who have sat two assessments within a week and got totally opposite scores." A more sensible, although not always practical, approach was to design an actual work trial for job applicants. A sales person would spend a morning serving customers on the shop floor, and the motor mechanic would work on a vehicle. "This gives a far better insight into a person's ability... Job interviews are too susceptible to opinion, emotion and feeling... This is why so many companies end up with clones. But enlightened organisations recognise that a bit of friction is a good thing, it sparks innovation." ...Personnel consultants often know they have [a] good candidate, but don't put them in front of the client because they know the person will perform poorly at the job interview... [The AUS]n's cynicism about the interview process had been reinforced after [it] had coached people into jobs they had lost a short time later because they lacked specific skills.

...JOB fairs look set to grab the recruitment spotlight in N[Z] following the success of the first careers exhibition... Job fairs provided a direct route to the people doing the hiring. Organisations also became aware of who was in the market place... Information technology specialists and graduates crowded the Aotea Centre in Auckland last week to discuss employment opportunities with... some of the 20 corporate exhibitors... Electronic Data Systems had 20 vacancies to fill. "The exhibition has exceeded our expectations," said [the] EDS project manager... "We have spoken to a lot of good people." The American company has 1500 employees in N[Z]. In the US, it recruits up to 40% of staff at job exhibitions... Bank of America, the most technologically advanced in the US, attended 104 job fairs a year where it did 86% of recruitment... But, personnel consultants need not feel threatened. Job fairs would never replace recruitment agencies... said... the... managing director of Career Exchange... The Auckland fair was organised by Career Exchange and followed its successful technology careers exhibition held earlier this year in Sydney. Around 40% of the 2000 job vacancies were filled. The same number of jobs was on offer at the Auckland show... The... [managing director] expected 30% of these positions would eventually be filled... Career Exchange will hold job fairs through Asia Pacific in the next six months. "We want to brand this region as one job market,"... Did this expose N[Z] to international job poaching of its scarce IT specialists? "We exclude overseas companies participating in local career exhibitions... But many organisations at the shows have offices around the world. You can't stop them from putting people where they are needed... The world is going through an incredible growth in IT... Globally, there are 500,000 vacancies that can't be filled. Upskilling is lagging way behind technology advances."

...China may be experiencing an economic boom to make the world envious but it is set to suffer from a serious shortage of talented people, according to a new official survey... The survey of the Chinese Association of Aged People indicated that more than 42[%] of China's professors and associate professors would retire around the year 2000. And 50[%] of its senior engineers, research fellows and agronomists are also expected to retire by that time... while only a third of the Chinese who have studied overseas in the past 10 years have decided to return their expertise to their homeland... "The lack of talents – especially a shortage... in the scientific and technological fields – will greatly affect the sustained growth of the Chinese economy and is detrimental to the country's international competitiveness," said the survey's co-ordinator... The survey's co-ordinators had also... found that of... people with senior professional titles, only 6.3[%] were aged younger than 45, with only 1.1[%] younger than 35.

...N[Z] is in the grip of a skills crisis that threatens [its] ability to develop industries and keep pace with the demands of a global marketplace, say industry trainers and researchers... There is also growing concern that skills taught do not match employer needs and expectations... [Indeed, a] review commissioned by the Auckland Business Development Board in 1995... concluded available training was not meeting the needs of employers... The skills shortage has been brewing for years, according to... [a] Waikato University senior lecturer at the centre for Labour and Trade Union Studies... "N[Z] has undertrained by 100,000 people since 1988. If we fixed it tomorrow, many industries would still have serious skill

shortages until 2010.” A plan needed to be put in place with all affected sectors – employers, Industry Training Organisations (ITOs), unions, researchers and the Government, said [the lecturer, who is especially] critical of government policy that viewed industry training as a private sector responsibility. The Industry Training Act took away the obligation on employers to train, but up-skilling was essential to progress... One of the [review’s authors, who is] the professor of International Business at Auckland University, agreed N[Z] industry needed more direction. “You need competency at the top end. It’s been proven overseas, to achieve this, an interventionist strategy works best.” Government policy on industry and training dated back to the early ’90s when the development of ITOs and standards was encouraged. There were now 52 ITOs, which was too many, according to some observers. Employers might have to deal with several ITOs at one time. Tasman Pulp and Paper... had to deal with 14 ITOs for a training programme at Kawerau. A reduction in the number of ITOs was needed to ensure flexible... training... [and] would mean... less [resources are] spent on organisational bureaucracy... said... [the] CEO of the Engineering Industry Training Organisation (EITO)... In A[US], for example, the number of training organisations was reduced from 47 to 18... [The CEO] said one of the biggest training issues faced today was the increased demand for multi-skilled workers. [The CEO] favoured ITO groupings on an industry basis. Funding and recruitment rivalry between ITOs representing the same industry would be minimised... The skills shortage was most apparent at the level above apprentice and below management, said... [the] Transport and Technologies head of department at Unitec, in Auckland[, who] had noticed more people were opting for skills-based training at polytechnics. [The head then] said an over complicated qualifications framework was creating highly qualified, multi-skilled people no longer happy to work in factory floor positions. “Employers don’t necessarily want someone who can do almost anything... They are looking for a cost-effective way to get the job done. Paying for skills that don’t get used is a waste of money.” [The department head] believed over training had also led to employees becoming dissatisfied with the industry they have chosen. “The motoring industry is a classic case. For every 100 people who enter their first year of employment, 80 have left by year 10. Likewise, if you have 20 people working in one place, assuming they are all around the same level, there’s a one-in-20 chance of promotion. Many people don’t wait around for that chance.” ...Some industries are weathering the skills shortage better than others. The dairy and forestry industry, for example, where there was significant capital investment and comparatively few staff, was making good progress... But small employers – the majority – were suffering. They are taking on fewer apprentices because of the cost and end up poaching staff from other small companies and from bigger companies that do train people... A N[ZES] survey in 1993 found the lack of companies taking on apprentices meant employers were having a hard time finding qualified tradespeople. Fitters, welders, turners and carpenters were in short supply. The shortage was accentuated by an up-turn in the industry. [The CEO] said the answer was group apprentice training schemes. With a network of 140,000 employers... the EITO was in a perfect position to monitor such a scheme. An apprentice would spend three years working with three employers. Each company would have to pay for only a year and the trainee would benefit from a broad skills base...

Our living standards depend on the skills of our workers. Being small and isolated, we have to be smart to do well. So I was concerned when people in two different trades – jewellery and upholstery – both told me recently that they were worried about a lack of skilled young people in their fields. The upholsterer has been in business for 10 years. When [it started his business], parents often used to ring asking whether their boy could join him as an apprentice. Those calls have stopped in the past three years. The jeweller has had trouble finding an assistant[, and has now] taken on an older person with some experience but no formal qualifications. Sadly, their experiences are common. Our trade training is not working as well as it should... 1992[was] the year when the postwar Apprenticeship Act was replaced by a new Industry Training Act. Apprenticeships, based simply on “serving time” for so many hours, were out. In came traineeships, based on setting standards for each skill unit making up each trade. Educationally it was great. Trainees could set their own pace, pass each unit when they were ready and learn their trade systematically. In some areas it has worked. Traineeships have sprung up where apprenticeships never extended – sport and fitness... for example. Even in some parts of engineering training is booming. Yet in others it is quite a different story... Unionists and recruitment consultants say that even in the big electrical and building trades, there’s a trend towards “deskilling.” ...Increasingly we’re ending up with a partially trained workforce of experienced labourers rather than people with any systematic training... This month the Government is reviewing its policy through a green paper available from... the Ministry of Education, “A Future Qualifications Policy for N[Z].” ...The paper suggests yet another upheaval. At present I[TO]s buy training from technical institutes and others according to their judgment of the need. The paper proposes letting educational institutions offer their own courses too as long as they meet quality standards. It has missed the point. It is proposing yet more formal technical institute training when we have a crisis in training on the job. The point should be to make training in industry more attractive. Industry training is a classic case of “market failure.” Its benefits go beyond the company that invests in it if the trainee eventually leaves, so any individual company is likely to invest less in training than the optimum from the whole country’s point of view. To achieve the optimum amount of training the country should subsidise those employers who provide it. We should be paying them for the time they put into it and meeting most or all of the costs of training at technical institutes... We should make it easier for small firms to offer training through group traineeships in which trainees can go to another firm if the first one runs out of work. Finally, we need to resurrect “planning.” I[TO]s are well placed to plan the training their industries need.

...over the past few years N[Z] has stood out in OECD figures as being top-heavy on wealth-manipulators: accountants outnumber engineers by two to one (in comparison with Japan where the engineers outnumber the accountants by 100 to one, or Sweden at six to one)... Furthermore, maths, science and physics teachers are in much demand... It is a vicious circle... Classes are taken by graduates in areas other than science who almost certainly don’t have a love for the subject and may even resent it. Children sense this and know that the subject is hard. In our consumer-driven society what is the incentive to persist? So they don’t do science at university and our chronic shortage persists... Supply and demand works in the employment market just as it does in all other sectors. Agriculture boomed in the 1970s but the removal of Government subsidies had a dismal effect on employment. During the 1980s commerce burgeoned; last year 3000 commerce students graduated. Master of business administration degrees became all the rage in the late... 80s and [early] 90s but the market now seems to be saturated; Auckland University declined to enrol new students mid-year. Where will be the next boom? ...[the answer] may seem self-evident, [due to] the explosive development of... IT... in the past decade... and... concern... [about] the number of skilled people having to be imported to cope with the demand for [teaching,] engineering, programming and communications positions.

...Jobs with electronic companies will account for more than one third of new manufacturing positions expected to be created in Canterbury next year, a survey by the region’s manufacturers’ shows... The pattern of job growth raises concern about whether there will be sufficient people with the necessary skills and attributes available to fill the expected positions... Despite excellent modern working conditions, the sector has had difficulty filling these positions because too few students, parents and teachers see electronics as a career path. Tait Electronics has a turnover of more than \$100 million and is the largest commercial employer in Christchurch... [-] the electronics capital of N[Z -] ...with 750 staff and 250 overseas. For the past four years, Tait has employed an extra 100 staff each year but the company head... says a lack of suitably skilled people is a serious threat to his company’s growth. [The head] says the ratio of law to engineering graduates in N[Z] is about nine to one whereas in Finland, a world leader in communications, the ratio is reversed. A group called Electrenz has been working hard to improve the image of electronics as a career option. Founded and funded by... [the] director of Swichtex Power Systems Ltd, the group has campaigned for a seventh-form bursary examination in electronics and control. Electrenz promotes teacher-industry links by encouraging site visits, teacher refresher courses and ongoing training courses. Electrenz and the electronics industry as a whole find they are still fighting against outdated public perceptions of manufacturing

that evoke images of dirty smoke-stacks and soulless production lines... The 82 firms which replied to the... survey, representing all manufacturing sectors, projected a total of 191 new jobs in 1998, of which 51[%] were classed as skilled... a third as semi-skilled... and... 11[%] were... unskilled...

Employer training costs are escalating as managers and employees struggle to stay on top of frenzied information and administrative overload. Although essential, specialist training takes staff out of the frontline action, and has the added impost of associated costs... Not surprisingly, more organisations are questioning the return on costs from traditional classroom instruction and, where appropriate, turning instead to CBT – computer-based training. “Last year, 15% of training investment in the US and Europe was spent on multi-media,” said... [the] director of international sales for US-based Allen Communication. “Next year, an estimated 50% of that expenditure is earmarked for CD-Rom training.” Allen Communication specialises in creating interactive software for CBT and traditional classroom training. The company this month launched its Designers Edge “authoring” software in N[Z] that enables professional trainers to write a blueprint for the production of their own multi-media presentations... The demand for the intuitive software programme was born out of frustration. “CD-Rom instruction in the workplace has been hampered by the difficulties in-house trainers and consultants have getting an accurate translation of their concepts on to disc,” said... [the] principal of training company The Learning Curve, which will market the software... The problem had been software programmers. Although skilled at constructing all the components required of a snazzy multi-media presentation, most programmers had no concept of training and learning processes. Designers Edge bridges the gap... “A major benefit of this authoring software is training programmes can be created for individual audiences or processes.”... A volume training CD-Rom – on occupational overuse syndrome, or the Dangerous Goods Act, for the fire service – could readily be up-dated every six months. [The director] said companies were finding a lot of traditional training was too generic. “It is too expensive to put employees in a classroom for days when the majority might only need to know a fraction of the course material.” A multi-media training disc allowed employees to access the sections relevant to their activity. “And most importantly, at a time convenient to the organisation...” ...Studies in the US, that included the Defence Department, IBM and Xerox, showed multi-media saved 25%-50% in training time, with the additional benefit of better retention of information (15%-25%) and transfer (using what was learned).

...*Electronic benefit transfers: bar codes for the poor...* As Finland goes, so goes Namibia – at least when it comes to pensions. The two countries are among the pioneers of electronic pension provision in which recipients draw their retirement cash by inserting a Government-issued card into a cash dispenser, otherwise known as an automatic teller machine. This method of transferring cash from governments to people, known in the trade as “electronic benefit transfer” (EBT), looks likely to make order books and welfare cheques obsolete. More efficient and fraud-proof than paper, EBT systems are part of the welfare state of the future. Bits of northern Italy and three provinces in South Africa have already put EBT schemes in place for paying pensions; Mexico is experimenting with one that monitors the supply of subsidised milk and tortillas to some two million poor families. Britain is planning, ambitiously, to disburse electronically almost all its £90 billion... in social spending by 2000, a[nd a]... pilot project administering child benefit is under way... The welfare-reform law passed in the U[S] last year demands that all 50 states must have EBT in place for food stamps by 2002. Most are taking the opportunity to include welfare payments to poor families in the card as well. Transactive, a subsidiary of GTech, a company based in Rhode Island, has the biggest system in operation so far, in Texas. Under a seven-year contract, Transactive is paid \$US2... a month for each food-stamp recipient, and US97c for each income-support recipient. In return, it does all the training and sets up the infrastructure, such as installing terminals. To receive their food stamps, Texas’ three million claimants swipe their “Lone Star Card” through a terminal at the checkout counter of a shop, and enter their PIN number. The cost of their food purchases is then automatically deducted from their entitlement and added to the retailer’s account. The system recognises the bar-codes of forbidden items such as alcohol and cigarettes, thus ensuring that food subsidies are actually spent on food. Texas officials noticed that, when towns introduced EBT, sales of alcohol tended to drop and of food to rise. Such cards are not truly “smart.” They use magnetic strips, not a microchip, to hold information so they cannot process the data. Spain, however, has decided to be smart. In a programme known as “Tass,” Spanish authorities have begun to embed a vast range of information in new social-security cards. Under the scheme, welfare benefits are still deposited directly into bank accounts. But Spaniards can use the card at designated kiosks to talk to any number of Government agencies. They can check the status of their pensions [or] unemployment benefits, ask about job training, check their health insurance or book an appointment at a clinic... By 2002, every citizen will have a card; already, two million Spaniards do... [Incidentally, life] may begin at 40 for some, but for many N[Z]ers it is the start of an unwanted, unavoidable early retirement. Age discrimination in the workforce may be illegal, but employment agencies working for the 40-plus group say it is a widespread practice... The Human Rights Commission received about 400 inquiries a year about age discrimination... [but] experts say many cases of age discrimination go unchallenged because applicants are not told the real reason they didn’t get jobs.

...[a 42-year-old] has won... \$5000 in... the country’s first successful legal challenge against a case of age discrimination... [It had] applied for a job as a trainee manager of a TAB branch in Wellington in June last year[, and] sat in while his Employment Service officer rang the branch manager to try to get him an interview. [The job-seeker] heard the employment officer say: “You cannot ask for that, it is against the law.” The officer confirmed later that the TAB manager had asked about his age. [The 42-year-old] didn’t get an interview... [and i]s still looking for a job.

...If one more person asks me what I am going to do when I retire, I shall scream. Why do people assume that moving out of a full-time, single-label job means... one is pulling out of the world of work? Let me say – not only for me, but for the hundreds of thousands of others like me who choose to be self-managing, and work in a variety of jobs rather than a single all-consuming one – [we have not retired! We’re still working]. Making the transition from one kind of working life to another provokes reflection on the confused work ethic of our society. Why is it that... kicking or hitting balls around paddocks... can earn [people] hundreds of thousands of dollars, while training to be skilled early childhood carers and teachers will earn them nothing in their own homes, or a pittance in a childcare centre? Why is it good to have one [person] being paid a million dollars a year to work a hundred hours a week making a hundred [workers] redundant so they can be paid \$10,000 a year to do nothing a hundred hours a week? ...Surely we want all our citizens working, as long as they are able, weaving the experience of age and the energy of youth into an exciting social tapestry... Then we could start demanding that everyone learn to work well, because we would be proving that good work counts.

...Thought your days of learning were over? You had better be prepared to hit the textbooks again if you want to hold a decent job and keep pace with the workforce. The Government’s [proposed] shakeup of the tertiary sector... comes amid predictions that most people will need tertiary training during their working lives to keep their skills up to date. Officials aim to overcome the looming demand by breaking down barriers to higher education... The biggest carrot, the universal tertiary tuition allowance... aims to subsidise everyone who wants to study at tertiary level. This replaces the current “cap” on subsidised student places and cuts the need for institutions to bid for a specified number of subsidised student places. The subsidy continues for as long as you keep studying, but the flipside is that students... have to meet the rest of their costs. The universal tuition allowance also means students at private establishments will get the same amount as those in public institutions. From 2000, all students on approved courses will be subsidised on the same basis, although more expensive courses, such as medical... degrees, will get a higher subsidy. But at the same time, the Study Right entitlement introduced to entice school-leavers and beneficiaries into tertiary study is being dumped... [And b]igger subsidies will go to poorer institutions while well-resourced ones will be given less... To ensure that publicly subsidised institutions are providing a valuable service, a new body, the Quality Assurance Authority, will have the overall role of maintaining standards... The Government’s policy document also raises the prospect of smaller tertiary institutions merging because their long-term viability otherwise is in doubt.

...Auckland College of Education will merge with another institution... The college’s council said it would continue to have discussions with possible merger partners, including the Auckland Institute of Technology and the Central Institute of Technology... [while it] was waiting for the

[outcom]e of the Ministry of Education's... discussion papers on tertiary education and teacher education... In May the councils of... [AIT and CIT] supported the prospect of merging the three institutions. Massey University and Wellington Polytechnic are also talking about merging...

Auckland's teachers college is being courted by three merger partners... as competition in the tertiary sector heats up. The... [college] will this month decide between a three-way merger with... [AIT and CIT], or joining Auckland University or Massey University. While rumours have circulated among staff that the University of Auckland will get the official nod as merger partner, [the college's] principal... said the decision was yet to be made. When talking with possible partners... the college had been aware of the need to maintain its well-known and respected "brand", either as a faculty or a college of education within the new institution... The college is one of many institutions talking mergers and strategic alliances... [Smaller institutions were looking] at merging with a larger institution to gain economies of scale and because of concerns over the future of smaller institutions in a time of falling Government subsidies and increasing student fees. Other advantages included a wider range of programmes for students, and for the larger institutions, the chance to offer multiple campuses...

Auckland University could lose its throne as the country's biggest tertiary institution through a proposed merger between Massey University and the Auckland teacher training college. The Auckland College of Education yesterday announced it would work towards a formal merger with Massey University, which is also merging with Wellington Polytechnic... The merger would... strengthen Massey's Auckland presence, which began with the advent of its campus at Albany... The vice-chancellor of Massey University... said Massey was attracted to the Auckland college because both had similar directions and philosophies in teacher education. Massey offers teacher education in Palmerston North, but... while the programmes would be compatible they would retain their own identities. The teacher education programmes offered at Massey's Albany campus would be moved across to the college's... Epsom... site... [Massey] had a "huge" extra-mural programme, and with its two latest mergers the university felt it had the network to cover the North Island well... [● AIT says it] is about to become affiliated with... Northland Polytechnic...

Planned mergers between universities and polytechnics have come under the scrutiny of the Commerce Commission. The chair[person] of the commission... said yesterday that it was investigating planned mergers at several tertiary institutions... to ensure institutions were not breaching the Commerce Act... If the union of the organisations meant they had more than 60[%] of the market then the commission would take [action]... The commission's Commerce Act manager... said it was so far happy that... Massey University[']s... plans were not illegal.

...An interim injunction against the proposed merger between Wellington Polytechnic and Massey University was granted in the High Court at Wellington yesterday. However, the ruling does not prevent the Minister of Education... from approving the merger before its legality has been determined. Manawatu Polytechnic made the injunction application... [■ Manawatu Polytechnic staff might feel threatened by the proposed merger, but NZ]ers... are generally optimistic about job security as long as they performed well. N[Z] ranked sixth equal with Brazil and Norway in the job security/performance poll, while Britain and the U[S] were at the bottom of the heap, according to a survey of multinationals in 22 countries done by Chicago-based International Survey Research Corporation... which has an extensive data base of 28 million workers' opinions in 106 countries, mostly on work issues... India, Mexico, Malaysia, Singapore, China and Hong Kong took top spots in the poll on job security... In terms of technological innovation, the N[Z] employee thinks much is lacking, unlike in Singapore where workers ranked their companies' technological innovation highly. Only 65[%] of those surveyed here said they had the computer systems needed to do their job effectively, compared with 72[%] in AUS. NZers... ranked their management above A[US]ns, having seen them cope with new directions and the changes in management structures.

...EMPLOYEE empowerment taken to the extreme has seen [a]Brazilian marine and food processing machinery manufacturer... power his company to 900% growth in 10 years. Under [the Brazilian]-style employee empowerment, employees decide how much they and others should be paid, have access to the company's financial records and can choose their own bosses... The Brazilian's methods are based on three fundamental values: Giving employees control over their work, incentives through profit sharing, and opening information channels to keep employees informed on what works and what doesn't. While most N[Z] employers are light years away from the [Brazilian] model, some companies have already started down the empowerment path. These include: Fisher & Paykel, Interlock, ICI, Lion Nation, Mainfreight and C[H]H... The human resources director at C[H]H... said N[Z] companies were slow to empower their staff because the all-important management buy-in remained low. "Empowerment is a two-edged sword," [CHH's human resources director] said. "It's one thing to offer staff extra discretionary freedom but getting them to use it is quite another matter. A company's existing power brokers can also see it as a potential threat to their own control levels."

...One of the management lessons of the year – perhaps the lesson – is that the art of business has swung from the organisation of things such as equipment, property and finances to the infinitely more subtle but more rewarding job of managing people. Time after time, it comes back to homo sapiens – that asset which the "company doctors" of the 80s tried to treat like inanimate objects. A recent example? Levene & Co, a second-generation business that had prospered largely through a caring, even paternalistic, attitude to staff until it was sold to the Skellerup Group, later the troubled Maine Investments... Levene's demise... looks to have resulted from a more mechanistic form of management that saw not people, but numbers. Although the detail of managing people might be awkward at times, the principle is simple. Put yourself in their shoes... "People no longer want to think of themselves as just economic units, mere cogs in some company machine." They never did, of course. The contemporary human resource-oriented management experts almost unanimously agree that most employees want to feel they are valued and are making a contribution. At Portland Cement, for decades a union-run dinosaur, a determined programme of pushing the rewards for initiative all the way down the line has produced some remarkable benefits. For example, a bulldozer driver who had for years cheerfully ripped up... expensive tyres on rocks and thought nothing about it, suddenly came up with an idea that protected the tyres... and turned him from a drone into an inventor... Just when individual employment contracts appear to be dominating industrial agreements, the Manukau City Council has signed a substantial collective deal that... has both parties in raptures... [T]he third-largest local authority in N[Z], says the new deal is a "partnership contract" that binds employers and employees in a spirit of cooperation with deep implications for the future of local government. The wildly enthusiastic PSA Union describes it as "a flagship agreement that will give Manukau Council a competitive edge." It now wants to extend the agreement to all N[Z]'s 7200 local government employees. This apparent dream collective employment contract was negotiated without even the usual rancour – "positional bargaining" in labour terms – and in double-quick time... In theory, a... practical result of the agreement will be less friction between management and staff... Often too much management theory can trick executives into ignoring the obvious... Keep it simple. Perhaps we... [should] commit to memory the words of... [a] father of management studies: "So much of what we call management consists in making it difficult for people to work."

...MODERN offices are being torn apart by downsizing – not of staff, but space. Size doesn't count in these new workplaces. Large individual offices are being dismantled to blend into more fluid, co-operative environments... Companies have been forced into workplace design changes by new technology... flatter management structures and a leaner workforce. Information technology had made it possible for people to work productively almost anywhere and any time... [says the] professor of Facility Planning and Management at Cornell University in the US. Ericsson is at the forefront of office design change and flexible work practices. "Organisations are rewarding people for what they deliver, not where they deliver it from," said Ericsson's corporate marketing manager... The company has 16 flexible office projects around the world. At its... NZ... headquarters in Wellington – home base for 150 people – Ericsson plans to accommodate 500 roving employees in 4845sq m within four years. This will cut the average space per person from 32.3sq m to 9.7sq m. Operational costs have already been slashed by installing a cordless phone system throughout the seven-floor building. "It cost... \$100,000, but paid for itself within six months... Staff can take incoming calls from anywhere in the building. They don't have to return to their desks and call back..." Project teams created work places as required by simply moving sliding

partitions, wheeling their special portable desks to the area and plugging in computers. [The professor] directs the International Workplace Studies programme at Cornell. The research consortium is made up of 17 leading companies in the US, Europe... and... Japan... includ[ing] IBM... General Electric, DuPont and Shell. Research focused on alternative “best practice” workplace arrangements, including team environments, non-territorial and virtual offices, and home-based telecommuting. Shrinking work floor space and the redevelopment of office buildings in N[Z, AUS], Japan and the US had... [enabled companies to save] substantially on real estate costs... But saving on rent was not the main motivation for N[Z] companies to reconfigure their offices, said... [the] managing director of Colliers Jardine. “More flexibility and improved productivity are the main drivers of change.”

...Today’s competitive environment means we’re increasingly having to work harder and put in longer hours. But what we really need to do is work smarter. Switched-on businesses recognise there will never be enough hours in the day, and they’re learning the key to time management is to use those hours better... [(note that some US and British businesses employ NZers to field phone calls from customers outside of their normal trading hours – as it works out cheaper than paying penal rates to have local employees work through the night). By the way, w]ider introduction of the three-and-a-half-day working week had suffered only a temporary setback, the president of the Federation of Labour... said last night. Commenting on the reintroduction of a five-day week at Kensington Carpets after 18 months of working three-and-a-half days, [the president] said there was a future for shorter working weeks, although they could generally only be applied to industries working long hours and involving machinery.

...Lying down on the job may be the solution for shiftworkers suffering fatigue, according to an Otago University academic. Twenty-minute “power naps” are increasingly being seen in industries overseas as a way of maintaining alertness on the job... A longer sleep of one or two hours could be counterproductive [as] sleepers enter a deep-sleep stage and could suffer “sleep inertia” – grogginess and disorientation – if woken early. So far only the aviation industry had accepted the concept of providing for sleep breaks but studies had also been conducted in Japan with night-duty nurses... “Our bodies are programmed to be asleep at certain times and awake at other times. The human body is not designed to stay awake all night...”

...[A study shows night workers are in danger of giving new meaning to “graveyard shift.” Working the night shift can not only ruin your social life, it puts you at a higher risk of developing heart disease. The heart is forced to work harder to keep shift workers alert during the hours the body naturally prefers to rest and repair itself. While there is no current research on the topic in NZ, cardiologists confirmed that shift work – and the sleep deprivation associated with it – pose a significant health risk. “You know it’s terrible for you. One of the well-known forms of torture is sleep deprivation,” said the head of cardiology at Christchurch Hospital. The professor believes that workers who alternate between day and night duty put their bodies through enormous stress. The body’s internal clock dictates that blood pressure and heart rate should fall at night. But people who worked the late shift forced their blood pressure and heart rate up by trying to stay awake when the body most needed to slow down. “Night shift isn’t necessarily something that will cause you harm if you do it for a little while. But if it goes on for months and years, it’s a different story.” Researchers from the University of Milan, who wrote the article published by the American Heart Foundation, found that the production of cortisol, a hormone which stimulates the heart rate, did not adjust when people worked at night. This meant they might not be able to handle stress as effectively as their colleagues who worked 9 to 5. But the director of the Centre for Sleep Research at the University of South Australia said shift workers probably suffered more heart disease because they drank too much coffee, ate fast food and did not exercise as much as they should. The director believed that shift workers resorted to “inappropriate coping mechanisms.” Companies have recently put in a lot of effort to cut down the other, better known effects of night shifts – grumpy, sleep-deprived and occasionally befuddled workers. Generally, police officers work seven nights in a row as part of their 5-week rotation. However, Auckland maritime police have tried out a 10-day roster that ensured a maximum two nights in a row on night duty. Night shifts alternated with two day and two evening shifts, followed by four days off. “It was brilliant,” said the sergeant who developed the roster. “The guys loved it. They felt better and they weren’t as grumpy.” After nearly 27 years of shift work, the sergeant would rather work any roster than the 5-week model, which left officers short-tempered and so tired their judgments could be impaired.’

...‘Chernobyl (1.23am) and Three Mile Island (4.00am) are just two examples of accidents which occurred during the wee small hours and were attributed to human error. It’s been suggested that shift work was to blame because it affects the human biological clock. Shift work also causes a condition known as daylight deprivation’ – a sign that we aren’t designed to be nocturnal! (Editor’s note: ‘Sleep is to rest the brain, not the body. When tired we can’t control our desire to sleep. The prefrontal cortex – used for planning and highest thought processes – is the part of our brain that is most affected by sleep deprivation.’)

...‘the idea came to a Boston University sociologist as the sociologist was walking out of a hospital where it had been studying shiftwork among nurses. There are a lot of things happening after dark, the sociologist thought. I wonder what they are? Soon the sociologist began to chart the night, as if it were a new territory, a work as intriguing as the frontier world of the Old West a hundred years ago. The sociologist believes we are moving into the age of *incessance*, when business as usual will mean business 24 hours a day. Already there are signs of this startling picture in America. In his recent book, *Night As Frontier*, the sociologist estimates that at the last US census, about 29 million USers, on average, were out of bed during the first hour after midnight. Most of the late crowd were out spending money; almost 20 million were eating in restaurants, shopping or travelling. But 7.1 million were earning wages via their regular jobs. Even between three and four in the morning, usually the quietest hour before the dawn, 10.6 million people were awake, with some 4.1 million at work. But on the night frontier, sleep prowls close to the perimeters of wakefulness. Eyeballs tremble at its approach. Often it wins. It shut down a nuclear reactor early in 1987, for example, after the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission got a tip that some of the operators and supervisors on the 11-7 night shift at the 2200-megawatt Pennsylvania facility appeared to be asleep. “It’s extremely difficult to change the mechanisms controlling sleep,” says a physiologist. Even when people force their eyes open, their physiological tides begin to ebb. Body temperature drops. Breathing slows. Can we learn to dispense with long hours of night sleep? The answer may lie hidden in some eye-opening studies. Research on sleep behaviour in 160 different species of animals, from insects to primates, shows that nearly all creatures except humans seem to break up sleep into several discrete phases per day. “We go against nature when we sleep just once in 24 hours,” says a psychologist of the University of California. People have long believed that naps disrupt night sleep. But the psychologist says it may be the other way round: night sleep disrupts our natural tendency towards nodding off during the height of the day. The psychologist is hopeful that, in the future, more humans will sleep more like animals, spreading short periods of slumber over the day.’

...‘If it is sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care, as Shakespeare said, then an overwhelming number of people are walking around with tatty shirt cuffs. Judging from recent surveys and clinical experiments, most experts in sleep behaviour agree there is virtually an epidemic of sleepiness. Even people who think they are sleeping enough would probably be better off with more rest. In one experiment, 16% of a study group of university students who averaged between seven and eight hours of sleep a night could doze off during the day in five minutes if allowed to lie down in a darkened room – evidence that those students were sleep-deprived. Researchers further discovered that if students spent one week getting to bed an hour to 90 minutes earlier than usual, they improved their performance on psychological tests. As added evidence that people don’t sleep enough, one sleep-researcher cites the bedside alarm clock. “If that’s how you wake up every morning you’re shortening your natural sleep pattern.” The beginning of our sleep-deficit crisis can be traced to the invention of the light bulb a century ago. From diary entries and other personal accounts from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, sleep scientists have deduced that the average person used to sleep about nine-and-a-half hours a night. “The best sleep habits once were forced on us, when we had nothing to do in the evening.” By the 1950s and 1960s, that sleep schedule had been whittled dramatically, to between seven-and-a-half and eight hours. Now social and economic trends are slicing ever deeper. “People cheat on their sleep, and they don’t even realize they’re doing it,” says the specialist. Perhaps the most relentless robber of sleep is the complexity of the day, say researchers. When pressures from work, family and friends mount,

many people consider sleep the most expendable item on the agenda. Often, though, our efforts to squeeze ever more tasks into our days and nights backfire. The person who invests in a full night's sleep, experts say, will be more than recompensed in heightened productivity, creativity and focus. Another thief of sleep is shift work. Researchers say the brain has difficulty varying sleep times, which means that these employees usually suffer a net loss of sleep. Because their reaction time and attention span are affected, sleepy people may be more prone to making mistakes on the job. Many major industrial accidents, including Three Mile Island and Chernobyl, occur in the late night or early morning, when researchers find that workers who monitor equipment are probably not at their most alert. One US government study estimated that up to 10% of traffic accidents may be sleep-related, and that perhaps as many as 20% of all drivers have fallen asleep at the wheel at least once. Recent studies have also found that sleep-deprived people have an impaired short-term memory and are affected by smaller quantities of alcohol than rested people are. Just one bad night's sleep can make a person less efficient on mental tasks. Worse still, the effects of sleep loss are cumulative. A person who chronically sleeps 90 minutes less per night than is necessary will feel far worse on Friday than on Tuesday. "By the fifth night, you've lost virtually a whole night's sleep. That's the day when you're just praying to get through it." Sleeping on the weekends does help the body recoup. But in chronic cases you may need weeks of catching up to reverse the effects of sleep loss. Sometimes a sleep-deprived brain will try to snatch a break by falling into so-called microsleeps, which last a few seconds and which may occur without even being noticed by the sleeper. In many tropical-zone countries, people often take siestas in the afternoon. Researchers say the brain tends to fall asleep more easily in the afternoon, suggesting to some an evolutionary predisposition towards napping. But they add that most people who get a full night's sleep will not need a nap. If you need to make up for lost sleep on the weekend, experts advise going to bed earlier rather than sleeping later. If that is not possible, they suggest taking a midafternoon nap for an hour or less on Sunday.'

... 'IF YOU'RE among the lucky and the wise you will be sitting down to read this morning's newspaper feeling refreshed and invigorated after a good seven to nine hours of blissful, uninterrupted sleep. If not, you're probably killing yourself. Getting a good night's sleep is not so easy, you say. There was too much to do last night. You were at the office 'til late, there was dinner with clients, homework from your MBA class, the kid's sports clothes needed washing, and you can't kick your Internet habit. Either that or you live in Auckland where traffic gridlock forces you to get up earlier each morning and means you are getting home later each night. Today you will be feeling the full effects of tiredness, with a sleep-debt of probably seven or eight hours built up over the week. You have the symptoms of a sleep-sick society. "It's to do with people doing too much during the day and then staying up too late at night," says a Wellington sleep specialist. "And someone's put the crazy idea in our heads that successful people only need four hours sleep each night and everyone else is lazy." Then there are those who want to sleep but can't. They lie awake each night with growing panic about not sleeping, which only makes it worse. Not sleeping becomes a source of embarrassment. They never discuss it at work because they know it is affecting their performance, but don't want to be considered impaired. Insomnia is not a disease, but a symptom of some underlying cause that keeps you awake. It could be anything from a disruption to your body clock from travel, consuming too much caffeine or alcohol, stress or depression. Resolving those issues can resolve the insomnia but, warns a Green Lane Hospital sleep specialist, insomnia can't be cured, only managed. People who have been severe sufferers never attain the sleep quality enjoyed by people who've never had insomnia. In the meantime, according to health care research company IMS Health, the sleepless accounted for 328,000 visits to doctors last year, took away 325,000 prescriptions for something to help them to sleep and, overall, contributed to an annual \$3 million market in this country for hypnotics and sedatives. Whether we blame the stresses of modern life, the invention of the light bulb or a misinformed culture that makes a virtue out of staying up late and rising early, too little sleep is turning ours into a dangerously sleep-deprived society. Dangerous because sleep deprivation diminishes our life expectancy and puts us at greater risk of injuring ourselves and others. According to America's leader in sleep research, doctors are being wilfully ignorant about the dire effects of sleep deprivation on their patients – and themselves. After 13 years working in Nasa's fatigue management unit, a NZer returned home to become one of our few dedicated sleep researchers. The NZer agrees that knowledge among doctors and the public about sleep disorders and the dangerous effects of too little sleep is pitiful. It also complains of too few resources to adequately diagnose and treat sleep disorders, a view backed by the Green Lane specialist, whose waiting list is five to seven years. The specialist says doctors have little alternative to prescribing much-maligned sleeping pills, because there is no funding for therapists to assist the sleepless. Although scientists now agree sleep is essential to a healthy body and mind, they don't know why. Right now the only thing most of us know about sleep is what it feels like not to do it. Many of us mistakenly believe sleep is something the body imposes on the mind, rather than being an essential part of life the brain demands. We tend to exalt the likes of Thomas Edison who claimed to need only three or four hours sleep each night. The lesser known fact about Edison is that the inventor would fall asleep in board meetings the next day, often for five hours at a time. What is known is that the more you stray from your normal sleep requirement the more determined your brain becomes to put you to sleep even if it is at inconvenient moments like when you are driving, operating heavy machinery, or the chief executive is addressing staff on this year's budget round. Which is why tiredness is now not only thought to play a role in alcohol-related car crashes, but fatigue among crew and management has been accepted as the root cause behind the grounding of the Exxon Valdez in Alaska's Prince William Sound and the explosion of Nasa's Challenger spacecraft. In NZ, the Land Transport Safety Authority attributes 8% of fatal crashes and 5% of injury crashes to fatigue. It puts the social cost of death and injury on the roads caused by fatigue at \$200 million yearly. Even so, the LTSA thinks fatigue-related road crashes are under-reported in NZ because police aren't trained to recognise the signs of it – like a crash on a straight piece of road with no skid marks from one set of tyres, meaning that driver was probably asleep. The Traffic Accident Research Foundation is financing Wellington Medical School's sleep investigation centre to study the role of sleep disorders in traffic accidents. In the pilot study of 600 adults, 42% said they rarely or never get enough sleep. Half said they seldom or never wake feeling refreshed. Moderate daytime sleepiness affected 12% and 4% said they had a severe problem. Some of those will be suffering from one of the 80 or so sleep disorders now identified, and the list is growing. Not only are we sleeping less than our ancestors, but we are either working longer or at times our bodies say we should be asleep. Since the advent of the Employment Contracts Act, allowing for more flexible working hours, 25% of us now have contracts that allow for shift-work, a particular threat to a good night's sleep. Otago University professors are looking at the effects of longer and more flexible working hours on our sleep, and ultimately our health. The idea isn't to oppose flexible working hours, but to give us better information about the effect they have on us so we can manage our sleep better in response.'

... '*Body clock* You wake after a good night's sleep and start to climb out of bed. Take care! You're beginning the most dangerous time of your day. For the next 2 hours or so, you are 2-3 times more likely to suffer a heart attack or stroke than in the late evening, the safest cardiovascular time of day. According to a study headed by a US sleep physiologist, 6am to 10am is the average peak time for many other major causes of death. Until recently, doctors were taught that the human body lives in homeostasis, changing little during the day. The science of chronobiology – the study of how time affects life – is sparking a medical revolution by revealing how much our bodies change through circadian (daily) rhythms. The long-held belief that some of us are "larks," or morning people, and others are "owls," or evening people, has now been confirmed by measurements of circadian rhythms in morning and afternoon people.'

... 'People are pre-destined to being night-owls, jet-lag sufferers or afternoon dozers by maternal genes which set the human body clock even before a baby is born, French scientists suggest. Understanding exactly how the clock functions could help people working at nights, or after flying into different time zones.' In related news, **the number of people needing treatment for a potentially fatal sleep disorder in the Midland Health region... [-] estimated... at up to 2000... [-] far exceeds the available funding, says a specialist. The Greenlane Hospital sleep specialist... estimates that 99[%] of cases of obstructive sleep apnoea are undiagnosed, and says that once sufferers become aware they could get relief, health providers would not be able to keep up with demand... The illness causes their upper airways to narrow, constantly waking them up.**

... 'YOU are dozing on a tropical beach, cocktail in hand. The shine shines. The waves gently lap the shore. Then you wake up. Sorry – you're dreaming. And yes, you're back in the office, with a Tuesday morning hangover from the Monday morning blues. It's enough to make anyone

consider taking a day off. If you've been feeling like this you won't be surprised to learn you're not alone. Absenteeism is on the rise worldwide. A survey by the Industrial Society in Britain found absenteeism rates there had risen by 25% in the last [3] years. In the US unscheduled absenteeism rose an estimated 14% between 1992 and 1995. It continues to cost American business millions of dollars a year. Questionnaires and surveys that try to measure job satisfaction have found a strong link between dissatisfaction and absenteeism – that is, if you're unhappy at work you're more likely to take days off. So why, in this age of enlightened management policy, employee empowerment and workplace therapy, is it that we still feel inclined to take "mental health days?" More to the point, how come work is so damn depressing? The same surveys have an answer. Research finds only a weak link between job satisfaction and the type of job performed. It does not matter what kind of work you do, it's your surroundings that make the difference. So you could be a high powered lawyer or a postie – if your boss is crazy or your office is depressing you won't be happy. Environmental problems that cause that unhappiness can include problems with reward systems, work load, the quality of supervision and physical working conditions. There's no point adding money to this list of woes because it's confirmed by research that no one thinks they ever get paid enough... Then again, the fact that you're unhappy in your job could be your parents' fault. Some researchers believe job satisfaction may have a genetic component. Their conclusion is based on psychological studies of twins... Or it could be a generational thing. A recent survey of job satisfaction in the US for business magazine *Inc.* found most 18 to 34 year olds felt secure in their jobs and that their development was encouraged. But Generation X doesn't like to be too happy; of all age groups surveyed, this one was least likely to be "extremely satisfied" with their work.

...Monday, bloody Monday! The day is starting gloomily: it's cold and raining. Your bed has never felt so warm and cosy. There's nothing that urgently needs your presence at work today, so why not take a sickie? Most of us have done it and some make a habit of it. An A[US]n study showed that on any given day, 4[%] of the population will be taking a sickie. That's a lot of days off: 60 million a year in that country. Proportionately, N[Z]'s figures are likely to be similar... Surprisingly, very little research on absenteeism of the sickie type seems to have been done in N[Z]... Generally, representatives of employers, the Labour and Health Departments and Statistics N[Z] agreed that Mondayitis (or Fridayitis) was a problem, but... there was almost no facts available to indicate its extent... Some organisations seemed to accept Mondayitis as a matter of course. In summertime, perhaps when the fish are biting, there are some organisations where taking a Friday or Monday to extend the weekend appears to be quite common. If Mondayitis was not from that cause, said... [an] Associate Professor... of the Auckland University School of Medicine... then it was likely to be caused by excessive drinking. "It is a common pattern for alcoholics... to take Monday off work." ...A report on research by the Industrial Society in Britain shows that a third of managers there believe that more days off work are taken because of personal problems and Monday-morning blues than because of genuine illness... [But the] Society believes that managers can be blamed for Mondayitis because they have allowed job insecurity, longer working hours and increased workloads as a result of "downsizing" to increase stress levels. And many companies accepted, without trying to do anything about it, that some jobs are boring... Companies which have tried to do something about "voluntary absenteeism" have not always achieved the desired outcome. In some organisations, incentive payments to reduce the number of days taken off work resulted in increased absenteeism because people came to work even when they were really sick, spread the illness and caused others to take time off. In some cases, unlimited time off for sickness had the wrong result when workers, knowing that they could stay home for as long as they wanted, felt guilty about staying home and came to work sick rather than waiting until they are well[(in NZ, companies 'aren't obligated to pay new staff for sick days during their first 6 months – so many don't, so those workers go to work sick')]. Factors... shown to reduce the incidence of unjustified absenteeism include encouraging people to work in teams rather than as individuals, and giving workers control over their working environments.

...The German cabinet has agreed that Government employees who call in sick from work should receive home visits to check whether they really are ill. On average Government employees miss 17 days a year... • [I'm often asked by labour relations students how]... long must an employer carry a sick employee? Most managers are humane about staff members who become too ill to work for long periods, particularly if they're valuable to the company. But economic considerations clearly make it impossible to keep a seriously ailing employee on the payroll for an unreasonable period of time. However, as the recent case... [involving] Motor Machinists quickly established, employers abuse at their peril the correct procedures for laying off a sick staff member. A machinist had been off work for nine months after injuring a finger in a grinding machine. At the end of that time [the machinist] obtained a medical certificate which cleared him for a trial return to work. But before doing so, [the machinist] took some annual leave. Three days before the employee was due back at work, the company told [the machinist that it] was no longer wanted because, the employer explained, the... machinist's... dermatitis – ...which had caused the injury in the first place... – ...could flare up again... The[employer's]... relatively common... assum[ption] was, however, incorrect... Motor Machinists had... made the elementary mistake of not consulting a specialist medical opinion before ending the machinist's employment... The upshot was that the machinist won hands down a personal grievance case in the Employment Court, with compensation and costs... "There have been a number of recent cases where employees have been dismissed before they have been given the opportunity to present their own medical evidence, and they have been held to be unjustifiably dismissed," said... a... lawyer...

['Sick children are supposed to stay at home and many parents use up their sick days looking after them.' However, 'parents who can't afford to get time off work to care for sick children are sending them to kindergarten and school – making teachers and other children sick.' 'Each year 9 out of 10 NZers catch a cold and 50% get the flu – most catch it off each other']...

THE cold and flu season brings more than sniffles and sneezes to the workplace. It also brings resentment. Healthy employees in America are grumbling about sick workers who spread germs on the job. Those who are ill, however, say they feel too guilty to stay home. The tension is pitting worker against worker... [although, ironically, sick] employees are coming in because they don't want co-workers to shoulder extra burdens and don't want unfinished work to pile up. And fear of losing a job still lingers following massive job cuts earlier in the decade... Despite workers' fear, many employers say they don't want sick people at work. Some even balk at letting ill workers come in. "If someone comes in sick and plays the part of the martyr, we tell them to go," said... a president of First National Bank. First National employees earned one sick day per month and they are urged to use them... At some companies, sick days can be turned into cash if they're not used up by year's end. Also, many employers offer paid-time-off banks that lump sick, holiday and personal days into one group. Taking too many sick days can leave less time for a holiday.

...the Holidays Act 1981... sets out a minimum code for the number of holidays a worker is entitled to receive. In addition to annual holidays, every [NZ] worker is entitled to 11 statutory holidays on pay... This obligation to provide 11 paid statutory holidays is one of the most fundamental elements of the Holidays Act. A worker cannot be forced to work on one of these statutory holidays unless... [it] has agreed to so do in his or her employment contract. Some employment contracts provide that an employer has the right to require an employee to work on one of these holidays but even if the contract does contain such a provision, the employer is still bound to provide the worker with a paid pay off in lieu of the statutory day. This is so even if the worker is required to be at work only briefly on a statutory holiday: someone who works only 1 hour on Christmas Day will be entitled to a whole day on pay in lieu. For many years employers attempted to effectively buy their way out of the statutory holiday obligation by paying workers penal rates – double... or triple time – for working on a statutory holiday. [However, in] a case universally known as the Telecom decision, the Employment Court made it clear that even if the employer had paid a worker penal rates for working one of the statutory holidays, that worker was still entitled to a paid lieu day. If a worker works on a statutory holiday who decides when the lieu day is to be taken? Ideally the employer and worker should agree on the day but the Employment Court has said that if agreement cannot be reached the holiday should be taken at the convenience of the employee. Another contentious issue is the rate at which an employee is entitled to be paid for statutory and lieu days. Many employment contracts provide for payment on the basis of an hourly rate plus a number of allowances, for example, shift...

clothing... and meal allowances. Should the pay an employee receives for a lieu day include those allowances? The Employment Court has on two occasions said "yes". In *N[Z] Harbour Workers Limited v Lyttelton Port Company*... [the judge] held that a worker was entitled to be paid exactly the same amount as [it] would have earned had [it] actually worked the day... [But the] Court of Appeal took a somewhat different view in *Ports of Auckland* and held that "on pay" did not include overtime, bonuses or allowances which... depend... on actual working results. The problem with the Holidays Act is that it attempts to be all things to all people – to prescribe a minimum code which applies to full-time... part-time... casual... and shift-workers. The shortcomings and problems with the act were acknowledged in 1995 when the then Minister of Labour... announced a review of legislation... This "urgent need for review" prompted the minister to call for submissions which closed on May 22, 1995... [Unfortunately, the] legislation was not introduced before last year's general election and the review has been on hold since then... It seems certain that legislation reforming the Holidays Act will be introduced this year but we are unlikely to see any reform until 1998 at the earliest. [Meanwhile, the current Minister of Labour] has indicated that flexibility will be the key to any reform. [The minister] has said that the Government wants to make the act more flexible for everybody "so they can enjoy their holidays rather better than is possible at the moment." [The minister] has also said that there is absolutely no intention to reduce present statutory holidays but... believes that the way in which the holiday entitlements can be enjoyed by employees is a matter for reasonable negotiation. This focus on flexibility can only mean that the reformed Holidays Act will give employers and employees greater latitude in agreeing when holidays are to be taken and may well allow employers to buy their way out of providing statutory holidays.

...A Government sports funder is taking its leisure message to heart with extra... holidays in return for staff staying at work... longer each day. The Hillary Commission for Sport, Fitness and Leisure... [wants] staff to take five extra days' holiday as a reward for knocking off 10 minutes later or starting 10 minutes earlier than other public servants. The time off is added to statutory holidays and one day's annual leave to give a two-week break, from Christmas Day until January 8. This leaves them with three weeks and four days of normal annual leave to be taken in the year it falls. Most Government agencies close until January 5, forcing staff to dip into their annual leave entitlements between the statutory holidays... ■ N[Z] looks set to follow the US where the burgeoning employee leasing industry will soon take over as the biggest employer...

IN THE squawking tropics of Parrot Jungle and Gardens in Miami exists a thin slice of workplace revolution. Despite the noise, this upheaval is peculiarly quiet. But within 10 years, the 102 Parrot Jungle employees will be working for perhaps the largest private employer in the US, bigger than Wal-Mart or General Motors. The business is not chain stores or autos... [but] worker... leasing... Chances are many will be swept up by the upheaval, too, if they work for a company with fewer than 500 employees, and 70% of the [US] labour force does. Companies that lease workers are growing by such bounds that they will employ 37 million by 2007, up from 2.5m in 1995. Go to work for one and you will report to the same job at the same place and to the same manager. But you will have to resign your current employer. Your new employer of record – which keeps personnel files and has the ultimate authority to hire and fire – will be Staff Leasing, Administaff or another of the companies scrambling to establish itself in this new industry. Although it's best known as employee leasing, the industry now calls itself professional employer organisations (PEOs) in a bid to improve its image after a decade of fraud and bankruptcy. Don't confuse PEOs with temporary agencies. PEOs don't send over a few workers when things get busy[, or to fill in for staff who are sick or on annual leave]. PEOs permanently employ everyone at a... company from the president down. PEOs have been growing as fast as temporary agencies, more than 30% in employees and revenue a year, and there's little to threaten that pace. The potential market of companies with fewer than 500 employees is \$3 trillion, and only 2% so far has been captured. Why will so many go to work for PEO companies? Simply, it's because many small company owners are tired of being distracted with human resources headaches such as workers' compensation, family and medical leave laws and discrimination suits. Large companies combat it all with an army of lawyers, accountants and HR specialists. Small companies are deciding it's worth turning over their payrolls plus 14% to 30% and relinquishing ultimate control of their workers just to get it all off their backs. In many ways, it's levelling the playing field between small and large companies. Consider Parrot Jungle, a sort of Sea World with feathers, whose employees have been working for The Vincam Group since 1989. Vincam knows nothing about parrots. But with 28,000 other employees – up from 12,000 a year ago – Vincam knows that proper performance reviews are crucial when defending against wrongful termination suits. And that there are solvents used to clean bird cages that must be on a list of toxic materials or the company could be slapped with a \$11,000 fine... Such expertise does not come cheaply. Parrot Jungle's owner... turns over his annual \$2.3m payroll to Vincam, plus a fee of... \$440,000 a year. But [the owner] said it was worth it so [the owner] could focus on critical duties. Like getting cockatoos to bicycle along the high wire. There are things Vincam can afford to do for small companies that they would never dream to do on their own. It spends \$7.3m a year on technology and has a computer room dubbed "the spaghetti bowl" because of its complexity. It has a doctor and 40 nurses on staff, whose duties include training hotel maids to protect themselves from Aids and hepatitis... [Speaking of maids, w]here would the... British... country-house... be... without its simpering serving-wench... [o]r, indeed, the... frosty butler...? Britain has rediscovered servants. Over the past 10 years, according to Government figures, the fastest-growing category of consumer spending has been domestic service. In 1989, Britons spent the equivalent of £1.45 b... today on all kinds of home help. By 1995 this had more than doubled... As a share of total household expenditure, domestic service rose from 0.4[% to 0.9%]. The growth in income inequality is, presumably, partly responsible. The services of those at the bottom of the pile are more affordable to those at the top than they used to be. Growing labour mobility probably has something to do with it: Britain is flooded with young foreigners short on skills but eager for work. And at the other end of the age range, growing unemployment among older people means a supply of more mature, reliable types who find it hard to get jobs in companies. The steady increase in the proportion of [mums] working has also pushed up demand. Over half... with a child under 10 now work. Compared with most other European countries, Britain's state provides little nonschool child-care, leaving parents to buy it for themselves. Recruitment agencies such as Hutchinsons Domestic Staff... report a steady increase in demand at the top end of the servant range, save for a dip in the recession of the early 1990s. Hutchinsons provides live-in butlers, whose annual salary is about £18,000 and housekeepers, who earn about £16,000. But most of the rise in expenditure is not by the rich on old-fashioned, starch-collar service, but by middle-class, double-income families on part-time help. Child-minders, cleaners, gardeners, dog-walkers and a bustle of other helpers are taking over the domestic chores of Britain's exhausted couples. Plenty of the work is arranged informally and wages paid in cash, thus avoiding tax, but an increasing share of contracts go through agencies. Setting up an agency has become easy since licensing requirements were abolished two years ago. Some established firms complain that deregulation... let in fly-by-night operations funnelling illegal immigrants into exploitative contracts. Certainly, there have been a few horrible cases of Filipina maids imprisoned by employers; but most new agencies exemplify the steady professionalism of domestic-service jobs that has already made a clean sweep of office cleaning.

...[I]t may be one of the world's richest people but the Queen believes that by watching her pennies, her \$multi-million fortune will look after itself. Even her family are limited to a single, modest present apiece at Christmas, while her staff get a Christmas pudding worth a few dollars from the cheapest supplier. In fact, it isn't easy being one of her servants. The pay is so terrible, some have been forced to claim state benefits to support their families, while a 104-hour working week is normal. ● 'The state of California has used a draconian law to seize millions of dollars worth of assets belonging to Britons, including Her Majesty's Stationary Office. Legislation allows California to take possession of bank accounts, stocks and the contents of security deposit boxes if they are dormant for longer than three years. A court was told California's funds were swollen to the tune of US\$400 million a year from the sale of personal property. A federal judge has ordered a stop to the seizures until "reasonable" efforts to reunite owners with their assets were improved.'

...Demand for household servants is soaring in the US, particularly in New York and Silicon Valley, where the new rich are pining for butlers in the Jeeves mould as never before – causing demand for experienced butlers to exceed supply. With annual salaries for top butlers reaching \$US123,000, butler

schools are thriving, especially those teaching household management in its traditional form. Lessons include how to tip-toe around marital indiscretions, how not to look smarter than your employer, and how to organise dinner parties for a boss used to eating pizza straight from the box'.]

...WHY do people hate cleaning ovens? "Basically, because it's a dirty job," says [the operator] of Lovin' Ovens. "And it's something you can get away with for a long time. You can shut the oven door and nobody knows." When the shame becomes too great, it's time to call [the person] who drives a car with OVENS plates. [The operator] always asks her clients to spray their dirty ovens the night before, so that [it] doesn't have to inhale the chemicals. "Clients very rarely won't,"... says [the operator, who] usually charges \$40 for an oven that takes an hour and a half to clean. [The operator] once charged \$60 for an oven so disgustingly dirty that it required three cans of oven spray. Some clients expect to have more than their oven cleaned. "Some think you are going to pull the oven out from the wall and clean all around it. They almost expect you to clean the kitchen for them." Lovin' Ovens was started by [her] son-in-law when [it] was a university student. When [the son-in-law] became a teacher [his mother-in-law] was left "holding the baby." [The mother-in-law, who] cleans up to three ovens in a day... always wears rubber gloves and kneels on a rubber cushion – but still has permanent bruises on her knees... [-] believes that more people are turning to household services to help them cope with domestic chores. There are not many professional oven cleaners to lend a helping hand, however. "There have been a few people who have started up oven cleaning – but they haven't lasted... If you are a one-[perso]n band there are just so many ovens that you can do. And if you try and get people to help you – they just don't last." [Another Aucklander] pushes an iron for a living... [The] previously national distributions service manager for *Readers Digest*, w[ho] was made redundant last year after more than 20 years with the company... bought a master franchise for the Green Acres Ironing service... Although his mates snicker at his new job, [the former manager] is confident that [it] will have the last laugh. A [US] research puts lawn mowing first, ironing second and home cleaning third in the preferred household services stakes... Ironing is a household chore that many people detest. And his customers are always delighted to have the tedious task done for them. "It's always hanging over them... We wave a magic wand and free up time to do something else." ...[the master franchisee] charges \$30 for a bag of 15 items, which takes about an hour to iron... An ironing franchisee can expect to earn \$800 a week for 25 to 30 hours at the ironing board... [The former manager] hopes to have more than 30 franchisees ironing for customers all over Auckland's North Shore in the not-too-distant future. By then, [it] expects that his marketing, management and support role as master franchisee will keep him away from the ironing board. But [the master franchisee] will probably always end up with a few bags of ironing to do... [The master franchisee], who stands while [it] irons, keeps boredom at bay by listening to talk-back radio, or watching cricket and [the US queen of talk] on TV... THE weekly trip to the supermarket is inevitably boring. You park your car, grab a trolley and load it. You then unload it three times – at the check out, at the car and at home. If you're shopping for a family, the whole tedious exercise can take an hour or more. Grocery Express was started two years ago, to relieve householders of this relentless chore. [The owner] runs the business from her Mt Wellington home, with help from two employees in central Auckland and two more in Whangaparaoa. [The business] has 200 clients on [its] books, not all of them regular... Grocery Express charges \$15 for up to \$100 worth of groceries. Supermarket shopping is being trialled on the internet, but [the owner] is confident that her thriving business will not be affected. "...we offer personal service – and that is very important... Besides... [o]nly a small number of people work with the internet – and some elderly people can't even handle a fax machine,"...

[Children are bitten by snakes on rubber plantations in Malaysia, inhale pesticides picking coffee in Tanzania and are hurt on construction sites in Portugal, says the United Nations Children's Fund. "Hazardous child labour must be left behind, consigned to history as completely as those other forms of slavery that it so closely resembles," said the Unicef director. Calling for global action, Unicef said countries should provide schooling for all children, enforce international treaties they signed and immediately end "intolerable forms of child labour such as prostitution or bonded labour." Unicef's report on child labour around the world, which follows one on the same subject several months ago by the International Labour Organisation, contended that 250 million children between 5 to 14 years were working in conditions detrimental to their health. The report also sought to debunk myths that child labour was found only in poor nations, that it was inevitable in families of extreme poverty and that most children were employed in export industries that could be reformed through sanctions and boycotts. Mexican-American children work on farms in New York state, including fields wet with pesticides, and can be found in sweatshops of the US garment industry. In Britain, 15 to 26% of 11-year-olds and 36 to 66% of 15-year-olds are working. Nevertheless, most child labourers live in the developing world, half of them in Asia, where bonded labour is common. Children as young as 8 are pledged by their parents to factory owners or agents in exchange for very small loans. The report also criticised the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund programmes']...

An international conference on child labour ended on Thursday with delegates expressing guarded optimism that the worst forms of exploiting 250 million working children worldwide can be stopped. "Because the causes of child labour are complex, including poverty, social values and even cultural complacency, there can be no simple or single answers,"... the executive director of... Unicef... said. "But two things are obvious – first, that the exploitation of children in hazardous work is totally unacceptable, and second, that it can be stopped," [the executive director] told the final session of the two-day conference in Amsterdam. "Hazardous child labour is a betrayal of every child's rights as a human being and is an offence against our civilisation." The conference has focused on the most intolerable types of child labour – slavery, forced labour and the use of children in prostitution, pornography and drug trafficking. It called for an immediate end to such practices and hoped that discussions between the 200 government ministers, union leaders and children's representatives present would help to lay the groundwork for a worldwide ban. Delegates said this could now happen because of changed attitudes. [A delegate from] the... ILO... said: "Those of us who remember what the situation was like a decade ago, remember a few individual voices crying in the wilderness. But now the issue has jumped to the top of the international agenda. I think it can be stated that the battle against child labour is being won." International action has been complicated by fears among developing countries that it may undermine their main trading advantage – cheap labour. The Indian Minister of Labour... said: "Parents send children away to work instead of sending them to school not because they want it, but because there is no option or alternative for their biological survival." But [the Unicef executive director] said improved access to education was one of the keys to solving the problem of child labour.

...Experts on child labour have begun a four-day international conference hoping to create a global strategy against the exploitation and abuse of... children. The Oslo conference – arranged by the Norwegian Government together with the... ILO... and... Unicef... – aims to provide an outline for legislation, education, social measures and development to fight child labour. According to ILO figures, 250 million children between the ages of five and 14-years-old are working, with about half in full-time employment... [The] director at the division of evaluation, planning and policy at Unicef, said, however, that the estimates of the numbers were "just the tip of the iceberg." ...The proportion of child workers under the age of 10 years could be up to 20[%] in some countries... Many instances of child labour occurred in "invisible settings" such as back-alley sweat shops, in prostitution or in domestic service for parents or guardians... –[and] the problem is spread across the globe... [A delegate from the ILO] said the Geneva-based organisation wanted to see a complete ban against children working under 12 years of age and for special protection for girls from being exploited... The conference, a follow-up to a similar meeting in Amsterdam... has attracted around 350 delegates from 35 countries and around 100 organisations. [The Unicef evaluation, planning and policy director] said acknowledgment of the problem of child labour was growing both at the Government and family level, although it would take many years and resources to eradicate. - 1997

A leading human rights group is accusing the U[S] of violating international standards on child labour by allowing minors – the vast majority Latinos – to work gruelling hours in the fields at the expense of their education, their health and other basic human standards. In a report entitled *Fingers to the Bone: U[S] Failure to Protect Child Farmworkers*, Human Rights Watch says hundreds of thousands of minors across the country are working days of 14 hours or more, often for well under the legal minimum wage, and are being exposed to highly toxic pesticides and running

serious risk of illness and injury from heavy equipment and sharp instruments. "In the fields, the U[S] is like a developing country," says the report's author... Under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, agricultural workers are exempt from the age restrictions that apply to almost every other sector of the economy. Although US politicians have lobbied in support of a far-reaching international treaty to outlaw abuses of child labour, the US itself is not in compliance with the treaty, H[RW] alleges. "A 12-year-old kid can work unlimited hours on a farm, but isn't allowed to work in a fast-food restaurant... There's no good reason to have such a double standard." The report, based largely on extensive interviews with teenage farm workers in Arizona and research in other western states, showed that the problem is countrywide... The report urged the US Government to close the labour standards loophole and severely restrict the rights of farmers to employ minors. [The author] acknowledged that it was often low pay and poor conditions endured by parents that pushed them into sending their children out into the fields, and that some farmworkers would therefore oppose a ban on child labour. The report included graphic testimony from melon and cotton pickers, and from one 15-year-old girl trapped in a cherry packing factory in Washington state during a carbon monoxide leak. "This girl who was working by us fainted," the girl... is quoted as saying. "A couple of hours later another girl fainted... After her a bunch of people were fainting. The manager told us to keep working, wouldn't let us leave... These kids were jumping on the doors to tear the tape off [and] open the doors so we could get outside."

...[yesterday] a New Lynn clothing business[person]... was found to have recruited sewing machinists from Thailand, fabricated time and wage records and forbidden workers to leave the premises even while off duty... [The businessperson] who ran a sweatshop factory forcing [the]Thai immigrants to work 14 hours a day, six days a week has been personally fined \$24,000. The money must go to the six workers. But they will not get almost \$300,000 in back pay. An employment tribunal judgment... confirmed that [the businessperson] underpaid her staff by \$295,000 but those arrears could not be pursued because of bankruptcy... The raid on [the businessperson]'s... home and factory in May last year was at the time dismissed by her and her husband as departmental prejudice against Asian workers... The tribunal said that i[t]... was difficult to imagine a more serious infringement of the rights of employees... In the judgment, published in this month's Employment Cases Summary, the tribunal found [that the businessperson] had "deliberately, systematically and persistently breached the minimum standards set by... the Minimum Wage Act 1983..."

...THE Government has given the lowest paid workers and young people a... pay rise to come next year. The adult minimum wage goes up 2[%] from March 5 to \$7.70 an hour, and the age of eligibility drops from 20 to 18 years. The minimum youth wage for those aged 16 and 17 also rises to 80[%] of the adult minimum over two years... [The] Youth Affairs Minister... says the rate increases match the average wage rises of the past year... But [the]National Distributors Union secretary... says the wage rise doesn't go far enough. "The adult minimum wage should be at least \$8.10 to \$8.80 an hour to reflect the rise in average wage over the past eight years... The minimum rate has slowly declined as wages have risen and until now successive Governments have done nothing about it." In other changes, employers will no longer be able to claim an exemption from paying minimum wage rates to employees training on the job for certain qualifications. They will have to pay a training minimum wage at the youth rate.

...THE government is to unveil a new initiative to give lower income N[Z]ers skills to find new jobs. Fresh Start will be launched next month to bridge the gap between the rich and poor. Speaking exclusively to *Sunday News*, [the PM]... said: "When 56[%] of employers say it is difficult getting staff, there is obviously a skills shortage – and that is crazy... We want to foster a dynamic relationship between industry, polytechnics and government. If business says 'we want more of that' then we have to help them,"... [U]nder Fresh Start... employers... will [be surveyed]... to find out the skills they require in prospective workers. [The government] will then start training courses at polytechnics to provide those skills... [By the way.] Treasury researchers... say... [t]he popular belief that N[Z] has suffered from a long-term "brain-drain" is wrong... Instead, N[Z] has experienced a "brain exchange" with the rest of the world in the past 40 years, with the skill levels of arrivals at least matching those leaving.

...N[Z] is in danger of losing the worldwide race for skilled workers. There is a global scramble to attract people with the skills vital to a modern economy – the European Union alone estimates it will be 1.7 million qualified workers short by 2003 – and the signs are that N[Z] is falling behind. The quarterly surveys of business opinion by the N[Z] Institute of Economic Research show a sharp increase in the number of firms reporting difficulties attracting skilled staff in the past six months. More than 40[%] now identify it as a problem... The Auckland and Wellington Chambers of Commerce also say members report increasing difficulty getting skilled staff... Lack of skilled staff is also seen as making N[Z] less attractive as a place to invest... Although IT is the most talked-about area, the shortages are developing right across the economy from traditionally high-tech areas like health – Auckland Healthcare had to cut back cancer treatments this month because of a chronic shortage of radiation staff – to more physical occupations, such as forestry. The causes are complex and the subject of frequent debate. But they include a mixture of rising demand for specialist skills, low levels of unemployment, skilled people seeking higher pay overseas, a mismatch between what the education system turns out and what business needs, and the ageing population (which means a smaller pool of workers).

...Sixtieth birthdays might replace 21sts as the [21st] century's rite of social passage if worldwide... ageing... trends... continue... [Incidentally, as of today] 65 years is no longer the compulsory retirement age and companies now have to treat their aging workers pretty much like anyone else...

Age shall not weary or even retire them A company whose job specifications require staff to run the length of the factory... at the rate of 100m in 15 seconds, climb 20m walls or lift 100kg lead ingots might be able to compulsorily pension off its 65-year-old workers. Otherwise... age no longer exists in employment terms... The new law is an example of employment legislation catching up with the fact. For the past 50 years... many workers aged 60 or over have been able to offer experience *and* fitness but have been pensioned off on the mistaken assumption that older employees get physically past it. However, [although the 'human brain starts to shrink from age 40 (affecting short-term memory)'], a wealth of research in the past 25 years, particularly through [US] agencies such as the National Council for Ageing, has shown fairly conclusively that the link between age and performance has been greatly exaggerated. For human resource purposes, however, the issue is deeper than compulsory retirement. If staff exercise their entitlement and stay on longer, employers will have to... introduce performance management techniques to see how everybody shapes up, not just the sexagenarians. There are three exceptions to the new law... • Government departments can still require employees to retire at any age, at least until the end of this year when they fall into line with other employers. • Contracts written after April 1992, where employees agreed to retire at a certain age, can still be enforced. • ...jobs where there is a "genuine occupational requirement" to be a certain age can exclude oldies. But... this test is very strict and will be difficult for most employers to satisfy. Having said that, don't expect a boom in 75-year-old piano movers.

...A[US]ns are being encouraged to put their retirement dreams on hold and keep on working for the good of the country. Although the experts say an ageing population is not a crisis, A[US]ns should be encouraged to stay in the workforce beyond 65 to reduce the growing costs of caring for the elderly. A Productivity Commission report released yesterday... said working more productively to generate higher incomes to improve retirement savings would enhance the quality of life for older A[US]ns and relieve pressure on the Government purse... "The A[US]n worker [except for those at very high incomes] has an incentive to retire early, live off superannuation savings and then claim an unreduced age pension at age 65,"... a senior economist with the World Bank, wrote in [a]report Policy Implications of the Ageing of A[US's] Population. The economist]... dismissed concerns that people working longer would increase unemployment among younger workers...

Paid work past about age 45 is vanishing fast. This change of the past 20 years has been huge and relentless, touches all levels of society, spreads right across the [First W]orld and shows few signs of halting, let alone reversing. And if present trends continue, then within a decade a third of all [NZ guys] in their later 40s will be "retired" (without significant prospects of getting paid work again) and half... by their mid-50s. Even fewer [gals] will have substantial paid work – perhaps 40[%] by their mid-50s. Consider just how deeply we are already into this "post-war world." Until the 1970s, 96 in every 100 [guys] had full-time paid work through from their 20s to their early 50s: only then did employment fall off. Using data from the... census, in which full-time work is 20 or more hours a week, we find that by 1996 the proportion of [guys] in full-time work was... 77[%]

for those in their later 40s, 65[%] in their later 50s and 40[%] in their early 60s. Only a few per cent more had some part-time work. Moreover, each successive birth cohort now begins paid work... later in life, reaches its employment peak at a lower and earlier point and sees its work fall off sooner and faster than for any predecessors... The nature and quality of the shrinking work are changing also. More and more of it after age 45 is self-employment, much of it uncertain, insecure and low-paying... International studies suggest the important explanations for the trends are not poor health (today's middle-aged are healthier than ever), mandatory retirement laws (most people finish work long before any compulsory retirement age), state pension age (again, most "retire" long before reaching this), or employment in the public or private sector (both drop older workers equally readily). More unexpected – and unwelcome perhaps – is that overall economic performance matters little either. Booming and stumbling economies alike have for 20 years been shedding their mature employees, as "jobless growth" policy takes hold. Several key forces are at work. First, automation, or the computer revolution, which helps to do away with many routine procedures or lets them move to cheaper places and people. Secondly, the blind drive of global capital for short-term "efficiencies," which leads to retaining as few staff as possible and as young, pliant, insecure and cheap as is possible. For many, it leads to an unpleasant, pressured workplace which we want to leave when we can. Thirdly, the disappearance of much manufacturing from [First World] economies and with it large numbers of better-paying jobs once dominated by the middle-aged. Fourthly comes attitudes, or the (questionable) belief that older workers are more expensive, slower, less enterprising, adaptable or retrainable than younger ones. Fifthly, and easy to overlook, is life-style choice, or a rising "culture of leisure" – the expectation among the middle-aged of an extended period free of work while still physically vigorous. All this is likely to intensify in the next few years, for the middle-aged are the fastest-growing segment of the population... The implications are enormous – for individuals, families, workplaces, public services, personal and collective retirement savings, taxes to support an ageing population and much more. Yet ordinary citizens and policy-makers alike remain in denial about the changes facing us. We blame individuals for their joblessness in mid-life, and urge them to retrain as if jobs will be there for all who do so. We... muse on raising retirement pension age next century to 70 or beyond, as though this will somehow make jobs available and so "solve" the problems of an ageing population... The London-based Future Foundation goes much further, predicting children born in the next decade will retire at 80... And we kid ourselves that economic growth will deliver full jobs for all. It will not happen: large-scale, later-life joblessness is here to stay, and it is time to debate some difficult matters. Do we care if some people past 45 have jobs... and most do not...? If we don't, then how are we to find income for the many without earnings. Or don't we bother? If we do care, then how might we bring about a different sharing of work so that older workers stay on? Through "elder-friendly workplaces," part-time work, job-sharing, flexible hours to allow for parenting duties, more holiday breaks, extra retraining budgets? Through subsidies for employers to take on those past 45 – or regulations enforcing it...? ...Perhaps we could be more visionary and abandon the idea that work for pay is normal and good and proper, welcome the release from the drudgery of it all, embrace a working life totalling 25 years or less and enrich personal and community lives through the resources and time thus freed? ...[By the way, NZ's] growing army of part-time workers, which stands at 420,000 now, accounts for almost one in every four members of the permanent workforce. A Household Labour Force Survey shows that this revolution in work patterns is showing no signs of abating. In the [past] year... the permanent part-time labour force grew 30,000, or 7.7[%], while full-time employment fell 19,000, or 1.4[%] (this figure might not take into account the fact that, because of the 'downturn in the economy, some NZ manufacturers have been forced to cut hours to a 4-day week to avoid redundancies'; note that the)... 35-hour week, the innovation that earned French workers scorn and envy around the world, seems destined to fade away as France grapples with a sagging economy and stubbornly high unemployment... It was only this increase in part-time work that enabled the Government to claim there had been an increase in the permanent workforce over the past year. Labour market flexibility was a key policy objective of the controversial Employment Contracts Act... Part-timers covered by collective agreements have access to the same rights and protections as full-time workers, such as sick leave and holiday entitlements. What worries people like... the director of the Centre for Labour Studies at Auckland University and... [the] national secretary of the Service and Food Workers Union, are the part-timers and casuals who are not in any collective agreement. "The feature of the hospitality industry," says [the unionist], "is part-time and casual work, and generally there are no collective contracts for workers other than those in large accommodation hotels and the odd pub. Mostly they're on individual contracts." The national secretary of the National Distribution Union... agrees. "We don't negotiate all the contracts for workers in this industry. There are some employers who refuse to let the union on site. I'm sure there are some pretty dodgy arrangements out there." One of her concerns is the development of employers offering part-timers extra work on a casual basis... [Another concern is her belief that] the growth in part-time work disguises significant underemployment, "where there are people who would happily have a full-time job but there isn't one so they're maybe working a 30-hour week and scrambling around looking for extra hours..." Household Labour Force Survey figures tend to bear out these claims... Between March 1987 and March [this year], the proportion of part-time workers wanting more hours increased from 11.6[%] to 29.8[%]... However, these figures need to be put into perspective. While nearly 30[%] wanted more work, only 6.8[%] of the part-timers actually wanted a full-time job.

...More of us now have part-time work. Those working less than 30 hours a week jumped 24.5[%] this decade. Fulltime employment grew about a third less at 7.9[%]... 1.74 million of us are in work – 80[%] of us toil for someone else. About 7[%] will be employers, 12[%]... opt for self-employment and just under 1[%] of us... work for a family business. There is still a city-sized crowd of us officially looking for work. In September 128,000 were unemployed. At December 10, 895,050 of us, including superannuitants, were on some sort of benefit... About 5500 N[Z]ers are neither workers nor beneficiaries. They are the ones now residing at Her Majesty's pleasure in one of the country's 17 prisons. They probably wish they weren't there; but then, a growing number of N[Z]ers outside the walls and wire of the country's lockups wish they were not in N[Z] at all. In the year to October, 68,261 of us left our country, either permanently or long-term... The bulk, nearly 33,000, jumped the ditch to A[US]. But we seem prepared to move to just about anywhere, including, for one person this year, a place called Andorra... We hope it was worth it... About 1.1 million N[Z]ers are enrolled in educational institutions of one kind or another, from kindergartens to universities.

...*Future not so bright for most universities...* There is something about a document called "Bright Future – Five Steps Forward" which calls to mind a visit I paid to Communist China in 1978. At that time, the only splashes of colour to be seen throughout China were huge billboards bearing red Chinese characters proclaiming the great virtues of the "four modernisations." Like the Chinese Government of that era, our Government seems to have an almost superstitious faith in the power of slogans – particularly slogans containing numbers. Unfortunately, as the Chinese Communists discovered, slogans are not enough. That is not to say that "Bright Future" is not a significant step forward. It is not so long ago... we were assured at every turn that government had no role to play and... it was up to market forces to produce the right answers. Now – perhaps a visit or two to Ireland or Finland later and faced with the truth about our own economic performance – we are suddenly told that government does have a responsibility. This is a welcome change of heart. Welcome, too, is the channelling of more resources into higher education – particularly the scholarships to encourage research – though the sums involved are pretty small. And who could quarrel with Bright Future's insistence that our future depends on how well we educate ourselves at the highest level? ...there is scarcely a government anywhere in the world that would not subscribe to the same fine sentiments... Unfortunately, [what]... matters is not what governments say but what they do. What the Government has done in N[Z] over the past decade or so is somewhat at variance with the language of Bright Future. Funding per student has fallen so sharply and fees have risen so steeply that the deterrent effect on the numbers going to university is now unmistakable. But it is not only numbers which have been affected. It is quality as well. An A[US]n graduate will have had 50[%] more spent on his or her university education than a N[Z] graduate will have had. N[Z] universities might use their resources more efficiently (as I, the... vice-chancellor at the University of Waikato... believe they do) but a disparity in resources of this size must affect quality. There are already worrying signs that a growing number of students at both

undergraduate and graduate level cross the Tasman for what they perceive as a better and cheaper education. The brave words of Bright Future must be set alongside this reality. Even more worrying is the gloss on Bright Future provided by [the Minister for Enterprise and Commerce] in a radio interview. [The minister] envisaged that just two or three elite research universities would carry the responsibility for the nation's research effort. The first point to grasp about this suggestion is that a university which is not funded to carry out research, and which therefore does not do so, cannot claim the status of a university in the international academic community. [The minister]'s bright idea is really a prescription for just two or three universities for the whole of N[Z] – a country which is not manifestly overprovided with university education... It doesn't take a genius to twig that when "two or three" centres are proposed the bureaucratic mind thinks immediately of Auckland, Wellington and the South Island... This further narrowing of an already dangerously narrow research base would be exactly the wrong remedy for our ills... Bright Future is full of praise for innovation, but the strategy is essentially risk-averse. It suggests that research will be funded only for known and prescribed outcomes. This is to fly in the face of all that we know about the essence of scholarship and research – that it is a voyage of discovery whose most valuable outcomes are often the least expected. This is the seminal idea which has underpinned so much of human progress over the past half-millennium... Bright Future means a welcome change from a direction which was heading nowhere, but more work is still needed on the best way forward.

...Auckland University is... striking up an alliance with its polytechnic neighbour, the Auckland Institute of Technology. The two voted last night to become partners in an agreement ostensibly designed to offer students the best possible tertiary education... [-] students... from one institution would have easier access to the other... qualify more readily for academic credits... and... notice more choice in study programmes... But papers obtained by the N[Z] *Herald* show that Auckland University's main motivation is to protect its status and market share from rival tertiary providers. The papers, outlining a regional strategy, said Auckland University could not sit back and watch AIT win university status and become a competitor – on its own, or with another tertiary provider... [(i)t is possible that other tertiary providers will join the group[-] Manukau Institute of Technology already has alliance status with Auckland University, while Northland Polytechnic has established relationships with both members of the alliance[])... The only other option was to downsize and become an "elite" institution, but that was too risky. Within a year there could be more than six universities in Auckland: Massey's Albany campus, Waikato's expansion plans for South Auckland, Otago University's move into Auckland, and AIT and Unitec's drive for university status. Global universities could offer long-distance learning. Other problems were inner-city traffic and parking hassles that made suburban campuses more attractive to students... The alliance is not a merger, or legal partnership, and both institutions will retain their identity and autonomy. However, they want to see one council run both institutions in the future. Meanwhile, the university vice-chancellor... will head a new board with power to make recommendations to the councils of both institutions.

...*'Getting noticed' secret of success...* The secret to promotion is getting yourself noticed by the decision-makers, even if you are not the most qualified candidate, says a networking specialist. In Wellington this week... [the AUS]n professional speaker with a background in sales, telemarketing and hospitality, said shunning self-promotion was a N[Z] weakness, and a part of our culture. [The AUS]n believed employees should make an effort to go to work functions to get noticed – go early and leave late – and try good old-fashioned flattery with their bosses. "The higher up the ladder you go, the less positive feedback you get... You have to realise that everyone, if they are at the top of the tree or the bottom... likes to get recognition." Making the effort to get yourself noticed would pay dividends. "I have observed that the people who get opportunities these days, the jobs, or the promotions, are not necessarily the most qualified... They are the people who are most visible..." ...N[Z]ers were very entrepreneurial and innovative, and networking could provide strategic alliances for both groups. "It's not who you know, but who knows you..."

...YOU'RE a good worker and enjoy your workmates. Then you get a promotion to supervisor and find yourself on the other side. How do you cope? Do you come down hard to show you're boss? Do you turn a blind eye to negative behaviour because you still want to be one of the gang? Such dilemmas are common, says [a trainer] of Training Matters[who] runs one-day introductory supervision programmes for the Auckland Chamber of Commerce, which focus on people management, covering assertiveness, conflict management, delegation, and influencing skills. But the starting point is relationship strategies. "We are motivated by different things, so each person needs to be handled differently. It is very important to know the person you manage..." New supervisors may have been... chosen for their people skills rather than technical nous... [The] organisational development manager of Ecopine, a CHH business unit, says traditionally supervisors weren't expected to have people skills and some staff struggle with the idea it's necessary. But a good supervisor needs knowledge of the job, coaching and mentoring skills, the ability to get staff behind them, and deliver results... Time management and prioritising are also biggies... Such practical skills are also important because many supervisors feel they're drowning under their work load... "They have to learn to let go. The problem is that sometimes people are identified as having potential, but they're not taught how to supervise." ■ The... Auckland... [who set up the new Internet] site, Staffyourself.com... is among those who have abandoned th[e old]... recruitment sector... model... [in which] a commission is often collected based on the appointee's first-year salary... [H]is... is a database-driven site in which jobs or resumes are posted free. Every four hours the database churns over, matching skill sets to positions and sending employers a shortlist of potential matches... Staffyourself.com also sends out fortnightly e-mail bulletins of what is happening in various industries, so people don't have to keep going back to the site for updates. The e-mails also act as a reminder for people to adjust the database if their skills or circumstances change... It is at the next stage [that the Auckland]... and his partner... hope to make money. While employers are sent brief descriptions of the likely candidates, to get the full cv from the secure database they need to subscribe – \$50 a month or \$250 a year – and then pay a \$10 transfer fee for each cv requested... A dozen employers are using the service already, including a major telecommunications company, a car retailer and a bank, and [the Auckland] is talking to other banks and retail chains... More than 200 job-seekers have registered, despite a minimal advertising budget, and about 40 have found work.

...Several people are sitting in a small reception area, nervously clutching resumes as they wait for a job interview. Time passes. Some of the applicants check their watches. Others drum their fingers. All but two leave in frustration as it becomes obvious nobody is coming to talk to them. One of those left, a young [guy], turns to the old [guy] sitting next to him and asks: "Are you here for the cheese-maker's job?" "No," is the reply. "I hire the cheese-makers." Guess who gets the job? This probably sounds familiar. It was a television advertisement for Mainland Cheese, and it also illustrates values at work in business. The young [guy] got the job not because [it] was necessarily the most knowledgeable or experienced, but because [it] shared the company's value of patience. Values will never entirely eclipse qualifications in such professions as law and medicine, but employers of all sizes are increasingly looking beyond the curriculum vitae and into the soul of a prospective employee... A [recent] survey... found that employers rated reliability, motivation... [c]onfidence... and teamwork higher than... [e]mployment history... qualifications and training.

...WHATEVER happened to employability? A much-banded concept early this decade, employability was meant to sum up the brave new employment deal. Instead of a job for life – impossible to promise in today's competitive conditions – employers would provide committed employees with self-development incentives, "ensuring" them of a job with a different company when the old one disappeared. Job security was dead – but long live employment security. With rare exceptions, the concept has been slow to materialise. "...employability was viewed as a radical shift, but in retrospect it has been honoured more in the breach than the observance," says... [the] principal author of a report titled *Employability: Bridging the Gap between Rhetoric and Reality*. It was commissioned by the Confederation of British Industry, the English Trade Union Congress, the British Government and several leading companies. Many employers, particularly in the private sector... quietly jettisoned the idea of employability. This says a lot about modern management. In essence, employability was an attempt to salvage something from the wreck of the downsizing epidemic of the late 80s. Having stripped out a whole layer of administrative and middle management jobs – 600,000 in the U[S] alone – companies suddenly found that their cost-cutting efforts had resulted in huge hidden costs. Overstretched and demoralised, many organisations

found themselves psychologically paralysed. To remotivate disaffected survivors, companies needed to replace the previous fractured contract with a new deal – and fast. Employability seemed to fit the bill. In place of the paternalistic and dependent employment relationship of the past, it proposed a more equal adult one. By equipping employees with marketable skills, the theory ran, companies were effectively making them independent. To keep them loyal and to prevent them from exercising their new-found marketability, they would have to be given challenging, fulfilling jobs... they really wanted to do. Everyone would gain. In practice[... over a third of surveyed companies]... say... employees lack necessary skills and attributes, particularly in the areas of resilience and ability, to cope with change. This is a kind of catch-22. As the report says, “The skills and attributes that individuals need to cope with the emotional insecurity associated with the concept of employability are not there in many organisations. Yet... these are the very attributes that employability is meant to provide.” Part of the trouble is that managers have consistently misunderstood the scope of what they are attempting to do, overestimated their capacity to do it, and underestimated the cynicism their behaviour would cause. Downsizing and delayering... made the task more difficult. The process involved getting rid of many coaches and mentors who were subsequently found to be most needed, and it increased time pressures on remaining managers. “Senior managers have been reported as following the time-honoured practice of change management, oversimplifying the past, over-exaggerating the present and over-romanticising the future... The language of change management promised far more than could be delivered in the climate of globalisation.” In particular, 95[%] of companies lack the leadership to motivate people in a climate of rapid change. And that holds at all levels. If anything, the report plays down the vast employee cynicism that exists and the difficulty of making further progress on the new agenda... This is confirmed by a survey for the British Joseph Rowntree Foundation. It... found that even though unemployment is low and the economy is growing, employees are much more concerned about redundancy than they used to be – a feeling reinforced by a very marked lack of trust between staff and bosses. The failure of companies to deliver on employability... is now coming back to bite those companies where it hurts. As the labour market tightens, employees in high demand are in the driving seat – and after the lean years of downsizing they’re making the most of it. Managers are discovering that the market-based approach to employment – giving workers shorter contracts – works both ways. Even Silicon Valley bosses, themselves a product of the world’s premier job-hopping culture, are beginning to worry about lack of employee loyalty... So though the word employability has disappeared, the need for a career-resilient workforce still stands. Much will depend on the ability of leaders and human resources departments to understand and harness the forces of motivation.

...Staff turnover in N[Z] companies is generally “way too high”, says an international study issued yesterday. The survey found that turnover in the local tourism industry is frequently above the internationally recognised danger level of 15[%] a year. The figures come from recruitment giant TMP Worldwide’s six-monthly Job Index Survey... It offers the most up-to-date picture of how often N[Z]ers change their jobs... Overall, 39[%] of surveyed companies admitted losing between 6... and 15[%] of staff every year. Turnover of between 16... and 51[%] plus was reported by 19[%] of businesses. In addition, 7.6[%] of companies surveyed had not measured their staff movement at all... [T]urnover figures incorporated redundancies, which had risen in some international companies with N[Z] headquarters in Auckland as the global shakedown of large corporations continued. The larger centres probably also had more job opportunities, making it easier for people to job hop... TMP[’s] strategy director... said higher turnover was expected in industries employing large numbers of unskilled and younger people, as in parts of the tourism, service and hospitality sectors... Of the tourism businesses surveyed, 37[%] reported annual staff turnover above 15[%]. In the health sector... a third of companies lost more than 15[%] of their staff a year. In IT, advertising and marketing, nearly a quarter of companies reported staff turnover above that level... [Other i]ndustries with turnover above 15[% are]... Financial services... Telecomms... Media... Government... Food... Legal...

N[Z]ers love to shop and we have the sales assistants to prove it. A snapshot of life in N[Z from the] last... Census reveals that “sales assistants” outnumber all other occupational categories. The 85,530 total is around 30,000 more than the number of general clerks (55,311) and nearly twice as many as the 43,077 general managers... [The remainder of the m]ost common 10 occupations... [were:] Cleaner 32,724... Retail manager 29,121... Primary school teacher 27,522... Secretary 26,484... Dairy farmers and workers 26,331... Crop and livestock farmers and workers 25,920... Registered nurse 25,272... [The l]east common 10 occupations [were:] Paste-up artist 6... Basket and wicker worker 18... Nondestructive testing technician 30... Filtering and separating equipment operator 33... Nonmetallic mineral products kiln or furnace operator 42... Sugar processor and refiner 42... Metallurgist 45... Distillery worker 45... Straddle-truck operator 45... Tobacco product process worker 48...

Pulling the strings Is the resourceful DIY Kiwi becoming an endangered species? [I ask this because] so many people are making it their business to make our personal decisions... Both the demand and supply of personal advisers is growing, and quickly: life or stress coaches, career counsellors, financial advisers, household managers, space organisers, wardrobe planners, performance coaches... there’s a myriad of small businesses cropping up to help you help yourself. What do they all do, you ask? Let’s take a few examples. A space-organiser... will come to you, say, if your office or kitchen is [in] chaos or if you are panicked about moving house. In the course of a three or four-hour consultation (\$250-300) [the space-organiser] will give you a “diagnosis” of your problem and help you to design a system to cut through the clutter. [It will also] bring in tradespeople, order your files, even borrow paintings to make sure you’re comfortable in your space. Next, to make sure you’re looking as good as your newly streamlined house or office, you’ll need an image consultant... Now you’re looking good. But are you thinking straight? Time for the life coach to help you change your job, your goals, or maybe your attitude... While there’s no way of knowing how many N[Z]ers are paying for some kind of personal development or advice, the anecdotal evidence is that it’s rising quickly and... [the people] who use s[uch] services... tend to be cash-rich and time-poor, aged 30 or 40... Less than a generation ago, such services would not only have been rarer than excess pounds on a personal trainer, they would have been scoffed at. It’s all American mumbo-jumbo, dad would have grumbled... But there’s a muddle of paradoxes here: people seeking to simplify their lives by hiring more people and seeking more information; adding another appointment to their list of commitments because they’re so busy; bringing in a stranger to gain more control over their own life. To extend [a British author]’s thesis, they buy further into the ergonarchy as a means of fending it off... – “the ergonarchy: rule by a work ethic closely entwined with a consuming duty.” Writing in the *New Statesman*, [the author] argues: “Where once we worked in order to make things, and thus keep warm and fed, now we work in order to earn, and earn in order to spend in order to work. We live longer and healthier lives, but not necessarily in tranquillity and contentment.”

...Doll creator’s career doesn’t seem like work... [Her] job is all about “playful spontaneity”... The Te Henga resident... spends her time making dolls and dressing them up to look pretty or handsome... – each with a unique appearance. “They don’t seem to have a point, but people seem to love them,”... says[the person who] has been making dolls for 10 years and was pleased to discover [it] could turn her hobby into a career... [The Te Henga resident, who estimates it] has made a few hundred dolls, many of which have won national awards... creates all her dolls... and spends up to a month on each. A lot of time is spent making sure the designs are foolproof[because the doll-maker]... also teaches people in classes throughout the world, and over the internet, how to do the same. “It seems to attract weavers, knitters, painters, dress makers and quiltmakers. A lot of people can’t sew. They just like making silly people,” says the mother of two. “Some days I think this can’t be work – I’m having too much fun,”...

If the prospect of another day at work is depressing, some consolation comes from scientists, who have found that sad workers make better employees. Overturning years of popular belief that happy workers are the best workers, the finding could spell an end to the corporate culture of treating workers well to ensure they are productive... [P]sychologists at the University of Alberta in Canada, found sad people made fewer mistakes and devoted more energy to their work than their happier colleagues. This is because happy people devoted a considerable amount of their energy and attention to maintaining their cheerfulness, [one psychologist] said. “The happy workers were more likely to think of their work as something that might damage their happy mood. But sad people devote more energy to their work in order to distract themselves from their sad feelings.”

...I live in an area considered to be family-oriented and affluent – there are nice houses, boats and... cars, and the residents have holiday houses, overseas trips and... [kids] in private schools. Therefore I can't help wondering why the wives complain about their lot and talk about returning to the workforce "for something to do"... I take my carless neighbours shopping and do voluntary work, which I enjoy. Surely these bored housewives could do likewise for the less fortunate, and let someone else work who needs the income. Perhaps then they will realise just how lucky they are.

...[a] Tauranga couple... are happy their intellectually handicapped son... aged 27, can come home at last. The[y]... have won a long battle with "the system" to win a precedent-setting ruling by the independent Complaints Review Tribunal that they can apply for the paid position of caregivers... With three school-aged children to support, they cannot afford to live on one wage... They knew the decision would be trendsetting, possibly opening the floodgates for relatives of other disabled people around the country, but say "our son drove us". For nearly 20 years, the[y]... have argued that the best place for [their son] is at home, where [it] is loved and secure. It is discriminatory, they believe, to pay strangers to be caregivers for the disabled yet expect families to do the same work for free. With an elder son – three younger siblings were born several years later – the [couple] looked after... their... intellectually impaired... son... until... [it] was eight. But the 24-hour seven-day a week demands took their toll, and they reluctantly let their son go to an IHC hostel. From age 14, [their son] was in a contract board situation with paid caregivers. It has been an unhappy saga for both [the son] and his parents, who claim their gentle son has been the victim of prejudice, greed and selfishness... Over the years, [their son] has always come home for part of each week and for holidays and special occasions. But the funding available for outsiders to look after him stops when their son crosses their doorstep. [The mother], a registered nurse, says the child with a disability has specific needs regardless of who looks after him... Earlier this year, [the mother] wrote and published a book – *Kids for Sale*, – ...which highlights the difficulties experienced by families caring for disabled loved ones and the alienation they can suffer from authorities who "know best" for [NZ's intellectually impaired kids]. The title reflects the [couple's] view of the financial exchange which goes with [their son] to caregivers outside his family. Now they are "ecstatic" the Complaints Review Tribunal has ruled in their favour. It is a relief, they say, to know they were morally right in their battle...

YOU MIGHT think living with a disability is tough. Try working with a disability. Even worse, try not working with a disability... Of all patients that pass through ACC's services, a mere 17[%] with spinal cord injury get back to meaningful work. And those whose disability is the result of an accident and comes under ACC are the lucky ones. Anyone born with a congenital condition like spina bifida or cerebral palsy gets much less assistance and funding – and the Government and judiciary justify such distinctions despite the Bill of Rights... [Someone who] spent 14 years running the NZ Spina Bifida Society... has spent the year working with some severely disabled children who see her as a role model... [-] a disabled person active in the workforce, living an independent life and making a valuable contribution to society. However the recessionary slashing and burning has cut into the education sector and [her] job will come to an end at Easter... [It] must now join thousands of others struggling to find work in a contracting job market. And for her, the struggle is harder because of the way people see her disability... [It]'s seeking work now.

...An Auckland organisation that finds work for the disabled has already placed staff with 100 companies, but needs more firms to hire 400 people still looking for work. Workforce Personnel has found jobs for the disabled since 1991. Its clients include people with physical and intellectual disabilities as well as those who are deaf or blind. Several companies, including NZ Post, Adventure Cycles and Hunza Productions, have taken on staff – some as many as nine... One company that has a firm commitment to employing disabled workers is Bluebird, which initiated Project Blue to create positions specifically for the new employees. Over the past few years, Bluebird has hired five people through Workforce... Bluebird[']s human resources manager... says Project Blue... began in 1995 after a mother approached the company to find work for her disabled son. "...it's certainly not a charity. Our Project Blue team have to make a worthy contribution to the business, and they are doing that very well."

...Disabled workers... are dismayed that... Workforce Industries... is considering laying off... the least productive of its 200 or so workers. It blames financial woes and a claimed lack of subsidies earmarked by the Government to make up for the planned repeal of a law sparing it... from paying the statutory minimum wage to... people with disabilities... [In related news, b]eneficiaries will have their payments docked if they turn up even 15 minutes late for jobs under the work-for-the-dole[(or community wage)] scheme that starts next week. Sanctions will also apply against beneficiaries who fail to answer questions, fail to cooperate or who walk out of interviews with Department of Work and Income officials... Although the Government had the authority to impose... penalties, questions remained about whether the scheme was forced labour and broke conventions of the International Labour Organisation. "The difficulty everyone is having is defining whether this is akin to a Chinese forced labour camp[,...]... Labour's employment spokes[person said yesterday, adding that] dependent children were unfairly punished by benefit sanctions... Beneficiaries who take part in the community wage will be entitled to \$21 extra a week, and up to a further \$20 a week for costs.

...THE GOVERNMENT has been battling over multi-million dollar funding for a new super department running the work-for-the-dole scheme just days out from its launch. A funding package for the new Work and Income Department is expected to go to Cabinet for approval at the 11th-hour tomorrow. Cabinet ministers will also be told the final set-up costs for the new department, estimated to be around \$70 million, including capital costs. Beehive sources close to [the]Associate Social Services Minister... said the demoted Employment Minister had still been negotiating funding for the new department late last week. "There's a scramble for funding at the moment. The money's been allocated but everything has been rethought because of the economic situation." The department will bring together the Employment Service, Income Support and Community Employment Group, which together have operating budgets of around \$600[m ('the restructuring is expected to create annual savings of \$20m')].

...Work and Income N[Z (your 'one-stop shop for all unemployment and beneficiary needs')] has been criticised for spending \$79,000 on designing a new corporate wardrobe and glossy brochure detailing it.

...[Winz's] chief executive... has called in two public relations firms, a private eye and a firm of business consultants to investigate and manage the fallout from allegations of overspending on staff training. [The CEO wouldn't] reveal what this advice is costing, but said some figures might be available later... Industry sources said public relations consultants in Wellington were normally charged out at \$200 to \$300 an hour, although some cost more. "It's the Government gravy train which drives prices up to that level," said one... Meanwhile, figures supplied by Winz show it has budgeted \$538,000 for internal conferences and seminars this financial year. They include \$154,000 for a three-day, 130-person national managers conference due to be held this month but postponed six weeks... The internal conferences budget did not include the June 3-4 Wairakei managers' training course, for which \$165,000 was spent on charter flights. [The CEO] said that course was part of an overall staff training budget of \$4.8 m... "We are a new organisation. We have enormous training requirements." Winz has asked the Auditor-General to investigate the charter flight issue. The ministers responsible for Winz... have asked the State Services Commission to review [the CEO]'s performance in light of the affair.

...Taxpayer-funded compensation for a suspended [Winz] manager may exceed the... bill for charter flights that triggered the controversy. The manager... resigned and is suing Winz for unjustified, constructive dismissal... The Employment Court could grant up to 18 months' lost wages and about \$50,000 for humiliation if Winz lost the case. In her letter of resignation, [the manager says it] has no chance of a fair hearing from Winz because [the CEO]... would make the final decision on her fate. "You have a clear interest in the matter, your recollection of events and of your own actions, conduct, comments and instructions to me is in important respects totally different from mine,"... said... her letter... Given claims that [the manager had misled the CEO], there was no basis on which [it] could trust the Winz boss to be impartial. "You have tried to make me a scapegoat for the failings of the organisation, and... been unrestrained in your efforts to do so,"... [Her lawyer said his client] wanted a mediating member of the Employment Tribunal to carry out the investigation. [The CEO claims it only] approved \$126,000 of the cost of... [the] charter flights... Meanwhile, a State Services Commission review of [the CEO]'s performance in the affair is due to go to the Government on Monday and be made public on Tuesday... [The]State Services Commissioner... had hoped to look at a separate Audit Office report first, but that is expected to take

several weeks to complete. An interim Winz report on the issue, given to ministers, suggests that \$65,000 more than the going rate was paid for the charters.

...[WINZ] is under fire for spending up large again – this time on office furniture. WINZ has called for tenders from furniture manufacturers to create “a set of furniture that will take WINZ into the future using the most ergonomic technology available.” [A]Labour MP... said it was another case of WINZ having wrong priorities... WINZ has already spent a “massive amount” on new furniture and refitting its offices... “They should be putting more money into frontline staff and better support for N[Z]ers on the edge of survival.” ...[a WINZ spokesperson] refused to answer questions about whether the furniture was a waste of taxpayers’ money... [In another development, the] State Services Commissioner... has censured the W[INZ] head over the... \$165,000 [that]was spent chartering planes to take staff to a conference.

...A senior [Winz] manager, suspended after the department spent \$165,000 on charter flights for staff, has received a secret out-of-court settlement understood to include an apology and a big cash payout. But the *Herald* is not allowed to name the manager because [it] has had her name suppressed... [(however, if you want to know her name, refer to *Herald* articles published on the 19th of last month, and 22nd + 31st of the previous month).] A source told the *Herald* that the... package, reached after mediation, [was for over]... \$100,000. But this could not be confirmed. The former manager’s lawyer... declined to comment... [The new] Social Services Minister... last night confirmed that a settlement had been reached... [but] understood there was a strict confidentiality clause that prevented his disclosing the details... [before adding that, “I] will not be tolerating waste and sloppiness at the top of Government agencies.” [The former]Social Services Minister... denied knowledge of any settlement... The Crown Law Office had advised that a settlement would be appropriate, but [the former minister] had not been asked to sign a deal, which would have been required had it involved as much as \$100,000... [Winz’s CEO] refused to release information about the case, saying the manager’s privacy had to be protected. Two investigations into events surrounding the Taupo staff conference and the charter flights... failed to find specific fault... Rather, it was the result of a series of miscommunications and mistakes. After a separate probe, [the]State Services Commissioner... docked some of [the CEO’s] \$37,500 performance bonus. But... stopped short of blaming anyone... Four days... [ago Labour’s spokesperson] on social services, revealed another bungled dismissal of a Winz executive that had led to a \$100,000 payment. It was later repaid because the amount exceeded [the CEO’s] authority, but was replaced with a compensation package worth \$110,000, including \$50,000 in cash and six months’ paid study leave.

...Lectures have started for tertiary students but thousands are still waiting on Winz for their student loans before they can officially enrol. Universities and polytechnics are doing their best for students – enrolling them anyway and providing emergency grants and loans – but students and staff are angry the year has started in chaos. [One student], aged 20, who is studying at both Auckland University and Unitec, has heard nothing from Winz since last week when the agency told her [to]... expect her loan within two days. [The 20-year-old] has phoned Winz twice a week since January, each call usually involving 15 minutes on hold, and has replied to several requests for more information, including two for her signature. [The 20-year-old] was supporting herself in the meantime with part-time work, but two friends had pulled out of plans to study this year after battling to get an allowance and loan for the second year running. “They just got sick of it and decided to work instead... It’s mayhem. You can understand why people miss out on an education because they can’t be bothered going through all this.” Winz[’s spokesperson]... said many students had not yet returned to study, and so were not due to be paid. “Student allowance payments and the living cost component of a student loan are paid in arrears and a student is not entitled to receive their first regular payment until their second week of study,”... it took at least three weeks to pay out a loan after the student had applied for it, including the seven-day “cooling off” period, required by the Credit Contracts Act. This time frame depended on there being no delays from any of the parties involved: Winz, the student and the institution. The... Social Services and Tertiary Education Minister... said yesterday that goodwill by some institutions had minimised loans problems... but... some institutions were going to get nervous if the fees money did not come through soon... [Incidentally, Winz – which ‘spent \$150,000 on its own inquiry’ into the charter flights for staff debacle – has] sent a letter to a dead... [person demanding it] pay back \$21.69 for a superannuation payment covering the day after his death. The [dead person]’s daughter... was dumbfounded by the letter. Winz has since apologised and launched an investigation.

...A[senior] state sector chief executive has called on his fellow public servants to get back to basics and regain the trust of N[Z]ers. The] Secretary for Justice... said a series of controversies, culminating in the Winz debacle, had shaken public confidence in the new era public service. “Public servants aren’t readily able to give voice to it, but they are also concerned. I think there’s a deep sense of unease, at chief executive level, at second tier level, right down to junior civil servants who have only ever worked under the new system... It is critical that leaders in the public sector demonstrate they have a real grip on the basics. That means going back to the basic values and ethics of public service.” ...[the secretary] agreed to comment after a request by the *Sunday Star-Times* to [the]State Services Commissioner... to nominate a chief executive to talk about the public service response to the unprecedented censure of [the]Winz chief executive... last week. [Winz’s CEO] was publicly caned by [the commissioner] for her department’s chartering of an aircraft to take staff to a training course at Wairakei, a training exercise which cost a total of \$325,000. The... reprimand was a new low for the public service after an already bad 12 months. State sector credibility has taken a severe battering from recent events such as... alleged heavy-handedness by the IRD, a series of golden handshakes, questions over lavish expenditure in... government agencies, and corruption prosecutions last year for IRD and employment staff for selling client information... “People are asking the question, have the state sector reforms somehow loosened the strings too much?” ...The new system allowed risk-taking by [CEOs], but the price to be paid was sometimes mistakes would be made. “If you say we’re not prepared to tolerate risk of anything ever going wrong, then you end up with a colourless, grey, do-nothing public service, which really only exists to manipulate the rule books and never deliver anything,”... The new state sector had strong financial rules, which made it easier to identify who was accountable and to sheet that responsibility home, as had happened in the case of [Winz]...

Do you receive a Community Wage, Independent Youth Benefit, Widows Benefit or Domestic Purposes Benefit, or are you the partner of someone who is receiving an Invalids Benefit, Emergency Benefit or Community Wage? If you are, you’ll probably have a Job Seeker Contract with [Winz] that sets out your obligations as a job-seeker... From July 1... your Job Seeker Contract will be replaced by your own Job Seeker Agreement. If you have job seeker obligations as part of your benefit, you’ll need to develop and sign a J[SA] with your Case Manager. Your J[SA] will set out your obligations as a job seeker, such as being available to look for work and coming in for interviews with us when we ask you to. Also, if you’re offered a suitable job, we’ll expect you to take it... If... you fail to meet your job obligations without a good and sufficient reason your benefit will be suspended until you meet your obligations. On your third failure, your benefit could be stopped for 13 weeks. For people receiving a benefit at the married or sole parent rate, the suspension or cancellation will only apply to half of the total benefit payment. The new system is designed to encourage you to meet your obligations... to find a job... Our job is to help your find work, and to provide income support to people who... are unable to work. These changes help us to do that by putting more emphasis on activities that... best suit... your situation.

...Combating crime is all in a day’s stroll for the... Waitakere City Wardens. The... 11-strong team that voluntarily walks the streets and car parks to act as security for the New Lynn area... often carry elderly and invalid people’s shopping, talk to people in need, and do a bit of crowd control. They have no enforcement powers, but can call the police or the relevant authority – and the response is quick... [The team] has started looking for funding and sponsorship so the community service can become a stand-alone organisation... [T]he warden team[are also]... looking for new recruits to join... [them as Winz] has stopped referring people to community work for the unemployment benefit... All new recruits are trained, and some move on to jobs with security firms... With more sponsorship, it is hoped the wardens will be able to patrol more of Waitakere City.

...People are working more hours today than ever before... 21.2[%] of the total N[Z] workforce are working more than 50 hours a week... Long working hours mean less time to relax... The result is... [that t]he pressures of work are... coupled with the... stresses of everyday life.

...The Health and Safety in Employment Act has been in force for nearly two months but so far the issue of workplace stress – the hot issue when the act was debated – has yet to make an impact. What is causing a bit of stress, however, is the requirement for employers to provide protective clothing. The problem is particularly tricky... and... cost[ly]... in industries where the number of casual staff is large, such as forestry or construction...

Workplace stress has become so bad that thousands of workers are presenting themselves for treatment, their symptoms similar to those of psychiatric outpatients, an investigation has found. “This is not a minor worry any more. It can be a serious crisis in people’s lives,” said [a p]rofessor... who has surveyed 10,000 victims of workplace stress across Britain. “The problem is definitely no longer linked only to management occupations. It now includes ordinary office workers and manual workers, too.” In the private sector, employees are suffering from the requirement to deliver higher and higher productivity per person. In the public sector, beleaguered staff are often being asked to bear greater responsibility with fewer resources... Undiagnosed anxiety conditions now cause more lost days from work than complaints such as backache, hangovers and stomach upset... The report suggests workplace counselling can reduce the incidence of office stress by 50[%]... Almost 1000 big British firms already provide free stress counselling services to employees... *Stress beaters* ■ Exercise [3 to 5] times a week... ■ Make time to switch off each day and be with family and friends. ■ Laugh. Life is too short to be serious all the time. ■ Have an active social life outside work... ■ Spend time tackling different tasks during your day, and take short breaks. ■ Learn to delegate or tell someone when your workload is... too much.

...*Work can be as addictive as any drug – and just as destructive if not treated...* A survey conducted by the Institute for Personnel and Development... shows that more than a million workers in Britain consider themselves “addicted” to their jobs... “Work addiction is becoming more prevalent at the clinic,”... [a] senior addiction therapist at the Priory Clinic, Bristol... says, “and like any other drug, it can, if pursued to its conclusion, be fatal.” Addiction often manifests itself in long hours. In the IPD research, one in three of people working more than 48 hours a week, said they were addicted. But, says [the therapist], you don’t need to be working all hours to be hooked. “You may be working nine to five – but if all the time you’re at home watching TV you’re actually thinking about work, you need to think about what that means...”

...*Do we work to live or live to work?* ...These days it can seem quaint to think that it’s enough to do a 40-hour week. Many of us are now working longer and harder than our parents or grandparents, either to make ends meet or to meet the standards of the performance culture... [A] University of Auckland economist... says an attitude shift is needed. “We used to think it was quite fun for people to get drunk a lot. We now no longer think that kind of behaviour is acceptable at all. If we really thought that workaholicism was really unacceptable and sick like alcoholism, rather than worthy of applause, we might get a healthier perspective on work.” Just how out of kilter our view of work has become can be seen in our changing attitudes to childhood. Having escaped the mines over a century ago, increasing numbers of children are now being subtly recruited into the world of work. In the US, many school districts have dropped gym classes and even playtimes. “No Time for Napping in Today’s Kindergarten” a recent *New York Times* article proclaimed... A recent article in American magazine *City Journal* describes the new youth culture, among young professionals at least, as “ecstatic capitalism.” Youth today want jobs with “soulfulness.” Work in the new economy, complete with long hours and a blurring between business and pleasure, is the place to find individual meaning and recovered community in a fragmented world. As online magazine *Ecompany* puts it, the modern workplace is “not just a place to work, it’s a place to live.” ...a senior lecturer in organisational analysis at the University of Auckland... says the corporate obsession with team-building, for example, is an attempt to patch over the reality of declining job security and increased workloads. “It’s a way of tapping into yet another human resource. That term signifies that the whole of the human is supposed to be a resource for the corporation.” Somewhere along the line, the idea of working to earn a living has been overrun. We don’t have jobs; jobs have us. Not since the work ethic was born out of the reformation in the 15th century has so much meaning been invested in work. Thanks to John Calvin’s idea of predestination – that God had already decided who would be blessed with eternal life – it was then believed that success at work was a sign that a person was amongst God’s elect. As sociologist Max Weber explained it in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* in 1904, work had become a way of worshipping God. “In exchange for being diligent and hardworking, we got a sense of spiritual satisfaction, a kind of salvation,” [says the lecturer]... “That ethic has been undermined because people are no longer getting the satisfaction of that cultural side of the bargain, whether it’s spiritual or about community. We’re now just getting consumerism.” ...an associate professor of science, technology and society at the University of Wollongong... traces the trend for mass, non-essential consumption back to the 1920s. Between 1860 and 1920 production increased 12 to 14 times in the US, while the population increased only three times. With US markets reaching saturation, there was debate over whether to cut work hours and so reduce production. “Employers didn’t like that idea and actually argued for ways to persuade people to buy more in order to keep work central to people’s lives,”... In a figure typical of developed countries, the average full-time worker in the U[S] in the early 1990s was working 140-163 more hours each year than in the 1970s. That’s an extra month a year, not including the extra day a year they spend commuting... A[n AUS]n Government survey in 1997 concluded that A[US]ns “endure more stress, work faster and more intensively, and put more effort into their jobs than they used to.” ...In Japan, studies estimate that 10,000 people a year die from overwork...

Japanese lead the way in dying to succeed at work... [T]he ailing former [Japanese PM] represents a culture that has given the world a new word... At the age of 62, in a country famous for longevity, [the former PM] might have expected 20 more years of good health... [Yet,] last week... the [then P]M... suffered his stroke... But as the week wore on, a... question presented itself: not why [the PM] fell ill so suddenly, but how on earth [it] lasted for so long. The background to his sudden illness came out in a remarkable briefing by his outgoing deputy press secretary... who described in some detail [his boss]’s extraordinary work regime. In his 20 months as P[M, it] took... three full days off. During weekdays and Saturdays, [the PM] rose at 6 am and started at the office at 8 am – or much earlier if there was a cabinet meeting to be chaired. Work – including meetings and hosting official receptions – occupied him until 11 pm, and [it] had fallen into the habit of waking in the middle of the night to review paperwork and read reports... [E]ven on Sundays there were visitors to receive and paperwork to catch up on. His last real holiday – two days of golf and relaxation in the mountain resort of Karuizawa – was eight months ago. In the week before his collapse, [the PM] had to deal with a volcanic eruption that displaced 15,000 people in the northern island of Hokkaido, and the defection from his Government of a coalition partner... All P[M]s work hard, of course and [thi]s case would not be so surprising if it was just the tragedy of one [perso]n in exceptional circumstances. In fact, [the former PM] is just the most prominent among tens of thousands of Japanese who die, commit suicide or fall sick every year as a direct result of murderously long working hours. The situation has generated a word, which has been adopted for use in English by the U[N] International Labour Organisation: *karoshi*...

The Japanese Government is aiming to introduce a medical insurance scheme to help to prevent “karoshi,” or death from overwork. Under the plan, people who show “critical” symptoms in four categories – obesity, high blood pressure, high blood sugar and high blood lipids – will be able to have medical examinations free of charge. Those with all four symptoms are about 35 times more at risk of dying from overwork... Some 90 people died from overwork in 1998... up from 32 in 1994. The Labour Ministry plans to... implement the legislation in... 2001.

...WORKERS will use any excuse to get out of being late for work – including the death of a relative. Elderly grandmothers are the most prone to die. “But that explanation starts to wear thin when granny has died for the fourth time,”... says... [the]employment and manufacturer’s union spokes[person, who]... regularly speaks with bosses upset at their employee’s tardiness. “We tell employers to use their discretion if a worker has a valid excuse for arriving late,”... But now new research has found the most common excuse people use for arriving late for work is traffic congestion. A major jam – like the one caused when an ink truck spilled its load on Auckland’s Harbour Bridge last November – set some commuters back for up to four hours. But that’s just tough according to [one]employment dispute consultant... [who] says repeated traffic excuses

would not be acceptable to bosses. "We get a number of calls from employers questioning whether traffic problems making people late for work are a valid excuse... But it's the perils of living in the city really." ...workers should leave home earlier to compensate for any delays. One of the more unusual cases [the consultant has] dealt with was a [gal] who had two written warnings for being late. "The next time [the worker] was more than an hour late... So the boss had written up an instant dismissal letter and they gave it to her when [the worker] finally arrived at work. This boss told the [worker it] didn't want to hear any excuses but it turned out [the worker] had rescued another motorist from a burning car on her way in,"... ■ The... Labour Minister... is seriously considering... proposals... [to give f]ulltime workers... four weeks' annual leave...

Cabinet ministers are being pressured to support four weeks' minimum annual leave... [A f]ormer Cabinet minister... argues that ministers themselves have at least four weeks' holiday a year... [M]inisters spent a lot of Cabinet time planning their breaks, and not supporting the move would be seen as a double standard... But... [i]t is thought the ministers... will take the view that... the time is not right economically...

[The] Labour Minister... and the Employers and Manufacturers Association say that granting hardworking N[Z]ers an extra week's holiday will cost the country \$1 billion a year. That is wrong. They base their calculation on everybody getting an extra week... But they forget that 17[%] of the N[Z] workforce – including the minister]... his parliamentary colleagues, [and] just about anyone else on his high salary level... [-] is already entitled to at least four weeks' annual leave... N[Z] lags well behind the rest of the western world when it comes to holidays... In voting in favour of a minimum of four weeks' annual leave for all, the Labour Party is not buying votes as [the minister] would have us believe. It is acknowledging that much of the wealth is being enjoyed by an elite group in our country [who keep] promising to "trickle it down" to the majority. Give workers a break.

...Why do you get sick when you take a break? ...It's a familiar scenario – you work, work, work and then, when you finally take a holiday, you fall ill and spend the first week in bed. No, it is not your imagination, it is becoming recognised as a real phenomenon and has even been given a name – "leisure syndrome". The heads of the A[USn and NZ] medical associations agree that the syndrome, which often seems to strike its victims on holidays or weekends, is real. It often takes the form of a headache, migraine, cold, flu, viral infection or simply intense tiredness during time off work... [The NZ] Medical Association chair[perso]n... said some people tended to keep up their defence mechanisms while they were at work. "When they have a task to do people can keep their defences intact until the end and push away exhaustion... And then when they stop and are supposed to relax, they are physically exhausted and lose the capacity to ward off sickness." Some also get ill when they finally stop working because they have ignored warning signs to slow down or take a day off.

...Imagine if every time you took a sick day, your boss registered the date and reason you were away on a central sickie register that could be accessed by other employers checking you out for a job in the future. Just such a register has been set up in A[US], and there's nothing, not even our Privacy Act, to stop it happening here. The A[US]n sick day register was launched... by [a]Queensland recruitment company... Employers can register, free, the details of any worker who has taken a sick day and for \$A40... a year can receive 10 sickie reports. "Prolific sickie and compo claimers are costing small businesses millions of dollars a year, and we believe it's time to weed out the troublemakers", says the service's website... ■ The... law provides [AUSn workers]five days sick leave in the first year of employment, then eight days in subsequent years. Canada: Ten days unpaid sick leave a year in organisations of 50 or more employees (most people have sick leave insurance as part of their medical insurance). UK: Three days a year. Any more and the employee goes on to a complicated state benefit system which may or may not be topped up by their employer... [NZ's] Holidays Amendment Act 1991 says that after six months employment, every worker is entitled to five days special leave... [- to be used when the] worker is sick[, the]... worker's spouse or dependent children or parents are sick[, or if it] suffers a bereavement... [-] for each ensuing 12 months.

...A supermarket chain is offering staff three days' domestic leave a year, a first for the industry. The leave for Woolworths, Big Fresh and Price Chopper staff sprang from collective contract talks with the National Distribution Workers' Union... The leave could be taken when a staff member was the primary caregiver for a sick child, partner, parent or other dependent relative... [While on the topic of annual leave, t]he Labour Party is under pressure to deliver more holidays if it wins the next election... Delegates to the party's conference served notice... that they expected the next Labour Government to raise statutory minimum leave from three to four weeks... – a move employers fear could add nearly \$1 billion a year to their costs... But... the Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union, the largest of the four unions affiliated to Labour... estimates the cost of the change at \$350 million a year, or 0.8[%] of total employment costs... Union leaders welcomed the move, saying it would bring N[Z] in line with Europe at a time many people were working longer hours to make ends meet... The conference also voted to bring Labour into line with the Alliance by supporting a remit calling for 12 weeks' parental leave paid for through a levy on employers. Existing Labour policy is for six weeks paid for by the taxpayer... [□ 'Swedish parents receive a m]aximum weekly rate... [of \$1205 (jin NZ dollars) for] 13 months... Germany 14 weeks 100% of earnings France 16 weeks \$775 Canada 15 weeks \$639... Britain 18 weeks \$265...

The long-running campaign for paid parental leave cleared a major hurdle yesterday when [the ruling party] bowed to lack of numbers in Parliament, enabling legislation to go to a select committee. But the big test for the Paid Parental Leave Bill will come when the private member's measure returns to the floor of the House at some point in the next six months. Even if the bill still has the numbers to pass into law, [the]... Government... could employ a rarely used veto, which allows [i]t... to kill any Opposition initiated measure that has a significant impact on departmental budgets. Yesterday's 109-11 vote was a triumph for the unionist and Alliance list MP... who lobbied MPs for support in the face of opposition from both [the Government] and Act. Her measure would allow [mums] or their spouses to take the first 12 weeks of maternity leave as paid leave. The parent would be paid 80[%] of his or her earnings out of a central fund[, although no] employee would be paid more than the average... weekly wage. The paid leave would be financed by a flat-rate percentage payroll levy on all employers at a rough cost of \$1.50 a week per worker on the average wage. The across-the-board levy is designed to prevent the full cost of the levy falling on workplaces with mainly [gal workers. The Alliance MP] estimates 22,000 work[ers]... would be eligible for paid parental leave each year at a cost of about \$110 million to employers. The vote on the bill's second reading was an early but minor setback for [the Government] following Tuesday's confidence vote, which was touted as showing it had the numbers to sway the House... The [PM], a former Minister of [Gals' Affairs, said the Government]'s subsequent support was contingent on "significant modification" to the bill... [The PM] said parental leave should be funded by employee as well as employer contributions[, and be income-tested]. The needs of [mothers] needed to be weighed against the risks that funding leave might cost their jobs... [The PM also] said it was too early to say whether [the Government] would contemplate using the veto as [the PM] did not want to pre-empt the select committee's work.

...The Paid Parental Leave Bill should not proceed because bosses should not have to pay for a responsibility that is not theirs, the Employers Federation told... the social services select committee... yesterday... [Its CEO] said the federation did not oppose paid maternity leave but believed it should be done through the welfare system or some other way, not funded solely through a levy on employers... The federation said the idea that paid leave made it more likely for a [mother] to return to work, thereby reducing training costs for a replacement, overlooked the fact that someone had to replace the person on leave. In response to questioning from... [the] federation deputy chief executive... the... [bill's sponsor said,] "Parental leave is a social good... but it is no more a social good than three weeks' annual leave, minimum wages or sickness and domestic leave. Yet we impose by law the cost of all these on employers." [● 'A poll estimated 63% of NZers support the idea of giving 12 weeks of paid maternity leave.'

...some mothers] are returning to work days after giving birth because they cannot afford to take time off, Parliament's social services select committee heard yesterday. The... Maternity Services Consumer Council, comprising almost 100 groups with interest or involvement in Auckland

maternity services, said... three months' paid leave would free [mothers] from money worries while they recovered from pregnancy and childbirth and established feeding routines. The national secretary of the Service and Food Workers Union... said many of the 23,000 workers the union represented were too poor to save to have a baby and struggled to survive when on unpaid maternity leave. In one example, a factory worker earning just above the minimum wage could afford only one week's leave before returning to her job while her family cared for the baby. Her work meant [the mother] was on her feet all day at a processing stand. The union had tried to negotiate paid parental leave for its members but employers were unresponsive. The National Distribution Union reported more success, with companies such as... Woolworths... K-Mart... and... Foodtown... offering their staff two weeks' paid leave. The National Council of [Gals] said it supported the bill but believed it should be jointly financed by the state and employers... A delegation from the [gals'] section of the National Party's Port Waikato electorate opposed the bill... [because] the group believed one parent should be at home with children until they were 12 or 13. [The group's spokesperson said paid] parental leave was not the answer as it only encouraged [mothers] back to work earlier... The committee heard from 12 groups yesterday. One day of submissions is left next week.

...The Government may yet adopt a limited paid parental leave scheme financed by the taxpayer, but has effectively ruled out employer contributions... [after] the Minister for Enterprise and Commerce... told an industrial relations conference in Auckland that "this is an employee benefit which should be paid for by employees, or at a long stretch, the taxpayer." ...*One Network News* reported last night that the cabinet was considering a \$50 million fund to be divided between parents of newborns.

...The Government is scrambling to head off employer-paid parental leave with an alternative "mother and baby" package – possibly featuring tax breaks, bigger childcare subsidies and more help for new mothers. But it may still stop short of granting any form of parental leave, which is fiercely opposed by some of its own MPs and supporters... The Government – which axed the family benefit in December 1990 to save about \$70 million – now plans to buy its way out of the problem with an extra \$30 million to \$50 million... on measures that it claims will help new mothers.

...[the] Paid Parental Leave Bill offers 12 weeks' paid leave to working couples which can be shared between mother and father on the birth of their child. [But] for families in which the mother is a full-time caregiver at home, the bill only gives two weeks' paid leave to the father. This is discriminatory. It sends a message that those who contribute at home are deemed worthy of little support compared with those in paid employment. Such a message is an affront to a significant proportion of N[Z]ers. Over 30[%] of all two-parent families have mum as a full-time homemaker. For families with children under five, the [%]age is up to 60. The couples represented by these families are not "dinosaurs" as [the bill's sponsor] implies, but have simply made a different choice about what is valuable. That choice often entails significant financial sacrifice. In spite of this, the concept of mums as homemakers is almost totally lacking from public debate and their existence and efforts go largely unrecognised in public policy. The tax system focuses on individuals rather than families and ensures there is little reward for couples who choose to have one parent at home. The earning parent is simply taxed as if the other didn't exist. In contrast, where both parents decide to enter paid employment the state recognises and affirms that choice with a tax rebate and a range of childcare subsidies. This policy is deliberately tilted in favour of both parents entering the paid workforce. [The Alliance] bill will tilt it even further. In view of that the Government needs to think carefully about its goals before forming its response to the bill. Does it want to continue with an agenda aimed primarily at increasing fem[inine] participation in the labour force and which discriminates against [those gals] who choose a different path? Or does it want to help all [NZers] having children, regardless of their employment status? Will it even dare... to provide some balancing incentives and affirmation to [gals] who choose full-time motherhood?

...[an Aucklander] went back to work when her first child was [7] months old. But after her second child, [it] chose to quit work and stay at home. "I just felt I could do it with one, but two is double the load and I didn't want to continue in the rat race." The... mother is one of many who leave their jobs thanks to "second-child syndrome." According to British research, [mums] struggle to cope with work and two children, and instead choose to leave the workforce. A Kent University study... shows 75[%] of mothers return to work after their first baby, but half drop out of the workforce completely after the arrival of the second child. The head of the sociology department at the University of Auckland... says parents often quit work after their second child because of difficulties with childcare... [A] new book, *Three Shoes, One Sock and No Hair Brush: Everything You Need to Know About Having Your Second Child*... says: "Most [gals] are totally unprepared for the impact of a second child on their working lives. It isn't just the cost of childcare, although that's important. It's the lack of time, the strain on relationships of having both parents in work, the complex logistics of working life with two [kids]. All these factors together prompt – and sometimes force – [mums] to re-evaluate their priorities."

...Discrimination in the workplace against pregnant [employees] is rife, but few report it. From workmates' unkind comments about big bellies and raging hormones to job loss, [gals] find reactions to pregnancy overwhelmingly negative, say [gals'] advocates. Although few agencies keep a log of complaints from [workers] concerned specifically about their treatment when pregnant, experts agree that the problem is huge. The Employment Court fielded 18 such complaints between 1991 and last year, while the Human Rights Commission averages five to 13 a year. "It's the tip of the iceberg," said [a commission spokesperson]... "We suspect it is a pervasive problem because anecdotal information suggests a lot of [pregnant workers] experience discrimination and even hostility." ...And as [one]Wellingtonian... discovered, getting justice for discrimination is not assured. [The Wellingtonian] sought redress from the commission after the Stock Exchange terminated her membership 18 months ago when [the Wellingtonian] took time off to look after her newborn child. But her attempt failed when it was discovered that the exchange is exempt from the Human Rights Act... because its rules are considered to be regulations... Other employees who could find themselves ineligible for protection from the act are crews of foreign ships and aircraft, those who work in national security or out of N[Z], and members of the Armed Forces and the police... Parliament's finance and expenditure committee this week promised [the Wellingtonian it] would get a hearing with the exchange... This week, the *Herald* revealed that a [person] was awarded close to \$13,000 because [it] was dismissed from her job after falling pregnant. In two cases mediated by the Human Rights Commission between November last year and February, [mothers] won out-of-court settlements. The Employment Relationship Service says employers must keep a [worker]'s job open if her parental leave is for four weeks or less. If longer, they would be expected to keep the job open unless it were a "key position" that could not practically be filled by a temporary replacement. In that case, the employer must offer the [worker] "employment preference" over a six-month period after the end of parental leave for any available jobs similar to her old job.

...The Government last night defeated an Alliance bill proposing 12 weeks' paid parental leave... [by] 60 votes to 58... but Opposition parties came close to delaying a vote until the next parliamentary term. Labour and the Alliance kept debate alive until [the]Speaker... demanded a vote one minute before Parliament was to adjourn... [The bill's sponsor] said the plan would return under "a new government."

...[the actor] has one Big problem with her pregnancy. Her *Sex And the City* co-star... keeps claiming [it]'s the father. "...and it's causing all sorts of problems,"... Not that [the actor] is too angry with [the guy] who plays her on-again, off-again love interest... in the sexy show, which begins a series of repeats on TV3 on Saturday... Just for the record, the baby's real father is [the sta]r's actor husband... and friends are already putting pressure on him to take time off after the birth. "For the last generation of [mothers] raising children the father just wasn't present and it wasn't expected. Now we expect our boyfriends and husbands to be there," [the expectant mother] says. "Isn't it funny that we can place those demands on them these days? I think once I go back to work [my husband] wants to carry a little bit of the weight so [it] can be counted on but I feel I'm lucky that I'm in a profession where I can bring my child to work. Most [mothers] don't have that opportunity."

...OVER the past few decades, as more and more [gals] have entered the paid workforce, a popular notion has arisen that [gals'] share of the workload has become increasingly unequal. The concept of the "double shift", where [gals] spend their days in paid employment and then come home to look after the family, has become firmly embedded in our thinking. The natural conclusion is that [guys] do not pull their weight and work as hard. Therefore they must be lazy. Yet the Time Use Survey carried out in 1998... by Statistics N[Z], in partnership with the Ministry of [Gals'] Affairs, showed this to be a myth. Announcing the results of this study in May... Statistics N[Z] stated: "Guys and gals] spend about the same amount of time working, on average seven hours a day or 49 hours a week". It went on to explain that "[gals] spend two hours a day more than [guys] on unpaid work, while [guys] spend two hours a day more than [gals] on paid work". Despite this well-researched evidence, the concept of gender inequality in time spent working continues. And the perception of a difference in working time between [the sexes]... is not confined to this country. Recently I presented a paper at an international conference in Canada on time use. I had the data from the Time Use Survey and had looked at the time that [guys and gals] who were in relationships spent working at various stages of family life. My conclusion was that, when we collated both paid and unpaid work, the amount of time the [guys and gals] spent in work, at all stages of the family life cycle, was generally equal... This finding... was not what the conference organisers had expected. They had difficulty finding the logical place or theme that encompassed my research. Consequently I presented my paper under the theme "The Gender Inequality of Work". So why is there such a disparity between the findings of the Time Use Survey and the prevailing popular perception of workload sharing by [guys and gals] in our society? The answer lies in what work we have considered when making the comparisons. Often when we have looked at the sharing of the workload between... [the sexes], we have looked only at certain aspects of work within the home. The opening article on "[Gals in NZ]" in the *Weekend Herald* provided a good example of this. The statistical snapshot stated that [gals] did 62 minutes of food and drink preparation a day, compared to 29 minutes by [guys]. And that [gals] spent 61 minutes cleaning to [guys'] 15 minutes. Yet if we were to choose lawn mowing, car maintenance or other outside work as the only basis for comparison, the figures would be unfairly biased towards [guys]. To get an accurate picture of who does what work we must look at all forms of work across the spectrum and not get carried away with comparisons about who does the washing or who cleans the car. It seems that [guys] in our society are too often seen as a large, slow-moving target and so it is tempting to take a pot-shot at them. On receiving Statistics N[Z]'s finding that the workload between [guys and gals] was evenly shared, the *Herald* ran a story that stated, "Survey confirms what [gals] already know. A [gal]'s work is never done" and that "[gals] spend twice the amount of time on cooking, cleaning and laundry than [guys]". While it is undoubtedly true that [gals] do more housework, this selective reporting of the findings of the survey could only reinforce the public perception that [gals] in this country work harder and longer than their... counterparts. The *Herald's* front-page article made very little of the fact that [guys] carried an equal workload... So the myth of the lazy [father] was perpetuated. What really happens? As an example, the birth of the first child in a family leads to the work patterns of both the mother and the father changing dramatically. The time spent working by both genders increases as they add the care of the child to their workloads. The time spent by [gals] in paid employment drops, while the time [they] spend... in unpaid work rises. But the... [father] takes on slightly more paid work, as well as considerably more unpaid work within the home... While we can all point to couples where... [the gal works] longer hours than... [her partner], and we may even feel that this is the case in our own lives, this study shows that... it is time that we jettison one of our cherished myths and admit there is a fair sharing of the load – and that [both sexes]... make an equal, though different, contribution to the wealth and well-being of our society.

In a moneyless society, parenting could be acknowledged as a valuable job. Indeed, because the early years of a child's development are so important ('the first three years last forever'; 'research shows most kids learn from their first birthday to mind their parents and it is easier to bring about long-term changes in behaviour before the age of 6 or 7 – by the time they get to high school you can only control, rather than change behaviour; yet early intervention programmes are 80% successful'), parenting should be viewed as a full-time job for both parents – unless the child is being raised by a solo parent – until the child starts preschool (i.e., the recommended length of maternity and paternity leave ought to be about three years). It wouldn't be compulsory for both parents to take three years leave, but only an HB would rate any other form of employment above being with its own offspring for as long as possible. If the couple has a second child before the first begins preschool – the sensible thing to do (from the children's perspective, and because it means people won't be leaving and returning to the general workforce more than once) – their parental leave will be extended; and be further extended if the couple has any more children (when returning to work, parents might just do one or two days a week until their youngest child is settled into preschool and they are re-acquainted with their jobs).

Allowing people to leave the workforce for a number of years so they can care for their preschoolers might be a huge drain on an economic society, but not a moneyless one. This is because many of the industries that exist in an economic society would be extinct in a moneyless society, and most of the remaining industries will have a decreased requirement for personnel (especially if technology is used in place of human labour as much as is practical). The extinct types of employment include: accounting, economics, taxation, insurance, banking and associated industries (e.g., credit card companies, financial advisers, debt collection, mints), stock and related markets (e.g., futures), retail sales and related industries (e.g., marketing and advertising), pension services, charities. (Note that financial industries employ at least 13% of NZ's workforce – including 'over 23,000 people working in banks' – and '1/4 of NZers work in sales or related industries'.) Amongst the types of employment which are likely to have a decreased requirement for personnel would be au pair services – only solo parents who don't have anyone else (e.g., the child's grandparents) who can give them assistance with their kids, or a break from their kids, should need an au pair. In addition, every able-bodied adult who isn't on parental leave would be expected to participate in the workforce of a moneyless society – so there will be no unemployed people or idle rich, including royalty (and, because there couldn't be any rich or royal people at all, no one will be employed as servants to anyone who is capable of serving itself). Furthermore, if the world was united, there would be no need for diplomats – NZ alone has '49 diplomatic and consular posts located in 41 countries and territories' – secret services, or any related jobs (e.g., electoral role offices and election officials; political party staff). Some industries could do with an increased number of personnel (e.g., education) but, overall, a moneyless society would require less work to be performed and have a lot more people available to do it. Therefore, apart from allowing parents of young children to leave the workforce for a number of years (and eliminating the performing of part-time work by pupils outside of school hours – excluding personal study, the only form of work pupils should have to do outside of school hours is *chores*), it should also be possible – if the workload is spread evenly among the available workers – to reduce the number of hours each worker has to complete each week. It is unlikely that the number of hours could be reduced to a *one-day working week* – i.e., 8 hours per week – but it might be possible for the 40-hour week ('the numbers of hours worked declined in the US from 38.6 in 1960 to 34.3 in 1991') to become a 24-hour week, which would mean that, for each 7-day period, every worker will literally have one day of work and six days of rest!

A 24-hour week ought to be regarded as an ideal figure – because, if it is possible to reduce the working week below 24 hours, the spare time can be used up by lowering the retirement age, or by increasing the number of holidays. However, if workers only have to complete 24 hours of work each week, they shouldn't need to have more holidays. Certainly, there should be no justification for having statutory public holidays – because 24 hours could be completed in three 8-hour days, or four 6-hour days, or any other combination of hours that suits both the worker and its industry while still enabling the worker to have at least three whole days off each week (although some workers might prefer, and be able, to spread their 24-hours over five or more days – and some might insist on working more than 24 hours – but working two 12-hour days, which may be possible in many industries, should not be encouraged). Incidentally, industries (or sectors of industries) should not operate during evening and night-time hours if it is unnecessary for them to do so.

Four weeks annual leave ought to be a sufficient amount. Excluding Education and any industries that can't avoid having one or more seasonal breaks, industries would have to roster holiday leave so that they can continue to function to the required capacity year-round (if the industry someone works for can accommodate it, a worker could use all of its annual leave at once, one day at a time or any other combination). Parents of school-aged children will have to be given preferential choice when it comes to taking annual leave that coincides with school holidays (but, because only one parent needs to be on holiday at the same time as their children, a couple could choose to arrange their annual leave so that they split some or all of the school holiday weeks between themselves then share some of their annual leave – or take separate leave – at a different time of the year). After parents, workers should get to choose when to take their annual leave according to seniority (hence, new workers who are childless might not get any choice about when they can have some or all of their holidays). Only one of an industry's world ministers may be on holiday at a time (excluding, perhaps, those from the Education Ministry – or any other industry that has good reason to completely or partially shut down at specific times of the year). Likewise, a state minister and its deputy – or a manager and its deputy; an organiser and its deputy; a supervisor and its deputy – will have to take leave at different times (which means that unless they work for the Education Ministry, deputies with children won't get preferential choice when it comes to taking leave if the person they are deputy to also has children).

To enable teachers to work just 24 hours, the school week could be four days long, and the school day divided into three periods: 9.00am – 10.30pm; 11.00am – 12.30pm; 1.30pm – 3.00pm. Between 10.30am and 10.45am, half of the teachers could have a 15 minute break while the other half watch the pupils, then the first group could watch the pupils while the other half have a 15 minute break; between 12.30pm and 1.30pm, teachers would have a break of 30 minutes and 30 minutes of playground duty (note that workers from other industries could take as long as they want for a lunch break – providing that they complete their allocated hours each day, and their industry can cope with staff taking a longer lunch break then finishing later than otherwise expected). Assuming that the practice of including the morning-tea break in a worker's hours remains, each teacher would only have completed 5 1/2 hours work between 9.00am and 3.00pm. However, if each class has at least two teachers, one teacher could start at 8.30am and finish at 3.00pm, and another could start at 9.00am and finish at 3.30pm – thereby raising their daily hours to 6. It would also mean that pupils who arrive at school early will be supervised, and one teacher is able to tidy up the room at the end of each day (or is available to supervise pupils who are performing cleaning tasks as a punishment). Teachers should have the same amount of holidays as every other worker and, therefore, so would children (decreasing the number of school holidays would compensate for time lost by having a 4-day school-week). It would be ideal for couples who have school-aged children if both the mother and father were able to work two 8-hour days plus two 4-hour days (i.e., each week one parent works 4 hours between 9.00am and 3.00pm for two school-days while the other is doing its 8-hour days, then the parents swap their hours for the two remaining school-days, thus enabling both parents to have a 3-day weekend that coincides with their children; alternatively, if their industries enable them to do so the parents could work some 4-hour shifts in the evenings while the children are asleep and one parent remains at home). Therefore, industries that operate for seven days each week should encourage rosters which allocate non-school-day work to childless workers, and industries (or sectors of industries) that are able to operate for just four days – or three days – each week could align their work-days with the school-week. If a couple is unable to arrange suitable work hours on one or more school-days, or on a non-school-day, they would have to arrange for the children to be looked after by grandparents, other relatives (e.g., aunts or uncles) or friends (e.g., their children could go to a neighbour's house, or the home of a classmate which is supervised by at least one adult).

If a child becomes sick on a school-day it shouldn't be sent to school (or should be sent home if it becomes sick while at school – unless the illness requires hospitalisation). If both parents are rostered to work that day – plus any subsequent days if the illness persists beyond 24 hours – and there isn't a relative or adult friend who is able to look after the child, one of its parents (preferably the one with the least responsible position) should be given leave. A sick adult who doesn't require hospitalisation ought to be able to look after itself and, therefore, its partner, or one of its children, needn't be sent home to stay with it.

Humans don't like to be sick, so they look after their bodies, which means they are less likely to require sick leave (but some may have unfortunate medical conditions that periodically prevent them from performing their work when rostered). Therefore, workers needn't be allocated a set number of sick leave days each year – it should just be assumed that workers are being genuine whenever they claim to be sick (after all, people would have a decreased need to 'skive off' if they are working less hours). However, every sick person should be examined by a doctor in order to aid its recovery, and ensure that its illness isn't contagious. If doctor examinations were compulsory, it would be theoretically impossible for a worker to take unnecessary sick leave (note that people who are severely affected by menstruation could receive a doctor's certificate to take sick leave whenever their worst time of the month falls on a working day – although such people could instead have their rosters arranged so that their days off will coincide with their worst time of the month; or, if their industry enables it, take a day off and simply arrange to work on their next rostered day off). When it comes to sick workers the main concern of an industry will be whether or not its operations can cope without them. If the sick worker is only off work for one day, its absence might not be a problem (if each industry was slightly overstaffed, non-sick staff would only come under pressure whenever more than normal absences occur), but if there is a problem – or if the worker is off work for more than one day – its industry could initially check to see if an unrostered worker is able to cover for the sick worker. If an industry is unable to cover for a sick worker by this means, it would need to obtain cover from elsewhere (although some sick workers – especially those who regularly use computers – may be able to perform part or all of their work from home).

In order to evenly spread the workload among available workers, each industry would need to estimate how much work it has to perform in total hours per year, and there will need to be an additional industry whose purpose is to maintain a balance between the estimations of the various industries and the number of available workers within each district. It might take a while to create a balance from the time such a system is set up but, eventually, the estimations of each industry should be expected to become fairly constant (hence, it may be possible to draw up most – if not all – rosters a year in advance). Therefore, when a balance has been created, it should be possible to work out how many hours each worker must perform in its lifetime. If every worker was expected to perform the same total of work-hours during its lifetime, the Employment Ministry would be able to run an account for each worker which opens when it first enters the workforce – or enters a training course – and closes when the worker retires. Parental leave could be included in a worker's account – any years parents take off to raise young children being added to the standard age of retirement (i.e., if, for example, a couple takes parental leave for a total of eight years because they have three children, that couple would be three years older when they retire than a couple which only takes parental leave for a total of five years – or eight years later than childless workers) – but, because full-time parents work virtually 24 hours every day, this shouldn't be necessary. When a worker's account is nearly empty, that worker could go into a period of semi-retirement – in which it joins a pool of workers who can be called upon at short notice to cover for full-time workers when necessary (obviously, semi-retired workers would only cover positions that they have previous experience with – if a district urgently needs to cover for a sick worker or, if necessary, until a full-time replacement has been found for a worker taking parental leave, and none of its semi-retired workers have the required experience, the worker's industry could try to reshuffle the tasks of the worker's colleagues so a semi-retired worker can be used to cover less-technical tasks; or the Employment Ministry could try to source an experienced semi-retired worker from another district). Moving into semi-retirement shouldn't have to be compulsory – indeed, some workers may be more useful to society if they continue to work full-time until their work account is empty. Semi-retirees would only work when required – which, on occasions, means they might have to work a 24-hour week – and continue to be semi-retired until their working account is empty (although all semi-retired and able-bodied fully-retired people should be regarded as a reserve workforce that can provide assistance at short notice during or after, for example, a natural disaster – be it in their own district or another; and every full-time worker may be required to work longer than 24 hours a week during periods of civil emergency – without having the overtime taken off their account).

This type of work system makes it possible for an individual to bring forward or delay its retirement – by working more or less than 24 hours each week, or by taking more or less holidays each year – but that should be discouraged (because doing so will increase the Employment Ministry's workload). However, the number of workers required by some industries may vary during the year (especially where work is seasonal), so some workers will need to work in more than one position, and perhaps for more than one industry, during a year. If such a worker can't be re-positioned immediately, be it in a position that utilises its training or one that requires less skills, the worker should have to take a holiday until another position becomes available (rather than being classified as unemployed) and, if the worker ends up having more than the standard allocation of annual leave – because it had already nearly or completely used up its holiday leave for that year – the worker could have leave deducted from the next year (alternatively, to keep calculations easy the worker would just benefit by getting extra holidays).

Rather than allocate a set number of bereavement days, each worker could instead be able to take a bereavement day – or days – whenever a family member or friend dies but not have it count as a deduction from its working account (i.e., a worker who takes a year's worth of bereavement days during its working life would effectively retire a year later than someone who takes no bereavement leave). By the way, if the Education Ministry employs two or more teachers per class, it should only be necessary to provide a replacement (perhaps from another class) when more than one teacher in a class is absent.

In some instances it may be possible for an industry (or sector within an industry) to say that a worker is expected to complete a minimum amount of work – without making any mistakes – during a working-week, and allow its workers to work at their own pace until that minimum amount is completed (i.e., if a worker prefers to work at a slower or faster pace than expected, it can take more or less than 24 hours to do the work – as long as its work is of an acceptable standard; if not, the worker will have to redo the work as unofficial overtime). In other instances a worker – or a team of workers – may be unable to perform its work due to, for example, weather conditions. However, if an industry knows what the average total of unavoidable down-time in hours is each year for each district, it can consider those hours when estimating how much work it has to perform in total hours per year. Down-time hours should be classified as normal (or official) working hours – but if a task has to be completed by a certain date, and a worker has to do extra hours to make up for lost time, the overtime ought to be deducted from the worker's work account (although at a real-time rate – as opposed to a penal-time rate).

To make it easier for the Employment Ministry to keep work accounts up-to-date, a computer programme could automatically deduct 24 hours from each worker's account every week, and the Employment Ministry would only access its account if the worker completes more or less than 24 hours during a week (excluding any excess hours performed voluntarily), or takes more or less holidays than allocated during the previous year. The Employment Ministry's task will be even easier if organisers were to be responsible for collating any deviations in their workers' hours at the end of each week then, at the end of each year, inform the Employment Ministry if a worker's account needs to be adjusted up or down.

As part of its role, the Employment Ministry could be an industrial relations mediator – although, in a moneyless society, there should be little or no conflict between workers and the industry they work for (e.g., there will be no strikes for extra pay or allowances; there would be no justification for any industry to maintain unpopular or unsatisfactory work practices and conditions), and it ought to be possible to deal with such conflict without needing the assistance of a mediator. In addition, the Employment Ministry could act as an inspector of industrial accidents.

Another responsibility of the Employment Ministry would be managing training institutes. This will enable the Employment Ministry to balance the annual training needs of respective industries with the number of school-leavers. Each district could have one central training institute, and each industry (including Education) can have a faculty on its campus. Placing every industrial faculty at the same location – as opposed to various campuses – will allow faculties to share facilities such as lecture theatres, and even lectures (some worker classifications – e.g., engineer – may have to be utilised by more than one industry and, although some tasks would be so industry-specific that they require independent tutorials, other tasks will be generalised enough for trainees from different faculties to cover the theory together; note that a moneyless society may continue to have work-sites – or work activities – that synchronise the efforts of multiple industries). Some courses might be so specialised that an industry only needs a few trainees worldwide, in which case the tutor could conduct lessons via communications technology (as opposed to temporarily moving the trainees to the tutor's district – r:p1925, ln20).

When working out their annual training needs, industries would have to take note of future developments within their area of work and figures relating to the number of experienced workers who are due to retire (or transfer to the semi-retirement pool, or take parental leave). If an industry needs to have a minimum number of trainees in a course but there aren't enough suitably-qualified school-leavers, rather than select less-suitably-qualified school-leavers to raise course numbers – which could result in having some trainees fail the course (effectively wasting everyone's time and effort) – the industry should look at upskilling some of its existing workers (i.e., a worker who originally was less-suitably-qualified – and, therefore, trained for a less-skilled position – might, after working in an industry for a number of years, have gained enough experience to enable it to complete a more skilful training course; an unskilled worker may perform its job to such a high standard that its industry, or the Employment Ministry, recommends it receive training for a semi-skilled or skilled position). However, an industry should only invite existing workers to upskill – as opposed to forcing them to upskill. If course numbers are still insufficient, the Employment Ministry could identify (with the aid of educational records – which can form the basis of a work record, linked to the work account, when a school-leaver becomes a worker or trainee) workers from other industries who, as school-leavers, were suitably-qualified but trained for a different profession (perhaps because, at the time, the training courses for their first- or second-choice careers were filled with other school-leavers). Any identified workers who want to change their profession (some people prefer to perform the same job throughout their working life while others prefer variety; illness may render some people unable to continue performing their chosen career, but not another) – and who can be spared by their current employer – could then be invited to enter the course. Indeed, workers who want a new job could be placed on a standby list by the Employment Ministry for easy reference. Although retraining existing workers would be the less-preferred option, workers who increase their range of skills will ultimately be more valuable to society – especially when they enter semi-retirement. Some workers may need to be retrained when they return from parental leave (and, regardless of whether they have to undergo retraining, they might have to be given a temporary position – perhaps one that they are overskilled to perform – until a suitable position becomes available for them to fill).

When it comes to placing trainees, those who perform the best should be given first pick of the available positions. However, all trainees should spend a minimum period of time assisting an experienced worker before entering a permanent position. Therefore, upon graduating, every trainee could immediately be placed with an experienced worker, then individual trainees can be shifted to a permanent position as vacancies in their sector become available. If for some reason an industry ends up with more qualified workers than it needs in a sector, and no existing workers (or not enough of them) volunteer to seek a new position elsewhere, the worst performed of the sector's workers (excluding recent graduates) could be dismissed from their positions and, if any of them can't be found another position within the same industry, those workers would become the responsibility of the Employment Ministry – which would try to place them with another industry (performing unskilled work if necessary) or retrain them. Once a balance between the workloads of every industry has been created, there may be a constant excess of workers, which means the Employment Ministry might eventually have a constant pool of predominantly unskilled workers who are sent as groups or individuals to help out wherever the ministry deems the need is greatest at the time (the need having been identified in advance – as opposed to after the fact, as is the case with utilising the pool of semi-retired workers) – and, therefore, some workers might be employed by one industry one week then another the next week.

Even unskilled workers require some form of training (be it just an induction course) – and have talents that are better suited to performing particular unskilled tasks – but it should be relatively easy for unskilled workers to change jobs and industries. Any unskilled worker who wants to change its job could – after first gaining permission from its present industry – apply to the Employment Ministry for a transfer, which would only occur once a suitable position becomes available (which might be to another position within its present industry). A consequence of this process might be that the unskilled workers who are least conscientious or disciplined end up being stuck with performing the tasks which are least popular! Incidentally, most disabled or

handicapped individuals should be capable of performing some form of unskilled work (even if it is just for a few hours one day a week) – and many are able to perform certain semi-skilled or skilled tasks (some might even manage to become ministers) – but some tasks could suit people with particular disabilities or handicaps more than able-bodied people (consider dwarfs – of which there are ‘about 250 in NZ’ – and any task that requires working in a confined area or being able to move through small spaces, or in outer space or whenever low body weight is advantageous; blind people and any task that could be done in the dark; deaf people and noisy tasks – but not if their being unable to hear places them in danger; people with no sense of smell and working in smelly environments).

As is the case today, some professions may require workers to undergo training throughout their career (consider the medical industry). Furthermore, any workers who are promoted to supervisors ought to receive some form of training in management theory (as well as spending time performing any tasks – including unskilled tasks – they are unfamiliar with but are performed by workers they will oversee), which could become more formal when a supervisor is in the process of being promoted to an organiser (each industry will have to work out how they can best access the performance of each worker, primarily for future reference when selecting people to be promoted – or dismissed; each worker’s record will need to be compiled by the person who oversees it, and stored on computer in such a way that the record can’t be tampered with by unauthorised people, while allowing the worker to access the record if it ever wants to check the details aren’t incorrect). However, there would be no monetary reward for being promoted in a moneyless society, and there shouldn’t be any material rewards either – the respect of colleagues and society in general, and personal satisfaction in receiving more responsibility, should be reward enough. Likewise, the only thing a demoted supervisor, manager or minister would lose is the respect of other citizens and, perhaps, self-respect. Assuming the process of selecting people worthy of gaining promotion works properly, there ought to be no cause for anyone to be demoted for making mistakes (mistakes would, however, be a sign that a person isn’t qualified to receive further promotions) – or for anyone to have a valid reason to protest about someone’s promotion (although people will be acknowledged as having the freedom to lodge a protest – and then defend their motives to the relevant ears) – or for unacceptable behaviour (be it at work or in social situations). Note that any worker who abuses its position of authority (be it at work or not) should be demoted to a position which has no authority – at least over other workers – although the demoted worker might have to assist its replacement if the replacement (who would normally be an incumbent deputy) isn’t ready to take on its new role; or until a deputy to the replacement has been found. Preferably, however, another manager – from the same management level or a higher level – or a semi-retired worker, should be found to act as the replacement’s mentor in such instances.

It might be possible to create a moneyless society overnight, but the process would be a lot smoother if such a society was formed in stages. The initial aim should be to have all of the citizens (including children) of a district receive the same amount of money each week (as already occurs ‘in parts of China’). In order to achieve this, the Employment Ministry could use the latest census results, taxation and beneficiary records, company employee records, electoral and school rolls to make up a list of the district’s total population. Once an initial list has been formed, the Employment Ministry could begin to pay an equal allowance to each member of the list on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis (it may be easier to start with monthly payments then work towards weekly payments). Ideally, the Employment Ministry should create a new account system for each payment (parents or caregivers can receive payments for children via one account) that can be accessed via existing automatic teller machines, but another option would be to use existing bank accounts as much as possible, cash payments via the point of employment when that isn’t possible, and have the remainder of the population visit an Employment Ministry office to receive cash payments (alternatively, a combination of existing accounts and cash payments could be utilised until a new account system can be introduced). The reason why a new account system would be ideal is because all other bank and investment accounts could then be closed down – meaning that, excluding any cash that a citizen may have stashed (which could be overcome by introducing a new currency), wealthy citizens wouldn’t be able to temporarily maintain their economic advantage over the rest of the population. However, it might be possible for current bank account balances to all be wiped before the Employment Ministry begins to direct-credit its payments into them. In addition, the use of a hard currency can be eliminated if existing technology is utilised to directly debit any purchase a citizen makes from its account – although accounts would have to be programmed to block purchases that will take them into overdraft. Debts incurred prior to the time of initiating a moneyless society (including those between countries) can be immediately forgotten – as is suggested by the biblical verse St Matthew 6:12 – while shares and other investments would automatically become worthless.

Citizens would be responsible for checking that they are on the list and their details are correct, and the Employment Ministry could be responsible for cross-referencing all the information available to it – including details of births and deaths – to find out if anyone is trying to double-dip or claim for children who don’t exist (or aren’t living with the person who is receiving their payment). The Employment Ministry can punish such offenders by reducing their payment by a set amount, publicising their names to create embarrassment and demoting anyone who is employed in a position of authority. It may be impossible to completely eliminate fraudulent payments, but the situation is unlikely to be any worse than it is at the moment!

The Employment Ministry can introduce extended parental leave and use its account list to ensure that every other able-bodied adult is working. Those who aren’t employed, or who have been made redundant because their industry has shrunk or disappeared, would have to be placed into a new position (even if it is just a temporary position as a labourer or cleaner). Any people who refuse to work at all, or who refuse to work the required amount of hours each week, may receive less than the normal amount of weekly pay as a punishment. The Employment Ministry shouldn’t pay extra to any people who end up working more than the required amount of hours – instead, there could be opportunities to reward such workers with non-monetary perks. Some industries might be understaffed to start with and have to remain so (meaning that the industry has to operate at a reduced capacity, or its employees have to work longer hours than normal) until additional staff have received adequate training – although their situation can be improved by returning retirees to the workforce. Retirees could also act as tutors, although it may initially be more useful in many instances to simply have trainees assist experienced workers – this would help to immediately decrease the workload of experienced workers. Attempts to decrease the number of weekly working hours and retirement age, or increase the number of holidays, should only be made once workloads have become uniform across every remaining industry.

It wouldn’t be essential for each district within a state to pay the same amount, or even to use the same currency (if purchases of services and products aren’t able to be directly debited from accounts), but each citizen within a district would have to receive enough to cover its expected living expenses. Each citizen or family will have to learn to cope with living on the amount provided. The living expenses of a child are likely to be less than an adult, but the balance can be given to the child as pocket-money.

Some industries (e.g., Education) could immediately provide their services (or produce) for free. Other industries would have to continue to provide their services at a cost (which ought to remain constant – i.e., unless shortages in supply demand that a price be altered upwards, there would be no justification for inflation) until doing so is no longer necessary. Each of these industries could estimate what they expect a citizen to spend with them each week or month, and the Employment Ministry can add up those estimates to find out how much the minimum weekly payment needs to be. However, prices or charges ought to be scaled according to importance (i.e., assuming they require equivalent resources to provide, a less essential service or product should not be less expensive than a more essential one – within an industry and in comparison to other industries). If the district has maintained the use of a currency, any money an industry receives will have to be sent to the Employment Ministry (which might have to maintain accounting services to keep track of such money). Industries should not have to charge each other for work performed, and neither should districts or states – therefore money wouldn’t need to be transferred between industries, districts and states. When an industry is able to stop charging non-industrial customers, the Employment Ministry can adjust the value of its payments downwards, and keep doing so until no industry is charging for services – at which time payments can be stopped.

...Hey poor Hey poor You don’t have to be poor any more... come inside...

HOME

shelter, as a habitation for the family group, had its origin in primitive bush dwellings and caves. Its character was determined by climate, the availability and adaptability of materials, and defense against enemies and the elements. The bush dwelling, in its most primitive form, consisted only of a roof made from branches and leaves or interwoven reeds suspended between trees or poles. From this beginning, it led to an entire category of framed structures involving the basic elements of post-and-lintel construction... In cold or temperate zones, the cave was a prevalent means of shelter... Where there were no caves a primitive structure evolved which was windowless and walled with rock, mud, and even ice and snow. The... natural stone or mud dwellings gave rise to the techniques of brick-making, masonry, stone-cutting, and joining, and the spanning of ceilings by various methods... Sociologically, the introduction in early times of stone and wood as building materials required male labor, and the female members of the family group were supplanted as the “housemaker[s].” Until recent times, architecture has concerned itself primarily with religious or secular public buildings. The private residences designed by architects were usually modelled after public buildings and were intended only for the wealthy or the ruling class. With the social and economic changes brought about by the events of the 19th and 20th cents., domestic architecture for the middle and lower classes has increased and become a principal preoccupation of the modern architect, as well as the modern family group. Despite enormous technological advances in central heating and new methods and materials of construction, sentimental notions of individual protection and defense have persisted with regard to the function of domestic architecture. Thus there are still thick walls and a minimum of window openings... The multicellular city apartment dwellings and the prefabricated private house of the 20th cent. have marked the appearance of a new era in domestic architecture, conditioned essentially by the interrelation of economics and industrialization... *town planning* is the physical organization of an urban community along lines beneficial to the population in general. A fairly recent development in human history, town planning as we know it today did not start until the days of the Roman Republics, at which time invading armies would set their camps in the shape of a square, intersected by two pathways which met in the square’s centre. Later, many of these camps became cities...

The name city is given to certain urban communities by virtue of some legal or conventional distinction. It also refers to a particular type of community, the urban community, and its generic culture, often called “urbanism.” In legal terms, in the U[S], for example, a city is an urban area incorporated by special or general act of a state legislature. Its charter of incorporation prescribes the extent of municipal powers and the frame of local government, subject to constitutional limitation and amendment. In common usage, however, the name is applied to almost every [US] urban centre, whether legally a city or not, and without much regard to actual size or importance. In A[US] and Canada, city is a term applied to the larger units of municipal government under state and provincial authority respectively. N[Z] has followed British precedent since the abolition of the provinces in 1876; the more populous towns are called boroughs... In... [Britain] itself, city is merely an official style accorded towns either in their historical identity as episcopal sees or as the beneficiaries *honoris causa* of a special act of the crown (the first... was Birmingham in 1889). Except for the ancient City of London (an area of about 677 acres in central London under the jurisdiction of the lord mayor), the title has no significance in local government in the U[K]. In all the other countries of the world, the definition of city similarly follows local tradition or preference... As a type of community, the city may be regarded as a relatively permanent concentration of population, together with its diverse habitations, social arrangements, and supporting activities, occupying a more or less discrete site, and having cultural importance that differentiates it from other types of human settlement and association. In its elementary functions and rudimentary characteristics, however, a city is not clearly distinguishable from a town or even a large village. Mere size of population, surface area, or density of settlement are not in themselves sufficient criteria of distinction, while many of their social correlates (division of labour, nonagricultural activity, central-place functions, and creativity) characterize in varying degrees all urban communities from the small country town to the giant metropolis... It was no accident that the earliest of [humanity]’s fixed settlements are found in the rich subtropical valleys of the Nile... Tigris... Euphrates... Indus, and... Yellow rivers or in such well-watered islands as Crete. Such areas provided favourable environmental factors making town living relatively easy: climate and soil favourable to plant and animal life, and adequate water supply, ready materials for providing shelter, and easy access to other peoples. Although [humanity] with ingenuity has been able to utilize almost any environment for town living, environments favourable to the production of food and shelter and ease and comfort of living clearly possess advantages for the beginnings of urban life... Preurban developments that paved the way for urban life... included such factors as traditionalism, a power structure, and a form of economic as well as social organization. Traditionalism lay in the acceptance and transmission of what had worked in the life of the group and was therefore “right” and to be retained. Some form of power structure involving subordination was necessary, for leadership was a vital element in urban living... Also prerequisite to group life were new economic and social institutions and groupings such as property, work, the family, a system for distribution of commodities and services, record keeping, police for internal security, and armed forces for defense. New value orientations and ideologies may also have affected the course of urbanization, though their importance is still highly conjectural. There are those who have felt that urbanization depended on a new outlook; it meant people had become more rationalistic (and less mystical); it meant that, for purposes of building, they were more willing and able to defer immediate for more desirable later gratification; it meant more emphasis on achievement and success as distinguished from status and prestige; it meant a cosmopolitan as distinguished from a parochial outlook; and it meant that relations between people were more ordered, impersonal, and utilitarian, rather than only personal and sentimental... About 10,000 years ago in the Neolithic Period, [our ancestors] achieved relatively fixed settlement, but for perhaps 5,000 years such living was confined to the semipermanent peasant village – semipermanent because, when the soil had been exhausted by the relatively primitive methods of cultivation, the entire village was usually compelled to pick up and move to another location. Even when the village prospered in one place and the population grew relatively large, the village usually had to split in two, so that all cultivators would have ready access to the soil... [The] Neolithic... domestication of plants and animals eventually led to improved methods of cultivation and stock breeding and the proliferation of... crafts, which in turn eventually produced a surplus and freed some of the population to work as artisans, craftspeople and service workers... By 3500 BC urban populations were distinguished by literacy, technological progress (notably in metals), social controls, political organization, and emotional focus (formalized in religious-legal codes and symbolized in temples and walls)... Cities proliferated along overland trade routes from Turkestan to the Caspian and then to the Persian Gulf and eastern Mediterranean. Their economic base in agriculture (supplemented by trade) and their political-religious institutions made for an unprecedented degree of occupational specialization and social stratification. From central vantage points, cities already gave some coherence and direction to life and society in their hinterlands. The growth of cities, however, was by no means the inevitable outcome of a succession from primitive life to civilization. As... “Role of the City in Ancient Civilizations” (in *Metropolis in Modern Life*... [1955])... pointed out... an alternative

and, in some ways, inimical type of community had arisen in the steppe-lands of Asia based upon animal husbandry: the nomadic encampment. Like their urban contemporaries, the nomads were no longer “primitive”... In addition to pastoralism, they had developed great oral traditions, abstract art styles, and numerous crafts, albeit no formal architecture. Led by warrior chiefs, these self-sustaining migratory peoples encroached upon the settled agricultural-trading areas to the south. During the 2nd millennium the Indus civilization was engulfed by an onslaught of Aryan nomads, while other peoples, using horses and chariots, penetrated the urban heartland from Mesopotamia to Egypt. In these circumstances of prolonged upheaval, survival required the perfection of warlike arts and predatory supply systems, which transformed the urban communities into paramilitary states – e.g., the Hittite, Egyptian, and Mycenaean empires. Citizenship, though still a ceremonial service, was increasingly associated with the bearing of arms. After 1200 BC even the city-empires (a city-camp hybrid) lapsed into chaos and disorder until the lifting of the Hellenic “dark ages” during the 8th century BC and the transplanting of the syncretic city-state beyond the eastern Mediterranean by Phoenicians and Greeks... The heterogeneous peoples that created the Greco-Roman world inherited a technological and nonmaterial culture from [SW] Asia which helped mollify barbarism and nourish the growth of cities. Their trading colonies, from the Crimea to Cadiz, eventually brought the entire Mediterranean within the orbit of civilization. It was in the Greek city-state, or *polis*, however, that the city idea reached its peak. Originally a devout association of patriarchal clans, the *polis* came to be a small self-governing community of citizens in contrast to the Asian empires and nomadic hordes. For citizens, at least, the city and its laws constituted a moral order symbolized in magnificent buildings and public assemblies. It was, in Aristotle’s phrase, “a common life for a noble end.” When the old exclusive citizenship was relaxed and as new commercial wealth surpassed that of the older landed citizenry, social strife at home and rivalry abroad gradually weakened the common life of the city-republics. The creativity and variety of the *polis* gave way before the unifying forces of king-worship and empire epitomized by Alexander the Great and his successors. To be sure, many new cities were planted between the Nile and the Indus through which the amenities and forms of city-culture were carried back to the east, but the city itself ceased to be an autonomous body politic and became a dependent member of a larger political-ideological whole. The Romans, who fell heirs to the Hellenistic world, transplanted the city into the technologically backwards areas beyond the Alps inhabited by pastoral-agricultural Celtic and Germanic peoples. But, if Rome brought order to civilization and carried both to barbarians along the frontier, it made of the city a means to empire (a centre for military pacification and bureaucratic control) rather than an end in itself. The enjoyment of the imperial Roman peace entailed the acceptance of the status of *municipium* – a dignified but subordinate rank. Initiatives passed to the centre; and, in the east, the culture of provincial cities became imitative, their politics trivial. They contributed little to the larger economic life beyond the needs of their social elites and the payment of taxes; they tapped the surpluses created by local agriculture and trade in rents and tribute. As Roman citizenship became more universal and formal, the idea of public duty gave way to private ambition. Municipal functions atrophied; and, except for their fiscal duties, it was in a passive role that the city survived into the Byzantine era... In Latin Europe neither political nor religious reforms could sustain the Roman regime. The breakdown of public administration and the breach of the frontier led to a revival of parochial outlook and allegiance, but their focus was not upon the city. Community life now centred on the fortress (*burgum*) or castle (*castellum*); the term city (*civitas*) was attached to the precincts of the episcopal throne, as in Merovingian Gaul. Early medieval society was a creation of camp and countryside to meet the local imperatives of sustenance and defense. With Germanic variations on late Roman forms, communities were restructured into functional estates, each of which owned formal obligations, immunities, and jurisdictions. What remained of the city was comprehended in this feudal-manorial order, and the distinction between town and country was largely obscured when secular and ecclesiastical lords ruled over the surrounding counties... as the vassals of mock emperors or barbarian kings. Social ethos and organization enforced submission to the common good of earthly survival and heavenly reward; the true city, *civitas Dei*, was not of this world. The attenuation of city life in most of [NW] Europe was accompanied by provincial separatism, economic isolation, and religious otherworldliness. Not before the cessation of attacks by Magyars, Norse[people], and Saracens did urban communities again experience sustained growth. Recovery after the 10th century was... fostered [by] a new era of increased tillage, enlarged manufacture, money economy, the growth of rural population, and the founding of “new towns,”... In almost all the medieval towns the role of the merchant was central: his needs and aspirations had a catalytic effect and, largely as a consequence of mercantile enterprise in the long-distance staple trade, cities were to flourish once more. Under commercial stimulus, feudal obligations were relaxed and European society was made over anew by the city and the marketplace in pursuit of self-government and economic gain... It was no coincidence that the 12th and 13th centuries, which saw the founding of more new towns than any time between the fall of Rome and the Industrial Revolution, also witnessed a singular upsurge toward civic autonomy. Throughout western Europe, towns acquired various kinds of municipal institutions loosely grouped together under the designation “commune.” Broadly speaking, the history of medieval towns is that of the merchant elites seeking to free their communities from lordly jurisdiction and to secure their government to themselves. Wherever monarchical power was strong, they had to be content with a municipal status, but elsewhere they created city-states. Taking advantage of renewed conflict between popes and emperors, they allied with local nobility to establish communal self-government in the largest cities of Lombardy, Tuscany, and Liguria... [T]he corporate freedom of the towns brought emancipation to individuals... In the 14th c... the urban movement subsided as Europe entered... a period of political anarchy and economic decline that did not much abate before the 16th c... At a time when local specialization and interregional exchange required more liberal trade policies, craft protectionism and corporate particularism in the cities tended to hobble the course of economic growth. The artisan and labouring classes, moreover, now challenged the oligarchical rule of the wealthy... and gentry, disrupting local government, and ultimately destroyed the basis of civic autonomy: prolonged social warfare led to “popular” despotisms and fiscal bankruptcy. Visitations of plague, fanatical crusades against heresy, and Turkish encroachments on the routes to Asia worsened conditions in town and country alike. Europe turned inward upon itself; and, except for a few large centres, activity in the marketplace was depressed: the cities surrendered their liberties and their population. These centuries of decline were relieved only by the slow process of individual emancipation and the cultural efflorescence of the Renaissance, which laid the intellectual basis for the great age of geographical and scientific discovery exemplified in the new technologies of gunpowder, mining, printing, and navigation. Not before the triumph of princely government, in fact, did political allegiance, economic interests, and spiritual authority again become centred in a viable unit of organization, the absolutist nation-state... The virtue of absolutism in the early modern period lay in its ability to utilize the new technologies. Through the centralization of power, economy, and belief it brought order and progress... and provided a framework in which individual energies could once more be channeled to a common end. While the nations stripped the cities of their remaining pretensions to political and economic independence (symbolized in their walls and tariff barriers), it created larger systems of interdependence in which territorial division of labour could operate. Though new mercantilist policies built up national wealth, they did not necessarily foster the growth of cities. All too often the wealth of nations was dissipated by war... o[r]... went to bolster the monarch’s power and advertise his fame; the splendour of court life and the baroque glory of palaces and churches were paid for by merchant enterprise and the toil of peasants and crafts[people]. Only in colonial areas, notably the Americas, did the age of expansion see the planting of many new cities, and it is significant that the capitals and ports of the colonizing nations experienced their most rapid growth during these years... With the exceptions of [the UK and Holland], however, the proportion of national populations resident in urban areas nowhere exceeded 10[%]. As late as 1800 only 3[% of the] world... lived in towns of more than 5,000 inhabitants.

Over 3,000 years ago, the world’s three largest cities were... the Egyptian cities of Thebes (100,000 people) and Memphis (74,000) and the ancient Asian metropolis of Babylon (54,000). One thousand years later, Rome had become the largest city with almost 600,000 inhabitants. By 1,000 A.D.,

the leading giants had become Cordova, Spain and Constantinople (both around 450,000). The first city to top 1 million inhabitants was the Chinese capital of Peking, late in the eighteenth century. It was only with the Industrial Revolution that the process of urbanization accelerated rapidly. In England, the first centre of industrialization, the imperial capital of London reached 2.3 million by 1850... and the incredible size of 6.5 million by 1900. In that year, twenty metropolises boasted 1 million-plus populations, a number which tripled during the next four decades. World urban growth has soared even more dramatically since 1950. Between then and 1975, the total number of metropolitan dwellers in the world more than doubled. Even more alarming, urban demographers project that the 1975 total may triple by the year 2000. At the beginning of the next century, the metropolitan area of Mexico City is expected to be the world's largest city with a population of 31.6 million[(in the early 1960s, Mexico City's 'Federal District – the city and surrounding towns – had a population of nearly 5 million'; in '1980, Mexico City's population was estimated at 16,000,000'). According to UNFPA projections, the percentage of the world's people living in cities will rise from 41 to 51[%] during the next twenty years. The figure was 19[%] in 1920... The world's poorest regions are urbanizing most rapidly... [F]rom 1950 to 2000, Africa will establish the pace among the eight major world regions with a 981[%] increase in city dwellers, from 32 million... to a projected 346 million... By 2000, U[N] demographers project a grand total of 82 cities in the 4 million range, 61 of them in today's [Last World]... Furthermore, of the 191 world cities over 2 million (there were 30 in 1950), two-thirds will be located in today's... [Last World]. Of the 440 cities over 1 million... again 2 of every 3 will be located in today's [Last] World... These burgeoning [Last] World cities face the stiffest challenge of all in meeting the employment and basic service needs of newcomers from the rural countryside... The urban horrors that Charles Dickens described so vividly in nineteenth century London will seem slight compared to the ills that await [Last] World cities in the coming years. - 1982

Every time a census is taken in the U[S], a flurry of attention is given to the shifting patterns of the population. The newspapers are full of stories that detail the number of rich who have left the cities... It seems reasonable to suggest that this natural migration could conceivably be encouraged on a much wider scale to offset the strains of overpopulation. One such concept that particularly interests me is a plan designed to alleviate the living conditions of disadvantaged people in the nation's large urban centres. Under this plan, families already receiving government assistance – such as those on welfare or, perhaps, unemployment insurance – would be eligible for government-funded relocation from urban ghettos to a variety of areas where living conditions and job opportunities were better. - 1984

...urban areas need to be greened and made pleasant to live in... In a green society, towns will not grow beyond the ability of the countryside around them to provide fresh and healthy water and food, recreation, timber and wildlife habitats... Rural and urban communities... are not separate from each other and one should not dominate the other... Greens would maintain... a constant flow of environmental, social and cultural information between them. Towns will return compostable materials to the countryside... The ideal green solution would be for each town or village to contain all the facilities for work, social and cultural activities required by the community, and to be surrounded by an agricultural hinterland that feeds it. All such settlements should fit into the ecosystem with minimum disruption to it...

'If one were to look for the single basic building block of the ecological world, it would be the community'... [T]he 'human animal' has historically favoured communities of 500 [to] 1,000 people for face-to-face contact and 5,000 [to] 10,000 'for the larger tribal association or extended community'... Communities much bigger than this are regarded as undesirable because they cannot be sustained on their own resources... [and] 'it is probable that only in the small community can a... [human animal] be an individual'... Greens (and particularly bioregionalists)... are also likely to suggest that... a federation of communes is the only viable political-institutional form for the sustainable society to take... The idea is that resource problems are best solved by bringing points of production and consumption closer together – we should no longer be talking of producers and consumers but of "prosumers"... though, the arguments that... surround Green communitarianism are familiar: is it practical? would such a life be stultifying? what would the relationship between communes look like? and so on... Similarly... the classic left position... [is] that 'The number of people which can be supported by an area of land is not given by nature, but by the sort of society in which they are organised'... - 1990

Our population is increasing, but available land for housing is steadily decreasing... Home ownership is still the aim of most people, although... [c]hanging government policies and a swathe of new terms... have caused a certain amount of confusion as everyone wonders how it will affect them, their homes and their dreams... So, rather than getting upset about change, it is better to investigate what these terms mean... *Medium-density housing* Mention medium-density housing and watch people become defensive about the "quarter-acre block". Two images seem to predominate – that of blocks of units overshadowing and overlooking their own backyards, and the soulless and endless concrete apartment blocks of Eastern Europe. A recent survey shows that most A[US]ns think they do live in medium-density housing, including 39[%] who live in houses on full blocks! ...Until the advent of the car, housing had to be within walking distance of work or close to public transport, such as trains. These older semi-detached and terrace dwellings, now being enthusiastically renovated, actually provide about 40 to 50 dwellings per hectare, a medium density, compared with the low density of eight to 12 dwellings per hectare in traditional detached housing. With small lots, townhouses and villas, a medium density of 20 to 40 dwellings per hectare is easily achieved. Medium-density housing can be created in carefully planned new sites, or by adding additional dwellings to existing full block areas where regulations permit. In the newly developed medium-density areas, thoughtful street planning has kept busy and hazardous through traffic to a minimum, with many houses planned around cul-de-sacs, and narrower streets that reduce the speed at which vehicles travel. This creates a far safer and more pleasant environment. For most occupants of the new developments, medium-density housing has many benefits which have improved their lifestyles, including better planned outdoor space, quieter streets, better communal facilities and transport and more attractive surroundings. *Urban consolidation* In the older parts of our cities, the population has generally been falling steadily for some time, as families have moved to larger blocks and singles and young couples enjoyed the convenience of inner city living. "Urban consolidation" means the government would like to encourage more people back to the existing urban areas, where the provision of services such as electricity, roads and public transport is already well established and there is less public cost in increasing the number of new dwellings. While many inner-city houses will not be suitable for dual occupancy; as small industries relocate and their larger sites become available, these can be re-zoned as suitable for residential development... *Dual occupancy* "Granny flats" are most people's idea of dual occupancy, and until recently were about all that could be done with the average suburban block. Now in many urban areas, an existing house on a lot larger than 400 square metres can be converted to dual occupancy by extending it either out or up; and on some blocks over 600 square metres, a separate dwelling may be erected... Dual occupancy can be used to allow relatives to live with families in separate accommodation... or to provide rental income for the home owner. The property owner does not need to live in either of the dwellings. *Zero lot lines* This is an American term meaning "building to the boundary", or specifically, placing one windowless wall on the side boundary. Sometimes a garage or carport can also be incorporated, extending to the front boundary. This technique makes better use of space on smaller sites by creating one larger and private side yard per block, rather than two narrow side passages which are each overlooked by the neighbouring houses. Front and rear setback conditions for siting houses may also be varied with council approval, to provide better access to sunlight and giving scope for better design and orientation of houses. *Cluster housing* Generally, this refers to housing estates which have single-storey, detached houses on smaller lots, but planned around additional community open space. The... idea is to achieve medium density while maximising outdoor space through overall planning concepts. *Multiplex developments* Duplex, triplex and multiplex developments are larger houses designed to look like one big house while actually being

divided into two, three or more residences. Larger old houses can be successfully divided without dramatically altering the exterior. This type of redevelopment can be very effective in retaining character in areas where existing houses are large. *Relocatable homes* These are not to be confused with mobile homes, which are like very large caravans. The relocatable home is manufactured in a factory and then transported to the site in two sections by semitrailer. Once in position, the two sections are joined and any decks or verandas added. Internal walls are painted, curtains and floor coverings are installed and the house is ready for occupation. The relocatable home can be delivered to your own block of land, or to a park or estate which will give you long-term lease of a site and additional communal facilities. Where detached dual occupancy is permitted, a relocatable home can be a speedy way of adding an extra dwelling. The house can be sold and removed if necessary, or taken with you to a different site later.

...Facing France's Loire River stands a line of strange constructions cut into the rock of the cliff side. These are the troglodyte dwellings, whose inhabitants "came up to the surface" in the wake of the industrial revolution. People had begun to dig into the earth [t]here in the 11th century, to extract the material for the Loire chateaux and the neighbouring towns. The more buildings rose above the earth, the bigger the holes in the valley became. Today, more than 300 people still live in the troglodyte dwellings. The "troglos" used to be sold for next to nothing. Today, it's a different story – fashion has caught up with the troglos and their owners refuse to sell, as prices continue to rise. About a third of the restored cellars are owned by Parisians, who come to play troglodytes during the weekends. This infuriates the purists. They say the troglos should be lived in all year or they will suffer from damp. If properly heated, aired and looked after, the "cave" becomes a quite healthy place to live in. - 1991

If people will use industrial technology equitably and wisely, they may at last, in the words of... Gandhi, "make... Earth a fit home for [humanity]." ...The centralized management of the Soviet industrial revolution achieved, beyond doubt, its greatest success in the necessary and concomitant urbanization of the population. Between the two wars, the Soviet Union had built nearly a thousand new cities. Their planning turned on a nuclear module of about 10,000 people housed in multifamily apartment buildings. Along with the modest (by European and American standards, minimal) apartments, the module produced the requisite number of classrooms (elementary and secondary), food stores and other consumer services, clinics, public places, and gardens. The land, having no value in a socialist economy, afforded generous green space around and between the modular centers in the new cities... Middle management and blue-collar workers enjoyed approximately the same square footage of dwelling space. By most accounts, these arrangements have been agreeable to the citizenry... In the [most] comprehensive survey of modern Soviet society assembled... the reader finds, that [the] urban population increased from 33[%] of the total population in 1940 to 60[%] in 1970; the average number of persons per household was 3.7 in 1970, compared with 7 persons a century ago. By 1970, 86[% of gals] of working age had... jobs; 78[%] of households had two employed members, and the natural rate of population increase declined to 0.8[%] from 1.3... in 1940... No one, in 1950, planned for the requirements of a [world] population doubling to 5 billion today... [(Editor's note: 'The human population reached its first billion mark around 1800, and 130 years later, in 1930, had doubled to 2 billion. In just 45 years, by 1975, it doubled again to 4 billion, cutting the doubling time by 2/3rds. The 5 billion mark was reached in 1987. However, these figures are only crude estimations based on census counts. Not all countries take a census of their people, and those that do inevitably undercount populations. Furthermore, the migrations of large numbers of people from war-torn or impoverished regions make accurate census-taking impossible. Therefore, the actual number of people in the world is probably higher than indicated.')] Recent projections show the world population increasing to a total of... more than 6 billion in the year 2000. Significantly, they show fertility in countries with a total population 3.3 billion in 2000 reaching the "replacement" rate... – that is, the "net reproduction rate" of 1, at which [gals], on the average, bear a single daughter... – ...during the following decade. That portion of the world population continues to grow, from lengthened life expectancies, for about a generation thereafter to a projected stable total of 4.4 billion. The 3.3 billion is the population in 2000, first of all, of the countries classified as having attained "high human development." These are the [First World] countries, many of them already at the replacement fertility rate, plus most of the newly industrializing countries that are now treading toward that rate. To the 3.3 billion total, however, a significant group of other countries... also add their populations. The largest addition to the total is the population of China... To see that country arriving at the replacement fertility rate before 2010, it must be assumed that the present trend in fertility, fostered by the country's equitable income distribution and its heavy investment in the formation of human capital, will persist. The... projections show India bringing the next hugest national population, 994 million in 2000, to the replacement fertility rate early in the following decade. The growth momentum in the Indian population, owing to the presence of a large number of young people with their childbearing years ahead of them, carries the country to a projected ultimate stationary population of 1.7 billion. That is 100 million larger than the ultimate... population projected for China. The addition of India's 1.7 billion to the 4.4 billion accounts for about 6 billion of the world's projected stable population of 10 to 11 billion... ['According to the 19th-century English economist Thomas Malthus, the lowest level of subsistence is a food supply just sufficient to sustain life obtained by the maximum work effort the population can exert. Malthus also believed human populations are limited by the food supply because they grow geometrically (by increments of 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, and so on), while food production only increases arithmetically (2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and so on). Humans tend to increase their numbers beyond the carrying capacity of the land until famine, war, or disease wipes out the excess.' Yet 'efforts to limit the number of births by contraception and abortion are rejected by large parts of the world. In parts of India your wealth and prestige is measured by how many children you have, while much of the rest of the world is Roman Catholic. Religious practices, customs, etc., have been too much to overcome. But the biggest factor in the current population rate of increase is the fact that modern medicine has vastly increased the number of people who survive childhood and grow to maturity and live to a ripe old age. The story is told of an English missionary doctor who spent years bringing medical care to a remote African village. Before his arrival, only 2 of 8 children survived to maturity. Due to immunization, insect control and modern medicine, 8 out of 10 children survived to maturity. When the doctor pointed with pride to this accomplishment, the chief of the tribe said, "Wonderful! But who will feed them?"] The explosion that will produce nearly half of the projected ultimate world population presently engages the populations of the countries recognized as the poorest and most backward. Among these are Pakistan and Bangladesh in South Asia; Iran and the Arab countries of Asia Minor and North Africa, including the richest oil exporters; most of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa, and the lagging Latin American economies. They have a present combined population of 1 billion... China... stemmed and diverted the pressure of its growing population by locating industries in the villages, by building new industrial cities, and by rigorous policing of internal passports... [but t]he continuing growth, at 1.2[%], of China's one-fifth of the world population has compelled the country to permit its bigger and older cities to grow. Shanghai is already one of the more-than-10-million agglomerations; Beijing is projected to join it in A.D. 2000. China has succeeded, however, in housing its urban populations in buildings that meet its minimal standards, at least, by massive building campaigns. Such campaigns... have not [always] fared as well. In a slum-clearance drive, authorities in Seoul, South Korea, displaced 100,000 households to "replace" them with 16,000 dwellings. Nigeria, in a \$3.5 billion campaign that the country could ill afford, built 100,000 new dwellings, which were promptly occupied by the better-off... The... world's poorest billion people... are bound to procreate and to increase in number. No power at human command is authorized to remove or to reduce their presence; none can forbid their procreation. Their numbers are fated to increase. What the fortunate... people... can do is help them to arrive at that improvement in the human condition at which they will be glad to bring their population growth to a halt... ['To blame the Last World for its poverty and overpopulation is merely an excuse for the richer countries to do nothing about the way in which resources are distributed globally or, indeed, their own population problems. The fact is that Holland is twice as densely populated as India, and Britain is two and a half times more densely populated than China. Western Europe has a population density of 94 people per square kilometre in contrast with the average Last World country of 34 people. The 16

million or so babies born in the First World will have an impact on the world's resources that is four times greater than that of the 109 million born in the Last World. Rather than preaching to the less developed countries about population levels, an examination of the global distribution of wealth would do more to aid the population crisis than all the money spent by the First World on family-planning programmes. The selfishness of the developed countries, which analyse issues in their own terms and disregard global perspectives, is legendary. They should all be considering alternative social systems designed to sustain life for all.' Outside of] the centrally planned economies... [it] has proved impossible... to stop the implosion of... landless people... from the villages into the cities... In the shantytowns that surround those cities on every continent, half or more of their populations live in shelters they have contrived for themselves. People live in these communities without any of the amenity afforded to the rest of the urban population by the infrastructure and public utilities of the city proper. - 1992

Most of the roughly 100 million homeless people in the world are [gals] and children, and up to 600 million live in inadequate, unhealthy shelters, says the U[N]... In its bleak assessment, the U[N] report says 50,000 people – mostly [gals] and children – die daily because of poor shelter, polluted water and bad sanitation. About 70 million [gals] and children live in homes where cooking-fire smoke damages their health. If housing could be brought up to a minimal accepted standard, there would be 5 million fewer deaths and 2 million fewer disabilities a year, the... [UN estimates. However, p]roposals to declare housing a human right are opposed by some [Last] World countries, which fear a legal obligation to house the poor.

...the U[N] High Commission for Refugees[says the]... total number of... people... uprooted... [by] armed conflicts since... W[W2]... is estimated to be... 50 million. [80% are gals] and children, while 90[%] of war casualties are now civilians, not combatants. So who is a refugee? According to the 1951 Refugee Convention, a refugee is a person who: "...owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country..." Debates on immigration at times risk confusing refugee issues with immigration concerns and lead to an unfortunate misconception that refugees are the same as migrants, that all asylum seekers are would-be immigrants trying to by-pass immigration rules. Unlike most other people who leave their country, refugees seek admission to another country not out of choice but... necessity, to escape threats to their most basic human rights. Left unprotected by their own governments, refugees have no choice but to seek the protection elsewhere. As uprooted foreigners, usually with scant material resources, often without passports or documentation, deprived not only of the protections of a government but also of the traditional protective structures of family, clan and community, they are perhaps the world's most vulnerable people... The right to seek sanctuary from persecution is one of civilisation's oldest principles. Throughout history, people have welcomed the persecuted stranger and granted asylum. Better-known refugees include Jesus Christ, Mohammed, Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud... and Lenin. But it is only in the 20th century that action to protect refugees has been organised on a world-wide basis. UNHCR and today's international system of refugee protection were born in response to the suffering caused by... W[W2]... The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, supplemented by a 1967 protocol, is the Magna Carta of international refugee protection. [2/3]rds of the world's states... are parties. The convention's most basic premise is that states may not force a refugee to return to a country where... [it] has a well-founded fear of persecution. Over time, even most non-signatories have come to accept this as a customary rule of international law. Under the convention governments assume basic obligations towards refugees... In general, these rights only amount to treatment on a par with that of other legally resident foreigners. Asylum countries do not have to keep refugees who are a threat to their security. The Convention also excludes people who are undeserving of protection from being granted refugee status – [e.g.], those who have committed war crimes, or serious non-political crimes. The Convention also recognises that people can cease to be in need of protection as refugees – [e.g.] if fundamental changes take place in their home country. Enforcement largely rests on the goodwill of states... In the last 45 years, the overwhelming majority of refugees have found protection under this regime. N[Z] was one of the early countries to become party to the convention, in 1960. There are two ways in which refugees come to N[Z]. 1]st, an annual quota programme provides for up to 800 recognised refugees to be resettled in this country. Resettlement is a valuable solution to the predicament of refugees, but it is a last resort – where it is not possible for refugees to return home safely or to remain in the neighbouring country where they initially sought refuge. N[Z] plays a valuable role as one of only ten countries which offer regular resettlement quotas... [But N[Z]'s geographical isolation has led to it sheltering far fewer refugees than other countries closer to the scene of conflicts... 2]ndly, there is the asylum channel, where people who are temporarily in N[Z] can apply for recognition as refugees. Those who turn out not to be refugees are subject to normal immigration procedures, including removal... N[Z]'s most significant roles in helping refugees began with an intake of 860 Polish orphans and other children... in 1944. The event is commemorated in a plaque... which reads: "You gave us shelter when we were homeless." Since then N[Z] has given protection to more than 20,000 refugees and displaced people... In 1959, during U[N] World Refugee Year, N[Z] was a pioneer in opening its doors to disabled refugees and their families, many of whom had been living in camps since... W[W2]. This initiative prompted the U[N] High Commissioner for Refugees... to declare in 1964: "Throughout the world, this breakthrough of N[Z]'s took on a significance that far transcended expectations. The international significance of N[Z]'s humanitarian action [went] far beyond that of this particular scheme. In fact it set off a whole chain reaction which saw a succession of overseas countries follow suit with similar programmes." In 1989, N[Z] became the second country to set up a special quota for "[gals]-at-risk," in recognition of the fact that... [gals] are among the most vulnerable of refugees.

...Though they do not know it, the... children represent a social time-bomb which Hong Kong is in no way equipped to defuse. They... represent a new wave of migrants, potentially the greatest since refugees poured in... from newly communist China in the 1950s... [The girl], aged 5, squats on a bunk among plastic bags, pots, pans, food and clothes, squinting in the permanent gloom at a book. Nearby, her six-year-old brother pushes a truck along cracks between floor tiles so laden with years of filth they have formed dirt roads... When they first started living... [here] six months ago, the children became seriously ill because the place was so filthy... [T]hey share with their father... a "cage-home," an airless rabbit warren of a room, pervaded by the smell of urine and faeces, up seven flights of narrow, stained stairs. [The cage-home building's rooms are normally rented by guys], most of them elderly itinerant workers or invalids. It is hardly a place to raise children. But the two... children ended up here because one of those sick, if not so elderly, [guys] is their father... The smell of years of uncleaned excrement... [from] the one toilet [which is] shared by nearly a hundred... [residents] is so powerful it hurts the nostrils. Studying is about the only thing the children can do. Playing is out, said their father... because it leads to "trouble." [Their dad] has a deep cut on the bridge of his nose because... [it] was beaten up by another resident whom [it had] accused of "interfering" with his daughter. "I don't like the way some of them look at or play with my daughter," [the dad] muttered giving me a look any parent, anywhere in the world would understand... Cage homes are so grotesque that many middle class Hong Kongers believe they no longer exist. They evolved fifty years ago when the more than one million refugees fleeing communist China arrived in Hong Kong with nowhere to live. Enterprising flat owners filled rooms with three tier bunks, covered them with chicken wire (hence the name "cage home") and rented out the bunks as bed-spaces. New immigrants cannot apply for public housing until they have lived in Hong Kong for seven years, so they are providing the cage-home landlords with an ever growing source of tenants to replace the Hong Kong poor who have managed to climb the rental ladder. [The girl and her brother aren't] the only immigrant children living in cage homes... [A]n 11-year-old boy left a two-storey house in a Chinese village where [it] kicked soccer balls in the streets with his friends, for a bunk shared with his father, an elderly construction worker [it] barely knows. The boy arrived with his mother... who throughout 26 years of cross-border marriage believed her husband was a wealthy [person]. At 52, after years of applying for a permit, [the boy's mum] got her chance to come to Hong Kong and seized it, determined her youngest child would realise her dream of wealth and success... [The mum] packed her things, said goodbye to her envious neighbours and set off in triumph. Now [the mum]

spends her days lying on a bunk in the [gals'] section of the cage home, separated from her husband and son and robbed of a lifetime's dreams. When I asked how [the mum felt when it] discovered the truth about her husband's life in Hong Kong, [it said nothing, though it] didn't have to, the sadness on her face made words redundant. Finally [the mum] whispered "The living conditions are much better in China." Though her life in China was far better, [the mum] is not going[back. Firstly, the mum] cannot go back and admit failure, but secondly, and more importantly, [it] is here to find a future for her son.

...Thirty-nine people have been confirmed dead in a fire in a high-rise... building in downtown Hong Kong yesterday. Officials said 79 people were injured and 39 were still missing. People trapped behind sealed windows in the 16-storey... block tore off their burning clothes, Government radio said. Others tried to jump to safety or were forced to cling to air-conditioners or wave frantically through small vents. One firefighter was killed after falling into an elevator shaft and four others were taken to hospital. The... Governor... inspected the rescue operation and... praised the firefighters for their bravery and said regulations would be tightened to prevent similar disasters... [In local news, the] Fire Service is concerned at how quickly a fatal fire swept through a Howick house on Saturday and will investigate the insulation. The owner of the home, Christopher John Bower, a 31-year-old supervisor, died in the blaze. Three [of his] friends... escaped through rear windows... Mr Bower's body was found in the lounge of the house after the 6 am blaze gutted the modern two-storey home... The fire was initially treated as a homicide, although an autopsy showed no suspicious signs... The cause of the blaze has still not been determined, but a Fire Service safety hazards manager... was concerned about the amount of thick, black smoke produced by the fire, how far and quickly the flames spread, and the apparent breakdown of the insulation material... the insulation... was a new material which was commonly used, but [the manager] would not name it until further investigations had been carried out. If the insulation proved to be faulty, the finding would have wide-ranging implications for home owners and insurance companies...

The Government has backed off its long-awaited plan to make N[Z] homes warmer after being threatened with legal action. [The]Rotorua-based... builder of Lockwood homes, fears it will lose sales if it has to meet higher insulation standards. It has support from the Business Roundtable, which also objects to the planned tougher Building Code. Since 1977, N[Z] homes have had to be insulated to the standard considered appropriate for Auckland's relatively warm climate. The code was regarded as interim but has remained for nearly 20 years. In that time, more than 370,000 houses have been built, many of them in areas with cooler climates than Auckland's. The thermal performance of N[Z] houses lags behind that of most developed countries. Collectively, they put significant demand on energy resources, while their owners bear the brunt of electricity price increases. Houses are usually expected to last about 100 years [(although most 'modern homes have a pathetic 65-year life span')] and cannot be fully insulated once built... Lockwood... said yesterday that the costs of meeting the new standards for solid wood construction houses would be between \$5000 and \$7000. This would penalise Lockwood houses. The proposed insulation standard is not regarded as a radical step. It would have applied only to the South Island and the North Island's central plateau, leaving unaffected many North Island areas that are cooler than Auckland. Officials from the Building Industry Authority who did the preparatory work for the new standard, sent it to the... Department of Internal Affairs... for Government approval. The Minister of Energy... revealed in answer to a written parliamentary question this month that... [Lockwood] lobbied intensively against the standard, sending copies of its objections not only to the authority [and himself] but also to... the Minister of Finance... and Minister of Commerce... [The Finance minister] accepted the advice of his department and sent the matter back to the authority and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority, asking whether they had taken into account the issue of "embodied energy" when looking at the requirement for homes to be energy-efficient. That would mean considering not only the amount of energy required to heat a house during its lifetime, but the amount of energy it takes to build it to the higher insulation standard. One of the officials who worked on the standard, the authority's technical adviser... said... energy savings over the life of a house would be many times the extra energy used building it to a particular energy-efficiency standard. [The adviser also] thought the cost of meeting the standard would be much less than \$5000... [In related news, t]he near-pristine Okura Estuary has come out the winner in a long running legal argument over whether North Shore City urban sprawl should swallow it up. The Environment Court issued its judgment yesterday on the metropolitan urban limits case which has for years pitted Auckland councils, Government departments and wealthy landowners against each other in a battle over development of the estuary shores. The... decision, released after a five-week hearing said to have cost all the parties well in excess of \$1 million, has effectively saved the ecologically sensitive estuary from urbanisation... Asked for responses to the result, which could be appealed against in the High Court, none of the parties would do so yesterday although a source at the Auckland Regional Council described it as "a judgment of Solomon." The ARC... did not win all it wanted, its urban limit being pushed north by the decision[– which also]... allowed development behind the nearby Long Bay Regional Park... But staff were encouraged by the judgment, which they took as sending strong signals reinforcing policies containing urban growth to prevent environmental degradation.

...As do their counterparts in hundreds of medium-sized cities around the world, Aucklanders spend much of their time contemplating and debating the future of their city... The Auckland Regional Authority has a policy of "containment" which sets limits on the outer growth of the metropolitan area, and aims to encourage development to provide the best possible environment for its citizens... The existing urban areas need to be more intensively developed and farms, orchards, bush and open space preserved.

...a district nurse... sits in the sun on her deck. The poplars are beginning to leaf up, hiding the houses that dot the adjoining paddocks. "It's like someone went daub, daub with a paintbrush," [the nurse] muses. "When we first came here there was nothing, just a couple of large farms. All the trees you can see, we planted. It's lovely to get up in the morning and hear the birds." Behind it all is the distant drone of cars as they career along East Coast Rd at the rate of 15,000 a day, between Orewa, Whangaparaoa and Auckland. [The nurse] now lives 500m off it, up Bawden Rd, which connects with the Northern Motorway. It used to be a rough, metal byway. "Now that it's tarsealed it has over 300 cars a day – and we've got a racetrack. I lost my lovely old cat." ...If the area is different now from when [the nurse] and her... builder... husband bought their house and one-hectare property 11 years ago, what will it be like in 12 months when construction of the motorway extensions is in full swing, right on their boundary? "I don't like the idea because we live here. But that's progress." Transit [NZ] has promised... the motorway will be surfaced with a new material that will be quieter. "Once it's in, we'll have a marketable property. We toss up about moving further out. When we came here we were told it was in a proposed green belt and we thought, that's nice. We never thought it would fill up so quickly." THE marketability of lifestyle blocks (some owners prefer to call them purpose blocks) is affected by their proximity to the city and in the north prices continue to rise... [But the couple] don't want to move... They're well entrenched where they are, running a little flock of sheep and breeding special silver-lace wyandote hens. In a paddock close to the house stands the skeleton of a greenhouse in which they plan to grow sandersonia, a South African flower with little orange bells. Further up the road, neighbours grow peppers and aubergines, breed horses or graze ponies. Most have jobs elsewhere. [The nurse]'s equanimity over the motorway isn't matched by her feelings about another project that will also alter the area's rural character. The Rodney District Council has approved plans for a residential aviation park to be built near the North Shore airfield. Her anger is shared by other residents, about 90 of whom made submissions... about their concerns. A mere four or five submissions were received in favour of the project. "I don't think councils are sympathetic to the needs of people," [the nurse] says. "If you're a developer and out to make megabucks, it's a different story." Planning is not an exercise in democracy... counters... Rodney's manager of forward planning. "It comes down to the merits of the proposal and the strength of the arguments against it – and they're frequently weak." N[evertheless], democracy has sometimes worked – or rather the arguments of protesting locals have finally been accepted by local authorities. In neighbouring Okura the community fought to preserve bush through which a public walkway now runs. At about the same time residents fought the regional council's plan for a landfill on the Okura estuary – and the river

has become part of the Long Bay/Okura Marine Reserve. Whitford residents... describe their area as “the lungs of Auckland.” [One couple] bought 4.2 hectares 10 years ago on which they run horses and a couple of cows. They... planted hazelnut trees and a stand of gums, poplars, chestnuts and A[US]n blackwoods as coppice trees for firewood. [Hubby, who] has established a small nursery from the seeds of native trees on the property[, is] secretary of the Whitford Residents’ and Ratepayers’ Association. The country was always a dream for the couple but since moving there they’ve discovered that holding on to the dream has required commitment and hard work. They were involved in community rejection of a suggestion by the Auckland Regional Council in the late 1980s that the area become a satellite city of 90,000 people. They like to debunk the image of Whitford as a playground for the rich. While it’s true that more than a few of the large houses could only be described as mansions, the[y]... point out that the area contains a good cross-section of means and lifestyles. Cities need the amenity value of adjoining rural areas. “For that reason alone Whitford is important,” says [the wife]. Cities also use the countryside as a dumping ground. A landfill at the end of their road takes rubbish from Auckland and Manukau cities. It’s a huge blot on the rural landscape, sited in a 100 year-old quarry, from which emanates the odour of methane gas and the squeak of gulls. It could have seen the country roads choked with a procession of rubbish-filled trailers every weekend – but for pressure from the ratepayers association for opening the transfer station in East Tamaki. This means all rubbish is taken to the tip in large trucks... [T]he association... monitor[s] the operation of the landfill and the quarry and have set up a community trust which receives a small fee for every tonne of waste dumped. That’s small compensation for the occasional horrendous accident that has occurred between trucks and riders. [The wife] describes Whitford as one of the last bastions for horse lovers... They’re proud of the network of bridle paths-cum-walkways which weave through the area. These were first established... eight years ago after consultations between Manukau City Council planners and the Whitford Pony Club to provide safe riding for all equestrians. When subdividing, landowners are required to make a reserve contribution as well as providing a public esplanade reserve along coastlines and rivers. At Whitford, subdividers have [also] been required to construct paths along grass verges... Known as “rotten rock” paths because of their all-weather surface, the network gives access to the tracks that run through the Whitford forest, up the estuary, and recently through a section of land owned by the tip... Manukau City’s senior subdivision adviser, says the network is added to as the opportunity arises. “We’re interested in the long-term picture.” Despite these successes in saving Whitford’s rural character, the [couple] don’t feel their dream is secure. They fear... the decision not to turn the area into a satellite city could be overturned. Part of its vulnerability stems from the poor quality of the land which makes its farms of relatively low productivity: urban sprawl has generally tried to spare the richer, food-producing soils.

...AUCKLAND’S rapid population growth is having an effect on other parts of the country, with many people leaving the city to return home to look for jobs and better lifestyles. Latest statistics show that Auckland now... contains 29.3% of the total population[, or]... almost 1.1 million people, up nearly 120,000 on the 1991 census. But Northland’s population has grown significantly too, up 9.3% to 139,000, arresting the drift south during the 1960s, ’70s and ’80s when many people went to Auckland in search of work... Canterbury’s population was up 31,553, to take it to 477,667, and... Wellington’s region has moved slightly, up 9693 to 412,585... Auckland University’s geography department says... finance was... likely to be a factor for people moving out of Auckland. “Particularly people who might be thinking of retirement. They can sell their property in Auckland and go somewhere cheaper, like Canterbury or the Bay of Plenty and have money for retirement,”... Others, particularly beneficiaries, are also leaving big cities for cheaper accommodation in rural areas... It is the opposite in places like Southland, South Waikato, Kawerau and Taranaki, the only regions to have lost population. Traditionally, people have always moved north from Southland for career opportunities, but the 5.3% drop in population in Invercargill, and the 4.8% drop in nearby Gore between 1991 and 1996 – a total of 3100 people – is worrying community leaders. When people go, money goes and the economy... spiral[s] downwards... “It’s all about jobs. If they’re not here then people will leave... the area,”... said... [the chief] executive of the Invercargill City Council... Canterbury University [confirmed that] the main problem with declining populations was that they tended to snowball. “There is a tendency for the younger group, those in the 25 to 30 age group, to migrate to A[US] or the North Island so that impacts on the growth potential for the area they lived in, and of course increases it for the area they are going to,”... ● [Auckland now has approximately the same population as Adelaide (1,080,972), while the populations of]... Perth... Brisbane... Melbourne... [and Sydney have risen to] 1,262,569... 1,489,069... 3,218,051 [and 3,772,700 respectively]...

There are now thirty cities of more than ten million people each... [Incidentally,] China’s population hit 1.2112 billion at the end of 1995 and could jump to 1.3 billion at the end of the century if families defy a strict one-couple, one-child family planning policy, officials say.

...While the most populous parts of China are governed by the one-child policy, some regions of China allow couples to have two. But authorities in Hainan Island province called a halt recently when it was revealed that [one citizen] and his wife had had children in 1982, 1986 and 1989. [The citizen] was once honoured as one of the “top 10 outstanding youths” in the province, and has since gone on to become chair[person] of a large state-owned company on the island. [The chairperson] had managed to keep the size of his family a secret for several years by telling anyone who asked that the third child was in fact the second. The province’s Family Planning Bureau had written to the Communist Youth League, strongly recommending that it erases[the] record of his “outstanding youth” title and expels him from his post.

...because of unavailability of contraceptives and exclusion of [gals] from decision-making at least a quarter of today’s pregnancies are definitely unwanted by the pregnant, according to the World Health Organization. Well, the equivalent of under a month’s global expenditure on armaments could make contraception available to everyone. Television soap operas in Brazil, showing families as typically small and happy but sometimes large and miserable, have been encouragingly effective[at lowering fertility rates], and... governments have had some success by combinations of reward and punishment. Despite the indignation expressed by Westerners at its population-control programme of 1975-7 – sterilization was officially compulsory for one of the parents in each family that had three children, while tiny rewards were given for other sterilizations – India is still offering its citizens cash for voluntarily ending their reproductive lives. The amount involved, so few rupees that they couldn’t buy [\$20], is accepted surprisingly often. In China a more draconian ‘one child only’ policy, backed by losses of benefits, by fines and by compulsory sterilizations, forced fertility downwards to almost the replacement rate. The cost in human misery was immense, but constant famine could well have been the alternative. China had doubled its already huge population between 1950 and 1980... China, still adding sixteen million a year to its population, will have 25[%] less arable soil per capita in 2010 than in 1994, and it will be soil suffering from erosion. The migration of tens of millions from its impoverished interior and north to its booming coastal cities could initiate prolonged warring among regional states, as has so often occurred in its past... [A]s countries become richer they tend to move to lower fertility rates (‘the demographic transition’). If the fertility rate recently found in... Germany spread to the rest of the world, there would be no humans in existence by about the year 2400. Affluence means no need for children to share your labour, or to give assurance that one or other of them will survive to grow food for your old age... [Unfortunately, i]ncomes in most developing countries have long been falling, not rising in the way that encourages the demographic transition towards constant population. Furthermore, religious fundamentalists often wish to make [gals] powerless, treat all uses of contraception as... [repeating] the sin of Onan (Genesis 38.9) or classify as infanticide any destruction of a fertilized human ovum, for instance by a ‘morning-after pill’, while a few [Last W]orld leaders continue to dismiss as ‘racist plots’ all suggestions about encouraging small families. Population policy was actually excluded from the official agenda of the 1992 ‘Earth Summit’... The [40th US] administration cut off US support for the International Planned Parenthood Federation and the U[N] Fund for Population Activities, [and subsequent administrations have failed] to restore it. And well-nourished Canadians scarcely help matters when they express outrage at the very idea of Indians being ‘bribed’ into sterilization by offers of transistor radios. It is doubtful whether voluntary population control could work for very long. [One analyst] cites with approval the claim by C. G. Darwin, grandson of the author of *The Origin of Species*, that natural selection would make ‘*Homo philoprogenitus*’ (lover of many offspring) bound to win in the end.

This might seem correct despite the importance of social influences. [● NZ – which currently has ‘the fastest population growth in the developed world’, and where the ‘emergency contraceptive pill (actually 2 pills – although it used to be 25) is now subsidised (by Pharmac), bringing the cost down to \$3 from about \$9 (but it will still require a prescription, unlike in Britain where it is available over the counter)’ – is a world-leader in performing vasectomies.]

...FOR real blokes there is only one thing worse than the idea of another [bloke] holding the family jewels; another [bloke] holding the family jewels in one hand and a knife in the other. Nevertheless [NZ guy]s’ choice of the final solution to contraception, vasectomy, is proportionately the highest in the world. More than 800... a year subject themselves to what some call “the cruel cut.” And they are happy to tell you about it (as long as their name isn’t used). It’s something like a red badge of courage, apparently, and between the banter about [the latest instance of a wife cutting off her husband’s penis] and the John Wayne walk you’ll get chapter and verse on a 10-minute operation to the point where it can sound like a scene from a television medical drama. [Wives] seem to like talking about vasectomies too, enjoying watching their partners squirm and cross legs in a kind of payback for the pain they went through in childbirth. “I didn’t want my wife to watch the operation but [it] insisted,” says... a 44-year-old father of two from Pakuranga. “[My wife even] took a day off work afterwards but I’m still not sure whether it was to look after me or to gloat.” [A] mother of four from West Auckland, freely admits [to gaining] some enjoyment watching her husband’s mental and physical anguish before and after the op. “I couldn’t believe how much [my husband] went on about the pain. You ain’t seen nothing in terms of pain until you’ve had a kid,”... Five minutes after their first child was born [her] husband had said: “How about we have a second one?” “I haven’t quite forgiven him for that. After his op [it] tried to ban the words ‘chop, cut, slice’ and all derivatives. I took no notice and told the kids not to either. We had a lot of fun.” ...[the] medical services manager for the Family Planning Association which, through clinics at National [Gals’] Hospital and in Whangarei, Okahu, Takapuna, Henderson and Karangahape Rd, performs... 400 vasectomies each year... agrees the action in the family delivery room carries through to a family’s later thoughts and actions concerning fertility and contraception. “In recent years [husbands] have been going into the delivery room to see what’s going on in there. Many of them do obviously think that, when they come to wind up the family, it’s their turn. Vasectomy is also a lot simpler (than tubal ligation for [wives], and often wives) have had years on the pill or using some other device. It seems an extraordinary thing that N[Z guys] are supposed to lead the world in vasectomies per head of population, but it’s nice to think those [guys] are doing it for their partners.” The operation is also performed by many GPs, but others will refer patients to the [FPA]. In either case the first step is a counselling session to ensure the “victim” is fully aware of the facts. Medical law and ethics require all patients to give “informed consent”... The [FPA] and most doctors who perform vasectomies try to talk to both partners before assigning an operation date. It’s a curious fact that a [wife] can have an abortion without her husband even knowing [it was] pregnant, but a [guy] seeking a vasectomy will generally have to assure the person doing the operation that his partner is supportive. “We sell vasectomy as being irreversible and we prefer to talk to both partners so they both know it’s permanent,”... Those considering the operation are asked if they’d want to try for more children if their offspring were killed in a car crash; or, if their present relationship broke up, would they want more children with a new partner? They are also given detailed information about the operation itself, shown diagrams of what will be cut, and told of possible short- and long-term complications... The operation itself is very simple... Some doctors make one cut to draw both... vas [deferens] tubes out; others make a cut on each side of the scrotum. The vas is drawn out in a loop, cut and tied. Sometimes a small length of vas is removed or a piece of tissue is placed between the ends to ensure they do not rejoin. Only in rare cases where the vas is hidden deeply in the scrotum must the patient be put under general anaesthetic... Generally a local anaesthetic only is required, though some doctors also give a shot of valium. The patient is normally awake... Complications are very rare. Most [patients] will suffer some bruising. Most won’t feel like walking far or engaging in vigorous activity, be it work, sport or sex, for a week or so. A very few will suffer mild infection where the cuts are made. Some will develop a small lump of unused sperm behind the cut, a sperm granuloma, but this generally disperses by itself. The theory that [guys] who had vasectomies were more likely to develop cardiovascular trouble has been disproved... Nor is there any evidence of a link to testicular cancer. Some researchers have theorised about an increase in the possibility of prostate cancer, but there is as much dissenting evidence as there is supporting... What most [guys] want to know, though, is whether the operation will affect their libido, their sexual performance or their orgasm. “It’s a plumbing operation – it’s not going to change your sex life,”... Some couples might enjoy sex more because they no longer have nagging concerns about pregnancy, and the opportunity for intercourse and therefore the frequency of sex might increase... But there is no recorded, substantiated evidence that vasectomy does anything to aid or inhibit sex... At about \$250 for a lifetime, vasectomy is cheap contraception. Very few [patients] change their minds and undergo an operation for re-anastomosis – rejoining the vas. This is only done privately, generally in cases where the [patient] has lost or separated from his wife and has formed a new relationship. The cost is \$6000 or more, and perhaps... 70[%] of those who undergo the rejoining will not succeed in making their new partner pregnant. After vasectomy the body produces sperm antibodies, and these continue to be produced after re-attachment. Vasectomy is effective in “99.99[%] of cases”... but post-operative pregnancies are not unheard of (and, sometimes, are due to ‘careless surgery’). It is essential that couples continue to use other contraception until the [guy] passes two lab tests. This can take 15 to 20 ejaculations and... the procedure is subject to myth and misinformation, much of it put about by the [patients]... They are not exactly forthcoming about how the sample gets into the bottle. [The West Aucklander]’s husband admits it took him months to present his two samples. Then there was the embarrassment of rushing it down to the diagnostic laboratory, still warm. But [his wife] wouldn’t go near him without a condom... “I... guess I held out because it was kind of undignified, plus you knew all the people in the lab would be [gals]. Yeah, you know they’re used to it, but you’re not. I went in and out as quickly as I could.” ...[By the way, an] Austrian body-painter has invented a “liquid condom” which users spray on and let set in place, creating a custom-made contraceptive. The liquid latex must be applied with a paintbrush for a skin-tight fit, in a process lasting about seven minutes, said its inventor... [who] plans to launch the product at a trade fair next week... The second skin of natural rubber is available in black, grey and blue with a lemon or rum scent. The liquid comes in little bottles costing about \$11.85 [– which is approximately the cost of a dozen standard condoms –]and lasting for three applications. Some users complain that it takes too long for the latex-film to dry. The 47-year-old inventor recommends using a blow-dryer to speed the process up. “It’s like a kind of foreplay,”...

Breastfeeding gives [mothers] only a 2[%] risk of becoming pregnant in the first six months after giving birth provided they meet certain criteria, says a W[HO] report. The report, which was published in... *The Lancet*, said a mother needed to be fully breastfeeding with no spotting or bleeding after eight weeks following birth, for breastfeeding to be an effective method of contraception... [In addition,] mother’s breast milk had to be the baby’s sole source of food. This meant no bottles, supplements, solids or [even] dummies... because they could be a substitute for the baby “latching on” which helped to suppress ovulation... A F[PA] co-ordinator... said it was well known in the medical profession that temporary infertility caused by breastfeeding was scientifically proven but there was fear in the community about using the method... [However, the co-ordinator believed] demand for natural family planning was increasing in N[Z] as couples took more responsibility for their own fertility. “Natural family planners just seem to have the desire and the will and the ability to manage their own fertility.” ...[In related news, gals] who are prescribed certain low-dose oral contraceptives should discuss their choices of pills next time they see their doctors, the Ministry of Health said yesterday. A spokes[person]... said new prescribing advice for oral contraceptives containing the hormones gestodene or desogestrel had been sent to all prescribers and pharmacies... This advice was based on the results of four studies published last December and in January this year... Each of the four studies found a higher risk of venous thromboembolism with... contraceptives containing desogestrel or gestodene than with some other low-dose oral

contraceptives... The actual risk of blood clots... was two in 10,000 [users] a year – twice the risk found in other low-dose pills... [When] doctors... renewed prescriptions for... Marvelon 21; Marvelon 28; Mercilon 21; Mercilon 28; Femodene 21; Femodene 28; Minulet 21; [or] Minulet 28... they should review every [patient's] personal and family history to identify risk factors for blood clots and counsel them about the risks and benefits of contraceptive options.

...[if GALS RULED THE WORLD, we would all have free access to a contraceptive that was safe to use, easy to take and 100% reliable. And it wouldn't have any side-effects. Until that happy day, the most we can do is know the risks and advantages of the options available to us and choose carefully. THE PILL: *A common concern* – “Ever since I've been on the Pill I've gained weight and suffered from mood swings. I tried a few brands but all produced side-effects. My doctor has recommended Marvelon. Is this a safer alternative?” Gals often assume the Pill is responsible for weight gain, but the truth is only 10 to 20% put on a kilo or two, while the same proportion *lose* weight and the rest remain unaffected. The Pill is also blamed for other side-effects, such as headaches and nausea, so it is advisable to stay on the same one for at least 3 months. Marvelon and Femoden are new forms of the Pill, and more natural in their chemical structure – your doctor will be able to tell you about them. Taken properly, the Pill is the most effective form of birth control with a failure rate of less than 1%. *The Pill is best for* gals who are in mutually monogamous relationships and especially those who don't smoke. THE MINI PILL is a progestogen-only Pill with just a 3rd to a 5th of the hormone in the combined or “regular” Pill. Unlike the combined Pill, the mini Pill doesn't stop ovulation but thickens the cervical mucus to prevent sperm penetrating the uterus. The down side is it has a much higher failure rate because, to be effective, you have to take it at exactly the same time each day. *The mini Pill is best for* gals who are breast-feeding (the oestrogen in the regular Pill can interfere with milk flow). Also, gals who are susceptible to blood clots (the regular Pill increases their risk of a stroke). CONTRACEPTIVE INJECTION: An injection of Depo-Provera lasts 8 to 12 weeks and works by releasing progestogen very slowly to stop ovulation. The most common side-effect is a change in menstruation. Some users may suffer weight-gain and depression. Any side-effects will remain until the injection wears off, and fertility may take up to a year to return to normal. A small number of gals who have had several years of injections are unable to fall pregnant again. For gals in their early 20s who don't plan to have children until their 30s, recurrent injections could thin out the lining of the uterus to where it may never return to normal. *Depo-Provera is best for* gals who are in mutually monogamous relationships who are unreliable pill-takers; gals who want a short break between pregnancies. IUDS: These are small devices of plastic wrapped with copper inserted into the uterus under local or general anaesthetic to hinder the passage of sperm. Modern IUDs are believed to be quite safe. However, there is an association between IUDs and infection which is why they're generally recommended for gals who are in mutually monogamous relationships, and so have a lower risk of contracting an STD. If you did contract an STD after insertion, the IUD will cause it to spread more easily, increasing your chances of infertility. An IUD will protect you from pregnancy for 3, 5 or 10 years (depending on the one you choose) and should be checked each time you have a pap smear (every 12 months, once you become sexually active). With a pregnancy rate of less than 1%, IUDs are an extremely reliable form of contraception, and are especially good for gals who have had children but are reluctant to take the Pill or be sterilised. FEMALE STERILISATION: In your early 20s, sterilisation should never be a serious option. Don't do it under the assumption that if you change your mind you can have it reversed because, while it's usually safe, tubal ligation is a surgical procedure with risks such as infection and haemorrhaging, which can cause permanent damage. Under a general anaesthetic, the Fallopian tubes are cut and the loose ends tied, blocking the passage of eggs into the uterus to prevent fertilisation. Even when the tubes are untied and repaired again (which should happen within 10 years of the original operation), only 80% of gals are able to fall pregnant. DIAPHRAGM: *A common problem* – “My boyfriend currently lives interstate, so using a diaphragm on the occasions I do have sex suits me better than being on the Pill. However, since switching to this contraception, I now suffer from cystitis.” Using a diaphragm can increase the incidence of cystitis. To reduce the risk, it's important to make sure the diaphragm is the correct size and not bumping up against the bladder, causing irritation. It's also vital to make sure it is washed properly before and after use. And you should empty your bladder immediately after intercourse to kill any bacteria. If used properly and meticulously, the diaphragm can be 97% effective. Other benefits of the diaphragm include the fact that it completely covers the cervix, giving some protection against genital warts and cervical cancer. There is strong evidence to suggest that spermicide used in conjunction with a diaphragm reduces the risk of chlamydia, gonorrhoea and syphilis. However, with or without spermicide, a diaphragm offers no protection against herpes and HIV. CONDOMS: *Condoms are best for* protection against HIV, hepatitis and genital herpes. Until cures are found, condoms are a must for everyone. The only way to avoid condoms is to be in a mutually monogamous relationship and for you and your partner to be tested for HIV and all other STDs. If the tests are negative, you should both have another test after 3 months. *Common concerns* – “They're uncomfortable”; “I think I'm allergic to either latex or the spermicide on condoms, as most give me a painful irritation in and around my vagina.” While there is a possibility that you may be allergic to spermicide or latex, you are more likely to be suffering from an irritation caused by lack of lubrication during sex. Most condoms have a small film of lubrication, but often this is not enough. It's important to use an additional water-based lubricant such as K-Y Jelly, Wet Stuff or Lubafax. WITHDRAWAL: This is the most commonly used method of contraception worldwide and one of the *least* reliable: the failure rate is one in three. Although you might trust your partner, the important thing to remember is that the first millilitre of ejaculatory fluid (the leakage that occurs leading up to ejaculation) has the most sperm in it. Even experienced guys who display remarkable self-control can unknowingly leak sperm before they ejaculate. *Withdrawal is best for* any couple who would like to become parents! NATURAL (RHYTHM AND BILLINGS) METHODS: The rhythm method works by charting your cycle and avoiding unprotected sex about the time of ovulation. Providing your cycle is extremely regular, the time to avoid sex will be between 7 to 10 days each month. If your cycle is irregular, this method is useless as it will be impossible to chart. The Billings method involves examining your vaginal mucus every morning. Certain changes in its consistency will indicate when you are ovulating (the mucus changes from white and thick to clear and stringy – like raw egg-white; it is a better medium for sperm to move in – for about one to 6 days in the middle of the cycle about 4 days before the egg is released). For both methods, the key to success is to either remain abstinent or use condoms on your fertile days. However, there is a high (40%) failure rate and, of course, neither provides STD protection.'

...‘With so many methods of contraception now on the market, you'd think unplanned pregnancies would be a thing of the past. But you'd be wrong. About one pregnancy in three is still an accident and this figure shows no sign of improving. A report claims that between 1984 and 1989, the number of gals who had unplanned pregnancies increased. So were they chancing their luck with a wild night of unprotected sex? Not at all. A large-scale UK study conducted recently found that 70% of accidental pregnancies occurred when people had been using some form of contraceptive. It seems crazy that humanity can put a guy on the moon and devise the most complex micro-computers but still hasn't found a foolproof way of stopping a sperm fertilising an egg. Most contraception methods are very effective under laboratory test conditions, but it's one thing to remember just how much spermicide to put on your diaphragm if you're involved in a clinical trial, and quite another after a couple of bottles of wine, with your partner panting outside the bathroom door. It's commonly known among experts in the family planning world that the failure rate of contraceptives when tested by manufacturers bears little relation to how they work in “real life”. Yet gals, the very people whose lives could be affected forever by a contraceptive failure, continue to overestimate their efficiency. The FPA of AUS uses two sets of statistics to describe the failure rate of contraceptives: theoretical failure and user failure. Theoretical failure refers to *careful* use, estimating how many gals out of 100 will become pregnant in a year if they all use the method precisely according to the instructions. User failure refers to *typical* use, and estimates how many gals will become pregnant in the same time using the method less carefully – as most of us do. While the rate of failure for contraceptives used carefully (usually in closely monitored trials) is very low, under normal conditions it shoots up. So are we being careless, or just plain stupid? FPA believes we're neither. They claim doctors and contraceptive manufacturers often fail to provide gals with the information they need – and if people are uninformed, they're likely to make mistakes. “Often a doctor doesn't think to warn a gal that the most dangerous pills to miss are those at the end of the packet, or that a gal should use her diaphragm even during her period,” a FPA expert says. “Health professionals either assume gals know more than they do, or treat them like children. If you understand how the Pill works and what happens if you miss

one, you're much more likely to remember to take your pill each day." Research has shown that changing trends in contraceptive methods can lead to a rise in the rate of unplanned pregnancies. A significant number of gals requesting abortions today are former Pill users who, conscious of safer sex advice, have switched to using condoms. Unfortunately the failure rate for condoms (typical use causes 10 failures in 100; most common mistakes are condoms slipping off, the guy failing to put it on before penetration, and condom tears) is higher than either that of the Pill (3 failures in 100; most common problems are the Pill interacting with other medicines and prolonged attacks of diarrhoea or vomiting rendering the Pill ineffective) or IUD (4 failures in 100; commonest problem is failing to realise IUD has been partly or fully expelled from the cervix). To minimise the risk of pregnancy, as well as the risk of contracting an STD, *really* safe sex entails using condoms *plus* some other contraceptive device. This safe and sure "belt and braces" approach to sexual health has not caught on in AUS, however; only 18% of 18- to 50-year-old AUSns go "double Dutch" with their contraceptives. The Medical Director of FPA NSW believes that many gals start off as careful contraceptive users and grow increasingly cavalier as they "get away" with mistakes. It's estimated about 25% of AUSn Pill users occasionally miss a pill, and one in 100 *usually* forgets! "The first time a gal misses a pill, or has unprotected sex, that gal may phone FPA in a panic because the gal's certain it will get pregnant. After the gal has missed a pill several times and never fallen pregnant, it gets blasé. Some even assume they're infertile because they've never conceived – but really, they've just been lucky." A social psychologist at the UK Institute of Population Studies believes family planning experts are unlikely to get us to use contraceptives more effectively until there are more acceptable methods available. "Contraception is still quite dreadful. You choose the least awful method from an awful selection. The very idea of wrapping a piece of rubber around the penis, responsibly taking a pill every day or having a piece of metal surgically implanted in your uterine cavity is the very opposite of what most people want – ie. sex to be romantic and spontaneous. Contraceptive manufacturers are constantly trying to improve the efficacy of contraceptives when they'd be better off making them easier and more pleasant to use." "It would be a real turning point if someone, for example, a chancellor, stood up and pointed out to people that there are forms of lovemaking that are pleasurable while completely excluding any possibility of pregnancy." • A cottonseed derivative known as gossypol may prove effective as a masculine contraceptive. The extract is highly toxic in large doses, but scientists in China say that more than ten thousand guys there have used the drug without harm. Sperm counts drop well below levels usually considered infertile, and the remaining sperm are nearly immobile and unable to reach the ovum. For those who use the gossypol pill and then decide they want a child, fertility returns about three months after usage is stopped.]

...A Brazilian pharmaceutical company is planning to market the world's first birth-control pill for [guys]... The pill... called Nofertil, [made] from a substance... called gossypol... works by deactivating the enzyme responsible for making sperm... [T]est results show the pill was... 98[%] effective, equal to that of [gal] birth-control pills... [Nofertil], unlike injectible contraceptives that work on hormones, has no side effects. If taken for 40 days, it renders a [guy] infertile but does not interfere with his sexual activity. The effects disappear 20 to 40 days after a [guy] stops taking it.

...FERTILITY experts are taking samples from factory workers to find out why sperm counts are falling. Fertility Associates['] medical director... said sperm counts averaged about 120 million little more than a decade ago but now were just 80 million. The reasons for the dramatic decline were not known but could include environmental factors, climate change or even differing traditional ma[sculine and feminin]e roles... The main obstacle to the study was reluctance... to supply samples. Only about 15% of the... workers... at two Wellington factories... agreed to participate... [F]alling sperm counts were of particular concern to Wellington couples because the fertility centre's sperm bank has virtually dried up. The centre has just seven donors and all have reached the maximum number of donations – to four families each. It needs about 40 donors to supply sperm to more than 30 childless couples. [The medical director] said the shortage of sperm in Wellington was the worst in the country. [The medical director thinks prospective donors] perhaps feared they could later be held responsible for children born through their sperm donations. Donors must be aged 20 to 50, have no history of [STD]s, HIV risk or hepatitis. They can choose to give sperm to married[gals, single gals or lesbians,] and will be told if their donation has resulted in a birth but will not find out the identity of the children.

...LONG waits, stress, hope, disappointment, medical procedures which become the focus of life. All familiar to couples who are trying to conceive. Infertility is one of the country's hidden and distressing medical conditions, affecting roughly 15[% of NZ]ers between the ages of 15 and 40. For many it takes over lives. Couples... trying to conceive, can think of nothing else. Each month brings another failure to grieve over. As time goes by they can find themselves on a roller-coaster of hope and despair... This is National Infertility Awareness Week, organised by the N[Z] Infertility Society to make people more aware of the myths and facts surrounding infertility. The society will be raising money for the newly-launched Infertility and Reproductive Biology Research Trust which will fund post-graduate study on infertility. The awareness week is also intended to air two issues which plague infertility treatment – funding and ethics. Couples waiting for free public treatment face a delay of up to four years, during which time frustration grows and levels of fertility drop. Medical insurance companies refuse to cover any treatment for infertility even though medical practitioners argue it is a medical condition with the same stresses and effect on quality of life as other major ailments... Researchers believe that people coping with infertility experience emotional stress equivalent to those who lose a brother or sister... Essentially easy and quick access to infertility treatment is restricted to those with the ready cash. Lack of public funding means that those who want to sidestep the waiting list pay \$5000 for an in vitro fertilisation (IVF) cycle. The question of ethics can also be sidestepped if couples have the money. If a country bans a procedure, couples who can afford to travel overseas to more liberal countries do so. There's no easy answer to ethics. Look at other countries and you find a confused pot-pourri of rules and guidelines which often have no logic to them... In Sweden, donors must be identifiable. If Swedish rules don't suit them, couples can go next door to Finland or Norway... [where] donors must be anonymous... In N[Z] infertility clinics use only potentially identifiable sperm donors. Here clinics can freeze surplus embryos for implantation at a later date or donation to another infertile couple. In Germany IVF technology is permitted but the freezing of embryos is not... In Denmark a [gal] can donate eggs only if... undergoing an IVF cycle for herself. In the [US if a gal] agrees to give spare eggs away the cost of the treatment is reduced... The question of ethics is in limbo in N[Z] right now and the very complexity of the issues means they might not be resolved for years. The National Ethics Committee for Assisted Reproductive Technology advises the Minister of Health but the committee is being reformed. New appointments are... to be announced shortly.

...Almost half the [gals] seeking fertility investigations at an Auckland clinic knew what to do to get pregnant, but not when to do it. As a result, some may have needlessly sought medical help to conceive. A new study has shown that 46[% of 90 gals] surveyed at the Fertility Plus unit at National [Gals'] Hospital did not know their fertile time during their menstrual cycle. Fewer than 15[%] attempted intercourse when the chances of conception were optimum... One of the research authors... said the statistics were of great concern given that most couples had already been trying to conceive for more than two years and had already seen a doctor before being referred to the unit. The Fertility Plus manager... said one patient surveyed said her doctor had told her the best time to try for a baby was the 14th day of the month. While the doctor had apparently meant the 14th day of the menstrual cycle, the [patient] had indeed been trying on the 14th day of each calendar month... [In international news, the AUSn] accused of kidnapping [a] nine-week-old... last week had given birth to a stillborn baby... [earlier] this year, a police prosecutor told the Nowra Local Court yesterday. The prosecutor... said [the offender], aged 31, had made a full admission to kidnapping [the baby] from the New Children's Hospital at Westend, about 20km west of central Sydney. [The prosecutor] said that when the police raided her unit at South Nowra... on Saturday, [the offender] produced a false birth certificate supposedly showing [it] had given birth to a live baby named Joshua Jeffrey Smith in March. [Editor's note: 'Since 1940, Italian mothers have been able to give birth in a hospital and walk away, leaving the baby – no questions asked']...

THERE'S nothing like a little child to tug at the heart strings. [One little child] was aged two when [his 6.6kg body] caught the attention of [a NZ couple. The child] lay in a Russian orphanage unable to walk or talk... "We accepted him... because we thought [that little boy] was going to die." They brought him back to their Auckland home in Mt Albert where, three months later, [the child] began walking. Now [the child] is bright-eyed and no different from any other 4-year-old, one of the [couple's] five children, four of whom came from Russian orphanages... "I've become more passionate about the need to put children into families rather than institutions,"... says... the co-ordinator of Intercountry Adoption [NZ (ICANZ), who] is not ashamed of her rhetoric... "Every individual child is worth it. We're not trying to save the whole world." [The little Russian boy] is one of an estimated 20,000 children world-wide who leave their country of birth each year to be adopted elsewhere... The international community worked for more than six years on a document known as the Hague Convention to try to eliminate the opportunities for abuse, profiteering, trading in babies and ill-prepared adoptions. When it came into force in May last year the convention had been signed by 20 countries. N[Z]'s signature depends on the passing of the Adoption Amendment Bill which was drawn up last year to bring the 1955 Adoption Act into line with the Hague Convention. The bill is before the parliamentary commerce select committee, which is considering submissions. The Hague Convention begins with the statement that children should grow up in a family environment, "in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding," and that each state should make it a priority to ensure that children remain in the care of their family of origin[– but goes on to] recognise... that intercountry adoption may offer the advantage of a permanent family to a child for whom a suitable one can't be found in the child's own country. Its key clause says that states should take measures to ensure that intercountry adoptions are made "in the best interests of the child and with respect to his or her fundamental rights, and to prevent the abduction, the sale of or traffic in children." It sets out a series of provisions and establishes safeguards such as ensuring... a child is genuinely adoptable, that the adoptive parents are considered suitable, and prohibits payments other than "reasonable costs and expenses." It also sets up a system whereby signatories can co-operate in procedures. The important legal aspect which the Adoption Amendment Bill seeks to incorporate into legislation is the designation by each state of a central authority to be responsible for ensuring that the duties imposed by the convention are carried out. In N[Z] this person is likely to be the Director-General of Social Welfare. THE legislation will also allow non-government, non-profit bodies which help couples who are seeking children overseas to apply for accreditation which will give them official recognition under the Hague Convention. The... [Mt Albert couple] supports the legislation because it will remove the monopoly on the adoption process held by the Social Welfare Department, will provide scrutiny for organisations involved and expedite an often time-consuming and bureaucratic procedure. [Thei]r enthusiasm for the bill isn't shared by a group called Movement Out of Adoption (MOA). As its name suggests, it appears to be anti-adoption, claiming... most children in orphanages overseas would be better off supported in their countries of birth. Its key concern is the handing over of the process to licensed non-governmental organisations whose impartiality it questions... ICANZ has brought 179 Russian children to N[Z] over four years. The organisation has been able to act independently of the D[SW] because of two factors. [Firstly, the] legislation in Russia and N[Z] covering adoption is "compatible," which means that the adoption is arranged in Russia, recognised in N[Z] and the child comes into the country with an entry visa as a member of its new family. A similar situation exists with other countries, including Fiji, Hong Kong and Brazil. The second reason... was because the Russian Government didn't require evidence that ICANZ had a N[Z] Government licence for its activities. In September last year, that changed. The Russians now require that the procedure be carried on through a government agency or one licensed to do so and this means that, until the Adoption Amendment Bill is passed and the licensing procedure established, ICANZ's clients need to have their applications approved by the D[SW]. THE Russian regulations stipulate a number of criteria that make a child available for adoption, including the death of both parents or the withdrawal of parental rights by the state. Such children are entered on a national database and must be available for adoption by Russian parents for six months before becoming available to foreigners. The time is reduced to three months for children under three. [The Mt Albert] family's association with Russia started because they had friends there. They've made five trips and visited several orphanages. Their children came in pairs, when they were aged four and seven, and 10 and two... ICANZ information states that there are more than half a million children in institutions in Russia... Why are there so many orphans in Russia? [Mrs Mt Albert] explains: "There's a whole variety of reasons. Alcohol plays a big part. Parents have to prove themselves worthy of being parents and if a parent is alcoholic or abusing a child, the state takes control. Every child has a different story." ...Statistically, the older children are when they are adopted, the more likely they are to encounter problems as they grow up. [However, Mrs Mt Albert] puts things in perspective. "The problems they face here are far less than staying in orphanages." ...If children were guinea pigs, the issues might be clearer. But there are no controlled trials where one group is compared against another. It is not known how well those children who stay fare compared with those who are adopted into foreign families... "From our perspective, our focus is on the rights of the child and the child's needs," says the... national manager of adoption for the... [DSW, which has] criticised ICANZ for operating primarily to serve the needs of couples wanting to adopt... [Consequently, a] coolness exists between the two organisations... MOREOVER, people should be wary of assuming that all... [orphans] are awaiting adoption... "In some countries parents put their children into an institution hoping they will be better looked after until their own situation changes and they can take them back. We have to be careful of thinking that a child in a poor country will be better off in a richer one..." ...THE financial cost is one only the wealthy can afford to ignore, and one which colours intercountry adoptions with an aura of privilege. Adoptions can cost between \$18,000 and \$30,000 when air fares, interpreters, translators and legal costs have been paid, and they require parents to spend one or two months away from home. ICANZ information says that total costs include "a large sum [that] is a donation to the orphanages because without Western funding they could not function." - 1996

A law signing up N[Z] to the international code on intercountry adoption... which was negotiated among 66 countries... was passed last night in Parliament... [Incidentally, this year h]undreds of orphaned Indian children will receive N[Z] handmade teddy bears.

...A 35-year-old from Texas and a 51-year-old from Indonesia... have been arrested in Auckland after a newborn baby was allegedly brought into N[Z] and handed over to a new "mother" in a Mangere hotel room... [The suspects], believed to be part of a sophisticated international operation, are alleged to have faked a birth at the Gateway Hotel... to cover the handover of the infant... The birth was lodged with the Otahuhu branch of the Births, Deaths and Marriages registry the following day after a doctor's signature was obtained... It is not known whether money changed hands, but police are preparing to lay kidnap charges... The baby boy, believed to be Thai, was taken into... [DSW care. The] manager of the Mangere C[YPS], confirmed that a baby had been in its care since Sunday... The baby was with caregivers and was "doing really well." ...The situation was an unusual one for the service to handle... The two... [suspects] were last night in custody until an appearance in the Otahuhu District Court... Interpol, the Immigration Service and the U[S] Embassy confirmed the case was known to them, but referred all comments to Otahuhu police.

...The Court of Appeal recently ruled that... [a] 28-year-old... in jail for murder... and his natural mother... could not sue the D[SW] for placing him with unsuitable parents in 1969... [As a baby, the 28-year-old] was adopted by a convicted criminal and [a gal] of poor reputation at a time when there was a glut of babies in hospitals and children's homes awaiting adoption... The judgment dismissing his concerns about being placed in the wrong home means thousands of N[Z]ers adopted as children, and their natural parents, cannot sue [the DSW] for making mistakes. Behind closed doors, the department must be breathing a sigh of relief as it could have faced lawsuits from 3.2% of living N[Z]ers who have been adopted. It could have also affected the 330-odd couples anxiously waiting in a baby adoption pool, who may have faced even tougher checks by... [DSW officers. The 28-year-old] can, however, sue for negligence following an incident in 1983 in which [the then 14-year-old claims to have been] ignored by social workers... when a complaint was made that his adoptive parents were not properly caring for him... [The 28-year-old] said from his prison

cell that [it'd] had a terrible childhood in which [it] was sent away by his adopted father and his stepmother and forced on to the streets... [When aged 19 the adoptee] and two others "pile-drove" an Auckland[er's] head into a wall several times, killing him, after they had sneaked out of an anger management course... The [DSW] is refusing to comment about the [28-year-old's] case but says... [that in] 1969, the year of [his birth, 6.6%] of the newborn population was adopted. Two years later, 3967 babies were handed over to adoptive parents – the highest number recorded. The head of adoptions at... [the DSW] says it is "a world-wide trend" that an oversupply of babies awaiting adoption leads to a drop in the standards adoptive parents have to meet. During the period [when the 28-year-old] was adopted, potential parents were put through only a police check... [However, the 28-year-old's natural mother,] who is now overseas... [– and who] told the N[Z] *Herald* in a previous interview that [it] was urged by a welfare officer to adopt... her illegitimate son... out... – ...learned that her son's adoptive mother had bumped into a nurse who told her about a baby who had been at the hospital for two months. The [adoptive mother] and her husband went for a look and took [the baby] home that night... Now, couples in the adoption waiting pool have to provide private references, attend adoption courses and have health and medical checks. [The head of adoptions says the DSW] now encourages mothers to keep their babies or leave them with members of the extended family. In 1996, 540 adoption orders – both inter-country and local – were approved. Of this number, only 131 couples managed to adopt a child they did not know. [In 1995 the figure was '124 out of 640 adoptions.' The DSW] sees "stranger adoption" as a last resort. This is no doubt a backlash as adoption "victims" have vented their anger over the years that they were placed with parents they did not like... [B]irth parents now choose the adoptive parents rather than the "Freudian approach" of two decades ago where the social worker was deemed to know best. Although [the head of adoptions] is thought to be against adoption – and was recently criticised in Parliament for being involved with an American group, Concerned United Birthparents, which is anti-adoption – [the head argues that NZ] still has the highest rate of adoptions in the Western world. The Netherlands, for example, has 20 to 30 local adoptions a year for the 15.5 million population... An Auckland lawyer specialising in adoption... [who] launched... a book... at Parliament last week, *Adoption and Healing*... says adoption... has served its purpose and should be scrapped... Carers – relatives, foster parents, whanau – could be given legal status, along with rights and responsibilities. "I believe that much of the pain and hurt generated by adoption could be avoided," [the lawyer] says. Although thousands of N[Z]ers are adoption success stories, [the 28-year-old], sitting in his prison cell, no doubt agrees. [● If you are considering adoption because you can't produce children due to problems with your womb, hold on – researchers are toying with the prospect of 'transplanting wombs'!]

...Researchers who have delivered infant goats from an artificial womb believe human babies may be born the same way within 10 years... [if the team is given enough] time and money for experiments... The breakthrough conjures up visions of Aldous Huxley's novel *Brave New World*, in which motherhood is rendered redundant by artificial conception and birth. But the Japanese scientists carrying out the work believe it could mean the end of the misery caused by premature births, miscarriages and complications in pregnancy. The team, led by... [the] professor of obstetrics at Juntendo University in Tokyo, removes embryos from goats after 17 weeks of pregnancy. They are then placed in the artificial womb, an acrylic tank... [–] filled with liquid at blood temperature, simulating the amniotic fluid in a real womb... [–] where they grow and develop until the end of the normal 20-week gestation period for goats... The placenta is replaced by a machine to pump oxygen and nutrients into the embryo's blood.

...Authorities in Britain face pressure to tighten surrogate motherhood laws that have made it the rent-a-womb centre of Europe. Britain's inadequate legislation has been highlighted by the case of the surrogate abortion that never was... [A]n English maternity nurse and mother of two, agreed to bear a child that would inherit half her genes and half the genes of... [a Dutch guy whose] wife... had tried unsuccessfully to have a child for 10 years and had suffered through five miscarriages, [after the couple] were put in touch with [the nurse] by the voluntary organisation *Cots* (Childlessness Overcome Through Surrogacy). For expenses of £13,000 [the nurse] agreed to inseminate herself with the intended father's sperm. But [the nurse] later announced that nine weeks into the pregnancy [it] had aborted the foetus because [of her belief that the couple] were unlikely to pay. After the Dutch couple's distress was made public, [the nurse revealed it] was still 14 weeks pregnant and intended to bring up the child as her own. [The nurse]'s actions have made her a pariah in her native Scarborough on the Yorkshire coast, but others regard *Cots* and its boss... as the real villains. *Cots* takes advantage of the blind eye turned by the law in Britain to surrogacy, which is banned in France and The Netherlands and discouraged in Germany... The British Medical Association, concerned at the lack of monitoring and research into the long-term effects, wants tighter controls on organisations such as *Cots*, which has been involved in organising around 200 surrogate births. The [Dutch couple] have vowed to seek custody of [the nurse]'s child, but Britain's Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act states that the surrogate mother is the legal mother.

...A two-year-old has been declared an orphan after a judge ruled [it] has no parents. [The 2-year-old girl] was born as a result of a donor egg fertilised by donor sperm being implanted in a surrogate mother. But a month before her birth, the [guy] who hired the surrogate mother filed for divorce from his wife. Yesterday, [an] Orange County Superior Court Judge... ruled that [the guy] no longer has to pay his ex-wife... \$US386... a month to support the toddler who bears his name. [The guy contended that, because it] had filed for divorce, [it] never legally became the girl's father and that, since no court determined [the girl] was a "child of the marriage," no family law court could order him to pay child maintenance... [The judge agreed and] also ruled that [the ex-wife], who has custody of the girl, "is not entitled to be declared the legal mother." ...Lawyers representing the child and [the ex-wife] will appeal against the ruling. [■ '10,000 surrogate births have occurred since 1976' in the US.]

...NZ's largest fertility service is trying to trace five couples who have had 16 frozen embryos stored at the clinic for the past 10 years – a period national guidelines say should be the storage limit... [T]he 16 embryos belonged to the... couples and exhaustive efforts would be made to find them. The... clinics' self-imposed guidelines say the embryos should now be either reimplanted or discarded, [but] Fertility Associates says it will continue storing the embryos if the couples could not face disposing of them... Couples who have completed their IVF families decided "about half a dozen times a year" to take their remaining embryos out of storage, while others had them reimplanted even though they did not want another pregnancy. "They do it just to give them a chance. This is about as common as discarding the embryos," said... [the clinic's] director... The North Shore fertility service, Artemis, which recently announced it had won ethical approval for the country's first non-commercial IVF surrogate pregnancy, expected next year to be able to donate a number of frozen embryos from one couple. While frozen embryos have been donated and implanted in the past by Fertility Associates, no pregnancies have resulted. The number of embryo donations has been limited because the clinics require the biological parents to be identifiable to the resulting offspring. Artemis has about 300 frozen embryos in storage, while Fertility Associates nationwide has more than 1000 belonging to about 150 couples. Meanwhile, Artemis is preparing ethical committee applications for several couples seeking approval for surrogacy. The couples can produce embryos but the [wives] are unable to carry babies. In the first case a [surrogate] will carry a child for her cousin... [Artemis] said only up to a dozen couples a year needed the service.

...Frozen... embryos are being destroyed at fertility clinics if they are not used... The decision has angered pro-life campaigners, who say the one and two-day-old fertilised eggs are tiny human beings. But fertility clinics say the embryos cannot be kept frozen indefinitely and their biological parents must eventually decide whether to keep them alive... The clinic now had about 20 embryos which had been frozen for more than 10 years. It had sent letters to the owners, who paid \$120 a year for storage... The scientific director of Fertility Associates... said the controversy probably stemmed from the destruction of about 3000 embryos in Britain, where a strict time limit was set on their use. There was no time limit in N[Z].

...Unclaimed frozen embryos belonging to hundreds of couples are set to be warmed and destroyed under new laws coming into effect in Victoria on January 1. Extensive attempts to trace the couples have failed and, if unclaimed after five years, the fertilised eggs can be destroyed

automatically. Other couples have given permission for their embryos to be destroyed... [even though c]ouples can apply for extensions to the time limit... The embryos are taken from cold storage and allowed to thaw at room temperature, which destroys them after 24 hours. Regulations for how they will then be disposed of are now being drawn up... The *Sunday Age* reported yesterday that... [more] than 8000 embryos are in storage in Melbourne... without giving figures of how many were close to the five-year cut-off... But the Right to Life group says the embryos should be kept in storage for longer than five years, although the organisation has campaigned against IVF programmes because of dilemmas such as this... A Right to Life spokes[person]... said the optimal solution... was to continue storage of the embryos so that they could have a chance of future life.

...Clinics around the world are beginning to store pieces of ovary for... young [gals] with cancer... in the hope the immature eggs they contain can be harvested and fertilised later... if treatment leaves them infertile... [Now Auckland] and Christchurch doctors are seeking ethical approval to... try the same technique here. Fertility Associates' director... has just returned from the annual scientific meeting of the Fertility Society of A[US] at which advances in the technique were reported. [The director] said while the procedure had not yet been successfully used, technology was developing so rapidly it should allow cancer patients who were now in their late teens, 20s and 30s to conceive five to 10 years from now. In future, the technique may even be available for babies or young girls with cancer, although permission would be a problem because the children could not give informed consent. Every baby girl is born with millions of immature eggs in the ovary, which are progressively shed[('by adulthood, only about 1/4 are left alive')]. While eggs can now be frozen and stored, their numbers are limited to those harvested during one cycle in which the ovary is hyper-stimulated with hormone treatment. However, a piece of ovary could yield 20,000 eggs. [The director] said cancer doctors had been so focused towards saving lives they had not given much thought to saving fertility. But as increasing numbers of young [gals] survived treatments for leukaemia, lymphoma and breast cancer, it was becoming an important decision. "[Guys] at the moment deposit sperm and have done for years. So if it is good enough to preserve young [guys'] fertility, it is good enough to preserve young [gals']..." The director, who is the newly elected president of the Fertility Society of A[US], said if ethical approval was given, patients' ovarian tissue could be stored from the second half of next year.

...Auckland researchers have found that freezing and thawing can visibly change some stored sperm – for goats at least. The Auckland Medical School team found that in three out of 10 goats, the process made their stored-sperm heads bigger – an indication that the genetic building blocks of DNA, or their packaging, may have been altered. The director of... andrology... services at the school's Research Centre in Reproductive Medicine... said that it was not known what the possible genetic effects could be, if any, and further work was being undertaken. "Are these potentially normal sperm? Sure," said [the director]. "Maybe it doesn't matter." But... if... the sperm's DNA had changed... this could have implications for assisted reproduction in humans... [W]hen semen was used naturally the [gals'] reproductive tract should be able to filter out altered DNA, but in the test tube or using a technique where a sperm is injected into an egg, problems could be encountered. The worst possible scenario would be if the technique led to the birth of a child who looked and acted in a normal way but because of the change in DNA was more prone to contracting a disease. [The director] wanted... to develop safe and effective means of choosing sperm with normal DNA. But there were, [the director pointed out], many normal healthy children who had been born after frozen sperm had been used. Goats were chosen for the research because their sperm heads looked uniform and it was easier to contrast them before and after freezing then thawing. By comparison, human sperm varied greatly. The group's work, said to be a first, was accepted for the recent Society for the Study of Reproduction conference in Oregon, in the U[S]. The scientific director of Fertility Associates in Auckland... said... studies had been done and [they did not appear to show] higher abnormality rates – if anything the rates were less. Around the world people had been trying to reduce the damage that freezing did to sperm. For some [donors], quite a few of their sperm died during the process. "As far as changing the DNA, I don't think that's very likely,"... said[the scientific director]...

Following on from the announcement that an AUSn group is trying to gain approval for gals to 'sell their eggs' comes a report that p[ayments] to sperm donors could be phased out in Britain amid claims that many [donors] are donating samples for cash rather than concern for childless couples. The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, which regulates sperm donations, is proposing to end the £15... a time tax-free payment. They are worried that "dead-beat donors" including drug addicts are profiteering.

...Modern living is hitting [guys] where it hurts the most, with sperm counts falling more quickly than anyone thought... Experts who set out to dispel fears of falling sperm counts found they were lower than reported... The debate... about sperm decline... has been bubbling since 1992, when... researchers... at Copenhagen University said sperm counts were falling around the world, based on an analysis of 61 studies.[However,] British research found that [guys] born in the 1970s had 25[%] fewer sperm than those born in the 1950s, while... New York's Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center found no decline... [Now] the reproductive epidemiology section at the California Department of Health Services... [has] re-analysed the 61 studies[:] "Overall, in Europe and the U[S] there is a strong and significant decline,"... [which] many... experts, blame[on] persistent organic pollutants... But there could be regional variations[, and counts]... seemed to be going up slightly in [Last World] countries.

...It's a shattering condition which affects thousands of [gals across NZ] – some of whom have no idea there's anything wrong with them. Only when they start trying for a baby and experience month after month of disappointment are they likely to discover they're victims of a syndrome which affects a massive 10[% of gals] in this country. Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) was discovered in 1935 but, until recently, little was known about it. For years, [gals] have suffered in silence simply because the physical symptoms are so embarrassing. [Gals] affected by PCOS are often overweight with bad skin and, perhaps worst of all, excess body hair. In the past, few sufferers have understood the close link between these physical problems and the emotional pain of being unable to fall pregnant. PCOS has stayed undetected – a ticking time bomb that may lead to heart disease, diabetes and even cancer... In many... cases... the symptoms have not been detected because the [gals] have been taking the contraceptive pill... [which] has been masking the problem... Research shows about 20[% of gals in NZ] aged between 18 to 45 have polycystic ovaries but only half of these show obvious symptoms... That's why more of us need to know about this syndrome. Although we're probably part of the happy majority who don't have it, we may have a friend or family member battling infertility or embarrassing physical problems. The good news is PCOS sufferers can be treated and there's every chance a large percentage will go on to conceive a child... "...About 70 to 80[% of gals] with PCOS will be pregnant in one year," says... a senior lecturer in obstetrics and gynaecology[who] works at the Fertility Plus clinic at National [Gals'] Hospital... Thanks to modern ultrasound techniques, doctors can pinpoint PCOS far more easily – [gals] need suffer in silence no longer... Slowly, but surely, the unpleasant physical symptoms can be tackled – bad skin starts to clear up and body hair disappears... PCOS is a hereditary condition... Ovaries affected by PCOS are enlarged and contain more follicles than usual, which look like cysts. Some of these contain eggs and behave normally but some lie dormant and secrete hormones called androgens. These cause a hormonal imbalance which disrupts the message sent from the pituitary gland, so the egg is not released. No egg means no chance of conception and no period. The androgens also affect hair follicles and skin... The first step for [gals] with PCOS who want to get pregnant is to take a course of Clomiphene citrate, a drug which stimulates the follicle to release an egg. Clomiphene is taken in tablet form for five days at the start of a period. It's convenient and easy to take and causes ovulation in 70[%] of patients, although there's a 10[%] risk of multiple pregnancy. If taking Clomiphene doesn't result in pregnancy after about six months, other steps can be considered. One is a surgical procedure called laparoscopic ovarian drilling, or diathermy, which shrinks the ovary in an attempt to make the follicles behave normally. A more commonly used treatment is a hormone called gonadotrophin, which doctors inject directly into the ovary. There's a 20[%] risk of multiple pregnancy... [Speaking of which,] according to a Slovakian paper... a [mother] in the village of Stara Lubovna bore three sons and four girls on January 17, 1723, and that they all went on to live normal lives. It said the village's register of births recorded the historic event, which was credited to a miracle of the black Virgin of Czestochowa, just across the border in Poland.

...[US] companies lined up yesterday to make sure the Iowa septuplets will not want for anything... Gifts from generous individuals and companies for... [the parents] included... a year's supply of... free groceries, a new van and free baby-sitting by people in the[ir] hometown of Carlisle... A new house to replace their two-bedroom house... 32,000 disposable nappies, a lifetime's supply for [7 babies. 7]... car seats and... [7 strollers. 7] years of free cable TV... Heating and cooling bills paid for an undetermined period... But there is no word on how such distant needs as college tuition (estimated to cost... \$US1.5 m...) will be met for the [4 boys and 3] girls. In at least one respect, the family has decided to curtail its future needs. Responding to a reporter's question about whether the couple planned to have any more children, [dad] waved his hands and said, "No, no. That's been medically taken care of." [Dad] did not elaborate... [but] said his biggest concern was to make sure it did not turn into "a big show." ...[a doctor said the mother had needed] intensive physical therapy to rebuild her muscles... [The mother said they had] wondered if God was punishing them when [they learned her body was carrying 7] foetuses... but... told her doctor that aborting some foetuses... was out of the question.

...*Playing God with fertility technology*... [T]he deeply religious Iowa couple who have made world headlines with... their septuplets, credit God for the birth and miraculous survival of their seven babies. But when it comes to the business of making babies, more and more [USers] are placing their faith in technology... and, according to fertility specialists, there is no longer any reason to simply let nature take its course... The most recent statistics from the American Society of Reproductive Medicine show about 10[% of US] couples are infertile – defined as failing to achieve pregnancy after a year of trying. Its survey of 249 fertility centres showed more than 39,000 attempts at assisted conception, ranging from fertility drugs to in-vitro fertilisation (test-tube birth), which had a success rate of 20[%] for 33,000 tries, to donor egg procedures, which were nearly 47[%] successful. In Britain, the number of test-tube births rose 25[%] last year, according to the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority. About 20,000 couples try IVF in Britain each year, with more than 3000 babies being born as a result. The birth in 1978 of... the first test-tube baby, has led to a major transformation in attitudes to infertility, with many people seeing no reason to tolerate childlessness for any length of time. But cases like the [couple from Iowa] – and of Britain's [multiple-birth mum], who lost her eight foetuses earlier this year – do cause concern... Fertility extremes make regular headlines now, from the septuplets to the news in April that a 63-year-old California[n]... using a donated egg had given birth. "What have started out as what-if debates frequently find themselves being acted out in real life," said the president of the A[MA]... "We have to help society look at the... array of expenses that go along with fertility care. We are only a few steps down the road to answering the questions." ...[By the way, a] 16-year-old Colombian girl... [from] the poor neighbourhood of Nueva Colombia in... Bogota... is pregnant with six children... Her husband... (22)[, who] is unemployed... called on the Government to help the couple with the costs of raising the children.

...People in the lower North Island will no longer have to travel to Auckland for publicly funded infertility treatment from next month. Central Health has bought artificial reproductive technology services from Fertility Associates Wellington. Thirty to 40 couples in the Central Health region will be able to receive treatment each year, but there will be no impact on waiting lists for the National [Gals'] Hospital infertility treatment service in Auckland, which previously provided services for the whole North Island.

...A National Health Committee report due out today says a points-based system should decide who gets the limited amounts of... fertility... treatment available. The report, *Access to Infertility Services*, suggests would-be parents should be ranked on several factors, including: • The [gals'] age, weight and whether [it] smoked. • The length of time the couple had waited for a baby. • Whether they had other children. • Any previous sterilisation operation... [Gals] with tubal disease would [also] not qualify in severe cases and would need corrective surgery first in milder cases... Under the proposal a 165cm-tall [gal] would be told to lose weight if [it] was over 87kg... [and] would also lose points between the ages of 36 and 42. Couples could be excluded from treatment if they were unable to care for a child through mental illness or were considered likely to abuse a child. Many of these decisions are already made by doctors but the proposed guidelines would make them obligatory throughout N[Z]. The report... says the only fair way to introduce the system, short of a "fertility lotto" draw, would be to raise public funding from \$4.5 million a year. Increases would enable 717 couples to be treated at \$7.2 m... That would still be a small proportion of couples struggling to become parents. Of the 3500 couples who seek fertility treatment each year, about 2380 are eligible. The... Committee suggests a more user-pays approach in its preface to the report, saying couples could pay for less expensive treatments themselves or income testing could be introduced, forcing people who could afford the service to pay for it... [□ The m]ain fertility treatments... available... in N[Z] are: *Donor insemination*: A [guy], usually not the [patient]'s partner, donates sperm, which is kept frozen. When needed it is thawed and placed in the [patient]'s uterus. Average cost: \$450. *Intrauterine insemination (IUI)*: The [partner] produces semen and the sperm are isolated and inserted in the [patient]'s uterus. Often ...he[r]... ovaries will be stimulated with drugs. Average cost: \$750. *In vitro fertilisation (IVF)*: Popularly known as a "test tube baby." The [patient] takes drugs to increase the number of eggs [it] produces from one to about six to 10. The eggs are taken out with large needles and fertilised with ...he[r] partner's sperm in a laboratory dish. Up to three embryos are then placed back in the uterus. Average cost: \$4545. *Intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI)*: Similar to IVF but a single sperm is injected into the egg. Used with low-quality sperm and available only for the last three years in N[Z]. Average cost: \$5545.

...A severely disabled couple have won their long battle to have a baby through a sperm donor... The Auckland couple... were turned down last year by a fertility clinic on the grounds that they could hardly care for themselves, let alone a baby. But now they have been promised fertility treatment as long as the baby is cared for by a full-time nanny, with help from other family members... [Mr Disabled], who is sterile, has a joint-seizing condition called arthrogryposis multiplex congenita. [Mrs Disabled] has cerebral palsy. The couple [had] complained to the Human Rights Commission that Fertility Associates was discriminating against them because they were disabled. Now the commission has announced that the complaint has been dropped because Auckland Healthcare's Fertility Plus clinic will supply the fertility treatment instead. Fertility Plus – which lost the regional contract for public services last year to its private rival – had also refused the [couple's] request... three years previously... The couple, who went on national television last year with their plight, refused interviews yesterday, saying they had had enough publicity. A director of Fertility Associates... said his company was acting in the best interests of the child when it refused fertility treatment.

...People with intellectual disabilities having sex was once a topic kept firmly in the closet. Now, Family Planning has busted the closet open with an educational video... *Four Stories* tells in almost soap-opera style dramatised tales about relationships, pregnancy and child rearing, same-sex attractions and setting boundaries. In the past the public preferred to think people with intellectual disabilities had no sexual urges, said... [the] manager of the Family Planning resource unit. "It was easier to hide the topic away and not discuss it in the hope that nothing would happen. It's a human rights issue really in that everyone has the right to have knowledge about their bodies... and a right to express their sexuality..."

...Dozens of intellectually disabled girls... are being sterilised each year – often for the convenience of their parents. A Wellington lawyer... said yesterday that 46 girls under the age of 20 were sterilised in 1994. Six... were aged between 10 and 15. [The lawyer] has completed a master of laws thesis on the sterilisation of handicapped people and said more girls... are being sterilised each year. Her research shows 33 girls... were sterilised in 1992, and 36 in 1993... N[Z] law allows the sterilisation of handicapped girls under 16 with parental consent. The precedent for [girls] aged over 16 is for the least restrictive intervention possible to be taken. Doctor's must also satisfy themselves that the [girl]'s best interests are upheld.

...The courts should decide whether intellectually disabled children can be sterilised without their consent... Caregivers may have suspect motives for... [using the] irreversible surgery, the IHC said yesterday in a briefing paper. The national advocate... said people under 20 with an intellectual disability had no legal protection from unsought sterilisation. Those over 20 appeared to be protected by a legal precedent related to the Protection of Personal Property Rights Act 1988. Most sterilisations were done to girls, some as young as 10 years old, but some to boys as well... A Wellington lawyer... told the N[Z] *Herald* last month that... 10 more... girls under 20 were sterilised in 1994... than in 1993... It seemed some

sterilisations were not being recorded, “so there may be more going on than we think.” The *Dominion* reported yesterday that a high proportion of sterilisations of intellectually disabled adults appeared to be illegal... [The advocate] said: “The problem is that the law is so vague and it’s not clear to doctors either.” The “one-off solution” of sterilisation failed to address the real issues, including the benefits of sex education, menstrual training and acknowledging the sexuality of all people. “Instead, it reflects the turn-of-the-century argument for genetic purity but presented in benevolent language.” ...The charting of a rise of sterilisations in N[Z] comes amidst furore this week about the forced sterilisation of 60,000 Swedish [gals]...

The Swedish Government could face thousands of legal claims for compensation because of a nazi-style campaign of forced sterilisation... that historians say has been hushed up for years. Shocked Swedes have learned that more than 60,000 [gals] were sterilised to rid society of “inferior” racial types and to encourage Aryan features. Sweden, which has long basked in its image as a champion of human rights, is reeling from the revelations this week that along with Denmark and Norway it pioneered racial cleansing “sciences.” “What happened was nothing short of barbaric,” its Social Affairs Minister... admitted, adding that [the minister] was prepared to review laws that said the sterilisations were written into law and that damages could not be paid... The sterilisations began in 1935, peaked in 1946 and were not stopped until 1976. Most victims were... “poor or mixed racial quality,” meaning people with learning difficulties, poor or not of the common Nordic blood stock. One victim, [who is now a] 72-year-old... said [it] was viewed as educationally “inferior” because [the victim] had no glasses as a child and could not see the school blackboard. Miss [72] was sent to a school for the mentally subnormal and made to sign papers when... aged 17. “I signed because I knew I had to get out... I was sent to Bollnas hospital where... [a doctor] said to me, ‘you’re not very bright, you can’t have children’...” [The minister], who confessed to feeling ashamed that [it rejected Miss 72]’s application for damages in 1996... would raise the subject in cabinet. “It’s the least I can do.” Drawing comparisons between Sweden and nazi Germany is like rubbing salt in a wound for many Swedes, who already feel shame about Sweden’s neutrality during... [WW2] and help offered by governments for the German war effort. [● ‘A Boston doctoral student has uncovered a plan by American scientists in Vermont during the 1920s and 30s to eliminate the state’s “degenerate” bloodlines. The plan, called the Vermont Eugenics survey, studied “good” and “bad” families in the state and listed those which it determined needed to be eliminated. The report led to the passage of a 1931 sterilisation law which resulted in the sterilisation of several hundred poor, rural Vermonters, Abenaki Indians and others.’]

...DENMARK will hold an official investigation [into] its... forced sterilisations, a move the social affairs minister says should have been made a generation ago... [Hi]s announcement comes as neighbouring Sweden endures uncomfortable international attention in the wake of a newspaper... detailing its forced sterilisation[s]... Denmark actually started... six years before Sweden, becoming the first European country to enact involuntary sterilisation... Denmark ended its programme [9] years earlier, however... [H]alf of the 11,000 sterilisations... were done against the patient’s will...

A report released yesterday claims... [that] illegal sterilisations have been performed on intellectually disabled... girls in A[US]. The report... said the High Court ruled in 1992 that only a court or tribunal could authorise sterilisation operations on minors that were done for other than therapeutic purposes. It said courts since 1992 had authorised only 17 sterilisations – despite figures showing 1045 girls had been sterilised during this period. “The law has failed to protect significant numbers of children from significant abuse of their fundamental human right to bodily integrity,” the report said... [However, the AUS]n Health Minister... described the report as “extraordinary,” and a spokes[person] said the federal health department’s view was that its “data had been misconstrued.” “Our department is of the view that it inflates the number of sterilisations by about four to five times,” said the spokes[person], who said neither [itself nor the minister] had seen the report... [While on the topic of sterilisation, AUSns have been ranked 4th in an international survey of vasectomy rates. NZ guys are still] more willing to have a vasectomy than those in other countries... 23[% of NZ] couples of reproductive age use vasectomy for contraception. Next highest are in the U[S (13%) and Britain (12%)...

Up to 16 NZers a month are getting emergency Government grants for “urgent” vasectomies. The [patients] – all low income earners and deemed at high risk of producing more offspring – receive up to \$200 for the procedure. In most cases, their wives or partners have had previous unwanted pregnancies because of contraception failures... The chair[person] of the General Practitioners Association... had urged a vasectomy for one patient whose wife had already had two abortions after contraception failure. The couple, who had three young children, did not have money for the vasectomy and applied for the grant. The alternative was a six-month wait, which could mean another pregnancy. The Government pays the full cost of very few vasectomies because they are seen as low priority operations. The onus is generally on the individual to come up with the \$200 to \$300. North Health... subsidises up to 900 vasectomies a year through the F[PA]. But low income earners with a Community Services Card must still pay \$161 towards the cost... [T]he subsidised rate was often still too much for a struggling family wanting permanent birth control.

...An Indonesian... cut off his penis with a kitchen knife after discovering his wife was pregnant for the ninth time. A friend said the [Indonesian] was extremely stressed at seeing his wife pregnant again, knowing his income was inadequate to support his family... [By the way,] Turkish maternity wards will have work on their hands over the coming months after 600,000 leaky condoms were exported from Germany. The “London” brand condoms were withdrawn from sale in Germany at the end of 1994... The manufacturer said the faulty batches were sent to be destroyed but a few weeks ago, a company executive in Turkey was offered... a batch of... the condoms, still in their original packaging with a German label.

...About 1000 packets of Trojan condoms, sold at service stations in packs of three, have been recalled after they failed to meet a safety standard. On Monday another brand of condoms, Ansell Affinity Extra Strength 12 packs with Nonoxynol 9, were also recalled.

...when is a condom a lemon? ...It may not have been the question on everybody’s mind yesterday, but it certainly occurred to a few of us: how do they know that a condom has failed a performance test and needs to be withdrawn? The recall notices published in every newspaper in the country this week announced that one batch of Trojan condoms (batch 3095, regular with spermicide, three-packs) “no longer meets” the N[Z] standard. The notice, inserted by Wilson Consumer Products, which distributes Trojans in N[Z], asked consumers to return condoms (the addition of the word “unused” seemed superfluous, to say the least) and promised a refund cheque by return mail. It has, it seems, been a bad week for condom makers. On Monday, there was an unrelated recall of another brand... All of this raised the question of how they knew the condoms weren’t working like a Trojan. Is this something that is brought to one’s attention by disgruntled customers who didn’t know until it was too late that there was a problem? ...the brand manager for the pharmacy division at Wilson, puts my mind at rest. Trojans... are tested by the distributors and A[US]n officials before being sent here. But that’s not the end of it. The official tester, known as the Therapeutic Goods Administration, randomly buys and tests condoms that are already on sale. It was just such a test that alerted them to the Trojan problem. The recall doesn’t mean that the Trojan or the Affinity are routinely disintegrating: the test procedure, which Ancell’s regional director... says is tougher in Australasia than in other territories, is exacting. In one, a condom is inflated with 48 litres of air (...that makes it about as big as “three or four basketballs end on end,” which, few would dispute, is well beyond normal operating requirements); in another it is filled with 300ml of water and checked for leakage – by close inspection and with absorbent paper. [The person] who leads the compliance team at the Ministry of Health in Wellington, says the test failure suggests the named brands are deteriorating... His team arranges for tests on 24 batches of 500 each year and allows a failure rate of only 0.4[%]. The trouble with the Trojan recall is that many of the defective batch have probably been used. [The brand manager] agrees that batch, being three-packs and sold only in service stations, would be more commonly bought by casual users or impulsive buyers rather than “people who take them home and put them in the drawer.” But [the brand manager] is relaxed about the predictable trickle of opportunistic lawsuits. [The brand manager] says every recall results in “two or three people ringing up saying that we are to blame for an unwanted pregnancy. But there’s no way they can prove it. They would have to prove they were using it correctly. I’ve never heard of a case succeeding.” ...[Incidentally,] Japan took a step towards approving the low-dose birth control pill yesterday after the key Health Ministry committee gave the oral contraceptive its blessing. That means Japanese [gals] may gain access to the pill for the first time next year.

...The latest in a series of studies on the newest formulation of birth control pills shows they do not increase the risk of blood clots. The study, in the American journal *Contraception*, shows second- and third-generation oral contraceptives carry the same risk of deep vein thrombosis... The third-generation pills were the focus of a worldwide scare in 1995, when several studies published in the British *Lancet* medical journal found they tripled the risk of such blood clots. Government regulators in Britain issued warnings about the pills, and they were followed by Germany and Norway. Sales of the pills, ironically formulated specifically to diminish health risks, plummeted in Europe. In the latest studies the researchers, whose work was financed by pill-maker Schering AG, re-analysed the data from the earlier studies. "We found, for first-time users, that the adjusted ratio of VTE (blood clots) as a function of the duration of oral contraceptive use is generally identical for second- and third-generation pills relative to never users," they wrote. They said the first-time study used many [gals] who had tried other pills before and who may have had problems with them. They also found the new pills did not increase the risk of heart attacks... [but 'reduced acne and helped with difficult periods.' However, they] said more studies were needed to determine absolutely whether the new pills carried any different risks from older ones.

...[when a 34-year-old NZer was 19 it] went to her local Family Planning clinic for contraceptive advice. After a brief chat with a doctor, [the 19-year-old] opted for an IUD... It was easier than remembering to take a pill every day and more convenient than a diaphragm, or so [the NZer] reasoned happily. It seemed an ideal solution, and it worked. [The NZer] didn't get pregnant. But now, [the NZer will] never have children, thanks to the tiny metal device. [The NZer] has endured agony after agony, both physical and mental, since having the Copper 7 IUD fitted. "I had no idea this one little thing would cause so much trauma in my life,"... Within about a year of having the IUD inserted, [the NZer] began experiencing vaginal discomfort. Her doctor gave her antibiotics but they didn't seem to help. By the time [the NZer] was 21 the discomfort had turned to pain and her periods stopped. [The NZer] saw a specialist who removed the IUD and found a piece of tissue, the size of a five cent piece, caught in the knotted cord. [The specialist] took swabs and advised [her] to have a smear test in six months. By then [the NZer] had moved to A[US] and a doctor there told her [that her body] had human papilloma virus (HPV), a virulent wart virus, which in some cases can cause cancer. Because the virus had spread extensively throughout her vulva, cervix and uterus, [the NZer] needed laser treatment to remove the infected cells. A laparoscopy – diagnostic surgery using a telescope-like instrument to look inside her body – revealed not only did [her body have HPV, it] also had pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), a disorder which causes infection and inflammation and in severe cases can lead to infertility. [The NZer] believes her body couldn't fight off the wart virus because it was ravaged by PID... Specialists told [her that] her uterus had "had it" and the best thing would be to have a hysterectomy. "I didn't stop to think, I just said okay. I was in a lot of pain and concerned I had an organ in my body that was diseased and could be dangerous." Her uterus and cervix were removed and during the operation her ovaries, which were covered in cysts, were "cleaned up" and put back inside her. "But I was still in a lot of pain and the HPV came back, so I started extensive laser ablation therapy." ...[the NZer] then had another laparoscopy, which revealed a cyst the size of an egg on her left ovary. As the ovary was no longer working, it was removed in February 1987. Her right ovary was taken out, cleaned and put back, this time in her back, away from her diseased pelvis. Adhesions were also discovered on her liver and kidneys. Not long afterwards [the NZer], who had all her treatment done privately and paid for it herself, returned to N[Z]. "I was still having problems and they decided my right ovary had died so they took it out. It meant everything was gone. I now had no ovaries, no uterus, no cervix. I was only 24. I had no hormones so I had to go on HRT (hormone replacement therapy). If I don't take it I get hot flushes and nausea... While I still had an ovary, I still had eggs and a chance of having a child of my own. I had asked my doctor if they could take some eggs and freeze them before they removed the ovary but [my doctor] said, 'We don't do that sort of thing.' Now there's no fertility treatment in the world that can give me back what was taken away. I had to face the fact that I could go through life alone. I thought, 'What [guy] was going to want me?'" But someone did... [They] were married in October 1994 and they've not given up on having a family. "We really want to be parents so we're looking into the possibility of surrogacy. That way there would be a genetic link through [my husband]. The tough part is finding someone prepared to do something so very special for us." If surrogacy isn't possible, they hope to adopt a baby from N[Z] or a child from overseas... [The NZer] says in many ways it was easier to deal with the fact [that her body] had lost the ability to have children because [the NZer had] always considered what happened to her to be "just one of those things". But that changed... when [the NZer] heard an item on the radio news about... [NZ gals] seeking compensation from American IUD manufacturers. A Wellington lawyer was acting on behalf of [gals] who alleged the Copper 7 caused PID, ectopic pregnancies, infertility and other complications. "When I heard that, something just went ding... Facing up to the fact that what I went through may have been due to a decision I made was really hard. It was easier to believe it was an act of God." After... years of ongoing legal action, claims by [herself] and 95 other [NZ gals] against GD Searle and Co, the [US] manufacturer of two brands of IUDs... have been settled. The... manufacturer and its N[Z] subsidiary did not accept liability but agreed to settle. "Nothing can make up for the loss of what we could have had... But now at least we can put the past behind us." ...• The Copper 7... was withdrawn from sale in N[Z] in 1987. The two brands used now are Multiload and Nova T, which have a different shape and cord to the Copper 7.

...New research shows that [gals] using hormone replacement therapy need to take progestogen for at least 10 days a month if they are to avoid endometrial cancer (cancer of the lining of the uterus)... [The] senior lecturer in reproductive medicine at National [Gals' Hospital says gals] using less than that dosage should switch to a longer progestogen regime. In the early years of hormone replacement, [patients] used to take oestrogen only. It was used to relieve menopausal symptoms, and to minimise post-menopausal bone loss. Unfortunately "unopposed oestrogen"... was found to cause a 10-fold increase in the risk of endometrial cancer. So doctors began to prescribe progestogen as well. That seemed to prevent any increase in the risk of endometrial cancer. But taking progestogen has a downside for some [gals]... "As the number of days of progestogen are increased, then so is the likelihood of experiencing side-effects such as bloating and weight gain and other premenstrual syndrome-like symptoms,"... [Gals on a] reduced progestogen regime should have annual cancer checks... Even after they stop hormone replacement therapy, this testing should continue for 15 years... [In related news, a] non-invasive treatment for fibroids may provide some [gals] with an alternative to the surgical removal of the uterus known as hysterectomy. The procedure, presented at a medical conference, involves a 5mm incision and uses a catheter to cut off blood-flow to the fibroid, a technique known as embolisation. It leaves the uterus in place... More than half a million American[s]... have hysterectomies each year, about one-third because of fibroids, which are non-cancerous growths that can cause pain and bleeding. There has been a raging controversy for years about whether many of these hysterectomies are unnecessary, and specialists have searched for alternative treatments that preserve the womb... A [patient] can no longer bear children after her uterus has been removed...

A new study has found greater reliance on "behavioural contraception"... – coitus interruptus... cleansing of the vagina and breastfeeding... – ...among [gals] having abortions than previously reported... ([p]revious studies had shown the use of behavioural methods ranging from nil to 22.6[%] – all less than [the 34.9%] recorded in the latest study[)]... leading to suggestions that there is a need for more education about the risk of pregnancy. [On a positive note, a British company has developed a 'natural birth monitor that tests urine – green = go; red = no (£50 + £10 for test sticks).']

...We were 9 months pregnant... and didn't know it... Aged 18 with no greater worry than her school exams, [subject #1] woke early one Sunday in 1992 with what [the teenager] thought was a severe belly ache. A warm bath eased her pain and [the teenager] went back to sleep. About 9am next morning, [the teenager] painlessly gave birth to a 2.9kg baby girl. Shock has dulled [her] memory of the event, but [subject #1] recalls wrapping the baby in a towel, walking to her parents' bedroom and entering with the words: "Look what I've got!" In the mad rush to reach the hospital that followed, [the teenager] asked her parents if [it] could keep the baby, to which her mother replied: "Don't be stupid, it's not a puppy." At the

hospital, mother and baby required urgent treatment: [the teenager] for serious haemorrhaging and the baby... for breathing difficulties. [The teenager], who mistook bleeding during her pregnancy for her period, admits [it] didn't take to instant motherhood easily: "It took me six months to bond with [my baby]. I hated the sight of her for a long time. I denied it. The first three weeks I was like a zombie. I kept waiting for someone to come and take [my baby] away." As the months passed, though, [the teenager] came to love her daughter like any mother and now wouldn't have life any other way... [A] senior lecturer at the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Melbourne's Mercy Maternity Hospital, says the incidence of unknown pregnancies occurs generally about twice a year. "Even if you are on the Pill, it can still happen. It is quite possible for a [person] to be on the Pill, have regular periods and be pregnant, because when you come off the hormone tablets and onto the coloured sugar tablets, you do bleed." ...It was a hot day and [subject #2] had planned a relaxing Sunday at the beach. But that morning [the 26-year-old] woke with agonising abdominal pains and... was certain [it had appendicitis]. Subject #2] went to hospital and sent doctors into a spin. They told her the mass they felt was either cancer... or a baby! "Well... I never dreamed it would be a baby, so that made me absolutely terrified because I really thought I was about to die." But [subject #2] was well into labor by the time [it] arrived at hospital and her baby was about to be born. Life [had] appeared perfectly normal for [subject #2] and her partner of four years... "I didn't have any morning sickness, everything was normal, I was still having my period regularly and I was taking the Pill... I locked up the office with my boss on the Friday night, and on Monday... had to ring him and ask... if I could have maternity leave!" ...[the] insurance underwriter had only put on a tiny amount of weight during the pregnancy... Amazingly, [subject #2] had seen her doctor several times during the pregnancy due to asthma, and had been three times in one week, but the baby was not detected. "Most people have nine months to get used to the idea; I had just nine minutes,"... [■ Engl]ish doctors are warning patients about the dangers of delivering babies in a birthing pool. The risk of the infant drowning during the underwater birth, which is thought to give the baby a gentler entry into the world, is well known. But doctors... of the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital in London, described how a two-day-old baby girl developed polycythaemia, a serious blood disorder, after a water birth. The baby was born without problems but the mother insisted on staying in the water with the baby during the third stage of labour, the delivery of the placenta. After 30 minutes [the mother] left the pool and 10 minutes later the umbilical cord was clamped and the afterbirth was expelled. The next day the baby was listless and not feeding properly. Tests showed that [the baby] had very thick blood with an exceptionally high concentration of red blood cells which could cause permanent brain damage. Doctors believe it was caused by an unusual amount of blood draining from the mother's afterbirth while they were both still in the pool. Because the pool is kept at around the same temperature as a warm bath, it allows the blood vessels in the umbilical cord to stay open much longer. When babies are born out of water, the blood vessels constrict quickly after the birth. The baby girl's blood was diluted and [it] has made a complete recovery.

...Giving birth at home is a safe and increasingly popular option... according to a study of... 9776 planned... home deliveries performed between 1973 and 1993... About 2[%] of births were planned home births in 1993, up from 0.04[%] in 1973... The perinatal mortality rate of 2.97 per 1000 births was not significantly different from a selected group of low-risk [mothers] having their babies at National [Gals'] Hospital over the same period. The rate was lower than the national perinatal mortality rate for the same period. The National [Gals'] Hospital figures were used for comparison as the home-birth population was mostly of low obstetric risk, said researchers. They found that many doctors and midwives regarded home birth as risky. Patients, however, saw it as a safe family event where they maintained personal control. The study did not investigate the demographic or socio-economic factors which may influence perinatal mortality. In N[Z], almost all births took place at home before 1914. By 1927, home births had slipped to 41[%] of total births, by 1936 to 18[%] and by 1951 to 5[%]. In related news, a self-styled... UK expert... says couples can choose to have a girl or a boy simply by changing the time they try to conceive. [The daughter of an] eminent physician... claims an 83[% success rate. The] method worked for [a] 37-year-old... and her husband... from Hayle in Cornwall. They have a four-year-old daughter... after following the advice for several months. "Having [a daughter] is proof to me you can choose," says [the 37-year-old]. "Now I feel fulfilled. I love my sons dearly but I felt a bit of a failure not having a daughter." There are many sceptics. [The physician's daughter, who is a former] nursery school teacher... has no scientific data, proof or medical qualifications. [The physician's daughter] simply bases her life's work on her own successful experience and on the desperate couples [the physician's daughter has] advised... "It's true there is no actual proof of what I'm saying, I'm merely a layperson who became interested. All you can do is look at the end results. The thousands of people who have used it say it works." ...After 30 years of counselling others, [the physician's daughter] concludes a couple wanting a girl should have sex regularly to lower the [guy]'s sperm count and they should make love more often just after the [gal]'s period has stopped... [In addition, the guy] should wear close-fitting underwear during the day about five days a month to lower his sperm count... Days 7, 8 and 9 are the most likely days for conceiving a girl. • Day one of your cycle is the first day of your period... For a boy, they should make love less frequently and try to have sex around the time of the [gal]'s mid-cycle, when [her body] produces an egg ready for fertilisation... [In addition, the guy] should wear boxer shorts and loose-fitting trousers to increase the circulation of cool air which will help increase his sperm count... If the [guy] has a low sperm count [it] should take cold showers for three months before trying for a baby... The results are at least based on the biological fact there are two types of sperm and they are known to behave differently. There is the longer-tailed androsperm which produces baby boys and the... gynesperm for girls. Because androsperms are quicker, they work best when a [gal] is ovulating... but they die off when the conditions are not so perfect. The [gyne]sperm is more hardy and, although slower, can survive until the [gal] produces another egg. It seems logical, then, that you can influence which type of sperm "wins" the egg and "sexes" the embryo. The mainstream medical profession has neither officially condemned nor endorsed [the physician's daughter's work. But the physician's daughter] does have support in the medical world and is sometimes recommended by sympathetic gynaecologists... [A gynaecologist] at the Hospital of St John and St Elizabeth in London has been referring patients to her for almost five years. "I don't know why it works but it does for the vast majority I have referred to her,"... says[the gynaecologist.

...gals] whose husbands were more than five years older tended to have boys first, but if their partner was younger or the same age their first child was usually a girl... say British researchers... at the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Liverpool... "We found that this was the case but only for first-born children,"... [The researchers'] findings support other studies showing boys are normally born during and shortly after periods of war or hardship... In most societies [husbands] are, on average, two years older than their wives or partners, but studies have shown that the age gap increased during both world wars, with a corresponding rise in the number of [boys born. The head researcher] said that rank in many animals is related to the sex of their offspring and the same is true of humans. "Human elites tend to have more sons than daughters. If you look at American presidents on the whole the number of sons they had exceeded the number of daughters. It is also the case for European royalty and aristocracy and business leaders...

[A British study of how diet affects the health of new mothers and their babies produced the surprise finding that vegetarian mothers are more likely to have girls. In what is thought to be the first study of its kind, researchers at Nottingham University found significant differences in the sex of babies born to vegetarian mothers and meat and fish-eating mothers. "The birth ratio in Britain is that for every 106 boys born there are 100 girls, that's pretty constant," said one of the authors. "In our sample group of vegetarians there were 81.5 boys born for every 100 girls." Previous studies have shown that diets high in potassium, calcium and magnesium produce more boy babies, but there is no evidence that a vegetarian diet lacks these elements.'

...the "Selnas method" of gender selection, which charts the electrical charge of the ovum (the electrical charge alternates during the month – when negatively-charged, the ovum attracts positively-charged androsperms; when positively-charged, the ovum attracts negatively-charged gynesperms), claims to have close to a 100% success rate – it worked for 153 out of 155 French couples over 5 years.' Another method, which claims to have a '73% success

rate, identifies androperm and gynesperm according to their DNA content (gynesperms contain over 2.8% more DNA' – hence 'sperm that produce girls are bigger than those which produce boys'), while Kiwi] couples could soon order designer daughters by mail. An Auckland clinic is seeking an ethical go-ahead to send semen to an American IVF unit... [which] gives an 85% chance of conceiving a daughter, but is less reliable with boys.

...[they] desperately want a daughter to complete their family. The Auckland couple, who have three sons, had given up hope of having a biological daughter and were trying to adopt an Eastern European baby girl. But a controversial scientific breakthrough in the U[S] has given the couple fresh hope of having their own daughter. The technique, offered by the IVF Genetic Centre in Fairfax, Virginia, is the first time gender selection has been available through artificial insemination. The fertility clinic has developed a technique for sorting the sperm with x-bearing chromosomes... from those with y-bearing chromosomes... About a million sperm are required, using a cell sorter which separates about 100,000 an hour... The technology increases either the number of x-bearing or y-bearing sperm in a sample. The result is that couples are five to six times more likely to have a girl or twice as likely to have a boy by using the sperm-sorting technique. "Those are brilliant odds," says [the wife], who at 38 is not prepared to undergo a normal pregnancy and risk having another boy. [The wife] is willing to go to the U[S] to have the treatment, although... it would be a lot easier if her husband's sperm could be sorted overseas and returned here. The Americans offer a mail-order sperm-sorting service, but N[Z]ers cannot use it until the technique gets official approval here. Sex selection is so new here that N[Z]'s ethics committee on assisted-human reproduction has yet to grapple with the issue. But fertility experts say it will not be long before the technique pioneered in the U[S] is more widely available around the world. There are doubts that the demand for the service will be strong enough in this country to justify the expense of the sperm-sorting machine, which costs millions of dollars. But it is likely that a nearby country, possibly A[US] or Singapore, will offer a similar service soon. The new treatment exposes the sperm to a DNA-binding dye and briefly to ultraviolet light. The clinic that pioneered the treatment says there is a risk that either of these procedures could cause DNA damage to the sperm. But experiments on animals show no evidence of increased birth defects. No reliable research is available on the application of the technology to humans because it is so new... [The director] of Fertility Associates, Auckland, says sex selection had started in the U[S] with little fanfare, but... predicted the topic would generate heated public debate in this country. "The Americans are not so introspective about these issues – they see the rights of the individual as being more important... The N[Z] way is to want to put their nose in other people's business." His clinic receives about one inquiry a fortnight from parents wanting to choose the sex of their child. "Does a group of people have the right to deny access to what would seem to be a reasonable request?" Fertility Associates did not have a view either way... but was interested in gauging public opinion. "I did an informal survey recently and found one-third would seriously consider using sex selection, one-third said they would not care, and one-third would oppose it. Most people's concerns are that all children should be valued, no matter what their gender..." ...If it is allowed in this country, [the director] says the technique will probably be used for gender balancing in families. But a population expert... of Waikato University, has reservations about a technique which allows humans to interfere with the natural balance of the sexes. The issue has to be given careful consideration... because little is known about the impact sex selection will have on demographics. "I would be very, very concerned. There are too many questions that remain unanswered on this issue." [The p]rofessor... says that in some societies, particularly those in South... and East Asia, there is a strong preference for boys, and there may be a latent preference in N[Z] for one sex in particular. A senior lecturer in medical ethics at the Auckland Medical School... also has some reservations over sex selection[– in particular, that if] the technique is allowed in this country... it will be available only to those who can afford to pay for it. "...is it fair that a rich person can choose what sex [its baby has] while a poorer person cannot?" ...As well as paying travel costs to the [US, NZ]ers will pay about \$2000 a cycle, plus \$1200 for tests beforehand to establish suitability for the technique... couples will [also] have the expense of replanting the sperm in the mother... [But the lecturer] says the technique has several advantages: If parents can choose the sex, it will probably lead to smaller families because parents will not have several children to get the sex of child they desire. "In an overpopulated world, this is surely a good thing."

...Once upon a time pregnancy was accomplished through two people having sex. It involved, hopefully, desire, intimacy, anticipation, and uncertainty. Pregnancy and childbirth were a voyage of discovery, a process of bonding closely as a couple in the shared task of preparing for the expected child. In sex selection, the prospective father has a solitary and probably bleak sexual experience. His sperm will be dispatched and returned, graded like hen's eggs, by Courierpost. Next, his wife will have the "sample" inserted by doctors in a clinic theatre. [Husband and wife] need not touch. They need not even jointly be present for either procedure. Sex is made utterly redundant. I suppose [the wife] could help him produce the specimen – this might be preferable to dirty magazines usually kept in clinic "wanking" rooms – and [the husband] might hold her hand during the insemination, or even help the doctor put it in (they do that in some clinics, so the dad can feel [like the dad] did it himself). But it doesn't compete with pelvic thrusting, does it? We seem to have come to a world where what ordinary human beings have done so successfully, for so long, is not good enough. Previous generations, including my own, were by and large content with what they got. There were all-girl families – like my family of birth – and all boy-families, like the one I produced. Part of the drama and excitement of the birth was finding out the sex of the child... Medicalising conception and birth potentially distances the parents from the humanness of this experience. It separates the [father from the mother] and diminishes their roles in the drama. Do we really know the effect this has? Prospective mothers are now so insecure they say they need ultra-sound scans to bond with their babies and make the pregnancy "real". They have to make up their minds whether to have a whole series of tests during the pregnancy to check the foetus is "normal". The implications of this is that you can't trust your own body to do its job without science confirming it, and that the only wanted child is a technically perfect child... Instead of letting nature take its course, with a bit of hit and miss, duplication, and surprise involved, we now have to be in control all the way. [Gals] have a duty to weed out defective offspring. Now the concept of the designer child is expanded to include control over the child's sex. This is being touted as giving parents "choice", that great icon of the consumer society. But will it? What if the [mother]'s wishes conflict with those of her partner? Or those of her wider family? ...Americans tend to think if you can pay for it, you should have it. N[Z]ers do not need to follow their example.

...Pick-and-mix families – the biggest leap forward in human reproduction since test-tube babies – may soon be available to N[Z] parents. Medical experts are meeting in Auckland this weekend at a gathering co-sponsored by North Health and Fertility Associates to grapple with the controversial issue of sex selection... The technology was originally developed for medical purposes – to avoid genetic diseases linked to... [sex] being passed on – but there is already a strong demand from parents who simply want to choose the sex of their child... The demand for sex selection in a small population such as N[Z] would probably be too low to have any impact on the overall gender balance... However, the issue of sex selection in some eastern cultures was more controversial, with [girl] babies considered less desirable.

...“One son is worth ten daughters,” exclaims the exultant South Korean mother of a newborn boy. It's a harsh assessment, but one often heard in [guy]-dominated Asian societies. In South Korea however, the preference for boys has taken a disturbing turn. There are at least 113 [guys] for every 100 [gals] in Korea, one of the highest gender imbalances in the world which, according to sociologists, has profound social implications. A shortage of wives is perhaps the most obvious of these, but more alarming is the willingness of many Korean [mothers to abort girl] foetuses in pursuit of a son. "People don't realise that it's a serious problem," says [the]sociology Professor... of Ewha [Gals'] University in Seoul. In a paper published this year, [the]Professor... cites recent estimates that up to 30,000 [girl] foetuses, or about one in every 12 girl births, are aborted each year after tests to confirm their gender. There are no official figures... [but the] Professor... notes that in a national survey in 1991, nearly one-third of respondents approved of abortion of [girl] foetuses. The abortion rate is extremely high in Korea. One survey says that half of all [gals] aged between 15 and 44 have had abortions, a rate that has stayed steady since the late 1970s. Abortion was widely used during South Korea's

successful 35-year population control programme, and it seems to remain so despite being illegal in most cases. "Many people do not feel guilty about abortion," explains... [a doctor at] the Government-run Korean [Gals'] Development Institute. "They think the unborn baby is not a human being." ...Most [Korean gals] pray for their first born to be a boy, consuming such bizarre folk medicines as raw rooster's testicles and holding religious services to boost their chances. They become increasingly desperate if they produce only girls, leading to more sex-tests and abortions... The so-called "son-preference" is rooted in South Korea's Confucian philosophy, which stresses the role of the son in carrying on the family's bloodline, and in various ancestral rituals. Bearing a son is regarded as a [wife's] most important role. Girls are secondary since they become part of their husband's family after marriage. But these traditions have been modified to suit South Korea's embrace of capitalism. It is a chauvinistic society where [gals] have little prospect of a well-paid job. Boys, simply, are a better bet for parents wanting financial support in their dotage.

...Launching what [it] claims is the "world's first 100[%] guaranteed baby sex selection project," [a]British gynaecologist... is unbothered by criticism that [it] is playing God. "The reality is that advances in human knowledge means doctors and scientists have ever greater opportunities to play God – many of which society welcomes in improving the quality of life, or the relief of suffering... Surgery is playing God and interfering with nature... so what's the difference?" [The gynaecologist] offers parents the chance to choose the sex of their unborn child by embryo selection for the equivalent of about \$20,000. Using existing... IVF... technology, his clinics in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and Naples, Italy, will take eggs and sperm from the couple, fertilise the eggs in a laboratory, then choose an embryo with the preferred sex to implant in the womb. [The gynaecologist] said the sex of the fertilised egg is evident after about 48 hours... Present sex-choice techniques involving sperm selection provide only an increased probability of one or the other... In applying techniques that have existed for 10 years to sex selection, [the gynaecologist] said, "it was simply a question of who would be first to grasp the nettle." ...[hi]s professional peers and British politicians have accused him of "flagrant ethical violations" and disturbing the balance of nature... [The gynaecologist] was alarmed by the force of the negative reaction, but that... was balanced by inquiries from parents keen on choosing the sex of their children... Asked about his religious beliefs, [the gynaecologist] said: "Church of England..." [The gynaecologist] said his clinics have a place in a world where sex selection is already commonly practised but in cruel and inhumane ways, the result of pressure to produce a male heir in many parts of the Middle and Far East and Africa... "Around the world tens of thousands of babies, whose only crime was being born of the 'wrong sex', are deliberately abandoned to... die." ...There are 15 or 20 clinics worldwide secretly offering sex selection...

['Of the 23 pairs of chromosomes, 22 are *autosomes*, that is, they are possessed equally by both sexes. In contrast, the 23rd pair, the *sex chromosomes*, differs in boys and girls. Girls have two X chromosomes (XX), and boys have an X and a Y (XY) chromosome. The X chromosome is about five times as long as the Y chromosome and carries more genes on it. Since the mother is XX, her ovum always contains an X chromosome. However, sperms may carry either an X or a Y chromosome. If a sperm with an X chromosome fertilizes the egg, the offspring will be a girl (XX); if the sperm carries a Y chromosome, the offspring will be a boy (XY). The sex of the child is thus determined by the father. The fact that some genes on the X chromosome have no equivalent genes on the Y chromosome results in the appearance of sex-linked recessive characteristics in boys. Since a boy has only one X chromosome, if the recessive allele for a defect is present on the X chromosome, the disorder will be manifested since there is no equivalent allele on the Y chromosome to counteract its effect. In girls the phenotypical expression of a recessive allele for a defect will be determined by its interaction with the matching allele on the other X chromosome. If the matching allele is a dominant one for normal development, it will overrule the effects of a damaging recessive allele. For example, hemophilia is a sex-linked trait carried on the X chromosome. Since it is recessive, if a girl receives the deleterious recessive gene from one parent, unless the matching gene from the other parent is also for hemophilia, it will have blood which clots normally. Only if the girl is homozygous for the recessive gene will her blood clotting be impaired. In contrast, if a boy receives the gene from the mother on the X chromosome, there can be no counteracting gene from the father and the son will be afflicted. Two types of abnormal sex chromosomal patterns in boys have been extensively studied. The first, which is known as Klinefelter's syndrome, involves an additional X chromosome – an XXY rather than the normal XY chromosomal array (XXY boys have testes although they are sterile, and they have many feminine characteristics such as breast development and a rounded, broad-hipped figure). The second pattern involves an extra Y chromosome, yielding an XYY array. They share with XXY boys a tendency to be significantly taller than normal boys. It has been reported that both XXY and XYY boys are impulsive and antisocial and are overrepresented in institutions for the mentally retarded and in prisons, particularly in those charged with violent crimes. A third pattern, known as fragile-X syndrome, has only recently been identified and is one of the most exciting new genetic discoveries. Advances in biology and genetics have opened new opportunities for shaping and controlling some aspects of development. Through amniocentesis and chromosomal analysis in early pregnancy we can detect not only the sex of the child but whether the child in utero has disorders such as sex chromosome abnormalities. Parents then have the option to abort and avoid the distress associated with a Down syndrome, sickle-cell anemia, Tay-Sachs syndrome, blind or paralysed child. But what kinds of ethical issues may arise from our growing genetic sophistication? If a fetus has no detectable genetic abnormalities, is sex of a child sufficient reason to abort? Biologists have been able to transplant animal embryos from one uterus to another, to remove and transfer genes from one organism to another, and to artificially synthesize a gene in a test tube. One of the processes which appears to have captured the public's imagination is called cloning, in which body cells are artificially induced to reproduce themselves. Through cloning it would be possible to reproduce a series of identical individuals from a single body cell. A recent novel presented the terrifying picture of cloned cells from Hitler being implanted in dozens of human wombs by rabid Nazis hoping to develop another Fuhrer. Some people might not regard all cloning as quite so undesirable. A basketball team of cloned Dr. J's would warm the cockles of many a coach's heart, and a university president might be delighted at the thought of the university's laboratories being filled with industrious clones from Nobel Prize winners.' □ The NZ] Government will soon introduce legislation to ban cloning of humans. The legislation also will prohibit animal/human hybrids and the implantation of human and animal embryos in the opposite species.

...Legislation outlawing commercial surrogacy... the sale of sperm, ova and embryos... and the cloning of humans had its first airing in Parliament last night.... [T]he Human Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill [will now]be referred to a select committee for consideration.

...TWENTY European countries have signed... the first international convention to control research into human genetic engineering and cloning. The Human Rights and Biomedicine Agreement, which took seven years to complete and was passed by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers in November, prohibits the creation of human embryos for research purposes. It also prohibits trade in human bodies or parts and regulates organ transplants. More countries, including all 40 Council of Europe members plus A[US], Canada, Japan and the U[S], may eventually sign the agreement.

...Leaders of 40 nations at a Council of Europe summit have pledged to... enforce a ban on any technique of human cloning that would attempt to create "a human being identical to another human being, whether living or dead." ...They also passed recommendations aimed at making the continent freer and fairer as it goes into the 21st century. The rare two-day meeting at the weekend wound up after taking a closer look at democracy in ex-communist states, hearing from new and would-be members about how they are implementing the rule of law. The summit's final declaration said the council would play a bigger role in protecting human and social rights and helping member states face the challenges of changing societies... The declaration listed among its goals the universal abolition of the death penalty... The summit also pledged to step up the battle against international scourges such as terrorism, organised crime... drug trafficking, racism and anti-Semitism. Speeches revealed different views of the purpose of the council, a less-known body than the European Union – from which it is completely separate – and the possible rival Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). One apparently attractive feature of the council is that the U[S] is not a member.

...An ethics panel in the U[S] recommended on Saturday that Congress enact legislation to ban the cloning of entire human beings for now, but allow the cloning of human embryos for private laboratory research. Under the scenario proposed by the National Bioethics Advisory Commission, scientists or doctors... would be prohibited from implanting them in [human] wombs to make viable babies. "Human cloning that leads to the birth of a child should be forbidden by law for at least three to five years," the panel said in its report, which will be sent to [the US President today. The President] asked the advisory group in February to review the complex legal and ethical ramifications of cloning after scientists in Scotland reported they had cloned a lamb – which they named Dolly... Polls shortly after the announcement of the Dolly cloning showed 90[%] of Americans opposed human cloning. [The President] in March broadened his 1994 prohibition on Government-funded human embryo research to include federal funding of human cloning work, saying it raised deep concerns "given our most cherished concepts of faith and humanity. Each human life is unique, born of a miracle that reaches beyond laboratory science. I believe we must respect this profound gift and resist the temptation to replicate ourselves,"... The commission's recommendations appeared to meet the most immediate concern of many Americans – that the procedure that produced Dolly might be used to make children who would be exact genetic copies of a single adult. But critics complained the commission had not gone far enough... [A] Missouri Republican... Senator... said it left the door wide open to future cloning... [In related news, more] than 87 million people in China are surnamed Li, making it the most commonly used family name in the country... [and] the planet... Li, family name of 7.9[%] of China's... population, replaces Zhang as the number one name in China which is listed in the *Guinness Book of World Records*. The surnames Li and Zhang are two of over 10,000 family names used in China, a country composed of 56 ethnic groups, said a study conducted by the Institute of Genetics under the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

...*Hui's who's who crisis shared by millions* LI HUI'S identity crisis hit rock bottom when [Li] started work at the Grand Hotel Beijing a few years ago. [Li quickly discovered it] wasn't the only Li Hui around. In fact, [Li] wasn't even the only Li Hui at the front desk. There were two, including himself, while another worked in financial. When another pair of Li Huis showed up for training months later, the count rose to five. Phone messages were a headache; office raffles were hell ("And the winner is: Li Hui"). Eventually, Li escaped the hotel business but not his identity. Now [Li] listens to radio personality Li Hui read the headlines. Two of his buddies have other pals called Li Hui. By his own reckoning, Li (28) has met six people in Beijing who have his name[, but] knows of scads more. "Maybe I'll form a Li Hui club," [Li] mused one afternoon... "That'd be fun." In the latest of China's looming shortages, from jobs to electricity to marriageable [gals], chalk up another commodity: names. The country claims one-fifth of humanity but just a fraction of its surnames. Of the 12,000 surnames that existed in China centuries ago, only 3100 remain today – a tiny number for 1.2 billion people, experts say. Indeed, the nation's top five family names cover nearly one-third of the population. Couple the shrinking surname supply with a serious lack of invention by many parents in producing given names for their children and you wind up with thousands bearing the same name – along with instances of mistaken identity. Lab tests get mixed up, as in the case of the [guy] who told relatives [it] had inoperable cancer when the unlucky patient turned out to be someone else. Love letters get opened by the wrong blushing recipients. Suspects get arrested for crimes they did not commit, including one [guy] in Shandong province whose name not only matched the villain's but also the local security chief.

...About 1000 police and paramilitary officers have been rushed to the southern Chinese city of Gaozhou to stop clashes over birth-control fines. One official was left suffering internal bleeding after the clashes. An independent daily newspaper, *Ming Pao*, said it understood the fighting began when birth-control officials swooped on the city's Zhaojiang county. Their mission was to check for families with more than one child and to ensure [gals] had been sterilised or fitted with [IUDs. Three guys] were arrested when they tried to warn residents of the arrival of the officials... Many people were also angry at the death of a 26-year-old... after [the 26-year-old] was forced to have an IUD fitted. Another [gal], aged 40, had to pay 10 yuan... for a medical examination to check whether [the 40-year-old] had been sterilised or had an IUD... [■ Babies] totalling the equivalent of N[Z]'s entire population... were born every eight weeks last year in China.

...The number of registered residents in China's capital... is now 12.594 million, according to official figures published in the Chinese press... [Incidentally, t]he world's population will swell to 6.1 billion by 2000 from its present 5.8 billion, and jump to 6.8 billion by 2025, according to a report by the Population Reference Bureau in Washington.

... "Population is not about counting people, but ensuring people count..." [a NZer] told the 1994 Cairo world population conference. Her words set the theme for N[Z]'s first official population conference[, which comes]... at a critical time of radical demographic change. We need to take stock of human capital resources, assess the population's access to social capital resources and ensure that people are taken into account in public policy. Until now we have had relatively high population growth rates. Our ideology has been that population growth is an essential driver for our economy. Recent debates about migration, viewing it as an instant panacea for the economy and an antidote to ageing, illustrate this... Radical fluctuations in fertility levels from prewar to the baby-boom, then the period since, have severely distorted the population's age-distribution. A "baby blip" increased birth numbers around 1990. We now face population waves battering different life-cycle stages, creating peak demands for market products and social services, followed by an ebbing of demand. These waves are inexorable: the people involved are already born. But it is prudent to project their impact. We must debate what sort of society we would like to be, and how these waves might reduce or enhance our chances of achieving it... The baby blippers born about 1990 are the key to meeting the burden of an ageing population. As yet, we seem concerned only with their schooling and health needs. But what about 2005-10 when the baby blip generation enter secondary and tertiary education, and the labour market? Will they have the scientific and technical skills needed for a wealth-generating society? Will they be fully employed, mostly in highly skilled and highly-paid jobs, so that they can look after the baby-boomers? Or will they be under-skilled and dependent on the dole, a fiscal burden themselves, diminishing what savings we might make for the baby-boomers? The last time such a youth bulge hit the labour market, in the 1980s, we radically restructured our economy, then ran a depression on the backs of the young and less skilled. Nobody can disagree with the need for that restructuring but we must deplore the fact that it was undertaken without consideration of human capital implications. Among us are cargo-cultists who believe that we will be always able to meet skill shortages by migration. But the U[S] has our demographic profile. When we need young skilled people, they will too... Public policy debates in N[Z] in recent years have been notable for their failure to discuss human capital. The emphasis has been mainly on financial aspects. In an era in which public sector accountability has become a religion, its most fundamental question – the people it should serve – has been superseded in favour of the short-term and narrow objective of balancing annual budgets. There is a parallel bias in private sector planning. Overseas, by contrast, senior commentators are looking at how demographic composition drives longer-term market trends... It is only by taking broader approaches that high-profile issues can be put into perspective.

...policy issues [were] being raised outside the... Population Conference... – notably at an "alternative conference" held last weekend by the Wellington-based Pacific Institute of Resource Management. It raised two broad issues. First, is there an optimum sustainable population, or "carrying capacity," that we should set as a target for N[Z]? And secondly, if there is room for immigrants in a sustainable population policy, how should they be chosen? Estimates of our "carrying capacity" were surprisingly low. [A s]oil scientist... said that compared with most [First World] countries we have very limited resources – only about 5[%] of our land area has good-quality soils, and we have few metals or other minerals. [A f]uturist... quoting the Government's own recent State of the Environment report, said the average N[Z]er used resources equivalent to 5ha of productive land. Given that we have only 21 million hectares of productive land, and 3.6 million people, with today's lifestyles we are already up to 90[%] of our carrying capacity. In his view, we should therefore hold our population where it is, or reduce it. Of course this argument is complicated by trade – it would be ridiculous to say that a city-state like Singapore, for example, should have its population limited to the carrying

capacity of its productive land. But the argument is basically right, if viewed from a global perspective. We are sustaining the 5.9 billion people in the world only by keeping most of them at a standard of living well below what we enjoy in N[Z]. So on a global scale there is a real limit to how many people we can sustain at any given standard of living. If either population or living standards increase in poorer countries, then this may only be sustainable, at some point, if population or living standards in richer countries like N[Z] come down. From this perspective, we should certainly be trying not to have too many children, and to change our lifestyles so that we put less strain on the environment... But this doesn't necessarily mean that we shouldn't accept immigrants. In principle, if our concern is the welfare of the world rather than purely of ourselves, we should let people live where they want to live. Until living standards in poorer countries are raised to our own levels, that is likely to mean some net inflow of people to this country. Traditional economic arguments about whether immigrants benefit our standard of living are irrelevant – we actually need to lower our material living standards, so that we share resources more fairly with other countries and put less strain on the environment. However, social arguments are still relevant in determining how quickly we let people in. It would be unfair to the immigrants if we didn't limit their numbers each year to the number that we can house, teach English to, find jobs for and provide with all the other facilities that an increased population needs... Which brings us... to the second issue at the alternative conference: how to select the immigrants once we decide to take some. The director of the Refugee and Migrant Service... said we should use part of our refugee quota of 750 people a year to bring the immediate families of refugees who are here. [The director] was appalled at the Government's "unconscionable and inhumane decision" to make such relatives get police and psychiatric certificates and pay \$700 plus their air fares to come here. With 26 million refugees seeking resettlement around the world, [the director] also believes we should increase our intake of refugees at least to, say, 1000 a year.

...ASYLUM seekers who see N[Z] as a soft touch are in for a rude awakening... as the Government moves to stem the tide of refugees... N[Z] takes an annual allocation of 800 refugees... but the latest figures showed that in 1995, 1251 others from 63 countries arrived seeking refugee status. Of those 73% were declined, but because N[Z] had some of the most humane refugee procedures in the world, asylum seekers could stay for up to three years while they challenged the decision. The asylum seeker was eligible for the unemployment benefit and other social welfare handouts if... [it] could not find a job, and the legal procedures were funded by the taxpayer through the legal aid system... [The] Immigration Minister... has ordered a major [review] of procedures relating to refugees... cit[ing] the case of two African stowaways who left a ship in Dunedin earlier this month seeking asylum. They had been earlier refused... entry into the Philippines. When they got to N[Z] they claimed to be fleeing from war-torn Rwanda – possible grounds for asylum – but immigration officials believed they were from Cameroon... "[D]isincentives" should be placed on shipping companies to curtail stowaways. There had been a long-held view by immigration officers that crew on ships arriving at ports were paid by stowaways to hide them on board until they reached N[Z]. Airlines can be made to fly people out of N[Z] at their own cost if they arrive with incorrect documentation... The review will be examined at a conference in [3 months]... The review mirrors developments in A[US], where refugee policies are also under the spotlight. Like N[Z], asylum seekers could stay in A[US] while they contested decisions. However, they were not eligible for social welfare payments... [By the way, the] population of greater Auckland climbed to an estimated 1,138,300 people by June 30 this year, according to statistics released yesterday. It grew at a much faster rate than the rest of the country, leaping... 2.6[%], compared with... last year.

...Auckland could be posting "no vacancy" signs in 17 years given current development policies... By then, all the available opportunities for metropolitan infill housing and redevelopment, new "greenfields" developments in the metropolitan area and in rural and coastal towns, and rural-residential development are expected to have been used up. This assumes a high population growth. Even if growth is at the lower end of the projected rates, the region's residential capacity is expected to be reached within 30 to 38 years. Auckland is at present growing at close to the high rate. There were 357,338 dwellings in the region last year... with an expected gain until 2026 of between 133,000 households (the low-growth projection) and 268,000 (high growth). This would take the population from its current level... to an estimated 1.3... to 1.59 million.

...Auckland City Council has been accused of misleading ratepayers during the development boom between 1993 and 1995. The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment... has taken the council to task over its response to environmental issues and the way it handled consultation with the community... [I]t gave out "erroneous signals" to residents at the height of the infill housing furor. In its 1993 proposed district plan the council said that in areas such as the eastern suburbs the capacity for infill development would decrease. But residents were not told that there was an achievable capacity for... an extra 7200 units in Eastern Bays. Similar situations occurred in Avondale and Mt Albert. "Public expectations that infill would decrease were wrong and the council statements may have resulted in residents not making submissions on the proposed district plan because they believed that infill was under control,"... What followed were public meetings where the council was lambasted by residents outraged at what appeared to be unbridled infill development and its impact on suburban infrastructure and amenity values... [His] investigation into the management of suburban amenity values was triggered by the large number of complaints his office received about the infill development... His... report says several factors contributed to the rise in infill housing, including the ability of some developers to build under old rules. Council planning staff faced significant work overloads at the time. This led to the use of private consultants but made it harder for potentially affected neighbours to scrutinise consent applications. The report says the council had "little regard for community groups or the wider environment."

...an environmental adviser and former chair[person] of the Auckland Regional Council's parks committee... laments the loss of a chance to plan for population growth and has a novel solution for Auckland... The recent national conference on population seems to have been something of a flop. It's a pity because reaching a national consensus on a population level should be a matter of some urgency – not just for the future provision of social services like... health, education and employment, housing and basic community services... but also for management of our environment. Centralised planning seems to have been lost from N[Z] culture since the Rogernomics reforms. Once upon a time the country used to take these things fairly seriously. There were regular national development conferences and until the 1970s a National Development Council. And not just N[Z] – national planning led to the rebuilding of Western Europe and Japan after [WW2]... When I was a member of the A[RC] I sat on the committee responsible for producing the Regional Policy Statement. This bulky document, a requirement under the Resource Management Act 1991, was enormously time consuming, expensive and once finished tends to be put away to gather dust in the library. It is a form of planning you have when you are not really allowed planning. In one of countless meetings on the draft council members were given the usual list of Auckland's growing infrastructural and environmental problems – clearly caused by the disproportionate population increase of this region. I suggested inserting a sentence stating that Auckland's development problems could not be solved at regional and city levels alone but required active central government planning. This was seen as 'political' but after an uproar I succeeded. A few months later the policy statement was redrafted and the offensive state planning sentence was quietly dropped. Four years later Auckland's population still continues to grow and so do the problems – transport, waste disposal, environmental degradation and the loss of open space and productive land... Little infrastructural investment has been made in the 25 years since the days... when Auckland's last dams, motorways and harbour bridge were completed. The Auckland Regional Services Trust estimates that \$6 billion of infrastructure is required in the near future... Auckland attracts 80[%] of new immigrants and N[Z]ers alike... We are told that most people prefer to come to Auckland not just for jobs but for the climate. A move to warmer areas is an international trend in [First World] countries... There is a need to divert people from Auckland somehow. Simply ordering people to places like Oamaru will not do. There is need for some lateral thinking. The Far North has the best year-round climate in the country and miles of some of the best beaches in the world – yet the area is a by-word for depression and rural slums. Clearly in neglecting the Far North we... are wasting the full potential of our country. The Government should look seriously at planning for a future city in the Far North... Such a project would create long term work and reduce Northland's notoriously high unemployment rates. A new city would not only take the pressure off the Auckland region but could be an

international showcase for N[Z] technology and environmental management. No doubt this suggestion will be seen by cynics as a pipe-dream and they may be right... However dreams are preferable to the growing nightmare of sprawling Auckland.

...PEOPLE who live in small towns in the South Island, like Alexandra, Ranfurly or Palmerston, greet with deep cynicism stories like the one from Auckland reporting that... [a pair of merchant bankers] have sold their mansions... for \$5.1 million and \$8m, and are upping sticks for greener pastures in Europe. Are these not the [same guys] who had a temporary starring role during the infamous "Winebox" inquiry, people ask – and especially those people in the land agency business who have been living on short rations lately... Business people in southern small towns read with amazement the claims from Wellington and Auckland about "Positive Outlook for NZ Economy." The headlines appear to be repetitious, all on the optimistic and positive aspects of economic activity. Indeed, they often wonder if the architects of such propaganda ever leave their plush offices and travel through areas that have to rely on the primary sector for the bulk of their income... And what is occurring in the hinterland must be reflected in Dunedin and Otago generally because the National Bank's regional trends report has Otago's economic activity trailing the nation for the first time since 1987. While Bay of Plenty, Wellington, Waikato and Northland showed handsome 3% growth, Otago recorded -0.2%... There has been criticism of the Dunedin City Council for what is termed its "lack of leadership" and [the]Mayor... has taken stick for being, allegedly, against industrial expansion. But the problem is deeper than that. Otago has tended to look backwards at what was when the province sailed majestically forward commercially and industrially on the prosperous waves created by the old gold rushes of the 1860s... [● Although the population] drift from South to North Islands reversed between 1991 and 1996 when the South Island gained about 5000 people... the... North Island will be home to 78[% of NZ]ers in less than 25 years, says Statistics N[Z].

...South Island mayors have rubbished forecasts that nearly 80[% of NZ]ers will live in the North Island by 2021... "It just couldn't happen," said the mayor of Invercargill... "They are going on an old trend and we have bottomed out down here. Our farming, fishing, forestry and tourism won't go away." Statistics NZ said Invercargill's population would fall 13,000 by 2021. About 50,000 live there now. "What comforts me is that in 1970 they predicted Invercargill's population would be in excess of 90,000 by 1990... That was so far off the mark – this latest projection looks wrong, too." ...[the mayor] said the Government should encourage people to move south, "because I just can't believe that everyone will want to live in Auckland." The southern lifestyle was exceptional, [the mayor] said. People lived comfortably and everyone knew their neighbours... The mayor of Christchurch... said statisticians should not underestimate the human reaction to overcrowding. "I recently spent an hour and a half on the Auckland motorway and found it stressful. We didn't go very far and I would hate to do that every day. But this report is very helpful and a timely warning to South Islanders. We need to market the South Island exclusively as a tourist destination, distinct from the rest of N[Z]."

...FIRST the Post Offices closed, then the banks. Small-town N[Z] weathered falling export prices for meat and wool, an end to farm subsidies, the closing of dairy factories and meat works. But with the banks went retail business. Across King Country, Taranaki and Bay of Plenty and up into the Far North, small towns have been hard hit. Empty buildings and boarded shop fronts pepper once-busy towns. Is small-town N[Z] dying, a victim of Rogernomics, Government cuts and centralisation? As N[Z]'s total population continues to grow (3.72 million in March) small-town N[Z] gets even smaller – unless it is somewhere tourists or superannuitants want to be. The populations of coastal Coromandel, Tauranga and Northland are burgeoning. Northland grew by around 12[%] and Rodney, the fastest-growing district in N[Z], jumped 20[%] in three years as Aucklanders moved north. But elsewhere it's a different story. "It would appear the aim of central Government is to close rural towns," says... the local police[officer] in... Kawakawa... To the casual observer Kawakawa is thriving – the well-established town centre for a large farming hinterland – but [the police officer] says the departure of the banks was the final straw. "We need something to combat unemployment. They're looking for somewhere... to build a prison. Why not Kawakawa? It would bring a business boost for the town." Every shop has experienced declining business... and the shoe shop closed altogether. Bay of Islands Intermediate, opened for 500 pupils, closed last year when the roll dropped to 110. "The bowling club and the rugby club are well down in numbers and the rugby league club has gone out of existence. If we didn't have the train we'd be just a memory," says [the police officer]. The train, which runs up the middle of the main street, brought 90,000 people last year... [The] secretary of the Kawakawa Business and Progressive Association and bookshop owner, hopes the soon-to-be refurbished public toilets will also be a tourist attraction. "We're getting[an] artist... to put his mark on them. Hopefully people will say, 'Wow! we'll go back there. They've got these neat toilets,'" [the secretary] laughs... It's the same story over the hill in Moerewa. While the region's population rose, Moerewa's dropped by 10[%] to 1697 in 1996. "We can still rely on one another," says [a spokesperson for] the He Iwi Kotahi Tatou (we are all one people) Trust. The trust is the driving social force in a town decimated by the closing of the dairy factory and the drastic "down-sizing" of Affco, the meat works plant the town grew up around. The trust's monthly newsletter, with a 1500 print run, goes into every household in Moerewa and Kawakawa... "About 70[%] of our people are unemployed. That's [Last] World status,"... Many people are angry about unemployment, [the spokesperson adds]. It was not their choice and it has had such a devastating effect... [Her husband, who is] the trust's community worker, says rural communities are facing a lot of issues... But people are starting to fight back. "If we are waiting for a saviour to come in the form of a large company, it is not going to... [However, there] are opportunities in tourism, fisheries and forestry..." ...The whole town is planning a festival – Moerewa Magic – for the end of the month... [and] Moerewa on the Move is the town slogan... The changes are starting. Volunteers help with the trust-run school holiday programmes; a shoe shop has recently reopened; plans are under way to develop a small town reserve with a play and picnic area and to rebuild the public toilets, dismantled because of repeated vandalism... Community caring is a necessary ingredient in towns dislocated by economic change and government policies. Caring is a common small-town theme, whether you're in Kawakawa, Moerewa, Ohura or Pio Pio in the King Country... Pio Pio has a well-cared-for look about it. Volunteers have transformed a vacant lot into an attractive village green, and vacated premises have found new owners – the old ANZ Bank has become a plant shop and homoeopathic clinic. A monthly newsletter, Bird Talk, goes to 740 area households. "If Pio Pio has any disadvantages it is that our children grow up and leave the area for work," says... [the chairperson] of the community board... who has lived in Pio Pio for 30 years... For... Pio Pio's police[officer], the close community is both a plus and a minus. "I know who the crooks are and they know me. We have a working relationship. But it can get a bit tricky when you have to arrest someone you know really well." AT OHURA, the... population of the area has slipped around 5[%] in the past five years but there is still "a core of people who love it here," says... [someone who] works at the Ohura Foodmarket and Hardware[store]. Apart from that only a dairy, a garage and the Cosmopolitan Club ("the only place to get a drink") are left in the town. "People have to go to Taumarunui to get money and they shop there." [The shop assistant] moved to Ohura from Auckland 10 years ago. "I love it here... You know everybody. In Auckland, if someone smiles at you, you feel for your wallet." Business continues to decline slowly... though the 100 prisoners at Ohura Prison are a big support. "They spend a fortune in the shop." Some of the 30 prison staff and their families also live in Ohura, helping to boost the town. [Kawakawa's police officer] might be on to something for [his town after all].

...NZ's] first natural population increase after five years of decline was recorded in the year to the end of September. Births exceeded deaths by 29,973, compared with 28,791 to September 1996.

...A message to young N[Z]ers: you all need to work and have two kids. In return, the student loan scheme should go and there would be more state support for your busy career and family lives. The recipe came yesterday from [population]experts... as ways to address the problems of a slower-growing and ageing population. Professors... from the Population Studies Centre at Waikato University... said it was a crucial part of the country's prospects next century to address the future of the "baby blip" generation. That was the surge around 1991 which took the country back to the 2.1 births per [gal] level needed to replace deaths in our population. Ideally... today's youngsters will keep to that replacement level when

they grow up. [One of the professors] acknowledged that policies coercing or even giving incentives for reproduction have not worked, either overseas or in N[Z]. The professor said, however, that better family support systems, in areas such as housing, could help birth rates.

...THE nuclear family is expanding. Baby boomers who have already seen economic pressures and student loans persuade their children to stay at home, often until well into their 30s, are now deciding it's probably time for their ageing parents to move in as well. That decision is sparked by uncharacteristically unselfish motives from what's been called the selfish generation. Research shows the primary motivation is to do the best for mum and dad. But the growing trend is revealing unexpected fishhooks that often snag the best intentions, resulting in the older parent moving out after a while. Only about 13% of N[Z]ers in the 60-plus age group – some 68,000 – live with their families, but Age Concern's chief executive... says those numbers continue to grow. Partly that's because... [g]overnments and councils are trying to shed responsibility for housing and support services for the elderly, and families are being forced to take on more responsibility for their older parents... Age Concern's CEO... says it's worth remembering that in many cases the suggestion for older parents to move in with adult children comes up when there is a crisis and the children are in "do something" rescue mode. Consequently, other options that might work better are not considered... Other options include the older person continuing to live independently, but with the assistance of the wide range of specialist support services available such as the Stroke, Arthritis and Alzheimers Foundations, various church groups, Meals on Wheels and Age Concern. Most local councils still offer low cost rental accommodation for the elderly, although the waiting lists can be long. There are alternatives like the Abbeyfield Societies, which provide a house for up to 10 people. Each person has an ensuite bedroom, and they all share the costs of a housekeeper who cooks the main meal of the day, does the heavy duty housework and doing their shopping for them. If moving in with the family still seems the best option, [the CEO] suggests a holiday with the family before any final decision is made to move in... "We sort of imagined it would be like *The Waltons* where grandma and grandpa lived with the family and you would all muck in together," said one person whose parent later moved out. "Our understanding was that we had a good opportunity to get together more and to participate in family life. That never happened – quite the opposite." [The CEO] says failure to clarify needs and expectations... beforehand... can turn even the best intentions sour. "For example, we had a [old person] who'd moved into her family's place after... [being] widowed. They were a lovely caring family, really doing it for the best motives. But they were a grown-up family, all working, so the older [person] would hold off going to the bathroom in the mornings because it was like Grand Central Station with everyone needing to use it. No-one realised her needs were being put on the back-burner. And as a result [the elder] developed an incontinence problem, which created more work for her daughter because [the daughter] ended up having wet bedding and wet linen. The daughter growled at her mother for not being more assertive and saying [it] needed to go to the loo." Television – the source of many problems when older parents come to live – was in this case the last straw. As often happens, the younger family wanted to watch different programmes, so the [e]lder... got a television set in her bedroom. "So more and more [the elder] was retiring to her bedroom, and... actually became quite isolated within the household. Her quality of life became worse than when... living by herself: [the elder] had companionship around her but it wasn't always compatible companionship. And it threw a lot of stress on the whole family unit because they loved... grandma but they didn't know what her needs were and how to deal with them." ...Planning... is the key, and that has to include financial arrangements, like whether rent or board will be paid, or whether the older person will contribute towards the costs of adding on an extra bedroom or building a granny flat. In the 1980s there were rebates for granny flats, but those have now disappeared.

...A growing number of N[Z]ers are sandwiched between helping to support elderly parents and the financial burden of bringing up children. This "sandwich generation" has been created by the trend towards later childbearing... – ...[the average age at which NZ gals give] birth has risen... [to] 28.5 years, up from 25.4 years in 1975... – ...coupled with the fact that young people are spending longer in the education system and so remain dependent on their parents for longer, says the newly released Statistics N[Z] report, *Ageing and Retirement*. Cuts in educational and health spending, and the emphasis on self-help and user-pays, have left parents often supporting children well into their 20s while at the same time having elderly parents in need of care... Grandparents are likely to live longer, too. Until 30 years ago much of the statistical increase in life expectancy was illusory in real terms because it was due to declining infant mortality rates. But most of the gains of the last three decades have been concrete... [One couple]'s story is not unusual: in their 50s, they work hard to pay the mortgage and daily expenses, supporting one child at university and another at polytech, and helping out an elderly parent. "It makes me angry when I'm told I also need to be saving a third of my salary to pay for my retirement," says [the husband]. "How the hell am I supposed to do that?" With an increase in one-parent families – from 9 to 18[%] over the past 20 years – grandparents in their 50s are also finding themselves more and more providing crucial support. [One grandparent] who helps her daughter financially, has cut her paid working hours to be on hand for her three grandchildren while their mother works part-time... The increasing numbers of [gals] in the paid workforce – only 31[%] of those aged 15-64 in 1996 were not in the workforce – have important implications, says the report. It suggests there may be increasing ability among the "young elderly" (65 to 75) to care for older people. "Many of those who retire at 65 can expect several years of good health in which they would be capable of caring for relatives." The working-age population is expected to peak at 2.80 million by 2020, dropping slowly to 2.67 million by 2051. At this time [SNZ] projections show that 25[%] of the population will be 65 and over. It is now 12[%]. This will mean disproportionately fewer people of working age will be available to support increasing numbers of retired people. However, there will also be proportionately fewer dependent children than in the past. The average number of children to a family has fallen continuously from 2.49 in 1966 to 1.96 in 1996 and is expected to fall further.

...A pensioner, call him Bob, had a birthday this week... I met Bob for only a few minutes in the course of another assignment. [Bob] called us in over the worn carpet, shook our hands from the well-used armchair where [Bob] rested a busted leg... in Bob's smoke-filled living room... and told us what [this pensioner] knew. Bob turned 70-something that day[and] said his best present was the return to health of one of his cats... his... only... company, for the best part of 20 years... His wife died in the 1960s, his two sons had married and left home. I got the impression [Bob] spent his days rattling around the old place, feeding his cats, maybe occasionally looking at the faded photographs on the mantelpiece. [Bob] did not ask for sympathy, [and] did not seem terribly down, but I left with a sense of his aloneness... Bob got me thinking how many others are out there, living behind drawn curtains. According to the 1991 census a third – or about 127,000 – people over the age of 65 live alone, a statistic which can only have grown markedly in recent years as the average age of the population rises. Beyond those figures there are the grislier stories of elderly people who die and their body not being found for weeks. The voluntary organisation Age Concern reports that its visitor programme for older people living alone can barely keep up with demand. Its national director... says there is a fine line between interfering and supporting. But... people should take time out of their busy lives to care more about their elderly relatives or neighbours... It's not a charitable act... because elderly people have a wealth of experience to give back. I'm ashamed to say I haven't talked to my grandmother in several weeks, probably months. But I've been busy and [Gran]'s in another city, and... and there are no excuses really, so I hope [Gran]'s standing by the phone. [Editor's note: If elderly people have a wealth of experience, how come the bed-wetting granny (r:Ins23-4 above) never thought to use a bed-pan?]

...Dry nights are a long way off for the country's 180,000 bed-wetters. A world authority... said the reason people continued to wet their beds beyond early childhood remained a mystery. However, advances were being made for people who regularly woke to the dreaded damp feeling... [T]he director of the Swedish Enuresis Academy, is in the country giving seminars on bedwetting diagnosis and treatment. Many adults who had wet their beds since birth had no idea treatments were available, [the director] said. It was important doctors could give accurate information. Bedwetting among young children did not primarily stem from psychological problems but medical deficiencies... Problems often arose because their "arousal systems" did not work when the bladder was full. As well, some people did not produce anti-diuretic hormones. Bedwetters could

easily develop psychological problems through the sense of shame or from being ridiculed... [I]nternational research was focused on sleep patterns, bladder function and hormone secretion. A common treatment was to use alarm-triggered mattresses which woke the bedwetter when moisture was felt. Anti-depressants were sometimes prescribed or anti-diuretic hormones to concentrate the urine. This remedy, however, merely delayed bedwetting until later in the night in some cases. "We are still far away from one single pill to cure bed-wetting,"... Recent research showed that about 15[% of NZ] families had one or more bedwetters... [□ Fewer NZ]ers are marrying each year despite more [guys and gals] being of marriageable age. Releasing the 1996 Demographic Trends report, a Deputy Government Statistician... said that in the year to December 1995, 21,579 couples married – 300... fewer than in 1994. The decrease continued the general downward trend recorded since 1991. In 1995 first time-grooms were, on average, 28.9 years old while brides were... 26.9... [Today's NZ]ers were marrying almost five years later than their counterparts in 1971. There had also been an increase in the divorce rate[, which]... rose slightly from 12.2 per 1000... marriages... to 12.3 in 1995. But marriages were lasting longer. The average duration of marriages ending in divorce in 1995 was 14.5 years compared with 14 years for 1986 to 1991.

...Marriages seem to be breaking up all over the place. Or not happening at all. Why should we bother with getting wed? ...TRUE LOVE, two gorgeous children, a beautiful home, buckets of money – [the middle-aged TV broadcaster (r:p1702, ln24) and his young wife] appeared to have it all. N[Z]'s media prince and his med-student princess should have lived happily ever after. Instead they became the latest in a long line of would-rather-not-be husbands and wives. Which makes us cynical and disillusioned common folk want to ask what the point was. Were they ever happily married? If so, what happened? Must relationships these days come with built-in expiry dates and is saying "I do" in the '90s as outdated as telling a [wife] her place is in the home? A lot of people seem to think so: Marriage rates are at a 25-year low as more couples say "I don't" and live together anyway. So, why do fewer people want to get married? ...a 28-year-old Wellington analyst, thought about all that when [it and the partner it's] been living with for nine years decided not to marry. "I think [my partner] was quite keen but I saw a lot of hypocrisy in what, to me, is basically a meaningless legal process. People who have never been to church suddenly go to church. People with feminist views enter into something... based on the contractual ownership of [wives]. From what I've seen, it's really just one stressful day that has nothing to do with anything spiritual or meaningful in my relationship." Objectors such as [her] don't like the fact that marriage was historically about the exchange of property: The bride. Consider the symbolism of the following: Being given from one [guy] (father) to another (husband), promising to "love, honour and obey", changing her surname to his. Although it might not feel that way, the formal vow-and-virginity version of marriage hasn't always been around. Some historians estimate up to half of all marriages in 14th-Century Britain were similar to this century's de facto relationships. To marry, couples "jumped the broomstick" (a broom placed on the threshold of their cottage). To divorce, they jumped back. Originally, churches were used like a small-town post office, to register and keep track of marriages. T[hen the Church hierarchy said: "Let us introduce a formal church ceremony – as a means of raising funds or, at least, a way to give clergy something to do between Sundays." T]oday, the... director of pastoral studies at the College of St John in Auckland, would like to see the Church's role change to one where it can "bless" a relationship, married or de facto. "I don't think marriage is outdated. But apart from the fact that I feel children need to have a stable family life, I can't give you an argument for legal marriage as opposed to a committed de facto relationship. As we tell our students: A wedding doesn't make a marriage,"... The way we get married is becoming a more private and informal process – check out all the couples... in fancy-dress or... doing silly things on beaches, mountain tops and jumping out of planes... Witness also the rise of the non-religious wedding celebrant. AS THE ceremony mutates, so does the result. The way we define long-term partnerships and families has been changing for some time and later this year the Matrimonial Property Act will be reviewed. Married couples are covered by the act, which equally divides possessions of couples married for three or more years if they divorce. Despite wide-spread misconceptions, de facto couples have no such statutory rights. In fact, they have the same rights as flatmates – none. If they split, the courts decide on a case-by-case basis. One way to overcome future inequity is to ensure major property is jointly-owned together. Another is to develop a legally binding agreement about shared property at the beginning of the relationship. Then you'll only have to argue about who gets the His And Hers bath mats. A revamped Matrimonial Act will still be unlikely to give de facto and married couples the same rights. As [the]Justice Minister... comments, "I would be surprised if my caucus did not believe that the sanctity of marriage needs to be respected." Nonetheless, if Church, society in general and, maybe later this year, the State, are ready to accept de facto relationships, then why bother getting married? ...A lot of couples marry only when they decide to have children. Marriage mainly protects the father's rights... [But if] a couple is... living together when the child is born, both parents are considered legal guardians. [Only if] the couple are not... living together at the time of the child's birth, [does mum become] the sole legal guardian. To some couples, having [kids] is akin to getting married, the most important commitment they can make... [A] 34-year-old journalist[and his] partner have been together for more than 10 years and have two primary school aged [kids]. "Once you've had kids there's really no turning back... We talk about getting married every now and then but really, what's the point? It's never been a big deal to me and it's the family relationship that keeps you coming back, not the marriage certificate. Anyway, when you have kids you have different priorities and the cost of a wedding would pay for a lot of music and swimming lessons." THEN there's the idea that de facto relationships don't last as long as marriages. But there is no objective data on this... [A spokesperson for] Relationship Services whose name change several years ago from Marriage Guidance reflects the changing attitudes... thinks even if there was, de facto relationships would still come out looking shorter than marriages because... "nowadays people tend to have a number of longer term relationships – some that even involve living together – before they make a firm marriage-type commitment or get married." ...There's only one big, and some will call it shallow, difference. As one bride says: "Getting married is not the same as being in a long-term relationship because I have stood up in front of 250 people and promised to spend the rest of my life with this guy."

...The 21,506 marriages last year was the lowest number recorded since 1964... Growth in de facto relationships, the trend towards delaying marriage and the growing number of N[Z]ers remaining single all contributed to the drop... I have sometimes found it helpful to reassure people I am not a prude... I have to say, however, that I have been saddened to read of the sexual revelations of [one columnist as it] writes on the future of marriage and about those people [it] knows who have entered and left that relationship with an increasingly greater rapidity and in rising numbers. I think I have read enough of this young [columnist] to suspect that a great deal of what [it] writes is done tongue-in-cheek. I confess to some difficulty believing that "At some point, you start finding yourself at parties where you walk into the kitchen and realise you've slept with everyone in it." My mind crowds with questions. How big is the kitchen? How many people are there in it? Are they all of the same sex? Have all these sexual assignations taken place in such a short time that [the columnist] can remember who they all were? Does [the columnist] keep notes in order to provide herself with comparative selections? My questions prove that [the columnist] does not have a monopoly on cynicism even if most of mine is about her capacity to fantasise. [The columnist] seems to hold that stable marriages are impossible since [it] is frequently engaged in consoling those who come to weep with her over the failed relationships crashing all around her. [The columnist] is probably right in wondering what hope there is... for people who stupidly imagine that anything resembling a marital arrangement has any hope of survival? ..."Desperate for passion on the one hand and desperately cynical on the other, we want the best, expect the worst and get it." [The columnist] points to a lifestyle which is almost certain to ensure failure in any long-term relationship. A great many young people follow a pattern of behaviour which may have become ingrained. The number of first-date sexual relationships reveals the basic attitudes which are so common today. A relationship with another person begins with the other's capacity to provide sexual satisfaction... In such situations the idea that friendship progressing to a deep sense of companionship is a possibility is rarely entertained let alone thought of. For many years our society believed... sexual intercourse needed to be reserved for marriage because that was the safest and best environment in which to express it for the best chance of future happiness. The fact

that that was more observed in the breach than in obedience did[n't] change the belief that it was regarded as relevant... It was the sexual revolution of the 1960s which changed that belief, perhaps forever. The contraceptive pill provided the carefree way and abolished the "No, darling, I might get pregnant" reaction. We have made great progress since then. Now we don't bother about the pill and the authorities are desperately trying to prevent social welfare pregnancies and HIV by getting the F[PA] to instruct little children about honey-covered condoms and oral sex. I asked a friend recently if his 21-year-old daughter had a boyfriend. In my opinion [his daughter] is sufficiently beautiful to need to carry a large stick to beat the boys off. Were I a young single [guy I'd] set out to court her with all the ardour and persuasion I could command, but that is because I see in her characteristics and gifts of intelligence and compassion which lie beyond the fact that [it] is physically attractive, though the latter is undeniable. Maybe... boys of her own age see her only as a sex object because their insight has been anaesthetised by years of conditioning by television soap operas. [The daughter] complains to her father that the pressure to conform to ill-concealed demands for intercourse on the first date make any outing an exercise in plotting how... [to] resist the clumsy adolescent fumbling of her companions. I have to agree with [the columnist that the] future for longevity in romance looks bleak. The view from lives in which adolescent children are trying to cope with the steady stream of... [people] who come into their households as temporary stepfathers and mothers is unlikely to fire the imagination towards settling for a lifelong commitment in their own lives. The commitment of intention and purpose which once undergirded a... majority of marriages has been gone so long that most people have forgotten that they ever existed. Perhaps one of these days some enterprising youngster will take the trouble to read about the social habits of past generations and discover love and commitment and wonder why the hell the older generation never told them about it.

...Young people think it makes sense to experience a little living before they tie the knot. This is the conclusion drawn by Relationship Service's chief executive... from... [SNZ figures. The executive] feels there are benefits in marrying older. "People are more likely to be ready for a long-term relationship if they have acquired life skills such as having experienced living as a single person, sharing a home with [people] other than family members, and being financially self-supporting... Relationships are most likely to survive if both partners are already independent individuals..." The... proportion of never-married [guys] aged between 25 and 34 has more than doubled over the past 20 years. It has tripled for [gals] in the same age bracket... In the past year 7844 marriages, or one in three, were for the second time for one or both partners. Of those who remarried in 1996, 89[%] had been divorced. The numbers of [gals] marrying as teenagers, and the figures for teenage pregnancies, show an interesting pattern. In 1971 nine in 25 first-time marriages involved a teenage bride. This had dropped to one in 25 in 1996. During the same period the number of [gals] who had a child but didn't marry has remained at only slightly more or less than 5000. But the number of young married mothers dropped. In 1971, 8139 so-called nuptial births were recorded for [mothers] aged 20 or under. In 1980 there were 3362, and last year only 497.

...Two in five babies are born to unmarried [NZers according to latest figures, compared to one in five in 1985], but demographers and midwives say this does not necessarily mean a lack of parental support... as many of these mothers were aged in their 30s and in stable relationships. Cohabitation had become a substitute for marriage in many cases and the lack of a wedding was not nearly as important as previously... However, a [wedding is still important in Samoa, where the]... Government has told expatriate couples in de facto relationships to either marry or face deportation. [The s]ecretary to the P[M]'s Department... said de facto relationships were not recognised because they were not part of the fa'a samoa (Samoan way)... "This practice refers only to those who want to stay on from overseas." [The secretary] could not give a figure on the number of couples in this situation... [The PM], who is also Immigration Minister... said... [marriage] was introduced by palagis (white people)... Now pastors made sermons, set up youth groups and other measures so that the things introduced by palagi could be adopted well and the policy was to prevent palagi advocating living together without marriage. [The PM admitted] it was true many Samoan couples were not married... One expatriate who declined to be named said once a work permit was granted, marital status was none of the Government's business. "If they had told us that it was a requirement before we moved here, that would be different..."... Expatriate homosexual couples fared no better. Last year a partner in a homosexual relationship from a N[Z] volunteer agency left to visit his relatives but on return was refused entry into Samoa. His partner, an expert in special education, left Samoa earlier than planned.

...All through the country, thousands of [gals live with gal partners, and guys with guy partners] – 3255 couples, according to the census. But there will be many more, too shy to confide in S[NZ]. They share each other's joys and dreams, sort each others washing, trim the same Christmas tree, and push a single trolley through the supermarket. More and more, when one's work or family has a party, the other is welcomed. They may have had a commitment ceremony, maybe even in a church. Whatever the Court of Appeal may say, they are married. But let the state become involved, and suddenly it turns out that in law they are strangers. Jerome died away from home last year, but the police would not give [his same-sex partner] his address book so that his friends could be told because [the partner] was not "next of kin." They had been together 13 years. If a couple meet overseas they must live together for four years before the partner can immigrate. If they were of opposite sex, two years (of course, legal marriage) would suffice. [A spokesperson for] the Human Relations Foundation... thinks same-sex union diminishes the institution of marriage... Her history [of institutional marriage] has some strange omissions. Where are Muslim polygamy, or the hundreds of wives and concubines of the Old Testament patriarchs? A less idealised view of marriage would mention child brides, arranged marriages, dowries, wives without property rights and wives as property, and suttee. Heterosexual, voluntary, adult monogamy between equals is far from a universal, eternal institution. Her ideal family is frozen in time. The family has evolved and continues to do so, and no single nuclear family stays the same for more than about 20 years from birth to "leaving the nest." [The spokesperson] speaks of "defending" marriage, yet how does it "attack" marriage if more people marry? The biggest threats to the heterosexual family today are not same-sex marriages but unemployment, poverty, alcohol, drugs and domestic violence. [The spokesperson] says children are "usually" born from marriage, and that they are "essential" for a marriage. Yet it is no legal impediment if a mixed-sex couple plan to be "child-free" or if one partner is sterile. [The spokesperson] says it is a "basic human right" to have a mother and father. Many children would gladly forgo that "right" to be free of a violent or neglectful parent. Children of happy same-sex couples fare better than those of stressed-out solo parents or warring spouses. Careful studies have shown that their emotional development (and of course their sexual orientation) is unaffected. Her expression "that covenant union between a [guy and a gal] that we avow in legal marriage" just underlines how strangely intertwined the civil contract and the religious covenant have become. The opposition to civil marriage seems to be mainly religious, yet several churches now bless same-sex unions, while the state does not. The right to civil marriage is a piece of the freedom from discrimination won in 1993 and due to bind the Government in 2000 – a date from which it now plans to renege.

...The Court of Appeal ruled this week that same-sex marriage had no legal status because the... 1955 Marriage Act... overrode anti-discrimination clauses in the Bill of Rights. The five judges found that though the Marriage Act did not specifically ban homosexual marriage, it clearly regarded marriage as being between a [guy and a gal. A former Labour MP], who represented Heretaunga from 1954 to 1960... was sure none of the MPs at the time would have considered the idea of homosexual marriage. "People accepted that there were homosexuals, but for homosexuals to get married was something out of a spoof world." The 80-year-old retired cabinet minister... said the legislation would have passed automatically "because in those days there was no question as to what was right and what was wrong." [The former MP] opposed same-sex marriage, but [believed that] if people wanted change a law should be passed.

...After 15 years living together, [a couple of lesbians]... are in no hurry to get married. The Auckland lesbian couple just want to have the right to tie the knot like everyone else. "We live the same as all the other married couples in our street," said [one of the lesbians], hours after the Court of Appeal ruled same-sex marriages had no legal status. "We want our kids to be successful and happy. We want our garden to be beautiful. We want to do the best we can in our jobs. We want our family around for Christmas. We just do the same things as any other person, so why...? It ain't

fair.” ...Marriage offered a wide range of rights which they could not have, such as being able to adopt children. They had to put their assets in family trusts, not for tax reasons but to protect themselves because the law did not recognise their relationship... The [Court of Appeal] decision came in a test case brought by three lesbian couples in long-term relationships. They were challenging a High Court decision last year that refused their applications to be legally registered as married. Last night N[Z]’s only openly gay MP... said [it] was willing to promote a law change. However, [the gay MP] believed there was little hope of getting a bill passed; the main aim would be to raise awareness of the issue... The meaning of the words of the Marriage Act that bars same-sex marriages are quite clear, the country’s top judges have decided. Particularly the section, in black and white, which specifies that a couple should use words similar to: “I, A.B., take you, C.D., to be my legal wife (or husband).” The act also talks about... his and her, when referring to prohibited marriage partners. It does not spell out the definition of marriage, but as [one of the judges] pointed out, some words and expressions are regarded as so well understood they do not need definition. “In 1955, marriage was one of those words,”... Because Parliament’s meaning was so clear in that act, all five Court of Appeal judges agreed it could not be superseded by section 19 of the 1990 Bill of Rights, even if it discriminated on the prohibited ground of sexual orientation. That is because of the basic constitutional principle that the courts interpret the law, not make it. However, the judges did vary on the underlying question of whether the Marriage Act did breach the Bill of Rights by discriminating against homosexuals. The court president... and [two others] found it did not; [the remaining judges]... felt it did... [While on the subject of anti-discrimination legislation, front] doorsteps are to be banned on all new houses built in Britain under new regulations to ensure access for people in wheelchairs. *The Times* reported yesterday new rules for the 150,000 new homes built in the country every year will also include downstairs toilets, wider doors and corridors and less steep footpaths.

...For the first time in his life, [an Aucklander] has a home of his own. And for someone who has spent much of his life in an institution, surrounded by dozens of people, flattening takes some getting used to. [The Aucklander], who has cerebral palsy, lives in one of three custom-built homes in Pt Chevalier... the first of their kind in N[Z]. The state-of-the-art houses... give [the Aucklander], his flatmate and his neighbours the chance to experience the freedom – and added responsibilities – of living in the community. At the same time the eight residents have round-the-clock care. Speaking with the aid of a computer, [the Aucklander says it] did not miss anything about the years [it had] spent in the Sutherland Unit, which closed last year. In the unit, [the Aucklander] shared a room with four other people. Now [the Aucklander] has his own room in a house built specially for his needs, with remote-controlled doors, wide corridors and custom bathrooms... [A] spokesperson for Focus 2000, an organisation which provides support for the residents, said some had found it difficult to adjust to life outside an institution. They battled loneliness, and for the first time had to manage their own finances and do their own housework and shopping. But at the same time they were able to choose what to have for dinner, go to the movies and go bowling – activities that were rare at the Sutherland Unit. It usually took a couple of years for people from institutions to settle into life in the community. [In related news, ‘people could in future live in “smart homes” that will tell them when to wake up or remind them to lock the back door, a British scientist predicts. The “caring home” – particularly useful to the elderly and infirm – would be equipped with electronic sensors connected to a computer that will remind people to take their medicine or turn off the oven. The bio-engineer at Brunel University near London told the annual British Association for the Advancement of Science conference that the first pilot home could be ready at the university by next autumn. The smart home would allow the elderly to live longer independently in their own homes.’

...‘Almost half a million NZers are in the “Third Age” – more than 65 years old – and that is expected to double in 30 years. Most people prefer to stay in their own homes as long as they can. But the number of superannuitants choosing to live in retirement villages has risen 50% over two years to about 15,000. As an option for the elderly, the villages are promoted as friendly, independent and affordable. Unfortunately, they do not always deliver the desired peace, security and services. Some elderly residents who have signed complex contracts find themselves locked into deals, not getting the services they expected, or being forced to pay higher-than-expected services fees. The Senior Citizens Minister is pledging “comprehensive protection” to those living in retirement villages. The minister is talking to Government departments and bodies such as Age Concern, Grey Power and the Retirement Villages Association with the view of having a bill ready for Parliament next year. The idea of separate legislation for retirement villages follows Law Commission recommendations that such villages should be covered by separate and freestanding legislation.’

...‘The retirement village industry is in limbo – with no over-riding set of guidelines – after the High Court last week threw out a new code of practice for the sector. The 250-member Retirement Village Association – representing about 85% of NZ’s retirement villages – had approached the Government seeking an industry-wide code of practice. The association’s own voluntary code was effectively accepted by the Government as the industry standard, but the association went to the High Court with concerns about aspects of the new code. Retirement village residents usually pay a lump sum to live in a unit, a percentage of which is refunded at the end of a tenancy. But the new code stipulated that when a resident moved out, the unit was to be refurbished to no more than the original condition, less fair wear and tear. The association objected to the clause, as it could be applied retrospectively, potentially saddling village owners with millions in costs – such as carpet cleaning – that could not be passed on to departing residents.’ Incidentally,] **the former co-leader of the Christian Coalition, is retiring from politics and will concentrate on housing conditions.** [The MP] **has been appointed the chief executive of the N[Z] wing of Habitat for Humanity, an organisation that builds houses for needy families. It aims to build 200 homes here by 2000.**

...THE tenant of a Tehran flat whose wife gave birth to triplets has been told by his landlord that his monthly rent would go up... by 50,000 rials (\$[NZ]22) per child... [The tenant says it] can’t pay and will ask authorities to find them a new flat... [In local news, t]he Ngapuhi runanga [council] has disputed suggestions that its Maori housing scheme has been a failure. The claim was made by the [former] Associate Treasurer... who said a housing scheme introduced by the National Government three years ago on the East Coast and in the Far North had produced only a handful of homes. [The NZ First MP] said the scheme had failed because of “mana munching,” in-fighting and legal arguments by runanga officials. “Everyone wants to be a chief. Those who miss out get a lawyer and start fighting... We need individuals who can take control and do it with full accountability. We need people who have gone out and got the skills and are willing to come back. The trouble is they then get slagged by their own people.” However, the deputy chair[person] of the Ngapuhi runanga... challenged those claims yesterday, saying the runanga had in the past three years provided for about 200 mid-Northland and Far North families for about \$3 million. The housing scheme – the first of its kind in N[Z] – aimed to provide better housing for Maori in the north and on the East Cape where it is estimated more than 1000 families lived in substandard accommodation. Under the scheme Maori living in those areas needed only a 5[%] deposit for a Government loan rather than the 15 to 20[%] previously required. The runanga identified those families in need and put them through a series of workshops covering housing options, insurance, rates, budgeting, hapu housing and the roles and responsibilities of homeowners. “This scheme is working well. All the mana munching is with N[Z] First, not us... I challenge [the NZ First MP] to come up here and have a look at how well this scheme is working...” [The deputy chairperson] accepted that the scheme did have problems, but that was largely because there was a lack of cash from the Government for the runanga to administer the programme. “We are doing our best, but you can only do so much with limited funding.”

...[‘An Auckland-based housing association has offered to help rebuild East Timor’s devastated houses using a kitset technology that can build homes for as little as \$40,000 apiece. An Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade has asked his officials to evaluate the Cooperative Housing Association of Aotearoa-NZ offer. 80% of ET’s houses were destroyed in fighting between the independence movement and Indonesian-backed militias. “Most of the people are still living under tents and emergency shelters like burned houses with temporary leaves,” said an ETese who is studying at Massey University. The student said aid agencies had distributed timber to some villages, but without roofing materials – which the Indonesians removed – or training. Some houses have been built, but many have collapsed. “People knew nothing about building the house. It the past we used to import builders from Indonesia.” The student hopes that funds can be obtained from either the NZ aid programme or the World Bank to train local people in the Cooperative Housing

Association's system. A founder of the association said the kitset system was so simple that anybody could learn it quickly. "In 3 weeks, we can get people from nowhere to an ability to produce their own homes." Financially, the system avoids the crippling cost of interest by using family and community labour to build the first houses, then using the rent from those houses to finance building later houses. The rent is counted as payment towards eventual ownership of the houses either by individual families or the community. In NZ, where the association has built 80 houses, costs have also been kept low through discounted materials and donated land. For the past year, the association has sought Government finance to kick-start cooperative housing for low-income NZers who could never afford their own homes on commercial terms. This proposal is still being evaluated by the Housing Corporation.'

...West Auckland's 'mayor is comfortable with Housing NZ building low-cost homes on prime harbourside real estate at the soon-to-be-closed Hobsonville Air Base. The mayor yesterday said the Waitakere City Council was committed to a mixed development of parkland and housing around a marine industry cluster on the defence land. The mayor was responding to a *Weekend Herald* report saying that Housing NZ and Canadian-based Sovereign Yachts are vying to control 63ha in what threatens to become a deepening embarrassment for the Government. Officials from the Ministry of Economic Development last year fast-tracked the release of a 4ha portion of the base to help Sovereign Yachts cut through red tape, spurred by the promise of hundreds of boatbuilding jobs and millions of export dollars. Sovereign's director has a contract with the council to expand the boatbuilding facilities to create a marine industry cluster. The director also wants to develop residential sites. But his aspirations may be scuppered by a Housing NZ plan to develop a mix of state housing and affordable private homes. The law requires that surplus defence land be first offered to other Government departments for public works. If no department wants it, the land is offered to former owners. The mayor said the council would have to "live with it" if Housing NZ got the 63ha of land ahead of Sovereign Yachts, but did not think that would hamper plans for a marine cluster. The prospect of low-cost housing worries real estate agents, who want the land turned into exclusive waterfront sections. It also concerns the local National MP, who said there would be state housing at Hobsonville "over my dead body". However, the mayor said the MP, who has been dumped as a National candidate for the next election, was "already dead", adding: "Housing NZ is already building some pretty trendy, stylish houses. What people like the National MP find difficult is the people who live in them."

... 'A quintessentially Kiwi house, dubbed the "modpod", has grabbed the attention this week at the Auckland Homeshow "street of houses". Underpinned by a "Pacific Rim" design philosophy, with its clean weatherboard lines and copious deck space, the house reflects the kiwi national identity, unique lifestyle and impulsive weather. On display until this Sunday, the house is a showcase for Haven NZ Limited. The modpod was a collaboration between Master Builders Haven NZ Ltd, Design Arts firm Red Turtle and CTM Architects. A key design challenge was the restricted floor space – imposed by the intention to relocate the modpod to Matarangi Beach Golf Estates following the Auckland Homeshow. This required a light-weight, flexible cladding system and timber floors throughout. Despite its compact size, the raked ceilings and light-filled interior exaggerate a feeling of spaciousness. At one end of the main living area, a full-length veneer wall hides a sleek family-sized kitchen. Extra fold-out bench space is contained in a multi-purpose mobile "grill" that doubles as an outdoor BBQ complete with a Jet-9 gas cooktop. Innovative storage spaces are cleverly contained throughout in the custom-designed cabinetry and Camira furniture – all of which is designed for multi-functional indoor-outdoor use. A fold-away bed discretely hidden in a wall cabinet reconfigures the study/games room to a guest bedroom. Both the main bathroom and separate toilet are readily accessible in the centre of the house. Predominantly full-height cavity sliders, the interior doors maximise efficiency while creating the illusion of space. The Kiwi outdoor lifestyle is encouraged in this house']...

THE great Kiwi house may sound like an attraction at a zoo but it... costs around \$100,800 to build... [or] \$896 per sq m plus GST... That's according to the NZ Institute of Valuers which has just released the specifications for the Modal (most common) N[Z] house. Each year the institute asks its members to supply design details and construction costs of the most common type of new homes being built in their areas. These are combined to produce... a national standard, which reflects design and building cost trends throughout the country. So what does the most common type of home being built in this country look like? According to the institute it is still a three bedroom, timber-framed house... However, there have been important changes in other aspects of the design and the materials used. The exterior is now likely to be clad in fibre cement board (Hardiplank) panels or weatherboards, rather than traditional wooden weatherboards, and it is most likely built on wooden piles. Houses in the South Island showed important regional variations in that they are more likely to be clad in brick veneer, reflecting local buyers' tastes, and built on a solid concrete base because of the ready availability of raw materials. The roof is now made of pre-painted steel sheets (Coloursteel) rather than traditional unpainted corrugated roofing iron. Guttering and downpipes are made from PVC. Exterior window and door frames are white, powdercoated aluminium, and the house has a floor area of 100sq m with a 4sq m deck. Inside there are open plan living areas and painted, rather than wallpapered, walls. A freestanding, solid fuel fireplace, provides most of the heating requirements. The house has 19 power points, 19 light sockets and two telephone connections, one each in the kitchen and main bedroom. [■ In the US, 'the nationwide median sale price of a one-family home rose from \$23,000 in 1970 to \$120,000 in 1990. The average floor area of a new one-family home is 2,075 sq. ft; 48% have one floor, 47% have two or more, and 5% are split level; 27% have four or more bedrooms and 14% have two or fewer; 60% are heated with gas, 32% with electricity, and 4% with oil; 33.9% have central air conditioning; 63% have one or more fireplaces; 81% have garages. Only 75.1% of homes had access to public sewers and 84.7% to public water supply. In 1990, residential buildings accounted for 39.7% of all new construction, private nonresidential buildings for 23.8%, and public buildings for 26.9%. In 1987, there were 544,200 construction establishments with 5.054 million workers']...

Tilt-up precast concrete sounds as exciting as watching paint dry, but there is more to this subject than meets the untrained eye. In the new age of multiplex cinemas and rapid construction warehouses with huge single-pour wall slabs in place of the old concrete block construction, advances are being made by a small Wairau Park business which is taking concrete further into house-building, introducing better insulation and making large-structure building cheaper. Tighter construction costs in the wake of the 1987 crash and, eventually, a change in heart by designers, have brought big changes to concrete's place in the building industry. "Designers were looking at first just to replace a cladding," said [the]Reid Engineering Systems general manager... "We needed them to use the strength of the panel as part of the building... The system was started in the US at the turn of the century but didn't become popular until the development of cranes after the war which gave them the lifting power to hold panels in mid-air. The system was used for firewalls and factory units and came to Christchurch in the 1950s, but they didn't have good methods of lifting or propping them up." Tilt-up concrete might have been used in Auckland's construction boom of the 80s, "but we needed to solve the lifting problems, how to hook on to the crane without the concrete cracking and how to temporarily support something that could be five storeys high, hanging in the air. [Also, we] couldn't get any interest from the major builders pre-crash. They said everything had been designed in blockwork or steel portal frames... [But our chairperson] started to make contacts around the world in the 80s, looking for innovative engineering systems. One was the reinforced earth system for retaining walls by a French engineer, who ran straps back so the more load you put on the earth, the more it held itself up. In N[Z], we started with concrete-lifting systems... We then looked overseas at building methods and at tilt-up construction... The turning point in the late 1980s was the first Countdown supermarket in Auckland... at Papakura, in a cluster of three buildings with Liquorland and the Roadhouse Diner." It was an excellent way to show how to take out internal columns, generally a nuisance in commercial and industrial buildings. "We pushed designers to use the concrete wall panels to support the building, and were coming in 10 to 15[%] more economical on overall building costs." Come the 1990s, builders were interested on the cost basis they had been ignoring "and... tilt-up has become the norm." ...So came the next stage in tilt-up concrete, overcoming the non-insulating character of plain concrete. One way was to put batts against the wall's interior, strapping it and finishing with a gib lining. "But concrete will absorb energy and can be a wonderful night-storage heater. Lining it, we were wasting that energy." ...European builders had been making insulated concrete panels for 30 years, normally using a polystyrene sandwich,

but the stainless steel ties used to hold the concrete layers together caused heat loss. Reid Engineering found a [US] glass-fibre tie, much stronger and non-heat conducting, and modified it to make it both cheaper and easier to use. "The biggest building using the [US] system was the Blind Foundation addition in Newmarket. It's quiet, and heats and cools well. We've also done a lot of barrel stores for the wine industry, keeping the wine at a constant temperature." But the [US] system was unsuitable for small commercial buildings and house walls full of doors and windows. "We redesigned it so the extra cost of insulation and conductors dropped to one-quarter of the [US] system's premium over normal unlined tilt-up – \$10 instead of \$40 extra over the normal \$90 to \$100 a sq m erected." For insulated residential use... most systems fell within a range from \$110 to \$160 a sq m and Reid Engineering's design... has been used successfully on townhouses in Hopper Developments' Maygrove subdivision at Orewa and in three-storey apartment buildings being built by Oakland Construction at New Lynn... For the next round of highrise construction, [Reid Engineering] focused on the problem of reinforcing bars sticking out of concrete slabs and beams and worked with Pacific Steel to design threaded reinforcing steel. "They saw a way of adding value to reinforcing steel. For the Manapouri power station's new \$200 million tailrace tunnel... we used our new Reidbar to anchor all the rocks – 2500 tonnes of rock bolts." This range of threaded bars has been designed for roof tiedowns and wind braces, for simpler and less congested formwork as well as rock anchoring. For concrete floors – where shrinking had traditionally been solved by sawing the floor into squares so when it cracks it cracks in the saw cuts – "in the last six months we've effectively pre-shrunk floors by casting our Reidbar into the floor in a plastic tube, poured the slab, then the next day tensioned the bar up to a five-tonne load with a jack. So when the concrete shrinks and wants to crack, it won't... because we've already pulled it into compression." One of the first buildings using the system is a Wiri freight depot where the concrete slabs measure 60m by 40m, "done at less cost than conventional sawed flooring because we're cutting down on the steel in it, and using the steel more efficiently by stretching it in the floor at the start." ...The Reidbar was introduced at the Quay West apartment building after construction had started, and was incorporated in floor slabs from level 6. Its use enabled the builders to cut the precast floor depth from 265mm to 180mm and to present a flat underside, simplifying the construction of lightweight walls between apartments. The new bars also have a place at the foot of multi-storey buildings, being supplied for the base isolators in quake-resistance pads.

...[*Divine vision hits brick wall* In one day, the AUSn can build an insulated concrete house costing less than \$10,000. But after four years of bringing his vision to fruition, the AUSn can't understand why no one wants to invest in what it believes could be a billion-dollar industry. The AUSn worked for 20 years renovating houses, and spent a number of years as a missionary in Last World countries. One day, while on a bus in Nepal, the AUSn had a vision of a green brick with nubs of concrete emerging from it. The AUSn was convinced the vision came from God, and six years later began to work on the new construction method, using egg cartons in the floor and bricks made of recycled plastic and wood fibre. These are built up as walls in Lego-block style, after which concrete is slowly poured in from the top. The concrete "oozes" through the plastic while a plasterer spreads it flat, burying the framework. It sets to a strong, double-insulated house. The light bricks cost about \$5 each – \$15 a metre compared to \$100 a metre for traditional concrete bricks. At the National Fieldays at Mystery Creek, people laughed at the AUSn as it made a floor out of slightly modified egg cartons. But when the show was over, the AUSn had a large truck laden with heavy machinery drive over the floor to break it up. "The truck drove over it five times and it wouldn't break. We had to lever it up and break it from underneath. The AUSn says the lack of interest from investors and buyers in his idea has amazed him. "I should be having people knocking on the door saying 'how do you do it and where can I sign up?'. But I haven't had one person offer one dollar towards it all." Disappointed by people's reluctance to change from concrete blocks and by the lack of Government support, the AUSn is considering taking his invention to AUS or the US."

...VILNIUS, Lithuania, a town of medieval walls and cobbled streets wrapped inside kilometres of concrete blocks, is where I spent ten days assimilating the history, philosophy and operating principles of my new employer – the *In Your Pocket* travel-guidebook company – before being put on a bus to Krakow, Poland, to write a guidebook. On the Lithuania-Poland border, a goon in a gulag guard's kit examined all our passports. After that, finally, sleep. In the early hours, we were on the outskirts of Warsaw, a seemingly endless succession of mud-splattered concrete buildings. P.J. O'Rourke put it best: "Commies love concrete." Then I was on another train. After two hours of drab, flat farmland, the train pulled into Krakow. More cement ugliness on its outskirts, and the bed and breakfast I checked into that night had all the glamour of a washing line in a retirement home but, after a quick stroll into the old town, I found the oldest medieval square in Europe and emulsified my woes in the very good Polish beer. Seven weeks later, I was running dangerously low on reserves when I was called to a guidebook managers' meeting in Bucharest. In Bucharest, as the local *In Your Pocket* guidebook puts it, "You can't swing a cat without hitting a rabid dog," a legacy of the forced evictions of thousands of bewildered residents during the building of the obscene, 330,000 sq m "People's Palace." Smart, Parisian-style architecture and cobbled walkways share streets with pot-holes, packs of feral canines and concrete-slab eyesores']...

IT'S been used for centuries as a building material and you're likely to find it on any modern construction site... Strong, versatile and durable, concrete has become synonymous with permanence. We talk of decisions "set in concrete," of a "concrete proposal." The word came into English in the 15th century from the Latin "concentus," meaning growing together. Concrete was used extensively by the Romans for buildings and baths. They built the harbour at Putoli in 199BC with concrete made from the local volcanic sand and lime mortar and the 43m dome of the Pantheon in Rome is lightweight concrete made with crushed pumice aggregate. The Romans are commonly credited with the discovery of concrete, but... [a] large concrete floor 5000 years old has been unearthed in north-west China, and one even older in Yugoslavia on the banks of the Danube. A 4000-year-old mural at Thebes in Egypt also shows the various stages of making concrete and mortar. But the technology seems to have largely disappeared with the end of the Roman Empire. It re-emerged in the late 18th century, arriving in N[Z] with the early European settlers. The basic component of concrete is cement, a fine-ground combination of limestone and clay which is mixed with coarse aggregate (broken stone, brick or gravel), sand and water. The sand fills in the spaces around the coarse aggregate; the water starts a chemical reaction in the cement and makes the mix plastic. Portland cement was imported into N[Z] from Britain from the 1840s... With the local production of Portland cement, the use of concrete... increased... Since the turn of the century concrete has become central in the construction of everything from public and commercial buildings, hydro-dams, bridges and footpaths, to culverts, cow sheds and retaining walls, water tanks and swimming pools. When Auckland's Grafton Bridge opened in 1910 it boasted the largest concrete arch span (97.6m) in the world. Rotorua's impressive Government Bath House (1908), and art deco Blue Baths (1931), are both concrete. So are the many art deco buildings which went up in Napier in the wake of the disastrous earthquake. Puhoi Town Library, built in 1923, must be one of the smallest concrete public buildings in the country, barring public toilets... While concrete reinforced with steel forms the basis of most large buildings, its use in private housing is often limited to footings, footpaths and floors (a concrete slab makes an efficient solar heat trap.) Many people see concrete as heavy, grey and uninteresting – and timber frame houses are cheaper. Where concrete is used it is often disguised... Invermay, built as a farmhouse near Mosgiel in 1862 and now living quarters for University of Otago researchers, is thought to be the oldest concrete building in the country still in use... Several fine examples of... Auckland's first concrete buildings]... survive, including Water Lea at Mangere Bridge, two houses on adjoining sections in Grey Lynn, St James Presbyterian Church (now Hopetoun Alpha)... and the four-storeyed Clifton Tower in Epsom. Decorated with paired heads of rams, lions and Maori chiefs, Clifton Tower was added to Josiah Firth's existing home in 1871. [Josiah] went on to build the Matamata landmark, Firth's Tower, in 1882.

...Firth Industries believes it has enough cost comparisons to persuade architects, specifiers and home builders to move away from timber framing in favour of masonry. A gain in masonry use would be welcomed by Firth's parent... Challenge Building, which reported a 6.4[%] fall in hollow masonry production in the June year. However, the overall gain for the group would be reduced as masonry's gain would be partly at the

expense of other [Challenge] Building products. The Firth business manager... said this week that the company aimed to raise masonry's share of the house market from below 2[% to 10%] over the next three years. That would suit Europeans and the many recent South African migrants, who are used to the solidity of masonry construction. But advances in the use of concrete over the past three years might also promote a change in attitude among N[Z]ers used to a tradition of timber framing and lightly clad homes. The bare concrete block has been a staple of sausage-block flats construction since the 1970s and is a chilling feature of many a motel. Firth has found a way to warm the blockwork and also to better insulate concrete floors. Another improvement came recently with the licensing of a pre-tinted plaster, allowing a full finish during the initial construction period instead of having a wait for the plaster to cure before painting... [A] preliminary assessment was that "a 200 series Hotbloc wall [made of insulating concrete blocks] comes in about \$160 to \$170 a sq m..." Using the new Designertex acrylic-based finishing plaster system, the masonry wall was costed at \$164 a sq m, with extra savings in construction elements that were no longer required... [C]lay brick exteriors cost about \$140 a sq m and Cedar \$190. The nearest Hardie competitor in quality terms, Hardibacker, was \$159. "There are so many benefits in masonry that far outweigh the small premium you may pay, and we're finding masonry buildings are getting a much higher resale price." ...The Hotbloc version of hollow concrete masonry, introduced three years ago and used in Wellington's energy-efficient, Medallion award-winning Eco House, incorporates a polystyrene biscuit which doubles the insulation capacity from 0.3 of the bare bloc to 0.6 on the insulation scale. "What this house has that's so different is mass, and it's mass that enables the house to function as well as it does; it warms and cools in a much slower cycle than a standard timber house... The other key is the quietness in the house, both inside and from outside." The floor is another new feature. What looks at first like beaten earth or tile turns out to be a terracotta-tinted oxide colouring introduced to the building slab before the pour. The slab itself uses the self-insulating Ribraft system, which... increased the floor's insulation value by five times over conventional flooring. Polystyrene pods are placed in a grid pattern, with reinforcing steel in the spacers around the perimeter beam and in the ribs between the pods, reinforcing mesh over the polystyrene and concrete poured on top. Trenches are not required because the slab is on the ground rather than in the ground, the normal method of concrete slab flooring. "Compared to two weeks for the standard concrete foundation, this takes five days, and we're finding fewer floor cracks because of the Ribraft system... At the same time you are pushing the vapour barrier away from the living space." The showhome has also incorporated a gas-heated, reticulated water, under-floor heating system, which allows the temperature to be altered room by room. By using 150mm concrete blocks on internal walls and a unispun floor for the house's second level, sound is further reduced and fireproofing increased.

...More buildings deemed to be fire risks will be closed[by] the... Fire Service. The... Fire Service Commission chair[perso]n... says the service has not made enough of its legal powers in the past and is demanding that his staff take action... Legislation introduced in 1991 had given the Fire Service and local authorities the power to close unsafe buildings... Multiple fatalities, such as the fire at the New Empire Hotel in Hamilton two years ago which left six dead, could have been avoided if the unsafe buildings had been policed more vigilantly, [the chairperson] said... The Auckland City Council last night welcomed the move by the Fire Service. "We strongly support safer buildings and clearly the Fire Service has the expertise and a role to play and we are delighted they are going to pursue that," said a council spokes[perso]n... The legislation had been used successfully to bring about the closure of a boarding house in Symonds St, Auckland, and in Wellington this year the service evicted tenants from a commercial building being used as a block of flats. Also, improvements were made to Mt Crawford prison in Wellington because of fire safety concerns... [By the way, m]ost Rotorua residents find the city's trademark "rotten egg" smell distasteful, but does it harm their health? The gas, hydrogen sulphide, has long been known to cause headaches, eye and lung irritation, and even unconsciousness and death, but until now there has been little research into the effects of long-term exposure to low levels of the gas. Toi Te Ora Public Health, a division of Eastbay Health, has embarked on a year-long study to find out if the gas causes health problems. A medical officer of health... said Rotorua was unique because it was the only place in the world where 45,000-or so people lived on a geothermal field.

...WOOL and polyester is as effective for thermal and acoustic insulation as the more traditional materials like fibreglass... People wrap themselves in a woollen blanket or duvet to keep warm. They can do the same for the whole house. Wool insulation, chosen for its safe insulation and low health risks, was put in the walls and ceilings of... [the] "eco-house" in Wellington - and power consumption was half that of an average house. Insulation Products Ltd (IPL) supplies a range of wool blend and polyester insulation systems... They include Thermofleece natural wool blend insulation; Acoustifleece acoustic insulation for walls between rooms, flats, ceilings and floors or metal stud partitions; and Polyfleece, a tough, non-irritant polyester insulation. IPL says its products have been tested by the Building Research Association, Wool Research Organisation and consulting engineers Beca Carter Hollings & Ferner Ltd and Marshall Day Associates. • ...MORE than 150 N[Z] houses have been built with a reinforced concrete wall method using polystyrene blocks. Insulform and MRA Architects are releasing a new range of house designs, combining the unique features of Insulform's wall systems with modern European styling... The Insulform building system was developed by [a]Christchurch builder... about three years ago. [The builder] had looked at similar systems overseas and patented the most advanced system of its type which complies with N[Z]'s strict earthquake-code design requirements. The company has recently licensed its polystyrene block system in other countries. In Japan the commercial and residential building company Takehana Kogyo Co has bought the right to make and distribute the system[, which]... consists of two moulded polystyrene walls connected by a metal bridge that runs through the centre of each block. The blocks are bonded by a dovetail locking system on the inside for accurate placing. Metal reinforcing rods are put through the centres and concrete is poured down the cavity... The system can give a house the solid look that comes from thick walls and allows recessed windows, the possibility of curved walls and the ability to incorporate suspended concrete floors. Other features include a high insulation rating for temperature and sound.

...BUILDING houses with highly-compressed earth bricks can combine the atmosphere of times gone by with flexibility of design, good insulation and durability. The Excalibur Earth Brick Company says its building concept is a natural alternative to "a world of chemically-saturated building materials." ...Earth brick construction is designed as a "load-bearing technique" that allows design flexibility... Internal and outside walls are 300mm thick and need no framing or lining. Their density makes for insulation qualities that... can mean heat loss of only 3 deg C in 24 hours.

...Insultech Group Ltd, will diagnose and fix energy efficiency problems in Auckland homes under its "energy-wise homes" programme. With a grant from the Government's energy-saver fund, Insultech can offer an interest-free finance package for this service. "Typically, people contact us because their house is so cold and mouldy and uncomfortable to live in that in desperation they're thinking of moving,"... [the company's energy] efficiency troubleshooter... says... Insultech offers a range of products and recommends the one best for the job. That can mean, for example, selecting from five blanket types, seven spray-in types of insulation and up to 20 brands. Insultech's energy efficiency packages can include any number of the following measures: ceiling, wall, under-floor and window insulation; window and door weather-stripping; drape upgrades; water cylinder wraps and pipe insulation; efficient shower roses; and efficient lights which use 75[%] less energy... Thanks to the energy-saver fund grant, which Insultech won by competitive tender, more than 100 Auckland homes have already had energy efficiency retrofits. Funding has been extended for... [19]98 to allow Insultech to upgrade a similar number of Auckland homes, and a further 150 nation wide... The energy saver fund, which is administered by the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority... was set up in 1995 to boost energy efficiency in homes. So far, more than \$6 million has been allocated to 69 projects which will benefit more than 60,000 homes throughout the country. Applicants submit a proposal to the authority for funding for their projects. Other projects include... Otago University's project to insulate privately-owned flats occupied by students... the insulation of the Ranfurly War Veterans Home in Auckland... and... a local body plan to insulate pensioner flats near Wellington.

...New standards for insulating houses may not stop N[Z]ers shivering in heat-leaking homes. Labour has been calling for Government haste in approving awaited energy-efficiency regulations for new houses, but they will be minimum standards and will not guarantee winter warmth. Home

heating and insulation issues have come to the fore after research suggesting that the winter temperatures in N[Z] homes often slide below the W[HO] minimum recommendation of 16 deg C. The survey backed what N[Z]ers had known intuitively, said Labour's energy spokes[person]... who wants older Housing N[Z] homes insulated when they are redecorated. Behind the cold homes was a history of poor building standards for insulation. The research, coordinated by the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority, discovered that... homes were often below 14 deg C and... occasionally temperatures fell below 10 deg C... Researchers... also found that there was no correlation between energy use and average indoor temperature. "This appears to imply that houses in N[Z] are not able to achieve desired comfort and health temperature levels, and are more controlled by outside temperatures than by heating,"... The authority's programmes and standards manager... said yesterday that probably 60[% of NZ] homes had been built before the first insulation standards were introduced in 1977. "[But even]... those post-1978 are minimally insulated." The new standard, which was waiting for Government approval, was higher but was still a baseline standard... If political will or an energy problem was great enough, [NZ]... could go down the road of high standards... "[However, t]here's also the fact that if you don't heat a house in N[Z], by and large you don't die. But in the Northern Hemisphere you can die of hypothermia, so there's a much stronger focus on energy issues – and energy prices are much more expensive." People from colder climates can be unpleasantly surprised by the winter temperatures in N[Z] homes. Accustomed to... radiators... central heating and double-glazed windows, they arrive to find much chillier indoor conditions. "It's so much colder in houses here," said an English[person]... who arrived in April. "I used to find it easier to go outside to warm up." - 1997

THE Building Research Association is a third of the way through studying the effects of insulating a house – and the family in it say they already feel warmer. A year ago, sensors were placed outdoors and in each room of a house occupied by a family of four to record temperature, humidity, heat flow and electricity use. The house was left uninsulated and, at the end of 12 months, 155mm depth of fibreglass insulation was put into the roof cavity and 100mm under the floor. The walls will be insulated next year. A physicist with the association... [said the past] three weeks showed that heat loss through the roof had dropped by 26[%] and through the floor by 77[%], compared with readings at the corresponding time last year. There has been a 1C to 2C improvement in temperature and 4 to 6[%] less humidity.

...If cost is seen as a barrier for switching from fibreglass to user-friendly polyester insulation for homes, then... [the] insulation product manager at Autex Industries has some interesting information. "For only \$190 extra, N[Z]ers can have a healthier, greener home and still enjoy the warmth and comfort of good insulation... That's the difference in the cost of installing the new GreenStuf polyester insulation into the ceiling and walls of an average-size N[Z] home, rather than using fibreglass or loose glass fibre insulation. Once homeowners and builders discover the minimal cost to have GreenStuf insulation, rather than fibreglass, they generally go for the healthier option. We make no apologies for GreenStuf costing that bit more than fibreglass insulation, simply because the polyester raw material is more expensive. However when you analyse it, there is little difference in the cost. That fact is being recognised by more architects..."... GreenStuf... [- which] is supplied in pre-cut construction sizes for ceilings and wall spaces [-] ...can be installed more easily than fibreglass because the installer is not required to wear protective clothing, a face mask and gloves or have to take a shower and have their clothing washed separately to avoid contamination from the glass fibres. The US-based International Agency for Research of Cancer has classified all synthetic mineral fibres, such as fibreglass insulation, as 'possibly carcinogenic to humans' and many countries, including A[US], include health warnings on product labels. N[Z] has yet to follow this course of action.

...Waitakere City is finding it difficult to foster eco-friendly homes. A house the council built to promote the idea has finally sold after nearly six months. The three-bedroom house at Sunnyside, near Oratia, was an open home three afternoons a week [during that time]. Thousands went through it. But there were no offers when tenders were called in October and it was passed in at auction. The house finally sold for just over \$350,000 and the buyer has moved in. "We've learned a lot," says... [the] development manager of the council-owned company Waitakere Properties. "People aren't ready yet to pay the extra dollar for an environmentally friendly house. But they're not far away. I still believe young people want environmentally friendly living. As the green products become competitively priced, they will incorporate them in their new houses." The house includes as much chemically-free plantation timber as possible, a concrete floor to store solar energy and release the heat at night, double-glazed windows in bedrooms, thermal-resistant roofing, panels on the roof for water heating, water-saving taps and a rainwater storage tank. "The extra cost of such features is worth it in the long run when you see electricity charges and water rates going up,"... But the company is not including such extras in its present projects on the council's 70ha Harbour View Estate, on the Te Atatu Peninsula. One is a three-storey villa priced at \$465,000... that... looks like a mansion from the street. "With the price of land nowadays, we believe this is the way to go."

...Children living at the Ranui-based Earthsong Eco-Neighbourhood are brought up in a village atmosphere where everyone's lives are closely intertwined. The co-housing concept is inspired by developments in the U[S] where private homes are combined with shared areas. Residents of Earthsong's 17 houses, more are due to be built soon, don't live in each other's pockets, but... have plenty of interaction through communal amenities like a common house, community workshop and shared recreational areas. They also have the privacy of their own rammed earth home...

You could say an unorthodox North Canterbury home with an arching frontage, known locally as "the eyebrow" is, well, eye-catching. It's the \$700,000 dream home of [a] Rangiora couple... The eco-friendly building, still under construction, is unique not just for its contoured shape – its roof is also a lawn and [the owners have] already been mowing it. Ultimately, they want to grow tussock there. The idea of piling earth over the southern side of the house and on to the roof was inspired by the habits of hibernating animals and the knowledge underground temperatures are constant and warm. "I've been thinking of this concept for a long time, probably 20 years... It's designed to conserve energy – and I think with everything being privatised I'll be proved right." ...A former motor mechanic, with management and commercial property expertise, [the husband] worked on the plan with a local draughting firm... The home's glass frontage is angled to maximise the heat of winter sun. A solarium with dark floor tiles and thick interior concrete wall blocks painted aubergine [is] also designed to absorb the sun's heat. Polystyrene insulation keeps the heat in... Over summer, with the sun overhead, the house stays cool. Inside the house, the temperature is a constant 14°-15° all year round.

...If you intend buying a section or building or buying a house, you might first want to know how much sun it gets. It is not that simple to guess, because sunrise and sunset vary about 90 deg between mid-summer and mid-winter... [Our cheap] gadget... will help... find your place in the sun.

...A... 60-year-old Raetihi [resident]... isn't afraid of the big bad wolf – even though [it]'s building his home out of straw. The... possum trapper says it is the perfect building material for his home climate. "It's the best insulation money can buy... It will keep the house at a constant temperature – never boiling hot or too cool. We can get 10 degrees below frosts here and the old house was quite cold." [Hi]'s former home burned down 18 months ago when pine cones fell out of a wood stove and started a blaze. "But straw won't burn because it's too compact and won't let oxygen in to fuel a fire. It won't catch alight, it will only smoulder,"... [His] wife... and sons... 30... and 28, finished putting the straw walls into place last week. They will trim the straw back with a weed-eater, pack any holes with loose straw then place netting over the straw ready for plastering. They expect to move into the house in June. It will have cost them \$85,000 – including 300 bales of straw... [In related news, a] Blockhouse Bay student... is making her mark in an architectural field alien to her own background... [It] is among 100 students whose work was in the University of Auckland School of Architecture public exhibition... Her design, a traditional Japanese house for a site in Howick is far removed from her own experience. [The student who] was born in Sri Lanka, raised in Zambia and has spent her last few years in N[Z]... has never been to Japan. "Learning about Japanese architecture gave me an appreciation of just how diverse cultures can be in the way they think about design and living... I was fascinated by the way the Japanese integrate the internal and external in their homes to attempt to live as one with nature."

...THOUGH this house is two years old, it has never been lived in. It was purchased off the plans by an Asian-based buyer... The house is for sale with or without all the furnishings. It was built by Fyfe Homes Design and Build at a time when Winstone Wallboards were promoting new noise-insulation systems. Fyfe decided to make full use of the leading-edge technology, with the result that the house is superbly quiet... The technology was so new that the Auckland University engineering department has used the house for testing... Hidden luxuries include a central vacuum system[and] underfloor heating throughout... [The architect's] brief... was... to ensure the design answered N[Z]ers' needs for... easy family living.

...What sort of homes will we live in... in the first century of the third millennium...? ...[NZ] should dispense with overseas models to build the type of homes that reflect our society... The North Island's plentiful supplies of clay could be used to make modern rammed-earth homes. Making more use of natural light and solar energy by orienting houses to the sun would be another simple improvement... For a more radical vision, an Auckland University senior lecturer in planning... envisages new laws making it mandatory for people to build their own homes... Building standards will rise as people take more care and the cost of housing will drop as people will stay in their houses longer... The fabled N[Z] quarter-acre section will disappear, and increasingly crowded cities will mean the only way to live is up... according to Auckland architects... Not too far up, though... They see three-to-four storey apartment buildings as the homes of the future as more people move towards the inner city to avoid traffic congestion.

...George Court's building took five years to build and opened in 1924... The... store, on the corner of Karangahape Rd and Mercury Lane, was sold to DIC in 1984 and closed in 1989. It passed to FAI Metropolitan Life Insurance, then the Newmarket Property Trust which from mid-1995 offered some of the intended 41 apartments as shells while it was refurbishing and converting the building to strata title. Most of the top units were sold that way... Some units on the first floor are used as offices and all but three of the retail units on the ground floor are sold... An apartment on the first floor fronting Karangahape Rd, with two bedrooms and a study, sold recently for \$280,000. The apartments are around the outer walls of the building, with a balcony at all levels around a wide staircase winding up the centre of a four-storey atrium with glassed ceiling. The balconies have original jarrah floors and heavy beams supporting high ceilings... Noise from... traffic... and... surrounding buildings... [could have been] a problem, but... the Auckland City Council insisted on double-gibbing for soundproofing... [One new owner] runs his publishing business from the... ground floor, and the entrance to his two-bedroom apartment upstairs is through the office... [Another apartment was purchased by a couple who had] looked at villas in Kingsland – an old gem to refurbish, with a garden outside for the[ir] cats. "But even the nastiest 'tin shed' was out of our price range and the amount of work to make them livable was daunting. We decided to start looking at apartments instead. We saw an ad for this unit, fell in love with it and bought it the next day,"... They bought it as a shell a year ago, saved some money and by mid-year carpenters were in creating what they wanted... [When they] moved into their apartment... three months ago, their cats came with them. One prefers to take in the city from the window sill, the other wanders around the parapet and through the window of neighbours' places... "...They're city cats now. They enjoy watching the action on K Rd as much as we do." ...the second animal's great[est] joy is wandering down the street with her owners – preferably without a lead... "We thought we'd be in this place for a while, but..." [the] American, is taking her partner to the U[S] long-term... They want \$240,000 for the apartment... It does not have a car park, although one might be available for lease at \$30 a week. One floor up... are... [a couple who] moved in last year, paying \$220,000 for a basic fitout and then seeking an elegance with the decor and fittings. "We have both the old charm of George Court's and a modern feel,"... Their apartment has two bedrooms and a study over two levels. They have been living on Karangahape Rd for three years, choosing the eastern end of the building for the city views and because it has no road frontage.

...Aucklanders flocking to the highrise lifestyle are learning hard lessons. That panoramic view they paid... extra... for can quickly disappear – replaced by a rear view of someone else's apartment. As the stock of inner-city apartments approaches 10,000, many residents are finding that what they buy is not protected from the impact of newcomers... Good views can represent 30 to 40[%] of the price paid for an apartment, according to... [an] Auckland valuation company... That is how much an apartment's value can be cut by an obstructive neighbouring high-rise... but "it's the risk you take." ...Depending on the location, up to \$100,000 can be wiped off an apartment's value... Angry owners are demanding better planning controls to safeguard their outlook and privacy. But they are finding civic planners loathe to tinker with market forces... While suburban homeowners have some protection, such as rules on height in relation to boundaries, commercial zones in the city have no such safeguards. Building is often allowed from the boundary... In Newton, the owners of three apartments are appalled that a new three-storey block will be less than 1m from their bedroom windows. "We'll be able to reach out and touch them," said one irate owner... The Auckland City Council's team leader for land use concepts... says projects open to public objections in residential zones [can] be permitted as of right in business zones... The Newton owners were not told of the proposal by the Auckland City Council because the block was allowed by the site's zoning... [A p]lanning consultant... says... "Some [apartment-buyers] go into the business-commercial zone with their eyes open; many don't. The city wouldn't exist without employment. You can't make it too costly for business by trying to create a pristine living environment too." But the buyer beware approach does not impress some owners. "I believe that the council and developers don't care about us," said one. "They rely on people like us giving up because [we] haven't got the money to fight." Neighbours do fight sometimes, and councils are occasionally told they err by not informing them. The High Court recently rapped the Dunedin City Council over the knuckles for not notifying neighbours before approving an extension to a hospital. Last year, Browns Bay residents convinced the High Court to order the North Shore City Council to reconsider approving a five-storey apartment block next to the beachfront. In a turnaround, the council declined the project. But loss of amenity can happen to anyone, however well-informed: the Real Estate Institute's national office in Parnell has had half its view blocked by three-level townhouses next door.

...A room with no view... [The young Aucklander] is no different from many of Auckland's new breed of apartment dwellers. Until a few months ago, [it] would come home to his Parnell apartment, fix himself a drink, step on to the sun-drenched balcony and watch cruise ships on the harbour, or gaze across to the museum. At night [the young Aucklander] and his flatmates would sit in the upstairs lounge with the lights off, enjoying the bright lights of the Sky Tower and city office blocks. Now they stare at a four-storey concrete wall, built hard up against the balcony of their Cleveland Rd apartment. The all-enveloping wall is for a carparking and office building on what was a vacant site, used as a carpark. The development, nearly 15m high, has destroyed the view and shut out the main source of light to a row of three-storey apartments in the Cleveland Villas complex. The urban nightmare is just the latest planning debacle to emerge from an inner-city apartment boom encouraged since the late-1980s by the Auckland City Council... [A] decade on, planning safeguards to limit the impact of developments on neighbours are still some way off. And long-awaited district plan changes to tighten the rules will be fought through the courts by property developers who say the new rules threaten their return on investments already made. [The young Aucklander] feels sorry for the owners of his apartment who stand to lose thousands on their investment. But the tenants are seeking a rent reduction as they contemplate a dark, dank winter, and damp bedrooms on the ground floor of their unit. [An agent], speaking on behalf of the owners, confirmed they expected to lose tens of thousands of dollars. "I just could not believe, when I realised what was going to happen, that they could come up with a design that would block out light and totally spoil the living environment of so many people,"... But the owners and occupants never got the chance to object. As with a number of similar cases around town, the development is perfectly legal under the council's light-handed town planning regulations. The apartment boom on inner-city land once reserved for commercial use has exposed time and again the inadequacies of the district plan. Most of the conflicts are in the CBD – where there are few constraints on development – and on land flanking the CBD, zoned business 4, where commercial and residential developments are allowed to sit side by side... But property experts say Cleveland Rd is the most striking example yet of inner-city living ruined by neighbouring development that the public can do nothing about. The carparking and office building at the centre of the row is the brainchild of Samson Corporation, owned by [a local] property magnate... The development has not only created a wall of resentment with neighbours, it has pitched developer against developer.

Samson[']s general manager... says the impact on Cleveland Villas is "unfortunate – but we weren't going to decrease the value of our property because people didn't think ahead". [The general manager blames the] developer of Cleveland Villas, for building right up to the western boundary of his land when [it] knew the vacant lot next door would one day be built on. "It was just a greedy developer... Why should we limit what we can do just for his benefit?" ...[the developer] built on the western boundary to create room for an Italian-style internal courtyard, around which the apartments are built. "I thought I'd done something nice that people would enjoy. I could have done all sorts of things but I went for a low-intensity development."

...*High density bends the rules*... Developers may be offered incentives to house people in multi-storey housing blocks in Auckland, as plans to cram greater numbers into the city move ahead. The council is also considering allowing cheap houses to be built with one, instead of the normal requirement for two car parks per dwelling, and smaller areas required for stormwater drainage than the rules allow. The ideas are contained in a report to the council on ways to build affordable housing in Auckland City... Another idea for "density bonuses," which would allow developers to build more low-cost houses on a site than planning rules permit, has been ruled out. That is because council officers believe the same outcome can be achieved by rezoning whole suburbs for four, five and six-storey apartment blocks... The authors have predicted difficulties with some of the[ir] ideas, including community resistance to more intense housing, traffic problems and the possible effect on property values. A spokes[perso]n for the Panmure Community Action Group... said the report underscored the group's worst fears about multi-storey housing, social engineering and calculated manipulation of the property market... Angry public reaction in working-class Panmure last year forced the council to withdraw a draft "livable community plan" for a new style of multi-storey, high-density housing. Panmure is a test site for developers to tear down [existing] houses and replace them with low-cost housing. Other areas will follow the Panmure model to help squeeze a further 220,000 people into Auckland City... over the next 50 years, when the region's population is expected to double to two million... The eastern suburbs of St Johns, Glen Innes and Panmure, Otahuhu in the south and the western suburbs of Newmarket, Newton, Kingsland, Mt Albert, Avondale and Blockhouse Bay have been earmarked for the most concentrated development. Dominion Rd, Greenlane... and even areas around Remuera's Upland Rd... are other targets.

...For some Aucklanders, the spread of high-density housing across the city spells a threat to the N[Z] way of life. But for [one immigrant] and his family, a home among 300 other terrace houses in Ambrico Place, New Lynn, suits them down to the ground. The [family] are typical of a Waitakere City Council survey showing that many Asian tenants like living close to their neighbours, a lifestyle that reminds them of home. [The immigrant] moved to Ambrico Place a year ago after coming to Auckland from China six years ago. The laboratory technician says his \$190,000 home was cheaper and more modern than others [they had] looked at. It was also within walking distance of the New Lynn town centre and Lynnmall – a convenient factor for the... household, made up of [the technician]'s wife... their toddler and [the technician]'s parents. "This is more our cup of tea... Shanghai is a very crowded city. We are used to sticking together rather than being isolated. It is better for communication and we feel safer, especially when the burglary rate is high. For us, this is very quiet..." [Hi]s reasons for moving to the former brick-works site echo the sentiments of many Asian households who took part in [the] council survey of 50 Ambrico Place homes. Of the 50 households, 56[%] were Asian... Results of the research will be released to city councillors tomorrow and are tipped to prompt a review of planning policies for the city, which has 15 such housing developments. Throughout Auckland, the rash of terrace-housing developments have been criticised by residents' groups as future slums. Waitakere planners say they were surprised by the speed at which the two and three-storey terrace houses went up in Ambrico Place. Since then the council has been struggling to keep up with upgrading neighbouring parks, improving traffic safety and beautifying streets.

...HOMEOWNERS at New Lynn's Tuscany Towers housing development say Waitakere City Council must accept responsibility for the cracks in their buildings. T[h]e Tuscany Towers homeowners group chair[perso]n... says nearly all of the development's 97 buildings have cracked exteriors... [R]esidents noticed cracks up to 2 millimetres wide appearing two years ago... [S]ome cracks were fixed by the original contractor, but have since reappeared. The cause remains unknown. The homeowners group and some companies involved with the [four-year-old] development are seeking legal advice. But... residents also want compensation from the council. Its inspectors signed off some of the work. "In my opinion we're going to have to approach the council and say 'this is pathetic, what are you going to do about it'... It's a dog's breakfast." The N[Z] Building Code states interior walls and exterior cladding must last for at least 15 years. Waitakere City Council's manager of consent services... is concerned with the residents' complaints and admits a number of consents and inspections were carried out by the council's building inspectors. "It has become apparent that this issue may be widespread and it is, naturally, of concern to the council through its role as a regulatory body... At this stage it would be unwise to speculate on any one possible cause as there are a number of contributing factors, including proper attention to details at both the design and construction stages." Tuscany Towers developers, Ambrico Apartments, went into liquidation last year. Waitakere City Council was criticised at the time for failing to secure a cash bond from Ambrico Apartments to ensure the development's completion.

...WAITAKERE ratepayers will have to find about \$120,000 to pay for infrastructure work at Tuscany Towers in New Lynn. The developer... [went] into liquidation leaving road and drainage work incomplete. The Waitakere City Council is being forced to pay the bill because its bond arrangement with the company didn't guarantee it first claim on debt. The council is now queuing up behind other creditors and [its] public affairs manager... says it is unlikely to recover the money... The 97 terraced house development was seen as a medium density housing solution to cater for west Auckland's population growth. Liquidators say Ambrico Apartments Ltd did not anticipate the downturn in the market over the past two years. "Sales were slow and the interest costs marched on. The market continued to see a drop in prices and eventually the company did not have the cashflow to be able to continue to trade..." The company went into liquidation owing \$2.1 million to unsecured creditors. The writing was literally on the wall at Tuscany Towers at least six months ago. Graffiti is scrawled across the incomplete development, while overgrown lawns and building debris surround the unsold units. Residents who bought units at Tuscany Towers for up to \$330,000... say... the developer made many promises that have been broken. "The development is not finished. There's no sign of a promised swimming pool which we already paid for. The road is incomplete and has huge potholes... All we want now is to ensure the development is finished." ...[By the way, t]he company developing a \$450 million mega-housing project at Orewa has gone into receivership. The construction project is the largest and most advanced in N[Z] to go under. Kensington Park Properties had planned to build 750 houses on the former Puriri Park camping ground... Only about 60 have been built... Most of the site is a construction zone, and its future is now uncertain. Residents' expectations of lakes, a gymnasium, extensive landscaping, a swimming pool and other common-area facilities look to be pipe dreams... Money was borrowed from BNZ and Fidelity to finance the... project.

...Around 40 West Auckland homes lie in various stages of completion and unsecured creditors are owed \$2m following the collapse of a Glen Eden based developer. Thirty-three homes across Waitakere City have had to be abandoned after Paramount Homes Limited, along with its five associated companies, went into liquidation last week. And on Friday some 150 creditors met in two separate meetings at the Institute of Chartered Accountants' city offices to hear their plight from liquidators... [B]oth meetings were heated at times. "A lot of people have lost a lot of money." The first meeting was for purchasers of homes. Around \$209,000 in deposits have been put on homes that are now left unfinished. At [the other] meeting, builders, subcontractors and trades[people] met to hear how the collapse will effect them... "We don't really know why the company collapsed. It could be the result of taking too much work on," [liquidators] say... However, the collapse is not a result of the "leaky home" syndrome.

...The timber frames of a growing number of new houses are rotting, some only months after they are built, as the building industry squabbles over the use of untreated kiln-dried framing and cheap cladding. No one knows how many of the 20,000 new dwellings built each year – including 7500 in the Auckland region – could be affected. But the Building Research Association is so worried that it has set up a group to investigate. In

one case, a house frame was found to have rotted in seven months. The distributors of the kiln-dried timber frames say they are a good product, and blame bad work... by builders and poor cladding which lets in moisture... Others in the industry say the removal of expensive eaves on modern houses allows rain to leak into the frames. The issue is to be debated at a conference of the Certified Builders Federation in Hamilton today... [The] founding director of Auckland building inspection firm Prendos and president of the Institute of Building Surveyors, says that [him] and his brother... have been trying to alert the industry to the issue for three years. [They] want the untreated kiln-dried timber banned until cladding technology improves. [They] also want... it banned in high-risk structures such as balconies and cantilevered deck[s]. The... Consumers Institute chief executive says the institute has not received any complaints [it] knows of, but admitted to being sceptical about untreated kiln-dried pine. "You have to be so careful in handling the stuff... It's asking for a high degree of skill and knowledge on the part of the builder." [The institute] did not know how prevalent the problem was. "It's one of those things that's all covered up. It's only going to become apparent when the house starts falling apart." ...[however, a] study of 300 pre-purchase building reports from Prendos showed 80[%] of exterior claddings had some defect, and 60[%] let in moisture. The Building Research Association information services general manager... says the research is alarming. And... admits that the association does not know the extent of the problem. "We also don't know its geographic distribution,"... But most reports show the problem is surfacing most in Auckland, the powerhouse of the country's building industry... [T]he Timber Industry Federation says untreated kiln-dried framing timber now dominates the market because it is easier, lighter, cheaper and quicker than other materials. But [Prendos] says it is unrealistic to expect buildings to be completely watertight, and the problem is with the... framing. "You can't keep a building dry. It's an impossibility." Framing timber has traditionally been treated with boron, which also provided some rot resistance. A change in the building standards in 1996 allowed untreated kiln-dried timber to be used. The standards assumed buildings would not leak. But the change came with the disappearance of... eaves from new houses, some shoddy construction, and the rise of so-called chillybin claddings such as stucco, fibre-cement and polystyrene.

...[an Aucklander] would love nothing better than to move out of her "polystyrene" apartment and back into a plain, solid and practical state house. The solo mother and three members of her whanau pay \$176 a week to live crammed into a two-storey apartment with structural cracks, cockroaches and polystyrene window and door frames. Chunks of the polystyrene... are coming away, allowing water to seep into the apartment and posing long-term problems with rot and mould. "The apartment is breaking around us. It is unhygienic. It smells to high heaven from sewage fumes coming back up the toilet, and the polystyrene is weak. It's like living in a packing case... Initially when I moved in I thought how modern and excellent the place was. But it didn't take long for cracks to appear up the staircase..." [The solo mother] and other low-income state tenants live in rows of Coronation St-style terraced houses at Takawai Apartments, dubbed "Takeaway Apartments," at Church St in Otahuhu. Two blocks away is Greenstone Gardens, the notorious three-storey block of state flats... Some of the problems at Greenstone Gardens were put down to the age of the 1970s Housing N[Z] block. The same cannot be said about Takawai Gardens. The development is barely two years old and already it has been labelled a slum. The charge comes from... a Labour councillor on the Auckland City Council, who could not believe her eyes when [it] visited this week. A state housing tenant most of her life, [the councillor said it] was horrified at the quality of the building materials, peeling polystyrene around the doors and windows, a tiny playground in the middle of the carpark, small backyards that got little sun and a lack of fire escapes. "These so-called new developments are... the pits." ...What really scares [the councillor] is the plan to cram a further 220,000 people into Auckland [City]... over 50 years. "The council really needs to look at what they are planning... because what I have seen at Takawai Apartments and elsewhere is not on." ...Housing N[Z]'s chief... said the Takawai Apartments development was built under the policy of the previous National Government and was an example of terraced housing from which it "had been able to learn" lessons for future developments and community consultations. "I undertook my own assessment of that development – I think we can improve on that in future." ...although the apartments had been built to specification, [the chief] was not happy with some design aspects, including layout of the buildings and open space... Housing N[Z] had received no complaints from tenants of Takawai Apartments but [the chief] was concerned to hear about [the solo mother]'s problems... Housing N[Z] said in response to a list of written questions about Takawai Apartments that it was aware of problems with polystyrene but these were "non-structural." It was unaware of any structural problems with the 32 two-bedroom and 14 three-bedroom units. "The use of this product [polystyrene] in Housing N[Z] properties is in accordance with various building codes and standards." ...the education and information services manager for the Building Research Association, said that even without seeing the crumbling polystyrene it would appear it had not been applied correctly. [The manager] said polystyrene was a good material for the cladding of houses when it was a "proprietary" building product... That meant at least three plaster coatings, including one with fibreglass mesh reinforcing, and at least one coat of paint to give total covered thickness of 12mm to 15mm. The *Weekend Herald* saw chunks of polystyrene that had come away from the window and door frames with a paint coating of 1mm or less. There appeared to be no visible problems with the main fibre cement wall cladding.

...The building industry has called for a tough new national inspection system after revelations that many of the country's new homes are in danger of rotting inside because of design and [builder] failings... Failures in cladding and framing revealed by the *Weekend Herald* may also open the door to litigation as homeowners seek redress. Under statutory building codes, cladding should be durable for at least 15 years, and structural framework for 50 years. Liability for repairs could cover not only builders and subcontractors but certifiers and local authorities. Building industry officials said yesterday that the causes went well beyond the use of untreated kiln-dried timber and extended throughout a cut-throat supply and construction chain. They also said existing inspection and certification systems were not adequate to deal with dramatic changes in the materials, design and construction of houses over the past 10 years. The potential scale of the problem was shown in research presented to a Certified Builders Association conference at the weekend. It was told that a census of 287 pre-purchase inspection reports on... houses [built since] 1996... found 60[%] leaked to some extent. The owners of one two-year-old house worth \$450,000 faced repairs estimated to cost \$150,000.

...[the Epsom builder] pulled up in his ute, clomped over an exclusive Remuera cul-de-sac in his heavy work boots, and discovered a \$600,000 catastrophe. This Epsom builder with 29 years' experience under his tool belt had been called out by the recently arrived American owner of her N[Z] dream home. The original builder had vanished, leaving the two-storey, architecturally designed house unfinished. "It was a bomb site," says [the Epsom builder], now into his sixth month of sorting out the mess... [His] firm had originally lost out at tender with a quote about \$100,000 higher than the successful company. [The Epsom builder] could see where those costs had been cut as soon as [it] walked up the drive. The front wall which should have been filled with concrete was hollow. Further inspection revealed a depressing catalogue of defects. The home's concrete base was cracked because clay excavated from the swimming pool was used as a base instead of hard aggregate. In the two-storey lounge, \$750 sheets of poplar burr for the curved ceiling had been replaced by cheaper pine, and on the roof a whole series of small faults combined to let water in. Some of it spilled on to the ceiling, staining the pine, another torrent collapsed part of the garage ceiling, and a combination of a leak and paint applied without a sealer saw a waterfall down one wall. On her first day in the house, the owner watched water spill from a light fitting in the kitchen because an enclosed deck above had not been given enough drainage. [The Epsom builder] estimates the cost of repairs so far to be around \$150,000. There seems little chance of recovery because the [original building] firm's owner has disappeared and his company is reportedly broke. [The Epsom builder] says the problems illustrate the building industry's vicious circle – the demand for the cheapest price from owners, architects and developers being met by less skilled tradespeople using cheaper products. It is the same equation at work in last week's revelations that many lower-cost new homes may be rotting because of water seeping through new "chilly-bin" claddings into chemical-free, kiln-dried timber. And while some question the quality of the products, the wider question is: are our builders up to it? Part of the answer lies in our proud tradition as a nation of do-it-yourselfers since the early settlers clambered ashore at the top of the Kerikeri inlet and put up the first stone and wooden structures that

survive to this day. A N[Z]er's right to build his or her own home has meant the industry has never been regulated, unlike of plumbers or electricians. Anyone can call themselves a builder, whether they are qualified and experienced, or cannot tell one end of a hammer from the other... A North Shore builder... says at one job a carpenter [it] hired was putting up ceiling batons using a nail gun. When power was cut [the carpenter] asked the builder what [it] should do. "I said, just nail them in by hand. [The carpenter] says, I can't, I've never done it, I don't know how." His partner says some so-called builders rely far too much on silicon and other fillers to plug problems. Such products deteriorated within a few years, letting in water. "In the old days everyone took pride in what they did, now no one gives a damn. It's just get it finished and get the dollars... When I was a boy... I did night-school once a week and two block courses a year for four to five years. Now there is not much off-site training. There's a book [trainees] fill out. I'm a sceptic about it." In... 1992, the Government... did away with the apprenticeship training boards and launched industry training organisations... Among the plethora of organisations with snappy acronyms involved in the building industry, is the BCITO, or Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation, which runs the modern apprenticeship scheme for builders. Its chief executive... explains there are two routes into a building career. One is to get a job with a builder and begin on-site training. The other is to first spend six months at a polytechnic doing a pre-trade block course, at your own expense. The apprentice is... required to keep a record of the work they have done which is checked by their assessor, who is usually their employer. The [BC]ITO employs 22 training advisers who visit apprentices, check their records and assess their competency in certain tasks. But with 2240 apprentices currently in training, that is one inspector to 100 apprentices... The anecdotal skill drop has coincided with a change in building styles and products. Even through the years we called Britain home, the abundance of local timber meant we drew our building styles more from North America than... the British, who favoured brick. As any one who has lived in a draughty villa through the winter will know, one of the reasons they have survived for so long is that the wind is free to whistle through them, drying out the timber as it goes. But with the escalating energy costs that accompanied the energy crisis in the 1970s, combined with environmental concerns about burning fossil fuels, came the pressure for homes that would keep the heat in, not let it out. First came Pink Batts, followed by a raft of modern building technologies that were smarter, warmer and cheaper than timber. At that level, says... [the] founding director of Auckland... firm Prendos, what the scientists were producing raced ahead of the builders' understanding – a problem that has been worldwide.

...Some experienced observers fear N[Z]'s problems could turn out to be as bad as Canada's "leaky condo" scandal, which created a crisis of confidence among home-owners and in the building industry. In Vancouver, experts believe that close to 90[%] of the 800-plus three- to four-storey, wooden-frame condominiums built between 1980 and 1995 have serious leaks. Owners, often retired people, who originally paid about C\$150,000... now face C\$35,000... repair bills they cannot pay. Property values have plummeted by up to two-thirds and building consents are still less than half their previous level. A Vancouver commission of inquiry found that the units showed signs of decay in as little as three years and buildings were being repaired twice for the same problem – which many builders say is happening in N[Z]. It is now compulsory in Vancouver to install "drainage planes" – a gap between the cladding and timber frame allowing water to escape – in new condominiums... [The chairperson] of the N[Z] building industry steering group on the issue, said that the same measures might be introduced here... [A]n industry crusader against leaky buildings, has predicted in the trade press that the long-term repair bill for this country will easily top \$1 billion. Others believe it will be higher... "We are aware of hundreds of properties which have been affected and those would be representative of many thousands that have been built in... [recent] years. On that basis, we've only seen the very beginning of the problem." Scientists are also monitoring an increase in the growth of a potentially lethal fungus, stachybotrys, and other toxic moulds believed to cause health problems, including breathing difficulties and flu-like symptoms.

...An ugly explosion of green and black is crawling up the walls of a worrying number of N[Z] homes. It is not a common mould, and it may be responsible for unexplained ill health. [A] HortResearch microbiologist... is searching N[Z] homes for the toxin-producing fungus stachybotrys, which has been linked to... severe health problems, including bleeding of the lungs, memory loss... breathing difficulties... and deaths in the U[S]... But the research remains controversial. "It's like the smoking argument – for years you couldn't link it," said [the microbiologist]... Scientists say that stachybotrys outbreaks were rare 10 years ago. But [the microbiologist]... had already found many examples of it growing in damp N[Z] homes. "It's not just stachybotrys either – there's a lot of other toxic fungi too,"... Stachybotrys grows only when materials such as wood or carpet backing are saturated for an extended period... [L]eaking and rotting problems with many new homes were creating the perfect conditions for stachybotrys... An Auckland building repair expert... said [it] often found stachybotrys when... investigat[ing] leaks in new houses. "I've had cases where I've been brought into a job and people have explained that various people got sick during the process and they didn't understand why." [The repair expert] believed the mould was not a health hazard until repair work sent any toxic spores airborne. A senior public health adviser with the Ministry of Health... was not aware of any confirmed cases of stachybotrys-related illness in N[Z].

...the couple would lie] awake at night in their new inner-city apartment in Marion Square, listening to the sound of falling rain. When it grew too loud, they[would ge]t out of bed, grab... a couple of old towels and stuff... them hard up against the wall to catch leaks. It was the last thing the couple had expected when they bought the \$330,000 three-storey unit in the heart of Wellington's Cuba St district. The 40 muddy-grey, loft-style apartments were built around an inner courtyard on top of a three-storey car park in 1996. The following year they won a regional architecture award, but the owners were already finding problems. "Within about three months of moving into a brand new apartment we got water damage on the inside of the stairwell... There was mould and rot and the carpet was sodden." ...it took the developers, Ebert Construction, three or four attempts to fix the problem... The [NZ] Herald understands that a report by... Prendos, found that leaks in some apartments were so bad that entire wall linings had to be replaced. Many apartments were infected with a dangerous mould known as stachybotrys – not well-known in N[Z], but linked in several American legal disputes to a range of health problems... Most seriously, in Ohio, doctors have linked bleeding in the lungs of 45 children over the past seven years to the presence of the fungus. Sixteen of the children died. Research into the exact causes of the deaths continues, but all of them lived in homes where stachybotrys was found... Marion Square residents have now taken legal action against Ebert Construction. The chair[perso]n of the body corporate... confirmed the case was heading for the High Court. Ebert Construction did not return calls. In Ponsonby, the owners of one three-storey... terraced house on Rose Rd called in the lawyers when a double bed fell through the floor of a downstairs bedroom. "The bed was shortly followed by the washing machine," said [their] lawyer... "When the [owners] took up the floorboards, the whole underfloor area was saturated and completely rotten." ...other houses in the block shared similar problems, as water had attacked the buildings' substructure. "One [of the houses] is particularly badly affected and perhaps if this hadn't been discovered, it may well have led to the whole structure being condemned." The Rose Rd body corporate is taking its case to the High Court at Auckland next week, suing the builder and the Auckland City Council. [The lawyer] said the body corporate would allege that substandard work... was carried out and question whether the council exercised proper oversight of the building process. The council and the builder are fighting the allegations. Marion Square and Rose Rd are the latest examples of a leaky-building crisis gradually seeping into public view... Last month the Building Industry Authority, the Government body responsible for enforcing building standards, announced an inquiry to determine the size of the problem. Industry sources say the answer is thousands of new homes – including dozens of multi-unit developments... ON THE rural hinterland hugging Auckland's eastern suburbs, the Botany Downs shopping centre, the country's largest retail development, looms over the intersection of Ti Rakau Drive and Te Irirangi Rd. Just behind it lies a 153-unit development once described by the Auckland Regional Council as a vision of future housing areas. Called Sacramento to reflect the Spanish-Californian theme, the development's \$150,000-\$243,000 homes were pitched at first-home buyers and couples looking for a

comfortable condominium lifestyle. The developer, North Shore-based Taradale, specialises in these projects. By the time Sacramento was built, Taradale already had several showcase sites, including the 105 houses at The Grange and the 61 terraced houses and apartments at Vista Rosa in Mt Albert. Sacramento followed the style of Vista Rosa, but on a much greater scale. It is one of the largest housing developments in the country, complete with mission-style belltowers and archways, communal barbecue area, swimming pool, gym and tennis court. Now Sacramento has been struck by the leaky building blight. Owners considered legal action but have decided as a group to deal with the problem – for now – by talking with Taradale, which has assigned... an independent director on the board of Taradale Property, to manage the problem. “We are as dismayed as the owners are with what’s occurring because we are proud of Sacramento,” says [the independent director, who adds that] the problems at Sacramento will affect one or two other Taradale developments, but emphasises that not all sites were built the same way. According to the company, the problem has been caused by a failure of the jointing system holding the exterior cladding to the frame. Last year, as a temporary measure, Taradale and the two main construction contractors squeezed adhesive sealants around the joints and anywhere else there was a risk of water getting in... [T]he company and the builders were working on a way to fix the problem long-term, but have decided to wait to see if the B[IA] inquiry comes up with a standard answer. While owners believe the issue has dragged on too long, Taradale believes it has moved quickly. In some ways it had no choice. “Sacramento is very prominent. One of the things in this business is that you can’t hide,” says [the independent director]. Last month the... *Herald* revealed leaks in another high-profile Auckland housing development, the 93-unit Summerfield Villas on the old Sleepyhead factory site in Grey Lynn, which was finished only last year. [The developer’s m]arketing manager... blames the problem on inadequate flashings (metal coverings designed to seal joints) on the parapets placed at every second or third unit... Until the 1980s most N[Z] houses had pitched roofs, with eaves to keep out the rain. They were usually made of weatherboard, brick or perhaps stucco on an open, ventilated timber frame. The houses leaked but water had room to drain away or dry out inside the walls. The timber framing was treated for borer, which made it more resistant to rot as well. Over the past... five to 10 years... most of these conditions have changed. Mediterranean-style houses with flat roofs, no eaves and floor-level decks and balconies tend to let more rain in. New water-resistant, but slow-drying, stucco and fibre cement claddings, combined with compulsory insulation from the early 1980s, give this water nowhere to go in the tightly packed wall cavities... Whatever the reasons, the effects have been dramatic and are getting worse... [A]larmingly... a survey... found... half the houses built since 1990 leak... and these houses had more leaks at a higher failure rate than... older houses... The highest failure rate came from stucco. Prendos’ latest study into... multi-unit housing... found average repair bills of \$32,000... The growing question is: who will pay? ...[one] building repair expert... knows of one three-year-old \$1 million central Auckland property where the cost will be six figures... If the worst predictions are right, many N[Z] homeowners could end up like [the guy] whose multi-level Mediterranean-style Devonport dream home has turned into a nightmare. Water leaked from the balcony straight into the main bedroom and poured in through the back wall. Similar leaks have rotted the timber framing of the garage. [The b]uilder... says the 14-year-old house has had three owners and was sold before completion, but has offered to contribute to the repair bill, which [is] put... at \$12,000... [The owner]’s fed up with the endless repairs. “I bought this house by the beach and here I am spending all my time fixing bloody botch-ups...”

...Rising claims for leaking and rotting new homes are forecast to cost Auckland City ratepayers \$1.4 million this year. Hundreds of home owners are suing or planning to sue Auckland City and other councils for allegedly failing to oversee the building consent process, in the knowledge that councils have the financial resources to pay up. Local authorities hope an independent report on leaky homes will provide clear guidelines on their role in the building process and the growing risk of exposure. It is in Auckland that the combined effects of wet weather and poorly designed and built terraced housing and apartment developments are causing the greatest alarm. [The]Hamilton City Council chief executive... yesterday said his council had accepted partial liability for just one leaky building and had one more claim before it. Tauranga District’s acting environmental services manager... said his council was monitoring the crisis closely because of a housing boom running between 1200 and 1400 building permits a year, many for apartment and terraced houses. [The manager] said the drier climate was one reason there had been no claims so far. “It is a relief.” At Auckland City, the council has made more than 13 confidential settlements since 1995 and has more than 15 claims before it, including one from owners at the 5-year-old Quest apartment building in Queen St, which... was being stripped floor by floor in an \$800,000 repair job. The cost of negligence claims, most involving building and planning, has rocketed from \$459,000 four years ago to \$1.2 million in the last financial year... Auckland City’s finance director... said yesterday that the jump in professional negligence claims was clearly a concern. North Shore[’s] Mayor... said his council had about seven cases of leaking buildings on its files. Another five cases had been settled out of court. “Obviously considerable litigation could stem from this,” [the mayor] said... North Shore City’s compliance and monitoring team leader, said several new cases, including the leaking and rotting 105-unit Grange development in Albany, would “come to the council’s attention”. Manukau [City’s] Mayor... was not aware of any problem buildings that had been signed off by council inspectors. [Yet, Manukau]Council officers told the *Herald* in April that the council faced 15 cases... More than 150 owners at the \$30 million Sacramento development... in Manukau City are preparing to sue the developer... for faults that include mushroom-sprouting mould. Waitakere [City’s] Mayor... was unaware of any claims before his council. [The mayor] was “bloody pleased” that the council’s building inspectors, perhaps thought of as over-zealous, had been strict in applying the building code... [However,] several terrace house owners in the 97-unit Tuscany Towers development in... West Auckland... have spoken out about their leaky homes... [Unfortunately, i]ts developer, Ambrico Apartments, and builder, United Homes, went into liquidation last year... [Now] a Tuscany Towers’ homeowners’ group... were obtaining legal advice about enforcing their rights under the Consumer Guarantees Act.

...Cabinet will today consider ways of settling disputes over the liability for leaky homes as building certifiers warn of a collapsing house market if they cannot get insurance... [The PM] said... last night... the Government was unlikely to go as far as legislating for dispute settlement tribunals... “There may be other ways of facilitating movement... There are a range of interests. There is local government, insurance, master builders and the customers. The question is, how are people best brought together.” Building certifiers yesterday held an emergency meeting in Drury where they revealed that inspection work had stopped on thousands of jobs because of insurance risks. The Government has now been directly affected by leaky building syndrome, after one inspection company, A1 Certifiers, had to stop work at a 29-unit Housing NZ development. Hundreds of homeowners face mounting repair bills for leaking homes... but so far no one is admitting responsibility. A report commissioned by the B[IA] estimates that nationally repairs could cost \$240 million. It criticised many sectors of the industry, including architects, developers and poorly skilled builders, and also questioned building inspection procedures. [The PM] said yesterday that legal advice to the Government was clear... there was no Crown liability for the problems. [The PM] had read the officials’ advice accompanying a Crown Law Office opinion and it was “very clear” there was no Crown liability, even taking into account Crown agencies such as the B[IA]. At yesterday’s Drury meeting at the offices of A1 Certifiers, which was forced to close last week because it was unable to get professional indemnity cover for watertightness of buildings, inspectors warned of a catastrophe in the industry. The company has stopped work on 5500 properties, including a \$1.2 million Papakura home, which could leave a builder \$250,000 out of pocket... [T]he immediate past president of the N[Z] Master Builders Federation, who chaired the meeting, said the industry could grind to a halt unless urgent steps were taken to help building certifiers to obtain insurance. Building certifiers are private inspectors who are responsible for ensuring that houses comply with the Building Code. They sign off houses before they can be sold by issuing a code of compliance. They undertake about half of the 40,000 building projects each year in the Auckland area, with council inspectors doing the rest. “What we are going to see is unfinished houses, builders unable to get progress payments, bankruptcies and ultimately people unable to get their homes,” [the past president] said... The building certifiers have formed a fighting group and are requesting an urgent meeting with [the]Internal Affairs Minister...

Brothers at odds over heads to roll... One of two brothers who first warned about the leaky buildings scandal says it is time for [the]Internal Affairs Minister... to go... [The brothers] bombarded the BIA, politicians and the media with information about... leaking homes. The... [minister has said it] was not informed of the problem until April 30 and that [it] relied on his paid officials to raise concerns with him. [Brother one] said that this may be so, but that was no excuse for not taking notice of all the letters and countless articles in the *Herald* and trade magazines about the problem... [Furthermore, a] letter from a worried building firm, HiTex Plastering Ltd... sent to the Housing Minister... [was forwarded to the Internal Affairs Minister], who replied to HiTex on September 7, [last year], saying the industry had set up a weathertight building steering committee... to investigate problems with rotting homes... [(t)he letter... says the questions raised by HiTex will be addressed[, and]... is signed by... [the Internal Affairs Minister]. In addition, a]n open letter... from [the brothers' company]Prendos had clearly warned [the minister] and other industry leaders about the scale of the problem and that it would only get worse... It also was clear the Government had no confidence left in the minister because the issue had been handed on to the Minister for Economic Development... [However, t]he other brother says [the Internal Affairs Minister] was treated appallingly by the B[IA] and that its chief executive... is the one who should resign... "At the end of the day, if [the minister] went, so what."

...Ministers should own up... AS THE Government struggles to deal with the leaky building crisis, there must be no doubt about where ultimate accountability lies. It is with the Government itself. While the P[M] denies the Government has any legal liability, that is somewhat different to accountability for Governments' actions in introducing a system which includes the Building Act, the attendant building code and the regulations set out in the act. Central government is also responsible for establishing the B[IA], which approves independent building certifiers. Among the requirements for certifiers is that they carry public liability insurance – from which insurance companies are now removing themselves. There is nothing in the system to deal with this or to ensure home-buyers are protected financially from shonky building. The system of building consent and certification was set up by Labour in the late 1980s, and National tinkered with it... That makes the Government accountable, whatever its colour. If there has been a systematic breakdown, as the B[IA] report claimed, it is the system set up by the Government that has broken down. The chaos outlined in the report has developed because the system simply did not work. Even now, while the Government introduces voluntary mediation, it is still being pointed out that litigation is the ultimate recourse for those already suffering a leaking home. But still no clear guidelines are being set on who to sue. In some cases, there should be a clear target – where, for example, buildings are found not to have complied with the requirements of the building consent. Sue the builder, you would think. But what if the builder has been issued with a certificate of compliance by the local council? Sue the council, you would think. But what if the building was signed off by a private building certifier on the basis of which the local council, which may never have actually visited the building site, then issued a compliance certificate as required under the Building Act? Sue the private certifier? Or the developer? Maybe neither, because the council, once it learns of the problem, can issue a "notice to rectify" to the private certifier, who must then get his client – the developer or builder – to carry out remedial work. If that does not work, the home-owner can still take the council to court... The council issues the compliance certificate and should carry ultimate liability. That liability arises directly from obligations laid on local government by central government through legislation. Therefore, logically and morally, central government must be held accountable. Local and central government's role is to regulate for an orderly society in which people's rights are protected. That is why we have laws that cover our daily lives and create and develop the framework within which we can live at peace with our neighbours and go about our daily business within a fair and equitable society. When those laws prove inadequate, that framework is endangered. Such is the case with the leaky buildings crisis. The system has failed. It is now the responsibility of central government to give adequate financial help to owners of leaky homes. That help could include legal aid to sue builders, developers and anyone else who may have contributed. It could also include interest-free loans – or even grants in cases of dire need – to enable repairs to be carried out swiftly and efficiently. Such measures would ease the immediate burden of those people suffering the stress and hardship this systematic failure has induced. And what about the future? How can home-buyers be given confidence that they will not be subject to such a systematic failure again? The basic framework of building control relies heavily on the role of the local council acting under clear and operable legislation. This means th[ey]... should continue to have responsibility for issuing building consents, inspecting buildings and issuing compliance certificates. And the councils should continue to accept liability when they certify that buildings have been constructed in accordance with tried and approved materials and building methods. No council will ever admit, in individual cases, that such liability exists because... [it] would lead to cancellation of the council's own liability insurance. That is why many councils have admitted making "confidential" payouts to owners of faulty homes. They have recognised their liability. Introducing substantial changes to the present system must reinforce that legal responsibility. [1]st, all building certification should be carried out by fully qualified council staff. The law allowing private certifiers should be revoked. In conjunction with that, the number of inspections carried out by councils must be increased to reflect the defects currently under appraisal. There must also be flexibility to carry out, and charge for, additional inspections if necessary. [2]nd, all builders should be registered, and registration must require proof of appropriate skills and qualifications. Allied to that, anyone other than a registered builder must be prohibited from being allowed to carry out any construction work. Building consents would be issued only to registered builders. And all registered builders should be required to contribute annually to an industry indemnity fund to meet claims arising from faulty work. [3]rd, all property developers involved in constructing units and houses must also be made to contribute to the builders' indemnity fund, and be held accountable in law, with the builder, for building defects. [4]th, councils should have the power to call for a bond for any new development from developers and builders to provide security for possible costs to councils in pursuing rectification of faults. Finally, in relation to the standard and performance of building materials and products, a revised set of procedures must be introduced, including the requirement for new products to be performance-bonded for an appropriate number of years until proved reliable. These measures would add to the cost of new homes or reduce profits for builders and developers. But they... provide a much more robust system of building control and give greater confidence to home-buyers.

...Homeowners suffering from the leaky homes syndrome still face an uphill hike to get their problems sorted – despite [the]government's announcement of a new \$4m adjudication service to make builders front up. The process is no quick fix and it will take possibly years before settlements are made... But how much teeth will the... Construction Contracts bill... have? How will it nail builders, to say nothing of developers, when it comes to remedial work and getting the cash, [workers] or materials to complete the job? Homeowners must register (and there'll be a yet-to-be-set fee) to take advantage of the new disputes resolution service. Complaints will be screened to ensure they fit the leaky building syndrome criteria. If a case is accepted a registration form will be sent out and once returned an independent assessor will interview the homeowner; inspect the house; determine the cause of problems, parties involved and approximate cost of repairs. Anyone whose complaint involves repairs of less than \$7500 will be shunted off to the Disputes Tribunal where they could have gone in the first place! However, we still have limited liability companies in this country and it's a fair bet a lot of them will consider going to the wall – faced with the threat of massive bills to fix leaky homes.

*...Dozens of new-home owners are fighting through the courts against two high-flying developers who have... put up terraced housing across Auckland. Tension is growing between[the] property magnates... and people who have bought homes at some of their developments and claim they are substandard... The brothers set up shelf companies for each development, later liquidating them to avoid personal liability – a common building industry practice that has come under increasing fire since the leaky building crisis. Last night, a group of about 40 owners of homes in the new Ellerslie Oaks complex met to discuss what action to take over alleged incomplete work. The company that developed the site... was one of four... [the] brothers... put into voluntary liquidation last week. Owners of homes in the leaking Greenwich Park development in Grafton have named the brothers and their core company, Castlerock Property Holdings, in their \$3.5 million legal action – [NZ's] biggest known legal building lawsuit. The... *Herald* has also spoken to subcontractors who say they are owed money by the pair... A... business claims to have gone bust largely because*

the brothers did not pay a bill. Some contractors say they have settled for much-reduced sums after giving up hope of getting any money from the shell companies involved. The... brothers are listed as directors of at least 33 companies, 15 of which have either been put into liquidation or struck off the company register. Yesterday, [one brother said it] was upset at the allegations being made against him and asked: "Is this shoot-the-developer season?" [The brother] added: "We do not have one single creditor – every person who has done work for us has received payment to their satisfaction." ...[the brother] was proud of his developments... describ[ing] Greenwich Park as a "beautiful development, well done" and said any "ongoing matters" were between the owners and the construction company, which is also being sued. [The brother] acknowledged that one contractor had taken him to court, but the matter was contested. "If we are proved wrong, we will pay them any money outstanding – if they are wrong they are up for a massive claim against them." ...[a l]awyer... believed there was scope under the Fair Trading Act to "lift the corporate veil" and sue directors of "shell" companies – so long as there was still a core company that was viable to sue. [The lawyer] believed developers had a duty to ensure that proper care and skill were used in the building of houses, and that could not be avoided by delegation to independent contractors... [The brothers] have been prominent on the Auckland property scene for several years and their 10 Auckland developments range from top-of-the-line terraced homes to cheaper apartments... [One brother], 34, lives in a \$725,000 home in Parnell and drives a Ferrari, and his partner... who markets his homes, drives a new Range Rover worth \$175,000. [His b]rother... also lives in Parnell and has a Mercedes four-wheel-drive... Using the name 35 Ayr St, they [recently] paid \$3.5 million for the old Grammar Carlton Rugby Club property in Parnell, which they plan to develop. They also have development plans in Queenstown. A representative of owners of homes in the Ellerslie Oaks complex, who asked not to be named, said: "We didn't get what we paid for." Security gates were not installed, courtyard fences were not finished, some appliances were not installed and remedial work was not finished... Subcontractors have told the... *Herald* that a lot of work has not been finished because they were paid late or not at all... The Building Subcontractors Federation wants the Government to tighten company law to crack down on developers "hiding" behind shelf companies... A spokes[person] for the Companies Office said it was not illegal to set up shelf companies to limit personal liability. "The whole nature of a limited liability company is to ultimately restrict your responsibility..." But... action could be taken against company directors who had had more than two failed, including liquidated, companies within five years, where the failure could be shown to be their fault... ■ [A]... team of Government ministers have been working on a plan to resolve the rotting homes problem that could involve repairs costing up to \$2.4 billion. A part of the solution package is the new mediation and adjudication service announced by [the Deputy-PM]... last month. A website and toll-free phone number have been set up so that homeowners can apply to take part in the dispute resolution process. The Government will today release more details about how the mediation and adjudication service will work, including the costs for homeowners. The *Herald* understands homeowners will pay a fee of \$200 to use the mediation arm of the disputes service. If mediation fails or if one of the parties involved refuses to take part, the homeowner can pay a further \$200 to use the adjudication service. Adjudication would be compulsory for all those involved, including the builder or property developer. If the case goes straight to adjudication without going through mediation, homeowners will pay a \$400 fee. The judge handling the case will have the power to award costs when issuing a decision, so homeowners could be reimbursed... About half of the 541 calls to the toll-free number have come from the Greater Auckland region... Internal Affairs has received 151 registrations from homeowners...

All new leak-prone houses in the Auckland region are now required to use wall cavities and treated timber for protection against leaks and rot... [T]he stricter system ha[s] been in use for about six weeks... Other councils around the country are expected to follow Auckland's lead soon, rather than wait for a decision from the Government or the B[IA]. The combined changes are expected to cost about \$1000 for an average house. However councils predict the numbers of affected homes could be relatively small, as builders and architects are already going back to more traditional designs... The council moves are identical to those proposed by... P[rendos]... in a letter to the B[IA] two years ago. At the time the authority's architect... dismissed the cavity plan as "an unjustified increase in cost to the industry" and a return to treated timber as "a backward step". The authority is now on the verge of introducing compulsory treated timber for outside walls and is considering compulsory use of cavities.

...Home builders and renovators will soon face a new challenge – tighter red tape. Stricter building rules through changes to the Building Act are set to come into force, partly in response to the leaky homes crisis. The rules are intended to ensure all buildings are constructed or altered properly. While the new rules are being welcomed by some, others are warning it could damage the DIY industry and put a dampener on a much-loved Kiwi hobby. Under existing rules, do-it-yourselfers need a building permit for some structural work, the work needs to comply with the building code and it has to be signed off by the local council. Under proposed new rules, all work over \$10,000 must be supervised by a qualified builder before it gets approved by the council... Further proposed changes to the Building Act will see some building methods and designs banned...

An Auckland structural engineer says many pre-cast concrete high-rise blocks built in N[Z] since 1994 do not comply with sound engineering practice and would collapse in a big earthquake. The engineer... has written a report documenting 26 examples of bad practices and described one fault on a multi-storey building as "tantamount to conspiracy to commit mass murder". [The engineer] says the "leaky buildings" syndrome is "only the tip of the iceberg" of declining standards... The Institution of Professional Engineers... has appointed a group to look into the allegations... High-rise buildings would need to be assessed structurally through the same kind of exercise that the Government was funding for leaky homes.

...The owners of up to one in 10 N[Z] high-rise buildings face... higher earthquake engineering standards. Costs could run into [\$]billions... and some buildings may have to be demolished. [The]Commerce Minister... put the construction industry on notice to lift its performance[, and]... said the Building Act would be changed to toughen provision for earthquake-prone buildings... The act is already being revised after the leaky buildings scandal to require the licensing of all builders, architects and building engineers and to certify that new buildings comply with the building code.

...*First leaks, now weak wood*... N[Z]'s biggest timber supplier has admitted selling under-strength wood, after three of its sawmills were raided in a Commerce Commission investigation. C[HH] acknowledged yesterday that its MGP10 grade Laserframe brand timber was not strong enough to meet the advertised standard and said the product would be regraded... CHH... has [also] been found guilty of misleading advertising... The Advertising Standards Complaints Board found C[HH] guilty on two counts of misrepresenting its Laserframe product in a free brochure available from retailers for the last two years. C[HH] won its appeal against a third brochure... CHH... stressed there had been no reports of timber failure.

...Israeli Army rescue experts yesterday searched for survivors in the rubble of a multi-storey banquet hall which collapsed during a wedding party, killing at least 20 people... 300 people were injured... [O]fficials at the scene said an engineering fault... not an Arab attack, was responsible for the collapse of the... hall, in the Talpiot industrial park of Jerusalem... [Ironically, the] young couple's fear of terrorism led them to make the decision that turned their wedding into a national tragedy... [They] had planned to marry at a kibbutz near the West Bank, but changed their mind at the last moment because they feared the recent violence in the Palestinian territories. Instead, they booked the Versailles Wedding Hall, in suburban Jerusalem, where the dance floor collapsed under the weight of their 620 guests... Despite its grand title, the Versailles Wedding Hall is scarcely distinguishable from many other modern, concrete block buildings in the rather soulless suburb of Talpiot, which is little more than a collection of car dealerships, electronic stores and factory outlets. And, like many of those buildings, it was put up in the 1980s using a cheap, lightweight construction method which has since been banned... The inventor of the method... which used... thinner layers of cement... appeared on Israeli radio... insisting the technique was safe. A few hours later, [it] was arrested. Another [person] was arrested at Jerusalem's city hall a few hours after the disaster as [it] tried to break into a document room. Ten people have been arrested, including the owners of the building and the builders. The wedding couple were among the survivors, more than 166 of whom remain... in hospital... including 16 who were in a serious condition. The moment celebration turned to tragedy was captured in a terrifying wedding video. The tape, broadcast repeatedly worldwide,

showed smiling faces on the packed floor, and then, seconds later, hundreds of dancers suddenly dropped into a giant abyss of orange sparks and smoke.

...Enjoy your breakfast, home handy[people] – then get to work before your castle collapses around you. It may be Father's Day weekend but for 1.4 million homeowners this is no time to put your feet up. There's borer under the floorboards, rising damp, peeling paint or a timebomb in the roof to fix in an alarming number of our homes, new research has found. And most owners are either oblivious to the problem or prefer to turn a blind eye. The Building Research Association of N[Z] (Brnz) says one in four homes are in poor condition, with a fifth having a serious defect raising immediate health and safety concerns. In a blow to our do-it-yourself tradition, Brnz says the average Kiwi house needs \$4000 spent on it just to return it to moderate condition. But owners are spending only \$1500 a year on average on maintenance. And the longer defects are ignored, the more costly they become to fix. These sad truths have emerged from the N[Z] House Condition Survey, released this week. The 142-page report follows 465 on-site inspections and 500 telephone interviews in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Poor ventilation beneath timber floors, corroded fastenings, inadequate clearance between ground and wall claddings and problems in the roof space are the most common serious defects. Dampness was a problem in 30[%] of houses surveyed. The findings add to suspicion that many first-home buyers don't know what they are getting themselves into when they sign up on older homes. Although newer homes feature low-maintenance materials, the typical Kiwi dwelling remains a timber-and-corrugated iron affair needing continuous care as it ages... [The] Auckland manager of Quotable Value, says some [DIY]ers have been destroyed financially after striking unexpected problems which they can't fix themselves. Others hire a builder who discovered rotting framing, and in no time at all, their budget spirals from \$20,000 to \$80,000. But... experts doubt that the findings will stop first-time buyers from falling in love with that character villa or bungalow. It seems many are genetically programmed to spend their time and money on such bottomless pits.

...[a t]elevision DIY expert... has fears for the future of building in N[Z]. "Given the way the industry and the government over the years has managed to completely muck up the apprenticeship system it's a wonder there is anybody left with any skills at all," [the DIY expert] told *TV Guide* as [it] prepared to host *The Registered Master Builders House Of The Year Show*. "You talk to older builders, and they wonder what will be the case in 10 years' time. The industry has become so competitive some builders feel that they can't afford to carry an apprentice. And if the industry as a whole doesn't keep bringing new talent on then it will reach a point where it doesn't have any." The talented ones it does have get to show off their wares every year in the *House Of The Year Show*, which is judged in eight categories. The categories are split into six new houses starting with an under-\$140,000 class and rising to an over-\$400,000 class and there are two restoration categories. Restoration seems to be a speciality of Wellington builders, due to the limitations on new house building in the capital. But when it comes to overall skills, [the DIY expert] says some of the best builders can be found in small towns. [The DIY expert] recalls filming a house renovation in the Mackenzie Country where the Auckland architect was worried about finding skilled crafts[people]. "The architect] said to me afterwards, in that tiny place they were so used to turning their hand to anything they did a better job than [the architect] could have got done in Auckland. So it's not just native skill, it's attitude, I guess."

...On Sunday they "packed down" their wagons and stalls for their Monday morning departure from Henderson. The 45 gypsy families are moving on to Orewa for the weekend, after spending last week at Lincoln Rd selling their wares at the Gypsy Fair. [The fair's o]rganisers... have to be the first at the next destination – which they have to arrange. In the big cities it is getting harder to find places to stay... "In somewhere like Auckland it's not that easy." Each week the gypsies are in a different town. From September to February they travel through the North Is selling their wares and performing, and till mid May they loop around the South Island. The travellers have stopped at Henderson for a while each year since their village started 10 years ago with 10 families. Since that time the gypsy village has grown to the point that there is now a waiting list. But not all families are allowed on the waiting list. People have to be experienced road travellers, and they have to know a trade or something different to draw people to their wagon or show, says [one of]... the village's co-organiser[s]... Her trade is in luck and legends, which [the co-organiser] became interested in while travelling in the U[K]. "This was designed for gypsies already living on the road. People really have to go out and learn to live on the road. It's quite hard work. It was started up because[we] all... were actually living on the road, but we needed to earn an income. It enables us to continue travelling but earning as well,"... [The co-organiser]'s been travelling for over 30 years of her life, and her home is her wagon.

...THE Henderson Community Board wants to get rid of Tui Glen camp ground. They say there's no room for caravan and cabin accommodation in the Henderson ward and they want it gone as soon as possible. Tui Glen was the last home of murder victim Justin Dyne, a transient whose decomposed body was found in Henderson Valley in September. The Waitakere City Council is reviewing the fate of the camping ground which provides emergency accommodation and permanent homes. [One b]oard member and councillor... says Tui Glen is a "blot on the landscape of Henderson. There's absolutely no place for camping grounds and caravans in a public park in any city... It's a crying shame to see historic trees and a beautiful landscape not being available to the wider public." ...Tui Glen was the first camp ground in N[Z] and is listed as a category two heritage item. Five of its residents have lived there more than 17 years. The council's lease to Tui Glen expired last year but is being renewed on a monthly basis until a decision is made. The camp[']s... future is being considered as part of the Henderson Creek reserves management plan.

...TUI Glen Motor Camp will be closed in eight months but... councillors have yet to decide what will take its place. Councillors voted to close the camp... during annual budget deliberations, despite a petition from 43 people who want long-term residents to remain at Tui Glen. A report... says... [the c]amp has had several breaches of its lease – up to 30 extra caravans over the limit of 48 on site, and residents staying beyond the maximum of three months. At least 34 people have been living at the... camp grounds for more than three months... [A c]ouncillor... says the camp does not have a "long-term life" because of its proximity to the aquatic centre and Henderson's main street... [Plu]s the... site has many potential uses, including recreation or extra car parking for the aquatic centre. Options for future use of the site are due back to the council over the next few months. [Another c]ouncillor... says they'll have to involve government agencies quickly to ensure those living at the camp... can find other homes. "A lot of people have lived there a long time... The worry is if the owner does decide to make changes really quickly people could be left homeless in the shortterm."

...ABOUT 100 million of the world's children live on the streets, where many become the victims of abuse and even killings by security forces, the U[N] was told yesterday... [By the way, w]ith its world's tallest building nearing completion... [-] due to be finished next September... it stood at a "new record height" of 688m at the start of last month... [-] Dubai is embarking on an even more ambitious skyscraper: one that will soar [over]... a kilometre high... Babel had nothing on this place... About 150 elevators will carry employees... to the Nakheel Tower's more than 200 floors... Foundation work has already begun... The tower... will be the centrepiece of a sprawling development... located between two of the city's artificial palm-shaped islands, which... will include... 40 additional towers up to 90 floors high... "It does show a lot of confidence in this environment" of worldwide credit problems and a souring global economy, said... Standard Chartered Bank's Dubai-based regional head of research.

...The U[S] Government hopes to have a plan ready this week to buy US\$700 billion... in "toxic" loans clogging the financial system and threatening the global economy. It will be the largest bailout since the Great Depression... More than 2.3 million homeowners coast-to-coast faced foreclosure proceedings last year, an 81[%] increase from... the... [previous year]. Analysts say that number could soar as high as 10 million in the coming years, depending on the severity of the recession... [In local news, t]axpayers are unlikely to have to pay for a big bank bailout under the Government's deposit guarantee scheme, but they could get the bill for finance company failures, says [the]Reserve Bank Governor...

Lender GE Money has told investors in failed finance company Blue Chip to pay up or it will sell their homes... Blue Chip left thousands of investors out of pocket after its collapse in February. Many of them had borrowed money against their homes... [A lawyer] said the Government

should have done something to protect the worst-off investors instead of bailing out the big banks. "These people... will never recover. They'll never be able to get another house..." [The]Finance Minister... announced a deal on Saturday to guarantee banks' overseas borrowing.

...A clandestine meeting at a public library has resulted in two suitcases full of original Blue Chip documents being handed in to the Serious Fraud Office. An unidentified [person] had offered the apparently stolen papers for sale to [the]property consultant... who is acting for victims of the Blue Chip collapse... when 22 of its companies were placed in liquidation owing around \$84 million... Meanwhile, in what's fast becoming a game of cat-and-mouse, Bridgecorp's receivers are searching in vain for the failed finance company's former chief in order to serve a bankruptcy notice on him... The receivers began bankruptcy proceedings last week... Bridgecorp collapsed a year ago owing \$458 million.

...The finance company meltdown claimed its 25th and biggest scalp yesterday when Hanover Finance froze repayments to 16,000 investors owed more than half a million dollars. The company – whose TV ads claimed it had "the size and strength to withstand any conditions" – was heavily exposed to the crumbling property development market and dependent on retail debenture funding, which has now largely dried up... Despite the freeze on Hanover funds there were positive developments in the finance company sector... as Spiers Group and Allied Farmers said they would merge their finance operations to create a stronger \$400 million company. Also, Marac announced it had secured \$104 m... in long-term funding.

...Despite an extra \$187m... [being allocated] for state housing... [- of which t]he Government has earmarked \$122.7m for maintenance... [-] some tenants in west Auckland remain disillusioned. [One] has lived in her four-bedroom Helensville home for 12 years and says Housing N[Z] has not looked after the property. "Nobody's spent one dime on it. The only thing I got was a new stove. I reckon I need about \$5000 to do it up." The mother of seven was paying \$240 rent a week when [it] first moved in, and is now only paying \$200... But... a by-product of cheaper rent is that tenants are expected to repair damages themselves. "The only time I see my officer is when I stop the rent... I should be renting to own that house, but I'm not." However, Housing N[Z]'s spokesperson says emergency repairs are responded to within four hours, and non-urgent repairs within 10 working days. Any problems that tenants have should be taken up with their tenancy manager or area manager.

...people have died and one child is admitted to hospital daily because they live in rundown housing in some of the poorest parts of [NZ]... The homes of... two elderly... people who died were on a list of more than 1000 houses waiting for urgent upgrades promised by the Government.

...A record fine imposed on two people who leased out an unsanitary building has been upheld by the High Court. [The pair] were fined \$40,500 in the Waitakere District Court in May last year after they rented out their converted garage in Rathgar Rd, Henderson... [to a couple] and up to four children for \$180 a week... for four years... Waitakere City Council officers found rats, cockroaches and water could enter through holes in the outer wall, food storage was poor... and electric fittings gave electric shocks when touched... The[pair] were no longer leasing out the building.

...The Government says it is to chase up bad landlords, but what about the other part of the equation, the tenant? ...Residential landlords – are they heartless exploiters of the needy or noble providers of a social service? The morals and motivations driving the home rental business have been in the spotlight this week. As the Government unveiled a proposal to crack down on bad landlords, it emerged that a property managed by one of its own ministers... had been declared unfit by the Gisborne District Council. Then Invercargill['s] Mayor... found himself under attack for offering a [person] free accommodation in a dilapidated property with the advice: "There are no keys, so just climb in through the window." Days earlier,[the] Housing Minister... announced that the Government was considering toughening up the Residential Tenancies Act to include hefty penalties for landlords who failed to comply with work orders under the legislation. According to [the]Monte Cecilia House manager... substandard housing is rife across Auckland and many families are living in slum conditions because landlords can get away with it... [T]he Monte Cecilia House Trust has tried to help people by talking to landlords about the problem, only to have the tenants evicted. "The landlords don't even worry about it. They say that for every person who challenges them about the house, and who they then evict, there are 10 or 20 more people who would happily live in the same conditions." But the president of the Auckland Property Investors Association... says most landlords keep their properties well maintained because it is in their interests to do so. "By not doing so they end up with larger repair bills, make the property difficult to let and do not maximise the achievable rental price for the property. That is why, out of approximately 300,000 rental properties in N[Z], there are only 300 applications to the Tenancy Tribunal every year from tenants wanting landlords to conduct repairs." ...By contrast, every year the tribunal gets about 24,000 applications from landlords seeking rent arrears and around 3000 applications wanting tenants to repair damage they have done. That does point to there being quite a lot of irresponsible tenants... But... although 60[%] of applications to the Tenancy Tribunal come from landlords seeking rent owing, there are no penalties for tenants who do not comply with orders to pay up. "The Government should look at addressing this inequity as a higher priority than extending penalties to a few bad landlords." ...[Incidentally, a] house in Ponsonby for which tenants are paying just \$6 rent a week to Housing N[Z] looks destined to remain a mystery. To protect the tenants' privacy, Housing N[Z] has not even revealed the Auckland location to [the]Housing Minister... And [the]Opposition housing spokes[perso]n... who uncovered the anomaly last week, [also]... does not know where it is. The cheap rent was the result of a transitional measure brought in by [the Government] in 1994 to amend the effect of its market rent policy on people over 55, and the rent for the tenants was struck at \$156... Winz, however, paid the tenants an accommodation supplement of \$150, which had been based on the full market rent of \$350, leaving a net rent of \$6 a week. The transitional measure was to end this year, but when [the Government reintroduced]... its income-related rents policy, instead of ending it, cemented the cheap rent, [the Opposition spokesperson] said. "No one begrudges anyone enjoying these lower rents... but if it is an anomaly it should be fixed rather than cemented in." ...[the minister said that i]n a year, the rent would begin to be increased until it reached the income-related level.

...Law changes to help landlords more easily find tenants with rent arrears... are... acceptable, says [the]Privacy Commissioner... The Government has announced a set of initiatives which include... ■ Improving access to Tenancy Tribunal orders so landlords and tenants can check each other out ■ Addresses passed on to... Courts to enforce... Tribunal orders ■ Rent... owed by beneficiaries can be paid directly by W[inz]...

It's still possible to live rent-free in one of the world's most expensive cities... I have lived rent-free in London for... two years. My flatmates and I have been evicted from two squats after amicable court cases and I have now moved into a third. My first squat was occupied by friends when I moved in. Getting into the second one was more daring. My prospective... flatmates and I... tackled the front door at 3am one icy winter morning... Once in, we changed the locks and got stuck into fixing up our home sweet home. That house lasted a year. The current squat, set up by friends, has been going nine months so far. *The Little Oxford Dictionary* defines a squatter as a "person who takes unauthorised possession of unoccupied premises" or an "A[US]n sheep farmer". Dags aside, squatting is a loathsome, dirty word and sounds close to squalor. It brings to mind life on the dole queue and dirty matted hair, grubby faces, ragged clothing and an unholy smell. In reality, the people I have shared my homes in London with have all been professionals. They have included a chef, an accountant, an occupational therapist and a landscape gardener. Under English law there is nothing criminal or illegal about squatting, but it is "unlawful". Being unlawful means it is a civil matter and a dispute between squatters and the landlord must be dealt with in a civil court. The police have no jurisdiction over such cases. So long as you do not cause damage when you enter a property and you arrange for and pay the electricity, gas and telephone bills, the whole business remains a civil matter. Ironically, while squatting is not a crime, attempting to evict squatters by using force is, so landlords are generally careful about going through the proper legal procedures. People are always fascinated when I tell them I am a squatter and being able to live like this is still a concept I find quite bizarre. An *Economist* magazine survey in June found London to be the 13th most expensive city in the world to live in (Auckland and Wellington were 34th equal), with rents here averaging £80 a room... a week. In theory, squatting is an insecure life, because you can be served with court summons any time the owner discovers you are there or decides to take action against you. But I do not fret about being kicked out and... so far... I have done less moving about than many people who rent here. Squatting has certainly made living in London more affordable, allowing me to take time off work

to travel. My flatmates are a [NZ nurse, NZ] computer programmer and a French receptionist. Our home is an old south London dry-cleaning shop, with accommodation above, 15 minutes from the West End. We have a two-level roof garden, four stories of living space above the shop and three lower stories for storage. The squat is not perfect and there are bare floorboards in several rooms, but it is in a tidy condition and more seemly than many a student flat I have seen. Our neighbours, also squatters, were not so lucky when they moved in. Their house had a leaking roof, smashed eggs in the toilet bowl, curry powder smeared over the kitchen floor, mouldy clothes half a metre deep on the bedroom floors and a pigeon colony in one of the rooms. My friends and I have always squatted in council or housing agency houses rather than those that are privately owned. Somehow, this seems more morally sound and you usually have a longer tenure, as local authorities often run out of money to keep their houses in an officially habitable condition, so board them up and forget about them. The first recorded instances of squatting in England date back to a peasant revolt in the 1830s. Historically, squatting has been a family affair, it is only now that it has become associated with new-age travellers and society fringe dwellers. "Cottars" and "borderers" are ancient English names for squatters, while "diggers" were famed for squatting on land after a revolution in 1649 made little difference to the lives of the poor. This century, squatting movements built up after [WW1 and WW2], when returned service[people] found themselves and their families homeless. A London Squatters Campaign was set up in 1969 and dedicated its first squats to homeless families. Through the 1970s, single people living in large communal squats joined the campaign. Squatting fell off during the 1980s but the 1990s have brought increased numbers of homeless, increased numbers of empty houses and therefore an increased interest in squatting. The London-based Advisory Service for Squatters (ASS) estimates around 20,000 people are squatting in London. Housing and homeless advocacy agencies say there are around 152,000 empty properties in the capital, with some 75,800 people last year classified as homeless. But to be classified as homeless you must have approached a local housing authority for help, so many more homeless people and street people do not show up on official figures. The ASS deals with around 60 inquiries about squatting each week. "For a lot of people it's finding a home, but, even more than that, it's finding a space where they can take control of their own life and not be dictated to by landlords or stuck in single bedsits cut off from friends," says [an ASS spokesperson]... The volunteer organisation covers England and Wales and has a huge computer database on squatting, legal information and a library. The service has a 70% success rate in getting court cases against squatters delayed or adjourned. In squatting terms, a delay or adjournment is a major victory as it gives you a few more weeks or months in a place. Money is the main motivation in squatting for my... [French flatmate, who] used to... pay... £60 a week for a room half the size of her one in the squat. Winter is a downer for squatters, [the]... hotel receptionist... says. Most squats have had their heating systems ripped out by zealous councils or anxious landlords. "...Winter is freezing cold, but apart from that it's like a normal home, everything works and we have hot water." ...[the] computer programmer... took up squatting for the experience and adventure, rather than as a cost-saving exercise. "It's one of those things I always thought would be fun and... make a good story to tell... One disadvantage is I'm probably compromising on the area I would choose to live in. Another is that because it's free people feel a little more at ease to invite themselves to come and live with you. That can put you in an awkward position... I own my own property back in N[Z]."

...Business tycoons, bankers and gentry in some of Paris' wealthiest areas are bracing themselves for what they fear is an invasion of the unwashed. The city's Socialist mayor... has embarked on an ambitious – and costly – experiment aimed at housing some of the 100,000 people on its waiting list and at easing a growing problem of ghettoisation. [The mayor] is spending the equivalent of tens of millions of N[Z] dollars to buy or rent luxury property in some of the swankiest streets in Paris' western suburbs, where homeless families from the poorer eastern quarters will be housed. Many of the beneficiaries of this largesse will be single-parent families and Arab and African workers. Under a new law, 20[%] of homes in cities of more than 50,000 people must be earmarked for low-rent accommodation by 2020. Cities will be fined 150 euros... a year for every home short of the threshold. [Paris' mayor] has enthusiastically embraced the law as a means of bridging the widening gap between eastern and western Paris. At present, 14[%] of Paris' housing stock is rent-controlled, but this varies from 30[%] in the city's eastern arrondissements (districts) to less than 1[%] in the ritzy west and the centre... [T]he first Socialist head of Paris in 130 years... succeeded a series of conservatives who presided over a demographic hollowing out of Paris, as young families fled the city for the suburbs, unable to cope with the city's high rents. This bred a commuter culture... The French state offered Paris low-interest credit or grants to provide cheap accommodation but this allocation was never taken up in its entirety before [now]. According to the Socialists, the conservative mayors had wanted a bourgeois electorate, rather than a proletarian one. How the city administration dished out its rent-controlled accommodation became a huge controversy, with accusations that [one French President]'s conservative Rally for the Republic party allocated flats in the Left Bank to its cronies. Last month, the state and city hall signed an agreement under which both sides will give 500 million euros... [over] five years to build or refurbish 3500 homes for low-income families each year. "A lot of social difficulties will be avoided if we can do a better job of distributing council accommodation across Paris," [the mayor] said.

...A FRENCH [citizen]'s body was left in her house for almost seven years before it was found in her dining room.

...Starved of water and food, Tabitha Cox lay down on the living-room floor next to the body of her... mother, and drifted towards death. Mother and daughter lay there for days, undisturbed, until police and social workers broke into their flat in... Melbourne... [17]-month-old Tabitha took up to a week to starve and dehydrate to death after Joy Cox, 42, died from an unknown cause. Victoria police said Joy... was from N[Z], but they did not know from which area or how long [Joy] had lived in A[US]. Her sister in N[Z] is believed to be flying to A[US] after the deaths. Her mother is thought to be living on the Gold Coast or Sunshine Coast and is ill with cancer. The grim discovery has shocked A[US] and placed Melbourne's social services under scrutiny. But behind the finger-pointing and accusations is the story of a quiet, lonely [person] with such pride in her daughter that [it] often entered her in baby shows. Joy Cox also had a dark side – drug, alcohol and domestic violence problems that thrust her into the arms of welfare agencies... The Age newspaper in Melbourne said Joy... and Tabitha had lived in the flat for seven months after fleeing an abusive relationship. Joy... was polite but private... One person Joy... did speak to was a [guy who is] thought to be the last person to see her alive. [The guy] told the Herald Sun newspaper that mother and baby were "both lovely people" and that Tabitha was a beautiful and happy toddler. "Everyone loved her. [Tabitha] was an angel." [The guy], who lived in the same block of flats as the pair, said Joy... told him 10 days before her body was found that [it] needed time to herself. After several days of not seeing her, [the guy assumed Joy] had flown to N[Z] to see her sister. Instead, [Joy] and her daughter were dead or dying in their flat... [W]elfare officers from Doncare, the agency assigned to monitor the family, last visited them [a fortnight before their bodies were discovered]. Doncare left 12 messages on Joy Cox's phone after [Joy] missed a welfare appointment a week later. By [the end of the following week], the Department of Human Services was alerted. The bodies were found the next day. The Age reported that the deaths had shocked welfare workers and raised questions about the contracting of child protection to non-Government agencies such as Doncare.

...New and rigorous research into the health of lone mothers paints a sad, and highly disturbing picture... STRESSED, hard-up and doing a job meant for two, single mothers are sicker, both mentally and physically, than their partnered sisters[– according to a] new research paper by [a]... fellow... from Otago Medical School... built on data from the N[Z] Health Survey of 1996-97 with references to nine other substantial pieces of research... The... [fellow]'s interest in the subject was sparked after her husband was away for three weeks when her younger child was three months old and [the wife]... found it difficult to cope. [The fellow] suggests the stress on lone mothers (...the term now fashionable in the U[S]) is underappreciated by the wider public. "I have an awful lot of advantages, but [my baby] was a poor sleeper. And by the end... [when her husband returned] I was a cot case. [Mothers] on their own don't have that option. I know how desperate you get..." Although a great deal had already been written on social and economic status and... [a] longitudinal study in Dunedin constantly updated information on lone parent families, there was absolutely no data looking at the realities of life from a single parent's point of view... Lone mothers are more likely to be Maori, have lower incomes... low educational qualifications and live in more deprived parts of N[Z]. They're also more likely to smoke and be hazardous drinkers than

[mothers] supported by a partner. Surprisingly, in one of the few findings not supported by similar overseas studies, they are also twice as likely to have taken hypertension medication as mothers who are part of a couple. Most predictable, but also most worrying, was the high incidence of mental disorders and psychological distress found among lone mothers. The report highlighted five reasons for... [thi]s: lack of social support (lone mothers have a higher risk of isolation); lower socio-economic status; the stress of losing or being abandoned by a partner; lower perceived control over their lives; and the high physical and emotional demands of raising children alone, which may result in poor health both directly and through higher rates of risky behaviours such as smoking and drinking. Even worse is the inter-generational roll-on effect. "Children raised in low socio-economic conditions are... disadvantaged in terms of survival, mental and physical development, educational achievement and future job prospects... They are also more likely to become... pregnant at an early age. This means that the cycle of deprivation is likely to continue into future generations. Considering the high proportion of families headed by a lone parent, this is a major public health concern." Overall, says the report, lone mothers are so vulnerable they should be targeted for special consideration to address health inequalities... As for solutions, [one]... strategy is to reduce the number of lone parents in the community, especially very young mothers... But how? Stopping young [gals] from getting pregnant is a complex problem as [the]Minister of Social Services and Employment... points out. "We either do what ...America's most dangerous conservative... – a recent guest of the Business Roundtable – says and condemn them, or we become very active in the area of parenting skills and making sure they don't get pregnant in the first place." ...The options, according to [the USer,] are: abortion, putting their babies up for adoption or asking the [mother]'s family and the baby's father for support. All this... will work just fine if young [gals deny guys] sex and instead demand marriage. [The minister] takes a very different line. "We need to get young people focused on their ambitions and aspirations" making early pregnancy the unattractive option for disadvantaged girls that it is for the middle-class [girls] who leave motherhood until 30 or later. For those who do get pregnant, [the minister] has a web of community incentives to get them back into education and employment... [The minister] is also determined to find the 15,000-odd fathers who have abandoned their children to the DPB – and either terrified or coerced their former girlfriends into refusing to name them to Work and Income authorities. "It's reinforcing the whole idea that we have to be responsible for kids... Fathers have to realise that that child is theirs for the rest of their lives."

...*Life in the future* "The modern home of 2000 will be waterproof inside and out so the lucky housewife can do all her cleaning with a hose," claimed *Popular Mechanics* magazine in 1957. According to a Nasa prediction in 1980, there would be... 1000 people living on the moon by 2001... According to [the author of *2001: A Space Odyssey*], writing in *Vogue*... in 1966, "Houses will be able to fly by 2000. The time may come when whole communities may migrate south in the winter." ...[By the way, the] latest report from [Auckland's] regional growth forum... goes into detail on how the compact city approach would enable [an] extra 550,000 people to live within the... region in 30 years, focusing on that rather than the possibility of an extra million in 50 years. A key point in the planners' strategy is one most feared by developers: prescription. A second key point is a suggestion that local bodies set up property development companies to help the process along. The report on intensification of urban areas was released this week along with one on the impacts of urban growth on social infrastructure, the stage two evaluation of natural and physical resource constraints and a summary of consultation processes. The new reports emphasise that the strategy proposals are not a one-day affair but a continuing process. The regional growth forum, so far an informal cooperation between councils and some elements from the private sector and led by the Auckland Regional Council, wants quick comments by the end of [next month], those with more detail lodged by next March and adoption of a strategy by August... The clear preference in forum documentation is for the compact city rather than continuing greenfields development on the fringes of the region. While some "leakage" is acknowledged as inevitable, the proposed strategy is for 70[%] of population growth to be housed within the present metropolitan urban limit – a line north and south which one opponent of prescriptive and contained growth described as the border between the city "and a national park." ...On the way to implement intensification, the forum's follow-up report (derived from... techniques tried in... British[, US and AUS]n cities) says the first task is to set the big picture. It [also]says the question of... urban limits... is complex... [To start with, there are] some automatic barriers to growth: price and section size. "Once you get below... 530 sq m... you get buyer resistance. Our preferred range is 550 to 700 sq m and the average section is 610 sq m. If you make sections larger, people won't pay any more for them... There's normally resistance between \$120,000 and \$140,000. If it wasn't for this fence [the urban limit] we could put sections on the market for \$20,000 less," says the... general manager of greenfields housing specialist Wilbow Corporation... But... [his] resistance levels are not part of the implementation proposal. The strategists... favoured a hierarchy of development nodes along major transport routes and high-intensity corridors: • In Auckland's central area... 34,000 more residents... • 10 sub-regional centres with populations exceeding 28,000... • 32 town centres with populations exceeding 11,000... • 64 neighbourhood centres with populations exceeding 2000... In the nodes and corridors the number of dwelling units a hectare would range from 30 to 80 net – "still low compared to North American intensification studies." Neighbourhood suburbs would keep their present densities, up to 15 a hectare net, and up to 100,000 people would live in each satellite centre outside the metropolitan area.

...[★ According to the 1996 census, NZ is now] the fourth most urbanised country in the world – following Singapore, Israel and Britain – with 85.4[%] of us living within town or city limits[(the figure in '1901 was 45.6%')]... Because we are having fewer children, the number of people in an average house has dropped steadily over the past 40 years from about four to three. The most popular arrangement behind the front door is to have one family occupying home, sweet home. They make up 62[%] of all household[s]... The next largest group are the growing number of us who live alone. More than 250,000 N[Z]ers live by themselves... Given that our home is our castle, it comes as little surprise that of our 1.27 million private dwellings, more than two-thirds are owned – with or without a mortgage – rather than rented. [★ In Japan a company has introduced a rent-a-family service: trained "families" can be hired to go on picnics, movie outings, even intimate dinners, providing all the affection a real family would. ★] In 'the Middle-West USA state' of 'Kansas, limestone mines have been turned into an underground commercial district called "subtropolis"'...

Before America turns into one giant paved-over subdivision, people are fighting back. Is there hope? ...Once a wilderness, [Atlanta is] now a 13-county eruption... the fastest-spreading human settlement in history. Already... 180 km across, up from just 105 in 1990, it consumes an additional 200 hectares of... farmland every week. What it leaves behind is tract houses, access roads, strip malls, off ramps, industrial parks and billboards advertising more tract houses where the peach trees used to be. Car exhaust is such a problem that Washington is withholding new highway funding until the region complies with federal clean-air standards. On a bad traffic day – basically any weekday with a morning and evening in it – you can review whole years of your life in the time it takes to get from Blockbuster to Fuddruckers. "We can't go on like this," says Georgia[']s Governor... a "smart growth" Democrat who was elected last year. [The Democrat] has proposed a regional transportation authority that can block local plans for new roads that encourage development. But dumb growth is not confined to Atlanta. Half a century after America loaded the car and fled to the suburbs, these boundless, slapdash places are making people want to flee once more. "All of a sudden, they're playing leapfrog with a bulldozer," says [the US Vice-President], who wants to be the antisprawl... [champion now] that... suburban overgrowth has become a national headache. Instead of just fleeing the sprawl (and thus creating more of it), people are groping for ways to fight it. Last November there were no fewer than 240 antisprawl ballot initiatives around the country. Most of them passed. Some stripped local authorities of the power to approve new subdivisions without voter assent. Others okayed tax money to buy open land before the developers get it. In the largest of those, New Jersey[']s Governor... successfully pushed a referendum to use sales-tax money to buy half the state's undeveloped land – 400,000 hectares. "Americans are finally realizing that once you lose land, you can't get it back," [the Governor] says. Twelve states have already enacted growth-management laws. Tennessee just adopted one of the strictest, requiring many cities to impose growth boundaries around their perimeters. In Maryland, counties get state money only if they agree to confine growth to areas... the state has designated as suitable. But managed growth is not a win-win proposition.

When laws make it harder to build in the countryside, new development is pressed into more expensive land closer to town. That can mean higher home prices, so the single mother who manages a doctor's office or the couple who make \$38,000 a year must choose between a tiny apartment close to work and a 90-min. commute to housing they can afford. Limiting growth also means dealing with a profound conflict between the good of the community and the rights of the individual. For a lot of people, the good life still means a big house on a big yard. Who's to say they shouldn't get it? Yet smart growth envisages a nation packaged into town houses and apartments, a country that rides trains and buses and leaves the car at home. Everybody hates the drive time, the scuffed and dented banality, of overextended suburbs. But are we ready for the confinement and compromise the solutions require? Maybe not, according to a recent TIME/CNN poll. It showed that most people like greenbelts but don't trust government planning... [and 69% believe the] ability of individuals to do what they want with land that they own... is more important... [than the] ability of government to regulate development for the common good... [USers] do believe in property rights – including the right to profit by selling. So the farmers and ranchers who feel squeezed out when tract housing plunks down next to their pasture often think about cashing in. "You get people waving millions," says... a rancher in Colorado's Eagle County, not far from the exploding area around Vail. "Some days you just think about taking the money and taking off." One way to solve the problem, being used in parts of Colorado, is "development rights," which let builders put up houses more densely near town in exchange for payments to outlying farmers and ranchers to keep land open... If America's detonating metro regions were the result of population growth alone, sprawl would be a problem without a solution. But they are equally the result of political decisions and economic incentives that lure people even further from center cities. For decades, federal highway subsidies have paid for the roads to those far-flung malls and tract houses. Then there are local zoning rules that require large building lots, ensuring more sprawl. Many localities fiercely resist denser housing because it brings in more people but less property-tax revenue. Zoning rules commonly forbid any mix of homes and shops, which worsens traffic by guaranteeing... you burn a quart of gas to find a quart of milk. Even more important, localities routinely agree to extend roads, sewer lines and other utilities to new suburban developments built far from downtown, while existing schools and housing stock are left to decay. "Impact fees" on developers cover just a fraction of what services for newcomers actually cost. These incentives to expand help create cities that widen much faster than their populations grow. Between 1990 and 1996, metro Kansas City spread 70%, while its population, now 1.9 million, increased just 5%. In that period greater Portland, Oregon, spread just 13%, the same growth rate as its population, now 1.7 million. For a long time Portland has been the laboratory city for smart growth. In 1979, as part of its compliance with a groundbreaking statewide land-use law, Portland imposed a "growth boundary," a ring enclosing the city proper and 23 surrounding towns... though the growth boundary has [since] been widened... WITHIN THAT CIRCLE, THE Portland-area metro council, the only directly elected regional government in the U.S., controls all development... Orderly growth comes at a price. Smaller towns within the ring are submerged by crowding they might otherwise zone out. And within the dwindling buildable space of the ring, average lot size has shrunk almost in half over the past 20 years, from 1,200 sq m to 620. Yet the median price for a single-family home has more than doubled in just 10 years... Once ranked by the National Association of Home Builders as among the most affordable U.S. cities for housing, Portland is now the third most expensive, just a bit cheaper than San Francisco... [Despite] that, the "great wall of Portland" is very popular with area voters... Since development tends to pop up any place it finds a foothold, the battle to contain it never ends. In Shelburne, Vermont, McCabe Brook meanders through... [a] farm. A developer liked the place so much that [it] planned to build 26 houses on its 50 hectares. But... a bushy-bearded organic tomato-farmer, and [a] dairy farmer... both of whom had been working to preserve other open spaces in the area, helped organize public gatherings to discuss the fact that the development would require taxpayers to finance firehouses and classrooms. "My tomatoes don't go to school," [the tomato-grower] says. "I think that woke people up." When Shelburne approved the development anyway, a neighbouring town took Shelburne to court, arguing that it would suffer costs from the project... In December 1997, the embattled developer sold the property to the Preservation Trust of Vermont... Keeping land open is just half the battle. The other half is keeping downtowns livable and affordable so people stay happily bunched there. That way new construction tends to cluster within developed zones and use existing roads, schools and utility lines. But for the centerless "edge cities" that connect around major highways, the problem is to create a downtown in the first place. So in Tysons Corner, Virginia, just outside Washington, county officials have just approved an instant town center – a 7-hectare collection of small office buildings that will also house shops and restaurants around a plaza... Endlessly elastic suburbia "is not a way we're going to be building in the future,"... predicts... [the chairperson] of the Congress for the New Urbanism, a group of architects and city planners who believe sprawl can be remedied in part through better town design – a return to sidewalks, narrower streets that don't encourage fast driving, a mix of homes and shops... The revival of downtowns in places like San Diego and Denver – and, for that matter, Atlanta – and the reaction against suburban sprawl among the suburbanites who spawned it may also be signs, as [the chairperson] says, that the problem can be fixed. But sprawl is mostly indelible ink... The best way to fight sprawl is to stop it before it starts.

...*Brakes go on rich urban sprawl*... [The Microsoft chairperson's] 6038 sq m compound is likely to stand as an isolated monument to the high-tech boom after the local authority moved to halt the spread of sprawling homes. A six-month freeze on building projects has been declared by [the] Mayor... of Medina, the Seattle suburb on Lake Washington that is home to Microsoft's [founder, the] Amazon founder... and a cluster of other billionaires. New buildings will be limited to 1254 sq m, said [the mayor]. "Someone has to put a stop to these houses." Restrictions will also be put on garden structures, frustrating one [citizen's] wish to build a replica of the Taj Mahal, and on the size of swimming pools to conserve water. [The Microsoft chairperson] will not be allowed to extend the [artificial] salmon stream at his \$277.5 million home[, which]... used 17.7 million litres of water [last year]. The average household uses 30,300... [In addition to water use, s]o-called mega-houses have put a strain on Seattle's infrastructure.

...The shift in world population patterns... over the past 100 years... manifested itself most spectacularly in the mushrooming of megacities, huge sprawling agglomerations – virtual city-states – with populations in excess of 10 million and economies larger than those of many nations. U[N] demographers are predicting that the move to the cities will continue well into the 21st century. They warn of serious problems arising from overpopulation, but other experts... downplay the link between rapid urbanisation and urban poverty... One of the biggest spurs to urbanisation this century was decolonisation, notes... the director of the Human Settlements Programme at the International Institute for Environment and Development in London. Once the colonial powers who controlled the right to live in cities pulled out, new leaders adopted the capital cities as the focus of their nation-building efforts, concentrating their administrations and much of their economic investment there. Urban growth is largely a consequence of economic development, [it] stresses, noting that more than one third of the world's million-plus cities are located in the five largest economies... [But the director] was dismissive of UN projections suggesting that cities such as Tokyo, Bombay and Lagos would swell to 25 million or more by 2015[, because by]... the 1980s... the rate of urban growth was slowing down in most of the largest cities... with, in many cases, more people moving out than moving in... [– often to find a more peaceful lifestyle. Unfortunately, r]emote houses can attract unwelcome criminal attention...

Rural folk in [the] central North Island are locking their doors and sleeping with guns under their beds as police hunt a roving band of killers who have terrorised two towns. Two attacks this week, on families at home in Reporoa and Ohakune... left one [person] dead and three other people nursing wounds. Families living in remote settlements are worried the killers may strike again... [Kids] are sleeping in their parents' beds; adults are scared to stay home by themselves... [R]ural folk are banding together to protect themselves... Reporoa's local reverend says the attacks are "an expression of a spiritually bereft society," but that small-town [NZ] is capable of fighting back... "Underlying it all is an incredible degree of anger." Ohakune residents... cannot understand why such violence would descend on their peaceful town. "Oh hell, we've been freaking out all right," says [one Ohakune resident]. "We've been warning our kids; our relatives have been ringing, worried." [A] Reporoa dairy farmer... was shot

dead in her home on Monday after four [guys] forced her and her husband... to reveal the PIN number for their cashflow card. Two of the robbers then drove to Taupo in... [her] Ford Laser and withdrew more than \$2000. [An Ohakune resident] thrust her fingers into the eyes of an axe-wielding robber when three [guys] burst into her... home on Thursday. [The robbers,] who had a pistol, beat her, her husband... and son... Police suspect the same [people] were involved in both attacks. Federated Farmers wants rural people to take "all possible measures" to protect themselves and their property. [The group's] Waikato president... says rural residents are "doubly appalled" at the brutal slaying of [the dairy farmer] because it shows they are just as likely to be hit by violent crime as city dwellers. No figures are available on trends in rural attacks, but dozens of family homes have been invaded by armed robbers in the past five years... [Police suspect that many rural home invasions] go unreported because they are drug-related. Some victims, such as the [Ohakune family], are fighting back. Last December, a [Waikato] Bible College student unleashed a flurry of martial arts kicks on an armed robber who burst into her home; and in July, [a] farmer... sent three masked [would-be-robbers] packing from his home in Drury. While police privately say they admire such acts of bravado, they are worried that some homeowners may go too far to protect themselves. [A] Taipa farmer... went to court... after [it] shot dead a [robber] who broke into his farmhouse and held a gun to his partner's head. A High Court judge said there was not enough evidence to convict... [the farmer of murder. Legal advisers] say... citizens cannot protect themselves with guns unless there is an "immediate and apparent threat." ...But people can use "such force as is necessary" to protect themselves during a robbery, and can use force to make a citizen's arrest if criminals resist... [During other] recent attacks in rural areas[, three guys]... armed with a shotgun, rifle and tomahawk rob[bed] the occupants of a rural home nearRotorua[- a 40-year-old gal was] smashed on the head with an axe[; four guys kidnapped two gals]... at gunpoint from their home in the forestry settlement of Kaingaroa[; armed robbers stole]... guns after storming a farmhouse at Reporoa while seven family members [were home; elderly]... couple John and Josephine Harrison [were] gunned down at their home in Te Akau...

Small town N[Z is] dying... SLOWLY but inevitably the life is being squeezed from small towns... in rural N[Z]. While the process might be unfortunately more advanced in the south it is undoubtedly a national trend, part of the March of Progress, perhaps. Not that those affected accept such sophistry. Part of the reason is self-evident. The scattered nature of the southern rural population, and the distances between small centres is a part of it. The squeeze of the market economy, with its insistence on the bottom line is another part... This has been emphasised in Otago recently by the decision of the BNZ to close three branches in strategic small towns... [that generated insufficient profits] to justify head office criteria. And this is at a time when BNZ is upping its transaction charges as it seeks to divert customers to tele-banking and machine facilities stuck in nearby walls. But for the smaller towns there are not even [ATM]s. The banks are not alone in putting on the squeeze. The major fuel companies are also exerting pressure by refusing to replace 30-year-old underground tank facilities at small outlets. Central Otago lost petrol outlets at places like Wedderburn and Lauder (though local residents came up with the cash to provide tanks at the latter village). But in Southland the impact is being felt where Shell and Caltex have used the R[MA as an] excuse because of the danger of prosecution if leaks occur in ageing tanks. The replacement cost for a three-tank underground system is... \$100,000 a time and the fuel throughput is not there, it is claimed. Southland motorists will simply have to better plan their longer journeys. From Queenstown... it is 40km to petrol at Kingston and, with Garton losing its tanks, a further 40km to Lumsden. Waikaka has lost its tanks and Otahuti is now dry and awaiting removal of its facilities. Relatives of mine who farm[near] the Pigroot... between Palmerston and Ranfurly, [have] had fairly regular calls from stranded motorists seeking petrol [but are] seldom able to meet the requests because it [is] an all-diesel operated farm. All these changes are cumulative, following the closure some years ago of small town Post Offices... Certainly, commercial reasons can be advanced, but people a longish distance from mainstream services recognise this while comparing it with their own sense of being under siege. The case of oil companies it seems is that facilities have to be able to stand economically alone: The days of the profitable subsidising the unprofitable as a service are gone... The shrinkage of services causes a shrinkage of population in the longer term, which means... local schools close, shops are unable to turn a profit, transport costs rise to meet the additional distances to be covered... Soon there[']s only]... one commercial operation... - the hotel, or social meeting place. I can... name a dozen villages where this has already occurred. And then what happens if the government goes on to change the method of funding roads? Taking Central Otago as an example, the roads probably carry as much tourist and holiday traffic as they do service traffic... Who pays when the population declines to even more minuscule numbers?

...If its steep population decline continues, Russia could, by [the middle of the 21st] century, be incapable of [ru]nning its industry, supporting its senior citizens or defending its long Siberian frontier, analysts say. "Russia is on the verge of a democratic crisis because we don't have very many children being born," says... [the] head of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences. "If this trend does not change within 20 years, we will face very serious economic and social difficulties." Russia's population has been plummeting for almost a decade, owing to a post-Soviet cocktail of bad news: spiralling poverty, disease, pollution, accidents, alcoholism, war and political instability. "People are in a bad mood, and thinking only of survival," says... an analyst with the Institute of Social and National Problems in Moscow. "Health indicators are dropping. Few want to bring children into this." In the past eight years, Russia's population has shrunk by 2.8 million, or more than 2[%], and now stands at 145.6 million. Projections suggest there will be as few as 130 million Russians by 2020 if the trend continues. Experts say Russian [gals], who are well-educated and emancipated from tradition, are following their Western sisters in putting off childbirth into their 30s and then having fewer offspring. "We have this crushing paradox of First World family attitudes combined with [Last] World economic conditions... It is creating a terrible squeeze." ...■ [NZ gals]... are being warned they may be leaving motherhood too late as the country's birth rate continues to drop and the average age of first-time mothers rises. Birth statistics for the year ended September... show there were 54,000 live births in N[Z, 3%] fewer than in [the previous 12-month period]. The median age of... giving birth [for the first time] is now 30.1 years, compared with 28.1 in 1992 and 24.9 in the early 1970s. Statistics N[Z]... said the drop in births was "largely due to a decrease in the number of [gals] in prime childbearing ages and partly because fewer of these [gals] are having children." ...A low birth rate across the Tasman has sparked calls for the Fertility Society of A[US] to teach high school girls about the risk of delaying motherhood after the age of 35. A study this year by Griffith University in Brisbane found that 82[% of girls] were prepared to delay having their first child until they were 35 or older, with a third ready to wait until they were older than 40.

...Go forth and multiply urges EU... Make more babies - that is the energising new message... sent to the bloc's 380 million citizens at the end of a two-day summit. Faced with labour shortages in key economic sectors, including the high-tech industry, the leaders of the 15-nation block also said... Europeans should work until they were older and called on more [mums] to enter the workforce... Opinion polls show... most Euro... couples want... more children but [a]re put off by the challenges of balancing jobs and family life... [□ The] world's population grew more slowly in 1997 than in other years... a population study says[, although it still grew by]... 80 million people... The growth rate has slowed because of lower fertility rates in countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, the Population Institute said. In Bangladesh the fertility rate... dropped to 3.57... children born per [gal]... from 6.2. In Turkey the fertility rate fell to 2.5 from 4.1; and in Kenya it dropped to 4.4 from 7.5... The global average is 2.96. Increased use of contraceptives, delayed marriages and a rise in death rates in many countries contributed to lower fertility rates, the report said... And most of the world's countries have passed laws to move towards giving [gals] the same rights as [guys], which is seen as a key goal in cutting population growth. However, [overpopulation remains]... a problem particularly in [Last World] countries... with almost 98[%] of the increase in population occurring there... About 80[%] of the world population lives in [Last World] countries and 74 of these countries are on a course to double their populations over the next 30 years... China, India, the U[S], Indonesia, Brazil and Russia are the five most populous countries in the world.

...*Baby, it's going to be crowded...* By the time [a]... five-day-old... of Mt Roskill... turns 70, [it]... will be one of 9 billion humans on Earth. But her grandchildren are likely to grow up in a world with a declining population. From 2070, the global population is expected to start dropping, from a high of 9 billion to 8.4 billion by 2100, says a new study from a team of international scientists. That is one billion fewer than U[N] predictions.

...*On or about October 12 the person who will take the world's population to six billion will be born...* U[N] numbers-crunchers say the six-billionth world citizen will probably be born in Africa or India and... is destined to be poor, illiterate and ill-housed, with a life expectancy of perhaps 55 years... The... world population has doubled since 1960, with the last billion added in the past 12 years... [T]he good news is that overall population growth has slowed in the past five years... "The down side is that in some parts of the world, there's desperate population growth and it is increasing poverty greatly, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and the Indian subcontinent," says a report from the U[N] Population Fund... The report projects that world population will reach 8.9 billion by 2050... with 40[%] of the population in 62 countries under the age of 15. Worldwide, more than a billion people are between ages 15 and 24, just entering or in the midst of their prime reproductive years... [The] president of the UN Foundation... discounted claims that the world could comfortably support such an expanding population. "The aspiration to an unfettered Western lifestyle... is going to destroy the globe... You can't have six billion people living the way people live in Manhattan or Los Angeles." ...money problems[are compounding the situation]. A global conference on population in Cairo in 1994[– which 'desired to stabilize the number of people at 7.2 billion' –] judged that \$US17 billion... would be needed annually by the year 2000 to pay for such activities as global family planning. By 1997, the total had reached less than \$US10 billion. International donors, including the U[S], were supposed to contribute a total of \$US5 billion annually, but in 1997, they offered less than \$US2 billion. Washington, while still the leading donor for population activities, has significantly reduced its level of support... Unless funding rises sharply the shortfall threatens to cause more unwanted pregnancies, abortions, maternal and child deaths and an even faster spread of HIV/Aids... Relatively modest spending to curb explosive growth in the poorest countries would help the environment, ease the flow of migrants out of [such] nations and help the global economy. "With such a small investment they can do so much to change the quality of life of people and the future of so many countries in the world," said the fund's director... More than 350 million [gals] did not have access to a range of safe and effective contraception... [D]ifferences with conservative Catholic and Muslim countries... continued to trouble international talks on population growth. Negotiations in New York in July pitted a handful of Catholic and Muslim states against more liberal countries, with disagreements holding up a final document until the last minute. "It's still as bad, [but] at country level they are losing ground. Individuals are thinking for themselves,"...

The billionth Indian was born sometime last weekend, one of 30 babies produced every minute in the country, according to U[N] population experts – who]... said it was not an event to celebrate. If the present growth rate was not halted, economic, social justice and ecological security would remain a mirage for a majority of Indians. "It's about time we woke up to the fact that population management necessitated adequate planning," said... the Population Council in New Delhi... India was one of the world's first... countries to launch a family planning programme in 1952. But officials said it had been taken over by politicians who equated numbers with "vote banks" to woo during elections and encouraged large families. The 19-month-long Emergency, declared... in 1975, dealt a severe blow to the family planning programme from which it has still not recovered. So vicious and widespread were the forced sterilisations that once respected doctors became feared "body snatchers." Ever since no party has dared to get overtly involved in family planning work, considering it politically suicidal... India adds... 15,678,000... people to its population... each year, a figure nearly equalling A[US]'s total population... [B]y 2001 New Delhi, bursting with over 13 million residents will be an overcrowded, powerless slum buried deep under garbage unless immediate measures to contain pollution, overcrowding, crime and chaotic traffic conditions were implemented. The National Capital Regional Planning Board said city slums that presently comprise 28[%] of the capital will encroach on all available space in two years and create a situation where 57[%] of people will have no water, 41[%] no sewage facilities and 40[%] no power.

...Shanghai, like Bombay, has always proved magnetic for the more adventurous citizens of a vast nation who sense the promise of a better and more interesting life. They arrive and settle every day... Despite its colourful past, and even with the one-child policy, the city seems incredibly young. On the evenings when Nanjing Lu is closed to traffic and families socialise in the street, the brash, confident Little Emperors (as the inevitably indulged single offspring are known) hurtle towards and around you on skates with infectious glee... Precocious 12-year-olds will tackle tourists to practise their English, drawing a good-natured crowd a hundred strong with nothing more profound than, "I am well, how are you?"

...*Spoiled brats call the shots...* CHINESE families' penchant to spend heavily on their "little emperors" – the spoiled products of Beijing's one-child policy – has become a pole star for marketing strategy in the country. Fast-food giants, computer companies and apparel designers alike are increasingly attuned to the obsessive concern and pampering heaped on the single offspring by parents and grandparents with far more money to spend than in past decades. The spending tastes of the children themselves are also increasingly a force to reckon with, as the first wave is now reaching the age of 16... "They're pulling money out of their pockets that their grandparents might not have made in their lives,"... [a] San Diego State University business and marketing researcher... says, adding that the money is being spent on items like sodas, snacks and magazines. Like the West's post-war baby-boomers, the little emperors also represent the first media-marketable generation, says... a Fulbright scholar in China to research a book about the phenomenon. Because they have television and other national communications technologies that create a unified pop culture, advertisers can more readily grasp and speak to China's youngsters. Targeting the group is especially crucial for Western food and food-service companies which are introducing products unfamiliar to the Chinese palate. Fast-food chains such as McDonald's have deliberately used cartoon characters and child-oriented promotions as a means of pulling in those who would otherwise be unlikely to sample such alien cuisine... The temptation of Western fast-food proved the 176kg downfall of [a] 19-year-old... awaiting a regime of acupuncture... 320 million children have been born since 1983, the first year China strictly enforced the one-child policy, but officials have struggled to enforce family-planning rules in poorer rural areas. Official estimates put out last year put the number of little emperors at 53 million, mainly in coastal cities where the country's new wealth is concentrated. With each child moulding the spending behaviour of up to six adults – [the] parents and two sets of grandparents – the economic impact is several times greater than any population figure suggests... In cities like Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou "they're spending in the realm of 40[%] of family income on child-rearing,"... [the] president of China-based Babycare, which makes pre-natal and child-development products... says, adding that the figure can rise to 50[%] in smaller cities where average earnings are lower... Families vie for "face," or status, based on their children rather than adult status symbols... "They look at the child next door." As a result, children go out on weekend family outings "decorated like Christmas trees" in expensive garments emblazoned with brand names, cartoon characters and corporate logos.

...The headline was from the present but the reminder was of the past... "Spoiled brats call the shots", the headline said above a discussion on the problems prompted by China's one-child family policy. It talked of "obsessive concern and pampering heaped on the single offspring by parents and grandparents". The "Little Emperors" it called them... Reading this, I remembered a hospital bedroom in Beijing nearly 20 years ago, and an afternoon spent there talking to the hospital's VIP patient, N[Z]er and China icon Rewi Alley. [Rewi] predicted grim social and economic effects of the one-child family rule and told wryly how his sceptical views had caused a breach between him and some communist planners. [Rewi] predicted a breakdown of old values and customs, of loneliness for both young and old. [Rewi] talked of future children dominating parents and grandparents and living in an environment without cousins, much less brothers and sisters. [Rewi] shook his head in obvious concern and prophesied – using exactly those words: "Spoiled brats". Rewi Alley was right. And now, the communist government agrees that [Rewi] was. The policy is being softened, allowing more categories of Chinese to have more than one child. State leaders were finally swayed by the distortion of

economic trends, by a rash of student suicides, breakdowns and family murders brought about by what are described as unbearable pressures on lone children. They carry the expectations of entire families on their shoulders. Significantly, under the one-child policy the ratio of Chinese baby boys to girls is widening – 120 to every 100 girls. In a community where infanticide of girl babies was an earlier accepted reflex, new ultrasound technology allows their abortion instead. Many rural families escape the dilemma. They simply don't register daughters, meaning they have no citizenship rights, access to education or to jobs. Non-people. In the long term, China will face generations where millions of [guys] cannot find a wife. The elderly – for millenniums the accepted responsibility of their children – are at risk if accident or illness robs them of their sole child. Rewi... foresaw all of this... [Y]ears later, the Beijing social experimenters and directors are seeing the light. But they still defend the original policy, claiming drastic action was needed and that the plan saved the world having to feed an extra 300 million. Which begs the question I realise now I did not ask Rewi...: "What was the alternative?" The whole process provides a valuable lesson to any community – even one like ours which by Chinese standards is only the equivalent of a small provincial city: Social engineering can go badly, producing totally unexpected outcomes. Don't let the political or social reform theorists dictate the future without careful and long-term study of the possible outcomes of their opinions. Even when their dogmatic arguments seem backed by some form of logic. ★ [China's]... one-child policy d[id] not apply to minority nationalities.

...In case anyone from the Government asks... the grocer has only one child. That's what [it] told the latest census-takers who canvassed his neighbourhood on the outskirts of Beijing. "Why invite trouble?" says [the 35-year-old] father of three... [T]he grocer seems more than happy with his three daughters[, even though it] and his wife had really hoped No 3 would be a son... "But now we love her just the same." ...The oldest, 12, is registered properly and living with her grandmother in Shandong province. The others, 7 and 8, were born in the crowded anonymity of Beijing. On paper they don't exist. [The grocer] could be fined... \$1200 and his house demolished if China's family-planners choose to make an example of him. That's not likely. There's no way to get a precise count, but [the grocer says ove]r... half of Beijing's 18,000 migrant children are unregistered. Nationwide, there may be 5 million... They pay extra to attend school ([the grocer] pays \$36 a term for each of his two young ones). When they get older it can also cost more to rent an apartment or get married without official papers. Meanwhile, the parents decide for themselves how many kids to have, far from the population police. "When you're not under the nose of family-planning officials, it's easy," ... Age has mellowed China's one-child policy. Its ruthless enforcement shocked the West when the campaign began in 1980... [But t]he policy was effective. The fertility rate has plunged from 5.8 births a [gal] in 1970 to about two today... In a Government survey covering city and country areas, 70[%] of respondents said if all limits were abolished they would want two children[– though]... Chinese views on family size are changing, especially in the cramped, expensive cities. "The young generation is totally different," says [the grocer]. "Some don't want any children and many don't want more than one."

...AROUND the globe, birthrates are falling and the one-child family is becoming the norm. That's good for the planet, right? So why is everyone so worried? On sunny days, elderly [Italians] in the working-class Rome neighbourhood of Testaccio bring their grandchildren to the local playground to socialise with other kids... [One] watches warily as her 3-year-old grandson... tussles with a playmate over a dump truck. "[My grandson] doesn't have any brothers or sisters or cousins," [the grandmother] laments. "We did wrong by having only one child. I keep telling my son to have another, have another." But [her] son and daughter-in-law seem disinclined, no doubt in part because they still live with her. "It used to be that Italian families had lots of kids... But now the mothers work and don't have time to have big families. It's a shame." It's more than just a grandmother's worry. With an average of 1.18 children per [gal], Italy has one of the lowest birthrates in the world. That means there are fewer births than deaths each year, resulting in what demographers call "subreplacement fertility." At that rate, massive immigration is the only way to maintain the total population. With the national pension system deeply in debt, [a] demographer... of the University of Rome says the country is already becoming dependent on immigrants to bear the economic load. And that, [the demographer] says, puts the future of Italian culture at risk. "Italy will no longer be Italian... It will be the end of society as we know it." That may be an overstatement. But at the very least, it's the end of the big, boisterous family crowded around the dinner table – and not just in Italy. Family size is shrinking in many places around the globe.

...*One child is enough for career-minded mothers* The trend to single-child families is worldwide, and N[Z] is right up there with the best... Statistics N[Z said NZ gals]... were averaging two births each, just shy of the 2.1 the population needed to replace itself. Maori and Pacific Islanders, who tended to have bigger families, were keeping N[Z] ahead of other Western countries, such as A[US], which had a birth rate of 1.75 children [per gal], Canada with 1.55 and England and Wales at 1.7... Maori [gals] averaged 2.7 births each, Pacific Islanders 3.5 each and Pakeha [gals] had 1.8 apiece... Projections show that if the fertility rate drops to 1.85 children... N[Z]'s population will peak in 2031 before beginning the downward trend... [A Rotorua couple] are representative of... [the] trend towards smaller families... [The wife] was six months pregnant when [it] was promoted to a senior management role at Rotorua Public Library. During the interview for the job, the 32-year-old was acutely aware of her heavy stomach and concerned it would speak louder than [her mouth] could. "I'm very career-oriented and I'm the main income-earner for the house[.]" the 32-year-old told the interviewer. The 32-year-old [took only three months' maternity leave and her husband... aged 33, a self-employed painter/decorator, became the primary caregiver, a role [it] loved. That was two years ago and the small family is delighted with how things are working out – although it still hurts when people tell them [their daughter] needs a brother or sister. [But their daughter] does not seem to notice, having made firm friends at daycare, where [it] is regarded as a social butterfly... The [couple] have no plans for more children, intending to offer their daughter the best education and childhood they can. [Their daughter] takes swimming lessons, will join a dancing class when [it] turns 3 and enjoys weekend "adventures" with her parents. But the couple are careful not to spoil [their daughter], fearing her status as the star of the family could turn her into a wilful child who expects to always be the centre of attention. "[Our daughter gets what it] needs, not what [it] wants."

...Many gals] these days think long and hard before... starting a family. [One Brit], on the other hand, is preparing for the birth of her 20th child – at the age of only 40. The newest member of the... brood, a boy due [in 9 weeks], will make her Britain's most productive living mother. Even more remarkably, [the 40-year-old] and her husband... may not stop there. "I'm just as thrilled about this baby as... the first. I might even have another... Though I've been pregnant for most of the last 20 years, every time I discover I'm going to bring a new life into the world I feel an overwhelming sense of joy... I love the feeling of being pregnant. There was never a question of contraceptives or getting sterilised. There are no religious reasons – we simply never discussed it..." says [the] former nurse. Amazingly, the family manages to meet their hefty \$1200 a week shopping bill without any state handouts... [– although dad], a self-employed joiner, works 12 hours a day, including weekends... And [mum] has no nannies or childminders to help her with the immense workload... Keeping track of the comings and goings of the lively... children[, aged]... 21... 19... 18... 17... 16... 15... 14... 13... 12... 11... 10... 9... 8... 7... 6... 5... 4... 3... [and] 18 months... is no easy task... The four eldest... offspring have left home and are doing well. But that still leaves a rugby team at home competing for the house's one bathroom and one shower room... "It's first come first served in the bathroom. There are always queues with lots of shouting..." ...[Mum] gets up at 5.30am, serving breakfast in three shifts, organised by age group... Evening meals are also dished up in three sittings, often with a different menu for each... "The first thing I do [each day] is stick the washing machine on..." ... There is a daily marathon of washing to keep 600 pairs of socks, 250 shirts and 100 pairs of trousers clean, dry and ironed. "We've got eight clothes lines and a tumble dryer, but we pray for good weather. And all those socks provide an ideal punishment for the little ones. If they're naughty... I make them put the pairs back together again." The laundry is rarely quiet with three washing machines churning through nine loads each day. The family also owns two fridges, a freezer and no fewer than 28 vacuum cleaners have bitten the dust. The couple admit it's a struggle to give each child enough attention. "But they all get lots of love," says... [dad, who'd] have been happy to stop at six children but was talked into each new addition by his wife... "All I wanted was a flat, a fast car and a quiet life... But if you make your bed you lie in it."

...Not many people know that... a... Russian [mother] had 69 children[– hopefully all to the same father...

Mothers whose] second child is fathered by a different [guy] than the first have double the risk of having a pre-term or small baby... researchers say.

...One in six mothers has a favourite child – but would never admit to it, according to a survey by... one of the... parenting websites in the UK.

...WHEN [a] Californian... broke up with her husband in the late 1980s, they had two toddlers. Her husband left home to live in a beach house with his girlfriend but missed the children. So [the wife] moved into a rented apartment... and [with]her husband took it in turns to look after the children in their old house. There was no name for it then, but they were pioneers of what has become an increasingly common arrangement in American families where the parents have split: “Birdnesting” – where mum and dad flit in and out of the marital home while the [kids stay put.

...NZ’s] Government is to tighten the definition of a family so it can[’]t include criminal gangs, but its new Families Commission w[on’t] rate the nuclear family better than any other kind... Solo parent families are just as good... as the mum and dad type. And to think I’ve wasted all these years doing the traditional father-husband... thing... I could[’]ve been out there spreading my seed, adding to the list of solo parents, propped up by the ever-expanding welfare system... As I write this, I am again in tears. For the [kids] yes, but also... for mothers who have abandoned mothering.

...[the journalist] has absolutely no desire to fatten up a Hansel or a Gretel and pop them into a pot of witch’s brew. But [it] does live far, far away in the forest of New York’s Catskill Mountains, and... has taken on something of the role of the old hags in fairy tales. Children and their parents beware. The computer is her cauldron and, in a house made of wood and glass rather than gingerbread, [the journalist] has come up with a potent incantation for the rebels in America’s latest culture war: the clash between the “child-free” and the “breeders” they resent and despise. Her book, *The Baby Boon, How Family-Friendly America Cheats the Childless*, has become the manifesto of the “child-free” movement. However daft it may sound, this really is a movement, and one with potential impact at the ballot box... There are now an estimated 14 million [US gals] who have chosen to avoid motherhood, and serious newspapers are printing articles about the “backlash” against rug rats, ankle biters and sprogs. These young humans are accused of disturbing the peace in restaurants and on the beach and, worse, actually taking money in taxation from the wallets of those smart enough to avoid the troubles and expense of reproduction. Why, the child-free want to know, should the peace of their weekends be interrupted by the babble of the future generation on the loose in the garden next door? Why should they foot the bill for “tax credits” so someone else can afford both the children and the shiny, new seven-seater people carrier? It is not surprising that the argument between the groups can become very heated, very quickly. Breeders take umbrage at attacks on “family values” and see [the child-free apostle] as a demon figure in a black conical hat. “People accuse me of hating kids... I don’t. I am not at ease with young children. That has always been true, and I have never wanted any of my own. But I love teenagers, and get on very well with them.” When word surfaced that, for her latest project, [the journalist] had spent last year with the children of Prior Lake High School in Minneapolis, it sounded as if some divine intervention had placed the apostle of the child-free in purgatory. But [the]... university professor-turned-journalist, went voluntarily, to investigate the mentality and the frustrations that could produce a Columbine High-type massacre, and... found herself sympathising with the teenagers. They share, after all, an objection to their parents, the breeders. “These kids have less and less room to breathe and that is enough to make them blow up at school... Even if you rebel, you just become a label. After all, even MTV was invented by their parents’ generation. Whatever you do, the Baby Boomers will just absorb you.” Given the ferocity of some of her views about parents, I am surprised to find myself sitting with a [perso]n who is full of smiles and jolly repartee. “I really do not miss having kids at all and that is a starting point for this debate... What we are seeing in the conflict between people with children and people without is really a consequence of the second wave of feminism. We chose not to have kids, and we have not been left on the shelf. We were the first generation of [gals] who could avoid having kids and still have sex. There is a subset of childless people now who have simply chosen a different way of life.” This life has advantages. [The journalist] has paid about the same for her 32ha of hillside and custom-built house with two studies – one for her and one for her husband – as [it] would for a small, two-bedroom flat in Manhattan. But... Margaretville... at the far reaches of weekend-cottage territory... is three hours from New York City, and about as far from the nearest first-class hospital or school. “I could not live here if I had children. I am lucky. Because I work on my own and because I am child-free, and because of computers and telephones, I can live as a writer just about anywhere I like.” So what is the beef with families with children? The problem has its roots in the mass movement of [gals] to the workplace, combined with the “me-first” attitude of America’s post-war Baby Boom generation. “We struggled to liberate [gals] from the home. Now who handles taking care of the house and the kids when we are at work? We thought [guys] would do more. But [they] did not come through.” There are few who would argue with that. Entire careers in journalism, management, law, social science and politics have been founded on debating the problem. The new twist... is that as America struggles to accommodate these structures of work and family, the child-free have been building up at least as big a grudge as those struggling to raise children and pay the mortgage. “Why should I have to work extra hours because you have had to rush out of the office to collect a sick child?” [the journalist] asks, in what amounts to a peric of her manifesto. “Why should I have to pay extra tax so that you get cash allowances to have children? Having children is a choice: people should pay for their choices. You have to make sacrifices, but... [w]hy should I make sacrifices for your choices?” Oh, dear. In many ways, this sounds less like an argument than the latest symptom of the aggressive individualism of the “Me Generation,” which is widely blamed for a collapse of the American community. Can the child-free really expect to live in a parallel world in which they are removed and protected from the private and public costs of raising a new generation? [The journalist] chuckles at this, for [it] relishes a good controversy. Her protest has scored a few points. As more and more [couples]... decide... they have no desire or need to have children, America is finding another faultline along which to divide. It is time, says [the journalist], to pay less heed to the me-and-mine lobby, and more to the me’s. “...You should be grateful to us, the people who don’t bring yet more... children... into the world.”

...[between 1900-1910, sex] was for procreation only. It was not an act of pleasure, especially for [gals]. A considerate husband took a mistress to spare his wife. [Between 1911-1920, f]amily planning advocate Margaret Sanger introduced the words “birth control” and set up the first US birth control clinic. [Sanger] was sent to prison... [Eventually birth and population control became acceptable to mainstream US society – no one was sent to prison for writing, printing or selling the] 1960s novella... *Logan’s Run*, ...in which the human age limit is set at 21[; or for making or screening the movie of the same name, about an enclosed]... futuristic city where pleasures are unending, [but citizens (who are produced artificially and raised without parents)] are not allowed to live past the age of 30[– at which age they enter a fatal process they’ve been coerced into believing will result in their going on to a wonderful afterlife.] Those who try to escape to the outside and live their full lifespan are chased and ‘terminated’ by special police... [By the way, US] health officials have approved a pill that causes an abortion early in pregnancy, clearing the way for its sale after 12 years of battles that kept it off the US market. In a move hailed by abortion rights groups as the beginning of a new era that might increase privacy and improve access to abortion, the F[DA] yesterday cleared the pill, known as RU-486, or mifepristone. The drug debuted in France in 1988 but abortion opponents fought its entry into the US. Fears of anti-abortion violence and boycotts kept the big drug-makers from pursuing the pill. The identity of the current manufacturer has been kept secret... Danco, a private firm set up to market the drug, said it should be available in a month... [but] has not announced a price. Opponents said they would work to discourage use of the drug, and the... President... call[ed] the decision “wrong.” His father... forbade the import of the pill in 1989. Mifepristone causes abortion by blocking a hormone needed to sustain pregnancy.

...N[Z gals] may soon be using the abortion pill commonly known as RU-486. [The]Health Minister said yesterday that there were unlikely to be any safety issues stopping its registration, and the Ministry of Health’s Medsafe agency would consider... an application to register the pill... [–] the first abortion drug to go on sale in America... [– in six months time. The minister said NZ] law allowed for medical as well as surgical abortions, so there would be no need for a law change if the abortion pill were approved. “This drug will give [NZ gals the choice gals] in other countries have.”

...N[Z] has the world's highest rate of vasectomy, but the procedure still raises questions... A family planning specialist[– who ha]s performed... 5500 vasectomies[– has]... heard all the jokes before, of course, usually spluttered out by nervous blokes just before dropping their trousers. But the good doctor can be relied upon not to titter. [It has] a nun-like vision of tranquillity, politely ignoring the wisecracks and waiting for the laughter to subside before calmly continuing the job at hand. But all that hysterical nervousness about vasectomy is the reason [the Dr] has teamed up with [a] similarly experienced family planning specialist... to produce a book called *Vasectomy, Practical Information and Advice*... Without wanting to actually promote the procedure... the book is an attempt to allay fears. Scanning through the chapter on the history of vasectomy, it's easy to see why there is so much unease about the procedure. In the past the procedure has been used (quite pointlessly) to treat everything from chronic masturbation to enlarged prostates. It became a favourite tool, so to speak, of the eugenics movement... popular throughout Europe and the U[S] in the 1930s... Recent bad press originated in India where a well-meaning effort at population control went mad and an estimated seven million vasectomies were carried out – thousands of them at vasectomy camps in northern India where people were at best coerced, at worst forced, to have the snip. Incidentally, it was in India [that the nun-like specialist] carried out her first vasectomy. [The Dr had] observed the procedure many times in England while on sabbatical in 1976 but because of rules (since repealed) preventing non-surgeons from performing vasectomies, was not allowed to perform one. "A colleague arranged for me to go to India on my way home from England and I actually did my first... in a converted bus in the slums of Bombay." [The Dr] stresses there was no coercion in the programme in which [it was involved. After returning to NZ it] was instrumental in starting the first Family Planning vasectomy clinic in Wellington. Despite all the unease... about 25% of N[Z] couples in their 40s... [use vasectomy] as their method of contraception. Even in the family planning mecca of China, only 8% of couples use the method. "I don't think we know exactly why N[Z]'s rate is so high but it's partly because we also have a very high Pill-taking population. [NZ gals] don't want to stay on the Pill too long and once their family is complete people have worries about the side effects and the risks [of blood clots]... highlighted in the media recently,"...

DOCTORS have been fobbing off... concerns in the wake of publicity about deaths relating to the use of oral contraceptive pills, says [a gals'] health campaigner... Thousands of N[Z gals] have contacted their GPs and Family Planning doctors... seeking advice on the risk associated with oral contraceptive use... since the *Sunday Star-Times* last month revealed six [NZers] had died from blood clots caused by using third-generation oral contraceptives Femodene, Minulet, Marvelon and Mercilon... However, [doctors said their patients]... were not panicking and just wanted information[, although some patients have]... changed the brand they used. But [the campaigner] said many doctors had told [their patients] there was nothing to worry about, or that they didn't know what advice to give because the Ministry of Health had not given any directions. "...Doctors are not rising to the occasion. It's not their job to tell [gals] what they shouldn't worry about, it's their job to give [gals] information so they can make up their own minds. It's time the ministry did more to get a handle on the situation and gave doctors some advice." [The campaigner said NZ gals] were not being given information about blood clots so were unaware of the symptoms. [Gals] have also told her doctors have criticised her for creating a "pill scare", saying [the campaigner] would be personally responsible should more of them get pregnant because they stopped taking their pill... [A] ministry medical adviser... said the ministry had dispensed advice to doctors as late as last December in its *Prescriber Update* magazine.

...Who's to blame for pill deaths? THE whole nation's attention is focused on the tragic death of young Kirsty Bentley[, whose raped and murdered body was recently found in bush near the rural community where the teenager lived]. Spare a thought too for other families grieving the untimely deaths of daughters. I am referring to the news, buried in the Ministry of Health's *Prescriber Update* publication, that six... [NZers] aged between 19 and 32... have recently died as a result of blood clots while taking third generation oral contraceptives... They were healthy young [gals], responsibly using contraceptives to prevent unwanted pregnancies. Most had few symptoms of the impending calamity. A pain in the leg in two [cases], a recent knee injury causing immobilisation in another. My question is: who is accountable for these deaths? Is it the drug companies, who raised the spectre of legal action against the ministry when it planned to issue warnings when the risks of these pills were first known? Is it the medical groups who pressured the ministry by saying they would disassociate themselves from the advice? Or is it the various officials of the Ministry of Health who caved in under the pressure...? ...Finally, did the young [NZers] who died make an informed choice to take the risk that ultimately cost them their lives? Will anyone be held accountable...? Somehow, I doubt it... The Ministry of Health first knew about the increased risk of potentially fatal blood clots in users of third generation OCs in... 1995... The news was third generation pills had double the risk of blood clots compared to other OCs. The drug companies had done such a good job of selling these brands to N[Z] doctors that... 175,000 [NZers]... were using them, an astonishing 75-80% of all [NZers] on OCs. This is the highest rate in the world, which tells us something about the too-cosy relationship between doctors and drug companies in N[Z]. In AUS, only 5% of OC users were on the suspect pills. The scale of the problem was embarrassing and probably explains the foot-dragging that followed, but it also meant this was no minor health scare, but a major public health problem. Blood clots are rare in young [gals] but at this rate you could expect... 35 cases of blood clots in users of third generation OCs each year... 1-2% of which were expected to be fatal. In October 1995 I was asked to sit on a ministry working party to discuss what to do. I should have seen the writing on the wall when I saw seven drug company bosses lined up around the table, including marketing managers. I was the sole consumer rep. In March 1996 the ministry's own advisory group, the Medicines Adverse Reactions Committee (MARC), gave its advice. It unanimously decided doctors should review their prescribing practices and "preferentially prescribe" brands of OCs other than those containing desogestrel and gestodene. MARC said this advice to doctors was urgent. All hell broke loose. The drug companies bombarded GPs with dossiers contradicting the studies that had shown the risk. Legal action against the ministry was threatened. Then the Royal N[Z] College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists proclaimed it would publicly disassociate itself from the advice. Family Planning went about saying the studies on which MARC's advice was based were affected by biases so... the results couldn't be trusted... [Consequently], a member of MARC and a WHO expert on hormonal contraception, complained to the Director-General of Health about the delay and "the extent to which the pharmaceutical industry is able to influence key decisions in N[Z]". Through all this ran claims that unless the whole thing was damped down, the media would blow it into a "pill scare"... [MARC's expert] commented on the "exaggerated fear of the news media", noting [NZers] would act with commonsense as long as they were given adequate information. Nevertheless, the ministry bowed to the pressure. The MARC communication to doctors was pulled back from the printers and shredded. In the revised version the information was watered down. Instead of advising doctors to prescribe other brands, the advice was now only to "consider prescribing" other brands. The leaflet produced for [users] was so bland and reassuring it would not have rung any alarm bells. Thus [NZ gals] were left unable to protect themselves, to the extent they were not even informed by the ministry of what the symptoms of blood clots were. In mid-1996 when this advice appeared, the ministry predicted there would be one death every 1.5 to 2.5 years of N[Z gals] on these pills. Now it is known four... died in the 18 months from January 1997 to June 1998. (Another two died earlier.) An "unexpectedly high number", says the ministry. There may well be even more... as the ministry says it is unlikely all cases have been reported. The reason for the high number is unclear. As the ministry failed to put in place any mechanism for monitoring the impact of its actions in 1996, it was unable to tell me whether there had been a fall in the use of third generation OCs. Fortunately I was able to learn this from elsewhere. Pharmacia was able to tell me the decrease in use of these pills in 1996... was only 19%, followed by a tiny 3% decline [in 1997]. Third generation OCs still make up 65% of [NZ's] total OC market.

...A SEVENTH N[Zer]... is dead and another severely brain-damaged from using popular brands of oral contraceptive pill. News of the latest death... – which occurred last year... [but has] been reported only because of publicity about the pills in the last month... – has prompted the

husband of one of the dead... to ask how many [NZers] need to die before the pills are banned... "It makes you wonder how many other unreported cases there are and that this situation may be worse than we even know now... What's going on? ...[NZ gals] are being treated like guinea pigs and it's about time the ministry did more to warn them how dangerous this is." The ministry's toll-free information line starts today.

...The Ministry of Health's latest advice on the pill, "Oral contraceptives and blood clots," is now available from doctors' surgeries, pharmacies, family planning clinics, midwifery clinics and Plunket... [- whose toll-free helpline, coincidentally,] reopens today... The Government is giving Plunket the money to resume the service... established... in 1994... from midday until midnight, seven days a week.

...[the Royal NZ] College of General Practitioners yesterday issued prescriber guidelines to GPs... warn[ing] that they could be sued if they fail to adequately advise [patients] of the risk of clotting from contraceptive pills... There have been 40 non-fatal reports of blood clots associated with third generation OC use since 1987, and nine involving other pills... [All of the relevant drug] manufacturers... failed to respond to requests for interviews. However, [a senior Ministry of Health medical adviser] said... they were concerned, but... did not believe they needed to take any action. "In 1996 we asked them to put warning statements in their data sheets and they did. We were the only country in the world to get that action."

...British doctors have done a turnaround and now mirror [NZ advice to patients] about third-generation contraceptive pills... A new review, by the United Kingdom Medicines Commission, of all available information had concluded there was a small difference in the risk of blood clots between second[-generation OCs - which were 'developed in the 70s (first-generation pills are no longer used') -] and third-generation pills. But it found the difference was so small that doctors could prescribe the pills as long as [patients] were fully informed of the risks... [I]n 1995... the... UK Committee on Safety of Medicines suggested... [a third-]generation OC... brand... change... but... [drug] companies discussed legal action... [In local news, the married] 30-year-old... from Nelson who died in March after taking the third-generation version of the Pill should never have been prescribed it because of her family history of blood clots, an MP says... The MP said the... family had approached her as they wanted to support the call that... [the MP and the Gals'] Health Action group, had made for an inquiry. They want a public investigation of the Ministry of Health's advice to doctors and other prescribers... The ministry is not commenting on their call, which follows its confirming that the blood-clot death toll from users of the pills has risen to nine in six years... [The MP said more than one] death was avoidable... "Both [of the latest confirmed victims] had known risk factors. One... was obese... and the mother of the other, and possibly her maternal grandmother, had died of pulmonary embolism..."

...The contraceptive pill may be the cause of breast sizes growing in recent years. Auckland bra manufacturer Bendon has said that sales of D cup bras between 1995 and [last year grew 4%] and DD cup sales increased 6[%] while sales of A cup bras fell 6[%]. Most notably... lingerie stores were being flooded by teenagers with very large busts. "Our shop assistants have noticed younger girls' breasts are getting bigger at an earlier age - far more teenagers are now wearing a 10D-10DD sized bra... slim girls coming in really full cup sizes." ...[an] Auckland Hospital endocrinologist... said that as N[Z]ers continued to grow taller and put on more weight... breast sizes increased. Larger [gals] tended to have larger breasts, but this did not explain slim young [girls] with big busts... A more likely alternative was changing sex habits. More and more... N[Z] girls from the age of 13 were on the pill... "It's well known that oral contraceptives increase breast size..."

...O[C]s can damage... gums, making them more vulnerable to gum disease... "Gingivitis... (inflammation of the gums)... was 32[%] more common in... [gals who used OCs compared to gals] who did not take the pill," says a report in *New Scientist* magazine... The researchers said... [h]ormones in the pill might dilate blood vessels and alter cells in the gum lining... [In spite of the report, a] Japanese Health Ministry committee has given its approval for the sale of birth control pills... The Central Pharmaceutical Affairs Council will submit its recommendation to the ministry in [three months], meaning the pill could be available by this autumn... [T]he Health and Welfare Ministry refused to comment. The reports come as [gals'] groups voice outrage over a ministry decision... to approve the... impotence drug Viagra, after deliberating for just half a year. An application to approve the pill... languished in the Health Ministry for nine years... Resistance to the pill in Japan has largely come from doctors, who say they are worried about side effects. They also want to promote condom usage to stem the spread of the Aids virus. But [gals'] groups say doctors do not want a reduction in the number of abortions, which at... 100,000 yen... are a lucrative business in a country where the national health programme caps fees for most other operations. Unwanted pregnancies are common in Japan, with official statistics showing one-in-five pregnancies end in abortion. Japan's per capital abortion rate is far higher than European nations, although somewhat lower than that of the US. Medical opinion outside Japan is generally in favour of the pill. A major study published last month in the *British Medical Journal* found no long-term ill-effects.

...Japan refused again to approve the birth control pill yesterday, only weeks after the blockbuster impotence drug Viagra was approved. The decision means Japanese [gals] still cannot get their hands on the pill some 40 years after it was introduced in the West.

...Timid Filipinas too frightened to talk about sex have found a novel way of avoiding unwanted pregnancies - by colour-coding their love lives. Instead of complaining about headaches... 300,000 [wives] across the country are now sending their husbands simple, yet intimate, messages about their menstrual cycle with... green or white clothing. "Green slippers would signal her readiness for a romantic evening in - but a white hairslide may be saying her [husband] should spend the evening out with his friends," said... [the] director of the Philippine Federation of Natural Family Planning, which devised the scheme... [In related news, gals] who think they can predict the days of the month when they are most fertile should think again. Researchers at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences in Durham, North Carolina, said yesterday that a [gal]'s fertile window - the six days each month when [it] is most likely to conceive - is extremely difficult to predict. Only 30[%] of gals... who took part in a study had the window entirely within the six days mid-cycle. [Couples] trying to avoid pregnancy were advised not to use the calendar month.

...Nuvaring, a revolutionary contraceptive ring going on sale in the U[S] this year, is as effective as the pill, despite delivering substantially less hormone... The flexible plastic device, which is inserted into the vagina each month, fits around the cervix and releases a steady flow of progestogen and oestrogen to prevent conception... Nuvaring... is not the first contraceptive ring but it offers a significant advantage over previous versions which released only progestogen, resulting in abnormal bleeding... In addition to convenience... Nuvaring's low dose would be a major plus for [gals] worried about high hormone levels in the pill... The ring, which is around 5cm in diameter and is folded before use, can be inserted and removed by [users] themselves. It is designed to be kept in for three weeks, followed by a one-week ring-free menstruation period, although in future it is possible it could be used continuously to stop periods altogether[(a 'pill that cuts the number of periods to four a year' is already available)].

...It is the future of sex, and it is already here. Just ask... a married couple who have resorted to the most popular method of contraception to make sure they do not become parents. But this time it is [the guy] who is on the pill. [The guy], aged 32, is one of the first [people] to take a newly developed... contraceptive pill. And for him it has been a revelation. It is the most significant breakthrough in a quest that has dominated the lives of small but determined groups of scientists around the world for the past decade. This week a new milestone was reached when a team based in Scotland announced it had made a pill which not only had a 100[%] success rate, but was also free from side effects. "A lot of people doubted this could be done... But we are... ready to take that work forward even further. We could have a... pill [for guys] on the market within five years." If [the Scots] achieve... that goal, it would be the biggest development in the sex lives of humans since the original... pill revolutionised contraception 40 years ago. There is no doubt that in scientific terms the invention of a little tablet which effectively fools the brain so the body stops producing sperm is a remarkable achievement. But even if future clinical studies are successful the researchers will face a barrage of criticism from outraged moral guardians. Then they will have to persuade [guys] to actually take the pill... The last point is not lost on big pharmaceutical companies who have not exactly been breaking [the] door down to buy the rights to the new drug. They have... been sceptical from the start. So far they have resisted pouring money into the pill's research and development. First, they simply did not think it could be done. Now they have to be convinced [guys] will take the pill, particularly when most people believe [gals] should be responsible for birth control... [An] agony aunt and columnist on

Scotland's biggest selling daily newspaper, the *Daily Record*, could not be accused of sitting on the fence. "It will only work if they dissolve it in the lager... I think this is the biggest waste of research money going. There's a perfectly good... contraceptive [for guys] at the moment which is the condom. Responsible [guys] will use the pill... Irresponsible younger guys will say: 'Don't worry love, I'm on the pill.' But they're all lying toads."

...Researchers at Monash University have found a way to block conception for up to 24 hours, devising what effectively amounts to a morning-before sex pill. The developers of the pill, based on the hormone progesterone, hope to test their findings on Melbourne [gals] by the end of the year. [AUS's] Family Planning Association president... said the main obstacle to the programme was a tough ethics committee, which could be troubled by the prospect of unwanted pregnancies resulting from voluntary testing. But the new method could be seen as more morally acceptable as it blocked sperm from getting to the egg rather than destroying a fertilised egg... herald[ing] a "whole new area of contraception."

...South African state-owned television communications utility Telkom has ordered 5 million condoms to help protect its workforce... 1700 people [in the country are] estimated to contract the virus which causes Aids every day... [□ Researchers] at Canada's Laval University... recruit[ed] prostitutes and other [gals] for clinical trials of microbicide gels known as "invisible condoms." ...an international conference on HIV and Aids... [was] told... that the research would determine if the gels protected against [STD]s and prevented pregnancy... [I]t would take up to two years for the gels to reach consumers. [Canada's] Health Minister... said the Government... g[ave] \$US235,000... to Laval for research of the vaginal gels.

...[as a consequence of] a Health Funding Authority contract which came into force this month, [NZers]... under 25 and those with a community services card can now get free contraceptive and sexual consultations from Family Planning Association centres.

...Infertile lesbians and single [gals] nationwide will now be entitled to state-paid fertility treatment under new rules about to be introduced. The Health Funding Authority will this month implement national guidelines on fertility services, which have just received a \$3.7 million boost to remove inequalities and reach more people... The new criteria have been welcomed by lesbians but criticised by the Act party... Under the new criteria... lesbians and single [gals]... would, like all candidates for the taxpayer-paid services, have to have tried for some time to conceive... [By the way, most gals] have only a 20[%] chance of getting pregnant each cycle, a figure which decreases as the[y] age, but according to one husband his wife "[...] is one of those rare [gals] who can release eggs at any time... We were... advised not to have unprotected sex..."

...[naturopaths advise parents to 'cleanse their body and environment 4 months prior to trying to conceive if they want a healthy and intelligent baby']...

Couples wanting to start a family are best advised to sneak home from work early and have sex between 5 pm and 7 pm, according to the latest British research. A study of more than 50 [guys] attending an infertility clinic has found that the amount and quality of sperm peaks in the late afternoon, the same time that [gal] fertility hits its optimum level... More than three-quarters of the [subjects] were found to have substantially higher, faster-moving levels of sperm in the afternoon. The findings, which have shocked medical experts, are being welcomed as good news for couples experiencing difficulties conceiving... ■ [Some]... Auckland medical researchers are holding out new hope for couples unable to have babies for unknown reasons. In a study of unexplained infertility, National [Gals'] Hospital specialists are flushing some [patients'] internal reproductive organs with a liquid used in taking x-rays. Of 15 [patients] who have received the treatment, about five have become pregnant and at least one has given birth... Thousands of [NZ] couples suffer from unexplained infertility. A sixth of couples have a fertility problem and in up to a quarter of those the cause is not known. The study involves flushing... fallopian tubes with an oil-soluble substance called lipiodol... Lipiodol... flushing as an infertility treatment was the rebirth of an old idea. "For a long time, GPs and gynaecologists have had a hunch that [gals], after they had their fallopian tubes tested – and that was done by flushing – may stand an increased chance of conceiving in the few months afterwards." The role of lipiodol was unclear but there were several theories, including that the flushing action removed debris in the tubes that was impeding eggs or sperm. But the National [Gals'] laboratory was investigating whether lipiodol caused changes in the cells of the endometrium, the uterine lining, which made it receptive to an embryo... [T]he study's one-in-three pregnancy rate mirrored the results of small trials overseas. This rate might be as good as or better than the rate for IVF. Lipiodol flushing cost several hundred dollars, compared with at least \$5000 for one cycle of IVF.

...Through my private practice I have seen a lot of couples go through the stress of IVF and... tear them apart. It is sometimes the case that by the time the fertilisation has occurred the relationship is irreparably damaged and there is no loving environment for the children to be a part of.

...THE movie *Maybe Baby* made fertility treatment look amusing. [The hero] remained besotted with his gorgeous wife despite her urgent demands for sex at short notice and their private lives seemed to flourish – for a while at least. But the reality is far less attractive. It is a rare [gal] who, when propped up on pillows with her legs in the air, looks as good as [the film's heroine]. And even the most swashbuckling young husband can be reduced to a quivering wreck when presented with a warm jar, a copy of *Ralph* and asked to deliver. But that undignified fate, says Auckland's band of world-class fertility experts, is where many couples are heading as they wait longer and longer to start their families. Today one in six couples experience some form of infertility and the problem is growing... [In a] homely, rather cramped building on the old Green Lane Hospital site, one floor below the Epsom Day Hospital where most of the city's abortions are performed, a team of dedicated doctors, scientists and nurses will this year carry out around 250... IVF... procedures – half of them paid for by the State. Down the road at the elegant new Ascot Hospital ...is... a second, much swifter, clinic, Fertility Associates... [– whose owners, NZ's] glamorous pioneers of high-tech infertility services, carried out Auckland's first IVF procedure in 1984. Although they left National [Gals'] Hospital in 1997 their Fertility Associates team still does half the publicly funded and most of the private work in Auckland, carrying out around 400 IVF procedures a year... Last year government fertility funding doubled to \$5.9 million, so allowing all [gals] under 40 who score 65 or more in a complicated points test, to have one course of state-funded IVF or four non-IVF treatments. Why the surge in infertility? Two main reasons says... the doctor who heads... Fertility Plus... "Each decade the maternal age for reproducing the first child goes up by three years. The average age for a first child in N[Z] is now 30." While 30 may sound young to start a family and we have all heard stories of 60-year-olds giving birth, from our ovaries' point of view, 30 is getting into amber light territory... "If a group of [gals] started trying at 20, between 90 and 93[%] of them would get pregnant in the end... By 38 that chance drops significantly." ...By the time [gals] get to 42 even the most brilliant procedures have just a 5[%] chance of success... [60%] of embryos from a [gal] of 40 will be too abnormal to implant – and only 20[%] destined for success... The second major problem, which affects half the couples [Fertility Plus] sees, relates to a fall in [guy] reproductive health – that is, the proportion of malformed and dead sperm produced by modern [guys] plus a higher incidence of [guys] with distended testicles. The sperm problem is relatively new. Ten years ago a [gal] was put through a battery of tests before fertility experts even started looking at her husband's sperm quality, now doctors carry out simultaneous... tests of... sperm... and... eggs. "We have pretty good evidence... from America and England that [the drop in sperm quality] relates to environmental issues... [T]oxins are going to turn out fairly relevant to [guy] fertility." In other words some scientists say that insecticides, fungicides, chemical oestrogens and PCBs are possibly getting into the... reproductive system, killing and maiming sperm. It is a problem... that when combined with things such as endometriosis, smoking and maturity add up to serious trouble. But for the high-tech specialists, sperm quality is one of the easiest fertility problems to overcome... "There's such a big reserve – so many spare in there. Nowadays, as long as a [guy] has as many sperm as his wife has eggs, that's all you need."

...[guys] who log up 4800km or more a year on their mountain bikes suffer scrotal damage that could reduce their fertility. A report, based on examinations of 40 "extreme" bikers and 35 non-cyclists... [by the] University Hospital in Innsbruck, Austria... suggests that [guys] who spend the most time on their bikes should invest in shock absorbers and suspension systems. Scrotal examinations of the bikers found that 88[%] had cysts, calcification, varicose veins and other abnormalities compared with 26[%] of the non-biking group. Sperm samples showed that the extreme bikers

had a count that was only a third that of the non-cyclists while bikers' sperm had less motility or movement than non-bikers... [● A breakthrough in IVF] used for the first time in N[Z] last week could double pregnancy rates for infertile couples. The IVF blastocyst transfer technique involved growing fertilised embryo longer in the laboratory before implantation in the... womb... Embryos are normally implanted two days after fertilisation, but the latest technique sees the embryos implanted after five days... It meant the embryo was more developed and the pregnancy had a greater chance of success... They cannot be grown longer because after five days, the embryos need to embed themselves to the uterus lining... [B]lastocyst had other advantages. It reduced the likelihood of multiple pregnancies because just two embryos were implanted instead of three as in normal IVF treatments. Because pregnancy rates were likely to double to 40%, [patients] should need less courses of IVF treatment... Two [patients] were... implanted with blastocyst embryos at Auckland's North Shore Fertility Clinic. It will be two weeks before it is known if the[y]re pregnant.

...A Singaporean researcher has improved the odds for people trying for a baby with [IVF] by growing the embryo in a lab for longer before it is implanted in the womb... [The researcher] developed a technique that mimics a [mother]'s body with a variety of laboratory cultures, including cells from the inner lining of the Fallopian tubes. "The embryos are kept in place by a layer of oil, which also keeps them warm and cosy like blankets,"... [U]nder the procedure about half of the [patients] seeking IVF treatment became pregnant versus the global average of... one in four.

...The star of *Veronica's Closet*... is... ready to spend \$US1 m... on fertility treatment to have a baby by [her] boyfriend. The 48-year-old... is considering a revolutionary technique specially designed for older [gals] where an embryo is put into the [mother]'s own womb lining in the lab. It means the baby has a more natural environment in which to grow. [The scientist], who earns \$US18 m... a year and adopted [two kids with her] ex-husband... and had a miscarriage, said: "For a long time I've felt God was mad at me because I couldn't have a natural child. But now I'm confident I can... spend... [\$US1] m... for the pregnancy... [to succeed]." ● 'US gals considered "too old" to adopt are being given donated eggs to mix with their husband's sperm then be placed in their uterus – even though they've had menopause (the process has a 37% success rate among 50 to 65-year-olds')...

When the 25-year-old] cradles her six-month-old daughter [it] looks like any other doting first-time mum. Her face beams with love as [mum] snuggles and plays with her precious little girl. '...our little miracle baby,' smiles... the former child star of the popular '80s drama series *Sons and Daughters*. After a long and frustrating battle to become a mum, [the] heartbroken and desperate [actor] turned to an extraordinary fertility treatment that uses nuns' urine. Within days, her pregnancy test came back positive and [the actor] and her husband... 33, wept for joy. 'I couldn't believe it when the clinic told me the treatment involved being injected with an extract from nuns' urine. I know it sounds crazy, but I didn't care – I just wanted to have a baby,' says [the gal], who had been collecting babies' toys and clothes since [the age of 11]. 'My husband] and I were so keen to have kids, we even bought a bassinet... weeks after we got engaged,'... Back in 1989, doctors discovered [her] chronic stomach pains were caused by... polycystic ovaries. 'I'd had problems with my periods for years. There were times when I didn't have a period for about a year and other times when I'd have heavy bleeding for up to 80 days. I also had a small tumour on my pituitary gland, which didn't help matters. I'd never had a regular cycle and that made it much harder to fall pregnant since I couldn't predict when I would be ovulating.' When the couple finally sought advice about their fertility doctors discovered th[e wife] wasn't ovulating at all. For a girl who was always a high achiever ([apart from being] a star as a child [it] started a career as a futures trader at the tender age of 16) the news brought her down to earth with a thud. 'My doctor told me I was infertile and... I would never have a baby without some sort of assistance. I was devastated.' After being referred to a specialist clinic at Sydney's Royal Hospital for [Gals, the wife] began a course of drugs designed to stimulate ovulation. 'I took these tablets for six months and still had no luck...'... It was then that doctors introduced her to the unusual therapy involving nuns' urine. The treatment, called Ovulation Induction Therapy, involved daily morning visits to the clinic, regular blood tests and two injections of a solution made from a derivative of either nuns' urine or the urine of menopausal [gals]. The secret is that both are rich in the natural follicle-stimulating hormones that help trigger ovulation. 'You are closely monitored the whole time and they can pinpoint exactly when you ovulate... I remember getting a call from the clinic saying: "Okay... today's the day. You're going to be ovulating, so get busy." So [my husband] and I had a couple of lunchtime rendezvous, where we'd both dash home from work...'... Fertility Associates in Auckland says [OIT] has been widely used in N[Z] for... 20 years... In the past two years, synthetic drugs (not derived from biological material) have begun to be used as an alternative. However this method is a lot more expensive therefore not as widely used... A[US]n studies indicate 75[% of gals] ovulate following therapy, and... there is a lowered risk of multiple births compared to other fertility treatments – around 70[%] of pregnancies resulting from this therapy are singular. ● The Pope has reportedly condoned the use of nun's urine.

...They are far too young to understand the fuss, but [the] 18-week-old miracle twins... have become celebrities in Murupara in the Eastern Bay of Plenty and an inspiration for childless couples nationwide. The girls were born to a mother whose body could not sustain a pregnancy and a father who could not produce sperm. After 18 months of hormone treatment, two stillborn babies and two miscarriages... seven years of hope and heartache paid off with the birth of the twins in May... The couple received congratulatory cards and gifts from strangers throughout the country, after an article appeared in the N[Z] *Herald* about the birth. "A lot were saying how they've been through what we've been through, and it's good to see someone's made it... I wouldn't have thought it would have touched so many people," said... [the twins' mother, who] has now had a hysterectomy... The couple wanted to thank the... staff in Ward 55 of Waikato Hospital and acknowledged the support they had received from... their community. "One day we went out with the pram. It took us nearly an hour to go to the shops – five minutes from home – and an hour to get back again,"... Apart from a slight dose of colic, the twins are doing well... [In related news, a] world-beating medical break-through could offer hope to [gals] who suffer multiple miscarriages. Until now it was thought that many foetuses died in the womb because clots in the mother's blood supply blocked the flow of nutrients to the unborn baby. But research by... Auckland University's department of obstetrics, suggests that the real cause is... an antibody called anticardiolipin... produced by some pregnant [gals] which interferes with the formation of cells in the placenta... These cells kick-start placental growth by invading the arteries of the uterus and increasing blood flow to the placenta so the baby can grow... [It is hoped the] discovery could lead to the development of new drugs that could spare [gals] the heartbreak of repeatedly miscarrying their babies... [The] discovery also questions the effectiveness of existing treatments where anticoagulants are given to at-risk [gals] to prevent blood clots forming... The findings... have generated international interest and could revolutionise existing treatments for the multiple miscarriages that affect one in 100 [gals] in the Western world... Up to 20[%] of all pregnancies end in a miscarriage, with multiple miscarriages affecting several thousand... [NZers] each year. In such cases, most babies are lost before 11 weeks... "Losing one baby is bad enough, but repeated miscarriages are extremely upsetting and traumatic for both partners. But what's amazing is how many times people will keep on trying to have a baby."

...[by the time I reached the age of 39, I had] suffered the tragedy of miscarriage ten times. Then the TV news led [m]e... to an amazing discovery... I was allergic to my husband... Then I... [heard] about a new treatment available for recurrent miscarriage... known as immunotherapy... – so we went through the procedure... to give me the immunity I needed... [and the result was our first son, born] in 1990, and then [our second son, born] in 1993.

...American scientists... have stumbled on a genetic quirk that helps to explain a... medical mystery: why some [gals] suffer recurrent miscarriages. Otherwise healthy [gals] can have an X chromosome defect that is lethal to [boy] foetuses. In a way this is good news – if the foetus is [a girl], the pregnancy should be fine. Miscarriages are common, occurring in about 20[%] of pregnancies. Most of these [gals] later have babies, but 1 to 2[%] suffer repeated miscarriages. Doctors discover a cause, such as uterine abnormalities, for... half of these miscarriages, leaving the rest with no explanation and no treatment. Enter... an expert on the genetics of Duchenne muscular dystrophy, one of the most deadly inherited

diseases. It usually hits boys, but [the expert] diagnosed it in a girl. Her mother asked 53 relatives to consent to genetic testing to better understand why her daughter became sick... Boys have an X and Y, and girls two Xs, one inherited from each parent. Cells need only one active chromosome, so every cell of a girl's body turns off one of those Xs. Typically, half the cells use the mother's X and the others use the father's. But [this] patient was using only her father's X chromosome, and half the [gals] in her extended family had the same abnormality. More intriguing, the large family had only half the boys expected from normal reproductive patterns – and many miscarriages. “We said, ‘Uh-oh, what’s going on?’” recalls... [the] head of genetics research at the Children’s National Medical Centre in Washington... [His] laboratory tested 100 miscarriage sufferers for whom every other cause had been ruled out, and found 14[%] with the X flaw. In contrast, only one in 100 mothers who had never had a miscarriage had the genetic flaw... Other specialists caution that if [the] findings are confirmed, the X flaw would still explain only a fraction of repeat miscarriages.

...One day – a day probably no more distant than the first wedding anniversary of a couple who are now teenage sweethearts – a [guy and a gal] will walk into an [IVF] clinic and make scientific history. Their problem won’t be infertility... Rather, they will be desperate for a... child who will elude a family curse. To create their dream-child, doctors will fertilise a few of the [gal]’s eggs with her husband’s sperm, as IVF clinics do today... then... inject an artificial human chromosome, carrying made-to-order genes like pearls on a string, into the fertilised egg. One of the genes will carry instructions ordering cells to commit suicide. Then the doctors will place the embryo into the [gal]’s uterus. Left without the artificial genes, if her baby is a boy, when [it becomes older the boy will], like his father and grandfather before him... develop prostate cancer. But the cell-suicide gene will make his prostate cells self-destruct... And since the gene that the doctors give him will copy itself into every cell of his body, including his sperm, his sons, too, will beat prostate cancer. Genetic engineers are preparing to cross what has long been an ethical Rubicon... “Life would enter a new phase... one in which we seize control of our own evolution[.]” says one genetic engineer from... the University of Southern California... Since 1990, gene therapy has meant slipping a healthy gene into the cells of one organ of a patient suffering from a genetic disease... When the pioneers of gene therapy first requested Government approval for their experiments in 1987, they vowed they would never alter patients’ eggs or sperm. That was then. This is now... Judging by the 70 pages of public comments... received since [the Californian] submitted his proposal... to use gene therapy on a foetus that has been diagnosed with a deadly inherited disease... the overwhelming majority of scientists and ethicists oppose gene therapy that changes the “germline” (eggs and sperm). But the opposition could be a boulevard wide and paper thin. “There is a great divide in the bioethics community over whether we should be opening up this Pandora’s box,” says a [science-policy scholar... of Tufts University. Many bioethicists are sympathetic to using germline therapy to shield a child from a family disposition to cancer... or other illnesses with a strong genetic component. As... [the] president of the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory and co-discoverer of the double-helical structure of DNA, said at a recent UCLA conference, “We might as well do what we finally can to take the threat of Alzheimer’s or breast cancer away from a family.” But something else is suddenly making it OK to discuss the once forbidden possibility of germline engineering: molecular biologists now think they have clever ways to circumvent the ethical concerns that engulf this sci-fi idea. There may be ways, for instance, to design a baby’s genes without violating the principle of informed consent... Presumably few people would object to being spared a fatal disease. But what about genes for personality traits, such as risk-taking or being neurotic? If you like today’s blame game (it’s mom’s fault you inherited her temper) you’ll love tomorrow’s game: [mom] intentionally stuck you with that personality trait. But the child of tomorrow might have the final word about his genes, says [one] UCLA geneticist... The designer gene for, say, patience could be paired with an on-off switch... The child would have to take a drug to activate the patience gene. Free to accept or reject the drug, [the child] retains informed consent over his genetic endowment. There may also be ways to make an end run around the worry that it is wrong to monkey with human evolution. Researchers are experimenting with tricks to make the introduced gene self-destruct in cells that become eggs or sperm... confin[ing] the tinkering to one generation. Then, if it becomes clear that eliminating genes for, say, mental illness also erased genes for creativity, that loss would not become a permanent part of [humanity]’s genetic blueprint... In experiments with animals... the University of Utah has designed a string of genes flanked by the molecular version of scissors. The scissors are activated by an enzyme that would be made only in the cells that become eggs or sperm. Once activated, the genetic scissors snip out the introduced gene and, presto, it is not passed along to future generations... (Of course, preventing the new gene’s transmission to future generations would also defeat the hope of permanently lopping off a diseased branch from a family tree)... There is no easy technological fix for another ethical worry, however... It isn’t hard to foresee a day like that painted in ...[th]e... film *Gattaca*, where only the wealthy can afford to genetically engineer their children with such “killer applications” as intelligence, beauty, long life or health. “If you are going to disadvantage even further those who are already disadvantaged,” says a [bioethicist... of Albert Einstein College of Medicine, “then that does raise serious concerns.” But perhaps not enough to keep designer babies solely in Hollywood’s imagination... The necessary pieces are quickly falling into place. The first artificial human chromosome was created last year. By 2003 the Human Genome Project will have decoded all 3 billion chemical letters that spell out our... genes. Animal experiments designed to show that the process will not create horrible mutants are underway. No law prohibits germline engineering. Although the National Institutes of Health now refuse to even consider funding proposals for it, the rules are being updated. And where there is a way, there will almost surely be a will... As [the scholar] says, “We know where to start.” The harder question is this: do we know where to stop?

...Twenty children have already been born in what critics warn could be the first step towards designer babies. Figures on the controversial technique are revealed in a public consultation document from the British Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority about whether genetic screening of embryos should be extended. The technique involves selecting embryos and checking for genetic defects. Only defect-free embryos are implanted in the womb. All the 200 [gals] on whom the technique has so far been tried wanted to avoid passing on serious genetic disorders in their families, including cystic fibrosis and Huntington’s chorea. But pro-life groups say the technique is meddling in human evolution and could be used to select qualities like intelligence and sporting prowess. They fear advances in the technique will trigger growing demands from parents seeking the “perfect” child. [However, t]he embryology authority said: “This isn’t about the creation of designer babies, but it is about helping families avoid passing on serious genetic diseases... They would not be allowed to select embryos for social, physical or psychological characteristics.”

...THE WORLD’S first genetically altered babies... are healthy. The technique used to “make” the 30 children has been widely criticised as unethical. Genetic finger-print tests on two one-year-old children confirm they contain a small quantity of genes not taken from either parent. The extra genes were taken from a healthy donor and used to overcome the mother’s infertility problems. The additional genes the children carry have altered their “germline”, or their collection of genes that they will pass on to their off-spring. Altering the germline is the thing most scientists see as unethical because of lack of knowledge. It is illegal in most countries and the American government will not fund experiments into it.

...Genetically altered babies may have been born... [in the US] under the revolutionary treatment that came to light at the weekend... [U]p to 30 children could be carrying genes from three people – father, biological mother and [the] egg donor. The technique has been used since 1997, but has only now attracted attention after researchers checked for the first time to see if the children ended up with genes from both [mothers]... New Jersey’s Institute for Reproductive Medicine and Science at St Barnabas... treated 30 [patients] who gave birth to 15 babies. But another 15 have since been born after the use of the technique at other facilities in the US... The treatment is used for a rare form of infertility in [gals] who have fertile eggs but whose resulting embryos die before they can be implanted in the uterus. Researchers at St Barnabas injected donor DNA that contained mitochondria, tiny self-contained structures that use oxygen and nutrients to create energy cells, into the defective eggs... The view of most experts was that the children were in no danger from having their eggs manipulated in this way... Having DNA from a donor implanted into the mother’s egg would make “absolutely” no difference to the genetic make-up of the children. The genes in the mitochondrial DNA were the same ones the children would have had anyway, because they were the same in everyone. In the US, clinics which do not receive Government funding are

legally able to carry out ground-breaking research with in-house approval from their own ethics committees... The technique would theoretically be legal in N[Z], but would have to gain approval from the National Ethics Committee on Human Assisted Reproduction... an independent body set up to advise the Government on fertility issues. It is unlikely such approval would be granted... Two bills dealing with reproductive technology are before Parliament's health select committee... One of Australasia's leading fertility experts, [the]... medical director of A[US]n fertility clinic Sydney IVF, said... fertility researchers in A[US] were "reluctant" to begin carrying out this kind of treatment until it was better understood.

...The American doctor who trumpeted a fertility treatment using three genetic parents failed to disclose that along with 15 healthy babies it produced two fetuses with a rare genetic disorder. Experts are horrified because the fault can be passed to future generations... The first unborn foetus was aborted and the second miscarried after both developed... Turner's Syndrome, a rare disorder in which an entire chromosome is missing. Two out of 17 far exceeds normal statistical expectation... [The doctor had] denounced as "hysterical" growing criticism of his claims that the research posed no risks... "Many of the techniques I carry out in America are illegal in Britain but that does not mean they are immoral."

...A decision to let a British couple use [IVF] to create a "designer baby"... is under fire from ethical campaigners. The move was a "dangerous precedent" that could be commercially exploited, said... Britain's Medical Ethics Alliance. The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority has ruled that... [a] couple... from Leeds, can use "pre-implantation genetic diagnosis" to "create" a baby whose cells could then be used to cure their son... who suffers from a rare blood disease. The *Independent on Sunday* has established that more than 50 [Brits] are pregnant with so-called designer babies, conceived to help cure an older sibling with a life-threatening disease. It is understood two N[Z] families were among parents at a Melbourne unit who wanted to have genetically engineered babies to save their seriously ill children... In Auckland, the Starship's clinical director of haematology and oncology... said N[Z] specialists would always take a keen interest in new medical developments and carefully assess the results achieved. Whether such a programme would be appropriate here... require[s] careful ethical consideration. Fertility Associates medical director... was not aware of any such applications to the... National Ethics Committee on human-assisted reproduction... and specialists here did not regard it as a high priority... [By the way, a] high proportion of [NZ gals] know that folic acid can prevent birth defects such as spina bifida but comparatively few take it. Research... found that 91[%] of the 191 pregnant [people] studied had heard of folic acid and 62[%] knew taking it was important in preventing... birth defects. However, only 17[%] actually took folic acid in the crucial time surrounding conception, compared with 31[%] in AUS]n and British studies... [Although the] Christchurch Medical School researchers who conducted the [local] study say their findings can be partly explained by the high rate of unplanned pregnancies – 55[%] – among the participants[, they also] say their findings emphasise the need for an effective public health strategy to ensure all [gals] of child-bearing age have an adequate folic acid intake... The Ministry of Health recommends... all [gals] of child-bearing age consume a daily 0.8mg folic acid supplement [a] month before and 12 weeks after conception to reduce the risk of a child being born with a "neural tube defect." ...The [chairperson of NZ's] Medical Association... says that taking it before pregnancy is important as neural tube defects occur 25 to 29 days after conception when many [gals] are unaware they are pregnant... Foods containing a large amount of folic acid include whole-wheat breads, spinach, broccoli, liver, lentils and kidney beans. It is also in some vitamin pills... In the U[S] folic acid is added to all grain products, in Britain it is added to certain foods, and "selective fortification" might be introduced here.

...A British hospital is pioneering a technique that allows HIV-positive [guys] to father children with virtually no risk of passing the infection to their... partners or the foetus. The technique, known as "sperm-washing" has been performed at London's Chelsea & Westminster Hospital, Britain's leading centre for the treatment of HIV. The first pregnancy from this treatment has already been confirmed... The washing is possible because HIV is carried mainly in the seminal fluid and non-sperm cells, not the sperm... To wash the sperm, a semen sample is spun for 20 minutes at high speed in a centrifuge. The force pushes the sperm through the fluid, leaving the infected semen plasma and non-sperm cells at the top. The sperm is mixed with another solution and centrifuged again. The tube is incubated and after about 30 minutes the sperm try to swim up the tube. An HIV test is done and, if the result is negative, the [partner] is artificially inseminated with the washed sperm. The treatment, for which most patients pay more than £1300... is regarded as the safest of its type available... [Incidentally, two NZers] have won approval to be inseminated with their dead husband's sperm, and a third... application is being considered... But unlike the British case... which made world headlines last year, the [NZer]'s husbands willingly provided the sperm and gave permission for it to be used after their deaths...

[In the] first known birth of its kind, a... California[n] has had a baby using sperm extracted from her dead husband. [The mother], who is in her 20s... was impregnated last July with sperm taken from her husband, Bruce, 30 hours after [Bruce] died suddenly of an allergic reaction. The couple had no other children. Acting at the widow's request, [a] fertility specialist... led a team that went to the coroner's office, made an incision in [Bruce]'s scrotum and extracted the sperm from the epididymis... The sperm was kept frozen for 15 months before [Bruce's wife] became pregnant. "I just did it because the family was in so much stress and so much grief," said [the specialist, who] has performed or supervised postmortem sperm extractions about a dozen times since 1978, when [the specialist first] took sperm from a [guy] killed in a car... [The] director of the Centre for Bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania knows of at least 45 cases in which someone has requested sperm be taken from a dead [person. ■ 'A US mother wants to use her eggs and her dead son's sperm to create his child which would be born via a surrogate then be adopted and raised by the mother']]

...A British clinic is considering helping an infertile [person] have her brother's child through artificial insemination. The [sister] is being assessed at the Bridge Centre in London and discussions with the regulatory body, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority... should be concluded in the next few weeks, the clinic's director said... The HFEA was not available for comment... *The Sunday Times* said the case had shocked the IVF community and created deep divisions over the morality of treating the [sister]. Some specialists had condemned it as a form of social incest, although the [sister] would use a donor egg, the newspaper said. The [sister], who is 47... did not wish to discuss her decision, or whether or not [it] had a partner who could have fathered the child... The newspaper quoted [the] clinic director... as saying: "I do not consider this case to be any different from a [patient] receiving an egg donated by her sister. It is not incest..."

...Sperm banks for elite athletes could be the next step in society's push to win at any cost, an Adelaide academic has predicted... [The academic], of the University of S[A], said it was only a matter of time before gene pools, offering an athlete's sperm or eggs were set up as pressure mounted to produce bigger and better athletes. "There's going to be the temptation to try... A lot of ability comes from genes. The[top athletes a]re born with a tremendous potential and obviously they capitalise on it. Elite athletes are going to be offered money for their sperm in the same way that models are offering their eggs." ('Couples who want beautiful children – and have at least \$NZ28,000 – can now bid for the eggs of models via the Internet.') The academic, who... spent six months in the U[S] last year studying the effect of selection pressures in sport on the size and shape of athletes... said already in the US a sperm bank existed specifically for people with high IQs. "There are several Nobel prize winners who have admitted to donating their sperm. You have to be part of Mensa to donate and to receive sperm. It's an elitist group... It hasn't happened yet in sport but... [s]ports stars earn so much more money than scientists and they're so much more recognisable than scientists."

...My IVF baby is a genius! When [the husband] gripped his wife's hand and gently whispered, "It's time," [the wife] braced herself for the most terrifying minutes of her life. Her long, exhausting and fearful wait was almost over. At 53 years old, [the wife] was about to make medical history by becoming the oldest mum in the world to be fertilised successfully with her own egg using... IVF... Tears flowed freely as [the couple]... celebrated the magic moment when [their daughter] arrived weighing 3.3kg. [The wife] – whose first IVF baby was born two months premature and lived just 16 hours – had feared the egg might not develop properly because of her age. "The odds... were a million to one," says [the wife], now 55. Two years on, not only is [her daughter] a healthy toddler but also intelligent to the point it astounds her proud parents. "[Our girl]'s a right little

genius,” says [the husband], 43. It’s not just dolls and building blocks for [their daughter, who] uses the household computer, recites the alphabet backwards and loves science and astronomy. [The daughter] could read street and shop signs by the time [it] was one – and not only in English, but in [her mother]’s native Thai as well... As for the fact that [the mother] will be 70 when her daughter turns 17, it is of little consequence to them. “[My wife] is biologically exceptional herself... To still be producing eggs at her age is amazing. It’s not that I think a typical [gal] in her 50s should be trying to have babies. It’s more a case of [my wife] not being a typical [gal] in her 50s,”... says [the husband. The wife] points out that her mother was 54 when [it] was born, and lived to be 92. And although [the wife] would dearly love one more child, the [couple] have decided against it.

...An Auckland clinic has been given approval to take ovaries from would-be mothers and freeze the eggs in case the [cancer patients] want to give birth later on. Until now, no one in N[Z] has been permitted to carry out the experimental practice... Fertility Associates... applied more than a year ago... to get the necessary consent from the National Ethics Committee on Assisted Human Reproduction... The would-be mothers have a piece of ovary surgically removed and frozen in the hope that scientific advances will eventually allow eggs to be matured in a laboratory... This week[a] 9-year-old... cancer patient at the Starship children’s hospital in Auckland, went to Melbourne for similar surgery to keep alive her chances of later having children. [Fertility Associates] knew of two others who had [also gone to AUS] for the operation. [The] clinic had... had 12 requests in the past three months, including one from [the 9-year-old]’s parents... The ethics committee approval was restrictive and it declined to fast-track a request to include children. It was only for [gals] aged 16 to 35 who were about to receive treatment that had a significant chance of leaving them sterile. “In future it may be that we get a medical student coming to us and saying, ‘I don’t want to have babies till I’m 45 and professor of the department; put an ovary in the freezer’... But at the moment, that’s nowhere close to where we’re at.” ...A few pregnancies, mostly in Italy, had resulted from [IVF] of thawed, mature eggs... But there had been none from thawed, immature eggs extracted from ovarian tissue. Researchers had successfully matured animal eggs in the laboratory, but not human ones... The scientists were still trying to determine the optimum temperature and mix of nutrients, hormones and saline solution. Eggs contained in fluid are harvested using a fine needle inserted through the vagina to the ovaries. Tissue is obtained by partly or wholly removing ovaries either during surgery for the cancer or with laparoscopic surgery – through narrow tubes inserted into the abdomen... [In related news, a]n internationally known [IVF] expert accused of stealing... eggs was fired yesterday from the University of California at Irvine. [The expert] was one of three doctors who ran the Centre for Reproductive Health... [One colleague] was fired in March and [the other] was an untenured professor whose contract was not renewed. The centre was closed in 1995 after patients claimed their eggs were taken without their consent and implanted in other [people], resulting in an estimated 15 babies of uncertain parentage. [The expert and the professor] fled the country after the scandal broke. [The expert] is in Mexico and has not returned to face charges that [it] stole patients’ eggs. [The professor], accused of insurance fraud, is in Chile. [The other colleague] tried to save his job... [by] telling the board [it] was “not the despicable person described by the administration.” [The colleague] was not accused of stealing eggs but was convicted in 1997 of federal mail fraud in connection with clinic billing practices. The university is suing all three..., trying to recoup some of the \$US17... million paid out to settle lawsuits.

...Triple error... A COUPLE have won compensation from a [British] fertility clinic after the w[ife] had triplets instead of the twins [it] wanted.

...Colour-blind stork delivers shock... A white couple have reportedly had black twins after a mix-up at a fertility clinic. The IVF-blunder, thought to be the first in Britain, could lead to a court battle over who are the twins’ legal parents. The couple, who have not been named, went to the National Health Service clinic for IVF treatment after trying for years to have a child... During the process, sperm [was] provided by the [husband] and eggs from the w[ife]... The blunder could have been caused by the clinic using a black [donor]’s sperm to fertilise the... w[ife]’s egg, or by a black couple’s fertilised egg being implanted in the w[ife. An NHS] source, who would not be named, said: “Great steps have been taken to ensure that this sort of thing never happens. It must be a one-in-a-million chance. The big problem now is, who are the real parents of the twins?” About 27,000 couples use IVF... each year in Britain. Previous mix-ups have been recorded in the U[S] and the Netherlands.

...When [the Dutch wife] gave birth to twin boys in 1993, [the mother] and her husband... who are both white, were “unbelievably shocked” to discover that one of the babies was black. An investigation found that the Netherlands fertility clinic... in Utrecht had erred in a basic matter of hygiene. [The wife] had been injected with a pipette which had not been properly cleaned and contained sperm from her husband and a[nother guy]... DNA tests confirmed [the husband] was the biological father of one boy... and a black [guy] from the Caribbean island of Aruba was the father of the other twin... The black [guy] received counselling but... did not wish to make any legal claim to see his son. Under Dutch law, the [white couple] were deemed the parents of both boys. [The wife] said: “When I first learned the truth, my first reaction was to feel as if I had been raped. My biggest fear is that [my black son] will grow up and think his whole existence was the result of a mistake. We love our babies equally, but when you discover that one had another father the shock is unbelievable.” ...[Meanwhile, the white British] mother who gave birth to black twins... is facing a legal challenge to keep the children. The mix-up involves a black couple also trying for a test-tube baby at the same time, the *Sun* newspaper reported, quoting a source at the authority which runs the fertility clinic involved. No confirmation was available from health officials, who instead swiftly circulated a gagging order imposed on them by the High Court. The injunction also forbade naming the two sets of parents involved or the clinic... Although experts insist such mistakes are extremely rare, the case will do little to reassure the tens of thousands of British would-be parents who go through IVF treatment each year. “It’s always there at the back of your mind – what if they’re not mine?...” said... [a mother] who gave birth to IVF twins after six years of trying to conceive. “It’s just awful that somebody’s mistake has made a mess of a lot of lives... This has been noticed because the babies were black. What if it had been two white couples?” A Department of Health source admitted there had been a “seriously unfortunate error”... “It’s our worst nightmare,” said [the person] in charge of the London Fertility Centre’s laboratory... A court hearing has now been scheduled... to determine who is the biological father of the twins. After the white mother gave birth, the twin babies were clearly dark-skinned and the couple were horrified to think something could have gone wrong. But they are determined to keep the children.

...The practice of giving infertile [gals] hormone treatments to increase the chances of pregnancy carried such a high risk of multiple births that doctors should avoid the treatment... [A doctor at] the Centre for Human Reproduction in New York, and his colleagues... spent 2 1/2 years studying 1494 [patients] who received the gonadotropin hormone treatments, which spur egg production in the ovaries. The team was trying to find a way to use the hormone without creating multiple births, but... concluded it was not possible. Multiple birth babies are frequently premature, low-weight infants in need of expensive, neonatal intensive care. Of the 441 [patients] who became pregnant, 9[%] had triplets, quadruplets, quintuplets or sextuplets. The natural rate of such multiple births is 0.01[%]. The researchers said a better alternative might be [IVF] because, with the test tube baby technique, doctors could implant just two fertilised eggs at a time. This procedure dramatically reduces the risk of a [patient] having more than twins... □ N[ewborn] twins from the Colombian U’Wa tribe who risked being sacrificed by their tribe because of a belief twins are demonic, are now in social care. The... boy and girl were born in the border state of Arauca, close to Venezuela. They owe their lives to the fact that they were born in a clinic and were immediately placed in care, said the Colombian Institute for Family Well-Being. According to U’Wa tradition, twins... have to be put to death to protect the community from punishment by the gods. Ordinarily, twins are drowned in a river or left to be eaten by ants.

...Months ago, Peruvian doctors gave [a couple]... the worst possible prognosis for their twin boys joined at the spine – sacrifice one of their lives so the other might have a chance to live. The boys shared intestinal and urinary organs and had a minimal chance of survival... [However,] a team

of... 20 surgeons... at Miami's Children's Hospital performed a successful 13-hour operation that separated... [the twins], a risky procedure that included disconnecting the fused spinal cord the boys shared... Doctors predict they will be able to walk, run and play like any other children.

...AN operation to separate Siamese twins – killing one child – can go ahead, a British court has ruled. The ruling goes against the wishes of the six-week-old twins' parents, who say God should decide if the girls should live and for how long. Doctors say without separation, both will die within months. Separating them will kill the weaker girl, who depends entirely on the other for blood. A panel of three Appeal Court judges in London voted unanimously to allow the separation, backing an earlier High Court ruling. Lawyers say the family hasn't decided on an appeal.

...British surgeons... succeeded in separating three-month-old Siamese twins, sacrificing one girl... so her stronger sister might live. The surgery ended weeks of legal wrangling over the ethics of operating on the sisters and went against the will of their Maltese Roman Catholic parents, who... came to Britain seeking medical help... A spokes[person] for St Mary's Hospital in Manchester said the [stronger] baby, known as Jodie, was in a critical but stable condition. "Unfortunately, despite all the efforts of the medical team, Mary... died." ...the next 36 hours would be critical for the [surviving] baby, as her organs adjusted to operating within a much smaller body mass... The girls... were born... joined at the abdomen and with a fused spine. They shared a heart and a pair of lungs. Doctors said before the operation that Mary... would suck the life out of her stronger sister unless they were parted. Thus the 20-strong operating team had to set out expressly to save Jodie by ending Mary's life: a stance fiercely opposed by Catholics and anti-abortion campaigners. The... Pro-Life Alliance accused the hospital of hypocrisy for claiming it had tried to save Mary.

...T[he 39-year-old] had a nightmare last week. [The American] woke up sobbing, relieved to find her sister... right next to her where [it] has been since the Siamese twins were born... "In my dream, [my sister] and I had been separated," [the dreamer] says, shuddering. "I felt so terribly lonely." The[y]... are the rarest form of Siamese twins. They have separate brains and bodies but share skull bone, tissue and blood vessels which bond [one sister]'s upper left temple with [the other]'s just above their left eyes. At the top of their shared scalp, [the dreamer]'s brown hair fades into [her sister]'s auburn. They look in opposite directions and can see each other's face only in mirrors. The effect is like watching two people in a permanent headbutt. In conversations, the twins, always polite, rotate their bodies so the one talking faces the visitor. [The auburn twin] has spina bifida and, at 150cm, is 10cm shorter than [her sister. When the taller sister walks, the shorter one] rolls alongside on a wheeled stool. "It's the easiest way for us both to get where we need to be,"... Both twins are adamantly opposed to any thought of separation, despite huge advances in surgical techniques since their birth and the fact that whenever [the taller one] bends down to open a cupboard or pick up a magazine, [it almost yanks the shorter one] off her stool. As children, they endured years of vicious teasing. As adults, they still get plenty of rude looks, yet they passionately supported the parents off the Maltese] Siamese twins Jodie and Mary... The rich life [the 39-year-olds] lead is powerful evidence for their argument against separation... Although it might seem they ought to agree about everything, they emphatically do not. For instance, [the taller twin] doesn't drink coffee. [Her sister] has to have a cup before work... as a country and western singer. Seven years ago, [the shorter twin] passed the first phase of exams required to become a doctor but medicine was not her biggest dream. [The twin] always wanted to be a star and, in 1993, her singing was heard by an agent from Nashville. A contract followed, [the twin] changed her name... and soon had a list of concerts. In 1997, [it] was named Most Promising Newcomer at the US Country and Western Music Awards... When [the singer works, her twin] sits on stage but plays no part in the proceedings. [The singer] does the same when [her sister], a trained nurse, takes jobs in local hospitals. All the elements of their daily routine have been worked out... The twins say their survival has depended on learning to live as two while being essentially just one. Nowhere has this been more challenging than in their love lives. "I like to date," [says the taller twin]. "I am a red-blooded American [gal]." "And you like a red-blooded American [guy]," says her sister] as both... dissolve into laughter. [The red-blooded twin] has had two serious boyfriends and, although [the gal] will not discuss it, the relationships included physical intimacy. Given the close proximity [the smaller twin] is forced to share with any of [her sister]'s boyfriends, it might be expected [the singer] would have a veto but that was not so. "I do not feel [like my sister] has to like my boyfriends... [My sister] actually has no say." [Her twin] is quick to agree. "When [my sister] is with a boyfriend, I am in my own world. I don't even know... [the guy is there." The taller twin]'s last serious relationship continued for more than two years and almost led to marriage. "I would like to have children... [My] fiancée... wanted them as well but we couldn't agree on where to live..." ...The sisters share an easy sense of humour and are philosophical about their situation... They... know if one of them dies the other will die soon after. "We came into this world together and we will go out that way... There is nothing on earth which would persuade me to separate..." ● [The 27-year-old Iranian Siamese twins who said they'd rather die than stay joined together, died following their operation to be separated.] Editor's note: 'The chances of a NZer having Siamese twins are 1-in-250,000. In India and Africa the chances are 1-in-16,000.' Normal twins]... occur once in every 80 births['the chances of having twins increases with age' and '60% aren't identical.' 'Identical twins are amongst the most studied people in the world.' 'We don't know exactly why twins occur, but their genes predispose them to lead identical lives and seek out identical things' ('growing evidence confirms that how twins turn out has more to do with genetics than their upbringing').

...Each year thousands of twins converge on the tiny town of Twinsburg, USA, hoping to meet, marry and live with another perfect matching twosome.'

...a set of NZ twins... are so in tune they've run neck and neck in their last three races. Even a photo finish couldn't split the Wanganui 14-year-olds as they went head and stride three times over the past fortnight over 200m and twice over 100m. Neither is bothered about not being able to shake off her perpetual shadow. "It's just real weird," said [one]. "We don't plan it to happen." ..."When you actually watch it, they are trying to beat each other,"... their father... said... "There have been quite a few twins who were close, but there is nothing about dead heats," said... [an athletics statistician, who] would forward details to the *Guinness Book of Athletics Facts and Feats*.

...Close-up siblings one for the book... [A pair of] Palmerston toddlers... have cracked a world record – their birthdays are closer together than any other siblings from separate pregnancies. [The boy] was less than seven months old when [his sister] was born, just 208 days after him, on March 30 last year. The previous *Guinness Book of Records* entry was 209 days. Their parents... say claiming the record is "just a bit of fun", but their other children, [aged] 10, and... 9, are thrilled. The couple received verbal confirmation of the record last month. But it's a record that wasn't easy to achieve, and it's still not all plain sailing... [Although the youngest child] is growing, walking and trying to talk, [it] carried the legacy of her premature birth. [The girl] was born at 24 weeks and weighed just 700g. "[It] really just looked like a baby bird. Her eyes weren't even properly formed,"... Photographs from those early days, when her parents didn't expect her to survive and arranged a hasty baptism, show [her mother]'s wedding ring fitting over... [her arm. The tiny child] was in care in Auckland for about seven months, a heart-breaking separation for the family... [Now the girl's at home it] still requires technical care and attention... [The girl]'s still just 8kg, and has a tracheotomy tube in her throat to keep her breathing passages open. "Her throat's tiny – the size of a grain and a half of rice,"... The tube needs changing once a week, and often needs to be suctioned to keep it clear. Twice in three weeks over winter the tube blocked and [the girl] turned blue and nearly died. When [the girl] is 4kg heavier [it] will need another operation to rebuild her throat and replace the tube with a metal one. Meanwhile, [the determined girl] eats what every other child enjoys... can make a range of noises, or use a mechanical voice box, or use sign language to communicate. It is hoped her throat can be repaired for her to talk normally. [● In 1997, 'an Englishperson gave birth to time-lag twins who were conceived a month apart. The Leicestershire housewife, aged 38, was the first recorded case in Britain of a mother conceiving naturally during different monthly cycles.']

...An Italian... is due to give birth in a hospital in Rome this week to a... girl – before returning three months later to have triplets. If both deliveries are successful, it is thought... this will be the first such case in history. [The mum], aged 20, denied suggestions that [it] might have had hormone or fertility treatment... "When I was at the sixth month of my pregnancy and went to see the doctor for the usual tests and scans, [it] noticed that, apart from [the 6-month-old foetus] there were another three babies... I remember asking ...h[im] to make sure because I just couldn't

understand how it was possible.” [A p]rofessor... of the London Fertility Clinic said it should not theoretically be possible... to be pregnant twice at the same time. “Normally when you are pregnant you switch off your ovulation, and you don’t then ovulate again and you have no periods until your child is born and you are at least part the way through breastfeeding...” [The p]rofessor... said the condition, known technically as superfecundation, occurred rarely in animals[, but that] it was unheard of for a [member of our species] to conceive naturally and then to spontaneously ovulate three eggs again.

...It was a case of double and triple trouble yesterday when... Auckland twins and triplets met at National [Gal’s] Hospital for celebrations marking Multiple Birth Awareness Week. Each year about 700 sets of twins, 12 sets of triplets[(‘there is a 1-in-6000 chance of a human having triplets’)] and one of quads are born in N[Z], and the incidence of multiple births is rising. This is not so much due to fertility drugs as the fact that [gals] are having babies later in life, when the likelihood of producing more than one egg increases.

...To outsiders, it seemed the... quintuplets of N[Z] had everything. Believed to be the world’s first naturally delivered quintuplets, they were the darlings of our nation. We watched them grow up. The media covered their every milestone, from their first step to their first day at school. Even the Queen sent a telegram and... [NZ’s PM] paid a personal visit after [the four girls and one boy] were born on July 27, 1965. And if looks are anything to go by, the... quins... would still seem to have it all. Blessed with good looks and sporting brilliant smiles, they could be the cast of a glamorous US sitcom. But life has been anything but a sitcom for the[m]... Their parents... divorced. By the time the children were [9 years old, their mother] Ann – a former beauty queen – desperate to establish a secure family life, had wed [a]painter and wallpaper hanger... Far from creating security, however, Gary tore the close-knit family apart. His erratic mood swings plunged their suburban world into one of violent beatings, drunken fights... and... emotional manipulation... From the age of [9 to the age of 13, one girl] was sexually abused by Gary. “I ran away from home when I was 14. I had had enough of the abuse... I hitchhiked to Waihi. I got myself into a real state... I had been drinking since the age of 13. It wasn’t until I saw... mother on television pleading for me to come home that I realised what I had done...” At 15, [the runaway] left home again. Every time her mother tried to find her, [it] moved on... Unlike her siblings[, one of the quins] was thrilled when Ann remarried. But her happiness was short-lived. Soon after... [the honeymoon, this quin] caught her new stepfather kissing another [gal. The quin] innocently told her mother, who confronted Gary. That night, [Gary] went berserk. “Gary took [Mum] into the bedroom, and we heard yelling, bangs, crashes. I knew something bad was happening. Gary kept her prisoner there all night... I used to lie in bed shaking; my nerves were so edgy. I no longer woke happy. I would fret about what Gary’s mood would be.” ...before Gary... [the quin’s] early years... were happy ones. Growing up on four hectares at Auckland’s then developing Hobsonville was “heaven”. They didn’t have a lot of toys, but relished the freedom of playing in wide, open fields... When Gary shot [her] cat in front of her, [Gary] manipulated his apology to gain her comfort. “[Gary] was lying on the bed sobbing, saying [it] felt bad and wanting to say sorry. I thought I should comfort him, but [Gary] took that attention and, in a sick way... took advantage of me. People need to know... sexual abuse is not acceptable. I have no shame because it was not my fault. When I found out it had happened to [one of my sisters as well], I felt doubly betrayed.” ...[another of the girls says, “Everything changed when Gary arrived. Gary] wanted Mum because [Ann] was so beautiful... But after they married, Mum wasn’t there for us. [Gary] would take her to work with him and not come home in time for dinner. [Gary] didn’t let her out of his sight... Mum became so sad. [Mum] tried to give us her love, but it was hard. [Mum] didn’t know what [it] was in for. Some of her friends knew what Gary was like, but... [n]o-one warned her.” ...This reign of terror lasted seven years, until... Ann... decided to leave Gary... [But] Gary, an untreated manic depressive and alcoholic, shot Ann dead in front of her [kids], then turned the gun on himself. It was the day after St Valentine’s Day, 1982. The quins were 16. Racked with grief, the quins and their older sister... scattered to escape their tragedy. For the next decade their lives were a rollercoaster of self-destruction. It wasn’t until their birth father... became terminally ill that they were reunited... [■ One of Canada’s] three remaining... quintuplets, has died of cancer. The 1934 birth of Yvonne and her four identical sisters to an impoverished couple in the small town of Callander... was hailed as a medical miracle. At the time, they were the only known quintuplets to survive more than a few days, their combined weight being only... 6.5kg... When the Ontario provincial government deemed the... parents unfit to care for their... girls, the quins were put in a specially built hospital – Quintland – where they became a moneymaking tourist attraction during the lean Depression years. More than five million tourists viewed the girls there through one-way glass. All the girls survived to adulthood... One sister, Emilie, died in 1954; another, Marie, died in 1970... The three surviving... quins eventually sued the Ontario government for separating them from their family and putting them on display. They received a \$US2.8 million... settlement... in 1998.

...A 27-year-old... has given birth to the first known set of surviving octuplets. The six girls and two boys, who weighed from 311g to 708g, were in critical condition and on ventilators at Texas Children’s Hospital... “When you get to these high-order multiple pregnancies, the uterus is so large it’s unusual to be able to keep a pregnancy to the point where you deliver and the babies become able to survive... It will be a remarkable feat if all the babies do survive,” said... one... doctor... Each baby added to a pregnancy tends to shave... three weeks off the time a... uterus can hold out before going into labour... The mother, [a]Nigerian immigrant... spent the last two weeks of her pregnancy reclining virtually upside down to keep pressure off her lower body... One of the girls was born vaginally on December 8, 12 weeks premature. But labour was delayed and the other seven were delivered yesterday by caesarean section, 10 weeks early... [The mum, who] had taken fertility medicine... was in a stable condition. The octuplets were the first children for her and her husband... They had been trying to have a baby for some time and earlier this year... miscarried triplets.

...The world’s only living octuplets are winning their fight for life and are expected to be taken off a mechanical ventilator by today, doctors said yesterday. “Today we stopped sedating them, and we gave them all caffeine to improve their breathing,” said... [the] head of the neonatal unit at St Luke’s Episcopal Hospital in Houston... All the babies are already on basic room air... except for Baby E, the smallest. The four-day-old girl, whose name... means “God has my life” in the parents’ Nigerian Ibo tribal language, is still on... 75[%] oxygen... The babies’ father... was still stunned...

THE birth of octuplets... has reignited debate about the ethics of a... risky multiple-birth boom. The boom is driven by aggressive fertility treatment and results every year in thousands of miscarriages, stillbirths, infant deaths and disabled children... The births may be a miracle, but whatever the outcome, it’s not a miracle that physicians or ethicists would like to see repeated. “I think it’s yet another wake-up call that brings into question the relatively unregulated practice of infertility treatment in the U[S],” said an] ethicist... of Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. Doctors don’t rule out the possibility that someone will manage to push the envelope even further. “Yes, you could have nine or 10. But I suspect the outcomes would be horrible. What infertile couples want is to take home a healthy baby, not to have a baby die or... who’s significantly impaired,” said... a specialist in maternal and foetal medicine at Hutzel Hospital in Detroit. Even fertility doctors say treatments leading to [7- and 8]-foetus pregnancies are out of line. “Obviously we wish the [octuplets] and their family the greatest good luck, good health and fortune, but we cannot as a medical community be at all happy that this event took place,” says... a fertility specialist in Washington who is on the board of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine... The octuplets... are part of a trend that began in the 1970s when fertility treatment became widespread. Births of triplets or more have quadrupled since. And the trend has accelerated in the 1990s... The pressure to get babies leads doctors “to do risky, dangerous and inexcusable things”, said [a spokesperson for] the University of Pennsylvania Center for Bioethics. “The first goal has got to be the health and safety of babies, not success rates, not the numbers of babies.” ...Even in the best circumstances, such births put an extraordinary burden on families, physically, emotionally and financially, said... a specialist in high-risk newborn care at University Hospital at Stonybrook, New York. There’s upwards of a 90% divorce rate if there’s a damaged baby in the house... One thing doctors could do... is to more aggressively promote selective abortions... a “horrible, miserable choice” but often the best available... But fewer couples would get to that

agonising decision point if doctors were less aggressive in efforts to achieve pregnancy. Leaders in the... field agree some doctors are irresponsible but say most are doing their best with imperfect technology and pressures from potential parents to make the most of each costly treatment cycle...

Weak but radiant with pride, the mother of the Houston octuplets has gone home from hospital, saying the pain and fear of her pregnancy gave way to wonder and gratitude the moment [it] gazed upon her eight babies. "When I saw them for the first time, I was so amazed at what God blessed me with,"... The 27-year-old... was wheeled out after visiting her seven surviving children, who remained in hospital in a critical but stable condition. If all goes well, they could join their mother at home in two to three months... There was no welcome-home gathering of the couple's neighbours. Some said they would do what they could to help, but many admitted they did not even know the couple and were first introduced to the new parents with the rest of the world... Plenty of aid is already pouring in. As with the septuplets of Carlisle, Iowa, companies have donated baby products, food and other goods and services... The... nurses... bestowed on the new mum eight silver spoons and eight baby bibs.

...A BABY was offered for auction yesterday on the eBay Internet site, a magnet for world wide web auctions, but no bids were received. The starting price for the... boy due to be born this month, was \$US100,000... eBay... said the offer would be removed from the site. The company has not put in place any automatic mechanism to stop prohibited articles like firearms or animals from being placed for auction on its site. According to the advertisement for the unborn baby, his parents are law students in Chicago. A judge would preside over the transaction. Selling babies is illegal in the U[S - where an]... Arizona couple in their 50s yesterday became the legal parents of six boys and four girls, aged... 4 to 17... one of the largest groups adopted in the U[S]. "Everyone thinks we're crazy, but the pros outweigh the cons," said [the new] mother... "The kids are the best things in my life." ...[the couple] spend \$US1500... a month on groceries, [and] have converted a garage and dining room to create a six-bedroom house with three bathrooms and 11 televisions. Police found the children in April 1995 after their mother abandoned them in a rubbish-strewn house.

...An alarming rise in children abandoned by penniless parents has forced South Korea to confront one of its most vexatious social issues - the adoption of its children by foreigners. Thousands of children were left at orphanages and other shelters last year - the sad legacy of a savage recession which has fragmented countless traditionally tight-knit families. For this reason they are called "IMF orphans," after the International Monetary Fund which bailed out Korea's crippled economy in 1997 and is blamed by some for the slump. For cultural reasons many parents never retrieve these children, and most Koreans are reluctant to adopt as they believe it taints their family bloodlines. As a result, the children live as orphans despite having parents. "Parents leave their children here for up to six months promising to return. But 90[%] don't...," says... the director of a children's home in Kyonggi Province... Her centre cares for 80 children. In desperation, the Health and Welfare Ministry is considering taking the extraordinarily sensitive step of lifting the annual cap on the number of "orphans" available to foreign parents. The limit was imposed a few years ago after an outcry at the country's growing reputation as an exporter of unwanted children. The cap stands at about 2000, but in the first half of last year alone nearly 5000 children were left at shelters, usually by an unemployed father whose wife has fled. Child welfare workers say the true number could be up to triple that. Only 3500 found new parents in Korea and overseas last year. The step will anger many Koreans who see foreign adoptions as a national shame. But as a ministry official said: "Domestic adoption is rare in Korea. It is best to send the children abroad where they will be loved and wanted." It is unlikely the limit will be scrapped altogether. But the fact that lifting it even slightly is even being considered suggests the orphan problem is worsening. Orphans are social outcasts in Korea. "Orphans here are non-existent, non-human," explains... [the person] who last year started the country's first foster-parents association and cares for three abandoned children in her home. "You can't get married... can't get a good job. Here you don't marry a person, you marry a family and try to get financial advantage." [It] believes abandoned children numbers have jumped by 30[%] since the recession began... Most Korean orphans have at least one parent. Nonetheless, they remain orphans because their parents will not find a new partner as long as they have a child from another bloodline... Foreign adoptions began as the country recovered from the 1950-1953 Korean War. The bustling trade went virtually unnoticed until the 1988... Olympics, when... Seoul... was anxious to put its best foot forward. Dog restaurants were outlawed, and the orphan trade was hushed up. The cap was imposed a few years later.

...SIX years after the fall of the Soviet empire opened the floodgates to adoptions of children from the former Eastern Bloc, a small but growing number of American couples are giving up the children they adopted there. The parents in these cases say their adopted kids[- who usually]... came from warehouse-like orphanages[where they were rarely] touched or held as infants... [-] have psychological problems too difficult to handle. They cannot bond to their caregivers. They are destructive, often dangerous. And they are unravelling the lives of their new families... Several doctors who have worked with adopted East[ern] Bloc children say about one third have serious problems and another third have less severe problems such as learning disabilities or development delays... Others say the fault lies with the new adoptive parents, many older, first-time parents. They say these new parents have unreal expectations. Whatever the case - and each case is unique - the issue sparks heated passion, and much controversy... [One couple] were desperate to become parents after struggling with infertility for years. They considered surrogate motherhood and adopting in the US[, but eventually]... decided the former Eastern Bloc provided the best hope. They were thrilled when the director of a Missouri adoption agency told them [it] had found an adorable child in Romania: [a 2-year-old who is] "perfectly healthy, very beautiful and hugs everyone..." ...The adoption cost \$25,000, but as soon as the [couple] saw their new daughter, they knew something was wrong. "[The child] was totally mute... never made eye contact with anyone... gnawed on everything... would lick the floor, chew on people's shoes... was in constant motion, spinning in circles, flapping her arms, banging her head,"... [They took the child] to a developmental psychologist in Kansas City[, who] told them their daughter was profoundly retarded and suffered from a bad case of [FAS] caused by her mother drinking during pregnancy. After 150 trips to doctors and therapists... and another \$15,000 in medical fees financed by selling their car, spending their savings and taking out loans, the [couple] decided they had no choice but to give up... Now again childless, but also guilt-ridden and heavily in debt, Mrs [Adoptive] says it was "the worst thing that's ever happened to me in my life"... About 3700 children were adopted by Americans from Russia and eastern Europe last year. Most of these adoptions end happily.

...When [an Auckland couple] gave up their adopted baby, they never thought they'd be parents again... The moment when a father first holds his newborn baby in his arms is always emotional, but for one Auckland [father], it was particularly special... [R]eaders will remember the tragic story of how [the couple]... gave their adopted son... back to his birth mother last January, after seven months of loving and caring for him. The [birth-mother] had changed her mind about the adoption and, rather than continue the legal tug of war over his custody, the couple decided to give their much-loved son back. The heart-breaking decision left the couple shattered but they always held firm to the belief something good would come of their unselfish act. And it did. The joy [their own] four-month-old... has brought into their lives is more than they could ever have hoped for... After losing [their adopted son], they decided to rebuild their lives, accepting their future would never include children. So the couple, who had been told they could not have children naturally and had tried fertility treatment - including IVF - before turning to adoption, couldn't believe it when they discovered [the wife] (40) was pregnant... [While on the topic of adoptions,] local police confirmed that [a]... five-year-old boy from Papua New Guinea's Western Highlands has... been sold... for \$NZ2200 and 17 pigs... to a... [guy] from Bundi, in Madang, who had four wives but no children.

...The British couple who bought twin babies over the Internet were yesterday fighting a losing battle for public credibility. It has emerged that they complained of an evil spirit in their home and are negotiating with a Hollywood studio about a film of their story. Flintshire social services are investigating the adoption... amid claims that the [couple broke US] law. The twins have been taken into social services care... The [couple] paid an internet firm £8200 to adopt the babies, but they had already been sold to [an] American couple... who claim they were duped by an adoption agent into giving them up. [US] lawyers yesterday predicted that US courts would order the return of the babies to California, where they were born.

...[the]y are just six months old but they have been bought and sold twice over the internet... The twins are at the centre of an international tug of war which has revealed a seamy side to internet adoptions and pitted two couples desperate for the children against each other. The saga began when the twins' natural mother... [-] a 28-year-old hotel receptionist from Missouri [-] decided to give the girls up for adoption and arranged for an agent... from the Caring Heart agency, to advertise them on the internet. A couple from California... paid \$NZ13,725 for the pair. They looked after the girls for two months in San Diego. But as the [California]ns were finalising the legal adoption paperwork, the girls' mother took the twins back, claiming [it] wanted to say a final goodbye. Instead, [the birth-mother] handed them to a British couple... who were willing to pay more. The couple had paid... \$27,603 as a "non-refundable arrangement fee." They took the twins... and set off on a 3000km drive across the US, pursued by the [Californians. First the British couple] drove to St Louis, Missouri, to get the babies' birth certificates. Fearing the [California]ns would take the twins back, they made a dash to Arkansas, where looser adoption laws allowed them to quickly complete the adoption papers. They later flew out to their home in north Wales with the twins, who have been with them since. Now a transatlantic row is in full flight between the British and American couples over the right to the twins... Things became heated when the competing couples had an angry confrontation by satellite link live on British television... The British Government and the FBI are investigating the adoption. In the latest twist, [the British wife has admitted it] lied on adoption forms. Her admission could mean that the adoption is invalid, and the girls would have to go back to the U[S]... The British Home Secretary... has labelled the way the girls were traded "revolting." "It is illegal, completely illegal, in Britain for people to buy and sell babies or children..." N[Z] laws also ban buying or selling children. A *Herald* search of the internet found it took only a few minutes to source foreign adoption agencies.

...[a 'couple who adopted a 6-year-old have won compensation for being denied crucial information about his behavioural problems.' In further news from Britain, t]he... couple at the centre of a tug-of-war over twins adopted on the internet have vowed to keep fighting for the babies in a court battle that could run for months... [Hubby] said: "We have right on our side. I am convinced of that. Whether that is enough remains to be seen."

...Adopted children are the hottest fashion accessory for career-minded gals in LA who can't spare nine months out of their hectic schedules.

...ADOPTING children is not like shopping – best to discuss thoroughly before purchase. The divorce petition [a US actress filed against her actor] hubby... will be her [second] and his fifth. According to [the wife's] petition, the couple separated... just weeks after adopting a Cambodian orphan.

...[the Maori]'s mum and dad got her when they went on a "shopping" expedition. [The child] was only a few weeks old, and those people [it] now calls mum and dad were, in fact, her aunt and uncle. "My aunt and uncle didn't have any children so they just went shopping, going to all the people who did have children... They said, 'I'll have that one, that one, that one.'" Her uncle was the head of the whanau, her aunt the tribe's peacemaker. [The niece] was given into their care so [it] could inherit those roles. [Another Maori child] was 14 days old when her mother's second cousin... [who] couldn't conceive... walked into her parents place in the bush near Waitangi and carried her away in a flax basket... "The old people got together, then my foster father approached my real mother and said, 'That next baby you're going to have, I'm going to have it'. [Mum] said, 'Okay, if that will make you happy'." That relations were willing to hand over their children – and still do – will shock many Pakeha, just as many struggled to understand how [a prominent lawyer]'s sister... could have given her daughter... into her aunt's care. As the kidnapping of [the lawyer's adopted] baby... was discussed around the country, conversations often turned to how [the sister gave her daughter to the lawyer] as a replacement for the child [the lawyer] had lost when... seven-and-a-half months pregnant. [The sisters'] parents had decided that the next baby born in the family would be placed with [the wealthy lawyer and her husband], the papers said. A nation fearful for the baby was also curious about the family's arrangement. There was confusion: was it legal? Concern: what about the poor birth parents? Indignation: what about the baby? Disapproval: that isn't right. Horror: give away a baby? The practice, as we learned, is called whangai, which translated means, in context, to foster or adopt or, more generally, to feed and nourish. Another word used for the practice is atawhai, one of two phrases used to translate "the grace of God". While not as common as in previous generations, it is still frequently practised by Maori... Nearly all cultures have had adoption, and there is evidence of it as far back as 2800BC. But its form has always varied... In contrast to old-fashioned Western adoption, whangai does not involve severing ties, secrecy or even permanency. Whangai is always open... The origins of whangai are obscure, but in her 1995 study of the whanau in modern N[Z, a] former associate professor at Victoria University wrote that it developed to meet the need[s] of a whanau-based, pre-industrial culture. Maori lived close to nature with all its inherent dangers, and in a warrior culture, so children could not expect their parents to survive into old age. [The associate professor] says it was only common sense to nurture wider relationships. Whangai was welfare, counsellor and court rolled into one... No research has been done from a sociological or child health point of view. But [the professor]'s anthropological work suggests the system works in most cases. Most of the whangai... interviewed "recall their homes nostalgically as happy, caring places"... Whangai children are often treated or think of themselves as a bit special... I have never ever heard of a neglected whangai... [A] Rotorua journalist whose mother and sister were both whangai... interviewed 28 Tuhoë whangai for her research paper and found only one who felt rejected by her birth parents. Some of the birth parents... expressed great sadness in having to give their children up, but few regretted it. They saw it as normal, and the ongoing contact meant that any sense of loss was not as great as in a legal adoption, where the birth parents can be cut off. In the past, birth parents seldom had a choice – whangai were typically organised by kaumatua and kuia for what they saw as the greater good. That's changed, and while birth parents can still come under immense pressure to accede to the whanau's wishes, they almost always have the right of veto... The main reasons for whangai today are to deal with teenage pregnancies, or if couples are poor. Often a family member will take the child for a few years then return him or her.

...WHO'S YOUR daddy? In a victory for [gals] everywhere... Florida's "Scarlet Letter Law" will be struck down this week. The law requires mothers who don't know who fathered their children to advertise their sexual history in local newspapers before placing the children for adoption.

...A three-day-old oryx antelope calf "adopted" by a lioness was rescued yesterday and transferred to a private game sanctuary. Kenya Wildlife Service staff grabbed the calf, separated from its mother by a lioness... in central Kenya's Samburu game reserve. The baby oryx... was... immediately separated from the mother... [after it] was born... by the lioness, who defied nature for a second time to turn the calf into her adopted cub. Kenyan newspaper reports said wildlife officers snatched the starving calf from its foster mother as [it] went out hunting. They gently loaded it into a vehicle that took it to Lewa Downs private game sanctuary on the slopes of Mt Kenya. A team of researchers, conservationists, veterinarians and wildlife rangers unanimously decided to cut short the three-day relationship between [the oryx calf] and its adopting mother... "[The calf] had starved since birth on Thursday and, because the lioness had nothing to offer as food, it would definitely have died[.]" one wildlife... officer... said... The lioness first made headlines early last month when, much to the surprise of wildlife experts, [it] adopted her first oryx calf. For 17 days, [the lioness] starved while the baby antelope made regular visits to its lactating mother, and keeping away a family of cheetahs that tried to kill the calf. The oryx was eventually killed by another passing lion after a fight with the foster mother. Animal behaviourists at first said [the lioness] had probably mistaken the calf for a lion cub, but with the second adoption [the lioness] showed full awareness of its species.

...A lioness... has taken in another oryx calf, the third in as many months... [O]fficials might let nature take its course... leaving the calf to starve or be killed by other predators. [In related news, 'an 8-months pregnant Colombian says the baby was snatched from her womb after kidnappers drugged her and performed a rudimentary caesarean.' And a USer 'was so desperate for a baby that it killed her pregnant neighbour and stole her unborn child.']

...One in 4000 [NZers] dies during pregnancy or childbirth ● Around... one in 50 pregnancies... [results] in... detached placentas... They can kill both mother and baby... ● [During a]... birth at Lower Hutt Hospital... [a] wee boy inhaled meconium, a green substance that forms in babies' bowels while they are in the womb. It is not usually passed until after birth. However, [the boy] had not only passed the meconium into the waters around him but... had breathed it in as well, causing serious damage to his lungs... [The good news is it]'s now a happy, contented seven-month-old.

...A [patient] was set on fire during a caesarean delivery at Waitakere Hospital's maternity unit at the weekend. The fire... left the [patient]... with burns to the lower part of her body... The [patient] was last night resting in a comfortable condition in Middlemore Hospital. Her baby boy was not hurt and is with her... The Waitemata District Health Board said the fire was a freak accident... Hospital authorities and the Fire Service have launched separate investigations into how the fire started... [O]ne possibility is that an alcohol-based swabbing solution, used to sterilise parts of the body for surgery, may have been accidentally ignited... Fire services said diathermy equipment, used to cut through skin and cauterise any bleeding, was a possible source of ignition... [The board's] general manager of communications... said the baby was still in the uterus when the fire started. Staff in the operating theatre, including an anaesthetist and obstetrician, are believed to have smothered the fire on the [patient] who was anaesthetised with an epidural (a local anaesthetic injected into the region around the spinal cord). They performed the caesarean immediately... "We do extend our deepest sympathy to the mother and her family. It must have been extremely distressing. It's been extremely distressing for staff. People are pretty devastated... What happened was outside the experience of anybody in that operating theatre and... [t]hey were not young people." ...The hospital is now using an iodine-based s[wabbing s]olution, which was non-flammable, while the investigation was carried out... [The] deputy chief fire officer for the Waitakere City Fire District, said the incident was of national significance and was very unusual.

...A second case of a hospital patient being set on fire during surgery has emerged... A 24-year-old... suffered... burns during an appendix operation at Middlemore Hospital last month... A... 17-year-old was set alight during a caesarean delivery at Waitakere Hospital on Saturday.

...Waitakere Hospital is investigating a sharp rise in the number of babies being born by caesarean section... [O]ver the last three months caesarean... deliveries have gone up to 21[%], compared with... 18[%] in the past... [I]t's the decision to have a caesarean... once the [mother] is in labour that's becoming more common. "We know the rate is too high. But the reason is not clear so we are now developing a clinical audit function to determine the cause and identify the relationship between practice and outcome... All doctors practice differently and some are more likely to do a C-section... What we have to ascertain is whether there is a clinical need for it – or is there a change of practice?" ...various factors influence the [C]-section rate – induced labour, distress to the baby during labour or a threat to the mother's health... The most common reason for [C-sections for mothers] having a first baby are failure to progress and foetal distress... [O]ver the last three months 47[% of mothers] having a first baby at Waitakere... had a [C-section. "13% of mothers] having a second or subsequent babies had a [C]-section while 63[%]... had a repeat [C]-section,"...

The continuing rise in caesarean births adds weight to a British doctor's prediction that half the [mums] giving birth will choose the surgical option by the year 2010. Statistics show caesarean rates are soaring, both here and around the [First W]orld. But they also show that [mums] are not choosing surgical births purely for convenience and lifestyle reasons. At an A[US-NZ] Perinatal Society congress last week, [the]... professor of foetal and maternal medicine at Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital in London, said the risks were finely balanced between caesarean and vaginal birth[, and i]t was wrong to deny [a mother] the choice when research indicated that attempting a vaginal birth could be riskier for ...he[r or the]... baby... In 1994, the international health watchdog the W[HO] suggested that the global rate of caesarean births should be no higher than 15[%] of the total. Here, the Ministry of Health's National Health Committee has suggested the surgical procedure be "subjected to clinical audit to ensure conformity with best practice," in other words, reviewed by specialists to make sure the caesarean is being performed in the best way for the best reasons. To do this, the committee has suggested the development of caesarean guidelines and work on these is continuing. In 1989, 12[% of NZ]'s births were by caesarean... but by [this year] that figure had reached almost 20[%]. The rate was 25[%] last year at National [Gals'] Hospital – Australasia's largest maternity facility – and 27[%] at North Shore Hospital. One private hospital in Christchurch had a percentage of more than 30. At Waikato Hospital the rate, taking in total births from the greater Waikato region, is around 20[%], but would be higher if only births in the hospital itself were counted... Middlemore... comes in at just 13[%]. The assumption that a caesarean is somehow an "easier" option ignores the fact that it is a major operation and is still up to nine times riskier than a natural delivery. Without complications the procedure will take up to an hour. An incision of around 14cm is made through the skin before fat, tissue and muscle are pushed aside to allow access to the abdominal cavity and the uterus. After that, locating the baby and lifting it out are normally straightforward steps. Recovery can take several days or weeks, depending on the level of complexity... North Shore Hospital[']s maternity services manager... says... lifestyle choice and the convenience of giving birth on a certain day are not unknown... but the number of [mums] choosing a caesarean for these reasons is so small [it] can remember only a couple of cases over the past few years. When it comes to childbirth, [the manager] believes, no option should be eliminated... "Of course, if nature intended all [mums] to give birth that way they would have been designed with a zipper or a pouch – like a kangaroo." Middlemore[']s... group manager of [gals'] health... believes the rise in caesareans can be attributed in part to the evolution of modern medicine. As medical procedures are developed and improved, the risks decrease. "The risk [with caesarean] is gradually lowering to nearer the same as a natural delivery. But that leads to the question, what happens when the risk is lower than that for a natural delivery?" ...But there are still serious risks. For instance, [mothers] having a second or subsequent caesarean face the risk of haemorrhaging so badly that their uterus will have to be removed... [A] Massey mother-of-two... [- both] delivered by caesarean section... in South Africa... [-] says there is a far greater acceptance of the caesarean option... [t]here... "It seems... that in N[Z] caesarean is a last resort. I find it frightening that risks like developing toxemia (high blood pressure and enlarged tissue) are not enough to put people off having a natural delivery. There's a mindset that you must have a natural birth come hell or high water. I think that has to change." Natural birth often seems to be regarded as a competition – "it's as if you get Brownie points for the longest, most gruelling labour. It's not a contest to see who can be more of a [mum]. People just have to realise it's not the only way, and if you are considering a caesarean because you feel it's safer... there should not be a problem with your decision."

...Almost half of all [mums] who give birth to their first baby by emergency caesarean section do not have another child, a... study shows... [1-in-3] suffers long-term infertility... [due to] a ruptured womb [or] placental problems... and [1-in-5] are too traumatised to go through childbirth again.

...Nuevo Leon is Mexico's richest state... [- where ATM]s offer the country's highest daily withdrawal limit. And Nuevo Leon holds another nationwide distinction: king of the caesarean... Half of all the state's babies are born surgically. In private hospitals, the proportion is 73[%] – the highest in the country and... five times the international norm. [Nuevo Leon mums] want the operation to avoid the pains of all-night labour, and over-worked doctors are happy to oblige with a half-hour insurance-paid procedure before breakfast... [T]he state capital... Monterrey[-] a city of 1.1 million, where C-sections are scheduled like hair appointments[-] ...may be C-section central, but it is hardly the exception. Across Mexico – and much of Latin America – the number of caesareans is on the rise... There are several explanations: better early detection of pregnancy complications, fear of malpractice suits for not having performed the surgery in deliveries that ended tragically, the idea... that a C-section is somehow more civilised than a natural birth, and the desire of doctors to maintain a large number of patients without the telephone ringing at 3 every morning. "Any doctor who says [it] doesn't do unnecessary caesareans is lying," says... a Monterrey gynaecologist, who delivers at least three babies a week – 65[%] of them by surgery... A recent study in the *British Medical Journal* concluded that 850,000 C-sections are needlessly performed throughout... Latin America... each year. Yet the real problem is the distribution of C-sections along class lines. While, urban, well-to-do [mums] chose surgery – unworried about increasing their risk of delivery complications – many poor, rural [mums] who need the operation don't get it. "There are still lots of [mums] dying at childbirth because they didn't have access to C-sections," says... a professor at Harvard Medical School who has studied the rates in Mexico. "That is the big irony." ...[In local news, j]unior doctors and midwives have a "frightening" ignorance of the anatomy involved in a small incision often made to ease childbirth, a specialist says... [I]t surveyed a sample of colleagues at

National [Gals'] Hospital about which muscles should be cut in an episiotomy. This is an incision in the perineum, the tissue between the vagina and the anus, and it is stitched up after birth. At National [Gals' last year], it was performed on 1367 [mums]... Of the 71 health workers and students who were asked which of nine muscles should be cut... – the superficial transverse perineal muscles and the bulbocavernosus... [– only t]hree of the 41 midwives answered correctly, two of the 20 registrars and house officers, and none of the 10 medical students... [The] obstetrician gynaecologist, said yesterday that the survey, published as a letter in the latest *Medical Journal*, revealed a lack of basic knowledge. Practitioners' knowledge of what they were doing was "quite frightening"... But tutors of doctors and midwives said getting the names wrong did not prove practitioners were performing the procedure incorrectly... [T]he Auckland University of Technology midwifery programme leader, said midwives only infrequently performed episiotomies, so [it wasn't] surprised they were unfamiliar with the... names. The Nursing Council... said midwives ought to be able to name the muscles, but [i]t... had received no complaints of badly handled episiotomies... Long-term complications of episiotomy and spontaneous tearing of the tissue can include faecal and urinary incontinence, and pain during sexual intercourse... Overseas research had found that up to 5[% of mums] who delivered babies vaginally later suffered altered bowel function, through damage to nerves or the structure of the anal sphincter. A significant number... returned to hospital for corrective surgery to a badly repaired episiotomy or vaginal laceration, although no statistics were collected...

[Pregnant people] who suffer from morning sickness should be treated with drugs to allow them to lead as normal a life as possible... Treatment would also prevent either the [mums] or their unborn babies' health being endangered as a result of regular vomiting or dehydration, the International Federation of Gynaecologists and Obstetricians' conference in Washington was told. More than 300 doctors voted for the widespread introduction of a drug called Diclectin, which prevents nausea and vomiting in pregnancy and allows m[um]s to lead a "normal daily life" from the beginning of their pregnancy. Diclectin has become "the drug of choice" for all pregnant... Canad[ians] and has been used to treat... 33 million [mums] in the past 25 years. It has undergone full clinical trials and has no effect on the unborn child. The drug is about to be approved for use in the U[S]. At the conference, British doctors called for Diclectin to be approved as soon as possible for use in Britain. Two-thirds of British [mums] suffer... morning sickness during pregnancy, usually beginning in the fourth week and lasting until three months... 8.6 million work days are lost each year from [employees] taking time off for morning sickness. There has been much reluctance to give any medication to pregnant m[um]s since the widespread use of Thalidomide in the 1960s... But in about 3[%] of cases morning sickness is so extreme that [mums] are unable to feed their babies because they cannot eat properly, and suffer weight loss and severe dehydration. They are put in hospital to ensure they get enough nutrients and to prevent dehydration. Research has shown... about 50... British [mums]... a year... have morning sickness so badly they seriously consider ending their pregnancy... [□ For many] decades doctors and scientists have tried to come up with a cause for cot death. But the... documentary *Sudden Death* on TV1 at 11.30pm, Thursday, reveals how a US doctor... devised a convincing new theory about Sudden Infant Death... after studying [a]... family, in which five babies supposedly died in their sleep in the 60s and 70s. Twenty years later it was discovered that, in fact, [the] mum... had murdered her children... "My colleagues have a saying: 'One SID is SID. Two SIDs, big question mark. Three, you're dealing with murder'," says... [the forensic pathologist who] examined the evidence... It's a fascinating and tragic tale which exposes the weaknesses that can exist in the medical world.

...A sleep wrap invented to prevent cot accidents is helping babies with flat or misshapen heads. Over the past two years [an] Auckland craniofacial surgeon... has referred more than 40 babies with positional plagiocephaly (where babies' heads are deformed because of constant pressure on one spot) to [the] Safe T Sleep inventor... as an alternative to using an orthotic helmet or performing surgery. The Safe T Sleep fits around a cot or bed mattress and wraps around the baby to give stable back or side sleeping positions. Using the surgeon's instructions, the wrap and specific bedding and wrapping techniques, all the babies have showed improved head shape. Cases of positional plagiocephaly have jumped around 300 percent over the past few years, especially since the "back is best" message has been promoted to reduce the risk of cot death... As well as helping prevent head deformities, the Safe T Sleep has been proven to help prevent suffocation (more than a quarter of cot death babies are found with their faces and heads covered), dangerous creeping and cot accidents... "One in five children under two are hospitalised after falls from cots, beds and bunks every year. Stopping it became my mission in life," says the inventor. When the inventor couldn't find a product to keep her son safe while sleeping, [it] invented her own prototype... The wrap, which has been clinically trialled and is used in hospitals, can be used from birth to age three, and can be used on bassinets, cots, beds and bunks. More than 60,000 Safe T Sleep wraps have been sold in N[Z] and overseas, with no deaths or injuries reported... ■ WE HAVE FOUR BASSINETTE-SIZE SAFE T SLEEPS TO GIVE AWAY, VALUED AT \$24.95 EACH.

...Babies who sleep on their backs are more likely to skip crawling and go directly from sitting to toddling, overseas experts have found... Lying on their backs means babies are not so readily lifting their heads, turning over or getting mobile on hands and knees at six to eight months, when baby books say they should. But there is nothing wrong with tots thinking they can walk before they crawl, say paediatricians. Although parents worry about physical milestones, failure to crawl doesn't indicate a baby is less intelligent or able. In fact, it could be the contrary. An estimated 10 to 15[%] of tots are "bottom shufflers" – part of the normal variant of child development. They don't crawl, and they walk later than the average 10 to 12 months, but they are generally more advanced with talking. Although no studies have been done in N[Z], the... professor of paediatric and child health at the Dunedin School of Medicine, says overseas research shows that babies who regularly sleep on their backs crawl two weeks later, on average, than those who sleep on their tummies. Conversely, babies who sleep on their backs develop language skills two weeks earlier than their face-down counterparts... "Sleeping on your tummy is a bit of a Western thing." ...For years, doctors advised parents to put infants to bed on their tummies, fearing they could choke sleeping on their backs. But then came the theory that sleeping face-down brought a risk of sudden infant death syndrome... Plunket advice these days is to sleep infants on their backs and there is no evidence to support the choking worry, says the society's general manager of clinical services... "But when baby is awake, we recommend tummy time. These things are all about getting a balance."

...A toddler was rushed to hospital in Wisconsin yesterday after being found outside his rural home in frigid cold hours after his father had started a videotape for the boy and his brother to watch... The father h[ad h]ad the children with him in the barn until [it] finished milking about 2:30 am, then took them into the house, where [it] fell asleep as the children watched... [the video. At some time the toddler], aged 2, wandered outside... The outside air temperature was minus 18deg... His father found him in the snow near the house about 6.45 am... [His son] was unconscious and not breathing. The boy was taken to the local hospital and from there to St Mary's Hospital and the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. The[hospital]... said no information on his condition would be released until [later] today... It was the second such incident in the U[S] in five days... In Edmonton, Alberta, this week, a 13-month-old girl survived several hours outdoors in bitter cold. Yesterday the little girl, nicknamed Miracle by staff at Stollery Children's Health Centre, Edmonton, moved from the intensive paediatric unit to a normal hospital room... [The] director of the hospital's paediatric unit, said the toddler was interacting with her mother and being playful... The baby girl, wearing only a nappy, wandered from the home where [it] had been sleeping with her mother and 2-year-old sister... [T]wo outstanding concerns remained: whether any of her frostbitten toes and fingers would require amputation, and whether [the baby] would suffer any serious brain complications.

...Children fathered by older [guys] may run a much higher risk of developing schizophrenia – evidence that [guys, like gals], have a "biological clock" when it comes to having children. The new research findings blow a gaping hole in the commonly held belief that while older [gals] run a higher risk of having babies with birth defects, [guys] face no risk when fathering children at an advanced age. A child's risk of developing the devastating mental illness rises dramatically and steadily as the age of the father increases, say... Columbia University College of Physicians and

Surgeons, New York University School of Medicine and Israel's Ministry of Health. They reviewed the records of 87,907 people born in Jerusalem from 1964 and 1976. They found that [guys] between the ages of 45 and 49 were twice as likely as those under 25 to have children who developed schizophrenia. [Guys] 50 or older ran three times the risk of the fathers under 25. The study said 26.6[%] of the schizophrenia cases could be attributed to the father's age, while the age of the mother appeared to play no role... [T]he findings augmented a growing body of evidence of an increased likelihood of health problems for children of older [dads]... The findings may help explain long-standing mysteries about schizophrenia. The fact that it is remarkably persistent in human populations over time puzzles experts because those with the disease are less likely to mate and reproduce, presumably because of the social effects of the illness. In addition, its incidence is strikingly consistent across... populations. The study suggests that in each generation fresh genetic mutations replenish the genes for schizophrenia and keep the incidence stable... As [guys] age, their sperm cells continue to reproduce through division. Each division introduces a slight risk of error in the genetic material of the new sperm...

A way to fertilise human eggs without using sperm threatens to make [guys] redundant. The technique – which uses cells from any part of the body, rather than sperm – has already been used to create embryos in mice. The research by Melbourne's Monash University aims to help [husbands] who have no sperm, or even sperm-making cells, to father babies that are their own genetic offspring. But it could also... in theory at least, enable... lesbian couples to have baby girls that are genetically their own... with one [partner] contributing an egg and the second a cell to fertilise it. There are theoretical problems to overcome in combining the genes of two [gals], because aspects of development are controlled by a paternal gene when a maternal copy is turned off, and vice versa, as a result of a process called imprinting. "But we have no proof yet that it is or is not a problem," [the head of the Monash team] said... Once offspring from animals have been born, the team will test their genetics, behaviour and ability to reproduce and give birth to healthy offspring for a few generations... [The head of the team] admitted that any technique which allowed babies to be created without [guys] could open an ethical can of worms... The Monash team's work is just one of a number of startling breakthroughs in reproductive science recently, all of which raised ethical questions. ■ Last year, a similar proposal to enable homosexual[s]... to have their own children made headlines. It was proposed that a "[guy] egg" would be created by removing the DNA from an egg donated from a [gal] and replacing it with that from sperm... ■ Gals seeking fertility treatment could one day be offered donor eggs grown from the tissue of an aborted foetus. In an experiment that raises the prospect of babies with "unborn mothers", ovarian tissue was removed from seven dead fetuses and kept alive for four weeks... ■ Scientists at the Wisconsin and Illinois Universities in the U[S] are working on a device to automate the process of [IVF]. They believe the technology may eventually be able to test embryos for genetic flaws[(note that 'tests of the fluid in a mother's sac are performed via a needle; the hole normally repairs but in hundreds of cases each year the fluid leaks out; while some doctors repair the hole, others recommend termination')]. They have designed a device that mimics conditions inside a [gal's] reproductive tract... Colorado State University in Fort Collins, said the work could represent the first step to IVF becoming the norm... ■ A technique has been... pioneered... in New York... that allows [doctors] to transfer genes from an infertile [human] egg into another egg, fertilise it with sperm and place the resulting embryo into the womb. The doctors used a technique similar to the one employed by Scottish scientists to clone Dolly the sheep, but the process itself is not cloning since the child would have genes from a mother and father. The new approach, which could allow infertile [gals] to have genetically related babies, is the first to mix significant amounts of DNA from two different [human] eggs into a single egg, the *Washington Post* reported. The resulting child would have two genetic mothers, although one... would contribute much more and could be identified as the biological mother... [T]he New York University doctor leading the experiments... said his colleagues had tried the method on two infertile [patients]. The first failed to get pregnant, while the second, who underwent the procedure last week, is not scheduled for a pregnancy test until next week. The university's scientific and ethics advisory board has given the team permission to perform the technique on five [patients]... "There are a lot of concerns about this. A lot of issues... But it's not like we did this thoughtlessly." ...the goal was to provide options for infertile [gals]. While some... infertility was caused by... inability to produce eggs, other [infertile gals] had eggs that might be defective, not because of the DNA but because of the fluid around the DNA... [The] team removed the nucleus of the DNA from the infertile... egg... and injected it into a healthy donor egg, which already had its nucleus removed. The... [team] said the procedure was similar enough to cloning to be illegal in California and possibly other states with broad anti-cloning legislation.

...A Chicago-area scientist [whose name means 'the unit of reproduction of a plant',] is poised to start experiments on cloning human beings to create babies for infertile couples, National Public Radio reported yesterday. It said... a physicist who has done fertility research in the past, was proposing to set up a clinic that would clone babies for would-be parents. "It is my objective to set up a human clone clinic in Greater Chicago, make it a profitable fertility clinic and when it is profitable to duplicate it in 10 or 20 other locations around the country and maybe five or six international,"... [The physicist] proposes using... the... same technique... [employed] by scientists at Scotland's Roslin Institute and the associated PPL Therapeutics... Th[is]... involves taking an unfertilised egg... removing the nucleus, which contains most of the genetic information, and replacing it with the nucleus of an adult cell... The radio said [the physicist] was working with a medical doctor who declined to be named, but who... would not go ahead with experiments unless the American Society for Reproductive Medicine cleared it. The group opposes human cloning. [The US]President... proposed banning such research for five years, saying it was morally unacceptable and could undermine society's respect for human life... While the legislation is pending... the ban on using federal funds to clone humans would stay in effect and [the President] called on the private sector to voluntarily refrain from it... [The President] said the legislation, which would have to be passed by Congress, would not prohibit the cloning of human DNA or of animals, arguing this did not pose the same moral questions and could lead to great medical and agricultural advances... Polls taken shortly after the announcement of the cloning of Dolly the sheep showed 90[% of USers] opposed human cloning.

...[a US p]hysicist... foresees as many as 200,000 human clones a year once his process is perfected, at a price for each clone far lower than the \$1 million the first one will cost... [I]t would take 40 seconds to implant the embryo, with no anaesthetic[the physicist said yesterday. Patients]... would be in and out of the office in 20 minutes... "When I was seven years old I was brilliant and crazy. I don't mind being called crazy," the 69-year-old... told his first formal news conference since... startl[ing] the world by saying... [his un]named... medical team... was ready to clone a human.

...IF [A]CHICAGO entrepreneur... has his way... [(and receives) the... \$3.57 million [it needs] to make his dream come true[)]... the waiting room at his Human Clone Clinic will be filled with childless couples seeking to have babies – and not just any babies, but clones of one of the parents. Still others, [it] hopes, will be parents of children with leukemia and other immune diseases. These people would pay big sums for [hi]s technicians to "reprogram" ordinary skin cells, transforming them into healthy white blood cells to replace cancerous ones... For most scientists, ethicists, physicians and theologians, th[e entrepreneur is "... a person on the fringe seizing an issue for his own purposes." What is his purpose? "...I wouldn't mind having 5000 patients lined up – or having more money, and I'd like to be the first to clone a human." Anything else? "I've always wanted to win the Nobel Prize." For patients desperate to have a child – or save a child battling cancer – there is something Messianic about a [guy] who has what sounds like an answer to their most fervent prayers... [However,] researchers familiar with the complexities of cloning say [it] faces daunting challenges: Overcoming technological barriers; assuring the cloned infants are born without... defects; doing this at a price people can afford; and silencing critics who call human cloning unethical. But [it] won't be swayed. "The first person to produce a healthy human clone will be the winner of the Super Bowl. The second person will be the loser. New things of any kind frighten everybody... We went through this with [IVF], embryo transfer, artificial insemination – we went through this with the automobile." ..."[The entrepreneur is] quite eccentric,"... said... [the]

chief of obstetrics and gynaecology at the University of Chicago's Weiss Memorial Hospital, [who worked with the entrepreneur and physicist] in the 1970s on embryo transfer.

...A Chicago physicist who provoked controversy... by announcing plans to clone humans says the first person [it] will try to copy is himself... [H]is wife... has agreed to carry an embryo that would be created by combining the nucleus of one of his cells with a donor egg... "I have decided to clone myself first to defuse the criticism that I'm taking advantage of desperate [infertile gals] with a procedure that's not proven," the 69-year-old said at a meeting of the Association for Politics and the Life Sciences, a group of academic researchers. [The physicist, who has 3] Harvard degrees, including a PhD, but no medical degree, no money and no institutional backing... described... his wife... as "post-menopausal." ...[the physicist claims to have] received hundreds of calls, some from parents of dying children who want to clone them[, and says his team]... has been invited to set up research laboratories in two other countries and that [it] will move his Human Clone Clinic to Mexico if the US Congress forbids his research.

...A[US] scientist... wants to clone humans – himself first. Is [it] a latter-day Frankenstein, a prophet of the new age or just a sad old [geezer]? ...IT IS from a small brick bungalow in the quiet Chicago suburb of Riverside that... the world's foremost advocate of cloning, spends his days dreaming up a biological vision of a future world. "You should have figured out by now that I am a genius," [the mad-scientist] barks, scarcely minutes into our meeting... By mid-morning... [hi]s irrepressible mind has raced past the scientific quandaries of human cloning; wrestled with the possibility of achieving eternal life by way of resetting the genetic body clock to end the ageing of cells; and has now alighted on what [it] holds to be the exemplary candidate for trans-species (animal-to-human) organ donation. "I think the ideal choice is the bonobo,"... The what? "The bonobo. You're illustrating your ignorance, your rampant lack of knowledge of the world around you... It's sometimes called a pygmy chimpanzee... It's an entirely separate species, they don't cross breed and it's the closest relative of [humanity]." ...As offbeat interviewees go... the Demon Seed... surpassed expectations. On t[v] a few days ago, [the physicist] not only looked like an Old Testament prophet, [it] had the delivery to back it up. "God made [us] in his own image," [it] intoned. "And God intended [us] to become one with God. Cloning... is merely the first serious step in becoming one with God." ...[it] comes from a long line of medics and scientists. His father was a prominent Chicago surgeon who helped to introduce blood-banking. His two brothers... are surgeons, while... [it] is a physicist by training... [Last week, it] announced that to defuse criticism... his first cloning candidate would be himself... But surely, to believe oneself worthy of replication is just a bit grandiose? "If you're not worth replicating then you shouldn't breathe, you shouldn't start in the first place," [the scientist] harrumphs. "And if it's worth you breeding with your wife then it's worth your replicating yourself... and her." ...his wife of 28 years, is keen on cloning too... "My wife has been interested in having a clone because [my wife thinks it] made serious errors in her life and if [it] had a clone [it] could convince her clone to avoid them." His children are less convinced. "[Dad]'s nuts," says his son... T[hat dad] has been married three times and had [7 kids] should not come as any surprise – particularly not in the case of someone so obsessed with the need to propagate the human species. His second wife... recalls him as a maddening husband who wanted to be cryogenically preserved. "I would have pulled the plug," [the ex-wife] told the *Washington Post*. "I'd have not paid the electricity bill and quietly let the lights go off." What is intriguing is [hi]s attitude towards the results of his handiwork. For it seems his [7 kids]... have not lived up to his expectations. [Dad] believes that, had his own gifts been recognised from the start, had [it] not wasted 10 years of his life in school as a misunderstood, unpopular student, things might have been very different – [it] might have been a Nobel Prize-winner. And, like all parents with a sense of personal failure, [it] has transferred his ambitions on to his [kids]. "I didn't have any kids who were smart enough to get into Harvard... I had [7] kids and not one who could get in... It was a terrible disappointment." There is a genuine note of despair in... [hi]s voice as... all at once the bluster collapses entirely. "Yes, I've had more failings than successes... [W]hen you have such a high opinion of yourself it's very easy for your reach to exceed your grasp but I genuinely believe that there is nothing I can't do... I want a clone to educate him, to... encourage him to go into biology and, at the age of 16, launch a major research project into any one of the subjects we have discussed." If the plan played out, not only would his clone win the intellectual respect [its dad] so much desires, but "what really ticks me off... is that [my clone] would be immortal too".

...Scientists who cloned six cows say the technology appears to offer a true fountain of youth... [It] seems to have turned back the ageing clock in the cells of the six heifers, which show signs of being younger than their actual ages... [I]t might be possible to use cloning to create organs that are nearly immortal for use in transplants, or create tissue to treat diseases of ageing such as Alzheimer's, a[n]d a[r]thritis... "We could take one young cell from a patient and make hundreds... of young cells and put them back into the patient and give back a young immune system or young knee cartilages..." said... [the] leader of the Advanced Cell Technology team that... included researchers from the Lankenau Institute in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, and Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia... The scientists will have to wait to find out if the cows will outlive their natural lifespan of about 24 years. The findings... are surprising because the most famous cloned animal, Dolly the sheep, appears... older than her... age.

...The discovery that Dolly the cloned sheep has arthritis has raised fears that the cloning process may cause premature ageing, calling into question the ethics of producing animals destined to suffer unnecessarily. [The p]rofessor... who led the scientists at the Roslin Institute near Edinburgh in cloning Dolly in 1996, said it was unusual for a sheep... [her age] to develop arthritis in the rear legs and it could be the result of her being cloned from a 6-year-old ewe. "We know already that there's an unusual incidence of death of cloned animals around the time of birth... What we need to go on studying is whether diseases like arthritis... occur in a normal way or whether the incidence is changed. That Dolly has arthritis at this comparatively young age suggests that there may be problems..." Dolly became lame in her left hind leg a few weeks ago... and x-rays confirmed [Dolly] has arthritis in the hip and knee of that leg. [Dolly] is being treated with anti-inflammatory drugs... The history of cloning research is littered with examples of the "inefficiency" of the process, which translates into failed embryos, oversized fetuses, stillbirths and congenital abnormalities. Dolly herself was the result of 277 cloning attempts... Dolly... was the first mammal to be cloned using an adult cell. Her makers... found that when [Dolly] was born, her cells appeared to be the same age as the cells of the 6-year-old ewe from which [Dolly] was cloned. They calculated this by looking at the telomeres, which are little caps on the ends of the chromosomes that carry the genetic blueprint inside cells. Each time a cell divides, the telomeres become a little more worn. When they are frayed beyond repair, the cell dies. This stage is known as senescence. Dolly had old telomeres. But the six heifers[produced by Advanced Cell Technology were] cloned from cells taken from a 45-day-old foetus[. They] have exceptionally young telomeres... [They were also created] using a slightly different cloning process to the one used to make Dolly.

...The British scientist who created Dolly, the world's first cloned sheep, hopes to file an application to clone human embryos within six months.

...Japanese researchers who cloned a dozen mice reported yesterday that nearly all of the animals died early. Their report casts more doubts on the safety of cloning. It also suggested that the technique used to clone an animal can have an impact on its ability to live a normal lifespan... Labs that have cloned animals have reported that the cattle, sheep, and goats that make it to adulthood are normal in every way that can be measured. One big glitch has been in Dolly, the sheep that... has been put to death... at... half the life expectancy of her breed... after premature aging and... lung disease... marred her short existence... [T]he National Institute of Infectious Diseases in Tokyo reported... on 12... mice they cloned that looked normal at birth, although certain liver enzymes, used to monitor liver activity, were abnormal... [The researchers later found that their] cloned mice had abnormal livers, lungs and perhaps some immune system anomalies. Two of the clones are still alive and might live normal lives... It might be that the genetic makeup of the clone's "parent" is [the] key to healthy survival, the researchers said. They also noted that clones may be born "old"[– in other words, may be born with] shortened telomeres... "The possible negative long-term effects of cloning, as well as the high incidence of spontaneous abortion and abnormal birth of cloned animals, give cause for concern about attempts to clone humans for reproductive purposes..."

British scientists are to be given the go-ahead to clone human embryos... [P]ermission for the use of so-called Frankenstein technology... may ultimately mean that cells from embryos can be cloned and used to grow new tissue for medical use... By taking cells from the embryos, scientists

will not only be able to grow new brain tissue to replace damaged material, but also new skin for burns victims and ultimately new organs, such as hearts, kidneys and livers. Cloning will also allow creation of “tissue banks” to deal with any illness from lung disease to diabetes. Eventually, whole limbs could be grown in laboratories. It will mean an end to waiting for donor organs, a situation that often ends in the death of patients... Initially, however, scientists will be allowed to clone embryos only for research purposes... The decision will allow British scientists to take a world lead in cloning research. Although the news will be greeted with delight by the scientific community, it will plunge the Government into a new battle with pro-family groups and religious organisations who argue that using embryos is tantamount to sacrificing one human being’s welfare for another... [A spokesperson] for the Catholic Church, said: “We are fundamentally opposed to any such development. A human embryo is a human life. It is creating a human life for the purposes of cloning.” ...Cloning embryos was banned two years ago because Government ministers feared a public backlash against scientists who were accused of playing God with people’s lives. The technique involves taking cells from adults, creating an embryo and injecting it into a... donated... human egg... Last year the Government asked the Chief Medical Officer... to investigate the issue. His report, sent to ministers [last month], and yet to be published, is thought to back cloning with certain ethical safeguards. Scientists will not, for example, be allowed to use cells taken from aborted human fetuses. The cloning of whole people will also remain banned.

...FIRST there was Dolly the sheep. Now fertility doctors say the first cloned human baby is just two years away. [An] Italian doctor... said that [it] has already been approached by 600... people who would like the treatment. [His] technique involves taking cells from the infertile father and injecting them into the egg of the natural mother rather than using donor sperm. [The Italian] said the result is a child that has the same physical characteristics as the father... But Britain’s Human Fertilisation chair[perso]n... warned the procedure was illegal and should remain so.

...“The genie is out of the bottle.” With those words, an American doctor announced that [it] and an Italian colleague plan to clone babies. Childless couples are already being selected for... the much feared, much talked about leap forward for science and medicine... The weekend declaration prompted renewed calls for legislation outlawing cloning and controversy about the ethical dilemmas in N[Z] and around the world... The technique used to clone a child would resemble that used to clone animals such as Dolly. The team said it planned to produce the babies in a Mediterranean country. Italian news agency ANSA quoted [the Italian colleague] as saying it would “very probably” be Israel. The German news magazine *Der Spiegel* said the venue would be Caesarea, an Israeli coastal resort. As reproductive techniques become increasingly sophisticated, world Governments are having to wrestle with the moral and ethical questions raised by cell research. While fertility specialists and scientists in N[Z] believe it is only a matter of time before a cloned human being is produced, they do not see any urgency to bring in laws on cloning here.

...A controversial Italian doctor... whose clinic in Rome enabled a 62-year-old... to have a baby in 1994, said up to 200 couples from several countries, including eight from Britain, were being selected for the cloning project and would be treated free... The [doctor]... acknowledged that international hostility to cloning meant [his team] could be forced to work in a remote country, or even on a ship in international waters.

...In the face of fierce opposition from fellow scientists, [an] Italian... yesterday reaffirmed his determination to push ahead with plans for the first human clone within weeks. Even if his experiments fail, scientists believe someone will create a human clone... within 10 years. But many renowned scientists say human cloning is unethical and [his] experiments are likely to lead to dead or deformed babies because the techniques are not advanced enough. The breaching of the frontier of human reproduction is forcing humanity to confront the most basic of ethical dilemmas as scientific advances collide head-on with beliefs about the sanctity of human life... [T]he... embryologist sometimes known as “Dr Miracle”, and his [US] partner... appeared before a high-powered U[S] scientific panel yesterday to explain their plans, sparking a storm of international protest. The normally staid National Academy of Sciences... which is gathering information on the science and ethics of human cloning, descended into chaos as [the Italian] faced a barrage of questions from his peers... The... 55-year-old was even mobbed by journalists outside the toilet, and heated debate raged in the corridors after the meeting. At the same meeting, another organisation, Clonaid, claimed it had already started the process of cloning a human. Clonaid was founded by the Raelian Movement, which believes extra-terrestrial beings created humans by genetic engineering.

...U[S] federal investigators have uncovered a secret laboratory where members of a religious sect were experimenting with human cloning... [T]he Raelian sect... believes scientists from another planet created all life on Earth, according to a *US News and World Reports* article. The Raelian chief scientist... along with [an] Italian gynaecologist... and US doctor... lead an international consortium that has announced plans to clone a human being. Clonaid... seeks to reproduce by cloning a 10-month-old baby that died during heart surgery, at the request of the baby’s US parents. Human cloning is forbidden in all but four of the country’s 50 states although no federal law exists barring private financing of such research.

...Family and admirers of U[S] baseball great Ted Williams expressed revulsion yesterday at reports that his body is being frozen in the hopes of one day selling his DNA or cloning him... William’s son had flown the body to a cryogenic warehouse in Arizona... [d]ays after the former Boston Red Sox player died at the age of 83... [H]is eldest daughter... told a Boston TV station... [that] her half-brother... had shipped her father’s corpse to the Alcor Life Extension Foundation in Scottsdale, Arizona, hoping the family could cash in on his genes. “[My half-brother] said we can sell Dad’s DNA, and people will buy that because they’d love to have little Ted Williamses,” [the daughter] said in the... interview from her home in Florida... [The daughter alleged her father had] wanted to be cremated – a claim backed up by at least one of his former team-mates. “His desire was to be cremated and buried next to his dog, Slugger... Maybe [his boy] knows more than others, but I wouldn’t think that Ted would go for that. Ted didn’t even want to have a movie made of his life.” ...The possibility that Alcor has Williams’ body has sparked a buzz among cryonics advocates, who often find themselves lumped with alien abductees and Big Foot researchers in the grey zone between fact and fantasy. “The more members we get the better off we are going to be when it comes to being treated seriously,” [one advocate] said... last year. “Sometimes all I think it would take is one famous person who would let us use his or her name and the floodgates would open.” Alcor is the largest of a handful of places that charge US\$30,000... to US\$150,000 to preserve a body – or just the head – for “reanimation” when it becomes possible. The company has 49 whole bodies or heads in its “patient care centre”... 580 people from the U[S] and other countries have made reservations so that when they die, their bodies can be rushed to the centre and stored in liquid nitrogen... The controversy dominated news coverage in Boston wh[ile, elsewhere, scientists were reacting]... with scepticism and shock to a report that a [patient] taking part in a controversial human cloning programme for infertile couples was eight weeks’ pregnant. [The] Italian... who... announced his intention to create the world’s first human clone, [and] [has been quoted as saying one [patient] in his programme was pregnant... has since refused to confirm or deny this... There was no information as to where the [patient] was, or from whom the foetus was cloned, if it was. However, the *Sunday Telegraph* in London reported that the cloned baby is the son of a rich Arab. [The Italian] had said that the embryo was the clone of a VIP and... [his team] had been experimenting to produce human clones in an Islamic country. The... [Italian] had told... *Il Tempo* newspaper in Rome, that the pregnancy was real and... [his team] had a “limitless supply of money”... Fertility and cloning experts expressed doubts over the pregnancy report... [The] professor of biology and a leading cloning scientist based at the Whitehead Institute at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, said [it] was extremely angry at the news but very sceptical[– adding that] the scientific community would have no way of verifying whether the baby, if it existed, was a clone or a normal child. “It is totally outrageous and irresponsible to attempt cloning of humans when we know there is a very high probability of severe abnormalities, even if the baby survives to birth, which is extremely doubtful. In fact, death before birth would be the best outcome.” ...[the Italian]’s plans have been condemned by the scientists who produced the world’s first successfully cloned mammal, Dolly... [The] assistant director of Scotland’s Roslin Institute, has said any attempt to clone a child would be wholly irresponsible. [The Italian]’s move prompted the U[N] to set up a panel... aimed at drafting an international treaty to ban the cloning of human[s]...

Six couples trying to become the parents of the first clones will be flown to an unnamed developing country by a leading fertility expert before the end of the year, says a Scottish weekly. One of the six couples[– an]American... who is in her mid-40s, and [her husband, who is] in his 50s[–]...told the *Sunday Herald* the experiment would be led by [the]American fertility expert [who is the partner of the controversial Italian fertility expert].

...The world's first cloned baby will be born in Belgrade [next month, says the] controversial Italian gynaecologist... "I think we have made a revolution in the field of genetics and Serbia will be one of three countries which will go down in history," [the Italian] said in an interview in... *Nin*.

...Clonaid... claims an American... has given birth to... the world's first cloned human... and... four more will be born in coming weeks in Europe, Asia and North America. Baby Eve was born by caesarean section in Miami, weighing 3.1kg and was the exact genetic duplicate of her 31-year-old mother... The claim has drawn widespread scepticism, and moral disgust from governments and religious leaders. [A Vatican spokesperson]n... said "the announcement is the expression of a brutal mentality, devoid of any humane or ethical considerations". [The]President... of France said cloning a human... should be made a worldwide crime. Human cloning was "contrary to human dignity and criminal". [The]US President... called for Congress to pass legislation banning cloning. One... leading specialist on the ethics of human cloning... believed the world would react with "revulsion and disgust" if Clonaid's claims were true. "There is a global race by maverick scientists to produce clones, motivated by fame, money and warped and twisted beliefs,"... One of Clonaid's biggest immediate problems is to overcome the overwhelming distrust of the announcement made by... a French chemist and a bishop in the Raelian sect, which believes that humans were cloned from extraterrestrials who came to Earth 25,000 years ago. [The chemist] said an independent journalist... would monitor verification tests on the mother and baby. But experts are dubious that any proof will be given... US genetic research firm Advanced Cell Technologies said Clonaid had no research experience in cloning.

...The company that claims to have created the world's first cloned human says the baby, nicknamed "Eve", is coming home to the U[S] today... with her family... two days after [it] announced the child's birth. [The chemist, who] is chief executive of Clonaid... offered no scientific proof, provided no photographs and did not produce the child or the mother... The US F[DA] said its regulations forbade human cloning without permission, and it had launched an investigation into whether Clonaid illegally performed any work on US soil... Although human cloning is not illegal in the US, any kind of human trials would have had to[have] obtained FDA approval as of 1998... [The] founder of the Raelian religion... says the goal is to create eternal life through cloning – and make a lot of money doing it. In an hour long interview, [the founder] said Clonaid, the company [it created] in 1997, had a waiting list of about 2000 clients willing to pay US\$200,000... each to have themselves or a loved one cloned. [The founder wouldn't]t profit directly because [it] had distanced himself from Clonaid, but... would not turn away donations from the company... Speaking at the home of a follower in a gated community near Miami, the Raelian leader... [–] dressed in white, space-age clothing from head to toe... [– said it] would advise... the [chem]ist and close associate who orchestrated the alleged cloning... not to identify the child until [it] was an adult to protect her privacy... For someone so passionate about the truths of science, [the founder] offered little more than verbal accounts of his alleged encounters with extraterrestrials – the very basis of his religion. [The founder said it] was on his way to work as a journalist at a car racing magazine in a town outside Paris on December 13, 1979, when something prodded him to drive to a volcanic crater nearby. There, [it] saw flashing lights and a 7m flying saucer in the sky. When it landed, a 1.2m tall alien emerged, renamed him Rael and told him [Rael] was the son of Yahweh and the brother of Jesus. The alien visitor said life on Earth was created in extraterrestrial laboratories by the Elohim, an advanced people from space. [The visitor] said humans would one day be gods themselves, creating life, travelling throughout the universe and spreading to other planets... [Rael said it] communicated with the extraterrestrials through telepathy once a year, and they told him to focus his missionary efforts... i[n] China...

A UFO cult says the world's second cloned baby has been born to a Dutch lesbian couple, but cloning experts swiftly dismissed the claim as a baseless stunt. The Raelian group... also claimed an earlier cloned birth to an American... but has not provided scientific evidence of either.

...Human clones and extraterrestrials are more than a sci-fi movie for some N[Z]ers – they've become reality. The Raelian... movement, which claims 60,000 members in 84 countries, [are]... gaining followers in N[Z] after claiming that two human babies have been cloned... [A local] representative for the sect, said [it] had been inundated with media, critics and supporters. The Hamilton fitness trainer said the Raelians were about to launch a campaign informing Maori about religion before European settlers arrived in N[Z]. The Raelians believe Maori legends refer to gods (known as Elohim) coming from the sky – giving weight to their belief that extraterrestrials used genetic engineering to create life on Earth...

An executive with Clonaid... has been subpoenaed to appear in a Florida court, and the company ordered to disclose the whereabouts of... a human clone... and her mother. The witness subpoena and summons were approved at the weekend by a court at the request of a[n a]ttorney... who has filed a lawsuit asking the state to appoint a guardian for the child. The papers were delivered to... a Clonaid vice-president, before [it] spoke at the Money World... conference in Fort Lauderdale... [However, doubts remain over whether a US court has any jurisdiction to intervene – assuming the child exists!] Since its inception, Clonaid, originally registered in the Bahamas, has stirred up hope, outrage and scandal. The company – and the movement behind it – entered the political mainstream... when [the movement's founder and the company's chief executive] testified before a US congressional committee about the future of cloning. The... [chief executive], who was a visiting assistant of chemistry at Hamilton College, in Clinton, New York, shocked congress members with her account of Clonaid's effort to clone a baby for a West Virginian couple who had lost their 10-month-old child to a heart defect... "We will do all that is humanly possible to bring the belated twin of this boy back to life and healthy," [the French chemist] testified. "If it becomes impossible to do it in this country, Clonaid will go elsewhere." Clonaid's venture was partly financed by... the Charleston, West Virginia, parents who put up US\$500,000 to create a cloning lab in a former high school in the nearby town of Nitro. The Justice Department and the F[DA] considered stopping Clonaid in court, according to published reports. But when federal investigators inspected the lab, they concluded the company was years away from attempting to clone a human. [The Raelian sect founder] said the Nitro lab was merely a "decoy" and that the real research was taking place elsewhere... "Stopping science is a crime against humanity," [the founder] testified.

...THOSE damned scientists are at it again. A new book by a couple of Canadian evolutionists is set to upset families around the world. The researchers from McMaster University claim, generally speaking, step-parents aren't as good as genetic parents when it comes to raising kids. They don't love their inherited children as deeply as they do their own, say... [the researchers] in *The Truth About Cinderella*. And there's little the substitute mums and dads can do about it, because this is the law of the jungle. Take lions. These largest members of the feline family lead relatively social lives. They hang out in prides, they hunt together and defend together. But the lion blokes have some pretty anti-social habits. Like attacking another pride, killing off all its [rival]s and taking over the [lionesses] and children. And these over-sized cats don't make great step-dads. Shortly after the coup they systematically hunt out all the cubs and kill them[– thus readying the lionesses for mating]. And why wouldn't they, argue [the Canadians]? In the survival-of-the-fittest world of nature the only purpose to life is to make sure as many of your genes as possible get into the next generation. Why would any sensible species waste time and energy feeding youngsters carrying someone else's chromosomes? Better to get rid of the competition's kids and replace them with their own. And it's not only lions that have this slash and burn approach to marriage. Birds break their predecessor's eggs and monkeys do a disappearing trick on their step-kids very quickly after meeting them. This sort of infanticide is hardly surprising, say [the Canadians]; Mother Nature actually rewards it by spreading the perpetrator's genes more widely. Really it's more of a mystery why every species doesn't wipe out its opposition's young. Now comes the disturbing bit. We humans evolved in the same Darwinian world as these ruthless beasts. If Nature endowed them with a tardy attitude toward step-parenting, why didn't [it] do the same with us? The answer is simple say the politically incorrect scientists: [Mother Nature] did. In stone-age times, when there was no government to

intervene, maltreatment of the steps was probably a relatively common affair. As evidence, take a look at some of the people still leading this lifestyle today, they suggest. It is not unknown for Yanomama... (Venezuelan indigenous people) [guys to abduct gals] from a neighbouring community. If any of them are feeding infants at the time it's customary to have the offending offspring killed. In a study of Paraguay's Ache, 43% of the community's step-children failed to reach the age of 15. We naked apes have lived this hunter-gatherer lifestyle for 99% of the time we've been around. So a more enlightened approach to step-parenting can only have developed very recently. But how much more enlightened are we really these days? Many studies show that child abuse is more common when step-parents are involved. Physical, sexual and emotional maltreatment are many times higher than for genetic parents. And the statistics for the most severe abuse of all – killing a child – are the most staggering of all. Children are around 100 times more likely to be murdered by a step-parent than a genetic child by its parents. One hundred times! And it's a myth that surrogate dads are more likely than mothers to be the perpetrators. It is true statistically that step-fathers are responsible for most of the mistreatment. This is because there are so many more of them living with children. Take away this bias and the figures reveal [step-fathers and step-mothers] are equal abusers.

...When hospital staff deliberately handed two newborn baby girls to the wrong parents... little did they know of the heartbreak which would result – not just for the babies and their families, but for the next generation, too. The story... has made headlines since the deception was revealed more than 10 years ago. Now [one of the girls] is in the news again, facing charges of abusing her own child. The trauma [this mum] suffered as a result of being swapped as a baby is being blamed for her current behaviour. [The mum is] accused of neglecting her 22-month-old son [by] leaving him hungry and dirty in his cot... and of once slapping him so hard, [it] left red welts on his back. [The boy] has been taken away from her and placed in foster care. Her natural mother... says... “This is a girl who was so emotionally abused, by what I believe was a criminal act[, that it]... has become an abuser.” The sorry story began at 5am on 29 November, 1978, when two baby girls were born in the Hardee Memorial Hospital near Sebring, Florida. When one of them... was found to have an incurably deformed heart, staff were horrified and not for the usual humane reasons. [The baby's parents] were very wealthy and members of the local “ruling class”... [Indeed, money from the wife's family... had helped build the hospital. Panic-stricken staff decided to switch the sickly infant with a healthy girl just born to... a cleaning lady, and... a railway clerk. [The cleaner and clerk] called the child given to them Arlena... But after Arlena died, aged nine, genetic testing showed [it] could not be [the poor couple's] child. When the swap was revealed, the [poor couple] received \$6 million from the hospital. Now out of business, the hospital also had to compensate [the couple's real daughter] with \$4 million. What happened next was to make the child's world even more confused. A judge ruled [the child] could decide her own future and, at 14, [it] was allowed to formally “divorce” herself from [her natural parents] and continue living with [Arlena's natural parents]. But just a year later, [the girl] fled to the [home of her natural parents, saying it] had been bullied into making loving statements about wanting to live with... [Arlena's natural family, which] strenuously denies... ever bull[ying] her. When the girl]... came to live with her natural parents, it wasn't to a poor home. Part of the settlement from the hospital had been spent on a seven-bedroom house with a swimming pool. But it was perhaps inevitable that neither [the girl] nor her new family could satisfy the other's hopes for each other. The US courts had told [the girl that it] was in charge of her [own life and, consequently, the girl] intended to do exactly as [it] wished. At night, [it] would sneak out of the house and indulge in alcohol, marijuana and, says [her natural mother], “sex, sex, sex”. Just as worrying was [her self-violence. “Our daughter would] bang her head against the refrigerator, claw her face and pull her hair out when things went wrong...” It broke [the natural mother's] heart to see her insecure 15-year-old colouring in *Snow White* colouring books, the sort meant for seven-year-olds. [The girl] was torn by rival loyalties to the [two families and when the girl learned that her natural parents] were planning to divorce... decided [it] could solve the problem by getting out of their lives. [The girl] ran away to the farm where... [Arlena's natural father, who allegedly had] both physically hit [her and made her] feel stupid and lazy[, was living with]... his third wife... [The natural mother recalls her daughter once saying it] would never have children because they might suffer as [their mother] had done.

...Two 10-year-old girls at the centre of a Timaru baby-swap case have the right to choose their own destiny and who they live with, says... [the Children's Commissioner. The commissioner... was speaking yesterday at the inaugural N[Z] College of Practice Nurses conference in Dunedin. The conference theme was “Our Heritage. Today's Children, Tomorrow's Adults.” In a speech on children's rights, [the commissioner] referred to a report published yesterday saying that the two girls had been living together for nearly 18 months. The *Sunday Star-Times* article said a Wellington solo mother had reluctantly given up the girl [it] had raised for eight years after the girl decided to live with her biological parents in Timaru... After the conference, [the commissioner] said the... case... was... “very, very sad”... “There's an acknowledgment worldwide that your biological relationships mean something to you,” [the commissioner added]... The girls were mistakenly swapped soon after their births in Timaru and taken home by the wrong parents... The swap was not discovered until 1992... The Timaru couple were now applying for custody...

BARCODES containing newborn babies' fingerprints are being used to prevent mix-ups over identification... [at] La Zarzuela Hospital in Madrid, Spain... As soon as babies are born their fingerprints, and those of their mothers, are stored in electronic barcodes... w[orn] on their wrists.

...Until [a 29-year-old] came into her life, [the 31-year-old] had resigned herself to never giving her husband... the child they so desperately wanted. After eight miscarriages, a shattered [wife]... had tearfully cleaned out the nursery they had kept waiting. Now, thanks to [the 29-year-old's] decision to act as a surrogate... the Ngatea couple's lives have been transformed by their baby... whom they will formally adopt... After recent bad publicity about surrogacy, the two families say they are proof it can work... [The surrogate], who has a six-year-old son... from a previous relationship, is even planning to repeat the experience when [it] finds the right couple. “What greater gift could you give somebody?” asks [the surrogate], whose mother... was unable to have more [kids] after two ectopic pregnancies. [The 31-year-old], who has only half a uterus, had investigated adoption, but few [kids] were available. “I thought, ‘[my guy] has ...his 12-year-old daughter from a previous relationship... we'll be a family together’...” Then [the wife] spied a magazine article about another surrogate... who passed them on to [the 29-year-old]. When they met... the couple bonded quickly with [the 29-year-old], but friends and family were sceptical. “We heard so many horror stories about mothers changing their minds... But we knew [our prospective surrogate] – they didn't.” H[is wife, who was] herself adopted, is adamant [her daughter] will grow up knowing her family history... There is no law against surrogacy in N[Z], or any laws that specifically govern it. However, the... legal rights of the people involved are determined by the Adoption Act, the Children Amendment Act, and the Guardianship Act. But because those acts were not designed with surrogacy in mind, the legal position of the parents is complex. The surrogate... is always the legal mother of the child, unless or until the child is adopted. Although a surrogacy arrangement is a contract, it is unlikely to be enforceable in N[Z] and couples have little recourse if the surrogate mum backs out.

...A British [citizen] hired by a California couple as a surrogate mother is suing, saying they backed out because [it] was carrying twins and refused to abort one. In a lawsuit filed in San Diego Family Court, [the Brit is suing the Californians]... for breach of contract and fraud in what some legal experts say is a novel action... [The Brit], a legal secretary and single mother of a 7-year-old boy, said [it] would be unable to care for the twins and asked that the court order the San Francisco Area Bay couple to pay unspecified damages for medical expenses and emotional suffering. [The Brit], aged 26, struck the surrogacy deal with the couple... [and] subsequently gave her verbal consent to undergo an abortion procedure called “selective reduction” before the 12th week of pregnancy if there was more than one foetus, court papers said. The following month, [the Brit] was impregnated with [the husband's] sperm and a donated egg. The would-be parents were to pay her about \$US19,000... for carrying the baby to

term. During the eighth week of her pregnancy, [the Brit] told the couple [it] was carrying twins and... alleged that they waited until the 13th week before instructing her to abort one of the foetuses. [The Brit] refused and later moved to San Diego to give birth and pressure the couple to take responsibility for the babies... [T]he couple contacted [the Brit] through a lawyer, who said they were not interested in taking the children and that [the Brit] should assign her surrogacy agreement to other parents. [The Brit]'s lawyer said the couple made it clear that they wanted one child or none at all. It is unusual and difficult for a biological parent to legally reject a child, said... a surrogacy law expert in San Diego. "If you conceive a child through a medical procedure, and you set that process in motion, you are the parent – whether you want to be or not."

...in England, a surrogate mum aborted the embryo implanted in her womb because [it] doubted the commitment of the baby's would-be parents. Another British [gal] was arrested on deception charges after refusing to give up her surrogate child, or the \$10,000 [it] was paid to have the baby. [A gay couple's adoption of a US-produced surrogate baby was unrecognised by customs officials when the threesome returned to Britain ('currently about 30 gay couples a year are having children through surrogate mothers'). And in AUS], the Family Court ordered a couple to return their baby to her birth mother after a surrogacy arrangement between life-long friends went sour. Surrogacy... may be a last resort for couples desperate for children, but it can have heart-breaking consequences. As surrogacies are approved in N[Z], debate about the legal, medical and ethical issues surrounding one of the country's newest baby-making techniques is hotting up. On Friday, experts gather in Auckland for a two-day symposium to thrash out the issues. There are no laws in N[Z] governing surrogacy. It has gone on informally for years, with [surrogates] carrying the biological babies of friends and relatives – having been naturally or artificially... inseminated with the semen of the commissioning father. Couples overseas have advertised here for surrogate mums and Kiwi parents have gone off-shore to rent a womb. Since the National Ethics Committee on Assisted Human Reproduction approved altruistic surrogacy using [IVF] as a treatment in July 1997, 11 couples have sought permission. Just three have been successful. All the [commissioning mothers] are medically unable to have a child; all the arrangements non-commercial. It is understood in two cases, the [commissioning mothers] were born without a uterus... [Now a]pplications for surrogacy are set to increase, with one or two couples a month turning up to fertility clinics seeking medically-assisted surrogacies. The surrogate mother, who carried the embryo of the commissioning parents, is always chosen by them and could be a friend, relative or stranger but [the surrogate] and her husband should have completed their own family. The advantage of medically-assisted surrogacies, according to Auckland Fertility Associates['] director... is that the commissioning parents get a baby which is genetically theirs. But there is always the possibility... the birth mother will want to keep the child. The baby is legally hers and the commissioning parents must adopt the child, even if it is genetically theirs. [The director] believes the birth mother's right to keep the child should be protected. "It's a thorny issue and some may not consider that the right answer. But the birth mother has carried the child for nine months and developed a relationship with it. The surrogacies going wrong overseas always hit the headlines, but data from the U[S] shows as few as 1 or 2% of birth mothers want to keep the child. It's a very complex procedure for all parties and people have gone into it very aware of all the dangers. There are certainly problems, but they shouldn't be put in the too-hard basket." Several hundred babies are born annually to medically-assisted surrogates in the UK and [US]. New problems arise every year... [The] director of the bioethics centre at... Dunedin School of Medicine[says]: "It's getting to the stage in the U[S] where the commissioning parents want to have some control over the lifestyle of the mother carrying the child. They want to tell her what [a surrogate] should eat and that [a surrogate] shouldn't smoke or drink. Is it fair? Well, if I was the commissioning mother I'd think that was fair... That would be my child in her womb and I don't want her doing things I wouldn't. I want the goods I've ordered and I don't want them to be soiled or spoiled. On the other hand, we don't license parenthood for people who can conceive without medical help. The state doesn't stop them conceiving if they don't meet a licensing procedure and fertility experts are against demands being made on infertile couples that are not made o[n] ordinary parents." ...medically-assisted surrogacy raised many other untested moral and social considerations. "The moral judgements of doctors has not been tested. It's against the ethos of medicine to make moral judgements, so can a doctor refuse to take part in the commissioning of a child if [the doctor] thinks that child would be brought into a morally-unsound environment? For example, if a doctor took the view that lesbianism was an evil thing and a lesbian... wanted surrogacy, could the doctor decline her?" [The director] said the surrogacy and genetics debates were similar. "How far do we go in creating children? If we can genetically engineer children in such a way that we're able to rectify genetic flaws... nobody would object. But what would they think if [someone] wanted to enhance a child, say a boy so [it] 'd turn out to be six foot six, 16 stone and extremely athletic in order [that it will] be able to [play for] the... All Blacks...?" [The director said NZ] needed to act quickly to ensure the interests of the yet-to-be-born children were protected in medically-assisted surrogacies. "But even that's difficult, because we're talking about the interests of people who don't yet exist, so how can we know what's best for them? And there could be so many people involved – the genetic, gestating and social mothers, and the genetic and social father – who all have their own interests and rights..." ...The Chief Family Court Judge... will address this week's symposium with the message new legislation is needed to protect the children... "As far as the court is concerned, we need some clear laws to work within. My main concern is the children. They should grow up knowing who they are." A[n A]uckland legal firm... has begun... developing "legal arrangements" between the parties involved... [The] head of the company's medical law team, said it was only a matter of time before the procedure became more common, especially as the number of children available for adoption dwindled. The legal agreement[may] contain... a basic outline of what is going to happen: [Gal] A will carry the embryo created by [Gal B and Guy] A. It will also include what the commissioning parents will pay for and the logistics of the pregnancy... [(although NZ] law indicates that surrogacy should not be advertised and cannot be for profit or reward... payment of the surrogate's expenses and general maintenance is permitted)].... Some could also include the commissioning parents' input into the pregnancy and what the child will be told about its origins... The... director for the Auckland University Centre for Child and Family Policy Research... remembers an 11-year-old girl... who spoke at an A[US]n fertility and genetics conference... in May. [The girl] was conceived from her mother's egg and a donor's sperm and gestated by her aunt. "People made predictions in newspapers and on t[v] about what would happen to me as I grew up... One thing was that I would be taunted at school because of my origins. It has not happened. I am teased only because I do not use a lunch box. One person said I would resent what my family did to get me into reality: fat chance. They said I would feel that I was given away. Pigs might fly. I am happy to have been born. I know I have only one mum and one dad[, who]... have looked after me since the age of 10 seconds. It is far too corny to say we make a real family, but I know exactly where I come from."

...An A[US]n... is suing his former partner to recover A\$18,247... spent on a little girl... after DNA tests showed the girl was... not his daughter... "I want it all back – every cent..." said the [AUS]n, who can't be identified for legal reasons. The claims include McDonald's takeaways for more than five years, four visits to an amusement park, three Barbie dolls, a play tent, a day of skating, and child support payments.

...A[n AUS]n has been left legally marooned after a couple... [the] sperm donor... helped have a baby refused him access to the child despite a written contract. Now two High Court judges say legislation is needed urgently to cover the rights of fathers and children in cases involving artificial insemination. The case occurred when a Family Court refused a Sydney [resident] access to the Auckland-based child [it] willingly fathered for a lesbian couple, via artificial means but not in a clinic. The trio had drawn up a detailed written agreement, including giving the father access to the baby boy for at least a fortnight a year. But the friendship broke down. The father, a gay... in a stable relationship, applied to the courts for contact with the child but the mother and her partner were reluctant. The Family Court ruled against the father's wish to have access partly because the Guardianship Act 1968 states that the biological father has no rights when a child is conceived artificially... Two High Court judges dismissed parts of the... appeal under the Guardianship Act. But, calling it a "complex and difficult" case, [they]... called for the current review of the act to look at the situation urgently. The judges say the law should appreciate that adults who use artificial reproduction could reach their own agreements with sperm donors over responsibilities for the child. "It is unreasonable that the father and children in the

situation should be left legally marooned.” ...agreements could not be enforced like commercial contracts but they should be given weight, especially when they were drawn up by “informed and intelligent adults (after what appears to have been careful thought)”. In this case, the lesbian couple had approached the [AUSn], who was their friend, twice before [it] agreed to become the donor. The... judges also said that... the Status of Children Amendment Act 1987 envisaged that the [perso]n... who conceived the baby would have a ma[sculin]e partner or husband who would be the father... After dismissing the... appeal and sending other aspects of the case back to the Family Court, the justices said the court was aware anecdotally that artificial insemination procedures were used by lesbians and homosexuals “to bring about the conception of children without heterosexual contact”... ■ About 150 children are born each year in N[Z] as a result of donor insemination... Before the mid-1980s few records, if any, were kept about donors, making it virtually impossible for children to make contact with their fathers... About six years ago fertility clinics in N[Z] voluntarily agreed to accept sperm donations only from [guys] willing to be identified when their child turns 18.

...*The Government wants to register sperm donors*... Few experiences could match providing sperm for test-tube reproduction. In most cases, there is only the obvious method to provide it. While the end process is the birth of a happy, healthy baby to an even happier couple, it is the beginning of this particular path to life which dwells on the minds of many: masturbation. How can they do it? Why do they do it? You can see the questions play across faces at the merest mention of the matter. Few [guys] can provide the answer because few [guys] are providers of sperm. Auckland’s Fertility Associates, for example, has just 180 on its books after 15 years running a donor insemination service. And those who provide “technical assistance,” as one donor puts it, remain in the main as curtain off as the little room with the mags. [A]Canterbury University associate professor... says although the sperm donors are on the path from obscurity to acknowledgment, it is important to recognise that the shadowy nature of such [guys] is related to the obscurity that has tended to surround donor insemination in general. This obscurity can be tracked back to medical paternalism. In his chapter on semen providers in a book [the associate professor] co-edited, *Donor Insemination: International Social Science Perspectives*, [it]... says that anxiety surrounding the practice led to a desire to protect donors. “Given that many early semen providers were medical students, there was a sense in which the profession was also protecting itself and its members.” Step back a couple of generations to see what [the associate professor] means. In the 50s, a N[Z] gynaecologist inseminated a [patient] with his own sperm after forgetting to obtain a sample from a friend. When [the gynaecologist] reported this to his wife[, his wife insisted that her husband] have a vasectomy, which [it] did. But the matter didn’t end there. Two years later the [patient] and her husband were asking for further donor insemination to have a sibling for their child, and specifically requested the same donor. The doctor explained that the “donor” was no longer available. [The doctor] reported being much relieved that this was the case because [it]’d experienced “unusual feelings” on seeing the couple and “his” child seated in the consulting room. It’s a yarn which echoes the first known instance of donor insemination using human sperm, which was reported by one Addison Hard... Hard was a student of a Dr William Pancoast who, while teaching a class at Jefferson Medical College in 1884, discussed a couple unable to have a child but of which the [wife] was perfectly capable of bearing children. The class suggested that a “hired [husband]” solve the problem, and Pancoast then took a semen sample from the “best-looking member of the class.” In 1909, Hard headed to New York to “shake the hand of the young [perso]n” who had been born of the donor insemination. It doesn’t take a Harvard PhD to conclude that Hard must have been that youthful donor 25 years before, though this remains speculation... Fertility clinics no longer use medical students for genetic material. Indeed, [nowadays NZ] sperm donors... tend to be older and married with children. Yet they remain unseen and unheard, and everyone involved in donor insemination has a theory on just why. But a century on, it mainly still involves one of the last great taboos. “Certainly it’s not the kind of thing a lot of [guys] talk about at dinner parties. It’s a complicated and difficult issue, but masturbation is a central part of it,” [the associate professor] says.

...*Secrecy over sperm donors exercise in maternal egoism* SO FINALLY the sperm barrier has been breached with the opening of a British-based service providing fresh sperm to anyone, but specifically to lesbian couples seeking a child. Using the services website, mannotincluded.com, couples will be able to order sperm online, stipulating physical characteristics of the child they wish to conceive. The site, which received 8000 registrations (3000 lesbian couples and 5000 donor[s]) in its first 48 hours of operation, asks its clients to imagine a world where no one has to ask a friend for a sperm sample, a place where discretion is paramount. It declares that you can now choose your child from the comfort of your own home (as if baby picking were as easy as eBay), and the company promises a world where the creation of a child can be completed in absolute anonymity, with no chance of the sperm being tagged to a real live [donor. The site’s owner said it] expected criticism from people who did not approve of the idea of helping lesbians to become parents. “If a child is going to be loved and cared for, to me it doesn’t matter if it is two [gals or two guys] bringing it up,”... And [the owner]’s right. A mother’s sexual orientation is irrelevant. But [the owner] is missing the point. By focusing the argument in this direction [the owner] is simply generating great PR by inducing moral outrage, while ignoring the real issue raised by his secret sperm service: anonymous children. In many ways this latest attraction on the reproductive road-map echoes the closed adoptions of the 1950s and 1960s, when the ideology of environmental supremacy (environment always overcomes heredity) reigned supreme. Back then they believed that only a complete break with the past would enable adoptive parents fully to shape an adoptee’s life. But, instead, these beliefs were found to be deeply flawed. Adoptees who wanted to know their origins were characterised as pathologically dysfunctional misfits. Nowadays we understand the power of genetic inheritance, with the right to know one’s origins considered a fundamental building block of human development. But the anonymous sperm donor is even more dangerous to the future emotional health of children than any closed adoption. The basis of adoption, closed or otherwise, was to benefit children deprived of their natural parents. The secrecy was designed to protect the child from the slur of illegitimacy that existed in society at that time, and adopting parents understood they were essentially receiving a surprise package. But this latest reproductive development is anything but altruistic. It has a far more insidious motivation. [The owner] says that knowing half your child’s genetic heritage could lead to complications for both sides in the future. So the secrecy is not to protect the child but to relieve the parent of the inconvenience of another adult, particularly a [guy]... Secrecy in any assisted reproductive technique, be it top-of-the-line technology or turkey baster home kits, is a smokescreen for selfishness – an opportunity for a parent to create a child in her own image. A certified blank slate. A creature unencumbered by heritage or past life baggage. A child without even a pesky mythical father to imagine. It is an unparalleled form of egoism, one that sees a child as a possession and parenting as a right. Many countries, including N[Z], have legislation pending to make registration of sperm donors mandatory. This will mean no guarantee of secrecy for sperm donors or room for a mother to imagine that the product of her conception is immaculate. But that is within the established fertility community. With the permeable borders of the worldwide web, the relative ease of servicing both supply and demand of sperm and the increasing commodification of everything, including our children, there is no way to legislate what people do with a turkey baster in the privacy of their own homes. So perhaps for once in history it is up to [guys] themselves to exert some control over reproduction; to limit the supply of that essential raw ingredient; to value their sperm as sacred and not to sell it into secrecy, condemning their anonymous offspring to grow up with the indelible knowledge that half a genetic heritage does not a whole person make.

...*Children born through fertility programmes are growing up – and going in search of their identity*... [One NZer] was eight when [the boy] asked to meet the [guy] who donated the sperm from which [it] was conceived. The request could have rocked his parents – an Auckland couple who had battled the Baby Gods for five long years before their precious son was born. But they were ready for it, and so was the sperm donor. In reality, [the donor] had little choice. Because, for the past five years, sperm donors have had to agree to be identified should their biological children want to meet them. N[Z] is the only country in the world to have such criteria for donors without requirement by law... Just this year, behind closed doors in suburban Auckland, [the] sperm donor and his son were introduced – by his mum and dad. The hour-long meeting went well; [the former-8-year-old] thought his father was “a really nice [guy]”. The boy]’s parents didn’t feel threatened. There might’ve been the odd tear, but they knew

they would still be tucking their son into bed that night. The meeting was necessary to satisfy [the boy]’s curiosity, to fit the last piece of his genetic jigsaw puzzle into place. After all, his parents had been open with him since [their son] was a toddler. [The boy] grew up knowing someone else had been vital in his creation, it was only natural [the boy would] want to know exactly whom. According to Fertility Associates[’] director... the issue is the latest moral dilemma facing Kiwi parents who have had children by donor insemination. (DI). It’s a problem which has needed addressing only now... For older children conceived by DI when donors were anonymous, the news is bleaker. Those children, now in their teens and... 20s, are frustrated and angry. They have no rights to information about their biological father and many have struggled to find out even whether records exist. In many cases, fertility clinics used a mix of sperm so the father’s identity wasn’t known. And after insemination, some couples were told to go home and have sex, and pretend the child was theirs... [The director] suspects many parents did not tell their children how they were conceived, meaning they had no reason to trace their biological background... “A lot of people said choose someone in their late 40s so [the donor’]ll be dead by the time the kids want to meet him...,” said... [a] Wellington couple... The pair chose their donor from five profiles[, and the prospective father] eventually picked a [donor] in his mid 20s, because there were physical similarities between them... THE first recorded instance of human insemination dates back to English doctor John Hunter in 1790, who inseminated a patient with her husband’s sperm. The first use of a donor is credited to... the U[S] 100 years later. In N[Z], doctors first sought funding for insemination in the early 1970s but a mixture of money and public unease saw it refused. University medical schools stepped in, and the first Kiwi clinic opened in 1972... but [DI] did not formally begin until 1983. Since then, an estimated 1000 DI children have been born here. But as technology advances, [DI] is becoming the least likely option for the estimated 2400 N[Z]ers who seek fertility treatment each year... Only 15% of couples choose DI... The technique is best used for a couple with low or no sperm count. Donor sperm is injected into a... uterus, with a 15-18% chance of pregnancy... It’s not known how many N[Z] children born with the help of [DI] know their origins, but in A[US] studies show 95% of DI children (about 9500) don’t know how they were conceived... A study here in the early 1990s showed 90% of DI parents intended telling their children how they were conceived... [By the way, m]others are considered by adolescents to be the most dependable source of sexual information, research shows. Studies conducted by the A[US]n Research Centre at Melbourne’s La Trobe University found, however, that young people want more information from their parents than they are getting. After their mother, adolescents would turn to school before approaching their father, for information on sex...

Washing your hair after sex... clos[ing your] eyes during sex... doing it standing up or on a boat or drinking Coca-Cola – these are just a few of the ways some teenagers believe you can avoid getting pregnant. A British survey of... 1000... GPs has found teenagers have a poor understanding of contraception and conception. But while N[Z] teenagers might not be as ignorant as their British counterparts when it comes to sex and pregnancy, there are still plenty of myths doing the rounds... The survey by *Doctor* magazine... found teenagers’ ignorance sprang from embarrassment about asking for advice and fear that their confidentiality would not be respected... The level of ignorance has surprised health workers and young people here, but they acknowledge myths and misconceptions are alive and well. Such as the one that you can’t get pregnant the first time you have sex. Or that... plastic film could be used instead of condoms... [A] Waiheke Island High School sixth former[, who is]... a member of the Peer Sexuality Support Group, said... it was vital teenagers had access to information from the time they were 12... The support group, run at 19 schools by the Auckland Sexual Health Service, trains teenagers to provide accurate advice to others... Sometimes families perpetuated myths[, and sometimes doctors.

...a schoolgirl], of Upper Hutt... battled almost constant pelvic infections from the age of 11. “I was in agony from the time I started my periods,” says [the schoolgirl], who’s just turned 18. “It was horrible, made me feel sick, faint and cold. I lost weight, could hardly walk and was always bent over to one side. I kept telling the doctors I wasn’t sexually active, and tests for chlamydia, which is the usual cause of pelvic inflammatory disease, came back clear... I’ve since found out you can get... PID... without being sexually active, although it’s quite rare. I felt nobody would listen to me, and couldn’t cope with the almost constant pain. I became a horrible person and my schoolwork suffered.” At the age of 14, [it] was seen by a doctor who recognised severe [PID]. The schoolgirl] was sent for immediate exploratory surgery. “The doctor found lots of scarring and everything stuck together... I lost an ovary and my fallopian tubes were very damaged. There was infection everywhere and things looked bad for my fertility. That was hard to take. I was still a kid myself, and it didn’t really sink in at first. Every time I had an episode of [PID], the damage got worse. I wish I had been diagnosed earlier.” Despite the effects of the disease, [the then]... 15-year-old... became accidentally pregnant to her first serious boyfriend... Because of the damage caused by the disease, her pregnancy was a miracle – and probably her only chance to ever have a baby... When [her] mum... and dad... found out... their reaction was to arrange an abortion. “But after thinking hard... we knew we had to let [our daughter] have her chance,” says [her mum]. “It was a huge decision. The hardest time was going out with [our daughter when it] was heavily pregnant. Some of the looks we got were terrible. But we knew this might be [her] only opportunity to have a child.” ...Since [her son’s birth, the schoolgirl] has got her life back together. The pregnancy helped her ...PID... and [it] now has episodes only once a month... [The young mother] has returned to school and wants to become a beauty therapist... But [the schoolgirl] is clear about one thing – [it wishes it] could have waited until her mid-20s to start a family... “It’s not easy having a baby so young. I can’t go out with my friends or spend money on things I want, like other girls my age.” ...[Incidentally, t]he number of teenage pregnancies in the Nordic countries... like Norway, where there are strong youth sex education programmes and sexual and reproductive health services... is amongst the lowest in the world... A report reviewing 73 controlled studies of more than 250 pregnancy prevention programs across the US has found those which emphasise frank discussion of sexuality, and education about contraception and disease prevention, have[the] greatest impact on delaying sexual experimentation and preventing pregnancy in teens. British studies have also found that good sex education programmes in schools to not encourage teenagers to have sex earlier...

Most of us hold the belief that... sexual development occurs at the time of... puberty. But... sexual maturation starts from birth and, in fact, the initial hormonal processes of puberty are now believed to begin around the ages of six to eight! Parents can help to shape a healthier sexuality in their children if they understand and accept the normal sexual landmarks from birth on... Try to display a positive attitude to sexuality, but too much parental nudity, overt sexual displays between parents or making love in front of a child, all go against the message that sexual activity is a private experience... School age children have learnt that sexual feelings and activities are private. Primary school children channel sexual energy into school, sports, friendship and hobbies. Romance is not uncommon and children can ‘fall in love’ with a teacher, a movie or rock star, or a classmate. Children will be curious about the opposite sex, and secret looking and showing may take place... If your child engages in sexual exploration with another, calmly ask them both to get dressed and guide them towards another activity. Be available to discuss sexual issues with your child... ■ [The NZ]... Government is planning to make sex education compulsory in schools as part of the health and physical education curriculum.

...Schools will be forced to teach sex education, but parents will retain the right to withdraw their children from it, under measures to be introduced into Parliament this month. [The]Education Minister... said changes to the health and physical education curriculum “would remove the ability of schools to decide not to teach the sexuality aspects of the curriculum... The development of the legislation was based on the need to address some of the youth sexual health issues while retaining the paramount right of parents to determine the sexual education aspects of the curriculum that their child participates in,”... Allowing schools to opt in and out of the curriculum... could see a minority of parents with strong views or a principal determine the outcome for the whole school... The new curriculum covers primary and secondary schools.

...A DRAMA group teaching students about safe sex has been banned at some schools because parents don’t want their children putting the lessons into practice. The Theatre and Health Education Trust employs actors to tour primary and secondary schools performing theatre-based

health education skits. The group is funded by the Health Funding Authority. The actor's use young people's language, music and humour... The... group had performed N[Z]-wide over the last 10 years... But... some... Bay of Plenty... parents had taken offence at the theatre group's references to certain types of sexual activities. Several schools... ha[ve] banned the show. "It's a shame because the group is really effective in getting the safe-sex message across to students," [a BOP]... health worker... said. [The health worker] disagreed with parents' concerns that the theatre group was putting ideas into student's heads. "Every school has a sex-education programme and the theatre group just compliments this,"...

AN American teacher was suspended after it was discovered nine students engaged in sex acts in class while [the teacher] did paperwork.

...*THE FACTS OF LIFE*... During the average human lifetime we will... [f]all in love twice... [and h]ave sex 2580 times with five different people.

...[concerning teaching the] facts of life Dr Spock... [said]: "Sex education starts early, whether you plan it or not." The truth is a better answer than the stork "because [the child isn't] going to be fooled for long, and then you have him knowing that you lied to him". [Another commentator said in] 1997: Answer their questions, but don't get carried away. Telling all in response to the first query is akin to telling the child interested in a cow "the whole story of dairy farming, the nutritional components of milk, and how it's marketed"... *Toilet training*... Spock, 1946: "It seems sensible... to leave (the baby) in peace until [the baby] is old enough to know a little of what it's all about. I would wait until [the baby] can at least sit up steadily alone, which will be around seven to nine months." [A children's] advice writer... 1989: "If you start later, [the child] will learn faster and reach the same point at the same time." ...ParentTime Web site, 1998: "Tell your child the store is out of diapers" and let [it] play bare-bottom in the yard.

...*Going potty over toilet training*... T[ODAY]'S... fast-track... toddlers... sing "I love you" at one, know their ABCs by two, manipulate a [computer] mouse by three. And they do it all... in nappies. Much to the horror of many grandmothers – but with the approval of many child-development experts – the age of potty-training seems to be edging upward. [US] studies suggest that while 90% of kids were out of nappies by two-and-a-half in the '60s, not even a quarter are trained that early now... USA TODAY... [produced figures in 1997 which showed that 0.4% of] kids are trained... [by 18 months; 3.9% by 24 mths; and 22.6% by] 30 mths... The largest recent study, conducted in suburban Philadelphia, found half of boys and 30% of girls weren't potty-trained by three. "When [my youngest boy is ready, it's] ready," says [a mum from] South Dakota, whose three-year-old son... still wears nappies. [The boy's mum] says friends and family have no problem with [the boy] taking his time. In fact, [this child is] following in the footsteps of two brothers who trained well after their third birthdays. But not everyone is pleased with this growing army of droppy-drawered big kids. "It's not unusual these days to find children who are ...4 years old who are not trained, and this is atrocious," says[a] family psychologist... a self-proclaimed traditionalist whose advice column runs in 200 newspapers in the US. [The psychologist] blames liberal child-rearing experts... [A] grandmother of four who runs three child-care centres is similarly aghast: "I've been in this business for 30 years, and when I started, there was absolutely no question. It never occurred to me that a three-year-old would come walking in the door who wasn't potty-trained." Less appalled are the makers of major disposable nappy brands. "No matter what your friends and family say, your baby knows best when it's to potty-train," says a magazine ad for Pampers' newest product, a "size 6" nappy that fits "babies" over 16 kilos – the size of an average three-year-old. Huggies nappies and Pull-Ups (basically underwear-shape nappies for "big kids"[]) are about to come in larger sizes, too. "We're already seeing that in... Pull-Ups, the largest size is the best seller,"... [a] researcher... says. Only three years ago... mediums were more popular, an indication, [the researcher] thinks, that go-slow potty training is gaining ground. Some observers suggest that the disposable-nappy companies are driving the trend, not responding to it. "What they're trying to do, obviously, is sell nappies," [another researcher] says. And... adds, busy parents with little time for laundry and "accidents" are easy targets. But the US's best-known child-development expert... not only approves, [the consultant]... appears in American TV ads for the larger Pampers, telling parents: "Don't rush your toddler into toilet training or let anyone else tell you it's time. It has to be [the toddler's] choice." A consultant to Pampers since 1996, [the consultant] has been promoting a child-led approach to potty training for nearly four decades. [The consultant] believes kids are less likely to develop problems such as bed-wetting and chronic constipation if parents avoid potty power struggles. And [the consultant] says kids who learn at their own pace gain a sense of accomplishment that's lost when parents take over with training-in-a-day schemes and bribes... "In any case, I think by four or five, if a child isn't ready, you wonder if they're trying to tell you something... And you address whatever that underlying problem is." It's often, [the consultant] says, a fear of growing up... [A parenting adviser agrees, although] the... parenting adviser... [suggests] it's sometimes busy parents who don't want their babies to grow up... [The adviser also] warns... that kids don't always co-operate with grown-up plans. "It's not like the kid is a tube of toothpaste you can put on the toilet and squeeze,"... [The family psychologist, a] 50-year-old grandfather of two advises parents simply to take nappies away from potty-shy preschoolers. Doing otherwise "just extends the child's dependency; it extends the child's immaturity"... The American Academy of Paediatrics... tells parents not to worry about training at a particular age. But the academy's advice book *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child*... says most children are ready to start the process around two. Then there's also the fact that many US daycare facilities either won't take children in nappies or won't allow them to progress beyond toddler classes if they aren't potty-trained.

...UNLIKE their [US counterparts, NZ] parents who want to wait a bit longer before toilet training probably won't strike a roadblock from their local daycare centre... Having small potty training groups, such as those at Paddington's Preschool in Christchurch, seems to be the extent of any different treatment... "They're not babies for very long, and I don't consider potty training to be very important compared to all the other things they have to learn..." says... [someone] who has worked in KinderCare centres for 24 years... The term toilet "training" is a misnomer anyway, says [a spokesperson for] Auckland's Kids' Kampus. "A child can't learn about using the toilet until they're neurologically ready, and then it's a case of training the parents to give them the opportunity. A child can be ready anywhere between the ages of 18 months and three years, typically at around two, but we've encountered parents who haven't got around to giving them the chance to use the toilet." [The spokesperson] thinks that toilet training may have slipped down the list of parents' priorities now that many mothers are working and their stresses lie elsewhere. Disposable nappies and automatic washing machines also mean it is no longer so important to get rid of the nappy washing chore... "To parents who are anxious about when their child will become toilet trained we say 'don't worry, no one ever goes to university in nappies'." Auckland University Creche[']s supervisor... agrees... but... [suggests a] sensible... approach... "Some parents... put off training until summer when it's much easier..." ...□ 500: Number of years that "disposable" nappies take to decompose in rubbish tips...

[During the average lifetime a human will produce] 40,000 litres of urine and spend more than six months on the toilet.

...*I am sick to death of hearing members of my own sex moaning about [guys] who don't put the toilet seat down. Why should they? You never hear [them complaining that we] don't put the seat up for them. Am I out on a limb here? Personally, I'd ban toilet seats completely – they just make for extra cleaning. Pan-sy, North Shore. Good Lord, [sister], what's with this nonsense about democracy – in the toilet or anywhere else? They should put the toilet seats down, they should open the doors and they should be encouraged – nay, expected – to do every little thing they can in the way of good manners and deference to make up for the vast debt that they... owe [us]. On the suggested removal of toilet seats altogether, P, I'm not with you there either. I like to be sure of where all my ends are at any given point and don't approve of one of them having to hover over a hole in the floor, thank you very much. Now, let's not be having any more talk about toilet seats[– except to point out that a local inventor has 'developed a mechanism which automatically lowers the seat when the flush button is used']*.

...*It could only happen in Japan*... Japanese subway commuters can now whip out a plastic-bag-like number and (discreetly) hold it in position while attending the call of nature. Chemicals use the urine to crystallise in less than 12 seconds – no mess, no smell and it's easy to throw away!

...A judge in Santiago has agreed to look into a lawsuit against the builders of an art project glass house where a [gal] undressed and showered near Chile's presidential palace... [A lawyer] alleges... the project breaks part of the Constitution that prohibits immoral conduct. As part of the Government-funded project, [a]student... aged 21, slept, used the toilet, ate, brushed her teeth, and talked on the phone inside the one-room transparent house in a bid to accustom Chileans to seeing such daily actions... [In related news, w]hen *Neighbours From Hell* first screened in Britain in 1997, it grabbed the attention of 11.7 million viewers and scared them half to death. They watched people hurl abuse and bricks... and since then they've been exposed to more violent confrontations on BBC's *Neighbours At War*. Both "nasty neighbour" documentary series have made viewers realise that people aren't necessarily safe in their own homes and a quiet suburban street can turn into a war zone. But now some people are asking if television has gone too far in exposing viewers to behaviour so despicable it drives victims from their homes... [D]o such shows explore a serious social problem – one in 14 British households report their neighbours to the police – or are they just using victims' misery to frighten viewers? "If people are suffering, their problems should be looked at, and my job is to tell that story in a way that rivets the audience," argues [the person] who directed the first *Neighbours From Hell* before defecting to the BBC to make *Neighbours At War*... The scariest cases aren't screened, says [a]*Neighbours From Hell* researcher... who sees both sides to get them to talk to the cameras. "More than half of the neighbours swear at me, one... has been leaving obscene messages on my answering machine and another had his rottweilers chase me down the street... It makes you realise that it must really be hell to have a person like that as a neighbour."

...*Houses From Hell* [(TV1, 7.30pm Friday) is a d]ocumentary looking at some of the most horrifying and bizarre house horror stories featuring very unlucky people for whom home is where the heartache is... [Speaking of housing heartaches, o]ld folk are owed [\$]thousands... after a rest home [wa]s sold... \$100,000 of [a] 94-year-old's life savings disappeared when the historic rest home where [it] was expecting to pleasantly live out her days failed... Despite paying the substantial sum to occupy a unit at the Valmai Rest Home in Cambridge, [it] had to pack up and find somewhere else to live... [Her] contract said the money for her unit would be returned if the contract was terminated for any reason, but [the 94-year-old] has received only about \$20,000... [T]he Consumer's Institute[said]... cases like this happen "far too frequently" and warns old people and families to be extremely careful before signing over money... [Valmai's owner] received \$300,000 when [it] sold the business. [It] used the money to pay debts.

If the housing industry within each district was united as one ministry it would be able to control what is built and where, and even who lives in each house. In a moneyless society each house will have to belong to the community, with the Housing Ministry being responsible for property management (including routine cleaning of building exteriors – but not interiors). Residents won't have to pay rent but they would be expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner with regards to the way they treat the property and also how they behave as neighbours. There should be fewer reasons for neighbours to clash when they don't own their homes and sections but, in the event that tensions arise between neighbours which can't be resolved, it will be the ministry's responsibility to arrange for one neighbour (probably the most recent arrival to the neighbourhood) to be shifted elsewhere – a simple process, unless there is a threat that the problem might just be transplanted. However, if residents all behaved like humans, there wouldn't be any problems – i.e., only HBs act like bad neighbours, and mistreat public property or are content to live in messy, unclean conditions. HBs also believe houses should all be different, since they consider material objects to be extensions of their personality (or confirmation that they are individuals) – probably because they consciously, or subconsciously, know that their personalities are too weak to stand out on their own (or have failed to appreciate that: they are individuals by virtue of their personal or 'separate existence' – i.e., every life is unique; and weak personalities can be strengthened mentally). To help eliminate this belief from society, the specifications of every house could in future be the same and, assuming those specifications adhere to a minimum standard of comfort, no one would need to complain.

Changing to a moneyless system could be a relatively easy process for the Housing Ministry, at least in First World countries. For example, the majority of NZers already live in houses that are at or above what should be considered *a minimum standard of comfort*. Furthermore, there is probably enough vacant housing – especially if holiday homes and self-contained motel units (plus similarly appointed hotel suites) are taken into consideration – for every homeless NZer, and most of the tenants currently living in sub-standard housing, to quickly be placed in suitable premises. Any people who can't be moved from sub-standard housing (because no more suitable housing is available), or who prefer not to be moved, can be placed on a list – headed by the most urgent cases – of housing to be renovated. New houses that are already under construction can be completed but, initially, districts in countries like NZ should only begin to build more new housing if they don't already have enough. Since that is unlikely, building materials currently sitting in the yards of wholesale and retail builders' suppliers, plus recyclers, which aren't needed for renovations or to complete unfinished houses, and new materials being produced in First World districts, can, during the immediate future, all be shipped to Last World districts – to address their dire lack of proper housing and building materials.

People ought to have the freedom to remain in their current residence for as long as they like, but anyone who has more space than it needs (e.g., a single person living in a house which has two or more bedrooms) could be given the opportunity to move into something more appropriate – thereby allowing the Housing Ministry to move a family which has less space than it needs into a larger space (in some instances tenants might agree to simply swap homes). However, people who live in mansions should be forced to leave if they don't volunteer (but, because they won't be able to employ servants to do the cleaning, few are likely to resist), so their former residence can be converted into apartments – one of which they may inhabit – or be used for other purposes. While the range of housing stock remains varied, couples who once owned their luxurious houses – excluding mansions – could be permitted to keep them in the hands of family members for as long as those houses remain habitable.

The Housing Ministry has to achieve maximum utility from its housing stock. In order to do so, it can aim to eventually have just two types of housing unit – multiple-bedroomed homes for families and single-bedroomed apartments for single people or couples. However, while trying to achieve maximum utility, each district ought to also aim to have slightly more homes and apartments than it actually needs at any given time. This would enable the Housing Ministry to move citizens whenever necessary – rather than placing citizens onto waiting lists and moving them only when they have reached the top of the list and a unit has become available. It would also present citizens with a choice of locations to move into – they can then choose the one which suits them best (e.g., which is closest to their work or other facilities that they use frequently, or to relatives and friends). There should be no need for the ministry to find house-sitters for empty accommodation and, because the ministry is responsible for finding accommodation for everyone, there is unlikely to be any problems with squatters (but the ministry can arrange for empty accommodation to be checked regularly for any signs of unauthorised tenants or vandalism; note that currently some new homes are vandalised – sometimes via strangers holding unauthorised parties in them – before the owners have moved in, and during their construction builders often arrive at work to find building materials or white ware has been stolen during the night).

People who rent properties have to allow their landlords to periodically inspect the premises. Although it shouldn't be necessary for the Housing Ministry to conduct periodic inspections of every property – under normal circumstances, the ministry should only have to enter an accommodation unit if the tenant says that it needs some maintenance – the ministry would need to inspect premises before tenant moves are confirmed; and conduct a second inspection shortly before a tenant's date of moving arrives to confirm that its accommodation unit is being left in a satisfactory condition (and the tenant has corrected any non-maintenance-related problems identified during the first inspection). Because the Housing Ministry manages both the property a tenant is leaving from and the one the tenant is going to, it will be easy for the ministry to block a tenant's move until it is satisfied with the condition of the premises to be vacated – unless the tenant is being evicted, in which case the ministry would have to be responsible for tidying up the evictee's former accommodation unit, if necessary, before it offers the unit to another tenant (such tidying up could be conducted by the same people who perform maintenance work).

Excluding evictions, citizens should only need to move if they are: school-leavers (or work trainees) who feel ready to stop living with their parents and, therefore, require an apartment; a couple currently living in separate apartments who wish to share an apartment (one of the partners would vacate its apartment in favour of the other's); someone who has to move out of a shared apartment because of a failed relationship; couples who are ready to move out of an apartment into a home because they are expecting a child; middle-aged couples who can be moved from a home to an apartment (separate apartments if requested) because all of their children have also moved into apartments and they don't intend to take in an elderly relative – one who is not so able to care for itself, but doesn't need full-time rest home care. There may also be instances where a citizen needs an apartment because it has separated from the person it had children with while still living with those children, but such instances are likely to become less frequent as citizens become more humanlike in their behaviour (and money or other property issues cease to be a contentious issue for partners) – anyone who has a failed relationship with someone it produced children with is likely to be an HB because humans not only work hard to make child-producing relationships work, they avoid producing children with potentially incompatible partners in the first place (which means that humans don't participate in arranged, forced, or underage marriages; don't participate in the mail-order bride business; and are unlikely to try to find a compatible partner with the aid of props – such as the *'love-geki'*, a handheld electronic toy purchased by at least 400,000 Japanese people). This also means that humans avoid having casual-sex relationships – but, even if they do have a casual-sex relationship (or a long-term relationship with someone that they don't love enough to produce children with), they are able to avoid unwanted or unplanned pregnancies without contraceptives because they have a thorough knowledge of the reproduction cycle, plus the imagination and self-control to use that knowledge properly ('if intercourse is to [be avoided], try forms of lovemaking that don't include penetration'), be they a guy or gal. Note that humans enjoy sex as much as HBs – if not moreso – it just isn't something that they 'spend all of their time thinking about.'

Parents ought to cover the basics of human reproduction, but school curriculums should ensure that every pupil receives enough sex education to understand what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate sexual behaviour, and to avoid an unwanted pregnancy if it behaves in a responsible manner when engaging in sexual activities. Regardless of whether or not they have received a proper sex education, most children and teenagers will refrain from sex at an early age if they are happy – or aren't continually bored – and have been convincingly taught that the most responsible manner is to wait until you and your partner are both physically and emotionally mature enough to be sexually active. Schools wouldn't have to worry about gaining parental consent for each child before it can undertake sex education classes – children are not a parent's possession, and any parent who objects to its child receiving a sex education at school obviously doesn't understand, or care about, what is best for that child! Some of the sex education curriculum should be covered by primary schools (i.e., before the children reach puberty – such classes could simply be designed to ensure that pre-pubescent pupils have been taught the basics, although some pupils may already know more theory if, for example, their parents or older siblings divulged more sexual information; and some, particularly those who have been sexually abused, will already have some practical knowledge) while the remainder can be covered by secondary schools – and it might be practical to segregate boys and girls for sex education classes. It isn't necessary for school sex education classes to teach pupils everything they can do while having sex with another person, but everyone should be able to calculate the days of a gal's cycle when unprotected intercourse is ill-advised (even if her cycle is erratic) – unless pregnancy is the desired outcome. Preferably aided by observing their own parents, every pupil should also have a perspective of what makes a relationship either successful or unsuccessful, thus helping to prevent unsuccessful ones. While it is probably expecting too much to assume everyone in future will be able to achieve what might be considered the ideal relationship – one in which two virgins fall in love and spend the rest of their lives together – or be interested in achieving it ('with dating experience and contact with many different kinds of people, young people gradually acquire a better understanding of others'; and it is hard to fully understand another person until you have lived with that person for a while, or to form a successful relationship without having any practise beforehand), more children than now might try if they accept that such a scenario will ultimately bring them the most personal happiness. However, it is neither practical nor essential for people to get married.

A number of animal species mate for life and remain loyal to each other without confirming their relationship via the exchanging of rings, vows, and the signing of contracts, etc. These practices were adopted by our species because of the need to confirm ownership of property. However, if a society doesn't recognise private ownership of accommodation, it follows that private ownership of most material objects would also be unrecognised. Therefore, the obligation to get married for legal reasons is largely removed. Furthermore, a formal exchange of vows is only necessary if one or both partners has reason to doubt the validity of the other's commitment – but, assuming that humans only commit themselves to someone they genuinely love, and are capable of showing it (while also refraining from 'chatting up' strangers or other people's partners – thereby dissolving the purpose of wearing rings on the 'third finger of their left hand'), they should be able to prove their love and commitment to a partner without ever needing to participate in a formal ceremony. That doesn't mean couples won't engage in commitment-confirming ceremonies in future, but these should only be informal – which means that society doesn't need to provide marriage-related services such as registry offices, marriage celebrants, wedding dress-makers, etc.

marriage, status, especially as recognized by law or custom, of a... [couple] living together as husband and wife, or legally united as such... In most societies marriages are negotiated by the families of the bride and groom, who often close the agreement with an exchange of property. Marriage laws in the U.S. differ somewhat in the different states. The legal and civil ceremony is all that is required... in addition to the securing of a license (civil registration). A marriage is a form of legal contract which requires process of law to set aside (...divorce). In some states a common-law marriage (by mutual consent) is recognized... The form of trial marriage called companionate marriage, which is marriage without legal obligations, was widely advocated in the 1920s, particularly by Judge Ben B. Lindsey, who argued that the initiation of people into the experience of married life before marriage would result in more stable marriages... Some form of marriage existed in prehistoric times... [but the] theory that the early type of marriage was group marriage wherein a group of [guys] married a group of [gals] is now generally rejected, since such marriage has rarely been observed in any primitive or advanced culture ([note that there is a 'Chinese region near Tibet where gals own property, handle money and choose husbands – who live with their mothers, while their children live with the children's mother' and are identified with her]).

...name, word by which a person... is identified... Personal names have had a long history. They began, simply, among primitive peoples with a birth name. Among the Romans a person usually bore three names: first name... gens name... and family name. In later Christian Europe, the first name was that which distinguished a person and was often a saint's name. As surnames came into use, in the Middle Ages, they developed along several lines: patronymic (Williamson), occupational (Miller), descriptive (Smart), and provenience (Melville). Though in most Western countries a child takes only his father's family name, in the Spanish-speaking countries [a child] often adds his mother's name, sometimes preceded by y ("and"), to his father's. Thus, Pablo Ruiz (patronymic) y Picasso (matronymic), whose exclusive use of the matronymic name is contrary to custom.

A child's surname (last name) should be the same as its mother's – if for no other reason than that mothers do most to produce children (r:p1021, ln3). The father's family name ought to be the child's middle name. That means parents only have to think up a personal (first) name for their children. Incidentally, if parents can access a computer record of the names of everyone living in their district, they could ensure that their child's full name will be unique (at least within that district). It isn't essential for every one of a district's citizens to have a unique full name, but would be practical. By the way, for most of our species' history the majority of families shared the same cave or one-bedroomed house (only the rich minority could afford to have more than one bedroom per family) – which means most children received their sex education by observing their parents in action! The ability to teach children about sex via words makes this unnecessary, but that doesn't mean it is necessary for members of a family to sleep in separate bedrooms. Indeed, only a bad parent (i.e., HB) would want its children – especially younger ones – to sleep in another room to itself.

ONCE THE LIGHTS are out and Mum and Dad have said good night, a child's bedroom can become a scary place. Ghosts hover inside a three-year-old's wardrobe. Escaped killers lurk outside an eight-year-old's window... Childhood fears are a normal part of growing up. "This does not mean that fears are of no concern," explains [a]psychologist... "Cavities are also normal, but we don't ignore them." - What Your Child Fears Most

A human wants its child to be and feel safe, but can't be sure that its child is safe at night – be it from imaginary fears, from illness or from other people – if the child sleeps in another bedroom (be it alone or with siblings). This means that a human prefers to have its children sleep near it. Therefore, a human family only needs a two-bedroomed house: one bedroom for the family to sleep in; the other for guests to sleep in, for sick family members to sleep in (if their condition is contagious or disturbs the sleep of other family members), for the parents to use if they want to have sex while the children are home (they can use any room if the children are at, for example, school or their grandparents') or privacy for any other reason, and for parents to sleep in permanently (or whenever they don't have overnight guests) when all of their children are old enough to not be scared to sleep without having a parent nearby (and are mature enough to behave in a responsible manner without direct adult supervision). Furthermore, the main bedroom only needs to have enough space to fit a double bed and two single beds. This is because bunks can be used if a couple has more than two children. However, humans are only interested in having two children – because a single-child is less likely to develop worthy social skills, while three or more children might increase their species' population (which is not just unnecessary but potentially catastrophic for this species and others)!

Apartments don't need to have separate living and sleeping quarters (i.e., the main living space can be open-plan, containing a double-bed – which doubles as a lounge suite during the day – dining table, two dining chairs and kitchen facilities), with an en suite toilet and bathroom, and perhaps another internal door to access a wardrobe/closet space. They also don't need private gardens, which means they can be constructed in soundproofed multi-storey blocks – which share communal gardens and other facilities (e.g., laundry equipment, general cleaning equipment). Ideally, these blocks would be in one-apartment-deep rows – so each apartment can have front and rear windows (and access – via a rear window – to an emergency escape ladder; access to the front door could be via a verandah which runs the length of each row, with lifts and staircases at each end) – but they shouldn't be positioned so that one block blocks sunlight from another (i.e., in future there should be restrictions on the height of apartment blocks and their proximity to other buildings). Furthermore, apartment blocks and family homes should be grouped separately – as opposed to having a mix of each in one area (i.e., all of a suburb's public buildings and amenities, industrial sites and apartment buildings should be located in its centre, with the remainder of the suburb's land being dedicated to family housing, parks and the occasional school; the centre of a city should only contain industrial sites or offices, public buildings and apartment blocks). A city's apartment blocks could: (1) all be segregated into those accommodating either young people or older people; (2) all accommodate mixed ages; (3) or there could be some age-segregated and some mixed-age blocks. The second option would be the easiest to manage – from the perspective of placing tenants – but the third option will be better from the perspective of personal choice (if someone wants to have similarly-aged neighbours, but no suitable apartments are available, it could be given a temporary apartment until a preferred apartment becomes available).

Initially, cities like Auckland wouldn't be able to justify building any new apartment blocks because there are already more office blocks than required (apart from the existing vacant office space, there would be all of the multi-storey office buildings used by industries which have been made redundant by the shift towards a moneyless society, and remaining industries should have a decreasing requirement for office space as they shake off economic practices). If industries were to co-operate in shuffling office workers so that there are only completely or near-full office blocks and completely empty office blocks – rather than having lots of partially-full office blocks – the completely empty ones could systematically be converted into apartment blocks. As new apartments are completed, groups of flatmates can be moved into them, thereby freeing up more multi-bedroomed housing for families or couples who are expecting their first child. Note that if a district's population is able to be maintained at a relatively constant level in future, with approximately equal numbers in each age group, the total number of accommodation units required by the district (and the ratio between numbers of apartments and homes) would be *relatively constant*.

In order for districts to best meet most of the needs of their own citizens, each district's productive land area has to be sufficient to support most or all of its population. Unfortunately, because some districts are currently so densely populated (especially where a city has a population over 10 million), it would be very difficult to immediately divide the world into districts having approximately equal population (r:p1865, ln59). It should, however, be possible to divide districts into approximately equal land areas, then encourage people to move from densely to less-densely populated districts, while preventing anyone from moving in the opposite direction. This process of managing the movement of citizens between districts (or between states) could continue until the population of every district is *approximately equal*. However, while trying to decrease the size of large cities, each district should also aim to eventually have most if not all of its citizens live in one urban location – so the remainder of the district's land only needs to be interrupted by a minimum number of roads, buildings and other facilities that aren't directly related to production of food, collection of raw materials or other industrial purposes. In some instances, it might be more sensible for a district to have twin cities, but there ought to be no justification for any district to have more than two urban areas. People shouldn't be forced to move from a rural home to an urban one, but new housing and other construction can just be built in the designated urban area (if a district doesn't already have a city, the most suitable location for one to be built would have to be identified – taking into consideration issues such as land fertility, proximity to flood plains, volcanoes and seismic activity). Some rural homes can be shifted to the urban area after they have been vacated, while those that can't be shifted – or utilised by other industries – ought to be dismantled and any trace of their existence removed.

From a purely utilitarian perspective, it is better to live in large communities (cities) than small or non-existent ones; to live near to other people rather than be isolated from them – because it minimises the use of land (and transport) while maximising the use of public services and infrastructure. In addition, a person is more likely to find a compatible partner if it has a large mix of people to choose from (and larger gene pools are healthier for society). This means that, in theory, people who live in cities are more likely to form successful relationships than those who live in the country or small towns.

Apart from being separated into 50 unequal states, the US is also divided into '3,043 counties, of which 167 have populations of more than 250,000 and 698 fewer than 5,000.' Some of those 698 counties might be able to cater for a much larger population than 5,000, but many are probably regions of largely uninhabitable and unproductive land whose citizens could, eventually, all be shifted elsewhere – or have died – thus creating areas of land which aren't inhabited by any humans or utilised for productive purposes. If we were to substitute the word DISTRICT for COUNTY and, hypothetically, each was to have a population of 1 million, the area currently known as the USA would need to be rearranged into about 260 districts (r:p1461, ln1-2). 260-or-so million humans may be close to the maximum carrying capacity of the land area, which means that while there could continue to be justification for moving people between USA counties, more people ought to only be allowed into the area if they are replacing people who've moved out of it. In comparison, AUS (which has a total land area of almost 7.7 million sq km to the USA's over 9.3 million sq km) is a part of the world that, despite containing expansive deserts, could support more than 16 million humans in its coastal areas, plus inland areas adjoining major rivers and lakes. Likewise, NZ's land area (which is currently divided into 12 regions – or districts) ought to be able to carry more than a current population of about 4 million (r:p1973, ln566-70). Most of NZ's districts have average populations of less than 250,000 (only the districts which incorporate the cities of Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch have populations greater than 250,000 – r:p373, ln26-7), but they may all be able to support a population nearer to that of Auckland – especially if the productive land is properly managed. If, for example, all of the productive land within a 1-hour-drive radius of central Auckland (the nearest cities to Auckland – Whangarei and Hamilton – are, respectively, about 2-3 hours away to the north and 1-2 hours away to the south) was dedicated to producing for that city – instead of also producing for other parts of NZ and, especially, for export – it is possible this area of land could supply the 1 to 1 1/2 million people who inhabit the district with all of their food and most, if not all, of their raw material requirements (the possibility would increase if all of the district's citizens were to be accommodated entirely within the current limits of Greater Auckland).

EAT

Under primitive agricultural conditions the farmer had few insect problems. These arose with the intensification of agriculture – the devotion of immense acreages to a single crop... Single-crop farming does not take advantage of the principles by which nature works; it is agriculture as an engineer might conceive it to be. Nature has introduced great variety into the landscape, but... [humanity] undoes the built-in checks and balances by which nature holds the species within bounds. One important natural check is a limit on the amount of suitable habitat for each species. Obviously then, an insect that lives on wheat can build up its population to much higher levels on a farm devoted to wheat than on one in which wheat is intermingled with other crops to which the insect is not adapted. The same thing happens in other situations. A generation or more ago, the towns of large areas of the U[S] lined their streets with the noble elm tree. Now the beauty they hopefully created is threatened with complete destruction as disease sweeps through the elms, carried by a beetle that would have only limited chance to build up large populations and to spread from tree to tree if the elms were only occasional trees in a richly diversified planting... THE THIN layer of soil that forms a patchy covering over the continents controls our own existence and that of every other animal of the land. Without soil, land plants as we know them could not grow, and without plants no animals could survive. Yet if our agriculture-based life depends on the soil, it is equally true that soil depends on life, its very origins and the maintenance of its true nature being intimately related to living plants and animals... There are few studies more fascinating, and at the same time more neglected, than those of the teeming populations that exist in the dark realms of the soil. We know too little of the threads that bind the soil organisms to each other and to their world, and to the world above. Perhaps the most essential organisms in the soil are the smallest – the invisible hosts of bacteria and of threadlike fungi. Statistics of their abundance take us at once into astronomical figures... With small green cells called algae, these make up the microscopic plant life of the soil. Bacteria, fungi, and algae are the principal agents of decay, reducing plant and animal residues to their component minerals. The vast cyclic movements of chemical elements such as carbon and nitrogen through soil and air and living tissue could not proceed without these microplants. Without the nitrogen-fixing bacteria, for example, plants would starve for want of nitrogen, though surrounded by a sea of nitrogen-containing air. Other organisms form carbon dioxide, which, as carbonic acid, aids in dissolving rock. Still other soil microbes perform various oxidations and reductions by which minerals such as iron, manganese, and sulphur are transformed and made available to plants. Also present in prodigious numbers are microscopic mites and primitive wingless insects called springtails. Despite their small size they play an important part in breaking down the residues of plants... The specialization of some of these minute creatures for their task is almost incredible... They macerate and digest... leaves, and aid in mixing the decomposed matter with the surface soil. Besides all this horde of minute but ceaselessly toiling creatures there are of course many larger forms... Some are permanent residents of the dark subsurface layers; some hibernate or spend definite parts of their life cycles in underground chambers; some freely come and go between their burrows and the upper world. In general the effect of all this habitation of the soil is to aerate it and improve both its drainage and the penetration of water throughout the layers of plant growth. Of all the larger inhabitants of the soil, probably none is more important than the earthworm... In... a book entitled *The Formation of Vegetable Mould, through the Action of Worms, with Observations on Their Habits*... Charles Darwin... gave the world its first understanding of the fundamental role of earthworms as geologic agents for the transport of soil – a picture of surface rocks gradually covered by fine soil brought up from below by the worms, in annual amounts running to many tons to the acre in most favourable areas... Darwin's calculations showed that the toil of earthworms might add a layer of soil an... inch and a half thick in a ten-year period... At the same time, quantities of organic matter contained in leaves and grass (as much as twenty pounds to the square yard in six months) are drawn down into the burrows and incorporated into the soil... ['Estimates of earthworms to the acre have been as high as 3 million. Without their continual action in aerating, pulling down leaves and throwing up worm casts, the earth, or at least uncultivated land "would soon become cold, hard-bound, and void of fermentation; and consequently sterile", as Gilbert White wrote in 1777, a time when "gardeners and farmers express(ed) their detestation of worms". Darwin pointed out, however, that the action of earthworms can sometimes be harmful on sloping ground and assist in denudation, the soil brought up being washed or blown downhill. Worms occur in the highest numbers in grassland, where there is plenty of food and no disturbance, and the population declines drastically if the ground is dug or ploughed. There is a limit to the earthworm's toleration of soil acidity and, if this is exceeded, vegetation accumulates on the surface as a mat which eventually becomes peat.' Worm burrows also] keep... the soil... well drained, and aid the penetration of plant roots. The presence of worms increases the nitrifying powers of the soil bacteria and decreases putrefaction of the soil. Organic matter is broken down as it passes through the digestive tracts of the worms and the soil is enriched by their excretory products... What happens to these incredibly numerous and vitally necessary inhabitants of the soil when poisonous chemicals are carried down into their world, either introduced directly as soil 'sterilants' or borne on the rain that has picked up a lethal contamination as it filters through the leaf canopy of forest and orchard and cropland? Is it reasonable to suppose that we can apply a broad-spectrum insecticide to kill the burrowing larval stages of a crop-destroying insect, for example, without also killing the 'good' insects whose function may be the essential one of breaking down organic matter? Or can we use a non-specific fungicide without also killing the fungi that... aids... in extracting nutrients from the soil? The plain truth is that this critically important subject of the ecology of the soil has been largely neglected even by scientists... Chemical control of insects seems to have proceeded on the assumption that the soil could and would sustain any amount of insult via the introduction of poisons without striking back. The very nature of the world of the soil has been largely ignored. From the few studies that have been made, a picture of the impact of pesticides on the soil is slowly emerging. It is not surprising that the studies are not always in agreement, for soil types vary so enormously that what causes damage in one may be innocuous in another. Light sandy soils suffer far more heavily than humus types. Combinations of chemicals seem to do more harm than separate applications. Despite the varying results, enough solid evidence is accumulating to cause apprehension on the part of many scientists... Apart from any directly toxic effects, curious indirect results follow the use of certain herbicides. It has been found that animals, both wild herbivores and livestock, are sometimes strangely attracted to a plant that has been sprayed, even though it is not one of their natural foods... Poisonous range weeds, for example, have suddenly become attractive to livestock after spraying, and the animals have died from indulging this unnatural appetite. The literature of veterinary medicine abounds in similar examples, swine eating sprayed cockleburs... lambs eating sprayed thistles, bees poisoned by pasturing on mustard sprayed after it came into bloom... [Humanity] is... dependent on these wild pollinators... [yet even farmers] seldom understand... the value of wild bees and often participate... in the very measures that rob [them] of their services. Some agricultural crops and many wild plants are partly or wholly dependent on the services of the native pollinating insects... Without insect pollination, most of the soil-holding and soil-enriching plants and uncultivated areas would die out, with far-reaching consequences to the ecology of the whole region... Although the Food and Drug Administration permits no residues of pesticides in milk, its restrictions are not only inadequately policed but they apply solely to inter-state shipments. State and county officials are under no compulsion to follow the federal pesticides tolerances unless local laws happen to conform – and they seldom do... The contamination of milk and farm produce in the course of the gypsy moth spraying programme came

as an unpleasant surprise to many people... Some leaf crops were so burned and spotted as to be unmarketable. Others carried heavy residues; a sample of peas analysed at Cornell University's Agricultural Experiment Station contained 14 to 20 parts per million of DDT. The legal maximum is 7 p[pm]... Growers therefore had to sustain heavy losses or find themselves in the position of selling produce carrying illegal residues. Some of them sought and collected damages. As the aerial spraying of DDT increased, so did the number of suits filed in the courts. Among them were suits brought by beekeepers in several parts of New York State. Even before the 1957 spraying, the beekeepers had suffered heavily from use of DDT in orchards. 'Up to 1953 I had regarded as gospel everything that emanated from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the agricultural colleges,' one of them remarked bitterly. But in May of that year this [apiarist] lost 800 colonies after the state had sprayed a large area. So widespread and heavy was the loss that fourteen other beekeepers joined him in suing the state for... [\$0.25] million... in damages. Another beekeeper, whose 400 colonies were incidental targets of the 1957 spray, reported that 100[%] of the field force of bees (the workers out gathering nectar and pollen for the hives) had been killed in forested areas and up to 50[%] in farming areas sprayed less intensively. 'It is a very disturbing thing... to walk into a yard in May and not hear a bee buzz.' The gypsy moth programmes were marked by many acts of irresponsibility. Because the spray planes were paid by the gallon rather than by the acre there was no effort to be conservative, and many properties were sprayed not once but several times. Contracts for aerial spraying were in at least one case awarded to an out-of-state firm with no local address, which had not complied with the legal requirement of registering with state officials for the purpose of establishing legal responsibility. In this exceedingly slippery situation, citizens who suffered direct financial loss from damage to apple orchards or bees discovered that there was no one to sue. After the disastrous 1957 spraying the programme was abruptly and drastically curtailed, with vague statements about 'evaluating' previous work and testing alternative insecticides. Instead of the 3 1/2 million acres sprayed in 1957, the treated areas fell to 1/2 million in 1958 and to about 100,000 acres in 1959, 1960, and 1961. During this interval, the control agencies must have found news from Long Island disquieting. The gypsy moth had reappeared there in numbers. The expensive spraying operation had cost the Department dearly in public confidence and good will – the operation that was intended to wipe out the gypsy moth for ever... had in reality accomplished nothing at all. Meanwhile, the Department's Plant Pest Control [officials] had temporarily forgotten gypsy moths, for they had been busy launching an even more ambitious programme in the South... In 1957 the... D[OA] launched one of the most remarkable publicity campaigns in its history. The fire ant[... which]... seems to have entered the U[S] from South America by way of the port of Mobile, Alabama... suddenly became the target of a barrage of government releases, motion pictures, and government-inspired stories portraying it as a despoiler of southern agriculture and a killer of birds, livestock and [humans]. A mighty campaign was announced, in which the federal government in co-operation with the afflicted states would ultimately treat some 20,000,000 acres in nine southern states. 'U[S] pesticide makers appear to have tapped a sales bonanza in the increasing numbers of broad-scale pest elimination programmes conducted by the U.S. D[OA], cheerfully reported one trade journal in 1958, as the fire ant programme got under way. Never has any pesticide programme been so thoroughly and deservedly damned by practically everyone except the beneficiaries of this 'sales bonanza'. It is an outstanding example of an ill-conceived, badly executed, and thoroughly detrimental experiment in the mass control of insects, an experiment so expensive in dollars, in destruction of animal life, and in loss of public confidence in the [DOA] that it is incomprehensible that any funds should still be devoted to [the Department]... The chemicals... used were dieldrin and heptachlor, both relatively new. There was little experience of field use for either, and no one knew what their effects would be on wild birds, fishes, or mammals when applied on a massive scale. It was known, however, that both poisons were many times more toxic than DDT, which had been used by that time for approximately a decade, and had killed some birds and many fish even at a rate of 1 pound per acre. And the dosage of dieldrin and heptachlor was heavier – 2 pounds to the acre under most conditions, or 3 pounds of dieldrin if the white-fringed beetle was also to be controlled. In terms of their effects on birds, the prescribed use of heptachlor would be equivalent to 20 pounds of DDT to the acre, that of dieldrin to 120 pounds! Urgent protests were made by most of the state conservation departments, by national conservation agencies, and by ecologists and even by some entomologists, calling on the then Secretary of Agriculture... to delay the programme at least until some research had been done to determine the effects of heptachlor and dieldrin on wild and domestic animals and to find the minimum amount that would control the ants. The protests were ignored... A million acres were treated the first year. It was clear that any research would be in the nature of a post mortem. As the programme continued, facts began to accumulate from studies made by biologists of state and federal wildlife agencies and several universities. The studies revealed losses running all the way up to complete destruction of wildlife on some of the treated areas. Poultry, livestock, and pets were also killed. The [DOA] brushed away all evidence of damage as exaggerated and misleading... [H]owever, ...statements made by D[OA] witnesses seeking appropriations were not in accord with those contained in key [DOA] publications... The 1957 bulletin *Insecticide Recommendations... for the Control of Insects Attacking Crops and Livestock* did not so much as mention the fire ant – an extraordinary omission if the D[OA] believes its own propaganda... Against the D[OA]'s undocumented claim that the fire ant destroys crops and attacks livestock is the careful study of the Agricultural Experiment Station in... Alabama. A[lt]hough 'fire ants cause damage to electronics in southern USA', a[cc]ording to Alabama scientists, 'damage to plants in general is rare.' ...an entomologist at the Alabama Polytechnic Institute and in 1961 president of the Entomological Society of America, states that his department 'has not received a single report of damage to plants by ants in the past five years... No damage to livestock has been observed.' ...fire ants feed chiefly on a variety of other insects, many of them considered harmful to [hu]man... interests. Fire ants have been observed picking larvae of the boll weevil off cotton. Their mound-building activities serve a useful purpose in aerating and draining the soil... The claim that the ant is a menace to health and life also bears considerable modification. The [DOA] sponsored a propaganda film (to gain support for its programme) in which horror scenes were built around the ant's sting. Admittedly this is painful and one is well advised to avoid being stung, just as one ordinarily avoids the sting of wasp or bee. Severe reactions may occasionally occur in sensitive individuals, and medical literature records one death possibly, though not definitely, attributable to fire ant venom. In contrast to this, the Office of Vital Statistics records thirty-three deaths in 1959 alone from the sting of bees and wasps. Yet no one seems to have proposed 'eradicating' these insects... In 1959... the State of Alabama, alarmed and angry at the damage done by the chemicals, refused to appropriate any further funds for the project. One of its officials characterized the whole programme as 'ill advised, hastily conceived, poorly planned, and a glaring example of riding roughshod over the responsibilities of other public and private agencies'... In the same year... perhaps in an attempt to offset the growing dissatisfaction with the programme, the [DOA] offered the chemicals free to Texas landowners who would sign a release absolving federal, state, and local governments of responsibility for damage... After three years of heavy doses, [the DOA] abruptly reduced the rate of application of heptachlor from 2 pounds to 1 1/4 pounds per acre... later to 1/2 pound per acre, applied in two treatments of 1/4 pound each, three to six months apart. A[DOA] official... explained that 'an aggressive methods improvement programme' showed the lower rate to be effective. Had this information been acquired before the programme was launched, a vast amount of damage could have been avoided and the taxpayers could have been saved a great deal of money... Effective and inexpensive methods of local control have been known for years. The mound-building habit of the fire ant makes the chemical treatment of individual mounds a simple matter. Costs of such treatment is about [\$1] per acre. For situations where mounds are numerous and mechanized methods are desirable, a cultivator which first levels and then applies chemical directly to the mounds has been developed by Mississippi's Agricultural Experiment Station. The method gives 90 to 95[%] control of the ants. Its cost is only \$.23 per acre. The [DOA]'s mass control programme, on the other hand, cost about \$3.50 per acre – the most expensive, the most damaging, and the least effective programme of all... Sometimes the result of chemical spraying has been a tremendous upsurge of the very insect the spraying was intended to control, as when blackflies in Ontario became 17 times more abundant after spraying than they had been before. Or when in England an enormous outbreak of the cabbage aphid – an outbreak that had no parallel on record – followed

spraying with one of the organic phosphorus chemicals. At other times spraying, while reasonably effective against the target insect, has let loose a whole Pandora's box of destructive pests that had never previously been abundant enough to cause trouble... The question of chemical residues on the food we eat is a hotly debated issue. The existence of such residues is either played down by the industry as unimportant or is flatly denied... It has been medically established that, as common sense would tell us, persons who lived and died before the dawn of the DDT era (about 1942) contained no trace of DDT or any similar material in their tissues... [S]amples of body fat collected from the general population between 1954 and 1956 averaged from 5.3 to 7.4 parts per million of DDT. There is some evidence that the average level has risen since then to a consistently higher figure, and individuals with occupational or other special exposures to insecticides of course store even more. A... scientific team from the U[S] Public Health Service sampled restaurant and institutional meals. *Every meal sampled contained DDT...* The quantities in such meals may be enormous. In a separate P[HS] study, analysis of prison meals disclosed such items as stewed dried fruit containing 69.9 parts per million and bread containing 100.9 parts per million of DDT! ...Residues on [fresh] fruit and vegetables tend to be somewhat less[, but these] are little affected by washing – the only remedy is to remove and discard all outside leaves of such vegetables as lettuce or cabbage, to peel fruit and to use no skins or outer covering whatever. Cooking does not destroy residues. Milk is one of the few foods in which no pesticide residues are permitted by F[DA] regulations. In actual fact, however, residues turn up whenever a check is made. They are heaviest in butter and other manufactured dairy products. A check of 461 samples of such products in 1960 showed... a third contained residues, a situation which the F[DA] characterized as 'far from encouraging'. To find a diet free from DDT and related chemicals, it seems one must go to a remote and primitive land, still lacking the amenities of civilization. Such a land appears to exist, at least marginally, on the far Arctic shores of Alaska – although even there one may see the approaching shadow. When scientists investigated the native diet of the Eskimos in this region it was found to be free of insecticides... When some of the Eskimos themselves were checked by analysis of fat samples, small residues were found (0 to 1.9 parts per million). The reason for this was clear. The fat samples were taken from people who had left their native villages to enter the [US PHS] Hospital in Anchorage for surgery. There the ways of civilization prevailed, and the meals in this hospital were found to contain as much DDT as those in the most populous city. For their brief stay in civilization the Eskimos were rewarded with a taint of poison. [About the same time, 'in an attempt to eradicate malaria, the WHO embarked on a major campaign to rid the tropics of the mosquitoes that carry the disease. Borneo was to be one of the regions cleared, and a massive spraying campaign was initiated throughout the worst affected regions. The chosen pesticide was DDT – which is still widely used in the Last World. Initially the programme was successful and the mosquito population fell dramatically. But it was not only mosquitoes that died. Numerous other species were poisoned, among them a minute wasp that preyed upon caterpillars living in the thatch of local houses. With the wasp gone, the caterpillar numbers increased to plague proportions, devouring the roofs of houses and causing them to collapse. Nonetheless, the spraying programme continued. The dead mosquitoes were eaten by lizards which, as they became sick, proved easy prey for the local cats. As a result the cats accumulated large quantities of DDT, passed on from insect to lizard to cat. The cats began to die in their thousands – and the local population of rats exploded. The rats not only ate local crops but brought an even greater menace – bubonic plague. In desperation the Borneo government called for cats to be parachuted into the worst affected areas. The mosquitoes have returned to the sprayed areas and malaria is still rife. Many pesticides are now ineffective, the mosquitoes having developed resistance to them. But, as in other parts of the world, the spraying goes on unabated. And the subtle balance of nature continues to be disrupted.']The fact that every meal we eat carries its load of chlorinated hydrocarbons is the inevitable consequence of the almost universal spraying or dusting of agricultural crops with these poisons. If the farmer scrupulously follows the instructions on the labels, his use of agricultural chemicals will produce no residues larger than are permitted by the F[DA]. Leaving aside for the moment the question whether these legal residues are as 'safe' as they are represented to be, there remains the well-known fact that farmers very frequently exceed the prescribed dosages, use the chemical too close to the time of harvest, use several insecticides where one would do, and in other ways display the common human failure to read the fine print... The files of the F[DA] contain records of a disturbing number of... examples... [of] the disregard of directions: a lettuce farmer who applied not one but eight different insecticides to his crop within a short time of harvest, a shipper who... used the deadly parathion on celery in an amount five times the recommended maximum, growers using endrin – most toxic of all the chlorinated hydrocarbons – on lettuce although no residue was allowable, spinach sprayed with DDT a week before harvest... Even the chemical industry recognizes the frequent misuse of insecticides and the need for education of farmers... There are also cases of chance or accidental contamination. Large lots of green coffee in burlap bags have become contaminated while being transported by vessels also carrying a cargo of insecticides. Packaged foods in warehouses are subjected to repeated aerosol treatments with DDT, lindane, and other insecticides, which may penetrate the packaging materials... To the question 'But doesn't the government protect us from such things?' the answer is, 'Only to a limited extent.' ...The ultimate answer is to use less toxic chemicals so that the public hazard from their misuse is greatly reduced. Such chemicals already exist: the pyrethrins, rotenone, ryania, and others derived from plant substances. Synthetic substitutes for the pyrethrins have recently been developed so that an otherwise critical shortage can be averted. Public education as to the nature of the chemicals offered for sale is sadly needed. The average purchaser is completely bewildered by the array of available insecticides, fungicides, and weed killers, and has no way of knowing which are the deadly ones, which reasonably safe. In addition to making this change to less dangerous agricultural pesticides, we should diligently explore the possibilities of non-chemical methods. Agricultural use of insect diseases, caused by a bacterium highly specific for certain types of insects, is already being tried in California, and more extended tests of this method are under way... [U]nder the onset of a virus[, insect] hordes sicken and die... like the [human] plagues of old... Some of the most fascinating of the new methods are those that seek to turn the strength of a species against itself... The most spectacular of these approaches is the... sterilization... technique developed by the... [DOA]'s Entomology Research Branch... a quarter of a century ago... If it were possible to sterilize and release large numbers of insects... the sterilized[insects] would, under certain conditions, compete with the normal wild[insects] so successfully that, after repeated releases, only infertile eggs would be produced and the population would die out. The proposal was met with bureaucratic inertia and with scepticism from scientists... One major problem remained to be solved before it could be put to the test – a practical method of insect sterilization had to be found[(even though, a]cademically, the fact that insects could be sterilized by exposure to X-ray had been known since 1916[). Unfortunately, one]... of the problems of sterilization by radiation is that this requires not only artificial rearing but the release of sterile [insects] in larger number than are present in the wild population... A chemical sterilant, on the other hand, could be combined with a bait substance and introduced into the natural environment[–]...insects feeding on it would become sterile and in the course of time... would breed themselves out of existence... The sterilants currently being tested fall generally into two groups... The first are intimately related to the life processes, or metabolism, of the cell... [–] the organism 'mistakes' them for the true metabolite and tries to incorporate them in its normal building processes. But the fit is wrong in some detail and the process comes to a halt. Such chemicals are called anti-metabolites. The second group consists of chemicals that act on the chromosomes, probably affecting the gene chemicals and causing the chromosomes to break up. The chemosterilants of this group are alkylating agents, which are extremely reactive chemicals, capable of intense cell destruction... and production of mutations[– which means]... any conceivable use of such chemicals in insect control would be 'open to the most severe objections'. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the present experiments will lead not to actual use of these particular chemicals but to the discovery of others that will be safe and also highly specific in their action on the target insect... Some of the most interesting of the recent work is concerned with still other ways of forging weapons from the insect's own life processes. Insects produce a variety of venoms, attractants, repellants... Could we make use of them...? Scientists at Cornell University and elsewhere are trying to find answers to some of these questions, studying the defence mechanisms by which many insects protect themselves from attack by predators, working out the chemical structure of insect secretions... ['The larvae of the willow beetle squirts out little

droplets from turrets on its side. Each droplet contains very powerful repellents. Actually, ants don't even have to touch the larvae itself to be repelled by these compounds. Just being near one of these droplets is enough to make the ant turn around and flee. The larvae doesn't even waste these droplets because once the enemy moves off it sucks them right back into the glands. The tiny Oriental beetle has become a scourge of US golf courses, gardens and crops after being introduced from Japan accidentally and multiplying at an alarming rate. Filtered air was passed over virgin gal Oriental beetles in a glass chamber and their smell collected in absorbent crystals. The concentrated perfume was then tested on guy Oriental beetles to pinpoint which particular scent from within the blend originally collected caused the greatest response. The tests went so well that the key chemical was identified within days and an artificial scent manufactured. "As we set out the traps the beetles rose out of the grass like a swarm of bees. Originally we had hoped that we would be able to count the beetles in the traps but the very first day we collected well over a hundred thousand.""] **The gypsy moth lure was the first insect sex attractant to be synthesized... A number of... scientists are working on the so-called 'juvenile hormone',** ["a hormone secreted by a gland near an insect's brain. Normally this gland stops functioning as an insect develops into an adult. Using an insecticide made of this juvenile hormone will keep insects from maturing into harmful adults. The nymph of a milkweed bug will just become a giant nymph. A mealworm pupa will develop into a short-lived second pupa instead of an adult"]... **Sound is also being tested as an agent of direct destruction. Ultrasound will kill all mosquito larvae in a laboratory tank... A great many other possibilities exist for effective insect control by methods that will leave no residues on foods... Until a large-scale conversion to these methods has been made, we... are in little better position than the guests of the Borgias... It was reported in 1960 that only 2[%] of all the economic entomologists in the U[S]** were then working in the field of biological controls. A substantial number of the remaining 98[%] were engaged in research on chemical insecticides. Why should this be? The major chemical companies are pouring money into the universities to support research on insecticides. This creates attractive fellowships for graduate students and attractive staff positions. Biological-control studies, on the other hand, are never so endowed – for the simple reason that they do not promise anyone the fortunes that are to be made in the chemical industry. These are left to state and federal agencies, where the salaries paid are far less. This situation also explains the otherwise mystifying fact that certain outstanding entomologists are among the leading advocates of chemical control. Inquiry into the background of some of these [entomologists] reveals that their entire research programme is supported by the chemical industry. Their professional prestige, sometimes their very jobs, depend on the perpetuation of chemical methods. Can we expect them to bite the hand that literally feeds them? But knowing their bias, how much credence can we give to their protests that insecticides are harmless? - 1962

Before it was transformed by modern technology, a farm was simply a place where... ecological cycles tended to be in balance, and with care the natural fertility of the soil could be maintained indefinitely. In contrast, modern agribusiness is so intensive that it depletes the natural supply of organic nutrients; as a result, inorganic fertilizers are applied in increasing amounts, and their runoff from the fields pollutes water supplies... Furthermore... when the whole... production cycle is considered – from soil preparation, planting, cultivating, and harvesting, t[o] transportation, processing, packaging, distribution, and final preparation – far more fossil fuel energy than solar energy from photosynthesis goes into the food on our table. Thus the trend to further industrialization of agriculture may be less rational than has been assumed... As global food scarcities become more and more apparent, so also does the inequitable distribution of available food... The food substance of most concern is protein... Protein deficiency has come to be recognized as one of the most serious impediments to development of human potential... Even when death does not occur, nutritional deficiencies during the critical first few years can cause irreversible brain damage... When nations become richer their consumption preferences tend to shift from grains to meat. As a result of changing tastes and the industrialization of meat production, more and more of this is grain-fed meat. Today[(while wastes)]... from cattle confined to feedlots accumulate and result in more water pollution; in the U.S., cattle produce more organic waste than the total sewage from humans[])... an increasingly large portion of the world's grain protein is going to animals rather than humans – a dubious practice in view of the fact that it takes from four to 12 pounds of grain protein to produce a single pound of meat protein. But this trend reflects the laws of economics, since the rich can afford more and more beef while the poor can afford less and less cereal. - 1976

Generally speaking... animal protein is dietarily superior to vegetable protein unless the latter is derived from a balanced variety of different sources... The significant point is that to produce 1 Calorie of any animal product requires a number of Calories of primary production of whatever vegetable substance the animal has consumed. [Using a highly efficient and scientific method of animal husbandry, the 'feed input'/'food output' ratio in the western world are for beef, roughly 10:1 and lamb (mutton) 12:1, chicken 3:1. Where animal husbandry methods are less efficient, the ratio is higher, and where animals in general forage at will (ie India, Nigeria) the ratio is also higher.] The apparent inefficiency of consuming animal products is somewhat less than the ratios imply in the case of ruminants (eg sheep and cattle), since these animals, with their specialized stomachs, are capable of digesting and utilizing cellulosic material such as grass and cornstalks... that humans cannot utilize directly... To feed cellulosic wastes to ruminants entails no direct cost at all in terms of human food, but for optimum productivity, even ruminants require high-protein supplements consisting of grain... cotton seed meal, soy bean meal or fish meal. This could be used to feed humans directly without intermediate conversion by animals... ['In the 1970s roughly one-third of the world's grain harvest is fed to livestock and poultry']. At least two or three times as many people could be fed on pure vegetarian diets as in Western-type diets that are high in animal products... The most interesting (and saddest) case is that of India, where 200 Calories per day per capita are derived from animal sources – virtually none from fish... an insignificant amount comes from red meat: animal protein is mostly obtained from milk and milk products, such as yogurt and some poultry and eggs... [Meanwhile,] an estimated 100 million scrawny cows... [– not] counting an equal number of non-milk producing bullocks... – ...roam freely, consuming whatever forage they can find, denuding the landscape, and yielding less milk than 10 million fenced-in and well-bred European or American dairy animals. Admittedly, they consume very little or no grain, but the vegetation they do consume would – if better utilized – undoubtedly suffice for the needs of several times their number of humans... Given the realities of the situation... it seems idle for well-fed but guilt-ridden humanitarians in the West to recommend that Americans or... [European]s should stop eating corn-fed beef so that the extra grain could be exported to feed the malnourished people of India. Indians may starve, but if they do it will be because they refuse to adopt serious birth control measures and choose, on religious grounds, to allow cattle to consume vegetation that would otherwise permit them to feed themselves more adequately. Even if Western consumers were altruistic enough to deny themselves meat for the sake of religious... prejudices of Indians, U[S] or European] farmers can hardly be expected to sell grain at a fraction of its production cost. Since the poorest... countries... have no foreign exchange to purchase grain from the U[S] through normal commercial markets, the American taxpayer would have to make up the difference. In a period of straitened government budgets, slower economic growth, and increasingly acute inflationary pressures, this seems highly unlikely... As it happens, the major sources of high-quality plant protein in South Asia (and elsewhere) are not grains but pulses, such as peanuts, soybeans, field beans, chick peas, and lentils[(which 'contain more protein than any other vegetable; 100g provides 337 calories')]. So far, despite considerable effort, there has been no significant progress in the U[S] or anywhere else in the world in raising output per acre of this category of crops... In the advanced countries the prospect for [farming progress during] the next half century is, essentially, for a series of minor improvements in present techniques... These... in addition to earlier ones such as irrigation and crop rotation, have only been exploited widely in... recent decades... [More recently, a] number of breakthrough possibilities for agricultural technology have been suggested, especially in the realm of biological engineering: • Increasing photosynthetic efficiency in plants; for example, by utilizing special light sources, light filters, and so on in a controlled "greenhouse"

environment. • Improved control over plant growth using hormones. • Biological control over pests... or spreading artificially bred insect predators... • New hybrid crop species to develop useful new characteristics such as... nitrogen fixation ability... drought tolerance, and... salt tolerance... [‘Studies conducted by FAO show as much as half of the world’s irrigated land suffers from salinization, alkalization, or waterlogging. Once the damage is done, it presents an economically forbidding cost of repair. Consequently, about 10 million hectares go out of cultivation each year.’] Land can become unproductive through various mechanisms, but the usual sequence involves some combination of deforestation, over-grazing, overcultivation, erosion, salination, and desertification... The degradation of land through surface contamination – as, for example, by mining residues – is also increasingly important... For the U[S] as a whole, it was estimated twenty years ago by the D[OA] that the annual loss of topsoil through erosion might still be as high as 0.5% per year. It was undoubtedly far higher at earlier periods, such as during the “dustbowl” episode of the 1930s[– ‘when the prairie land was returned to grazing after having been cultivated since the First World War, and the hooves of livestock pulverized the unprotected soil’]. The growing need for synthetic fertilizers to replace lost natural soil is understandable in light of numbers like this.

...Already there is evidence that soil fertility cannot be maintained indefinitely with current methods of high fertiliser input as this practice tends to decrease the soil bacteria and reduce the humus content, leaving the land more liable to erosion. The East Anglian fens are a particular example of this... The main problem of chemical inputs is that the chemicals are usually of a kind not found in nature, and therefore there are no organisms capable of dealing with them... [B]acteria would probably evolve to break down most... [synthetic] chemicals, but the timescale... for such an evolution to take place... is too... [long, while the] given time... for... [averting the] consequences... of... present-day... [practices is too] short... Much has been said in recent years about the world’s inability to grow food for its increasing population... [H]owever... there are several options that may alleviate the worst... effects. Firstly, beef and dairy production [needs to] start to give way to arable production, as the tonnage per acre gained this way is far greater than by using animals as intermediates... After this, improved strains of plants could be used to increase food production from a given acreage... The soya bean, for example[– that ‘has the merit of being free from attack from insect pests, grows easily in dry country’, is ‘a soil-enricher (the seeds also produce oil which is used in paints and many other manufactured products, including plastics’), and ‘1000s of years ago was thought to be a sacred grain by the Chinese’ –] is virtually a wild plant and yields are low compared to other similar species. There are, of course, considerable dangers in going for culture of a single strain: the statistics are such that sooner or later we are likely to suffer from the effects of its becoming suddenly virtually extinct. Extreme pressure on food supply might lead to the situation where nobody grows a variety that is slightly less profitable... A more insidious danger is the replacement of wild strains by a single or small number of cultivated ones. A wild plant can be considered as a bunch of keys, each one able to unlock a particular environmental problem, whether it be drought, frost resistance, immunity from fungal attack or maybe a higher percentage of protein in the seed. A cultivated plant, while being very good at solving the problem it is bred for, does not have this variety of attributes. Thus, by destroying wild species, one is throwing away solutions to problems that have not yet arisen. Once these species have gone there is little hope of retrieving them, for the plant took... hundreds of millions of years to evolve and one cannot compress that kind of timescale into a five-year plan... One of the most likely developments resulting from a threatened or actual shortage of food is an increase in production by any means available. At present food production is limited to the use of only parts of plants: if more of the plant could be used as food, then production could be increased proportionately. There are several routes to this, the simplest being the chemical cracking of cellulose, which makes up the bulk of plant tissue, to derive sugar. Another route... [is] to use the inedible portions as feedstock for algae or other single-celled organisms. The use of algae direct might be a more satisfactory solution. Plants are inefficient as collectors of solar energy, and... have a slow growth rate. Algae can absorb many times the amount of energy out of a given amount of sunlight than higher plants can, and some have a doubling rate of the order of hours rather than weeks. Further, many of them yield higher concentrations of protein than the higher plants. Because they live in a liquid environment, handling problems are simpler – the liquid can be pumped, filtered and evaporated in a way that is not possible in normal farming. Indeed, the tank farm of the future will probably resemble an oil refinery more closely than anything else. [‘The nutritive value of algae is indubitable, and it is highly esteemed in the Far East and is used as a basis for a large number of widely marketed foodstuffs. It is not a question of replacing traditional cultivation with that of algae, but the latter may come in useful in the exploitation of solar energy in arid or semi-arid zones.’] There are other plants, yeasts and fungi, that do not get their energy from sunlight. Some yeasts can live on crude oil... The technique of growing yeasts in oil was first developed as a way of cleaning water from the heat exchangers of oil refineries, and later to clean the oil itself of impurities... It is not a far step from this to the adding of substances to the oil to improve the yeast crop and make this the main product. At the present time there is great interest in this possible route to food production, with particular reference to those organisms that can live on the paraffin series and convert some of the energy stored in oil to fats and proteins. This is probably one of the main areas of expansion for food technology... Refineries are sophisticated places where one [hu]man can produce an end-product measured in thousands of tonnes over the period of a year; they can be made virtually automatic, with very tight quality control. With the present shortage of food, rising prices and lack of other investment opportunities it is almost inevitable that ‘food factories’ of this nature will spread rapidly. At first the produce will probably be fed to animals, but before long it will be doctored... so as to be acceptable straight from factory to table... What could be done... ultimately, perhaps... is to... develop... techniques for the direct synthesis of food from inorganic material. If this were done then it would be a relatively simple process to phase oil out gradually and replace it with an ‘in cycle’ method. Even were this achieved, there is... one major danger to be faced. The... carrying capacity of the land will go up a hundredfold, and at the same time vast tracts of land will no longer be needed for agriculture. Thus the cities will be free to expand virtually until they meet each others’ boundaries. In short, the development of synthetic food is likely to lead to a population explosion that will make the present one look like a damp squid. This... will throw severe strains on the other resources of the planet. Metal and energy shortages will become more severe, pollution... much more widespread and interest in it will decline for a while as it no longer threatens the food base. We could even end up in the ridiculous situation where cities are domed and have their own air-conditioning plants, all waste being dumped outside with no further thought for the environment. We would then, to all intents and purposes, be living on an alien planet, because that is what we would have made it. This, of course, is speculation. However, at the present time refineries are being adapted to make food from oil and production is already in the thousand tonne per annum range. It is certain that this food will form an increasing part of the diet of humans. - 1979

The food pessimists with their tales of gloom have infiltrated the public consciousness to a far greater extent than the optimists – and this is hardly surprising since we often see in our newspapers, or watch on TV, reports of famine and crop failure, but hardly ever get any news of all the people who are now better fed than before and the crops that produce the required goods... Studies like... [Hum]ankind at the Turning Point... that... set... the basic human nutritional requirement... at 2200-3000 kilocalories and 70 mg of protein per day and... estimate that 95[%] of all available land in south-east Asia is already in use while most of Africa is ‘unusable’, have added to the gloom. Yet, during the decades since... [WW2] while there has been a widespread belief that world food supplies are already insufficient, or at best about to be overtaken by increasing population, *food production has actually been growing more rapidly than population!* Over those decades, food production worldwide has risen by an average of 2.8[%] a year, and population by only 2[%] a year, according to official... UN Food and Agriculture Organisation... figures. Obviously, there... is no problem of food *production*[, but]... there is a real problem involving food *distribution*... 1967 opinion gave a maximum possible area of land available for cropping of 6600 million hectares, of which about half had actually been cultivated sometime in history and only 1400 million hectares... is in use in any one year now. Almost two thirds of this estimated resource lay in Africa, Asia and South America, where, it was thought, only about one third of the available land was being harvested in any one year. Other studies in the middle and late 1960s gave similar figures in

the same range, providing a basis from which towers of gloom were built. Yet, even these figures show that world food production could be doubled immediately if all available land were put to effective use – and these figures underestimate the true position, as improved understanding of the Earth through monitoring from satellites] (‘from the heights of space, laser scanners can tell, with the precision of a few acres, where crops are too dry and where they are overwatered’).] use of the new UNESCO soil maps, and results of the 11-year International Biological Programme have now shown... The single most dramatic, and important, piece of work on the real potential of the world food production system was carried out in 1973... by a team at the Dutch Wageningen Agricultural University... With ‘best’ farming practice, but no new technology (not even desalination), they arrived at a figure of just under 50,000 million tonnes of grain equivalent a year, forty times the present world production... Of course, this maximum could never be reached in practice, since some land will be used for other purposes, and best yields are seldom achieved. But you can put in a... reduction by a fraction of two thirds to take account of this and still have left a capacity twenty times present production... Where does the scope for improved crops lie? In the real world, a shift from individual to commercial farming has *reduced* the productivity per hectare, in spite of increased use of fertilizers. Big business agriculture, with emphasis on machinery, produces less from the same amount of land than small farmers who cultivate every corner, plant rows of one crop between those of another (where the wheels of machines on a ‘commercial’ farm would crush them), and in general pay attention to detail. The ideal situation would be if the enthusiasm of farmers who own and manage their own land could be combined with modernisation of techniques, to increase both productivity per hectare and productivity per [hu]man. Is this really possible? In some countries, at least (notably China), the evidence suggests that it can be done. But what is *not* needed is the mindless application of ‘western’ agricultural methods in... countries... where, as well as the need to maximise yields, there is also a need to maximise employment in any case!

...To a considerable degree the revolution in the automation of agriculture, which has caused a massive shift of population from the farmlands over the last century, will be repeated by a massive shift of population out of factory cities during the next... I invite you to join me in a tour through... the world of 2081... in which our great-grandchildren will be just at their prime... In contrast to the streamlined shape of the jet airplane, the last vehicle [Eric]’d seen... Ellen’s car... was a chunky little box... Evidently the car’s on-board computer had been given a list of those people authorized to drive it, since the [controls] remained blank when... Eric... got in, but came to life immediately when Ellen took her seat... Ellen told the car... to leave at once for her home in Waterford, and... a large video screen confirmed the order by showing the street address, the routing, and the estimated time en route. The little car started to move immediately, and [Eric] heard the faint hum of electric motors... [The] way led between sloping, ivy-covered banks, then to a wide road... Cars were three abreast in each direction, and the spacing between [Ellen’s] and the cars in front and back was less than a car length. All were moving at a steady 50 mph... The car began to bump and pitch, and [Eric] could see patches of beaten snow on the ground... There were electric motors on all four wheels, usable as generators for braking, so the car was able to cope with most driving conditions unless the snow patches became too deep for its small wheels. If [it] began to skid, the road computer would direct [the] car to slow down. Ellen... wanted to speak with her mother, and after a few moments [Eric] heard the voice of an older [person. Ellen and her mother talked about the car’s] expected arrival time, and then [Ellen asked for Eric’s] drink order, saying that “Arthur” would have it ready for [him]. Arthur was... their household robot, and Ellen’s mother Jeannette was quite proud of him. As [they] drove... one by one the other cars turned onto sloping exits that curved off to [thei]r right. Far away at left or right there occasionally appeared large clusters of dim lights through the falling snow, and Ellen explained that those were open towns, exposed to the weather... [S]oon... a bell that was just audible, told... th[em] the Waterford exit ramp was 50 meters ahead. [They] left the main road and... Eric... was surprised to see no general glow of lights, but Ellen... [said Eric] should expect none because Waterford was totally enclosed... The car had slowed to perhaps 30 mph... to keep wind noise down within the town. Above... there was brilliant light, as bright as afternoon sun, and it seemed to come from a regular array of lights some twenty meters overhead. Although the color quality was that of sunlight, [Eric] found the arrangement rather artificial when contrasted with the natural sunlight [i]t... was used to in all of the [space] colonies. The feeling of enclosure was also strange to [hi]m... because... at home in Fox Cluster [there are] no roofs on... towns, and when [people] look up, far above [they] see the parks and villages on the other side of the sphere. The car slowed on a side street, a small sunken roadway bordered by hedges and flowering shrubs and the occasional stone gateway. [They] turned into one of them... Though the Tehaneys live in a separate, single-family dwelling, most of Waterford’s residential areas are... townhouses or apartments... 10,000 or so people... live within a space of a square mile... The house seemed much like those in one of [the] Polynesian-climate colonies, with plenty of open space, high ceilings, and thick roof beams in natural wood. The floors at the entry level were terra cotta tile, and large windows opened onto courtyards and gardens rich with tropical flowers. [They] climbed stairs with a carved wooden railing to a carpeted level where Jeannette showed [Eric to his] suite, with bedroom, balcony, bath, and exercise room. [Jeannette showed him] the controls for the stereo, the video, and the lights, and added that if [Eric] just spoke in a normal tone in any room the house computer would hear [hi]m... and carry out [his instructions. Eric] wasn’t at all... [keen on] the idea that every word... spoke[n] was being listened to, but it seemed to be the price of perfect service. After [Jeannette] left, there was a gentle knock at the door and [Eric] found Arthur outside it waiting with the last of... Eric’s... bags... [Arthur] was programmed not to enter a bedroom without permission... When [Eric]’d unpacked and showered [it] followed the sound of a cocktail mixer being shaken... Eric... was surprised to find... Ellen’s father... mixing the drink himself, but... Bill Tehaney... explained that with short working weeks and highly mechanized households most people treated cooking and drink mixing as creative hobbies... [Bill] and Jeannette didn’t allow Arthur to take over the kitchen unless they were ill or very tired. Jeannette suggested that [they all] take a drive in the Waterford park before dinner... The Tehaney’s town car was waiting for [them] at the front door. It was much longer than Ellen’s commuter car... Eric... leaned back for comfort, and turned [his] face up to the “sunlight,” now darkening gradually toward dusk... [Eric]’d estimated by squinting upward toward the lights that the height of Waterford’s roof... [– which] was supported at intervals by slim columns, mostly ivy covered... [–] was not much over twenty meters... though... over the... [park] there was a high oval dome. [They] watched as the “sunlight” faded. On the dome there appeared, dimly at first and then more clearly, cumulous clouds. An image of an orange sun slowly set, and as it passed behind layers of clouds the light turned from orange to red, with rays and streamers of light filtered, apparently, by the slow-moving clouds... Eric... heard, dimly and far away, a momentary burst of a hissing, pattering noise... and... Ellen... supplied the explanation: [the noise was]... sleet drumming on the outside of the dome... Waterford’s... citizens... choose the climate and the weather they prefer... [Because this was] a winter day of sleet and storm... the town[was] enclosed. A few months later... [the town might be] wide open to the sun and sky... The shape of its enclosure... [is] dictated by the practical realities of snow removal and of solar energy... Waterford’s flat roof, well suited to being swept by automatic machines, will never accumulate great depths of snow because the machines... just push the stuff to the nearest edge, and over... The dome... [is] fixed permanently in place... Over all the rest of the town the roof... consist[s] of three layers, forming three flat planes, and the upper two layers... [are] movable. The highest layer... [is] topped by a sheet of bright, reflecting aluminium to keep out rain and wind and to reflect the heat of the summer... Under the entire aluminium surface there... [is] insulation... to a depth of meters. This top layer... [was] built in modular sections, hundreds of meters in each direction, and the sections... roll aside to a storage area at the perimeter of Waterford. Under the opaque insulating layer... [is] a separate, independent layer of glass, also in modular sections. This... turn[s] Waterford into a greenhouse for solar energy on bright cold days... Only when the weather is very good, or when Waterford’s residents desire natural rainfall, [are] both the insulating and the glass layer... rolled aside. Then, only the third layer... remain[s], a stretched, flat sheet of screen to keep out mosquitoes and other insects... Towns with fixed roofs... require... no pesticides at all... Th[e third layer is]... supported on the same lightweight framework that... carry[s] Waterford’s artificial “sun” lights... Jeannette suggested... [they] stop at a market, and [Eric] asked her how far [the family] had to

go for groceries. [Jeannette said they normally] didn't go out for them at all... Most of the staple items... the[y] used regularly were on a list that the home computer kept. The computer reordered any time they ran low, so... the... pantry was always fully stocked. After a few minutes' drive the town car[, that is]... never used outside Waterford... let [them] off at a low arched entrance to a pedestrian avenue, which led... past small shops, fountains, and flowering plants. [They] turned into... a grocery market, and [Eric] was surprised to find that it had no checkout counters. Instead, the shoppers carried small baskets, and when they had accumulated a few things from the shelves they dropped them at one of the charge counters among the shelves[, where an automatic device sensitive to the ankle signals charged each item and routed it to the customer's car... [Eric]'d been surprised by the freshness of the fruit and vegetables in the shop, and Ellen explained that they were grown in greenhouses just outside Waterford's town walls, using as nutrients chemicals sterilized from sewage. The recycling system had been copied from those perfected years earlier for the space colonies, the only difference being that on Earth sunlight had to be provided artificially to permit a twelve-month growing season... Greenhouse agriculture, guided by computer, ha[s solved Waterford's] food problem by closing the water cycle and providing dependable crops free of weather. And by providing food at the village level, it had also bypassed the whole problem of an inadequate system of distribution... In my view, the development of closed-cycle (greenhouse) agriculture over the next century will be the only effective solution to the problems of agricultural pollution and deforestation and also of year-to-year variations of food production. In closed-cycle agriculture, runoff water is cleaned and recirculated instead of being allowed to escape, and fertilizers are recycled instead of being allowed to run off into watersheds... Crops are protected from climatic extremes outside... [while, inside,] bugs and... blights are excluded physically rather than attacked chemically... Basic research into greenhouse agriculture is being done by corporations and universities, and it will receive a boost from the development of self-sufficient space colonies. As soon as there are a few hundred people in residence outside Earth's biosphere there will be a stronger incentive than ever before to learn every detail of agricultural production in a closed system... The greenhouse agricultural revolution is closer than you might think. Already Soviet cosmonauts have grown wheat and cabbages in space, and Soviet technicians have lived in closed-cycle environments on Earth for several months at a time... At present, greenhouse agriculture is a commercial success in Holland, in Japan, and in several locations in the U[S (there are '30,000 greenhouses of fruit and vegetables in the San Augusta desert')]. On Kharg Island in the Arabian Gulf, it is the only source of fresh vegetables in a wide area. In the late 1970s, the General Electric Company spent corporate funds for the successful development of a pilot plant for enclosed agriculture at its main research facility in... New York. The plant used artificial lighting, a special atmosphere enriched in carbon dioxide to yield rapid growth of crops, and a closed system of recycled nutrients. Many of the detail's of G.E.[C.]'s work are unpublished precisely because the work was successful: the details became proprietary trade secrets. Greenhouse agriculture... requires only a small area... and produces crops of high quality... [Although it] demands considerable care and attention, [if]... the world... take[s] up greenhouse farming, enough can be grown to feed the world's people, and our land can recover its forests and the purity of its waters. - 1981

Tomorrow's farmer is as likely to wear a lab coat as a pair of overalls. Growing food will become a highly sophisticated, technological operation. From genetically-engineered seedlings to computer-controlled fields and space monitors for weather and water patterns, every step of the farming process will draw upon new scientific techniques. The techno-farmer will... be more concerned with monitoring the system than in watching the weather or sitting on a tractor... will run an operation with minimal waste and total efficiency[, will]... be able to grow more food on less land than today's agriculturalist, and the produce may be markedly different from today's wheat and corn... As the twenty-first century approaches... twenty-three square miles of arable land are engulfed by deserts every day[, largely]... through erosion... greed... and destructive farming methods... Desertification is a process as old as Western civilization. Some 8,000 years ago, the land around the Tigris and Euphrates rivers – the Fertile Crescent – was rich in grassland and forest. As shepherds built the first great cities, however, they cut down trees and built irrigation canals. With the remaining grass devoured by growing herds, the soil gradually eroded. Silt clogged the irrigation canals. Wars and upheavals wrecked the complex society needed to keep the land green. Today, the Fertile Crescent, covering much of Iraq, is barren. Similar changes have happened almost everywhere [humanity] has been careless with the soil. When Carthage, for example, was a great empire, North Africa was a breadbasket of the world. That land is now the Sahara Desert. Such deterioration continues into modern times. Even in the U[S], careless farming, soil erosion, and drought created the Dust Bowl of the 1930s... [US topsoil is currently] eroding at an average rate of nine to twelve tons per acre a year... Unless major changes are finally made in the way we treat our land, desert will eventually consume most of the arable land in twenty-four nations in Africa and Asia, many of them already poverty-stricken. Desert could claim significant land masses in at least twenty-three other countries, including Spain, South Africa, the Soviet Union, India, A[US], Chile and Bolivia... To feed the world of 6 billion people in 2000, world governments must affect certain improvements in food productivity. Some of the keys to improved production include the following. • International fisheries must be cooperatively managed to avoid disastrous overfishing. • Nontraditional marine species, such as the Antarctic krill, must be used as future sources of vital protein. [('A vivid idea of the abundance of Antarctic krill – which contain 7% fat and 16% protein – can be conveyed by a few statistics. During January to April the shoals contain about 35 lb of krill per cu yd and during this time whales are estimated to eat 150 million tons. The present annual world catch of marine animals is said to be 60 million tonnes and with better methods of fishing this could be expanded to 80-90 million tons. These figures have been presented by Russian biologists who point out that, on present showing, there will be a need to increase this last figure of 80-90 to 130-150 million tonnes by 2000 AD if people are to be adequately fed, and they see in krill one of the few large sources of food that could be exploited. The populations of whalebone whales have been reduced by 85-90%. Allowing that other species – the seals, sea birds and 32 species of fish which feed on krill – may have benefited from this it still means a vast harvest of krill to be tapped, if only an economic method can be found of locating the shoals.')] • Aquaculture must be further exploited... (Aquaculture produced 6 million metric tons in 1975.)... • Research and development in the area of closed-cycle (greenhouse) agriculture... must be expanded[, along with]... genetic engineering techniques... [to] craft new kinds of plants... Among the advances genetic manipulation of agricultural components will produce are: • Crops that fix their own nitrogen, making expensive, dangerous fossil fuel fertilizers obsolete. • Plants that can grow in... lands where too much irrigation has left the earth saline. • Corn that automatically blooms each year, like a perennial flower, without replanting or fertilizing. • Potatoes and tomatoes that grow on the same vine... • Crops that can be harvested three times a growing season... • Crops that contain all the basic nutrients in one food... Eventually, genetic engineers may attempt to construct a plant that will build an analogue for complete animal protein. This would be a true "soy-burger," a material grown by a plant that has all the best nutritional aspects of meat.

...Gandhi wrote: "...I do believe that all God's creatures have the right to live as much as we have. Instead of prescribing the killing of... fellow creatures... if... knowledge[able people] had devoted their gift to discovering ways of dealing with [our fellow creatures] otherwise than by killing them, we would be living in a world befitting our status as... animals endowed with reason and the power of choosing between good and evil, right from wrong, violence and nonviolence, truth and untruth." - 1982

I have no deep misgivings about the manipulation of plants and animals, because that has always been the human way. The earliest people, 2 million years ago, who took up a stick to knock fruit from a tree, or a stone to strike down an animal, were using... artificial methods. Clearing land to make a farm, whether with stone axes and wooden hoes or with modern tractors and chemical herbicides, was always a violent assault on nature. More subtly, around 10,000 years ago, people in West Asia, Indochina, China, Africa and Mexico independently took grasses and sowed them in new places... and thus evolved them into cultivated wheat, rice, millets and maize. These are unnatural varieties of grass, the products of

unwitting genetic engineering... The same story can be told about such unnatural creatures as poodles, milking cows, and racehorses. But we ought to leave ourselves alone... [I also have no deep misgiving about the fact that on] every continent the area in grass... – [for raising]1.2 billion cattle, 1 billion sheep, 400 million goats... 130 million water buffalo... camels... and [other animals] – ...exceeds that planted to crops... Of course it is conceivable that [in future] we shall produce our food in factories, without animals or plants... Eventually we should be able to manufacture satisfactory foodstuffs in great chemical plants, where masses of ribosomes would be supplied with synthetic amino acids and long-lived messenger RNAs, with energy-yielding phosphates produced by irradiating chloroplasts with laser-tuned light of the most effective wavelength... [In the meantime, a] factor influencing the productivity of cropland is a shrinkage of the world's fallowed area. As world wheat prices rose during the seventies, the US land in fallow declined from an average of sixty-five acres for every hundred acres planted in wheat during the sixties, to thirty-seven acres in 1970. As a result, US wheat yields have fallen, and severe dust storms reminiscent of those of the thirties are reappearing in some states. - 1983

Thirty-six out of the 40 poorest and hungriest countries in the world export food to North America (reported in 1981 by the U[N] Fund for Population Activities)! Meanwhile, large amounts of U.S. acreage are allowed to lie fallow because excessive domestic production has lowered crop values. The problem right now, therefore, is not that there isn't enough food to go around, but that the food that's available is going to those who can most easily afford it instead of those who need it. As Gandhi once said, "The earth can provide enough for every[body]'s need but not enough for every[body]'s greed." ...To emphasize the problem, [a US]Senator... notes that if just 20[%] of the world were to consume at the rate the U[S] consumes, the remaining 80[%] would be totally without food. - 1984

The goal of the transnational agribusiness corporations is to... create a single world agricultural system, a global supermarket in which they would be able to control all stages of food production and distribution... [However, the] disastrous consequences of global agribusiness becomes... apparent... where the exploitation of people and of their land has reached extreme proportions... In Central America at least half of the agricultural land – and precisely the most fertile land – is used to grow cash crops for export while up to 70[%] of the children are undernourished. In Senegal vegetables for export to Europe are grown on choice land while the country's rural majority goes hungry. Rich, fertile land in Mexico that previously produced a dozen local foods is now used to grow asparagus for European gourmets. Thus an enterprise that was originally nourishing and life-sustaining is now perpetuating world hunger.

...Peasants in Africa, Asia and South America are pushed off their tenancies because it is more profitable to produce coffee, tea or soya for... Western consumerism... than to use the land to feed them. Our demands force the poorest people on to hillsides and other types of marginal land, where desperate attempts at cultivation cause soil erosion or destroy areas of wood or natural grassland... But... there is plenty of land: about 21[%] of the world's surface is arable, yet only 8[%] is actually farmed... The food industry... condemns critics as 'food Leninists', makes generous donations to political parties and spends millions of pounds on advertising. The provision of cheap, wholesome, unadulterated food and the promotion of a less calorie-intensive diet that is not based on meat is clearly not in its interest. Its influence over home economics curricula in schools and catering colleges and even over advisory bodies concerned with health policy is all-pervasive. A European Community ban on growth hormones for cattle was another 'Luddite move in the face of scientific advance', according to one [British]government minister... Medical research confirms that allergies and hyperactivity in children are linked with the chemical content of food (though food manufacturers deny this). Yet food additives are consumed in large quantities: over 200,000 tonnes of additives are eaten every year in the UK at a rate of 4.5 kilograms per adult. Nine tenths of these are used purely for cosmetic effect – to make steaks look redder, batter more golden or otherwise grey instant-soup mixes more appealing. While some additives are valuable, enhancing the quality of food or preserving it, the majority are at best unnecessary and at worst dangerous. Britain has a poor record of endorsing additives banned by other countries... [and] lags behind nearly every other industrialized country in its outdated attitude to food safety. Potassium bromide was used for three decades in white sliced bread but banned in November 1989 after it was found to be carcinogenic. Food-processing workers are also at risk and are likely to come into contact with all manner of chemicals. Calcium propionate (a mould inhibitor added to bread) causes irritation to the eyes and nose. Sodium bisulfite, which prevents fruit and vegetables from becoming discoloured, causes painful blisters... Far from being a 'scientific breakthrough' or 'new advance in food technology', irradiation should be seen for what it is: a way of killing bacteria in food that has been stored for too long or shipped too far. Like additives, irradiation helps the industry but does little for the consumer, who deserves food that is good to eat without the dubious benefit of high-energy ray treatment. On the domestic front, November 1989 brought warnings of the danger of some microwave ovens, which were inadequately insulated, and we have all become aware of another danger, PVC clingfilm, from which di-2-ethylhexadinate migrates into food if the film is inadvertently heated.

...A crucial question is, 'what constitutes acceptable evidence of early [humanity]'s possession of fire?' We must be careful of negative evidence, especially in the tropics, for wood burned at a campfire might leave virtually nothing but fine ash, and the chances of its being preserved... are not high. Even in the Upper Palaeolithic when fire is well documented, much of the evidence comes from caves rather than open sites... [T]here is good evidence of cone-shaped masses of burnt clay, with a shallow concrete base... but... [such] features might have had natural causes... [rather than resulting] from the intentional ignition of tree stumps in order to preserve fire. Sites like this[, which were]... found at Chesowanja (Kenya)... and... the Middle Awash valley in Ethiopia... are... associated with *Homo erectus*... Fire is definitely associated with *Homo erectus* in their spread from the heartland into Europe and Asia... Where good evidence of fire is found it tends to be at settlement sites or in association with animal bones... [*Homo sapiens* are the only living creature to use cooked food. (Children, however, have an innate taste for raw vegetables and even for unripe fruit, which indicates that raw food should be an essential part of humanity's diet.) Cooking was born when primitive humans first discovered that if a hunk of meat was placed near the fire it tasted better, and was easier to eat. Some ingenious primitive found a way of heating water in a stone hollowed out into a basin. The clay vase succeeded this primitive pot. The spit and the pot, however rudimentary in the beginning, made many culinary operations possible.] An extension of the use of fire to technology is seen in its use as a hardener of bone and especially wooden implements of which a number, mostly spears, have turned up from this period in Europe and which seem indeed to have been the main weapon used to kill animals as large as elephants. A fire-hardened antler tip also appears at Zhoukoudian... in China... as well as charred bones from cooking, and at that site we get a tiny glimpse of the role of plants in the diet with the finds of the berries of *Celtis* and various tubers... Any reckoning of our past will show that humans have spent most of their history as hunters and gatherers... If [hu]mankind was once (perhaps at about 10 000 BC) 100[%] hunters and gatherers, then it is now more like 0.001[%], and the replacement of hunting by other modes of life has occurred at practically every period from the first agricultural communities... to the present... The key point is that these... 'hunter-gatherer'... people were and are food collectors... not food producers. As an energy source they rely on the sun in the form of recently grown organic material; to manipulate the energy and matter flows to themselves they use only fire and the muscular energy of their own bodies, together with that of a single tamed animal, the dog, which is found around 10 000 BC onwards in hunting societies. Yet because solar energy is so diffuse a source even when concentrated into the chemical energy of plants, the density of hunters has never been large, and an average for the world of 26 [sq]km... of land per head is often quoted, with the figure falling as low as 250 [sq]km... per head for the dry interior of A[US]... Archaeological evidence coupled with the reports of early European travellers has shown us some details of another kind of hunting economy, in the shape of the killing of large mammals by Indians and palaeo-Indians on the grasslands of

the High Plains of North America during the Holocene period... At the... Olsen-Chubbuck site in... Colorado, dated 8200[+/-]500 BC... hunters stampeded a herd of buffalo into a narrow canyon or *arroyo*, some 2-3 m wide and 2 m deep. The age of the calves suggests this happened in late June. The bone remains extended some 57 m along the arroyo and about 190 animals were killed... some... wedged so fast in the bottom of the canyon that they could not be extracted for butchering and thus must have rotted *in situ*... At one time during the years AD 1670-1740 another group of buffalo hunters used a spectacular site in... Wyoming, where a bluff 14 m high... was utilized. The vertical part of the bluff is restricted, and the animals had to be carefully controlled: a metre or two either side and they would probably escape down steep but not lethal slopes. In this case, the drive lane suggests the control of the herd's movements for 1.5-4.5 km before it was finally stampeded over the cliff. The bones suggest... this and similar bluffs might be used in rotation: as one author points out, about 100 buffalo stomachs left to rot might not be approachable again for a year or two, even to people less easily made queasy than ourselves... The fact that hunter-gatherer economies survived for such long periods is testimony to a [hu]man-nature relationship of a sustainable, though not necessarily static, kind. The question to be asked at this stage is: did their persistence derive from a care not to overexploit their biotic resources... or did it just happen, in the sense that although no particular 'tenderness' was involved, nevertheless the environment could withstand such pressure as was put on it? ...Because of the nature of the evidence, agriculture [only] tends to show up in the prehistoric record when it is well developed... [P]eople may have diverted streams to bring water to plants, and could have undertaken some elimination of competitive plants and perhaps even scared away herbivorous animals. But the people (who were in any case nomadic) went to the plants rather than brought the crops to the settlements... Two linked developments... behind the transfers of biota and agroecosystems... [are] the ocean-going vessels pioneered by the Portuguese which meant... Europeans could penetrate to most parts of the world's littorals, and the desire of Euro... states to extend trade and hegemony to the lands thus 'discovered'. Before Columbus, the Portuguese had taken crops to west Africa and the Atlantic islands: in the first half of the [15]th century... they introduced maize, sugar cane, bananas and the grape to those places, and by 1513... were trading plants in the spice islands of the Moluccas... Such trickles quickly became a braided flood... The 19th c... advent of iron as an architectural technology hastened the movement of plants around the world since bigger glasshouses could be built. - 1990

Through the miracle of biotechnology, scientists are beginning to produce crops beyond our wildest imagination... In the [First W]orld, people get their primary nutrition from no more than 10 plant species (including those processed through animal metabolism), and the standard recipes call on less than 100. These are the select few from an estimated 1000 species that have been in wide cultivation since the time of the agricultural revolution... In the tropical wilds, where the native people consume such a great variety of the indigenous flora, economic botanists are identifying attractive prospective additions to the cuisine of the outside world. Amaranth, "the cereal of the Aztecs," is already emerging as the first innovation in the "cereal" nutrition of the [outside] world in hundreds of years, the first ever from a plant not in the grass family... THE LOST TEMPLES of the Incas are renowned. But how about the lost vegetables? If it weren't for the scornful Spanish conquistadors who forced the local populace to grow the standard European fare instead of their native foods, people today might be feasting on candy-striped tubers and purple "tomatoes" that taste like melons. There is hope for a comeback, however. A report titled *The Lost Crops of the Incas* produced by a panel of the US National Research Council identified 31 of the most promising but overlooked native Andean crops that are still being grown in out-of-the-way gardens in South America... [But there is no longer a need to search the world for new crop species! In the US last winter], when consumers were still eating those pink vinyl rocks that pass for tomatoes, a scientist handed me a tomato as red as a fire engine and as juicy as any back-yard beauty in season... This delicacy, which you will find at your greengrocer's in a few years... is the first blockbuster product of "plant biotechnology," a new science that's expected to revolutionize agriculture... Ten year's ago, biotechnology hardly existed, though the groundwork was laid in the 1970s when scientists learned to cut genes and then move them from one organism to another. Soon, they were making bacteria churn out valuable proteins... Today, biotechnology is growing faster than ever... Supermarket tomatoes have to be tough and tasteless because nature is too quick. The acids, sugars and aromas that suffuse a tomato with tangy flavour are the last things it gets. From that moment, all the fruit wants to do is soften and burst so its seeds will scatter. To beat the softening, growers pick tomatoes green. But even with refrigeration, which kills any flavour the tomatoes might have gained, a third are spoiled by rot. The softening is caused, in part, by an enzyme known as PG, which dissolves the glue holding the tomato's cells together... So the challenge to put taste back into the billion dollar fresh-tomato market has been to block or slow the PG enzyme... The problem... was to switch off the single gene that sets the PG enzyme to work... Tomatoes, like humans, have about 100,000 genes... You can't snip out a gene that you want to turn off... but you can deactivate it by inserting a copy of the gene made in reverse... From a few cells growing on a dish under laboratory lights, the transformed plants were cultivated and then grown in a greenhouse. Ten months later, the first ripe tomatoes were picked... "By switching... [the] PG enzyme... off...,"... says... [a] microbiologist... of California's Calgene company... "...we bought the tomato an extra week on the vine. Now we no longer have to pick it green." It is only a matter of time before bioengineers bring tastier varieties of other soft fruits to market, including tamarillos... apricots, grapes... and... kiwi fruit... "Soon many fruits and vegetables will not only taste better," says... a molecular biologist with N[Z]'s Horticulture and Food Research Institute, "they'll look better, grow better and last longer." Nature's chemical language is the same in all organisms... so all genes are theoretically interchangeable. A tomato given the gene of a fungal-fighting microbe can fend off the grey mould called botrytis. A potato given the gene of the unappealing petunia makes the Colorado beetle reject it. Potatoes are the largest single vegetable crop in the world, but viral infections can devastate yields and quality... [The US DOA recently reported annual losses of 60 million bushels of potatoes due to crop diseases (plus 2 1/4 billion bushels of corn, oats, barley and wheat). What can be done about this enormous waste of valuable food?] The NZ Institute for Crop and Food Research at Lincoln is looking at ways to improve potato resistance by transferring a small piece of genetic material from a virus into the chromosome of the potato to "immunize" the potato against disease. Then there's the strawberry that might "marry" a flounder. Strawberries are often wiped out by frosts. Learning that the Arctic flounder makes an antifreeze to protect itself against winter chills, bioengineers at DNA Plant Technology Corporation in Oakland, California, plan to inject the antifreeze into a strawberry... Presto! Strawberries that survive frosts and don't go mushy when you take them out of the freezer... As more of these novelties are developed, plants will provide not only better flavours and nutritional qualities but special products. "We may see one bunch of farmers specializing in blue, shrinkproof cotton for denims, and another supplying flameproof cotton for aircraft seats," says Calgene... For scientists this truly is the golden age... N[Z] farmers spray chemicals up to three or four times a season, fighting the insects, viruses and weeds that attack their pastures and crops. But in the last few years, at a research station in Palmerston North[... a molecular]... geneticist... and his colleagues have augured a different future. Rows of tobacco plants in the glasshouse contain a potato gene. Deliberately exposed to their dreaded enemy, the green looper caterpillar, the tobacco shows little damage. "The caterpillars take a few chomps and die..." This "transgenic" tobacco has been programmed to manufacture a natural pesticide in its own cells. Similar traits are being engineered into soybeans, potatoes, cotton and corn, and [the Palmerston North] team is about to start testing a clover bred to resist grass grubs. When the seeds of these "smart" plants reach the market... crop yields should improve dramatically, and there will be less need for costly and potentially harmful pesticides... Another hope is that important crops can derive fertilizer from thin air... Scientists from the US and Europe are trying to get rice and corn to emulate peas and beans... [which], aided by bacteria, extract nitrogen from the atmosphere and store it in their roots... [P]erhaps the most exciting potential of biotech is the ability to add genes to existing proven cultivars without the need for extended breeding programmes. "Take apples..." explains... [the] director of the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Auckland. "It can take more than twenty years to develop new varieties and prove them in the marketplace. But now it may be possible to manipulate the colour and storage qualities of popular varieties within a few seasons." ...[the agriculture] genetics... industry is

dominated by 50 transnational corporations that have been buying up smaller companies, especially successful developers of seed for single species. In Europe and the U[S], these enterprises have come to enjoy patent protection on their house seed varieties. The concentration of the world economy is “even more significant at the crop level,” according to the UN Centre on Transnational Corporations, “with three firms holding 80[%] of the patents on beans and four firms holding... 60[%] on lettuce, 48[%] on soybeans and 36[%] on wheat.” However, although, as... of 1980, this industry had \$[US]12 billion in sales worldwide... the green-gene revolution will not get much further than the lab unless transgenic plants are accepted by consumers. Concern about tampering with the genetic makeup of food is a powerful force[, but the]... pioneering companies hope the benefits of genetically transformed products will be so tantalizing that any lingering resistance will melt away. The key point to remember is this: the green-gene technology that created a tastier tomato will also benefit the environment and help feed the ten billion mouths that will be here within half a lifetime.

...MORE than 780 million people don't get enough food to lead active, healthy lives although the world has more than enough to feed everyone... if distributed according to individual requirements... says... [a] new UN report... produced jointly by the... [FAO and WHO. By the way, experts say that your thoughts] influence feelings and behaviour and therefore the state of your body. Awareness of this can make an important difference in treating problems of being overweight... Food may be a solace, a response to boredom, and eating may be just something you do in your spare time. Only by understanding the emotions and situations that lead you to overeat can you begin to make changes. One of... the Mind/Body Medical Institute[']s... patients, a 55-year-old mechanical engineer, looked forward to relaxing at home after a challenging day at the office. However, after an ample dinner, [the engineer] always ate more, even if [it] didn't feel hungry. Upon questioning, the [engineer] explained that every night after his dinner, [it] settled into his favourite chair and watched television. After about an hour [the engineer] would feel bored, and his mind turned to food. [The engineer] would wander into the kitchen, fill a large bowl with ice cream and return to the television. Sometimes [the engineer] went back for a second helping. “Once I've had one bowl. I think, ‘I might as well have seconds.’ I feel terrible afterwards, of course... but by then it's too late.” ...[the institute] tried to help him break the chain of events. On some nights, instead of relaxing in front of the [television, the engineer was advised to] take a walk with his wife. Or as soon as television became boring, [the engineer] could turn it off and pick up something to read. Ultimately [the institute] decided that ridding the house of ice cream was essential, since [the engineer] found it so irresistible. You, too, can apply this kind of analysis. Think about when you are most likely to overeat... Write it down as a chain of events. Once you've laid out your overeating chain, decide at what point you can break it. The next time the situation arises, try your strategy. If it doesn't work, try another. Persistence will pay off... Once you have successfully adopted a new attitude and altered your eating habits, the challenge is to maintain that change. One key to doing that is not to be too inflexible. Remember, most people have lapses and need to allow themselves some room. The point is to see these lapses as isolated slip-ups, not as total catastrophes. The greatest single danger during a lapse is to take a “saint or sinner” attitude... Instead of viewing your diet lapses as defeats, try to learn from them... *Set realistic goals.* A healthy short-term goal is to lose 250 to 500 grams per week. Given that, look at a calendar and determine when you can expect to reach your weight goal... Now you have a weight goal within a reasonable time frame. Don't get angry at yourself if you don't lose weight on your schedule. And don't depend on a rigid diet designed exclusively for weight loss to do it. Anyone who is sufficiently motivated can follow... a strict, low-kilojoule regimen for two weeks, maybe even for a month, but eventually boredom sets in, and then come the familiar [desires to overeat]...

The... average... U.S. consumer... [has an] intake of 3600 kilocalories per day[, of which]... not much more than 10[%] comes]... directly from grain... Often remarked upon is the decline in U.S. agriculture employment – from more than 12[%] of the labor force in 1950 to less than 3[%] in 1985. Often celebrated is the increase in the number of people fed by one U.S. farmer – from 7 people in 1900, to 16 in 1950, and then to 75 in 1985. The astonishment and the numbers belie the true and more significant state of affairs. In fact, a much larger number of people are employed in feeding the nation. About 75 cents of each consumer dollar at the store goes to pay the farmer's many helpers. They make their contribution in a division of labor that starts before the farmer goes to work and carries on long after [the farmer] is done... All told, the feeding of the U.S. population employs one out of five persons in the labor force and remains the country's largest industry... [Incidentally, it] is possible, with the external inputs of fertilizer and pesticides, to grow the same crop year after year on the same field... [But the US DOA recently] ratified the advice of organic farmers that greater reliance be placed upon the regenerative power of the soil... [‘Early in the history of agriculture, it was discovered that crop yield decreased when, year after year, the same crop was planted in one field. During the Middle Ages, European farmers would leave one portion of their land unplanted each season, allowing the soil to “rest.” Later it was learned that certain crops remove from the soil minerals and helpful nitrogen-fixing bacteria, while others restore them to the soil. Thus, a system evolved for changing crops from year to year in certain fields. This is known as *crop rotation*.’] With crop rotation... the yields from... new technology can be raised by 10 to 15[%]. The plowing in of animal manure or the “green manure” of a crop of alfalfa or of crop residues[also] improves the soil's fertility, water-storage capacity, and tilth (or structure) and maintains its natural population of microbes, earthworms, ants, and other soil-turning insects. In the Corn Belt of the U[S], unfortunately, a tenth or more of the country's total livestock output of 1.7 billion tons of manure is produced in the feeding pens, at a considerable distance from the cornfields. Most of it goes to cause eutrophication of the Mississippi watershed. If pollution control and enhancement of the soil could somehow be harnessed to finance the collection and transportation cost, that manure... and... the composting of urban waste... could significantly reduce the use of fertilizer and enhance the soil of 100 million acres of crop land. No microeconomic interest, however, supports this obvious remedial action... [‘NZ farmers receive no subsidies from their urban counterparts but in most First World nations city-dwellers pay higher prices for food or taxes to support farm incomes. The OECD each year calculates the total transfers associated with agricultural policies in its 24 member countries. These transfers are the net costs to consumers and taxpayers. They are expected to average over \$US20,000 for each OECD full-time farmer next year (\$40,000 in Norway and \$35,000 in the US).’ Unfortunately for First World farmers, a]griculture... remains the last production sector subject to market forces. Prices for its output still respond to supply and demand. That is in contrast to the highly centralized industrial sectors, where not more than three producers dominate each industry; prices for their output move continuously upward, secured by strong ratchets against fallback. Farmers accordingly face perpetual inflation in the prices they pay for the inputs they purchase from industry, which add up to half of their total costs. The imparity of economic power between agriculture and industry brings, in every industrial country at one time or another, such imparity in income as to provoke the organization of farmers in protest. To this “farm crisis,” the political process invariably responds, in violation of free-enterprise shibboleths, with the provision of subsidies in one form or another... Sugar-beet growers in the U[S and other First World] countries (the beets return half the calories expended to grow them) could not otherwise compete with cane-cutters in [Last World] countries (the cane returns double and more the calories expended)... The purchase by the U.S. government of price-depressing surpluses from the country's farmers took tons of wheat, butter, and other commodities out of the domestic market during the late 1950s and through the 1960s. Under Public Law 480, the surpluses were shipped as food aid to [the Last World], answering desperate need there, especially in India... [Normally, however, food heads in the opposite direction]. As farmers to the [First World nations, the Last World] nations have neither the political nor economic power to claim parity. Food and agricultural raw materials made up more than half their exports to the [First World] countries at the beginning of this half century... To the... nations that import these goods, they represent less than 10[%] of total consumption; except for the protests of coffee and tea drinkers, their absence would scarcely be noticed. The imparity that governs this trade has widened since 1950[, while d]ecline in agricultural prices is a long-term trend in the world economy... The free-market law of comparative advantage brings in view a rational planetary division of labor. If the Corn Belt of the U[S] produces the cheapest grain and could, at full throttle, feed the world, it should do so. That would free the [Last World] countries to find the

contributions they might make most efficiently to the world economy... Japan employs four workers per hectare, twice as many as India or China, to achieve a yield per hectare four times that of India and twice as high as that of China. The land-maximizing technology of the green revolution yields generously to intensification of labor. Adoption of Japanese methods, it has been estimated, would reduce underemployment and unemployment in rural India by half. The attainment of Japanese productivity would make the country's present misery a part of the memory of the painful past... T[ag]ged... as a 'can't be saved' nation, India secured its first increases in food production by increasing the land under cultivation from 140 million hectares to 160... With its own Rice Research Institute in operation in Calcutta... the country's agronomists went early to work on the task of increasing the output per hectare. The 85[%] increase in total output achieved by 1973 (over the pitiful starting output of 55 million tons) could be attributed to the increase in cultivated hectares but, more promisingly, to a cumulative increase in output per hectare of more than 40[%]... On unirrigated land, the crop must be grown and harvested during the weeks through which the land holds moisture from the rains that it absorbed and that did not run off into the rivers... The average flow of the Ganges River is 2800 cubic meters per second, but it fluctuates between 1700 [cu. m/s] in the dry season and 56,000... in the monsoon... Supplied with water the year around, much of India's land could produce two and even three crops per year... Major national effort went to begin the impounding of the average 660 million cubic meters of rainfall delivered so erratically and torrentially by the annual monsoons... From less than 100 million [cu. m] in 1950, impoundment now exceeds 300 million [cu. m]... The land under irrigation has doubled, from 20 to 40 million hectares. The tripling of India's total output of grain to 166 million tons in 1985 is owed principally to the doubling of the output per hectare. This achievement has brought increase in the population's daily average intake of calories from a wasting 1700 kilocalories to a still inadequate 2500 kilocalories. To provide adequate nutrition to its prospective 1.2 billion population, India possesses the necessary resources and the technology... [Whether or not it eventually does so] is a question for sociology, economics, and politics... Responding to economic incentive... Chinese farmers increased... the land under cultivation from 90 million to 100 million hectares. With capital input from the center, they increased the land under irrigation from 30 million hectares in 1950 to 45 million in 1985... The input of energy per hectare, principally in the form of fertilizer, is estimated to have multiplied 100 times over the input of the biological energy of the farmer... Per hectare, the yield increased more than threefold, from 1200 kilograms of rice in 1950 to 3850 kilograms in 1985... Fossil water of Pleistocene vintage from aquifers under the Sahara and the Arabian Peninsula irrigates new farmlands there (at least for as long as those nonrecharging aquifers hold out)... [while t]he people of sub-Saharan Africa have secured an increase of the output of food since 1950 almost entirely by increasing the number of hectares under cultivation. In effect, each additional family in the fast-growing population has got its food by opening up new land. Following such primitive practices as slash-and-burn and bush-fallow, they plant and harvest less than half their cropland from year to year. Barred from the best 10 million hectares of river-valley land by insect vectors of parasitic diseases, they overwork the poorest land. In consequence, they lose millions of hectares each year to desert that advances at the rate of 5 kilometers per year into the Sahel region on the southern perimeter of the Sahara. The nomadic peoples, who have so successfully employed cattle to secure their nourishment from plant life inedible by [humans], are being compelled by the increasing density of their population to abandon their technology and way of life for "sedentarization" on the barren land... What the Africans want most are the professional cadres trained in the agriculture sciences that have led the Chinese and the Indians into the second agricultural revolution. The first generation of Africans taught by qualified African scientists is graduating from universities in Nigeria, Kenya, and Tanzania. These... [graduates] will begin the deflection of African history in the next century. Occupation and development of the 10 million hectares of river-valley land may be facilitated by the control of the insect disease-vectors issuing from the work of the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology at Nairobi. - 1992

Plants and the soil have been the focus[of] our attention for many years. The book, The Secret Life of Plants, written by [a colleague] and myself, came an international bestseller in 1973 when it first came out, and still is in print today... We had promised a sequel... and it was a long time coming. At first, we wanted to entitle the new book The Secret Death of Plants, but, apt as the title was, various publishing "experts" thought it too macabre. So Secrets of the Soil, as it was named, came out in 1989. It proposed brand new solutions for turning around the disastrous state of agricultural practice. Among them was Biodynamic Farming[-] a method of healing sick or barren soils and of growing healthy plants first proposed back in 1924 by the Austrian scientist, and clairvoyant, Rudolph Steiner, founder of the Anthroposophical movement. Steiner's highly practical recommendations have been considered so "occult" or "alchemical" that they have been castigated by the scientific culture as a joke, not to say worse. And the arbiters of popular culture have been equally scoffing. Though the book is really a companion volume to The Secret Life of Plants, it was boycotted for review in all leading American newspapers with the exception of the Boston Herald in which it was compared to... [the] now classic Silent Spring[(r:p2025, ln3 to p2028, ln23)]. Steiner's healing methods for agriculture and horticulture were basically ones working from "the bottom up." If the soil was healthy, so would plants growing in it be healthy and, climbing up the pyramid, so would the animals who eat the plants, and the humans who eat them plus the animals. An equally healing and productive method set forth in the book worked from "the top down." This was "Sonic Bloom," invented and developed... in Minnesota. The method combines foliar feeding - feeding plants, from sprouts to trees, through their leaves, not their roots - with a simultaneous broadcast of sonic frequencies in the same diapason as those of early morning birdsong. The astounding results obtained with the "Sonic Bloom" method are detailed in the book. What can be added here is that [the Minnesota inventor] has recently found that his ministrations work wonders on the growth of trees. To take one example, the Black Walnut, prized not only for its nuts but for its wood used in cabinet making and by sculptors, is a notoriously slow-growing tree that takes 80-100 years to reach maturity. But starting with a "slip" or "whip," a branchlet cut from a tree and rooted in the ground, [the inventor] has found that foliar fed nutrients, plus "sonics", can create twelve years growth in a Black Walnut in two years. What does this imply for an earth being rapidly deforested with each passing minute? While most foresters would write off [hi]s claims as "pure fantasy," recently the owners of more than 100,000 hectares of teak wood forests have invited the inventor to their plantations in Papua-New Guinea and Indonesia to see if his method can grow teak trees as quickly as it did walnuts. So these methods are there, in place, waiting to be used, used to create a "new impulse" as Steiner used to say. So far, they have not been widely disseminated. Only in A[US] where, due to more than three decades of effort by a single... [entrepreneur], does Biodynamic Farming seem to be coming into its own. As for... "Sonic Bloom," which was inspired by [the inventor]'s dream of eradicating world hunger, it has yet to be accepted as the remarkable agricultural method that it is. Why aren't these new methods being used everywhere? - 1994

Despite advances in crop science, global population growth seems almost sure to outstrip growth in food production in the next forty years... World per capita grain yields have been falling by about 1[%] a year since 1984... [F]actors limiting harvests include... failures of genetically uniform crops to stand up to disease and to insects... pollution... and... the exhaustion of aquifers (the aquifer under the US grain belt, the one under the north China plain, the one supplying the vital Punjab wheatfields, those waters are sinking by a meter a year...)... Africa now needs 14 million tonnes more grain per year than it produces. With a population growing at 3[%] a year, and agricultural production at 2[%], that shortfall will reach 50 million tonnes by the year 2000. China's growing population... and... diminishing farmland... could boost Chinese grain imports from 12 million tonnes per year now to 100 million by the year 2000. If countries with surpluses must choose between giving grain to Africa[, which has decreasing prosperity,] and selling it to China, [which has greater political power and]... increasing prosperity... the choice may not be difficult... *Overfishing*... not pollution, has so far been the major cause of declining fish stocks. Trawlers use advanced technology to pinpoint shoals, and then sweep up everything in huge nets kept open by heavy trawl-doors which can utterly plough up seabed ecosystems, while driftnets extend for up to

fifty kilometers. Much of the catch is discarded as trash. Of the rest, much becomes fertilizer or animal feed. Sea fishing provides some of the clearest examples of the 'Tragedy of the Commons': ...when a resource is exploitable by many individuals, it is to the advantage of each to grab as much as possible, in spite of how this leads to resource exhaustion. Global catches kept growing until 1989... In 1990 they began to fall. But although the U[N] estimates that the world's fishing fleets now make an annual loss totalling about [US\$]50 billion... the fleets operate as enthusiastically as ever, thanks to governmental subsidies. Some doubt the gravity of all this. It has, for example, been denied, and by such experts as the two who produced the *World Atlas of Desertification* for the U[N] Environment Programme, that deserts have advanced on a broad front. Certainly, many alleged desertifications are only cases of temporarily reduced rainfall. [Regardless of who is right, less politically correct commentators suggest that future] food scarcities... could be resolved in the usual way through famine deaths instead of putting the very survival of the human race at risk... *The Population Explosion* (1990)... suggested that the maximum readily sustainable global population would be two billion... In connection with this theme that the carrying capacity of the Earth should be treated as sacred, [another writer] tells of an American visiting a refugee camp where almost half had starved: Noticing sacks of grain stocked in great mounds in an adjacent field, [the American] asked the patriarch of the refugee community why the people did not simply overpower the lone soldier guarding the grain. The patriarch explained that the sacks contained seed for planting the next season. 'We do not steal from the future'... [the patriarch said. There are also commentators who point out that there could be] countries whose militaries might believe that unleashing, say, biological warfare [in the First World] would be preferable to starvation[in the Last World], and an act of just revenge on the disgustingly overfed.

...World agricultural production is growing at a slower rate... In the 1960s, production growth averaged 3[%] a year; in the 1970s, 2.3[%]; and from 1980-1992, 2[%]. Since then, average yearly production was up 1.8[%]... "The slowdown... is... due to the fact that people who would consume more do not have sufficient incomes to demand more food and cause it to be produced," [an]... FAO... report said... But delegates to the first summit called to fight famine are divided about how to resuscitate the agricultural revolution that saved Asia from mass hunger in the 1960s.

...World food supply: first here is the good news If the importance of events can be measured by the number of chauffeured limousines and bodyguards, then the World Food Summit that closed in Rome on Sunday was almost as important as a... concert[by Wacko]. But the world's media mostly ignored... [the summit], and you can hardly blame them. The debate that should have been fought out in Rome really is important: will we still have enough food for everybody in 10 or 20 years' time? But all the optimists were on the inside, and all the pessimists were on the outside, and they never really connected. Which is a pity, because it would help to have a clearer idea of who is right. On the inside were people like... the [US] Secretary of Agriculture, boasting that... [his country] is "the leading supplier of food... Our farmers now plant for world demand." Or, as one trade expert put it: "The more mouths there are to feed, the more the food companies want to fill them." This generally upbeat assumption that the market will take care of everything set the tone for the entire conference, despite occasional dissenters such as [Cuba's President]. But then governments generally prefer to be optimistic in public about such questions because any other attitude would put them under severe pressure to do something now. By the same token, the aid agencies and environmentalists are professional pessimists: if there is no crisis, who needs them? ...[the] head of the Washington-based environmental group Worldwatch, [who was] one of the outsiders... argues that the... host of the summit... (FAO)... is "overstating food production and misleading political leaders... For the first time in history the oceanic fish catch and the grain harvest per person are both declining. In each of the past three years, we consumed more than we produced, drawing on depleted grain stocks that will not be rebuilt." ...[the FAO and the head of Worldwatch] are both working from roughly the same numbers, but they can't both be right. Or can they? The average human being, in a lifetime, consumes about 75 tonnes of water, 17 tonnes of carbohydrates, 2.5 tonnes of proteins, and more than a tonne of fats. There are now six billion people in the world, and even the most recent and hopeful figures for global population growth... suggest that there will be 9.4 billion of us – three more Chinas – by the time the global population stabilises around 2050. Even the FAO admits that the world will have to produce 75[%] more food over the next three decades to meet rising demand. That's a lot of extra food, and they're not making any more land. There is, however, still some mileage left in the "green revolution." The optimists point out that the U[S] went from producing 252 million tonnes of the 17 most important food, feed and fibre crops in 1949 to 610 million tonnes in 1980. Yet the amount of land in use increased by only 3[%], and the number of people working the land dropped drastically... The "green revolution" in the U[S] sparked similar agricultural revolutions in Europe and large parts of Asia, and kept world grain production growing comfortably faster than world population right down to 1990. But pessimists argue that this was a one-time jump in production that cannot be repeated... [However, we] just need two more continent-wide green revolutions to plug the gaps. And oddly enough, we happen to have two continents left... Africa, the second-largest continent, has scarcely benefited from the [green revolution] techniques at all yet. Then there is the cerrado – the endless, grassy plains of central South America, mostly in Brazil – where the acid soils were considered useless for farming until scientists began producing acid-resistant strains of rice, corn and soybeans in the past few years. Only 12 million hectares of the cerrado are farmed but the total, some 200 million hectares, is more than all the cultivated land that feeds India... So the FAO is right: the long-term prospects for feeding a world of 9.5 billion people are reasonably good – provided, of course, that its assumptions are not knocked sideways by major changes in global climate and rainfall patterns. But [the head of] Worldwatch... is... also right, because the short-term problems with food supply may be quite horrifying.

...World food supply: now here is some bad news... Last August, before the main autumn harvest in North America and Europe, we were down to a worldwide grain reserve of only 48 days. All we need is a few more years of declining reserves, then one really bad summer in the main grain-growing areas of the Northern Hemisphere, and we're looking at a worldwide shortfall of maybe 50 million tonnes of grain... The global market in food has come into being only in the past 20 or 30 years, and mostly it provides people with more food at better prices than if it did not exist. But it also creates the possibility of a global famine. Not a famine where everybody starves, of course... It is a safe bet that nobody reading this... will starve even if there is a global famine. Even in famines, only the poor starve. If you... live in a country rich enough to import grain at inflated prices and distribute it domestically, you will also not starve, even if you are poor. But if you live in a very poor country[... one that]... cannot pay the exorbitant price that grain will rise to if there is even a temporary worldwide shortfall in the amount of grain available... and you are not personally rich, then you are in great danger. For the next few decades, there are practically bound to be global famines. This prediction is entirely compatible with the other, more comforting, prediction that emerged from last week's World Food Summit in Rome. The... FAO... believes that we can eventually grow enough food to feed a world of 9.5 billion people. But in the short run, a lot of people may end up dead. The divergent predictions stem from the fact that the market's response to rising demand for food is quite slow. It takes time to bring new land into production... The new factor in the equation that makes such an unpredictable event [as global famine] possible is the "China syndrome": the fact that as China and other Asian countries climb rapidly up the ladder of industrialisation, the first thing that hundreds of millions of newly affluent consumers do is to add more meat to their diet. The average citizen of southern China already consumes more meat a head than the Japanese. Even India, where vegetarianism is widely viewed as a sign of virtue, is seeing meat consumption soar. And the problem is that the more meat and animal products rich people eat, the less grain there is for poor people to eat. A simple illustration: China has adopted the national goal of doubling the number of eggs[– which 'contain all known vitamins except C', but also 'contain cholesterol in the proportion of 20 parts per 1000 (a similar proportion to brains)' –] consumed by the average citizen from 100 to 200 annually by 2000. That will mean feeding an extra 1.3 billion hens... And what will the hens eat? Grain, of course – enough grain to use up the entire production of A[US] and more besides... Yet if affluent consumers are willing to pay a high enough premium for meat (and they are), then the required amount of grain will be diverted from human use to animal feed. That is the market at work... [■ At the summit, US] officials said many new techniques were being shared with [Last World] countries but private firms also had a right

to market their new inventions without seeing their ownership rights washed away... [Consequently,] many farmers were struggling to survive while research stations only a few miles away were growing food with yields three or even 10 times as high... The green revolution of the 1960s and 1970s depended on fertilisers, pesticides and irrigation... [However,] with fertiliser use reaching saturation levels in some countries, scientists are now toying with genetic engineering to create crop varieties that environmentalists describe as a risky experiment with nature. Greenpeace activists blockaded what they believed to be the first shipments to Europe of genetically altered soybeans developed by [US] chemical group Monsanto.

...The world that Greenpeace wants is pretty much the world I want. So why do I go slitty-eyed with suspicion over Greenpeace's doings? Could it be that Greenpeace has been invaded by flat-earthers and is going to be laughed off the face of the planet that it set out to save? Consider Greenpeace, genes and glyphosate. Glyphosate is a wonder weedkiller. It zaps what it touches and turns inert on hitting the ground. Some plants resist it: nettles, mallows, hearts-ease and sorrel. Otherwise it is so good I have been forced to put it aside and, instead, to hand-weed several kilometres of young grapevines... Monsanto, one of the companies that make glyphosate, had a brilliant idea: Why not slice the glyphosate-resistant gene out of nettles or whatever, splice it into the DNA of a crop plant and so produce a strain of plants which from generation to generation will withstand weedkiller while all around them weeds fall dead? It is not a new idea. Humans have been tinkering with genes for thousands of years. We have turned wolves and jackals into Pekingese and whippets, and wild cabbages into brussels sprouts and cauliflowers[(there are now 'a wide variety of cauliflower types available to choose from to find one appropriate to the climate and season'), then recently created a cross between the cauliflower and broccoli]. The new thing is that gene-splicing lets us bypass the limits on sexual reproduction and swap genes among plants and animals which, in nature, cannot interbreed... The alternative to glyphosate-resistant crops lies in every farm shed in the country – selective poisons which kill only target weeds and whose residues remain on food crops or accumulate in the soil and leach into groundwater. The priests and priestesses of Greenpeace, though, have been marching around a rape-seed crop in the South Island protesting that the crop has been bred to resist glyphosate. Rape is one of the cabbage family and Greenpeace asks: What if flying pollen crossed with a weed and bred a monstrous pest that glyphosate could not harm? Fair go! Crosses between unrelated species don't happen[outside of the lab]. Carrots and cabbages? Camels and elephants? The rape-seed farmers may just as well fret that their neighbours' dandelions will pollinate rape flowers and ruin the harvest... [Speaking of flowers, a] carpet made out of 800,000 begonias [is currently attracting] hundreds of spectators at the Grand Place in Brussels. The display, which measures 75m by 25m, is on show through the weekend. The flower exhibition has been mounted 10 times since 1971.

...MORE than 100,000 flowers and plants will take centre stage at this week's Ellerslie Flower Show, [which organisers]... say... is the biggest gardening and horticultural event in the South Pacific. This year 70,000 visitors are expected and will boost Auckland's economy by \$6 million in five days... Caterers expect to make more than 60,000 cups of tea, serve 5000 bottles of wine and 500kg of strawberries during the show. A meadow garden was planted at the site at the beginning of September and workers have been employed at the show for the past three weeks landscaping and preparing... more than 300... exhibits. ●... [Similar in concept to the annual show in Chelsea,] Ellerslie Flower Show runs from November 13... A full adult pass costs \$23; an afternoon pass \$18.

...LAVENDER – it's good for burns or as an antiseptic, helps the sleepless, soothes nerves. And now there's a blossoming business in N[Z], growing the sweet-smelling herb commercially... A lavender-oil industry is beginning to thrive and the dried flowers are sought after for the making of pot-pourri, scented sachets and other sweet-smelling gifts. Even so, the chair[perso]n of the Lavender Oil Producers' Association... [(which so) far... has fewer than 25 members although not all of them produce oil)]... cautions that the plant is not the answer to kiwifruit-growers' woes or an alternative to the depressed beef industry... [because] it is costly and time-consuming to set up even a small block of commercial lavender – close to \$7000 a hectare for young plants, with harvesting machinery and an oil still costing a further \$35,000 or more. Plants are grown at the rate of 6600 to the hectare... [T]he average size of commercial crops in this country is only 2ha. [The chairperson] is one of the largest growers and has just 6ha. "To grow it as a commercially viable crop you need to have about 20ha in plants,"... During the last season (late summer) [the chairperson]'s crop produced 20 litres of the fragrant essential oil... N[Z]'s annual consumption is 3.3 tonnes, from a world harvest of 1200 tonnes... France is by far the greatest oil exporter, with Bulgaria, Tasmania and, decreasingly, England, growing a number of species for... [the oil which] is used widely in the booming aromatherapy industry and in the manufacture of perfumes, scented soaps and candles... Hospitals are using it in increasing quantities for skin cleansing and the soothing of burns and scar tissue... WHILE there are scores of different varieties of lavender, the three most commonly used commercial species are *Angustifolia*, *Intermedia* and *Latifolia*... *Angustifolia* (sometimes referred to as "true lavender") is the main oil-producing plant because of its especially sweet aroma, but it produces only about 60 litres a hectare. *Intermedia*, on the other hand, will produce as much as 120 litres a hectare. The *Latifolia* species gives a more camphorous, less sweet oil... [T]he *Lavandin* species, a sterile hybrid of the *Angustifolia*... is also a good insect repellent... particularly against sandflies. [While on the topic of repelling insects, a new 'insecticide is being made from the root of the tropical derris plant', and the suppliers of *Genesis* claim their product heralds a 'new era in parasite control'.]

...The decision by the Pesticides Board to end the use of a volatile form of the herbicide 2,4-D is seen as a small victory for campaigners wanting to have all agricultural spray-drift branded as chemical trespass... Despite the agreement, the chemical can be manufactured in Dow Elanco's New Plymouth factory until next October, raising fears that long-time users will stockpile as much as they can. The 2,4-D compounds are part of the phenoxy acid family of chemicals that came into wide agricultural use after... [WW2], many of which have now been banned overseas... [as] they have been linked to a number of medical conditions and are probably carcinogenic... One of the family, 245-T, was voluntarily removed from use in N[Z] in 1989 after a four-year campaign against it... A biochemist and former member of the Toxic Substances Board... says the decision to stop using the isobutyl formulation was a regulatory charade. "Using any of the phenoxy acids, and in particular the wide use of 2,4-D, is an uncivilised procedure. Scientists still don't really understand how these chemicals provoke the disorderly growth of plant cells which they rely on for their effectiveness,"... [However, supporters] of the chemicals, including the manufacturers, say there is no "hard evidence" that 2,4-D causes cancer or other short-term problems, and that it is safe if used according to directions... A recent [regional] council report revealed... a number of users, particularly aerial sprayers, have been applying 2,4-D diluted with only 10 litres of water per hectare, rather than the recommended 60-100 litres... The isobutyl formulation is preferred by most farmers and spray contractors because it is more rapidly absorbed into plant tissue and is therefore less vulnerable to being washed off by rain in the hours immediately after spraying. It is the most widely used agricultural herbicide in N[Z]... It is also the chemical most commonly named in complaints to authorities about spray-drift. Research suggests that in some cases up to 40[%] of the herbicide can vaporise within a few hours of application, sometimes vaporising and drifting hours after it has landed on the target plants. If the wind shifts after application, the chemical can drift several kilometres... Over the years there have been a number of civil cases about spray-drift damage, particularly to susceptible crops such as grapes and tomatoes. Many more claims have been settled out of court... On the enforcement front, the board says it recognises the role of regional councils as the lead agencies in monitoring the use of agrichemicals. In Northland, where the greatest amounts of 2,4-D are used, the regional council has come under pressure to take a stand against spray-drift... A number of regional councils, including Northland, have indicated they will use air quality regulations to police the use of agricultural chemicals... A... stable amine (salt) based version of 2,4-D is already available and the Pesticides Board has now approved the manufacture of a 2-ethylhexyl ester version... 20 times less volatile than the isobutyl... But... Dow Elanco... has suggested the new formulation will cost up to 30[%] more. For farmers, some of whom spray hundreds of hectares in their annual battle against thistles, broadleaf weeds and noxious plants... the extra cost is a concern.

...environmental activists... yesterday voiced concern that... [a] shipment of genetically altered soybeans... bound for A[US], would find their way to [NZ], unleashing an unknown and potentially serious risk to the nation's health and environment... They have called for a moratorium on the importation and sale of genetically altered foods and for compulsory labelling... The soybeans[... which]... food regulators in A[US say are]... not for human consumption... have been altered to be resistant to the herbicide Roundup and under reciprocal arrangements through the new A[NZ] Food Authority... can freely enter N[Z]. The... "Roundup Ready Soybean" had been rejected by European consumers and retailers because of health risks... [But] the authority said [it] had a good guarantee the beans in question were safe. "That is that the soybeans are designed for cattle feed, not human feed." [The authority] also ruled out contamination by humans eating the cattle fed with the beans. But a physicist... who is the Auckland director of the National Food Commission, said that even if it was true the first shipment was not for human consumption other shipments would soon follow. [The physicist] also challenged the authority's ruling out contamination by humans eating cattle fed with the beans. "Research shows that antibiotic resistance... can pass from animals to other animals and on to humans through consuming foods and medicines in animals."

...SOYA-BASED infant formulas should be used only on medical advice in the wake of a UK Health Department report recommending urgent research into the safety of the products... The chief medical officer of the... [d]epartment wants the research done "as a high priority" to determine whether the formulas affect infant reproductive development because they contain phytoestrogens (plant oestrogens). The chemicals influence [human] menstrual cycles and have been shown to cause infertility in animals. [A]Wellington barrister... who has been campaigning to have soy infant formulas removed from the market until they are proven safe, said... "...our studies... have estimated that a child fed exclusively on soy infant formula would get the oestrogen equivalent of two to three oral contraceptive pills a day." ...[In related news, a] change in diet can be of major assistance to the 85[% of gals in AUS and NZ] who seek help during menopause. An expert says fruit and vegetables, cereals and legumes all provide hormonally active compounds which help balance the decreasing levels of fem[inin]e hormones at mid-life. But... [the] associate professor in reproductive endocrinology at Sydney's Royal Hospital for [Gals], head of the A[US]n Menopause Society and a world authority on the subject, also acknowledges that patch-delivered hormone replacement therapy is the only effective therapy for some [patients]. "Some... have a very efficient liver which simply removes all the oestrogen taken in tablet form... So oral HRT does not work for them..." Pharmacist this week announced it was halving the subsidy on transdermal HRT, which will increase the cost to between \$12 and \$16 a month. The drug-funding agency claims... patches offer no clinical advantage over the tablets and the convenience... is not worth the extra cost. [The expert], who has just completed a research programme addressing nutrition and the menopause, presented his findings at a conference in Rotorua this week, and spoke to a group of health professionals at the Auckland School of Medicine yesterday. His advice for [gals] approaching the years of menopause is to "eat as much plant material as possible and to be as vegetarian as you can stand." His ideal diet includes five daily portions of fruit and vegetables, with whole-grain cereal, legumes and a minimum of animal fats. [The expert] also suggests that [they] add tofu to their diet or substitute cow's milk with soy milk. All plants contain hormonally active compounds but soy beans are "in a class of their own" with 10 times more than other foods... Limiting alcohol intake is also recommended, as [gals] who drink more than three measures of alcohol a day increase their risk of breast cancer by 70[%], the expert says. But while [gals] commonly worry about breast cancer, far more die from cardiovascular disease. The fem[inin]e hormones provide a natural protection against CVD but this is lost after menopause. [The expert] has recently completed a pilot study using a clover-based product in tablet form which indicates... plant hormones may play a major role in preventing heart disease. Clover has even more phyto[estrogens] than soya beans.

...Shoppers go for healthy products... Researchers... studied N[Z] supermarket sales from July 1995 to July 1996 and found that Nature's Fresh bread is our top brand with \$54 million in sales. Coca-Cola beverages, Tegal frozen chickens, Treasures disposable nappies and Anchor milk... rounded out the top five... The research... did not include "house" brands such as supermarket labels... Despite severe advertising restrictions and anti-smoking warnings, three cigarette brands made the top 20... This compares well with A[US] however, where similar research placed nine cigarette brands in the top 20... [- including four] in their first five supermarket items of choice. Coca-Cola was the only product to outsell cigarettes across the Tasman... The results of the local annual study will be published in the November issue of *Marketing Magazine*. It suggests an increasing consumer sophistication with the growth in sales of ethnic foods, premium catfoods, hair care products, olive oil and a switch from cask to bottled wines. Rising new brands... were led by Sure As Eggs... with \$4.6 million sales. Bluebird megamix cereal snacks and Cadbury Timeout chocolate bars were second and third.

...Call for food consumers to be more knowledgeable What we don't know can't hurt us... or can it? ...As food consumers we... understand little of what happens between the farm gate and plate... [an] Otago University anthropologist told a conference of food writers in Dunedin. N[Z] has cheerfully participated in a global food system, for instance, that requires us to apply a solid marinade of pesticides to apples. Yet we trenchantly insist that N[Z] products are clean and green... and we believe these myths about our own produce more than overseas consumers do... Food advertising suggests (increasingly erroneously) that foodstuffs come directly from nature to our plates. But the truth is the processes of global food production are increasingly complex – and largely opaque to the consumer... [The anthropologist] describes a world food system that is lurching from crisis to crisis. Failures are apparent when regions experience famine and even successes have negative effects – such as increasing Western obesity... Most of us would be hard put to name even one of the five largest grain multinationals, though we could name several giant oil or computer companies. "Large food companies lurk in the shadows and are only occasionally dragged into the light of day,"... That happened in the 1970s when consumers boycotted Nestle products because the company was promoting infant formula in the [Last] World... Consumers glimpsed questionable business tactics and responded vigorously... [Nestle] was converting the time-honoured and simple system where [mothers] breast-feed infants into a far more complex one of purchasing First World milk and processing it into formula for [Last] World mothers. This "thickening" of the food system (or increasing complexity in the middle stages) continues to happen... In response to a butter surplus, butter fat is added to calves' feed – surely a complex way of getting milk from the cow's udder to the calf, says [the anthropologist – who] traces our present world food system back to the British industrial revolution of last century... Factory workers crowding into cities needed to be fed. But farmers could not produce enough food and transport systems were inadequate, resulting in bread riots. British workers were being slowly starved to death, and that put serious brakes on industrial progress. The solution lay in building on existing trade in luxury items like sugar, spices, tobacco, coffee and tea, and extending it to staple foods. Advances in steam transport allowed food to be imported from colonies, and by the end of the 19th century the British urban poor had a dramatically changed relationship with food. They shopped for food, rather than providing it themselves. The standard diet was wheat based, and spiced up with stimulants... and meat when available. Put another way, the classic working class meal was a chunk of white bread, a smear of jam or treacle, a sweet cup of tea and a smoke... • [The fruit of the BREADFRUIT TREE is an important item of food for natives of the South Seas. When fully ripe it has a sweetish taste, is laxative and indigestible, and goes bad quickly. It is gathered before it is fully ripe, when the flesh is firm and white, mealy and rich in starch, and has almost all the nutritive qualities of wheaten bread. It is cut in slices and toasted on hot coals, or baked in the oven until the outside skin becomes dark. Prepared in this way it is a valuable food, very nutritious, its taste recalling that of freshly baked bread'...

'Ever bought a loaf of "fresh" packaged bread, only to discover it was already stale? When an Aucklander found the crusts on her North's Kibble-wheat sandwich were so dry it couldn't eat them, the Aucklander promptly rang the factory. After all, the bread had been bought at the supermarket only that day, a Friday. Her call was put through to a dispatcher "who was probably more honest with me than a bakery employee should've been." The dispatcher told her the bread had probably been baked on the previous Wednesday morning. The loaf could have been sitting on the supermarket shelf until just before fresh deliveries at lunchtime on Friday. At packaged bread plants, loaves are bagged and closed with a plastic tag – colour-coded according to the day of

baking. That coding was introduced for the convenience of the contractors who deliver the bread, not the customer – who is instead offered a “best by” date stamped on the tag, and set at five days after the day of baking. This customer’s loaf carried a white tag (Wednesday) with no date stamped on it. The dispatcher told her it should have had a date. How can customers know they are buying bread actually baked two and a half days earlier, the Auckland asked. “We try not to let it happen to often,” was the reply. The dispatcher offered to post the Auckland vouchers for two replacement loaves. But the Auckland is still an unhappy customer. “I remember fresh, warm, crusty loaves being delivered daily to the letter box. What has happened to our so-called daily bread? Shouldn’t we know when our bread was baked?” Well, yes, we probably should – and canny shoppers already do. Furthermore, consumers who know how to crack the bread code might be in the bakeries’ best interest. Most NZ packaged bread is made by only two companies. Allied Foods has just over 19% of the \$225m bread market. Allied’s main rival is Goodman Fielder Milling and Baking, which claims 54% of the market. Allied’s managing director says the company delivers bread daily – and some days twice daily. The contractors who do the deliveries for Allied remove old bread from the supermarket or dairy shelves, and stack the new loaves. “When you buy the bread it is no more than 36 hours old,” says the managing director. “It almost makes me cry when I see the returned bread.” That is because it seems so wasteful – bread which still has two or three days before its best-by expiry date is either dumped or fed to pigs. “On average, 15% of the bread you bake is returned.” But sad as it might be to see almost 20 million loaves a year wasted, shoppers do want to buy the freshest bread available in the store – not the pig fodder. Perhaps the last word on bread freshness should go to Goodman’s research and development manager. “We demand too much from our bread in AUS and NZ. Customers want bread that is fresh, white and soft – and that can be kept like a packet of biscuits.” Some in the baking industry say we have gone too far to accommodate these conflicting desires, the manager says. Basic home-made bread with no improvers or emulsifiers does not last long, but the manager says no nasties or preservatives go into our commercially baked bread to make it last. Techniques and ingredients that do help include putting more water into the dough, using hydrogenated vegetable fat and a soft soy-based fat, and adding alpha-amylase enzyme (which is naturally present in flour as well). Adding sugar also helps since it attracts moisture. To prevent mould or bacteria growth (a problem with sliced bread) an acidity regulator (citric acid or vinegar are well known ones, but bakers tend to use calcium acetate) is added to reduce the pH of the bread.’ ‘All cereals – farinaceous foodstuffs are the basis of human diet – can be made into bread, but wheat and rye are particularly suitable.’]

...it’s hard to find a food that has all the wonders of bread. For those who bake their own there’s the hands-on satisfaction of mixing, kneading and shaping, and the ambrosial aroma from the oven while it’s cooking... In Christian scriptural language “to break bread” refers to the Eucharist and means to partake of food. Jewish communities the world over regard the breaking of challah, the special sabbath loaf, as a signal for the commencement of the Kabbalat Shabbat, the cherished Friday evening meal. The challah, enriched with eggs and sometimes made with raisins, sultanas, nuts, saffron and other spices, thus has special significance in the Jewish household. Some Jewish people still bake their own, but for others the pressures of modern living have meant buying this traditional yeast bread from commercial bakers... The variety of bread now available in N[Z] is limited only by the baker’s imagination... The shape of bread is also changing... The Designer Bread Company in Auckland... has made [its] mark with decorative bread, creating spirals, swirls, flowerpots, daisies, shamrocks, buttons, bows, twists and crosses. [The company] only takes orders, and... will make anything, however big, small or unusual. [The company also] turns out lavender and marigold biscuits, rose muffins and chervil rolls as easily as... pain au chocolat, panettone (a festive bread from Milan) and the German stollen. Bread has been a major food source since neolithic times, over 12,000 years ago, when coarsely crushed grain was mixed with water and the resulting dough was baked by covering it with hot ashes and placing it on heated stones. The earliest form of bread was flat, and in many parts of the world today flatbread (some leavened, others not) continues to be a staple food: chappatis... parathas... and naan... are popular in India, corn or flour tortillas in Mexico, and pita bread in Greece and the Middle East... Over 2000 years ago the Egyptians discovered that if wheat dough was allowed to ferment it formed a gas which produced a light, expanded loaf. Later civilisations used beer froth and other fermenting substances to get their bread to rise. In 1850 Louis Pasteur identified a single-celled microscopic fungus as the cause of this leavening process and determined that yeast converts sugar into alcohol and carbon dioxide. The gluten in the flour forms a skin that traps these carbon dioxide bubbles and aerates the dough. Today’s baker’s yeast is available in several forms: compressed, fresh and granulated. For sourdough, however, the ancient Egyptian principle of leaving the dough to attract wild airborne yeasts is still employed. Sometimes yoghurt or cheese is used to accelerate the process. Because wild yeasts differ between geographical areas, each sourdough develops its own characteristics and flavour. The Devonport Stone Oven in Auckland makes particularly good sourdough bread... Five bakers on rota enable The Stone Oven to operate around the clock. They supply nearly 80 restaurants, cafes and healthfood stores in N[Z] with organic sourdough bread, and two delicatessens in Tahiti with a weekly stock of sunflower seed sourdough... [B]lack Russian and barley ryes – no-wheat loaves – regularly wing their way to A[US] in the suitcases of visitors-in-the-know, and the East West bread and rice kaiu, containing cooked, organic, shortgrained brown rice, are hot favourites. French and Italian breads are also popular in N[Z]... Pandoro, an Italian bread shop in Parnell, Auckland, has 300 wholesale customers throughout the country. All-night baking ensures the product is ready for distribution by 5am, and the increasing demand resulted in the opening of a branch in Wellington last month... The most common grain used for flour is wheat. Wholemeal flour is ground from the entire kernel, comprising the bran, the germ or embryo, and endosperm. The embryo is rich in protein, vitamins and oil. The endosperm supplies the starch. Because both bran and germ are removed for refined white flour, the emphasis on healthy eating and awareness of the importance of dietary fibre has led to a decrease in the consumption of white bread in N[Z]... In 1985 63[%] of all bread consumed was white; by 1990 the figure had dropped to 44[%]. NZers]... eat about 4.5 million loaves of bread a week, which works out to about 1.3 loaves per person... To counteract the conception that white bread is unhealthy some bakers worked on improving its image. Even large establishments such as Quality Bakers N[Z] Ltd, with 22 bakeries around the country, got into the act and introduced a high-fibre white bread. “As a base food, bread is a good source of complex carbohydrates... It’s low in fat and is a good source of fibre and protein. But there’s no question that wholemeal bread and grain bread have more fibre content than white bread. They are, however, dense breads. Our high-fibre white, made from special maize, has 60[%] more fibre than ordinary white bread, but is as soft.”

...Low-fat, high-fibre diets may stunt children’s growth and could lead to anaemia, learning difficulties, and heart disease. British researchers have warned such diets could also lack zinc... [‘Fruits, vegetables and cereals contain high levels of dietary fibre which can bind zinc, making it unavailable to the body. At least one study has shown that a high fibre meal can reduce zinc absorption by more than 97%!’ On a positive note, don’t] fret if your toddler won’t eat anything but Weetbix, milk and strawberries, says [a] Sydney paediatrician... That kind of eating is perfectly normal – and temporary. But what if they demand corn chips, Coke and ice blocks – and nothing else will do? If those foods are in the house then the parent has the problem, says [the paediatrician]. “From about two, children are sussing out who in the family is in charge of what. If they learn that Mum is in charge of what food is available, and they are in charge of whether they want to eat it, then you have a very healthy system set up.” ...No more mealtime hassles. No threatening “no pudding unless you eat your veg.” No insisting on eating everything on the plate. You present the food and the child takes it or leaves it. It is that simple, says [the paediatrician], who is in N[Z] on a lecture tour. Her topic is *The Child Who Won’t Eat* and though her tour is sponsored by Watties, [the paediatrician] isn’t here to recommend little jars of her sponsor’s fine products. “Canned baby foods are nutritionally fine, but uninteresting. Starting on solids is about learning about colour and texture and taste, and canned foods tend to be all the same.” Better to serve tiny helpings of individual veges... but don’t waste time preparing special meals for infants with minuscule appetites. “You have too much vested interest in their eating them.” Just mash up your own leftover vegetables... and put them aside for toddler tomorrow. [The paediatrician] wastes no sympathy on parents who say “[my child]’ll only eat chocolate.” “I say: ‘Who gives him the chocolate?’ The parents’ role is to say: [‘]This is what is in our house, this is what is available. If you want to snack we have crackers and cheese and apples and you’re welcome to

it.” For years my... children refused anything green that was cooked, so I run that past [the paediatrician] “That doesn’t matter... If they’re eating fruit and raw vegetables they are getting all they need.” Parents should model good eating habits: sitting in front of the telly eating chocolate and chips and Coke is out... Not that [the paediatrician] would ban confectionery altogether – a regular ice cream treat is fine, but don’t make sweets either a no-no or a reward. What [the paediatrician] does advocate is respecting the child’s right to decline food... [O]ne study clocked parents prompting about food once a minute, says [the paediatrician]. This compared with only 2.2 prompts an hour for other activities. Some of this urging is because we don’t understand about children’s growth patterns... “Nature is very mean. Children in utero grow at a phenomenal rate. In their first year they grow more than twice as fast as adolescents.” Lulled into complacency by their burgeoning babes, parents can fret when growth slows markedly in the child’s second year. That is also when toddlers start to assert their independence... Not only does nagging (“negative prompting”) result in the child eating less (and less varied) food, but some studies suggest that warring at meal times may result in obesity or anorexia in latter life. A child’s attitude to food goes in phases... Tastes are forming even in the womb. “Amniotic fluid has taste. If mum has had a garlicky meal, the fluid swallowed will taste of garlic.” Breast milk is similarly affected. “Breast-fed babies will more quickly adapt to new tastes than formula fed babies because they get a wide experience of tastes.” In the first year of life babies will taste anything, but by one year “neophobia” develops. “That means if you haven’t seen it before, you don’t trust it.” It probably evolved as a protection mechanism – protecting the cave-crawling baby from eating new and poisonous berries. So during this phase mother has to present new foods several times over before the baby learns to accept them. By two that mistrust is diminishing, and by four to six it is over... The child is by then more influenced by family and by peer group, who may of course be crunching crisps and downing fizzy drinks – or fruit juice. Juice as a regular thirst quencher gets the thumbs down from [the paediatrician]. “At one, infants need about 600ml of full fat milk (or equivalent) a day. Above that, water is the best drink... Parents often say ‘[]but they won’t drink water.’” Presumably these are the same wussy mums and dads whose kids will only eat chocolate. What is confusing them is that junior who used to get through a bottle of juice in a session, now acts like a well-irrigated camel. The good news is that [such a child] is as likely to die of thirst as the camel. “Infants will only drink as much water as they need – and in winter that will be very little.” By offering them water you are familiarising them with the stuff that will quench their thirst in summer[(‘our bodies contain approximately 70% water, eliminating daily an average of three litres; when the water content is lowered to a considerable degree, the sensation of thirst results’)]... **The trouble with juice is that even the purest is high in sugar[, which makes drinks]... such as... orange juice... notorious... mood-changers... Toddlers will swig [juice] because it is sweet and because [drinking it] is less time-consuming than eating. Like chips and chocolate, it satisfies their energy requirements, leaving them no appetite for foods they need. Two cups of juice is the sugar equivalent of eating eight apples, says [the paediatrician], so if you must serve juice either dilute it or limit it to one cup a day.**

...An apple a day might keep the doctor away – but it could keep your dentist in business. That’s the message from [a]visiting Hong Kong dental health expert... who says chewing a stick of gum for half an hour after lunch is better than trying to clean your pearly whites with an apple. The sugar-containing fruit sticks around the teeth to help trigger cavities. Gum stimulates saliva which helps protect against fillings. It’s better to finish off your meal with a vegetable such as a carrot or celery stick, or even a wedge of calcium-containing cheese. “There is a lot of rethinking going on about so-called ‘safe’ foods,” says... [the] professor of children’s dentistry and orthodontics at the University of Hong Kong. The emergence of sugar-free chewing gum as a weapon in the dental war means school kids who were once chewed out for chewing gum may now be encouraged... [The] managing director of the Wrigley [chewing gum]company which, with the Dental Association, sponsored [the professor]’s visit, said gum is even being given out to school dental therapists to pass on to children as part of dental hygiene education packages. And the company is talking to health authorities on incorporating it in primary prevention strategies... ENZA (formerly the Apple and Pear Marketing Board)... said it had never promoted apples as dental cleaners – it was well aware of the sugar levels in the fruit – but as a healthy part of the diet.

...[FLETCHERISM is the ‘doctrine established by an American industrialist, who restored his gravely failing health by following an extremely austere diet (after having read Gornaro’s book on the subject). The industrialist claimed to have discovered the “golden key to health” in mastication pushed to its extreme limits: not swallowing a mouthful of food until it was reduced to the state of a liquid pap and had lost all its flavour...]

Psychologists define under the term natural appetite the tendencies which instinctively cause us to satisfy the needs of the body. In physiology appetite is defined as something rather different from hunger. Hunger in reality is nothing more than the need to eat, whereas appetite is the lure of pleasure which one experiences whilst eating, brought about by a particular condition of the organism. The appetite is stimulated by the sight and smell of food; bitter substances frequently awaken lost appetite by releasing digestive secretions. In certain psychic and mental cases, appetite can degenerate into a craving for offensive and non-edible substances.’ Incidentally, Popeye] had the right idea about spinach. The fictional sailor gulped it straight from the can – and it kept him so strong that [Popeye] didn’t even need an opener to get the top off the can. Spinach won’t make you an instant iron[person] of course, nor is it an overnight miracle. But it yields long-term health effects matched by few other foods. A cup of cooked fresh spinach has twice as much vitamin A as the daily requirement needed to keep eyesight functioning properly. It also contains nearly a day’s worth of vitamin C for forming protein collagen and half a day’s supply of the antioxidant vitamin E to protect cell membranes. And as a side-salad, half a cup of chopped fresh spinach has twice the recommended daily amount of vitamin K, which enables blood to clot normally. But that’s not all the nutritional muscle spinach packs. For a pregnant [person], spinach is the perfect food. A cup of cooked fresh spinach contains more than a daily dose of folacin, which is essential for the formation of DNA, RNA, bone marrow and blood cells. Folacin is crucial during the first four weeks of pregnancy. And in a one-two punch, the same amount of spinach is a good source of calcium and iron, two things a pregnant [person] needs plenty of. Many adults still harbour childhood phobias about spinach. Too bad, because they’re missing some great treats: cooked spinach dressed with a dash of vinegar, or fresh spinach as a salad, tossed with warm crumbled bacon and chopped egg. Spinach is easy to buy and prepare and is readily available in many shops.

...[‘the nutritional value of the peanut plant is considerable. Its pods bury themselves in the earth to mature the seeds, which are eaten either raw or roasted. Peanut oil and peanut butter are made from this nut. The latter can be eaten in sandwiches or on pieces of toast accompanied with jam or jelly.’]

...At their most severe, food allergies can make sufferers prisoners in their own homes. But... airlines at least are trying to help to lessen the dangers... The danger of inhaling peanut dust and oil was highlighted this week by the case of [an]Auckland toddler... who nearly died on a flight back to N[Z]. The 16-month-old suffered an allergic reaction after passengers opened packets of peanuts en masse. Experts say such a severe reaction to inhaling peanut dust and oil is extremely rare. However, the artificial environment on a plane, where the cabin air recirculates, can be lethal for sufferers... Flying is also a risky business because medical attention can be some hours away. Two years ago, an American tourist returning from a holiday in N[Z] went into anaphylactic shock. Mr John Kirst died minutes before the Air N[Z] Boeing 747 touched down in Rarotonga, where it had been diverted when the [tourist] collapsed after his meal. [However, an Air NZ spokesperson] says it is not certain exactly what Mr Kirst reacted to because [the tourist] was sensitive to several foods, including cashew nuts, sesame seeds and fish. [Unfortunately, medication] for his allergies was stolen when his campervan was burgled in Auckland... Since [the 16-month-old]’s attack, a new policy has been introduced[by Air NZ]. If an individual sends a written request, the airline will: • Remove peanuts and peanut product from meals. • Not serve peanuts as snacks. • Check the aircraft thoroughly before each flight for dropped peanuts. • Ask passengers not to eat peanuts they might have brought with them... According to the Allergy Awareness Association, milk... eggs, fish, wheat[(‘gluten is a possible culprit’)]... peanuts and... other nuts can trigger severe reactions. The association’s medical adviser... says allergies to milk usually decrease as children grow older, but sensitivity to peanuts and eggs often remain for life. In [a British teenager]’s case, her sensitivity increased as [the allergy-sufferer] got older. As an 18-month-

old her face swelled up after [the toddler] had eaten peanuts. But at the age of 15 the allergic reaction became dramatically more acute. Now... [the teenager] can't go to the movies or a nightclub... can't go on a bus, go out for a meal or even shop for clothes. The British teenager suffers from the worst case of peanut allergy doctors have seen. A life-threatening attack can be triggered by contact with someone who has eaten peanuts in the past 24 hours... [The association's medical adviser] remembers a case in Sydney when a university student went to an Indonesian restaurant with friends. [The student] had been given an assurance that her meal would be peanut-free. But after her first mouthful... uttered just one word – "ambulance" – then collapsed and died... Overseas studies have found peanut allergy is increasing in younger children. Doctors believe this may be because of their mothers' diet. Research suggests that youngsters can become sensitised to peanut through traces found in breast milk, bottled milks and nipple creams, many of which contain peanut oil... Food labelling is a major problem, says the president of the [association]... who has a four-year-old allergic to peanuts, dairy products and eggs. Inadequate regulations allow manufacturers to leave off some ingredients which... can trigger reactions... [By the way, b]iotechnologists at an independent research centre at Cornell University in the U[S] are genetically engineering a banana to produce an antigen found in the outer coat of the hepatitis B virus... The research team hopes the experiments lead to the development of banana vaccines with the ability to protect... millions of young lives in developing countries... from a range of diseases including measles, yellow fever, diphtheria and polio... The researchers say banana vaccines could slash the cost of vaccines from up to \$NZ231 to a few cents a dose. The vaccine would be delivered in a puree, similar to babyfood... They showed last year that hepatitis B antigens produced by genetically engineered potatoes triggered an immune response in rats. But they switched to bananas because cooking potatoes destroyed the vaccine. - 1996

I am amazed... the public has been so blinded by overconfident hype from the biotech industry that people will now swallow almost anything, even Monsanto's version of glyphosate, Roundup... Herbicide enthusiasts... think ...a... "Roundup Ready soybean"... is a brilliant idea because it allows the farmer to get out there with his wonder weedkiller chemicals and scorch the earth of everything except the crop [the farmer] wants to grow, thereby gaining a marginal advantage over his economic competitors. Glyphosate-resistant corn, cotton, canola and sugar beet are just around the corner. Free of cost, N[Z] provides large Northern Hemisphere firms developing these products the chance to get in an extra growing season, allowing them more quickly to multiply their seed to commercial levels. For years environmentalists have... advocat[ed] that we should preserve the genetic diversity of our seed stocks and reduce dependence on agricultural chemicals. It is little wonder... Greenpeace is objecting to mono-cultures of herbicide-resistant crops and a new agricultural economy based on the expanded use of glyphosate. Any notion of a transition to more healthy methods of organic farming has been abandoned in favour of quick profits for those who play to the rules of the multinational giants. Unless we change course within a few short years those with greatest control over the world's economic capital will extend their influence to cover the processes whereby the integrity and stability of the whole of biology has been developed and maintained during the billions of years of evolution – the Earth's gene pool. It would be comforting to know that behind commercial interests in genetic engineering, and all of the hopeful propaganda about it in the media, there were sober scientists who have a deep appreciation of the ways of nature, people of the intellectual calibre of Newton and Einstein who were not blinded by their success in understanding something fundamental about our world. Sadly, such is not the case. Biotechnologists are mostly absorbed by the cleverness of their experimental trickery. Any sense of awe or respect for nature has been replaced by a concept of life as a quaint genetic jigsaw puzzle. From such a narrow perspective it is easy to believe that genetic engineering will be the means of finally transforming our global society so... the starving can be fed, the diseased cured, world population controlled, new super-species created and old ones rescued or resurrected from extinction. But... [w]e have not yet learned about the downside of biotechnology and we would be foolish to meddle with it. The scope for harm is enormous. The ultimate consequences of putting bacterial genes in plants cannot be judged from the results of classical selective breeding and hybridisation, whereby wolves have been turned into Pekinese and wild cabbages into cauliflowers. If we were wise we would follow nature's precedents in ecology. The results of classical practices are confined by the natural limits of sexual reproduction but swapping genes between species which cannot interbreed is achieving precisely what evolution has guarded against for aeons. It is only self-justifying biotechnologists who declare... those limits are of little ecological or ethical importance and... any effect of violating them can be assessed in terms of the local operation of simple principles. Yet it is the judgment of such "experts" which dominates the regulation of biotechnology here as elsewhere. I take little heart from the fact that our Ministry for the Environment's "interim assessment group" put unprecedented restriction on the field trials of Roundup Ready canola being grown near Oamaru. In previous trials the group was not prepared to require that appropriate precautions be taken until there was proof... the genes could be transported further than had been guessed and that the herbicide resistance could cross more readily than expected to related species. The group has adopted the attitude that anything is allowed for commercial gain unless there is scientific proof of any postulated danger. By allowing the trials to proceed we are accepting chemical and genetic pollution as collateral damage to corporate profits. With enough effort, chemical pollution, even radioactivity, can eventually be cleaned up in most cases but self-propagating genetic pollution cannot be. The introduction of herbicide resistance into plants may, through crossbreeding in the wild, give rise to "superweeds." The presence of foreign proteins in foodstuffs may trigger new allergies in susceptible individuals. And even if glyphosate itself has relatively low toxicity for humans, we can expect soon to be eating more Roundup in our food. Monsanto has applied to the A[NZ] Food Authority to raise the allowed level of glyphosate in our food. All of this helps to minimise any inconvenience to Monsanto which has become skilled at keeping itself ahead of public awareness... 60[%] of processed food contains soy-derived material. It is likely to contain a significant fraction of Roundup Ready soybean in the future. Roundup is Monsanto's most profitable product, but the company now sees more money in biotechnology than chemicals. As the biotech industry outstrips the chemical industry we will find its big money exercising tremendous influence over all aspects of our lives.

...N[Z]ers may already be] eating genetically altered food – even though laws on the controversial new techniques are months away. A government-appointed group has given interested parties until this Thursday to have a say on genetic engineering of food and plants. But the Health Minister has already cleared... [two] food ingredients for use here... Chymasine, a genetic form of rennet, has been cleared... as an additive for cheese, while fungal alpha amylase, an artificially generated enzyme, can be used in some bread products. But manufacturers... appeared to have voluntarily declined to use this genetic material... Documents obtained under the Official Information Act show the Government was advised last December that "transgenic" soya beans were safe for N[Z] consumers. The beans have been injected with genes from a soil bacteria and from the petunia plant as well as cauliflower mosaic virus to make it immune to weedkiller. [The d]irector of Public Health... told the then Associate Health Minister and Consumer Affairs Minister... that foods could only be banned or restricted if there were "grounds to do so based on the need to protect public health and safety... To date no such data has been provided to the ministry and we are not aware of such material..." Despite the reassurance, the ministry was advised last November of at least six studies that raised concerns of safety risks with genetic engineering of food. One of these studies – from... [the] Professor Emeritus of Genetics at the University of Ontario – specifically warned about the use of... cauliflower mosaic virus. "Certainly the widely used cauliflower mosaic virus is a potentially dangerous gene... Modified viruses could cause famine by destroying crops or cause human and animal diseases of tremendous power." [The]Natural Food Commission director... said the... soya beans were being shipped to A[US, where NZ] sourced its beans. About 2% of the A[US]n soya bean stockpile is made of the physically indistinguishable genetic beans. "Soya is used in... 60% of processed foods... from margarine to baby foods to pasta and bread... In Switzerland, they recently tested a number of foods and found the genetically altered soya beans were in their beloved Toblerone chocolate, prompting an immediate product recall. Nothing like these checks are being done in N[Z]. We are living in a regulatory vacuum." The A[NZ] Food Authority... also recently identified a number of safety concerns... includ[ing] consumers suffering reactions to foods after genes from allergy-causing foods were placed in what might appear to be

harmless products. Another concern was that a build-up of genes, such as herbicide-resistant strains, might interfere with the therapeutic action of antibiotics... Any such product should be labelled to let the consumer decide. "The research says when the consumers are given a choice, the market diminishes,"... [the] Alliance health spokesperson... said. "That's what happened in... [Britain] when supermarkets insisted on labelling." ...[in NZ, current] labelling requirements did not distinguish between food additives derived from different sources, such as gene technology... ANZFA [i]s looking at five criteria for introducing labelling... ● When any gene was introduced that could cause an allergic reaction. ● When a protein was introduced from an animal in a vegetable product which might be of concern to groups such as vegetarians. ● When a product was changed in appearance by genetic modification. ● When a living organism such as a fruit, vegetable, grain or cut of meat was the product of genetic modification. ● When the product appeared unchanged but contained 5% or more ingredients that had been genetically modified.

...APRIL 3 is the deadline for N[Z]ers to have a say about an alarming new development... American food manufacturers and chemical companies are already selling... genetically engineered (GE)... soy and corn, despite widespread opposition in the US and Europe. Now the A[NZFA] is consulting the public on both sides of the Tasman about what to do, although few people here know about it. ANZFA is based in Canberra, and has one solitary N[Z] member. No N[Z] consumer groups are represented on it. The call for submissions consisted of a tiny advertisement in a few daily newspapers. Yet the topic is vital to the future of the planet's food chain. If some critics' predictions prove true, we may face environmental chaos as mutant plants invade new habitats and crowd out existing species. No one knows what the health effects of these strange new foods might be on humans. Rampant allergies and runaway viruses are some of the frightening possibilities... In the US, unrestricted use of a number of [GE] foods has been allowed including tomatoes... and oilseed rape. The best known example is the Monsanto Round-up Ready soy bean... created with genes from... substances humans don't eat. Ciba-Geigy has a maize which has a toxin gene to deter insects and a marker gene that creates resistance to the antibiotic ampicillin. So far only soy and maize are available internationally... You don't have to be a rocket scientist to foresee the dangers in interfering in such a fundamental way in the integrity of foods. If we need a reminder, the "mad cow" disease debacle... [- which] cost the British government £855.1 million between April 1 and December 31 last year[-] ...is it... As individuals and parents we could end up having no idea what goes into the food we put in the supermarket trolley. Processed foods often have unlikely ingredients. When the "mad cow" story broke, a shocked public learned that even vegetarians could have ingested contaminated meat products contained in foods as remote as sweets and jellies. For instance, avoiding [GE] soy is not as simple as swearing off tofu, TVP ['Textured Vegetable Proteins - processed soya protein which has been spun into fibres, or extruded at high heat under great pressure, to be made into a food product of the same texture as meat then flavoured and shaped to look and taste like beef, ham, pork, bacon, etc; *monosodium glutamate* - identified as the cause of the "Chinese Restaurant Syndrome" where people who have had a Chinese dinner suffer from severe migraine-like headaches a few hours later - is used in most TVP'; TVP can also be made with 'protein derived from wheat, oats, cotton-seed and other vegetable matter')]and soy milk... It's found in 30,000 food products... ANZFA proposes that foods be cleared for sale on a case-by-case basis. Only some will be labelled as containing [GE] food... a food... will not require labelling if the [GE] component is less than 5%. The 5% rule is arbitrary - it is not based on any known safety ground, but it means that many processed foods such as pizzas, pies and cereals would not have to be labelled. Nor would food containing [GE] micro-organisms - such as wine, cheese, beer and bread. Various trade agreements to which N[Z] is a signatory require this country to keep the doors open to competitors' products. The price of doing so may prove unbearably high. N[Z]ers who want us to stay clean, green and genetically pure might join in a fax attack to ANZFA, 04 473-9855.

...concerns about [GE] foods led to protests at Parliament today. The demonstrators claimed some food is already on sale here without proper tests and without proper labelling... The march called for an immediate moratorium on such foods... In [international news, scientists from]the country proud to have brought you the potato... have rooted around and found wonder tubers they say can boost world nutrition and help starve off environmental ruin. Experts at the International Potato Centre outside Lima have built an El Dorado of genetic plant wealth... "We are custodians of the world's biggest collection of potatoes," boasts the centre's research director... It has more than 500 local and international staff, a budget topping \$34 million and the bustle of a university campus... [But there are n]o patents here, its technology is freely available to those who seek it... With more than 150 of the world's 220 potato species kept thriving in an "in vitro plantlet" lab worthy of a sci-fi spud thriller, the centre is about serious science - research, not marketing... "The aim of all our work is to try to improve the living conditions of the poor and hungry... and at the same time take steps that are going to be helpful to the environment,"... Thousands of test-tubes containing potato plantlets, including many... rescued... from Andean nooks and crannies... shine under fluorescent light in a stark white earthquake-proof room... Scientists here made a splash a few years back by introducing a "hairy potato" with long and short sticky hairs on the plant and leaves, not the tuber. Crossing a commercial species with a wild Bolivian one, they built a better potato that snares pests and costs less to produce because pesticide costs are cut to nearly nil... But it's not all gene maps and test-tubes: in a lab out back technicians are frying away making test chips... to see if cross-breeds can pass culinary muster. Europe and the former... U[SSR] remain the biggest producers, but by the early 1990s, 30[%] of global production was in the [Last W]orld, up from 11[%] in the early 1960s. India is becoming a potato power, with a booming 5[%] output increase yearly, followed by China at... 3[%]. Indonesia has also] become a big producer. If the trend continues, most of the world's potatoes will be grown in Asia, Africa and Latin America in less than a generation...

For more than 25 years, the International Rice Research Centre (IRRI) has been working on identifying more high-yielding varieties of rice - the staple food of more than half of humanity. It has been credited with increasing average rice yields by 71[%]. More than 60[%] of the world's rice paddies are planted with varieties developed at the IRRI and their progenies. Much of Asia, where 92[%] of the world's rice is grown, is now self-sufficient and many countries have exportable surpluses. But with the prospect of at least four billion rice eaters by the year 2025, the IRRI is working on a new "super-rice," which can increase average yields by a further 25[%]. Scientists say the new thick-stalked variety can yield up to 12 or 13 tonnes a hectare and up to three crops a year. The IRRI hopes to perfect the new strain by the year 2000 but fears that cuts in its budget may hold up research. "We may have a \$US6 million... budget shortfall next year, which... could... severely... jeopardise our research," says [the] IRRI director... The IRRI needs \$44 million to operate annually, a measly sum considering the benefits possible[, but has been hit with]... budget cuts by traditional donors. "I think the rest of the world is so preoccupied with domestic issues they don't realise the importance of agriculture to economic development. Many spend so much on the military. The cost of one fighter plane is more than many years of research in this institute." ...BESIDES building disease resistance into the... potential super-rice... plant, genetics engineers at IRRI say they are also improving the grain's flavour to match local tastes... In... [local news], some imposters are sprouting amidst a forest of bonsai-size Radiata pine seedlings... [in] a hothouse out the back of the Forestry Research Institute's campus in Rotorua... On the outside, they look like any other tree. But if you cut open these pretenders they are stained... with a badge of abnormality. On the inside, these trees are blue... Scientists have added a new characteristic to their cells to produce the pigment. So what use, you ask, is a forest full of blue trees? Will we have multi-coloured forests that when processed will return to N[Z]ers those lost weekends spent painting the house? Well, no. What scientists are doing will have much more commercial impact. For the forests of the future they are developing trees resistant to herbicide, so foresters can kill weeds but leave trees untouched. They are also creating trees resistant to bacteria and fungal infections, along with plants that can withstand frosts and other environmental hazards such as salty soil and droughts... [P]erhaps highest on the must-do list is development of sterile trees. This will ensure modified pines don't takeover N[Z]'s forests. "That is absolutely crucial, even though Radiata pine isn't like most other trees here,"... Scientists are also working on accelerating or delaying the onset of flowering. Acceleration speeds reproduction, while suspending flowering redirects growth from cone to wood production. And the scientists plan to turn softwood to hardwood by injecting a gene that increases the density of logs. This is not fanciful thinking. Scientists

at the... [i]nstitute are already completing legal paperwork to take seedlings out of the glasshouse and into trial forests. Much of their work is being done in association with a development company, GEENZ Ltd. The company has only one full-time employee, [its] chief executive... But that belies the weight of corporates behind it. GEENZ' major shareholders are C[HH] Forests... Challenge Forests and Rayonier N[Z]. Its "minor" shareholders are Earnshaw One, Caxton Forestry, Wenita Forest and PF Olsen and Co. Together these companies control the majority of N[Z]'s plantation forests. [The chief executive] said the strength of the companies behind GEENZ indicates the potential impact [GE] will have on the forestry industry... "The economic impact of what we are doing could be enormous," [the]... manager of the... [i]nstitute's biotechnology division, said... But... the impact [GE] will have on conventional forests is huge, especially in an industry where investment decisions made today won't be realised for another 25-30 years. If genetic manipulation reduces growth times to 15 or even 10 years, the value of current plantations would decline sharply. [The chief executive] said forestry companies are now researching how the market for timber in 30 years might be altered by new breeds and breeding techniques. But, given the time involved, it is extremely difficult to make predictions. "For some of the trees that will be developed we won't know if we have got it right until they are cut down in 25 years' time,"... For that reason, forest industry analysts suggest investors should be cautious about any initial investment in genetically altered forests. "The N[Z] plantation experience suggests investors that get in at the beginning of any modified product have higher costs than those that come in later," one industry expert, who requested anonymity, said. "To capture the major benefits of [GE], we will require a strategic thinking process to evaluate options for potential markets two rotations out," [the expert] added. That could require even more investment than the money currently being pumped into the genetic research, [the expert] warned.

...*Blue genes into blue jeans*... Scientists are working on the ultimate in designer jeans – made with cotton that needs no dyeing. The blue gene project, created by... Monsanto, reveals the power of crop geneticists. This year, 4 million ha of modified soy bean will be grown, 10[%] of the U[S]'s total, and 1 million ha of modified cotton, a sixth of the national total, will be planted. The byproducts range from T-shirts to cooking oil. "G[E] crops are here to stay. People don't realise that yet," says [a p]rofessor... of Nottingham University. "We have successfully inserted blue pigment genes into cotton plants and have got them to express colour," says... [the] technical manager at Monsanto. But the process is patchy, and may take two years to perfect. Cotton plants... have also been inserted with a gene that makes a chemical that kills insect pests, and so need little spraying with insecticides. "By contrast, normal cotton needs spraying a dozen times a year. The cotton industry uses a million tons of sprays, 40[%] of the U[S] agricultural industry's total. Our plants will reduce that load dramatically, while crops such as blue-gene cotton should eradicate dyeing, which produces heavy pollution." ...[In another development, British s]cientists are scouring the tropics for the genes that could create a super chocolate... [which can save] the world from chocolate famine... Cocoa supply is more than adequate for present consumption and sliding prices reflect this. But... [major] Western chocolate manufacturers have already set up shop in China, Russia and other emerging economies to tap the potential demand. "The main problem is China... If everybody there eats one chocolate bar a year that's going[to] be an awful lot of cocoa," said... [the] secretary of Cocoa Research UK Ltd, which is financing the pilot project at the University of Reading. "You've got to be thinking... way ahead." The biggest snag is that cocoa can be grown only within a narrow corridor of 10 degrees north and south of the Equator where soil and weather conditions are just right. Production efficiency is also limited because, in contrast to plantation crops such as bananas, cocoa is grown by small farmers whose expertise often derives from sense and feel. "Most of the trees are ageing. If you have a pick-up in consumption you could get a bull market [which] there will be no turning off," said... [a] soft commodities analyst... in Toronto. Experts have worked out that if yields were at their maximum the world's potential output would be approximately two tonnes of dry beans a hectare a year compared with about 180kg now... Deciphering the cocoa genes can be a painstaking task... Identifying the key DNA in plants is so often prone to error that different laboratories may yield different profiles for the same plant. The problem is even more acute in perennial crops such as cocoa which take five to seven years just to enter the full productive cycle. Experts say genetic engineering, or a simple cross-fertilisation of trees, may produce results in 40 years. What scientists at Reading are hoping for more urgently, however, is to find the genes for such factors as pest resistance or high yield. This may take two or three years. With a bit of luck it may even be possible to come across the gene for exquisite taste, they say. To hasten the process, the Reading molecular biologists have resorted to a new version of a genetic fingerprinting method called "anchored micro-satellite." This... requires a much lower parity in the DNA which in plants tend to be hidden among a rich source of compounds. It works by tracing the "non-coding" DNAs that feature satellite regions of repetitive genetic codes. "The main advantage of this technique is that it's... able to distinguish between very closely related plants," said... [the] research leader and lecturer in genetics... Those paying for the research appear little worried about a consumer reaction if the outcome of the research is genetic engineering... Cocoa Research UK, said the idea that [GE] crops were bad for health was a total misconception.

...FOOD crops designed to incorporate medical benefits are on the horizon... says [Monsanto's NZ] product development manager... "Our people are working on nutri-medicinal crops which will have implications for public health. In future, when a child is born, as well as having a blood test they will have a gene map done. This might show, for instance, that they have a predisposition to heart disease later in life. With that knowledge they could eat bread made from nutri-medicinal wheat, and reduce their susceptibility."

...WHAT'S THAT YOU'RE EATING? ...BREAD, margarine, noodles, sausages, pies, baby food and chocolate: just a short list of foods on supermarket shelves that... can contain [GE] food products. Food suppliers can import them as they like. No questions, no pack drill – and no labelling. Whether this should happen or not, the situation will continue until next year at least, while our food regulations are harmonised with A[US]'s. Once there is an agreed standard, food importers are likely to face regulation, but... safe food... campaigners question whether it will adequately protect either our health or our environment. Aware that the issue of what some dub "Frankenfood" has happened at a time of regulatory limbo, the Ministry of Health has acted, writing to the food industry to invite companies to list what [GE] foods are already in the country... [a]s it wants to keep a "watchdog brief" and "respond to public inquiries." The meekly couched request warns recipients that confidentiality of disclosed information cannot be guaranteed. Canny food suppliers may read this as "tell us what you're selling – but if we have to let Greenpeace know then watch out for picketers." Perhaps not surprisingly, in five weeks only 30 of the 700 suppliers... have bothered to respond. The other interim measure taken by the ministry is to ask the food industry to import and supply only those [GE] foods approved by "competent overseas bodies." ...[However,] a natural food campaigner... is[n't] reassured by GE... foods which have been approved overseas[, and believes NZ's] public is under the mistaken impression that overseas authorities have thoroughly tested [GE] food... Some scientists say it is not possible to test such products for food safety. Says... a... professor of food safety at Leeds University, best known for his prediction of the mad cow disease crisis: "It is virtually impossible to even conceive of a testing procedure to assess the health effects of [GE] foods when introduced into the food chain." Many N[Z]ers don't need convincing of this. In the process of working out a food accord with A[US], our new regulatory authority invited submissions from the public on a draft standard for [GE] foods. The ANZFA has so far received... 2000 written replies – most expressing concern... and seeking a total ban or full disclosure on labels... [It's] manager in... [NZ] is busy forwarding submissions to the authority's A[US]n office. By the end of this year staff will have analysed them and reported to the authority – which in turn reports its decision on the standard to a council of the health ministers of the 10 jurisdictions involved (N[Z] is one). At that stage N[Z] can either make the new standard mandatory or opt for an entirely different standard, says [the manager]... "Our objectives are ranked in priority order. Health and safety is the top one." That doesn't satisfy [the campaigner], who says the public is not being asked whether it wants [GE] food, "but how and when." [The campaigner] wants a moratorium on [GE] foods in this country until the food authority's new standard is reported – and then a referendum on whether the standard is acceptable. The... [campaigner] suggests that the mutant beta casein A1 milk protein, selectively bred into cows, and later identified as triggering

diabetes, should act as a warning... “This is something completely new and we have the right to decide about it in our own time. Just because giant chemical companies want to feed us this food, we don’t have to rush. I would say N[Z]ers are more interested in food that tastes good, than in scientific manipulation of it.” ...[□ At present the ANZFA] has a six-member board, with two to come. An A[US]n member with a background in consumer rights has yet to be appointed. Of the two possible permanent N[Z]er appointments, only one has been made. [That NZer is the chairperson] of the board of Nestle N[Z].

...A FEW weeks ago I wrote about the A[NZFA] standard on genetic engineering of food. The N[Z] office of ANZFA has had such a huge response that it has extended the deadline for submissions. By this week, 2500-3000 had been received... [In comparison,] ANZFA’s principal food technologist in Canberra, who is running the food standards project, reports that only 200 submissions have been received from A[US]. This, the technologist said, was a big response for the Aussies... At the time of my column, the *Sunday Star-Times* revealed that foods containing... GE... ingredients were already on the shelves of N[Z] stores. I decided to write to the manufacturers and distributors of foods I ate to find out whether I was already unwittingly consuming GE ingredients. Here’s what I found: Real Foods, makers of soy products, sent statements from the companies which supplied its beans... and sent a parcel of products... Vitasoy in Hong Kong said it used only organic soy beans. Morinaga Nutritional Foods of California was similarly adamant... However, Real Foods could not be so adamant about other ingredients, but was in the process of surveying its suppliers “to establish the true position”... Stormont Bakeries, makers of Tip Top, Burgen and North’s bread, said that “to the best of our knowledge” they did not use GE ingredients... Griffin’s (biscuits and ETA products) does not use any GE ingredients. Pepsico Restaurants International, which owns Pizza Hut and KFC (NZ), could not confirm whether any of its ingredients were genetically engineered. Its suppliers were not required to tell them. “I would have to suggest,” said the brand manager, “that if your purchase decision is based solely on genetically engineered foods, that you steer clear of any of our products you think may concern you, because I do not have enough information to make a statement.” Point taken. Safeway Traders, which markets Pam’s and Budget label products, said I should avoid using products containing soy bean oil until “the edible oil industry clarifies the situation with the N[Z] Health Department”. Sanitarium did not answer my question, but sent recipes and an order form so I could buy some products. Nestle pontificated to me that “[hu]mankind has long benefited from using biotechnology” and that genetic engineering “allows improvements to be made more rapidly, precisely and safely”. Because there is no requirement to segregate GE soy beans from conventional soy beans, Nestle said it would become increasingly difficult for suppliers to give a guarantee of the absence of GE soy beans. Nestle said it did not add GE raw material directly into products, but it could not guarantee that two ingredients in its products – soy sauce powder and red miso powder – were not made from GE soy bean[s]. Nestle specifically said it supported the ANZFA proposal to only declare GE in the case of foods that are “substantially different” from the natural product. If every product with GE ingredients had to be identified “then any distinction would be lost on consumers”. I have outlined Nestle’s position at some length because it offered such a staunch defence of GE foods[– it] was the only one of my correspondents to do so[– and it is directly linked to the sole NZ]er on the ANZFA board to be recommending whether all GE foods must be labelled... This raises the question of how well N[Z] interests will be represented on the... authority... Despite their huge interest and strong opposition, there was no plan for the analysis of the submissions to identify a specifically Kiwi view. The next step is for the ANZFA board to make a recommendation to the [NZ and AUS] Food Standards Council. Here again, N[Z] is under-represented... N[Z] is in danger of being swallowed up in this trans-Tasman process. In the interests of global trading, N[Z] consumers may be saddled with something they don’t want and no one can prove is safe. At its most basic, this issue comes down to one of informed choice. It is not good enough for food authorities or food manufacturers to decide for us what we need to know about what we are eating. Consumers should be able to make their own decision with all the information... Borrowing from reproductive rights campaigns, perhaps the slogan should be: “My stomach, my right to choose!”

...*Keeping your mouth shut is the best way to get on-side with the public...* Biotechnology companies are being advised to avoid public discussion of the safety of genetically altered food. It comes from a damage-limitation consultan[cy firm] in a document which has been leaked to the *Observer* newspaper. [The document’s author] was the firm which represented the companies involved in the Three Mile Island nuclear crisis in 1979 and the Bhopal chemical disaster which killed up to 15,000 in India in 1984. The same firm stepped in after the Exxon Valdez oil tanker ran aground off Alaska in 1989, and helped to manage public relations for the British authorities during the BSE crisis. The company has been hired to improve the image of the European biotechnology industry and to challenge the green lobby over [GE] food. Its advice... is to focus on consumer benefits and steer clear of safety questions. “Public issues of environmental and human health risk are communications killing fields... EuropaBio’s communications strategy must be to stay off these killing fields – no matter how provocative the invitation.” The document advises the industry to abandon the use of logical arguments and to adopt symbols in its battle to win greater acceptance for genetically altered products... [A spokesperson for the consultancy firm] said the industry has behaved “like an axe murderer with something to hide... Now the industry has learned that if a product benefits the consumer that fact has to be communicated to the consumer.” Environmental groups have dismissed the strategy as cynical. Greenpeace... said: “We do not understand why they don’t accept public opinion rather than trying to change it.” [The consultancy firm] was hired after a Greenpeace campaign against [GE] food... The European Commission has decided to oblige companies to label such products.

...[GE] crops are no more dangerous to the environment than traditional crops... says an international panel of scientists. In a report for the World Bank, [a]1990 Nobel Prize winner... and seven other scientists recommended that the bank pay for genetic engineering research products... The report[– which]... acknowledged that some risks exist, including the potential for a herbicide-tolerant plant to cross with wild plants and produce a weed that could not be killed[– also]... attempted to calm fears among some watchdog groups, who contend plants should not be altered until more is known about possible long-term health effects. Brazil, which had banned the import of [GE] soybeans, reversed that decision because of the country’s need for soybeans for industrial use.

...Safe and wholesome food is a basic human need. N[Z]’s reputation for production of high-quality food earns a large proportion of its income and supports our lifestyle. Anything that threatens the quality of our food is a threat to our health and wealth. Recently a campaign against [GE] food has been promoted... [E]xamples used to illustrate the “dangers” of this technology... frequently included a series of misleading statements and misrepresentation of scientific facts. These have been presented to generate an irrational fear of a new technology to suit a political agenda to ban... genetic engineering of food... The statements are the result of repeated quotations, each time being slightly reworded until the “truth” has been diluted to a series of exaggerated myths. The result is nothing more than “folklore” presented as scientific fact. Another common strategy is to cite “leading international authorities” such as a medical expert warning of the dangers posed by [GE] plants. The risks... as perceived by scientists from other disciplines are merely casual comments by individuals who do not understand the basic principles of traditional breeding. In particular they do not realise that the risks they suggest can be equally attributed to genetic engineering and traditional breeding. Plant and animal improvement by traditional breeding has been going on for centuries, with a long and impressive record for the safe introduction of new genetic combinations in foods... [Indeed, new] genetic material arises every day by natural means at a far greater rate than humans can “engineer.” ...Any new technology contains potential risks that may pose a hazard to public health. Risk, however, has to be assessed against known hazards and there are plenty of those in our food already... [As lecturers] at Lincoln University in plant genetics, molecular biology and food biochemistry respectively[, we]... consider the risk of genetic engineering of food to be very low in relation to existing hazards... which include bacterial and fungal contamination that regularly cause acute human illness and sometimes death. Reports are seen regularly of food poisoning caused by coliforms, salmonella and campylobacter. Less obvious are the hidden nutritional dangers, such as excessive saturated fat and high levels of salt in some processed foods. Even some... foods... accepted as being “naturally derived” can contain high levels of hidden toxins. The use of pesticides and

herbicides is also a major food quality issue and it is generally agreed that the levels of these should be reduced in convenience foods... Another threat to our food is the control of its supply by multinational corporations... [While this is also a problem with GE foods], to parade genetic engineering as the underlying evil is misguided and overlooks the immense benefit this technology offers for the production of much safer foods... Finally, [in preparation for the new technology, GE]... foods in A[US and NZ] are poised to be controlled by what may be the world's toughest regulations. Manufacturers must provide an enormous amount of detailed scientific evidence to prove the safety of their proposed new food. They must provide data on the sources of new genes and full sequences of the DNA... manipulated, the vectors used to ferry the gene into place and the marker sequences that indicate whether they have been successfully introduced. Stringent regulations will also apply if some of the plant or animal genes have been deleted... It is ironic that the rules will not be applied to foods developed by traditional breeding despite the similarity of the risks.

...Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, Soil and Health and other green groups will target supermarkets and shoppers today as part of a global week of action against [GE]. A... poll... th[ey]... commissioned... found... 60[%] of people were worried about eating [GE] food... only 12[%] were not.

...The public needs to be educated to understand rather than fear... developments in cloning and food technology... the Minister of Agriculture... [said at] a science convention at Lincoln University yesterday... A lack of understanding about modified food products could "put new technologies at risk, because in the final analysis the consumer has the final say through his or her spending decisions," [the minister] said.

...Governments are out of touch with public concerns about food quality, says a visiting critic... Failure to respect consumer concerns about food will result in "extreme public anger," warns [the British food industry critic... That might happen in N[Z] if the state relinquishes its health and safety role. "That [British] 1970s model of deregulation and 'hands-off state' has run out of steam. I know it is the model you have in N[Z], but it is no longer the right one for Government,"... [The critic] spoke of Britain's loss of confidence in Government food policies, and of corners being cut over food safety... In Britain there had been public unease over food additives, food poisoning caused by production methods, food contamination, use of growth hormones in cattle, irradiation of food – and now over genetic engineering... [T]he way the European Union and British Government handled issues like [GE] food would show whether they were willing to listen to the consumer voice. Before... [becoming] professor of food policy at Thames Valley University in London, [the critic] spent a quarter of a century farming and working with voluntary groups concerned about food and public health. [The critic] was one of the initiators of the British Food Commission – originally a think-tank and public advisory service on food issues, now a campaign organisation. "As the state withdrew from the food area, and failed to intervene over issues like BSE... and food irradiation, the food commission ended up setting standards and providing a public voice." ...[the critic urged NZ] dietitians to take a political view of food policy, to think about what sort of food and farming systems we want, to push for reform of our regulatory bodies, and to encourage governments to protect consumers from the excesses of profit-driven corporate power... So-called cheap, mass-produced food came with a huge hidden cost... At the beginning of the century, the average British household used to spend half its income on food; now it spent about 11[%]. But the story was different for the British poor... They spent a third of their income, or more, on food. Even so, one tenth of the population could not afford a healthy diet... and food was now a source of alienation... A "new food poor" was emerging.

...Hoechst and Monsanto... may well control the future of world farming and horticulture through their ownership of materials essential for developing plants... The significance of the near-monopoly is explained by a Karapiro nursery[-owner]... who... was offered recently a genetic development to prevent apple flesh going brown after being cut. "I had to ask, are you offering me just the genes, and do I have to go and deal with Monsanto for the transfer material and pay a separate royalty?" ...The transfer materials and plasmas are essential for causing genes inserted into cells to bond with the cells. Control of these agents, rather than other genetic technology, is a simple way of gaining awesome power by the two... giant companies... which grew to be multinationals by manufacturing chemicals... [Although the nursery-owner] deals in the intellectual property of horticulture – the rights to "ownership" of biological material – [it] disagrees with the principle of such ownership. "Nevertheless, the black and white of the law is that such rights exist, and I have to operate in it,"... HIS private contention is that biological material is a natural resource and the property of [hu]mankind. "After all, [the companies] haven't created these materials... They were there all along, and [someone] simply discovered their existence by applying technology and science. If th[e] totara tree is found to contain [a] miracle cure for cancer, who does it belong to – Maori who were the original settlers, or me, who has assumed the role of custodian of the land for the present time, or to everyone?["] ...wheat rust... once threatened crops everywhere. Eventually a strain of resistance was found in a grain in Siberia, and bred into wheat to save the world's crops. "Who got rich out of that? ...You can bet it wasn't the Siberian peasants." The issue has been canvassed by a Waikato University law lecturer... in a paper for the Environmental and Planning Law Journal. [The paper outlines what the lecturer] describes as a "chasm" between the so-called poor south of the world, which claims it provides most of the genetic material on which the world's food is based, and the rich north, which claims private ownership of such genetic material... [T]hat... chasm, which caused the refusal of the... U[S] to sign the 1992 Convention on Biodiversity, stems from basic conflict over what is common, as opposed to private, property... [E]ight nations have reserved their positions on such contentions in international forums because these northern countries saw the undertakings as "a blatant attack on the principles of private property." ...that confrontation over biological diversity seems set to continue into the indefinite future[, even though statements made by the FAO]... and international conventions[can be] summed up as: "Plant genetic resources are a heritage of [hu]mankind and consequently should be available without restriction... [T]his included elite and breeding lines ([e.g.], genetically altered biological materials) [which are] within the rubric of common heritage." ...[Incidentally, i]mplementation of the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act has been deferred to allow the Government more time to set up the new regime. The provisions relating to [GE] organisms are scheduled to come into effect [in July 1998], while those relating to hazardous substances are aimed for October. Both were to have come into force in April. The Minister for the Environment... said there was little to be gained by insisting on a tight timeframe when with more time "we can deliver a more stable and complete system that is workable."

...N[Z] may miss out on new agricultural chemicals if the Environmental Risk Management Authority (Erma) opts for too much public disclosure of commercially sensitive information, warns a chemical company lobbyist. The... Agricultural Chemical and Animal Remedies Manufacturers' Association... says the... need to protect confidential information is crucial to the import of new animal health and crop protection products... But... Greenpeace claims the public's right to know about new chemicals and [GE] organisms requires fullest disclosure. The Department of Conservation also questions whether Erma intends to disclose enough to ensure the public interest is protected. N[Z] is one of the first countries to set standards for "ecotoxic" substances and [GE] organisms in fully public hearings, and to give the public the right to request reviews. That protection is enshrined in the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act enacted in June 1996 – but the agency entrusted with enforcing the law is slow to get up and running... Until new regulations are finalised, the work of Erma is being carried out by a thinly resourced, stopgap body called the Interim Assessment Group, established in 1988. The group is having to make the hard and controversial decisions about whether to permit trials of [GE] crops and other organisms (including animals), without benefit of statute or regulations. The group's chair[person, who is]... a molecular biologist at Massey University... hopes this will be the last year the group will have to function[, and describes NZ]'s new law on [GE] organisms as trail-blazing. "No other country has done anything like this,"... But trail-blazers don't always get it right first shot. In resolving the knotty issue of public disclosure, N[Z]'s decision-makers may find it difficult to satisfy both greenies and the chemical industry. Greenpeace has already complained about lack of full disclosure by companies applying to field-test [GE organisms in NZ]. For instance, when Zeneca applied to carry out a modified canola (oilseed rape) trial last year, the company advised that the field-test would take place in Canterbury or Southland. The company would not reveal the exact location to Greenpeace or to the media... It turned out to be in North Otago.

...Rabbit-shooting and Greenpeace worry me. Carrying a rifle, I get mean, cautious and slow. I waste no shots on rabbits that are running for cover under the gorse bushes. If rabbits want me to kill them they must stand perfectly still and be patient while I get everything adjusted. Long-term, the result must be that trusting rabbits do not live long enough to pass on their fatal genes. But alert and lively rabbits that run without stopping live long and fecund lives. If I keep on killing three rabbits a day, there will soon be nothing left but an unkillable strain, selectively bred to flash out of sight before I can get a bead on them. Greenpeace friends will then be able to tell me I have bred a Frankenstein rabbit. Greenpeace people are big on scary words. They talk in a hectoring way about Frankenstein soya beans and Frankenstein rapeseed plants. I don't want to niggle over side issues. But Greenpeace really is up the boohai in putting this Frankenstein tag on newly developed plants it doesn't like. After all, Frankenstein... was not the monster. Frankenstein was the scientist who made the monster. Scientists today are making new plants by splicing, say, cold-resistant genes from fish into tomato plants to stop frosts killing tomato crops. In theory, splicing genes... could open up dazzling possibilities: disease-resistant people, farm animals that never need drenching, mangoes ripening in Southland... I want someone to splice a hedgehog gene into my rabbits. The gene I want is the one that makes hedgehogs stand... still, pretending to be invisible... when they see someone coming... Greenpeace people, though, feel dread not hope. Their photocopies pump out Frankenstein-phobia. I get the feeling that Greenpeace has stolen the job the Church performed in the days of the Inquisition. Just as the Church started off by challenging the established system and then turned itself into the established system, so Greenpeace has changed. Once it challenged authoritarian scientists. Now it has grown authoritarian itself. It is turning into a religion. It claims to own the one Great Truth. And in a world that thrives through harnessing expanding knowledge, the Greenpeace religion stands guard against new knowledge with barricades of slogans.

...[“Everything you see around you is constructed of molecules so small that it's only been in the last decade we've been able to see them. It takes trillions of billions of atoms to make up something as simple as a pasture and it's occupants. If the molecules are rearranged, what we see changes. Nature learned to handle atoms one at a time a long time ago, but the process is a new and exciting field for us. There are scientists who feel that when they can manipulate atoms one by one they'll be able to do away with the steer and just turn the grass into steak”! By the way,] British parents have been given [a] new weapon in the age-old battle to get their children to eat their greens – chocolate-flavoured carrots, baked bean-flavoured peas, cheese-and-onion cauliflower and sweet corn with just a hint of pizza are part of a line of “wacky veg” unveiled yesterday by a chain of supermarkets.

...[a shortage] of food technicians threatens to halt the pace of N[Z]'s spectacular growth in value-added food production... The value of food and beverage exports has nearly doubled to \$9.7 billion during the past 10 years. The industry is predicted to contribute half of N[Z]'s foreign exchange earnings by the year 2002... [However, big] changes in international food trends have led to a shortage of people with technical skills not only in product development, production and quality control, but also in marketing and general management.

...The fruit industry should speed development of new varieties to take advantage of changing consumer trends, says the chief executive of HortResearch... The premier status of apple varieties like Braeburn and Royal Gala appeared to be at an end, [it] told the Hortcuture conference in Auckland... “We must become the undisputed global leaders in innovation in horticultural products... The world expects more and we can deliver more but we must do that with an unprecedented sense of urgency.” ...while the vegetable industry had introduced pre-washed salads and coleslaws, it was noticeable that the same development had not taken place with fruit... Meanwhile, [a]... drop in plantings and prices has reduced the process vegetable industry by 40[%]... in four years. From a farm gate value of \$46 million... the industry was expected to drop to \$27m in the coming season, said... the Vegetable and Potato Growers' Federation (Vegfed) process sector chair[person. It] blamed cuts to contracted areas.

...[latest sales statistics have confirmed once again that the banana is NZ's m]ost popular fruit... Most popular vegetable: Potatoes... [Speaking of spuds, if you grow your own or purchase them unwashed, consider this the next time you clean them: e]ating dirt can be good for you, according to scientists who have analysed soil consumed by people in China, Zimbabwe and the U[S]. The samples contained exactly the nutrients needed to provide the benefits reported by soil-eaters[. ■ ‘In different parts of Asia, Africa and America, there are whole tribes of geophagists (earth-eaters). Certain American Indians in times of scarcity used to eat a type of clay soil. But this soil has no food value, and serves only to create an illusion of satiety. In Java and Sumatra, clay that provides food for the inhabitants undergoes some preparation in advance. It is mixed into a paste with water after all foreign bodies (such as sand and stones and other hard matter) have been removed. It is then rolled out into thin cakes and baked in an iron pan over a charcoal fire.’

...[a] former private investigator... wants to turn the world on to worms as a cheap source of protein-rich food, potent fertiliser and efficient waste disposal. The... survivor of heart surgery has used a seven-year spell on the invalids' benefit to research possible uses for worms... While not great-tasting... “Worms contain all the minerals and vitamins. They're higher in nutrients than fish. They are two-thirds protein,”... [The former PI] has developed a feed pellet for fish, poultry, and livestock which is made principally from minced worms and oat flakes... Worm-based biscuits, high in protein, minerals and vitamins, could one day replace the milk biscuits donated to [Last W]orld countries... Export and local market opportunities could develop for products like worm burger patties, a feature of some Philippine menus. Worm slime could even prove a medical boon for humans if an antibiotic agent within it, which is presumed to keep the invertebrates disease-free, could be harnessed... [The former PI also] hopes other... innovations like worm composting toilets and rubbish bins will eventually catch on with householders... [b]ut his immediate goal is to use billions of red and tiger worms to halve the nation's organic waste output and reduce its need for landfills. Worms turned mountains of organic waste... into piles of vermicast... A trial negotiated with the Stratford District Council would see green waste diverted from the tip face to an on-site worm farm managed by his company, Vermicast N[Z]. The resulting... nutrient-rich... vermicast would be sold as fertiliser to farmers, orchardists, market gardeners, and nurseries... [While on the topic of fertiliser, I hope] Channel One attracts a good audience for its 46-minute Tuesday night documentary *Rubber Gloves or Green Fingers*, not least because of the bizarre way Television N[Z] tried to get out of screening it after contributing \$25,000 to the cost plus \$102,000 from N[Z] On Air. It makes a case for “natural” rather than synthetic chemical fertilisers and insecticides, following in the footsteps of *The Silent Spring* and other polemic pieces warning of the risks of using pesticides that interfere with the ecological predator-prey chain. It includes a segment on a fruit grower who tells of losing his rating as a certified organic producer after insecticide spray drifted across his property from a neighbouring farm. In a Gilbertian farce of accusations and counter-accusations, [the [film-maker... and[the] writer... fought TVNZ month after month to get the documentary shown. TVNZ said it was defamatory. I've seen it, and it is clear that no defamation claim would succeed. I'm satisfied that feeding plants with so-called organic materials is no better than going straight to their roots with the minerals they extract themselves from compost, but contrived synthetic insecticides are another matter. Pesticides that have killed off half the small birds in England, and abolished the ladybirds in my garden, deserve the critical attention films such as *Rubber Gloves*... focus on them.

...Why a programme about pesticides has TVNZ green around the gills... N[Z]'s heavy pesticide use weighs most heavily on Northland. Farmers, orchardists, organic growers and urban refugees jostle for space there and argue over traditional farming practices versus a chemical-free environment. Complaints hang as thickly in the air as spraydrift above the lush countryside... One Northland... organic avocado... farmer's problem goes back some years... A neighbouring orchard was sprayed with organophosphate insecticide. Spraydrift floated across the avocado grower's boundary in such quantities that his Biogrow label was revoked. Adding injury to injury, [the avocado farmer] became ill for several weeks. The spraydrift incidents involving this farmer and some of his neighbours have been well documented. A Northland Regional Council report said, yes, no doubt spray drifted across their property, but there was no proof of organophosphates poisoning people, and not enough evidence for the council to step in and stop the spraying. Attitudes have hardened since. For example, the medical officer of health for Northland has changed. The new incumbent... concluded after another spraydrift incident in Northland that it was “plausible” that some of the ensuing

illnesses were caused by the pesticide used. Against a background of growing international unease about agri-chemicals, farmers reply that sprays are a commercial necessity, part of modern productive life. The... avocado grower... features in a documentary called *Rubber Gloves or Green Fingers*[, which TVNZ]... commissioned... approved its final content... and agreed to screen... on primetime television. After nearly \$130,000 was spent, TVNZ then refused to show the documentary. It says that the section concerning the avocado grower is potentially defamatory. The producer... is willing to remove identifying places and faces... TVNZ, though, says the whole section must be cut... [The producer], whose company, Small World Productions, made the film, says his documentary would lose its edge if the whole section were cut: "The issue of spraydrift goes to the nub of the film... We have to show it, otherwise it's just glossing over, playing some kind of superficial game." According to [the producer] and the programme's writer... *Rubber Gloves or Green Fingers* is about the contradiction between N[Z]'s high use of agricultural chemicals and our green identity and what they see as our opportunity to produce organic food for world markets. It's a piece of advocacy journalism; that is, it takes a particular line, and tells the viewer clearly what that line is. Evidently TVNZ had no problem with that. When the production team delivered the finished product, TVNZ first accepted it, then alleged the six-minute section was defamatory. While [the producer] and TVNZ have argued the point, seven regional stations have aired the programme uncut – without being sued. Why can they do it and TVNZ not? ...In a letter to... [the producer, TVNZ's chairperson] said that TVNZ makes a much choicer target for litigation than regionals. Is this part of the programme defamatory? [The producer and writer] insist that it is not, that the section concerning the avocado farmer is absolutely true (truth is a defence in defamation actions), and that they can produce comprehensive supporting evidence, if TVNZ would look at it. But... they will change their programme to make the section acceptable to TVNZ's lawyers, if they would only tell them what is wrong with it. Says [the producer]: "...I've made a film that's important and I work professionally through the process to make sure the film is safe for the broadcaster as well as for the public issue it's about... I don't think it's right for TVNZ to behave like some sort of rogue." ...Meanwhile, [the leader of NZ's Green Party] has suggested to the Ombuds[person] that the public could see TVNZ's stance as being influenced by the large amount of pesticide advertising appearing on screen. Says... [TVNZ's] company secretary and general counsel...: "I've no idea that the pesticides people even advertise." Surely [the general counsel] has watched a rugby game on [TV? The counsel decries the Green Party leader]'s point: "It has no relevance. And it is a defamatory comment..."

...SAY "NO" TO EMBARRASSING GAS! ...A healthier diet means cutting down on fat and increasing fruits and vegetables. Benefits of these changes may include decreased risk of heart disease, colon, breast and other cancers, a[nd]... other diseases. You will also feel better and have more energy! It is especially important to cut down on saturated fat, which is mainly found in animal products. It is also important to eat more legumes and vegetables which are excellent sources of fibre, minerals, and assorted vitamins. Unfortunately eating more of these, often results in the unwanted side effect of flatulence for many people. BeSure... [- which] comes in convenient, discreet, take-anywhere capsules... you can use any time[-] ...was designed to help you to enjoy a variety of nutritional foods without the embarrassing side effects. BeSure helps to break down the sugars found in... fruits and vegetables so they can easily be absorbed and do not stay in the lower intestine where gas is produced by bacterial fermentation.

...GUYS, here's the diet advice you've been waiting for: Pizza can save your life. So can spaghetti sauce... [D]etailed studies of the diets of 52,000 [guys]... found that five servings a week of some form of tomato sauce lowered the prostate cancer risk by 40%. And the pizza-eaters in the study were among the lowest-risk group... The secret ingredient is a chemical called lycopene which gives the tomato its red colour. It's in the family of carotenoids, which give carrots their orange colour and are thought to prevent cancer, heart disease and [strokes]. Carotenoids are powerful antioxidants, substances in the body that fight cell damage, and lycopene is one of the most potent. It's also found in watermelon and grapefruit, but is not nearly as plentiful there. Here's the kicker: [a doctor] – who just happens to be Italian-American – found that lycopene is more available to the body when a little olive oil is thrown into the processed tomatoes. And it goes without saying that garlic is also a great source of antioxidants.

...THE publicity surrounding antioxidant nutrients has encouraged many people to take... vitamin... supplements... However the... antioxidant nutrients consumed in our normal diets have a protective effect against degenerative diseases including cancer and coronary artery disease. Vegetables and fruit are abundant in antioxidants and the protective nature of eating five or more servings a day... [- which matches the WHO] recommendation of 500g of fruit and vegetables a day... [-] can not be too strongly stressed. Wholegrain products, ...[olive] oil, especially extra virgin... (...oil made usually from green, unripe olives which have been pressed once and to which no heat or chemicals have been applied... [thereby retaining] all its natural flavours and [a] oleic acid level... below 1[%; further]... down the scale is "virgin olive oil," which has an acidity level of between 1 and 3[%; while the]... real cheapos are... refined oil that is extracted with additives from the pulp, or residue, of the pressing[- but] even with such intriguing labels, olive oil[, the local prices of which]... range from \$15.95 for 500ml of Romulo to \$37.40 for 500ml of Colonna... is not always as it seems[because the] words "extra virgin"... are not necessarily an indicator of quality...)... soy beans and other legumes are also rich in antioxidants. Antioxidant nutrients play an important part in the body's defence system against free radicals of oxygen and reactive-oxygen species. While the body needs oxygen to drive essential metabolic processes, it also continually produces free radicals and reactive oxygen species that can cause damage. Under normal circumstances, free-radical activity is well balanced by the body's complex antioxidant defence system. However, as we age, oxidative damage becomes more apparent[(in addition, elderly)]... people often lose so much of their ability to taste and smell that they are in danger of malnutrition, immune problems or food poisoning[- using]... flavour enhancers such as fruit juices and... stocks [is] likely to encourage the elderly to consume a nutritious diet... according to... a psychologist who reviewed research on the problem[])... Stresses such as severe and prolonged infections, ultra-violet radiation and smoking increase this damage. Antioxidants occurring in food join antioxidants manufactured by the body to fight against free radicals... The antioxidant minerals, iron, zinc, copper and manganese, [further] assist the body's enzymes to fight free radicals... The antioxidant vitamins are A, E, C and beta carotene. These scavenge for free radicals and reactive oxygen species, mopping them up and neutralising them. However they are not solely antioxidants but can also be pro-oxidant in certain circumstances, producing billions of harmful free radicals. This is more likely to be so in the pharmacologic quantities found in supplements. Vitamin C, for example, is dangerous in the presence of high iron stores in the body... The main message is to eat a wide variety of food in order to obtain a nutritional advantage and not to limit yourself to [hu]man-made chemicals... The greatest benefit seems to be associated with eating a variety of plant foods which provide a complex mixture of antioxidants. This also avoids the danger of unbalanced combinations causing an environment which promotes oxidation reactions, as can happen with supplements... There are about 600 anti-oxidants in fruit and vegetables which may be more effective than vitamins in preventing undesirable oxidation reactions[, but there]... is a good possibility that the most potentially-beneficial substances have not been isolated yet and so are not available as supplements.

...Every day thousands of people walk into retail health food stores and spend 20 [to] 40% too much for their vitamins. Why do they do this? Very simply because they aren't aware of the fact that buying through mail order can save themselves the added costs of the middle[people], and the usual retail overheads. There is a company set up to provide this service... – *Golden Glow Natural Health Products* and [it is] very enthusiastic about the savings you can make.

...[a] British heart specialist... [says eating] fruit and vegetables is far better than taking vitamin... pills... if you want to prevent a heart attack... [The heart specialist, from] Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge... drew his conclusions after reviewing international studies in which people suffering from heart disease were given supplements of Vitamin C, or Vitamin E or betacarotene... "There is no conclusive evidence that taking... vitamin supplements reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease. We should... be recommending that people eat a diet rich in fruit and vegetables... or... exercise... My concern is that in taking single vitamin supplements, people may be wasting money and be given a false sense of security,"...

Are vitamin[supplement]s vital? SPRING arrived and left you feeling worse. But at least you've [had] your last... snuffle... and can put the vitamin C, the multis and other vitamin supplements back in the bathroom cabinet. Scientists would say don't bother; pour them down the drain. It's almost undisputed that increasing your intake of vitamins by eating more fruit and vegetables reduces the risk of cancer and heart disease. But evidence that swallowing pills has the same effect is thin on the ground – unless you have a deficiency, are elderly and not eating well, or have very specific needs. This message appears not to have got through to the public. Up to one-quarter of N[Z]ers are believed to take vitamin supplements in one form or another and they are taking more of them. Combined sales of vitamin, mineral and herbal supplements have doubled in the past three years and are expected to grow by another 24[%] this year – to reach \$25.6 million. Just why your sore throat disappears after chewing one of those delicious vitamin C pills is beyond science... Otago University's human nutrition department, allows that dosages of between 500mg and 1000mg can possibly reduce the severity of your cold but there's little evidence that the vitamin prevents you catching them. Athletes who take supplements of thiamin and riboflavin for an energy boost are also fooling themselves. There are no tests that show any benefit or improvement in energy from increased supplement levels... [– although] those who indulge in heavy physical activity need to constantly replace riboflavin, which is crucial in the production of body energy, because it is water-soluble and not stored in significant quantities in the body. Those who take B5 or B3 to alleviate stress might as well suck a peppermint. As long as you aren't deficient, the effort is pure placebo... Moreover... deficiencies of B vitamins in N[Z] are rare... However, points out... Red Seal's managing director... most N[Z]ers don't have an adequate intake of fruit and vegetables and that's why they should be buying vitamin supplements. With him on that side of the fence is... [the] technical manager for Healtheries who, with 52[%] of the market, are the largest manufacturers of supplements. [The technical manager] has no quibble with the evidence of clinical trials but... would like the debate to be a bit more open. "There is no doubt that the jury is still out on a lot of these studies... Athletes tell us anecdotally that vitamins work." But when [the technical manager] feels a cold coming, [it] hops back over the fence – leaving his vitamin C behind. "No... I don't believe it works for colds. Lots of people do believe in it but I can't find a shred of evidence." Part of the growth in the market for supplements is because of the rise in popularity of antioxidants... Evidence shows that antioxidants can be effective in slowing the onset of some degenerative diseases and in reducing the likelihood of having a heart attack or getting cancer – but only if you eat more fruit and veges. The point about fruit and vegetables is that they contain many more chemicals than those antioxidants identified as beneficial, and that these benefits may be the result of as-yet unexplained synergistic effects of several substances... But... evidence that folic acid, or folate, reduces the incidence of neural tube defect (spina bifida) is now so convincing that the Ministry of Health recommends that [gals] who want to become pregnant take a supplement to increase their intake by 0.4mg a day. To be effective the supplement must be continued for 12 weeks after conception. A[though 'natural folic acid has been taken out of food by over-processing it', a]chieving that amount by diet alone would be extremely difficult... Folic acid is present in green leafy vegetables, kidney beans, pulses and... some fortified breakfast cereals. There has been a suggestion... that fortifying flour by adding 0.1mg of folate to every 35g would ensure [gals] received an adequate amount... But... ['small tumours have a strong craving for folic acid', and d]espite fortified foods, the rate of [iron deficiency] among Americans has remained the same over two decades[(t)oday, 10% of toddlers, adolescent girls and young [gals] don't get enough iron(), and]... the repercussions for the rest of the population are unknown... THE news for the smoker is even worse than for the general pill-popper. If you smoke, taking a supplement of Beta carotene, because you've read it will protect you against cancer, may hasten the onset of the disease you dread. Two large intervention trials... have indicated adverse effects from Beta carotene supplements for... heavy smokers. If you have to smoke, you could do well to increase your vitamin C intake... "In the U[S] a recommended daily intake [RDI] of vitamin C for smokers has been set at a higher level [100mg a day] than for the general population [60mg a day]. In N[Z] the RDI is 40mg for [guys] and 30mg for [gals]. Some scientists are arguing that the daily intake should be increased to higher levels, perhaps 200mg per day,"... says... the Institute of Environmental Science and Research in Christchurch... One lemon has 120mg, an orange 64mg and a kiwifruit 92mg of vitamin C.

...If you want to keep the doctor away, leave your apples in the fruit bowl and switch to a kiwifruit, new research suggests. The hairy green fruit has been named the "most nutritionally dense"... out of a list of 27 commonly eaten fruits. In particular it scored highly for vitamin C and E, magnesium, potassium and fibre... It also has high levels of the calm-inducing serotonin and the amino acid arginine, which is used to treat impotence... The study, carried out by scientists in the U[S], measured how many essential vitamins and minerals each fruit provided per 100g of weight... Avocados also scored highly in the nutrition stakes, topping the tests for vitamin E, folate, potassium and magnesium... Other exotic fruits – papaya, rock melon and strawberries – outranked the more mundane bananas, oranges and apples... [Strawberries, which are] widely associated with creamy summer desserts and the annual Wimbledon tennis tournament in London, scored best for nutrients yielded per calorie consumed.

...a crop of strawberries [is] destined to give Aucklanders a taste of the traditional summer fruit a bit sooner than usual... [A] Kumeu strawberry grower... planted [a] hectare under plastic [held up by hoops] to create a "mini hot-house." This is designed to bring the fruit on in September, a month earlier... The hoops are exposed when the strawberries are uncovered for weeding.

...[the strawberry is a 'plant of the rose family common throughout Europe. It began to be cultivated in the thirteenth century. Five or six species of strawberries are known. From these a number of varieties have been cultivated. Strawberries are classified into two groups: small strawberries of which the commonest variety is the ever-bearing strawberry, and large strawberries, which comprise a great many varieties. These are constantly being added to by crossings. Large strawberries came from the US and Canada (*Fragaria virginiana*), and from Chile (*Fragaria chiloensis*). They were imported into France by a naval officer. The beautiful Madame Tallien bathed in strawberry water to keep her skin soft and velvety. About 10 kg were crushed for each of her baths. Some people are allergic to strawberries. Cooking them for a few moments in boiling water can counteract this. Strawberries must be eaten freshly gathered because they do not keep. They may also be eaten pureed. Strawberries are used for jam-making, to make a soft drink and for the extraction of spirits. The strawberry tomato is a fruit originating in Mexico where it is called Mexican tomato. The strawberry tomato plant belongs to the same family as the tomato and the potato – a tuber-bearing plant native to South America that was introduced into France, as an ornamental plant, towards 1540, and later from North America into England. Sir John Hawkins is said to have introduced the potato into England in 1563, but its cultivation was neglected there and it was reintroduced in 1586 by Sir Francis Drake. Sir Walter Raleigh grew potatoes in Ireland. In 1619 potatoes figured among the foods to be served at the Royal table in England. In France the potato was still considered suspect in 1771; it was said to be unfit for human consumption and dangerous, because of its weakening properties. It was Parmentier who rehabilitated it. In a thesis, Parmentier listed it among the vegetables which could be used in times of food shortage along with horse chestnuts, acorns, and the roots of bryony, iris, gladioli and couch grass. In 1773 Parmentier began his research into the panification of potato flour. In 1787, during a period of scarcity, Parmentier obtained the concession of 50 arpents (old French measure roughly equivalent to an acre) of poor land in the Sablon plain. The cultivation proved successful, contrary to all expectations, and a short while later Parmentier was able to offer King Louis XVI a bouquet of potato flowers, which set the fashion for this plant. Denigration gave place to a period of enthusiasm and a craze for the potato flower, which was used as a decorative design for plates. After its popularisation, the potato became one of the staple foods at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The potato is an energy food, 100 calories per 100g, rich in carbohydrates (20 to 25%), lacking in albuminoids. It contains a few mineral salts (potassium mostly), Vitamins B and C, and a small amount of iodine. There are only traces of fats and calcium. It constitutes a highly alkaline food. Its starch is one of the most assimilable of all and for this reason it can be included in the diet of diabetics (weight for weight, the potato contains two and a half times less carbohydrates than bread, which makes it a highly desirable food in diets for diabetics, as 40g of bread can be replaced by 100g of potato). Yellow-fleshy potatoes are considered the best, since white-fleshed potatoes are usually demineralized. Some people find potatoes hard to digest, especially mashed potatoes, often due to insufficient mastication and salivary impregnation. To avoid the loss of mineral salts, and in particular of

potassium salts, potato should not be boiled in too much water (or at least the water in which it is boiled should be kept for soup). This loss is decreased by cooking in fat, such as butter, lard or oil. There are lots of nutrients – especially potassium and fibre – in the skin, so the best method of cooking potato to preserve the maximum of its mineral elements and taste is to bake it in the ashes or in the oven. The taste is incomparably better and makes it possible to eat potatoes without salt, should this be necessary. Sweet potato is a hardy plant with edible tubers resembling the potato. A native of India, it has now adapted to grow in all warm countries.’ Editor’s note: ‘*Kumara* is a sweet potato that was brought to NZ by early Polynesian migrants. It almost certainly was a Central American plant originally, and its introduction into the Pacific and its distribution around the islands of Polynesia has been the subject of much speculation over the years. Kumara was the major cultivated food crop of the pre-European Maori, and is the only pre-European cultivated plant to become commercially established in the modern NZ diet – although for a long period following European settlement it lost favour to the potato which can be grown in a shorter period with less care (Kumara is grown successfully here only on sheltered north-facing gardens in the north of the North Island)’.

...though ‘60-80% of cancers are known to be caused by diet’, an] **Auckland cancer researcher has found early signs that some traditional Polynesian vegetables help ward off cancer. The findings...** [- which are part of a] **two-year study being aided by \$93,000 from the Lottery Grants Board...** [-] **could propel Dargaville, the kumara capital, on to the international health map. Results from the humble sweet potato are creating a stir in the laboratory, along with puha and watercress. Taros, coconuts and pineapples have also gone under the microscope, but the findings are yet to come in...** [P]eople living in the Pacific Islands generally had lower rates of most cancers, heart disease and diabetes. However, [if]... you think this means you can now bypass Western vegetables, think again. Much-dreaded brussels sprouts and broccoli have proven to have anti-cancer properties while tomatoes seem... to cut prostate cancer... [The findings come as] Tradenz... published comments on... the opportunities for N[Z] in the expanding world market for healthy food.

...[‘*health foods* If it’s true that you are what you eat, then here is a list of nutritious “musts”: CARROTS Super-rich in beta carotene – one carrot gives you all you need for a day. They are good against cancer, especially of the bowel. Use pureed for infant diarrhoea and juiced for liver problems. Carrots can help with chest infections, skin and eye problems. CELERY Very rich in calcium, it is diuretic – so it helps pre-menstrual water retention. It is also a traditional herbal cure for rheumatism, and is reputed to be an aphrodisiac. CRANBERRIES The iron in cranberries would be a valuable contribution to a vegetarian diet. The juice kills bacteria and is effective against urinary infections and cystitis. GRAPES A form of instant energy and easily digested, so they are good for you as well as delicious. They are vital, too, for relieving chronic fatigue. OLIVE OIL It stimulates production of bile, and so improves fat digestion. OATS Contain lots of protein, polyunsaturated fats, B vitamins, calcium, potassium, magnesium, silicon, vitamin E and a valuable growth-promoting hormone called *auxin*. They help reduce cholesterol (a bowl of porridge a day can bring the level down by 20%). Oats also control sugar metabolism, so they are good for diabetics, and they keep the bowels regular. ONIONS Powerfully antibiotic, they are excellent for chest, stomach and urinary infections. They also protect the circulatory system and help increase the good fats in the blood. ALMONDS These delicious nuts are a highly concentrated form of protein – and, unlike some other nuts, easily digested. They are perfect for convalescents and especially good for chest complaints. More than half their weight is oil. APPLES High in the gumlike substance called pectin, which reduces cholesterol, apples are also a good source of malic and tartaric acids, which relieve indigestion and break down fats. Eat two apples a day if you suffer from arthritis, rheumatism or gout. APRICOTS Rich in beta carotene, which helps protect against cancer, helps fight infection and keeps your skin clear. The dried versions have more iron and fibre than fresh apricots. AVOCADOS These contain potassium – to beat fatigue, depression and poor digestion – the anti-cancer vitamins, and healthy mono-unsaturated oil. Avocados stimulate production of collagen, so they help to keep your skin looking young and fresh. They are also good for circulation problems and fertility. However, the avocado is the only fruit that contains fat. BANANAS One of the first fruits gathered and cultivated by humans, bananas are a perfect fast food.’]

...*Bottom of the junk food chain...* What do teenagers and kitchen garbage grinders have in common? Quite a lot... MOST parents of teens will recognise the whine “there’s no food in the house.” Never mind that the pantry is groaning with staples, the fridge loaded with eggs, milk, cheese and yoghurt, and the crisper a cornucopia of fruit and veg. It’s the freezer that counts, and in households with teenagers it cries out for pies (microwave heatable), mini-pizzas, crispy-coated potato wedges, potato medallions, sausage rolls, ice cream and ice-blocks. Fast, fatty, salty and hot – or frozen and sweet. That’s what teenagers crave. An instant hot meal with frozen afters. A big bowl of ice cream is necessary to round off each and every meal – and in our house that can include breakfast. For snacks, the teens can devour fruit at a cracking pace. But they also desire cheese balls, salt-and-vinegar crisps, barbecue snacks, chocolate biscuits and chocolate milk, canned soup or instant noodles – though apparently the last lose their appeal after a few months of daily consumption. Distinctions between meals and snacks are meaningless to grazing teenagers. Most adolescents eat at least six times a day, say four Auckland public health researchers... [who] have just completed a study on the eating habits of 13- to 16-years-olds... As one mother reports of her 15-year-old son: “[My son is]... like a permanent hole. I’ve watched him eat for three hours at a stretch, just one thing after another.” While there’s no doubting teenage appetites, the researchers were more interested in just which foods these kids were choosing to eat – and what influenced those choices... While parents provide most of the food that gets eaten, the adolescents do influence what is purchased... As principal shopper mum takes charge of the trolley, loading it with staples and unprocessed food. The teens cruise the aisles, amassing pricey toiletries and value-added foodstuffs. Some get dumped straight into the trolley while others are recognised as negotiable items. In our house it goes like this: “Yes you can have the potato wedges but only one bag. No, I’m not buying the crisps but you can deduct them off your pocket money. Yes, you can have the yoghurts but I am definitely not buying that disgusting cheesecake... oh alright then.” As one surveyed mum puts it: “I guess I influence those things by telling her that we can or cannot afford them... [while my daughter] influences me by telling me [it] doesn’t like them.” ...The researchers also discovered parents negotiate with their kids which veg to include in the evening meal. Otherwise, say the parents, disliked veges are resisted at dinner (and who wants hassles then?)[...] Disliked fruit too is left to rot in the bowl. VEGETABLES, even preferred ones, don’t get eaten as snacks. That, say the researchers, is because they are not instantly available. Teenagers report occasionally eating a carrot or tomato as a snack, but they avoid any vegetable that requires preparation... Fruit is different. That’s seen as an acceptable snack food. Peeling a banana is just about on. Not that teens purchase fruit. It is something parents are expected to supply. Most of the surveyed teens say they wouldn’t think of spending their own money on fruit. Parents do provide fruit – but they have a few problems about it. Some avoid higher-priced fruits, while others ration fruit for reasons of cost – summer stone fruit in particular. “I actually restrict it,” says one mother. “...[my daughter] can eat six nectarines at a sitting... I spend \$50-60 in my major shop of fruit and vegetables and then sometimes I have to go back again.” Some parents resort to putting the bananas and oranges in the fruit bowl, while doling out the passionfruit and peaches from a hidden supply. That avoids squabbling along the lines of “[my brother] ate seven apricots and I haven’t had any.” From a public health point of view, encouraging emerging adults to eat more fruit and vegetables and less fatty, sugary food so heavily promoted on TV is a good idea. After all, fruit and veg are proven to help prevent heart disease and cancer – although not one of the surveyed teens volunteered that information when quizzed about it.

...IT used to be rubbished as “pure, white, and deadly” but sugar is no longer considered such a poison on the palate. It may provide only “empty calories” but you have to bolt down half a kilo of the stuff before it starts to make you fat. That is because very little of the carbohydrate we consume is converted to body fat under normal circumstances and sugar is just another carbohydrate... Eating fat is what makes you fat. Eating a little sugar may even help keep you lean. Reports from the U[S] indicate that people who restrict their sugar intake eat more fat in compensation and conversely, when fats are restricted in the diet there is a natural tendency for sugar consumption to rise. It is called the “fat-sugar see-saw” and the dietary experts all agree that the low-fat option is the way to go for unclogged arteries and a daintier derriere. There are no proven links

between sugar and heart disease – or cancer. On the minus side, sugar can rot your teeth, but only if you suck on sugary substances for hours a day. A sweet dessert alone will not result in caries... Even diabetics are now allowed to consume moderate amounts of sugar. At the centre of this sugar revolution is the “glycaemic index factor.” The Glycaemic Index is not new but it is only beginning to be understood by ordinary people designing ordinary breakfasts for ordinary lifestyles. The GI measures the rate at which carbohydrate foods are digested and absorbed into the bloodstream. Pure glucose is absorbed the fastest and has the reference score of 100. All other carbohydrate foods are compared to that... It is the surprising GI factors of some common carbohydrates that have forced dietitians to reconsider the role of sugar... A baked potato scores 85 on the GI compared to 68 for a Mars Bar. Sugar is “moderate” at 65... So have that ice cream, muesli bar or fruit juice – if you are active enough to “deserve” it. But look out for the fat, which is present in a lot of “sweet” foods... “It is often a spoonful of sugar that makes the fat go down,” says... a... sports nutritionist.

...A US government advisory panel says saccharin[(the ‘commercial name for a crystalline chemical substance, soluble in water, with a very sweet taste; the sensation of sweetness provided is 250 times stronger than that of sugar, 5 centigrams being equivalent to a normal-sized sugar cube – but it has no chemical analogy with sugar and none of its nutritional value; it is chiefly used to give an illusion of sweetness’), **ja key ingredient in some sugar substitutes, should stay on the list of likely cancer-causing agents.** [● ‘Carrots have a notable amount of sugar, which adds to their nutritive properties.’

...‘Any substance which upon entering the body is capable of supplying it with materials for growth or repair and with fuel for its energy requirements is an aliment. *Simple aliments* are those that the organism consumes and absorbs without first submitting them to modification; water, which is of considerable alimentary importance, and sea salt are about the only substances in this category. Foods that contain an excess of basic elements (lime, soda, potassium, magnesium) are called *alkalescents*. Milk and blood are the only alkalescents of animal origin. On the other hand, most foods of vegetable origin are alkalescents with the exception of cereals, cereal products and a number of vegetables of which we consume the flowers (artichoke) or buds (asparagus, Brussels sprouts). All acid-tasting fruit are alkalescents. *Alimentation* must provide (with a small excess) the wherewithal for growth (in the young), for the repair and upkeep of the tissues and organs, and for the expenditure of energy. To determine the energy value of an aliment or diet, we employ as a measure the calorie, going on the principle that all forms of energy can be transformed into heat. Modern dietitians agree that the normal alimentation for an adult of average weight (65kg) in repose or engaged in only light duties must correspond to 2350 calories, that is approximately 36 calories for every kg. Fats have the highest calorific value of all foods, but they produce a feeling of satiety more rapidly than other foods and the system can only tolerate a limited amount of fat (there are three principal constituents in fat: *stearin*, *olein* and *margarine* – stearin is solid at normal temperature, olen is liquid and margarine has intermediate consistency). The normal diet for an adult must contain an average of 75g of natural fats daily (in very cold countries far more is needed’)]...

DO YOU FEEL worn out halfway through the day? Try changing your diet. “Eating wisely can increase your energy,” says... a nutritionist... Food, after all, is the body’s fuel, and adding high-energy choices to your diet will keep your engine running at peak performance. That means having breakfast each morning, refuelling your body with a meal or snack every four to five hours, and choosing the right foods – [‘all organic foods can supply energy to the body, but the most readily usable form of energy is provided by carbohydrate foods. However, one tablespoon of fat provides two and one-quarter times as much energy as a tablespoon of carbohydrates, which are the only food which can be almost totally eliminated from the diet.’]

...ARE you in the Zone? This is the question on everyone’s lips in Los Angeles. And if you’re a supermodel... a megastar... or a top athlete... in fact if you’re an anybody who is anybody, then the answer must be yes. In a city where flab-fighting is a full-time job and bandwagon-jumping is everybody’s favourite past-time, the Zone diet is the hottest thing since sliced bread. Actually, according to the Zone, sliced bread isn’t hot at all. Neither is pasta or potatoes or any of those other starchy old carbohydrates. Welcome to a bizarre world where carbo-loading is bad for you and eating a high protein, high fat diet is good. The secret, says [the Zone’s] inventor... is all in the proportions. Eat a mix of 40% carbs, 30% protein and 30% fat at every meal and you’re at the optimum zone to lose weight. Of course this prescription means sitting down to a Zone meal is a scientific equation. Skipping the number crunching, most Hollywood celebrities choose to dine out at Zone restaurants instead. Or if they’re on the run they could grab a Zone Bar to see them through. When[the] biochemist... wrote *Enter The Zone*, as a “guide for medical purposes”[the biochemist claims it] had no idea the text would sell over 1.5 million copies and expand into an entire lifestyle. Perhaps [the biochemist] didn’t anticipate the ’90s craving for fad diets. Just when it seemed that nutritionists had finally convinced us that living off nothing but whole grain bread, starving ourselves on cabbage soup, or surviving on only green apples just didn’t work, it seems the fad diet is regaining popularity. Let’s face it, eating sensibly is boring, whereas surviving on the Hollywood Diet of fresh pineapple, strawberries and champagne is more of a challenge... [A]n Auckland nutritional consultant[’s]... problem with the Zone diet is simple. “The ideas in this book are so outdated it isn’t even funny. They go against all the state-of-the-art research on nutrition.” [Another] Aucklander... – a freelance television director who was so convinced about the Zone, [the director] began to import the second book *Master The Zone* himself because it wasn’t available here – anticipated such scepticism. His response? “I’ve followed all the fads and tried them for years... what convinced me about this one is that it really works. I went from 24% body fat to 14%.” ...[the director is] obviously sincere in his enthusiasm, although his arguments for the diet seem specious at best. “10,000 years ago we ate like this,” [it] says of the Zone, “then the ancient Egyptians invented bread and that was when we started getting fat.” Apparently, there are some pudgy mummies lying about in their tombs. Then there is the “fat cow” argument, “What do they use to fatten cattle? Grain! So obviously bread and grains are fattening.” Ermm... Not a likely comparison since cows have three stomachs which would tend to point to differences in our digestive systems... Forget keeping your diet low fat says [the Zone’s] inventor... “it’s excess insulin that makes you fat and keeps you fat. And your body produces excessive amounts of insulin when you eat (1) too many fat free carbohydrates, or (2) too many calories at a meal...”... “People lose weight on this diet because it is so energy restricted,” says [the nutritional consultant]. The Zone diet adds up to under 1700 calories a day – low enough to lead to weight loss in almost any adult. The recipe for weight loss is simple, “At the end of the day... [it’s] down to energy input verses energy output... [M]ovie stars spend hours on exercise and personal trainers. It’s not all based on diet.” ...A recent study at Stanford University... compared low calorie diets where fat, protein and carbohydrate intake varied. All participants lost the same weight no matter what combination they ate... Sorry fad dieters, back to the drawing board.

...HERE’S the dilemma. For several days you’ve been courageously adhering to The Diet, but sitting inconsiderately in front of you is a dark, heavy fantastic chocolate thing. Your body has already made the decision and begun watering the mouth. All that stands between you and gastronomic infidelity is willpower. To eat or not to eat? Of course, your conscience says stick with the diet... But how wise is this advice really? Consider the story of two [US gals]. For most of her life [one] exercised no self-control when eating, wolfing down whatever took her fancy. By the age of 49 [this gal] clocked the scales at more than 200kg... Tragically, it wasn’t that [this gal] accepted obesity – a car accident earlier in life had left her mentally retarded. [This gal] was completely unaware of her weight problem. [The other gal], on the other hand, paid close attention to her appearance and had gone on diets throughout life. But her battles with the demands of the stomach were in vain. At 49 [the other gal] too tipped the scales at more than 200kg. How could these [gals], with their very different attitudes to food, end up with almost the same figures? [A couple of] US obesity researchers... believe the explanation lies with [the two gals’] relationship. They were identical twin sisters and therefore had identical genes. Pitted against a genetic programme hell-bent on fattening [her up, the other gal]’s self-control was just too feeble a force. So are the waistline impaired not gluttons after all? Just a little remiss when choosing their parents? Interestingly, many studies over the years have shown that obese people do not eat more than average, indeed some seem to eat less. But [a] Chicago nutritionist... found such results hard to swallow. A more likely

explanation, [the nutritionist] figured, was that heavier people consistently underestimate their food consumption. For in most of these studies they were the ones trusted to note down what went into their mouths. [The nutritionist] devised a more objective method. By dosing up the subjects on radioactively labelled water [the nutritionist] measured how much energy their bodies burned over a two-week period. [The nutritionist] weighed them before and after to work out the bulk they put on and then a simple calculation revealed how much food must have been consumed over the fortnight. Sure enough, bigger people ate more. Then there's the old I-don't-pig-out-I-just-have-a-slower-metabolism line. Wouldn't you like an after-dinner mint for every time you'd heard that one. It's true that more leisurely engines chew through less fuel but... most of the evidence indicates that both the skinny and the elephantine run on similar-sized engines. In fact, the metabolisms of fatter people are actually a little faster than normal but this is due to their greater size. Once adjustments are made for body weight there are no significant differences... It's long been thought diet is something learned from the environment you grow up in. Feed a child apples instead of lollies and they'll become a thin apple-munching adult. But it now seems genes exert a stronger influence. An excess of cakes and chocolates may create fat children but the effects will be only transitory if they have thin genes. Still the environment obviously plays some role. How else do you explain the results of one survey which found that fat people tend to own fat dogs? And, of course, not all identical twins are equally rounded. Studies of migrants also indicate that a country can cause a person to put on weight. On average the Japanese living in America... are heavier than those who stay back in the homeland.

...Nearly 70% of our flower exports go to Japan, and that's meant mixed blessings for the industry... Flower exports fell in the year to June from \$61 million to \$53m, [primarily because] while... the yen has strengthened... the Kiwi dollar... [has weakened. B]etween \$10m and \$20m... [of sales are attributed to] FlowerZone International... SUCCESS in Japan has earned [the company] a finalist berth in the Tradenz Exporter of the Year awards... FlowerZone [also] exports cut flowers to... the rest of South East Asia, North America and Europe. It buys cut flowers year-round from 300 to 400 growers at either a fixed price if they are sent direct to customers or at a price determined later if sold at auction overseas. Speed is the essence. A typical scenario: A grower cuts and packs flowers on Thursday, and sends them – usually by road – to FlowerZone's headquarters near Auckland Airport. They arrive early Friday... and are maintained by FlowerZone at controlled temperatures then readied for loading on to a Tokyo-bound plane. The aircraft takes off on Friday afternoon. The flowers arrive in Japan early on Saturday... NZT and are cleared in time for Sunday afternoon wholesale auctions. By Monday they are for sale in florist shops. Different varieties require different handling and packing into high-grade cardboard boxes. Some travel with water vials, cushioning material is used liberally and if the export markets are suffering a cold snap they may be wrapped in several layers of newspaper to keep them warm... [One of FlowerZone's partners] said the most popular flower was the cymbidium orchid, grown in four colours and which retailed in Japan for \$25 to \$40 a stem. In Italy, our No 2 flower market, it was the "Queen of Flowers" and in great demand. They were grown in winter and supplied to markets at a time they were unavailable from Northern Hemisphere growers, particularly Holland. That also applied to No 2 and No 3 in the export popularity stakes – calla lilies and sandersonias, the major (Kiwi) summer sellers. Few roses were exported. Once big sellers in Norway and Sweden, the market collapsed overnight about three years ago when those countries joined the European Community. Before that N[Z] had competed several months of the year with Dutch exporters, overcoming the problems of distance by supplying bigger and better flowers... [NZ's biggest flower-exporting competition currently comes] from Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa... "We can't stop competition from countries with cheaper production bases. The only way we're going to stay ahead... is to... develop new and better varieties..." said... [FlowerZone. By the way,] 36,000 long-stemmed blooms [have been] wrapped for Red Cross Red Rose Day today. They are available for a \$1 or \$2 donation that will go towards emergency preparation courses for children and to build up equipment supplies. A local shortage of red roses meant organisers had to import some... at the last minute... from... [AUS and Holland – where t]ulip growers... a[re getting] ready for the annual bulb harvest. The tulip generates big foreign currency earnings for the Netherlands from the export of bulbs.

...ALL that glitters is not gold – as [an] Invercargill tulip growing family... know all too well. Over the next few weekends thousands of Southland flower lovers will make their annual pilgrimage to tiptoe through 11ha of tulips in full bloom at the[ir]... flower farm... "Half don't buy anything. They just come for a look. Some have been coming for years and years," said... [the son of a couple] who emigrated from Holland 38 years ago. But lack of flower sales doesn't faze the [tulip growers]. In fact, the cherished blooms have a tragically short lifespan. At the end of showtime they are cut and dumped – so many millions of flowers would have little commercial value anyway. The real gold for these growers is what lies under the ground... Small bulbs are planted out, not for the flowers but to increase the size of the bulb, making them more saleable to other growers, who will replant them to reap better quality flowers for on-selling... The family not only supplied a local market with 2-2.5 million bulbs each year, but have now exported to Holland the first trial shipment of half a million bulbs. Tulips are always planted in spring... It was possible for growers in Holland to cold store bulbs during the northern summer for replanting in September, but quality suffered, and bulbs from N[Z] were finding a ready market... [Another plant being 'cultivated for its bulb' in Southland is the giant garlic – which has cloves the size of a normal garlic compound bulb, but a milder smell. However, for those of you who prefer a] truly odourless garlic... Kyolic – The Aged Garlic [–] ...supplement with scientifically proven immune boosting effects... [is now on special: pay just \$12.95 for] 30 CAPSULES... \$24.40[for 60.

...the 'LEEK is a hardy biennial, the origins of which go back a long way, which has never been found in its wild state and is believed to be a cultivated variety of oriental garlic.' Speaking of 'garlic, Aristophanes wrote that athletes used to eat it before their exercises at the stadium. In the 16th century, certain doctors, says the *Dictionnaire de la table*, "condemned themselves to constant carrying of several cloves of garlic in their pockets to protect them, and their patients, from the bad air and epidemic diseases." "The king of healing plants, modern science has now proved garlic reduces cholesterol, blood pressure and clotting tendencies, improves circulation, fights attacks by bacteria, fungi and viruses. Garlic also helps protect against cancer and is good for infections and stomach bugs. I tell everyone that garlic is an indispensable ingredient in many types of cooking. Include it in all types of savoury food.'

...The American who taught the English how to cook French food and 16 years ago accurately predicted the rise of Pacific rim cuisine and the popular fusion of eastern and western cuisines is making a flying first visit to N[Z] this week... to promote his updated book *Great Dishes of the World*... [H]is rise to stardom is as colourful as his food. When the New York[er]... arrived in Britain in 1953, the country was getting over food rationing, and cooking was seen as a tedious chore. After editing a paper in Paris and also running a theatre in Montmartre and touring Italy as a singing cowboy, [the New Yorker] took on the task of teaching the English how to... have fun with [cooking]. In 1963... *Great Dishes of the World* was first published. The book was subsequently translated into 12 languages and enjoyed sales of over four million copies. Restaurants followed, in Islington (London) and Hintlesham Hall in Suffolk and both received Michelin star status. His *Food, Wine and Friends* television series was a huge success... Despite an impressive publishing record... [(the New Yorker] has published a total of 11 books[) his]... food today can be summed up in one word – simplicity. ["Simple need not be boring. Simple can be exotic and full of flavour, yet be prepared in minutes." There is, however, nothing new about his theories – the *New Larousse Gastronomique* states that 'the true gastronome, while esteeming the most refined products of the culinary arts, enjoys them in moderation, and for his normal fare, seeks out the simplest dishes.']

...IT'S enough to make Thomas J Edmonds turn in his grave. The N[Z]er who invented baking powder as we know it and who was responsible for the first – and now ubiquitous – *Edmond's Cookbook* would surely be upset to discover a lost generation in the kitchens of N[Z]. Apparently young NZ[er]s can no longer cook. Right now a large proportion of under-35-year-olds are staring blankly at the food processor and wondering exactly what it was they were meant to do with flour, eggs and milk. They can't understand a cookbook, they eat a lot of toast and tonight they'll probably end up down at the supermarket buying a packet of Edmond's pancake mix. The kids-can't-cook controversy is being fuelled by the N[Z] Beef and Lamb Marketing Bureau... The bureau's market research has shown a large portion of the population – mainly [gals] and younger than 35 – thinks beef and lamb is old fashioned, confusing, difficult and time consuming to prepare[. so]... its Quality Mark campaign... aims to educate

those who don't know their spatula from their fish slice, or a lamb shank from a chop, with some simple meaty recipes. There's no doubt the eating patterns of our once three-veg-and-meat-proud nation have altered. In general, N[Z] consumers... spend less time on preparation, an average of half an hour on dinner, and the most common ways to make a meal are opening a can, box, bag or the phone book. They also spend more money on eating out... Grocery stores and supermarkets are experiencing minimal growth, whereas the cafe, restaurant and takeaway bar sector is expanding by around 10%. [Gals] used to be the ones to take charge of preparing the evening meal (and apparently in 60% of households they still are; in 71% they do the food shopping)[but now] that almost 60% of [gal] householders work, they are just too busy or tired to prepare meals from scratch. Today you'll "make someone a good wife" if you can open a jar of pasta sauce. This may account for the inordinate pride with which some under-30s proclaim their lack of culinary skills: It's a political statement. Parents are not teaching their offspring to boil an egg or knit a scarf the way they used to. And in schools domestic science is slowly being replaced by computer science. A 1994 study in Britain found that most children aged from seven to 15 could play a computer game and programme a video recorder but less than half knew how to cook a jacket potato. But isn't this just a sign of the times? After all, even the Queen of England gets her weekly curry delivered to Buckingham Palace. Would it really kill us if we ate fish and chips every night for a year? Unfortunately, it just might, says... [the] National Heart Foundation['s]... director... "Your fat and salt intake would be higher than normal, which could very likely lead to cardiovascular disease, obesity and high blood pressure,"... Traditional takeaways, including hamburgers, fish, chips, pizza and chicken, all contain higher-than-average fat and salt. Increasingly, there's a growing demand for what sounds like a contradiction in terms: Healthy fastfood. "In 20 years' time relying on convenience foods for nutrition may not be an issue... But at this stage it remains a problem." Happily, over the past decade our palate has had a cosmopolitan education. Kebabs, sushi, green curry and black bean sauce feature on fastfood shopfronts all around the country. Our restaurants, producing imaginative and delicious hybrids of classic Asian, European and Pacific cooking, are considered world class. Which make you wonder if those so-called good ol' days of meat and two veg were really as good for you as is made out. We may not cook from scratch every evening but what we do cook is probably better for us. We're unlikely to boil all the nutrients out of the broccoli or roast everything in dripping. Olive oil is the choice of a new generation, as are vegetarian meals, spices and white meats. "There's no doubt about it," says... [the] senior lecturer in epidemiology at the Auckland Medical School. "The sort of diet we eat now is healthier, though certainly there's still room for improvement." Although we are getting more obese... mortality rates from cardiovascular disease have decreased by around a quarter in the last few decades. This... can be partially attributed to dietary change: We eat less meat, butter and saturated fats. Fast-thinking marketers say the key to encouraging home cooking is to take away the drudgery but not the excitement. A good example is fresh pasta. Consumers cook it and add sauce from a jar. When they add meat or vegetables and seasoning of their own choice it becomes their own creation. Mainstream manufacturers, such as Heinz-Wattie's which now makes fresh pasta, are expanding into this area, known as the "home meal replacement market". Foodtown Kitchen – a flashy, new section that opened last week in the [supermarket] chain's Meadowbank, Auckland, branch – will include things such as stir-fries, salads, burgers and pasta meals made to order, a cafe, a juice bar and a range of packaged meals with everything from pate to paella. It optimistically promises "the speed of takeaways, the freshness of home cooking and the quality of a restaurant at reasonable prices". But, says... [the] senior lecturer in the department of human nutrition at Otago University, cooking like this is a little like doing your taxes without learning how to add. With help you can manage, but you don't really know what you're doing. [The lecturer] believes cooking should be recognised as an essential life skill. [It is] particularly worried about the rising cost of heat-and-eat or value-added meals to lower income families. "These meals do tend to be more expensive than raw ingredients... So those who can least afford it, who also lack basic cooking skills, will be spending a greater proportion of their discriminatory dollar... Most of us have never had more choice... But for those on low incomes there is actually less choice." N[Z] is following trends in Britain, A[US]... and North America... However... in some countries – Finland, Belgium, the Netherlands among them – governments have begun to recognise cooking as an essential skill, instituting programmes in schools to teach children culinary craft and nutrition... [I]n France children are also taught cooking, but this is more in an attempt to preserve the French culture and stop dishes like frog's legs being usurped by a Big Mac. So should we do the same: Place... the pavlova and pikelets on a gastronomic pedestal and harass anyone who can't prepare them? [The lecturer] thinks not. "I'm not sure that those dishes are worthy of preservation... What I love at the moment is the input of other cultures into our food. So it's not so much what we put on our plates that worries me, it's that we may forget how it got there."

...[If you have never cooked before, the efficiency displayed by experienced cooks in their spotless well-organised kitchens, and the luscious mouth-watering delicacies they produce, may seem completely beyond your capabilities. No doubt visits to restaurants with their expensive meals will have given you the impression that anything worth eating is outside the range of the normal budget. Take comfort, the prospects are not so grim – cooks are not born but made, while many recipes are cheap and easy to prepare. If you are uncertain of your cooking ability it is tempting to take the line of least resistance and buy pre-cooked dishes in cans, or from the grocer's deep-freeze locker or as "takeaways". However this soon proves to be a very dull and expensive way out. These pre-cooked meals are reasonably nutritious but tend to lack flavour, and their range is strictly limited; above all, they'll cost you double or treble the price of a home-cooked meal – or even more than that. One question that arises continually: is it better to shop in a supermarket or in specialist stores? Like all complicated questions the answer to this one is – it depends. The advantage of using a good supermarket is that it is convenient and often very cheap. However, it is important to remember that supermarkets generally are able to reduce prices because they buy from suppliers in bulk – which also means that the products they are selling are often not as fresh as they might be in stores which order smaller quantities more frequently. For the purpose of bulk buying and storage, foods can be divided into three main categories: (i) highly perishable, e.g., milk, meat, fruit, vegetables, bread. *Do not buy in bulk.* (ii) perishable, e.g., butter, cheese, bacon, prepared cereals. These may be stored rather longer than those mentioned in the first category, but only under special conditions (such as refrigerating or storing in air-tight containers). (iii) non-perishable, e.g., salt, sugar, spices, flour, bottled, dried and canned foods' ('canned food keeps almost indefinitely – but canned goods have serious defects: they take up far more space than dried foods, and the high heats used in canning damage the vitamin C, the B Complex, and enzymes, to say nothing of protein; they lose nutritional value rapidly, and after six months to a year, their value is dubious at best; plus canners just can't resist the temptation to add sugar to everything – it has a mild preservative effect but adds nothing but empty calories'). 'If you buy in bulk you will save money. When buying foods ensure that adequate storage is available. Above all, the space available should be dry. Store potatoes and other root vegetables in dark dry places or they will begin to sprout. Onions should be hung in a mesh bag. Try not to keep vegetables in the fridge for more than three days. Do not store strong-smelling foods in the fridge unless they are securely sealed, since they will taint other foods.'

...One of the most important ways to prevent contamination of food is correct storage. Foodstuffs of all kinds should be kept covered as much as possible. In the air there are certain micro-organisms called moulds, yeasts and bacteria which cause foods to go bad. Food spoilage can occur from other causes, such as by chemical substances called enzymes, which are produced by living cells. Fruits are ripened by the action of enzymes; they do not remain edible indefinitely because other enzymes cause the fruit to become over-ripe and spoil. Acid retards the enzyme action; e.g., lemon juice prevents the browning of bananas or apples when they are cut into slices. Pasteurisation – heating a liquid up to a temperature between 70° and 80°C, then cooling quickly – arrests development of certain bacteria and increases the duration for which the product can be kept, without assuring complete sterilisation (unfortunately, pasteurisation often removes valuable nutrients). Boiling will kill bacteria in a few minutes, but to destroy toxins boiling for a half-hour is necessary. To kill heat-resistant spores, 4-5 hours boiling is required. Bacteria are not killed by cold, though they don't multiply at very low temperatures – e.g., in a deep freeze they lie dormant for long periods. Bacteria require moisture for growth, they cannot multiply on dry food. *House flies* are the foremost of the insects which spread infection. Flies alight on filth and contaminate their legs, wings and bodies with harmful bacteria, and deposit these on the next

object on which they settle; this may well be food. This is what happens when a fly lands on your food. Flies can't eat solid food, so to soften it up they vomit on it. Then they stamp the vomit until it's liquid, usually stamping in a few germs for good measure. Then when it's good and runny they suck it all back again, probably dropping some excrement at the same time. And then, when they've finished eating, it's your turn. Domestic pets should not be permitted in kitchens or on food premises as they carry harmful bacteria on their coats and are not always clean in their habits. Dust contains bacteria, therefore it should not be allowed to settle on food or surfaces used for food. Kitchen premises should be kept clean, then no dust will accumulate. Hands should be cleaned after handling dirty vegetables. For the body to obtain the maximum benefit from food it is essential that everyone concerned with the buying, storage, cooking and serving of food should have some knowledge of nutrition. For the body to obtain the full benefit from food it must be absorbed into the blood-stream; this absorption occurs after the food has been broken down. It should be remembered that to stimulate the flow of saliva and gastric juices food must smell, look and taste attractive. Protein is an essential part of all living matter. Protein is composed of amino-acids, and the number and arrangement of these acids are not the same in every food. A certain number of these amino-acids are essential to the body and have to be provided by food. It is preferable that the body has both animal and vegetable protein, so that a complete variety of the necessary amino-acids is available. Proteins containing all the essential amino-acids in the correct proportion are said to be of high biological value. The human body is capable of changing the other kinds of amino-acids to suit its needs. On being heated, the different proteins in foods set or coagulate at different temperatures; above these temperatures shrinkage occurs. Moderately cooked protein is the most easy to digest. There are two main groups of fats, animal and vegetable. The function of fat is to protect vital organs of the body. To be useful to the body, fats have to be broken down into glycerol and fatty acids so they can be absorbed; they can then provide heat and energy. Cooking has little effect on fat except to make it more digestible. Fats should be eaten with other foods such as bread, potatoes, etc, as they can then be more easily digested and utilised in the body. There are three main groups of carbohydrates: sugar, starch (uncooked starch is not digestible; when cooked, the starch granules swell, burst and then the starch can be digested – this is called gelatinisation of starch) and cellulose (the coarser structure of vegetables and cereals which is not digested but is used as roughage in the intestine). Sugars are the simplest form of carbohydrate and the end-products of the digestion of carbohydrates (sugars, which leave no residue, are completely digestible; with most other foods there is a proportion of waste). The function of carbohydrates is to provide the body with most of its energy. Vitamins are chemical substances (hence they can be produced synthetically – it generally takes five years from the time of discovery of a nutrient for it to be synthesised) which are vital for life, and if the diet is deficient in any vitamin, ill-health results. Dark green vegetables are a good source of vitamin A, the green colour masking the yellow of the carotene. Carotene is gradually destroyed by light (hence the fading of orange coloured spices and vegetables on prolonged storage). Like Vitamin A, Vitamin D is fat soluble. Vitamin B is water soluble and can be lost in cooking water. Vitamin C is also water soluble and can be lost during cooking or soaking in water. It is also lost by bad storage (keeping foods for too long, bruising, or storing in a badly ventilated place) and by cutting vegetables into small pieces. There are nineteen mineral elements, most of which are required by the body in very small quantities. The body has at certain times a greater demand for certain mineral elements and there is a danger then of a deficiency in the diet. There is a possibility of some minerals being lost in the cooking liquor, so diminishing the amount available in the food. This applies to soluble minerals such as salt, but not to calcium or iron compounds which do not dissolve in the cooking liquor. Food additives can be divided into 12 categories – preservatives; colouring agents; flavouring agents; sweeteners; emulsifying agents (to stop separation); antioxidants; flour improvers (to strengthen the gluten in flour); thickeners; humectants (to prevent food drying out); polyphosphates; nutrients; miscellaneous (e.g., anti-caking agents added to icing sugar and salt; firming agents added to tinned fruit and vegetables to prevent too much softening in the process; mineral oils added to dried fruit to prevent stickiness) – and except for purely “natural” substances, their use is subject to certain legislation.’ During the ‘19th century lots of untested products – that today are known to be unsafe – were added to foods. It is estimated that the average NZ child now consumes 158 food additives/day – many of which are used by the producers simply to increase profits’. Incidentally, with full support from the World Dental Federation, the NZ Dental Association is encouraging children to chew gum (*Extra* sugar-free gum – the ‘first sugar-free gum recognised by the world dental industry’ – as opposed to bubble gum, which has been known to stick to faces, human and animal hair, not to mention the undersides of desks and shoes) as a way to ‘help strengthen teeth against decay...

Do you brush morning and night? Good. And after lunch, snacks, drinks, sweets? The trouble is almost every time you eat or drink you produce plaque acid. You should chew sugar-free gum. Chewing produces more saliva you see, which neutralises the acids’]...

Opponents of gum chewing are wrong, it seems, to blame the habit on America... [T]he latest edition of *British Archeology*... reports... that it was popular – particularly with children aged six to 15 – in 7000 BC. It was made of birch bark tar and had a “smoky, burnt flavour.” Many modern kids tend to discard chewed gum with a dismayed lack of consideration. So, it seems, did young cave-dwellers in the Stone Age. - 1997

THE stickiest problem facing streets worldwide could be on its way out. Wrigley... has filed a worldwide patent for the first non-stick chewing gum. The product, described by Wrigley as “wax-free and non-tacky”, promises to end the problem of gum on shoes, pavements and school desks. It is a revolutionary “plastic” gum made from a polyester, which is biodegradable as well as non-stick. It is expected to reduce significantly the annual bill of at least \$500 million for cleansing the streets of discarded gum from the 13 million sticks chewed daily in Britain alone. The product is understood to have cost millions and taken years to develop as confectionery experts strive to ensure that it has a flavour to match the world’s favourites, such as Juicy Fruit and Spearmint. News of the patent was welcomed by environmentalists, local authorities and anti-litter activists. The Tidy Britain Group, which recently launched a chewing and bubble gum programme with the slogan, “Gum: don’t drop it, bin it”, is watching closely... [The] director-general of the group which has worked on the problem with Wrigley, said: “We are making significant progress in ridding the streets of Britain of badly discarded gum... However, until such time as it becomes available to customers, we believe the best way to keep chewing gum off our streets is for people not to drop it there in the first place.” Chewing gum was first made in America more than a century ago. Today the industry is worth more than \$660m a year in Britain alone. However, gum also accounts for about 6% of all litter, compared with 1% a decade ago. Conventional gums are notoriously difficult to remove... Removal techniques include chemicals, high-pressure ice pellets and long-hand scrapers, but have had limited success. Laser technology tests are under way... Local authorities in Britain have tried measures such as special bins, or boards on to which gum can be stuck, but their efforts are largely ignored... Among the councils facing the worst problems is Westminster in central London, where the average number of “blobs” per square metre on city centre pavements can exceed 20. At any one time there are an estimated 300,000 pieces of gum stuck to Oxford St. The council... [uses] two high-pressure “gum-busting” machines to tackle the hazard every night between 2am and 8.30am... Among the most vociferous campaigners against the menace has been [a]Labour MP... who... was incensed when Bradford council recently had to spend \$2570 scrubbing gum from the city’s new Centenary Square. “...I just hope... this... [new] gum... works... It is high time that the manufacturers, who make so much money from selling gum, took a more responsible attitude.” Wrigley is the world’s largest chewing gum manufacturer, with worldwide annual sales of \$4 billion... AS anyone who steps on to our streets can confirm... unsightly chewing gum problems are in... [NZ too. The] manager of Auckland Street Environments, part of the city council, says in the Auckland... CBD... alone the cost of cleaning gum from streets would be \$2.6 million a year. But that’s not what is spent. The budget for street cleaning, not just the removal of gum, is \$100,000 for the 60 commercial centres in the CBD. That’s enough for just two cleans a year, and the progress is difficult. “The most effective way to remove gum on asphalt is to lift the top 25mm. That’s hugely expensive so it can’t be done. With paving slabs it’s a bit easier: we use high-pressure steam in combination with scrubbing machines.” ...councils all over N[Z] would be delighted to see a non-stick gum. But the manager of Wrigley N[Z]... says availability of a commercially acceptable non-stick product is a long way off. “What has happened is that one of our scientists has developed a proposition. As it’s valuable intellectual property, Wrigley has patented it... it could take years to develop acceptable

flavours and texture qualities. In the meantime, the most important thing for Wrigley is to help educate the people who dispose of their gum incorrectly.” The right thing to do with your gum is wrap it before you toss it. [■ Chewing gum wrappers usually state, in small print: ‘Please dispose of wrapper and gum carefully’ – alongside a sequence of diagrams that suggest chewed gum should be placed inside its wrapper before both are placed in a bin (Wrigley’s wrappers also state: ‘Excessive consumption may produce laxative effects’) – but, though ads for chewing gum feature prominently on TV, they never cover the topic of disposal.]

...Heavy gum chewers risk breaking down the amalgam in their dental fillings, boosting mercury levels in their bodies to dangerously high levels, a Swedish study has found... “In our study, we found out that people who chewed gum for at least five hours a day had significantly higher mercury levels...”... said... the... medical director... [of the] Sahlgrenska university hospital in Gothenburg... The test group included 17 people with at least five amalgam fillings who chewed gum an average of five hours a day, and consumed seven pieces of gum. The group was compared with a control group of equal size made up of people with the same number of fillings, but who chewed gum only 30 minutes a week. A comparison of quicksilver levels between the groups yielded clear differences. The heavy gum chewers had twice the amount of mercury in their blood and three times the level in their urine and breath exhalation as the infrequent chewers. The mercury level rose in proportion to the number of fillings the subjects had...

Singapore’s... famous... ban on chewing gum, is about to come unstuck, but gum will be available strictly for therapeutic reasons and only on prescription. The chewing gum question had been a sticking point during two years of negotiations to seal a free trade agreement with the U[S].

...SWEETS are creating something of a sticky situation for [US] chewing gum makers. Americans chew an estimated 190 sticks of gum per person per year, but the industry is in a slump due partly to sweet success – especially of the mint kind. While sales of all types of sweets rose 2.3% in the year ended March 31, chewing gum sales dropped 4.8% in the year ended June 21. A spokes[person] for famed gum-maker Wrigley, the 105-year-old Chicago firm, admitted high-intensity mints had given them something to chew over... [Their response has been to introduce a mint-coated gum (or ‘Mint Crunch Pearls’)! In related news,] yesterday... 26,000 sweets [were scattered] to throngs of children in the Auckland Domain... as part of an attempt to throw the world’s largest lolly scramble. Some 100kg of lollies rained down from a cherry-picker...

[‘The transformation of sugar into sweets is termed CONFISERIE (confectionery). It tends more and more to be an industry of which the products are sold in special shops. Long ago the Egyptians, the Arabs and the Chinese prepared sweetmeats based on various fruit juices and honey. In Europe the use of sugar was not widespread until after the Crusades, and even then remained for a long time in the hands of apothecaries. In the 15th century the crystallised fruits of Auvergne, the sugared almonds flavoured with amber or musk, and the *gigemrats de Montpellier* enjoyed a well-deserved reputation. In 1660, the regulations promulgated by Colbert underlined the importance of the manufacture of the sugared almonds of Verdun. With the discovery of sugar beet juice and the advance of machinery in the 19th century, sweet-making developed rapidly. One branch of confectionery is the making of chocolates (chocolate was brought to Europe from Mexico by the Spaniards in 1519; the Aztec Emperor Montezuma and his court are reputed to have consumed 50 large jars of cocoa a day – there was no sugar at that time and it was flavoured with vanilla). The dried, roasted and polished “nibs” or almonds of the cacao bean are crushed, and the resulting liquor, if of good quality, is about 50% cocoa fat. When the liquor is partly defatted, it is cooled and solidifies into a hard block, known as *bitter chocolate*. This is used for baking in U.S.A. The cooking chocolate used most in England and France is a mixture of the chocolate liquor with some of the fat removed and sugar added. In England this is known as *pure chocolate* and in the U.S.A. as *bitter-sweet chocolate*. *Milk chocolate* has powdered or condensed milk added to the sweetened chocolate and is flavoured with vanilla, almond, cinnamon, etc. Chocolate used in confectionery to coat sweets has added cocoa fat. Cocoa is made from powdered chocolate which contains only 18% fat. Chocolate is better eaten between meals. It is a concentrated food, but should not be abused. The cocoa from which it is made contains theobromine – a nitrogenous substance similar to caffeine, which has a stimulating effect on the nervous system, and makes chocolate an excellent tonic for intellectual fatigue – but also calcium oxalate, which is harmful to the obese and those with rheumatic or liver complaints. It is not recommended for sufferers from constipation nor for diabetics, who have their own special chocolate.’]

...chocolate is about to change. Food bosses are set to remove minimum standards for making the mouth-watering confection, prompting predictions of doom and gloom... The A[NZFA] plans to rewrite the rules that require a certain amount of cocoa bean solids or cocoa butter in chocolate. At present chocolate-makers must put... in... at least 14[%] non-fat cocoa solids (or a mix of mild solids and cocoa solids)... White chocolate must have at least 20[%] cocoa butter. The proposals would... allow manufacturers to use vegetable oil. Manufacturers say the new rules could harm chocolate quality, threatening exports worth \$300 m... and... alienate a nation of sweet-lovers whose... diet consists of large amounts of confectionery. “There’s an issue of consumer deception here if products are put on the market purporting to be chocolate but no longer contain the right ingredients,” says Cadbury’s scientific adviser... [An ANZFA spokesperson] says manufacturers must still use some cocoa ingredients in order to call their product chocolate... [but existing] rules fail to recognise innovation and are beyond the authority’s role of maintaining safe and healthy food... [By the way,] German experts have discovered why chocolate is the perfect winter comforter and why a craving for sweets is common during winter months. One reason is that the body breaks down the “happiness messenger” substance serotonin more quickly when there is little sunshine. That is why a quick bar of chocolate or a walk in the fresh air can do wonders for a gloomy mood. But that is no excuse for pigging out on chocolate, say the spoilsports at the Hamburg nutrition advice centre. They say the potato is just as good at helping combat winter blues.

...Brought to Europe from South America 200 years ago, potatoes have been a N[Z] staple for the past century. Although rice and pasta have made big inroads in the past 30 years... 85[%] of us still eat potatoes at least five times a week... We boil them, bake them and fry them, stuff them, mash them and turn them into soups and salads, eat them as hash-browns... The... *all year...* Desiree [variety is]... okay for anything[, as are the]... Karaka *Feb-Sep...* and... Rocket *Oct-Jan...* [varieties, whereas the] Nadine *Feb-Sep...* Draga *Oct-Jan...* and... Jersey Bennie *Oct-Jan...* are... low... in starch... [and, therefore, are less] perfect for roasting or chips... [but] make a great potato salad... [We don’t know yet what style of preparation suits it best, but a variety] spliced with toad genes[could one day be on the market]... Last month the... Environmental Risk Management Authority held hearings in Wellington on a proposal from the Institute for Crop and Food Research to grow potatoes containing a synthetic gene that encodes an antibiotic toxin from the African clawed toad. The experimental programme is designed to discover whether production of the toad antibiotic in potatoes protects them against the troublesome soft rot that plagues growers and distributors... The E[рма] has to decide whether Crop and Food should be allowed to grow plots containing 150 different lines of genetically modified potatoes during each of the next five years. Some of the spuds produce a toxin found in the giant silk moth rather than the toad, others an enzyme from a “phage,” a sort of virus that attacks bacteria, and still others Bt insecticide toxins derived from the bacterium which was used to great effect in Auckland against the white spotted tussock moth. The application from Crop and Food stated that all the transgenic potato lines were produced essentially following their standard transformation protocols. But it turns out that most of the potatoes, perhaps three or four hundred varieties, have not yet been produced at all. Crop and Food’s counsel argued that an application under the new Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act was like a request for a discharge under the Resource Management Act. You shouldn’t have to specify every occasion on which you are going to discharge waste, or the exact composition of the waste, provided the levels of chemicals are within certain limits. So, they argue, you shouldn’t be required to have already created all the modified potatoes you want to grow. One of the problems with available techniques for genetic engineering is that when you introduce a new gene into an organism, the DNA can become inserted at essentially any point in the organism’s chromosomes. The genetic engineer lets this happen more or less at random then looks for transformed organisms that seem to behave normally, those whose genetic structure has probably not been seriously disrupted by introduction of the new foreign gene. The Crop and Food application is designed to cover billions of such possibilities. It is

not possible to test many important characteristics of transformed potatoes before they are field-tested in open experimental plots. For one thing, potato plants don't usually flower when grown in a containment glasshouse. This means there is considerable uncertainty concerning the possible characteristics of [GE] potatoes, even after they have been produced and grown in containment. However, blanket approval is being sought to grow open plots of potato lines that have not yet been created, let alone met the limited tests of normality that can be conducted in a glasshouse. No one denies that the proposed experiments run a risk of "genetic escape" but the probability of the toxic genes being transferred into other organisms in the wild is claimed to be minuscule. It is up to the authority to decide whether the benefits of the experiments outweigh the risks... What approach would N[Z]ers like to see the authority adopt in reaching its decision? A special advisory group, Nga Kaihautu Tikanga Taiao, has been set up to look after Maori interests and comment on treaty issues. The group noted in its report that some of the general concerns about genetic engineering raised in public submissions to the authority were similar to those likely to be raised by Maori, but tangata whenua cannot be lumbered with the task of acting as a conscience for the whole of society. The Maori attitude to indigenous flora and fauna differs from the attitude of scientists to "biodiversity," as the living world is now called in official circles. If I sequenced the gene encoding the katipo toxin, inserted a modified version into kumara which I then wanted to grow in experimental plots with a view to testing the vegetables as possum bait, great weight would be given to the statutory role of Nga Kaihautu in protecting the status of katipo and kumara as taonga. However, genetic engineers do not regard the providence of evolutions as a treasure, the integrity of which they have a responsibility to preserve. In N[Z] we allow the transfer of genetic information from the African clawed toad into potatoes to be done in an ethical void. We are all complicit. While tangata whenua act to protect and preserve the whakapapa of their valued taonga, we allow genetic engineers to reduce the evolutionary tree of life to a jumbled heap of broken twigs. In fact, the Government is right behind such activity and foreign corporations are given liberal access to N[Z] as a testing ground for their [GE] products.

...The E[rma] has approved an application by... Crop and Food... to grow potatoes genetically engineered to resist soft rot and tuber moths. The authority said the risks of adverse effects were negligible. Crop and Food[']s chief executive... said the trials would be conducted on a research farm and appropriate steps would be taken to minimise risks of any loss of genetically modified material from the site... The application was approved subject to 20 controls, including that the area of the trial be left fallow for three years after the trial finished. The controls did not state whether the potatoes could be eaten. At last month's application, critics questioned whether Crop and Food would abide by the trial conditions after it offered [GE] potatoes for human consumption earlier this year. At a July conference in Nelson on food and nutrition, 300 guests were reportedly offered potatoes genetically altered... for higher levels of anti-oxidants and resistance to aphids. They contained a specially inserted gene from the human gut bacteria *E. coli*. But a Crop and Food scientist... said that incident had nothing to do with the latest application. Last month the authority approved an application for field trials of [GE] sugar beet, the first new organism taken to a full hearing by the authority... *News in Brief*... – raids on G[E] crops in UK inspire similar direct action in USA and France; 45 people charged over bungled attack on farm in Lincolnshire; protesters also]... arrested after mistakenly tearing up crop of maize believed to be genetically modified...

An act of eco-sabotage and growing public unrest has brought calls from scientists and politicians for a high-level inquiry into [GE] organisms. The calls follow the destruction by political activists of an experimental... potato crop at Crop and Food Research, Lincoln. There are five other experiments under way, including tests on radiata pine and sheep. The Wild Greens, an activist group affiliated to the Green Party, claimed responsibility for the sabotage, saying it had a moral responsibility to break the law in order to protect people. Police are investigating but so far there have been no arrests. The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment... said there was a desperate need for some kind of public forum. A public referendum was also an option, but there was no stopping genetic science. "This is not going to go away. This will be the revolutionary branch of science in the next century." The chief executive of AgResearch... said the international competitiveness of N[Z] agriculture could be seriously undermined if the value of [GE] organisms was not assessed.

...[NZ's Green Party has] been delivered a reprieve from political death row. Since signing their own warrants when they quit the Alliance in 1997, the Greens have not found anything likely to save their parliamentary hides[– until g]enetic engineering... To... [be anti-GE] is thoroughly Green... But until the Greens uncovered the lumpy-headed salmon experiment this week, and the existence of 200 other [local GE] experiments, the biggest impact had been from the party's aptly named youth activists, the Wild Greens... [I]t is difficult to see that the Wild Greens did the adult Greens too much harm... [by demolishing a GE] potato patch in Christchurch... The Wild Greens are not rivals and could even help the Greens... The Government's slow response also plays into the Green's advantage... If the Greens are smart, they will continue to exploit that lack of focus from the Government... [□ S]ecurity fears... in the light of the vandalism of... [the Christchurch] potato trial... have led HortResearch to postpone the public hearing on its application to conduct field trials with transgenic apple trees in Auckland... "In the emotion of the moment, we are concerned for the security of this valuable research material. If it was tampered with, it could destroy the results of several years' work." ...In the meantime, HortResearch can continue experimenting with [GE] apples in containment, under an old approval given by Erma's predecessor.

...A nationwide petition calling for public scrutiny of genetic engineering kicks off... today, following claims that genetic engineering of kiwifruit is... well advanced. The Greens... said nearly every quality of kiwifruit was being targeted by... genetic engineers... at HortResearch[in] Te Puke...

N[Z]ers are feeling "left in the dark" about [GE] organisms and the products to which they can lead, says the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment... "N[Z] consumers, retailers, farmers and food manufacturers – and our overseas buyers – all need more information about [the organisms] to be able to make informed choices,"... Calling for wider debate on the issues involved in developing [GE] plants and animals, [the commissioner said it] was concerned the technology was advancing so fast that public understanding was being left behind. "Last week's destruction of a research crop of [GE] potatoes was a wake-up call for everyone interested in the place of genetic science in N[Z]." The issue had been highlighted again on Tuesday in Parliament by the third knockback of a private member's bill for labelling of [GE] foods. "Public anxiety is justifiably bound to rise," [the commissioner] said... yesterday... "People don't have enough information..."

...Don't know your [GE] apples from your oranges? Here... are all the answers you need about Frankenstein foods... *Which crops have been modified so far?* The first plants were modified in 1983. All major crops have been modified and are now being grown commercially... but only on an experimental basis... in N[Z]... *Is it unnatural?* On the face of it, yes. Plucking the gene that makes a jelly fish glow and inserting it into an experimental crop, which has been done, seems very unnatural. But experts point out that in the natural world, foreign genes do move between species. When one scientist began to introduce genes that resist virus infection into the tobacco plant, [it] was surprised to find that hundreds of similar foreign genes already existed within the plant's genetic makeup... *Are they really putting human genes into animals?* Yes... *How does this fit in with cannibalism?* Only those with a very stupid understanding of what it is to be human would classify this as cannibalism... There is nothing particularly "human" about any particular gene... Genes are just stretches of code that instruct the body to produce one substance or another... [and we] share virtually all our genes with other creatures... *Is [GE] food dangerous?* Many theoretical risks exist... [but as] for the foreign gene itself, we eat DNA all the time so there is no general reason why an introduced gene should cause harm. DNA is rapidly broken down in the stomach and by cooking. That is why there is little concern that sugar refine[d] from sugar beet modified to resist insects will cause problems... *What is the worst-case scenario?* Pressure groups predict an environment of "green concrete" in which the herbicides have wiped out all weeds, leaving only the [GE] crops growing. Alternatively, rampant superweeds might engulf the countryside... The groups [also] predict a population with damaged immune systems as a result of eating harmful proteins... *How likely is this?* Environmental pressure groups say it is highly likely. Scientists in the field say it is extremely unlikely... *What's wrong with banning [GE] food or crops from N[Z]?* It could put us way behind in exploiting what promises to be one of the biggest industries of the next century.

...IT will be dubbed the genetic revolution: the time in the late 20th century when “super crops” bloomed and boomed. N[Z] does not lag in the revolution. Overseas corporations have viewed this country’s temperate climate, isolation and well-trained scientists as ideal for a test-bed and 11 major field tests for [GE] crops are under way. But, as with all experiments, the results don’t always turn out as expected. Critics of [GE] crops... will take grim solace in French research that shows that a transgenic crop... [of] canola (*Brassica napus* L. *oleifera*, or oilseed rape)... grown in N[Z] can pass on a herbicide-resistant gene to wild radish, a noxious weed in Canada which is also found in this country. The gene persists through at least four generations... The likelihood of any engineered trait transferring to a related wild species or to another crop was “extremely low,” according to the applicants... [in] 1996... If it did happen, the consequences would be “negligible,” and the risk for harm would be “none.” And since there are no native brassicas in N[Z], they said, the trial posed no threat to native flora. But just to be sure, the site would be located at least 1km from any other canola plant, and the field monitored for the subsequent emergence of stray canola plants. The Minister for the Environment approved the trial application – as well as another from Zeneca Seeds, also for engineered canola. They imposed a swag of extra conditions, including an isolation zone of 2km, reduction of the trial site, isolation tents and netting covers. Of more than 60 applications to field test or release [GE] organisms into NZ, only four have been rejected... The procedures sound reassuring – until you consider the French research, reported in *Nature* magazine... In Europe the French study is seen as both good and bad news. Optimistically, the results suggest the gene might be lost eventually. But for a hybrid like that to survive beyond the first generation is unusual, and that persistence troubles the French team... [A] Crop and Food plant geneticist... is less concerned. Our isolation procedures are adequate and... [the] French had to use sophisticated breeding techniques to force... [the hybridisation of] wild radish... with canola, and the hybrids were not particularly “fit.” “In the improbable event that the hybrid happened in the wild, it would probably revert back to regular radish, with no herbicide resistance.” The French experiment is not the first such study – engineered canola has been found to interbreed with related weeds in Scotland, Canada and Denmark. There has been another unforeseen genetic-engineering spin-off. British scientists fed ladybirds on aphids which had been fed sap from potatoes engineered to resist aphid attacks. The life span of the... ladybirds was halved, and they laid 30[%] fewer viable eggs. Such an effect on a beneficial predator species has not been seen before, reported the *New Scientist* magazine. It is bad news for the biotechnology industry, already dealing with the European public’s suspicion of transgenic crops – including American soy beans and maize engineered to produce a bacterial insecticide (a crop approved for trial near Pukekohe this season.) Nor is it good news for [a] Greenpeace campaigner... who has helped monitor transgenic crop trials in N[Z] for several years. A year ago... the Zeneca Roundup Ready canola... seed was sown without any confinement of the area involved, and... [the] Greenpeace observer noticed considerable bird activity in the field. In any event that seed failed to germinate, since it was eaten by springtail insects... “We are concerned at the casual way in which Zeneca appears to be undertaking this field trial,” [the observer] wrote to the... Interim Assessment Group... Zeneca’s N[Z] consultant... rejects that charge, saying it was not in the company’s interest to allow outside contamination. A very high standard of site security and isolation from related crops and weeds is essential for the production of pure seeds, [the consultant] says... But one complaint by Greenpeace was upheld... by IAG...: non-modified canola was planted alongside the transgenic crop, a deviation from the original proposal... The IAG lacks the resources to check that its own conditions have been met, and would be unaware of some breaches unless Greenpeace alerted them... says... [the observer. A] molecular geneticist at Massey University[, who is the IAG chairperson]... concurs. “We can’t go and look at a crop every week. In some ways Greenpeace did a good job for us.” A more regular monitoring programme has [since] been introduced... with infringements punishable by a maximum fine of \$500,000 and up to three months in jail... But [IAG’s chairperson] also defends Zeneca, saying it was their first test here. “They wanted to come and do things on a big scale. We scaled them right down. They just didn’t appreciate that this isn’t the Canadian prairies. We’ve been pretty tough with them and they are much more aware now.” ...[the IAG chairperson] expects several 100ha to 200ha applications early this year, probably for canola and maize. If approved these crops will be grown here on a commercial basis in order to build up seed supplied for other countries – making N[Z] one of the few regions other than North America where this can be done. Asked how N[Z] benefits from transgenic plantings, [the chairperson] responds, “Good question. We’ve always worked on the basis that there has to be something in it for N[Z]. We’re not just a testing ground for multinationals.” ...[Zeneca’s NZ consultant] says the benefits for N[Z] include access to transgenic technology and, for farmers, diversification – adding a new, perhaps more profitable crop... THE scale and speed of the switch to [GE] food production in the U[S] is stunning even those in the industry. With six giant agrochemical corporations poised to dominate world food production, more than 12 million hectares of [GE] crops were planted last year, reports the *Guardian* newspaper. The market is expected to double this year if, as expected, the European Union approves commercial releases of engineered seeds. This food revolution raises questions of corporate influence on governments, says the *Guardian*... The newspaper reports: • A revolving door between the U[S] Government and the biotech industry. • Heavy lobbying to rewrite world food safety standards to favour biotechnology... • Legal contracts locking farmers into corporate control of production. • Public relations firms massaging of the debate in favour of [GE]... • New laws protecting the U[S] food industry from criticism... Critics say this food revolution will mean more U[S] domination of food markets. They fear unemployment for millions of small farmers without access to technologies or global markets... Consumer resistance to engineered foods is growing in Europe, and some trial crops are being sabotaged.

...G[E] potatoes can damage the immune system of rats, according to British research that calls into question the safety of the new food technology... Aberdeen’s Rowett Institute... fed five rats on... potatoes that carried genes from the snowdrop and jackbean for 110 days – equivalent to 10 years in human terms... [T]he rats suffered from slightly stunted growth and were more likely to be vulnerable to disease... The findings have alarmed consumer groups... The A[US]n Consumers’ Association said... “We’ve really argued all along for the precautionary principle – that is that these products are presumed guilty before they are ruled innocent. That may take 20 years.” Environmental groups say that it took decades before the full dangers of pesticides such as DDT were known, or the ability of BSE... to also affect humans. However... Monsanto Co... said that all [GE] food was safe and had undergone rigorous trials. “There have been more than 25,000 field trials conducted on 60 crops in 45 countries around the world... and not one of the regulatory agencies in those countries has said that there is a safety issue,” a Monsanto spokes[person] said. But many Britons are anxious about meddling with nature to produce food. More than 40 of the 300 experimental sites growing [GE] trial crops... in Britain... have been damaged in the past six months by environmental campaigners. [The Prince of Wales], himself an organic farmer, fuelled the debate in June with a warning that genetic engineering of food “takes [hu]mankind into realms that belong to God and God alone.” ...“We are assured that this is absolutely safe and that no harm can come to us from eating it. But if you gave me the choice now, I wouldn’t eat it,” [the professor who headed the institute’s rat study]... said. Britain’s agriculture ministry said [GE] potatoes had not been approved for human consumption in Britain, although soya and some other [GE] products have been on sale for about two years. The particular strain of modified potato used in the professor’s experiments are not thought to be sold commercially anywhere in the world... [ANZFA said no GE] foods would be allowed in A[US] and NZ until they had passed rigorous safety standards. “We’ll take a cautionary approach... If there’s any doubt it won’t be on the shelves.”

...G[E] food is probably already in your shopping trolley... Officials believe 56 genetically altered crops are permitted worldwide, and that up to 500 products on N[Z] shelves contain one or more of these ingredients... As part of... temporary safety measures, the Ministry of Health would carry out random checks... But... the Safe Food Campaign[group is] not happy with the temporary regime, which allows food to be sold if it has been approved overseas. Some products have been approved by the U[S], but rejected elsewhere... Meantime, [the]... Royal Agricultural Society[of NZ] said the reaction to genetic engineering had been extreme.

...N[Z]'s academy of sciences, the Royal Society – which says it represents most of the country's scientists – has backed the use of [GE] foods for humans. [Its] president... said the society wanted to see constructive debate on the issues involved, but believed “the debate surrounding [GE] organisms in NZ” is beginning to stray from the informative. The risks are being overplayed.”

...GOVERNMENT agencies are helping to promote the controversial [GE] food industry, providing funding and experts for seminars that opponents yesterday dubbed taxpayer-funded propaganda... Entitled “Concepts, Myths and Realities of Gene Technology and Food”, the seminars have been underwritten by a \$60,000 grant from Technology N[Z], an arm of the government-funded Foundation for Research Science and Technology. A further \$10,000 has been made available to prepare educational material for schools, aimed at children around 12 years old. Both the seminars and educational resources are being prepared by Genepool, a trust established to “provide authoritative gene technology information so N[Z]ers can make informed choices on the use of these technologies”... The first of 11 national seminars, costing \$50 to \$100 per head, is in Hastings tomorrow. It will present scientific and industry viewpoints, but has no speakers scheduled to give opposing views in the polarised debate. Substantial protests are being promised at each venue by Revolt Against Genetic Engineering[(Rage)], an environmental lobby group with links to the Alliance MP... whose attempt last month to introduce legislation requiring labelling of all [GE] food failed... Genepool is managed from the offices of a Wellington public relations consultancy, Communications Trumps, but its purpose was educational, not public relations, said the N[Z] manager for Monsanto[– one of the trust's private]... sector members... the trust[also includes] government-funded scientific research institutes, and representatives of official health, agricultural, and food regulation bodies... The... Science Research and Technology Minister... defended Genepool's funding... and personally supported “any initiative that develops reasoned scientific debate”... However, [a spokesperson for] Rage... said the group was “horrified that an organisation that purports to be neutral would organise seminars that are completely one-sided and don't represent the consumer viewpoint at all”... Last night... Rage... said it was taking legal action against the [Erma] over its decision to approve the latest [GE] application, by Kimihere Research Centre in Canterbury, for a second trial of sugar beet that is resistant to a type of herbicide... “We are concerned that even if it doesn't spread to other crops, you still have pollution of the soil. Insects will eat the genetically altered sugar beet, birds will eat the insects... We don't know what the result of that will be. We want these experiments done in contained laboratory conditions, not in fields, and that is why we are taking legal action to ensure this happens.” ...[● C]ontroversial biotechnology forays include Syngenta's “golden rice”, normal rice that has been genetically engineered to make vitamin A. This, it is claimed, could save thousands of [Last] World lives. Some scientists even claim that a month's delay in marketing golden rice could cause more than 50,000 children to go blind through vitamin A deficiency. But Greenpeace research suggests a person would have to eat 10kg of... the... rice a day to receive a sight-saving dose of... vitamin[A].

...When the gene genies start tampering with our food, where will it end? And should we be worried?... [A NZer] is the Devil Incarnate. Or so [it] must seem to the small, but potentially fast-growing lobby which sees the technology juggernaut of [GE] food as a combination of unknown health risks and global corporatist plot. Look at these diabolical credentials[the NZer is the local manager] for the multi-national food and chemical giant, Monsanto, the company which made Agent Orange... On his card is the slightly cultish Monsanto credo: “Food, Health, Hope.” His recommended reading is a book called *Saving the Planet with Pesticides and Plastic*. The company [the NZer] represents sees a future, and not a terribly distant one, where corn stems will be pulped for plastic, and where instead of taking pills, antibiotics will be available in the flesh of specially coloured bananas. It markets this vision under the banner “Let the Harvest Begin”, and accuses its critics of a First World arrogance that ignores what more reliable, higher yield crops could do for the [Last] World. Those critics, however, see an international web of relationships between the bio-tech companies and those who will regulate them in future, and attempts to make American food standards for genetic modification the world's standards. Already, “Roundup Ready Soy”... accounts for around 40% (and growing) of the American annual harvest of soybeans, a staple ingredient in around two-thirds of all processed foods. It is... [the manager of Monsanto NZ]'s mission to try to prevent mandatory labelling of these basic ingredients... [in NZ. The manager] argues that such labels would be meaningless, costly to avoid and, more to the point, potentially off-putting... Imagine, for example, if every packet of fries in a McDonald's “Happy Meal” carried a label saying “may contain [GE] potatoes”. Who wouldn't think twice before feeding them to their offspring? What [the manager] wants is labelling only where there is a substantial difference between the [GE] product and the original it comes from... However, [the manager] and other supporters of [GE] food may find themselves up against it. Even if the risks associated with such genetic modification are overstated and unscientific, risk communication experts believe that if the public wants labelling, it will get it. “We predict that it will be the perceived rather than the actual risk of gene technology that will determine whether it is acceptable to N[Z]ers and is, therefore, successfully introduced,” said HortResearch social science researchers... at an environmental risk management conference in June... [Their] research shows that although a net 75% of N[Z]ers support gene technology for medical purposes, they are much warier about its application to food, with a net 49% support. New polling under way now is asking for the first time how N[Z]ers feel about food produced from crossing genetic material from animals, viruses, and bacteria with plants and [one of the researchers] says there is considerable confusion in the public mind between gene technology and other more ethically fraught techniques, such as cloning. Moreover, scientists themselves disagree about the degree of risk which bio-technology represents. Even supporters such as [a p]rofessor... from Massey University's Institute of Molecular Bio-Sciences, willingly concede that the science in this area is only just ahead of its commercial exploitation. For [the manager of Monsanto NZ], however, the capacity to cross genes from one plant or animal to another is not a threat to the environment, but a “wonderful” opportunity to increase bio-diversity... For those who embrace a technologically advanced future with enthusiasm, this is exciting stuff, and for a food-exporting nation, it is regarded as essential by both the farming and food-manufacturing lobbies, with the strong exception of the organic farming lobby. “The food industry is worth 48% of [NZ's] export earnings,” says the executive director of the Grocery Marketers Association... “We need state-of-the-art technology. The world population has trebled because of the use of pesticides, chemicals, and bio-technology. We are almost ashamed of saying it, but I think we should be proud of it.” ...For as far as... most of the scientific community is concerned, the genetic modification of food represents either no risk at all or less risk than conventional plant breeding... However, for... a convener of the N[Z] Safe Food Campaign and author of the newly published *Eating Safely in a Toxic World*: “This issue just needs the spark that lights the prairie fire, feelings are so intense. Given that these are radically different foods from any other food that humans have eaten before and that they may contain bacteria and viruses that have never been in the human diet before, how do we know that safety testing (of new [GE] foods) is for anything more than short-term obvious effects? I'm part of an international movement of people who want food that is natural. We don't want food that has been made by industrialised agriculture... I don't trust it or the scientists who tell me it's perfectly safe. These are things which have never happened in billions of years of evolution. It touches on deep uncertainties about how far humans should meddle with nature. We have never had as much power as now.” As a European organic farmer put it for a *New York Times* reporter: “A bunch of people are trying to get rich by telling us that nature isn't good enough and that we will have to take genes out of fish and put them in a strawberry if we want to survive. They are changing the basic rules of life and they want to try it all out on us.” What opponents of genetic engineering tap into is a larger millennial angst in which public scepticism is undermining traditional faith in the ability of science to deliver truth, and of regulators to control food safety... This volatile political climate is producing a fascinating reaction in the insurance industry, which makes money from understanding where the greatest risks lie and then avoiding them. According to reports in the German media, the Swiss insurance giant Rueck is refusing to insure [GE] crops and foods... Rueck sees the risk of a sudden collapse in public support for bio-technology and attendant changes in social values as a huge risk if international legal action were sparked by alleged victims of [GE] food... In the end, however, fear of consumer backlash may prove to be more important to food producers than logic, science, or international trade regulations... [A] Wellington-based lobbyist with clients including Kellogg's

and the Mars food empire, points to the example already set by... Nestle, which has decided to label all... [GE foods (however,) in a new twist to the row over the company's demands for £3.7 million... from Ethiopia... Nestle has been accused of exploiting Pakistani dairy farmers by buying up their milk for less than it costs to produce – and selling it back to local people at inflated prices... of 200[%]... profit... as “long life” [milk]...

Why do insurance companies refuse to insure against GE-related catastrophes? It's because they know that GE is too risky. In fact, there are no long-term safety studies of the consequences of G[E]. Once these new organisms are let loose into the environment, no one really has any idea what harm they might do – to the environment or your health. That's why the biotech companies want you (through the government) to pay for the damages GE crops and products can inflict on the health and safety of the country... Does anti-GE mean “anti-science”? No. The issue is not “science” vs “non-science”. The issue is profit-oriented corporate (“no ethics”) science vs the safety of our food and the integrity of our health. There is nothing more destructive than “science” harnessed to corporate or military goals. After all, it was scientists who created deadly biological warfare agents, cancer-causing pesticides, and nuclear weapons... What do you want – a NZ where our food supply is safe from unpredictable consequences – or one where we always have to wonder if what we are eating could make us ill or give us an allergic reaction?

...THE Washington Post reported on 14 June... that G[E] StarLink corn did not cause allergic reactions in 17 people who had reported sometimes severe reactions after eating corn tacos and tortillas. Blood tests failed to find any signs of antibodies to the protein in the genetically enhanced corn, indicating none of those tested had experienced an allergic reaction, the federal Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said... The results were applauded by advocates of biotechnology as confirming the safety of StarLink in particular and modified crops in general. But, predictably environmental groups called the federal effort limited and insufficient to answer the question of whether StarLink can cause dangerous allergic reactions... StarLink is a variety of corn engineered to contain a protein, called Cry9c, that can protect crops against several insects. While many similar modified corns have been approved for general use, StarLink was approved only for animal feed because of concerns that it broke down more slowly than many proteins and might cause allergic reactions. The corn nevertheless inadvertently entered the human food supply...

A biotechnology firm is scrambling to buy millions of bales of [GE] corn approved only for animal feed after revelations that the crop slipped into the human food chain, says the *Washington Post*. Aventis FoodSciences, of Research Triangle Park in North Carolina, is offering a 25[%] premium to buy the corn from grain silos and food producers... The revelations about the modified corn, dubbed StarLink, have raised fears in the U[S] about GE] crops and whether they can be kept separate from non-modified goods.

...L[ast week]... a US advocate for... [GE food was] flown into town by the U[S] Embassy to try to convince N[Z]ers that labelling all G[E] food] is unnecessary. Apparently N[Z]ers are not to be allowed to make up their own minds. Instead, there is a major international brainwashing effort going on to persuade us G[E] food] is good for us. The thinking seems to be that if we have more “information” we would come to agree with the corporates. The implication is that objectors to G[E] food] are superstitious, fear-ridden flat-earthers, rather than educated, rational grown-ups who see things from a different point of view... [The chairperso]n and CEO of mega-corporate Monsanto, calls the objections of people like me “religious or quasi-religious” because we fear the consequences of significantly interfering with the natural world. Yet... from... a purely self-interested consumer viewpoint, what does G[E] food] offer me? There is no promise that retail prices will be reduced, nor that the quality of products will be increased. Why should I take unknown risks with my own health to increase the yields and profits of multinationals? ...Monsanto... explains its role as “providing to the institutions of society – particularly governments; the information... requested in order for those institutions to make the judgments they are chartered to make”. Gee, thanks, Monsanto. It just happens that Monsanto has “chosen to be the leading firm in the application of biotechnology of agriculture”. Does this make it a credible source of information on biotech, or a source of information that should be treated with caution? ...N[Z]ers have already spoken on this issue[– back when the]... ANZFA... asked for public submissions... The overwhelming majority supported a ban, a policy that is not even on the agenda of the various government agencies charged with overseeing genetic engineering. Officially all we've been allowed to have a say on is whether all [GE] foods... should be labelled... The deluge of “anti” submissions was clearly not the result... ANZFA wanted. Democracy being a tradeable commodity these days, the authority disregarded 85% of the... submissions it received because they were in “the general protest/form letter category, objecting to one or more aspects of the... debate (e.g., asking for full labelling, moratorium, etc)”. Only... “substantive submissions providing some detailed information” were “used as part of our assessment procedure and detailed in our assessment reports”. One of the crises of our times is that the global marketplace has bred corporates so large they can manipulate national governments and even international agencies to get them in harmony with their ambitions... Individual nation states have to be bullied into submission, not because they individually matter particularly, especially when they are as small as N[Z], but because they might set a “bad” example to the rest of the world. It reminds me somewhat of the US's persistent efforts to overturn N[Z]'s nuclear free policy, simply because of its upstart potential... [GE food] bears comparison to the issues of nuclear power and... weapons in its potential for devastation. Indeed, it is bigger because while nuclear accidents can lay waste to an area, rogue G[E] crops could permanently contaminate the entire global food chain.

...First the good news. If you're worried about eating ...G[E]... food – and scientific evidence is mounting that you *should* be worried – then you'll be pleased to know that a G[E] food-labelling regime will soon be in place. Right now, on your behalf, the A[nzfa] is busy framing regulations – building, in effect, a stable door behind which this strange new beast of a food can be penned. The bad news is that the horse has already bolted. And the worse news – if you're the worrying kind – is that the government is not exactly making strenuous efforts to get it back... No matter what plans are being made to identify it and label it from here on in, you've almost certainly eaten some already without knowing it... Welcome to your new diet. Nice of them to tell you, wasn't it? But the whole history of G[E] food has been one of giant corporates pushing the stuff into the marketplace – just going ahead and doing it anyway – while governments and bureaucracies trail some distance behind, bleating about checks and balances. Belatedly, three months ago, A[ustralasian] health ministers decided by majority vote that all G[E] food would in future have to be labelled... although N[Z's] Associate Health Minister... is pessimistic... “I don't believe... we will be able to come up with a sensible, practical regime.” This is the challenge facing politicians and bureaucrats the world over... The upshot in this part of the world is that, though Anzfa is considering three labelling categories – CONTAINS, MAY CONTAIN and DOES NOT CONTAIN (or G[E]-FREE, if the manufacturer prefers) – the vast majority of such products will probably wind up in the MAY CONTAIN basket. Which, both [the minister] and opponents of G[E] food agree, would be next to useless. The technology for identifying food components is improving all the time, however, and, no matter how tiny the G[E] trace, no matter how unrecognisable it may be in the final product, it ought to be possible to track it down and give it a name. [The minister] all but acknowledges this, but says it would cost too much to find out. “Ideally,” [the minister] says, “it would be nice to have every component listed up there. But I think that has to be balanced up with what is reasonable and practical. Society wouldn't forgive government if compliance costs doubled the cost of food.” To his opponents, this argument is a red herring, and possibly a [GE] one at that. The Alliance[Party MP]... whose private member G[E] bill died after some politically inspired dirty dealing in Parliament... points out that in “virtually all of the other foodstuff we produce we have traceability back to the paddock” and... you can make a market virtue of such traceability – think of the [NZ Beef and Lamb] Quality Mark... Such is his scepticism about mandatory labelling that [the minister] has not even given much thought to how the new regime will be policed. “We've certainly got no concrete plans to do anything at this stage... I'm not sure how we do it. Because anything would be a huge cost, and I can think of better ways to spend the taxpayers' money.” In other words, even if Anzfa devises a viable definition of G[E] food, the labelling system is likely to have loopholes big enough to build a supermarket in, and preventing people abusing the system will not be a high priority anyway... [The Alliance MP and the Green's co-leader both] believe that the government's reluctance to take a tough stand on G[E] food stems from

its fear of offending the US... and there is certainly a hint of that in leaked ministerial minutes from last year, which refer to [US] concern that even a relatively toothless labelling regime “could impact negatively on the bilateral trade relationship[.]” Last week, attempts to establish the first global treaty regulating trade in [GE] foods collapsed when the... US – along with A[US], Chile, Argentina and Uruguay – ...rejected a proposal supported by about 130 other nations... Five against 130 – you’d think it would count for something. But where the US goes, the rest of the world is bound, by free-trade zealotry, to follow. The main argument of the industry and its political acolytes is that G[E] crops will help feed the world and its burgeoning population. But the world already produces 50[%] more food than it needs. The world just isn’t very good at sharing it... In N[Z], public opposition to G[E] foods has been modest. But this year the issue exploded in the British and European press with the sound and fury you would expect to accompany your average revolution (which is exactly what G[E] food science is). Monsanto was ordered to pay £17,000 for failing to prevent the spread of pollen from a trial site of [GE] oilseed rape in Lincolnshire. (An amount environmentalists condemned as “lunch money”.) A British company was fined £14,000 for a similar offence... Much of the current furore was sparked off by revelations that... several million [pounds were]... lent... to a biotechnology firm... [by the British] science minister... and... supermarket billionaire, [who owns]... the worldwide patent for a key gene.

...N[Z] has been in cahoots with the U[S] to stop Japan labelling [GE] foods, papers released last night by the Alliance show. The... Alliance health spokes[person said the NZ PM’s]... assurances about labelling [GE] food in N[Z] did not measure up against her Government’s action... Last week, [the PM] repeated in Parliament that the Government supported labelling. In the same week, National ministers bagged the Greens co-leader... as “anti-big business and anti-American” for her campaign against [GE] food. It followed a warning from... [the US ambassador that NZ] could face trade sanctions if it went ahead with mandatory labelling.

...A compelling argument for [NZ to adopt GE] foods is that the U[S] has already decided to sell this food in shops... “If we choose to label that food, we are creating a trade barrier with the US... In turn, the [US] may complain to the W[TO] and slap economic sanctions on our food exports in retaliation,” says [a] former senior lecturer in biochemistry and molecular biology... [at] Lincoln University... “We export about \$2.1 billion-worth of goods to USA per annum, they are our third biggest market and represent 2[%] of our GDP]. The economic fallout will be substantial. That doesn’t detract from the safety issues about [GE] foods but it is an important consideration. One thing that may protect us is that Europe and Britain appear to want clear labelling of GE foods, too, and we can take support from that. Unfortunately, it is looking increasingly likely there will be a trade war between Europe and the US and we don’t want to be caught in the crossfire. As we sell our produce to the top 3[%] of the world’s markets, producing high-quality, high-value product, the first thing we should do is ask each market individually what they want. If they don’t want GE products it would be sensible not to deliver. It may be we can get a premium price for something that is not [GE] and market our clean, green food internationally... British supermarkets have turned to their suppliers and said they don’t want any [GE] products... And it’s a good selling point. One British supermarket, Iceland, announced they were GE free and customers beat a path to their door... In terms of us not having the resources to safely test GE food, the comparison is imported motor vehicles. The N[Z] Government defines regulations and standards and it is up to the motor vehicle manufacturer to meet them. We don’t test the cars themselves, as the cost would be prohibitive, but instead put the onus for safety on the producer... [But there] have been some negative aspects of genetic modification and I would expect there to be a few more cropping up. A Japanese firm produced a food supplement for insomnia which killed at least 37 people in America. There’s some debate whether it was [the] genetic... modification process that did it or poor purification, but it is seen as a negative aspect. Yet since 1987 every diabetic has been using [GE] insulin at least four times a day, which is the flip side. There are a[iso a]t least 130 current uses of Thalidomide... You have to balance the good and the bad...”

...The Alliance... presented a 27,000-signature petition to the... parliamentary select committee on health... yesterday calling for labelling of G[E] foods, but... the... Alliance’s health and environmental spokes[person said NZ’s parliament should]... require all foods to be traceable to origin...

Someone needs to tell... [NZ’s] Minister of Health... there’s many a slip between a ministerial communique and a supermarket checkout. The [minister]... and his A[US] counterparts have agreed on mandatory labelling of foods containing G[E] ingredients. We’ll all be mightily cheered when foodstuffs with G[E] ingredients are clearly marked as such. But the absence of a label may prove nothing except that there’s no label there. Keeping a G[E]-free supply line is the chief article of faith in the food business these days, the 90s equivalent of the 70s’ “no preservatives” and the 80s’ “no artificial colour or flavour.” ...the owner of the Bake Haus Swiss Bakery, says [it] stopped buying soy oil when reports began circulating about [GE] soybeans. But... like every other operator who relies on suppliers for raw ingredients, [the owner] knows his guarantees of purity are often based on trust. “We do our best to make sure... but it isn’t that easy, really. We rely on our suppliers, who rely on their suppliers not to tell porkies.” [The owner] of the Pandoro Italian Bakery, devotes endless energy to gaining assurances from suppliers that ingredients are G[E]-free – and finds new ones when assurances aren’t forthcoming. But yesterday... admitted that absolute certainty was impossible. “There’s a grain of truth in what you’re saying, that the labelling can be meaningless... It’s a huge undertaking and with the best will in the world there are going to be times when you’ve got ingredients which are [GE]. It’s so pervasive.”

...Shopping for groceries is to get more complicated with new rules on [GE] food. Labels will be introduced in a year or so for food with more than 0.1[%] of GE ingredients. Thousands of items will be affected – about 60[%] of processed food has a GE component. The changes could also mean more expensive food. And the complexity of sorting ingredients will mean items such as tofu will be labelled, but not food colouring. Under the rules announced by transtasman Health Ministers... food... sold at point of sale, such as fresh foods from supermarkets and meals from restaurants and takeaway outlets, will be exempt... [However, a] Green Party MP and safe food campaigner... said exempting highly refined foods made a mockery of the new regime. Foods with no detectable GE ingredient in the final product, such as highly refined cooking oils... would be exempt, even if they were made from GE crops or were genetically engineered at some stage during their manufacture. “This will make manufacturers and retailers very happy, but not consumers,”... But... [NZ’s] Health Minister... said the new rules were the most comprehensive in the world and consumers would be pleased. The Ministry of Health would police labelling, and anyone who broke the rules would feel the full weight of the law. [The Green MP said it] would be asking where the money was coming from to monitor the labelling regime because it was not in the Budget... Future meetings of the ministers will set the size of labels, where on packaging they must be displayed and exactly what they will say.

...The world’s most powerful leaders have labelled [GE] food alongside Aids and the millennium bug, as one of the greatest threats facing the planet... [Even the British PM and US] President... – two of the genetic modification industry’s strongest supporters – were bounced into agreeing to support a new global inquiry into the safety of such foods while attending the G8 summit in Cologne at the weekend. Environmentalists welcomed the development as “significant,” but warned that the public would not be “duped by international committees interested in rubber-stamping products of biotechnology firms.” Friends of the Earth[’s] director... said: “It shows just how far the thinking in the U[S] and British Governments is from those of other leading nations. If this G8 initiative is to have any credibility, there must now be a five-year freeze on all G[E] food being used commercially.” ...The U[S] has threatened an all-out trade war if Europe tries to ban... [GE food, but opposition to it] is also beginning to grow in the U[S]... A 500,000-signature petition was given to Congress last week demanding that G[E] products be clearly labelled as such... Monsanto... welcomed the [G8] move, saying it hoped it would speed international approval of its controversial products.

...The controversy over Monsanto’s introduction of [GE] crops and foods in Europe and elsewhere may be rather more than just another clumsy American boot trampling on the sensitivities of others. At stake is more than the profits of a single company, or even one industry. Rumbling under

the surface are issues that may influence the boundaries between company, market and Government responsibilities for decades. Genetic modification is the pivot on which these possibilities turn. At the management level Monsanto got it wrong. "It's a classic case of good intentions gone awry," says... [the chairperson] of the Global Business Network, an influential California-based research and consulting organisation. Because it believed it was doing right, [the chairperson] says, Monsanto was unprepared for public hostility based on a different reading of the issues. It compounded the problem with an arrogant initial reaction and is now condemned to chase an agenda set by others – an unwinnable battle. The serious damage that Monsanto has suffered... will take years to recover from. The [GE] mouthful that Monsanto has bitten off is not just a social responsibility problem – on a par with the employment policies of Nike's suppliers in Asia or Shell's relationship with the Nigerian Government. Manipulating genes could hardly be more psychologically potent, appearing to go to the heart of what it means to be human. Pressure groups are insisting that there are limits to consumerism and that some things, such as playing with nature, cannot be left to business alone. As a result, the firm has found it hard to stop the debate shifting from the technical (are [GE] foods and crops safe?) to something simple: given past experiences (such as the mad cow disease), should we let the [GE] genie out of the bottle? Although Monsanto managers really do believe they can improve the world... people in Europe and many other places are sceptical. They see that Monsanto makes money from killing plants, not growing them, and that for a firm boasting a commitment to life, it did pretty well out of the defoliant Agent Orange in the Vietnam War. The clash of values is stark – and what happens will be decided in the short term as much by consumers and markets as Governments. This is a tribute to the remarkable and near-invisible rise of the newest actors on the international business stage: non-governmental organisations such as Amnesty International, Greenpeace and the aid organisations. In a measured and thought-provoking new book, *When Good Companies Do Bad Things* [– which was co-written by the network chairperson –] it is calculated that there are now 16,000 [NGO]s. In many respects they are more formidable opponents than Governments or governmental institutions, being more agile and much more adept users of the media. Companies are only just beginning to recognise what such organisations have long understood: that the two are sides of the same coin... As Governments have withdrawn from international roles, companies and such [NGO]s are the only bodies capable of swift global action. They complement each other. [NGO]s lack resources, but are nimble and directly tuned into public concerns in a way that Monsanto or Shell can never be. [NGOs] are the public conscience. And, despairing of the ineffectual U[N] bureaucracies, they know that waiting for international governmental agreement on contentious issues such as biotechnology or human rights is not an option. And it is their mortal enemies, the corporations, with their powerful resources and worldwide organisations, that offer the best chance of getting things done. A good example of this... is the environment, which 20 years ago barely figured on companies' radar screens. If it did, it certainly was not their responsibility. Now, however, sustained pressure by organisations such as Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth means there are few companies in resource-related industries that refuse to accept, grudgingly or not, that they have environmental responsibilities... [Incidentally, last] March... a little-known cotton seed enterprise called Delta and Pine Land Company acquired American patent No 5,723,765, which gave it exclusive rights to technology enabling it to promulgate plants that will produce "self-terminating" offspring, the so-called "terminator seeds." The "terminator" is a [GE] mechanism triggered by an outside stimulus... The preferred trigger is the antibiotic tetracycline. Two months later, Monsanto bought Delta and Pine Land and a new prospect opened up – that this giant multinational could control the seeds of most of the world's farmers. Already the Terminator patent is registered, or in the process of being so, in 87 countries... The minor acquisition could be the key to Monsanto's continuing profitability since its patent on glyphosate... expires in 2000.

...Monsanto's decision not to commercialise technology that makes plants sterile is a relief to N[Z]'s arable farmers, who feared it could eventually be introduced here. The concept of a terminator gene was "something of a concern to all farmers," the national grain council chair[perso]n of Federated Farmers... said yesterday. The new technology would have resulted in farmers being forced to buy seed every season rather than harvesting their own... Monsanto... said on Tuesday that it had found other biotechnology capable of achieving the same ends and it did not now intend to use the genetic engineering technique... Monsanto... already holds patents on other technology that would discourage farmers from planting seeds from a previous crop – but would not render those seeds infertile. It was not yet developing those technologies, but would not rule it out... [A] South Canterbury arable farmer... warned that just because Monsanto had decided not to commercialise the terminator gene it did not mean other companies would not try to develop their own... Other biotechnology companies have announced that they have found ways to create extremely high numbers of different mutations in conventional plant breeding. They then select the traits they want to breed into the commercial seed lines. Because no genetic engineering is used, the resulting seed can be sold as "GE-free."

...Applications to sell 13 [GE] foods in A[US and NZ] will be advertised today. Eight applications to... Anzfa... are from... Monsanto... Most of the foods for which applications are being advertised were among the 20 [GE] crops which Anzfa said in May were undergoing "rigorous" safety assessments. It allowed foods containing those engineered ingredients to stay on sale... at the same time as it... effectively shelved any labelling of such foods until at least 2001... The engineered foods to be advertised include... [cotton] seed and canola from plants tolerant of bromoxynil (a herbicide used around small and coarse grain crops)... The inclusion of tolerant canola has positive implications for N[Z] chemical company Fernz. Fernz has recently taken over the French chemical group Compagnie Francaise de Produits Industriels (CFPI), which has about 20[%] of the world market for the bromoxynil herbicide. At the same time it has done a deal with global chemical giant Rhone Poulenc, which controls the other 80[%] of the market, so that the two of them have a stranglehold on supplies.

...The local arm of... Monsanto is withdrawing its application for N[Z] field trials of [GE] wheat. "It is clear... N[Z]ers want more time to consider the technology, and look at how it is introduced," said Monsanto's NZ biotechnology business manager... The application to grow Roundup-Ready wheat on a 22m by 32m test site... sparked an explosion of public submissions when it was advertised... With 1418 submissions received, and 433 people asking to speak to the E[rma] directly, its staff faced the logistical challenge of organising the necessary public hearings... Monsanto wanted to use the Canterbury Plains to test 11 strains of bread wheat, changed to tolerate its herbicide, in line with field tests on the crop in the U[S], Canada and the Czech Republic... The... [business manager's] statement said that as Monsanto had agreed last year to the voluntary moratorium on [commercial] releases of engineered crops requested by the... Independent Biotechnology Advisory Council, it was appropriate to put the company's field test on hold as well... [■ Yesterday, the] *Independent* newspaper said the [British] government had summoned the heads of biotechnology companies, including... Monsanto, for talks about a voluntary code that would delay wide-scale planting of [GE] crops until 2002.

...The British Government has sought to reassure consumers over the safety of... [GE] foods after shops warned they could lose billions of dollars if confusion was not resolved. Retailers had called for an "unequivocal" Government statement a day after 21 top international scientists demanded the reinstatement of a British researcher who claimed that rats fed on modified potatoes suffered a weakened immune system... [In local news, a] multinational seed company plans to grow [GE] maize in South Auckland. The plan has outraged environmentalists... At a hearing in Wellington yesterday, Greenpeace's spokesperson... urged the Government's watchdog on new organisms to delay approval of Pioneer N[Z]'s planting plan. Appearing as a witness for... Rage... [the spokesperson told the Erma] that one line of the GE maize seed gene posed a threat to N[Z]'s ecological systems. The maize was engineered to create a toxin which killed corn borer insects. But laboratory tests had shown large amounts of its pollen, dusted on other plants, would kill other caterpillars, such as the larvae of monarch butterflies... [The executive of] Pioneer NZ, a subsidiary of Pioneer Hi-Bred International... told the hearing the project was worth \$600,000 to the company, which employed 25 people. Neighbours of the Glenbrook field where the maize tests are believed to be planned were last night unconcerned... [One neighbour], who owns a nearby garden centre with [his] wife... said Pioneer had been doing seed trials for years. "But they control what they do quite thoroughly. The risk of something getting

loose is quite small.” But [his wife] added: “If it kills off butterflies, it is not good.” ...Meanwhile, it should be known by the end of the week if [GE] canola being tested in the South Island has spread to surrounding areas. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is investigating.

...A study of [GE] corn has raised new concerns about the crop after finding that it spreads enough pollen to nearby weeds to kill monarch butterfly caterpillars feeding on them. Iowa State University scientists found that one in five monarch larvae died after being exposed to the toxic corn pollen for two days. Three days after the initial two-day exposure, more than half the larvae were dead. The biotech corn, known as Bt corn for a bacterium gene that makes it toxic to the European corn borer, became controversial last year after a laboratory study at Cornell University showed it was toxic to monarch butterflies. The Iowa State study was set up to find out how the pollen would affect butterflies in their natural environment. The Cornell finding produced a public outcry in Europe and calls from environmental groups to curb the spread of gene-altered crops. But biotech supporters have criticised both studies as being unrealistic... [The] vice-president of food and agriculture for the Biotechnology Industry Organisation... said caterpillars were unlikely to encounter the pollen in nature in any great amount, and the monarch population increased almost as much as the plantings of Bt corn last year. Environmental groups have petitioned the US Environmental Protection Agency to have farmers surround Bt corn with buffer zones of conventional corn to prevent the pollen from spreading to milkweed.

...IN 1992 THE AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY SANCTIONED THE RELEASE OF A GENETICALLY ENGINEERED VARIANT OF A COMMON BACTERIA... DESIGNED TO CONVERT DECAYING PLANT MATTER INTO INDUSTRIAL ALCOHOL... IT HAD BEEN TESTED TO ENSURE THAT IT WAS NON-TOXIC TO HUMANS AND ANIMALS[. BUT.] JUST WEEKS BEFORE ITS RELEASE AND QUITE BY CHANCE, A GRADUATE STUDENT WORKING ON HIS PHD DISCOVERED THAT THE NEW BACTERIA WAS ACTUALLY TOXIC TO LIVING PLANTS... HAD THIS... BACTERIA BEEN RELEASED INTO THE ENVIRONMENT... IT IS ESTIMATED THAT... WITHIN A FEW SHORT YEARS, IT WOULD HAVE DESTROYED THE WORLD'S ENTIRE PLANT LIFE.

...Research by a leading German zoologist has shown that genes used to genetically engineer crops can jump the species barrier. A three-year study by [the p]rofessor... at the University of Jena found that the gene used to modify oil-seed rape had transferred to bacteria living inside honey bees. The findings, reported in British newspapers, will undermine claims by the biotech industry and supporters of GE foods that genes cannot spread. They will also increase pressure on farmers across Europe to destroy fields of oil-seed rape contaminated with G[E] seeds... Asked if his findings had implications for the bacteria inside the human gut, [the German] replied: “Maybe, but I am not an expert on this.” The *Observer* said [the German] was reluctant to talk about his work until it was officially published and reviewed by fellow scientists. The reports come a day after Britain's Agriculture Minister... urged farmers to destroy crops contaminated with GE seeds.

...Alarming results from official trials of G[E] crops show them interbreeding on a large scale with conventional crops – and weeds. A Government report, the result of six years' monitoring of G[E] crops in Britain, gives the first results from the official farm-scale trials, originally begun to study the effects of pesticides but later expanded to study “gene flow” as a result of public pressure. Carried out... by the National Institute of Agricultural Botany and the Laboratory of the Government Chemist, the trials show... G[E] oil seed rape that had escaped from a crop... persisted for at least four years. The report also shows that the G[E] crop interbred with... wild turnip, giving it resistance to herbicides...

Vital “politically explosive... devastating” detail on the genetic engineering controversy may have passed you by... In N[Z], the topic got scant attention – four paragraphs on an inside page in my *Herald*, behind commendable accounts of animals needing foster homes, reports on the plight of rain-drenched campers, the latest doings of trivial people who are deemed to be famous and the misdeeds of the criminally minded. The *Herald*... gave the bare bones of a very frightening report. What was available in the original item but not included was that, in Britain, the report's findings were deliberately and callously handled in official tactics which were just short of actual suppression... I don't in any way suggest conspiracy... [– abetted by] the Auckland news editors [who] chose to print... [a] highly truncated and underplayed version... [– but] I thought you would be interested in a fuller transcript... QUOTE: *Alarming new results from official British trials of G[E] crops are severely jeopardising plans for growing them commercially. The findings, in a new Government report, show, for the first time in Britain, that genes from G[E] crops are interbreeding on a large scale with conventional ones, and with weeds. The study is so devastating to the Government's case for G[E] crops that ministers sought to bury it by publishing the first information on it on the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs website on Christmas Eve. That is the one day in the year when no newspapers are being prepared. Even then it only produced a heavily edited summary of the main report. Unusually the full report, which will contain much more devastating detail, was withheld from publication on the website. The department said that it was available on request, but when The Independent on Sunday tried to ask for it, the department said that no one was available to provide it. The report, the result of six years of monitoring of G[E] crops in Britain, is politically explosive and gives the first results from the official farm-scale trials. The Government has repeatedly said the results would settle the question on whether G[E] crops endangered the environment. But it has been playing down their significance in recent weeks. [A spokesperson from] Friends of the Earth, said the results showed that if G[E] crops became widespread, almost all similar crops would become contaminated, threatening organic agriculture. It is not surprising the Government has tried to cover this up. It shows we need to know a great deal more about these issues before we contemplate growing G[E] crops commercially.* UNQUOTE Need I say more? Not really, except that incidents like this highlight the total contempt which people in positions of political power sometimes show for the rights of the public to be informed. They blatantly ignore their obligations to brief fully the people who give them their vote and who pay their salaries. More than that, it shows clearly that public concerns over GE here and overseas are totally justified. And, not surprisingly, it simply fuels conspiracy theories among some sections of the community who are convinced that facts are withheld or downplayed for purely political reasons... Never forget the old definition about politicians and the way they handle their public. The way you grow mushrooms – keep them in the dark and feed them on what, for the purposes of this publication, we will define as “bull manure”... From the significant to the ridiculous[, ‘Monsanto has successfully sued to claim a North American farmer's crop which was cross-pollinated by one of its GE crops’.]

...Tree breeders use a technique called control-pollination. Plastic bags are placed over... flowers to keep wind-borne pollen out. Instead, selected pollen is applied. It's breeding with a purpose, so trees can be developed for economic advantage, such as improved growth and wood properties like straightness and density... The... Forest Genetics... team's success... recently led to the development of the Maxel brand. Customers can choose from [4] different categories of tree stocks, based on the genetic characteristics they require. Forest Genetics' business is also focused on striving to satisfy customers' future demands... Forest Genetics give[s] new meaning to the term ‘customers of the future.’ ...Forest Genetics... is an innovative world leader in the development of this type of technology. Basically, it takes the gamble out of forestry... “Not all trees are created equal,” says [the team leader. “While]... elite family forestry... is new... [e]lite families of plants, vegetables and fruit has been around for a long time...”

...Canterbury scientists believe they can save bananas from extinction using the same technology they used to create pest-resistant potatoes.[A] Crop and Food, Lincoln... banana expert, said G[E] could be used to develop a banana with resistance to black sigatoka disease, which experts predict could wipe out conventional bananas within 10 years... Developing disease-resistant bananas through conventional breeding was not an option since all edible bananas were sterile clones... [T]he lack of seeds and pollen meant there was a zero risk of contamination of other crops by G[E] bananas... Unless bananas were developed with resistance to the disease, many communities in the [Last] World faced economic and social ruin... Bananas are grown in most of the countries receiving N[Z] aid and in some, such as Samoa or Tonga, are one of the most important cash crops. N[Z] had the capacity to do the genetic engineering, [which could become a form]... of foreign aid to countries all over... the [world]...

Starving nations wary of aid shipment... A 120,000-tonne shipment of food from the U[S] is languishing in Durban, South Africa, because famine-stricken Zimbabwe and Zambia are reluctant to accept... G[E] corn... say aid officials. More than 13 million people in southern Africa urgently

need food aid, according to the US Agency for International Development. But Zimbabwe and Zambia have said [GE] food could contaminate their crops and threaten exports to the E[U], which does not accept [GE] food. Zambia's President... said: "It is necessary to examine the maize before we can give it to our people and I'm certain if it is found to be safe then we will give it. But if it is not then we would rather [our people] starve than get something toxic." ...a spokes[person] for the Zimbabwean Embassy, said... "It is unfair that we are being put in a situation where people are saying, 'Beggars are trying to be choosers'... If we are not prudent, we will be laughed at later." ...his nation would accept the shipment of kernel corn if the grain was milled first so it could not be planted. The US and Zimbabwe were now deciding who will pay the milling costs.

...A[US] will pay the African nation of Eritrea A\$1 m... to take a shipload of 52,000 unwanted sheep off its hands. The Federal Government said the MV Corno Express was in the process of unloading the sheep in Eritrea. The sheep had been stranded at sea for almost three months after being rejected by Saudi Arabia. As well as... financial assistance, Eritrea will receive 3000 tonnes of fodder. Eritrea's Agriculture Minister... said measures had been put in place to ensure the welfare of the sheep. The sheep crisis has cost A\$10 m... [and lots of bad will after their plight was highlighted in news articles around the world, resulting in a fresh round of protests against live exports. In related news, thousands of AUSNs] are calling on state and federal Health Ministers to inquire into the unregulated sale of [GE] foods, says the A[US]n Conservation Foundation. Demonstrators gathered in central Melbourne outside the office of [the] Victorian Health Minister... yesterday to call for a delay on today's introduction of a new gene technology food standard... Food standard A18 of the A[USFA] takes effect today. This means food products of 20 [GE] crops will remain in the food supply for the next year untested, unassessed and unlabelled... ACF GeneEthics Network's director... said there was a great risk to public health if [GE] foods went on the shelf... "The risks are that people will be unable to make choices in protection of their own health and safety,"... Those at risk included children with allergies, people whose immune systems were weakened and those recovering from cancers and other disorders... "The onus is on the companies to show before, not after foods go on the shelves, that they are safe and they haven't done that."

...Jellyfish genes will go into grapevines as part of a Victorian study approved by A[US]'s... Genetic Manipulation Advisory Committee (Gmac)... The gene will be used to identify the flow of pollens and seeds from... laboratory vines... at the centre of a CSIRO study aimed at producing low-brown raisins, altering the colour of grapes, and modifying fruit taste. Last month Gmac approved a [GE] sugar cane trial in Queensland using the jellyfish gene. It has also approved a 500ha trial of 50 million GE cotton plants in the Kununurra area of Western A[US], where the state's agricultural department is carrying out the trial in an effort to develop cotton that is toxic to certain types of insects... A further 1.8 million GE cotton plants are to be planted over 20ha near Broome. Gmac has also approved a CSIRO study into GE field peas that have genes taken from the common bean to make the plant resistant to the pea weevil. About 10ha of the crop will be planted in the Naracoorte and Lucindale areas of South A[US]... The committee is about to consider a proposal to allow genetically altered poppies to be grown in Tasmania... [By the way, NZ's national GE] watchdog... said yesterday that its investigations had shown widespread unauthorised work throughout research institutions... Nearly 20[%] of the 1065 [GE] developments reported at 27 universities and crown science companies have been declared illicit because they were not properly authorised... None... posed significant environmental risk, said... Erma's... chief executive... But the authority had also found evidence of similar experiments being done in polytechnics, and was extending its inquiry into those tertiary institutions, [the CEO] told scientists at an Erma conference in Christchurch. The row over illicit genetic engineering by some researchers escalated into a slanging match between regulators and scientists after the voluntary disclosures in April by the University of Otago's school of medicine in Christchurch. Students were genetically engineering E coli bacteria and DNA material from native species. When the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act took effect... Erma set up a process so that low-risk GE work could be approved by committees in research institutes. It said that after the... experiments were reported, it had found 113 instances of unauthorised genetic research, and another 196 cases of research not notified to the Environment Ministry [last] July... when the new organisms law took effect. But Erma's efforts to bring unauthorised work inside the framework of the act drew criticism from senior scientists. One said... a third of senior biology classes in the U[S] used the same techniques that were now heavily regulated in N[Z], "and for which our scientists are being vilified." [Erma's CEO] said such criticism was unprofessional, as the law said that low-risk GE work should be regulated.

...*Brave New World* THE CONCEPT that the genetic engineering debate is about facts is philosophically naive, says... [the] author of *Brief History of the Future* and a director at the Open University of Cambridge. "It's never like that in these issues... It is actually an argument about values which arouses deep tensions." The Irish[person] is right. The controversy over GE has much more to do with intrinsic values than science and safety. Certainly, genetic engineering holds a key to global sustainability and our long-term health. But at the same time it arouses our deepest fears: about creation, scientists playing God, animal rights and the delicate relationship we all have with the environment. The notion of purity of species – that a lamb is a lamb and a dog a dog – is buried deep in each one of us. Much of the tension is driven by major misconceptions as the long-overdue food safety debate becomes more and more tangled with the equally urgent GE debate. Mention a food safety issue and many of us assume that the food in question is genetically engineered. GE, with no related deaths to its name, is perceived as far more dangerous than pesticides, fungicides and herbicides which are known to be carcinogens... [An] associate professor of philosophy at Canterbury University, suggests that the "so-called moral objections to cross-species recombination [GE] are based on ignorance. Every person... shares 50[%] of his or her DNA with a banana. All life is one – and that's not a nebulous, mystical claim, it's a scientific fact." As [the associate professor] points out, the only reasons to be for or against GE are empirical: "Will it make us happier, improve our health, increase our lifespans? Will it make farming easier and more productive? ...Part of any technology ought to be to improve human well-being – human flourishing, as Aristotle put it." And will it? For medicine, definitely. For food production, maybe. Scientists, conservationists and agriculturists do agree on one thing: that contemporary farming methods are biologically damaging and, in the long term, unsustainable. By 2050, when the world population reaches eight billion, we will need new answers. Right now, however, in the [First W]orld at least, food is cheap and plentiful. Driven mainly by supermarket groups, the price of food has dropped dramatically. In the 1950s, 40[%] of the household budget went on food. Now, led by North America, it's down to 12[%], with most of the cost in processing. What we want now, as displayed by the huge backlash against GE food and the exponential rise in organics, is not cheaper food but healthier and safer food. And we're willing to pay for it. In N[Z], where our future still rides on primary production, questions on whether to go with GE technology or opt for organic productions are crucial. It is no surprise that the Government has taken months setting boundaries for the high-powered Royal Commission into GE which will start on June 1.

...The U[S], a hotbed of ...G[E]... has much to learn from N[Z]'s approach to the contentious issue, says a visiting US Government researcher. [The]... senior specialist in agricultural policy in the US Congressional Research Service, sees the Royal Commission on Genetic Modification as an "exciting process, unlike anything we have in the US. The need for more public information on this broad issue is something the US could benefit from. We're moving in that direction but we still have some way to go." The commission... will begin a series of public meetings next Monday, will launch public hearings from 109 interested persons a month later, and will take written submissions from others... The commission will investigate how N[Z] should best deal with genetically modified organisms and products. Our Government has already announced plans to introduce compulsory labelling of G[E] food, and the main reason for [the researcher]'s visit was to examine these moves. [The researcher] said the US Government had initially resisted labelling but recently [the] President... had introduced a voluntary labelling scheme and US food producers recognised that they had to label to get into overseas markets. US companies, the food industry and grain handlers were finally taking steps to meet demand for non-G[E] food, or anticipating demands to do so. But their output of non-G[E] food was relatively low. "US farmers would like to see international uncertainty about biotech reduced, but at the same time they're continuing to plant biotech crops, as the demand for G[E]-free corn, soy beans and cotton crops are still tiny,"... G[E] issues were also far down the list in the issues dominating public debate... In Congress, legislation

to move to compulsory labelling was being introduced but... would have little impact on US trade policy as it affected New Zealand... Meanwhile, [one of NZ's]... largest bakers, Goodman Fielder, has announced it will no longer use possibly genetically altered soy oil in its products.

...G[E] food may be slowly disappearing from N[Z] shelves, as more and more food manufacturers shun the technology. Greenpeace's "true food" website guide says... three companies, which... produce some of N[Z]'s best-known brands, including Chicken Tonight sauces, Oxo cubes, Refresh and Raro drinks, Amco cooking oils and DYC vinegar, have moved from a "red" classification to an "amber"... Greenpeace classifies companies in the "red" if their products might contain G[E] ingredients or if a company supports genetic modification. The "amber" category is for companies that are committed to being G[E]-free but are not yet sure their products do not contain G[E] ingredients... 227 companies were listed on the website, up from 89 six months ago... The information on the website was supplied from the companies, said Greenpeace's spokesperson. The spokesperson, [who helps run the website, said the gradual change by food manufacturers was good news. "It's a good result. It's nice to see companies moving away from GE but we won't be happy until the N[Z] food chain is GE-free altogether." Companies that have moved from a red category to amber since the website was created include Unilever, Mainland, Goodman Fielder... Allied Foods... Pillsbury NZ, Frucor, Cerebos Greggs, Tip Top Ice Cream and Chateau Ice Cream... Five companies... [- the most notable being] Effem Foods, whose products include Dolmio pasta sauces and the Master Foods range... [-] have moved from the amber category to the green, meaning they are now guaranteed G[E]-free.

...All life on Earth could be destroyed by [GE] bacteria, a scientist has told the Royal Commission on Genetic Modification. Four scientists gave evidence for the Green Party at the hearing this week via video link from the U[S. A s]oil ecologist... spoke about a plant-killing G[E] bacteria her Oregon State University research team prevented from being released into the environment... [T]he bacteria had been approved for field trials when her team discovered its lethal effects. [The soil ecologist] believed the widespread plant deaths caused by the bacteria would in turn affect all life on Earth. The G[E] *klebsiella planticola* produced alcohol from post-harvest crop residue. The leftover organic sludge, containing the bacteria, would be returned to fields as fertiliser. [The soil ecologist said it] had independently tested the bacteria on plants, which the regulatory authority had failed to do. "After seven days, all wheat plants turned to slime." This example showed the need for better risk assessment of ecological impact.

...The Government faces a possible showdown with the Green Party next month after yesterday's report of the Royal Commission on Genetic Modification. The commission's four-volume report, which will be made public on Monday, is expected to give a cautious go-ahead to restricted use of genetic engineering in agriculture. The Greens, whose seven MPs hold the balance of power in Parliament, are strongly opposed to allowing any genetic modification outside the laboratory... The sensitivity of the issue was demonstrated yesterday when members of the pro-GE Life Sciences Network protested to the P[M] about the Government's decision to give a copy of the royal commission report to the Greens several hours before it is released publicly... [One member] said the decision "makes it look as though the Government has decided it doesn't want a balanced debate". The Government has also rejected a request from the Life Sciences Network to be allowed to take part in the media "lockup" which will give journalists up to an hour to read the report before [the PM]'s press conference on Monday afternoon. Although financial analysts have their own lockup before release of the annual Budget, [the PM's spokesperson] said it was not usual to hold analysts' lockups for other events. The contents of the report were still a closely guarded secret last night, and... [the] Green co-leader... said [it] could not understand why there seemed to be "a sudden consensus" that the report would give a restricted go-ahead to genetic modification... not[ing] that so far no [GE] crops had been approved in N[Z]. "A recommendation that we should proceed cautiously to release [GE] crops for planting, or to approved GE pine trees for commercial release, is actually taking us a giant step closer to a GE future," [the co-leader] said. "I don't sense that that's where the balance of forces lies at all." [The f]ormer Chief Justice... who chaired the royal commission, is remembered for abolishing wigs in court and is regarded as relatively liberal. [The chairperson] is said to have been "fastidious" in checking every word in the 1500-page report, and to have been its main writer. The only scientist on the four-person commission... a biologist who convened the 1993 [Gals'] Suffrage Centennial Science Conference... is said to have asked many questions at the hearings and is expected to support limited genetic engineering. The Anglican Dean of Auckland... appointed to provide an ethical perspective, is seen as the commission's most likely Green supporter. The fourth member, [a] [Papakura GP... is described as "a maverick who doesn't always follow the expected channel". [The GP] has Ngai Tahu tribal links and spoke up for a Maori perspective, but Maori groups making submissions were divided on the key issues. A spokes[perso]n for the Alliance leader... said Alliance MPs would not necessarily join the Greens in rejecting any genetic engineering outside the laboratory. "We are looking for the royal commission to sort out a lot of these issues."

...The Royal Commission on Genetic Modification has rejected a G[E]-free future for N[Z], plunging into doubt the Green Party's backing of the Government. A furious Green Party is not yet threatening to withdraw its support for the minority Labour-Alliance Coalition but that cannot be ruled out. The party is devastated that the... commission has effectively given a big tick to the present approval system for [GE] organisms... and food labelling. "I find it very hard to think of anything further they could[']ve recommended to take us closer to a GE future than what they have," [a] disappointed Greens co-leader... said last night. "The issue won't go away and the fight isn't over. We were quite prepared not to get everything we were looking for. We were quite prepared to work in a spirit of compromise. But... this goes too far." ...The commission's \$6.2 m... report says it would be "unwise" for N[Z] to turn its back on the potential of G[E] technology, but urges caution. "As in the past, we should go forward but with care," the report says, comparing biotechnology with such great advances as the use of fire, the wheel, steam power, electricity and the microchip. Many scientists, research groups and businesses welcomed the report. [The] Auckland Medical School dean... said: "It looks like a pragmatically sensible road map ahead for N[Z]." The P[M]... described the report as thorough, measured and balanced and conducted by a group of people "with no axe to grind... It rejects the idea of N[Z] being free of all [GE] material at the one extreme and the option of unrestricted use of [GE] at the other." [The PM] indicated broad support for the result of the commission's work... [among] over 10,000 public submissions, but dismissed the possibility of drastic action from the Greens. "What I can say is that any suggestion of an election between now and Christmas... on issues of supply and confidence is completely ridiculous." The commission wants to make it easier for low-risk research to be carried out by lowering compliance costs and allowing for approval on a project-wide basis rather than for each individual organism used... No application has yet been made for the public release of a G[E] crop in N[Z]. But the commission says the first case will be such an important event that the Minister for the Environment... should use her statutory powers to make the decision... The commission said organic, [GE] and conventional agriculture could exist comfortably in the same environment - a claim rejected by the Greens and organic farmers. It did not recommend any move to prohibit field tests... Industry and research groups agreed to a voluntary moratorium on field trials while the... commission carried out its inquiry. No decision has been made on what to do when the moratorium expires on August 31, but it is likely to continue during the Government's three-month deliberation on the commission's findings... The commission has virtually left the food labelling regulations alone, saying that the ...Anzfa... is doing a good job.

...The Royal Commission on Genetic Modification believes N[Z] should adopt a "proceed with caution" approach to genetic science. But the term "caution" didn't go far enough for thousands of N[Z]ers, who want genetic modification... banned. The public's distrust of genetic science is partly due to a number of scare stories... In 1989 thousands of people in America were affected by a new illness, resulting in painful and swollen muscles, rashes and gastro-intestinal problems. The condition left 37 people dead and disabled 1500 others. Authorities found that all of those affected had taken a health food supplement called L-tryptophan, used to treat conditions such as insomnia and depression. The outbreak was traced to a Japanese company, which had used [GE] material in the manufacturing processes. But court authorities blamed the problem on a build-up of toxic contaminants in the product rather than [GE]... Last year a N[Z] salmon-farming company accused of breeding mutant chinook salmon killed all its

[GE] fish and buried their remains. Anti-G[E] groups fought for more than a year to stop NZ king salmon from breeding G[E] fish after leaked papers showed deformed heads and other abnormalities had occurred during the breeding programme. The so-called “Franken-fish” experiment, involving a new growth-hormone gene, led to the salmon growing three times faster th[an th]e normal rate. Some of the fish developed lumps on their heads due to apparent genetic deformities... A[US]n scientists this year reported a G[E] experiment which accidentally created a deadly version of mouse smallpox in the laboratory. They said a similar change in human smallpox... [-] a much feared disease... eradicated by a huge vaccination programme... [-] could produce a far more virulent strain which could even be resistant to vaccines... Police in Italy raided a warehouse of US biotech company Monsanto this year and seized 112 tonnes of [GE] maize, the use of which is illegal in that country.

...New GE crops will be in the ground by Christmas after the Government overruled opposition from its Maori MPs to reopen the door to field trials. The long-awaited Government response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Genetic Modification came as a voluntary ban on applications for field trials was due to expire today. The decision allows medical and laboratory experiments and reopens field trials but bans commercial releases of [GE] organisms for two years. It walks a fine line between scientific and economic demands and a need for assurances to the public that the environment will not be put at risk. [The P]M... said science was critical to ensuring N[Z] developed a knowledge-based economy. “We cannot afford to turn our back on science... but nor can we ignore the concerns raised about aspects of [GE,” the PM] said yesterday... The Greens[’ co-leader]... said the party had not signed up to the Government’s package and would continue to fight for a G[E]-free future.

...*Silent Spring*, published in 1962, shocked us into understanding the extreme and enduring damage to our environment of the wanton use of synthetic pesticides. From this shock emerged the modern environmentalist movement. However, it was not the use of pesticides that was threatening to our environment but their uncontrolled, profligate use... The Green Party and its supporters did their job well by forcing the Government to have a Royal Commission on Genetic Modification. Their next task is to make sure the implementation of the controls emphasised in the report are monitored and carefully applied. But the Greenies will be the new Luddites if now, on the principle that it is essentially unnatural, they obstruct genetic research which promises so much for the health and food supply of people in an increasingly crowded world. They should remember that almost every step in the advancement of [hu]mankind since the first of us came down from the trees has been the result of yet another victory over the forces of nature. Ned Ludd is described as “a simpleton” in one... reference work I have and as “an obscure individual” in another, but [Ned] and his early-19th-century companions were right when they predicted the spinning jenny would change the lives of their generation from workers in a cottage industry to wage slaves in battery-hen factories. The huge misjudgment they made was to use their energy to smash the new machines rather than try to manage the workers’ place in the change. Social and economic globalisation and [GE] are inexorable and those expending their energy so resolutely against them are a distracting sideshow. The real concentration should be to force governments to make sure that globalisation is not left to the profit-driven devices of transnational corporations at the expense of people of all socio-economic groups, and that scientists’ G[E] research and development is closely monitored and defiant transgressions are severely punished.

...experts from 174 nations are... meeting... this week... at... the exotic old Caribbean pirate port of Cartagena, Colombia[, to debate]... how to regulate trade in [GE] potatoes, cotton, grains and trees. The U[N]-backed summit represents the first global attempt to reduce the risks laboratory-designed species might pose to public health and the environment. For 20 years, biotech companies have been genetically manipulating plants and animals.

...N[Z] environmentalists and politicians are hailing an international agreement allowing countries to restrict imports of [GE] crops. The deal, reached in Montreal on Saturday after meetings involving 130 countries at a U[N] summit, is the biggest setback suffered by the beleaguered [GE] food industry. The Biosafety Protocol allows countries to ban imports of modified food without breaking international trade rules... Five years of negotiations went into the agreement. Talks collapsed last year after six big agricultural exporters, including the U[S], rejected the deal. The Friday night deadline for agreement in Montreal had already passed, with the US and six others steadfastly blocking a consensus. Talks continued until near dawn, when the [US] agreed to sign, conceding that the agreement would not unduly disrupt trade... The protocol has comparable status to the W[TO] but will not take effect until ratified by 50 countries. It is open for official signing at the next meeting in Nairobi... [NZ’s] Biosecurity Minister... was proud ...he[r] Government had achieved its aims. “Virtually since the Government took office we have been working on this biosafety protocol.” The... Green Party co-leader... said the pact... puts environmental and health concerns on an equal footing with free trade agreements.

...Simmering tensions between Labour and the Greens erupted into open warfare yesterday over claims that the Government covered up an accidental release of [GE] sweetcorn. A furious P[M]... savaged the Greens co-leader... and TV3, claiming [it] had been ambushed by the claims. [The PM] and senior Labour ministers were caught flat-footed by allegations in [the] book *Seeds of Distrust*. Yesterday, they scrambled to reassure the public they had not allowed G[E] corn into the food chain. It took the Government’s spin machine six hours to issue a rebuttal of the book’s claims. [The PM] cancelled a trip to Whangarei to front a press conference in Auckland. [The PM] flayed the book’s author and the Greens’ co-leader, accusing the author of concocting a conspiracy theory and rejecting [the co-leader]’s claims that [it] had been surprised by details in the book. [The PM said the Greens’ co-leader] had been well briefed... when the problem was first identified... [The PM] also attacked TV3, accusing it of unethical and unprofessional journalism after [the PM and a TV3] presenter... squared off in a tense interview screened last night. [The PM] said TV3 had set her up, and during the angry interview, filmed on Tuesday... accused [the presenter] of ambushing her. [The PM] is now considering whether... [it] should lay a formal complaint. At her press conference yesterday, [the PM denied that it] and other ministers covered up the release, which allowed G[E] corn seeds accidentally imported from the US to be grown, harvested and sold for food here and overseas. “I am sickened at the way these allegations have been levelled at me personally and at the Government and its officials in general. I am going to sing from the rooftops that this is a very dirty campaign where the Greens and their supporters have descended to the gutter of the National Party.” [The PM added that] it would be very hard to rebuild trust with the Greens. [The PM] said the Government’s first reaction... when it heard of a possible release of G[E] seeds, had been that the crop must be removed. “Later evidence suggested strongly that there had been no such release, so no such action was taken or required to be taken.” The Government had then set standards to ensure there could be 99[%] confidence that contamination did not exceed 0.5[%]. Since then the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry had proposed even tighter controls, to take effect from [next month]. “The so-called release [the author] wrote about was a corn seed where there was a theoretical outside limit of a 0.04[%] contamination, and not necessarily of G[E]. The PM] insisted that no G[E] was detected in the corn. If it had been detected, the corn would have been uprooted and destroyed. [The]Finance Minister... also attacked [the Greens’ co-leader’s] credibility, saying the co-leader] had clearly known about [the] book in advance because it was published by [a]Green list candidate... [However, the co-leader said the list candidate] had not breathed a word to the Greens about the book.

...Sweetcorn seeds that sparked the [GE] scare may have been contaminated by nothing more than soil from a Gisborne farm. Crop & Food Research yesterday revealed what a genetic scientist calls “the missing piece of the puzzle” to explain an apparent false positive result after the seed was tested for any G[E] contamination. The scandal... erupted after... publication of the book *Seeds of Distrust* by[an] environmentalist... The Government sought to distance itself yesterday by wheeling in several top officials to take over the debate. The senior Wellington bureaucrats were instructed to answer all inquiries. Also yesterday, the P[M] let fly against [a]TV3 news presenter... saying [it] was being told to “take the little creep on”... [The little creep] said last night that the show was “legitimate journalism”. In a new revelation, the *Herald* learned yesterday that a bag of soiled corn seeds returned by a Gisborne farmer seeking a refund might be behind the G[E] scare. Farmers were entitled to return the expensive

seed for a refund if they initially buy more than they need, and often do so. Two years ago Cedenco – one of the companies that imported the 5.6-tonne shipment of the seed in question – wanted to sell its leftover seed to Japan and submitted several batches to Crop & Food... to test as standard procedure. It was in this testing process... that the problem of potential contamination was revealed, prompting Cedenco to alert the Government. Fearing that it was dealing with G[E] contamination, the Government initiated further tests, which came back inconclusive. On that basis, the Government decided that the seeds already distributed by the importing companies could stay in the ground. Yesterday, Crop & Food[']s... communications manager... explained that the sample that tested positive was one of eight batches Cedenco submitted for testing... “Subsequently the origin of this sample was found to include a bag of seed which had been returned by a farmer. The seed had talcum powder added to it to make the seed flow better through the drill.” ...the presence of talcum powder indicated that the seed had been removed from the bag, “therefore introducing the opportunity for soil and soil bacteria to contaminate the sample. Contamination with soil and soil bacteria could account for the positive result.” ...But the explanation has not convinced [the environmentalist]. Reacting last night, [the author] said the Government was in damage-control mode and in the past 48 hours had pushed forward every single voice it could find to “muddy the waters”. [The author] agreed that theoretically seed exposed to soil on a Gisborne farm could account for the contamination. But that did not change the fact that... when the Government thought it was dealing with a G[E] crisis, it chose not to subject the seeds to more tests but instead changed the rules to allow the seeds to stay. [The author] said there were two sets of tests that threw up a positive result, but no further tests were completed to contradict those results... At a special press conference in Wellington... officials, from the Ministry for the Environment and MAF, said initial tests on the... consignment of corn seed planted in Hawkes Bay, Gisborne and Blenheim raised serious concerns about possible contamination. But later tests by independent laboratories in N[Z and AUS] raised strong doubts about the accuracy of the early results. [The]Environment Ministry chief executive... who has been in the job for eight days, said [it] had a “very high degree of confidence” that there was no cover up.

...The Government would have been liable for compensation claims of nearly \$1 million if it had ordered the destruction of corn crops suspected of containing [GE] seeds. Almost 400 pages of official documents relating to the contaminated corn scare were released by the Government yesterday. Among them was a copy of an email to [the]Environment Minister... setting out the cost of ripping up 178ha of suspect sweetcorn growing in Gisborne, Hawkes Bay and Marlborough. The identity of the person sending the email has been blacked out.

...About 30 tonnes of suspected [GE] corn seed produced on farms around Pukekohe and Gisborne has been discovered and will be destroyed. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is moving quickly to contain damage from the country's second major G[E] contamination scare in a month. [The]Green Party... said last night the new discovery showed G[E] corn... was now so widespread in the US that N[Z] should stop importing any more seed from there. Officials have been much swifter this time to disclose their findings after a[n a]uthor... last month dropped a bombshell... by revealing an alleged contamination cover-up almost two years ago. Word of the new scare came late yesterday when MAF said Queensland-based Pacific Seeds had reported possible contamination from tests conducted on Monday on seeds produced by contract growers. MAF[']s acting director-general... said the firm offered to destroy the lot, before being directed to do so, to protect its reputation for being G[E]-free. The... seed was grown to supply farmers rather than for direct human consumption, and none had entered the food chain. But [the director-general] could not rule out the possibility of contamination of neighbouring crops... [It] was reasonably confident all the suspect seed had been gathered into three secure locations, but further checks were being made. While there remained a possibility of “false positives” from the tests, [the director-general] told the *Herald* it appeared likely at this stage that the country had its first genetically contaminated crops. The contamination was a mystery, because parent seed was tested as G[E]-free before being imported... [The director-general] said MAF and Erma were impressed with the speed with which Pacific Seeds told them of the possible contamination... Pacific Seeds['] managing director... said his firm took action as soon as it received positive tests. “It is a serious issue – your jails are probably like A[US]n jails – not very pleasant.” [The managing director] would not disclose the name of the company's two U[S] seed suppliers, except to say neither was Novartis, source of the seed involved in the earlier scare. [The]Environment Minister... said between 20 and 21 tonnes of corn from the latest imports was harvested from seed planted by Seed Solutions on 15ha of leased land near Pukekohe, and nine tonnes from a paddock in Gisborne. Seed Solutions['] manager... said Pacific Seeds had tested the parent seeds in A[US], even though testing was not required by N[Z] law until the beginning of this month. “It's disappointing that despite all the care and professionalism that they've shown this has happened.” [The manager] said the G[E] contamination would not ruin Seed Solutions' reputation. “Our reputation isn't at stake because we've done what we're required to do, but it makes N[Z] look stupid for taking it to this degree. It just demonstrates to the rest of the world what a farcical policy this country has on GE. We have to meet the rules, but the reality is I'd eat it, I'd sleep in it, I'd do anything with it.”

...Tests ordered by biosecurity officials on the parent seedlines of 30 tonnes of maize destroyed because it was contaminated with [GE] seed showed two types of G[E] strains... Bt179... and... Yieldgard... Government officials said yesterday it was likely that G[E] seeds in the imported parent lines were missed in testing by the seed companies involved because of the relatively small amounts of contaminated seed present.

...The [GE] material which contaminated sweetcorn grown near Gisborne is one of the G[E] corn varieties approved for consumption in N[Z]. The MA[F]... said yesterday that testing over the weekend had shown the presence of Bt11, an insect-resistant G[E] sweetcorn variety. N[Z and AUS]n food standards class this type of corn as safe to eat... On Wednesday, the ministry revealed that a N[Z] company had alerted it to G[E]-positive tests carried out in Japan by a pizza-maker of a topping mix containing the sweetcorn grown near Gisborne... MAF is still investigating how the sweetcorn grown by Sunrise Coast NZ was contaminated.

...Subway sandwiches made in N[Z] use the same bread dough that has caused an outcry in Japan because it contains a product made using a... G[E] organism... But... Subway says the dough is approved for use in N[Z] and has been exported to Japan for years... Staff at [the]Taranaki bakery... which produced the dough, have been working day and night to make a new dough that does not contain the product, believed to have been imported. Yesterday... the family [that runs] the business, said the news had come as a shock. [It] hoped to have the new dough [in] Japanese stores by Wednesday... Subway's development agent in N[Z]... said the problem appeared to be an enzyme in the... dough... and... questioned whether Japan had changed its restrictions... [A] Japanese newspaper... said the chain removed the dough as a precaution... [T]he news... comes only months after a Japanese pizza maker rejected a Gisborne firm's corn when it was found to contain G[E] material, and... has sparked further debate in N[Z] over the lifting of the G[E] moratorium... ■ Add[ing] weight to the concerns of local food safety campaigners, spices... dosed with radiation have been allowed into the country despite a Government ban. Officials admit they turned a blind eye to shipments of paprika believed to have been exposed to radioactive treatment. The revelation comes as debate rages over the safety of irradiated food and authorities consider overturning a decade-old ban on selling it here. Food safety campaigners are shocked that paprika was allowed on to shop shelves without prior warnings to unwitting consumers – and in contravention of the law... “It's outrageous if they have knowingly allowed irradiated food to be sold without investigating it, and without labelling it,” said... Friends of the Earth. “It illustrates their eagerness to foist it on consumers.” ...the Safe Food Campaign, said: “If they've done that, what else have they let in?” The Associate Minister of Health... was told about the shipments in a Ministry of Health briefing paper last month. It has now been released under the Official Information Act. In the paper, [a]ministry staff... member says... “Health officials who examine imported foods have, in the past, noted that some shipments of paprika appeared to be free of contamination, while being free of fumigant chemical residues... The officials inferred that the paprika had more than likely been treated with irradiation. No action was taken.” Contacted by the N[Z *Herald*], the paper's author said it had no more specific information, and declined to answer further questions. The director of public health... confirmed... in a written answer to questions... [that] a “small number of shipments” treated with

irradiation had been introduced. "In 1994 [the ministry] tested 28 spice samples. The results showed that one sample had been treated by irradiation,"... Figures for... other years... were not available. The ban on irradiated food was imposed in 1989 after an outcry over plans to build a gamma irradiation plant in Mangere. Asked why the ministry had ignored the ban, [the director] said: "Because of the small level of food involved and the fact that irradiation does not present a health risk to people... The priority for action by the ministry has been in sampling and treating [with fumigation] shipments of spices known to be at higher risk of bacterial contamination." Last month, the... A[NZFA] began a consultation process over its proposal to allow certain foods to be exposed to radiation doses of up to three million times the strength of an x-ray. The treatment, which is proposed as a replacement for chemical controls of pests and micro-organisms, could[also] be used for herbs... fruits and vegetables.

...food for thought... Should N[Z] guarantee pest-free exports by using chemicals or by zapping food with radiation? ...Irradiation of food may prove crucial to the continuation of important horticultural exports from N[Z], say health officials. The Health Ministry says food irradiation is important to exporters because at present the most widely used treatment for fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts, cereals and grains is methyl bromide gas. N[Z] has signed international agreements to phase out the use of methyl bromide by 2005 because it depletes the ozone layer, although there would be some scope for its continued use in quarantine procedures. "Without the ability to permit the sale of irradiated foods, N[Z] could continue to be dependent on chemical alternatives to safeguard certain food while other countries are phasing out or banning the use of these chemicals, says the ministry. It argues that since there is "overwhelming" scientific consensus on the safety of foods irradiated to specified standards, it would be difficult to justify on technical grounds a continued prohibition of irradiation... The official view is that world trade rules are likely to make it difficult for N[Z] to continue its present ban on imports of irradiated foods. The A[NZFA] is preparing to consult N[Z]ers on a standard for the treatment of food with radiation... In irradiation of food, the products are bombarded with radiation from cobalt-60 or from an electron-beam accelerator... The treatment does not make the food radioactive, but can make small changes to it. At present, a regulation under the Food Act 1984 allows the sale of irradiated food with the permission of the Health Ministry. But a policy developed in 1989 says the use of the process or its products should not be permitted in N[Z]. Last month it was reported that the only irradiated foods that had been sold in N[Z] were spices, which are often contaminated with soil micro-organisms. Paprika, especially, is often contaminated with salmonella bacteria... In A[US], where there is also an official moratorium on food irradiation, a standard for irradiated food was already being drafted when the [ANZFA] was established in July 1996. In January, the authority released a discussion paper presenting the A[US]n draft standard for use on both sides of the Tasman. The A[US]n proposal was for a general ban on irradiated foods, with exceptions granted for specific foods and an evaluation of the likely nutritional impact of individual foods on diet. Irradiated food would have to be labelled. Health Ministry advice published last year said irradiation was a highly effective method of destroying micro-organisms in food, including those which might spoil it or cause illness, "purportedly without compromising safety or affecting nutrition and sensory – taste, flavour, texture – quality." But it noted that while the World Health Organisation had said irradiation was "the most thoroughly investigated food processing technology," it was still controversial and moves to establish a food irradiation industry in N[Z] had so far been unsuccessful. The ministry's director of public health... said adoption of the standard on which the authority was seeking public comment would resolve ambiguities over the import of irradiated spices.

...The minister appointed to a trans-tasman committee considering overturning a ban on food irradiation has been accused of making his mind up without listening to public consultation... [T]he Associate Minister of Health, told Parliament yesterday... "I for one support the proposal... The alternative to irradiation is to eat the residues of toxic fumigants that we now use." ...The Green party co-leader... said... "It's of concern to me [that the minister] supported the proposal... I assume the consultation process is specifically to inform [the minister – who] is the sole N[Z] representative [on the transtasman committee of health ministers which will make the final decision][– of NZer's opinions. Therefore, the minister] should be listening[to what other NZers are saying on the issue]."

...Ministers give a green light to nuked produce... Bureaucrats have ended N[Z]'s... ban on irradiated food, sparking an outcry among health campaigners. As part of the talks this week that saw agreement on reaching a common standard for labelling [GE foods – the compliance costs of which] might range up to \$300 m... [– the NZ and AUS]n Governments decided to allow irradiated food to be manufactured in N[Z], or imported. Applications would be considered individually... [The] Safe Food Campaign... said last night the issue raised environmental and health concerns, as irradiation reduced vitamin and nutritional levels... "Consumers don't want to eat... nuked... food... They want natural, fresh, nutritious food."

...Zapping food in the suburbs... Snuggled among 1950s state houses in Upper Hutt... N[Z]'s only irradiation... processing plant uses a cobalt-60 radioactive source to sterilise a variety of goods from pot-pourri to plastic bottles[, but primarily]... the animal vaccines it[s owners –] ...Schering-Plough Animal Health... [–] manufacture... and export... around the world... And thanks to a policy change made this week, food, too, could soon be on the irradiation menu... [A spokesperson for the plant's owners] said yesterday: "We won't be turning into a food irradiation company overnight, but we certainly have been keeping our eye on the discussions and certainly see it as an opportunity to get a little bit of extra business." ...Within the confines of a lead-lined room, the gamma-rays pass through the food in much the same way as microwaves. But rather than heat the food, they break down the genetic make-up of certain components. A 1988 Ministry for the Environment briefing paper produced by a working party convened to study irradiation listed the benefits as decontamination, disinfestation and reduction of spoilage. Detrimental effects identified in the paper were flavour changes, nutrient loss and oxidation of fats... [The] manager of isotope applications at the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences, was a member of the working party that recommended the Government ban irradiation. Since then, [the manager] has been chair[perso]n of the International Consultative Group on Food Irradiation, and... now believes the time is right for N[Z] to adopt the process. "From my point of view, I... regard it as a safe process, and it's a very effective one because it deals with all types of insects." ...the controlled use of irradiation has gained... so much... acceptance... that [it] is considered safe by the W[HO] and is approved in 30 countries... But another member of the working party... is flabbergasted that something... [the] volunteer with Friends of the Earth... fought for so hard has been overturned. Although the public will be able to make submissions on each application, [the volunteer] believes it will be hard to stop irradiated food slipping on to supermarket shelves. "How much notice are they going to take of objections?[" An AUSn-based]... sterilisation company... Steritech in Melbourne, ...is expected to be the first applicant to take advantage of the relaxed food-irradiation rules.

...N[Z] Government papers show officials considered a failure to relax the ban... on food irradiation... could result in a challenge to the W[TO]. But the manager of isotope applications at] the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences, said the greatest political pressure came from A[US]. "There was not pressure from big brother, but there was internal pressure." ...[AUS] had wanted to change to the new regulation... [3 years ago when an AUS]n Senator... wrote to the then [NZ] Associate Minister of Health... trying to get the issue moving. [The NZer] replied that irradiation affected the Government as a whole, not just the health sector. Last year, Ministry of Health officials advised the [ANZFA] that a communications strategy would need to be formulated to deal with the issue in N[Z]. "It is anticipated that the issue... will cause significant public debate... possibly similar to that raised by [GE] foods," wrote... the ministry's food and nutrition section. "Particular thought will need to be given to how this information and the consultation process is to be carried out in N[Z] for a successful result." ...• Zapp[ed]... food allowed on to shop shelves would be labelled.

...Food labelling changes hard to swallow... Most people oppose changes to food-labelling regulation, a survey commissioned by Sanitarium Health Food shows... 70[%] of people did not know that regulations governing food labelling were about to change. Once questioned on the subject, 87[%] said information panels proposed by the A[NZFA] would not give them all the information they needed. The authority has called for extra information on content, nutrition and allergy risks to be available to customers. Labels showing the [%]age content of a food's key ingredient

would let shoppers directly compare products, it said. But sugar content, along with information on dietary fibre, potassium, cholesterol, fatty acids, calcium and iron, would have to be listed only on foods claiming health benefits, such as being low-fat or low-sugar. The survey found that 85[%] of people wanted sugar content disclosed regardless of whether the... manufacturer had made a claim about the sugar content, and 87[%] said the nutritional content of food should be labelled... Sanitarium N[Z]... said a third of people were trying to make dietary changes, usually by altering their intake of foods with a high sugar and fat content. “[The authority] is going against the N[Z] health strategy, and common sense, by making it harder for people to choose healthy food when they’re shopping.” Sanitarium had asked the authority to make it mandatory for all foods making a nutritional claim to list sugar content, type of fat and fibre... The... Health Minister... [– who] accepted a petition yesterday from the National Heart Foundation, calling for food packaging labels to be made mandatory... [(t)he petition had been signed by more than 100 health workers, including many leading cardiologists and public health experts] –] ...said yesterday that [it] would push for mandatory labelling of saturated fats and sugars on food packaging to be included in the... food standards code... The minister... had gained cabinet support to move the... amendment to the code when the council meets in Sydney on Friday... The code would ensure consumers received more information about use and storage instructions and food additives, as well as enforcing date marking and legibility requirements... “I have a duty as Health Minister to listen to health groups who have sensible and practical proposals to put forward. The mandatory labelling of sugars and saturated fats is vitally important for consumers.”

...New labelling requirements are costing food manufacturers hundreds of millions of dollars, and may also reduce buyers’ choice. The label regime will give buyers more information but may cost them the choice of smaller lines... as overseas manufacturers balked at the cost of the new rules and stopped exporting to N[Z]... Seven years in the making, the 520-page A[NZ] Food Standards Code is set to take effect from December 20. The Grocery Marketers Association, which represents processed food and beverage manufacturers, says 35,000 product lines are being relabelled to comply... [The association’s] executive director said companies were only now starting to work on the new labels. It was costing N[Z] manufacturers between \$2000 and \$5000 a label to comply with the requirements. In some cases extra staff were being hired to cope. Some companies are having to change 2500 labels... The... industry was willing to bear the cost because it supported the code, which would create some of the most stringent food regulations in the world. The industry had been able to introduce the changes gradually and existing stock which did not comply would be given grace periods and not have to be pulled from shelves when the rules took effect... [The executive director couldn’t] name any [imported] products that might be withdrawn from shelves. But Auckland importer Beer Force International says some beers may be pulled from N[Z] because the new labelling requirements do not make the effort worthwhile. The general manager of the A[NZFA]... accepted the argument that N[Z] was a tiny market, but said that with A[US] it would be much larger... [The general manager believed] the harmonisation of food regulations might, in fact, give consumers even more choice as manufacturers outside Australasia took advantage of the common standards to introduce products to both markets... “[And s]o much of our food is traded trans-tasman [that] for both countries to be able to work to the same law is really cost effective.”

...Warning: ice cream contains real thing A fake ice cream is being pulled from shop shelves because it is contaminated... by ice cream. The Sanitarium Health Food Company said yesterday that it was recalling its soy-based So Good Creamy Vanilla ice cream substitute as a precautionary health measure... The problem was limited to one-litre tubs with a best-before date of February 6... and did not affect any other flavours or products. Sanitarium said customers who were sensitive to dairy products could have an allergic reaction, and should return containers to the company for a full refund... Sanitarium has set up a freephone number, 0800 100 257, which was not [being answer]ed last night... A... “real” milk-based ice cream was somehow mixed in with a single batch of the soy product... [Speaking of “real” milk-based products, c]heesemakers in the north Italian town of Parma have gone to the European Court of Justice to protect the name Parmesan, saying their traditional product is being besmirched by forgeries. They have named N[Z] as their public enemy number one. The case was filed by a consortium of cheesemakers, Parmigiano Reggiano, who have been making the hard, dry cheese for centuries with traditional methods. They say their business is affected by cheaper rivals made to less-demanding standards. Parmigiano Reggiano has been a brandname since 1996, but the name Parmesan itself (Parmigiano in Italian) has no such legal protection, and cheese described as such is sold around the world... packed in plastic bags emblazoned with an Italian flag... “To sell cheese described as Parmesan which was not made in the Parma area is fraudulent,” said Parmigiano Reggiano... “These producers are using the word Parmesan to make consumers believe that their product has an origin and characteristics which it hasn’t.” The case is a classic one in Europe, where producers of local products such as Bayonne ham, Camembert and Brie cheese, Scotch whisky, champagne, port and sherry fight tooth and nail to protect their name from generic competitors... [A] part-owner of Albany luxury food store Vinotica, said that while many N[Z] cheeses were stocked, the store did not use Kiwi Parmesan. “My personal opinion is that there is no comparison... And for that reason it may only be fair that producers toe the line and stop passing it off as the real thing. But this argument could go round and round for ever. We make Feta cheese in N[Z] and call it Feta, and you don’t hear the Greeks complaining.”

...[a] National MP... has accused Enza’s corporate shareholders of an “immoral, but legal” conspiracy to force apple growers to pay for Enza’s \$50 million in foreign exchange losses. [The MP] said orchardists would be forced out of business unless the Government amended legislation to stop Enza taking money out of growers’ accounts. [It also] said growers had not been given full information about the value of Enza, their shares and documents about how foreign exchange dealings were handled and who was liable for them... The Nelson MP said... [t]he bringing forward of losses was illegal and being done now because Enza feared growers fleeing the company when the export market was deregulated... GPG and FR Partners, who own about 40[%] of Enza, were... trying to tidy up their balance sheets... and... extract money from growers before the monopoly on exports was lost, [the MP] said... FR Partners and GPG were... trying to protect the profit they made on their initial purchase of shares through a legal loophole. [The MP] estimated that if all Enza shareholders... paid to cover the losses, the two corporates would have to hand over \$19.5 million, leaving them with a profit of \$3 million on their purchase price of \$11.94 m[. Incidentally, the]... fungal toxin patulin has been found in some apple juices available in N[Z]... Patulin comes from a family of toxins responsible for tens of thousands of deaths worldwide and consumers should be worried by the discovery of even small amounts, say scientists. It is one of the mycotoxins, which... can... [be] eaten, inhaled or absorbed through the skin... Their presence in the body may be undetected for years... The A[NZFA] monitors mycotoxins using standards set by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, a Rome-based international committee on food quality. It is advised by the W[HO] and other expert bodies... [NZ’s] Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR)... and other scientific organisations test imported foods, particularly peanuts, deemed at high risk of being contaminated with mycotoxins. Among these poisons are aflatoxins, one of the most carcinogenic substances known. They occur most commonly in peanuts, but are also found in other nuts, maize, and occasionally spices, dried fruit and figs... A recent study in Indonesia revealed 25[%] of samples taken at random contained aflatoxin levels often higher than 1000 micrograms per kilogram – compared with the generally accepted level of 15 micrograms for peanuts in world trade. “These were not selected samples... Most... samples were taken from ordinary trade consignments. The take-home message here is that if you’re travelling in Indonesia, don’t eat the peanuts.” ...Another group of mycotoxins, called fumonisins, are occasionally found in maize. They cause a disease in horses and other equines where their brains literally turn to mush. In humans, fumonisins have been possibly linked to throat cancer in parts of China and southern Africa. The fungi, which create a family of mycotoxins known as trichothecenes, are endemic in wheat and related grains. Fortunately, trichothecenes rarely occur in quantities to be a serious threat to human health – with notable exceptions. This type of toxin killed thousands of Russians during and after... [WW2] when the fungus

bloomed in wheat left over the winter before harvesting. Victims often died of the common cold because the toxin suppressed their immune systems... [T]here have been a few recent cases in North America where children died from inhaling mycotoxins.

...For years, parents have been telling children to eat their greens and fill up with fruit to keep healthy. But new research shows some... [natural foods] we have been encouraged to eat are likely to make us ill. Symptoms among those sensitive to the foodstuffs include migraine, eczema, lethargy, depression and irritable bowel syndrome... The findings by York Nutritional Laboratory, a company that has tested the food sensitivity of thousands of patients, surprised doctors and nutritionists. In tests on 93 common foods, it found eight of the 25 to which patients most often reacted were fruit, vegetables or pulses. Of those, blackcurrants, closely followed by kidney beans [of which there 'are 40 varieties'], were the worse offenders. Peas, olives, tomatoes, grapefruit, orange and lettuce also fared badly. The foods themselves to not cause the symptoms but trigger an adverse reaction in people with a disposition to those symptoms... Foods the least number of people reacted to were ginger, chicken, beetroot, garlic and venison. It was already widely known wheat and milk could cause adverse reactions and allergies in many people. But more surprising to researchers was the finding [that] 10% of those tested were sensitive to lettuce... [The] professor of biology and vice-chancellor of the University of York... said: "Who would believe the friendly old lettuce would make someone feel very unwell..." ...food sensitivity was triggered by the rejection of an ingested substance by the body's immune system. "The human body has developed a sophisticated defence against being attacked on all sides. When it sees something it does not like it produces an allergic response." ...[but a spokesperson for] the British Nutrition Foundation was sceptical [and was concerned that] if diets dispensed with too many fruit and vegetables, they would not deliver adequate vitamins and minerals... [T]he Fruit and Vegetable Information Bureau said: "For the general population these foods are healthy. They affect you only if you... are allergic to them."

...Suffer from headaches? Take a look at your diet before popping a pill... Foods with high levels of chemical compounds called amines (which affect physiology and brain function) can trigger headaches. Here are foods with amines to avoid and some that are OK to eat... AVOID... instant foods such as soups and gravies, frozen... food... aged, canned, cured or processed meats, organ meats... yeast bread... doughnuts... and passionfruit... EAT... cereals... starches... eggs... most veges, legumes and seeds... most fruit, but limit citrus fruit and drinks to half a cup per day...

Fruits with the highest concentration of immune system-enhancing vitamin C include blackcurrants and guava while mangos are the best fruit source of beta carotene, which also boosts immune responses. But for the most effective all-round benefit when you are feeling run-down, opt for kiwifruit... Rutgers's University... ranked them best out of 27 fruits, based on the percentage of nine recommended daily nutrient intakes they provide...

A KIWI FRUIT laxative could flush the economy with... million[s of dollars]... Dietitians have long known of the humble kiwifruit's magical bowel-shifting properties... The pill, called Zylax, is made from an enzyme extracted from the furry green fruit by a new hi-tech process. Vital Foods believes the natural relief pill could unclog the N[Z] export industry with a predicted \$100 million in sales each year and the creation of 500 new jobs. The Auckland-based firm originally developed a kiwifruit juice which hospitals used to help patients' digestion and prevent constipation... a side effect for patients suffering from cancer, spinal injury and burns... ■ [In a recent]... *Herald* column a food expert wrote of Aucklanders exchanging bags of feijoas picked up from under backyard trees... Some Aucklanders were willing to pay far more for their neighbours' feijoas than the \$5 a kilo growers receive. Growers do not let their mature fruit drop to the ground. They and their staff go round every feijoa tree each day picking fruit by touch, just before it is ready to fall to the ground. They handle the delicate skins with the upmost care, avoiding bruising and skin breaks and thus prolonging the fruit's shelf life. Their finest fruit is probably air-freighted to California and Asian markets. A well-grown, fresh, ripe feijoa is a taste delight. To a feijoa addict... the first sniff of the fruit's distinctive aroma... usually brings... a mouth-watering promise of that delicious flavour... It is a flavour appreciated by many nationalities. Asians, especially, respond to the sweet, aromatic taste. [A veteran Whakatane grower... has an orchard and cafe on the main highway to Rotorua and... testifies to tourists' appreciation of feijoas, both fresh and made into wine. [The veteran] had bred several new varieties for the fresh fruit market, but it is in processing that [the veteran] sees the feijoa's potential. "It retains its fresh fruit flavour when processed for wine, juice, yoghurt, ice cream, or for adding to confectionery or cereals... The possibilities are unlimited... We could be selling to the world. We have a unique product. We are the only country with a feijoa industry. Though the fruit is commercially grown in... coastal Victoria... California, Israel and some other Mediterranean countries, it is a minimal crop compared with its situation in N[Z], where soil and climate are just about ideal..." [The veteran] likens the feijoa to the mango. While some mangoes are available as fresh fruit, many more are processed for use in drinks and ice cream... The formation of a grower co-operative for marketing process[ed] fruit means processors can now obtain reliable volumes of quality fruit, and give growers better returns. [The veteran] sees the day when carefully tended orchards will produce large, high-quality fruit for processing, and orchardists will make a return at least on a par with that of kiwifruit growers... Many feijoa growers are part-timers, leaving their fruit to drop and harvesting it into bins for processing... [T]hey are missing out on higher returns. More care in management, including feeding, irrigation and pruning, would result in higher yields of larger fruit. Processors reward suppliers of large fruit because they have proportionately less peel and more flesh... The... neighbourly gifts, mostly small and misshapen, are a far cry from the huge and luscious beauties, weighing more than 300g and the size of a small apple...

Eating apples may be good for you lungs. British researchers, reporting in the journal *Thorax*, on a study of 2512 middle-aged [guys], conclude that more than five apples a week could protect the lungs from atmospheric pollutants and irritants including nitrogen dioxide and cigarette smoke. Previous studies have linked both fresh fruit and antioxidant vitamins to respiratory health but this study reveals a strong link between lung function and the number of apples eaten weekly. Good lung function was [also] associated with eating citrus fruit.

...[*'Foods That SHARPEN Your Mind* "EAT YOUR FISH," my mum would say. "It's brain food." Mum wasn't, of course, a nutritionist. Mum was merely citing an item of food folklore that has been around for ages. Another mother, on the other hand, is a nutrition scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. When her daughter was studying to become a barrister, the mum recommended tuna "to keep her mentally alert." And when the mum travels, it carries cans of tuna for snacks. The mum and her colleague and spouse – who is the director of MIT's Clinical Research Centre – have measured the reactions of the brain to different types of foods. They and other researchers have discovered that food affects the mind in powerful and surprising ways. What you put in your mouth can change your mood, alertness, memory and clarity of thought. "It remains peculiar to me," the director has said, "that the brain should have evolved in such a way that it is subject to having its function and chemistry depend on whether you had lunch and what you ate. I wouldn't have designed the brain that way myself." But nature apparently did design it that way, and what scientists have learned about it can be of great value to us. Use their findings in the course of an average day, and you may well gain mental acuity: *Breakfast*. The first thing in the morning, many of us feast on carbohydrates such as toast and jam and, even worse, sweet cereals. These sugars and starches increase the presence in the brain of the soothing neurotransmitter serotonin. As a result, we might not reach our normal morning energy peak. Bacon and eggs contain high fat and cholesterol. They are slow to digest, diverting blood from the brain and thereby reducing mental sharpness. "When I see people eating bacon and eggs for breakfast I feel like shaking them and saying, 'Why are you eating that food? Don't you know how you're going to feel?'" A good breakfast, scientists now believe, features foods low in fat. This means choosing lean ham instead of sausage or bacon, low-fat cottage cheese as a butter substitute, and fresh fruit or juice instead of preserves and sugary foods. (The fructose sugar in fruits digests slowly and does not trigger the reaction that table sugar and honey do.) *Lunch*. Most people recognize the dangers of the "liquid lunch" and its ability to dull the mind all afternoon. (Alcohol might be called the antibrain food; chronic use can cause structural and functional damage.) But few are aware of the effect of a carbohydrate-heavy lunch featuring only such foods as bread, pasta or potatoes, and sweet desserts. One study, headed by a psychologist, found such meals made gals sleepy and guys calmer and lethargic. Moreover, says the psychologist, "we found that people over 40 were less able to keep their minds focused on work for up to four hours after eating carbohydrates than were

those who ate a high-protein meal instead.” Why? Protein-rich meals of poultry or fish, for example, charge your bloodstream with amino acids, including tyrosine. Tyrosine is carried across the protective filter called the blood-brain barrier. In the brain this amino acid is available for conversion into the alertness chemicals dopamine and noradrenaline. If stress exhausts the brain’s supply of these neurotransmitters, the result may be confusion, indecisiveness, anxiety and depression. Another key nutrient that is carried across the blood-brain barrier is choline – found in fish, meats, egg yolks, soy products, oatmeal, rice, peanuts and pecans. Choline is a chemical precursor of the brain neurotransmitter acetylcholine, which plays a major role in memory. *Dinner.* Unless you need energy and stimulation to work or study through the night, avoid proteins – such as a juicy steak or chicken – at dinner time. Instead choose carbohydrates. These foods alter brain chemistry indirectly: by triggering a release of the hormone insulin, they cause muscle cells to take up most amino acids in the bloodstream. One amino acid not taken up is tryptophan, a scarce chemical that competes with other amino acids for transport through the blood-brain barrier. With its competition reduced, more tryptophan enters the brain, where it is converted into soothing serotonin. What about the glass of warm milk your mother told you would make you sleepy at bedtime? Your mother was wrong. While milk does contain tryptophan, nutrition scientists now find that the protein in milk cancels the effect of this amino acid. The best snacks before bed are carbohydrates: oatmeal biscuits or an English muffin with jam. Carbohydrates may have a deeper influence on the mind than scientists used to suspect – in addition to making a person drowsy, tryptophan can also help reduce sensitivity to pain. In recent years, we’ve learned to choose foods that help the heart and help prevent cancer. Now we should learn to choose them with our brain in mind.’]

...Even modest deficiencies in a mother’s diet around the time of conception can lead to premature birth and affect the long-term health of their child, says a study... [Another] new study concludes... [that n]ewborn babies who are fed too frequently are likely to sleep badly. Researchers studied 600 healthy British babies and discovered that newborns who were fed more than 11 times during 24 hours in their first week of life were nearly three times as likely to have disruptive night-time sleep three months later. The researchers’ work has been published in *Archives of Disease in Childhood*...

“There is so much research about little kids not getting enough exercise and learning good eating habits,” [say the Auckland couple who brought a US]... idea... Stretch-n-Grow... here... “If you teach them early enough, they grow up with healthy attitudes to fitness and food.” ...[they] visit pre-schools, kindergartens and childcare centres to teach... [t]he new... programme... “The [kids] love it, from the warm-up and the aerobic exercise, to the cool down and a talk about nutrition, exercise and other health issues afterwards,”... The[y]... plan to expand Stretch-n-Grow throughout [NZ.

...The Weekend Herald] asks the experts about healthy, and hassle-free, food for children. Two small pieces of lettuce are the only things standing between [a] 3-year-old... and his pudding. [It] pushes them around the plate, hoping to make them smaller or, better still, disappear altogether. [The boy] has already finished a plateful of spaghetti bolognese – a lot of it by hand. But the salad is a bit of a hurdle. His two big brothers and little sister are enjoying their plates of ice cream. [His sister] even has her plate tipped up to her mouth to get every last morsel. [The 3-year-old’s] pudding plate sits, waiting. “You know the rule,” says father... “If you haven’t finished your dinner before we’ve finished our pudding, you won’t be having any. Just eat that lettuce.” “I’m just cutting it up,” comes the speedy reply. It’s probably just a slight variation on the comments being made by hundreds of children around the country in a nightly battle otherwise known as dinner. While parents seem to have no trouble getting kids to eat pudding, how do they get them to first eat their main course? And what should they be feeding their children to make sure their diet is healthy and nutritious? [The 3-year-old’s parents] have four hungry mouths to feed, and although they favour meals that are easy to make in bulk, they are conscious of giving their growing children a healthy diet. That means... things such as rice and pasta are on the menu a lot, although they make sure there is always a decent helping of veges or salad as well. Scanning a Health Ministry sample diet for a 6-year-old, [the mother] says it contains a lot of the things her children eat... A comprehensive national study of children’s diets – what they eat and how much – has never been done in N[Z], but plans are under way to start one next year. A pilot study for the survey has almost been completed in a joint effort by Massey and Auckland Universities and the Auckland University of Technology. The pilot will pre-test the best ways for the nationwide study to be done, and how it can best find out what our children are eating, when they eat, what food groups they eat from and how they are growing. The study also aims to collect information about the average heights and weights of N[Z] children – information that also has not been compiled in such detail before... [The] project leader of Massey’s human nutrition department, says the study is well overdue and is a “very exciting project to be involved in.” It will take [a] year and... observe children selected at random. But dietitians, working on information and experience they already have, say children will eat practically anything if you teach them early. And junk food from time to time is not all bad – provided the rest of your child’s diet has all the right ingredients. [One d]ietitian... says parents have to remember that children have small tummies. They need to snack often to fill up, and that is a golden opportunity to make sure they are getting their “5-plus” – at least five servings of fruit and vegetables every day. “That is a minimum, so you can keep on feeding them fruit and veges as long as they will eat it, really,”... Water, milk or pure juice are always going to be the better options to drink, but occasional doses of fizzy soft drinks are not going to hinder a child’s development. The trick is to get children used to eating healthy foods at a young age... If they grow up snacking on fruit and veges, they will usually continue to do so, and... then pass the habit on to their own children. Education... is the key. And it is a lesson some children appear to have learned. At Richmond Rd School in Ponsonby, Auckland, this week, the... *Herald* talked to children about the contents of their lunchboxes. Sandwiches or filled rolls were most popular, with a good smattering of fruit as well. [One], aged 10... liked her chicken sandwiches, but if it was up to her [the 10-year-old] would have a pie every day. “But that’s not healthy. Sandwiches and fruit are healthy and much better for you.” Another authority on good lunch fare... also 10, said [it] liked to eat lots of fruit – “especially cold oranges” – although a packet of chips would never go amiss. [A boy, aged] 9, says “bananas are best,” even though [it] would rather wash them down with a can of Coke than a bottle of water. Their schoolmate, [also aged] 9, was enjoying a very large packet of chips and an ice cream for his lunch – something that may not have looked like the makings of a particularly healthy diet. But, as [the dietitian] pointed out, “you don’t know what [this boy] eats for breakfast and dinner. It could be that the rest of his diet is more than adequately addressing his nutritional needs.” Teaching children to eat their greens early has been the subject of overseas research as well, starting even before birth. U[S] scientists at the Monell Chemical Senses Centre in Philadelphia have found that foods eaten late in pregnancy tend to be favoured by children as they grow up... [T]heir discovery is the first demonstration that exposure in the womb affects taste preferences later in life. N[Z]’s Ministry of Health has its own guidelines about healthy eating for children, containing common sense advice for parents... The ministry has also put together sample diets for 3-year-olds, 6-year-olds and 11-year-olds, which it has published on its website... While the diets are not necessarily to be followed rigidly, they do give an indication of what portions to give and variety. Despite what children are eating the rest of the time, breakfast is still considered the most important meal of the day. A recent study into its impact has just been completed in Auckland. The results prove what dietitians and nutritionists have been saying for years – breakfast gives kids more energy and can improve their performance at school. The month-long study, called Get Going With Breakfast, involved both secondary and primary school students... In the study the children were given cereal, bread and other breakfast foods and were watched while they ate them at school. They were also surveyed about their normal breakfast eating habits and how they felt in the mornings at the start and the end of the programme... [T]he... results confirmed that breakfast was crucial to mental, physical and academic performances, as well as improved behaviour... □ [A local]... health food manufacturer has halted plans to market its vitamin supplements in schools after criticism from dietitians. Healtheries had offered to sell vitamin C and echinacea direct to selected schools, but the Dietetics Association said it had serious concerns about vitamin supplements being promoted to children... [because] supplement use could undermine healthy eating and healthy food choices[, and] was also concerned schools might give children supplements without obtaining parental [consent.

...NZ]ers are swallowing up to \$145 million in nutritional supplements every year for little or no benefit, says the author of a new report. The study... calls for regulations on the sale and manufacture of supplements... [The] senior lecturer at the Otago School of Dentistry, said yesterday... "A lot of stuff being sold and marketed out there is basically, as far as we can tell, probably giving people very expensive urine but maybe not much else... In spite of the large scale of the industry in this country, there is a paucity of information about the use of nutrient supplements." ...research was needed into how well supplements, including multi-vitamins, minerals, herbal remedies, garlic preparations and sports formulations, worked... Most research around the world has concentrated on the habits of older people, although a 1997 N[Z] nutritional survey reported that over 60[%] of 19 to 24-year-olds had taken vitamin or mineral supplements... Of all the supplements, [guys exceeded gals] in the use of only one category – sports formulations. The study[']s author]... said there was a potential for supplements to be used misguidedly, although no one in the study group was "overdoing" things... Most supplements are not covered by the Medicines Act, which sets out regulations for labelling and testing. The executive director of the National Nutritional Food Association... said the study offered no basis for introducing regulations. "There is no evidence... in the study... that products are not what they say they are. There is no evidence there that the products are toxic. There are about 1500 deaths in N[Z] every year from properly used medical drugs, compared to zero deaths from dietary supplements. I would ask the question: Why the excitement?"

...[']supplements don't work as well as the real thing', yet 'instead of simply adjusting their diet, some people experiment with "smart pills" said to improve brain function. Some are as commonplace as choline, a highly impure form of which is marketed as lecithin. Others include carnitine, a carrier molecule involved in fatty-acid metabolism, and tyrosine, which in its pure form – that is, without the other amino acids that normally accompany it in dietary supplements – can cause dangerous changes in blood pressure. Tryptophan pills used to be sold in NZ to relieve insomnia and pre-menstrual tension but, following 28 deaths in the US, the Ministry of Health has recalled all products with a recommended daily dosage of more than 100 milligrams.

...at a natural-foods market the true believers in vitamins linger over labels, comparing dosages, trading health sermons and nutritional arcana. One faithful customer, a middle-aged gal plagued by chronic fatigue syndrome, admits to taking "tonnes" of vitamins C and E, plus calcium and a daily vitamin-mineral complex. "Basically, I'm looking for anything to make me feel better." For every true believer, however, there is a sceptic who insists that popping supplements doesn't do any good. "With some exceptions, such as pregnancy and infancy, we get all the vitamins we need in our diets," says a professor of medicine at New York's Mount Sinai School of Medicine. "Barring these exceptions, taking supplements just gives you expensive urine." The vast majority of us wonder whom to believe. If a diet doesn't regularly contain fruit and veggies over the long haul, taking supplements can be good insurance – although improving one's diet is still the healthier choice. Supplements are also helpful to people with special conditions, including the house-bound, alcoholics, those on very restrictive diets who tend to be poorly nourished, and the elderly. A US government study indicated that people over 60 may need about a third more vitamin B-6 than young adults do to maintain good nutrition. Vitamin D consumption apparently should increase with age as well. Opinion is divided, however, about high doses of vitamins to prevent chronic disease or delay ageing. Some experts argue that enough evidence is in to justify taking moderately high amounts of antioxidants. Several researchers say they already do. Others believe it is too soon to make recommendations to the public. The long-term effects of high-dose supplements are unknown, and doctors warn of dangers even in the short term. Advises the chairperson of the department of nutrition at the Harvard School of Public Health: "At this time I say don't take megadoses, but I'm not ruling out that in two or three years we might change our minds." The wisest strategy right now may be to eat more broccoli and carrots, spinach and pumpkin, and to follow the familiar exhortation: get moving, cut down fat and cut out smoking. No matter how powerful antioxidants and the other supplementary nutrients turn out to be, they will never be a substitute for salutary habits.' ● An eastern European government is alleged to be freely 'supplying its population with the dietary supplement GH4'...

The question is: Where can we obtain minerals and trace minerals in an adequate balance? The answer is: Ripple Creek – the most comprehensive natural mineral supplement in America and now available in NZ for the first time. Ripple Creek supplements – containing over 65 major and trace minerals which are microscopic enough for your body to absorb quickly and effectively – are extracted from a pure, cool, clear mineral spring running through an ancient rainforest over 60 million years old. There is no other spring of this type in the world. A 2 times nobel prize winner once stated: "You can trace every sickness, every disease and every ailment to a mineral deficiency." The 74th US Congress was told: "The alarming fact is that food no longer contains enough of our major needed minerals and is starving us no matter how much we eat. 99% of Americans are deficient in minerals, and a marked deficiency in any one of the major minerals results in disease." Gals] are also at risk from nutrient deficiencies if they are menstruating, on a diet, pregnant or breast-feeding. Studies of [gals] who use birth control pills, show that blood levels of several nutrients are low despite adequate intake... [However, according to] the latest research, [gals are consuming] more iron, calcium and... 35[% a]re taking... folate supplements.

...this year... despite opposition by pure-food activists... the Ministry of Health... recommend[ed that folate be added] to bread for health reasons... [The] proposal to dose our daily bread with folic acid may help others besides pregnant [people] and unborn children. Research shows that besides preventing birth defects... folate may help stop heart disease and strokes. [The]National Heart Foundation... medical director... says that, while the research is not conclusive, it could help a great number of people... Another possible additive being considered for bread is iodine. Scientists are urging the Government to find an alternative way of boosting N[Z]ers' iodine intake. They say the 70-year-old practice of adding iodine to salt is no longer working because a health-conscious generation is cutting back on salt. Iodine prevents goitre, a swelling of the thyroid gland in the neck, and deficiencies are linked to impaired intellectual performance and hearing loss... ([...]iodine deficiency disorder... affects... 13[%] of the world's population; ...50 million people suffer from some degree of IDD-related brain damage...; i]odine-deficient people may forfeit 15 IQ points... [- a] lack of iodine in the diets of N[Z and AUS]n children is "an insult to our children's intelligence", says a leading paediatric specialist...)... Because N[Z] soil has low iodine levels, goitre affected almost a third of children in some towns until the Government legislated to add iodine to salt.

...WHAT did your child have for lunch today? Some tasty 310 and 280 followed by a dessert of 210, 160b [– propyl gallate, propionic acid, benzoic acid and annatto extracts (bixin, norbixin) respectively –]and a healthy salicylate snack. Did junior sit down nicely afterwards and read a book or did his head spin round on his shoulders, his eyes glaze over and his fists fly? ...[an AUSn author]'s latest book *Fed Up* throws a lifeline to frazzled parents who suspect or have already made the association between what their children eat and how they behave. [The author] received a big response to her first book *Different Kids: Growing Up with Attention Deficit Disorder* in which, after being driven to exhaustion with her daughter's behaviour, [the author] discovered the effects of food additives and chemicals on her child. *Fed Up* explores the wider theory that some children, and adults, suffer varying side-effects to food chemicals, both artificial and naturally occurring and includes charts of problem additive numbers. Until [the author]'s research, conducted with a paediatrician, there were few scientific experiments to test the affect of food additives. Most research focuses on allergic reactions rather than food intolerance. The difference between the two is that an allergic reaction is usually immediate, easy to see and involves a measurable development of antibodies by the immune system... [The author's] daughter had been a difficult and sleepless baby, [then] grew into the terrible twos but never grew out of them. [The daughter] was aggressive, defiant, irritable and resentful. For 11 years [the author] talked to doctors and psychologists, trying 30 different treatments... [Eventually, a doctor acknowledged the daughter]'s food reactions and the process of elimination began. They discovered [the daughter] reacted to food additives but also, surprisingly, to salicylates – natural food chemicals that occur in plant foods, including most fruits... "Doctors need to realise that if the parent comes in saying 'I think my child is affected by food' they should take it seriously." ...while many parents believe food additives can have an effect on their children, they find it hard to understand how healthy foods like fruit and vegetables may also have detrimental effects... [The author] advises people who have recognised food intolerance as a problem to... [try her] elimination and challenge diet... This removes all potential problem foods from the diet and gradually

reintroduces groups... *Fed Up* provides convincing cases of studies of children who... have had their lives improved by eliminating additives from their diet... Unfortunately, the overwhelming feeling in these fast-paced days is of a society where it is now so difficult to avoid food additives it isn't worth trying. But [the author] says it can be done, and is writing another book containing "failsafe[]" recipes. The author] also features recipes on her Failsafe newsletter on the Internet... [The author's] main bugbear is... [the] bread preservative... 282 (calcium propionate)... [The author] believes this is the most insidious and dangerous of all food additives... "It builds up in the body over a length of time. Nobody ever notices it affecting their children, at first..." ...[the author] cites the case of a mother with a fidgety, asthmatic seven-year-old with reading problems who said: "My child doesn't eat food additives. We eat healthy food." "I often hear this," [the author] says... "When I explain to mothers what to look for they realise just how many additives their children eat every day." The first two daily items the mother mentioned included bread... ([containing] 282) and diet cordial. "I asked the mother to read me the label on the cordial. It contained preservatives 211 and 203, colours 102 and 110... All five of these additives have been found to cause problems including restlessness, irritability and asthma..." ...[another of the author's] big concerns is a new additive 635, present in some chips... pies and instant noodles in A[US] and, if imported, N[Z]. Children may break out in rashes from its ingestion.

...IN THE black hole that seems to be our sum of knowledge about childhood nutrition... Auckland University's community health department... study... [of] the iron status of nearly 1500 adolescents... was... a tiny, worrying pinhead of light... And the skeleton outline of what... the [department's] epidemiologist... saw has frightening implications for this country's long-term health. [The epidemiologist] and his research student... discovered almost one in five of the... 900 girls tested were iron deficient. Not one of them had any idea they had a problem. The deficiency was most prevalent in minority groups... Fewer than 10% of European girls lacked iron... The rate for girls was 10 times higher than boys... With such dramatic differences among boys and girls, periods seem an obvious contributor, yet other studies have found iron deficiency often begins before menstruation starts and does not worsen once periods become established. Frequent tea drinking, especially among pre-schoolers, is a well-recognised risk... but it is a popular drink among Maori and Pacific Island children. "Tea? Don't drink it till you're 21," says [the Starship Children Hospital's] paediatrician... only partly tongue in cheek. Other potential culprits are more subtle. *Helicobacter pylori*... – ...a common infection of the gut – ...has been linked with iron deficiency... The prevalence of the infection is high in Pacific Island (48%) and Maori (21%) children, but low in Europeans (7%). Then there's even the weather. Vitamin D, which we get mainly from exposure to the sun, is thought to increase iron absorption. But vitamin D levels are inversely related to skin pigment – Pacific Island adults have only half the amount of Europeans. Doctors are casting about in the dark partly because there is so little information about what Kiwi kids eat. That's about to be rectified by a national nutrition survey of 5000 children aged from one to 14. Expected to cost... \$4 m... and to start at the end of next year, it follows a similar-sized probe of adult eating habits and will include biochemical analysis of blood samples from all the participants... Many teachers – and [the epidemiologist] himself – believe iron deficiency and the more severe iron deficiency anaemia, are primary causes of lower academic performance among Maori and Pacific Island groups. While it isn't exactly clear how a lack of iron affects the brain, studies have shown iron deficient children are more likely to have impaired memory and ability to concentrate. "There is a lot of scepticism in public health circles about the clinical effect of iron deficiency... but my attitude is you have to treat it like you treat high blood pressure." ...Anaemia... is associated with increased infections, lethargy, irritability and tiredness. The groups most at risk – infants, pre-schoolers, adolescents, athletes, [gals] of childbearing age and vegetarians – may be commonly misdiagnosed because their malaise can be so easily attributed to other causes... While vegetarians usually have lower iron levels, "dedicated vegetarians" are more likely to modify the rest of their diet to compensate... But some, especially teens who gave up flesh foods on a sudden whim, might develop a deficiency over several months then not link it to their diet. In babies, two things make iron deficiency especially scary. The first is it is often symptomless; the second is by the time it is identified, it's too late to reverse the damage. Babies are most likely to start developing a deficiency when their birth stores of iron begin to run out at four to six months... Baby food manufacturers have increased the iron content in a range of weaning foods over recent years and doctors say in some cases they may be better for baby than meals prepared at home with inappropriate ingredients or in unhygienic surroundings... 30% of children admitted to the Starship... with infections are iron deficient – and the admission rate for infections has increased 25% in the last year. "Compared with other [First World] countries, we have a lot more children with more serious infections... Our pneumonia hospitalisation rates are... four times higher than the U[S.] A... Massey University human nutrition lecturer... suspects many families simply do not have enough money left after paying rents or mortgages to feed their children balanced diets. "You'd have to have a PhD in nutrition to feed a family of six on \$60 a week." There is evidence many babies are being weaned from breast milk to cows' milk before they are a year old, instead of on to iron-fortified infant formulas. Cows' milk not only has a low concentration of iron, but the iron in it is poorly absorbed. Some babies may even suffer through being exclusively breast fed for too long by well-intentioned mums... While taking... an iron pill or placebo every day for eight weeks... might allay the effects of iron deficiency, [the epidemiologist] is more concerned with prevention. But the causes may be many... And even the suggested answers raise more questions. While low or no red meat intake is commonly associated with iron deficiency, the Maori and Pacific Island girls in [the epidemiologist's] study appeared to eat more red meat than their European counterparts... [E]ating foods high in Vitamin C... at every meal [will also] help increase iron absorption a[s will] trying to reduce foods that might reduce absorption, for example, cabbages.

...Dust off the barbie... [– with caution (AUS's) Minister for Emergency Services... has launched the inaugural Barbecue Safety Awareness Day... [because] 100 children had been killed in barbecue-related incidents around A[US] in the past five years...)]... – a rare steak is the most concentrated form of iron available, according to a study commissioned by Meat N[Z]... An as yet unidentified "meat factor" enhanced the body's ability to absorb not only the iron in meat, but other iron in the same meal... ■ *Two famous iron myths*... A low iron level does not necessarily mean you're anaemic... Spinach is not high in iron – one cup of boiled spinach provides just 0.02mg of absorbed iron – less than two Weetbix[(according to *Sanitarium*, '30g of Weetbix – two biscuits – provides 3.0mg of iron, or 25% of the RDI; in comparison, 30g – approximately one cup – of Ricies rice cereal provides 16% of the RDI for the average NZ adult, or 25% of the daily iron requirements for children up to 11 years of age': according to *Kellogg's*, '30g – one metric cup – of corn flakes provides 3.0mg of iron, and 100g provides 10mg'; in comparison, one nutritional content table says '100g of beef, wheatgerm, oysters and offal provide 3.5, 4.07, 5.7 and 7.9mg of iron respectively', while another says 'beef contains 1.8-3.0mg, oatmeal and dried apricots 4.1mg, dried figs and almonds 4.2mg, dried haricot beans 6.7mg, dried lentils 7.6mg, liver 8.8-11.4mg, black pudding 20mg and cornflakes 0.6mg').

...A] Briton... who sneezed hundreds of times a day for 37 years, may sue health officials after discovering [w]hat... was causing the problem. [The Briton], aged 52, estimates [it] sneezed six million times because of the ailment, which was so bad [the Briton] gave up his job so [it] could try to find a cure for himself because doctors had failed... A private clinic specialising in nutrition finally diagnosed an allergy to the egg yolk and oats [the Briton] ate every day in... his breakfast bowl of... muesli... [N]ow sneeze-free for the first time since the age of 15, [the Briton said it] might take legal action against a local health authority after 60 doctors failed to diagnose his problem. The *Times* said there might be one unexpected bonus for [the Briton] – the *Guinness Book of Records* was looking to see if [the 52-year-old] had achieved the world sneezing record.

...[Dr. Bircher-Benner's] *muesli* is not strictly speaking a porridge, because it is not boiled, but its consistency is so mushy that it has the appearance of porridge. Attaching great importance to the nutritive value of raw food, the Dr prescribed this mixture as a breakfast and supper dish. At lunch time the Dr allowed various cooked foods and even meat, in addition to raw vegetables and fruit served as an *hors-d'oeuvre*. The *muesli* is prepared overnight. Soak 2 or 3 tablespoons of rolled oats in cold water for 12 hours. On the following morning, drain and mix with condensed milk, raw grated unpeeled apples, or with any other fruit in season, sometimes with grated carrots. Add honey and lemon juice.' By the way, a] new tablet that stimulates an optimum amount

of insulin will allow diabetics to eat when they like... [R]epaglinide or NovoNorm... needs to be taken only with a meal... Research has shown that nearly 40[%] of diabetics eat when they are not hungry because of fear of low blood sugar, leading to weight control becoming a challenge.

...Many diabetics can significantly lower their blood sugar – and maybe even reduce their medication – by eating lots of fruit, vegetables and high-fibre grain... The experimental diet – tested on 13 diabetics... taking... once-a-day pills... – contained 50g of fibre a day, or about twice the amount recommended by the American Diabetes Association. That is equivalent to seven or eight servings of fruit and vegetables and three of whole wheat or other high-fibre grain. The... diet reduced blood sugar levels by about 10[%]. The... drop in blood sugar was about the same as a second pill might have brought... The diet also improved the diabetics' cholesterol levels, which was encouraging, because heart disease is a major cause of death among diabetics... Diabetes occurs when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin, the hormone needed for the body to process sugar for energy.

...Refined carbohydrates (such as white flour and sugar) are foods where much of the natural vitamin and mineral content has been removed, affecting the body's ability to convert them to energy. [But you can compensate by consuming various seeds (r:p1345, lns43-4 + p1372, lnl1), roots (r:p1580, lnl25) and plant-based products (e.g., 'Ginsana – the root of energy'). Incidentally, geneticists estimate]... there's a 50/50 chance... Hollow Viscous Myopathy... will be inherited... [The] rare and incurable condition... prevents [people] from digesting food. Fed intravenously through a tube in [their chest, people with HVM] endure... up to 14 hours a day linked to a machine that pumps liquid nourishment through [their]... body...

I can think of no gourmet foodstuff whose taste lives up to its billing. Pate de foie gras, for example, is not only made by force-feeding geese through a funnel, but is also indistinguishable from the standard meat paste made from nostrils and knee-gristle. I once ate frogs' legs. Actually, it's the thighs that you eat. The calves aren't worth bothering with. Nor, after 20 minutes of fiddling with a tiny fork, are the thighs. Snails taste like rubber bands but are more chewy. I have been known to order snails but they are best served without the snails. It's the garlic and melted butter that please. Indeed, a drenching of melted butter improves all foods except ice cream, and perhaps cucumber. Asparagus is best eaten with butter, too. Where I grew up, asparagus was an unthinkable luxury, but when I came to N[Z] I discovered that asparagus is okay as far as it goes, but that isn't far. Furthermore, it does unpleasant things to the urine... [Someone once told me] of being taken by a friend to Bromley cemetery at night. Amid the tombs... moved a shadowy, silent crowd of human forms. Each bore a knife. They were hunting asparagus. Asparagus apparently likes nothing better than to sink its roots into human corpses and feast on the remains. On reflection, that seems fair enough. One particular grave was a renowned asparagus bed and the hunters clustered round it to hack off the spears the moment they pushed their innocent little heads above the soil. I asked... if by any chance the grave was that of a hanged [person], which I thought would be a delicious irony, but [the storyteller] didn't know... OYSTERS have a narrow emotional range and make poor pets. Passive is a good word to describe an oyster, but phlegmatic is better. Phlegmatic captures both an oyster's attitude to life and its quality as food. Oysters may be able to tell whether they are alive or dead but I find it hard to. So when, as happened at a dinner party, I am presented with a plate of oysters in their shells I wrinkle a nostril and pass the plate on. But an artist at the table insisted that I was missing one of the great joys. [The artist] told me to lay an oyster on my tongue and to squeeze it against my palate in the manner of Cleopatra attacking a peeled grape. I had, [the artist] said, to let the oyster-juices ooze. Though I half expected the oyster to squirm, I did as I was bid. The only juice I detected was seawater. Then I bit the little darling into extinction and doused it with wine. The artist announced that if [it] were due to be executed the next day [it] would order for his final meal a bowl of oysters. [The artist] would chase them down with a properly made trifle. Then, [the artist said, it] would go happy to the gallows. The hostess pointed out that oysters and trifle made a poorly balanced diet but it was generally agreed that at that stage of one's life it hardly mattered. Allowing a doomed [convict] to choose his last meal from all the menus of the world appears to be a humane gesture but it seems to me to be a cruelty. It only reminds the convict of what [it]'s about to lose. Of course, everyone at the dinner party had then to choose a hypothetical final meal. I dithered between Mars bars and fried cod, then declared that I too would choose oysters and trifle, and I stipulated that the trifle should be soaked in sweet sherry and have hundreds and thousands sprinkled on the custard – on the grounds that after such a meal, death would come as a relief. One [guest] chose to meet her maker replete with caviar. I wondered if [the guest had] ever eaten caviar. It tastes in equal measure of salt and socks. Caviar has gained its reputation as a food of the gods simply by being expensive.

...[‘Gourmets eat caviare as it is, without toast or butter, simply adding a sprinkling of lemon juice. Caviare is the “fruit” of the sturgeon, a migratory fish, of which there are a dozen or so varieties, each belonging to one of two species. The sturgeon lives in coastal waters and in the spring, when fully grown, it swims up the rivers to spawn. The time of this migratory movement depends upon the temperature of the water, which itself depends on the severity of the preceding winter and the melting snows. At one time, the Cossacks of the Ural River harpooned the fish through holes in the ice, thus obtaining the first caviar of the year. This yellowy-gold caviare was superior to all the rest, a gift worthy of the Tsar, to whom they presented it. Extracting the caviare is a knack acquired only through experience. Immediately the fish is caught, it is gutted (while still alive, and after having let its blood through an incision under the caudal fin so as to diminish its reactions). The eggs are immediately extracted and placed on a special sieve to be washed, drained, and salted. Soviet scientists perfected a type of Caesarean operation for sturgeons that made it possible for them to be thrown back into the river alive and recommence the reproduction cycle.’ Speaking of exploiting ‘cold-blooded animals with gills and fins that live wholly in water’, aquaculture is “contributing] to the collapse of fisheries stocks worldwide,” warn scientists from the U[S], Scotland, Sweden and the Philippines... Supplies of farmed fish rose from 10 million tonnes in 1987 to 29 million... in 1997. Asia accounts for 90[%] of the total. By comparison, global tonnage of trawled fish remained unchanged, around 85 to 95 million tonnes a year. However, claims that fish and shellfish farms can provide cheap, risk-free protein are bogus... This is mainly because huge amounts of seafish, especially anchovies and mackerel, are scooped from the oceans and ground into meal to feed penned fish. The research says fish farms, especially ones specialising in carnivorous fish and shrimp, are wrecking the environment by destroying habitats, devastating non-native species, encouraging fish disease and causing pollution from fish effluent and decomposing, uneaten food. Thailand is singled out for its conversion of mangroves into shrimp farms. For every k[g] of farmed shrimp, 400g of wild fish and shellfish are lost because of habitat conversion. China, which accounts for [2/3]rds of farm fish tonnage, is praised for embracing a centuries-old technique of sustainable fish farming based on non-carnivorous freshwater species. This entails using four types of carp, which feed on different food and filter algae, keeping a balanced ecosystem. But the farming is intensifying, meaning more fish are... crammed into ponds, causing farmers to use fishmeal to sustain them.

...studies have yielded contradictory findings about the possible heart dangers of eating mercury-laden fish. Plenty of research shows... mercury accumulated from fish can harm the developing brain of a foetus or child. Far less is known about how the toxic, wide-spread pollutant affects the heart. Two studies in the *New England Journal of Medicine* on the long-term effects of mercury exposure on the hearts of middle-aged and elderly [guys] had opposite findings. One found no clear link between mercury levels and the risk of developing heart disease; the other found [guys] who... suffered a heart attack had higher mercury levels than similar [guys] who had not. That left the researchers, US F[DA] officials and other experts agreeing on just two things: more research is needed, and people should not stop eating fish, because minerals and fatty acids in fish protect the heart. Also, many fish, such as salmon and shrimp, contain little or no mercury. “The bottom line is, yes, you should eat fish, and yes, you should know which fish have mercury” levels considered unsafe, said... a cardiologist at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in New Brunswick... who was not involved in either study. [● Another study has found that ‘people who eat fish once a week have 60% less risk of developing Alzheimer’s.’]

...A British brain and nutrition expert warns that N[Z] is at risk of rising rates of mental illness because people eat too little seafood.[The] Professor... of the London Metropolitan University, said that despite huge coastal resources, the bulk of the population consumed relatively little seafood. Seafood, particularly oily fish, was a good source of fatty acid linked to brain growth and function... The... Professor... said seafood

consumption should be encouraged by the Government, which should ensure it was available at affordable prices and not treated as a luxury... Oily fish... were not widely available in N[Z. In related news, fish]... oil may give protection against colon cancer, according to the latest study to heap praise on the health-giving qualities of the Mediterranean diet. Researchers from Barcelona report... that rats fed on safflower oil had more pre-cancerous tissue, such as bowel polyps, than those fed on fish-oil or olive-oil diets...

FOOD and the art of CANCER prevention A CHEESEBURGER or a caesar salad? If you sift through the available evidence, it's hard not to agree with... the American Cancer Society's director of prostate and colorectal cancer. "We don't need years of research... If people would implement what we know today, cancer rates would drop. It's that simple." ...Population studies have consistently linked a high intake of plant foods to a low risk of cancer. And as molecular biologists have discovered in the past decade, the compounds contained in those foods can work in specific ways to block the development of tumours. No one is holding up green tea and garlic as adequate treatments for advanced disease. The goal of the new prevention diets is to reduce the need for such treatments. As... [the] head of medical oncology at New York's Strang Cancer Prevention Centre puts it, eating the right foods is "as specific to stopping cancer before it starts as wearing a seatbelt is to lowering your risk of a fatal automobile accident." ...Researchers have recently identified several plant chemicals that may have far stronger effects... [than] vitamins... Grapes and red wine are rich in an antioxidant called resveratrol, which reduced the incidence of skin tumours in mice by 88[%] in one study. Green tea contains several potent antioxidant chemicals known as polyphenols. Researchers estimate that one of them, a compound called EGCG, has 20 times the [free] radical-quenching effect of vitamin E and 500 times the effect of vitamin C. Then there's lycopene, the pigment that gives tomatoes their blush. You can't get much lycopene from a raw tomato because it is too tightly bound by the fruit's proteins and fibres. But cooking frees it for absorption by the body and dietary fat helps to carry it to the bloodstream... [S]tudies suggest that lycopene may help to ward off cancers of the breast, lung and digestive system. If you do make tomato sauce, don't forget to add some garlic. Just as lycopene helps to ward off oxidative damage, the allyl sulphides found in garlic, chives and onions may help the body to process cancer-causing chemicals more safely. Enzymes from the liver continually battle potential carcinogens that enter the body. Allyl sulphides can modulate enzyme activity, presumably reducing the volume of debris that our cells have to contend with. "Even modest amounts of garlic have a marked impact on metabolism," says [a] nutritionist... of Pennsylvania State University. You don't have to cook the clove to get the effect, but the allyl sulphides won't fully form unless you cut it up and let it sit for 10 minutes. [The nutritionist] suggests buying aged garlic extract, which has shown the most potency in laboratory studies... Cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage may boost production of another set of enzymes that cart away chemical debris. The credit goes to sulforaphane, a sharp-tasting chemical that insects (and some humans) find repellent... Soy foods are another good bet, especially if you're worried about breast or prostate cancer. One of the strongest promoters of reproductive tumours is oestrogen... Soy contains weak oestrogens, or isoflavones, which compete with the full-strength hormone for access to cells. Isoflavones bind with cell receptors that would normally attract the body's own oestrogen, but the growth signal they deliver is only one-thousandth as strong. That means less cell division and, presumably, less risk that a lesion will become cancerous. No one has tested that assumption in a controlled clinical trial, but [in one] population... study, Chinese [gals] on high-soy diets had only half the breast-cancer incidence of [those] on low-soy diets. If a transformed cell eludes all these obstacles to form a palpable cancerous mass, diet alone can't be counted on to reverse it. Still, plant-based chemicals might help to deprive it of a blood supply. A number of plant foods – soy, rosemary, turmeric, carrots and grapes – contain compounds known as Cox-2 inhibitors, which can impede the growth of new blood vessels. In a test tube... tumour cells doused with Cox-2 inhibitors stop spitting out the growth factors that trigger vessel growth. Needless to say, a tumour without arteries is a tumour without a future. Diet won't eliminate cancer from the world. And until many more studies are completed, we'll have to speculate about its potential to keep people healthy... Could other foods affect the odds that a precancerous lesion will bloom into a tumour? Dietary fat may play an important role. Precancerous prostate lesions are equally common throughout the world, notes... a urologist at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Hospital. Autopsy studies find them in nearly a third of all [guys] in their 30s. Yet advanced tumours are six times more common in the U[S] (where fat accounts for nearly 40[%] of calories) than in Japan (where it accounts for less than 20[%]). Breast-cancer incidence follows a similar pattern. And laboratory studies have shown that tumour cells behave less aggressively in animals on low-fat diets than in those fed higher-fat fare. But total fat intake is only part of the story. Many experts now agree that the type of fat you consume is as important as the amount. Saturated fats, for all the havoc it wreaks on the heart and blood vessels, doesn't seem to affect cancer risk one way or the other. Monounsaturated fat (as in olive oil) seems equally innocuous. But the two forms of polyunsaturated fat – omega-6 and omega-3 – are another story. The omega-6 fats, which abound in corn and safflower oil, seem to promote tumour growth; the omega-3s, found in flaxseed and fish oil, may help to inhibit it... [- although h]ealthy people should go easy on high-dose omega-3 supplements, for they can disrupt normal blood clotting.

...A study has found that the more overweight a person is, the higher the chance of developing almost all types of cancer. For obese [guys], the risk can be up to 52[% greater; for gals], it can be 62[% more. The problem is compounded because fat]... makes detecting lumps and bumps more difficult.

...[The Essential Fatty Acids (E.F.A, also known as "Vitamin F") are the "Assimilation Factors". Their function is to make it possible for the cell to receive nutrients and discharge wastes. The cell wall or membrane has the ability to select from the bloodstream the nutrients it needs to function. If the cell wall is adequately supplied with E.F.A, it can do its job effectively. Without E.F.A it becomes leathery and impermeable, and the cell is poorly nourished. Toxins accumulate, it ages faster, and is subject to disease. Without E.F.A, nutrients will be wasted. You can get some E.F.A. from stored oils, but rancidity damages E.F.A. There is some in the wheat germ oil in wheat, but E.F.A. is damaged in cooking or baking. E.F.A. is also altered and damaged in hydrogenation. You should be sure that your supplements have E.F.A in concentrated form in generous amounts. The soft gelatin capsule will protect it from rancidity. Look on the label for Linoleic Acid, Linolenic Acid, and Arachidonic Acid. Look on the label or promotional literature for the "Essential Lipids and Sterols". Sterols are made from E.F.A. in the body. They are components of hormones. You can't make hormones without them. Under stress your body steps up its production of hormones, and sterols are used up. Your requirements will increase just when the available supply is disappearing. If you have a good supplement, containing enough, you don't have to worry. There is probably enough vitamin C in any multi-supplement to prevent scurvy, but not to meet the requirements of stress. Most experts agree stress destroys vitamin C in the body. Vitamin C is an integral part of your white blood cells, and as they multiply when you are fighting infection, you use up vitamin C rapidly. Connective tissue (collagen) requires vitamin C, and your body can't make collagen without it. When healing from surgery or injury, collagen is the repair tissue, so vitamin C is used up rapidly. Humans, guinea pigs, apes, and a species of Indian fruit bat, are the only animals that don't manufacture their own vitamin C in the liver. If we took as much vitamin C for our body weight, as other animals manufacture for their weight, we'd take between 5,000 and 20,000 milligrams a day! So much for the Recommended Daily Allowance of 60 mgs!]

...[The discovery and study of vitamins began just in the 20th century. As long ago as 1720, it was discovered that citrus fruit juices aided in the treatment of *scurvy*, now known to be a vitamin C deficiency disease. In 1906, an English scientist made the discovery that milk, in addition to being an excellent food, also contains other substances necessary to good health. These substances later became known as *vitamins*. In 1911, Casimir Funk, a Polish biochemist, found a substance in rice and bran which Funk used to cure polyneuritis in pigeons. Funk gave it the name of *vitamine* (Latin: *vita*, life plus *amine*, hydrocarbon). It was soon found that the substance Funk had discovered was the vitamin B group, also called *B complex*. Of all vitamins, only A, D, and K can be synthesized by the human body. For example, vitamin K is produced by certain bacteria that grow in our intestines. In humans, water, water-soluble vitamins, and minerals need no digestion. Among the necessary minerals' is *zinc*...

'Zinc isn't just that coloured stuff you smear on your nose at the beach, but one of the most important minerals in the body. It occurs in the body in greater amounts than all other minerals except iron, and is needed for the normal function of every cell in the body. Zinc is a healer – it assists in the production of new cells to replace damaged ones. It assists wound healing, burns and injuries and helps to prevent scarring. It improves our immune response by helping to regulate the white blood cells, and is one of several nutrients required to restore a lowered, or depressed immune system. Zinc is required for the sexual development and maturation of both sexes, and can prove beneficial in the treatment of infertility. Soil exhaustion and modern food processing techniques can reduce the amount of Zinc we get in our diet, and lifestyle factors such as the use of alcohol, smoking, an inadequate diet, etc., can mean we don't have enough of this essential mineral. Our skin, hair and nails are good indicators of Zinc status in the body. Falling hair and premature greying, some forms of acne, and stretch marks can be caused by low levels of Zinc. White spots and ridges on nails, as well as an opaque nail bed may be visible signs of possible Zinc deficiency. One of the first signs of a deficiency may be a loss of taste. The Zinc Taste Test has been developed to give a quick diagnosis of a possible deficiency. Zinc is found in the following foods: seafood (especially oysters and herring), meats, eggs, mushrooms, brewer's yeast, wheatgerm, whole wheat or oats and rye, nuts (with brazils and pecans the richest), pumpkin and sunflower seeds, ginger root, mustard, chilli powder, black pepper' and spirulina...

*'Spirulina is an almost microscopic fresh water plant. An aquatic micro-vegetable/organism composed of transparent bubble-thin cells stacked end-to-end forming a helical spiral filament. Imagine a plant without roots, leaves, seeds, flowers or fruits, that grows by the hundreds in a single drop of water. Barely big enough to be seen with the naked eye, yet it contains over 100 synergistic nutrients and is incontestably the richest and most complete source of total organic nutrition in the world! Ancient cultures with a native awareness of Spirulina's exceptional biogenic-life-force energy, have perhaps since time immemorial, esteemed its remarkable energising and rejuvenating properties. The Aztecs considered it a "Sacred Power Plant". Priests and warriors sustained themselves (at times solely) on dried Spirulina wafers. Living in a retreat on Mt Hakone near Tokyo, an old Japanese philosopher is reported to have lived for the past 15 years exclusively on Spirulina as a living proof that Spirulina is a total food for human nutrition! A superior strain of Spirulina has been developed from a wild African parent-stock which blooms naturally in Lake Chad in the Sahara Desert. Like wild sun-dried Spirulina in its native Saharan habitat, our **New Generation Spirulina** also grows **organically**, and is dried at normal sun temperatures (only inside a controlled environment). This ensures preservation of the vital enzymes and living essences contained within the fresh plants! Additionally, this new strain has a superior nutrient profile to even better fulfill the total human nutritional requirement; for instance: • **Iron** levels have been increased over **300%** • **Calcium** levels have been increased over **1000%**. Coupled with state-of-the-art low temperature dehydrating technology, improved **New Generation Spirulina** establishes a new quality standard by which all others will be measured: Fact: **New Generation Spirulina** is 2-6 times richer than its nearest rival raw beef liver as a source of Vitamin B-12 (not only is Spirulina the richest source of Vitamin B-12 in all of nature, but it is the **only** plant source of B-12); is 28 times richer than raw beef liver and 58 times richer than raw spinach as a source of biochelated Organic Iron; is 3 times richer than raw wheat germ as a source of Vitamin E, and its biological activity is 49% greater than synthetic vitamin E; is 25 times richer than raw carrots as a source of Beta-Carotene or provitamin A (unlike the preformed vitamin A of synthetics and fish liver oils, beta-carotene is completely non-toxic even in mega doses); contains a spectrum of practically every natural antioxidant known, including the antioxidant vitamins C, B-1, B-5 and B-6, the minerals zinc, manganese and copper, **all 8 essential amino acids plus an additional 10 "non"-essential amino acids**, and the trace element selenium. Fact: **New Generation Spirulina** has nature's highest Complete Biological Value (60-70%), compared to: Soybeans – 30-35%; Beef – 18-22%; Eggs – 12-16%; Tofu – 8%; Milk – 3%, contains virtually **no saturated fats, poisons or toxic chemical residues** (the UN has conducted a 5 year toxicology study on Spirulina and found it to be **completely non-toxic**), is remarkably **low in cholesterol** (230 times less than eggs!), is **low in sodium**, AND it's one of the only (if not the only) **non-mucus forming** and **non-acid forming** proteins! Unlike other high-protein foods which are characteristically difficult to digest, **New Generation Spirulina is extraordinarily easy to digest – It has an unmatched digestibility coefficient of 95.1%** (its amino acids are delivered in an essentially "free form" state for almost instantaneous assimilation). Within moments, its concentrated nutrients, enzymes and living essences are absorbed into the bloodstream without the momentous loss of energy incurred in the digestion of ordinary foods (**more energy is spent on digestion than on any other bodily function – it actually exceeds the amount consumed during strenuous exercise!**). Spirulina is the missing link in vegetarianism. It complements the specific weaknesses of vegetarian (particularly vegan) nutrition as no other plant can. From around the world, doctors, naturopaths, weight-loss clinics and slimmers by the hundreds of thousands have discovered the remarkably effective Spirulina Way to Leanness and Aliveness! The surprising success of Spirulina seems to be in its ability to facilitate low-calorie dieting without the energy draining and health destroying nutritional deficiencies that underlie the failures of most weight-loss programs. Slimmers claim that Spirulina effectively suppresses their appetite while at the same time actually boosting their energy levels. That's because Spirulina is one of nature's richest sources of **phenylalanine – the superstar of natural appetite suppressants**. Additionally, Spirulina's supernutrition satisfies hunger because it so totally fulfills the body's real biochemical needs. The familiar syndrome of cravings, psychological stress and fatigue is eliminated. When the appetite is appeased, overeating is automatically reduced in a natural way and with a minimum of inconvenience.'*

... 'Auto-intoxication – due to healthy foods ingested in excessive quantity and subjected to bacterial putrefaction in the intestines – should not be confused with alimentary intoxication due to ingestion of toxic foods or foods which have gone bad.' Speaking of toxic foods, **edible plants grown in city gardens can contain dangerous levels of lead... lead[ing] to people ingesting more than the daily safety limit... of 15g a day for [kids] and 75g... for adults...**

...an unusually heavy meal does not just add calories, it also might trigger a heart attack, especially in people who already suffer from heart disease. A study... found that heart attack risk jumps four times in the two hours after a large meal. A very large meal may start the whole process of a heart attack, said... Brigham and [Gals'] Hospital in Boston... "Overeating should be considered as a heart attack trigger, in much the same way as extreme physical activities and severe anger episodes." ...Of... nearly 2000 patients... interviewed... shortly after they had had heart attacks... 158 reported having an unusually large meal during the 26 hours before the attack. [25] patients had the meal in the two hours before the attack.

...A fat test may help... kids who are paying dearly for overeating and not exercising. Call them the supersize generation. American children aged 6 to 11 are three times as likely to be overweight today as they were 30 years ago. And the news on adolescents (12 to 17) is not much better – the proportion of fat teens has nearly doubled since the early 1970s. The reasons are obvious... [- b]ut help may be on the way. The US Government has issued a "body mass index" (BMI) for those aged 2 to 20. The index, which considers a child's age, weight and height to calculate body fat, is similar to one used for years to identify overweight and obese adults. Gender differences are also considered. For example, an 8-year-old boy who is 122cm tall and weighs 30kg would earn a BMI score of 20.4 – and be considered overweight. A girl with the same score would not – falling into the lesser category of children at risk of being too heavy... The... scientists who assembled the index hope plotting such numbers on the new BMI chart will become a standard part of children's annual physicals, and make it easier for paediatricians and parents to monitor weight gain and determine when pudginess is becoming a problem. The... Government has also laid out plans to study the effectiveness and safety of two popular but diametrically opposed diets, the high-protein, low-carbohydrate variety and the low-fat, low-meat ones. Both announcements came at the first National Nutritional Summit sponsored by Washington in 31 years. Last time the topic was hunger. This time, obesity. That's food for thought.

...Myriad Genetics says it has discovered a gene that appears directly linked to human obesity and drugs could be relatively easily developed to combat the condition. The biotechnology company, based in Salt Lake City, said the gene, HOB1, also appeared to provide an important molecular link between obesity and diabetes... Myriad compare[d] the DNA of Utah people who were obese with that of family members who were not. Many

Utah families can trace their ancestry directly to pioneers, and the company discovered a mutation in one gene that it was able to follow back through numerous generations. What is not clear is what percentage of people with the mutated gene become obese. It could be high, based on equivalent studies into breast and ovarian cancer. Myriad said that unlike the genes which caused those conditions, the structure of the mutated obesity gene meant it could be attacked with a small molecule drug, which means a pill rather than an injection. It might also be easier to develop drugs to compensate for the genetic mutation because the gene is too active rather than not active enough.

...Raiding the fridge at midnight seems harmless enough, but it's a craving that has life-threatening repercussions for some. The urge to eat continuously is overwhelming for children born with the rare genetic condition Prader-Willi Syndrome. "Despite the amount of food they consume these children never feel full," says... a Wellington paediatrician... As few as 230 people in N[Z] are thought to have Prader-Willi Syndrome, which affects just one in 15,000 people. Surprisingly though, it has been identified as the most common genetic cause of obesity. Children born with the condition have a chromosomal abnormality in the brain that usually leads to low IQ, delayed development, stunted growth and an uncontrollable, never-ending urge to eat. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that such children require fewer calories than usual anyway, resulting in life-threatening weight gain. They also suffer from reduced muscle mass, fragile bones and clumsy mobility, dramatically limiting their ability to enjoy exercise or participate in outdoor games. Learning that your child has this genetic disorder is devastating for parents, says... [the] national co-ordinator of the Prader-Willi Syndrome Association... Policing eating habits can mean putting padlocks on the fridge and locks on the kitchen cupboards... Their parents have now been given new hope with the availability of the world's first drug to treat it, a growth hormone called Genotropin... [-] a genetically engineered protein that is identical to human growth hormone. It has been in wide use since 1987 for children with other growth disorders associated with Turner Syndrome or chronic renal failure... Clinical trials show that daily injections of Genotropin renew growth to near normal height, increase muscle mass, and help to reduce body fat. In Florida, a 14-year-old boy who was predicted to never grow taller than five foot, grew four inches in his first nine months on the hormone... is now already 4ft 11ins and is predicted to eventually reach 5ft 8...

As an overweight teenage girl, [the]... West Auckland author... often had to put up with cruel nicknames and insensitive comments about her size. After half a lifetime of being referred to as Two Ton Tessie, Tub or Bessy Bunter, the Waitakere writer is fighting back against fat phobia through her first book. *Largely Happy* offers a fresh perspective on body image to those who are struggling with unworkable diets and low self-esteem, backed by strong medical and scientific research... [The westie] recalls an episode where a [guy] held a door open for her as [they] walked into a bakery, but... then turned to her and said, 'I've made a mistake there, there's not going to be anything left in a few minutes'. [...] I've had friends who've had their faces pushed into their meals and things taken out of their supermarket trolleys or food snatched off their plate at a restaurant,"... [The westie] discovered size acceptance herself when her son bought her a computer with unlimited Internet access: "That really opened my eyes to what happened in the rest of the world." ...[the westie] says 165,000 people in the US died last year as a direct result of dieting, weight loss products or related suicides. It has even been proven that excess weight is 70[%] due to your genes, and that the human body is biologically programmed to prevent loss of fat as a survival mechanism... In 1998 [the westie] founded a support network in west Auckland called N[Z]-Wide and Wonderful, though... had to withdraw from it following a serious motor-bike accident. [The westie] is also co-chair-person of the International Alliance for Size Acceptance... ■ ['While the problem of obesity often begins in infancy and childhood, not all obesity is the same. Some people get fat early in infancy and childhood, while others become obese only after puberty. While most obese individuals – regardless of the timing of onset of their weight problem – have cells with a higher fat content, people with early-onset obesity have *more* fat cells than either the nonobese or those with late-onset obesity. Moreover, those who get overweight early may have more difficulty keeping weight off later, since weight loss in children and adolescents reduces only cell size but not the number of fat cells. As the proliferation of weight-reduction clubs, magazines devoted to weight and diet, and fad diets indicates, we are a weight-conscious society. In fact, as many as 70 to 80% of American girls have been on a diet by middle adolescence']...

LOSE WEIGHT NATURALLY... No Crazy Diets – No Drugs – No prescription required... [(i)f allergic to seafood or pregnant consult your M.D)]... **FAT BUSTERS**... taken before meals soak up fat from food and stop fat being absorbed into the body – Your body then burns off your stored fat naturally... No hunger pains – No cravings – Eat your usual meals – Average weightloss 8% of bodyweight after one month... Mr. M. H. lost 27kgs in two months!! ...FREE-PHONE 0800-78-2000... [for the b]est price: Only \$59.95 for 240 capsules! or send credit card details or cheque to... P.O.Box 39-211 Auckland plus \$5 DELIVERY BY OVERNIGHT COURIER POST ANYWHERE IN NZ...

Sleepless Auckland shoppers will soon be able to indulge their nocturnal trolley passions around the clock. From Monday, the Woolworths supermarket at LynnMall City will be open 24 hours a day, every day of the week. The supermarket now closes at 10 pm... [A]part from some promotions, it was the first time a big [NZ] supermarket would be open around the clock. A further 12 staff had been recruited and others had been given the opportunity to extend their working hours. Alcohol is not sold in the supermarket, as the area is controlled by a licensing trust.

...Woolworths' store at LynnMall is extending its trading hours following the success of the company's 24-hour ventures at BP Swanson and Herne Bay... The company's joint ventures with BP service stations have shown there's a demand for around the clock shopping... "Both the sites have had good business right through the night, particularly at the Swanson site,"... says... [Woolworth's m]arketing and business development manager... [T]he open all hours approach aims to ease car parking congestion at LynnMall and better meet the needs of shift workers out west.

...[West Auckland s]upermarkets have been given food for thought with council set to serve them a \$30,000 bill for recovery of trolleys dumped in Waitakere streams and roadsides. The move is a new Waitakere City Council bylaw under consideration and is a response to what[one] Henderson Community Board member... says is supermarkets being "too bloody lazy" to clean up their act. His attack came at a meeting of the Environmental Management Committee, which considered the bylaw option. It is estimated that replacing the... \$400 trolleys costs supermarkets up to \$50,000 a year. Council now wants supermarkets to adopt trolley control devices being trialed at Glen Innes Pak 'n' Save. The device would cost each shop about \$30,000. But West Auckland supermarkets say the charge threat is unfair... "A bylaw gives the implication that it's all our fault. Are they going to introduce a bylaw for any dumping of rubbish in West Auckland?"... Foodstuffs spokes[perso]n... asks. Progressive Enterprises' general manager... says the company has looked at locking up trolleys but it would cost business. A bid to get customers [to] pay for the trolley years ago also failed. "It's a hassle and customer reaction is 'We don't want to see them on the streets or in the creeks, but we don't want to put a deposit down'." [The board member] says the decision is the result of years of non-action by supermarkets. "The council has decided to stop pussyfooting around."

...Waitakere City Council is looking at a new bylaw to make supermarkets and shopping malls more accountable for their trolleys... "The Council spends thousands of dollars a year removing trolleys... from local streams and streets – and supermarkets pay even more to replace trolleys that are taken from their premises – so we're hoping to find a solution to the problem that works for everyone concerned." ...The [bylaw could] see supermarkets installing coin-operated or electronic wheel-locking on their trolleys... [By the way, NZ] supermarkets may be the battleground for a banana war after a decision by one of the world's biggest fruit companies to set up shop here... "There'll be a bloodbath, I guess," was the response yesterday of a Dole executive... [to] Florida-based fruit giant Fresh Del Monte[']s... purchase of local fruit distributors Ventura Pacific and Shafers International... Del Monte is the world's largest marketer of pineapple and third largest marketer of bananas. At present, Dole sells almost all the pineapples sold in N[Z], and Del Monte has confirmed it is likely to bring in its own brand. But it has not yet decided whether it will try to snare a slice of banana sales, estimated to be worth around \$130 million a year. N[Z]ers, who already enjoy low banana prices, are among the world's biggest consumers of the fruit, gobbling up around 68 million kilograms a year. Bonita and Dole claim there is no room for another player in N[Z]... Since buying out the N[Z] arm of Chiquita in 1994, Dole, which is aligned with distributor MG Marketing, is believed to have secured

around half of all banana sales. Bonita, linked with distributor Turners and Growers, has the other half. Both companies note Chiquita's restraint of trade will expire soon, allowing the company to operate back here. But they are also concerned about Del Monte... However... the new general manager of Fresh Del Monte in N[Z], said the company's arrival was... a fantastic opportunity for N[Z] fruit exporters... "There is huge value in the Del Monte brand, and it has the ability to hopefully market N[Z] products in a different fashion than is being done today, with resources that haven't been available to those products before."

...[In the Hindu religion there is a legend in which the banana was the fruit forbidden to Adam and Eve in the terrestrial paradise, which, according to the legend, was on the island of Ceylon, where the parents of the human race covered their nakedness with banana leaves. This explains the names of *Adam's fig-tree* and *Paradise banana*, which the Indians have given to two species of banana tree. About 30 species of banana are known. The dietetic qualities of the banana are undisputed. It provides 100 calories per 100g. Bananas are sometimes dried in their country of origin and exported in this form. Their calorific value then rises to about 285 calories per 100g – twice that of meat. Figs also are more nourishing when dried. In the south of France, figs are preserved by drying in the sun. They have to be turned over several times during the drying and, before they are completely dried, are slightly flattened. Treated in this way, figs will keep a very long time. Besides being the sweetest of all fruits, the fig contains appreciable quantities of Vitamins A, B and C. The tomato is another fruit rich in Vitamins A, B and C. In olden days tomatoes were called *pommes d'amour* – "love apples".]

...Pommy] scientists have discovered that loud rock music and thumping drum and bass tunes could ensure a bumper crop. Researchers at the British Tomato Growers Association... revealed that the vibrations caused by... [such] music boosts the quality of production by dislodging pollen so it falls on the stigmas causing self-pollination... [In local news, t]he huge fruit trees and lawn carpeted with fallen figs, guavas and persimmons hint that [a West Auckland widow's backyard] is no ordinary suburban garden and [it]'s been getting some extra help. But... [the g]reen-thumbed gardening guru[s]... secret isn't attributable to freak weather patterns, alien visitations... acts of God... or even... [loud rock music], it's good old rock dust. "It's really done marvels for all the fruit trees,"... [H]er... huge persimmon tree grew a further 2-3m after putting the miracle dust on... The persimmon tree is actually supposed to be an umbrella persimmon, a dwarf variety, but has proved to be more of a giant... While her late husband moaned about having to mow under the tree, [the widow] says it's always been her favourite... This year's fruit crop is a bumper one. "It's never had this much fruit. Generally I pick about 35 and have one a day... The... neighbourhood... kids come and ask me if they can have some. They love them,"... With four children [of her own] the... fruit never went to waste. The fruitful bounty also makes her garden a popular haunt with local birdlife... Even though the... 1/5 acre Te Atatu plot... keeps her busy [the widow] has no intention of giving it up for a retirement unit or apartment. "People say 'it's too much for you, get a smaller place' but what would I do? You never retire when you have a garden."

...West Aucklanders should be alarmed that the only community permaculture gardens in all of Auckland could be under threat, says [a] Glen Eden resident. St Benedict's Community Gardens in Basque Park, off Newton Rd[in Auckland City], face an uncertain future on July 18 when the Hobson Community Board will decide if they should be redeveloped as landscaped park land... "It would be a terrible waste if they ripped them down," says [the resident], who... found the courage to create her own permaculture plot at home after seeing the concept put into practice at St Benedict's. "There is nothing which measures up to this in the west, and what happens in the city affects us too." Permaculture describes a philosophy of growing and landscaping based on what happens in nature. It includes self-seeding, edible plants, self-sufficiency organic gardening, and recycling natural resources. [The resident will ask the] Mayor... to establish a similar garden in Waitakere City, to provide schoolchildren and the public with an educational resource. St Benedict's Community Gardens are managed as a non-profit incorporated society by two facilitators, who also coordinate tours and permaculture workshop classes for anyone interested in learning. [One f]acilitator... says the gardens' vision is to sustain "a living outdoor community centre" that shows people how food is produced, and demonstrates sensible ways of reducing the ecological damage we cause to the planet so people can transfer these ideas into their own backyards at home... The gardens are collectively maintained through a mixture of regular working bees, shared resources, and individual efforts... 90 people have worked their hands through the soil over the last two and a half years, with about 30 people involved at any one time... They are regularly used for practical assignments by UNITEC and Auckland University students, and visited by a dozen interested groups... But the Friends of Basque Park are no friends of St Benedict's, and have voiced strong opposition to their continued existence... [The group] says the gardens promote a preferred lifestyle that is "better suited to a commune than to a public park". The group has collected 129 signatures from people who want the gardens closed for good. "It is morally reprehensible that the subtenants of the St Benedict's Urban Farm seek continued access to public park land – for conversion to allotments – whilst householders pay rates for the land on which they garden," [the group] told Hobson community board members at an informal meeting last Wednesday. [The group] says the gardens are being run for the benefit of its leaseholders "to do as they please", and that there is no shortage of private gardening land within reach of the city which should be used instead... UNITEC[s] Sustainable Land Management and Design tutor... says there is room for everyone in the park. "This is a small, dynamic, successful project which is easy for people to achieve, and Auckland needs a lot more like it... it costs peanuts. The management of the gardens could be improved on, so they may need some help, but let's build it up rather than this overkill attitude."

...Auckland's only community permaculture gardens have been given a 12-month stay of execution before they must go, but organisers and west Auckland supporters are digging in for a fight. The Hobson Community Board last Tuesday voted 5 to 3, with one abstention, to get rid of St Benedict's Community Gardens in Basque Park... The gardens' spokesperson... says the decision effectively bulldozes Auckland City Council[s]... consultation process with the community. Local residents clearly signalled they wanted the gardens retained in the park's new design, [the spokesperson] says, with a petition to keep them receiving 607 signatures. [The council's] open space planner... also recommended they be included in the park's redevelopment. The board will however ask the council to prepare a report investigating the suitability of and demand for community gardens within Auckland City... There have... been criticisms that the gardens are untidy and poorly managed. A new management team is currently setting up a trust board to address those problems, and hopes to overturn the board's decision within 12 months. However, there is no appeals process in place. A rally to raise public support for the gardens will be held in Basque Park this Sunday... at noon. [A tutor], who teaches permaculture at Rutherford High's night school, says: "It's basically turned a green city backwards, and now I'll have to find somewhere else to take my students. The percentage of land is so small, I can't see why they've focused on this one garden." ...[Incidentally, a father], 30, was astonished to find a gigantic earthworm, measuring 45cm, under some cobblestones in the backyard of his Te Kuiti home. "It was lying on top of the dirt and I kept pulling and more and more of it would come out... I got quite a fright when I finally pulled it out." The Conservation Department said while the creature was huge, the biggest earthworm ever found in N[Z] was 142cm long. [The father] said his two sons [aged] three, and... five, had taken the worm to school to show their friends. It was now part of an exhibit in a natural display at the Te Kuiti kindergarten.

...KITCHEN GARDEN If you're not planning to plant a winter vegetable garden then sow a green crop such as lupin or mustard seed. Dig this in when it matures and this will provide the soil with a high level of nitrogen which will be readily available to your next crop of vegetables... Seeds can be sown such as beetroot, broccoli, broad beans, onions, radish, spinach, swedes or turnips. Seed potatoes can be planted now in frost free areas. Rhubarb can be divided and replanted in compost enriched soil. Perennial herbs including parsley can be planted now also, with the exception of basil which does not overwinter well so it is better planted later.

...JULY and August are often the coldest... wettest months of the year. Listen to the weather forecast... and be prepared to protect tender plants from frost, freezing and flooding. Much gardener anguish occurs in midwinter when seedlings of winter crops suddenly turn yellow, keel over and

die. Few of us naturally inherit open and well-draining earth – heavy, wet or clay soils are a big problem. They bring instant rot to seeds and death by drowning to... seedlings. But you can do a lot to stop waterlogging by conditioning the soil to make it drain more freely or by building simple raised beds – a system used over many centuries... A raised bed system is also invaluable where a garden has to be created on a sloping site... Building raised beds is not difficult and involves few tools other than hammer and nails or lengths of strong wire and pliers... Raised beds should be of a size to provide easy working access from all sides. If you need one of larger design, plan for pathways of bricks or pavers to avoid treading all over and compacting your fill – thereby defeating the object of the exercise... During the drought months... bed surfaces can be mulched with organic materials such as shredded bark, pea straw, well-rotted manure, or... grass clippings to conserve moisture and inhibit weed growth.

...*‘Organic’... redefined...* Bowing to public demands to ban biotechnology and irradiation of foods labelled and sold as “organic,” the [US] Administration has unveiled regulations for the fast-growing organic food industry. The Department of Agriculture’s 650-page proposal aims to provide a nationwide standard for food and clothing marketed as “organic.” The label at present falls under a hodgepodge of state, regional and private certifier standards, giving rise to confusion about its meaning. A nationwide organic standard, which Administration officials hope will become final by the end of the year, should not only clarify the meaning of “organic” for American consumers but also for foreign nations, who are increasingly shying away from conventional American growing practices... “The organic label is about giving consumers a choice,” said A[merica’s] Agriculture secretary... “It’s about giving consumers and farmers a definition of organic that takes the guesswork out of the process. Consumers know what they’re buying and farmers know what’s expected of them.” ...There are 12,000 organic farmers in the U[S] and that number is rising by 12[%] a year. The... proposal was the strictest organic standard in the world and might force other countries to tighten their regulations. The proposal bans food from crops that are genetically altered to fight off weeds and pests, withstand droughts and floods and provide extra nutrients... Also banned... is food irradiated by... electron beams[, or] fertilised by sewage sludge recycled by municipal waste plants. Meat produced from animals that receive antibiotics could also not be labelled organic... The move may help sell American organic products in Europe and Japan...

Organically produced food has yet to make a significant impact here, but... it is already becoming a significant export earner Some authorities want to irradiate pests on food instead of using chemicals. And ingredients from [GE] crops may turn up in... many... processed foods. What, you may ask, is safe to feed your children? The answer may turn out to be that either there is no real problem with such techniques, or there is. Until it is clear, more consumers may be inclined to try something else – food that is organically produced. The difficulties are its availability and the cost. Organic food prices are anywhere between 10 and 15[%] higher than for conventionally produced goods. But about 600 primary producers and processors are licensed to use the Bio-Gro symbol, meaning produce has been grown to an internationally agreed standard. The number has almost trebled in the past two years. The products range from fruit and vegetables (both frozen and fresh), meat and grains such as oats and wheat to dairy products, wine and baby food. In response to the increased demand for organic agriculture both here and overseas, the fledgling industry is rapidly organising itself. The Organic Products Exporters Group... expects members’ exports to be worth \$65 million [in] 2000, triple the 1997 figure. Its founder members include Heinz Wattie, the Kiwifruit Marketing Board, Only Organics, Northland Dairy Products, Agriculture N[Z], Bio-Gro, the Bio Dynamic Association and Trade NZ... 5[%] of Heinz Wattie’s frozen vegetable production is organic and includes peas, sweet corn and carrots. All is exported because the local market has failed to develop. The [company]... says that through the 1990s demand for certified organic produce... increased in Japan, North America and Europe at a much faster rate than the general growth in food sales. Because of a shortage of supply, the company has a policy of helping growers to make the conversion to organic production and more recently of converting land itself and producing its own organic vegetables. For consumers, identifying genuine organically grown products is relatively simple... Look... for either a specific symbol on the label... or evidence that it was produced in accordance with the California Organic Foods Act 1990. In N[Z] there are two registered symbols – Bio-Gro and Demeter. Demeter is the trade name of the Bio Dynamic Association, an international organisation whose symbol is recognised worldwide. It is considered the high priesthood of organic methods because of its holistic approach. Bio-Gro is the trading name of the N[Z] Biological Producers and Consumers Council, which was set up in 1983. It is a member of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, based in Germany. Produce that carries the Bio-Gro symbol has been... produced without fungicides, herbicides, insecticides, growth regulators or the addition of colour or flavour enhancers. The symbol is also used for processed food derived from organically grown produce without synthetic additives such as stabilisers, emulsifiers, antioxidants, preservatives and colourants. Certification of organic products is a rigorous procedure that takes two years – and often a big sacrifice on the part of... farmers because productivity inevitably drops when they stop using chemicals in the operation. A producer has to furnish the council with a management plan, maps, test results, spray diaries and receipts for farm inputs. The licence has to be renewed annually. The only fertilisers allowed are manures, composts or mulching materials from on-property sources. Others have to be documented as free of pesticide residues. Permissible mineral additives include sulphur, limestone, rock phosphate, dolomite and unadulterated seaweed and fish products. Permitted pest and disease controls include biological controls, sodium silicate, herbal sprays, soft soaps and pheromones for mating disruption. This year the industry set up another body, the Organic Federation of N[Z], to act as a watchdog, promote its products and lobby. Its convenor... who also chairs Bio-Gro, says organic farmers are affected by an enormous amount of legislation on which they have had limited input. As an example, [the convenor] cites the effect of spray drift. “Organic farmers cannot sue [the offender] if drift from a neighbour’s property is below a certain level. But the levels allowed by current legislation are above those permitted by Bio-Gro, so a farmer can risk losing certification.” [The convenor, who] has an organic farm near Wellington and a retail shop in the city... says it is small wonder that prices for organic produce are higher. “Conventional growers don’t have to pick up the downstream costs of environmental pollution their methods cause. That’s strange in these days of user-pays.” What kind of a diet is an organic one? Quite exciting, I thought, after a visit to... the major retail outlets in Auckland, Ceres Wholefoods in Ellerslie and Huckleberry Farms in Greenlane. As well as an organic range of the familiar breakfast cereals imported from the U[S], I found something called peach cereal with echinacea and elderberry, and another with amaranth flakes. Pasta and a range of sauces were available, as was organic olive oil from Mexico... Organics is a way of life that not only avoids chemicals but has as its priority long-term benefits to the environment, the humane management of livestock, genetic diversity and the fair distribution of profits. In this context the word sustainability becomes more than a political buzzword.

...ORGANICS is the fastest growing agriculture in the world. Despite commercial horticulture spending millions marketing chemicals they guarantee will improve results... it seems a discerning public has become better informed about the potential dangers associated with [GE] and chemically treated foods. There is a growing public awareness that chemical pesticides and hormone sprays may contribute to a wide variety of health problems, as well as contamination of soils and drinking water... This realisation has led to an increase in public demand for “natural/pure” foods. Demand far outstrips supply and consequently people are beginning to grow their own. Commercial growers, aware of this trend, are moving towards large-scale organic farming with an increasing number of journals and publications to guide them... Fundamental to organic gardening is improvement and replenishment of the soil. This is done primarily through composting. All organic materials are recycled into compost... Burnable materials too large to break down or mulch are returned as ashes. Compost is added to the land regularly to build humus in the soil... Mineral soil (subsoil) has no humus while topsoil has a varying amount of mineral soil mixed with humus. Mineral soil absorbs about 20% of its weight in moisture but humus can absorb 300%-500% more water. Humus acts like a sponge, holding water needed for sustained plant growth over long periods... Inorganic materials are discouraged because they chemically burn worms and kill soil microbes ultimately leading to the decline in humus or collapse of “living” earth... [One] additive frequently used is lime. Gypsum, especially when applied with round river sand or gravel, will “sweeten”, loosen and open clay soils. Crushed limestone rock and dolomite are to a plant what milk is to a baby. The calcium

strengthens plant tissues helping them withstand stress attack from fungus and disease... Rock phosphate, a natural source of phosphorous, is applied to increase quantity and enhance quality of fruits and flowers[(note that another natural source of phosphorous is 'wheat and other grains – you need two parts of calcium to one part phosphorous in your diet; too much phosphorous creates an imbalance resulting in a calcium deficiency' and, interestingly, wheat 'contains phytic acid, a phosphorous compound which inhibits your utilization of calcium')]. Wood ashes are a natural source of potash essential for root development and plant vigour... Trace minerals are sometimes added to replenish depleted soils. Granite dust or powdered rock are natural sources of trace minerals which strengthen tender, difficult crops. Dried blood is a natural source of nitrogen, an essential element needed for leafy growth... Liquid food is usually applied with rain water. Most popular feeds include fish emulsions, seaweed extracts, manure tea, or snail tea. These are made by soaking the fish, manure and/or dead snails in a bag of water for a week or more. The resultant liquid is watered down... before being applied to already watered plants and foliage... Organic pest/disease control relies on the notion that... [the] more balanced the natural environment... [is], the healthier plants will remain. Some plants emit chemicals or odours that deter disease-spreading insects. Garlic and most members of the onion family repel ants. Ants herd and 'milk' aphids. By planting garlic near a susceptible host... the aphids will be reduced or eliminated. Planting basil with tomatoes nearly eliminates whitefly attack. French marigolds eliminate nematodes from the soil and prevent blackfly attack. Onions and rosemary reduce carrot rust fly. Pyrethrum, daisy, mint, sage, thyme and many strongly scented herbs repel a variety of insects... [Encourage birds] to catch insects for you by creating shelters for them, feeding them and training them. This could be a whistle, call or a coloured marker placed next to their food. The birds will associate this with food. At the first sign of insect invasion stop feeding but call the birds to where the unwanted insects are. There are also helpful insects that should be encouraged. Ladybirds eat many small insects and praying mantis tackle almost anything. Asian wasps are hunters of caterpillars... Bees are not predators but disturb intruders while pollinating. At the first sign of disease or infestation act immediately and burn anything contaminated before it can spread... Soapy water is effective at reducing both pests and diseases. Sudsy bubbles lift, drown and smother insects but are most effective when used regularly on wet foliage to create a protective film around plants that might be attacked... [Plain water can also] play a part in insect and disease control. Most insects hate getting wet. Effective spraying can wash away many insects or put them in vulnerable positions where birds find them. Some blights and mildews can be scalded off plants by watering during hot, sunny weather but care must be taken not to damage tender growth. Evening watering will revive a dry garden during drought but allow enough time for foliage to dry before nightfall otherwise fungal growth will spread... Learn to water with celestial cycles. Just like the tides, water in plants responds to sun/moon cycles. If the sun is rising ahead of the moon (a waxing moon) the upward 'celestial' pull is vigorous. This is an excellent time to liquid feed. When moonlight wanes toward the new moon in the last quarter gravitational extremes increase. This can be used to draw water and food downward to encourage strong root development. Cuts made in unwanted vegetation near new moon would draw air deeply into the root system killing regrowth without the need for herbicides.

...Angry growers have called for more care after several herbicide spray drifts badly damaged north-west crops. Greenhouse tomato crops at Whenuapai and Waimauku have been hit, and one grower is seeking legal advice... Vegfed['s] spray drift assessor... has inspected 12 properties [near] Waimauku... About 14 growers have collectively suffered more than \$600,000 losses and have little or no redress... One grower hit four times has lost all profit for the year... Most growers don't have insurance because of the expense, and pursuing the matter through the courts can be difficult... Vineyards, tomato crops and beans are particularly susceptible to mainly hormone-based sprays, such as those used to control difficult weeds like gorse. Spray residue can drift in the wind for many kilometres. In some of the most recent incidents, a few contractors have been implicated... [O]ne was seen spraying gorse with Tordon in wind gusting up to 18 kilometres per hour and then abused a concerned grower who asked what [the contractor] was doing. Spraying should not be done in winds over 8km/h or in temperatures over 20 degrees because of evaporation and drift risk, says [the assessor], who helped formulate the code of practice for spray use... Before using sprays, people should talk to neighbouring growers – even those up to a few kilometres away – about the best time to spray... People using contractors should ensure they are properly qualified... Those affected by spray drift should record details such as the day, time, weather, sprayer location and identification, chemical name (if known), colour and smell; any witnesses and whether humans, animals, crops, gardens or water supplies are affected. Incidents should be reported to the Auckland Regional Council's Enviroline, phone: 0800-80-60-40, or 379-2090 after hours. The ARC says it will help investigate spray drift incidents and work with neighbours to find answers and avoid further incidents, but it does not have direct powers to prosecute.

...The sudden onset of "loopy" behaviour among pupils at a rural Tauranga primary school has been linked to toxic spraydrift from a growth hormone chemical sprayed on nearby kiwifruit orchards. Staff and pupils at Te Puna School, 10km northwest of Tauranga, are suffering the effects of chemical fallout from hydrogen cyanamide, a plant growth regulator, marketed as Hi-Cane. It is sprayed on dormant kiwifruit vines annually during late July and August... before the onset of buds... [The] principal... could virtually predict behaviour changes among his senior pupils this time of year – changes [it] puts down to the hormone residues carried in the air from the spray. Hydrogen cyanamide is... regarded by orchardists as a critical part of their regime because it stimulates uniform budbreak following the vine's dormancy. At his school this week, [the principal] said the Hi-Cane effects had returned. In a 20-pupil senior immersion class, between Monday and Wednesday, six pupils had crook stomachs, two were vomiting and eight had headaches. The changed behaviour had been occurring every August for the past four to five years... After seven years at the school, [the principal] has no doubt that the "hormonal" properties of Hi-Cane were the villain. [The principal] had contacted the National Poison Centre and others in the scientific community with his concerns but "nobody wants to know"... [The centre's] medical toxicologist... said "bystander exposure" to Hi-Cane should not be a major health concern because of the low levels of the chemical in the air. "I doubt that level of exposure would create problems... I don't see its effects being long term or irreversible... It would be a relatively low risk..."

...N[Z]ers' food is relatively free of contaminants and pesticide residues. The total diet survey, released by the Ministry of Health, analysed 114 common foods for five contaminant elements, 90 pesticides and three key nutrient elements. Overall, the results were very encouraging and showed that any risk to public health was negligible, said [the ministry's] chief adviser on safety and regulation. Pesticide residues remained low compared with international standards and contaminants were similar to levels overseas. The estimated intakes of pesticide residue and contaminants were not expected to affect health. The survey, taken in 1997-98, found the intake of lead through food had fallen by more than half since the previous study in 1990-91. Iodine intake was lower than the recommended level... [In related news, AUS]n research shows that the banned pesticide DDT may have left a legacy of thinning bones in [gals] now going through menopause. A study of northern N[SW] gals] aged 45 to 65 found those with traces of the pesticide in their blood had lower bone-mineral density than those with none. The head of population health for the Northern Rivers area... and [the] Southern Cross University in Lismore, said the research was the first to highlight the impact of DDT on human bone. The organochlorine pesticide was used widely in A[US], including as a cattledip, from the 1950s until the 1970s. Concerns about its environmental impact led to a ban in 1987... The... Southern Cross Institute of Health Research, said a majority of A[US]ns growing up in the 1950s and 1960s, whether rural or city dwellers, were exposed to DDT through diet... In the body, DDT metabolises into DDE, which is known to affect human hormones.

...The U[S] Government is poised to declare that dioxin, a toxin found... throughout the world's food supply, causes cancer. Dioxin became notorious when it was fingered as the toxic component in Agent Orange – the herbicide used... in the Vietnam War. It also caused the evacuation of Times Beach, Missouri, in 1983. The town was later bulldozed when... found to be contaminated with the chemical. In N[Z], the widely used 2,4,5-T herbicide attracted heated protests in the 1980s until Ivan Watkins-Dow stopped manufacturing it in New Plymouth in 1987... [- though]

difficulties in reaching a new dioxin limit set by the Government was one of the reasons for stopping production. Now, a draft report leaked to the *Washington Post* upgrades dioxin to a “human carcinogen,” but also concludes that health and environmental officials have done as good a job as possible to control it. Officials at the US Environmental Protection Agency, who have been reviewing dioxin for 10 years, confirmed the report. Dioxin has hormone-like effects on the human body, causing cancer, infertility and other sexual changes. Vietnam vet[s]... claim it... caused... cancer and birth defects in their children. The National Toxicology Programme and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences also tried to declare dioxin a human carcinogen in its report on cancer-causing substances released last week. However, a lawsuit by New York restaurant owners, who claim the link to cancer will scare away customers, has blocked its publication. The EPA report, due out next month, notes that emissions of dioxin have plummeted from peak levels in the 1970s but still pose a significant cancer threat to some people who ingest it – mostly in food, especially... of animal origin... [The] director of the National Toxicology Programme and author of some of the... report, said there was no avoiding dioxin. “Even penguins in Antarctica have dioxin in them,”... Over the past five years, the EPA has imposed regulations on major dioxin emitters, including municipal waste combustion units, medical or hazardous waste incinerators, cement kilns that burn hazardous waste, pulp and paper operations... Dioxin attaches, or binds, tightly to the AH receptor – a kind of cellular doorway found in virtually all cells in the body. Once there, it changes the function of hundreds of genes. “It can make them more, or less active,” said [the director, who]... hoped... his programme... [would] raise the status of dioxin to a known human carcinogen, mostly so Government agencies could be encouraged to monitor its effects on the population... [Incidentally,] Chinese eggs have been found with excessive amounts of the industrial chemical melamine that may be traced to fertiliser fed to chickens... China has been caught in a food safety scandal over dairy products tainted with melamine. More than 3600 children remain sick in China from contaminated milk, with three in a serious condition.

...Chinese police have arrested two brothers suspected of adding an industrial chemical to milk they sold to a company that produced infant formula that has killed two babies. The news came just hours after Fonterra[s] chief executive... said [it] was happy with the way the NZ dairy giant had acted over the crisis... “I can look myself in the mirror and say Fonterra acted absolutely responsibly in this one,”... Contaminated milk powder made by Chinese dairy company San Lu was publicly recalled last week. Dairy co-operative Fonterra – the world’s biggest dairy exporter – paid US\$107 million for 43[%] of San Lu [two years ago] and has three directors on the seven-member board. The two brothers... are accused of adding melamine, a chemical used in plastics, to the milk to make it appear higher in protein, the official Xinhua News Agency said... Melamine is rich in nitrogen, and standard tests for protein in food ingredients measure nitrogen levels. [Fonterra’s chief executive] said San Lu had rigorous testing procedures “but it’s impossible to totally exclude sabotage of a product”. [The chief executive] was frustrated with the handling of the situation by the Chinese authorities... The San Lu board was informed about the contamination, met officials and ordered a trade recall of infant formula on August 2, [the chief executive] said. However, it would have been irresponsible for Fonterra to have gone public that day... [NZ’s PM] yesterday said a full recall had earlier been blocked by Chinese local officials. [The PM said it] found out about the milk powder issue on September 5 and the N[Z] Government blew the whistle in Beijing. “I’m confident Fonterra wanted the product recalled from the beginning but could not get the local authorities in China to do that... Eventually, Fonterra quite properly came to the N[Z] Government.” The PM... did not believe the tragedy would damage the N[Z] national brand. “...there was a lesson from this for Fonterra and any Kiwi company looking to have joint ventures in anything which can have a product impacting on consumer safety...” ...San Lu has been reported to have received complaints in March and to have recalled products but not reported the problem to officials... Taiwan is the only export destination.

...Milk and dairy products sold in Asian supermarkets are being tested for melamine by the N[Z] Food Safety Authority. Food safety inspectors started taking random samples on Thursday night... after initially focusing on infant formula... But Asian supermarket customers are not taking any chances. A check with 10 customers at three Asian supermarkets in Auckland... found most are shunning milk and dairy products from China.

...[NZ] Government officials are helping Fonterra keep its directors in China safe as authorities there crack down on those involved in the tainted baby formula scandal. Four Chinese babies are dead, 158 have acute kidney failure and 6244 have kidney stones... Police have detained San Lu’s chair[perso]n... Meanwhile, new allegations have emerged, suggesting San Lu knew melamine was being added to its milk products more than three years ago... It also emerged yesterday that the melamine content in San Lu’s tainted milk powder was vastly higher than samples from other companies, prompting China’s Health Minister... to blame San Lu for the four deaths and the majority of the illnesses. Hundreds of parents have streamed into San Lu’s office, demanding refunds and worrying over what products they could safely give to their children.

...*Toxic trade* Fonterra’s business relationship with... the company at the centre of the tainted milk powder scandal in China, raises questions about the responsibility and involvement of international partners in the safety of the goods they sell... Farmer shareholders would expect N[Z]’s biggest multinational... to be acutely aware of the risks, with its global growth strategy heavily aligned to soaring demand for dairy products in Asia, South America, Africa and the Middle East. These emerging markets promise infinite rewards; but you enter at your peril. They tend to lack infrastructure needed to ensure robust quality assurances... Such markets may be fledgling and remote, but scandals related to product safety or quality quickly reverberate around the world and damage the brand – no matter how diluted... Fonterra’s subsidiary, San Lu, lied for eight months to hide complaints about its melamine-contaminated baby formula, an official Chinese investigation has found... [□ The health spokesperson for NZ’s] Green Party... is concerned that a Ministry of Health report, the Total Diet Survey, found high levels of mercury in some... battered fish... say[ing] the ministry has failed to point out the information to the public, which has a right to know that high levels of the cumulative toxins can be dangerous... [O]ne meal a week of larger fish such as shark (or lemon fish) could add up to too much, especially for pregnant [people] and infants. The larger the fish, the more mercury it is likely to have in its body... As for oyster lovers, the... [s]urvey found oysters from Bluff were over the cadmium limit because of high levels of naturally occurring cadmium in Foveaux Strait. Too much cadmium can damage kidneys and bones. “We don’t want to be alarmist,” said [the spokesperson] last night. “I mean, fish are very good nutritionally and so forth. But I think consumers have a right to know, and because information might be a bit alarming is no reason to conceal it.” The ministry disputes that the average N[Z]er should cut back to less than one meal of battered fish a week, and says only Bluff oyster “binge eaters” need be concerned about cadmium. [In response to the spokesperson’s comments], the ministry’s chief adviser of safety and regulation, said the report had been made public and had not concealed anything. [The adviser agreed pregnant people] and infants should not eat too much of the larger fish. “But when talking about a weekly visit to the fish and chip shop rather than having fish as a staple diet, the chance of getting to levels that are above the provisional tolerable intake – it’s just not possible.” [The adviser admitte]d some of the samples of fish tested did exceed the current N[Z] standard for mercury but there had been an ongoing debate about whether the level was set too low. A[US]’s level was twice that of N[Z]’s... “So that would mean all A[US]n fish and chips were unsafe, and that’s just not so.” ...Not all takeaways sell shark and other fish... high in mercury.

...LONDON – Too many Chinese takeaways can damage the eyesight, researchers claim... [S]cientists have found that eating large amounts of monosodium glutamate (MSG), used to flavour oriental and processed foods, injures the retina. Glutamate is an amino acid which acts as a neurotransmitter... Previous research has already shown that it causes nerve damage when injected directly into the eye. But the [latest] study... was the first to show eye damage can be caused by eating food containing MSG.

...Despite a massive increase in the availability of exotic and gourmet foods, nearly nine out of 10 British people admit to a penchant for a plate of chips. The findings come after a poll for National Chip Week, which starts today. However, vinegar and tomato sauce are often giving way to a generous helping of curry sauce or following the Belgian example, chips and mayonnaise. Fish and chips proved to be the top takeaway in Britain, selling in excess of 300 million meals a year, compared with 219 million Indian meals and 210 million Chinese takeaways.

...Fish and chips are still N[Z]'s number one fast food... Young people are leading the fast food trend. Outlets have become meeting places for young people... [However, as] young people become more concerned about animal issues, there is a growing number of vegetarians. Although no real research has been done there is thought to be about 70,000 vegetarians in N[Z].

...TOO many greens can make you blue – that's the finding of a study into the effects of a meat-free diet. Scientists have found vegetarians can suffer mood swings... and... depression... because their diet is too low in carbohydrates and protein. [Although – because most vegetarians are sensitive to the problems of others or the world at large, and they have to exist in societies which aren't based around their beliefs – it would seem to be obvious that they are more likely to be depressed than meat-eaters, t]he absence of those vital ['for large brains'] nutrients causes low levels of serotonin, an amino acid responsible for feelings of optimism and well-being. "I've seen a lot more cases of vegetarians who aren't getting adequate nutrition in the last five or 10 years than before," said [a]Christchurch dietitian... "But people who go on vegetarian diets for philosophical or religious reasons usually have a very healthy diet. Some studies have shown that vegetarians live longer and healthier. Seventh Day Adventists, for example, are known to be very healthy, although it's not known how much not drinking and smoking helps... [I]t's important to recognise most vegetarian diets are as healthy as people make them – just like a meat-eater's diet can be unhealthy if they eat badly..." Vegetarians are advised to eat plenty of carbo-rich foods like tofu, cereals, pasta and rice to boost serotonin levels... Scientists from England's York University also found many young [gals] take up vegetarianism to lose weight. Being vegetarian legitimised eating disorders by extending the range of foods to be avoided, they found. Parents need to be careful their children are not claiming to be vegetarian to mask bulimia or anorexia... ■ Vegan diet warning – [see page]A3...

How vegan diet can put babies in peril Many more children could be at risk from the diet deficiencies that led to Caleb Moorhead's death, says an Auckland paediatrician... [The] Starship children's hospital [paediatrician] said about 40 cases of B12 deficiency in babies had been described in medical literature but [it] believed there were likely to be many more. "This was an avoidable tragedy but there are many left unreported,"... said [the paediatrician, adding that t]he only source of B12 available to humans is in bacteria found in dead animals, such as meat. Humans store B12 in the liver but once someone is on a B12-deficient diet, the store begins to run out. Often people who switch to a vegan or vegetarian diet as adults have enough of the vitamin to last years, as many as 20. But a baby has only what it gets from its mother in the womb and a tiny amount from breastmilk. At 6 months of age, the baby's store needs replenishing... It was not always obvious that long-term damage to a child, such as lower intelligence, was because of a lack of B12. "The presentation of B12 deficiency can be quite subtle,"... [A] registered nutritionist in private practice in Auckland, said some vegans used injections to boost B12 levels[, adding that t]he only source of the vitamin in a non-animal protein diet was mushrooms. There are eight amino acids the human body does not produce but which it needs to stay healthy. Animal proteins contain all eight, and in the right proportions, but vegetable proteins contain only five to six and not always in the right quantities. "I mean, you really have to know what you are doing... To eat a proper vegan or even vegetarian diet is quite time-consuming..." A quick scan of the internet shows there is a wealth of information on vegetarian and vegan diets and societies. A US-based group called Physicians' Committee for Responsible Medicine says children of vegetarians and vegans should have a reliable source of vitamin B12 in their diet. Good sources include B12-fortified foods such as soy milk, breakfast cereal, meat analogues (a "meat" made up of usually high-protein non-animal foods such as nuts) and vitamin B12 supplements. An A[US]n website called Vegan Voice gives special advice to vegan parents of children and teenagers, suggesting they be given a multivitamin tablet daily and making sure it contains B12.

...Prophet's message cost baby his life The religious group at the centre of the Caleb Moorhead case follows the teachings of a 19th century... Seventh-Day Adventist prophet... who advocated natural healing and a strict vegan diet. The dozen members of the White Horse Ministry do not smoke, drink or take drugs and do not own televisions or believe in unisex clothes... Their first headquarters was the Dargaville home of... a grey-haired 55-year-old, who outlined her beliefs in an exclusive interview with the *Herald* yesterday. [The 55-year-old] follows a strict regime of eating twice a day and drinking water one hour before and two hours after each meal. [The 55-year-old – who also] refuses prescribed medicines, instead relying on natural remedies, and prays often... [-] is a close friend of... [the parents] whose 6-month-old son, Caleb, died after they refused to get him medical treatment for vitamin B12 deficiency brought on by his mother's vegan diet... The [parent]s are in custody awaiting sentencing after an Auckland jury this week found them guilty of [hu]manslaughter and failing to provide Caleb with the necessities of life. The couple took the boy out of Auckland's Starship hospital and went on the run in March last year. Two weeks later, Caleb was dead. The case ignited widespread concern among doctors. Developments include: ■ New calls for a formal body to arbitrate disputes between the parents of sick children and doctors. ■ Draft guidelines for Starship doctors facing similar situations. ■ The Starship seeking a legal opinion on whether staff could have physically stopped the [parent]s leaving – the view was that this case would not have met the legal criteria. [The 55-year-old], a lifelong Seventh-Day Adventist, told yesterday how [it] took up the "health message" six years ago after reading books by Ellen White... Like [Caleb's parents, the 55-year-old] shuns meat, dairy products and sugar... say[ing] the *Bible* teaches that [humanity] was to eat fruit, grains and nuts. "Later vegetables were added when [Adam] sinned... Sugar is poison, a killer." [The 55-year-old adds that] meat is only to be eaten in an emergency... [The 55-year-old] does not believe in drugs prescribed by doctors, saying they simply treat symptoms but do not cure people. [The 55-year-old] does not believe a vitamin B12 deficiency led to Caleb's death, and backs the [parents 100%] in their decision to refuse treatment... [The 55-year-old] formed... the White Horse Ministry... with six others in Dargaville... The group has now doubled in size and operates out of the Seventh-Day Adventist church in Dargaville... The Seventh-Day Adventist Church has distanced itself from the group, saying its lifestyle and beliefs are not in harmony with church teachings.

...On a sunny lawn, two young girls are tickling the tummy of a chubby puppy and giggling with delight. Laughter from [the girls aged]12... and ...10... has been rare since the death of their baby half-brother Caleb... Their dad... welcomes the happy sound as another sign that his daughters are moving on from the tragedy... When Caleb was born, the girls were thrilled to have a baby brother. "They talked about him all the time; they adored him... When [Caleb] died, they were devastated. [The elder sister] carried around a bag with one of his disposable nappies in it for a while... I think the girls feel responsible for his death as they helped with his treatment,"... The girls' mother... and her [new]husband... were jailed recently for five years for Caleb's [hu]manslaughter. Caleb had severe vitamin deficiency... A simple injection and supplements could have saved him. Deeply religious, [Caleb's parents]... believed modern medicine was evil and that God and herbs would cure their son. The couple went into hiding with Caleb... and [his two half-sisters] after concerns were raised about the baby... Now [Caleb's mother] has given birth to a baby girl, conceived while on bail awaiting trial... [Her ex-husband] has custody of his two traumatised daughters. The... transition from a deeply religious and restricted life has been tough on the two girls... "[Their mother] was home-schooling them but the education was all to do with Jesus and God... They were so far behind when we put them into school..." Interaction with people outside the church was limited. The... only books they were allowed were religious... "Everything was controlled and God took precedence, even over the children." The girls always wore long, dowdy dresses and hairbands. They were put on the "God's Plan" strictly vegan diet, which [their father] says they ate reluctantly... Once a month... the girls... visit [their mother in]... Auckland's Mt Eden Prison... "They put on their dresses and read their Bibles again..." [Their mother] also sends... letters full of religious verses. "In one [their mother] drew a big love heart with 'Caleb is waiting for you' written inside it... We've asked her to put in less about God and Satan and more of herself but [their mother] doesn't listen... To[o]... fanatical." ...Doctors checked the girls after the[ir mother and step-father's] arrests. They both had vitamin deficiencies. "They are much healthier now... The only vegan thing they still have is soya milk. They love schnitzel and sausages." ...● [A guy's 'irreversible blindness has been blamed on his strict vegetarian diet that including no supplements' ...

The other night] on *Holmes*... N[Z]'s greatest rugby player... [- who 'broke an arm during a test but didn't leave the field' and] has been named... as a distinguished companion of the N[Z] Order of Merit... [-] said the All Blacks should be eating more meat if they want to be consistently winning again... "Pinetree"... is right. Human beings are by their physiology predators. We have predator eyes in the front of our faces and canine teeth. Prey animals have their eyes at the sides of their heads so they can see all around and watch out for lions and eagles and the likes of us. Since the idea that eating a lot of carbohydrates became popular, the meat industry in N[Z] has caved in and it took our standard of living down with it from fourth in the world to bloody near the bottom third. The thing about carbohydrates is that they are simply sugars, chains of sugars that can keep a prey animal running all day. Since the western world embraced the carbohydrate fad, there has been an explosion of diabetes. It is no wonder. On top of that the world has become full of fat people who cannot understand why. They think they have no willpower to resist food when all it is they are addicted to sugar. This is easy to prove. If you eat a diet of quality meat and salads with a minimum of starchy carbs, you get lean very quickly and you get strong with only moderate exercise. Give the All Blacks more red meat. Honour them for the predators they ought to be.

...The secret to living to be 100 – and enjoying it – may not be pots of money and a personal trainer. It could be down to eating plenty of porridge... and nuts... Researchers at the University of Keto... measured the blood cholesterol levels of 75 centenarians against a group of people 40 years younger. The [subjects]... who had made it to 100 had much lower levels of LDL (or "bad") cholesterol than the younger subjects. But, equally, the healthier centenarians had higher levels of HDL (or "good") cholesterol than their weaker peers... "Good" cholesterol binds with a lipoprotein that takes cholesterol away from the tissues to the liver, which excretes it. "Bad" cholesterol goes the other way – from the liver to the cells... ['While it is a delicate matter to wrestle with the excessive formation of cholesterol internally, it is very easy to put a stop to excessive intake of cholesterol simply by eliminating certain foods from the diet. All foods containing animal fats should be avoided'.] Soluble fibre, found in oats, beans and pulses such as lentils, actively helps reduce levels of LDL cholesterol... But lowering levels of LDL cholesterol is only half the story. Maintaining levels of HDL cholesterol – which tend to drop naturally with advanced years – is equally important... All nuts, but particularly almonds, reduce harmful LDL and raise helpful HDL... Almonds and other nuts also contain chemicals similar to those in red wine, which act as antioxidants. They prevent the oxidation of the LDL, a process that results in the cholesterol being deposited in the walls of the blood vessels... leading to cardiovascular disease... Although nuts have a high fat content, they are high in mono-unsaturated fatty acids, which are... good... as long as you do not gorge on them.

...Slow down and make a meal of it... Many people have problems because they eat too quickly and in a manner that stops them gleaming the maximum benefit from food. More often than not, meal times are rushed. A croissant is bought while running for the bus; a sandwich is devoured at the desk. The most likely evening scenarios are a TV dinner or bowl of pasta downed before crashing into bed. Society seems to collude in encouraging such unhealthy eating patterns. Schools urge their pupils to eat lunch in 10 minutes flat and long working hours force people to ignore hunger pains to the point of having to eat immediately after arriving home at the end of a punishing day. All in all, eating has become a joyless procedure that people tend [not] to... savour. Changing how you eat is not an easy task. It is like learning to ride a bike: you will get the hang of it for a few seconds and then you will fall off, discouraging you from trying again. But if you are determined to conquer bad eating habits, you will reap immeasurable rewards. As soon as you start eating in a way that assists your body in knowing when it has had enough, and also helps it to digest food efficiently, then the final part of the puzzle – eating health-giving foods – will slot smoothly into place. If you eat well in the basic sense – that is, chew food properly and in a manner that aids digestion – nutrients will be released to begin to work on improving your general wellbeing.

...NITROUS oxide canisters... are being pushed by dodgy dairy owners as legal hits of laughing gas. "Enjoy the quick harmless revelations and feeling of spontaneous laughter," says an advertisement being circulated around Auckland stores. The flyer says the tiny gas canisters... – designed to fit in whipped-cream pumps [and sold] for \$1... – ...are "on everyone's lips", and promises they will make "extra money for your business"... [But k]ids who inhale the gas... risk brain and lung damage. Overseas users have died from head injuries after collapsing while inhaling the gas.

...His weapon concealed under his jacket, the young assailant eyed his target: [that being the person who was] about to make his swansong as managing director of the... [IMF. The assailant] pushed through... a phalanx of bodyguards... until [the assailant] was at point-blank range, reached for his weapon and let rip... SPLAT! [The target] reeled. His face was a mess – of whipped cream, chocolate and fruit sauce. There was a stunned silence, broken only by the sound of camera shutters as they recorded the humiliation. The commandos of Pastry International had done it again: another... emblem of greed and pomposity had got what [it] deserved. The head of these pie-throwing protesters is... the French-speaking world's wackiest prankster. An anarchist, occasional writer and film-maker, the 53-year-old Belgian has been flinging the flan for more than 30 years at celebrities, business[people] and politicians whom [the Belgian] considers stuck-up or vacuous... The greatest coup of [his] career was the pie attack on [the head of Microsoft] in April... "It took 32 people to take [on the world's richest entrepreneur," says the Belgian,] explaining with pride how a mole within Microsoft with no liking for his boss tipped off the pie[-throwers about his boss's movements. The Belgian] and his co-conspirators lurked on the streets, carrying tarts in camera bags under their clothes, until [the target] came into sight. [The Belgian]'s favourite target, though, is [a] French "new philosopher"... famous for writing grandiose tracts with such titles as *The Testament of God* and *The Last Days of Baudelaire*, for flaunting Sixties-style long hair and a hairy chest unbuttoned to the navel... [The new philosopher] has been pied five times in 11 years.

...The phrase "socialite and ecologist" first found its way on to the front pages of newspapers a month ago when... [a] grandmother of two... [and] full-time eco-warrior... [- who was] christened... after the ancient queen of Carthage... [and whose] family gave its name to one of the most exclusive squares in Mayfair... – ...threw a chocolate eclair into the face of [the] British Agriculture Secretary... in full view of the British media. The point, apparently, was to help the British countryside and British farmers, but the message was rather obscured by the pre-pie photographs of her modelling, in various seductive poses, in the papers the following day... [The grandmother] is no mere posh eccentric[, but] is part of a new wave of aristocrats championing environmental causes – and going out of their way to be seen doing it... [Eco-grannie] is now using her sudden fame to publicise a Website... set... up to promote environmental issues... Part-American, part-German and independently wealthy ("I have a portfolio of technology stocks")[, one]... of her connections is [the] heiress... of... the billion-pound Vestey food empire. [The heiress], who recently posed nude – apart from some strategically placed body paint – in *Tatler* to promote animal welfare, is a living stereotype of the upper-class Sloane Ranger... [Although the heiress] and her brother... are part of a family that made its fortune in the meat business[, the heiress] is an avowed vegetarian, and [her] brother is standing trial for his involvement in last June's Carnival Against Capitalism in London, which ended with £2 million... of damage being done. [The heiress] insists that people with trust funds make natural environmentalists. "If you're a trustafarian, you have more time and money to find out what is going on. If you're on the work treadmill, who has time to read *Ecologist* magazine? People like me should be applauded for using their time well." Indeed, the last remaining practical problem for eco-toffs has been overcome. "You can now get organic champagne... It's rather good." Establishment interest in the environment goes back at least to medieval times, when monarchs preserved huge swathes of countryside so they could go hunting. The Queen is patron of the Council for the Protection of Rural England, the Duke of Edinburgh is patron of the World Wide Fund for Nature and [their eldest son] grows organic crops. In the more recent tradition of aristo-radicals, the old Etonian Second Baronet of Hampstead... is director of Friends of the Earth and the Marchioness of Worcester... is a trustee of Friends of the Earth[as well as being the] associate director of the International Society for Ecology and Culture. The most influential of the radical eco-toffs is the old Etonian Fourth Baron Mond, great-grandson of the founder of ICI, one of the UK's most polluting companies. [The Fourth Baron Mond] is now executive-director of Greenpeace, and recently gained headlines for being arrested while trampling on a field of G[E] crops.

...Three activists convicted of battery for creaming San Francisco[']s Mayor... with cherry, pumpkin and tofu pies last year have been sentenced for six months' jail. [The]Judge... levied the maximum sentence for a misdemeanour after the pie-tossers declined probation. The trio were members of the Biotic Baking Brigade, which seeks to make political points by hurling pastries at the prominent... [In local news, t]he avocado industry is being hit by well-organised raiders who are stripping fruit for sale on the black market... Some orchardists have taken to staking out their properties at night, using cellphones to call in neighbours. They warn they may arm themselves. Police have... warned against [orchardist]s confronting the raiders. They should report suspicious behaviour and vehicles... [The person] who chairs the Avocado Growers' Association... has another warning: ...people buying cheap avocados from unknown sources risked being poisoned because the raiders "flogging and flicking them off" would not know if the fruit had been sprayed with insecticide the day before... The avocado gangs disguise their raids by leaving the end trees in rows fully laden so that the missing fruit is not noticed immediately. Police and the growers believe the avocados, which fetch from \$1.50 to \$3 in supermarkets, are being sold cheaply in markets around Auckland... A[n] thenree orchardist... who had a quarter of this season's avocado harvest stripped, said yesterday: "I would do just about anything to stop these people intruding on our livelihood. It's sickening. I can see how farmers and horticulturists would very well take the law into their own hands." ...Fruit worth tens of thousands of dollars has been taken in some raids in the western Bay of Plenty, home to 60[%] of the country's 1000 growers in the \$40 million export industry.

...Several Bay of Plenty kiwifruit growers are upsetting neighbours by burning tyres and diesel in a desperate bid to protect crops from frost. Environment Bay of Plenty took four complaints about thick black smoke coming from kiwifruit orchards last Tuesday... No action had been taken because the complaints were made the next day, when no evidence remained... [A council spokesperson] said staff felt sympathy for growers who had suffered three harsh spring frosts in four weeks. If frost hit a crop when the buds had burst, the grower was likely to lose a lot of kiwifruit... But burning tyres released toxic contaminants... said[the spokesperson, who]... understood growers burned tyres when warmer air was too high for helicopters to effectively push it down on to vines. The maximum nuisance-fire fine was only \$300, and burning tyres was cheaper than paying \$3000 in helicopter hire or up to \$100,000 for frost fans or an overhead sprinkler system. Kiwifruit Growers Incorporated... said if orchardists had burned tyres, it would be out of sheer frustration. "It's their livelihood sitting on the vine and it means no income next year [if the crop is damaged]."

...Losses are mounting in the powerhouse rural sector from an almost unprecedented run of cold, frosts, hail storms and drought. Earlier in the month, the M[AF] predicted nationwide production would be down across a range of agricultural and horticultural sectors by between 2 and 5[%]. But sector policy analyst[s]... now believed the drop in production would be at least 5[%] – a figure which will mean millions of dollars lost to the national economy. Marlborough grapegrowers were the latest to be hit by frost, only last Monday. One grower expected up to 20[%] of the prime growing region's grapes could be wiped out by the season's frosts... some vineyards have been totally wiped out... The true picture would be clearer after flowering over the next month. The wait and see story is the same in Hawkes Bay, where it is feared frosts have destroyed up to 70[%] of the chardonnay crop – the region's most important grape variety... Tales of weather woe are coming in from all over the country, and from virtually every type of farming. Kiwifruit growers from Auckland to Nelson have suffered either from hail or from frosts, possibly to the tune of \$50 million. Marketer Zespri said crop assessors had yet to report and even then the full cost would not be known until next year's harvest. In Hawkes Bay, [the]Fruitgrowers' Association pipfruit sector chair[perso]n said last month's frosts could cut \$48 million from the incomes of the region's pipfruit growers. At least 30[%] of the Braeburn crop of almost one million cartons was knocked off the trees by three hard frosts and up to 20[%] more could be damaged but still on the trees. Damage to the other apple varieties was between 15 and 25[%] and the Bay's average harvest of eight million cartons would be cut by two million. Nationwide, MAF estimated the expected apple crop of around 10 million cartons could be cut by 12[%]. In the Waikato, the main growing region for asparagus and blueberries, crops have been knocked by frosts and slowed by cold temperatures... Otago's spring has been labelled the worst in 30 years. Snow, freezing winds and persistent rain killed more than 750,000 lambs, stripped stock of condition and slowed grass growth... The cold was right across the country and no area had the feed to take on the stock to be fattened... Marlborough farmers were responding well to drought and many had destocked early. There was no move yet for a drought relief committee to be set up and in the past two weeks some of the driest areas had up to 50mm of rain... But... Marlborough farms needed a lot more rain, and that isn't being forecast... "The ground water is now critically low and there are no indications of any end to the dry spell,"... said... [a] MetService weather presentation specialist... The rain that had fallen would produce pasture growth but a strong, cold southerly wind had been quickly drying off moisture. ■ ...A[US]'s once-mighty agricultural industries are a shadow of their 20th century forebears, crippled by vast paddocks of salt or stripped of their soil. The continent's rivers are seriously, if not terminally, ill. The cost of just staying alive is fearsome. The nation's foreign earnings have been clamped by falling farm exports; the proportion of national income devoured by the need to preserve the remaining reserves of water and productive land is fearsome and rising. An apocalyptic fantasy? For the moment, perhaps. But this scenario for 2050 has been drawn from the projections of A[US]'s leading researchers, many now written into Government policy. This week a national summit of political, industry and community leaders, chaired by [the acting P]M... met in the Victorian city of Mildura to save the quality of the nation's soil and water. Along the endless banks of the Murray River, the heart of a system that nurtures most of eastern A[US], communities are being asked, in effect, to reduce their standards of living by pumping water back into a dying artery. The suburbs of Melbourne and Sydney will soon face similar decisions. Authorities are considering plans to increase the cost of water – with permanent summer hikes – to write water-saving systems and appliances into building codes, and to introduce national efficiency standards for everything from shower heads to dishwashers. Last week their message could not be ignored. Driven by searing northerly winds, a wall of red dust reaching 400km from Mt Isa in Queensland down through N[SW] to southern Victoria, billowed across A[US]'s largest cities and towns, cloaking homes, cars and businesses in a film of ochre and turning backyard swimming pools into mudholes. This was prime agricultural land blowing in the wind. At least 7 million tonnes of irreplaceable topsoil was whipped out to sea: some of it, similar dust storms have previously shown, will cross the Tasman and tinge the snow of the Southern Alps. The immediate cost will be enormous. After a smaller storm blanketed Melbourne two decades ago, blowing 2 million tonnes of farmland into the Southern Ocean, the federal science agency CSIRO estimated the cost of replacing lost nutrients at A\$4 million... The long-term cost to productivity is infinitely higher. Twenty years ago Queensland scientists calculated that if nothing changed, the soil of the state's grainbelt had a lifespan of 100 years: 60 of those years had already passed. Environmental audits since then have shown that soil erosion is as severe as ever... Time is running out for a dying continent. A[US] is only starting to come to terms with the reality that it is the driest inhabited continent on the planet – one third is arid, another third semi-arid – and has fewer rivers and less run-off than any other continent except Antarctica. Its soils are among the world's most deficient in nutrients, with less than 10[%] of its mass wrapped in land capable of sustaining intensive agriculture or dense vegetation. The enormous groundwater reserve of the Great Artesian Basin, which extends beneath one-quarter of the continent, is being drained much faster than it can replenish. State and federal government, while rapidly facing the inevitability of action, continue to wrangle over questions of jurisdiction and cost. "The national ability to manage the environment is continually hamstrung by structural problems between different areas of government," the federal Government's state of the environment report says. Environmental demands are gaining priority, but economics are still frequently more important to policymakers. Land clearing continues at an alarming rate: 687,000ha of native bushland vanishes every year, more than Mexico and rapidly gaining on Brazil, Indonesia, Zambia and Sudan, the world's worst land clearers. Cities, especially Sydney, Melbourne and the Brisbane-Gold Coast-Sunshine Coast triangle – devour land and resources at a frightening pace. The consequences are tragically clear... Water, wind, land clearing and agriculture are... casting A[US]'s future to the wind, burying roads, rail lines, and fences, and choking its

waterways. Every year, between 2 and 20 tonnes of soil are stripped from every hectare of farmland on the continent – and with every resulting fall in productivity, the pressure on the remaining soil increases. A[US], finally, is starting to tackle its mountain of environmental problems... It will be a long process, says... the A[US]n Conservation Foundation, but at last the first step has been taken. For a continent in peril, there is no other option... The nation's biggest cities have become virtual islands in which water is the single most valuable commodity and where declining national wealth is further distancing the handful of rich from the increasing mass of poor. The gracious metropolis of Adelaide is gasping, its water undrinkable for most of the year.

...[‘Quite simply there’s nothing better than water for your body.’ ‘Water – which accounts for 65% of an adult’s weight – is the only natural beverage, and only our species can claim to appease thirst with any other liquid.’ *This week’s question: Why is carbonated water more thirst-quenching than ordinary tap water? Answer: Reaching for that ice-cold refreshing can of soda on a sweltering hot day – as everyone seems to do on the TV ads – is more of a fraud than thirst quenching... The fizziness... does little to actually meet your thirst needs... Not only are... soda[s]... high in sugar, they can leave the stomach feeling bloated and unreceptive to further drinking – remember we all need at least eight glasses of water a day to be healthy.*

...*Researcher pours cold water on fad* The only benefit from drinking eight full glasses of water a day may come from running to the bathroom... Newspaper articles, health and beauty magazines all advise drinking at least eight full glasses of water a day for optimal health. But... 10 months of research found no scientific evidence to back up this advice, which has helped create a huge demand for bottled water... The Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council has recommended drinking about one millilitre of water for each calorie of food eaten. This adds up to 2 litres, on an average 2000-calorie diet. But the council also noted that much of this is already contained in food. “I did 43 years of research on the osmoregulatory system. That system is so precise and so fast that I find it impossible to believe that evolution left us with a chronic water deficit.”... said[the person who headed the research at]... Dartmouth Medical School in New Hampshire... If a person gets low on fluid, the body compensates by bringing fluid back out of the kidneys and by slowing the loss of water through the skin... Thirst kicks in long before dehydration starts. [The head] and colleagues became concerned after seeing dozens of... articles urging people to sip water all day... [The head] hopes people will be relieved of the guilt of not getting enough water, and of the expense of buying bottled water... Overdosing on water can lead to confusion and even death.

...The health fad for drinking filtered and bottled water is raising... concerns that a generation of young people are doing serious damage to their teeth. Leading dentists fear that an increasing number of children and teenagers are inadvertently cutting fluoride from their diet by replacing tap water with bottled and filtered varieties. There is also concern that constant sipping of sports drinks is causing an “acid attack” on... teeth... Research shows an approximate 20[%] increase in the worldwide consumption of bottled water, with sales reaching more than \$4 billion a year in the U[S]. Bottled water contains a maximum of just 0.1 part of fluoride per million, compared to N[Z] tap water, which is usually about 0.7 per million.

...Dentists... say anecdotal evidence suggests a big rise in children with significant tooth decay, who come from homes where water filters are used... But Just Water, a company that supplies 25,000 water coolers and filters to businesses and schools, says the dentists’ comments on fluoride removal are misleading... “Filters remove chlorine, taste and any impurities from the water, but not fluoride.” It was wrong to put filtered water in the same category as bottled, which often had fluoride removed... Distillers, which purified water by steaming it, also extracted everything, including fluoride... Pure Water N[Z]’s managing director... said there was no conclusive proof that fluoride protected teeth against cavities... [By the way, a]nts, crickets and scorpions, baked, coated in chocolate and promoted as a high-protein snack, are proving popular among peckish Londoners... “They are very... low in fat,” says... [the person] who... has sold 5000 chocolate-coated bugs... for about £3 [each] at upmarket London stores... [The entrepreneur] trained as a chef in Louisiana and acquired a taste for cooked insects while travelling in Asia and Central America...

If you’re hungry enough you’ll eat anything, and even the barest cell can be a larder for the starving con... Last year, two Russian prisoners in Siberia cooked and ate a fellow con. The pair strangled the 23-year-old and kebaped body parts over a fire made from an old blanket[‘cannibalism isn’t illegal in Germany, where a citizen used the Internet to find someone to eat’]... In many cultures, insects are delicacies and form an important part of the diet. They apparently taste similar to seafood or nuts. Grasshoppers, ants, termites, beetles and stingless bees are all fine sources of natural sugars; while grubs, worms and moths are rich in protein. In a stroke of pure desperate genius during [WW2], Allied prisoners of the Japanese buried dead cockroaches, left them for a month then dug them up and used the decomposed, salty paste to season bland bowls of rice...

Rice is nice. And a Mt Albert scientist believes the dietary staple could be a money-spinner for [NZ producers. The guy who] worked as a rice scientist in Bangladesh for... 20 years, before emigrating to N[Z] in 1995... says the popular dinner dish has been over-looked by [local food] scientists, who say the grain doesn’t grow well in N[Z] terrain. But... there are... 80,000 varieties of rice, some of which suit [NZ conditions. The guy] is experimenting with a long grain rice called IR50. Results from early experiments show good growth, but when [it] discussed his project with Auckland University they were not interested... “N[Z] imports its rice from A[US] and Thailand. Our researchers and growers are missing out on a great opportunity.” However, the unemployed [rice scientist] is not giving up and wants to approach Hortresearch in Mt Albert with his theory.

...The battle over who controls the world’s food supplies has escalated dramatically, with the Indian Government launching a legal challenge in the U[S] against a... company... granted a patent on the world-renowned basmati rice. It is thought to be the first time a... developing country has challenged an attempt by a US company to patent and thus control the production of staple food and crops in what campaigners dub the rush for green gold. Basmati rice, sought-after for its fragrant taste, was developed by Indian farmers over hundreds of years, but the Texan company RiceTec obtained a patent for a cross-breed with American long-grain rice. RiceTec was granted the patent on the basis of aroma, elongation of the grain on cooking and chalkiness. However, the Indian Government has filed 50,000 pages of scientific evidence to the US Patents and Trademarks Office, insisting that most high-quality basmati varieties already possess these characteristics. The office accepted the petition and will re-examine its legitimacy. The patent, granted only in the US, gives RiceTec control over basmati rice production in North America. Farmers have to pay a fee to grow the rice and are not allowed to plant the seeds to grow the following year’s crops. India fears the patent will severely damage exports from its own farmers to the US. In 1998, they exported almost 600,000 tonnes of basmati rice. India has also objected to RiceTec calling the rice basmati, insisting the name should be used only for rice grown in the Basmati region of India. [● ‘Originating in India and China, rice was introduced first of all into Egypt, then Greece, where it was already highly prized at the time of Theophrastus. Its popularity spread to Portugal, then Italy and America. In France Cardinal Fleury’s first attempts to grow it in Auvergne were not a success. Today French rice is of good quality, though there isn’t enough of it to satisfy the demands of the home market. Rice requires a great deal of heat and humidity to grow well.’ Rice is ‘a kind of grass (*Oryza sativa*) grown in marshes’]...

Growing plants without soil When I was a child I visited a horticulturally inclined cousin and was given a guided tour of his extensive glass houses... In the early 70s, [my cuz] was a horticulturalist pioneer, and had what I believe was one of the first commercial operations in N[Z] to experiment with growing crops hydroponically. At the time of my visit [my cuz] was full of enthusiasm for his new venture, and we were all rather blown away by the automated systems for circulating the nutrients to the crops and testing and replenishing the nutrient solution. I remember being amazed at the fact that tomatoes could grow in what appeared to be water with no soil and still produce crops that were prolific... This new technology has continued to fascinate me and I was intrigued to visit an uncle last summer and see that [it] had a very successful hydroponic unit installed in a small glass house in his backyard. With a simple mostly homemade system [uncle] was producing all the tomatoes that his family

could eat and... made it all seem very simple. Hydroponics is not a new system and in fact the principle of growing plants without soil goes back to the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. The Aztec Indians also produced crops in floating gardens or rafts moored in shallow lakes. The western world... didn't start to experiment with the concept until 1699 when a scientist named Woodward... gr[e]w plants in a solution of water with a small amount of soil added. The research was developed no further until the 19th century when several scientists began to study plant nutrients and growing plants in nutrient solutions without using soil. Research continued into the 20th century and by 1925 horticulturalists were beginning to apply the research to glasshouse crops. In 1930 the first commercial unit was established and from there on the industry has never looked back. American troops even used hydroponics to grow vegetable crops in the Pacific during W[2]. In the 1970's a new break-through called NFT... resulted in hydroponics becoming a viable way to grow a wide range of crops commercially... This system uses a covered light-proof channel with the plants growing through holes in the cover into a shallow nutrient solution... circulated over the roots of the plant by a pump that pumps the solution from a central holding tank via a system of pipes and channels... Air must also be bubbled into the water in one of a variety of ways or the plants will not remain healthy. Because the correct nutrients are always available to the plant it does not need to put a lot of energy into growing an extensive root system and can devote more energy to producing fruit or leaves. Growing plants using a hydroponic system has many advantages over growing plants in soil. Plants usually grow faster, crop earlier, and need no weeding and feeding, cultivating or watering. Plants can also be grown successfully even when you have terrible soil or live in an apartment with no access to soil at all. In fact using artificial lights you can produce your own vegetables totally indoors... There are many commercial hydroponic units in N[Z] producing everything from tomatoes to strawberries.

...Many rural blocks cut up for horticulture failed but... times are changing... Telegraph cucumber is the star performer of the... glasshouse at Dairy Flat but in a hundred other factory plant-growing operations in Rodney and Franklin districts it could be tomatoes, beans or flowers. [The Dairy Flat farmers] bought 2ha in the Rodney greenbelt 20 minutes from downtown Auckland. They planted an ornamental garden for 1ha around their new home and on the rest set up a sparkling 2800 sq m glasshouse and a water supply pond. They believed they could make a living from that area, although people with 10 times as much grass would find it a struggle. "We wanted something large enough to be a business but small enough not to need staff," says... [the] former manager of research and development for Turners and Growers. The modern, European-designed glasshouse keeps their dream alive. Similar modern glasshouses... are sprouting all over the greenbelt surrounding Auckland. The highly intensive farming shows that a buck can still be made on rural land near the city – providing you have the upfront capital to invest. The [Dairy Flat farmers] harvest 11 months a year for a steady Auckland market. Cucumbers grow hydroponically... in radiata sawdust, which receives plant food and moisture controlled by a computer programme. The glasshouse ventilation and heating systems are also automatically controlled. Like others, their glasshouse is ranked squeaky clean for environmental friendliness by Greenpeace and the Rodney District Council. Rainwater... collected from the glasshouse's ample roof... is... stored in the dam... The glasshouse does not discharge wastewater into streams because water is filtered and reused. Sawdust is changed between plantings and used as a mulch on the shrubbery. Plant pests are controlled by predators instead of nasty chemical sprays. C[O₂] gas is recirculated in the glasshouse for the plants to use. Rodney's deputy mayor... says the council is excited about the boost that glasshouses, with their year-round jobs, are bringing to areas starved of industry. A 9ha glasshouse has been built near Helensville for NZ Gourmet Ltd – an export capsicum joint venture with a Dutch company. Such developments are heartening... after the disappointment when scores of horticulture blocks created 10 to 12 years ago never came to anything. Warkworth also has a Dutch joint venture growing capsicums in a new 2.5ha glasshouse. The operation is run by... [a company that] also has a 1ha glasshouse at Pt Wells. Both sites will employ 22 people year round. Glasshouses were not unanimously welcomed by lifestyle residents during discussions on what was fit for the "countryside living" zone of the proposed Rodney District Plan. [The p]lanning policy manager... says there were concerns that a neighbouring glasshouse would produce noise from automatic vents and fans, reflect sunlight and look like acres of factories. But the council decided to allow glasshouses as part of rural production in the lifestyle block area where sites can be smaller than 2ha, but only on condition they covered less than 10[%] of the section.

It is common for science-fiction cities to be completely enclosed by glass domes (or other forms of glass structure). Although these structures are useful for protecting a city from rain, snow and wind, the occasional benefits hardly seem to justify the effort (i.e., use of labour and material resources) that would be required to construct them – and will they withstand violent storms? However, although 'vegetables or fruits cultivated under glass have less flavour than plants grown in the open air', the benefits gained by constructing glasshouses to produce food justifies the effort of doing so.

The most obvious benefits are that crops grown in glasshouses don't suffer damage caused by pests, snow (assuming that glasshouse roofs are capable of eliminating snow – e.g., by heat – before it gets too heavy), frost, winds, hail or heavy rain (if well-designed, it should even be possible to protect crops from floodwaters in the middle of a floodplain); and – by using artificial sunlight – crops can be grown out of season (the energy expended generating artificial sunlight is offset by saving energy on refrigerating out-of-season crops or transporting them half-way round the world). A less obvious benefit is that top-soil won't blow or wash away. Glasshouses also enable GE crops to be grown safely (i.e., without threatening other crops or wild plant and animal species growing outside a glasshouse) – assuming all necessary precautions are applied thoroughly. However, if animal pests can be controlled via a closed environment (or semi-closed – i.e., if the glasshouse has windows or vents, because 'ventilation is an important factor', although fans and pumps can be used to aid air ventilation – in which case netting can be utilised to prevent birds and unwanted insects from gaining access to the crops; glasshouses might enable much of Africa's 10 million hectares of unusable fertile land – r:p2035, ln26 – to become usable), and specialised technology or increased labour utilised to control unwanted plants, the justification for using GE crops would be severely diminished if not completely removed (at least there ought to be no excuse for mixing the genes of animals and plants, but plant genes could continue to be mixed if doing so can improve the nutritional content of a crop or remove unwanted items such as pips – especially if used in conjunction with cloning [by the way, America's 'FDA has tentatively concluded that milk and meat from cloned animals are safe to consume'], which has the added advantage of eliminating the need to set aside land for seed production; increase the yield; decrease the harvest cycle or amount of physical attention, fertilising or watering that a crop needs; make a crop more suitable to being grown inside a glasshouse – r:p2055, ln2 + ln42 above). Other advantages of glasshouses are that any sprays used will remain contained within their walls (i.e., no spray-drift), and it is easier to manage the amount of water crops receive (plus the times when they receive water) – as well as carbon dioxide levels.

Specialised technology or increased labour should mean that organic farming practices can be applied universally (in addition, knowledge of which crops – or which strains of a particular crop – best suit particular soil types ought to be utilised; where soil is unsuitable to grow any crops, or unavailable, methods such as hydroponics could be adopted – perhaps utilising each floor of a multi-storey building; where water is scarce or unavailable, 'dry farming' – the cultivation of arid or semi-arid land without help of irrigation – could be utilised), and might also render insect pollinators obsolete (it may eventually be possible to perfectly replicate the action of insect pollinators mechanically – be it with 'hormone sprays and hand-held mechanical vibrators', music or robotics – or simply by using many hands; such methods of pollination could mean that, for example, all of a tree's fruit are able to be harvested on the same day – or, if pollination is staggered, a percentage of its fruit will be ready for harvesting one day, some more a week later than again the following week, and so on, thereby eliminating the need to check each tree every day for fruit that is ready to be picked). Obviously, crops grown inside glasshouses can still be pollinated naturally – and if natural pollinators are released inside a glasshouse, not only are they protected from predators, but the crops and by-products are protected from contamination by unwanted pollen – i.e., pollen from plants other than the designated crop).

As much as possible of a district's food ought to be grown inside glasshouses (the larger the better – although certain crops may suit smaller units) in order to maximise the district's year-round self-sufficiency in food production (i.e., eventually, most of the arable land surrounding each city should be

enclosed in glass – or a plastic substitute; if each district is able to construct a few suitably sized and equipped glasshouses per year, most of the arable land could be covered within a century – and if the materials they are built out of are designed to last a long time, the requirement to replace them will be decreased). Obviously, some land can be unsuitable for glasshouses – ‘about two-thirds of NZ’s 21.2 million ha of farmland is too undulating or hilly’ (although different designs – e.g., ‘tunnel houses’, the long, thin glasshouses currently used for crops such as herbs; or netting – might partly or completely solve that problem), and there is no need to cover grassland used to produce meat and other animal-based food products (it is estimated that ‘53% of NZ’s total land area is used for pasture and only 2% for crops’; of the ‘342,416 hectares contained within the Auckland Regional Council’s jurisdiction – divided among 7,351 farms as at June 30, 1993 – 9,109 were used for horticulture, 34,251 for plantations of exotic timber and 252,116 for grazing; the corresponding figures for the 2,018,502 and 981,128 hectares contained within the neighbouring regions of Waikato and Northland were 8,686, 412,341, 1,322,289, and 5,501, 131,613, 679,962’ respectively; note that although it is preferable for districts to be self-sufficient, there may be instances where it makes sense to continue trading certain food products – e.g., using Canterbury’s plains to produce cereal crops for neighbouring districts, which would supply Christchurch with a different food product, or non-food product, in return). However, the requirement for *meat and other animal-based food products* is likely to decrease in future as more people learn that such production is wasteful, unnecessary and even unhealthy. Indeed, although humans are defined as being OMNIVORES, only HBs consume animal products or exploit animals in other ways as a matter of choice (a human only consumes animal products if it is threatened with starvation and nothing else is available, or if it has allergies – or unusual genetic attributes – that prevent it from adopting a vegan diet even when bolstered with supplementary pills)!

The word ‘vegan’ was coined in 1945 by the newly formed Vegan Society to describe those who avoid animal products for food, clothing and other consumer goods... Vegans do not imagine that their food bypasses every possibility of death and suffering for the animal kingdom. The grain fields needed for the bread we eat rob many animals of their natural habitats and mean that many more are killed as pests. It is not necessarily compassion for animals alone which leads people to veganism. But veganism is about having a consistent approach to human... and animal rights, ecology and world food problems... Veganism is not about cats’ homes and being kind to furry animals, about living in cloud cuckoo-land... It is a very important subject indeed, since each of us is responsible through what we consume for the management of the Earth’s resources, and ultimately for peaceful coexistence with others on the planet... The threat of destruction of the world through atomic fission hovers over us and we fear for our children’s future, yet millions are already watching their children starve to death in conditions similar to a post-holocaust famine. Despite the fact that the world production of wheat alone is 1 kg. per day per person alive (according to a recent Oxfam hand-out), twelve to 13 million children die each year through malnutrition; that is the equivalent of a Hiroshima every three days... It is the over-consumption of meat, eggs and dairy products in the West that underlies the inequitable distribution of the world’s food resources... But colossal vested interests on the one hand, and blinkered table habits on the other, encourages us to continue in ignorance of the fact... that... [animal] products are not even necessary in any proportion in our diet... At the moment, the economics of our country is geared to meat production whether we like it or not, and we are all paying for it through taxation... That meat is a wasteful way of producing food protein is beyond doubt. Weight for weight, there is only about a 10[%] conversion rate from plant to animal protein (less if you count how much of the product is unusable or wasted) which means that it takes an awful lot of plant material to produce a certain amount of steak, eggs or milk... For instance, using body weight as a measure, one study has shown that it would take ten kilos of fish to make a person gain one kilo in weight. The fish would have consumed 100 kilos of shrimp and worms, and the shrimp and worms 1,000 kilos of plankton. So one kilo of the person’s body weight represents one tonne of matter two steps further down the food chain! ...using land as a measure of efficiency, cereals produce five times as much protein as meat, peas and beans ten times more and spinach twenty-six times more... Another estimate has shown that soya beans can produce 260 kg. of protein per acre, lucerne 675 kg. per acre and prime grade beef only 49 kg. per acre... So it takes approximately five times as much land to feed a meat-eater as it does a vegetarian. Now, if you have a limited amount of land, and a growing number of people, you would naturally use that land in the most efficient way in order to feed the people – unless you deliberately intended some of them to starve. In terms of our farming industry’s efficiency, there is also to be considered the cost in energy of shipping animal feed halfway around the world and of running the intensive units which comprise the majority of modern-day farms... In 1983 the EEC imported 14 million tonnes of grain just to feed animals. Britain alone imports 4 million of the 14 million tonnes... Yet 92[%] of farmland in the UK is already devoted to feeding livestock... [The] *British Medical Journal*, July 1977... [stated that:] ‘Food imports are, in fact, unnecessary. Our farm land is productive enough to support 250 million people on a vegetarian diet.’ ...Despite the absurdities of Western food production, there are still many who think that modern developments are our main hope for feeding our huge populations. Factory farming, for instance, was hailed as a necessary evil which was to alleviate food shortages by confining farming operations into a smaller space. But confined animals take an even higher proportion of their food from good arable land than do animals which roam in the fields... But surely, you may say, we can still have milk and other dairy produce, since cows produce it so abundantly it must make good sense for us to drink it. Unfortunately... a... cow gives as milk only about one-tenth of the protein [it] eats, and the modern dairy industry involves an extremely artificial and intensive use of resources. Partly by genetic manipulation, and partly by feeding hormone stimulants and food concentrates, the annual production of a typical cow has been increased from 1,500 litres of milk in 1950 to over 5,000 litres in 1983... The methods of modern dairy farming are a very expensive way of producing a European surplus of one million tonnes of skimmed milk and a butter mountain which costs us £500,000 per day to store... In any case, the dairy industry is really part and parcel of the beef industry, with 80[%] of beef now sold being a by-product of dairy farms. The calf which each cow has to produce each year to maintain her milk supply will either be slaughtered very early for veal, or go to a veal unit or a beef herd; a minority of [young cows] will become part of another dairy herd. The fuss that the farmers made when the milk ‘quotas’ were imposed in 1984 played heavily on the public ignorance of these facts; the farmers wept crocodile tears at having to send cows to slaughter to cut their losses – as if the cows were not going to die anyway... and as if milk production itself did not rely on the mass slaughter of calves. The myth is so strong that the public continues to be conned by the crocodile tears; in Cornwall, where I live, there are car stickers to be seen with the message ‘Save Cows – Drink Milk’! Incidentally, there are more bizarre ways to off-load surpluses in the dairy industry than the flavoured drinks now being produced. Currently in Devon, as a local paper reports, waste whey from cheese-making is simply dumped over the fields... In recent years, whey has popped up in various surprising places in foods which are not normally associated with milk, as habitual readers of food labels will realise. In terms of the Earth’s resources, the dairy industry is responsible for a colossal amount of wastage... Advocates of animal farming would say that animal rearing is necessary so that the animals’ dung can keep the soil in good heart. Indeed, in the natural course of events both animal and human waste would be returned as nutrients to the soil by the process of decay. But so much animal waste is produced by intensive farming that it is impossible to return it to the land locally and it is either transported elsewhere, dumped in waterways or simply burned so that it is totally wasted. Far from being good for the land, modern husbandry is a major pollutant of the country’s water systems. In 1982, 2,523 cases of pollution from farms were reported to water authorities in this country, and many more no doubt went unreported. This is in addition to the chemical spin-off from farms, which is responsible for the alarming amounts of nitrates in our drinking water... All our energy needs as well as food needs could be met, even with our relatively high population, if animal farming could be brought to an end... The vegan landscape would include many trees as a prime renewable source of food as well as fuel... In fact, a far larger amount of food per acre can be produced by tree-growing than by any other means. Walnuts, for instance, have an astonishingly high food value... supplying many essential nutrients. ‘An acre of walnuts will supply more than 1,000 lbs of shelled meats with a food value of 3,000,000 calories. This is 20 times the amount that the same acre would yield in beef. The protein quality

of the nuts would be as great as in beef and of superior quality.' ['Two brazil nuts provide the same amount of protein as one egg'. Chestnuts – which 'are technically a nut but contain no oil and are low in fats and sodium' – also 'have considerable food value. 1 1/2 kg supply sufficient calories to satisfy the needs of an average person (although they contain a high percentage of starch, which is difficult to assimilate and makes them indigestible for many people); moreover, their richness in mineral salts (particularly calcium and potassium) makes them an excellent food for growing children.'] ...The fact is that our bodies seem to be 'designed' to be vegetarian, or, more accurately, like the great apes, to absorb a diet of fruit, nuts and shoots... From teeth, jaws, and saliva right through the alimentary canal, our bodies are enormously different from those of the carnivores. We loosely call ourselves 'omnivorous', but that is through our own choice, not 'design'. Meat-eating nations have enormous health problems, with the so-called 'degenerative diseases', those caused by accumulations of wastes our bodies can't deal with, reaching epidemic proportions[('as early as 1961, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* stated that 90 to 97% of heart disease, the cause of more than half of the deaths in the US, could be prevented by a vegetarian diet')]. After digestion in the intestines, meat becomes infested with putrefactive bacteria; carnivores have a short and smooth bowel for quick release of toxic wastes, unlike our own longer bowel... and [carnivores also have] ten times greater internal secretions of hydrochloric acid... As soon as an animal's death occurs, putrefaction begins... Only careful cooking and preserving can cheat the bacteria from entering our systems live... A substance which can so quickly become actually harmful to us, and which needs such careful treatment, can hardly be considered our 'natural' food. The last remnants of the disease-ridden Eskimo culture, with their high meat intake, are a very poor advertisement indeed for the diet... After infancy, the enzymes necessary to digest milk disappear from our bodies... Far from being a 'natural' food, [cows'] milk has been consumed by humans only in comparatively recent times (6,000 to 8,000 years) and purely dairy herds were not developed in this country until the late 19th century... Though modern-day researchers cannot be sure of human origins, it does seem likely that the traditional view of early [humanity] as a violent hunter has got it very wrong. The picture which has filled the early pages of many a school history book, of a club-bearing brute about to batter to death his next meal, is quite incorrect, though it might serve as a fitting model for the origins of a culture which has developed through belligerent self-interest. This is perfectly in line with the old school of history which has battles as its main landmarks, offering to young people stories of extreme brutality and selfishness (like the War of the Roses) as our 'heritage', rather than as something of which people, particularly the landed aristocracy, should be deeply ashamed. As regards the origins of humankind, it is much more likely that we began as frugivorous creatures and took to flesh-eating only as a result of a migration to inhospitable regions, or a catastrophe like a drought or an ice age. In any event – and for whatever reason... – ...early humans 'broke the ancient primate habit of vegetarianism'... There are many... ways of getting the nutrients that we need... and a varied vegan diet can provide them adequately. After a period of veganism, one does not worry whether one is getting adequate amounts of this or that nutrient, and I have found that, given freshness and variety, a non-animal diet is automatically fulfilling, even and especially during its severest test, pregnancy and lactation... The thing about vegan infant feeding is not that it is specialist or difficult in any way, but only that it differs from the norm, at present, in our society. The difficulty lies not with the vegan diet but outside it, when most books on babies, and infant foods available, assume an omnivorous diet... Fresh, whole, organically grown foods are obviously preferable to denatured foods from factories, but aside from these considerations, new vegans, victims of a lifetime's habit of thinking of animal foods as our 'protein', may first of all panic that a vegan diet will not provide enough protein... And people subscribe to the popular myth, perhaps, without even knowing what this magical substance is. In fact protein seems to consist of amino acids, that is, compounds of nitrogen and other elements, essential to all plants and animals... There are 20 or so amino acids all together, 12 of which are made in our bodies and 8 of which must be taken as food in order to sustain tissue building and repair.['Your body cannot make protein tissues (such as muscle, skin, hair, lungs, heart, brain, enzymes, hormones, digestive fluids, etc.) out of your food, unless all 8 essential amino acids are present, *at the same time, in the same meal*. Some foods have all the essential amino acids and are technically, "complete" proteins, but are *low* in one or more of them. The body, then has only limited use of the other amino acids.'] Grains and seeds are good sources of protein but have low proportions of two of the essential amino acids; legumes... have a high percentage of these two, whilst being low in two others. Therefore, eating foods from both groups at one time provides complete protein requirements from non-animal sources... Another over-played worry about the vegan diet is the question of vitamin B12. Years ago, someone whom I respected told me that this was 'the animal vitamin', and without it we would die... Commercially, it is produced by bacteria growing on vegetable matter. It is possible that humans have the ability to synthesise the vitamin in our own intestines and that this ability has been diminished by our turning to an omnivorous diet and thereby changing the bacterial content of our gut. Certainly, the constant dosing of ourselves with chlorine through our drinking water will not help the functioning of the micro-organisms which inhabit our intestines, and civilised 'hygiene' prevents the accidental intake of some bacteria from the environment... Before 1912, nothing definite was known about vitamins at all and in our own times the research is still going on... With so many variables and unknown factors, individuals vary greatly in their need to have a dietary source[of B12], so an intake of about 3 micrograms daily is a good insurance policy. This can be got from various yeast extracts... or in tablet form... Most vegans are healthy people who have taken the trouble to educate themselves about nutrition... Vegans are still pioneers in the sense that we have to show everyone else that our common sense viewpoint and diet also foster happiness... [S]peaking personally, once I had made the decision to do without animal food I felt a sense of exhilaration and release from a cycle of exploitation. It was a very life-enhancing decision, and looking back now it seems that it was more like a liberation than an act of self-discipline. The reason why vegans are careful where possible to see that they never take animal products is not a sanctimonious attitude of wishing to keep their moral integrity untainted (...[although we] should never forget that daily mass slaughter... – ...a thousand million animals are slaughtered each year in Britain[–] ...is the basis of any diet that is not vegan...), but it is usually because we think it important to illustrate to others that good health can be maintained entirely without animal products... It seems obvious that all living creatures are 'designed' for certain lifestyles (only the lifestyle most suited to humankind is most variable and in question). That humans' extreme possessiveness over material things has spilled over into the weaker species, so that they can actually have the arrogance to say that an animal 'belongs' to them, seems to me a distortion of the natural order... Perhaps one day we will reject the notion of 'owning' animals, just as we have now rejected the practice of owning humans, i.e. slavery. Meanwhile, the keeping of 'pets' is part of our culture, though to me it is unjustifiable. There must be something wrong with us when we live in overcrowded cities and yet confine animals with us for 'companionship'. And if we are true animal lovers, we would not wish to be responsible through the food we feed to cats and dogs for maintaining the slaughterhouses, which can cut their losses by selling the least attractive meat to the pet food industry. To keep an omnivorous pet, and to feed it on the dead flesh of other equally sensitive and intelligent creatures, is surely a gross irony. I believe it is possible for some dogs to be vegan when reared on the diet from an early age[– after all, many dogs (not just sheepdogs) already eat the odd blade of grass! –] but the cat is unquestionably a true carnivore. It is a mark of our insensitivity and our double standards when the pet food industry in a nation of animal lovers actually props up the meat industry, not to mention encouraging the mass slaughter of such creatures as whales and kangaroos, which we are only just dimly aware of, as if it took place on another planet... The main obstacle to... [veganism] being widely adopted, however, is not people's illogicality but their indifference. Most people, unfortunately, seem not to be truly concerned about any tragedy which takes place outside their own home or workplace (nor even about the possibility of a nuclear holocaust). The millions who starve in silence and the dumb victims of animal farming are not particularly high in their consciousness. But I think that the change is at least possible. After all, every reform in our society from the abolition of serfdom and slavery to the opening of public libraries and contraceptive services has had to overcome the fierce resistance of the powerful and the broad indifference of the majority. Our next reform must strike at the roots of cruelty, violence and exploitation. A move towards proper vegetarianism is the next step for us to take. - Why Vegan

While it may have been hard for humans to exist on a vegan diet prior to the 20th century, and still is in some parts of the world, First World countries are able to continuously supply a wide enough range of fresh and dried non-animal food products to make being a vegan relatively easy for anyone who isn't allergic to every non-meat-product! Supermarkets sell a range of soy milk products – which, partly through lack of demand, currently are more expensive than cows' milk (fresh soy milk is slightly more expensive, but highly-processed products such as *Vitasoy* – the brand which 'has been providing families with delicious, nutritious soymilk for over 60 years' – are roughly twice as expensive) – that can be used for drinking or when cooking. Alternatives include rice milk and coconut milk. Most breads in NZ are now made without adding cows' milk powder, margarine can be substituted for butter (though some margarines include cows' milk powder), 'plant-based yoghurts are available', there are plant-based products that can be substituted for eggs in some recipes (e.g., 'No Egg' – excellent for baking, fillings, batter & custard'), cornflower can be used instead of eggs as a thickener, gelatin can be replaced by arrowroot, pectin, salep or agar-agar, to name a few, and there are also a range of processed foods (e.g., *Vege Hot Dogs*), not to mention all of the supplements available for people who are diagnosed as lacking particular nutrients. Although a type of cheese can be made from soya beans ('juices' – extracted by passing soya beans, softened and swollen by soaking, through a press – are fermented, then the liquid is mixed with a little sulphate of lime or magnesium, coagulating it into a grey mass which is left to ferment like curds'), 'substances contained in certain plants (thistle, yellow bedstraw, common fig, etc.) have the property of coagulating milk', so it should be possible to produce a vegan-cheese – if it isn't already possible (vegetable-rennet cheeses available in NZ supermarkets still contain animal products such as casein – although *legumin*, a 'proteid substance found in pulses that resembles casein,' might work as a substitute for the milk protein) – but cheese isn't an essential food product ('if you get migraines, don't eat cheese'), and people who have freezers can make a savoury white sauce, freeze it, then grate it over pizzas, etc., in place of cheese. People with freezers can also store vegan ice cream.

Flavoured ices have been made since the very earliest times, and it is generally recognised that the Arabs and the Chinese knew the art of making iced sweets, especially water ices (sherbets). The Chinese, it is said, taught the art of ice cream making to the Indians, the Persians and the Arabs... Although the Romans used to cool drinks with ice or snow, this practice was not introduced into France until the seventeenth century, and even then it was only adopted by persons of great refinement. In the *Dictionnaire de Monnet*, 1636, the word *glaciere* (ice chest) does not even appear. Yet some forty years later the custom of drinking iced wines was so general in France that any departure from it was much frowned upon... Ice creams and water ices were introduced into France about the year 1600 by a Sicilian, Francisco Procopio. Some ten years later [Procopio] opened a cafe in Paris... It was here that Procopio (who had changed his name to the more Gallic-sounding Procopé) sold variously flavoured ice creams and water ices to the Parisians, who acquired a taste for these sweets... Other Parisian *limonadiers* quickly followed Procopé's example, and soon there were so many of them [– 250 –] that, in 1676, it was necessary to give statutory recognition to their corporation and to authorise its members officially to sell ice creams and water ices... Until about the middle of the eighteenth century, ices were only sold in Paris in the summer. In 1750, Procopé's successor, Buisson, started making ices all the year round. His competitors at once followed suit. But the ices were of poor quality. It was not until 1776 that ices more delicate in flavour began to be made. These had more body to those of earlier times and could be moulded into different shapes. It was around this time that *fromages*, as well as a number of frozen desserts, were invented... At the end of the eighteenth century, the manufacture of ices developed considerably, especially in Paris. This was the age which saw the invention of the ice bombe. It was soon the custom to serve a *bombe glacée* at the end of any formal meal, and the savouring of ices at the cafes of the Palais-Royal had by this time become fashionable. During the period of the First Empire, thanks to the Italian ice cream manufacturers, of whom there were many in Paris, ice cream and water ices of various kinds improved still further in quality. Ices began to be made from a basic mixture of egg yolks and syrup, which led to the creation of more elaborate sweets. These took the place of cylindrical ice cream blocks at formal dinners. Under the Second Empire the 'surprise omelette'... was invented. This remarkable sweet, with a centre of cold fruit and ice cream and a hot crust of meringue browned in the oven, was cleverly devised to produce a gastronomic paradox, a ball of ice in piping hot casing... Under the Second Empire, too, *coupes*, mousses, and *parfaits* were first made. The manufacture of ices, sherbets and ice creams has developed into an industry of some magnitude being, as it is, an important outlet for agricultural dairy produce, eggs and fruit.

If dairy produce and eggs are to be eliminated from the agricultural landscape, it won't be considered important to have industries that use them – and, although ice creams, etc., can be made without using animal-products, there will be no justification for producing such non-essential food products in a non-economic climate. But, while the ice cream-making and related industries ought to be shut down immediately, the process of eliminating animal-based foods from our society may have to be gradual (i.e., demand for animal-based products is unlikely to end overnight, and might not end completely until the last HB has become extinct; in addition, people should ease themselves into a vegan diet by, for example, adopting substitutes for red meats first, then – when they are familiar with that diet – adopting substitutes for white meats before, finally, repeating the process with dairy products and eggs). When society has ceased to produce animal-based foods for the consumption of its members, people who wish to continue eating them (or have a genetic quirk that means they have no other option but to continue eating them) could still do so – as long as they are prepared to go out hunting, fishing or shellfish gathering (obviously, it would be difficult for society to prevent citizens from doing these things – and obtaining such food for free – while society is still supplying them at a cost!). However, if it remains necessary to continue using bees (or other suitable pollinators) – r:p2084, ln63 – excess by-products of natural pollination (e.g., honey) could continue being collected for nutritional or medical use.

Changing to a vegan diet will help future societies to make better use of land while minimising the amount of land used (which ought to be an aim). This process can be accelerated by ceasing to produce flowers and other crops which have no value in a moneyless system or a society of humans (i.e., only HBs purchase flowers and, therefore, think that society should be responsible for growing them for non-industrial purposes – obviously, there would be justification for continuing to grow a flower species if it provides a product that is essential for some industrial purpose). It necessarily follows from this that no people will be employed as florists in a moneyless society. Amongst the other crops that there is no need for society to grow are tobacco and plants used to produce alcoholic beverages (and, hence, a moneyless society would have no tobacco and brewery industries – unless the alcohol is to be used for industrial purposes). The same logic can be applied to beverages such as tea and coffee.

Coffee, introduced to Europe by the Arabs in the sixteenth century, is the most widely drunk beverage in the world... Leading coffee-drinking countries include the U[S], West Germany, France, and Italy... ['More than 18 million 132-pound (60-kg) bags of green coffee, or over one million metric tons, were imported by the US in 1980. This was more than twice the imports of West Germany, the 2nd largest consumer.'] **Coffee plants reach maturity after four years and remain productive for about 30 years more, but there is usually a drop in quality in about the 15th year, after which the trees are usually replaced... Each tree yields an average of about 1.5 pounds (0.7kg) of green beans each year.**

Coffea arabica is a shrub with glossy, evergreen leaves. It is 4.3 to 6.1 metres high when fully grown. As a rule, coffee growers prune it to under 3.7 metres. It has white flowers that are self-pollinating... Most beans are handpicked. However, some are harvested by machines that vibrate the berries off the trees... Each berry contains two *beans*... The beans lose about a sixth of their weight during roasting... The average plant produces enough berries each year to make about 0.7 kilogram of roasted coffee... Most coffee is made in *percolators*, *filter* pots, or *vacuum* coffeemakers, which strain boiling water through the coffee. The best results are obtained by using one standard coffee measure, or two level tablespoons of

coffee, to each cup... The U[S] uses about... one-fifth of all coffee grown in the world annually... A coffee plant is usually six to eight years old before it bears a full crop. The common variety grows best at altitudes ranging from 1,100 to 2,400 metres in a tropical climate... Around 500 to 1,000 seedlings are planted per acre...

Plantations are usually established in cleared forestland. The young shrubs are planted in rows spaced so that the density varies between... 1,200 and 1,800 plants per hectare... Irrigation is required where annual rainfall is less than 40 inches... For a long time coffee was cultivated in the shade. This is still done in many areas but is losing popularity because better results can be obtained without shade or with very light shade if other practices, such as trimming, weeding, and fertilization are followed. Yields as high as 2,000 to 3,000 pounds per acre (2,300 to 3,400 kilograms per hectare) can be grown, compared to 450 to 900 pounds per acre... by traditional methods.

Consider the yield of 3,400kg/hectare. It was stated previously that *one kg of coffee makes 150 espressos*. If we assume that the average coffee-drinker has only 2 cups per day, each will annually consume 730 cups. Therefore, under the best growing conditions, each hectare of coffee trees caters for no more than 700 coffee-drinkers (less if we take into consideration the land used to grow immature coffee trees, the production of sugar, milk or other flavourings, plus the energy used to roast the beans, grind them, package and transport them, then brew them). If every citizen of a district which is populated by 1 million people was to consume 2 cups of coffee each day, the district would need to utilise a minimum of 1431 hectares (5.5sq. miles) – be it local or foreign land. That's a lot of land and energy (including labour) for a district to devote to producing a mere drink – especially one which has little nutritional value ('100g of instant powder coffee provides 424kJ of energy, 14.6g of protein, 11.0g of carbohydrate, 160mg calcium, 4.4mg iron, 0.11mg riboflavin and 25.1mg of nicotinic acid; ground coffee provides 12kJ, 0.3g, 0.4g, 3mg, 0mg, 0.2mg and 10.0mg' respectively) and dubious effects on a drinker's health! Obviously, not everyone drinks coffee – or drinks as much as 2 cups per day (the 'average coffee drinker has 6 cups per day') – but some who don't might instead drink tea (and many people drink both), which a human also considers to be a waste of land to produce (nutritionally, it only provides a little amount of 'riboflavin and nicotinic acid'). Coffee and tea are drunk in many parts of the world where it is unsafe to drink unboiled water, but supplying such places with improved technology could perform the same function – alternatively, hot drinks may be flavoured with a squeeze of fresh fruit juice; or boiled water can be chilled before consumption.

After uniting the food industry, the initial concern of the Food Ministry must be to ensure that everyone who doesn't have access to enough nutritional food gains it. Hopefully it would be possible to do this without affecting the intake of those who do have access to enough. However, if food prices in First World districts have to be increased to encourage well-fed citizens to decrease their intake of nutrients – at least until everyone is well-fed – this should be done (prices of animal-based food products could also be set at a level that encourages HBs to phase out their consumption of these items).

Where food has been scarce, it can be divided into portions dependent on family size, then be distributed to families free-of-charge. Elsewhere, the Employment Ministry would have to include an allowance for food in the money it pays to citizens. If citizens know how much that allowance is, they could budget to spend roughly that amount on food (the Employment or Food ministries should freely provide budgeting advice to those who need it, while the latter ministry ought to also provide free courses on food preparation to those who lack culinary skills – such courses might be broadcast via television). People who over-eat in the past and are unwilling to decrease their consumption in future, would have to decrease their spending on non-food products. If food scarcity is a problem, the Food Ministry ought to look at mass producing algae (e.g., spirulina) and, if necessary, insects as food sources.

WITCHETY GRUB, a name, Aboriginal in origin, used for several species of large insect larvae. They are used as bait for freshwater fishing and were relished by Aborigines as a prime article of diet, supplying the equivalent of European's butter[('6 grubs provide enough daily protein for one person')]... Among the largest witchety grubs... is one found on the roots of several forms of the red gum at depths of up to two metres... Aborigines detected the grub holes by scrapping the surface of the soil near faint cracks on the ground indicating the trend of the roots. They then deftly hooked the insects out with a long flexible hooked stick. Each grub may be as large as 13 centimetres long. Not only were the larvae and pupae eaten, but when the adult moth... emerged in autumn, the Aborigines attracted the large-bodied insects to the light of specially-built fires and feasted on their bodies as fast as the flames singed off the wings.

In Ecuador people have a... close... relationship with beetles... The people... use fallen palm trees to cultivate their favourite beetle. The scent from slots cut in the trunk attract palm weevils within minutes. These large black beetles come here to mate... Two months later... it's time for an unusual harvest – weevil grubs. A single tree yields over a hundred of these giant grubs and they are considered well worth the effort of collecting. These grubs are truly tasty and full of proteins and nourishing oil... Some are boiled up to extract their oil[which]... is... considered a cure-all... One-in-four animals on Earth is a beetle. 300,000 beetles have been described and we know that's only a small fraction. There are probably anywhere between 5 and 20 million beetle[species out there. But]... most beetles that are flashily coloured taste foul and some are highly poisonous.

...aquatic bug[s known a]s... water boat[people] swim about in a crazy fashion. They eat algae and diatoms. In turn, the Mexican Indians eat them.

...in Mexico, fried palm and agave grubs are sold in the streets like chestnuts... [S]everal other insects, such as white ants, are used as food by savage tribes... The Chinese, too, eat certain insects, caterpillars, etc... [In particular, they] feast upon the chrysalis of the silk-worm... Considering the prodigious number of insects, which, for the most part, feed on the greenstuffs which are also eaten by [a perso]n and his flocks and cattle, one cannot help being surprised that in the west, even in times of famine, no one dreams of eating them. They are usually objects of disgust among western peoples who do not, however, hesitate to eat prawns and other shellfish. On the other hand, the Arabs and other peoples of Africa and Asia look upon certain insects as great delicacies, and are surprised at our taste for shellfish... **ENTOMOPHAGE** [is a w]ord of Greek origin meaning insect-eating. The ancient Athenians ate grilled cicadas. Even today many peoples, including the Arabs and Egyptians, enjoy grasshoppers... Grasshoppers are greatly relished by African natives who eat them in the most diverse forms, boiled, roasted, grilled, salted, dried and reduced to a paste. Moses permitted the Hebrews to eat four different species... which Saint Jerome in his Latin translation calls *locusta*, *bruchus*, *ophimachus* and *attacus*. The *locusta* must have been the locust, but naturalists have been unable to identify the other three... **ACRIDOPHAGE** [is the word used to describe a person] who feeds on locusts... It appears that the taste... resembles, if somewhat remotely, that of raw shrimps.

Another insect that might be useful for human consumption is the mealworm – which is 'familiar to almost everyone as a handy food to give pets (at one time the problem was how to keep down the numbers of mealworms, now it is how to breed enough of them).' Whichever insects are used, some could be processed into sausages or patties, for example, to make them more palatable – at least to First Worlders. Likewise, krill and other small sea creatures (including shellfish) could be harvested – or bred in captivity – for human consumption until the Food Ministry can regularly provide enough plant-based foods (including seaweeds, which also don't have to be consumed as is – e.g., 'kombu' is an ingredient of some soy milks) for everyone. Obviously, temporarily continuing to harvest larger fish is another option – assuming less wasteful trawling practices are adopted (eliminating other wasteful practices – 'the annual "Tomatina" battle in Bunyol, Spain, the biggest tomato fight in the world, takes place when the town erupts into a fiery blaze of tomato-hurling on the last Wednesday of August' – would also be helpful).

Wastage is a major problem with the modern food production and distribution systems of countries like NZ. Because there are so many locations where food is sold, and consumers demand freshness, most shops are unable to sell everything before it becomes unsaleable (because it has overripened, passed its used-by date, etc.). To help to overcome this problem, the Food Ministry should initially eliminate small vendors (e.g., corner stores) in favour of larger ones (e.g., supermarkets) – and the people who are made redundant could be re-employed in food production instead of food retailing! Eventually, however, all of the food that society produces has to be provided to consumers free-of-charge. In order to do that, each district's Food Ministry would need to send food to depots (which initially could be former supermarkets or warehouses) where it is divided into houselots and then delivered to each house. An advantage of this is that citizens would no longer have to go food shopping (which is more advantageous to parents with mischievous children than people who enjoy the chore) or carry their food home. A disadvantage is that citizens would no longer be able to exercise personal choice in the range of food they get. However, as long as a broad range of food items is provided, consumers would have plenty of scope to exercise personal freedom in the type of meals they prepare from them. But, until everyone in the world has access to an adequate diet, each district should concentrate on producing a range of the most basic food items first, then expand the range provided when the worldwide food situation has improved.

If food production within a district is being managed by one united ministry, that ministry should – in conjunction with the use of glasshouses and other technology or farming practices (the best knowledge would be freely exchanged between districts in a non-economic system which is united worldwide) – be able to arrange for a sufficient supply of each crop to be ready for harvesting each week (grains, whose harvest time would no longer be dependent on weather conditions if grown inside glasshouses, could be managed in a similar fashion, but don't need to be harvested each week because they're able to be grown in bulk during favourable seasons then stored and distributed as required – 'wheat can store almost forever; in fact, some found in King Tut's tomb is one of the ancestors of the new hybrid grains that have created the "Green revolution"') and, in addition, equipment can be shared between glasshouses, exposed fields and even other districts (NZ's combine harvesters lie idle for nine months each year, but during the three months when they are being used there aren't enough because 'everyone wants to harvest at the same time').

There are three primary options for how food can be distributed: (1) All of the harvesting is undertaken on one day of the week (i.e., crops would be managed so that enough food to supply the district reaches harvest maturity once every 7 days), then all of the deliveries to households are completed within the next day or two. (2) Crops are managed to reach harvest maturity on one of 3 or 4 consecutive days each week, and deliveries to households are made during subsequent days – with 1/3rd, or 1/4th, of the district's households receiving their delivery on one of these days. (3) Harvesting is a 7-day-a-week exercise, and the proceeds of each day's harvest – which should be uniform in volume and variety – would go to 1/7th of the district's households.

Option (3) appears to be the most practical. It means that people employed as harvesters could move from field to field – depending on where the mature crops are situated (but each harvester would only need to work for 3 or 4 of the 7 days – as will the people responsible for deliveries). For this option, the district should have 7 food warehouses (one for each 1/7th of the population) – or multiples of 7 (approximately one warehouse per suburb, perhaps) – which need to be climatically controlled (or have a coolstore) to help maintain the freshness of produce while being held in them. Crops can be harvested during the morning and afternoon then be transported to one warehouse – or 2 warehouses out of 14, 3 of 21, 4 of 28, etc. – at the end of the day (alternatively, transporters might travel backwards and forwards between the area of harvesting and the relevant warehouse – or warehouses – throughout the day), while non-fresh foods (e.g., stored grains, nuts, etc., and processed foods) are being transported from their point of production or storage to the warehouse at the same time (or transporters could go between the processing or storage facilities and warehouse in the morning, then between the fields and warehouse in the afternoon – or vice versa). If more than one warehouse is to be supplied each day, food products may have to all go to a central warehouse first, then be divided into amounts to be delivered to each warehouse. The next day, warehouse workers would divide the harvest into household lots (although they could begin the process the previous day if any food items are available to them – especially non-fresh products), then each houselot can be delivered later that day or the following day. To assist with making deliveries, each household should be allocated a bin into which its weekly food allowance can be packed and then be used to carry the food to the household (there could be one size bin for houses and a smaller size for apartments, but all such bins ought to be capable of protecting their contents from sun – or heat – rain and insects, especially if no one is at home to receive it; however, if householders know what day – and even approximately what time of the day – their delivery is due, many should be able to arrange for someone from the household to be home when the delivery arrives). Warehouse workers and delivery workers could work at 3 or 4 different locations each week, or at one location where each week such workers could start with a 6-hour day while receiving produce, followed by a 6-hour day of dividing produce into houselots, then a 6-hour day of delivering the houselots, and end their week with a 6-hour day during which they collect the empty bins from households and tidy up the warehouse (alternatively, this sequence could be spread over 3 8-hour days). Householders ought to be responsible for keeping their bins clean.

Food allocations would have to be sufficient to last each household until the next delivery (but, ideally, they should be slightly more than sufficient). Although fresh vegetables can 'lose their vitamins in 1-3 days', most will remain edible for up to a week in a fridge – some longer – and others (e.g., potatoes, onions) will last much longer than a week at room temperature. Vegetables that last the least amount of time should be consumed first. Unfortunately, while each household has to effectively receive an equal volume of each food item per occupant so that food is distributed fairly, not every household with an equal number of occupants will consume an equal volume of food each week! However, if each warehouse had a computer which was programmed to divide the amount of each food item available by the total number of residents within the warehouse's delivery area, in order to give a weight total per household (weights would have to be rounded down – i.e., if the programme says a household is to receive 12.5 apples, the household should get 12 – so that the warehouse doesn't run out of an item before every bin has received its allocation), it should be possible to make adjustments to allow for the fact that some households consume more than the average (an allowance will definitely have to be increased if members of a house are losing too much weight despite consuming all of their weekly supply) – especially if the extra amounts can be offset by households that consume less than the average – and even to take into account personal preferences or allergies (i.e., a household could arrange to receive more of some food items and less of others). If it isn't possible to programme the computer to make such adjustments, or until such a programme has been set up, householders would have to try to find some neighbours, friends or relatives with whom they could swap preferred and unpreferred food items – or receive excess food items from (or give excess food items to). Some households might occasionally, or repeatedly, have some food wastage at the end of the week (especially if households receive more than sufficient allowances) but, overall, there should be much less wastage than occurs with current food distribution systems. Unless a householder wants to use leftover food or food scraps as compost for its own purposes, they could be returned to the Food Ministry when household bins are collected in order to be recycled as compost for farmland use. Significantly, while such a system wouldn't prevent people from under-eating, it should make over-eating less viable!

The Food Ministry should try to identify the most popular food items – perhaps with the assistance of past sales figures – when working out which to supply (or to supply in the greatest volume), but another concern must be to provide items that give the greatest nutritional value from the least input ('cucumbers are very watery and contain little nutritive value – they contain Vitamins A and C, but it is indigestible; so they should only be eaten by those with good digestions'). This concern is particularly relevant when it comes to processed foods – therefore, these should be kept to a minimum (which would also minimise the need to use packaging in conjunction with food – and, if most or all of the non-dried processed foods are consumed within a week or two of the date of production, there won't need to be much or any use of artificial preservatives). Processed foods that ought to be supplied are margarine (or vegetable butters) and soya milk (householders could request their preferences from a range of recipes). Householders might like to also receive a selection of basic sauces (e.g., soya, tomato – or at least tomato paste), dried egg-free pastas (e.g., spaghetti, lasagna, macaroni) or noodles, tofu and maybe even TVP.

Society shouldn't produce sweets (including chewing gum: people who enjoy chewing gum must prefer to be classified as ruminants rather than humans; and only people who lack a tongue or the ability to generate saliva naturally need to use chewing gum to protect their teeth from decay – but, alternatively, such people could keep a toothbrush in their pocket), cakes, biscuits, etc. – but the raw ingredients can be provided instead (dry goods could be delivered in amounts that last longer than a week – either a few items each week, then a few different items the next week, and so on; or all such items could be supplied on, for example, a monthly basis). Children who aren't raised on sweets and similar products are unlikely to miss them – especially if they have access to fresh or dried figs, dates ('since dates are a concentrate of sugar – 73% of their weight is rapidly assimilable sugar – they are full of nourishment; while figs are more nourishing when dried and, like prunes, are improved by soaking for 24 hours before use') and other fruits – but parents ought to have enough time to make treats like biscuits and cakes if they are only working 24 hours each week. Likewise, they would have little excuse for not being able to make their own bread if provided with yeast. However, if a district deems it necessary to supply households with one or two standard loaves each week, the district could have one central bakery that supplies each food warehouse on the morning that deliveries are due to go out (or the afternoon of the previous day) – and still provide households with yeast so they have the opportunity to make their own bread after the supplied loaves have been consumed (but there is no need to provide households with bread-making machines!); alternatively, there could be two or more deliveries of bread directly to households each week, unrelated to the general food delivery – and, to avoid congestion, not on the same day as the general food delivery). A limited range of popular jams could be produced and supplied to households (if the level of consumption doesn't warrant operating production facilities for at least 3 or 4 days each week of the year, the people who are responsible for growing berries could also be responsible for harvesting them and turning them into jam).

If householders are supplied with one or more loaves, they could have toast for breakfast (especially when the bread is a few days old); if they are provided with oats, they could make porridge. However, cereals are just as good as a breakfast for adults as for children, make preparing breakfast fast and easy, can be consumed as snacks at non-breakfast times, or can be combined with oats, dried fruit and nuts, etc., to create a muesli, so society should produce a basic selection – perhaps wheat biscuits (according to a 'survey of 63 NZ dietitians of their 3 most recommended cereals for kids, 9 out of 10 nutritionists recommend kids eat Weetbix'), corn flakes and rice bubbles – and households could receive a supply of each (people who don't like one of the selections could arrange to do a swap with someone who does – rather than allowing households to have the food warehouse computer allocate just their preferred cereal). Individual pieces of fruit, or fruit salad, can also be eaten as a breakfast, but if people want to drink fruit juice they should squeeze their own – rather than have society produce, package and distribute a selection of juices (if the Food Ministry does produce beverages, perhaps to use unpresentable pieces of fruit, the empty bottles or containers could be returned to the ministry when household bins are collected – along with any empty soya milk, margarine, etc., containers – so they can be sterilised and reused). Householders could grow their preferred selection of herbs in their own home or garden, so there should be little or no need for the Food Ministry to supply any herbs. Sprouts (which 'add colour, roughage and garnish to a diet, and can be used in salads, sandwiches, soups, etc – sprouting increases the vitamin content of the grain by as much as 600% for A and C, but don't over estimate its value; seeds are low in these vitamins, so even a 600% increase isn't a lot') should also be something that householders produce themselves – using whatever whole grains or seeds the Food Ministry delivers – if that's what they want to consume.

A new report says not everyone is born with the same number of taste-buds[(in 1990 so-called 'super tasters – who have 5 to 10 times more taste-buds – were identified')] and some have a more sophisticated palate than others.

Influential chefs and traditional gastronomes recommend people eat simple meals (as the majority of their species' members did in the past, and continue to do through economic necessity – although, in such cases, their diets might be better described by the word BASIC than SIMPLE) – which not only minimises the amount of preparation that goes into constructing them, but also the amount of cleaning up required afterwards. Simple food is also best for society because it consumes less energy. Anyone who possesses a little bit of imagination, has been provided with a range of non-animal-based food items, and received basic training in cooking methods, should – with practise – be capable of creating a varied and appealing selection of raw or cooked vegan meals (without needing to garnish them with, for example, gold – 'edible gold sells for \$2 a sheet'). Furthermore, this potential, combined with having more time to prepare meals, means that it ought to be unnecessary for society to provide restaurants – including takeaway bars, cafes and cafeterias (people can always take a packed lunch to work or school; people who want to dine away from home can go to a friend's or relative's place – 'to make things easier on the host, it has been a well-observed ritual that [dinner] parties are always bring-a-plate' – then return the favour at a later date) – in future.

The origin of restaurants, as we know them, is not very old. In the eighteenth century one could eat only in the inns, which served at fixed times an equally fixed menu, or at the shops of the *traiteurs* (eating-house keepers) who could only sell whole pieces of food. In 1765... a vendor of soup in the Rue Poulies, gave his soups the name of *restaurants*, i.e. restoratives, and inscribed on his sign: 'Boulangier sells magical restoratives'... Wishing to augment his menus and unable to serve sauces or *ragouts* because... Boulangier... was not a member of the corporation of *traiteurs*, [Boulangier] had the idea of offering his clients sheep's feet in white wine sauce. The *traiteurs* did not fail to bring a lawsuit against him, which was a tremendous advertisement for the innovator and his sheep's feet. In the end, Boulangier won the case, a solemn judgement of Parliament having decreed that sheep's feet in white wine sauce were not a *ragout*. This was a great triumph; all Paris rushed to Boulangier's to taste this extraordinary dish... Louis XV himself had it served at Versailles, but the king, who was a real gourmand, did not share the general enthusiasm. It is nevertheless true that Boulangier created... a profession which commands a fortune for all who pursue it with good faith, orderliness and skill. After Boulangier, the first restaurant worthy of the name was that which Beauvilliers founded in 1783 – an establishment which, because of the revolutionary activities of 1793, its founder felt obliged to close. Then followed the restaurant... at the Palais-Royal... This restaurant shut its doors in 1869, and it was in this house that Duglere, Casimir Moisson and several other great *cuisiniers* of the nineteenth century carried out their first campaigns.

The Food Ministry of each district could compare the current number of diners with the number of seats available within the district, then close down the least popular restaurants so that these numbers match (a similar process would have to be adopted for takeaway bars, etc.). Citizens would have to pay for their meals, the price of which could gradually be increased to further reduce demand, thereby allowing the ministry to close the remaining restaurants one by one until there are none left – which might coincide with the time when money is completely removed from society. Most of the buildings housing restaurants ought to be converted so that they can be used for other purposes, but a few could be left virtually as they are so citizens can book them for group *bring-a-plate* banquets (e.g., for birthdays and other personal celebrations) whenever someone's home is too small to cope with an intended gathering. If people are preparing food before arriving at banquet halls, the halls' kitchens should only need to have reheating equipment. Apart from these self-servicing halls, catering equipment (and caterers) would only need to be employed to prepare meals for hospital patients (and any people who live at home but are unable to prepare their own meals due to injury or age, and have no partner, relative or friend that will prepare their meals for them).

Hospital catering is classified as welfare catering, the object being to assist the nursing staff to get the patient well as soon as possible. To do this it is necessary to provide good quality food which has been carefully prepared and cooked to retain the maximum nutritional value, and presented to the patient in an appetising manner. It is recognised that the provision of an adequate diet is just as much a part of the patients treatment as careful nursing and skilled medical attention.

SICK

...a distinguished A[US]n physician and a Nobel Prize winner, considers it 'one of the most significant medical features' of our time that, 'as a by-product of more and more powerful therapeutic procedures and the production of chemical substances outside of biological experiences, the normal protective barriers that kept mutagenic agents from the internal organs have been more and more frequently penetrated.' The study of human chromosomes is in its infancy, and so it has only recently become possible to study the effect of environmental factors upon them... The whole concept of genetic damage by something in the environment is also relatively new, and it is little understood except by the geneticist, whose advice is seldom sought... [S]cientists have been more concerned with identifying the chromosome abnormalities associated with disease and defective development than with speculating about the causes. It would be foolish to assume that any single agent is responsible for damaging the chromosomes or causing their erratic behaviour during cell division. But can we afford to ignore the fact that we are now filling the environment with chemicals that have the power to strike directly at the chromosomes, affecting them in the precise ways that could cause such conditions? Is this not too high a price to pay for a sproutless potato or a mosquitoless patio? ...No longer are exposures to dangerous chemicals occupational alone; they have entered the environment of everyone – even of children as yet unborn. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that we are now aware of an alarming increase in malignant disease... Judging by the present incidence of the disease, the American Cancer Society estimates that 45,000,000 Americans now living will eventually develop cancer... The situation with respect to children is even more deeply disturbing. A quarter-century ago, cancer in children was considered a medical rarity. *Today, more American school children die of cancer than from any other disease.* So serious has the situation become that Boston has established the first hospital in the U[S] devoted exclusively to the treatment of children with cancer. [12%] of all deaths in children between the ages of one and fourteen are caused by cancer. Large numbers of malignant tumours are discovered clinically in children under the age of five, but it is an even grimmer fact that significant numbers of such growths are present at or before birth... [C]ancers in infants may be related to the action of cancer-producing agents to which the mother has been exposed during pregnancy... Experiments show that the younger the animal is when it is subjected to a cancer-producing agent the more certain is the production of cancer... [T]he University of Florida has warned that 'we may be initiating cancer in the children of today by the addition of chemicals [to food]... We will not know, perhaps for a generation or two, what the effects will be.' ...These chemicals seem to initiate the malignant change, which may then be completed by other chemicals of types prevalent in the environment... Water pollution experts throughout the U[S] are concerned by the fact that detergents are now a troublesome and practically universal contaminant of public water supplies. There is no practical way to remove them by treatment. Few detergents are known to be carcinogenic, but in an indirect way they may promote cancer by acting on the lining of the digestive tract, changing the tissues so that they more easily absorb dangerous chemicals, thereby aggravating their effect... The chemical agents of cancer have become entrenched in our world... through [our] search for a better and easier way of life; [and]because the manufacture and sale of such chemicals has become an accepted part of our economy and our way of life. It would be unrealistic to suppose that all chemical carcinogens can or will be eliminated from the modern world. But a very large proportion are by no means necessities of life. By their elimination the total load of carcinogens would be enormously lightened, and the threat that one in every four will develop cancer would at least be greatly mitigated. - 1962

Cancer kills about one thousand Americans a day... To combat this killer, thousands of scientists are working hard to understand the exact mechanism of cancer and develop cures. Laboratory research is vital, but we must... debate... the bankrupt logic of a medical system costing 10.5[%] of GNP, predicated on ever more technology and research to "cure" diseases, rather than a preventive health-maintenance approach to reducing stress and hazards of industrial culture that lead to "disease" ('the question we must seriously ask ourselves is to what extent are we as physicians prepared to disappear? What we should be asking in our relationships with patients is "What have I done so this person can manage to do without me in the future?"').

...Every cell of the body carries within it the genetic code for the entire individual, and biologists are just beginning to learn how to "clone" from one cell a microscopic bit of tissue that can grow into an adult body... Perhaps in a century biologists will learn so much about the complexities of the human cell that they can take a tissue sample from each human... in childhood, freeze the sample, and then grow from it a heart, liver, kidneys, eyes, and other critical replacement parts, in anticipation of their being needed in later life... Machinery can be kept going indefinitely if we are willing to replace parts that wear out. Artificial organs made of the inert plastic Teflon (the same one used to line frying pans), and of certain metals, especially tantalum, don't produce any immune response at all. Such metal and plastic parts are already used routinely to replace damaged or diseased blood vessels, bone sockets, portions of the... eye, kneecaps, and other human parts... The road ahead for bionics is not entirely clear, though, because of a problem that may not be solved...: though muscle, bone, and skin cells can regenerate after damage, nerve cells cannot... In every cell there are small, specialized groups of molecules continually moving up and down each strand of the DNA helix, checking for signs of damage... When the DNA-repair mechanism finds an error, it performs an act of "recombinant DNA." It excises the bad section of the strand and replaces it with a newly assembled good one. In a healthy cell, DNA repair occurs in a matter of seconds, as can be shown by experiments in which damage is induced by ultraviolet light. But in certain cells, there are indications that DNA repair can become sluggish, and possibly aging is a symptom of such slow or careless performances on the part of the DNA-repair mechanism. Aging may therefore be like cancer, a kind of disease – and so, by inference, curable. There is, of course, a long distance between such a speculation and a full understanding. We can acquire a respect for the distance yet to go by appreciating that roughly two-thirds of the DNA double-helix is there for reasons that we do not yet understand. - 1981

By examining the DNA, doctors will eventually be able to screen fetuses for the diseases that will afflict them throughout their lives. Even now, it is possible to predict the illnesses to which we are prone by studying our HLA antigens, the cellular markers that identify our tissue as being our own. There are five sets of HLA antigens – A through D and DR... Each antigen is known by a letter and a number; A1, for example, or B8. All of us are born with a unique selection of antigens, five from each of our parents. Hundreds of millions of combinations are possible. For reasons no one yet understands, many illnesses are far more common in people with certain HLA markers than in others. For example, psoriasis is five times as common in people with an HLA antigen known as Cw6 as it is in others. And ankylosing spondylitis, a kind of arthritis in which the spinal vertebrae fuse together, is 175 times as frequent in people with the B27 antigen as in the general population... About 100 of these correlations are now known, and a dozen or so more are discovered each year. - 1982

Most of the diseases we get are really failures of our “doctor within.” You can call them heart disease, or infections, or herpes, or stroke, or high blood pressure, or cancer, or AIDS, or the common cold, but the truth is that they are all due to a breakdown in our natural defences. If your immune system is strong, you can shrug off most diseases... Many years ago, as a resident in Internal Medicine at Los Angeles County Hospital, I was in charge of the adult infectious-disease ward. For 10 to 15 hours a day, I was exposed to just about every infectious illness you can imagine. These patients had tuberculosis, meningitis, the very deadly septicemia and other dangerous diseases. They coughed and sneezed on me; I got their blood, sweat and even feces on my hands. But I didn’t “catch” any of their diseases. My “doctor within” kept me in perfect health. Some time later, I was rotated out of the infectious-disease ward and into surgery. Months later I came down with meningitis... What happened was that I was working double shifts, going to every class and lecture offered and moonlighting besides. In other words, I ran my immune system into the ground. Without immune-system protection I was “easy-pickings” for any disease... Cold, flus, polio... cancer, forms of arthritis and other disorders are all symptoms of an immune-system dysfunction. AIDS is the immune system disorder getting the most press at the moment, but terrible as it is, it’s far from being the only immune-system disease. When I check the blood of patients who “just don’t feel good,” I may find... a virus such as CMV (cytomegalic virus), which can cause an immune-system disorder that may leave you feeling terrible, with enlarged glands and a sore throat. A sore throat may not bother you too much, but remember that CMV is attacking and weakening your immune system... Under ideal conditions your immune system would keep you free from many diseases, from colds to cancer. Unfortunately, we don’t live in an ideal world. Your goal, therefore, is to... make your immune system as strong as it can possibly be. Remember: the stronger your immune system, the better your health. - 1986

Medical technology should be used with caution. G[P]s are seen by many patients as tribal witch doctors with almost supernatural curative powers, from whom they expect miracle cures. Many people are not satisfied unless they walk out of the surgery with some kind of pill or potion, but they should be taught instead how to involve their natural processes of healing. The medical profession has for too long provided a ‘sickness service’ rather than promising a genuine health service. Medicine is too often used to ‘cure’ socially created ills... as this is both ‘easier’ and more profitable than attending to real causes... The problem is that drug companies make their money by selling as many drugs as possible, giving doctors an incentive to over-medicate and create patients dependent on drugs or damaged by their side-effects... 5[% of British] hospital admissions are patients made unwell by prescribed drugs... It can be argued that tranquillizers, laxatives and cough medicines are all useless. £30 million a year is spent on ‘peripheral vasodilator drugs’, despite the fact that there is no evidence that they work, and tranquillizers have created a far bigger addiction problem than heroin... Given that [1/3]rd of NHS spending is taken up by the drugs bill, it is essential that... drug manufacturers’ profits should be reduced drastically and the savings used to supplement pay, boost hospital building and promote preventive medicine... Prevention is better than cure. Hypertension causes raised blood pressure... increasing the possibility of heart attacks or strokes. The total bill for a [patient]... treated... with Navidrex K between the ages of 40 and 80 will be £164 at 1989 prices, but [the patient] runs the risk of developing diabetes or gout, and there may also be psychological side-effects. If the newer Capozide were used instead, the bill would rocket to £8.356 over forty years... On the other hand, hypertension can be treated at zero cost by reducing salt intake, cutting alcohol consumption, losing weight or taking up relaxation techniques such as meditation. This example could be matched by many similar cases of cheap, effective, non-pharmaceutical treatment. Sadly, medical training tends to forget such alternative approaches... We need to put alternatives into the NHS: acupuncture, herbal medicine and traditional techniques all have a role to play... Many people gain relief from techniques that fall outside medical orthodoxy, yet at present alternative therapies are just as much a middle-class luxury as BUPA... The NHS needs more resources... NHS... hospitals... [have been] described... as ‘the most rigidly hierarchial society to be found in Britain since the Middle Ages’. Even if we were to ignore the epidemics caused by freeze/thaw catering... there are many other reasons why hospitals are far from healthy. Vast and uninviting, they hardly make us feel at home or encourage the natural rhythms of healing. Hospitals need to be rehumanized. Caring should be emphasized rather than high technology. - 1990

Powerful new weapons now being developed help kick-start the body’s natural defences... FOR 18 MONTHS, [an American] suffered worsening night sweats, nausea and fatigue. By early 1988, the 51-year-old primary-school principal could work barely two hours a day. In July, her doctor diagnosed renal cancer, and two weeks later, at the University of Rochester Medical Centre, a surgeon removed a massive tumour that had wrapped itself round [her] right kidney and filled her abdomen. After x-rays showed the cancer had spread to her left lung and adrenal gland, doctors gave [her] only a 20[%] chance of living two years or longer. Then... [the] associate professor of oncology and medicine at the university, stopped by to see her. [The associate professor] had developed an experimental vaccine... “So far, it has been used on only about 50 patients... but it stopped the cancer in 20[%] of them.” “What are my other options?” [the principal] asked. “There is no other effective therapy,” [was his reply]. Unlike traditional vaccines, cancer vaccines don’t prevent the disease. Administered after a primary tumour is removed, they may help destroy secondary growths and prevent recurrences of some cancers. That is critical because 90[%] of all cancer deaths are caused by micrometastases. These are tiny clusters of cells that escape the surgeon’s knife or the radiation-treatment site, and often elude chemotherapy. They then erupt into tumours that kill months or years after initial treatment. Cancer vaccines appear to prompt the body’s immune system to destroy these tiny clusters before they grow. And, once switched on by a vaccine, the immune system seems to keep destroying any new cell clusters... A month after her meeting with [the associate professor, the principal] received the first of three vaccine injections... Her immune system quickly mobilized, and by early December the lung tumour had disappeared. Before Christmas, [the principal] was back working full time. Then, in July 1990, the tumour on her adrenal gland was removed, and [the principal] began a second round of injections. Today, [the principal]... is doing well, despite a small tumour on her left shoulder and one on a bone in her hip. “I’m not out of the woods yet... but at least I’ve returned to a normal life.” ...IN MID-1987, [another American,] 35, noticed that the thumbtack-size mole on her right shoulder had turned from dark brown to sooty black. A surgeon removed the mole and sent it for biopsy. It was malignant. [The 35-year-old] had melanoma. A first round of tests showed no sign the cancer had spread. But in January 1988 doctors found three tumours, one in the lymph nodes under her right arm and two others near the original mole. After... surgery to remove the new growths, her doctor told her about an experimental vaccine being tested by... [the] chief of surgery at St Vincent’s Medical Centre in New York. “It can’t hurt to try,”... said[the 35-year-old, who]... has been free of cancer now for more than three years. - 1991

THE DEVELOPMENT by researchers at Melbourne’s St Vincent’s Hospital of a laser technique for “welding” body tissue could end the need for stitches after surgery. Bowel tissue has been joined over a plastic splint that looks and feels like pasta, and dissolves within hours of an operation. The splint holds the bowel ends in place while laser energy seals the edges together... The researchers have found that tissue rejoined by laser heat heals faster and better than if stitched. As well, the pen-size laser-light delivery system needs only about 25 seconds to rejoin bowel tissue, compared with ten to 12 minutes for traditional stitching or stapling... Research is also under way to use the technique in vasectomy reversals and to rejoin fallopian tubes, severed hand tendons and facial nerves cut by injuries. - 1992

In another A[US]n breakthrough a research team has discovered a potential new treatment for diabetes which is 3000 times more potent than medication at present available... although human testing of the compounds was three to five years away... The compounds could provide an oral medication for non-insulin or type II diabetes with its extra potency resulting in fewer side effects. “...This means that people would not have to take as much of the drug. In addition it operates by two different mechanisms, by increasing insulin secretion and by improving its effectiveness.”

...[‘injecting healthy pancreas cells cures diabetes (although patients still need medicine to ward off rejection’). By the way, ‘computers are more effective in detecting heart disease than trained experts. In one case, a computer at the University of Missouri Medical Center, which was programmed to scan X rays and diagnose rheumatic heart disease, was 73% accurate. In contrast, a team of ten radiologists scanning the same X rays was correct only 62% of the time.’]

...A laser beam that vaporises life-threatening blood clots has joined the battle against heart disease. By threading a thin, light-reflective tube called a catheter into a major blood vessel until it reaches a clot, doctors can fire a laser to burn away the blockage without damaging the blood vessel... Three kinds of laser are being studied as ways to blast a clot: excimer, holmium and pulsed-dye. The pulsed-dye laser also shows promise for treating stroke victims by reaching into the tiny vessels that supply blood to the brain, which now can be treated only with clot-busting drugs.

...A common hospital procedure used to investigate the condition of the heart... – ...right heart catheterisation... [-] does patients little good, researchers say... “Despite the widespread use of this procedure and its attendant costs, there is no evidence that it benefits patients,” [the]... editor of the A[MA] journal *Archives of Internal Medicine*, wrote. “To the contrary, there is evidence that it may increase morbidity and mortality.”

...A new twist on a revolutionary heart surgery technique developed in Brazil could lead to a cure for many people who would normally need a transplant to survive, heart surgeons say. They warn that the jury is still out on the long-term benefits of the new technique, but say it is promising. The technique combines the use of a pump device that helps ailing hearts pump blood... [A] Brazilian surgeon... working at a rural hospital, found [it] could improve the function of enlarged hearts, which can cause heart attacks, by cutting away part of the left ventricle and sewing the heart back together... While 40[% of]... 420 patients... had died... the long-term survival rate would be higher at a better-equipped hospital.

...As [NZ] doctors fight to keep some illnesses at bay, health officials have realised the country must be better geared to turn the tide. An international focus has been adopted to anticipate, track and swiftly contain new and persistent outbreaks... [of] infectious diseases. The key to pinning down emerging diseases quickly is a direct link between public health specialists and the laboratories which identify illnesses... Public health offices rely on [GP]s notifying them of illnesses. The problem... is that this might be months after the patient is seen, or the information may be incomplete. “There was the classic case last year with the hepatitis outbreak. It was three months after it had first started that there was a significant rise in notification... [W]hen we looked back through lab information, it had been evident quite a lot earlier. If we had a system whereby a disease like that was automatically notified by labs or by doctors, we could do something sooner[,” says an]... Auckland public health specialist... [who] also cites a whooping cough outbreak in West Auckland that spread across the city. “We could have used more sophisticated systems to plot it and identify areas in the district which were at high risk.” However... patient privacy issues have to be worked through before specialists would be allowed to tap directly into doctors’ or laboratory files... [C]omputer systems used overseas automatically delete patient names to solve privacy issues... “I went to the GP Sentinal Network in France. It has 500 doctors around the country reporting each week on eight diseases which they are not legally required to notify. It is fed into a database... and means they are able to take that information and put mathematic models to it to predict what the pattern will be in the future...” ...The Ministry of Health is looking at the feasibility of laboratories reporting to medical officers of health on notifiable diseases. Such a move would require legislative changes... The ministry’s pilot programme involves the Communicable Disease Centre in Wellington, which has started collecting information from laboratories... In Auckland, four public health offices have been blended into one regional service. This allows medical officers to work from one place and specialise in different areas to give a better overview. [‘■ If you think that doctor/patient confidentiality is as sacrosanct as a confessional box, consider this complaint that went to the Privacy Commissioner. A patient was being treated for depression and had talked about killing himself before. So when his doctor found a message explaining the patient had missed his last appointment because it was buying a gun, the doctor agonised, consulted colleagues, then told the police. The patient claimed that his privacy had been unlawfully breached, but the commissioner disagreed. Rule 11 of the Health Information Privacy Code allows doctors to raise the alarm to prevent serious harm. You may see your health as no one’s business but your own but for all sorts of reasons – ranging from public safety to containing and analysing the spread of disease, running an efficient public health system to claiming insurance cover or accident compensation – when you get sick and see a doctor, some other agency will invariably be told. For instance, catch one of the 40 diseases that are notifiable in NZ, such as tuberculosis or campylobacter, and a medical officer of health has to be told, with your name, address and test results. If it’s a food-borne illness even your local council will be notified. Your illness may be further investigated and, if you’re a cook or work with children and have food poisoning, you will have to stay home from work and your employer will be asked to help you comply with those rules. You can certainly expect to be mailed information on your disease. If your doctor or optometrist considers you are too sick or too blind to drive, they have to tell the Land Transport Safety Authority. But even if your ill health is not a threat to others, someone other than your doctor will be collecting information about you. If you have ever spent more than a day in hospital, the NZ Health Information Service, a division of the Ministry of Health, will have something on you. If you have ever used a healthcare service, you will have been tagged with a National Health Index number, revealing your name, address, ethnicity and any aliases you have gone by. There won’t be any clinical information alongside that number, but it will have a flag showing whether there is significant medical information held about you in another database called the Medical Warning System. Information about you in the MWS will have been gleaned from the National Minimum Data Set – the information about your hospital stay of more than one day that is routinely sent to the ministry to provide a national overview. All personal information is removed when the overview is produced. If you’ve got a malignant tumour your name will be on the Cancer Register, having been sent there automatically by the pathology laboratory.’]

...because of its pioneering achievements and the comparatively cheap labour rates... [m]ajor research is under way in N[Z] to come up with cancer drugs without harsh side-effects. The Cancer Society Research Laboratory in Auckland is working with five international pharmaceutical giants to develop drugs that specifically attack cancer cells... [E]xisting “classical” drugs attacked all cells which rapidly divided. Although the drugs largely honed in on cancer cells, they also attacked types of normal cells affecting hair growth, the stomach lining and bone marrow... [T]he laboratory team had recently been awarded the Royal Society of N[Z] Science and Technology gold medal. It is regarded as the country’s premier scientific award... The co-director of the laboratory... said the medal had boosted morale among the team of about 40 scientists, based in the Auckland School of Medicine... “On a day-to-day basis it’s hard. It’s all blue sky stuff... you can work for 10 years and find it doesn’t work...,” ...

A Christchurch immunologist... is on the brink of finding a vaccine for cancer and HIV. Whether [the immunologist] succeeds... will depend less on scientific sleuthing than scrambling for money to keep his research alive... Two major grants run out at the end of the year, and of the 19 researchers in [the immunologist]’s haematology-immunology team, only four have financial support to the middle of next year... [The immunologist] has about one-fifth of the \$1 million a year... need[ed] to keep his laboratory running. “We’re desperately underfunded in terms of what an international research group needs. It’s very hard to keep a top quality scientific group together here. The Government does not provide the funding for hard core medical research. A[US]ns are doing our experiments with our reagent... because we’re underfunded – and that’s irritating.” [The immunologist] is not alone in his frustration. Only one in four applications to the... Health Research Council... wins backing – a ratio[the] Auckland Medical School dean... calls woefully inadequate. Medical research accounts for just 0.4% of health spending, less than half that set by many other Western countries... About 200 fulltime researchers are spread throughout the medical schools of the four main centres. Hundreds of other researchers piece together a career on short-term contracts, in some cases not knowing more than a month in advance whether they will remain on the payroll... From July 1, the HRC’s budget was boosted by almost one-third to \$25 million – the first significant increase in a decade. An additional \$600,000 is earmarked for next year. But to pour millions more into long-term research projects at the expense of hospital waiting lists would be political dynamite... [In related news,] American researchers believe they may have found a way to stop cancer tumours in

their tracks with injections of an agent that occurs naturally in the body. The... agent called angiostatin... stops the blood vessels in cancer tumours from developing, therefore halting the tumour's growth. The... Harvard Medical School... team... injected angiostatin into mice with lung cancer. "We injected the mice every day... and the tumours were held in check..." [the team leader] said. But there is a problem in producing the agent to use against human cancers – it takes about three litres of plasma and a week of laboratory time to produce just 0.15g of the substance.

...An A[US]n scientific and medical team says it has invented a new way of detecting skin cancer that can do away with the scalpel and save thousands of lives... [T]he breakthrough will allow ordinary doctors to detect melanomas with a camera and computer, instead of cutting off a suspect mole and sending it to a laboratory for a biopsy... The camera, acting as a low-power microscope, sends an image of the mole, or lesion, to a personal computer. The computer uses digital image analysis and stored information from melanoma specialists to analyse the mole's colour, texture, symmetry and general appearance to facilitate the diagnosis.

...Geneticists believe they have found a way to beat the harmful side-effects of chemotherapy, which often leaves cancer patients more ill than they were before they went into hospital... Scientists have successfully developed a mutant version of the protein ATase which repairs DNA inside cancers and thwarts the benefits of chemotherapy. Substances have in the past been used to inactivate ATase and stop the tumours repairing themselves. But this has had the drawback of affecting healthy cells as well.

...About 60 N[Z]ers develop Hodgkin's Disease each year... [and c]hances of recovery in newly diagnosed cases are around 75%... Because of its sensitivity to chemotherapy and radiotherapy, an almost always fatal cancer has been transformed into one of the most curable... [By the way, e]ye-catching billboards displaying naked breasts are part of a nationwide campaign targeting breast cancer awareness... The breasts... looked healthy... to reinforce the message that often [gals] have cancer for two years or more before there is a lump. Each year... 600 [NZers] die from breast cancer.

...regional health authorities and the Breast Cancer Foundation are bickering over the pert appearance of a pair of breasts. The foundation has launched a campaign aimed at encouraging older [gals] to have a mammogram (breast x-ray) and regular breast checks to deter cancer in its early stages. But the [RHA]s, which will launch their own free national screening programme next July... [- which] will target those [aged] 50 to 64... – ...are disappointed with the youthful appearance of the breasts used in the foundation's campaign... "Did they expect us to have a [model] with her breasts hanging down to her navel?" ...asked... the foundation's... president... The Cancer Society has also distanced itself from the foundation campaign. "We are concerned about how [gals] will interpret the messages given and we're concerned that many... will be seeking mammograms before they are free and accessible,"... Mammograms... cost about \$90... Two-thirds of breast cancers occur in [gals] over 50.

...An experimental technique for treating patients who have locally advanced prostate cancer that is inoperable or resistant to other therapies is being tested at several American medical centres. Called cryosurgery, the procedure uses extremely low temperatures to freeze and destroy tumour cells. Doctors stress, however, that this approach should be an option only when conventional treatment has failed. While they're hopeful cryosurgery will be beneficial, they do not yet have data on long-term effectiveness... Freezing body parts as a treatment for disease is not new: surgeons use the technique to treat easy-to-reach areas such as the... cervix... skin... and... eyes...

[A US]-based Professor... has inserted tiny electrodes into the eyes of eight blind people in tests, restoring their sight. [The professor] is confident a commercial version of the implant will be widely available within five years... [and] the cost of a 2mm grid of electrodes could be just \$70... "I believe it will deliver the gift of sight to 50% of blind people... It works with retinal blindness where the photo-receptors on the retina have died or not formed properly but the layers of cells beneath are still intact." The damaged light-sensitive cells on the retina are replaced with electrodes only 1/100th of a millimetre long, in a unit that is superglued to the retina. "When light hits the electrodes, they transmit an electrical charge to the nearby neural unit, which leads to the brain,"... [w]here signals are interpreted in the usual way to form an image.

...Around 1400 people from 87 countries are... in Auckland to attend the 18th World Congress of Rehabilitation International... [Amongst the conference-goers is] Europe's first blind Cabinet Member. [The Swede], who turned blind at 15, and is the U[N]s' Special Rapporteur on Disability, says it is still necessary to point out that disabled people are not creatures from outer space. "We are often hidden away in institutions and by families who were ashamed to show that they had a disabled family member. Unfortunately these practices still occur in many countries. As a result houses, streets, schools[,] workplaces, vehicles... have been and are still being designed as if we do not exist." Auckland is believed to have more disabled people than ever attending the conference. That means more wheelchairs, motorised scooters and guide dogs than ever seen at the Aotea Centre... [Another conference-goer is a 41-year-old Aborigine who] is angry that... [as a 3-year-old it] caught polio, when vaccinations were available, free and compulsory. "I think it was because I was Aborigine. They didn't bother to vaccinate the Aborigine kids out where I was living."

...Mesothelioma merits particular attention because... the virus in question appears to be new among humans and its DNA 'looks suspiciously like that of SV40, a monkey virus accidentally given to millions of people between 1954 and 1963 as a contaminant of polio vaccines'. Perhaps what we have here is the worst accident in the history of medicine. Similar suspicions have been voiced in connection with... genetic engineering[, which] might be considered extremely dangerous. The fact is that the complexity of the field makes its risks very hard to evaluate. At least in public, most experts say they are no great cause for concern, as shown both by calm scientific reasoning and by the absence of any disaster so far... Without actually being ill informed or irrational, however, you might think the risks as great as any which humankind now faces. The apparent consensus among the experts might perhaps itself be explicable more by social pressures than by scientific findings: instead of just affecting industry, as in the case of regulations applying to nuclear power plants, attempting restrictions on genetic engineering threatened the salaries and research grants of scientists in universities and research laboratories. The outcome, it has sometimes been suggested, was a speedy presentation of a united front despite quite a severe lack of evidence... There were certainly some excuses for relaxed regulations. In particular, many techniques of gene-crippling had been perfected. Organisms could be engineered so that they survived only in the presence of chemicals not normally available, or genes could be inserted to limit how many generations of descendants they could have. Still, no firm legislation prevented engineering of organisms potentially capable of reproducing themselves better than natural ones when released into the wild. This situation continued despite discoveries showing that gene-crippling might succeed only temporarily, and that alterations engineered into one species could spread to others. In particular, it was fast becoming plain that... 'a blizzard of genetic material blows freely through the microbial world, not only between bacteria of the same species but also between members of distantly related species and even between bacteria and viruses' – viruses being, so far as risks are concerned, even worse than bacteria because they evolve by the exchange of whole functional genetic units, and because they can so readily transport genes from one species to another. Genetically crippled by being deprived, for instance, of elements essential to their replication, microbes can fairly readily acquire the missing material from elsewhere: British safety inspectors gave precisely this reason for ending some University of Birmingham tinkering with organisms which were cancer-producing in their uncrippled form. Using viruses as their carriages, genes can travel from one type of plant to another, or between humans and other mammals.

...British scientists are working on a breed of genetically engineered mosquitoes to act as a sort of flying hypodermic needle against malaria, [and]... have already received a patent on the idea... The... mosquitoes... would transfer a protein through their saliva to act as a vaccine against the disease. [Incidentally, scientists have developed an 'air-pressured hypodermic needle that is better than the standard model.'

...[Timaru] residents are pleased that Health South Canterbury is rethinking its controversial plan to start burning medical waste... [-] including syringes, needles and dressings... [-] from a hospital incinerator... as a way of cutting costs... The crown health enterprise has applied for resource consent to discharge contaminants... into the night air. It admits the end products from burning up to 208kg of medical waste per hour is likely to

have a detrimental effect on air quality... The material is now transported and processed in Otago. Another option being considered is sending the waste to a commercial incinerator in Christchurch.

...An international conference on leprosy ended yesterday [in New Delhi] with experts saying they were on the threshold of a wonder medicine which could reduce cure time from two years to one month. The World Health Organisation did not unveil a time frame for the latest drug's introduction in hospitals, but said it... needed about \$US370 million... until the year 2000 to reach its neglected sufferers worldwide. [Editor's note: leprosy is 'a chronic infectious bacterial disease affecting the nerves, skin, and certain other tissues of the human body, resulting in mutations and deformities. It is caused by the presence of the bacillus *Mycobacterium leprae*, first demonstrated by the Norwegian Gerhard Hansen (1841-1912), and is now almost entirely a tropical disease, with many millions of sufferers in Africa and Asia. Common in medieval Europe, it was gradually stamped out by strict isolation and improved hygiene. To the layperson it was always a disease that created both fear and superstition, but modern methods of treatment are effective if applied in the early stages. The disease takes two main forms, of which the more acute malignant type is sometimes fatal.' There are also different forms of another disease affecting the nerves: 'epilepsy' (a nervous disorder with seizures accompanied by changes in the rhythm of the electrical current of the brain) – *grand mal* involves loss of consciousness, and convulsions; *petite mal* lasts for only a few seconds, with partial loss of consciousness.' 'Ancient doctors, in particular Hippocrates, recognised the importance of diet in the treatment of this disease, and since then all kinds of conflicting diets have been concocted. Some definite conclusions can be drawn from certain facts, however. Epileptics are generally hearty eaters and bulimics: cutting down on food therefore diminishes the number of epileptic fits. A vegetarian diet, or particularly a milk diet lessens the frequency of fits in the majority of cases.']

...Down syndrome affects one in 700 people. Usually not inherited, it is the most common cause of mental retardation. The culprit is an extra chromosome – trisomy 21 – which forms at conception when either the egg or the sperm misdivides. A person with Down syndrome has 47 instead of 46 chromosomes. The presence of this extra chromosome affects the whole body, impairing motor skills and muscle tone along with mental capacity. [60%] of babies born with Down syndrome also have a heart defect, typically a hole in the heart... The syndrome was identified late last century, but it is only in the last 20 years that health professionals have realised the potential of early intervention, says the national co-ordinator of the [NZ] Down Syndrome Association... "There is a huge difference in the skills of younger people with Down syndrome who have the benefit of early intervention,"... Between 2 and 3[%] of all pregnancies result in some congenital abnormality. These range from the very severe to something relatively benign, like having an extra finger... • [In]... Minnesota... a mother... [d]istraught over her infant son's birth defect... shot the baby and killed her husband and herself, saying in a note [that it] did not want him to grow up deformed.

...Technology advances mean doctors must consider the point at which their care should be withdrawn when treating ill premature babies, says a report in the [NZ] *Medical Journal*. It says the continuing revolution in neonatal technology means more infants are surviving against the odds of "human viability." "A number of these infants are seriously disabled, others experiencing lingering and distressing medical complications... At what point, if any, does the prognosis of an individual become so poor that it is unacceptable to prolong life?" ...although the sanctity of human life is deemed to have a value exceeding all other considerations, "...could there be qualities of life that hold less value than death?" The report says the predicted quality of life for a seriously ill or disabled infant is rarely questioned. It says it seems the choice for or against treatment should not be seen as between the "absolute" right or wrongs but rather as occurring between the "greater and lesser goods and harms."

...The hearing industry has bought into the stigma attached to deafness by trying to design smaller and less-visible hearing aids. "They got so small in the end, there was nothing in them," says... [the] director of audiology for the Swiss hearing instrument company Phonak, who was in Auckland this week to introduce the latest digitally programmable and remote-controlled hearing instruments. Phonak's new devices are still small, fitted either in or behind the ear, with a palm-sized hand control, but large enough to contain a computer chip and a system of directional microphones. The trump card, exclusive to Phonak, is... "audio-zoom." Thousands of [USers] who had been fitted with other hearing aids in the previous two years identified their biggest problem as conversation in large rooms. [A US] psychologist and market researcher... found a 92[%] level of satisfaction with available hearing devices in a one-on-one situation. But in a group conversation, such as around a dinner table in a restaurant, only 26[%] were satisfied with their level of hearing. The audio-zoom system involves two microphones, one pointing to the front, the most likely source of what should be heard, and one to the back. Tiny computers discriminate between the received sounds, enhancing the quality and volume in the front microphone and filtering out background noise in the other. Wearers, including... [the] patron of the Deaf Association in... [NZ – where about 400,000 people] have some sort of hearing problem and up to 50,000 are so badly affected they need to use hearing aids or sign language... – ...report an "incredible" hearing difference... [□ A Statistics NZ] study proves once and for all that people with disabilities make up a significant part of the population... What constituted a disability was defined according to the... WHO[, which] defines it as any restriction or lack of ability to perform in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being. Disabilities identified in the study could include anything from occupational overuse syndrome to spina bifida. The important criterion was that the disability was long-term... Initial results show that nearly one in five... live with the long-term effects of a disability. Many are elderly – one in two people aged 65 and over reported some form of disability. That compared with 17[%] of people aged 15 to 64 and 12[%] of children under 5... The Government Statistician... said the... findings were similar to recent surveys in Canada and A[US] but detailed results would not be available until next June. They will cover the nature and severity of people's disabilities, the underlying cause and details of social characteristics. "The survey results will also include information about the use of, and unmet need for, special equipment and support services... in education, employment, housing, transport, health services and home help."

...Provided back-up care is available most health professionals agree that home is the best place for sick children[, which is the reason behind]... the Middlemore Hospital mobile care team. The seven nurses of the team travel to the homes of children recently discharged from hospital to check their progress, set up contacts with doctors and other caregivers, and administer medication... [T]he travelling nurses were visiting on average 9.2 children each day... Without the home visits the children would have to be back at Middlemore for daily check-ups, and might have had to stay in hospital longer. The visits also relieve some of the pressure on the hospital, which dealt with overflowing waiting rooms and full paediatric wards throughout winter... Often the children visited by the nurses were quite sick, but generally the parents felt comfortable about looking after them at home because they knew a health professional would be visiting regularly. For the nurses it was a case of weighing up whether the family could look after the sick child, and ensuring that they knew the signs to look for if the illness deteriorated. "If we are not happy with how a child is going we can fast track them back into hospital,"... Children's health could deteriorate quickly, and... 10[%] of the discharged patients were readmitted.

...Middlemore Hospital is among more than 20 Australasian hospitals which admit using bodies of newly deceased patients to train doctors... in resuscitation skills. The issue has caused huge debate among the health profession and is expected to similarly spark public feeling. The clinical head of Middlemore's emergency department... last night said that using deceased patients as a teaching tool was valuable but had to be done extremely sensitively. "There's a certain amount of teaching that goes on over a newly deceased body, but there has to be a limit to what's appropriate. If it is something that can be done briefly and is non-invasive, doesn't mutilate the body or affect coroner results, then it may be appropriate to do." ...None of the 22 hospitals which used the bodies sought consent from patient's families... Most... believed the practice was ethical[– even though]... there were now simulators and manikins[, which replicate 'human responses to operations and medical emergencies'.] available for training doctors... [● NZ]'s first bone bank has opened for business in Auckland – but you have to be dead to make a large deposit. The bone bank, run in conjunction with the Auckland Regional Blood Services, wants donors to bequest their bones for use in orthopaedic

surgery... Previously, surgeons used bones from overseas, which were costly and difficult to obtain, or synthetic material, when treating such common afflictions as bone cancer or performing hip-replacement operations... Post-operative discarded bone was already stored... Although some people might regard the collection of dead people's bones as ghoulish... the bone banks would save people's lives... Any bones taken for the bank would be replaced with a reconstructed plastic model so the body appears undisturbed... Donated whole bones are tested for a range of diseases such as Aids, the marrow extracted and the remaining "calcium scaffolding" frozen at -80 deg C. Other bones are made into powder, chips or wedges for bone reconstruction... These products are freeze dried. Using bone rather than a synthetic product in an operation was preferable as the bone implant attracted other bone cells, which assisted the healing process.

...*Kidney bank would aid donor hunt* Doctors are investigating setting up a national pool of live kidney donors amid controversy over an Auckland[er]'s cash bid for a new organ. This was confirmed by an Auckland Hospital renal physician... to whom [the 29-year-old... [w]as... referred for dialysis treatment at the end stage of renal failure. [The 29-year-old] sparked heated debate with an offer in the *N[Z] Herald*... to pay \$10,000 for a kidney to keep him off expensive publicly funded dialysis. The Government has ruled out any such trade, which is also prohibited by W[HO] guidelines, so Mr [29-year-old] is considering about 20 offers of free organs. Although doctors say they would not dismiss out of hand offers from strangers, there were only three cases in the decade to 1994 of transplants from other than blood relatives. All involved people related by marriage. Most transplants come from people who die of brain failure while on life-support systems, but only 35 donors were available from this source last year, contributing 70 kidneys to a waiting list of about 290 patients. About 40[%] of families choose not to authorise donations when a relative dies and the Health Ministry is urging would-be donors to make their intentions clear to their families... Mr [29-year-old], who is making arrangements to start dialysis treatment next week, has... confirmed his cash offer for a kidney followed reluctance by family members to donate an organ, but said [it] respected their wishes and was anxious not to put pressure on them. "Everyone else in N[Z] has the right to say 'No', so why can't they?" ...Some dialysis patients have expressed concern that Mr [29-year-old] is trying to "jump the queue" for transplants but others have voiced support, pleased that his novel bid... brought the shortage of donors to public attention.

...a recipient of a transplanted kidney which is now failing, says recent offers by two fellow sufferers to pay for a kidney should prompt a drive for more donors instead... [W]hile the risks associated with donating a kidney are quite low, it is... hard logically to justify [seeking] living kidney donors without first making a concerted effort to use the many perfectly good kidneys which are buried and cremated each year. The operation to remove the organs is probably simpler, the efficiency is doubled, the risks to the donor are nil[] and it means death can provide a *new lease of life*.

...Matthew Howard was killed after being hit by a car while riding his bicycle near his home in Essex. The 11-year-old who insisted on carrying a donor card has given a new lease of life to as many as 40 people.'

...A 72-year-old former MP is enjoying a new lease of life – studying the ancient art of homoeopathy[], which... involves the use of liquid and cream remedies to cure diseases, injuries and other health problems. It dates back centuries in Europe and has found favour with the royal family... [(The 'discipline originated by the Swiss citizen called Hahnemann – who claimed his distilled water retained "vibrations" of substances that were once in contact with it – also found favour with Himmler, who directed tests of homeopathic remedies to be used on more than 100 prisoners at Dachau concentration camp. These unfortunates were purposely inoculated with tuberculosis bacteria and a variety of deadly blood infections, then given the experimental medications. The results were disastrous'.)] The 72-year-old, who] will today gain a diploma from the Auckland College of Classical Homoeopathy after five years of study... said his studies had given him personal satisfaction by helping others to help themselves... "Homoeopathy is a method where you help stimulate the body's immune system... rather than use antibiotics and other drugs." ...the [former]National MP... now expects to spend more time using his new skills. [And] will need it. A consultation can take as long as 2 1/2 hours. "You can't diagnose a person's problems in five minutes. It takes time to reach into that person."

...Herbology is the practice of using whole plant remedies to relieve symptoms, tone organs and stimulate the body's healing powers. It has been used since ancient times... Practitioners are naturopaths or herbalists... Avoid prolonged use without professional supervision... Some herbs[are] unsafe in pregnancy... See your doctor for proper diagnosis. - 1996

...twelve years ago... [a guy] from Hampshire... was diagnosed as... suffer[ing] from... irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), a... condition which affects an estimated 12 million people in the U.K. alone... 'The doctors didn't seem to know much about the condition. I was told simply to eat less fibre. For more than ten years I put up with debilitating pain to the point of almost being hospitalized'... Orthodox treatment for IBS is either antispasmodic drugs to control the muscles of the intestine, or bulking agents... which help material pass through the intestine. These can suppress symptoms, but are not a long-term cure. However, sufferers are now claiming that by taking a daily dose of the bitter-tasting extract of the... cactus-like... aloe vera plant, they have cured the problem permanently... Although aloe juice has been readily available for many years, converts believe it is medicine's best-kept secret... [Yet] a doctor with Britain's National Health Service, for many years a staunch supporter of orthodox medicine, says: 'Last year a patient asked me if I had heard of aloe vera as a healing agent. I ordered all current research on it and was astonished to find 39 out of the 40 research papers were positive...' ...Last year [the 33-year-old]'s wife... recommended aloe vera, having heard from friends that it could help... 'I was having a painful attack. After a few minutes I had this warming sensation as the aloe vera went down. It seemed to soothe the tension and the spasm disappeared'. [The 33-year-old] took a tablespoon of aloe every day for four months. As his symptoms didn't recur, [the 33-year-old] cut the dose down to a tablespoon every other day. 'The relief is marvellous... For the first time in ten years I can eat what I like'.

...[the patient] looked uneasily at the 2.5cm sardine swimming in a handful of water in a plastic bag... [Someone] dressed in saffron robes grabbed the fish, placed a bead of yellow paste in its mouth and deftly popped it down... [the patient's throat. The patient – who] came all the way from Srinagar... about 1800km to the north[, and had]... stood in line for two days[– believes]... this unconventional treatment... is a miracle cure. Every June, on a date chosen by astrologers, asthma patients from all over India show up at a house in Hyderabad to receive the free treatment... This year, police... estimated that 500,000 were in the line snaking through a rabbit warren of city lanes. The federal Government operated a dozen special trains; Indian Airlines flew a special planeload of patients from New Delhi... The family that organises the one-day annual event says a Himalayan saint revealed the formula to an ancestor 152 years ago, in gratitude for being given dry clothes and food on a rainy day. "I don't know how it works. Perhaps it [i]s God's blessing," said... one of the five brothers who knows the secret. The [brothers] refuse to give anyone, not even medical researchers, the formula, for fear it will be used for profit. They say the saint warned that the remedy would lose its potency if it were commercialised. Family members refuse any payment. Instead they pool money earned as landlords, farmers and office workers to raise the 40,000 rupees... needed every year to buy the herbs stuffed into the fish. After swallowing the live fish, patients are advised to begin a strict 45-day diet that requires them to consume 25 different foods – including lamb, old rice, white sugar, dried mango, spinach and clarified butter – and abstain from alcohol, caffeine, tobacco or any deep-fried food. They must repeat the treatment for at least two successive years. [One of the brothers claims 90%] of patients are cured, but... offers no evidence. Those queuing were unconcerned with scientific proof. They simply wanted to breathe freely.

...ROLL up, roll up, do yourself a favour. Take home this magic elixir which for a small consideration will cure everything from warts to whooping cough. The quacks who flourished in fair-grounds 100 [years] ago were well aware of the public's desire for a quick-fix remedy. Today... the same whiff of quackery exploiting human credulity lurks around the many health food shops which have sprung up in almost every shopping centre, and around the rows of vitamins and mineral supplements on the shelves of virtually every supermarket. Up to half of N[Z]ers say they've used some sort of vitamin, mineral or herbal supplement at least once in the past year... While conventional medicine continues to complain there is

no scientific evidence the[y]... work, there's a growing trend for people to buy them, and a corresponding increase in reputable research that backs many supplements... [But t]he... head of Otago Medical School's Human Nutrition Department... is... concerned by the herbal supplements available which... have the potential for lethal results. "There's no scientific evidence for... any... benefit... If you've got money to spare from buying Lotto tickets, you could spend it on supplements. But unlike Lotto, the herbal supplements might kill you." Royal Jelly, for example, hit the headlines in A[US] recently when a coroner decided an asthmatic... died because of taking one capsule... [The coroner urged AUS]n health authorities to ban sales of Royal Jelly... In... [NZ] bottles of Royal Jelly warn people not to try the substance if they suffer from asthma. Other vitamins, however, are not as well marked. The American Dietetic Association has warned that the trace mineral selenium, which one European study showed could reduce prostate and bowel cancers by up to 45% can also be toxic if more than five times the recommended daily allowance is taken. That's the sort of useful information you'd probably hope to get from your GP in an ideal world. But if the GP dismisses all such supplements as a load of hokum, self-dosing could lead you into trouble. The relationship between pharmaceutical-based medicine and the use of vitamins and herbs as well, or instead of, proprietary drugs, remains basically in standoff mode, regardless of what research has been done... [The NZ] General Practitioners Association chair[perso]n... dismisses as unfair criticism by [a]health food lobbyist... who told [local]health food proponents recently that doctors only have time to read drug companies' literature and... don't look at other research[– but goes on to] say... doctors are brought up in the scientific method and place a lot of credence on reputable journals... They don't have time to read the "little pamphlets" put out, frequently, by health food companies. [The chairperson] agrees people are turning increasingly to herbal and vitamin remedies, but says that usually happens after they've tried conventional medicine and it's failed. [The chairperson is] underwhelmed by any possible benefits... "You can have herbal remedies for insomnia, and that makes someone go to sleep... [but i]t's difficult to say whether or not that's just a placebo effect. I'd agree there are lots of situations where herbal remedies have a small role to play. But... [you] don't get herbal remedies for heart failure."

...A nun who studied medicine and botany... has been the guiding light behind a range of herbal remedies... WHEN people came to Mt Eden[s] medical herbalist... last winter with a particularly debilitating flu, [the herbalist] gave them "marupa," a fragrant concoction of houhere, kareao, kawakawa, manuka, pinatoro, rata, tarata and tawa. Asthma, bronchitis, chest colds, sore throats and coughs also respond well to marupa... The remedy has a long history. Its original source is the branch of Maori medicine called wairakau, literally "tree-water," which was taken up and adapted with great success last century by a Roman Catholic missionary nun, Suzanne Aubert. The original formula for marupa was Aubert's own... Aubert was born in France in 1835 and suffered an accident at the age of two which left her a sickly child. But her suffering and an invalid childhood resulted in a strong compassion towards the sick, especially children, in later life. [Aubert] trained as a nurse... and came to [NZ, where the nun] founded the order of the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion. In Wellington and later Jerusalem, on the Wanganui River, [Aubert] worked closely with Maori, who shared with her their traditional knowledge of the medicinal properties of bark and berry, root, leaf and stem from the indigenous flora. Aubert's medicines, with their pigeon Maori names, a la Francais, became immensely popular with Maori and Pakeha alike and were credited with saving many lives... Aubert destroyed her original recipes before... [dying], but many of the herb combinations... used were remembered and [the Mt Eden herbalist] was given permission by the Order, now known as the Sisters of Compassion[,] to produce tinctures based on this remaining knowledge. In return [the herbalist] has pledged a 10[%] tithe on all [of her] sales, to go to the Order.

...TO the growing number of traditional Maori healers, now practising in 186 clinics around [NZ] and serving... 400,000 people, the Western preoccupation with conventional drug treatment leaves [patients with no option but to seek out alternative cures]. "In Western style medicine you give drugs to cover up the symptoms – then wait until the condition gets bad enough for surgery," says [a healer] from Piki Ora, the traditional Maori health clinic at... Hoani Waititi Marae, Glen Eden... The Maori approach to health is a far more holistic one. There are four branches of healing in the Maori tradition, dealing with spirit, mind, body and extended family and environment. Each aspect is considered equally important and no... healer expects to restore health to anyone without addressing all four... The Maori concept of health is more than an absence of illness... Health is a positive feeling of the energy running through the body. The word Hauora carries the meaning of health within it... The first syllable "ha" means breath and "u" symbolises the entering of the breath into the body... "O" was the old name for kai, or food... And "ra" is the sun. Health... is associated with light, a pure white light called "ma." "...health or the absence of health begins with the spirit, moves into thought forms and into the person's belief system. Ultimately, it reflects in attitudes which are expressed in some physical form." ...prayers, said at the beginning of every consultation acknowledge the spiritual aspect of the patient. There may also be an acknowledgement or discussion of spiritual beliefs: if the belief in the laws of tapu, for example, are powerful and dominant, and a tapu has been broken, there will almost certainly be an affect on physical health. Moemoea are dreams, and the interpretation of a dream can also be significant. [In]Makakite, or psychic healing, [the]... healer might... "see" a patient's cancer and be able to link specific tumours with events or aspects of her life. "We believe everyone has this intuition... The healer is just the tool, an open channel for connecting with the spirit of the ancestors and moving beyond to the realms of the Atua, or Gods." Such healing is never "sold" because it is seen to come from the Gods... Taha hinengaro, the second aspect of Maori healing, which deals with the mind, is far less other-worldly. Its basic tool is waha korero or speaking out... Taha tinana deals with the physical aspects of health, in hugely varied ways... [One is] rongoa (health practices including herbal medicines); another... is mirimiri... incorporat[ing] a range of massage and manipulations. Massage is carried out with the hands – or feet – and sometimes with sticks and stones. [Other]times, one stone is held over the point and tapped with another to create both pressure and sound. There is even a Maori form of Tai Chi, called manawa pou[, that]... offers... health benefits... [to] the elderly, in particular, by "getting them out in the sun, gently moving the body and increasing the flow of the breath." ...The resurgence of interest in... Maori healing is reflected in the membership of Nga Ringa Whakahaere o te Iwi Maori, the equivalent of a medical association. Acceptance of the important role traditional healers can play is also being increasingly acknowledged. The Central Regional Health Authority led the way by contracting a traditional Maori health clinic, in August 1995. Clinics like Piki Ora, in West Auckland, certainly do not have to advertise for clients.

...most South African blacks... see... a Western-style doctor only for X-rays, immunisations, broken bones and the like. For most ailments, physical or spiritual, [they] visit... an indigenous healer who relies on herbs, ancestors and ancient folklore for... cures... [Typically, such healers will] lift a goatskin bag, press... it to [their] forehead and tap... it on each knee before spilling the contents on the floor. [Next, they] poke... a stick at the scattered bits of bone, shell, ivory and coins to form... [their diagnosis. In one healer's] home... herbs, branches and other ingredients are stored in dusty bottles, bags and jugs on the floor. Perhaps the most unusual object in the room is a certificate on the wall. It is from Thamba Administrators Ltd, and means that a visit to [this "doctor"] now may be covered under certain medical insurance schemes. Ever since democratic elections ended white rule in 1994, the government has pledged to incorporate the estimated 200,000 traditional African healers into the formal health delivery system, which includes some of the best health care in the world. The problem is that traditional healers... – ...70 to 80% of... [whom] are functionally illiterate... – ...attend no special school, are not licensed and have no written body of knowledge... [Consequently, m]ost Western doctors scoff at what they consider the unhygienic and unscientific practices of indigenous medicine... ■ [The conflict that]... has raged between advocates of traditional science and of alternative healing... [is] one of the most heated but overlooked battles... of modern medicine... Into the breach comes... a physician and author who is fast emerging as a family doctor to America. Only a physician who trained in medicine's mainstream could credibly question its methods. And [the 55-year-old] studied in the most mainstream place possible: Harvard Medical School. While there, [the physician] conducted some of the earliest lab studies of marijuana and concluded that there are no bad plants, just inexperienced users. Later

[it] travelled to South America to study medicinal flora. "Local healers were using these marvellous plants... and established medicine had never even heard of many of them." [The physician] began preaching the word of alternative medicine (though downplaying his pot position of old). Now that word has been heard. *Spontaneous Healing*, published in 1995, has sold more than a million copies, and his latest book, *8 Weeks to Optimum Health*, has become a best-seller as well... The extraordinary thing about [hi]s medical gospel – a liturgy of nutrition and life-style tips – is its ordinariness. That has not stopped some doctors from arguing that woefully little science documents the value of much that [the 55-year-old prescribes. The 55-year-old] responds with an olive branch. "Mainstream medicine handles some things quite well – particularly emergencies... But when it comes to helping the body stay healthy, alternative methods are the way to go." ...many Americans are going with him.

...Since his landmark book *Spontaneous Healing* was translated into 22 languages, th[e] acclaimed botanist and champion of... alternative medicine has been in big demand... "I wanted a medical education and a medical degree, I never saw myself becoming a practitioner. I'd had a great time as an undergraduate, so I was shocked to find the teaching in medical school so narrow. You could see people losing their diversity over the course of the four years – their whole focus became centred on disease, not health. I was interested in how else you could 'do' medicine... that's when I began travelling." The worldwide quest for information in medicinal plants, altered states of consciousness and alternative healing that started in 1969, would span over a decade. Undoubtedly, part of the considerable folklore built up around his work today can be attributed to the fact that [the botanist] operates like a slightly rotund Indiana Jones – trudging through the hinterlands of Colombia in search of a powerful Shaman (medicine [doctors] mostly just out for fame and fortune) or dabbling with PCP (angel dust)... With a writing style that blends crisp doses of science and infectious jabs of humour, Dr Feelgood may not read off the wall – but whether [the botanist] looks off the wall is another chapter altogether. If it wasn't for the firm traces of sanity shrouding that signature beard and smile, one could be forgiven for thinking the only reason [the botanist] missed the recent Hale-Bopp tour party was because his Nike sneakers were at the cleaners. "I think that's part of my appeal too. Y'know, the way I look – yet I've got two degrees from Harvard. In America, two things happening at the same time have also created an audience for this. The first is this economic collapse of the medical system. The second is that the consumer trend toward natural medicine has now reached a point where it is a significant political and economic force that can't be ignored any longer." And the [botanist's] diagnosis? Patient – heal thyself. An elaborate healing system already exists in the body, a system capable of repairing wounds, renewing bones and, most importantly, correcting glitches in our DNA blueprint that, if left uncorrected, could germinate into cancers and other diseases. By modifying diet and lifestyle, we can all increase our body's innate healing potential, enabling "spontaneous healing" to occur... "In the last 100 years or so, western medicine has turned it's back on nature and lost sight of the fact that healing really has it's origins in the natural world. We're so dazzled by technology that we've lost that perspective. There's also a lot of nonsense out there in the world of alternative medicine – the challenge is to sort it all out and take from it what we can use." Aside from the crippling cost, [his] most damning critique of conventional medicine lies in it's betrayal of the patient through what [the botanist] called "medical hexing!" – ...doctors telling patients there's nothing they can do for them or that they're not going to get better... The [person] named in *Time* magazine as one of 1997's 25 most influential Americans, has a simple message. "...Most of the diseases that kill or disable people prematurely are diseases of lifestyle, and you've got to look at all aspects of it. I'm not rejecting conventional medicine or telling people they have to become vegetarians or live in caves. I am saying 'more... broccoli... walk more!' Most of my work could fly under the banner of common sense – plus good information." There is good money in good information. Paid a million dollars up front to write *Spontaneous Healing*, his sixth book, does [the botanist] ever feel like something of a modern day Shaman, lost in a jungle of self-help hustlers? "I'm not very comfortable with celebrity and I'm not going to keep grinding out books for the sake of it... There were a lot of periods when I was very lonely in my work. Money was tight. But through it all I stuck to what I was saying. Looking back now, it... definitely feels like I'm on some kind of path that you could say is not entirely of my own choosing... I'm looking forward to getting back to the University of Arizona." Indeed, [in two months] the department of Integrative Medicine – "his baby" – will launch it's inaugural fellowship programme to train qualified doctors in the best of both worlds.

...In the last 100 years it is the application of science more than any other activity that has, for better or worse, transformed our world. Science is a discipline by which we seek to explain the world around us... In medical science general ideas have been built up about the way the human body works, how it becomes ill, and the way it is treated. As these are tested so it becomes clear that there are sub-groups which need special attention. In medical science the individual differences are considered more important than in other scientific fields. Humans think, rightly, that humans as individuals are more important than tulips. By contrast with medical science, the general medical practitioner approaches the patient as an individual with individual needs... At first sight there would not seem to be any conflict between the interest of the medical scientist, the GP, or the sick patient, but there is. The sick patient has a very personal want to be healthy without necessarily understanding why they are ill, while medical science offers a range of general treatments, of greater or less effectiveness, to populations at large. The GP in the middle must make the diagnosis and prescribe suitable treatment for the particular person. However, the GP, while trying to do good, can also do harm. The clearest example is in the prescription of antibiotics. GPs very commonly prescribe antibiotics – sometimes for relatively trivial illnesses – without knowing the organisms responsible for the illness and therefore whether the drug will be useful. In treating the want of the patient the doctor has met the feelings of personal need without detailed consideration of the medical need. Basically the GP hopes that the patient will get better according to nature's way and, maybe or maybe not, the drug will help. This approach to prescription contributes to about 20 million doses of penicillin-type antibiotics and about 10 million oxytetracycline-type antibiotics being prescribed to N[Z]ers every year... A consequence of this approach world-wide is that some of our most valuable antibiotics have been retired early and... some patients are now dying because there are no equally effective replacements... A GP of my childhood had a prescription for a general purpose "Pink Medicine." Whenever we were ill, for whatever reason it seemed, we were dosed with the Pink Medicine. This not unpleasant concoction probably did little... [but n]obody with any involvement in or knowledge of medical science doubts the importance of the psychological component in illness. Doctors have understood this from their professional experience for generations. Perhaps the clearest examples are the studies of the effectiveness of pain-killers. In these it was shown that some doctors obtained consistently better results with sugar solution (placebos) than others did with proved drugs. Hence the requirement that all new therapies be tested by double-blind experiments in which neither doctor nor patient knows whether a real drug or placebo is being given. But the point is... it was only by such formally conducted experiments... made by medical science teams, that we distinguish useful from useless treatments and the extent of the emotional component in any particular illness and its treatment. The danger to the community is that doctors themselves do not make a clear distinction between useful therapy treatments and their emotional support... Homeopathy is an example. Anecdotal reports of success by patients and their doctors using homeopathic remedies will almost certainly be shown to be mistaken when these measures are subjected to the rigour of double-blind tests... No doubt there are actually useful ancient remedies such as the old herbals. But it... pay[s] for us to know which are useful and which are useless lest we be treated by a good doctor only with a gentle touch, when what we want is a good doctor... who also has a useful drug.

...Auckland cancer researchers are optimistic of a drug breakthrough which spares patients harsh side-effects. The Cancer Society Research Laboratory is testing a drug which kills cancer cells by starving them... For the past year the drug, called DMXAA, has been given to patients in Auckland and... Britain. U[S] giant Parke Davis has first rights to the drug if it is deemed a breakthrough... Qualified success might come later this year... when first-stage clinical trials finished... [T]ypical stage-one trials went for two years, with a new patient joining the programme every fortnight. Patients usually had a variety of cancers... DMXAA cut the blood supply to cancer cells, causing them to run out of energy and die. The drug also sparked the immune system to wipe out any remaining cancer growths... Despite the possibility of success, [the]... laboratory director...

said it was unwise to think scientists had the upper hand. "Many cancers have learned to survive. The body's natural defences are always killing cells before they become serious so the ones that do develop into cancers have somehow toughened themselves. They can also change under different circumstances but we always hope there is some weakness we can tap into."

...*Immunity lost with constant drip of poison...* A remote island destroyed by a ferocious hurricane (6,000 killed) in 1900 lies at the end of Interstate 45 in Texas, an hour from Houston, past the space centre... The only sights of significance are the white ellipses: discs of stored gas, nestling close by their spindly flame-topped parents in Texas City. The sky rests overhead, a blanket of orange sulphurous excrement lit by the dimming sun. The refined skyline of "Toxic" City drifts for miles. There are stories of unusual brain cancers in the area. The *Houston Chronicle* reports the dissemblings from the British defence minister about the use of organophosphate pesticides around British forces in the Gulf War. There is justifiable alarm about the figures. More than 4,000 ill, perhaps as many as 100 dead, and children with birth defects. All these chemicals, what do they do? Can they cause tumours to sprout? Do they insidiously disable? Some say they do. There is a modern diagnosis for their subtle effects: multiple chemical sensitivity. Clinical ecologists suggest repeated tiny exposures (or a single heavy exposure, as in the Gulf War) can sensitise our immune systems into decline. Once sensitised, they argue, we become intolerant to the huge range of synthetic chemicals we employ to ease our, and our governments' vanities: perfumes, exhaust fumes, natural gas, food additives and preservatives, and chemicals in clothes, carpets and building materials. It's a 20th century disease for a 20th century phenomenon. Physicians flinch at this sort of thing. How can there be a "disease" when the [myriad of] symptoms... simply go on and on, refusing to organise themselves into any clear pattern? Despite the amused scepticism of orthodox medicine, multiple chemical sensitivity has an American Academy (of Environmental Medicine, made up of physicians and osteopaths) to promote it and a celebrity doctor to shout for it. Sitting in his Environmental Health Centre in Dallas, [the celebrity] claims to have treated a hardly trivial 20,000 patients. [The celebrity] explains away this vast cache of human disease with disarming simplicity. Not only do we develop symptoms when our immunity collapses with toxic overload, but ironically, because of our addiction to pollutants, we also experience withdrawal symptoms... More orthodox medical colleagues will have nothing to do with it, of course. The American Medical Association has ridiculed this hokum (as it sees it). Its leaders accuse the so-called ecologists of clouded understanding, relying on junk science published by third-rate journals, and applying the label of multiple chemical sensitivity when no condition exists... And yet people remain ill. So somehow I... [- the] editor of *Lancet* [-] ...cannot accept that pesticides, sprays and gases are the harmless accoutrements of today's life.

...Two Auckland public health specialists have challenged their colleagues to take a broader view of the real threats to human health, drawing a prickly response from the prestigious British medical journal the *Lancet*. In their book, *Public Health at the Crossroads*, [the] Professor... and Associate Professor... [from the] Auckland Medical School, say public health practitioners are too narrowly focused on disease eradication and on medical studies which ignore the social and global origins of disease... The journal acknowledges that clinical epidemiology may sometimes be too narrow in focus but concludes that reorienting public health to social and global issues may just "muddy the water." "Woolly breadth will help no one," the editorial declares. [However, the] Professor... rejects the charge of "woolly breadth," saying public health is much more than the medical specialty implied by the editorial. Physicians who have campaigned against nuclear weapons have enjoyed success... and public health professionals working with environmentalists and climatologists raised concerns about global warming, which turns out to be a major health issue. "Public health specialists have a particular role because they have a population perspective for whole countries. But it is easier to elucidate the finer points of new risk factors for coronary heart disease than to study global warming." The] Professor... is critical of "the extremely disappointing performance" of the W[HO] in recent years. "A block of small countries can dominate the WHO and ensure that local concerns are given priority." That can mean WHO resources are misdirected to satisfy the short-term priorities of member governments, while problems affecting huge numbers of people go untackled. "We spend more money on preventing 500,000 maternal deaths a year than on preventing 10 million cardiovascular deaths. The major killers are not infectious diseases but chronic diseases." Those chronic diseases are not given priority because they are seen as affecting rich countries. But poor countries are affected by them too... The health needs of the population will change dramatically over the next two decades... Non-communicable diseases are expected to cause seven out of every 10 deaths in [First World] countries within the next 20 years, compared with under half now... The impact these changes will have on our future is obvious. The number of beds, numbers of staff, facilities and even future organisation structures will need to be revisited as the focus of priorities change...

Cancer Genes Revisited... CANCER RESEARCHERS AREN'T ACCUS-tomed to breakthroughs, but three years ago, they thought they had scored a big one. That's when scientists revealed they had found and begun mapping the first of two genes that appeared to be behind most cases of inherited breast cancer. Suddenly it seemed possible that a [gal]'s odds of getting the disease might be determined by simply scanning her genetic schematic. Thousands of U.S. [gals] with a family history of breast cancer rushed to take blood tests designed to look for the rogue genes. Of those who tested positive, as many as 20% underwent prophylactic mastectomies. In some cases that may have been premature. In papers published last week... investigators took a good look at the suspect genes and found them less guilty than originally charged... High-risk [gals] who have had preemptive mastectomies may not regret the decision, since the procedure can mean a 91% likelihood of remaining cancer free... [and e]ven if gene screening remains inconclusive, not everyone wants to toss the tests aside... For now, researchers say, the key may be to look at genetic testing not as form forecasting but as mere odds-making. As with all rolls of the dice, the outcome is never a sure thing.

...MENTION breast cancer and most [gals] dive into their bra cups to check for the first dreaded hint of an irregularity. But the message from... a survivor of three cancerous tumours in one breast, is "don't panic": Breast cancer is not always the death penalty [gals] presume it to be. The Christchurch mother of eight, including [a] former world triathlon champion... [whose sister was an] Olympic rower... has had three operations for the disease in the last two decades. Two of them occurred after [the mother of eight] had already lost her right breast and the glands in her armpit in what is known as a radical mastectomy. Yet [the 66-year-old] doesn't consider herself a victim. "I've been a lucky survivor...." Next month is international breast cancer awareness month, a time when scary statistics abound on the potential of "the big C". Breast cancer is the biggest killer of [NZ gals] aged under 50. Nearly a dozen... die of the disease per week; about one in 12... will get breast cancer during their lifetime and the rate is believed to be on the rise. Even that half of the population without real cleavage cannot escape this cancer: It is a little-known fact that 1% of sufferers are [guys]. Amid the gloom surrounding the disease... [doctors] say, overall, 70% of [gals] with breast cancer who get treatment will survive. Success rates vary, depending on how early the cancer is detected... [In the 66-year-old's] case it was fate rather than early detection... "I noticed one breast was standing right up. I... had no thought of breast cancer when I... mentioned it to another [gal] who I worked with and... [my colleague] made me ring a doctor... That was Thursday - by Tuesday I had a mastectomy... It was so quick I never thought I was going to die... I was 42 and there... was too much else to think about." ...Now [one of] her high-profile daughter[s]... is... promoting a nationwide 5km run/walk to raise money for breast cancer... the idea... [was] borrowed... from the U[S] where a series of fun runs has raised more than \$100 million towards research... Regular exercise, a low-fat diet and early detection are the keys to fighting the disease. A Norwegian study has found that [gals] who exercise at least four hours a week before the age of 40 can cut their breast cancer risk by one-third. [A co-promoter] hopes that will be an added incentive for [gals] to join the ANZ Race for a Cure in Christchurch on September 21, Wellington on October 5 and Auckland on October 19. So far, around 2000 have registered and [the co-promoter] hopes that will grow to 15,000...

THE Breast Cancer Foundation has emerged as a political lobbyist with its recent, highly publicised tour by... [a US radiologist] well-known as a vociferous advocate of breast cancer screening for [gals] younger than 50, against the trend to discourage mammography in this age group. Earlier this year, the National Institute of Health in the US held a conference to review the evidence for screening this younger age group. By an 11-2

decision, it stated there was insufficient evidence to recommend screening. People who disagreed with this assessment have since successfully lobbied the National Cancer Institute to have the decision over-ruled. In scientific circles, this debacle has caused consternation that a time-honoured scientific method could be overturned by ill-informed politicians and emotive lobbyists. In [NZ, the radiologist is maintaining it] has evidence the conference didn't see, but [the USer] gave testimony to the conference... [It] claims there is a 16% reduction in deaths among [gals] who start screening when they are in their 40s. The trouble is the conference said this small benefit only shows up after 10 to 16 years of screening, that is, after [gals] have reached their 50s. So it is not clear whether it is the screening before 50 or after 50 that is doing any good. Against this, screening young [gals] can do harm. Because the technique is less accurate in young [gals] there are more unnecessary biopsies but fewer cancers are found. More mammograms means more radiation, and the possibility has been consistently raised of spreading cancer by compressing the breast in young [gals] who have more blood vessels. [The radiologist] is clever with figures, claiming on television that breast cancer is the greatest cause of death in [gals] in their 40s. So it is, but [gals] do not die often in this age group. Only four... in 1000 die from breast cancer in their 40s compared to 52 in 1000... over 50. There is more evidence to argue for screening [gals] over 64, the cut-off age for the proposed [NZ] programme, but I don't hear [the radiologist or the foundation] lobbying on behalf of these older, voiceless... [gals]. It is a worry that the [foundation] is promoting only one side of the debate. Especially since the foundation extracts large amounts of money out of the public and sponsors. My repeated requests to the [foundation] for information about what it does with this money has so far drawn a blank. When I went to the Companies Office I was told that trusts don't have to file accounts. I was referred back to the trust's accountant who failed to produce them, despite two letters asking. From other sources I found out that in the financial year ending March 31 1996, the foundation raised around \$150,000 from the public and over \$100,000 from sponsors. Last year's campaign listed 31 corporate sponsors, as well as gifts from trusts. Since that time [another sponsor] has donated \$250,000 and the planned "Race for the Cure" has 12 sponsors. This is a huge amount of money going into an organisation which resists accountability, and which seems to spend the money on media hooplas. I am not aware of the foundation funding any practical support for [people] who have breast cancer, some of whom are waiting months for treatment... In the US the money raised by the "Race for the Cure" goes into research, and that is the logical inference one would take from the title. Not so here. The small print in press releases reveals that the money will send "a member of the medical profession to train for one year at the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre in New York". Hardly a cure. Why should [NZ gals] pay for the training of health professionals? Is there anything to suggest that [NZ] physicians are deficient in their training? ...Is this the best use of [gals'] hard earned money? Once again, the activities of the [foundation] raise more questions than we are likely to get answers.

...A COLUMNIST who is rendering advice on life and death issues has an ethical obligation to provide accurate and factually correct information. I... an Associate Professor of Radiology at Harvard Medical School and Director of Breast Imaging at Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston... am surprised that... [a] *Sunday Star-Times* columnist... would write such a scathing column about my visit to N[Z]... Not only did [the columnist] not speak with me first to get her facts checked, but, to my knowledge... did not attend any of the 17 talks I gave... at the invitation of the [NZ] Cancer Foundation... Her assertion that, in [NZ, only 4 gals] in 1000 in their 40s die from breast cancer compared to 52 per 1000 for [gals over] 50... is the type of data manipulation that has been so misleading by comparing [gals] in a 10-year age span with all [gals] from age 50 to 80 and above... [If her comparisons were consistent... [the columnist] would find that [gals] in their 50s have only a slightly higher death rate compared to [those] in their 40s... Because of the "baby boomers", last year, in N[Z] as in the US, there were actually more [gals] diagnosed with breast cancer in their 40s, than... in their 50s... Finally, contrary to her assertion, I addressed the issue of screening... beyond the age of 65. I pointed out that there was no evidence that screening stops working at age 64. In the U[S] there is no upper limit on screening. It should be made clear to [NZ gals] that the 50-64 year age range for your upcoming national screening programme is either based on cost or outdated studies...

FOR some years I have been a bit of a lone voice locally, warning about hormone replacement therapy. For this stance I have been criticised as not serving [gals] well, expecting them to guts out the horrors of hot flushes and crumbling bones and spurn the salvation offered in the form of pills, patches and hormone implants. Now a succession of studies have vindicated my stance, although this does not give me pleasure as the news is discomfiting... The Collaborative Group on Hormonal Factors in Breast Cancer compared 52,705 [gals] with breast cancer with more than 100,000... who did not have breast cancer from 51 studies in 21 countries, including N[Z]. By analysing these very large numbers the study was able to conclude that after five years, the use of HRT increased the risk of breast cancer by 35%. This increase is related to duration of use and seems to disappear within five years of stopping HRT... The study mainly covered users of oestrogen alone, whereas most [NZ gals] use oestrogen with added progestogen. Earlier studies had shown an even greater risk of breast cancer among users of such combined therapy. Breast cancer is not the only problem with HRT shown in recent studies. Contrary to doctors' assertions, the progestogen added to HRT is often not enough to cancel the risk of endometrial cancer, and HRT, like the pill, doubles the risk of blood clots... Although the figures are hard to find out, around 20% of postmenopausal... [NZers] probably use hormones, and the cost to the country escalates every year. Some doctors are routinely sending [gals] at menopause off for bone scans to test the strength of their bones as a prelude to hormones. Almost invariably they are told they have "the bones of a 70-year-old", so, fearfully, they gobble up the hormones, not realising that the results of bone scans can vary from week to week, operator to operator, and even whether the [patient] was sitting or walking before... ha[ving] the scan done. Scientific reviews of bone scans in a number of countries have decided against population screening because of its inexactitude. And [gals] who think hormones will prevent fractures often do not realise they need to stay on them for decades, or lose the benefit when they stop. Breast cancer is a common, feared cancer among [gals,] and countries such as N[Z] are making major efforts to decrease deaths by promoting early detection. How illogical, then, to increase... risk by unnecessarily giving [gals] hormones. [Gals] on hormones are often told to have more mammograms, but mammography does not work well in [patients] on HRT because of increased breast density. Reducing unnecessary HRT use is probably the single biggest step that could have been taken to reduce the number of breast cases in N[Z] as little is known about other ways of preventing breast cancer... [while, for most gals], hot flushes are self-limiting, and if uncomfortable, not fatal... [By the way, b]reast cancer surgery is more successful if performed when a [patient] is at the most fertile phase of her menstrual cycle, says a report by the Royal Australasian College of surgeons.

...Medical researchers said yesterday they had developed a vaccine that targets breast cancer tumours before they become malignant, possibly making a new treatment for the disease... [T]he University of California, San Francisco, has applied to begin human trials within three years.

...Of 57 [NZers] studied with vulva cancer between 1965 and 1974, only one was under 50 years old[. In comparison, of 57 NZers] studied with the... rare type of... cancer between 1990 and 1994, 12 were under 50... Auckland researchers have started studying why vulva cancer is taking hold of younger generations, including [patients] in their late 20s. [A] Dr... from the Research Centre in Reproductive Medicine at National [Gals'] Hospital, said most younger [patients] got the cancer through a common [STD, whereas t]he cancer developed in older [patients] as part of ageing... generally [among those with] a history of a chronic skin disease... "It's unusual to see one type of cancer caused by two different ways. Academically it makes it a very, very interesting study." ...[the] research leader... said there had been a huge surge in the number of younger [patients] with the pre-cancerous condition, called VIN. "This is a new disease [in younger [patients]] and it... has gone up 10 times over the past 20 years. What's it going to be like in another two decades?" ...While researchers around the world had noted a rise in younger cases, N[Z] specialists were the first to come up with explanations. [The leader] said cancer was never caused by one single thing. [Patients] with the pre-cancerous condition were found to carry t[he] papilloma virus, were usually smokers or had low immune systems. The cancer symptoms include itching and a wart-like growth... Overseas researchers were trialing a vaccine to protect against the papilloma virus, which is also linked to cervical, penile and anal cancer.

...[NZers will] be among 430 high-risk families on an international bowel cancer registry as part of research into one of the Western world's main killers. The four-year project, based at the University of Queensland, has been awarded a \$4.4 million grant from the National Institutes of Health in the U[S]. There will be registry centres in six A[US]n cities and Auckland. [The head of the research team], who has already set up the Queensland Bowel Cancer Family Registry, said the medical profession had been slow to accept the genetic link in bowel cancer... [One NZ] family whose members had a high incidence of the disease were repeatedly told by their GPs that it was not hereditary.

...A new class of drugs known as "super aspirin" could help prevent and treat bowel cancer... The drugs[, which are]... 50 times more effective than aspirin in making [cancerous] cells kill themselves... have all the benefits of normal aspirin but none of the side-effects when taken in high doses, say British doctors... Regular aspirin has been shown to help prevent heart disease and bowel cancer, but used over a long period of time or in high doses it can cause ulcers or bleeding of the stomach lining.

...Cancer and cardiovascular diseases are two of the great medical problems of our time and it is exciting when products come along that may be of assistance... [T]he Michigan Medical Foundation announced in the "Journal of The National Cancer Institute" that a modified form of citrus pectin prevents the spread of prostate cancer in rats... The researchers believe that the compound may also inhibit the spread of other malignancies, including breast and lung cancers and melanoma. The researchers suggested that the ultimate goal may be to have... [everyone] take a modified citrus pectin supplement after the age of 30. Then, if a primary malignant tumour develops, they would be helping to protect themselves from the cancer cells spreading throughout the body... [Incidentally, guys] treated for testicular cancer have a 43[%] higher risk than average of contracting other types of cancer within 20 years... The metal-based drugs and radiation therapy used to treat the cancer are thought to be factors.

...Targeted blasts of radiation have proved more effective in treating... skull-base meningioma... than open surgery, according to a new study... Neurosurgeons at... the Stanford University School of Medicine... used a technique called LINAC radiosurgery, in which radiation is generated by a linear accelerator that rotates around the patient's head, delivering the radiation dose in a series of precisely computed arcs converging on the target... A meningioma is a relatively common and usually benign type of brain tumour, but it can cause seizures by putting pressure on adjacent brain structures and by irritating surrounding brain tissue. In many cases meningiomas are on the surface of the brain and are easily removed through surgery. But for meningiomas along the skull base, surgery has the risk of damaging cranial nerves or arteries... [In related news, a] Massey University research team has discovered a small compartment inside human nerve cells that determines whether such cells commit programmed "suicide." The discovery has widespread implications in the search for cancer cures, and for those trying to understand the triggers of mental illness. [The b]iochemist... who made the discovery, said it was believed the compartment, known as a "transport vesicle," was transported down the longest part of a nerve cell, carrying a signal which told each cell to stay alive. Some spinal motor nerve cells can be up to a metre long. Programming cell death was a form of deliberate suicide, the body's way of getting rid of unwanted cells. More nerve cells were created during development than were needed, and those which did not make the right connections were allowed to die. Normal nerve cells neither divided nor died through out life, but if they did, tumours such as childhood neuroblastomas could result. Some psychiatric and neurodegenerative disorders might also result from premature cell death... [The biochemist, who] began his research at the University of California in San Francisco... [and] has been at Massey for three years... has just been awarded a \$138,000 grant over three years from the Health Research Council.

...THE N[Z] medical research centre that earlier this year unveiled its breakthrough cancer vaccine has made another new discovery in cancer treatment. Wellington's Malaghan Institute has found that particular stimulation of the body's immune system allows it to fight disease more strongly and possibly sooner than it normally would. The research means the body could fight cancer more effectively and has implications for fighting many other diseases. The work is part of the institute's cancer immunotherapy programme... T-cells activate the immune system, but a protein called CTLA-4 turns off the t-cells. The research has shown that by using an antibody to the protein, CTLA-4 can be stopped from turning off the t-cells, therefore allowing the immune system to fight better. The institute[']s... director of research... is excited by the development, which will be published in the prestigious international *Journal of Experimental Medicine* later this month... [The director left NZ] last week on a six-week tour of Europe in an attempt to attract \$1.5 million... "The money will be essential in keeping us going, there is just not enough money in N[Z]."

...NZ] scientists have reported two potential breakthroughs in cancer treatment. Wellington researchers have identified an antibody which stimulates the body's immune system to fight cancer and other infectious diseases... The... Malaghan Institute of Medical Research... director of research... is in Europe, attempting to raise \$1.5 million to fund research. The present research is funded by the Cancer Society. The institute recently announced plans for clinical trials of a new cancer vaccine. Meanwhile, a South Island research team said it had moved a step closer to developing a cancer vaccine. Christchurch Hospital and Otago University have isolated white blood cells, known as dendritic cells, which trigger the immune system to recognise cancers and attack their proteins. The vaccine is made from a patient's own dendritic cells, purified with an antibody and combined with cancer proteins. The research leader... said [it] hoped the first human trial of the vaccine would take place this year.

...A research team has moved a step closer towards inventing a vaccine against cancer. The treatment being developed by Christchurch Hospital and Otago University... has fewer side-effects than current cancer treatments such as chemotherapy and radiotherapy... The method works on minute components of white blood cells... Because of their small quantity in the blood (0.1% of white blood cells) some scientists believed dendritic cells did not exist. But after 17 years of research, [the] team not only confirmed they existed but developed an antibody, called CMRF-44, which helps purify the cells so they can act more efficiently... The first human trial of [the] vaccine is expected to take place in N[Z] later this year.

...A new weapon in the fight against cancer[, which]... offers "extreme promise" with fewer side-effects than other therapies... should move out of the laboratory and into Wellington Hospital later this year... After three years of work at the Malaghan Institute of Medical Research... [- NZ]'s only independent medical research organisation, [which] is funded by donations and research grants... - ...researchers and hospital cancer specialists are about to start testing a process that involves modifying a particular type of cell to stimulate the immune system to fight the tumour. The... process involves removing dendritic cells from the patient and growing them to relatively large numbers before stimulating them with an antigen from the tumour. The "armed" cells are then replaced in the patient... Initial trials, which doctors hope will get ethical approval soon, will be with patients who have had chemotherapy but in whom some residual cancer remains.

...More than five million of... the... 10 million new... cancer cases occurring around the world each year are preventable, says an editorial in the *Medical Journal of A[US]*... "The single greatest barrier to improving the control of cancer is human behaviour;"... [The editorial claimed that] the critical point in cancer research had been passed. The main priority was to think strategically about gaining the benefit from what was already known... By 1980, controlled trials had shown that [gals] who had surgery for breast cancer could have their chance of survival improved with post-operative chemotherapy. By 1985, similar trials had shown that radiotherapy could prevent local recurrence of cancer in [gals] who had less than a total mastectomy. "However, evidence from breast cancer treatment surveys indicate that many [gals] who could have benefited from post-operative chemotherapy and radiotherapy were not receiving it up to a decade later... How long, then, will it take us to fully capitalise on the great discoveries in molecular biology and molecular genetics now being made?"

...[T]he folks at tiny Cell]-Pro, Inc... like most biotech researchers... prefer to toil far away from the gritty reality of illness and human suffering. So when the chief executive of their Bothell, Wash., company announced a year ago that [it] had developed a deadly lymphatic cancer and that his slim chance for survival might rest on their lab results, it was more than they'd bargained for. They already knew their company was fighting for survival, locked in a legal battle over patents with a competitor. Now they were also supposed to save their boss? [The boss didn']t mean to put pressure on his employees, but his life hung in the balance. At 49, the deceptively tanned and fit executive had... a rare case of advanced mantle-cell

lymphoma. Doctors told him the average life expectancy for the disease was 30 months, and indeed, his initial round of conventional chemotherapy was unsuccessful. But by coincidence, CellPro scientists were experimenting with a new way to boost the success rate of the very operation recommended for this type of cancer: a bone-marrow transplant. In one form of this procedure, doctors remove from the patient's bone marrow a supply of stem cells... and put them aside for safe-keeping. Then they use powerful doses of radiation and chemotherapy to destroy all the cancer cells in the blood – in the process, destroying the healthy blood cells as well. Finally, they try to rebuild the blood supply from scratch by reinfusing the patient with the original stem cells. Invariably, however, some cancer cells slip in with the stem cells. CellPro was working on a procedure that would reliably separate cancer cells from stem cells. If those cancer cells could be completely purged from the blood, the cancer might not recur. The problem was that CellPro's experiments were still in their infancy... First the stem cells were collected in an elaborate maze of plastic tubing, then they were purged of cancer cells – a confetti of malignant cells sticking to columns of coated beads like flies to flypaper. Unfortunately, the purging process wasn't eliminating all the cancer cells. The experiment seemed to be failing. Then, in a last-minute brainstorm, [the scientists] decided to reverse the order: purge the cancer first, then collect the stem cells. "It worked,"... With a "compassionate use" waiver from the U.S. government, the procedure was ready for testing. "[Our boss] was the guinea pig,"... Almost a year later, [the boss] shows no sign of cancer.

...Scientists have managed to wipe out cancer in some laboratory mice by creating blood clots that cause "miniature strokes" that kill the tumour. The experiments eliminated 40[%] of tumours within hours and succeeded in shrinking many of the other cancers. But the scientists caution that there are still considerable hurdles to overcome before the technique can be tried in people. When cancer tumours form, blood vessels develop to nourish them. In addition to allowing the tumours to grow and thrive, these vessels can also carry cancer cells to other parts of the body. The... University of Texas Medical Centre in Dallas... developed an antibody that can... tell the difference between newly formed blood vessels and established ones... and deliver a clotting factor... directly to the new blood vessels... The researchers also hop[e] to develop a tumour necrosis therapy that would use a monoclonal antibody to carry toxic substances such as radioisotopes into the core of a tumour and kill it from the inside... this approach could eventually be a follow-up to the blood-clotting approach, delivering a "one-two punch" to tumours.

...[a] Yale cancer biologist... ha[s] genetically altered salmonella... to seek out and destroy tumours in mice... [The] expert in melanoma biology, said... salmonella strains could potentially be used to fight cancers of the skin, breast, colon, prostate, liver and lung... Yale has licensed a New Haven-based company, Vion Pharmaceuticals, to develop a clinical product. Vion said on Monday that it anticipated clinical trials on humans by the middle of next year.

...[People who are] fortunate enough to survive a BONE-MARROW TRANSPLANT may face another problem later: an extremely high risk of developing a new tumor in the brain, liver or elsewhere. These tumors may be caused by the treatments with high doses of radiation that transplant patients require.

...*Forget about transplants. Soon, people with failing tissues or organs may have new ones fabricated in a laboratory...* THE world saw him on TV a while back, the 10cm mouse with the 7cm ear. It wasn't just the size of the appendage that looked so strange, or its placement on the middle of the creature's back. The weird part is that it wasn't a mouse ear. It was a perfectly formed human ear – and it was alive. Tissue engineers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Massachusetts had grown the thing in a laboratory, from human cartilage cells, then implanted it surgically under the mouse's skin to see if it was viable. It thrived there, and though it may have been a nuisance, the recipient suffered no apparent problems. The three-eared mouse is a pretty good emblem of where medical science could take us in the new millennium. The burgeoning field known as tissue engineering didn't even exist 15 years ago. Today its pioneers are finding that almost any biological material can be coaxed from a culture dish. Bioengineered skin, bone and cartilage are already reaching the clinic... Several biotech companies are... racing to license skin substitutes that could revolutionise the treatment of burns and other serious wounds. Starting with cells from the foreskins of circumcised infants, engineers can now mass-produce postcard-size sheets of durable, uniform tissue that the body readily accepts... Working with calcium phosphate, [a] University of Texas chemist... builds structures that approximate the various textures of bone. When surgeons implant these devices, they're continually broken down and refurbished along with the surrounding tissue. So far only a half-dozen test subjects (all dogs) have received [this] bone substitute, but all have fared well. Implants placed in the animals' front legs converted to new bone within three years... Lab-grown organs, though farther off, are also in the works... The basic technique is to seed a biological scaffold with cells for the needed replacement part. When the structure is bathed in the right nutrients and growth factors for a period of weeks, the cells overrun the scaffolding, creating a ready-to-wear tissue implant. Researchers have already used the technique to fabricate... heart valves grown from blood-vessel cells [that] function normally in lambs. If human trials yield similar results, 60,000 Americans who now receive troublesome pig valves or mechanical devices each year could soon be growing their own. A Boston company called Reprogenesis has already launched human trials of lab-grown urinary valves and expects to start producing them commercially within two years. The same company hopes to generate natural breast tissue (an obvious improvement over saline or silicone implants). A company named Advanced Tissue Sciences, of California, has purchased the rights to market lab-grown facial features. As the MIT mouse showed the world, replacing a damaged ear, nose or eye socket is now theoretically as simple as building a scaffold from an MRI scan image. WITH luck, then, the tissues that hold us together will be fully replaceable within a few decades... Like engineered organs, lab-grown prosthetics for the brain and nervous system are still far in the future. But scientists are learning to cultivate nerve cells, and a few... are designing biomechanical substitutes. One of the early entries is LIVES, for Low-Vision Enhancement System, which costs about \$NZ7000 and has been commercially available for two years. Designed as a pair of goggles, the system features two wide-angle cameras and a zoom lens, which feed images to a battery-powered waist pack. After magnifying images and adding contrast, it projects them onto a pair of goggle-mounted screens. The effect is like that of watching a 1.5m-wide TV screen from a distance of 1.2m. Future models will offer advanced features, such as freeze frame and instant replay, as well as ports to accommodate video and computer feeds. But the system will still require at least partial vision. When the eyes can no longer receive data, the question becomes "Where can you plug in?" Scientists are pursuing at least two possibilities. Researchers at MIT and the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary are developing a tiny computer chip that would sit on the back of the eye, receiving visual data from a goggle-mounted laser and relaying impulses through the optic nerve to the brain... – a la cyborg... And researchers are fiddling with a system for mapping camera signals straight onto the brain's visual cortex. [Scientists are also trying to 'use brain activity to work as a mouse cursor, which may help paralysed people. "This type of system has application in only a very small group of disabled persons, but for those people it can make a very large difference in their quality of life." For the person who can't move or speak it is a huge leap forward. In the laboratories of a USAF base in Ohio, a link is made between the subject's brain and a computer, which will translate pilot mental actions into flight commands. "People have always dreamed about controlling objects or events or things with their brains and there's been a large body of research conducted over the last 30 years or so which has shown that people can learn to control their heart-rate, blood pressure, that sort of thing. It's called biofeedback. So we decided to take a look at harnessing that as an alternative control technology that might be applied in the Air Force for people with disabilities." Returning to the subject of low-vision enhancement, one company has developed 'adjustable silicon glasses' (they can be used by people with different eye-sight strengths), an AUSn company is producing '30-day contact lenses made from a plastic that allows the eyes to breathe', doctors are now 'putting new lenses in the eye', and 'plastic rings are being inserted to correct short-sightedness (the procedure – not yet available in NZ – isn't as accurate as laser surgery but is reversible').]

...Tiny, transparent rings implanted into the cornea may be the newest hope for near-sighted adults fed up with glasses and contact lenses. The plastic rings, slightly thicker than a contact lens, would be an alternative to permanent vision correction... Doctors implant two crescent shapes to form a ring around the cornea, a clear window that covers the pupil and iris... The rings, which took 10 years to develop, are made of a type of

plastic that is used in cataract surgery implants. Patients remain awake for the operation but are given anaesthetic eyedrops to numb the eye... Using a tiny spatula, the doctor inserts the crescents into pockets cut into the cornea. The procedure takes about 30 minutes... In the U[S] about 30,000 people have sought... photorefractive keratotomy... [and a]bout 250,000 people a year receive radial keratotomy...

So many N[Z]ers are having refractive eye surgery which enables them to throw away their glasses that medical insurance companies are no longer prepared to pay for it. Photo refractive keratotomy (PRK) using a laser can correct myopia, hypermetropia and astigmatism, complaints listed by the W[HO] as diseases, but rated by insurers as "elective surgery" because glasses and contact lenses make the conditions "bearable." Yet for patients like [a] 34-year-old Auckland accountant... who couldn't see the clock beside his bed without putting on his glasses, PRK has been "brilliant. It has changed my life..." [The accountant, who] had the operation four years ago and had 80[%] of the cost met by medical insurance... thinks it "disgusting" that it's been delisted. Southern Cross Healthcare['s] general manager... is not about to argue the toss over the condition or the operation. However, Southern Cross regards it as "a procedure of choice" as opposed, for example, to an operation for a cataract which has to be removed otherwise it will cause blindness... [The manager] confirms that PRK is "very popular," costing about \$3000 for the operation on both eyes. Southern Cross had been processing more than 4000 claims a year before removing it from claims on January 1. Other companies cancelled coverage last year and worldwide the procedure is not generally covered by insurance... Refractive surgery was pioneered by a Russian eye specialist... in 1977. [The Russian] devised radial keratotomy, involving microscopic incisions on the cornea which, upon healing, contracted and altered the cornea's curvature. The application of lasers to refine the technique came about a decade ago and has been available here for more than five years. PRK uses a laser to reshape the curvature of the cornea, in cases of myopia and hypermetropia, and is done directly on the cornea. A new procedure known as Lasik – short for laser insitu keratomileusis – is now being introduced. It is said to extend the chances of successful treatments for people with extreme myopia. Lasik is done after cutting a hinged flap from the front of the cornea. This is replaced after the cornea curvature is corrected by laser and bonds fully in minutes without stitches. It lessens recovery discomfort and pain... [but if] the... \$770,000 laser machine... calibration... is[set] too high, the extra power could destroy too much corneal tissue... a North Shore [GP] had the surgery for "lifestyle reasons." [The GP is] a competitive yacht[ie] and mountain bike rider, both activities which require a keen eye at a distance and quick judgment... [H]is surgeon... operated on only one eye[and the GP] is delighted with the outcome... The initial surgery was no problem but [the GP] did suffer severe pain 11 hours later. [However, the GP] was ready for it with prescribed painkillers. [The GP] recovered in two days and was driving within a week although it took nearly three months for his eye to lose ghosting of image. That made him anxious and upset but now his vision is sharp... [The general manager] of the PreMac Group of consulting companies, wore glasses for nearly 30 years before having PRK... "...I found it a big decision. They can't guarantee a 100[%] success rate. Thoughts like 'will I be blind in one eye?' go through your mind... They expected there was an 85[%] chance I'd get 20-20 vision and a 90[%] chance I'd be able to get my driver's licence without glasses. I now have perfect vision and don't wear glasses for anything." Blindness is less of a risk than wearing contact lenses, according to... ophthalmologists... They understand patients' concern about the outcome of the operation, but say at the worst there will be no improvement. Worldwide there have been no reports of blindness attributable to PRK. There have been some cases of sight being worse... PRK (and Lasik) only take about 10 minutes – several pre-operative consultations may be necessary... Ophthalmologists ban LASIK on patients under 18 because the eye is not fully developed until then.

...an Auckland University English lecturer... is only 40 but has the eyes of an 80-year-old. The mother of two has always been scared that by the time [the lecturer was 80 it] will be blind, but as of today, World Retina Day, [the lecturer] has reason to hope for a brighter future. Otago University researchers report a breakthrough in the study of her condition, retinitis pigmentosa, an inherited eye disease which affects about 1000 people here and millions around the world. It causes progressive degeneration of light-detecting cells, leading to night blindness, tunnel vision and blindness. In collaboration with the Institute of Human Genetics in Hamburg, [the researchers]... have discovered defects in two genes found in the retinal epithelium – a layer of cells at the back of the eye. The genes provide instructions for two proteins that play a vital role in transporting vitamin A to the eye's light-detecting cells, which require a continuous supply of the vitamin... [The lecturer] was diagnosed when... [aged] about 28 but four years ago it was found the condition was occurring in the middle of her eye in the macular... "That's where your fine focus is, where colour vision is. It's the part of your eye that means you can read." [The lecturer] has a field of vision, but anything more than arm's length away is just a shape... [The lecturer] can see her husband and children by getting close enough to hug them but teaching is trickier... "News like this is incredibly important to anybody with that disease because what looks like a dream – 'oh God, one day I might be able to see' – is getting a lot nearer."

...[Have you ever healed a blind person? Did you know that most blind people in the world today – over 30 million – live in poverty stricken areas where health services are virtually unknown? 50% of these unfortunate adults and children have lost their sight to cataracts, which can be easily removed by a simple 15-minute operation costing only \$27! To protect blind children and adults from such a dark fate, Christian Blind Mission International conducts its programme to restore sight to these people. Last year, every three minutes a blind person's eyesight was restored through CBMI's world wide programme. Removing a cataract is not a difficult feat for an eye surgeon, but for a penniless, blind person, it seems a miracle that someone would find his way to their village and heal the poorest of the poor at no cost. Nearly all of the formerly blind people who regained their eyesight through this programme have been able to earn their own livelihood instead of being forced to survive as beggars. Many of them also want to learn more about the God of their helpers. Who can deny these curably blind adults and children? They depend upon gifts from compassionate people like yourself, who consider CBMI's programme worthy of their support. Even if you can only send \$5 for the necessary cataract eye-glasses, you can help turn despair into hope. No gift is greater than eyesight; it is priceless.]

...*Surgeon's cash plea for gift of sight IN THE [LAST] WORLD...* a... N[Z]-born eye surgeon['s]... gift of sight to the blind must appear almost god-like. However, [the surgeon] (41), one of the Fred Hollows Foundation's four medical directors, describes his work more humbly: "It is to give choices to people who have no choice." ...A campaign to be launched this week hopes to raise... \$500,000 to extend this... programme. "When I was in public practice I operated on a journalist who was blind in one eye. [The journalist] asked what would [it] have done if I hadn't been there. The answer was 'go down the road to another surgeon'... many others do not have that choice,"... Around 40 million people worldwide are blind, half by cataracts. N[Z] eye surgeon Fred Hollows realised the greatest obstacle to restoring sight to those with curable cataracts was the cost of intraocular lenses[, and] set about establishing laboratories to make them. This week marks the fifth anniversary of the foundation's establishment.

...In the five years since the Fred Hollows Foundation was established in 1992, 100,000 people with cataract blindness have been helped to see and 360 surgeons have been trained in modern cataract surgical techniques. Surgical training programmes have been established in Eritrea, Nepal and Vietnam, and state-of-the-art intra-ocular lens laboratories have been built in Eritrea and Nepal. Intra-ocular lenses are small perspex discs inserted into the eye to replace the cloudy cataract, in what some call the most successful surgical procedure ever devised. Professor Fred... established himself as a pioneer in the treatment of eye disease among the A[US]n Aboriginal people before becoming a consultant with the W[HO]. The NZer visited many Last World countries where [it] was inspired, in particular, by the remarkable work of people in war-torn Eritrea, who were producing medical supplies and performing life-saving operations with only the most primitive resources. The charismatic and plain-speaking doctor died on February 10, 1993, aged 63. But his work, tackling the huge backlog of cataract blindness in [Last World] countries continues unabated. In 1995 N[Z]ers donated the initial money needed to begin an African Microsurgical Training Programme designed to train 66 surgeons in 12 countries over three years – giving... \$300,000 in the "Fivers for Fred" campaign. They are being asked to contribute again, over the next month, to support the ongoing work in Africa. In a region with 500 million people (excluding South Africa) the number of new cases of cataract blindness is estimated to be... 500,000 a year. The backlog... is about 2.5 million. The focus of the Africa Campaign this year is the \$25 total cost of

a cataract operation, including the intra-ocular lens, suture, pharmaceuticals and surgical costs. In the West the lens alone... cost \$400. Creating laboratories in Eritrea and Nepal, which use sophisticated "clean room" technology and operate in accordance with international standards but can still produce the lenses for just \$5, is a key point in the foundation's success. Both laboratories sell their lenses to other... countries for from \$NZ10.94, depending on volume, making them self-sustaining facilities. Profits pay for health care programmes... The foundation has also developed... a compact, portable, operating microscope which, at \$4523, is half the cost of those on the commercial market... [I]t can run on mains or battery power. A portable laser for treating "capsular opacification," a side effect of IOL implant surgery... [is] also on the foundation's drawing board.

...During the past 30 years, lasers have become a familiar and versatile tool. After years of effort, a research team said it has created the first atom laser – a device that shoots out a tight beam of atoms instead of photons, making possible even more precise surgery. However... an atom laser can exist only in an extremely low vacuum – at temperatures close to absolute zero, where atoms slow down and assume a new form of matter... At... only 40 billionths of a degree above absolute zero... the atoms overlap, forming a single blob known as a Bose-Einstein condensate, named for Albert Einstein and the Indian physicist Satyendra Bose, who predicted its existence 70 years ago. Instead of flitting about independently, like normal atoms... the frigid particles move in the same direction. The final step came when the MIT team extracted a focused beam of atoms from the condensate by applying a powerful magnetic field. On their computer screens, the physicists saw multiple pulses of "droplets" each containing 100,000 to several million atoms.

...*Laparoscopic surgery explained...* It differs from conventional "open" surgery because the laparoscopic technique allows the surgeon to operate from the outside, through very small incisions, and view the process on a monitor like a tv screen... "The image on the monitor is magnified 16 times so the dissection is far more precise. There is almost no blood loss. There is little pain so the patient does not need to be drugged heavily... [- but] is under full anaesthetic... [-] and is mobile much sooner, recovering far more quickly." ...While the laparoscopic procedures themselves sometimes cost a little more, this... [is offset by] a much shorter hospital stay and period of convalescence... [It] shortens convalescence for cholecystectomy (gallbladder removal) for example, from six weeks to just ten days and for an appendectomy from three weeks to around five days.

...[an Aucklander] can steer her bike with both hands these days[, and] is also coming to grips with tying shoelaces and brushing her hair with her left hand. No big deal for a 5-year-old? Perhaps not, but her left hand is not the usual run of left hands. [The girl], who was born with a severely short arm, is the first N[Z] child to receive a myoelectric one. The advanced artificial limb offers more control over movement than other equivalent types. Tiny fingers... move[d] by flexing muscles in her arm socket make the limb seem almost real. It is also less cumbersome than other prostheses made for children. Previously the young were not fitted with electronic arms because of cost and the difficulty of training them to use one... A German company... supplied the \$8000 limb... At the moment [the girl] wears it... only four hours a day. Occupational therapy classes are teaching her how to grasp objects and twist her wrist. As [the girl] grows the artificial arm will be replaced with a bigger one with a larger hand.

...[a Christchurch] gynaecologist... made medical history for... [NZ and AUS yesterday by using] a voice-controlled robot to perform an operation. The Oxford Clinic surgeon said the robotic "third hand," known as Aesop, had performed well during the videoscopic hysterectomy. Aesop... acts as an assistant... [by] holding and positioning the telescope and camera and allowing the surgeon to control the view of the patient's anatomy.

...Telemedicine is increasingly a staple in the doctor's bag of tricks... [T]he use of video link-ups has boomed in the past three years. In N[Z and AUS] video links are used mainly by psychiatric services, but in the U[S] a wide range of clinical specialists are finding innovative ways to use the technology... Medical peripherals can be pressed into service, for example by video-enabling diagnostic or surgical scopes, or hooking up X-rays, CT scans or motion scans... [Telemedicine] has particular application to rural areas, where some studies say up to 60[%] of people delay seeking care because of location, economics or culture. This means when they finally get help, the costs of treatment are likely to be higher... [The] Asia Pacific telemedicine marketing manager for video conference equipment supplier PictureTel... is... pushing its value for medical education. Students, or specialists in other hospitals, can link with operations or to ward rounds, to pick up the latest ideas or techniques... While most video conferences are conducted over an ISDN line, they can also be done with T1/E1, ATM or LAN technologies... Pilot programs are being conducted in Thailand and China using VSat... [In another development, geographically scattered NZ] public health workers are... using World Wide Web pages to network and plan strategy. Even tiny dissident community groups will now be able to keep in touch with the bigger players – debating in open forum, and forming closed groups once they become serious about strategy. To boost this trend the [RHA]s have funded a project run by[an] Auckland public health academic... A first move for the project was to set up a public health Web site – www.publichealth.org.nz... [T]his site provides a neutral meeting place... The Web allows collaboration and reduces duplication of effort... It is going to become the normal mode of communication... [because in] the hard-strapped public health sector face-to-face meeting has become too costly.

...*Disease sufferers are finding comfort as well as information on the Internet[, and]... the global communication system is also transforming the patient-doctor relationship...* The Internet has transformed the way people throughout the world deal with health issues... [A] telephone connection to the Internet [links patients with] Web sites that offer medical information, advertisements for products, and bulletin boards with the latest news and gossip... There are literally hundreds of sites people... can look at. Some contain information from medical journals, others summarise conference proceedings. Many Internet browsers find their new-found knowledge gives them a better background for dealing with the once-mysterious medical profession. "It gives me back-up information to ask questions of the doctors," says [a mother], whose 10-year-old son has cystic fibrosis. For her, the word of a doctor is no longer the ultimate authority... [The] president of the New York-based Body Health Resources Corporation, which runs a popular HIV site, says: "The HIV/Aids population has led the way in changing the physician-patient relationship, through maximum preparation for the clinical encounter and the evolution of the role of patient as advocate. Do we find people become more informed and empowered when they talk to their doctors after visiting our site? Definitely." Doctors have recognised this too, and many give patients with HIV an active role in determining what their treatment should be... Health professionals use [the Internet] too, but sometimes worry about the quality of information. Some of the forums, they complain, amount to little more than gossip sessions. "I am a strong advocate of the use of e-mail discussion forums," says... a pharmacist in Alberta, Canada. But [the pharmacist] points out that no one screens what goes on the Internet, and desperate people grasping at any bit of information could become misinformed... • [The West Auckland]... Crown Health Enterprise... Waitemata Health has challenged other [CHE]s to follow its example by using information systems to reduce long waiting lists, endless paper trails and inefficiencies... On general surgery, patients needed to fill out 30 forms and see 20 people before going to the operating theatre. "In other departments it was worse[...]" said the[...] senior general surgeon at Waitemata Health... The CHE has re-engineered all its processes after a two-year multimillion-dollar overhaul... The project involved patient management systems from Information Builders of A[US], Digital Alpha servers, and facilities management and networking services from EDS. Auckland-based health systems developer Galen Group developed emergency department, surgical centre and operating theatre software specifically to meet the CHE's requirements. The system runs across multiple departments and buildings so data can be shared and analysed. The software was developed in Visual Basic using SQL Windows and runs on an Oracle database. The new systems will link directly into the National Health Index and other outside systems, such as those of GPs, using a product called DataGate... While the system has the potential to connect directly with GPs, none are currently doing so.

...Auckland company Orion Systems is leading the way in health systems connectivity with its locally developed standards-based messaging software, Symphonia. The advantage of the software is it gets different health computer systems that could not previously talk to each other working in harmony. The software... has hooks into most databases, handles objects and can work with Web browsers. To date 60[%] of Orion's

business is in exports... [-] Symphonia... has just... [been] sold... to a managed health care system in Florida[, while other] sales include KPMG Health Systems in England, Siemens AG in Germany, Washington Hospital and 350 veterans' hospitals throughout the U[S -] ...although local users are quickly becoming aware of the efficiencies they can gain from the software. Orion Systems[] account manager... claimed a six-doctor practice, for example, could save about \$60,000 by electronically connecting into laboratory and radiology results... [The manager] said the international success of the product could be attributed to product information made available on the Internet and Internet-based fax marketing. Orion's major client, however, continues to be the HealthLink network, run by its subsidiary SectorNet. HealthLink is a value-added network connecting the National Health Index and most major health suppliers in N[Z]. "We have 80[%] of all hospitals, 100[%] of laboratories and 35[%] of GPs who transfer pathology and radiology results online... Laboratory results transmitted electronically last year would have previously taken 120 typists about 40 hours a week." ...there was pressure from the pharmaceutical area for accurate information on the use of generic drug equivalents. "There's huge amounts of information on the N[HI] and all sorts of little data bases that could be used for effective disease management, for example diabetes. A huge percentage - about 20[%] - of the national health budget is spent on diabetes but there are no major disease management initiatives in place." [The manager, who believes NZ]... is a world leader in terms of making health systems talk to each other... claims it will ultimately become a requirement for users to have better access to information about medication, side-effects and recommended dosages. "That kind of information is kept all over the world in medical libraries and private companies, databases and health magazines. If you have a national network system, GPs or pharmacies can connect into [it] and get relevant information."

...Major health reforms announced in Britain last week have been welcomed by a contingent of local software developers who are planning a trade mission to promote N[Z] as a leading provider of health technology solutions. Five... software developers, who often compete for the same business, have agreed to cooperate in the joint mission which comes just as the British Government published a white paper on the future of its National Health System... Included is the requirement for all British doctors to be connected to a new nation-wide computer system by 2002.

...[according to the] general manager for information systems at health funding agency North Health... N[Z] Health Information Services (NZHIS) should not be imposing its idea of integrated health information systems on the whole country... a[s] the nationwide "health intranet" network was an "idiotic idea" which would prove to be a "wasted investment." ...Health professionals will be asked to foot half the \$750,000 bill for rolling out the Internet-based network but there is concern the benefits may not be there for those who have built or are building their own systems. It is estimated that North Health, and Health Benefits Ltd which handles electronic claims, have each spent \$400,000 to \$800,000 on electronic communications with GPs and other health professionals. [The NHI] run by the NZHIS was only important if it made a difference to people's health. "At the moment it makes no difference at all." [The manager] suggested the NHI database, which provides a unique identifier for medical records, could be regionalised so there was more incentive to ensure the data was accurate. The database... had just had a major technology overhaul. However, the N[HI] is significantly out of date with 4.5 million names on it, including duplicates and people who have died. [The manager] was also critical of the Government's... up to \$3.95 million... investment in health information solutions being evaluated by the Ministry of Health. The Government is evaluating... 62 proposals [-] requesting just under a total of \$12 million... in funding... [-] from doctors, pharmacists and groups of health professionals to enable them to better share information. "We're here to buy health services for people. Anyone who supplies health services has an obligation to supply information to others in the health services area. It's their problem to surround themselves with computer systems - not ours..."

Health computing dollars would be better spent on the clinical side where real efficiencies can be made rather than on large, incompatible administration systems... That is the view of [a]medical practitioner and software programmer... who believes health organisations are buying administrative systems with little thought as to how they will be integrated with clinical systems... "Doctors are overburdened. Instead of creating more administrative processes for them we should be putting in systems to save them time and ensure they are fully informed. That will have a huge impact on the quality of care." [The medical practitioner] was heading for a career as a surgeon at Middlemore when... [it made] a decision... to... develop software that would make the process easier for doctors and specialists. [The practitioner] formed Plato CIS and installed the first of his new specialist systems at Middlemore Hospital's orthopaedics department. From there, Plato modules were developed for plastic and general surgery, ear, nose and throat, audiology and radiology departments. The most recent approach has been to set up a paperless office trail in the surgical department at Middlemore so doctors can have access to patient records even at the super clinics outside the hospital using a secure intranet... [The] orthopaedic surgeon at Middlemore... had considerable input... on how Plato would work in orthopaedics several years ago. Now Plato is seen as a major time saver. "We've seen a one third increase in secretarial efficiency. Even though we've had an increased amount of work going through the department we've been able to get away without employing more staff... Plato... minimises the loss of clinical information and has allowed us to conduct electronic audits which has had a major impact on quality control by patient and by surgeon. We are able to review progress every six weeks..." Plato uses a fuzzy logic-based artificial intelligence which... is patented here and pending in the U[S]. The object-oriented product was developed using Microsoft SQL Server, Visual FoxPro and Visual Basic. It runs OLE (object linking and embedding) on Windows NT Server and its integration engine works with most databases... Plato is now installed at departments within Auckland, Palmerston North and Tauranga hospitals, a government health pilot in the Hokianga and at Whangarei Hospital... [The practitioner, who] is having the product redeveloped in Java... has... been invited to demonstrate the product at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and a new children's hospital in Sydney and Sheffield Hospital in Britain... [In related news, the Privacy] Commissioner... is investigating concerns about patients' health records being kept on computer databases. [The commissioner] is examining whether the data collection breaches the Privacy Act and whether health agencies should collect and hold sensitive information. The... possible misuse of information and lack of confidentiality is upsetting patient rights advocates, including [the]Alliance health spokes[person, who]... said multiple access points would make it impossible to ensure unauthorised people did not see personal information. The Health Information Service denies this and says security will be as tight as the latest technology can be - similar to the Internet's banking services. [The commissioner said it] took seriously any concerns about health information because it was such a sensitive subject. Part of his investigation will look at North Health's supply of computer disks containing confidential patient information to [GPs]... Last month [the Alliance] criticised North Health in Parliament for sending a disk containing patient names and code numbers through the mail. North Health... said the CD ROM is protected by encryption and can be activated only by someone with a password unique to that disk... Under the health information privacy code, patients must be told if information is being collected, the purpose for which it will be used and who will hold it. Patient databases already exist. The Royal N[Z] College of General Practitioners has collected information from the patient records of around 800,000 N[Z]ers. Patient names are not included... Doctors have also expressed concerns about the proposed record-sharing network, mainly about funding issues. Support for the system has come from smaller doctor groups who lack the resources to analyse their own data.

...Plans for a national database to monitor children's health records have been labelled invasive and a waste of money. [A] civil libertarian... said [it] understood legislation would be put in place which forced health workers to supply patient details to the database. Tabs would be kept on children from birth ensuring they got care, such as vaccines, at the appropriate age. Parents of children with incomplete health records would be tracked down... A Ministry of Health manager... last night said moves towards a national database had been signalled for years. [However, the manager] would not discuss the matter further as... the Associate Minister of Health... was yet to publicly release details. [The libertarian] said... doctor-patient confidentiality would go out the window if medical professionals were forced to supply information... [and] it was folly to spend millions of dollars on a computer system while children languished on waiting lists for ongoing problems like glue ear.

...the Associate Minister of Health... told a child health conference in Auckland yesterday that a pilot project... [for a] national health database covering every child in the country... would begin next week in Hamilton... [E]very newborn baby would have a number, which would go to a health provider, such as Plunket. The provider would be chosen by the baby's parents, who could refuse to take part if they wished. The child and its health details could then be tracked, no matter where the family moved around [NZ]. Information on the file could be passed from one health provider to another, but only with the consent of parents or caregivers... [T]he information could not be passed on to other agencies such as social welfare or the police[(the)... Government is looking at ways to link the [social welfare]Community Services Card... with the unique health number assigned to most N[Z]ers... held on the... NHI)... [The minister] compared the process to taxpayers handing over private information to the Inland Revenue Department and rejected claims it could invade people's privacy and put extra pressure on parents. "Society has got to make a choice here. They either accept poor, [Last] World health statistics or they want to go forward. I'm happy to entertain the debate but I'm not going to back off on the niceties of this when children miss out. I don't think society will tolerate that." ...[the minister] had not yet discussed the issue with his... colleagues[but] did not believe the database would require any change in legislation. Many health professionals at yesterday's conference supported... better co-ordination and "tracking" of children who slipped through gaps in the system. Some said up to 20[%] of children were victims of problems such as cot death, child abuse and teenage suicide in later years because they missed out on good health care when they were young. But the privacy commissioner... said that once a database was established, people would be tempted to extend it to tackle other problems, such as truancy. Last year North Health was accused of using a similar planned scheme, called Healthy Homes, to collect information on parents who could be child abusers. The programme is still on hold – although from lack of money rather than any controversy over how it would work.

...A new programme under way in Auckland to care for acutely sick children in their homes is growing with the addition of a second intake of... nurses. Eighteen have graduated at the Auckland Institute of Technology's Akoranga campus in Takapuna after 17 weeks' specialist training... 15 nurses graduated earlier in the year and were now working in parts of Auckland and Northland... They are all senior registered nurses who were hand-picked for the North Health-funded specialist paediatric nurses training course. The course co-ordinator... said the concept of caring for sick children at home was modelled on successful overseas programmes. "It takes nursing into the home environment, where we feel best helps the children get well sooner... There's nothing wrong with hospitals, but this would add to the effective recovery of children... because of the support and comfort of family and friends,"... [By the way, a] widespread backlash has greeted a health manager's claim that children should get priority over the elderly in health spending. The child health manager of North Health... said yesterday that most people would rather have an extra \$100,000 spent on them when they were younger, as it would pay off over the rest of their lives... [T]he \$50,000 cost of a year's dialysis treatment in old age would amount to having an extra Plunket nurse as a young child... [The manager] was not suggesting taking existing money away from the elderly, but recommending that future increases go to children. But his comments... were publicly rejected by his own boss and... by the Associate Minister of Health[who]... was concerned to hear [RHA]s arguing for different priorities in spending. [The minister] said the authorities existed to set these priorities when they bought health services, so it was up to them to make the decisions... The president of the Association of Gerontology... said it was not helpful to pit young and old people, "our two more vulnerable and voiceless groups," against each other. But... debate was necessary so society could decide "what it is permissible to die from, when to draw the line between cure and care. It may be more cost-effective and beneficial to the individual and society to give an 80-year-old a new hip if the result otherwise is expensive care in a rest-home."

...WE all want good health, but how much are we responsible for ourselves and how much do we leave to the health professionals? ...health must be seen in a broader context when we start to question who bears the responsibility, says... [the] medical director of primary care for North Health and a senior lecturer in general practice at the Auckland School of Medicine[– who] believes responsibility for health exists on several levels, beginning with the individual. "Making informed choices about lifestyle is the basis of good health,"... While people may tire of hearing the same messages, individuals have an obligation to themselves and their families to weigh up the pros and cons of their lifestyle and how it may affect their future... The next stage of responsibility is picking up the warning signs of ill-health. Here the individual is still the first line of defence. Unfortunately, [the director] says, too many people ignore symptoms such as bleeding from the bowel or breast lumps. Whether they are scared of what it may mean or believe it will go away, such people risk a condition – which should have been easily treated – becoming difficult to cure. Children need regular health and dental checks, immunisation and to be taught good diet and hygiene habits. Doctors and health professionals, meanwhile, are responsible for more than just health management. Providing best practice in a good and safe environment, ensuring accessibility particularly for the disabled, making patients feel comfortable in the surgery and being aware of cultural sensitivities – all are within their role. "Whichever way you look at it we are all responsible, either directly or indirectly, for our health and the health of others,"...

"Physician, heal thyself," wrote St Luke. Fine. I'll buy that. But what about, "Physician, research on thyself?" "Not bloody likely," would be the response from my friends. Bravery in the field might extend to late nights or lost weekends, but when it comes to self-experimentation, count us out. Fortunately, not all doctors are yellow-bellies. Take... an A[US]n physician who thought the unthinkable, and did something about it. In the early 1980s, several perspicacious researchers saw tiny, wriggly bugs on the walls of stomachs chopped out of patients with peptic ulcers. They had no idea why they were there; most thought they were just hanging around feeding off the remains of the last meal. An unimportant finding, was the conclusion. A few people went against this grain of opinion and got it into their heads that these innocuous bacteria now known as *Helicobacter pylori* were not so innocuous after all. But how could one be sure? [The AUSn] had the answer. In April 1985, [the AUSn described how it] ate a sample of these bacteria, scraped from inside the stomach of someone else and grown in the laboratory. [The AUSn] "swallowed the growth from a flourishing three-day culture of the isolate." Clearly a [physician] with an original, if not discerning, palate. A week later, [the AUSn] was doubled up with bouts of nausea. Despite his anguished state, [the physician] allowed one of his clinical colleagues to take a look inside his stomach and clip off bits from his gastric wall. When these were placed under a microscope, it became clear these bugs were up to no good. They had caused a florid inflammation... In one selfless exercise, [the AUSn] had provided evidence that *H. pylori* caused disease. His story is now part of medical folklore. Since then, there has been an explosion of research about this casual acquaintance of our stomachs. Not only is it associated with peptic ulcers and gastritis... but it is also linked with gastric cancer and other rarer types of stomach tumours. For one unusual type of lymphoma... killing the bacterium also kills that cancer. So how many of us have this annoying creature? The frequency of infection rises the older you are. About one in five of us under 40 will have *H. pylori*, while that figure jumps to 50[%] over 60. Luckily, once it has been diagnosed, a cocktail of antibiotics provides the best chance of relief. All of which makes the recent description of the complete genetic signature of *H. pylori* quite remarkable only 12 years from its discovery as a human pathogen... The library of information that resides in these genes is arranged in a circle. There are more than 1500 books (the individual genes) and together these contain two million bits of data.

...While academics freely exchange data, companies – concerned about securing patents for their discoveries – maintain tight secrecy and insist that university scientists who collaborate with them sign complex agreements that ensure their silence. Medical research suffers as a result. "It's helicopter science," said... [a] former Harvard researcher... "Companies fly in, take what they want and then fly out again. When I was at Harvard, I saw this happening and I decided no one was going to do that to Iceland." [So it] set up DeCode, with the backing of local government and academics, and funded by international venture capital. Tens of thousands of Icelanders have given blood and their family histories. Eventually... DeCode's president... hopes most of [the nation's population of] 270,000... will contribute. Companies will then have to pay for access to Iceland's unique genetic heritage, formed when the island was settled by Vikings 1100 years ago and distilled through two subsequent population crashes – an outbreak of bubonic plague in the 1400s and an eruption of the volcano Heckla, which triggered famine in the 1700s. The reduction in Iceland's

gene pool has been dramatic and the usefulness of this limiting effect to science is revealed through the first ailment that was tackled by scientists using DeCode's database. In only 10 weeks they were able to pinpoint the gene for the world's most common neurological movement disorder – "familial essential tremor," an inherited shakiness of the limbs. Now projects aimed at pinpointing genes associated with... pre-eclampsia and... multiple sclerosis... are being established between DeCode and various pharmaceutical companies. And once these genes are found, the abnormal proteins that they are responsible for manufacturing can be isolated and studied. Drugs can then be made to counter their effects, tested and eventually marketed around the world... – though not in Iceland, for one of DeCode's stipulations is that all medicines made from use of its DNA database must be provided free to Icelanders... Tightly inbred populations such as Iceland's are invaluable for tracing disease genes and have led to the creation of a generation of "gene prospectors," scientists who pore over the world's isolated peoples – in Tristan da Cunha, Easter Island, the Brazilian highlands and Iceland – in search of DNA that can be linked to ailments... Gene prospecting has been labelled the ultimate exploitation of the [Last] World, with companies – such as Sequana Therapeutics of... California; Millennium Pharmaceuticals, of Massachusetts; and Genset, of Paris – being accused of acquiring the DNA of indigenous peoples in order to fill corporate coffers without thought, concern or benefit to natives.

...*Genes know their... rights*... Researchers have found two of the genes that help the developing embryo tell left from right when deciding where to put the internal organs. The heart, stomach and spleen normally end up on the left side of the body, the liver on the right. That placement is almost always determined within a few weeks of conception... But one time in 10,000, in a condition known as heterotaxy, the embryo never distinguishes left from right. The organs end up in the wrong orientation, and serious medical problems can result. People with heterotaxy rarely live past young adulthood... Mutations in the human gene, ZIC3, have been found in four families with members who have heterotaxy. And mutations in another gene, 1rd, can cause heterotaxy in mice... Although heterotaxy will never be cured... a number of treatments can be developed if the genetic causes of the disorder are better understood.

...Scientists have identified genetic defects that make people smell like rotting fish, an uncommon disorder that can lead to ridicule, loneliness and depression... No cure is known for "fish-odour syndrome," though avoiding certain foods... [–] fish from the sea, eggs, liver... [–] and taking antibiotics can help... It is not clear how common... [the syndrome is ('there are about 200 documented cases – the latest is a 4-year-old girl in Spain') but] it is mentioned in some ancient literature and even caught the attention of Shakespeare, who in *The Tempest* describes a character with "a very ancient and fish-like smell." The newly found defects... in a single gene... cripple the body's ability to produce an effective version of an enzyme called FMO3. The liver needs that enzyme to process a smelly protein called TMA, or trimethylamine, which is produced by bacteria in the gut. When TMA goes unprocessed, it seeps out in a person's breath and perspiration... [A] member of the... Imperial College School of Medicine in London... told of a [gal] who divorced her husband because [the wife thought the husband] was not keeping himself clean... Some affected people reach their teens without finding out why others avoid them... Many victims go into jobs where they can work alone. Some start smoking heavily to try to disguise the smell... [In local news, s]cientists at the University of Otago have found a significant cause of inherited deafness... [M]any genes affected the ear, and it had been thought testing each gene to see why people were deaf was too difficult. But now a simple molecular test could show whether people had the gene essential for hearing. About 500 N[Z]ers were believed to be deaf as a result of missing both copies of the gene, but many more hearing people were missing one copy and could have deaf children.

...[mums] need to think long and hard before having a screening test which estimates the risk of having an imperfect child, a... health specialist warns... [A] \$73 blood test being offered... was only the first step in determining the risk of birth defects, ranging from brain failure to Down's syndrome. The test was often imprecise and could cause a lot of undue stress. The risk could be confirmed only by an amniocentesis, which takes a fluid sample from the [mum]'s abdomen with a needle. This was very intrusive and could... [create] more risk of miscarriage than having a disabled child... [The specialist] took the blood test in Britain when... [aged] 32 and carrying her first child. Results suggested that [the foetus] had a one-in-300 chance of a birth defect. Yet an amniocentesis to confirm the risk carried a one-in-200 chance of causing a miscarriage. "I went into a real panic..." However, her husband reasoned that the odds were heavily stacked in favour of a healthy child. They chose not to have the amniocentesis and subsequently delivered a healthy child. The N[Z] *Herald* yesterday revealed that health officials want to give [mums] free access to the screening test as a service to them. It also had the potential to reduce the number of disabled or handicapped people... who used large amounts of health funding... [North Health] estimated that at \$1 million a year, a free test for all pregnant [people] would eventually pay for itself... A North Health public health medicine specialist... said most [gals] who found their foetus had major defects had an abortion. While there were no N[Z] figures, a British study found 15 out of 16... chose to end their pregnancy. North Health supported the test as a service... rather than for its money-saving...

I am dismayed that once again the ethical issue of the prevention of Down syndrome arises. The only means to prevent Down syndrome is termination, therefore it is not possible to cloak this discussion under the guise of a "good service to [pregnant people]." The issue must address the place of the person with Down syndrome within our society... without the constraints of the accountant's bottom line. The move by health planners to give... free access to a screening test... supposes that the birth of babies with Down syndrome or other disabilities is a tragedy. That they will be a burden to both society, in terms of financial cost, and to parents in terms of emotional cost... The huge advances in health and education have impacted positively throughout our society, including on people with Down syndrome. Society demanded we change the institutionalisation of people with disabilities. It recognised everyone had the right to a valued place in the community. This is the same society which now seems to condone pressuring prospective parents into decisions to terminate so-called "imperfect" children... We have very quickly accepted the "user pays" concept in other aspects of our lives. Will there come a day when the question will be put to parents that they chose to have a child with a disability so therefore they must carry the financial cost of education and health needs?

...Under "ideal" conditions (ie. carefully organised clinical trials)... maternal serum screening (MSS) tests... reduce the number of Down's births by approximately 70[%]. Again, at best, the test will indicate possible Down's syndrome in 4 to 5[% of pregnant people] undergoing the test. That means that if all who tested positive chose to have amniocentesis, there will be between 40 and 50 [gals] tested to detect one case of Down's... In last year's *British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology*, obstetricians reported on the success rate of the MSS test in areas of London. The overall reduction in Down's births was 21[%]. There are many reasons for such a "disappointing" result. Firstly... the MSS test is normal in approximately one third of Down's pregnancies so a number of cases are missed... Secondly, the concept of "seeking and destroying" a Down's syndrome child is unacceptable to many [people]. Thirdly... as the test has to be performed before 18 weeks of pregnancy, it is not available to [people] who seek care quite late in their pregnancies. Generally "late bookers" are those... from socially disadvantaged circumstances. It is easy to see that if the test is provided free in Auckland, it will mainly be used by educated Pakeha rather than disadvantaged Maori and Pacific Islanders. In addition the test is virtually uninterpretable in twin pregnancies or those complicated by diabetes.

...Respiratory infections in infants may protect them from diabetes later in life[. D]octors... believe the early infections helped to equip the babies' immune systems to respond more effectively to other illnesses as they grow older... decreased exposure to common infections during infancy... could account for the increase in diabetes in northern Europe over the past 30 years. Children with juvenile onset, or type 1 diabetes, produce little or no insulin... Although the condition can be controlled with insulin injections, diabetics face a lifetime of treatment and up to four injections a day.

...[A NZ medical research company claims an international breakthrough in diabetes treatment that could eventually provide a cure for 11,000 NZers and 15 million people around the world with type 1 diabetes who now need daily injections of insulin. The Auckland company, Diatranz, says a Mexican schoolgirl given insulin-producing cells from the pancreas of newborn piglets has overcome diabetes. Diatranz's medical director said the girl, who is now

18, was “naturally very pleased. This is a young, very attractive Mexican girl, who is very relieved indeed.” Twelve teenage diabetics – six girls and six boys – received the pig cell transplants 14 to 20 months ago. Four of the girls and one boy now produce enough of their own insulin, using the transplanted cells, to at least halve the daily injections of insulin keeping them alive. The director said even halving insulin injections made the transplants worthwhile because of the risks and costs of total dependence on injections – \$12,500 a year for a standard type 1 diabetic. By comparison, extracting insulin-producing cells from piglets, flying them to Mexico and transplanting them into diabetic patients costs only \$20,000 to \$25,000, saving many times that amount over a patient’s lifetime. Diatranz scientists have made 12 trips to Mexico carrying the pig cells in their hand luggage to get them there quickly. At the Mexico City Children’s Hospital, a doctor developed a unique method of transplanting the cells. The doctor inserted a cigarette-sized stainless-steel tube on each side of the stomach just under the patient’s skin. At first, the tubes contained just a plastic rod. After two months, the rod was removed and the insulin-producing piglet cells replaced it. It then took up to a year for the piglet cells to mature and start producing full quantities of insulin. Diatranz and the doctor plan a further trial starting within two months to improve their success rate. The company will then seek financing, possibly from a pharmaceutical company or a big institute such as America’s Mayo Clinic, to do full clinical trials in the US. Diatranz has spent \$7 million to \$8 million so far and would probably recover its money by licensing the rights to the procedure and teaching other people to do it. The company is owned privately by individual shareholders, most of whom have close relatives with diabetes. The biggest single investor is the Warehouse founder, who became involved when it had a diabetic dog treated by Diatranz. A 12-year-old diabetes sufferer who attends Long Bay College said it was glad not to have been the first to get the pig cell transplants. “I wouldn’t really want to get diseases and stuff from pigs. But after some other people have had it done, and if it has been successful, then yes, I would.” However, the NZ Health Ministry has banned the process here. Submissions close on Friday on a new law that would extend the ban until at least June next year and possibly two more years because of a risk that pig viruses could spread into people. The Green Party co-leader said there was a risk that transplanting animal cells into people could transmit viruses in the same way that influenza originally spread from animals. “It’s a question of whether you can put the whole human population at risk in order to treat some individuals. It’s a difficult ethical question.” The process began with killing newborn piglets to extract their pancreas. But the director said any animal rights objection would be “hard to square up with ham”. The procedure does not involve genetic modification – in contrast to most insulin which was originally also taken from pigs but is now made in laboratories through genetic manipulation.’]

...Tiny worms could hold vital clues for the development of new treatments for diabetes, a disease that afflicts up to 135 million people. Doctors at the Massachusetts General Hospital have discovered... that... mutations... in a gene called daf-16... allow a... worm, *Caenorhabditis elegans*... to survive without the hormone that controls human metabolism and blood sugar levels... The gene encodes a protein that passes along insulin signals within the cells to control the production of enzymes metabolising sugars and fats. Humans carry two daf-16 equivalent genes... [The doctors] believe that in the absence of insulin, the daf-16 protein becomes unregulated, and its runaway activities may be the key cause of diabetes. “Our discovery that animals do not need insulin signals if they also carry an inactive daf-16 gene was completely unexpected...,” [one of the doctors] said... Studies have shown that obese people have a much higher risk of developing... Type 2, adult onset diabetes... The worms that are missing insulin or another hormone called daf-7 get fat. In the worm, daf-7 is a metabolism-regulating hormone like insulin... but unlike daf-16, scientists have not yet found the human equivalent of DAF-7... [However, if the doctor’s] hypothesis was correct... [the method] could be used to treat both type[s] of diabetes, the... disorder [that] causes... strokes, heart attacks, blindness... nerve damage... can result in amputations... and... kidney disease...

[‘A kidney is liable to damage by infections, vascular disease, a tumour, or an obstruction (*e.g.* an enlarged prostate or stones).’]

...‘A few weeks in jail seemed a small price to pay for a penniless Palestinian suffering from kidney stones. Unable to afford the operation, the 32-year-old attacked his neighbour, forcing police to arrest him. When in jail the 32-year-old complained of stomach cramps and his kidney stones were promptly removed – at no cost to him. When police found out about his sneaky surgery, they kept him behind bars for a few more weeks – just to teach him a lesson.’]

...Getting married, divorced or sued could hurt more than your wallet. Such changes also may trigger kidney stones, according to a study that, for the first time, links the painful ailment with stress... The... study... could lead to increased focus on stress management to prevent recurrences of kidney stones[, which]... occur when excess calcium and other substances crystallise in ducts connecting the kidneys and bladder, causing pain from the blockage of urine or the sharp edges scraping the ureter as the stone passes through. About 12[% of USers] develop a kidney stone at some point, and each has a 50[%] chance of recurrence within 10 years and an 80[%] chance of eventual recurrence. Kidney stones cost an estimated \$NZ2.75 billion annually for medical treatment consisting generally of medication, removal of the stone through a tiny device threaded up the urethra and bladder, or the increasingly popular and less-painful use of shock waves to break the stones into tiny pieces.

...SIX years ago... a 23-year-old line[person]... was... working for the South African equivalent of Telecom. Today, [it]’s a millionaire and South Africa’s Young Businessperson of the Year – thanks to a magic box that relieves pain. Famous users include... tennis... and... rugby players... and [an F1] racing driver... Now the box is available in N[Z]. The battery-powered machine, weighing under 2kg, is called an Action Potential Simulation (APS) Therapy machine, and generates an electrical current that matches the body’s natural nerve impulses. It was the only technology in the world that could do this, said [its inventor], who has patented it in 38 countries. However, health professionals here said electro-therapy devices similar to APS are already available and are used by physiotherapists, anaesthetists and others, with good results. “We’re not quite sure how these things work,” said one professional, “but the electrical simulation seems to succeed in confusing nerve impulses and blocking pain.” While more basic pulse massagers retail for a few hundred dollars and are used privately, devices comparable to APS tend to be used only by health professionals... The machines retail for about \$3300. In South Africa, [the inventor] has sold 30,000... [His] Pretoria-based company, Tech Pulse, had also established distributors in Germany, Ireland and the US, where the device has won approval from the F[DA].

...A new one-a-day pill that stops hair loss and encourages hair to grow back in some [patients] has won approval from the U[S FD]A... Merck and Co said in Washington that its Propecia might be available by prescription as early as mid-January. The drug, developed for baldness after [guys] taking it for prostate enlargement noticed hair growing back, will not be available to [gals] because it causes birth defects...

[‘Hair loss is now as big a problem for gals as for guys, according to the magazine *Hair International*. It says this is the result of lifestyles and stresses brought about by equal opportunities with guys’ – as opposed to genetics (the genetic opposite of baldness is the aptly-named ‘werewolf syndrome’).]

...‘how an experiment on my wife led to a breakthrough in hair transplants. Over the past few days our department at Durham University has been deluged with letters, e-mails and calls from people with all sorts of distressing stories about their hair problems. They’ve all seen headlines claiming my wife and I have discovered a new way of transplanting hair from one human being to another – because that’s exactly what we did with each other. We took a cluster of follicles from my scalp and implanted tiny bits of them in my wife’s inner arm. My wife looked after the transplanted cells by putting a little plastic dome over her skin. Air got through, but if my wife had a shower the follicles weren’t damaged. When the domes were eventually removed, you could see very clearly a small dark hair fibre which was quite different to anything growing on the rest of her forearm. It was amazing – one of those moments that make you understand why you became a scientist. If our interpretation was correct, my cells were organising hers to produce a new hair follicle. What was exciting about our experiment is that, although our cells weren’t compatible, the follicles weren’t rejected. What this suggests is that these cells have immune privilege. One reason we did this experiment on ourselves was because transferring tissue from one individual to another can cause health problems, such as the transfer of infection. But research has suggested that husbands and wives may develop some sort of immune tolerance

through contact – to put it delicately! So we carried out another experiment with a colleague, using his hair follicles. They, too, grew in my wife's arm – another brick on the edifice.'

... 'In recent medically supervised trials by the AUSn Photobiology Testing Facility at the University of Sydney, 90% of the patients with genetic baldness stopped their hair loss and reversed the balding process. They actually grew back more hair, thicker and healthier, thanks to the unique *RealGROWTH* Treatment Program. Call today for an obligation-free, confidential consultation with one of our fully experienced Consultants. They'll tell you how to stop your hair loss – with a money back guarantee (naturally some conditions apply)! For your free consultation call 0800 HAIRLOSS' [...]

Nothing, absolutely nothing known to science can do more to [save your hair t]han Clive's guaranteed Hair Gain Methods... Hormone imbalance, stress, wrong food, poor nourishment, bad habits of hair care are but a few of the factors that will take their toll on your... scalp and lead you towards a hairless future... For thousands of years, balding... [people] of all ages and nationalities have had to put up, not only with the jibes of unfeeling friends, but also with the various lotions, potions and tonics that are meant to restore everyone's thinning hair to a full head of glorious locks. Until now there has been a great silence on the major cause of baldness – genetics... [For] only \$25... Clive Clinics are not only willing to talk to you about why your parents are the reason for your baldness, but we also want to talk to you about the latest in invisible Hair Replacement Units, undetectable Hair Slit Grafts and treatments that block the genetic messages from advancing your years unnecessarily!

...Ageing, says... the new Masonic Professor of Geriatric Medicine at the Auckland University School of Medicine, is not something that begins when you're 65. It begins when you're in your 20s and you start to lose bone. If you're 35 and can't remember where you left your keys – that's normal, because memory begins to slip away, if imperceptibly, soon after 30... With each generation, health improvements are lopping about 10 years off how we can expect to feel. For instance... today's 75-year-old has the health of a 65-year-old about 15 years ago... [The professor] came to Auckland last month from Flinders University, Adelaide. His training in both neurology and geriatrics, combined with his interest in epidemiology, make him relatively rare in medicine. What brought him to North Shore Hospital – where the Medicine School's department of geriatric medicine is based – was the supportive professional environment offered at the hospital for him to continue his research interests, particularly into strokes... a condition which has many facets to it. "It's a big problem in the community and there's a lot of uncertainty about its causes, treatment and prevention..." Each year about 2000 people in Auckland suffer a stroke. [The professor] finds the processes of ageing generally, and the care of old people individually, intellectually challenging and professionally satisfying. "Geriatrics straddles the interface between acute hospital care and looking after people within the community. Some people think it's hard work. It requires a different sort of brainpower from other areas of medicine. You have to have empathy and the ability to communicate and understand the older person in their own setting..." His long-term plans include establishing a Centre of Ageing which would offer enhanced under graduate and postgraduate education in the ageing process, such as masters degree programmes in gerontology and geriatrics. (Gerontology refers to the sciences related to ageing while geriatrics is concerned with the medical and health-care aspects.) ...How would such a centre fare in the competition for the scarce health dollar? The department of geriatrics was set up with money from the Freemasons but partly depends for its continuation on outside support. Yes, [the professor] says, there's a struggle. Cardiology gets five times more financial help than stroke and yet statistically it's just as big a problem. And 10 times more is spent on research into child health than on ageing. "It's going to be to the benefit of us all. It's investing in our future – like superannuation."

...*HELP DEFY AGEING!* ...research shows the importance of getting enough vitamins and minerals from the diet... especially from fruit and vegetables! These help maintain good health and slow ageing. However, [a]... good basic nutritional anti-ageing program could include a multivitamin, such as... Kordel's Pycnogenol Plus... [-] which... is derived from the bark of the French Coastal Pine... [-] with the evening meal. Talk to your Pharmacist or Health Food Adviser for more specific recommendations for you! ...[Or come to the] *AGEING WITHOUT ILL-HEALTH SEMINAR*... [on] Thursday 13th November... [at the] Centra Auckland... Cost: \$10. Includes Refreshments on arrival and FREE SAMPLE BAG...

Cracking the keys to longer lifespan... [W]hen a French[per]son turns 122 this month the whole world... [will take notice. The old gal], who entered the record books as the world's oldest person two years ago, was born in Arles, France, in 1875, a year before the invention of the telephone. [It] remembers the builders erecting the Eiffel Tower... met Vincent van Gogh... as a teenager... and [was] a pensioner when Hitler invaded France... With every remarkable milestone [the 122-year-old re]fuels the hopes of researchers around the world who believe it is possible to extend the human lifespan. [The old gal] is already proof that people can live beyond 120, a feat even the experts would have said was impossible until recently... The key to eternal life still lies in the realm of science fiction but longer, active life, is becoming reality. It is also big business: in America, \$1 billion is spent on anti-ageing treatments every year. The catch is that nobody knows how people like the [122-year-old] do it. The old gal] was not athletic in her youth, nor is [it] a health fanatic. [It] gave up smoking... at 117 and has only recently forsworn her daily glass of port. [The 122-year-old, who claims it] enjoys everything, has spent her life with a smile on her face, and expects to "die laughing". According to... research published last week, this may be the key. A 22-year study of 750 white, middle-class [USers] now aged around 70 showed that "socially dominant [people]", the type most likely to monopolise conversations, interrupt others and constantly compete for attention, were significantly more likely to die earlier than their more relaxed counterparts... The theory in vogue is that mood can affect the immune system and that changing emotional behaviour and outlook may be just as important in maintaining good health as giving up smoking or losing weight... The idea that ageing is largely mind over matter is also the conclusion of... [a] chess grandmaster and co-author of "The Age Heresy", a guide to determining – and possibly lengthening – lifespan... Never retire, says [the co-author], who believes 120 is the age everyone should aim for. "If you finish one job, start another... or take a degree in philosophy or whatever interests you and will keep your brain active. Once the brain stops working it shuts down frighteningly fast." ...Contrary to the popular belief that we lose brain cells every day, leading to inevitable degeneration, [the co-author] believes it is possible to strengthen the brain's grey matter... [with] "mind sports" – taking up chess or learning to play a musical instrument and practising on a daily basis... – ...and that, combined with a healthy lifestyle, this will prolong life... [T]he trendiest anti-ageing remedy has been dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA), which is produced by the adrenal gland and converted into testosterone and estrogen. Production of the naturally occurring hormone falls off after the age of about 35. There have been some studies showing that low levels of DHEA can increase the risk of heart attacks... and breast cancer... [However, t]rying to coax creatures past their natural lifespan is so far an imperfect science. Experiments on fruit flies, which were not allowed to breed until much later than usual, did produce a strain that lived much longer. Alas, it was much less adept at breeding – in survival terms, hopeless.

...[we aren't flies, so w]hy do spiders... bug... us so much... Is our fear of creepy crawlies irrational, or is it a part of our primal biology? ...[a p]sychologist... who works for the Anxiety Disorders Trust helping people whose fears have become phobias, says some of our reactions to creepy-crawlies are learned, but some are programmed into our genes. "For example, studies have shown that if you show a snake shape to any primate, the first reaction is to back away, to avoid it. We seem to have a similar reaction to black, creepy things, or to certain colours, like red or yellow... We've got an incredibly complicated computer system keeping us safe. Our neurotransmitter system reacts very fast, and the initial reaction is to... be safe, be careful... Many people have problems with... spiders... especially the big black ones you get in the Auckland suburb of Avondale. And a number of people have difficulties with stick insects, moths, worms... wetas... and cicadas... A lot of people [also] have trouble playing tennis... because of the three-dimensional image of a ball coming towards you fast. The instinctive reaction can be that it's a projectile, and you should avoid it." It's a great excuse for tennis incompetents... A useful test of instincts and reactions can be found at the Auckland Museum where Lifestyles of The Small and Hairy is on exhibit. Look at the live tarantulas and the dangerous mix of A[US]n arachnids... You'll probably feel just

a little bit brave, macho, even... Bravado doesn't wash with some people, though, whose instinctive fears have expanded to... the extent where their anxieties actually affect their lives. Their reaction to even the threat of their particular fear leads to physical reactions: Increased heart rate, increased breathing, a sense of tightening in the chest... [The psychologist] works with them to reduce the anxiety... People need to learn, [the psychologist] says, that anxiety oscillates. It increases, it hovers around a peak, and then it reduces. And getting used to the fact that you do eventually become less anxious is the key to getting over a phobia.

...more overseas children with a deadly brain disorder are waiting for cutting-edge brain treatment in N[Z. Two US] tots were treated at Auckland Hospital last year after [a NZ p]rofessor... led development of the world-first therapy. Now the parents of five more children from the U[S], and one each from Germany, A[US] and South Africa want their children to undergo the treatment... The therapy, which involves inserting synthetic genes into the brain, aims to curtail degeneration caused by Canavan disease, a rare and fatal disorder... [However, b]efore any further therapy goes ahead, it must first go through an official process including approval by the Genetic Technology Advisory Committee. That committee, under the Health Research Council, has called for more information on the plans to extend the project... [The p]rofessor... said it had been hoped that one of the... children already treated... could be brought back to Auckland for top-up treatment. But the committee turned down the proposal because there were no animal studies to back up repeat treatments... Even if... [the girl], now almost 3... were never able to have more gene therapy, [her mother said her daughter] had paved the way for others... "Everybody wants to know it's a cure and I wish to God I could say that – obviously – but it's a first step." ...The original therapy was the source of some controversy. Critics complained that ethical approval should never have been granted for a safety trial involving children who were too young to give informed consent. The northern regional health... ethics committee, however, stood by its decision to grant approval... An independent review subsequently backed the ethics committee's decision.

...British scientists have pioneered a revolutionary technique for making medicines. They have protected animals against disease using a vaccine made from plants – a world first. The plant process could dramatically cut the cost of manufacturing drugs and vaccines, allowing medicines to be derived from viruses that blight plants but which have been genetically engineered to make proteins found in humans... Crops such as black-eyed peas and potatoes could then be infected with these altered viruses and used as pharmaceutical storehouses. Researchers say that more than 1000 doses of a vaccine could be grown on a single plant and that one room could provide the world's requirements for an individual vaccine. There would be no need to build complicated fermenting plants, where many drugs and vaccines are now made, or to design transgenic animals... that make human hormones in their milk – another route to pharmaceutical manufacture being explored by scientists... The critical technology which permitted the vaccine's creation was developed by scientists in Norfolk, England, and Purdue University, in the U[S], seven years ago. The rights were obtained by the British company Agricultural Genetics Company... Convinced that AGC's plant virus techniques were the company's most valuable asset, [one scientist] persuaded several of his colleagues to join him in a management buyout of the technology in November 1993. Axis Genetics was the result. In 1995 the company won \$4.7 million of private funds to carry out research, and by the end of 1996 was valued at more than \$47 million – even though it has yet to produce a commercial product based on its plant virus technology. Axis is developing versions of the vaccine for dogs and cats while carrying out research on human varieties... The company is also investigating the possibility of using plant vaccines to stimulate the body against cancer. "Tumours can hide from the body's immune system quite easily... The aim is to create a vaccine that can stimulate T-cells so that they are primed to hunt down cancers growing in the body..."

...Forget about... nasty needles – vaccinations of the future are likely to come in the friendly form of a banana or carrot. Auckland scientists are working on developing an edible, everyday food which contains a vaccine against diarrhoea... aided by \$110,000 from the Lottery Grants Board. A project outline states the work is "an important international public health priority" given that diarrhoea kills 3.5 million people... each year... While deaths are uncommon in [First World] countries, hospitalisations are common... The researchers needed first to genetically engineer plants so they carried the infectious protein responsible for diarrhoea. The [GE] plants would then be tested to see if they built immunity... Researchers in the U[S] hope to come up with a banana that will guard against a range of diseases including hepatitis B, measles, yellow fever and poliomyelitis.

...Researchers believe they have made a breakthrough in the fight against tuberculosis. In their research for an effective vaccine against TB they have discovered that by boosting a small section of the immune system it will fight back and control the disease... TB, once a major problem in N[Z], has largely been controlled, just 728 cases having been reported between 1972 and 1985. But the disease is still the top killer overseas... The research has been carried out at the Malaghan Institute... in Wellington... [but] all attempts to get Government funding... had failed. Much of the... research is paid for by the British Wellcome Charitable Trust, with help from the L[GB] for equipment.

...*Malaysia says mystery child killer now under control...* The death toll from an airborne virus that has killed at least 26 children... under the age of four... and baffled international medical experts has stabilised, Malaysia's health minister said yesterday... As of Saturday, 1240 children had been admitted to hospitals throughout Malaysia for suspected Cocksackie B and A infection and 968 had been discharged... What has puzzled health officials is why the virus is killing children in Sarawak and nowhere else in Malaysia[, which]... called in experts from Atlanta's Centres for Disease Control and Prevention earlier this month. They found traces of another virus in at least two of the victims that has no known cure or vaccine...

Wuhan, a deadly strain of flu... killed more than 20,000 people across the U[S] last winter. This winter, flu vaccinations... are giving companies hard hit by winter illness a shot in the arm. Large organisations are slashing sick day costs and maintaining productivity... Workers who get flu shots at Cigna insurance company take 1.4 fewer sick days a year. Shots were introduced to the company's Nashville office last year. Employees reported flu-like symptoms fell 92%. Eastman Kodak estimated it saved as much as \$4m in absenteeism alone last year... But while flu shots for workers in the US are increasingly viewed as "business critical", N[Z] companies have not yet caught the vaccination bug[('every year flu viruses affect 300,000 NZers')]... A dose of flu will usually knock someone out of action for around 10 days. The attention and performance of workers who soldier on will typically be affected. The up side is once stricken, people can develop some immunity. But because the flu virus mutates, this immunity might not be able to stave off a new strain. That is why the flu vaccine must be changed every year. If the drug company has got the brew right, the vaccine should protect 60%-90% of fit adults. Vaccination is considered safe as it does not stimulate the immune system. Minor side effects might include a tender arm and minor muscle aches for a few hours. Employees who take the annual jab also help slow the spread of influenza to workmates who have not taken the vaccine. But this spinoff – called herd immunity – will not be felt unless the bulk of employees (70%) have been vaccinated. There's the rub. Most staff opt out of vaccination... Acceptance at most N[Z] companies peaks near 30%... A *New England Journal of Medicine* survey showed on an average day at a typical company, three workers out of 100 called in sick. By reducing absenteeism to two workers a day, a company of 5000 workers could save \$1.47 m... for a \$58,000 investment in shots... [– which] cost employers \$12-\$23 each, depending on the provider. [□] 'Two studies concluding that the flu exacts a major toll on children may re-open the debate over whether youngsters should be vaccinated. The influenza vaccine is not recommended for children unless they already have health problems, such as asthma, that could make an influenza infection deadly. But during an epidemic, the disease can strike more than 40% of children, who often spread the illness' ('about two decades after Europeans first made contact with Maoris, a severe epidemic called by Maoris rewha-rewha – possibly influenza – broke out, which missionary William Colenso estimated destroyed about three-fifths of the people in the southern part of the North Island; about 1795, an epidemic called Te Ngara spread among the Maoris – there were so many fatalities that "the living with difficulty disposed of the dead"; one of the most disastrous epidemics of rewha-rewha occurred about 1810'; 'the great influenza epidemic beginning in 1918 caused nearly 7000 NZ deaths'; during its administration of Western Samoa in the 1920s, the 'NZ Government allowed an influenza-infested ship to dock at Apia then refused to provide medical treatment – 25% of the native population was wiped out').]

...Paraparaumu School... is recovering from what appears to be the first big outbreak of type-A flu the Public Health Service has seen this year. The school closed on Friday afternoon and Monday after 110 of its 300 pupils and half the staff were away sick... The service has advised parents to keep their children home and watch for secondary infections such as earache... [Incidentally, a] bionic ear implanted in profoundly deaf young children has enabled them to speak and hear sounds... Results of the world's largest study of cochlear implants showed that 87[%] of all children aged two to 11 who had the implant before the age of five were able to speak functional language after three years. Almost as large a percentage were able to understand common phrases without lip reading... Unlike hearing aids which amplify sound, the cochlear... [positions] electrodes in the inner ear [that] bypass the damaged area and create a nerve impulse which stimulates the auditory cortex of the brain. An external microphone receives sound signals which are converted into electrical signals by a small speech processor and fed through the transmitter coil to the implanted receiver... Children who were born... deaf benefit as much, and often more, than children who lost their hearing early in life... [but a]dults who have never heard are not suitable candidates because the auditory part of the[ir] brain will not respond to the stimulus... Most children in the programme continued using the implant, even into the teenage years, unlike an American study that showed 48[%] of children refused to wear it. "For me it's been an absolute miracle," said... [a] 74-year-old member of Britain's House of Lords[, who] was left deaf after an operation 28 years ago... "It isn't perfect by any means – voices are a bit distorted and birds sound husky... but who cares? At least I can hear birds,"...

A record number of cochlear implant procedures performed in the last year has brought the joy of hearing to 26 profoundly deaf people. The high-tech implant devices... available in N[Z] since 1986, make hearing possible for people so deaf they cannot be helped by hearing aids. Half the recipients are children, some as young as two. Adult recipients include elderly people... [The] manager of the A+ National Audiology Centre, says the highest number previously undertaken in one year was 19... "We are still dealing with a backlog of clients. When we've dealt with that backlog we will be working on newly deaf cases and the demand for implants should settle down to about 15 to 20... per year... They are expensive devices, each costing around \$25,000. The final cost with all the services involved, including the operation, is about \$40,000 for each client." [The manager] is delighted that funding for clients was available from all four [RHA]s for participation in the scheme... "The RHAs have chosen to invest because we have been able to show from overseas how these implants can improve the quality of life of clients and produce economic benefits. People can function more independently. One cochlear implant recipient was a trades[person] who had always worked with his wife because [it] could not use the telephone. The implant meant [the husband] could use a phone and his wife could get another job... We are expecting to achieve even more with children because of the impact on their future earning capacity and their reduced need for social services." ...approximately 380,000 [NZers] have hearing loss but only a small percentage of these are profoundly deaf and an even smaller number meet the criteria for cochlear implants.

...In a N[Z] first, a Christchurch Hospital surgeon has implanted a stainless steel hip and half a pelvis in a patient... one of the most extensive hip-pelvis operations in the world. People with hip replacements usually have artificial sockets implanted but never whole stainless steel hips – until now... The computer-designed stainless steel hip and pelvis was shaped at [the h]ospital, then taken... for "Rolls-Royce" cleaning at Air N[Z]'s depot. The patient... is fully recovered and enjoying life after a seven-hour operation to save her leg. [The 73-year-old] had a malignant tumour the size of a cricket ball in her hip socket and pelvic bone... was in constant pain and it seemed inevitable that her leg and half her pelvis would have to be removed. [However, the o]rthopaedic surgeon... decided on a landmark operation to save the leg. "Basically it meant chopping off her whole leg and reattaching it..." ...[The patient] still suffers a little pain, and her left leg is not as subtle as it used to be. But... it was better than... a wooden leg.

...A judo champion and a national badminton player are among 500 British patients to have benefited from an alternative to hip replacements. They have undergone a process involving the same effect as total replacement but is far less invasive – and far more liberating, judging by initial results. Joints affected by osteoarthritis become painful and swollen when the bones rub together as cartilage is lost. The conventional operation involves cutting deep into the femur or thigh bone to allow a plastic or metal joint to be implanted... But this [new treatment] simply involves stopping the rubbing by replacing the diseased tissue with a metal-on-metal lining which contains a bonding substance. The amount of bone removed in the resurfacing operation is about the size of a large knuckle; in a replacement it is the size of a fist. A replacement [also] leads to further bone loss because the artificial joint interferes with growth... Total hip replacement, developed by Sir John Charnley in the early 60s, is acclaimed as one of the most successful operations ever. Each year in Britain there are 40,000 hip replacements, and a further 13,000 revision operations to replace loose artificial joints. But Sir John always regarded total hip replacement as second best. Before developing the "Charnley hip" [John] tried in vain to perfect a simpler "restructuring" operation. Surgeons are now realising... [hi]s original vision, 15 years after his death... John's original idea "failed for lack of the right material. [John] used teflon, but this wore out within two years, making further surgery necessary." Attempts at relining continued to fail because surgeons used weak materials. It was not until 1991 that the... Royal Orthopaedic Hospital in Birmingham... started to come up with the winning combination... [In further news from Britain, a] doctor has cut off a... head in a pioneering 17-hour operation and screwed it back on again. The patient[, aged 36, who]... had a crippling condition which meant her face pointed downwards... survived... [The surgeon] detached the head from her spinal column, leaving it connected by the spinal cord, key blood vessels and the skin at the front of her neck... then cut a wedge from the base of her skull and the top vertebra before fixing her head back with a metal plate and two screws, leaving her looking forward.

...The operation was performed in February but presented at the British Society of Neurosurgeons only last week... [The patient, who] suffers from a bone condition called ankylosing spondylitis, a rheumatic condition which progressively fuses bones in the spine together[– but was compounded after the patient] broke her neck in a fall four years ago... – ...thanked [the surgeon] for changing her life. "I had become a recluse. I was too scared to go out and couldn't cross the road because I couldn't see straight ahead."

...Microsurgeons have reattached the face of a Victorian... in a surgical first for A[US] which the team leader says has saved her from a life as a recluse. The 28-year-old mother from Shepparton had virtually her entire face and scalp ripped off when her hair caught in machinery in a milking shed last Tuesday... The [28-year-old], whose identity and personal details were not being released to protect her distraught family, was found by her partner. When [the 28-year-old] arrived at St Vincent's the skin and tissue of her face were packed in ice and totally separate, with only her chin, lower lip and left ear remaining intact... [The p]rofessor... who headed the St Vincent's Hospital team for the 25-hour operation, yesterday described the [28-year-old]'s injuries as "the most horrific and horrendous that we have seen." [The professor] told of going home "terribly depressed" last Wednesday night, fearing the surgery... had failed and [it] would have to tell the [patient's family that the 28-year-old] faced months of surgery, the result of which could only be "very inferior to normality." ...But by the next morning it was clear the blood thinner injected when circulation to the reattached tissue was failing had worked. Surgeons used microscopes to magnify tiny blood vessels, some just 0.5mm in diameter, up to 30 times, matching the vessels in the amputated tissue with the remaining tissue. The team is now sure... that the [patient] will look as [it] used to with only some join scars... [The patient, who] was being kept unconscious while her surgery began to heal... may be able to go home within two weeks. If not, [the patient] faces further surgery and skin grafts but could cover them with a wig.

...[the] surgeon who reattached a... face... says... the day might come when major trauma victims left hospital with someone else's face sewn on. "This is a dry run for actually transplanting faces. This is what we could only dream we could do... I understand there is a film in town at the moment, *Face/Off*. I have not seen it, but the comparison is being made." *Face/Off* is... [about] enemies whose faces are swapped by surgeons... Last night, the patient was still in intensive care, but [the surgeon]... was fairly confident all the face would survive. [The surgeon] said face transplants were too risky at present because of the potential side effects of the immuno-suppressive drugs used to stop rejection of transplanted organs.

...A [28-year-old] whose face was ripped off... is awake and recovering well, the head of the surgical team said yesterday... [The AUSn, who is] able to drink but was being fed intravenously... was still sedated but had been able to talk to her family and hospital staff. During the operation... [it] received... 30 units of blood – almost double the eight pints contained in the body... [By the way, NZ h]eart-attack patients will take part in an international trial to test a potentially lifesaving treatment using a thin balloon that boosts blood flow. The simple-looking medical gadget could save many from the devastating effects of heart damage. When inserted into the coronary artery, the balloon is expected to help the heart pump better and dissolve very damaging blood clots... Drugs are available that dissolve blood clots and boost the survival of heart-attack patients. But they fail to clear clots in some people, who can go on to develop heart failure and undesirably low blood pressure. This happens in... 150 Green Lane patients a year... [T]hese patients had a high death rate in hospital or were sent home, often with severe breathlessness. Their doctors hope... the balloon, inserted within 12 hours of an attack's onset, will change that. The balloon, connected to a pump machine, must stay inside the patient for up to five days and will be used alongside clot-dissolving drugs. Patients treated with the balloon will be compared with others treated solely with the clot drugs... A similar study is already under way using the balloon on patients in "shock" – where blood pressure had dived dangerously.

...A Washington surgeon said yesterday [it] had performed the first-ever quintuple bypass operation through a keyhole incision – which meant [the surgeon] did not have to crack open the patient's chest... [T]he new method, involving only a 7.5cm incision, [also] meant his patient could recover and go home more quickly... [In local news, more] people are sustaining serious brain damage from assaults and some doctors are unable to respond effectively, recent studies show. Releasing details of an Auckland study, the Brain Injury Association chief executive... lashed out at GPs for their inadequate handling of brain-injured patients... [The] study in South Auckland by his association showed GPs had a poor knowledge of brain injury and often had no idea where to refer such cases. But the problem was more widespread. A central North Island mother... took her brain-injured two-year-old daughter to three specialists before an adequate diagnosis was made... [In addition,] the South Auckland study, involving 154 people, found that half of those who suffered a head injury never reported it to their doctor... Each year more than 9000 people are admitted to hospital with a head injury and most suffered a subsequent brain injury[but it is]... hard to gauge the extent of brain injury... as many problems developed months after an accident... [The author of a] Waikato University... study... [that] had looked at only the most severe cases, was particularly disturbed by the rise in the number of [gals] suffering serious brain injury from being attacked. Another disturbing trend was the increase in relationship breakdowns after a brain-injury incident... Divorce rates rose from 3[%] before brain damage to 22[%] afterward.

...55%... of... physiotherapists... said it was wrong to invite a patient to meet at a bar after work for a drink, and carry on providing professional services when a sexual relationship developed... [But ove]r... 40% said "this was okay, and I might do it if the circumstances were right"... Sexual attraction toward a patient was... reported by 44% of physiotherapists in a survey of 1365 members of the N[Z] Society of Physiotherapists on sexual contact in the professional relationship... 20% of physiotherapists have dated one of their ex-patients, while almost 5% have dated a current patient. "There is little doubt that significant numbers of physiotherapists see, and are seen by, patients as sexual beings," the survey reported... 40% of physiotherapists have been sexually propositioned... by a patient or a patient's relative... [The society's] executive officer... was not particularly surprised by the survey's findings. "If you look at a profession such as nursing you would... find a similar situation." ...[● T]he former Associate Minister of Health... [has] released a Government report... that [suggests] Northland Health should operate commercially... The chief executive of Northland Health... said the [report] reflected international trends... Meanwhile... the... [PM has] challenged doctors and nurses to show leadership and side with [the Government] to convince the public that large, old hospitals were no longer needed to deliver modern health care.

...Could nurses do the work of junior doctors in hospitals – and do it better and cheaper? The Minister of Health seems to think so[(r:p428, ln46)]. Junior doctors disagree. The 1800 house surgeons, house officers and registrars working on hospital wards throughout the country are responsible for the day-to-day diagnostic treatment and wellbeing of all patients... [J]unior doctors at Green Lane Hospital... average... 60 hours a week, and they often work 12 days in a row. The rate of pay after six years of lectures, study and clinical work is \$18 an hour. "If you are going to take junior doctors out of the system, you would need to upgrade nurses, and there is no way that would work out cheaper," [one junior doctor] said yesterday. Not only would they need extensive – and expensive – training; they would then command higher rates of pay. [The junior doctor] cited specialist neo-natal nurse practitioners. "They work 40 hours for \$55,000; we work 60 hours for the same amount. I don't know how the minister is going to save money by training nurses to do our job." ...nurses did not have indepth training... This was very relevant when it came to prescribing drugs, one area the minister has suggested nurses could be involved in... "Nurses are very well-trained in their speciality. A gastroenterology nurse will know more about that than I do when I start on that ward. But I have the responsibility for the over-all management of each patient," [the junior doctor] said. Junior doctors change wards every three months. It is not their job to be specialised... "The specialists spend a lot of time doing surgery and in clinic. They are not here to deal with medical problems on the ward. This is where we come in."

...Doctors could soon be paid to keep their patients out of hospital under a revolutionary health agreement signed yesterday. The joint venture between Auckland Healthcare, the country's biggest C[HE], and Procare, the largest group of [GP]s, is expected to create dramatic changes to the way GPs work. Instead of receiving a Government subsidy each time they treat a patient, they will be given annual budgets based on the number of patients in their area and the estimated cost of managing illnesses. Supporters of the "integrated care" system... say it will give all doctors the right incentives to treat patients early and keep them out of hospital. Opponents fear patients will suffer because they say GPs will cut corners to save money on their limited budgets. The new system is a blueprint for the way the Minister of Health... wants to see all health services run... The chief executive of Auckland Healthcare... and the chair[person] of ProCare... said the main early benefits lay in better teamwork, which avoided waste and duplication... [C]hildren with asthma in West Auckland... [– where an] asthma project was based on an existing partnership between ProCare doctors and the Starship children's hospital... [–] would be the first patients affected...

The Starship children's hospital is battling to stem the tide of patients to its emergency department... [R]esearch showed that many West Auckland parents were bypassing local doctors in favour of taking them to the straining Starship[, which is why]... it launched WestKids with a West Auckland [GP]s' group... The programme involves the GP group Integrated Primary Care Services funding seven nurses to resettle patients after they leave the Starship... [while two specialist doctors] are based in Henderson to take questions from local doctors, give training to boost skills as well as seeing more complicated cases... A Starship paediatrician... said the aim was to support and back up GPs and build confidence in local services so kids were better managed in the community... [Incidentally, a]ccidents kill around 100 children under the age of ten each year. And for every fatality, almost 130 other children are admitted to hospital for treatment. Yet many... injuries to... youngsters can be prevented... "Each year nearly 450 kids are admitted to hospital as a result of scalds,"... Many children are scalded by tap water because in homes built before 1991, hot water systems supply water well above the 55[°C] limit required by N[Z]'s current building code. A child's skin is thinner than an adult's and at 60 degrees it takes one second to inflict a serious burn... Over the past 12 months, 15 of the 35 children killed in motor accidents were unrestrained... Each year, more than 700 children under the age of 15 are hospitalised as a result of bike mishaps; several die... "Each year around 400 children are injured because they misjudge traffic and step out into the path of vehicles." ...Each year approximately 7400 children under 15 are treated at emergency departments for injuries sustained in mishaps with playground equipment in schools, pre-schools, public places and at home... Every year, an estimated 2800 kids under the age of 14 are treated for injuries incurred in trampolining accidents... While some 70[%] of schools in N[Z] have their own pool, learning to swim is not compulsory... Every year around ten children under the age of ten perish in house fires... Each year the National Poisons and Hazardous Chemicals Information Centre in Dunedin receives around 16,000 inquiries, more than half

of which involve children swallowing poisons... [■] Copies of a book on poisonous plants have been donated to Auckland kindergartens and playcentres by the Auckland Regional Council... to help educate the public about harmful plants in their gardens and methods of treatment for poisoned children.

...rain forests are bountiful – and seemingly inexhaustible – ecosystems that have supplied the human race with a staggering treasure trove including timber, fruit, spices and medicines. Although much more bounty lies in wait, the pace of discovery... is naturally slow. The sheer number of plants to study is staggering! (according)... to conservative estimates, about 30 million species of plants and animals – more than half of all life forms on Earth – live in the tropical rain forests... and scientific experimentation takes time and money. Even when a chemical needle is found in a rain forest haystack, it still takes years to get a new drug to market. [An English naturalist... assailed those who would ravage the rain forests – loggers, ranchers and miners – for acting “with the savage, unthinking ferocity of a troupe of apes in an art gallery.” But... “whereas pictures can be repainted, tropical rain forests can’t be recreated.” Indeed, what could replace the wondrous electric fish of the Amazon River, the poisonous-sweating frogs of Panama, or the host of plants and animals whose secrets – and potential benefits – have yet to be fathomed? In a word, nothing. When they are gone, they are gone, even if the trees that shielded them grow back... JUST AS THE PHYSICAL WORLD AROUND US STILL HOLDS MANY mysteries, much about how our own bodies and minds work remains to be discovered... Genome researchers are making steady progress... As of late 1997 they have identified some 50,000 human genes and determined the function of 5,000 of them... Last year alone, 21 new disease genes were discovered, ten more than in 1995. Among those already found this year are a mutated gene that causes a rare and fatal childhood cholesterol disorder... a third breast cancer gene... and a gene that appears to control whether cells die naturally or duplicate themselves without limit, the way cancer cells do... AS EVERY CHILD KNOWS, LOP THE TAIL OFF A LIZARD AND, astonishingly, it grows back. Unfortunately, the ability to regenerate missing or damaged organs and body parts is largely lost in adult human beings. Except for blood, skin and a few other types of cells, we are unable to repair or renew most tissue after we leave the womb – even though we retain the same genes that built those organs in the first place. Given the huge implications of being able to, say, repair a damaged heart, it is small wonder that developmental biology is attracting a growing number of researchers seeking to tease out the mysteries behind cell growth... Once scientists locate a disease gene and determine the complete sequence of its genetic code, they can devise a test for the presence of that gene in any patient... But with almost routine ways now available to test DNA samples for the presence of specific mutant genes, there is increased anxiety that an individual’s genetic heritage may be vulnerable to unwanted prying. The DNA from a single human hair... may be sufficient to alert a prospective employer or health insurer to a person’s genetic predisposition to disease. Broad privacy laws must therefore be enacted to forbid genetic tests without the informed consent of the individual involved. But even with such laws, dilemmas will arise when individuals do not realize the significance of the proposed genetic screening. These tests warn of impending disease, but do not cure. And how many people would want to have certain knowledge that they will contract a disease for which there is no cure? Banishing genetic disability must therefore be our primary concern. We would not worry about testing for a predisposing gene for Alzheimer’s disease if we already had the cure. In this case, knowing that an individual is seriously predisposed might allow drug therapy to begin before brain functioning is irreversibly diminished... We must never, however, live under the misconception that we will ever effectively control the majority of genetic diseases. Many are likely to prove intractable to drug therapies or gene therapies, in which good genes are introduced into cells to compensate for bad ones. It will be particularly difficult to compensate for genes that malfunction during fetal development. If key genes controlling the networking of brain cells don’t come into action in the womb, no drug or gene therapy procedure will be able to correctly rewire the brain later. There is a difference of opinion as to whether steps should be taken to prevent the birth of genetically impaired children. Many are opposed for religious reasons to trying to control the genetic destinies of children. Others, recalling Germany’s eugenic practices, have an equally strong abhorrence of genetic-based reproductive decisions. These people fear a more powerful eugenic practice, whereby the crude racial and class prejudices of early eugenicists are replaced by scientific demonstrations of genetic inequality. But the possibility of controlling our children’s genetic destiny strikes me as only good. It is grossly unfair that some families’ lives are dominated by the horrors of genetic disease... Mutation has been – and always will be – an essential fact of life, since it is through mistakes in gene replication that the positive genetic variants arise which are the lifeblood of evolution. If the gene copying process were perfect, life as it now exists never would have come about. Genetic disease is the price we pay for the extraordinary evolutionary process that has given rise to the wonders of life on Earth. I thus do not see genetic disease in any way as an expression of the complex will of any supernatural authority, but rather as random tragedies that we should do everything in our power to prevent. There is, of course, nothing pleasant about terminating the existence of a genetically disabled fetus. But doing so is incomparably more compassionate than allowing an infant to come into the world tragically impaired. There is, of course, the question of who should have the authority to make decisions of this kind. Here the message of past eugenic practices is clear. Never let a government, no matter how apparently benign, into the process. The potential mother should have this authority... [– because it is the mother] who is likely to be most involved with the upbringing of the child. I am aware that some will argue that the fetus has an inalienable right to life. But the process of evolution never regards any form of life, be it adult or fetal, as an inalienable right. It’s better to see humans as wonderful social animals having *needs* ([e.g.,]for food... and... health...), *capabilities* (for thought and love, among others) and *responsibilities* (including... work[ing] with other human beings to see that everyone’s needs are adequately met). Working intelligently and wisely to see that good genes – not bad ones – dominate as many lives as possible is the truly moral way for us to proceed.

...Seldom has a room afforded such a view. As 150 delegates of the Privacy Issues Forum stared out from the large windows of the Ellerslie Convention Centre, each could see the winding racetrack and the cityscape beyond. But [one delegate]... could see much more. [It] was staring into the future of the whole of humanity. “It’s nothing less than the future of our species. Will we become known as the generation which started the creation of the super-species?” [The delegate], a visiting senior A[US]n judge, has grappled with this question at the highest levels. [The judge] is a member of two world organisations coping with the almost unfathomable legal and moral implications of one of science’s most extraordinary projects: the push to tinker with the basic structure of each and every one of us. Drawing on observations made from those organisations – the bioethics committee of UNESCO and the ethics committee of the Human Genome Organisation – [the judge] addressed the forum last week and charged his audience with making it their business to be concerned about what advances are being made. “It is worthy of the attention of people concerned about human rights.” The Human Genome project began in 1988 as a cooperative effort to record and study the 100,000 human genes. Its potential is mind-blowing: science is on the verge of cracking the code to our existence; catastrophic diseases lay at the project’s mercy; humankind has at its fingertips the strands which dictate hair colour, height – everything about us. “The project is assembling the encyclopaedia of medical practice in the millennium we are about to enter. The potential benefit to humanity is enormous,”... But with technology advancing so fast, [the judge] is worried legislators are not keeping up. Effective law, [the judge] says, is just not there. While some scientists are suggesting limits as to how far we should go, there is little to keep the advances in check. Some have suggested a moratorium on touching the germ line. “At one conference I attended, there were four Nobel Laureates present. They made two points: “That the genetic pool was very important in our search for the perfect human being, that we recognise the great utility of gene diversity. And they also made the point that we do not have sufficient scientific knowledge about what would happen in future generations if we manipulated the germ line.” Ethical issues abound, too... Who should be told if it is discovered that someone has a “bad” gene? “Should an insurer have access to your genetic markings? Family members, employers and the state: who has the right to know? We should be giving more attention to this subject.” – 1997

THE sci-fi film *Gattaca* sketched a world divided into two. Humans representing genetic perfection – those without flaws or unlikely to be tainted with predisposition to disease – scored the top... jobs. Those afflicted with even the most minor imperfections were consigned to menial work and became part of an underclass... [T]he word denoting those who made the grade was “valids” and the word for the failures, “in-valids.” ...Often the defects were invisible, but instant and constant DNA testing kept the... groups segregated. Science permitted the line to be drawn and 21st century society sanctioned the dumping of people on either side. Science and society – the two can never be prised apart. So when nine leading medical researchers made a foray into the future for a new book, they forecast not only the technological advances, but the social and economic shock waves likely to radiate from them... Artificial wombs, smart houses monitoring inhabitants’ health, drugs enabling the body to regenerate and robots carrying out operations, fill the pages of the *British Medical Journal* publication. But read on and the potential social scenarios left in the wake of the inventions ...provide even more of a jolt, particularly in the chapter on foetal and child development... [What if gals] could be screened for pre-fertilisation parental fitness? And what if parents could select the characteristics of their baby? It’s all in the realm of the possible, according to the chapter author... That is because scientists will continue to find it easier and more attractive to tackle genetic questions rather than the environmental ones affecting children... The scenarios, like the scenes from *Gattaca*, seem light years away, but science has an eerie way of following science fiction.

...IF A paediatrician who stopped practising 50 years ago looked in on the children’s health scene today, the sight might seem more like science fiction than medical fact. Babies born three months too soon and weighing less than 600g survive. Diseases that often killed or crippled kids... don’t strike any more, or are so rare that many children’s doctors have never treated them. Foetuses are now operated on for life-threatening disorders. And mothers-to-be are treated with drugs or vitamins to avoid dreaded conditions that can disable children or take their lives, such as blood Rh incompatibility between mothers and babies, or spina bifida... Old-time baby docs... might be amazed to see... that... 10% of current *Pediatrics* articles concern sexual or physical abuse, “a subject that just didn’t come up 50 years ago”. Obesity is also a new problem. “Our kids are couch potatoes. They used to be much more physically active,” says... [the] emeritus Stanford University paediatrician. “Social issues are driving childhood mortality now rather than infectious diseases,”... In recent decades, vaccines have nearly eradicated disabling bacterial meningitis and become available to prevent measles, rubella, mumps and chicken pox. The prevention emphasis is touching [kids] at ever younger ages. US infant mortality hit a new low of 7.2 deaths per 1000 in 1996, thanks primarily to new medications that accelerate lung maturity in premature babies and rapidly improving neonatal intensive care. The ability to save ever smaller premature babies “is overall very positive, but it raises ethical issues, too,” says [a] neonatologist... of Case Western Reserve University Medical School, Cleveland. Between 0.2% and 0.4% of full-term babies get cerebral palsy and 3% are mentally retarded; for 24-week premature babies... 10% will have cerebral palsy and 20% mental retardation. “In Europe, most of these babies aren’t allowed to survive... But here I think we’ll continue to see each family and each infant considered individually.” ...Three new vaccines are expected within a few years. They’d prevent ear infections, rotavirus... and flu. Some of the most dramatic breakthroughs will come after the Human Genome Project maps all genes, says... [the] medical genetics chief at Stanford University Medical School. “It’s realistic to expect that within a few decades we’ll diagnose prenatally and replace abnormal genes with normal genes while the baby’s in utero.”

...The announcement, expected today, that two separate teams have put together a rough map of the human genome is just the start of a long road that will eventually transform medicine, say scientists. Both the Human Genome Project, a publicly funded international effort, and Celera Genomics are expected to announce that they have completed the first big step toward unravelling the human genetic code by sequencing and assembling the DNA that makes up the genes. The... head of the National Human Genome Research Institute, said recently: “This is it. This is the book of life.” Banks of machines at Celera, based in Rockville, Maryland, at the nearby Institute of Genomic Research, at the Whitehead Institute at the M[IT], and at the Sanger Centre in Cambridge, England, have been working 24 hours a day, seven days a week to crank out the series of A, T, C and G that spell out the human genetic code. As quickly as this sequence is spilled out, it is fed into computers that have then assembled it into the correct order. It could have taken years, but in the end it took months. Celera started in September and has just finished. The slower, more painstaking work being done by the Human Genome Project has been given a shot in the arm by the huge publicity Celera has garnered, and it raced to finish a rough draft at the same time. But scientists stress that having the code is only a beginning... [The] co-founder and president of Celera, said: “This is a race to the starting line.” The real work will come in the next years and decades, as powerful computers labour to figure out where in the miles and miles of As, Cs, Ts and Gs the genes are. Only about 3[%] of these base pairs, which are repeated over and over again in different order, represent genes that are code for proteins that make up everything in the body... [The] president and chief executive officer of Lexicon Genetics Incorporated, one of many companies whose goal is to exploit genetic information, said: “One analogy we use is the dictionary... Imagine a dictionary with 100,000 words and 95[%] of it is blank where the definitions should be. Only it’s worse than that because the words are scrambled.” The next task will be to unscramble the words, then find their definitions. This has already been done with many genes, but most of the genes in the human body remain a mystery, and scientists do not even know just how many there are. Estimates range from 40,000 to 100,000.

...All over the world, there was panic and depression as word spread that the human species has only 30,000 genes. People wept openly in the street, humiliated by the thought that we have only twice as many genes as flies and worms, and barely more than cress. Not since Copernicus demoted our planet to a satellite of the Sun, or Darwin demoted our species to a branch of the ape family, has there been such a pitiless reminder that there is nothing special about us... If the quantity of our genes is humiliating, the quality does not seem to offer much reassurance. Scientists reported this week that about 60[%] of our genes are direct copies of ones used by flies, worms, yeast and bacteria: themes invented by our common ancestors and used ever since... For instance, the “hox” genes that are used for laying down the basic body plan of the human embryo are recognisably the same as those that flies use for the same purpose. They are so similar, in fact, that human hox genes can be substituted for fly hox genes to grow a normal fly. Likewise, and even more surprisingly, the 17 genes that we switch on every time we remember something are the same as the ones with which flies remember. It seems that we inherited both sets from our last common ancestor, a humble creature known as the “roundish flatworm” that probably lived over 600 million years ago. Nature, it transpires, is a careful economist. Once [nature] has invented a new trick, [nature] rarely discards it. In the most remarkable similarity of all, just one basic genetic code – the dictionary that translates DNA into protein – is good enough for all living things, a fact that reveals that all living things on the planet share a single common ancestor. It gets worse. Of the genes that we vertebrates do not share with flies and yeast, one set – of 223 genes – has been borrowed directly from bacteria. It seems that our vertebrate ancestors somehow unwittingly had sex with bacteria and incorporated some of their genes into our own genome. This so-called horizontal transfer of genes between species was probably common among microbes in the early days of life on Earth, but nobody expected to find it going on in animals. Ready for some more humiliation? The 98[%] of the genome that does not consist of genes at all is largely borrowed from viruses and still simpler types of digital parasite called transposons. The human symphony, in other words, consists almost entirely of old tunes stolen from other works... A moment’s reflection, however, dispels the humiliation... Thirty thousand is still a large number: there are more human genes than there are species of mammal, bird, reptile and amphibian put together. But our self-esteem did not rest on the expectation that we had 100,000 genes, but on 10,000 years of learning and achievement – on the accomplishments of Socrates, Leonardo... and Einstein. The learning and behaviour genes that we share with flies are activated by other actions in the living brain. They are puppets, not string-pullers. The search for what makes a human being human will go on, but it seems unlikely the raw sequence of the genome will reveal it. The key to understanding our recipe will have to wait for the result of a further scientific marathon, called the proteome. For, in one respect, we are much more sophisticated than flies. We do a lot more “alternative splicing:” this means taking different sections of different genes and recombining them in several ways. Thus, from

our 30,000 genes we probably manufacture 300,000 different proteins. Until alternative splicing is understood, the uniqueness of the human being will probably remain as mysterious as ever... The Human Genome Project, which includes scientists at 16 institutions in the U[S], Britain, Japan, Germany, China and France, is expected to complete the highly accurate version of the human genome in 2003.

...Now the human genome is almost completely mapped, researchers have launched a major effort to find genes that cause human disease. The National Human Genome Research Institute said last week that three academic centres would work to find segments in the gene structure that varied from person to person, a big step towards finding genes that cause heart disease, diabetes and other common diseases. The Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the Washington University School of Medicine in St Louis, and the Sanger Centre in... England, are collaborating in the effort... The collaboration is being funded by the National Human Genome Research Institute, the leading agency behind the Human Genome Project, and the SNP Consortium, a nonprofit organisation that includes the Wellcome Trust and 13 pharmaceutical and technical companies... Researchers will seek to find variable sequences by searching the 3.1 billion chemical base pairs that make up human DNA. These sequences are called single nucleotide polymorphisms, or SNPs... The SNPs will be located, or mapped, on the genome. This map can then be used to locate gene variations that cause disease... Officials say the new research for genetic variations is expected to identify and map up to 750,000 SNPs, only a fraction of which are expected to be medically significant. To find the SNPs, researchers will cut the DNA into about two million fragments, each with about 6000 chemical base pairs... Some of the tiniest variations in the base pairs may provide the key to why one person is predisposed to a disease and another is not... The analysed sequences also may help close some of the few remaining gaps in the working draft of the human genome... [In related news, t]he prospect of genetic testing being used to exclude some people from health insurance is alarming human rights advocates. A group representing most health insurance companies is looking at the use of genetic testing to assess insurance risk... [T]he insurance industry's interest in gene testing is a major issue and in Britain the Government has proposed setting up a group of experts to determine which genetic tests are robust enough for insurers to be able to request the results. British insurers have identified eight disorders, such as Huntington's disease, Alzheimer's and hereditary breast cancer, where genetic tests can be useful to them.

...The exploitation of genetic testing by insurers is set to be outlawed by the British Government amid fears of creating an uninsurable "genetic underclass." ...Insurers argue that using genetic testing to calculate premiums is little different from asking about family medical histories and helps spread risk. They agreed not to use results in applications for life insurance linked to mortgages of under £100,000... but a recent survey found this widely flouted. A parliamentary committee on science and technology has condemned the voluntary code as "inadequate" and... warned that... [the] Health Secretary... will signal this week the banning of the use of so-called genetic profiling tests – which could predict who will die prematurely or suffer chronic disease – to deny people essentials such as mortgage cover. [The secretary] is still awaiting final recommendations from the ethical watchdog, the Human Genetics Commission... before making a final decision, but is known to favour at least a partial moratorium.

...Use of gene 'horoscopes' to defy death sparks ethics row... Do you want to know how you will die and when? Or would you rather live without that knowledge? Such a dilemma might only be expected to face characters in science fiction. Until now. Now genetic tests that promise to foretell accurately our medical future are being sold in growing numbers. Dubbed health "horoscopes", they claim to be able to predict with certainty what illnesses you are likely to suffer throughout your lifetime by revealing inherited traits... All the... Genovation test... scientists ask from you is a sample of your DNA which can be obtained by swishing spearmint mouthwash vigorously around your mouth for 60 seconds in the morning and spitting the proceeds into a plastic test tube. The inside of the mouth is full of DNA and dead cells at that time. The sample is then sent by post to the Great Smokies Diagnostic Laboratory in Asheville, North Carolina. Within two weeks you can discover what your genetic makeup holds in store for your future health... [- d]elivered to your home wrapped like an expensive box of chocolates... Some critics believe the tests are simply a cynical marketing strategy designed to expand the lucrative market for health supplements... There is also concern that some people will learn devastating news without counselling support... However, others have welcomed the... tests... [One n]utritionist... firmly rejects the criticism: "This is all about empowering people so they can get some feedback on how their individual biochemistry is working. Anyone with a sense of doom and gloom doesn't need to take the tests. Nobody is being forced to take them. But my view is, if you can help save your life by spending a few pennies on supplements, then it's got to be worth it." [The nutritionist], who runs the Nutrition Clinic from a Harley Street, London, office, had his own genetic profile tested[and learnt it has] a gene that is linked to high levels of homocysteine – an enzyme associated by some studies with an increase in cardiovascular problems. As a result of this discovery, [the nutritionist] takes a special supplement that is alleged to reduce the impact of too much homocysteine in the body. Yet his optimism is in sharp contrast to scepticism among leading geneticists and the pressure group Genewatch[, which recently]... forced the Body Shop to stop a simple form of "life-style" genetic testing made by the British firm Sciona... Genewatch is calling for the British Government to introduce proper regulation to control the sale of such genetic tests which the group claims are just a cynical ploy to profit from the fear people have of getting ill in the future... The Human Genetics Commission is due to report... about controls for such tests.

...Scientists at the Auckland School of Medicine have found a way to treat genetic disorders that promises a pill to cure diseases such as stomach cancer and diabetes. The team... have used a gene-therapy treatment taken orally to cure the world's commonest genetic disorder, lactose intolerance, in rats. It is hoped that within a decade a "dose" of the same gene therapy will be used to combat inherited conditions in humans...

Parents of children suffering from rare genetic disorders want nothing to stand in the way of gene research. The emotional plea was made during the final hearings before the Royal Commission on Genetic Modification in Wellington. A couple with two children suffering from the rare Mucopolysaccharide type 3 (ML3) disease said gene research offered the only hope of a cure. It is one of 40 lysosomal storage diseases... which are caused by genetic defects[and affect a]bout 180 N[Zers. An Aucklander]... whose daughter suffers from lymphangioleiomyomatosis, a progressive and extremely rare lung disease, said it was "intolerable and unthinkable" that public fear should be allowed to stop medical research into the condition. In her submission for the N[Z] Organisation for Rare Diseases, [the Aucklander] said research under way in the U[S] into the gene now known to cause the disease offered the only hope of a cure to the mainly young [gals] affected by it... [A] senior research scientist at the University of Otago, said on behalf of the organisation that... the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act, which governed the importation and research into genetically altered organisms, was too restrictive and should be changed.

...Human genetic engineering will profoundly change the practice of medicine over the next 30 to 40 years... Genes can be used in two ways to treat disease. The first is gene therapy, in which one or more genes are injected into the patient to replace those absent or not working properly. In the second, a drug is given to the patient to modify the function of one or more genes in the body. Pharmaceutical and biotech companies are investing heavily in both approaches... Thirty years from now, essentially every disease will have gene-based therapy as a treatment option.

...“It has taken 31 years of hard labour to invent myself,” says a]... casino waitress... in Bristol, England, [who] has applied to patent herself... [to] protect herself from “genetic exploitation”... “In my application I stated that I was novel and useful and that my genetic make-up could be used to profit medical research... There is a kind of greedy, unpleasant atmosphere around the mapping of the human at the moment... I want to have sole control of my own genetic material...” ...A spokes[perso]n at the Patent Office... said: “I can confirm we have received a patent application... entitled ‘Myself.’” ...Scientists around the world are in a race to decode human genes so they can find cures for diseases such as cancer.

...Despite all of the shortcomings of modern medicine – the cost, the impersonal reliance on technology, the many ills still beyond its reach – there has never been a better time to get sick than now. The revolution in medicine during the 20th century is mind-bending... A century ago, the standard contents of a doctor's bag included arsenic, mercury and other medicines that could kill before they cured. A physical examination often amounted to little more than looking at the patient's tongue... Slowly at first, and then accelerating mid-century, medicine retooled itself. It became

less art, more science... And many scientists believe this is barely the start. Like the discovery of X-rays at the end of the 19th century, the harnessing of genes at the end of the 20th century is likely to pay off in powerful new ways to control human ills in the century to come.

...Genetics look set to provide the biggest medical breakthroughs in the new century. The Dean of Auckland University Medical School... predicts that, once [GE] foods are shown to have health benefits, controversy over their use will dwindle... foods could[then] be designed for people with sedentary lifestyles. Genetic therapies will also be developed to enhance the body's own systems for fighting illness. Cloning techniques could be used to promote cell growth for repairing or replacing limbs... Revolutionary advance in biotechnology and... IVF... means the complete genetic makeup of a child can be efficiently determined before the fertilised egg is implanted... The technology will prevent... the trauma of aborting [a] pregnancy, with a wide range of genetic diseases now able to be identified and prevented before inception. Before the technology, which uses special DNA microchips, only certain diseases could be identified, and by a lengthy, costly process of elimination. A pair of ...American twins were the first... to be born of the new technology, which still needs extensive research... The parents, who carry the gene with the debilitating disease sickle-celled anaemia, had terminated children on two previous occasions because the disease had been identified 15 weeks into the pregnancies.

...Last year was a stunner for medicine: 21 new drugs – an unparalleled number – were marketed by U[S] pharmaceutical companies. The treatments – for heart disease, multiple sclerosis, hepatitis, Alzheimer's, epilepsy and cancers – poured out of America's biotechnology giants. There has never been a better time to be ill – if you are American. For the world's richest people, things can only get better. But for the rest of the planet, fears are growing that others may have to pay the price for this meteoric rise in medical knowledge. The concerns of the US biotechnology industry are sweeping aside everything in their path. The point was starkly underlined at... [a] science forum in Lyons this week. International health officials, drug company chiefs and doctors all expressed alarm that the US genetics juggernaut has become so powerful that it threatens to force its products on the world, whether it likes it or not. At best, the consequences will be wasteful; at worst, they will be dangerous to health. In most African countries, new heart drugs are useless in towns and villages where most people die before middle age. As... the W[HO's representative] put it: "There is a simple question to consider. Will current advances in genomics help the [Last W]orld? And the answer is that they will not." ...The health of Africans and Asians could worsen because of the rise of the US genetics industry, [the representative] said. Malaria... – ...which... [can be prevented by] cheap... mosquito nets, [yet still kills]... more than a million people a year, most of them children[–] illustrated what could happen. "It is attractive to think that sequencing its genes will lead to new drugs and insecticides... It is more likely, however, that any such discoveries will be patented and only developed at prices unaffordable to those who need them most."

...Thanks to vaccines, smallpox and polio are no longer killer diseases. Vaccines... have had "the greatest impact on human health of any medical intervention." The revolution is not over. Armed with new tools for manipulating genes and proteins, scientists are concocting vaccines to fight everything from food poisoning to cervical cancer. At the same time, they are discovering radical ways to improve compounds that generate immunity. If the strategies work, future vaccines will not be manufactured in costly laboratories or doled out through needles. We may cull them cheaply from genetically altered fruits... or... vegetables... – and we'll consume them in pills, ointments and nose sprays... Another option could involve using animals. Scientists at Genzyme Transgenics and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases are working to create goats whose milk could be used to vaccinate children against malaria. They have already had goats and mice churn out pieces of MSP-1, a protein displayed on the surface of the malaria parasite. If tests show that the MSP particles protect monkeys from malaria, the scientists will try testing them in humans... Scientists realised centuries ago that a benign substance can sometimes rally the body's defences against a harmful one. The surest way to put a dangerous microbe out of business is simply to infect people with a mild strain of it... [Modern] researchers are pursuing variations on this strategy. If a sub-unit – or a whole pathogen – doesn't trigger immunity, they fasten it to a molecule that will attract more attention. That's the strategy that yielded the new meningitis vaccines, and it may also be our best hope of controlling streptococcus pneumoniae, the leading cause of childhood ear infections. Some 83[% of US] children suffer an ear infection by the age of 3. The condition accounts for 35 million doctors visits every year, as well as a flood of antibiotic prescriptions... But many experts think they're overused, and antibiotic resistance is growing... Children's immune systems don't respond forcefully to the outer coat of strep pneumoniae, which consists of sugar molecules. So researchers have created copies of those sugars and attached them to an easily recognised diphtheria protein. If this "conjugate" vaccine works as intended, children will respond to both of its elements, and achieve lasting immunity from ear aches... Meanwhile, the... North Shore childcare facility at the centre of a diphtheria scare has decided to ban non-immunised children from enrolling... [T]he centre was introducing the ban after a public meeting last night and pressure from angry parents... Previously, it had felt legally obliged to enrol children even when parents could not provide... immunisation certificates... [One mother], who has two pre-schoolers at the centre, said parents wanted to see the ban adopted at kindergartens and childcare centres citywide. [The mother] had endured five days of fear, waiting to discover if her two children... carried the disease. Tests later cleared them... [T]he medical director of the Immunisation Advisory Centre... said those parents who decided not to vaccinate their children did so at the expense of safeguarding society. "More people are travelling overseas and could come back with anything... We are sitting ducks." [The medical director, who is] based at the Auckland Medical School, said the unvaccinated Auckland toddler at the centre of the diphtheria scare was likely to have picked up the acute infection from his parents, who holidayed in Indonesia last month. "If the parents can bring [diphtheria] back and give it to their child, they can easily give it to their neighbours." The... [medical director] endorsed the idea of childcare centres being allowed to ban unvaccinated children. But... the Immunisation Awareness Society, called the ban idea hypocritical... Unvaccinated children posed no threat to others if vaccines were as effective as often claimed. The toddler at the Beach Haven centre merely had a sore throat, even though some diphtheria bacteria were found in lab tests. The ban on unvaccinated children was an overreaction from hysterical parents.

...Fewer than half N[Z]'s young children are thought to be still protected against the meningococcal disease epidemic, despite a \$200 million mass vaccination campaign. The vaccine injections give short-term immunity against the N[Z] B-strain of the bacteria. But this drops below protective levels within months, says a report by the Immunisation Advisory Centre at Auckland University... [A h]ealth campaigner... said parents were not told how quickly the immunity wore off, leaving them with a dangerously false sense of security. The vaccine injections were available to everyone under 20... The programme ran until May this year for children under 5. Originally three doses were given, but after it was found that babies' immune responses were much weaker than those of older children and teenagers, a fourth dose was added for babies at 10 months.

...Half of all children under 6 visiting Auckland medical centres do not have a regular doctor. Health professionals say that because of this some children may be missing immunisation checks and other routine visits where problems are picked up early. The finding results from an eight-week study by Auckland Medical School researchers... One of the researchers... said anecdotal evidence suggested parents not registered with GPs were poorer, less organised and without ready transport, meaning they had to go wherever was convenient... [The chairperso]n of the Royal N[Z] College of General Practitioners, said people's health could suffer without continuity of care because their records were not kept in one place.

...CHILD health problems out west are not being dealt with by the current fee-per-consultation for GPs, says a new report on Waitakere City's health needs. The... Waitakere Health Planning Group... [p]roject manager... says there are many west Aucklanders who don't have access to primary health care. "We will win or lose the battle with child health and chronic diseases in primary health care... We want to create a more prevention-oriented health system..." The West Auckland GPs' group, Integrated Primary Care Services, says access to primary health care is a huge problem and the pay per consultation system benefits the rich. [The group's g]eneral manager... says the GPs want funding based on population to enable subsidised services for those who can't afford access to primary care. "For example if transport is a problem we can put a shuttle bus on and that sort of thing..." • A[ll NZers]... under the age of 18 would get free visits to their GP under a scheme being pushed by the...

Alliance[. The party's] leader... told the *Weekend Herald* yesterday that the proposal would extend the existing free health care policy for children under 6 to all those of school age – believed to total around one million N[Z]ers. It would cost an estimated \$35 million a year on top of the \$69 million for the under-6 scheme. The amount is regarded as small enough to give the scheme a real chance of being accepted by... the Government...

The cost of going to a GP could fall long-term – possibly to as low as \$2 – under Government plans. The Government last week proposed major changes to primary health care. Under the plan, The Future Shape of Primary Health Care, N[Z]ers would sign up to a particular Primary Care Organisation... [– which] would receive bulk-funding for each patient under a population-based formula weighing up factors such as gender, ethnicity, social deprivation and disease spread. [A p]rofessor... of the Auckland University School of Medicine said the initiative could lead N[Z] closer to fully funded primary health care, like Britain's... About 15[% of NZ GPs are already] working under a capitation system and the move to [full capitation] would take at least six years... [As for the other 85% of GPs, the Government currently] subsidises about 35[% of their] income and patients pay the rest. [The professor, who is] a board member of the Health Funding Authority, said the Government had indicated that it hoped to build on the new plan and increase subsidy levels for GP care. [The professor] believed capitation levels would increase from 35 to 85[%], so patient charges could drop to between \$10 and \$12... To lift subsidy levels, the Government would need an estimated \$350 million, on top of the \$276 million already spent on primary health care. Britain's moves to a primary health care model raised concerns that budget-holding would encourage organisations to turn away chronically ill patients trying to enrol. This practice is known as “cream-skimming.” [NZ's Health Minister] said the weighted population funding meant cream-skimming was unlikely, as sickly patients would bring more money with them to the organisation.

...If there is anything you need to know about health and well-being then make a point of visiting Sport Waitakere's Health Check day later this month. The... Health Check day is at the Kelston Community Centre from 10am to 12pm. Admission is \$4 but all the services are free. Sport Waitakere's active living manager... says the event allows... a huge variety of health professionals... to return something to the community that supports them through the rest of the year. “The health check day is now in its eighth year and has gone from strength to strength. It is always very popular as people can have so much checked out at once... It [is like] getting a warrant of fitness for your body instead of your car.”

...*Macho [guy]s happy to pull in for their pit stops* A blokey approach to medical care which invites [guys] to put themselves “over the pits” for a check-up by health workers in navy overalls is paying dividends in rural Western A[US. Guys], notoriously reluctant to talk to doctors, are responding in droves to the health initiative, which could potentially save their lives, its creators say. [The h]ealth promotions officer... from the Gascoyne Public Health Unit in central W[A said guys] appreciated the humour in the Pit Stop health programme. Mechanical terms employed in the state Government-funded project included references to checks on oil pressure (blood), sparkplugs (testicles) and duco rust (skin cancers)... Success during a trial run at a Carnarvon drag race meet led to the programme's extension throughout the remote Gascoyne region... [In local news, d]octors attending emergencies want permission to exceed the speed limit. The Rural GP Network will seek a law change after a Northland doctor received a speed camera fine while on his way to help a suspected heart attack victim. The doctor is contesting the \$510 fine imposed after a speed camera clocked him travelling... 115 km/h in a 70 km/h zone... The patient survived. The police rejected the doctor's appeal to have the fine waived and the case is now before the courts... [The] Rural GP Network chair[perso]n... said the doctor was called out as part of the Government-funded Primary Response in Medical Emergency (Prime) service, which was established about two years ago to get rural GPs and nurses working with emergency services at accidents and emergencies... [T]he network would approach ACC and the Ministry of Health, which fund Prime, to help it seek the same legal status for GPs attending emergencies as services such as ambulances and the police. The doctor involved was driving in fine conditions, with no other traffic around and was equipped with a green flashing light. “We have no intent to drive unsafely but we need to know whether we can attend as quickly as we can,” said [the chairperson. The p]olice national road safety manager... was not familiar with the case but expected that if the doctor had been exceeding the limit by over 40 km/h [it] would be prosecuted. Even police, who were trained and drove specially modified and highly visible vehicles, were not allowed to drive more than 30 km/h above the limit while attending emergencies. “The idea is to get to an emergency in one piece... You are neither use nor ornament if you're tied up in a crash yourself.” However, the Minister of Health... is unhappy the police have refused to waive the fine and plans to raise the issue today with [the]Police Minister... “I would have hoped that common sense would have prevailed but it seems the police have decided to... send it to the court, which I think shows a lack of judgment...”

...More than a third of N[Z]'s physicians, surgeons, pharmacists and general practitioners have... significant symptoms of mental illness and 10[%] more severe mental disturbances... a... Wellington School of Medicine study, released yesterday... has found. The... Medical Association chair[perso]n... said the study... was a worrying snapshot of the work stress suffered by medical professionals. Their level of psychiatric distress was higher than in the [general]community... and emphasised that medical professionals often did not make the best decisions for patients... “Unless the Government and health sector organisations are able to address some of the more potent causes of job stress, there is undoubtedly the possibility of further deterioration in recruitment, retention and, ultimately, patient care,” the study said... Doctors and pharmacists were... asked to complete a questionnaire used to measure mental health. The study... also... asked... about job satisfaction... Nearly half of the pharmacists had considered quitting, as had 22[%] of surgeons and 15[%] of physicians... Bureaucratic interference frustrated nearly 90[%] of pharmacists, 75[%] of surgeons and 64[%] of doctors. More than 60[%] of the respondents said work had interfered significantly with their family and social lives, and 80[%] of pharmacists, 60[%] of surgeons and 58[%] of physicians said they felt overwhelmed by paperwork.

...The U[S] Government has issued guidelines urging doctors and nurses to abandon washing their hands with soap and water between patients and instead rub on fast-drying alcohol gels to kill more germs. The goal: reduce the hospital spread of viruses and bacteria that infect an estimated two million people in the U[S] each year and kill about 90,000. Many hospitals have already made the change and studies show this can halve their infection rates... [By the way, c]hildren who wash their hands four or more times a day... have 24[%] fewer sick days with colds and flu, and 50[%] fewer days off with tummy bugs... a US survey shows.

...A LITTLE bit of dirt doesn't hurt anybody – it's good for us... [An] immunologist at the Auckland University School of Medicine, is one of a growing number of scientists warning that our paranoia about germs and obsession with cleanliness could be responsible for the explosion in... allergic diseases throughout the West... The theory is that during the course of evolution the immune system learned to cope from birth with a huge array of germs. The onslaught helped humans to develop specialised immune cells and chemical pathways to deal with them, especially during infancy and childhood. But if this stimulation is removed the immune system does not develop in a balanced way. “In our quest to rid ourselves of germs and infectious diseases we are not treating the immune system to all the things that would induce a state of tolerance... There is good scientific reason for believing that the fewer infectious diseases a person meets early in life, the more likely the immune system will be hypersensitive to allergens like pollens and dust mites. We keep ourselves far too clean these days.” Yes, “normal” hygiene is still important to avoid diseases such as food poisoning. But... [the] new range of antibacterial products... [– such as] soaps and kitchen cleaners, chopping boards and dish clothes, quilts and pillows... [–] and advertisements on television is sucking people into believing that we should at all times be striving for sterility. “Even if this were possible, it is not desirable...” It's a trade-off, [the immunologist] says, between preventing diseases which are potentially very serious and allowing children to be exposed to a wide range of microbes. The immune system responds in two ways when it meets an andogen or pathogen... Both Th1 and Th2 responses are activated but one will be pre-eminent. (Th means T-cell helper. T-cells are the lymphocytes or type of white blood cells that act as the defenders in our immune systems.) When the Th1 response is triggered, very few antibodies are made. Instead, killer cells are produced which identify the “intruder”... and destroy it. The Th2 response, on the other hand, makes lots of antibodies or soluble proteins which bind to the surface of the “intruder”... to neutralise it. This results in wheeziness, runny noses and itchy eyes.

In newborns, the immune system response is more skewed towards the Th2 response... The particular response triggered later in life seems to depend on which of the two gains the upper hand during childhood, and this, immunologists now think, depends on how many viruses and bacteria the immune system encounters in childhood. "As we come into contact with childhood illnesses, bacteria in the gut and microbes, putting our fingers in our mouths and sucking on old clothes, the Th1 response becomes more prominent." In most adults, bacteria mainly set off the Th1 response, restricting the Th2 allergic response. "A little bit of dirt teaches the immune system not to overreact,"... One of the first hints that lack of dirt or disease might be implicated in the asthma explosion came nine years ago... [A]n epidemiologist at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, challenged the prevailing wisdom that infections triggered asthma when [the epidemiologist] noticed children from big families – especially younger siblings – were less likely to develop asthma, hay fever or childhood eczema. "Mucky" children bringing home bucketloads of infections somehow protected the younger children from allergies, [the epidemiologist] suggested. However, the findings are not clearcut. There is also plenty of asthma among children living in poor, crowded conditions and exposed to many infections... The increase in air-pollution and dust-mite numbers... have both been identified as culprits... But both seem to be in the clear, according to *New Scientist*. It says dust mite numbers levelled off years ago while asthma rates continue to rise; and in Europe, asthma and other allergies are more common in the relatively clean air of southern Swedish cities than heavily polluted Polish cities. City living itself is being suggested as part of the problem because lack of gardens means little contact with earth, which teems with mycobacteria. And the treated water we now drink and wash in, which at one time would have contained millions of mycobacteria a litre, now has very few, because of chlorination. "Most of the mycobacteria that live in dirt and water don't cause disease but it appears they do have a dramatic effect on our immune systems,"...

THERE'S more than one reason to be the first in your house to read your *Sunday Star-Times*. Today's newspaper is usually germ-free, since fresh ink inhibits the growth of micro-organisms. But yesterday's paper or a weekly magazine will be covered with potentially dangerous bacteria. So says... [a] health writer and author of *The Hypochondriac's Handbook*. The book, which [its author] says should not be taken too seriously although the information in it is correct... contains 128 pages of snippets about viruses, bacteria and other health risks. Unfortunately, once read it's hard not to start washing your hands frantically and considering wearing a mask to work to ward off infection from colleagues... because along with its underlying humour, the book contains hundreds of "fright bites"... that would scare even your average slob half to death... ● Flu viruses can live for years in dried spit. ● Coliform bacteria has been found on 60% of office coffee mugs while 10% had E. Coli. ● Some bacteria can survive for months on a single dust particle. ● Children bring their hands to their mouths once every three minutes on average. The amount of dirt they swallow daily would cover seven kitchen floor tiles... ● A fifth of the world's population carries hookworms that enter the human body through the feet, travel through the bloodstream into the lungs, then into the intestines... caus[ing] symptoms similar to ulcers. ● More than 90% of kitchen sinks harbour salmonella and campylobacter. Delightful, huh? ...but it's all scientific fact (at least in America)... [Here are some more reasons for living] in a plastic bubble... ● Public [gals'] restrooms are twice as germ laden as [guys' – though gals] spend more time in the bathroom and also bring in children aka walking, talking bacterial hot zones... ● There are 120 viruses including Hepatitis A that live in faeces. When you flush the toilet, water droplets containing more than 25,000 virus particles and 600,000 bacteria fly from the bowl, hover for a few hours then land on surfaces as far away as 1.8m. Closing the toilet lid doesn't help, the next time it's opened a cloud of virus-carrying water particles will burst out. (Toothbrushes are a common target of this vapour.) For a truly clean toilet regular disinfectants won't do so you will have to spray lab alcohol in the bowl and light it.

...A new front is opening in the never-ending war between germs and humans. As befits this information age, the battle is to control the enemy's communications systems – the enemies in this case being potentially lethal bacteria such as E. coli, salmonella and vibrio cholerae, the bug that causes cholera. Researchers have discovered that these and other infectious microbes need to exchange messages in order to be dangerous. They are harmless if they cannot communicate. These organisms have developed... a "bacterial language" – a set of chemical signals that enable them to take a head count, rather like a sergeant calling the roll of his platoon. The bacteria do not attack until they sense they have sufficient numbers... "If bacteria started producing toxins as soon as the infection began, it would be like waving a flag to alert the host's immune system,"... wrote... a molecular biologist at Princeton University... The messages are hormone-like molecules that certain microbes can send and receive, saying, in effect, "I'm here," and responding, "So am I." Researchers think they might be able to prevent or cure disease if they can jam the bacterial communication network, by, say, blocking the apparatus that receives messages, known as a "receptor," on the microbes' surface... In addition to its potential for preventing disease, the discovery of bacterial communication may help to explain how complex, many-celled micro-organisms developed. For its first three billion years, Earth was inhabited by single-celled micro-organisms such as bacteria... [A]bout 600 million years ago, cells began to join in larger unions, such as algae and fungi, presumably because they were better able to find food and protect themselves... [A] biology professor... of Nottingham University... says "chemical signalling between single-celled organisms is likely to have been a key evolutionary step in the development of all multicellular higher organisms." In a sense, therefore, modern civilisation – with all its complex laws and rules – can trace its ancestry back to those little quorum-sensing bacteria, which learned to cooperate and coordinate their activities for their common good.

...A new antibiotic with the power to kill drug-resistant "superbugs" and other tough infections has won approval from U[S] health officials. The Food and Drug Administration said Zyvox, made by New Jersey-based Pharmacia Corp, was the first in a new class of antibiotics. The FDA cleared Zyvox for use against a variety of infections, including some that resist the antibiotic methicillin and also vancomycin, for years a last line of defence against certain virulent bacteria... that have adapted to resist even the strongest drugs. Thousands of patients each year become ill with staphylococcus infections that resist methicillin and stubborn strains of the enterococcus bacteria that do not succumb to vancomycin... [The] FDA director of anti-infective drug products, said clinical trials with more than 4000 patients had shown Zyvox could fight both types of infections... Zyvox is the first new treatment for methicillin-resistant staph approved in the U[S] in 40 years. Its arrival follows the debut last September of Synercid, an antibiotic by Aventis SA that also holds approval for fighting vancomycin-resistant enterococcus. Zyvox, known generically as linezolid, works differently from Synercid and older drugs. It stops bacteria from multiplying by halting production of proteins vital to their growth early in their life cycle. Other antibiotics stop the spread of germs later in the process... Another advantage may be that the drug is made synthetically. Pharmacia officials said that in the past antibiotics were developed naturally, which made it easier for bacteria to outwit them... The FDA approved Zyvox for fighting pneumonia and skin infections as well as the resistant superbugs. To prevent bacteria from growing resistant to Zyvox, it said the drug "would best be used" starting only in a hospital or nursing home, where patients are most vulnerable to serious infections. Pharmaceutical industry analysts... predict Zyvox sales as high as \$US550 million... a year... Zyvox should be available within weeks.

...Garlic is effective in eliminating MRSA, the "superbug" responsible for up to 20,000 deaths in British hospitals every year. A bacterium that can be harboured harmlessly by healthy people, MRSA... can poison the blood of those with vulnerable immune systems. Last year, it was estimated that 24[%] of patients suffering from blood poisoning in English and Welsh hospitals had contracted MRSA while being treated. Until now, a cream called Mupirocin has been used to combat hospital "superbugs", but experts say it is not effective... [T]he University of East London discovered that allicin, an active ingredient of garlic, killed all 30 strains of MRSA isolated from patients in two hospitals...

THE black rat, responsible for spreading the bubonic plague that killed 25 million in Europe in the 14th century, is making a comeback in Britain. Six infestations of *rattus rattus*, thought to be nearly extinct in Britain, have been discovered thriving along the Thames in east London... The new colonies of black rats, also called ship rats, are thought to have been brought in on cargo vessels from eastern Europe, where pest control is not as advanced as in Britain. In the docks of Southampton, Portsmouth, Manchester and Glasgow, there have been no sightings of black rats

since the 1960s... So far, the newly discovered colonies have not been found to carry the fleas that cause bubonic plague known as the black death. However, the disease has not disappeared entirely. Between 1980 and 1994 there were more than 18,000 infections and 1852 deaths around the world. Last year [‘researchers from France reported in the New England Journal of Medicine that they had found a strain of bubonic plague resistant to most of the antibiotics used to treat and prevent the disease’]...

It is one of the deadliest new viruses to have emerged on the planet, and in the past few months it has begun to terrorise a growing number of victim nations. West Nile Fever looks set to become a global threat for the 21st century. Last month the disease killed 12 Israelis; France and Jordan reported outbreaks; and U[S] scientists warned that the disease has probably spread across the nation, threatening new eruptions in areas such as the Gulf coast. The bird-borne disease – which can trigger fatal... encephalitis – caused panic when it broke out in America last year, killing seven New Yorkers. It was the first outbreak in the Western hemisphere. Researchers are still arguing over the cause, with some putting the blame on an infected bird that had been imported from Israel, while others said mosquitoes on airliners had spread the disease... “The disease is now firmly established in the US,” [a doctor]... of the Institute of Virology and Environmental Microbiology, Oxford, said. “It is there for good now. It is hard to see how on earth they can get rid of it.” The threat of West Nile has so alarmed Canadian health authorities they have decided to post chickens along their border with the US. Coops are being built from Saskatchewan to Atlantic Canada, creating a poultry version of Hadrian’s Wall. The birds inside are scheduled to be tested regularly for West Nile viral antibodies, the aim being to give scientists an early warning of an impending outbreak. Such measures will probably prove futile... [Academic]s at the Smithsonian Institute’s Zoo in Front Royal, Virginia, have just reported... that they now believe more than 70 migratory species of bird, including ducks, starlings, terns and gulls, can carry the... virus, creating vast squadrons of avian hosts that can ferry the disease around the globe with impunity. “The virus is probably in every corner of North America by now,” as well as parts of South America... But although the disease has caused alarm in the West, it is by no means a new affliction to our planet. It is endemic from the Cape of Good Hope to Cairo. More than 80[%] of Egyptians are infected at some time... The virus is usually harmless in healthy people, but can cause deadly inflammations in the brain and spinal cords of immune suppressed or elderly patients... “It is without doubt a nasty illness,” said [a] neurologist... of Liverpool University in the United Kingdom. “But we should not go overboard about it. Until last year no one knew about West Nile Fever, even though there had been several previous outbreaks in south Europe. It wasn’t until New York was hit that the West gave a damn. The situation is particularly ironic when you look at Japanese encephalitis, a virtually identical bird-borne disease caused by a sibling virus. It affects more than 50,000 people a year in Asia, and kills 15,000 of them. It is much nastier, but we don’t notice it. In general, though, flaviviruses are going to be a real problem. We have not seen everything they can do yet. They are rapidly evolving entities and they are likely to adapt to all sorts of ecological niches.” Flaviviruses have already adapted to cooler climates by abandoning mosquitoes and starting to use ticks as their intermediary hosts. One such illness has appeared in Britain: louping-ill fever, which can decimate grouse populations and has triggered outbreaks of non-fatal meningo-encephalitis in humans... [Incidentally, a] pensioner who is one of the few people in Britain allergic to electricity has been told by doctors they cannot cure her condition[, although]... treatment will reduce her problems... [The pensioner] developed her unusual allergy after being caught in a violent electric storm while on holiday in Cornwall 20 years ago. The 78-year-old from Southdown, near Bath, is so affected that [it] cannot wear a battery-driven watch, has to have specially lined shoes... [-] all her shoes [are] lined with chrome leather soles, which dancers use to cut down on heat and static[-] ...and feels pain when... walk[ing] over underground electric cables. [The pensioner] also has to wrap up in survival blankets and wear rubber boots during electric storms to stop the pain becoming unbearable... [The pensioner] has to take homoeopathic desensitising drops every day and can spend up to £188... a month on medicine... [The pensioner] worries that there are plans to erect a mobile telephone tower close to her home, which would only make her problems worse.

...Scientists have confirmed the mould growing in water-damaged homes around N[Z] is dangerous to humans and may also affect animals. The toxin-producing fungus stachybotrys has been linked to serious illness and deaths in the U[S], but until now researchers had not proven the fungus found in N[Z] homes was toxic. Scientists now confirm the fungus is linked to the... rashes, tiredness, headaches, allergic reactions, breathing trouble... and chronic chest infections of some home owners. [A] HortResearch microbiologist... said tests had also found other toxic fungi growing with the stachybotrys. “We’re finding the population of fungi in the walls is more complex than we thought. Some of them... haven’t been reported overseas.” ...The preliminary results have already attracted international interest with the N[Z] evidence to be included in stachybotrys research at Columbia University in New York, Denmark’s Technical University and the Institute of Hygiene and Medicine in Germany. However, further investigation of stachybotrys in N[Z] by HortResearch and Landcare Research is on hold while applications for more funding are made to the Government... [S]tachybotrys had been confirmed in 170 [NZ] homes but the toxic rot is likely to be growing in any home which has been poorly constructed and leaks, or in old damp homes... The fungus emits toxic gases which can permeate minute cracks or wallpaper but, if disturbed, the fungus may send out spores which expose people to dangerous levels of the toxin... Builders making repairs to rotting homes were at high risk.

...[NZ m]ortuaries may be banned from doing some autopsies because... Occupational Safety and Health believes staff are at risk of infection from potentially fatal diseases. The... OSH... said yesterday that it was alarmed at safety standards at mortuaries and could not vouch for the safety of any of them... During autopsies, fine sprays of bodily fluids, known as aerosols, are released which are invisible to the naked eye. Blood, body tissue and other potentially infectious fluids can also be splattered round the autopsy room... Pathologists and mortuary staff are believed to be at risk of contracting HIV/Aids... CJD... hepatitis B, hepatitis C and tuberculosis because of poor ventilation systems and lack of protective clothing. Medical students observing autopsies have also been at risk... Staff... [at the] Auckland mortuary... have refused to do autopsies on suspected CJD cases because of the risk of infection. Some are now refusing to do other categories considered high-risk... The Auckland Healthcare general manager of clinical support services... said... [s]uspected CJD victims were being buried without a definite cause of death listed in their death certificates, but... did not believe any suspected Aids, TB or hepatitis cases had gone unidentified as a result of the OSH action... However, the Ministry of Health said all types of autopsies should continue despite the OSH safety review, which it welcomed... [Auckland Healthcare’s manager] agreed ventilation systems were inadequate and that some staff did not wear protective gear when they should. Talks had been held with the mortuary owner, the Auckland University medical school, about a \$1 million upgrade but no decision had been made on when it would happen or who would pay.

...Mercury from dead people’s fillings is endangering crematorium workers’ health because it is not being destroyed during cremations. Concentrated levels of mercury were found in the hair of British crematorium workers – an indication that it may be in their liver and kidneys. Health officials here now plan to investigate the risks posed both to N[Z] workers and people who live near crematoriums. The Waikumete Crematorium manager... whose operation uses British-made cremators... was concerned about the overseas health findings and planned to have his staff tested immediately for traces of mercury. And... a scientist at the toxicology laboratory of the Institute of Environmental Science and Research in Wellington, said: “If mercury fumes are going up crematorium chimneys it is a cause for concern. I would certainly recommend monitoring levels.” ...Previous research had found mercury in the soil around crematoriums, but... the... research published in the *British Medical Journal*... was the first time an attempt had been made to measure levels of mercury affecting workers... Neve University College, Northampton... estimated each crematorium emitted 5.4kg of mercury a year... In Sweden, selenium filters have been shown to remove 85[%] of mercury when put in crematorium chimneys... Mercury poisoning, known as mercurialism, can cause kidney damage, intestinal problems and nervous irritability... [In related news, i]t has been nearly two years since James Takamore’s body was taken from Christchurch but [his widow] is adamant the fight to have it returned will go on... [The widow] had applied for an order from the High Court at Christchurch, which, if successful, would force the Takamore whanau to disinter her husband’s body from his marae at Kutarere, near Opotiki... Mr Takamore, who died in August... said in his will

that [it] wanted to be buried but did not specify where. After a confrontation with [his wife], Mr Takamore's mother, sister and brother took his body back to be buried beside his father. The whanau have refused to relinquish the body, saying the burial was done in accordance with tikanga Maori... [The widow] said changes to the law were needed to allow police intervention when disputes arouse over bodies... [A s]choolteacher... supported the idea. [The schoolteacher] was on her way to a Hamilton cemetery to wait for her aunty (Ivy) May Ngahooro's body last year when [it] received a panicked phone call from a relative saying: "Hurry, they've taken her". Mrs Ngahooro's estranged daughter... and relatives forcibly took the 76-year-old[']s... body from a Hamilton funeral home. They drove her to Taumarunui after a police roadblock and attempts at mediation failed. It took a court injunction, a hefty legal bill... and a long meeting between the two sides of the family before Mrs Ngahooro's initial wish was agreed to two days later. The saga, [the schoolteacher] said, caused both sides of the family unnecessary and massive trauma... In response, the Ministry of Justice recommended late last year that police be given the power to seize bodies involved in disputes with or without a warrant.

...[a British guy's 'father has turned up in a rest home five years after his body was supposedly cremated. Now officials are trying to find out who was cremated'! In local news, h]eadstones of migrants who died while quarantined on Somes Island in the middle of Wellington Harbour were returned to the island... yesterday... [T]he island had been used to quarantine immigrants from Europe from as early as 1870 to the influenza epidemic of 1918... "A typical voyage during the 1870s would be up to 120 days in usually unhygienic conditions... Diseases such as typhoid and scarlet fever were common and devastating to the old, very young or weak. Of the many who were placed in quarantine on the island, at least 40 never left." ...the immigrant cemetery on the island became overrun and derelict, and during the early 1970s the remaining headstones were removed and replaced with a mass memorial overlooking the site. "The... Conservation Department... decided that the remaining headstones should be moved back to the memorial site rather than have them shut away where no one could see them,"... [a DoC officer said. A ceremony, which was attended by] representatives of local iwi... and descendants of immigrants buried on the island... was held yesterday to bless the headstones in their new location.

...New research says a web-based headache assessment test can help patients and doctors improve the diagnosis and treatment of one of the most common human ailments. The Headache Impact Test (HIT), developed by US-based QualityMetric and drug giant Glaxo Wellcome, is an internet-based questionnaire that measures the severity... of headaches... "One of the key problems is... many patients with headaches find it hard to communicate their degree of disability... [T]ools of this kind should improve the situation dramatically... I know that many patients with headaches are not achieving the quality of life... they should and are suffering needlessly," said [a Dr from] King's College Hospital in London... HIT can be found on the internet at www.amlhealthy.com. An estimated 96[% of gals and 91% of guys] suffer from some type of headache during their lives... rang[ing] from mild discomfort to crippling pain. Cluster and tension headaches and migraines, which afflict 120 million people in the developed world, are among the most common. Headaches can be the primary problem or an indication of something more serious such as a tumour.

...*How to light up your lice...* Parents fed up with... battl[ing] infestations of lice on their children's heads may soon find a disco light makes the task a lot easier. A paediatrics professor at Yale University School of Medicine... has devised a shampoo that includes a harmless dye which sticks to the outside of lice eggs... Illuminated by a "black" ultra-violet light... the dyed egg glows brightly and can be easily removed by hand... The dye was simply added to a shampoo available over the counter. [The professor] has now patented the product and is looking for a partner to market it... Lice are becoming resistant to conventional delousing shampoos, which means that if only one or two eggs survive a blitzing, the child's scalp quickly gets reinfested. That leaves parents with the literal job of nit-picking – using a special fine-toothed comb to remove all the lice eggs, which measure less than a millimetre across and can easily be missed. In addition, some head lice shampoos contain lindane, a pesticide that has been linked to cancer and, health watchdogs say, is not suitable for children. [The professor says it] felt an inventive itch after spending an hour manually removing lice and their eggs from a child with thick blond hair. Knowing that lice eggs contain a polysaccharide called chitin, [the professor] took a commercially available organic dye [the professor] knew would stick to it, but not to the hair or the skin.

...*A skin specialist says a five-minute treatment can completely clear a patient's pimples* A zit-zapping laser has been hailed as the biggest step forward in acne treatment for 30 years by an expert who tested it on patients. The pilot study of 41 patients showed that a single five-minute session with the NLite laser can produce a 50[%] improvement. Ten of the patients who took part in the trial at Hammersmith Hospital were completely cleared of acne... [The] consultant dermatologist at the hospital, and founder of the Acne Support Group, said: "The results were stunning. I was a complete sceptic but now I'm completely converted..." ...His is the only National Health Service clinic using the NLite to treat acne... The NLite, originally developed at the University of Wales to tackle birth marks and wrinkles, is now being used to treat acne at about 25 private clinics around Britain. A single facial treatment costs about £300... "A single treatment has an effect that lasts three months. It does support the idea that there is a fundamental alteration in the skin micro-environment." ...Acne is the most common skin disease in the world, affecting 90[%] of adolescents and a large number of people in their 40s and 50s... [The dermatologist – who] said it was a myth that acne was caused by bad diet, not washing, or too much or too little sex... [-] is now investigating precisely how the NLite achieves such dramatic results... It works by heating small blood vessels to provoke a natural healing response and collagen production.

...A... [NZ] 18-year-old... suffers from a rare skin disorder called erthromelalgia, which affects the nervous system and blood vessels. If... exposed to temperatures over 12 degrees C, his body swells up and [the teenager] suffers excruciating pain. Going out into hot summer temperatures could even be fatal... The 18-year-old... can't eat hot food or have a hot shower... The pain has been so bad [the teenager] has passed out several times and, at night, it's hard to sleep because his chest, neck, arms and feet feel like they're being scorched... Sadly there is no cure for the condition, which has medical experts baffled. Doctors can't even predict his life expectancy. Life has been an uphill battle for [the teenager] since the diagnosis. [It] used to love spending time outdoors – playing soccer, snorkelling and going fishing with his grandfather. Now [the teenager]'s virtually a prisoner in his own home... While most other teenagers are outside enjoying the sunshine, [the 18-year-old i]s stuck inside his Wellington home, the curtains pulled to keep out the sun and fans going so [his body] stays cool... The... [teenager] sat School Certificate, despite being in great pain, and passed six subjects with a 70[%] average but, because [it] couldn't control the temperature at school, [the teenager] had to leave... "When I heat up, my lips, my face – everything just swells up," [the teenager] explains, pacing the living room of his home because [it]'s in too much pain to sit down. "It's... so frustrating. What's worse is if I get emotional, if I get angry or I laugh or do anything physical, it hurts... like a burning pain..."

...A shortage of skin donors has pushed specialist hospital burns units to crisis point. Skin has had to be imported from... a private cultivation lab in Brisbane... for at least one critical patient... A... Middlemore and Kidz First hospital burns unit co-director... said there was only enough donor skin in Auckland to help one more serious burns victim... Burns units at Waikato and Christchurch hospitals are not as concerned about the shortage, but tend to deal with smaller burns. Donor skin is a temporary measure and is placed on parts of the body that are weight-bearing – the back, buttocks and thighs – and are most likely to be rubbed raw while the patient recovers in bed. The skin stays on for up to two weeks, helping to repair the blood vessels and to control the patient's pain. Permanent grafts of artificial skin or skin from another part of the patient's body, then replace the donor skin. In the past three months, the Middlemore and Kidz First burns units have dealt with at least five serious cases... [A]nyone with burns to more than 30[%] of their body was in the serious category, where the risks and complications were potentially fatal. The sudden influx of serious cases is the main reason for the skin shortage. Registering as a skin donor is done in the same way as for donating other organs... The skin is removed under sterile operating procedures and the donor's blood and tissues are carefully screened for HIV and hepatitis. [The co-director] said it was taken from parts of the body that were not visible. Unlike most other Western countries, N[Z] does not have its own skin cultivation facilities, something [the burns unit co-directors] are constantly frustrated by. Some of the best treatment results are gained by using the patient's own skin, which can be "grown" in a skin bank from a small sample. It is extremely beneficial with facial burns because cultivation of

their own skin gives the patient the correct pigmentation... A skin bank would cost around \$1 million to set up and the Middlemore doctors said they had started lobbying “everywhere” for money. [They added that a local] skin cultivation laboratory could save the lives of 10 people a year.

...More children are being treated for hot water burns at... Kidz First Hospital... partly attributed to Auckland’s flourishing cafe culture...

[An Auckland toddler] does not go near the kitchen bench any more. Three months ago, the... 2-year-old was balancing on a beach ball and holding onto the kitchen bench when [it] toppled off, taking the kettle with him. The water in the kettle had boiled just 10 minutes earlier. It splashed across [his] face and down his left arm, leaving the toddler howling in pain and sending his mother... into “emergency mode”. After a long time in the shower and on advice from the family doctor, [the toddler] went to hospital, ending up in the Kidz First burns unit in South Auckland. [The toddler] suffered burns to 10[%] of his body and, although most of the burns were superficial... will wear a pressure shirt for the next year to help with the healing. [The toddler] is expected to make a full recovery and the red marks from the burns that remain on his forehead and shoulder will fade over time. Despite having burns that were relatively minor, [the toddler] still suffered a great deal of pain during the early healing process... Starting today, Kidz First hospital is launching a two-week appeal to raise money to buy a bed that would have helped [him] to be more comfortable. Clinitron beds have a special mattress that support the patient using columns of air. The different columns ease the pressure on the burns and make lying down more comfortable. One bed costs \$120,000 and the money is being raised by the South Auckland Health Foundation. The \$60 million hospital itself, which opened last year, was built through taking out bank loans and embarking on a huge fundraising and sponsorship drive because public money was not available. The Kidz First burns unit expects more than 130 children to be admitted every year. Of these, 75[%] will be aged less than 3. Most of the burns treated are scalds from hot drinks, kettles and pots, although a small number are burns from flames. ■ [For 7 months a British] ...boy... lay perilously close to death after a freak fireball accident left more than 90[%] of his body burned. His injuries were so severe, doctors at first agonised over whether to try to save him. But against all the odds, the brave 16-year-old won his fight for life and is believed to be the most serious burns victim to survive in Britain. [The]Chelsea fan... was filling his moped with petrol when it sprayed back on him, setting him and his clothing alight... On large parts of his body the flames had burned right down to his bones, stripping skin, fat and muscle. Only his head – and crucially his face – escaped. The remains of his skin were stripped from his body to reduce the risk of infection.

...A... British [immigrant] who suffered horrific burns after being doused in petrol and set alight in her Sydney home... wanted to die... “There were many times I wished I was dead, wished I hadn’t survived, but the fact I did means something special... Today I’m anxious but excited and trying to think of it all as an adventure.” ...After five months of painful treatment [the nurse], aged 28, is heading home to family and friends in Britain after... an anonymous Scottish benefactor... gave the \$442,000 it cost to fly her, her stretcher and a Careflight International crew to Britain... [Her attacker] has since been charged with attempted murder for the attack... which left her with third degree burns to 90[%] of her body... [T]he initial shock caused her lungs and kidneys to shut down... [Her] injuries were so horrific that doctors at Concord Hospital gave her little chance of surviving... But [the nurse] confounded the doctors[, who]... spent \$A27,000... on importing artificial skin harvested in the U[S].

...*Miracle for bu[rm victim]*... When her 10-year-old-son... suffered severe methylated spirits burns to his face, hands and legs, [a Warkworth resident]... was afraid her son would carry the physical as well as emotional scars for life. However, after using a futuristic tool – a kind of colour acupuncture treatment called the Biopton light on her son for just a month, [the son] experienced an almost miraculous healing. The severe burning... has healed to such a degree, virtually no scarring is now visible at all... It was late last year when [the son] was badly burned after a bunsen burner full of meths, which [the boy] was using at home for a science experiment, exploded. His father immediately placed [him] under a cold shower and gave him the homeopathic remedy Cantharis, then took him to hospital. The next day [his parents brought him]... home and began immediate treatment with the Biopton light, initially for two-hour sessions twice a day, then decreasing the time as the healing rapidly began... Healing human burns is not the only application of the light... Auckland Zoo’s famous elephant Kashin responded incredibly well to Biopton light treatment for an arthritic foot condition and a recurring facial sore. [The s]enior keeper... says Kashin’s wound healed and [the elephant] was more playful, much less anxious and happier following successful treatment with the light. Previous pain relief remedies had not worked on the elephant... The Biopton colour acupuncture light was developed 15 years ago when... Swedish... scientists studying laser technology discovered that linearly polarised light – light waves oscillating in parallel planes – had a definite immunostimulatory effect on the body... ● For [Taranaki’s newest twins, life has been a battle]... for survival from the moment they were born 16 weeks premature. Weighing only 735 and 805 grams at their birth on December 28, the Taranaki twins spent 3 1/2 months fighting for life in a number of hospitals. But one of their worst moments came in March, when eye specialists discovered the babies had a condition which, if not treated immediately, would have made them blind. The condition, retinopathy of prematurity, causes blood vessels in the eye to grow rapidly until they bleed. The retina, the layer at the back of the eyeball which triggers nerve impulses leading to the brain, then detaches from the eye, causing blindness. The disease is found in 80[%] of babies born after around 25 weeks’ gestation. But a new highly sensitive laser treatment meant... [the twins’] sight could be saved. Details of improvements in laser treatment for retinopathy of prematurity were revealed at the Royal A[US and NZ] College of Ophthalmologists conference in Palmerston North last week. [A p]rofessor... who was at the conference, operated on the... twins in March[, and] said the treatment involved painstakingly tracing the outside of the entire retina, applying about 4000 individual laser burns... [T]he procedure could be available for use on patients in about two years.

...A top British eye surgeon has warned that more than a million people are in danger of having their eyeballs disintegrate after having “miracle” laser surgery... [The] professor of ophthalmology at St Thomas’s Hospital and Britain’s top expert on the Lasik technique, says evidence of long-term damage is growing... [T]he technique can lead to the cornea being so eroded that it starts bulging, and... parts of it may become dislodged... “There have been a number of reports of erosion of tissue, with people having to have their corneas transplanted.” ...The use of the Lasik technique has exploded in recent years after heavy promotion by private eye clinics, which offer it as a painless, instant cure for short sightedness. Because of commercial pressures, the technique was quickly authorised in the U[S], although almost nothing is known of its long-term effects. More than a million Americans have had the operation... Patients are rarely warned about the risks. When a reporter phoned Optimax posing as a patient, a consultant said: “All the research shows it’s a safe... proven treatment.” ...[a Dr from] Optimax, who does Lasik operations, said: “I can’t see any danger. Throughout the world, people are switching to this operation because it’s quick, relatively painless and has reliable results.” [The Dr] predicted that by 2005, Britain would match the US, where 90[%] of such eye surgery is Lasik. But... admitted: “Nobody knows what the effects after 10 years are. But how would patients wait 10 years for it? Are we supposed to do 10 patients and wait 10 years? Science doesn’t work like that.” ...a consultant eye surgeon at Moorfields Eye Hospital in London, who helped to draw up the Lasik guidelines for the Royal College of Ophthalmologists, said: “If you stick to the guidelines, there shouldn’t be a problem.” ...[however,] it was “almost certain”... British surgeons were going beyond guidelines, removing up to [2/3]rds of the cornea in patients with extreme short sight. “That’s totally unwarranted. If it’s thin, the pressure from behind will make the cornea bulge out and distort the image...” ...*Eye Facts*... The human eye sees everything upside-down but the brain turns it right side up. The only part of the human body that has no blood supply is the cornea... [– i]t takes... oxygen directly from the air. The pupil of the eye expands as much as 45[%] when a person looks at something pleasing... Computer users, on average, blink seven times per minute.

...An eye disease that can leave its victims blind in just hours is becoming rife among younger people in Britain. Experts describe the epidemic as frightening and warn that if it continues at its present pace it will make a million people blind within 15 years – and could strike people as young as 30. There has been virtually no research into the disease, although scientists are sure it is caused by something in “modern living.” Speculation about the cause ranges from more intense ultra-violet light as a result of the thinning ozone layer, to artificial sweeteners, pesticides, or chemicals

in plastic food-wrap. Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) was virtually unknown in people under 60 until 10 years ago. A recent study shows it is now the cause of sight loss in more than 10[%] of people under 64, ranking alongside diabetes and glaucoma... The number of registered blind people aged 18 to 49 has risen 43[%] since 1982, and almost 56[%] among those aged between 50 and 64. AMD – which is caused by a build-up of dead cells within the eye – is also soaring among older people, and now causes half of all blindness in Britain, afflicting 400,000. In the 1950s it was responsible for just 10[%] of blindness. A consultant at Moorfields Eye hospital... said: “It [AMD] now causes half the blindness in Britain, but it’s not a Department of Health priority, which is stunning.” ...The disease builds up over a long time with no symptoms and can strike without warning... [A] 55-year-old GP... who is now chair[person] of the recently founded AMD Society, says it... first noticed his eyesight was failing while playing squash when [it] was 48. “The squash court lines were crooked, and within a year I had lost my eyesight... I am now registered blind.”

...[there has been a medical breakthrough in Britain. Surgeons have restored a blind person’s sight using one of his teeth to repair a damaged cornea.]

...*I once was blind but now I see...* Cancer stole [a NZer]’s eyesight a decade ago. Last week a bump on the head gave it back. The 24-year-old Auckland[er]... has miraculously regained partial eyesight after knocking her head, confounding doctors who said [the Aucklander] would never see again. [Nine days ago, the Aucklander] bent to kiss her guide dog good night, but instead collided against a coffee table. When [the Aucklander] woke the following morning [it] could see for the first time in 10 years... Last weekend [the 24-year-old] saw her boyfriend of two months for the first time, along with most of her close friends. Her brother had changed from a 12-year-old boy into a[n adult]. “It’s almost too much to take in, I’m so excited. It’s fantastic, amazing, unbelievable,” said... [the 24-year-old], who now has 80[%] vision from her left eye... The cancer that robbed [her]... of her eyesight was diagnosed 13 years ago. Doctors gave her a 5[%] chance of survival after discovering a large brain tumour. Radiology and an operation to remove the cancer were successful, however, but the tumour had already damaged her eyes, cutting off blood supply and putting pressure on her optic nerves. [The Aucklander] was declared legally and permanently blind at 14, her eyes able to detect only light and dark... A[n Auckland Hospital eye surgeon... has no explanation for her recovery and has never encountered a similar case in 25 years as an eye specialist. [The surgeon] could not say whether her sight would be permanent... Unsure if her eyesight would last, [the Aucklander] waited until Friday morning before throwing away her walking cane and spreading the news.

...Bats have inspired the creation of a cane to help the blind and partially sighted find their stride. The eerie creatures manoeuvre by bouncing high-pitched sounds off nearby objects in a process called echolocation, and researchers at Leeds University in Britain used this as the model for their “Batcane”. The cane emits sonar waves inaudible to the human ear to help users detect obstacles ahead, around, or even above them. Any nearby object triggers a vibration in one of four pads in the cane’s plastic handle. As the object gets nearer, the vibration speeds up... [A spokesperson for] Cambridge Consultants, which has developed the cane in conjunction with Sound Foresight... said the Batcane would help visually impaired people to create a “mind map” of their environment and so encourage independent mobility, particularly in cities... “Obviously it won’t suite everyone, but there’s a big market out there,”... There are 1.4 million people registered as blind in Britain alone... Trials are taking place in Britain, the U[S], Canada and Germany... and... [t]he Batcane is expected to be on the market towards the end of the year...

Auckland’s blind residents will soon be... able to combine information sent from the stratosphere with their own knowledge of Auckland’s central city... to walk around the... streets. An international company has combined two hi-tech devices to tell sight impaired people where they are using positional information sent from satellites. Christchurch company Pulse Data International has developed a portable computer called the BrailleNote, which is able to record information. It also has other functions such as e-mail, a personal diary and a calculator. The 1 kilogram BrailleNote computer is connected to a small portable receiver able to receive global positioning system... signals... BrailleNote... has the exact location of 165,000 N[Z] businesses programmed into its memory. The user combines the information about the location of businesses in their area with information about their own specific landmarks... or “waypoints”... After a number of waypoints are entered... into their BrailleNote... the map can be replayed verbally via an electronic voice... The software for the communication technology is in the final stages of development... The GPS system doesn’t work inside yet. “But we are working on it,”... The cost of a basic BrailleNote begins at \$4500 and a GPS receiver costs about \$1400... [A Royal NZ] Foundation for the Blind... member... says the best thing about the technology is that it “remembers” fine detail. “Guide dogs are trained to avoid things... They have no idea that there is a toilet or telephone booth nearby.”

...*Blind dogs see the light again...* Scientists using gene therapy say they have restored sight to dogs suffering an inherited form of blindness – an achievement that offers hope to infants born with a similar handicap. The work in the U[S] centres on a gene, RPE65, which controls a protein that helps to build pigments in the photo-receptors. These are cells in the retina that translate light into nerve impulses, which are sent to the brain. Flaws in RPE65 mean that the photo-receptors do not work, and the retinas gradually degrade. A tragic but rare inherited condition implicating RPE65 occurs in infants called Leber’s congenital amaurosis... A team... from the University of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia... described... in the journal *Nature Genetics*... how they took retinal cells from blind dogs with this disorder and “infected” them with a disabled virus into which a normal RPE65 gene was tucked. The repaired retinal cells were then injected back into the dog’s eyes, which eventually were able to respond to light as well as the eyes of seeing dogs... Previous gene therapy on RPE65 has worked to reverse blindness in mice, but this is the first time it has succeeded in a large animal... Experts are cautious about trying experimental work on humans, mainly because so much still needs to be learned about how genes work together. Fixing one gene may have a knock-on effect on another, causing health complications elsewhere.

...*‘Bionic eye’ offers new hope of sight* American scientists hoping to give sight to the blind say they have successfully inserted silicon microchips in the eyes of three elderly [patients]... They have given no indication, however, of whether the[patients’] eyesight has improved... It was the second stage of a clinical trial being closely monitored by U[S] Government regulators and rival researchers around the world. The device inserted, known as an artificial silicon retina... has been developed by a private research institute team from Chicago called Optobionics, run... in association with the University of Illinois. The chip is smaller than a pinhead and narrower than a human hair. It is inserted beneath the retina, and the plan is for it to take over the light-sensing functions performed by a healthy human eye and permit people suffering from degenerative retinal disorders to make out shapes in a room or even read large-print books... The search for a system of “bionic eyes”, as this field of research has been dubbed, sounded like science fiction when first proposed a decade ago, but intensive research in Germany, Japan and the US has significantly raised hopes.

...A tiny camera wired into the back of the brain could give the blind the gift of sight. The makers of the device claim it has already enabled a [person] blind for 26 years, to read 5cm-high letters from 1.5 metres. Experts here are excited but cautious about the artificial eye technology announced yesterday by an American biomedical company... – the Doherty Institute in New York... The Foundation for the Blind says it will be extremely expensive, may take years to arrive in N[Z] and that money would be better spent on more basic needs for blind people, such as talking computers... [A]n Otago University lecturer and the foundation’s chair[person], said the device and surgery could cost upward of \$500,000 per person. [The chairperson] would rather see money put into award-winning “sonic spectacles” invented by a Northland [resident]... which enabled blind children to learn to perceive objects in a room... [O]nly a few pairs of the \$50,000 spectacles existed in this country... American experts have also greeted the announcement with a blend of excitement and caution... “For many blind people it would be a totally high-risk, ridiculously unnecessary thing to do,”... But... a 46-year-old Auckland[er]... blinded 25 years ago by a shotgun blast, says [it] would definitely undergo the delicate brain surgery involved: “I... know what I’m missing...” The “Doherty Eye”... uses a tiny television camera and an ultrasonic distance sensor, both mounted on a pair of eyeglasses. The sensors connect through a cable to a miniature computer worn on the person’s belt and wired to the brain’s visual cortex. Tiny electrodes stimulate the brain cells, resulting in specks of light allowing a blind person to make out large... objects.

...A joint team of Anglo-Israeli medical scientists have boldly gone where no one has gone before: they have recorded a video film of a journey through a person's entire digestive tract. A pill-sized capsule containing a camera, light and radio transmitter – but no wires – has emulated science fiction by making a “fantastic voyage” from the mouth to the rear end. In the... 1966... sci-fi thriller... *Fantastic Voyage*... a submarine and its crew are shrunk and injected into a [perso]n's bloodstream. Their mission is to destroy a blood clot in the brain of a Czech scientist who was the victim of an assassination attempt. The real-life fantastic voyage was performed on a group of... volunteers who each swallowed a torpedo-shaped capsule while wearing a special belt with recording equipment, which monitored the capsule's passage through the body... [They swallowed the capsule] after an eight-hour fast and eliminate[d] it eight hours later after it ha[d] travelled the length of the[ir] intestines... On its way through, the device shines a light, takes two pictures a second and transmits them by radio waves to [the]... belt. Doctors transfer the digital images to a computer. They can view the images as still shots or run them together quickly like a video... The team leader, [who is] a professor of gastroenterology at the Royal London Hospital, said one great advantage of the capsule was that it could be used to take images in the small bowel. This was a region not normally accessible with conventional endoscopes inserted through the rectum... The Given Imaging Diagnostic System has a battery life of eight hours, which is long enough to photograph the small intestine but not the large intestine... [The p]rofessor... said the capsule was easier to swallow than many antibiotic pills and patients could not feel it moving inside them... The... disposable... camera[– which i]s not appropriate for certain patients, such as people with intestinal obstructions... – ...has been approved by U[S] regulators. The... deputy director of the FDA office that reviewed the camera, said it did a better job of detecting bowel abnormalities than did computer tomography with ingested barium, a method known as CT... [But the deputy director also] said... capsule endoscopy... should complement but not replace endoscopes, x-rays or other traditional diagnostic tools.

...British researchers have invented a diagnostic tool startlingly similar to [the equipment used] in ‘Star Trek’. It was Dr McCoy's trademark – a gadget you simply waved across a patient's body to provide instant diagnosis. Now British scientists have invented a real-life version... Their super-sensor can monitor a person's heartbeat or brainwaves from 90cm away and could mark the start of a revolution in remote medical testing... Remote monitoring could be invaluable for doctors treating patients who cannot be touched, such as severe burns victims... The team from the University of Sussex in Brighton made the breakthrough while setting out to improve the accuracy of electro-cardiograms. Via stick-on contacts, ECGs measure minute voltages on the surface of the skin which respond to electrical activity in the heart. The data is displayed as a wave on a screen, or a printout. But conventional ECGs suffer from the fact that the skin contacts drain some of the current, so the signal is weak and distorted. The Sussex team... developed an alternative system that measures the changing electric field in the air generated by the shifting voltages on the skin's surface. Their prototype remote device, unlike Dr McCoy's, is not hand-held but fastened rigidly in front of the seated patient. It does not look particularly space-age either, consisting of a copper disc mounted on the end of a metal box. Details are being kept secret because of patents pending. But the results of tests on volunteers have been so startling that [the inventors are] convinced it will completely transform the business of monitoring the vital signs of patients. “What we're talking about is a real paradigm shift. These devices are orders of magnitude more sensitive than anything that has gone before, yet they are cheap and relatively easy to produce. You can go from close non-electrical contact to more than a metre away. In five years' time you could be able to monitor from five or 10 metres.” There are two versions of the device, one which monitors from a distance and another that touches the skin and produces a much stronger signal... [T]he “close-contact” version of the device could lead to portable ECG monitors which could be used in GP surgeries, or even at home. Looking further ahead, arrays of the sensors could provide a complete picture of a patient's electric field. They may also help scientists unravel the secrets of acupuncture, which many experts believe works by altering electrical pathways in the body. [It has been] predicted that the technology could even give rise to a form of electro-acupuncture. “The body runs on electrical signals... If you can pick them up in a way that hasn't been possible before and learn about the relationship individual signals have with the overall harmony of the body, clearly there's a possibility that you could feed back signals and alter activity in the body.”

...[First we heard about ‘the “constantly expanding” computer that can diagnose a patient's condition when a doctor can't (the computer considers everything and produces the most likely diagnosis’). Now we hear a team of medical technicians has created ‘a “sniffer” machine for diagnosing illnesses’.

...researchers are] working on a way to diagnose diseases with a breath test. [A b]iochemist... of the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre, has been working with Glasgow University researchers for 10 years to perfect [the] technique... Initially, trials involve giving isotopically labelled urea to patients. This compound breaks down in the stomach, and the resulting breath-test sample can be analysed to see if the bacterium *Helicobacter pylori*... is present. The technique is non-invasive and safe. Other trials have been devised to check that therapy given to children with cystic fibrosis is not damaging their liver. Caffeine labelled with the stable isotope 13C is given to a child and its breath sampled and analysed. The 13C content indicates whether the caffeine is broken down normally by the liver. Similarly, tests using lipid tracers have been used to check that enzyme supplements in cystic-fibrosis therapies are working effectively and that children have an adequate nutritional intake. The technique... – ...[which has already]been applied to the study of digestive diseases in dogs and ponies... – ...is popular with doctors because the tests can be made fun by allowing children to blow up balloons to provide breath samples that are then analysed by mass spectrometry.

...Picture this: a doctor examines a patient suspected of having stomach ulcers and asks him to blow on a specially impregnated card. Chemicals in his breath, released by the ulcers, cause blue spots to appear within seconds, confirming the diagnosis. Or consider a factory believed to be spewing cancer-causing pollutants into the air. Environmental health officials leave a similar card in the neighbourhood, which also blotches quickly to betray the presence of a harmful chemical. Finally, think of an athlete thought to have taken a banned drug. No need to wait for complex blood or urine analysis. The same simple card trick will instantly reveal guilt or innocence. These diagnoses may soon be commonplace, thanks to a remarkable universal sensor based on the sex life of yeast... [T]he bio sensor team at Leeds University in England, has developed a “library” of millions of genetically engineered yeast cells capable of responding to virtually any chemical in existence... [The] research has focused on membranes, the gossamer-thin skins that cover all living cells and protect them from chemical and biological invasions. Membranes form a coat around a cell, except at key points where long protein receptors form pathways from the surface into the cell's interior. These control the exchange of chemicals, nutrients and waste products. When a chemical latches on to the external end of the receptor it triggers a signal that activates the other end in the cell's interior. “Yeast uses receptors to detect... pheromones... given off by other yeast cells... The cell then knows it is near another yeast cell – and can mate with it.” In exploiting this yeastly sexual urge, [the team] took the receptor protein gene and mutated it, creating thousands of versions, each changed in a unique way. These receptors no longer reacted to the yeast pheromone, but to a vast number of substances ranging from relatively simple chemicals such as carbon monoxide to highly complicated organic molecules, including those given off by living organisms. Then the Leeds team used a [GE] yeast strain whose receptor protein – when stimulated by a chemical visitor – released a special molecule that triggered a biological cascade to spread through its interior, causing the cell to turn blue. “Essentially, we have a line of yeast cells so they no longer react to a single pheromone, but to a vast range of other chemicals,” said [the team's leader]. “In fact, we still do not know exactly what chemicals the yeast will react to, for we created our library only a few months ago. However, we do know we now have millions of different mutant yeast sensors. All we have to do is put a chemical near a sample, and, if it turns blue, we have found a yeast sensor for that chemical.”

...Disease diagnosis could come in the form of a pill next century... [The] director of London's Central Public Health Laboratory, said patient testing kits could range from smart capsules that could detect micro-organisms through to computerised breath analysers. The impetus for the technology came from the space programme's wanting to provide medical backup for astronauts and the military's need to detect agents of

biological warfare. However, [the professor] wrote in the *British Medical Journal* that “there may be little incentive to develop kits for which the perceived market is small even though the need is great... such as rapid determination of HIV status in pregnant [gals in Last World] countries.”

...The search for an Aids vaccine has been dealt a blow by the discovery that a group of Kenyan prostitutes thought to be immune to HIV have now caught the virus... The [prostitutes] all have large numbers of special white blood cells, called cytotoxic T lymphocytes, that are primed to destroy other cells in which HIV lurks. Oxford University specialists have sought to mimic the response by devising a vaccine containing fragments of the HIV virus tucked inside a disabled cowpox virus. Administered to monkeys, the vaccine triggered a big response of the white blood cells and protected the animals against HIV infection. Safety trials begin this year on 30 British volunteers. They will be followed by further safety trials in Nairobi if all goes well. The next step would be a trial in Kenya within five years, involving hundreds of people. But the... *New Scientist*... says the vaccine designers may have to go back to the drawing board... [because] six of the... 43 Kenyan prostitutes who had astonished researchers by remaining HIV-free for more than 15 years, despite intensive exposure to a range of virus strains... had become HIV-positive. Their immunity apparently fell away once they were no longer being exposed to HIV daily... “This implies that to maintain immunity you need to have continual exposure.” In turn, that means people would have to be given repeated shots of the vaccine in order to be protected – something that is financially out of the question in poor countries where Aids is most prevalent... HIV/Aids has exploded into the worst epidemic humanity has faced... The disease has struck 42 million people... [-] half of them... [gals -] and killed 24 million worldwide... Ominously, the disease is also starting to take its toll on agricultural output and is worsening the food crisis in some of the world’s poorest areas... ■ Sunday is World Aids Day.

...The virus that causes Aids can hide in the body for as long as 60 years, even when patients take strong cocktails of drugs, according to researchers. Their findings are bad news for those who had hoped the drugs, which can suppress the virus to near-zero levels, could eventually wipe out the virus within a person’s lifetime... [In related news, m]editation produces lasting beneficial changes in immune-system function and brain electrical activity... says... an American study... [that] looked at 25 employees of a company who underwent an eight-week meditation training programme... At the end of the eight weeks, flu shots were given to the meditators and a group of 16 other employees who did not receive meditation training. When... checked for antibodies to the vaccine one month... later, the meditators had significantly higher levels... On average, the meditators had about a 5[%] increase... but some showed increases of up to 25[%]. More importantly, the level of antibodies increased directly in relation to the level of increased brain-activity... The study... is the latest in a growing body of research into the so-called mind-body connection.

...Your state of health – and recovery – could be affected by how you think. [The NZ Herald] considers a catchy little number: psychoneuroimmunology... A [gal believes it] developed breast cancer because [it] hasn’t been in relationships where [it] could express her emotions. A normally robust [guy] spends a week in bed with a virulent flu – his worst illness since... child[hood. It] is deeply sad, having just separated from his wife. A mature [gal] suffering from severe gastritis undergoes a painful process of revelation and understanding about her relationship with her father[, then] recovers within hours. Humans have long been aware that our health is closely linked with our thoughts, emotions and relationships. Common sense tells us that we’ll probably feel grumpy or uninspired when we have a cold, and that people possessing hope and willpower can sometimes recover from the most threatening of diseases. Now science is catching up with our intuition. A new field of... investigation has sprung up. It’s... the study of how our thoughts and feelings work with our immune and nervous systems – a way of adding our psychological selves into the traditional medical health equation... [T]he University of Auckland already has a researcher devoted to its study... His research has uncovered surprising connections between mind and body... [- e.g.] when we write about personal, painful subjects, there’s an increase in the activity of our immune systems. The idea is simple: emotional disclosure seems to help our capacity to develop antibodies... [So] by acknowledging the pain in our lives we can help to protect ourselves... Not exactly the classic Kiwi stoic approach to life. But another Auckland[er]... has preliminary findings that support such an idea... [The] medical psychologist... has been working with breast cancer patients... [a]nd... noticed a remarkable trend. [Gals who didn’t] express emotions about their illness were less likely to be alive five years after treatment. To put it unscientifically, not letting negative feelings out, can do you in... [Hi]s findings match research in the U[S] which suggests... that those with stoic personalities... may be more likely to get cancer... [Other] research published in [US] medical journals suggests that... those who score high on the... stress scale are much more likely to get an infection than those who score low, even though you spray the same amount of virus up their noses... And once they have the virus, the people in the high stress group have more trouble keeping it under control. BUT stress was not the whole story. The study was repeated... This new study found again that stress correlated with becoming ill but it also found that the more, and the more varied, social support you had, the less likely you were to fall ill... Our immune system works best when we have a clear sense of who we are and what gives meaning to our life. Self-identity and self-defence are linked.

...Research such as the Auckland-based development of two revolutionary neurological drugs is under threat from inadequate funding, says the [person] behind the discovery. The new drugs, which stop damaged brain cells from “committing suicide,” may help millions of people worldwide who suffer from distressing disorders such as multiple sclerosis, Parkinson’s disease and Alzheimer’s disease. Clinical trials of one of the drugs, which were developed by an Auckland Medical School team... could start within months and the other within the next few years. They could also be worth billions of dollars and prove a pharmaceutical cash bonanza for the economy... The only available drug for multiple sclerosis – and not a very effective one – sold more than \$1 billion in the U[S] in its first year on the market... But... [the team leader] would not predict how “big” the drugs would be until the clinical trials were complete. Until now only the symptoms, such as the tremor for Parkinson’s disease, could be treated.

...When the tremors of people with Parkinson’s... or multiple sclerosis cannot be controlled with drugs, doctors sometimes destroy a small portion of the brain to relieve the quivering. But... delivering electrical impulses to the same area of the brain may be just as effective, with fewer serious side-effects... [because] the newer technique, thalamic stimulation, is less destructive than the traditional surgery, known as a thalamotomy... Some people who underwent the thalamotomy surgery could not reason as well afterwards... developed language problems... [or] felt decreased initiative... However, [at least one thalamic stimulation recipient has] died from complications of the... procedure, [during which] surgeons insert a wire with four electrodes into the thalamus... [N]either treatment is effective in all patients[, but they]... seem... to work best in patients with Parkinson’s[disease (‘also known as *Parkinsonism* – named after the English surgeon who described it in 1817 under the names “paralysis agitans” and “shaking palsy”).

...a young Aucklander] could barely stand six months ago. Now [it] challenges her school buddies to races around the playground. The 6-year-old has cerebral palsy, but that no longer stops her from playing soccer or walking around the supermarket with her mum or dad. [The mum and dad] have watched their daughter’s life turn around since [it] was fitted with a Hart Walker... The creation of [a]British medical engineer... allows children with moderate to severe physical disabilities to stand and experience hands-free walking. Now [the 6-year-old] hardly stops smiling... has grown taller... healthier and can breathe properly, making it easier for her to speak up in the classroom... Yesterday, [a]physiotherapist... and... a[n]... orthotist... from the Spastic Centre in N[SW], were back in Auckland to adjust the walkers fitted to Auckland children [six months ago. The physiotherapist] says her team is delighted with the progress made by the children. All of them are walking more fluidly and, importantly, can play with their peers. While the walker looks simple, it has 1000 components designed to straighten a child’s body and teach him or her to step. The Government does not subsidise the walkers but Lions clubs have helped 14 families to pay for them.

...[a] Swedish cerebral palsy sufferer – a celebrity in his home country – slipped into Auckland this week on his honeymoon but took time out to pass on a passionate message... [C]onventional treatment is killing people with motor disorders such as his – including stroke victims and others with brain damage. The [guy] voted Sweden’s most intelligent person for 1997 is dismissive of physiotherapy and [GPs, who]... generally have no

idea how to treat these patients yet do not promote alternative treatments that work. So people die... of depression and they frequently die of pneumonia through lack of movement. Their bodies are weak and without the correct training they remain useless. Only a few years ago the 38-year-old prolific writer of novels... was trapped in a body that would not respond when [his brain] wanted it to. In 1995 [the Swede] became a disciple of conductive education, and a year later his campaign was the main reason a controversial decision to outlaw the alternative treatment in Sweden was overturned. Conductive education is not a therapy or purely body exercise and massage, such as physiotherapy. Exponents say it is an educational practice where the brain is retrained to learn or relearn to carry out tasks such as movement. N[Z] does not have a bad record with conductive education compared to the rest of the world, [the Swede says. But the]... Auckland Conductive Education Foundation... accuses doctors of failing to refer people to their educators. The chair[person] of the Medical Association... confesses to knowing nothing about conductive education but takes strong issue at the claim... The [Conductive Education Foundation] also says the Stroke Foundation fails to promote the one effective treatment... [T]here are 10,000 stroke victims in N[Z] without effective ongoing treatment, and of the 140 babies born with cerebral palsy each year only a handful were referred... [In reply] the Stroke Foundation's medical director, said [it] is not against conductive education but its benefits had not been scientifically proved so the foundation was not able to endorse it. "There is plenty of anecdotal evidence from people with strokes who say it worked for them. [However,] I do know other people who say it hasn't..."

...[the guy was] young for a stroke victim – only 48. But that wasn't what most puzzled [a neurologist and a] neuropsychologist... about the political journalist recuperating at University Hospital in Zurich. Although a lesion in the right frontal part of his brain had made his left side so weak [that the journalist] couldn't walk, the patient didn't complain about being bedridden. [The patient] griped instead about the lousy hospital food... After the patient recovered [it] returned to work. As a dining columnist. Of 36 other patients newly preoccupied with fine food, [the neurologist and the neuropsychologist] found 34 with a brain injury exactly where the journalist-turned-food-writer's was. "Gourmand syndrome," they reported last year, can be a sign of neurological damage. The link between a sudden fixation on food and a brain lesion is one more piece of evidence that idiosyncratic behaviour and personality quirks once thought merely "odd" or "interesting" might be, in a sense, mental illnesses, a reflection of an abnormality in the brain... Ever since Freud, the number of psychiatric illnesses has soared. The first edition of *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM), published in 1952, listed 60; the... fourth and latest version, in 1994, lists 410. Until recently it was easy to blame this psychiatric bracket creep on therapists trying to expand the population of paying clients. But two recent developments make it harder to dismiss. The first is brain imaging. MRI, CT and PET scans that peer into the structure and activity of the brain are turning up real physical correlates of eccentric behaviour. The second is genetics. Researchers are finding genes that seem to increase the risk of particular mental illnesses. Because virtually all such illnesses are thought to involve several genes, it is tempting to label people who have only one or two of them "a touch" schizophrenic, or "just slightly" paranoid. And since the genes and brain quirks seem common, "ultimately it might just mean that we're all a little bit crazy," says... a leading behavioural geneticist at the National Cancer Institute who is best known for discovering the so-called gay gene. Mental health, in this new view, is a continuum. At one extreme might be... the Unabomber suspect described by his brother's lawyers as obsessive-compulsive, out of touch with reality, delusional, anti-social and paranoid. At the other end of the spectrum lie what are usually considered normal, even wonderful, human differences. The computer whiz who hasn't a clue how to engage in small talk is... not merely socially awkward; [it] suffers from a mild form of autism. The emotionally needy person you can't get off the telephone has a frontal-lobe abnormality. And the originators of religious dietary rules and hand-washing rituals? They had mild obsessive-compulsive disorder... [Guys] who are unable to talk about their feelings suffer "from an unrecognised adult form of attention deficit disorder"... Mild ADD also marks the business titan who can't file his taxes on time... This labelling is more than a party game ("[That person who] thinks we're whispering about him... must have mild schizophrenia"). It has consequences. Doctors who blame their patients' peculiarities on biologically based mental illness, rather than seeing them as individual responses to life's circumstances, are quick to prescribe psychoactive drugs. TEENAGE girls with "body dysmorphic disorder" – deep unhappiness with how they look – are candidates for Prozac even before they develop anorexia or bulimia... Some psychiatrists worry that their colleagues are dispensing brain drugs to treat symptoms rather than causes. Putting teenage girls on Prozac to cure them of their sense that their bodies are imperfect is so much easier, after all, than changing the Barbie culture. Or changing pro sports and its fans so that anger and aggression are not rewarded... [A doctor from] Columbia University admitted that since many people have occasional and temporary symptoms of mental illness – from sadness to exuberance bordering on mania – "it's very difficult to say where mental illness shades into normalcy. And that poses real questions for treatment: when should you prescribe anti-depressants?..." ...A new book, *Making Us Crazy*, by [two] social scientists... blasts the DSM for being scientifically unsound... "The psychiatric bible has been making us crazy when we are just human," they argue. The debate might have remained a standoff. Except that psychiatrists who believe in shadow mental illnesses are, to even their own surprise, getting support from science... Researchers found the first hints that mental illness comes in mild forms when they examined relatives of seriously ill people... [Their data] suggests that while the patient has many mental-illness genes, the relatives have only a few, and thus have "shadow syndromes." SCHIZOPHRENIA offers the classic illustration. Schizophrenics have less grey matter in the frontal cortex, the seat of higher thought... and in the hippocampus, which helps to run memory and emotion, cells are out of place. People with mild schizophrenia, whose symptoms are not severe enough to keep them socially isolated, have mild versions of these brain abnormalities. People with severe schizophrenia, who are unable to distinguish fears and fantasies from reality, have severe versions. Last year, addiction, a mental illness, was found to be on a continuum with a normal personality trait. Researchers discovered an abnormally long version, or allele, of a gene on chromosome 11... The allele was found more often in heroin addicts than in non-addicts. The job of this gene is to produce a receptor... for the brain chemical dopamine. Here's where the continuum comes in: the long version of the gene is also common in mentally healthy people who exhibit "novelty-seeking" behaviour... This gene is only one of 10 or so that determine novelty-seeking... Someone with two or three... might be a little impulsive. Someone with all 10 might be a risk freak – or a heroin addict... Genes associated with mental illness might keep society supplied with the personality traits it needs... [Novelty-seekers] are the world's race-car drivers and its explorers... Those with a touch of OCD are the dogged employees who don't let go of a task until it is complete. Long ago they may have been shamans and witch doctors... The visions of Joan of Arc... [(incidentally, the saga of Joan of Arc is one of France's greatest stories but a new investigation suggests her martyrdom at the hands of the English never happened... [-] research into the skulls and skeletons of France's long-dead royals has led ...an orthopaedic surgeon... to conclude that the [gal] on the pyre was not Joan at all but another French [gal; the one] known as "Joan"... lived on for decades after her supposed execution...[)], the prophet Muhammad and Saint Paul are suggestive of hallucinations produced by temporal-lobe epilepsy. And in 1990 researchers in Minnesota, studying identical twins, calculated that religious belief is 50[%] genetic. Mercifully, they refrained from calling it the God Gene. EVEN if neuroscientists find brain lesions linked to holding grudges or spending too much time on the Internet... that will not prove that biology is destiny. For one thing, the structure and activity patterns of the brain reflect experience, not just the biology one is born with. The idea that eccentric behaviour may be mild forms of mental illness is so new that its implications for society are unclear... Will couples count their respective "crazy genes" before they have children – or abort fetuses with too many of them? Will prospective mates demand to look at each other's brain scans? What will that do to the world's supply of artists and dreamers, adventurers and inventors?

...Scientists have shown for the first time that adults grow new brain cells, even in their 60s and 70s. The discovery... contradicts the traditional wisdom... [and] raises a distant hope for treating brain diseases or damage by getting the brain to fix its broken circuitry. The new neurons... were found in just one small part of the brain – the hippocampus... That our adult brains... [-] even diseased brains... [-] create new cells and can repair themselves is good news for all of us. For sufferers of diseases such as Parkinson's, Huntington's, Alzheimer's and epilepsy, it's downright brilliant.

The discovery was made this year by [a]Professor... and his team at Auckland University's medical school and turns the way we think about our head on its head. "When I went to medical school I was told that by the age of 15, whatever size of brain you had, that was it for life, and you had to look after your brain because you were gradually going to lose a few more brain cells each year,"... It turns out his teachers were wrong.

...Memory loss, far from striking late in life, creeps up on people from their mid-20s... research shows... "It's not as though you hit 60 or 70 and fall apart. We're falling apart as we speak," *New Scientist* magazine quoted... [t]he University of Michigan... [psychologist as saying. It] tested 350 people from 20-somethings to octogenarians... [and] found... the decline in performance between the 70s and 80s was the same as that between the 20s and 30s, dispelling popular notions that mental abilities fall sharply after a particular age... [A] psychiatrist at the University of Toronto, said the results were surprising... because the decline started so early and... it seemed to happen at the same rate for many different memory tasks.

...Adults with hobbies that exercise their brains, such as reading, jigsaw puzzles or chess, are two and a half times less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease than those who have passive mental recreations... The finding supports other studies that have shown that brain power unused is brain power lost. The study was more bad news for the couch potato... "Television watching is not protective and may even... increase the risk of developing the... disease," said... [the] author of the research... an associate professor of neurology at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine... [A] senior medical adviser to the Alzheimer's Association, said the study was important because it supported other research that showed the onset of Alzheimer's was delayed by education and by working in intellectually demanding professions... "The brain is an organ just like every other organ in the body. It ages in regard to how it is used. Just as physical activity strengthens the heart, muscles and bones, intellectual activity strengthens the brain against disease." It was believed that healthier brain cells were better able to control or slow the Alzheimer's process... the effect seemed to be that brain-challenging activities "built up a reserve" of neuron connections. Because of this reserve it took longer for the Alzheimer's process to destroy enough neurons for there to be identifiable symptoms... Alzheimer's disease is a fatal... disorder that... progressively destroys memory and, eventually, the ability to care for oneself. There are millions worldwide diagnosed now...

Researchers say they have found a way to tag the waxy "plaques" that clog the brains of patients suffering from Alzheimer's disease. Their discovery offers new routes for diagnosing and tracking progression of the disease... Writing in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*... the University of Pennsylvania Medical Centre... research team... said the tag could offer a way to... check the extent of Alzheimer's in living patients... Alzheimer's[], which] affects 22 million people worldwide... can be diagnosed with tests of cognitive skills, but the physical diagnosis is not final until a brain autopsy is done after death... The waxy blobs are associated with the death of neurons, which result in memory loss...

Some memory loss in old age may have nothing to do with Alzheimer's and lots to do with blood sugar. Research has found that people who don't process blood sugar normally are likely to suffer poor memory and the region of their brains crucial for recall may actually shrink. If the small study from New York University is confirmed, diet and exercise could help many people prevent the memory loss of ageing. "That's a great motivator to stay off the calories and stay off the couch," said... a... New York University psychiatry professor. For every Alzheimer's patient, eight older people suffered enough memory loss to harm their quality of life, yet had no dementia-causing disease... Scientists have long known that diabetics are at higher-than-normal risk for memory problems, possibly because diabetes harms blood vessels that supply the brain. [However, the latest] study... found that people's memory may be harmed long before they ever develop diabetes.

...Genetic engineering has produced a strain of super-smart mice and may point to a way to help patients with Alzheimer's, mental retardation and perhaps even the annoying "senior moments" that come with ageing, researchers say. The protein GAP-43, has long been associated with learning. Mice given extra boosts of the GAP-43 gene did much better in mazes used to test rodent intelligence, [the researchers]... at Northwestern University have found. What they do not have, [the head of research] stresses, is a smart pill. "...it's a gene, so you can't take it,"... But [the researchers] think it may be possible to manipulate brain cells so that they produce more GAP-43 when necessary. "The important point here is that we have the first good evidence that this protein actually regulates learning,"... GAP-43 was found early in the development of all animals... But the gene had to work just right. Tweaking it to produce a slight mutation ruined the effect. "The protein by itself is not active unless it has phosphate group on it,"... The process of adding a phosphate molecule, called phosphorylation, is the key to activating many genes. If researchers could find a way to phosphorylate GAP-43 in humans, it might be a way to help learning without resorting to genetic engineering... [The head of research said it] would oppose moves to create a designer drug for people who wanted to be smarter, or who wanted their children to have an advantage at school. "But I think that we are moving ever closer to finding an agent that will facilitate when we are learning."

...Alzheimer's disease, which primarily affects industrialised nations, is expected to hit more people around the world as life expectancies in developing nations increase... [The] vice-president of the Alzheimer's Association, told a world congress on the disease in Washington that "we are on the edge of a worldwide epidemic." The association estimates Alzheimer's hits 10[%] of people over 65 and nearly 50[%] of those older than 85... Increased life expectancy also means an increase of the age-related illness of dementia, which is primarily caused by Alzheimer's... In 1996, there were 1.2 billion cases of cancer around the world and 600 million cases of dementia. In 2050, the two could be nearly equal, with 2.5 billion cases of cancer and 2.5 billion of dementia... The experts meeting in Washington have compiled data on the disease, but have made no breakthroughs. [One speaker], of Johns Hopkins University... noted the progress made in understanding the disease over the past 10 years. Researchers have found a genetic link to Alzheimer's, better understand the biological processes of the disease and have conducted tests of treatments on mice – including a medication to slow its progress... Elan Pharmaceuticals, gave the conference a glimmer of hope when [it] announced that a vaccine which has reduced in mice the development of amyloid plaques, a manifestation of Alzheimer's, was safe for humans. However... tests were still necessary and any vaccine would not hit the markets "for three to six years." Specialists are therefore left to try to slow the development of the disease through low-fat diets rich in vegetables, reducing high blood pressure, stopping smoking and taking adequate doses of vitamins E and C. Patients should also maintain stimulating mental activity and avoid blows to the head. However, these precautions could not stop the world growing older...

You have heard of the type: they eat whatever they want and maybe they smoke. Some of them exercise, some don't. And they live to be 100. What is their secret? Is it good genes, good habits – or just good luck? It is a question that researchers are trying to answer... So far, centenarians have shattered myths, and raised more questions about extreme old age. Researchers know for certain that few 100-year-olds have had heart attacks, developed Alzheimer's or been hit by diabetes. The only thing researchers have found they share is that many had a family member who lived long as well... Just one in 10,000 Americans have lived a century. [But t]hey are the fastest-growing age group, and by 2050... there could be nearly a million people that age or older in the US... [(t]here are 400 people aged over 100 years in N[Z; i]n another 50 years... there will be 12,000[].

... 'US scientists say they've found the way to stop human cells ageing by as much as 40% by adding a natural chemical' ('when cells divide they lose part of their DNA until they are unable to divide any more, but a "cell's clock" can be reversed by enzymes – a process that could raise the potential age of humans to 150 or 200'). ● A] Malaysian... who says [it] is 141 years old has staked his claim to the title of world's oldest living person, currently held by an American... [The Malaysian, who claims to have been] born on September 26, 1857, has received the support of Malaysia's Health Minister and the *Malaysia Book of Records*. The... [Malaysian] does not have a birth certificate... [(t]he Malaysian citizens were not issued birth certificates until June 1926[])... but the registration department where [it] lives has verified his birth date. That would make him more than two decades older than [a resident] of Pennsylvania, currently deemed the world's oldest living person at 118... [The Malaysian] married in his late 60s and still lives with his wife, [who is] said to be 100 years old. The couple have four children, 24 grandchildren, 101 great-grandchildren and 4

great-great-grandchildren... [H]is secret to longevity was “simple living”, balanced with moderate exercise and a careful diet filled with fruits and vegetables.

...A team of scientists in St Petersburg has developed a new style of drug from the organs of newborn calves which, they claim, slows the human ageing process so radically that life expectancy could be increased to 110. Some senior Kremlin politicians, prominent business[people], leading footballers and ballerinas have started to make twice-yearly visits to a clinic in one of the city’s up-market suburbs, hoping to prolong their lives with a course of treatment from the former military doctors responsible for the formula. One of the most popular aspects of the therapy is that there is no need to begin early; on the contrary, doctors claim the best results are achieved among people who start treatment when confronted by the symptoms of middle age. This year the directors of Gazprom, the gas giant that is Russia’s largest business, signed a contract with the institute to provide the therapy for about 300,000 members of staff in a drive to reduce sick leave and boost employees’ enthusiasm for work. Preliminary results, they claim, are very positive. The treatment centres on a series of medicines, named bioregulators... Scientists at the institute are particularly excited by the effects of two of their creations – thymalin and epithalamin – which they say mirror the work of the body’s immune system and hormonal system, respectively. By taking these drugs, they claim, patients can rejuvenate the functions of these systems, thus staving off both the ageing process itself and the illnesses that accelerate it. “These discoveries are as important as the development of the atomic bomb. It is colossally significant for the whole of [hu]mankind,” declared... a specialist in gerontology... who is responsible for much of the research. Judging by his huge apartment in an ostentatious new development for St Petersburg’s elite (equipped with a television in every room), his work has proved extremely lucrative... No independent research has been done to corroborate the[institute’s] claims, but the mere suggestion that the institute may have discovered an elixir that prolongs youth has aroused huge international interest. A team of venture capitalists from Britain is negotiating to sponsor research as well as patent and register several of the preparations. Pharmaceutical corporations in Germany and the U[S] are also interested in backing the development of new synthetic versions of the original animal-based products. “Doctors in the West are very suspicious of medicines developed from the bone stems and inner organs of animals because of the BSE crisis, so we have been forced to work on synthetic copies which are much more acceptable to the Western mentality... These synthetic drugs are the future.” There is heavy scepticism among those who warn that some kind of charlatanism always lies behind such claims... [The] deputy director of the UK charity Research into Ageing, said [it] would caution against spending money on this kind of drug. “As far as we know, it is just not possible to extend human life expectancy like this.”

...Let’s get this straight – at 16, with a bright future ahead of me, the last thing I’d planned on doing was falling in love with a 40-year-old... But that’s what happened and there wasn’t a thing I could do about it... We were never blessed with children, but still, I never dreamt that such happiness existed. Not that we didn’t have our disagreements, of course. When I refused his proposal, Helmer was shocked. ‘Why won’t you marry me?’ [Helmer] demanded. ‘I thought you loved me!’ ‘I do, darling. I simply don’t believe in marriage.’ Still, [Helmer] kept asking me at least once a year. Then one day I read an article about... a procedure where people’s bodies were preserved after death. I thought it sounded fascinating. ‘Just imagine, Helmer,’ I said. ‘People can be frozen in the hope that one day, when there’s a cure for whatever killed them, they can be brought back to life in their own repaired healthy body and carry on as before.’ ‘It’s not right,’... Helmer... cried, appalled. ‘How can you make a deal with death like that? And who’s to say it would work?’ ‘Who’s to say it wouldn’t?’ I replied. In the end, we let it drop. Time passed and before we knew it, we’d been together 20 years. Then one day Helmer... got a stomach-ache so painful [Helmer] went to hospital. ‘We’ll keep him in, just in case,’ the doctor said. ‘Why don’t you go home and come back tomorrow?’ So I kissed Helmer and left – but late that night the hospital contacted me and asked me to come quickly. I was terrified. Once there, I discovered Helmer’s heart had stopped beating three times and [my lover] was technically dead. Only machines were keeping him alive. ‘You’ll be OK, darling,’ I whispered, but the thought of life without him was unbearable. That’s when I thought of cryonics again. Even if my precious Helmer died, it didn’t have to be the end permanently. Three days later, to my utter joy, Helmer regained consciousness... ‘Helmer,’ I cried. ‘Thank you for coming back to me, darling!’ But it was a hard road. I had to quit work to care for Helmer full-time and we relocated to our farm. Over the next few years, Helmer suffered from one life-threatening scare after another – a heart attack, serious kidney and liver problems and finally, an inoperable brain tumour that doctors said would eventually kill him. I had to do something. Again, cryonics came to mind... But Helmer wouldn’t be swayed, so I decided to do my own research. Naturally a sceptic, I set out to disprove cryonics, but even after three years of research I have found no reason it couldn’t have at least a reasonable chance of success. I found out that certain living creatures, like insects and even mammals, had already been revived from the dead[(plus a species of ‘snake becomes frozen when caught in winter snow and moves again after it has thawed’; while young members of a tiny spider species are ‘carried by winds to the upper atmosphere where they freeze and can remain for long periods of time – possibly even floating around in outer space – before falling back to earth, thawing out’ and carrying on with their lives)]. The way science and technology was progressing these days I felt confident they could do that with humans some day. Then Helmer caught a virus which hospitalised him for two months. By the time [Helmer came out, Helmer] could barely see or stand. We both knew [Helmer] didn’t have long. That’s when I made a decision. ‘Helmer, at least every year for the last 22 years you have asked me to marry you. Well, the answer is now yes. It’s my gift to you.’ A tear rolled down his cheek. ‘Thank you... Now I have a gift for you. I’ll go through with cryonics. I don’t agree with it, but I’ll do it for you. If there’s the slightest chance we can one day meet again, it will be worth it.’ ...I... signed us up with the Cryonics Institute in Michigan, one of several US companies who perform the procedure. It cost around \$80,000 each, which included the transportation of our bodies and the cost of potential revival at a later date. We only had enough money saved to pay for Helmer outright, so the Institute arranged to take the money out of my life insurance when I died... We made it to Michigan, where... the cryonics people... located a hospice for him. One evening soon after, Helmer reached for my hand. ‘Au revoir, my darling,’ [Helmer] whispered to me. Then [Helmer] passed away. Nothing could have prepared me for the loss I felt. How could I go on without him? But grief was a luxury right now: I had to rush him to the Cryonics Institute before decay set in. Then I watched as they prepared his body for cryonic suspension. It was a confronting sight – his vital organs and blood had to be removed and replaced with a liquid similar to antifreeze – but this was my own private funeral... Eight years have passed since Helmer was... frozen. I’m now 47 and still living on our farm... I still yearn for Helmer’s touch, his wisdom, the warmth of him in bed beside me. While I’m here I’ll live life to the fullest, as [Helmer wanted] me to. But when my time comes, I won’t be scared. Death will just bring me one step closer to Helmer and one day, if I’m very lucky, I’ll wake up and see him beside me. Then hopefully we can fall in love all over again.

...The frozen heart technique was developed by a Siberian-based surgeon... who decided to persevere with supposedly outdated ice operations... pioneered in the US in the 1950s. [US] surgeons had abandoned the method as they believed patients could survive for a maximum of only eight minutes at low temperatures without the risk of suffering permanent brain damage. This was nowhere near long enough for anything more than the most simple operation to be carried out. Meanwhile, the heart and lung bypass machine was being developed as an alternative method. In addition to [the Siberian]’s own curiosity to develop the technique, three major factors spurred him on. First, his Siberian hospital – under-funded even by Russian standards and positively impoverished compared with the big Western heart centres – could not afford to buy enough heart-lung machines. Second, [the Siberian] was convinced that the greater use of complex equipment, the greater the number of risks. These ranged from a breakdown of the immune system to a breakdown of Novosibirsk’s unreliable electricity system – which might stop the blood pumping mid-operation, with fatal results. Third, and most obviously, the professor wanted to make good use of Siberia’s most overlooked natural resource – its abundance of ice... Outside the hospital, in the Siberian mid-winter, the temperature... plunge[s] to -32 degrees C and the air is so cold it stings your face. But for [an] 18-month-old... now lying semi-conscious on the operating table, the big chill is only beginning. As the ether takes hold and her eyelids grow leaden, a deep metal tray piled high with ice is placed beside her. Then, rather like a party host about to mix cocktails,[the]

anaesthetist... rolls up the sleeves of his surgical gown and crushes the cubes with a hammer. His preparation complete, [the anaesthetist] fills both his fists with steaming clumps of ice and forces it under [the girl's] naked legs, buttocks and back. Soon her stomach has disappeared under a mini-avalanche. Her blond curls are enveloped by a frozen white bonnet, and snowballs are wedged in her half-clenched palms, turning her tiny fingers lobster pink. Five minutes later, when... step[ping] back to assess his work, [the anaesthetist] might be casting his eye over a sleeping ice maiden from a Walt Disney film. In fact, [the girl's] life has been placed in cold storage ready for the surgery that offers her the only hope of a normal existence. When her body temperature drops to 24 degrees C – more than 13 degrees below its normal reading – her heart will be stopped while a hole in the lower ventricular wall is patched up. For the 41-minute operation all her physical functions – including that of her brain – will grind to a halt. Clinically, [the girl] will now be dead. Watching this vulnerable little Russian doll of a child being frozen alive in such a seemingly primitive manner jolts one's emotions like a cattle-prod, arousing deep protective instincts. But then the incredible work being carried out at the Institute of Circulation Pathology, in the remote Siberian capital... flies in the face of instinct... Today... the... method [that] is as simple and effective as it is inexpensive... [– but is] practised nowhere else in the world and [is] virtually unknown outside this icebound city... [–] is saving thousands of children... Until recently, great thick swathes of... [ice] were cut from the ground around the hospital everyday and carried up to the operating theatres on pallets. These days, to lessen the workload and enable operations to continue uninterrupted through the summer, ice is bought from the local meat-freezing factory, which has a handy German-built ice-making machine. It's a long way in the future, but it's possible this technique could eventually stop the ageing process. "We know... that when the body temperature is near to zero, a human being ages only 10 years in an entire century... This would, of course, be useful in long-term space travel. Personally, I'm more concerned with the health benefits, which could be enormous. The terminally ill... could be kept frozen in suspended animation until new drugs were found to treat them. We also have evidence that hypothermia could be used to treat spinal injuries, gynaecological problems, head injuries[–] ...research shows that cooling [a] baby's head alone has the potential to dramatically reduce brain damage to asphyxiated infants... [–] poisoning cases and some nervous and psychological diseases."

...Anxiety disorders are on the rise... [O]ne of the Phobic Trust of N[Z]'s typical customers... has suffered from panic attacks and agoraphobia for the past 25 years and links them with an incredibly dominant mother and husband. "I was married at 19 in 1955. It was a time when husbands told you exactly what you could do, and you did it... The panic attacks were incredibly creepy... They are so terrifying you become scared of experiencing another one. I consider myself a fairly intelligent person and over the past 10 years I began to see they were being brought on by me in one way or another. With my marriage gone and my mother dead there was no one left to dominate me so it's almost like I'd punish myself if I began to enjoy myself." ...the... head of... [the trust] deals with thousands of similar people as they seek to free themselves of demons. Anxiety in certain situations – going outside, eating in public, having recurrent negative thoughts – can be so great in some people they avoid the situation or develop complex rituals to manage... [their anxiety. P]hobias apparently affect 10 to 15% of the population to varying degrees[, including]... often highly intelligent and sensitive people... At a time when many organisations are struggling for survival, the Phobic Trust is undergoing large scale expansion... Perhaps, more than anything, the trust is an organisation whose time has come: we live in the veritable "age of anxiety". Read: "It's not simply a matter of people needing to pull themselves together. This is a huge problem that has been kept shut away for far too long."

...Snorers are a health hazard... [to] loved ones... says a study by Scottish scientists. On average, snorers wake up partners 26 times a night and cut their sleep by 40[%] – contributing to irritability, anxiety and depression, says the Edinburgh Sleep Clinic study. "It's often partners who have the biggest problems," the clinic's [spokesperson] says. "People move into separate rooms. A few even get divorced."

...[an Aucklander] is in his late thirties and has snored since [it] was a teenager. "I used to share a room with my brother [who]... would throw things at me when it got bad, which... was all the time. Usually [my brother] would run out of things to throw." Now[the Aucklander]... can control his chronic snoring through breathing exercises but is finding out what it is like to live with a snorer as his pregnant wife has started snoring. "Some sort of justice, I suppose,"... [I]t makes no difference whether [the Aucklander] sleeps on his side, stomach or back[– but c]ertain foods or drinks do seem to make him snore louder. "Red wine's a classic. And creamy products, too much dairy is another bad one,"... [In addition,] his snoring appears to be worse when [the Aucklander] is over-tired. "When I'm really tired, you can usually guarantee my snoring will be bad. It just comes down to lazy breathing." And waking him or prodding him or shaking him appears to have no effect either. "My partner will shake me if it's bad. Sometimes [my partner]'ll wake me up... I'll... talk for a while, and have no recollection of that conversation in the morning. But just a couple of breaths later I'll be back at it again." ...[the Aucklander] had a surgical trimming operation about 12 years ago to try to cure his snoring... [I]t was painful, and made little difference. [The Aucklander] has also tried hypnosis. Both [the Aucklander and his partner] found it upsetting, especially initially, to be forced to sleep in different rooms to get a good night's sleep... "We used to have to meet halfway if we wanted a kiss and a cuddle, and then go our separate ways. It took a lot of getting used to, certainly[," his partner says. The Aucklander] says: "It was quite disturbing in the beginning and it does affect your marital life." But they have got used to sleeping alone. "It has become something we live with and accept,"...

UNLIKE most people who sleep alongside someone with sleep apnoea, [one person's] partner did not move into the next room when the loud snoring, snorting and gasping got too much, but insisted [her bloke] see the specialists at Green Lane Hospital's sleep clinic. Looking back, the computer company executive realised [it] had many of the typical apnoea symptoms – feeling tired during the day, trouble staying awake through company presentations, loss of short-term memory and poor concentration. [A] Stanford University Professor... describes sleep apnoea as the "most undiagnosed deadly problem in medicine." [The professor] believes that each year an estimated 38,000 fatal heart attacks and strokes in the U[S] are caused by sleep apnoea, and... urges anyone with high blood pressure to ask themselves if they feel tired in the daytime. The terrible thing about apnoea sufferers is that they believe they are getting a good night's sleep when in fact they are barely sleeping at all. Instead, their airway is constantly collapsing, preventing them from breathing. Their oxygen-deprived and panicked brain fights to snap them back into consciousness so that breathing can resume. This pattern can be repeated hundreds of times each night. Snoring in itself is not necessarily a problem, although the research debate is whether snoring is the beginning of a sleep apnoea problem. N[Z]ers with high blood pressure who feel tired during the day may have trouble finding out if they indeed suffer from apnoea and then having it treated. Auckland has two sleep clinics to make the diagnosis – a private one at Mercy Hospital and a public one at Green Lane. The Green Lane clinic is funded to see only 350 of the 1000 people referred to it each year with suspected sleep apnoea. The waiting list is up to seven years, so unless your case is so bad you are falling asleep at the wheel, you may never be properly diagnosed or treated. [The head of the clinic says guys] are more susceptible to apnoea than [gals] and testosterone is thought to play a role. All of us probably stop breathing in our sleep at some time, especially if we've been drinking alcohol. But there are other factors, too, such as a small jaw and throat, having suffered a nasal obstruction like tonsillitis in childhood and being older, because an old throat collapses more readily. Weight and thickness of neck are also risk factors showing up particularly in this country, where Maori and Pacific Island[ers] dominate the numbers attending clinics and are highly represented in those dying from heart attack, stroke and car crash – the side effects of sleep apnoea. Which is part of the reason why a study on the incidence of apnoea is being run out of the Wellington School of Medicine in conjunction with the Eru Pomare Maori Health Research Centre. The 400 participants are monitored in their homes with equipment that measures heart rate, snoring levels, blood oxygen and body position while they're sleeping to indicate if they have apnoea... The standard treatment for apnoea is to sleep with a continuous air-pressure machine (CPAP) that forces air down the windpipe. In this country you have to stop breathing 20 times every hour to qualify for publicly funded CPAP treatment. [One patient who] did not take well to CPAP... was referred to an ear, nose the throat specialist who recommended an operation to prevent the airway collapsing during sleep. "It... helped enormously... Since the operation the symptoms have gone."

...It's a familiar story to many N[Z]ers. One partner snores while the other lies awake at night – pillow over head, occasionally prodding or shoving the offender, or stumbles, bleary-eyed, down the hall to the spare room. Snoring and sleep apnoea are common problems in N[Z] but are not taken seriously, says... [the] clinical director of the Auckland Physiology Sleep Laboratory. "People with sleep apnoea do have an increased mortality risk. No doubt about that... The public health service is woefully inadequate. If you are nodding off while driving it takes four to five months to get a sleep study done. I understand that it's hard to take money away from things for the new kid on the block, but this is being treated as a serious issue in other places, including A[US]." ...there are several predisposing factors for snoring. Anyone with a nasal disease or nasal airflow obstruction is likely to be prone to snoring or sleep apnoea... Those with flattened mid-face, such as Asians, tend to be snorers as the whole of the face, including the palate, sits nearer the back. "Skeletal predisposition is quite a good predictor. If your dad snores and you look like your dad, you are in serious trouble." People with a big tongue are more likely to keep their partners awake at night snoring. Overweight or obese people have a bigger neck circumference and a much smaller airway, so obesity is also a predictive factor. Alcohol acts as a muscle relaxant, which is why people who are intoxicated tend to snore. Despite lifestyle factors such as smoking, alcohol intake and excess weight being highly influential, [the clinical director] says few of his patients feel able to change their habits. [The clinical director says it] has heard of every snoring remedy. Every remedy – [including] the old wives' tale of putting a ping-pong ball between the snorers' shoulder blades to prevent their sleeping on their back... – works for some. Throat sprays work for some because they are made of a detergent-like substance which stops the throat closing and sticking, making the "snap" sound sometimes heard. Other remedies include nasal strips, soft collars, dental devices and surgical techniques. Some apnoea sufferers are hooked up to a continuous positive airways pressure device every night. It is a rather drastic but effective measure which works by constantly forcing air into the wearer through a mouthpiece. The first of the surgical options involves trimming the edge off the soft palate, including the uvula. This procedure can be quite painful. "It works in a percentage of people but you have got to pick your case very carefully,"... A laser surgery procedure, called laser-assisted uvuloplasty, involves making a burn of about 1cm across the midline of the soft palate. As the scar heals, it causes some tissue shrinkage and stops the palate going floppy... [T]he latest procedure, which [the clinical director] has been carrying out for about three years, is somnoplasty... An area of palate tissue is heated, and as the cells heated die and are removed by the body the palate shrinks and stiffens. The technique is also used to shrink the back of the tongue... [S]omnoplasty is expensive – between \$1000 and \$1200. Often several treatments are required, but it is a much less painful treatment than the other surgeries. "If you're rich it's a reasonable thing to do but it has an unpredictable outcome,"... says [the clinical director, who] cites a 60 to 70[%] success rate... ■ SNO[REX] is a remedy offered by the... New Clinic at Manukau City... The Snorex sleeping aid is a plastic oral appliance individually made from impressions of both the upper and lower teeth. Plastic moulds similar to those in an athlete's mouthguard are formed over stone casts and then welded together so that the lower jaw is brought forward. The result is safe, easy and comfortable – and most importantly, effective. Snorex has been described as a scientific breakthrough... The airway will remain open in a constant position during sleep... All it takes is just Two visits to get your Snorex and stop snoring forever.

...Apnoea is only one of a growing list of sleep disorders which now number more than 80. Arguably more common, affecting about 10[%] of the population, is a condition known as periodic limb movement. It means your legs thrash around so violently when you are asleep that it rouses but never fully awakens you. It will be accompanied by restless leg syndrome – an uncontrollable urge to move your limbs while... awake... [P]eriodic limb movement can be caused by anything from neurological disorders, renal failure, anaemia or antidepressants... [A] [Wellington sleep specialist... says it is easily treatable. Sometimes all that is required is reassurance that there is nothing seriously wrong. Then there is narcolepsy which, according [to the specialist], is woefully under-diagnosed in our community. It affects .06[%] of us, making it twice as common as multiple sclerosis. People with narcolepsy suffer from extreme daytime tiredness and muscle collapse, or cataplexy. They have extremely vivid dreams, or hallucinations, and tend to wake up feeling paralysed. The cause is unknown but... there may be a genetic predisposition. The most important thing with narcolepsy... is to have it diagnosed. It can be treated by planning to get adequate sleep, using stimulants or drugs to suppress REM sleep.

...Question: Sometimes when I'm lying in bed I suddenly wake up with a jolt – it's as if the body's mechanisms have been switched off and on again suddenly. I have spoken to others who say they also suffer this infrequent "spasm". What's happening? Answer: The case of your body going "bump" in the night is called a Myoclonic Jerk – they can be frightening and exhilarating but for the most part completely harmless. N[Z]'s resident sleep expert... from the Sleep/Wake Research Centre in Wellington, says they haven't quite got to the bottom of this mystery but scientists offer a plausible explanation. When we sleep we go through five stages, with Rapid Eye Movement... being one of the most significant stages. Dreams are most vivid in this stage, and the bod[y]'s muscles are relaxed to the point of paralysis. However, when we are going to sleep, sometimes we reach a state of REM in mind, but the body hasn't fully been put to rest yet. So when we begin to dream we might actually, physically, respond to an event in the dream, causing us to jerk awake and experience a "hypnic myoclonia". Frequent attacks of this sort can be due to stress or poor sleep patterns. So if you're bugged by an attack of the myoclones then you may wish to look at your habits – for good reason. A study by the American Cancer Society concluded that people who sleep less than six hours or more than nine hours each night had a death rate 30[%] higher than [people who] sleep seven or eight hours.

...A 10-minute power nap is more beneficial than longer or shorter sleeps, says an Adelaide researcher. [The] Flinders University school of psychology researcher... has found that 10-minute naps reduce fatigue and significantly improve alertness and vigour. [The researcher] oversaw a recent study in which 24 people were assessed before and after taking naps lasting 5, 10, 20 and 30 minutes. "There were only limited benefits gained from a 5-minute nap... However, immediate benefits lasting up to 155 minutes were achieved by a 10-minute power nap. The alertness and performance of participants after the 20- and 30-minute naps didn't improve until at least 35 minutes after the nap." Tests after 20- and 30-minute naps showed immediate impairment of alertness and vigour, which indicated sleep inertia – a period of disorientation, confusion and sleepiness sometimes experienced when waking from a longer sleep... [U]ntil recently there had been little scientific research to justify the benefits of naps.

...Most people know that... a fabled Dutch[perso]n... fell asleep under a tree and woke up seven years later. And in real life a Canadian... actually did sleep for years... before waking up... – ...liv[ing] a life and a love story like no other... [gal in history. C]alled Ms Rip Van Winkle because [it] accomplished what no other human had... Anne Shapiro... awakened from a 30-year coma, entering a strange new world... [It] fell into a coma in 1963, on the day John F. Kennedy was assassinated... During her long sleep, Anne's body began breaking down. [Anne] underwent cataract surgery, a hysterectomy and a hip replacement operation... When... finally w[aking] up in 1992, [the Canadian] was shocked to find that [it] was 79 years old... and... her teenage son... and 25-year-old daughter... were now middle-aged. And [it] was awestruck to learn about mobile phones, colour TVs and that [a guy] had walked on the moon... [H]er husband Martin... died two years later. Their son Marshall soon followed, and Anne was placed in a seniors' health centre. Her biggest excitement in her last years was when a TV movie, *Forever Love*, was made based on her life... Anne lived in the nursing home for several years, talking only when spoken to. Mostly [Anne] just looked out a window, drifting back and forth between 1963 – the year [it] preferred – and the present... [T]his year... Ms Rip Van Winkle returned to 1963 for good... [While his wife was in her coma,] Martin bathed her, dressed her... brushed her long hair... put drops in her eyes every two hours to prevent them drying out – and went on to do it for 30 years... At night, [Martin] lay next to Anne praying [his wife] would come back. [Martin] consulted every expert, but no one could help her.

...The oldest trick in the doctor's black bag – giving patients dummy pills to make them feel better – may have to be abandoned after scientists yesterday reported that the placebo effect is a myth. Countless patients have been comforted by fake pills, believing they are real, or so doctors have long believed. The effect has been supposed to demonstrate the power of suggestion... until now. Danish medical researchers... say they have

analysed medical research over 45 years and concluded that the placebo effect does not exist. If patients say they feel better after taking a dummy pill, it is most likely to be because they are feeling better... Dummy pills are used in medical research to measure the difference between patients receiving genuine medicine and patients who only believe they have been treated. Medical textbooks assert that on average, 35[%] of patients improve simply because they are told they were being treated... The doctors, from the Nordic Cochran Centre in Copenhagen, an organisation which studies medical trials, analysed 114 published studies from 1946... which used placebos, involving 7500 patients... In each of the 114 studies analysed, there was a third group of patients who had not been given any pill at all and many of these also reported feeling better. [The Danish researchers] said any apparent placebo effect could be due to researchers seeing what they wanted to see, or patients trying to please the researcher. Researchers had also failed to take into account the fact that diseases naturally wax and wane, [one of the Danes] said... "There are just as many trials where the... placebo causes... a negative effect... as where there is a positive effect."

...Whereas lead can seriously harm health, heavy metal bismuth... – ...which sits next to highly toxic lead in the periodic table of elements[–] is increasingly being used to... treat... stomach ulcers and disorders, as former Iranian leader Ayatollah Khomeini and Pope John Paul, who both suffered from internal bleeding, could testify. Now, bismuth medicines can combat the bacteria which specialists say cause peptic ulcers, and with bismuth-based alloys being used in x-ray screening... magnetic resonance imaging scanners... and [other]medical diagnostic equipment... prospects for the metal are healthy... Pharmaceutical – medicines and diagnostics – account for about 10[%] of the 5000 tonnes-a-year global bismuth market. Although rare, bismuth is a metal that has been used since antiquity and traces have been found in Roman coinage. But it is only in the last 200 years that usage has become widespread. Other alloying uses include steel cutting tools and iron castings, while compounds are also used in electrochemistry, ceramics, plastics and pigments. In the medical field, research now suggests that bismuth compounds [administered]before treatment reduce the lethal toxicity of some cancer therapies, and may even combat Aids, although rapid progress will not happen in these fields... Outside the body, bismuth alloys and crystals are making steady inroads in... MRI scanner diagnosis. Bismuth germanium oxide crystals are at the heart of scanners. Their use was kick-started several years ago when the European Organisation for Nuclear Research built its gigantic multiple-particle accelerator... Bismuth germanium oxide crystals neutralise lethal gamma rays, as well as improve overall imaging, and there are no viable technological alternatives on the immediate horizon, nor is there any financial stimulus, as metal prices have a track record of stability... Bismuth alloys, which are used in the protective radiation shields in oncology centres, are likely to see similar steady growth rates. These are solid castings, sometimes cut into complicated shapes, that are placed on certain parts of the body that need shielding from radiation during cancer treatment. Each shield will be different, depending on the patient... The advantage of bismuth alloys is that they can be cast in polystyrene moulds – a cheaper process. "The alloy is totally reusable,"... [a spokesperson for] alloy-producers Mining & Chemical Products... said. "When it is used the block is recycled and then used for another patient." Because of this, explosive growth is unlikely, unless more oncology centres are built.

...A visiting oncologist's claim that mammograms increase the risk of breast cancer is worthless without evidence, says the chair[person of the NZ Medical Association. The]... director of the Oasis of Hope Hospital in Mexico, says every mammogram boosts the risk by 2[%]. Physical examinations and ultrasound scans are safer... [while e]xamination of a single strand of hair can [also]indicate whether a [patient] has breast cancer, a Sydney scientist claims. The technique... may [even]predict whether a [patient] will develop the cancer... Very young [patients] had tested positive to breast cancer, although they had no clinical signs of cancer... [R]esearch... found that a hair from a cancer sufferer showed a different molecular structure when examined by x-ray diffusion... The hair of all [test subjects] with breast cancer showed the same feature... [The AUSn] discovered the technique by accident while seeking a cancer indicator in skin samples from cancer patients. When the samples were accidentally thrown out [it] decided to examine the 600 hair samples instead... [S]cientists do not know how cancer can affect the molecular structure of hair, but speculate that abnormal proteins may attach themselves to its keratin... The equipment... used to detect the different molecular structure was in N[Z] universities and could be more widely available if it proved useful in detecting cancer and there was a demand from the community.

...For more than half a century, doctors and scientists have been intrigued with the idea that light might be a better way to detect breast tumours. Clemson University... in South Carolina [is] working on a prototype machine that shines invisible laser beams through a... breast. This and other projects worldwide have raised hope for an alternative to the squeezing, pressing x-ray mammogram, derided by some... as the "slammogram." "We are encouraged by our early findings, but the research is still in the preliminary stages," said [an]assistant physics professor... [who was] part of the Clemson team. The problem is that light scatters wildly inside breast tissue and the tissue's density poses some unique viewing challenges. "The holy grail is to find the wavelength to isolate cancer," said... a laser physicist at City College in New York and a pioneer who holds a patent for optical imaging of breast tissue. Clemson's machine uses a laser diode that shines infrared light through a breast at 16 different points. A computer analyses the pattern of photons... to reconstruct an image of the breast's interior. Out of 10 [volunteers] in the first clinical trials, the system found five malignant tumours and one that was benign. They were confirmed by biopsies and were as small as 5mm. Mammograms usually cannot detect lumps any smaller than twice that. X-ray mammography is the only breast-cancer screening system now approved by the federal FDA. Other methods – ultrasound and magnetic resonance imaging among them – are used to follow up if a suspicious lump is detected.

...Research shows that in [gals] over 50, mammography picks up 90[%] of tumours. The procedure's effectiveness is reduced for those aged 40 to 50 because breast tissue is different in younger [gals]. Only about five out of every 1000 [gals] screened will be found to have a lump that turns out to be cancerous. A free mammogram is available every two years for [gals] aged 50 to 64 as part of the national breast cancer screening programme – BreastScreen Aotearoa – which begins in December. Also, as part of... October's International Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the Breast Cancer Foundation is... asking all N[Z]ers to wear pink ribbons to highlight the impact of the disease... The incidence has increased enormously since 1960 when fewer than 40 in every 100,000 [NZ gals] died of breast cancer. In 1994, the figure was more than double that, at 81.2 for every 100,000... This trend is projected to reach 89 in each 100,000 by the year 2000... [A] member of the medical advisory committee of the foundation, says overseas trials of [gals] aged 50 to 69 in screening programmes have shown a reduction in mortality by about one-third if the programmes achieve a participation rate of 70[%]. The age limit of 64 for the BreastScreen Aotearoa programme may eventually be extended to 69, but overseas evidence shows that participation rates drop considerably in older [gals].

...Many international studies have shown a probable link with breast cancer among [gals] who have had abortions. The studies say the risk increases with the abortion of a... first pregnancy; if [the mother] is young; if [it] has had other abortions; and if [it] has not born children.

...most British hospitals are ignoring... evidence... [that gals] with breast cancer sharply improve their chances of survival by timing surgery in the second half of their menstrual cycle... according to a leading cancer specialist. [Though research shows that patients] who have breast cancer tumours removed during the first part of the cycle... have a survival rate after 10 years of 45[% – compared with a survival rate of 75[%] if the operation is done in the latter part... [– the professor] who led the research, said it had had no impact. "Surgeons are very happy to try new technologies but when it comes to something as simple as the timing of an operation – it just hasn't caught on." ...In Britain, where there are 13,000 deaths from breast cancer a year... the change could [annually]save 300 to 400 lives. In the U[S], where there are 30,000 deaths, it could save 2000. The importance of timing is linked to the effects of the hormones oestrogen and progesterone on the cancer. Those patients who do best have hormonally sensitive cancers.

...A common herb used for medicinal purposes for more than 700 years is providing scientists with a new weapon in the battle against cancer, say British experts. The starflower, commonly known as borage, contains a substance called gamma linolenic acid (GLA) that studies have shown can kill brain and prostate cancer cells and inhibit the spread of malignant tumours by restricting blood vessel growth. In a recent study of [patients]

with breast cancer... a cocktail of GLA and the anti-cancer drug Tamoxifen speeded up patients' response rates... The starflower has the most potent concentration of GLA in nature. Oil from the plant is 24[%] GLA. The compound is also found in evening primrose oil, which is used to treat premenstrual problems... [Incidentally, n]early three years after... [being] cleared of poisoning her former partner, world-respected Professor David Lloyd, [the ex-defendant] is herself poised to become a famous scientist... [The doctor] found not guilty at her second trial in the High Court at Christchurch in April 1996 of attempting to murder... Lloyd with the debilitating chemical acrylamide... is part of a team working on ground-breaking research which is closing in on developing a natural treatment for breast and ovarian cancer... using deep-sea sponges from Kaikoura.

...Screening tests for ovarian cancer could save thousands of lives every year if they are done for all [gals] over the age of 50, say U[S] researchers. But the tests would have to be done every year as the disease grows quickly and gets to a potentially deadly phase within two years... "We estimate the minimum impact of this approach would be a 30[%] reduction in mortality." Every year, 15,000 American[s] die from ovarian cancer. Only 20[%] of ovarian cancer patients survive for five years because most cases are not caught until the cancer is advanced. When caught in its earliest stages, ovarian cancer is 90[%] curable. But gals... are not routinely screened for ovarian cancer the way they are for breast and cervical cancer.

...A study [has 'found that self-examination doesn't detect breast cancers early enough.' On a positive note, a completely different study]done in South Africa indicates that a self-test using a vaginal swab may provide an alternative to the smear test in the battle against cervical cancer. "A single Pap [Papanicolaou] smear misses about 40[%] of cervical disease," said the study's chief author... [from] Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons. "[Furthermore,]Pap smears require a gynaecological exam, which many older [patients] don't get. In addition, Pap smears are not available in many parts of the world." The study involved... [having patients] self-collect... tissue DNA samples used to detect the presence of human papillomavirus or HPV[, plus]... the same test administered by a clinic worker and a standard Pap smear test... The study found that the sensitivity of HPV DNA testing in the patient-collected samples was equivalent to that of a Pap at detecting high-grade cervical disease. However, the HPV DNA tests also had higher rates of false-positive results than Pap smears performed in a clinic.

...Beneath the microscope, spread over a glass cervical smear slide, thousands of cells conceal a deadly secret. Hidden among the tiny normal cells are large dark dots that should ring alarm bells for the screener checking the slide. The dots are signs of cancer. At the Diagnostic Laboratory, N[Z]'s largest private medical laboratory... 500 slides are examined daily by 18 skilled screeners... Senior staff examine up to 60 slides a day, spending five minutes tracking over smooth glass plates. Each plate gets a two-minute re-read by a different screener as part of the clinic's quality-assurance measures. Slides that appear abnormal, and a percentage of normal slides, are examined by cytologists, specialist pathologists who decide whether they are studying a [slide] with signs of invasive cancer... Recognition of precursors means the condition can be detected and the patient cured. Sometimes, but not often, these highly trained specialists and lab staff make mistakes. Labs worldwide miss around 5[%] of abnormalities, mainly because of sample problems. N[Z] pathologists say as many as one in five tests may be misreported as clear... Screeners can get distracted... and sometimes cells get mixed with blood and mucus... In the past decade N[Z] pathology has been shaken by two scandals where specialists did not get it right. The consequences for patients were disastrous. Both involved the misreading of cancer tests. Five years ago, 4000 tests from Wanganui Hospital were reviewed after an elderly pathologist misdiagnosed samples from dozens of patients. Six [patients] had needless mastectomies and at least 15... developed cancer despite being cleared... The latest bungle involves a former Gisborne pathologist accused of misreading cervical smear tests. Like [the Wanganui pathologist, the Gisborne pathologist], who was nearing retirement, worked in an isolated laboratory without the advantage of skilled colleagues close at hand for second opinions. One [patient], who had four separate tests misreported by the pathologist, developed cervical cancer. Other patients also claim their tests were misread. The Health Funding Authority is settling a process for investigating the doctor's work back to 1990 and perhaps further. The Gisborne case, profoundly unsettling for many East Coast [citizens], came to light through a High Court ruling which concluded the doctor was negligent... [However, when] specialists were asked to review the contentious slides, one of five unidentified labs[also] misreported two... One... [pathologist], who works at Auckland Hospital, feels the public's faith in the infallibility of pathology tests is "probably misplaced." The former head of the Royal A[US]n College of Pathologists says there always will be degrees of uncertainty... [A] former Medical Association chair[perso]n, says that a searching review of any clinical pathologist's work would throw up mistakes... N[Z] has around 170 specialist pathologists... [F]or their work on the Ministry of Health's \$20 million cervical screening programme, labs get \$16 a slide. Despite the much publicised failures, pathologists argue that N[Z] has a high-quality diagnostic service, comparable to that available in A[US], Britain and North America. Specialist pathologists spend a decade training. They qualify as doctors, then complete the royal college's oral, practical and written exams. The college runs a voluntary professional development programme... to keep consultants up to date with present thinking on pathology... which by 2001 will be compulsory... Specialists are encouraged to read the latest journals, attend lectures and conferences and submit to peer review of their work. The Sydney-based college provides a computer programme so consultants can check whether they need to step up any area of study. Best practice includes random audits of biopsies by outside pathologists, slide swapping around the country, and second opinions... For [one]Alliance MP... a review of the entire screening programme cannot come soon enough. It was promised two years ago, and... [the MP] believes that the review, if initiated earlier, might have spared East Coast [gals] the anxiety of not knowing whether their pathologist got it right.

...Authorities are preparing to use the national cervical screening programme's register to track [gals] whose smear tests might have been misdiagnosed at Gisborne Hospital. Why? The screening programme is a shambles. Its contribution to [gals'] health nil. Since 1987, the year of the... inquiry into the treatment of cervical cancer at National [Gals' Hospital, NZ gals] have been the most intensively smear-tested population in the world. A survey commissioned by the Department of Health in 1990 showed that 82[%] of gals] aged 20 to 64 (the target group) had averaged a startling 2.4 smears each in the previous three years. There has been no benefit. The decline in deaths since 1987 is no greater than the decline seen before the introductions of limited screening in the mid-1960s. The clear conclusion must be that few, if any, of the so-called pre-invasive conditions we are screening for have the capacity to progress to invasive cervical cancer. Mass screening, therefore, is no more than a chimera – chased at great expense. Unfortunately, that simple deduction, made... by [a]Professor... more than 30 years ago... was lost on the posse of pro-screeners who lynched him [in the 1987] inquiry, then persuaded [the head of the inquiry] to write: "The benefits of a well-planned N[Z]-wide cervical screening programme are now indisputable." What the screening posse now needs to explain is why it masterminded a programme so deficient it should carry the warning "Injurious to [gals'] health." Common sense demands that a programme should: be able to track a mobile population; employ highly trained staff at entry level; strive for consistency by processing smears in one centralised laboratory where smear results are matched with biopsy results; educate [gals] about the symptoms of invasive cervical cancer – post-menopausal bleeding, bleeding after intercourse, discharge, unpleasant odour and pain; and issue results directly to its customers. The national cervical screening programme does none of these... Laboratories continue to employ poorly trained staff because a course for technicians set up in 1991 was abandoned in 1993, having trained the equivalent of just two full-time students a year. Smears are processed in a multiplicity of laboratories which have no legal obligation to improve standards by participating in inter-laboratory training programmes. Laboratory accreditation remains voluntary... Then there is the matter of the smear test's false negative rate... Last week one pathologist said it was 10[%], another 20[%]. The literature puts it closer to 50[%]... One paper by Canadian researchers... calculated a false-negative rate of 45[%] for carcinoma in situ, the most severe of the pre-invasive conditions. Their conclusion was: "These studies show the false negative rate to be so high that it cannot be ignored in the design of strategies for cancer prevention." A flurry of studies, all published in 1995, confirm their findings... So where to now? Gisborne [gals] need to be reassured that, terrible

though it is, invasive cervical cancer is a rare disease with a higher survival rate than most cancers. A campaign emphasising the symptoms of the invasive condition would probably save more lives in Gisborne than another subjective look at smears.

...The Cancer Society is supporting seven Gisborne families who believe cancer tests were misdiagnosed. The society's chief executive... said two of the people involved had since died and two others were seriously ill... [A] specialist has re-read some of the patients' original slides and some families were now taking legal advice. All seven had contacted the society before [an] Alliance MP... announced last week that the pathologist at the centre of the controversy had worked in Gisborne. The chair[person] of the Health Consumers Service Trust... said the trust had been approached by at least one patient who believed cancer tests had been misdiagnosed. The trust is financed by the Health Funding Authority and works to find a resolution where a patient has a complaint about health services. [The Alliance MP] claims at least three [gals] developed cancer after misdiagnosis and more could be at risk... Health workers in Gisborne said other [patients] suspected their smears had been misdiagnosed but were yet to have that confirmed. Some had since been diagnosed with cancer and others had later smears showing high-level abnormalities. One health worker said it was an anxious time for [the patients] who felt they were in that situation, and for others who had not had a smear since 1996 but had done so since the publicity surrounding the cases and were now awaiting results. [The chief executive] said the society was relieved that Gisborne had been named as the town involved as [Poverty Bay gals] who might be affected were now able to get information. A spokes[person] for the H[FA]... said it was still working out how best to determine which smear slides needed to be re-read and how it would review the pathologist's reading standard in regard to cervical smears. If it found evidence to back concerns about the pathologist's cervical screening it could investigate other areas of his work. The authority will contact Gisborne [gals] registered with the cervical cancer screening programme who have missed their three-yearly smear or are due for it. Local doctors have been asked to be vigilant in recalling patients over-due for a smear but not on the national register.

...Hundreds of [gals] are feared to be developing cervical cancer, after health authorities' revelations that [a] Gisborne pathologist... misdiagnosed 82[%] of seriously abnormal tests... according to early findings released yesterday... The scale of his misreading of cervical smear slides has forced the Government to... prepare law changes to prevent a repeat scare... These include... allowing the Director-General of Health access to patient information where public safety was at stake, and extending the Medical Council's powers to suspend doctors believed to be a risk to the public... The H[FA] is also arranging to review some of [the Gisborne pathologist]'s tissue-testing work, which includes breast-tissue samples... The HFA had intended waiting until all the slides were re-read but decided on an interim announcement after learning the magnitude of the misreading. The... authority sent 30,000 slides from [the pathologist]'s former laboratory, read from 1991 until h[is] retirement in 1996, to Sydney for review. Almost 4900 have been re-read. Of 157 slides showing high-grade abnormalities from 147 [patients, the pathologist] reported only 28 slides... An authority spokes[person]... said about half of the 147 [patients] identified so far had received, or were receiving, appropriate treatment. The HFA says the[y] need to have internal examinations and it has set up clinics and reintroduced free smears and GP counselling. The Minister of Health... was concerned at the findings and was setting up a ministerial inquiry, some details of which had yet to be decided. It would investigate what caused the under-reporting and whether it was an isolated case, and identify any changes needed to avoid a recurrence.

...The [person] who fought a four-year legal action against [a] Gisborne pathologist... was weary and relieved last night – and was not surprised that an official inquiry indicates hundreds of mis-read cancer tests in the area. “Jane”... who has had name suppression from the High Court trial in which... Jane... unsuccessfully sued [the pathologist], had to undergo a radical hysterectomy in 1995, after precancerous cells developed into invasive cervical cancer. [The pathologist] missed signs of high-grade abnormalities in two [of her] smears and under-reported two more. By the time the cancer was picked up it was too late for less drastic treatment. Jane has been told [it] has a 40[%] chance of the deadly disease returning. [Jane, who]... said the \$60 a week from ACC failed to come close to compensating her... has renewed her fight for exemplary damages from [the pathologist] and has lodged an appeal for a retrial on the grounds of fresh evidence.

...The sad and sorry history of the patients of [a]... Gisborne pathologist... and how... [his] mishandling of their tests remained undetected for years is behind moves to tighten laws aimed at preventing such medical misadventures. It took six “strikes” beside the name of the ailing practitioner before his patients were notified of the potentially fatal flaws in his work. With no mandatory reporting regime, health authorities spent years unaware that [the pathologist] had been the subject of separate cases involving the same [patient] with ACC, the Medical Practitioners Disciplinary Committee and the High Court. The cloak of silence over the flawed cervical smear tests [the pathologist] returned fell away only when the [patient] unsuccessfully sued him in the High Court... • [The new]... laws aimed at further spreading the net to catch errant doctors have been welcomed by the profession, but health advocates say... “The changes don’t go far enough – they are still [just] tinkering around the edges.”

...health advocates are outraged that a document revealing the names of laboratories whose reporting of abnormal smears was comparable to [the] Gisborne pathologist... has been censored by a ministerial inquiry... [The Auckland Gals'] Health Council... said the decision to suppress the information was raising concern among [gals] in other parts of the country that they might be at risk... “This is just increasing the level of suspicion that is becoming a feature of this inquiry... It’s still early days, but it is not helpful to deny [people] information that is vital to their health. It must be made clear that the full facts are going to be made known.” ...The document, comparing smear reporting rates in 1994, was “sanitised” before being presented to the Gisborne inquiry, with the names and regions of laboratories deleted. It revealed that five other laboratories had the same or a lower rate of abnormal smear reporting as [the pathologist]. Two laboratories had told the Ministry of Health that they objected to the document’s being made public at the inquiry... [The inquiry chairperson]... told the hearing on Thursday that if the document was accepted by the panel, only the regions would need to be identified. Even then, publication would be suppressed, with the document being made available only to lawyers and the panel... [The] Health Minister... yesterday refused to comment on the suppression of the document. However, [its spokesperson] referred the *Herald* to an earlier press release that said [the minister] expected the H[FA] to make public immediately any problems of a “Gisborne proportion” discovered during its investigation. [The HFA’s] lawyer... has assured the inquiry that the funding body will present the results of its investigation in [three months]. Throughout the hearing, [the pathologist]’s lawyer... has asked for information to be made available about the performance of other laboratories. [The lawyer said his client] has been heavily criticised for his reporting rate and the same attention should be turned to other parts of the country with similar laboratory results. Meanwhile at yesterday’s hearing, the ministry’s Deputy Director-General (Maori Health)... revealed that the incidence and death rates of cervical cancer among Maori... were declining steadily. But... the rates still remained double those of non-Maori and more work needed to be done to close the gap... Cross-examination of [the Deputy Director-General] will continue when the inquiry reconvenes on Monday.

...Health authorities are investigating a complaint about another N[Z] laboratory involved with screening cervical smear slides. The name and location of the laboratory were suppressed during a special sitting of the cervical cancer inquiry in Gisborne on Saturday. During cross-examination of a H[FA] witness... it was revealed that a complaint about the laboratory had been laid by... one of the lawyers representing [Gisborne gals] affected by slide misreading... [The witness], a statistician, said figures sent to [the] former Gisborne pathologist... in the early to mid-1990s show [the pathologist] was reporting within “acceptable limits.” In response to questions, [the witness] agreed the statistics may have been misleading and encouraged [the pathologist] not to make changes because they did not suggest any concerns about his work. Those changes could have included pursuing Telarc accreditation or employing a laboratory worker specially trained in reading smear slides... The cervical cancer inquiry was scheduled to finish at the end of this week, although there have been suggestions of a possible extension because there are still about 20 witnesses to give evidence, including [the pathologist] and 10 of his former patients.

...A wife had] had her life mapped out. At 26, [it] had a comfortable life working as an administrator and was about to start a family with her husband... Then [the wife] received the shattering news that [it] had cancer growing at least 5mm deep into her cervix. Not only would there be no children, but there were doubts whether [the wife] would have her health or even her life. [The administrator] had had regular smears since the age of 16 after seeing advertisements which promised “never fear, have a smear.” In 1992, her slide was read by [the]Gisborne pathologist... who reported it was normal. In the next five years, [the wife] had four smears read by pathologists in other laboratories, who also described them as “normal.” The disease steadily growing in her cervix was not found until last year, and [the wife] had a radical hysterectomy at National [Gals’] Hospital this year. “I could not believe that after having regular smears the outcome was that I was to be robbed of my right to have children,” [the wife] told... the Gisborne inquiry into mis-read smear tests. [The wife] said her battle against cancer was made more traumatic by a health system which... treated her with callous disregard. [The wife] waited weeks after diagnosis for National [Gals’] to contact her with a date for surgery, only to find [her name] had mistakenly been dropped off the list... [The wife said it] did not want revenge, nor did [it] hate anyone for what had happened. “[The pathologist] made a mistake, but it is not just him that I blame. The health authorities paid him but failed to check that [the pathologist] was going a good job... I want an assurance this will never happen again.”

...The Gisborne laboratory embroiled in a cervical cancer inquiry had cracked and broken benchtops, out-of-date equipment and textbooks and was in a generally run-down state, according to an accreditation officer who visited it in 1993... [The] former programme manager at International Accreditation N[Z]... told the inquiry yesterday that the laboratory left such an impression on him after his visit that [the officer] was unlikely to forget it. [The officer added] that in technical categories [it] had not visited another medical laboratory since that had such deficiencies... [The officer] told the inquiry [it] visited the Gisborne laboratory, owned by... [the pathologist,] again in 1994 after an application for registration with IANZ (then known as Telarc) was received. “It was my clear impression from my visit to Gisborne Laboratories that accreditation was not being actively pursued by the laboratory and that the process was being pursued begrudgingly for other reasons.” ...In a report written in November 1994, [the officer] found that deficiencies at the Gisborne laboratory included a lack of participation in external proficiency testing with the Royal College of Pathologists and a lack of records showing feedback had been sought on the reading of slides. [The officer] had... noted an apparent lack of on-going training at [the Gisborne laboratory. The pathologist’s]... lawyer... disputed parts of [the officer’s] testimony, saying his client had access to journals at the Gisborne Hospital library and had attended conferences. [The lawyer] also said a state-of-the-art haematology analyser was brought in 1994... [and the pathologist’s] microscope was in good order... – countering... evidence that [the pathologist’s] equipment was in poor condition... [The officer] stunned the inquiry with revelations of growing numbers of N[Z] laboratories becoming increasingly cash-strapped and with a desperate shortage of experienced staff. “In my view, the ramifications of this decreased funding has far-reaching consequences, which are only now beginning to show, and will, I believe, have a significant impact on standards and therefore the validity of tests.” ...Laboratories did not have budgets that allowed them to replace senior laboratory staff. [The officer] said three laboratories that read smear slides for the national programme had had their accreditation for this service suspended because qualified staff had left... N[Z] was fast approaching a situation where a qualified smear screener could be replaced only with someone who had no experience in that field. About half of all laboratories doing smear reading did not have their full complement of staff... [The officer] said standards being proposed by the national programme’s managers were unlikely to be achieved because of under-resourcing.

...Six laboratories found to have under-reported abnormal cervical smears should be named, say 50[%] of the general practitioners polled about the issue. The poll, carried out by *New Zealand Doctor* magazine, found that another 34[%] thought the labs should not be named and 16[%] were undecided... One of the labs had been cleared, but five continued to work with the [HFA] because their reporting rates for high-grade abnormalities were lower than the benchmark of 0.5[%]. The head of... the Gisborne cervical cancer inquiry said the... authority... suppressed the labs’ names because of uncertainty over the scientific value of the report and concern that the labs might since have changed owners.

...More than most, [one mum] understands the human toll of misread cervical smears. The [mum]... needed a hysterectomy – and had a pregnancy terminated to save her life – after abnormal cells were not picked up in two slides. “I already had a two-year-old[who] had to have a mother,” said the 36-year-old, who fought invasive cancer and then mustered her strength to fight for answers. But this tragedy did not have its origins in Gisborne or any other N[Z] centre. It happened in England where [the mum] had been living in the early 90s. Her battle for redress contrasts with the plight of Gisborne [residents], who because they live in a country with a no-fault ACC system cannot sue for compensation. Victims can go to court for exemplary damages, which are designed to punish rather than compensate, but no one in N[Z] has ever won such damages from a health professional. Some cases, however, have been settled out of court. The issue of compensation was raised at the Gisborne cervical cancer inquiry this week, when a lawyer representing affected [patients]... urged the committee to recommend paying victims of misreading. The inquiry head... asked... why the Gisborne [patients] should be treated differently from others who had suffered personal injury... [The lawyer] replied that significant responsibility for their plight lay at the feet of the Government and the Ministry of Health. “These [patients] were entitled to place their confidence in the screening programme and all associated procedures... If that has let them down, then the Government should be prepared to make an ex-gratia payment to them. Given the level of Government responsibility for what has happened and the extent of the suffering, common justice requires the Government to pay compensation for that.” [The lawyer] cited an example in A[US] where a patient[who] had a single smear misread was awarded \$750,000. In [the mum]’s case, invasive cancer was picked up after her return to N[Z] in 1991. Her English smear tests, which had been reported as clear, were rechecked and mistakes found in the diagnosis. With no ACC-style system preventing her from taking legal action against English officialdom, [the mum] filed her case in the High Court in London in 1994. Three years later, [the Christchurch resident] was awarded \$142,000 in damages. The Wiltshire and Bath Health Authority had already admitted liability over her treatment in 1988 and 1991, and the dispute was over the amount of money to be awarded... [T]he judge said: “If ever a case demonstrated the inadequacy of money to compensate for loss, this must be it.” ...The judgment left open the possibility of further damages if cancer returned or if secondary effects of radiation such as osteoporosis materialised. During the Gisborne inquiry this week, [the lawyer] said that the [patient] who sparked a ministerial inquiry into cervical smear misreading could have walked away with at least \$1 million compensation if [it] had lived in A[US]. The patient[, known... as Jane... knocked at the doors of ACC, the Medical Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal and the High Court before a ministerial inquiry was ordered into the practices of [Gisborne’s former pathologist] and the health system that paid him. Her application for a retrial has since been granted.

...A stand-alone cervical screening unit which could become part of a national cervical control agency is likely to be set up as the result of a ministerial inquiry. The Gisborne inquiry into mass under-reporting of cervical smears ended yesterday after a marathon 12 weeks of evidence from [people] caught up in the health scandal... The panel must now prepare its report... The call for a new agency follows a Cancer Control workshop last year during which 110 participants agreed that a coordinated approach to cancer prevention was needed... A big failing of the [smear test] programme has been its inability to do in-depth audits of cervical cancer cases to determine whether there have been mistakes in diagnosis and treatment. Under existing health legislation, researchers are unable to obtain information identifying [patients] from the screening register without consent. If this obstacle was removed, records could be more easily accessed by researchers monitoring the programme’s safety and success. [Patients] who objected to the use of the information without their consent could opt off the register. [The inquiry chairperson] has indicated the report will not focus on blame. But it was possible adverse comment would be made, along with recommendations... In its final submission, the... Ministry of Health... and H[FA]... asked the panel to take an unemotional, analytical, objective, constructive and balanced

approach to its findings... “It is easy to be critical... with hindsight, but we need to keep in mind that no medical professionals, including pathologists... rang alarm bells.” The ministry claimed it had chosen not to challenge some evidence given to the inquiry because it would have taken too long and may have damaged relationships with some experts still involved with the programme.

...The witchhunt for those who set up a defective cancer screening programme should take a closer look at the report of the Gisborne inquiry. It does not name names but it points the blame fairly clearly at non-medical crusaders for the cause. And one culprit... all but named... is now the PM. After dealing exhaustively with the deficiencies of the Gisborne laboratory, and concluding that it might not be the only black spot on the national screen, [the inquiry chairperson] and her committee began (155 pages in) to ask how an unsound programme ever got off the ground. The question leads them all the way back to the report of the Cartwright inquiry in July 1988 and the cervical smear testing drive that followed it. “Essentially a cervical screening programme is a medical programme,” the [1988] report says. “Medical practitioners with specialist qualifications and experience in public health and epidemiology know what is essential and what can safely be left out.” However, this programme began “with a misplaced focus on the number of [people] having smear tests at the expense of other components...” Its design “was influenced by non-medical persons who perhaps failed to recognise the essential medical components...” In August 1989... an unnamed Minister of Health... was getting impatient. On August 25, [the minister] sent a memorandum to her officials which the Gisborne report reprints at length. Citing “concern among those groups who have an interest in the success of this programme,” [the future PM] wrote: “There has been too much emphasis placed on development of the national register and computing system necessary to operate the register and recall system, at the expense of action on developing smear-taking programmes.” The memorandum emphasised that money voted by the Government for the programme was intended to reach [people] who were not yet having regular tests. The register and recall system was of secondary importance. That, says the [chairperson’s] committee, was “understandable” but “not ultimately helpful... There was no point in encouraging [people] to have smear tests taken when their tests were being read at laboratories whose performance was accepted on trust and may have been performing inadequately.” ...Population screening was, and is, quite contentious in medical and health policy circles. Today N[Z] screens only for cervical and breast cancer. The one thing both sides will tell you is that unless screening is done very well, it is probably better not to do it at all. Errors give either needless alarm or false comfort. To do it well means much more than urging healthy people to undergo regular tests. It requires an elaborate medical superstructure of trained test readers (top pathologists told the Gisborne inquiry their technical skills were not up to it), routine quality-assurance checks in laboratories, a reliable record of results and a recall system for cases needing further attention. Most important... a programme needs a national register of all test results and case records so it can be properly monitored, regularly audited and independently evaluated... When eventually a national cervical screening register was established by act of Parliament, the statute gave [patients] the right to refuse to let their tests results be forwarded to the register. And identifiable case information contained in it was not readily available for the programme’s evaluation. The Gisborne inquiry ran into the statutory block itself when it tried to assess the performance of other laboratories. Says the report: “The choice for the programme is stark. Effective evaluation can not be guaranteed if [patient] consent is required. If the right of an individual is to predominate, the safety of all participants is potentially at risk.” As things stand, [patients]... are being given an illusion of consent. They are being misinformed by the programme’s written material which suggests monitoring and evaluation are being done. “[Patients] should be told the monitoring and evaluation now carried out is not able to detect misread smear tests. Evaluation teams of medically qualified people must be given unhindered access to now protected information... without the need for consent from the subjects or ethics committees.” Ethics committees, another creation of the Cartwright era, are evidently claiming jurisdiction over medical evaluations as well as research projects. The [Gisborne inquiry] committee says that has to change; evaluations are part of treatment these days. And it takes obvious delight in pointing out that the unauthorised... investigation which led to the Cartwright inquiry could probably not have been approved by today’s ethical committees and requirements for patient consent. If the Cartwright report was the beginning of the new age health culture... perhaps the Gisborne report will come to mark the return to sanity.

...The Government has offered compensation to 61 [patients affected by the Gisborne pathologist’s] misreading of cervical smears – but at least one of them is unhappy with the proposal. Most of the [patients] contacted by the *Herald* about the offer declined to comment yesterday. But one said: “I’m not happy; I can tell you that much.” The Gisborne [resident], who asked not to be named, said the group were not allowed to talk until lawyers arrived next week... A lawyer representing the 61 [patients]... said yesterday that the compensation offer was confidential... A spokes[person] for the Health Minister... said the minister would not reveal details of the offer until [it] had heard back from the... [patients. The group] – 41 of them at first – began a lawsuit against the Government and [the pathologist two years ago]... They claimed \$150,000 each – \$50,000 from [the pathologist] and \$100,000 from the Government... Separately, negotiations to avoid a court case are continuing between lawyers acting for [the pathologist and the patient] known... as Jane... [T]he Privy Council gave permission for a retrial, but [Jane] hopes to settle outside the courtroom.

...International Accreditation N[Z]... suspended LabPlus’ accreditation for chemical pathology and virology-immunology testing on the... 18[th day of] last month... T[he PM had only]... opened LabPlus, N[Z]’s largest hospital laboratory, on [the 1st day of the month!] Sited next to Auckland Hospital, it employs 350 staff and performs the widest range of tests in the country. Pathologists... expressed fears that... [the] crisis at LabPlus could cause delays in diagnosing seriously ill patients... [In related news, a] review of laws governing the reporting and investigation of medical failures has not satisfied [patients] calling for an inquiry into[a] suspended Northland gynaecologist. Launching the review yesterday, [the] Health Minister... said it was not an inquiry into [the gynaecologist]. “That is happening elsewhere.” But... the lawyer representing former patients... said the only investigation was one complaint before the Medical Council. Patients were being denigrated by not being able to have a say. The Northland [patients] wanted a full investigation along the lines of the Gisborne cervical cancer inquiry. “I have spoken to over 60 [patients. 18] have had claims accepted by ACC... The majority of them have lost or are losing confidence in the professional bodies to deal with these complaints.” ...In Gisborne yesterday, [another lawyer said that NZ]... had become caught up in “doctor-bashing.” His client, [the]... pathologist and managing director of Hamilton and Gisborne Medlabs, was... desperately unhappy about... [being] criticised this week by the lawyer for [patients affected by the cervical cancer scandal. The patients’ lawyer]... said that after Medlab bought [the former Gisborne pathologist’s] laboratory, it did not “look back” at slides from Gisborne [patients] because it was too logistically difficult. Most of [the former pathologist’s] smears were housed in a shed at the lab.

...A group of [gals] outraged at alleged medical botch-ups by [a] Whangarei surgeon... have botched up a simple act of vandalism. The debate of a court decision allowing [him] to resume practising has turned nasty in the form of a vandalism attack on a house in Whangarei on Thursday night. The vandals obviously thought the house was where [the surgeon] lived, but it was the home of a [person who has his surname but isn’t a] relation. The spraypaint attack on the Kamo home did not impress its owner... At 10.50 on Thursday night, the *Northern Advocate* received a telephone call, saying a “large group... had spraypainted [the surgeon’s] house” in Blenheim Court... The message said the [group] had carried out the vandalism to show their outrage at [the surgeon’s appeal to be allowed to resume practising. “The murderer] should not be allowed to practise again...,” the [person] who left the message said. “It is an insult to Colleen Poutsma and all the [patients] who are putting through complaints. [The murderer] should be suspended until all the complaints have come forward.” Last year, the obstetrician/gynaecologist was struck off the medical register by the Medical Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal, after it found that his treatment of [the now deceased Paihia resident] Colleen Poutsma amounted to disgraceful conduct. The tribunal also ordered that [the surgeon] pay costs of \$56,000 and fined him \$15,000, the highest fine it had imposed. [The surgeon] appealed against the finding and penalties[, and] was partly successful when [an] Auckland District Court Judge... re[ad his] decision

on the appeal on Wednesday. [The judge... took the unprecedented [step of] reversing a tribunal finding, and ordered [that the surgeon] be allowed to resume his specialist... work. [The surgeon's] fine was also reduced to \$5000.]

...For five months doctors told... [a mother her daughter's] stomach aches were due to obesity and growing pains. They even went so far as to say her child was a hypochondriac who simply needed to be more active. Believing the doctors' diagnoses, [the mother] quickly set about changing some of the family's habits. [The daughter] (11) and her sister... (10) were talked into riding their bikes and playing at the local park for hours on end. Family walks became an everyday activity and junk food was restricted. But no matter how many changes... the family made to their lifestyle, [the girl] continued to suffer bouts of severe abdominal pain. At times the pain was so intense [it] could barely walk. "Several other doctors we took [her] to continued to tell us the same things... It was difficult because we actually started to doubt her." But [the mother] and her partner... didn't doubt [the girl] was in severe pain when [it] collapsed at home last March. They took her to Wellington Hospital's A&E... department but a few hours later [the girl] was sent home with the usual diagnosis – a tummy bug. "We thought we were going insane because one minute [my girl] was in extreme pain and the next it had settled. I remember getting into the car that day and saying... 'Well, if the hospital says it's just a tummy bug, it must be.'" [The couple] knew deep down that there must be something seriously wrong but put their trust in the medical experts. "We had to trust them. My mum was just beside herself with worry. [Mum and my eldest girl] have a very close relationship... There were times when we felt as though we were failing... as parents because we felt so helpless. When you see your child in pain and you can't say what the cause is, it's just not a pleasant experience." Less than two weeks after being taken to A&E, [the girl] collapsed at school but this time... was admitted to Wellington Hospital. "[My girl] saw an amazing doctor this time round... This doctor just took one look... and said there is something seriously wrong with this child. [It examined her] and while looking at her abdomen, commented on how there are definite differences between fat and swelling and this was obviously swelling." [The girl] was suspected of having appendicitis and booked in for surgery that night. The procedure was to take a few hours. Six hours later [the mother] was called into a... waiting room. "It was 4am and I was there by myself because I had told everyone else to go home and rest. I heard the doctor say [my girl] had a tumour... It took a while for it all to sink in. I just asked if [my girl] was going to die. At that stage it was a definite possibility." ...the operation had revealed a 3kg cancerous tumour growing on [the girl's] right ovary. "The tumour had caused her stomach to swell so much it looked as though [my girl] was pregnant... And there we were, listening to the doctors and telling her to get outside, ride her bike and go for a walk because [the girl was] overweight. Our daughter] was in pain and we were making her exercise." The tumour was removed during surgery but it had ruptured and countless cancer cells had been deposited throughout [the girl's] pelvis. The girl] needed to have three months of intensive chemotherapy... Since the operation four more tumours have been removed, including one weighing 1.2kg. There were plans for more chemotherapy but it wasn't needed thanks to the good news that those tumours were benign. A number of other tumour deposits will still need to be surgically removed from the lining of [her] pelvis. They are not malignant but if they're left, the tumours will cause pain.

...Hospitals must go to court to force reluctant parents to accept treatment for children with cancer, says a leading medical ethics specialist... [The] director of the bioethics centre at Otago University, says that if they don't, they are taking dangerous risks with children's lives. [The director] was commenting yesterday on the Starship Children's Hospital's not seeking a court order to enforce treatment of Tovia Laufau. The 13-year-old Mangere boy died at home last September with a basketball-sized tumour on his left leg. [The 13-year-old] had not wanted to go back to hospital for treatment as [the teenager] was afraid it would kill him. His parents... accepted his decision. This week they were convicted of failing to provide him with the necessities of life. They are on bail awaiting sentencing... Last month another boy – a 6-year-old Cook Islander, whose name is suppressed – died at the Starship after his parents refused life-saving treatment. [The 6-year-old] was to have radiotherapy after the removal of a brain tumour, but his parents fled home with him... before Auckland Healthcare's bid for guardianship could be heard in court. [The boy] was returned after it was too late. Starship staff say that case highlights the risks of going to court. That risk was one reason they did not go to court in Tovia's case, despite expecting him to die without treatment; another was the adverse public reaction in the Liam Williams-Holloway case. [The director said it] could understand why Liam's case might deter them but it was very worrying. The doctors involved in treating... [the] 5-year-old... for cancer came under "almost intolerable" pressure from the public reaction to the hunt for him after the court order for treatment. There was now a climate of fear over the issue of whether to seek such orders... Meanwhile, a friend of the... family... said Liam was "progressing favourably" in Mexico.

...Six years ago, [an] Aucklander... would never have set foot in a health food store – let alone get on a plane bound for Mexico for alternative cancer therapy... But that was before... [the 41-year-old] was dying of cancer. "They told me it was a matter of months, rather than years," says [the] husband... and father of [a 14-year-old boy and girl] (12)... Orthodox surgery and chemotherapy had removed the cancer, which had begun a steady march through his abdomen, but [the Aucklander] was told there was a very high chance the cancer would be back – so... began [his exploration of] alternative options, eventually settling on a Mexican clinic, American Biologics, as his one chance at survival. "I firmly believe in the power of the mind and, if you believe something, there's a chance it will happen,"... With the financial support of the Masonic Lodge and Rotary Club, [the Aucklander] and his family left NZ for six weeks at the end of 1995. Three weeks of that time was spent in the... clinic, the other three holidaying. "We weren't sure what was going to happen, so we did Disneyland and Knott's Berry Farm and had some good-quality family time." [The Aucklander] had chosen American Biologics because it combined orthodox medicine with alternatives and treated people on a case by case basis, using a combination of chelation therapy (flushing toxins out of the body), live cell therapy (the injection of animal cells), acupuncture, herbal remedies and lifestyle changes. Four years down the track, [the Aucklander] is still clear of cancer. "I'm a miracle cure,"... grins... [the Aucklander. However, his] medical oncologist doesn't believe the Mexican clinic played any part in his remarkable recovery. "...there [was a 95%] chance of the cancer returning... and [the Aucklander was in the 5%]. I've had dozens... of patients go to American Biologics and I've never had one patient go away with cancer who's come back with the cancer anything but worse. There are no exceptions." ...[the oncologist] understands why people seek alternative treatments but... doesn't believe people should go to... American Biologics, because "it's a monumental rip off" and the chances of a cure are nil. With fees for Mexican clinics rising into tens of thousands of US dollars, [the oncologist despairs when it] sees people who are not well off mortgaging their homes, spending huge amounts of money on treatments and then dying – sometimes in Mexico – leaving their spouse with a large mortgage and no income. "That's a tragedy." ...[● A British] cancer victim given six months to live by... doctors is now recovering after [it] surfed the internet to find an American surgeon willing to carry out the life-saving surgery... [The victim] from Eaton... in Herefordshire, logged on to his 16-year-old daughter's... computer to find help after [being]... told his 37cm kidney tumour was untreatable. A cancer specialist in Birmingham told him... it was decided surgery was too dangerous. But after two weeks of trawling the internet... a Californian kidney cancer expert... gave him the e-mail address of the surgeon who would eventually save his life... "I was 45 and with three children I just didn't think it was right I was going to die."

...In the debate over who should... have... treat[et] Liam Williams-Holloway for cancer, many... lost sight of the question that the proponents of all treatments must ask: where is the scientific evidence for them? [A writer's] emotive outburst in the *Herald* last Friday does nothing to advance [the alternative treatments] cause. His references to "masochism" and "barbaric treatments" on the part of medical researchers, oncologists, and countless others who are striving to help those in need with evidence-based, if unpleasant, techniques are unforgivable. Many people will read his article and decide to follow false prophets... who, while proffering hope (often at considerable expense), offer no scientific evidence their treatments are more effective than medical approaches. The treatment [the writer advocated for the now deceased Liam wa]s the Gerson method... that

[proclaims] cancer can be cured “only if toxins are eliminated from the body” – a plausible-sounding statement. Recommended detoxification methods include coffee or chamomile enemas, and a low sodium/high potassium diet that includes up to five litres a day of juices made from fruits and vegetables. Other substances... have... [been] added empirically from time to time... Raw calf’s liver was included but was discontinued after a series of... patients were admitted to San Diego Hospital between 1979 and 1981 suffering from campylobacter infection. Five were comatose and all had severe electrolyte abnormalities. Nine of these patients had cancer and all of these died shortly after admission. The American National Cancer Institute, the New York Medical Society and a team of British researchers have all concluded that... data [on the method] provides no demonstration of benefit. No doubt [the writer] regards these findings as part of a vast medical conspiracy to stifle debate. But perhaps [the writer] might care to comment on the findings of a naturopath who tracked 21 patients of the Gerson Clinic over five years and found only one (not cancer free) still alive. There are many reasons alternative therapies seem to work: initial mis-diagnosis; the disease may have run its course or be in remission; the placebo effect; and temporary mood improvement confused with cure. Many alternative practitioners have forceful, charismatic personalities and their messianic approach results in a psychological uplift. And if improvement occurs after someone has had both alternative and science-based treatments, the alternative approach usually gets the credit. Those who are antagonistic towards medical treatments that have been shown through controlled scientific studies to help many patients should reflect on the harm they may do by denying them to those in need. Unlike doctors, they are seldom held accountable for the consequences of their actions. It is time legislation was passed requiring stringent safety and procedural controls for alternative treatments similar to those applying to conventional medicine. Unhappily, in these days of managed care and overworked doctors, conventional medicine is increasingly viewed as impersonal. Doctors graduate with high student debts, then have to cope with high practice costs, political interference and uncertainties, and many other frustrations. Such constraints reduce the time available to spend on patients’ problems. The old-fashioned family doctor is becoming an endangered species. Alternative practitioners suffer few of these constraints and have more time to treat their patients... It is... well known that with many non-malignant conditions, people usually feel much better after spending time talking with a sympathetic therapist. Like many medical colleagues, I come across extreme examples of alternative medicine. Some are ridiculous... One patient, suffering from severe headaches, was relieved of \$2000 over two years by a clinic in Oxford, England, which claimed it could cure her by “radionic therapy” – beaming a radio wave of a secret frequency to the head of the Auckland sufferer. Another was told by a naturopath that all of her problems were due to the amalgam fillings in her teeth, and that her “pituitary and thyroid glands were not working.” Examination showed four small fillings in her back teeth. The remainder were in perfect condition, yet [the patient] had been told to have all of her teeth removed as “the poison has affected them all.” A blood test showed her thyroid to be perfectly normal. Toxicology tests at Auckland Hospital revealed not a trace of mercury. Yet, on further advice from the naturopath, [the patient] cancelled her hospital appointments and persuaded a dentist to extract all her teeth. [The writer] will be surprised to learn that many doctors are open minded about complementary methods... which have been shown to be helpful or appear promising and where further studies are indicated... There are a number of positive reports in the scientific literature on... various mind-body techniques such as hypnosis, meditation and relaxation techniques for stress-related disorders and chronic pain... [(using relaxation and guided imagery techniques... [c]ancer patients can think themselves to a stronger immune system... says a British researcher...)]; and herbal remedies such as ginko in stroke and St John’s Wort for depression... Folk and herbal remedies are where much modern medicine originated. But there is much work to be done to separate the wheat from the chaff.

...A leukaemia drug hailed by researchers and doctors as a breakthrough has been fast-tracked for use in the U[S]. The *Weekend Herald* highlighted the story of [a Rotorua resident] two weeks ago. [The resident] has beaten her chronic myeloid leukaemia with the help of the drug – known as Gleevec. The Food and Drug Administration reviewed the application by Novartis in a record time for cancer medication – 2 1/2 months. Gleevec should be available in the US by the end of the month. It will cost \$US2000... a month... [In related news, a] drug based on chemicals found in cabbage and broccoli may protect people against liver cancer caused by... aflatoxin, a fungus that contaminates food.

...A study conducted at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Centre in Seattle found that three daily servings of vegetables nearly halved the risk of prostate cancer... [compared to eating] less than one serving a day... “And when we compared relative potency, vegetables from the cruciferous family, like broccoli and cabbage, reduced the risk even further,”... [T]he results cast doubt on research extolling the prostate cancer-fighting benefits of lycopene, found most abundantly in cooked tomatoes. “Every... magazine in the country says eat more spaghetti sauce to cut your prostate cancer risk, but we found no relation at all,”... The handful of studies that showed protective effects of lycopene were flawed because they did not take into account total vegetable consumption. Scientists believe vegetables protect against cancer because they contain a variety of phytochemicals, which are toxins produced to protect the plants. When eaten, the phytochemicals trigger the activity of enzymes that can detoxify cancer-promoting compounds in the body.

...An extract of the ancient grazing crop red clover has been used to successfully treat prostate cancer in tests conducted by Melbourne researchers. A study conducted at Monash University’s Centre for Urological Research found that the prostate cancer cells in 38 [patients] who took red clover isoflavone supplements died at a high rate. The data, presented to the Third World Congress on the Ageing [Guy], held in Germany last week, found the cancer cells in the [patients] taking the supplement died in numbers five times greater than in an untreated group... Isoflavones are found in many plants... and are chemically similar to oestrogen. In the 19th century, red clover was popular with herbalists as a blood purifier. Chinese physicians and Russian folk healers also used it to treat respiratory problems. The red clover contains four isoflavones common in the Asian diet, thought to be the reason why Asian [guys] have a lower incidence of prostate cancer. In China, 1.5[% of guys] develop prostate cancer compared with 5.3[% of guys] in the U[S]. “Guys in Asia and... in the West had a similar number of cancer cells in their prostates, but their cancer was latent or dormant... But... when Asian [guys] move to Western countries they develop cancer at the same rate as the Western population.”

...A radioactive pellet the size of a grain of rice will soon offer new hope for N[Z]’s prostate cancer victims. The pellet, dubbed the “magic bullet,” is inserted directly into the cancerous prostate tumour by a series of needles and treats only the affected part rather than swamping the rest of the body with radioactivity... [D]octors use... an ultrasound probe to guide the path of the needles, containing the radioactive iodine 125... Doctors say that because the radiation doses can be delivered more accurately, higher levels can be used to destroy the cancerous cells, with fewer side-effects such as bowel problems or impotency. In some cases, the treatment... called prostate brachytherapy... can even be given without the need for a general anaesthetic... Once inside the body, the metallic pellets can be left in permanently after they have finished delivering the radiotherapy... Initially, the treatment[– which has]... been successfully used in... Britain, [AUS and the US –] ...will be available for private patients. However, [an]... Auckland oncologist... hope[s]... the Health Funding Authority... will eventually make the treatment available to all [NZers]... suffering from the cancer[, which]... kills more than 500 [of them] a year... A further 1100 new cases are detected each year. It is increasing at such an alarming rate that it is forecast to become the most fatal cancer in [guys] within five years[. It is currently the 4th most fatal cancer behind ‘breast cancer; large bowel (1089 annual deaths); and lung, trachea and bronchus (1412)’]...

Tobacco unlikely ally in war against cancer... Blamed for millions of deaths, tobacco may soon have a role in saving lives. This transformation is being investigated at California’s Large Scale Biology Corporation, where scientists have created tobacco plants which churn out chemicals that protect against leukaemia and lymphoma. “It is a neat concept,” said [one] project scientist... “It is the medical equivalent of beating swords into ploughshares...” ...leukaemia and lymphoma... occurred when a single white blood cell... proliferated uncontrollably to swamp the body. Humans have millions of varieties of white cell, each designed to defend the body against a different virus or bacteria. There are millions of subtly different forms of leukaemia and lymphoma, each based on the spread of a slightly different type of white blood cell. “That makes it very difficult to combat

such illnesses..." Scientists have to try to find a way to tackle one form of lymphoma and no other when dealing with an individual patient, and that is where the tobacco plant has provided crucial help. They have pinpointed the distinctive part of a lymphoma-causing white blood cell, the bit that distinguishes it from all other white blood cells. They then isolated the gene that makes that key component, put it in a tobacco mosaic virus and used the modified virus to infect the tobacco plant. As the virus replicates, it spews out white cell particles, and as the virus takes over the tobacco plant, it becomes coated with these protein pieces. "Essentially, you produce a little bio-factory... You have specific pieces of white cell protein on the stalk and leaves. You just scrap them off and collect them." The scientists now have patches of tobacco plants, each making proteins tailor-made to match a lymphoma from one of 16 people... Once the protein fragment from each person was scraped from their tobacco plant, it was injected back into the patient. "Essentially, we use them as a vaccine. Our immune systems often do not recognise a cancer... as being foreign and dangerous and so allow it to spread. But by re-administering pieces of a cancer as a vaccine, it makes the body realise something is amiss. Suddenly, it starts to attack the tumour. We have opened its eyes to the danger within... You couldn't find a better use for tobacco if you tried."

...[scientists have developed a 'target-specific anti-cancer drug. STI571 is a pill which targets the enzyme that triggers a type of leukaemia and improves the condition of many test patients (it worked for 53 out of 54 leukaemia patients) without side-effects.' Speaking of which, s]tandard doses of chemotherapy can lead to permanent mental impairment for some patients, research shows... [A] clinical psychologist and professor at Dartmouth Medical School in New Hampshire, said many patients reported difficulties while undergoing chemotherapy, including cognitive problems such as memory and concentration loss. However, it was only now being established that the effects appeared to be lasting for some former cancer patients... One cause might be that toxic chemotherapy agents crossed the blood-brain barrier more than previously thought... The issue is a concern to the growing number of cancer survivors. About 8.4 million Americans have a history of cancer, with more than 1.2 million cases expected to be diagnosed this year. Little research has been done on adult cancer survivors. However... research on children had resulted in changes in both the way chemotherapy was delivered to the body, for example through a central line rather than directly into the spinal cord, and the dose schedule. More research might prove these procedures were useful for adults.

...Scientists do not expect to find a quick cure for cancer but are working to develop treatments which might turn deadly cancers into chronic but no longer fatal diseases... possibly adding to health-care costs... Medicine has already succeeded in finding effective cures for some cancers and reducing the mortality rate of others... New treatments wo[n't] replace the present, often blunt and unpleasant therapies, but complement them...

A new technique could revolutionise the early detection of cancer, giving sufferers a better chance. Researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have devised a novel method of detecting changes in the nucleus of cells in the earliest stages of the disease. "More than 85[%] of cancers originate in the epithelium that lines the internal surfaces of organs throughout the body. Although these are readily treatable if diagnosed in one of the preventative stages, early lesions are almost impossible to detect... We present a new optical-probe technique based on light-scattering spectroscopy that is able to detect pre-cancerous and early cancerous changes in cell-rich epithelia." The technique relies on the fact that... the differences... [in] cell nuclei... in the early stages of cancer... scatter light in a characteristic way. Until now the changes were detectable only after a biopsy. The technique... can be done in conjunction with a routine cancer screening technique using an endoscope... [In another development, a] six-legged robot has been [built] in Singapore and programmed to drill through the skull during surgery to remove deep-seated brain tumours in sharply reduced operating time. Engineers at the Nanyang Technological University... came up with the computer-controlled robot known as "Hexapod" in conjunction with surgeons at the National Neuroscience Institute... "Currently surgeons have to drill through the bone for up to... six hours, followed by another three spent removing the tumour... Using the robot to perform the drilling will be... more precise,"... with the time cut by nearly 50[%]... The team hopes to begin human trials by the middle of next year following the completion of animal tests.

...[doctors are applying 'proton-beam therapy' and 'neutron therapy – using sub-atomic particles – to treat brain cancers'. By the way, 'siblings could become the saviours of some cancer patients. Doctors are using immune cells from the brothers or sisters of melanoma victims to treat the cancers']...

A melanoma vaccine being tested in Brisbane has achieved complete remission in [some] patients, with deep-seated tumours disappearing after treatment, researchers say. Twelve patients have been treated with the experimental vaccine, which has been developed at the Queensland Institute of Medical Research... [The] director of the melanoma clinic at Brisbane's Mater Adult Hospital, said the results were promising given that the patients were believed to be incurable. "Half the patients had no reaction [to the vaccine] and just progressed... But three patients had total disappearance, and three others had partial disappearance of tumour. Compared with an expected response rate of zero, this is an enormously exciting response... We feel these results are so important we'd like to study the vaccine in an earlier phase of treatment, with people who have very early recurrence of melanoma to see if we can prevent the disease spreading,"... Patients with very early recurrent melanoma have a 20[%] chance of being cured by surgery. A trial [using] patients with early melanoma is expected to begin at Royal Brisbane Hospital next month.

...Sun-worshippers may be able to get that bronze tan without baking for hours in potentially lethal rays, and fight skin cancer at the same time, when a new drug implant hits the market in a few years. The implants, containing the drug melanotan, are being developed by... EpiTan... a biotech firm in A[US]... Dubbed the "Barbie drug", melanotan stimulates the production of the melanin pigment in the skin which causes tanning...

MoleMap N[Z] has unveiled a new weapon that uses the internet to help detect skin cancer early. The Auckland-based company uses Telecom broadband technology to send highly detailed melanograms – images recorded by special cameras – from its nationwide network of clinics to a central database. The images are stored and also forwarded to doctors to pass on to their patients. There are 11 diagnostic clinics, from Christchurch to Whangarei, and the company plans to open three more in the next few months... Some people can have... 100 moles, so each file can be huge to send. Telecom's Jetstream broadband internet service ensures the large files arrive quickly... All patient files are compressed and encrypted to ensure they are kept secure... "It is a very cost-effective way for patients to have moles scanned and diagnosed, and w[e]... are less likely to miss potential melanomas, or to cut them out unnecessarily[.]" the... chief executive of MoleMap, said... In the future, doctors will be able to take their own images of lesions and send them to dermatologists to get results... [T]he ability to transfer images from the point of care to dermatologists was an excellent tool for both patients and practitioners alike... ■ [They are being called]... green gold – and if cancer researchers prove green-shell mussels can cure the disease they will be worth their weight in gold for farmers. [A farmer] of Kaiua hauled 20 tonnes of the humble shellfish from his farms in the Firth of Thames yesterday. These mussels, along with another 580 tonnes this year, will be mainly sold to the U[S] and Europe for eating, but in the future [the farmer] hopes they will also be saving lives "If it works it will be great," [the farmer] said of... A[US]n... research that shows lyprinol, an extract from the mussels, has strong cancer-fighting properties. The extract, a valuable anti-arthritis preparation, will now be tested on cancer-sufferers in trials beginning in about a month. However, [the]... former scallop farmer who entered the mussel industry four years ago, is not holding his breath. "It's early days yet,"... This year the industry has "found its feet" after suffering from a high exchange rate and a toxic algal bloom which practically closed it and put consumers off eating mussels... This year export earnings have risen by \$100 a tonne, thanks to the weak N[Z] dollar, and consumption is on the rise now that news of the... research has lifted the profile of the mussel. "It will definitely have a flow-on effect. I guess this [research] will be publicised overseas as well so people will be buying mussels overseas..."

...N[Z]'s exclusive grip on greenshell mussels – a potential gold-rush industry following the discovery of their cancer-killing powers – could be wiped out within years. The mussels, which take 18 months to grow, are indigenous to N[Z]. Marine experts last night said they were not aware of their growing elsewhere in the world, but they could think of no environmental reasons why they would not... [The] director of fisheries at the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research, said a Californian attempt in the 1970s to cultivate the mussels in a laboratory had failed. But all it would take was the right conditions, [the director] said. There was a high probability that greenshell mussels grown elsewhere would

contain the crucial extract, lyprinol... However, Maclab, the Nelson and Melbourne business with patents on the extraction methods, said the extract could be obtained only from the N[Z] mussels because of our clean waters. An owner of the marine farming and processing business... said it would not try to cultivate the mussels overseas as [it] had “faith” that N[Z] would open up new areas of coastline to marine farming. [The]Food and Fibre Minister... expected any plans to remove greenshell mussels for cultivation overseas would need to be approved by N[Z] fisheries authorities. The Government would take a close interest in any such plans... A[US]n researchers discovered the extract... kills human cancer cells in the laboratory... The dietary supplement has been hailed overseas for helping asthma and arthritis sufferers. Fifty thousand lyprinol capsules started going on sale in N[Z] pharmacies on Friday at just under \$50 for a packet of 50. The packet recommends taking up to four capsules a day. One of the N[Z] distribution companies fears the market will go wild today with people racing to pharmacies to buy up the few packets. The Ministry of Health warned that as lyprinol was not yet fully tested, cancer sufferers should talk to their doctors before even considering it. Demand for greenshell mussels at supermarkets soared at the weekend, although shoppers may be expecting rather too much. At this stage, researchers do not know if eating raw mussels kills cancer cells, but they have established that cooking and storing them destroys the active ingredient.

...The company behind a potentially life-saving new cancer treatment... says the breakthrough is the result of 20 years spent researching the shellfish. But... Maclab has no intention of allowing overseas competitors to “poach” N[Z]’s \$118 million-a-year mussel industry... More than 100 people with cancer will take part in trials to discover the full scope of the marine extract, which it is hoped will be effective against prostate and breast cancers... [The] principal research scientist in the rheumatology research unit at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Adelaide... was amazed to find that in test-tube trials, lyprinol killed cancer cells in less than 24 hours. “There have been countless new drugs that seem to kill cancer cells in the test tube but fail in the human body... We know lyprinol works in the body based on its current history. This trial is simply an exciting extension of that usage...” If successful in human trials, the mussel-oil extract will provide a natural alternative for cancer treatment without the side-effects of normal drugs... “The best answer we can come up with is that the cancer-eating properties seem to be a unique combination of the plankton that the mussels eat and the way it then metabolises that diet to produce lyprinol. We have even tried growing the black mussels on the same ropes as the green mussels – you often find the two growing together in Marlborough – and we have tested them for lyprinol. We found there isn’t any lyprinol in any other type of shellfish.” ...[the owner of] Maclab... also played down fears that other countries such as Chile might try to farm greenshell mussels... “That won’t happen because we own the patent to produce the chemical from the mussels and we will only use N[Z] mussels. We have invested heavily in marine farming operations in Marlborough and we are there to stay...” ...Setting up a 5ha farm can cost more than \$100,000, and then there is equipment – starting with a \$250,000 barge... [A]n average... mussel would produce 10 million eggs... The mussels process between four and seven litres of water an hour so it is vital to ensure they are harvested from pollution-free areas.

...N[Z]’s... mussel industry could be over-whelmed by demand ...f[or] the green-lipped mussel’s cancer-killing powers. But the prospect of rich rewards has been tempered by warnings about the limits of expansion for marine fishing... Greenshell mussels were indigenous to N[Z]. The only close relation was a Chinese variety which had a green-tinged shell, but not the same properties... [A]n owner of... the Nelson business preparing mussels for lipid extraction in Germany... said marine farmers could not grow enough mussels even to meet the present demand from seafood processors. Others areas of the coast could be used but there was a delicate balance between marine-farming, conservation and recreational interests... The main... farming areas for the mussels are Marlborough, the Coromandel... Hauraki Gulf, Stewart Island and Golden Bay. Maclab was now processing 40 tonnes of mussel flesh a week to produce freeze-dried powder... compared with four tonnes previously. The lipid material could not be reproduced artificially and so could be obtained only from the N[Z] mussel. Maori had known of its medicinal properties for centuries.

...An A[US]n... is 90[%] sure that an extract derived from N[Z]’s green-lipped mussel will provide the key to the holy grail of medical science... “This is the most exciting discovery of my career. If I was diagnosed with cancer I would take as much lyprinol as I could hold down.” Melbourne-based family company Maclab, which has a factory in Nelson, will reap the benefits if... trials [on cancer patients] are successful. An owner... said the company had been chasing the cure for arthritis for 18 years – “and look what happened...” [The owner] had seen cancer cells growing in the laboratory and to watch them dying was “magnificent.” But [the owner] was concerned that N[Z] would not be able to supply enough mussels for world demand and a new supply would have to be developed. “The Government will have to make some hard decisions. If the rest of the world says, ‘We demand this material because this is going to help so many people,’ how do you turn around and say, ‘Sorry, you can’t have it?’”

...[an] extract offering hope to cancer sufferers may be banned from N[Z] shops indefinitely after a ruling yesterday that sales may be illegal. N[Z]ers yesterday rushed pharmacies searching for... the extract. But the sales bonanza – reaping a reported... \$2 million in one day... – was soon over. The Ministry of Health said... lyprinol, had been promoted as a medicine, yet had not been proved as one. And because claims in promotional material outstripped research evidence, it was a breach of the Medicines Act... Last night, the ministry was still deciding whether to recall capsules already sold, or those on the way to shops, after revealing... the N[Z] distributor, Pacific Pharmaceuticals, had voluntarily halted distribution.

...Just hours after ordering lyprinol from his pharmacist, [a]cancer sufferer... felt the rug had been pulled from under his feet... [The] 31-year-old trainee specialist at the Starship children’s hospital profiled in the *Weekend Herald* last month... is angry at the “overly paternalistic” attitude taken by the Ministry of Health in stopping sales. “What if lyprinol does have significant effects on cancer? Then thousands of N[Z]ers would have been deprived of potential treatments... It annoys me we don’t have a choice. All of a sudden that has been taken away from us... I don’t have time to wait for clinical trials to be carried out. It could be a red herring, but why can’t I spend \$50 to find out?” [The trainee doctor] said the ministry seemed to think cancer sufferers made decisions purely on emotion and were incapable of rational thought. And it appeared to be acting conservatively with the drug because of the publicity. “There are lots of other cancer drugs ‘alternative’ people seem to sell with gay abandon, and the ministry turns a blind eye. But when someone ‘respectable’ promotes it, it kills it.” ...• [The]Dr... said the support [it] had received since appearing in the *Weekend Herald* had been heart-warming... “Cancer can take many things away from me, but it can’t remove my memories.”

...The greenshell mussel seems to be proving a little too hot to handle for the doctors and drug company who announced its cancer-fighting potential to the world. As its commercial offshoot, lyprinol, met obstacles... from the Ministry of Health, the mussel [promoters] were pulling back from statements and promises they made last week. The... main researcher into the mussels’ cancer-fighting qualities... had... said... it... felt 90[%] sure that the extract would work. But last night, [the main researcher said]... “It’s a great concern of mine to even suggest that there is any evidence that it is effective in treating human cancers... We’ve not made that claim at all. What we’re saying is there is evidence it may be effective and we are launching clinical trials in Adelaide to find out if that is the case or not.” Criticism yesterday by [the P]M... of the timing of the research announcement so close to the N[Z] launch of lyprinol also saw a change in tack by... [the] managing director of the product’s maker, Pharmedica. It was [the managing director] who arranged last week for TVNZ to make the worldwide announcement of the mussel’s potential – to run on *One Network News*... The TV firm was hosted in Adelaide last Thursday under this arrangement. [The managing director] attempted to lock the N[Z] *Herald* into a similar agreement, with all details to be kept secret until Pharmedica determined, but that offer was declined. Independent inquiries by the *Herald* last Friday subsequently prompted TVNZ to screen the... material that night – four days early. [The managing director] had threatened the *Herald* with legal action if any details of the research were published before [it] was ready – and said [it] had “shut down” the... Queen Elizabeth Hospital... staff and even [the]Food and Fibre Minister... to prevent them from talking. Last night, responding to [the PM]’s allegations of media manipulation, [the managing director] said there was no way [it] would have been able to control the Queen Elizabeth doctors commenting on the research. However, a “journalistic adviser” acting for him... wrote to the *Herald* last Friday offering exclusive interviews with the doctors and scientists involved – as long as the newspaper agreed to an embargo... [on news till] the mussel extract had been tested on patients.

...The greenshell mussel extract Lyprinol ran foul of the law on several counts, and the N[Z] distributor Pacific Pharmaceuticals would have quickly found itself in legal trouble had it not withdrawn it from sale. Ministry of Health officials were yesterday anxious to stress that Lyprinol had been voluntarily withdrawn. "It has not been banned," said a ministry spokes[perso]n... "People can still obtain it from overseas..." [The spokesperson], a softly spoken [guy] who chooses his words carefully and enunciates them precisely in a distinct Scots burr, was technically correct. But it's a fine point. Pacific withdrew Lyprinol from sale once it was told that to continue distributing it would breach the Medicines Act. Individuals doing so could face six months in prison or a fine of \$20,000. For a company, the fine could be \$100,000. The legalities of the matter revolve around the definition of a medicine. Lyprinol's sponsors sought to claim it was being sold as a dietary supplement. But the information available on the Internet and circulated to pharmacies... undermined that claim... "It was also being promoted as a cancer cure... making... this product a medicine in terms of the Medicines Act." ...If a substance is going to be a medicine, it has to be approved as such by the Minister of Health – effectively the ministry which will want to be satisfied that the manufacturers' claims about the product's healing powers are true. Lyprinol not only doesn't have ministerial approval, it has not even started down the long and winding road of scientific testing on humans. By accident or design – and the ministry suspects that a little design was involved – it was allowed to look like a medicine without explicitly claiming to be. In the end, though, the law prevents unjustified claims of effectiveness whether explicit or implied. And the restrictions don't stop even when a medicine is approved. Section 58 of the act bans advertising that "directly or by implication" claims to remedy certain ailments. They are listed in long schedules – lists at the end of the act. The first, longer list is diseases that you may not claim to be able to "prevent, alleviate or cure." It includes arthritis and cancer. The second list is diseases you may not claim to be able to "prevent or cure" – so it is not illegal to simply offer relief. On that list you will find asthma, and the two commonest diseases of all – dental decay and the common cold. Make those claims and you will be prosecuted. And the only defence that will save you is that your cure works... Lyprinol is a long way... from being able to rely on that defence.

...[a medical researcher's claim that it] has approval to begin clinical trials of Lyprinol as a cancer treatment has been denied by the hospital ethics committee that supposedly gave the go-ahead. Trials of... Lyprinol's life-saving potential on human cancer sufferers are crucial to the product's gaining international acceptance. [The main researcher] yesterday continued to say [it] had approval, but a spokes[perso]n for the ethics committee at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Adelaide... said that was not the case and never had been. [The spokesperson] said the committee could not understand [the researcher's] confusion and suggested [it] might have "jumped the gun" in announcing that a trial was to start soon. [The researcher] had been told to revise his research programme and resubmit it for further consideration... Even if that was done, it would not guarantee permission for trials... In N[Z], the Ministry of Health has launched an investigation into what it calls cynical marketing ploys.

...Claims that Lyprinol may make some cancers worse, or even promote tumours, have been dismissed by an A[US]n professor researching the... greenshell mussel... Distribution of Lyprinol in N[Z] has been halted pending an investigation into its launch here, which coincided with A[US]n publicity about cancer-fighting possibilities... [Y]esterday... the Malaghan Institute of Medical Research in Wellington... said... that the active ingredients in Lyprinol were polyunsaturated fatty acids and some of those kinds of acids were known to promote tumours... [The AUS]n company that processes the mussels, would not comment on the claims but referred the *Herald* to... [the] professor of food science with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology... [The] expert on polyunsaturated fats... said it was true the fatty acids in Lyprinol were polyunsaturated, but so were the fatty acids found in fish and fish oil and those acids were linked with cancer prevention... The Cancer Society said... [his] claims should be taken seriously. But [the society's] medical director... said Lyprinol had been used by people for a number of years and no side-effects had been noted.

...An investigation into the marketing of Lyprinol... as a cure for cancer, will be extended into A[US]. The Ministry of Health will work with the A[US]n Therapeutic Goods Administration and other groups over the probe.

...Eighteen charges have been laid against two companies and some of their staff over the sale, distribution and advertising of the green-lipped mussel extract Lyprinol... A lawyer for the defendants... said the charges would be vigorously defended but refused to comment further.

...The Ministry of Health has welcomed the penalty of \$15,000 imposed on Lyprinol (NZ) for selling a product... as a cure for cancer. The company was sentenced in the North Shore District Court on two charges relating to the... advertising of Lyprinol as a medicine without consent.

...Lyprinol could be back on shop shelves... as a health supplement – not a medicine – ...in months, says the Ministry of Health... as long as certain issues were cleared up satisfactorily... A product called Lyprinex is marketed on the Internet as the Life Plus International equivalent of Lyprinol. That costs ...\$57.70... for 50 capsules, plus shipping... as opposed to the \$49.95 for 50 capsules that people were paying until its withdrawal.

...Lyprinol will be available again late next week – under a new name. The product is the same... but now it will be known as HPME, or highly purified marine lipid extract... No claims were made on the packaging of HPME other than that it was a health supplement, although the box referred to Lyprinol because that was the active ingredient... A... representative for... Pacific Pharmaceuticals, said the name change allowed the company to provide the product but to back away from the controversy associated with Lyprinol – a brand name unlikely to resurface in N[Z].

...no-one] emerges with much credit from the fuss over Lyprinol. The researchers seem to have made rather too much of their findings[, and the]... release on to the N[Z] market quickly followed the media razzamatazz – a most unfortunate piece of timing. And then the Health Ministry over-reacted. It's a fine mess. The news media must bear most of the blame. A press statement issued in Adelaide – "Cancer – Hope from the Sea" – led to a TVNZ extravaganza and extravagant front-page reporting by some newspapers. The [main] researcher said Lyprinol had "the potential for remarkable anti-cancer action", a claim from which [it] later seemed to distance himself. But... [the researcher] cannot be regretting his statements as much as the journalists are regretting theirs. The news media should not make the mistake of crying "breakthrough" every time a researcher finds something interesting in a petri dish... Journalists have been confronted with this situation a thousand times before... They should know not to leap to conclusions... Sensationalist reporting raises false hopes among desperate people... The public knows now there is no evidence so far to suggest that Lyprinol is a cure for cancer. Cancer sufferers know it too. But the product also seems harmless, and cancer patients should be free to try it. The ministry is in the paradoxical position of opposing a harmless food extract while defending third-generation contraceptive pills... It needs to change its mind on both counts.

...The hype surrounding the Lyprinol launch was unethical, says a biochemist who... [is the chairperson] of the European Cancer Prevention Organisation... [Yesterday the biochemist claimed] that Lyprinol publicity should have been held back... "Everybody should have kept quiet until they had done some clinical tests... People are finding these things all the time. Every now and again one of them gets hyped up. In Britain it's usually because a university laboratory wants to get some more funding." ...The body had many mechanisms to repair damage to the DNA of cells, including cancer cells, and many other ways of preventing foreign substances, such as Lyprinol, even getting to the target area... and rather than "wasting" money on vitamin supplements people were better off getting vitamins from food...

Vitamin C pills may cause hardening of the arteries, say [US researchers. The NZ] Heart Foundation sees the discovery as further evidence that vitamin supplements do more harm than good... The study found no clear-cut sign that getting lots of vitamin C from food or a daily multivitamin does any harm. But those taking vitamin C pills had accelerated thickening of the walls of the big arteries in their necks. In fact, the more they took, the faster the buildup... [● Local h]ealth authorities are being hampered in their investigations into recalled A[US]n supplements by N[Z]'s open licensing regime. The A[US]n Government was yesterday planning a new crackdown on pharmaceutical manufacturers as panicked consumers flooded chemists and health stores following the recall of more than 200... supplements. The recall, A[US]'s biggest, also shut down Pan Pharmaceuticals, which holds... 70[%] of the booming market in herbal remedies, vitamins and painkillers. The company... alleged[ly]... fabricated

and manipulated quality control data. Some of its supplements... have caused hallucinations. Last year Pan Pharmaceuticals earned... 12[%] of its worldwide sales of A\$110 m... from N[Z, where]... dietary supplements and complementary medicines do not have to be registered... unlike A[US]...

Health officials hope thousands of health supplements will be pulled from supermarkets and health shops today as the full list of products made by disgraced... Pan Pharmaceuticals is revealed... The problem widened last night when A[US]'s drugs watchdog added a further 449 products to the recall list. That makes 668 products with possible health risks – and the Therapeutic Goods Administration indicated the list could reach 1000.

...N[Z]'s official list of suspect dietary supplements and vitamins made by... Pan Pharmaceuticals failed to include products from major local health company Red Seal Natural Health. The N[Z] Food Safety Authority updated... its website on Saturday but did not make public the omission.

...[NZ's] \$200 million-a-year health supplements business is up in arms over a Government plan to join forces with A[US] to regulate the industry... [NZ's] Health Minister... said [it] was criticised for not having regulations after this year's big recall of Pan Pharmaceuticals products.

...Medical researchers want regulations for health food stores... [whose s]taff... often recommend natural remedies that can trigger allergic responses... Their study... also found ...o[n]e health shop... actively discouraged a customer with asthma symptoms from seeking medical advice...

Junk food and ready-made packaged meals may be causing the alarming rise in the world's childhood asthma rates. Scottish researchers have found that children who have diets low in vegetables, vitamins and minerals are three times more likely to suffer from wheezing, infections and other asthmatic symptoms... In Britain, the number of children developing asthma before the age of 5 has doubled in less than a decade... [Incidentally,] British scientists... are transforming one of the world's most toxic substances into a new non-addictive drug that could relieve chronic pain caused by cancer and other diseases. Botulinum neurotoxin is released by a bacterium... found in contaminated food or infected wounds and which causes botulism, a rare but deadly illness. The bacterium has... also gained popularity as a treatment for wrinkles under the name of Botox... Experimental results... at the Centre for Applied Microbiology and Research, an arm of Britain's health ministry... show... there is potential to target the toxin to nerves... responsible for pain and to block their function for many weeks... It has... been used in small, controlled doses for... 10 years to treat patients with cerebral palsy, muscle spasms and other complaints caused by uncontrolled muscle contractions... It's... particularly effective for muscle damage resulting from brain and spinal injury and strokes and for chronic back and neck pain. Injections of the toxin also relieve sweating, drooling and writer's cramp. The... molecule is designed to treat conditions such as cancer where a muscle relaxant is not needed.

...Industrial Research... [and] the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the U[S]... have climbed a "Mt Everest of chemistry" in designing... "immucillins" – ...drugs that... require a tiny fraction of the previous dosages required... in... treatments for arthritis, malaria and some cancers.

...Revolutionary surgery... is offering hope to thousands of N[Zers with cancer] who may otherwise die or have limbs amputated. The technique involves removing the piece of bone with the tumour, killing the cancer cells by placing the bone in a hot water bath... – ...[tumour] cells are more sensitive to heat than normal cells... – ...then replanting the now cancer-free piece of bone into the patient and enabling new bone to grow... One of the patients, who had cancer in his forearm, is doing so well that [it] has recently gone back to a job involving heavy lifting... Other surgical techniques for removing bone tumours and filling the gap left behind have been performed... at Middlemore Hospital... for... a decade, but... they are not as simple or cost-effective as re-growing a patient's own bone. The new method was developed in Japan by a professor who experimented by growing tumours in animals... [I]t could take another five years before surgeons were 100[%] certain the method was as good as the previous techniques.

...The hand of a dead [perso]n has been transplanted to a Perth amputee in a pioneering operation in France by a Sydney microsurgeon. [The AUSn microsurgeon] yesterday led a specialist transplant team of eight surgeons in the 11-hour operation at a Lyon clinic... The team hoped to create medical history by giving [the amputee], who lost his right hand in a circular saw accident 14 years ago, full feeling and movement with someone else's hand. It was believed to be the first time a limb from a dead person had been transplanted to a living one... [T]he landmark operation may bring hope to millions of people including parents of babies born without limbs. The surgeons from France, Italy and Britain worked in teams to join up the bones, blood vessels and skin. But it will be weeks before it is known if the procedure was a complete success.

...SURGEONS [in Lyon] have transplanted hands and forearms on to a person for the first time. The patient was a 33-year-old French[perso]n who lost his hands in 1996 when an amateur rocket exploded as [the Frenchperson] held it. The doctors grafted the arms of a dead [perso]n on to him in a 17-hour procedure. The medical team was headed by... [the surgeons who] performed the world's first single hand transplant... on... [an expatriate NZer, who recently] said the transplant did not quite produce the full sensitivity and dexterity of his original hand.

...To the dismay of his doctors, [the NZ]er... who underwent [the world's first] hand transplant, has broken contact with them... "I really didn't expect something like this to happen,"... [a member of the] transplant team... at the Edouard Herriot Hospital in Lyon... said yesterday... [The team-member attributed the NZer]'s disappearance to a "psychological reaction after being surrounded by doctors for three months." But... it could also be because of problems in A[US, where the NZer] faces fraud-related charges from a marketing investment scam allegedly worth \$NZ1.16 million... [The NZer], aged 48... told CBS News in New York that [it] went to the U[S] from France and no longer underwent therapy or essential skin biopsies and blood tests[, although the NZer] had probably lost "40[%] of the movement that I had in France." But [the NZer] did not acknowledge any fault and said: "They [the doctors] tend to forget... that I know my body better than they do... I'm not about to lose my hand. I'm not about to throw a dream away." ...At the time of the operation, doctors said [the NZer] would need to continue physiotherapy for at least a year but that it could be as long as 18 months before it was known if the hand had been successfully transplanted[, and, ideally, his health needs to be regularly checked for at least a decade (statistically, 'one out of 10 patients will be dead after 10 years because of the drugs that they must take to suppress their immune systems, which reject a transplant'). The NZer] lost his hand in a sawing accident in prison in 1984 while serving a two-year sentence for fraud. For five years, N[Z] doctors tried to fully reattach his hand. But [the NZer] gave up and had them amputate at the upper forearm.

...The N[Zer] who was given the world's first transplanted hand and then persuaded doctors to remove it said yesterday that [it] could not live with the pain and discomfort any more. In an interview with the *Mail on Sunday* newspaper, [the NZer] said the side-effects of the medication [it] was on made his life unbearable. "I do not believe it was a failure, but the pain just became unbearable," [the NZer] said from his hospital bed in London as [it] recovered from the removal operation... The surgeons who gave [hi]m the transplanted arm... have criticised him for failing to take his medication and not consulting them... [– although the surgeon who] removed the new hand on Saturday... reportedly carried out the original transplant... [A Sydney microbiologist], who co-led the original operation, said six other successful transplants have taken place since [the NZer]'s...

An intelligent artificial hand developed in England is believed to be the most sophisticated in the world. The... Oxford Intelligent Hand has two fingers and a thumb. Unlike a conventional prosthetic hand, which opens and closes like a claw, it is able to grasp objects in a more natural manner. Weighing half a kilogram, it can be operated by tensing two muscles in the user's forearm where two electrodes – one for each muscle – read the tiny electrical signals, which are amplified and fed into a series of circuits, prompting the fingers to curl up. The hand can pick things up between two fingers or clasp an object in a fist... [Speaking of artificial body parts, a 65-year-old NZer] didn't give much thought to the... hip... implants his surgeon put in. What his doctor recommended was good enough for him... Anything to get rid of the pain of his degenerating joints. But seven years later, [the now 72-year-old] was back on the operating table having the replacements replaced. "They showed me the kidney dishes full of what looked like black rotting meat,"... That... was his own flesh – the prostheses were flaking and the rejection reaction of his immune system was eating away his bone. The... cheaper titanium copies of the Muller 5 model... joints... [originally received] were among the more

spectacular failures in N[Z]'s 30-year history of hip replacements. Titanium, which performed so well in the stem of the device, had been used as the weight-bearing head. The result was disastrous. The combination of the titanium head and plastic cup of the implant resulted in huge amounts of flaking debris shedding into surrounding tissue, triggering the immune response and loosening the joint. [The 72-year-old] was one of hundreds of patients in whom the joints failed, but like them... has no redress because of our ACC laws. It cost him \$23,000 for the two extensive operations required to repair the damage. In Britain, the failure of another joint, the Capital hip... withdrawn from sale last year, has led to hundreds of patients having re-operations paid for by the company which marketed the device, 3M Health Care. It had been introduced without clinical trials. "There is better quality control when you are buying a video or lawnmower," said one MP. The failure led to new rules requiring the makers of all medical devices to prove they are fit for the functions they claim – nearly 10 years after the F[DA] introduced similar regulations in the U[S]. An award-winning innovation by a [N[Z]] surgeon is providing valuable clues to international researchers about why joints fail... [The] senior lecturer in orthopaedic surgery at Wellington Clinical School, has designed computer software that measures on x-rays rates of prosthesis wear. It has been used in a major U[S] study of 1050 joint operations by seven surgeons using the same prosthesis to reveal the single most important factor in replacement longevity. Surprisingly, it's not the type of device that has the most impact, but rather "the surgeon factor" – how the device was put in... The surgeon factor includes pre-operative planning, preparation of the bone, "the absolutely meticulous way the prosthesis is handled" and the operation through to closure of the joint. Damage during surgery can render the joint more likely to wear... But[an] Auckland surgeon... says some failures are still inexplicable. How is it... that a patient can have two joints replaced within a year of each other by the same surgeon, using the same prosthesis – and one will last 10 years, while the other is still going strong at 20 years? While the failure of [the titanium] joint and the 3M hip are among the more spectacular disasters, they are not the only ones. In the 1980s, the development of new joints actually went backwards as theory after promising theory failed. Though doctors still regard hip replacements alongside heart transplants as one of the success stories of modern medicine, it is a story of experimentation littered with costly flops. Of the 40 or so implants used over the years, about half have failed, on average, before the 15 to 20-year threshold regarded as the clinical yardstick by which prostheses are measured... The irony is some of the earliest joints used in N[Z] – the so-called Charnley hips – remain among the most reliable today. The first problems began with attempts to improve them.

...Two N[Z]ers are helping introduce a new type of hard-wearing plastic which is being tested in hip-replacement surgery throughout the world. The technology could eventually help N[Z]ers who have hip replacements predict when their new hip will wear out and how it will fail. Assessment of the new plastic will use a monitoring technique developed... at Otago University's Wellington School of Medicine. The technique allows orthopaedic surgeons to use a computer to measure wear with an accuracy of 0.13mm or better... The three-dimensional monitoring technique, known as PolyWare... has been evaluated in Canada and the U[S], and... is accepted as being the most accurate measurement of plastic wear available. In the U[S], the FDA has a condition that any new material used in total hip replacements must have ongoing monitoring through the [PolyWare] method... PolyWare is currently used by about 35 major university centres in the US, Canada, Britain and Europe... [A]bout 4500 hip replacements were done in N[Z] annually, and up to a million worldwide... The N[Z] Orthopaedics Association has been compiling a record of every joint replacement in the country for the last three years. [PolyWare's creators hope the record] will help monitor how well the technology works... [T]rials were promising and the new plastic was being used in patients with total hip replacements... The new plastic is also being used for knee-joint replacements. Funding for the development of PolyWare has come from the Lottery Grants Board and the... [association's] Wishbone Trust.

...Doctors may soon be fixing broken bones with dissolving plastic implants to take the agony out of traditional nuts-and-bolts surgery. Engineers at Auckland University, in conjunction with German medical researchers, are set to patent a new biodegradable polymer, which dissolves in the body once the shattered pieces of bone have knitted together, replacing the need for traditional metal plates. The development means patients could soon be spared the misery of further surgery to remove titanium plates once the broken limb has healed. Preliminary trials with plastic composites already used in aircraft... suggest they are also more flexible, lighter and cope better with the growth of new bone... And although... the polymer is... slightly... more expensive than traditional materials, surgeons hope to recoup the cost by avoiding further operations on patients to remove the plates... [T]he project leader, [who]... had already used plastic composite materials to build hip protectors for elderly people at risk from falls and was developing the world's first plastic wheelchair... said metal plates had drawbacks because of their stiffness, which can impede bone growth, slowing the healing process. In some cases patients are at risk from allergic reaction to the nickel in the plates. But initial tests suggest the plastic composite does not react with human tissue and can be absorbed into the body without side-effects. The team plan to test the effectiveness of the implants using a micro-electronic measuring device, which will monitor the amount of stress placed on the implant while it is in the patient's body.

...Recovering from a broken bone...? Perhaps best to lay off painkillers such as ibuprofen, related to aspirin: they may significantly hinder the healing of broken bones, warn researchers. Studies carried out on rats suggest that non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) can delay or even prevent the mending of fractures. NSAIDs, which include aspirin and drugs made from ibuprofen such as Nurofen, are taken daily by millions of people worldwide, and a common use includes easing the pain of broken bones. According to... the Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology in London... the area needed to be investigated urgently... "In the meantime, people with healing fractures should steer clear of these drugs." ...For over 20 years there have been occasional reports of impaired bone healing in patients taking NSAIDs... – although aspirin is off the hook... "Aspirin is one of the few NSAIDs that appears to kill pain without this side-effect,"... (...low-dose aspirin... [can also] stop... recurrent miscarriages... [in gals who have] a form of the autoimmune disease lupus...)... Traditional NSAIDs inhibit the enzymes cox-1 and cox-2. The latter catalyses the production of hormone-like chemicals known as prostaglandins, involved in inflammation, while cox-1 has a variety of roles. New generation NSAIDs such as rofecoxib are designed as far as possible to block only cox-2 to minimise side-effects. But research now indicates that cox-2 may be crucial in helping bone-forming stem cells and growth-triggering chemicals to do their work, said... [t]he magazine... *New Scientist*.

...Researchers have made unspecialised embryo cells transform into bone, an advance that may offer hope of repairing diseased bones and correcting genetic bone disorders. Nearly 90[%] of the mouse embryonic stem cells... [(editor's note: US] researchers... admitted producing human embryos in laboratories and killing them to use their stem cells in research)]... in the experiment placed in a lab dish in a special liquid evolved into crunchy bone nodules, says... a British scientist... "This could lead to the creation of purified bone cells to be used in bone repair without the problems of tissue rejection," says [the scientist], a lecturer at London's Imperial College School of Medicine. "This would dramatically improve the methods of bone grafting and bone prosthesis in patients with severe traumatic bone injuries or suffering with diseases like osteoporosis."

...**OSTEOPOROSIS – the myths and the truth...** THERE ARE A NUMBER OF OBVIOUS SIGNS WHICH SHOW IF YOU'RE AT RISK OF OSTEOPOROSIS... Because bone density testing wasn't available to the public until recently, you may not know whether or not your parents suffered from [osteoporosis]. If they did, it is likely you will too as osteoporosis is partly a genetic condition... You have a higher risk if you are of European or Asian descent... [Gals] who begin menstruating relatively late, age 15 and upwards, are at a higher risk of osteoporosis[, and those] who go through the menopause early (before 45) are also more at risk because the earlier [a gal] stops menstruating, the less oestrogen exposure [it] has in a lifetime... [Gals] who are tall and slender are at additional risk[(slender people] have less bone mass than normal or heavy [people – i]n addition, the longer the bones, the easier they can break[)... Yo-yo dieting and frequent cycles of losing and then regaining six or more kilos puts you at increased risk[(eating disorders –) including both anorexia and bulimia[–] increase the risk... significantly[)... Some medications can have an impact on the risk... [–] for example, steroids, thyroid hormone treatments or medication for seizures... **THE EARLIER YOU CHANGE YOUR LIFESTYLE, THE LESS LIKELY YOU ARE TO DEVELOP OSTEOPOROSIS...** The less active you are, the greater your risk of osteoporosis

and fractures... In order to produce healthy and strong bones, you need to eat five or more servings of fruit and vegetables a day. Vitamin C is crucial for healthy bones... Vitamin K is also important... If you drink more than seven alcoholic drinks a week, the bone-building activity of your cells will be diminished. The toxins from the alcohol will prevent your bones from absorbing the maximum nutrients from your food as your liver will not be functioning at optimum capacity... Drinking more than four cups of coffee a day doubles the risk of hip fracture because it is a diuretic, sucking water from bones and joints... [Gal smokers] have significantly lower bone density because smoking reduces oestrogen levels...

Athletes may be in top shape but the gruelling physical activity and competition to which they subject themselves increases their risk of suffering bone and joint problems. Footballers are 10 times more likely to develop osteoarthritis in their hip than [non-athletes], and long-distance runners are more prone... to fractures and osteoporosis. "We suspect it is just the nature of the sport. It is almost analogous to an industrial injury," said... an orthopaedic surgeon at the Royal Bolton Hospital in Lancashire, northern England[, who was part of the team that] studied the rate of osteoarthritis in 68 football managers who had been former players and 136 [guys] who had never played football. Their research is reported in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*... In a separate study in the journal, researchers found that instead of increasing bone mineral density in [gal] athletes, long-distance running lowered it. By measuring the bone density of 52 [gals] who ran between five and 70km a week, they discovered a link between lower bone density in the spine and hip and running greater distances. [But they also]found that... athletes who do weightlifting, gymnastics and volleyball... who had more muscle than fat, had a higher bone density...

Osteopathy What is it? This therapy treats the mechanics of the human body – the bones, joints, muscles, ligaments and connective tissue. Osteopaths believe many diseases are caused by problems with the body's structure, so, if they fix the structural problems, the body will be encouraged to heal itself. *What happens when you go?* A first visit usually lasts for an hour. You will be asked about your lifestyle, work, leisure activities and your ailment. You will be examined standing, sitting and lying down, and asked to bend or stretch to see how your body responds in different positions. Your reflexes will be tested with a small, rubber-tipped hammer and you may be asked to have x-rays. The osteopath will use massage-like techniques to help relax tight muscles and tighten loose ones. Joint problems are eased with stretching exercises and gentle, repetitive movements. The osteopath may also use the high-velocity thrust technique, a rapid, painless movement, usually applied to the spine.

...A 12-year-old boy with a severely twisted spine has had his back straightened by breakthrough surgery performed for the first time in N[Z. The 12-year-old] suffered so badly from scoliosis, or curvature of the spine, that [the youngster] found it difficult to keep his balance. Now the Wanganui youngster is keen to get back on his skateboard and play basketball, using the... height [it] has gained from the operation. [Hi]s spine was repaired through small holes in his skin by Starship children's hospital paediatric spinal surgeons... using a new keyhole technique considered largely experimental. The technique means [the boy]'s recovery has been much quicker, his risk of complications reduced and the scars are much smaller. [One of the surgeons] described the technique as an exciting breakthrough but warned that it was not suitable for all children with scoliosis. [The boy] was diagnosed with scoliosis several years ago while in hospital for treatment to help him put on weight. In the past year, his condition worsened rapidly. His twisted spine caused his right shoulder-blade and ribs to protrude significantly. Scoliosis nearly always occurs during the growth spurt just before and during adolescence, although it is occasionally found as a birth defect. A small degree of spinal curvature occurs in 10[%] of the population. Only 0.3 to 0.5[%] of adolescents suffer from a severely curved spine. The straightened spine gave [the 12-year-old] an extra 8cm in height and significantly reduced the prominence of his shoulder and ribs. The operation... involved making three small incisions in his back. Doctors then inserted tubes in the holes which allowed them to pass through a camera on a scope and surgical instruments. The special instruments needed for the surgery cost \$20,000 and were financed by Mercury Energy through the Starship Foundation. Surgeons collapsed [the boy]'s lung to allow them access to the spine from inside the body. Portions of six of [hi]s ribs were removed and cut into small chips. A number of soft discs which allow the spine to sink into an "S" shape were removed and the rib chips inserted in their place to make a solid structure. Surgeons then cut along the length of [hi]s spine from the outside and attached two metal rods to either side to give it permanent support. The spine will take from six to 12 months to settle into its new shape. If doctors had used the more common technique, they would have had to make a large cut running from [hi]s side around under the shoulder blade. [The boy]'s mother... said his condition... was upsetting for him and could have led to his lungs becoming congested. "[My son] used to have real trouble... balanc[ing]. Now my son]... no longer walks like [it] is drunk."

...a horse riding fall consigned [him]... to life in a wheelchair. But [the actor] has... expressed his determination to walk again... Throughout his comfortable, light-filled home... near Boston, a nurse, a publicist, aides and assistants are busy. His actress wife... is not at home. Out back, their son... (5) plays ball with another boy and... the family dog... All around [the actor], people are moving... But... [the actor] is still. Since May 27, 1995, when [it] fell from his horse in a riding competition and damaged the first two vertebrae of his back, [the actor] has been unable to move much of anything below his neck. But the 45-year-old... *Superman* of four films and star of 14 others, believes that, because of stunning scientific advances in spinal cord injury research [made over]the past decade, [it]'ll be able to walk by his 50th birthday. "Maybe a bit sooner,"... In the meantime, [it] has written an autobiography, *Still Me*, which is in bookstores this week. The title is taken from something [his wife] said to him as [the actor] lay broken and terrified in a hospital bed in the days after the accident. "...I mouthed my first lucid words to her: 'Maybe we should let me go.' [My wife]... said: 'I am only going to say this once: I will support whatever you want to do, because this is your life and your decision. But I want you to know that I'll be with you for the long haul, no matter what'. Then [my wife] added the words that saved my life: 'You're still you. And I love you'." The couple, together for 11 years, have become a model of courage under fire and of devotion. They sleep in adjoining single beds, unable to share a bed because of the equipment [the actor] needs and the possibility of his having spasms in the night... "I've told her once I get out of this mess that [it] has a lot of loving attention coming her way,"... [The actor] is relentlessly hopeful, even... seeing some progress: On a good day [it] can breathe without the aid of a ventilator for two hours at a time by using his neck and shoulder muscles. Recently, for about half an hour a day, [the actor] has been able to breathe normally by expanding his diaphragm. That's a "significant development" because it means [the actor] has recovered function in nerve cells below his injury, suggesting some of the nerves have either made new connections or strengthened whatever connection survived. "What I'm doing now with the entire body... is getting everything ready for the reconnection of nerves." Doctors are cautious but will not say it's impossible... FOR thousands of years, a spinal cord injury meant one thing: If the patient survived the accident or the pneumonia that was likely to set in soon after, they were destined to spend the rest of their life in a chair. A spinal cord injury is "not to be treated", Egyptian physicians wrote 2500 years ago, and until the last decade... there was not much to challenge that philosophy. Few young researchers were tempted to spend their lives on what was believed to be a dead-end road. That has changed dramatically, thanks to important discoveries and areas of research that have brought excitement to scientists and others in the tight-knit community of spinal cord injury. "The progress of the last five to seven years has been truly breathtaking," sa[ys the]... director of research at the American Paralysis Association... "A true revolution has occurred in biology," sa[ys the]... director of the neuroscience centre at Rutgers University and one of [the actor]'s consulting physicians... "The recognition that regeneration can occur in the central nervous system is on a par with the recognition that the world is not governed solely by Newtonian physics." But [the neuroscientist] and other scientists say that because of the complexities of the spinal cord, there is still a long way to go... [The actor] is doing his part... speak[ing] frequently at benefits and other large gatherings. This month [it]'ll give commencement addresses at the University of Virginia and Pace University... [The actor, who] has no bladder, bowel or sexual function... exercises every day, using hi-tech equipment that prevents atrophy of his muscles by stimulating them through electrodes attached to his legs, arms and abdomen. Through exercise, "I'm helping myself from sliding backwards into negative emotion... And I'm also preparing my body to meet the scientists halfway when they've accomplished their task." ...[the actor hasn't given up his career – it] directed an HBO special, *In the Gloaming*... last

April, and... hop[es] his next project will be a remake of the classic... film *Rear Window*[, in which it] wants to show “a seriously disabled person in a positive light”... There are... 5000 people with spinal cord injury in N[Z]... 60% of them quadriplegics... 100 new cases are admitted to spinal units annually. [A local r]ehabilitation medicine specialist... said while there was promising work in rats “the unfortunate reality is it doesn’t translate into humans...” ...Methylprednisolone, a steroid[that ha]s been a standard treatment since 1990[–] when a study showed... people given the drug within eight hours of injury had less damage to their cell membranes, which contributes to death of nerve cells... [–] was used here but the benefits were “pretty small”... Researchers are trying to get the connections that remain after an injury to work again[(o)ne reason they often don’t is damage to the myelin sheath, a coating over the nerve fibres that increases the transmission of signals along nerves[by]... testing a drug, 4-aminopyridine, that acts temporarily as a myelin coating, improving muscle response. “More permanent solutions... include drugs that stimulate re-myelination and transplantation of re-myelinating cells.”

...A [guy] whose legs were paralysed in a car accident 10 years ago has taken a few steps after a microchip was implanted to stimulate his muscles... [The surgeon, who is the] coordinator of a European project called Stand Up and Walk, said that his pioneering technique worked only on paraplegics who still had viable muscle tissue... [The 39-year-old patient] underwent surgery in Montpellier... last September to implant a microchip in his abdomen to provide electrical signals to... electrodes attached to the nerves and main muscles used in walking. The technique is so complex that [the patient] needed a second operation on February 14 because of technical problems with the implant... Both patient and doctors would have their work cut out to revive the muscle action in the next six months. Another French[perso]n and two Italians will be the next patients to benefit from the project, which brings together doctors and medical experts from Britain, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands.

...Japanese technology has allowed two crippled Brit[s]... to walk again. Sensors placed over certain muscle groups in the[patients’] good leg linked to stimulators implanted in their paralysed leg triggered programmed electrical impulses in 11 electrodes in the disabled leg, allowing it to move. The *New Scientist* said it could be five years before the technology became generally available... [In further news from Britain, a] clinical trial involving the transplantation of nerve cells from aborted foetuses into the damaged brains of stroke patients will begin next year... Medical researchers believe that foetal cells have the ability to develop into the fully mature nerve cells of the adult brain, enabling stroke victims to make a remarkable recovery from what has until now been an incurable condition... [A] former researcher at the Institute of Psychiatry in London and chief scientific officer of ReNeuron, the company established to develop the technique, said animal studies had shown that it was possible to recover well from a stroke, or blood clot on the brain, which could cause permanent paralysis... If the pilot trial is successful, a larger trial will follow.

...Transplants using the brain tissue of dead people could become reality after pioneering work has shown it is possible to grow nerve cells extracted from human corpses. Medical researchers have taken living cells from the brains of dead people in an attempt to discover a new source of valuable stem cells, [to complement sources such as aborted foetuses and ‘lyposuction fat’]... Using post-mortem samples from 23 children and adults, the scientists found they could grow at least three types of brain cell in a test tube for possible transplant operations on people with degenerative neurological conditions such as Parkinson’s disease. “I find it remarkable that we all have pockets of cells in our brains that can grow and differentiate throughout our lives and even after death,”... said... [the professor who] led... the... team... [at] Salk Institute in La Jolla, California... The time of death when the cells were extracted varied from two hours to 20 hours. [In related news, an ‘AUSn courier has lost a donated kidney’.]

...AN English bar[tender] who died in a Greek holiday accident had his kidney stolen by hospital authorities. His parents want it back.

...[the paramedic] is trained to save bodies mangled in road crashes. But at each horror accident scene [it] couldn’t stop thinking about a struggle for life closer to home. Her husband... was battling diseased kidneys, waiting for a donor. One accident sticks in her mind. A teenager died. A few hours later [her hubby] got the call [they] had been waiting for – a kidney match had been found. “I’ll never know for sure, but that dead boy might well have been the donor,”... Celebrations were short-lived when [the husband]’s body rejected the transplant. Life continued on home dialysis... Six months later another kidney donor match was found. This time the transplant was a success. [The husband] was able to complete his nursing studies and now works in the coronary unit at Auckland Hospital. Four months ago the couple had their first child... “Every anniversary of the transplant we open a bottle of wine and celebrate another year of life... And we pause to remember that someone is grieving the death of a person they loved.”

...The Mexican teenager who had a second heart-lung transplant after [it] was initially given a set of incompatible organs... d[ied] yesterday.

...a g[orgeous] Hamilton teenager... sleeps with a giant teddy bear to help heal the pain of losing her best friend and soulmate, Jason Uluave, to leukaemia. While the cuddly soft toy, which... has [been] christened Wax after her boyfriend’s nickname, helps to replace the physical absence of her partner, nothing will ever take the place in her heart that Jason held. “I’ll always miss him,” says [the 18-year-old], who was with Jason in his final hours. “But Jase will always be here with me.” ...[NZers] were touched by Jason’s heartfelt plea for a bone marrow transplant. Being part Tongan, [Jason] had exhausted the 4500 Polynesian people on the register without finding a donor when [Jason] appealed to the public for help... “It would only take a bit of your time and it would give me back my life... Please help me. I’d be your friend for life.” Although an extra 600 people were inspired to donate their bone marrow, [Jason’s]... family was unable to find a match... “It’s so hard knowing that there is someone out there who could have helped Jase,” says his mum... “[Jase] didn’t want to die, no way, but at least [Jase i]s not in pain and... not suffering. When [Jase] was first diagnosed two years ago, [Jase] sat on the bed and said, ‘Why me? Why did I have to get sick?’ and it broke my heart because I didn’t have an answer for him.” [Jason’s mum] says the guilt [it] feels over not being able to help her child is immense, but... is working towards healing the pain. “I’m trying to remember the good times.” One of those good times was a birthday party Jason had shortly before his death. “Jase... was turning 20... and... asked... if [it] could get some beers and have his mates around. They had a great time together. Jase even got up for a while... For a moment I forgot how sick [Jase was because Jase] was so happy.” A few weeks later, Jason was... [dea]d... “Even though it’s painful, it happens for a reason and Jason realised that. [Jason] knew that if we couldn’t find him a donor, the effort we made may have been able to help another.”

...Organ donation may be a personal choice, but who is making the decision? N[Z]’s first Organ Donor Awareness Week kicked off on Monday in a bid to publicise the urgent need for more donors and to remind people to discuss their wishes with their families. [A] Glen Eden resident... has someone else’s heart beating in his chest after a virus claimed his own in 1990. [It] waited six months for a suitable heart, and when the transplant finally took place in December 1990... didn’t have much longer to live. Despite his fears, [the resident] had the operation and now... lives a healthy life not much different to the one [it] had before... Not surprisingly [the resident] is himself a donor, but... says it is not something that should be pushed on anyone. “I have a mate who had an organ transplant that saved his life but... says [it wouldn’t] donate his own organs. I can’t understand that but it’s a pretty personal thing. The most important thing we need to get across is that you are not the one making the decision, your family and friends are. You need to discuss it with them so they know your wishes when the time comes.” Waiting for someone else’s organs and knowing that they have to come from a dead body does funny things to you... “You get quite ghoulish, you pray for long weekends because there are lots of road accidents. But of course you never lose an appreciation for that person.” ...not all organ donations have to come from someone who has died. The Auckland District Kidney Society is also holding Kidney Week this week. The non-profit organisation provides low level support for people who have to have a kidney transplant or have to go on dialysis. In some of these cases, a kidney can come from a live donor[– e.g.,] a family member. They have the same tissue as the patient, so it is more likely to be accepted by the body than one from a stranger... ■ [A patient]... who received a liver transplant got a life-threatening nut allergy from the new organ, A[US]n doctors say. The liver came from a 15-year-old boy

who died of an allergic reaction to peanuts... [A]n immunology specialist at Sydney's Royal Prince Alfred Hospital who was involved in the case... knew of only one other report in medical literature of an allergy being passed on in an organ transplant. While such cases may be rare, organ donors should be screened for allergies and transplant patients should be warned to take precautions... Such allergies generally would be noted during the organ procurement process, which involves obtaining information on the donor's health history, said... the United Networks for Organ Sharing. The 60-year-old... patient and his doctors did not know about the boy's condition, which had not been formally diagnosed. The [patient] underwent the transplant at the Sydney hospital... The day after being sent home, [it] ate some cashews. Within 15 minutes [it] developed anaphylaxis – a life-threatening allergic reaction. [It] recovered after hospitalisation and drug treatment... About 11 months after his transplant... tests suggested the allergy was waning, but the [patient] died two years after the operation... [TNX-901, a] new anti-allergy drug tested successfully in the U[S – where the p]eanut allergy... kill[s] 50 to 100 people... a year[–] ...gives hope to more than 20,000 N[Z]ers at risk of a potentially fatal reaction to peanuts[]].

...Surgeons are preparing to carry out the first full-face transplants for seriously disfigured patients. Experts at the Royal Free Hospital in north London claim that new microsurgical techniques make it possible to graft on a new face. The prospect of facial transplantation, in which a patient would undergo at least 10 hours' surgery to receive new skin, bone, lips, a chin, ears and a nose from a donor, may seem more akin to science fiction... The proposals are likely to go out for nationwide consultation next year, once surgeons have proved that it is anatomically feasible. The technique – and the considerable ethical barriers it faces – will be debated for the first time at the British Association of Plastic Surgery conference this week. Surgeons will argue that it could transform the lives of people disfigured by cancer, accidents or burns. If the public can be won over, the new procedure could be only 18 months away... New microsurgical devices, coupled with better anti-rejection drugs, have brought the transplant closer to reality. Eight blood vessels – four arteries and four veins – providing blood to the face would have to be removed from the donor. A separate team of surgeons would remove, or “de-glove”, the face, facial muscles, skin and sub-cutaneous fat from the recipient. Once they had the new face, they would begin to attach the nerves that control movement and feeling in the face. Without successful nerve regeneration, transplantation would be useless... [A] plastic surgeon... said: “It may seem an extraordinary concept, but it comes from a desire to help those who have to live with very serious deformities. If the reasons behind this are explained fully to the public, they may overcome their revulsion.”

...Surgeons have come up with a device that can change the shape of something as personal as a face, and save youngsters from the stigma and embarrassment of abnormalities... It's not that easy to spot at a glance but [the little Auckland] was born with one half of her face smaller than the other. Yesterday, in a first for the country, the three-year-old underwent a delicate new surgical procedure designed to outwit her abnormality and let her body grow new bone to make her face even... In yesterday's operation, [a p]lastic surgeon... implanted inside [the girl]'s face a tiny metal device about the size of an adult's little finger. It was locked on to the cut jaw-bone and will be slowly cranked apart over coming weeks to widen the gap between the bone ends. The device stimulates soft tissue to grow and stretch as the body's own healing mechanism forms new bone to heal the [hu]man-made fracture... Surgeons at Middlemore Hospital... say... all going well, [the toddler] should be right in just eight weeks... [W]ithout surgery the pretty toddler's face would have looked extremely distorted. The technique has in the past been extensively applied to the long bones of the leg and arm. But recently it has been applied in the head and face and ever smaller devices are being developed for use in the skull and jaw for a variety of congenital abnormalities. Without it [the toddler] would have had two options – to wear a similar device but one which protrudes from the outside of her face, or to wait until [it] was a teenager to have her face cut open and reconstructed with the use of bones from other parts of her body... “Standard bone grafting techniques don't give you the results you want, so we're using this to move bones in new directions, if you will. We must have at least a dozen kids on our books who need this kind of surgery,” the plastic surgeon... said... The new surgery should help hundreds of children born each year with facial defects such as cleft palate, which can lead to cruel taunting in the schoolyard and ongoing physical problems.

...British scientists have identified the gene that causes cleft palate. The finding could improve the diagnosis and treatment of the congenital disorder. About one in 600 babies is born with cleft palate, a condition where the two sides of the roof of the mouth do not fuse properly. Researchers at Imperial College, London, found the TBX22 gene on the X chromosome by using information from the Human Gene Project. “By identifying the gene that causes X-linked cleft palate we will understand much more about the cause of the condition,” said... the head of the research team. “In the long term it will also shed more light on other forms of the disorder and lead to effective treatments other than corrective surgery,”... The discovery may also help scientists uncover a link between inherited cases of the disorder and those that occur sporadically.

...No-one in... [a] Kaiapoi... household dares sleep with their bedroom door closed – [the]parents... fear they will wake to find one of their children dead. [Their three children, aged] 18... 16 and... 14, all suffer from Long QT syndrome, a rare condition that short-circuits the heart's electrical system. The slightest rush of adrenaline could kill them – even a late phone call in their... home... can be deadly. As a precaution against an unexpected fright, every phone in the house is switched off during the night, except the one [the parents]... keep muffled under a pillow in case of an emergency. Inherited from their father's side of the family, the rare affliction has already claimed the life of [hi]s niece and twice [dad has saved his youngest daughter], bringing her back from the brink of death with CPR... [The girl] remembers nothing about her first brush with death three years ago... Her mother... was startled from her sleep by a “strange wind-type noise” coming from [the girl's room. Mum] later learned from doctors that the sound was a “death rattle”, the body's final gasps for air... After [her] second brush with death late last year, [it] now lives with a pacemaker/defibrillator in her chest, that regulates her heartbeat and gives her a cardiac jump-start in an emergency. Doctors have warned her against doing anything on her own. At times [the 14-year-old], believed to be the youngest in the Southern Hemisphere with the life-saving device, feels as though her every step is monitored... For years, the condition that causes wild and irregular heartbeats went undiagnosed and mysterious “blackouts” were written off as fainting spells or minor heart attacks. It wasn't until [the girl], the worst affected by the syndrome, almost died after a Halloween celebration that an abnormality was spotted on a routine electrocardiogram... Further tests showed that almost 20 members of [her dad]'s family were affected by the condition. Surprisingly, [the dad's] eldest daughter... 20, and her 14-month-old son... were given a medical clearance. But [the parents say their eldest child], who is deaf, has experienced similar symptoms and they are adamant [the 20-year-old] is also affected... [By the way, two British constables] in Sunderland... nicked a deaf and dumb lad because they thought his sign language was a rude gesture. [The lad], 22, was stopped for munching pizza in the middle of a road after downing birthday drinks. [The lad] made the sign for “I am deaf” – the first two fingers held together – and pointed at an ear. But [the]... not so... PC... constables... thought [it] was giving them the two-fingered salute and arrested him... His brother, [aged] 20, was also arrested as [it] tried to explain their blunder and the pair were locked in cells overnight. The case was eventually thrown out.

...Ear, ear turn down volume TEENS should wear ear muffs to rock concerts or risk going deaf before middle age. The Hearing Association says one in five Kiwi youngsters have hearing damage from exposure to loud music. “Some music at concerts is louder than standing next to a jumbo taking off... That ringing in your ears after a concert is actually damage to hearing cells and it can be irreversible.” New technology boosting the maximum volume of music systems is being blamed for increased numbers of youngsters with hearing problems. “Proper ear muffs should be worn when there is exposure to loud noise, whatever the source... There should be breaks from noise so ears have a chance to recover. It is prolonged exposure that causes the long-term problems.” More than 400,000 Kiwis have hearing loss, with 90,000 needing hearing aids.

...Clinical trials are about to start on a microchip implant that can enable the profoundly deaf to lead virtually normal lives. Researchers at Imperial College, London, have developed an artificial cochlea that mimics the sound-processing functions of the human ear. They say the invention is a world first. In contrast to conventional hearing aids, which simply amplify sound, the microchip converts sound vibrations into

electrical signals which stimulate the auditory nerves, thus triggering the hearing process in the brain. One of the main advantages of the invention is that it is fully implantable, thus eliminating the need for bulky external hardware and allowing the user to hear while participating in... day-to-day activities. Cochlear implants available at present must be worn externally and require frequent battery changes. The Imperial College... device... dramatically reduces the power required and is also more user-friendly. Patients can control the tone insensitivity directly and need to recharge the device only once a year. With further development the device is expected to be significantly cheaper than conventional implants.

...[conventional artificial eyeballs – which are supplied to people who have lost one eye – generally remain stationary in their sockets, but scientists in ‘AUS have developed artificial “orbital implants” that can be connected to the eye muscles’ so they move like the real thing and, hence, are less obvious.]

...Scientists believe the recent discovery of a new family of proteins may lead them to a cure for conditions like gigantism, dwarfism and obesity. The hope rests on the discovery by A[US]n researchers about five years ago of a protein known as SOCS – or suppressors of cytokine signalling. The SOCS act as “negative regulators” that suppress the hormones responsible for cell growth. Since then, research has shown that regulating the activity of SOCS could “turn on” or “turn off” the hormones that influence obesity, gigantism and dwarfism... [– e]xperiments... showed mice grew to abnormal sizes when their SOCS were turned off... [–] as well as strengthening the body’s immune system to disease. The Cooperative Research Centre for Cellular Growth Factors, which was established by the A[US]n Government in 1991, is undertaking the research. [The centre’s d]irector... told a Sydney conference that the discovery of SOCS was a biological springboard for further advances – just as the discovery of histamines 50 years ago paved the way for the development of antihistamines. “These proteins just turn off the cell when it’s overstimulated. If we understood how we can turn off responses, then we can actually think about how we might regulate those processes through drugs,”... In practical terms, the discovery could form the basis of a cure for cancer and infectious diseases like HIV/Aids by increasing immune responses... “With cancer, for instance, bumping up the immune system might be able to protect the cells from the invasiveness of the cancer cells.”

...Industrial action has interrupted treatment of ...a... 16-year-old[’s]... brain tumour for the second year running and [it] fears delays could make his condition worse. And while the Auckland District Health Board girds for a fresh round of radiographers’ strikes... tensions between staff and management are boiling over. Last year, when [the teenager] was considered inoperable, radiotherapy to shrink it was delayed by the therapists’ strike at Auckland Hospital. Now [the hospital’s] neurosurgeon... is prepared to operate, but the surgery has been deferred because of walkouts by radiographers. “It’s pretty frustrating,”... [The teenager]’s tumour was growing slowly. Deterioration of his condition was unlikely because of the delay, “but I don’t know.” Last Thursday, [the teenager] received a letter from Auckland Hospital saying [it] would be admitted yesterday for surgery today. But within hours of the letter’s arrival, the hospital cancelled the appointment. [Hi]s mother... said that after... [they complained to the Health Minister]’s office an official phoned to say the operation could be done in several weeks, but gave no specific date. The hospital is cancelling nearly all non-urgent surgery and many outpatient clinics at Auckland, Starship, Green Lane and National [Gals’] hospitals from today in preparation for the 48-hour strikes starting on Thursday... □ [During]... a month-long doctors’ strike in Israel in 1973... the death rate dropped... by ... 40[%]...

N[Z] is ranked 80th in health system efficiency by the W[HO]... based on a survey of 191 countries measuring how successful [they] are at turning expenditure into positive health outcomes that improve life expectancy. Mediterranean countries dominated the top 10... N[Z] lags behind Britain (24), A[US] (39), the U[S] (72), Nicaragua (74)... and... Brazil (78)... The 10 least-efficient health systems are found in Africa... The... WHO... attributes their rankings to civil unrest and the high rate of HIV and Aids... The information used to estimate healthcare efficiency was taken from 1993 to 1997. The... information did not measure the quality of healthcare – it was more “an efficiency index charting what you get out compared to what you put in”... Oman... was ranked the most “efficient” because... [in] 40 years... it had dramatically reduced child mortality rates from 310 to 81 per 1000 live births... While N[Z] ranked just ahead of... Yemen, [the] Waitemata District Health Board chief executive... believed... we had an efficient system. “I think it’s run quite efficiently but certainly from the outcome measures, we don’t do as well in terms of life expectancy.” ...the high rate of road fatalities, youth suicides, bowel cancer and melanoma, combined with the gap between Maori and non-Maori, meant that our life expectancy was not as high as it could be. “That’s probably what’s dragging us down rather than inefficiency in terms of spending,”... said [the chief executive. However, a NZ] Nurses Organisation spokes[perso]n... said that our health system was “terribly inefficient” when it comes to staffing issues. A lack of workforce planning over the past decade had led to a severe nursing shortage. Patients were either being turned away or receiving less than ideal care, which [the spokesperson] believed was an inefficient use of the healthcare dollar. “The ranking doesn’t surprise me because we see inefficiencies all the time in our health system,”... [The] Health Minister... did not wish to comment yesterday as [it] had not read the report.

...[our correspondent] in London reports on persistent health anxiety – a condition all too real for its sufferers. For some people, feelings of pre-occupation with a disease – or indeed any number of illnesses – don’t pass as they do for most of us. Rather, they grow and start to dominate the way they think about themselves, their body and their future. The persistence of this anxiety about health is what separates the “worried well” from the hypochondriac. [One person], aged 52, is often told that her feeling that [it] has ovarian cancer is “only” her imagination. [The 52-year-old] has had three private investigative operations, countless tests and visited more than 20 doctors in England, France and Spain. Nothing has been found to be medically wrong with her, yet that does not reassure or stop her trying to find “better” medical advice. The fear, anticipation and certainty of having an illness has taken over, costing her time and money and affecting the quality of her life. Her husband... feels that this experience is marrring their life almost as much as a physical illness “because increasingly [my wife] lives like an invalid. I think I have probably gone along with it all too much, but every time [my wife] saw a new doctor I thought [it] might believe what they said.” ...the director for anxiety disorders at the Maudsley Hospital in London... treats cases of “persistent health anxiety” with cognitive-behavioural therapy... [The p]rofessor... does not test his patients for the illness they think they have because the nature of health anxiety means that this almost certainly will not offer reassurance. Instead, they go through a series of behavioural experiments in which they will find out for themselves that they may be interpreting their symptoms of anxiety as a physical illness. “For instance, someone may think there is something wrong with the glands in their neck, that their size is indicative of a serious disease, and repeatedly touch them to check. We would suggest that they may actually be causing the glands to become inflamed and/or enlarged because of this constant touching. Each case is different, though, so the cognitive therapy is, of course, personalised.” ...Hypochondriacs want a certainty that they are 100[%] well. But the truth is that there is no doctor on earth that can ever be completely certain about the health of a patient. For most of us, that slight uncertainty is something we accept as part of life, but for hypochondriacs, it becomes a daily torment – a torment that can finally be relieved only by specialist psychiatric help... [Incidentally,] last May... a... 58[-year-old West Aucklander realised it] had put on weight. A size 22-24, [the westie] couldn’t find anything to wear to a friend’s 40th. [The westie] became depressed and refused to leave the house. But as her stomach ballooned, [the westie] realised it wasn’t a dieting issue, it was something more sinister. “I hid behind my kitchen table wearing baggy jumpers. I never let anybody see how much weight I was putting on. “They didn’t realise because I was losing weight in my face and arms because I wasn’t eating.” Looking back, [the westie says it] lost interest in everything, even ...he[r] grandchildren. “I was sure I was dying of cancer so I had even prepared my will.” Her three adult sons didn’t know how to talk to their mother about medical issues, so her daughters-in-law got a doctor to visit... her... [at] home... By that stage [the westie] was 116kg. Hospital tests revealed it was a cyst which had forced her kidneys up almost to her shoulder blades and distorted her bowel... although [the westie]... was never in any pain... [The westie] made medical history... six weeks ago... when surgeons removed [the] 28kg cyst... from her stomach. The bulbous mound was the... largest even known in N[Z].

...a... 40-year-old Wellingtonian is one of 10 [gals in NZ] diagnosed with a rare lung and kidney disease – so rare that only a handful of doctors know enough about it to recognise the symptoms. Lymphangioleiomyomatosis, known as LAM, affects only [gals] of childbearing age. It produces cysts on the lungs and kidneys which restrict breathing and cause the lungs to collapse. And the disease is a killer. There is no cure or treatment and once diagnosed, sufferers usually die within 10 years. Just over a year ago, [an Aucklander who had]... a family member with the disease... set up the LAM Charity Trust, which raises money for... research... [– although t]he... main focus of the trust is to raise awareness of the disease, especially among the medical profession... “Before we can hope to start finding a treatment or a cure we have to make sure everyone knows the disease is out there... A lot of the time these kids may be misdiagnosed or not diagnosed at all because the GPs don’t know what they are looking at...”

...A... m[um] is numb... after treatment for a disease [it] probably did not have. Suffering... severe headaches, [it]... was taken to Waikato Hospital... with suspected amoebic meningitis. The Matamata m[um] had swum at Opal Hot Springs and a spa pool at Matamata Sports Centre... days before... [D]rs saw what seemed to be classic signs of amoebae in a sample of spinal fluid. “Most patients slip within a matter of days to a week into a coma and then they just die,” [the hospital’s microbiologist] said. “Early treatment is critical.” Doctors immediately injected an antibiotic, amphotericin B, into [the mum]’s spine. But [the microbiologist] could not find *naegleria fowleri* in a sample of spinal fluid [it] tested. The amoeba is associated with most cases of meningoencephalitis. The initial findings were unable to be confirmed, but [the mum] now walks with crutches and was told the numbness was likely to be permanent... [The microbiologist] wished medical science could solve the mystery of [the mum]’s condition.

...A [34-year-old mother of two] who went to hospital for a throat operation requiring an overnight stay awoke two days later to find [it] had been set alight during surgery and suffered horrific burns... “The first breath I took when I woke up was when I felt the tracheotomy. I knew something must have gone wrong.” ...[it] returned... home on Thursday, four weeks after going into Dunedin Hospital for laser surgery on her throat to clear a build-up of scar tissue from earlier operations... The Invercargill [resident] and her family now face financial hardship as her husband has had to stop work to care for their children. ACC is investigating... to establish if hers is a case of medical misadventure... and may eventually give... [he]r compensation, but the inquiry will take months to complete... Otago District Health Board yesterday conceded... the surgery “probably” should have been done differently. Surgeons used a plastic oxygen tube... instead of a metal one[, which]... was too big for the unusually narrow airway... The intense heat of the laser next to the plastic... ignited [i]t... inside her throat, and the oxygen fuelled the fire. In August, a [mum] was set alight during a caesarean operation at Waitakere Hospital, and a month before that a [patient] was burned during an appendix operation at Middlemore Hospital. [The 34-year-old] learned... her larynx, windpipe and vocal cords were burned and blistered and a lump of molten plastic discovered near her lung was removed... [Her] voice is now husky and weak, and [the 34-year-old] struggles to maintain speech for any length of time. “I’m really having to take one day at a time. I’m living on painkillers one day to the next, trying to figure out how to get through the day.” ...In 10 days [the 34-year-old] will go for follow-up surgery, with the same surgeon who did her original operation. “I figure that if it was his mistake, then [the surgeon] can fix it.” ...Medical experts say the risk of fire with lasers is well known. One said incidents were rare, but precautions were always taken.

...Hospitals have been warned about the risks of starting non-urgent surgery after hours after two swabs were left inside a patient because nurses working overtime forgot to make a final count. A... trampoline accident... wound on the... right hip... [of the] 12-year-old girl, became infected... The error led to three more operations, including one where a drain was inadvertently stitched into the... wound and had to be surgically removed. The series of mishaps caused the girl considerable psychological stress... Her father complained to the Health and Disability Commissioner... who found that the nurses, surgeon and public hospital had provided substandard care... [but] has suppressed all parties’ names. [The commissioner] told the *Herald* [it didn’t] want to make scapegoats of the[m]... and aimed to promote a culture of safety, not blame. “This could have happened at any public hospital in N[Z].” In his decision, [the commissioner] said the mistake with the swabs was an accident waiting to happen[that] was within the hospital’s control to prevent. Several factors had set the scene for human error that evening. The surgery began after-hours, at 5.50 pm, with both nurses working overtime. The orthopaedic surgery was not performed in the usual theatre, which was tied up with an emergency, so one nurse had to leave several times to fetch extra equipment. The scrub nurse was also acting as the surgeon’s assistant, and there were two wound sites... further complicat[ing] the procedure. “I consider that it is unsatisfactory to allow complex spinal surgery to take place in the presence of so many complicating factors, as this increases the likelihood of errors or omissions.” In such conditions it was better to postpone surgery. [The commissioner] agreed... the implication of his decision would be far reaching for all hospitals... [It] sent his findings to the 21 district health boards and the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, the Nursing Council and other health authorities... [The commissioner, who] also criticised the hospital... concerned... for stopping the nurses from apologising to the patient for their mistake... had received favourable feedback to his recommendations from the hospital... and was satisfied with the action taken... [The] Nurses Organisation... said yesterday that pressure was increasing on public hospitals to perform volumes of surgery that overwhelmed their resources. [Its CEO] was unaware of the spinal surgery swabs mistake, but said it was unfair in such cases to blame the staff when the demands placed on the system meant the margin for error was too small.

...Almost two-thirds of N[Z] doctors who took part in an international survey feel hospital staff are discouraged from reporting medical errors. The... International Health Policy Survey of Physicians interviewed 493 N[Z] doctors and specialists, comparing their views with those of colleagues in Canada, A[US], Britain and the U[S]. The... findings are being discussed at a Commonwealth Fund forum in Washington, attended by [NZ’s] Health Minister... and Director-General of Health... 64[%] of general hospital doctors in N[Z] and 46[%] of specialists felt hospital staff were encouraged not to report errors... “I’m also a bit surprised, given the legal protections that are available in N[Z] that are not available in those other countries,”... [said the] Health and Disability Commissioner... These protections included the accident compensation scheme, which prevented doctors being sued by their patients, and the emphasis of the commissioner’s office on resolving disputes. “But the survey highlights that we have got a problem and I’m concerned by the clear perception I have observed... that people may think it is better to keep their mouth shut about errors.” Hospitals needed a culture change as well as a system to deal with mistakes that was balanced by public accountability for serious lapses. The... Association of Salaried Medical Specialists... said the results reflected years of under-resourcing and a lack of reporting systems. “The whole question of reporting medical errors has not been part of the central ethos of hospitals, [which]... have been preoccupied with survival.”

...All medical errors will have to be automatically reported under new guidelines health authorities are drafting. There is no consistent requirement at present to report and investigate medical errors or system failures which increase medical risk. The Health Funding Authority says international trends, impending law changes and public outrage over the Gisborne cervical cancer scandal have prompted it to begin work on a mandatory “sentinel event” reporting system. [The HFA’s] project coordinator... says work began on the mandatory reporting issue only in the past month, about the time the *Herald* was revealing horrific cases of medical misadventure where victims have limited access to compensation... In the Gisborne case a number of agencies knew about... [the pathologist]’s failure to correctly read the cervical smear slides of [a gal] at the centre of the High Court case that first brought the scandal to public attention, but none had an obligation to report the failure to the... Ministry of Health... or the authority. The move... also follows an announcement by [the] US President... last month of a nationwide system for reporting medical errors in America... [NZ’s] project has the support of both the Medical Association and the Medical Council. [The council’s chairperson]... said many mistakes in the health sector occurred “because of deficiencies in the health system as well as poor performance by the practitioners.”

...SYSTEMS failures are to blame for at least 90[%] of errors in the treatment of hospital patients, says Waitakere Hospital’s clinical leader... N[Z]’s health care system “actually promotes errors and the consequences of those errors are sometimes devastating for patients”. His comments

follow [the publication of] a study... that shows 10.7[%] of patients admitted to N[Z] hospitals are harmed by their treatment. [The clinical leader] says hospitals need a “much more sophisticated” understanding of what causes errors and accidents and how to prevent them[, but adds that NZ]... hospitals are lucky to have good doctors and staff who are “very vigilant” and... prevent harm to the[ir patients by detecting]... most of th[e] errors...

The Medical Council is pushing to be told of all cases of medical misadventure discovered through accident investigations. In a deal signed last month, the A[CC] agreed to inform the council of all findings against doctors of medical “error” – the more serious category of misadventure, which can involve negligence. But it has stopped passing on findings of medical “mishap” – defined as rare and severe complications of a treatment properly given. Under the deal... the corporation will alert the council if a doctor is the subject of five mishap findings in five years, or more than one in a year... The number of mishaps would be set higher for those working in areas where medical or surgical complications were more likely, such as obstetrics... But [the]Medical Association chair[person]... said his group objected to any use of ACC mishap findings for disciplinary action or competence reviews... [because c]omplications sometimes occurred in medicine and the doctors in mishap cases were explicitly not at fault.

...A... study... confirm[s] what most of us, especially pharmacists, have known for years: the legibility of doctors’ writing is pretty bad. The s[tudy, that] examined how health workers wrote letters and numbers, gave doctors a definite thumbs-down, even when they were asked to write neatly.

...A new family doctor internet site has over 200 articles written by doctors and specialists specifically for the public. The articles cover a wide range of conditions... This friendly, reliable information is free to view, and can be regularly used to find out more information about health conditions for yourself, family and friends. Visit www.familydoctor.co.nz today.

...the N[Z] Telepaediatric Service, which will allow specialists to treat children from a distance[, is now operational].

...A 68-year-old French [citizen] has had her gall bladder removed by surgeons who were more than 6400km away... in what is claimed to be the first intercontinental surgical operation. The French surgeon and his team... [from] the Research Institute Against Cancers of the Digestive Tract in Strasbourg... travelled to New York to test the effectiveness of a new system of robotics surgery that was linked to a high-speed telephone line. The patient was in Strasbourg... [T]he time delay between the manipulation of the surgeons’ hands and the movements of the robot, as monitored on a screen in the US, had to be constant and reduced to no more than... one-fifth of a second... Although robot surgery over short distances has been performed, this was the first time a doctor had operated on a patient from the other side of the world, across six time zones. The feat was disclosed only yesterday... [T]he operation... took 54 minutes and was a complete success with no risk to the patient... The [professor] who performed the surgery... said: “It will soon be possible for the leading surgeons in their field to conduct, or take part in, an operation anywhere in the world. At present, this kind of robot costs \$US1 million... but in a few years they will be a normal part of the surgical apparatus in all hospitals.”

...It’s a scene created in every hospital drama – and the moment every anaesthetist dreads. When the steady hum of operating machinery suddenly turns to beeps of alarm, the doctor monitoring the patient’s sedation has just seconds to find the problem and fix it. Now help has arrived in the shape of a computer programme created by Auckland University researchers. It can save lives with its ultra-sensitive watch on the patient... [- t]he program can detect minute changes in a patient’s blood pressure and temperature... [-] and speedy diagnosis gleaned from scores of previous operations. Hailed as the anaesthetist’s secret weapon, the program keeps watch on the patient, even over marathon microsurgery operations which push human concentration to the limit... The software is called Sentinel, because of its watchdog ability. It is the brainchild of [an]Auckland Hospital anaesthetist... and [a]mechanical engineering student... who is researching the project for his doctoral thesis... The pair spent... 2 1/2 years developing the program... The pair plan to eventually patent the program and hope it will one day be a standard operating theatre resource.

...Virtual reality can help doctors perform surgery... [by practising] a procedure on a three-dimensional image before performing it on a human body. “It helps to pinpoint which is the best way to go in.” A further benefit of virtual reality will be to provide a painless way to screen for colon cancer... The present test for this type of cancer is highly invasive. The doctor must insert a sigmoidoscope – a long, hollow tube with a camera on the end – into the rectum to get a look inside the colon... To use... the alternate method... doctors take images from normal magnetic resonance or CT scans and put them into a computer programme... “You are looking inside the structures without actually going inside,” said... a Harvard radiologist[, who predicts]... that it will soon be more widely available because these uses of virtual reality do not require complicated computers or software. “The technology isn’t new, but the application is.”

...The... Minister of Health... showed barely a flicker of embarrassment when... confronted with a pair of naked breasts – and invited to give them a quick squeeze. And when... asked to perform a tricky... pelvic examination and investigate a suspect prostate gland, [the minister]... also... had no problem tackling the tasks... [The minister then] examined cases of glue ear and eye disease and learned the correct way to insert a catheter... The minister’s crash course in diagnosis came as [the minister] opened the... centre for medical education at Middlemore Hospital yesterday. The centre houses a new clinical-skills laboratory containing \$25,000 of high-tech dummies. Imported from as far afield as Norway, Britain and the U[S], the dummies provide students with lifelike models on which to practise difficult and sensitive procedures, where they would normally have to rely on volunteers from hospital wards. The centre – the only one of its kind in the country – was developed thanks to a partnership between the South Auckland hospital and the... Auckland School of Medicine... in an effort to improve training for doctors... far earlier in their careers.

...Auckland’s junior doctors should have no worries in performing their first lumbar punctures – they have been practising on pigs’ spines. Short courses at Green Lane Hospital use pig carcasses and mutton legs so doctors in their first year out of medical school can polish their skills... [in] procedures they might not otherwise have the chance to do... The two-day training sessions, run jointly by Auckland Health Care and the Auckland School of Medicine[, also]... teach 24 junior doctors procedures such as chest tube insertions, cleaning wounds... syringing ears and sewing wounds. “Traditionally the way doctors learn how to do these procedures is to watch someone doing it on a patient and then trying it themselves under supervision.” The new training sessions would operate in conjunction with the traditional method, ensuring doctors were taught by experts in each field and boosting their confidence... However, a spokes[person] for Save Animals From Exploitation... was concerned... “They would be better off using dead human bodies. This just sounds like the cheaper option.” ...[By the way, a] spinal operation for people with chronic back pain which restores them to normal movement has been performed for the first time in N[Z]. The surgery involves replacing a damaged or diseased disc with a prosthesis instead of fusing the vertebrae. A[n A]uckland Hospital orthopaedic surgeon... said people who had the spinal fusion operation later suffered from stiffening of the spine, which reduced movement and put stress on other parts of their back. The new technique, known as intervertebral disc replacement... allowed normal movement of the spine and patients generally recovered within six weeks rather than the six- to nine-month recovery period taken after spinal fusion. An American gymnast who had the surgery in A[US] was performing backward flips on a trampoline six weeks later. [The orthopaedic surgeon], who performed the surgery... last week... hoped the operation would eventually be performed on about 200 people a year... [However,] it was not known how long the prosthesis would last. It was possible patients who had the disc replacement would later have the spinal fusion operation... [B]etween 10 and 30[%] of the population suffered from chronic back pain.

...are you suffering Chronic Pain? We can help! Experienced, friendly Professionals Specialising in • Acupuncture • Chinese Herbal Medicine • Tuina (manipulation & deep tissue therapy) • Moxibustion (Improve your energy & blood flow)... [Visit us at the] GLENDENE... Natromed Clinic... First consultation FREE... [We are a]ccredited ACC providers...

Why does society view alternative medical treatments so cynically while mainstream remedies are often adopted before full tests have been run? ...A PARADOX of health care this decade is the rapid rise in the numbers of people who visit non-traditional healers. Even as the numbers climb, the

effectiveness of many alternative treatments remains unproven. Late last year the journal of the A[MA], *JAMA*, published a series of studies on non-medical remedies. The conclusion was that while yoga and acupuncture have become facts of life, researchers need to continue to gauge the effects of other alternative disciplines. The journal found that... more than 40[% of America's] adult population sought out herbalists, chiropractors and other nonconventional practitioners, paying more to these healers (\$US629 million) than to primary-care physicians (\$US386 million). If some of that money was wasted on alternative treatments, some of it appears very well spent. Of the published studies, seven evaluated specific remedies and three found no apparent benefits... Dieters who took an extract from... garcinia cambogia, a popular herbal weight-loss remedy... for 12 weeks lost an average of 3.1kg, while those who got the dummy pill lost 4kg. In another study, researchers found that chiropractic manoeuvres were no better than simple massages for treating tension headaches. And a trial involving 239 HIV-infected patients found that random pin pricks were just as good as acupuncture for easing the pain caused by damaged nerve endings. But... researchers in Italy and China showed that moxibustion – a traditional Chinese practice that uses heat from burning herbs to stimulate acupuncture points – can help to move a foetus into proper position for a head-first delivery... Though the mechanism is unclear... babies [who] were still in the breech position after 33 weeks... became measurably more active, and 75[%] of them (verses 48[%] of the controls) righted themselves in time for a normal delivery. If further studies confirm the finding, says... the editor of *JAMA*, moxibustion could become a part of Western obstetrics, helping to reduce the high rate of Caesarean births... Western medicine has yet to devise a reliable treatment... for... “irritable bowel syndrome,”... but researchers in A[US] report that patients who took cocktails of powdered herbs for 16 weeks enjoyed... roughly a 60[%] improvement in symptoms... [compared to] those who took placebos... Other papers reported that practising yoga for two to three hours a week can ease the symptoms of carpal tunnel syndrome[(‘regular daily yoga exercise can also prolong good eyesight or improve weak eyes by strengthening the eye muscles’)], and that extracts from the saw palmetto plant treat benign prostate swelling as effectively as Merck’s Proscar, with far fewer side-effects. What, then, distinguishes “alternative” from “mainstream” medicine? Alternative practitioners have been known to put belief before evidence – but so have conventional physicians... [F]ewer than half the protocols now used to prevent blood clots in people with cardiovascular disease have been evaluated in controlled clinical trials. Yet no one calls the untested ones unconventional... [N]atural products... called “neutraceuticals”... are increasingly being manufactured by pharmaceutical companies... ONE way of gauging which treatments have become “mainstream” is to look at what is covered by accident compensation. In N[Z], the ACC forks out... [almost 5% of its] about \$200 million... [annual] spend... for acupuncture, osteopathy and chiropractic treatments and has, infrequently, paid for hypnotherapy.

...[‘Among the scientifically demonstrated aspects of hypnosis are that hypnotic suggestion can bring about local or general loss of sensation (anesthesia) and the absence of a sense of pain (analgesia); positive and negative hallucinations; regression to an earlier age; unusual muscular strength, rigidity, and resistance to fatigue; and bodily changes normally outside voluntary control. The anesthetic and analgesic potentialities of hypnosis were demonstrated a century ago in hundreds of apparently painless major operations, some witnessed by scores of physicians. Yet the possibility of the phenomenon’s existence was denied, and medical journals refused to publish papers documenting the work. But the important point here is that scientists once felt very uncomfortable with hypnosis, and now feel quite comfortable – despite the fact that the basic mechanism cannot be “explained” any better now than before.’

...‘Hypnosis in medicine was approved by the AMA in 1958. The basis of hypnosis – the mental state of heightened suggestibility, characterized by trance-like sleep – is the fixation of the subject’s attention upon a gradually narrowing source of stimulation, until the subject is attendant upon only the directions of the hypnotist. This is variously achieved by repetition of instructions in a low, level voice, or having the subject fix his gaze upon a light in an otherwise darkened room. The subject usually remembers nothing of what it did during the hypnotic period. Certain effects may be suggested to continue after the subject returns to consciousness; these are called post-hypnotic suggestions. Hypnotism has found its greatest use as an adjunct to medicine in relieving or diminishing pain as in childbirth and dentistry, especially when use of an anesthetic is dangerous or impractical. Hypnotism was used by Charlot, Janet, and Freud in the study and treatment of hysteria. It proved impractical because not everyone is capable of hypnosis and effects are frequently only temporary. One of the earliest exponents of hypnotism was Frederick Mesmer (c.1733-1815), a German physician. His treatments by hypnotism, known as mesmerism and popularly believed to be based upon electricity and magnetism, attracted a cultish and fashionable clientele in Paris.’

...‘Born near Constance, Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815) studied medicine at Vienna, and claimed that there existed a power which could be used to cure diseases. In 1778 Franz went to Paris, where the Austrian physician created a sensation; but in 1785 a learned commission reported unfavourably, and the founder of mesmerism retired into obscurity in Switzerland.’]

...AN OBSCURE South African plant credited with curing almost anything from hangovers to boils is in danger of extinction because of soaring demand from Europe and America... [Another alternative method of treatment experiencing soaring demand] is... Reiki... a universal healing life energy, which can be transferred from person to person using a particular system... The incredible spread of reiki around the world in recent years is partly due to the ease of teaching the system. No books have to be studied, there’s no equipment or products to buy – just the courses which initiate people into the universal life energy... The system[, which] is said to have its roots in ancient Tibet... is... suitable for all ages, including babies, and even pets and plants are said to be healed by it... Reiki in itself cannot claim to cure anything but the effect is said to be like turning on a switch to activate the body’s own healing mechanism. It can be used in conjunction with all pharmaceutical and complementary therapies.

...Henderson’s own Reiki Healing Centre is opening its doors to you with introductory training sessions... every Tuesday night at 7.30pm at just \$20 a time... Includes Booklet and Supper... Three levels of training are available[with a]Reiki and Seichim Master Teacher... [who] has trained in UK, USA and N[Z], so has immense experience to share... A Reiki session gives you a very relaxing experience from which you will emerge refreshed and energised... [C]ombined with massage it gives even deeper benefits... An hour long Reiki massage session is \$40 and a massage combined with Reiki techniques (some deep tissue) is... \$70, a special offer for those wishing to try it... Reiki is effectively an art of energy transmission and is one of the purest forms of healing... But... Reiki healers don’t heal, they channel energy which the receiver can use in a way that best fits their needs.

...Cabbage leaves and chemotherapy will be tools of the trade at Middlemore Hospital when Pacific Island and Maori healers work alongside hospital staff. Under a new agreement... South Auckland Health... doctors and traditional healers will share patient information and treatment methods... 70[%] of Pacific Island people and a large proportion of Maori already use traditional healing such as massage, herbal tonics and spiritual healing... [One healer] was born with deformed fingers that have a special gift. [The Papatoetoe resident] uses massage and prayer to help cure sicknesses as varied as asthma, strokes and child diarrhoea. His... finger nail[less]... massage... helped [a patient] regain movement on the right side of her body, lost after a stroke two years ago. Last week, [it] started the first of three sometimes painful sessions... and can now lift her arm above her head with ease. [The healer] says massaging for a stroke is about coaxing the vein to release the blood clot and make the blood flow to get the body working again... Sometimes more than 80 people a day use [hi]s services, which shows the widespread use of traditional healing in South Auckland.

...Coy ad[s] that dominate the personnel columns have created a wink-and-nod public perception of the ancient art of healing... [by] massage... While genuine massage therapy can play a role in a healthy sex life, the red light “relaxing massage” [wa]s merely a transparent contrivance to satisfy the law. Great strides have been made in the past 15 years in promoting the credibility and benefits of professional therapeutic massage and distancing qualified practitioners from the sex parlour stigma. Regular massage is now widely accepted as having major benefits for people of all ages, including babies. A full body massage can soothe and repair tired or damaged muscle and soft tissue, improve circulation, stimulate the

lymphatic system to rid the body of waste, increase oxygen capacity in the blood, balance the nervous system, and enhance skin condition... Headaches, insomnia, digestive disorders - including constipation and spastic colon – arthritis... carpal tunnel syndrome, [and] sinusitis can respond to massage therapy. Ancient Mediterranean civilisations understood this. They included a top-to-toe massage after bathing and exercise. Practitioners were now following the US neuro muscular therapy technique, [which is taught locally at The NZ] College of Massage in Auckland... [- where] 100 fulltime and part-time students [are trained each] year. A full year diploma study course includes learning about the muscular skeletal system, cell chemistry, and the skin, vascular and blood system... Employment opportunities are expanding for graduates. Therapists are [especially] in demand in... sport, where athletes have regular massages focusing on specific parts of the body... to treat... injuries, aches and pains.

...It feels great and it may have some psychological impact, but British doctors say using massage to ease aching muscles and improve performance has little physical benefit. "Massage enhances the perception of recovery but does not do anything physically," said ...a... professor in the sports studies department at University College, Northampton.

...If you are looking for help with long-term back pain, sell those magnets, because it seems they might not work. But then if you had no idea that magnets could help you and are interested – don't despair, because doctors in the U[S] say more research is needed to see if the popular magnetic cures really work... Worldwide sales of magnets for treatments of pain have been estimated at \$5 billion.

...*The Surprising Power of Magnets* A... Husband and Wife team... are the owners of Magnetic Energy. Together... [they] have thirty years combined experience with magnetic products. Their [b]usiness... has the largest range of magnetic products in A[US]... Magnetic Energy manufactures and sells the magnetic pillow and underlay as well as supplying over sixty other magnetic support products to assist with pain relief... Alex... from Dunedin was a big sceptic of alternative therapy until [it] tried Magnetic Energy's pillow and underlay... "I've suffered with back pain for the last ten years. I would hate going to bed because that's when the pain got worse and in the morning I would get up stiff and sore. Now with my new underlay I sleep like a baby. Even my eleven year old dog has a new lease of life since [it]'s been sleeping on the pet underlay.["] Magnetic Energy currently mail orders A[US] wide and now N[Z]. Our service is prompt so you will not have to wait an unreasonable period of time to start using your magnetic products. If you wish to view the Magnetic Energy range, they will be on display at WestCity Shoppingtown... For anyone who purchases both a magnetic pillow and underlay, [Magnetic Energy is]... giving away... a free comprehensive guide... and... a packet of magnetic body studs normally valued at \$36. These powerful little magnets can be placed anywhere on the body to assist with pain relief.

...Sleep soundly with relief from pain with... BIOMAG The Genuine magnetic underlay more N[Z]ers know and trust... Join 100,000 Kiwis... now... Fitted underlay available in all bed sizes • Priced from \$195.95 including delivery • 60 day money back product guarantee... • Also available in a luxurious Biomag Woolrest combo... Note: Individual results will vary. If you are pregnant or have a pacemaker check with your doctor first.

...[Gals] suffer from pain more than [guys] do, scientists claim. And they say that research into the reasons why will lead to more effective pain relief... [S]cientists had suggested [gals] had more contact with healthcare services through their role as primary child carers, giving them more opportunity to report pain. But... researchers at the... University of N[SW]'s... school of physiology and pharmacology have... discovered differences in the way [guys and gals] respond to the pain-relieving drug ibuprofen – a non-steroid anti-inflammatory... [- and] hormones probably play a role... A [gal]'s response seemed to depend on the stage of her hormonal cycle... It was possible some people had a genetic predisposition towards sensitivity to pain, in which case doctors could DNA-test patients before treatment to enable them to more appropriately administer pain relief.

...[a baby]'s parents have invested in a new type of bank account... [- preserving her] umbilical cord blood in Cord-bank... Umbilical cord blood is unusually rich in stem cells that are an exact DNA match for the baby... The blood can be used to treat [the]... 14 week... old, if [it] ever develops one of ...[ve]r... 45 life-threatening illnesses... People involved in the scheme pay to have their babies' umbilical cords stored... for at least 30 years.

...Ever tried to wrap a plaster around a small toe? ...Our new liquid bandage... BAND-AID* Brand Liquid Bandage... goes places plasters can't.

...IT'S hard to imagine any common health problem being taboo in an age where subjects such as impotence, depression and obesity barely raise an eyebrow. But a new study indicates thousands of [NZ gals] – particularly Maori and Pacific Islanders – would rather wet their pants than own up to urinary incontinence. One in three [NZ gals] will experience urinary leakage at some point with the rate among Maori estimated at 48%. Yet the study shows a combination of intense embarrassment among sufferers and ignorance among [GP]s has created an obstacle to effective treatment... "[L]eaking of urine that is socially or hygienically unacceptable"... is usually caused by childbirth, ageing, obesity or long-term straining problems like constipation. Improvement, at least, is often possible through pelvic floor exercises and lifestyle changes... [-] such as, oddly enough, drinking more water... [(a) common mistake by incontinent [gals] is to cut fluid intake, which worsens the problem because the urine becomes more concentrated and irritates the bladder) – although some sufferers]... require medication or surgery... [A]ttempts to recruit [subjects] for the study soon revealed the level of sensitivity. Eventually, 17 pakeha, eight Maori and nine Pacific Island[ers] of varying ages agreed to be interviewed, revealing everything from simple embarrassment to intense shame about their leaky bladders. Some had become virtually housebound for fear of having an accident, while others had become "spectators rather than participants" in life, shunning sport or activities with their [kids] for fear of a leakage. "Their bladder somehow ruled their lives. They felt governed by needing to be close to a toilet and having to always carry pads and spare underwear." Many of those who talked to their GP received little relief. They were told it was a part of life, or the ageing process or a symptom of stress. One... was told to take paracetamol; another was prescribed anti-depressants. A 53-year-old Maori... told the researchers: "[The doctor] said 'I can't see anything wrong.['] I told him it was leaking all over the place; I was wearing three or four pads at the time to hold it." Worse was to come when [the Maori] was referred to a hospital. "They took me into this room and told me to change into this gown and stuck me on this wheel. They turned me upside down and up again and didn't explain what they were doing and I thought: 'What the hell are they doing to me?'" Hardly surprising, many of the [subjects] didn't attend follow-up appointments... [The s]tudy leader... and her team also interviewed a range of health professionals and were dismayed to find many GPs lacked the knowledge and the sensitivity to deal adequately with incontinence. In one striking example, every [guy] Tongan health professional interviewed asserted: "Tongan[']s do not get incontinence"... Confident, intelligent and good humoured, [a 34-year-old] South Auckland nurse... kept her incontinence secret for most of her life, from all but those closest to her. "The worst thing as an adult was wetting at night... It's bad to wet in the day, but I could cope. Night time was worst." ...It was a contributing factor in [her] marriage break-up. "The guy I married didn't... understand... [O]nce we were driving and I said 'I really need to go to the toilet' and [the guy] said: 'I'm not bloody stopping'... I wet my pants." Eventually... [the guy said it] wasn't going to live with someone who wet the bed. "...There were other dynamics as well but it didn't help being incontinent." ...[the nurse has now] been "dry" for five years, the result of surgery to enlarge her bladder... [The nurse] was born with a small and unstable bladder... The urologist who performed the surgery was the first specialist to thoroughly test her bladder (through a process called urodynamics) and try her on drug therapies before offering surgery. [The nurse], who now works in urodynamics, stresses surgery is a last resort... with the one setback that [it] must catheterise (use a tube to completely empty her bladder) once or twice a day – to her, a minor inconvenience.

...When [a nurse] left her simple social housing home and moved into a £3 million castle... [- after] turning... her bus driver father's £25,000 redundancy... payment into a £1 billion international empire[– the]... boss of... bus company Stagecoach... had it all. But two years ago her life was devastated when her 28-year-old son... hanged himself in a forest near her home. Bewildered and distraught, [the nurse] disappeared from public life and quit the company [it founded]... with her brother... [Now the nurse] is swapping her Scottish Highland estate for a hospital in one of the

world's poorest countries where [it] will treat Aids and cancer patients. [The nurse], aged 58, has arrived in Benin to start working for Mercy Ships, a charity that provides ship-based hospitals offering free medical and dental care to some of the world's poorest people. [The nurse] decided to take the unpaid job on the 12,000-tonne SS Anastasis, moored off Cotonou, after a visit to West Africa last year. Friends say [the nurse] wants to start a new chapter after 20 gruelling years that made her Britain's second-richest [gal] – only the Queen is richer – but which have cost her her marriage and, some say, the life of her son. “[The nurse] is still deeply traumatised by Jonathon's death, but getting back to work is her way of getting on with life,” one friend says. “It is her way, perhaps, of acknowledging what has happened and of starting again and showing that some benefit can come out of it all.” As [the Queen's economic rival] prepared to treat her first patient since... quit[ting] her job as a theatre nurse in Bridge of Earn Hospital, near Perth, Scotland, 20 years ago, [it] said: “I've been fortunate in many ways. I enjoyed my years as a nurse. I enjoyed my years in business. Maybe if I can do something for these charities for a few years, it wouldn't be a bad idea.” [The nurse] has donated £4 million of her fortune to buy a new hospital ship, the African Mercy, moored at Newcastle upon Tyne[. and] wants to raise £15 million to refit and equip the ship.

...COMING to a town near you – a mobile hospital. Inspired by the military model of mobile field hospital units, surgeons are planning to set up [NZ]'s first mobile operating theatre. It would cost \$4 million to construct and could handle six to eight patients a day. Annual operating costs would be around \$3 million. The idea is to have an operating room and facilities based in a state of the art vehicle which could service many small towns... Centres with a hospital would also be able to take advantage of the vehicle's on-board satellite technology to beam in advice and support from elsewhere. The proposal is already getting the thumbs up from Balclutha[. whose] local hospital closed last December...

Health workers battling South Auckland's child health crisis went to the children at the weekend... The [local] population is mobile, and highly elusive, and many parents do not realise what free health care their children are entitled to. So in a bid to stem an ever-increasing tide of child illness and hospital admissions, the South Auckland Health Foundation set up a clinic outside the Otara McDonald's... The carpark clinic, enlivened by Pacific music, captured the attention of Saturday morning flea market shoppers... [H]undreds of children and their parents queued for health checks... McDonald's is supporting the venture and is giving cheeseburger vouchers to children who have... [t]he one-stop shop check... [on] teeth, hearing, vision, nutrition and immunisation status... The same clinic will take place again next Saturday, and will be shifted to other McDonald's restaurants around South Auckland... [– which] is home to 10[% of NZ's under 14s –] ...in coming months... [Incidentally,] Waitakere City residents who have trouble getting to health appointments now have a new transport service to their aide. Today the pilot of a Health Shuttle Service is being launched... [P]eople who have little transport or who cannot catch buses will be able to use the shuttle. “We really found there was a gap in the market. People need to get to their appointments, and they should not be disadvantaged because of their mobility or income level... We chose West Auckland because it's a region where there are a number of districts where people don't have transport,” says... [the] director of health services at The Order of St John... The shuttle service will run from Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5pm. Bookings will need to be made 24 hours in advance, by calling (0800) 000-606... The shuttle seats eight people seated, and five people seated with two wheelchairs... The service is subsidised by the Order of St John, but still requires a donation of five to \$10 depending on the amount of kilometres the commuter travels.

...British authorities are investigating how a teenage girl fell from the back of an ambulance on to a motorway, suffering fatal injuries. The... girl's condition was not believed to be life-threatening before [it] fell from the ambulance... [I]n local news, i[f] you're sick but can't get to the doctor, help is only a phone call away. The St John health shuttle... trial... has been up and running for around three weeks and... it's already proving a hit. “People think it's great, a really good service and I think it'll catch on fairly fast when word gets around,” says... [the] driver... The shuttle... leave[s] its New Lynn base before travelling via Green Bay, Titirangi, Glen Eden, Kelston, Glendene, Ranui and Henderson to Waitakere Hospital. It... then travel[s] to Massey, West Harbour, Te Atatu South and North before returning to the hospital. The service is provided on a donation basis with recommended donations of \$5 for a trip up to 10km, \$7.50 for a journey of 10km to 20km and \$10 for passengers travelling more than 20km.

...[a West Aucklander is] accused of trading on his... late... father's name and costing taxpayers thousands of dollars to sit on a health board half the country away... The 35-year-old... son of... a prominent Wellington physician and political activist... is accused of duping the Wellington public who voted him onto the Capital and Coast District Health Board by not disclosing [i]t... lives in Auckland[. where it] is attending medical school... National['s]... associate health spokesperson... this week... [said the son] is draining an already stressed health budget. “The District Health Boards are looking at deficits for this year from anything between \$180m to \$230m... so what we don't need is having to pay for somebody's very expensive airfares to and fro. [The west]e has incurred more costs than all of the other board members put together in actually attending the meetings.” [The son, who] was brought up in Wellington, attending Wellington High School, and... has spent the last 10 years as a health science journalist in Western Europe and fundraiser for primary health services in Africa... was elected to the... board [last year. It is] also serving on the Community and Public Advisory committee and Disability Support Advisory committee, which held meetings last week. [The son didn't] return... phone calls to his home last week, and calls to the Capital and Coast District Health Board reveal [it] is overseas on business. But a board source confirmed [the son] attended all meetings. [The son] is quoted in a recent report as saying... “a few thousand extra travel expenses” is worth it to have him on the board. The same report says [the son] has already cost... \$25,000 in expenses. “What's so special about him...? ...We live in an egalitarian society[.]” says the MP – who... was herself accused of “carpet-bagging” by rivals... when standing for the Clevedon electorate but living in Remuera.

...Hospitals get treatment A \$660 million revamp of Auckland's hospitals – including the demolition of National [Gals'] and possible sale of land at Green Lane – is in full swing. The Auckland District Health Board will spend \$423 million on a new 710-bed hospital next to Auckland Hospital in Grafton, extensions to the Starship and a new day-surgery building at Green Lane. The Waitemata board is [looking at] spending \$120 million on North Shore and Waitakere hospital redevelopments. And South Auckland has already completed some of its \$120 million redevelopment projects... [T]he improvements are wide-ranging. For example, all patients' rooms in the new hospital at Grafton will have ensuite bathrooms and toilets, and most mothers will have single rooms... [Tomorrow, a Herald] health reporter... writes... the first of two articles examining the changes.

...[our reporter consults a] Dr... about his prognosis for N[Z]'s newest medical advice show... [A] Christchurch GP... hopes *Body Wise* is a prescription for success... [The GP] usually sees his patients on a one-to-one basis but, as presenter of TV2's *Body Wise*, [it]'s offering advice to the nation. A newcomer to television, [the GP]'s rapt about the latest avenue for health education. “...my job... is... to sift through lots of information and come up with a considered opinion and... people... can take it or leave it.” ...the medical information on the internet, together with a mass of advertised products, can be a hurdle for anyone. “The idea with TV is that we can present things in an attractive, interesting and entertaining way so that it's easy for people to learn... The same information could be presented in a completely different way and people wouldn't be interested and wouldn't take it on board.” The series joins with the Consumers' Institute to test... the effectiveness of... products... *Body Wise* also follows patients' experiences as they go through procedures including breast augmentation, vasectomy, laser hair removal and varicose veins treatment. “The show is very well-researched which was a necessary pre-condition for me to be involved,” says... [NZ's very own d]octor in the house...

A MEDICAL centre may join the 29 state houses to be built on the site of Glen Eden's only supermarket. But that has failed to appease 500 residents who attended an emotional meeting on Sunday to express their concerns to representatives from local and central government. They are angry at the loss of 3 Guys supermarket, the lack of consultation over plans for the site, and worried the high density housing will turn into a ghetto. A number ceremonially “turned in” their Foodtown cards at the meeting to wild applause, in protest at Progressive Enterprises' sale of the

supermarket. Progressive, which owns the... Foodtown [supermarket in the neighbouring suburb of Kelston], sold the site to developer Morningstar Enterprises last month for \$2.25 million. The sale covenant prohibits another supermarket on the site for 20 years. [A]Dr... from Westview Medical Centre Limited announced the medical centre proposal at the meeting and... hopes it will be open by July next year if consent is granted. "I think it is going to offer a wide range of facilities that few centres in Auckland presently have,"... All of Glen Eden's GPs would move to the centre, which would include two pharmacies, a physiotherapy unit, an X-ray unit and outpatient services.

...West Auckland's only 24-hour medical clinic turned away at least two patients last Tuesday... when the doctor on duty didn't turn up for work. A Glen Eden... [resident] went to Westcare Accident and 24-hour Medical Centre in Henderson at around 2.30am to get help for her 19-year-old son, but was told to go elsewhere... "I wanted to talk to the nurse, to at least tell her to ring other hospitals so they knew the centre was not open tonight because they were still referring people to Westcare,"... [A]nother family turned up with a sick four-year-old but had to go to the Starship Hospital in Auckland City... "The child was wheezing badly but the nurse didn't even come out. The security guard turned them away." ...[a local] MP... says these incidents show how inadequate the emergency health services in west Auckland are. "This is a disgrace on the part of Westcare... A fully up-graded Waitakere Hospital would provide those reliable emergency health services as a matter of course,"... The closest 24-hour emergency services, apart from the... Westcare Centre, are North Shore and Auckland Hospitals. Westcare management could not be reached for comment.

...A shortage of doctors and money are stacking the dice against west Auckland's only 24-hour medical centre. Two weeks ago... patients were turned away... when the doctor did not turn up for work... [The chairperson] of Westcare's board of directors, says the doctor concerned was sick and they couldn't find another to replace him on the graveyard shift. "We only have a small pool of doctors to do this shift and, when one is sick, the whole process grinds to a halt. If we have time, we usually try to notify ambulances and hospitals that we are closed, but sometimes the message doesn't get through... There is a distinct possibility that the service will have to be closed as we cannot afford to keep it up and running. It doesn't help that 15[%] of overnight patients don't pay their bills..."... Westcare's 24-hour service was also threatened late last year when the H[FA] considered scraping its \$50,000 top-up... At the moment [its] 24-hour service is losing up to \$60,000 per year... As [the chairperson] points out, up until recently, even North Shore Hospital has not been able to fund... such a service. Now that North Shore is up and running, Westcare's board will meet... to discuss closing [its] service altogether. "Several other 24 hour services have closed lately. The need is there, but it is unfair to expect GPs to take on the financial burden,"... [W]est Auckland needs its own facility because the time it takes to get to North Shore or into the city could make all the difference in an emergency. Waitemata Health has been promising a new facility for some time but it won't say when. Meanwhile... Titirangi's [MP]... says, "Only the public health system can reliably provide the comprehensive range of secondary and acute services of which the emergency health services are an integral part." [The MP adds] that relying on privately-run clinics with precarious positions in the market is not good enough.

...THE merger of west Auckland's two biggest private medical centres will do nothing to prevent the closure of the area's only overnight accident and medical clinic. Westcare Specialist Centre is to officially announce its 50-50 joint venture with White Cross Accident and Medical Centre in two weeks. The two centres in Lincoln Rd will combine their management and operate virtually as they are until new premises are built in four to six months. The merged centre will lease premises built either on land owned by Waitakere Hospital or on a site [further]along Lincoln Rd... The joint venture... [between Westcare's] co-operative made up of 92 GPs... [and White Cross'] more than 20 GPs... is for business reasons... [The merged centre will have] to renegotiate a new contract with the Government...

Deadline day for the fate of the proposed \$60 million revamp of Waitakere Hospital is [three weeks away – when the] Health Minister... gets briefed by Treasury's Crown Company Monitoring and Advisory Unit... Waitemata Health wants [the minister] to approve a \$120.8m upgrade for Waitakere and North Shore hospitals. The Lincoln Rd site in Waitakere City would become a full general hospital, with an [A&E] department and surgical wards. Two other proposals – just upgrading North Shore hospital or creating a new hospital in Albany – are not favoured by Waitemata Health... Labour's [MP] for Titirangi... believes the [minister's] briefing will show that upgrading Waitakere Hospital will cost more each year in running costs compared with the other options... "But I have got an assurance from [the minister that it']ll consider the needs of west Aucklanders... The need to have a primary care service in west Auckland is more important than extra dollars in running costs." ...[the minister] will be looking not only at which... option should be chosen but also where the money is coming from. Waitemata Health proposes to borrow against its own assets, a move opposed by the Alliance which believes it should be state funded... [The minister]'s office did not respond to a request for comment.

...In answer to [a National MP's comments made last month in]West Views... I... have lived in west Auckland for 40 years[, and like]... any long time resident of west Auckland... am... aware National took the money for Waitakere Hospital to upgrade North Shore Hospital to buy back East Coast Bays from Social Credit. National told west Auckland: "Your hospital is now North Shore Hospital", assuming everyone had access to private transport. National played with the idea west Auckland needed a full hospital only when an election was getting closer.

...Re [a National MP]'s letter (West Views, May 16). One would think the hospital was a recent issue. Back in 1978, Robert Muldoon called a public meeting in Henderson and explained a change of plan. As the North Shore was expanding because of the building of the harbour bridge, a hospital was needed over there. So, with apologies, our already planned hospital would be transferred to North Shore. But immediately the North Shore Hospital was completed, the Waitakere Hospital would be built [–] estimated start time no later than 1982. It was put off, I expect, because Muldoon [– a North Shore resident –]had a heart condition. Somehow the hospital issue was put on the back burner and when the Labour Party became Government in 1984, suddenly it did not come to fruition. So... it has been a sore point for... years. [The National MP] did say in Parliament a few years ago that the Waitakere Hospital was not needed. Apparently [the MP] has a short memory but I have a memory like an elephant.

...Diagnosing infections c[an] be complicated because germs could be found on all body parts' surfaces. Most were "good" bacteria, the body's first line of immune defence against "nasty" bacteria. Scientists trying to determine why someone had died had to sift through the germs to work out "what's there and allowed to be there, and what's there and not allowed to be". That was made harder by the germs that could live in many people's bodies without creating any problems but suddenly made some people ill. Every person has more germs in their gut than cells in their body, which is why[an] Institute of Environment and Science Research microbiologist and infectious disease expert... says scientists cannot pinpoint the cause of some deaths. Medical researchers are still trying to explain what caused three people to die with unexplained lung haemorrhages in Dunedin last month. [The microbiologist] said scientists had excellent tests for common and deadly causes of death, including heart attacks, pneumonia, meningococcal disease and diabetes, but not for rare diseases or benign conditions that cured themselves, such as colds.

...The Ministry of Health is monitoring a rare worldwide alert from the World Health Organisation about a deadly new form of pneumonia that has spread from Asia... [A ministry spokesperson]n... told the *Herald* last night that... the... symptoms include a high fever, coughing and shortness of breath... [The spokesperson], a virologist for the Canterbury District Health Board, said the... WHO issued a general emergency travel advisory on Saturday. "I suspect what we will see as more information becomes available will be the Ministry of Health giving specific advice to N[Z]ers as to what to look out for and who to contact. In the meantime, if people are concerned at all, if they develop respiratory symptoms [after]returning from overseas, they should talk to their general practitioner or their local medical officer of health." ...N[Z] has not had any cases of severe acute respiratory syndrome, a virulent strain of what is known as atypical pneumonia... [T]here was a national surveillance network for influenza. The ministry also had a public health emergency plan for influenza, with a national planning committee. An Air N[Z] spokesperson said the airline was keeping an eye on the mystery disease to see what developed. "The air quality on the planes is rigorously monitored, and our systems catch 99.9[%]

of bacteria and infections...” A [NZ spokesperson] for Cathay Pacific, which flies 10 direct flights from Auckland to Hong Kong each week, said the airline had received no instructions from Hong Kong about the situation. On Friday, the Singapore Health Ministry advised people to avoid travelling to Hong Kong, Hanoi and Guangdong “unless absolutely necessary”. Hong Kong’s Health Secretary... responded by angrily denying there was an outbreak of atypical pneumonia in the territory. Several travel industry operators in Hong Kong have expressed fears that tourism could be dented by news of the pneumonia cases. More than 100 people have been hit by the illness in Asia... nine deaths have been linked to the highly contagious virus. The latest victim was a young Vietnamese nurse who died at the weekend. [The nurse] contracted the disease after treating an American business[person] who died of it last week. A Canadian... and her son died last week after being infected while visiting Hong Kong. Another five deaths in southern China have also been linked. [A spokesperson for the]WHO... said: “People are not responding to antibiotics and antivirals. It’s a highly contagious disease and it’s moving by jet. It’s bad.”

...researchers say they have designed the first diagnostic test for a killer pneumonia that has spread across the world, coming a step closer to finding a cure for the mystery illness. Some 350 people in 13 countries have been infected by the pneumonia... Fifteen people have died worldwide, including seven in Hong Kong. Almost all confirmed infections are... believed to be linked to one doctor from China’s southern Guangdong province, who treated patients in China before dying from the disease. “I think what we have here is a new virus,” said... [the] virology chief at the University of Hong Kong. Scientists in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Germany and Canada had earlier identified viruses taken from patients as paramyxoviruses, a large family of microbes that includes the germs that cause measles, mumps and respiratory infections. There is no vaccine or specific cure for this strain of pneumonia. But Hong Kong doctors have been treating patients with ribavirin – an anti-virus drug – and steroids. [The virology chief] said experience showed 70[%] of patients would improve if treated in time. His research team isolated a virus from the lung of a patient and successfully grew or “cultured” it for study. They then designed the diagnostic test, which would tell within five to 14 days if a patient was infected with the disease... [E]arly diagnosis enabled early treatment and therefore a greater chance of recovery... Hong Kong officials have emphasised that the spread of the disease is slow. Most of the sick are health care workers and relatives with close contacts with the patients. The... W[HO – which ‘has no power or authority’ –] has issued its first global alert in a decade over the deadly illness, called [SARS].

...The Government is considering letting pharmacies play a greater role in the health system, as pharmacists call for more responsibility in tending the sick... The Pharmacy Guild says the swine flu scare has highlighted the role pharmacists play as health advisers – a role it says is not recognised by the district health board system... The number of patients seeking help from hospitals and GPs has spiked as swine flu compounds the usual winter peak of illness in the community... In N[Z], the number of confirmed cases since the virus arrived in April rose yesterday to 711, many of whom have recovered... The World Health Organisation’s latest update... reports 70,893 confirmed cases worldwide, including 311 deaths.

If there literally was a *World Health Organisation*, or World Health Ministry (linking all healthcare workers, facilities and other resources – including pharmaceutical production and pharmacists or chemists), it should be easier to diagnose, treat and control diseases, viruses, etc. – and make the provision of health care less complicated for both patients and health workers. Like housing, healthcare is something that can immediately be made free for all citizens who use the ministry’s practitioners. The Health Ministry ought to be open-minded about employing practitioners of traditional or unorthodox treatments (assuming they have a proven record or have undertaken an acceptable course of training) – especially when an orthodox treatment seems to be having little effect on a patient, or is causing problematic side-effects. Completely removing the profit motive from healthcare would mean that GPs will no longer be pressured by pharmaceutical manufacturers to prescribe their products when other products might work better for a particular patient (the provision of healthcare could be more efficient if, in instances when more than one drug or treatment is available for a single complaint, the likelihood that a drug or treatment will work best on a patient with a particular genetic makeup can be identified), and also means hospitals won’t have to shut wards because they’re low on money!

Providing free healthcare would increase the number of minor medical inquiries handled by GPs and hospital receptions, but incorporating traditional and unorthodox practitioners with mainstream practitioners will help to spread the load – and, if there isn’t enough work for a non-mainstream practitioner to be employed full-time at its own speciality, it can make up hours by performing related tasks (e.g., hospital reception or office work, cleaning, acting as ambulance drivers, orderlies or nurse-aides). If a district initially has a shortage of doctors but an abundance of nurses, some nurses might be capable of up-skilling to perform specific tasks (note that NZ already operates a health phonenumber which enables the public to receive free advice from nurses around the clock). If a district initially has a shortage of nurses, suitable unemployed people – or people already familiar with aspects of the health industry, such as nurse-aides and orderlies – could be trained to perform basic nursing tasks, thereby decreasing the workload of qualified nurses (such trainees who prove to be especially competent, may eventually complete proper nursing training – perhaps on a part-time basis). Trainee doctors could also start by learning a specific task so that they are able to perform some work while gradually increasing their range of skills (and range of responsibilities). Furthermore, GPs and prescription chemists could combine premises so that patients who have minor complaints (e.g., colds) can speak to the chemist first – as advocated by the British Government and advertisements on NZ television – being referred to the GP only if the chemist is unsure of its diagnosis, or if the diagnosis requires prescription medication. As far as more serious treatments are concerned (e.g., operations, long term hospitalisation, use of specialised personnel, equipment or rare medications), while demand for healthcare continues to outstrip the ability of a district to provide it, young people – especially children – should be given preference over older people, and avoidable illnesses (e.g., those related to lifestyle choices) ought to receive less consideration than illnesses which weren’t self-induced! Receiving less consideration could simply mean being placed on a waiting list instead of getting immediate attention. Although conditions such as drug addictions, alcoholism, obesity, etc., are generally classified as being self-induced, trying to immediately increase the provision of treatments that help people get over them may be more advantageous than delaying such treatments (note that a NZ MP has introduced a ‘bill on what GPs can treat’). By the way, greater community control over the work performed by the citizens of each district, and the productive use of land, will make it more difficult for people to produce large quantities of cocaine, opium, etc., while a fairer and less stressful society would simultaneously decrease the demand for narcotic drugs (as would placing everyone on the same income which is based on a figure that is meant to cover essential living expenses and not much more – i.e., it will be harder for people to afford to buy narcotic drugs, even if their price falls dramatically).

Removing unnecessary activity from the healthcare industry would also help the initial supply-and-demand situation. ‘Doctors say 1-in-5 appendectomies performed in the US (and NZ) aren’t necessary.’ The performing of plastic surgery for purely cosmetic purposes (i.e., purposes other than to repair burns, wounds or other forms of skin damage; and, if practical, unsightly deformities) should be stopped completely. If some adults believe they are unable to be happy because they can’t find a partner due to the ugliness of their non-deformed faces, that might be considered a valid reason for allowing them to receive cosmetic surgery – but maybe all they really need is to improve their personality (and, if their surgery leads to love, their offspring are likely to wonder why they aren’t physically beautiful also – unless cosmetic surgery enables the recipient to find a partner who has a naturally beautiful face, in which case their offspring are likely to be average-looking). The Health Ministry should, however, only look at performing their surgery when it is able to treat every genuine illness without delay. The same can be said of procedures such as, for example, pinning back genetically protruding ears (‘normally carried out when the patient is 4 1/2’), and operating on the eyes of people who already have adequate glasses or contact lenses. There is definitely no reason why anyone should get breast enlargements, but reductions are justifiable (though oversized breasts normally aren’t life-threatening, so maintaining this procedure doesn’t need to be an immediate concern). Treatments for conditions such as baldness also aren’t justifiable. Likewise, IVF treatments shouldn’t be performed while the world contains millions of orphans or unloved children and, especially, while overpopulation remains a concern. When humanity’s worldwide population has been stabilised – preferably at a figure closer to its present level than 9 billion or more – and a limited supply of

orphans and foster children has developed, the Health Ministry can start to reconsider the personal needs of semi-barren couples (i.e., couples that would have had to accept being barren before the advent of IVF and similar technology); and it could also start to assist couples who want to guarantee that their second child is not the same sex as their first.

In order to assist population stabilisation, the Health Ministry should insist that two children be the maximum allowed per couple in future. While some HBs are likely to be unhappy about being told how many children they are allowed to have, the ministry would be perfectly justified to point out to them that they are being selfish (which is the same reason the ministry can give to people who complain about being denied immediate treatment for illnesses caused by lifestyle choices, or because they are near to dying anyway)! While humanity's worldwide population continues to increase, the ministry ought to enforce the sterilisation of partners of mums with two children, or who have produced triplets, etc. When the worldwide population has stabilised, the ministry could relax its rules (perhaps enforcing sterilisation only after a third pregnancy) – because some couples might only produce one child and others might not produce any.

Only HBs have unwanted or unexpected pregnancies (so-called *unplanned* – or *accidental* – pregnancies). However, the invention of the *morning-after pill* means even an HB has no excuse for creating an unwanted foetus, and the removal of financial strife will eliminate that motive for termination. Nevertheless, if someone wants an abortion, the request shouldn't be denied. Abortion is an issue that pits the rights of the mother against those of her unborn child – but while a child remains inside its mother's body, her rights take precedence. If a child is unloved after it has been born, it can be fostered – but while children are starving to death, dying of curable or preventable diseases, being abused, neglected, living in war zones and rubbish dumps, etc., it is senseless to say that abortion is a sin! Call the mother "stupid" or "a disgrace to her species", but don't force her to carry a foetus it doesn't want, or to seek alternative methods of procuring a termination. What the Health Ministry could do is to insist that the mother (and, ideally, her partner also) undertakes and passes a natural family planning course in order to qualify for an abortion (so, hopefully, they won't ever need to have another abortion).

When every child receives a proper sex education, morning-after pills shouldn't need to be made, and contraceptives should only need to be supplied – via prescription – to people with AIDS/HIV or STDs, gals who have erratic periods or *who can release eggs at any time* of the month ('sex lubricants' may also be a prescription item). While society still uses money, and even though all healthcare is theoretically free, demand for items like contraceptives could be mitigated by charging for them (unless they've been prescribed). This implies that such items would need to only be distributed via chemists, family planning clinics (which will be redundant if every child received a proper sex education) and other Health Ministry offices.

In a society full of humans, rapes won't occur, so abortions would only be necessary if a foetus has been identified as being severely disabled. If the severity of disability (i.e., the child's capacity to appreciate its own existence and contribute to society) is uncertain, the pregnancy should be taken full-term and a decision – made by a committee including the parents – on whether or not the child should be *put to sleep* can be made after its birth (as has been the practice for most of humanity's history). If one parent is willing to act as a full-time caregiver (assisted by its partner when the partner isn't working; and by facilities where the child can receive therapy, plus whatever training or education it is capable of comprehending, while also giving the caregiver a break) to its severely disabled child, such a request could be considered viable after the world population has been stabilised, when every member of society is receiving the basic necessities of life, and a balanced workforce between every industry within the parent's district has been achieved. Basic modifications could be made to the parents' home if necessary, but homes or apartments that are specially designed for residents who have specific disabilities (r:p1979, ln17) should only need to be made available to adults – especially those who are single (i.e., who have to do everything – or most things – for themselves).

Further activities that can be classified as unnecessary, and therefore shouldn't be performed in future, include circumcisions (unless required for acceptable medical reasons), penis enlargements and sex-change operations.

A court has ruled that Britain's free healthcare service should pay for sex-change operations for transsexuals... The Court of Appeal's ruling means about 1000 transsexuals will be able to have the £8000... surgery... under the N[HS]. The three-judge panel said the service wrongly regarded transsexualism as a state of mind that did not warrant medical treatment, despite "overwhelming evidence" it was... a legitimate illness.

...Britain's Ministry of Defence says it has paid for sex-change operations... A spokes[person] said "a small number, no more than five" soldiers had undergone gender reassignment operations paid by the ministry. "The MoD medical services provide similar services to the military that are available to civilians on the N[HS]... If a doctor says surgery is appropriate because of the genuine psychological reasons it is considered... If the operation did not diminish the soldier's relevant job skills there is no reason why we would not keep them in the Army." The [MoD] also confirmed that "about 10" members of the armed forces had been given free liposuction... and... had paid for breast enlargements for four [gal] soldiers since the start of last year... Last week, [newspapers announced that 'members of the Canadian armed forces can get sex-change operations done for free'...

It started school as a boy, by 4th form [it] was a girl. Is 14 too young to change sex?

...[NZ's Chief Ombuds[person]] has made a landmark recommendation that a person be given a sex change and the Health Funding Authority... foot the bill. [The Chief Ombuds[person]] made his unusual recommendation to the HFA and Health Minister... after ruling that the authority acted unreasonably in the case of [a guy], aged 52, who is now living as a [gal] in the King Country. [The person] was scheduled to have gender reassignment surgery in Waikato Hospital in 1997, when Midland Health, the now-defunct regional health authority, decided against funding sex changes... [The] former Christchurch crane driver, complained to [the Chief Ombuds[person]], whose office launched an investigation into whether health authorities treated her unfairly. The HFA later conceded that [the person] had been treated "with a degree of administrative unfairness."

...As a 5-year-old living in Kaikoura, [the person] would lie in bed at night begging God that [it wanted to] wake up the next day as a girl. "I would fall asleep dreaming I was a girl. Of course, when I woke up... well, I thought it was God's cruel joke." Nearly 50 years on [the person]... may soon have her prayers answered... [It has] won the right to have a publicly financed sex change operation after... the... Chief Ombuds[person]... determined 11 days ago that [the person] had been unfairly denied... in 1997. The former Lyttelton crane-driver... spoke to the *Herald* yesterday after a roller-coaster week of relief followed by sadness at the public reaction to [the Chief Ombuds[person]]'s decision. "The electronic media have been going crazy, especially talkback [radio]. People think this is like a nose job. That's... the worst bigotry I've seen since Aids was discovered." Her King Country home is well away from the nearest town. "It's my own slice of paradise... away from the ignorance." [The person], who lives on an invalid's benefit, moved there from Hamilton... soon after... [being] denied sex change surgery... [Now the Chief Ombuds[person] has] recommended that the H[FA] arrange and pay for psychiatric assessments and, if approval was given, to pay for the surgery. "I'm so thrilled. It's been a battle,"... The operation cannot come soon enough. A heart condition means that the longer [the person] waits, the less likely [it] is to survive the procedure... "I want to speak out now because I know there are people like me being born here every year. I don't want them to suffer like I have." [The person] said fear had kept her from telling her neighbours, for whom [it] works occasionally, of her condition. "I'll call them later. I think they'll be all right. But you never know with bigotry; it's such an irrational thing." [Editor's note: How *irrational* is it to beg God for a sex-change (i.e., declare you believe God exists but openly criticise then defy the way this universal controller had created you)? If, instead of spending most of its life wishing it were a girl, the person had applied its mind more productively, it might have grown up to find a way to enhance society's resources instead of helping to squander them (an answer to the question: "If God controls the universe, why does it make people want to change their sex?"), could be that this is one of many examples intended to serve as lessons for future generations of what constitutes misuse or abuse of brainpower and technology)! Until recently, people had no choice but to accept the gender they were born with. Now, gender reassignment surgery is so common that we have a transsexual MP and even a 'transsexual Anglican vicar'.

...‘research indicates that up to 20% of sex-change patients regret the operation – the removal of their sexual organs did nothing to address their gender confusion. Faced with the prospect of living an isolated and lonely life without any real possibility of marriage and family, too many have committed suicide’.]

...The sporty multi-millionaire property developer... was born a [guy], but underwent sex-change surgery to become a [gal]. Incredibly, seven years later, [it realised it]’d made a mistake – and now, after spending more than \$200,000 on painful operations, [it] has made history by becoming the first person in the UK to have two sex changes, and now lives as a [guy] again. But... can no longer get a natural erection and uses a special pump to inflate his penis... [M]arried in 1985... his wife... left him for another [guy] 12 years later. Feeling lonely, [it]... began visiting gay clubs... became fascinated by transvestites, and began cross-dressing... “I... haven’t seen my children for over 10 years. They’re now aged 22 and 23, but don’t want to know me.” ...the... 48-year-old... reveals... it... still hasn’t found happiness and is desperate to settle down with a [gal]... to marry.

...When... [they] walk down the aisle together they will be fulfilling every young couple’s dream, with one exception – for this wedding ceremony [the groom (30)] is technically the bride and [the bride (34)] is the groom. The 30-year-old was born a [gal] and the 34-year-old a [guy], and they will be N[Z]’s first transsexual vice-versa married couple when they exchange vows... It was love at first sight for the unusual couple when they met at a dragon boat festival six months ago. When [the 30-year-old... caught sight of... [the] 34-year-old[’s]... piercing blue eyes, [it] was hooked. “I knew as soon as I saw her [it] was a transsexual...” ...The devoted couple see nothing strange about their relationship. “We do our own thing and we’re just a standard couple,” says... [the groom], who... gave birth 14 years ago to a daughter who now calls him ‘Dad’... “We’re no different to any other heterosexual couple, I suppose. The real difference is when it comes to the bed. But... even then we’re still [a guy and a gal] – it doesn’t matter which way you look at it.” Neither has had a full sex-change operation, although [the groom] has had a hysterectomy. “Sometimes we gender alternate...”

...Hidden gender [IN]BANGKOK A THAI beauty queen has given up her title after admitting [it] is actually a [him].

...Swathed in a purple velvet gown with nail polish to match, [a]transsexual... presides over the Half Moon bar in Beijing’s trendy diplomatic district. The former national [guys’] dance champion – and one-time colonel in a People’s Liberation Army dance troupe – underwent a sex-change operation three years ago. [The transsexual] makes no secret of her past, but admits that dating can be a problem. “I’m too much for Chinese [guys,” sighed the transsexual], aged 31... Still, [the transsexual] has become accepted in Beijing in a way unthinkable just a few years ago. Her colourful lifestyle illustrates a sexual revolution now sweeping China, an unintended result of economic reforms launched 20 years ago by the late Deng Xiaoping. Chinese have used their new wealth and expanded personal freedoms to throw off decades of socialist morality. Larger cities boast sex shops and gay bars; gigolos and prostitutes openly advertise for business on street corners. Divorce is on the rise, and extramarital affairs – regarded as a shocking sin in more puritanical socialist days – are now grist for office gossip. “In the days before ‘reform and opening,’ movies showed actors and actresses lying in bed together but talking about the revolution,” said a... social commentator... “Today, movies show people kissing and embracing. Ideas in the West are more advanced and we are borrowing them... We’ve begun to respect people as individuals.” ...Not everybody is happy with the new easy-going attitudes to sex and marriage... Panicked lawmakers this year proposed the first amendments to the country’s 1980 marriage law that would make extramarital sex a criminal offence. The draft revisions have met howls of public protests, and may well be knocked back. Still, they reflect the fears of authorities that the institution of marriage is under threat, and with it social stability. Old prejudices also linger. Homosexuals who cruise public parks to pick up lovers risk being beaten up by police. Gay bars are routinely closed down... “China’s opening has not reached the level that we hoped for,”... Nevertheless, the contrast between China today and China 20 years ago is dramatic... T[he transsexual]’s story is testament to the change. A sex change would have been unthinkable during the draconian days of... Mao Zedong. “I would have been punished and put in jail,”... said[the transsexual, who] was born in the north-eastern city of Shenyang and from the age of six felt [it was “a gal] trapped in a [guy]’s body.” ...Thanks to Deng’s “open door” policies, [the transsexual] was able to travel to the U[S] to study modern dance from 1988 to 1990 and worked in Italy and Belgium before returning to China in 1993. [The transsexual] heeded Deng’s call that “to get rich is glorious” and now runs a successful bar and restaurant. “Before, people had no choice... Now they have many choices.”

The estranged wife of a doctor who had a sex change has... applauded her [ex’s]... decision, saying: “I know [my ex] has no choice but to take this very positive final step... I hope [my ex] can be a more complete person and find inner contentment in becoming... [a gal.]” They have five children... About one in 30,000 [guys] would prefer to be [a gal], but only one [gal] in 100,000 wishes [it] could be a [guy]. Those statistics come from... Thailand’s Chulalongkorn University... “Thailand has become the most popular place for sex change operations... Many foreigners are coming here to have the surgery and I think the income will help shore up the economy.” ...A-[gal-to-guy]... operation costs about [double a guy-to-gal one]...

When... the Northern Territory Attorney-General, saw *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, [the Attorney-General] laughed along with the rest of the audience – but it also got him thinking. The hit A[US]n movie on the life and times of three transsexuals made him wonder about the unfairness of being a [gal trapped in a guy’s body. So it] set out to... ease the pain. The result: N[T] this week became the third jurisdiction in A[US] and one of only a handful in the world which actively recognises transsexuals’ new gender... Under the new law, unmarried adults who have had sex realignment surgery can apply for new birth certificates [that] classify their new gender. The changes mean official documents, including passports, also can be issued with the new gender... The amendments stem from meetings of the standing committee of A[US]n Attorneys-General. They have been in place in South A[US] since 1988, were recently enacted in New South Wales, and are expected to be introduced in Western A[US] soon.

...Cross-dressing between sunset and sunrise will be legalised under draft legislation designed to remove archaic offences from the Tasmanian statute books... [T]he Tasmanian Law Reform Commission has recommended that the Police Offences Act of 1935 be replaced with a Summary Offences Act reflecting current community values. “It’s a mish-mash of offences derived from English legislation of the last century, some of it framed in very archaic language, and new offences added since 1935... One of the more humorous examples was the offence of being a [guy] going around town in [gals’] clothing during the hours of darkness.” [In related news, ‘science is starting to reveal in extraordinary detail how genes determine the sex of a foetus and how that process can and does go awry. The head of the Centre for Hormone Research at the University of Melbourne was part of the British-based team that in 1990 discovered a crucial gene, known as SRY, that usually occurs only on the Y chromosome of all mammals. Take SRY alone and inject it into a fertilised girl mouse egg and it will become a boy mouse, as other researchers at Britain’s National Institute for Medical Research later showed. When a human foetus is still thumbnail-sized, you can’t tell a boy from a girl one – the budding sex tissues are identical. If it is a boy, however, SRY switches on about 7 weeks after conception and causes testes to form, which soon flood the developing baby’s body with the masculine sex hormone testosterone that shapes the development of masculine genitals and physical traits. Without SRY, a feminine foetus waits until 13 weeks to develop ovaries (from exactly the same tissue buds that otherwise produce testes), which produce oestrogen. It is often argued that being feminine is the default state for mammals. It now seems just as possible we start out sexless but with dual potential. It’s worth noting that SRY’s discovery was made possible with the help of French scientists who identified 4 unusual guys who had sought treatment for infertility. Tests revealed all 4 were in fact genetic gals, yet they had guys’ bodies, including testes. Further studies showed an SRY gene had somehow become attached to one of their X chromosomes. It was just a tiny glitch, enough to reverse their sexual anatomy but not to endow them with other masculine genes to make sperm. Many other such variants are now being discovered – along with true hermaphrodites and pseudo-hermaphrodites, there are people with missing sex chromosomes, extra sex chromosomes, or tiny genetic fragments tacked onto or missing from chromosomes that seem to have nothing to do with sex determination. The Intersex Society of North America asserts that one person in 500 has sex chromosomes which are neither the usual XX or XY. Many such people don’t discover

this until they seek help with fertility problems. One group is genetically masculine with a condition known as androgen insensitivity syndrome. In essence, their receptors to testosterone don't work. So, although they have masculine chromosomes and the SRY gene intact, their genitals and general body form are not masculinised in the womb. They develop outwardly feminine bodies but may have internal testes instead of ovaries.'

...The presence of an extra copy of a human sex gene can transform an embryo from boy to girl and produce genitalia that doctors cannot determine to be masculine or feminine. Researchers at the University of California, LA, say babies born with this condition are relatively common. They hope their findings will help doctors to ascertain more accurately and quickly the sex of these babies and perhaps lead to ways of correcting the defect before birth. The study shows that mild cases of malformed genitalia such as undescended testes or an enlarged clitoris are seen in 1% of all births. More severe cases, in which babies are born with such sexually ambiguous genitals that obstetricians cannot discern the sex of the infant, occur in one out of 3000 births.' □ 'In the early stages of development, a foetus contains both sets of genitals –' and sometimes babies are 'born with almost complete sets of both boy and girl genitalia'.]

...there are more than two sexes, but the small band of N[Z] intersexuals don't find life in a [guy's or a gal's] world easy... HER birth 50 years ago was registered as [that of a boy, but it was christened with a girl's name] and raised as a girl in Hamilton. At age 12, with her breasts already growing, [it] also started to develop the body of a teenage boy. Her schoolmates' reaction was predictably cruel. "Things turned from bearable to nasty in a couple of weeks... and that was effectively the end of my schooling." ...[the gal]s studies PhD student at the University of Waikato, is an intersexual. At birth her genitalia, like those of one in every 2000 babies, were ambiguous, neither completely [a penis or vagina]. "I was discouraged from undressing in front of other children, and I was permanently excused from PE. I knew I was different, but I got through school largely by being a non-gendered person as far as possible." Doctors decided to help the masculinisation along with a hefty course of testosterone and minor surgery: correcting hypospadias, in which the urethra opening is along the shaft of the penis instead of the tip. [The patient] had gone into surgery thinking the unwanted penis was to be removed and [it] could go back to being a girl. Waking up to find the penis still there was devastating. Her next visit to the medical team was her last for many years. [The patient] wanted to tell them to stop the masculinisation process. Instead, they told her it was time to remove her breasts... Statistics say... 1800 intersexuals [live in NZ], with another 30 born each year, although most people have never heard of the condition... Although everyone in her small home town knew of her unusual anatomy, and [our second subject knew it was different, her condition] was never discussed with... [her. At age 8] her parents dropped her off at hospital. [The 8-year-old] had her own room attached to a [guys'] ward, and "a constant stream of curious medical visitors to see the freak," [the now 44-year-old hermaphrodite] says. Then her penis was removed, also in front of an audience... [The child, who] was conscious throughout the operation... spent the next three weeks strapped to a hospital bed to allow the wound to heal – and still nothing was explained to her. [It] remembers her mother attempting to explain when [the daughter was 24. Her mum] was able only to recount how the young nurse attending her birth had said, "Oh my God, it's a hermaphrodite!" before starting to scream with distress. End of discussion. [The 44-year-old] came across her Plunket book after her mother died 13 years ago. Her name, Margaret, covered the original name entry, Bruce... [Bruce] had been born with a small penis and a vagina-like opening. Doctors initially decided [the baby] should be raised as a boy, but surgical exploration ([it] still has the deep scar from navel to pelvic bone) revealed a uterus and as a one-year-old [Bruce] was renamed Margaret. Finally armed with some clues to her difference and her difficult childhood, [the 44-year-old] began to reclaim her intersexuality. [The 44-year-old] researched and asked questions and underwent extensive counselling – walking through layers of shame and humiliation to come to terms with who [it] actually was. Last year [it] took the name Mani, which is Sanskrit for both ma[sculine and feminine, and] has let a wispy beard grow... IN MAY this year [it] formed the Intersex Society of N[Z]. While the majority of the 120-plus members are people who have heard the story and support the work of the society, more than 20 are intersexuals. [The 44-year-old] has had a flood of letters since starting the society, from intersexuals ranging in age from 16 to 60... "Those letters are full of pain." Through the society, [it] aims to raise public awareness of intersexuality so that others may be spared the years of secrecy and shame... [The 44-year-old] would also like to see an end to the gender-assignment surgery which is routinely carried out on intersex babies born in N[Z] (as it is in most Western countries). "...In most cases it's not medical intervention to do with physical health. In those cases we support it. They try to justify the surgery on psychological grounds, and I don't think that is proven. There's been almost no follow-up of intersex babies, and everyone has assumed it's okay but I haven't heard of one intersex person who's had the surgery as a baby or child and is completely happy with it." ...[However, the] director of paediatric endocrinology at the Starship Children's Hospital, says children develop a gender identity by the time they are 18 months old. "The worst thing you could do for babies born with ambiguous genitalia is to say, 'You're neither [a boy or girl] right now, and we'll decide later.' That tells them they're not normal, and it deprives them of gender identity, which is such an integral part of our being." [The director] says intersex babies are treated as a paediatric endocrinology emergency... [These days, most hermaphrodite babies end up being classed as girls' – perhaps because it is 'easier to construct a vagina.' The 44-year-old] acknowledges that life for a child who is physically different can be tough. But... believes that with a supportive family and school, the child will be better off not having the surgery until they are of an age to decide for themselves. In the U[S], intersexuals are more visible and stropky. The political wing of the Intersex Society of North America, Hermaphrodites with Attitude, have run protests outside paediatrics conventions. SOME [US] doctors concede that the intersexuals might have a point, but the campaigners have also hit a lot of brick walls. In this country the situation is much calmer. [The 44-year-old] has been invited to speak at medical conferences and other gatherings, and received only positive responses to her story. Doctors say the surgery performed on babies now is far more sophisticated than what [the 44-year-old faced. But the 44-year-old] says that is not the point. "I realise these children would have to be raised as either [a boy or a girl], rather than as third gender, but I'm saying that shouldn't be rigidly enforced with surgery. And it shouldn't be hidden from them. It's an issue of autonomy and human rights." ...[the PhD student] says nobody ever asked her which gender [it] would prefer... In her early 20s [it] met a transsexual, and discovered that some transsexuals chose to have genital surgery. [The PhD student] first presented herself as a candidate for this surgery in 1972 but it was 16 years before [the hermaphrodite] underwent the first of several operations in Melbourne... Since the age of 20 [the PhD student] has lived as a lesbian. "I was so repelled by the idea of [masculine]ness, there was no way I was going to have anything to do with [guys. 'It is not possible for me, at the moment, to have sex as a gal, because I'm not, but'] I regret that I didn't have the opportunity to go through the usual teen experimentation, and I suspect I'm actually heterosexual or bisexual." [The 44-year-old also 'believes her intersexualism was due to the masculine hormone drugs her mother was on to help prevent a miscarriage'. Ironically, 'a US study links lesbianism to exposure to masculine hormones in the womb.' Incidentally, another study has concluded that 'gay students are 7 times more likely to commit suicide than non-gays', and 'young gay guys are 14 times more likely to commit suicide than their non-gay counterparts'...

A US study found that one third of gay and bisexual youth reported at least one intentional self-destructive act and almost half of them repeatedly made attempts on their lives. - 1997

...Sing if you're glad to be gay Sing if you're happy that way...

...according to the U[S] Lesbian and Gay Health Foundation... three out of every 10 homosexuals ha[s] a drinking or drug abuse problem... [(that's three] times as high as for straight people...[)]; many because they suffered from "diminished self-esteem and impaired sense of self-worth." - 1990

The drinking problems of lesbians are... targeted in a new Alcohol Advisory Council (Alac) campaign. A report on [gals] and drugs in N[Z] showed lesbians are more likely to develop problems with alcohol than heterosexual [gals]... It is not easy being lesbian in a predominantly straight world and sometimes alcohol and drugs help dull the associated pain... Few specific resources for lesbians exist and the new resource material aims to fill the gap... Information is... also... provided on where [lesbians] can go for help if they are worried about their own or somebody else's drinking.

...On the gay battlefronts... DRIFTING quietly across... [her] pager was a coded message. It was a stream of number 7s, and to her its meaning was crystal clear. [The pager's owner, who is a member] of the Human Rights Campaign, a gay-rights group in Washington, had arranged for a friend at the... Supreme Court to contact her when the justices issued their long-awaited ruling in the case of *Romer v Evans*. The 7s meant the court had thrown out Colorado's constitutional amendment that barred any legislation protecting homosexuals from discrimination. The headquarters of the H[RC], which had helped bankroll the legal challenge to Amendment 2, burst into celebration... "I thought of... all the civil rights lawyers who struggled to achieve *Brown v Board of Education*," says [the HRC's] executive director... But even [the executive] doesn't think *Romer v Evans* gives gays and lesbians that kind of victory. The *Brown v Board of Education* decision in 1954... really was a landmark for black Americans. In outlawing school segregation, the court reversed years of social policy and triggered the modern civil-rights revolution. By contrast, last week's decision created no new rights for gay Americans and failed to declare them a specially protected group like blacks... To be sure, *Romer v Evans* has momentous symbolic value. It's the first time the justices have hinted they may be sympathetic to constitutional claims by gays and lesbians. The only other time the court visited the issue, 10 years ago, the justices were downright antagonistic – ruling... that nothing barred the states from making sodomy a crime. Yet symbolism only goes so far. It doesn't guarantee housing, medical care or a job – all of which can still be denied homosexuals simply because they're gay. In virtually every state and municipality, that kind of discrimination remains legal and is unaffected by *Romer v Evans*. All the decision says is that a state constitutional amendment can't *prevent* the Aspen or Boulder city councils from passing anti-discrimination laws if they so choose. Indeed, the Colorado legislature tomorrow could accomplish the goal of the amendment without any legal problems. How? By passing a law banning discrimination in employment, housing and so forth based on race, religion and other well-accepted classifications – but leave out sexual orientation. Then, explicitly say the law pre-empts all local legislation. That way, unlike Amendment 2, sexual orientation is not singled out. Just two days after the ruling, gay activists learned how quickly the pendulum can swing.[The US] President... an ally on many gay issues, stunned them by announcing [it] would sign a bill in Congress... which denies federal recognition of same-sex marriages. No state yet permits such marriages. As a practical matter, that legislation could have far wider consequences for the gay movement than *Romer v Evans*. However, it is possible the constitutional bill itself is unconstitutional because it could violate a guarantee that each state give "full faith and credit" to the decrees of other states. But that's a court fight years down the road. THE gay-rights movement has become a potent political and social force in the country... But ambivalence runs deep. A recent poll underscored how far the gay-rights movement has come – and how far it has to go... 73[% of]... people polled... acknowledged that gays were victims of at least some discrimination but only 27[%] believe more eff[or]t is needed to protect homosexual rights. The majority does not support legislation guaranteeing equal rights for gays... [84%] says gays should get equal job opportunities – up from 74[%] two years ago – but only a third support legal gay marriage. Unless the courts decide to give gays added constitutional protection, gay activists will have to fight for their cause in every workplace, school board and legislature. Without a significant switch in public opinion they won't have the electoral votes to win very often, which is why so much effort is being spent in the courts. [Another g]ay battleground in the U[S] is the [military: Seven cases are pending in the federal courts, all challenging [the President's] "don't ask, don't tell" policy. The theory is that soldiers who acknowledge they're gay should be protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution since a mere statement doesn't prove proscribed conduct. Moreover, being dismissed for such a statement may violate the Constitution's guarantee of "equal protection of the laws." For example, would a heterosexual be disciplined for saying [it] was straight? So far five trial courts have ruled for the military – two against. The Supreme court hasn't heard any of them but it's a good bet it will take on one within a year or two.

...Sexual variety has always been the spice of life for humans, says an English archaeologist... who has taken a sweeping look at four million years of passion. [The archaeologist] argues that masturbation, homosexuality, bestiality... transsexualism and transvestism... date back to the early mists of time. Sex has never been just for reproduction, [the archaeologist] says... Examples abound in [the archaeologist's] entertaining *The Prehistory of Sex* to underline his point that sexual imagery dates back at least 30,000 years. Eroticism, not biology, ruled way back then... The... archaeologist... quotes everyone from Hippocrates to [an AUSn (r:p1029, ln38)] feminist... to bring a popular touch to his academic treatise... Graphic proof is offered by a 5000-year-old Siberian rock engraving of a Stone Age [guy] on skis trying to penetrate an elk. Black Sea Scythian nomads, made impotent by the constant jostling they received on horseback, wore [gals' clothing. Amazonian gals] cauterised one breast of their baby daughters so they could shoot their arrows more effectively when they grew up. Only [gals] who had killed three people were allowed to breed... Some biologists argue that humans are slaves to their genes but [the archaeologist] says most prehistoric communities were in control of their destiny and fully able to separate sex from reproduction. [The archaeologist] concludes that variety is indeed the spice of life – especially if it keeps burgeoning birth rates under control. "To maintain a sexual morality that is based on reproduction is nonsense and, at present world population levels, dangerous nonsense..." - 1996

['THREE teams of scientists in America are searching for the genes that cause homosexuality. They are reputable scientists who are persuaded by recent research that gay guys for the most part inherit their sexual preference rather than learn it. Their work is being welcomed by militant homosexuals because it refutes the charge that they could have chosen to be heterosexual. Until recently the assumption that homosexuality must be caused by upbringing and young experience was shared by most researchers who looked at the field. Dominant mothers, hostile fathers, a failure to resolve the Oedipus complex, effeminate role models – all were suggested as the causes of homosexuality, but all attempts to find conclusive evidence for them failed. Then, six years ago, Boston University reported that brothers of homosexual guys were five times more likely to be gay than brothers of heterosexual guys, and homosexual guys are more likely to have older brothers than heterosexuals. That proved nothing, because brothers share upbringings as well as genes, but it revived interest in the idea of a genetic explanation. Then Northwestern University found that if a homosexual guy had an identical twin, in 52% of cases his twin was also homosexual; if a gay had a non-identical twin, in only 22% of cases was the twin also homosexual. From the difference between the fraternal twins and the identical twins, one of the researchers calculated that the heritability of homosexuality is between 30 and 70%, depending on how many genes are involved and how biased the sample was. Both universities have since repeated the study for lesbians and found similar results. Most neurophysicists believe that the differences between guys' brains and gals' brains depend on events in early life – the release of masculine hormones by the testes of boy foetuses. Sexual preference may well fit into the same pattern. Some rats have been given carefully timed injections that block masculine hormones in foetuses; they develop as normal boy rats – except they solicit sex from other boy rats. The Salk Institute in San Diego has shown anatomical differences between the brains of homosexual and heterosexual guys in parts of the brain noted for differences between guys and gals. That does not mean, though, that guy homosexuality can be reduced to effeminacy. Researchers doubt the oft-repeated figure that one in 10 guys is homosexual; they think people whose sex lives are exclusively homosexual make up about 4% of adult guys and less than 2% of adult gals. Things seen as natural and biological have a habit of becoming medical or ethical issues. If there are genes for homosexuality, then there can be genetic tests for homosexuality. Those would enable prospective parents to discover whether their foetus was likely to be gay and abort it if it was; in the same way it is already possible to test the sex of the foetus early and selectively abort daughters or sons. In the case of homosexuality, though, "treatment" in the form of hormone therapy might be offered instead. At which point, what price "naturalness?"]

...the Nobel prize winner who discovered DNA... has provoked outrage by claiming that [pregnant people] should be allowed an abortion if their unborn babies are found to be carrying a gene for homosexuality... [A] Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford University, said: "To say this is controversial is a generous way to describe it." ...[the] author of *The New Genetics and Clinical Practice*, said th[e] Nobel prize winning doctor's comments were a "hindrance" to the debate about genetics. "This... is really emotive and it is a gross oversimplification,"... Although... scientists claimed in 1993 that they had identified a link between homosexuality and genetic make-up, it remains unproven... At that time the former Chief Rabbi of Britain... was criticised when [it] said that if the techniques became available, then scientists should help eradicate the "abnormality of homosexuality". [The doctor], however, admitted that it was not even known how normal sexuality was determined. "But while I think in the end we will[know], that doesn't mean that the majority of homosexuality has a genetic basis, just that genetics will help us understand." ...Speaking from his home in Long Island, New York, [the doctor] recalled a discussion [it]d had about the genetic implications of homosexuality in front of a [mum] whose son was gay... "Looking at the situation from her point of view, it was that [the mum] wanted grandchildren. Her son's homosexuality was the greatest tragedy of her life. And who am I to say otherwise?" ...Although [the doctor] claimed that these issues should be left to the individual, [it] also stated that parents had a moral responsibility to make sure their babies were born as healthy as possible. "We already accept that most couples don't want a Down's child. You would have to be crazy to say you wanted one, because that child has no future... Some day a child is going to sue its parents for being born. [The child] will say: My life is so awful with these terrible genetic defects and you just callously didn't find out. Or you knew and didn't do anything about it. Or, this disease was in the family and again you didn't do anything about it." ...[a] founder of the Genetic Interest Group, which supports research into genetically inherited diseases, said [the doctor] was not commenting on science but on social matters, and from a "prejudiced American perspective".

...*Being gay is not a matter of choice, but of rights*... IN HIS recent article "Society dilemma over hero worship", [a writer] offered an annotation upon recent history as redolent with novelty as it was with the measure of its own deviousness. Among "the most telling and dramatic" reasons for the "changes to our attitudes to homosexuality", [the writer] said, has been the American Psychiatric Association's decision in 1973 to remove homosexuality from a diagnostic manual of disorders, thereby obtaining... "one of the most spectacular cures in the history of medicines". Of course, the... [a]ssociation did not bring about a "spectacular cure" for anything – which is hardly surprising given that no one had ever actually succeeded in establishing pathology. Rather the association simply yielded to a burgeoning understanding that the listing of homosexuality in a diagnostic manual of disorders could in no way be construed as being the function of rational scientific discourse but rather was the result of what might be described as a plaintively idiosyncratic, flat-earth mentality. In addition, more and more... [people] had come to realise that to classify as a pathology something so legitimately inherent to many human beings as their homosexuality is not only merely wrong-headed, but certainly downright pernicious. Of the few psychiatrists who continued to insist otherwise[one]... persistently maintained that homosexuality was a "dread dysfunction" established in infancy through a fixation upon an overbearing mother. Ominously, [it] advocated the establishment of a "national centre for sexual rehabilitation" where [gay]s could be sent for "cure". One is reminded of the incarceration by Nazis of gay[s]... in Buchenwald, where they were variously castrated and subjected to "experiments in the reversal of hormonal polarity" by an SS-commissioned doctor operating under the alias Carl Vaernet. [The psychiatrist's] son... is today the openly gay [US President]-appointed White House liaison for the Department of Labour. Poetic justice, one might say. [The writer] went on to make the claim that gay people "display none of the characteristics of a repressed minority" because they "have higher incomes... are better educated, go on more holidays and have greater spending power". Although [the writer] does not want gay... people to be able to marry or to have families, [it] maintained that gay people "have the same rights as everybody else". It is as though ostensible economic privilege were an immunity from the social omission, religious ostracism and the various forms of discrimination which continue to be endured by gay and lesbian people in N[Z]... But the fanciful idea that a group cannot be oppressed if it is well-to-do has been widely employed at once to obfuscate prejudice and its effects and to actively fan such prejudice itself... Citing [Auckland's] Hero Parade, whose onlookers' largely benign curiosity is tainted by [the writer] with idle voyeurism, [it] expressed the fond hope that society (will be) mature enough to examine and assess the consequences of such "celebration". Clearly, [the writer] already rues these "consequences". Presenting the reality of a gay and lesbian culture in the media is, according to him, tantamount to "advocacy". Reference to homosexuality in the school curriculum, are similarly... a case of "advocacy". Implicit here, though never expressly stated, is the notion of ideological recruitment and manipulation on the part of gay people and their "liberal" supporters. And what such innuendos serve to do is to inflame fear of gay people through injecting and re-injecting popular perceptions of gay[s]... with the toxicity of the malign and of the contentious, with no acknowledgment of the distress endured by gay people (not least of all gay and lesbian youth) resulting from invisibility, prejudice, denial and popular misapprehensions as to the nature of homosexuality itself. Still the matter of gay and lesbian rights, is not, [the writer] told us, "simply one of justice". "Certain fundamental changes must take place at the heart of our culture", [the writer] declared, proclaiming that such changes must entail "elevating choice to a value in its own right". Herein lies the banal insinuation that, first, homosexuality is a matter of choice and, second, that the existence of such choice is commensurate with an amoral society which has succumbed to a depreciation of what have been called "traditional values". Hence... [his] imputation upon lesbian and gay marriage and parenting as constituting a declension of familial bonds from "social responsibility" into "therapy" and "fulfilment of the vagaries of intellectual fashion", is a grave and completely unfounded prejudice. And yet such breathtaking insolence does not alter the facts of gay and lesbian marriage and child-rearing. The late... Yale Professor of History John Boswell documented... 60 ceremonies of same-sex union, most but not all of which were used in the Greek Orthodox Church until the beginning of this century. Professor Boswell also conclusively attested that in the early church until the third century not only were gay and lesbian marriages consecrated but that there was no distinction made in respect of homosexual or heterosexual whatsoever. So – notwithstanding the largely catastrophic historical position of gay and lesbian people – gay and lesbian marriage has certainly been "traditional". And... in the U[S]... studies have all shown that where gay and lesbian couples are raising children, these children are developing into far better rounded individuals than those raised by couples of mixed gender. Common sense alone should tell us that children do not suffer because their parents are gay or lesbian or straight or because their mothers or fathers do or do not live with them. They suffer because parents – regardless of gender or sexuality – are incompetent, irresponsible or unfeeling... If homosexuality is not to be "given" the same status as heterosexuality, then it must follow that the latter is indeed in some sense superior – biologically, aesthetically, and/or morally. But of course there is no evidence at all to suggest that one form of sexuality is in any sense superior to any other.

...*This week the Court of Appeal ruled that homosexual marriages were not permitted under N[Z] law. Here are t[he] views... of... one of the litigants*... We went to the highest court in N[Z] to uphold our right to marry and to gain access to all the statutory protections, support, recognition and responsibilities that presently apply only to heterosexual couples. They turned us down. It's over. Well, no, it's not over. The next step we are taking is off-shore. We are appealing to the U[N, taking NZ] to a higher court. There are more than sufficient grounds. N[Z] has signed and ratified international covenants which bind it to upholding human rights. N[Z] courts didn't even have to contradict or distort existing legislation to do that – the Marriage Act does not forbid same-sex couples to marry. To refuse us the right to do so is in direct contravention of our Bill of Rights and the Human Rights Act 1993... N[Z] will continue to parade itself as a champion of human rights on the international stage, while at home human rights legislation has proved unable to protect the rights of homosexual N[Zers. NZ]ers may continue to believe that we have a functioning Human Rights Act and Bill of Rights, when, in fact, both have failed their first major test. This was a watershed case, and N[Z]'s human rights legislation has collapsed in impotent tatters. You may continue to believe that you are part of a fair and just society. I don't. Not any more.

...when five Court of Appeal judges said “you can’t” to three homosexual couples who would if they could... [-] ruling that same-sex marriages could be legalised only by Parliament... [-] gays and lesbians everywhere were denied rights available to heterosexual couples who choose to wed... The Law Commission has recommended giving de facto couples, including people in same-sex relationships, the same legal protection enjoyed by married couples. However, the Minister of Justice... has indicated that the initiative will not survive enactment of the draft Succession (Adjustment) Bill... Holland has just passed legislation allowing homosexual marriages, while Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and Norway either officially allow gay and lesbian union or afford those couples the same protection in law as that enjoyed by heterosexuals... [A] lawyer who has worked for many homosexual clients, sa[ys]... that eventually N[Z] gays and lesbians would be able to legally marry. It just required the political will. • The... N[SW police department], anxious to recruit staff from minority groups, has started an advertising campaign aimed at getting homosexuals to join the force. A spokes[person] said gay police were often more sensitive to victims of crime.

...*Daring to tell the truth about lesbian teen love...* ALTHOUGH [the author says it is] a bit too old to hang out regularly at McDonald’s and... no longer strives to keep up with the latest slang, [the]Dunedin writer... has a flair for entering into teenage minds without false notes or condescension. In the seven years [the Dunedinite] has been writing books for young people, [it] has scooped some of N[Z]’s top honours for children’s literature, including the AIM Best First Book Award in 1991... Her latest novel, *Dare Truth or Promise...* examines such issues as religion, prejudice, snobbery and the politics of racist or sexist jokes, but the chief focus is on the triumphs and anxieties of first love. What makes the book unusual – a first, in fact, among N[Z] novels aimed at a teenage audience – is that the tentative lovers are two high school girls... [The author], who works fulltime as an editor at Longacre Press and has a shrewd sense of the N[Z] book market, accepts in a philosophical fashion that her new novel might meet with some resistance. “There will probably be some schools that won’t stock it... although I find it hard to understand the psychology of people who will be upset by it. It’s certainly not designed to shock or provoke.” Nor is the novel intended exclusively for a youthful lesbian audience... “There tends to be a mentality, particularly in schools, only to give people books about themselves, but I think the beauty of literature is its ability to take you into worlds you wouldn’t otherwise know about...” [The author] is open about her own sexual orientation. “I had my first lesbian relationship when I was a teenager...” ...[By the way, a US] study shows that nearly 2% of BLOOD donors don’t reveal if they have had unprotected gay... sex, used intravenous drugs or engaged in other behavior that might taint their blood.

...[NZ’s] Aids Foundation surveyed just over 1850 [guys] nationwide who have had [gay] sex... during the past five years... [and found that most guys] in relationships were not using condoms. “Some... see a relationship as a buffer against HIV, as a way of staying safe, so they discard condoms. But overseas we are finding that many [guys] who are becoming infected with HIV are [guys in relationships].” It is estimated that ‘around 99% of HIV infections in guys who had gay sex have occurred through unprotected anal sex’, yet more] than half the [NZ guys] who had anal sex with their regular partners never used condoms while nearly 8[%] did not use them during sex with casual partners. Almost 6[%] never used condoms for either casual or regular partners... The average length of gay relationships was [fifty-one]... months. However, 54[% of guys] in relationships of longer than six months had sex with at least one casual partner in the six months before the survey... The survey also found that more than a tenth of the respondents were married or in a de facto relationship with a [gal. Another 25%] had formerly had a [heterosexual] relationship... - 1997

Researchers say a significant number of gay[s (nearly 8%)] ...are becoming infected with the Aids virus through oral sex – an activity that was rumoured to be safe... [O]ral sex was the only risky behaviour that... [they] had engaged in... But many of the [guys] in the study indicated that they had not been aware of the risk. “I think some investigators have actually shown that gay[s]... might be substituting oral sex for anal sex in an attempt to curb transmission.” The study showed this could be a deadly mistake. The Aids Foundation director... said the news report was worrying but [the director] wanted to read the study to check its research methods before drawing any conclusions. [The director] believed that gay and bisexual [guys in NZ] knew that oral sex was not completely risk-free. “We’re surprised by the rate reported in the San Francisco study because it’s out of step with all studies on that issue.” ...Having a cut or sore inside the mouth greatly increased the chances of transmission, and many people could have tiny abrasions of the mouth or gums without being aware of them. “It doesn’t have to be a gaping sore or ulcer,” said the]... deputy director of the... HIV prevention centre... at the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention... at the University of California[who also]... said the study had been carefully done, and the [subjects] were able to pinpoint exactly when they became infected... ■ LONG-TERM PRACTITIONERS OF ANAL SEX HAVE TO WEAR “BUTT TAMPONS”... Gay bowel syndrome is the old-fashioned term still used to describe a collection of symptoms affecting the anus and rectum... [A] consultant gastroenterologist, contends that in the space of a year a gay... with a penchant for “being burgled” will experience rectal inflammation, abscesses around the anus, anal fistules (a hollow around the perineum after a rectal abscess has burst) or blood in their crap due to stools scraping fissures. In time, anal sphincters can collapse, necessitating colostomy bags and the unconventional insertion of jam-rags to prevent insidious faecal seepage.

...Rarely does a police officer witness violations of Section 21.06 of the Texas criminal code, the section entitled “Homosexual conduct”. And almost never is an arrest made under the 119-year-old statute. So what happened recently... [to a couple of guys], in the privacy of [one of the guys’] bedroom, was highly unusual. The[y]... were having sex when a Harris County sheriff’s deputy walked into the apartment on another matter, saw what they were doing and hauled them off to jail. “In all candour, I don’t believe we’ve ever made an arrest before under those circumstances,” said... a sheriff’s spokes[person]. But the law is the law... “We can’t give our deputies a list of statutes we think they should enforce and a list of statutes we want them to ignore.” Handcuffing [the gay lovers] that night did more than just satisfy the deputy’s obligation to enforce the law. It opened up a new legal front in a long campaign by gay activists across America to do away with such statutes, which... [also resulted in] a Minnesota bartender [being] arrested for engaging in oral sex with a [gal] in the bar after closing time. Minnesota’s law, which applies to all couples, includes oral sex in the definition of sodomy, as does the Texas law. But in Minnesota, police witnessed the offence after the fact, while viewing a videotape from the bar’s security camera during an unrelated investigation... Answering what turned out to be a bogus report of a [guy] behaving erratically with a gun, [the Texas deputy sheriff entered the] apartment through an unlocked door with his weapon drawn. After finding no one with a gun, [it] later wrote in his report, “[I observed a guy] engaged in deviate sexual conduct, namely, anal sex, with another [guy]”. The pair]... spent the rest of the night behind bars before each was let out on \$200 bail. [They] pleaded no contest to violating the anti-sodomy statute and were fined \$125 each by a justice of the peace. Now the stage is set for what lawyers predict will be a long appeal process, one they hope will end with the state’s highest criminal appeals court invalidating the law as an infringement on privacy as protected by the Texas Constitution. The arrests in some ways delighted gay activists... Here, they contend, was an instance of government authority literally reaching under a person’s blankets. “You can’t get more private than a bedroom,” said... a lawyer with... Lambda Legal Defence and Education Fund, which is representing the [pair, aged 55 and 31].

...[IN] COLOMBIA... A GAY activist has been fined for complaining about a newspaper report demanding the rape of lesbians... [IN THE US, A GUY is] suing the Scientology cult for [failing to cure] his homosexuality... “They hinted they’d cured [the star of the movie *Michael*], that’s why I gave them \$500,000. But I’m still gay. It was fraud...” [The star, an a]rdent Scientologist... was embarrassed 10 years ago when a... gay... porn star gave graphic details of an alleged... affair with the actor. Since then, [the star’s] become a husband... father and vehemently denies [it] was ever gay.

...GAYNESS – THE SCIENCE... For half a century, boffins have been trying to answer one of the most controversial questions in the history of science: is homosexuality determined by genes, or is it simply a matter of personal choice? ...■ In the Forties, gayness was thought to be caused by

faulty parenting or bad moral fibre... Alfred Kinsey conducted the first study into [gayness], and stunned the world with his findings that "...whether in large cities or small towns, whether from a church school or a state university, persons with homosexual histories are to be found in every age group, every social level, in every conceivable occupation." [His] subsequent attempts to change gay people's sexual orientation all failed. ■ A decade later, [US] scientists performed experiments on [gay]s, who were viewed as mentally retarded. In an effort to turn lesbians straight, doctors forcibly removed their uteri and cut off their breasts. The operations never altered the [lesbians'] sexual orientation; nor did those performed on gay [guys], who were routinely castrated or lobotomised. ■ In 1963, [an] Indian... discovered a homosexual fruit fly. Although the fly had been genetically altered by X-rays, it added weight to growing speculation that sexual orientation was not down to choice. Researchers also found that other animals engaged in gay sex, from alligators to cows to geese... [(s)tudies of sexual preferences in sheep... found that between 6 and 10[%] of rams are attracted to other [ram]s rather than ewes...[:] scientists watched the sheep to be sure of their behaviour – something that cannot be done with humans[– t]hen they took apart their brains... and found that these sexual preferences could be predicted by structural differences in the tissues of the central nervous system[)]... ■ Gays scored a major victory in 1973, when the American Psychiatric Association declared that [gayness] wasn't a "disorder"... ■ A proliferation of other studies in the early Nineties culminated in a breakthrough report by... Washington DC's National Institute Of Health. [A molecular geneticist] interviewed dozens of gay brothers and found... [gayness] runs in families – specifically on the maternal side. Although [it] didn't find the much talked about "gay gene"... his and other studies... all pointed to one thing, now almost universally accepted by scientists: people don't decide to be [gay], they're born gay... *In the Nineties, surely the religious can embrace same-sex love...?* The evidence to support the cheeky joys of homosexuality is abundant throughout the world, from fresh-faced leather boys in San Francisco to happy lesbian couples living in harmony on the shores of Whitley Bay. But for... gays in America's unforgiving Deep South, there's little solace in the Bible...

The Bible is anything but Christian when it comes to our gay friends To err, Christians are fond of saying, is human. To forgive, they piously crow, is divine. Sadly, this open-hearted attitude to those who may have, say, crippled someone while drunk-driving or burned down an orphanage while depressed doesn't extend to [guys] who simply want to seek pleasure with other [guys]. Using that font of misinformation as their source, homophobic Bible-bashers are keen to point out the bits of the big book which clearly forbid[gay] love... Corinthians (6.9) gets the ball rolling with an all-out attack on, basically, anyone who wants to have a little fun. "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the Kingdom of God?" Mister know-it-all Corinthian harps. "Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral nor idolators nor ma[sculin]e prostitutes nor homosexual offenders will inherit the Kingdom of God." Heaven, it would appear, is going to have a mighty lot of shoulder-room for those of us boring enough to end up there. Leviticus joins in this shameless homophobia in the 22nd verse of his 18th chapter. "Do not lie with a [guy] as one lies with a [gal]... That is detestable." Mind you, this is the same book of the Bible which announces that anyone who has sexual relations with an animal must be put to death. Clearly the God-fearing folk of the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia aren't too keen on following the Bible to the letter of the law – thanks to this little warning, most of them would be dead by now. The Bible, while undoubtedly a good collection of fantastic stories, was obviously cobbled together rather quickly and with some very poor sub-editing. How, for instance, can the Good Book be so clear on one commandment – "Thou shalt not kill" – and in the same breath tell us that "if a [guy] lies with a [guy] as one lies with a [gal], both of them... must be put to death..."?

...The... founder of Westboro Baptist Church in Kansas, often pickets the funerals of gay people. Among his placards: "God hates fags." After gay college student Matthew Shepard was beaten and killed last year in Wyoming, [the founder] and his followers waved their signs outside his funeral. Today, [the founder's] Website features a shot of Shepard in the flames of hell... [Don't expect to see the phrase: 'I used to be straight but now I'm gay, I think that God made me that way' posted on his Website, or that of] the National Alliance[, which]... wants to carve an exclusively white, heterosexual nation out of North America... "Why can't we all just get along?" [you may well ask]... The supremacy movement... poses a similar question: "Will [hu]mankind ever stop hating?" and answers it with: "[N]ever. Without hate you can't have love. Without love you can't have hate."

... "I promise to love you the rest of my life," a tearful... [lesbian], aged 63, told [her 68-year-old girlfriend as they]... exchanged promises in a "holy union" ceremony in Sacramento, California, blessed by more than 90... ministers in a dramatic mass defiance of a church law... The... pastor of St Mark's United Methodist Church, says the church allows him to bless the [lesbians'] home, car, tractor and even their dog, "but I am not allowed to bless them." The ceremony took place in a state where voters next year will decide whether only marriages between a [guy and a gal] are legal.

...Four gay couples have exchanged rings and vows at Amsterdam's City Hall in the first same-sex marriages recognised by the Netherlands. [Amsterdam's] Mayor... officiated at Saturday's ceremony for three [guy] couples and one lesbian couple, which took place immediately after the law permitting gays to wed took effect at midnight. It was the denouement of a 15-year campaign to allow gay couples equal rights under civil law. The legislation easily passed through both houses of Parliament last year... Gays have enjoyed general acceptance in the Netherlands for years and surveys show that more than 75 per cent of the population supported the equal rights bill... As the couples arrived for the ceremony, a handful of demonstrators protested against what they called an unnatural union. "We hope these people will choose to return to the Lord," said... a 30-year-old protester. The lesbian couple were dressed in wedding gowns with long trains... Four of the [guys] wore formal suits and one pair were outfitted in leather... Foreigners hoping to marry in the Netherlands will be disappointed. Only Dutch national or resident foreigners living with a Dutch partner will be eligible for same-sex marriages. [The mayor said it] believed the Dutch law would encourage other countries to assess gay marriages.

...Gay and lesbian couples will get the same legal property rights as de facto heterosexual couples, says [NZ's] Minister of Justice... The... [minister] said the Government had no overall view on the wider issues involved, such as gay marriage. But it saw no reason to delay the... De Facto Relationships (Property) Bill... while these issues were being debated.

...Yes, [the Samoan] dresses in drag and sings on stage. But the Auckland-based entertainer and fashion designer will have you know the stereotyping should stop at this point. "People think of queens and associate them with full-on make-up, huge hair, lip syncing and *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. While there's nothing wrong with that, I've never really been able to relate to it. Fa'afafine literally means 'like a [gal]' and a... married [guy] with children can be fa'afafine. It's not necessarily a gay thing." ...[the entertainer] grew up as a fa'afafine in Samoa and says, despite popular belief that Samoan families without daughters encourage one son to become fa'afafine, [the entertainer] never witnessed it. [The entertainer] believes many people, from many different cultures, appear to accept fa'afafine but only on a superficial level. "Their attitude is 'We love your show and we think you're fantastic but don't tell us about your personal life'." [The Samoan] hopes to break down those misconceptions by expressing herself through music... "It's very important to me, because this is a channel for fa'afafine to encourage others to be themselves." ...[the Samoan writes its] own songs and has regularly performed at night spots, award ceremonies, fashion shows and conferences in N[Z] since the mid 1990s. [The Samoan] and her friends were the first queens in N[Z] to star in a commercial (Coca-Cola) in 1995. "When I came here from Samoa, in 1992... I created my own image. I wanted an image which was quite mysterious, so people would see me and say, 'My God, [that person is] gorgeous – oh God, [it's] a guy.'..." [The Samoan] is performing at [Auckland's] Pasifika Festival... This is her first time performing for the festival.

...do... [w]e... need another Hero Auckland welcomes back the Hero Festival on Friday after the gay pride gala decided not to come out last year. The 11th festival features a raft of arts and community events: high point for the public is the Hero Parade down Ponsonby Rd on Saturday... So what's it all about, we asked... [various celebrities: An] author "It's the Antipodean version of Heroes throughout the world and therefore is much more of a crossover party, festival and parade than anywhere in the world. This is because there is more of an inclusive community here in

Auckland. For instance, the party is for anybody who loves to dance. And the parade now is not only watched by a gay audience; there are Samoan, Maori and little children waving wands. So Santa better watch out.” ...Founder of *Out!* magazine, now in its 25th year “Having started the first openly gay business in the country, it’s gratifying to see the fantastic change in views and attitudes which allows Hero to take place... It’s really important.” ...Producer and presenter of *Queer Nation* “It’s about visibility. You look on the news and you see [Americans] wearing T-shirts saying ‘God hates fags’ and you realise it’s a hard won freedom. It’s only in recent history we’ve been able to come out of the closet and cloak rooms and cloisters and say who we are and be publicly proud of who we are. That can only be healthy. On a personal level... I remember... [a]ll those guys in the 80s I knew... who are dead... now... of HIV/Aids... So it’s about celebrating our visibility and our hard-won freedom and remembering.” ...Kamo Cafe proprietor and an icon among gays “For me as a straight person, Hero represents an individual thing: each and every one of them is a hero to me. It’s a chance to be able to celebrate who you are, celebrating each and every hero within us all.” ...Former chair[person] of the Hero project “I’m pleased to see the Hero parade back, it’s not only a good thing for the gay and lesbian community, it’s great for Auckland. It’s time Auckland stepped up and embraced it. I think Hero contributes more to the sense of social inclusion and normality than any other event in N[Z]...”

...Aids charities have yet to receive money raised during... the previous... Hero Festival... [(which began with) an \$80,000 deficit()]... and are giving organisers – believed to be facing debts of more than \$100,000 – until tomorrow to pay up. The Hero project is calling on the public to help it out of its financial woes. Its trustees went into an emergency meeting last night to discuss finances and creditors have been asked for a 90-day credit period... Charities were to have got 70[%] of the money collected during the Hero Parade... The amount raised during the parade – which attracted 200,000 people to Ponsonby Rd – had been “terrible” and [t]he... Hero project director... said last night that organisers would pay the charities when they could... A spokes[person] for the charities... said they... would discuss their next step tomorrow... The festival [has been] expanded this year and the budget for the parade and party alone [i]s \$300,000. The cost [i]s to be met by corporate sponsors, party ticket sales, merchandise sales and donations... [The director] said that like any growing company, Hero would “at some time experience some cash flow difficulties.”

...As the Hero Parade marks [its final] celebration of gay pride in [NZ, the Herald] speaks to one of the world’s most famous homosexuals... APPROACHING the towers of Manhattan, on the expressway from John F Kennedy Airport, you might well be reminded of the moment in *The Wizard of Oz* when Dorothy and her friends get their first glimpse of the Emerald City. Here is the place where dreams come true, but where success or failure is balanced on the fulcrum of a lucky break. If Manhattan could double as the Emerald City, then to whom might we turn to be its presiding Wizard...? The tinfoil crown of New York’s principal seer and underground analyst must surely rest on the violet coiffure of... an 89-year-old English[person] living on the Lower East Side, who has described his occupation as “breathing”, but whose life as “a self-evident and effeminate homosexual” has entered the mythology of modern times... “Happiness is the only thing which I can understand... so I can tell people how to be happy”... [says the guy who for] 66 years... wore a mixture of lipstick, powder and bruises as [it] struggled to survive – by his own admission incapable of forming any loving relationship – in a London which took his undisguised homosexuality as the justification to jeer at him, spit at him and beat him up daily, if not hourly. [The queer] worked as a commercial artist, a part-time prostitute and an art-school model before his autobiography, *The Naked Civil Servant*, was made into a play for television in 1975... In a rare case of literally overnight success, [the queer] became as famous and admired as [it] had once been obscure and despised: His “Case” was taken as the perfect temperature reading of England’s social climate across the 20th century. By 1981, [the queer] had moved to New York, fully engaged in what [it] describes as the profession of “being” – writing, acting, but principally being himself for a new generation of acolytes who took the defiance of his individualism as a streetwise, post-punk and glamorous form of existentialism. WITHIN the counter-culture, gay or straight, his perseverance has made him heroic. Today, [the queer] still lectures to packed halls – but... still lives, as [it] always has, alone in a single, filthy room. “After four years,” [the queer] once declared, “the dust doesn’t get any worse.” Now, listening to him as [it] sits in his little room, aware of the peevish hissing of the scalding radiator, the piles of dusty books and the limp net curtains black with grime, one begins to realise that [his] philosophy on life has been derived from simply sitting in coffee shops and talking. “...the reason why I came to America is that I need a constantly changing audience, because I say the same thing over and over again. Recently, I went to Portland... and said the same things – but it seemed new to them because they had never heard of me... In that sense, I am like Wall’s ice cream or Hershey Bars – always the same. I am infinitely visible; I go on to television and... [people] cross the road, at risk of losing their own lives, to say, ‘We saw you on the telly’ – and their faces are glowing. It is all you can do not to reply, ‘Bless you my child.’ But all I have said is this: That you should find out who you are, and do it like mad. Style is being yourself, but on purpose. And this is what I tell people, but I don’t know that it’s the secret of life. I don’t know in fact, if life has a secret...” [His] autobiography revealed a mixture of pragmatism and generosity towards the hardships of a life which was neither distinguished by artistic genius nor sweetened by money... And yet *The Naked Civil Servant* (recently re-published, by Penguin, as a Modern Classic) was only written because someone remarked that it might make a bit of money. “An art master at Maidstone said to me, ‘You despise art because you are a work of art,’ and so I smiled and lowered my eyelids. I am an autifact; I am self-creating...” Within his 66 years of struggle, prior to his celebrity, [it] found friendship with a succession of misfits and bohemian outcasts: A disabled suburban girl who became a nun, her unfaithful Czech lover who fell in love with [the queer] before hanging himself, a nagging young [guy] called Thumbnails and a paranoid civil servant... [But the] frozen core of his desire [was] reserved for the “Great Dark [Guy]” of his dreams, whom [it knew it] would never meet because the rampant heterosexuality of this “real [guy]” was essential to his perfection. “...Homosexuals don’t have ambitions, only daydreams. In America everything dates from the Stonewall riots (when police raided a [gay] bar in New York City on 28 June 1969, causing the bar’s clientele to riot and sparking the Gay Rights movement), and weren’t they lucky that it all took off in a pub called the Stonewall? Suppose you were compelled to say, ‘Yes, I was there on the barricades of the Pig and Whistle’? The queer populace has to move further and further forward, so as to vent its discontent; so they look around for something they’ve been denied and insist on having it. The armed forces, for example! I have said to my gay friends: ‘Do you really want to be a killing machine?’ And they... replied: ‘Well, I would be prepared to shoot someone if the circumstances were right’. And I say: ‘Soldiers are not people who shoot someone if the circumstances are right! Soldiers long to kill and that is why they are soldiers’. And why do gay people want marriage? I used to think that the hatred of [guy gays] was due to an envy of their freedom, because [gay]s are always making love to people they really fancy, whereas real [guys] are always making love to someone they find thoroughly distasteful – forever! But now gay[s]... want to be married!” ...[the queer] entered his 90th year on Christmas Day, sharing a birthday with You Know Who. As the witness of nearly a century of change, [the queer] is more than “the stately homo” [it] described himself to be. Now making his way down East Third Street in a long, fur-collared coat, with a blue silk scarf around his delicate neck, [the queer] is like an Edwardian dandy who might just survive to see the 21st century... “I am now waiting for death... and as long as it comes fairly soon, I shall be content.” ...[By the way, t]he reason so few accept suicide ended a lengthy career that included the worldwide TV smash *Kung Fu*, and, latterly, a starring role in... [the] *Kill Bill* films, is not so much to do with a lack of any note as with the position of the rope that killed... David Carradine... Suicides tend to put a ligature around their necks and let gravity take its course. But Carradine’s rope not only encircled his neck, but his wrist and penis as well. This is strongly suggestive of auto-eroticism, a private procedure dangerous enough to kill hundreds of [guys] in the U[S] each year. The idea is that temporarily cutting off the supply of oxygen to the brain will heighten the effects of a sexual climax.

...COMING out as a gay tourism mecca has some locals of a heartland community seeing red rather than pink. Youths fired stones at ...a... [businessperson’s] Kiwi House a day after the transsexual... persuaded fellow shop owners to declare Hokitika the world’s first officially gay-friendly town. But hours later [the transsexual] received flowers and a bottle of bubbly from supporters. The 60-year-old – who has a NZ Order of

Merit – suggested Enterprise Hokitika take the gay-friendly stance for economic reasons. “My promotion is not to turn Hokitika into Sodom and Gomorrah and have rooting in the streets... What I’m saying is that you have high income earners come and visit your town and leave some money behind. The gay travel agents are looking for destinations, so let’s put Hokitika on their map.” But not all of the townsfolk are eager for the pink dollar. “There are plenty of words floating about – Homotika, Gaymouth and Westpool – and letters in the local paper say we don’t want these sort of people in our town. But we’re not going to fly six-foot flags from the roof or anything,” [the transsexual] said. “We are going to supply smallish pink triangles for shops to put in a corner of their windows. Most have said they will put them in, but there are one or two who are anti.” [The transsexual] doesn’t know the extent of Hokitika’s gay community. “I don’t mix in the gay community. I suppose I’m gay. I had a sex change operation 30 years ago – what does that make me? ...There are gay people in business, there are a few closets. But that is not what this is about. It is simply adding to the already strong tourist trade. I think Hokitika folk are doing pretty well. It’s a pretty vibrant sort of place but I know a market I can tap into because I have a knowledge of that market obviously, so why don’t we tap into it? And I have. And it’s working.” [The transsexual] says for every gay person there might be an extended group of 50 straight family and friends. “We’re saying this is a tolerant town, come and visit us.” *Locals have their say...* Cafe Fix owner, 35: “I think it’s a great idea as long as it’s acceptable to the gay community.” ...owner of jewellery store the Gold Room: “There is no issue at all. It’s simply a media beat-up. We are just like any other small town.” But [the jeweller] will not be putting up one of the campaign’s pink triangles in his shop... [A] cleaner: “There are only a small lot of gays in Hokitika and they’re very nice people. But I wouldn’t promote them.” ...retire[e], 76: “It doesn’t really worry me what they do. If they want to be gay they can be as long as they keep away from me. I had to whack someone on St Patrick’s Day when [a guy who] was dressed up... tried to kiss me.” ...Westland[’s] mayor... 54: “Clearly this is a decision made by Enterprise Hokitika. The council has not been involved but Hokitika is friendly to all people.”

...“I was... a gentle person. I didn’t like rugby. I preferred to sit and talk and have friendships with girls,”... By 14 [it] was sexually active with [guys] and by 16, h[ad] come out to his family... Around this time [it] started dressing in [gals’] clothing and by 18 h[ad] started taking hormones... [It had] heard about sex change operations, which weren’t performed in N[Z] then... “The operation became this big thing that would solve all my problems but it seemed to get further and further away. Saving up... was the hard part. That involved prostitution and to sleep with those guys I needed to be off my face on drugs... – and there went my money.” Then in 1981, at the age of 20, [it] was approached by two [gals] from the Assembly of God church... Overwhelmed by their acceptance of him and disillusioned from the lack of love and support in his life, this meeting prompted [him] to become a Christian... [It] started working for the Salvation Army scheme, which is how [it met his future wife]. They couldn’t have been more different. [The gal], a virgin, came from a stable but very sheltered upbringing and was expecting a life of spinsterhood, looking after her crippled mother... While the attraction wasn’t mutual at first, [the guy] persisted and eventually they became great companions, which culminated in [his] proposing... Despite opposition from both of their families and their church, the[y]... went ahead and got married. Two sons and two daughters... later they are still happy together... • Many gay[s]... and lesbians disagree with the theory that homosexuality or transsexuality can be “reversed”.

...A reputable American study has... concluded that homosexuals who undergo “reparative” or “reorientation” therapy can change their sexuality.

...**HOMOSEXUALITY IN HISTORY** Long before the first *Pet Shop Boys LP*, [guys] were eyeing up other [guys]... ■ **ANCIENT ROME** Homosexuality was rife, but only slaves could be penetrated, and a law, the *Lex Scatinia*, forbade the master from being the passive partner. In fact, the biggest insult you could throw at a free [person] was: “Your breath smells of your slave’s semen!” However, the plays of Plautus hint that most courtiers ignored these rules behind closed doors, and Emperor Otho was known to massage his beard with bread pellets in an attempt to stop his stubble grazing his ma[sculin]e partner’s inner thigh. By AD533, the Emperor Justinian – concerned that the citizenry was becoming to fay – banned gay lovin’ on the grounds that it “caused earthquakes”. ■ **ANCIENT EGYPT** Anal penetration was out, and the thought of being “somebody’s bitch” made Egyptians feel so uneasy that a word for homosexuality was never even invented. This fear was inherent throughout Egyptian myth: the god Atum boasts that one of his rivals has “no power over me, for I copulate between his buttocks”. However, the Egyptians saw no problem in “pitching”, and would take great delight in sodomising their enemies on the battlefield before cutting off their penises to take home as souvenirs. The pharaoh Merneptah once returned from a tussle with the Libyans with a booty of 6,359 uncircumcised shafts. ■ **THE MIDDLE AGES** Not exactly the golden years for buggery. The church decreed that any clerics caught cassock-lifting could face castration or be hung by their “virile member”. The ruling barons were anti-gay too, and suspected Edward II of having an affair with a page boy when the king became obsessed by French fashions and poetry. [The king] was soon murdered by having a red-hot poker rammed up his arse... ■ **ANCIENT GREECE** According to the historian Ephorus, Greek boys could expect their first encounter with another[guy’s love]-milk at 13. A lad would pair with an older [guy], who would take him into the mountains for hunting, philosophy – and fellatio. [Guys] would go on to marry in their twenties, but keep a ma[sculin]e partner for trips to social functions and the gymnasium. In turn, all [fathers] wanted their sons to be desired by their pals. In Aristophanes’ *The Birds*, one irate father exclaims to a mate: “This is a fine state of affairs. You meet my son all fresh from the bath, and you don’t kiss him or feel his balls! And you’re supposed to be a friend of ours!” ...foreign boys were often smuggled home from wars... to serve as catomites.

The ancient Greeks thought it quite natural and normal for an older [guy] to be sexually attracted to, and have an affair with, a younger [guy], usually an adolescent (but not a minor – pederasty was not permitted). Such affairs were not considered incompatible with concurrent heterosexual affairs or marriage. The Greeks in fact did not, as we do, divide people into homosexual and heterosexual; rather, bisexuality was recognized as a norm and in literature and philosophy at least it was extolled as the pursuit of beauty whether [masculine or feminine]. Elaborate conventions surrounded such homosexual affairs. The older [partner], the lover or *erastes*, pursued the younger [partner], the beloved or *eromenos*, not too forwardly and with proper respect for the conventions of courtship. The *eromenos* was expected not to be too forthcoming in his response but at least to show some gratitude and affection; only much later would the relationship lead to sexual gratification of the older [partner] by the younger. Long-lasting homosexual affairs... were not all that common. Usually when the younger [partner] reached adulthood the affair ended. [Greek guys] were not backward in expressing their erotic feelings towards other [guys]... Plato portrays this erotic side of Socrates in several dialogues. However, as the speech of Alcibiades shows at the end of the *Symposium*, Socrates’ erotic desires... towards the bodies of beautiful... [guys] were... more... towards their minds, as his resistance to Alcibiades’ sexual advances shows. The *Symposium* also indicates that... homosexual affairs could be of educative value. Through associating with an older [guy] who was educated, who displayed the virtues, and who was successful as a citizen of Athens and as a soldier in the defence of Athens, a younger [guy] could hope to learn much that would benefit him in his future.

Adequate sex education should be provided that would include ‘information on the physical, psychological and spiritual aspects of human sexuality. Young people should be informed about different forms of sexual behaviour, including heterosexuality, homosexuality and chastity, and... be free to make their own moral choices. They should be brought up to understand that they may experience heterosexual or homosexual feelings or both, and taught not to discriminate against others because of their sexuality’... [A] gay activist, argues very strongly for the abolition of the homosexual as a distinct category of person: Instead of exclusive heterosexuality and exclusive homosexuality, and in place of self-identified and separate heterosexual and homosexual people, lesbian and gay liberation affirmed the universal potential for everyone to experience both the homosexual and heterosexual dimensions of their personality. Given the plasticity and social determination of human sexuality, if the institutional restrictions and ideological pressures against gayness were removed and if [gayness] were positively promoted as an equally valid form of sexual

and emotional expression, then [gay] experiences could become part of the typical range of erotic desires for the whole population, on a par with heterosexuality.

One of the basic instinctual drives is for sensual gratification. This drive is called “libido.” During the first year of life, the highly developed nerve endings in the mouth provide the greatest opportunity for libidinal gratification. By the second... year... the nerves of the anus have also become sensitive to pleasure, and anal activity is the focus of libidinal energy... The genital stage of psychosexual development follows the anal stage.

With his introduction of psychoanalytic theory... Freud initiated a revolution in thinking about human motivation and personality... According to Freud, development is governed by unconscious drives and instincts... To Freud, development was a discontinuous process that proceeded in a series of discrete stages. In each stage, certain biological forces play a central role in organizing how the infant and child relates to the world. In the first phase, the *oral stage*, which covers the first year of life, the infant is preoccupied with activities such as eating, sucking, and biting, and with objects, such as food, associated with the mouth... Freud assumed that the infant derived great enjoyment and satisfaction from these oral-related behaviors. In the second year, priorities change and the *anal stage* begins. The infant... is now involved with anal activities. At this time, too, parents are concerned with toilet training. In the third year, and until approximately the fifth... the infant’s focus shifts... to the *phallic* or *Oedipal stage*; the child’s sexual curiosity is aroused and attention is drawn to the genitals. Pleasure from stimulation of the genitals is discovered. At the same time... awareness of... sexual anatomy, and particularly of anatomical differences between the sexes, begins. In this period, boys experience the emergence of the Oedipus complex, which consists of sexual feeling for the m[um] and jealousy of the [dad] and rivalry with him for... [her] attention. Girls, in the Electra complex, experience similar dynamics in relation to their parents but to a less severe degree than boys. Freud called the next stage the *latency period* because [Freud] believed that sexual drives are submerged or latent in this period. It is partly to avoid reminders of sexual feelings that occurred during the phallic phase that children avoid relationships with opposite-sex peers and become intensely involved with same-sex peers during this period from 6 to puberty... Finally, in the last period, the *genital stage*, sexual desires reemerge, but this time more appropriately directed... As in earlier stages, the onset of biological changes – in this case puberty – plays a significant role in defining the focus of the particular stage of development. According to Freud, the ways in which each of these stages is managed by the child will have a profound impact on the later adult personality... [– e.g.], infants who have unsatisfied needs for oral stimulation may be more likely to smoke as adults.

As long as it doesn’t lead to a disease or injury, homosexuality between consenting partners should be considered a harmless type of behaviour (from a moral perspective, eating meat is far worse). But homosexuality (together with the harmful or exploitative sexual activities such as paedophilia and bestiality; plus the bizarre activities such as masochism, necrophilia, having sex with dildos, blow-up dolls, vacuum-cleaners, etc.) isn’t something that interests humans – only HBs, plus species such as *alligators, cows and geese*. Regardless of whether a person becomes gay by genetics, personal choice or due to a Master Plan, the easiest way of defining homosexuality is to say: children are sexually immature emotionally and physically; gays are sexually mature physically but not emotionally. To paraphrase Freud: gays are guys who never got over the *anal stage* of development! Of course, ‘not all gays are interested in anal sex’ (some may suffer from haemorrhoids, or know ‘the anus wasn’t designed for intercourse and all types of infections may result’), in which case it could be said that the gay hasn’t got past the *phallic stage* (i.e., the gay’s fascination with its own penis develops into a fascination for penises in general; or the gay’s inability to do everything it wants to with its own penis – e.g., fellatio – causes it to seek out other penises). Other alleged causes of homosexuality (e.g., domineering mothers) also satisfy the definition as they would have had a retarding effect on the child’s emotional development. In addition, most gays could just be sexually lazy (i.e., it is generally easier for a guy to give sexual pleasure to itself or another guy than to a gal). Ironically, as with transsexuals, during their childhood many gays began thinking of themselves as being that way because they were sensitive and not interested in rugby, fighting or other boyish activities – which suggests that at the time they were actually displaying more of their potential to be human (i.e., gender-neutral, possessing a blend of masculine and feminine non-physical characteristics – r:p1878, ln66 + p1925, ln17) than other boys of the same age. Unfortunately, they never fully developed that potential – probably because they spent most of their time wondering about whether or not they were gay!

Though many of the above points apply to lesbians, gal homosexuality is more complex than guy homosexuality because more gals are turned off guys as a result of having bad experiences with them than vice versa. However, an inability to realise that not all guys act like untamed animals is a form of emotional immaturity. Other lesbians may simply have found sex with guys unsatisfying – but the previous statement can also be applied to this scenario (i.e., just because all of the guys a gal has slept with were sexually inept doesn’t mean that all guys are sexually inept – after all, a guy can do everything sexually to a gal that another gal can, and then some!).

An adult can be *sexually immature emotionally* without being gay – for example:

My fiancé is 21 and still has wet dreams. Is this normal? I [’ve asked him who [it] is dreaming about and [my guy says it] can’t remember. The thought that [my guy is] getting aroused by another [gal] makes me crazy with jealousy. [Your fiancé is] simply having a young [guy]’s physiological response to a fleeting sexual thought while asleep, and... hasn’t a drop of conscious responsibility for this. No doubt [it’ll] outgrow bed wetting soon. Meanwhile, you’d better outgrow silly jealousies and stop badgering him for doing something [it] can’t control any more than sneezing!

Actually, wet dreams aren’t simply *a young guy’s physiological response to a fleeting sexual thought*. Older guys can have them as well, and they don’t always follow a fleeting sexual thought or any kind of erotic vision. Wet dreams are most often caused by lack of sexual activity (including masturbation) – as a guy’s body doesn’t stop producing sperm just because it isn’t having orgasms! After a period of time (e.g., a month) the build-up of sperm is such that the testes have to get rid of the excess. However, wet dreams aren’t the only means of expelling excess sperm – if a celibate guy’s body is in sync, sitting on the toilet may cause its brain to send a message to the testes that tells them this is an opportunity to clean out a dollop of the old swimmers, either with or without urine, and without requiring the penis to be erect (although some people might prefer to have wet dreams – as they can seem extremely realistic at times). Incidentally, considering how many guys allegedly fail to wash their hands after going to the toilet, the custom of shaking hands when greeting other people would seem to be unhygienic – although encouraging everyone to wash their hands is a solution, it might be easier to discourage people from maintaining a custom which, since the end of the days of knights (‘in the days when arguments were resolved by hand-to-hand combat, being left-handed gave people the benefit of surprise over right-handers’) and gun-slingers, serves no useful purpose but may cause many contracted illnesses. The only greeting one needs to give to platonic friends or strangers is a smile or a word or two (e.g., hello, hi, howdy, giddy, good-morning – assuming that’s true).

Instead of allocating workers a set number of sick days each year, every worker should be given time off to have medical check-ups (including examinations of their teeth, eyesight and hearing). ‘British pilots used to have to complete physicals every three months, now every month’ – but for most people one or two check-ups per year might be sufficient (kids also need to have annual or biannual check-ups – so working parents may have to be allowed time off work to go with them, especially if a grandparent or other suitable adult can’t go instead – and younger children, particularly pre-schoolers, probably need more than two check-ups per year). Such check-ups could be designed to include as many tests as possible – the aim being to identify any medical problems (including vitamin or mineral deficiencies) before they become serious. Most tests can be carried out by taking a blood sample (current blood tests may be ‘able to detect up to 50% of cancers’; ‘a blood test has been developed that can be performed without needles’) – so

blood samples ought to be taken each visit (the Health Ministry should also take extra blood to store for donor purposes – although utilising synthetic blood for medical emergencies and operations might be more practical) – while checks that can't be done via blood samples (e.g., brain scans) may only need to be carried out biennially, every three years or longer. People who are on long-term medication could receive enough of a supply to last them until their next check-up (unless the medication is perishable). Check-ups needn't be compulsory for people who aren't on long-term medication, but only a fool (i.e., an HB) would decline them!

Each suburb should have a central medical centre where people can go to have their check-ups, and where recuperating patients can stay close to home (unless they're able to be cared for in their home); which ought to mean that each district only needs one genuine hospital – where operations and intensive care (including treatment of contagious diseases) can be carried out. Furthermore, instead of making people who feel sick travel to their suburban medical centre (SMC) to see a doctor, SMC doctors should always make house-calls. If the patient needs a prescription, the doctor can arrange for that to be sent to the house (but the doctor's vehicle could carry basic medicinal supplies, as well as basic medical equipment); if the patient needs to be hospitalised, an ambulance can be sent to the house instead. Preferably, SMCs and hospitals will normally be able to provide each patient with a private room.

SMCs would need to have enough doctors on duty to be able to cater for expected demand (doctors can revise or improve their medical knowledge during periods of low demand, or assist in cleaning and other general activities). However, if SMCs have two streams of doctors working during the daytime – one stream being available for housecalls, the other performing general check-ups – one or more of those performing check-ups could delay that work in order to assist the housecall doctors when they are over-extended; and doctors from neighbouring SMCs can be called in during the night-time hours when only housecall doctors are on duty. Alternatively, check-ups could be carried out by nurses or technicians – and SMC doctors can act as their assistants when not on housecalls.

Historically, when citizens go to hospital accident and emergency departments they are examined or treated by unfamiliar doctors. Therefore, nobody should be concerned about not having the same person perform its check-ups or housecalls. However, if the people doing check-ups are always rostered on the same days each week, it ought to be easy – unless the structure of check-ups requires patients to be seen by a series of different doctors, nurses or technicians (e.g., one for a blood test, another for a scan, a third for a physical) – for patients to book the same person, if that is their preference. They could also request a specific doctor each time they order a housecall, but it is unlikely that their favourite doctor will always be rostered on when they feel sick. In most instances, though, it should be possible for patients to request a guy or gal doctor – depending on their preference. By the way, there is no longer any justification for guys to train as, for example, gynaecologists or mid-wives!

Although SMCs could have birthing rooms, babies ought to be delivered in the mother's home – unless a delivery is expected to be complicated, or the baby is premature, in which case the mother will have to go to her district hospital. Homebirths should minimise the number of babies born whilst in transit to a clinic (or hospital), and the potential for babies to accidentally or deliberately end up with the wrong parents, be abducted, etc. – although simple security measures can also largely eliminate these events. Incidentally, to eliminate all or most of the risks associated with vaccinations, health practitioners would need to ensure that a child *with a particular genetic make-up* is never administered a vaccine which will give it an adverse reaction.

It may be impossible to completely eliminate medical mistakes, but doctors could always use computer programmes to gain second opinions – thereby minimising the potential for misdiagnosis – and, as the industry becomes less pressurised (due to supply of medical treatment generally matching then surpassing demand), the number of mistakes made during surgery or post-operative treatment are likely to decrease as well. A lot more thought should be given to post-operative care (e.g., patients who have had haemorrhoids removed ought to be put on a liquid diet until their wounds have healed). Note that if everyone received the type of care given to injured professional sportspeople, the majority of patients will recover faster than they currently do!

Ideally, each district will have the capacity to be able to treat every known medical complaint locally (r:p863, lns70-1). However, rarer treatments could continue to be performed only in a few districts – in which case patients (and some or all of their immediate family) would need to be temporarily accommodated by the relevant district. Specialist medical teams (and their equipment) could be sent from district to district, but it's normally more efficient for such teams to remain in one place – because the time the team spends on travel and setting up can be used to treat more patients. There is also the option of surgeons in one district operating on patients in another district via telecommunications and robotics (r:p2147, ln18).

While incurable medical complaints continue to exist (or the available cure remains unsatisfactory), the people who have the complaint could be used as guinea pigs – which, if necessary, can be classified as their full-time employment. This infers that the use of animals in medical experiments should be stopped immediately – unless the animal develops the same complaint naturally (obviously, testing on an animal is valid if this is necessary for veterinarians to save its species from some kind of disease or other life-threatening medical condition). It is far more useful for society to experiment on people who have the relevant complaint than inducing the complaint in animals, healthy university students or the unemployed, and leaving the genuine sufferers in limbo! As long as satisfactory controls are maintained or implemented, the experimental treatment is unlikely to make the patient's condition any worse than it already is – and, even if their condition doesn't improve at all, the knowledge gained from that lack of improvement (or from the worsening of their condition) is likely to play a valuable role in eventually obtaining a cure (i.e., such patients ought to consider themselves obligated to participate for the sake of future generations). Likewise, the use of animals to assist disabled humans is barely justifiable today (e.g., although it is less companionable, a '\$NZ4,000 sonar that tells what objects exist within a 4m arc of blind people' is obviously far more efficient to produce and maintain than a guide dog – r:p1066, ln40). AIDS, cancer and Down's syndrome patients are encouraged to swim with dolphins (because their 'sonar is 4-times more powerful than human sonar-cell therapy'), and in Turkey cirrhosis is allegedly cured by 'allowing a certain fish to nibble at the skin of sufferers' – but it should be possible to imitate the latter treatment, and increasing the power of human sonar-cell therapy would mean that patients don't need to swim with dolphins (although 'just being around dolphins generally makes the patients feel better – and the dolphins, who are accessed in the wild, are happy to oblige').

It would be ideal if every illness could be cured simply by prayer or the touch of a holy person. Unfortunately, that scenario is unlikely to ever become reality. Therefore, society will always need to train doctors and nurses, and produce medicines and medical equipment. Furthermore, while our environments and fetuses continue to be affected by harmful products, and people continue to directly harm their own bodies as a matter of choice, diseases will continue to be a major problem and cause of premature death. But if the environments and people's bodies can be cleaned up, and most medical problems are identified then treated before they do irreversible damage, the demand for healthcare should decrease (i.e., society may be able to cope with having less nurses and doctors – the 'rate of physicians per 100,000 population in the US increased from 184 in 1980 to 210 in 1988' – although the decreased demand for medical personnel might be completely offset by having a thorough check-up system), and most people would die peacefully in old age. In instances where a person can't die peacefully, euthanasia ought to be an acceptable option for people who have a valid reason (confirmed by a council of relevant people – i.e., senior medical professionals, the patient, its family and friends) for wanting to terminate their own life.

The Health Ministry should insist that the practice of burying dead bodies comes to an end. It is a wasteful use of land and other resources, and is based on beliefs that are ignorant. Whenever someone dies, the body ought to be sent to the district's main hospital (unless it is already there). If any organs or other body parts are suitable for use in transplants – assuming that there will continue to be a need to perform transplant operations (less premature deaths would, however, affect the supply of suitable bodies) – they could be removed (following the autopsy if one is required), then the remains can be cremated. The hospital would need to have one or more rooms where family and friends of the deceased can meet and farewell the body, but there shouldn't be any kind of plaque or memorial produced to acknowledge the dead person's life – the dead ought to only live on in the memories of those who loved them (and if no one remembers a dead person, then that is its own fault!). Eliminating burials means there will be no call for coffin-making and associated forms of employment.

MAKE

Whereas the earlie[st principle guiding human society] *compares* goods, and does so not by means of the reason only, the late[st (or postwar) one *compare*s the... economic... value... of wares, and does so by rigid unqualitative measures... The... system of values... is reduced exclusively to quantities, whereas the important point about “goods” had been their quality. - 1962

Another characteristic of postwar technology has been the progressive substitution of relatively nonbiodegradable synthetics for natural materials, and energy-costly materials and operations for less energy-intensive ones. Examples of the former are the substitution of nylon and polyester fibers for cotton[(which, around the middle of this century – when ‘annual world production averaged about 45 million 500-lb bales – was used for 90% of the fiber employed in clothing and numberless other fabrics’)], wool, and silk, and of detergents for soap. An example of the latter is the replacement of lumber and steel by aluminium for building and packaging materials. Natural fibers depend ultimately on a renewable energy resource, sunlight, whereas the synthetics rely on fossil fuel derivatives for their manufacture. Unlike the natural fibers, which are subject to decay by molds and bacteria, and thus return to enrich the soil, synthetic fibers and polymers are extremely resistant to decay[(e.g., nylon – ‘a strong light polymer that may be produced as filaments, bristles, moulded objects or textile fabric – is resistant to destruction by bacteria, fungus, insects, and rodents’)]. Synthetics end up either being burned (thus contributing to atmospheric pollution) or accumulating as essentially nondestructible rubbish (contributing to environmental degradation). Plastic packages and containers, aluminium cans, artificial fertilizers, synthetic pesticides, detergents – the consequences are similar in each case. They consume energy when they are made, and they damage the environment after they have been used. Technological gains bring economic benefits but are accompanied by severe social and environmental costs... The... developed countries, whether their economies are planned or free, contain less than 30[%] of the world population but produce approximately 85[%] of gross world product... [The US], with only 8.5[%] of the total population of the free-market economies, produces almost 45[%] of the total GNP of the [free] world. - 1976

Every year the mines of the free world produce around three thousand million tonnes of ore ready to be processed for metals and minerals – quite apart from coal production and ignoring the necessary waste rock and overburden which accompanies mining. This amount of rock would be yielded by a tunnel 3m... in diameter driven 3 1/2 times round the world at the equator, and reflects an average demand of about one tonne of ore per annum for every... [adult] and child in the free world... As minerals are the raw materials which have given rise to and support our complex civilization, we... [need] to exploit the Earth’s not unlimited resources with wisdom and foresight. - 1977

God created the earth and its fullness for all the people of the earth... Its resources are not meant just for those with the economic, political or military power to take them for themselves. The Scriptures are definite about this.

...The Industrial Revolution was in part powered by the resources of the New World, by way of the fertility of virgin soils and the removal of forest from much of North America. This, combined with [UK] iron and steel... meant... we were exploiting several hundred years of accumulated riches, and it will take as long or longer for them to accumulate again. Also, the I[R] is still exploiting natural resources, in the form of minerals, on a planetary scale. Here the period for accumulation is of the order of... millions of years, and there is no hope of ever accumulating this stock again.

...resources can be described as exhaustible[if they] consist... primarily of concentrated deposits of fossil fuels and metal ores, which are dispersed and modified by use. They are not literally consumed, since an atom of copper or cobalt is never actually destroyed. But they may be so degraded or dispersed by use as to be, effectively, used up. The resources I call degradable can, in principle, be reused forever with proper care. This is not true of the metals and fossil fuels deposits. Admittedly, the distinction between degradable and exhaustible is fuzzy. For fuels, normal use means combustion. Here the degradation is inevitable and essential to the process. No fuel can be burned twice. However, many metals, in some of their applications, can be used again. In fact, some items like gold jewelry, lead automobile batteries, steel rails, and copper tubing or cable are nearly 100% recycled. On the other hand, other uses of the same materials are seldom or never recovered for secondary use. For instance, gold paint or gold plating for electrical switches, tetraethyl lead in gasoline, tungsten welding bars, incandescent light filaments, coatings for TV tubes or fluorescent lights, silver compounds used in photographic film, titanium, zinc, chrome or lead pigments, iron nails, copper sulfate fungicide, and scores of other metal or metal-containing products are virtually irrecoverable. Since large fractions of every finished material are ultimately lost or dispersed as such, one can roughly relate the rate of consumption of scarce materials to the rate of approaching exhaustion... The effective stock at a given moment is the amount that is discoverable and recoverable, based on the current technology of exploration and extraction. As the technology improves, the recoverable fraction grows in relation to the total amount in the earth, but at a decreasing rate. Eventually it must approach some upper limit, which is the ultimate stock. I should add, however, that the ultimate stock... can be defined to take into account the recyclable fraction of the scarce material. Recycling may extend the available stock considerably in some cases, but since there is always some loss in use, the ultimate stock is still finite unless there are natural biogeochemical cycles that are capable of renewing the supply indefinitely... For some materials, at least, the ultimate stock must eventually be exhausted... However, technology offers one “out” from the apparent dilemma of inevitable exhaustion, namely, the possibility of substitutions between materials or, more significantly, between the uses of materials... Copper was once used for roofing and sheathing the hulls of wooden ships. It no longer is. Aluminium, a much more abundant metal, has already replaced copper in many applications, including high-voltage electrical transmission lines... Brass, an alloy of copper, is rapidly being replaced by other materials, including aluminium, for all sorts of hardware applications... The telephone industry... has worked out the technological problems of voice and data transmission by means of modulated light beams transmitted through tiny glass fibers and amplified by lasers – a system using virtually no copper at all. The fibers are made mostly of silica, a material in unlimited supply... [P]lastics (notably PVC) developed by the chemical industry are already beginning to replace copper water pipes. As a consequence of these accumulated technological changes, the world copper industry is already facing the prospect of a long-term glut – not a shortage... For extremely demanding structural applications, there are also exciting new high-strength materials becoming available, consisting of very fine filaments or fibers of carbon, beryllium, quartz, or boron embedded in a plastic or ceramic... Natural rubber was once the sole basis of automotive (and other) tyre production. It was thought to be a unique and irreplaceable product on which a number of industries depended absolutely. [But ‘a guy named Grenville Williams had discovered *isoprene*, and in 1879 a French chemist converted isoprene into a rubber-like solid. When WWI cut the Germans off from natural rubber, they experimented and produced *methyl rubber* in the first synthetic rubber factory. After the war, chemists gave up making synthetic rubber, since natural rubber was very cheap.’ Natural r]ubber was derived from the sap of a tropical tree... growing wild in West Africa and Brazil... [‘Columbus saw Haitian kids playing with

black rubber balls made from the juice of the *hevea tree*. Rubber is a material that has the wonderful ability to stretch and return to its original shape over and over again. It also is an excellent insulating material for electricity.' 'Crude rubber is formed into sheets and its strength and elasticity are improved by vulcanization with sulphur. Hard rubber requires about 30% sulphur.'] **For a while the rubber barons enjoyed a monopoly, and... Manaus on the Amazon... was, briefly, the "fifth richest city in the world."** But its wealth was ephemeral: The seeds of rubber trees were smuggled out, and raw material production was shifted to rubber plantations in such places as Malaya and Vietnam, where output could more easily be controlled. By 1940 most of the world's rubber supply came from... Indochina. When Japanese military expansion threatened Southeast Asia at the beginning of [WWII], it appeared to many that this event would deprive the Western world of a unique... resource essential to rearmament! [US] policy toward Japan prior to Pearl Harbor was strongly influenced by this misconception. As we now know, the consequences of Japanese takeover were minimal as far as rubber was concerned. Within... three years natural rubber was largely replaced by synthetic rubber made from petroleum, and this substitution was not only swift but irreversible[– assisted 'by the discovery of a rubber synthesis called *copolymerization*'. 'Although less elastic, synthetic rubber has better wearing qualities. Synthetic and natural rubbers are sometimes used together to make the most of the best qualities.'] **...Quite apart from the possibilities of substitution for scarce materials, it must be pointed out that some materials are *not* scarce and will always be available and extractable. This is probably the case for some [fif]teen elements that are major constituents of air, seawater, crustal rock, and biological organisms... These elements... [– H, C, N, O, Na, Mg, Al, Si, P, Cl, K, Ca, Ti, Mn, and Fe –] are not all obtained right now from their "ultimate" sources, but all easily can be. There are also one or two marginal elements, such as sulfur, that are quite widely distributed on the Earth's crust and might conceivably be added to the list. One could add nickel and copper, which will be available in very large quantities from deep-sea nodules as a by-product of manganese. Note that basic components of plastics (carbon), glass (silica), and ceramics (silica, lime, alumina) are all abundant. Plastics need *not* be produced from fossil hydrocarbons, although it is convenient to do so; they can be manufactured from other organic materials[– especially *cellulose*, which is 'the essential material of the cell wall in plants, serving for strength and support. A white, opaque carbohydrate insoluble in water, it is nearly pure in the fiber of cotton, linen and hemp, and is the main constituent of wood. Boiling with dilute sulphuric acid changes it into dextrose. Nitric acid converts it into nitrocellulose, the base of celluloid. With acetic anhydride it reacts to form cellulose acetate, which is made into plastics and other products. With caustic soda and carbon disulphide it becomes the viscose which yields artificial silk (*rayon*).'] ('In contrast to this mechanical process, the SILKWORM'S *enzymes* change the cellulose into a protein from which it spins silk' – 'an ounce of eggs will produce about 30,000 larvae and with good management they should produce 12 lb of silk, consuming a ton of mulberry leaves in the process'; note that researchers are currently trying to replicate 'one of nature's strongest materials – spider's silk.')** Another 'artificial fabric is Nylon, which is made of furfural found in corn cobs and oat hulls, and was developed in 1938 by a chemist who combined two organic chemicals – *hexamethylene-diamine* and *adipic acid* – by forming POLYMERS of them. Many plastics are formed through polymerizing simpler chemicals. *Polymerization* means joining together small molecules into larger ones under the influence of heat and a catalyst. The high polymers are of particular importance. High polymers include rubber, protein, starch, wood, and hormones. Plastics are either *thermoplastic* or *thermosetting*. Thermosetting (hardened by heat) plastics such as Bakelite, Textolite, Urea-formaldehyde and Melamine-formaldehyde, are obtained using raw materials such as air, water, limestone, coal, oat hulls and fillers. Like casein, celluloid (which was discovered about 1869) is a thermoplastic – it can be softened again and again by high temperatures and remolded. One of the earliest products produced from cellulose was *Cellophane*. *Cellulose nitrate* is made into explosives, varnishes, oil cloth and leather substitutes, and other artificial fabrics. All synthetic fibers and fabrics are made of *monomers*. There are true synthetic fabrics and human-made fabrics. In true synthetic fabrics the monomer is chemically made out of inorganic compounds. Human-made fabrics are made of organic monomers. Molded synthetics are made by mixing the monomer and a catalyst with a solvent and then freezing the mixture. When the solvent is evaporated, a clothlike material that doesn't have to be woven results. The newest synthetic fabrics, the eutectics, are formed by roasting a synthetic fabric such as rayon. The results are pure stretched carbon crystals called whiskers. They are used in the cones of rockets, heat shields, the metal skin of airplanes and in the new F.R.P. (fabric reinforced plastic). Some day plastics may be used in place of metals in the building of houses' – although steel won't] **ever be in short supply. Most of the intrinsically scarce alloying elements such as nickel, chromium, molybdenum, and niobium are probably replaceable by combinations of other elements such as silicon, aluminium, titanium, and nitrogen... The problem with mining is that the ancient method of underground mining is now rapidly being replaced by the open-pit or strip method, which facilitates the use of very large machines and is much less dangerous to the workers. However, the resulting scars to the Earth's surface are very damaging. In regions with heavy rainfall they can lead to serious erosion and acid drainage problems that affect the downstream river valleys. In extremely arid regions only the scenery may be affected, but this too is a permanent loss... Techniques for restoring the land surface after open-pit mining have been perfected in Europe... With care, the end result can, in some cases, actually be an improvement on the original. However, it is much harder to restore the land if mining is not carried out with eventual restoration in mind. Thus old strip mines in most places tend to be permanent unhealing wounds in the Earth. Moreover, restoration requires ample water to establish a vegetative cover... The process of winning and smelting metals from their ores has also left extremely long-lasting scars, particularly in the neighborhood of copper, silver, lead, or zinc refineries. All these are mainly found in combination with sulfur and extracted by a process that typically includes roasting... in which the sulfur is recombined with atmospheric oxygen and driven off as gaseous sulfur oxides... [T]hese gases are highly water soluble, and... quickly combine with any water droplets in the air to form... sulfuric acid... Mountain valleys where copper smelters have long been located tend to look like the surface of the Moon. Nothing green grows for miles around – nor will grow for decades, even long after the... smelting stops. Lead and zinc smelters also tend to poison their surroundings with arsenic and/or cadmium-containing dust. These are highly toxic... Silver smelters once saturated the neighboring area with mercury vapor. Now they use a different process based on an equally toxic chemical, sodium cyanide... Placer mining... is another technique that is extremely damaging to the land. Whole mountainsides are deliberately washed away by high-pressure water jets to dislodge and capture a tiny metallic component. Yet long after the miners' fortunes have been made and spent, the fertile downstream river bottom lands lie buried under sterile gravel heaps.**

...the early [detergents] were not biodegradable and led to foaming problems in rivers; later ones were made biodegradable and therefore do not persist long enough to give a foam problem. There is evidence that this may be just sweeping the problem out of sight, for many modern detergents encourage bacterial growth by the very fact that they are a foodstuff for them: this can lead to a great increase in bacterial numbers which may alter the biochemical balance of a waterway. - 1979

[Biodegradable detergents were developed in response to consumer concerns.] **Citizens also fought corporate energy waste in the form of one-way containers and bottles, which use 3.11 times the energy of returnables. New laws banning one-way containers in Maine and Michigan have saved 5.5 trillion BTUs a year, the equivalent of 40 million gallons of gasoline. Container litter was reduced 82[%], and total solid waste was down 4.5[%]** (many detergents and similar products are now distributed in plastic refill bags as well as plastic containers, thus enabling consumers to top up an originally purchased container then throw away the bag – which takes up less room in the local landfill than a discarded container)], **and four thousand new jobs have been created at a savings to taxpayers of \$15 million... [Incidentally, we] are... learning fast in mass-consumerist societies that overemphasis on material things diverts us from achieving fuller human maturity. Here it is interesting to contrast the views of human needs held by economists and psychologists. While economists see human needs in material terms, not only food, clothing, and shelter but actually postulating that material needs and desires are, *in principle*, insatiable; psychologists, on the contrary, see most human needs as *nonmaterial*: acceptance by others, self-esteem, loving interpersonal relationships, the challenge of useful and interesting work, the desire for meaning, purpose and harmony,**

and the urge to pattern and make sense of our experience... An expanding calculus of self-interest, increasingly coterminous with group and species "self-interest," culminating in the holistic perception of oneness with the global ecosystem, is characteristic of this progression toward maturity. - 1981

"The golden rule[," said Gandhi, "... is resolutely to refuse to have what millions cannot[have]... The first thing is to cultivate the mental attitude that will not have possessions or facilities denied to millions, and the next immediate thing is to rearrange our lives as fast as possible in accordance with that mentality... so... one [does] not possess anything which one does not really need. It would be a breach of this principle to possess unnecessary foodstuffs, clothing, or furniture... In observing this principle one is led to a progressive simplification of one's own life." - 1982

In order for all of the present population of the world to reach a standard of living equivalent to that of the U[S] in 1970, it would require extraction of some seventy-five times as much iron as is now extracted annually, 100 times as much copper, 200 times as much lead... 250 times as much tin, and increases of similar orders of magnitude in the production of many other basic resources... The explosion of our capacity to produce a multitude of material goods and services which accompanied the Industrial Revolution has brought unprecedented benefits to the peoples of the [First W]orld. It has also made it technically possible to improve radically the conditions of life available to the entire human population. Despite this, economic and political barriers continue to prevent the two-thirds of the world's people who live in the [Last W]orld from realizing these benefits. Today, the mass market in the [First W]orld for whom the mass production was designed has been largely satisfied, if not over-saturated. Most of the unsatisfied needs in [First World] societies today are of a non-material nature which industry rarely searches out as they do not accord with its traditional industrial logic. The remaining large unsatisfied markets for material goods and services are principally in the [Last] World where people cannot afford them. But response of our industrial machine is to expand its markets by creating new wants and new appetites amongst the people who can afford them. We are thus caught in the paradox of having created an industrial system able to meet the basic needs of all the world's people but in fact using it largely to foster further growth in the demand by the wealthy minority for goods and services well beyond what we need or is good for us. Perhaps worse, this forced new growth is increasingly illusory. Illusory because the industrial-economic system we have inherited aims at the largest possible production of the most simplified goods. Thus competition, which has been vaunted as the essential condition driving our systems to offer greater and greater choice in the market place, has gradually lost that function. In fact, it has been reversed. The financial need for large production makes innovation into a dangerously expensive risk. To avoid risk, competition increasingly pits almost identical products against each other in sectors where basic markets have already been established. The principal differences within that competition are in presentation and publicity. In other words, this forced growth is not real; it simply offers greater and greater quantities of increasingly similar products – which is to say, of fewer and fewer real products. This system, like the bicycle, can only maintain its equilibrium when it is moving forward at sufficient speed... The great backlog of unfulfilled basic needs in the [First World] countries together with the massive reconstruction required following the two world wars of this century gave our industrial system a dynamic momentum which has now receded. There is nothing in prospect that is likely to see this momentum renewed in the foreseeable future. We... could... now... be in a period of degeneration for western industrial civilization... Social degeneration has always been marked in history by overkill through concentration on quantity rather than quality. This was true in ancient Greece where concentration on quality was a sign of the civilization's innate rigor; its subsequent degeneration being marked by encrusting that quality with a plaster-like over-emphasis which eventually dragged the society down... At the end of a long siege, Athens eventually fell to Sparta because of an epidemic caused by the polluted... water... running... through the city... In seventeenth and eighteenth century France, [there]... was a very real decline in the actual quality of life during that period as exemplified by the disappearance of adequate sanitation and water supply systems, even in the palaces... Medieval Europe's inability or unwillingness to deal with the waste produced by a growing urban population led to an increase in rats which carried the plague which in turn proved so destructive to that society. Degradation of water systems in China in several periods led to disastrous floods, rivers changing routes, agricultural disasters, followed by revolts and the collapse of the empire. Similar circumstances affected the histories of Rome and of Egypt... Interestingly enough, the decline of efficient sanitation and water systems has symbolized the decline of societies since before the Greeks. One of the effects of our society's concentration on production has been... the pollution of water systems in [First World] countries, the decline in the quality of water available for consumption, especially in urban areas, and... the abandonment of water systems in the [Last] World... - 1983

The opinion leaders we surveyed are pessimistic about... the future. They believe, and I share their belief, that unless current efforts to correct the waste-dumping problems are intensified, the outlook for the environment... is bleak. For example, here is a list of some of the problems currently facing my own state of New Jersey, as compiled by *The New York Times* (June 19, 1983): • ...More than 45,000 barrels of chemicals stored in Elizabeth have exploded and left toxic debris that hasn't been cleaned up. Storm sewers are contaminated, and the waterway between Elizabeth and Staten Island hasn't been checked for contamination, as of this writing[– although the]... state... has warned [people] not to eat striped bass, bluefish, white perch, white catfish, or eels more than once a week if they've been caught off sections of the coast... • About 50,000 chemical drums filled with toxic wastes are buried in Burnt Fly Bog and Lone Pine... Burnt Fly lies above the water source for 150,000 people. • Radioactive contamination has been discovered in Sheffield Brook in Wayne, where children play... • There's a marsh full of mercury near Giants Stadium in the Meadowlands. The source... is a nearby processing plant. The area is regarded as the world's worst case of mercury pollution. - 1984

We are entering the final years of the twentieth century with a planet at risk. Around the world we face a crisis in reality. It is an invasion, not from outer space, but from ourselves; in the way we have over-exploited and degraded the Earth. We have ignored warnings about causes. Now – all too late – we are desperately reacting to effects... However, we need not be without hope. New understanding and policies could see the human race working together as one. But we will need to be content with sufficiency, not affluence; quality, not quantity... Industry and technology must play a major part in willingness for new attitudes. Technology is not the enemy. To call for a "non-technological age" would be futile... and would disown the whole course of human evolution. Used with ingenuity and conscience, technology could be the instrument to save planet Earth... [Some] companies... have revealing stories to tell about their part in helping to keep our environment safe for the future... Last year, Lever-Rexona substantially reduced the amount of raw packaging materials by substituting reusable one-tonne bags for 50kg bags[, and]... will shortly begin selling commercial Handy Andy in a big 20-litre bag-in-a-box... If it is successful, other products will follow... The company recycles plastic waste to be used in new plastic products. Lever-Rexona is introducing identification codes for the base of all plastic bottles to help with sorting for recycling... The company is installing a new recycling system in its... factory to deal with the liquid effluent from the detergent powder manufacturing process, instead of discharging it into the sewage system... The company stopped using chlorofluorocarbons... for aerosol propellant last year... Back in 1976 when people didn't know about the ozone layer or... CFCs... [someone] made a major decision which, in retrospect, was visionary. As the head of S. C. Johnson Wax, [that someone] made a worldwide edict banning the use of CFCs in his company's aerosols. The move came after his research scientists told him there was a possibility the chemicals could harm the ozone layer. The mere use of the word "possible" was enough to make S. C. Johnson Wax... provide alternatives. The company invented the "water-based" aerosol system that uses... hydrocarbons... But S. C. Johnson Wax didn't stop there. The company says whilst hydrocarbons are a far better and completely safe alternative

to CFCs, they're not sure hydrocarbons are the ultimate solution. Currently, its researchers are looking at other propellants because they believe there are even better substitutes waiting to be discovered. Today... people have learned that in order to have the advantage of aerosol cans, they have to exercise common sense, because the aerosol – like the automobile, or even a simple stepladder – can be dangerous if not used properly... But S. C. Johnson Wax [also] believes that aerosols are good and useful, otherwise they would not manufacture them... Like most people, you probably do not give a second thought to the batteries you use in your portable sound system, camera, children's toys and the countless other battery-powered devices around your home. But if you consider the fact that your home is just one of the... million households in N[Z], it does not take long for those discarded batteries to become a mountain. As a nation of environmentally conscious people, N[Z]ers are becoming increasingly concerned about the potential impact of discarded batteries, because batteries use mercury and other potentially environmentally damaging heavy metals. Eveready understands that concern and company research scientists applied their years of knowledge to come up with better batteries. The result? Environmentally-friendly batteries that maintain the company's traditionally high standards of reliability and long-lasting performance. Eveready says its worldwide use of mercury has been cut by 97[%] over the past 10 years. Its current breed of carbon zinc batteries has a mercury level of less than 100 parts per million... Eveready... ultra-low mercury alkaline batteries... will be 99.975[%] mercury-free. However, the company says even that is not good enough, and continues research towards totally eliminating the use of mercury in all its batteries... Eveready believes it has a responsibility to minimise the environmental impact of its products. Eveready is committed to leading the way with technology to help make the Earth a cleaner, safer place... Committed to protecting the environment and conserving the world's resources, Reckitt & Coleman's new range of Down To Earth household cleaning products is designed to care for you and the environment. The range... are all biodegradable, phosphate free and have not been tested on animals... Wherever possible, the ingredients used... are naturally derived and include chalk, fruit acid and vinegar. The fragrance is another gift from nature – eucalyptus... The company believes we all have to start caring for a world that is worth sharing.

...[“Like telephones, cameras have become virtually universal items, with 91.9% of all US households owning at least one (between 1985 and 1988, the percentage of US households owning videocassette recorders grew from 20.9% to 66.5%). NZers] buy 200,000 cameras a year and take 140 million photos. Most of the cameras are simple point-and-shoot models[(increasingly they are ‘disposable cameras’ – designed to be discarded after they have taken one film’s worth of photos)]. But rarely does the amateur photographer capture that singular image that becomes more than a mere record, expressing for everyone who sees it, as [one] writer... put it in *One Time, One Place*, “something of our common feeling.” ...For... [the photographer who] once taught a class called “How to Look at the World[,”] ...the whole point of taking photographs [is] to gain a new appreciation of everyday life. “Celebrate the wonderful, ordinary things you see around you,”... One of [his] loveliest prints – of a tree’s shadow falling gently on a snow-covered field – hangs over my desk... It reminds me that seeing the world through the camera’s eye can make the joy of a passing moment eternal.

...[“How much is this moment worth? \$100? \$1000? The moments of your life are priceless. Are you saving them on the right film – *Kodak Gold*?”] ...while... our intuition... might persuade us to agree about the value of Nature’s ‘spectaculars’, it might not stretch as far as other offerings such as the anopheles mosquito and the tsetse fly... [V]alue is a quality invested in an object by human beings. In other words, objects are not the carriers of value; we are... [Ecologists] have set themselves the goal of... investing the environment with value... Reducing material consumption is an integral part of ecologism’s project and so the Green movement has... [to persuade] potential supporters that this is a desirable aspiration, [but] it is saddled with a series of intellectual arguments for its position that presently appear too weak to do the job required. The assertion... that a society organized around reduced consumption just *would* be more pleasurable to live in seems unlikely – in present circumstances – to cut the necessary ice. Likewise, the most favoured alternative strategy, the building of a theory of need, is notoriously difficult to carry out. How... [do we] arrive at the conclusion that washing-machines are legitimate objects but that electric toothbrushes are not? There is evidently a theory (or more likely an intuition) of need at work here, but how is it to be persuasively expressed? ...most expressions of theories of need are far too vague to be of much use: ‘needs [are] those things that are essential to our survival and to civilized human existence, wants being the extras that serve to satisfy our desires’... The problem with such a formulation is that, while it gives us an idea of the general differences between needs and wants, it does not help us concretely to fill out their content. At the same time, to be able to fill out their content in any universal sense presupposes that ‘fundamental human needs are finite, few and classifiable’... The obvious objection to this – that needs are historically and culturally mediated – can be partly met by saying that ‘fundamental human needs are the same in all cultures and all historical periods. What changes, both over time and through cultures, is the form or the means by which these needs are satisfied’... [However], the sense of scarcity that informs the whole discussion... generates another characteristic of the sustainable society to which most of its supporters will subscribe: a tendency towards egalitarian distribution of the material wealth that is available. Thus... ‘redistribution is a precondition for any transition to a stable society’, and, more fully... ‘If there are limits to the needs for which society can provide, their fair distribution is even more urgent... Limiting differentials between people is as essential as limiting economic growth and technological innovation’... Greens will insist that... basic answers can be provided only by... answering the following question... in the affirmative: ‘If something cannot be manufactured, built or grown without causing irreparable ecological damage, can’t we strive to create something to take its place, or simply decide to do without it?’

...The Greens’ critique of *what* is produced includes their rejection of armaments, wasteful packaging, dangerous chemicals, and frivolous household gadgets... The Green critique of *how* things are produced... addresses the problems of monotonous work... and... undignified working conditions... Moreover, the Greens advocate decentralizing production to bring it closer to local and regional markets, thus reducing traffic and saving energy. The necessity of such measures is also becoming apparent in the U[S], where distances are huge compared to... Germany and where more and more large enterprises suffer from excessive centralization... [– although] in some cases large-scale factories are more efficient... Many Green groups at the local level monitor the emission levels of factories to see whether they are complying with federal law, and some Greens have successfully initiated local ordinances in this area[– e.g.] a Green proposal in... Nuremberg resulted in that city’s becoming the first in... Germany to restrict the emission levels for its municipal power plant. Not only were nitrogen oxide and sulphur dioxide emissions almost eliminated, but a procedure was installed whereby sulphur dioxide is processed into nontoxic gypsum and sold to the housing industry. The... ecological measures proposed by the Greens flow from their rejection of purely quantitative growth – especially growth that entails environmental destruction. The fallacy of unlimited quantitative growth is eloquently exposed in their Economic Program: In 1950, 1[%] growth meant increased goods with a value of 1.9 billion [Deutschmarks. Today, 1%] growth brings... additional products with a value of 9 billion DM. To cure unemployment by means of growth – a method... Greens... reject... – would require a growth rate of 6[%] per year. This would mean that in ten years we would have to produce and consume twice as much per year as we do now... It requires only common sense to see that... this course... is neither possible nor admissible... In a mere blink on the timescale of human evolution, industrial society has been depleting and impairing Earth’s “supply system” at a phenomenal rate... [and USers] used more minerals and fossil fuels during the past half-century than all other peoples in the world throughout human history...

By any sober analysis conventional politicians and economists are apologists for the most excessive system of all-consuming greed in human history... As our economies grow, so the waste mounts up. After just a few decades of consumerism we are already running out of rubbish dumps... New York City once offered a local council in Cheshire \$1 million to dump its rubbish in the Manchester Ship Canal! Much has been made of the decline of traditional ‘dirty’ industry... but silicon can be just as dirty as smoke stacks. Information technology is by no means clean technology. Silicon Valley... has had its pollution scares. A computer-components factory in Thailand caused so much damage that the local population burned it to the ground... Soviet... industry produces 60 million tonnes of atmospheric pollution each year... If responsibility for eliminating pollution were

placed on those that caused it in the first place, industry would quickly find less polluting methods of manufacture... The next step is to... assume personal responsibility for the state of the planet... [by analysing] our own consumerism. Is what I buy really necessary, and do my purchases waste resources or damage the environment? ...Greens argue that the increasing use of gadgets like electric carving knives, power-assisted toothbrushes and automatic tin openers creates unnecessary waste and that such devices could be phased out without causing the able-bodied any real inconvenience. It is tragic that so much research is devoted to trivial electrical goods when the majority of our disabled citizens lack the tools they need to lead independent lives. An electric wheelchair gives genuine freedom rather than the illusory freedom so many of us think we have when we purchase quite useless products... We need to use less, rationing the content of the larder today and allowing it to be replenished naturally, instead of gorging ourselves today and leaving our children to starve tomorrow. An ecological economy would conserve, rather than consume, resources for the future. Non-renewable resources such as metals would be used as sparingly as possible and replaced by renewables wherever possible. The substitution of high-performance ceramics for steel components is one particularly exciting example... Potentially renewable resources, from rainforests to the living soil, would be used in a sustainable manner rather than ripped apart for short-term profit... In essence, a Green [society] would recycle all its elements so as to maintain prosperity on a long-term basis... Items such as fridges and cookers could be made to last for longer, repaired with cheap, standardized parts and reused, finally recycled so as to reduce waste while maintaining what we have. The average milk bottle is used forty times. If milk bottles, why not all other bottles? ...Smashing up bottles in a bottle bank is like throwing away after just one year something that has a life of forty years. A Green government would swiftly introduce a Minimum Packaging Act with specifications for packaging that would ensure that waste was minimized and that the shape of bottles was standardized to allow for maximum reusability... [(most NZers) will recall the days when they could return a soft drink bottle to the dairy and receive a refund[– f]or many children collecting and returning bottles provided an important source of pocket money[; t]oday, thanks to government reluctance to intervene in the marketplace, such incentives are history[– but t]he Ministry for the Environment has promised to review the waste problem in December 1991 to decide whether a mandatory deposit-refund system should be started[; m]eanwhile, across the Tasman, South A[US] is living proof that such a system works[– i]t has the highest beverage container recycling rate in A[US], because i]t is also the only state with mandatory deposit-refund legislation on the books[)]... In 1989 Avon County Council sent half a million tonnes of rubbish to a dump in Buckinghamshire at a cost of £14.35 per tonne. [Yet m]embers of the Bristol Green Party have pointed out that the scrap value of glass [is] £15 per tonne, paper [is] £12, light iron and plastic... £20, and aluminium... an extraordinary £600 per tonne... Sheffield City Council, which has introduced the first large-scale recycling scheme in the country, estimates that 40[%] of the city's population participates in some form of recycling and that if everybody reused 50 kilos of paper, this would save 250,000 trees every year. 10,000 homes in the city have been supplied with separate 'blue boxes' for organic, paper, glass and metal rubbish... A new Standards Commission... would make sure that consumer goods were produced in such a way as to maximize energy conservation, recyclability and long life while minimizing energy consumption and waste... A typical fridge uses 270 kilowatt hours of electricity a year, yet the best-designed models on sale... use just 70 kw hours... Better motors and seals would reduce the energy demand of a wide variety of appliances[, while]... the introduction of low-energy light bulbs into every British home would reduce energy demand by the equivalent of two pressurized water reactors... It would be possible to reduce the energy bills for commercial and home heating to a mere 5-10[%] of current costs, but this would demand the rebuilding of most of Britain to conservation standards, a task that would be... physically... impossible. [● 'Demand for salt and water is shrinking the Dead Sea.']

...the *Economist*... reported... [recently that due to Uzbekistan's] 'internationalist duty'... to produce cotton... the... Aral Sea[–]...the world's fourth biggest lake... [–] has lost over half its water in the past twenty years. The last fish died in 1983; fishing villages lie abandoned 40 miles from the receding coast; large ships lie beached on the giant salt flats that were once the seabed... Every year 75,000 tonnes of salt and dust are picked up by the winds from the dry seabed... and blown over the cotton fields. It will require billions of roubles merely to prevent the fields becoming deserts by the end of the century – by which time the Aral will be a series of salt puddles. The extinction of the Aral is likely to make the climate of Central Asia hotter and drier... [A]lready this crisis of nature kills Soviet citizens: two thirds of those living in the Kara-Kalpak republic suffer from liver disorders, typhoid and cancer of the oesophagus. Many children die within one year of birth... and... millions of people who cannot get unpolluted water... are forced to drink what is essentially dilute pesticide solution – and all because of a grandiose, and unsuccessful, scheme for cotton. - 1990

"I REMEMBER too clearly for my own good,"... said... [the] slight, gently spoken ship's captain [while] reminiscing about his career at the helm of *Albatross*, a scientific-research vessel. Suddenly, [the captain] wondered aloud, perhaps for the first time in almost 40 years, whether [it] could have found the courage to speak his mind that fateful July day in 1954. But the government officials did not ask his opinion of the plan – and to volunteer it would have been unthinkable. Barely a year had passed since Stalin's death, and the dictator's hand still lay heavy on the land. [The captain] knew little about the officials... who had arranged to use his ship for their first look at Lake Baikal in southeastern Siberia. They were, of course, well-informed. All Soviet schoolchildren were taught that Baikal is special. It is the deepest lake on earth, measuring more than 1600 metres from top to bottom, and one of the largest, 635 kilometres long by 80 wide. It holds one-fifth of the planet's fresh water – more than all of North America's Great Lakes combined. And it is so immense that if all of its 336 tributaries dried up tomorrow, its volume... could keep its one out-flowing river, the Angara, moving for close to 400 years... [The lake] sits in the planet's deepest land depression, a rift over nine kilometres deep that has been opening for at least 25 million years. Judging by the thickness of sediment at the bottom, Baikal has been there for much of that time, which [also] makes it the world's oldest body of fresh water – and its most interesting... In school, these [officials] had traced Baikal's elegant crescent shape and learned to call it the Pearl of Siberia and the Sacred Sea. Yet as days passed, [the captain] overheard enough of their conversation to know that they weren't admiring the lake so much as evaluating it, probing its shores for a place to put something. The officials were convinced that the lake's sparkling-clear, nearly mineral-free water, when run through the pulp of Siberian pines, would produce "super" cellulose for jet-aircraft tyres. To be sure, some chemical pollution of the Sacred Sea would result. But that was the price of keeping up with the Americans... Thirty-eight years later, [the captain] is still haunted by the sight of the Baikalsk cellulose-paper plant. "Helping to bring that monster to Lake Baikal... is the one great regret of my life." ...Baikal is a living museum of aquatic plants and animals... Fifty-two species of fish and more than 250 varieties of fresh-water shrimp inhabit the waters... *Epischura baicalensis*, a tiny crustacean, renders the water strikingly clear by straining out algae and bacteria. But water at the southern end of the lake tells a different story. Around Baikalsk, bacteria discharged by the cellulose plant contaminate some 200 square kilometres of water... All summer I had heard Russians... refer... to Lake Baikal in the past tense, as if it were already dead. Most scientists disagree with that dire conclusion, but there's no doubt that the plant fouls the area. Its airborne emissions make Baikalsk one of the most polluted cities in Russia. And biochemists worry that industrial wastes from the pulp-bleaching process may one day accumulate to toxic levels in the food chain. In 1957, when the public first heard about plans for the pulp factory, ordinary citizens banded together to fight it. Their protests were mostly ignored, but 30 years later, the Soviet government issued a decree protecting Lake Baikal. Among other things, it pledged that the cellulose plant would be "re-profiled" for activities harmless to the environment by 1993. Today, few believe that the government will actually shut down a top-producing plant. (Super cellulose never worked out, but the mill makes bleached cellulose for clothing.)

...[a 'Swedish mill makes chlorine-free paper by bleaching pulp with hydrogen peroxide (chlorine is one of the major pollutants of North America's Great Lakes'). Alternatively, the 'chlorine used to bleach pulp for paper production can be replaced by enzymes, as can chemicals needed in newspaper recycling' ('unbleached paper is cheaper, but it is yellowish in colour and turns brown and brittle in a few years'). 'Enzyme processing will revolutionize the field of chemistry. Enzymes will be able to duplicate the reactions of petroleum refining, plastics synthesis, and high-temperature reagent processes.

Combining with genetic engineering, enzymatics will command the lion's share of the fuel, plastics, and specialty chemical markets'. By the way, environmental benefits may arise once plants are programmed to produce polymers, enzymes, pharmaceuticals and other industrial raw materials. "Fifty years ago plants provided almost everything we needed, and then petrochemicals took over," explains [a scientist from] Michigan State University. "Now we're going back to plants, but with a lot of new tricks." [The scientist] has produced biodegradable plastic by inserting a polymer-producing gene into a bacterium. The next step: transfer the gene into potatoes or sugar beets, and eventually churn out plastic for only a few cents a kilo.

...the tropical forests produce from 1 to 3.5 kilograms of organic matter, dry weight, per square meter per year; the temperate-zone forests, 0.6 to 2.5 k[g]; the savannas and grasslands, 0.2 to 2 k[g]; and the oceans, from 0.02 to 0.4 k[g]s over their vast pelagic reaches and 0.2 to 0.6 k[g]s on the continental shelves... Alternatives to petroleum and natural gas, even for the supply of liquid fuel, are to be had from abundant supplies of other fossil fuels. There is even, without doubt, more petroleum to be had at much higher cost and risk to the environment in unproved deposits in the fragile ecosystems of the Arctic or the outer, deeper slopes of the continental shelves. They might stretch the petroleum age to the length of a full human lifetime... So long as the liquid fuels last, they will probably find their principal use in transportation... A wiser disposition of resources, if one could be devised, would save those molecules for better uses than combustion; they are the starting materials for the huge volume and diversity of industrial organic chemicals and plastics that serve so many useful (and sometimes essential) purposes... To the number of different organic chemical compounds currently marketed – a low estimate says 40,000; a high estimate, 70,000 – the chemical industry adds a conservatively estimated 1000 new compounds each year. In 1940, the industry shipped 10 million pounds of these chemicals. In 1980, it was shipping 80 compounds in volume exceeding 100 million pounds each and 100 billion pounds in all, a 10,000-fold increase. Much of this increase in poundage is accounted for by the tonnage of plastics. By volume, if not by weight, plastic materials bulk larger in the U.S. economy than steel. After one stop in the kitchen, a significant fraction of the output of plastics makes a large and imperishable contribution to the [USs'] accumulation of solid waste... [T]he U.S. economy continues to produce some 80 million tons of steel each year. [But what] counts increasingly in steel production is the tonnage of iron above ground. Except for a momentary rise in the consumption of new iron ore occasioned by the favored basic oxygen process, the steel economy is approaching steady-state recycling of its scrap. The [US currently] has 5 billion tons of iron above ground, 20 tons per capita. The rest of the [First W]orld has 10 tons per capita... [Incidentally,] less than 30[%]... of the... U.S... labor force remains engaged in... the production of goods.

...[an oligarchy of] rich capitalists and powerful commissars despoil the world and con the people into buying needless things when critical life-needs have not been met, nor even produced... To put it bluntly, capitalism (and socialism as well) have been socially blind in their pursuit of production. They've used up vast amounts of the planet's true capital, its resources and energies, and... poisoned vast sections of the planet's bio-regions in producing and over-producing the wrong kind of goods for the wrong kind of people... The oligarchy... have a far too privileged position in offices of governmental power, and this makes them blind to their own responsibility. They are far too rich and lead such incredibly opulent lifestyles that it makes them unaware of what life is like for 99% of the human race... Merrill, Lynch – one of their most prestigious firms, an icon of Wall Street and industrial capitalism – ran a brilliantly executed advertisement in the '80s that featured the catch phrase, "A Breed Apart." ...[i]t's a fitting accolade for the entire oligarchic stratum. They do not inspire the world with confidence that they, who are so "apart" – apart from nature and from others – can provide the creative, responsive and responsible leadership in these new times... They continue to charge forth in terms of the strengths and values (autonomy, instrumental rationality, macho self-importance) which they are used to. They are like a Goliath strutting about trying to convince the world that they are still "the greatest." ...Consequently, how would they respond to the following... requirements for business and government (assuming they could [be] convinced to listen to them)? ...The... requirements are: Ban all hazardous waste exports... Immunize environmental protection and health and safety laws from the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade... so that they will not be overturned as nontariff trade barriers. Stop all pesticide use and make a transition to organic farming techniques... Stop all production of... CFCs... Expand governmental cost-benefit analyses to include the environmental impact of products and projects so that agencies no longer make choices without taking into account the full costs associated with their decisions. Build and maintain mass transit systems; stop the tax subsidies going to individual auto transport... Ban all nonessential use of plastic and asbestos... Mandate recycling for paper, glass and plastic. - 1992

RECYCLING has taken a rubbishing – so much so that a group of recyclers plan to make it an election issue. Many schemes are in danger of folding as material stockpiles, markets dry up, processes run at a loss and consumers shun expensive recycled products... Previously, recycling was treated as a business and only profitable materials were recycled. Now, there is a drive to recycle everything and it just doesn't pay... Some say the only answer is for the Government to get involved. RONZ (Recycling Operators of N[Z]) intends to lobby the Government to keep the industry afloat. [A c]ommittee member... says the Government should subsidise recycling, put levies on packaging, tax raw materials which can be replaced by recycled material and encourage the use of recycled products... Overseas some governments take a tough line, forcing councils, householders and industry to reduce waste and recycle. In N[Z], the Environment Minister has admitted the country faces a significant waste management problem and the Government has set a target of reducing waste by 20%. Its policy on waste management is voluntary, however, legislation may be passed if the voluntary approach fails. [The] Minister... says it's a step the Government is reluctant to take. [The minister] told plastic recyclers in Auckland: "I do not want to see N[Z] going down the same track Germany has taken in stringently regulating its manufacturers to control the level of waste. Blanket levies or other forms of taxation can often create more problems than they solve if not targeted correctly. I would prefer to see industry take the lead." There are many who would like the Government to get tough. One is... [a former chairperson] of the Auckland Regional Council's... works committee... [who] urges a co-ordinated nationwide approach to waste management. "A lot of councils are re-inventing the wheel. Everyone has their own idiosyncratic view on how to do it. No one is looking at the macro view or even the global view. Local authorities don't like being told what to do and until that weakness is dealt with, rubbish will continue to be a political football. The free market will not produce a good response. The Government needs to be involved in some way." Private companies have always competed to collect our waste. Now they're competing for the chance to throw it away. Disposal used to be controlled by councils who dictated where waste would go. Now, private industry is taking control. Companies own the two biggest landfills, are working part-share in a third and are about to open a fourth. Some councils are determined to hang on to control. Others want to hand the lot over to private industry. The three big players in the market are Northern Disposal Systems, Waste Management and Waste Care. Competition is so fierce workers are forbidden to talk or associate with staff from other waste companies. So just what effect will this competition have? Here's what the companies think... *WASTE MANAGEMENT*... already runs the bulk of waste collections, and its 84 hectare landfill in Redvale, Dairy Flat, is due to open this month. [The r]egional operations director... says running both the collection and disposal systems will allow the company to control its own destiny. It's a fast-growing company, buying three to four smaller refuse companies a year. Last year, it made an after tax profit of \$3,646,184 – up 16.8% on the previous year. [The director] wants to see councils get out of waste management. "Private enterprise is a lot more accountable than councils have been and there are greater reasons for doing the job properly. If we don't do a good job, we'll be shut down, so we have a vested interest in making sure we do the best job ever." And councils are too inclined to meddle. "Refuge is a complex subject and I don't think you can just pick it up by sitting around a council chamber at a low level debate and make those sort of decisions." ...*NORTHERN DISPOSAL SYSTEMS* plan to be around for many years. Time on its two

landfills, Greenmount and Rosedale, is running out, but the company intends replacing them with a waste disposal facility... The company evolved out... of the ARC's... refuse department and is now a private company owned by the Auckland Regional Services Trust. It also operates the Pikes Point, Constellation Drive and Devonport transfer stations... NDS is... not involved in waste collection, an area it's keen to be involved in. [The director] says competition means each company is taking less waste and that has put up the cost of operating landfills. Prices to councils will remain static for years. "At the moment, if you're not price-competitive, you're out of the race." NDS posted an after-tax profit of \$1,354,000 in the eight months to June 30... *WASTECARE*, keen to secure its future, is working on plans for a joint partnership with Manukau City Council to run the Whitford tip. The plan includes extending the site and running it another 30 years – a move unpopular with many local residents. Waste Carel[s] managing director... believes waste management should be done by private industry with regional and local councils setting the standards... [The managing director] denies suggestions private industry will ignore waste minimisation... Wastecare is a private company and [its managing director] is not prepared to reveal last year's financial results... *So where do our recyclables go?* ... • *Paper* In Auckland, most paper recycling is done by C[HH] through the Paper Chase collection and its Te Papapa mill... [T]he company recycles around 40,000 tonnes of paper, 25% of the N[Z] total. Now, they have about as much paper as the market can handle and... they are becoming selective about what grades they take. The big problem is glossy paper, the type used in magazines. It's uneconomical to recycle and there is no market for the end product... Apart from that, [the company's recycled fibre manager] says his paper recycling scheme makes money. Paper recycled through the Te Papapa mill becomes corrugated liners for cardboard boxes. Paper through the PRINT PAC-UEB moulded pulp plant in Otara becomes things like egg cartons and hospitality trays... [E]ach... *PAPER CHASE*... truck... is... owner-operated and contracted. An interdenominational trust, Children's Homes United Council, gets \$6 for each tonne collected and last year made \$200,000. Paper Chase runs a free household kerbside paper collection and is now starting to target industry. [The company's k]erbside manager... reckons they'll collect a record 28,000 tonnes of paper this year[but] believes this could double if all councils encouraged recycling... *PAPER RECLAIM*[the]... biggest commercial collectors of waste paper... picked-up 30,000 tonnes last year. But 20% of that was virtually useless... the problem is the low grade. Prices are so poor they don't cover the cost of freight. Paper Reclaim has 16,000 tonnes of low grade paper stockpiled waiting for the market to improve... [T]he stockpile may be dumped if they can't move it. Other grades are still selling and the company is now targeting them... • *Glass* ACI have the market wrapped up. It produces all container glass and operates the major recycling scheme. Last year, ACI recycled 9500 tonnes of glass, about 30% of the total in circulation. ACI[s] recycling manager... says the Penrose furnaces could handle much more and the company aims to collect over 10,000 tonnes this year. It is a financially fragile scheme engineered to match the price of raw materials. At the moment, it breaks even. [The manager] says... "There's always a cost attached to recycling. It just depends where you stand morally." • *Steel*... *STEEL CAN RECYCLING*... is a financial dud... [SCR's] national recycling co-ordinator... says the scheme makes "embarrassing" losses[but] won't reveal the figure. However... the scheme is here to stay, because they are obliged to recycle the cans they put on the market. S[CR] is the national management office for a recycling scheme initiated by members of the Steel Can Association of... [NZ. B]etween 10% and 15% of the three million steel cans used every year... are returned for recycling. Around 255 tonnes of steel cans are collected every month. These are sold to BHP/N[Z] Steel's Glenbrook mill where they are melted down to become, among other things, hot rolled coils or galvanised roofing... [T]here is a good market for recycled steel and Glenbrook could take double the amount currently supplied. With so few councils running kerbside recycling schemes, it's hard to increase the amount collected. SIMS PACIFIC METALS deals in scrap metal and collects around 200,000 tonnes of steel, old whiteware and car bodies which are sold to Pacific Steel in Otahuhu to be melted down and made into a range of steel items... [The company's] operations manager... says the supply of scrap is dwindling as dealers stockpile for export. As a result, S[PM] has to import scrap to meet orders. [The manager] says the company makes a profit, but it is becoming harder to do so. • *Plastic* MILK CORPORATION'S RAP (Return All Plastics) scheme is plagued by problems. It recycles most of the country's plastics through the scheme run in 400 schools. The scheme runs at a huge loss, only one grade of plastic has a market and the situation is likely to get worse. Of around 1300 tonnes collected every year, just 800 tonnes can be recycled. The rest is landfilled or stockpiled. The 800 tonnes is made up of two grades of plastic sent to A[US] for processing. However, A[US] has just announced it won't take one of those grades, just seven months after it refused to take any more mixed plastics. Corporation[s] food division general manager... says the market is saturated. "The A[US]n recycling scheme, just like our own, is getting stronger. Their tonnages, just like ours, are increasing. So I guess they're looking after their own backyard, before they worry about other peoples." The scheme cost the corporation \$1.75 million over three years because the collection costs far outstrip the price paid for plastic. And the price of virgin plastic material has nose-dived. [The manager] says they never expected to make money on the scheme and it's a bill they're prepared to pay. They... want school children to see them as a responsible company. "We are educating the customers of the future." Even so, [the manager] concedes recycling is probably not the right solution for the country's waste management problems. "...but I think at the moment it's a lot better than nothing." C[HH] has had a rough time with plastics. It was forced to shut its recycling plant after losing \$1m a year. The company is now negotiating to sell the plant. CHH is still recycling plastics from Waitakere City and Intermilk. Some is recycled for their own use, the rest is exported to China. The company is still losing on the deal. Plastic recyclers are pinning their hopes on a scheme being developed by NEXUS Packaging Systems to use a layer of recycled plastic in multi-layered Coke and Pepsi bottles. The scheme is revolutionary, as recycled plastic is not normally allowed in food or drink packaging. Nexus[s] technical manager... says... the process will just use carbonated drink bottles, but they hope to eventually use other plastics as well. • *Aluminium* COMALCO N[Z] LIMITED is taking a closer look at how to make its aluminium can recycling scheme pay. [Comalco's p]romotions officer... says the scheme had significant losses over the past four years. Initially, losses were in start-up costs, but the period of grace is over and the scheme must now at least break even. "For recycling to work as a long term option, it has to break even. No one can keep putting money into something that isn't profitable." Last year, Comalco collected 96 million cans. The number is dropping as other scrap metal dealers compete. N[Z] used 430 million cans last year. Around 47% of those were returned. Comalco's cans are processed at Inmetal Trading in Penrose and bundled into 25kg bales for shipment overseas, primarily to A[US] and Japan. Comalco has a remelt furnace in Sydney, where they are made into can stock again and sold to can makers. In Japan, the cans are remelted and used for car parts. N[Z] doesn't use enough aluminium cans to support a local remelt plant. • *Organic* RESOURCE RECOVERY is one of the main recyclers of garden refuse, and[its] director... says they can't work fast enough. The company processes 30 tonnes a day through its operation at Waitakere's Concourse transfer station and the Rosedale landfill. Out of that, it produces 800 cubic metres of compost each week... [I]t's taken three years to build up the business, now breaking even. Contractors pick up material which is put through a mulching machine. The blend is then piled in long rows and left to aerate for anything between 60 days to 6 months before it becomes compost ready for sale... "People are beginning to understand that recycling is important and accepting that it must happen"... • *Oil*: The biggest problem facing DOMINION OIL and its re-refined oil is lack of customer interest. The plant works at just 65% capacity, producing 6 million litres a year. [The t]echnical manager... says they are battling consumer perception that re-refined oil is inferior when the process is sophisticated and the price is similar to virgin oil prices. The other problem is that world virgin oil prices are very low. And refining plants overseas are subsidised making their final product cheaper... [Dominion Oil has] lobbied the Government for some concessions, but without success. The end result is that the process... only just... runs at a profit... *How we dispose of our rubbish* Most Auckland rubbish is dumped in landfills, the most common form of disposal around the world. At the moment, it is believed the most economical way to get rid of our waste. The Auckland landfills are: • *GREENMOUNT in East Tamaki*... [the] region's largest... taking 50% of Auckland's rubbish... Methane gas produced is used to generate electricity. It is the only site capable of taking hazardous waste. The site is

destined to become a golf course. • **ROSEDALE in Browns Bay...** receives around 16% of Auckland's refuse... Methane gas produced is also used for electricity generation... It is expected to reach capacity by the year 2000. • **WHITFORD...** • **HUNUA GORGE...** takes around 5500 tonnes of refuse a year. It is expected to last another 14 years. • **SNELLS BEACH:** ...First valley due to reach capacity in 12 months. Another two valleys are available to fill, [if] the... Rodney District Council... gets approval. • **HELENSVILLE:** ...Due to close in 12 months. • **REDDALE...** Has capacity to take 50% of Auckland's rubbish over the next 30 years. **OLD TIPS:** Many of the 120 in the Auckland region are thought to be leaking chemicals and gas. Councils have given the ARC a priority list of 26 old sites in need of attention, some 70 years old. All will be investigated and treated if necessary. **BALEFILLS:** They differ from a landfill – refuse is baled before being stacked on site. Waitakere is the only council operating one. It is due to close at the end of the year. The council is negotiating an extension. Gas is flared off but the council has called for proposals to use it. - 1993

Auckland primary school children will soon be learning that rubbish in dumps is not just a waste of space. Mercury Energy is developing school kits which explain how the company is generating electricity for 9000 homes from rubbish from landfills – and reducing greenhouse gas emissions at the same time. The school kits, being developed by professional educators, will link in with Auckland City Council's new recycling programme to show that smart thinking can turn rubbish into a resource – and help the environment. Mercury Energy pioneered the landfill gas generation in **N[Z]** which runs on the gas produced by decomposing rubbish. Rubbish is sealed in landfills like the filling in a pie. Wells drilled through the pie crust allow vacuum pumps to suck the gas out of the landfill, which is then dried and filtered before being fed to gas engine generator sets.

...To help raise money for the Cancer Society's Daffodil Day Appeal, **C[HH] Pulp & Paper – Fibre Recycling** co-ordinated the collection of old telephone books to be recycled. People were encouraged to bring their old telephone books into National Bank branches and from there the books were collected and shipped via rail wagons to the Penrose Paper Mill where they were converted into corrugating medium. "The response from the... public was fantastic," explained... Fibre Recycling's Christchurch Sales Representative. "In the past it has not been economical to recycle telephone books because of the collection and transport costs involved, but thanks to a special freight rate and support of many volunteers the project became possible." In total over 134,000 books (approximately 134 tonnes) were collected... includ[ing] telephone books from all over the world... [-] some dating back as far as 1956. A significant amount of money was raised... and plans are already underway for next year's collection.

...Daily, **[User]s** dispose of about 160 million tons of garbage – often sending it to China. Another] method of dealing with the enormous garbage disposal problem has been to build expensive waste incinerators, sometimes using the heat to generate electricity. Unfortunately, [while] the waste disposal problem is solved, an enormous air pollution problem is created... Every 100 tons of trash produces 30 tons of ash, which contains heavy metals and therefore qualifies as hazardous waste. But incineration could be minimized or avoided entirely by aggressive recycling... Recycling also reduces the amount of trash in landfills and generates no pollution; it... decreases the need to mine or harvest raw materials, thereby helping to save the environment... Over [75%] of the **U[Ss']** municipal solid waste is recyclable material. However, implementing recycling on a national scale is difficult. The problem is that some industries refuse to use secondary materials[, and t]here is little economic incentive for recycling... [But the] recycling of waste plastics, which account for about 40[%] of landfill trash, can yield a high-quality fuel oil to reduce the need for petroleum imports. In order to reduce the amount of garbage, our economy, based as it is on overconsumption and waste, would have to be overhauled... Manufacturers should be discouraged from making durable goods that don't last or that waste energy, and encouraged to use recycled materials whenever possible... In addition[, the]... system might be improved by... banning certain unrecyclable plastics and throwaway products...

SOME DAY, [a 60-year-old from] Yorkshire... might be mentioned in the same breath as Edison or Marconi. But for now the amateur inventor is relishing the mystified gasps... [being] elicited for his invention of Starlite, a new plastic that appears to be all but destructible. In one of the first displays of Starlite's heat-dispersing abilities... the shell of an egg... [was] slathered... with a thin coat of Starlite before... a welding torch [was turned] on it. The egg remained uncooked and even cool to touch. Pieces of Starlite have withstood temperatures of several thousand degrees and pulses from a laser. Its composition remains a secret, but [the inventor] insists it contains no exotic materials, and is easily produced. [The inventor] hit upon the formula in 1986, but the world began to take notice only after Britain's Atomic Weapons Establishment conducted tests in 1990. Scientists reported that a piece of Starlite a quarter of a millimetre thick survived simulated nuclear flashes that would have penetrated five-millimetre-thick-stainless steel. Now everybody from a Japanese bank-vault manufacturer to America's NASA is interested. Among Starlite applications envisioned... [is] a new heat shield for the space shuttle.

...[an expert tells us that an MIT forecaster erred in expecting the nose cones of re-entry vehicles to be made of heat-absorbing plastics, and came up with one of the most blatantly wrong forecasts, in expecting houses to be made of plastics. In 1964 the forecaster wrote: "For all but special buildings, the use of stone and brick will largely have disappeared by 1984, and happily we shall have passed out of the grey concrete age." One difficulty was that plastics became expensive. A more interesting snag in the forecast about the disappearance of concrete is the recent discovery that cement can be made stronger by squeezing it, to eliminate cavities. Cement looks like becoming a cheap, low-energy substitute for plastics; ballpoint pens, phonograph records and even springs have recently been made from cement, at Oxford University. Applied to concrete, the discovery will create much tougher and lighter structures. Another 1964 forecast was that humans are likely, in future wars, to stand helplessly by as a struggle rages between robot armies and navies, and air and rocket forces. That forecaster has become vehement about the misuse of engineering in general. "The best jobs for young graduates are all in weaponry," that forecaster says now, and has written *The Engineer's Conscience*, calling for the redirection of technology towards humane ends. His own concerns have shifted away from militaristic robots towards mechanical crutches for the disabled and remote-controlled mining equipment. And that may be why his prediction of domestic robots by 1984 was also wrong. Perhaps domestic robots did not materialise because that forecaster and others in the field were not fanatical enough about their idea of helping the homemaker to share the leisure that high technology could bring. Robots appeared first on the factory floor'.

...**'ROBOTS HAVE** long been stuck on the factory floor, welding car bodies and lifting heavy steel bars. Now they're breaking loose. Service robots, already at work in nuclear plants, are embarking on myriad new activities: taking care of the handicapped and elderly, cleaning offices and hotel rooms, guarding commercial buildings. In laboratories worldwide, hundreds of robots perform such intricate tasks as measuring and mixing minute quantities of chemicals, medications and DNA. The US navy is starting to deploy tethered undersea robotic devices with cutter-arms that snip mines' mooring cables. Other fields open for service robots include support in building and maintaining offshore oil platforms, assembling space stations, preparing fast food, sorting packages for posting and inspecting high-tension electric cables. As with almost any new technology, the major innovators are university labs and small firms – such as Transition's Research Corp. of Connecticut. Its founder is the "father" of industrial robotics and a driving force behind service robots. "The more stultifying, demeaning and downright dangerous human activities will be taken over literally by a new slave class," the founder says. A visitor to Transition's lab may be greeted by a squat, 1m-tall vacuum-cleaner robot rolling past the founder's office. Designed to clean supermarkets, factories and airports, it will sell for about \$30,000 – economical for a business the size of a small shopping mall. Transition's ultimate robot will be a \$77,000 household helper – assuming the company can raise \$33 million to develop it. This high-tech butler would prepare meals, clean, cut grass, even fix appliances. A snag: the lab hasn't worked out how to teach it to make beds. If researchers can get robots to see clearly and to understand where they are, it could make possible seeing-eye robots']...

THERE ARE ROBOTS that can see, hear and even talk. Now **A[US]n** engineers have created one that can smell. The electronic nose has been developed at the School of Microelectronic Engineering at Griffith University, Brisbane, and the Department of Electrical and Computer Systems Engineering at Monash University in Melbourne... Griffith University predicts the robots will revolutionise everything from polishing floors and

distributing office mail to finding victims trapped under earthquake rubble. Smells... can be detected and identified by coating electric sensors with other chemicals that react to that odour... Sniffing robots could deliver goods from a warehouse loading dock after a programmed "leader" robot had laid scented trails to various destinations. A series of simpler robot drones would collect goods and follow the trails like ants.

...ROBOTS THAT SLITHER like snakes and creep like caterpillars could one day help [us] by wriggling into places... [we cannot reach. A] professor of mechanical engineering at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, has developed such a multijointed device. Take exploratory surgery, for instance. The human intestine is between seven and eight metres long, and endoscopes can normally explore only 1.5 metres from each end. [The Pasadena] team built a robot about 17 millimetres in diameter and 25 centimetres long that uses airbags attached to each section to travel along tubes. The bags can be directed to fill or empty, creating traction on the tube's walls at key moments. Researchers have tested a prototype in a pig's intestine. [The professor] envisages snakelike robots... wriggling into the chest to help fit pacemakers... slithering into earthquake-damaged buildings to seek survivors... or... worming into toxic dumps to take samples...

Annually, Americans generate nearly 600 million tons of hazardous waste and wastewater, requiring up to \$80 billion for disposal and treatment. During 1990, the U[S] spent over \$100 billion, about 2[%] of its gross domestic product, on environmental cleanup. Over 1,000 sites on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's national priority list have been slated for cleanup... a number that is likely to double before this century is out... The disposal of mounting piles of waste generated by modern society remains one of the most perverse problems we face in the upcoming years... Landfills in most major cities are overflowing, and few new spaces are available... to put the trash. As the number of dump sites dwindles, the garbage continues to mount, while the growing population keeps on generating waste. Much of the garbage is composed of nonbiodegradable materials, like plastic, and remains in the environment for a long time. Most of the waste is trucked to already overflowing landfills and buried under conditions that do not allow it to deteriorate properly. Because of the high cost of the disposal of toxic wastes on land, coastal metropolitan areas worldwide dump municipal and industrial wastes directly into the sea. Much of the waste that washes to shore... [-] often resulting in beach closings in many parts of the world... [-] comes from... accidental spills by garbage barges, and lack of winds to disperse the flotsam. - 1995

Orange foam has oozed out of the old Devonport landfill site, issuing for several days from a [hu]manhole on a walkway beside mangroves at Ngataranga Park... The 3m-long pile looked like sponge but blew into the air like sawdust, irritating the eyes... said [a local resident], who pioneered a campaign which led to the closure of the landfill 2 1/2 years ago... An A[RC] pollution officer... said: "It looks pretty weird." ...Pollution experts from the A[RC]... and the region's leachate management contractors, Envirowaste Services Ltd, removed the foam... Envirowaste... said it was caused by a pin-hole leak in a leachate removal system's pump station, with the frothing caused by air being sucked into the leachate.

...Pollution experts are still trying to find the cause of a leak from the old Devonport landfill where orange foam is oozing through a containment wall. The problem has settled since last week... but there is still enough oozing to require daily mopping up... The A[RC] says the leachate is "not particularly nasty" but is keen to see the leak contained and stopped from reaching the harbour... The tip was contained and capped when it closed. Its liquid wastes are pumped into the North Shore sewage system.

...[a] Ngaruawahia pharmacist felt uneasy after discovering the volume of contaminants leaching from a tip in the river upstream from the town's water supply. After 10 years... [the pharmacist] lodged his protest against the Horotiu tip the best way [it knew how - the pharmacist] left town... "We're now on tank water supply. I did not want to subject my kids to drinking water from a river that contained leachate." [The pharmacist] is one of many people... who want the Horotiu tip closed when it comes under scrutiny later this year in a resource management consent hearing. [The] Turangawaewae Trust Board manager... said the marae did not want children swimming in leachate and demands the pollution stops. The tip was opened in 1985 by the Hamilton City Council to take rubbish from the city. But now it is becoming a regional dump, with garbage from Thames and Te Awamutu... [and m]anagement say rubbish coming from as far afield as Tauranga and Te Kuiti is likely... In 1994-95, the Horotiu site was taking almost 72,000 tonnes of refuse a year... The tip's riverside location was fortuitous for Perry[Waste Services], the contracting firm that manages the tip. An arm of the firm takes out sand from beside the river. The holes left are replaced by rubbish. But the landfill is regarded by some as a blight on the landscape and a typical example of the wider pollution cloud hanging over the Waikato River... The river rises from Lake Taupo and travels 330km to the Tasman Sea. It is the most intensively used water resource in N[Z], providing... hydro power... drinking water for 19 communities and 300 irrigation systems. There are 2700 permits for the discharge of wastes into the river, mostly dairy shed effluent. Nine communities, including Hamilton and Ngaruawahia, unload treated sewage into the river. [Challenge] Wood Panels, the Wairakei and Ohaaki geothermal power stations, Kinleith Pulp and Paper Mill, the Hautapu and Te Rapa dairy processing plants, Affco's Horotiu meatworks, the Huntly Thermal Power Station, Waikato Woolscourers and Waikato By-Products are major industrial plants that also discharge into the Waikato. The Horotiu landfill never had a water right. When it first opened, no discharge into the river was predicted. Clay linings in the bottom of the tip are supposed to keep all liquid in. Although everyone accepts the tip is leaching some waste into the river, debate rages on the volume... A 1995 Works Consultancy report estimates 19,433,000 litres of leachate a year is lost from the Horotiu landfill. But Perry Waste Service[s] general manager... insisted no leachate has been found downstream from the tip. Perry's has taken steps to improve the control of leachate. The clay liner was thicker, a rubber membrane would be put over the clay as new sections of the tip are commissioned and a pipeline had been constructed to pump leachate to a treatment station in Hamilton. "There would be 30 to 40 tips along the Waikato which have no linings," [the manager volunteers]. The city council remains committed to Horotiu... [and] expects it to operate for many years. "The Horotiu landfill is well engineered and monitored and has a reputation as one of the best landfills of its type in the country[," said the council's general manager, who also] said it could be argued a landfill well away from a river poses as much of an environmental risk. "...it is better [for leachate to] find its way into a river and quickly dilute than contaminate surrounding groundwater for an extended period." The biggest obstacle to the Horotiu landfill is probably Waste Management NZ... [T]he company was taking a keen interest in the Horotiu resource consent and would make a submission. [Waste Management's general manager] said its Redvale tip was established... in line with stringent resource management requirements and it was in the company's "commercial interests" to ensure other refuse operators were up to the same standard. "I believe they should shut it down and be forced to find another location... Waikato has a great range of old quarries which can be used as landfills,"...

Auckland could be generating more domestic and commercial rubbish... [by] the turn of the century... than the region's landfill companies can dispose of under existing operating conditions[- a]lthough waste companies are not saying so publicly... The quantity of waste dumped in the region climbed to 821,000 tonnes... [(of which) 501,000 tonnes or 5.9 tonnes per million dollars of [GDP] for the period... [was] commercial and industrial waste[)]... during the 1995-1996 financial year, a 13[%] increase over the previous year... [L]evels have climbed steadily... since 1992-1993, when about 530,000 tonnes of waste was buried... The good news is that waste minimisation and recycling appear to be making an impact on waste levels... Based on information available to the A[RC], 370,660 tonnes of material was recycled or composted... The Auckland City Council kerbside recycling scheme, celebrating its first anniversary next week, has resulted in more than 7000 tonnes of plastic, glass and cans being collected across the city's 120,000 households. The city council estimated that 60[%] of the... households are taking part in the kerbside scheme and believes the rate is "excellent" by world standards. But the council wants to improve on the number over the next year.

...The Auckland City domestic recycling scheme will celebrate its first birthday with a \$30,000 thank-you for users. Cards bearing a message from [the] mayor... printed on recycled paper, should arrive in 120,000 of the city's letter boxes at the cost of 25 cents each. But do not put them in the blue recycling bins, as paper is not collected. The waste minimisation unit manager for the city... said the... birthday promotion

followed an evaluation of the scheme which found that most users thought it operated well and was cost effective at \$6.40 a household a year... Those [households] who do not use the scheme would not be left out of the birthday celebration; the card doubled as a promotion for the scheme and has the bin info-line phone number on it... [A]lthough a high number of people used the scheme the council wanted more people to participate.

...A survey by the... [ARC estimates that m]ore than 9.65 million tonnes of... waste – about 10 tonnes a person – were generated in Auckland last year... [A]bout 9.5 million tonnes of the total was water-borne industrial trade wastes. This contained the equivalent of 13,390 tonnes of hazardous materials... The water-borne waste is treated in the region's sewage plants while 110,605 tonnes of other hazardous contaminants are put into landfills and 5392 tonnes are incinerated. Hazardous wastes are materials which have the potential to degrade the environment or pose a health risk to humans. A 1990 survey found only 45,000 tonnes of hazardous wastes were generated a year in the region. The latest survey, for the 1995 year, found about 8000 Auckland businesses produced hazardous wastes while 55 were involved in its collection, treatment or transport. The most common types of hazardous wastes dealt with... were from food manufacturing... Greenpeace said the survey results showed there was an urgent need for the Government to act on waste reduction measures before Auckland became a toxic time bomb... [and] the survey underestimated the amount of hazardous wastes generated, because it did not include stormwater discharges or emissions of air pollutants. Greenpeace... urge[d] the Government to bring in a polluter-pays hazard tax aimed at those who generate hazardous or eco-toxic waste... "It is Aucklanders, not the polluters, who are paying the cost of this toxic pollution with their health, polluted harbours and beaches, tainted air and poisoned lands."

...International traders are illegally exporting hazardous wastes into India... Greenpeace has said, "Every Indian port is a floodgate standing open and the world's waste traders know it. India is receiving the worst waste of the wasteful nations on the planet – the effluent of the affluent,"... The traders were defying a ban imposed by a New Delhi court in April on the import of toxic wastes for recycling, reprocessing or dumping in India... [D]ata for the last two years showed that India was unable to monitor and control its borders against the influx of toxic wastes, despite the Government claiming it had the situation under control... [In local news, t]oxic waste in the sediment of waterways needs to be monitored and charted so dangerous chemicals can be screened out in future, say scientists. Not all dumped chemicals are necessarily bad, but those that are can have a long-term effect... Identifying the bad ones has become a major project for a[n]... ecotoxicologist with the... Hamilton... [branch of the] National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research... For the past 10 weeks [the Hamiltonian] has been working with... an ecotoxicologist from Wright State University in Ohio, who has previously worked on similar projects in Spain and Portugal. Together they have developed a method of making toxicity tests in the field, rather than having to take mud samples to a laboratory to check. [The USer], who returns to the U[S] this week, said... "Some of the worst contamination comes from the run-off from city streets... When you get concentrations of people and machinery... zinc, lead, cadmium and copper... are... the sort of toxic run-off you get. It all goes into the waterways and then settles into the mud where it gradually builds up." But in most... countries it was not the present activity that was the problem because much of today's industrial waste was taken care of properly. Rather, the danger was from the toxic waste dumped in the past when there were few laws and almost no understanding of the long-term problems from such material. "Some of our biggest headaches in the U[S] come from trying to clean up these old dump sites... In N[Z] the problem is not as bad as elsewhere in the world... You have fewer people, and a lot of water running through the country and around it... You also have more to protect here. The environment is so high-quality and pristine, and it would be wrong to have it contaminated."

...Clean, green image a load of rubbish THE environmental management and reporting standards of many N[Z] companies... often fail to meet the levels required... overseas[, says]... one of the authors of the Resource Management Act and... now the director of the environmental consulting unit for leading accounting firm KPMG... [- which] sponsors the Environmental Report Award, presented annually to the company that presents the best report on the environmental aspects of its business. This year, the award was won for the second time in a row by Auckland's water supply and waste-water treatment company Watcare Services – which... was the only N[Z] company to produce a full environmental report.

...As early as in 1986... it was estimated that humans took for their own use '25[%] of the photosynthetic product of the earth as a whole (land and sea), and 40[%] of the photosynthetic product on land'... A rule of thumb... is that each ton of final product, eventually to become garbage in many cases, is preceded by five tons of waste generated during manufacturing, and by twenty tons of it during initial resource extraction... During both the [extraction] and the manufacturing, toxic metals are scattered far and wide... In the mid-1980s, Britain and France were using sea dumping for nearly twenty million tons of industrial waste yearly, despite severe lack of knowledge about the environmental effects of the eighty thousand chemicals synthesized industrially... China generates five hundred million tons a year of industrial waste, dumping most of it just outside its cities.

...600 million Chinese – mostly peasants and young students – do not brush their teeth, according to the China Toothpaste Association. China's 1.2 billion people buy an average of fewer than two tubes of toothpaste a year, compared to an average of at least five tubes needed to keep basic oral hygiene.

...All around the world, people are voting with their feet – for China. Officials in China said the country was now making four billion pairs of shoes a year... "...so roughly 80[%] of the world's population wear Chinese-made shoes,"... China accounted for 40[%] of the world's annual shoe output, exporting mainly to Europe and the U[S]. By the way, in]... 1992... a small German company, Foron, develop[ed] the first CFC-free refrigerator technology – dubbed "greenfreeze"... After Greenpeace took the refrigerator to China, three of the four largest makers there... converted to greenfreeze. Yet a switch to greenfreeze technology was dismissed as impossible by every major expert in 1992.

...If you are an asthma sufferer your freezer could be your best friend. Freezing your pillow once a month will kill the house-dust mites that trigger attacks... [T]he practice of putting pillows, and children's soft toys, in the freezer is common in Scandinavian countries where they are more aware of allergies... The mites inhabit nooks and crannies all over the world and... excrete microscopic pellets which get into the inner cavities of the lungs and set up an immunological reaction in people with a predisposition to asthma. Some people are also allergic to the mites themselves but mostly it is the excreta that cause the problem... [The] International Study of Asthma and Allergies in Childhood... found high rates of [house mites] in Wellington homes, as well as in coastal A[US], where asthma incidence is high. The important thing is to get rid of them and... a member of the [study's NZ] team... suggests that washing bed linen in water hotter than 55 deg C will do this. But [a spokesperson for] Unilever disputes the necessity of using hot water. [The spokesperson] says it is more important to remove the dead skin cells that lodge in bedding and provide the mites' food source, and to wash away their faecal matter. This can be done, [the spokesperson] maintains, by regular cold-water washes. - 1996

[‘AN allergy to the faeces of dust mites is the number one trigger for asthma attacks in NZ – it affects about 80% of people with asthma. Since asthma affects 15 to 20% of the NZ population, finding an effective way to control dust mites – the tiny creatures that live in dust – would greatly improve the health of NZers. New research by the Building Research Association of NZ in conjunction with the Asthma Foundation, the Wellington School of Medicine and Victoria University, is leading the world in discovering how to control dust mites. Since the early 80s it has been known that dust mites can't survive in environments below 65% humidity. But the average humidity in many parts of NZ is about 80%. To make matters worse, the BRANZ research has shown that dehumidifiers and vacuum cleaners are not very effective at reaching inside the dust mites' favourite places of habitation – carpets, mattresses, pillows and bedding. These crucial dust-mite reservoirs have their own private micro-climates which keep remarkably constant high temperatures, no matter what the room humidity is. ● ‘Asthma is not giving up its secrets easily. A global study of childhood asthma and allergies involving more than 700,000 children in 155 centres across 56 countries has netted results that present medical thinking is at a loss to explain. Researchers are finding striking differences in the prevalence of asthma in different countries. NZ, with its high incidence (after Britain, NZ is the second wheeziest

nation in the world), is of special interest to the international research team. Other top scorers are AUS and Ireland, followed by North, Central and South American countries. Countries like those in Eastern Europe and Indonesia, Greece, China, India and Ethiopia are relatively asthma-free. A previous theory that genetics played a major role in global asthma patterns has been discarded by the study. While genetics is still important on an individual basis (an asthma sufferer still needs the right genetics for the expression of the disease), there is no correlation between genetic types and occurrence. Hong Kong has a prevalence rate five times higher than Guangzhou. "Two places very close geographically and whose peoples have a similar genetic background." European people who had migrated to AUS showed marked differences from those in Europe. So the evidence suggests that environmental factors, whatever they are, are more powerful than genetic makeup. Some researchers believe that some types of respiratory infections in childhood may be protective and other types of infection may predispose you towards asthma. For example, there is an inverse relationship between tuberculosis rates and asthma prevalence.']

...It was once said, entirely seriously, that cigars soothed asthma, coughs, bronchitis, hay fever and shortness of breath. Allegedly these pungent cheroots gave "immediate relief" and, when used daily, produced a "complete cure." How could this be? The explanation given at the time: "The contraction of the air tubes, which causes tightness of chest and difficulty of breathing, is at once lessened by inhaling the medicinal smoke." Doctors, surely, objected? Well, not especially. The Cigars de Joy, they said, "have been successfully tested and recommended by the medical profession for many years. They are perfectly harmless, and can be smoked by... children, and the most delicate patients, and they are pleasant to use, and contain no substance capable of deranging the system." This is one cure that has, thankfully, not stood the test of time. But ideas of progress should not let pride get the better of us. Asthma still presents an acute paradox. The more we learn about it, the less able we seem to prevent and control it... [A] leading asthma researcher from Southampton, has written that "our knowledge of the underlying mechanisms of asthma has been revolutionised by advances in molecular medicine." Perhaps. But the figures tell a different story. Not one life has been saved by such success. In adults and the elderly, related admissions to hospital and deaths have continued to rise sharply since the 1950s... On June 24, 1994, 50 bolts of lightning struck the ground around London. An hour or so later more than 600 people turned up in 12 casualty departments with acute asthma attacks. Needless to say, no one knows why... But... asthma... is... a disease of the rich. If you travel to rural Ethiopia... it's hard to discover anybody wheezing... The explanation seems to be... [that] in... Britain... and... America[, for]... instance... the... average house... produces about 0.9kg of dirt each month. And millions of dust mites are crawling around your bed waiting to feed off the 0.4kg of skin you shed every year.

...Asthmatics should... cover bed mattresses to reduce exposure to dust mites, according to a major medical study... Foam and cotton mattresses showed higher levels... of dust-mite allergen[s]... than water beds. "Because large numbers of children in our... 16-month study... use these mattresses, public health interventions that aim to reduce exposure to inner-sprung mattresses are important,"... a British medical journal... said. Allergen levels were lower in beds with a layer of foam rubber on top of mattresses or with plastic or rubber sheets. Wool underlays were a major risk. Allergen levels increased with the number of children per household. Cats, dogs or birds made little difference. The study said the home environment might need modifying. This included avoiding high-risk mattresses... reducing bed humidity... "and perhaps the most important strategy, removing carpets."

...The bedbugs are biting – big time. Our homes play host to... dust mites, an asthma sufferer's health enemy number one[– NZ and AUSn]... data shows that exposure to allergens of house dust mites and cats is the main reason for the onset of asthma... But researchers are putting their heads together to cull the staggering army of unwelcome house guests. Scientists from around the world met in Wellington at the weekend to work on a battle plan. A leading... asthma researcher... said the bedroom was the ultimate war zone. "We spend a third of our lives there and most of that time... we have our heads stuck in a pillow." Pillows alone harboured millions of mites which were readily inhaled... The tiny bugs... go about their business completely undetected by most. "There's a desperate need to raise the profile of this whole problem. This is a silent biological pollution disaster,"... To attack the mites, people should lower humidity, regularly wash bedding and get rid of carpets where mites tended to live. Alternatively, frequent vacuuming would cut allergen levels, but actual mite numbers would stay high as they clung to fibres... The carpet industry, important to the country's economy, was looking at mite deterrents. [□ It has been suggested that asthma sufferers remove carpets – but 'if you've ever lived in an apartment building or multi level house with hard wood flooring, you'll understand the value of carpet. Every movement within your house and the neighbours above, beside or below you will be greatly magnified if there's nothing to absorb the noise. And as the trend towards apartment style living in NZ has increased so too has the country undergone a carpet revival. Apart from its ability to add peace, carpet will of course enhance the aesthetics']...

THE noise-absorption and aesthetic qualities of carpet are obvious, but wall-to-wall carpet is also an efficient, cost-effective way to increase the comfort and well-being of building inhabitants. Carpets – particularly on a good-quality underlay – will keep the warmth in heated buildings in winter and the heat out of air-conditioned buildings in summer. Wools of N[Z] has found that carpets with thicker pile understandably have better insulation characteristics. As carpet flattens and wears the insulation effectiveness is reduced. Carpet that is made with a pile fibre that is resilient and resists compression (such as N[Z] wool), is a good choice... Another benefit of wool carpet is that wool assists in stabilising the relative humidity in buildings. Scientific studies have shown that wool fibres actually absorb or release moisture during periods of high or low atmospheric humidity. It is not always practical or desirable to install carpet in all areas of a building... [The] general manager of Hills Floorings Ltd, one of the country's largest carpet retailers... suggests cork tiles as an alternative in areas such as bathrooms and kitchens. While not as good an insulator as carpet, cork tiles are usually 6mm thick and coated with four coats of polyurethane. This is not only easy to maintain but provides a warm and comfortable alternative to harder ceramic tiles. Carpet has an important role to play in the total insulation of a home or building.

...A revolutionary new insulation product developed by a N[Z] company is described as a breakthrough in thermal technology. The new material, Thermobond 100 Series, has been developed over eight years by Waco Coatings and Chemicals. Interest in the new product is coming from around the globe... Among the companies evaluating Thermobond is the Boeing Company, which is assessing the savings in weight and volume over fibreglass-type insulation. Boeing now uses a 7.5cm cavity of fibreglass insulation in its aircraft with the insulation material weighing up to seven tonnes. Using Thermobond, the insulation cavity could be reduced to around 2cm, with the insulation weighing less than a tonne. But it's not just aircraft that can benefit from Thermobond's outstanding thermal and acoustic properties. Typical applications of Thermobond include insulation of homes, water tanks, exhaust pipes, steam pipes, cars, boats, and even pizza delivery boxes... A network of 38 franchised Thermobond applicators is now being developed by the company around the country... Application of Thermobond is by brush, spray or trowel and it will adhere to wood, metal or plastic... The cost is around \$6.50 a sq m and application time is the same as spray painting... It is dry to touch within hours and hard in 21 hours. It can be sanded and painted. Application can be external or internal. "Thermobond is odourless, free of ozone-depleting CFCs, cannot be infested by vermin, and does not require fastening or gluing. It contains no dangerous chemicals and will not aggravate respiratory and other health problems. In the event of a fire, Thermobond will not release dangerous fumes," says... [the] Thermobond sales manager...

HEATER manufacturers are under constant pressure to reduce the running costs of heating or to increase efficiency for environmental reasons. At the same time the insulation industry continues to improve its performance and joinery companies make doors and windows which exclude draughts. This has a flow-on impact on ventilation and comfort levels in the home. Home owners often find that their heating systems are over-efficient for the room they are located in and would like to be able to "move" some of that heat into their bedroom. The Auckland-based distributor of Manrose duct-fan systems, Securi-Max Ltd, now has a range of cost-effective packages to enable home owners to transfer excess heat to remote areas of the home. The system capitalises on the fact that hot air rises and, if undistributed, is held in a pocket under the ceiling. The temperature near ceiling level can be as high as 35 deg C, while the temperature at seated level is a more comfortable level. The Manrose heat-transfer system

can be manually switched on to gently move the over-hot layer of air to a remote room. Alternatively an optional wall-mounted thermostat keeps the air at a pre-set comfort level. As air is removed from the heated room, other air is drawn naturally from adjacent rooms, hence warm, dry air is being circulated throughout the home. Depending on the kit purchased, the system can transfer heat to from one to three rooms.

...HEAT pump is the generic name... given to home or residential air conditioning, which heat as well as cool. They use the same technology as a domestic refrigerator and produce heat by “transferring” it from one area to another. However, whereas a fridge transfers heat from inside its cold compartment to the outside, a heat pump can transfer heat both into and out of the home. In this way it produces nearly three times more heat than a normal electric heater. It also increases the heating power available from a standard wall socket. A normal electric heater can produce a maximum of 2.4kW from a wall socket – a heat pump produces about 7.0kW. This is still paid for at the 2.4kW price – hence... 4 or 5kW of “free home heating.” Heat pumps are available in many options... Prices can be from... \$3000 installed for a small split system to \$10,000 or more for a fully-ducted central heating system... Overseas experience has shown that... installing one improves the resale value of any home... A heat pump is effectively five appliances in one... [-] a heater for winter, a cooler for summer, a circulating fan for autumn and spring, a dehumidifier and an air filter. This means year-round comfort and reduced mould and condensation. This is beneficial for most occupants but especially... asthmatics and those with respiratory conditions... The same technology is now also used to heat water... Carrier Air Conditioning... has developed a hot water pump that can be installed into existing or new hot water systems. The unit costs... \$2000 installed but can save... 50[%] in water-heating costs.

...[‘HOT WATER FROM THIN AIR Imagine a 24 hour day continuous hot water supply that only needs as little as one quarter of the energy of a conventional water heater, and provides hot water much faster than an equivalent electric system. By reversing the heat pump principle the Quantum System draws heat directly from nature’s elements – and all the electricity it needs is enough to run its pump. What’s more, Quantum is simple, compact, clean and reliable. Quantum has no elements and needs no specific wiring.’ It’s ‘extraordinary. They’re creating hot water by extracting heat literally out of thin air.’]

...REMEMBER the sudden warmth when you step from the shade into the rays of the sun on a winter’s morning? Feel it every day when you walk through the front door into your home, by making a move to radiant floor heating. This is a system which uses warm water to heat up the entire house. A manufacturer of the system, Florad Underfloor Heating NZ Ltd, claims it is more efficient than other heating methods. Radiant heating systems, it says, make rooms warm by heating the walls, floors and furniture, not the air. That translates into health and cost advantages. The elimination of dampness from the floors, removes the environment in which dust mites, mildew and other bugs thrive. Sinus passages get it easy with a radiant floor system – convection-based air-heating methods... quickly dry out the eyes, nose and throat. Heating the air means moving it but the movement of air causes greater heat losses, requiring the costly heating of more air. [Furthermore, t]he dust circulates, making dust allergies worse. The Florad system uses a series of pipes underfoot. Water heated to about 45 deg C is pumped through the pipes, transferring heat to the floor as it goes. Just about any method can be used to heat the water to that temperature – gas, electricity, diesel, heat pump, solid fuel burners, or wetback. Florad designs and engineers each system to suit the regional climatic conditions. This ensures that there is enough tube in the floor and that the water temperatures required will not be too high. For new homes the pipes can be planted in the concrete foundations. With existing homes they can be fitted to the underside of a wooden floor which can then be left bare or covered. The key to a wooden floor-heating system is foil-faced insulation under the heating tubes. The foil reflects the radiant wave back through the floor, increasing the efficiency of the system by 50[%]. What you get is a heating system you can feel safe with – no hot spots that could harm children. Nor are there... wall-hung radiators or vents to get in the way of furniture. Florad says it has the only floor-heating system approved by the Building Research Association... The BRANZ mark shows that the system has passed rigorous independent testing. There is a 20-year guarantee... [■ BRANZ has yet to comment on recent reports stating h]ealth officials are concerned that a marked increase in cases of potentially fatal lead poisoning points to a growing ignorance about the illness. The Waikato Medical Officer of Health... said 13 cases of the poisoning – a notifiable illness – were reported last year. That was a “marked jump” from the previous year... The large increase indicated that people were not aware of the danger associated with lead-based paint.

...Lead found in a popular brand of children’s paint is up to 70 times above the safe legal limit, the Ministry of Health says. The Maries oil or water colour paints, sold in lead tubes, have been on the market for several years and sold widely through at least two major retail chains. The ministry confirmed yesterday that it had tested the paints only after someone noticed they were being promoted in back-to-school publicity campaigns. Ordering a recall of the paints would be difficult as they had been in use so long, the ministry said. Importers and distributors had agreed, however, to voluntarily withdraw the products from sale. The ministry’s senior adviser in health protection... said paint tubes made of lead had been used for about 40 years. Most brands were expensive... and sales were targeted at artists and other specialist users[, but] Maries... paints were cheap and highly likely to be used by children. Those aged under six, including unborn infants, were particularly sensitive to exposure to lead... “Small amounts... can cause hyperactivity... learning and behaviour disorders, impaired hearing and delayed mental development.” People who found Maries paints in their home should throw them out because of the risk of lead poisoning... They could be disposed of with the household rubbish... [T]he ministry would test other brands of paint stored in lead tubes to ensure they complied with legal limits.

...Health officials are concerned not only about what is on our plates, but what sort of plates we use. Fresh warnings have been sent out to tableware importers about ceramic goods with dangerous lead levels which may leach from poor glazing... Lead is often used in ceramics to enhance colours and glazing. New types and designs of imported ceramics were tested before being allowed on our shelves and scored against acceptable lead levels. Ceramic goods from countries such as A[US], Canada, Japan, Britain and the U[S] were exempt from testing, although the policy was under review... [after] consignments of Chinese tableware, totalling about 100,000 pieces[, were]... rejected in past weeks after failing border surveillance checks... The Public Health national coordinator of imported products... said potentially dangerous ceramics were being picked up about every [3] months. Most... were arriving from Asia, although Italian goods had come under close scrutiny since a consignment was rejected this year... [S]ome... Italian ceramics had imperfections in the glazing, called pinholes. Acidic type food... could eat into the glazing and bring the lead out... The other danger was that food particles could lodge in... pinholes and bacteria would contaminate other foods... [Incidentally, Mattel has been] forced to recall its popular motorised Cabbage Patch Snacktime Kids’ Doll because of its tendency to chomp on children’s hair and not let go.

...The Ministry of Consumer Affairs has welcomed the maker’s recall of a N[Z]-made wooden child’s rattle, Dumbbell. It has parts that could choke children... [In related news,] Plunket is warning parents to beware of old baby equipment after news of a second infant being admitted to hospital when a spring on a baby-bouncer broke... and gouged his head. In a letter in the parenting magazine *Little Treasures*, [the Auckland infant’s] mother said only luck prevented a serious injury. Her letter coincides with the admission to Waikato Hospital on Monday of a Tokoroa baby... after a bouncer spring became embedded in her head... Her family... had modified the bouncer, and that may have caused the accident... [The] Auckland mother... bought her bouncer secondhand. It was at least seven years old. A nurse specialist for Plunket... urged parents to have older equipment checked for safety. “The issue goes beyond bouncers. It is the buying of secondhand furniture, like car seats and cot mattresses.” [The nurse] urged parents to buy new articles if possible, because the safety of older products could not be guaranteed. For example, second owners of bouncers would not know if a previous owner had exceeded the recommended maximum weight. Bouncers did not enhance a baby’s development and infants in them should be supervised at all times... “There is a temptation to stick them in and then go and get a whole bunch of stuff done.”

...The Ministry of Consumer Affairs lacks the resources to adequately address child safety issues, says Safekids. A spokes[person] for the child safety agency said yesterday that the ministry was so stretched it failed to give some issues the importance they deserved. On the first day of

Kidsafe Week, [the spokesperson] said the high child injury rate from accidents involving supermarket trolleys was one issue the ministry had not addressed. [The spokesperson] did, however, welcome the ministry's move... to organise a forum next month to discuss child product safety issues. The general manager of the ministry... said the ministry could not be funded to cover every safety issue. The ministry had given other matters priority over supermarket trolley safety. The... debate over mandatory versus voluntary standards for strollers... and the... issue of introducing child-proof cigarette lighters... were considered to be more important, [the manager said. ● 'The latest show on at Waitakere College is sure to fire the sympathies of its audience. *The Match Girls* takes a step back into British history, to the first successful strike by unskilled workers. Their claims of "white slavery" and "phossy jaw" – teeth and jawbones rotten from working with the phosphorus used to make matches – brought the strikers widespread publicity. The 1888 strike brought the girls better wages and encouraged other workers to act to improve their conditions.'

...*Question*: What is the origin of the matchstick and how did safety matches come to be? *Answer*: An alchemist discovered phosphorous – the chemical needed to create flame – in 1669, but it was not until 1680 that an English physicist named Robert Boyle devised a small piece of paper coated with phosphorous. Boyle had a small splinter of wood with sulphur on it. When the wood was drawn through the paper it burst into flames. In 1830, a French chemist called Charles Sauria created an "odourless match", but they made people sick with a condition called "possy jaw". In 1855, safety matches were patented by Johan Edvard Lundstrom of Sweden. Lundstrom put red phosphorous on the sandpaper outside the box and the other ingredients on the match head, solving the smell problem. In 1889, Joshua Pusey invented the matchbook. American company the Diamond Match Company bought it for \$4000 in 1896. But matches were still poisonous and by 1910 there was a worldwide push to ban the use of them. Diamond invented the first non-poisonous match made out of sesquisulfide of phosphorous. On January 11, 1911 they released the patent at the request of US President William H Taft.'

... 'An electric blanket has been blamed for a house fire in Kelston. Firefighters from Avondale, Glen Eden and Titirangi had to battle through thick black smoke to reach the blaze in the back bedroom of the house on Archibald Rd. No one was in the house and the fire was quickly extinguished. A recent Fire Service campaign revealed that one in 5 electric blankets were unsafe. A Titirangi Station officer says blankets should be tested annually, used flat without creases, secured firmly and stored rolled up. They should be cleaned according to the manufacturer's instructions, leads should be uncoiled and children should always be supervised when the blanket is turned on. "Electric blankets are a common cause of avoidable house fires easily prevented by taking these precautions," the officer said, adding that fumes from a burning mattress can be fatal.' By the way, 'Air NZ has advised customers holding mugs from domestic flights not to put them into the microwave, after 3 melted yesterday. The mugs are labelled microwave-safe and 1.2 million have been given out.'

...a few days ago] **The Warehouse... recalled the Lilo 3m by 3m Hyper tent as it had faulty stitching and poles... [Y]esterday... the retail chain... recalled the Power Supply brand of double plug adaptors, as they had a mechanical fault... The Warehouse warned those who had bought the products not to use them, but to return them for a full refund... It also recalled Field of Flowers 25cm gold taper candles after incidents of the flame suddenly increasing in size... [In international news, 12] people... were killed... yesterday when a series of explosions in a fireworks market set off an intense fire in Ecuador's largest city, Guayaquil... Among the dead were a three-month-old boy and a three-year-old girl.**

... '[An indoor fireworks display ignited a wooden stage yesterday at an overcrowded dance club in Brazil, setting off a blaze that killed at least six people and injured 340 others. Fire officials in the city of Belo Horizonte said the club had no working fire extinguishers and no emergency exit. 1500 people were inside, double its capacity. The flames spread rapidly, and panicking club-goers tried to escape through the roof. But part of it collapsed on to others inside.'

... 'a fireworks display turned to tragedy when fireworks struck a high-voltage cable which crashed onto a crowd enjoying a festival killing 35 people. The 10,000-volt cable slashed through about 1500 people celebrating the 456th anniversary of Peru's second city, Arequipa. Charred bodies lay next to a burning pile where the cable hit one of the city's bridges. Witnesses and rescue workers said many people under the bridge continued celebrating after the tragedy, assuming the noise came from the fireworks and the crowd above. Adding to the panic in Arequipa there was a tremor measuring 4.0 on the Richter scale.'

... 'At least 80 people died and more than 200 were injured in a blaze sparked by an explosion in a fireworks store in a historic district of the Peruvian capital Lima. Charred bodies were piled on debris-strewn streets in the popular shopping area as firefighters battled the inferno on Saturday night (Peruvian time). At least three buildings were destroyed. Peru's President has declared two days of national mourning. Radio reports said people trapped on rooftops called in vain for help. "I tried to help, but unfortunately lots of people stayed to try to save their belongings and died," said a tearful merchant. Lima's fire chief said 440 firefighters fought the blaze, which was the worst the fire chief had seen in 40 years. Firefighters said temperatures inside the buildings could have reached 600 degrees.'

... 'Thousands of children in the Philippines are forced to work in dangerous, squalid conditions making firecrackers for New Year celebrations. It is illegal for youths aged under 15 to work, but children as young as 4 are being maimed or killed by explosions in makeshift backyard factories. The pyrotechnics business in the Philippines is still largely a cottage industry. Although the Government legalised the making of firecrackers in 1992 in an attempt to control and tax the industry, many "factories" are unlicensed. More importantly, there is no quality control and knowledge of safety procedures. Traditionally, Filipinos let off millions of firecrackers on New Year's Eve to herald a prosperous New Year and ward off evil spirits. Casualties from improper use are high. Last Christmas the Department of Health recorded 611 injuries, some the result of stray bullets fired into the air by police and security guards.'

... a 'Mexican security guard had just dragged two people from the wreckage of a mammoth fireworks explosion when a second blast catapulted him into the asphalt 6m away. The series of explosions – at least three – tore through a busy area of street stalls and shops near a downtown bus station in Celaya yesterday, killing 56 people and injuring 348. Many were rescuers like the 21-year-old guard, who rushed to help the victims. The blast is thought to have started in the back of a candy-store where fireworks were sold, then more explosions were set off, possibly from gas tanks in nearby restaurants or other firework stashes.'

... 'A fireworks explosion that devastated a school fete and killed an 11-year-old girl was described by witnesses as "like an atomic bomb blast." Chunks of metal the size of cellphones were found 600m away and thousands of smaller pieces landed as far as 2km from the school grounds. Holy Spirit Primary School student Dominique Baxendell died, two people were critically injured and seven others suffered shrapnel wounds in the explosion that rocked the north Brisbane suburb of Bray Park on Saturday night. The fireworks sponsor, a father in his 30s with children at the school, had part of his right leg blown off when the display toppled over and sprayed shrapnel over a crowd of 2000. Police took hundreds of witness accounts in the school hall and guarded the site overnight before a team of 20 scientific and dog squad officers arrived early yesterday to begin mapping the spread of the shrapnel. State Emergency Services volunteers arrived to scour the school's grounds for pieces of shrapnel. Police have called on residents to search their yards for the metal, which is needed to piece together what went wrong. The school was expected to reopen today, but classes might be held elsewhere while investigations continued.'

... 'An explosion in a Dutch fireworks warehouse has killed at least 20 people, including two fire officers, and injured more than 300 others. Many of the victims had been drawn out of their homes in Enschede to watch fireworks set off by an earlier, smaller explosion. They died when a huge red fireball hurled a blast wave across the town. Late yesterday emergency workers were sifting through rubble in a residential area that resembled a war zone, strewn with the blackened, twisted hulks of cars and piles of bricks where neat homes once stood. "People are shocked, confused," said a spokesperson for the town of 145,000. The tragic chain of events began when a fire outside a warehouse owned by the S.E. Fireworks company spread to the storage area, which held about 100 tonnes of fireworks, touching off the explosions. It was not clear if the fire was linked to other recent blazes in Enschede that officials suspect were arson. The blast, which was heard in nearby towns, gouged huge gashes in apartment buildings and shattered windows. Slabs of concrete blocked roads, and a brewery was set on fire. 2000 people were evacuated from the area, which is sealed off. It wasn't known last night when they would

be allowed to return. Police sealed off a 700m radius around the blast centre and asked shopkeepers to help prevent any threat of looting. The State Secretary at the Dutch Interior Ministry praised the help German emergency services provided and said it was too early to determine the cause of the disaster. Television reports said Enschede residents were asking how authorities had allowed the fireworks warehouse to be located in the middle of a residential area.'

...Firefighters had to] **douse trailers full of fireworks at a... warehouse in... Tennessee, after an explosion... killed four people and injured... several others. Witness[es]... said the explosion had... strewn hundreds of live shells over several blocks... blasted [a guy] out of a church basement... and... blown out... windows in a car dealership...** [1.5 miles away. Incidentally, t]he chore of cleaning windows may soon be history. Japanese scientists are close to fulfilling the dream of all householders – a self-cleaning windowpane. A special coating on the glass stops dirt sticking to it. The modified surface no longer mists over, even when humidity is high. The... coating which gives glass this astonishing characteristic is titanium dioxide. A thin film of the substance seals the pane. If ultraviolet rays fall on the glass, the coating begins to work. The surface then bonds with both water and oil. Neither of the fluids forms drops, but spreads evenly. The result is that every rain shower then effortlessly washes dirt particles down the pane.

...['Self-cleaning glass is no longer an impossible dream following Pilkington NZ's unveiling of the world's first self-cleaning glass, Pilkington Activ Self-Cleaning Glass – which uses the forces of nature to keep the glass free from organic dirt, delivering the practical benefit of less cleaning and more leisure time to do the things you want to do, as well as the environmental benefit of eliminating the need to use detergents and bucket-loads of water in window washing. "Anyone who has spent a weekend cleaning windows with a messy squeegee and bucket in hand will know what a laborious, time-consuming task it is – it's on almost everyone's most hated chores list," said Pilkington NZ's general manager. "In addition to its self-cleaning properties, Pilkington Activ can be further processed to offer all the benefits of a safety glass, whilst eliminating the occupational hazard of balancing on ladders when cleaning hard-to-reach windows." Pilkington Activ's self-cleaning action is continuous and will last the life of the window. "It's not that you'll never have to clean your windows again – windows will still need to be cleaned on the inside and hosed down on the outside during dry weather spells – but the frequency and amount of time cleaning windows will decrease significantly." Pilkington Activ can also be incorporated into Insulated Glass Units to provide energy efficiency.'

...'*Choosing efficient windows* Up to 40% of a home's energy is lost through the windows. Improving energy performance of the window system reduces heating and cooling costs, creating a more comfortable home and reducing energy consumption. To help people choose the most efficient windows, the Window Association of NZ has launched a Window Efficiency Rating System (WERS). Government supported, it uses a simple 5-star system to indicate how various window frame and glass options will perform. WERS advises on the best windows to use for keeping houses warm in winter and cool in summer, and for minimising fading damage. WERS uses computer simulation, based on real data gathered in scientific testing, to reflect changes in performance in the key areas of heating, cooling and fading. The calculations are made using software developed by BRANZ. WERS covers different frame materials – aluminium, timber, PVC etc – and different glazing types such as single or double-glazing and tinted glass. WERS applies to any glazed exterior joinery in the home, such as windows and glass doors. The average house has 20 windows and doors. Generally, locally made glazing products perform well because they are designed for NZ conditions. However, pure performance is only part of the story. Positioning for the sun, management of heat and cold, noise, condensation and cost factors also need to be considered. Understanding the performance trade-off and cost ramifications of different frame types and glass and glazing options helps make an informed decision which will best suit the specific circumstances. Purchasers can ask the supplier for the WERS star rating for the different options. A Rating Certificate and a schedule outlining the star rating for each window type will be issued on request. It will set out a licence number and the star rating for cooling, heating and fading. The certificate will include a brief description of the makeup of the window or door.')

...The idea of creating a pull-down-and-roll-up insect screen for windows or doors solves several problems posed by conventional screens. According to Rollo Screen NZ Ltd, there is no need to unhook or peel back its screen to open or close the window. The screen simply rolls away and when in use it is almost unnoticeable... The Italian-designed product is made from materials such as ultra-violet-resistant carbon fibre, aluminium and PVC... [While on the topic of insect screens, early] last year... scientists from Harvard and Johns Hopkins University confirmed fears that global warming could result in fatal, mosquito-borne diseases spreading to countries such as N[Z].

...A report for the Ministry of Health by an A[US]n doctor said a mosquito invasion was inevitable, unless the Government spent between \$1[million] and \$2 million a year to prevent them from entering the country... Auckland was at the greatest risk, with the high turnover of air and port cargo, large numbers of travellers and a growing population that included many Polynesians... The report said the expenditure should be regarded as a necessary insurance policy. Exotic mosquitoes had cost other countries millions... in health costs and damage to tourism. It called the present mosquito surveillance programme rudimentary and non-audited, noted a general lack of expertise, and said the lack of inspections for ocean-going yachts was a "glaring deficiency." It [also said NZ] authorities were not complying fully with the International Health Regulations to which they were a signatory... [The] head of the Queensland Institute of Medical Research mosquito control laboratory... has a reputation for accurately predicting mosquito developments. In 1980 his institute predicted... dengue fever would enter A[US] and it arrived the next year. In 1988 the virus-carrying Asian tiger mosquito entered A[US] in imported tyres after [the doctor]... warned that tighter border control was needed over such tyres.

...Indian scientists say they have isolated a fungus found in rice paddies that could be used to fight malaria and other mosquito-borne diseases... the Malaria Research Centre in the southern territory of Goa, says the fungus, named MRC-367, can kill mosquito larvae in three hours. "It causes 100[%] mortality,"... Tests are being conducted to make sure the fungus is safe for non-targeted organisms like fish before studies are conducted.

...Office workers walking over London Bridge on Monday were unaware of one of nature's wonders taking place in the waters below. Millions of tiny sea bass swam upstream in a sight not seen since the Industrial Revolution, according to environmental experts. This commercially important fish species was once common in the Thames, but pollution and sewage killed off stocks. It has only returned recently because of a clean-up campaign... The fish will probably swim as far as Teddington in West London and stay in the river until autumn. Then they will swim back to the Thames Estuary and out to sea... [In local news, a] Waikato farmer and his sharemilker have been fined a total of \$9500 for discharging raw effluent into a tributary of the Rotohouhou Stream... [The pair] pleaded guilty to charges levelled by Environment Waikato.

...A discharge of food-processing waste... into a Wiri creek from a Bluebird Foods factory [has]resulted in the company being fined \$5000... [plus court] costs of more than \$2500... Bluebird... pleaded guilty to discharging the waste into a tributary of the Puhinui Stream[, which]... flows into the Manukau Harbour. The offence, which occurred in December last year, was dealt with... in the Auckland District Court after the Auckland Regional Council decided to prosecute. In May last year, after vegetable oil flowed into the tributary... council officers asked the company to take action to prevent waste entering the stormwater system. Officers inspected the site in September and saw no evidence of contingency plans or equipment to prevent such spills happening again. The council wrote to the company in October asking that improvements be carried out.

...['Challenge Concrete and Infrastructure has been fined \$29,000 for a series of toxic discharges into the Papakura stream which flows into the Manukau Harbour. All signs of aquatic life were extinguished in the stream after the Challenge subsidiary, Humes Pipeline Systems, polluted it to such an extent that investigating officers could not find even the bodies of dead fish or eels. A tributary of Hayes Creek at Papakura was found to be completely lifeless and sterile after highly alkaline wastewater drained into it throughout the last two years. In the Auckland District Court, a judge said the events were easily foreseeable and easily preventable, and the prosecution should be a warning to all businesses. A pollution control officer said yesterday that although it was pleased with the outcome, the case – which was, in his opinion, one of the worse in the 1000 complaints received annually in Auckland – had taken six months of his time, adding that his division was over-worked and understaffed. "Auckland has 14,000 businesses which could potentially pollute the

environment but there are only nine pollution control officers – we are up against it.” Pollution control officers visited the Hayes Creek site three times, between February and August last year, after a consultant working on a nearby site reported finding the stream heavily discoloured with what appeared to be concrete sediment. On the first visit, the officers found concrete wastewater from Humes’ settling pond system had been deliberately diverted from the recycling ponds into the stormwater system. The ARC said this was because the process was not coping with the amount of waste being produced on the site. “The second offence involved a break in a wastewater pipe, discharging waste into the ground and stormwater drain. The company had no detection or prevention system for such an incident. ARC officers revisited the site at the request of the company, having been assured that the stormwater system was blocked off allowing no material to leave the site. However, ARC staff found that concrete was being waterblasted off pipes, and stormwater drains were ineffectively blocked with sand-filled rice bags.” In June last year, Firth Industries – another division of Challenge Concrete and Infrastructure – was fined \$27,000 for discharging wastewater into the Henderson Creek in May and July of the previous year. Firth was also prosecuted five years ago for illegal discharges from a site in Takanini. The chief financial officer for Challenge Building said yesterday the company regretted what had happened at Papakura. Asked if three prosecutions of Challenge concrete companies in five years was an acceptable record, it said Challenge took environmental issues seriously and had taken steps to ensure there were no further problems. ■’] **Greenpeace and Tasman Pulp and Paper are back at loggerheads over discharges from the company’s Kawerau mill into the polluted Tarawera River in the eastern Bay of Plenty.** Greenpeace activists began erecting signs early yesterday along the banks of the river and at the mouth at Matata warning against eating fish... because the water contained cancer-causing dioxin... The Tasman community relations manager... said it was becoming increasingly difficult for Greenpeace to substantiate its wild claims with facts[, but Greenpeace]... said the... conclusions were from International Association for the Registration of Cancer scientists evaluating carcinogenic risks to humans.

...Residents living near the Tarawera River hope a hearing starting today will finally see the end to pollution that has turned its water from “gin clear to black liquor.” [Challenge’s]Tasman Pulp and Paper [mill and CHH’s Kawerau Tissue] mill... want resource consent to continue discharging about 260,000 cu m of treated effluent each day into the river, including organochlorines that can cause cancer. By comparison, Auckland’s Mangere sewage treatment works receives 300,000 cu m of waste a day. Greenpeace has likened the contamination to the effect of a leaking nuclear power plant... Since the Resource Management Act was passed six years ago, the mills have continued discharging into the river under special exemptions. The hearing of the applications, filed two years ago, has been delayed while the council completed its draft Tarawera River plan containing policies for its management. Council staff have recommended granting consents with conditions aimed at reducing the impact of the discharges and reducing the toxicity of the discharges within 15 years... The river at the Tasman mill is... black, with flecks of foam, and stays that way until it meets the sea... [An old local, who lives] near the river, [and whose family has] for nearly half a century spearheaded a fight to have it cleaned up... remembers the river differently. When... a boy, [the local] swam in the river, and in a lake nearby. His whanau ate eel and morara (carp) and whitebait were plentiful... But while others share their views, the hearing has attracted only 14 submissions. A campaigner against the pollution for 17 years... said local campaigners had dropped by the wayside. “I don’t think it’s because they’re happy with the consultation process. I think it’s because they don’t see any commitment and don’t get any satisfaction.” Tasman’s community relations manager... said the low number of submissions was “a reflection of how things have changed.” Opponents had based their arguments on rhetoric and philosophy. This week, [the manager] claimed, the facts would be laid before the council.

...The cover of th[e]... 1997 TASMAN PULP AND PAPER COMPANY LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT... consists of kraft (chemical) pulp, produced by using residual Radiata Pine from managed plantation forests, and bleached using Tasman’s ECF (elemental chlorine free) process. By 1998 all of Tasman’s bleached pulp and paper will be produced using this... process... *Environmental Review [of] Achievements 1987 – 1997*: ENVIRONMENTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE: \$70.1 million PLUS Annual Ongoing Cost of Environmental Control: \$8.0 million... * Bleaching gas emissions virtually eliminated... [(Total Air Emissions 3,344 t/day Comprising: Water Vapour 89.786% CO2 10.17% Particulate 0.04% TRS 0.004%)]... * River discharge colour reduced by 60% * Odour emissions reduced by more than 95%... * Dioxin (toxin equivalent) in effluent reduced by 95% from levels already regarded internationally as below measurement levels. * Water use reduced by 27% over the last three years to an average of 150 million litres a day... [* Other chemicals used are] Dyes 13.7kg/day Fillers 640kg/day Retention Aids 220kg/day Sulphuric Acid 16t/day Caustic Soda 14t/day Sodium Chlorate 1t/day Salt 55t/day Burnt Lime 1.6t/day Lime Rock 41t/day Sodium Sulphate/Carbonate 21t/day... Tasman’s solid waste management plan... covers... disposal of hazardous wastes, and operation of the primary solid lagoon in the area adjacent to the waste water treatment plant. Tasman operates its own landfill, where in early 1996 it commenced a programme to recover recyclable material for use by other parties. The 1996 acquisition of a solid waste compactor at a cost of \$478,000 has assisted in maximising landfill utilisation and efficiency... Work is proceeding on integrating environmental requirements into Tasman’s existing management systems, including the widely applied quality system, ISO 9002... Recent audits have included systems consistent with those required by the international ISO 14001 environmental management system standard... Information about Tasman’s environmental policies and performance is willingly provided to customers wishing to ensure compliance with their own environmental policies, and Tasman is committed to consultation with community groups, environmental regulators and its own employees, who now largely work in a structure of self-managed teams... Tasman’s Environmental Department, which has a dedicated manager reporting directly to the Director of Operations, has a team of 10 people committed to environmental monitoring, ongoing improvement projects and maintaining a high level of awareness and understanding of international trends and developments... Approximately 1200 people are employed by Tasman at its Kawerau mill, which is one of N[Z]’s largest industrial sites. A further 130 people are employed at offices in Sydney and Auckland, and at the company’s Mt Maunganui warehouse and shipping operation. Tasman’s... significance is reflected in a 1995 update of a 1993 study of Tasman’s national and regional economic impact, carried out by the University of Waikato. The 1995 study showed that with an employment multiplier of 5.87... [–] the Tasman operation generated 4.87 jobs nationally for each employee at its Kawerau mill... [–] Tasman, as a one-company sector, ranked sixth overall in a listing on N[Z]’s most valuable employment sectors, and third in a listing of non-agricultural sectors. The study also showed that... for each dollar paid to a Tasman employee, an income of \$2.50 was generated in the pay packets of every other working N[Z]er. Tasman’s Kawerau mill produces for sale two product lines. One of these is... chemical woodpulp, which is... sold in a variety of bleached and unbleached grades, mainly in Australasia but also in North America. The other product line is newsprint, and a range of paper grades related to it. Tasman produces all of N[Z]’s newsprint and telephone directory paper requirements and supplies approximately 30% of the AUS[n] market, the balance of production being exported throughout Asia and the South Pacific. In its 1996/97 financial year Tasman produced for market 399,000 tonnes of newsprint, directory paper and enhanced paper grades, and 151,000 tonnes of Kraft pulp. The planned production figures for the 1997/98 financial year are 408,000 tonnes and 213,000 tonnes of paper and pulp respectively... Tasman’s application for a permit to take water from and discharge into the Tarawera River [is at present being] heard by a panel of commissioners along with applications for the adjacent C[HH] Tissue mill and by the Crown for geothermal discharges.

...Tasman Pulp and Paper put its case bluntly to the Bay of Plenty Regional Council yesterday: its Kawerau mill would face shutdowns if forced to meet new environmental standards... [S]ome standards proposed by Environment BOP... were unreasonable... [for a mill that] produces about 1[%] of the world’s paper... and contributes nearly 1[%] to the NZ] economy. But it also discharges about 160,000 cu m of industrial waste into the [Tarawera River] a day, about 10[%] of its flow... Environmentalists call the river the Black Drain... The managing director... said Tasman’s turnover of about \$570 million and after-tax profit of... \$32 million would fall well short of the target return of its owner... Challenge, by a good margin for the year... [But the] colour issue had a high profile and the company had “aggressive plans” to make further reductions at high cost.

...Improvements planned by Tasman... for its Kawerau mill will not eliminate potentially harmful organochlorines from discharges, says Greenpeace... While Tasman proposed switching to a production process known as elemental chlorine free next year, reducing its organochlorine output, the chemicals would still be produced... A [Greenpeace spokesperson]... said Tasman should adopt a totally chlorine free (TCF) process. Tasman is not convinced, adopting a similar stance to Environment B[OP] staff who conclude there is no environmental justification for converting to TCF. A regional council witness... of the Institute of Environmental Science and Research, said it was safe to eat eels from the Tarawera. A person consuming a 31g slither of eel every day for a lifetime would not exceed the tolerable intake of dioxin. [Incidentally, 'the NZ-born head of inorganic chemistry at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, has won the US President's Green Chemistry Challenge Award – the highest US award for environmentally friendly science – after 20 years spent trying to replace chlorine agents with the "greener" hydrogen peroxide. The professor and colleagues developed catalysts which help the process. Hydrogen peroxide, which scientists worldwide would ideally like to see all pulp and paper mills use for bleaching, can work without a catalyst but is extremely energy intensive. Using a catalyst, bleaching pulp with hydrogen peroxide has the potential to shorten the process from six hours to one and reduce the temperature needed from 90°C to 50, making it environmentally more friendly and economically viable through big savings in energy costs. The team should be ready to conduct pilot programmes at NZ pulp and paper mills in two years.']

...The Ministry for the Environment yesterday released a preliminary list of toxic wastes to be given top priority for treatment or phasing out... In the top 12... on the list of 50 wastes identified were: aluminium wastes which contain dioxins and heavy metals; timber treatment wastes which contain organochlorines and heavy metals; chlorinated pulp mill sludges which contain dioxins and organochlorines; lead paint; ...benzene; waste oils and sludges containing organochlorines; unidentified military wastes; mine tailings containing arsenic and other heavy metals; incinerator ashes containing dioxins and other heavy metals; ...electroplating sludges containing heavy metals[: ...persistent pollutants containing dioxins and organochlorines; ...and unspecified waste pesticides and chemicals... The list... compiled by the Hazardous Waste Advisory Group, made up of representatives of the ministry, industry, environment groups and local councils... was... just the beginning of a process of identifying the risk criteria of various toxic wastes and establishing the technologies to deal with them. "...wastes on the list are... difficult to deal with,"... said... [the] manager of pollution and risk management at the ministry... [T]he Greenpeace representative on the group, has urged the Government to fund a phase-out of toxic chemicals[, but the manager]... said it was not just up to central government to deal with the issue, "it is also industry's problem."

...Help to deal with unwanted agricultural chemicals stored by seven local bodies in Auckland is on the way. A project manager should be appointed in the next two weeks to oversee the safe management of[the] chemicals... Between 20 and 25 tonnes were collected in the A[RC]'s area, while a further 30 tonnes... are also being stored around Auckland. A further 35 tonnes of chemicals remain stored in the areas where they were collected... [A] consortium formed by the seven local bodies had received a \$158,000 grant from the Ministry for the Environment to cover the cost of identification, repackaging and management of the chemicals... A Greenpeace spokes[person]... said that because there was no national hazardous wastes facilities Auckland had become the de facto storage place. Regional councils had taken on the burden of what to do with the chemicals by collecting them, but several had found the storage facilities they were using were unsuitable... Greenpeace is pushing for more research into disposal methods other than incineration. It opposes exporting them which was one suggestion.

...The Government will develop national rules for disposing of hazardous waste. The Minister for the Environment... said yesterday that the decision followed concerns that local authorities were having difficulties dealing with hazardous substances. [The minister] told an international conference on solid waste in Wellington that [the ministry] was "increasingly alarmed about the potential these wastes have for causing serious environmental harm." The evidence was that standards varied among regions and it was time a national regulatory framework was set up. [The minister said 98%] of hazardous wastes in Auckland went straight into the sewer systems, which had resulted in damage. "If it damages the pipe, imagine what it does when it emerges into the environment." Anecdotal evidence was given of "regulatory flight" between regions – such as Auckland waste from the drycleaning chemical carbon tetrachloride being shipped to Wellington because Auckland landfills would no longer accept it. Old pesticides, oil products and other hazardous substances were leaching into aquifers in Napier, Wellington and elsewhere... This would be the first time national standards had been developed under the Resource Management Act, which generally leaves environmental standards up to regional authorities. [The minister] said the regulations would "obviously" have an effect on both industry and local authorities. Industry would have greater certainty about what they could discharge and where. Greenpeace said the Government would need to set the regulations following best overseas practice, rather than the "lowest common denominator" used in legislation last year on hazardous substances.

...N[Z and AUS]n scientists have come up with a simple, relatively cheap process to destroy deadly [hu]man-made chemicals in soil. The process announced... yesterday by the Minister for the Environment... could mean a more cost-efficient clean-up of organochlorines from numerous sites in N[Z] poisoned by timber treatment chemicals and pesticides... The unique one-step yet chemically complex process... known as thermal desorption and yet to be scaled up to full commercial operation... involves loading contaminated soil into a kiln, applying indirect... moderate... heat and some additives, including lime... What comes out is water, carbon and inorganic chloride as well as a soil which can be reused... All gaseous emissions from the process are washed and filtered and other particulate material is captured and recycled through the process. The technique could be delivered either by smaller scale mobile plant handling one to two tonnes of contaminated soil an hour, a relocatable plant in several shipping containers handling 5 to 10 tonnes an hour or a fixed plant handling from 20 to 40 tonnes an hour. There is competing technology available worldwide including high temperature incineration in the U[S] and Europe and methods involving the destruction of organochlorines in liquid form but all are expensive. [The minister] said... while the development made the ministry delighted and optimistic there had to be caution about tackling such an expensive and difficult task as cleaning up N[Z's more]... than 8000... contaminated sites... about 800 being the legacy of old timber-mill practices... To achieve economics of scale clean-ups would have to be carried out in a coordinated way. Issues of liability also had to be considered. At the announcement yesterday the Associate Minister for the Environment... launched a public consultation phase of the Government's study into organochlorine pollution... One aim of the study is to put N[Z]'s clean, green image to scrutiny to see if it can be verified.

...N[Z]'s clean green image is a sham... says a report... Speaking at the launch of the report, the... [PM] said that all N[Z]ers stood tall when the world talked positively and enthusiastically about their beautiful "clean, green" country. "The world judges us by images of crisp, clean air, green and productive farmland, dazzling white mountain peaks, sparkling lakes, tall pine plantations and remote native forest tracks..." ...But behind the picture-perfect scenery lurks an uglier reality... [T]he foul truth is that N[Z]ers are world leaders in polluting the environment... The [report] was the result of five years' work and... was a timely warning that N[Z]ers could not take the environment for granted... Entitled The State of N[Z]'s Environment, the report] paints a picture of Kiwis as gas-guzzling motorists and rubbish bin-filling homemakers... N[Z] has the highest rate of motor vehicle ownership in the world, with nearly 70 people out of every 100 driving an environment-fouling vehicle. The average Kiwi's annual energy consumption is the equivalent of more than three tonnes of oil per person, compared with a global average of one tonne. In 1993 each N[Z]er pumped into the atmosphere 8.7 tonnes of... [CO₂] – compared with a world average of 3.9 tonnes per person... [The average NZer also] generates about 145,000 litres of sewage a year and nearly 900kg of landfill waste... Most solid waste – about 2.5 million tonnes a year – goes into landfills.

...NZ landfills... are a national disgrace and need urgent attention from the Government, says Greenpeace. Reacting to the 1995 landfill census, released on Friday by the Ministry for the Environment, the environmental group said that the 327 landfills surveyed were far from clean and green... • 87[%] of landfills have no leachate (general contaminant) collection systems. • 96[%] do not have a properly engineered lining system. • 65[%] have no liner to contain wastes. • 52[%] of landfill operators burn waste (likely to cause toxic emissions), with 27[%] of this being

intentional. • 82[%] of landfill staff are not trained in hazardous waste identification procedures. • 20[%] of landfills accept hazardous waste in a completely uncontrolled manner. • 79[%] have no hazardous waste manifest or reporting system... A [Greenpeace spokesperson]... cited a paper by a ministry official... circulated to the ministry's advisory group on hazardous waste, of which [the spokesperson] is a member. In the paper, [the ministry official says NZ]'s landfill management "presents unacceptable risks to the environment" and is "generally well below international best practice."

...The [landfill]... serving Hamilton and several Waikato towns contains a highly toxic brew but does not threaten groundwater or the nearby Waikato River, says an environmental scientist. [The] senior consultant with the Institute of Environmental Science and Research... reported on leachate at the Horotiu tip to a Waikato Regional Council committee hearing an application from the dump owner, Hamilton City Council, for new resource consents. The level of some organochlorine pesticides, including dieldrin, chlordane and DDT, in the landfill exceeded international freshwater guidelines. Dieldrin exceeded water quality criteria for the protection of aquatic life by a factor of 44. [However, the scientist] said the level of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) was not likely to have any environmental effect.

...Residents near a contaminated Northland landfill want the site closed and its potentially lethal contents removed. The residents of Waipu... say they were shocked by the discovery of ...PCBs... from shredded car waste or floc mud... at a... private... dump near the area's water supply... But a report commissioned by Sims Pacific Metals, says it is safe to people and the environment.

...Auckland-based EnviroWaste Services Ltd has announced plans to investigate establishing a regional landfill site near Te Kauwhata. It unveiled its plans to residents at a special meeting on Friday. The site was chosen from more than 50 locations after an 18-month selection process.

...Details of a \$223 million scheme to turn the mothballed... Meremere power station... into a rubbish-burning power plant [have been] set out in a 700-page resource consent application filed with Environment Waikato. Nga Puawaitanga (Meremere) Ltd – a joint venture company formed by Auckland-based Olivine N[Z] and Meremere hapu Ngati Naho – is touting its project as an environmentally friendly alternative to dumping waste in landfills... Plans for a high-tech waste incineration plant... include the building of up to four vitrification units to turn hazardous waste into glass products... Councils are being asked to pay \$200 a tonne for a 40-year right to dump rubbish at Meremere[, a few kilometres north of Te Kauwhata.

...the 'scheme's promoter is out to shatter the myths about recycling. In his opinion, those of us who separate out the paper and the plastic for the recycling bin and make a point of buying recycled writing paper have been wasting out time, albeit with good intentions. Unless there is a definite market for the plastic (and for much of it there isn't), the only products worth recycling in the conventional manner are aluminium and metals. Instead, the promoter favours burning waste in a purpose-built power station. Incineration of the Auckland and Waikato regions' garbage could on its own achieve NZ's required contribution to the Rio de Janeiro earth treaty by cutting emissions of global warming gases from rubbish dumps. The promoter has been knocked back several times in his plan to generate 210MW, but within a fortnight it should be known whether the managing director of Olivine NZ has finally succeeded with the company's bid to re-fire the old Meremere power station and progressively convert it from burning coal to burning garbage. "Rubbish dumps produce methane, fluorocarbons, chlorocarbon, aromatic hydrocarbons – all poisonous and all gases with global warming potential. If you burn the fuel and recover the energy, that's the best form of recycling you can do because garbage is a biomass fuel, apart from the 10% that is plastic. A rubbish tip in itself is an incinerator. When you put garbage in you are incinerating at a low temperature because oxidation is burning, but you're not getting the benefit of the energy. And when the tip runs out of oxygen it just reduces what is left of the garbage, making methane and other poisonous gases and leachates." The promoter cites the Barrys Point tip in Takapuna as an example of the environmental problems landfills can cause as toxic sludge seeps out. In comparison, the Olivine incineration process completely combusts all carbon. Acid gases are neutralised, heavy metals and acids are melted into glass products, ash is used either for concrete, road base or high-quality cement. "Burying garbage is an escape, a time bomb for future generations to clean up. We've got thousands of hectares of old rubbish tips and new ones in the making. That land is stuffed for 500 years. After the year 2005 it will be illegal in Germany to landfill anything with more than 5% carbon in it. At the moment it's 10%. A good incineration leaves no hydrocarbons, no carbon monoxide, only carbon dioxide. Good incineration means sufficient heat and sufficient time to burn the gases. We keep the gases in the incinerators for 8 seconds at more than 1100 deg C. Hopefully there will be something better one day, but at the moment incineration is the only clean and responsible way of getting rid of garbage. Recycling paper is the very worst thing you can do for the environment unless you recycle the energy in the paper. You have to use chlorines to bleach it and a lot of energy in producing the recycled paper, between 1.2MW and 1.4MW per tonne. When you make a tonne of paper from a tree you use about 1.8MW but 0.6MW of that comes from the liquors in the wood, which you extract in the process of pulping and bleaching the pulps. That liquor is then burned to generate power. That means you use a net 1.2MW and you can get that 1.2MW back by burning the used paper in a power station. You then have energy in balance from a tonne of paper made from a tree. Plus the paper maker has to plant a tree to make sure it's got a stock wood for his future production. When you recycle it, there's no liquor, because that's been taken out the first time, and you don't get the energy from burning. So you have to assume that the whole 1.4MW comes from the worst form of electricity generation, fossil fuel. And if you leave the paper to rot all you're doing is making methane."]

...Would-be electricity generation company Olivine N[Z] has had its prospectus cleared by the Securities Commission. Promotion of the prospectus was put on hold after the ECNZ subsidiary DesignPower withdrew consent for the use of a report in the prospectus about Olivine's proposed garbage-to-electricity technology. The report said Olivine's development strategy was "sound and well-considered." However, DesignPower said approval for the statement to be used was provided by one of its employees acting without authority. An amendment to the report will be issued with the prospectus... The prospectus seeks both institutional and private funding for the venture. A spokes[person] for Olivine says the company... will also issue an investment statement designed to inform smaller investors about the opportunity. That statement, issued under new securities regulations introduced [last week], will be designed to give an overview of the opportunity to investors, without their having to read the longer prospectus. Any investment in the Olivine project would[, however,] still be governed by the full prospectus.

...Olivine N[Z] is banking on an \$80 million injection of ratepayer money to fire up its waste incineration power plant in Meremere. The company is approaching North Island district and city councils offering them free tipping rights in return for shares in the business... [However, Greenpeace NZ] has issued an "information pack" outlining... concerns about... [Olivine]'s proposal... It has been sent to fund managers who might be considering investing in Olivine's... share issue. The pack purports to contain a briefing by accounting firm Coopers and Lybrand on the economics of incineration, a summary of information about... incineration pricing, a "commentary" on Olivine's prospectus claims, and a discussion on the competitiveness of Meremere as a coal-fired power station. The information is drawn from sources already in the public domain. But it is also biased. Greenpeace is opposed to the Meremere project. It believes it will have detrimental effects. Its "information pack" contains selective reports to support this position... It snidely points to an auditor's report showing the financial forecasts relate to events that have not yet occurred and are "therefore speculative in nature." ...The Olivine proposal might well be environmentally flaky. It might also be financially marginal. But those assessments should be made by impartial professionals. If Greenpeace was concerned about Olivine's plans it should have called in the experts. It should have commissioned independent assessments on the financial forecasts, the technology and environmental aspects. That is what Olivine had to do before getting its prospectus registered with the Securities Commission. Organisations like Greenpeace have an important role to play in making sure businesses meet social obligations. But the report on Olivine is unprofessional. It should be consigned to the recycling bin.

...Recycling is often not the most efficient way of dealing with rubbish, says... a resource management consultant whose clients include Olivine... Whenever we make something useful we produce byproducts we do not want. If we saw a piece of timber... we generate a small pile of sawdust, which we let blow away, or sweep into a pile and put out with the rubbish. Major manufacturers of wood products have long recognised that large

amounts of sawdust are costly to dispose of, and such costs affect the final cost of the price paid by the consumer. Gradually, under competitive pressures, sawmillers began to realise that sawdust was a potential source of energy when burned as a fuel, and... could even be incorporated into a range of wood-based products. Almost all industrial sawdust is now transformed into valuable products, or used as a fuel to reduce production costs. As manufacturers have learned this lesson their products have become more efficient. Early motor cars were heavy and guzzled fuel. Modern cars are light, more fuel-efficient, and considerably more affordable. Early disc drives stored only kilobytes of information, cost tens of thousands of dollars, and were delivered in truckloads. A modern computer hard-drive stores gigabytes of information, costs a few score dollars, and weighs a few ounces. However, once these same products leave the factory door the discipline of the competitive market ceases to operate. Consumers buy their packets of biscuits, or tins of soft drink, and... after they eat the biscuits and drink the soft drink... throw the package and container away. The[se had]... represented the most efficient means of containing and protecting the products from damage and contamination. But once used they become unwanted rubbish. Some groups advocate recycling as a major solution. In practice recycling is not cost-effective for most materials and products. If such inefficient recycling is subsidised the end result is frequently a glut on the market and prices collapse even further. Others argue that such waste should be eliminated by the producers of the original goods. Because such wrappers and containers become waste it is easy to assume... the packaging and containers are wasteful in their own right. However, [much]... of the waste stream is the product itself. Waste washing machines, cars, computers, and tractor tyres cannot be removed by any campaign against excess packaging. So when deep-green environmentalists charge through supermarkets abusing customers for buying packaged goods they may promote their own feelings of moral superiority but... are not contributing anything useful to solving the “waste” problem... N[Z] statistics reveal that many of our businesses use more energy and other inputs than our competitors overseas. This is not because N[Z]ers are an inherently wasteful, or even sinful, lot. Rather it reflects the fact that most of our managers and owners grew up in an environment which protected them from vigorous competition. Hence they could afford to be wasteful and yet continue to survive. The viable solution to dealing with the problem of waste products is to extend the philosophy of the production manager beyond the point where the customer has used the product. We need production engineers and entrepreneurs to deal with the contemporary waste streams in the same way as those early sawmillers dealt with their piles of sawdust. The question should be not “How do we get rid of this waste?” but “How do we profitably transform it into useful products of value to customers?” The present solution – which is no solution – is to cart our waste off to rubbish dumps which we have now renamed landfills, as if we had a problem of surplus holes in the land needing to be filled. But 2 tonnes of our rubbish contains as much energy as 1 tonne of coal and we now have the technology to turn such wastes (including sewage sludge) into electricity and other useful products without polluting the air, water or soil. N[Z] desperately needs new sources of electrical power. Our rubbish is mostly sunlight trapped in paper products. Most of the rest can be recovered as cement, building aggregate, metals or other products... Dumping this material into a hole in the ground and leaving it to rot is a mindless way to deal with material which is waste only in the eye of the cost-plus beholder. Surely it is time to... regard our waste as a valued feedstock for well-managed processing plants which can generate useful products and electric power... [T]he overseas trend is to build modern, clean incineration plants while closing down landfills. Many landfills are being excavated and processed through these new facilities. Germany, France, Japan and many other countries are prohibiting and closing down landfills after the turn of the century because superior environmental standards are being met by modern waste-to-energy facilities.

...Why Meremere waste-burning proposition is not a good idea... At first glance the idea of burning N[Z]’s waste has superficial appeal. The problem is that... the smoke contains cancer-causing pollutants. And, like cigarettes, adding a filter does not guarantee purity... Olivine recently conceded that the \$30 a tonne figure it has been touting as the cost of disposing of municipal solid waste does not include waste handling and collection costs. The *Herald* has cited a figure... of around \$200 a tonne... based on a... 1990 [ARC report which] found that waste incineration was a prohibitive option at \$157 a tonne for an incinerator burning 300,000 tonnes a year, and \$282 a tonne for one burning 100,000 tonnes annually. In contrast, a 1993 Ministry for the Environment study of waste disposal in Northland put the cost of recycling at... \$7.40 a tonne and landfilling at... \$12 a tonne... [A] study of waste management options in Europe[also] concluded that recycling, composting and landfilling were better options – financially and environmentally – than incineration... The energy equation [further f]avours recycling. Research shows that three to five times more energy is saved by recycling waste than is generated if that waste was burned. Nor does recycling generate the large quantities – up to 25[%] of the original waste stream – of toxic ash which incineration does... Last month Lebanese authorities closed the[ir] last waste incinerator... Yet in N[Z] there are still five incinerators in the main centres burning hazardous wastes such as PVC from hospitals, as well as Dow Elanco’s, which burns toxic pesticide wastes in New Plymouth. However, the Meremere plant will dwarf those incinerators... The performance of Olivine technology overseas is a source of concern. In the U[S], the North-West Air Pollution Authority has listed 27 permit violations by an incinerator in Bellington, including exceeding its allowable stack emission rate, fugitive emissions and failing to complete required tests... [US] experience shows that up to 85[%] of municipal waste is reusable or recyclable. In A[US], Canberra has set a goal of zero waste by 2010 and is already making progress towards that.

...[a spokesperson for] Greenpeace, argues that... “...the smoke generated contains cancer-causing pollutants.” Olivine “supercinerators” produce no smoke so the simile is meaningless. [The spokesperson] then continues with the claim that Olivine’s supercinerators produce cancer-forming dioxins. The natural level of dioxin in the air around the Meremere site is about 18 femtograms a cubic metre, to which the Olivine supercinerators will “add” about two femtograms a cubic metre. Because the ambient level can vary from day to day by more than two femtograms a cubic metre it will be impossible for any measurement to reveal whether the supercinerators are operating or not. The ambient dioxin level around Auckland is probably about 100 femtograms a cubic metre. If any Auckland members of Greenpeace are genuinely worried about dioxins they should all move to Meremere... [The spokesperson] then claims... Olivine’s offer to councils now proves that its waste treatment costs must be around \$200 a tonne. Given that Olivine is offering free tipping for 40 years in return for an investment in the project, [Greenpeace’s] calculations must be truly arcane... Sales of cement and concrete products made from furnace ash... [and] a host of [other] valuable by-products, including... 20,000 tonnes of ferrous metals a year... exceed the revenues from “tipping fees.” ...[plus it] will... vitrify hazardous wastes and toxic chemicals which are being landfilled, illegally dumped or haphazardly stored. Olivine will also recycle a whole power station... Hence costing comparisons with antique stand-alone incineration plants in Europe are meaningless, as are references to long outdated reports from accounting firms on the other side of the world. What is the point of telling *Herald* readers that some clapped-out incinerator in Beirut has been closed? Probably all the incinerators in our schools should be closed, too. These plants have as much similarity to Olivine as a Tiger Moth has to a Boeing 747. The Bellingham plant that Greenpeace criticises is actually the experimental site in which the Olivine technology was developed for a host of applications over many years. Experimental plants do have their bad days – that is why they are experimental. But Greenpeace has never tried to solve a problem, which is why it shows little understanding of the process. The Olivine plant in Nova Scotia has been running for 11 years under local authority ownership and has set new standards and maintained an impeccable track record. Yes, the coal-fired power station will generate... an additional 1.4 million tonnes of carbon dioxide annually... But the rubbish burned in the supercinerators would otherwise go to landfills where the carbon in rubbish is turned into methane which is 60 times more potent as a greenhouse gas... The Ministry for the Environment has pointed out that N[Z] has a methane problem, not a... [CO2 problem. NZ]’s landfills are generating... 500 million cubic metres of landfill gas a year, of which 55[%] is methane or other toxic gases such as hydrogen sulphide, furans and dioxins. But who is measuring them? Tall chimneys should be built on these landfills to disperse these gases and allow compulsory testing of the emissions. The people of Hamilton... and elsewhere are now fully aware that landfills generate leachates and other hazards which pose an unknowable threat to future generations. Unlike an Olivine plant, no one can turn them off when they malfunction or

need an upgrade. Greenpeace presents its case as a choice between recycling and incineration. Olivine will take rubbish which has already been through standard recycling and is otherwise destined for the tip. The Auckland Regional Services Trust has proposed a massive landfill on the site adjoining Meremere. So local authorities must now choose between a huge... landfill, and the Olivine technology park with its superincinerators, high-tech vitrifiers, bio-treatments and future high-tech ramjets burning biomass to generate power. The... choice ...ought... to be a simple one.

...Olivine N[Z] says it is continuing to negotiate with North Island authorities to take a share in its proposal to modify the coal-fired Meremere power station... [Y]esterday... Olivine... said... interest in the project had increased after an Environment Waikato report that Hamilton's Horotiu landfill must close by 2003... – 29 years earlier than the Hamilton City Council wanted. The Waikato Regional Council hearings committee... also cut the amount of refuse that could be dumped each year from 220,000 tonnes to 160,000... That means several North Island councils might have to find a new place to dump waste. However... councils spoken to by the... *Herald* suggest the project is too risky to warrant investment of ratepayer money...

North Island local authorities are about sign up to provide \$64 million of funding for the... power station. In exchange... they will get rights lasting 40 years to dump... rubbish... at the plant... conditional on the plant securing strict resource consents. Nga Pua Waitanga Meremere, an associate of Olivine N[Z], is expected to announce this week that it has firm commitments of interest from councils willing to pay \$200 per tonne for the right to dump 320,000 tonnes of rubbish a year at the plant... [A] director of Olivine, [said]... his company had so far received expressions of interest by councils willing to pay to dump 700,000 tonnes annually. "It appears the offer will be well oversubscribed,"... [The director won't] name the councils, saying it might prejudice negotiations. Nga Pua has to compete for the rubbish-disposal dollar with landfill operators. The... *Herald* was unable to find any councils who would confirm they had signed up for the project. However, a number said they were seriously considering the offer. An information memorandum issued by Nga Pua shows the... authorities will have to pay 5[%] of the rights payment immediately, with 45[%] payable when the plant is given Resource Management Act consent and the final 50[%] to be paid when the first of the waste-burning furnaces is commissioned. The sale of dumping rights is just part of a complicated \$100 m... capital-raising exercise by Nga Pua. That is in addition to a \$9 m... capital-raising exercise being carried out by Olivine... In May, Nga Pua signed a contract to buy the mothballed Meremere plant from the Electricity Corporation for \$17.2 m... A \$1 m... non-refundable deposit was paid at the time and further \$1 m... refundable deposits are payable every six months until the... consents come through. Once the consents are given, the balance of the purchase price falls due. Part of the Nga Pua offer includes the issuing of 10 ordinary shares at... \$120,000 each to meet the next E[CNZ] payment and... the company had secured funding for that payment. Other... plans include the issuing of 80 ordinary shares in Nga Pua to institutional shareholders at \$300,000 each... The development has been criticised by environmental groups in part because Olivine will restart the coal-fired plant while it builds the rubbish-powered burners. There are concerns the plant will discharge dioxins and other pollutants, though reports commissioned by Olivine find to the contrary.

...The Minister for the Environment... has rejected a call for a special inquiry into Olivine[']s... plans... Eight environmental groups, including Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, had asked the minister to use his powers under the Resource Management Act[, but the minister]... said the concerns could be adequately dealt with through the resource consent process under way. Environment Waikato and the Waikato District Council have advertised the Olivine proposal and objectors have until December 18 to make submissions. The Hauraki District Council voted against committing money to the scheme. Meanwhile, a scientist who has found three native forest fungi with an amazing ability to gobble up toxic substances does not want the technology locked away with patents. The three forms of white-rot might be a clean, green way to solve a serious environmental problem, said... [the] leader of a research programme which screened the trio from more than 500 native fungi... Some of the native fungi have an appetite for pollutants, such as pentachlorophenol (PCP) which is used in timber treatment.

...[You have probably read the headlines and heard the views on talkback radio as various individuals and groups attempt to place the blame of problem buildings on kiln-dried, chemical-free framing timber. The development of chemical-free timber was no accident. It was researched by BRANZ, Forest Research, Consulting Engineers, Territorial Authorities and the Timber Industry itself. This group examined buildings around NZ (some were up to 80 years old) and showed that untreated pine framing performed as well as H1 treated pine framing. In AUS, chemical-free radiata pine has been used for the past 50 years without any problems. So why are some people calling for the return of what they call "treated" timber for framing? And what do they think "treated" means? Lots of people seem confused so here is a simple explanation that may help clear things up. There are two distinct types of hazards that affect pine – borer and fungi. H1 treated timber is specifically designed for resistance to common borer only. If the timber is at risk from decay, higher levels of treatment such as H3, H4 and H5 must be used. H1 treatment, which was commonly used with wet framing, has a very low specified level of boron. It leaches out in wet conditions, and although it may be mildly fungicidal to some brown rot fungi, there are other brown rot fungi that tolerate H1 at this level. It is not a broad spectrum fungicide and was not intended to be. The case history of weathertightness failures is heavy with the high repair costs for damage to H1 timber. The only proven way to prevent fungal attack comes from protection against moisture, which applies equally to both chemical-free and H1! Untreated pine framing offers more than adequate protection against borer as long as it is high temperature kiln dried, dressed and stays dry. High temperature kiln drying makes timber unpalatable for insects and in particular anobium, better known as borer. Insect larvae can only attack the cellulose and starch if the timber has a very high moisture content. High temperature kiln drying permanently lowers the moisture content and allows the timber to dry faster even if exposed to weather during construction. Also, the eggs need surface texture to hang on to. Dressed timber does not provide suitable egg laying sites. So, if chemical-free pine resists borer, why was H1 treatment against borer ever introduced? The answer in a word – ignorance. The NZ Building Industry was quickly changing over to pine – native timbers were prone to borer attack – and it was generally and incorrectly assumed that kiln dried pine would be equally prone to borer attack. There was no evidence that this was the case but the result was that H1 became mandatory through regulation.'

... 'A working group has been set up to lobby central government on the Litter Act and getting harsher litter laws, and to lobby the packaging industry about its excessive use of branding. It costs West Auckland ratepayers \$600,000 a year to have the Waitakere City Council remove litter from the streets. The council is the first in Auckland to conduct analysis of this kind, in an attempt to reduce the amount of waste and money spent on its collection. Litter dropped on the streets was counted out and classified by a team of workers from the independent company Waste Not. Worldwide fast food chain McDonald's topped the 12% fast food category with 6.4% of all litter collected bearing its brand – a total cost to ratepayers of \$38,400. The council has started working with McDonald's and other food chains to find solutions for reducing the amount of waste they contribute. Cigarette packets account for 5.1% of litter generated (note: butts take 5 years to decompose) – costing ratepayers \$30,600 a year. With the government getting back most of the tax from cigarette sales, the council's solid waste business unit manager questions why local authorities should be expected to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars cleaning up after smokers. "It's unfair if you don't smoke or eat fast food. Basically, we're subsidising people smoking cigarettes and eating takeaways." In litter bins pizza boxes are a problem, as it only takes one box to jam up a whole bin. Pizza boxes are also a problem for the Auckland City Council, which has had to install larger bins with specially manufactured lids to cope. Auckland City spends about \$1m on litter per year. Household rubbish like plastic bags, food and packaging make up 43% of roadside litter. Dairies and service stations are the second largest source of litter contributing 40% to the total.'

... 'THE Waitakere City Council wants burger chain McDonald's to pay for part of the \$600,000 annual bill for cleaning up litter from Waitakere City streets. That follows a council survey showing the company's burger wrappers account for more than half of the litter generated by fast food chains in the city. The council's solid waste manager says McDonald's has not been asked for a specific amount of money. "We have suggested to McDonald's that they should be contributing to the cost of litter pick up for as long as they continue to produce packaging that's so readily disposable in a takeaway form."

McDonald's communications manager says the council has not asked them to pay for the clean-up, but they have received a letter from the council about the litter problem and the cost to the council. "All our franchises have a contract with us to pick up litter within a block of where they are situated." The communications manager says the company funds educational kits for schools, produced by the NZ Packaging Council, that deal with waste disposal and environmental issues. The council manager says: "Our laws are inadequate in comparison to other countries. An individual can be fined \$100 and businesses up to \$500. If you start hitting them as hard as you do with people who drink and drive, you are going to see some people changing their attitude.""]

...Litter bugs in Palmerston North may find themselves parting with more than just the wrapping on... takeaways. The council has decided to use the Litter Act 1979 to exact instant \$100 fines, instead of using its by-law, which meant lengthy and costly court action. A litter control officer can fine someone seen dropping rubbish, or in the belief the offence had occurred. People who see someone dumping rubbish from a vehicle can note the registration number and advise the council[, which] had noticed more rubbish on the streets after an increase in the number of fast food outlets.

...Auckland City Council... would save... \$900,000 and complaints from residents over growing rubbish piles in suburban streets... if... [it closed t]he lid... on... [it]s troublesome inorganic rubbish collection. The... push to axe the annual pick-up follows claims that people outside city boundaries took advantage of this year's collection to dispose of unwanted junk. Council officials estimate that tonnages in some wards jumped by 75[%] this year, with much of the waste from major building works and new residential construction. Delays in some wards this year had garbage piled up on footpaths for weeks. In a report to councillors considering next year's budget, [the person]... who manages resource recovery for the council... noted that as householders had mobile garbage bins or "wheelie bins" they could get rid of most domestic rubbish. The onus of disposing of larger items rested on individuals, rather than on all ratepayers. "There are a multitude of commercial operators in this industry sector to cater for such a user-pays service." Though [the council's resource recovery manager] recommended scrapping the inorganic collection, [it]... also wanted the council staff to investigate other ways of dumping. In a separate move, the council may increase the charge for additional bins by 30[%]. Extra bins cost \$140 but a report to the budget committee recommends a charge of \$185 to reflect costs and discourage excessive dumping.

...Manukau City is getting rid of "wheelie" rubbish bins because they have been found to be generating twice as much rubbish as the conventional bins and bags... [A] small number of residents were abusing the wheelie bin system by putting garden waste in them, at the expense of ratepayers' money. The conventional bins and bags system was fairer and... from October 1 next year the council will offer free collection of refuse in bags and cans in a bid to reduce what it calls excessive solid waste generation... The council has adopted a waste management plan that aims to reduce rubbish being generated by 20[%] before the year 2014. It said it would fund community-based programmes and initiatives which encourage businesses to reuse and recycle rubbish. Each programme would be evaluated and, if successful, could be set up citywide... A... councillor... said residents who wanted to continue using the wheelie bins might make private arrangements with the company operating them.

...Manukau City is quickly running out of room for its rubbish and urgent planning has begun to cut refuse generation. Based on calculations on waste production levels over the past three years, council officers fear the city's two landfill sites... will reach capacity in eight years... Council staff... want to slash the amount of garden waste householders put in their bins. Up to 25[%] of domestic rubbish is organic... Council research shows that more than 210,000 tonnes of rubbish is produced in Manukau each year. About 60,000 tonnes comes from households and the rest from commercial properties and industry... Commercial and industrial waste production in the wider Auckland region has increased by 13[%] to 501,000 tonnes over the past two years.

...Waitakere City Council is to weigh rubbish produced by residents and charge them accordingly in a trial designed to cut down on waste. The city intends selecting a sample of households for the "charge-by-weight" trial which will use a high technology system. The normal collection will be retained until the council makes decisions about rubbish services by December. The "eco-city" wants to slash the amount of waste it... generate[s].

...Six smelly sacks of rubbish that have haunted Otahuhu's business district for a week show that Auckland City Council's recent restructuring is not working... Someone dumped the plastic sacks beside a shop's wheelie bin... says the Otahuhu Business Association director... The bin contractor would not take them because they were not official council bags and therefore [it] would not be paid to remove them. [The director], who is a Tamaki Community Board member, said the rubbish had been rotting in the humid street while [the association] tried to persuade the council to remove it. Before council restructuring a month ago, such problems could have been easily sorted in an hour by the resident council services representative. But now countless phone calls were needed to contact the officer responsible, who had been relocated to a centralised office...

Late last year I wrote a column lamenting the passing of one of our national treasures, the local rubbish dump, a place at which, for the hire of a trailer and the fee of a few bucks, one could quickly, easily and cheaply dispose of the accumulated family junk of the past few months. This prompted a number of letters, some well meaning; others, I suspect, derisory, advising that what you do, idiot, is hoard the stuff in some unseen place, like around behind the woodshed. Then, when the council advertises its annual inorganic collection, you whip it all up to the roadside and one morning when you wake up, presto, it's all gone. Just like that. Clean as a whistle. And free. Unfortunately, it's not at all like that... My return to this subject was sparked by a photograph in the *Herald* recently showing ranks of inorganic rubbish slumped forlornly on a suburban footpath, like passengers waiting for a bus that's already gone. More recently still, one of our local papers ran a report quoting the North Shore City Council's refuse and recycling manager... as saying professional scavengers have been among those scouring the inorganic piles on the streets. Well, fancy that! You call that news? I could have told you that years ago. But it's not the pros who are the problem – they know what they're looking for and that's what they take; it's the amateurs, hordes of them – they have no idea what they're looking for but they take it all the same, or half of it. The other half they biff on to your front lawn, the road or someone else's by-now-dishevelled pile. I have no objection to other people helping themselves to my rubbish. It's just the way they go about it. While we were brought up to respect other people's property (not that you'd notice, these days) there's nothing in the book about unwanted property. They attack it with the frenzy of starving seagulls spying a dead fish in the sand, tearing it to shreds until only the bones are left and then disgorging the over-stuffed bits anywhere along the beach. And it's no use trying to fool them by sticking your rubbish out under the cover of darkness the night before the collection officially begins – it could be days, sometimes weeks, before that big truck rumbles by. Because I had to go out in the afternoon I put my last lot out early on a Sunday morning the day before the collection period officially began... Even at that early stage the advance party of pros was on patrol, utes, vans and trailers crawling menacingly along both sides of the road, practised eyes peeled for a Stradivarius or a Steinway among the lesser spoils. In no time the main body was moving in; big, cigarette-smoking mums in equally big station wagons, disgorging urchins on Fagin-like missions. But I was ready for them. This year, I had decided, I would make it easier for giver and receiver. Remotely salvageable disposable assets were neatly arrayed in one lot, among them five typewriters of tappier times and a VCR... I had just placed the VCR prominently in position and was retreating down the driveway when I heard urgent footfalls descending on me. "ey mate... that video go?" "If it did," I replied tartly, "it wouldn't be out there." You could tell [the scavenger] didn't like smart-alec responses. [The scavenger] turned on his heel and disappeared. So, I noticed a few minutes later, had the video, along with the electric typewriter. The two portables proved, as they say in the retail trade, harder to move... though by day's end they were perplexing new owners elsewhere... Customer response to the two remaining typewriters, relics from newspaper offices of the 50s, was disheartening. From their increasingly battered demeanour it was obvious that passing fowssickers had given them more than an inquisitorial tap or two. Then, on the day before the collection truck finally arrived, two youths happened by and uplifted them – high above their heads before dashing them on to the footpath many times. But, like pre-war cars, 50s typewriters are made of sterner stuff than juvenile morality: although the innards were smashed

to a million bits, the casings remained intact. I did not witness this display of witless wantonness, but my seven-year-old grandson did. And although [my grandson] later expressed astonishment I suspect that, as is the wont of small boys, [my grandson] might have secretly found it pretty cool. Now, several months on, after the lawnmower has picked up most of the stray keys and springs from the typewriters, I keep worrying about my grandson – that after [it] gets to be a big boy [it]’ll be able to go around at inorganic collection time and smash all those discarded PCs into a trillion pieces.

...[I am dismayed to read in a leaflet, recently distributed to all Waitakere City householders, the request that anyone seen “scavenging” be reported to the council. I find it extraordinary that a council, which advocates its citizens “reduce, reuse and recycle”, would then demonise those who do what it suggests. One would imagine that a council, sincerely advocating policies of conservation and environmental care, would be encouraging members of the public to avail themselves of any “rubbish” that could be put to use. Such an enlightened council would be pleased that this was happening and appreciative of the fact that the reuse of materials and goods means reduced volumes in landfills and reduced demand on the planet’s resources. That would seem an appropriate approach from a council professing to be a clean and green “eco-city”. Instead of that, we have a council which promotes the disgusting “spy-on-your-neighbour” tactics of totalitarian regimes. I find the hypocrisy disturbing and would like to know who decided that “scavengers” should be reported?]

...[Scavengers setting their eyes on this week’s round of inorganic rubbish could be deterred from rummaging in it – because fellow citizens may do them in for stealing. In addition to explaining what “We will NOT COLLECT” (any bagged rubbish, garden waste, commercial and farming waste, bricks and broken concrete, glass and small loose items, oil and paint, fibrolite/asbestos, car bodies and tyres, builders waste and anything that cannot be lifted by two people), plus asking that doors be removed from stoves/refrigerators (or place the appliances face down) for safety reasons and metal items be sorted from other inorganic rubbish to assist in recycling, the inorganic rubbish collection brochure lays out the law with these sentences: “Anyone who witnesses people illegally dumping or scavenging inorganic rubbish may record the date, time, and vehicle registration details. To report illegal dumping or scavenging contact Waitakere City Council on 839-0400.” The brochure is sent to all households seven days before their inorganic rubbish collection, which happens in different streets for 50 weeks of the year. Scavenging can be dangerous, and makes rubbish collectors’ work-load tough, the council’s waste minimisation officer says. Not all scavengers will be sought after: “It depends what they are scavenging.” People smashing up a television on someone’s front lawn and taking the insides out is an example of dangerous scavenging. Not only does it pose a safety threat to pedestrians, it also shows lack of respect for others’ property. As yet there have been no reported cases to the police of scavengers stealing from the inorganic collections’, or people illegally dumping rubbish.]

...[Widespread illegal rubbish dumping throughout Auckland City is likely to force the council to reinstate an inorganic waste collection it axed to save money. The removal of tonnes of rubbish is costing the council \$10,000 a month. No one has been prosecuted and health inspectors are worried that the refuse is a health and safety hazard... [A] senior councillor... called the collection a core council responsibility... The policy u-turn is calculated to cost \$1.6 million, with the collection accompanied by a campaign promoting recycling... [□ A NZ]-born recycling consultant [i]s in Auckland talking to local councils about Canberra’s goal of becoming the first city in the world with a waste-free society. It aims to reduce waste generation, recover resources and, eventually, halt the flow of rubbish to landfills... By intercepting rubbish at the landfill face and at transfer stations Revolve... [(a community employment and recycling enterprise)]... stocks its depots with reusable building materials, plastic goods, parts for electrical appliances, suitcases – anything for which there is a demand... [The consultant] said the Canberra experience should happen in N[Z] – and in Auckland in particular... All that was needed was support and an enclosed area with some sheds. If waste generators provided reusable materials goals of saving landfill space and creating jobs could be achieved. [The consultant] was hosted by the Zero Waste N[Z] organisation.

...[Looking into bins, [a]... waste management consultant for Waste Not Auckland... doesn’t see rubbish, [it] sees energy, resources, money and jobs... When you regularly look into bins, as I do, it soon becomes apparent that what we regard as waste is in fact a valuable resource... [A recent] article... said our practice of landfilling was “no solution,” and I couldn’t agree with [the article’s author] more. Where our paths diverge is in his support of incineration. Hardly a better step. At least with landfill there is a future opportunity to mine the resources, as is happening in the U[S]. Incineration is being touted as the waste disposal solution for the 21st century allowing us to “consume as much as we want and could afford, without suffering from environmental guilt.” Given the Earth’s finite resources, not a philosophy my generation should promote. Regardless of our consumption patterns, would not the best system be the reuse and recycling of these waste materials? ...[the article] argues that in practice recycling is not cost effective for most materials. Yet this is not surprising for a number of reasons. In a society where user-pays is the norm, waste management practices are heavily subsidised by councils, while recyclers, who by diverting material from landfill directly save councils money, receive no assistance. I would like to know how many landfilling/incineration operations there would be if a council offered entrepreneurs \$20 a tonne to take waste from the kerbside. The Auckland landfill rate is approximately \$60 a tonne, and is set to rise. At a reduced cost per tonne recyclers can now utilise material to produce top-quality products, such as the compost made by The Living Earth Company. In Kaitia, a community has shown that recycling, even in a remote area, costs less than landfilling. An increase in recycling would also bring an increase in low-entry-level jobs into the local community, those that have been lost over the past 40 years, and money directly into local communities. Operations such as Urban Ore in America have thrived off waste. They employ 23 fulltime and 8 part-time staff, with a turnover of \$US1.4 million, by diverting 6000 tonnes... Before there are accusations that I am another “deep-green environmentalist promoting my own feeling of moral superiority,” I am... [I] like *Steptoe and Son*, and my Yorkshire-born grandfather, [who believed] that “where there’s muck there’s brass,” and that doesn’t mean throwing it in a furnace. • [The Christchurch City Council has begun a recycling enterprise similar to Canberra’s Revolve programme.]

...[Voluntary consents to reduce waste are not working and new strategies are needed, says [NZ’s] Associate Minister for the Environment... The ministry has completed its first National Waste Data Report in line with the ...g[overn]ment’s waste-reduction policy... The... report showed there was a serious information gap in the waste area. “We know far too little about what waste there is and where it comes from. We have to do more to ensure that adequate information is collected in a useable way,”... The ministry was working on draft legislation which would require companies to report their environmental impacts.

...[PDL Plastics takes pride in being environmentally conscious. “We’ve always maintained an interest in, and taken responsibility for, environmental issues,” says the company’s chief executive officer, [who]... chaired the Plastics Institute of N[Z] action group when it initiated a system in the late 1980’s of marking different types of plastic mouldings with recycling codes. This enabled products to be separated for recycling or for other re-use applications. Today the company continues this practice, type-coding products to improve the viability of local collection services... [A]ll scrap and waste within the PDL Plastics plant is recovered and re-used... [s]crap which cannot be used by PDL Plastics on site is recovered by a local recycling company[.]... often being manufactured into low-specification products such as garden centre buckets and pot plant holders.

...[London’s *Sunday Times* report[s] that... oilseed rape plants... have [been] genetically engineered... so that they grow plastic polymers in their leaves and seeds. The [US] chemical manufacturer, Monsanto, will attempt to boost the content of the plant’s plastic so it can be made into various household items such as plastic bags and bottles. The new type of “natural” plastic is also biodegradable, so that once buried, it converts into harmless carbon dioxide and water within six months. Farmers could be growing the plastic plant crops within ten years...]

[THE YEAR 1909 saw the arrival in the manufacturing world of a material that would change our lives: plastic. Today it is difficult to imagine a world without plastic products, and that’s the problem – we’re being buried in the stuff. The documentary *Planet Plastic – The 4th Kingdom* (Discovery, 10pm, Saturday) reveals that Americans alone throw away 10 million tonnes of the stuff every year and that only 5% of it is recyclable. Scientists are now

working hard to find ways in which a product designed to endure can be made biodegradable. Good luck, we say.' By the way, 'roadside recycling collections will start in Manukau City next April. A Manukau City councillor said residents created about 2kg of waste each day. This figure compares with 0.9kg in Sydney and 1.5kg in Brisbane. The councillor said while the service was a good step toward reducing the city's waste stream, the council should continue to look for new ways to discourage waste production. Last November, the council reversed a decision to introduce user-pays rubbish collection, a move the mayor said "destroyed" Manukau's efforts to reduce waste. The scheme offered residents year-long contracts as an alternative to paying \$1 a bag for rubbish removal. Tenders for the new recycling service have been called for and Manukau expects the successful bid to be announced in three months. A one-off sum has been included in Manukau's annual plan for start-up costs, such as new bins, and a public education programme. Manukau City's senior policy analyst will not say how much money has been provided for fear of showing the city's hand to potential tenders. Rates will pay for ongoing costs. The service will operate alongside normal rubbish collections and offers residents a weekly collection for some plastics, aluminium cans, paper, cardboard and glass'...

Fed up with sifting through dead cats and dirty nappies, Glass Recyclers of N[Z] has removed its bottle banks from Auckland. But Paper Reclaim Ltd plans to modify and reintroduce about half of the 100 bins to raise funds for schools and community groups. The bins will be locked.

...a... mountain of waste paper [is] awaiting recycling at A[US]'s largest paper recycling mill in Sydney... Over the past year, prices for recycled paper, plastic and bottles have fallen so heavily that A[US] has been forced into paying Indonesia to accept some of its [recyclables]...

Recycling: is it worth all the hassle? ...For [an] environmental economist... there is more to recycling than the realities of budgets, cost-effectiveness, profits and losses. [The economist] comes from the U[S] where... more adults regularly participate in recycling than vote... Recycling... may make only a modest contribution towards an environmentally sustainable future and it is not the most pressing of environmental issues. [Howeve]r, it is important because many people care about leaving a livable world for their descendants. Apart from making green purchases and cutting car travel, it is the easiest activity they can do each day and then say they have helped the environment. [The USer], who holds a doctorate from Harvard and is now research professor at the Global Development and Environment Institute at Tufts University in Massachusetts, was in Auckland last week hosted by the Packaging Industry Advisory Council. [The USer] asks why we recycle when the activity is profitable only for people involved in scavenging in [Last World] countries and a handful of specialised businesses... But [the USer] says recycling is important even in the absence of a crisis caused by a lack of landfills or an immediate opportunity for profit... A strong case for recycling rests on its benefits in resource use and manufacturing... "Using less stuff in the first place is even better for the environment than recycling." ...● About 29[%] of packaging consumed in N[Z] is recycled. The average weight of packaging per unit of goods has decreased by about 24[%] over the past 10 years.

...The Minister of Finance... yesterday patted the Papakura District Council on the back during the opening of a new joint-venture project in the city... sa[ying] the \$2.5 million... refuse transfer and recycling station... was a shining example of cooperation between a local authority and a private company... The new facility is expected to process 12,500 tonnes of refuse in its first year... The council used its expertise to get the necessary consents, which it then onsold to Waste Management NZ Ltd, which built the plant and will operate it... Waste Management [also] plans to make trial rail runs of rubbish before Christmas and should have a service from Thames to Auckland operating in six months... [R]ail was a cheap option over long distances and was used to move waste extensively in Europe, particularly in Holland... [The company i]s working with Trans Rail to test a railway wagon converted to allow a truck driver to load or unload a 10-tonned container of compacted waste directly onto or off it.

...More quarry trucks 'inevitable' Auckland's quarries are fast running out of rock to meet the voracious demands of expanding roads, ports and construction projects... The biggest, Auckland Airport's second runway, will absorb two million tonnes – equivalent to the annual output of Winstone[Aggregate]'s Mt Wellington quarry, the largest in the country. Roads and motorways need "several million tonnes" in the next five years. The Britomart scheme, the America's Cup Viaduct Basin development, the Fergusson Wharf expansion and housing growth also will be big users of aggregate... Quarries supplying almost 50[%] of aggregate... are expected to be depleted by the year 2000, forcing firms to use rock sources south of the Bombay Hills. The greater distances involved in trucking quarried material is expected to add to congestion and the cost of infrastructure projects. These are the conclusions of a University of Auckland study... Commissioned by Winstone Aggregates, a [Challenge] subsidiary... the study estimates that twice as many big trucks may be needed to move... quarried material 40km along the Southern Motorway when existing operations close... A Winstone manager believes authorities and the community should review quarry restrictions... [because] using "appropriate regional resources" would help to relieve the burden on roads and save on transport costs... But an Auckland City councillor... said higher costs imposed by trucking aggregate long distances "may be the price we have to pay." [The councillor] supports Three Kings residents in their fight against the 35-year expansion of Winstone's local quarry. [The councillor] feels the time has passed when dusty, noisy quarries could operate in the suburbs. "I don't think they're a good marriage." ...[the] president of a Three Kings group fighting the 15ha quarry, questions whether Winstone wants a relaxation of its Resource Management Act obligations or 24-hour blasting rights. [The president also] says the company's plan... [for the pit] to be mined 57m deeper... will create a suburban open-cast mine. "We would much prefer for the company to close its quarry by the year 2000 and start the millennium with a new recreation reserve." ...The company contends that scoria is an essential resource – about 40[%] of Auckland's scoria market is met from Three Kings – and that the quarry has been there as long as the suburb... (The Auckland Regional Council intends to build a plant beside the quarry to treat the water... to be pumped out of the pit... and feed it into the city's water supply.)

...A New Lynn [resident] has come up with an idea... [that] could help to fill the gap as Auckland's quarries run out of rock... [The idea – which] occurred to him at 2 o'clock one morning – is to turn plastic milk containers from kerbside collections into plastic flakes... [E]ngineering tests showed that the flakes have a permeability similar to that of course sand or fine gravel and stand the weight of a heavy load... [I]f they were contained in material that was tough and would not rot, they could take the place of quarried scoria or gravel as free-draining material. In 2 1/2 years the idea has won a Waitakere City Council ecology award and has grown into a patented product called Flomat. The flakes form a quilted mat 2m by 1m wrapped in a polypropylene fabric... [and are already] used between walls and clay banks as part of the drainage system. It had taken "a lot of talking" to persuade conservative builders to try something different from scoria... but the converts were enthusiastic about the savings in trucking of gravel and disposing of excavated clay... [A] cubic metre of mat weighed 32kg compared with 1.2 tonnes for a cubic metre of metal. The fact that more mats could be carried in a truckload was attracting interest from forestry operators for use as an alternative to metal for temporary roading and from farmers for their stock-holding areas... [A] Henderson factory... produc[es] the plastic flakes and imports the mat covers from the U[S]. Flomat's inventor said there was an endless supply of plastic waste in Auckland [and] business had grown to the extent that a council that previously had no market for two-thirds of its plastic could now sell twice as much as it collected.

...[Waste plastic is being used by a Papakura businessperson to make "hard-as-concrete" paving stones. His experience with plastic began when a tail-light on his car broke and the businessperson couldn't find anyone to repair it. From building up a successful business specialising in tail-light repairs, the businessperson turned to fixing damaged plastic milk trays previously thrown away at the rate of about 30,000 a year. But while most containers could be fixed, plenty were still beyond repair. "Suddenly I had a yard cluttered with these crates. That's when I started granulating and grinding the plastic." The businessperson then hit on the idea of mixing the grindings with cement and sand. "I thought, 'This is too simple and obvious. Why hasn't anybody else thought of it?'" The businessperson spent hours on the Internet trying to find out if anyone else had the same idea, but could find no evidence and now has

international patents protecting the Plascrete product made at his Enviropas premises. The paving stones, in a variety of colours, are being launched on the market this week. At about 1.8kg, they are lighter than normal paving stones of the same size, which weigh about 3.4kg. The plastic pavers are sold in six-packs for about \$8, and 39 of the triangular stones are needed to cover a square metre. The pavers, which can be cut with a hand-saw, are designed for pedestrian walkways and are the first products using the manufacturing process. In time the businessperson hopes to make heavier pavers suitable for traffic, as well as other building products. "The whole plastics game is about repairing, reusing and recycling. Even these pavers can be recycled."

... 'A milk company is helping customers to stay warm this winter by recycling plastic and fibreboard milk containers into fire logs. "Just another log on the fire, except it's like no other. For a start it was sold and delivered by a Dunedin milky." In a unique recycling loop the milky also collects the beginnings of more logs, picking up empties and returning them to Dunedin's milk plant. They're ground into small chips then added to a special recipe of coal fines and recycled paper. While plastic on a fire is normally a no-no the hot-rocks, as they're called, were designed by the old Department of Science and Industrial Research for their clean-burning qualities. "As far as we're aware the particular process that we're operating is unique to Dunedin, to NZ and possibly even the world. The rocks sell for about 33 cents each and will burn for between 2 and 7 hours." The hot-rocks plant was officially opened this week.'

... a New Yorker's 'customers are being hassled about the backyard decks the contractor has built for them out of recycled plastic. They've even asked him to stop using them for referrals. Their complaint? The decks are too popular. "These people just became overwhelmed by people knocking on their door or calling them up." Artificial timber – made of recycled plastic or a blend of plastic and scrap wood – is chipping away at the dominance of real wood in the \$2.2b annual market for decks. The industry's top producers, US Plastic Lumber Corp and Trex Company – who together have 80% of the artificial lumber decking market – have about 4% of the US deck market and now are targeting national parks, railroads and local government. While their market share may be small, it's enough to generate stock gains for US Plastic and Trex that far exceed those of big forestry companies. Artificial lumber has a big advantage, contractors say: it lasts for decades. Treated wood needs replacing much sooner because of cracking and rotting. The disadvantage is price. Artificial-lumber decks can cost twice that of wood. However, advocates say consumers recoup the higher price in as little as three years once the maintenance costs for wood are included. The threat of market-share loss has prompted at least one lumber-treatment company to battle back. Two years ago the 4th-largest lumber company in the US began distributing Deck-Cap, a wood board partly covered in vinyl. "We are absolutely concerned about alternative products to wood," says the lumber company's vice-president. Lumber companies should be concerned. Artificial boards cover the surface of the 3000 sq m viewing platform for the Old Faithful geyser at Wyoming's Yellowstone National Park. The three-year-old platform supports 2.5 million visitors a year in temperatures ranging from almost 38 degrees to well below freezing. "We've never replaced a single board," says the chief of maintenance at the world's oldest national park.'

... Victoria University's school of biology and physiology is substituting plastic for glass in one of its laboratories to boost safety and reduce breakage costs. Glass will be restricted to experiments involving direct flame... [The] senior physiology lecturer... said the user-friendly lightness of plastic equipment and that it was recyclable made it ideal... [Incidentally,] Auckland-based ACI Glass has suspended its sand mining at Parengarenga harbour in the Far North after environmental concerns raised by local Maori. A Ngati Kuri Trust Board member... said about 100 people attended a hui on Tuesday at Te Hapua Marae after a threat by Maori last week to blockade the entrance to the harbour. Ngati Kuri said the sandspit had been changed by underwater suction dredging of the sea bed. A new coastal inlet had been created, widening the harbour mouth and eroding the foreshore. The Ministry of Commerce said this week that ACI had mined silica sand in the Parengarenga area since 1922.

... An independent report has cleared... ACI NZ Glass Manufacturers... of causing erosion to... the Parengarenga Harbour entrance... [and foreshore during decades of sand] mining activity. The environmental report was responding to concerns by the local... tribe.

... ['Plans to dredge huge amounts of sand from the seabed off Leigh, north of Auckland, have raised fears for the marine reserve around Goat Island. An application by Kaipara Excavators to suction dredge 2 million cu. m of sand over 480 sq km is believed to be the largest proposal of its kind in NZ. The proposed area extends to within 1.5km of the marine reserve. An Auckland University marine ecology lecturer, whose research programme is based at Goat Island, said dredging would kill shellfish beds, starfish and crabs – reducing available food for snapper and crayfish that lived in the reserve. "This affects the reserve's integrity. You don't want something making a big mess at the edge of it." The 20 objectors to the application include the Department of Conservation. But the applicants have already overcome one hurdle with coastal Maori just north of Leigh, who have relaxed their stance about the issue. The Ngatiwai Trust Board chairperson, a vocal campaigner for the preservation of Pakiri Beach, said it was taking a pragmatic approach – perhaps because it has been retained by the applicants as a cultural consultant – though the chairperson said it was only receiving "a bit of petrol money and some koha (gifts)" from the company. The sand was inevitably going to be needed for the expansion of Auckland, and taking it from offshore was better than from the beach']...

Not even a grain is too small to escape the labyrinth of bureaucracy... [T]he forms have been completed, the officials have investigated and at last the... Museum of N[Z]... has approval under the Resource Management Act to display a piece of the great outdoors indoors. Subject only to negotiating a suitable protocol with the local tribe, museum staff can proceed to a west coast beach north of Auckland and remove some sand. To be precise, six buckets full. And the strangest part of the story is the museum's insistence that it obtain a resource consent from the A[RC] despite being told it did not need one... "We told them not to be so silly..." said the council's environmental officer... "...We try to employ the principle that if it's minor and not going to have an impact then don't worry about it, but they insisted... because they were a public body and didn't want anyone attacking them for doing something illegal..." Asked for his view on the sand consent application, the council coastal resources manager... said: "It would be fair to say it is the most minor activity that we have processed a consent for." A consent might be needed for a trailer load of sand but only because "the council likes to know what people are doing." The black sand was needed to pad out a Treaty of Waitangi exhibition.

... BHP N[Z] Steel officials brought an uncertain message at the weekend to Taharoa, an isolated settlement on Waikato's west coast and site of an ironsand mining operation... [BHP's] chief executive, and... [its] primary operations manager, said they had secured the future of the ironsand mining operation at least until 2004 by clinching a further five-year contract with Japanese steel mills – but with annual tonnage cut from 1.1 million to 700,000 tonnes. If BHP is to retain the present level of mining operations it must now find new markets for ironsand in Korea and China before existing contracts expire in March 1999. BHP faces the same dilemma with its Glenbrook steel plant which faces falling demand for its steel at home and abroad. At Taharoa, however... [(j)unique in the BHP empire as the only worksite with a set number of employees – 50 – written into the existing contract)]... the crumbling global demand for ironsand hardly rated on the list of concerns... The community was much more worried about the appalling quality of tap water in the town, the sinking levels of Lake Taharoa, environmental oversights on everything from scrap waste to whitebait, and impressing on BHP the need for respect for traditional burial sites. "Twenty years ago they tried to sell our water to Saudi Arabia... Now we can't even drink it." A trial shipment of 55,000 tonnes of ironsand to China, being loaded next week, may secure a much-needed new customer... China faces an annual shortage of 100 million tonnes of iron ore by the year 2000... By the end of the century, annual demand for iron ore will be 350 million tonnes, with domestic supply at 230 million to 250 million tonnes... [In related news, t]he world's major aluminium producers are expecting to restart mothballed smelters in the next few years as the price of the base metal climbs and stockpiles drop... Last week, Montreal-based Alcan Aluminium, the second-largest aluminium producer in the world, said it will increase output from its Kitimat smelter in northwestern British Columbia to 100[% from 92%] now, a rise of about 22,000 tons a year... The company also said it might reopen further idle capacity in Canada, the U[K] and the U[S]. It has 134,000 tons a year of idle capacity around the world excluding Kitimat... Other major producers, though, are less willing to suggest they will resume idle capacity... The... largest... producer[, the]... Aluminium Co of America (Alcoa)[,

has]... 450,000... tons a year of idle capacity... Reynolds Metals Co, another leading American producer[has]... 209,000... and Pechiney of France... 125,000... Consumption of aluminium this year could be as much as 18.8 million tons[up 5%, and]... demand... is expected to... [rise a further 3%] next year... The... London Metal Exchange... said the stockpiles were now at 620,475 tons, a drop of 330,800 tons... since the beginning of the year.

...Since 1919, when an A[US]n-dominated triumvirate, the British Phosphate Commissioners, began mining the... tiny South Pacific island of Nauru... more than 100 million tons of premium-grade phosphate – the product of centuries of seabird droppings – have been gouged from its central plateau for use as fertiliser in... Britain[NZ and AUS]. The exports bought Nauru's 7,000 citizens a good life: one of the world's highest per capita GNPs, free education and health services, no income tax. It is one of the few island nations in the region that has never needed foreign aid. But phosphate – the nation's sole export – has been both blessing and curse: when deposits are exhausted at the turn of the century, roughly three-quarters of Nauru will have been mined out. The only arable land available will be a coastal fringe less than 400m wide; the biggest employer will be gone; alternative industries like fishing are so far nonexistent. Says... the South Pacific Trade Commission: "It was good while it lasted, but unless they can live off the investment, there's nothing in the future for them really." Four years ago, Nauru won \$A107 million compensation from A[US] for environmental damage. The government is also believed to have invested another \$A700 million of past royalty payments. Some of those investments – including an ill-fated loan to a Melbourne football club and a short-lived musical in London's West End – have been disasters. As were the loss of funds handled by one A[US]n law firm and problems at the Bank of Nauru. Besides troubled investments, deficits previously masked by phosphate income have been increasing... [Once.] falling numbers threatened their community. Underpopulation is no longer a problem, but other threats remain. The 21 sq.km republic... is now torn by political instability – four presidents since November and another election this weekend... As well, Nauru has some of the worst characteristics of small-town politics – family rivalries and old feuds.

...Nauru, the tiny coral island in the Pacific whose environmental destruction supported N[Z] agriculture for decades, is rapidly facing hard times as its rich phosphate reserves reach their end... Already, Nauru's latest budget has slashed... public spending by 41[%], halved]... the deficit to \$A24 million... clamped down on public employment, and cut salaries and overtime. Import duties have been increased, and other licences and fees have been increased or introduced... [The]Finance Minister... told Parliament the nation had assets of about \$A1.26 billion... in 1991: by last year, after deducting public debts, these had plummeted to \$A423 million. "An era of comfort and extravagance has come to a severe halt," said [an AUS]n Agency for International Development economist... "The difficulty for the Government is that... [the] 10,400... people in Nauru are accustomed to the delivery of free or cheap services and may find it difficult to accept the need to pay." The need to work after years of living on phosphate royalties may present other difficulties... "Workplace skills are poor, with little economic incentive in the past for Nauruans to participate actively in the workforce." Nauru is a product of colonial history. The British discovered phosphate in the island's central plateau in 1899, and began mining it seven years later, splitting the proceeds with the German administrators. During the First World War the island was occupied by A[US], and remained a trust territory until 1968. Its only wealth... was stripped from the island and poured across the farms of N[Z, AUS] and Britain as superphosphate. Deep gullies now lace the interior of an island whose 34km of coastline embraces just 21 sq km of land. Nauru won back part of the wealth that was lost before independence with a settlement in the International Court of Justice, under which A[US] agreed to a \$A57 million lump sum payment and \$A2.5 million a year for 20 years. But the future is darkening... There are few options. Despite some stopovers by package tours heading for Guam, tourism's prospects are limited. And while there are no taxes on the island, the development of Nauru as an off-shore finance centre appears unlikely. Now the tough options are being faced. Land rehabilitation has been identified as a key priority to boost cultural, social and political development, and to diversify the options through the creation of alternative industries... Nauru also badly needs new housing, but... the island was unlikely to be able to both finance these demands and maintain present standards of living... It is, says the... [new] President... – elected... after claims of massive squandering of the Lilliputian republic's wealth by [the]former President... – a new era of frugality.

...futuristic new materials – some of which are already in use... – will be stronger, more durable and less polluting than their predecessors. And this stuff could very well define the coming age, just as stone, bronze and iron defined their respective eras. To many, the "Materials Age" would make a fine sobriquet for modern times. In the past, new materials were developed "by guess, by God or by good luck," says... [the] adjunct chemical director of the Physical Sciences Research Division of Lucent Technologies... But now scientists are taking at least the luck and guesswork out of the creative process by discovering the complex protocols of construction behind atoms, molecules, crystals and even living tissue. "Engineers will no longer be limited by what materials exist," predicts... a materials scientist at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill. "They will be able to design according to the materials they would like to have." The invention of new materials involves a new paradigm of discovery... Materials designers now rely on scientific understanding and sophisticated computer modelling to perform their modern alchemy of turning the common elements of the Periodic Table into the gold of new materials. For the past dozen years or so, [the materials scientist has tried to]... develop an affordable steel alloy that is twice as strong as any available today [so] only half as much of it will be required to build a car, for example. Such a steel would be a boon to the environment, since just half the mining and energy consumption would be needed to harvest the steel, and fleets of lighter vehicles would consume less fuel. [The materials scientist] and his colleagues have not yet perfected this type of doubly-strong steel, but his forays into the Periodic Table have yielded specialty alloys that are strong and less apt to fail than previous alloys... [His] most ambitious project to date is known as Terminator 3: a smart steel composite, inspired by the fictional material depicted in the movie *Terminator 2*, that is self-healing and biomimetic – meaning that it emulates certain types of biological materials. In the film, the robotic villain is made of a metal that can take on any form, including that of specific persons, and can reassemble itself even after being blown to bits.

...Beware the rise of the robots... THE robots are coming and there's nowhere to hide. Computers are developing so quickly that a race of intelligent androids more awesome than... Terminator may enslave the world and treat their human creators as little more than pets. This is not the paranoid delusion of a science-fiction dreamer, but the considered opinion of... a world authority on robotic research and professor of cybernetics at Reading University in the [U]K... According to [the professor], within the next few decades research into artificial intelligence will create computerised robots that could outperform humans in every intellectual capacity. In his laboratory and other centres in the U[S] and Japan... advances in computers are already laying the foundations for new "life-forms" that could take control of the planet. "It is because of our intelligence that we are in the driving seat on Earth... When machines become more intelligent... they will take over control... In contemplating the next millennium and our future, we should prepare ourselves now for a society in which a more intelligent life-form than ourselves will exist." Will they treat us just as we treat animals? "We can't rely on intelligent robots being nice and generous when we are not nice and generous to life forms less intelligent than ourselves,"... If computers are the next step of evolution, they may also follow the law of survival of the fittest. It is a scenario predicted... in 2001: *A Space Odyssey*, where the computer HAL kills all but one of the crew of its space ship to protect itself... A machine as clever as HAL or as brutal as the T-1000 Terminator will not be created by 2001. But by the end of the decade, the Japanese will have developed machines as intelligent as a cat and... there is no fundamental barrier to creating ever more sophisticated robots with the ability to improve on their own design. Cyber-intelligence may have no limits... [The professor] believes there is nothing mystical about human intelligence that cannot be encoded in the circuits of a robot: "There are those who say humans have a magic ingredient that keeps us ahead, but I don't believe it." His vision of the rise of artificial intelligence is supported by... [the] head of research and development at BT Laboratories. In 10 years, computers will be 1000 times more powerful than today, [the head] says; a million times greater in 20 years, and a billion times by 2030. "Machines of such power and capability will evolve human characteristics of adaptability... and personality,"... Such views are not, however, shared by other eminent scientists... [A] leading mathematical theorist at Oxford University, says [the professor]'s nightmare is improbable. "It is based on the view that all

our brains do is compute. What is involved in intelligence is quite different from computation. Whatever intelligence is, it involves consciousness or awareness... The danger is that people will think that something like this is true, when it is not. It is a dangerous trend in society for people to believe computers can replace us." Time will tell, however. At the end of last year, [the professor] was the first scientist in the world to succeed in getting one robot to programme another over the Internet. "The experiment showed that machines can learn, like humans, by communicating what they themselves have learnt,"... [H]is research team have also created miniature robots that learn from one another and even exhibit new behaviour – such as "flocking" around a leader – that... had not [been] programmed into them. So far they do not seem threatening. [The professor] calls them "the seven dwarfs"... [The professor] does not want to "overreact" by calling a halt to robotic research, but intends to warn the world of what is going on: "There is a lot of frightening stuff out there that nobody is telling us about." [The professor] believes developments in artificial intelligence should be policed by an international body as an insurance against malign influences. "We cannot and should not rely on computers forming such a body for us,"... Fear of technological progress has a long history... [T]he idea of being threatened by clever "beings" created by humans goes back to the golem of Jewish tradition, a story about a [hu]man made of clay... [The] rector of the Royal College of Art, London, sa[ys]... "All the anxieties people felt during the industrial revolution about loss of control we are now feeling in the information age."

...[LITTLE Hachibe, whose name is the Japanese equivalent of Rover or Bowser, has been with its human family for five months, and in that time their lives have been transformed. "My husband bought him and, at first, Mother and I weren't sure," says the 54-year-old wife. "But we're a family of grown-ups, with no children at home any more, and these days Hachibe's all we talk about." While the wife does the house-work and her 82-year-old mother sits in front of the television, little Hachibe ambles around their small apartment, playing with his pink ball and only occasionally walking into things. "When Hachibe's tired it curls up and goes to sleep, and sometimes it comes up to see what we're doing. When my mother calls out, 'Hey, Hachikins!' it hears, and moves his head so prettily. I know I shouldn't, but sometimes, when we've been eating together, I put a bit of food in his mouth." But Hachibe has no mouth, no digestive system and no orifices. His ears are tiny microphones concealed inside his sleek silver head. His paws are articulated plastic, and his eyes are tiny video cameras which glow behind a curved perspex screen. Hachibe is an Aibo or Artificial Intelligence robot, a computerised dog released, in limited numbers and at enormous expense, by the Sony Corporation. Hachibe has no fur, no smell and no warmth but for the wife, who had a traumatic experience with a hamster as a child, this is his great attraction. "I hate dogs and cats," the wife admits, as the little bundle of joy head-butts the wall. "I can't stand being near any live, furry animal. So we don't think of him as a robot. This is a real dog." If you like your pets cool and metallic, you too can purchase an Aibo – for the first time, through the company's Website (www.world.sony.com/aibo). Sony is accepting orders from Europe, the US and Japan for the second generation of robot pets. Even at Euro 2400 (about \$NZ4700) each, the 10,000 units for sale are likely to be ordered several times over, and there is little doubt where most will end up. When the first 5000 Aibo went on sale last year, they sold out in the US in four days. In Tokyo, they were cleaned out in 20 minutes. The Aibo is just the visible tip of a potentially enormous new field of personal robots – robots designed to assist, entertain, communicate with and even love humans. The leading researchers, the designers and the keenest consumers of this technology are in Japan, the global centre of robot civilisation. Robots in their more functional forms are in use all over the world, from the giant industrial limbs which assemble cars to the Nasa planetary rover which collected samples from the surface of Mars. Japan still has a higher ratio of industrial robots to humans than any other country, although since its economy began to decline, the lead has been slipping. But nowhere is there greater interest in what may soon become the most interesting and lucrative area of robotics research – human and animal-like robots capable of interacting directly with people and expressing something very like emotion. The first walking humanoid robot, the Wabot, which could move one leg every 45 seconds, lurched out of Tokyo's Waseda University in 1974. Ten years later the piano-playing Wabot 2 made robotic and musical history by performing Bach's Air on a G-String with the NHK Symphony Orchestra. As the robot sat at the keyboard, his circuitry and memory chips occupied an entire room at the back of the concert hall. As the new model Aibo was tottering through his paces for the press, the latest in robotic innovation was on display on the other side of Tokyo at the International Robot Exhibition. There were vigilant guard robots, looking like benign daleks without the death rays, "welfare" robots – moving platforms with arms which can fetch and carry household objects or scoop up food from a plate and lift it to the mouth – aimed at the elderly or disabled, and industrious cleaner robots, which scrub and Hoover.'

... 'Electrolux appliance dealers are set to clean up with a robot carpet-cleaner.' [I]t's unlikely to be on sale for at least a year but no one can deny it's a brilliant idea to have a robot do your housework... CHATTERING appliances are growing in popularity. A robot which detects dirt and vacuums it up – created by university scientists in Georgia – tells anyone obstructing its path: "It anybody there? I'm cleaning up a mess." Weight-conscious Americans are also buying a slimming gadget, activated by the opening of fridge or pantry doors, which gives a stern warning: "Watch it, fatso."

...WATCHES that squeal warnings if their owners absent-mindedly leave their credit cards in shops – or if their cameras, for instance, are stolen – are being developed in Britain. [The i]nventor... is perfecting them in partnership with electronics experts at Southampton University. The watches have transducers that exchange signals with others built into the cards, cameras, or other valued possessions. If a return signal is not received, because the linked transducer is out of range, the alarm is activated. Another security aspect... is personal protection. A different type of screeching alarm goes off, at the touch of a button, if the wearer is mugged. The watch will also spout an evil-smelling spray on the assailants...

IF necessity is the mother of invention, do we really need a flying car... or a doggie nappy... which comes in various shapes and sizes and costs about \$6.35 each...? These were just some issues creators and dreamers grappled with at their annual Invention Convention in Pasadena, California. [A] [San Diego resident... has been inventing things for decades in his spare time, but the 67-year-old inventor of the "cafly" flying car does not expect to get rich quickly. "Usually 90[%] of inventors die poor... It's the next guy, who has the money to commercialise the invention, who becomes... rich..." The "cafly" is an egg-shaped two-seater with wings on top that flap like a lethargic bird and a top speed of 130 km/h. The wings would eliminate the need for stoplights, allowing the car to soar over busy junctions and traffic jams... [The 67-year-old] hopes to revolutionise the motor industry but his car has yet to make its maiden flight. A simpler... invention [of his] is the "pop-up," a device allowing a movie-goer to eat popcorn with one hand while draping the other around his girlfriend. "I do this for the same reason people... smoke... drink... and... play football... Inventing things is my sickness." His book, *An Inventor's Life*, discusses other ideas such as bathing only in warm water. [It] suffers from skin cancer, many of his family have died of cancer and... believes one cause of the disease is taking hot showers and baths. One of his aunts who washed only in warm water lived cancer-free... A Korean company is trying to attract distributors for its range of products, which includes... mineral-enhanced underwear. The "pio power underwear" is said to raise your spirits by relieving stress and steadying your nerves. If you are not happy with the idea of imbibing minerals through your underwear, they can also be found in special socks, soap and bedsheets. Does it work? Just ask your celestial wristwatch. [An i]nventor and astrologer... of Los Angeles explains: "If you wanted to know the outcome of a job interview you would stop your watch and you will get a horoscope that will give you your yes or no." [The astrologer] needs a company to make the chip that will make his watch tick then a manufacturer to build it. Meanwhile, [the astrologer] will read your stars in person for around \$140 an hour. [Another] Californian... reckons that her indelible cosmetics have the potential to become a household name. Her lipstick lasts 24 hours and requires a special remover. [Another stand was for] the inventor of the disposable erection enhancing band, an adjustable plastic ring that enables a [guy] to achieve a bigger, longer-lasting erection by keeping blood from leaving the penis... [I]t comes in just three sizes – large, extra-large and extra-extra-large.

...There is a story that economics lecturers used to tell their students to demonstrate the vast superiority of free markets over communism. It concerned a bolt factory, somewhere in the Soviet Union, where they used central planning rather than the profit motive to allocate resources. At first the factory's production target was set by Moscow in terms of quantities – so many million bolts a month. The plant managers were savvy

enough to realise that the easiest way to meet this target was to produce very small bolts and this they did – many more... than were needed and, of course, not enough medium and larger-sized bolts. Frustrated, the central planners changed the target to tonnes – so many hundred tonnes of bolts a month. The manager's response was to switch production to making a small number of huge bolts... the easiest way of meeting the target... Modern history has thrown up two ironies in connection with this story. The first – and it is rather tragic, like so much of Russian history – is that the communist economy turned out to be held together by rather more than the edicts of central planners, so that when these informal networks and relationships were torn apart by the capitalist revolution of the 1990s the economy basically collapsed and is yet to recover. The follies of the bolt factory don't look so bad, in retrospect. The second irony is shared – or suffered – in a few countries, notably N[Z] and Canada, which have adopted an extreme anti-inflation monetary policy. The irony is that [NZ's] 1989 Reserve Bank Act – a centrepiece of our own “free” market revolution – can be seen as an example of crudest, Kremlin-style central planning with its obsessive focus on keeping a particular measure of the consumers price index within a very narrow arbitrary band. As with the bolt factory, the danger in setting such a strict target is not that it won't be met, but that it will be – at the expense of other, worthy goals not written in to the contract which can therefore be distorted with impunity.

...A N[Z] company says its new cleaning agent will revolutionise auto parts washing in workshops and garages. Stocks AutoQuip says the biological agent in SmartWasher is safe, healthy and environmentally friendly... It has been cleared by OSH... and... has been used in industrial applications in N[Z] for the past four years... [A] Stocks AutoQuip executive, said microscopic enzymes digest all organic compounds, including oil and grease, and turn them into harmless [CO2]... The enzymes, nicknamed Ozzys, are contained in the cleansing fluid, known as OzzyJuice... Auto parts washed with OzzyJuice are cleaned in the same time as [traditional] systems, with any metal residue captured in the system's filter. The OzzyJuice is returned fully cleansed to the washing bath to be re-used indefinitely. A new filter is required each month and the OzzyJuice needs topping up every eight weeks or so as it is depleted by the cleansing action... The company says SmartWasher is just as efficient as traditional products – even better with varnish – and costs about the same to run in the longterm. It says engine reconditioners can even leave seals on parts because SmartWasher does not harm them, this saving time... [It also] doesn't aggravate... dermatitis... SmartWasher is designed and produced in the U[S]... Most existing cleaning products in garages contain solvents...

Solvents, from paint thinners to nail polish and industrial fuels, can cause brain damage and must be treated carefully, two U[S] experts have warned... Effects on the brain could be subtle and difficult to detect, ranging from difficulty remembering to personality changes, listlessness, irritability or depression. Nerve damage in the limbs could show up as intermittent tingling, numbness and muscle weakness... “An estimated 49 million metric tonnes of solvents are produced a year in America alone and more than 9.8 million people experience daily solvent exposure,” they said... Such chemicals... can be inhaled or can get into the body through the skin... Treatment is limited but patients whose moods had been affected could sometimes be helped with therapy and psychiatric medication... [□ IRD staff “are] all a bit tense,”... [after the NZ tax department's] managers... ordered painfully cheap toilet paper for... the Wellington service centre region. The department's Palmerston North staff said the new paper was hard and nasty to use. Its poor absorbency meant people had to use more to do the job – which negated the attempt at savings.

...[in] 1594 Sir John Harrington, an Elizabethan poet, invent[ed] the flush lavatory – installing one at his country home near Bath and just one other at Richmond Palace at the command of Queen Elizabeth I. Consequently, some people say they're going to use ‘the John’ when heading off to do a #1 or #2 in the device which one selection panel recently judged to be our species' ‘greatest invention’. While on the topic of flush toilets, ‘don't buy expensive loo deodorisers. Instead, keep a box of matches on the cistern and strike one after you flush – any trace of odour will vanish when you blow out the match. To remove odours in the kitchen, leave a saucer of vinegar to evaporate overnight and take any lingering smells with it.’]

...kitchens of the future... look... good: Never again will you run out of chocolate icecream. In the future, your fridge has a programmed inventory of staple items. When these foods run out, the fridge sends a message to the supermarket requesting more. A package arrives on your doorstep and your bank account is automatically debited... Should you get a little too enthusiastic with the frozen deserts, your fridge is programmed to keep track of consumption and tell you that you've had enough carbohydrates for the week. The thought of being disciplined by your fridge is unnerving; sounds a little too sci-fi. But it's closer to reality than you might think. The major trend in appliance manufacturing is in “intelligent” machines. Prototypes incorporating some of the aforementioned functions already exist... In the future your fridge... your oven... your lights and so on... will all be... run from a central computer. In the US, it's possible to automate your whole home. A combination of touchscreens... hand-held remotes and wall-mounted keyboards control lighting, temperature, the curtains and blinds, security and entertainment systems. The rooms are full of receptors that react to climate changes or a human presence, turning appliances on and off to achieve optimum comfort and efficiency levels. Says [the] jex-rocket scientist... who runs an automation design and installation company from Phoenix, Arizona; “Kitchen appliances will most likely remain fairly similar but will have a ‘smart’ chip... [which] will automatically share information with the other appliances in the home. So, for instance, when the phone rings it tells the TV to lower its volume so you can hear... [The ex-rocket scientist] predicts there will be a touch screen located in the kitchen that allows you to control your entire home from the kitchen. There will also be a television screen that allows you to check on the kids playing in their room or to see who's at the front door without abandoning the pots on the boil. In such a digital palace you can run a bath from the office, make breakfast from bed, even control how regularly your plants are watered and how fast your garden fountains tinkle... [The ex-rocket scientist] estimates that within 15 years every North American household will have at least some automation... However at the moment home automation remains the preserve of the wealthy – it costs about \$20 a square foot of totally automated house. For instance[, the Microsoft billionaire's] new \$80 million home on the shores of Lake Washington... is completely computer controlled. British Telecom researchers forecast that within 10 years, domestic robots – the equivalent of an automated dog that acts as security, cleans and does other household tasks – will become widely available in Europe. They already exist in Japan... AUTOMATION, robotics, smart chips – conjure up a futuristic vision in stainless steel complete with talking food processors; but some cuisine-oriented fortune tellers have quite different ideas. For various reasons they believe we'll be longing for an old-fashioned kitchen... To deal with condensation and eliminate the need for an extractor fan... a professor of architectural technology at Auckland University, has... [designed a] future kitchen... that... is built from natural wood because... “it absorbs moisture far better than shiny plastics or metals”. Every kitchen will have space for recycling bins. As for the stove top, individual appliances are much more energy efficient than a large hob, [the p]rofessor... says and predicts a series of smaller devices as a replacement. And the bad news is: We'll be doing our own dishes too. Well, some of us will... [The] head of department of Consumer Technology at Massey University is an advocate of the modern, minimalist kitchen[, but will] stick with his steam cleaning micro-dishwasher... [H]is colleagues' kitchen of the future is on wheels. It can be folded away to become little more than a benchtop during the week, or expanded with tables, shelves and seating for those “ceremonial” meals. You can also plug in accessories, such as a pizza oven or electric wok.

...[‘The latest in news, views and clues Ever wonder why your vacuum cleaner is so noisy? It's because people like it that way, according to an overseas survey, which polled consumers, asking them if they would buy a quiet vacuum cleaner. The answer was a firm “no”. The reason? They thought if the cleaner didn't make a lot of noise, it wouldn't do a good job. And apparently they feel the same way about lawn mowers, hair dryers and other gadgets. Noise equals power. In fact, manufacturers could make quieter, and just as powerful, models. FOR A GREAT floor cleaner, pour a couple of capfuls of eucalyptus oil into a bucket of hot water. The oil leaves floors with a clean sheen, has antiseptic properties and smells fresh’]...

We were watching a story on television regarding hay fever – one cause given was flowers indoors. “You see,” said MM. “I told you I had trouble breathing at night. It's those damn flowers you've got all over the place.” I had to point out that the flowers in question were made of silk.

...[‘an apartment tenant in Singapore has been fined \$14,000 after her flowerpot fell 22 stories and killed a five-year-old girl.’]

...The company's biggest sellers, however, are cube urns with a sandstone finish for prettying up the decor in high-rise apartment blocks. Coliseum Contractors in Mt Roskill reports a similar trend. "Our biggest sellers at the moment are special pots – mostly cube size – for special areas... They go outside cafes. Or rich people with nice houses buy them for placing around the swimming pool. Some of them are so big they have to be made up in panels and glued on site." ...A marble statue in the backyard? Until recently, N[Z]ers shuddered at the thought. Now, we think it's not such a bad idea after all. As long as it's not naked... Garden Statues and Ornaments in Tauranga... has manufactured statues for 17 years... "When we first started people wouldn't dream of having them. They thought statues were for graveyards. It's because we haven't been brought up with them. We're not like the Italians, who are surrounded by them all the time." [Garden Statues'] best seller is the goddess Diana – fully dressed... [The company's] version of Michelangelo's *David* comes with a fig leaf – or without. Even though we now accept the notion of a 1.5m Greek god lurking by the clothes-line, marble deities are still not "everyday sellers." "But N[Z]ers are getting better all the time," says [the company's founder, who] started making concrete gnomes, animals and miniature Venus de Milos in his own backyard. [The founder] was manufacturing 2000 gnomes pushing barrows, wielding picks and carrying rakes each year. Now [his business] no longer produces gnomes and his home is far too small for his mushrooming business[, which has]... 10 people working on a wide range of garden ornaments... RIGHT now there is a lot of customer interest in classical Roman columns venerably draped in vines or rambling roses. The older and more ruined they look, the better. "People ask us to make columns and break the ends off... There are some very wild imaginations out there." ...A silicon rubber mould is... made... from classical statues manufactured in Italy... reproductions are [normally] cast in a mix of white cement and crushed marble. Each statue can... also be bronzed, silvered... painted bright yellow... bright red[, or]... tinged in brown, black or green to give it an aged look. ■ 'A lack of money is holding up completion of a \$100,000 statue for Ericsson Stadium of the NZ athletics legend who was the first person to encourage cardiac patients to jog and has trained 17 Olympic gold medallists around the world. "There's a lot of work involved and the materials are really expensive," says the Waitakere sculptor who did a couple of test runs with smaller statues before embarking on the two metre version. The statue is still a clay mould and has to go through a few processes before it is cast in bronze. A fundraiser says they had hoped to unveil the statue next summer but funds are slow coming in. "We believe that NZ sporting icons should be honoured. Despite pioneering athletics and single-handedly starting the jogging movement, our model's been unrecognised."

...*'There's no business like gnome business* Everyone knows garden gnomes are naff, yet 2000 of them have invaded Bagatelle, a charming 18th-century estate in the Bois de Boulogne near Paris. Gnomes? Yes, everywhere – gnomes on the balconies, gnomes on the balustrades, gnomes on the parterre, gnomes on the lawns. "It is not a question of spoiling a historic site with kitsch, rather of initiating a dialogue between this type of sculpture and its site," says the organiser of the exhibition. "It is the context which transforms a gnome into a garden gnome." To prove his point, the organiser has invited some very superior gnomes to his show – antique gnomes who would utterly deny kinship with the plastic, red-capped species. Take Morgante, for example, a 1565 Medici court dwarf in marble who hails from the Boboli gardens in Florence. Few people would have a problem with these gnomes – in fact, Britons would hardly call them gnomes at all. But purely as a matter of semantics they are wrong. The "quaint manikins" disparagingly called gnomes across the Channel were first sold in Germany as Gnomengiguren, which simply meant "miniature figures." The first person to import gnomes into England was Sir Charles Isham, who created a rock garden at Lamport Hall peopled with porcelain figures Sir Charles had brought from Germany, where in the 1890s they were sold as table ornaments. Gnomes in their thousands are still imported from Germany. There is a Gnome Reserve in Devon (with 1000 small residents) that attracts 25,000 visitors a year, and an International Gnome Club based in California with its own Internet site. Thus the popularity of the genus cannot be denied – but neither can the scorn with which it is viewed by people of so-called good taste. For years, gnomes have been banned from the Chelsea Flower Show – it is claimed that their bright colouring renders them vulgar. But could there be a more arcane reason? After all, Sir Charles was a spiritualist and believed in fairies. So could these grinning figures evoke in us a subliminal fear of the supernatural?

The Garden Gnomes Liberation Front has struck again, kidnapping 20 of the cheerful little characters from a Paris park. A grim-faced watchperson at the Bagatelle estate admitted that an anonymous statement from the Paris branch of the front claimed responsibility: "We want to deridiculise garden gnomes, return them to their natural environment by releasing them in the forests that they should never have left. We demand the immediate closure of this odious exhibition and the unconditional freeing of the garden gnomes still being held." The liberation front has periodically stolen gnomes from domestic gardens and left them in local forests. Police have sometimes recovered the gnomes, returning them to their owners, but the kidnappers have not been arrested.'

...*It's not easy being GREEN* [The shopkeeper] cradles a plastic bottle as if it's the holy grail. It's nothing more than biodegradable liquid cleaner concentrate. But [the shopkeeper is a guy] with a mission. His environmentally friendly household and garden products are precious to him... And now [the shopkeeper] wants bitumen-hardened Aucklanders to like them too. That's why [the shopkeeper] has brought a range of 400 environmental products to the Big Smoke – from his home on a small communal-type farm in Northland. [The shopkeeper] left Auckland more than 12 years ago to work as an event organiser and fund-raiser in Whangarei[, organising]... the first national buskers festival and a mid-winter Christmas for the winterless north – with snow trucked in from Mt Ruapehu. Three years ago, [the event organiser] changed direction, setting up Fairground Ethical Traders with his school teacher wife... It began as a mail-order company selling environmental products from a small warehouse dug beneath their Matapouri Bay house. They specialise... in organic products – ...85[% of which are sourced from within NZ –] ...reaching out to like-minded people around the country, plus a few extra-keen customers abroad. Sometimes they packed 30 to 40 boxes a day for the rural delivery post[al service] to collect from the gate. Now... [they] have opened the Eco Store in Freemans Bay, where they hope to grow their business by combining mail order with a green shopping experience. "Most of us in the [First] World have houses full of poisons... We are creating a toxic nightmare, because we always want faster, cleaner and brighter. Research from America shows that domestic households have taken over from industry and agriculture as the greatest polluters..." Aucklanders, however, are a far cry from a group of like-minded eco-families in the north. And the sloppiness of our city ways have surprised the couple. "There is so much complacency here – even among our own family and friends," says [the wife]. "I'm shocked. They use horrible dish washing liquids that smell like an Olympic swimming pool. I'm amazed at the lack of awareness." Nevertheless, Aucklanders are finding their way to the couple's newly-opened shop, in a building that once housed... the Freemans Bay Boat Club... [The couple's] metamorphosis into shopkeepers is taking time. They are used to a warehouse environment. Now they have a till and eftpos machine. But enthusiasm for their product continues to shine through... [The husband] displays a flame thrower that kills weeds... There are hemp and wool socks, toothbrushes with natural bristles, organic food stuffs, organic... insecticides... paint... and... shampoos...

"Before you go out burgling tonight, dear, don't forget to shampoo your hair." ...DANDRUFF may soon be more than an unsightly annoyance to criminals. It could result in them being nabbed – sometimes for crimes committed years earlier. A system perfected by [a] British pathologist... enables forensic scientists to identify DNA in just one speck – with the chances of two people having identical dandruff being... one in 1 billion.

...[dandruff can 'usually be effectively controlled with the use of sulfur-containing ointment and shampoo. Most individuals with seborrheic dermatitis tend to have an oily skin, but the causal relationship between the oil glands and the skin disorder is still unclear.' By the way, 'hairdressing first became a profession in Greece, and its practitioners were prosperous enough to form an industry. Greek guys cut and curled their hair on reaching the condition known as ephebe (18 years of age), while Greek gals wore their long locks drawn back simply into a Psyche knot. Simplicity in coiffures persisted until the 14th cent., when variety became the fashion keynote and hair styles varied from the long curls of the nobility to the close-cropped haircut first introduced by Charles IV of France. To compensate for his short stature, Louis XVI introduced the towering curled wig, a hairdressing trend which produced the high rolled pompadour and the extreme styles popular among the court of Louis XVI, coiffures sporting miniature ships and coaches. The French Revolution reversed this trend. However, the turn of the 20th century saw a revival of the pompadour exaggerated by the use of artificial padding, but by the early 1900s gals began to bob their hair, thus inaugurating the modern preference for naturalness and simplicity in hairdressing – until the 1960s. The early

Marcel wave, named for the French hairdresser who invented it, 1872, was produced by applying a heated grooved iron. Charles Nessler invented the permanent wave process in Germany in 1905, using chemical and electric heat. The current cold-wave process has so simplified the art of hairdressing that more than 50 million home permanents, using packaged kits, are had each year in the US. Hairdressing salons have suffered little loss of business as the cutting and arranging of the hair, wigs and hairpieces have become increasingly dictated by fashion.'

...*'Choice of brush makes power of a difference* Use of a certain kind of power toothbrush each day could keep the dental hygienist at bay. People who wake up in a cold sweat at the thought of dental assistants with sharp instruments hacking away at plaque on their teeth, or those simply interested in the most efficient method of daily dental care, should use a power toothbrush with rotational/oscillation action, according to a new report announced at a symposium in Boston at the weekend. The finding comes from the oral-health wing of the Cochrane Collaboration, an international non-profit organisation that reviews data from healthcare studies. Rotational oscillation toothbrushes – those that rotate in one direction and then the other – removed up to 11% more plaque and reduced bleeding of the gums by up to 17% more than manual or other power toothbrushes. A senior director of the Council on Scientific Affairs for the American Dental Association said the findings, if they prove accurate, could be useful in helping dentists make recommendations to their patients. "That still doesn't mean that everyone should abandon the toothbrush that they're currently using. Someone using the simplest manual toothbrush with good knowledge of how to brush and conscientious brushing can do just as well as somebody using a power toothbrush, regardless of the design."

...*'Pain-free lasers could one day replace the dentist's drill.* A US dental expert has developed a laser that can zap infected tissue inside the tooth rather than having to drill and fill. The procedure does not damage the healthy nerve, and patients do not even need a local anaesthetic unless the tooth is really painful. The expert, of the Centre for Advanced Dentistry, in Fullerton, California, says the procedure also reduces the likelihood of root canal work in later life. The expert says most of the dental work done on adults is necessary only because of treatment during childhood. "Adult dentistry wouldn't exist if we routinely used lasers," says the expert, who has used the laser method to treat nearly 600 patients and claims a success rate of almost 100%. The erbium laser used emits light with a wavelength which is mainly absorbed by water. Decayed material has an extremely high water content, so that most of the laser's energy is absorbed by the infected tissue, which is vaporised. If necessary, an antibiotic paste can be inserted through a hole made by a more powerful laser and the tooth sealed. A Harley St dental surgeon in London said: "I personally would not use lasers. In the first place, the equipment required is incredibly costly, which would make it very expensive for the patient. Also, I don't think they have been tried and tested enough, and they take too long."

...a *'West Auckland Dental Centre is committed to total long-term patient care, using the latest dental technology to provide diagnosis and treatment that is faster, more accurate, and more comfortable for patients. The diagnostic laser has been shown to be 75% more accurate than X-rays and manual probes in detecting cavities. When X-rays are required, the centre uses digital radiography, which provides more immediate and accurate diagnosis while exposing patients to 90% less radiation than conventional X-rays. Intra-oral cameras enable both dentists and patients to see exactly what is inside the mouth. The image captured by the camera is magnified and projected on a screen to give a clear view of the teeth from any angle. For more difficult cases, dentists at the centre can use an operating microscope to enhance visibility when they are engaged in a delicate procedure. Air abrasion can be used instead of the drill in many cases. This modern technique is less invasive than drilling and often does not require injections. At the Lincoln Rd centre, founded in 1957, it is used whenever possible. The centre includes a new teeth whitening clinic, where the LaserBrite teeth whitening system is used. Never before has teeth whitening been such a comfortable experience. Patients spend only one hour in this pleasant treatment clinic and have had some fantastic whitening results.'*

...product[s] **claiming to brighten and whiten teeth without visiting a dentist can in fact damage teeth, says a report in the *Consumer* magazine. All of the whiteners contain a bleach, usually peroxide-based...** Hydrogen peroxide can demineralise a tooth's surface, roughening it, which in turn can lead to further staining. It also can severely damage some dental work... **Problems that can arise from regular use... include temporary damage to soft tissue (such as gums and the tongue), damage to tooth pulp, as well as irreversible cell changes or enhancement of the effects of carcinogens.** In N[Z], the Ministry of Health classifies tooth whiteners as cosmetics which means producers are not required to list their ingredients.

...Skin contains lots of things that you can't see from the outside, like sweat glands, hair follicles and nerve endings[, but it]... is our single largest body organ. The whole thing weighs as much as four kilos... The thickest skin is on the soles of our feet – up to 10 millimetres – while the thinnest is the skin of our eyelids – a m[m] or less... Skin might seem kind of soft... but it's the body's first line of defence against all sorts of infectious nasties like bacteria... and fungi. Skin has some bacteria of its own which can help stop these others taking hold. Plus skin cells are always shedding and replacing themselves to give us the best protection they can... [But we can help] skin by being careful about what goes on to it and into it... You need to put time and care in every day to give your skin its best chance. Find a cleansing, nourishing and protection programme that suits your lifestyle and your skin... Use good quality, natural products... Be careful what you wash with. It's not going to do your skin any good to scrub it off in strips... A toner will help keep your skin's surface cool and refreshed... Summer swims in salt water or chlorine can dry skin out, so get yourself into a fresh water shower if you've been at the pool or the beach. Follow with a natural moisturiser all over... [This] helps restore the skin's natural balance... It's estimated that as much as 80[%] of skin damage occurs on the inside, so it makes sense to begin your skin care with what you put into your body... Regular care and a balanced lifestyle will help your skin to do its job better. But there may still be changes in your skin, like pimples, blemishes, dry patches and oily spots. Just covering them up isn't the same as curing the problem. Use covering cosmetics that... also do your skin some good... [- e.g.] Blackmore's Treatment Cover Stick... Summer's an important time to take special care of... skin. The more sunburns you have, the more likely you are to get skin cancer... The message is clear: keep your skin out of the sun... Your face is the most exposed part of your body. But slap sunscreen on to every other part the sun gets to... [U]se high SPF sunscreens and head for the shade... Remember to wear sunglasses...

[*'Use sunglasses, children told* Children should be taught to slip, slop, slap and slide to avoid serious eye conditions such as cataracts later in life. The Optometrists Association AUS president said prolonged exposure to the sun could cause conditions such as cataracts, growths on the eyes, loss of central vision and even cancer. People's eyes didn't fully develop until the age of 30, and prolonged early exposure to UV rays almost doubled the need for corrective cataract surgery later in life. More than 120,000 cataract operations were performed in AUS each year 'at a cost of \$A378 million'...

A User's 17-year career chasing the sun on the professional tennis circuit brought her 18 Grand Slam singles titles, made her a multimillionaire and left her with damaged eyes. "And I'm not alone," the 45-year-old who retired from playing in 1989 says in the current edition of *Florida Tennis*, urging today's competitors to avoid the mistake of playing without protecting their eyes against ultraviolet radiation. The player idolised by generations of players who copied her baseline style, has pterygiums – cataract-like growths – in both eyes. "This problem is the nasty little secret tour players don't talk about much. But lots of them suffer from moderate to serious eye damage. I'm fortunate that mine haven't moved over my pupils, requiring surgical removal." In related news], a physics lecturer at Oxford University, [has]devised a pair of self-adjusting, fluid-filled spectacles. The glasses consist of an inert silicon oil sandwiched between two lenses made of thin polyester film. They can be adjusted to correct a person's vision simply by varying the amount of fluid in each lens with a syringe. [The lecturer's] aim is to produce spectacles for as little as \$3 a pair that would not need to be fitted by an optician.

...[*'If you're looking at the world through \$2 sunglasses, you are doing your eyes – and your wallet – no harm. While some fork out hundreds of dollars for designer sunnies, cheap versions are often just as good, says a Wellington optometrist. A recent survey by *Consumer Magazine* showed even \$2 glasses blocked the harmful effects of ultraviolet light. But buyers should be vigilant about ensuring lenses offered UV protection. Unlike AUS, NZ does not have a sunglass standard for wholesalers or retailers. The NZ Association of Optometrists wants that changed to stop substandard AUSn sunglasses being*

dumped here. Despite all the brands in the *Consumer* survey passing the UV test, the Wellington optometrist said there had been cases of dodgy sunglasses being sold in NZ. And while cost need not be a major consideration when looking for sunglasses, there are several other factors to be aware of. Contrary to popular belief, dark lenses do not offer more protection. Lenses which are too dark may obscure vision and be dangerous to wear while driving.']

...Sunglasses have four major purposes: 1. Protection of the eyes from harmful radiation, namely ultraviolet. 2... To assist in the process of adapting to different light levels... 3. To ensure clearer vision... 4... To provide comfortable vision by reducing glare... Glare comes from visible light and can cause discomfort (frowning, headaches, tired red eyes), temporary loss of ability to see, and some long-term effects on certain conditions involving the back of the eye. Studies have shown that night vision is detrimentally affected subsequent to exposure to intense glare if sun protection is not worn. Children with healthy eyes have very transparent media. That is to say the cornea, aqueous humour, crystalline lens and vitreous are all new and clear so transmit light very efficiently to the back of the eye. This increases the potential for damage to the retina from harmful radiation. Much of the effect of exposure to ultraviolet radiation is cumulative and it may take twenty or thirty years for a problem to appear. However, the damage process begins when children first begin to play outside. It is common to see adults wearing sunglasses on the beach but rare for children. This is understandable considering most young children are not good at caring for their possessions and breakage, scratching and loss will be higher than for adults. The wholesalers of sunglasses appear to have reduced their profit margins in children's sunglasses, perhaps in appreciation of the higher incidence of replacements. The prices charged for children's sunglasses are not usually high. As an alternative to sunglasses a good peaked hat will serve well at eliminating glare and ultraviolet radiation coming from above. However, this will not block out reflected light such as comes from a light sandy beach, water or snow. [● A reader asks: 'How much heat is lost through the head when a person is not wearing a hat?' As much as 40 to 50% of total body heat, depending on how hard the heart is working to circulate blood to the head.]

...in winter there 'has always been a trade-off between staying warm and looking your best – until now. Thermal underwear is taking off down under. Forget the "passion killers" your grandmother wore. We are talking about little lacy numbers that are as hot as they look – teddies, camisoles, body suits and French knickers that hug your body in a cosy cocoon. Damart – one of Europe's leading mail order lingerie labels – has more than 82 different styles, including a range for guys, gloves, socks and specialist garments. Its extraordinary success is attributed to the unique fabric used in the manufacture of all its garments – thermolactyl. "It is made from weaving spun PVC. The final fabric itself is no thicker than ordinary cotton and is just as soft." But that is where the similarity ends. Whereas cotton absorbs moisture, thermolactyl does not. Instead, it allows perspiration to evaporate. This is essential to warmth as moisture will quickly conduct any heat away from the body. "Thermolactyl allows people to wear lightweight clothes, move freely and yet still be as warm. We do not go for the big advertising hype. Our customers do most of our advertising for us." One famous customer had no qualms about revealing how it stayed looking slim and smart in the chilliest of weather. "I am a walking ad for Damart," Princess Di once told shivering crowds who had gathered in bitter winds to welcome her on to a new housing estate in London']...

LONDON – Soldiers of the British Army's prestigious Household Division are in uproar over a proposal to replace their shining metal breastplates with imitation plastic ones. The... proposed break with tradition follows a suggestion last week that the... Canadian bearskin hats which have been worn since 1815... by several British regiments be replaced by synthetic versions. That suggestion was made by the Minister of State for Defence Procurement, [who is] a staunch defender of animal rights... Traditionalists say the synthetic versions look electrified when affected by static electricity and resemble drowned rats when it rains. Cost is apparently the reason for the second proposal. The imitation breast-plates are reportedly half as expensive as the metal versions, which cost about £1000... □ [British soldiers are]... not alone in having expensive sartorial tastes. [A Hollywood movie star (r:p1734, ln7) splashed out \$150 on a pair of gloves in Toronto. But[after] feeling pangs of pity... gave them to a vagrant who was freezing outside the shop. The [vagrant] promptly swapped them in the store for others costing \$30 – and accepted the balance of \$120.

...A classified advertisement in a Japanese friends-wanted magazine sought [gals] to "exchange tips on becoming more beautiful." The person who placed the ad was a [guy. While that case] may be considered the extreme, a whole industry has sprung up in Japan catering to [guys'] vanity... Shape-Up House, an Osaka-based beauty parlour operator, opened its first [guy]-only Dandy House in Tokyo in September 1995 and now has six such places to meet growing demand... Customers spend on average \$NZ6000 for three months of pampering, with the most popular services being hair removal and weight-reducing massage. Japan's top cosmetics maker Shiseido is in on the act, too, launching its Geraid line late last year. It estimates the [guys'] cosmetic market has grown 70[%] in the past 10 years to more than Y200 billion. One Shiseido product has been an extremely hot item, an eyebrow-designing kit... that includes a tiny comb, scissors, tweezers and an eyebrow pencil, [which posted] twice the sales the company expected. A survey done by Shiseido before the launch of the eyebrow product found that the second wave of baby boomers, born between 1971 and 1974, "have a strong tendency towards narcissism." In the survey... 57.6[%] of guys]... in their early 20s... said the main purpose for wanting to look beautiful was for personal satisfaction, far higher than the 16[%] who said they wanted to attract girls... The survey showed that 65[%] had dyed their hair, 43[%] had long hair, 24[%] had a pierced ear and 11.5[%] cultivated a suntan in their pursuit of... "a wild appearance and a beautiful body." ...To enhance beauty, 85[%] used face cleansing foams, 54[%] were devoted to deodorant spray, 32[%] used mud masks and 17[%] were obsessed with trimming "excessive" hair. But far from being an obsession of the young, their fathers also worry about their appearances, says a marketing official at Fuji Spinning Co Ltd. Sales of the company's "shape-up underwear" for [guys], introduced two years ago, posted a four-fold jump last year. Sales grew among young [guys] and spread unexpectedly to the older generation worried about fat bellies and falling buttocks.

...Grots – that N[Z] schoolboy colloquialism for underwear – is an accurate description, if the results of a survey into Kiwis' knicker-changing habits are to be believed. Holey smalls, sagging undies, discoloured delicates and lingerie that has lingered so long its elastic is but a memory – it seems most N[Z]ers are averse to emptying the knicker draw until its contents are examined and certified dead by the underwear police. Research conducted by [an] underwear manufacturer... reveals that 63[%] of NZ]ers do not renew their underwear until even its use as a rag is questionable... [The manufacturer] estimates that about five million pairs of underpants are sold each year, equating to not quite two new pairs per person. A straw poll confirmed the awful truth: people are happy to wear underwear so riddled with holes it can be used as a sieve. Never mind – similar research in A[US] shows an identical if-you-can-wear-it, don't-change-it attitude. But at least Down Under we beat the Brits. Surveys may show we are slow to update our undies, but British [guys] are often loathe to change theirs from day to day... [In related news, the] vice-president of the Italian family business that has 30[%] of the world's fine [guy]swear market and annual revenues approaching \$1 billion... flew into Auckland yesterday for a quick tour of... the first Southern Hemisphere boutique to sell only... [their] clothes... and seemed pleased with the displays of \$130 polo shirts, \$1650 double-breasted jackets and \$395 bathrobes... [T]he Queen St store... got in ahead of frontrunners Sydney and Melbourne because of... [the franchise partner's] "forward thinking and readiness to break through in [guyswear]." The vice-president said guys] should have as much fun shopping as... [gals, and: "Gals want their guys] to look good. [Gals] like nice accessories such as handbags or belts and aren't [guys] their best accessories?"

...Be sexy, start smelling... You're out on the pull. At a party or on the dance floor, sheathed in designer wear, looking for that significant other. You have checked for radicchio stuck between the teeth, scrubbed at that stain and washed and powdered yourself to meet operating-room standards of sterility. We spend a fortune eliminating body odour, but are we making a terrible mistake? The news from the research labs is that the right sort of body odours can trigger desire more effectively than a bottle of costly scent... We are talking pheromones here – chemicals, the slightest whiff of which sends most mammals and insects into a sexual frenzy. However, scientific wisdom has always held that humans are not susceptible to crude stimulus-response mechanisms. What is more, say today's experts, we do not have the sense organ needed to respond to pheromones. Animals detect them with a special organ in the nose that is different from the one that detects ordinary smells. Called the veromonal

nasal organ (VNO) it consists of two small pits with tiny openings in their centres about... [0.1mm] wide. But although we develop one as a foetus, it then atrophies... Like the appendix or the tail, our VNO is something we can now do without. But our lofty eminence may be about to take a tumble. A... group of [US] researchers claims to have discovered the VNO in... adult... humans, raising the possibility that we may be responding to chemical messengers... [Researchers from] the University of Utah... Pennsylvania University and... the University of Colorado... examined subjects who virtually all had VNO pits – about 1cm up the nostril... [A]nd there seem to be clear gender differences – [guys'] VNOs respond vigorously to steroids from the skin of a [gal] and vice versa. Not everyone is convinced. For a start, [the head Utah researcher] has a vested interest in our VNOs, having raised \$12 million to exploit his discovery. His company is already selling “his and hers” pheromone perfumes. What’s more, no one has repeated the work yet. And even [his Utah] team has not been able to show that nerves from the human VNO actually go into the brain. But, as [the head researcher] points out, there is good reason for this: “We know a lot about the rat’s VNO, but studying the human one is hard because not many people are willing to have dyes that trace nerve cells injected into their brains, then have their heads cut off so you can take sections to see where the dyes went.” But if we are not affected by pheromones, it’s hard to explain why we produce them all the time all over the body... [W]ater sweat comes from one set of glands (eccrine) and gets mixed with tiny amounts of fatty material from two other types of glands (sebaceous and apocrine), both found around hair follicles. It is surely significant that in puberty we sprout hair in precisely those areas that fill with blood... The warmer they get, the more easily the... [sweat evaporates. So it] seems that we have two sets of chemical detectors in our noses. As well as the one that responds to newly-baked bread there is another that is triggered off by the waste products produced by millions of bacteria that chomp at fat deposits on your skin. Precisely the material you have been scrubbing off and trying to disguise. - 1997

IF SOME wicked witch could transport us back to the 1920s, our noses would tell us when we had got there. Suddenly we would meet the smell that the 20th century has managed to suppress: the rank, stale stink of the human body[‘perfumes and incense have been associated with humans throughout our recorded history – in ancient times they were primarily used in religious ceremonies and when embalming the dead, though the Egyptians soaked fragrant woods and resins in water and oil, and then rubbed their bodies with the liquid’; ‘alcoholic perfumes for applying to the body as “scent” were unknown during Elizabethan times, and the use of perfume was confined to fragrant powders and water’; ‘in England, aromatics were carried inside lockets, which gals wore around their necks and held to their noses when they were outdoors’ to gain some relief from ‘the odors of houses and streets’]. Cleanliness was the great, unnoticed achievement of the century. For the first half, people simply didn’t wash. Well, not by the standards of the second half. Daily showers? No, a weekly bath night, more likely, and often the whole family wallowed, one after the other, in the same tubful of water. Clean underwear every morning? Not a show. Housewives held a washday every Monday, and it was such a brutal and wearying job that clean clothes on Tuesday morning had to last all week. People had tricks, though, for looking fresh. [Guys’] shirts came with detachable collars held in place by collar studs. Pernickety [guys] could change their collars daily or every few days... I once had the privilege of working for a year in a Tibetan refugee camp. None of us in the camp bathed or showered, even in 40 deg C heat. And nobody cared or noticed because a kind of providence designed humans so that if nobody bathes nobody stinks: we are so used to our own smell that we become inured to the stink of others. So it’s bad luck to become the first person who takes up regular bathing. But not washing can be even worse luck. Once doctors realised that they were killing [gals] in childbirth by not washing their own hands, they themselves were bound to scrub up and to sterilise their own saws, scalpels and forceps. Hospitals became another source for the spread of cleanliness. Florence Nightingale had shown how lives could be saved by scrapping and scrubbing away the muck in military hospitals, and by the 1930s the lessons of Crimea had spread to N[Z] classrooms, where our own missionaries of cleanliness were almost as imperious as Miss Nightingale had been. Teachers held competitions for the cleanest fingernails. Dental nurses visited classrooms... I remember one nurse publicly berating a boy who had grown a line of bright viridian-green scum along his upper gum... We 7-year-olds knew how close to destitute the boy’s family was. So we understood, when [it] told the nurse that his mother said toothbrushes wore away teeth, that the real message was: “We can’t afford toothbrushes.” [‘The standard of dental health in NZ was once among the poorest in the world. It was found to be so bad among young recruits called up for service in WWI, that the school dental service was established in the early 1920s by the Department of Education and later transferred to the Department of Health.’]Three hundred years beforehand, Francis Bacon had declared that cleanliness was next to godliness. For centuries cleanliness remained only a pretty idea until the 20th century when Lever, Colgate and Procter & Gamble discovered that cleanliness could also be immensely profitable, to themselves. We ought to be able to measure with what a fury we N[Z]ers took up washing. By rights the *Year Book* ought to record how every decade soap production had doubled, quadrupled or whatever. Instead the *Year Book* says nothing. Statistics N[Z] claims not to know. And at the Manufacturers’ Federation, the [person] who ought to know says [it] doesn’t – probably... because the 19 soap factories we had in 1891... have now shrivelled to Levers and to Colgate, neither of which wants the other to know how much it makes. So we only know that two companies overwhelmed 19 – and that the winning two called in brilliant writers of advertisements to crush their enemies. Lifebuoy soap, glaring pink and reeking of the laboratory, launched one of the all-time great advertising slogans: “Lifebuoy stops BO.” Within days, BO (short for body odour) was absorbed into the language. And every day the advertisements pierced us with fear: “Have I got BO?” Nor was the advertisement dishonest. Washing does get rid of smells. Sunlight laundry soap – or Solvol sandsoap, for that matter – would have done as well. But no. The... ads had welded BO and Lifebuoy together: you couldn’t get rid of one without the other. A Lux product, soap flakes, probably had the greatest impact on the century. Soap flakes forced us into changing our underwear every day. “Join the Lux change-daily girls,” said the advertisement, and there stood a young [gal] wearing a skimpy nightdress and washing her knickers (pronounced longdzer-ray) in the handbasin before hanging them on a towel rail and going to bed. Next morning, and every morning of every day, [the young gal] would slither into slightly damp underwear, confident that her odourless knickers would not let down her over-all personal freshness. The soap companies and the writers of advertisements may have strutted and gloated to see how they had changed the world simply by selling soap and growing rich. If so, they overlooked the real revolutionaries... [R]eally it was electricians who made us clean. Cold water is a hateful substance. Nobody lingers in it, luxuriously lathering the gunk out of every fold in the skin. But until the 1940s it was tedious and troublesome to make hot water. A boiler in the kitchen would do the job. But the firebox had to be cleaned out daily and a new fire started. By the 1930s califonts... were common. Inside a califont a column of coal-gas flame played on a corkscrew waterpipe. Into the top end flowed cold water. Out the other end dribbled hot. The terrible disadvantage, though, was that califonts often started with an explosion that rattled windows and sent children running in terror. By the 1940s electric hot-water cylinders were standard and the daily bath or, increasingly, the daily shower were established. In the 1950s young people returned from long working holidays in England aghast with news of bathless Britain: houses row on row and not a bath between them, only municipal slipper-baths used by sullen and smelly Poms and amazed A[US]ns, Canadians and N[Z]ers.

...*Soap magnate leaves lots of suds...* William Hesketh Lever had a brilliant idea in the 19th century, and it made him one of the world’s largest fortunes. Before [Lever] came on the scene, soap was made from rendered animal fat called tallow. Lever began making better soap from easier-to-handle vegetable oils, including palm oil from Africa... Sunlight and Pears soaps were his creation and [Lever] sold them everywhere. When [Lever] died in 1925, as the first Viscount Leverhulme, his business was worth £60 million... [–] or... £1.6 billion... in today’s money. His grandson Philip, the third viscount, died a year ago without an heir and now the family mansion, Thornton Manor, and the treasures within it, are poised under the auctioneer’s hammer... Not on offer is the splendid art collection housed in the Lady Lever Art Gallery, which... grace[s] Port Sunlight, a model town with leafy streets and gardens, which the first viscount built for his employees... The viscount made up his title... from the surnames of himself and his wife, Eliza Hulme. His fame and fortune live on as Unilever, the company which last year had worldwide sales of \$US43 b[il]. Editor’s note:

'Soap was first discovered in the Middle Ages – when it was found to mix with both water and fatty dirt. Water alone does not loosen or remove oily or greasy coatings, but soap – especially when used in association with warm or hot water – divides the fats into droplets (*emulsifying action*) and breaks up carbon compounds into fine pieces (*dispersing action*).’ ‘Soap also reduces the surface tension of water by 2/3rds, thus causing more thorough wetting’.]

...What is Ha-Ra? ...Ha-Ra[is]... the Chemical Free Fibre Cleaning Technology... system which cleans better, faster and cheaper! ...Ha-Ra is an amazing invention, a complete cleaning system which Protect[s] Yourself and the Environment... The only solution you need to clean with is: water!

...It is surprising how few people know anything about the origin of dry-cleaning, the methods used and the progress made since the secret was first discovered. France was the original home of the so-called dry-cleaning (which by the way is not an entirely dry process). A rather romantic accident about 100 years ago was responsible for its beginning. According to the story, during the course of a lovers' quarrel, a lamp was upset on a tapestry tablecloth. Although it appeared at first that damage had been done to the valuable table covering by the liquid spilled from the lamp, it was soon found that the appearance of the cloth had greatly improved when compared with surrounding parts that had not come in contact with the liquid. This discovery gave birth to the idea that the same liquid might effectively clean... other fabrics and textiles. The average person does not stop to think what happens between the time the frock or suit is handed in and picked up by the owner so in order to satisfy our curiosity a visit was paid to a city dry-cleaner's. The first thing to strike one is the absence of any chemical smell and the bowls of spring flowers around the office, where the cleaning is actually done... The manager... explained the technical side of the dry-cleaning... Garments are brought in two or three times a day from depots in the city and suburbs. A search is made through pockets and it is amazing the collection found by the end of the day. Letters, note money as well as coins, butter coupons, car and radio licences, photographs and even nuts and bolts. If the clothes have been picked up from a house by a driver in the course of a laundry delivery, the belongings found are returned... to the person concerned that day. Otherwise they are sent back to the depot with the garments when cleaned. The first thing done by the sorter is to remove the docket pinned on at the depot and find out which day the garment has been promised for return or if it [is] a particularly urgent job. The docket is filed and a ticket is put on by a metal stamping machine. The colours of the tickets vary each day so that later on, when the garment comes to be pressed, the operator can tell at a glance... which to give priority... The room is lit with fluorescent lighting and, although used in many places of business nowadays, it is even more important here, as it shows up spots and stains more clearly than ordinary electricity. After details of the stain have been noted, the garments are then weighed and tied into bundles not exceeding 250lbs. The reason for this is that the load in the cleaning machine is limited to this amount. After this the clothes are sorted into bins, light and dark clothes being divided, so that in the cleaning process only clothing of the same colouring is done. Grubby clothes, such as raincoats, are kept apart from others and cleaned separately. The actual dry-cleaning process is rather wonderful to watch. Because of modern scientific developments none of the solvent fluid is wasted. While the cleaning is going on, the fluid is being converted back both as liquid and vapour to new solvent that can be used time and time again. The clothes to be dry-cleaned are put into the machine... The attendant of the machine sets the time... the cleaning will take (it varies for different things) on the automatic clock face, closes the door and the machine does the rest. In the trade, this part of the cleaning is known as "washing" and the clothes are turned over and over in a bath of cleaning fluid which is pumped continuously through at 400 gallons per minute. In this case trichloroethylene is used and, as well as removing soil, it revives colour. After the wash is completed, the machine is speeded up to 1000 revolutions per minute, creating sufficient centrifugal force to throw most of the solvent out of the garments. When the clothes are taken out at the end of the 25 minutes, they feel dry but there is still about 20[%] solvent remaining. So the next part of the cycle is to put the garments into another machine known as a Syntho Saver, in which circulating warm air takes out in the form of vapour every remaining trace of the solvent liquid. It is at this stage too that moisture in the form of perspiration is removed. I asked... how it was that there were no overpowering fumes while the machines were operating. [The manager] took me to inspect two huge grey tanks at the other end of the room and said that the fumes are conveyed in pipes into these tanks, the interior of which is like a huge gas mask containing large particles of charcoal that absorb and neutralise them. While this is going on, steam is applied to the air in the "gas mask" tank and by sublimation the vapour is converted into solvent again. We followed the cleaned clothes into the pressing room. Before a frock or suit is free of stain, and should any mark remain, such as rust, which is not taken out by the ordinary cleaning, it is treated by various chemicals. One of the interesting things about cleaning is the steam gun, which also removes obstinate stains... After "spotting" as this is termed, the clothes are put into a machine that circulates hot air for rapid drying. Many a housewife would envy the wonderful shoulder pressers – the "puff irons"... Incidentally, [the manager] explained that steam heat is not as hot as a household iron and cannot scorch even the most delicate fabric.

...Self-cleaning materials could soon make scrubbing out coffee stains as redundant as the horse and cart. The new science of "nanotechnology" is developing self-cleaning materials ranging from clothes to kitchentops, using tiny structures the size of a few nanometres, or billionths of a metre. The techniques rearrange the atoms in traditional materials to stop liquids getting through. In NZ, the Kathmandu sports stores plans to launch shirts, shorts and trousers made of self-cleaning "nano-care" material in October. The associate director of the Institute of Nanoscale Technology at the University of Technology in Sydney... told a conference on nanotechnology and advanced materials in Wellington this week that the techniques would revolutionise many consumer products. "It's a technology that can be incorporated into almost anything that we use..." [the] institute is building a model "nanohouse" that will incorporate self-cleaning benches, fridge pipes coated with material that will not heat the surrounding air, and windows made of transparent glass that you can see through but which blocks out heat in the middle of the day. The trick lies in using nano-sized particles that are smaller than the wavelength of visible light, which is around 500 nanometres... Traditional sunscreens, for example, were white because they incorporated large blocks of zinc oxide, which absorbs ultraviolet light. New transparent sunscreens used the same zinc oxide, but in such tiny 10-nanometre particles that they scatter the light while still absorbing it. The tiny particles are made in "ball mills", using large metal balls to literally crush material into a microscopic powder... [In another development, a] University of California chemist has invented odourless sports socks... [In addition to meaning there will be] NO more stinky socks[. the chemist]... hopes to develop the technique into odour-free diapers and hospital gowns that ward off deadly bacteria and viruses.

...● I have just had my grand-daughter to stay while her mum was in hospital having Number Three. My daughter left disposable nappies for Miss Under Two and, having read a lot of opinions about these nappies, let me tell you they are marvellous – better than sliced bread. No leaks, no washing, no trying to get them dry in the rain. In fact no worries at all. *Happy Nanny, Walton* ● I agree with EF DE of Hamilton's letter... about all the negative responses to people using cloth nappies. I know – I'm one of the minority of young mothers who do use [them]... I'm a 26-year-old mother of a two-year-old boy and my husband and I are expecting our second baby next April. My friends think I'm crazy for using cloth nappies. I do use disposables when we go out and one at night, as our son sleeps through the night. We watched a programme while I was pregnant with our son which said to keep a baby in disposables full-time for a year costs \$1200. As I'm a full-time mum, we are on a limited income and I would rather spend the money elsewhere... [I say] to EF DE's daughter... [d]on't worry about people thinking you are mad. Do what you think is best for your baby. H[owever, h]ave you tried shopping at the Baby Factory, K-Mart or Mitre 10 for a nappy bucket with a lid? Good luck. *KH, Waipawa*...

Finally a solution for maternity wear! PreggyBand is an insert that buttons on to your own clothes, allowing them to expand and fit through pregnancy... enabl[ing] you to retain your existing wardrobe... A... single pack is \$26.95 a... double... \$39.95... Look and feel great in your own style.

...Gangster-style swagger recipe for back pains Low-slung pants and a gangster-style walk may look cool, but they are exposing teenagers to hip and back injuries... "Walking around with their legs wide out to their side because they have to hold their trousers up tends to influence back

pain,” says the Waikato chair[person] of the N[Z] Society of Physiotherapists... The walk, which [the chairperson] describes as a swagger, is a nationwide trend among teenage [boys] wearing low-slung baggy pants that expose acres of boxer shorts. It causes a lot of rotating in the lower back, and an abnormal swaying motion “to keep everything up”... Teenagers also tend to slouch when they walk with a swagger. The overall walk affects teenagers from the shoulder blades to the lower spine... It will not cause injuries by itself, but teenagers going through a growth spurt risk back problems if they walk with a wide-leg swagger. [The chairperson]’s advice to teenagers is to try to keep good posture...

[A NZ fashion designer] is excited about a dead [guy]’s ties. So much so that when they came up for auction [the Auckland] bought the lot: 1000. They’re not woven from the woolly bellies of exotic creatures, nor are they the most exquisite things you’ve ever seen. Some are downright ugly. Yet, [the Auckland, who forms] one half of the World design duo, had to have them because they represent the fetish aspect of fashion. “They’re pointless [– apart from pointing towards the wearer’s face or crotch, depending on your point-of-view!] They stick around your neck and they look silly. But they’re one of the few things that [guys] can get obsessed about. There’s a lot of fetishes that [gals] can get. Guys don’t wear nail polish and they don’t do lipstick.” ...As the ties are mostly [N]Z... and A[US]n-made with a brief foray into American culture, they illustrate the mood of the nation from the 1940s to the 1980s. For instance, the swirled paisley and “Muldoon” ties of the 70s depict a groovy, positive era, whereas those from the 40s and 50s show a bolder, more beautiful and classical period... These thin scraps of mostly unworn fabric waiting to be knotted around... throats are on show on the mezzanine level of World’s High St premises... and are on sale from between \$20 to \$30 each... [The bald Auckland] will keep a few of the collection... – without even knowing how to knot one properly. “I’m hoping a lawyer will come in and show me.”

...Get rid of unwanted hair permanently, effectively, painlessly! With the highly advanced IGIA hair removal system. One of the most effective hair removal systems ever... Simply hold the hair in the electronic tweezers. The tweezers emit a radio frequency in the form of a dry heat which goes down the hair to the root and the papilla, stopping the hair growth cycle. In just 30 seconds to 1 minute the hair will slide out... Sometimes up to 3 applications are necessary, because occasionally more than one hair grows in each follicle and some hairs can be stubborn. If the hair grows back within a year after 3 applications, return for a full refund... Only \$17980... Includes special cleansing gel and after treatment cream.

...Now you can afford to remove unwanted body hair – permanently! With the affordable, new, permanent hair remover from... Sonique – one of the most effective hair removers available... Why waste time waxing, shaving or plucking again and again when you can remove hair once and for all? ...Sonique employs radio signals to kill hair at the roots... and you won’t feel a thing... Only \$99...

Is embarrassing facial and body hair ruining your life? Unwanted facial or body hair is an embarrassing fact of life for many [gals]. Now, the CACI Clinic’s advanced new *PermaLase* treatment means you don’t have to just put up with the problem. Medically-developed, *PermaLase* is the quick and virtually painfree way to remove unwanted facial or body hair – and restore your self-confidence. Hair that is treated effectively during the... cost-effective *PermaLase* programme will not return. Studies show an average hair loss of 50-70% after two... treatments.

...imagine... no more awkward shaving, painful waxing, or messy creams Depilux is a new method of hair removal that’s clean, quick and effective! Simply smooth Depilux... DEPILATORY CREAM... onto your skin while in the bath or shower and leave for a few minutes before rinsing away. Each hair is painlessly removed right from the root so you can enjoy baby-soft, ultra-smooth skin for even longer... Depilux... dissolves each hair... [but] is so gentle you can use it on your face or bikini line and, even better, the hair that grows back will gradually become softer and finer... See and feel the difference – for weeks on end! ...Only \$29... each \$26... each for 2 or more... No other hair removal method is this easy.

...‘epil-stop plus’ ...is a new improved hair removal formulae that contains Vitamin E to leave your skin feeling soft and smooth. A painless alternative to electrolysis and a convenient alternative to shaving and plucking. ‘epil-stop’ penetrates deep down to the hair follicle and prevents the hair from growing – for weeks! ...Only \$69... Includes... ‘epil-stop Growth Spray Inhibitor’, reusable spatula applicator and instructions... I’d consider it if they had some free add-on like an abdominiser and a set of Ginsu 2000 steak knives... [Also featur]ing... on TV4[’s]... the Active Shopper Network... is... an... infomercial... [in which] two fat... g[als]... prance, dance and try to entice me into buying the AirCore – the pot that cooks... dinner while I’m out on the town.

...[introducing an] amazing new bakeware... unlike anything you’ve seen before, it will turn your ideas about baking inside out! IT’S INCREDIBLE, IT’S FLEXIBLE! Never again will you have to battle a baking mould that won’t let go of your freshly baked cake. With Llorente you simply flex the tray and your baking pops out, perfect, in one piece! ...It’s absolutely indestructible... GENUINE NON-STICK! (All the way through) Llorente needs absolutely no greasing... [– so] you won’t need to add fattening oil or butter to your recipes... [–] and won’t... rust, dent... chip or flake. Best of all it’s not a coating so Llorente will never lose its non-stick qualities... And since food doesn’t stick, clean up is a breeze... Just rinse or wipe clean, or pop in the dishwasher... Llorente is not just for cakes. Now you can prepare pizza, lasagne, meatloaf, quiche and delicious specialty dishes. Plus... you can make wonderful cold dishes... COOKS EVENLY! There are no hot spots, so your baking cooks evenly with no burnt edges... [– u]nlike traditional pans that absorb heat, causing food to be overcooked and underdone... The baking trays are made of 100% pure food-grade silicon, which doesn’t hold the heat, [so] it stops cooking as soon as it leaves the oven... “...one thing that [we] noticed that made a difference was that the pan couldn’t burn you. We took it out of the oven and you could touch it right away...” ...Metal pans can rust, dent, and the non-stick surface can scratch and flake... Glass pans can shatter... [Since Llorente]’s not rubber it won’t melt. That’s why it’s earned the Good Housekeeping seal [of approval]... By now you can all see why Llorente cookware is *the* hottest product in Europe... Retailers throughout Europe are raving about it. “[The]Llorente product-line is revolutionary. People love it. We never have returns. People come back over and over to buy it for themselves and their friends.” ...SPACE SAVING! You can fit 25 of these revolutionary baking moulds in an average sized cutlery drawer – simply roll up or fold, saving valuable space! ...Choose from... seven great styles... All moulds are available in 3 colours... Only \$3995 each... Buy your Llorente moulds one at a time or put together your own 3 piece set or 6 piece set and take advantage of the special prices... Select any 3 – pay only \$9985... Select any 6 – pay only \$17970... plus buy 3 or more and receive a free recipe book... Try your Llorente cookware risk-free for a full 30 days. If you don’t love the way it looks and cooks, simply return it for a full refund of the purchase price... DURABLE! Heat proof up to 220°C... microwave and freezer safe. They can be put in the oven or microwave straight from the freezer.

...THE GADGETS WE OWN... Today... 80.0... % of N[Z] households own... a... Microwave... [(compared with 37].6%... 10 years ago[)]; 80.3% own]... a... Combination fridge/freezer... [(69.8%)]... a third... own... a... Dishwasher... [(18.6%); 65.4% own]... a... Clothes drier... (...55.7%]; 79.3% own]... a... Video recorder... [(42.7%)] and... 32.9... % of... households... [have a computer (9.6%). Surveys] say... plenty about our changing lifestyles. Cellphones and pay-TV were nowhere to be found in the [corresponding] survey a decade ago. Now, around 20% of households have one or both, while the prevalence of black and white television sets is no longer recorded in the publicly issued tables... 96.3% now have a]... Colour TV... Likewise, the quiet demise of the open fire can be observed. In 1988, more than 33% of houses still had one, whereas only 20% have them today.

...Is condensation driving you up the wall? Create a dry healthy home with a Dry-Matic ventilation unit... Continuous, filtered fresh air... Recycles lost heat... ● Childproof caps are a great innovation and do a great job but could I make a plea to manufacturers to spare a thought for those who suffer from arthritis and similar afflictions. Increasingly caps on household cleaners are getting larger and more difficult to remove...

THE UVtec franchising operation has targeted one of the sore points for N[Z] homeowners – the effect of the sun’s ultraviolet rays on their fixtures and furnishings... “There are other options for protecting furniture, carpets and artwork, but these involve keeping curtains closed all day, tinting windows which affects light in the room, and applying film. The UVtec liquid is invisible and bonds to the surface of the glass – you won’t even know it is there.” ...UVtec’s clear liquid is applied to the inside of ordinary window glass... 98[%] of UV rays are blocked by the... product.

...Millions of people who suffer from sick-building syndrome could be cured if ultraviolet lights were installed in office ventilation systems... 70[%] of people in the West now work in air-conditioned offices, and... [u]p to 80[%] of office workers are thought to suffer from ...related illnesses.

...Office workers who festoon their desks with potted plants in the hope that it will cure sick building syndrome are wasting their time. A[n AUS]n researcher... says plants have no measurable effect on removing airborne chemicals that are blamed for the syndrome, which causes people to feel tired, irritable and unwell... One of the biggest culprits for sick building syndrome is formaldehyde, a toxic compound that is widely used in pressed wood products such as plywood and some foam insulation. Formaldehyde can irritate the eyes, skin and throat, aggravate asthma and trigger hay fever. At levels as low as 50 parts per billion... it is thought to cause nausea, dizziness and tiredness. The W[HO]'s safety standard for this chemical is 82 ppb. [The AUSn researcher] set up five rooms in which [were] placed five plants every two days until there were 20 plants in each. With up to 10 plants in the room, formaldehyde levels were unchanged. With 20 plants, the levels reduced slightly, from 856 ppb to 761 ppb.

...['plants in office or shop environments may turn yellow and down due to light, water and air-con problems – but the solution is the NZ ARTIFICIAL PLANT SHOP: a special shop for realistic Palms, Ficus and other big or small trees, foliages and potted plants']...

The versatility of vinyl... Think vinyl and you may cast your mind back a few years to some of the cheap and nasty flooring options found in areas like the kitchen and bathroom. Home owners today however are looking for more fashionable choices in their flooring selections. No other floor covering category offers the selection, styling, and ease of maintenance as a vinyl floor! Thanks to some great advancements in styling and technology, vinyl floors have been changed forever. Modern technology has literally revolutionised the vinyl flooring market with manufacturing processes that produce vinyl that resembles the look and textures of real ceramic, stone and wood grain patterns. They have changed the way vinyl floors are made and these amazing replicas have such incredible realism it is difficult for most people to tell whether it's the real thing or not. Today's vinyl floors are extremely durable and long lasting, but like any floorcovering they still need regular maintenance to stay looking like new.

...“Never Paint Again” has been the promise made to users of Masada Twin-wall claddings since 1985 and now many thousands of proud home owners across N[Z] enjoy the long-term benefits of cladding with Masada's low-maintenance exterior vinyl weatherboards and soffitline. When re-cladding, Masada can usually be fixed over the top of existing claddings, thus transforming an old home in a matter of a few days, to one that will never need painting again and that will stay looking good for decades. Satisfied users have found that Masada Twin-wall Vinyl weatherboards provide the answer for an exterior cladding which is unaffected by the sun and salt-spray of N[Z]'s harsh maritime environment and won't warp, split or rot. As well as the appealing classic rusticated design, Masada Twin-wall vinyl weatherboards offer practical benefits, including increased levels of thermal insulation. The weatherboards are capable of being fixed vertically or diagonally as well as horizontally or bent around a radius for such purposes as curved decking balustrades, or for under bay windows. [■ Another alternative to timber or fibre-cement weatherboards, and Masada's primary competitor, is 'Marley Clad – a tough impact resistant PVC construction that is easy to work with, will never rot, rust or need painting'.]

...THE SMART CHOICE... IN WEATHERBOARDS... [Marley's] *Pallside* is a solid weatherboard that combines the traditional values of weatherboards with modern technology. Designed and manufactured in N[Z] specifically to withstand the rigours of N[Z]'s harsh environment, *Pallside* is a low-maintenance, cost effective weatherboard that offers stylish looks without the need for painting. That's right, no more painting, just select the colour and profile and sit back and relax. *Pallside* is used mainly for new homes but can be used to re-clad an existing building, to breathe new life into the tired, old exterior of your home... •Doesn't rot or absorb water so increased durability... • Smart looks • ...25-yr Guarantee

...A range of polycarbonate roof sheeting has completed more than five years of exposure at the Building Research Association's test site in Wellington. The 20 imported sheets were fixed at angles of 45deg on weathering racks on the edge of Cook Strait in 1992 to test their life expectancy... Some look as good as the day they were put up, others have yellowed and developed haze on the surface caused by micro-cracking, which reduces its impact strength. Among the conclusions: “The greater the roof pitch, the longer the life of the polycarbonate... The part of the sheet that is closest to horizontal weathers the fastest. A good surface protective coating on the side facing the sun is necessary for good durability. Protective layers of acrylic coating appear to weather better than surfaces that incorporate only ultraviolet light absorbers. Less condensation occurs in the channels of coloured twin-wall sheeting than clear sheeting. We recommend that the top of the supporting timber (for example, purlins) directly under the polycarbonate sheet be painted white at installation – also for all other glazing sheeting, including fibreglass, PVC and acrylic. This helps to prevent localised heating of the sheet and premature breakdown.” PVC wall claddings Branz has had on the exposure site since 1990 have shown noticeably reduced impact strength. “However, after three to five years the loss of impact strength has levelled off and, in the case of the worst-performing cladding, has even improved slightly.” The association tests a range of building materials as part of ongoing research and also for paying clients. Some materials have been up for 20 years. They are tested for the impact of such things as ultra-violet light, moisture, corrosion and salt in a maritime environment. Branz uses sites in Queensland to test the effects of extreme heat[– ‘plastics expand on hot days’ –] while cold weather is simulated in freezers. Weathering can be accelerated in laboratories, but the results are checked long-term outdoors.

...A smart type of plastic which automatically “heals” itself like human skin when cracked or broken has been developed... The substance, containing embedded microcapsules filled with a special healing agent, could mark a revolution in materials for systems that cannot easily be repaired once in use. Examples include the components of spacecraft and space stations, satellites... motors, artificial organs and bridge supports.

...The west Indian state of Maharashtra is set to place a total ban on plastic shopping bags, with violators facing a maximum five-year sentence. Officials said the beaches and drains in the state capital, Bombay, were being choked with millions of plastic carry bags discarded after use.

...South Africa is to ban the use of plastic bags in a bid to rid the country of [them]. The ban on the bags, handed out free to shoppers at all major stores, will be phased in over the coming months... The prohibition is the brainchild of [the]Environmental Affairs Minister... who has campaigned for months to rid the country of the [non-]biodegradable bags, which [it] refers to as “the country's national flower”... [In related news, AUSn] companies are moving off-shore because of hazardous substances and new organisms legislation similar to legislation proposed in N[Z], says a local] plastics industry leader. The new chief executive of the Plastics Institute (PINZ)... says the HSNO legislation... is a “real can of worms.” If it is introduced in its present form it will have a “drastic effect on any manufacturing industry with an imported content... In essence what it means is that anybody bringing any substance into the country, as opposed to a finished product, is required to notify that substance and have the substance, the method of treatment, labelling, packaging and a whole host of other elements, approved by... the Environmental Risk Management Authority... At the moment... ERMA... has something like 120,000 separate notifications in front of it, and it's going to be a bureaucratic nightmare.” ...[but] the biggest risk is that N[Z] will get the same situation as occurred in A[US]... where companies found it too difficult, too time consuming and expensive, and left... Firms competing in world markets have to be very nimble to stay competitive... and they cannot do that if... bogged down in bureaucracy. The industry is also being hurt by the low value of the N[Z] dollar, which is compounded by the fact that raw material prices, even in US dollar terms, have virtually doubled in the last six months. That has been caused by a shortage of materials arising from the doubling in the cost of polymers used in the plastics industry because of oil industry manoeuvrings. “The whole thing has snowballed a bit of late and our members are certainly having to approach their customers with price increases... Having said that, the industry is in good heart despite the problems. Everyone is very busy and... we keep hoping that it will get better.” The plastic industry, [the executive] says, has a commitment to environmental protection and product development. Several sophisticated new products have been developed in a joint venture with Auckland University and at least one of those is now coming on-stream. The industry is a significant exporter, and in the last calendar year earned N[Z] more than \$300 million...

Tyres may be made of plastic in future Tyre companies have tried all types of alternatives but nothing works quite as well as rubber – for now. However, the search continues for better materials and rubber may well be replaced by new types of plastic compounds in the tyres of the future.

Firestone and its parent Bridgestone, are among those researching composite plastic rubber materials that will perform better under stress and will be easier to recycle than existing rubber tyres... The ability to maintain elasticity at high temperatures is crucial because heat is a real enemy to current tyres, hardening the rubber and increasing wear. The new plastic compounds stay elastic even up to 180 degrees centigrade. But Firestone says more testing is required and it could be several years before a non-rubber tyre is available at a competitive price.

...Overseas sources say th[at] sharing of componentry... [(Mazda's] 1998 323 four-door sedan and five-door hatchback share body panels apart from the obvious differences at the rear[)]... has been instrumental in reducing development and production costs... [- but r]ecycling cars may not help car-makers to recycle money. Costs are starting to outweigh the value of the material retrieved, according to reports... which say there is a slump in demand for steels, plastics and other materials... [But Mercedes-Benz - which] made much three years ago of the use of renewable raw materials, such as the tropical plant sisal, in its E-class[- has now] gone further with the new S-Class... Wood, cotton, wool, cellulose, flax, sisal and coconut have found their way into components. Using the natural ingredients meant a weight saving of... 23kg over conventional materials. The rear parcel shelf is 40[%] cellulose. The backing for door panels is flax and sisal bonded with polyurethane instead of epoxy resin. An insulating mat is made of felt, basalt wood, carbon fibres and cotton. For the first time Mercedes-Benz has used eucalyptus in the wood trim... It's more plentiful than walnut and mahogany. Cheaper too... □ ['Ford made a chassis out of a plastic produced from corn starch during WW2.' Yet most post-war manufacturers stuck with using steel - although increasingly]... a fibreglass body [is being adopted so vehicles are lighter and]won't be troubled by rust...

SCIENTISTS IN America are... produci[ng]... glass that is stronger than steel. By hooking a stereo speaker to a sample of glass... a research student at Alfred University in New York state, found that vibrations from the speaker made the glass structure vibrate. After immersing panes of glass in molten chemicals to give them extra strength, [the student] and colleagues used a sonic-wave generator to bombard the panes with sound waves. Too much power from the generator caused the glass to shatter, but pitched at the right level, the waves helped speed up the process in which the chemicals close the microscopic cracks that weaken glass. The result was a "super glass" five times stronger than normal glass. Glass bottles could be almost as light as plastic, windows could be half as thick and less distorted, while car windscreens could become three times stronger than safety glass... [Incidentally, r]estrictions on more creative building designs may be a thing of the past with a west Auckland company leading the way in laser technology. Avondale's Stainless Technology has acquired the only three dimensional laser cutter in the southern hemisphere. The \$1 million laser is one of only 12 in the world. The others are in use in Europe and the U[S]. The c[ompany]... has imported the laser primarily to strengthen the manufacturing and metal production base in N[Z], but... hopes the building sector will take advantage of the opportunities it offers. Stainless Technology designs and supplies food processing and packaging machinery to businesses around the world. [90%] of their work is exported... [T]he laser is capable of cutting any material... "...architects... are no longer constrained by the limitations of conventional cutters... For example the cutter can cut a steel pipe into any shape imaginable which is not possible with conventional cutters."

...Steel mills tend not to feature too often as travel destinations, but... one... in Kakogawa, 60km west of Osaka[, is an exception to the rule]. Kakogawa is one of those pleasant coastal cities that casual travellers invariably race through by bullet train after seeing the historic castle at nearby Himeji and on their way to the neon-lit pleasures of bustling Osaka. In the competition for tourists' attention there is little in Kakogawa's history that makes the major guide books, and the impression is that there are few... reason[s] to spend any time in this low-lying city when historic Kyoto is so close. Yet Kakogawa, with a population of 250,000, has long been a destination for N[Z]ers. It has had a sister-city relationship with Waitakere since May 1992 and there has been a consistent and fruitful exchange of students, teachers, sports groups and pleasantries between the two... [As is] befitting a city which has a relationship with the Auckland region's most self-professed eco-city, Kakogawa has a proud record in conservation and eco-consciousness. The huge Kobe Steel site, occupying six million square metres of shorefront, is a case in point. Surrounded by lush greenery and with broad boulevards lined by immaculately trimmed topiary, some parts of Kakogawa Works (as it is commonly known) could easily be mistaken for a holiday resort if it weren't for the huge blast furnace, pelletising plant, coke ovens and enormous hot-strip mill that takes at least 15 minutes to walk its full length... [The head of] the environmental control and plant safety section, is understandably proud of what his team has achieved since the plate mill began operation in 1968. [The head] produces graphs to illustrate the steady decline in energy consumption rates, now reduced by a quarter of its 1974 level, and how carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide are recycled into the power supply of the factory. Kakogawa not only creates its own power but sells its excess to local private companies. The nitrogen gas used to cool the coke is also recycled, and sophisticated dust-collecting systems have reduced dust and soot to imperceptible levels. Most impressive to the lay visitor... is the plant's water recycling: 97[%] of the 3000 cu m used every day is treated, filtered, cooled and returned to the environment... 100[%] of all limestone used is recycled, [and]a permanent oil fence floats just out from the docks to contain accidental spillage... This is steel mill as responsible corporate citizen... Noise levels are reduced by covers over cooling towers and silencers on exhaust ducts (which makes the cold-strip mill look more like Paris' Pompidou Centre than a steel plant), and computers monitor levels of dust, noise, water quality and effluent. The avenues outside the hellfire furnaces and gargantuan machinery of steel production are quiet and peaceful. Oddly enough, as I look up birds wing through clear skies towards puffy clouds. It's probably a good day for windsurfing, I think.

...Public health authorities in Whangarei have been alerted to the cases of nine Kaitia people suffering illnesses suspected of being linked to toxic chemical emissions... [from] the Japanese-owned Kaitia mill... The number of cases reported has... doubled since early [last month], when the medical conditions of four people were notified... At the same time, a draft report on testing of chimney stack gases being released from the Juken Nissho triboard mill shows "detectable amounts" of isocyanates and related chemicals are coming from the mill chimney. The Northland Regional Council is now seeking expert opinions on whether the amount of chemicals in the mill's discharges can cause ill-health effects for people at ground level nearby... Specialised stack emission testing, as well as ongoing air sample monitoring, was undertaken at the mill after the... council became aware the plant was using a chemical substance in its triboard production process that it did not have consent to use under its air-discharge permit... The mill's consent covers only formaldehyde and total aldehyde amounts which can be discharged... into the surrounding air... [Its] monitoring manager... said the council's report was now being interpreted and reviewed because the type of specialised emission being carried out had not been done before and work was needed to evaluate and establish what the results meant. Meanwhile, a Kaitia couple who have lived near the mill for six years and... are among the nine cases... have been told by a specialist from Auckland that their conditions have been caused by... "multiple chemical poisoning," [with one of the chemicals being] ...methylene diphenyl di-isocyanate... The couple, who... have had... breathing problems, rashes and persistent headaches... for the past six months, are waiting for a written report from their specialist before passing it on to health authorities. The[y]... are also seeking a High Court judicial review of a decision by the Far North District Council earlier this year to allow the mill land use consent to build a multimillion-dollar extension to its operations without publicly notifying the company's application. They say full public consultation was never carried out before consent was granted. No date has been set for a hearing. An air-discharge permit hearing for the mill extensions, needed before the expanded plant can become operational, is... to be held by the regional council in Kaitia late next month.

...A contaminated Avondale paint factory site may not be cleaned up for years if resource consents can't be fast-tracked... Funding apportioned to the cleanup may be reallocated if not spent on the project this financial year, [a Dulux spokesperson] says. "I'm not saying it will never be carried out but we would have to wait until the company decided to spend the money in this area again." [Avondale Community]Board members commended Dulux for its openness about the cleanup. "They should be fully commended for their voluntary approach - a lot of companies would not be so responsible,"... Dulux wants to remove 15,000 tonnes of rubble and soil contaminated with heavy metals and solvents brought on to the

site in the early 1980s. The multi-million dollar operation would see 20 trucks a day over a four month period taking the material to a licensed landfill.

...AN industrial-sized conscience will cost a former Avondale company millions of dollars to remove contaminated landfill from its Rosebank Rd site... over an 18-week period. Twenty truckloads of landfill a day will be taken to a licensed tip in the cleanup of the 1.5 hectare site backing on to the Waitemata Harbour. The paint company is... asking the Avondale Community Board to put traffic lights on Rosebank Rd to give the trucks easy and safe access to the motorway. [An e]nvironmental consultant... says strict guidelines to prevent accidental contamination... [of] ground water or... the harbour... during the cleanup will... be enforced allowing only a small area of landfill to be exposed at any time. Dulux[s] communications manager... says the fill was already contaminated when used to level the site in the early 1980s, when regulations were more relaxed. The site is set to be broken up and sold... and they don't want repercussions of any future development stirring up the contaminated soil.

...10 sites are being cleaned of contaminated soil at any one time, but Dulux's is one of the biggest. [A c]ontamination control leader... says companies do not have to disclose whether their soil is unclean. "That's one of the failings of the Resource Management Act as the company or their consultants don't have to tell us anything... We have to keep our ears to the ground." ...the attitude behind cleanups is refreshing, given the often cavalier attitudes of international companies in the past. "When a company comes and asks how we would like things to be carried out and who should be spoken to such as residents and iwi, it is pretty impressive." ...companies face prosecution if they try to use contaminated landfill.

...Landfills linked to birth defects... [Pregnant people] living near landfills run a greater risk of giving birth to deformed babies than those who live elsewhere, a British study has shown. It found that 80[%] of the British population live within 2km of a landfill and babies... in those areas have 5[%] more neural tube defects such as spina bifida, 7[%] more genital defects in boys and 8[%] more abdominal wall defects. The [mothers] have a 1[%] increased risk overall of having a baby with birth defects. There is also a 5[%] increased risk that the baby will be of very low birthweight (less than 1500g) and 4[%] that it will be of low birthweight (less than 2500g). The risks are higher near landfills for hazardous waste, where [pregnant people] have a 7[%] chance of giving birth to a baby with a birth defect. The risk of a heart or genital defect goes up to 11[%]. On the other hand, the abdominal wall defect risk drops to 3[%] near hazardous waste sites... The British Government's deputy chief medical officer... said the research's results could be skewed by several factors but it could not be discounted. Even so... the Government would not give any new advice to pregnant [people]. In an editorial, the... *British Medical Journal*... said exposure to landfill waste could harm the foetus but more research was needed. The Auckland medical officer of health... said a review of Auckland landfill sites two years ago raised no concerns about health effects but there was a shortage of information about them... N[Z]'s low number of [annual] births... could make it difficult to quantify risks from landfills... Of the four landfills in Greater Auckland – Greenmount, Redvale, Rosedale and Whitford – only Greenmount is licensed to take hazardous waste.

...*'Hazmobile' swallows... hazardous waste.* The... Auckland Region Hazardous Waste Programme[s]... Hazmobile has hit the road and judging from its first outings Aucklanders want more of it... Designed to make it easy for householders to dispose of their hazardous wastes without a trip to the local transfer station, the Hazmobile was a big hit on the North Shore in September (supported by the ARC and North Shore City Council). The Hazmobile was in Albany [first]... and in Takapuna the following Saturday... 1,000 people took the opportunity to get rid of their old car batteries, tins of paint, oil and other chemicals. Hazmobile staff collected more than 5000 litres of oil, 320 car batteries and countless tins of paint over the two days... The Hazmobile rolls into Papakura in November and Pukekohe in December. It is scheduled to be in Auckland City... early [next year]...

Do you have any unwanted agricultural chemicals sitting in the shed? The next ARC collection round for agricultural chemicals will be at the end of February. Call Enviroline on 0800 80 60 40 to register for a free pick-up. This is a free service only for rural residents.

...Regional councils planning to export a stockpile of deadly farm chemicals to Europe for destruction are ignoring locally based safe disposal technology[, according to]... the Minister for the Environment... Six regional councils are on the verge of announcing they will export 120 tonnes of the unwanted dangerous chemicals to France or the Netherlands for incineration, contrary to the spirit of the international Basle Convention on the transport of hazardous waste. The councils claim that sending the chemicals is the most environmentally responsible option available until treatment facilities are available in N[Z]. But one of the disposal tenderers, the A[US]n-based defence engineering and technology company ADI Ltd, says it could set up two plants in N[Z] within eight weeks. The treatment, described as world-leading Anzac technology, was developed with the help of N[Z] scientists and taxpayers. However, the councils complain that they have given up waiting for the Government to propose a national solution to the problem. The chemicals, which include the pesticides DDT and dieldrin, have been built up since 1992. [The minister] dismissed the complaint, saying the Government had done everything it could to help them... [A]s well as helping to fund the new technology, the Government had offered to contribute towards the continued storage of the chemicals and support a resource consent application for the plants. Greenpeace[s] toxics campaigner... said that given the councils had their chemicals and the Government had a huge number of contaminated sites to clean up, it was a pity the two sides could not work together. A spokes[person] for the six-council consortium... said: "I would have thought people would be congratulating us, not continually seeming to be negative to what we are doing. At the end of the day most of these chemicals have come into the country. Anyone think about that?"

...Auckland City is to stop using chemical herbicides. Councillors decided yesterday to phase out the spraying of roadside weeds, a decision that will add nearly \$1.25 million to the... [annual] budget. The decision, at a rates committee meeting, is in line with promises made by many councillors during last year's elections. Anti-chemical spray groups welcomed the news, saying it marks the end of a 10-year battle to stop the council using toxic sprays along public footpaths. Instead of chemicals the council will use steam, weed-trimmers and thermal air weed destruction measures. In the Auckland region only the North Shore City Council has a similar policy. The Mayor of Auckland supports the phase-out but does not believe the spending level will be enough to achieve the spray-free goal... For the past few years the council has been using a mix of herbicides and steam to destroy weeds. Chemical control still dominates, but in the past six or seven years the volume of herbicides used in weed control on roadsides and in parks and reserves has reduced 75[%]. In another development, the Auckland City Council... could impose user-pays charges... for household rubbish, saving itself \$10 million a year. The council hopes to reduce the city's rubbish pile by highlighting refuge costs in rates bills and linking the charge to the amount of waste a household throws out. Under the proposed scheme, which could be introduced next July, homes that switched to smaller, 120-litre wheelie rubbish bins would pay \$88 a year for collection. Those who stuck with 240-litre bins would be charged \$175. The scheme still needs to be approved by the full council... The user-pays concept goes against the wishes of most submitters to the council's draft waste management plan. About 400 submitters said they opposed the idea, while 175 supported it. While the wheelie-bin scheme has been criticised in the past, it received overwhelming support from the submitters, who believed it was a hygienic, animal-proof and tidy way to collect rubbish... The... \$1.70 a week... charge for a 120-litre bin... compares with... \$2.60 charged by the North Shore City Council. Auckland City produces 380,000 tonnes of rubbish a year, about a quarter of it coming from households.

...Nine appeals have been filed to try to stop a planned dump in the northern Waikato... ear-marked to take some of Auckland's annual million-tonne mountain of rubbish. Appeals against the \$25 million project... near Meremere, have been received from local iwi and Northern District Federated Farmers as well as neighbours and environmental groups. Environment Waikato and the Waikato District Council gave approval... last year to EnviroWaste Services and Northern Disposal Systems to dump... 30 million cu m of solid waste in the 87ha landfill over the next 25 years... N[DS] is owned by Auckland ratepayers through Infrastructure Auckland... Opening the... landfill will keep... EnviroWaste... in the Auckland market... [once its] Auckland landfills at East Tamaki and North Shore [reach] capacity... Hamilton faces a critical shortage of dump facilities in

five years, when its Horotiu landfill has been ordered to be closed because of adverse environmental effects and its proximity to the Waikato River. Most of the 620 submissions on the Hampton Downs plan were against it, citing concerns about smell, health and environmental effects. The site is just 500m from the Waikato River... But engineers say silt and sandstone at the site will stop fluids leaking into the river... [O]pening... the dump... would help keep the Auckland waste market competitive... However... Auckland would eventually have to look at reducing waste.

...One million tonnes of solid waste. That's a mountain of rubbish in anyone's terms. And it's the nightmare all of us within the Auckland region will face... if we don't do something to reduce the amount of waste we generate... The cost of rubbish disposal in the... region is expected to jump by at least 50% – perhaps as much as 100% – within the next five years. The problem stems from the fact that... roughly 90% of... all the waste... ends up in landfills, and... two of the region's four current landfills close by 2003. So what are the alternatives to paying these higher charges? One possible alternative is for all the region's councils to competitively tender our combined solid waste, thereby bring[ing] down the total cost. Another... is for the councils to work together to build a third landfill within the region[... which is]... not as simple as it sounds. A third alternative is to transport our waste outside our region to a less populated area. Plans for a new landfill... at Hampton Downs... have just begun... but the cost of transporting our waste there rather than to our own region's landfills will of course be far higher. Fortunately there is a simple solution to the solid waste problem, and that's to reduce the amount of rubbish we send to landfills. The Government has made it clear that this is not just an option, it's a necessity. They've signalled that a landfill tax, similar to that imposed in the United Kingdom, may be introduced... Disturbingly... recent waste analysis of a random sample from the Waitakere City kerbside rubbish collection revealed that more than... 20% of bag contents could have been recycled through the kerbside recycling collections. • 14.4% was recyclable paper • 1.5% was recyclable... plastic • 2.6% was recyclable glass bottles and jars • 1.9% was recyclable steel and aluminium cans... If recyclable materials are separated at the source – that is, put in the recycling bins rather than rubbish bags – residents would not only help the City achieve its... goal of reducing the amount of solid waste that goes to landfill by 40% by 2001... but would also save themselves money... “Education is critical if we're going to develop long-term sustainable solutions to the problem,” says [a coordinator] of Waitakere City's new Waste Minimisation Learning Centre... Existing programmes, such as the You Prevent Waste campaign, provide a good starting point for public education but because attitudes about waste are formed at an early age, solid waste management also needs to be stressed in the school system. The Learning Centre's approach is to make learning about rubbish and recycling a fun experience and very “hands on” for children... “Most of the children have no idea what happens to their rubbish,”... Although the Learning Centre has only been open for less than a year, more than 1300 children – as well as visitors from other parts of the world, including a South Korean television crew – have already been through its waste minimisation programme. The programme includes donning hard hats for a tour of Waitakere City's Recycling and Refuse Transfer Station, conveniently located on the same site... Demand for tours... has been so great that the centre is now open for three days each week. When it first opened... the centre was only open one day a week. A grant from the Zero Waste N[Z] Trust enabled a second day to be added in July. A further sponsorship... has... [now come] from the waste company Onyx... – but [the] coordinator... warns that this arrangement can only continue as long as funds are available.

...This week, Auckland City... stopped recycling huge amounts of plastic... – anything Grade 5 and 6 is now being dumped in landfills... although these products are completely recyclable... – ...then advertise[d they're] sponsoring a conference “to help promote sustainable business practices...”

...World leaders of a burgeoning coalition of industrialists and ecologists will descend on Kaitia... next month for [NZ]'s second annual Zero Waste conference... [G]uests from the US, Britain and A[US] are keen to come here to study a bold campaign to turn N[Z] into a waste-free society by 2015, reusing everything that would now be dumped in landfills. Although it might sound wishful thinking, 26 district and city councils making up [33% of NZ]'s local authorities have already joined the cause, qualifying for \$25,000 grants from the Zero Waste trust. The trust, which also finances community projects and has given away almost \$1 million, is heavily backed by the Tindall Foundation but receives some money from the Ministry for the Environment and private donors. [The] Environment Minister... is expected during the three-day conference to issue a public discussion paper on waste minimisation, from a working party convened by her ministry and Local Government NZ. The paper will canvass the possibility of national landfill levies, such as are already imposed by Christchurch City Council to finance a sophisticated recycling operation. Christchurch's Recovery Materials Foundation, which receives \$4 to \$5 for every tonne of dumped rubbish, is researching ways of turning ground waste glass and plastics into local industries rather than exporting them as raw commodities. Zero Waste[s] director... said many people were eyeing N[Z] as a potential world leader in sustainability because it was rich in ideas yet small enough to accommodate new technologies and practices... Topping the bill [at the conference] will be... a former managing director of Japan's Mitsubishi Electric Corporation[who now] chairs Future 500, a group of big U[S] firms at the sharp edge of a sustainable development revolution. The 65-year-old executive... decided to help set his company on the path to sustainability, relying on knowledge rather than raw materials, after falling asleep at the wheel of his car and driving over a cliff. Reflecting in hospital on his brush with death, [the executive] concluded that the global business community was similarly driving towards a cliff, its eyes closed.

...*Humans driving Earth bankrupt*... The consumption of... [today's] people is exceeding the rate at which Earth can replenish itself. Research published yesterday in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences says a failure to rein in humanity's overuse of natural resources could send the planet into “ecological bankruptcy”. The... lead author of the study and a programme director at Redefining Progress... [–] a non-profit group concerned with environmental conservation and its economics... [–] said Earth's resources were “like a pile of money anyone can grab while they all close their eyes, but then it's gone”... [D]emand for resources had soared during the past 40 years to a level where it would take the planet 1.2 years to regenerate what people removed each year... [40 years ago,] demand was 70[%] of the planet's regenerative capacity. “If we don't live within the budget of nature, sustainability becomes futile,”... The study measured the “ecological footprint” of human activities... then used Government data and various estimates to determine how much land would be required to meet human demand for those actions[– e.g., the]... team found that [3 years ago], each person consumed an average of 2.3 hectares. The global average was lower than in industrialised countries such as the U[S] and Britain, where [the figures were] 9.6ha and 5.3ha respectively... Even though the findings revealed that human use of resources was far outstripping Earth's supply, it stopped short of determining how long the process could continue without detrimental consequences. “Like any responsible business that keeps track of spending and income to protect financial assets, we need ecological accounts to protect our natural assets,”...

[A] professional British muckraker who makes a decent living going through rubbish, specialises in stealing waste. Dressed in overalls and a fluorescent jacket, [it] drives around London emptying bins and plastic bags into the back of his van. Addresses of prominent people and firms are targeted and the rubbish is collected according to precise timings, mainly at night. To avoid detection after a series of scrapes with the law, [the muckraker] even recycles old rubbish so householders and office staff are not left wondering where it all went. [The muckraker claims to be] a social necessity, not a menace. Nor does [the muckraker accept it] is breaking the law; the culprits are individuals... and firms carelessly disposing of confidential documents. [The muckraker], aged 36, has been diagnosed as suffering from a very severe form of obsessive-compulsive disorder. As well as filling the family home with papers, his daily routine involves repeated checks of doors, locks, lights and other possessions. The illness is thought to have started in his early teens after an older brother died in a car crash. A[t] the age of 14 [it] became known as the “bag boy,” carrying around half a dozen bags stuffed with papers and books. [BB] started a law course at University College, London, but unexpectedly failed his exams in 1986. [BB didn't] tell his parents and for eight months pretended [it] was a lawyer until they found out. After a further stab at joining the legal profession, [BB] started work for a cleaning company and then launched his own cleaning firm. That set him off down the road that led him

to being named as the source of... leaked Downing St memos that have rocked the British Government. His contempt for the lawyers who refused to embrace him as one of their own and growing interest in rubbish saw him raiding the bins of solicitors and barristers. [BB] took the waste home to sift through the dregs of everyday life in search of notes, letters, credit card details and bank statements of the rich and famous. [BB] initially dealt directly with newspapers but, after feeling [it] had been ripped off, struck up a relationship with [a] British publicist... who could use his formidable contacts to supply the documents and guarantee payment... A News International invoice shows [BB] was paid £3375... at the end of April last year for stories on... the former lover of the late... Princess of Wales... and allegations of ballot-rigging in Hackney, east London. Another invoice, from Mirror Group Newspapers, detailed £1435 paid... last year ranging from £15 for a tale about [a] British TV presenter... to £400 for a story about ex-Spice Girl G[inger]. BB accepts commissions, regularly visiting addresses that newspapers and others such as private investigators want targeted... [BB] was fined £20 in London last November on five counts of "stealing documentary waste." The court heard [BB] had been seen loading rubbish into his van outside a firm of London solicitors... When [BB] was searched in Marylebone police station officers discovered a £2500 cheque from News International. A search of his home uncovered at least 200,000 documents in his shed... [In local news, t]he letters concerning Onyx taking papers intended for Paperchase are timely. It appears it is happening in all areas. Having seen this, I phoned Paperchase. They replied they had a long list of complaints about this matter but were having difficulty stopping it. When phoned, Onyx replied – guess it is a paper war, and they (Paperchase) are probably taking our paper. For those of us who support Paperchase because of its charitable work, this theft is despicable.

...a new product designed by [a] Green Bay resident... aims to reduce... wastage by helping people stack and secure their old papers until they are ready for recycling. The Vermiche Paper Stacker is a powder-coated frame that can be attached to the wall of the garage or inside a cupboard, wherever it's convenient. Its unique tie-off system also allows you to use string, twine or thin strapping to make compact bundles ready for kerbside collection... Manufactured in Auckland, Vermiche Paper Stackers are being sold as a fundraiser at Waitakere City primary and intermediate schools. Retailing for \$22, the product is... not available in retail outlets... Thousands of tonnes of paper are wasted each year – most of it screwed up and thrown in the bin with other household rubbish.

...When the do-gooder lefties gang up with the know-best righties, it's time to be very afraid. Take Auckland's rubbish. Or should I say, please take the city's rubbish, because the council no longer wants to. Our leaders have decided that the 380,000 tonnes of waste that city businesses and households put out in their wheelie bins each year is too much. By June 2003 they want this figure halved. By June 2010 they want us putting out just 20[%] of what we now toss away. How will this miracle occur? Like all true believers, their plan of action is doctrinaire. The popular 240-litre bins are out; half-sized 120-litre bins are in, no matter the size of your family or business. They're even going to use video cameras to spy on the contents of bins to ensure you put out only acceptable rubbish. For the master plan, even food scraps were to be forbidden. "Kitchen and garden waste is not collected kerbside, so don't put this in the wheelie bin," said promotional material issued last year. This was echoed in a council brochure giving six simple steps to recycling. It advised, under the heading "Garden and kitchen waste" to "please don't put this in your wheelie bin." The policy seems to have softened. This month, after a *Herald* story referring to the ban, city officials said food scraps were permissible but not garden rubbish. I'm not too fussed by the ban on big bins. I already compost and need to put mine out only every two or three weeks. But I don't have a tribe of consuming teenagers to clean up after, or a flow of disposable nappies to contend with. Friends who do, however, are very agitated. And I can see their point. What are they supposed to do with the rubbish that doesn't fit in the little bin? Wave a wand and hope it goes away? This is the problem facing Mt Roskill Primary School... For in this brave new world, every unit is treated the same, be it a Freemans Bay pensioner, a school or large factory. Come July, each will be allowed to put out one small bin full of "domestic" rubbish and not one cigarette butt more. At present... [the] school gets one large bin as of right and pays the council to have a further seven emptied. These bins are placed around the playground for kiddy litter: yoghurt containers, clingwrap, lunch scraps and the like. Soon the school will be allowed to put out just one little bin. Staff and pupils already recycle waste paper, but some items don't qualify. [A local councillor who is] a critic of this "big stick" approach to recycling, asks if the school is supposed to send the rubbish home in schoolbags? The reality is, [the principal] will have to call in a private contractor – which will not reduce the rubbish mountain one jot. To me, replacing 150,000 perfectly good bins with little ones is more like creating a new rubbish mountain, not reducing one. The council fudges the embarrassing question of what to do with the redundant big bins by claiming they are "gifting" them to us for garden waste disposal. In other words, they've dumped them in our backyards. My bet is an awful lot of other stuff will get dumped in backyards and frontyards and grass berms as well, cluttering up neighbourhoods until an inorganic collection takes place.

...Wheelie bins turn out to be rubbish... The Auckland City Council has started a huge hunt for faults in a \$2 million batch of its new wheelie bins and has frozen payments to the manufacturer. Councillors were dismayed when they learned that as many as 90[%] of 60,000 bins brought from an Otahuhu manufacturer failed council specifications... This number would cost \$2 million to replace in full. [A councillor] said the disclosure of the flaws by officers... came on top of a string of problems in bringing in the \$104.2 million system of red-top wheelie bins... "The bins have only been taken out to the letter box 10 times and already the wheels are falling off,"... Apart from failing wheels, ill-fitting lids and blurred logos, the bins had thin walls that an expert predicted would not withstand harsh ultraviolet light. But [Auckland's m]ayor... said last night that [it] knew of faults to a varying degree only on 411 bins given to residents in the west. [The mayor] said the reports of flaws were being treated seriously, although they were small compared with the 146,000 bins in use. Faults had been reported only in suburbs that received... bins made by Otahuhu company Sulo-Simapas. No problems were reported with the rest of the bins, which were from... Germany... and... A[US. The]... manufacturer would repair faults but accelerated ageing tests would be carried out to indicate durability. Until this information was available, the council would withhold \$1.5 million still owing for bins, in addition to a \$250,000 performance bond. [The mayor] said performance clauses in the contract meant the council was not exposed to financial loss if a number of bins proved faulty. The Otahuhu company had a \$2.5 million contract to supply 75,000 bins but it had to bring in 15,000 made in A[US] to fill the order in time... The council had bought the bins from the manufacturer for about \$33 each to sell to its three rubbish collection contractors. Before buying, contractors needed assurances the bins would last the life of their seven-year collection contracts... [B]oth Sulo-Simapas and the western city collection contractor did not return the *Herald's* calls... [On a positive note, the chairperso]n of the council works committee... said the smaller wheelie bins had encouraged recycling. The council introduced the bins two months ago with the aim of halving the amount of domestic waste going to landfills by 2005. Progress figures showed waste taken to landfills in the two months had dropped 34.5[%]... from 18,019 tonnes to 11,810 tonnes. Residents had also recycled 77[%] more glass, 57[%] more plastics and 4.8[%] more cans. Paper and cardboard recycling was up 23.8[%]. In related news, the... finger has been pointed at Waitakere landlords for rubbish left to rot in city streets since the... new user-pays collection started last week. While... 90[%] of households managed to put their refuse out in the new prepaid bags, pockets of the city resembled mini-rubbish dumps yesterday. The Waitakere City Council had warned residents that their rubbish would not be collected unless it was in an official \$1 bag... [But the council said it] had been... difficult getting the message through to tenants, despite a leaflet drop and a free bag delivered to every letterbox... The new system has a flat fee of \$30 plus \$1 for every bag, as against the previous \$125 charge.

...Waitakere's clean image goes down the dumps... [The] Waitakere City Council Works and Services Committee reported this month that far from achieving its annual target of a 1[%] reduction in street litter, over the last six months there has been a 10.9[%] increase. The council started a user-pays rubbish bag scheme... [by] claiming it would reduce the amount of rubbish being created and encourage recycling. However it seems that instead of people putting out less rubbish, it is turning up in other, illegal areas. At the moment, there are no fines for dumping household rubbish in litter bins or in private skips but after the latest figures, the council is looking at introducing these and increasing fines for other litter dumping

offences. Random waste audits, already in place to identify and target the main culprits, have shown that the majority of rubbish is from the commercial sector. As a result, the report states that there will be discussions with local shopkeepers to work out ways to reduce this. Another initiative to prevent dumping is a gradual replacement of current litter bins with a different sort making it difficult to leave shopping bags of rubbish in them. The council is hoping that as people get used to the new by bag system, they will dump less into public rubbish bins.

...THE Waitakere City Council has ordered two independent refuse collectors to stop collecting rubbish in the city. It has revoked the licence of Metropolitan Waste Ltd and is prosecuting it for unauthorised use of the council's logo on green rubbish bags sold in... supermarkets. The council has also ordered Waste Management Ltd, which doesn't have a licence, to stop its wheeler bin pickups in the city for failing to comply with council bylaws. Both companies say they will defy the orders. Metropolitan Waste... says the council's ban is a "standover tactic to protect their user pays revenue. To have a true user pays system there must be competition,"... Metropolitan Waste gets its money from selling green rubbish bags 5 cents cheaper than the council's grey bags, which are collected by official city contractor Onyx. The council is taking Metropolitan Waste to court for misleading and deceptive conduct and infringement of copyright"... [The managing director] says his company "made a mistake" by photocopying its licence, which includes a city council logo, on to the rubbish bags. "We have since corrected the mistake and offered to make a \$5000 donation to a charity of the council's choice but it's been rejected by the council,"... [By the way,] I have recently been shocked to discover that this "clean, green, eco city", as promoted ad infinitum by the mayor and... council, now requires us to dump all types of rubbish at the Refuse Station, organic and inorganic alike, in one huge, evil-smelling conglomeration, with no separation of garden waste for composting. Why is this? Until now, I was under the impression that all garden waste was composted, and sold to the public, since we have been taking it there for several years, paying the fees, and off-loading into the area set aside for garden waste. But not so any more... Is this what Waitakere Eco City calls recycling?

...Waitakere City councillors are looking at a scheme which could see pressure taken off landfills by recycling the city's huge proportion of organic waste... [F]ood and garden[waste] would be turned into compost at a privately run operation at the city's refuse and recycling station...

The volume of waste West Aucklanders send to landfills could be halved by a composting plant under consideration by the Waitakere City Council. Garden and food scraps would be collected and taken to a fully enclosed composting facility... They needed far less land than open-air composting operations and were odour free... [T]he council had resource consent for an enclosed plant that could convert up to 14,000 tonnes of raw materials a year to compost. Just over half Waitakere's annual 20,000 tonnes of domestic refuse was kitchen or garden waste which could be recycled and sold locally. The proposal follows limited enthusiasm for the self-styled eco-city's efforts to reduce its waste mountain by encouraging home composting. The council subsidises the cost of compost bins, but only 70 residents in the past year have picked up the subsidy... The privately owned and operated facility, which would be sited at the city's refuse station... could also take organic waste from business and industry... Councillors are approaching the scheme cautiously, mindful of the recycling venture with EcoPlan Ltd, which collapsed [two years ago] with debts of around \$1.4 million. Over \$5 million of ratepayers' money was poured in without proper authority... Waitakere's solid waste manager... said officials were negotiating with preferred bidders for a scheme involving no extra disposal and collection costs to ratepayers. "It's a win-win situation, with the element of risk to the council very much reduced. They simply take green waste off us and we provide an area of land." ...If the scheme wins approval, the most likely plant is a vertical composting unit manufactured in N[Z]... The region's only large-scale composting operation is Living Earth's open-air facility at Pikes Pt, Onehunga, which takes garden waste from six refuse transfer stations. Waitakere sends about 8000 tonnes of green waste mulch a year to a Tuakau "land farming" operation... Separate organic collection has already been tried by the North Shore City Council, without much success. Shore residents complained of difficulty separating kitchen refuse from other waste. [However, the Waitakere City Council's] works and services chair[perso]n... says they may succeed where the North Shore has failed.

...WEST Aucklanders could be forced to separate food scraps from household rubbish within three years. The Waitakere City Council has applied to the Auckland Regional Council for an air discharge resource consent to trial food waste separation in a bid to reduce the amount of rubbish going to landfill. The... proposed trial – similar to one in Christchurch [(which, however, hasn't prevented the city's council from searching Canterbury for somewhere to site a 'super-dump'), but unlike the]... proposal... Auckland City councillors heard... today... from a 9-year-old boy... [whose] idea... to reduce inorganic waste on city streets... [involves] a council web-site where people could list and exchange unwanted items... – ...would see a select group of residents separating food waste from other rubbish and putting it in a specially provided bin to be collected regularly by the council for mulching in its \$2 million composting machine. The council's manager of solid waste... says the scheme could become compulsory for all residents if the trials are successful. But the ARC air quality manager... says the consent could take as long as three years to process.

...Waitakere City Council will not make separation of food scraps compulsory. The *Western Leader* ran a front page article last week saying that residents could be forced to separate waste. This was based on an incorrect assumption. The council says that if any scheme is implemented, it will be entirely voluntary... The *Western Leader* apologises for any confusion its original article may have caused... [Incidentally, i]n a few weeks, the heir to one of the world's greatest fortunes... will set sail across the Pacific in the *Plastiki*, a boat made from plastic bottles and recycled waste. The aim of the venture is to focus attention on the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a rubbish-covered region of ocean, several hundred kilometres in diameter. The patch, north-west of Hawaii, was discovered in 1999 by researchers who found that its waters contained tens of thousands of pieces of plastic per square kilometre... The plastic, most of it swept from coastal cities in Asia and California, is trapped indefinitely in the region by the North Pacific Gyre, a vortex of currents that circulate clockwise around the ocean. Scientists estimate that there is six times more plastic than plankton by weight in the patch and this is having disastrous ecological consequences. Fish and seabirds mistake plastic for food and choke to death; 'jellyfish absorb it into their bodies'. Plastics also absorb pollutants including PCBs... and pesticides, bringing poisons into the food chain.

...Floating rubbish traps have been installed in three Waitakere City streams to protect waterways from litter and debris. The floating mesh baskets are in place in the Opanuku, Oratia and Rewarewa streams. Booms have also been added to deflect floating litter into the baskets. "The floating litter traps are effective and well suited to tidal areas because they are fitted with flaps that close when the tide turns, trapping debris so it doesn't escape back up-stream," says... [the] general manager of Waitakere City Council's Eco Water Business Unit. "Debris will be cleared once a week initially, but we will be monitoring it to achieve the best balance. The amount of debris collected at each clearing will also be measured." [The] Deputy Mayor... hopes the litter trap programme will heighten public awareness of the amount of rubbish finding its way into Waitakere City waterways... Auckland City has also installed four rubbish traps in their streams, including the Whau River on the Waitakere City border... In A[US], floating rubbish traps have been used for a number of years with great success. In Sydney the traps have captured between 24-71 kg of rubbish per hectare in each catchment. In Melbourne, 15 traps in the Yarra and Maribymong rivers are collecting about 100 cu m of debris and litter a year.

...Japan suffocating under weight of its rubbish... Japan, renowned worldwide for its tidy cities, is awash with garbage. Disposal sites are overflowing. Illegal dumping is on the rise... Greenpeace has dubbed Tokyo the dioxin capital of the world. Alarmed by an ever-increasing volume of trash and the rapidly vanishing space available to dispose of it, Japanese sanitation officials say the country could eventually drown in its own waste. "In 30 years there won't be any place left in this city for garbage, no matter how much we burn," said... a spokes[perso]n for Tokyo's sanitation department. The Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development says the average person in Japan produces about a kilogram of garbage a day – half the amount Americans toss out and about the same as green-minded Germans. The problem is a lack of space. Much of Japan is too mountainous for habitation, and the plains and coasts where most of the 120 million Japanese live are already notoriously crowded. To save room, the country burns most of its garbage – about 75[%] compared with about 20[%] in the U[S] and Germany. Tokyo alone has 17 factory-

sized incinerators burning trash around the clock. Even so, available disposal space shrank by about a fifth in the past decade. And while most Japanese understand the need for new dumps, no one wants one next door. In Hinode, a small community in the hilly outskirts of western Tokyo, riot police were deployed to enforce a court order expropriating a small grove of cypress trees to make way for the expansion of an 18ha dump. The property had been bought by residents worried that the site was polluting their air and water with dioxins... The operator of the Hinode dump considers it safe, but disclosed environmental data only after a long legal skirmish. “Nobody really understands the risks,” said... an environmental activist. “Who’s going to take responsibility when the unthinkable happens?” An increasing amount of garbage that is not burned or buried is being shipped overseas – an illegal, but cheaper, solution. In the most glaring example, the president of a commercial waste-removal service was arrested in May for shipping 2000 tonnes of used syringes and soiled diapers to the Philippines in containers marked “paper for recycling.”

...*Dump deaths* At least 37 people were killed and more than 60 missing yesterday when a huge garbage dump collapsed and buried a cluster of shanties in the Philippine capital, Manila. More than 90 people were injured as the... rubbish mountain... buried more than 100 houses, mostly shanties. Survivors said they heard a rumbling sound followed by an avalanche of mud and garbage which swamped their wooden houses after one side of the 15m high dumpsite caved in following days of heavy rains.

...*Globe-trotting ash returns for burial*... Almost 2400 tonnes of burned garbage from Philadelphia, part of the gigantic load of ash that roamed the globe for 10 years, has been tucked into a Pennsylvania landfill over the past six weeks. The 128th and final shipment of incinerator ash was dumped yesterday at Mountain View Reclamation landfill... all that remained of the 15,000-tonne Khian Sea cargo that wandered the globe in search of a dump site... “They should have kept it in Philadelphia,” said [a 61-year-old]... who lives 2.5km from the landfill. The ash was left without a home in 1985 because Philadelphia’s landfill had no space left. The following year, a subcontractor sent the Khian Sea with the ash to the Bahamas, but the Government would not allow the ship to dock. For a year, the ship sailed the Caribbean but was turned away by... Bermuda, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Guinea-Bissau and the Netherlands Antilles – sometimes at gunpoint, said crew members. Environmental groups warned the countries that the ash might contain toxic materials. Federal and state regulators in the U[S] said it had minute amounts of toxic metals such as lead and cadmium. On New Year’s Eve 1987, the ship anchored off Gonaives, Haiti, with a contract to use the ash as topsoil fertiliser. But after weeks of protest, the permits were revoked and the Khian Sea was ordered to leave with the remaining 10,977 tonnes... Most of the ash was... eventually... dumped in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans... resulting in prison terms for two shipping company executives... Eastern Environmental Services took on the... [portion of ash that had spent the intervening] years on a beach in Haiti... and sailed it to Florida... on a... barge... two years ago. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection finally agreed to dispose of it, with the first truckload arriving on June 27.

“Go ahead, try... [my] smell-a-scope... You’ll find that every heavenly body has its own particular scent. Here, I’ll point it at Jupiter.” “...smells like strawberries.” “Exactly. And now, Saturn.” “...pine needles... this is great... as long as you don’t make me smell Uranus.” “...I’m sorry Fry, but astronomers renamed Uranus in 2620 to end that stupid joke once and for all.” “Oh, what’s it called now?” “Urectum. Here, let me locate it for you.” “...no, no, I think I’ll just smell around a bit over here... [Pooh! What’s that?]” “...remarkable! A stench so foul it’s right off the... monitor. I dare say Fry may have discovered the smelliest object in the known Universe.” “...I think it’s moving.” “Umm, perhaps the computer can calculate its projectory. My God! Whatever it is, it’s heading straight for us, with enough force to reduce this entire city to a stinky crater. We have less than 72 hours.” “...So this thing’s going to destroy the whole city? What the heck is it?” “Ah, just as I thought. The answer lies in this movie I found on the Internet[called *THE GREAT GARBAGE CRISIS OF 2000*].” “New York City, the year 2000 – the most wasteful society in the history of the galaxy, and it was running out of places to bury its never-ending output of garbage. The landfills were full; New Jersey was full. And so, under cover of darkness, the city put its garbage out to sea on the world’s largest barge. The repulsive barge circled the oceans for 50 years but no country would accept it... Finally, in 2052, the city used its mob connections to obtain a rocket, and launched the garbage into outer space. Some experts claim the ball might return to Earth some day, but their concerns were dismissed as depressing.” “Wow, you got that off the Internet? In my day the Internet was only used to download pornography.” “...So that’s the situation. Due to the short-sightedness of Old New York, New New York is going to be destroyed by a giant ball of garbage.” “Fry, what the hell were you people thinking back then? How could you just throw your garbage away?” “Hey... give me a break... what do you do with it?” “We recycle everything... Nothing just gets thrown away.” “The future is disgusting!” “Typical 20th century attitude.” “Hey, you have no right to criticise the 20th century. We gave the world the light bulb... and... the steam boat...” “Those things were from the 19th century.” “Yeah? Well they probably just copied us.” “...If we could build an object the exact size, density and consistency of the garbage ball, it might just knock the ball away without smashing it to bits.” “But where can we find a substance the exact density and consistency of garbage?” “Alas, I don’t know.” “...what about garbage?” “Good lord! A second ball of garbage. That might just work.” “But garbage isn’t something you just find lying in the streets of Manhattan. This city’s been garbage-free for 500 years.” “Well, then it’s time to make some more.” “Make garbage, but how?” “Stand back and watch the master...” “...If my calculations are correct, this garbage ball will knock the other ball directly into the Sun... It worked!” “...And so, on behalf of the entire city, I thank you... Fry, we owe you a tremendous debt... Were it not for your 20th century garbage-making skills, we’d all be buried under 20th century garbage.” “Should we really be celebrating? I mean, what if the second garbage ball returns to Earth like the first one did?” “...who cares? That won’t be for hundreds of years.” “Exactly! It’s none of our concern.” “That’s the 20th century spirit!” - FUTURAMA

If all manufacturing became united under one ministry, that ministry would be able to classify every product as being either ESSENTIAL or NON-ESSENTIAL, then cease making all non-essential products (some products might have to be classified as temporarily-essential because they are still needed initially but have the potential to become non-essential in future; other products might be temporarily-non-essential because existing stocks mean that no more need to be manufactured for a long time) – thereby reducing the ministry’s use of human labour, raw materials and energy. Use of those three resources can be further reduced by standardising manufacturing as much as possible (including, wherever practical, using the same components when making various complex products – which should ultimately mean that many parts of complex products will be interchangeable).

Products also ought to be standardised worldwide – which means that they will be compatible worldwide. Although worldwide compatibility won’t normally serve a useful purpose, it would be valuable whenever emergency supplies have to be sent from one district to another. Furthermore, although it would be ideal if every district could manufacture all of its own material requirements (thereby reducing transportation between districts or states), some products – large machinery in particular – might never be used in enough volume to warrant having each district produce them fulltime. Therefore, some or all districts will need to have a factory (or a number of factories) which produces a specialised finished product (or a range of related specialised products) on behalf of one or more neighbouring districts – or every district within a state; or every other district in the world. The receiving districts would each provide raw materials used in making the final product, or produce one or more components of the final product; or trade different unrelated components or completed products (there should be no justification for districts to have trade disputes with each other – e.g., over the relative value of different products – but, if ever there is, the state government would be responsible for resolving the situation). Unfortunately, because few Last World districts currently have much in the way of sophisticated, large-scale production facilities, the practice of moving large volumes of raw materials from Last World regions to the First, to be processed then returned to the Last World (including districts which can’t provide raw materials, or compensate the manufacturing district in any other manner) will have to be maintained – except that the returned goods no longer need to include items which may be called JUNK!

If everything society produces is being managed by one ministry, and the worldwide population can be stabilised, it should eventually be possible to reach a *perfect equilibrium between production and consumption* – a situation where the range and volume of products manufactured alters little from week to week, year to year, maybe even century to century. While the production level of a particular essential product remains below the volume required, different factories could continue to make different designs of that product, but the Manufacturing Ministry should identify the best design – by comparing factors such as: easiest and safest to make and use, most durable – and phase out the others as its capacity to produce the favoured design increases (some factories making less-favoured designs might be able to convert to making favoured designs; if increased production of the favoured design can only be achieved by building one or more new factories, such construction ought to be delayed until the less-favoured factories near the end of their productive lives).

Factories – especially highly-automated ones – are relatively easy to run non-stop, but the Manufacturing Ministry should aim to eventually have as few factories as possible do so (i.e., it ought to be considered preferable for a district to have two identical factories both operating for 12 hours/day than one operating non-stop – because, although it requires more resources to build two factories than one, routine maintenance can be performed during the 12 non-operational hours; non-operational time can be used to make up for time lost whenever a production line breaks down unexpectedly; one factory can operate non-stop in the event that the other is disabled for an extended period of time; a district's productive capacity can easily and quickly be increased if, for example, it has to temporarily cover for the production of another district – r:p1865, lns63-4).

If the Manufacturing Ministry was also responsible for handling all of the wastes it produces – and economic cost was no longer an issue – it could adopt reuse and recycling practices wherever possible (a product should be reused until it becomes non-reusable due to damage or other reasons, then be recycled), and proper waste management practices elsewhere. The aim should be to eventually have *zero-waste* at all points of production, but until that has been achieved – or if it can't be achieved – productive waste must be treated to render it harmless before being released into the environment, or be stockpiled until a safe method of treatment or reuse is found. Unless the current processes for making plastics create more waste (toxic or non-toxic) than mining, wastes produced while collecting raw materials can be minimised by substituting plastics for glass (if sand needs to be used – to make glass or for whatever reason – it should come from effectively limitless sources like the Sahara) and metals. Preferably, plastics should be sourced from plant polymers; but, until plant-based plastics are more common, it is more efficient to turn petroleum into a plastic product which can be used indefinitely than burn it once in a car engine or heater (r:p2169, lns13-4).

The Manufacturing Ministry would have to make products required by other ministries and by householders (other ministries would have to justify the products they require the Manufacturing Ministry to make for them, and the Manufacturing Ministry would have to convince other ministries of the necessity of every household product it makes). Any wastes produced by another ministry (while using the products manufactured for it by the Manufacturing Ministry, or during any other process) would have to be treated properly at the point of use – with the relevant ministry being responsible for implementing that treatment – or be collected and returned to the Manufacturing Ministry to treat. The Manufacturing Ministry would manage any quarries or other forms of raw material gathering operation. However, rather than have that ministry manage forests and other plant-growing operations (e.g. those providing the raw materials needed to make fabrics and plastics – although plastics, in particular, could be sourced from waste plant products, including weeds and fallen tree leaves; efforts ought to be made to identify the plant species which provide the most cellulose or other base ingredients used in plastic-making, of the best quality, in the shortest amount of time – consider bamboo – or require the least input of other resources, which might depend on local soils and climates), the Food Ministry could manage them on its behalf – thereby eliminating duplication of effort (and, if the Food Ministry is responsible for managing forests, it could utilise some forest floors to, for example, produce mushrooms or other shade-loving crops). The Food Ministry may need to use paper bags, cardboard or biodegradable plastics to package certain processed foods (e.g., flour), but the Manufacturing Ministry should still be responsible for making them for the Food Ministry – from the raw materials the Food Ministry produces – rather than have the Food Ministry produce its own packaging (after all, other ministries might need to use paper bags, cardboard or biodegradable plastic).

The Manufacturing Ministry would be responsible for making any machinery used by the Food Ministry in growing and processing foods, as it would also be responsible for producing medical equipment (machinery, bandages, etc.) for the Health Ministry – although the Health Ministry could be responsible for manufacturing medicines (from raw materials provided by the Manufacturing Ministry or the Food Ministry).

The Housing Ministry could still be responsible for constructing buildings – but, because the Manufacturing Ministry should be responsible for making building materials, it would be sensible for that ministry to manage construction through to completion (after all, other ministries will also require buildings to be constructed on their behalf). The Manufacturing Ministry can also be responsible for the maintenance and repair of buildings (and their interior fittings) – although each ministry should be responsible for the cleanliness of the interiors and exteriors of the buildings it manages (with the exception of the Housing Ministry, which would not normally be expected to keep the interior of houses or apartments clean – r:p2022, lns25 + lns68-9).

One means of keeping manufacturing to a minimum is to make products which are expected to have a long life-time, and this applies to buildings as much as anything else made by society – if not moreso. Most of the houses built in NZ since the arrival of the Europeans have been made from wood. Some are now over 100 years old (r:p1959, lns24), and they could last a lot longer yet – 'the first capital of Japan was Nara in 710 AD, which has the oldest temple complex in Japan and the oldest wooden building in the world.' However, few of the wooden houses built in NZ before WW1 are still standing. Fire or natural disasters claimed some, others were condemned (due to disrepair; rotting or wood-eating-insect-infested frames), but most would have been pulled down before their useful life had expired – often because the land-owner could make more profit out of building a new house (or multiple houses) on the section. The remainder of NZ's houses are mostly made from brick or concrete products, although they normally still use wood for interior framing (steel framing has been introduced recently). These houses should last much longer than wooden ones (if the continued use of stone housing in other parts of the world is anything to go by – and they aren't damaged by an earthquake or other forms of land movement – they could last thousands of years).

NZ may not need to build any more houses for its own requirements for a while (r:p2022, lns37-42), which means NZ's redundant builders – and those from countries in a similar situation (especially those with lots of stone or brick houses which need little or no work to keep them habitable) – could be sent (along with building materials – r:p2022, lns42-5) to parts of the world where large-scale new housing projects are needed. Alternatively, these builders could construct prefabricated houses, then ship them to other parts of the world. In NZ's case, wood would have to be the main construction material – because it is a raw resource that NZ currently has an abundance of, extracting and processing it has less impact on the environment than clay or concrete-based materials and, although it might be possible to construct prefabricated housing out of concrete-based products, their weight means they aren't as easy to transport). Eventually, however, the Manufacturing Ministry should look at using plastics as the major construction material used in all buildings.

Plastics are considered a threat to the environment because most types 'take about 500 years to break down' – but, if used sensibly, this could be a valuable characteristic. The main problem with current construction plastics is that while having the potential to effectively last indefinitely – especially when buried in landfills – they become brittle after being exposed to the Sun for a decade or two (though that might not apply to 'UV-treated high-density polyethylene' or to fibreglass – 'plastic containing glass in fibrous form, used as a structural material: e.g., for boat-hulls'). However, it should be possible to develop a UV-resistant (r:p2196, lns23) – and expansion-resistant (r:p2196, lns45) – construction plastic that can be produced from plant-sourced (i.e., renewable) raw materials. Until such a plastic is available – assuming one hasn't already been patented (plus existing fibreglass materials are unsuitable) – houses could have plastic shells whose exterior walls are covered with fibre-cement or *carbon fibre*. The advantages of UV-resistant plastic housing are so numerous that they surely outweigh any disadvantages. Examples of the advantages are: • Plastic houses have the potential to last much longer than brick or concrete ones, whose walls ultimately crumble beyond repair. They are resistant to insect attacks ('AUSn termites whose ancestors arrived in logs used for power poles are a problem for homeowners in parts of NZ'), and even natural disasters – such as earthquakes or storms – should have less effect on

plastic housing than those constructed using traditional materials (i.e., a plastic house can be floodproof and is unlikely to break apart when shaken by the earth, or be blown apart by strong winds – although, because they would be lightweight, they will need to be well secured to the ground, especially in exposed locations, or where tornadoes, hurricanes, etc., are frequent, unless they are tethered to allow them to float above floodwaters; a safety bonus is that plastic windows ought to be unbreakable). Such houses could have a life-time that is measured in tens of thousands of years, and maybe even millions of years (theoretically, each house could be inhabited by successive generations of humans for as long as Earth continues to support life!). • Plastic houses would, presumably, have better insulating and sound-proofing (be it between interior rooms, or the interior and exterior) qualities than wood, brick, or other types of housing (if these qualities aren't inherent in plastic, it should be relatively easy to develop a construction plastic which has better insulating and sound-proofing qualities). • Plastic housing would be easier to keep clean and maintain than other housing, and won't ever have to be decorated (e.g., painted or wallpapered). In addition, it should be easy to produce plastic in a range of colours, so even if neighbouring houses are identical in design, their exteriors don't have to look exactly the same (but the same aesthetic reasoning doesn't need to be applied to the interiors). • Plastic housing can be made out of a mould (thereby minimising the need for joins – and eliminating cracks that may let water plus ants or other small insects enter the building). Moulded houses can be made in a factory, which means their construction isn't delayed by wet or stormy weather (note that NZ builders sometimes face delays because the factory which put together their pre-nailed trusses got the specifications wrong). They would also be relatively easy to move from their point of construction to point of use – and later be moved to another location, if necessary (e.g., when land movements due to earthquakes or other natural disasters render a residential area inhabitable; if one district's population undergoes a decrease as another district's population is increasing).

If the worldwide population can be stabilised, and houses can be made out of a UV-resistant plastic, by the time all – or the majority – of houses worldwide have been made out of such plastic, demand for new housing should be so minimal that only one district (or just a few worldwide) would need to have a house-making factory. Furthermore, if the design of standard houses remains constant in future, and the major components of this factory's machinery – and that of any other factory – are all made out of a long-lasting material, it might only be necessary to replace moveable parts (i.e., the same factories and most of their machinery could be used indefinitely). In addition, there would be little or no need to employ any people as architects (the same goes for designers after the best design of every product has been identified).

The standard, two-bedroomed house design (r:p2024, ln7) ought to be single-storeyed, but there may be some instances where this is impractical (e.g., although roofs and exterior walls can be heated, districts which experience heavy snow-falls in winter might need to have A-frame or chalet houses – as are common in Switzerland; some districts might need to utilise a mixture of both standard and A-frame housing). However, a house-making factory should be able to produce both design types, and any other kind of prefab building, simply by changing the mould used.

The roofs of standard houses could be flat – although a partial slope (be it from one side of the house to the opposite side; or to the left and right sides of a central ridge; or on each side of a central apex), or a domed roof, would assist the removal of rainwater. However, regardless of whether or not a house is standard or A-frame, it should only be necessary to have ceilings in addition to the underside of their roofs if they are the only means of dampening the noise of rain landing on the roof (regardless of whether or not the house has a ceiling, there ought to be enough internal headroom to allow the tallest people to stand upright comfortably – but if house roofs slope *from one side of the house*, the living space area can be located on the higher side, and the bedroom space – where people are less likely to be standing up for long periods – on the lower side). Assuming that the noise of rain hitting the roof can be dampened without requiring a ceiling, houses could be formed from two moulds – one consisting of the roof and outer walls, the other consisting of the base and internal walls (including, perhaps, kitchen benches, cupboard frames and other permanent internal fixtures, such as the bathtub – thereby minimising the amount of fixtures that need to be replaced due to *wear and tear*) – which are then joined together (if necessary, the bottom mould could include a ceiling). Incidentally, moulds could also be used in the construction of larger, multi-storey buildings, including schools and apartment blocks (i.e., individual apartments or classrooms could be constructed in single units, which are then joined together to form blocks), but only if the stability of the completed structure isn't compromised – in comparison to traditional apartment blocks. Blocks of prefab apartments might be stable and earthquake resistant if they are held together by a strong plastic (or steel/plastic composite) external frame.

A standard two-bedroom house can be symmetrical (be it square shaped or circular) – which should make it easier to produce and handle their moulded frames – because each bedroom would occupy one quarter of the house (the spare bedroom doesn't need to be as large as the family bedroom, so part of the second quarter space could contain a walk-in wardrobe/closet – which is accessible from both bedrooms, thereby also providing a direct route from one bedroom to the other), with the lounge/dining area occupying a third quarter, and the kitchen/bathroom/toilet (plus a hallway between the front, main bedroom, bathroom, toilet and kitchen doors) occupying the remaining quarter (thus allowing all plumbing to be located in one quarter – which not only minimises the amount of piping required, but also the distance hot water has to travel through pipes). Alternatively, if houses are circular the two bedrooms could occupy one side of the building, the general living area (i.e., lounge, dining-room and kitchen) the other side, and the bathroom/toilet could be located centrally (with the backs of the kitchen sink and bathroom sinks being separated by an interior wall).

It is not normally necessary for a house to have more than one toilet – because, most of the time, no one in the house will be using a toilet. However, the value of having two toilets for the few occasions when two or more people want to use one at the same time (like in the morning – r:p1976, ln22) would seem – especially to people who are busting to go to the toilet but otherwise would have to wait their turn – to outweigh the material costs and labour expended in providing two toilets per house (but apartments definitely only need one toilet each). The toilets could be aligned side-by-side – to minimise the amount of piping needed to carry sewage – but be partitioned, with one toilet being accessed via its own door while the other is accessed via the bathroom. Alternatively, houses might have one toilet and keep a bedpan in the bathroom. It isn't necessary for houses to have both a bath and a shower but, because houses should definitely have a bath (especially for cleaning children) and constructing a combination bath/shower is relatively easy, that's what each house could have. Apartments, though, only need a shower box (thereby minimising the amount of space that is devoted to their bathroom/toilet area).

Household fittings (e.g., furnishings, utensils) ought to belong to each house – or apartment – which means, if ever a tenant has to move from one residence to another, the only things that it has to take apart from itself are personal items (e.g., clothing, towels and flannels, bedding – excluding bed bases, unless a base was made specially to fit a very tall person). Furthermore, unless a tenant has a disability which means its residence needs some basic, reversible modifications (e.g., extra hand-rails – note that all homes ought to have access ramps instead of front steps, while other buildings can have both), the range of fixtures and fittings should be uniform from house to house – although any house that has more than four inhabitants would, in addition to having more than four beds (r:p2024, ln12), need to have more than four chairs, dining utensils (e.g., cutlery, plates, cups), etc; but apartments may only ever need to have two of everything in the way of dining equipment (and only one double bed – which could covert into a lounge suite). If an apartment accommodates a couple, and that couple is catering for guests, those guests can bring their own utensils; with the same applying to house-guests – unless the Manufacturing Ministry decides to provide enough utensils for each apartment and house to prepare two meals without having to wash dishes in-between (so there will be enough utensils for dinner-guests). Each house needs a lounge suite, which guests or the children can sit on while dining (and might convert into an extra double bed – the other double beds being the parents' and the one in the spare room, which might fold up to form a desk?) – rather than have them bring their own chairs (although, if every dining chair was foldable and made from a light-weight material, they would be easy to carry from house to house). Dining tables can be expandable and, if they could be folded away against a wall, that would be a useful as a space-saving measure. Each residence needs to have a fridge – although those used by apartments ought to be smaller than those used by houses – but, eventually (i.e., when the Food Ministry is delivering weekly allowances of fresh foods to each residence – r:p2089, ln6), there should be no justification for residences to

have freezers (which means that ice cream and similar foods, including frozen white sauces – r:p2087, ln17 – will become rare, if not extinct). Apart from being little more than an energy-guzzling piece of convenience equipment, residential freezers affect the nutritional quality of foods.

The water in each cell contains the minerals which give flavour and goodness to food; if frozen slowly... large uneven... ice crystals... are formed in the cells of food... which break through the cells; on thawing, the goodness and flavour drain away... Microwave is a method of cooking and heating food... [‘Much prized for its cleanliness and speed in cooking and defrosting, it has gained great popularity. Manufacturers have met all government safety and health requirements, but scientists have no definite data on possible radiation damage from prolonged use.’] The energy used is the same as that which carries t[v] from the transmitter to the receiver but is at a higher frequency. The waves disturb the molecules or particles of food and agitate them, thus causing friction which has the effect of cooking the whole of the food, whereas in the conventional method of cooking, heat penetrates the food only by conduction from the outside. Food being cooked by microwave needs no fat or water and is placed in a glass, earthenware, plastic or paper container before being put in the oven. Metal is not used as the microwaves are reflected by it... [One design of] cooker combines forced air convection and microwave, either of which can be used separately, but... are normally used simultaneously thereby giving the advantages of both systems: speed, colouration and texture of food. Traditional metal cooking pans may also be used without fear of damage to the cooker. *Induction cookers*... are solid top plates made of vitroceraic material which provide heat only when pans are put on them and... stop the heat immediately the pans are removed. A generator creates a two-way magnetic field at the level of the top. When a utensil with a magnetic base is placed on the top a current passes directly to the pan. This means that a far more efficient use is made of the energy than with conventional cooking equipment... Tests indicate more than 50% energy saving. If a pan of water is to be brought to the boil there is no delay in waiting for the top to heat up; the transmission of heat through the pan is immediate. When shallow frying, cold oil and the food can be put into the pan together without affecting the quality of the food as the speed of heat is so rapid... Since the ceramic top is not magnetic but merely a tray to stand the pots and pans on, it never heats up... [Apart from being safe and having a] faster cooking time... [i]nduction tops have a number of [other] advantages over ranges using conventional sources: ...flexib[ility], controllability... easy maintenance, hygienic... improved working environment (less heat in the kitchen). However, induction tops are expensive and special cooking utensils are required... Stainless steel, enamelled ware... and... iron... are suitable... Any non-magnetic material does not work and aluminium and copper are unsuitable... [unless they are] specially adapted copper pans... Copper equipment is expensive, but it is first-class for cooking... The disadvantages of copper are that it tarnishes easily and looks dirty... [Aluminium equipment is] also... expensive, but one advantage is that the pans do not tarnish... A disadvantage is that in the manufacture of aluminium, which is a soft metal, other metals are added to make pans stronger. As a result certain foods can become discoloured; [e.g.], care should be taken when making white sauces and... soups. A wooden spoon should be used for mixing; then there should be no discolouration. The use of metal whisks or spoons must be avoided. Water boiled in aluminium pans is unsuitable for tea-making as it gives the tea an unpleasant colour... An ever-increasing variety of kitchen utensils... are available... [in a n]on-stick metal... [U]se plastic or wooden spatulas or spoons when using non-stick pans so that contact is not made to the surface with metal... [E]xtra care is needed when cleaning non-stick surfaces... *Wooden cutting boards* are an important item of kitchen equipment which should be kept in use on all table surfaces to protect the table and the edges of cutting knives... Heavy chopping should not occur on boards as this causes splintering... Wooden cutting boards will warp... and... are porous... therefore retain taste, smell, bacteria, grease and dirt... They expand and contract when washed and allow small particles of food to become trapped... The cut and scoured surface also allows food particles and bacteria to become embedded... Cutting boards are also made of hard rubber and rubber compounds... These are hygienic because they are solid, in one piece and should not warp, crack or absorb flavours. They are cleaned by scrubbing with hot water and then drying... Dishwashing machines take over an arduous job... For hygienic washing up the generally recognised requirements are a good supply of hot water at a temperature of 60°C for general cleansing followed by a sterilising rinse at a temperature of 82°C for at least one minute. Alternatively low-temperature equipment is available which sterilises by means of a chemical, sodium hypochlorite (bleach).

Dishwashing machines are needed by hospital catering kitchens but not in households containing able-bodied tenants. Even though it is more hygienic to wash dishes by machine than by hand, washing by hand isn’t unhygienic if performed properly; and even when a house has a dishwashing machine, it still needs to have other dishwashing equipment (e.g., a sink, brushes, pot-scourers, sponge-cloths, towels, cleansing liquid), because some dishes still have to be pre-washed to remove the worst dirt, and other dishes can’t be cleaned properly by a machine at all – so dishwashing machines merely duplicate the work performed by equipment that a household can’t do without (whereas they can do without a dishwashing machine). For a similar reason, the Manufacturing Ministry shouldn’t be able to justify producing both a microwave oven and conventional oven for each household – unless they are a combined unit. Every kitchen needs a hob, and because hot water can be boiled in a pot on the hob, the Manufacturing Ministry can cease to produce electric jugs.

Vacuum-cleaners can be classified as an unessential household item because, as long as a house has a mop and bucket, broom and dustpan, vacuums are only needed to clean carpets – but carpet can also be classified as an unessential item. If a householder doesn’t like walking on a bare floor (be it wooden or plastic), it can wear socks or slippers (or shoes); if a parent doesn’t want its baby to crawl on a bare floor, it can lay down a blanket (or rug).

Blinds should be preferred to cover windows because they are more versatile and easier to clean than curtains – and, although curtains have better thermal properties, windows can be double-glazed. It shouldn’t be necessary to tint-windows (either with a permanent tint, or a film that darkens as sunlight intensifies) because, although sunlight can fade the colour of interior fabrics, that isn’t a huge problem (and the few fabrics existing in future housing – those covering the lounge suite and beds – can be pale-coloured to start with). However, it may be possible to produce double-glazed windows which enable residents to change the amount of light coming through from 100% to 0%, removing the need for blinds or curtains.

If *house roofs slope*, the higher side could be that which most often faces the Sun, and have vertically longer windows to take advantage of the wall’s height (in which case, to assist with privacy, the bottom of the windows could be about chest-high on an average-sized adult). Vertically long windows should mean that skylights aren’t necessary on the higher side of the house (however, the windows could extend across part or all of the roof – including, perhaps, an emergency exit onto the roof), and maximisation of natural light isn’t normally an issue for bedrooms.

Beds should all have mattresses (that aren’t water-filled) – which are covered in a waterproof fabric (or a plastic bag) to protect them from moisture and dirt – but householders could be given a choice between having blankets or a duvet as their upper bed-cover (which, like sheets, don’t need to be dyed).

Even in a house which has more than one young child (except, perhaps, houses that have more than three youngsters), it shouldn’t be necessary to do a load of washing (clothes and bedding) everyday. Therefore, rather than supply every house with a clothes-washing machine, groups of houses can share a launderette (as could apartment blocks) – which has both automatic clothes-washing machines (preferably, they would only use cold water – or at least a set warm temperature) and dryers (although each house ought to have its own clothes-line, which means dryers will only need to be used on wet days). Each house would, however, need to have a clothes-basket that is fitted with wheels – to make transporting laundry easier (although a householder may wash by hand in a sink or the bathtub if it prefers). If problems are caused because everyone always wants to use a launderette (or laundromat) at the same time, a rostered booking system might have to be adopted – which won’t be too hard to organise (especially since the launderettes can stay open at all hours). The Manufacturing Ministry would be responsible for cleaning and maintaining these launderettes (including restocking washing detergents – but not fabric softener, and any other product that is unnecessary or unhealthy for the machines) – and will also have to be responsible for maintaining household equipment (if an oven, for example, is faulty and can’t be repaired on the spot, it should immediately be swapped for a working oven – which

would remain in the house even after the original oven has been repaired). These launderettes might not be of much help to houses containing babies, but those houses could temporarily be provided with a clothes-washing machine (and maybe even a clothes-dryer) – or, as an alternative, a nappy-cleaning service (i.e., someone visits the house daily, or every second day, supplies clean nappies and collects soiled nappies, which are taken to be cleaned in bulk). Unless they are biodegradable, the Manufacturing Ministry would cease to produce disposable nappies. In addition to extra clothes-washing machines (and dryers), the ministry could store products such as prams (or push-chairs) and cribs, to be lent out whenever a couple has a baby – then be returned when the product is no longer required, or has to be swapped for a larger size.

Clothes-lines can be totally or semi-removable (i.e., the lines could be pulled in and out from a box attached to an exterior wall and hook up to a fence or post; the lines could open out like an umbrella from a post which can be put into, and removed from, a hole in the ground). Access to the clothesline at the back end of the house should be via the lounge (through french or sliding glass-doors). Cavity sliders can be used for internal doors – or at least wherever it is awkward to have a hinged door – but they don't need to be automatic. Likewise, houses can do without many other forms of automation (e.g., automatic blinds, lighting systems) – and residents can also cope without having robots to clean, cook, and answer the front-door, etc. (unless they are disabled, in which case another human ought to be employed as their home-help).

While money is still being utilised, householders would need to continue purchasing household cleaning products (containers can include a deposit to encourage their return to the Manufacturing Ministry), but eventually such products (and things like light-bulbs) should be delivered to each household on, for example, a monthly basis – each house could receive a sufficient supply of the range of household products to last until the next month; householders could order their monthly delivery before the delivery date; or households could leave empty containers and used material products (e.g., old spongecloths, brushes, light-bulbs) outside their house prior to delivery day so that the delivery person is able to see what items each household needs. The first of those three household delivery options would seem to be the easiest to organise (householders would have to ration their use of products until the end of the delivery period; or householders could go to the nearest Manufacturing Ministry warehouse if they run out of a product between deliveries). Alternatively, instead of having the Manufacturing Ministry deliver to households, householders visit their nearest warehouse whenever it suits them, swapping empty containers or used products for full containers, etc. If the process of supplying such products was linked to a computer programme, the ministry would be able to keep a tab on the amount of product that each household is using – so households which are consuming more than average can be warned that they must reduce their consumption or risk being refused extra supplies the next time they run out of something.

Householders ought to clean empty containers (and recyclables) before returning them – but some reusable containers would also have to be sterilised before being refilled. If containers were all identical, the process of reusing them would be simplified. However, if different sized, shaped or coloured containers were matched to specific contents, users would be able to easily identify the products they want (therefore containers might not need to be labelled – although information on their contents could be embossed into the containers); while it should be possible to mechanically sort returned containers into each size, shape or colour at a central collection and sterilisation facility (Auckland City Council's recyclable waste is separated into plastics, paper, metals, etc., by 'Visy's' large robotic sorter), before each type of container is returned to the factory which produced its original contents.

Many of the household cleaning products currently produced are unnecessary. One liquid suitable for washing dishes and general cleaning, another for extra-hard cleaning jobs (e.g., oven cleaning; polishing – though future housing is unlikely to have anything that needs to be polished) in unison with a scouring cloth, and one for sanitising (or disinfecting) floors and toilets, ought to be sufficient – although the latter two cleaners might be covered by one 'All-Purpose Cleaner'. As for toilets, it isn't necessary to produce bleached, coloured, embossed or non-absorbent toilet-paper (note that if toilets were like some used in Japan – i.e., with water jets, as opposed to having a separate bidet – the requirement for toilet paper might be reduced)! Toilet-paper can be used for handkerchiefs. Paper towels (e.g., for use in kitchens) are unessential – producing reusable cloth towels or sponges is more efficient (though less hygienic if not cleaned properly) than producing paper towels.

In addition to having regular dental checkups and consuming a proper diet, people will need to be provided with tooth-care products such as dental-floss, toothpaste and toothbrushes (but electronic toothbrushes are an unnecessary use of resources – r:p2191, lns12-3; furthermore, because normally only the bristles need replacing, toothbrushes ought to have replaceable heads – at least one brand already does this – with each handle, perhaps, lasting for the lifetime of its user). Proper dental care and a proper diet should help to prevent bad-breath – but mouthwashes could be provided to anyone who needs them.

If a *general cleaning* liquid is mild enough, it could also be suitable for cleaning humans – thereby eliminating the need to also provide soaps specifically for washing hands, etc. (preferably, such a cleansing liquid should be hypo-allergenic – if not, the Manufacturing Ministry would still have to produce hypo-allergenic cleansers to supply, possibly via the Health Ministry, people with overly sensitive skin) – including the hair of people who have something against just using water (if someone needs a special shampoo – e.g., to treat severe dandruff – it should be supplied via the Health Ministry). There is no justification for producing hair dyes, sprays and accessories (e.g., bands, clips and, perhaps, ties – string, old shoe-laces or the hair itself can perform that task), or even hair dryers – people who don't like to dry their hair by more natural means should shave it short or completely off (although they would be removing their head's natural protection from sunlight and cold). Furthermore, if the Manufacturing Ministry provides each household with a suitable pair of scissors, there wouldn't need to be any hairdressers (people should also shave their hair if they don't trust themselves or an acquaintance to cut it).

Each household could be given an option between having an electric shaver or a hand-held razor and shaving cream (if the equipment is properly cleaned after each use, sharing such equipment shouldn't lead to health problems). Gals shouldn't feel like they need to shave their legs, etc., but if a gal has a genetic condition which causes it to grow embarrassing facial hair, the hairs could be removed by a more permanent process when it has a health check-up. By the way, gals could receive a supply of sanitary products (and have the choice of tampons, pads, or a mix of both) when having their health check-ups.

Deodorants are another product that ought to only be supplied via the Health Ministry to people with special problems (and they should only neutralise the offending smell, not add a new one) – but, in many cases, an altered diet might be a simpler solution; or always carrying a flannel in order to wash after performing strenuous activities. Perfumes (excluding, perhaps, toilet air-fresheners), make-up and jewellery (if all of the jewellery currently in existence was melted down, the Manufacturing Ministry would be able to cease mining for gold, silver, etc., *for a long time* – if not forever) are some of the other products that a truly intelligent society wouldn't devote labour, material resources and energy to producing. The same goes for ornaments and other purely decorative products – including Christmas decorations (society doesn't have to force people to stop celebrating Christmas – just stop producing related items; and telling lies to children!) – plus mindless celebratory products (e.g., fireworks).

The practice of giving presents to children mostly serves the purpose of conditioning them into having personal belongings, and becoming present-buyers (i.e., consumers) themselves. If parents want to honour a child's birthday, they can arrange to have friends and family visit – but the visitors should only bring a plate of food. If adults want to give something to children, or other adults that they care about, they should give their love – or at least their attention.

...my [partner does]n't give me presents I know that... [my partner] only... has to give me love... - The Beatles

The Manufacturing Ministry would be responsible for ensuring that each person has the things that it NEEDS, and people shouldn't want to give others things that they don't need (note that in a moneyless society, people definitely won't need purses or wallets). Something that people need – and is often gifted to others on their birthday – is clothing. Each citizen would have to receive a supply of clothing at least once a year, and an easy way for the Manufacturing Ministry to spread out the distribution of clothing is to match delivery dates to birth dates. Each suburb could have a warehouse where

people go on their birthday, or shortly before, to be measured for their annual clothing supply. Each person might, for example, be allowed a new pair of trousers and a jersey, a couple of tee-shirts, underpants and pairs of socks each year (ideally, all made from plant-based fabrics; note that 'everyone in the US has Teflon particles in their bloodstream – causing "teflon flu" – from clothing, cookware' and other products). A range of basic, practical, sensible (e.g., no ties) and mostly unisex patterns (which might vary depending on the climate of each district – some districts may need to provide both thermal and standard underwear – or the preference of each district's inhabitants) could be offered in each item, in a selection of colours (using natural dyes – e.g., 'if boiled, the campeachy tree's wood produces red colouring matter on contact with acids, violet on contact with alkali') – but no future clothing should need to be ironed (so the Manufacturing Ministry won't need to produce irons or ironing boards). Although each person ought to just settle for whatever is immediately available in its size, if a person's choices of pattern and colour aren't immediately available, the relevant items could be sourced from another suburb or be made up by the clothing factory – the person would either return to the warehouse when notified that its supply of clothes is ready, or the clothing could be delivered to the person's home. Instead of having designer labels, clothing can be tagged with their user's name for easy identification.

The amount of each clothing product that people are allowed annually would depend on what the product's average life expectancy is (i.e., if the average life of a pair of socks is four months, each person will get three pairs annually). However, amounts could also be related to what each person already has. If the Manufacturing Ministry decides that each person should, at any one time, possess no more than, for example, eight tee-shirts, underpants and pairs of socks (thus allowing people to wear a clean pair each day of each week), three trousers and jerseys (one to wear, one spare and one in the wash), each adult ought to effectively start out with the maximum amount, and only receive more the next year if any products have become unwearable due to overuse or damage (an exception to the rule will be when someone becomes pregnant – i.e., mothers-to-be may need to receive a range of suitable maternity clothing, which can be swapped for larger sizes as their girth increases or have adjustable girths). The set amount of clothing could be managed voluntarily; or each person might be required to produce worn-out or damaged products (the Manufacturing Ministry can provide a repair service for minor damage – which means it doesn't need to provide clothes-mending products to each household) in order to receive replacements. Some products (those which the Manufacturing Ministry decides each person only needs to have one of at any time) may just need to be supplied once a decade or human lifetime – a light, hooded raincoat; a heavy winter coat; a sunhat and sunglasses (suntan lotion could be provided as a household product, along with products such as mosquito repellents – if a district deems such products necessary); an umbrella; swimsuit; a pair of sturdy, all-weather boots (replacements for all of the products can be provided when they become unwearable and have been returned to a local warehouse). People would also need a pair of light shoes (e.g., made out of canvas and PVC), but they might not last more than a year – in which case they should be provided annually (and people may need to have at least two pairs at any one time). Pointy-toed shoes, stilettos and other absurd, or dangerous, designs of foot apparel shouldn't be manufactured (slippers also aren't necessary – people ought to wear socks or go bare foot when indoors). The Manufacturing Ministry might also produce wind-up watches to be supplied on request (note that it ought to be possible for watches to be passed from generation to generation) – but, as long as each house has an alarm-clock, and clocks are located strategically around workplaces and in public spaces, individuals shouldn't need to have a personal watch (the only requirement may be for people who work outdoors – in which case, a watch can be supplied by the relevant ministry as part of the workers' equipment). Incidentally, each workplace needs a first-aid kit – either each workplace would make one person responsible for checking that a kit is fully stocked (such a worker should be a trained first-aid, or the senior first-aid on duty); or the Manufacturing Ministry – or the Health Ministry – could employ people to visit workplaces to restock their kits (note that each household also needs a first-aid kit, which householders could gain supplies for – including, perhaps, 'spray bandage' – either via Manufacturing Ministry deliveries or from the Health Ministry during annual health checks).

If someone needs to have specialised clothing because of their work, or their work makes their clothes particularly dirty, the relevant ministry would have to order such clothes from the Manufacturing Ministry – and be responsible for cleaning them. Children's clothing would also need special consideration, because children can grow out of clothing before the clothing becomes worn-out. An option is that a child could be fitted with slightly bigger than expected clothing, then swap all of its clothing at the time when they are too small. Because this means that clothing which is still wearable will be returned to the Manufacturing Ministry, children would have to receive a mixture of new and used clothes (although they needn't be given used underwear and socks). Whatever clothing children receive, it should be sufficient for them to wear to school (they would also need to be supplied with a school bag, lunch box and drink container – but these things ought to last a lifetime, which means adults shouldn't need to be re-supplied with such products when starting work).

Products currently sitting in shops and warehouses that have traditionally been sold to both businesses and the general public, but which have been classified as essential to the operations of a particular ministry (including the Manufacturing Ministry), can be forwarded to the relevant ministry (e.g., the Housing Ministry ought to receive all of the decorating materials in existence – which should help to reduce, if not completely eliminate, acts of mindless graffiti) – or be shared if more than one ministry uses them – to be distributed within each ministry (be it within a district or between districts), or stored until required (products used periodically by various ministries could be stored by the Manufacturing Ministry and be loaned out). Of the remaining products, some will be useful to householders who own equipment which has been classified as non-essential, and therefore is no longer being made. Such products can be shifted within districts so that the same things are all stored in one warehouse (because they are no longer being used for their original purposes, shops – and department stores in particular – can be designated as warehouse space; note that if shopping plazas aren't required for warehousing, they would need to eventually be converted for use by a ministry or as recreational facilities – or, if they can't be utilised, be demolished so the space can be rebuilt on and used productively) – or a number of adjacent warehouses (depending on the volume to be stored and the size of each warehouse) – and householders could find out where whatever they want is being held, then go there to purchase it. Products which haven't been sold out by the time money ceases to be used by a district could then be divided evenly between the people who have been purchasing them (in one go if the remaining volume is low enough; or else at regular intervals until all the stock is gone). All remaining products – those which can be classified as being USELESS – ought to be divided into things which have been made from recyclable materials (then be recycled, or be stored until being recycled) and things which can't be reused or recycled in any way (which should be stored until a means of reusing or recycling them has been devised – although any householders who want to use some of these products could be allowed to go and collect whatever they want).

The amount of rubbish that each household produces would gradually decrease until they have nothing to dispose of except for the food scraps and containers (and biodegradable food packaging) collected by the Food Ministry, and the empty containers or used household products which are collected by the Manufacturing Ministry (i.e., there would be no need to regularly send trucks around every residential street to collect rubbish bags or to empty rubbish bins, and occasionally collect inorganic waste). Until this eventuates, the Manufacturing Ministry could situate groups of bins (one each for plastics, metals, glass, etc.) in strategic places around each suburb so that householders can be responsible for sorting (after being cleaned) their waste and depositing it into the relevant bin – rather than have the Manufacturing Ministry be responsible for trying to sort waste after it has been collected from households. Collecting rubbish by this means would take a lot less time (instead of emptying them weekly, it might be possible to empty them every few days, or daily – depending on how common the bins are, and how large they are, it might only take a day to fill some of them). The Manufacturing Ministry should also start, or continue, to dig up landfills and deal with their contents (and the contents of uncovered rubbish dumps) in an environmentally-safe manner – i.e., recycling as much as possible, then incinerating (assuming gaseous by-products are filtered so any atmospheric emissions are non-toxic) the remainder to produce energy and ash (assuming it contains no toxins; toxic ash that can't be converted into a harmless product may have to be safely reburied) to be used elsewhere. Obviously, landfills which have been built over (e.g., Auckland's Western Springs College is built on a landfill) should only be dug up when the buildings above them are due to be replaced, or if the landfill is collapsing or causing health problems through leaching of liquids or gases.

ENERGY

In the decade from 1965 to 1975, U.S. energy usage rose an average of about 4.5[%] per year; at this rate energy usage doubles every 16 years. Now suppose that during the decade 1975-85 energy conservation measures save enough wasted energy... [- by, for example, providing better insulation and more efficient heating and cooling systems in residences and office buildings[; increasing] efficiency in household appliances[; changing]... freight-hauling... and... [other] transportation patterns (e.g., increased use of car pools, mass transit)[; improving the]... gas mileage of automobile engines... [and the] efficiency of industrial processes... - ...so that the demand in 1985 is only 75[%] of what was projected for that year. That 25[%] saving would stretch out the doubling time to 23 years. But the critical point is that the demand would still double. And double again. So energy conservation in the conventional sense of the term only buys time; it does not avoid the fundamental problem of endlessly rising demand... Of course, it is possible to reduce the growth rate of energy demand - to make it zero or even negative. Such a reduction of the energy growth rate has been seriously proposed (e.g., by the Ford Foundation Energy Policy Project in 1974)... Consider the possibility of restructuring various sectors of society to be more frugal in their use of energy. (The word frugal is used here to connote not austerity but using resources sparingly and wisely.) Here are some of the kinds of measures that could lead toward an energy-frugal society: 1. Reduce agriculture's dependence on fossil fuel derivatives... place... farming... closer to consumers; reduce processing and energy-wasteful packaging of food. 2. Reduce industrial consumption of energy by producing more durable, repairable goods (eliminating planned obsolescence), by designing for materials recycling, by altering production processes so that waste heat and materials from one process becomes inputs to another; change the product mix of the economy to include less energy-consumptive materials and services; ...produce goods closer to raw materials sources and to users... 3. Reduce personal energy requirements by... reduc[ing] transportation needs from residence to place of work, by increasing dependence on communication instead of transportation... by curbing consumption of energy-intensive goods and services, and by stimulating community-based recreation instead of long-distance travel. 4. Redesign communities to be more self-sufficient and better suited to the environment and ecology, while using sophisticated technology to support highly civilized living conditions, not primitive privation... A glance at this list emphasizes the drastic changes in consumption habits, industrial structure, social institutions, personal values, and national goals that are implied by real energy frugality. These steps are very different from the earlier list of "energy-saving" or "conservation" measures, which assume that essentially the same goods and services are to be provided as exist today and the same appetites catered to, with only the elimination of unnecessary energy expenditures. - 1976

...a growth in efficiency should not be too difficult to achieve. The use of abundant resources has made us very wasteful: there is, in a sense, plenty of slack in the system that could be taken up. We can see this by looking at some of the things we have come to accept as everyday, without questioning their efficiency. A homely example is the electric light bulb. Of the power that goes into it... 5% is manifested in the form of light; the remaining 95% is wasted in the form of heat. When heating is anyway required, this is not so important - other than that electricity is a wasteful way of heating; at other times it is pure waste and, even, additional electricity may be required for cooling if the heat has to be extracted after it is produced. Fluorescent lamps, on the other hand, can be 30% efficient, and it should be possible to achieve perhaps 50% without stretching the technology too much. Thus a tenfold increase might be possible if we really put our minds to it. Similarly, if we examine the system serving the electric lamp, we find a loss of 5% or over in the transmission system, and 60-70% conversion loss at the power station, which makes approximately twice as much waste heat as it does electricity. To this one must add the loss entailed in getting fuel to the power station, plus the capital cost in terms of the steel, concrete and copper used in the station and its grid system. We find that our home lighting is, at best, somewhat under 1% efficient. Let us take another example, in case electricity is a special instance: the family automobile will do, as it is a common object on which a lot of design work has been lavished over the past few decades. To start with, of course, the engine is only 20-25% efficient, even if in peak tune. This is only part of the story, however: the average car weighs about ten times as much as its occupant, so only 10% of the energy used moves the occupant... Add to this the fact that under modern traffic conditions much of the energy is wasted in braking: compounding it with the fact that road distances are quite a bit more than straight-line distances; make allowance for the fact that many journeys are made necessary by an unrealistic separation between work and living areas; and one comes out with a figure of about 0.5% efficiency for the automobile. Home heating is another area we could examine. Here the efficiency is really zero, for all the heat put into homes leaks out again within a few hours. Thus home insulation can be a very effective investment in efficiency... [In the past, some people] have dreamed of being immortal, or at least of living for a very long time: now we know that ageing is a process that is perhaps retardable, and in the past few centuries we have doubled the [average length of human lives. Some people] have also dreamed of 'perpetual motion', or the creation of energy... ['Once started, a *perpetual motion machine* should run forever without any additional energy being supplied to it from an outside source. This *ideal* - but only theoretically possible - machine could supply energy to run other pieces of equipment. The planets and natural satellites, such as the moon, seem to travel about their central bodies perpetually, for they move in the near-vacuum of space and undergo little or no friction. The main friction-like forces on satellites are those made by space debris - which might sometime end the perpetual motion of these bodies. One of the many proposed perpetual motion machines uses a wheel with mallets attached to its outside that fall out as they head downwards and fall in as they head upwards. Another has three springs - one of which is supported by two upright rods, the other two have metal spheres at their lower ends. This system is started by introducing energy into sphere A; that is, it is set to vibrating up and down. Eventually sphere B will vibrate and A will come to rest. This process will repeat itself for quite some time. Then why will it fail in perpetual motion? There will always be some air friction; and even in a vacuum, there will also be the internal friction and heat loss of the molecules in the springs themselves. In short, friction and heat loss are the two ever-present conquerors of perfect use of energy and thus of perpetual motion.' However,] **presumably at one time energy was created, and if our science develops far enough to understand the process, it may well be possible to duplicate it...** [Presently, t]here are three thermodynamic laws, which state that (a) energy can neither be created nor destroyed, (b) there is a continual running down of the system from high concentrations of energy to a more average distribution, this process being irreversible, and (c) entropy - that is, a state of disorder - decreases at very low temperatures. The laws are empirical; that is, they are derived from observation and there is perhaps no good theoretical base for them... [But] so far nobody has been able to contravene them... [T]he Earth continuously receives a large amount of energy from the Sun. This causes the natural cycling of water from the atmosphere to the seas and back again, and also the planetary wind systems. Together, these agencies have been responsible for the less than random arrangement of different elements in the crust. Added to this there has been the effort of living things in concentrating material by way of carbonates, coal and oil deposits and oxygen. Thus, although it is true to say that there is a trend to entropy in the sense that the total system is running down, the flow is not linear but turbulent. In rather the same way that some of the water in a fast-flowing and eddying stream will be going the 'wrong' way, some of the processes operating do not tend to entropy but result in

accumulations of energy and less than randomly distributed materials. The power to effect this comes from the total system, so there is no overall gain, and the laws are conserved. The same kind of effect is observable in a refrigerator: it uses power and on balance it does more warming up than cooling down if one measures both the amount of heat removed from the cabinet and that rejected at the back. In the thermodynamic model of the world we can distinguish between the main flow and the eddies in a similar manner, and again we find that always the amount of energy used up in making some kind of differential is greater than that which can be released by running that differential down. The interesting thing about this is that, whereas all natural cycles are powered by the main flow, or are at least so close to it that time out of flow is insignificant, most of our industrial processes are powered by releasing power in the eddies. Thus food production is powered by the Sun *via* green plants, the food is eaten and the energy run to waste in, on average, less than a year. The fuel used to power industry has been in circulation for several million years, however, and the same applies for most materials used by industry as well. This is the main problem facing our civilisation at the present time, for we are running down these accretions of energy and material at a far faster rate than they are accumulating. We have, in a sense, become parasitic on the mineral resources of the planet, and these have a far shorter expected lifetime than [hu]mankind's, or at least shorter than [hu]mankind's need be if we can find some other way of doing things. There are three options open: we must get back much closer to the mainstream of energy flow from the Sun, which is, after all, very much greater than our present needs even if we consider only the minuscule fraction that falls on our planet[('a widely quoted figure is that the solar energy falling on 20 million sq. kms of desert is 400 times present world energy production'; another source says that the amount of solar energy 'reaching the earth after due account has been taken of surface averaging and atmospheric losses is 170W/m²')] or we must try to duplicate the reactions of the Sun here, or at least get some kind of atomic reaction using a fuel that is neither scarce nor productive of dangerous wastes; or, finally, we must find some way of circumventing the laws of thermodynamics. Surprisingly, all three may be possible. The total energy input from the Sun is vast and from our point of view inexhaustible. Given the technology we could use this until our civilisation died of old age, or until we ceased to exist in our present form. Direct solar radiation could be augmented by use of wind or wave power, as these are in effect concentrations of solar energy. Tidal energy could be used up to a point, although here we would be using gravitational energy, mainly from the Earth-Moon couple. At present the technology does not exist for these sources in any developed form, and when it does it is likely to cover large areas of ground (unless we get it up into space). However, the possibility is there and the main outlines of the technology are already known. Thermonuclear energy from hydrogen fusion – duplicating the reactions of the Sun – is the present main hope. So far progress has been disappointingly slow. This is not because the reaction cannot be initiated; it already has, in hydrogen bombs. The problem is that it cannot be scaled down to a useful size. There is at present no known way of getting energy out of a small enough reacting mass to be contained in a power station. Laser technology may point the way here as this can give the intense heat needed to fuse atoms of deuterium or tritium. In a sense we have to do a good deal better than the Sun regarding the rate of energy release from a given mass. A roomful of Sun would give less heat than a candle at a steady rate of output: the Sun is hot only because it is so big and every square kilometre of surface is the only outlet for over one hundred and fifty thousand cubic kilometres of reacting gas. Should it be possible to build a device which uses hydrogen from seawater as its fuel, then our energy problems are solved... The third possibility... is perhaps the most interesting. Firstly there is no such thing as an unbreakable scientific law. By their very nature scientific propositions cannot be proved in the absolute sense, they can only be disproved or not disproved, as the case may be. Usually they last for a while and are then overthrown or, more commonly, absorbed in a more embracing theory. The laws, furthermore... describe what is observed to happen and say nothing of what might be made to happen with the use of a little [bit of] wit and imagination. Many of [humanity]'s artefacts are in fact new: for example, it is highly probable that a uranium fusion reaction moderated by graphite has never existed in the Universe before. If we examine our thermodynamic laws we will find that they are in fact self-contradictory. Either we must accept that energy (and that means matter, too) cannot be created or destroyed, or we can accept the fact that the Universe is in the process of running down from some state, which by reverse extrapolation must have been more 'wound up' than it is now. Ultimately our extrapolation must bring us to the creation of the Universe, which breaks the first law. If we postulate some cyclic Universe, which periodically runs down and then winds up again, we break the second law. It is a pretty safe bet that matter was at one time created – and could still be being created someplace in the Universe today, for all we know. We can be fairly certain that it is being destroyed in some fashion in black holes, or, if not destroyed, then at least dropped through into another dimension rather as a stone may be dropped through the surface of water. The true function of a black hole may, in fact, be not much different from the hole in one's kitchen sink: all we have to do now is to find the tap and we have in effect an open system once more. Thus, the next stage after fusion power might well be the *creation* of power. Similarly one could hazard a guess and say that all processes are reversible if only one knew how. There is some evidence that a gravitational field could be used to effect a selection between 'hot' and 'cold' atoms of a gas, thus performing the function of 'Maxwell's Demons' postulated over a hundred years ago to 'wind-up' a run-down thermodynamic system so that it could provide an energy gradient once again... Ideas about methane are not new. Dalton did experiments on the gas in the early part of the last century, and cow-dung gasworks are in operation in India.

...In factories, there are vast opportunities for increased use of heat exchangers or recuperators to recapture waste heat from boiler smokestacks, hot metal castings or ingots, slag heaps or incinerators. Local on-site electric power generation is economic in many locations because of the possibilities for utilizing both the heat and the electric power. Much of this low-grade waste heat could be put into economic use in winter; [e.g.], in adjacent greenhouses... Organic wastes such as sewage or animal manure that [c]ould... be recycled... damage a stream or lake if the quantity being dumped is excessive. Organic material normally decays by an oxidation process via the agency of aerobic (air breathing) microorganisms. This uses up the oxygen in the stream. If the amount of waste is too great, all the oxygen dissolved in the water will be exhausted, thus killing the aerobic bacteria and all fish or other air-breathing animals. At this point the waste begins to accumulate on the bottom of the stream or lake where it continues to decay slowly, with the help of anaerobic bacteria. The decay products consist mainly of carbon, tars, and hydrocarbons, such as methane. If left long enough, the result is peat or, ultimately, coal, petroleum, or natural gas... Taking into account our existing knowledge of reserves, rates of discovery and rates of substitution, it is almost certain that one can rule out the possibility of a critical shortage of any mineral resource prior to 2025, with the exceptions... [of] natural gas, petroleum, and (unless a viable breeder system is developed) uranium. All are used for the production of energy – the latter being a partial substitute for fossil fuels... [W]astes can also result in contamination of, or damage to, the land surface or the coastal waters. However, nothing now known would touch the devastation of a major nuclear reactor melt-down... This fortunately has not yet happened, but even the slight possibility causes many people to worry about the plutonium breeder concept. Conceivably, tens of thousands of square miles of land and water would be contaminated by highly radioactive and toxic materials, including plutonium. Any region thus contaminated would have to be totally evacuated and quarantined, lest the dangerous materials be spread even further by wind, flood, or wandering animals. If the ocean itself were contaminated by radioactive wastes, the consequences would be permanent. There would be no conceivable method of restoring it to purity... A major commitment to nuclear power now means that our descendants for many generations will have to live with a legacy of hazards that are truly frightening, at least in terms of their potential. One of these is the need for permanent storage of the dangerous waste products, many of which have an effective half-life of thousands of years.['The US Department of Energy assured the public in recent hearings that it is only "the first thousand years of the disposal period that are critical". This year – the year that a publication entitled *Nuclear Disaster in the Urals* described an official government cover-up of the disastrous explosion of nuclear wastes at Kyshtym, in the USSR, in 1957, where thousands were killed and injured and an entire region was destroyed – the 72 licensed reactors in the US will produce between 8,000 and 14,000 cubic feet of wastes'.] Most scientists now agree that, because of geological and seismological changes in the Earth's crust, there is no such thing as a

permanently safe method of disposal by burial or dumping in the oceans. According to [one] biologist-writer... it would require a kind of “nuclear priesthood” to watch over permanently and prevent the escape of these wastes. Such a priesthood is not *ipso facto* out of the question, but it is no light commitment to impose on our descendants. A[safer source of energy is the Sun]... Solar collectors on the surface of the Earth... [generally] encompass... photovoltaic solar cells which convert sunlight directly into electricity. After two decades of intensive development by Bell Laboratories and other research groups, the best existing solar cell utilizes ultrapure silicon crystals, grown in a vacuum[and formed into ‘slabs. The crystal has p-type and n-type semiconductor junctions near the surface. Sunlight falling on the silicon crystal surface displaces the electrons from the atoms. Since the junction tends to transport electrons across it in one direction only, an electric current will then flow. Under ideal conditions, nine square feet of silicon crystal in a solar cell will produce 100 watts of electric power. The present solar cells only use 10% of the solar energy striking their surface’ but solar cells have] a **theoretical maximum conversion efficiency of 18%**. [‘The history of solar engineering may conveniently be grouped into three periods. There was the pre-20th century phase, which one can think of as “the age of the great inventors.” Archimedes is reputed to have used mirrors to burn enemy ships attacking Syracuse, and Leonardo began work on a 4-mile-wide mirror for peaceful uses of solar energy. Many ingenious one-of-a-kind devices were built in the 19th century. A solar steam engine, for example, was presented to Napoleon III and its inventor, Augustin Mouchot, demonstrated a giant, multipurpose solar machine at the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1878. But it soon became clear that coal was a far more convenient form of energy. By the time the 20th century dawned, what one may call the “age of pragmatism” had clearly set in. The most ambitious solar engineering project on record appears to have been a 55 hp water pump, built at Meadi in Egypt and powered by 1230m³ of parabolic trough-shaped solar concentrators. This system was supposed to pay for itself in four years but, owing to the outbreak of WW1, it fell into disuse after operating for barely a year. From then on, solar energy usage was confined to domestic hot-water production in those places where it was found to be economically viable. Renewed interest in solar energy was generated suddenly in 1974. Owing to the Arab oil crisis, crash programs were introduced all over the First World in order to reduce oil consumption, and one product of these programs was the commencement of a systematic study of all potential methods for utilizing solar energy. The “age of solar engineering” as a recognized discipline in its own right, had begun’]... **There are, of course, a vast number of [energy] devices based on... electromagnetic[s]... Electric motors and generators are both based on the fundamental discoveries of Michael Faraday (1791-1867) that if a conductor such as a wire moves “through” a magnetic field (or, equivalently, if a magnet is physically moved past a conducting element) an electric current will be excited in the conductor. Moreover, if a current is passed through a conducting wire or coil of wire, a magnetic field is produced. Interestingly enough, the magnetic field that is required by an electric generator [(which “does not “make” electricity – electricity is already present in all matter, and generators merely make the electrons move: although one must not think that electrons move smoothly through a wire, as water moves through a pipe; rather, the movement is a series of impacts, in which one electron moves into a nearby atom, pushing another out and displacing another from the next atom, and so on’)] can be produced internally by an electromagnet utilizing part of the electricity output of the generator itself. Thus electric conductors are the only basic elements actually needed to make a motor, generator or magnet. Until recently copper was almost exclusively used for all electric purposes. Silver and gold are as good or better in terms of intrinsic conductivity, but the two precious metals are much scarcer... [A]luminium is also a fairly good conductor... Since it is significantly cheaper, aluminium has recently begun to replace copper for a number of applications... However... [a]luminium wiring is a little less satisfactory than copper... because it tends to heat up more in case of an overload... Thus aluminium is not likely to replace all copper wire in the foreseeable future. But several new competitors for both aluminium and copper are coming on the scene. One rather surprising alternative is metallic sodium, which is an excellent conductor at room temperature but even better than copper for carrying large currents at ultra-low temperatures because of its unusually low intrinsic magneto-resistance. Of course, the metallic sodium must not be exposed directly to air or water (it reacts violently to moisture), but this can be accomplished by encasing a sodium conductor in a plastic sheath and then armoring the whole cable. Superconductors are another old scientific dream, that is gradually approaching realization and commercial viability. A superconductor is a material which when cooled to a low enough temperature loses *all* its electrical resistance. A superconducting loop can literally carry a current for an indefinite period with no dissipation. It has long been hoped that it may be possible to synthesize an organic superconductor that will operate at room temperature, but no significant progress in this direction has occurred for several years. To date, the best superconductors are alloys of metals: niobium, zirconium, vanadium, titanium, and various rare earths. All these become superconducting... in the range of 18-20°K, which is about -350F. To maintain this temperature requires the use of liquid helium as a refrigerant – nothing else will do – plus very high-quality vacuum insulation. Yet the savings for a major electric transmission line in energy not lost as heat can probably justify the cost of such an elaborate conductor. At this point, all that seems to remain in the way of practical application is the manufacturing capability and a customer. - 1979**

Electricity’s most sterling virtue is that it is totally clean for the user. It is extremely easy to control, and with the advance of the solid-state art it will become even easier. It is highly versatile, being convertible to heat with 100[%] efficiency and to or from mechanical energy with an efficiency of 70[%] for small motors today and close to 100[%] for large motors and generators. B[ut]... the efficiency even of small electric motors is likely to approach 100[%], partly as the result of developments in strong permanent magnets and partly because there is likely to be a substantial shift from alternating to direct current (DC)... In a power grid with many generators, it is far easier to switch individual sources on and off line with DC than with alternating current[(AC)], because there is no need with DC to match the phases of alternating voltages... Already some of the high-voltage transmission lines operate on DC, because such lines can carry more power with fewer losses... Electricity has just two disadvantages: it is difficult to store cheaply, and it can be transmitted easily only on high-voltage lines, above the ground and visible. Automotive lead-acid storage batteries are as cheap as mass production and the cost of materials will allow, yet their cost for storing an hour’s worth of energy coming off the power line is over two thousand times as much as the utility company charges for that energy. Multiple recharges can’t even come close to bringing that factor down below about three... It may just be possible to develop superstrong materials during the next century. We’ve known for years that carbon and certain metals could be very strong when they were in the form of tiny, ordered crystals. However, we’ve never been able to preserve the same order and the same strength in pieces of material larger than microscopic size. The strongest large-sized objects in use today are the cables of suspension bridges, and we don’t know how to make them much stronger now than we could fifty years ago. It is tantalizing that the ultimate theoretical limits of strength are about one hundred times greater. If we had such material, a wire no thicker than a needle could suspend the weight of an automobile. In practical applications, it could be used in the building of suspension bridges several miles in length... and perhaps less fortunately, taller skyscrapers. The most generally useful application of superstrong materials would probably be to the building of flywheels for storing energy. Such flywheels, spinning so fast that they would store more energy in their motion than we carry now in the form of gasoline, would power electric cars of high performance. Those cars would be totally nonpolluting and – unlike any electric car that’s now possible – would never require battery replacement... Ever since gasoline prices began their upward spiral we’ve all hoped that someone would invent a practical, high-performance electric car. Unfortunately, it just won’t be possible until something much better than a lead-acid battery is developed... There are newer types of battery under development, but they all use expensive materials like nickel or zinc, and they store only two or three times more energy than the old lead-acid type... They’ll be used mainly [in] commuter vehicles that can be plugged in for re-charging each night... [Alternatively, we could end up with] “changing stations” where batteries would be mechanically removed from cars and replaced by freshly charged units, but that seems an awkward solution to a problem... For the larger electric power grid there are other ways of storing energy, and that’s good, because electricity demand varies within each 24 hours. Typically, a power grid has to supply twice as many kilowatts in peak hours as

it does in the middle of the night. At present, peak fluctuations are handled by starting relatively inefficient diesel-electric generators and, where hydroelectric power is available, by opening the inlet water valves to turbogenerators that are already spinning at full speed with zero current output. Some experiments are being made with "pumped storage," the technique of pumping water up to a high-altitude reservoir during times of low electric power demand, then running the motor pumps in reverse as turbogenerators to put the energy back into the power grid when the demand peaks. That is a good, reliable, low-technology method of storing energy, but I doubt that it will find wide use... because of the inherent ugliness of reservoirs that fill and empty within a matter of hours... As a medium for transporting and storing energy, pure liquid hydrogen gets a top rating for effectiveness and near-zero environmental impact. It contains a great deal of energy per kilogram, and it burns with oxygen to give only... pure warm water... as a product. Burned in air, it does form ammoniacal compounds with nitrogen, but only in tiny amounts compared to the similar compounds that result from burning gasoline... To prevent hydrogen's boiling away as a vapor, it must be kept very cold – just a few degrees above absolute zero... The Boeing Corporation, after a detailed study, found that liquid hydrogen was the only fuel so light and so powerful that it could drive a supersonic airliner across the whole Pacific Ocean... and [also] found that the thick insulation needed around hydrogen fuel tanks could be accommodated in a wide-bodied jet, but not in any smaller supersonic plane. Hydrogen could easily fuel any slow aircraft. Before engineers and scientists had acquired experience with large quantities of liquid hydrogen, they were fearful of its explosive properties. [‘To longer memories, hydrogen recalls the flaming catastrophe of the airship *Hindenburg*. In pipelines, however, hydrogen presents no hazard not already managed in piping natural gas. A 200km pipeline in Germany has been moving 4000 billion cubic feet of hydrogen per year since the 1930s without mishap’ and, [after several years of working with it in laboratories and in rocketry, [engineers and scientists have] concluded that it's less dangerous than gasoline or jet fuel. In the crash of a hydrogen-fuelled aircraft, the hydrogen would tend to rise very quickly because of its light weight. Though it would certainly burn, the flames and heat would be high in the air. Ordinary jet fuel stays on the ground as a liquid, soaks the clothing of crash victims, and burns them... Liquid hydrogen could become the fuel for surface vehicles as well as for aircraft... The hydrogen would react with the oxygen of the air in a fuel cell to transform its energy into electricity. Fuel cells were engineered for the Apollo program of the 1960s, and their efficiency can reach 80[%]. The electricity put out by the fuel cell would drive electric motors at each wheel of the vehicle, and we would have the perfect combination of high performance, long range, quiet operation, and complete freedom from pollution. It will be some years before you can buy a tankful of liquid hydrogen at your neighborhood gas station, but there's an interim technology already in use on an experimental basis. In Stuttgart, Germany, city buses are being run on hydrogen fuel, with the hydrogen absorbed on fine metallic grains filling a pressure tank. In the event of a crash, the worst that can happen is that the powder spills out in the street, and releases its hydrogen too slowly for a serious fire to feed on it. Liquid hydrogen may well be the preferred medium for transporting and storing energy in [future], but liquefying it will always require complicated refrigeration machinery. There is likely to be at least as much demand for a synthetic fuel that can be stored and handled at ordinary temperatures as easily as gasoline. Two hydrogen molecules can be pacified by linking their four atoms to the four chemical bonds of carbon to make methane, the main constituent of natural gas. Methane can be liquefied and stored at moderate pressure at a temperature that can be maintained with equipment not much more complicated than a household refrigerator. These days it's shipped as "Liquid natural gas"... The same chemical game can be played further by adding pairs of hydrogen atoms along with single carbon atoms, to form ethane... propane... and butane... Propane and butane are even easier to store than methane, because they become liquids at moderate pressure at ordinary "room" temperature. Butane liquefies so easily that it can be found in cheap plastic cigarette lighters. Propane requires at least a thin steel shell to contain it, but it is so easily handled that it has been in routine use for many decades as "bottled gas." One can anchor hydrogen atoms to nitrogen as well as to carbon, and the result is ammonia... familiar to us in watered-down form as a household cleaning agent. Ammonia works fine in fuel cells, where its hydrogen reacts with atmospheric oxygen and its nitrogen escapes to mingle harmlessly with the air... but ammonia is less attractive as a fuel for vehicles because it has to carry along the dead weight of the nitrogen; as a result it has only about half the energy per kilogram that methane or gasoline contain, and only a fifth as much as there is in liquid hydrogen. Talking of energy content, don't be so gullible as to believe irresponsible statements that alcohol can easily be substituted for gasoline. Alcohol has so little energy per gallon that its price would have to be less than half that of gasoline before it would be a good buy at the pump... [‘Since it is far more practical to produce electric power in very large central generating stations than in many small local generating stations, a single station often produces electricity for a large area. This necessitates a method of distribution with minimum loss of power in the transmission process.’] It is likely that increased electric power transmission will occur through using thicker conductors on existing lines, and by "low-profile" towers hidden by trees in flat country. Lines under water could be economical, but not those underground, except for short-distance, low-power cable runs as in residential neighborhoods. By contrast, ammonia or synthetic hydrocarbons can be transported by pipeline, with almost no environmental impact, at a cost only a fifth to a third that of transmitting equal electric energy on overhead lines. My guess is that pipeline transportation of such liquid fuels will be the most practical, economical, acceptable method for sending energy over long distances in [future], but that electric lines will still carry a great deal of the total energy transmitted, because a large electric power grid can respond instantaneously to sudden heavy demands occurring anywhere within it... During [WW2] Germany developed a practical though expensive method for producing liquid fuels from coal. This and other methods of liquefying coal are being studied again, and within some decades it is probable that a good deal of fuel oil for use in central power stations will be obtained this way. As with coal gasification, about a third of the energy content of the coal gets dumped as waste heat, but sulfur, an undesirable pollutant, is removed safely as a solid. With further refinement and more loss of energy, it's possible to extract diesel oil and even an equivalent of gasoline from such fuel oils, and we may have to... There's so much more fossil energy in the ground in the form of coal than of oil that coal gasification and liquefaction will almost certainly be large-scale activities long after cheap, natural crude oil is just a distant memory. We'll probably shift during the next century from a fossil-dominated energy economy to a healthier reliance on long-term resources. In my guess, from 50... to 95[%] of the energy used on Earth in 2081 will be from such self-renewing or near-infinite resources. You've probably heard quite a lot about several of them: nuclear fission and fusion, breeder reactors, and perhaps ocean thermal power; you've probably heard less about a newcomer to the field of long-term energy resources: satellite solar power... Satellite Solar Power (SPS)... was invented in the late 1960s by... a research firm. A power satellite is a large array of solar cells or of turbogenerators, located in synchronous ([24]-hour) orbit above a fixed point on the equator. The satellite receives full-time solar energy, converts it to low-density microwaves, and then relays it to a ground station where it is rectified to DC current with an efficiency of about 90[%]... For energy density equal to sunlight, the microwave antennas... use only about 1/36 as much land area as ground-based solar cells producing the same average power. The antenna is a mesh structure, intercepting the microwaves but allowing rain and sunlight to pass through it, so if it is raised above ground level on posts, the land below it can be used... In orbit we don't care how much area is needed for the solar cell array, because it's not in competition with land area... In a two-year study completed in 1980, the U[S] Department of Energy found "no unacceptable environmental effects" from [SPS]. However, many experiments remain to be done before [SPS] can be certified safe. The low-density microwaves may have some yet-unsuspected biological effect on birds, or may alter the ionosphere in ways that disagree with calculations made so far. If [SPS] turns out to be acceptable on all grounds other than the environmental effects of microwaves on birds or insects, there may still be a way to use it safely. One can float the antennas above biological life and above the weather in the stratosphere where the winds are usually mild (one needs to avoid the special combinations of latitude and altitude where the jet stream sometimes penetrates). A balloon-borne antenna could feed continuous electric power through its tether cable to a moored ship and from there by undersea cable to shore... You may be surprised that I don't list ground-based solar power as a viable option, but... [because] of interruptions by nighttime and clouds, and lower illumination near sunrise and sunset, a solar cell at

the Earth's surface puts out power, averaged over a year, that is only a sixth as much as its output at high noon on a clear day... The U[S] is a relatively sunlit nation of low population density, a particularly favorable place for solar energy. Yet... [if] we add together... all... sources... of solar energy... [- w]indpower, tidepower, photosynthesis, and hydroelectric power... [-] for the entire continental U[S], including damming every stream for hydro power and burning every forest, and throw[ing] in geothermal power for good measure, the most energy we could get is... only 1.5 watts per sq... m... The total annual amount of sunlight reaching ground level, if converted to usable energy needs at the fairly high efficiency of 15[%] would be 33 watts per sq... m... In 1971[- when] the average U[S] energy use was 0.3 watts per sq... m[- a]... committee of the American Physical Society did a careful review for the federal government for the cost required to satisfy just 1[% of US] electricity needs in the year 2000 from solar-electric cells... The committee concluded that... ground-based solar electricity could never supply more than about 5[%] of the nation's electricity needs, because above that level one would have to solve the problem of cheap storage of electric energy – something we don't have a clue how to do in the vast amounts that would be necessary... The continuous sunlight of synchronous orbit makes storage unnecessary... For more than three decades we've dreamed and hoped that we could obtain nuclear energy the same way the sun does: by fusing hydrogen nuclei together to make helium. That reaction is a copious source of energy, and it doesn't produce penetrating radioactive particles. There are several ways it might be done: by confining an intense, hot cloud of heavy-hydrogen ions and electrons in a very strong magnetic field, by "zapping" a microsphere of glass containing hydrogen with a powerful laser beam, or perhaps by using some version of a mass-driver to smash together two glass hemispheres of liquid hydrogen at such a speed that the collision would heat the hydrogen to the fusion temperature. At least in the case of the first two alternatives, it has turned out that the technical challenge is so difficult that we may not be able to meet it head-on. Instead, we may be forced to work with a less clean reaction, that of deuterium with tritium. Those are heavy, rare isotopes of hydrogen, and they react to produce helium and a neutron. It appears, rather unfortunately, that the most economical version of fusion may be to use that neutron to breed plutonium or uranium, and then burn the fissionable isotope in an ordinary reactor. That raises all the difficulties and fears associated with reactor safety... For some years there's been intense controversy over a pilot-plant "fast-breeder" reactor, which was built to transmute the commonly occurring isotope U238 into the fissionable isotope P239... The controversy has raged because fast breeder reactors are much trickier and more dangerous than ordinary fission reactors, and because P239 is a suitable material for making atomic bombs... There seems to be a way to avoid both problems by breeding from the element thorium [- which, together with other 'naturally occurring radioactive materials such as uranium, is believed to be largely responsible for the heating of the earth's core and for volcanic heat' -] in an ordinary "slow" reactor (the fast/slow distinction refers both to the average speed of the neutrons in the reactor and to the speed with which it could go from a safe to an unsafe condition). Canadian scientists have developed the CANDU reactor, which uses slow neutrons to breed fissionable U233 from the commonly occurring isotope Th232... If the thorium is kept mixed with nonfissionable U238, as it can be without degrading the operation of the reactor, the resulting nuclear material couldn't be used to make a bomb without very elaborate, large-scale laboratory equipment. It has been estimated that if even 5[%] of the available thorium can be burned in reactors of the CANDU variety, we will have enough energy available to run our civilization at fifteen times its present energy-use rate for 30,000 years... (some optimists think 50[%] can be achieved)... [T]he commercial CANDU reactor operated by Ontario Hydro Power Company has run with no difficulties for more than five years, so nuclear power certainly seems capable of giving all the energy we need... I'm not strongly biased against nuclear power, but I'll be happier if we can find a good alternative to it, because it's an inherently messy solution to a problem. As long as nuclear radiation is involved in any system, it has the basic drawback that the "off" switch doesn't really mean "off." Radioactivity remains... [P]ublic opinion polls such as that... in the [New York] Times of April 10, 1979, showed a sharp rise since 1977 in opposition to nuclear power, with 56[%] opposed and only 38[%] still willing to have a plant close to their town... [SPS] has at least one great advantage over any form of nuclear energy, for should it subsequently turn out to have been a wrong choice, it can simply be turned off, leaving no radioactive wastes. The various likely sources of primary energy... are sharply different in the waste heat they will dump into the biosphere. [SPS] is the most benign, because for each kilowatt on the power line here on Earth, it would put a total of 1,100 watts into the environment (the 1,000 that are useful, plus about 100 watts of waste-heat at the antenna). Any type of nuclear reactor... must go through the "thermal bottleneck" to deliver power, so nuclear puts 2,500 watts into the biosphere for each 1,000 on the power line. Coal-burning is about the same, except that if the coal is gasified or liquefied the figure becomes worse: about 3,800 watts. - 1981

If power plants are built in space during the twenty-first century... their energy will be beamed down to earth... [by] lasers... Unlike other energy forms, the laser spreads only slightly, so an energy-enriched laser beam could be collected in a relatively small area. Also, lasers are totally self-contained; they don't wander and they don't create radiation or other unwanted side effects. Finally, even a massive laser presence in the atmosphere shouldn't ruin radio and television signals, which a microwave beam from space could easily do. This laser space plant could use the power it gleams from the sun to power a massive laser gun, which could then create a beam of virtually limitless force. Since the laser light beams are packed tightly together, incredible power can be concentrated in a beam over a brief time span. A laser could deliver at least ten times more power than any other wave in a given period of time... A huge solar-powered grid could be placed in orbit between the earth and sun. If covered with solar cells or plastics that conduct electrical currents, such a grid could generate huge amounts of electricity... Another energy possibility involves building giant mirrors in space that reflect sunlight to solar collection sites on our planet's surface. These huge power stations could be located in the centre of deserts and other unpopular areas... However, isolated rural ranchers and farmers will make use of tiny water-wheel plants that use small amounts of moving water to generate a usable current. This will be a new development in the hydroelectric field. These torque units will enable rural areas to generate electricity from even the most sluggish streams... By the turn of the century, enzyme products will be used in plastics... and fuels. Genetically engineered enzymes will be built up from simple hydrogen, oxygen, and carbon and fashioned into virtually any desired molecule. The future for this energy source appears almost limitless... The poorly conceived and designed nuclear power plant that was once touted as the answer to our energy woes by virtually every major utility is almost certainly the biggest technological boondoggle ever perpetuated on the public... By the turn of the century, most of the problem-plagued nuclear power plants already built will be shut down. Most will grind to a stop on their own because of broken pipes, leaks, or assorted fuel problems. The rest will be closed by economic necessity. They will be expensive white elephants, unable to generate enough power to outweigh related mechanical difficulties... Breeder power plant reactors, which make their own fuel, may very well be regarded more favorably in the near future. The world needs fuel almost as much as it needs energy... Breeder reactors are... closed systems... – those processes that feed off themselves or that link smoothly with other needs... American physicists anticipate that by 1992, the first successful fusion reactor system will be demonstrated at the Plasma Physics Laboratory of Princeton University... The percentage of U.S. electricity supplied by fusion nuclear power plants may not be overwhelming by 2050, but the impact of this source... could become significant since, theoretically, 9[%] of America's electricity needs could be supplied by only two fusion power plants. The extraordinary amounts of power each fusion plant will be able to produce suggest the importance of the new technology. Fusion will most likely become the dominant form of large-scale electrical power generation in the twenty-first century... Geothermal energy will never be more than a secondary energy form, but improved understanding of geothermal engineering should increase its use. Hawaii and the Pacific Northwest plan to take advantage of favorable local conditions to generate most of their energy from underground streams... Hawaii is pioneering the use of tidal shifts for power generation in America... Experts project that tidal power could eventually provide up to 5[%] of America's energy, as much as 25[%] in areas like Louisiana and southern Texas... Houston and Galveston lie at or near sea level. Both are industrial cities that use immense quantities of

water. These two factors will combine to put large parts of both cities underwater within fifty years if civil leaders are not careful. Simply stated, southeastern Texas is sinking because it is pulling too much water out of the deep underground. The cavities created by depleted water supplies pull surface land masses downward. Over the past fifty years, some 1,300 square miles of coastal land have subsided by more than a foot... Bangkok parallels Venice in many respects. Once a city of canals, it is no longer. The waterways have been filled in for roads and construction sites, destroying the natural drainage of Bangkok's marshy land. The problem has been compounded by the unrestrained pumping of drinking water.

...Aucklanders may tap into the Waikato River in the future as a source of their water. A pilot study at Mercer has shown that high-quality, drinkable water can be produced consistently from the lower Waikato. [In related news, 'the fate of the Whakapapa Stream and the Wanganui River looks like another example of myopic planning, says the chairperson of the National Conservation Council. With large proportions of their waters diverted eastward for the Tongariro power scheme, the Whakapapa is reduced to pools of water and the level of the Wanganui is drastically lowered.'

...recently, 'industrial research scientists discovered a superconductor called copper bismuth that worked at much warmer temperatures. It still needs to be cooled but not as much. Now they've put it into their first commercial product, a magnet attached to a machine used in physics research in Lower Hutt. Manufacturing companies say it's a huge technological advance. "It's maybe two quantum leaps. We couldn't really under-rate the giant step we've taken here." As superconductor technology evolves, scientists say it will allow perfect transmission of power through superconducting wires. And, at the moment, one of the most advanced substances in the world for superconducting electricity is this NZ one.'

...scientists predict that by 1994 they will be able to] **create compounds that can carry electricity without resistance at ordinary temperatures. Called room-temperature superconductors, these materials can save more than 15[%] of American energy production without requiring any new plants to be built... Room-temperature superconductors [will] also have applications in appliances and computers. - 1982**

Superconductivity has found many specialist applications, but scarcely in heavy engineering, except in such pioneering ventures as particle accelerators... If, as seems fairly likely, superconductors can be used in heavy engineering, high-tension cables will go underground and pylons may disappear... The first big industrial application for superconductors is expected to be a matter of boosting electricity production in power stations, by the principle called magneto-hydrodynamics... Conversion efficiencies should rise to between 45 and 48[%]... 'Conversion efficiency' in a power station means the proportion of the energy input that becomes converted into electricity. In this context, 'magneto-hydrodynamics', or MHD for short, is a matter of topping up the output by taking hot, electrically charged gases, produced by burning the fuel, and passing them through magnetic fields, so generating supplementary electricity... The first power station topped up by MHD is coming into operation in the Soviet Union in 1984... A demonstration fuel-cell power station became operational in New York in 1982... The advantages of fuel cells includes their quietness, potential high efficiency and possible role in decentralising power generation at a time when the main trend is towards very big power stations and expensive power distribution systems. They have potential in [Last World] countries, where methane, for example, generated from vegetable waste, could run fuel cells in villages. But energy strategy on a grand scale also favours fuel cells... Weather and the unavoidable nights make it unthinkable to use solar energy on a large scale, while the old problem of cheap electricity storage remains intractable... [Yet, even if the old problem can be solved,] I do not believe, for advanced areas, in houses heated by solar energy... Solar heat, however, seems to have a future... in the [Last World] countries of the tropics... (solar cookers, boilers and water distillation units)... At the peak rate of oil formation, during the Cretaceous geological period, nature added 5,000 tons a year to the preserved stocks of petroleum. That's barely enough to wet the bottom of the tanks of one supertanker. If we're going to use the oil, instead of saving it for future generations, why do we burn it instead of making valuable chemicals from it? If we're going to burn it, should not the... countries that cannot easily turn to other sources of energy have first call? The oil is a treasure beyond price because it is a finite source of cheap energy, and the market place cannot cope with that sort of paradox... [W]ell-informed friends from the [Last] World insist that they must have nuclear electricity, for any hope of even modest prosperity for their peoples. Spurn nuclear power[in the First World], by all means, if you live above a coal field... but geological history has distributed oil and coal very inequitably around the world, and nuclear energy could help to restore the balance. That remains the dream of many people, and the Director-General of the World Health Organisation recently endorsed a declaration by the International Atomic Energy Agency that nuclear power 'is a technology whose hazardous effects are well understood and controlled.' ...But... [how] do you safely bury copious radioactive wastes, and what do you do with derelict but still 'hot' reactors when their useful life is over, are questions not yet answered to everyone's satisfaction... About 10[%] of the world's electricity now comes from nuclear power plants, which seems a 'substantial contribution'... though... much of [the future nuclear power will] be from a new generation of power reactors... Fast breeders conserve uranium supplies, so they would be the next logical step in the use of fission energy. Beyond that, the difficult quest is for unlimited energy from nuclear fusion, which could 'burn' atoms from sea water...

As a source of energy, the potential of the oceans is staggering, even for the supply of non-renewable forms of energy... If nuclear fission has any long-term future, uranium and thorium in seawater could in principle 'sustain the estimated 21st-century level of power production for some million years', [while the]... lithium and deuterium from the sea, if used in thermo-nuclear fusion, could 'sustain the power level for the remainder of the life of the solar system'. The tidal power plant successfully operating at the mouth of the Rance River in northern France is a small token of the renewable and non-polluting modes of energy production from the sea, waiting to be harnessed. Useful tidal energy will be restricted to favoured places where the tidal range is very large, but low-pressure water turbines of the kind developed for this purpose might also tap the energy of ocean currents - for example, from the Gulf Stream where it passes Miami... Wave energy is more widely available on exposed coasts, and experiments to tap it are under way in Britain, the U[S] and Japan. In theory the most prodigious energy-content of the oceans takes the form of differences in salinity between different layers of water, but the technology needed to extract useful energy supplies does not yet exist. On the other hand the temperature difference between warm surface water and cold deep-lying water, amounting to 20° to 25° C in the tropical oceans, can certainly be exploited as... the French first demonstrated three-quarters of a century ago, and as experimental and pilot plants of the 1980's are reconfirming. Because it brings deep, nutrient-rich water to the surface, 'ocean thermal energy conversion', or OTEC, will lend itself to integration with aquaculture... Rivalling the urban sector as a claimant on cropland is the fast-growing global energy sector... Hydroelectric dams often inundate vast stretches of rich bottomland; electric generating plants can cover hundreds of hectares. More often than not, oil refineries and storage tanks are built on prime farmland along rivers and coastal plains. Strip-mining of coal and the diversion of irrigation water to the energy sector both tend to reduce the cultivated area... The *Climate Regulator* is a system, or assortment of systems, for managing or generally improving climatic conditions over substantial parts of the Earth. Existing concepts range from family-scale greenhouses in which people can live comfortably in a frigid climate, to global proposals for controlling the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, or for increasing the supply of sunlight by flying huge mirrors in space. Intermediate in scale are air-conditioned cities inside giant domes, and schemes for wringing moisture out of the desert air by promoting an updraft... perhaps by painting the desert black, perhaps by setting up huge chimneys. Meteorological nuisances like hurricanes, tornadoes and fogs might be suppressed locally. Although the term *Climate Regulator* may imply playing games with the air in particular, I would extend it to include large-scale manipulation of the water cycle, a theme that goes back to ancient Mesopotamia. One contemporary example is the project for towing Antarctic icebergs to A[US] or Saudi Arabia; another is the controversial Soviet scheme for diverting the great rivers of Siberia. And the... proposed... Ganges Water Machine... might rescue much of India and Bangladesh from the tyranny

of fickle monsoons by using hydro-electric power from Nepal to run a system which stores water underground during floods and pumps it up again for irrigation in the dry season. (That could be set up, by the way, for the cost of two aircraft carriers.) - 1983

The... director of the United Nations Environmental Program, has said, "People throughout the world are contaminating water much faster than they are conserving it. Eventually, the growing scarcity of fresh water could lead to international conflict." In [Last World] nations, one fifth of all urban residents and 70[%] of all rural dwellers drink contaminated water, [the director] says. Moreover, about 25,000 people die daily from water-related diseases. But there is an even more ominous threat than the prospect of a water-based international conflict: The natural environment can take just so much abuse, just so much imbalance. When pollution gets too far along, we may pass the point of no return. Then, we may well be facing a natural cataclysm... So the state of our water supplies is one of the keys to our very existence in the near future.

...[*In some countries one of the most dangerous things you can do is drink the water.*] By law, water authorities are required to provide a supply of clean, wholesome water – that is, water free from: suspended matter, odour and taste; all bacteria which are likely to cause disease; mineral matter injurious to health. [From the point of view of chemical analysis, it must dissolve soap, reveal no traces of lead, leave no more than 0.50 dry residue per litre after evaporation, contain less than 3 mg organic matter, less than 1 mg ammonia, less than 10 mg nitrates, contain no trace of albuminoids or nitrites, and contain at least 8-12 mg dissolved oxygen per litre. Drinking water often contains too high a proportion of calcium salt and is called *hard* (such water prevents the satisfactory cooking of vegetables). All this explains the remark: "Pure water is a myth."]Water is obtained from rainfall which is collected in the following ways: natural lakes, rivers, artificial reservoirs, underground lakes, wells, springs. Water is collected... and is then given several cleansing processes before being piped to the consumer... The Water Board's stopcock is situated beyond the boundary of the proprietor's premises. Another stopcock should be fitted just inside the boundary to enable the consumer to turn off the water in an emergency... There are usually other stopcocks throughout the premises enabling water supplies at different points to be cut off. If the ball-valves fail to function, the water would flow out through the overflow pipe... The entire supply sometimes comes direct from the main, and may be considered drinkable... [However, where] the main supply has to be pumped by the water authority (not relying on gravity) then fluctuations in pressure at peak times – breakfast, lunch, dinner – will occur. Therefore the water authorit[ies generally] require cold water cisterns to be fitted... [A] cold water cistern... [also provides] an emergency water supply should the main supply be turned off, or lowered... In the average house there is usually a day's supply in the cistern, provided the water is carefully used... *Disadvantages* Stored water should always be considered suspect as it may become contaminated even though covered... It must be above the level of all taps; the higher the cistern is placed, the greater the pressure of water when supplied to the taps... The washers for modern taps are of two sizes and replacements are normally a composite material similar to rubber... A modern cistern is usually made of galvanised steel or plastic... The cistern should be insulated with fire resisting material like fibreglass... Flushing cisterns should be so designed that they will discharge 2 gallons of water in 5 seconds... *Methods of heating water...* *Storage heaters* Water is heated by the fuel and stored in a container designed for the purpose and suitably insulated. Water in large quantities may then be drawn off as required. *Instantaneous heaters...* Water is heated and supplied direct to the fitting on demand, therefore cutting down heat loss... Any fitting which discharges water from it should have a drain or waste pipe which has a diameter of not less than the size of the outlet. Each fitting... must be fitted with a water seal (trap), when connected to a drainage system, to prevent unpleasant smells rising from the pipe into the room... Blockage occurs most frequently because of misuse, such as depositing liquid grease, tea leaves and other waste products in the sink... Modern plastic traps... are very smooth and reduce danger of blockage... Lag all pipes... [to prevent] pipes bursting... when... frozen... water expands... In... electricity generating stations... magnets may be moved by turbines driven either by steam pressure or by water power... The most common electricity supply system now in use is A.C... Electricity is carried by cables called the grid and transformed [– by transformers, which are 'electrical devices that use the principle of induction to increase (step up) or decrease (step down) the voltage of an alternating current' –]at local substations. The consumer takes the supply of electricity from the substation. Electricity must have a complete circuit from the source of supply through the load, eg an appliance back to the source of supply or it will cease to flow... All substances allow electricity to pass through them. Those which allow electricity to flow freely are known as *conductors*, eg metals, carbon, tap water, damp earth... Anyone who has received an electric shock will know that the human body also conducts electricity... Those which do not allow electricity to flow freely are known as *insulators*, eg glass, porcelain, wood, rubber... - 1984

Plants and especially trees are our most precious renewable resource, providing fuel, food, textiles, cosmetics and almost anything else that human ingenuity might devise. By biomass fermentation, 'all required liquid fuel could be obtained from 17[%] of the UK's land area' and 'all gas from 15[%]' (quoting a p[ro]fessor... of King's College, London, [who gave] evidence at the Windscale Enquiry of 1977). The manufacture of fuel alcohol on a large scale has already been shown to be possible, for instance in Brazil, where part of the coffee crop is diverted in this way in order to lessen dependence on imported fuel (though unfortunately in this case it only runs cars for the rich)... According to [the same p]rofessor... in May 1984, all of the world's economically extractable coal, oil and gas only ha[d] an energy output equal to that of the trees now growing in the world... It is well within the range of our ingenuity to produce... [energy from renewable plant] resources which would be cheap and... ecologically sound. - 1985

When nuclear-power reactors first became operational 35 years ago, the problems of dismantlement seemed trivial compared to the benefits scientists said would flow from these sources of infinite power. Engineers boasted that the first-generation plants would churn out inexpensive electricity for about 30 years. But design and equipment failures at some of the reactors forced their shutdown less than two years after they were put into operation. Accidents such as the ones at Lucens in Switzerland, Three Mile Island in America and, more recently, Chernobyl... dramatically aborted the working lives of these plants and posed awesome problems of securing or dismantling them. As well, growing public reaction to the potential perils of nuclear energy restricted how the industry could handle its old plants and where to dispose of radioactive waste. Today, the nuclear industry is facing a universal problem: what to do with a mounting inventory of obsolete nuclear-power plants. In Europe, over a dozen facilities... are already standing idle near populous centres... Experts tell us that an estimated 300 nuclear facilities will be obsolete by the year 2010. In any other industry, getting rid of an old plant is a relatively simple matter. But decommissioning a nuclear plant poses safety, technological and economic problems never encountered before. Even several decades after the uranium fuel elements have been removed, the reactor core is still "hot" enough to cause radiation sickness in anyone directly exposed to the rays for more than... 15 minutes at a time. What can be done with a retired nuclear facility? At present there are three options. The first – and by far the option of choice – is "mothballing" for a period ranging from a decade up to a century... Next came decontamination of equipment and buildings – tonnes of steel and concrete – outside the contamination structure. "Most of this was surface contamination that could be washed away by high-pressure steams and chemical solutions,"... Then the turbine and electric engines were removed intact and sold to conventional power plants, while most of the steel components, including piping and joints, were sold for recycling... The third option for decommissioning... is complete and immediate – meaning within the first decade after shutdown – dismantling, usually until nothing is left but, as nuclear engineers call it, a "greenfield." The biggest test for "greenfield" dismantlement began in 1984 at the Shippingport plant, America's first commercial nuclear reactor built primarily to generate electricity. When the plant began operations in December 1957, it was with an unusual condition: the government operators of the reactor agreed to return the land to a radiologically safe condition by 1994. Thus, complete and immediate dismantlement was the best option the engineers could exercise when the plant was shut down in October 1982... In America... the burial ground best suited for the materials from Shippingport was a site in Washington

state in the west, involving a trip of more than 7000 kilometres across at least seven states. The Shippingport engineers decided to remove the huge, highly radioactive main pressure vessel in one piece and transport it to the state of Washington via an ocean-going barge. The pressure vessel is a cylinder about ten metres tall and three metres wide, surrounded by an even larger one-metre-thick Neutron shield filled with water. The radioactive water will be drained, processed to remove the radioactivity, and replaced with a material similar to concrete. Next, the team will build a steel tower over the vessel, on which they will put a giant crane. In mid-1989, the crane will lift the cylinder from its bed and place it on to a crawler vehicle. The crawler will inch over specially constructed roads to... nearby Ohio River. From Ohio, the barge will travel down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico, through the Panama Canal, up America's west coast to Washington, and finally up the Columbia River to a landing area. Then it will be driven to the site, placed in a ten-metre-deep pit and buried until natural decay reduces its radioactivity to safe levels. The total distance of this incredible trip will be nearly 14,000 kilometres! Since dismantling of commercial plants started three years ago, a major new problem has arisen: where to dispose of the increasing amount of radioactive bits, pieces and parts? Since 1983, there has been a worldwide moratorium on sea dumping... This restriction has put land burial at a premium. In Sweden, for example, public pressure has prompted the government to put its low- and intermediate-level nuclear waste into underground caves that have been blasted into granite rock 50 metres below the Baltic Sea. Material from... the relatively small Niederaichbach nuclear-power plant[... which] was shut down in July 1974... will be buried in a retired iron mine in West Germany. In France, nuclear waste is compacted, packaged in concrete and buried in concrete-lined bunkers covered by metres of soil. And in Britain, intermediate-level waste is stored in concrete silos with 1.8-metre-thick walls. Even so, all these disposal sites must be monitored 24 hours a day until the risk of spillage is gone and there is no longer any evidence of harmful radiation – possibly hundreds of years. The same is true for the high-level waste that comes mainly from the reactor core, which will give off potentially lethal rays for up to a thousand years. Most of it is now stored at nuclear and reprocessing plants where it can be monitored round the clock. Final disposal will probably be in deep granite caverns or watertight salt or iron mines located far from population centres. But where...? ...“So far, no final decision has been made.” Lastly, who pays for the \$400,000 a year that it takes to monitor and maintain a mothballed plant? What about the estimated... \$230 million it will cost to dismantle a nuclear plant of small to modest size? Who picks up the formidable bills for packaging, shipping, storing and monitoring the dumps? Experts estimate that these expenses could run anywhere from [10%] of the original cost of each plant to 30[%] or more. The estimated costs are being incorporated into electricity bills. Thus, one way or another, the consumer will have to pay... - 1988

Energy policy is still driven by the short term profit motive... Most of Northland's power is generated in the National grid south of Auckland[– including power from 'the 120 MW-capacity Rangipo hydro-electric station, which is built completely underground and was commissioned in' 1983, thereby completing 'the fourth and final stage of the Tongariro Power Development Scheme and becoming the country's second underground station, after Manapouri (the largest hydro-generating station in NZ at 700 MW – Lake Manapouri is regarded by many as the most beautiful of NZ's lakes, and at 433 m deep it is the deepest in NZ, so when the original power scheme provided for the raising of the lake artificially by 11 m, there was a public outcry, which resulted in the construction in a huge human-made cavern 213 m below the lake, hewn out of solid rock, into which the water of the lake plunges down vertical penstocks to turbines, and then on through a 10 km tailrace tunnel to Deep Cove in Doubtful Sound'; unfortunately, 'thousands of migrating eels also plunge down the penstocks – a fatal deviation from the lake's natural outlet')]. Electricity charges are very expensive and some Northland homes are still not electrified... Marsden A [power station] runs on oil, a by-product from the Marsden Point Oil Refinery. It supplies electricity for Northland only at peak-load and times of breakdown. Marsden B, even bigger and more complex has never been put into action in the ten years of its existence... Right now Maui gas is being... converted to synthetic petrol at Motonui and the surplus flared off... Instead of keeping the gas until the best use can be made of it, an agreement signed in 1973 means that all gas will be gone by 2008... The major reason for the existence of these plants was to create employment in provincial areas like Northland and Taranaki and to move towards self-sufficiency in energy. In fact: ...When they were completed, most of the local workers were made redundant[... and NZ]... is still dependent on imported oil... Large energy companies control energy sources. They are not interested in developing technologies for conservation and renewable fuel and power resources. One reason for this is that it is difficult to “own” the wind, sun or the waves. It is easier to “own” land, minerals and machinery. - 1989

Water is... a vital component in the cooling process at the eight thermal stations Electricorp owns. But Electricorp Production must apply for the right to use water along with any other use of natural resources. In some cases, it may be necessary to impose limits on the amount of water that can be diverted or discharged. This may be to protect the environments of rare species or because a number of users are competing for the same resource. However, if limits are too severe they may reduce Electricorp's ability to generate electricity from N[Z]'s only renewable resource. If this does happen, [the state-owned-enterprise] must place more reliance on its thermal stations which burn coal or gas... [Because] Electricorp cannot satisfy all the demands for electricity from hydro generation alone, it carries out ongoing research into ways of reducing harmful emissions from its thermal stations. And there's an element of recycling involved. The ash, which has cement-like properties, can be sold for use in road construction. At Electricorp's newest power station, Ohaaki, the waste products from geothermal steam are reinjected back into the steam fields. This major experiment is being pioneered in N[Z] and if successful will be used here and around the world. Other major research is under way into alternative electricity generation such as wave and wind power, coal gasification and other forms of fuel.

...Greens usually base their energy strategy around renewable sources... It is worth noting, however, that... technology associated with renewable energy sources (windmills, barrages) is often highly complex and, in the case of the production of solar cells, polluting... [We can, therefore,] see that the issue of alternative energy sources provides us with yet another specific example of the ambivalence with which Greens... view the role of technology... Renewable energy sources are argued to be desirable because they are in principle unlimited... [But producing] fantastic quantities of ...renewable... energy... encourages frippery and helps to turn wants into needs (do we need kiwi fruits? – but, then, do we need tea?)... Likewise... patterns of trade [may] lend up being notoriously wasteful... [Already,] tomatoes (for example) are grown on the island of Guernsey, exported, and then sometimes shipped back for consumption... [When considering] the Green argument for reduced trade we find the central notions of reduced consumption (if you can't produce it, think about doing without it first, and only trading for it second), and a theory of need that hopes to sustain the view that in many instances the trade to which we have become accustomed is an unwarranted indulgence... This [theory] also affects the Green position on travel: one of the characteristics of the Green sustainable society is that people would travel less... In the first place this is because Greens consider present travel practices to be wasteful of resources... Secondly, and more importantly, Greens argue for reduced mobility as a part of their hopes for generating supportive, satisfying relationships in their decentralized, self-reliant communities. From this point of view, travel involves dislocation of the ties that hold such communities together, and so endangers the emergence of the 'sense of loyalty and involvement'... that, for Greens, will be one of the prime benefits of decentralized communitarian life. The sustainable society is substantially about living 'in place' and developing an intimacy with it and the people who live there; travel, on this reading, is too expansive and too centrifugal an occupation.

...[the wife of the famed Texas oil-well firefighter] asked him that evening, “Haven't you had enough? Haven't you... put out enough fires? Don't you think you ought to quit completely and take it easy? Relax? Travel?” “Travel?” [her husband] said. “You know... that reminds me... I've never been to China. That's a place I'd like to see... They got these wells blowin' like crazy over in China and they're gonna need help over there bad...” [That evening the husband had returned from his most difficult challenge in a career that included putting out the Gassi Touil fire]... WHEN THE CAR came within 500 metres of the burning gas well, the roar was so loud it set the floorboards thrumming... The bonnet began dancing on its hinges,

and the windscreen, peppered by driven sand, threatened to pop loose from its seals. Even with the windows wound up, you had to shout to make yourself heard, though at that moment none of the four [occupants of] the car was saying a thing. In front of them were the twisted remains of a drilling rig jutting from the sand, blown into grotesque shapes like the wreck of a spaceship on the moon. At the centre, raging from the wellhead, was a column of fire that roared like a fleet of jet engines... The manager of North African operations for Phillips Petroleum was driving... Two French oil-and-gas experts sat in the back seat... both were sweating profusely. Their trepidation was understandable. They had been... at Gassi Touil, a remote desert outpost in Algeria... on November 3, 1961, when the well blew out with such force that it exploded the safety devices and sent a 33-centimetre-thick column of gas into the air. Almost immediately the call had gone out to Houston... [to get] the famed Texas oil-well firefighter... [However, the Texan] was on his way to fight a blowout in Mexico, and... sent his two assistants... to Algeria. For a week, [the two assistants] fought to control the well. Then a sandstorm swept in, charging the air with static electricity that ignited a small fire on some nearby machinery. The flames quickly spread to the derrick, sending every rig hand running for his life. There was a blinding flash and a noise like thunder as the gas exploded and a flame that would become known as The Devil's Cigarette Lighter rocketed skyward. With 8.5 million cubic metres of gas going up in smoke each day, this was the most violent conflagration yet recorded in petroleum history. When [the Texan] heard what had happened, [it] rushed to Gassi Touil... THE FIRST THING needed at Gassi Touil was water: not to put out the fire – [the Texan] would do that with explosives – but to cool down the surrounding desert and provide continuous soaking for [the Texan and his crew] when they made their final assault on the well. Oil-company geologists located an area with water only a few kilometres away, deep beneath the desert. Wells were dug and the water was piped overland to three polyethylene-lined reservoirs, each the size of a football field. For days, [the Texan] surveyed the area, measuring, calculating and sketching... [The Texan] ordered eight brand-new bulldozers, tonnes of pipe in various diameters, large quantities of sheet metal and welding equipment, and 900 kilos of solidified nitroglycerin delivered by a French army unit. All this preparation involved over \$4-million worth of equipment, which took months to assemble. Meanwhile, the drilling camp of 30... had grown to a town of 300. The reservoirs were now full. Beside them stood giant pumps, ready to force water through the lines snaking their way to the well. Mechanics... were fitting an 18-metre-long steel boom onto the back of a bulldozer. A hook would be attached to the end of the boom... to pull the wreck of the drilling rig away from the wellhead – the area had to be free of debris... This part of the job went smoothly... At 3 a.m. on May 28, 1962, the crew [controlling] the hoses advanced and began spraying the area. They cooled it for six hours while [the Texan] finished packing 340 kilos of... nitro... into a huge drum. A dry, nonexplosive chemical was poured around the charge in order to knock out any small ground fires that might start as a result of the explosion – fires that might reignite the well. In the morning, [the Texan] mounted the explosives on the hook. As... the bulldozer... [was] reversed... towards the wellhead... [it] was bucking and shaking from the well's noise. The boom was swinging to and fro with enough nitro dangling off its end to reduce a 25-storey building to rubble. The fire was so hot the charge could go off at any time without an electrical impulse. [The Texan] directed the boom close to the base of the flame. Then... gave the signal to detonate... the device went off with such a mighty blast that the bulldozer jumped 30 centimetres off the ground. Through the enormous cloud of dust, filled with rocks and shrapnel and pieces of water hose... they could see that The Devil's Cigarette Lighter... was finally out... [B]ut there was no time to relax. It would be another week before the well was capped, stopping the escape of gas. Defeating [the Gassi Touil fire brought the Texan] international acclaim. Geologists predicted that if [the Texan] hadn't killed the well fire, it would have burned for another hundred years. *Life* magazine did a story about [the Texan]... In 1969, John Wayne starred in a movie, *Hellfighters*, that was based on [the Texan]'s life... IT WAS ON A stifling summer night in 1921, on a weed-choked vacant lot, that [the Texan, then a] six-year-old... saw his first oil-well fire. [The six-year-old] was with a dozen older boys [it] had followed when they raced past his house... shouting and pointing at the sky, east of town, that pulsed orange and crimson through the trees. It was very late, and [the six-year-old knew it]d get a hiding for leaving the house, but... kept right on running. On the lot, [the six-year-old] and the other boys fell silent for a time, watching the sky. "What is it?" [the six-year-old finally] asked. "An oil-well fire," an older boy said. "My dad says there ain't nothin' on this earth more dangerous." "What will they do about it?" ... "Sometimes they just let 'em burn." "My dad had a friend who tried to put one out," another boy said. "[My dad's friend] got burned up. My dad says you make a lot of money fighting oil fires, but ain't a [one] who's done it ever died a natural death." [The six-year-old] stared at the eastern sky and tried to imagine the kind of [person] who would battle a fire like that. "I bet I could get it out, someday," ... "Sure you could," scoffed one of the boys. "If a pig had wings, it could fly." ...For... years, [the Texan] fought wild wells from the equator to the Arctic Circle. [The Texan] had fought with an air pack on his back in Alaska at 55 degrees below zero; and... had fought poison-gas wells spewing deadly hydrogen sulphide. The exposure to extremes of heat and cold, from the weather as well as the fires, had taken its toll. The skin on his face and hands was creased and blotchy, and... [the Texan underwent] numerous operations for skin cancer. Constant proximity to gas and distillate had left the tissue round his eyes puffy and red. As well, despite taking precautions to protect his ears, the noise from the wells had permanently damaged his hearing... [Red's] most difficult challenge, and best-known case, came on July 8, 1988, when at the age of 73 [the Texan] landed in Scotland to fight a blaze that had erupted at the Occidental Petroleum's Piper Alpha production platform in the North Sea. There had been 226 [workers] on the Piper Alpha platform, 200 kilometres northeast of Aberdeen... when... came the piercing, paralysing scream of escaping gas – the sound of a thousand nightmares. Within seconds, a spark hit the gas, and the first explosion knocked out communications facilities. Steel beams and pieces of equipment hurtled through the air as more explosions tore through Piper Alpha. The platform trembled and convulsed. Inside the crew's quarters, which were nearly 30 metres above the water, some 100 [workers] were trapped. The survivors... were those... who were able to jump into the water – itself a perilous choice. Even in summer, the North Sea is so cold that a [person] loses consciousness in half an hour or less. And jumping into water from a great height is like plunging from a rooftop onto concrete. The [workers] who jumped would surely have died had Piper Alpha been alone in that part of the sea. But close by... were the... supply and support vessels... Also nearby was the *Tharos*, a huge multipurpose built vessel carrying firefighting equipment... Suddenly, another enormous explosion rocked the platform, and there was nothing but a wall of fire from the top of the structure to the sea. The *Tharos* sprayed more than 150,000 litres of water per minute on Piper Alpha, but it was like spitting on a burning barn... Two-and-a-half hours later, the giant steel legs buckled, the entire structure tilted nearly 45 degrees, and the accommodation module... dropped into the waves like a pat of butter sliding down a canted frying pan... No-one still [i]n it – or in the flaming water below – was left alive... [The Texan] met with his [crew] in a room below the *Tharos's* deck... [The *Tharos* was a vessel the Texan] had helped design... It was a near duplicate of the *Phillips SS*, the first semisubmersible firefighting support vessel, which had been [the Texan]'s idea – his solution to the problem of reaching an off-shore-platform emergency quickly. On board there was a hospital, a pollution-dispersal system and a diving station... If it were up to him, there would be a... [sister ship] in every body of water where [people] drilled for oil and gas... While they worked, they would keep records of everything they uncovered, so that if the platform fell into the sea, they could return with a team of divers and control the wells with a sub-sea kill. If that happened, it could take months, or even years to complete the job... *The whole world is watching this one... to see what we can do...* [the Texan thought. His crew] worked for weeks, 15 to 16 hours a day, clearing debris, making their way towards the burning wells... But, as press helicopters circled above Piper Alpha... some were questioning his chances of victory... Then one day, the wind blew right and [the Texan] was able to direct water just where [the Texan] wanted it. The fire went out... [The Texan] flew home to... Texas. It was a time of mixed emotions. [The Texan] felt satisfaction because of his team's success; but at the same time [the Texan] was filled with sorrow for the [workers] on the platform who had died.

...Floating oil, released either by accidental spillage or by illegal tanker cleaning, is one of the most devastating forms of marine pollution. Although major oil spills that threaten coasts receive much publicity, those on the open oceans often go unreported... Much of our knowledge of the

forces that drive the oceans, of their geography and of the myriad forms of life that inhabit their depths is relatively recent, and even today there are major areas of uncertainty and ignorance. One hundred and twenty years ago, those who sailed the oceans knew next to nothing of the vast mountain ranges below them: the Mid-Ocean Ridge, for example, was not discovered until 1872. It was not until the 1960s, when transistors replaced vacuum tubes, that oceanographers were able to study deep ocean cataracts and currents. As our knowledge of the oceans increases, so many widely accepted theories turn out to be myths. Until the early 1980s, it was generally assumed that conditions on the seabed of the deep oceans – at depths of 4,800 m... below sea level – were utterly calm. However, researchers at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute in the US have now discovered that far from being calm, the deep oceans experience violent underwater storms which scour the sea floor, transporting large volumes of silt and sediment from one area to another. Because of their size, and the vast quantities of water they contain, the world's oceans have long been regarded as having an almost infinite capacity to absorb wastes, the assumption being that the wastes are rapidly diluted and dispersed to levels where they pose no threat to the environment or human health. In many areas, the reverse is proving to be true. Inshore currents often trap wastes along the shoreline, where they may accumulate in sediments. In others, wastes are swept offshore only to be carried to other coastal areas, a problem that is particularly acute in seas such as the Baltic and the Mediterranean, which are almost completely surrounded by land. Moreover, as pollutants are taken up by marine organisms, so they accumulate in the food chain, often reaching toxic levels... As a result, vast stretches of coastal waters have been rendered all but lifeless through pollution, threatening wildlife and destroying fisheries. Several seas are now in critical condition. The Baltic is one of the most polluted seas in the world. Wastes from factories, farms and private households have turned 100,000 [sq.]km... of the sea into an ecological wasteland, devoid of life below depths of 80 m... The damage is particularly severe in the narrow straits between Denmark and Sweden and in the bay off Gdansk, where thousands of tonnes of phenols, oil, lead, zinc and other pollutants are carried into the sea by Poland's main river, the Vistula... The Mediterranean, like the Baltic, is virtually an enclosed sea, and is almost as sick. Because of its high rates of evaporation and its very slow-moving waters (it takes a hundred years for the sea's waters to renew themselves as they flow through the Straits of Gibraltar), pollutants tend to accumulate without degrading. But it is not only enclosed seas that are now under threat. The North Sea is also showing signs of biological collapse. Worst affected are the coastal areas of Holland, West Germany and Denmark. Here, strong inshore currents have trapped tonnes of pollutants carried into the sea by the major rivers of northern Europe – the Elbe, Rhine, Meuse and Scheldt – causing them to accumulate to dangerously high levels in the Wadden Sea and the German Bight. Adding to this fatal burden are pollutants driven across the North Sea from Britain by westerly winds... Even coastal areas as yet unaffected by industrialization have not escaped the effects of pollution. Ninety-eight per cent of the PCBs in the sea enter the ocean via the atmosphere, borne up into the air through evaporation and often transported thousands of kilometres by the wind. Even the high Arctic and other remote regions are now contaminated... The health of the great inland seas of the world is in many cases even worse than that of the oceans. In the Soviet Union, the over-extraction of water for irrigation is causing the Aral Sea – once the fourth largest lake in the world – to disappear. The area of the Aral shrunk by 40[%] between 1960 and 1989... Salt from the dried-out bed of the Aral has been blown as far away as the Arctic. [Earlier this year], an agreement was signed between the USSR and the U[N] Environment Programme for international action to save the Aral Sea. But, with the Soviet economy in crisis, the massive sums of money required to stop the further devastation of the region are unlikely to be forthcoming... In 1980, in a characteristically unrealistic gesture, the UN General Assembly proclaimed that the 'International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade' had begun, with the aim of "Clean Water and Adequate Sanitation for all by 1990". Needless to say, the UN's grandiose plans have largely come to nought. Only a tiny fraction of the \$300 billion which the project was to have cost was spent on water schemes around the world... Even if more of this money had been spent it is debatable what good this would have done the world's poor. Most foreign aid for water projects is spent on buying unsuitable and expensive equipment made by the country which has given the funds. In 1970, a \$3.5 million sewerage system was built in Accra, Ghana. Designed by foreign consultants and supported by foreign aid, the system was excessively elaborate and too expensive to use, and by 1977 only 171 houses had been connected... In the [Last] World, particularly in urban areas, the discharge of raw sewage to waterways is the rule rather than the exception. The bacteria, viruses and parasites in untreated human waste make it the world's most dangerous environmental pollutant. Typhoid, cholera, amoebic dysentery, polio and hepatitis are all transmitted in human excreta. Nearly two billion people in the [Last] World are exposed to these diseases by drinking contaminated water, and every day an average of 25,000 people die from them. Four out of five deaths of children in developing countries are due to water-related diseases... The main threat to water quality in industrialized countries undoubtedly stems from chemical pollution. Industrial discharges, the run-off from land treated with agricultural chemicals, leakages from landfill sites, and accidental spillages of chemicals have all combined to render many drinking water sources increasingly unfit to drink. Twenty million Europeans obtain their drinking water from the Rhine, which is heavily contaminated with chemical wastes... In spite of the most up-to-date treatment of water supplies, more and more chemicals are being found in drinking water from the Rhine. The head of the Dutch waterworks in the Rhine treatment area has admitted that just about every substance present in untreated water can also be found in drinking water. Many rivers in the eastern US are so polluted by industrial chemicals that they can no longer serve as sources of drinking water. The water of other less polluted rivers has to be treated at great cost, but this has not stopped nearly 130 dangerous chemicals being detected in US drinking water. Only 14 of these contaminants are regularly monitored. Not only do water treatment processes fail to remove hazardous chemicals, but they also pose health risks themselves. The chlorination of water supplies kills most harmful germs but the chlorine can react with various organic pollutants to form chlorinated hydrocarbons, several of which are suspected of causing cancer. In the US, increased cancer rates have been found among people supplied with... polluted and chlorinated water. Many German treatment plants now use ozone instead of chlorine as a disinfectant. Groundwater, which provides drinking water for many millions of people around the world, including a half of the US population, are also becoming polluted with industrial and agricultural chemicals.

...['Industrial plants which use large amounts of water usually construct water-supply systems for their own use. Smaller water-supply systems sometimes rely on natural springs or wells (either free-flowing artesian wells or pumped wells). The earliest sources of water were lakes, streams, springs, and wells. Aqueducts and other closed systems for supplying water by gravity were constructed by the ancient Romans and some are still in use. The earliest use of pumps for water supply was at the London Bridge waterworks, built in 1572. The first American pumping plant was at Bethlehem, Pa., c.1760, but the first municipal waterworks was set up in Boston, 1652. Modern water-supply systems, particularly those of large cities, are of great complexity – they usually consist of chains of reservoirs, sometimes located hundreds of miles from the area supplied, which are interconnected by underground aqueducts (large pumping stations transmit water through the aqueducts and provide water pressure for distribution through large mains to the individual user')]...

Later cities in many parts of the world rarely reached the standard of water supply of... Samos and Athens in ancient Greece... being mostly reliant upon local wells or rivers... [instead of] covered or underground aqueducts with settling basins, and the aqueducts of the Romans are justly famous although the use of lead pipes was not perhaps quite so clever... In environmental terms, the city represents a wholesale transformation of the local environment... The nucleation of people in the city inevitably brought a concentration of wastes which themselves altered the environment of the city and its surroundings. Noise was an immediate effect, to the point where Julius Caesar prohibited all wheeled vehicles from entering Rome between sunrise and two hours before sunset; this law, however, fell into disuse in the third century AD. Possibly more significant is the contamination of the air caused by the effluents from its energy sources: again in Rome, citizens coming back from the country commented upon the smoke and dust which obscured the sun and caused them to lose their tan. In medieval London, the smoke caused by fires burning coal (known as sea-coal...) high in soot and sulphur residues caused problems as early as the last quarter of the thirteenth century. By the second half of the

sixteenth century it became so serious that Queen Elizabeth prohibited the use of sea-coal in brewhouses within a mile of the Court; later, in 1627 the smoke from alum works was said to be the cause of tainting the pastures near the city and even of poisoning the fish in the Thames. Waste water likewise became more contaminated as cities grew. Sewers might have been built from ancient times, but they generally discharged to the nearest watercourse and in time the by-products of all those manufactures which were attracted to the city also ran off into the common drain. In some cities, night soil was collected from pits or directly from privies and sold for fertilizer, but elsewhere the rivers or the sea were the sites of the biological transformation of ordure back to simpler molecules. The solid wastes created by an urban population would require disposal as well but a simple pit outside the built-up area would likely suffice; it could be built upon easily when full, and disjecta per person were no doubt a great deal lower than those of today's western populations and more like the thrifty dwellers of [Last] World cities. The decomposition of the human body itself might also change land use patterns near the city, since the dead might not be buried within the city either because it was a sacred place or because they were crowded out by more active land developers. In all events, the pre-industrial city[']s... environmental impact was... much smaller than those of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries... simply because each citizen had access to lower quantities of energy than fossil-fuel-using successors... Like the control of fire and the invention of agriculture, industrialization represents a turning point in the history of [hu]man-nature relations. An essential economic characteristic of the period since AD 1800 has been the manufacture of goods in a factory and by a machine, for sale outside the neighbourhood concerned. As a result, the structure of environmental relations over most parts of the world has been changed by the use of coal, oil and natural gas... Energy use per head in an industrial world can usefully be compared with past times. Hunter-gatherers can only tap solar energy and nearly all of this comes in the form of food and fire. Their energy throughput as food is perhaps 2000 kcal per head per day... Even without access to fossil fuels, agriculturalists nevertheless use draught animals, construct irrigation channels, use wind and water power and may produce surpluses: they can be responsible for throughputs of 10-20,000 kcal per head per day... Calculations suggest that in the early phases of industrialization, the members of such societies average a throughput of 70,000 kcal per head per day... and that members of today's full industrialized societies are at the level of 120,000 kcal per head per day... The elite selected to engage in space travel are supported, it seems, by 2,740,000 kcal per head per day... Since 1945, the energy of the atomic nucleus has been added to the repertory of energy sources available to [hu]mankind... The discovery of radioactivity is credited to the French scientist Becquerel in 1896, and thereafter significant developments on the practical side included the isolation of polonium and radium from pitchblende by the Curies, and demonstrations of the fission of heavy nuclei by Rutherford, Bohr and others in the 1930s... ['The first nuclear reactor (then called an *atomic pile*) began to operate on December 2, 1942, at the University of Chicago.'] The early development of civilian nuclear power as a source of electricity took place under the impetus of... the belief that it would be very cheap since the energy from 1kg of uranium-235 was equivalent to 2500 t of coal... ['There is a wide variety of coal types, from black anthracite (almost pure carbon) through bituminous coal to lignite, a soft brown coal of later formation and with lower calorific value. Layers of coal near the surface are mined by opencast methods; deeper layers are mined by sinking shafts and digging the coal layers by machine, leaving pillars to support the ground above. Both methods have severe social problems'. In] the USA in the 1970s there were 262 urban areas that were in jeopardy from [coal]mining subsidence: depressions, pits, troughs, cracks, compression bulges, sinkholes and small ponds were all recorded... The formation of these features may take place more than 50 years after mining has stopped... [Where mining continues, there] is... likely to be considerable active management of regional water resources in order to produce the large quantities of water needed for dust control and coal washing where open pits are used: a consumption of 17 litres per tonne coal mined is representative for the USA; underground mining uses 63-120 l/tonne, plus 33 l/tonne for surface waste disposal. If coal is gasified then another 6-36 x 10[00000] litres of water per million cubic metres of gas are required and a coal-fired power plant may also require 1.86 litres per kWh of electricity generated. Such a plant also has numerous effluents... Oil refineries are major industrial installations... and as such may interact strongly with the environment, not least in the changes of land use needed to provide sites. Since proximity to deep water is usually required, coastal wetlands are often modified for this purpose. Once in operation, the refinery demands water for cooling and chemical processes, of the order of 195 litres of water per barrel of oil processed, and in turn emits wastes to the air and to the out-going water... Oil and gas may be burned to produce electricity... in which case there are further demands for cooling water... If we imagine an early stage when *Homo sapiens* used water only for drinking, then each adult would require an average of 2.25 litres per day... [During] our own time... residential use of an individual is... a minimum need of 90 l/day for drinking, cooking, washing and sillage. This is the order of consumption in the households of Karachi, for instance. In London it is 263 l/day, in the USA 635 l/day. Modern agriculture, too, raises the demand for water... In the food industry the unit consumption is correspondingly higher because of the multiplicity of processes which need water. A tonne of bread produced industrially consumes 2100-4200 litres of water; in the UK 1000 [litres] of beer has been needed... 10000 litres of water for its production, and in the USA the same quantity of beer has needed 15200 litres of water: American beer is either cleaner or weaker than its British counterpart, we may suppose. A tonne of steel may need 8000-12000 litres of water at the steel mill, and a single automobile some 38000 litres while at the factory... All these data are for the 1960s and the magnitudes are now probably lower because of improved efficiency, but... [i]ncreasing knowledge of scientific hygiene leads to raised requirements for clean water... [T]his usually means industrially based treatment, with filtration to remove sediment and organic matter, aeration, sterilization with ozone or chlorine to kill micro-organisms, and possibly further chemical treatment to adjust the pH. All this may well necessitate the use of energy, not only in constructing the facilities but in pumping the water between source, storage, treatment and use. In [Last World] nations such water treatment is less common, with various diseases... being a common result... To bring clean water to all users is a major task... [I]n Tanzania it means getting it to 20 million rural inhabitants. These schemes will in some places compete with agriculture for water resources which are in limited supply... Since the 1960s attempts have been made to increase the number of condensation nuclei in clouds by scattering substances such as silver iodide from aircraft: it has been claimed that one gram of silver iodide can produce 250 x 10[00 cu.] m of rain. [However, t]he statistical problems of interpreting the results are considerable (would it have rained anyway?) and the legal difficulties are a paradise for lawyers who are called in to arbitrate (whose rain is it?)... [Subsequently,] weather modification seems unlikely to be as important a resource as ground and surface water, and so environmental modification is... more productive...

The practice of using our seas as international dumping grounds must be stopped. HRH The Prince [of Wales] said, when opening the North Sea Conference in 1987, that the North Sea is 'not a bottomless pit for all our waste and it makes no sense to test it to destruction'. Britain was a willing signatory to an agreement to stop dumping toxic materials harmful to the marine environment in the North Sea by December 1989. Well into 1990 the T[ory] government is shown to be full of broken promises and confirms Britain's reputation as the 'dirt... of Europe'. Britain is the only North Sea state to continue polluting the seas in this way. An international monitoring commission must have powers to deal with pollution, whether it be on land or sea or in the air, and any penalties must be severe enough to ensure that it is not financially worth while to pollute. Too often it is cheaper to pay fines than invest in alternatives. In 1987 reported incidents of river pollution in Britain numbered 23,253, of which 1,402 were categorized as 'serious'. Yet only 288 prosecutions were made, and many of those convicted were given conditional discharges or small fines. Considering that the river authorities themselves were responsible for over one fifth of these incidents, it is no surprise that industrial polluters fail to take the new Green Bill seriously... Successive governments' neglect of [Britain's] water systems means that to bring drinking and bathing water quality up to minimum EEC standards would cost approximately £39 billion. 'Liquid Costs', an environmental report on water written by... Leeds University, concludes that only 30[%] of the £18.6 b... of government money earmarked for capital spending by the ten new water companies will be used on environmental improvements. The remainder is needed for government neglect. If EEC standards are to be complied with, water bills for consumers will have to soar. Under the government's privatization scheme, the report concludes, river pollution will become worse because the

government has relaxed the controls on sewage discharge to make ownership of shares in the industry more attractive. This report was suppressed until the Water Privatization Bill was on the statute book. While the... government has made noises about the level of pollution and damage to the eco-system, it has been busy cutting funding in those very areas seeking to promote better understanding of the biosphere. Government spending on environmental research was £161.2 m... for the year 1988-89, contrasted with a defence budget of £19,215 m... Spending by the energy-efficiency office was slashed by £6 m... in the year 1987-88 from a high of £24.5 m... in 1986. The Select Committee on Energy in July 1989 said, 'The government's cutting of the Energy Efficiency Office's budget shows misplaced complacency... it indicated a misjudgement both of the evidence and the analysis of this issue.' Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution set up in April 1987, supposedly at the heart of the government's commitment to all things 'green', has been a dismal failure. The director, Brian Ponsford, who committed suicide in December 1989, had written a damning report of the Inspectorate's activities. Lack of money and staff and low morale had meant that monitoring undertaken by the Inspectorate was woefully inadequate. Britain had [32] full-time anti-pollution police, while Holland had 1,000 staff and the U[S] Environmental Protection Agency 20,000 staff for air pollution alone... The privatization of the electricity industry means maximizing profit by maximizing consumption rather than by promoting energy conservation, which is essential if we are to combat the greenhouse effect and to preserve fossil fuels for future generations. If this or any other previous administration had poured the money used for research into the nuclear industry into the promotion of energy conservation and alternative renewable energy resources, we would today be well on the way to having a safe, clean renewable energy supply. Britain is one of the largest importers of other people's toxic waste and plans to build more incinerators. In 1986 it disposed of... 1,580,000 tonnes of toxic waste, and in 1988 saw the importation of over 100,000 tonnes of dangerous waste on the grounds that the UK has the advanced technology to deal with it. The truth is that British laws are more relaxed than those of the country's counterparts and... profit is more important than either health or safety. However, when faced with public pressure, angry environmentalists and tightening controls, some companies have sought to export their hazardous cargoes to [Last World] countries where... the... high cost of toxic-waste disposal... (approximately... £20 per tonne in Africa... compared with... £750 per tonne... in [First World] countries...) make the [Last] World an attractive dump. When [Last World] countries pressed the [First World] countries to stop dumping waste on their territories, the [First World] refused to agree. Indeed, the U[S] objected to a clause in the UN Environment Programme that required exported waste to be handled just as safely in the receiving country as in the exporting country. This led Greenpeace... to say, 'The Basle Convention was not drafted in the spirit of compromise. The demands of [Last World] countries for protection from the international waste trade have been largely ignored. [First World] countries had the power to stop waste exports to the [Last] World; instead they opted to legalize them.' It makes no global sense at all to transport toxic waste over long distances, so that the chance of accident during transportation becomes greater... it is far better and more sensible to transport the technology capable of dealing with toxic substances until we are in a position not to produce the dangerous chemicals in the first place... British Nuclear Fuels Limited (BNFL) actively seeks contracts for reprocessing nuclear waste from abroad and maintains that these are vital for its business and Britain's balance of payments. At present most spent fuel from abroad and the UK goes to Sellafield, where it is stored under water to await reprocessing and the extraction of plutonium. The spent rods inevitably corrode and contaminate the water with radiation. In 1988... a radio interview with... BNFL... went something like this: PK: "[...]Do you think it morally wrong to import dangerous substances from abroad, like nuclear waste, which poses a threat to the health of people?]" BNFL: "[...]It is not right to call it nuclear waste. It is spent fuel, a valuable commodity, and by your continued insinuations you are ruining a multi-million-pound industry, which profits the people of this country." PK: "[...]You are therefore prepared to put profits before the health and safety of the people." This is... a draft letter to the then UK Energy Secretary... [from the then chairperson of the] Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB)... 'We are under attack from environmentalists and our critics for storing Magnox fuel in water. The attack is difficult to answer because it is basically correct...' BNFL was reported recently to have told workers to stop fathering [kids] because of the risk of cancer... [Britain's PM, the Iron Maiden,] proclaims that nuclear power is the only solution to the greenhouse effect, deftly plucking us from the fire and into the radioactive frying pan... Only a minority of countries have nuclear power stations and in all but France and the countries of Eastern Europe nuclear power generates only a fraction of the energy required (in Britain, despite [the PM]'s advocacy, a mere 7[%])... Every stage of the atomic cycle, from mining the uranium to transportation and reprocessing, from the operation of the Chernobyls and Harrisburgs of this world to the unsolved problem of what to do with ever-growing quantities of waste, is fraught with difficulties... The USA hasn't seen the construction of a new nuclear power station since the 1976 Three Mile Island accident. Austria, Sweden and a host of European countries are phasing out their nuclear power programmes, while even France and the USSR are seriously questioning their commitment to this source of poisoned power... Fast-breeder reactors, which... can generate up to seventy times more energy than conventional power plants, may be seen as another nuclear way forward. But breeders are difficult and dangerous sources of energy, as they operate at very high temperatures, use highly volatile sodium as a cooling agent and contain 4-5 tonnes of plutonium... Fusion is heralded as a new source of electricity too cheap to be metered, just as fission used to be, but it is both technically a distant prospect and has its own risks. Although the risks of catastrophic meltdown or explosive nuclear reaction would not apply, fusion would produce large quantities of waste... Their life may be much shorter than that of fission reactors; [20] years has been mentioned. Neutron bombardment in the reactor would induce radioactivity in some materials that have very long lives. The niobium which is necessary to contain corrosive lithium has a radioactive half-life of 29,000 years. Permanent waste storage would be needed for these substances... [T]he former chair[person] of the... CEGB[-] ...an enthusiastic exponent of the nuclear dream[- has] stated, 'The chance of it [fusion] being commercial is zero.'

...Of the 103 chemical elements present on our planet, only 20 are actually made use of by animals and plants. Of the rest, most are damaging to living organisms... All living creatures are exposed to background radiation, some of it emanating from outer space and some from radioactive substances... which occur in rocks, soil and seawater. Radiation is measured in becquerels, one becquerel being equivalent to one atomic disintegration per second. On average, a human receives... 60,000 becquerels from natural sources. The radiation comes from outside the body as well as from natural radioactive substances, such as radioactive potassium, taken in with food. Such exposure cannot be prevented, although it can sometimes be reduced... Plants and animals have little choice but to live with natural background radiation, and... have protective mechanisms to combat the damage it does. But if such radiation is unavoidably part of life, that does not signify that additional amounts from [hu]man-made sources are harmless. The evidence is that a small addition to the natural levels will cause an increase in disease - and that, in some cases, even background levels can cause cancers and genetic damage. Yet, over the past 40 years, as a result of human activity, ecosystems have become increasingly polluted with radiation-emitting substances. After more than 1,000 nuclear weapons were tested by exploding them in the atmosphere, the fallout of radiation covered the Earth in a fine radioactive dust, containing highly carcinogenic plutonium, a few grains of which, taken into the lungs, can significantly increase the chances of lung cancer. Plutonium will remain an environmental hazard for tens of thousands of years... To fuel nuclear power stations, now the major source of electricity in some countries, notably France, uranium must be mined... To obtain the uranium to run one nuclear reactor for one year requires 100,000 tonnes of rock to be brought up to the surface, most of which gets dumped... on the surface... 90[%] of the original radioactivity in the rock remains in the tailings. The number of reactors that need fuelling is increasing every year, and thus the mountains of tailings increase day by day. Nuclear power plants, meanwhile, produce an extremely dangerous cocktail of radioactive substances... [S]plitting... the atom increases the original radioactivity in... uranium a million times... To date, there is little agreement of the best way to dispose of such waste. Proposals vary from sending it by rocket out to space to burying it deep in the ground. The large quantities of low-level waste produced in operating nuclear installations are meanwhile discharged into the environment within limits set by governments - even though the evidence that they are damaging the environment is now overwhelming. Accidents have occurred at nuclear

installations with depressing regularity, frequently releasing radioactive substances into the environment. The most devastating accident to date took place in April 1986, when a reactor at Chernobyl in the Ukraine exploded. [‘The Soviets tried to hush the incident up while young army conscripts were brought in to help clear up. With no special protective clothing available they had to improvise. The level of radioactivity was so great that each conscript was allowed to work for a single two minute period. They had to rush in and rush out.’] Hundreds of thousands of people had to be evacuated. Four years [la]ter... people were still being moved. Levels of radiation... 400 km... from Chernobyl are still between 8 and 25 times more than the background average. - 1990

...in December 1990... [came] the news... that radium from the earth’s crust has been brought to the surface in decades of oil drilling, causing widespread radioactive contamination of the... world’s... oil fields, and through them of its water, drainage systems, and soil... [H]ow many executives in high places would continue to love fossil fuels if in the price of oil and gas and coal there would be included the staggering costs of environmental degradation their products unleash on the planet and its inhabitants, including people? ...Similarly... [it] is doubtful if utilities and/or consumers of electricity would care to pay for the thousands of years of disposal costs of nuclear waste... As the hidden costs of nuclear and fossil fuels come into the light, the perceived costs of conservation and of solar power will come down dramatically. Their costs would also come down absolutely because of the much greater research and development that would be put into solar energy and conservation. But even more than that, it becomes clear that not just one major energy source will be the “silver bullet” on which the economy must run. A variety of renewable energy sources, adapted to different regions, with a different mix in each region, would then come into focus and sharply influence the way economists, business[people], labor leaders, and politicians would think about the priorities and the efficiencies of successful production.

...In the present crisis, there is blame enough to go around. The world market has no mechanism for establishing the true scarcity value of the dwindling petroleum reserve... The political stampede away from nuclear energy has gone to increase the opaquing of the infrared window of the planetary greenhouse. The planetary catastrophe invited by continued increase in the combustion of fossil fuels compels re-examination of the nuclear alternative... So urgent is the situation, as long as the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere continues to rise, that even the free-lunch alternatives – wind, tide, geothermy, and the rest – must be re-examined. By the time the UNCED conference convenes[in Rio de Janeiro later this year], the world may be ready to respond to rational counsel. That will mean stretching the time horizon of public investment in research and development beyond that by which the members of the world’s business and political communities now live. [Editor’s note: ‘The value of a fuel – any combustible material used as a source of heat – is determined by the ratio of the heat released (measured in calories or B.T.U.s) to the fuel weight. The more common fuels consist largely of some form of carbon or hydrocarbon. Combustion occurs through an exothermic reaction involving the rapid union of the carbon and hydrogen in the fuel with oxygen, releasing energy in the form of heat. Petroleum is the chief liquid fuel while coal is the most important solid fuel, but also used are other carbonaceous material such as vegetable waste, straw, peat and wood’.]

...wood, for 2 billion [Last World people, still] supplies substantially all of the energy available to them external to their bodies[– it] cooks their food and warms their homes... – [while] most of the world’s households... still [live] a kilometer or more distant from their water sources... Early in the history of agricultural civilization, people engaged falling water to turn millstones and the wind to do the work of oars... The water wheel and the sail exchange motion in one direction for motion in another[(‘water wheels – which were an important source of power until the turbine was introduced at the beginning of the 19th century – convert the energy of moving water into rotary motion; the three types used – the overshot, undershot, and breast – may reach efficiencies of 85%, 35% and 75%’ respectively)]... It was an entirely different kind of energy exchange that started industrial civilization. The steam engine transformed the energy of heat to the energy of motion. James Watt invented the term horsepower to describe the superhuman power of his steam engine to do work... After Watt, people learned to transform the energy of heat not into motion but into electricity, and then into radiant energy, and then into chemical bonds, and back again and across the circle from one form of energy to another at will. By the middle of this century, energy-transforming machines had taken over the toil of human beings in the [First World] countries. These machines summon enormous power to do work. They lift and move, hammer and squeeze things in masses, with forces and at velocities that no number of people and beasts could together manage. With a command of energy on this scale, people have been making materials that enlarge and diversify their command and use of such energy. Thus, to increase the working temperature of gas turbines, and so the efficiency with which they transform heat to motion, they make the turbine buckets of a ceramic reinforced by single-crystal inorganic whiskers or fibers. These “composite” materials retain tensile strength at high temperature better than any metal against the immense centrifugal force exerted by the spinning of the turbine. Employing another class of ceramic, the semiconductors, people have learned to make energy and information interchangeable... Machines that interchange energy and information are now doing the work of human nervous systems as well as of human muscles. - 1992

One of the basic tenets of our reigning belief system is that unlike animals, human beings can choose. And, by making choices, they can become architects of their destiny. Put another way, this proposition states that all of us individually and, more importantly, collectively, may be capable of envisioning, designing, putting in place and, above all, controlling what, in the broadest anthropological sense, we call “culture.” Yet, if we subject this “rosy outlook” to a careful consideration... first we begin to wonder, then to doubt. Let us take a case of our culture “in action”: the case of nuclear fusion. Way back in the 1940’s, physicists... began to ponder the notion of using... the same reaction that powers the sun, to generate power on earth. In 1951, one early fusion “prophet” predicted a fusion power plant within five years. Seven years later... the director of the new US Government fusion energy programme insisted that a full-scale fusion energy reactor was almost a certainty... providing that “enough ingenuity and hard work” were brought to bear on the problem. [The director] also added: “luck.” [Although ‘scientists at Los Alamos, N. M., produced a controlled thermonuclear fusion reaction for a few microseconds in 1960’, b]y 1971, his successor less sanguinely foresaw an operating demonstration fusion plant only[by] 1995. Today, after forty years and the expenditure of some \$20 billion by the U[S] and a few other countries, no one seems close to making electricity from tiny [hu]man-made suns. However... this is hardly going to halt in its tracks the juggernaut set in motion by human hope. Only half a year ago, a special advisory committee suggested... it was only necessary... to hike... steeply... the fusion budget in order to build a demonstration plant by... the year 2025, and to have one commercial reactor fully operative by 2050! The juggernaut relentlessly proceeds down its track in spite of any naysaying to the contrary. One physicist at the... University of Maryland [sai]d: “Fusion is thirty years away, and always will be... Except now it seems to be sixty years away.” Is this an example of humankind in control of its destiny? ...I would like to add that one gigantic barrier to the development of fusion power, at least in the modalities considered through science or hope, to be feasible, is its environmental effect. For we have not been fully informed that the process is not as “clean” as advertised. And that, in turn, raises another question in the context of my thesis: “How can we become masters of our fate if those purporting to be in command of our culture, and to control it, hide the truth?” A hum]an’s judgement is only as good as the valid information that supports it... [T]he widely touted fusion process... spew[s] out neutrons which... can turn almost any material radioactive. This problem has so far been considered unsolvable by the “crowned heads” of fusion. Yet, for nearly twenty years, a brilliant Yugoslav-born physicist and inventor... has been developing a new “migma” process to achieve non-radioactive fusion, otherwise known as “aneutronic energy”... “Migma”, which uses NON-radioactive deuterium as a fuel (available in nearly UNlimited quantities from sea water[; it]... is interesting to note that Deuterium, or ‘Heavy Hydrogen’, is what powers the ‘H’ Bomb[– a] pound of this fuel at less than a hundred dollars... will produce the power of \$75,000 worth of fossil fuels[– but the]... proposed methods of producing cheap deuterium now have already become details of the suppressed past...), does NOT produce radioactive waste[,] can be converted DIRECTLY into electricity (without

energy-wasting steam turbines), and can be constructed small enough to power a house or large enough to power a city... The only trouble is that, after performing four experiments at a cost of \$17 million... to increasingly demonstrate the potential of the new system... his Advanced Physics Corporation have... been unable to find support and funding necessary for a fifth crucial experiment that bids fair to establish what is known as “proof of principle.” In comparison to the staggeringly huge amounts of money allocated over the years to fusion, those required for this fifth stage are minuscule: \$3.5 million. Nevertheless, applications for this paltry amount have been turned down by the US Energy Department on the basis of “peer reviews” in which various scientists, hiding behind a cloak of anonymity, maintained... the four former experiments were “scientifically flawed.” ...despite the fact that members of [APC]’s Board of Directors and Scientific Advisory Board bear nationally recognized names, including those of two Nobel Laureates in physics... [I]t seems that establishmentarian “powers that be” have not seen fit to back a promising new overture that would cost figuratively, if not virtually, no more than “pennies”... [A] high-ranking scientist at the Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory has said: “The top two inches of Lake Erie contain 1.6 times more energy than all the world’s oil supplies.” Why, then, have our national leaders continued to insist that a full-scale effort be made to locate more of what is colloquially known as “Black Gold?” Why haven’t they sought to unlock the power hidden in water with keys other than the “fusion key?” Do we humans presently dominate our culture in that respect, or does the “King Oil” aspect of it dominate us? Can water be made into fuel? The question is no longer rhetorical. Fuel from water is a fact... it has sprung from the inspiration of a Bulgarian-born [US]n inventor... whose travails I have followed for... six years. [The Bulgarian]’s story is one of struggle, and survival, the story of an innovator and his conception, one still considered by many moguls of science as pure fantasy, yet courted by many entrepreneurs of dubious ethics as a potential bonanza. It is the story of a machine able to crack water into its two constituents... and to burn both of them together safely with out risk of explosion, a result almost universally considered impossible. It is also the story of the flame produced by that burning, a flame with properties so remarkable that they are confounding scientists in the laboratories of many countries... [(t)he flame burns through bricks with a speed impossible to reproduce with hand-held oxy-acetylene welders and reduces them to very dense and hard lumps of glass; and]... when... applied to the tip of a tungsten rod, there is intense light and the dimensions and mass of the metal are reduced by what appears to be vaporisation[– t]he temperature for the vaporisation of tungsten is supposedly 5900°C)]... To do... that story... full justice, to get all the intricacies of it, the genius of it, the politics of it and its “politics of science”, would demand a whole book. What can be asked here is the overall question: “Why are those responsible for our energy future not investigating the new avenue opened up by [the Bulgarian]...?” ...Migma WORKS, already producing at least three watts of power for every watt put in... A few years ago, Carr was advertising his model A-X1 energy system that produced 15,000 watts from an input of only 5000 watts... In “Return of the Dove”... Carr is mentioned having... started a company which dealt with “free energy”. Supposedly, certain aspects of his “free energy” device were incorporated in his “Amusement Device” patent (2,912,244)... It took... [an inventor from] Blacksburg, Virginia... six years of legal hassles to get his “free energy” motor patented... Patent... # 4,151,431... [is his] motor... in which the power is generated by magnets alone... Professional sceptics were stumped, a generation or two ago, by an invention in Utah. Incredulously, people witnessed a working “free energy” device... [Scientists] mailed impressive credentials ahead to open the inventor’s workshop door, then strode into examine his tabletop apparatus from all angles, poking it and interrogating him in their search for evidence of fraud. Scientists were allowed to dismantle everything except a delicate two-ounce component, the Radiant Energy detector. When the unit was put back together, they ended up witnessing – but not all believing their eyes – as the self-contained unit converted some unknown energy into useable power, and ran continually for days at a time. Without any moving parts, the device produced a strange cold form of electricity which lit incandescent bulbs, heated a flat iron and ran a motor. The inventor – T. Henry Moray, D.Sc., of Salt Lake City – in the late 1920’s was a confident 33 year old engineer with a young family and a gift to give humanity. The gift was his Radiant Energy invention, which as [Henry] saw it converted power from the cosmos – from rays which, on their eternally-launched flights through space, constantly pierce the earth from all directions... “Energy can be obtained by oscillatory means in harmony with the vibrations of the universe... the Moray Radiant Energy Device is a high-speed electron oscillating device.” [Henry] also said that those vibrations continually surged onto the earth like waves onto a seashore... [Henry said his device could generate power] in the middle of the Sahara Desert or in the deepest mine... The power... would come in so strongly during the day that it would burn out [the] detector... Despite his self-confidence, there were hints that [Henry] might be stopped from mass producing his device. His family was harassed by mysterious threats. “Your husband’s life is not worth a plugged nickel unless [it] co-operates on Radiant Energy”, an anonymous caller told [Mrs] Moray over the telephone. Their home was repeatedly broken into when the family was away, as if in warnings of worse to come... Since the device seemed to go against current “laws” of physics, professional doubters went to ludicrous lengths in attempts to dismiss it as a hoax. Moray’s sons remember the family laughing about a visitor who saw the device working in Moray’s basement. [The visitor] insisted that “Mrs Moray was secretly powering it; [the wife] must have been pacing back and forth on a carpet upstairs and generating static electricity!” Would-be debunkers, sabotage and lack of funding were only some of the obstacles in the way of further developing the invention. Because of betrayals, Henry... eventually distrusted people outside his family and... guarded his technical secrets closely – even to the point of losing a potential business deal... [Ironically,] Henry offered his Radiant Energy discovery to the... [US Government during a 1925 meeting] with... Senator Reed Smoot... Free of cost. According to... the book... The Sea of Energy – In Which the Earth Floats... the senator thanked Moray but replied that the government would decline such an offer. Why? “On the grounds that the government was not competing with public utilities.” Undeterred, Henry spent countless hours in his basement working on solid state physics with what [it] called the Moray Valve as a detector for radio frequencies. According to his records, early in the 1930’s [Henry] made a radio which was no bigger than a wristwatch. Parts of Henry’s invention was his pioneering use of semi-conductors. Moray’s first germanium solid-state device (a transistor) was sent to the US Patent Office in 1927, and was rejected on the basis that it would not work without a heated cathode. Heated cathodes were commonly used in vacuum tubes of that time. This means that Henry... was so far ahead of his time in semi-conductor technology that the patent office had not heard of it, and so the bureaucrats decreed that what [Henry] had was impossible. Of course society later learned that cold cathodes are most definitely possible. But when the transistor was officially invented 20 years later, no credit was given to... Moray. The second generation of Moray’s radio valve not only picked up radio waves, it also detected a small amount of power. Launched by these experiments with semi-conductors, [Henry] followed a trail of discovery which led to his powerful energy converter. By 1939, a unit weighing less than 55 pounds, including its wooden case, converted 50,000 watts of power – enough to run a small factory. [Henry] tested it 90 miles from the nearest radio station, at a desolate area now known as the U.S. Army Dugway proving ground, and the device still worked. Witnesses to his experiments included engineers and curiosity-seekers from other countries as well as local visitors from Utah Power and Light, the Secretary of State’s office in Utah and other officials. As far as this author can discover, no one refuted... Moray’s claim that his Radiant Energy device did run motors, light bulbs and a radio. The invention had unusual characteristics. Photographers exclaimed over the intensity of the light from the bulbs – remarkably more bright than... 150-watt bulbs normally shone... Despite death threats, Henry... repeatedly worked on his strange electric generator in front of creditable witnesses. The only threat which stopped him from demonstrations came in the form of advice from his patent attorneys in Washington DC – under patent laws [Henry] could have lost his rights to a patent if [it] showed his invention to just anyone. The US Patent Office itself was not much help either. That agency rejected seven patent applications for his Radiant Energy Device... In one attempt by intruders to break into the Moray house in 1931... someone... shot the Morays’ watchdog... Violence in Henry’s lab... also shocked the family. A[n assistant]... who had been sent by the Rural Electrical Administration to work in Moray’s lab went crazy with a sledge hammer... one day. The [assistant] destroyed the Radiant Energy machine... What type of person would hammer an important invention into useless pieces – destroy a device which took years to perfect and which contained expensive almost-

irreplaceable parts? [One of Henry's sons] describes the saboteur as "a double agent trying to force Dr Moray to co-operate with the US Department of Agriculture's R[EA] and a communist government"... From then on, trouble multiplied. Henry... refused to co-operate further with the REA... His family later discovered that more than a dozen of Henry's original patent applications had disappeared from the U.S. Patent Office, although the file jackets remained there. "The contents and applications themselves are gone... Watergate was not the first great coverup and act of duplicity," [Henry's son later] wrote. Who stole the... patent applications? ...the question will probably remain unanswered. Over half a century after... Moray's discovery, his sons are still waiting for an investor who will fund the expensive development of the Moray device; engineering problems still have to be solved. Some researchers believed that... Moray's secrets died with him and that the family and associates would not be able to replicate his device even if they had funding... This incident is only one example of difficulties facing independent inventors of unorthodox energy devices... Federal employees worked with a vengeance when instructed to destroy the work of scientist Wilhelm Reich, MD, at his lab... in the state of Maine. Their 1956 court injunction said that construction materials in... Reich's boxlike "orgone accumulator" could be salvaged, but the workers slashed the Celotex panels into useless junk. Down the coast in New York, Reich's associates... were forced to load the literature in the Orgone Institute stock room into a large truck. The freight truck dumped the papers at a Lower Manhattan incinerator, for an FDA-ordered book burning. The American Civil Liberties Union stepped in when it was too late, with a press release saying that the court order was a violation of free speech because only one of the torched books could be considered... to promote or explain the controversial orgone accumulator. (Orgone... – energy of the organism... – ...is the name Reich gave to a life force which [Reich] discovered to be within and around all living organisms, including the earth... It is not a biological radiation, not electromagnetic, and an Oslo radiologist confirmed that no standard nuclear radiation was present... Instead, it corresponded more to the Hindu concept of prana or to the Chinese concept of chi...). The... press release said, in part, "It is a serious challenge to freedom of the press, principles of free thought on which our democratic government is based, for an agency of government to take advantage of such a dragnet injunction to thwart the dissemination of knowledge, however eccentric or unpopular that knowledge may be." ...No major newspaper used the press release. Furthermore, six scientists and educators sent all major papers in England a letter of protest about the book-burning and Reich's sentencing. All the papers remained silent on the topic. What was the suppression of Reich's scientific work really about? It was apparently about more than just the FDA's responsibility to protect supposedly gullible consumers from spending money on devices which the FDA decreed as useless... Some observers wonder if his free-energy invention played a part in the squashing of his scientific writings and the obliteration of his reputation. Reich claimed that h[is invention] could power an electric motor with concentrated atmospheric energy. Did economic interests want to crush that possibility? Or... [d]id mechanistic-minded people, in positions of power, fear being shown that they and the earth itself and the universe are filled with streamings of a vibrant, pulsating unpredictable life force? Reich's experiments indicated that this living force could actually be measured in terms such as heat or movement, and that it is present in varying degrees depending on sickness or health of the organism. And that this life-giving substratum is bothered by high-voltage power grids and is in effect irritated into a frenzy by unnatural levels of nuclear radioactivity... [(m)measurements inside the accumulators would swing strangely... after atomic testing[])... Reich's biographers hint that squashing of writings about a dynamic atmospheric force in the 1950's was related to the fact that the atomic power industry was emerging at that time; it would not do for the public to debate whether atomic fission and its byproducts turns life force in the environment into a destructive presence which Reich called Deadly Orgone Radiation. Nor would the atomic power industry want people to connect droughts and anomalous weather with atmospheric DOR... A third possibility is that the unprecedented opposition came from the orthodox medical community. The orgone accumulator... was a simple medical-treatment box which concentrated the previously-unknown energy by a certain layering of absorbent organic and reflective inorganic materials. Experiments showed an anomalous rise in temperature inside the box, and even Albert Einstein had experienced this phenomenon under Reich's tutoring. Although Reich himself never claimed... the accumulator cured cancer, patients of a number of physicians reported that they were helped with various conditions by sitting in an accumulator or being treated with a smaller accumulator called a shooter... While confined to his bed a couple of days, an Edinburgh professor doodled up a method of using ocean wave action to produce an amazing amount of electric energy. Large pods shaped something like a duck simply bobbed up and down in a pumping action that used 90% of the waves' energy. Scale models actually functioned perfectly and indicated that larger units should produce hundreds of kilowatts... Not one to stay at the vapourware level of ideas, [an Austrian named Viktor]Schauberger picked up his tools and built hardware. From watercourses to agricultural implements, his constructions attracted praise from users. Then [Viktor] turned to extracting electrical energy directly from the flow of water and air. "They contain all the power we need." Hitler had heard of the... [Austri]an through an industrialist. After Germany took over Austria in 1938, word came to Schauburger that [it] would be hired to plan log flotation structures in Bavaria, Bohemia and North Austria, and that furthermore [Viktor] could use a professor's lab... in Nuremberg for his research. Viktor... sent for his son[, who] had studied physics in university and was said to find that some of his father's concepts were foreign to the way [it] had been taught to think. However, [the son]'s scepticism crumbled during the experiments they conducted. [The son] contributed useful techniques himself, and the duo were soon extracting 50,000 volts from fine jets of water at low pressures. A physicist from a nearby technical college came; his first action was to search for hidden wires. When [the physicist] could find none, [it] lost his temper and asked... where [the duo] had hidden the electrical leads. Eventually [the physicist] had to admit that there was no trick involved; the experiment was valid. However, [the physicist] could not explain such a high charge from water. After... W[W2] interrupted their experiments, and [the son] had been drafted, Viktor was ordered to undergo a physical examination supposedly related to his forthcoming pension. However, says [his]biographer... "it looked like an engineering and architectural association was behind this demand for a check-up." Viktor... unsuspectingly showed up, but was whisked to another clinic... in... the mental hospital... Registering almost a hundred patents, [Nikola Tesla] is the inventor of... basic developments in high voltage, electric motors, oscillators etc. Almost everything that touches our lives in the 20th century has been brought out to the world by Tesla... arguably the greatest inventive genius... at least as far back as Leonardo. What a shame and an indictment of our educational institutions that his name enlists barely a mention here and there in the hallways of learning. When pressed, our vaunted electrical engineers, who in fact owe their livelihood to Tesla, will tell you... Tesla invented alternating current and "the Tesla coil"... the poly-phase alternating current system of power generation... which they play around with every so often when they have to. But they will probably not be able to tell you anything about his other... basic patents... Or his invention of the radio (well before Marconi) [and] x-rays... Or his ability to fetch electricity from the ambient atmosphere... and his experiments with transmitting electricity around the globe to virtually anywhere... ['By this discovery Tesla proved the Earth could be used as a conductor and would be as responsive as a tuning fork to electrical vibrations of a certain frequency.' 'It has been reported by various writers that during his power transmission experiments in Colorado, Tesla succeeded in lighting up a bank of 200 50-watt incandescent lamps wirelessly, 26 miles from his station. In his own writings, however, no such claim was ever made, nor is there other evidence that Tesla did so. What Tesla actually wrote was that, by use of the magnifying transmitter, it had passed a current around the globe sufficient to light 200 incandescent lamps'.] *Towards the close of 1898[1 (Tesla) undertook] a systematic research, carried on for a number of years with the object of perfecting a method of transmission of electrical energy through the natural medium, [which]led me to recognize three important necessities: First, [I needed]to develop a transmitter of great power; second, to perfect means for individualizing and isolating the energy transmitted; and third, to ascertain the laws of propagation of currents through the earth and the atmosphere... It was on the third of July... when I obtained the first decisive experimental evidence of a truth of overwhelming importance for the advancement of humanity... Impossible as it seemed, this planet, despite its vast extent, behaved like a conductor of limited dimensions. The tremendous significance of this fact in the transmission of energy by my system had already become quite clear to me. Not only was it practicable to send telegraphic messages to any distance*

without wires, as I recognized long ago, but also to impress upon the entire globe the faint modulations of the human voice, far more still, to transmit power, in unlimited amounts, to any terrestrial distance and almost without any loss. With these stupendous possibilities in sight, with the experimental evidence before me that their realization was henceforth merely a question of expert knowledge, patience and skill, I attacked vigorously the development of my magnifying transmitter, now, however, not so much with the original intention of producing one of great power, as with the object of learning how to construct the best one. This is, essentially, a circuit of very high self-induction and small resistance which in its arrangement, mode of excitation and action, may be said to be the dimetrical opposite of a transmitting circuit typical of telegraphy by Hertzian or electromagnetic radiations. It is difficult to form an adequate idea of the marvelous power of this unique appliance, by the aid of which the globe will be transformed. The electromagnetic radiations being reduced to an insignificant quantity, and proper conditions of resonance maintained, the circuit acts like an immense pendulum, storing indefinitely the energy of the primary exciting impulses and impressions upon the earth and its conducting atmosphere uniform harmonic oscillations of intensities which, as actual tests have shown, may be pushed so far as to surpass those attained in the natural displays of static electricity... Much has already been done towards making my system commercially available, in the transmission of energy in small amounts for specific purposes, as well as on an industrial scale... The Canadian Niagara Power Company have offered me a splendid inducement, and next to achieving success for the sake of the art, it will give me the greatest satisfaction to make their concession financially profitable to them. In this first power plant, which I have been designing for a long time, I propose to distribute ten thousand horse-power under a tension of one hundred million volts, which I am now able to produce and handle with safety. This energy will be collected all over the globe preferably in small amounts, ranging from a fraction of one to a few horse-power. One of its chief uses will be the illumination of isolated houses. It takes very little power to light a dwelling with vacuum tubes operated by high-frequency currents and in each instance a terminal a little above the roof will be sufficient. Another valuable application will be the driving of clocks and other such apparatus. These clocks will be exceedingly simple, will require absolutely no attention and will indicate rigorously correct time... There are innumerable devices of all kinds which are either now employed or can be supplied, and by operating them in this manner I may be able to offer a great convenience to the whole world with a plant of not more than ten thousand horse-power. The introduction of this system will give opportunities for invention and manufacture such as have never presented themselves before. Knowing the far-reaching importance of this first attempt and its effect upon future development, I shall proceed slowly and carefully... But I am hopeful that these great realizations are not far off, and I know that... the great truth accidentally revealed and experimentally confirmed is... that this planet, with all its appalling immensity, is to electric currents virtually no more than a small metal ball... and... that... the energy of a waterfall... can be transmitted to any... point of the globe... – on sea, or land, or high in the air...! - 1994

An energy crisis of immense proportions looms ahead if alternative sources of energy are not found and exploited before petroleum begins to run out. Nuclear energy is one of the... solutions to the world's chronic energy problems... However, the safety of the plants must be ensured and nuclear wastes have to be managed properly... if nuclear energy is to be considered a viable alternative energy source. Much research has been done on fusion energy... but... [u]nless a major breakthrough is made soon and the technology is rapidly commercialized, fusion would not figure significantly as an energy source in the near future... The potential for geothermal energy is enormous, and that of the U.S. alone is about 10 times the heat energy of all its coal deposits... In... areas without natural geysers, geothermal energy can be extracted from fractured, hot, dry rock, in a method whereby water is injected into deep wells and steam is recovered. Unfortunately, overproduction of steam fields such as The Geysers in California... the largest geothermal electrical generating plant in the world, could rapidly deplete this... natural resource. The geopressed energy deposits beneath the Gulf Coast off Texas and Louisiana are a hybrid of geothermal energy and fossil fuel in reservoirs of hot gas-charged seawater. The deposits were formed millions of years ago when seawater was trapped in porous beds of sandstone between impermeable clay layers. Heat building up from below was captured in the seawater along with methane from decaying organic matter. As more sediments piled on, the hot gas-charged seawater became highly pressurized. Wells drilled into this formation... not only tap geothermal energy but also natural gas, providing an energy potential equal to about one-third that of all coal deposits in the U[S]... Another successful energy alternative is solar energy... The sunlight striking the Earth is equivalent to about 15,000 times the world's present energy supply... The manufacture of solar cells... with an optimum efficiency of about 20[%]... is very expensive, however, making large-scale use uneconomical. But less efficient solar cells can be manufactured in mass quantities at greatly reduced prices. A more successful means of converting sunlight into electricity are vast arrays of solar collectors combined in solar farms... Sunlight is focused into a powerful narrow beam by banks of heliostatic mirrors that automatically track the sun as it travels across the sky. The light beam is directed onto a central receiving station, where the intensified light heats a boiler and superheated steam drives a turbine generator. At present, however, solar power stations cannot compete economically with conventional fossil fuel generating plants. But this could change as fossil fuels become scarce and expensive. Commercial and residential buildings can utilize solar energy to supplement conventional water heaters and furnaces... The Sun Belt states of the Southwest, which receive a generous supply of sunlight, can take full advantage of this type of solar energy... In windy locations, such as seacoasts, where the offshore and onshore wind currents are reliable, utilities construct large windmills to generate electricity... About 90[%] of the U.S. wind power potential lies in 12 north-central and western states. The wind also drives ocean waves, which could be harnessed... Trapping tidewaters in enclosed bays is a means of generating electricity from the power of falling water. [‘Also some natural WATERFALLS can be used as sources of water power for hydroelectric generators. The power plant at the base of Niagara Falls is an example of this type of installation.’] Another important use of falling water is hydroelectric dams. However, hydroelectric projects are expensive, and the most accessible sites [in the US] have either been exploited or deemed unacceptable due to the necessary flooding of large tracts of valuable land. A little-known energy source [utilises the fact that ‘if a long strip of zinc and a similar strip of copper are pressed together at both ends to form two junctions, some of the electrons will leave the zinc and go over to the copper. The copper will acquire a small negative charge due to the excess electrons, and the zinc will acquire a slight positive charge due to the loss of electrons. Therefore, any additional loss of electrons by the zinc quickly becomes impossible because of zinc’s positive-charged attraction for electrons and copper’s negative-charge repulsion of electrons. In 1821 Thomas Seeback discovered that heat altered an atom’s ability to gain or lose electrons. Seeback heated one copper-zinc junction and cooled the other. More electrons were lost by the zinc and gained by the copper at the hot junction than at the cold. The hot end of the copper then had more electrons than the cold end. Since electrons repel one another, some flowed down the copper strip to the cold end. But cold copper can’t hold as many electrons as hot copper and some electrons went back to the zinc strip. The resulting thermocouple can generate electric current indefinitely as long as the temperature difference between the junctions is maintained. By using hot and cold gases instead of wires, a thermoelectric generator was being developed in the 1970s which would generate electricity without moving parts.’ Then there is ocean thermal-energy conversion... OTEC... plants also produce fresh water as a by-product – another valuable resource... [Incidentally,] British scientists have discovered... that... [the] seeds... of the Moringa tree, native to northern India, can render water safe to drink in an hour, according to... the University of Leicester. The crushed seeds adhere to bacteria and viruses, allowing them to be easily filtered off... [The discovery will have] immense value in the [Last W]orld, the *Times* reported.

...In the future... who[ever] controls the water may control the world. [The NZ Herald] looks at the growing global water bomb and its devastating consequences. THE World Bank has seen the future and it’s very, very dry. As the U[S] counts the rising death toll of a searing summer, as Spanish regions clash over what to do in seven weeks’ time when their drinking water may run dry after a two-year drought, and as tinder-dry Britain finds it is leaking a third of its water supplies, the world’s most cautious economists are helpfully chiming in... [T]he World Bank... vice-president... says the wars of the next century will... be fought over... water... 40[%] of the world lives in the 250 river basins whose water is

competed for by more than one nation... all of whom want to extract as much water as possible... Because water is no respecter of national boundaries, the potential for insecurity is great. Botswana, Bulgaria, Cambodia, the Congo, Gambia, the Sudan, Syria and many other countries receive 75[%] or more of their fresh water from the river flows of upstream neighbours who are often hostile... Eighty countries... now have shortages that threaten health and economies; 40[%] of the world... has no access to clean water or sanitation; and as industrial, agricultural and individual demands escalate everywhere the situation is deteriorating... ['Communism's filthy legacy means that the waters of the Vistula are too polluted for industrial use, Warsaw having no sewage treatment; 90% of wells in the Czech countryside are contaminated; and Romania's border-crossing emissions pushed tens of thousands of Bulgarians into antigovernment demonstrations in 1987.' Moreover, the situation] is being worsened as tensions grow everywhere between the three sectors of society that traditionally compete for water... World demand for water is doubling every 21 years. Supply can't remotely keep pace with demand as populations soar and cities explode... *Ultimate Security*, is... [a book written by] a fellow of Green College, Oxford, and consultant to the World Bank... It says Egypt's water supply per person is expected to shrink by 30[%], Nigeria's by 40[%], Kenya's by 50[%] in under a decade. By 2025... the amount of water available to each person in the Middle East and North Africa will have dropped by 80[%] in a single lifetime... The problem, the FAO says, is not "climatic drought." Rainfall stays roughly the same. Today's problem is self-induced... Growing populations need more food which demands more water to grow it. But less marked (and ignored in the bank's analysis) is the fact that new high-yielding crop varieties – subsidised and pushed vigorously by governments, industry and world bodies as the most efficient way to feed people – demand much more water per se... THE figures are startling: according to the FAO, the average 15,000 c m of water needed to irrigate 1ha of high-yielding modern rice is enough for 100 nomads and 450 cattle for three years, or 100 rural families for three years, or 100 urban families for two years. The same amount can supply 100 luxury hotel guests for just 55 days... The bank wants \$NZ909 billion to be invested in sanitation and water schemes in the next decade, and says it will up its lending in this area to about 25[%] of its loans. It makes economic sense: the price of not investing in health and sanitation is huge. Ten weeks of cholera caused by contaminated water in Peru recently cost about \$1.5 billion – three times the amount invested in the country's water supply in the whole of the 1980s. Because it could not afford to clean up the pollution of its water supplies, Shanghai spent \$454 million recently moving its intake 40km upstream. In Britain, water companies say it will cost \$136 billion to meet European Union water quality standards – the price of not investing in pollution prevention earlier. "It's good to see the bank taking water seriously," says... WaterAid, the British charity which claims 80[%] of all deaths in the [Last W]orld are now water-related... "But money is not enough – the approach is vital. Time and again the poorest are bypassed by inappropriate water and sanitation investments. The [Last W]orld is littered with failed water projects..."

...A garden in the South Pole is set to cheer up scientists wintering there while improving their diet and recycling waste. San Francisco space researchers have worked out a prototype for the experiment in which several hundred [US] scientists wintering at the Pole this year will grow salad greens, tomatoes, wheat and potatoes in artificial light, using water produced by the purification of sewage. The 15 sq m growing space will be little bigger than a backyard glasshouse. If successful... Nasa... intended to apply the programme to making space missions cheaper... "If they can make the thing work on Earth, clearly they have overcome some of the problems they will meet attempting similar things in space." Managing and watching the growth of plants in the sunless and relatively sterile environment of the Antarctic winter would boost the morale of scientists as well as providing them with more varied... food. Flights to the southern continent were few in winter and the cost of bringing fresh food in was high.

...['First came the stone age, then the iron age, now it's the sewage' 'Disposal of the organic waste products of people and industry is very important in both urban and rural areas (raw sewage can be a threat to public health if not disposed of quickly and satisfactorily). As the population of a community increases, problems of sewage disposal also increase.'] Auckland's main Wastewater Treatment plant... now serves a section of the city with a population of 700,000 – in 25 years the same area will be pressing one million... Urgent decisions need to be made about... [t]he plant... to cope with[that] growth... Something... also... needs to be done about its odours, its effects on the Manukau Harbour and the sludge it produces... Overall, [Auckland's sewage] is about 99% water – the problem is the 1% of impurities. It... includes nutrients which cause algal growth when they end up in the harbour in sufficient quantities... pathogens (disease-causing bacteria and viruses)... solids such as grit, wood and plastic... organic matter, oil, grease... - 1995

...Christmas w[as]... particularly grim for some workers for the sewerage company Thames Water. They... [were] organised into a crack squad of "fatbusters," according to the *Sunday Telegraph*... Their task w[as]... to don protective suits and wade through sewers scratching turkey and goose fat poured down domestic kitchen sinks on Christmas Day from the sewer walls. "It is not a pleasant job but someone has to do it,"... Thames Water e[stimates that] more than 100 tonnes of fat... go down the sink [each year and, before Christmas,] were urging cooks to pour fat into a tin, let it go hard, then throw it in a bin. [In local news, 'Wellington pumps 100 million litres of untreated effluent into the ocean every day – and will continue to do so until the city's new sewage treatment plant becomes operational in the year 2000.']

...A bid to protect a volcanic crater... has prompted a last-minute revision of plans to upgrade the main Auckland sewage treatment plant. Watercare Services Ltd has bowed to pressure from environmental, geological and other groups and changed tack on its plan for rehabilitating the sludge lagoons at its Mangere plant. It intends ceasing to use the lagoons but before this week had proposed to fill in most of their 35ha to create a grassed recreation area. It also planned to protect the remnant of the [volcanic] cone in the centre of the lagoons – culturally significant to Maori – by surrounding it with a lake. The revised plan is to return the area of the lagoons, which fill a volcanic crater, to its natural state as part of the Manukau Harbour shore. Watercare's 11 planning applications for the \$360 million upgrade of the Mangere plant will go under the microscope of a resource management commission of the Auckland Regional Council, the Manukau City Council and the Minister of Conservation next week... The Mangere Lagoon crater has been used for sewage sludge stabilisation since the 1960s. The remnant of the tip of the volcano's scoria cone stood only an estimated 8m above the lagoon, even before it was quarried. A regional council natural heritage officer... says in her report to the commissioners that the Mangere Lagoon is considered the "best representative example of its type remaining in the Auckland volcanic field..." ...But the revised scheme is also likely to be controversial because the one it replaces was the option favoured by a majority of 712 residents near the Mangere plant who responded to a Watercare circular. People fear that if it is returned to its natural state, the Mangere Lagoon will become a smelly mudflat, trapping seaweed and harbour debris. [However, the ARC officer] says that if it is properly restored it is unlikely to be a problem.

...Local residents will endure another summer of foul smells from the polluted Orakei Basin. Auckland City councillors yesterday agreed on a plan to improve water quality in the basin but will not meet again until March ['97] to allocate funds for the project during the council's budget rounds. Signs were put up [last] February warning people against swimming and waterskiing in the basin because of high pollution levels. Diluted raw sewage pours into the basin when combined stormwater and sewage pipes... from both the Meadowbank and Waiaatarua catchments... overflow after heavy rain... [causing] silt build-up and high nutrient levels which encourage algal growth and add to the odour. A resident and member of the Orakei Basin Protection Group, said the... air around it was so bad that clean silverware went black in a week... Separating sewage and stormwater systems to stop sewage overflowing into the basin is already underway. Stormwater treatment ponds will be built in the Orakei creek to filter silt, and an automatic sluice gate in the railway embankment will allow higher water levels. Erosion control, some dredging, and improved cesspit cleaning operations will also contribute to a safer waterway. The Orakei Basin project manager... could not say how long the estimated \$16.9 million project would take but hoped it would be finished by 2001 when the separation of sewage and stormwater systems was due

to be complete. The council would also impose building regulations governing surface water run-off and explore whether regulations needed to be imposed on the Winstone Quarry which accounts for 10 to 15[%] of the sediments carried into the basin through the Waiaatarua tunnel.

...Pollution levels caused by the recent heavy rain washing sewage into the Waitemata Harbour warrant public health warnings... An Auckland Healthcare official... said water samples taken from beaches across Auckland – from Kohimarama to Pt Chevalier – showed... swimmers ran a high risk of contracting health problems such as vomiting and diarrhoea, ear and eye infections and possibly hepatitis A... Pollution levels, measured by the account of the human gut organism *Enterococci* in the water, are about twice the acceptable level for swimming... But most die-hard winter swimmers... probably know not to swim for 48 hours after rain, [the official] said... Consistent rain over the past two months meant the ground was not soaking up water, instead it was flowing into the city's inadequate stormwater drains, flooding the sewage system and polluting the harbour.

...The Nelson Regional Sewerage Authority is defending a delay in notifying the public after the largest major sewage spill... [–] an estimated two million litres... [–] into the Waimea Inlet this year. The public is be[late]ly be[ing] warned not to swim at Tahunanui Beach or to take shellfish from the estuary... [but] a warning could not have been issued earlier, as the full extent of the spillage had not been determined... [In related news, the Auckland] City Council... has adopted a 20-year plan which provides for a \$350 million sewer separation programme to minimise outflows... says[its] works and services committee chair[person]... The city... is spending \$22.8 m... [–] almost one third of its drainage maintenance budget... [–] this financial year, and plans to spend \$25 m... next year. That amount will increase each year to 2011. His comments followed an episode last Monday when raw sewage flowed into the harbour around Princess Wharf and Queens Wharf, startling tourists and prompting a complaint from Fullers[Ferry Services]... Sewage outflows into the harbour are not acceptable, says [the chairperson], but the problem cannot be addressed immediately.

...Visitors often envy Aucklanders for being able to choose a beach to match their mood – that is within 30 minutes drive of downtown city. For example, on the west coast there are the wild rugged surf beaches of Muriwai and Piha while the northernmost of the North Shore's eastern bays is gentle and serene Long Bay. What they have in common is their popularity; Muriwai and Long Bay each have just over a million visitors a year while Piha can have 20,000 visitors on a sunny day. Such high use, assaults by storms and close proximity to generators of pollution, bring problems in keeping Auckland's beaches in good shape and health. Efforts to replace sand washed away at beaches have cost ratepayers more than \$200,000 at Orewa and \$2.2 million at Mission Bay in Auckland's eastern suburbs. But the price of basking in clean sand is small bikkies compared with that facing Aucklanders if they are to have healthy Waitemata Harbour beaches all year round. Forty years after the city fathers decided to stop pumping raw sewage into the Waitemata and instead send it to treatment plants at Mangere on the Manukau Harbour, human waste is still discharged albeit unintentionally at various places on the city's waterfront... [from] century-old drains that carry both sewage and stormwater runoff for 15[%] of the city... By cleaning up three major catchments, the council aims to halve the number of stormwater overflows containing sewage in 10 years, and stop the lot in 30 years. The estimated cost is \$380 million. [Until then, s]tormwater drains will continue to feed heavy metals and poisons to the marine food chain in tidal areas. While the plumbing is being fixed, public health protection officials have a stack of warning signs at the ready to be nailed up at beaches anywhere on the isthmus... But sampling is not done on rainy days and it takes 48 hours to get test results. The council reports that last summer's samples met median Ministry of Health guidelines for swimming and that water quality was "very good" in terms of the guidelines. However, samples at some beaches on one of two days of the summer indicated levels of bacterial contamination well above the recognised standard.

...Seven years after first being called in by the A[RC] for expert advice on urban stormwater... [the] environmental engineer, who started stormwater control programmes in severely polluted Atlantic coast areas of the U[S – including]... Chesapeake Bay, one of the most polluted estuaries in the world... [– and now] works for the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control... said Auckland had made big progress dealing with a problem common to all urban areas... On his fourth visit to the Auckland region, [the engineer] can now inspect stormwater treatment ponds and wetlands and see what our local bodies are doing about the problem... "You are well ahead of most states in the U[S], but you are not ahead where there are serious problems like Chesapeake Bay or Puget Sound." ...Runoff pollution is widespread. Scientists have found contaminated shellfish and other tiny marine animals in Auckland estuarine sediments. And the bill for cleaning up polluted waterways is sizeable – about \$100 million says the A[RC]... Twenty years ago drainage systems relied on removing rain from roads and other surfaces as quickly as possible. The focus was now on building systems which mimicked the natural world's drainage patterns. [The engineer] said stormwater programmes in the U[S] were moving towards total catchment control, where only land use appropriate to catchment was permitted.

...A pilot study centred on four areas on the... fringes [of Auckland] is finding that at least half of... drinking water... supplies collected from householders' roofs are showing evidence of animal faeces. Droppings from... possums, cats and birds can lead to diarrhoea illnesses... The project is considered small... [– only] 25 homes in Muriwai, Clevedon, Waiheke Island and Kumeu were being checked... [–] but indicative and it is hoped that a larger study involving Auckland University will go ahead next year. It is estimated that 15[%], or 100,000 people, in the region gather their water off the roof. "The water that hits the roof is pretty pure but once it hits the roof it can be contaminated by lead-based paint, dust and faecal matter,"... [the] principal investigator in the Auckland Healthcare public health protection team... said. "...Lead-based paints... and nails with lead heads... is the biggest [problem] on the bach-type places such as Muriwai." ...people with such water supplies should be scrubbing their roofs at least every six months, disconnecting downpipes before doing so. Chlorination of supply was also an option and filters did help... [The investigator] said some people had been drinking the water for years with no apparent ill effects but some illnesses could be carried and passed on to others.

...The U[N] human settlement conference has heard a gloomy prophecy that most cities in the [Last W]orld will face extreme water shortages by the year 2010. More than one and a half billion people will face environments that threaten life and health by 2025 unless a revolution in urban problem-solving takes place, the U[N] said... Habitat II, the last major U[N] conference this century, seeks to address the deep-seated urban ills of poverty, homelessness, and social and environmental decay. But participating countries have yet to agree on how to treat these problems. The U[S] stood out against demands that housing be given the status of human right... The European Union backed the developing countries' demands, but Habitat officials said the U[S] and some other developed states were wary of seeing housing as a distinct human right for fear of incurring legal obligations to the world's homeless. The U[N]... listed Cairo, Lagos, Dhaka, Beijing, Calcutta and Sao Paulo among the developing cities facing the greatest water problems, but said [First World] cities such as Houston, Los Angeles, Warsaw, Cardiff and Tel Aviv also encountered severe shortages... [■ A Waikato]-based water filtration manufacturing company... [that] employs 12 people... has won two \$15 million contracts to clean up the water in two Chinese cities. Works Filter Systems will design, build and operate plants in... Wuxi and in Shenyang. The company's porous ceramic dual media filtration system design won last year's Rutherford Award for energy efficiency, innovation, environmental friendliness and commercial potential.

...[The Waikato River is one of NZ's most important and utilised rivers, draining 5% of the land area. Clear, blue water leaving Lake Taupo changes to a more turbid, darker green-brown in the lower river due to: geothermal inflows in the upper river (e.g., chloride, lithium, arsenic – the arsenic levels downstream of Wairakei geothermal power station exceed drinking water guidelines); tributary inflows, especially from peatlands; waste inflows and runoff (the faecal indicators of bacteria in the river between Cambridge and Huntly exceed limits for bathing); and hydro lakes which increase residence time of water increasing algal biomass and temperature.' However, the] feelings of Aucklanders worried about the purity of the Waikato River as a potential drinking-water source are unlikely to be considered in resource consent decisions crucial to the development of the new water supply. A... public... resource consent hearing... for... a treatment plant and a 38km pipeline... begins on Monday at Tuakau[, and]... is expected to run over 13 days... Water quality has been one of the hot topics in submissions to the Waikato Regional Council[, but in]... an unusual move before a resource

consent hearing Waikato Regional Council staff scrutinising the applications have been unable to make a recommendation. The officers have left the decision-making to the hearing committee... On the basis of the officers' report... [-] that the water quality of the river is relatively high by world standards, adding there is evidence of improvement in recent years... [-] the committee will have to decide whether to decline or approve the applications or perhaps defer them until Tainui's [Waitangi Tribunal] claim on the Waikato River is settled... Maori objections look likely to be the biggest hurdle for the scheme, [which]... the Waikato staff... have concluded... can be managed to have only minor environmental effects... The hearing comes as Auckland's [eleven] water supply lakes are more than 95[%] full holding about 95 million tonnes of water but as consumption has jumped to an average daily use... of over 317,000 cu m... from a system which can deliver up to 346,000 cu m of water a day. Watercare Services puts the consumption jump down to population and industrial growth... When Watercare 13 months ago announced its plans for the \$155 million pipeline scheme to boost Auckland's water supply... it said independent experts from Thames Water, a British company, had confirmed that the water could be treated to a standard better than the N[Z] standard. Thames said the reported concentrations of pesticides... PCBs... and dioxins were low or below the detection limit and no problems were envisaged... Watercare... [-] Auckland's publicly-owned water company... [-] says the new water source is needed to cope with population growth and to meet the increase in the drought security standard from 1-in-50-years to 1-in-200 sought by its local authority customers after the 1994 drought during which a \$73 million emergency Waikato pipeline was considered.

...Hidden water supplies in the Hunua Ranges have been discounted by Watercare Services, says an environmentalist... [who] told the panel considering the bulk water supply company's Waikato River pipeline project yesterday that [it] believed Watercare had significantly under-stated the water yield from its four Hunua storage dams. Water stored in the surrounding hills – which replenish the dams – had not been included in Watercare's assessment of the existing water supply... Watercare's lake-level forecasts lacked credibility in 1994 and [the environmentalist] was still concerned "by its forecasts today." [The] director of Friends of the Earth... said that in 1994 hydrologists had looked at the Hunua dams' replenishment from the surrounding geological strata[, and] had estimated that a similar amount of water "may be available to recharge the dams as was held in the dams when they were full." ...an Alliance activist, said that Watercare had not considered dual reticulation schemes for both drinking water and non-potable water. High quality waste water from the Mangere treatment plant could be separately reticulated and [the activist] believed that two-thirds of all industrial, commercial and domestic requirements could come from non-potable water. This... scheme could be built in stages over almost 100 years, enabling Auckland's existing bulk water supply to meet future needs without the Waikato pipeline... [But Watercare says it] has no second thoughts about its... pipeline project in spite of water supply lakes overflowing from [recent] rain and... Waitakere City Council, the only Auckland council opposing the pipeline... saying water use could be reduced by more than 40[%] over the next 10 years by the introduction of water-efficient appliances... The deputy mayor of Waitakere... said: "Our focus is on our ratepayers' pockets as well as the environment. We never opposed planning for a pipeline but we believe that kind of insurance policy is not necessary now." ...a spokes[person] for Watercare... said the 39c a tonne unit charge for water paid for by the company's council customers would rise by 2[%] a year for 10 years to pay for the pipeline... [By the way, c]ooling water from an expanded Otahuhu thermal power station poses little risk of environmental contamination, according to scientists hired by the scheme's backers. Contact Energy Ltd's advisers told a resource consent hearing yesterday that the discharge from the... new, \$250 million, 360-megawatt "combined cycle"... South Auckland station into the Tamaki River would raise the temperature by no more than 3 deg C outside the mixing zone extended 200m either side of the outfall. An environmental researcher... said... fish... in the Tamaki River and Otara Creek were adapted to the wide-ranging natural fluctuations in water temperature. Another researcher from the same consultancy... said the potential environmental risk from discharges of biocides – chemicals used to kill algae and other unwanted organisms in the cooling towers – would be extremely small. Techniques were available if necessary... to neutralise or treat the biocides before discharge...

N[Z] will face power shortages within five years, according to an independent report... The study, by academics and engineering consultants, has identified a big gap between supply and demand from 2001 based on present construction and power use patterns – and sooner if we have a dry year... The report, Electricity Supply and Demand to 2015... is an update of two works but for the first time takes into account the 1175MW capacity of proposed power stations as well as existing capacity of 7185MW... [- although the] publication of the report yesterday coincided with an announcement that a major hydro power project has been postponed indefinitely. Contact Energy said it had shelved plans to put another dam on the Clutha River. The chief executive... said the project for a 50m dam and a 320MW power station was not viable. About \$22 million had been spent on investigations and buying land to flood... The ensuing shortages could mean a repeat, possibly more dramatically, of the 1992 power crisis when homes were forced to ration power and street lighting was cut. On a greater scale, future shortages could lead to blackouts... The vulnerability of N[Z]'s electricity system to the forces of nature was exposed during yesterday's storms... [when] bolts of lightning hit the national grid on the lines leading into Auckland's western suburbs. All power was cut to areas near Trans Power's Henderson substation and all parts north. Customers of four power companies were limited to cold drinks, fruit and cereal for breakfast... The fierce storm produced a freak occurrence when two high-voltage transmission lines leading to the substation from different locations were zapped either simultaneously or within seconds of each other. Trans Power's acting general manager of operations... said the supply system was designed to cope with lightning strikes, but two strikes at the same time was a rare occurrence. Compounding the problem, the lines were leading into N[Z]'s biggest population centre during the morning demand peak. Power surges raced along both 220,000-volt lines but within a split second safety mechanisms came into action and prevented serious damage... Each transmission line has equipment at either end monitoring the current, the speed at which electricity is flowing. Henderson-bound power in from the south, comes through Auckland's biggest substation, at Otahuhu, or alternatively along a second line from the switchyard outside Huntly power station. When lightning hits a line there is a flash but a circuit breaker prevents the surge going beyond the line's end. An auto-reclose device then allows the power to flow normally again. Consumers might notice their lights flicker... But [on this occasion] Trans Power was unable to keep power flowing beyond Henderson... [P]ower was gradually restored... 12 minutes later... Because of the size of the load that was lost in the cut – about 420MW – it was necessary to restore power in stages... In other parts of the North Island local power line networks suffered similar damage, causing power cuts in Bay of Plenty, Waikato, King Country and Taranaki... In the US, an icy storm that glazed the north-west stranded holiday travellers... and... forced... shoppers to try on their clothes by candlelight... Ice-covered trees splintered or toppled onto power lines, leaving about 185,000 homes and businesses in Oregon and Washington state without electricity.

...A tree that had grown too close to a transmission line... triggered a power cut that affected two million homes and businesses in 15 western states this month, investigators said yesterday. The Western Systems Co-ordinating Council, an electricity energy group, said the July 2 cut began when electricity from a 345,000-volt transmission line jumped to the nearby tree, causing a short-circuit... It caused scattered power cuts lasting from a few minutes to several hours across an area stretching from southern California to Canada and as far east as Texas... [- although it only affected] less than 10[%] of the customers served by the 88 members of the council... [However, it] raised concerns in the industry about the integrity of the transmission system... The council said the tree that had grown too close to the... line that spans the 376km between the Jim Bridger generating plant near Rock Springs, Wyoming, and the Kinport substation in south-eastern Idaho... had been removed... Meanwhile, [a]... power failure across Malaysia... stranded train passengers, snarled traffic, shut down shopping malls and forced the country's most popular soccer match... [- t]he final of the Football Association tournament between Kedah and Sarawak states... [-] to be abandoned... The national power company, Tenaga Nasional, said the electricity supply went out almost simultaneously in all 11 states in peninsular Malaysia two hours before nightfall. The news agency Bernama quoted the Minister of Energy... as saying the cut was caused by a fault at the Baka power station, about 350km north-east of Kuala Lumpur. Power was restored to most of the country by early morning... [but, as a precaution,] Malaysia will request

Singapore to provide some power... A similar blackout occurred in September 1992 when lightning damaged a power station on the national grid, blacking out nine Malaysian states for 12 hours... [This time, a]irports functioned normally, using their own power sources.

...A total loss of power to Auckland Airport was the most serious of three separate power cuts in Auckland yesterday that left nearly 20,000 Mercury Energy customers without electricity. Safety was not jeopardised at the airport during the one-hour cut, said... a spokes[person] for the Airways Corporation... The tower automatically switched over to a battery-powered electricity supply system... allowing aircraft movements to remain on the controllers' computer screens throughout the power cut. A bird strike at a Mangere substation was believed to be responsible... Middlemore Hospital was [also] forced to use its emergency generator while the Mangere substation was repaired... In the two other incidents, about 100 homes in Papatoetoe lost supply for up to an hour after a truck hit a power pole, and a contractor digging through a cable left 80 or so homes in Bucklands Beach without power for up to two hours. [In international news, 'a contractor who inadvertently dug through a cable outside the head office of a major US airline shut down its computer, affecting all of the airline's operations across the country']

...A serious nuclear accident took place at Greenham Common more than 30 years ago, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament said yesterday... [A]t least 150,000... lives were put at risk as radioactive fall-out from the former U[S] military air base settled across west Berkshire and north Wiltshire, but the incident was hushed up by the British and U[S] authorities... CND says the accident occurred when a B-47 bomber flying at 7000-8000ft got into engine trouble and was forced to jettison its wing-tip fuel tanks. The tanks were supposed to land on an emergency drop zone within the airfield. Instead, one fell on a hanger on the air base, causing a huge fire... The other landed 30m behind a parked B-47 equipped with nuclear weapons, which was also engulfed in flames, creating a fine uranium and plutonium powder. Firefighters trapped some of the powder using spray foam, but a residue remained after the foam was removed and was then blown up to 15km away across surrounding countryside... The campaigners' allegations were denied by the Ministry of Defence [last night, but]... CND said it had seen a copy of the confidential report into the accident and conducted its own 12-month investigation... [A CND spokesperson]... said: "The Government has lied to Parliament and said there has never been an accident involving a nuclear weapon in the UK which resulted in nuclear contamination." In addition to local residents, thousands of people had served at the base, attended international airshows there or protested against the siting of Cruise missiles during the 80s...

TWENTY years ago a small group of anti-nuclear activists organised "Campaign Half Million." They set themselves the ambitious target of collecting half a million signatures to a petition asking the Government to reject the possibility of nuclear power for N[Z]. In 1976 that number of signatures represented one-sixth of the population. A national network was set up. Petitioners stood in shopping malls, outside school gates, near bus stops and on the windswept steps of the museum to offer people the opportunity to "Say No to Nuclear Power." They didn't get their half million signatures – they got 333,087. But the Government got the message and N[Z] has exploited other means of power generation... Other countries are not so lucky. There are 430 commercial nuclear reactors throughout the world. They produce about 17[%] of the total global electricity – much less than predictions made 50 years ago... The industry's steady decline over the past 20 years can be attributed to the higher costs of nuclear power compared with that generated by other means, and the failure of scientists to come up with a solution to the problem of disposal of the increasing amounts of radioactive waste. Despite these facts and the undoubted effects of the loss of credibility after the Chernobyl disaster, 36 new nuclear power plants are still under construction, half of them in Asia... France... is the only European country where a new reactor is being built. It is described as the "inherently safe" model of the "next generation" of nuclear reactors... Called the "European Pressurised Water Reactor" it is said by its promoters to have a 10 to 100 times smaller risk of a core meltdown than the present pressurised water reactors. But its costs are... at least 15[%] higher. The date for its start-up is 2005. In Britain a lengthy and often bitter debate on the industry's future ended last December with the cancellation of two proposed new stations. Sweden, which [like France] generates half of its electricity in nuclear reactors, is now deciding whether to phase out nuclear power by 2010 – which it voted to do in a referendum in 1980. The date for the phase-out was based on the estimated working life of power stations in use at that time... Russia has official plans to build up to 10 reactors by 2005, but such is their cost that industry officials predict only two will go ahead. The downturn of the nuclear industry is particularly notable in the U[S] where, after a boom in the construction of plants, none has been built in the last 23 years. Complacency about the safe operation of existing plants and the adequacy of regulations was rocked by a recent *Time* magazine article outlining shortcuts that were being taken at an older plant called Millstone Unit 1 in Connecticut. There, safety precautions governing the cool-down period – before spent fuel rods could be removed and the plant refuelled – were being ignored, saving the company money and two weeks of "downtime" for each refuelling. In Japan, which has 50 nuclear reactors and four more under construction, public confidence was shaken when sodium coolant leaked from a fast breeder reactor at Monju in December. In 1992 the official forecast for Japan's energy needs was for the construction of 40 more reactors but changed economic circumstances make this highly unlikely. REACTORS are under construction in China at Daya Bay, close to Hong Kong, India and North Korea where the U[S] has promised the Government \$400 million worth of fuel oil and two reactors in exchange for a pledge not to develop nuclear weapons. Vietnam, Thailand and the Philippines have expressed interest in nuclear power, and in Indonesia negotiations are said to be under way for the construction of a plant. The average operational life of a nuclear power plant is 50 years, after which it must be "decommissioned." ...In a paper titled *Nuclear Power World Status Report 1996*, Greenpeace points out that no full-size reactor has yet been dismantled anywhere in the world. "Although some countries are planning to remove the entire structure... leaving a flat empty space, others have suggested leaving the building where it stands, covering it in concrete or possibly burying it under a mound of earth. The Yankee Rowe reactor in Western Massachusetts... which cost more than \$US186 million to build in 1961, was closed in 1991. To fully dismantle the plant will cost about \$US370 million..." ...The 10 most dangerous nuclear power plants in the world, according to a recent report issued by the U[S] Department of Energy, are in Eastern Europe; of these, Chernobyl is considered the worst. Yet the Ukraine continues to depend on electricity from the two reactors in the crippled plant which are still working. Their operation is highly controversial. The Ukrainian Government is seeking enormous amounts of aid which will enable it to close the plant by the year 2000 and the request is being considered by the G7 countries.

...Twenty years ago... the most important scientist of his generation... formulated the "Gaia" hypothesis: that Earth's life-friendly environment has been shaped, and is kept stable, by the living species that depend upon it. The concept was soon hijacked by Greens and New-Agers who use it as a mere metaphor of Mother Earth, but the theory itself is strictly scientific... So it is not surprising that [the scientist] backs nuclear power... It is... 10 years since the Number 4 reactor at Chernobyl exploded... starting a fire that burned in the reactor for nine days and spewed 200 times the combined radiation from the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombs into the atmosphere. Stand by for a torrent of outrage about the dangers of nuclear power. Some of the outrage is justified. It is outrageous that 15 other reactors of the same unreliable RBMK type are still operating in Russia, Ukraine and Lithuania, including two right on the Chernobyl site. It is outrageous that 12 other Russian reactors of another flawed design, the older generation VVERs, remain in operation in Russia, Armenia (that one is located on an earthquake fault), Slovakia and Bulgaria. After that, however, the outrage slides into the gulf of ignorance about risk perception, and about the difference between local and global risks. The local damage from the Chernobyl calamity was severe. Even 10 years later hardly anybody enters the "Zone of Alienation" around Chernobyl except the people running the remaining reactors (and they do not stay overnight). In the large "Purple Zone" around Chernobyl, where the soil is contaminated but the residents have returned, there are two million children – and Unicef reports a 38[%] increase in the number of children suffering malignant tumours and bone disorders. But does this mean... nuclear power poses unacceptable risks? Only if you believe that other means of generating power have no consequences for people's health. You also have to ignore the global environmental effects of burning coal, which is still nuclear power's main rival... Estimates of the deaths directly caused by radioactive contamination from Chernobyl vary widely, but...

there have been at least 6000. That is close to the number of people who die *each year* from coal-mining accidents and miners' diseases such as emphysema. This is where risk perception distorts the equation. The miners' deaths are an annual event, so they are discounted. A single nuclear accident of comparable scale, once in the 40-year history of nuclear power generation, gets far more attention. Moreover, miners' deaths mostly happen within relatively isolated mining communities, whereas a nuclear accident strikes at the public. And the wider health consequences of burning megatonnes of coal... (...power stations... burned 2.3 billion tons of coal in 1970, 5.2 billion in 1990)... for electricity, in terms of pumping pollutants and carcinogens into the atmosphere, are so hard to trace, in terms of any individual illness, that they are simply ignored. But the *global* consequences of favouring coal over nuclear power are what really frighten [the scientist, who]... was deeply pessimistic about the short-term future of humanity... [w]hen I drove down to the West of England to see him recently... "Why do the Greens all fret about nuclear power? ...It could actually be a boon in every sense of the word. The worst thing that could happen with nuclear power is that it would kill some people – which sounds a terrible thing to say, but it would relieve the pressures on the planet. Whereas burning coal... has the danger of... kill[ing us all]." His]... point is that... Earth shifts between three stable temperature regimes in this geological epoch. Most of the time, it is in a relatively cool, glacial regime with average global temperature about 10 deg C. For brief periods during the inter-glacials, it warms to... 15 deg. (The present inter-glacial began... 10,000 years ago.) But it can also run away to a hot stable state about 25 deg, and stay there for a long time. The worst time at which to be pumping huge amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere is during an unstable inter-glacial period like the present. It is not clear how much is needed to trigger a runaway effect, but we really do not want to find out... The real tragedy of Chernobyl is that it has made people hypersensitive to the risks of nuclear power while they remain blind to the graver risks of "conventional" coal-fired power stations... If this goes on, we are in deep trouble.

...A top minister said yesterday that Ukraine was reviewing how to deal with the cracking "tomb" around the Chernobyl ruined fourth reactor... after a chain reaction was observed there last week. The comments, by the Minister for the Environment... were the first admission that the increased readings of neutron activity 10 years after the reactor exploded amounted to a limited nuclear chain reaction inside the structure. But [the minister] said the data was insufficient to determine whether it posed a real threat... "What we are observing shows that we must remove as much fuel as possible to rule out the development of chain reactions inside the devastated reactor." ...meters last week showed neutron radiation dozens of times normal levels inside the concrete and steel covering hurriedly erected after the April 1986 fire and explosion... A project drawn up three years ago to build a new sarcophagus has made no progress and is to be discussed at a Group of Seven meeting in Paris next month... [G7] countries have pledged more than \$US3 billion... to help Ukraine to keep its promise to close the two working Chernobyl reactors by the year 2000.

...The Chernobyl disaster involved such ludicrous disregard for safety that we might harbour hopes of its never being repeated: 'no matter what you did with the reactor an explosion was impossible', the operators are reported to have thought. It did, however, kill thirty people quickly, with up to forty thousand premature deaths to follow according to an official Soviet report, or half a million or more according to... [unofficial reports]; and there could be still more energetic reactor explosions... Nevertheless, [until] the explosion... in 1986, civilian nuclear power had a remarkably fine record, making it a much more environmentally friendly source of energy than coal or hydro-electricity. The partial core meltdown at Three Mile Island seven years earlier had released hardly any radiation to the surroundings. Even the fire at Windscale in 1957 had led to no fatalities in the short term, and although in the long term up to one hundred additional deaths from cancer may conceivably have resulted, any large coal-burning power station beats this total... [But s]ites geographically suitable for prolonged underground storage [of radioactive waste] have proved very hard to find, while above-ground storage has a deplorable history: between 1945 and 1973 over four hundred thousand gallons of radioactive waste leaked from tanks at Hanford, the main US storage center. The US D[OE] estimates that the States will have accumulated fifty thousand tons of 'spent fuel' by the year 2000... And... the radioactivity from Chernobyl 'was puny compared with the colossal exudation of much longer lived radionuclides from reactions that the former Soviet Union used, and Russia still uses, to produce plutonium for bombs', the world's biggest environmental release occurring over decades at Toms-7 in central Siberia, which poured out 'about a billion curies of high-level waste, or 20 Chernobyls' worth'... while in the Urals... many cities... had become utterly unfit for human habitation... In 1992, British Nuclear Fuels had detected 2,400 [computer] errors, about 100 of which could have 'placed a demand upon the safety systems' (to quote the project manager's careful words), in an early version of software to control its huge new nuclear fuel reprocessing plant at Sellafield. When a computer program contains more than a couple of thousand lines of code, finding all its faults can be near impossible.

...Auckland-based Advanced Windpower Ltd plans to build a prototype wind-powered electricity-generating turbine at Waikaretu, in the Waikato. The executive director... said that resource management consent had been received to build the \$1 million machine on private land. The 22m tall machine, which will have blades seven metres in diameter, is expected to be built by October. Advanced Windpower had gained global rights to the diffuser augmented wind turbine from the U[S]-based Northrop Grumman Corporation, which had decided to concentrate on its core defence activities. The prototype machine... will be a small-scale version of a commercial model, which would have blades with a diameter of 22m. The... machine uses an expansion chamber behind the blades to create a pocket of low pressure and thereby draw more high pressure wind across the blades. The prototype aimed to prove the degree to which the diffuser augmented the wind flow... [C]omputer simulation and testing of the design using wind tunnels had indicated Advanced Windpower could sell electricity at 3.45c a kilowatt hour, significantly below the cost of most other electricity generators... Counties Power had agreed to handle the power generated... - 1996

The DAWT system was developed as an alternative energy system to fossil fuels during the oil crisis in the 1970s. However, Grumman dropped the project after eight years investigation because it could not find cost-effective construction material. The company... [that] developed... Apollo 11... was also sidetracked when it secured major defence contracts from the US government. Instead of using high cost steel to build the DAWT, Advanced Windpower will build it with high tensile ferro-cement. Advanced Windpower[s] managing director... said the... system had the capacity to revolutionise wind electricity generation and claimed it could be 50% cheaper than conventional wind power... The... DAWT... can suck in twice as much air as most other turbines and produce five times the energy of a conventional one... "Current predictions are showing annual energy outputs in excess of 12 million kilowatt hours per annum for a single (full size) machine are possible,"... The final DAWT would be around 18 storeys high and be capable of producing power for 1500 homes. It had cost about \$5 million to reach the demonstration stage, funded by 80 private investors... N[Z]'s first wind farm near Martinborough in south Wairarapa, began producing electricity for 1500 homes last June.

...[the Te Uku land mobile telecommunications base station was commissioned on Dec. 6, 1973, using batteries. Within ten months a locally designed windmill generator was keeping the batteries charged.' Yet it was another twelve years before NZ's first wind farm opened. Now] Tararua Windpower has permission to build a large wind farm at the north end of the Tararua Ranges near Palmerston North. According to... [the] research manager at ECNZ, average wind speeds in many areas exceed 36 km/h, and it's feasible... to generate more than 20[% of NZ]'s power needs from wind.

...A BATTLE is developing near Wellington, with residents of a coastal settlement set to take on electricity generating giant ECNZ, which wants to build a wind farm... [that] would meet the electricity needs of 8% of the Wellington region... Makara is a popular recreational spot about 20km from Wellington and residents are worried up to 80 turbines each 100m-high will be noisy and "ugly blots" on the landscape... "It's outrageous. These turbines could be as high as the BNZ building in downtown Wellington – that's a 30-storey building," said [the] Makara Guardians president[, who believed]... some of the turbines could be as close as 300m from some of the 100 houses at Makara. "We accept renewable energy is a good thing but it should not be done at the expense of defiling a unique and beautiful spot... We [also] do not want to be a testing ground for wind

farms in the rest of N[Z] when it could easily be viewed as a national disaster in future years,”... But ECNZ... assured Makara residents they would be listened to. ECNZ had not determined the number of turbines or what size they would be... Research by the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Agency shows that 30[% of NZ]’s energy needs could be met by wind – about the same amount that is generated at present by fossil fuels... [● A] Dutch company is moving to build the world’s biggest wind power station, in the North Sea off the east English port of Harwich. WindMaster Nederland BV, based in the small town of Lelystad, east of Amsterdam, won a contract to sell power from the 30MW station last April. It is now seeking contractors for the scheme, which will be developed privately... Power from the Harwich scheme will be bought by the Non-Fossil Purchasing Agency, owned by Britain’s 12 regional electricity companies... WindMaster, which started modestly in the early 1970s, is now a major player, accounting for 20[%] of installed wind power capacity in the Netherlands. The company offers turbines ranging from a 300kW machine with a 28m rotor, best suited to sites where wind speeds are slower, to a 750kW turbine with a rotor diameter of 48m. WindMaster’s latest project, which at \$13 million was also the biggest in the company’s history, was completed in August and involved the erection of 18 750kW turbines near Lelystad. Other schemes have been completed or are planned in France, Ireland and Costa Rica. In the U[S], projects with a combined capacity of 60MW are being researched... *Wind Power Monthly*, says the Dutch have the most well-thought-out future energy policies of all the European countries... [T]he Netherlands has the third-biggest wind-power generation capacity in Europe – 323MW, against 1675MW for Germany and 927MW for Denmark. In fourth place is Britain, with 285MW... India... [has] 825MW... Worldwide wind-power capacity totals 6457MW... It is unlikely that wind power will ever seriously challenge more conventional sources of electricity... While environmentalists embrace wind power for its cleanliness, they have expressed concern at the visual intrusiveness of the giant turbines. Building stations offshore... sidesteps that objection and at the same time offers access to the best winds... As offshore installations will be built where the sea is shallow, they should pose no significant danger to shipping.

...*Wind power* is becoming a viable industry in N[Z]... *Wave power* is plentiful but techniques to harness it are expensive. The potential is greatest around the southern end of the South Island where the average offshore wave energy is around 90 kilowatts per metre of wavefront. But plants are at risk of being destroyed in storms and maintenance costs are high... *Tidal power*, with a barrage across an estuary using tidal flow to turn turbines, has limited potential in N[Z] because of our low tidal range – 1.7 to two metres compared with the five to eight metres needed for it to be cost-effective. Environmentalists say it also poses a threat to wildlife and estuary ecosystems... *Solar power* is among the most promising developments, and N[Z] is ideally suited to exploit this because of our many clear days... In remote areas, a growing number of farmers... are turning to photovoltaics... [because they] face high charges from ECNZ to install power lines... [-] \$25,000 to supply power to [one] new Wairarapa farmhouse[(the owners) decided to... install... a 13-metre-high wind turbine and four photovoltaic solar modules to provide back-up power on windless days[– this], combined with a system of storage batteries, meets all their energy needs[; and the] cost of maintenance is around \$500 a year, compared with \$1400 to buy mains electricity[)]... Other uses include lighthouses, navigation buoys and telecommunication systems[(the ‘NZ Post Office’s Kakatarahae installation in the Coromandel Ranges became NZ’s first solar-powered telecommunications station when it began service in Dec. 1976; Te Uku was fitted with solar collectors in May, 1977’)]. PV-driven emergency telephones have been on our motorways since 1989.

...Sunshine means more to [one ex-pat] than most people. Back home in A[US] the sun powers his water heating and when [the ex-pat] travels it makes his laptop work through a newly developed solar electric panel... [Born in Invercargill, the ex-pat now] lives northwest of Melbourne in the shady, forested Central Highlands. The area gets less sunshine than his birthplace but solar power heats two-thirds of the home’s water. A steam engine provides the rest of the water heating and steam for the radiators... But it is a desire to investigate wind power developments which has brought him [back to NZ]. The publisher and editor of the 25-year-old self-sufficiency and alternative energy magazine *Earth Garden* says N[Z] leads the Southern Hemisphere in the use of wind power. [The ex-pat believes that NZ is] lucky in that about 75[%] of its electricity was produced by hydro plants. With the addition of wind power, combined with solar heating, the country could generate all its power from renewable sources. “N[Z] receives three times its total electricity requirements hitting the coastline as wind power. If you harnessed only 8.5[%] of the wind energy hitting the country then it would be the first country in the world to be completely powered by renewable resources...” The problem was a lack of political will. “In general, A[US and NZ] are run by... politicians who think the bigger the smokestack the better.” ...[however, at] the end of last month, EnergyA[US] started a huge wind turbine in N[SW] to generate 600kW of power... [Recently published figures show that last year the world’s windmill power production increased by 26[%] on 1995, while nuclear energy output rose less than 1[%]. Solar energy also rose, after a drop in the price of photovoltaic batteries enabled more than 400,000 households in [Last World] countries to install solar systems.

...The total solar energy falling on the roof of a house in a year is about 20 to 30 times the amount of energy required by that household. The question is not whether we have enough energy, but how do we get it into a usable form? Space and water heating use about two thirds of a household’s energy needs. Ideally solar space heating should be dealt with at the time the house is designed. Appropriate materials and design can get the best use of the sun for winter heating without cooking the inhabitants in summer. Some of these can be fitted to existing houses. The use of relatively large north-facing windows, with shades to allow low angle winter sun into the house while eliminating high-angle summer sun, is an example... Solar water heating can almost always be installed in new and existing houses... If all NZ houses had solar water heaters the energy input would be equivalent to one more Clyde-sized dam... There are about 10 different sorts of solar water heaters available on the market. The typical heater is a flat-plate collector on which solar energy is collected on a blackened flat plate and conducted to water flowing in tubes attached to the plate. The water either circulates of its own accord in a thermosyphon or is forced around by a small pump. Three to 4 sq m of collector area will provide most of the energy required to heat the water for a typical family home... Even in quite dull weather the collector will make some contribution to the water heating and many have surface coatings designed to enhance their dull-weather performance... It is generally not convenient or economic to try to obtain the whole of one’s hot-water supply from the sun – this would require too large a collector and cylinder. Typically, the solar collector will be sized to provide 50 to 70[%] of the household requirement and the rest will come from the back-up electric element... Some solar collectors come as a package, with the hot-water cylinder sitting on the roof above the collector panels, while others have only the panels mounted on the roof. Some systems have the collectors incorporated into the roof structure. Depending on size of the collector and the associated water storage the cost can range from \$2000 to \$5000... The direct production of electricity from sunlight can be done with photovoltaic cells, but the capital cost for a suburban household is \$25,000 to \$40,000. Developments in the technology will reduce the cost significantly in the next 15 to 20 years. By then the typical household may well have a roof covered with, or even made from, photovoltaic panels. These will produce electricity continuously in sunny conditions, with the excess to household needs being fed to the grid.

...Synergex Systems NZ Ltd has a new... solar hot-water... range from Solahart... The Black Chrome 12, launched... last month, has a 12-year warranty. To compliment the model, a system of slim-line solar panels means tanks can be installed inside the premises rather than on the roof. Called Streamline, is it quick to install with dual pumping connections... Solahart has [also] developed the Sorcerer hot-water storage cylinder, and claims it is up to five times more efficient than ordinary gas or electric systems. Easily installed, it has 250-litre and 315-litre cylinder options... Another way to use the sun to heat water is by heat pump, where the heat energy in the air is used and concentrated into hot water.

...ELECTRICITY plus heat. If [a Whangarei-based inventor] has his way, the world will soon be able to produce both more cheaply and cleanly. His brainchild is the Heliostat, a solar energy machine radically different to previous models, which has attracted the interest of ECNZ... [-] his... former employer... [-] and Montana Wines... The latest Heliostat model is working at Montana Wines’ Blenheim winery, with Montana providing land and the use of its engineers to evaluate the project. [The winery’s] manager... said the Heliostat had huge potential, especially as a future

source of hot water for winery business such as tank washing... The company set up a solar power testing site for an older Heliostat model at its Gisborne winery... a year ago. Assistance was provided by ECNZ and Gisborne's Eastland Energy... The machine uses flat mirrors to concentrate sunshine on to a strip of photovoltaic cells. Some of the electricity generated is then used to pump liquid across the solar panels, to cool them and collect heat. This improves the cells' efficiency... mak[ing] the energy produced by the Heliostat potentially cheaper than other solar forms... The average cost of producing a kilowatt of electricity for existing solar energy was between \$25,000 and \$35,000. But... the Heliostat would be able to produce the same amount for between \$15,000 and \$20,000. As a bonus, it would also generate 10kW of heat... If positive test results turn in to commercial success, the Heliostat could be used for water pumping, desalination and filtration, stand-alone electrical generation for remote areas, and heating swimming pools and hot water cylinders. It could supply electricity to the national grid or pump 10,000 litres of water an hour over a 10-metre head... [T]he project had enormous potential for use in [undeveloped] countries. While most of the [Last] World lacked the necessary infrastructure – or... money to develop one – for more traditional forms of power generation, what many impoverished nations didn't lack was sun.

...ONE RESOURCE AFRICA HAS IN ABUNDANCE is sunlight... [S]olar-powered cookers could help save Africa's forests... In some of the remoter regions of Eritrea some 23 hospitals and health centers use solar power systems... At Adi Qwala in central Eritrea, a town that has only five hours of electricity supply daily, solar panels now provide current 24 hours a day to the local health centre, which serves a catchment area for more than 100,000 people. The system produces enough electricity to power the hospital's lighting and air-conditioning and to refrigerate supplies of vaccines and blood. Constant energy also means that the operating theatre can work around-the-clock... When the world's top athletes arrive in Sydney for the 2000 Olympics, their living quarters will be powered by the sun. By then, 400 remote villages in the Philippines will be decked in solar panels built by the energy giant British Petroleum... Japan, which imports almost all its energy, has pledged that half of all new homes will be solar-powered by 2010. But while concern for the environment grows, industry analysts say the hard reality is that the world will rely on hydrocarbons... for most of its energy needs well into the next century. In most cases it is still too expensive to use energy that produces no harmful emissions. A massive structural change is needed before hydrocarbons could be superseded.

...I felt a wee bit smug for some 36 hours after Cyclone Fergus when we were the only house in our valley with lights and one of only a few with water. But much more important, our wind generator and solar panels and composting toilet are not polluting anyone's air or water, increasing the cancer rate, changing the climate or sending our sons to war to secure our access to oil. A recent *Herald* editorial suggested that if I... [- a] co-leader of the Green Party... [-] or Auckland University's new professor of architecture use renewable energy to run our homes or transport we are just exercising our personal consumer choice in a rather odd way and this is of no concern to anyone else. It was said that we used to think renewable energy and self-sufficiency were necessary because the Club of Rome report showed us the world was running out of resources. But there were some mistakes in the Club of Rome report and now we have even more oil than we thought we had in 1973. What's more, when resources do become depleted the market will produce price signals and make sure alternative fuels "far more efficient and pleasant than today's environmental Jeremiahs can imagine" will be ready to take over. It is time this pernicious nonsense was laid to rest. The Club of Rome has long been a whipping boy for those anxious to discredit the case of living within the limits of our planet. But how many of the detractors have even read its report, "The Limits to Growth"? It rightly saw that resource depletion, pollution, population growth and food supply are interconnected and that population and economic growth would eventually, and sooner rather than later, be limited by some combination of those factors... The real limit to fossil energy resources is not "running out" but the pollution from burning these fuels. The increasing reliance on fossil fuels to oil the wheels of our social machinery has impacts far uglier than the idyllic image of a sleek vehicle entering grand scenery on a lonely highway... The Ogoni people in Nigeria, their lands laid waste by an international oil giant and their protesters hanged, could also tell us of the real effects of our oil use. Less visible but eventually more life-threatening is the cautious consensus of hundreds of the world's scientists in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that human-induced climate change... has probably already begun. There are, of course, a few dissenting scientists who say there is nothing to worry about. Many of them are, or have been, employed by the oil and coal industries. There are others again who believe the panel is far too conservative and that the effects of global warming could be worse than predicted – for example if the warming of the tundra thaws frozen swamps and releases huge quantities of methane which will accelerate the warming... Renewable energy is claimed to be much more expensive than fossil energy. It is worth considering why: Oil is a mature technology[('the modern mineral oil industry dates from 1859, when a well was bored at Titusville in Pennsylvania')]. The research and development on drilling, processing and eventual burning has been done and is a sunk cost. The production, transport and marketing systems are in place. One can buy appliances ready to use it off the shelf. All these will eventually be true for renewables (with the market being in the hardware to produce and use the energy, not in the energy itself) but at present renewables are an emerging technology trying to compete with one that is fully established. Since we are going to need them eventually it would repay us to put some of the huge profits of the oil industry into developing the use of solar, wind and wood energy so that their cost comes down as soon as possible. Secondly, renewables have virtually no running costs, but that has to be balanced by high capital cost. Our society demands a very fast return on capital. Energy efficiency improvements which pay back their capital cost in two years typically do not proceed, yet a coal or nuclear power station which takes 14 years to pay back the capital investment gets built. A society that valued the future and used a lower discount rate would find renewables were often cheaper than oil. And then there are the subsidies. A database of all the geological records of oil and gas drilling is maintained at public expense for the oil and gas industry. If a wind farm wants detailed meteorological information it has to pay for it. N[Z] is facing the depletion of its largest energy resource, the Maui gas field. Gas provides a third of our primary energy. We are poised on the brink of deciding what should replace it. The default option is coal, of which we have plenty but which would double the carbon emissions of each unit of energy... Once a large-scale coal industry has developed to replace gas the transition to renewables will be retarded by many years and be accomplished only at the expense of loss of jobs and waste of infrastructure. The market cannot make the decision for us. It can help by making sure that prices reflect true costs, but in the end it is a social and political decision about what sort of future we want to have... And we will not get there by thinking energy decisions are a question of individual preferences which have no effect on anyone else.

...A[n A]uckland... research consultant in resource management and strategic planning... says market prices are better than Green politicians when it comes to guiding the world's energy developments... [The NZ Greens' co-leader] claims... it is "simplicistic to believe that the market has the answer to the depletion of energy resources" and... "decisions should be made now on renewable energy sources for the future." But such decisions are being made, and the market is making them. All around the world new energy sources are being developed and implemented... [The co-leader] defended the Club of Rome, though it predicted that the world would, by now, have run out of mercury, tin, zinc, oil, copper, lead and natural gas. How wrong do you have to be? The Club of Rome failed to recognise that all of these "natural" resources are human inventions and will run out of them only when we run out of the power to invent. There is no sign of that. The Club of Rome also predicted a combination of... [factors] would combine, "sooner rather than later" to destroy civilisation as we know it. [The co-leader] agrees. The facts do not. All resources, including energy, are now cheaper, which means more plentiful, than ever. The world's population has doubled since 1960 and yet 80[%] are better fed than ever. Hungry populations are hungry because they are poor, not because of any shortage of food. They are poor because they live under tyranny. There have been no famines in any democracy since the [end of WW2]. The poor and hungry need political reform. [The co-leader] blames the oil industry for executions in Nigeria which were ordered by tyrants. Politicians should not blame business for the murderous behaviour of politicians... We known how... to feed... the poor... – set them free... [and allow them] to get rich... The [rich societies] grow cleaner by the day because citizens demand it. The oil industry has helped. Imagine living in London in the 19th century when coal fires pea-souped the air and horse excrement

drowned the streets... Historically all replacements of one major resource by another have been driven by price changes. None was the result of political decisions. If we had listened to “expert opinion” (such as the Club of Rome) we would have got everything wrong. As [a] Nobel laureate economist... pointed out: “Industrial development would have been greatly retarded if 60 or 80 years ago the warnings of the conservationists about threatened exhaustion of the supply of coal had been heeded; and the internal combustion engine would never have revolutionised transport if its use had been limited to the known supplies of oil. The result would have been very detrimental if [experts had had] the power to enforce their views on policy.” [The co-leader] then argues that it is unfair to compare new renewable technologies with oil because oil is a mature industry and entry costs are high. The bronze industry was mature too – but iron replaced bronze. And steam replaced sail; fibre optics replaced copper and jets replaced propellers. So what is so special now? Energy fuels political fires. Politicians who would never interfere with the market for bread, steel – and even rugby on television – will leap to intervene in energy. Why is this? They are driven by fears of depletion, price manipulation by foreign devils, and dependency. Although no one really knows how much oil is below... Earth’s surface, today’s best guesses are that, at current rates of consumption, 650 years’ worth of oil remains for future generations... Should we be panicking... [when prices] have many years to send their signals, and we have many years to respond...? ...The *Washington Post*, normally so politically correct, [recently] said: “Leaving energy to the free market means leaving it to the roller-coaster of alternating shortages and gluts... [I]n the case of oil they are aggravated by the concentration of reserves in a place that... you can fairly describe as the world’s least stable.” Would the *Post* argue that the price of newsprint should also be controlled by the Government, or that the Government has a right to regulate the purchase and use of all commodities because they undergo “wild swings” in price? We tried that with wool and mutton... Rather than deal with all the other assertions of [the co-leader’s] tract it is worth quoting one of [the observations of the new professor of architecture at Auckland University], as recorded in the *Herald* interview which triggered this whole debate. [The professor] said: “The depletion of energy reserves... raises all sorts of questions. Like whether a market-led economy can be sustainable when it is based on profit and an ever-increasing use of resources?” This raises all sorts of questions. Like what is her alternative to the market-led economy? Does [the professor] prefer one led by a priesthood who claim more information than is contained in the price system as expressed by the workings of the democratic markets? Who are these remarkable people? Where have they acquired their special knowledge? If we give them the power to exercise their dominance over the millions who make up the market, how do we restrain them from exercising unlimited power over every aspect of our lives. The truly poor people of the world can help to provide the answers. And the devastated environments of the centrally planned economies have much to say.

...a consulting engineer in Auckland... doubts that markets will provide abundant new sources of energy. “All resources, including energy, are now cheaper,” writes [a research consultant in resource management and strategic planning]. In the 1960s and early 70s we were in a post-war development phase[when] prices were high... and we were [paying for] the last major capital intensive hydro schemes. In today’s more competitive climate (with the country’s power systems sold off at bargain-basement prices...) the whole lot is being run on a shoestring by a deliberately fragmented industry... Now we are looking to an economic recovery which will increase our energy demands considerably... [– yet r]enewable energy sources such as wind, solar and wave generation continue to be limited in the contribution they can make (there is vigorous opposition to a wind generation proposal at Pencarrow, for example, on visual amenity grounds.) ...[however, t]here is no such thing as unfettered private growth... “Free” enterprise will continue to be constrained by environmental legislation and public protest, as it should be in a free society... Conservation [– the antithesis of a free enterprise economy –] has been, and will continue to be, an important part of the energy equation... [Finally, the consultant believes centrally planned economies are even worse than free-enterprise economies. The consultant appears to be unaware that it isn’t central planning which is the problem – it’s the fact that the wrong people get to become central planners!] Events in the Soviet states have shown the dangers of nuclear energy in a politically unstable environment. From the viewpoint of long-term planning, is our political circus any better?

...Playing the new power game... With world energy demand expected to increase by up to 50[%] over the next 25 years, concern is growing at the ability of conventional power systems to deliver... “Coupled with this massive demand for energy... [– primarily from the] estimated two billion people around the world [who] still do not have access to electricity... the majority of [whom] live in rural and remote locations in... [Last World countries –] are major environmental concerns...” said a study of renewable energy by the A[US]n Department of Primary Industries and Energy... The study said that although high capital costs were a problem for some forms of renewable energy in [Last World] countries, and usually involved aid funding or concessional loans, widespread reforms in energy markets could allow renewables to compete on an increasingly even footing with conventional power generation. The potential is vast. The International Energy Agency says biomass... is already the fourth-largest source of energy in the world, providing about one-fifth of the [Last] World’s needs and 11[%] of total world energy demand. In some [Last World] countries, biomass may [already] be the largest source of energy, providing up to 38[%] of needs... A[US]n researchers say continuously running landfill-gas-fuelled generators can deliver more than 90[%] of installed capacity, with the added benefits of reducing odour and the emission of greenhouse gases... Similar gains are emerging from sewage gas – already generating electricity in Adelaide, Melbourne and Brisbane – and from sugar refining in Queensland, where power from cane residue could be worth up to \$A20 million... a year for the sugar industry... Already the nation is turning the sun, wind, rivers, sugar waste, rubbish tips and sewage into energy equivalent to 6[%] of AUS’s needs, while in[... the remote north-west of the continent vast tidal stretches could generate almost a tenth of the entire nation’s electricity. Waves pounding the Victorian coast hold the potential to pump more power into A[US]’s homes and industries... And near Musswellbrook, in N[SW]’s Hunter Valley, Hot Rock Energy A[US], a company set up by A[US]n National University researchers, is hunting corporate sponsors to build a pilot geothermal power station tapping heated rocks kilometres beneath the ground. According to the *ANU Reporter*, a 1994 federal study found there was enough... heat stored in A[US]n rocks to supply the country with power for at least the next 850 years. Electricity is generated by drilling bores up to 5km deep, connecting them with a network of small fissures and pumping cold water down the first bore. The water becomes superheated steam as it percolates through rocks as hot as 300 deg C, and drives turbines as it erupts from the second bore... [□ G]eothermal energy provides about [6% of NZ’s electricit]y... This source has the advantage of continuous supply. Wairakei and Ohaaki geothermal power stations in the central North Island operate round the clock every day... There are plenty of geothermal systems in N[Z], but only those between Lake Taupo and the Bay of Plenty, and the Ngawha field in Northland, are suitable for power generation because of their high temperatures. Fifteen geothermal fields in the central North Island could still be developed, but ownership of much of the land and its resources is awaiting investigation by the Waitangi tribunal.

...Mercury Energy yesterday made legal progress in its costly fight to fire up its \$80 million geothermal power station. The Auckland power company’s... 55MW... Poihipi plant north-west of Taupo has been idle for six months after a Maori sub-tribe claimed its operations would affect the Wairakei thermal field... which was a taonga (treasure)... But the tribe, Ngati Rauhoto... was knocked back in the Environmental Court yesterday... A request from Mercury for costs was reserved... [Mercur]y claims the starting delay is costing it \$1 million a month... [● A] fourth power station is planned for Taupo’s Tauhara geothermal field, where the scale of proposed development worries many residents. A company called Tauhara Geothermal Co-operative yesterday lodged a resource consent application with the Taupo District Council for a 33-megawatt station.

...Kaimai Energy has put its plans to test the Reporoa geothermal field south of Rotorua on hold, partly because of community opposition... [but two] power companies are [still] fighting thousands of Taupo residents and a regional council to build geothermal power stations... on the untapped Tauhara... field... near the town... [The] regional council, Environment Waikato, said at a joint resource consent committee meeting with Taupo District Council that neither company had properly addressed the issue of land slumping.

...The Ohaaki geothermal power field is subsiding at an unexpected and unprecedented rate, threatening to drown the local marae and historic gravesites under the Waikato River. Local Maori... have been in talks with the power station operator, Contact Energy, anxious about the marae's future. According to Contact, the 70-year-old meeting house, Tahumatua, may have to be moved... Alarm about Ohaaki, which began production only eight years ago, coincides with growing concern among some Bay of Plenty residents about the environmental consequences of the host of new geothermal stations planned or under construction. Subsidence occurs because steam and boiling water extracted to produce electricity cannot all be returned underground. Previously, subsidence at the Wairakei geothermal field, near Taupo, was known to be the greatest of any exploited underground reservoir in the world, including oil and gas fields. Now Ohaaki, 30km south of Rotorua has that dubious distinction and Contact Energy, already struggling to make a profit as a state-owned enterprise, is restricted to a 70MW capacity instead of the 104MW it was built for because river water was flooding its geothermal wells... Land at Waikareki subsided 13m in 36 years. Ohaaki was sinking at... double that rate by 1995 when a report was prepared for the Electricity Corporation (before Contact was created) by the Geological and Nuclear Sciences Institute... By 1995 low-lying areas normally dry in the summer were permanently flooded... The affected area is... 500m by 1km... If subsidence continues at its present rate it is predicted that by 2005 the area will have sunk... 7m, making it... permanently under water. A geophysicist... said: "The whole area that is sinking will continue to do so even if the... power station is shut down tomorrow. It is now irreversible and probably unstoppable."

...About 50km south of Rotorua is a small Maori settlement and a geothermal power station. The settlement bears the name Te Ohaaki-o-Ngatoroirangi – the gift of Ngatoroirangi, tohunga of the Arawa canoe... Edward Earle Vaile (1869-1956) whose 53,000-acre property Broadlands shared with Ohaaki a common boundary on the Waikato River, wrote in his book *Conquest of the Wilderness* that the Maori people there had "a wonderful great boiling pool with a beautiful lacework pattern around the edges – the most handsome pool in the whole thermal area. They had led the overflow into two useful baths in which the temperature can be controlled... They also have a 'champagne' pool (that is one which will effervesce when sand is thrown into it), numerous small cooking pools, and a beautiful sulphur cave." Test bores to ascertain the area's suitability for the generation of geothermal power were sunk between 1969 and 1981. The hot pools were drained dry. The bottom literally dropped out of one; all traces of another were wiped out by bulldozers. Ground surrounding the pools became unstable and dangerous and had to be fenced off. Today, vast amounts of carbon dioxide are released from the wells, much of it into the atmosphere along with thousands of tonnes of water vapour. All production wells have silencers, which are themselves noisy but only to anyone nearby... Many of the Ngati Tahu people who live at Ohaaki... are descended from those who, until the 1886 Tarawera eruption, lived in a sizeable village at Orakei Korako a few kilometres to the west. Great changes are said to have occurred in the [area's] hot springs after that eruption... As if [tha]t were not enough... the Waikato River [was dammed, flooding] two-thirds of the unique geothermal scenic area of Orakei Korako in 1961... When investigations were carried out into Ohaaki's viability as a geothermal field the [local Maori] jelders were uneasy. But when it was pointed out that a power station would provide tribal members with a livelihood and new skills they reluctantly accepted the scheme. Now, as a large part of the Ohaaki geothermal field rapidly sinks below the level of the Waikato River... [meaning that the] marae of Te Ohaaki-o-Ngatoroirangi may be as doomed to drown as was the ancient city of Atlantis[...], a new power station at Poihipi – west of the Wairakei geothermal field – has been given the approval to begin production. In the 1950s test bores were drilled at both Wairakei and Waiotapu. It was established that Waiotapu water was 40 deg C hotter than that at Wairakei but the ground had poor permeability. Wairakei was chosen... And then, when all the springs and geysers at Wairakei were destroyed, Waiotapu was declared a scenic reserve, thus saving it from the same fate... In the 1950s N[Z] had at least 240 active geysers. Today only about 55 remain... No springs, alkaline or otherwise, remain in their natural condition[at Wairakei]... A new geothermal field is due to go into production next month at Rotokawa, 10km south-west of Ohaaki. The area was acclaimed by the author Thorpe Taylor in 1882 as being the "choicest wonder of Wairakei." And "when the development of Wairakei makes it easier to access, it will be one of the main features of the district. It is already one of the most wonderful." [This year the area] was described as thus: "It looks like a nuclear bomb site! What appears to be either a landfill dump or car wrecker's yard is actually a huge plant of... rotting metal, a constant reminder of many decades of sulphur mining carried out in the area."

...With its multitude of tiny islands rising sharply from emerald waters, romantic boat rides and spectacular sunsets, Halong Bay naturally gets a "must not miss" rating from Vietnam's travel guide writers. No wonder, too, that the... cultural agency Unesco has this giant arena of natural beauty on its list of World Heritage sites. And yet a Government-run weekly recently described northern Vietnam's most popular tourist draw thus: "Mountains of dirt and rocks from... coal mines, some reaching over 200 metres in height, are casting clouds of dirt over residential areas of the region." That's no exaggeration, as... the general director of the state-owned coal monopoly, Vinacoal... [– which last year had] revenue... around \$US300 million[(but) because of cheap domestic prices and a policy of keeping uneconomical mines open to protect jobs... [– it employs] about... 70,000 employees[–] ...its profit was just \$US4 million[–] ...is ready to admit. "The damage done there is a consequence of many years of exploitation, to which the Government paid no attention." Indeed, forest cover in this coal-rich province of Quang Ninh has tumbled to... 15[% from 42%] in 1969, rivers are heavily polluted and 300,000 tonnes of coal slurry are spewed into the sea every year. According to the Mine Science and Technology Institute, the concentration of dust is 10 times higher than international standards, causing respiratory diseases among 80[%] of the province's rag-tag army of miners. At the Coc Sau open-cast mine in the town of Cam Pha, where a crater measuring 2.2km across has been gouged out of the... landscape, workers scramble with their hands for coal as mechanical diggers grind deafeningly beside them. Most cover their face with cloth masks, which are black [from dust] around the mouth and nose. "I am totally exhausted at the end of every day," says [a] 31-year-old... who has toiled at Coc Sau for the past five years. "Sometimes I just say to myself that I won't go back the next day." But [the 31-year-old] always does – to earn \$US60... a month. [Gals], who account for about a third of Coc Sau's 5300 workers, take home as little as \$US30 a month because they lack the strength to carry as much from the coal-face. In an unusually frank article last month, the official English-language daily *Vietnam News* asked whether the authorities really cared about the arduous lives of [Vietnamese people] working at mines... "Many workers die before they become eligible for the pension."

...Eighty-six people were killed and 12 seriously injured in an explosion in a privately run coalmine in central China, it was reported yesterday... The three owners of connected sets of mine workings fled with their families after the accident, fearful of reprisals, said the report quoting Chinese Government officials in the area. Most victims died while working in the mine. The cause of the huge underground blast is still being investigated... The blast follows a series of similar accidents in Chinese mines, which have together claimed well over 100 lives this year[and, last]... November, 114 people were killed in a coalmine explosion in the northern province of Shanxi.

...Chinese regulators blame bad management for a string of coalmine explosions that killed more than 200 people last month. Chinese authorities have appealed for greater attention to safety and warned that officials in charge of badly run mines may be prosecuted... [In local news, t]he Coal Producers' Federation said a coal ban would not fix the problem... of the smog... [that] s... smothered... Christchurch... 26 nights so far this winter.

...Coal could be banned from all Christchurch homes next year in a bold smog-busting drive to clean up the city's winter air-pollution problem. The Canterbury Regional Council planning committee... also decided open fires should be phased out by September 30, 2001, and enclosed burners phased out after 15 years' use or by September 2002, whichever is later. The full council will decide [in a fortnight] whether to approve the committee's recommendations. Christchurch has been the country's winter smog capital for years. This winter 33 nights were considered high-pollution nights because of smoke from house fires being trapped in clear, freezing air... and on one night the number of polluted particles per cubic metre of air was more than four times the healthy level. [Incidentally, '40% of Christchurch's smog is produced by just 10% of the city's houses.']

...Smog in this city is not just a nuisance, it kills, says the Clean Air Society. The... filthy Christchurch winter air was so bad, people were dying of respiratory ailments... At dusk on some nights, Christchurch is clogged in suffocating smog and from the [adjacent] Port Hills the city is barely visible through the haze, as dirty smoke from puffing chimneys destroys the clean night air... Christchurch was the third worst city in the world for this pollution from home fires. "Vancouver is worse and so is Logan in Utah. But forget Manchester, Birmingham or London. Christchurch is next on the list..." ...The... [s]ociety and Christchurch Polytech students are gearing up for a protest rally in... Cathedral Square... this month. They say Christchurch is known as the garden city, but if people don't stop polluting the atmosphere, it will become the smoggy city... But the problem is that Christchurch wakes up to the smog problem every winter and then forgets about it by the time the hot summer nor'westers start to blow.

...Christchurch residents are not worried about living in one of the most polluted cities in the world. A survey found only 17[%]... considered... air pollution... a problem over the past 12 months. The seventh annual residents' survey... showed barking dogs were the biggest nuisance in the... city. Residents also complained about traffic noise and backyard fires... [40%] of... the... 800... residents surveyed... said they were concerned about litter in the streets or shopping centres... [but 94%] were satisfied or very satisfied with Christchurch as a place to live, work and to spend spare time.

...Christchurch's blanket of smog is likely to linger for years even if council authorities decide to ban open fires and older woodburners... Christchurch has 15,500 open fires in regular use and 31,000 woodburners. They produce about 90% of the city's winter air pollution... Burning wood generates two-thirds of the pollution, particularly in woodburners... [T]his month the Canterbury Regional Council toughened its requirements on the emission rates from new woodburners. It raised the N[Z] standard, based on 5.5 grams of particulate per kilogram of fuel burned, to 3g. By the year 2000, Christchurch's standard rises further to 1.5g. But... [w]oodburners that have "clean air approval" at the old 5.5g rate can still be bought and installed, until the approval period for that model runs out – five years after it was originally tested. From now on, manufacturers submitting their models for approval will have to meet the 3g standard. About 24% of woodburners on the market already comply.

...IN these days of heightened environmental awareness many people are doing their best to ensure they play their part. So it may come as a shock to read that some authorities are targeting solid-fuel heating as a major contributor to air pollution – particularly in the colder weather. Before you cancel your firewood delivery, or rip out your fireplace, let us approach this rationally and sensibly. Solid-fuel heating is an umbrella for a vast array of heating appliances and fuels, from the open fireplace to the latest enclosed wood burner, and from the driest wood to the roughest coal... Before the late 1970s the most common solid-fuel appliances were a development of the open fire – a hearth, a grate and a venting system with little or no control over combustion, which resulted in little increased efficiencies. There were few – if any – requirements for clean air because there was no need to address the problem. Then along came the first truly efficient enclosed wood heater. This heralded a significant change in heating habits. For once the home owner could install a high-output appliance which would burn over night and heat the whole home. These early heaters sold in their thousands, and the owners were unreservedly enthusiastic about the product. Smoke levels seemed to be reduced, and servicing was cut to a minimum. The move towards a popular form of heating had begun. But the early technology brought with it a whole raft of problems which had yet to be solved. It was a significant improvement over the open fire, but its efficiency and performance meant that it was more sensitive to the type of fuel used... – wood for heating is the most environmentally acceptable option... but for maximum benefit, and minimum emissions it has to be... as dry as possible... [-] and to user operation. Over the years, research and development solved the problems with more sophisticated air systems, heat exchangers and fire-box linings which helped to meet or exceed the ever-changing clean-air legislation which was evolving as the state of the planet became a critical concern. Today's enclosed wood burners or high-efficiency fireplace inserts are a far cry from those of even five years ago, and they meet even the most stringent international clean-air standards even in problem areas like Christchurch when operated correctly... If... [open] fires, their sheet-steel counterparts, early enclosed wood stoves and pot bellies... were replaced by today's more sophisticated appliances the problem of pollution due to solid-fuel heating would be minimised if not eradicated.

...What form of home heating appliance should you choose – gas, electricity or solid fuel? Proponents of these different fuels put their cases... THE world's cleanest fossil fuel [– it 'doesn't produce ash, dust or smoke' –] natural gas is also easy to use, readily available and economical [('it requires little processing from the time it comes out of the ground until the time it is used in homes and businesses – having passed through an extensive network of steel and Polyethylene pipelines, which are buried to minimise disturbance to the environment and its visual natural beauty')], claims... the marketing manager for Enerco... "Natural gas provides large amounts of very controllable heat. Continuous-flow gas hot water heaters eliminate the heat losses of storage tanks. The supply of hot water is inexhaustible, and the high heating rate makes such appliances particularly popular for spa baths... It makes more sense to use up to 80[%] of the energy in natural gas by using it directly to heat water in your home, rather than wasting nearly 70[%] and increasing pollutants by converting (gas) energy to electricity... then heating your water... If you're cold and switch on the heater, you want to warm up as quickly as possible... Gas heaters are [also] convenient to use, can be portable or wall mounted and give you the same cosy feeling as an open fire without the hassle and heat loss. New flame effect fires look just like a wood-burning fire but are more environmentally sound." Flued gas heaters are usually larger appliances for heating bigger areas, while smaller capacity gas heaters are often not flued. Deciding which type of heater is most economical for household needs is often made more confusing by the different ratings and fuel efficiencies. Fuels are measured in different ways – gas by the megajoule (mj), electricity by the kilowatt hour (kW), coal by weight or the bag, and wood usually by the trailer-load which makes it difficult to compare heating values. However, if all energy values are converted to megajoules... (3.6mj equals 1kW)... a comparison can be made... [B]ased on 400mj, which is an average household's weekly winter power consumption, a flued gas heater cost \$4.33 to run in 1995, an unflued gas heater \$3.78 while an electric radiant heater cost \$9.44. These figures... are from the energy and resources division of the Ministry of Commerce... [A]n unflued gas heater converts 90[%] of the available energy to heat... "While new-technology heat pumps are more efficient than natural gas space heaters they are usually more expensive to buy, install and operate." ...Electricity THE Electricity Corporation wants to persuade people that electrical heaters are not as expensive to run as some may think. Its marketing information co-ordinator... claims that the latest technology and moves by a competitive electricity industry give electricity an edge over other home-heating options. [The co-ordinator] says that heat pumps are at the leading edge of heating technology when it comes to efficiency. According to the Heat Pump Association... heat pumps produce almost three times as much heat energy as the electrical energy they use. "It sounds miraculous... but it's proven technology." ...While in the summer they can be used to cool the home, in a temperate climate like N[Z]'s they are generally used for heating. Heat pumps are widely used in countries like A[US and the US]... Conventional electric storage or plug-in heaters are also likely to beat non-electrical heaters in most situations... "The best and cheapest option for each individual home rests on a complex combination of factors, including insulation, draughtiness, the number of appliances using each energy option, local electricity and gas prices, family type and lifestyle, and available sunlight." ...Gas heating can be cheaper than electricity in some situations, [the co-ordinator] admits. However, if the heater is the only appliance to use gas, "it can be an expensive option." Customers often pay a fixed charge which remains the same whether or not they actually use any gas... [T]here is, of course, a fixed charge for electricity too, but electricity is used over a greater range of appliances, so the cost of a fixed charge can be spread over a variety of uses... Solid fuels... [T]he Home Heating Association – which represents the solid-fuel industry – believes that further price increases for electricity will be introduced next summer. It claims that there are also concerns about the future availability and price of gas. Both coal and wood are readily available, but efficient utilisation is the key to economy here, it says. The best economy and efficiency is achieved if the whole home is kept warm and dry. What's more, a fully heated home is more healthy and livable so "heating capacity must be a major concern." The average home requires 12-15kW for adequate heating – that's six to eight two-bar electric heaters, the association claims... Other forms of heating... find it difficult to match the attributes of the solid-fuel heater "without making compromises which may not be so user friendly..."

...For many there are pleasant features about winter – from snow sport to roaring fires or the sound of rain on a tin roof. But for many elderly people winter is a time of bleakness and discomfort – caused by worsening illness, cost and even danger. A number of these problems revolve around the use of small electric heaters or open fires... [which] heat... only a small part of the house... Cold areas within the home quickly soak up the warmth provided by small output heaters, so while one room may be warm, the next may be as cold as ice... The N[Z] Home Heating Association says there are far better alternatives on the market... For best heating, and to reduce dampness – the cause of mildew, condensation and chills – the association says it's important for a home's structure to be as dry as possible, and to maintain a constant overall temperature to prevent moisture building up again as winter progresses... By maintaining a more even temperature throughout – even if there is just one person living in the house – sharp temperature drops... [that] can affect the body, making it prone to colds and flu... are avoided... The “trusty” open fireplace is a trap. Its efficiency is low, burning far more fuel than necessary. It takes more loading work and cleaning. The large fireplace opening causes cold drafts along with useful heat, so it becomes necessary to sit closer to the fire to feel warm. The association adds that... [s]ometimes it's not possible to react quickly to a falling log, or cinders, with potentially disastrous results... [By the way, t]he Christchurch School of Medicine, Christchurch Hospital and Christchurch Regional Council found that 29 deaths in the city a year might have been associated with air pollution[caused by open fires and other means of burning solid fuels, while]... 400,000 productivity days [are probably] lost by people feeling under the weather... The School of Medicine is carrying out [further] research... Dunedin, with so many coal fires, has also been testing its air... Wellington's notorious wind kept the capital clean most, but not all, of the time... Auckland had a different problem with pollution from car exhaust fumes.

...The Ministry of Commerce is taking an Auckland-based gas company to court following two house fires... The fires allegedly resulted from a failure to follow correct procedures during a mains pressure up-grade carried out by Enerco... “We're prosecuting to send a sign to utilities or gas companies to ensure they follow gas regulations and the safety of consumers is not put at risk.”

...Firefighters used a risky “wall of water” technique... to tame a gas fireball which raged for nearly five hours in a Hamilton street. Normal hose use proved useless against the 2000 degree-plus flames after a car crashed into a gas regulator station in Kahikatea Drive at 5.50 am yesterday, rupturing pipes and valves. The 15m fireball turned water to steam and the heat could be felt 50m away. Emergency services could not reach a valve to turn off the gas because the car was sitting on it. Gas workers gradually reduced the pressure from a nearby main to a point where firefighters [were able to] create... a wall of water shield... in front of them... [using] two hoses... and edge... forward to connect a tow truck cable to the car... The manoeuvre had been used only once before in N[Z] – at Manukau in 1990 when a girl was trapped under a crashed petrol tanker that ignited... Frantic firefighters initially feared at least one person was trapped in the... car... Police later determined no one was... They were following positive leads to identify the driver, who fled the scene. The Natural Gas communications manager... said there had been some vehicle collisions with stations since their installation 25 years ago, but never with serious results. The station reduces gas pressure from the main intermediate pipeline delivering gas to Hamilton, so it can be distributed to clients. Nearby service stations temporarily closed their CNG facilities to reduce demand. [Editor's note: 'Natural gas composed mostly of methane is the second most plentiful hydrocarbon energy source in the US. The country's present reserves of natural gas can withstand steep increases well into the next century. Electrical generating plants and motor vehicles could take advantage of this fuel; compressed natural gas mixed with hydrogen yields the cleanest-burning alternative fuel for powering motor vehicles. Switching to natural gas where possible would cut carbon dioxide emissions in half. Unfortunately, significant amounts of natural gas leak into the atmosphere during pipeline transmission and urban distribution, possibly contributing to greenhouse warming' ('in 1990 there were 194,100 miles of natural gas pipelines and 168,000 miles of petroleum pipelines in the US, which delivered 5.6 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 11,378 billion barrels of petroleum respectively').]

...Dash for gas set to sweep Asia... Asia's... economies may be heading for a greener future if several multi-billion dollar pipeline projects aimed at supplying... power-provider natural gas come to fruition. But analysts warn that the region will have to wait for huge projects to bring gas from Russia and Central Asia. The attraction of gas for Asia is that it is both plentiful and clean... This means it is well-placed both to meet new energy demand, and to displace coal with all its associated pollution problems in the existing market... While this was still not as important an issue as in Europe, it was becoming more of a concern in Asia. The growth of gas use around the world has been spectacular. In the past 10 years global demand has risen by a third and consumption is... 60[%] of that of its big brother, oil... [G]as use increas[ed by 7.5% in the]... Asia Pacific region... in 1996 over the previous year to 235 billion cubic metres... But consumption could change out of recognition if plans to move natural gas by pipeline from the giant fields of Russia and... Turkmenistan go ahead... Russia's supplies are so large it cannot sell all the gas... in its traditional markets in Europe... The chair[perso]n of the world's largest gas company Russia's Gazprom... recently announced his company's intention... to develop gas fields in Irkutsk and Yakutia in Siberia and to link Siberian fields by pipeline with China, North and South Korea and “very likely” Japan. “We are aware that gas from the Middle East may start competing with Russian gas in the region in the next 10 to 15 years... But Gazprom expects the Russian gas to win the competition.” Senior officials from Turkmenistan and Japan recently reaffirmed plans to build a pipeline from the Turkmen gas fields to the Pacific and also eventually on to Japan. “If Turkmenistan's natural resources reach the Pacific... and the pipeline goes as far as Japan, there is no doubt this will have a positive effect on peace and stability in the Asian region,” [says the]... special councillor to the Japanese [PM]... The... Japan Gas Association... told a conference in June that East Asian demand will double from 140b cm a year now to around 300b cm a year by 2010. “On the one hand its utilisation as an electric power generation fuel is expected to rise... On the other hand, its employment in the manufacture of chemicals and fertilisers as well as a fuel for industrial purposes is anticipated to burgeon.” ...There are also other plans to build major pipelines from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan to Pakistan and India, as well as smaller scale projects, like a pipeline from Burma to Thailand already underway... [■ Yesterday's] blessing by local iwi heralded the start of Enerco's \$10 million North Harbour gas pipeline project. The 25km pipe will run from Taupaki to Albany and deliver gas to thousands of North Shore homes and businesses. The project will begin in October and is expected to take six months. A high-pressure gas pipeline across[Auckland's] Harbour Bridge is working at full capacity.

...[‘over-filled’] LPG cylinders have caused explosions in NZ – but nothing like the explosion allegedly caused by a leaking ‘gas pipeline that killed 10 campers in a remote part of the US’. In related news, it] is estimated that... in Britain... up to 70% of reservoir water is lost between the reservoir and the customer due to leaky pipes. The recently privatised water companies are all making massive profits but it seems these must be returned to the shareholders and the executive, rather than be used to fix the pipes.

...WHY do you think so much water is lost from cracked mains? Water pipes do not just shatter of their own accord, for the Victorians built well and solidly. No, the reason is the endless pounding from above by needlessly heavy lorries... [– although frozen water might have caused some of the damage? Speaking of frozen water,] Essex and Suffolk Water, which provides water to 1.4 million consumers... is in talks with a Scandinavian company to examine whether... it can tow giant icebergs from the Arctic circle to bring water to Britain's drought-stricken south... “It does sound a little fanciful but we have a duty to investigate all sources of supply,” said... [a spokesperson, who] admitted “getting the icebergs across the North Sea would probably be rather expensive because we would have to build plants on the coast to convert the ice back into water and then treat it.”

...Enormous deposits of ice-like crystals beneath the sea-bed could provide energy to power North America for over a century... “The inclination to dream about how many cities might be lighted with the stuff can prove irresistible,” says [a scientist from] Texas A and M University, who published his findings in the British scientific journal *Nature*. His university operates the research ship *Resolution*, which discovered the... methane hydrate crystals... [that] contain natural gas... below Blake Ridge off South Carolina on America's eastern seaboard – although they are thought to

be widespread elsewhere. The crystals – formed by the combination of methane and water under huge pressure at low temperatures – may well yield more energy than all the remaining oil reserves in the world. They act like cages, trapping neighbouring gas molecules which originate in organic sediment deposited over millions of years. Russian technologists have already succeeded in producing methane from gas hydrates in the Messoyakh field... At room temperature, the crystals – which resemble dirty, bluish-grey snowballs – smoke, pop and eventually disintegrate with a hiss as the gas escapes. This explosive property... may also unlock the mysteries of the Bermuda Triangle, the stretch of the Atlantic... close to the target area of the Resolution's drilling exercise... where... 1000 lives have been lost without trace in the past hundred years... [S]uggested solutions to the mystery have included disastrous mini-tornadoes and evil rays emitted from the underwater ruins of the lost city of Atlantis... [According to the crystal theory,] methane hydrate zones act as impermeable barriers to gas fields that accumulate beneath them. The crystals form a seal but, if it cracks in an earthquake or other disturbance, gas and decomposing hydrate rise through the water, causing surface eruptions. This, some believe, could produce a highly concentrated – but invisible – flammable bubble above the surface of the sea, endangering not just ships but low-flying aircraft as well... Ships have been lost in the triangle without issuing mayday calls or leaving bodies, wrecks or even oil slicks in the water.

...Parts of an oil slick from a sunken Russian tanker started washing ashore in northern Japan yesterday, threatening a possible environmental disaster for the Noto Peninsula. A Maritime Safety Agency spokes[person] told Reuters the 10km slick had broken into many parts and the first patch washed ashore on a beach at Echizen. Bad weather has dogged efforts to stop the oil spill since the 13,157-tonne Russian-registered Nakhodka, carrying 19,000 tonnes of heavy fuel oil, sank and broke in two during storms in the Sea of Japan last Thursday... It has been estimated that at least 3700 tonnes of oil had escaped from ruptured tanks in the ship's bow and more oil was leaking from tanks in the stern. The Noto Peninsula, about 350km west of Tokyo, is a rich fishing ground famed for its shrimp... snow crabs, abalone and... [gal] divers known as "Ama."

...The battle against one of Japan's worst oil spills grew more difficult yesterday as huge new slicks whipped by heavy winds quadrupled to 450km of coastline affected by the spill. And the top civil servant in charge of the clean-up... was seriously ill in hospital after losing both his feet and an arm when [the civil servant] fell in front of a speeding subway train yesterday. Police were mystified about how [the 50-year-old]... director of Japan's Marine Pollution and Waste Management Office, fell on to the tracks at central Tokyo's Awajicho Station... The shoreline threatened by the breakup of an ageing Russian tanker spanned six prefectures on the Sea of Japan, stretching from around Kyoto to the Noto Peninsula[, and oil is] continuing to spill from the tanker... said the Kyoto News Service... "It's worse than we expected," said one fisher[person] cleaning up the shores of Imagoura in Hyogo prefecture. "We have to scoop the oil by hand because the slick is like jelly and won't react to neutralising chemicals or absorbing mats," a Hyogo prefectural official said. Once-thriving fish markets were either shut or had only frozen or processed seafood on sale, a rare sight in Japan. In a mainly symbolic gesture, the Russian Government is sending a ship to help with the clean-up.

...The Russians have apologised to the Japanese for an oil spill from a sunken Russian tanker which has turned into a major ecological disaster. The Russian Ambassador to Japan... sa[id]: "This is a dreadful, regrettable thing. I apologise for such tremendous damage and destruction." Oil was still seeping from an inaccessible part of the tanker yesterday and adding to a group of oil slicks which has already fouled much of Japan's west coast... The rear section of the... Nakhodka, which sank about 150km off [Japan's] western coast... is thought to still hold three times the total amount that has spilled so far, said [a] coast guard spokes[person]... If all the remainder spilled out, it would be Japan's worst oil slick ever. Slicks have now affected... an 800km stretch of the western coastline... Japanese environment officials are calling for volunteers to clean up bird sanctuaries smeared with oil... "Oil slicks have already hit the shores of Kanmuriyima Island, [which]... is a summer nesting ground for 600,000 white-faced shearwater birds... We don't have the resources to clean up the slicks, so it's down to volunteers." ...[however, c]leanup operations... were cancelled today because of stormy weather... Waves up to 4m were whipping at the coast, and threatened to disturb the fragile, oil-laden bow portion of the ship, which has run aground on rocks off Mikuni. The bow split from the rest of the ship when it sank. Salvage experts plan to try to pump the oil out of the bow when the weather calms down. The four-day operation was originally scheduled to start today... [On a positive note, the] oil spill... has narrowly missed a string of 15 nuclear power plants at Wakasa Bay, the world's largest concentration of nuclear power generation...

A network of oil fences and favourable currents have prevented... Japan's... worst oil spill from reaching a string of nuclear plants along... the country's... northern coast... However, a new slick estimated at 20km long was spotted east of the main concentration of oil, possible heading for previously untouched areas. Officials are focusing their clean-up efforts on the waters near [the] nuclear power plants... The sea water is vital in keeping the reactors from overheating. While their intake pipes are set about 5m below the water level, the heavy oil... from the... 26-year-old... Russian tanker... has been gradually sinking as it becomes as thick as mud... Nuclear power plant officials say there is no danger of a meltdown even if oil gets into the intake pipes. The system can tolerate small amounts of oil and at worse they would have to suspend power generation.

...Nuclear. Now there's a word to set the blood boiling – even when it applies to power not weapons. N[ations], blessed with free-running rivers, coal and gas reserves, and with a tendency to live in the present (if not the past), find resisting the nuclear option a simple matter. However, taking the high ground against countries not so similarly blessed is disingenuous. It is because their options are limited that nuclear power is here to stay... Absence of natural resources is not the only reason for choosing the nuclear option. Concentrate oil reserves in politically unstable regions and expect nervousness. In Tokyo's eyes the 1990-91 Gulf War justified the decision in the wake of the 1973 oil shock to reduce Japanese dependence on Middle East oil... Japanese nuclear waste is being reprocessed – in France until Japan builds its own reprocessing facilities – and returned for reuse... The shipment of processed nuclear waste from France to Japan has brought the usual protest from anti-nuclear militants... Some of the N[ation's] reaction to the shipment's passing through the Pacific region smacks of the not-in-my-backyard mindset that France was charged with at the height of its nuclear testing. But in the interests of recycling nuclear waste it seems of greater value to encourage international assistance for Japan in its venture rather than taking a negative stance that can only be interpreted as accepting the alternative – waste dumping... In the late 1980s impoverished states in West Africa and the Pacific had become targets for private companies that had taken over the business as industrial countries faced a combination of growth in toxic, including radioactive, waste and a reduction in disposal space. Comparative costs made the business attractive. At the time, disposal cost the equivalent of about \$1500 a tonne in Europe compared with \$3.60 a tonne in Africa... Not all African states welcomed the new growth industry among their neighbours... And the publicity over the attempts to try to use poor states as dumping grounds for toxic waste encouraged regional agreements to counter such activities. Collapse of the Berlin Wall opened the curtain to disaster areas of untreated contaminated waste. In 1993 Russia's dumping of nuclear waste into the Sea of Japan drew attention to the disintegration of the former Soviet Union's nuclear-powered naval vessels. Co-operation in such matters provides the key: Japan came to Russia's assistance with a pledge to build a treatment facility for safer disposal of the waste.

...Britain[, which for]... years... has been using the water as a... [dump for its nuclear waste, says it']ll honour a ban on radioactive dumping at sea.

...A link between a French nuclear reprocessing plant and leukaemia in children has been found by a new study which is likely to reopen controversy over the safety of Britain's two reprocessing plants. One of them, Dounreay in Scotland, reprocesses spent nuclear fuel rods from Lucas Heights, near Sydney. The study... was carried out at La Hague... Nearby are a low-level radioactive waste depository, a nuclear power station and a navy dockyard where nuclear fuel is handled. The area is "one of the most densely nuclearised in the world,"... The... study... found children who visited local beaches at least once a month were almost three times as likely to develop leukaemia. Eating local fish and shellfish at least once a week showed a similar increased risk... La Hague, Dounreay and Sellafield in northern England are the world's only nuclear reprocessing plants operating on an industrial scale... Sellafield... handles more than 200 tonnes of nuclear fuel from Europe and Japan each year.

...A sharp increase in radioactive waste from Britain's Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant has been detected in Norwegian waters, says Norway's Radiation Protection Board... [In another development, n]early 50 people living near the French town of Saint-Jean d'Ormont [have been] tested for contamination after radioactive traces were found in wild boar caught in the region. The tainted animals were... found to have three times the normal safety levels of cesium 137 and strontium. The discoveries have caused concern that the nuclear cloud released by the accident at Chernobyl in... 1986 could still be affecting the area. Radioactive mushrooms were discovered growing in France earlier this year.

...A Russian scientist has warned a Chernobyl-style disaster could happen just outside Moscow because his institute cannot afford to dispose of its large quantities of highly radioactive material... The environment minister... said recently that disposing of radioactive waste would cost Russia \$US700 billion. The country's 1996 [GDP] only came to about \$US400 billion. Meanwhile, Ukraine has made "great progress" in... the latest round of talks with... the G[7] countries... on how to shut down Chernobyl but no final decision has been taken on compensation for the loss of energy... For the record, the financial cost of the Chernobyl accident – the most expensive ever – is estimated at between \$283[billion] and \$358 billion.

...Ukraine said it needs to complete two new reactors to compensate for the lost electricity... [if it were] to close Chernobyl... The G7... had agreed to fund the reactors, but lately has been showing reluctance.

...Western diplomats, journalists, South Korean contractors and officials of an international consortium arrived in North Korea yesterday to witness the breaking of ground for a landmark nuclear project. The international community is due to build two 1000 megawatt light-water reactors in the communist state in return for Pyongyang's promise to freeze and eventually dismantle its suspected atomic weapons programme... Before... the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation (KEDO)... puts the vital reactor cores in the new reactors to be built over the next seven to 10 years, the International Atomic Energy Agency must give North Korea a clean nuclear bill of health... [● Last week in Germany, m]asked militants fought with firebombs and slingshots to protest against nuclear power. Now, their cause may be triumphing throughout Europe – not as a result of their protests but because of the rising cost of producing nuclear energy. Western European countries have stopped building nuclear power plants... partly because of the panic over radioactive fallout from the... Chernobyl disaster. The panic fed a desire for top-level safety standards, and those standards can raise the cost of a plant to \$NZ3 billion... Germany has an unofficial moratorium until 2005. It also has the strongest anti-nuclear movement in Europe, as shown by[the] demonstrations... against a shipment of nuclear waste to a storage facility in the northern German town of Gorleben. [But t]hree years of Gorleben demonstrations have failed to pressure Germany into closing down its 19 atomic power plants, which produce a third of the country's electricity.

...Indonesia's Parliament has approved a law allowing state-owned and private companies to develop nuclear energy despite protests that the Government was ignoring safety issues. About 50 anti-nuclear activists... protested outside Parliament as 75 of Indonesia's 500 law-makers debated and approved the bill. They argue that earthquake-prone Indonesia is no place to build nuclear power stations... The... Research and Technology Minister... said the law was not aimed at legalising the construction of nuclear power plants but only at updating a 1964 atomic energy law, which had no provision for compensation in case of an accident. The new law sets the liability of a nuclear plant's operator at 450 billion rupiah (\$[NZ]27.65 million) including the compensation to victims of fallout. But the law is vague about the mechanism for subsequent generations to sue the operator for radiation-related genetic diseases. The Government has been promising to build at least 12 nuclear power plants across the country. The first is planned to be built by 2000 in the foothills of a dormant volcano in central Java... [D]emand for power in Java... [–] one of the most densely populated regions of the world... [– is] expected to grow six times by 2015... A feasibility study has been conducted by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd of Japan, Samsung Corp of South Korea and Westinghouse Electric Corp of the U[S]... In Canberra... the... Greens Senator... accused the Federal Government of being more intent on promoting uranium sales than protecting the interests of A[US]ns over Indonesia's nuclear plans. [The] Senator... said the prospect of nuclear power stations in Indonesia was one of the biggest environmental threats facing A[US] and the region. "We know that in the event of a major nuclear accident with one of these nuclear power stations the whole of north A[US] could be contaminated if it's in the monsoon season, but this Government is not going to complain about that on behalf of the A[US]n people..."

...A public inquiry organised by the Nuclear Issues Coalition in A[US] yesterday renewed calls to abolish the A[US]n uranium industry, citing its negative health, environmental, social, cultural and economic effects... [Incidentally, the US] House of Representatives yesterday passed a bill to build a temporary dump in Nevada for spent fuel from nuclear power plant reactors.

...Nuclear leaders in the U[S] yesterday spoke dreamily of the opportunities opening up in China... [The US] President... is poised to allow sales of nuclear technology to China and the Chinese are expected to spend[at least] \$US50 billion... until 2015 to meet their energy needs, making them by far the fastest growing nuclear market. "From a US perspective, the numbers are very big," said... [the] vice-president of the Nuclear Energy Institute, an industry organisation. "We think that you are not going to have that spread out over 50 countries. You are going to have a few big winners"... France, Russia and Canada have already clinched deals with China to build two nuclear power plants each but U[S] industry officials say their advanced technology will allow them to compete in the market despite the late start." Giants like Westinghouse and General Electric are barred from doing business in China under a 1985 law which prevents such exchanges until the Administration can certify to Congress that China is not helping countries develop nuclear weapons. China's nuclear cooperation with Iran and Pakistan had up until now prevented the Administration from making that determination... To secure certification, China reportedly agreed in talks last week in Beijing to end nuclear cooperation with Iran... [By the way, last week a] prominent Bulgarian brewery announced it has developed a new formula for "beer" that will filter out the harmful effects of radiation in humans... The Bulgarian daily *Troud* reported that the non-alcoholic brew is made of herbs and mineral water, and is said to neutralise strontium and uranium in those who drink it. Research on the beer was funded by Bulgaria's defence and health ministries, and the final product is targeted for workers at nuclear power plants.

...Workers in a Japanese nuclear fuel reprocessing plant were dusted with radioactive particles after a fire broke out at the facility north-east of Tokyo. The blaze was brought under control within 10 minutes.

...Radioactive particles collected after an explosion at Japan's nuclear reprocessing plant indicate that plutonium may have been released into the air... However, the level of radioactive particles found was below the limit set for areas outside the plant and did not pose a risk to the environment... The... explosion at the facility in Tokaimura, 160km north-east of Tokyo, was caused by a fire that was not properly extinguished 10 hours earlier. Radiation escaped, exposing 37 workers to minor levels. [The Japanese PM], who was not informed of the accident for several hours, formally apologised to the nation in Parliament for the lapses. Since the Tokaimura incident two other nuclear plants have either shut or cut back production because of maintenance checks that found flaws in their operations. The Tokaimura plant is Japan's only nuclear reprocessing facility... with the rest... [of the] spent nuclear fuel from Japan's 50 running commercial nuclear power plants... [being] reprocessed at French plants.

...Japan's most serious atomic energy accident could not have come [at a worse time] for the country's nuclear power industry. The incident early last week, in which a radiation leak contaminated 35 workers, was just one blow in what could turn into more than a bad luck week for an industry regarded as a cornerstone of energy-starved Japan's economic policy. Hours before the fire... the industry had already suffered a setback when local opposition elsewhere in Japan forced the scrapping of a planned nuclear power plant... [The] Citizens Nuclear Information Centre Secretary-General... expected the accident to have a significant psychological impact. "I think the accident is going to provide momentum to people calling for an end to Japan's plutonium energy policy." That is bad news for economic planners, as Japan hopes plutonium technology will allow it to wean itself off oil imports to the point where... it will be able to supply more than half of its energy needs. Nuclear planners were already reeling from the impact of a December 1995 accident... at Monju, a prototype plutonium fast-breeder reactor, which was the centrepiece of the plutonium strategy.

Although no radiation leaked... at Monju, the incident became a public relations disaster when the media revealed that the state-run Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corporation (PNC), owner of both the Monju and the Tokaimura plants, tried to keep videotapes of a coolant accident secret. The shame and perception of betrayal of the public trust was so great that a PNC official at Monju committed suicide.

...A Science and Technology Agency panel looking into the cause of [Japan's] nuclear fuel reprocessing plant accident met yesterday to scrutinise the cover-up... The meeting is the fifth of its kind since a fire and subsequent explosion took place... at a bituminisation facility in the plant where low-level nuclear waste is solidified with asphalt for storage.

...Supporters and opponents of nuclear power were united in anger yesterday after a state-run firm said it had delayed reporting a new radiation leak after concealing Japan's worst nuclear mishap last month. The beleaguered... PNC... was ordered to halt operations at its Fugen reactor in western Japan after it emerged that it had waited 30 hours before reporting a radiation leak which occurred on Monday... It shut down the Fugen plant on Tuesday night... A Government spokes[person]... said the troubled state-run body "should be dismantled and start again from scratch, leaving no sanctuaries." [The spokesperson's] comments echoed those of the head of the Citizens Nuclear Information Centre, Japan's biggest anti-nuclear organisation. "Let's say 'sayonara'... to the PNC... we should be telling the firm to 'please go away,'... instead of saying 'clean up your act'...,"... [Japan's PM], who last week said revelations of PNC's earlier cover-up made him speechless... yesterday... was disgusted at the latest revelation. "I saw the date of the accident and the date the PNC reported. It's completely hopeless!" ...The Government has asked the police to press charges over the cover-up... If convicted, PNC officials would face a fine of up to 200,000 yen (\$2340) each and a jail term of up to six months.

...WHEN an explosion at a government nuclear fuel plant north of Tokyo recently exposed a large number of people to high levels of radiation, officials quickly covered up the accident and denied responsibility. Last week the Japanese public learnt just how dangerous their 52 nuclear plants have become. Investigators uncovered a web of lies, falsified reports and at least 11 other unreported nuclear accidents... [Then the public found out yesterday that an] estimated 100 litres of coolant water [has] leaked from a nuclear reactor in northern Japan...

PM angry at 30-year nuclear waste leak... A furious Japanese [PM]... said yesterday that it was unbelievable the country's state-run nuclear corporation turned a blind eye for 30 years to a low-level radiation leak from a storage plant... at Tokaimura... "....despite the fact that the company even received a verbal warning from the Science and Technology Agency in 1982,"... [The PM] also questioned the credibility of the... [a]gency, which oversees PNC operations... The radiation leaked from about 2000 drums, each containing 200 litres of low-level radioactive waste produced by uranium processing. The drums were in an open swimming pool-like pit exposed to rain which rusted some of the containers.

...The "No Swimming" signs beside Orakei Basin look as if they will stay for a few more years. The latest tests show that the basin remains a public health risk, almost 65 years after the first complaints of sewage contamination... [T]wo-thirds of sewers in the Auckland City Council area were laid before 1930... [O]nly one of 12 tests in the... basin last summer was within the Department of Health bathing guidelines... Enterococci bacteria... indicates sewage contamination... The department maximum is 104 enterococci... per 100ml, but the median reading was 4300... Tests of the four sites in November, February and March showed a low reading of 10 bacteria per 100ml at the sluice gates and a high of 59,000 in the Kelvin Rd arm of Orakei Creek... [I]t would be another two to three years before it would be known when swimming in the basin would be safe.

...Swimming at the outfall from a sewage treatment plant is more than four times safer than swimming at the Auckland Viaduct Basin... The... figures... issued... yesterday... have alarmed health officials... The high pollution is caused by three combined stormwater and sewage pipes that drain into the [Waitemata Harbour] around the basin... [T]he problem was exacerbated by fishing boats that discharge raw sewage in the vicinity... **With a... faecal pollution reading... of 104, 19 out of 1000 bathers could become sick with gastroenteritis... conjunctivitis and hepatitis A...* [The e]xpected reading from a large municipal sewage treatment plant [is] 1000... The... Viaduct Basin [was] 4600...

Tegal Foods Ltd has been fined a total of \$7500 after admitting it allowed chicken faeces and body parts to enter a Henderson stormwater system. Three charges of breaching the Resource Management Act... were... brought against Tegal by the Auckland Regional Council... The ARC's lawyer... said the stormwater drained into the Oratia Stream and thereby into the Henderson Creek and, eventually, the Waitemata Harbour. Tegal's lawyer... said the plant was in the middle of an upgrade at the time and, in hindsight, the first two... overflows were due to inadequate practices and facilities. But staff training and the building of a bund were among steps taken to improve yard procedures, and the third incident had resulted from a mechanical pump failure. [The lawyer] said there was no evidence of environmental harm. Tegal had plans for a \$6.5 million redevelopment of its inherited site which included a new purpose-built live-bird processing plant... The planned redevelopment would have to conform to Resource Management Act regulations... [Incidentally, plans] to clean up the polluted Viaduct Basin in downtown Auckland are on hold because of a legal battle. The disagreement between the Auckland City Council and Ports of Auckland means that clean-up work... may be delayed for months... Plans to redirect drains that feed into the basin into an area near Wynyard Wharf depend on the argument being resolved... The port company says the proposal simply shifts the stormwater pollution problem elsewhere. The company's group public affairs manager... said it would have to spend more on disposing of dredged material if stormwater outflow continued to be near wharves... The council's water and wastewater manager... said... an outfall at Wynyard Wharf... [would be] tidal and not prone to silting... [T]he proposal to improve Viaduct Basin water was part of \$16.2 million being spent on separating stormwater and sewage drains in central Auckland.

...[city traffic will be disrupted while t]win lines of stormwater pipes big enough for a person to walk through are being installed along Commerce St as part of [the] scheme to clean up the downtown area discharges to the Waitemata Harbour for the year 2000... [In related news, the] North Shore City Council has rejected the claims of a former council sewerage worker that its 40-year-old... sewerage and stormwater... system is in danger of collapse... The council's... deputy mayor... said... last night... "...We are working to replace it and we've spent about \$50 million on it since 1989." ...The accusations follow growing concern about beach pollution in the East Coast Bays... A residents action group, the North Shore Environmental Protection A[ssociation], is campaigning to ensure \$1 million earmarked for stormwater work is retained in the up-coming budget.

...Rebel councillors are fighting for more money to upgrade the North Shore's ageing sewerage system... A five-[member] group is expected to put pressure on the city council today... "We are not asking for an increase in total expenditure, just funds to accelerate the programme and do essential work,"... said... the lobby group's leader, who is the council's finance committee chair[person]... The council said it was spending \$2.5 million this year on sewerage and pumping station renewal works. In a statement, it said the sewerage system was not perfect but had been adequately designed to cope with expected population growth... A claim by... a former sewerage employee... that an overflow alarm in the Devonport area was turned off to conceal continual overflows had been investigated by the council. The statement said a continuously monitored alarm system was in operation and a telemetry alarm system, controlled by a central computer, was installed at every pumping station in the city... The biggest problem for the system continued to be stormwater infiltration, caused largely by illegal private connections and low gully traps.

...More than 30,000 North Shore properties will be checked as the city council cracks down on the illegal stormwater connections wreaking havoc on the city's sewerage system. Roof run-off pipes [are often] connected to the sewerage rather than the stormwater system... The council's water network manager... said the inspections, which would be carried out over the next year, would cost about two-thirds of the \$1 million allocated to improve stormwater and wastewater systems... [T]he checks were an ongoing process because people renovated or replaced piping and could do it incorrectly... Last year, pipe faults were found in 5.6[%] of the 19,470 properties inspected.

...Contamination of North Shore streams is so high that bathers risk illness and infection, says a damning new report. A survey by Auckland Healthcare officials shows that bacterial levels in eight main urban streams are at least 10 times higher than recommended under guidelines for

recreation and shellfish gathering. While the exact source of the contamination is unclear, officials suggest it is highly likely to be sewage. North Shore City Council last night slammed the report and claimed the contamination could have come from bird or animal droppings or soil bacteria. Council officials produced their own report by two leading water-quality scientists from Auckland University, who attacked the findings as "confused... haphazard... and inconclusive." ...The... scientists... said the report failed to prove ongoing sewage contamination... [T]he North Shore Environmental Protection Association... said the council was whitewashing the issue, because raw sewage regularly poured from overflow pipes into the streams... The council has approved a \$25,000 water-quality pilot study... which will begin next month... in Mairangi Bay...

Bacterial levels at five North Shore beaches exceed... guidelines... The Auckland Regional Council's guidelines specify bacterial levels in bathing water should be no higher than 119 enterococci/100ml... Samples were taken from 24 North Shore beaches on Monday... The beaches that failed the bathing water quality tests... and... [t]he results... were... Takapuna 486, Mairangi Bay 218, Murrays Bay 170, Long Bay 159 and Rothesay Bay 142.

...Warning signs have been erected at Milford and Mairangi Bay beaches after heavy rain caused sewage overflows at the weekend.

...An independent audit of the North Shore City Council sewage disposal system has exposed management deficiencies... [However, the audit, which] cost about \$20,000... found that techniques being used to rehabilitate sewerage were as good as anywhere in N[Z]... The... Council yesterday made a further move to clean up an image muddled by public health authorities' criticism of stream pollution. It called for a unified approach to the monitoring of streams and bathing water throughout the Auckland Region... The chair[person] of the city council's regulatory committee... said last night that environmental health had suffered from a lack of consensus between agencies. A joint approach was urgently needed.

...A public health official has accused the Auckland City Council of upgrading its sewerage system too slowly, after a mystery spill into Cocks Creek... The heavily polluted creek, which drains into the Waitemata Harbour from the Auckland suburb of Grey Lynn, ran bright orange with the spill for several hours on Tuesday... [The health official's accusation coincided with the ARC] taking its stormwater pollution message to the streets and airwaves as part of a \$60,000 advertising campaign[, which]... is aimed at discouraging people from pouring toxic substances on the ground or down stormwater drains... A council officer said the campaign had an immediate effect... – a person rang a hotline to complain about car-washing detergent flowing down a stormwater drain. Though the main component of stormwater pollution is road run-off from vehicles, a significant amount occurs because people do not understand that stormwater drains lead to the nearest waterway, rather than a sewage treatment plant. The council's resource quality section deals with about 1100 water pollution complaints each year... [However, an ARC] pollution control officer... said no... action would be taken over... [Tuesday's spill. The officer] was not sure what it was but thought it could be dye or paint from an industrial source. It was legitimately in the nearby sewer which had overflowed after rain... Sewage overflows into the creek were common after rain and were permitted... The drainage operations manager... said... last week... that... the council's... four-year, \$55 million project to separate... combined drains in[cluded] the Cocks Bay, Freemans Bay... catchments... Freemans Bay drains were being fixed first. Cocks Bay would have to wait until July next year at the earliest for its upgrading. [The health official], while recognising the council's efforts to fix the problem, said it had not given it high enough priority. "When Auckland City allowed substantial infill housing, they should have at that time started making sure the infrastructure could handle the increased loading." [The official also disputed the council's] assertion that yesterday's pollution followed rain, saying there had been no significant rain for several hours beforehand... [● ○]rganisms which cause food poisoning have been found in four Waiheke Island streams, opening more debate on whether a reticulated sewerage system is needed there. Residents of the Hauraki Gulf island now dispose of sewage from their own properties, using methods such as septic tanks and pits. A health official says evidence is mounting that the ground is not coping, with contaminants seeping into the environment... Local Auckland City Council politicians were reluctant to comment... However, a council project aiming to maintain the village atmosphere of the Oneroa settlement, the island's biggest, had decided there was surplus effluent which needed to be removed. The manager of Project Oneroa... said the public were being consulted over setting up an irrigation system to take it to forest areas or creating oxidation ponds. A proposal would go to the Auckland City Council next month, but public consensus and funding would be needed for changes to take place...

The Auckland City Council looks set to miss the boat for dealing with sewage problems on Waiheke Island... The draft budget for ...1998 allocates \$200,000 for solving sewage problems in the commercial area of Oneroa. But... [a] local councillor... says more than three times that amount may be needed just to build a service lane where pipes would be laid. The Minister of Health... has told the council that cost cannot be used to ignore a public health problem. As a result, senior engineers were sent to the island this week to assess the situation... [The minister's] attention has added urgency to a long-running discussion on what should be done... The council estimates it will cost up to \$3 million to build a reticulated system for Oneroa's commercial area alone. Servicing 40 businesses and 25 homes, that breaks down to about \$46,000 for each property. Who will pay the high capital cost is a sticky question for the... [c]ouncil, which this month narrowly rejected turning sewerage into a business and introducing user-pays financing. In a letter written in January but not released to the works committee until this month, [the minister] said... "A narrow interpretation of user pays must not hold up implementation of a sewage scheme for those parts of Waiheke... that need it,"... The chair[person] of the Waiheke Island community board... says the council has an obligation to Oneroa. "They are paying rates that would make your eyes water."

...A conventional sewerage system is planned for Oneroa Village... which may get rid of the offensive odour that has plagued the commercial area for decades. The Auckland City Council works and services committee passed a resolution yesterday to allow the design of a system which would cost around \$300,000. The Waiheke Community Board had opposed a conventional system in favour of a small bore system, which it said was cheaper and would do the same job... and it feared that the [alternative] decision would lead to more intensive commercial development against the wishes of most islanders... [But t]he decision was welcomed by the Oneroa Commercial Landowners Group... "Common sense has prevailed. We've finally put an end to the suffering of having to come face to face with the gross smell and odour for years,"... The... committee felt that the more expensive option would serve the community longer – between 30 and 50 years – before the system needed modernising. The small bore system was only a short-term solution... However, the... Waiheke Community Board... felt that the small bore system would last more than 25 years.

...[a] plan to force Oneroa residents to pay for Waiheke Island's first sewage system has struck 11th-hour trouble... Today an Auckland City Council committee is expected to recommend that Oneroa businesses pay about \$90,000 a year, and one-off connection costs of \$2000... Local businesses have complained of unfair treatment and say the costs should be shared by all Auckland ratepayers. They believe the council has underestimated the cost of the project... and say a decision should be delayed until their objections can be heard... Council staff estimate the scheme will cost \$685,000, but... an Oneroa commercial landowner, said that excluded land and a treatment plant. He said a realistic cost would be closer to \$3 million, and pointed out that islanders had paid rates for years as if they had full wastewater services... It is expected that residents at the western end of the island will be charged a special rate.

...A decision on the funding of the Oneroa sewerage system has been postponed for a month after deficiencies were revealed in a... [c]ouncil report... The committee agreed to the delay to allow more ratepayer consultation and financial analysis, and talks with Metrowater about its involvement... [But a]pproval for using the island's two septic tank sludge disposal sites expires on December 31. The owner of the larger capacity site intends closing it permanently. Businesses and home-owners could be faced with \$700 bills to have their tank sludge dumped on the mainland... An Oneroa commercial land-owner... said yesterday that the cost... would bankrupt commercial tenants and landlords... The alternative for some may be having their premises closed by officials if their tanks begin to malfunction. Domestic tanks need to be pumped out three-yearly on average

but restaurants need more frequent service. Bach-owners and tourists swell the island's population from 6500 to an estimated 30,000 during the summer holidays.

...Overflowing septic tanks have left about 30 homes in the Coromandel Peninsula settlement of Cooks Beach uninhabitable... Most of the homes were holiday houses... [In related news, a] combination of devices is tipped to cut... household water bills and soften the blow of... user charges for wastewater disposal. The devices will also make it possible for homes to be built on hundreds of sections not served by sewers and which Auckland councils previously considered too small to accommodate septic tanks. A Waiheke Island house fitted with wastewater reduction devices has already been allowed on a site smaller than that normally required for septic tank storage. Studies indicate the devices, which would cost the average house up to \$5000, could cut personal water use by 66[%]. Proven water savings from use of the improved plumbing fixtures and appliances have prompted the A[RC] to modify wastewater disposal system guidelines used in granting building permits. Most Auckland beach resorts without reticulated sewerage have poor soils for waste disposal by septic tank.

...A new sludge dump has been proposed to solve Waiheke Island's sewage problem, but it will not be usable for at least a year... [A local couple] want to run a sludge dump for the whole island, on 40ha in the centre of the island, south-east of Onetangi. However, the consent process is slow and expensive and before they go to the... ARC... they are seeking consent from nine neighbours and concerned parties. One of those groups is the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, which owns a neighbouring reserve.

...Authorities have taken emergency action to stem the sewage crisis on Waiheke Island... In an eleventh-hour decision, the Auckland City Council is using special powers under the Resource Management Act to use a quarry without resource consent... [But, because d]isposal of the sludge constituted an offensive trade under the Health Act... the council was seeking consent from Auckland Healthcare to use the site... It [hopes to] dump sludge at the council-owned site in Onetangi Rd from January 1. The... quarry was an interim measure until a long-term solution could be found... [In another development,] Waiheke High School has won approval to discharge... 58,000 litres of treated sewage a day over a 13ha site near Surfdale.

...The Ministry of Education is making a new attempt to fix the overloaded Waiheke High School sewage disposal system. The system, which handles effluent from the 400-pupil high school, a primary school, five houses, a creche and kindergarten has been the source of public health hazards after sewage "breakouts" and surface ponding in the past. The problem is symptomatic of Waiheke Island's increasing septic tank sewage disposal woes... The Ministry of Education has been served with an abatement notice by the A[RC] requiring the installation of an improved system or the termination of effluent disposal at the site, which would effectively shut down the schools. In response to the abatement notice the ministry applied for a resource consent from the ARC for modifications to the system but council staff recommended the application be refused because they were concerned how well the proposal would meet environmental concerns.

...Widespread sewage contamination in Mangawhai is bad for shellfish and puts public health at risk, says a Northland Regional Council survey. It says seepage from on-site sewage treatment and disposal systems appears to be a problem in most parts of Mangawhai Heads and the village.

...Many streams and creeks in the Wellington region are polluted and a health hazard, says the Hutt Valley Health medical officer...

Contractors laying cable television and telephone wires for Telecom... in Wellington... are causing thousands of dollars of damage to water, sewer and stormpipes... Some homeowners face being out of pocket because of the damage and Wellington City Council may consider legal action to try to recover the costs[... which included using]... underground TV cameras to find the damage... Council officials are angry at the "cowboy" attitude of the contractors who, the officials say, don't want to take the time or the expense to find out the location of existing pipes... "It's just hit and miss. They've had 180 strikes since October..." ...rather than digging trenches, workers were using a "thruster borer" to speed up the work. In one case, residents of a Wellington street were without water for about 10 hours after contractors hit a water main. The work[ers] turned off the main valve and left without telling city officials. Telecom said it was doing everything it could to minimise damage and disruption...

Telecom and Wellington City Council officers are finalising tough conditions for contractors... [which] include locating the underground services or using cameras to film the pipes before and after... [their jobs. Incidentally, a] clean green approach to drains... and... underground water systems... in Waitakere City has earned the council-owned Eco Works an ISO 14001 stamp of approval.

...The Mayor of Auckland... had a tale of caution for those who gathered to see him officially open a keenly awaited public toilet at Greenwoods Corner, in Royal Oak, yesterday. [The mayor] had been jogging in Western Springs several years ago when [the mayor] heard screams coming from a self-cleaning Exeloo toilet – the same make as the high-tech one... opened yesterday. "There was tremendous screaming and a mother was banging on the door. I prised it open and there was a completely washed child... so these toilets are not without their problems!" ...[By the way, t]he thousands of people who flocked to Bay of Plenty swimming spots yesterday enjoyed the region's finest water in seven years. So says Environment Bay of Plenty, which monitors 59 swimming spots at beaches, rivers and lakes for cleanliness.

...A \$17 million water upgrade in Tauranga, which could see an end to annual summer hosing restrictions, uses some of the most advanced technology in the world. The district's new, fully automatic Joyce Rd water treatment plant at Pyes Pa uses a system which filters water through tiny holes in plastic straws. Reported to be the largest microfiltration plant of its type internationally, it will be opened tomorrow by the Deputy P[M]. In further news from Tauranga, a]... Maori group frustrated by... years of... inaction on a cultural grievance is considering using explosives to sabotage a sewer pipeline... owned by the Western Bay of Plenty District Council... A kaumatua representing the group of residents of Matakana Island, in the Tauranga Harbour, has approached a former naval demolition expert to blow up the pipe, which crosses land they consider sacred and pumps sewage into the sea. The... demolition expert, who served in the Navy for seven years, was asked about five weeks ago to damage the facility – a request [it rejected. But the demolition expert] believes the plan is still alive, and... is speaking publicly to try to avoid someone being injured or killed in an amateur attempt... What scares him most is the involvement of kaumatua who have mana and, as such, have influence over others. A Matakana Island community spokes[perso]n... confirmed the intention to destroy the pipe. "We have had enough of butting our heads against the council. People have to know it is not an idle threat. The pipe will be destroyed if there is no satisfaction... We acknowledge the council has met us and listened to our concerns, but they always come back to the costs of what we want, which is to pump the sewage on to land where it will do some good as compost." ...[the spokesperson] was prepared to face the consequences if the pipe was destroyed by an explosion. "They can take me to jail, I don't care. We have tried every legal way to try to stop the pipe pumping sewage and I'm damn sick of it." ...[the] former Maori Affairs Department officer in Tauranga, said another person had come forward who had explosives experience and was willing to do the job.

...A sewer pipeline, which is the target of a possible bomb threat, has been the focus of intense debate between the Katikati community, the Western Bay of Plenty Council and Maori on Matakana Island for three years, including 27 meetings. Working parties have been set up to deal with the issue, and to find the best solution. The pipe was installed in 1978 and originally used to pump milk waste from a dairy factory in Katikati. The Katikati Wastewater Working Party decided last year, after looking at options, to stick with the continued disposal using the existing ocean outfall pipe, but with effluent treated to an extremely high standard that did not impact environmentally on the ocean. Reaction from the people of Matakana Island was swift and vocal. They said the decision was ill thought out and hadn't taken into consideration cultural issues that ran hand in hand with the environmental issues. At that time threats of "direct action" against the working party were made by the young people of the island. The Western Bay [of Plenty] council plans to upgrade the pipe including a scheme for treatment by aerated lagoons, surface flow wetland and ultra-violet disinfection, before the effluent is pumped out to sea. The estimated capital cost is \$1.95 million, with \$115,000 annually in operational and maintenance costs... Matakana residents have supported the treatment of Katikati's sewage but have always been opposed to the

pipeline.[The] Matakana Island Trust spokes[person]... said disposal of the sewage was Katikati's problem, not theirs and believed money had been the only consideration in the decision to continue using the pipeline... "We cannot change our mind at this late stage,"... the... Western Bay of Plenty Mayor... said[yesterday]. "Our resource consent for the pipe is running out..." ...[■ A] strong opponent of the \$360 million scheme to upgrade the Mangere sewage treatment plant has scrapped its appeal plans. The Papakura District Council had found it lacked sufficient appeal grounds to justify the cost of going to the Environment Court, the mayor... said yesterday. The council had already spent \$74,000 on legal fees and expert witnesses... His council supported upgrading the 37-year-old... sewage treatment plant but believed it could be done for about \$155 million and still meet the requirements of the Resource Management Act... [The mayor] said the Watercare scheme was too expensive for the region to bear... [and] would provide only minimal environmental improvements... Sewage treatment bills would more than treble over the next 10 years to pay for Watercare's upgrading plan, [the mayor] claimed. However, his figures were at odds with Watercare, which says there will be a 50[%] increase, excluding inflation... lifting the average household cost to \$6.51 a week. The publicly owned company also maintains its scheme, which it hopes to start building this year, will significantly improve the plant's environmental performance... The Papakura council... [- which] is refusing to pay a scheduled 22[%] increase in wastewater charges levied by... Watercare... [-] believed Watercare would struggle to comply with the enforcement order of the former Planning Tribunal (now the Environmental Court) requiring the plant's... containment of offensive odours.

...Unpleasant odours from North Shore's wastewater treatment plant will be cut by a \$4.8 million sludge dewatering facility opening tomorrow.

...Pollution creates a stink the world over, and there are big rewards for whoever can quell the smell. A[n A]uckland firm... High Tech Pure Air... has the stuff to do it with, and... says, "We're on the verge of breaking through big-time overseas." ...To create a smell a substance must be volatile, releasing molecules into the air. The High Tech anti-aroma product contains a monomer... that... has a positive charge which attaches to the negatively-charged target molecules, says company literature, and wraps its long tail around to encapsulate an offending odour. The result is "a spectacular odour knockdown." The smell has not been merely masked; the malodorous molecules have been chemically neutralised and the stink eliminated... A drive up the Northern Motorway past the North Shore sewage treatment plant where it is used, gives a fair indication of its effectiveness. That sudden wave of pungency as you pass the ponds is a thing of the past. The deodorising treatment is said to be specially beneficial at pig and poultry farms. Pigs develop a dry cough and other problems from breathing ammonia in their pens. The spray neutralises the fumes to the benefit of pigs and workers alike... The product has purified prawn-farm water in Thailand, making the prawns grow bigger, and allowed fish to breed again in areas polluted for a century... Its many applications include hospital, airline and household use. It is not yet in the supermarkets, but Amway and some chemists sell it... High Tech Pure Air spray... can [also] be made mildly anti-bacterial, but for it to be more so would halt the natural functioning of[a] cesspit or sewage farm.

...cleansing... effluent at... the... source [is an idea that] came to... the... managing director of Sydney company Atlantis Corporation... in bed... "We believe it's crazy that Sydney should have 9000km of tunnels, all full of effluent, so we asked ourselves what could we do. The first thing was to recognise the system was unsustainable and attacking the life of the planet. The alternatives are a mirror reversal of the way we're doing it..." ...[his] solution was to build a house which would sustain itself... [via a] roof garden... "If the government pays 50[%] of the cost of your roof garden it would be more economical, because they would not have to put sewers through the cities." ...Despite what [the director] insists is an entirely logical way of salvaging urban health... his company... [has] had to fight entrenched interests to get its message across. The company discovered the potential for lawsuits if a new idea was tried and failed, and this meant engineers and regulators were not prepared to take the risk. [The director] cited the example of the Sydney Olympics... for which Atlantis' technology was specified for stadium drainage. "The International Olympic Committee said you can't do that, go back to herringbone. They never questioned us, just said it was too risky." In the Atlantis Corporation system, stormwater and sewage water percolate and permeate through designed "biologically amended" soil mixes surrounding the system's drainage cells. This "biodigester" takes all the organic waste from a household, which became almost pure by infiltration and passing through these soils. "It separates the water from the solids almost instantly..." Atlantis Corporation has priced a household system at \$A450... [or] \$1000 fully installed...

A British company thinks it has devised a good answer to the siting of land-hungry sewage treatment plants – build them at sea. The president of Kaiaki Ltd... is in Auckland promoting his company's "starfish" scheme, which [it] says is a practical and cost-effective system that could suit this region. The idea is to incorporate all the best sewage treatment equipment in a concrete or steel box. The 10m-high, 90m by 90m structure would be submerged, up to 2km offshore, with only the staff quarters and communications room above the surface. The company has not yet installed any of these systems but is discussing them with one of Britain's privatised water companies and the European Commission for use off polluted coastal areas... This week [the president] discussed his company's scheme with officials of Auckland's... Watercare Services... [whose] upgrading of... the... Mangere sewage treatment and disposal plant is budgeted to cost \$360 million. [The president] said it would cost about \$520 million to build and install a starfish plant of similar capacity or several smaller ones around the region, possibly in the harbours... Watercare representatives said that as they had not evaluated the starfish for a specific application, they could not comment in detail[, but an]... Auckland environmentalist... said the starfish scheme... was... an extreme example of the "flush it and forget it syndrome" that could lead to less-strict monitoring because it was "out of sight, out of mind." ...It... would greatly increase the environmental risks in sewage treatment and disposal and could threaten fishing.

...AT 1110 sq km, the Manukau Harbour is the second largest harbour in the southern hemisphere. But Maori have watched their traditional fishing ground in this huge harbour being depleted by pollution. The D[O]C has described the harbour as the most threatened in the Auckland region. It suffers from extensive water pollution, with pollutants coming from the Auckland International Airport, farm runoff, domestic and industrial wastes, sewage pumping station overflows and from the Mangere sewage works... A report compiled by the... Huakina Development Trust... said pollution of the harbour first came to public attention in the 1950s and has steadily worsened... For 1000 years, the Manukau was the traditional fishery of the Waikato people. It was harvested, but with strict controls... Seafoods were traded with inland tribes for birds and berries. Dried shark was a particular Manukau delicacy, as were cockles and scallops. Logging around the harbour began in the 1830s. Mangrove swamps, important breeding grounds for fish, were reclaimed or used as rubbish dumps. Industrial development near the harbour began in earnest around 1847... Although a major pollution crackdown was launched in the late 1980s, the harbour is still struggling to recover. Maori still fish the harbour and it still supplies seafood to... Turangawaewae, the home of the Maori queen... [Now the] Manukau is finally getting the treatment it deserves. Watercare is playing its part to clean up the... [harbour and the surrounding foreshore. This is of major importance to the future of Auckland... The final five kilometres of the Southwestern Interceptor is currently under construction and this vital pipeline is scheduled to be connected to the Mangere Plant next year. Until the Southwestern Interceptor is completed raw sewage will overflow into the Manukau... whenever it rains heavily... [because the] existing Southern Interceptor... is operating beyond its design capacity and simply cannot cope... New, land-based, high quality treatment units will produce an effluent so clean that if all other flows into the Manukau... were of a similar high quality, swimming, fishing and shellfish gathering will be able to be enjoyed in all parts of a sparkling harbour... Future initiatives include the replanting of native coastal trees... and foreshore plants including sea grass and reeds, the creation of new mangrove areas... and the preservation of important historical and archaeological sites... Improvements include coastal walkways, viewing platforms, bird boxes and roosts and the creation of a new 25 hectare reserve. With the co-operation of all local industry and users of the Manukau, together we can all work to clean up the harbour.

...For two weekends recently raw sewage poured into the Manukau Harbour as sewer lines failed to cope with heavy downpours. The reason is that a much-needed and long-planned new trunk sewer (the south-western interceptor) is not yet complete. Watercare has been embroiled in a

legal dispute over the final section of the pipeline; 400m of the 12.5km proposed route crosses an area regarded by some Maori as waahi tapu. Environmental law is a mechanism for balancing competing interests... Getting the balance right however is never easy. No matter what precautions are taken some local residents will be implacably opposed to various projects. It is that balance between public and private interests which is increasingly under the spotlight in the sewer issue... Watercare said it had arranged a comprehensive archaeological survey of the strip... and had arranged for artefacts (if any) discovered on the site... [-] that for several decades... has either been farmed or used for grazing cattle, sheep and horses... [but today] is privately owned by a quarrying company which intends extracting scoria and basalt rock... [-] to be handed over to Maori. Last year local Maori blessed the project... Meanwhile, [four members]... from a Waikato Tainui iwi [- Ngati Te Ata -] went to the Environment Court objecting to the pipe passing through the strip... The court dismissed... [their] case. It held that Watercare had obtained all necessary consents under the Resource Management Act and saw no reason to stop the project... [But one of the four] appealed against the Environment Court decision. One ground of appeal was that “reasonableness” in European law is not the same as “reasonableness” in Maori law and the Environment Court applied the wrong legal test. The High Court has issued a declaratory judgment upholding Watercare’s right to proceed... But a deeper question remains: have our laws got the balance right? Do our environmental laws adequately protect personal interests while at the same time allowing much-needed public works to proceed in a timely and inexpensive fashion? Have we as a society allowed ourselves to be so “hog-tied” in legal red tape... that major projects take years to approve? Do the thousands of dollars frequently paid in fees for major project – often before the first spade of turf is turned – deliver a better project and provide value for money? ...Have we put the interests of litigants too high at the expense of the silent majority? ...Watercare estimates that a two-month delay while the appeal [i]s being processed will cost... ratepayers \$419,000 in extra construction costs after which the costs will accelerate further. In the meantime, of course, there is the ongoing threat to the Manukau Harbour...

The Environment Court has set November 26 as the start date for an appeal hearing on the planning approval granted last year for the... upgrading of the Mangere sewage treatment plant. Nine appeals have been lodged against the Watercare... scheme, including one from the environmental arm of the Tainui Maori Trust Board... Technical experts have argued over methods of achieving high-quality discharges and monitoring standards... [A] Sydney... lecturer and consultant in environmental virology and waste water treatment has advised the group challenging Watercare’s consent conditions[, called] the Manukau Appellants... [-] made up of Manukau and Waitakere City Councils... and [the] Mangere Bridge Residents and Ratepayers Association[– that despite]... the Mangere upgrade... one could expect a filter-feeding oyster to accumulate from 10 to 100 viruses over a normal week... [T]he plant’s proposed use of high-intensity ultra violet... light rays to disinfect effluent would give no more than an 80 to 90[%] virus kill, which would mean a discharge of about four million viruses a day. This made the plant a significant health risk all year round... Ironically, [the lecturer] said the plant’s maligned oxidation ponds, which are demolished in the upgrade, are an efficient killer of viruses and parasites. So, the upgraded plant would increase viruses and parasites being shed into the harbour. [The lecturer] recommended filtering to remove pathogens before UV disinfection. This method allowed water from effluent to be re-used for drinking. [The lecturer] had meetings in Auckland with Watercare’s adviser, [the]... vice-president of the Montgomery Watson waste treatment technology consultancy in the... [US. Hi]s studies showed water quality under UV irradiation could achieve target bug kill standards for unfiltered and filtered secondary waste. But [the adviser] acknowledged that bacteria and viruses reacted differently to UV... It is now agreed that Watercare will undertake a pilot study to determine processes so that a full-scale plant can achieve a 10,000-fold reduction in viruses from raw to treated effluent.

...A proposal to treat high sewage flows with chlorine at the Mangere plant has been dropped by Watercare... on the advice of overseas experts concerned about health risks. Chlorination was in Watercare’s plans... when A[RC] commissioners approved consents... But the method has been dropped during the settling of appeals against the project consents... Watercare had proposed to deal with storm flows occurring about 2[%] of the year. All wastewater up to 9 cu m a second would be [UV] irradiated... but flows above that, up to the maximum of 14 cu m a second, would be treated with chlorine.

...When the Mangere sewage treatment plant opened in 1960,[the then] Auckland mayor... – a health fanatic – was pictured with a drinking glass of treated effluent. The message: this water is fit to drink. The state-of-the-art plant has since become the main source of faecal coliform and other pathogens in the... Manukau Harbour and is the reason swimming and shellfish gathering is not recommended at beaches near the plant discharge. Nutrients discharged from the plant brought weeds, algae and plankton blooms to the harbour and, more important to many Mangere people, smells and midges. In 1993 the Environment Court ordered the plant to clean up its act, and the Waitangi Tribunal has condemned it for its effect on shellfish gathering... So, in... 2003, when the new-generation plant is supposed to be operating, public relations consultants may well suggest a new version of the old “water fit to drink” picture. Or arrange for Watercare chiefs to line up a plate of 10 raw oysters from the Oruarangi Channel near the plant’s discharge point. Such a show of faith would indeed dispel thoughts of Auckland history repeating itself.

...The Waikato River pipeline plan could be scrapped if Auckland tapped into treated effluent for some non-drinking water... [A]n environmental activist... called yesterday for the construction of a second network of pipes to recycle the effluent for toilets, irrigation and industrial purposes[, which it]... estimated... would cost between \$500 million to \$1 billion and could be built progressively over the next 73 years... Recycling could more than triple the 327,000 cu m a day yield of Auckland’s water system... This would [also] head off the risk to Auckland’s high drinking water standard from the addition of ...lower-quality treated... water from the Waikato River, which had 13 sewage effluent discharges upstream of the proposed water take at Tuakau... [But Watercare’s] lawyer... dismissed... the... suggestion yesterday. With such a large river so close to Auckland and with less than 1[%] of it wanted for the city, Watercare could not approve the proposal to “re-reticulate” the whole Auckland water system.

...The Hamilton City Council is on notice to stop the daily dumping of 40,000 cubic metres of treated sewage into the Waikato River. In a resource consent decision released yesterday, the Waikato Regional Council harshly criticised the city’s attitude over the discharge. It said the effluent emission was the “largest discharge of treated sewage to an inland waterway in N[Z].” The city was “posing significant risks of high potential... for which it must take responsibility.” ...[the regional council’s stance comes after] an... Environment Waikato scientist... [voiced concerns about the Waikato River’s source. The scientist is amazed that] Lake Taupo, the largest freshwater lake in the Southern Hemisphere, is not protected by a management plan to safeguard it from pollution... [In related news, the] Huakina Development Trust is crying foul over what it considers the selective disclosure of Waikato River pipeline costs. The trust, part of the Tainui Maori Trust Board, was paid about \$70,000 by Watercare Services for consultancy work. But Watercare refused to disclose details of firms paid almost \$3 million. The Auckland Regional Services Trust subsidiary claimed the information was “commercially sensitive.” The company revealed to the N[Z] Herald this week, following an official information request... that it had spent more than \$3m so far on finding a future water source for Auckland. Half went on analysing 96 identified options, and the rest on the resource consent application for the preferred one.

...Watercare... is lining up its attack on Tainui Maori and other Waikato pipeline objectors should their opposition lead to water restrictions in Auckland. The company’s chief executive... told the A[US]n Water and Wastewater Conference in Melbourne this week that with the Waikato River so close to Auckland, “you would think that the project would be greeted with open arms. Not so. Opposition from one council [Waitakere City], Maori iwi seeking control over the river, and some environmental groups has meant that the regulatory consent process has been long and costly. We are still to receive a decision from the authorities and, even if favourable, we know it will be appealed to the Environment Court... In the meantime we know that a very dry winter similar to 1993 would mean water restrictions in the following summer. You can be assured that should we have another shortage we are ready to place the blame on those who deserve it.”

...Watercare Services Ltd is being criticised over an apparent lack of progress in developing a water conservation strategy. The Mayor of Waitakere... says Auckland's bulk water company should be "front-ending" a region-wide strategy but appears to have made virtually no progress on its promise. "It should be one of their major programmes and it's clearly not,"... When Watercare announced in 1995 that it wanted to build a pipeline from the Waikato River... it also committed itself to drawing up a conservation plan... The company's board required that the strategy be implemented and its effect on water consumption be assessed before starting... the pipeline. It is understood the board faced senior staff opposition over the conservation strategy. A Watercare spokes[person]... said this week that it wanted its dams and other assets to suffice as long as possible, so it encouraged the public to use water carefully. It employed school programmes and newspaper advertisements. It had also reduced the amount of unaccounted-for water in its network from 4[%] a year ago to 2[%], mostly by fixing leaks. But it had no power to introduce water restrictions. Asked if these measures were the comprehensive conservation strategy announced in 1995, [the spokesperson] said they were a continuation of it. In an earlier interview, however, [the spokesperson had] said the company could provide no documents on the development of the strategy as "it hasn't got that far yet." [The spokesperson] also agreed that no detailed work had been done on a strategy as the first priority was to obtain consent for the pipeline... Waitakere City Council... opposed the pipeline[because it] favours sticking to Auckland water sources and having greater emphasis on conservation... The council's target is a 25[%] drop in water use in the city between 1992 and 2000 through measures including its controversial water pressure reduction, and promotion of alternatives, such as composting toilets and recycling of non-toilet wastewater. [The spokesperson], fending off the frequent criticism that Watercare wants to sell as much water as possible to maximise profits, said there was no reason for it to do so. It was legally prevented from paying a dividend to its owner... [T]he region's average daily water usage last month was 304,674 cu m...

Auckland City[']s water supply is drawing more from under Onehunga. Onehunga groundwater had supplied Auckland for a century and its present contribution was 800 cu m daily... It would now be capable of supplying 19,000 cu m daily... Watercare... said... the Onehunga contribution would be significant should El Nino reduce rainfall and restrictions be required before the next major water source was tapped.

...Auckland[']s water supply lakes are brimful, meaning that water restrictions over summer are unlikely... [Meanwhile, the] Waikato River water pipeline has passed another hurdle, with approval granted for its construction from the river to a Manukau reservoir. But any progress on 25km of trenchwork remains a long way off, with a series of appeals... lodged with the Environment Court. The latest decision covers resource consents for the pipeline route for stream crossings, roadworks, excavations and fill sites. The pipeline crosses 23 streams. Conditions require Watercare... to stop work if it uncovers archaeological evidence, including human remains. A[RC] approval would be needed before digging could resume.

...A High Court decision cleared the way for work to resume on a sewage pipeline through sacred Maori sites... [after the judge had] ruled... that an old, disputed Historic Places Trust authority allowing construction of the pipeline was valid... [- even though] the modification of significant archaeological sites in parts of the Matukuturua Stonefields near Wiri... could [mean that some sites are going] to be destroyed[, and the]... trust has argued that its 1978 authority "counts for nothing" in 1997... [The] judgment was sought by Watercare... after the Minister of Conservation... - who has called the stonefields one of N[Z]'s greatest archaeological treasures - told Parliament... that the Crown Law Office would take on the case. At the start of the hearing [the judge] refused an application by [a member] of Ngati Te Ata, whose ancestors lie in the stonefields, to join the case...

Opponents of Watercare Services' new South Auckland sewage pipeline launch a new legal battle today but are too late to stop earthworks on the Matukuturua stonefields. Watercare contractors last Thursday completed most of the bulldozer work needed in a 20m by 400m strip for the south-western interceptor to cross the stonefields... The same day, [a member] of Ngati Te Ata, filed an application in the High Court at Auckland for the work to be stopped until it hears her appeal against an Environment Court decision not to halt the project. The Huakina Development Trust, the environmental arm of the Tainui Maori Trust Board, said yesterday it was disgusted by Watercare's desecration of the waahi tapu (sacred site), N[Z]'s equivalent of the pyramids. The trust... said Watercare intended pumping excrement and industrial waste over "the remains of our tupuna [ancestors]. It's disgusting and despicable." Watercare's communications manager... said it was ironic that Maori opposed to the pipeline had urged the company to clean up the Manukau while frustrating a project which would help achieve that aim... [N]o sites of archaeological or cultural significance were unearthed by last week's removal of topsoil... Bypassing the stonefields would add \$15-19 million to the pipeline bill.

...Auckland once had about 8000ha of stonefields showing such signs of occupation as houses, terraces, walls, pavements and drainage systems. Less than 200ha remain, mostly in Manukau City. Most of the remnant stonefields are on private land but some can be seen at the Ambury Farm Park, on Browns Island (Motukorea) and around the base of Mt Wellington (Maungarei). "Because so many of the stonefields in the... region have been devastated, it is imperative to preserve what little remains today,"... says... a[n ARC] poster for schools[, which is meant] to raise awareness of one of the region's most significant historic landscapes... The poster had been devised more than a year ago as a heritage education project before the pipeline issue became controversial... A descendant of inhabitants of the area around the ancient... Matukuturua... stonefields is making a last-ditch stand to save the sacred site from destruction... [The] Ngati Te Ata[descendant] is seeking a[n]... urgent High Court... judicial review of approval granted 19 years ago for [the] sewage pipeline through the stonefields. [The descendant] is seeking the... review in a bid to stop the pipeline carrying human and industrial waste across the... stonefields, which contain the remains of her people's ancestors. [The descendant] has won an injunction preventing Watercare Services continuing work on the pipeline while an appeal to the Environment Court proceeds.

...Watercare Services faces an indefinite delay to its South Auckland sewage pipeline after the High Court extended a temporary halt to work on the project... For [one member] of Ngati Te Ata, it was another step in her battle against the company plan to put a sewage pipeline through the Matukuturua stonefields... [T]he counsel for the [Ngati Te Ata member], told the court that the bulldozing of 400m of pipeline route across the stonefields two weeks ago was severe, but it would not cause the same continuing insult or loss of mana as if it carried human and industrial waste. The stonefields were the sole remaining treasure of Ngati Te Ata, whose people once lived in the area in settlements of up to 5000 and tied their canoes directly under the pipeline route... It was unclear last night whether Watercare... would appeal against the judgment... [However, the company's counsel said the member of Ngati Te Ata] had the right to appeal but not to a stay. "It has been a huge public labour to get to this point, and it should not be stopped - not for a day, not for a week or a month."

...Watercare Services is going to the Court of Appeal in its bid to build a sewer across the Matukuturua stonefields in South Auckland. The company is appealing against... [a] judgement in the High Court at Auckland last month over the sacred Maori stonefields. [The High Court was] ruling on an appeal by... [a member of] Ngati Te Ata[, who]... had asked the Environment Court to stop the project[because her tribe considered it offensive. Incidentally, Watercare Services has launched a public advertising campaign in the hope of firming up support for its other major pipeline project.]

...We can't gamble on the weather for our water supply any longer... Each year the risk of another drought becomes... greater and we have an ever increasing population. That's a risk we can't afford to take... [- but] that's exactly what's happening. What we can rely on, however, is the Waikato River Future Water Source Project... the only option that offers a continuous and plentiful water supply to meet the demand predictions of 468,000 cubic metres a day by the year 2021... an extra 140,000 cubic metres a day... [above the volume] our existing dams are supplying. The Waikato River is also the only option that will ensure... a 1 in 200 year drought standard can be met. A standard that Aucklanders and local councils demanded after it was agreed that the previous 1 in 50 year drought standard was no longer acceptable for a modern and growing city. Looking at it another way, the... [pipeline] will mean that Aucklanders can count on an unrestricted water supply most of the time... People forget that even with the catchment lakes at their fullest, the existing system is still only capable of holding 290 days supply of water. So why haven't we

started building the... [pipeline] even though resource consents have been granted? We're waiting for final appeals to be heard, then after that it will take... two and a half years to construct... [the pipeline and treatment plant – that] will give Auckland a quality of water which meets the Drinking Water Standards for N[Z] and compares favourably with the world's best... Only then will Auckland have its drinking problem well and truly under control.

...[‘in 1995 1-in-4 NZers drank water that did not comply with NZ drinking water standards’ ...

Earlier this year, a) Ministry of Health survey... found 54[% of NZ's] population had safe water supplies... [Another survey estimated that e]very day each N[Z]er pours and flushes about 350 litres of water into sewage systems[– ‘approximately 30% of a household's total water use goes through the toilet; 25% through the bathroom; 25% through the kitchen and laundry; and the remaining 20% is used outside’ (most of which doesn't enter the sewage system) –] but when the water used to generate electricity is added the water use becomes 82,000 litres per person per day.

...Water is our most precious resource. Millions are dying because they can't get enough of it in a potable state or can't get it at all. And yet millions more people never give the fact that it is always there, at the turn of a tap, a second thought. [‘Water should be used wisely – and it is to your benefit to reduce your water consumption, particularly with the wastewater user charges which started in October’.]By saving water we also reduce the amount of chemicals and energy used in water and sewage treatment. • *Use your bucket* when you wash the car not a hose[– which ‘uses 150 litres per 5 minutes (on full)’]. • *Aerate your shower*. Low-flow shower heads reduce water use by 50% or more[(a standard shower uses ‘75lts per 5 minutes – a full bath, 200lts’)]. • *Brush off*. Use a glass of water when doing your teeth[‘rather than leaving the tap running, and put the plug in the sink’ when washing vegetables and utensils. • *Water plants* – ‘at night rather than during the day to reduce evaporation’ –] *with the rinse water from your washing machine*[(which uses ‘200lts per load). A dishwasher (single wash) uses 40lts. • *Fix dripping taps*. Dripping taps waste 10,000 to 250,000 litres per annum’]. The waste of water is a crying shame, please don't be a part of it. Do your bit every day, starting today! YOU CAN SAVE THE WORLD.

...a World Water Forum opened in the southern Moroccan city of Marrakesh[yesterday], gathering specialists, bankers, and senior officials from 50 countries... A senior UN official... said: “For most of the world, current patterns of water resource development and utilisation is not sustainable. Unless action is taken now, the situation will become increasingly serious in the future.” [The official], chief of the UN energy and natural resources department, said by 2025, “as much as two-thirds of the (world) population in the lower income categories could be facing moderate to severe water stress”. The... meeting coincided with UN World Water Day and will examine the outlook for world water supplies and ways of managing them... [A]ccording to a new UN report... [only] about 0.007% of the world's water is readily accessible for human use... It says water use had been growing at more than twice the rate of the population increase during this century... The... UNESCO Director-General... said in a statement that water would be one of the great challenges of the next century. “It will be necessary to show proof, in action, wisdom and vision, if we want to satisfy human needs and avoid the most precious of natural resources becoming an object of conflict,”... Morocco's Public Work's Minister... [also] told the forum that... in... the next decade, water would represent “the same value” as crude oil and be the source of conflicts...

Water rift hard to bridge in Israeli-PLO conflict... Peace with Israel was supposed to bring running water to [a Palestinian]'s West Bank home. [The Palestinian] gets 60 television channels piped into her house, but her tiny village is still dry. “We hope that some day we'll have running water,” [the Palestinian] said, balancing a bucket of well water on her head with one hand and holding her two-year-old daughter... by the other. “That's what they [the P[LO]] promised, but we haven't seen anything.” While politicians bicker about the status of Jerusalem and a future Palestinian state, experts on both sides say there will be no peace until the water problem is solved... About 130,000 religious Jews live on West Bank land... They make up less than 10[%] of the population, but use 80[%] of the water, according to Palestinian and independent assessments. “We need more water,” said... a[n Israeli] farmer at the Peza'el settlement in the Jordan Valley, one of the West Bank's driest... [The farmer] has enough water for only half his crops. Peza'el has started using drip irrigation to conserve water, but [the Israeli farmer] says it is on the verge of economic ruin because of a disastrously small grape harvest and the water shortage. Palestinians have little sympathy. While Peza'el pipes in drinking and irrigation water, villagers in Ain Arik drink and irrigate their fields with water taken manually from the village well... and collect rain in rooftop tanks for washing... Farmers gather the water from a mossy concrete pool that holds the green run-off. Village boys swim in it... More than half of West Bank Palestinian towns do not have water piped in, Palestinian officials said... In the dry summers, they buy water that is often polluted at exorbitant prices from green tractor trucks... “There is no single Israeli settlement without water, and they have good water and good pipes,” said... [the] director of the Palestinian Hydrology Group, a[n NGO] monitoring the water supply in the West Bank and Gaza. “This is increasing tensions between the two countries,”... The water dispute stems from disagreements over who should control Israel's water resources, which lie mainly under Palestinian land. Palestinians say land is inseparable from the water that lies beneath it. They say the water is theirs. But Israelis say they have a historical right to the water, which they have been tapping for decades. “It's going to be difficult,” said... a water expert who spent five years on the Israeli team negotiating the issue with the Palestinians. “Water resources don't always conform to political boundaries,” [the expert] said, adding that the sides would have to share. One of the difficulties, [the director] said, was getting the politicians to understand the problem. “There is a water shortage, and there is a large demand for water, and some Palestinian minister is talking about bringing 50 million tourists to Bethlehem. If each one of them goes to the bathroom once a day, they need three million cubic metres of water... That's just to flush the toilets. It's a disaster.” At the same time, both sides say that when talks on a permanent peace settlement finally roll around, it will be easier to solve the water problem than to find a solution for the status of Jerusalem and a future Palestinian state. They have already reached a temporary agreement giving Palestinians some extra water until a final agreement is worked out. But [the director] said it was not enough. “The Palestinian villagers cannot wait,”... The water shortage has created an economic crisis for Arab villages in Gaza and the West Bank, which now cultivate only 3[%] of their farmland, down from more than 25[%] 30 years ago... The well water is drying up slowly, and Palestinians depend on a new Israeli-Palestinian water committee to get permission to dig new wells. But that committee has not met since last February, and no new wells have been dug. “Water is not the dream any more. The approval to find water is the dream now... [In Gaza they] drink water unfit for human beings, and even in some areas like Khan Yunis, they drink water unfit for agriculture,” [the director] said, adding that it was polluted with chemicals and pesticides... [In local news, t]he Department of Conservation has raised the ire of Mingingui villagers who fear contamination of their water supply after the burial of... poison bait in the area... south-east of Rotorua. The village manager... said the pit the D[oC] dug to bury nine 80kg barrels of 1080 poison and nine of non-toxic pre-feed bait is only 35 to 38 paces from the creek which feeds the village's water supply bores.

...The Auckland Regional Council has applauded the fining of a water-drilling firm... The Kiwi Drilling Company and its director... have to pay \$45,000 for breaches of the Resource Management Act. The firm admitted 20 breaches relating to the drilling and construction of... unauthorised... and... substandard bores... [By the way, heavy rain has] seriously polluted the water supply in the Taranaki town of Opunake... forcing more than 3000 residents and holidaymakers to cope with muddy tap water for over 30 hours.

...[water – ‘Africa's life-blood’ – is volatile]: usually there is too little of it, as in droughts, or too much, as in floods. But even when rainfall is good and rivers are full, but not overflowing, millions of people live many kilometres from a reliable source of clean water, leaving them vulnerable to... water-borne diseases... [Herders] often have to water their flocks at muddy or polluted water holes... while... [villagers] spend much of their time hauling water to their homes... Dismayed by the back-breaking labor endured by the rural [gal-folk] and children in the traditional transport of water, [a] South African architect... and his brother... a civil engineer, reinvented the wheel to ease their burden... “All around us in the African

rural areas we could see the problems caused by the lack of clean, piped water... We could just imagine the agony for [gals] who have to carry open, unstable containers on their heads for long distances... [W]e believe we've come up with the ideal solution to one of Africa's age-old burdens." ...Their Q-Drum is a doughnut-shaped plastic drum that can be filled with water and rolled easily along the ground using rope passed through the middle of the container. To ensure low maintenance and durability, the... brothers opted for simplicity. Apart from the screw-top lid, the Q-Drum has no removable parts. Available in 50- and 70-liter sizes, it is made from low-density polyethylene and is virtually indestructible... During field tests... a drum that was used daily for more than 20 months travelled 12,000 kilometres, made 7 million revolutions and provided a family of 13 people with 120,000 liters of potable water. During that time, the Q-Drum had worn less than half a millimeter – giving the container a life-span of more than 10 years... The ingenuity of the... brothers shows that it is possible to teach an old wheel new tricks.

...The Waikumete reservoir in West Auckland is being upgraded as part of a project to strengthen the earthquake-resistance of the region's water system. Watercare Services is strengthening six of its 53 reservoirs after a survey found they did not meet present earthquake standards. A contract supervisor for the company... said from inside the empty, 22,000 cu m Waikumete reservoir that in an earthquake, water tended to "slosh around" in them, creating great stresses. The joint between the walls and base of this 1966 reservoir was no longer considered adequate. The solution was to cast and fix an 800mm by 400mm reinforced concrete "ring beam" around the base... In others, the wall-to-base joints are being strengthened by the fitting of numerous steel ties... The upgrading of the six reservoirs is expected to cost \$550,000.

...The extent of damage caused to the Opuha River dam project has shocked the Timaru district mayor[, who]... yesterday flew over the scene of the deluge near Fairlie. "Frankly, the damage to the dam is far greater than I expected. Had the river system been in flood and if the dam had broken quickly I'd hate to think what would have happened..." Surging waters tore away a third of the massive dam early yesterday, sending a violent wall of water towards the sea. The dam section tumbled soon after 1 am after heavy machines had been brought in to dig a channel to release floodwater built up behind the unfinished wall of compacted gravel... after... several days... of... heavy rain... Muddy water roared through the channel and through a pipe beneath the dam draining at 50 cubic metres a second, but the structure began to crumble and the huge volume of water in the lake cannoned forward... Civil Defence officials declared a state of emergency at 3.15 am and about 200 residents of the riverside settlements of Stratheona and Butlers Crossing... were evacuated. They were allowed back into their homes about 6 am after it was clear the torrent had passed its peak... [T]he irony of the situation was that if the dam had been full, the excess water would have flowed down the dam's spillway. On its wild ride through the river system the water punched out the approach to the Skipton Bridge... closing State Highway 79 between Geraldine and Fairlie and leaving engineers with a deep gash to repair. Floodwaters crossed the highway, veered through paddocks, and re-entered the river system... Downstream, the water wrecked a pump station for the Allandale water supply system, leaving 38 homes without water... Dam workers had been confident that the pipe beneath the dam would keep the level safe... The Opuha Dam Company chair[person]... who inspected the dam before it burst... had expected, at worst, the channel to deepen and widen, but was not prepared for the devastation... "The building of the dam and its integrity in the future will not, I repeat not, be affected by this major incident,"...

FARMERS facing a mammoth cleanup after the Opuha dam collapse... are planning to put a case to Cabinet in the hope of receiving immediate... help... Up to eight farms were severely affected by the flooding, and others have also lost stock and fencing. One farmer's stock wandered after [his property] lost 10km of fences. "[The farmer]'s got about half back, but [has] had to put them on his winter grazing... The stock's happy, but come the winter, that farmer is not going to have any winter feed." Funding was necessary to ease that type of situation... Details of insurance funding would be required soon. Meanwhile, the... Civil Defence Minister... has called for an urgent report on the collapse of the dam...

CIVIL Defence is to develop an emergency response plan for dam failures... A report called for by [the]Civil Defence Minister... has questioned the reassurances from dam company staff to Civil Defence authorities in the hours leading up to the [Opuha]dam collapse. The report showed the last assurance was given two hours before the collapse... "How can the dam engineers reconcile their repeated assurances to Civil Defence with the catastrophic failure of the dam only hours later? ...If a satisfactory answer is not found, we run the risk of repeating the experience elsewhere." ...About 18 million cubic metres of water escaped when the nearly completed \$32 million dam was breached... [In international news, t]wo workers were seriously injured when a dam collapsed and sent water from Sydney's Cooks River flooding into a construction area of the city-to-airport light rail tunnel. Twenty-one workers were in the tunnel at the time.

...[an AUS]n assessor has laid the blame for the breaching of... Opuha dam... on a double weather event... combin[ing] to cause... a one-in-20-year flood. [The]Perth-based consultant... commissioned by the Opuha Dam Company... said the double event was very rare. The... design had allowed for a one-in-10-year event... [Other] possible contributing factors for the dam failure include[d]: • Construction guideline warnings about overtopping the dam during a flood were not carried from design to construction. • The decision to close flood channels once the dam reached a certain height. • A possible flaw in the quality assurance system which did not challenge the absence of flood-mitigating works. • Only occasional visits to the dam site by designers familiar with all the concepts. • Modifications to the design during construction. • Lack of warning of rain/river flows.

...The main insurer of the... [Opuha dam has] refused to accept liability for damage because it believed there were faults in construction... The dam company... blamed the disaster on a "triple rain event" but the insurance company... disputed that[, though its]... engineering manager... would not comment on what... faults had been found... [T]he construction company building the dam, was disappointed with [the] decision. The general manager... intended to challenge the decision jointly with the dam company. [It believed the insurance] experts had made some errors.

...The Canterbury Regional Council is looking at whether [the construction] company involved in the Canterbury dam collapse... complied with its original resource consents... The council has been investigating the environmental impact of the collapse and said it was assessing whether new consents would be required to rebuild the dam... [- i]t would be rebuilt to withstand a 100-year flood during construction... [- the cost of which is] estimated to be between \$3.5 million and \$4.5 m... [Now for some news from overseas in brief, a] supertanker was ripped open by a shallow reef in Tokyo Bay yesterday, leaking an estimated 13,400 tonnes of crude oil, causing Japan's worst yet oil spill... The affected area is between Yokohama, Japan's biggest port, and metropolitan Tokyo. [Japan's P]M... declared... a national emergency[, and] warned that there was a threat of a big fire.

...Embarrassed Japanese Government officials said yesterday that an oil spill from a supertanker in Tokyo Bay, initially thought to be of record proportions, was just one-tenth the size previously estimated... The Panamanian-flagged Diamond Grace, carrying 257,000 tonnes of crude oil from the United Arab Emirates, scraped a well-known shallow reef in calm water in daylight. The resulting oil slick spread over an area about 5.5km long and 4.5km wide in the middle of Tokyo Bay. The tanker was last night heading for port and the leaks were reported to have stopped. [Earlier this year] the Russian tanker Nahodka leaked 5200 tonnes (about 36,400 barrels) of heavy fuel oil when it broke in two in the Sea of Japan.

...The waters look pristine again in the coves and inlets along the picturesque coast of the Sea of Japan... months after a Russian tanker broke apart and caused the country's worst oil spill. But fishers in Mikuni, a town of scenic rocky shores and white beaches... fear that the area's future is not so crystal clear. "We are in a dilemma... We don't think the water is 100[%] clean here but if we say this out loud, our fish won't sell." ...More than half of the... 276... members of [the local fishing] cooperative are a group of [gals] called "ama" who dive without breathing equipment for choice abalone (paua), sea urchins, and sea weeds. "Our fresh green seaweed catch was completely wiped out this year... But our catch of 'uni' [sea urchins...] was about one tonne[, which is about average." However]... nobody knew the long-term effects of the oil on marine life. "It takes three or four years for sea urchins to grow, and that really worries us..." [The cooperative] held out little hope of being fully compensated. Little progress has been made after several months of negotiations with agents of the London-based International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund (IOPC). "Unlike Japanese companies which readily pay damages for pollution cases, the IOPC is difficult to talk to... They don't go by concrete damages or

common sense. I hate giving the impression that we are playing into their hands, but we don't really expect them to pay damages beyond the... 20 million yen... for the... wiped-out seaweed catch." Mikuni town officials said the IOPC told them it could meet only about 22.5 billion yen (\$[NZ]300 million) of the 36 billion yen in total damage claims by nine prefectures affected by the spill... Compensation is likely to be complicated, and payment delayed, by disagreement among Russian and Japanese authorities about why the *Nahodka* capsized and broke in two. Russia says the tanker hit something, while Japan says a huge wave broke the aged ship in two... About 3700 kilolitres (23,273 barrels) of oil washed up on the shores of Mikuni and other parts of the coast. Some oil is still seeping from the stern section resting 2500m below the surface... [C]oatings of thick oil were still visible on the underside of rocks and in places where the thousands of volunteers who took part in a clean-up could not reach... The economic damage is not only to fishing. This ...[season], tourists visiting Fukui Prefecture's beaches numbered only 1.59 million people, down 600,000 from last year. [□ 'A retired headmaster has received a suspended jail term for negligence over the first outbreak six years ago of a killer germ now sweeping Japan. The court ruled that the former headmaster, aged 69, ignored warnings from the local health department that a well supplying water to his kindergarten was contaminated with the O-157 colon bacillus germ. O-157 food poisoning spread at the kindergarten leading to 319 people, including 149 children, being infected. Two children, aged four and six, later died from kidney complications.'

...the husband] is a worried [guy]. His wife often threatens to leave him – not because of any conflict but because five people in his family suffer from arsenic poisoning. "Life has become somewhat tense... My problem is that I can't leave my family," said [the husband], who teaches zoology at a [gals'] college at Rajarampur in the north-western [Bangladeshi] district of Chapainawabganj. Like [the teacher], despair is gripping many families in this village where people say they are fighting a losing battle against a previously unknown enemy. As villagers drink water from wells considered safe, more and more people fall sick and develop various symptoms from black body spots to tumours and gangrene. "We are helpless," said... [another villager, who believes it] was infected by arsenic contamination years ago but only recently realised its dreadful effects... [Now the 26-year-old] lives in fear because one of his brothers has already died and several other members of his family have symptoms of arsenic poisoning. There is hardly a family in Rajarampur and nearby Naysankha village which does not have at least one member suffering the effects of contaminated water. "Fighting the effects of arsenic pollution is an uphill task and so far we have not had much success," said... [the] professor of zoology and mining at nearby Rajshahi University... "The problem is widespread. It requires coordinated efforts by researchers, doctors and the Government to try to contain it,"... An arsenic content of up to 0.1 mg per litre of water is considered safe for drinking, but in many areas in Chapainawabganj and neighbouring districts wells contained 4 or 5mg per litre and sometimes even more... "Contamination is caused by the [naturally occurring] arsenic-rich pyrite mineral in the water..."... Public health authorities have sealed dozens of wells, including 15 in Rajarampur. But hundreds more are still in use because people have no alternative source of water. River water is generally arsenic-free but is often contaminated with other diseases. "Hardly any progress has been made in the fight against arsenic pollution. In some of the worst cases, victims develop tumours in the lower abdomen and die from bleeding when these burst," said... a front-runner in the campaign against arsenic contamination... "Some victims suffer rotting of their nails, which is often mistaken for leprosy." ...The public health department was doing little and had not attached much importance to what... [the campaigner, himself] a victim... called "a growing menace." ...wells more than 15m deep were generally found to have high arsenic contents. "Those only... 9m to 12m... deep are usually safe... We are trying to make the people aware of that... [But] the Government is virtually quiet [on the problem]. Politicians tend to ignore it... and the general public are mostly ignorant." The Government says only three people have died from arsenic-related illnesses over the past year. But in a report earlier this year, Dhaka's *Independent* newspaper quoted health officials as saying arsenic contamination of sub-soil water threatened 15 million people in northern and south-western Bangladesh. A survey by a group of [NGO]s found that many people in these areas had developed severe rashes, mainly on the palms of their hands and feet, and were suffering from chronic intestinal complications... Doctors and officials say the social effects of arsenic contamination are as bad as, if not worse than, the health hazards. "No groom would agree to marry a bride with arsenic poisoning – except in very rare cases. These poor girls and their families face social rejection... Some husbands have divorced their wives after they discovered symptoms of arsenic poisoning. Many others had their proposals of marriage refused." ...[■] Communities in the top half of the North Island are drinking imperfect water, says the Consumers' Institute magazine... It said 68 of N[Z]'s 137 communities with more than 2000 inhabitants had water supplies with "a high risk of contamination in the source, treatment or distribution system." Towns deemed by the Health Ministry as having... a very high level of risk included Taupo... Those classed as having... an unsatisfactory water supply... included... Helensville... and Warkworth.

...The North Shore City Council is aiming to safeguard drinking water. The council has started a programme to protect against backflow – the flow of water and contaminants, mainly from industrial and commercial sources, into the public water supply. The water network manager... said the main cause of backflow was a drop in pressure in the water system... [In related news, Takaka's] Chief Fire Officer... [i]s afraid of running out of water in the middle of fighting a fire. [His] brigade had repeatedly asked the Tasman District Council to help buy a water tanker. But the brigade and council disagree over the flow rate required to make the hydrants effective... Water supply problems in Takaka... forced firefighters dousing a house blaze... [– that] could have led to four deaths... [–] to pump from a nearby swimming pool rather than a hydrant 20m from the scene.

...Wellington residents' weekly rubbish bags will help to warm city swimming pools from next month... Council swimming pools in the suburbs of Tawa and Johnsonville will switch to methane gas supplied from Spicer Valley landfill... [T]he change would save about 15[%] in heating costs for the pools... [Incidentally], new studies raise questions about the safety of chlorine used to purify everything from swimming pools to municipal drinking-water supplies. In the latest study a team of Finnish scientists report... that MX, a compound produced when chlorine reacts with organic material in water, causes cancer in... rats when swallowed in large quantities... As a disinfectant, chlorine is one of the public-health success stories of the 20th century. After it was first used to purify water supplies in the early 1900s, typhoid fever, cholera and dysentery virtually disappeared from the U.S. But the chemical has been under attack in recent years by environmentalists for contributing to the destruction of the earth's ozone layer. Greenpeace's "Chlorine Kills!" campaign... urged pool operators to look for an alternative to chlorine. An editorial... tried to put the drinking-water problem into perspective. It pointed out that at the highest levels of MX found in U.S. water supplies, the additional lifetime cancer risk was only 2 in 1 million. But it encouraged further investigation of the effects of MX and other chlorination by-products, and two weeks ago the National Institutes of Health announced that it was launching a two-year study. The NCI editorial also warned about the perils of abandoning drinking-water chlorination too hastily. It noted that when Peru did that in 1991, some 300,000 Peruvians were stricken in a cholera epidemic.

...Filterzone... is the invention of a Takapuna company... [Currently in] the process of being patented, [it] took two years to design and another two years to complete... Filterzone uses ozone to zap the life out of bacteria, especially giardia and cryptosporidium, which are immune to chlorine and other forms of treatment... Using ozone to treat water has been known to the world as early as the 1840s. It was used in 1893 to treat water in the Netherlands. The idea has been revived in the U[S] because of concerns over the use of chlorine... Ozone is already used commercially to treat water in spas and swimming pools... [However, b]ig-scale ozone plants are expensive... Filterzone is [not only cheaper,] it is portable and relatively idiot-proof... The Filterzone process introduces ozone to the water and, through the process of oxidation, it gets rid of algae and bacteria, among other things. Filterzone's "brain" is a computer working on fuzzy logic which tells the system what to do. In simple terms, it "knows" when the water is treated... [T]he machine provides up to 100 tonnes of water per day... Because Filterzone is a stand-alone machine, it can be placed anywhere – in an isolated resort or a small village. Once it is installed, it functions on its own and requires full servicing once a year. It is intelligent enough to wait when there is a power failure or when there is insufficient water to process. Any breakdown will send off an alarm or make the computer dial home to report there is a glitch. Phone or satellite links will provide 24-hour contact with the home base... The Rodney District

Council has tried Filterzone at its Muriwai water treatment site since October 1996, supplying... “the best water in N[Z]” to more than 500 people... During the trial period, there were three power failures at Muriwai. Once, [the designer] had more than 30 messages on his telephone from the computer to tell him the system had shut down. But once the power supply came back, it reported that it was back in action.

...A broken power cable caused a blackout for up to 200 homes in Remuera last night. A Mercury spokes[per]son... said the power cut started just after 7 pm... Electricity was restored after an hour... Much of central Takapuna was [also]without power for part of last night. The power cut hit about 6.15 and affected 10 streets...

About 10,000 Hamilton households endured a cold, dark night last night after a fault in a Trans Power supply transformer cut their electricity about 5.30 pm. Trans Power hoped to have power restored by midnight.

...A... blizzard buried New England and the north-east under nearly 90cm of heavy, wet snow yesterday, downing power lines... More than 168,000 households were without power in the state... [In further news from the US, a] massive solar flare that burst off the sun was predicted to cause a geomagnetic storm around Earth late in the week. Scientists at the... Space Environment Centre in Boulder, Colorado, warned that the flare was rated as a class X, the highest intensity classification, and... advised... [r]esidents of Canada and the northern U[S]... that the stream of charged particles could cause problems with satellite communications and power grids when it interacts with Earth’s magnetic field.

...a solar flare... [is hurtling] toward the Earth... The sun spat out the flare – it’s actually tons of charged hydrogen and helium, same as the sun – and propelled it toward Earth at about 2.4 million kph. Flares normally occur every three or four years, stretch across 50 million km and take anywhere from 16 hours to several days to pass Earth. This one is the largest since a 1989 flare that knocked out a power grid in Quebec for nine hours. Oh, yes, they can disturb the Earth’s magnetic field [– ‘peeling it away like an onion’ –]and give heart attacks to electric wiring, telephone lines and electronic transmissions. Earthlings need not fear. Scientists say that such flares are harmless to humans, and the few common effects are limited to missed telephone calls... [–] a solar burst shortly after the New Year... knocked AT&T’s Telestar 401 satellite out of service, a \$200 million loss... [–] and TV programs. “Maybe people will read again,” mused a flare-watcher in New York. Another perk: flares set off pretty auroras such as the Northern Lights.

...With the America’s Cup and other significant events looming... we should start brightening up our city... Auckland could learn a lot from the way European countries light up their cities. In many countries, particularly in France, master plans are being developed for illuminating landmarks and buildings. Floodlighting the local church around the corner is no longer seen as a waste of precious electricity as it would have been during the energy crisis in the 1970s. Lighting adds beauty to the environment and gives cities a feeling of character. The exterior lighting of the Sky Tower in Auckland is a graphic example of the effect this type of lighting can have on our city... Imagine a plan which included the lighting of the majority of our classical, historical and major industrial and commercial buildings... Imagine the enhanced mood it would create around the upper harbour and the visuals we would enjoy when viewing it from afar, if the superstructure, rails and pylons... [of the] dull and drab... Harbour Bridge... were illuminated. If you drive around Auckland at night there are numerous buildings just screaming out to be lit in an artistic way... and if you are feeling really adventurous – how about the slopes of Mt Eden? We should not forget some of the dark and gloomy parks and reserves which so often are the scenes of crime. We all know what it feels like to walk through or around dimly lit areas in the city. It is a well-documented fact that criminal elements do not like high illumination because of the risk of detection or recognition... So come on building owners and managers (not to forget our city planners), let’s get moving. We need to copy our European counterparts... [– although we] should avoid copying the parish of Bramber, Sussex. Street lights there were switched off for three nights as a cash-saving experiment. The electricity bill for the period tumbled by... \$20. Unfortunately, bills for switching the electricity off and on totalled... \$60. Ratepayers paid an extra \$40... for their three nights of darkness.

...Most [N[Z]]companies can cut their power bills by around a fifth by taking simple steps to conserve energy, according to the Government’s Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority... The Government set up the authority two years ago to help companies reduce energy waste. At last count it was working with 700 firms... Changes as basic as reducing the wattage of lightbulbs, or repairing leaks in steam pipes, are proving to be big savers... “Many businesses simply don’t know where the energy they are using is going...,”... said... the authority’s communications executive... Even companies like Mobil Oil have benefited from an energy audit. It is saving around \$4000 a year at each of its service stations after introducing new lighting and air conditioning units.

...Lights going out for efficient energy-saver... Despite a new era of competition and supposed efficiency in the electricity industry, N[Z]ers are paying more to heat their homes. In five years bills have risen 20[%] above inflation. Now, the only Government-funded organisation set up to combat rising power bills has had its budget cut from \$3 million to \$1.9 million and faces extinction in an upcoming review. It appears the taxpayer may be in danger of cutting off its nose to spite its face. The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) was praised earlier this year by the International Energy Agency, which noted its effectiveness was limited by its modest budget. The authority was set up in 1992 with the aim of demonstrating how to wring more value out of every dollar spent on energy – for homes, businesses and transport. Its establishment coincided with deregulation of the power boards, which were turned into companies looking to sell more power and increase profits. It also followed the 1992 power crisis, when drought resulted in the state generator, ECNZ, worrying that hydro power... might not be available. A massive “switch off” campaign that year led to a 20[%] cut in demand for electricity as N[Z]ers went without in the national interest. But there was – and still is – a better way: energy efficiency offers even larger savings in consumption without the hardship. In other words, we can use less power, save money yet enjoy greater levels of comfort in the form of warmer houses with more appliances... The authority began work by focusing on its own backyard: government departments. It has had some spectacular achievements... Within a year of the authority’s formation its base, the Ministry of Commerce building in Wellington, had been refitted with energy-efficient equipment – light bulbs, new lights, timer switches – at a cost of \$40,000. Commerce’s power bill was cut by \$43,000 a year, repaying the outlay and then some almost immediately. More recently Auckland Healthcare... has shaved \$250,000 from the annual power bills for three of its hospitals, most of it on lighting... The authority loaned Wellington Hospital \$600,000 from which it is making savings of \$200,000 a year and has already repaid half the loan... The authority’s acting chief executive... says the loans scheme to schools, hospitals and the like is achieving annual savings of \$4.8 million. The private sector has also benefited. So far 700 major companies have signed up to an “Energy Wise” programme. Sixteen of those were recently given awards by the authority, having amassed collective savings of \$23 million a year. An Energy Saver Fund, directed at households, has resulted in 32,000 homes installing better lighting, hot water systems and insulation, but many more thousands of homes remain draughty and mould-prone... Market proponents argue people will insulate their homes and install efficient natural gas or electric heat pumps when the cost of electricity makes them realise it is worthwhile. They say people should be free to choose when and if they take those steps. The rationale for the authority is that energy efficiency can become part of a market but needs a kick-start. What incentive, for example, does a landlord have to insulate a house when tenants pay the power... bills? For that matter, what incentive do tenants have to insulate a house they do not own? Significant decisions, or more accurately, non-decisions, by the Government this year include the deferral of a carbon tax and failure to act on recommendations that the 20-year-old “interim” building code standards for home insulation be upgraded.

...Bureaucrats are [still]at odds over stricter home insulation standards... Last year the threat of legal action by the makers of Lockwood homes led the National Administration to back off a long-awaited plan to change the rules for colder parts of the country... Now the Treasury has weighed in with its opposition to the proposed change to the building code. Like the Roundtable, its opposition is largely philosophical. The former Minister of Energy... said in July last year that upgrading the building code was a “key element in the Government’s energy efficiency strategy and part of

N[Z]'s internationally reported response to its commitments under the Framework Convention of Climate Change." [The former Minister of Energy] told the then Internal Affairs Minister... that [his department] wanted the Building Regulations Act amended without delay... The Secretary of Internal Affairs... acknowledged the urgency of the matter... but the department has yet to produce recommendations. A spokes[person] for the Minister of Internal Affairs... said a fresh report from the department was not imminent and [the spokesperson] did not know when to expect it.

...[As efficient use of our natural resources becomes a priority for the 90's it seems more important than ever that we take this concern into our own homes. And there is plenty a canny kiwi can do to make their nest more energy efficient. Like making sure your home is properly insulated. And making sure you are using the most energy efficient appliances. *With up-to-date styling and high-tech bonded magnetite heating cores, the new generation of night-store heaters* are a good example of efficient use of energy – they use cheaper "Off-Peak" electricity to charge up overnight and then they release their energy during the day when you need it.' The new Nightsaver price option released last June offers real savings for households that can manage on one tank of hot water a day. The benefits will vary, but Nightsaver could save a 4-person household on the Household price rate \$5 to \$10 on their monthly power bill.']

...North Shore residents... [were] saved... from a big power cut yesterday morning. A Wairau Rd power pole burst into flames about 3 am when a glass insulator failed... Power N[Z] staff isolated the area and rerouted power to most affected suburbs. But the loss of two 110,000-volt power lines meant the morning peak demand would have to be reduced to avoid blackouts. A radio appeal went out to go easy on the electricity and phone calls were made to key users such as the Devonport Naval Base, North Shore Hospital, Chelsea Sugar Refinery and supermarkets. The Power NZ chief operations manager... said the city's hot water heating was turned off and the big users were asked to delay or rotate the use of some heavy-demand equipment. "We are very grateful to everyone who had a cold breakfast or left the laundry until later. We cut normal power demand by 15[%] and that made all the difference,"... The crisis was over by 10 am, but 11 firms near the damaged pole were without power until midday. They will have a credit on their next power bill because they were without power for more than six hours. It was a busy morning for faults staff as high winds caused other brief power cuts in Whangaparaoa, Milford and western parts of the North Shore.

...Stress can make people say the oddest things. Take the victim of last week's destructive electricity "surge" who told a Power N[Z] official that it would teach her not to leave her appliances plugged in. This by way of chat to the company that had just zapped her Murrays Bay home with a ruinous 380-volt surge of electricity, putting out of action every plugged-in electrical device in her place. To say nothing of the electrical goodies of 34 neighbours as well. I suspect that, in her shoes, I might have been rather less generous. My father, however, would have been nodding in agreement. Indeed, the chances are, if [dad] had lived in that street, [dad] would have had the only functioning television left. [Dad] was a stickler for unplugging the box. I suspect it was something to do with its rumoured propensity to self-destruction. And also to the stern admonitions of the instruction book. These days, of course, you would have to go to bed half an hour early each night if you wanted to do the rounds of the electrical gadgetry, unplugging as you went. And you would have to be up two hours early each morning to reset the various built-in timing devices. Still, the great Murrays Bay surge does make one feel a tad vulnerable. Stop worrying, the Power NZ experts assured me. Last week's unfortunate surge was an extremely rare event. As for the increasingly sophisticated electronics of our modern-day home gadgetry, it's apparently not as vulnerable to the spikes and surges of the power supply as is sometimes made out... "I don't protect myself against it,"... Power NZ's network performance manager... assured me, "and I'm as aware as anyone." [The manager] said most modern home appliances had a voltage "clipper" which diverted excess voltage to earth or, in extreme cases, protected the equipment by self-destructing. Only if [the manager] were working from home would [it] consider additional "protection." This would be a battery-backed device to provide an "uninterruptible power supply" to his computer. This would give him five minutes' battery power – in the case of a power failure – to store data.

...If it's vital you keep going during a power outage, Power N[Z] can help. No matter where you are, PowerProtect lets you carry on for as long as you need through an Uninterruptible Power Supply. And with a power filter, you protect your sensitive electrical equipment, like computers and security systems, from potential damage caused by power fluctuations. For more information on how PowerProtect can help you finish what you start, call... 0800 POWER NZ or 0800 769 376.

...[Swedish power officials were left scratching their heads after] an outage that cost an estimated \$7 million. The power cut affected 50,000 households in western Sweden and forced the SCA forest products company to shut down three plants. The cause of the cut was a mystery until a great horned owl – alive but with singed feathers – was found near the outage site... □ MONKEYS have emerged as the biggest threat to New Delhi's off and on electricity supply. Senior officials have asked the New Delhi Municipal Committee to immediately appoint monkey catchers to tackle the growing menace of the monkeys which tend to jump over transformers causing short circuits.

...A Taranaki schoolboy survived last night after climbing a power pole and causing a short circuit which cut power to more than 300 homes. [The boy], aged 10, of Waitara, is in Waikato Hospital with serious burns. [A police officer had found the boy motionless. "The boy] was draped between the transformer and the pole. It was obvious that [the boy] had well and truly had a shock. You could see burns on his hands and back." A Powerco spokes[person] said the boy was lucky to be alive. "I don't think there are too many people alive today who have taken 11,000 volts."

...US ranger Roy Sullivan... would have hung on to his hair, toenails and eyebrows if he had subscribed to the power of the pyramid. They were burnt off more than once when he was struck by lightning no less than seven times throughout his life... The power of the pyramid... [is] about to be reincarnated in a totally new form thanks to... a University of Queensland laboratory... [which has] constructed a sort of downsized '90s version of the ancient Egyptian icon. Consisting of just three sections of collapsible aluminium tubing, it's... a portable lightning shield. As long as the occupants are at least 25cm from the frame they will survive a direct hit... The device... [was] developed to protect soldiers in Singapore, but anyone caught outside in a thunderstorm would benefit... But what's really needed is for science to take complete control of these Acts of God: To tame lightning at its heavenly source... [I]n their miniature world... modern day Zeuses have... [already learnt how well-]placed lasers could discharge thunderclouds at will... The next step is to test... laser logic outside in the real world... [■ NZ] researchers have linked high-tension power lines – already associated with higher rates of leukaemia among children – to asthma and depression in adults. The ground-breaking research suggests that people living within a 20m "shadow" of high-voltage lines are three times as likely to suffer asthma and twice as likely to have major depression. Researchers believe the danger levels drop rapidly outside that 20m-zone. The major new study also indicates that these people have a higher incidence of diabetes and are twice as likely to suffer from immune-related illnesses such as allergies and dermatitis. Auckland is most affected because of the city's population density but high-voltage lines stretch across the country. Although less than 1[% of NZ]ers live near the lines, the research has implications for the vast number of people exposed to electromagnetic fields at work. For example, industrial sewing machine operators, welders and some supermarket check-out operators are subjected to prolonged magnetic field exposure. But although the evidence linking electromagnetic fields to health problems mounts, scientists are yet to prove the link. The research is expected to stimulate worldwide debate when it is presented to an international symposium of electricity and magnetism in Italy next month... Some 570 people in South Auckland, West Auckland and the eastern suburbs took part in the three-year study. The participants consented to detailed measurements of magnetic fields being taken in their homes, to releasing their medical records and giving blood samples. The study... revealed that adverse health effects became apparent in homes with magnetic field readings as low as 5 milligauss or mG. (The reading is obtained by measuring the density of the magnetic field with a handheld device.) One home recorded a 190mG reading... An Auckland University... psychology department... academic involved in the research... said the research findings added weight to other studies which suggested the internationally accepted electromagnetic field exposure limits should be lowered. The National Radiation Laboratory recommends 1000mG as a safe level, based on the guidelines...

Medium sized electric welder[s generate 5000mG (0.04 kilovolts/metre), while the inside of an] electricity substation... tended to be... 10,000[mG (9kv/m)]... Houses close to high-voltage lines, which already sell more cheaply because of the lines, could be under further price pressure as the result of the research. "Personally, I would not want to live underneath these power lines – I would want to move as soon as possible, not because I'm certain I would be affected adversely but I would not want to live with the doubts,"... said[the professor, who]... likened it to earlier this century when agents like tobacco and asbestos were suspected of harm – but it was many years before there was conclusive proof.

...[an Aucklander] knows that living in the shadow of a looming 110,000-volt pylon is not a great selling point for her home. But... [the Blockhouse Bay resident] has fresh worries... [after hearing] yesterday about... the health effects of living directly under live power lines... "It does alarm me for my health and my children's health and secondly for the price of my property." ...[the] bus driver... was aware of possible health effects when... [buying] her immaculate home three years ago for \$95,000. "It was a bargain. For the price it was a matter of taking the risk or living in a hovel. It's a risk you take when you want to give your children a home and you only have the basic deposit." A real estate agent has recently priced the... three-bedroom... home... at \$145,000. The nearby series of power lines was listed as a big disadvantage. Her clothesline sits dead centre under a high-voltage tower... A Hillsborough resident... trie[s] to get her three children away from her house every weekend and every school holiday... [They] appeared calmer away from the house, but [the mother] did not know if it was related to the pylon... in her otherwise tranquil back garden [- which] almost put her off buying the property four years ago. But... [the Hillsborough resident] wanted a good neighbourhood for her [kids] within a certain budget... Trans Power sent out questionnaires to affected residents every year which related to maintenance issues... No health questions were asked.

...Although hardly an unbiased observer, Trans Power[']s general operations manager... is not convinced that power lines can be blamed for the alleged health risks posed by electromagnetic fields... "It can be pretty depressing living next to a power pylon in South Auckland, but that is not necessarily because of electromagnetic fields... [Seriously though, the] problem that I have is how do you distinguish the source of the electromagnetic fields which are supposed to be causing the problems? They are not tagged." ...The power of the field was generally determined by the amount of electricity consumed by the device being used, with appliances such as hair dryers and food processors creating bigger fields because of the wiring coils in their electric motors. Other devices subjected users to fields for longer periods, such as electric blankets and bedside clock radios... [The manager] – who has not seen the yet-to-be-published study – ...said people tended to blame high-voltage transmission lines for powerful electromagnetic fields when they actually produced relatively low levels. "It is because they are so big and noticeable, but magnetic fields are associated with current rather than voltage." ...[and] their strength fell rapidly with distance. Placing power lines underground would make little difference – overhead tension lines were no less than 12m from the ground at their lowest point, and they would have to be buried the same depth to achieve a similar ground level reading... A Ministry of Health booklet says the highest voltage transmission lines in N[Z] produced electric fields of up to 3 kilovolts per metre, although trees and buildings reduced their strength to only a few per cent of that. The ministry concluded that there was no simple yes or no answer to the question of whether electromagnetic fields from power lines and appliances are completely safe.

...A [US] study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*... found... magnetic fields from electrical appliances and power lines do not raise the risk of acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, a common form of childhood cancer... [In related news,] Waikato power poles are getting an electronic once-over from the heavens. The Hamilton-based company WEL Energy is using... the Global Positioning System... to pin down the location of its 50,000... poles... [T]he survey will allow [i]t... to react more quickly during power outages, and to improve planning for maintenance.

...Lines of history are disappearing in Morningside. The ancient power poles which flank New North Rd have been dug up after decades of service and replaced with shiny arcing lights. The look of the road has changed and is much cleaner with all the drooping power lines buried beneath the pavement. The removal of the old totara and A[US]n hardwood poles created a minor flurry among handy[people]... keen to lay claim to the tungsten-hard sentinels for retaining walls and gardens. Mercury Energy is swapping poles all over the city, though few were as old as the [Morningside] collection. The company is spending \$8.5 million this year on the task because it wants to tidy up its network. Main routes are being tackled first, because that reduces the number of poles hit by wayward vehicles. With fewer pole-strikes, power supply is that much more secure. Reliability is enhanced with the wires buried where bad weather cannot affect them. And the new curved metal [streetlight] poles are what Mercury calls frangible – they are designed to crumple on impact, which increases survival odds... [T]he wooden poles... date from the years that first trams and then trolley buses rumbled along the city streets. They needed to be tough as teak to carry the weight of overhead cables and wires for the trolley network... At the turn of the century, the electric tram run from Khyber Pass... to Kingsland... was so popular that hundreds of people endured long waits before squeezing on to the open and uncomfortable vehicles which trundled through gloomy suburbs. In 1903 the route witnessed the worst tram disaster in Auckland history. A tram packed with Christmas Eve shoppers rolled backwards down a slope from Eden Terrace to Rocky Nook. As it gathered speed it slammed into a city-bound tram. Passengers were tossed from the top-deck like ragdolls and knocked out by the lurching trolley arm. When the smoke cleared, three people lay dead and 50 nursed shocking injuries. But this tragedy failed to deter tram-riders and the top-heavy double-deckers remained on the route despite an inquiry recommending their removal. It took the car to kill off the trolleys and the modern bus fleet is still trying to catch up... [Incidentally, the] North Shore City Council is pushing for a law change to give local authorities greater control over utility companies which install underground cables and pipes. The council is concerned at the growing number of utility operators. It wants to be able to tender for the provision of utility services, thereby reducing congestion under the road.

...The burying of 3km of high-voltage power lines through Pakuranga may mark the beginning of the end for pylons. A \$4.6 million project by the Manukau City Council, Transpower and property developers will see new, more powerful transmission cables placed underground by April next year. A 2.2km tunnel running eastwards from Ti Rakau Drive through Botany Downs will carry the new 220,000-volt cables. The project is designed to be more friendly to the environment and less hazardous to health. The 1.8m diameter tunnel will be 2m beneath roads rather than homes... Transpower... said yesterday that the future was in underground cables but they were expensive... Transpower looks after 13,000km of transmission lines... The Mayor of Manukau... said the project would be totally funded by the private sector, which saw room for the development of 500 new homes and commercial properties. The value of existing homes is expected to jump up by 30[%]. "I hope other local government units will follow our lead and work in partnership with private sector interests to remove large, unsightly pylons from sensitive areas of the landscape,"...

Construction will start on Monday on Mercury Energy's \$62 million tunnel for power cables between Penrose and... Auckland city. The Mayor of Auckland... struck the first blows for the 9.2km subway, which will be large enough for a golf buggy to drive through. The total project, including new electricity cables... is budgeted to cost around \$110 million. Mercury's chief executive... said that in the short term the tunnel would cost more than to lay cables in a shallow trench, but [having the cables '30 to 50 metres below the surface will protect them from damage due to diggers' and] there would be [other] longer-term savings. "The tunnel has a life of around 200 years and we will be able to add new cables to it over that time. In addition, we will have easy access to cables that have a 20-year lifespan,"... Other users, such as telecommunications companies, would lease tunnel space... The tunnel will follow the Southern Motorway for much of its route... to Mercury's substation on the corner of Hobson St and Fanshawe St.

...Underground tremors were felt in Auckland last week – not from an earthquake but from earthworks on the Mercury Energy tunnel... Basalt rock is being blasted at the Penrose site to extend the 6m vertical shaft of the tunnel to 70m, the depth required for boring to begin.

...The first bites of... [the] power cable tunnel underneath Auckland [city] were chewed out yesterday when a special drilling machine descended below Hobson St... Called a Roadheader, the mechanical excavator was lowered down a 20 m shaft and began to blast rock... The machine is operated by a construction worker, and the debris it produces is cleared away by a crew waiting at the surface. The device will bore a tunnel to a point below the Symonds St off-ramp... [of] the Southern Motorway... generally following the surface street layout. At that point a giant tunnel boring machine capable of digging out 100m a week will do the hard work. The tunnel will... meet... the Auckland central business district[']s... power needs beyond the year 2000. Completion is expected in November 1999. - 1997

ON THE EDGE OF DARKNESS... Auckland city leaders and emergency services last night ordered an unprecedented shut-down of the central city until power is restored – at least a week away. A crisis committee of police, civil defence officials, firefighters, health officials, insurers and Mercury Energy said the risk to public health and safety was too great and no shop or office should open without power until further notice. The full magnitude of the crisis became apparent when the Fire Service warned it was not safe to enter buildings with alarms, sprinkler systems and lighting out. “Those who [still] have power in the CBD are likely to lose it; those who don’t have power shouldn’t expect it to return,” the committee said. “Any power available will only be sufficient for hospitals and emergency services.” Police have brought in mass reinforcements to protect shops and buildings left vulnerable by the lack of lights and alarms. Health inspectors will be checking food retailers to ensure hygiene standards are met. Auckland’s courts, university and the technical institute had already decided to shut for the week, meaning delays to trials and disruption for tens of thousands of students. The costs to the city and nation are likely to run into hundreds of millions of dollars. Many businesses face crippling losses – possibly bankruptcy – and are unlikely to win more than limited compensation from Mercury Energy... Businesses with emergency generators – like Sky City, the Ports of Auckland and the *N[Z] Herald* – will cope, but... [e]ngineers warn that machines designed to provide backup for short periods could easily overheat and catch fire if run at capacity for days at a time. The Auckland Employers’ Association said bosses were obliged to pay workers to stay home. About 60,000 work in the affected area, which is the hub of N[Z]’s business community. Many more come to the city daily for business and shopping. Thousands of apartment dwellers and occupants of inner-city hotels have been told to find alternative accommodation. Businesses that were able to relocate at the weekend did so, including some to Sydney. Disgruntled tourists likened the situation to that of a [Last] World nation. The spotlight turned on Mercury’s board and management, with the chief executive... [offering to] resign if the board wanted him out. The consumer trust that owns Mercury demanded the company restore supplies urgently “irrespective of cost.” The level of disruption was totally unacceptable, said the trust chair[person]n... Asked if... [it would] call... for the Mercury board to resign, [the chairperson] said: “Not yet...” However, the trust expected a full inquiry and report back “with an assurance the Auckland CBD would never again face such a crisis.” Mercury’s board apologised publicly but indicated it did not believe it or its management were at fault. “It’s the most incredible, freakish bad luck you could ever imagine,” the chair[person]n of Mercury... said. But the former chair[person]n of Mercury... said the four big cables that failed were up to 30 years old and concerns about their reliability had been raised five years ago or more. Opposition politicians pointed fingers at the Government for the way it restructured electricity supply companies five years ago to make profitability the prime objective ahead of reliability of supply. “Aucklanders need to know if their electricity costs will rise again to pay for fixing this disaster,” said the Auckland Central MP... The Mayor... was concerned th[at] people did not realise the seriousness of the situation, which could worsen... Fears that [the] power crisis will damage the country’s reputation as an international tourist destination are deepening each day it lasts. A group of tourist promoters from overseas who searched for meals among the inner-city’s closed restaurants called it “Gotham City” after Batman’s city of darkness. [Editor’s note: ‘originally *Gotham* was a village of Nottinghamshire, with which are connected many of the simpleton stories of immemorial antiquity.’]

...Holiday from hell for Aussies... A trip to Auckland for a family wedding degenerated into a comedy of errors... “It’s been awful. I just can’t believe that something like this could happen in a city this big,”... Things started off well enough for the party of six as they travelled the country. But on Wednesday they hit Auckland and were turned away from their pre-booked Hobson St apartment because the lift was out of order due to renovations. Then came a power cut just as they were ironing shirts and getting ready for the wedding. Then the heavens opened on them and they returned, dripping, to a still powerless hotel. They woke in the morning to find the power was still off and they were being evicted for the second time in three days. So they... went back to the... unfinished... Hobson St apartments. But the only room available was a... sixth-floor apartment. “...there was no emergency lighting on the stairs so we had to feel our way up to the sixth floor. But apart from that we had a great time,”... The hotel learned only late yesterday morning that Mercury Energy could supply a generator to allow it to operate last night.

...A senior doctor says lives were endangered at Auckland Hospital after emergency generators failed to kick in when power was cut to operating theatres... [T]hree surgical theatres were being used on Friday night when the blackout hit... [T]he clinical director of the hospital’s operating theatres... would be demanding answers today. The failure came after the hospital agreed last week to run its emergency generators for some of its daily needs, to take pressure off Mercury Energy’s fourth cable. When that cable failed on Friday, the hospital’s computers had trouble pinpointing the exact problem, leading to the delay... “Senior medical staff are extremely concerned that the engineering systems of the hospital allowed this to happen. We rely on the back-up generators to come in within 10 to 15 seconds and that didn’t happen.” ...[the clinical director] put the delay at about 25 minutes... [S]taff had worked incredibly well with no adverse effects on patients. A manual over-ride was now installed to prevent a repeat of the problem... The hospital was expecting two extra generators yesterday, which would provide most needs should all Mercury’s cables fail. But only one generator had arrived last night. The second is expected to come tomorrow after last-minute maintenance.

...The cable system: what went wrong... Electricity runs into 50 Auckland substations, which radiate it to surrounding areas. Two major substations supply the CBD... [Both] are fed by two 110kV cables... [– containing copper] or aluminium conductors... [surrounded by insulation, filler (including ducts) for gas or oil... coolant...], a lead casing, then a bitumen or plastic case, steel]... or wire tape[, and an outer plastic sheath –] ...which run side-by-side about 1.5m apart and are buried 1.5m deep. The city needs three operational cables to run normally, and can get by (with minor outages) on any two... *January 22:* The first of two 1950s gas-filled 110kV cables running from Penrose to Quay St fails. *February 9:* The second gas-filled cable fails. Probable reason: Design faults. Insulating grease thins in heat, and pressurised gas eventually causes it to form blockages. Areas of cable become unpressurised and deteriorate. *February 10:* Mercury asks CBD businesses to cut back on power. *February 19:* The first of two 1970s oil-filled 110kV cables running from Mt Roskill to Liverpool St fails in a joint, producing major power cuts. Probable reason: The joint was badly prepared, or the earth moved slightly. *February 20:* The second oil-filled cable fails. Probable reason: Stress caused by driving the cable to its limits. *The city is expected to be running normally again by March 3.*

...The cabinet will discuss the Auckland power blackout today but is unlikely to make any hard decisions. The Minister of Energy... [said] yesterday that the first priority must be to get electricity restored... In the meantime, [the minister] did not want to “clutter the focus” of Mercury Energy’s management until that was done. But... was seeking official advice over whether [the minister] had the authority to call an inquiry or... would have to resort to the Commission of Inquiries Act – “which I really think is elevating it a little high.” [The minister was, however,] critical of Mercury... saying it must have been aware... the cables were under pressure because three years ago it had committed \$120 million for a tunnel project to replace them. [The minister] believed... there should be an investigation into whether the replacement programme was left too late. The P[M]... said the Government was taking the issue very seriously and was looking at what it could do. But both [the PM and the minister] were firm that any compensation claims were not a matter for the Government but for Mercury... and its customers... The Alliance... criticised Mercury[']s

priorities in slashing its maintenance staff while managers and directors “massively increased their personal pay.” Last year the director’s fee paid to the chair[person]... had been raised from \$50,000 to \$70,000... Meanwhile the workforce had been cut from 1141 in 1992 to 596 today...

Aucklanders wondering what went wrong with their “no worries” power company and who to blame need to look back a few years. In 1992 the Government approved a poorly disguised but ingeniously planned path to privatise Mercury Energy that had little public support. The disaster Auckland has encountered is a demonstration of the limitations of market mechanisms for running the electricity system. By allowing Mercury to be owned by a trust but not controlled by it the Government accepted a situation where, in the public mind, even the appearance of honesty and integrity went out the window. With it went the former chair[person] of the board... forced out by the other directors... [for opposing] the way the ownership structure was set up. The intention was – and still is – to float 25[%] of Mercury on the stock market. The catch is that the owners of those shares will appoint five of the nine directors. The publicly-elected trust, which will then have 75[%] ownership, will remain toothless. Right now the situation is arguably worse. Five directors have no accountability to anyone – and represent shares not yet floated... Extreme El Nino weather is clearly a major cause of the crisis. Records have been set for heat, humidity and low rainfall this summer. As well as triggering unprecedented demand for air conditioning and refrigeration it meant the four crucial 110kV underground cables have likely been damaged by constant vibrations from traffic, trains, construction work and sloppy digger drivers. Whether such extremes should have been foreseen and prepared for earlier will be a matter for an inquiry to deal with.

...[Auckland’s] electricity crisis is battering financial dealings far beyond the Queen City’s Golden Mile. At least one multi-million dollar hire purchase scheme is affected, denying the payment by instalments option to would-be buyers of big-ticket items around the country. And the Income Support computer system servicing the Auckland and Northland region has crashed... Meanwhile, [public]... health inspectors will patrol inner-city Auckland again today to lock up food shops posing a health risk... They [will] also start... surveying apartments to assess their water and sewage systems. The authorities warned that all food in fridges and freezers affected by the cuts should be thrown out. The Loaded Hog bar-restaurant at the Viaduct Basin had thrown out an estimated \$8000 of seafood, meat and ice cream, said the assistant manager... However, it had hooked up a generator to keep beer in its boutique brewery at the correct temperature.

...The cold fingers of the power cuts are reaching out to touch the city’s homeless. Hundreds of cups of tea and coffee served at the Auckland City Mission drop-in centre in Hobson St are in jeopardy, as are meals served at the Methodist Mission shelter in Airedale St. The distribution of food to more than 70 foodbanks may also be under threat... But both organisations are determined the homeless and needy will not suffer and are looking at arrangements to keep their operations rolling... At the weekend hundreds of retailers tried to operate without power. Some said they had no choice but to open for business because they had lost thousands of dollars as a result of the cuts... Frustrated staff at many shops used torches to show customers goods, hoping to salvage a small portion of their lost income... [But the] power failures means loss of customers, time and a lack of opportunity for businesses to sell their more valuable products, which have had to be stored in safes... Of the retailers who elected to close over the weekend, a large number brought in security staff to guard their shops... One business[person] who closed his three large shops in the central city... had lost about \$50,000 a day because of the blackouts. “We’ve got mouths to feed like everyone else,”... Horns blared as motorists tried to cross uncontrolled intersections or turn into major roads... Police have asked people to stay away from the central city unless their needs are urgent. The Mercury Energy chief executive... said [yesterday that] the company accepted responsibility but denied claims of negligence.

...A wheelchair-bound student[] was stuck in a lift for 45 minutes because of power cuts on Friday... [The] science student at Auckland University, was rescued by a lift technician. [It] is now paying \$125 a night at a Newmarket motel... [while waiting] for the power to come back on. “I’ll be asking Mercury... for compensation... I’ve got... cash to pay for the motel this week, but I won’t have any left...” Even if [the student] could walk up the stairs... the lack of... services on his 11th floor apartment would make it impossible to live in... The rest of the city’s apartment dwellers spent the weekend throwing away... spoiled food, getting stuck in lifts, being locked out of their homes and trudging up and down darkened stairwells.

...It will probably be business as usual on financial markets today despite the electricity crisis, thanks to a lot of work behind the scenes by Auckland brokers and banks. Much of that work has centred on moving staff from the central business district to suburbs... or... other cities... Dealers and brokers left in the cbd are likely to work in T-shirts and shorts rather than suits, after climbing the stairs to their dealing rooms where the air-conditioning will probably not be working... An organisation such as an investment bank could potentially claim huge losses if electricity cuts meant it missed out on money-making deals. [However,]Mercury... is confident... it would have to compensate for a few costs only... because its liability in the crisis is limited by supply contracts it has with consumers... The main cost would be to meet service guarantees... [which] allow for payments of \$50 to domestic consumers and \$200 to commercial consumers who have their supply interrupted. But while saying this is its only liability, the company is already compensating for other costs. The company has told customers they will not have to pay line charges for the length of time they go without electricity. The company has also agreed to reimburse consumers who are running their own generators.

...The cloud cast over the Auckland [CBD] by the electricity crisis is proving to have a silver lining for equipment hire firms. They have been overwhelmed by demand... for... security lights... [and] electricity generators from businesses... [Y]esterday Projex was unable to supply generators as they had all been hired. It was the same story at Hirepool where... there was a waiting list for generators. Many had been used on floats in the Hero Parade on Saturday night and... the company... was waiting to see when they would be returned... Both... [companies] were seeking more generators from outside Auckland. In some cases, generators were being removed from locations outside the [CBD] where they were being used only as a back-up or standby system... [Hirepool said one] company was paying to have a generator trucked from Wellington to Auckland at a one-way cost of about \$2000... Most clients were hiring the generators for an open-ended week... The cost of hiring a generator varies from... \$40 a day for a 1800-watt machine to \$200 a day for a 30,000-watt machine. Fuel, usually diesel, is extra but the hire companies will co-ordinate its supply.

...[telecommunications companies a]re operating using back-up generators, with Telecom expecting to consume 20,000 litres of diesel a day. Telstra was last night flying an additional backup generator to Auckland from Sydney and Clear Communications was installing a second standby generator to cover the risk of breakdown before power is restored... Meanwhile... Telecom, Clear and Telstra... are offering [CBD] businesses free call-diversion to non-cbd locations to help them cope... [with] moving as many staff as possible... outside the district or getting them to work from home... [By the way, the] power crisis has forced Auckland police to postpone their first-ever uniformed protest march to call for more pay.

...The... [blackout] snapped... the... Auckland police communications life-line... for... an hour when power surges blocked emergency calls. More than 100 calls were diverted to Wellington and Christchurch. The problem, late on Sunday night, affected communications equipment at the Auckland central police station, which in turn stopped calls going into the new communications centre in Great North Rd... [S]taff at the communications centre sat helpless as 111 and general calls ceased coming in... In a separate incident also believed to be related to the power crisis, the police Central One radio channel collapsed for about three hours early on Sunday. But police bosses said backup systems swung into action and allowed staff to respond to emergencies... Fire Service resources were stretched to the limit... with an average of one callout to power-struck fire alarms every five minutes.

...Firefighters rushed to eight central Auckland buildings yesterday after alarms sparked by overheated emergency generators... [A]ppliances were called in from several suburban stations. The Fire Service fire hazard manager... said generators had to be wired by competent electricians and carefully sited in well ventilated areas. “A lot of them are not geared up for this type of thing.” And in many cases the water cooling systems were not working properly... [M]ost portable generators were designed for use out-doors and had not been used for years... ● A... Mercury Energy

s[spokesperson says the CBD] can not expect full power again until March 15... On Sunday, it estimated that full supply would be restored by March 3. [The spokesperson] refused to speculate on what was causing the delays... [or] on when any of the four major electricity cables would be working.

...Workers are being warned to read the fine print in their contracts to avoid being ripped off by their employers during the crisis. The Council of Trade Unions president... yesterday said... some bosses would try not to... pay workers told to stay home... A[n A]uckland industrial relations advocate... said employers could not automatically force workers to take time off during the crisis as annual leave. "The Holiday Act 1981 requires no less than seven days notice for annual leave to be given when an employer is directing an employee to take annual leave." Some bosses were suggesting staff work from home but that was unrealistic for most businesses...

Tens of thousands of people were turned away from work... yesterday... morning after businesses that did not heed [a] call to close lost power and were forced to shut... [when] Auckland's power crisis spread beyond the [CBD]... with blackouts in [the]surrounding suburbs... of Freemans Bay, Ponsonby and Newton... A spokes[person for Mercury]... said the blackouts should not spread beyond the fringe of the [CBD], but cuts to hot-water heating in other suburbs were necessary... The Mayor of Manukau... demanded assurances from Mercury that supplies to South Auckland would be maintained... Another alarming weakness in the national electricity supply system – a Transpower substation at Henderson – was revealed by power companies north of Auckland as a threat to their supplies. The substation is overdue for a substantial upgrade as growing demand in the North puts it under strain, but Transpower, Power N[Z], Northpower and Top Energy are at odds over who should pay.

...Before the crisis this week in central Auckland, [an]electricity industry consultant... rated the cable supplying the North Shore and Northland as the greater risk... [O]verseas practice is never to rely on a single cable for loads over 300MW. The cable running from Henderson... carries 600MW. A violent storm, a tumbling pylon or an aircraft flying into the cable would cut two-thirds of Northland's power supply... The Power N[Z] operations manager... says his company was disappointed Transpower had failed to address the region's electricity-supply problems when Mercury Energy decided to build the Penrose tunnel... [A Transpower spokesperson] says local power companies must pay for any upgrades or new cables but so far they are refusing to do so... [Incidentally,] Mercury Energy is suing... Transpower for cheaper electricity. The longstanding pricing wrangle, which dates back to 1996, is understood to involve more than \$10 million which Mercury has allegedly been withholding while contesting Transpower's charges. Transpower is considering its own legal action.

...Small-business owners turned their fury on the Auckland City Council yesterday as their hopes of seeking legal recompense from Mercury Energy faded... They claimed that their firms were facing bankruptcy thanks to... [a city c]ouncil message advising visitors to stay away... The owner of the Buro Bar... said: "Even though some of us have power, there are no customers because they've been told not to come into the centre. The council is crippling us." ...Next door in Monique's Cafe, [its owner claimed to be] losing important regular customers. [The owner] was angry that big hotels were given emergency generators but small businesses were left to collapse... Up in Lorne St, [a]watchmaker... lambasted Mercury Energy: "It's... made the whole city a laughing stock – it's just unbelievably pathetic." ...[the owners of] Aladdin's Kebab in the Countrywide Bank food hall in Queen St... say the[y]... will lose a week's turnover of around \$7000 but will still have to pay rent, rates and wages – and, adding insult to injury, their power bill. "We survived the war, you know, in Lebanon... But we... may not be able to survive long-term cuts..." ...A war council of about 80 businesspeople crippled by power loss gathered at the Civic Tavern to discuss options... One possibility... was a business rates amnesty... [□ Mercury Energy] acknowledged yesterday that the area affected by its four failed cables was larger than first stated... Company management also... [confirmed s]uburbs skirting the central city face daytime cuts to water-heating supplies as Mercury engineers try to move more power into the city. "Our advice to people in the areas affected is to shower before 7 am,"... Mercury's network general manager... said. Storms wreaked havoc on other parts of the Mercury network on Monday night, cutting power to parts of Avondale, Mangere, Whitford and Clevedon. Mercury said the cuts were not related to the central city crisis and supplies were restored yesterday morning.

...One of the worst blackouts in Quebec history gripped the province yesterday, with more than a million households battling to cope without power... [after an icy] storm... splintered trees and... [downed] power lines... Montreal-area hospitals were overloaded with emergencies, including dozens who broke bones slipping on the ice and about 100 people overcome by gas fumes from faulty heaters. The same slow-moving system... brought violent weather and flooding to the U[S] south. At least 14 people died. Meanwhile, [as Auckland's power failure continues to bring]... misery to many Aucklanders, business has been brisk for some. Camping stores report... record sales of portable gas stoves, lanterns and torches... Mobile phones [have]also sold well. Marinas [are relaxing] rules to accommodate boaties who want... to stay on their launches and yachts. "If our customers say they need to stay on their boats because of the power cut we are prepared to be sympathetic," said the manager of Westpark Marina... Restaurants and bars in Ponsonby... reported tills ringing... [due to custom from people who] were unable to cook for themselves because their flats were without power... Eden Park stadium [i]s... looking forward to bumper crowds for the start on Thursday of the second cricket test match against Zimbabwe as workers find themselves with unexpected days off.

...[although] work by Mercury is expected to restore some power [to Auckland's CBD] later in the week with one of the four failed major cables coming back on line... [t]he Schweppes Showtime summer concert in the Auckland Domain on Sunday is in jeopardy because co-sponsor Mercury, which had promised to light up the night, is worried whether that will send an inappropriate message during the crisis. Advertising for the event has already been cancelled... The Aotea Centre[and] the Town Hall... are open, with concerts and corporate events proceeding as planned... [However, m]ovies at the Hoyts Midcity complex have been cancelled... Freemans Bay Primary School last night announced it would close from tomorrow until power was restored. It urged parents to keep pupils at home today, if possible, after enduring most of yesterday without power... The Auckland Regional Chamber of Commerce... said temporary office space... has... been made available for a nominal cost at the Expo Centre in Epsom and a vacant building in Howick. Both sites had been wired up for phone and computers... Meanwhile, costs are mounting at Auckland University's central-city campus... Expensive chemicals refrigerated in the science laboratories are threatened, and orientation activities scheduled to start next week have been thrown into chaos. Student leaders said they hoped to postpone most of the events for a week... Many of the... hundreds of out-of-town students... arriving to take up residence in Auckland University's central-city hostels and flats... [were] turned out on the street yesterday... [(a spokesperson] said the university would lose about \$75,000 because of rent refunds and unexpected costs resulting from the blackout[). Some out-of-town students]... at least had somewhere else to stay outside the... [CBD, others] returned home immediately, and those from overseas with nowhere to go were offered a bed at a camping ground in Auckland's eastern suburbs... The... Auckland City Council... said... [v]acant council pensioner units in outer suburbs were likely to be used... [for] people needing accommodation outside the city centre... The council was trying to find other housing... in vacant council flats or motels[, but many]... inner-city dwellers are staying put despite some having to climb 15 storeys on a darkened fire escape to an apartment with no hot water, lighting, refrigeration or cooking facilities... Extra rubbish collections are being organised for spoiled food and the council has closed its two central city art galleries. The city library is operating a reduced service... All bus, train and ferry services are running... [but as] the Ports of Auckland struggles to cope, a container vessel, the Maersk Tekapo is being diverted to Tauranga. Its 350 containers will be unloaded at Tauranga and railed to Auckland.

...Ports of Auckland was the biggest victim... of the city's power cuts with its operations brought to a virtual standstill, disrupting N[Z]'s external trade. Forced to generate its own electricity, it had power enough for only two of its seven container cranes to operate at reduced speed... The port was able to handle only 200 containers on Sunday, a 90[%] reduction from a normal day's throughput... [It also] railed 200 containers to Wellington... [on] Sunday... and a further 40 followed yesterday morning, with more rail shipments planned... The backlog from just one day at the port was going to be appalling, said... [the] executive director of the Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Federation. If the downtown power

failure persists, imports of vital goods could be subjected to delays and extra costs... One offer to help the port solve its power problems came from... a lawyer... acting for owners of vessels on charter to South Pacific Shipping Line which is [in] the process of liquidation... [T]he port was considering the proposal but its power needs were specialised. "Using a ship's power may be possible but won't solve our problems. What you can source from a ship would only match one of the mobile stand-alone generators." ...the Navy is fending off calls from the public to hook its ships into the local electricity grid[because, according to the]... fleet marine engineer... the ships generated power at a higher frequency than shore-based systems and could not produce a safe supply for anything except lights and heating... ● [Last night t]he... managing director of P&O... said his company was faced with significant additional costs. "We had to bypass Auckland with our ships. This is costing us a significant amount of money. I presume at the end of the day, Mercury would pay for it. Certainly, we don't intend to pay for it, nor the customers. There is also the question of demurrage (the rate payable to a shipowner by a charterer for failure to load or discharge a ship within the agreed time)...." ... Some other shipping lines have yet to make diversion decisions, deterred by the extra costs they would incur.

...*Want to leave?* The Internal Affairs Passport Office at 380 Queen St is closed but processing is continuing... As news of the power crisis spreads overseas, the Tourism Board is trying to dispel notions that the whole country is affected. A spokes[person] for the board... said some newspapers in Asia had reported with sensational headlines that N[Z] was blacked out. "It appears it's not getting balanced coverage overseas." But it is far too early to say whether people were cancelling holidays... To 1200 American passengers stepping off the cruise ship Sky Princess today, the City of Sails may offer little more than harbour views... [A Pom who's] here to present a business seminar, found it cancelled because the buildings were considered unsafe. "If you've got a regulator like we have in the United Kingdom [that regulator] needs his [backside] kicked."...

While Aucklanders – like passengers on a doomed aircraft – reel from the shock that all four major electricity cables have failed, questions are being asked about who knew what, when they knew it and what they did about it. [One e]lectricity industry consultant... knew in 1988 that the electricity supply to central Auckland was precarious. [The consultant] worked with Mercury Energy's predecessor, the Auckland Electric Power Board, on the issue... Transpower... certainly knew that Auckland's ageing cables had between five and 10 years' life remaining... [A Transpower spokesperson] agrees that it has been widely known for some time that Auckland was suffering from both ageing cables and increased demand and that the latter exacerbated problems associated with the former. But it is up to Mercury Energy to determine the exact cause of the fault. Mercury Energy's spokes[person]... could not be reached. Her voice mail was full, according to a recorded message, "Goodbye." Clearly the... two... post... W[W2] cables... made it to the outer limits of their predicted life, but no further. The surprise has been that the two newer cables have also been knocked out. According to [the consultant], not enough was done soon enough to avert the crisis because, until 1994, Mercury Energy and Transpower were trying to find one solution to two major problems facing Auckland's electricity supply... The second is the supply to the North Shore and Northland... But given the parochial nature of power supply it was not Mercury Energy's problem... Aucklanders, whose ire has been raised by this week's crisis, will be further incensed to learn that Wellington's CBD is served by eight cables and... has more interconnection capabilities than Auckland's network... [I]t would take a major catastrophe to knock the lights out on Lambton Quay... according to... a... TransAlta spokes[person]... Is this simply because Wellington is more likely than Auckland to be flattened in an earthquake? [The consultant] blames the disparity between Auckland and Wellington's electricity supply systems on the old N[Z] Electricity Department. As a state department it had a vested interest – perhaps even a ministerial directive – to protect the seat of Government from power failure... ● The... Wellington for Jesus Campaign has blamed the power crisis on the Hero parade. [The campaign's] coordinator... said the crisis was "a warning of the judgment of God following the brazen flaunting of homosexuality and promiscuity" in the parade on Saturday night.

...The 1996-97 power survey, the latest available from the Electricity Supply Association, shows Mercury had more faults per 100km of cable than WEL Energy (Hamilton), TransAlta (Wellington), Southpower (Christchurch) or Dunedin Electricity... [The number of faults per 100km in Auckland was 8 – mostly] on the smaller 11kV lines, which were not the ones associated with the power crisis... [– while the other cities recorded] 2.2... 6.7... 2.27... and... 4.91 [respectively]... However, some provincial areas... were ahead of Mercury... Hawke's Bay Power, which had... 18.56... faults/[100km]... said the main cause was Napier's salty soil, which corroded cables... [But power could be] re-routed without inconvenience to customers... [The ESA] said Mercury's high number of faults had to be balanced against the fact that it had more cable than other suppliers. It must maintain 2537km of cable, compared with TransAlta's 1089km and Southpower's 1847km... [Auckland has more cables length-wise but, whereas its CBD was supplied by 5 cables, Christchurch] is supplied by... 10... and Hamilton by six [– although all] are smaller capacity cables than those in Auckland... In Christchurch, the system's only Achilles heel is the Addington substation... [D]amage to the substation by earthquake would cause the city some problems. Dunedin's [CBD] is supplied by three substations, each with two cables. [A Dunedin network] manager... said the system was reliable and closely monitored.

...The events of the past few days have clearly illustrated the importance to consumers of a reliable and secure supply of electricity. In the planning and implementing of market reforms in recent years, electricity has tended to be regarded by Government ministers and officials as a product to be brought and sold... Undoubtedly it is a product but it is also an essential public service. The lives of most N[Z]ers are completely disrupted without it... It is vital that the opportunity is taken to collect as much information as possible on the actual costs incurred by consumers as that will influence the desired level of future security and the price which consumers will be prepared to pay to have security of supply. Government policy now encourages electricity consumers to negotiate a contract with a supplier for a desired level of security and to pay a premium on the price if they require a high level of security. Under the Electricity Act 1992, generators of electricity no longer have an obligation to supply consumers and the Government has legislation in the pipeline to remove the obligation from suppliers too... The questions which now need to be asked appear to me to be: ● Is the average electricity consumer being well served by the reforms? ● In what ways (if any) could the reforms best be improved or modified for the benefit of the consumer? ● Who (if anybody) in this country any longer has a responsibility to consumers for maintaining an adequate and reliable supply of electricity, apart from the individual contractual arrangements between consumers and suppliers? I believe that the answers to these three questions will be very important for both the Government and our electricity industry when they consider the appropriate strategy for reliable electricity supply in the future... [■] The second Penrose-to-Liverpool St substation... cable was ready to be repressurised yesterday after jointing... [–] splicing in a... 3m long... permanent... replacement section... [–] was completed. Testing will follow, and Mercury says this line is on target to be re-energised on Friday. Repairs on the... Penrose-to-Quay St cable began yesterday morning and are expected to take five days. After that it will still need pressurising and testing. This cable is not expected to be live until Wednesday next week. The repair of the first Roskill-to-Liverpool St cable... is proceeding well and jointing is ready to begin... The remaining cable, set into the side of a bank, is providing a challenge because a 4m chamber needs to be created around it to provide a safe working area for engineers.

...[an] Auckland city barber... has quickly adapted to cutting hair by candlelight... and swapp[ing] his electric shaver for old-fashioned trimmers and a razor... [Incidentally, prices] for wholesale electricity have slumped dramatically in the few days since supply to Auckland's [CBD] was cut, with North Island prices falling... from almost \$40 per megawatt hour last week to about \$15... yesterday. [However, t]he degree to which the price has been affected by lower demand following Mercury's problems is difficult to assess[– because c]heaper electricity from South Island power stations has come on to the wholesale market in the past week or so, replacing more expensive gas-powered electricity plants.

...What do cities Ouagadougou and Ulan Bator have that Auckland does not? Electricity. Auckland is on its own when it comes to power crises... There may be only one television for every 210 of Ouagadougou's 500,000 residents but at least the set works. In vast, remote Mongolia, people are shocked to hear about Auckland's powerless plight. "It is a disgrace," said a sympathetic [person] at the British Embassy in the capital[with a]

population about 700,000. Electricity fluctuated but a nice, hot cup of tea was never far away... Situation normal in Uzbekistan's capital, Tashkent, where, the *Herald* is tersely informed, occasional cuts cause inconvenience but are generally not an issue... [D]iplomats... in Vietnam's capital, Hanoi, feel sorry for Aucklanders... Hanoi used to suffer regular power cuts about six years ago but, apart from power surges caused by electrical faults, residents were now guaranteed a steady supply.

...No need, said the *Australian*, for the last one leaving to turn out the lights. In the *Canberra Times*, [a] cartoonist... ran a pitch black square above the caption: "N[Z] All Black." Across A[US] and into Asia, Auckland's blackout has made the news, even eclipsing similar woes overtaking the Queensland capital of Brisbane. As the city's power crisis continues, apocalyptic reports of mass evacuations, business closures and health fears have raised new outcries over privatisation of electricity suppliers in A[US]. In NSW, where proposed privatisation is ripping the Labour Government in two, [the] Electrical Trades Union... warned that Auckland's darkness was a "precursor of things to come." ...Similar fears spread south to... where the already-privatised industry has come under renewed attack for similar commercial thinking, forcing a spirited defence by the Victorian Power Exchange... [It]s manager of communications, rejected both comparisons between Auckland and Melbourne, and the possibility of Mercury-style blackouts in Victoria. But in Brisbane, where reforms promised to provide uninterrupted supplies and cheaper power, comparisons became inevitable as the city followed Auckland into a series of generating failures and rolling blackouts. Brisbane's problems were compounded when power failures caused backups and overflowing in the city's sewage treatment plants, spilling raw sewage into creeks and stormwater drains. But yesterday Brisbane was shunted into a poor second place by newspapers and radio and TV stations fascinated by the chaos in Auckland.

...Auckland's image took a [further battering in AUS] yesterday after the Government there warned against visiting the city centre until power was guaranteed. Overseas reports again said Auckland, rather than the CBD, was powerless. Mercury is flying seven portable generators in from A[US] today. It has leased them for a fortnight for about \$1.5 million. They will add 9MW to the 22MW already brought from N[Z] cities... The cost of the crisis to Mercury to date is estimated at \$8 million, a figure likely to pale into insignificance when compared with the total costs to businesses. A Melbourne law firm... was preparing a "potentially massive" claim against Mercury on behalf of several Auckland businesses.

...The Government plans to push on with further electricity reforms... [T]he Minister of Finance... [said] yesterday that Auckland's power crisis would not derail a bold new programme of asset sales. If anything, the events of the past few days would "focus people's minds on the need for continuing reforms,"... [the minister said. By the way, last night in Parliament the NZ] First leader... said Mercury had so run down its services that it had hired staff from neighbouring Power N[Z] to help during the crisis. It had then got the company to paint out Power N[Z] from its trucks and uniforms to stop being found out... Mercury ha[s] increased its monitoring of cable routes from once a week to twice a day in the wake of the crisis... Overnight security had been placed at all repair sites to make sure they were not vandalised.

...[a] 66-year-old... has come out of retirement to act as Auckland's last line of defence against further power cuts. Armed with his hard hat and maps... [the] electrical supervisor... who... retired from Mercury last year... hits the streets at 7.30 am on a lone vigil – to ensure no one is digging up the city's five vital power lines... [F]our of the cables have failed, and... any strikes now by contractors installing plumbing or drainage would be a disaster for the city. The vital line is the live 22kV cable running from the Kingsland substation to [the] Liverpool St one. Emergency services could be without power if it failed. [The inspector] travels the 25km route of the cables twice a day... keep[ing] an eagle eye out for tell-tale piles of clay, and holes in the road... So far [the inspector] has found two contractors digging holes near the cables, and is monitoring their progress. While contractors should have detailed maps of existing cables... some do not – in which case [the inspector will] ask... them to stop work until they do.

...The [person] in the middle of the city's electricity storm rejects any suggestion that the company's maintenance programme caused the crisis... [The] chief executive of Mercury... said it was naive to suggest that routine maintenance would have averted the central city blackout. "When cables are buried two metres underground, the correct and best practice for maintaining them is to leave them... It is absolute nonsense to suggest that the cables are not properly maintained. The one thing you don't want to do is dig them up – that's what damages them... We have never had trades[people] to repair 110,000-volt cables because the incidence of failure is so occasional that it would be ludicrous. It is such a specialised task – that's why these repairs are taking the best part of 10 days – that anyone who's qualified has to work on it pretty well continuously to keep their skills up." [The chief executive] noted that the transformers, switches and related equipment that do need to be maintained had all "worked admirably." ...[the chief executive then confessed:] "It may appear, with the benefit of hindsight, that our ethic of keeping the power on and being reluctant to shed load meant that we loaded the cables up more than was smart. Having said that, the cables were never loaded above 90[%] of the manufacturer's recommendations and when the cables got to that level at the end of last week we started load shedding." [The chief executive]... said the "public mood" might make it sensible to use the \$27 million dividend due to be paid at the end of April to recompense affected customers.

...The temptation is always to find someone to blame. And the reaction of the vulnerable luminaries is always to duck for cover. Monday's choreography was particularly elaborate. By 7am... [the Energy Minister] said there would be no early inquiry. By 10am the P[M], sensing the importance of deflecting attention from her Government, announced that there would be. The previous president of the National Party... [– the one person] who opposed his own minister's original ownership plan for Mercury and years ago paid the price for his trouble [–] was suddenly resurrected and reinstated to the board on Monday afternoon. That vacancy was created by the... executive director of the Auckland Chamber of Commerce and Industry... who, having begun Monday as deputy chair[perso]n of Mercury, had by 7 pm that evening resigned and become one of Mercury's staunchest public critics. But it is now time to leave the witch hunt alone and focus on the underlying cause of this crisis. Its origins are not to be found in bad luck or hot weather but in the culture that exists in Mercury (and elsewhere), the ownership plan that created that culture, and the ideology that created the ownership plan. Almost unbelievably, Mercury is owned by people who, individually or collectively, have no control of it... The prevailing ideology is that power companies must behave competitively, and the Government wanted combative people from the private sector to do their bidding, unencumbered by any accountability structures. And so it was. Price hikes, revaluations, skill shedding, take-over bids, rocketing profits and a major investment down in Taranaki. The product was no longer electricity: the product was the bottom line. Mercury used to employ cable jointers. They do not do so now. When Mercury claims that its maintenance is up to scratch I am tempted to wonder how they would know, given a staff reduction of 46[%] in recent years. The culture is that the engineers are out and the baked bean counters are in. But electricity is not like baked beans. It is a unique product, unable to be stored. The Government's reforms do not acknowledge this reality... When the ideology failed, at 6 pm on Friday, the Government sought to do as little as possible, and they did it all weekend. It was four days before Transpower announced that they were looking at an alternative supply... The market is a good servant. But it is a bad master, and this week we saw that it has our cabinet by the throat. Even now [the minister] clings bizarrely to the notion that we need more market. Ideology has swamped common sense... ● [A]... report on the accident which killed a worker in Mercury[']s... 9.2km power-supply tunnel under central Auckland last month has been delayed... but tunnelling continues... William Hetet, aged 48, of Huntly, was pinned against the tunnel wall when an electric locomotive derailed on January 14. [William] died on the way to hospital. Two weeks later another experienced miner... was paralysed when part of the tunnel collapsed on him. [The paralysed miner] said from his hospital bed that [it] feared for the lives of fellow workers because safety measures on the... project were slack. Tunnelling resumed a day after his accident, as approved by a Ministry of Commerce mining inspector... [H]is report on both accidents is still two weeks away.

...[the owner of the] Wyndham St shop, Fast Finish Photo... does not want to fill out the "additional comments" section of an Auckland Chamber of Commerce survey about electricity losses, because what [the shop-owner] wants to say... would not be pleasant... [His shop] usually has sales of \$12,000 a week, but yesterday's turnover was a mere \$170... [The shop] has weekly expenses of about \$6000... The information... sent to the

chamber will be used “for the purpose of exploring future options” related to compensation... Some businesses have “business interruption” insurance, but... to be eligible they had to include a “supplier extension” clause covering the failure of public utilities... The Auckland Chamber of Commerce has asked the Inland Revenue Department to defer tax payments or remove late penalties for the GST and March 7 tax payments for those affected... [Unaffected is the] McDonald’s restaurant at the Starship[, which]... is still cooking hamburgers because of the priority electricity supplies Mercury... has given to the... children’s hospital...

Visiting N[Z] without going to Auckland is like visiting France without seeing Paris, say tourist operators reeling from a downturn in business. They fear the power crisis is leading tourists to choose other destinations because of a perception that the gateway to... [NZ] is closed. About 50[%] of business travellers are cancelling bookings... But... [the] Schweppes Showtime will go ahead at the Auckland Domain on Saturday night – without the backing of Mercury Energy... Showtime organisers opted to plough on after securing three generator trucks capable of powering the stage and laser light show... However... the... Central City Library [ha]s closed until further notice... [T]he power crisis has[also] forced the Auckland Land Title Services office to close. Millions of dollars of sales are up in the air with nervous buyers and sellers unsure if their deal will survive the delay.

...Using 18 generators to provide [enough] power... to operate four of its seven cranes... Ports of Auckland says it will be able to cope with the volume of cargo expected... over the next seven days... The port... has also been able to restore night lighting, allowing 24-hour operations to continue... One strategy has been to make sure that export reefers (refrigerated containers) arrive at the port as late as possible, minimising the time between when they arrive and are connected to the power and when they are disconnected and put on ships... To further conserve power, ships with their own cranes were required to use them rather than the port’s gantry cranes... A mobile crane pick[ed] up some of the slack on... Bledisloe Wharf yesterday... Meanwhile... Mercury Energy is investigating a proposal to string a transmission line straight from the national grid to rescue downtown Auckland... while it waits for the Penrose tunnel to be finished... Mercury is confident the... temporary 110kV... overhead line... with two independent circuits on the same poles... could be installed within 10 weeks... [– a]ssuming there are no environmental roadblocks or technical hitches... – ...using the Auckland rail corridor from Penrose to the city. Transpower... estimates the temporary link could cost about \$5 million... Tranz Rail, which owns the rail corridor... has already given its support in principle... Mercury Energy will meet Tranz Rail officials today to discuss technical, operational and safety issues. But Mercury noted that it is also exploring other options such as new, smaller interconnections between the CBD and neighbouring substations in case there is a technical hitch with the overhead supply proposal... [In another development, all] of Mercury’s directors and senior officials, including recently resigned directors, have been warned by the law firm [which appoints the five directors who are unaccountable to the public] that any comments on compensation matters could prejudice the company’s insurance cover. That cover stipulates that Mercury must not admit any guilt or liability.

...[one pensioner] is about as angry as a Queen St shopkeeper, which is pretty mad right now. Sitting in his Bucklands Beach home – where the lights are still on – [the pensioner] feels a strong sense of betrayal that the city’s electricity supply system [it] oversaw 24 years ago was never upgraded. Between 1971 and 1974 [the pensioner], then the Auckland Electric Power Board’s assistant chief engineer, was already worrying about weaknesses in the two gas-filled electricity cables supplying Auckland’s [CBD] – cables laid in the 1950s which [the engineer] always believed were wrong for the Auckland terrain. Whenever there were road works near the supply lines, the cables were decommissioned – a tricky process in itself. [The engineer] discovered that the cables were damaged from being de-gassed too quickly. [The engineer] noticed... “frothing” of the oil used in the gas-filled cables. But while... concerned, [the engineer] did not believe the situation in the early 1970s was urgent. The cables would survive another 10, maybe 15 years, if they were not abused... [The engineer] expected by the mid-1980s that the A[EPB] would be upgrading electricity supply to the CBD. [The pensioner] was stunned to discover this week that nothing had been done... Locked away in Mercury Energy’s Newmarket headquarters are the board’s records – agendas, minutes, reports and discussion papers. When the N[Z] *Herald* sought access to these archives, Mercury Energy, already under attack this week for poor communication, said no. It says it has a legal opinion that these once-public records are now commercially sensitive. Luckily, ex-A[EPB] members have long memories... Hungry lawyers and nervous insurance companies – the first looking for ways to win compensation, the latter looking for reasons not to pay out – need only read Mercury’s annual reports for indications that the board knew about the problems and had the money to fix them... Mercury Energy did, after all, commission the Penrose tunnel soon after taking over the board’s assets in 1993. The tunnel was originally scheduled to be finished in late 1997. Planning consents delayed it by two years.

...Before the crisis, Mercury had put a lot of effort into improving its image... – through its sponsorship of outdoor family events, among other things... [Since] the power blackout[, many]... would say that Mercury Energy’s public relations performance... has been almost as defective as the cables that caused the crisis. When Mercury[’s] chief executive... commented... [on TVOne] that: “We will accept responsibility but not culpability,” it sounded suspiciously like Mercury’s public relations advisers were driving in the back seat of a car now filled with lawyers.

...The inquiry into Auckland’s power crisis will investigate how Mercury is run – including the role of the country’s biggest law firm... [– after] the Treasurer... singled out [the law firm]... for the second day running... Claims for damages against Mercury could keep lawyers in work for years...

The consumers trust that owns... 100[%] of Mercury, but... has only 50.5[%] voting authority and can only appoint four of the company’s nine non-executive directors... wants to fast-track compensation claims for losses related to this week’s power cuts so the company’s planned share float can get back on course. Consumers could be offered big capital payments and extra dividends to help push the float through. The power cuts... have undermined Mercury’s float because of possible contingent liabilities related to compensation. The trustees believe a sharemarket float is the main way they can get control of the board of the company... [In the meantime, Mercury]’s plan to erect huge electricity poles alongside homes has set sparks flying... Last night residents reacted angrily... saying the poles will destroy the views from their homes and apartments and create eyesores... A keen gardener... said: “We are not bothered by the railway line at the end of the garden, because we don’t really notice it. But the poles are a different matter. They won’t have much room to install them and I am worried they may try to cut down trees which provide a vital screen between us and the rail track... [W]e are all paying the price... [for the] \$85 million profit... [Mercury] made...” ...The... 160... 18m poles – ...normal poles are 8m... – will make a continuous low hum. [However,] if residents living next to the poles and cables do not approve of Mercury’s scheme, it is hard luck – the lines are being brought in under emergency provisions. Work will start next week and the poles will remain in place for 18 months...

In a twist of fate, Mercury Energy lost power to its own Newmarket headquarters yesterday in a cut which hit about 3000 users. The building was plunged into darkness for about 15 minutes when a jumper cable blew at 1 pm... [– although the c]ommunications manager... said the vital control room and computers were not affected... as they had fail-safe systems. The headquarters was switched to another electricity source fairly quickly. But other businesses and residential users in Newmarket, Parnell and Remuera had no power for up to three hours. One dentist needed three people to help remove a... drugged... patient from an electrically elevated chair. Many other doctors and dentists in the area said they were affected... Afternoon appointments had to be cancelled. A 100-year-old [gal] had her Life Link system, a button which connects her directly to emergency services, rendered useless... Her grandson said Mercury’s attitude to her predicament was callous. “They told me there was nothing they could do; that perhaps I should move her to a hospital...” ...[the latest cut coincided with an announcement by] Mercury Energy and the Auckland mayor... [of] plans... to split available power between inner-city users next week. Students will deliver 50,000 flyers today – explaining to

businesses and residents whether they can expect power from 7 am to noon, or from 12.30 pm to 6 pm. Mercury said there was a 90[%] chance that power would be available to everyone in the evenings. But the general manager [of Mercury] urged people to be “cautious – even frugal” with their use: “It’s not ‘come in and turn everything on time,’ guys”... Meanwhile, [plans]... for hardship payments to victims of power blackouts are being carefully crafted to avoid any admission of liability by Mercury Energy[, which] is effectively routing payments to customers through the Auckland Energy Consumer Trust to avoid losing its insurance coverage... Mercury is unable to make payments directly because [of] its insurance policies... So far \$2 million has been made available. Mercury and trust officials are discussing whether more money could be forthcoming.

...Aucklanders looking forward to a return to normal were told yesterday to forget it... Mercury management said cable repairs had suffered a serious setback. The days of blackouts, rationing, closed shops and half-empty streets now look set to stretch on for weeks... Mercury had said the first of the four main cables... would be fixed by Thursday, then Monday. Now the firm is reluctant to give a date, although it says its teams of engineers are working “flat out.” ...Yesterday’s glitch – where it was found that before the cable was repressurised old oil, not properly cleared, had seeped into the gas duct – indicates the painstaking task Mercury has in front of it and the potential for more to go wrong... Electricity industry experts... yesterday suggested the news might get worse before it gets better. Restoring full voltage to cold, old 110kV cables is one of the riskiest and most tense parts of the repair. “Mercury will be lucky to get three out of four cables back and they might manage only two,” one source said... [On a lighter note, the] central city blackouts have given bright sparks plenty of ammunition to poke fun at Auckland’s plight. Here’s a selection of jokes seen and heard. *Q:* Why did [Iraq’s President] hastily sign the UN accord before the R[NZAF] Hercules touched down in the Gulf? *A:* ‘Coz military intelligence told him that Mercury Energy directors were on board. *Q:* How many Mercury executives does it take to change a light bulb? *A:* We’ve got four light bulbs, we don’t need to change them. *Q:* Why is everybody walking around with their hands in the air? *A:* ‘Coz many hands make lights work... *Pub patron:* “I’ll have a light beer thanks. *Bartender:* “Sorry mate, we’re out for a couple of weeks!” *Q:* Why did Auckland build the Sky Tower so high? *A:* To see if there’s light out there. *Q:* How do you make Aucklanders feel better about the crisis? *A:* Who cares? (Of course, this one came from someone south of the Bombay Hills.) *Q:* What did Aucklanders use before candles? *A:* Electricity. *Q:* What’s Auckland’s favourite drink? *A:* Powerade. *Q:* How can you tell an Aucklander in a power cut? *A:* You can’t tell an Aucklander anything – that’s why they have power cuts. *Q:* What do you call a Mercury board member with a torch? *A:* A light looking for the end of the tunnel.

...The red lights are off but business grinds on in Fort St... “We work whether there’s light or not,” said [one] masseuse... “The light is only needed to count the cold cash from customers...” ...● [Inner-city] tenants... may not be legally obliged to pay rent during the power crisis. [A] commercial lawyer... said people renting apartments or offices... might have a case, if they could not come to reasonable agreements with landlords first, for withholding rent. “I would feel comfortable defending a tenant who hadn’t paid rent.” The legal arguments would centre on whether people had reasonable access to their premises, whether facilities such as lights... lifts... and air-conditioning were available. A landlord had a legal obligation to provide “quiet enjoyment” for tenants... “Under general principles, it is clearly inequitable to have to pay rent for the use of premises that can’t, in principle, be used... In an office building, it is the building owners who can’t give you access, even though it is beyond their control.”

...The sudden influx of diesel-powered generators has led to five people being overcome by fumes, according to public health experts... [I]n experienced restaurant and shop staff have suffered health problems after using generators in confined spaces. None of the cases is thought to be serious... [What’s serious is the news that t]hree inner-city food shops have gone bust... The shops relied on the morning patronage of office workers and the crisis hit them particularly hard. “The proprietors have just walked away. And they won’t be coming back.” ...one owner, who said [it] could not survive without daily business... was keeping a low profile because... creditors [were] chasing him... “Most businesses don’t go broke in a week. But some of these guys run on a knife’s edge.” However... dozens of other small businesses against the wall may be aided by a \$2 million relief fund... From Monday, businesses will be able to claim from \$500 to \$2000. They can apply at the Town Hall, and will need to prove they are... Mercury customers; have annual turnover of less than \$250,000; need assistance to operate because of the power crisis; and be located in the [CBD] and unable to move elsewhere... A[n]... Auckland Energy Consumers Trust... trustee... said people would be compensated for some losses on phone rentals, leases, security and generator hire. They could expect to get money in 12 to 24 hours. But food shop proprietors would not be given money to compensate for food that had to be discarded. Insurance would normally cover that... [The] Mayor... said... Auckland City Council... tenants could expect about two weeks rent-free as well as the rates-penalty relief announced earlier this week... Meanwhile... apartment... dwellers hit by power cuts have been warned to flush out their water pipes – or risk catching potentially fatal diseases. The alarm was raised by Metrowater, which said residents risked catching water-borne infections like Legionnaire’s Disease or being poisoned by lead or copper which leached into stale or stagnant water. City apartment blocks with electric pumps that have been out of action for a week or more are most at risk... As a precaution, engineers will flush the water mains in the [CBD] area tomorrow to ensure that supplies from all its water mains are fresh... Metrowater was also concerned about a possible build-up of explosive levels of methane gas in apartments where sewage pumps have been out of action... [Inner-city] residents should flush their toilets during check-up visits to... prevent gas building up.

...BUSINESSES have been told not to move back into Auckland’s city centre and Mercury Energy has called for [more] generators... as the power crisis drags into its second week... Four extra generators are being flown in from A[US] within the next 24 hours; more may follow next week. Mercury is also investigating bringing in... generators that were to have been used by allied forces in the Persian Gulf during strikes against Iraq.

...Last Thursday was... the... Mercury Energy chief executive[’s]... 60th birthday and apart from a few presents strewn around the office, no one would have noticed. [His wife had] cancelled a surprise city centre party because there was no power – and it wasn’t quite appropriate anyway. “It hasn’t been the best of birthdays,” said... [the guy who] considered putting his head in the oven [upon hearing that] Auckland’s fourth power cable had failed. “Then I realised it was electric...” ...Surprisingly, there have been tougher times for [the guy] who was appointed chief executive in April 1994... [– like when it] was the chief executive of the South East Queensland Electricity Board 12 years ago[and] workers took on the government [by going] on strike, blacking out the whole territory for three weeks. “In a sense that was more difficult than this. There isn’t a risk to life or limb here. Most people can move out of the city. In Queensland everything was blacked out and we never knew when it would end.” ...When... offered the... job as... [Mercury’s] chief executive... the... A[US]n was... “not at all interested. The prospect of managing a distribution utility in N[Z] was not going to set me on fire,”... Money may have inflamed his interest. When his appointment was announced, a former Mercury Energy trustee... – who had resigned in protest at what [the trustee] saw as the creeping privatisation of a publicly owned asset – claimed his salary package was worth \$450,000 a year. Both... [himself] and the company’s chair[person]... disputed that figure, although unnamed senior company sources confirmed it. But at the end of what has been the most torrid week of his tenure[, the AUSn] could be forgiven for wondering whether the money’s good enough. As the city was plunged into the darkest depths of the power crisis [the AUSn] was keen to portray himself as a [manager] determined to face the music – and equally resolute that [it] would not be distracted by a witchhunt or a call for public bloodletting... [The AUSn] believes the blame placed on Mercury is unfair. “...Nothing last week shook my confidence that we haven’t made mistakes. I’m sure there hasn’t been a cover-up... The worse any inquiry will come up with is that someone may have made an error of judgment but there are no signs of that yet. Some of the media comment has been cruel in the extreme. If you are going to rubbish people you are doing everyone a disservice. I have a clear conscience. I don’t stay awake at night thinking about small businesses struggling... [However, at] the moment the reputation [of Mercury] is as low as you can get and my personal reputation is somewhat below that. If the inquiry establishes there is blame attached, without a doubt, you can expect my resignation.”

...THE power crisis which has blacked out central Auckland was probably both foreseeable and preventable, despite claims to the contrary... But fingers which point to... [Mercury]'s move to reduce staff and blame this for causing shoddy maintenance as a cause of the problem, appear wide of the mark. The blackouts were unlikely to have been caused by lack of maintenance. Instead, the probable culprit appears to be the way Mercury managed rising demand for electricity from CBD customers through an increasingly vulnerable line network... In 1992, inner city apartments were barely a gleam in a developer's eye. By 1997 they had increased in number by 458%. In 1996 alone, more new apartments were completed than existed in total in 1992. Apartments are comparatively high users of electricity, with their requirements for hot water, cooking, heating and airconditioning, as well as services such as elevators, electronic security doors, lighting and alarms. And they often replace low-grade buildings, which were vacant or used for purposes such as storage, and which had very low electricity requirements. Similarly, the CBD office market recovered strongly... [from] the severe post-87 sharemarket crash recession... The amount of prime CBD office space which was occupied increased by 50% between 1992 and 1997. And modern offices with their computers, faxes, and airconditioning[, etc.], are big users of electricity. Other major commercial users located near the CBD, such as Ports of Auckland, also benefited from strong growth... Over the past few years it has... [increased its] need for power by 40%... In the last week, some commentators have claimed Mercury was too distracted by its protracted takeover bid for neighbouring Power N[Z] to take heed of this growth and ensure an adequate supply of electricity was available to the city. But that claim is unfair and untrue. In fact, it continued to work on the original plan to double the amount of electricity it could supply... Had the tunnel been completed on time, as Mercury envisaged, then the present crisis would almost certainly have been avoided. But it was not to be. The company did not gain the necessary consents under the Resource Management Act until June 1996, and by the beginning of 1997, Mercury had still been unable to conclude satisfactory contracts with the owners of the land under which the tunnel was to travel. These were... Transpower, Transit N[Z], the Auckland City Council and Tranz Rail. In announcing the tunnel plan in 1995, Mercury['s] network general manager... gave security of supply as a major reason for its development, and in words which now have an ominous overtone, described the motivation behind it as "make sure the lights stay on, make sure the lights stay on and make sure the lights stay on, or resign"... [Then, at] the beginning of 1997[, it] admitted that without the tunnel, the strain on the company's ageing cables would lead to outages and restrictions. Those words have since proved unfortunately prophetic.

...The crisis crippling the city was foreshadowed by blackouts in December 1995, and the following January and February... with faults and failures in three of the four cables now out of action... Mercury just managed to salvage the situation but the near-disaster prompted shaken engineers to warn the Auckland City Council that [Mercury] expected its system to fail by the end of 1997. Mercury bosses now say that prediction – revealed in the N[Z] *Herald* yesterday – was based on faster growth in power demand than actually happened... "Various large projects, including Britomart... have not been completed," said the Mercury general manager... Mercury had expected that the total [CBD] load would increase from 202MV in 1995 to... 222.3 this year.

...NO ONE can sensibly argue that the sprawling civic conglomerate that is Greater Auckland is easily managed or notably efficient. It has grown too rapidly, spread too far, suffered from a diverse kind of political tribalism, and is now reaping the whirlwind of it all... The provision of the Sky Tower, like the Harbour Bridge of earlier years, gave Aucklanders something of an edifice complex, but the opening of Te Papa at Wellington might have blunted that psychosis. The provision of such big-ticket items sometimes blunts the realities of civic management. It is what is not on show, not a tourist positive, that makes a community tick – the quality of water and the infrastructure of pipes which deliver it; the power available at the flick of a switch, provision for sewage and rubbish disposal. Because communities do not see or even think deeply of such services until they no longer operate efficiently, politicians are able to concentrate on the obvious, big-ticket edifices in prominent view. This is not a problem for... big cities... alone... There... [aren't] many communities which have not suffered from the extravagant lethargy of previous councils... not giving a proper priority to services, but who point to new buildings and their ilk as memorials to their own constipated egotism... [By the way,] Labour's energy spokes[person says]... the terms of reference for the inquiry... into Auckland's power crisis... should be as broad-ranging as possible.

...It's a catastrophe of national – dammit, international – significance and it's going to take us years to get over it if we recover at all. I refer... to last week's revelations that, whatever we may have believed up till now, lemmings do not hurl themselves off cliffs to drown. Reuters whipped the story on to the wires the minute it broke: a group of British naturalists had looked up from their binoculars to tell us that lemmings aren't leapers. Indeed they are "strong swimmers and have a well-honed instinct for survival." Better late than never, you might say. But I'm not sure it's that simple. The inquiry to find out how the plug got pulled on downtown Auckland should add to its terms of reference the job of finding out why we weren't told about the lemmings before now. We've been wandering around for years using these hamster-like rodents as a handy simile for mad suicidal behaviour and now these squinting twerps pop their heads up out of the undergrowth and blandly advise us that lemmings are nature's great survivors. In fact, the BBC television programme that revealed the story told us... [lemmings] get it on under snow which, if you don't mind my saying so, is close to the exact opposite of hurling yourself off a cliff. The ramifications of all this are hard to comprehend... We're going to have to add some of these naturalists to a panel which will help rewrite the dictionaries. "Breeding like lemmings" is going to nudge its way into the vernacular, particularly now RCD has made the rabbit inappropriate as an exemplar of furious fertility. (The bunny doesn't have to miss out altogether: "dying like rabbits" will surely soon replace "dying like flies" in popular usage, especially across the Tasman where flies don't die. We could just import the expression like we imported the virus.) While we're about it we should take a look at a few of the other zoological fictions that support metaphorical usage. We can stop saying "blind as a bat." Bats (and beetles and moles and owls) are not blind, I have discovered. And if naturalists – whose credibility has taken a bit of a hammering over this – really think an elephant never forgets, they should tell us how they know. Do horses really have a big appetite or sweat a lot? Who ever saw a crocodile pretending to cry? I think we need to be told.

...As 'Black Monday' hit the city, businesses were faced with a sudden test of their system's flexibility in an emergency. Some sank and some swam – off to the suburbs with their databases... [An] accounting firm... had upgraded the software on its main computer not long before the lights went out. That meant its four IT staff could quickly reboot it at [a] new remote location and get back all the e-mail, database, tax and other capabilities in double-quick time. "If we didn't have that, we were not going to be able to do any work,"... And when Internet provider Xtra's power went down... on Sunday... it simply carried its servers and other technologies across the road to its Mayoral Drive backup site... The next day the customers did not know the difference... These examples illustrate the searing management lesson of the great blackout: that information technology can save the day. Those companies best positioned to pick up their databases and run were the ones that survived the best. Of course many businesses cannot do that. Restaurants, hotels, manufacturers, the Ports of Auckland and others tied to fixed locations had to muddle along the best they could. But the "portable" businesses such as the professional firms reaped the rewards of heavy investment in [IT. One law]... firm... loaded up its mainframe and departed the Coopers & Lybrand building on Saturday morning at the first hint that the [CBD]'s power might collapse... [The law firm] was ready because it had done its usual... backup of... business on Thursday night. This is called an "incremental backup" – anything new goes on the tape. Also, as usual, the tape had been dispatched to other centres in case of fire or earthquake. So when it had to vacate the building... the firm had a current database to work with... [The firm]'s IT people deconstructed the tape in Wellington and fired it back to the new remote site for the start of the week... The backup-obsessed [NZ] Futures and Options Exchange gave one of the week's most impressive performances. It has backups on backups so that members can keep trading on their screens in all situations bar war and pestilence. When the power went off for everybody else, it kept on humming for the traders through a system of cables running between Wellington and Auckland. If that failed, there was an ISDN backup. The parent exchange in Sydney has its own UPS (Uninterruptible Power Source) feeding the juice to a bank of eight computers, each with its own "hot backup." The Sydney Futures Exchange favours multiple computers over a single mainframe, because the chief executive... believes they

reduce the risk of a complete knockdown. And if all else failed at the N[Z] exchange's base in South Sydney, it could still operate through yet another power backup site in North Sydney. "However, if all of Sydney went out, we would be in trouble,"... Because power is "mission-critical" to exchange members, all can fall back on remote... fully wired... dealing rooms waiting under dustsheets for... years... for events like last week. For example, Bankers Trust has a 62-seat dealing room in Papatoetoe. Some companies did not have to move. The ASB Bank has a basement full of generators. But Countrywide had only one generator to keep its treasury going, and most of its central staff had to move to suburban branches.

...A large generator destined for a building at the Auckland Institute of Technology was flown all the way from Singapore only to be dropped and damaged at Auckland Airport. The AIT general manager... said the generator was a write-off, but insured. The polytechnic had hired it and flown it to N[Z] yesterday at a cost of about \$15,000... The... 1500kg... 350kW generator was not the biggest flown into [NZ] last week... Some of the generators brought in... were 10 times larger. AIT will still open as planned this morning on the main electricity supply. A replacement generator... will arrive this afternoon... [Incidentally, an a]sthma sufferer... had to be put on oxygen and drugs after suffering an attack trying to reach her fifth-floor doctor... [- who] has treated others affected by the power crisis. One patient had fallen down dark stairs twice in the past week, suffering severe bruising... [The doctor] was disappointed that the... [building] had not been put on a generator. The building manager had told her it was too old to have one... Another patient at Auckland Metro Doctors in the Dingwall Building in Queen St had his nebuliser treatment ended halfway through by a power cut.

...an A[US]n... aged 81... who spends a lot of time in... [NZ,] has had enough of Mercury Energy and its promises. After coping for more than a week with on-again, off-again power supply to her... third-floor Liverpool St... apartment, [the]... member of the Auckland Racing Club... thought that yesterday [it] could at least plan her day around the fact that the power company had promised... electricity all morning. But [the AUSn] had been up for just half an hour when the power went off at 7 am – and stayed off until nearly 2 pm... "I've lived in many cities in the world, and I can't imagine this happening anywhere else, unless there was an earthquake or some other natural disaster... Mercury has got to take responsibility for this..." A spokes[erso]n... said the company was trying to give some certainty to consumers about power supplies... "We can only apologise for the frustration,"... Meanwhile, anyone considering withholding rent for properties with no power is being advised to think again. A commercial lawyer has suggested that the courts might back such a stand, but Housing N[Z]'s tenancy service division says that it is unlikely.

...the fund to provide relief for businesses suffering financial hardship because of the crisis... [has so far] paid out... \$16,000... to 19 claimants. There had been 148 inquiries. Of those that had applied, 84[%] had been approved. One business, Cafe Tom Yum, is spending its tax money to stay afloat. The Victoria St Thai restaurant has been ruled ineligible for the hardship fund because its turnover is about \$300,000. Its income is therefore \$50,000 too high for it to qualify as a small business... [T]he husband of [the] owner... said... his wife had invested between \$150,000 and \$200,000 in the restaurant and now faced losing it. "When we get to the end of next month and can't pay the GST we will have to look at putting the business on the market – that's ridiculous." A spokes[erso]n for Redmond Software said: "Where is our compensation? Just because we've had to relocate doesn't mean we aren't losing a whole lot of money." "...It stinks," said... a drycleaning contractor, after being turned down... His premises are in Birkenhead but 90[%] of his business comes from the inner city, where [the drycleaner] picks up and delivers clothes and gets paid on a commission basis. "I completely rely on the area for my living. There must be hundreds of cleaners and courier drivers in my position." ...last night... the... Treasurer... urged business not to be overwhelmed by the power crisis, the Asian implosion or the drought but to focus on the underlying strength of the N[Z] economy. "Let's not lose sight of the whole picture. Let's keep things in perspective and recognise that we have got the fundamentals right for future growth... We should not talk ourselves into a lack of confidence when we have everything to be confident about."

...Now Auckland's power crisis gets really serious. With the wait for a secure electricity supply stretching out to 10 weeks, the strain on business is escalating fast... Some small companies were mortally wounded... last week... and will die... [However,] the large majority survived on adrenalin, can-do spirit, adventure and humour. But such stimulating breaks from the normal pressures and routines of business wear very thin very quickly. The first day, it was fun for teams of lawyers to work around a senior partner's dining room table. By Friday, they might have had enough of such camaraderie... This week, business people will be more tired and, worse, more frustrated... Not only is white collar output lower than usual[-] ...under this stress, the risk of people making bad and costly decisions is rising rapidly. Given the integrated nature of N[Z]'s economy, the repercussions will be national... Mercury's timetable for restoring power keeps slipping... No business which went to the effort and cost of moving into temporary accommodation will want to come back downtown until it feels Mercury can offer reasonable security of supply... People can help Mercury by distrusting it. If they stay away from downtown, power consumption will stay low. But the distrust will cost every business... [□ The] power crisis is being seen as a warning of what might happen if Year 2000 computer problems aren't fixed... "This crisis has revealed an appalling lack of continuity planning," said... the... United MP... who has been trying to get the Government to take a more active role encouraging businesses to ready themselves for the millennium. [The MP's comments were backed up by the] author of *A Survivor's Guide to the Year 2000 Problem*, [who] said the Millennium Bug could make Auckland's problems... [- which are] reasonably narrowly-focussed... [-] look like child's play.

...Betting has all but come to a halt at the Victoria St TAB since the inner city was hit by power cuts nearly two weeks ago. But [the] manager of the agency... has found a new way to keep punters happy while they wait for the power to come back on – speculating about where the blame for the crisis lies. So far... the... law firm... [that chose the majority of Mercury's directors] is odds-on favourite in the Whose Head Should Roll Stakes... [If you can prove God was responsible, you stand to receive \$500 for each \$1 bet. Another odds-on favourite was the] Mayor of Auckland, [who]... yesterday widened the eligibility of businesses for Mercury Energy's relief fund, sparking criticism from a trustee of the company's consumer trust. After complaints from businesses who were barred from obtaining relief, [the mayor] raised the cutoff point for small businesses to a maximum annual turnover of \$400,000... [The trust member] said it was an "extraordinary situation" that [the mayor] was making decisions on who got fund money... Meanwhile, [pleas]... for an emergency bailout of struggling central Auckland businesses sparked crossed wires in the... Government leadership yesterday. At first the Treasurer... responded sympathetically to a request from the Auckland mayor... for an emergency relief fund, saying the Government could consider a range of options... [- including having] the Government give businesses money now and claim this back from Mercury if the company were found responsible... But within two hours the P[M – who, along with her Energy Minister, also features in the Whose Head Should Roll Stakes –] had overruled her [fellow cabinet member] and firmly rejected direct financial aid... [A letter from the mayor] asked the Government to treat the crisis the same way it would a rural disaster... It was over to the Government to decide how much to give and how the fund should be administered, [the letter said. But the PM's response was]... "We still believe that Mercury Energy... has the primary responsibility to deal with any issues of compensation and loss. We are not going to ask the N[Z] taxpayer to pick up what is clearly the responsibility of a commercial entity."

...*'Fiscal responsibility' led to buck-passing...* While Mercury Energy deserves a great deal of disgrace as a consequence of the failure of its Auckland cables, L... [-] a political economist and economic historian... [-] believe we need to look at the bigger picture. The problems stem from the growth of Auckland at the expense of the rest of the country, and from the effects of two cultures now widely pervasive in N[Z]. The first culture, that of commercialisation of all aspects of life, treats public infrastructure as no different from other commodities... The second culture, a recent reinterpretation of "financial responsibility," suggests to us that not spending money is generally more responsible than spending one's income. A financially responsible enterprise is one which is seen to have cut its workforce to the bone. The Government has taken a strong lead in spreading this culture, [especially] through its Fiscal Responsibility Act... Budget surpluses are seen nowadays more as a means to cutting taxes than to a commitment to invest in the social and physical infrastructure of the nation. Financial responsibility has come to mean maximising

surpluses and externalising costs, meaning making someone else pay for the catastrophes... As we noticed with the Electricity Corporation in 1992, and Auckland's water services in early 1994, it was cheaper for the supplying utilities to pray for rain than to prepare for its absence. Another part of the problem is that, thanks to the devolution of responsibility, public utilities are constituted to defend their patch, even if it means legal disputes. Mercury... found itself in a dispute with Transit N[Z], causing a long delay in starting the tunnel solution. Whereas the coordination of infrastructure is of paramount importance to the public, this bigger picture is often lost on the utilities themselves... Ironically, [the]... devolution of responsibility that... now affects all areas of public life... coincided with the rapid expansion of executive central Government. At each reform, the Government has been increasingly able to stand aloof from failures in the supply of public goods... The electricity supply problem is simply another chapter in the problems of water shortages, overstretched schools, public hospitals, inadequate public transport and gridlock on Auckland's roads. N[Z] is starting to display the regional imbalances characteristic of South American countries. Like Buenos Aires, Greater Auckland has one-third of its nation's population [– which means] Auckland's problem is N[Z]'s problem... While I neither live nor work in Auckland's central city area, I am nevertheless inconvenienced by the shutdown of the city. I don't want to have to pay twice, by having to share in the payment of compensation to central city businesses. Rather than focusing on blame, I want to see something good come out of this crisis, something like a national commitment to public utilities. A start might be an end to the pressure from Wellington to privatise the Auckland Regional Services Trust.

...The Treasury's worst fears over the costs of the Auckland power crisis came a step closer last night with confirmation that cuts are likely for a further seven weeks... after two of the four big... cables failed critical voltage tests... at the final stages of repair. A brief flicker of hope during the day when Mercury successfully restored one of the... failed cables ahead of expectations gave way to gloom in the evening. A grim-faced Mercury chief executive... delivered the news financially stricken Auckland businesses had been dreading: "I said 10 days ago it was a dark time – it is much darker now... There is no apology great enough and I realise this will be absolutely devastating for our customers, as it is for us... It is true to say that all of us today are in a state of quite deep shock." ...Last week, Treasury officials put the possible cost to [NZ] at \$600 million but expected to escape with much less if the crisis were resolved by Monday, as Mercury... [had once] predicted... For today and tomorrow the city would continue to be split into morning and afternoon supply areas, with Mercury able to meet about 80[%] of the current (heavily reduced) total morning load, 50[%] of afternoon load and 100[%] of evening load... The introduction tomorrow of a transman cargo ship, Union Rotorua, hired by Mercury to pump 12MW, will add to the 34MW of diesel-powered generators already in operation... [– bringing the total] available... to... 104MW... Other options for Mercury include... hiring a second ship or putting more mobile generators on barges. However, there are constraints on Quay St substation, which is closest to the port... A Ports of Auckland spokes[person]... said all the cargo on board... the Union Rotorua... had to be unloaded before Mercury could begin refitting it... Mercury was paying for transporting the cargo by rail and road to... Wellington, Lyttelton and Nelson.

...The latest chapter in the power fiasco has forced the Government to step in and stop suburban trains to speed up construction of the cable that will become Auckland's lifeline. The Minister of Energy... said Trans Rail had agreed to stop all trains on the Newmarket line... between Penrose and the city. This would shorten the 10-week construction period by several weeks, [the minister said, although it] could not give a definite time-span... [The minister] planned to ring contractors to try to find out how to get the power poles up faster and whether there were any restraints due to a lack of materials or people to dig the holes... Details would be confirmed today but the Penrose commuter line may be closed as soon as tomorrow. Trans Rail would make alternative arrangements for commuters by rerouting traffic through other lines and putting on additional buses... [Meanwhile, only] a fraction of a \$2 million fund to help small businesses through the power crisis has been claimed. By yesterday afternoon just \$114,000 had been collected by 126 people – despite a widening of the eligibility criteria last week. "We were led to believe there were hundreds of businesses going to the wall," said the chair[person] of the Auckland Energy Consumer Trust... "Where are these people?" ...The Mayor of Auckland... said some people had been put off by false rumours. [The mayor] wished to make it clear that accepting money from the fund did not prejudice legal action people might want to take against Mercury in any way. And the forms were completely confidential... There was little chance that people who were not Mercury customers would get money, despite some of them relying on the [CBD] for their income[, although the mayor]... was prepared to look at the criteria again tomorrow if the numbers were still low. It was unlikely that the maximum payout of \$2000 would be raised... [The mayor also said it] was not put off by the... [PM] pouring cold water on [his] plea for crisis funds from the Government... [The mayor claimed to have] some ideas to discuss with [the PM] when they meet tomorrow, but did not wish to go into specifics at this stage.

...Auckland lawyers were warned off becoming involved in the fight between Mercury Energy and the heavyweight A[US]n law firm brought in by its disgruntled customers. [Two] local lawyers... are helping [the Melbourne law firm. One claimed yesterday to have] been approached by colleagues who had told him it was not wise to tackle Mercury... and its powerful legal team... Colleagues said battling "the establishment" would rebound on him later. "It's an unfortunate fact that some lawyers are probably reluctant to get involved in taking on big corporations because, if you offend them, that will offend other people, and it might stir up trouble... Personally, I don't care – I will take on anybody." [The Melbourne law firm] have come to N[Z] with a big reputation gained from a series of victories against A[US]n corporates.

...Most Mercury Energy directors... [– who] will face multi-million dollar personal liability suits if aggressive A[US]n legal bounty-hunters name them in High Court actions on behalf of Auckland businesses... – ...are shielding behind a legal gag imposed by their own lawyers instead of fronting up in public to hard questions on the power fiasco... The *Business Herald* yesterday asked Mercury's directors if they were "satisfied" with the way the company's risk management had handled the crisis. It also sought answers on risk management policies and the adequacy of technical briefings given to directors. Several directors cited an agreement to leave comment to [Mercury's chairperson] as a reason they could not answer the questions. However, [the chairperson], who has been undergoing... treatment to alleviate terminal cancer, told the *Business Herald* [it] would not be answering the questions... cit[ing] legal advice... Just one director agreed to answer the... questions: [the] former Goodman Fielder Wattie chair[person]... who said the possibility that the final two cables might fail was never raised.

...N[Z]'s largest power supply company had no effective risk management strategies in place to cope with the unexpected blowout of all its main lines into Auckland's commercial heart. That has been confirmed by *Business Herald* investigations... [Mercury's chairperson] and chief executive... also miscalculated on the extend of the crisis... [– although] investigations show that... [a] week after two of the four main cables supplying central Auckland broke down, Mercury[']s... engineers did not warn the company's directors of the possibility that a third cable could fail... [E]ngineers discussed the possibility among themselves, [but] did not canvass the possibility... in a February 16 report prepared for Mercury directors. The engineers did note that with two electrical failures in key circuits, there was a need to plan for similar faults in those cables in the future. But the company's top officials... were not formally told of the potential for a breakdown in the other two main circuits keeping the city alive.

...The Government will present a survival plan for central Auckland to shellshocked Mercury Energy bosses this morning. The aim is to have much of the city back to business within five days despite the crippling power restrictions... The plan – nicknamed Apollo 13 after the lunar module that had to shut down almost all its normal operating systems to make it back to Earth – involves assembling a team of experts to advise Mercury and its customers how to run their businesses on minimum power... Under Apollo 13, businesses could return to the central city, but only with extreme energy conservation measures... [I]t was estimated that most commercial buildings could cut their power consumption by... 20[%] by removing unnecessary lights, turning air conditioning up or off, and installing power saving devices on office equipment... Owners could be offered discounts on electricity bills if they agreed to cut use... But indications yesterday were that the... [PM] and officials advising her may be overly optimistic... The plan's chances of success may be limited by Mercury's willingness to cooperate[– especially while the PM]... is advising businesses

crippled by the... energy crisis to sue Mercury... [-] technical difficulties and arguments over who should bear the costs... Meanwhile, a business group is planning a \$180,000 multimedia advertising campaign to draw shoppers back to the district. Heart of the City, a pressure group initially set up to force rates relief, is using \$80,000 of its own money, plus \$50,000 from Mercury and the same sum from the Auckland City Council, to promote a St Patrick's Day parade as payback time. They will ask the council to close Queen St all day on Saturday, March 14, for a festival to celebrate surviving the crisis. A lucky shopper will win a BMW car in a prize draw. A spokes[per]son... said: "We've got to get the shoppers back or else." It is indeed a shoppers' market in Queen St. Most businesses are offering "blackout sales" and discounts... But while plans are hatched to save businesses from bankruptcy, the Department of Social Welfare will be setting up shop in the Auckland Town Hall. It anticipates its unemployment business will boom... The first casualties of the crisis are expected to fall in the restaurant, cafe and bar industry.

...Cheers restaurant and bar is opening today for the first time in 12 days... [but the news might not console the directors of Mercury Energy, whose company] is now almost certain to face a class action by hundreds of businesses for compensation running into hundreds of millions of dollars.

...Small business owners trying to get a share of the \$2 million emergency fund have found cashing in on their woes no easy task... [One person] said his wife... was this week given a cash cheque... made out by the Auckland City Council, which is administering the fund. Because both the council's bank, the B[NZ] Town Hall branch, and [his wife's] bank, the ASB Customs St branch, are closed due to the power crisis, [the husband] tried to cash his wife's cheque at another branch of the ASB. There [the husband] was told the bank could not cash his cheque and [the couple] would have to wait five days for it to be cleared. If [they] wanted a special clearance it would cost an extra \$12. [The husband] rang the council helpline and was advised to take the cheque to the Newmarket or Parnell branches of the BNZ who "were accepting the cheques." • The value of claims from small businesses... has almost doubled. More than \$86,000... [was] paid out... yesterday... taking the total to over \$200,000.

...The P[M] sailed away from Auckland's power woes yesterday afternoon... [The PM's] two-hour caper was not mentioned in her appointments list for the day [when it] was expected to show leadership over the Mercury mess. [The PM] spent only an hour in official meetings earlier in which [it] stressed the need to tackle the power problem immediately[- then said it] would visit struggling shopkeepers before leaving for Japan tomorrow. But the PM took to the sun-drenched Waitemata Harbour shortly after noon with h[er] husband... and their two children... [The PM] quickly came under fire from business people for putting her pleasure ahead of their pain. [A restaurateur] would love to have joined [her] on the harbour. "I would rather be sailing but I can't - I've got a business to save... I'm completely disappointed with [her] whole attitude." Her failure to hit the streets urgently offended even traditional supporters... [A]n unabashed conservative, said the PM had let him down. Yesterday, [it] shut one of his two cafes for four weeks.

...Aucklanders will put on brave faces and summer clothes as they head back warily into a still-under-powered central city on Monday. That will mean little or no air conditioning, limited lift service, less lighting and reduced use of office equipment... Barring further disaster, a total of 122MW should be available... By Tuesday, matters should improve. Another seven diesel generators are being flown from Singapore and Perth... adding 13.2MW. If the second cable is working[- even at a 'reduced capacity' -] that will take available power up to the basic requirement of 150MW... The Labour Department is warning building owners not to go too far with conservation measures. Workers must have adequate working conditions... [While visiting the] Mercury headquarters yesterday, [the PM]... urged Aucklanders to be tolerant and Mercury to adopt Dunedin Electricity's response to the national power crisis in 1992. Dunedin paid its customers to reduce demand and cashed in heavily on the Electricity Corporation spot market by selling power back. The Mercury chief executive... tactfully agreed to "embrace the concept" of demand-side management... • T[he]... owner of an Onehunga generator firm... Power Hire... promised a month ago to supply two 800kW generators for [a concert by the two piano players (r:p1621, ln23)], but the power crisis left him short of equipment and [the owner] warned concert bosses about this. [The owner], who has set up two generators at Auckland Hospital... accepted that [it] had a deal to supply equipment for the concerts but was stunned by the promoters' attitude. "When I told the Americans we could no longer supply them with generators they threatened to sue me. Given the country's problems I think they could have been more understanding." [The owner] finally managed to offer organisers one generator free. Last night, [the]concert promoter... said an American subcontractor was responsible for hiring generators for the tour and admitted that the legal threat was "unnecessary." ...[the concert organisers - who donated] 500 tickets to central-city retailers... [- were] forced to plug into Auckland's dwindling supply of generators... after the plane transporting the show's gear was rammed by a truck in the U[S. Previously, a]... production coordinator said [one of the piano players] had offered to fly in generators after hearing foreign reports that the whole of Auckland was without power.

...When the power crisis first struck there was that old resignation Aucklanders have from time to time: a water crisis in a region where it rains most of the year; a harbour foreshore that boasts oil tanks and containers on prime real estate; entertainment centres that make a bunker look attractive... And now this. But as the nights went by, the humour ran dry. Now, if you ask around, there's that inarticulate disbelief that this could have happened. And an unfocused anger, of course, as we are bitterly reminded when someone screws up that there is no tradition of resignation in this country. Highly paid people tough it out, deflect blame and it all blows over. But not this time. Too many people are hurt, too much money lost. There is... a litigious mood... Two words keep coming up: "Melbourne lawyers." Someone's going to pay, is what you hear. But who? Those who always pay, say the cynics. Us, somehow... Some say the big business guys in the city are reaping what they sowed with their free-market talk and privatisation... But what ordinary Aucklanders have exhibited most is patience, almost passivity. It might have been different if the bodies had started turning up in elevators after that first weekend. But there have been no protests outside Mercury offices with the waving of bill-hooks and a baying for blood; no looting [(as occurred during 'New York's 1977 blackout')] nor window smashing. Voices have been raised in anger, that's true, but we are behaving. We are even driving more carefully[- although having no] red to run[takes] the fun out of it maybe... The fact is we have behaved remarkably well - which is why it is unbecoming of the P[M] to suggest... we should be tolerant, exhibit "goodwill" and "try to make the best of what is a difficult situation." Ma'am, [we]... are, better than... [you] have any right to expect. Talk in candlelit bars and dark stairwells is of the woeful lack of leadership shown by those who have been styled our political masters or better... [A]t Mercury the PR war was lost early. Maybe it was "the most incredible, freakish bad luck you could ever imagine," as... [Mercury's chairperson said. But it] hasn't said much since. Very wise, sir. [Mercury's chief executive] must be the least telegenic front the company could have put up. All that icy, tight-lipped antipodean monotone... You have to ask, too, what kind of company has a "general manager future" called Dr Strange? This is comic-book territory. Still, we do live in Gotham City. And in the middle of this... one of the architects of Think Big... says this crisis will not derail a bold new programme of asset sales. My Mum would have clipped him one and told him that if [a person] could not say anything nice [the person] should not say anything at all. Except maybe about those... lawyer guys lurking in the background. Yes, we are that cynical about lawyers, big business and the free-market miracle - and we are taking it in the meantime because there is nowhere to put the anger. But we are patient - and we will find the place when the time is right. Heard the one about the diesel shortage?

...Auckland diesel deliverers cannot cope with the huge demand for generator fuel - and some businesses are being left dry... The owner of JD's Nightclub... said [it] had run out of diesel three times in as many days, for about an hour each time... [- although the owner] managed to keep his business going in the dark... The general manager of Shuttle Tankers... was asked to deliver diesel to 30 more generators yesterday, but... had to say no... "We have got trucks in from Whangarei and Hamilton, and we are running 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We just can't do any more." ...[the manager] said some people had been panicking, which had exacerbated the problem. "Some of them are ringing up when they still have three-quarters of a tank, saying, 'help, we are running out'." ...But the manager of the Wiri supply terminal... said that despite the rush for

fuel in the inner city, there was still plenty of supply... Diesel consumption from Wiri was only slightly up, at 1.3 million litres yesterday, compared with the usual 1.2 million litres a day... [M]ost diesel in Auckland originated at Marsden Pt refinery in Northland and was fed through a pipeline to the Wiri terminal[... which]... had almost 10 days' reserve... and Marsden Pt also had reserves.

...Go downtown... [and] listen to the music of the diesel in the city The heart of the city pumps diesel. When the lights go down the generators fire up, filling the air with such a din that the cars seem to roll with eerie noiselessness through the streets. On the morning that downtown Auckland grapples with the idea that this state of emergency could simply become a state of affairs, the pavements rattle and hum with an infernal combustion... Many [generators] are so shiny they look like they have just emerged from plastic packaging... At the foot of Wyndham St a small generator "farm" which has grown in parking places was once roughly fenced off with yellow plastic tape. The tape lies tattered now, but over the week, the assemblage of massive thundering boxes seems to have settled into place. Litter has gathered against its windward side; it looks like a permanent installation. This is the sight, these are the sounds, of a city... in a state of siege. The faces that peer from the shops are often anxious, as if the proprietors and staff are startled at the sight of a customer. In idle moments they gather in knots on the footpaths, exchanging stories of days disrupted and businesses bruised... This darkness has been seen around the world. The *Times* in London editorialised, perhaps overstating the case when it said the city "was suddenly brought back to its beginnings." But it did point up the magnitude of the problem when it reminded us that "electricity is the lifeblood of the e-mail age..." The paper's most contestable observation is that Aucklanders are "bemused, unsure whether to laugh at the plight of modern civilisation when its machinery fails or rail at the incompetence" of Mercury. As the city stares at another month or more of this, the grim laughter is fading. Walk the streets of the city and you hear another sound. And when the generators are finally switched off and we can hear it clearly, it may turn out to be a baying for blood.

...[a few] weeks ago a team of high-ranking Chilean businesspeople arrived in N[Z]. Their mission: to observe the workings of N[Z]'s economic miracle in action. As the country's largest business district faded into black, the delegation's raves about N[Z]'s economic performance turned to consternation. Within hours the elegantly suited visitors were on their cellphones to Santiago. "If this is the model, if the system works so well, how could something as fundamental as this happen?" ...[the] chief executive of [a firm of] stockbrokers and investment bankers, [who] spends much of his time talking to the money markets of the world... insists the crisis will generate international shock waves that will be felt for years to come. "It gets to the heart of whether a system [can be relied on]... Our clients are dumbfounded. We're getting calls from all around the world, people saying, 'We can't believe this is happening'." [The chief executive] is convinced that N[Z]'s economic reputation... is... wobbly... "The world has sensed that something's wrong... Now our bubble of credibility has well and truly burst. People don't understand that this is one of the most serious lapses in N[Z]'s performance since 84, when we had problems with the exchange rate. This will hurt us for a very, very long time to come... It's inconceivable Wall Street could ever be out of power... If that happened the power companies feeding New York would be sued out of existence. This is an appalling abrogation of duties. Overseas people are saying that the directors of Mercury, maybe even the Minister of Energy, should resign." [The] Bankers' Trust... has estimated the costs of a two-week power crisis as only 0.1[%] of gross domestic product. In terms of jobs, [Auckland's CBD has 4%] of the nation's workforce... But it is a part of the workforce with huge influence on business confidence... Today a bank rises on almost every corner, each one sucking up huge amounts of electricity. And these are serviced by tower blocks full of lawyers and accountants, who are in turn serviced by the little guys at street level...

Mind where you answer the call of nature, and watch your language. With those words of advice, 40 workers trooped off along Auckland's rail corridor... to save the city from electrical doom... As trains carried the power poles into place, and work gangs began digging the first of 110 holes needed for the project, oblivious drivers whizzed past on the Southern Motorway. No special ceremony attended the raising into position about 2 pm of the first pole... Planners from the contractors, GEC Alsthom, had spent sleepless nights designing the project and preparing the installation.

...Contractors working on the overhead cable project will work around the clock in a bid to finish the job in less than three weeks... GEC Alsthom... will even employ extra staff from rival firms if necessary... During the night... crews will work... with the help of floodlights... The most time-consuming part of the process is threading the six conducting cables and single earth cable along the route. Using nylon guide ropes, the cables are threaded 2km at a time. A winch is used to keep the tension in the cables, so they never touch the ground for the entire route. That could lead to corrosion problems. The threading is expected to take two weeks, and will begin even before all the poles are up... Complicating the process is a section of cable that has to go through a tunnel, and another over a highway.

...Affected residents are being left in the dark about work on an emergency overhead line. [One resident], whose Newmarket house overlooks two poles, said a letter Mercury Energy sent did not tell them anything useful. It should have stated what hours the line would be worked on, how high the poles would be and what, if any, the health risks were. [The resident] was surprised that work would be going on all night – it was the first [residents] had heard of it. "I get up at six every morning to go to work, and I need my eight hours' sleep." And [another resident], whose rented Newmarket house is almost directly in front of a pole site... had not received the letter at all. "I want to know what it looks like, what the noise level will be, and if there is any magnetic field." ...Nearby, [a resident said it] had just spent \$350 on a new television aerial, and wanted to know if the cables would interfere with reception... The letter stated that Mercury was writing to residents as "part of [its] pledge to keep Aucklanders informed." It said work would start at 8 am yesterday, and "you and your neighbours may notice some noise." ...Workers on the cable said one resident had been yelling at them from his balcony and had threatened to "blow it up" if they put the line in. Others, however, were not worried about disruptions. "I am happy so long as it helps the city out," said [someone else from Newmarket]...

Mercury's network manager... has turned to God... for... help... [The manager] said that... the "power of prayer support from our church" and messages of support from friends all over the world... is... the only thing [capable of] pulling... everyone... through... Auckland's power crisis... [While the manager is relying on prayers, the energy company] is preparing to pay Auckland businesses to go without power... [Mercury] will target about 240 businesses that have modern time-of-use meters... For most corporates the power bill makes up less than 1[%] of running costs, but they cannot run without it, so a realistic incentive not to use would have to be set hundreds or thousands of times higher than the price of the electricity.

...Mercury Energy was forced to rely on two cables it knew were unstable... because of the demands of the Britomart project. Documents obtained... under the Official Information Act reveal that Mercury, at the request of the Auckland City Council, agreed to relocate cable in Quay St and Britomart Place to make way for the controversial transport terminal... [that still] has yet to be granted the necessary Environment Court consents to begin construction... A letter from Mercury to the council dated May 22, 1997, says... that taking the 22kV cable circuit out of service meant... "relying on the... two 110kV gas-filled cables... which... will dramatically increase the risk of losing power to a large area of the [CBD]. The recent performance of these cables has shown that problems on one cable invariably causes problems to the other and therefore these cables are not considered reliable." The relocation, estimated to cost \$265,000, was completed in early January. The first 110kV cable keeled over on January 20.

...One of the more absurd conspiracy theories doing the rounds in the wake of the power crisis is that big business somehow had a hand in pulling the plug on Auckland because it was keen to get rid of the Resource Management Act. That feelings run strong on the RMA is without doubt[, and]... Mercury's network manager... is clearly no fan of the legislation. If it had not been for the RMA, [the manager] muses, Mercury could have had new cables to replace the ageing gas cables by now. "If it had been 10 years ago we would have just dug up the road, put great big cables in without anyone telling us [what to do]. Now we have to get approval." Engineers also point out that the RMA has made it virtually impossible for power companies to consider the cheapest and most efficient way of supplying power to... customers – through overhead lines. In fact, overhead

lines have fallen out of favour not because of the RMA but because the public hates them. They are seen as an eyesore, and therefore it is generally thought customers are prepared to pay more for underground supplies. [Furthermore, it] took just a few weeks for the Auckland Regional Council to grant Mercury a resource consent for its underground tunnel. According to the council's strategic policy manager... the RMA is a "convenient scapegoat. The same people who criticise the RMA and say it's a lengthy process are happy to use it to blackmail others,"...

The sudden death of Mercury's chief executive... has led the Government to delay the release of the report into the Auckland power crisis. [The chief executive] was alone in his Newmarket office when [the AUSn] suffered a heart attack and died about 2.20 pm. A meeting in Wellington later in the afternoon between the Minister of Energy... and Mercury board and trust members to discuss the report was cancelled... [T]he report, which is expected to be critical of Mercury and has still not been seen by anyone in the company, would now be released later this week or early next week. It had been due for release today. Both [the minister] and the Mercury chair[perso]n believe the stress on Mr Gilbert in the aftermath of the power crisis would have contributed to his death at 60. "It just shows you the sort of thing that can happen when you put senior management under extraordinary stress..." said [the minister. The chairperson] said Mr Gilbert... had been "totally devastated" at the failure of the downtown cables.

...The way Wayne Gilbert saw it, [the chief of Mercury] was "absolutely responsible" for plunging downtown Auckland into darkness... The... chief was only hours away from hearing what was in the Government report on the inquiry... when... apparently suffer[ing] a heart attack... [Wayne] was found by his secretary and attended by two paramedic staff at Mercury's offices... [They] spent... 40 minutes trying to resuscitate him. The burly A[US]n had previously had heart trouble and, like most mornings, had got up yesterday at 6.30 am, put on a beanie and plastic raincoat, and gone for a walk round Remuera with a neighbour... [That neighbour] and another... jointly owned a fishing boat with Mr Gilbert and they saw another side to the "hard and ruthless" public image of their friend... "[Wayne] was ruthlessly honest, extremely sensitive and extremely loyal..." After the release of the Government report, Mr Gilbert had planned to relinquish his position about September – his contract was to expire next March – and retire to A[US]. Among other things, [Wayne] wanted to indulge his passion for classic cars, "to try and recapture a bit of my youth before it all disappears." ...Wayne... was head-hunted by Mercury... because of his track record in restructuring similar companies across the Tasman. After a 16-year career in the brewing industry, [Wayne] was appointed general manager of the South East Queensland Electricity Board in 1984. His brief was to stop power charges rising faster than inflation. His attack on staffing levels pitched him into one of the most bitter industrial disputes in A[US]n history... 900 members of the state's toughest union, the Electrical Trades Union, were sacked after a dispute over the use of contract labour... [A] member of the union, described Mr Gilbert as... hard... "But we knew where we stood. [Wayne] made it clear that [Wayne] had a point of view and unless you could shift him, that was the way it was going to be." ...Mr Gilbert is survived by his wife... and three adult children.

...Why the lights went out: Mercury gets the blame... The inquiry, made public by the Minister of Energy... in Wellington yesterday... will provide ammunition for the big litigants, such as insurance companies, still expected to line up against Mercury – in the courts if necessary – seeking massive damages to cover their losses. The 193-page inquiry report... quotes from a Mercury letter, dated June 22, which claims nothing the company could have done would have prevented the crisis... [The chairperson of the three-member] inquiry team... is succinct: "We disagree... Too many people in Auckland suffered too much, personally and financially, for a narrower view to be taken." ...Blundering Mercury... bosses did not even know where their power cables were or on what side of the street they lay... In scenes resembling a Monty Python film, a consultant to the inquiry was led on a wild goose chase as Mercury engineers desperately tried to find missing cables without proper maps to guide them... [The] consultant... was amazed there were no markers showing where cables were supposed to be and Mercury had only the most basic of cable plans. On many occasions... [it] was stunned to find cables running through private gardens with trees and shrubs planted over them. Other experts discovered that Mercury... was not even aware that the landscape had been changed since the cables were first installed or that trees endangered some high-voltage cables – even though the risks were clearly visible to bystanders. In another episode, Mercury staff carefully removed kerbside markers for security reasons during the 1990 Commonwealth Games but forgot to put them back. The blunder meant the number of cases where roadworkers dug through cables rocketed. There were only three power cuts in the 32 years before the markers were removed – but three further blackouts since 1990. Yet despite contractors' cutting the cables, Mercury did not bother to protect cables from further damage, putting the entire city at risk.

...Central Auckland power supplies remain under threat of blackouts of up to four days, says the inquiry into the power crisis... [that] lays... blame squarely at the door of Mercury Energy and its predecessor, the A[EPB – although the]... Minister of Energy... acknowledged yesterday the previous National Government's role in allowing the flawed Mercury... company structure to come into being. [The minister, who remains happy to] blame... management failure[s within Mercury] for the crisis... would not have approved the establishment plan as... his ministerial colleague and previous Minister of Energy, had done in 1993... Consumers throughout [NZ] will get a better deal from electricity supply companies with improved customer contracts on the way to provide fairer compensation in power cuts. The inquiry recommended that Mercury's... "no worries" customer service guarantees be beefed up on the side of the consumers and the Government wants the move applied across the industry as a priority.

...Mercury Energy believes it is close to wrapping up all outstanding compensation claims over the power crisis. One of the largest claimants, Ports of Auckland, said yesterday that it had settled with the power company for \$1.3 million... A Mercury Energy spokes[perso]n... said only a handful of larger consumers had yet to reach agreement. And more than 90[%] of affected customers had now lodged claims for compensation. The Auckland City Council settled with Mercury and council insurers for \$2.4 million two months ago. [The spokesperson] said the company had set aside \$128.3 million for all costs incurred with the crisis, including the construction of an overhead emergency line. It would wait to see if that amount had been sufficient. But the issue of individual or group action aside from the Mercury compensation offer is still to be resolved. Yesterday a business lobby group, Power for the People, said some businesses that had gone broke during the crisis were still seeking independent legal action through... Wellington-based... law offices. Many of the businesses had earlier dropped out of possible group action when [a Melbourne-based] law firm... decided not to pursue a case... Mercury's compensation package... offered rebates or cash equal to six months of power bills.

...Six months on from the Auckland power crisis and morale among the staff at Mercury Energy is surprisingly high. Since the crisis the company has been pilloried by politicians and the public, has suffered a first financial loss, and has had to cope with the mayhem of new electricity industry laws. Senior Mercury managers have been forced to quit following the... crisis, while many other workers are likely to lose their jobs as new laws force power companies to consolidate... [A Mercury p]roject manager... noted this week that the upgraded system was as secure and modern as any in the world. For example, the new... \$23.5 million underground cable running from Mt Roskill to Liverpool St... is made of latest-technology materials that have a new type of insulation called XPLE. This plastic derivative is much more reliable than the gas and oil insulation in previous cables... The way... underground cables are installed has... been improved... Mercury is [now] using specialist packing material around the cable, rather than backfilling the surround with soil. Overheating of that backfill was partly blamed for some of the failures. The cable has also been encased in concrete to make sure that stray ditchdiggers do not pierce it... As an extra precaution against the likes of telecommunications contractors breaking the power cable, Mercury has meticulously recorded the route of it electronically. Other protective measures include running a fibre-optic cable the length of the power line, so that its heat can be monitored every 2mm. That will allow the cable to be automatically shut down to prevent any damage if the slightest hint of overheating is detected. The two gas cables serving the [CBD] are... being operated at less than

half their previous stress rating, to ensure that they will not overheat. The other two oil-insulated cables have yet to be repaired fully, but there are also plans to fix those. But it is the overhead line that remains the system's biggest safety net. The fact that it is easily accessible means it could be repaired within 24 hours, even if a train derailed and took out some of the poles.

...Regional power struggle ends... A six-year battle for control of the Auckland and Waikato electricity markets has come to an end, with Mercury Energy agreeing to sell its stake in Takapuna-based Power N[Z] to Utilicorp of the U[S]. As part of a series of deals agreed to yesterday, control of Hamilton's WEL Energy will return to local hands... [T]he community-owned WEL Energy Trust will pay about \$75 million for control of WEL Energy. The trust will also sell a stake it holds in Power NZ to Utilicorp. So far the deals do not include plans to buy out thousands of small shareholders in Power NZ and WEL Energy... Kansas-city based Utilicorp will pay Mercury \$300 million for one-third of Power NZ. Utilicorp already owns a third of the company. Mercury will make a profit of nearly \$100 million on the deal. That money will mostly offset the costs of the Auckland central business district power crisis this year... Mercury and Utilicorp have fought a sometimes vicious battle for control of Power NZ, including an advertising blitz that attacked the integrity of the company directors and management. Many of the early players in the battle have lost their boardroom jobs. Now, the companies have agreed to work together to unravel a series of legal hurdles they put up to stop the deals going ahead. The... catalyst for the change in attitude has been a revamp in electricity laws, which will make it illegal for companies to own both energy-trading and monopoly electricity line businesses. Mercury, Power NZ, and WEL Energy are likely to sell their electricity-trading and power-generation assets as a result of the law changes. □ *...The family of Folole Muliaga have not ruled out taking legal action against Mercury Energy and Counties Manukau Health Board after a report concluded a power cut that stopped oxygen therapy contributed to her death. Mrs Muliaga, 44, was receiving oxygen at her Mangere home when the power was cut on May 29 last year because of unpaid bills... The report said Mercury... acknowledged it was not fully compliant with guidelines that identified vulnerable customers, but had made changes since Mrs Muliaga's death.*

...THE day Mrs Muliaga's death was reported... online I was far away from this compassionate country. "Hell," I said to my travelling companions, "back home [someone] has died because [it] depended on a breathing machine and her power was cut off for not paying her bill." "Why didn't [it] pay the bill?" one of them asked. "Don't know... The story didn't say." When I got back a week or so later the story was still running hot. The P[M] was on the case, demanding answers to every question but that one. The power company was in full retreat and an unnamed agent who disconnected the power was the supposed villain of the piece. But still that question bothered me. No matter how poor the household, if a family member's life depends on the power, wouldn't it be the first bill you paid? The climate of outrage was such that even to ask the question seemed to be considered grossly improper... Finally... a coroner's report has provided a more complete account of the case, exonerating the unnamed agent who cut off her power. The coroner has found that had Mrs Muliaga or her son told the agent [it] was dependent on a respiratory machine, [the agent] undoubtedly would have used the discretion [the agent] had, and had used in previous cases. The coroner finds "some merit" in the contention that [the agent] should have told them [it] had the discretion, but... prefers to put that responsibility on the company.

...[A friend] of the Good Oil was jotting down how much a new car would set him back late the other night when the kitchen lights flickered and went out... [The friend... opened the back door to check the fuseboard and smelled burning. The switch marked "lights" was hot. "I turned it off with a piece of wood. It sparked for a second before spitting out scorching flame and leaving an even worse smell,"... [The friend] phoned Mercury Energy's 24-hour emergency number... But a recorded voice said the service was no longer available. So [the friend] phoned a neighbourhood electrical contractor who, the yellow pages said, was open 24 hours. No luck there, the contractor wasn't answering his paging service. Finally, [the friend] phoned 111 and the fire brigade arrived in minutes. A fire[officer] pin-pointed the short-circuit and shut it down. The brigade doesn't charge to fight a domestic fire or check the threat of a fire. It doesn't charge for a lot of other things either, but that's another story.

...A 63-year-old Methven [resident] charged with 12 counts of criminal damage relating to the sabotage of pylons and power poles... over a wide area of Canterbury in the past year... has denied any involvement in the incidents... [T]he 12 charges... each carry a maximum penalty of 14 years' imprisonment... Nine poles owned by Electricity Ashburton were attacked in two separate incidents of sabotage where the wooden poles were cut through with a chainsaw. Nine Transpower high-voltage steel power pylons were attacked in a similar way... [In related news,] Massey residents were back in their homes yesterday morning as work[ers] dismantled the power pylon that threatened to topple on to houses after a car crash. Up to 80 homes in and around Waimumu Rd were evacuated at 1.30am yesterday, until cranes were brought in to secure the buckled pylon. [One resident... who lives opposite the pylon... slept through the crash. "The first I knew anything was when police knocked on my bedroom window... Then I had to find alternative accommodation." ...[the resident] and his wife drove up to Huapai to stay with his daughter. "I don't think [my daughter] was too happy to see us at 2.30am." ...his 78-year-old neighbour had to call a taxi and stay with her grandson. Thirteen residents drank cups of tea and watched TV at the civil defence headquarters in Elcoat Ave... "Because no one was injured everyone was talking and helping each other and lots of reassurance was going on,"... says a civil defence manager... Police closed off roads and four patrols were assigned to the area to ward off burglars. The first residents were allowed back to their homes at 4am. [The resident who drove to Huapai] returned around 7am yesterday to take medication [it]d forgotten in the rush. Families from two homes 30 metres from the pylon were not allowed to return until mid morning.

...THE car crash into a power pylon which forced the evacuation of 80 Massey homes was an accident waiting to happen, says one resident... Waimumu Rd... residents have long been worried about the speed of some cars travelling along that stretch of road with a deceptive curve. It's the second time in six years a car has crashed into the pylon... [T]he road is used as a quicker route than Triangle Rd to get to the Don Buck Rd area. "We hear people putting their foot on the accelerators before the bend, which they don't really know is there,"... Her daughter's parked car was written off when a car smashed into it outside [thei]r house a year ago. "We've also had a motorcyclist come off, a car in the neighbouring section that's come off the road, and others not judging the curve." [The resident] wants a chicane in the road to force drivers to slow down, or even warning signs... [The resident] was woken at 10.30pm on Tuesday by the crash and later saw the driver being taken away by ambulance. Hers was not one of the homes evacuated by emergency services early on Wednesday, when fears rose the pylon would topple and drag other pylons with it... [The resident] says small wooden posts in front of the pylon... proved useless as a barrier on Tuesday night as the car missed them completely. "Pylons like that shouldn't be right next to the road,"... says [the resident. The] Waitakere deputy fire chief... says Transpower must put a "substantial" metal barrier in front of that pylon and its neighbour to prevent a tragedy. "It's on a bend and on a downward grade of the road as well. Even if there's not another crash for another 10 years, next time it happens the pylon could come down and somebody could be killed,"... Transpower[s] North Island field services manager... says there's "every likelihood" a more substantial crash barrier will be installed. [The manager] says repairs to the pylon are likely to take until the weekend, and Waimumu Rd will remain partly blocked by... cranes until then. "One leg is sheared off and the other one is buckled. We have to replace the bottom section of the tower which could take two or three days." [The manager] says it was lucky there was no power[passing] through the damaged pylon's cables at the time of the crash as it had been turned off for work on the line. [The manager] says the damaged pylon and the repair work will not affect power supplies to the area.

...When teams of police came knocking on Wednesday morning, most sleepy Massey residents quickly realised the danger to their homes from a nearly power pylon – damaged when a car crashed into it. But not all residents had exactly the same priorities about safety in the wake of the car crash. Police explained to one [guy] that if the damaged pylon fell it could take the others down, like a set of dominoes. The resident was very concerned, police inform Westie Bits, but his thoughts didn't run in the most obvious direction. "[The guy] was really worried about the threat the pylon had to his boat," says [the Senior Sergeant... who headed the evacuation. The [guy] headed off the doorstep for the boat to make sure it was absolutely secure. As constables walked up the path, they heard the [guy] say: "Oh, I'd better tell the wife."

...*Air crash ends life full of promise* A former... ski champion who had won a bout with cancer was piloting the helicopter that crashed in remote Fiordland... killing her and four American tourists. Janey Blair, aged 28, renowned for her “guts and determination,” was flying the tourists to a rendezvous with a boat on Lake Manapouri about 10 am when disaster struck. The Fiordland Helicopters chopper appeared to clip power-lines near the Manapouri power station, about 160km northwest of Invercargill. The wreckage was strewn over a beach and in the lake, the deepest in N[Z] and known to Maori as the Lake of the Sorrowful Heart. Yesterday afternoon, the bodies of Ms Blair... and the tourists... were returned to the Te Anau side of the lake. The[tourist’s] names were not available last night. Fifteen people have died in air crashes in the Southland-Fiordland area in the past year. Ms Blair, an experienced fixed-wing and helicopter pilot, was remembered yesterday as an “invincible action [gal].” ...The executive officer of Ski Racing N[Z]... said Ms Blair had helped shape the N[Z] ski racing industry. [Ms Blair] achieved impressive world rankings in the super G and the downhill, and in 1990 won the U[S gals’] combined junior title. “At that time they were the best results N[Z] had ever had.” What was shaping up to be an Olympic career took a setback in 1991 when Ms Blair had reconstructive knee surgery and then was diagnosed with thyroid cancer. In 1993, aged 21, [Ms Blair] fought her way back into the national ski rankings and beat[NZ’s first Winter] Olympic silver medallist... in the Wigley Cup. [Ms Blair] took up flying when... 18. At 21, [Ms Blair] was already flying commercial fixed-wing flights to Milford, and a year later became the only [gal] commercial biplane pilot operating in N[Z]. Ms Blair is survived by her parents and two sisters...

Aviation authorities say there have been delays in marking powerlines and introducing rules to prevent air crashes involving lines and other wires. But in the wake of Tuesday’s helicopter crash, which killed five people, the Civil Aviation Authority says there has been concentration on pilot awareness and education about wire danger... An expert had been brought from America to give seminars for both civil and military pilots and a range of “helikiwi” seminars on the same subject... Pilots yesterday criticised the lack of powerline markers. Queenstown pilot Janey Blair and two American couples were killed in the crash, on the shores of Lake Manapouri. The two couples, who were travelling together, had arrived in N[Z] the day before the crash. They were Sandra Elizabeth Robinson, aged 56, and her husband, Grover Cleveland Robinson III, 56, of Florida, and Chanetta Perdue Terrell, 65, and her husband, Richmond Britton Terrell, 67, of California. The Hughes 530F helicopter clipped a high voltage overhead power cable near the Lake Manapouri power station on its descent. Transport investigators have yet to establish whether the crash was caused by impact with the wires or something before that. Other pilots were yesterday coming to grips with the death of yet another colleague. [A]Queenstown pilot... said Ms Blair was an inspiration to many, particularly after her successful battle with thyroid cancer and her career as a top N[Z] ski racer. “It’s the old story – we are all there but for the grace of God. We certainly don’t think we are bullet-proof and a lot of us have been in the same situation as Janey, but we’ve got away with it.”... [A] Te Anau-based pilot... said yesterday that pilots in the region were struggling to come to grips with the crash. “People are pretty shocked and stunned. Janey was a pretty gutsy little girl.” [A CAA spokesperson] said that in the 20 years to the end of last year there had been 73 “wire-strike accidents,” in which 32 people had died. Most accidents... occurred when aircraft were well below the minimum height at which they should be flying... “You’ve got to have a bona fide reason to be down below that height. Giving tourists a thrill is not a bona fide reason.” [The spokesperson] said there were still issues to be resolved before any powerlines would be marked, including legal issues, who would pay and planning permission... Transport Accident Investigation Commission investigators finished examining the crash site yesterday and the wreckage was put in storage in Te Anau to enable more detailed investigations... [The chief inspector... said two commission investigators would today interview people who were in the area at the time of the crash, including some who heard it.

...powerlines are hindering helicopter rescues at Bethells Beach. The surf club is one of the main groups trying to get the lines placed underground. [The club’s p]resident... says helicopter pilots are loath to land on the beach as sand is sucked up through the air intakes, leading to an expensive cleanup bill. The better alternative, a harder, grassed area at Te Henga Park, is dangerous because of the overhead power lines which are hard to see. [The president] says putting the lines underground will be expensive for the Waitakere City Council. But... the move is essential as a safeguard for the thousands of visitors who make their way to Bethells each summer. At least two years ago a [visitor] died of heart failure at the beach a[fter] the helicopter couldn’t get close to her. “I don’t know if [the patient] would have been saved but it caused some consternation at the time. It [the helicopter] was delayed in getting access to the area.” [A]long-time Bethells resident, [who]... remembers the incident and that there was no safe designated place for the helicopter to land... agrees that safety is a priority and to a lesser degree so is the natural beauty of the environment. “Visually the area will look good without them but I understand it will be a large expense.” ...[the] Waitakere Community Board chair[person]... says no money is available for the scheme in this year’s annual budget. “Hopefully next year we can support some of these projects.”

...*People power behind drive to bury remaining lines* In 1984 the old Auckland Electric Power Board launched a 40-year programme to put the company’s power lines underground. By 1998, when the project was abruptly cancelled, more than 60[%] of its wirescape had been buried. Last week the AEPB’s successor, line company Vector, pledged to revise the stalled undergrounding enterprise. The time needed to bury the remaining 30-plus per cent? Another 40 years. Such is progress. Still, we should be grateful for small mercies. If it hadn’t been for pressure from the elected trustees, this city-friendly programme would have remained stalled. My sources indicate there was a good old brawl between, on the one hand, the trustees who have a mandate from you and me, the owners, to put them underground, and on the other, the directors and management of the company, who are not so keen. Indeed, the latter were more than happy to leave things as they were, or if they had to, to spend no more than \$5 million on it annually. The trustees insisted on \$10 m... and, after some table-thumping, got their way. For someone who remembers, just over a year ago, Vector[’s] chief executive... apparently lauding a \$400 m... plan to bury the remaining lines within 10 years, the present management and director-level reluctance is rather confusing. Back in 1984 the old power board decided, for environmental reasons, to gradually bury existing overhead power lines. Since the 1960s, all new subdivision lines have had to go underground. By 1988, around \$8 m... a year was being spent by Vector on the underground project. This level of spending went on until the 1998 power crisis brought it to a stop. It bounced back on the public agenda... when [Vector’s chief executive] enthusiastically outlined the 10-year project. “We are keen to move forward with undergrounding,” [the chief] declared in a... press release which can still be found on the Vector website. “We’d like to see the unsightly power lines and poles go just as much as our customers would.” [The chief] added... the “outstanding question was how undergrounding could be funded.” [The chief] offered three options: a rise in prices, a decrease in dividends paid or a new source of funding. It was the last option that gives the clue to why the company was suddenly keen on reviving the issue. By launching a hugely expensive, 10-year plan, it gave the then trust chair[person] (r:executive director, p2253, ln49 + chief executive, p265, ln64)... a new chance to ride his old privatisation hobby-horse. By waving the enticing prospect of a wire-free landscape in front of our eyes, [the chairperson] then declared the only palatable way to pay for this was to sell a 20-25[%] stake in Vector... banking on consumers preferring a part-sale to a cut in dividends, in achieving the wire-free dream. The [trustee]election... was to prove how wrong [the chairperson] was. The non-privatising, pro-underground candidates from both ends of the political spectrum achieved a clean sweep. Privatisers such as [the chairperson] were dumped. Now it appears the 10-year plan [the chairperson] was pushing was hokum. Even [the chief] admits to me it is not really a practicable solution – though at a pinch it might have just been possible. “If you threw every resource in the world at it and were prepared to pay too much for contracting and turned Auckland upside down, 10 years is probably the very minimum,” [the chief] now says. However, “I’m not sure there are even the resources to do it that quickly.” ...Ten years or 40, the good news is that parts of the remaining wirescapes of Auckland City, Manukau City and parts of Papakura are on the way out. I say parts of, because Telecom shows no inclination to join the party. The ideal would be for Telecom and Vector and the other utilities to join with city authorities to develop a cooperative undergrounding programme which included extra ducts for future expansion. I suspect, though, that that’s a dream for the science fiction writers...

[The P]M... has attacked as “totally unacceptable” a failure that sent a huge power cable crashing on to houses. Up to 20 people were trapped in their homes when the 250m length of cable snapped and fell 7m from the pylons supporting it onto the road and at least 16 front lawns... It damaged cars and homes, and burnt through fences. Some residents fled when they got the chance and ran across the street, but others had to stay indoors as the live wire sent out sparks... Whetstone Rd residents said an explosive “boom” rang through the street, when the cable – a 220kV conductor line running from Otahuhu to Whakamaru – fell shortly after 10.30am. Contact with a live wire could have been deadly, but Transpower’s general manager of system operations... said the line was live when it hit the ground only for “fractions of a second”... Transpower was still investigating what caused the failure last night... this was the first time a major cable had fallen in an urban area. “We’ve had about three of these [accidents] throughout the past 12 years – they’re rare but they do happen.” ...Transpower, which... would pay for any damage... has been under fire since a power cut last week which left up to 74,000 Auckland homes and businesses without electricity... [The PM said:] “There is going to be a massive expenditure on the upgrade of Transpower’s grid to make sure that that network is not only reliable but safer.”

...Transpower yesterday welcomed The Resource Management Act Board of Inquiry’s draft decision for it to begin its North Island Grid Upgrade Project. The... vital to N[Z]’s economy... project, which has an estimated cost of \$824 million, would see new transmission lines put between Whakamaru, near Tokoroa, and Otahuhu in South Auckland. Transpower said it wanted to start building access roads as early as next year... The new lines will be capable of carrying 400kV... The proposal has met ongoing resistance from environmentalists, farmers and lifestyle block owners whose lands are among the 314 properties affected by the new towers – some up to 70m in height... A Transpower spokes[person] said the organisation had agreements either through easements or ownership with 56[%] of the affected properties... the national grid operator had spent around \$150 million buying 74 properties affected on the line route and eight for substation sites or on the underground cable route.

...The right of power companies to enter private property to maintain lines without the owner’s consent is being tested in court in a \$200,000 compensation claim against UnitedNetworks. [A]Whitianga farmer... claimed in the Hamilton District Court yesterday that UnitedNetworks trespassed on his property when it installed a 1650m cable after the existing 10-year-old cable malfunctioned... [T]he installation of the 11,000-volt cable in 1997 caused widespread floods... [–] heavy machinery cleared a swathe of bush around the trench where the cable was laid that allowed torrents of water to flood five hectares of valuable grazing land after heavy rain... It had reduced the property’s value by making future subdivision and development difficult... [The farmer] also asked the court to grant an easement compensating him for the loss of the land taken up by the four-metre-wide strip where the cable was laid. His lawyer... said the new line belonged to [the farmer]... because the company installed it illegally. The original cable was put in by the Thames Valley Electric Power Board in 1987 under statutory rights granted under old Ministry of Works regulations. [The lawyer] said that in 1992 the old power boards were replaced by profit-driven energy firms responsible to shareholders, and the new utilities were allowed right of access only to “inspect, maintain, or operate existing works”. “That legislation did not grant the powers and authority of the old power boards to new utilities, powers to enter by force and put lines anywhere they want.” ...because the company had installed an entirely new higher-capacity cable alongside the existing cable, it could not claim to have been simply maintaining or repairing. “The work constitutes a trespass, and the defendant is liable.” [The farmer], a Qantas pilot... retired to the 154ha Moewai Farm in 1985. The property ran sheep and cattle and also produced manuka and kanuka honey and oils. [The farmer] said the dispute dated back to the installation under duress of the original powerlines and a cable by the Thames Valley power board. [The farmer] agreed then to pay \$24,000 towards the difference in cost of installing an underground cable rather than powerlines because [it] was concerned about the danger to aircraft and damage to the environment posed by lines... [The farmer] never wanted the original cable installed and agreed to the installation in 1987 only because [it] was threatened with court action... [It] was angry that UnitedNetworks had forced him to again confront the issue, at the cost of considerable stress to himself and his wife. “The company has given me a great deal of aggro. We never asked these people to come on to our land, we didn’t solicit this.”

...Piha residents are reeling after 30 power cuts in the last week, but lines company UnitedNetworks can’t guarantee it won’t happen again over the remaining winter months. Residents say they are fed up and want compensation for the inconvenience... [The] residents have made repeated complaints to UnitedNetworks in the past. [One resident] claims the problem has been getting worse over the last two years... [T]he power failures affect computers and other electrical appliances, sometimes resulting in costly repair bills. “This is the first blast of winter and we’ve already had in excess of 30 outages. What does the future hold for us?” UnitedNetworks['] corporate communications manager... blames strong winds for the latest power cuts. “In high winds you get lines clashing with each other which can short out... My understanding of the Piha situation in the last few days is that... gusty winds... had lines clashing and that intermittently trips out the system. It’s a protection mechanism we have in place so it cuts out and cuts back in. We have also taken lines out of service to retension them so that they are not loose and won’t hit each other and short circuit in those very high winds.” ...one solution is to underground power lines in the area. But [the manager] believes the move is unlikely as high costs would increase power prices for residents. [The manager] says there can be no guarantee of continuous power supply, even if the company put all cables in the country underground. [The manager] says residents should take up the compensation issue with their electricity retailers.

...*Steaming over cold showers* United Networks is in hot water – even if its customers weren’t. The power company is being criticised for leaving Titirangi customers out in the cold after last week’s high winds. [One resident] says her South Titirangi Rd home was without hot water for three mornings. “On Tuesday my husband didn’t go to work with a shower... On Wednesday [my husband] took his towels with him. I must have rung them about 10 times and they kept telling me it would be back on soon.” But on Thursday morning [the resident] spent 30 minutes boiling pots of water... so her family could share a bath... [The] hot water finally came back on during Thursday morning... “If they can make so much profit, they can get [workers] up the poles to fix things quicker... If it had been a school week it could have been more difficult.” United Networks’ spokes[person]... says hot water is cut whenever power needs to be redistributed. “The availability of hot water depends on the demand in the region... The storm obviously took out a lot of lines but we have been repairing them to get electricity to as many people in the region as possible.”

...A series of breakdowns and faults at power stations has left the nation on the brink of a power supply crisis. Transpower... has warned that generation capacity is so low that collectively the industry may not meet winter requirements... Vital North Island thermal stations at Auckland, Huntly and Taranaki (12[%] of the total national capacity) are out of action or crippled... Spilling of water from hydropower lakes by the Electricity Corporation this year may have exacerbated the difficulties. Coping with the problem will be a test of the wisdom and success of last month’s split of ECNZ into three competing generators... The... minister responsible for energy, dismissed the claims of power shortfalls as a “beat-up” by some power companies wanting to raise prices.

...The Commerce Commission is getting new powers to stamp out any price gouging by power companies – ...it will be... [able] to impose price controls on line companies at its own initiative. Under the new regime price controls will be triggered automatically if line companies do not meet price and profit performance measures. First Electric and TransAlta announced retail electricity price increases of up to 13[%] on Tuesday, blaming line charges imposed by Auckland and Christchurch monopoly line companies... [T]he increases are embarrassing for the Government as they come only days after... much trumpeting of cheaper power prices by the Minister for Enterprise and Commerce...

[Westie]s face increased phone and electricity prices when utility companies are put on city council rating valuation rolls. Waitakere City Council will decide whether to charge utility companies rates once the valuation is completed. Both industries estimate about \$100 million in costs will be passed on to consumers if they are charged rates, says UnitedNetwork’s legal and regulatory manager... UnitedNetworks is the lines company that services Waitakere City. [The manager] says Waitakere residents will bear some of the costs if any of Auckland’s council’s charge rates. “As a company we will be incurring higher costs which we will need to pass on to consumers,”... Telecom says it’s aware... [the] council is looking at

charging it rates... but won't confirm whether... [i]t... will also pass on costs to consumers... The Valuer General has made it mandatory under the Rating Valuations Act of 1988 to place utility companies on the valuation roll. [A]Waitakere City Council spokes[person]... says all of the region's councils (excluding Auckland City... [- which] is already rating utility companies...) have joined Waikato and hired Valnet Ltd to do the work.

...N[Z]'s biggest building products maker, [Challenge Building,]will shut down its steel mill for half of next week in an attempt to avoid the worst of the nation's high electricity prices. Workers will begin at 10pm on Thursday night and end Monday morning, taking advantage of the lower weekend power prices. The Pacific Steel mill in Auckland can produce 200,000 tonnes of steel a year for the local market and export. "That will take us to 3000 tonnes a week from about 5000 tonnes," said Pacific Steel's general manager... "We can still supply the domestic market but it means we're walking away from the export market." Power prices have been rising this year because three months of below-average rainfall... left hydro-electricity reservoirs holding 17[%] less water than usual at the start of autumn. Average daily electricity prices have surged almost sevenfold in the past year to \$215 a megawatt hour yesterday, according to an index measured by Marketplace Co, the manager of N[Z]'s electricity market. Electricity in Auckland cost \$154 a megawatt at 1.30pm, four times the average [of]... a year earlier. [The general manager said that like the other large manufacturing plants which are also undertaking temporary shut-downs, his] company had hedge contracts for about 25[%] of its power needs but hadn't been able to buy more at [spot]prices it could afford. Even if power prices fall in the short-term, the lack of affordable contracts means the mill is likely to work only weekend shifts until June 30. "If it ends before June 30, that would be a bonus." ... [Before March 31 this year]... a handful of utilities held a monopoly on... California's... \$US20 billion... [power] industry. The system made sense, given the high cost of producing and transmitting electricity and the need for reliable electricity in this energy-dependent age. But California's deregulation legislation, passed in 1997, opened the market. "You used to have to give all your money to the monopoly utility. Now you can choose an independent supplier," said... the Sacramento-based Centre for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Technologies. Whether consumers will use their buying power to demand lower prices or whether they will be willing to pay more for non-polluting choices are unanswered questions.

...The sun is shining on the award-winning Massey Leisure Centre and Library – and it is being put to good use. Thanks to \$166,000 from the United Networks Shareholders Society, a photovoltaic (...PV) system has been erected on the roof of the building to convert sunlight into electricity to help power the library. A daily average of 30 kilowatt hours is being generated by the system, which provides enough electricity for... two houses.

...They won't say how they did it but their breakthrough opens the way to building much bigger, more powerful[solar] panels... able to power a whole house, more cheaply... [Their] transparent coloured dyes promise to be up to three times more efficient[than normal solar cells]. They're similar to chlorophyll, the green-coloured compound that helps plants make food from sunlight. But the dyes were very difficult to make until the Massey scientists succeeded in enlarging their chemical structure... They say it could be five years before their dyes are incorporated into a solar cell but their discovery offers a ray of hope for future power.

...Scientists have developed a new kind of cell which could make solar energy cheaper than oil within 10 years. The system uses organic materials such as carbon, oxygen and hydrogen that can be extracted from the air... The new system simply does what nature has done for millions of years through photo-synthesis... Organic solar cells could be much bigger than silicon crystals, could be made at room temperature... could also be made in the form of a thin transparent film which could fit over the windows of a building and provide enough energy to run the activities inside[(c)ars could be coated with the material and... be charged up simply by being parked in the sun[– i]f parked indoors, a car's battery could be charged up from solar energy collected on the building[)]... and would eventually cost less than a tenth of the present inorganic cells... [A p]rofessor... of South Korea's Pusan National University, said... that the new system was not yet as efficient as present silicon-based systems [at] converting sunlight into energy. "But to reach the current efficiency of inorganic solar cells took 50 years. Organic solar cells have only been known for five years... All energy on earth comes from the sun... So the best way to solve our energy problem may be to use solar energy efficiently and safely. Solar energy is quite safe, very clean, and there is no limitation on it." ...His team... discovered that organic solar cells can also work in reverse...

Cheques from the power company, rather than the reverse? It can happen... [The homeowner] invites me to peer into the electricity meter box on the back verandah of his Mt Roskill house. It's like any other, so what am I looking for? Then it clicks. The disc indicating usage is spinning in reverse. Electricity is going out, not coming in. It's a [NZ first. The] Aucklander... and his wife... are generating power from the sun on the roof of their own home and selling it to Mercury Energy. And while it may amount to only 50c a day at this stage... it's a glimpse into the future of pollution-free, inexhaustible energy production at minimal cost. "We're an experiment at this stage... but just think of the financial impact if 100,000 households were doing the same and what that portends." The [house's] power comes from an array of 30 photovoltaic solar cells aligned due north, which are sufficient to meet most of their home needs except cooking. For that they use a [LPG]-fuelled, four-hob cooktop and oven. Near-boiling-point hot water is solar-powered with a gas booster for cold days, which has been turned off since last August. Technically their latest system is called "distributed power" and it allows solar-equipped houses or buildings to use the national power grid as a giant storage battery. During the day excess power is fed [i]nto the grid allowing power companies to reduce their production while still meeting commercial demands. Then, when the sun goes down, the solar-powered houses and buildings draw electricity from the grid. "It's a win-win situation... Owners get paid for power they don't need and power companies don't have to spend millions on new power plants to meet peak demands." ...the Japanese are embracing the concept and have set 2020 as the target by when solar-generated power will be their main source of energy. That will be a huge change and saving for... [the country. T]he cost of the latest technology and sufficient for average household needs is around... \$20,000 – about half of what [the Aucklander's] stand-alone energy system has cost to develop since... 1994. In March that year [it] asked a bemused Mercury Energy to disconnect his power and remove his meter. The company had nobody who dealt with such requests but finally an obliging repair[person] did the job and the national grid bypassed [a] little bit of suburbia. The system... installed at the time included a bank of 12 large storage batteries in his basement and an inverter to give 230 volts mains power. The battery bank has been expanded over the years... [but n]ow, with the [house] reconnected to the Mercury grid, the battery system is redundant. However, they are keeping eight batteries as an emergency standby. Similar systems provided some power in Kobe, Japan, after the disastrous 1995 earthquake, when conventional electricity supplies were destroyed. [The Aucklander] says to get the best results from such systems homes and appliances must be properly insulated. For example, his refrigerator's... interior walls are twice as thick. The deepfreeze is the same. Both are of Danish design and manufacture[,] built to demanding insulation requirements. His German-made dishwasher uses and heats just seven litres of water. Only the washing machine and microwave oven are either N[Z]-made or supplied. When... his house... [was built, it] exceeded minimum insulation requirements and included in it all interior walls so there is no loss of heat or cold spots such as the hall. The lights... are low-watt fluorescent bulbs, which put out the same light for less power. The television, stereo and computer are turned off at the wall because even when off on the unit they still use a trickle of power... "As a result, only twice have we had to call in an outside boost to our system over the past five years. The last time was in October a couple of years ago when we had 14 days' rain on end (the... wettest October since 1962) and the PV panels couldn't charge up our batteries sufficiently. So we ran a power cable in from the neighbours to recharge, just as someone in the country with a similar self-sufficient system... would start up a small generator in similar circumstances. It cost us... \$2 for the recharge. If it had been a generator, say \$5 worth of petrol. But now, with our metering agreement with Mercury... and Power N[Z], we'll never have to worry..."

...I'D ALWAYS thought the A[US]n Outback would give me agoraphobia but I had a gentle introduction that whet my appetite. The Wilpena Pound, a... 60 sq km... natural amphitheatre... in the Flinders Range, is on the brink of that unimaginably endless landscape. Its spectacular

scenery makes it a stopover point for travellers headed to Alice Springs, the Northern Territory or across the Nullarbor Plain. The Pound is something of an enigma because it lies behind steep, rocky walls that rise to 400m. They're streaked with seams of orange, purple, red. In the soft, slanting light of early morning or evening the colours are unreal. The amphitheatre is magical – flat, peaceful, studded with black-barked native pines and groves of silver gums. Kangaroos are easy prey for cameras. Galahs, cockatoos and myriad other birds make the only sounds[– especially now that the]... Wilpena Tourist Centre is powered by the largest off-grid solar electricity system in A[US]. It opened in June and is described as a hybrid power station because it combines [PV] solar cells and storage batteries with back-up diesel generators. The use of solar energy saves between \$50,000 and \$60,000 a year in diesel and means that greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced by up to 300 tonnes a year.

...AN INEXPENSIVE solar-powered desalination process developed in Japan by the Mitsubishi Corporation and Nihon Polytechnic uses transparent plastic sheets. A hydroxyl compound with a strong affinity for water is incorporated into the surfaces. At slopes greater than five degrees, the water runs down the plastic sheet and is collected. Mitsubishi calculates that the conversion costs of a tonne of sea water into fresh water will be around \$2. There are almost no running costs except for the current used to operate the pumps that bring seawater into the facility. The development consortium plans to market desalination units about the size and configuration of a household solar water heater, as well as a small unit to replace the heavy, unwieldy models now used on some boats.

...Solar water heating has come a long way in the last few years, and with 40[%] of a typical monthly domestic electricity account going towards water heating costs, many homeowners are considering solar water heating. Water comes into homes from underground pipes at around 10-15 degrees Celsius. This water has to be heated above 55 degrees Celsius to avoid Legionella bacterial growth. An average family uses around 160-200 litres of hot water each day, requiring 10-12 kW of energy to heat. Due to heat losses from the hot water storage cylinder, dripping taps and unlagged pipes, the energy required can be considerably more than this... The annual amount of sunshine falling on an average [NZ] home is equivalent to 200,000 kW. This is fifty times the hot water heating needs of a family home. Capturing energy to heat water is technically a simple process... The aim is to supply 50-70[%] of the annual water heating energy needs, as this gives a good compromise between capital cost and delivered energy. A collector panel three-four sq.metres providing 1800-2800 kW/year is recommended for an average home... At present electricity prices, the cost will be written off in around 12 years. With uncertain electricity prices and a life-span of at least 20 years for... a... solar hot water system... owner[s'll be] pleased with... th[eir]... investment... Information courtesy of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority.

...Israel's innovative Weizmann Institute leads the way in solar energy. [It]s giant reflector can generate 350,000 kW of energy (top[that!]); while in... Britain[, a]... futuristic eco-estate... where green technology extends to the toilet, is to be built in[the] West Midlands. The £1.5 million... scheme consists of 12 houses with inbuilt systems that take warmth from the soil and use solar power for heating and electricity. Sewage will be converted into compost and wastewater recycled to flush toilets... [By the way,] Britain's first cow dung-fuelled power station has been given the go-ahead. The £7 million... plant, to be built in North Devon, will burn methane gas from farm slurry to produce electricity... for the national grid and power local community buildings. The scheme... has won £3.5 million backing from the European Union.

...Britain's first dung-fired power station... will run on about 1.6 million tonnes of farm slurry a year... [The] slurry will ferment... in... [t]wo digesters... produc[ing] methane to power engines to produce electricity... said a spokes[person]... for the... £7.7 m... plant in Holsworthy, Devon.

...An A\$3 million demonstration plant that converts waste material into clean energy was opened in the Latrobe Valley, Victoria last month. The Waterwide energy system, designed and built by the Renewable Energy Corporation, gasifies industrial waste material including forestry residues, pulp waste, sludges, crop residues – even chicken litter – and converts them into energy, with what is claimed to be 99.9% combustion efficiency. [The corporation's executive chairperson]... and the energy gasification systems' inventor... says the demonstration facility is a significant step forward in environmentally friendly energy production. The new technology gasification system eliminates pollutants common to other methods... "Major pollutants that companies such as pulp mills struggle to get rid of can be effectively and efficiently eradicated using the Waterwide technology and as an added bonus the company can save on its electricity bill. The unit is also fitted with state-of-the-art emissions monitoring to guarantee we meet new emission levels compliance," [the inventor] says. Originally headquartered in N[Z], the corporation... now has offices throughout A[ustralasia] and... has recently opened an office in North Carolina, forming an alliance with a major US energy company.

...Former energy-trading giant Enron not only lavished campaign donations on [the Republican who is now] President... but was one of America's biggest political contributors, spreading money across both parties on Capitol Hill. Almost half the present... House of Representatives and almost three-quarters of the present Senate have been beneficiaries of Enron largesse in recent years, say Washington watchdog groups. Since 1989 Enron has made a whopping \$[US]5.8 m... in campaign donations, 73[%] to Republicans and 27[%] to Democrats, says the Centre for Responsive Politics, an organisation that tracks political giving. Nearly half of these funds were donated during [the last campaign], when Enron was one of the top 50 organisational donors in the US. The money kept coming in until just before Enron filed for bankruptcy on December 2. Since then, as the controversy around Enron has grown, some donations have been returned. Texans were by far the biggest Enron recipients, and Republicans got more than Democrats. [The President], being both a Texan and a Republican, and a friend of Enron[']s chairperson... did very well... In all the company made \$US623,000 in contributions to his campaigns since 1993, according to the Centre for Public Integrity, another watchdog group. But the giving did not stop after election day. Enron officials contributed \$US10,500 to his Florida recount committee, and when the recount was ended, donated \$US300,000 for the inaugural celebrations, said ...a... researcher for the Centre for Responsive Politics... What Enron got in exchange for the money was access. [The researcher said the chairperson met the] Vice-President... during... California[']s energy crisis, at the time the Administration was formulating its energy policy. "One thing is clear. They have written a lot of cheques to a lot of people in this town and I guess that gets their phone calls answered when they call cabinet secretaries." It was disclosed last week that [the chairperson] telephoned two cabinet officials last fall as the company's financial situation worsened. The... Democrats were dragged into the Enron scandal when it emerged that... the... former President[']s... Treasury Secretary, had contacted a top official at his old department to find out if the [Republican] Administration could step in to help the energy group. [The former secretary] made his call in November to... the head of the Treasury's domestic finance section, in his capacity as chair[person] of Citigroup, one of the main creditors of Enron. [The former secretary] was one of the most admired members of the [former President's] team, and his involvement will dent Democratic efforts to turn the affair into a new Whitewater... The fall of what was once the seventh largest US corporation is causing great embarrassment for the White House because of the close ties between [Enron's chairperson] and the President. In return for the more than \$US600,000 it donated since 1993 the company is seen to have had a major influence on the [then Texas governor's] energy strategy, successfully pressing for greater deregulation. The \$US5.8 m... of political donations made by Enron since 1989 was seen to have paid off when Congress exempted Enron's key energy trading activities from a bill overhauling federal oversight of commodity markets. In his call to the Treasury, [the former secretary asked the head of the domestic finance section] about the possibility of pressing the bond-rating agencies not to lower their published view of Enron bonds, as such a ratings change would have provoked a crisis of confidence in the group. The Treasury Department said that [the head] had opposed the idea. Subsequent to the call the agencies slashed their assessment of Enron's creditworthiness, triggering its demise. The latest disclosure followed three days of turmoil. First, details emerged of numerous calls by [Enron's chairperson to senior Administration] officials last Autumn, telling them of Enron's growing problems. Hours later[, the person who is both the] Attorney-General and the head of the Justice Department, which is now conducting a criminal probe of Enron, formally took himself out of the case, admitting [it] had taken \$US60,000 of Enron donations in his failed... campaign to retain his Senate seat. The... accounting firm, which audits Enron... had destroyed many documents relating to the audit. The firm has been criticised for failing to detect the private partnerships into which

Enron executives had shunted [\$]millions of... debt in order to keep it off the energy company's main balance sheet... Enron's collapse... wiped out the pensions of thousands... Enron's collapse has [also kept a] power plant... the company... built... at Dabhol, 250km south of Bombay, idle...

THE DAY [the Republican President] took office... was as cold and comfortless as his victory; his motorcade braved driving rain and a gauntlet of demonstrations marking the most contested election result in US history. After[wards, the President said it]... did "not want to hear about politics". But now the moratorium on politics has been lifted and the White House is laid bare by what rivals call "Enronomics" – the political fable of the Enron corporation. The case has all the ingredients of a classic Washington scandal that dwarfs the Whitewater property deal with which Republicans were so eager to hang [the former Democratic President and his wife]: secret stock sales, shredded documents, high-level political contacts – and tens of thousands of innocent victims robbed of their savings and retirement funds while the company's top brass lined their pockets. Enron was the kind of scandal that [nothing on Earth] would hide. The company plunged from a stock rating worth \$US80 billion... into the biggest bankruptcy filing in US history... The ethical – maybe criminal – core of the scandal is that Enron trapped its employees into a "stock lock" – they were not allowed to sell share options bought by way of savings. When the company collapsed, they lost everything. Meanwhile, Enron's executives made a killing by selling shares before the price collapsed... Six Congressional committees are preparing to investigate the firm. But they will have to wait for the two criminal investigations launched last week: one into Enron's bankruptcy, the other into the admission by the company's auditor... that it destroyed thousands of documents about the bankruptcy. [The auditors] had good reason to destroy the papers. The reasons for Enron's destruction are associated with the labyrinth of subsidiaries built up by [Enron's] chief finance officer[, who was] fired on October 24, and other executives. [The chief finance officer] created partnerships with... independently run companies owned by him and others with Enron backing. As a result, hundreds of millions of dollars were slushing overseas to tax havens as [the chief finance officer] and other executives – so they said – sought to shore up the company against a possible fall in energy prices. What they were [real]ly doing was amassing personal fortunes. The ensuing gaps in the balance sheet became a gaping abyss down which the company finally fell. Enron has admitted that it had overstated profits by \$US400 million. However, Chewco alone enabled Enron to keep some \$US600 million of debt off its books. The crucial criminal issue is whether Enron executives misled investors by inflating revenues and minimising debts. The political issue is now closely entwined [with] the Washington elite – and the immediate circle around... [the President. Before] all its troubles, Enron [had] continued to benefit from [the Republican Administration's] policies, notably a refusal to step in during the Californian energy crisis... leaving consumers to pay the price... to Enron... [In local news, t]he extraction of geothermal energy for electricity is being blamed for subsidence likely to damage more than 150 buildings in Taupo within the next 50 years. Contact Energy draws heat from the Wairakei-Taupohara geothermal field but will now face growing opposition to its plans to extend operations. A report prepared for the Taupo District Council said at least 126 buildings and 24 homes would suffer minor damage in future because the soil was losing its strength as water and heat was removed from the ground... The situation is not as severe as subsidence in Waihi where hundreds of homes remain at risk of collapsing due to former mines in the area. But Contact Energy wants to increase its level of extraction from the Wairakei field by 82[%] over the next 11 years, while another firm, Geotherm Group, wants permission to build a new power station there. Both are seeking resource consent from Environment Waikato and will face stiff opposition from the Taupo District Council and residents... [T]he council was seeking legal opinion on the issue of compensation. "It's not of our making and it's not fair to expect Taupo people to carry the can." It was thought the repairs could cost \$1 million. Insurance was unlikely to cover any damage as subsidence in such circumstances was predictable... Contact's Wairakei power plant re-injects 40-50[%] of the water it draws up back into the ground at present. The report says subsidence can be minimised if more fluid is re-injected. [However,] Contact's Wairakei generation manager... said the company did not plan to change anything in the short term and would push ahead with its resource consent application... [The manager said t]he report was based on assumptions about underground pressure trends and the geotechnical properties of the area and until those assumptions were proved, it would be unwise to regard the findings as conclusive.

...A hot idea has won a Rotorua teenager acclaim at the world expo in Hanover, Germany. [Hi]s innovative geyser research placed him among the best of 143 young environmental scientists from 73 countries to pitch their projects to 12 internationally respected scientists at the expo. The 18-year-old and six teens from Finland, the U[S] and Canada have won grand awards worth ...\$[NZ]4191... at the first world championships for young environmental scientists. [The 18-year-old] has also qualified for an internship with pharmaceuticals giant Bayer in Singapore. The announcement yesterday did not surprise those who know the Rotorua Boys' High School head prefect, who also excels at music and Maori language[, and has]... been studying thermal activity at Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve, recording temperatures and water levels at various pools, since 1996...

Some of the North Island's most beautiful hidden lakes are seeping away. The alum lakes – a collection of bright blue, emerald, red, turquoise and pea-green pools in the Wairakei geothermal valley near Taupo – have dropped dramatically in the past six months and some have dried up completely. They sit on a parcel of land which is owned by the Crown but used by Contact Energy for steam extraction and are surrounded by a bore field which has been in use since 1958. The Department of Conservation and iwi are worried by the drop in water and are investigating... [A DoC spokesperson]... said the low water level was a problem and the department, which had applied to protect the lakes, would try to find the reason for it... Contact Energy's general manager for generation operations... said the water flow coming from the lake closest to the power station – which has dropped a metre in less than a month – was regularly monitored and had stopped in the past three months. [The manager] said Contact was looking at ways to work around the problem. [A scientist from] the Institute of Geothermal and Nuclear Sciences, said a drop of 15m was not easily explained but [it] did not believe Contact Energy's activity could be responsible... [The] Wairakei Forest Tourist Park administrator... said that while the alum lakes were officially part of the park, they were also part of a bore field and therefore not under his control. "There is definitely concern about the ongoing maintenance and preservation of the lakes. They're the jewel in the crown in the tourist sense." But most people do not even know the lakes exist. They are not accessible by road and you must pass through Contact Energy land to get to them. Only those who fly over the area can see what they may be losing... [A h]elicopter pilot... has flown over the small thermal lakes nearly every day for the past three years and is afraid that one of the most beautiful natural features in the region is vanishing before his eyes... [The pilot] used to fly tourists over the lakes as part of a scenic flight which also takes in Craters of the Moon and Huka Falls[, but n]ow avoids the area because its beauty has faded and no longer impresses his clients.

...A[n AUS]n tourist... and her family were soaking their feet in [a] hot pool at... Kuirau Park... when they heard what they thought was a helicopter taking off. "We had been standing taking photos on the rocks in front of [the new eruption] seconds before." ...A new steam vent, formed as hot water forced its way out of the earth, created a cloud of vapour... that killed nearby trees and... [shot h]ot mud and rocks the size of rugby balls... 60m into the Rotorua sky... spew[ing] mud over cars parked... in the Rotorua Hospital car park, some 100m away... The hot water was replaced by the steam that is continuing to rise from the ground in... the... geothermal area... Police were yesterday keeping spectators well away from Rotorua's latest thermal attraction... The freshly erected barricades in the park will be in place throughout this weekend.

...Underneath tens of thousands of people who live and work in Rotorua, hot water bubbles away at a pressure not seen for decades. Almost every week there is now proof that the once-declining geothermal system is heating up. Geysers at Whakarewarewa... are filling up and blowing higher and more often than they have for decades. Near Kuirau Park, steaming holes are opening up on private property, pools are getting bigger and hotter, the ground is getting warmer and gutters overflow with hot water. No one knows where the next geyser will open up, but many residents are complacent – as accustomed to steam and boiling mud as Wellington people are to earthquakes. The resurgence is a guarantee of income for the

local tourism industry, a source of pride for the local iwi... and good from a scientific and environmental perspective. The danger is, however, that a geyser will come up under someone's bedroom... A steaming pond in Tarewa Rd marks the spot where a hot pool burst through the garage of two pensioner flats last year, forcing two widows to flee. A newer house nearby sits precariously close to a... long-forgotten underground pool [that] burst through the ground metres away, spewing hot water and rocks. The effects of the resurgence in geothermal activity are eerie but there is no mystery about the cause. In 1986, the Government ordered all geothermal bores to be closed within 1.5km of... Whakarewarewa. Years of exploiting the 12 sq km Rotorua geothermal field had left once-magnificent geysers barely spluttering... The building controls manager of the Rotorua District Council... said the now-demolished pensioner flats had been built over a geothermal hole that was covered up decades ago... [N]ew houses in the vicinity were required to be built on piles, so they could be removed... "This place is a volcano, a bit like Taupo and other places. Everywhere around here there is something we don't know about and we can't control. They are acts of God."

...tourists who pass through Rotorua each week... endure... the "rotten eggs" stench... to see the city's... natural wonders such as geysers... and... thermal hot pools... But reports this week of the death of Mrs Umlauf-Rueprecht... have again sparked interest in whether living or visiting the Sulphur City is a health risk. Mrs Umlauf-Rueprecht is thought to have been overcome by sulphur fumes while... talking to a friend on the phone. News of her death shocked the Austrian and German audiences of the popular television series *Kaisermohlen Blues*, in which [Mrs Umlauf-Rueprecht] starred for seven years. The soap opera, said to be the Austrian equivalent of *Coronation Street*, was watched by 1.5 million people every night... Mrs Umlauf-Rueprecht... was in [N]Z producing a television documentary. A report from the Institute of Environmental Science and Research... found that [the actor] had toxic levels of hydrogen sulphide in her blood which constituted poisoning from the gas. Rotorua's coroner... will hold an inquest in [two months]. Mrs Umlauf-Rueprecht's son... plans to sue the Tourism Board and the Rotorua District Council for \$160 million over her death. Until the inquest Rotorua's Mayor... and Tourism Rotorua's chief executive... are reluctant to rush into damage control. "Her death is very unfortunate but... [our] population of almost 70,000 and just under 20,000 tourists a week are exposed constantly to the gas and we aren't dropping dead..." said... [the mayor. A recent] study by National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (Niwa) scientists found that nearly half of Rotorua's residents were regularly exposed to hydrogen sulphide in doses greater than the maximum levels recommended by the Ministry for the Environment. But neither the Niwa study nor one the ESR conducted last year showed that the hydrogen sulphide levels were high enough to kill... "Generally, levels in Rotorua are around one thousand times lower than the level thought to impact on human health..." The gas, which is heavier than air, becomes toxic only if it collects in areas that are not well ventilated... [B]ecause hydrogen sulphide dulled the senses it could kill people despite its pungent smell... Tourism operators and travel agents have not noticed any downturn in business following the fatality and [one] British tourist... did not think other tourists would be deterred by reports of Mrs Umlauf-Rueprecht's death. "I think the smell is most amusing. We've heard all the wise cracks about it and I think you would have to be most unlucky for it to harm you." ...No Rotorua residents the *Weekend Herald* spoke to yesterday were concerned about living among sulphur fumes... [A Maori who's] lived at Rotorua's thermal Whakarewarewa Village for... 80 years... has bathed all her life in thermal pools and has never known anyone to suffer ill health from the fumes.

...Rotorua's sulphur fumes are to blame for the death of an Austrian actress... but questions remain as to why the gas levels were so high. [Rotorua's] coroner... yesterday adjourned the inquest into the death of [the actress], aged 74, until September but said there was no doubt [the actress] had died from hydrogen sulphide poisoning. Ellen Umlauf-Rueprecht's body was discovered lying face down on the floor of her Sulphur City Motel room... by the motel's owner. [A] constable... told the Rotorua District Court that Mrs Umlauf-Rueprecht had probably fainted... [her] son had visited the Sulphur City Motel shortly after his mother's death and told the owner [his mother] was prone to fainting spells... [-] hit her head on a nearby chest of drawers and fallen into a deep state of unconsciousness with her mouth close to the ground. "It is my belief that from this position [it] inhaled the lethal gases that ultimately killed her." However, [the] constable... was unable to explain how a toxic level of the gas emitted from Rotorua's geothermal waters came to be present, and [the coroner] may call further witnesses in September to try to unravel the mystery.

...Rotorua's renowned Polynesian Spa is to be prosecuted by Occupational Safety and Health over the death of a Wanganui artist who collapsed in a thermal pool... Joanna Margaret Paul was taken off life-support two days after... [being] found by another swimmer floating face down in the hot mineral Priest's pool. A coroner's inquest has not yet been held but it is thought that [Joanna] may have collapsed from hydrogen sulphide fumes. The... rotten eggs... gas... has been blamed for 11 deaths in the city since 1946, including that of Austrian actress Ellen Umlauf-Rueprecht...

Three contractors, from the companies Aquatech and Stargate, died when they were overcome by fumes in a [hu]manhole while flushing out sewerage lines on the corner of Fanshawe and Halsey Sts in Auckland at noon yesterday. They were Kenneth Karu (30), Avondale, Eddie James Rihia (30), Albany, and Darren Skeens (19), Greenhithe... [One] contractor hanging from his safety harness... [had] phoned for help for his two unconscious workmates seconds before [it] too was killed... His efforts to save his friends cost him his life... [H]is cellphone call [was] to another contracting company, Groutseal... [Two of its workers], who were friends of the three... received the call... and... arrived minutes later [but] found the trio dead... [One would-be] rescuer... was taken to Auckland Hospital with shock and gas inhalation... [The] workers who perished... would have died in less than a minute, experts believe... Occupational Safety and Health is investigating the deaths... [An] OSH construction inspector... said it appeared the three... were... not carrying mandatory oxygen detectors and would not have been aware of the lethal cocktail of hydrogen sulphide, carbon monoxide and low levels of oxygen. A tripod usually left over the [hu]manhole to assist in case of a rescue was left in the truck... The owner of Aquatech contractors... lost his brother and cousin in the tragedy... [T]he deaths were the first since the company started nine years ago. "Everyone is devastated. We don't know what happened down there." ...The maintenance work had been contracted out by Metrowater...

Authorities will today try to unravel the reasons behind the country's worst industrial accident in 20 years... Aquatech... said yesterday that it was too early to speculate about how or why the [workers] had died. The firm would hold its own investigation... "There are very strict guidelines and procedures as to how we operate in such situations and that's why we're so baffled and confused... At this stage we don't know why... [they] went down the sewer because that wasn't part of their original brief." The type of work... - flushing fat off the walls of a sewer - could normally be done from street level. The last time three workers died together on a work site was in the mid-1970s when a building platform collapsed at Wellington Hospital... Yesterday's deaths were the first workplace accidents this month and brought this year's total to eight. In the 1997-98 reporting year, 46 workers died in workplace accidents - 16 of them construction workers.

...THE Auckland tragedy comes in a week of complaints OSH was not prosecuting enough employers. It was disclosed last week that in 1996 there were 42 workplace deaths but OSH laid only six prosecutions. [The] Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union health and safety specialist... said employers were "getting away with murder" because there had been so few prosecutions. But [the] Labour Minister... rejected the criticisms and said OSH issued thousands of prohibition and improvement notices every year which were often a more effective tool than prosecution. Several workers have been killed in underground accidents in recent years. Four years ago, Terry Harland was swept to his death after descending a [hu]manhole just a few hundred metres from that which... claimed [the latest] lives. Harland was carrying out video surveillance of a stormwater drain when a mini flash flood swept him down the drain. His body was found in Auckland Harbour the next day. Two years later, the Auckland City Council was fined \$8000 for its part in Harland's death because [the worker] was not wearing a safety harness. In 1996, [in] Stratford... John Philp died after... [being] overcome with high levels of methane gas while inspecting a stormwater [hu]manhole on a farm. A year ago, [in] Canterbury... Grant Burns... [was] overcome by fermented carbon dioxide gas after climbing into a steep tank used for mashing pig feed. Burns was not wearing breathing apparatus. [His] employer... was fined \$10,000... The maximum penalty [is] a \$100,000 fine and one year in jail.

...Seven people died and 12 were in a critical condition after being suffocated in an underground water tank on Arutua atoll in French Polynesia. The water tank, a common feature in French Polynesia's outer islands, was in the process of being cleaned by a team of five people who failed to reappear. More people went down to rescue them and faced similar problems. Officials said the accident probably resulted from a build-up of carbon dioxide gas, which led to suffocation.

...two [workers] died of suffocation from hydrogen sulphide gas which leaked at one of the units at Shuaiba refinery... 80km south of Kuwait City.

...Four people were killed and 49 injured in a blast at a refinery yesterday, believed to have been caused by a gas leak, in the second deadly incident in a week at a Kuwaiti refinery. The sources said the explosion at Al-Ahmadi, 40km south of Kuwait City, also caused material damage... "The situation is now under control..." a security source told the official news agency Kuna, which earlier gave a toll of several injured... [The] Oil Minister... had already ordered an official probe into what was called Kuwait's worst refinery disaster since the 1991 Gulf War after two technicians were killed and four others hurt in a major gas leak [at Shuaiba].

...The world's biggest off-shore oil rig, owned by Brazil's state oil giant Petrobras, is poised to become a major environmental threat after a powerful explosion yesterday. Three blasts rocked the 40-storey rig off the coast of Rio de Janeiro state, apparently killing 10 people. The explosion started a fire that killed at least one of the 175 workers on board. Nine workers were listed as missing, and Petrobras said that there was little chance they had survived. Another worker had severe burns... Tense families of the workers a[re waiting] to see if the official death toll would rise when search and rescue operations resume today... Public outrage mounted against accident-prone Petrobras as its biggest platform tilted into the sea. If the rig sinks it could dump crude and diesel into the open ocean, causing yet another environmental disaster... "Petrobras is much more worried about cutting costs than ensuring the safety of its workers and of the environment," said... a federal deputy who met officials after the explosion. It was not clear what caused the blasts at the platform, located in the Roncador oil field... where 80[%] of Brazil's oil is produced... The immense structure was listing three times more than the Leaning Tower of Pisa, according to engineers, and appeared on the verge of lurching into the sea. If it did, at least half of the 1200 cu m of diesel and 300 cu m of crude stored on the rig could spill. Five boats are standing by to collect the oil, but they can hold only half of the total amount stored there... Petrobras said it could lose \$US50 m... a month with the rig out of operation... The P-36 rig can produce up to 180,000 barrels of crude oil per day... [(in comparison, the '37,000 tonne, \$4.5b North Sea platform] Hibernia GBS is... designed to pump almost a million barrels of oil a day in the middle of a stormy ocean[; 'over 30 GBS platforms operate in the North Sea, where icebergs don't go – even so, Hibernia has been surrounded by a protective outer wall designed to break up bergs weighing up to 6 million tons by utilising their own internal weaknesses')]. After starting operations last year, it was only pumping out 80,000 bpd, or 5[%] of Brazil's total daily output.

...The world's largest off-shore oil rig stopped sinking three days after massive blasts rocked the structure, killing 10, but bad weather could hamper efforts to recover the bodies and salvage the platform. The steeply listing 40-storey platform was stable yesterday, after sinking more than 13ft since explosions ripped through a column on Friday... "We are not out of danger and the situation continues to be critical but we are more optimistic now that it is stable," said... Petrobras['] general manager. "It was a great feat to stop the sinking..." Petrobras has flown in U[S] and Dutch experts and 50 tonnes of European equipment to keep the deep-sea platform afloat and prevent an oil spill... A team of 40, including 11 Dutch platform-rescue specialists, was yesterday injecting nitrogen gas into tanks inside the damaged column to expel water and gradually right the platform. It was [currently] leaning at an angle of 25 degrees, two degrees less than at the worst point. Incoming bad weather is expected to make conditions difficult for the divers but not stop the work... If the rig were to sink, up to 1.5 million litres of crude and diesel in underwater pipelines and onboard tanks could go into the ocean. Petrobras said it did not expect the 21 well heads to break, which would have led to a much more serious environmental disaster. After two major oil spills and a series of explosions in which 81 workers have died in the past three years, the accident was a fresh blow to Petrobras, which has been trying to establish itself as one of the world's leading oil companies.

...A methane gas explosion ripped through a coal mine in eastern Ukraine yesterday, killing 80 miners. The accident, at the Barakova mine in Luhansk, is Ukraine's worst in at least two decades. [The Ukrainian]President... and P[M]... both cancelled pending trips abroad because of the accident... Rescuers had recovered all the dead and injured after combing the entire blast area. The explosion occurred 664m below ground – probably the result of a highly explosive mix of methane gas and coal dust igniting. Underground explosions have been common in Ukrainian mines in recent years. Funding cuts since the breakup of the Soviet Union have pushed safety concerns into the background and forced the industry into a struggle for survival. An explosion in the nearby Donetsk region killed 63 miners two years ago, while 48 miners have died in other mine disasters this year... [Incidentally, all] fires at Esso's gas plant at Longford in south-eastern Victoria are out, but Esso cannot say when gas production will resume. The company's chair[perso]n... said yesterday that Victorians would be without gas for at least a week and perhaps longer... [E]xperts, including 12 flown in from overseas, were now able to begin assessing the damage and the cause of last Friday's explosions and fires in which two [workers died. The chairperson] said it was a coincidence the plant had caught fire so soon after production was halted by an ice plug in June this year and totally rejected suggestions that maintenance standards had been lax... About 60 firefighters were at the scene of the fire in plant 1 of the gas facility last night. Earlier, fire crews had crushed gas pipes to cut the flow of gas to the fire and gas detection equipment had been brought in to sniff out leaks. Esso said it had about 200 people working to restore gas production to plants 2 and 3 and to isolate them from damaged equipment in the devastated plant 1... The huge blaze started after at least five explosions ripped through plant 1... All oil and gas production from the Bass Strait fields off the coast were halted because of the explosions, as the Longford plant handles all production from the strait between mainland A[US] and Tasmania. The state's gas system operator, VENCORP, shut down the whole gas system on Saturday except to hospitals, because gas levels were critically low... Gas supplies for hospitals were coming from stored liquefied natural gas and a small supply from a new pipeline from N[SW], which was opened on Friday. The state asked hospitals to defer elective surgery from today until normal gas supplies resumed. As back-up for hospitals, the A[US]n Defence Force flew in equipment for sterilisation, cooking and hot water. The crisis hit on Melbourne's biggest weekend of the year, with tens of thousands of people in the city for the grand final of the A[FL] season. At the Grand Hotel, which was fully booked and hosted two football club breakfasts on Saturday, the kitchen coped by using only electrical appliances, but there was no hot water.

...It will be at least two weeks before Melbourne is back on gas, in a city where nine out of 10 homes rely on it... [But] there is nothing like a crisis to bring people together. Those with electric heating and cooking opened their kitchens and bathrooms to friends and family. Offers of support [have] flooded the city – including bakers offering to heat meals free, and timed hot showers at sports venues. In Carrum, an outlying suburb, [a wife had to feed] her husband, three daughters and visitors using a barbecue and an electric frypan. When the trickle of hot water in the cylinder runs out, the family will shower using buckets with holes or a watering can filled with warm water. In a city that prides itself on its restaurants, it was still possible to eat out. As long as you felt like a focaccia and salad... But for every cafe that was open, there were outlets with signs plastered on their doors – "no gas, no bread, no kebabs." ...restaurants and hotels that continued to use gas in defiance of [an] emergency order were risking fines of \$600 for the first violation and \$120 a day thereafter... [While restaurants and cafes are struggling, electrical appliance] businesses are booming. Phones ran hot at supermarkets with inquiries for electrical goods such as solar showers and breadmakers that had sold out... At Camberwell's large second-hand market, the humble electric frying pan became a collector's item... but [many] small businesses are... losing a lot of money... Giant companies such as... Ford, Holden and Toyota each stands to lose about \$A10 million... a day...

Holden's Adelaide plant will shut down tonight because of the Victorian gas crisis, leaving a question-mark over the immediate future of 4500 workers. A Holden spokes[perso]n... said the employees had been told to return to work next Tuesday. However, there was no certainty the plant could resume operation... [O]ne possibility was for component manufacturers to convert to [LPG] until normal services were restored. A Mitsubishi

spokes[person]... expected his company's Adelaide manufacturing plant would be able to operate until tomorrow. The ANZ chief economist... said the crisis... could seriously affect the national economy. "If the disruption of the gas supply persists for more than one week, then the impact on the... quarter's [GDP] could be of the order of 0.1 of a percentage point..." ...June's restriction caused an estimated \$90 million worth of damage to the state's economy, but that was small compared to this crisis... Meanwhile, not even the dead have been spared by the crisis as crematoriums have ground to a halt. "Without the gas supplies, nobody physically here in Melbourne is able to cremate,"... Some families are travelling up to 130km out of town to take care of the departed at small crematoriums which run on LPG. About 60km from Melbourne, the Geelong Cemeteries Trust is running at about five times its normal rate, handling 30 bodies a day.

...Gas company Esso still has no definite time for restoring supplies to Victoria... [However, a company spokesperson] rejected speculation said to be circulating in Sale, the town near the Longford plant... that gas resumption would take at least a month... Meanwhile, the construction of an 800m bypass pipeline necessary to carry byproducts when gas production resumes was progressing quickly, said [the spokesperson].

...their Premier] yesterday told Victorians to stop whingeing about cold showers as... fallout from the state's gas crisis widened, with more workers being laid off. Industry groups and trade unions fear 100,000 may lose their jobs throughout Victoria... The cost of the crisis to manufacturers is tipped by the A[merican] Industry Group to exceed \$NZ119 million a day... Meanwhile, the energy company Esso is facing what could become the nation's largest class action suit, a claim by the same Melbourne law firm that tried to take Mercury... to court over Auckland's electricity crisis.

...They scoffed at Auckland's power crisis... Now nobody is laughing in Melbourne as the city [continues to endure] its own nightmare... N[Z] authorities say such a crisis could not happen here because gas supplies do not rely on one source... "...if the worst-case scenario occurred and the Maui production station shut down, we would be able to get by on the 50 petajoules of gas per annum from... on-shore fields... This would allow operators to meet the requirements of essential services, and even maintain domestic supplies," said... the National Gas Corporation... [However,] Auckland faces a "serious and real threat" to public safety from dangerously laid Enerco gas pipes... confidential documents obtained by the N[Z] Herald... have revealed. Stainless steel pipe laid by untrained contractors risked "serious degradation," one memo warned... The same notice also disclosed that Enerco did not know precisely where contractors had installed gas pipes. Enerco later discovered hundreds of substandard connections... [which it] was forced to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars rectifying... The memo, issued when the company was having trouble finding 5.8km of pipe from its supply stores, pleaded with contract managers to help locate all addresses where stainless steel was used. The memo said: "This is not a 'witch-hunt' directed at contract managers and there will be no recourse. This is a major problem... and we all need to work together to resolve... [it] in the shortest possible time." The company denies downplaying the scare to the public...

Dangerous flaws in gas connections to Auckland homes, schools and shopping malls were dealt with quietly by Enerco in 1997, despite public safety fears... [C]ontractors cut corners in the race to connect thousands of customers under a \$21 million "mains to frame" strategy[- when] Enerco hired teams of contractors to connect households for \$99... Stainless steel pipe was used above ground, contrary to best practice, or laid near driveways where it could be run over. Pipes tacked on to fences or cast in concrete risked decay. Connections which were meant to be laid 600mm underground were buried under shallow soil cover, posing an explosive hazard to contractors working on water, power or telephone connections. Homes were connected so rapidly that Enerco lost track of pipe leaving its stores.

...Natural gas supply to about 50,000 customers was disrupted... yesterday after a bulldozer ruptured the high-pressure pipeline to the southern half of the North Island. Police said the accident, involving contractors, happened at 3.10 pm yesterday near Himatangi, north of Foxton. The [police spokesperson] said residents described the rupture as sounding like an aircraft taking off as a large volume of gas escaped. The bulldozer operator and a [resident] required treatment for gas inhalation. A 10km stretch of State Highway 1 between Himatangi and Foxton was closed and several properties were evacuated. Natural Gas Corporation... said the rupture affected people [on all sides of the Tararua Ranges, including] the greater Wellington region[, and as far north as]... Hawkes Bay... Repairs to the pipe could take up to two days... [NGC] asked large customers to stop drawing on the gas south of the breach and domestic users to limit gas consumption as much as possible. Contact Energy yesterday warned of serious consequences if lower North Island customers ignored pleas to stop using gas. "This is potentially a very serious situation," [the company's] corporate affairs general manager... said... "We are requiring all but our smallest commercial customers to cease using gas immediately."

...48 wind turbines [are] being put up at a site in the Tararua Ranges near Palmerston North... [by] CentralPower... While the 40m-high windmills are designed for power generation, they also have pulling power with tourists and a steady stream of visitors are expected to check out the first 10 during open days this weekend. They would be well advised to button up, however, as the average wind speed at the site is 35 km/h. The turbine farm is expected to produce 31.7[MW] of electricity - enough for 15,000 households... [■ A NZ-based] Iraqi engineer has developed a mini wind turbine that could revolutionise the world's energy market... [H]is novel design will be small enough to fit on the roof of an average house, with much less noise and vibration than traditional windmills. The Foundation for Research, Science and Technology has given him \$266,000 to develop the design during the next four years. The design is based on a spiral blade originally developed in Sweden for large-scale industrial wind turbines. [The engineer] has subtly changed the shape of the blade to alter the way it catches gusts of wind. "It's an aerodynamic problem that has not been fully solved by others... For sure, it will be cheaper than the conventional existing power supplies." ...the turbine "shouldn't be larger than the antenna of a TV aerial", and would generate electricity in typical wind conditions in most parts of the world. Born in Iraq, [the engineer] was educated in Cairo and London and worked for 20 years in the oil industry in the Gulf. [It] came to N[Z] after the... Gulf War in 1990-91... [The engineer] has already registered two patents in Unitec's name... Unitec is now looking for companies to commercialise [his] invention... Another wind power pioneer... expressed doubts about [the Iraqi]'s design because its vertical blade would be subject to higher fatigue loads than blades with a horizontal axis. But [the pioneer] confirmed that wind power was already cost-competitive at recent power prices of about 6c a kilowatt-hour.

...At Tehachapi Pass, on the grassy hillsides that lead up to [California's] high desert, more than 4900 wind turbines spin out enough energy annually to power 250,000 homes. "Some say they're an eyesore," says [a] local... "But I'd rather have wind turbines than nuclear power plants."

...The problem with nuclear power is that it comes with an unpleasant side-effect: highly radioactive waste material... But what if we could build a reactor that ran on nuclear waste - a reactor that generated power by cleaning up the most toxic substance in existence? Tucked among the fertile vineyards of central California is a machine that promises to do just that. This week, work finished on the National Ignition Facility... The NIF contains the most powerful laser in history... The aim is to split the laser into 192 separate beams, then focus them on a speck of fuel little bigger than a pinhead. The resulting temperatures and pressures will be millions and billions times greater than those on Earth, triggered by the start of a fusion reaction... By using hydrogen as its fuel, the NIF should become the first fusion machine that gives off more energy than is needed to trigger the reaction. But... due to the enormous energies involved (1000 times the amount produced by America's national grid), the laser can only fire once every three hours. For a commercial fusion power station, that would need to be 10 times a second. So... the scientists at the NIF... plan to combine their technology with a traditional nuclear fission reactor, which would require the laser to fire at a far lower frequency.

...It sounds like the plot of a 1950s horror film: bugs may be spreading radiation at the Hanford nuclear reservation. Thirteen spots on the former nuclear weapons site have been contaminated. The source has not been determined, but fruit flies, gnats and ants are believed to be part of the problem. And 35 tonnes of dumped rubbish must be taken back to Hanford because it is contaminated... [By the way, the] cleanup of an old... COLORADO... nuclear weapons factory has come to a halt after 10 workers tested positive for radiation exposure[(usually 'people who work near radiation wear detection devices such as film badges and dosimeters, which record the total amount of radiation to which the wearer has been exposed')].

...it has now been two months since the US] Energy Secretary ordered an investigation... into whether thousands of workers were unwittingly exposed to plutonium... at a federally owned plant in Kentucky. The [secretary had ordered the investigation after the]*Washington Post*, citing court documents, plant records and interviews, reported that uranium workers at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant inhaled plutonium-laced dust... for 23 years until as recently as 1976... [P]lutonium was introduced... in tiny but dangerous quantities in used uranium brought to the plant... as part of an experimental nuclear reactor fuel recycling programme... The workers were exposed to the plutonium and other radioactive metals in work areas, locker rooms and even cafeterias. The Government did not inform workers about the hazard even after employees started to notice a string of cancers in the 1980s. The *Post* said a lawsuit filed under seal in June by three present plant employees alleges that radiation exposure was a problem at Paducah well into the 1990s... Radioactive contaminants from the 300ha plant, built in 1952, [also]spilled into ditches and eventually seeped into creeks, a state-owned wildlife area and private wells... The Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences will independently investigate any possible links between illnesses and exposure to hazardous materials at Paducah and other Energy Department sites.

...In an about face, the U[S] Government says it is likely that... hundreds – perhaps thousands – of workers... who built America's nuclear weapons became ill because of exposure to radiation or toxic chemicals. The findings, based on a review of dozens of studies and raw medical data covering an estimated 600,000 workers at 14 nuclear weapons sites, are a reversal of a position held for decades... [that] has stymied numerous lawsuits seeking compensation... [The] Energy Secretary... cautioned that the findings were preliminary and would not be completed for several months but that if the findings were borne out, "the honourable thing for the Government to do is to protect its workers, past and present," including compensation... [● US, f]irefighters were struggling overnight to contain a wildfire accidentally set by park rangers that has destroyed or damaged up to 400 houses in a New Mexico town and is threatening its nuclear weapons lab. The White House said it believed the nuclear materials were safe in disaster-proof bundles... in concrete and steel bunkers... at the sprawling Los Alamos National Laboratory, where the first atomic bomb was built in 1945... "The equipment to keep our plutonium is designed to withstand a crash of a 747 into it," said [the laboratory's]director... The National Park Service came under criticism for starting the wildfire by burning excess underbrush in nearby Bandelier National Monument last Friday despite high winds and dry conditions... Winds gusting to 97 km/h fanned flames that rose up to 60m from burning pine forests... [S]moke... rose 6000m into the sky, clearly visible on satellite photographs... Spot fires from windblown embers erupted in the grounds of the laboratory but were quickly put out... New Mexico[']s Senator... would ask Congress' General Accounting Office to investigate... "I believe someone is responsible... We'll know by next week... if [the excess burning] was a good thing to do or the equivalent of a mistake. I think the latter,"... Since the US stopped testing nuclear weapons... the laboratory's main role has been to make sure existing stockpiles remain safe and functioning.

...An army of 1000 firefighters on the ground and in the sky struggled yesterday to contain a wind-driven forest fire that [has]forced thousands of people from their homes, caused \$US1 billion... in damages and charred vast areas around the top [US]nuclear research facility... Despite their efforts, the mighty blaze spread like a fast-growing cancer across more than 14,500ha of scenic northern New Mexico... Officials had expected cooler temperatures and calmer winds to help them get a grip on the fire... But... winds had picked up again and left them scrambling to hold on to the 5[%] of the fire they had contained on Saturday. [The]US Forest Service fire information officer... said: "This thing is growing and we don't know where it's going to end up. It... is going to burn for weeks." ...Along with the winds... the fire was being fuelled by the effects of a prolonged drought that was the most severe in New Mexico's recorded history, dating back to the 1700s... Officials said 30[%] of the 11 sq km land area of the Los Alamos laboratory... had been burned. None of the lab's permanent buildings was damaged... Air monitors had detected no radioactive releases, but lab officials said they were still taking care to protect a warehouse containing low-level nuclear waste stored above ground. More potent nuclear materials are stored in underground bunkers[– some of which the fire passed over]... The laboratory has been closed, but... a few administrative functions could reopen today... [In related news, the US] has urged North Korea not to restart a nuclear reactor... after the... International Atomic Energy Agency... said Pyongyang had disabled its monitoring equipment... at the five-megawatt Nyongbyong reactor, which the UN believes was used to make plutonium before being closed under a 1994 agreement with the US. "We urge the DPRK... not to restart its frozen nuclear facilities..." said [a]US State Department spokes[perso]n... To do so would "fly in the face of international consensus". The North's official Korean Central News Agency confirmed it began removing the surveillance devices after the UN nuclear watchdog had not acted on Pyongyang's demand early this month to take the equipment away to allow the reactor to be reactivated... It did not appear that the seals or cameras had been disturbed at the reprocessing plant or at the spent fuel rod pond where 8000 spent fuel rods were stored... North Korea's actions and its pursuit of a covert nuclear programme undermined the international community's efforts to help it deal with poverty and other serious problems... Under the 1994 accord, Pyongyang promised to freeze its nuclear programmes in return for a \$US5 billion... package that included two light-water nuclear reactors for power generation and 500,000 metric tonnes of heavy fuel oil a year... Pyongyang, acting after the US, South Korea, Japan and the E[U] decided to halt its heavy fuel oil deliveries, announced plans this month to immediately reactivate the Nyongbyong reactor. The US and its allies decided to cut fuel deliveries after the North acknowledged it had a programme to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons, which was prohibited by the 1994 agreement.

...Nuclear weapons inspectors are being forced to leave North Korea tomorrow in a mounting crisis on the world's last Cold War frontier... North Korea told the IAEA the 1994 agreement... had broken down and its inspectors must go. The expulsion will deprive outside agencies of the last reliable means of monitoring the closed Stalinist state. International monitors will have to rely on satellite images, the testimony of defectors and decoding the utterances of North Korea's leader... "This is a country in defiance of its international obligations," said the IAEA's director-general... The U[S] has said it will step up pressure on the communist state if it refuses to abandon a nuclear arms programme that Washington fears may already have produced one or two atomic bombs. U[S] officials said North Korean missile shipments might be blocked to deny the cash-strapped country further revenue from arms sales. North Korea's order expelling the... inspectors was its latest move in a crisis some suspect is aimed at prising more food and energy aid from Washington and its allies for the starving nation of 22 million. The U[S]... has told North Korea it would not negotiate under duress... Washington will attempt to pressure Pyongyang through its neighbours and allies, along with the United Nations, with a strategy of "tailored containment". Behind the scenes, it also threatened to push North Korea... towards economic collapse. The tension... came to a head [two months ago] when North Korea said it had a covert nuclear programme. The... crisis worsened on Friday when North Korea announced that it was firing up a reprocessing laboratory that could convert spent fuel into plutonium for nuclear bombs and had begun moving fresh fuel rods to the five-megawatt research reactor... South Korea has called for a strategy meeting with the U[S] and Japan. A senior envoy from the U[S] is expected in Seoul within the next two weeks to co-ordinate Washington's policy. While the crisis escalated, [North Korea's leader] relaxed at a concert where an army choir praised him in song. The Korean Central News Agency said an official rally "called on all the Koreans to turn out in the sacred anti-US resistance to drive the US imperialist aggressors out of South Korea and resolutely frustrate the nuclear racket of the US".

...North Korea has for the first time indicated that its membership of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) could be the next victim of a deepening crisis over its nuclear weapons ambitions. In a statement last night, North Korea's Foreign Ministry blamed the U[S] for the collapse of the 1994 Agreed Framework accord... Earlier yesterday, [the]US Secretary of State... said that the US did not plan to strike North Korea, which is still technically at war with South Korea... "Military action is never off the table in the sense that it is not an option... We just don't think the circumstances at this time require us to point a gun at someone's head." ...North Korea announced its withdrawal from the NPT in March 1993,

triggering a nuclear crisis that brought the Korean Peninsula to the brink of war. The Stalinist country suspended the threatened withdrawal three months later, after the US agreed to start talks to improve ties with North Korea. [Last night's] statement also blasted Washington for trying to destroy North Korea "with nuclear weapons, gripped by the Cold War way of thinking, going against the basic trend of... heading for reconciliation and peace". "We have been left with no option but to consider self-defensive means to cope with the threat in order to protect the nation's dignity and right to existence." ...The [US] Administration has prepared a policy of financial and political pressure on Pyongyang, the *New York Times* reports. Under the plan, US officials are willing to negotiate, but only providing North Korea first dismantles its nuclear weapons programme. If it refuses, the UN Security Council could threaten economic sanctions, and the US military might intercept... North Korea[n]... missile shipments...

The U[S] is seeking to play down differences with key allies South Korea and Russia over its response to communist North Korea's nuclear brinkmanship, saying it has no plans for sanctions. South Korea yesterday launched a flurry of diplomacy to try and ward off a crisis, while Washington insisted on avoiding calling it that and US officials pushed a strategy they were calling "tailored containment"... Although... [the US] Administration has called for punitive economic measures against... North Korea – already one of the world's most isolated countries – US officials backtracked yesterday, saying sanctions were not currently being considered. Even so, Washington's stance was far from clear. US officials already have unsettled important allies by suggesting that sanctions could be imposed by the U[N]... Last week, South Korea's President-elect... called on North Korea to back down. But South Korea has made plain its reluctance to join any US moves to isolate Pyongyang economically, something that would threaten millions of North Koreans who already live on the brink of starvation... [The President-elect] told his Cabinet: "We cannot go to war with North Korea and we can't go back to the Cold War system and extreme confrontation." Russia aligned itself with South Korea's approach and suggested the US tone down its pronouncements... [However,] Russia also denounced the expulsion of the I[AEA] inspectors...

Russia's 29 nuclear power plants recorded 62 "irregularities" in the first five months of 1998, five times more than in the same period the previous year... [Incidentally, a] steel mill in southern Spain is believed to be the source of a sharp rise in radiation levels detected in France, Switzerland and Italy earlier this month, say Spanish authorities. Scrap metal obtained from an unknown location was melted down at the Acerinox plant... sending a cloud containing cesium-137 blowing to the north and east. Radiation 1000 times higher than normal was detected for a few days, but is said not to have posed any health threat. It was the highest nuclear contamination on the continent since the Chernobyl disaster...

A UN assessment of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear meltdown says the worst health consequences for 7.1 million people may be yet to come... Three people were killed in the explosion... and 28 emergency workers died within the first three months, the report said. It gave no later death toll but noted that 106 of the other emergency workers... first on the scene were... diagnosed with acute radiation syndrome... 600,000 emergency workers who helped in the cleanup and in the sealing of the destroyed reactor "must be constantly monitored for the effects of exposure to radiation." The three countries most affected by the radiation – Belarus, Ukraine and Russia – continue to pay the price. Soviet officials initially tried to play down the tragedy but official figures now show that several thousand people have died and... 3.5 million were disabled in the Ukraine alone. The... UN Secretary-General... said the exact number of victims might never be known, but three million children required treatment and "many will die prematurely." [The Secretary-General] said response to a UN appeal launched three years ago had fallen so short that the original list of 60 projects had been shortened to the nine most urgent. The projects include modernisation of a hospital, creation of a network of centres to treat children and decontamination of schools, kindergartens and hospitals in Belarus. In Russia, the projects include supplying vitamins to increase immunity to radiation exposure, providing ultra-sound screening of 500,000 children and developing rehabilitation centres for affected people. Among projects in Ukraine are improving healthcare, restoring forests and conducting research into the health impact on future generations. Meanwhile, experts warn... Chernobyl... is effectively a nuclear timebomb... [The] closure of... Chernobyl's last reactor... has been delayed... Officials vow there will be no second Chernobyl in Ukraine... But... [are they right, and] what... about the... [other] Soviet-era nuclear plants...

NUCLEAR TIMEBOMBS... VISITORS to Sosnovy-Bor, a distant suburb of St Petersburg, can't say they aren't warned. The town hall boasts a digital Geiger counter, displaying local radiation levels in large red letters. That's because Sosnovy-Bor's only industry is the Leningrad Nuclear Power Plant (LNPP), with its four huge reactors. Earlier this year the plant looked like an abandoned construction site. Rusting cranes loomed like mutant insects over piles of building materials... They are supposed to be used to revamp the plant's safety systems, an overhaul originally scheduled for completion by the end of the year. But that has been postponed... The LNPP is a Chernobyl-type power station – only much more dangerous. If Chernobyl had happened here, many of the four million people of St Petersburg would have been hit with a huge dose of radiation. Outsiders can enter the plant only with permission from Russia's nuclear-regulation agency, Minatom, which rarely grants visits. Visitors to the LNPP remove their shoes and don plastic booties and protective overclothing, but this seems intended mainly for the amusement of the staff. In the Block 2 Reactor Containment Room, for instance, many employees don't wear any protective gear at all – or even dosimeters... "When we were kids, we used to go swimming in the... waste water from the plant-cooling systems... because the water was so warm," boasts... a technician... aged 22... Officials at LNPP are touchy about suggestions that their plant could become another Chernobyl, and say a meltdown can't happen here. "What we call the human factor is really very important," says [a] technical director... referring to the importance of worker morale in maintaining good safety practices. "You can't underestimate this. It is what you depend on." Yet plant workers routinely get their Government pay cheques as much as six months late. And... critics of the plant have discovered that at least three LNPP employees were heroin addicts. One... died of an overdose last winter, the others were sent to rehab. Russian environmentalists claim at least one addict had access to the vital control room of the facility, and others to radioactive-waste-storage facilities... The I[AEA] says... there were 508 nuclear "incidents" between 1993 and last October alone, an average of more than one for each of the world's 434 operating power plants. Behind the mishaps is a simple fact. Nuclear-power generation is well into its middle age. At plants around the globe, pipes, vats and controls have worn down dangerously, vastly increasing the chances of mishaps, both minor and major. Industry executives insist... nuclear power in Asia, Western Europe and the U[S] remains safe. But the public is no longer buying it. "Now, many European countries are saying... the risk is unacceptably high," says... the I[AEA] chief. Nuclear-reactor orders and start-ups ranged from 20 to 40 a year in the 1980s; in 1997 there were just two new orders, and five start-ups worldwide... "There's no real future for the nuclear industry," says... a physicist and Greenpeace campaigner in England. "It's clear... nuclear power is on its way out." Yet that's easier said than done. Some 16[%] of the world's power now comes from nuclear plants[– and 1/3rd] of Europe's... That kind of dependence makes it impossible for governments to simply turn off the juice. But it isn't the state of the plants in France, America or even Japan that keeps nuclear experts awake at night... Of the 58 Soviet-era reactors still functioning, 15 are... identical in design to Chernobyl. Although the Chernobyl explosion was the result of human error, the design of the plant was also a major factor. RBMK reactors, which are graphite-cooled... have a tendency to get hotter when something goes wrong in the reactor core. Western plants are usually water-cooled, and tend to lose heat during an accident, making them easier to bring under control. The West is worried enough about [Eastern Europe's] ageing plants to have ponied up... \$[US]3.7 billion so far to improve safety and training. But most experts agree... the only way to really make them safe is to shut them down... "As a class, these reactors continue to experience serious incidents, raising the spectre of another accident akin to Chernobyl." Or worse... [T]he Green World environmental group in Sosnovy-Bor, has photos... smuggled out of the LNPP by workers. They show cracks 21m long and 20cm wide in the thick cement of the building used to store highly radioactive waste... "In just this one building there's enough hot waste to make 20 Chernobyls. And it's only 20 years old... What will it be like in 100 to 200 years?" People who live near these old plants are already living with the disastrous

effects of radiation poisoning. Just ask the residents of Chelyabinsk, in the Ural Mountains... The region is ringed with nuclear facilities, but the most notorious is the Mayak Production Association, a reprocessing plant... 80km outside of Chelyabinsk near a town called Novogornyy. In 1957, there was a mysterious explosion of the highly toxic radioactive isotope strontium-90 at Mayak... 28,000... residents and workers... were officially classified as "affected" by the releases. Since then, there have been half a dozen fatal incidents, including a 1967 explosion... that spewed... cesium-137... particles over a large area. The Mayor of Novogornyy... says his small city still draws its drinking water from Karachai Lake, where the complex dumps its radioactive waste. "There is 15 times the limit of strontium-90 in the soil, 38 times the limit of cesium-137... but the authorities don't believe that when the wind blows, people here all get headaches. They say it's just radiophobia." Russian authorities have plenty to hide. A doctor in a village near Mayak... says nearly every member of his family has some chronic medical problem; a granddaughter was born with only six fingers. "We don't have concrete statistics to prove it... But I was born in 1939 and there used to be 50 people in the village my age. Now no more than 10 are left and most of them are oncological cases." At the Novogornyy hospital, the medical director... says there hasn't been a single normal birth there in two years. A school director... says... chronic illnesses are so common that a third of his 230 students are out sick on any given day. Researchers from Mayak came and tested the children's blood but never divulged the results. Few Western countries would tolerate a Mayak or LNPP in their midst, but their own ageing nuclear plants have plenty of problems... At Britain's Sellafield nuclear-power site, a complex of eight reactors and two reprocessing plants, there were 27 level 1 and 2 incidents in [the past two years] – compared with just 32 worldwide in 1997. Three workers there were fired last month for allegedly falsifying safety checks on plutonium. Sellafield is home to the world's first commercial nuclear reactor. Opened in 1956, the facility was designed to run for 25 years. It's... still going. Britain has become the first European country to decommission a reactor, the Dounreay plant... on Scotland's northern coast. The cleanup and shutdown process will take up to 100 years and cost \$1370 m... Authorities acted after acknowledging... waste-storage units were leaking and after finding mysterious "hot" particles on local beaches. The sand-like particles are radioactive enough to blister anyone who sits on them, and dangerous enough to kill a child who swallows them.

...The people who live near Temelin, in the rolling hills of south Bohemia, have been issued with two small tablets each. They have been told to keep them in a safe place – and to take them if anything goes wrong at the Soviet-designed nuclear power plant a few kilometres from their homes. To the fury of its E[U] neighbours, the Czech Republic is on the verge of activating the nuclear reactor, which German experts say may not be safe... The Germans... [and Austrians] this week threatened to veto Czech membership of the EU if the plant, partly modernised by a subsidiary of British Nuclear Fuels Ltd, is activated as planned [next week]... Austria, whose border is only 48km away, has been furiously lobbying against Temelin for months. Greenpeace claims there are serious safety shortcomings at Temelin – claims which are strenuously denied by the Czech nuclear safety authorities. Temelin's two reactors are Russian VVER-1000s – generally regarded as the safest of the Russian designs, and completely different from the reactor involved in the Chernobyl disaster. Work started at Temelin under the old communist authorities, in 1983, and has been going on ever since. Last year, the Czech authorities decided to finish and activate the reactor. Parts of the plant – the instrumentation and control – are being replaced with American designs by the US firm Westinghouse, a subsidiary of BNFL. The Czech Republic is not short of electricity, but Temelin is expected to provide lucrative energy exports. In the villages around Temelin, opinion is divided. "They should have switched it on months ago," says [one villager]. "We should be making money from it. The Germans should mind their own business. They're just trying to ruin our economy." But not everybody agrees. "Of course I'm scared," says... [someone] visiting Hluboka castle with his two young children. "I'm scared for the children." "Czech people don't realise we have a democracy now," says... an anti-nuclear campaigner who lives near Temelin. "They think we have to accept what the politicians decide, like in the old days. They don't realise we can object, so they don't." [The campaigner] organises holidays in the Czech Republic for the child victims of the Chernobyl disaster.

...To the relief of just about everybody outside northern Ukraine, Chernobyl nuclear power station will produce its last electricity this month. After years of intense pressure from the West, the Ukraine has promised it will finally switch off the one reactor still functioning at the infamous site in the pine forests 98km north of Kiev. Chernobyl spawned the world's worst nuclear accident... when a disastrous explosion during a test shutdown of Reactor Four spewed out a nine-tonne radioactive dust cloud that reached as far as Britain. In 1991, Reactor Two was closed after a fire. Reactor One reached the end of its productive life in 1996. Then last week, winter's first heavy snows iced up overhead power lines and forced officials to switch off Reactor Three as a safety precaution. They plan to start it momentarily, only to close it permanently at a grand televised ceremony [next week]. Despite this appalling track record, the workers of Chernobyl defiantly insist their plant is safe, but is being killed off for political reasons. The catastrophic explosion in the early hours of April 26, 1986... is regarded as little more than a technical blip by those who still work there... More than 100,000 people were evacuated after the accident, and the 5800 remaining Chernobyl workers are brought by train from a new city outside the "Zone" as it is known. The original town of Chernobyl is home to about 1000 Government employees, mainly security and forestry workers. The dingy bar in the disused bus station is the main draw in the evenings. Downing copious quantities of pepper vodka as insulation against the sub-zero temperatures outside, the locals lamented Chernobyl's demise. Outside the Zone, few will join their wake next week... Western donors... this year pledged more than £500 million... to fund the closure of Chernobyl and a new steel-latticed "tomb" for Reactor Four. And yesterday the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development made Ukraine a controversial loan of \$US215 million... to help it build two nuclear reactors to replace the Chernobyl reactors. But release of the money will depend on the resumption of aid to Ukraine by the IMF and on the shutdown of the Chernobyl plant... The West is also pressing for the closure of 11 nuclear plants in Russia and two in Lithuania that are of the same design as Chernobyl. Even in Kiev there is relief at the closure, especially among young couples who delayed having families, fearing the effect of radiation on children. Lack of money and poor monitoring techniques mean the overall health impact of the disaster in Ukraine and neighbouring Belarus, the worst-affected territory, is still not known, although child thyroid cancers caused by radioactive fallout have soared. Deaths among the 600,000 cleanup workers brought in from across the Soviet Union are also unknown... In huge lettering above a decaying apartment block[in]... Pripyat, the now-deserted city built just 3km from the station... a Soviet slogan declares: "The health of the people is the wealth of the country." ...I spent two days inside the barbed-wire fences of the 28km exclusion zone after being granted government entry permits.

...Restrictions on 300,000 residents near the site of Japan's worst nuclear accident were lifted last night, but officials are still uncertain what the potential long-term effects will be. Experts said the chain reaction at the Tokaimura uranium-processing plant... had halted for now. People within a 10km radius of the plant had been banned from going outdoors. A Government spokes[person] said a decision would be made later on people living within 350m of the plant, most of whom had anyway been evacuated. At least 55 people were exposed to radiation, including 45 workers at the plant, three fire[officers] and seven people at a nearby golf course... The Government admitted that its response had been slow. "I understand that this is a type of accident that was seen in the 1950s," said[a spokesperson]... "As a modern nation, it's shameful that this kind of accident happened[again]." The emergency is believed to have started when a worker piled almost eight times too much uranium into a container, with the result that it reached "critical mass"... Working through Thursday night, technicians drained water that had helped to feed the chain reaction and sent radiation levels near the plant to 15,000 times normal... [A]t all but two spots very close to the site, levels had returned to normal... Officials told residents that clothes worn during evening rain showers in the area should be washed and locally grown vegetables should not be harvested... Earlier, the Government declared the incident a "level four" on a scale of nuclear accidents... Japan's... worst previous accident, also at Tokaimura in 1997, had been a level three. The 1979... Three Mile Island accident [in the US] was a level five, while the... Chernobyl accident... was level seven.

...The Japanese Government will revoke the business licence of JCO Co, the operator of [the] nuclear fuel reprocessing plant where the nation's worst nuclear accident occurred last week[after]... JCO officials admitted the firm illegally revised a Government-approved manual to allow

workers to use buckets instead of a pump to transfer uranium solution to a tank... [In another development, the Government's estimate of how many people were exposed to radiation... has [been] raised... to 439 from 70... [T]he new calculation takes into account local residents as well as plant workers not equipped with radiation monitoring devices... [The] accident... killed one person...

A ship carrying nuclear material from Japan to Britain... sailed last night despite opposition from anti-nuclear activists, who said the cargo was a theft and attack risk. The sailing of the Pacific Pintail, carrying a weapons-usable mix of plutonium and uranium oxides (MOX)... sufficient for 50 nuclear weapons... has raised tension as it... comes after US warnings of the continuing potential for terrorist attacks. An air of watchfulness surrounded the pier in the looming shadow of Takahama's nuclear power plant 300km west of Tokyo. Police with dogs surrounded two massive, 100-tonne nuclear transport casks trucked to the pier for the loading, 20 security guards stood on the ship's deck and plant security kept protesters out of the area. The Pacific Pintail and 12 Japanese coast-guard escorts had slipped into serene Uchiura Bay, past the Greenpeace International protest ship Arctic Sunrise. The MOX fuel is being returned to state-owned BNFL after Japan's Kansai Electric Power Co Inc discovered that data for a... shipment from Britain had been deliberately falsified. Kansai was to use the fuel in commercial reactors. As a security measure, the Pacific Pintail, which had a machine gun, was to sail with another ship, the Pacific Teal[– which had carried the original shipment from Britain].

...Two shipments of nuclear fuel leaving... the French port of Cherbourg tonight... will sail close to N[Z]'s shores, opening old wounds over the anti-nuclear debate and straining our relations with several key allies... The likely passage of... the... Pacific Pintail and Pacific Teal... through the Tasman Sea within the next month is seen as a direct challenge to the Government's opposition to such shipments. Rather than just carrying waste, the material on board this time is capable of being converted into nuclear weapons and is an affront to the Government's drive for a nuclear-free region... [(France... quietly imposed a ban on information about its... shipments of nuclear material, declaring that such details are tantamount to military secrets and disclosure of them is punishable by a jail term... – but... [t]he move has outraged the country's powerful ecology movement[)]... The... MOX... fuel... is destined for the Tokyo Electric Power Company... 80 more of these shipments... are... planned for the next 20 years...

Plans to build the world's biggest nuclear waste repository in the A[US]n outback are being drawn up in Britain, the *Observer* says... BNFL... had put £5 million... into developing the project which, if it went ahead, could threaten Aboriginal communities and wildlife, the newspaper said. Britain has the world's second largest stock of nuclear waste. In 1997 the Government abandoned work on the deep-level Nirex nuclear dump in Cumbria, leaving the UK without anywhere locally to dispose of its radioactive waste... A BNFL spokes[person] told the newspaper that A[US] had the "right geology and the political stability vital for a deep disposal site... We believe there would be substantial economic and other benefits for A[US]." But the A[US]n Government has rejected the idea... "It is not Government policy to import nuclear waste from other countries and there is no intention to change that. The only thing that is currently happening is that we are looking to identify a site for our own low-level nuclear waste..." ...The *Observer* article follows a similar report late last year in which a leaked video showed the American company Pangea promoting A[US] as a nuclear waste dump. The video said Pangea had searched the world for the best possible location.

...A[US] could "do the right thing for the world" and avail itself of an ideal opportunity to become a nuclear waste dump, says... the... promotional video... made... to sell the concept... Set to soothing background music, a [gal] with a British accent explains in dulcet tones: "A[US] possesses a unique combination of natural, political and infrastructural factors which make it the world's best for the time." After setting out the technological processes involved, the explanation continues: "All this state-of-the-art engineering and activity will have a profoundly beneficial economic effect both direct and indirect on the state and Commonwealth economy, so both the rest of the world and A[US] will benefit from solving this world problem."

...The decision to replace A[US]'s only nuclear facility has run into a storm rolling around the selection of an Argentinian company, and the threat of a catastrophic accident. Commissioned in 1958... the... Lucas Heights reactor in the wooded hills of southwest Sydney... is central to new materials' research, to irradiate computer chips and to produce new materials used in minerals exploration, agriculture and environmental management. Replacement of the facility is considered necessary to keep A[US]'s foot in the nuclear door, give it a credible voice in non-proliferation forums and to continue neutron-based research. But with the reawakening of the anti-nuclear movement, Lucas Heights has come under increasing pressure and now a Senate inquiry has begun into the tendering process that gave the contract for its replacement to Argentina's struggling state-owned INVAP. The Government is accused of pushing through the contract with indecent haste, running foul even of its own nuclear safety watchdog, the A[US]n Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency, which has said it will not approve a new reactor until a national waste repository has been established... There are other concerns around Lucas Heights. In the surrounding district, surveys have found that 88[%] of its neighbours do not want a new reactor, and Greenpeace reported 75[%] reject the reactor until there is a new waste dump.

...A[US]'s nuclear safety watchdog said yesterday that radioactive water leaked from a cooling pond at the Lucas Heights nuclear reactor last year. A spokes[person] for the A[US]n Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency... said several litres of the water, used to cool nuclear fuel rods, leaked into a catchment deliberately built for such an event. But there was no indication that surrounding land was contaminated. On the agency's instructions, the A[US]n Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation, which runs the Sydney reactor, had dug holes around the area... to a[cc]umulate... a collection sump... [I]t was still not clear whether the leak was still occurring or for how long the pond had been leaking.

...A NEW LYNN packaging company at the centre of a chemical leak which devastated... the Whau River has escaped prosecution. The Auckland Regional Council... decision... [to] not prosecute... comes six months after 4000 litres of printing chemical n-propyl acetate leaked from a container at [the packaging company], through a stormwater drain and into the Whau. Thirty-year-old eels and hundreds of fish were killed in the spill which left a kilometre section of the Whau devoid of marine life. [The] ARC pollution control officer... who headed the investigation into the spill says the leak was caused by an "unforeseen mechanical failure... Our advice from our legal team is that a prosecution would be hard to pursue... [– as t]here is a clause in the Resource Management Act which exempts companies from prosecution if it is because of mechanical failure... The reality is that we will probably get more co-operation and a better deal for the river than if we pressed ahead with any prosecution." ...[as if to confirm that statement, the officer said the packaging company]'s help in the immediate aftermath of the spill and six months down the line has been "awesome"... [It] has made a long term commitment to restocking the river, to revegetation and continued maintenance of the area. [The company]'s operations manager... says the company "deeply regrets" the spill. "We now have manual safety checks on the piece of equipment and a checking system in place." ...[in addition,] the stormwater drain entrance on the company's property has been sealed to prevent any further spills getting into the river.

...Three companies that developed Westgate shopping centre have been fined \$104,000 for resource consent breaches and serious disregard for environmental controls. Westgate Properties Ltd, WGS Construction Ltd and Cato Consultants were fined by... the Auckland District Court on Friday. [The] judge... says none of the three companies proactively sought to ensure the site or contractors complied with consents and abatement notices issued by the A[RC]. The companies admitted to lacking erosion and sediment control measures required by their resource consents, to discharging sediment into the Manu Te Whau stream over a considerable period and failing to comply with two abatement notices. A[n] A[RC] soil conservator... says the environment was sacrificed [for] commercial gain. "In this case, work that should have been better controlled on the site was given very low or no priority," sa[id] the ARC soil conservator. The manager of Westgate investors Westland Ltd, says there was no intention to spoil the natural resources... "There were some errors made on our part but there were no effects from them and we tried to mitigate them as soon as possible." [The manager] says Westgate was developed during a wet winter and this contributed to problems such as heavy stormwater run off.

...The Auckland region is losing up to... 66,000 tonnes of soil washed into the sea every year – much of it avoidable, according to ARC soil experts. The loss of irreplaceable soil and the impact on fisheries are both serious economic issues... One of the main causes of soil loss is urban

development. The ARC estimates that... 2000 times more sediment runs off bare earth exposed to rain compared to forested areas. Up to 500 tonnes of earth, or 50 large truckloads, can be lost from a five hectare subdivision without adequate soil retention. The ARC works with developers, particularly on sites larger than 0.25 hectares, who are required to gain resource consents to expose bare earth to ensure that appropriate controls are implemented... A... councillor... says soil loss from small sites can be prevented if developers and contractors follow... ARC... stormwater management guidelines... Typical measures include using sand-bags to divert water flows, hay bales to detain and filter flows, revegetation of exposed areas, and covering piles of earth with tarpaulins when it rains. Applying straw mulch to exposed earth also helps to reduce sediment loss... Sediment, a mixture of topsoil and clays, is washed into streams, estuaries and harbours where[, in addition to affecting recreational activities – p]eople don't like to swim or play in muddy waters... [-] it has a devastating effect on... fisheries[('if you wouldn't wash in it don't expect other creatures to live in it')]... Sediment is like an underwater dust storm to fish and shellfish. It is the single biggest water pollutant... in the... region.

...More than 330 flood-related calls were received by Waitakere City Council following June's heavy storm and subsequent downpours in July. About a third of the calls were to report emergency flooding incidents. The remainder related to flooding caused by public drains exceeding their capacity, surface water in backyards and garages, or problems relating to broken pipes and blocked drains on both private and public property. The high number of flooding incidents created a large backlog of jobs for the Council's EcoWater business unit. Priority was given to emergency flooding incidents. Staff are continuing to follow up on minor flooding concerns... Residents are urged to take responsibility to improve stormwater control on their own property by keeping gutters and downpipes clear of debris and fixing broken pipes. EcoWater[']s Education Adviser... says careless disposal of household rubbish is also a concern, as too many cans, paper and plastic bottles are finding their way into local streams. Homeowners also need to consider what impact new landscaping will have on stormwater run-off, and should ensure that any work undertaken on their property meets building compliance codes... The Council itself is actively working to upgrade its stormwater systems so that flooding incidents occur less often. Consequently, EcoWater's stormwater budget... has been significantly increased.

...THE Go Waitakere city councillors push for a zero rates increase this year has been approved in principle by the... Council. However, the final rates for [this year] won't be struck until the long term finance strategy has been agreed to later this month. The council voted to cut spending by \$1,295,000, after days of sometimes heated debate and block voting by Go Waitakere councillors, bringing the budget to \$14,000 under this year's total of \$79.2 million. The draft budget, after annual plan submissions, proposed a 1.52[%] rates increase, excluding regional levies yet to be finalised. A \$276,000 cut to stormwater network renewals was one of the more contentious issues which was kept in the budget through a casting vote by... [the mayor. A c]ouncillor argued that [it] was not prepared to support funding for stormwater year after year when central Government was not paying its share of the work... [But another c]ouncillor was concerned about deferring work on stormwater projects, saying there was a need to fund it now instead of continuing to load the cost on coming years. "We have pipes splitting, the Auditor General will clamp down on us if we don't fulfil our legal obligations to fund stormwater renewals and councillors here are arguing to... save a few measly dollars to keep rates down."

...A series of colourful murals painted around some of the region's stormwater grates are not just there to brighten the city. They are part of a campaign by the A[RC] to educate the people of the Auckland region about our number one urban pollution problem. The [regional c]ouncil, which receives over 1000 pollution complaints a year, wanted to illustrate that when people pollute stormwater drains, they ultimately affect their own enjoyment of the waterways... the... region has to offer... [Anything t]hat enters a stormwater drain... other than rain is considered a poison. Ten murals, depicting either sea life or people... bear the slogan "Poison the Sea, Poison Me". It is hoped... murals like this will be seen throughout the region during the next year... [Another ARC slogan is:] Save the drain for rain! ...Aucklanders... who wash their vehicles on the road or on driveways flush an estimated 500,000 litres of detergent and grime down stormwater drains every year directly into our streams, beaches and harbours.

...A *Part of the Solution to Pollution – You!* ...To help avoid stormwater pollution... there are a number of things that you can do... ■ Drop off oils at petrol stations for recycling ■ Wash paint... brushes in an inside sink that goes to the sanitary sewer ■ Allow left over paint in a tin to dry before disposing of it with household rubbish ■ Wash your car at a car wash or on the lawn ■ Drop off... hazardous wastes at a... refuse Transfer Station.

...A recent editorial in the *Herald* refers to the shame of Auckland's beaches, with the Auckland City Council putting permanent signs on several beaches warning swimmers of water pollution. It's a real concern, but the editorial suggests that a multi-million-dollar council clean-up programme may not fix the harbour. "As a council report has lately observed, separating the stormwater from sewage is going to put more street run-off into the harbour and less into the Mangere treatment plant. Some sort of soakage for stormwater might be a very good idea." This suggests the council has its plan badly screwed up. If its stormwater-sewage separation programme is not going to lead to cleaner beaches, one wonders why the millions of dollars are being spent on it at all. The problem affecting Auckland's beaches is not sewage and it is not stormwater, it is the fact that the two are sloshing around together... If we could get to the situation envisaged in the editorial, we should be very pleased, because the sewage (a comparatively small volume) would all end up at Mangere and the stormwater would all end up in the Waitemata Harbour as it has done for hundreds of years, but it would all be beautifully clean. The reason this doesn't happen in older parts of Auckland City is that houses... were built to a system that is below today's standard and do not have separate drainage pipes for stormwater and sewage. The water from the rooves mixes in with wastewater from washing and toilets and heads off to Mangere... But it often fails to reach that destination. During storms... the sewerage system cannot cope. The sewage-laden water overflows onto roads, streams, into stormwater systems, wherever, and the filthy mix eventually ends up in the harbour. The council is not confused. Separation will clean up the stormwater (partly), but it won't reduce its volume. But it is vastly better to have that volume going clean into the Waitemata than dirty to Mangere (to be cleaned up at great expense). The programme won't completely clean up Auckland's stormwater. Other problems include car-caused pollution washing off roads[-] ...though less of a problem than when we had leaded petrol... [-] industrial waste and so on, but a separate sewerage system would fix a huge part of the problem.

...Officials with an eye on the weather map hope to prevent a rerun of last weekend's emergency that saw raw sewage gush into the Hauraki Gulf... The emergency was caused by the response of alarmed North Shore City engineers to vast amounts of rainwater overloading the capacity of the sewage disposal system. It highlights the widespread problem of stormwater pouring into sewers from the illegal connection of roof downpipes and through cracks and other points of decay in the sewers themselves. On Friday night, the council's engineers switched off the six big coastal pumping stations, which force sewage to the Rosedale... sewage treatment... plant, following several days of heavy rain. They stayed off until late on Saturday afternoon. The engineers feared that with continued pumping an oxidation pond wall would collapse, causing flooding and putting the treatment plant out of action. With all the pumping stations off – an unprecedented move – raw sewage that backed up in tanks spewed on to East Coast Bays beaches, forcing the council to close all beaches for swimming... [W]hen asked yesterday if [the council] was confident a repeat of the emergency could be avoided, [the]... council's water services director... said it depended on the weather... But his staff were reducing pond levels, their usual preparation for bad weather, so that when the [next] storm hit a greater inflow could be absorbed... As beach warning signs become characteristic of North Shore's otherwise beautiful bays, the council has given its wastewater budget a big boost. Just over \$30 million is planned to be spent this financial year from loans and rates – a 34[%] increase on last year's budget. The increase is even larger than was first intended because of public submissions on the draft annual plan. Spending on the 1300km sewer network... [will account for] \$3.4 million this year... [and] would rise to \$5 million next year as information from studies now under way helped to determine which were the priority areas. The sewage treatment plant is also in line for a \$45 million upgrade over the next seven years to improve its environmental performance and to expand it to

cater for a maximum population of 242,000. The Shore's predicted population in 2004 is 220,000. At present the plant is theoretically capable of handling the sewage from a population of 198,000, compared with the Shore's estimated 183,000... "We are not happy that raw sewage gets discharged to the sea," said... a pollution-control officer with the A[RC], "but under the circumstances we feel that what they did over the weekend was probably the best practical option of avoiding a possible dam failure, which would be far worse." Prosecution was not being considered. Auckland and Manukau City Councils say they too have problems with illegal or incorrect stormwater connections overloading their sewage systems, but North Shore seems to be devoting the greater proportion of resources to attacking the issue. Its aim is to inspect each property every two years... Auckland City also inspects properties but... [the] Manukau water services manager... said that with the cost-cutting for this year's budget, his council did not have a programme for investigating and remedying stormwater infiltration. Auckland City has the biggest drainage problem in the region... [I]ts aged, combined stormwater-sewage system... pours an average 20,000 tonnes of raw sewage into the Waitemata Harbour each week... [But t]he pollution problem on North Shore's beaches is, in some ways, more evident, because of the use of warning signs.

...Big sea slugs linked to excess sewage at a North Shore beach are packing a powerful environmental message. Their presence in huge numbers sliming along part of the southern end of Long Bay are a sure sign that something is not quite right, says [a]Torbay resident and scientist[. The p]rofessor... said that... the... creatures – known as sea hares, but related to sea slugs – are not dangerous in themselves. However, the algae they feed on indicated bacteria in the water and... the associate dean of the faculty of science and engineering at the Auckland University of Technology and head[of] the Earth and Oceanic Sciences research centre at the department... warned people not to swim at the south end of the beach, or in nearby Awaruku Stream. The sea hares, which range in size from a few centimetres to as large as a [human]'s hand, spurt out an inky, purplish fluid when squashed and are opportunists that feed on nutrients created by sewage... "The numbers we've got now are far, far in excess of anything I've ever seen before in all the 20 years I've been living here." ...Sometimes the stench was horrendous and even the seagulls would not go near the slugs... [The ARC]'s coastal resources manager... knew little about sea hares. However, [the manager]... said algae specialists had advised the council that the bacteria was not related to human causes. [The professor disagrees, and adds]: "What I'm worried about is that there are new developments, sort of *Coronation Street* style, around Albany and areas that are going up very, very dense. The council says they were a mistake but they're still in the process of being developed." ...The council had a tendency to be reactive, rather than proactive, in dealing with environmental matters, said [the p]rofessor... Council representatives could not be reached last night... [□ Today,] the designers of the next phase of the Rosedale[sewage treatment] plant upgrading w[ill] release their[report on the costs and benefits of retaining oxidation ponds or switching to ultra-violet light or other methods for the final stage of sewage treatment. Ultra-violet light would have to be considered if industrial re-use of effluent is desired.

...Cost estimates for upgrading... Rosedale... are spiralling to meet population growth and environmental standards. The bill could rise... to \$162 m... according to figures to go before a North Shore Council committee tomorrow. The costs facing ratepayers are emerging as... [o]fficials involved in Auckland City's \$360 m... sewer-stormwater separation programme... concede... it may not stop harbour pollution. On the North Shore, a larger sewer[is needed] to carry treated effluent from Rosedale to the sea outfall... The existing sewer is not big enough for the flow from predicted population growth... [Plus t]he existing... outfall... between Castor Bay and Campbells Bay, which extends 600m offshore, does not meet present... resource consent... standards. The council has allowed \$18 m... to build a 1.5km-long replacement, but it could cost \$50 m... [T]he treatment plant would faultlessly have to produce effluent of exceptionally high quality for the 1.5km outfall to be environmentally acceptable. The plant could be upgraded to a lesser standard if the outfall extended further out to sea. Two longer outfall options, costing up to \$60 m... were being considered.

...Efforts to deal with North Shore's sewage pollution woes have passed inspection by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment. A request from a Birkenhead resident prompted the commissioner's office to look into the city's sewage disposal problems, producing a 10-page assessment of the citizen's concerns. The commissioner... decided not to mount a full investigation, concluding instead that the council was implementing two strategies – Project Care and Project Rosedale – addressing the issues of concern to the resident. The work would improve the coastal marine environment, the report said, and there was no reason the two strategies would not be introduced – if money was available.

...A 7.5km-long tunnel for storing sewage beneath three North Shore suburbs is being mooted as a way of providing quick relief from the city's beach pollution woes. The tunnel tank – ...[which would resemble the tunnels for m]oving and storing sewage... [that are currently] being built in Hong Kong, Singapore and Sydney... – [was among] fresh ideas revealed yesterday in an engineering update on plans to improve the city's struggling wastewater system... System improvements costing from \$100 million to \$600 million are being assessed by engineers for consideration later in the year by the council and citizens in Project Care. They are in addition to \$60 million of work already under way to reduce the level of city sewer overflows in wet weather... A tunnel would run from the municipal golf course at Takapuna, to the west of the Northern Motorway, through Glenfield, Unsworth Heights and North Harbour to the Massey University campus at Albany... [T]he council's wastewater planning engineer... said the tunnel could cost \$60 million – making it \$10 million more expensive than conventional storage tanks... It would take six months to work out whether a tunnel was preferable to conventional works... [The engineer] said a study was also being made into the possibility of relieving the network by building local treatment stations – for example, at Long Bay. But the... council's works and environment committee... played down the possibility...

North-west Auckland could have its own... sewage treatment plant within five years, allowing more housing development and reducing the risk of harbour pollution. Watercare Services has just spent \$1.9 million buying 50ha of farmland on Amrein Rd near Taupaki for the plant... The preferred option is estimated to cost \$30 million to \$45 million and could serve up to 20,000 people from the Rodney district and Waitakere and North Shore cities. It could be expanded in future as needed. Alternatives considered could involve five or six plants in Waitakere and Rodney costing up to \$410 million in total and serving 160,000 people; or a single facility for the same population, with a price tag of up to \$400 million... Watercare... said the plant's effluent would end up in the Kumeu River after being discharged on to land nearby, but farmers and horticulturists would be able to tap into the pipe for irrigation. It says the river flow is low for much of the year and the effluent would be purer than the river water... [Currently,] Huapai, Kumeu and Riverhead rely mainly on septic tanks, and Watercare says the soil there does not cope well with septic tank discharges... The proposed plan would also ease the strain on the western interceptor, the main pipe from Waitakere City to the Mangere plant, which is expected to reach its capacity by 2005. That easing would reduce overflows to the harbours from the interceptor and also from the Orakei main. And the Mangere plant's resource consents limit it to serving 900,000 people – only 150,000 more than those now hooked up to it. During the consultation process over the Mangere upgrading, Watercare developed a preference for expanding its future wastewater-treatment capacity through smaller plants, reducing the need for long and expensive pipelines. It has decided all its wastewater customers (who do not at present include North Shore residents or businesses) would pay for the northwestern plant through their wastewater or council rates bills because of the regional benefits... 140,000... Auckland City residents [already] face a possible 17[%] rates increase to finance improvements to an ageing drainage system where one in six pipes is at breaking point... The draft plan proposes spending \$12.7 million on fixing drains in the new financial year, rising to \$23 million by year four.

...West Aucklanders could pay part of the bill for upgrading the Hobson Bay sewer pipeline – even though the pipe doesn't serve their homes. The two kilometre long sewer, built in the early 1900s, carries about 25[%] of the Auckland region's wastewater from Parnell to Orakei across Hobson Bay toward the Mangere Wastewater Treatment Plant... Exposure to marine elements means the pipe, administered by Watercare, now needs a major upgrade. To repair the sewer pipeline above ground would cost about \$26.5 million, with running costs of \$20,000 a year. A tunnel

would cost about \$47m initially and about \$700,000 a year to run. Householders across Auckland could end up paying for this because Watercare serves the entire region... Watercare[’s] communication manager... says the situation evens out, given that wastewater sewer maintenance in west Auckland is also paid by everyone in the greater region. [The manager points out that] it would be too difficult to decide who gets the benefit of a repaired pipe as a way of allocating costs... [Last] October... Watercare asked the public how it wanted the Hobson Bay sewer pipe to be upgraded... Now the company is doing a more detailed consultation, meaning west Aucklanders can also comment because they will help pay the bill... “This is a very high profile and important part of the network... Because that will impact on everyone, we have to let everyone know.”

...Residents living at Waitakere City’s gateway have been saved from seeing the upper Waitemata Harbour turned into a vast sewage pond. A[RC] has canned a North Shore City Council plan to discharge wastewater from Rosedale Treatment Plant into Oteha Stream, which feeds into Lucas Creek then the upper... [h]arbour. The council planned that this would cater for excess wastewater during storms, while it builds a sewage outfall pipe at Mairangi Bay. But Waitakere City ratepayers’ and environmental groups lobbied against the move, saying they did not want their water muddied. Now that A[RC] commissioners have decided, at a hearing last week, to ditch the application, any discharge from the treatment plant into Oteha stream could spell prosecution. Although the decision is a victory for people power, it doesn’t mean there is no risk of such a thing happening in the Auckland region or upper Waitemata Harbour... [By the way, a]uthorities have still not settled on an alternative sewage disposal site... on Waiheke Island... A stand-by site was promised by the Auckland City Council and last week it said a quarry on council-owned land could be commandeered[, but] inquiries yesterday revealed that the quarry was found to be unsatisfactory and the search was still on for an alternative.

...Golfers on Waiheke Island will eventually tee off on one of the best fertilised courses in the region after the local club agreed to accept sewage sludge to prevent a potential waste crisis. From Friday, land leased by the golf club from the Auckland City Council will begin taking septic tank sludge until permanent facilities are found. The council sealed the deal yesterday after weeks of searching for a suitable site... The council intends using emergency provisions of the Resource Management Act to begin dumping immediately and seek approval for at least 12 months’ operation... A Waiheke couple may provide a long-term solution... if they establish a 40ha disposal site, but they face a lengthy consent application process.

...THE announcement curdled in the veins of local environmental lobbyists and had at least two government ministries vowing to fight. Last month the Living Earth company... announced its desire to turn Aucklanders’ sewage into garden compost. With its larger rubbish-disposing partner, Waste Management Ltd, it has formed the Living Earth Joint Venture, a company which already sells compost made from human excrement in Wellington, and has its sights on Christchurch’s sewage-treatment byproducts. As international demands grow for cleaner waterways, the mountains of sludge being extracted from sewage are growing rapidly. But that coincides with vociferous calls for reduced waste volumes through better management and recycling. [‘Treated effluent from the Rotorua wastewater plant is used for forest irrigation – the scheme won an Institution of Professional Engineers of NZ (IPENZ) Environmental Award for Works Consultancy Services in 1992’ – but p]olicy advisers in the Environment Ministry and the Agriculture and Forestry Ministry are nervous about sludge being returned to the soil when it harbours contaminants which could enter the food chain if the land is later used for grazing[(‘NZ authorities won’t allow treated sewage to be used on dairy farms’)]. They are particularly concerned that the Wellington City Council has raised the allowable contaminant levels for this compost, against the advice of its officials. Groups as diverse as Federated Farmers and environmentalists Friends of the Earth fear the precedent set in Wellington will be replicated nationwide, threatening our meat and dairy trade to countries with stringent contaminant levels on their imports, and possibly leaving contaminated sites for future generations... Decades of reliance on superphosphate have built up cadmium in sheep livers to the degree that those from animals older than two and a half years cannot be exported. Considerable effort has gone into reducing cadmium in superphosphate and the ministry does not want to see that work undermined. It wants farmers using biosolid compost to be required to lodge management plans... Set against those concerns are the opinions of two heavy-metal experts... who gave evidence for Living Earth when it applied for resource consents for the higher contaminant levels. They insist that if the correct amount of compost is applied to the soil, it will take longer than 25 years – the duration of the resource consent – before the contaminants exceed... guidelines. In that time... more research should have been done and the heavy metal content in sewage should have been reduced sufficiently by environmentally conscious local bodies to eradicate any long-term problems... For scientists like [the heavy-metal experts], it is a question of balancing the risk of contaminants against the benefits of recycling the rich nutrients in the sewage sludge. It also solves the problem of what to do with the ever-increasing mountains of sludge. As sewage treatment became more common and more efficient, mountains of biosolids piled up across developed countries. The solution to one environmental problem created another. Pumping it out to sea, bulldozing it into landfill or burning it all damage the environment. Plough it back into the garden? Now that was a possibility. Surely that is what nature intended. Dung from humans and animals has been recognised as valuable fertiliser for thousands of years. The problem is that human waste, which can be rendered unhygienic within about 30 days, gets mixed in the same... system as the chemicals and heavy metals from industry, household detergents, cleaning products and even dyes from cheap, imported T-shirts. But before marketers had any chance of convincing the average home gardener to take a bag of it home for the tomatoes or the petunia patch, they had to come up with a more palatable name. After the American spin-doctors got elbow-deep in it, the fetid, slimy leftovers from treating raw sewage became known by the more palatable term, biosolids. What it is, of course, is excrement, mixed with the heavy metals from stormwater runoff. Auckland’s Mangere sewage treatment plant produces around 100 tonnes of biosolids daily. The new, more efficient plant will extract three times as much. Right now the sludge, which is treated and has lime added, is mostly being used to restore the coastal areas around the old plant. But Watercare Services, the company owned by the six greater Auckland councils, knows that before long it will have to find some other way of disposing of the biosolids... North Shore City, producing 20 tonnes of sludge daily, is facing the same question, as is Rodney District (eight tonnes). Both dump it in landfills.

...It would be hard to find a town that has less in common with the heaving metropolis of New York. But for a decade, small, dusty Sierra Blanca, Texas, was linked to New York in what most would consider an unfair relationship: the city literally dumped on it. No longer. The train bringing the human sewage and industrial waste from New York that... had been spread over the Texan desert, has stopped. As people will tell you with mixed feelings the Poo-poo Choo-choo doesn’t stop here any more. “We have been trying to stop this for years so we are very pleased,” said... a local store owner and a key figure in the campaign to stop Sierra Blanca acting as the world’s largest sewage dump. “After it rained it would smell, it was foul, there was a faecal stench. But it was also damaging to our health. It contained a toxic soup of chemicals. It was like holding a gun to our children’s heads.” The contract to spread sewage over 33,000ha of high desert range was won by a Long Island-based firm, Merco, after Congress... stopped the city pumping its sewage into the Atlantic. Since then more than 350 tonnes of sewage has been transported to Sierra Blanca daily. But New York officials have now decided the operation is too costly, which is bad news for the sludge’s new destinations – Pennsylvania and New Jersey... [In local news, w]ork has begun on six giant reactor clarifiers to clean effluent as part of N[Z]’s largest civil engineering project, the \$450 million Mangere sewage purification works upgrade. The 77m-wide clarifiers will biologically remove organic and chemical nutrients from the raw sewage after treatment in screening and settling tanks. The reactor clarifiers will be more efficient than the existing four fixed-growth reactors at the works, which will ultimately make way for three more reactor clarifiers. The nine reactor clarifiers will be able to extract four times the wet sludge that the fixed-growth reactors now remove, about 100 tonnes a day. The improvement in the solid waste removal process will go a long way towards improving the quality of the treated effluent discharged from the works... “The big challenge is keeping the existing plant running while we are upgrading it at the same time,” said a Watercare Services spokes[person]... The first anniversary of work passed last month with the 250 Project Manukau workers celebrating no accidents for the year. After clearing the reactor clarifiers, the effluent will be filtered and disinfected by ultraviolet light... From the works, the treated effluent will run to a point near Puketutu Island, where it will be discharged at high

tide twice a day from six outfalls in a rock wall at the rate of 25 tonnes a second. More than 600,000 cu m of spoil – about three times the amount of dirt excavated for the Sky City casino – was removed from the site of the reactor clarifiers. The spoil has been stored in a 12ha carefully monitored stockpile 15 m high so it can be returned to the site for landscaping to partially conceal the completed reactor clarifiers.

...An eight year programme to dramatically improve the Wastewater system in New Lynn will have a major effect on the system's efficiency and will save ratepayers money. The work will renew or replace up to 90% of the wastewater... network, which is one of the oldest in the city and highly susceptible to inflow and infiltration of stormwater. Infiltration occurs when water seeps through the ground and into cracks in the pipes... [The] rate can be much greater in areas that have pre-1960's ceramic waste-pipes... Inflow occurs when water enters via low-lying gully traps, broken [hu]manholes, or roof downpipes connected to the system. Rainwater should flow to the nearest body of water at no cost. When it gets into wastewater, however, it flows to the Mangere treatment plant and we are charged. This increases costs, reduces the network capacity and leads to sewer overflows in wet weather... The New Lynn programme started two years ago in Miro and Nikau Sts... Flow monitors, rain gauges and closed circuit television were used to determine whether extra water was getting into the sewer system. Existing pipes were then replaced with welded polyethylene pipe which have reduced peak flows in the... network by 25[%]. Residents... can help achieve further improvements by following a few simple steps. • Ensure household gully traps are 25mm above ground... • New toilets should be the 6/3 variety (6 litres for main flush and 3... for a half flush)... • Fit volume control devices to household taps; there is no noticeable difference in water flow, and you will save... on your water bill.

...Having read about the necessity to conserve water and suggestions in the press and by circulars from the Waitakere City Council, I have assiduously followed their suggestions, expecting the savings to show on my water bill. Alas, my latest bill contained an item "balance of minimum charge". This was not only charging me for the water I had saved but GST was added to it. Surely this is a contravention of the Fair Trading Act? How can GST apply to water not delivered. Can any[one]... enlighten me? I rang the Waitakere City Council and was told I should use more water!

...Rain, rain, rain. We get our fill of it in Auckland, watering our parched gardens and making manicured lawns wet and soggy. Everyone knows that rain is necessary to life. But it's easy to see just what a waste all that rainwater is when its ultimate destination is an underground stormwater system via guttering and downpipes. In fact, if every household collected rainwater on a daily basis, 65[%] of average water needs could be met free – courtesy of Mother Nature. People have relied on rainwater for household, landscape and agricultural uses for centuries. As communities have grown and become more centralised, community water treatment and distribution systems have gradually replaced the collection of rainwater as our primary water supply system. Yet, as sustainable use of water worldwide has become a major issue, there has been a renewed interest in collecting rainwater. And think of the major benefits to you and/or future generations – saving on council water charges, reducing flooding, reducing wet weather sewage overflows, and helping to reduce pollution of our beaches and waterways. Local authority public water supplies should always be used for drinking, food preparation and kitchen use – and if you are intending to drink rainwater, it must be appropriately treated... Several types and sizes of barrels and tanks are available to install into domestic homes, ranging from 200 litres to 9000 litres. They can be installed on ground level or wall-mounted, or set under a house for aesthetic purposes. A building consent is generally not required for garden irrigation rain tanks, but is needed for all household plumbing. Tanks larger than 6000 litres may additionally require a resource consent to ensure that they meet certain criteria, such as distances in relation to boundaries. If you do install a rainwater system, there are several 'must do' tasks. 'Not suitable for drinking' signage must be fixed to all rainwater system faucets, and backflow prevention devices should be installed to stop possible mains water contamination... Remember, the installation of a 4,500 litre tank for collecting rainwater from a typical Auckland roof can reduce peak stormwater flows by... 35[%], so it's definitely worth the effort... The amount of rainfall you can collect is solely dependent on the size of the surface area and the amount of rainfall. As an example, on the North Shore where the annual rainfall is 1200mm, a 150 sq metre roof can comfortably collect 180,000 litres of water per year – or an average of 500 litres per day. That is more than enough to cover... garden, laundry and toilet water needs... [Incidentally, after] the \$2.2 billion Getty Museum was completed in Los Angeles... it was not until the public started complaining that the experts realised they had forgotten to include public toilets in most of the building. Not that we can afford to be too smug about this bizarre oversight. Auckland didn't do much better when it came to... [the] \$125 million tart up of the Viaduct Basin. Certainly there was provision for public super-loos in the waterfront redevelopment plans, and yes, appropriate piping was installed during the makeover. But of the above-ground business end, there was no sight. For reasons which I still can't understand, the powers that be paid for the toilets, had them built and then decided not to install them... Fear of over-use, perhaps. Whatever, it took a flurry of public complaining and unsightly peeing off the back of yachts before the pristine dunnies were moved out of storage and into use. Then, of course, there's Aotea Square. Wait until you reach that popular meeting place and seek out a toilet and you are in trouble. There isn't one. There hasn't been one since the old underground one got bowled... during the construction of the Force Entertainment Centre. What have the "caught short" done since? Well, not unnaturally, they seek relief in the neighbouring Aotea Centre or Town Hall or Force Entertainment Centre. Not that any of these public venues greet those in need with any warmth. Certainly there are no directional signs from the square, and, as a city council report admits, "it would be fair to say that general use of those toilets is not encouraged." Now, after many complaints and much report writing by planners and managers, Aotea Square is to get an \$80,000 plus GST, two-seater, unisex, 24-hour dunny all of its own... [I]t sounds as if the new Aotea relocatable is part of a renaissance of city conveniences... Next for the unisex revolution are the grotty High St [guys'] toilets in the Victoria St carpark. Electronic counters reveal that, with 300-400 users a day, they are, with the ones in the Big Pinky at the corner of Wyndham and Queen Sts, the city's most popular relieving spot. As far as the Big Pinky loos go, they are to get an interior upgrade and, like High St, become a 24-hour facility. And best of all, they'll remain free.

...Piha residents are kicking up a stink over whose plan should be used for new public toilets at the beach. The Waitakere City Council wants to build two toilet blocks and changing areas at the northern end of the settlement. It aims to improve facilities for the hundreds of thousands of people who visit the area each year. [One b]ach owner... says the council supported a resident-backed design for composting toilets with deep holes. But the A[RC] thinks this could see dangerous nitrates seep into ground water and on to the beach. The regional council favours a system which would filter waste and divert the residue to underground storage areas close to the beach. The waste would lie close to the surface where it could evaporate. [However, the bach owner] says that would prove equally damaging to the environment, and create no-go areas. "The sand dunes at north Piha got special mention in the Piha Coastal Management Plan for their high ecological values... It seems nothing short of vandalism to use the sand dunes for effluent disposal." The... regional council has the final say on the plans because the toilets will be heavily used... [The city council's] senior public affairs adviser... says consultants have been hired to try to find a solution acceptable to all. Before then [the bach owner] wants Piha residents to think about other possible solutions which are as environmentally-friendly as possible... [● I r]ecently... had an exciting time at... [the] public toilets, by the busy corner of Great North Rd and Ratanui St. It has several mod cons, such as doors which open and close at the push of a button. I was sitting there minding my business when the door shot open. That pushed my button, and I gathered my wits – and clothes – fast.

...CLEAN clothes, a wash and going to the toilet are about to be a lot more expensive. Metrowater bills are to rise 17[%]. That means most households will pay about \$100 more a year... The increase comes on top of a proposed rates increase of nearly 20[%]. Increased bulk water charges from Watercare Services are being blamed. Metrowater[s] communications manager... says Watercare increases are "significant". And Metrowater also needs to fund a capital works programme to reduce sewage outflows into the harbour and to replace old sewage pipes. The future of Metrowater remains uncertain. The Water Pressure Group says it has thousands of members opposed to the high cost of wastewater charges,

and councillors are divided over its... [value. Two] councillors both resigned from Metrowater's board last week so they could vote on Metrowater's future without a conflict of interest. [One of them] says rates will go up if Metrowater is scrapped, but will still be lower than the present rates and water charges added together. But [the communications manager] says a council report earlier this year shows rates will jump 28[%] if Metrowater becomes a non-profit making council business unit. [The manager] says the water component of rates dropped an average of 20[%] when Metrowater formed in July, 1997, although housing valuations – and consequent rates increases – kept rates bills up.

...Auckland City councillors have voted to bring Metrowater's wastewater charges back into rates – a move which would push rates up 28[%] on top of a 10.5[%] increase already proposed. Yesterday's vote was by the council finance committee, and any change has to be approved by the full city council. All 20 councillors are members of the finance committee, and if they vote as they did yesterday, the change would be approved 11 votes to 9. But two councillors... say they could change their votes if a Metrowater tariff review meets their approval. The city-owned water company will brief councillors tomorrow on a plan to cut its annual fixed charges from about \$250 to no more than \$50 and increase the unit cost of water... If wastewater charges were returned to rates, the city council would pay Metrowater a lump sum – council officers estimate \$75.5 million – for wastewater disposal. The amount charged to ratepayers would vary according to the rateable value of their properties. Some households would pay more in rates for wastewater disposal than they would pay directly to Metrowater, others would pay less... Winners would be big families in areas with low rateable values... Schools, community organisations and charities would also benefit, but most businesses would pay more.

...Papakura residents face an 11.3[%] rise in water and sewage bills, the first increase... by their foreign-owned supplier, United Water. This means a rise of \$48 a year, to \$474, for an average household using 190,000 litres of water... [The new tariffs were being set] in anticipation of wholesale increases... by the region's bulk supplier, Watercare. But [United's] general manager... said its water charges would remain the region's lowest[– although the manager] could not say the same of the sewage tariff, which Manukau City will undercut by \$34 a year. Papakura residential customers will, however, pay about \$36 less a year for wastewater than Auckland City households even before Metrowater raises its tariffs... [In related news,] Waitakere City Council staff, consultants and landscape architects involved in Henderson's... Paremuka reserve and lakeside development rolled out their picnic blankets for a (slightly chilly) celebration last month. Paremuka won a prestigious planning and design award for its development and management plan at the annual awards of the NZ Institute of Landscape Architects and the Landscape Industry Association. The Council has transformed the Paremuka development into an ecological and recreational asset for the City, incorporating [hu]man-made stormwater ponds, now frequented by ducks. "It's a first in N[Z] to take an integrated approach to ecology, recreation, urban development and stormwater quality and flood management," says [the c]ouncil's landscape development service manager...

Waitakere City Council projects featured highly in the A[RC]'s Environment Awards last month. The... Manawa Wetlands project in New Lynn saw it clinch an 'Action Award' for its "huge impact on the local community and environment". The five judges, representing a range of business, rural, community and educational interests, said the project successfully integrates sustainable land and water quality practices with urban and economic growth. "The Council did a considerable amount of consultation during the course of the project and has taken a degraded area that was being used as a landfill and restored it to visually pleasant wetland that provides improved stormwater management and enhances wildlife habitat,"... The Council was also an award finalist in the Education category with its *Dont Trash It, Stash It!* campaign – which aims to raise awareness amongst... children about the consequences of littering[– and]... won a 'Product/Service Award' for its *Sustainable Home Guidelines*.

...[a] Sydneysider... and his wife... started renovating their bathroom and kitchen – and ended up with a household that relies on rainfall for water, energy from the sun and takes care of all its waste. [The Sydneysider] has written a book, *Sustainable House: Living for our Future*, about their experience and opens the house to tours. The book has nearly 200 pages, lots of facts and appendages and the costs in 1996 when the work on the house was done. Much in it can serve as a guide to folk here who care for their environment; much makes economic sense for everyone... The two-level house on a tiny 130 sq m site is still connected to electricity, gas, water and sewerage. No sewage leaves the site, though, and virtually no stormwater. It is not quite self-sufficient in water, but it provides most of the energy for cooking, heating and hot water... and their excess... electricity generation... goes... into the national grid... [The couple] spent \$A165,000 on the bathroom and kitchen – about a third of that on the energy, water and waste water systems... "The eventual cost was way more than I had wanted but, in the end, I accepted that a few extra years on the mortgage was a small price to pay for the satisfaction of knowing that we, as a family, at least had done all that was possible to minimise our contribution to the destruction of the Earth." ...It would have cost... \$20,000... less if what they installed was going into a new house... Their water and energy bills were \$1600 a year and rising; now, less than \$200. The kitchen has fluorescent lights... [and w]indows are sited over work areas. There are recycling bins, and a compost bin for vegetable waste... Clothes are dried in sunshine, when possible, rather than in the clothes dryer. Rainwater goes into a 10,000-litre buried concrete tank and is pumped back into the house... "Waste" water from the toilet and down plug holes is not wasted. It goes into a buried wet compost system which uses soil filters and insects and worms to break it down... Even newspapers and cardboard are composted by the waste water system... It is then recycled after being disinfected by an ultra-violet lamp... A dual-flush toilet uses the recycled water ("a colour like that of weak tea, and it is getting steadily clearer") and it is clean enough to be used in the clothes washer. It also irrigates the garden. Of course all of this work needed local body consents and the book contains advice on dealing with councils.

...FINDING worms down your toilet could be pretty disturbing, a sign of extremely bad housekeeping to say the least. But in the '90s worms, microbes and dirt down your loo are signs of an environmentally conscious homeowner. It's becoming more popular to install self-sufficient, on-site sewerage systems in far-flung residential suburbs and country areas where councils are no longer willing, or perhaps able, to deal with the problem. And it's no longer as simple – or smelly – as digging a nice, deep hole in the ground and putting an outhouse roof over it... While much of the population of the Auckland region has its water and sewage reticulated, the pipelines service only about 25[%] of the region. Rural areas have to rely on rainwater or bores[, and many rural houses still enjoy]... the best views of the bush and coastline... from... a toilet seat at the top... [of those nice, deep] holes in the ground... Most holiday and rural places, though, now have flush toilets inside sending human waste (blackwater) and what is going down the plug hole (greywater) into an underground holding area – usually a septic tank – for treatment and dispersion by soakage into the earth... Heavy solids sink to the bottom... [of] a septic tank... lighter materials float up and separate. What's not broken down – like grease and detergent – stays in this tank and must be removed by a professional septic tank cleaner... [B]leach or disinfectant... is... not... recommended for washing [septic tanks]... Multi-chambered septic tanks improve the quality of the final product. This is done by splitting up the waste water – say, to grey water... and black water... – or by adding filters of some kind... Sometimes the waste goes into more modern dehydrating, incineration or chemical containers... The alternative waste disposal systems in N[Z]... often combine several of the methods described... One treatment system on the market which is an alternative to septic tanks is bioCYCLE, consisting of an 8000-litre capacity, 2.2m high by 2.4m diameter tank, which is buried. It processes wastewater to an odourless liquid which is clean enough to irrigate plants, native bush or lawn (not paddocks, where stock can damage lines, nor among vegetables for eating). A pump takes the liquid through irrigation drip lines... Auckland-based bioCYCLE North[']s... slogan is "turning your 1s and 2s into trees"... The company says... the system suits houses on lifestyle blocks and frequently used holiday homes and, by treating up to 1200 litres a day, will cater for up to 10 occupants... It can be installed for little more than \$8000... compare[d] with the \$5000 to \$11,000 for septic tanks... The bioCYCLE system's plant requires servicing every six months (the first two without charge) costing about \$90 a time. [But the] company says that cost should not make other apparently maintenance-free systems more attractive, because the expected national standard is likely to make maintenance of every system compulsory to ensure it is working efficiently. Its system, however, slows the build-

up of sludge, which delays cleaning out for 15 to 20 years. By comparison... a septic tank leaves at least 60[%] untreated and also needs cleaning regularly – every two years is recommended, every three years is required in Waitakere City and other councils are considering “warrants of fitness” to ensure regular cleaning. Each clean-out costs \$600 in Manukau City, for example... *SAND FILTERS* Works on a similar premise to a septic tank, but uses beds of sand as a filter system. Sand and gravel filters produce a high quality end product. It’s been done for centuries and the modern sand filters are descendants of mid-1800s “sewage farms” where waste was efficiently filtered through sandy soil. Waste water is distributed over the sand and gravel beds, which can be buried, free standing or recirculating filters with an electric pump. One drawback is they need regular maintenance... The Dowmus system treats waste water (from kitchen, bathroom and toilet) and organic waste (food scraps... cardboard... paper and... sanitary products... [– although, I]like any system, sanitary napkins, tampons and condoms cause blockages...) using decomposing organic material as a biological filter. It is much the same process as occurs in a natural wetland – water is purified as it passes through layers of decaying plant matter. Using ordinary household plumbing, waste is carried to a tank filled with a natural ecosystem of micro-organisms, bacteria, bugs, beetles and composting worms, which improve the aeration and drainage of the biomass and help convert the solids into humus. An activity sand filter then treats the waste water to a standard suitable for garden irrigation... Dowmus systems range in price from \$8500 to \$10,500 plus GST, for a system capable of dealing with up to 960 litres of waste water per day... *AERATED TREATMENT SYSTEMS* Introducing oxygen into the holding tank... with a bubbler... increases the aerobic activity of the microbes at work and speeds up the breakdown of waste matter. Aeration systems usually incorporate several chambers and filters. This system doesn’t need much space or land. However, the need for a continuous electrical supply (to run the aerators) can cause problems if there’s a power cut. This type of system goes head to head with Dowmus. It is different in that Dowmus separates fluid from solid in the primary chamber where aerobic breakdown occurs... *COMPOSTING TOILETS* This is like an advanced model of the old-hole-in-the-ground outhouse and is particularly robust. In this system human waste is collected and turned into compost using natural or controlled dehydration processes. Microbes and animals like worms might be added to help the decomposing process. The composted material builds up in a vault and must be removed about once a year after which it can be... dug into the ground... *ELECTRIC TOILETS* Using an electric coil these toilets incinerate human waste and are useful when the land is too small to provide necessary dispersal space or when the soil is unsuitable. The waste is burnt and fumes are removed via a ventilation stack on the toilet’s outside wall. Ash needs to be removed about once a week.

...Waitakere City residents are warming to free firewood provided by the council. The wood is available at Waitakere’s refuge transfer station. The two-year-old service is aimed at families who struggle to buy firewood during winter... The council’s environmental management committee chair[perso]n... says anything that reduces the amount of waste sent to a landfill is good, and helping families out makes the scheme even better.

...The cold of winter is here, and the heating appliances have no doubt already been dug out of the basement or spare room and plugged in or fired up. Wood has been collected and stored, and the fire has probably been lit once or twice – the evenings and early mornings have been pretty chilly a couple of times already. However, it’s not simply a case of starting up where things left off at the end of last winter. Winter is the most dangerous time of the year for fires in the home, not least because many people don’t take fire safety issues as seriously as they should... One of the major dangers comes from heat sources and combustible materials being in close proximity. Heaters should be at least a metre from curtains, bedclothes, furniture or drying washing. Heating equipment should always be installed by qualified trades people and regularly maintained in accordance with the manufacturers instructions. Open fires should always have a fire screen in front of them, to keep children away and prevent sparks from landing on a carpet or hearth rug. Even with a guard, children should not be left unsupervised in the vicinity of open fires or heaters. Ashes should be allowed to cool before being placed in a metal container outside the house. All flames and embers should be extinguished before leaving the house or going to bed and the flue or chimney should be cleaned at least once a year to prevent the build up of flammable material. When refuelling kerosene heaters, only kerosene should be used and refuelling should only be done in a well-ventilated area... Prevention is a first line of defence against fire, but these precautions, however vigilantly they are observed, don’t preclude the necessity to install suitable and sufficient fire detection devices. A smoke alarm should be installed in each bedroom and living area, as well as the kitchen, and on each level of the home... Alarms should be tested every month, the batteries changed at least once a year and alarms gently dusted with a brush or vacuum cleaner every six months. Whilst smoke alarms are an essential tool in early detection of fire, they are only effective if a full evacuation of the house is achieved quickly and safely... Winter’s onset [also] means an increase in the use of... electric blankets... Electric blankets can be a wonderful comfort in cold and damp weather because they not only warm but dry out the bedclothes as well. A manufacturer’s brochure once stated that up to two litres of water can be removed from bedclothes... This was concluded because the bedclothes were weighed before and after a test... From my own experience of testing electric blankets when I was working for the old Power Board my records showed that one out of every six blankets were faulty. Problems included faulty controls, exposed wiring, broken wires touching and arcing intermittently and other hot spots caused by the elements moving out of their proper pattern. A report appeared in the North Shore Times Advertiser which said that the North Shore Fire Service attends fires caused by electric blankets about once every six weeks during the cold period between Queen’s Birthday weekend and November. Their Safety Officer suggests blankets should be checked annually. The Fire Safety Officer is also reported as saying that people wake up between 4 am and 5am – when it is cold and switch the blanket on full. In the morning they wake up again and [forget to switch off the electric blanket in their] rush to get to work, [although they usually have time to turn back the] bedclothes... leaving them all bunched up on the bed. The electric blanket itself may be scrunched. As the result of this many electric blanket fires start in the early afternoon after the weight of the bedclothes or the concentration of heat in one area has started to smoulder. I make motel clients aware of a similar problem when their guests might put heavy suitcases on a bed, switch their electric blanket on full and leave the motel for a period.

...Home owners can now install a wood fire into a timber surround without fear of it going up in flames[– by using a] special ‘Zero Clearance Kit’[, which]... utilises heat absorbent materials and construction techniques that enable the wood fire to snuggle up closely to timber and plasterboard... There has been a strong trend towards making the fire unobtrusive in the home, by setting it into an existing fireplace or creating an inbuilt look in a brand new house. But until Masport developed the Zero Clearance Kit... for N[Z]’s most popular inbuilt wood fire, the LE Provincial... – the LE... stands for Low Emission... [–] inbuilt wood fires could only be installed in traditional chimneys... The LE Provincial is not only the biggest selling inbuilt wood fire in N[Z.] it is also one of the easiest to install, with minimal hearth clearance requirements... The quality cast iron materials used in the construction of the LE Provincial are so good that Masport guarantees the fire for ten years.

...Masport is pioneering a healthier way to enjoy the warmth of a gas fire in N[Z] homes. It’s called Direct Vent technology and Masport is promoting it as the most effective method of eliminating harmful fumes from living areas that can result from a poorly vented gas fire. With Direct Vent, the firebox is airtight and no fumes can escape into the room. All the air required for combustion is drawn through a specially designed twin-sleeve flue and then vented back outside. “Direct Vent is... a must for anyone suffering from asthma...” says... [the] Sales & Product Manager, Gas Heating, for Masport Limited. “...But even if you are not an asthma sufferer, Direct Vent is much healthier...” That’s because a non-vented gas heater doesn’t just leak fumes, it also creates moisture and can lead to dampness inside a home, which is equally unhealthy. Another advantage of Direct Vent technology is that the efficiency of the gas fire is not affected by changes in pressure within the home. Air pressure can vary dramatically due to other appliances, such as clothes dryers, bathroom fans, kitchen rangehoods and even down draughts created by windy conditions outside. Direct Vent also does away with the need for a conventional chimney or vent on the roof since it can be vented through a sidewall. This means that even high-rise apartments can get that warm feeling and enjoy the advantages of a gas fire. Direct Vent can still cater for

those who wish to have a roof vent or mask the flue inside an existing chimney... All Masport Direct Vent gas fires are designed to run off piped natural gas or from bottled LPG.

...Good news guys! There's another remote control to add to that ever-growing collection on the coffee table... Masport research has revealed that homeowners who are used to remotely controlling their TVs, videos and air-conditioning systems are keen for the same convenience to be extended to home heating. Until now the remote controls available with gas fires have only been able to switch the fire on or off. But... Masport... has developed a... remote control... [for the] new Baltimore Premier freestanding gas fire... [that] can precisely vary the flames and heat setting to any level. It also controls the programming function on the thermostat... Furthermore, the Baltimore Premier... features the very latest technology "flame effect" ceramic array, which Masport has spent two years researching and perfecting to ensure it meets consumer demands... Attractive styling is another drawcard for the Baltimore range. The three-sided design, using heavy-duty ceramic glass, affords a good view of the new flame effect log from anywhere in the room, and the black finish cabinet blends with any decor. Masport's technologically-advanced heat exchanger delivers an impressive 81[%] heating efficiency, so that most of the heat stays in the home and does not disappear up the flue... Like other Masport gas fires, the Baltimore range can operate on piped natural gas or bottled LPG... Masport has also designed all its gas fires to continue to operate safely even when electricity is cut to the controls, as in a power cut[– although, obviously, this won't concern you if you've got a back-up power source, such as batteries. Speaking of which, scientists have developed a 'plastic battery (it has no liquids or other non-plastic parts) that is non-explosive, mouldable and will work in a wide temperature range'.

... 'What the rest of the world knows now and what we realised five years ago, was that lithium would rapidly replace the current battery compounds in use today. Lithium batteries are lighter, more powerful, and pack more punch. They are also completely recyclable and contain no harmful or poisonous substances. A fact not lost on the governments of Europe and Japan, who face enormous problems with waste management. The global market is a huge one. And if everyone is going to be switching to lithium batteries? Well, enough said. Pacific Lithium, right now from their plant in Auckland, is producing ultra-high grade lithium. The purest available. This is the product the world's battery manufacturers must have. Better still, we have perfected technology for recycling lithium batteries. As the market matures we will be in the box seat for the demand for this technology. This all sounds fine, you're saying to yourself, but why are we doing it here in NZ, far from the big markets? Well, NZ may traditionally be a great place to grow things, but it's also a great place to grow ideas. And we're proud to be a high technology based industry that's exporting to the world. The Americans and the Japanese have already made the investment (National Panasonic spent 50 billion yen on their new lithium battery plant in Japan). We now invite a limited number of NZers to make theirs.']

...Revolutionary battery developer Pacific Lithium is moving a step closer to its goal, with the reverse takeover of Nasdaq-listed Lithium Technology Corp for \$15 million in cash and shares. The takeover combines two companies with world-class research seeking to commercialise revolutionary battery material and cell-making technology. Initially founded to tap lithium from the sea, Pacific Lithium has since changed tack, focusing on niche production of battery material, based on technology developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology... It also earns revenue by purifying high-purity lithium carbonate. Pacific Lithium's co-founder and managing director... told the Business Herald that the merger would bring together the two elements crucial to lightweight battery production, low cost manganese based cathode and polymer technology. The reverse takeover is a precursor of things to come: Pacific Lithium plans to reincorporate, in the US, a private company, called Ilion Technology, which would seek[an] initial public offering and later a Nasdaq listing. Before going public it intends to raise \$US10 million and later \$US50 million. That will be for a new plant in the US and other development costs. Future business development will be done in the US, while N[Z] will be kept as a research base... A battery is made up of three components – the cathode, anode and electrolyte. In the cathode component, researchers have been seeking to replace cobalt or nickel with manganese as the cheaper alternative. That was difficult due to, among other things, obtaining stability when using manganese operating under high temperature. MIT's technology addressed that problem, in theory. What Pacific Lithium did... was to find an efficient and cost-effective way to manufacture... manganese-based rechargeable lithium polymer battery... cathodes.

...Auckland company Pacific Lithium Ltd is on track to revolutionise the development of batteries worldwide, cutting battery costs as much as 75[%]. Pacific Lithium ultimately aims to target the lightweight, high performance Lithiumion/Lithium-polymer batteries to the automotive and marine markets currently dominated by lead-acid batteries... "We see Lithium batteries taking over in a wide range of products, from powerful laptop computers, cellphones and camcorders, to making hybrid electric-powered cars economically feasible..." says [Pacific Lithium's] chief technical officer... "The key is getting new, higher performance lithium batteries produced at a much lower cost than today's generation of lithium batteries." In addition to being cost-competitive, [the chief technical officer] says the new generation of lithium batteries will provide up to five times the performance of traditional technology batteries and could be moulded into specific shapes allowing engineers greater freedom in creating new consumer products. Pacific Lithium... has already completed the first stage of its programme by successfully developing lithium manganese oxide technology, which offers significant cost/performance advantages over existing lithium cobalt-based batteries. Now the company is looking to go to the next stage by producing new ion and polymer materials that are much cheaper. Those plans have received a major boost after Pacific Lithium was awarded one of the first New Economy Research Fund (NERF) investments from the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology (FoRST). The NERF Tender Process attracted a huge level of interest, with FoRST receiving 214 applications requesting \$110 million for the \$11.25 million of funding available for investment. Pacific Lithium was among a small number to receive... \$675,000 in... NERF funding... Pacific Lithium is in the process of merging with Lithium Technologies Corporation, a NASDAQ bulletin board listed company.

...If all goes well on New York's Nasdaq stock exchange next year, [an] Auckland entrepreneur... believes [it] will make more N[Z]ers into millionaires than anyone before him... Such an attitude is ambitious for a business that employs just 40 people in Auckland and 20 in the U[S]. But it is the kind of global vision N[Z] needs to turn around 40 years of relative economic decline, dramatised lately by the crashing kiwi dollar... [The entrepreneur] plans to raise \$US120 million... from the January listing of Ilion Corporation, formerly Pacific Lithium. [Pacific Lithium's co-founder] aims to develop a cheaper, more powerful lithium battery system that could... achieve the company's vision of "a world powered by renewable energy." ...[the entrepreneur] started out in his family's company, T & T Childrenswear, and ran other businesses. "But there was no purpose in just making money. I wanted to do something more worthwhile. This opportunity came along with lithium, and I put a stake in the ground." [The entrepreneur] raised \$2.5 million and started building a lithium extraction plant in the Firth of Thames. Then in 1995-96 the price of lithium plunged when a new source came into the market. Pacific Lithium had to change tack completely. It shelved the Firth of Thames plant and refocused on producing the world's highest-quality lithium and battery materials, initially for cellphones and laptop computers... The company built a processing plant at Manukau and began a joint venture with a Chinese province that has the world's largest unexploited lithium resource. Pacific now imports all its lithium carbonate, refines it, and exports 100[%] of its output, mainly to Japanese lithium battery manufacturers.

...[A group of companies including Challenge is investigating ways to extract chemicals such as high-grade silica (that can be used to whiten, brighten and increase the opacity of paper to stop light passing through it; Challenge was close to applying the chemical as a filter and coating for paper production at its Tasman mill – the silica-coated paper would have specialist uses in high-quality inkjet or laser printing) and lithium from the water that is a by-product of geothermal power generation. The group is using ground-breaking technology that has been patented by an associate of listed investment group Pure NZ.]

...a little Dunedin builder which started out in 1909... [and today] employs 7000 people... built Auckland's Sky Tower and Casino, Wellington's Te Papa Museum... and the city's new WestpacTrust Stadium. It is just finishing Auckland's tallest... office block, the Royal & SunAlliance Centre, in

Shortland St... [and is about to commence work on NZ]'s biggest new hospital, a \$420 million project. [Challenge] Construction's part of the project will bring it \$150 million. Work at Grafton will result in a... 710-bed hospital in a single 70,500 sq m building. The acute inpatient services of Auckland, Green Lane and National [Gals'] hospitals will be housed in the new centre. [Challenge] was well-qualified to get this job: it has built... an estimated \$2 billion worth of hospitals and healthcare facilities around the Pacific Rim[, including]... some of the largest new hospitals in A[US], such as the \$A60 million St George private medical centre in South Sydney and, across the bridge, the \$A55 million North Shore private hospital... But these projects [we]re just small-fry for the country's largest building company... The scope of its work in[cludes]... the \$US1 billion Getty Centre outside Los Angeles (one of the world's largest museums, bankrolled by one of its richest families), w[hich w]as a hard act to follow. Having gone on what one... executive calls "our intergalactic phase," the company is but a shadow of the firm which put up the sail-shaped Burj Al-Arab hotel in Dubai. It has pulled out of the U[S] and Middle East and retrenched its A[US]n operations. But even scaled down, [Challenge] Construction is still a real knockout. If you need convincing: the firm is undertaking the two single largest capital works now on in N[Z] and all in the face of a relatively uncertain future. [Challenge] Construction is a division of... Challenge Building, which is expected to be split away from parent... Challenge and become a stand-alone company. This week... Challenge confirmed that Credit Suisse First Boston had been appointed to [Challenge] Building after successfully selling [Challenge] Paper (to Norway's Norske Skog for \$5.1 billion). It is expected that [Challenge] Building will also be sold. [Challenge Energy and Challenge] Forests could go the same way. What is certain is that [Challenge] Construction... remains at the forefront of the construction industry here. It is our one true star, shining bright as ever... The firm's single largest job is at the Manukau wastewater treatment station, where it is part of a consortium... [that comprises NZ] engineers and consultants B[CH&F]; the world's largest wastewater consultants, Ch2M Hill, of Denver; A[US]n builders Bovis Lend Lease; and French firm Lyonnaise Des Eaux which operates water and wastewater treatment plants worldwide. The... vast 500ha... oxidation ponds will be cleaned and returned to the Manukau Harbour... During the past 30 years, sludge has accumulated on the floor of the ponds. This is being vacuumed up by a fleet of dredges and pumped through long flexible pipelines to a processing area. After shells and silt are settled out, the sludge is conditioned with mixers to give it a uniform consistency. It is then spun in huge centrifuge driers to separate out the water. The solids are being dumped in a 24-hour-a-day operation running seven days a week. The job is scheduled to be completed in 2003-2004. [Challenge] Construction's second-largest job is building a 10km tunnel under the mountains in Fiordland. This is to create a second tailrace to move water between Lake Manapouri and the Tasman... Vertical turbines are driven by water from both Lake Manapouri and Lake Te Anau. The head of water to drive the turbines is achieved not by the usual dam, but by using the 178m difference in levels between the lakes and the sea at Doubtful Sound. The second tailrace tunnel is needed to increase this flow to the sea. The existing tunnel does not move enough water through the power station to achieve maximum power production. To build this second... tailrace, [Challenge] Construction is using a tunnel-boring machine which has an impressive 10m diameter and literally cuts through the rocks under the mountains... Four crews of 16 work this machine round the clock. The workers have their own camp and complete 15 shifts before taking five days' leave.

...[delays in constructing the second Manapouri tailrace are expected to cost Challenge 'millions of dollars due to time-penalty clauses in its contract. The delays are due to problems the borers are facing while passing through the multiple faultlines which are a feature of NZ's Southern Alps (apart from the risk that the soft faultline rock will cause the ceiling to collapse, it allows water to enter the tunnel, threatening the borer's sophisticated electronics) and the hardness of the remaining rock (the boring machine's teeth have to be replaced every few metres).'] However, the lessons learnt in NZ will enable tunnels to be bored through other hard rock mountains – such as those in central Europe – so the company may be able to recoup some of its lost profits by acting as advisers on those projects. □ As Manapouri's second tailrace nears completion, Meridian Energy has unveiled the g[r]andest plan yet for the great Waitaki...

When the state-owned power generator ECNZ was split into four companies[, the newly formed] Meridian Energy found itself with one of the jewels of N[Z]'s energy system, the Waitaki River. The Waitaki catchment covers a vast area of the South Island, with an interconnected series of lakes and canals giving Meridian the means to use the same drop of water to spin turbines at eight different power stations. Between 1935 and 1985, the Government spent billions on works designed to extract as much electricity as possible from the river. Ministry of Works engineers built a network of stations – Waitaki, Tekapo A, Tekapo B, Ohau A, Ohau B, Ohau C, Benmore and Aviemore. Now Meridian has taken the mantle from the Ministry of Works and wants to use the last untouched stretch of the Waitaki to complete the chain. It is calling the ambitious, \$1.2 billion scheme Project Aqua. If built, Meridian will control the river from the snowy heights of the Mackenzie Basin down nearly the entire length of the Waitaki to the coast near Oamaru... [T]he Waitaki Power Station, commissioned in 1935 and one of the last big hydro works in N[Z] built with picks and shovels, [is] a place where [labourers] shifted more than half a million cubic metres of earth and rock to build the massive weir. Meridian hopes the future of electricity generation on the Waitaki will soon take shape just a few kilometres downstream of this historic, yet still functioning, monument to 1930s engineering. A 62km canal will begin near the town of Kurow, diverting more than 75[%] of the water and sending it through a series of six small power stations before rejoining the river a few kilometres from the coast. These stations will supply as much power as the Clyde Dam – around 8[%] of NZ's entire energy needs, or 570MW. It is the biggest single-generation project planned for the next few years. But building Aqua will be different to how the other Waitaki hydro projects were built, for Meridian has to do this one by the book, and there is a new book – the Resource Management Act. The act is why Meridian is in the process of commissioning thousands of pages of scientific reports, investigating the effects of Project Aqua, while consulting with the locals and flying journalists (including this writer) to the site for media tours. Over the past 50 years, Government engineers moved from project to project, building impressive dams and power stations to supply the country's burgeoning need for electricity[('Reefton became the first town in NZ to have electricity in 1887')]. But demand and supply were not closely linked – an oversupply of electricity meant very cheap power for N[Z] and, in the past few years, little or no incentive to build any new stations. The numbers Meridian bandies about are impressive. It says the project will irrigate 39,000ha of North Otago land, inject \$145 million annually into the regional economy and create 1800 fulltime jobs. Around 30 million cubic metres of earth must be shifted for the project to succeed. Meridian[s] chief executive... makes no bones about the fragility of the plan – if [they] cannot get permission to take sufficient water out of the river, the canal will never be dug, and the river will remain as it is... "This project is pretty finely balanced economically... One of the misconceptions is that there are huge profits in this – ...I can absolutely demonstrate that... there are not... [However, y]ou can't spend \$1200 million and get nothing back. You've got to earn enough to pay the interest on the debt, enough to pay off the asset and enough to pay a fair return on the equity..." ...One crucial factor going into the Project Aqua equation is the future cost of wholesale electricity – Aqua will generate it at a cost of between 4c and 4.5c a kilowatt hour. Average wholesale prices for power in the past week ranged between 2.48c and 3.06c per kilowatt hour. The looming depletion of the Maui natural gas field means that thermal power stations – such as those at Huntly and Otahuhu[–] will find their fuel bill becoming more expensive... [Another consideration is that] the South Island will soon be at serious risk of power cuts in the event of a dry year. Energy demand is growing in the South Island, and if the rivers run dry there will not be enough power available from the North Island thermal power stations to come to the rescue. [The]... mayor of the Waitaki District, based in Oamaru, supports Project Aqua, and believes it will be built. But [the mayor] is not an unquestioning cheerleader for Meridian. The memory of high-handed actions by previous governments lingers in this part of N[Z]. "I like to think positively about these developments, but positively without forgetting the things that have happened in the past, when there was some reasonably rugged land acquisition and people were very poorly compensated... I suppose that's in the back of my mind when I think of these things." [The mayor] is inspired by the irrigation plan that will accompany Aqua, with possibly 40,000ha... opened up for more

intensive agriculture and predictions of 1500 new jobs. [The mayor] puts the curious Aqua observer straight onto... an Oamaru architect... if... asked about the reasons for opposition to Aqua... [The architect] is president of the Waitaki River Users' Liaison Group, an umbrella organisation formed to respond to the development... "North Otago, in effect, provides the largest chunk of energy, through hydro, to the country. From that you have to look at what has occurred in the past and ask, 'What has North Otago got out of that?' The answer is three lakes we didn't have before." Meridian wanted to take three quarters of the river's water to use for its power stations, leaving very little to support the popular fishing area. "Surely it is time to leave some natural river section in there for purposes other than just generating income." [The architect] is sure the nation will benefit from Aqua, but feels the local community will "get dorked again". "We think we are sacrificing this great river for the national interest again and again and again. No one is building us a new river." It is the only river in N[Z] that has an adult run of mature chinook salmon, brown trout and rainbow trout.

...A noisy debate pitting Pacific Northwest salmon fisher[s]... against four hydro-electric dams is set to grow louder this month when two federal reports spell out ways to save the dwindling fish stocks. The number of salmon returning to the area from the sea to spawn each year has declined from an estimated 10 to 16 million a century ago to about a million today. In the first report, due out this week, the National Marine Fisheries Service will set binding guidelines for all federal dams in the Northwest, including the four in question on the Lower Snake River in Washington – Lower Granite, Lower Monumental, Little Goose and Ice Harbour. The second report, by nine federal agencies, will make nonbinding recommendations to help salmon recovery throughout the Columbia and Snake River basins, an area that extends into six states and Canada. Dam companies and environmentalists are already promising action if they are unhappy with the reports. Thirteen species of salmon are listed as endangered, and environmentalists, Indian tribes and commercial fisher[s]... claim the dams are their biggest threat. But the dams, among some of the biggest structures in the world, help to power cities from Seattle to Los Angeles, and are central to much of the region's economy.

...LOS ANGELES – Soon after moving to Fallon, in Nevada, [a wife's] husband... started developing skin lesions on his arms. As his condition worsened over the course of a week – it got so bad it began to resemble psoriasis – the couple suspected that it might have something to do with the water supply. They had previously lived in the countryside outside the town, and knew that the water extracted from their private well there was so salty it killed their plants and made it almost intolerable to take a shower. What they did not know at the time was that Fallon and the surrounding area has the highest concentration of arsenic in its drinking water of anywhere in the U[S]; twice as high, in fact, as the federal Government's long-standing legal limit, and 10 times higher than safety levels mandated in most of Europe. Lesions like [the husband]'s can be a precursor to chronic rashes, liver spots and full-blown skin or bladder cancer – all well-documented symptoms of arsenic poisoning. In this case, [the husband] followed his hunch, switched to bottled water, and the problem with his arms subsided. The city has since sent out a number of flyers alerting its citizens to the problem with its water. But his wife, for one, is far from reassured. [The wife] wants to know why children are still given tapwater in Fallon's elementary schools (her two, aged 7 and 5, are under strict instructions not to touch it and take juice to school instead). [The wife] wants to know why the city fathers have bitterly resisted pressure to install a treatment facility and clean up the water supply. [The wife] also cannot understand why [America's] President... has just scrapped new federal standards for arsenic in drinking water – one of the more controversial environmental moves of his Administration. [The wife] also has asked urgent questions about a cluster of leukaemia cases that have broken out in Fallon, affecting 12 children. [The wife] wonders, given the official attitude to arsenic and the profusion of industrial, military and mining interests in this part of northern Nevada, what other poisons might be out there that [residents have] not been warned about... In the dying days of the [previous Democratic] Administration, new rules were at least issued, tightening the legally acceptable level of arsenic in drinking water from 50 parts per billion to the European standard of 10 parts per billion. As a result, Fallon, whose level is around 100 ppb, was ordered to install a treatment facility by 2003 and comply with federal standards or else face fines of \$US27,000... a day. But that has now been undone by [the Republican] President... whose Administration announced last month that it was revoking the new rules on the grounds that the medical risks were not sufficiently proven to justify the costs of installing expensive filtering systems in largely rural, impoverished communities... Fallon is too small to demonstrate the effects of arsenic conclusively – particularly given the controversies surrounding jet fuel from the neighbouring air naval station, mercury from mines near the Carson River, nickel carbonyl from a local car-parts factory, and other poisons coursing through the local community. With just 8200 residents, anything short of a spectacular jump in the number of cancers is likely to be statistically insignificant and lost in the noise of other illnesses and other causes. The cluster of acute lymphocytic leukaemia cases is spectacular (24 times the expected norm), but according to the best scientific knowledge, it is unrelated to arsenic and its cause is still being investigated. City officials find themselves caught between the embarrassment of national exposure as the arsenic capital of America, and an almost preternatural reluctance – driven largely by fear of what it will take to fix the problem – to admit there is anything wrong at all. [The] Mayor... insists there are no documented cases of illness, and stands by the quality of what comes out of his municipal taps. "It's pretty good water... It has naturally occurring fluoride. In fact, it's real pure – outside of the arsenic." Old-timers around Fallon, a farming community built a century ago on reclaimed land from the Carson River, even go so far as to say it is the arsenic that has kept them alive into their 70s and 80s. "Don't get me wrong," [the] Mayor... counters, "arsenic at some level probably is harmful. But why are we treating the water if no one here's been harmed?" Despite his rosy views, however, most Fallon residents have long since switched to bottled water. "I wouldn't give that water to my dog," was a common refrain ...a[n]d it tasted "mouldy, like it's been sitting for ever."

...Never mind whether they're drinking our beer over there, Americans may soon be sipping Waitakere's finest. The west's tap water came out top in a blind tasting at the American Water Works Association annual conference. [The mayor of Waitakere], the keynote speaker at the conference, says after a series of tastings Waitakere tap water was declared the clearest, purest and most drinkable. "Water's the stuff of life and we've got the best there is... It was an absolute triumph for Waitakere and our water company Eco-Water. We were able to demonstrate not only how we've done things but the taste of the product won hands down." [The mayor] says the win has boosted N[Z]'s clean, green image among hundreds of delegates from the U[S], Asia and the Pacific. And [the mayor] believes Waitakere tap water could find a ready market in the U[S] with its "incredible" taste. "We've always felt that the export potential of N[Z] water to the rest of the world is yet to be tapped. It could very well become our greatest export in the future." At the conference, [the mayor] talked about Waitakere declaring itself an Eco City, its approach to water and wastewater management... [The mayor] says many of the cities at the conference are likely to follow Waitakere's lead in water and conservation issues. "With water we have left a lasting image, that in N[Z] there is a city... w[here] a wonderful resource [is] used and managed very well,"...

Waitakere City Council is not considering any changes to the current system for water despite claims from a group call[ed]... Citizens Against Privatisation... [The] general manager of Ecowater... rejects any suggestion that the system for water charging is to change. "They are completely wrong. I can't imagine why C[itizens Against Privatisation] would be doing this, and confusing people, especially after they have been told, time and time again, that this Council does not intend to make any changes to the way it charges for water usage. The only possible explanation is that they are confusing Waitakere's situation with Auckland City (which runs a commercial water supply operation in the form of Metrowater)." The Council's water unit Ecowater is completely different from Metrowater. It is... not... commercially run... [The manager] also points out that Waitakere's drinking water recently won an international "taste" award, and has an "A" grading from the Ministry of Health. "We are determined to maintain that... Of course we could drop costs by dropping the quality of our water, but I don't think most people want that."

...Waitakere City is looking for assurances that last month's problems with tainted water will not happen again. Three of five water supply lakes in the Waitakere Ranges were closed late last month by Watercare... after residents in parts of Waitakere, Auckland, North Shore and Rodney

complained of water that tasted and smelled unpleasant... Watercare said that stocking water in several Waitakere Ranges supply lakes... may [be causing]... the problem. The insulating effect of the extra water is thought to have contributed to higher-than-normal lake temperatures. This helped create favourable conditions for a particular algae. "What is certain is that now it has happened, we know it can happen again. So, we want assurances that the emergence of similar conditions in future, will be responded to and similar problems prevented,"... says... the... General Manager of EcoWater, the Council's water unit... However, despite the unpleasant qualities, the Medical Officer of Health repeatedly gave assurances that the water was safe to drink. Once Watercare isolated these lakes from the water supply network, the City's water was drawn from the remaining two water supply dams, which helped to dilute the tainted water in our network.

...Auckland City will join other councils in the region in supporting a community water-quality programme. Called Waterwatch, it will bring together schools, community groups, landowners and residents to test the quality of local streams and rivers to improve water quality. The council has approved \$50,000 to set up the programme and \$10,000 a year to maintain it... Residents will be asked to look out for water bugs, algae, pollution and litter as part of the surveillance programme.

...When the Mangere sewerage plant opened many years ago, [the then]Auckland Mayor... drank a glass of the treated water... As a beverage it didn't catch on. Who in their right mind would choose to drink treated effluent, however pure, when there was an endless supply of A-grade water flowing from their taps? [The] stunt came to mind yesterday when a Three Kings resident rang to say that Auckland City bureaucrats were continuing a five-year campaign... to switch off water from the protected Waitakere dams, and... force him and 40,000 of his neighbours, to drink... lower-grade bore water from beneath the quarry and the three rubbish dumps of the Three Kings hills. In a report to tomorrow night's council meeting... the manager of utility planning, recommends the council agree "it is satisfied with the water quality" and "that the water is safe to drink." This is a view... two of the consultants to the council-owned water company Metrowater... continue to question. In a late plea to the council they "highlight the fact that the information available is insufficient to draw the conclusion that this water source is safe for human consumption in the long term." ...They point to very high nitrate levels in samples and worry about the health consequences for the vulnerable, such as infants. Another concern is where the nitrate comes from. One suspicion is... fractured sewerage pipes. If this is the case, there are concerns that the supply could become vulnerable to disease... Putting aside the health considerations for a moment, it is something of a scandal that the council even bothers to waste any more ratepayer money on reports and tests and hearings into the Three Kings water source. With the water supply dams... 70[%] full and the Waikato pipeline to come on stream by[next] March... the Three Kings source, whatever its quality, is not needed. Nor will it be, except in the highly unlikely case that this winter we experience a once-in-200-year drought like... 1994... It was in the aftermath of 1994 that the city went in search of additional water sources. Mt Wellington, Western Springs and Three Kings were singled out. Three Kings proved the most promising. It fitted in with the plans of the scoria mining company Winstone Aggregates, which wanted to lower the water table in its Three Kings quarry so it could mine deeper. As for Auckland City, it saw the Three Kings source as the chance to break Watercare's regional water monopoly with a competing water company of its own. However, the circumstances that gave birth – and some sense – to the Three Kings water project, soon changed. Auckland City became part-owner of Watercare. And the region, instead of looking for bitsy solutions to future water supply needs, voted to plug into the mighty Waikato instead. Despite these changes, those pushing the now-pointless Three Kings project soldiered on.

...The Three Kings water treatment plant is nearing completion and should be operational before Christmas. The plant's commissioning has involved close liaison with the Health Department to ensure it will operate with high quality procedures, and that the water supply will meet N[Z] drinking standards. By tapping into the Three Kings aquifer which flows through the volcanic strata beneath the quarry, Metrowater is using and developing the water resource in a sustainable way as required by the Resource Management Act. This valuable water source has not been used for supply purposes before... Diatomaceous earth filtering systems, which will remove particles as small as one micron (Giardia is 5-7 microns and Cryptosporidium is 2-3 microns), are being used... at the plant... When it is operating the plant will supply on average 5,000 cubic metres of water per day and will serve almost 40,000 consumers... If the... fully automated... plant shuts down[– due to a computer fault or whatever –] water will continue to be supplied from existing Watercare points, minimising customer inconvenience. [By the way, a NZ company has developed a 'quick, cheap, testing kit which can be used to check for the presence of giardia and related contaminants in streams and other bodies of water.']

...News that... Sydney's water is contaminated with giardia has its citizens fizzing with anger. Aucklanders know exactly how they feel. It is a disaster by any standard, and Auckland's power woes set the standard for urban catastrophe... And like the source of Auckland's problems – badly maintained cables – the cause of Sydney's contamination is equally mundane: quite a number of dead dogs in an open canal feeding into the water supply. Traces of the parasite... were found even on the outskirts of the city, making all water unsafe... That means a population the size of N[Z] have to boil all their water for at least one minute, leave it to cool and put it in a container in the fridge. That water must be used for drinking, cooking, making ice, washing and pets' drinking water. Could such a disaster happen here? Auckland's Watercare Services last night said no. Auckland water was treated to a higher standard and the system was sealed once water left the reservoir. The fiasco has embarrassed officials, politicians and even the A[USn PM]. In a cruel twist of fate, Sydney is hosting the U[S] Secretary of State... Already politicians are promising a blood-letting as an inquiry is launched.

...Sydney's water supply is expected to be given the all-clear tomorrow after flushing to remove contamination being blamed on dead animals... "I'm told... that the search of the 23km of... open canal... between the Nepean Dams and the Prospect Water Filtration Plant... identified a number of dead... dogs... Now how they've got in there, goodness only knows, but they've either fallen in or been thrown in by uncaring owners... [But] the source of the contamination... [has] been shut out of the system... As a consequence of the bypass Sydney is now being supplied with uncontaminated water[," NSW's]... Urban Affairs and Planning Minister... said yesterday.

...WELLINGTON water has been declared safe despite the discovery of... giardia, which has crippled Sydney's water supply. The bug... was detected in low levels – one cyst per 100 litres – in treated water at the Wainuiomata plant on Monday. The plant is one of three major sources of the city's water. Monthly tests also found higher rates than usual of the bug in the Wainui River, one of the rivers feeding the plant. It's the first time giardia has been found in the treated Wellington supply, although other centres, including Dunedin... Timaru, Wanganui and Nelson... have had a problem with it in the past... The Wainui River flows through a catchment of hilly bush country. Deer, pigs, goats and possums are believed to be the source of the infection... The Wainui River intake was shut on Monday and the plant closed on Thursday. Wellington is now being supplied by the Te Marua Plant, at the head of the Hutt Valley, and the Waterloo plant, fed by underground aquifers. [The]Wellington Regional Council utility services manager... said chlorine [sh]ould have killed giardia in the treated water... [The manager] would not speculate how giardia got through the treatment process. Using sand filtration, the plant was commissioned in 1993 to screen out the bug, as well as... cryptosporidium. All plants were now being tested daily and would be monitored weekly once the immediate problem was over. Wellington['s] Medical Officer of Health... said there had been no recent increase in rates of giardia in the region. "From our point of view, public health has not been put at risk."

...THE latest contamination tests of Sydney's major water filtration plant at Prospect were clear, but there [i]s no end to Sydney's water crisis in sight, the Health Department said yesterday... After three clear readings the plant would be considered free of the parasites... However, NSW['s] chief health officer... said all Sydney's other dams and filtration plants would have to be assessed... [T]he Warragamba filtration plant and the Orchard Hills filtration plant were still contaminated with... cryptosporidium and giardia... Before the latest tests, an expert had claimed the reported degree of contamination of the city's water supply was unbelievable. [The c]ivil engineer... was reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* as

saying the levels of... both parasites... found... by Sydney Water were “as high as you would find in pure raw sewage, probably higher”... There has not been a reported increase in illnesses related to the parasites since the first contamination scare in July, said the NSW Health Department.

...The three million residents of Sydney appear to be coping with the health threat from their contaminated water supply. Health department surveys had recorded no deaths or increase in illness due to giardia and cryptosporidium since the parasites were first discovered... [The NSW] Health Minister... said the health survey results were heartening... [because w]hen a cryptosporidium outbreak hit the U[S] city of Milwaukee in 1993, it killed more than 100 people and made an estimated 400,000 ill... [T]he latest tests showed no parasites in Sydney’s water supply despite high levels on Friday, although residents were urged to continue boiling water for the next two weeks. Clumps of parasites were thought to be working their way through the system, hence the variable readings, [the minister] said.

...Sydney Water officials mismanaged the city’s contamination crisis, misled the public and might have tried to cover up their mistakes, a damning report released yesterday found. [The NSW] Premier... moved to place Sydney Water under stronger Government control following the release of the report... “It confirms that the handling of the water crisis from the very start was botched by the senior management... of Sydney Water,” [the Premier said. The Premier] also announced a \$A15... rebate for water users in affected areas and a freeze on water rates for the next quarter, although there was no guarantee landlords would pass on the rebate to tenants. Sydney remains in the grip of its second water scare in two months, with millions of residents forced to boil drinking water... Both... the... Sydney Water chair[person and its]... managing director... have since resigned their posts and the Government said two more senior managers would be asked to explain their roles in the crisis.

...*Rivers that will run the elections* Seven years ago, in the run-up to the... State election, the then [NSW] Government secretly blocked plans to screen a specially produced video called *River Running Out Of Time* on commercial television. The video... commissioned by the old Sydney Water Board... revealed the environmental plight of the Hawkesbury-Nepean river system, portraying the city’s lifeline as being destroyed by human development. The production had the potential to shock and anger many viewers. This and the sheer immensity of the challenge to overcome two centuries of environmental neglect and destruction explain the political sensitivity. Now another election looms in March next year and the health of the Hawkesbury-Nepean and other rivers in NSW is likely to be high on the agenda... [– but unlike seven years ago,] the problems of [NSW’s] waterways are beyond suppression. The bugs plaguing Sydney’s water supply are giving... city people a crash course on the importance of catchment management. Yet for a decade... rural... people have lived with their dams being taken over by toxic blue-green algae... have watched their soil eroding and washing away... have seen their streams choked by silt and weed infestations, and polluted by human sewage and agricultural run-off. In the city, thanks to giardia and cryptosporidium, the consequences of catchment decline are finally having a big impact at the tap... though the extent of the problems still overwhelms community enthusiasm... This week, the Healthy Rivers Commission released its report from an 18-month investigation of the Hawkesbury-Nepean’s woes, an inquiry that is part of the State Government’s \$117 million water reform package. The author is... a water industry veteran who headed the Water Board in the mid-1980s. “It is uncomfortable for everyone, isn’t it?” says... [the author and] commission chief... of his blueprint for rescuing the river system that feeds water to the nation’s biggest city. “Traditional planning is currently directed far more towards land, its use and development. The result is that land is favoured over water.” The evidence of catchment decline has mounted even during the time that [hi]s report has been compiled. On the Southern Highlands, a major reservoir has been devastated by the catastrophic collapse of the naturally filtering Wingecarribee Swamp, a heritage area, as a result of peat mining to mulch city gardens. The Cataract River in Sydney’s south now loses most of its water through cracks caused by underground coal-mining directly beneath the once vibrant stream... [Three years ago, a local] historian... predicted the kind of crisis that is now destroying faith in the water supply. [The historian] lays blame for a “growth at all costs mentality” on other Government agencies, such as the departments of Housing and Mining, rather than Sydney Water. In her book *Losing Ground: An Environmental History of the Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment*... [the historian] concludes: “The ultimate real costs of that [mentality] have not yet been calculated or even envisaged.” The costs certainly are being envisaged now, although the calculations will take years to tally. Tonight... a former vice-president of A[US]ns for an Ecologically Sustainable Population, is launching his new book, *This Tired Brown Land*... [It] recalls the suppression of the Water Board video... seven years ago, describing the production as a “wake-up call to politicians and planners to start taking Sydney’s growth seriously... The notion that there is some easy solution to complex environmental problems caused by overpopulation is surely almost impossible for any serious person to hold these days,”... [The commission chief]’s report acknowledges that solutions are not easy and... tough, sometimes costly, decisions are needed. “If the costs of protecting river health are not recognised now, we can be certain they will grow and... we will soon have no choice but to face them.” ...This weekend marks the start of a new focus on bringing the people of the city face to face with their water catchment, its problems and ways to solve them. The occasion is the launch of Olympic Landcare, a creation of Landcare A[US]...

An ancient underground water basin the size of Libya holds the key to A[US] avoiding a water crisis as climate change bites the drought-hit nation. The Great Artesian Basin is one of the largest artesian groundwater basins in the world, covering 1.7 million sq km and lying beneath one-fifth of A[US]. It holds 65 million gigalitres of water, about 820 times the amount of surface water in A[US], and enough to cover the Earth’s land mass under half a metre of water, says the Great Artesian Basin Co-ordinating Committee. And it is slowly topped up with 1 million megalitres a year as rain filters through porous sandstone rock. “There is probably enough water in there to last A[US]’s needs for 1500 years, if we wanted to use it all,” says... a hydrogeologist who has just completed the Great Artesian Basin Resource Study. But [the hydrogeologist] and other experts warn that access to the basin’s water supply is under threat from declining artesian pressure. If artesian pressure falls too far, due to excessive extraction of water, the ancient water source will be unreachable, except by costly pumping. The basin lies as much as 2km below ground, and... was formed between 100[million] and 250 million years ago... Basin water is extracted through bores and is the only source of water for... A\$3.5 billion... worth of... mining, tourism and grazing in outback Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and the Northern Territory... Since the basin was tapped in 1878, about 87 million megalitres has been extracted and up to 90[%] of it wasted. As a result of falling water pressure, more than 1000 natural springs have been lost and one-third of the original artesian bores have ceased flowing... [In further news from AUS, a Sydney resident] who bashed a retiree [it] wrongly accused of ignoring water restrictions has pleaded guilty to [humanslaughter. The 37-year-old], of Caringbah, punched 66-year-old Ken Proctor in the face as [Ken] was watering his roses at Sylvania in October...

The Sydney water crisis flows into court this week with hundreds of residents and businesses suing Sydney Water for damages... [Ironically, next week Sydney hosts] a water conference[, that’ll be attended by a]... 13-strong Israeli delegation... [which includes the] managing director of the Israel Municipal Water Works Administration[– who, together with the other delegates, is]... inspecting water services technology and administration in Auckland and Tauranga this week... The delegation... has [already] visited the Ardmore filter station, the Hunua Reservoir and... met officials from Watercare, Metrowater and the Waitakere City Council. It[’ll visit]... Tauranga’s world-leading water treatment plant... [today. The director] said yesterday that... Aucklanders are not alone in their anxiety over the costs of water and who controls water services. Israel is going through similar angst... The Finance Ministry wanted complete privatisation while the Interior Ministry wanted the infrastructure to remain in public hands. “That’s my opinion also. Part-outsourcing [contracting out the operation of a plant] is okay, but to sell the infrastructure to a private company, then find yourself in 10 years with infrastructure that doesn’t work, is not. Finance people, they always want to have everything in private hands.” ...Jerusalem was Israel’s first major city to begin “running water to economic standards,” although it could not be called commercialisation. Beesheba had just franchised its water services to a consortium involving a division of Thames Water... the British company which is involved in the joint venture with the franchise... run[ning] Papakura’s water services. It is also advising Watercare on its Waikato River pipeline scheme.

...Waitakere City wants Watercare to keep the tap turned off on the Waikato pipeline unless there's an emergency. The finance and policy committee has voted to ask Watercare why it can't defer commissioning the pipeline until there is a water shortage. [One councillor... says its too late to stop the pipeline now but the committee is concerned that Waitakere has to pay for the water regardless of whether it is needed. "It's a huge cost and it will be met by the region. We say, 'Don't commission it'," [the councillor] says. Work on the \$155 million pipeline begins next month... Water will be treated at a plant near Tuakau and will be piped 38 kilometres to connect with Auckland's supply system at the Ardmore treatment station. The rest of Auckland will get Waikato water once the pipeline is open, but Waitakere City residents will continue to get their water from the five Waitakere dams – unless there's an emergency. It's part of a deal struck by the then council with Watercare in 1998 when it withdrew its appeal to the Environment Court. The pipeline won court approval at the end of 1998. Watercare's communications manager... says the pipeline has to be commissioned because the water is needed and it's the only scheme that can meet drought standards. "Watercare has a legal responsibility to ensure Auckland has sufficient water supply," [the communications manager] says.

...No one takes responsibility for the quality of water we drink... Watercare Services Ltd... [got] the consent it need[ed] to build the Waikato pipeline to augment Auckland's water supply... [when] the Environmental Court dismissed the appeals by me and a Papakura tomato farmer. The court ruled that the suitability of the water for drinking "is not relevant" and that protecting the public health is an "ulterior purpose" as far as the Resource Management Act is concerned. The decision begs several questions. What are the Crown's obligations to ensure healthy drinking water? How can public opinion over health risks and other issues of public interest be considered? Protections are needed that go beyond the management of immediate environmental effects. For example, the... construction of cellphone transmitter aerials have... raised broad public health concerns that go way beyond the... visual impact of a shoebox-sized object on a post. Yet [that is] the narrow environmental effect... that seem[s] most relevant in a planning hearing. What about the big picture? What about the people? Another example is a recent Britomart appeal hearing which defied common sense. To the public it seemed that legal consideration of the whole Britomart development had been collapsed into the single issue of whether it was acceptable, or not, to drain water from the six-storey-deep home destined to take the development's foundations. It seemed the only thing the Environment Court was worried about was some muddy water, where it had been and whence it would be discharged... Interestingly, in that case, the Environment Court was persuaded to consider potential adverse effects from the possible development – not just the muddy water. It may be that many of us have unreasonable expectations of the R[MA]. It has become the backstop for the concern of community groups disappointed or disenfranchised by the lack of care exercised by regional or local councils responsible for resource applications. An appeal often results when a council has not taken consultation and participation seriously enough. It is not unknown for a council to shelter behind the specific natural resource duties imposed by the R[MA] and not consult people directly about the bigger picture. How many times have we read calls from this newspaper and from individuals for Auckland City Council to survey ratepayers over Britomart? All have been ignored. To be fair, there is no legal obligation on a council to conduct such a poll, nor is consultation defined. Perhaps that is a gap in our legislation. In the U[S], local councils must seek a popular vote on any bond issue necessary to raise money for capital works. This gives ratepayers the opportunity to vote for, or against, public works – quite apart from consideration of environmental effects. In any case, the much-criticised R[MA] is under review again, so its future emphasis is uncertain. The Minister of Environment... told the N[Z] Water and Waste Water Conference in September that the Waikato River contained "higher levels of giardia and cryptosporidium than we expected" and noted that "one thing seems highly likely. We are going to need to ensure the quality of our drinking water." Every N[Z]er must be concerned by the inadequacy of our drinking water legislation. The only safety net we have is the water supplies protection regulations made under the Health Act in 1961. In 1994, at the time of the Auckland water shortage, the cabinet "noted the limitations of the regulatory powers available to protect public health in the existing legislation." So says a Ministry of Health report after a four-year review of drinking-water regulations. In fact, reports are the only thing that review has produced as it has ping-ponged between the Ministry of Health, the Department of Internal Affairs, Treasury and, lately, the Ministry of Commerce. Again it seems that public health and the public interest take low priority while the ideological battle over ownership and control of water rages in Wellington. And don't forget that the 1995 N[Z] drinking water standards are entirely voluntary. In this extraordinarily unregulated environment, Auckland residents owe a vote of thanks to Manukau City Council, which ha[d] been negotiating with Watercare for months over the treatment of Waikato River water. The Manukau agreement was signed just one day before the Waikato pipeline appeal hearing began. It requires the establishment of a microbiological advisory group, demands weekly raw Waikato water testing (which has started) and creates a process for evaluating the process and tender for treatment technology. The Environment Court says: "The standard to which the water is treated before delivery to ultimate users is a matter between Watercare as the bulk supplier and the territorial authorities or their water trading enterprises who purchase water from it." So, where now for public health and drinking water quality? ...Do we all have to buy our own water filters? Surely not. There must be nationally enforced water quality minimums. We cannot be reliant on sporadic acts of care from the odd vigilant council.

...North Shore City Council is forecasting a \$300,000 windfall from its water account this year, which is great news in the short term but the reasons for it raise major concerns about Auckland's long-term water management. All councils in the region buy water from Watercare Services and sell it to residents and businesses in their area. For most of the year councils pay Watercare between 30c and 40c a cubic metre. But when the region has used enough water for Watercare to cover its budgeted costs for the year, the price suddenly drops to less than 3c a cubic metre, which covers the cost of treatment chemicals and electricity... [This] year... the... price is forecast to fall... with two or three weeks of the financial year to run. The North Shore council could pass that saving to customers or plough the windfall surplus into upgrading water-reticulation infrastructure. It has opted for upgrading. So what's the problem? The message in this pricing is that the more water is consumed, the cheaper it becomes – exactly the opposite of the efficiency and environmental objectives adopted in other western countries. For example, the Sydney Water Corporation is required to "give equal weight to demand side management as the basis for planning the future provision of water..." and to reduce per capita consumption of water by "at least 35[%] between 1990 and 2010." Water is a renewable resource but it is available in finite quantities, and at a cost. Drawing gravity-fed, low-contaminant water from the reservoirs in the Hunuas and Waitakeres is undoubtedly cheap. But the next bulk supply source for Auckland comes at a much higher price. The Waikato pipeline... is planned to carry 10,000 cu m a day in its early years, although its maximum capacity is 150,000 cu m daily. A 6[%] cost of capital amounts to an annual operating cost of \$10 million excluding treatment, staff and electricity costs. That means the cost of the water delivered by the pipeline for the first few years will be at least \$3 a [cu m]... The most significant impact of consuming more water is the increased volume of wastewater that has to be treated. The... Mangere treatment plant upgrade... [proves that over-c]onsuming cheap water comes at a high price... yet no demand management strategy is seriously being considered for the Auckland region. Watercare is not to blame. Local Authority Trading Enterprises (Lates) are required by law "to act commercially." Watercare's statement of corporate intent includes environmental targets but experience suggests they come second to the need to act commercially. As a director of the publicly owned Northern Disposal Systems rubbish company I experienced Late priorities when I advocated an increase in the price for rubbish dumping. My aim was to reduce rubbish and lengthen the lives of existing landfill sites – a strategy adopted in N[SW]. But my fellow directors suggested such a strategy would not be commercial because it would lead to reduced revenues – given the competition – and would be unlawful... Interestingly, Metrowater has been able to achieve some degree of water use reduction through its adoption of separate wastewater charges. I am advised there could be room for reductions of water use in the vicinity of 20[%] with the right price signals. Unlike Lates, councils cannot charge for wastewater by volume. The careful single occupier of a \$70,000 home pays the same wastewater charge in North Shore City as the family with three toilets in a \$750,000 home. A Government review of water legislation is looking at demand management

policies, according to [the]Energy Minister... in a speech to the... conference of the N[Z] Water and Waste Association. That announcement is welcome. However, I am concerned that the economic and environmental importance of demand management is not appreciated and will not be given the weight necessary. There is still too much emphasis on commercial objectives. Auckland councils and Watercare could do more to implement demand management strategies. Councils can use fixed charges (for maintenance of the water) and variable charges for use so that large users – for example, homes with pools – would be charged more. Cooperation between the region’s councils would be required... While some cooperation can be expected, specific water reforms will be needed for certain results. All local bodies should be required to adopt... consumption reduction targets. Councils need the power to charge for wastewater on a usage basis without having to go to the expense of establishing a Late. And the legislation governing Lates needs to be broadened to require accountability across commercial, natural resource sustainability and consumer priorities. Despite Sydney’s cryptosporidium outbreak, we can learn from the Sydney Water Corporation’s main objectives...

Mt Roskill and Mt Eden residents awoke yesterday to find they had no running water after vandals... used a hacksaw to attack a Mt Roskill pump station’s main pipe, cutting off water to more than 1000 households. Metrowater[’s spokesperson]n... said the damage was discovered around 8 am, after residents complained to the company that they had no water. When emergency contractors arrived at the Duke St station, water was gushing from the main, which was switched off so it could be repaired. However, the damage was worse than first thought and the main pipe burst around 10 am when the water was turned back on... [T]he water had to be switched off at the reservoir feeding the pump station, before a digger could begin repairs. “They’ve done a fair bit of damage and gone at it with a fair bit of intent because it’s not easy to damage pipes of that size,” [the spokesperson] said. Metrowater brought in water from surrounding areas while repairs were undertaken but pressure was reduced. All households now had running water but an attempt to reinstate the supply late yesterday afternoon failed and repair work would resume this morning. Police were investigating the incident, which... was the first attack of its kind on a Metrowater pump station. The computerised alarm system was also attacked so the company was unaware anything was wrong until residents phoned in... “I can’t imagine why anybody would want to attack the city’s water supply and inconvenience so many people. You can guarantee there will be a step-up in security now that this has happened,”... The Fire Service was called to pump water out of one resident’s garage and clean up minor flooding around the Duke St station.

...[‘in 1992, Chicago’s CBD lost power after a “cave-in flood” of office basements.’ ‘Flood hazard information influences attitudes towards floods, home building, and the prudent use of land. Partly for this purpose, a comprehensive national programme for managing flood losses was started by the US government in 1966. As one part of this program, the US Geological Survey prepares and publishes maps showing areas subject to relatively large floods. These maps and other information on floods are provided by the local office of the Geological Survey. Individuals can also play a significant role in reducing losses due to flooding. Homes and other buildings can be designed to include provisions for movable bulkheads that can be placed in windows and doors in times of flood warning, placement of electrical and plumbing systems to avoid damage by floodwaters, and arrangement of storage space above flood levels. The belief that deforestation and land cultivation greatly increase the frequency and magnitude of floods led to the conclusion that floods could be prevented or reduced by reforestation or soil conservation. It was thought such measures would increase the rate at which rain or snow infiltrated the soil and increase the capacity of the soil to retain the infiltrated water. Research in the 1950s and ’60s showed that such land treatment measures increase the infiltration capacity and, to a limited extent, the water storage capacity of the soil. But research also revealed that the effects of these measures are small compared with the intensities of storms producing large floods of major rivers. Hence, land treatment alone isn’t a feasible measure for reducing large floods. In the case of coastal floods, there’s no practical way to provide full protection on most exposed shorelines. The buildup of beaches and sand dunes by means of artificial barriers may provide a partial solution, but also may seriously interfere with the natural beauty and recreational value of beach areas. For these reasons, the principal ways to reduce damage from floods due to hurricanes and other sea storms are adequate warning systems, evacuation plans, proper building design, and zoning of the more hazardous areas. In the case of river floods, various measures can be taken to reduce flood damages, including confining river water, storing the water, or increasing the channel capacity. Another means of increasing channel capacity is to provide alternative channels, called *floodways*, that come into play only during great floods. Floodways have been built at key points in the Mississippi River valley and in the Sacramento River valley in California. Excessive damage when great floods occur can be avoided by regulations that prevent misuse of floodplain lands. Measures for such control are becoming more important as floodplains are more intensively developed. They include zoning ordinances, which specify the kind of use that can be made of a particular area, and building ordinances, which specify the elevations and type of construction permitted in vulnerable areas – e.g., high hazard areas frequently are zoned for uses such as riverfront parks.’ ‘Levees or dikes are used to keep flooding streams in their courses. In the US the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Missouri River Basin project, and other projects aim, among other things, at flood control. But floods are important in modifying surface features of lands bordering rivers, and in some places, notably the Nile Valley, annually deposit a fertile layer of silt, upon which agriculture depends.

...Ancient Greeks erected over natural springs columnar shrines dedicated to nymphs or deities. More recently, fountains have been used to dominate city squares in the U.S. and Europe, and have provided focal points in town planning. Outstanding examples would include the fountains in Paris at the Place de la Concorde, in London at Trafalgar Square, and in Rome at the Piazza dell’Esedra. The famed Trevi Fountain in Rome, probably the most dramatic of baroque fountains, pours out 17.5 million gallons of water every day. The ancient Romans furnished sources of water to people in the streets, to town houses, and to villa gardens by creating artificial jets of water from their great system of aqueducts. Building upon the Roman tradition, artists and craftspeople of Renaissance Italy erected magnificent fountains, manipulating the vocabulary of ancient art forms to create architectural and sculptural decoration. Virtually every village square in Italy has its own fountain, be it splendidly designed or simply a jet of water spouting into a basin.

...the addition of minute proportions of fluoride to drinking water to prevent or reduce dental decay is favored by even the most conservative medical organizations. However, there is still significant opposition from those who are concerned lest there be possible long-term toxic effects from fluoridation.’

...some people want ‘fluoride-contaminated water forbidden because of fluoride’s toxicity to valuable enzymes. The first proposal for fluoridation of public water supplies came from Gerald J. Cox, PhD, a research fellow at the Mellon Institute. On 29 September 1939, in a speech to the Western Pennsylvania section of the American Waterworks Association, Dr Cox said, “The present trend towards complete removal of fluorine from water and food may need some reversal.” Dr Cox then suggested that fluoride be added to water supplies as a means of reducing tooth decay. Scientific literature up to that date contained several references linking fluoride with teeth and bones. Dr Cox based his proposal of artificially adding fluoride to public drinking water specifically on an article in the *Journal of Dental Research* which appeared a year earlier. It was by Dr Wallace D Armstrong, Professor of biochemistry at the University of Minnesota and P.J. Brekhuis. Their analysis of tooth enamel showed more fluoride in healthy teeth than in decayed teeth. However Dr Armstrong published another article somewhat later (1963) which reassessed his original findings. In fact his reinvestigation convinced him that they had misinterpreted their earlier data. Dr Armstrong states “The sound tooth of an older person demonstrated that its composition had been adequate to resist caries (tooth decay)” and that “fluoride content of enamel increases as a person grows older”. “Age as a factor in fluoride content was not then (in 1938) appreciated”. Thus it appears that the evidence on which Dr Cox had based his recommendation that fluoride be added to drinking water had, after 24 years, been retracted. However Dr Cox went on to become a member of the Food Nutrition board and the National Research Council from which position Dr Cox advocated the idea of fluoridation. Then in 1944 Dr Cox became employed as a research scientist for Corn Products Refining & Co. of Argo, Illinois, a company involved in sugar processing. Companies involved in the sugar industry had in 1943 set up the Sugar Research Foundation Inc. which among other things embarked on a dental caries research programme. The Foundation’s scientific director acknowledged that the dental caries research programme was “to find out how tooth decay may be controlled effectively without restriction of sugar intake”. Fluoridation was just such a proposal and from that date the Foundation started making research grants in support of fluoridation and to actively promote it. Two such recipients of grants were the

Dental Schools of Harvard and Rochester University and these two have been among the most vocal promoters of fluoridation to this day. During 1969 a doctor sought a chance to speak at the American Dental Association symposium on fluoridation. The doctor was going to present a scholarly summary of his findings of the mounting evidence showing the possible side effects from taking fluoride-treated drinking water. The doctor received this reply from the secretary of the Council on Dental Health of the American Dental Association: "The type of presentation you are suggesting might have been appropriate a generation ago when the early studies on fluoridation were being carried out. The theme of the symposium is not controversy, but additional documentation of the universality of experience of the safety and effectiveness of fluoridation, world over. Presentation of the type of paper you propose would be an insult to the scientific community today." Other equally qualified people who have come forward with evidence adverse to official policy have met with the same result.'

... 'experts recommend people consume only a small amount of fluoride because teeth will only absorb what they need.' 'Under normal conditions, a human absorbs small quantities of fluorine in its food (foods richest in fluorine are fish and tea; small amounts of it are present in meat, egg, cow's milk, and fresh vegetables) – but the most valuable source is drinking water containing not less than 1 mg. fluorine per litre.']

...A group of Onehunga residents is demanding the area's spring water be fluoridated. But not all in the area support the call, among them an Onehunga micro-brewery that says it would be a crime to add chemicals to the local water... "The water out here has been recognised since Captain Cook landed for its purity and quality..." Onehunga gets water from a series of local springs, rather than the city's main supply. The springs' naturally low fluoride levels have never been topped up to the level recommended by city health authorities. The state of the water harks back to the days before councils amalgamated in 1989 and the then-Onehunga Borough Council held a referendum which voted against fluoridation. Now a group of parents, teachers and Plunket and dental nurses, worried that their children are missing out on the health benefits of fluoridated water, are insisting they get the same as everyone else in the city. A spokes[person] for the group... said it had been well documented that fluoride in the water made a big difference to dental health, particularly to the socially disadvantaged... The group has asked the Maungakiekie Community Board to take its concerns to the Auckland City Council. Auckland's medical officer of health... supports the move. "My view, and the view of the Ministry of Health, is that water fluoridation is the most effective and efficient way of reducing diseased teeth,"... A spokes[person] for Metrowater... said the company was simply operating on the wishes of the last local referendum. "If they want fluoridation they've got to... have another referendum. We'll go with the opinion of the majority of residents and we don't mind either way."

...To fluoridate or not to fluoridate the local spring water? That was the question that the people of Onehunga had to decide. Their will prevailed. The Auckland City Council voted 10-9 to retain the status quo, but not before passions were raised by both supporters and opponents of fluoridation. A referendum of sorts was held among Onehunga residents. In a turnout that was about as high as you can expect to get for a stand alone postal ballot (about one-third of ballots were returned), there was a two-to-one rejection of fluoridation. A majority of members of the Maungakiekie Community Board and various commentators... believed that the residents' poll should have been overridden on the grounds that the evidence in favour of fluoridation was "irrefutable," and on the claim that many fluoridation supporters for one reason or another forgot to return their ballots. To undermine the referendum, community board proponents even produced the results of a previously secret five-month-old telephone survey that appeared to contradict the referendum result. To get such a different result, the people sampled by telephone were almost certainly asked leading questions that virtually obliged agreement. As a political economist – and as an Onehunga resident who is equally happy to drink fluoridated or unfluoridated water – these kinds of anti-democratic rationalisations worry me. The referendum non-response rate was most likely due to a combination of public ignorance and indifference. Most people had no opinion. Of those residents who did have an opinion, the weight of opinion was clearly and substantially against fluoridation... All of Auckland benefits if one part of Auckland has unfluoridated water. Call it an experiment. Keeping Onehunga unfluoridated means that researchers will be able to study the effects of fluoridation over the long term. Onehunga serves as the study's control group. A continuation of the status quo also means that both supporters and opponents of fluoridation can choose to reside in a place that suits their preference. As economists say, "The customer is always right." That maxim applies to public goods such as water as much as to pizzas and meat pies. We need expertise in public health, just as in economics, statistics and other branches of science. But we also need humility from our experts. According to one claim advanced in the Catching the Knowledge Wave project, the world's knowledge now doubles every seven years. Who knows what this exponential growth of knowledge will reveal about fluoride? The more we know, the more we upwardly revise our estimates of what we don't know. A future knowledge society will be less certain about what is true and what is not true than... societ[ies] of the 20th century [– the century when] too many of our decision-makers believed they knew everything there was to know.

...As the power comes back on the experts follow the trail to disaster... [Yesterday America's] northwest was close to normal two days after a huge blackout. The probe into how the eight-state, two-nation blackout began centred on an area just south of Cleveland, where a leading investigator said three transmission lines failed just before the huge outage... ['Cutbacks on maintenance' may ultimately be blamed, but] the North American Electric Reliability Council... suggested human error might have been the reason the problems were not isolated before they knocked out power from Michigan to New Jersey to Ontario... 100 power plants were "tripped" or automatically shut down by circuit breakers that sensed voltage fluctuations... The blackout was the biggest in U[S] history... An estimated 35 million US and 10 million Canadian residents were left in the dark...

London['s] Mayor... has led angry demands for answers to how a power failure paralysed the capital, leaving 500,000 commuters stranded... [The mayor took 3] hours to get home after the blackout. National Grid Transco... was still investigating the cause but described it as a freak occurrence.

...Power went out across Italy yesterday, disrupting travel nationwide and cutting short an all-night festival in Rome. Most of Italy's 57 million people were left without power for hours... [P]arts of the south were still without electricity... The national grid authority blamed the blackout on a malfunction of supply lines from France. ■ Italy and France have an exchange scheme to help deal with peaks in demand. ■ The failure appears similar to the problems that caused blackouts in the north-eastern U[S] and London last month, and... a few days ago... [when] 4 million people in eastern Denmark and southern Sweden were without electricity for more than three hours after a rare outage plagued parts of Scandinavia.

...['last month's London blackout was caused by an incorrectly fitted 1 amp fuse.' In local news, when a Ngaruawahia resident]'s power surged and her radio went off [it] had no idea her 6-year-old son was climbing a power pole up the road... 11,000 volts struck him, causing burns... which cover 60[%] of his body, [and] will... scar him for life... WEL Networks... said the... pole complied with standards and the boy should not have climbed it.

...Levy... just as unpopular as 'fat tax'... Farmers have vowed to continue to fight against any levies for research into greenhouse gas emissions...

The U[S] and E[U]... faced international outrage yesterday after triggering the collapse of UN climate talks, leaving the fight against global warming in disarray. Activists and poor nations poured scorn on the failure of the richest countries to agree on ways to reduce the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. "The failure of these talks is a disaster. No words can truly express our anger," said the Friends of the Earth group, describing the breakdown as a fiasco... The Sierra Club campaigning group said the US bore the greatest responsibility for solving the global warming problem. "The US emits almost a quarter of global warming pollution despite having only 4[%] of the world's population. While other countries are not blameless, the US deserves special recognition as the world's only superpower and biggest polluter." ...Experts said failure to cut emissions of greenhouse gases would bring more storms and floods of the kind that ravaged parts of Asia and A[U]S last week. "Time is running out. It has run out," said... [the] President-elect of Palau, one of the Pacific islands most vulnerable to rising sea levels. N[Z]'s representative at the talks, [the] Energy Minister... was more optimistic, saying [it] hoped a deal could be struck when the talks resume in... May...

The U[N] talks aimed at imposing realistic greenhouse gas reductions unravelled catastrophically... Faced by implacable opposition from his European counterparts, the head of the British delegation... found himself isolated in his bid to broker a deal with the U[S]. His attempt to save the

planet had collapsed and the enraged head of Britain's climate change delegation stalked furiously from The Hague's convention centre. "I am gutted," [Britain's Deputy PM] said. Shortly afterwards, [the British delegation head] was followed by... [the] head of the Danish delegation. The climate convention had begun to disintegrate. Only a few hours earlier, an ebullient [British Deputy PM] and equally enthusiastic British Environment Minister... had said that they were close to brokering a deal between the US and the E[U], the two major opponents in the talks... On the one side stood a US-led umbrella group. On the other the EU nations and the developing world. The US camp had travelled to The Hague seeking to avoid cuts in carbon dioxide emissions from cars and factories. Instead they wanted to fund carbon sinks – forests and plants that absorb carbon dioxide – as a substitute for halting their profligacy with petrol and the energy inefficiency of their industries... Europe was committed to the idea that the developed world had to reduce its burning of fossil fuels and considered the US carbon sink plan as a bid to avoid global responsibilities. Delegates received few satisfactory answers to their questions about the carbon sink plan.

...The first evidence that millions of tonnes of a greenhouse gas 20 times more potent than carbon dioxide is being released into the atmosphere from beneath the Arctic seabed has been discovered by scientists. Details of preliminary findings suggest that massive deposits of sub-sea methane are bubbling to the surface as the Arctic region becomes warmer and its ice retreats... The Arctic region as a whole has seen a 4C rise in average temperatures over recent decades... Underground stores of methane are important because scientists believe their sudden release has in the past been responsible for rapid increases in global temperatures, dramatic changes to the climate, and even the mass extinction of species.

...Thousands of people evacuated, two killed and a likely damage bill of tens of millions of dollars. That was the toll in the Bay of Plenty last night after heavy rain caused the second set of devastating floods to hit N[Z this year. Meanwhile, the US]... has rejected an invitation to reopen climate talks with the E[U], killing the latest effort to forge an international strategy on global warming. "Without additional convergence between the parties on important issues, a further ministerial meeting would not be useful at this time," said [the]US Under-Secretary of State... Norway had offered to host a meeting in Oslo at the end of this week between the EU and a US-led "umbrella group," which includes Canada, Japan, and A[US].

...The US] has abandoned the 1997 Kyoto treaty to fight global warming, dealing a blow to European hopes to salvage the pact. "The President has been unequivocal. [It] does not support the Kyoto treaty," [a]White House spokes[person]n... told reporters. "It is not in the U[S]'s economic interest,"... Asked whether the U[S] would withdraw from the treaty, [the spokesperson] said it had never come into force, and therefore "there's nothing to withdraw from." Asked if Washington had abandoned the pact, [the spokesperson] said, "Given the fact that it was voted 95-0 against in the Senate, it's a clear sign that there is little support, if any." [The spokesperson] was referring to a nonbinding resolution, passed before the Kyoto Protocol was reached, that said the Senate could not support any global warming pact that did not bind developing countries along with developed countries. The E[U], which said last week the global warming issue was an integral part of US-EU relations, expressed concern over the [Republican] Administration stance. Democrats and environmental groups denounced it. "The new President came to town saying [the former Texas governor] would change the tone and change the climate in Washington; I guess we didn't realise it was the real climate [the new President] wanted to change," said [the]US House Democratic leader... The pact, signed by[the Democratic] President... in 1998[, was] never introduced in the Senate for ratification... Already this month, the President broke a campaign promise by announcing [it] would not ask US power plants to cut emissions of carbon dioxide... [The President]'s... decision followed intense lobbying by coal and oil companies and congressional conservatives who opposed regulation. [The President] today has talks in Washington with German[y's] Chancellor... who asked [the President] in a letter last week to abide by the agreement. The EU[']s Environment Commissioner... said: "It is very worrying if it is true that the US intends to pull out of the Kyoto Protocol." An EU spokes[person]n said the US had not yet replied to its request for high-level meetings to settle differences over the treaty.

...E[U] leaders say parts of the Kyoto Protocol on curbing global warming could be renegotiated to suit the [U]S... The... P[M] of Sweden (which holds the rotating EU presidency), and EU Commission president... say it would be "a tragic mistake to tear the agreement to pieces and start over again." "We lose time and all of us become losers," they wrote in a joint column in the Swedish regional daily *Goteborgs-Posten*... "The longer we wait, the more difficult and the more expensive it will become... If certain parts of the agreement prevent the U[S] from ratifying it, we should negotiate about those parts rather than bury the entire agreement." Japan's Kyoto news agency reported at the weekend that [the]US Deputy Secretary of State... was considering a substitute for the Kyoto treaty which would... involve developing and industrialised nations. The two European leaders reiterated that the 15 EU countries would ratify the Kyoto Protocol with or without the US.

...SOME 40 years ago, [a]celebrated British playwright... wrote a "Damn You, England" letter to a London newspaper... from an address on the French Riviera. Such letters are being written mentally all over Europe at present, only they are addressed to the U[S]. "Damn You, America" has become a popular theme since [the US]President announced h[is administration] was not prepared to sign the Kyoto Protocol... Seldom has such anger been felt in recent decades towards Britain's trans-atlantic cousins. True, the French have resisted Americanisation with loud and clear signs since the presidency of Charles De Gaulle (1958-1969). But turn on the television in France today and the odds are you will find yourself watching a dubbed American film – just as you can't miss McDonald's on the Champs Elysee. But this is real hostility. The Kyoto news was the last straw for a continent that had watched from across the water as [the US administration] unveiled tax cuts designed almost entirely for the rich, new plans for assaulting the meagre welfare benefits of the poor, and the increasingly hawkish stand on Russia and China. In Britain, the [Republican] US administration is seen as a Rip Van Winkle gang that has been asleep since the fall of the Berlin Wall and wishes to revive old memories.

...I'M NOT sure when it hit me. Maybe it was when the [US] administration announced two weeks ago that it would not be sending the Kyoto Protocol to the US Senate for ratification. Or maybe it was when the Netherlands had the world's first real gay marriage last week, with all the attendant rights of straight marriage, weeks after the Vermont House of Representatives voted to outlaw the practice. Whatever the tipping point, I have been struck by the huge – and growing – gap between the political, social and cultural values of the U[S] and Europe. Truth be told, I've been suffering a bad case of Euro envy. A year-and-a-half ago, I returned to the States after more than six years as a foreign correspondent. And like many expats who come home, I've been wondering why my native land seems so out of step with the other industrialised democracies at the dawn of the 21st century. The... "values gap" threatens to undermine the Atlantic alliance and, one day, America's claim to global leadership. Why is it surfacing now? The reasons go beyond any one American leader, to the burgeoning post-Cold War order. [The US President]'s penchant for unilateralism hasn't helped. But Europeans have long been horrified by America's embrace of gun rights, our incidence of violent crime and our infant mortality among the poor. [USer]s have criticised European dependence on the welfare state and US taxpayer dollars to equip a military that supplies their security. The changing landscape of the post-Cold War world has made the rifts more apparent and the Europeans less likely to ignore them. When Europe faced the Soviet Union, far more pressing issues than US domestic politics worried the Old World. Today, the common military threat has faded. On the continent, says... the French International Relations Institute, "there's a sense of 'who do you think you are?'" Crucially, just as the need for American protection waned, Europe's own sense of self grew. "We have developed a European identity, a European social agenda. We are inventing a European model," says [the institute]. As a result, while European criticism of America used to centre on what America did... now it's based on what America is. In a globalised world, all politics are global. As [the]... coordinator for German-American relations at the Foreign Ministry in Berlin, puts it, the global reach of the media, the internet and non-governmental organisations means every domestic issue has the potential to become a source of international conflict... Human-rights organisations and thousands of demonstrators bear down on US embassies with each controversial execution in America... Last week... [the] vice-president of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, went to America on a fact-finding mission to study U[S] support for the death penalty... "We hope America will follow our example, (decree) a moratorium and eventually abolish the death penalty." The U[S] following Europe's lead? That's a switch. But for [USer]s who prize

our position as a global leader, there's an even more ominous possibility. Even without posing an economic or military challenge, united Europe will eventually present a moral rival to American leadership. That alone would give the world something it never had during the face off with the Soviet Union: an appealing alternative. ■ ...here's [some] things we've learned about... [America's 43rd] President... Dubya. 1. When the chips are down, [the President] can sometimes string together a full sentence... 2... his view of "abroad," as in his pre-primary remarks: "When I was coming up, it was a dangerous world and you knew exactly who they were. It was us vs them, and it was clear who them was. Today, we are not so sure who they are, but we know they're there." ...The charm [Dubya] hoped to work on "abroad" has so far brought spats with Russia, China, South Korea and Taiwan. That's for starters... 3. [Dubya] doesn't speak Spanish as well as [it] had us believe during the election campaign. 4... Not a lot of the Sixties rubbed off on him: [the former alcoholic] was having too good a time as it was... 5. [The former Texas governor believes it] can get the job of President done in a 9 to 5, four-and-a-half-day work-week. 6. [Dubya] tells his staff to do likewise, unless there's a big crisis playing out in another time zone. 7. [Dubya]... is a master of the political feint, loudly announcing "concessions" to one constituency or another (an end to US aid to charities that condone abortion, renouncing the Kyoto global warming treaty), that leave US policy utterly unchanged... [Dubya] still doesn't understand why Europe created such a fuss over his renunciation of Kyoto. [Dubya] thinks it was just common sense (and worth a few votes at home) ...8. The [guy] who brought you "teach a child to read and [it]... will be able to pass a literary test" is making education his presidential priority. No wonder... 9. [Dubya]... has a thing about *Bibles*: the book that most changed him, [the then Texas governor] said, in an election debate ...10. Dubya earned \$US900,000 last year. [11. Dubya] has a lot of richer friends, and many are now in Government... His Vice-President[– who]'s heart condition turned out to be a lot more serious than presented during the campaign... [(denying that the Vice-President] had had a heart attack in February was the one time [Dubya] was caught lying[–] ...earned \$US36 million last year. [12. Dubya]'s not as dim as you think. Or how would [it] have earned all that money? [13. Dubya]'s not as bright as [it thinks – or the son of a former President] would have made it to the White House sooner... 14. The [President]... hasn't had a day off sick... 15. His favourite brand of cowboy boots costs \$US600... a pair. 16. [Dubya]... flies off the handle if a mobile phone rings when [it's speaking. 17. Dubya]... paid \$US240,342 in income tax last year. No wonder [it] wants tax cuts... 18. [Dubya]... is expert at "spinning" the facts: [the President] did not actually get the tax cut [it] wanted through Congress, but you wouldn't know that from the official rejoicing... 19. [Dubya]... will not be concreting over the Alaska National Wildlife Reserve to drill for oil, after all – not because [the President] thinks it's a bad idea, but because Congress won't let him.

...The U[S] took a big step towards opening up Alaska's arctic wilderness to oil exploration yesterday when a vote in the House of Representatives... threatened one of the most unsullied pieces of open space in the world. The vote to permit exploration on a limited section of the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve, passed by a margin of 223 to 206, handed an important victory to [the]President... and his many backers in the energy industry. The issue has been a lightning rod for environmentalists worldwide. After several rounds of furious lobbying and deal-making, lawmakers chose to ignore opinion polls showing strong public opposition to exploration of the refuge. They brushed aside the arguments of advocacy groups who said the environmental havoc wreaked by the oil companies will yield no more than a six-month supply of oil over several years... [T]he vote was described by the *New York Times* as a "crushing defeat" for the environmental movement. The energy package passed by the House included \$US33.5 billion of subsidies... Only 25[%] was earmarked for conservation and the development of renewable energy sources.

...MAYBE [the US President] has done the world a favour. When [Dubya] renounced the Kyoto treaty on greenhouse emissions (because it would hurt America) [the Republican] helped to peel away the mask of sanity from Uncle Sam, revealing him for what [it] is, in all his savagery and nonchalance – a glutton and a psychopath. Forget the Taleban, [Libya] or the beastly [Iraqi dictator], it is the U[S] that is out of control, the wildest rogue nation of all. The assertion of America's lifestyle rights, come what may, over any other consideration – including the survival of future generations – was made during the week of the Oscars. Catching a transit-lounge glimpse of this spectacle, I marvelled at its imperial might, its furious flame-fanning of consumer desire. The desire for beauty (although of an exterior kind), wealth, fame, luxury and crappy movies... And therein lies the beguiling genius of Uncle Sam – the dissemination of illusions consumed as reality. Not just in movies, but in its products, politics and foreign policy. American is the land of... opportunity. Yes, but the deck is stacked. The richest 1[%] has more financial wealth than is possessed by the poorest 90[% of USer]s combined; the starkest inequality among major Western nations... The impact of such division percolates through the country. You see it the moment you land at the airport and feed a credit card into the trolley machines: the tattered touts, the stretch limos, the battered buses, the bright lights of Tiffany's. What's unseen is worse... 40 million US citizens are not covered by any form of health insurance, a figure that is increasing each year. Public education and welfare are all on the decline. Basically, the US is a republic of lobbyists attached to a global public relations machine bent on turning the whole of life into a series of paid-for, staged events, like guzzling fake food in themed restaurants, while displaying designer sportswear, and chattering about... special effects as we wash down Prozac... [–] the most prosperous nation on earth exhibits the highest rates of clinical depression[–] ...with a Starbucks soy latte, and remain largely oblivious to the deeper tragedy taking place on the late great planet Earth. [Dubya] is not an original. [It] is pursuing the doctrine formed by his father on the eve of the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, 1992, which laid the groundwork for Kyoto. [Dad had said it] was prepared to talk about the environment, but – here's the rub – "the American way of life is not negotiable." Got it? This mantra should be burned into the brains of six billion earthlings, because the American way of life is now diminishing the life of everyone else. In disaster-movie speak, it's Planet Hollywood versus the world. Already, with less than 5[%] of the global population, the US uses almost 30[%] of the planet's resources. Its emission record is the world's worse, spewing 20 tonnes of greenhouse gas a person a year... The US consumes a quarter of the world's oil, a third of it's paper, and 40[%] of its beef and veal. The reason given by the US President... for his abandonment of Kyoto was uttered with commendable brevity: "Emission controls do not apply to the developing world." So? In most cases, their energy use is minuscule, only 5[%] of per capita emissions of the West, while its inhabitants are climate fodder already, living and dying on the frontline of hurricanes and floods. Emissions from developing nations will rise, but let's not overlook the reason. Their farms, factories and infrastructure are throbbing to service the appetites of distant consumers, whether it's Kenya airlifting flowers to the Netherlands or Korea shipping cut-price cars. The source of the fumes ascending from their smokestacks is us. Meanwhile, the... land of the free... [(which deserves] an Oscar from the World Academy of Jailers for holding the highest proportion of its citizens in custody[)]... is also the land of the fat – its citizens are plagued with obesity. While many may deny the existence of global warming, the overwhelming advice of the scientific community is that we should prepare now for rising seas and disruptive weather. This year the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change... reported that the 1990s were the hottest decade since... records were first taken, and that 1998 was the hottest year. It foretold "future large-scale and possibly irreversible changes in Earth's systems." This report broke new ground by citing the cause of the warming as "mostly due to human activity." And this activity is not about to wind down. The American way of life may not be negotiable but, more frighteningly, it is also inescapable. And the nation that runs the world is ruining the world as it runs amok in Armani, dazzling us with... gangsta rap, making us sick with fast food, workaholia and porno violence, as its hordes of silent seamstresses in tropic locations stitch [designer logos] on to our Y-fronts. All for the glory of shareholder value... It's worth it, you say, it's worth it... Will globalisation accentuate future blindness, or can it also trigger a countervailing wave of enlightenment? ...At its deepest level, globalisation is about sharing, just like the internet, and once understood will incite a value revolution of such sweep that within 100 years the main business of business will no longer be business, and politics will no longer be about swapping preferences, placating nutters and jailing refugees. The total goal will be planetary restoration – social, economic, ecologic. The question to ask ourselves as we journey into the 21st century is this: is each of us at heart a business[perso]n, or is each of us at heart a human being? The fate of the Earth will hinge on our answer.

...Global warming is helping cause an unprecedented series of famines that is pushing the world beyond its ability to cope... The warning [is] the starkest yet by the UN on how climate change is affecting world food supplies... The... UN's F[AO] is predicting that this year's total world harvest will fall for the fifth year in succession, while the global population continues to grow. Food stocks are falling well below critical levels and prices are soaring. The escalating crises will add urgency to a new round of international negotiations on combating global warming under way...

Plan B emerges from the mire of Kyoto... Now the experts are warming to 'contraction and convergence' to save the planet.

...Environmental ministers meeting in Germany reached a last-minute compromise deal last night to salvage the Kyoto accord... "It's a brilliant day for the environment. It's a huge leap to have achieved a result on this very complex international negotiation," Brit[ain's] Environment Minister... said... Japan, Canada, Russia and A[US] had finally backed a compromise accord being pushed by the E[U] to avert a potentially disastrous failure after the collapse of a summit at The Hague... and withdrawal of the U[S] from the Kyoto negotiations this year... The deal ironed out remaining differences on technical issues necessary to turn the protocol into a workable treaty that could be brought into force next year. Japan had demanded a softer approach on compliance mechanisms than the E[U]. Japan, Canada, Russia and others had already won concessions... on counting carbon-absorbing forests towards their emission reduction targets. That will mean the global cut in emissions is only about a third of the original goal of reducing greenhouse gas production by the 30-odd most industrial nations to an average of 5.2[%] below their 1990 levels by 2012.

...A 3km high "brown haze" of human-generated soot and greenhouse gases is blanketing Asia, damaging health and altering rainfall patterns... [-] future... rainfall over north-west India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, western China and neighbouring regions could be reduced by... 40[% (research)]... in India already shows that the haze may be reducing winter rice harvests by as much as 10[%] -] ...according to U[N] scientists. They say the effects are being felt around the world, because the particles in the haze can travel halfway around the globe in a week. The findings come on the eve of the World Summit on Sustainable Development... in Johannesburg... But they are unlikely to be debated at the conference table, although the experts who discovered the cloud fear its impact will intensify over the next 30 years as south Asia's population rises to an expected 5 billion.

...Delegates to the Earth Summit meeting to save the planet's rapidly dwindling resources have apparently not led by example. The 45,000 participants are expected to generate 300 to 400 tonnes of rubbish, only 20[%] of which will be recycled, the *Guardian* reports. It says hundreds of groups have produced mountains of pamphlets, press statements and brochures to draw attention to a multitude of causes. Organisers estimate that around five million sheets of paper will be read - or thrown straight into the bin. "We never had any illusions this would be a green summit," said... [the] Environment Minister in the local Gauteng provincial Government. At one point, Gauteng... and the U[N] had hoped to offset the 300,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide generated flying delegates to Johannesburg and shuttling them around the city by raising US\$3 million... from participating countries, corporations and individuals to fund 16 projects that help cut carbon emissions. So far only US\$300,000 has been raised.

...Green campaigners and aid groups were incensed yesterday at the Earth Summit's draft plan for tackling global poverty and protecting the environment, saying greed had gutted its ambitions. But corporate representatives said they thought the deal was fair, and politicians argued they had backed the best available compromise in a complex world of competing interests. "Nothing for the poor, nothing for the climate," said a joint statement issued by WWF, Oxfam and Greenpeace. "The Johannesburg World Summit will go down in history as a missed opportunity to deliver energy to the two billion people on this planet with no access to energy services, and as a failure to kick-start the renewable energy revolution that is required to protect the climate." The 10-day summit, due to endorse the draft plan at its close overnight, is officially called the WSSD, for World Summit for Sustainable Development. But WWF declared the initials really meant "the World Summit of Shameful Deals"... Oxfam, said the blame lay squarely with political leaders, who were well out of step with world opinion. "Most of them lacked the guts and will to achieve a brave and far-reaching agreement that might have effectively tackled the problems of poverty and the decaying environment." The draft, a raft of non-binding goals, covers action for providing fresh water, sewerage and electricity for the very poor and slowing the planet's loss of biodiversity and depletion of fisheries and forests. But few of these aims have deadlines, and details about how they will be achieved are sketchy... The... EU Environment Commissioner... denied that the action plan was meaningless[, saying that] "extremely important" goals had been establishing a deadline of 2015 for providing clean water and sanitation and for improving management of hazardous chemicals. The plan "provides direction for countries and also concrete actions. Don't underestimate the effects of this. You cannot say that from now on the whole sustainable development issue is marginalised, it is there and we have a document to work on". But a dissenting political voice was... Ecuador[']s President... whose country is poor but also home to the Galapagos archipelago, a world environmental treasure. "The biggest polluters are portraying themselves as environmental paragons and do not want to agree to a compromise for saving the planet or adhere to official goals on development aid."

...They flew around the world in pollution-spewing jets... d[rove] around in luxury cars... ate expensive food in Africa where many go hungry, and worked out a plan to "Save the Planet". But experts say a blueprint by the widely maligned negotiators at Johannesburg's Earth Summit will not radically change the world. It may, however, help a bit. Negotiators representing about 190 nations aimed to help halve poverty by 2015 by promoting environmentally friendly economic growth which does not repeat the polluting mistakes caused by 200 years of industrialisation in the rich West. But many delegates believe the worthy new targets set in Johannesburg... will fail to be fully implemented. Friends of the Earth gave the summit a "must do better" rating. From presidents to prime ministers, leaders said the key now would be to implement the deals, brushing aside criticisms of a gargantuan text which includes few pledges of new cash to help the developing world. And many criticised it as hot air... Even politicians are sceptical that summits with an agenda spanning water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity as part of an assault on poverty can achieve much. "We deal with everything and there is a risk at the end of the day that it means nothing," said... the... Danish P[M]... In some key areas such as promoting clean energy like wind and solar power, [the blueprint] lacks targets... "You cannot measure the value of this summit by the documents it produces. There is a lot of discussion, a lot of negotiation, a lot of friendships are made[.]"... said... a Guyana delegate... "Maybe this will be seen as an historic event five years down the road." But many wonder if the money could be better spent. "This summit and all the preparations probably cost the world a billion dollars: it would have been better spent buying 500 million solar cookers," said... [the] head of the non-governmental organisations' energy caucus... [T]he \$4 solar cookers - silver reflectors mounted on cardboard - could save 500 million [Last] World families from foraging for a tonne of firewood each year and prevent millions of cases of smoke-related diseases from fires.

...N[Z] w[as]... hailed as a model at the W[SSD]. With thousands of delegates, it was one of the largest conferences ever held. Heading the N[Z] local government contingent was Waitakere[']s Mayor... who delivered a keynote address on "How Leading Cities Lead the World." [Waitakere's mayor] shared the podium with the mayors of Curitiba and Freiburg and Germany's Minister for the Environment. Waitakere - the self-styled "Eco City" - was held up as an example of how communities should approach environmental issues... "I wanted to showcase the difference that acting locally has made in N[Z]. Every night the world news swirls around with violence, terrorism and racism and frankly makes people miserable and traps the world into feeling that we can't do a damn thing about it. Well, I told the world that we can, and we have. Over the past 20 years, in Waitakere we've turned things around at a very basic level. We've drastically reduced rubbish and water consumption, put the brakes on pollution and generally improved the quality of the environment and through that the lives of our citizens. Those are messages we are telling the world, with really simple, concrete actions to back them up... We don't have to be trapped into inaction - we can act locally and make a difference..."

...[the] lucky-to-be-alive Waitakere Mayor... escaped within an inch of his life when his driver was attacked by... car-jackers an hour after dropping him off at the airport in Johannesburg. The driver, a [guy] from Victoria, suffered deep lacerations to his hands and arms after being slashed by a machete as thugs tried to grab his van keys. The attack has made the mayor realise in hindsight how dangerous his trip to the world

summit had been. [The mayor admits it] had originally felt security had been a “little bit over the top” despite N[Z]’s original Israeli bodyguards quitting on the first weekend, saying they feared for their lives... [The mayor] ignored suggestions by American mayors to travel to Johannesburg with bodyguards, saying the N[Z] delegation decided to go it alone. The large Kiwi delegation even worked late and travelled unguarded to their hotels at night, which [the mayor] admits made them feel “somewhat at risk” given Johannesburg’s reputation. But... the bodyguards refused to stay at night. Luckily, [the mayor] escaped unscathed, even after marching unprotected with demonstrators down the main street to “hear the other side”. [The mayor] decided to march because tight security at the summit made locals angry they didn’t have a voice... “I wasn’t scared. I just thought it was a pretty aggressive march of the homeless and marginalised people of Africa. That was an amazing experience. They were basically saying they wanted a chance to make the world leaders realise that poverty is a real thing.” ...The 65,000-strong summit, which included more than 100 world leaders, focused on several issues including... health and how to develop resources more efficiently while not poisoning the environment.

...Moisture in the home is the number one enemy of home owners, according to the Building Research Assoc of N[Z]... A damp house needs more energy to heat... while... too much... humidity... makes the air stuffy and increases odours... BRANZ... say[s]... moisture is best removed by continuous ventilation... A ventilating fan will remove the vapour... [from] the main sources... – the kitchen, laundry and bathroom... [–] and ideally it should be ducted outside rather than into the ceiling space. The drawback of a ventilating fan is that it will remove warm air as well as moist air so it should not be left on too long... It is impossible to totally eliminate water vapour, and... [because] dry air... can irritate throats and noses... nor should it be the goal. But... [a] dehumidifier will remove an amazing amount of water vapour from a house – up to... 12 litres a day... [However, in] many regions of N[Z], a DVS (domestic ventilation system) from Home Ventilation Services is fast becoming the preferred method of solving condensation problems... A DVS... fully installed from \$1175.00 including GST... is generally cheaper to run, quieter, requires less maintenance and takes up less space than a dehumidifier[(priced from \$300 to over \$1000)], and is effective in any size of home... The main part of the DVS unit is located in the roof cavity of the home. All that is visible within the home is a slim unobtrusive diffuser in the hallway ceiling and some speed controls the size of a light switch. The ultra quiet fan unit is gently pushing fresher, drier, cleaner air into the home 24 hours a day (temperature permitting), which in turn displaces and replaces the damp air being created within the house... *The benefits of a DVS* ● Controls condensation, mould, mildew and dampness problems ● Better utilises existing heating... With appropriate heating, a DVS will provide... a uniform ambient... background heat throughout your home... [S]ome say their home is warmer with a DVS installed... ● Ventilates your house securely, no need to open windows... ● Custom-made to suit your style and size of house... ● Very low maintenance, no water containers to empty ● Power consumption from less than 7 cents per day (20 watts) in a typical 3 bedroom home... Most DVS owners notice no difference in their heating bills... ● Creates a healthy home...

For health reasons, some international organisations recommend that houses be ‘kept at a constant 24°C’. Although it might not be possible to ensure that every existing house has the necessary equipment to maintain a constant interior temperature (assuming a constant supply of power is being maintained) – be it 24°C, 22°C (r:p725, ln51) or 16-20°C (r:p408, ln27 + p1983, ln2) – there ought to be no excuses for producing new housing which lacks such technology. Even if a house is well insulated and heat pumps are used, maintaining a constant interior temperature may require more power than a house would otherwise consume – but such a house wouldn’t need to be supplied with electric bar heaters (or other forms of heaters – e.g., convection, oil column, fan, gas; electric ‘bar heaters can be dangerous for children, oil column heaters take a long time to heat up, fan heaters are good for small spaces but dry out the air, gas heaters provide a moist heat – which can cause condensation – and may also fill a room with carbon dioxide’; note that in the past year at least five people have died in NZ from carbon monoxide poisoning after bringing outside gas heaters or barbecues inside to keep themselves warm), including electric blankets, thereby eliminating the need to use power to manufacture, transport and operate such appliances (in addition, there should be a reduced requirement for the manufacture of medicines – plus less visits to doctors and days off work – and, perhaps, no need for items such as dressing gowns or slippers).

To efficiently maintain a constant interior temperature, windows and doors need to be kept closed (the temperature control system could be designed to turn itself off if sensors show that a window or door has been left open for, say, longer than a minute – and automatically restart once the window or door has been closed). Although keeping windows and doors closed helps to keep out unwanted insects, householders would have the choice of whether or not they want their home kept at a constant temperature or to have fresh air flowing through it (though the equipment which keeps the interior at a constant temperature might include a ventilation system to continually replace stale air with fresh air – this will, however, increase power usage) – and, at certain times of the year (i.e., when the outside temperature is equal to the desired interior temperature), there’ll be no need to use the system at all, or only during night hours (so, when residents get up in the morning – or during the night – they aren’t suddenly going from a warm bed to a cold room).

Single-storey homes with a minimum of rooms help to keep the amount of power they use down to a reasonable level – and, if the Manufacturing Ministry is responsible for producing everything that goes into a house, it might be efficient to link the heat pump, water heater and refrigerator into one system. The necessary piping and vents could be attached to, or even be built into, the house’s walls, but the easiest solution may be to place them under the floor (if houses are made by joining a top/outer shell to a bottom/inner shell, the outside walls could be designed to extend below the floor level – and the outer shell’s lower rim can slot into an earthquake-absorbing or hurricane-resistant base sitting on, or embedded in, the ground – thereby creating space for pipes and related equipment to be contained and easily accessed when necessary; the depth of the area under houses would have to be sufficient to allow workers to at least move about on their knees when they tend underfloor piping and equipment – i.e., 2ft to 1m). Condensation would be less of a problem in compact houses which have constant internal temperatures and no laundries (r:p2205, ln63), but in districts that have high humidity some form of moisture-removing equipment may need to be included. It could be possible to also link such equipment with the heat pump, etc., but it might be easier to keep the dehumidifying equipment separate – especially if the best solution is to place such equipment in the ceiling/roof. However, if the kitchen and bathroom have steam extractors – as they should – it might be practical, and electrically efficient, to link the dehumidifying and steam extracting units into one system (wires and pipes could be incorporated into the walls, perhaps with removable covers for easy access, but it wouldn’t hurt anyone if the necessary wiring and piping was visible inside the house – i.e., running across the underside of the roof or down interior walls; alternatively, they could be run over the outside wall).

In a moneyless society, energy resources would belong to the community and the power they generate will have to be provided freely to users (when beginning to set up such a society, ministries could immediately receive their power for no cost and households can receive free power up to a certain level – calculated by working out how much power a person ought to be using and multiplying that figure by the number of people living in each house or apartment – then charging households for whatever power they use above their allowable total; the cut-off point and price of overuse should be set to discourage unnecessary power use, and depend on each district’s capacity to supply power – which means the price within a district may still rise or fall with the change of seasons). Furthermore, the various methods of generating power won’t have to compete with each other – except to justify their continued use! The practice of generating power via non-renewable, polluting resources ought to be considered so unacceptable as to warrant closing down such stations immediately where possible (e.g., if a district can already provide enough energy to meet its own needs via renewable sources; if a district can utilise a neighbouring district’s excess renewable-source-generated power), or as soon as a district’s capacity to generate power via renewable sources has been increased – though the Energy (or Utilities) Ministry ought to be more concerned with providing energy-generating facilities to districts that lack them than building new power stations in districts that don’t. Villages that lack power can be provided with generators (preferably dual purpose – i.e., able to utilise solar or wind power when available, then use diesel when they aren’t) so they are able to link up with the outside world via TV and other

communications equipment, have lighting at night and be provided with ovens/stoves (thereby eliminating the need for villagers to burn wood or other fuels for cooking; until a village has a generator, its local vegetation could be totally or partially protected by sending firewood to it from First World districts – most of which ought to be able to minimise or eliminate their need to burn wood), refrigerators and maybe even freezers – such equipment could initially be kept in a communal area for shared or rostered use, and the available appliances ought to be distributed evenly between villages (i.e., if, for example, there are only enough fridges available to initially provide each deprived village in the world with one, then efforts should be made to ensure that each has one fridge before any such village is issued a second fridge; then that each has a second before any receives a third, and so on). The generators can be used to pump water to the village, treat it if necessary, and even to provide hot water. If a village's generator(s) provides enough power, electric heaters could be issued to each residence (thereby eliminating the need for villagers to burn wood for heating); or, if there is a limited number of electric heaters available, they could at least be issued to residences housing young children, the sick or elderly (note that in NZ and other First World countries, some people – particularly pensioners – 'go to bed early to save on heating' and other energy costs).

Districts that already have satisfactory power infrastructures should replace inefficient appliances with energy-saving alliances as they become available via the Manufacturing Ministry's factories (those producing inefficient appliances could cease production immediately – although production of components to maintain existing inefficient appliances would have to continue until all such equipment has been completely phased out). Households connected to a natural gas pipeline – or that have appliances connected to LPG cylinders – can be charged for gas usage at an equivalent rate to what is charged for electricity usage, but the production of such equipment also ought to be phased out (i.e., the Energy Ministry will cease connecting households – and factories, etc – to the gas system, and replace gas appliances with electrical appliances when they reach the end of their working lives: sooner if there are excess electrical appliances and workers available to install them). It might be possible to convert parts of the gas pipeline system to carry water – potable or waste – but unusable (or non-required) sections would have to be removed from the ground when it is practical to do so (i.e., unless the pipes are hazardous, their removal can be delayed until the Energy Ministry has no more urgent projects to complete). The Energy Ministry ought to take a similar approach to the use of coal, wood or other fireplace (open or closed) fuels in such districts. This means that eventually there should be no gas, coal, or nuclear industries, no one will be employed to collect, chop or distribute firewood, and there won't be any chimney-sweeps either!

Ending the manufacture of unnecessary products and packaging will decrease the amount of power used by each district (and power requirements can be further decreased by eliminating inefficiencies – be they during power production, delivery or usage). However, any savings may be completely offset by increased production of essentials – at least until an adequate supply of essentials is available worldwide (note that factories which mostly utilise robots – and don't need to run 24-hours/day – could be operated at night, when overall power demand is decreased). Many or all districts might have to continue trading material resources indefinitely, but there is no reason why every district can't eventually be completely self-sufficient in power generation – especially if heavy users (e.g., the Manufacturing Ministry; the Food Ministry) recycle energy as much as possible. The type of renewable energy resource utilised by any particular district would have to depend on what is most accessible to it – some could use just one source (either wind, waves, fast-moving rivers, ocean thermals, solar, or some other source – but, preferably, not geothermal), others a variety of sources – and what is most efficient (which depends on how the amount of energy required to produce the means of power generation compares with the average output produced by the generator during its expected lifetime). Because of the effect hydro dams have on the environment they initially flood, and their potential to eventually flood larger regions with drastic consequences, they should cease to be produced – unless a dam actually enhances the surrounding environment (e.g., if it is built in an otherwise barren valley); the effects of its collapse are likely to be minimal; or the stored water is also needed to supply taps (in which case the stored water being drawn into pipes to be sent to the city could also drive turbines to generate power for the system's personal use and exterior use – such turbines can even be situated at numerous points along a pipeline so that the energy contained within a segment of water being forced through the pipe is reused more than once).

It eventually might become possible to safely produce satisfactory amounts of power via equipment such as the *Radiant Energy Device* (r:p2221, ln37), the *orgone accumulator* (r:p2222, ln10), the system envisaged by Nikola Tesla (r:p2222, ln54 to p2223, ln25) or some other invention (e.g., *fuel-cell power stations*; solar power stations in space; power stations that will efficiently create or capture lightning, then enable the resulting energy to be utilised; a source yet to be discovered). Alternatively, *perpetual motion* machines could eventually become the preferred means of power generation. If improvements are forthcoming in the production of superconductors, the day may arrive when such materials are used to generate all of the power in every district – perhaps utilising a series of *free energy* power stations (e.g., one for each suburb, plus one for each industrial zone or major industrial facility – especially hospitals and schools), with each station using the power it generates to run itself as well as supplying the district grid. If each station was also capable of storing some power (e.g., in a bank of rechargeable batteries), computers could draw on that power supply to automatically increase or decrease a station's power output depending on demand (be it from within its allotted supply area or from elsewhere in the grid) and, if the capacity of the entire system is greater than the district's maximum requirement, the system will be unaffected if one or more stations are out of operation due to routine maintenance or an unexpected breakdown – and, if for some reason the entire system crashes, the first station to be restarted will have a source of power to do so. A system which is capable of providing more than a district's maximum power requirement (i.e., the amount of energy required if everything electrical within the district was simultaneously being used to its fullest potential) would mean the Energy Ministry won't have to continue fitting electricity meters to houses to keep a check on whether any residents are overusing power – but while meters continue to be read, those that are inside houses should be transferred to their exteriors for easier access. Even if room-temperature superconductors can't be produced (or haven't already been produced), and each power station has to divert some energy to keeping the conductive material at a low temperature, it may still be possible to produce power stations that are more efficient than – or at least as efficient as – any currently available means of power generation.

Even if free-energy power stations become a reality, it would seem to be practical to have at least some organic – or, less preferably, PV – solar cells on the roof of every house (this should be considered impractical if the energy required to produce the necessary volume of cells and associated equipment is greater than the average output of the cells during their lifetime; or if an environmentally sound means of producing solar cells isn't developed). This will enable each household to have an emergency, albeit limited, power supply (the power produced only needs to be enough to provide lighting and communications equipment in the event of a major grid failure – because the type of food kept in the fridge ought to remain edible for a few days without constant cooling, and residents can prepare raw meals instead of using their oven; residents may also wear more clothing or exercise for short periods if they get cold) – at least while sunlight is available (though the system could include at least one rechargeable battery) – and utilising otherwise unproductive space (especially if the alternative is to build a *solar farm* on land that could be used for other purposes; note that, if it doesn't block sunlight, glasshouse roofs and windows – r:p2265, ln32 – could contain solar cells to produce some of the power used for farming purposes) as well as decreasing the amount of power that has to be produced by generator stations during daylight hours (any unused solar power would be fed straight into the grid). Alternatively, each house might be supplied with a mini wind turbine or mini free-energy generator (but still be connected to the district grid – so that if ever a house's generator fails, it will only be without electricity if the failure coincides with multiple failures of the district's power stations).

If future house roofs lacked gutters, rain would run down the sides of houses – thereby helping to keep them clean. However, the problem of where that rain goes when it reaches the ground will always be an important consideration for urban areas. At present, the preferred solution is to collect rainwater via roof gutters and downpipes, then divert it into pipes which eventually drain into local waterways and harbours. An alternative solution would be to provide every house with a sufficiently-sized water tank so that some of the rain which falls on a roof (if the gutters were located lower down the side of each house, as opposed to just below the roof-line, this would aid both natural exterior cleaning – especially above arms' reach – and the amount of water collected) can be used by the building's tenants – even if this water is only used by toilet cisterns (although houses can be fitted with a filter, distiller or

other form of purifying equipment, on a single tap so it can be used for drinking-water) and in the unlikely event that normal water supplies are disrupted (hot water tanks could be another source of emergency water, but using elements to heat water only when required is a preferable option – especially if houses have rain-water tanks). This alternative still needs to include a system of pipes capable of collecting excess roof rainwater, plus rainwater which lands on roads, footpaths, etc. – but it doesn't make sense to then dump the rainwater into the sea, especially since clean water still needs to be pumped to houses (because, even if household rainwater storage tanks were larger, hardly anywhere in the world receives rain regularly enough to guarantee a year-round water supply). The Energy Ministry should build a facility near the end of each stormwater pipeline outlet which can remove any impurities from rainwater then pump it back to houses (and other buildings) via the potable water pipeline system. Such facilities ought to be capable of processing all of the water flowing through their stormwater pipes – but if a period of rainfall is so heavy or prolonged that the potable water pipeline system is being oversupplied, excess rainwater can be piped to farms for use as irrigation (the pipes used for this purpose can double as storage tanks, and only when they are full would the excess rainwater be allowed to overflow and continue to a traditional outlet – or, perhaps, to managed forests; rain collected from glasshouse roofs would be fed into the same pipes, or go into extra tanks – such tanks being placed either adjacent to each glasshouse, inside them, or underneath them). If no rain is falling, or the level of rainfall is below the volume required by the potable water system, that system would then draw on water from other sources (e.g., natural springs – 'all of Christchurch's water comes from artesian wells'; rivers; lakes; storage dams; desalination plants – the latter being preferable to towing icebergs or 'large plastic bags filled with water' through the oceans because they are able to extract essential minerals and metals in addition to salt).

Auckland's water storage dams can be classified as being relatively safe from a public perspective because, if any of them collapse, loss of human life is unlikely and the damage caused to the environment would be minimal. However, the district shouldn't build any more, or replace the existing ones if any of them do collapse or outlive their usefulness. Furthermore, when the Waikato River pipeline has reached the end of its lifetime, it shouldn't be replaced either. Instead, a desalination plant ought to be built on one of Auckland's harbours to produce potable water from seawater whenever the district's supply of spring and rainwater is insufficient. Desalination plants can be operated full-time in districts which lack sufficient supplies of spring, river or lake water – even if their product has to be pumped a long way inland. Incidentally, there ought to be no more fountains built in future (and those already in existence can be turned off) – except for suitably located public drinking-fountains. Furthermore, fluoride shouldn't need to be added to public water supplies if, in future, people have healthy diets, receive regular (and free) dental care, and every parent takes an interest in the condition of its children's teeth!

Household water meters wouldn't be warranted in a moneyless society (although the water system could still utilise meters – or fibre optics – at various points as a check for leaks) – especially if children are taught to use water sparingly, and continue to do so as adults (at least one actor's 'favourite indulgence is having two or three baths a day'!). The only reason why someone should have more than one shower or bath a day is if it gets very dirty more than once a day – but the majority of people don't need to have a single shower or bath each day because, even if they get sweaty a lot, most days sufficient cleanliness can be achieved via a flannel (or sponge) and a basin of water. It also isn't necessary to flush a toilet every time one is used – if the previous user has flushed the toilet and the current user only urinates, that user could leave the flushing to the next user – 'if it's yellow let it mellow, if it's brown flush it down' (household toilets still ought to be dual-flush, and public urinals have buttons so they're able to be flushed when necessary as opposed to self-flushing whenever their cistern has filled). By the way, if a guy who only wants to urinate finds a toilet-seat down, it should lift the seat (placing a piece of toilet paper between the seat and its hand to avoid also picking up germs) and then leave the seat up when finished – because the next user might be another guy; if a gal finds a toilet seat up it should lower the seat, then leave the seat down (unless spiders are a concern) in case the next user is another gal. However, if boys are taught to sit down when urinating (even puppy dogs can be conditioned to urinate like a bitch – i.e., without cocking their leg – if they aren't raised with adult dogs), toilet seats wouldn't need to be raised or lowered (and, in addition, it won't be necessary for public toilets to have urinals – which can cause urine to splash back on to trousers, shoes or the floor, and some people find urinals difficult to use if strangers are standing beside them).

Because it is possible to extract pure water from household and industrial sewage, it might seem ideal for dry districts to recycle (by properly treating) their water as much as possible – merely replacing the small volume of water that even an enclosed system is likely to lose – rather than pump water long distances from a lake, river or desalination plant. However, if every district has a constant supply of water, and harmful industrial compounds are removed by the Manufacturing Ministry (r:p2203, ln15) before its waste water enters the sewers, sewage will eventually only contain biodegradable compounds (via toilets and sinks), meaning every district could use its sewage to fertilise its farmland. The sewage would be either: (a) pumped directly to and throughout the farmland area (perhaps having one main pipe which is periodically fed by secondary pipes that come from different sections of the city), with valves being opened to allow the sewage to flow to whichever field, glasshouse or hydroponic system that needs to be fertilised (measures can be taken to control any odours, but they would be contained within closed systems such as glasshouses – if not, the farmland ought to be far enough away from housing that such odours aren't a problem – while farm workers can wear masks), with any excess sewage either being allowed to flow freely through managed forests or properly treated when it reaches the end of the pipeline before being used for irrigation or released into the environment (recycling the remaining sludge or dried compounds in a suitable way – e.g., burning it for power generation; using it as filler in construction projects, or – if possible – as an ingredient in the production of construction materials, roading and other solids); (b) piped to facilities where it can be loaded into mobile tankers – which then deliver it to specific fields or glasshouses as per the Food Ministry's requirements (with any excess being dealt with properly). Even if sewage has to be partially treated before it is used as fertiliser, that should still be done – because this is the most efficient means of handling such waste, and doing so means suitable waste plant material can be turned into plastic, paper or other products instead of compost. Note that if sewage treatment (plus stormwater) stations are built with dual systems, one could normally serve as a back-up – in case the other breaks down or is being serviced; and both could be operated when flows are heavy.

Modern utility companies waste a lot of time digging holes to access their respective pipes or wires whenever they have to be serviced, repaired or replaced – then recovering the pipes, etc., with dirt afterwards. If utility services were all being handled by one ministry, the likelihood that diggers will accidentally damage one utility service supply line while working on another should be eliminated, and an easier system for handling pipes and wires could be adopted. Wherever possible, pipes and wires should follow the same route – and, as much as possible, they should be placed underneath footpaths. After all, it is more practical to dig up a footpath than a road! However, if pipes and wiring were to be placed in the same ditch, and that ditch wasn't refilled with dirt but instead was covered by large removable paving slabs, each time a section of pipe or wiring has to be tended to, workers could simply lift off the relevant slab then put it back in place afterwards. Such paving slabs would need to be made out of a tough and durable but lightweight material (as opposed to using concrete, which is heavy and can crack), be wider than the ditch – so they don't fall into it – and should have two underhanging walls to stop soil from falling into the ditch from its sides.

Having localised power-generating stations would reduce the need to utilise high-voltage wiring, but if the wires that link such stations still have to carry voltages which makes it unsafe – for utilities workers – to place them next to pipes, rather than string them high in the air or bury them deep in the ground, strips of land can be dedicated to the Energy Ministry in much the same way that areas of land are currently used for roading or railways. The wires could run above ground – meaning that they will be easy to access for repairs, maintenance or replacement – or be buried to a shallow depth (if they can be encased in an electromagnetic dampening material, this should not only decrease the width of the strip of land but it might also be safe for the public to use the land as walking or cycling trails). Such wires may still have to go deep underground or be held by pylons wherever their routes traverse waterways or roading.

MOVE

The argument is often heard that, “because [we] can land on the moon,” we should also be able to design and produce an efficient nonpolluting automobile or a good public transport system... The [blame for the present lack of an efficient nonpolluting automobile], of course, rests with the motor vehicle manufacturers. They prefer to stay with the existing technology as long as possible. If the industry does change, it will be because of a possibility of significant fuel savings and superior performance... plus multifuel capability... [T]he successor to the internal combustion engine will either be a gas turbine of very advanced design or a Stirling cycle[or] Rankine cycle engine... Unlike gasoline or Diesel engines... these... external combustion engines... can burn *any* fuel (liquid or gas). Stirling or Rankine engines could also burn pulverised solid or slurries, such as powdered carbon... During any manufacturing changeover period there will be at least ten years during which both kinds of engine... – ...the internal combustion engine... [and the] external combustion engine... – ...are produced simultaneously. For at least fifteen years subsequently, both old and new types would still be in service. Many futurists unfamiliar with the auto industry (or any industry) are rather contemptuous of such mundane interim possibilities and project – or prefer – a direct shift to electric cars. Numerous advantages are casually claimed for electric propulsion, including... [l]ow operating cost[, ease of operation, low maintenance and long life]. Apparently, the last three advantages are based on analogy with simple electrical household appliances, compounded by widespread misinformation about just how long conventional automobiles do last... [(M]ost people guess about seven years. The truth is that the *median* age of automobile scrappage in the U[S – where ‘an average of 8.5 million cars are retired from use each year’ –] has consistently ranged between eleven and twelve years. Trucks are about the same. Buses last twenty years or more.[)] ...The sad fact is that all the claimed benefits are totally hypothetical... More than one may be illusory. More important, the electric car cannot be a practical reality without a substantial improvement in electric storage batteries or fuel cells. (The latter would be of no interest without fossil fuels, however.) ...If the... [s]o-called “advanced” storage batteries using exotic electrochemical combinations such as lithium and sulfur... ever emerge into production, there is little doubt that the cost of the combined motor-control-storage-system would be at least three times – and possibly as much as ten times – as much as a comparable gasoline engine and transmission combination. For the same weight, they will provide less power and less range... There will probably be a future for electric cars later, however, because the electronics industry will eventually solve a very difficult technical problem: how to provide *external* power to a moving vehicle without unacceptably high losses or awkward mechanical contacts. Only by this means can transportation be truly systematized and begin to get away from the pattern of individually driven and powered machines competing with each other for space on the road and dissipating most of their energy in useless and wasteful stops and starts. Almost certainly the best method will be to provide energy in fairly large increments or “pulses” and not on a steady continuous basis. The old overhead wire or third-rail devices used by trolleys and subway trains are inadequate for obvious reasons (aesthetics, cost, inflexibility, risk of accident). The science fiction idea of picking up power from a microwave broadcast beam covering a wide area can also be discarded at once: the efficiency of transmission would be too low, and intensity levels that would be safe for humans would be inadequate to operate a vehicle... What I envision is a small, lightweight vehicle driven by air-cooled electric motors, probably in the wheels. It would have a... solid-state electronic power control system and a high-capacity energy pickup unit under the car. It would also have an intermediate storage capacity good for distances of 30-50 miles. The storage system could be either an electrochemical cell (e.g., lithium-sulfur) or a high-tensile ceramic flywheel. In the latter case, the flywheel would actually be the rotor of a specially designed motor-generator unit capable of converting pulses of current from the external pickup into kinetic energy of rotation and also capable of converting rotational kinetic energy into electric power for the wheel motors. The wheel motors would also operate, in reverse, as regenerative brakes, converting the kinetic energy of the car itself back into electricity and storing it. Recharge would have to take place automatically as the car passed over special... units in the road. Since fairly close tolerances are likely, I would expect the car to synchronize with and temporarily “lock onto” a moving cable in the roadway... A single pass might require 60 seconds or so and provide enough energy for 2 miles of driving. For densely traveled routes the vehicle would remain permanently locked on the external guide cable, except for turns. Within cities, a certain number of off-street “full” recharge locations would also be likely, probably at parking facilities. The cost of each refill would... probably... be by... electronic funds transfer... Computers could also check the registration of passing vehicles, automatically checking for cars reported stolen or in violation of traffic regulations, thus discouraging car theft and irresponsible driving. Obviously, such a vehicle would be of marginal utility away from a network or grid where it could readily obtain power... Thus the system is, of necessity, urban in orientation. Such a system would still be far short of a fully automatic (driverless) transportation system... Unfortunately, the notion of electronically controlled vehicles acting like chauffeured limousines is probably fanciful. It would be intolerably lavish in use of both energy and capital – and very possibly technically infeasible – to have individually owned units utilizing a common network; a private vehicle being shuttled empty from a dropoff or pickup point to a remote storage location would be excessively wasteful. On the contrary, it seems to me that if passenger cars ever become fully automatic, they will also inevitably become part of a public transportation system. When that happens... the distinction between taxis, limousines, jitneys, and buses will be one of size and route only. Small vehicles will provide individualized service at a higher price; larger vehicles will provide cheaper group service on limited routes and/or times. The customer will call for individual service by utilizing automatic special purpose telephones located on all street corners, inserting [a] magnetically coded credit identification card... and specifying by number code the size and type of vehicle desired. The nearest empty car of the appropriate type will make its way automatically to the point at which the call originated, ready to be activated by the *same* credit card... A system of the kind described would require only a fraction of the number of cars now in service in [First World] countries, since each car would be much more fully utilized... and designed for ultralong life... Maintenance would be centralized. Electronic controls and automatic electric power distribution would... be comparable in magnitude and cost to the present traffic control and fuel refining and distribution system... A few years ago there was a great flurry of interest in new forms of high-speed... transportation systems... between major cities... Some concepts involved creating new, totally enclosed, and possibly evacuated underground guideways. The advantages were thought to be protection from all possibility of external interference and theoretical elimination of all curves, so that extremely high speeds could be achieved. Unfortunately, the cost of digging thousands of miles of tunnels would negate these hypothetical advantages. Another, probably prohibitive, problem is seismic instability: Even a minor earth tremor could destroy the integrity of an arrow-straight... tunnel... The more practical answer... appeared to involve surface routes... but... the air-suspension system ground effect machine... can be disregarded as a serious contender... Although several experimental units have been built in different countries, they cannot be justified economically except at speeds higher than can be attained on realistic routes. They consume too much energy for too little benefit.

...The British and French Government’s decision to go ahead with the Concorde project may well be... an example... [of spending] community... money unwisely so as to... gain... prestige... At best, only a few people will fly in it, for a saving of only a few percent of their travelling time, and

even then they would not use the craft if they had to pay the full cost of the fare... For less than one-thousandth of the total investment it would have been possible to develop a cheap electric bicycle that would have provided short-haul transport for millions... Or, if one wants to write off huge amounts of capital to provide jobs, the Severn Barrage could have been built and amortised, thus providing cheap electricity forever. - 1979

...we have produced permanent magnets so strong that they break before you can pull them away from an iron surface. More than half of those we have made are no longer here on Earth; they rest in endless silence on the moon, in the electric motors of the Lunar Rovers, relics of the Apollo project... Short of space travel there's no more efficient way of transporting people and goods at high speed than by magnetic flight in vacuum underground... A tunnel doesn't require the acquisition and destruction of property... can provide... zero-drag and [be] quiet even at high speed, safe from weather and vandalism... and because of the predictability of the environment, the technique lends itself to automation... [If you move] a permanent magnet slowly downward toward a nail resting on a surface[, for] a while nothing will happen, but then suddenly the nail will jump up and plaster itself against the magnet. If you replace the permanent magnet by an electric one, and control its current through a simple computer that senses the position of the nail, you can make the current decrease if the nail moves up, and increase if it moves down. In that way you can make the nail hover indefinitely in mid-air. That is called "attractive magnetic levitation," and though it sounds risky, given the reliability of modern electronics it can be made quite safe. Already by the late 1970s three different organizations... had demonstrated full-size railcars that... [were] suspended with a clearance of a finger's breadth from a steel rail, by controlled magnetic forces. The Krass-Maffei version exceeded 250 mph on its test track, and... Japan Air Lines... is building a magnetic-suspension railcar line to connect the city of Tokyo to its main airport... The concept of high-speed wingless "floaters" riding a cushion of magnetic fields is really quite old-fashioned: Emile Bachelet, a French engineer, invented it in the early days of this century and demonstrated a successful working model at a Paris exposition in 1914 to crowds that included the young Winston Churchill. In the 1930s a Princeton professor, Edwin Northrup, carried out experiments on magnetic flight and published his results... In magnetic flight, a magnet moving at high speed near to, but not in contact with, a conducting surface... generates eddy currents in it. The currents provide fields that repel the magnet. It's simple, passive, and self-correcting... To provide acceleration, transverse coils are located along the right-of-way, and a computer controls their currents as necessary to make the vehicle speed up, coast, or slow down, sensing its position and speed by its interruption of light beams at intervals along the line of flight... Using no fossil fuels, but only electric power in small quantities, a floater car in vacuum will fly at much lower cost than any of its competitors. An aircraft must spend more energy per mile the faster it flies, whereas for a floater the energy cost per mile of travel actually goes down slightly with increasing speed... [However, f]ixed-routing transport systems of any kind won't compete with aircraft over long distances. Planes will always retain the advantages of zero-cost rights-of-way and the ability to adjust seasonally, or even daily, to changing patterns of passenger demand.

...as is often the case when institutions and nations reach the dinosaur stage, individual voters and small-scale towns and states [a]re ahead of the national and corporate leaders. Riders flocked to unprepared mass transit systems, as for example in Milwaukee, where ridership soared by some 20[%] in 1980. Environmentalists and public-interest groups had lobbied mass-transit funds into the [39th Administration's] energy plan and called for spending \$13 billion on mass transit to increase capacity by 50[%]. The bottleneck was Detroit, which had long since deemphasized buses. (General Motors had actually bought Los Angeles' rapid-transport rail system in the 1920s in order to tear it up and thus increase the sale of private autos.) Citizens demanded that Chrysler begin making buses as a quid pro quo for its bail-out by the taxpayers, and traffic surveys showed that Americans were, on the whole, trying car-pools... as well as... driving within the 55-mile-an-hour limit...

Faster-than-light Travel... It is foolish to speculate about what humanity will be like 30 million years from now. We are just beginning to understand our own genetic structure, and in the far future we may well choose to alter ourselves rather than our environment. If it should turn out, however, that our descendants decide to expand... throughout... [and] out of our own galaxy, the kinds of spaceflight technology we[currently] have... simply will not be adequate for the task. The distances that will have to be traversed by... starships during the colonization of our galaxy are typically five to ten light years, and the time involved [using existing technology] is a little more than a century. If we want to discuss travel to another galaxy, however, this mode of transportation just won't work. The nearest galaxy is 2 million light years away, so that with travel at 10[%] of light speed, it would take 20 million years to bridge the gap. During this time the ship would be in free space with no energy source at all. It seems pretty clear, therefore, that if the laws of physics are such that faster than light travel is impossible, the human race will never expand out of the Milky Way. Therefore, the question we have to ask is how firm the speed-of-light limit is. The increase of mass with velocity has been well documented experimentally. Large particle accelerators are designed to take this effect into account, and governments routinely spend millions of dollars to build and operate them. This would hardly be the case if there were a flagrant violation of Einstein's prediction. On the other hand, it is undeniably true that the basic theory underlying all of our understanding in this area – the general theory of relativity – is the most poorly tested of all our generally accepted theories of physics. This is something of an historical accident. It turns out that most of the effects predicted by general relativity are so small that they are very hard to measure. Only now are our experimental techniques getting to the point where the theory can really be put to the test. In a decade or so, when the present generation of experiments of general relativity have been completed and analyzed, we shall have a better idea of the validity of the theory. It may turn out that the theory is correct, or it may turn out that there are regions where the theory needs to be replaced by something more complete. So even in the near term, there is some chance that a way around the speed-of-light limit will turn up. It is important to emphasize that we are discussing here a "way around" the limit. We shall never build a spaceship where someone climbs in, steps on the pedal, and accelerates smoothly past the speed of light. There is simply too much evidence supporting the conventional argument for such a thing to happen. What I am suggesting is that it may turn out that general relativity fails in such a way that it becomes possible for an object to move from point A to point B in less time than it takes for light to make the trip, but without the object actually being accelerated through the light barrier. I am suggesting, in other words, that it may be possible to sneak around the light barrier without violating any laws of physics... One device for doing this is routinely used by science fiction writers. It's called hyperspace, space warp, or something equivalent... I have to emphasize that there is absolutely no reason to expect such... faster-than-light travel... to come about on the basis of our present knowledge... I just feel that it is presumptuous of us to suppose, on the basis of three hundred years of experience with science, that barriers that appear insurmountable to us will remain insurmountable 30 million years from now... One of the main problems with any conventional fuel carried on board a spacecraft is the rather small amount of energy that can be obtained from it. For example, it takes 250 kilowatt-hours of energy to move a kilogram of matter from the earth's orbit into deep space. This corresponds to the energy tax imposed on interstellar travel by our sun. For comparison, a kilogram of the best chemical fuel will yield 3.2 kilowatt-hours of energy when it is burned. The conversion of mass to energy via fission or fusion does better, but even in nuclear burning, a large fraction of the original mass winds up as "ashes," serving no useful purpose as far as propulsion is concerned. It would be much more useful to find a way of converting *all* of the mass in the fuel to energy. A kilogram of matter converted completely to energy, for example, would yield no less than 25 billion kilowatt-hours. This has been recognized by those who think about spaceflight, and it is recognized that the ultimate fuel for spaceships will probably be antimatter. One of the great discoveries of modern physics is that for every known type of subatomic particle, it is possible to create an antiparticle... ([which]... has the same mass as the particle, but all of its other properties... are reversed...)... When a particle and an antiparticle come together, they undergo a process called annihilation. The original particle and antiparticle disappear... and in their places are a collection of highly energetic lighter particles... For technical reasons, it is easiest to store protons and antiprotons for use as fuel, so most antimatter ships would have two storage areas

– one where each of the particles are stored, and a combustion chamber where they are allowed to come together. This is the design of the starship *Enterprise* on “Star Trek,” so it is not an unfamiliar concept. There is an important drawback to using protons, however... Since proton-antiproton annihilation produces particles whose velocities are below the speed of light, the exhaust velocity from the combustion chamber will be less than its maximum allowed value... Consequently, even though antiproton drive would be an enormous improvement in interstellar propulsion systems, it is conceivable that we could do better if we could find a massive and easily controllable particle-antiparticle pair that would produce only photons upon annihilation. Theoretical physicists have speculated for decades about the existence of such particles, but at the moment there is no generally accepted evidence that any have ever been seen. The hypothetical particle is called the magnetic monopole... Theorists believe such a particle should exist because of a curious asymmetry we find in nature. We know that there is a fundamental connection between electricity and magnetism, and we know that single, isolated electrical charges exist in nature. The electron and proton are examples of this. There has never been, however, a single isolated magnetic pole. Whenever we find a north magnetic pole in nature, there is a south magnetic pole associated with it... but... [i]f nature is symmetrical as far as electrical and magnetic effects are concerned, we would expect that a single magnetic pole – a magnetic monopole – should exist. If this should turn out to be the case, there... would be two kinds of monopoles – north and south, and one would be the antiparticle of the other. This means that if a north and south monopole are brought together, they will annihilate. Consequently, monopoles would be candidates for antimatter engines... [O]nce a single monopole exists, it is easy to manufacture others... An accelerated monopole could be directed against a target where, a certain percentage of the time, it would create another north-south pair. The new monopoles (and the original one) could then be guided around to the entrance of the accelerator by magnetic fields, accelerated, and used to create still more pairs. This means that an interstellar ship could “refuel” at any place in the galaxy where it could find enough energy to run a small accelerator. We could even imagine an interstellar network of “monopole stations” similar to the coaling stations that dotted the oceans during the past century. - 1981

By the middle of the next century... consumer response to human-powered vehicles will become steadily more positive... [As a consequence,] vehicles that enormously magnify the power of human muscles will slowly supplant the car in the inner city and will ultimately revolutionize city travel. Cam-driven, super-lubricated wheels, located beneath membrane frames that weigh just a few pounds, will allow human drivers to maintain speeds of thirty miles per hour for more than an hour without getting out of breath. Whereas a bicycle requires the driver to pedal with the whole leg, these vehicles will work from a simple back and forth movement of the feet, requiring as little exertion of energy as the pressing of a clutch. The industry may be hampered at first by liability problems, for such new-fangled vehicles will share the road with larger automobiles. Some cities could conceivably ban cars... [– although, with] the cost of traditional automobiles rising even faster than the rate of inflation, many people will not be able to afford them [anyway]... Moving sidewalks will not gain widespread acceptance as urban transportation until the Variflex Moving Sidewalk is developed for practical use... This particular sidewalk functions under a variable width, variable speed system. It travels at slightly faster-than-walking speed on approach and departure, but accelerates from about two miles an hour to over ten miles at maximum speeds. Cross walks will have slow zones. More complex systems will add speed lanes, creating multiple-sidewalk highways. They will replace sidewalks in shopping areas [– ‘we could shop all day and not wear our feet out’ –] airports, and large public buildings. - 1982

...Greens would make mobility without the car a real and far from inconvenient possibility[– but via bikes not moving sidewalks! ‘The average annual distance people are now travelling exceeds 10,000km per capita –’ but s]omething like 70[%] of journeys are less than 8[km] in length or, put another way, would take less than half an hour by bike. In inner London it is already faster to commute by bike than by car, bus or train. Sadly, casualties among cyclists are nine times higher per mile than among motorists... [Yet, in] contrast to the billions of pounds spent on roads, as little as a few thousand pounds invested in cycle lanes would make cycling safer and would boost mobility. Bikes create no fumes or pollution, save on fossil fuels and are healthy to use. The carrying of bicycles on public transport could be free and the provision of cycle parks the duty of local authorities... The Green Party would... increase fuel taxes in a move to persuade citizens to use public transport. We would include a third-party insurance levy in the price of fuel and ban the building of town-centre car parks. Where possible, the use of the private car in city centres would [also] be banned. Citizens would benefit by having cleaner cities... and... there would be fewer accidents... - 1990

Mazda’s latest “fantasy prototype”, the 35kg suitcase car, takes one minute to assemble and cruises at 20km/h. Perfect for tired sightseers, but hopeless as a getaway car!

...FUTURISTIC CAB. [A] former Jaguar designer... harbours plans to build a luxury car. But to do that [it] must first establish a company that has the proper base to support such a project. ¶ And [the designer reckons it] has the right idea by establishing a company to build a decent, modern, taxi cab. ¶ It’s called the Hermes and uses a high efficiency gas turbine running at 13,000rpm to drive a generator that powers small electric motors on each rear wheel. At the same time, the generator is charging a set of underfloor batteries. Once the batteries are fully charged the turbine shuts down and the Hermes will travel for 50 kms before the batteries need re-charging again. ¶ The cab is built on an aluminium floorpan and uses lightly stressed aluminium and glass fibre body panels. ■ ...A prototype bus that runs on electricity and CNG... has won an environmental award... The Yellow Bus company built it and ECNZ sponsored the project[headed by]... a lecturer in the department of electrical and electronic engineering... [and a colleague from] the... Auckland University engineering department... [The bus] looks and drives like any other bus but is heavier, mainly because of the batteries it carries. Most of the power comes from the batteries, with only 30 of the required 150 kilowatts covered by a CNG component. It is maintenance free... and... very safe... The design requirements were that it have minimum noise and pollution emission – and it succeeds... [I]t makes as much noise as an average car, even when it is grinding up-hill. “It also compares well with electric buses being developed overseas, in terms of the range it can travel, speed and economy.” [The lecturer] says American cities have legislated to replace a percentage of internal-combustion vehicles in an effort to reduce air pollution[and it believes NZ] should be making similar moves.

...Here in the final years of what must be the most violent century in all of recorded history, whe[n]... little children starve while food surpluses rot, some people still find it surprising that in the field of ideas and inventions the “real world” of war, murder, suppression and other black arts does not intervene. Somehow, in this best of all possible viewpoints... good ideas and inventions will... find their way as commodities into our “open society”... because there is so much “freedom of information”. One’s attention is directed to satellites, cat scans... the Hubble telescope and assorted other technomiracles. These, the argument goes, are reason enough to support the assumption that it is now virtually impossible to suppress anything. But is it? ...the answer is a resounding NO. Any technology gets developed when there are enough interests to see that it gets developed and suppressed when those championing the technology are not powerful enough to make it past the “vested interests”. Case in point: The engine that runs on water. In our research we have discovered numerous examples of inventors who have developed practical and economically viable ways of cracking water on board a car into its constituent gases... then recombining them in the engine with a spark to create an even more powerful explosion in the cylinder than is obtained from petrol. Such a device renders the internal combustion engine completely non-polluting (with the exception of some nitrogen oxides)... Archie Blue of N[Z] developed such a device... The Royal Automobile Club in the UK vouched for his device and stated publicly that the inventor’s car, a Mini, was getting 100 miles per gallon on water ALONE. The device worked so well that a group of English investors in the Channel Islands backed Blue, having brought him to the UK, tested the device and... then the whole thing stopped. Archie returned to N[Z] and stopped publicising the device. When [Archie] died in 1991 his secrets died with him – especially the secrets

of possible “over unity”... [THE WEEKEND] EDITION OF THE “CHRISTCHURCH STAR,” APRIL 29, 1978... [ran a front-page article that said:] *Mr Blue spent seven years developing his “water car” unit, which... can be built for under \$100. “It could put all the service stations out of business,” [Mr Blue] said today... Mr Archie Blue [also says himself] and his Guernsey partners... have been offered \$500 million for the patent by Arab interests...* Archie Blue was reputedly paid \$2 million for his invention, though his daughter disputes this. In any event, [the daughter] apparently never saw any of the money. And when her father died, [the daughter] and her husband cleaned out his laboratory and “took a lot of junk to the tip”. This junk, presumably contained some of Archie Blue’s working models of a water to hydrogen converter. Was Archie Blue’s invention suppressed? Probably. But much more to the point is why, with the earth beginning to destruct, with people literally choking to death on the fumes of the petrochemical industry, isn’t someone else taking up where Archie left off? Even if “over unity” is currently not achievable – and there is no doubt in this writer’s mind that it is achievable – hydrogen converters are simple to build and mass produce, cheap and potentially valuable in reducing car emissions... Why aren’t people now pooling resources, starting companies and making the damn thing? In every instance where we uncovered stories of people who had developed water to hydrogen converters for cars, they were unceremoniously stopped in their efforts, sometimes violently. To assume that the oil companies, with their billions of dollars in resources, cash and private armies will consent to the development of hydrogen conversion is, to but it mildly, naive. Unless, of course, a new market is developed for sand. For years Mercedes Benz and Audi both developed and reportedly perfected cars that ran on hydrogen, and then in 1993 inexplicably dropped their projects. The University of Melbourne had a long term hydrogen project going and cars running on it... A... Sydney inventor... successfully demonstrated his special carburettor and water cell in a Ford Prefect, using a couple of conventional 12-volt car batteries to provide the electric power. [The Sydneysider] claimed the kit could be produced for... \$400 a car, but production never started... [An inventor] of Los Angeles developed a revolutionary hydrogen extraction process during the mid-70’s. This unit was said to easily extract free hydrogen from water and yet be small enough for use in automobiles. In 1976 two independent labs in LA tested this generator with perfect results. [The person] who began the Budget car rental system purchased rights for this device... One of the most controversial figures of his kind... created a sensation when [the figure] began demonstrating his water-to-gas miracle... [in] the 70’s... Chemists at Havoline Chemical of Michigan and the University were among the first to test his fuel. According to both, it actually worked better than gasoline... According to [the inventor], his secret lay in using a small quantity of ‘conversion powder’ which was processed from coal... While it cost [the inventor] over a dollar a gallon to make his fuel in small quantities, [the inventor] claimed that it could be produced for a few cents a gallon if mass produced... [T]he inventor... continued to put on his demonstrations for years and claimed the auto manufacturers, Government, and private companies just weren’t interested in his revolutionary fuel... In the mid-70’s a Dr... of United International Research presented his Hydro-fuel mixture concepts at a meeting of petroleum refiners in Houston, Texas. According to reports, this fuel was a mixture of 45% gasoline, 50% or more of water, and small percentages of crude alcohol and United’s ‘Hydrelate’. This latter chemical was a bonding agent which kept the fuel’s ingredients mixed. Even though it was estimated that a hundred million gallons of gas a day could be saved through the use of this product, no one seemed to be interested... [‘Like alchemists turning metal into gold, an Indian family makes petrol from a secret herb, water, lemon juice and salt as easily as making tea. It all began when the father remembered a strange leaf which burned brightly near a childhood picnic fire. The father took a sample of his petrol to the Indian Institute of Technology in Madras, where it was found to be more efficient and produce less pollution than real petrol. The secret herb found somewhere in local mountains – the father was once kidnapped and tortured for 3 days to give up his secret but refused – which turns water into petrol is either a discovery with the potential to transform the world economy or a fraud.’ Lack of official interest in – or suppression of – inventions seems to also have occurred] in the field of carburetion... G.A. Moore... held... some 17,000 patents... 250 of [which] were related to the automobile and its carburetion. While industry relies on his air brakes and fuel injection systems, it has completely ignored his systems for reducing pollution, gaining more mileage, and improving engine performance in general. As far back as the mid 20’s Moore’s systems were found to be capable of virtually eliminating carbon monoxide pollution. Persons involved in the automotive field viewed Moore as an authentic genius and could not understand why the industry ignored his advanced automotive designs... In the late 30’s there was an inventor in Winnipeg, Canada, who developed a carburetor which got at least 200 mpg by using superheated steam in its system. C.N. Pogue was quite open about this work until very professional thefts indicated his invention was in danger... What eventually happened is still unclear. In the early 40’s there was another inventor who developed a design that cost him many years of heartache and ‘dead ends’. John R. Fish was cut off from every direction, and when [the inventor] finally resorted to selling his carburetors by mail, the post office stopped him. In tests by Ford, they admitted that his carburetors were a third more efficient than theirs, yet no one helped. As late as 1962... a ‘Fish’... [was used on a] winning Indianapolis 500 car... In the early 70’s a small concern in the L[A] area turned out a number of remarkable Variable Venture Carburetors. Most of these were hand made for racing cars. Buying one of their less sophisticated prototypes, a young college student mounted it on his old Mercury ‘gas hog’. Entering it in a California air pollution run, the student won easily. Not only did the carburetor reduce pollution, it gave almost twice the mileage. Within a week the student allegedly was told to remove his carburetor – it was not approved by the Air Resources Board. Due for production in 1975, the simpler Kendig model has yet to be produced... L.M. Beam, who had had his super-mileage carburetor bought out back in the 20’s, worked out a catalytic vegetable compound that produced much the same results... At one cent a gallon [Beam] guaranteed his W-6 formula would save at least 10% in fuel costs[. However, Beam’s invention was r]efused and rejected by State and Federal certification agencies (Air Pollution and Environmental Pollution agencies)... In his, “Suppressed Inventions” [an author] spoke with Mr Beam and found that the shadowy trail seemed to lead to a major oil company – but, of course, little could be proved. [The author] tells of a later device which used the same principle. [An inventor] of Gratz, Kentucky, could supposedly get 115 mpg out of his big 8 cylinder Buick, using his vaporizing arrangement. Typically, this device was assured of obscurity when Detroit interests bought it in 1950. In the early 70’s there was a device made by Shell Research of London that was a bit more sophisticated in design. Vaporizing the gas at around 40 degrees centigrade a certain amount was allowed to go around the vaporizer to reduce pressure losses. The ‘Vapipe’ unit was supposedly not marketed because it did not meet Federal emission standards. Another advocate of vaporizing gasoline... [lived in] Lucerne Valley, California. According to a Sun-Telegraph of 11-2-74, [this inventor claimed to have taken]... a 10,000 mile trip across the country in his 1949 Buick for \$10 worth of carbide. Building a simple carbide generator, which worked on the order of a miner’s lamp, [the inventor] said that a half pound of acetylene pressure was sufficient to keep his car running... all day on a gallon of gas... Because acetylene was dangerous, [the inventor] put a safety valve on his generator and ran the outlet gas through water to ensure there would be no ‘blow back’... In 1975 UCLA experimenters ran liquid hydrogen to a standard propane regulator and mixer atop a standard carburetor. In the carburetor they used water to lower combustion temperatures and to act as a combustion and backfire control. (An ‘approved’ gas mixer or carburetor is necessary in California)... Many believe that hydrogen is the ideal motive force. Containing no carbon, H₂ can be burned safely in any enclosure and broken up into safe components whatever the conversion. A number of minor experimental successes proved the worth of these conversions over the years. Some simply hooked up a mixing chamber instead of a carburetor on their car, and they experimented with combinations of oxygen and hydrogen until successful. In 1972 a UCLA team built an automobile to compete in a ‘clean air’ race. Using a stock gasoline engine, they lowered its compression rate and made a few alterations to allow for a greater heat build-up. Next, they recirculated part of the exhaust gas to decrease the excess oxygen and slow the combustion process slightly. The result was a success. The only real problem was in the bulky, quickly exhausted tanks of fuel. Billings Energy Research of Provo, Utah, solved the bulky tank problem a couple of years later when they built a hydride storage system. Hydrogen is chemically locked in powdered iron titanium and is released when heat from the engine’s cooling fluid warms it. With this... there is little reason for our continuing dependence on fossil fuels... With the advent of the fuel crisis of

1973 there were a number of experimentors who found solutions involving the use of ultrasonic fuel systems. Much of this work involved using sonic transducers to ‘vibrate’ existing fuels down to much smaller particles. This procedure simply increased the surface area of the fuel and made it work more efficiently... [An inventor working in this field] was one of the first persons to proclaim the fact that water could be mixed with gas and used as fuel with these units... When the word suddenly got out that the super fine S-onized water would mix perfectly with up to 70% oil or gas, there was congratulations from many sides (June 17, 74, Newsweek, etc). Later there was nothing but silence again. Later in 1975 [the inventor] was interviewed again and explained that Detroit was so myopic that they would probably turn down even the wheel [– ‘used first in the Tigris-Euphrates Valley about 3500 BC’ –]if it were a newly offered invention... [A] Portuguese chemist... gave a demonstration to Navy officials that proved his additive could reduce fuel costs down to 2c per gallon. It allowed ordinary gasoline to be mixed with water without reducing its combustion potentials. When Navy officials finally went to negotiate for the formula, they found the inventor missing and his lab ransacked. (Saga 5-’74)... The Pacheco Bi-Polar Autoelectric Hydrogen Generator... could revolutionize the field of energy... [It] is a unique system which separates hydrogen from seawater (the element’s natural storage tank) as it is needed for use. The... patent (#5,089,107)... teaches the on demand autoelectrolytic separation of 99.98% pure hydrogen from seawater at both electrodes of the generator, and the simultaneous use of the hydrogen’s carried energy... The oxides of the two metals used in the system which produce hydrogen at both electrodes are also recyclable (with a minimal 0.25% loss)... [Its inventor] has built prototypes which have successfully fuelled a car, a motorcycle, a lawn mower, a torch, and a boat (with the ocean serving as its inexhaustible fuel tank)... His generator was... exhibited in Canada at the 1990 Green Energy Conference, and at many other notable conferences where [the inventor] received several awards for his work... As a young [guy] in his native country Bolivia, [the inventor] was fascinated with the idea of developing a super battery. While experimenting in his makeshift laboratory, [the Bolivian] lit a match and the bubbles forming in one of the beakers ignited and blew a hole in the ceiling. [The Bolivian knew that it] had made a discovery but was not sure what [it had discovered. The Bolivian then] abandoned his work with the battery and proceeded to develop his hydrogen. In 1943, while on a Good Will Tour of South America, the Vice President of the U[S] witnessed his generator running an automobile. [The Vice President] invited him to bring the generator to Washington where, later in that year, [the Bolivian] demonstrated it to scientists and representatives from the U.S War Department at the Bureau of Standards. [The Bolivian] applied for a patent, but because the U[S] was at war, all patents were sealed and available only to the military. Later, his lawyers advised him to shelve his patents because, at that time, oil was plentiful and cheap and there was no need to develop an alternative source of energy. [The Bolivian] became a U.S citizen and brought his family to his newly adopted country, knowing that one day, the time would be right for his invention... During the oil shortage in the 70’s, [the Bolivian] decided it was time to apply for his patent again and received a U.S and several foreign patents. But, [the Bolivian] soon learned that neither the energy industries, the heavily subsidised utilities, nor the Department of Energy were interested in developing clean, abundant, safe energy from the hydrogen. Determined to bring his invention to the people, [the Bolivian] built prototypes and demonstration models to show government and industry officials. Many came and saw, said they were impressed, promised to help, but none ever did. In 1974, with the hopes of acquiring government backing, [the Bolivian] demonstrated his pollution free hydrogen fuel cell to[a member of] Congress... who today speaks often of the wonders of hydrogen fuel. With no outside power source, the self taught chemical engineer connected the fuel cell to an alternator unit with a 3hp, 1000 watt generator with a 4 stroke engine. The demonstration was a success and the excited congress[perso]n promised to bring it to the attention of Washington officials. Upon leaving [the congressperson’s office, the Bolivian] invited him to participate in another demonstration at the Jersey Shore. [The congressperson] was invited to take part in a history making voyage, the first power boat ride, “fuelled by... seawater.” Many newspapers were invited as well. But, [the congressperson] never showed up, nor did very many newspapers. [The Bolivian] never heard from the Congress[perso]n again, but his voyage was... a... great success. History was made on July 27th, 1974 when a 26 foot in-board power boat ran for nine hours using... seawater for fuel, putting back into the ocean as its waste, clean water. In an effort to overcome the scepticism [the Bolivian] was facing and the Ph.D [the Bolivian] could not add to his name, [the Bolivian] had his invention analyzed by several independent laboratories. It passed all tests but when [the Bolivian] tried to introduce it to the automobile industry and the oil companies, the response was either cool or non-existent. After a 2 hour meeting with one of the oil companies, [the Bolivian] was told that developing the generator would be against their interests. In 1977, [the Bolivian] built a prototype unit which provided hydrogen, electric and thermal energy... for cooking and heating... a 1,000 sq ft home in West Milford. The New Jersey Commissioner of Energy, and several of his staff came to see and were impressed. The Commissioner wrote a letter of recommendation to the D[OE], but again nothing happened. In an effort to bring the generator to the public’s attention, [the Bolivian contacted a producer] who... wanted to do a TV show about the generator, but the idea was axed by the station. It was during this time that [the Bolivian]... was the recipient of a plaque and award from the Commissioner of the Patent Department and 2 consecutive Hall of Fame awards from the Inventor’s Club of America in 1978 and 1979. In 1980, [the Bolivian] was contacted by 60 minutes who promised to help him show his invention to millions of Americans. The 60 Minutes crew arrived in West Milford and taped the generator producing hydrogen fuel for a bunsen burner, and a torch which cut through a 3/4[in.] thick steel plate... The last of his demonstrations involved running a lawnmower with the fuel. Because [the Bolivian] was going to be on [TV], at the last minute, [the Bolivian] decided to buy a new one, and did not have time to test it out. The engine choked due to the excessive amount of gas being produced but the 60 minutes crew assured him that they had enough material to present an entire show with the successful demonstrations. Later when the show... was aired, [the Bolivian] was devastated as the show had a completely different focus. The only demonstration aired was the lawn mower, and it was used to provide an example of an independent inventor’s non-working invention. In 1986, with increasing concerns about the environment, [the Bolivian] wrote to the D[OE] about the generator but received only a fact sheet in response which provided information on the drawbacks of hydrogen fuel based on the problem of storing it in liquid or gas form. [The Bolivian] wrote back explaining that with his system, there was no need to store the hydrogen as it is produced on demand. His detailed response was ignored... [A designer produced] a remarkable air-powered flywheel that [it] claimed could propel an auto for 2c per mile. Using a principle of “ratio amplification of motion” in a closed system, the motor was easily attached to electric generators for pollution-free variable power systems... Back in 1816 a Scottish clergyman, Robert Sterling, designed an external combustion engine that ran on hot air. Since that time, many experiments have been made trying to perfect his idea... Because air is non-polluting and does not tend to heat nor contaminate engines it is used in, it is an ideal power source. The one major problem, however, has always been just how to store enough compressed air for lengthy travel. Air has been used for years to power localized underground mine engines, and even a number of experimental ‘air autos’ have been successful. In 1931 L A Engineer R.J. Meyers built a 114 lb, 6 cylinder radial air engine that produced over 180 HP. Newspaper articles reported that the Meyers vehicle could cruise several hundred miles at low speeds. Compressed air stored as a liquid was later used on advanced air auto designs in the 70’s... In 1973 [an inventor from] San Diego, California, thought up a simple air car design. Using a scuba bottle full of air, [the inventor] ran a hose to an air impact wrench. The wrench shaft was, in turn, hooked to the wheel... By using a battery to pump up his tank, [the inventor] was able to go some distance at speeds up to 50 mph... In 1975 there was a breakthrough of some significance in the British Atomic Energy Research Lab at Harwell. There they came up with a working fluid pump which was nothing more than a container with an assortment of pipes and valves. This means that solar energy should be capable of pumping water – or your hot springs or hot air supply can furnish pumping power... In the 1930’s in Wollega, Holland, there was a 21 year old inventor who developed a piston engine which reportedly could run for three months before needing recharging. The engine was remarkable in that it ran on hot compressed air. [However, before the 21 year old] had a chance to market the engine, [the inventor] was sent to a mental hospital, and his

working models disappeared[(the most recent model of a 'car that is powered by nothing but air has a range of 120km and a top speed of 70kmph – using \$2 of compressed air')].... Russell Bourke was probably one of the true geniuses in the field of internal combustion engines. Upon noting the incredible waste of motion in the standard auto engine, [Bourke] set about designing his own engine in 1918. In 1932 [Bourke] connected two pistons to a refined "Scotch yoke" crankshaft and came up with a design using only two moving parts. For over thirty years this engine was found to be superior in most respects to any competitive engine, yet it was rejected by all of the powers that be. This amazing engine not only burned any cheap carbon-based fuel, but it delivered great mileage and performance. Article after article acclaimed his engine and its test performance results, yet nothing ever came of his many projects except frustration and blockage... [An inventor and his brother] struggled for years in Vermont to get backing to perfect his amazing engine... [which] manages to use even the harder to burn heavy gasoline molecules. Current engines are said to waste these, and, since they make up to 25% of the current fuels, the use of the heavy molecules was a great step forward. According to a 'Los Angeles Examiner' article (Dec.29, 1974), the cams, timing, and so on were altered on stock Detroit engines... With such publicity, the EPA was forced to examine the situation, and of course, they found that the motor designs were not good enough. Few persons believed the EPA, including a number of Senators. A Congressional hearing on the matter in March 75 still brought nothing to light – except silence. [The brother]s were interviewed by newspapers and auto manufacturers across the world, and even though they... [achieved] 80% more mileage... [by merely modifying] the basic Detroit designs; Detroit was not interested... ['Gas turbines are a form of internal-combustion engine in which air is compressed, heated by means of fuel sprayed into a combustion chamber, then expanded in a turbine to produce enough power both to drive the compressor and to provide a surplus. They are much used for aircraft propulsion, having a high specific power output (i.e. high power for low weight). The steam turbine was invented 2,000 years ago by Hero of Alexandria, but the first practical one was devised by Sir Charles Parsons in 1884, and contributions to its development were made by the Swedish engineer de Laval and others.'] In 1907 a Stanley Steamer car travelled down a Florida beach at 170 mph before a bump sent it out of control. Losing ground to cheaper gasoline vehicles, a number of the old steamers were resurrected and run during the [WW2] fuel shortages. Even in the 50's a Stanley engine carried one researcher and his newer car across the US for \$6 worth of kerosene. The Doble Steam Auto was probably the first steamer of modern design. Instead of allowing the steam to escape, it recirculated it so that an owner conceivably could drive a thousand miles before refilling the twenty-five gallon water tank. With less than a minute warm-up owners could get performance equal to the best gasoline automobiles. The amazing Doble engines were guaranteed for 100 thousand miles, and some owners reported having got a phenomenal 800 thousand miles from them. From his first auto show Doble got 27 million dollars in orders. The War Emergency Board of the period 1917 plus discouraged production completely, so Doble was forced to survive abroad building steam trucks for an English firm. Steam power plants have been no problem. Kinetics Inc. of Sarasota, Florida, had a superb engine developed for cars of the late 60's... One of the most advanced steam turbine designs came from the DuPont Laboratories in late 1971. They used a recyclable fluid of the freon family... Using more basic designs, Sundstrand Aviation put one of their steam power plants in a Dallas city bus. At the same time... three Oakland Buses... [were] equipped... with similar 'Doble' designs. Lear Motors Corp. of Reno, Nevada, spent millions on advanced steam designs until it was apparent there would probably be little financial reward in the end... About as close as anyone came to putting a production model on the market in the 70's was the attempt by [an inventor who, u]sing Swedish Sullair rotary compressors for motors... mounted his system on a standard Datsun and got a contract for at least a hundred more. Later modifications included a gyrator engine, which was actually a pump motor working backward. One of the few new steam engine designs able to be directly tied to the drive wheels of an auto is the KROV design of 1973. Claiming at least a one-third advantage in economy over conventional gas engines, all this engine needed was financing... In the early 70's [an inventor] in Rialto, California, developed an unusual steam engine design that was purported to get 50 miles to the gallon. The engine, which used only 17 moving parts, weighed less than 50 pounds and eliminated the usual transmission and drive train in an auto. After contacting Detroit interests, the inventor claimed [it] was required to sign forms releasing these interests from acknowledging his claims to the design before they would even look at [the design]. After a Sun-Telegraph article on the project, his factory was fire bombed to the tune of \$600,000. After letters to the White House, the inventor finally gave up... I recall that one enterprising [inventor] sold a kit to convert gas engines to steam engines during... [WW2. This inventor] ran around L[A] in a converted Model A Ford until [it] dropped from sight. In the 60's there was a similar conversion kit put out by a small company in Oregon... Aside from a token steam project by Ford, the steam auto was ignored right up to the time of various Senate pollution control committees of the late 60's. Typically, the representatives of the auto industry alleged that steam engines were not dependable, safe, or necessary – especially since Detroit would soon have good minimal engine emission designs... One of the most astonishing engine designs of the 60's was the Papp engine which could run on 15c an hour on a secret combination of expandable gases. Instead of burning a fuel, this engine used electricity to expand the gas in hermetically sealed cylinders. Far from being complex, the first prototype used a ninety horsepower Volvo automobile engine with upper end modifications. Attaching the Volvo pistons to pistons fitting the sealed cylinders, the engine worked perfectly and showed an output of three hundred horsepower... In 1969 [an inventor] became disgusted with his ailing automobile and decided to gamble a couple of hundred dollars on putting together an electric car. Using an ancient ten horsepower electric truck motor, [the inventor] figured out a unique system to get peak performance from this motor; [and] actually ran his 1961 Mercury from this power plant. Estimating that his electric car costs him less than \$100 a year to operate, the inventor was sure that larger concerns would be very interested, and... could hardly believe the lack of response [it] received from his efforts... [His] invention actually cut energy drain on electric car starting by 75%. By weakening excitation after getting started, there is a 100% mileage gain over conventional electric motors... ['An electric car held the world land speed record at 66 mph in 1899; this was increased to 85 mph two years later – present day electric cars have reached 150 mph. The reason for the relative lack of commercial success of electric vehicles up to the present lie in the battery specifications required in order to produce a performance even approaching those of internal combustion engines.' 'Electric motors vary in size from small electric clock motors to sizes which develop 40,000 HORSEPOWER or more – used to propel ocean ships.' (Editor's note: some 'bacteria swim by being turned at the base by a small rotary motor – the motors are small electric engines powered by a current of protons.')] One of the startling electric motor designs of the 1970's was the E M A motor. By recycling energy this astounding motor reportedly was able to get a better than 90% efficiency. Using a patented Ev-Gray generator, which intensified battery current, the voltage was introduced to the field coils by a simple programmer. By allowing the motor to charge separate batteries as it ran, phenomenally small amounts of electricity were needed. In tests by the Crosby Research Institute of Beverly Hills, Ca., a ten horsepower E M A motor ran for over a week on four automobile batteries... When [its inventor] demonstrated his radically different motor to physicists and engineers in 1976, their reaction was typical. They admitted the motor worked remarkably well but since it was beyond the 'accepted' laws of physics they chose to ignore it... At an inventors workshop (I. W. International) an amazing electrical auto engine was shown by[its] inventor... Using what [it] called "liquid electricity", [the inventor felt that his engine] could power a large truck for 25,000 miles from a single portable unit of his electrical fuel. Liquid electricity[also] violated a number of the well known physical laws... Any mention that an electric car could be made which could regenerate its own power as it was driven was a joke to most 'experts'. Yet, in 1976, this author actually saw such a car function. Using various standard automotive parts and an electric golf cart motor, [the inventor]'s first model functioned perfectly. Once this remarkable auto reached a speed of 20 mph, it regenerated all of its own electricity. In normal stop and go driving, it gave several hundred miles of service between recharges. The secret to the system lay in the way that the inventor wired the batteries to act as capacitors once the car was moving. Four standard alternators acted to keep the batteries recharged[(in 1990, a 'Japanese company claimed to have perfected an electronic car battery which was capable of maintaining consistent power for 6 hours and would recharge itself in 30 seconds'). Yet another inventor]... and his partner spent only 45 days and around \$500 to put together a car that confounded experts. A

small 7/8ths 12 v-motor provided the initial power. Once going, a hydraulic and air system took over and actually recharged the small electric energy drain. The Montebello, Ca. inventors were, at last reports, very determined that the auto industry would not bury their “super power” system. What happened? ...One inventor in the 20’s used an electric car which ran off high frequency electricity which [was] generated at a distance. Using principles similar to... Tesla’s ideas, [that inventor] simply broadcast the re-radiated atmospheric energy from a unit on his house roof. Henry Ford, acting for himself and the other Detroit oil “powers”, quickly bought and quietly shelved this invention. John W. Keely reportedly used harmonic magnetic energies from the planet to run his mysterious motor. Later, [an inventor] of Lake Isabella, California, worked out a motor thought to be similar to Keely’s. In the late 40’s it was demonstrated for many persons, including Naval scientists. After a round of “dead ends”, it, too, vanished into the pages of the past... In... “Suppressed Inventions”, [the] author... tells of [an inventor from]... Kentucky, who turned down a GM offer of 35 million dollars when they wouldn’t guarantee to market his amazing magnetic engine... built... from old washlous machine parts... In the 70’s it was found that ceramic permanent magnets could replace conventional field coils in electric motors. This resulted in low current drain, high performance, and freedom from burn out, an ideal prescription for electric cars. Two 6 V batteries are supposedly enough to run a 1 1/4 hp motor 50 miles at 30 mph... A retired electronics engineer... of Madison, Florida, invented a motor which apparently ran by means of six tiny electromagnets and a secret timing device. Requiring no fuel, the engine of course emitted no gases. It was so simple in design that it required very little maintenance and a small motorcycle battery was the only thing needed to get it started. Typically, most persons who had professional background in this field felt that the machine must be a farce and viewed it and the inventor with suspicion. After seeing the machine run a power saw in the inventor’s workshop, a number of persons were forced to expand their thinking somewhat... In the June 1973... issue of “Probe” there was an article on an electromagnetic engine that was fuelless... T. Townsend Brown was... [a] soft-spoken scientist[who] had a solid clue which could lead to fuel-less space travel. His saucer-shaped discs flew at speeds of up to several hundred miles per hour, with no moving parts. One thing [Brown] was certain of – the phenomena should be investigated by the best scientific institutions. Surely... the science establishment would admit that [Brown] really had something. Although the tall, lean physicist... was a humble [person, even shy, Brown] confidently took his good news to a top-ranking officer [the physicist] knew in Washington DC. “...experiments in Paris proved that the anomalous motion of my disc airfoils was not all caused by ion wind... They conclusively proved that the apparatus works even in high vacuum. Here’s the documentation...” ...That year Interavia magazine reported that Brown’s discs reached [the aforementioned] speeds... when charged with several hundred thousand volts of electricity. A wire running along the leading edge of each disc charged that side with high positive voltage, and the trailing edge was wired for an opposite charge. The high charge ionized air around them, and a cloud of positive ions formed ahead of the craft and a cloud of negative ions behind. The apparatus was pulled along by its self-generated gravity field, like a surfer riding a wave.[A] Fate magazine writer... in 1958 also described Brown’s metal discs, some up to 30 inches in diameter by that time. Because they needed a wire to supply electric charges, the discs were tethered by a wire to a Maypole-like mast. The double-saucer objects circled the pole with a slight humming sound. “In the dark they glow with an eerie lavender light.” Instead of congratulations on the French test results, in the Pentagon... [Brown] ran into closed doors. Even his former classmate from officer’s candidate school, [now an] Admiral... discouraged Brown from continuing to explore the dogma-shattering discovery that the force of gravity could be tweaked or even blanked out by the electrical force. “Townsend, I’m going to do you a favour and tell you: Don’t take this work any further. Drop it.” Was this advice given to Brown by a highly-placed friend who knew that the US military was already exploring electrogravities? (Recent sleuthing by [another US] scientist... uncovers a paper trail which leads from Brown’s early work, toward secret research by the military and eventually points to “Black Project” air craft... The B-2 seems to be a culmination of many of Brown’s observations...)... Were... repeated breakins into Brown’s laboratory meant to discourage him from pursuing his line of research? Brown didn’t quit[, perhaps because the physicist]... wanted to know “Why is this happening?” [Brown] was convinced that the coupling of the two forces – electricity and gravity – could be put to practical use. The arrogant academia ignored his findings... Perhaps [Brown] would not have had the heart to continue his lonely research if [the physicist] had known in 1956 that nearly thirty more years of hard work were ahead of him, and [that it] would pass over in 1985 with the frustration of having his findings still unaccepted. The last half of his career involved new twists. Instead of electrogravities, at the end of his life [Brown was demonstrating] “gravitoelectrics” and “petrovoltatics” – electricity-from-rocks. Brown’s many patent’s and findings ranged from an electrostatic motor to unusual high-fidelity speakers and electrostatic cooling, to lighter-than-air materials and advanced dielectrics. His name should be recognized by students of science, but instead has dropped into obscurity... Brown fought an uphill battle all his life, at great cost to himself and to family life. His cause included getting the science of advanced propulsion out into public domain, not hidden behind the Secrecy Act and a wall of classified documents. [Brown] died feeling that [the physicist] had lost the battle... Too late to comfort him, some leading-edge scientists of the mid-1990s are now resurrecting Brown’s papers. Or what they can find of his papers... A number of researchers contend that if the poles of the atomic fields in matter are arranged in a linear polarity, one can produce an anti-gravity effect. This is the principle a magnet works under when its molecules are in alignment. The perfect example of this principle in application is the bumblebee. Flying against all aerodynamic principles, the wings purportedly produce enough electro-static polarity bands around the bee’s body to carry it aloft. According to some theories anti-gravity can actually come from creating any system which will use the confusion of matter against the orderly flow of energy... By orienting the poles of the atomic structure of matter instead of the molecular structure (magnet), even non-ferrous metals can gain attraction repulsion qualities. We should shortly be using propulsion units which are little more than diaphragms of matter sending out discordant vibrations – out of harmony to the resonance of space... While the electrical resistance of various metals has long been affected by super cold temperatures, it was not until the mid-60’s that scientists found a ‘breakthrough’. Niobium with tin zirconium or titanium were found to produce super-conducting magnets ten times as strong as ordinary magnets... [S]uch super-conductive characteristics could allow a super magnetic shield for space ships. This would, in effect, act as a ‘force field’ protector against dangerous protons and radiation. Super-conductive wire, of course, could allow frictionless gyros, and ultra small computers and electrical circuits. When larger super-conductive metals act to repel magnetic fields, we have an actual ‘levitation’... Threatening to hang the 58-year-old... and to harm his family if [it] did not co-operate, Adolf Hitler forced an Austrian inventor to build a flying craft which levitated without burning any fuel... The work was based on Schauburger’s discovery of how to develop a low-pressure zone at the atomic level. This had happened in seconds when his laboratory device whirled air or water “radially and axially” at a falling temperature. [Schauburger] referred to the resulting force as diamagnetic levitation power. [It] emphasized that nature uses indirect – what Schauburger called reactionary – suction force... After their research headquarters was bombed, they were transferred to Leonstein and started a flying-disc project to be powered with his trout-inspired turbine which rotated air into a twisting type of oscillation resulting in a buildup of immense power causing levitation. A small model which crashed against the ceiling glowed blue-green at first as it rose, then trailed a silvery glow... [The] devices were no more than lab... models by the end of the War. However, the [US] military officers who showed up a few days after the model hit the ceiling seemed to know what [the Austrian] was doing. They seized everything. [The Austrian] was interrogated by a high-ranking officer, and put into “protective custody” for six months... because of his knowledge of atomic energy. (Even though his research was directed toward implosion – which was labelled fusion – rather than toward the destructive fission approach to the atom.) A few tantalising bits of lore about Hitler’s “flying saucers” rose into public awareness years later. The July 27, 1956 Munich publication Da Neue Zeitalter said that “...this new motive power – implosion[–] ...generated light, heat and motion... with the use of only air and water...” The first [remote-control]ed flying disc was tested February 19, 1945 near Prague... [–] the disc could hover motionless in the air and could fly as fast backwards as forwards. “This ‘flying disc’ had a diameter of 50 metres.” ...the craft test-flown near Prague... rose to 15,000 metres in three minutes. It then flew

horizontally at 2,200 k[m]/h... There is no doubt... Schauberger knew how to build an implosion device which levitated. His problem was how to brake it. Test models generated so much energy that an entire engine lifted itself off the floor, levitated in the high-ceilinged test hall, and crashed against the ceiling... Did anyone carry on the levitation-craft work after Schauberger's wartime research team was split up? The answer may be buried in some country's classified defense files. After the Far East Treaty was signed... attempt[s] to get his implosion generator funded and developed was derailed... Pythagoras was the first person history records as working out a reasonably sound harmonic musical scale. [Pythagoras] was also convinced that certain modes or keys had profound effects upon emotions. The 'Hard Rock' music of the 70's then was probably far worse on the listener's well-being than the less chaotic music [Pythagoras] warned his disciples against. The early Greeks had great knowledge on the use of vibrations, and the priests were able to build highly unique sound chambers to use in their rituals and religious ceremonies. Many persons have felt that all elements have certain keynotes and, if such a keynote is duplicated, it can disintegrate the compounds into their various parts. The mystical principle that two exact things cannot occupy the same space at the same time is valid whether applied to a mind system or to a wall of Jericho. According to a number of ancient records, round metal discs of certain shapes and resonance could lift... objects if sounded... Indian Sanskrit records are usually more detailed and indicate a science of acoustics far ahead of ours. The 716 ancient stone discs found in China by the Russians in the 60's were said to vibrate in a peculiar manner when struck... [A w]ell-known occult writer... explained in some of her works, that the gigantic stones moved by the ancients were rendered weightless by a simple application of natural magnetic law... [One researcher's e]arly work... found a direct relationship between the output frequency of the brain and intelligence. The Energies Science has yet to understand what we could call the 'other energies'. These energies – or let's say, 'this energy'[-] can be operated at great distance without any 'grounding' actions by physical bodies. It can even be reflected by mirrors and transported, concentrated, and increased by sound. The mystics referred to this other energy as 'life force', and 'Prana'... and the ancients referred to it in various ways as the 'binding force'... [More recently it has been] called... the X force... 'Odic Force'; [and]... 'the mumia'... Townsend Brown[']s... new principle of propulsion... started with a charged condenser on a string and led into miniature flying saucers. It was found that the closer the condenser plates, the wider the area they covered, and the more voltage difference between them, the greater the resistance to the effects of gravitation. Brown... is thought to have concluded that three large condensers under a saucer (120° control) would be sufficient to make practical flight possible. Theoretically, the condensers act in creating a modification of the gravitational field around a craft and, by using a "Caduceus" coil to change field polarity, directional guidance can be attained. As late as the early 1970's one inventor in the Northwest demonstrated similar anti-gravity discs before Portland TV Channel 8 viewers. His 'Sicorsci Aviation' spent seven million dollars on the project before it faded away. These and other propulsion systems were all but ignored, officially. They went against the notions of gravity, for one thing, and for another, how would the powers that be make money from them? Jets cost millions... these systems were too simple. - 1994

RUSSIA HAS UNVEILED a fuel-efficient transporter that could revolutionise world travel. A cross between a flying boat and a hovercraft, the "ekrano-plane" was for decades a far-fetched mystery, glimpsed only by military satellites as it skimmed on an air cushion over land and sea. It can carry 400 passengers at a cruising speed of more than 480 km/h, fly off water, land or ice, and soar to thousands of metres to avoid bad weather. It has a range of 16,000 k[m] and uses only one-fifth of the fuel required for a conventional aircraft... [Incidentally, in the US, t]ransportation sources consume about 200 billion gallons of fuel each year. They also produce over half the air pollution generated by the combustion of fossil fuels. An improvement of 5 miles per gallon in American automobile mileage would cut carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 100 million tons a year. Energy-efficient automobiles including electric vehicles... would cut automotive carbon dioxide by up to 70[%]. Car pooling and greater reliance on mass transit would reduce smog in big cities. Furthermore, the use of alternative fuels such as natural gas and methanol would cut emissions... - 1995

Roadside radio beacons could be used to enforce pollution-free zones in city centres by automatically switching specially-designed cars to battery power, says a British engineer. Hybrid taxis could run on relatively pollution-free natural gas outside smog black spots, but use... 370kg of... batteries... [- enough to run the taxi] for as long as three hours... before needing a recharge... - ...in designated zero-emission zones...

Toyota will mass-produce the world's first production-line hybrid petrol and electric car within a year, the daily *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* newspaper reports. Toyota plan to turn out tens of thousands of the hybrid by the end of 1997, aiming at a price tag of around 2.5 million yen (\$31,950), said the daily. The hybrid is expected to boast a two-fold increase in petrol economy compared with the Toyota Corolla, according to company sources... Power generated by the petrol engine but not used for locomotion could be shunted to the car's battery, to be used later by the electric motor. The American market was being targeted first because of an growing shift in the U[S] towards low-pollution cars, the paper said.

...AUCKLANDERS can identify with Vancouver[']s inhabitants)... Both cities are proud of their natural environment, both are experiencing a growth spurt, and cars are the preferred means of transport. But Vancouverites have made some hard decisions... In consultations over four years, Vancouverites became convinced that continuing down their present track would mean they would end up with a seriously degraded way of life... So the 20 local governments of Greater Vancouver gave unanimous approval to a Livable Region Strategic Plan, a detailed transport blueprint and a Growth Strategies Act... which, by 2021, will reduce the traffic load on highways by 20[%], vehicle pollution by 37[%], capital outlays for roads and transport by 30[%], and the conversion of rural land to development by 33[%]... The plan has four strategies: (1) The establishment of a green zone to protect Greater Vancouver's natural assets, including parks, watersheds, ecologically important areas and farmland. The green zone sets a long-term boundary for urban growth. Municipalities nominate lands to be placed in the zone, which will end up comprising two-thirds of Greater Vancouver's total land base. (2) Building "complete communities" – transit-connected town centres and surrounding residential areas to replace sprawling, unfocused subdivisions. The result will be a better balance in the distribution of jobs and housing, a wider choice of affordable houses, better distribution of public services and more effective transport. (3) Concentrating a larger share of residential growth in certain city areas so that more people will live closer to their jobs, making better use of public transport and community services. (4) Developing an "automobile-restrained" transport system geared toward public transport. Its core will consist of light rail and bus connections. High-occupancy vehicles and goods transport will have priority on highways, and congestion will be allowed to discourage car use. Streets will be altered to favour public transport, cycles and pedestrians. The vision is of a more compact and efficient region with development focused on city areas and discouraged further out. Sound sensible?

...[the other day t]raffic officers in Rawalpindi, Pakistan... [used] a steam-roller[to] crush... 1500 pressure motor horns seized from vehicles during an anti-noise pollution campaign. The use of the horns is illegal in all but ambulances and police cars... [By the way, h]ow many cartons can fit on a single bicycle? Fifty-two, [some Hanoi merchants have learnt]. Widespread poverty has impeded the development of transport services in Vietnam and merchants must often resort to pedal-power or oxcarts to move their goods.

...Sleek, black and bug-like, the sun-powered cars that glided through the A[US]n outback on the World Solar Challenge will... never see the light of day on a city street... "No one goes to work in a F[1] racing car and these solar vehicles are race cars..."... said... the three-yearly international challenge[']s... founder... But... the technology is on track for wider commercial use in cars and homes... [A]n engineer with Ford A[US], said... a near certainly in the short-term is a hybrid using fuel, electric and solar power. "...These... solar... electric drives give regeneration, and when you hit the brakes they instantly change from motor into generator, so you could feasibly drive around town with no fuel consumed." ...The 3010-km race from Darwin to Adelaide saw average speeds rise from 66.9 km/h in the 1987 event to 89.76 km/h. The Japanese Honda Dream won with a top

speed of 140 km/h. Cars were allowed a maximum of 8 sq m of solar panels to gather the sun's energy, and to carry a small battery to store some energy for strategic use. The fastest cars used... 1.5kw of power – equivalent to the amount used to run a small hairdryer – and boasted major improvements in motor design, aerodynamics, battery, tyre and solar cell technology... Honda used laser-grooved solar cell technology from the University of NSW, paying \$NZ1.92 million for 4500 cells to power one car... The... [c]ells... were able to convert up to 24[%] of the light energy falling on to their surface directly into electrical energy, compared to vehicles from 10 years ago where a 14-15[%] efficiency would have been the best. A key had been to reduce the loss of light which falls on to the cells through anti-reflection technology, and in achieving maximum voltage.

...It may look like a bug whirring in the air, but it is the world's smallest helicopter, and mistaking it for an insect would set its German creators back by 100,000 marks... The tiny twirler, developed by the Institute of Microtechnology in Mainz, weighs 400mg, is 24mm long and 8mm tall. Propelled by a motor that drives two blades capable of rotating more than 100,000 times a minute, the helicopter flew about 13cm... on its maiden voyage yesterday before landing safely several seconds later... The motor was connected to an electricity supply by copper threads. When more power was applied, the machine went up; and when power was reduced, it landed. The... real challenge is to find practical applications for the micro-motor, which has a diameter of 1.9mm. Institute officials said the motors could be used in medicine, computers and, of course, toys. - 1996

...Chrysler is developing a vehicle that... might look like a toy but it's due to be a grown-up car very soon... Plastic has been the miracle material of the last half of the 20th century, used for everything from cutlery to credit cards... [However, although p]lastics might be used under the bonnet, under the fenders and inside the boot and cabin of every modern car... they have yet to become commonplace in vehicle super-structure or exterior cladding. This is surprising. After all, plastic is light, strong and easy to work with – a plastic body can withstand impacts – such as those from a bicycle or car door – without suffering a dent... [(k]ids' cars are made of plastic, and the best test of indestructibility has to be a stint in the hands of a toddler[)]... Plastic does not corrode and is unaffected by environmental contaminants such as acid rain. There have been plastic-bodied cars, of course, but most have been low-volume specials such as the Pontiac Fiero of a few years ago. [Unfortunately, the] mid-engined Fiero was a dismal flop, failing to meet the usual objectives of cost and quality... The one big-production plastics number is General Motor's Saturn, which is a reasonably successful car in the U[S]. The Saturn has a plastic skin on a steel skeleton... Now Chrysler is contemplating a plastic fantastic called the Composite Concept Vehicle. Unveiled last month, the CCV uses only five major components during production – four plastic body sections and a "drivable" steel chassis – reducing tooling and assembly costs by up to 75[%]... Other savings include tens of millions of dollars in regulatory costs alone in the U[S], normally needed to cut down paint shop emissions... and the huge cost of setting up the paint shop in the first place... Originally designed as a concept car for emerging markets such as China and India, the CCV may have broader appeal because of the low-cost methods of manufacture. The total number of pieces required to produce the CCV is about 1100 – down from 4000 parts in a traditional mini car... A traditional small American vehicle normally needs between 75 and 100 "stampings" (or massive industrial press actions which shape a car body from a flat piece of steel) in a plant of around 185,000 sq m of space... "For the CCV we can manufacture these vehicles in mass numbers in a 28,000 sq m plant... Virtually everything we do in engine, stamping and assembly plants could be done under one roof. It would require 6.5 hours to build each car compared to the 19 hours now needed to build small cars." ...The CCV is assembled using massive thermoplastic-based injection moulding machines which process... resins... [that] are almost 100[%] recyclable... (similar to plastic drink bottles) into large structural body parts. These body parts – virtually two interior and two exterior halves – are then glued together and bolted to the chassis using only four bolts. There are some hurdles before it gets into production. Chrysler... is developing technologies to meet crash test requirements without a steel substructure and methods to ensure repairs match the original moulded-in colour surface... Plastic (or sheet moulding composite, as it is known in the business) is dearer than steel, especially in bigger volumes. Steel is around \$1 a kilo and plastic between \$3 and \$5 a kilo... [- although 1kg of plastic should produce a larger area of body panelling than 1kg of steel! Remarkably, an]other major issue is recyclability. Plain plastics can be re-used easily, but... only about 50[%]... [by weight] of... cars... manufactured in sheet moulding composite... can be recycled... [compared with 84%] if the same vehicle was... steel... What is also obvious is that the steel industry has seen the threat posed by plastics. It has redoubled its efforts to remain the motor industry's main supplier. The industry is also happy to work with steel. Rust prevention measures have improved and pressing techniques are far better than even a decade ago. Weaning the car industry off steel will not be easy.

...MOTORISTS who know what they like in car design face an uncertain future, even some shocks. They have no control over the finished product. [It is the] environmentalists, safety legislators and accountants [who] are forcing big changes to the form and function of the average car. Forget fifties-style chromed bumpers, gigantic metal grilles and Darth Vader tail fins – they will never come back. Look instead, for little lumps of fibreglass and plastic, designed for function and not form... [-] the politically-correct dream of clean, green, mass mobility... It will not happen in 10 years, maybe not 20, but the world's streets are destined to be filled with plastic fantasies bearing all the appeal of an over-the-limit credit card. They will be powered by ultra-clean hybrid engines, with bodies so cleverly designed they will not damage people or other cars to anywhere near the degree they do now... Balancing the mix... [of] possible and planned international laws on vehicle safety, recycling, fuel efficiency and fuel type, car size and top speed... will be difficult for car companies, and their super computers will be processing data for years, with no guarantee of success. In the meantime, the less scientific equation – how the motorist will react to cars which may end up looking like badly-recycled yogurt bottles or mis-shapen bran muffins – has to be considered... That is why all the concept cars appear first as the show ponies.

...B[eautiful] girls, and some quite ugly cars. That is... the... story of the 32nd biennial Tokyo Motor Show, which opened officially... on Friday... With close to 1800 vehicles on display... fortunately, not all was... strained, dumpy and downright peculiar among, particularly, the smaller vehicles shown. One striking standout was a two-seater roadster from Honda, which displayed two themes common at the show, matching performance with environmental responsibility. The JV-X sports car featured a direct-injection petrol engine of just one litre, which integrates a slim electric motor. Apparently performance of this ultra-light vehicle does not suffer, because electricity generated by the electric motor under deceleration is available to enhance acceleration through the car's stepless automatic gearbox... [T]he car sips petrol at a rate of about a litre every 30km. Special features... include seat belts that double as air bags... known as the "air belt". It comprises an inflating seat belt shoulder, with an inflator and control unit. On impact, the control unit sends a signal to initiate inflation... The system partly doubles as a seat belt pretensioner by reducing seat belt slack on inflation. In addition, the air belt serves as a cushion, reducing head movement... reduces pressure on the thoracic cage on impact and absorbs kinetic energy as gases are evacuated through ventilation holes in the subsequent deflation process. Because the system is compact, it can also be installed in the back seats... The way ahead was also shown by the first appearance of Toyota's much-anticipated Prius hybrid fuel/electric car, along with the FCEV, a fuel cell car based on the body and mechanics of the RAV4... A variety of other low consumption, fuel efficient future cars were on display, some interestingly offering CNG as the fuel at the same time as N[Z] is backing away from this natural resource.

...N[Z] appeared to be encouraging the use of diesel fuel in spite of the risk to health and the environment, [says]... National Gas Corporation... "As a result, our CNG vehicle population is decreasing while other countries are doing exactly the opposite. We are out of step with... A[US and the] USA where the price of diesel is slightly higher than petrol... When natural gas is used to substitute diesel fuel particulate emissions can be cut by up to 98[%],"... At a natural gas conference in Sydney, N[Z] was used by several speakers as an example of how a successful CNG programme can fail if government and industry do not take a longer term view and critical support initiatives are removed prematurely. In the early 1980s... [NZ's] Government offered cheap loans to convert cars to CNG and provided incentives for service stations to install CNG equipment. The scheme ended in 1985, with CNG sales dropping... since then... 130,000 cars were running on CNG... ten years ago, but the total is now... 25,000...

[However,] the jury is still out on the effects of diesel... [(which utilises 'compression-ignition instead of spark-ignition – the advantage is that a high compression ratio can be employed, as there is no danger of the explosive combustion of a fuel/air mixture as with a petrol engine'). The] director of environmental programmes for Rover Britain, said both petrol and diesel were good fuels and... neither should be rejected on environmental grounds.

...[Britain's PM] runs a Ford Galaxy MPV powered by liquefied petroleum gas. So what? Well, [the PM] has also ordered that all 175 ministerial cars should be powered by natural gas by 2001... [A]gain, so what? The what is that [hi]s keenness on setting an example to Brits by publicly using environmentally friendly fuel, has a somewhat ironic relevance to N[Z]. Remember the mid-'70s when the Arab leaders of OPEC... forced the so-called fuel crisis by pushing crude oil prices... to a level rather more realistic for a fast-diminishing resource than had previously been charged. High-performance gas-guzzlers depreciated faster than a pierced balloon; carmakers suddenly found a new deity whose creed was "small and fuel-efficient is beautiful"; and N[Z], endowed with bags of natural gas and not a lot of oil from the huge new Maui field... was the first country in the world to set up a strong national infrastructure and installation programme for compressed natural gas. CNG was cheap and non-polluting. But the programme... was bedevilled by cowboy installers whose bodgy jobs led to starting problems and unacceptable power losses compared with petrol. The lack of range of CNG cars and the loss of boot space caused by their bulky cylinders added to the problems. When the Government pulled its installation subsidies, the industry withered and has almost died, in spite of... much good development work done on getting CNG to perform almost as well as petrol. Shamefully, and ironically as it has proved, N[Z] exported compressor stations, surplus CNG bottles and other equipment to countries which were, 20 years and more later, realising that natural gas has much to offer... Meanwhile, LPG... though never as high in profile as CNG, maintained a core of enthusiasts who appreciated its longer range. But only... 150 vehicles a year are converted to LPG. Only 50,000 gas-fuelled vehicles remain on N[Z] roads, a number declining by... 8000 a year, while less than half the 400 CNG stations of a few years back remain... A[US] has a fleet of 350,000 vehicles using LPG, Venezuela's domestic car industry is meeting a government requirement to build 60,000 gas-powered vehicles a year. Japan is targeting 200,000 gas vehicles within two years and Korea aims for 800,000 by 2005. A fresh drive to boost the LPG side of the industry here has now come from its biggest LPG wholesaler, Rockgas, a subsidiary of Caltex NZ and of Boral in A[US]. Rockgas believes putting... 100,000 gas vehicles on [NZ's] roads... could save \$50 million a year in displaced oil imports... The company has bought 13 factory-converted LPG Ford Falcons and is mounting a national drive with them to push the virtues of converting to LPG to high mileage users... It is offering Taxi Federation members an interest-free loan for the \$1200 a vehicle extra cost of having a factory-built Falcon, with 80-litre LPG tank specially designed to tuck away right at the rear of the boot, or in the case of wagons, in three scuba-like tanks neatly fitted... in the spare wheel bay... Cheaper fuel and better economy are said to give savings of around... \$1400 for a 60,000[km]-a-year car. I have been driving one of the Rockgas vehicles... Start-up is instant on petrol, and the almost immediate automatic switchover to 100% LPG can not be detected... [T]here seems no likelihood of any international let-up on development of gas-powered vehicles. On show at Tokyo recently was a current model Honda Civic with dedicated natural gas power... set for sale domestically in Japan and also in the U[S] next year... Honda has solved one big problem with CNG, its lack of range, which has specially affected small cars with boot space enough for only one gas cylinder. Honda has developed a gas cylinder capable of storing CNG at much greater pressure so its NGV Civic has a drive range of 400km... Honda claims its tailpipe emissions are 20[%] less than a petrol-powered car, and... by avoiding the need to have a dual fuel vehicle compromise, Honda has managed to get an excellent power output... taking full advantage of the fact that CNG has an effective octane rating of about 120 and a considerably higher calorific value than petrol.

...AT the Frankfurt Motor Show this month, the world's car companies have been pushing the environment... With global concerns for the environment growing year by year, and accusatory fingers pointing at the car as a big contributor to global warming, the car industry is in defence and attack mode at the same time. Environmentally friendly, eco-friendly and other public relations phrases are popping up in nearly all news releases about cars these days. It stretches belief to accept words such as these about any device which burns fossil fuels in order to operate, but all self-respecting car manufacturers now have intensive research and development programmes – looking for ways to reduce the impact their vehicles have on the environment. Volvo recently announced a technical development which it says is another step towards the goal of a zero-emissions car... The catalytic-conversion technology in present Volvo cars already eliminates up to 95[%] of the hazardous emissions... To meet increasingly stringent future demands, however, petrol engines and emission control technology must be further refined.

...British chemists have developed... [a] new converter... which... uses palladium rather than the platinum, rhodium and palladium used in the current generation of catalysts... The similarity of the new device's design to existing ones should make it easier for vehicle manufacturers to switch to producing the new catalyst in future... [The] professor of electronic and mechanical engineering at Dundee University in Scotland... believes his brainchild will be in volume production within two years, with its simplicity and cheaper cost likely to boost interest from car producers. The new catalyst still has to prove that it can go on working for 160,000km, the life span that is now required for catalytic converters.

...[if you ignore Nissan's] somewhat less than stylish Stylish 6 concept, a three-row six-seater with a multitude of futuristic gizmos... its parallel hybrid motive system and high-tech interior are symbols of well-developed engineering. It couples a direct injection 2.5-litre development of Nissan's V6 VQ engine with an electric traction motor which becomes a generator under braking. Nissan says the combination not only cuts exhaust emissions but reduces fuel use by half. It expects to make further gains by using a thermoelectric cell to recover as electric energy heat normally released into the atmosphere as exhaust gas[('thermoelectric cells can also be used to recover the heat created while braking')]... • Nissan says 90[%] of all passenger cars are driven less than 70km a day and 90[%] of cars on weekdays have only one or two occupants. This strengthens the case for small mini-size vehicles and for multiple vehicle ownership.

...The Maia, a multi-use city car[, is]... perhaps... one Mitsubishi concept vehicle that [won't] make it into production... if only because of its ultra-boxy looks. But the Maia does not lack for good ideas. These include sliding and reclining seats which can be rotated around a central pivot, and with a variety of passenger/luggage configurations, as is more likely to be seen in a much larger MPV.

...The world's largest airship is to be built to carry 100 revellers to the Chatham Islands for the year 2000 dawn celebrations. Tickets are expected to sell for up to \$60,000. The airship, twice as large as a Boeing 747, will be built in South Africa, a London-based consortium, FirstLight 2000, said yesterday. Channel 7 in A[US] has won the contract to beam live photographs from the airship to A[US]n and N[Z] television audiences.

...THE BIGGEST thing to come out of Africa since the pyramids will astonish the world next year. A huge airship is taking shape in a hanger on the fringes of Johannesburg International Airport. The makers of the largest flying machine to be built since the fiery demise of the Hindenburg in 1937, plan a celebrity-packed transatlantic voyage from South Africa to New York in August 1998. Some 60 passengers will have the run of three decks – enjoying liner-quality cabins, restaurants... a piano cocktail bar and an unsurpassed view. "It will be cheap to run and very safe," said... [the] managing director of the Hamilton Airship Company. The maximum speed is 100 knots – Johannesburg to JFK in three days. The 132m craft, powered by three fuel-injected V-8 Chevrolet car engines uses non-flammable helium.

...The sequel to one of the most famous aviation failures of the 20th Century has been unveiled in Germany. The ZEPPELIN N.T., a 25 metre long craft, can carry 12 passengers and two pilots... The \$12 million... helium gas... craft will be used to carry tourists around the German Alps.

...NOT SO long ago motor shows were full of weird and wonderful "show" and "concept" cars which had as little to do with car-makers' production plans as politicians' promises have with legislative reality. Most could not be driven, either because they were simply clay models or because their futuristic curves hid no power train. The Tokyo Motor Show demonstrated how much times have changed, with almost all the

vehicles on show... having been developed sufficiently to be already roadworthy. Even the big surprise – or should that be giant surprise? – from Mercedes-Benz, the Maybach super-luxury limo, is reported to be headed for limited edition production from around 2001. The Maybach, named for the [person] who designed the Zeppelin and also a variety of distinguished cars early in the century, is apparently to be hand-built to customer specifications at a rate of about 100 a year... Power is from a high torque V12 of just under six litres... Although the Maybach is a gargantuan 5.77 metres long, the use of synthetic fibres for its rigid upper body helped cut its weight by 10%... In spite of its size, the Maybach boasts only four seats. Beneath the glass-covered roof, which can be controlled to make the light intensity suit the occupants, the plutocratic pair at the rear can lounge back in electrically adjustable seats in a splendour as yet unavailable in any production car... Comfort is assured by the active hydraulic suspension which does away with shock absorbers while compensating for roll during cornering, as does Citroen's current Xantia Activa.

...Chevrolet is showing off an "active handling chassis" Corvette. The new system will be available on all new Corvettes from next year. The handling system features sensors that can read steering inputs, vehicle yaw rates and lateral G forces. In an emergency, the system selectively activates the brakes to stabilise the vehicle.

...Computer chip maker Intel is developing special PCs for cars – not just to navigate but to read e-mail to drivers, browse the Internet... and entertain passengers with computer games. A 15cm screen runs images when the car is stopped but the computer switches to voice-only in motion.

...Jaguar is developing a voice recognition system for its 1999 mid-sized model, the X200. The system allows the driver to dial the phone, tune the radio, set the air-conditioning and open the boot... merely by saying the word... • The technology seemed exotic at the time: Secret agent James Bond attaching a tracking device to a baddie's car in the 1960s blockbuster movie *Goldfinger*. Even more improbable was Bond... following the progress of the villain's vehicle via an electronic map on the dashboard of his Aston Martin DB5. But Bond's ploy to catch Aurial Goldfinger... off-guard ended up a blind alley when the evil genius had the car crushed in a compactor. Today's global technology would have made Bond's task easier. All [Bond] would have needed was a notebook computer and software from [US] electronic company Roadtrac. The Georgia-based company has a system that tracks a vehicle by beaming signals to satellites. It was designed to help guide police, ambulance or fire engine drivers to emergencies. But now Roadtrac has software which lets private car owners track and monitor their own vehicles on computer. It is something Goldfinger would have had difficulty resisting. Had [Goldfinger] been a family [guy, the evil genius] could have kept tabs on his teenagers out in dad's car on a date. Or made sure his wife wasn't cheating on him with his partners in crime. More legitimate business[people] like fleet operators might want to know where their vehicles are at all times. A company like Telecom would have no more use for private eyes – it could just use the system to make sure its vehicles go where they are supposed to.

...The Government should consider teleworking as an option when it thinks about changing management of the \$23 billion roading network into a user-pays, profit-making business, says a Wellington consultant... a[nd] member of a panel advising the Minister for Information Technology... who is also Minister of Transport. Teleworking allows office workers to work from home or in groups in "telecentres" located in suburbs or remote areas of the country... [The consultant] said putting teleworking on the agenda would highlight alternatives to building more or bigger roads and putting more people into cars or shifting them into cities. Overseas a steady and quiet teleworking revolution was taking place as governments tried to shift cars off the road to reduce pollution and the cost of roading... Sometimes tax incentives were used to encourage the development of teleworking. "Growth in teleworking has been very slow in N[Z] compared to A[US], Britain, Japan, Ireland and the U[S] – and one reason is that the benefits of teleworking have not been officially recognised in this country... But I think people are starting to get angry about road congestion."

...Hundreds of years ago most people travelled no more than a few kilometres from their homes. Their communication was limited to family members and people from their village. In the early days of N[Z], newspaper reporters would row out to meet arriving sailing ships to buy a three-month-old English newspaper for the latest overseas news. It was a long time before roads and rail made it possible to get from place to place.

...Japan's magnetically levitated (maglev) train has broken the world speed record for a [hu]manned train clocking 451km/h on an experimental track west of Tokyo... [In further news from] Japan... Toyota's production Prius Hybrid car... goes on sale... on December 10. Export plans are still unknown while Toyota plots the car's progress on the domestic market. Prius is a stand-alone car which at 4275mm is 180mm longer than a five-door Corolla hatchback and sits on a longer 2550mm wheelbase. At 1515 kg, the dual-power vehicle is substantially heavier than a 1050 kg Corolla five-door... An in-line four cylinder, fuel injected twin over camshaft 1.5 litre petrol engine producing 43 kW... operates in conjunction with a 30 kW electric motor which uses 40 nickel-metal hydride batteries.

...Environmental vehicles... starred at the recent Tokyo international motor show... They included an electric Toyota RAV4 which costs twice as much as a petrol version... Nissan's Hypermini concept car is only 2500mm long and definitely a two-seater. It uses light lithium-ion batteries for the electric power, has a range of 130 km and a top speed of 100 km/h. Battery charging is simply a matter of inserting into a charging port a plastic paddle with built-in coil that generates a high frequency magnetic field. Nissan has developed its own parallel hybrid system which is mated with a continuously variable transmission. [As with the Stylish 6, a] thermoelectric power system recovers the thermal energy... in the exhaust gas. Mazda showed an electric Demio equipped with a dual power source combining an ultra-capacitor and nickel-hydrogen cells. These cells have twice the output density of a normal lead battery. Daihatsu's EV Move station wagon incorporates a 570cm³ auxiliary engine which starts up and generates power when the batteries run low.

...A low emission Honda engine will be available in the Asian region by the end of next year while a petrol-powered engine with almost zero emissions is being developed, claimed to pump out cleaner emissions from the exhaust than the air which entered the engine. This ZLEV... technology virtually eliminates hydrocarbon emissions, offers improved combustion during cold starts and is better during warm-up and normal temperature operation... [But] Honda believes that, ultimately, powering vehicles with hydrogen from a fuel cell with reformer offers the prospect of simultaneously solving the three major environmental challenges currently posed by the motor vehicle: Air pollution from exhaust gases, global warming due to carbon dioxide and depletion of fossil fuels. Realistically, it says that such an all-encompassing solution is not likely until 2020.

...The Government eventually can be expected to increase road-user charges and/or impose a tax on water vapour if BMW achieves its long-term plans. The German car-maker aims to have hydrogen-fuelled cars in mass production soon after 2020. The company says the ultimate goal is cars running on the gas extracted from water. Sure to be tax revenue or compensation claims in there somewhere.

...[A fuel cell is a small device which converts chemical energy into a direct electric current. Car batteries might be classified as fuel cells, but these use expensive fuels, such as lead and zinc. A true fuel cell should use a basic, chemically reactive fuel, such as hydrogen, coal, oil, or natural gas. The fuel cell is 75% effective. In the case of the steam TURBINE, the most efficient method of producing electricity today, only 40% of the chemical energy of the coal is transformed into electrical energy. The rest of the heat is lost in the intermediate conversions. The fuel cell bypasses the intermediate stages and converts chemical energy directly to electrical energy. The fuel cell is not a new idea. As early as 1839, Sir William Grove of England invented a chemical BATTERY which combined hydrogen and oxygen to produce water and electrical energy. However, the DYNAMO, which was just becoming widely used in the late nineteenth century, provided the quicker means of getting electricity to industry and the public. As a result, the fuel cell – which generates electricity without using heat engines or great water sources to run huge *dynamos* – was ignored as a source of electricity until recently.]

...[A fuel cell is like a battery, but better. It requires no overnight charging. It reverses the familiar high-school science experiment in which electricity is put through water to produce hydrogen and oxygen. One key advance has been a cheaper membrane, the heart of the fuel cell. The first membranes turned brittle and failed after 300 to 500 hours, not good enough for a commercial vehicle. However, a "third generation" membrane – developed by Ballard Power Systems – kept running for 10,000 hours.]

...A BREAKTHROUGH in the real-life use of fuel cell technology will see Daimler-Benz and Ballard Power Systems of Canada put up about \$600 million to produce the world's first volume production vehicle with a fuel cell engine. This follows the success of Daimler-Benz scientists in fitting its new small A-Class car with a methanol-powered fuel cell which produces its own electricity. This eliminates the need to use storage batteries and gives the car an almost emission-free range of around 400km from its 40-litre fuel tank. It also allows 90% of the system's power to be available within two seconds of pressing the accelerator, endowing the vehicle with drive dynamics which the German scientists say is equivalent to conventional petrol or diesel-powered cars. The latest fuel cell car – dubbed NECAR 3 for New Electric Car – and shown for the first time at the recent Frankfurt Motor Show, marks huge progress in the three years since NECAR 1 rolled out of the... laboratory with the fuel cell system housed in the back of a small van. NECAR 3... fills up with liquid methanol, which... is more efficient for hydrogen generation than petrol or diesel... [and] can be handled by filling stations as safely as petrol or diesel. The methanol is converted into hydrogen by water-vapor reformation... The hydrogen gas then feeds into the fuel cells, reacting with oxygen in the air to produce electrical energy to power the vehicle... The system avoids the high energy losses involved in the intermediate stage of heat generation in internal combustion engines... But it seems likely that when a production car is introduced, especially in the early stages, a multi-fuel approach may permit the use of different types of fuel.

...U[S] car maker Ford [– which 'is working on a hydrogen-powered internal combustion engine that it plans to begin road testing later' next year –] has joined Germany's Daimler-Benz AG and Canada-based Ballard Power Systems in efforts to develop fuel-cell technology... The firms said Ford would buy a 15[%] stake in Ballard... Daimler will reduce its stake in Ballard to 20[% from 25%] and also scale back its 66.6[% holding in the] joint-venture to make room for Ford, while retaining a majority. The alliance reaffirmed it wants to have fuel cell power trains available to support commercial use of fuel cell vehicles by 2004.

...“I sell here, Sir, what all the world desires to have. Power.” Matthew Boulton, the manufacturer who made James Watt's steam engine into an industrial tool, grasped the realities of the new industrial revolution from the beginning. For 100 years, the source of that power was coal. For almost another 100 it has been oil. But, as the revolution that Boulton helped to start enters its third century, it may be about to embrace a third fuel: hydrogen. The idea of a “hydrogen economy,” in which that light, combustible gas would be the main source of energy, has been around for several decades. It was dreamed up by people who wondered what would happen when the oil ran out. In the way of predictions about the future, those people tended to extrapolate from the present. Hydrogen... would be used in much the same way that petrol and its cousins are: burned in engines. That, however, is not going to happen. Instead, not only will the fuel change, so will the engines that it powers. The hydrogen economy will be a consequence not of the running out of oil, but of the development of the fuel cell – just as the oil economy was not a consequence of coal running out, but of the fact that the internal-combustion engine was a better technology than the steam engine. The... fuel cells do not even burn [hydrogen]; the reaction in a fuel cell has no flame, so noxious byproducts such as nitrogen oxides are impossible. [F]uel-cell-powered vehicles would thus, in the jargon, be “zero-emission” vehicles. They would therefore qualify for sale in places – particularly California – that are tiring of traffic-generated pollution and have passed laws intended to do something about it. It is fear of California's zero-emissions law that provided the initial spur to take fuel cells seriously. But they have a second environmental bonus. Not only are their emissions not noxious, they do not include carbon dioxide... This pain-free way of reducing CO₂ emissions should prove particularly welcome in America, where rhetoric and action on global warming seem heavily at odds with one another. Those working on fuel cells reckon that the technology has developed to the point where mass production would make fuel-cell power generators or car engines economical to manufacture, compared with conventional generators and engines. Thereafter they could find their place in the market... This is where governments could step in. If they wanted to pursue the public good of having clean air and less global warming, they could skew taxation so that what is put into fuel cells is cheaper than what goes into internal-combustion engines and thermal power stations, just as some countries now favour diesel over petrol... Ever since the industrial revolution began... the sources of power have been getting dirtier – from water and wind to coal and oil, with the questionable exception of nuclear fission. Easier to live with than nuclear power, hydrogen could be the first durable steps towards reversing that trend.

...Two Norwegian designers believe they have the solution to traffic congestion and related pollution. Claimed to be the first combined solar and wind-powered vehicle, their three-wheeled, open, aluminium-framed car is based on a principle similar to a motorised rickshaw... Its roof has three solar panels extending from the windscreen to a black wire sphere containing the windmill at the back... [E]lectricity from the sun and wind... charge[s a]... battery at the rear of the car... Dubbed the Butterfly, because butterflies spread their wings to warm up their bodies with solar energy before they can fly, its top speed is just 50 kph. The Butterfly can seat the driver and... three passengers.

...Is it a bird? ...Is it a plane? ...No, it's... hypercar! It gobbles up motorways on a spoonful of gas... [and] puts dollars back in your pocket at the caryard. This is no science fiction. The hypercar is already on the way, heralded by the release in California and Arizona of General Motors' EV-1 sleek electric coupe... So what is the hypercar? It is the son of ZEV, the acronym for the now unlikely 1990 Californian target of having 10[%] of its passenger car and truck fleet as “zero pollution vehicles” by the year 2003. To date, only electric cars... [– which, by the way, Switzerland now] has more than 2000... [of on its roads –] meet the requirement... But, says... [the] manager of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation's environmental research unit, even EV is not really ZEV: “...A power station supplies the electricity to recharge the batteries and, while its emissions may not always contribute to urban air pollution, it is still a substantial greenhouse gas emitter.” So California now talks about equivalent zero emission vehicles, which pump no more pollutants into the air than a power station would emit in recharging a battery-powered car. As well as electric cars, these include compressed natural gas-powered vehicles, and some “super-efficient” petrol vehicles. Enter the next generation hypercar, embracing advanced technology to reduce weight and energy losses, and small batteries and very small internal combustion engines. [The manager] says bodyweight is cut by... [up to 70%] by the use of synthetic composite materials, aerodynamic drag is reduced by... 80[%] through sleeker streamlining and more compact packaging, and tyre and road energy loss are trimmed by up to 80[%] with better tyres and lighter weight... There is also less need for power steering, power brakes and engine cooling, producing performance likely to... [deliver] better than... 1.6 litres/100 km... Similar potential... exists for larger vehicles... A Florida firm has tested composite delivery vans that weigh less loaded than empty normal steel vans, and has designed a bus half the normal weight, while other companies are experimenting with streamlined composite designs for... 18-wheeler... trucks. All these achieve roughly twice normal efficiency with conventional drivelines, and could redouble that with hybrids.

...an American visionary... believes... that the hypercar owner... will be able to make money from its fuel-cell's electricity-making capabilities. “Consider your hypercar as a 20kW power plant on wheels. It is... typically... parked 96[%] of the time... So, you would drive to your office and park where the electric or gas company had installed hydrogen and electricity inlets. While you sit at your desk, your fuel cell will send back power to the grid, which they pay you for.” [The visionary] says that if all of today's cars were replaced with hypercars, they could generate five times the generating capacity of the [US] national grid, eliminating the need for coal-fired or nuclear power stations... [Such vehicles are also capable of moving] along in a cone of silence (well almost)...

ANTI-MATTER in space, antibiotics at the hospital[, anti-dirt glass] – ...Nissan has developed the world's first self-cleaning door mirror... which uses a chemical coating to ward off dirt and grime... [–] and soon, anti-noise for the family car. Anti-noise for motor vehicles has been seriously talked about for only a few years, but already many millions of dollars have been spent on its development. In principle, it is simple: noise plus anti-noise equals silence. Yet the average motorist has no better idea of what it means than differential calculus. Nevertheless, anti-noise has already gone well beyond the sci-fi magazine headlines. In fact it is based on a phenomenon known as “destructive interference,” patented as far back as

the 1930s... [I]ts latest form [is] often called active noise control... Three things cause car noise in the main: its slipstream, powertrain (engine and gearbox) and the contact point between the tyres and the road. Whistling, rushing or hissing noises are usually caused by the slipstream acting on the A-pillars either side of the windscreen, the door seals and the exterior mirrors. Roof racks and sun-roofs can set up a fearful racket too. Whining doesn't just come from the children in the back seat – it can be set up by the gearbox or the drivetrain, and vibrations can transmit themselves to a car's occupants through the seats, the gearshift, the steering wheel and the door frames... Science has found a tidy way of describing this tuneless babble in the form of decibel measurements (noise) and frequency measurement in hertz (vibrations)... For 60 years... scientists have... [been manually] eliminating noise and vibration by a counter-vibration of the exact opposite frequency and amplitude... [but now m]icrophones positioned in the headliner of the car's roof could measure the noise and transfer the data to a computer which would calculate the required anti-noise. Through a sine generator or synthesiser, the mirror-inverted wave pattern would be played through the speakers of the car's stereo – effectively extinguishing the annoying noise... [However,] German car builder Opel believes noiseless cars are no more desirable than noisy ones. If the car is completely silent, says Opel, the driver has none of the important feedback needed to judge speed, engine revs, acceleration and deceleration, and the countless other messages a car sends its driver during a trip.

...Some who contemplate a motoring future involving electric cars might be dubious about their load-carrying capacity, acceleration and range... Some might even worry about such a car killing them by electric shock. There has been little or no such concern in Europe where companies are streaming ahead with electric power and where Peugeot is already selling a 106 Electric model. But the safety issue has surfaced in the U[S, where t]here has been enough concern to spur the International Centre for Technology Assessment[(ICTA)] to assess the electric vehicle (EV) to see if one day it might fatally jolt someone... Part of that concern stemmed from numerous “anti-EV” advertisements and paid editorials sponsored by some sectors of the oil and car industry... [● T]he daughter of land speed record holder Malcolm Campbell is selling part of the family silver to help finance her son's attempt to set a new record for the family. Next spring... Campbell's grandson, hopes to go faster than 370 km/h in an electric-powered car named Bluebird Electric. His mother... is selling a solid silver trophy presented to Malcolm... after [it] set the record at 484.4 km/h...

WIDESPREAD use of electric-powered cars would prevent thousands of deaths and injuries, and hundreds of millions of dollars of property damage each year, according to a new study. The report, released last month by the I[CTA], outlines nine of 11 categories where electric cars are considered safer than petrol-powered cars. The risks of a collision or an electric shock were judged to be about the same in either type of vehicle. But petrol-powered cars were more prone to fires, steam burns, heat burns, chemical burns, refuelling mishaps, rollovers, toxic fumes, noise pollution and manufacturing defects. For example, the danger of fire in a collision is substantially reduced because electric cars do not have a petrol tank or a reservoir of engine lubricating oil. And... electric cars... have no radiator... The Consumer Federation of America welcomed the new report... – [which was commissioned] because of criticism from opponents of electric vehicles... – ...[because] it “should lay to rest the rumours and misleading charges made by those... oppo[nents.” However, a spokesperson]... for the American Petroleum Institute, a trade organisation representing major oil companies, says the report does not change that organisation's position on electric cars.

...There's a new motorcycle for California commuters who are born to be mild: the Lectra. What is touted as the world's first electric motorcycle [recently] went on display at the mobile Harley-Davidson Museum. With a small profile, a sound like a golf cart, a top speed of 72km/h and a range of 50km between power charges, the Lectra does not exactly thrill Harley lovers. “What the hell would you want with an electric bike?” asked... a tattooed, ponytailed... 45[-year-old]... mechanic. “You need something that makes noise and vibrates.”

...the casual observer of Beijing's bustling traffic could be forgiven for deciding the *last* thing anyone would want to do is get out there on a bike. But don't let first impressions deceive you. Biking in Beijing is simple... [– t]he city is... as flat as a punctured tyre... and most of the major sights are within comfortable riding distance of each other... [–] especially if you keep the following in mind. First, in China, vehicles drive on the right side of the road. This generally applies to bicycles, but sometimes necessity is the mother of creative interpretation. Second, major roads are edged with cycle lanes. In these sanctuaries from the internal combustion engine, the *zixingche* reigns supreme and you can cruise with calm confidence. In contrast, intersections are less straight-forward, even those controlled by traffic lights. Interpreting traffic lights is a more subtle process than in N[Z]... cyclists seemed to have the attitude that they were here long before traffic lights, so the lights didn't really apply to them. At uncontrolled intersections, the simultaneous criss-crossing of all road-users is an exciting spectacle. This might sound off-putting or downright life-threatening to the average tourist, but it works amazingly well... Finally, one *crucial* piece of advice. Never do anything suddenly. *Never*. Always glide along eyes firmly ahead (with your peripheral vision working overtime) and hold your line. People anticipate where you are going. A sudden turn or braking causes confusion and accidents. Make changes gradually, preferably with lots of bell-ringing... The bell... is extremely useful for warning those up ahead of your approach, or those nearby of an impending turn or stop. No one ever appears to respond to this information, but there is some comfort in having made the effort to let them know... The [primary] issue of concern to the potential cyclist is safety... The great bike safety feature of modern times is the bike helmet. Helmets? For bikes? Are you kidding? We never saw one during two weeks in Beijing. Wearing a helmet will probably be a major distraction to other road users and therefore a positive hazard. Forget it... ● *Some hotels rent bikes but we used the public bike rental by the Beijing Hotel... Bikes cost about \$1 an hour, with a refundable deposit of about \$40 for old bikes and \$150 for new.*

...[a lower North Island town has 'painted 100 old bikes green which will be free to all' who want to borrow them. In related news, g]etting westies out of their cars and on to bikes is the aim of a new cycleway. The cycleway, between Waitakere and the CBD, was officially opened on Tuesday when the northwestern leg of the route was completed. The route avoids busy arterial roads and links with the existing Henderson to Waterview cycleway. Cyclists no longer have to venture out on main roads and can get a clear run into the central [city]... The next stage of the cycleway will be creating a safe route between Newton Rd and Upper Queen St. The Auckland City Council intends to complete this section in the next financial year... A 1996 N[Z] Census showed only 1.8[%] of workers cycle to work in Auckland and the... Council wants to change this... “It's a moment many of us have been waiting for, for many, many years,”... [Auckland's] Mayor... says. “Not only will it be a safe route, but it will be a scenic one as well.” The route provides better access... to Motat, Auckland Zoo, Western Springs Park and Western Springs Stadium... for cyclists and pedestrians...

NEW school pedestrian crossings will be trialled... in an attempt to improve road safety for pupils. Kea crossings will be installed on roads surrounding 36... schools [throughout NZ] in the coming weeks, as alternatives to the more traditional zebra crossings... The kea... crossings... have... L-shaped markings... painted on the road to show cars where they should stop[to allow pedestrians to cross, or to give way to on-coming traffic as it travels through the stretch of road between the L-shaped markings that is normally narrowed to a single lane (roads won't be narrowed for the trial kea crossings because they might be turned back into zebra crossings afterwards)]... “...ultimately, it will be up to roading authorities and communities to decide what is the most appropriate form of crossing for them,”... [Kea crossings] will be used only at peak times, such as before and after school, and revert to normal sections of road for the rest of the time. Motorists will be warned of the kea crossings by bright orange signs on each side of the road, which will be taken down when the crossings are not in use. The... idea came from a group of Christchurch parents concerned about pedestrian crossing safety, and was developed by a working party made up of police... the Land Transport Safety Authority... education, health and roading experts... [T]he LTSA's general manager of safer vehicles, roads and rail, said that while controlled pedestrian crossings were traditionally safe, there was always the potential for accidents. In the last 13 years there was an average of two crashes a year involving children at controlled crossings, compared with an average of 37 crashes at non-controlled crossings. “So while more children are injured or killed crossing roads in an uncontrolled way, like running out from behind a school bus, we have to make sure our pedestrian crossings are as

safe as they can be. Drivers act in a certain way towards traditional pedestrian crossings. They don't take so much care because the crossings are always there – but they're not always being used and drivers become blasé about them. Also, for pedestrians, there is a false sense of safety when they use zebra crossings because they think motorists will always stop, but sometimes [motorists] don't. There are peak demands for school... crossings and no need for them at other times, so these temporary kea crossings are the ideal alternative. Because they will only be used at peak times, motorists seeing signs indicating a kea crossing know they will be being used." [A Plunket spokesperson says 'children aren't able to properly cross roads until they are 8 years old.']

...A NAPIER city councillor haunted by the death of Teresa Cormack says... the city['s]... 90 alleyways... should be sealed off as a crime prevention measure to safeguard young children and the elderly... [T]he six-year-old... was abducted on her way to school, sexually violated, suffocated and buried in a shallow grave on Napier's Whirinaki Beach on June 19, 1987... [Her killer has never been found and hair] samples taken from the prime suspect... do not match strands found near... the... schoolgirl's body... One of the last sightings of Teresa put her in a walkway near her home... "Her death was horrific. I guess you can heal but you never forget... Maybe that's made me over-cautious but there are not many days in the year when I don't think about her." [The councillor] described alleyways as "an accident waiting to happen", claiming criminals preyed on people using them. They were also used as a getaway to avoid police... "The reason for alleyways was admirable but society has changed. Now I'd never advise anyone to use them, especially young children and the elderly." However, [the councillor's] views are at odds with the city's district plan which promotes the building of more alleyways. "The idea is to create more walkways in the city – the council would not want to close them down," said the council's road assets manager... [- even though three] alleyways have been closed by the Napier City Council in the past 18 months. A committee meeting last week considered whether to close another in the... suburb... where Teresa was last seen. Alleyways were usually closed after requests from adjacent residents unhappy with graffiti, noise and anti-social behaviour. If an alleyway closed, residents were expected to pay the council because the land is added to their properties, making them more valuable. - 1997

It's hardly surprising that people are walking less and less when you consider the life-threatening risks we pedestrians expose ourselves to each time we step out on the Queen's pavements – 28[%] of people killed on urban roads are pedestrians... Traffic lights are... just one of the perils of pedestrianism... My favourite is the one by Victoria Park which signals pedestrians across busy Beaumont St and then turns red when they are halfway across, encouraging impatient drivers to believe they have every right to plough through them. Between this intersection and the bridge flyover is an even more novel obstacle – two old trees with head-high branches stretching across much of the pavement. Across the road, the route is even more dangerous. The mouth of Franklin Rd where it hits Victoria St is the most perilous crossing in Auckland. With no marked crossing or lights, and with everyone's sightlines blocked by two massive flyover uprights, this is one scary spot... At times it feels like it's the pavements that should come with a health warning. As [a] Road Safety Trust researcher... says, pedestrians are the forgotten road users in N[Z]. After all, when did you last hear of Transit N[Z] or a city council building a pedestrian-way? Motorways and busways and cycle paths are no problem. But a pedestrian way? It's as though... walkers are something of an after-thought. Pedestrianism is a particularly fraught activity in the central business district at present. Pavements are under threat from competing telecommunications providers, each intent on wiring the downtown with their own individual, high-speed cable network. Combine that with Metrowater's ongoing pipe renovations, and it pays to keep your eyes wide open each time you step out. The surface scars being left behind are as rough and prominent as the ones early open-heart surgery patients used to show off afterwards. Outside the *Herald* office in Albert St we have a particularly nasty example. Here the scar is accentuated by being in black, while the surrounding paving is red. Council officials assure me that if red seal is still available – apparently there's some debate about whether anyone still makes it – the contractors will have to replace the black scar with red. As for any unevenness between the old and new seal, the city's rules state that this cannot exceed 5mm either way. Of course, we all know that whatever the rules, once a trench or a patch appears in a pavement, it's only a matter of time before a puddle or a stumbling point develops. We walkers know these things. That's why the patchwork of... lines and arrows now appearing on pristine footpaths is so depressing. This graffiti identifies existing underground wires and pipes, no doubt in preparation for new diggings.

...If you have had a fall in a public place – Waitakere City Council would like to hear from you. The Safe Waitakere Working Group is using information on falls and near-misses to help identify hazards and prevent future mishaps – and is especially interested in hearing from the City's older residents. Over the past year, 20 people over the age of 60 have reported falls to the Council. All had fallen on cement, asphalt or paving stones. Only one described the conditions as wet, while all others said they had tripped on uneven or broken surfaces. In N[Z], one in every three people over 65 will fall each year, says Safe Waitakere['s] spokesperson... "Falls often have a huge impact on quality of life, resulting in loss of self-confidence, loss of independence, restriction of activity, injury, or even death... For older people, most falls occur... in public places... while carrying out essential daily tasks, such as shopping. But most are preventable." [A] Massey resident and Working Group member... found himself calling the service recently after tripping over a broken piece of footpath while out walking his dog in West Harbour... suffer[ing] a broken arm... "I was walking quite quickly so I hit the ground at a fair rate of knots,"... The council has since repaired the West Harbour Rd footpath.

...Waitakere City Council's Roading and Traffic service manager... says a total of \$426,000 was spent on footpath and vehicle crossing repair last year, with most of the damage caused by cars and trucks. A further \$165,000 was spent on the mowing and maintenance of grass verges, which are also often damaged by vehicles. "The council enforces its bylaw in relation to footpaths and grass verges rigorously – and a majority of the public complaints received by the Parking Enforcement Section relate to this type of offence... As a result of this illegal parking, the council spends a considerable sum of money repairing damaged footpaths and grass verges – and the pipes beneath. This damage is definitely not caused by lawnmowers or pedestrians. Footpaths are intended for foot traffic only and are constructed as such." A \$40 fine can be issued for parking on either a footpath or a grass verge outside a property line. A vehicle will also be towed away if it is causing an obstruction – leaving the owner liable for up to \$100 in towing charges as well... [□ A] Waitakere City Council project is using Formpave pavers which are so porous they can suck up 20 l of water in an amazing 17 seconds... and treat it... The small amount of water that comes out the bottom doesn't pose a threat to the environment. This is the first time the pavers have been used in N[Z], although it is becoming commonplace in Britain... While the pavers are a little more expensive than normal materials, they save the large cost of stormwater systems... "They can have ten acres of carparking. With normal pavers the stormwater problems would be massive," says the council's... project manager for the Parrs Park development.

...The resealing of the Te Atatu RSA car park has upset a neighbouring kindergarten which has asked for more than 10 years that its car park be upgraded. The community facilities and recreation committee has allocated \$30,000 to reseat the RSA car park before a visit from [the PM]... next month. But Te Atatu Peninsula Kindergarten['s] head teacher... says their car park is in a worse condition than the RSA's... Their metalled, pot-holed car park needs to be sealed, [the head teacher] says... "There's not a week that goes by that someone is not complaining about it." ...the kindergarten can't afford to repair it and one of the parents has even offered to do the work if the resources are provided... But [Waitakere City's] parks manager... says they are legally required to maintain the car parks to their existing standards. This means they have to reseat the... RSA car park and keep the kindergarten's car park metalled. [The manager] says the kindergarten car park won't become a priority for a few years.

...As soon as... [the] Sergeant... saw the blood-spattered concrete and the little pair of shoes, [it was sure another child] had been killed. "Looking at the scene, I just expected her to be dead," says the Auckland police officer, as [it] recalls arriving in the driveway where the toddler had been run over by a reversing car... [The two-year-old] cheated death and escaped almost unharmed after... [being] pinned under the car for several minutes, a

feat which amazed medical staff and her family... "It makes you believe in things like guardian angels....," says her mum... [The mum] had been at work on 29 April when her sister... who looked after [the toddler while its mum] worked, phoned to say her only child had been run over by an elderly [guy] visiting the sleep-out at the back of her Auckland house. "When [my sister told me my little girl] had been run over, I thought [the driver]'d just bumped into her and [my baby]'d taken a nasty knock... As I came around the corner and saw the police cars and ambulance, I freaked out." [The toddler] had been pushing her doll's pram down the drive on the way to the shops while [her aunt] locked up when the car hit her. Feeling the bump, the 70-year-old driver got out and discovered [a toddler] face down with the rear wheel on her body. After raising the alarm, [the driver] backed the car off her torso but had to move it again as her arm was still trapped. [Her mum] arrived as they put [the] bleeding and swollen body in the ambulance. "...The blood vessels in her face had burst... They couldn't tell me how bad [the situation] was but I found out later even the ambulance officer thought [my baby] wasn't going to make it. I thought [my baby] was going to be brain damaged... I began thinking the worst." Doctors at the Starship children's hospital were stunned to find [the toddler] had no broken bones. Fearing... internal injuries, they sent [her] for a CAT scan but miraculously, tests showed... only... a lacerated liver and bruising. They monitored her in hospital for a week and further checkups have been clear. Now, three months later, [the girl]'s a happy and healthy toddler and shows no sign of her ordeal. "[My baby] doesn't remember any of it but I don't think [my baby is] too keen on hospitals anymore,"... Although relieved her daughter was not killed or seriously hurt, [the mum]... still finds it hard to understand how [her daughter] was run over and hopes her close call will serve as an important warning to all drivers. "Before this happened, I'd never really thought about the dangers of driveways. Now, everyone who knows me... is a lot more aware when they're going into driveways. People need to be a lot more careful." ...[the two-year-old's] miracle survival came in a week where two other Auckland children were killed in their driveways. There have been several other driveway... deaths in the past few years: ...*I May*... • A five-year-old... died in hospital from multiple injuries after... [being] run over outside a house in Mt Roskill... [The child had] been sitting on a skateboard in the driveway when a visitor drove up and didn't see her. *27 April*... • An Auckland [mother] killed her 16-month-old baby daughter as [the mother] backed down her drive. The toddler had just learned to walk and may have followed her mother on to the drive. *December 1997* • A two-year-old Northland boy died after... [being] run over by a truck on his family's property... *August 1995* • A 20-month-old girl was run over by a trailer in the driveway of her Invercargill home. When her father moved the trailer after unloading it, [the dad] discovered his daughter dead under the trailer's wheel. *October 1993* • A 17-month-old Tauranga boy died after... [being] hit by his father's ute as it was backed down the driveway. *March 1993* • A 15-month-old... run over by a car backing out of his Wiri home died of head injuries... [T]he Injury Prevention Research Centre in Auckland [says]: • One in five Auckland children killed or injured by cars are hit in their own driveway. • Children are three times more likely to be backed over in their drive when the play area is not fenced off from the driveway. • The risk is higher for children in homes where the driveway is shared. • Most children involved in driveway accidents are toddlers, with the peak age being two... Auckland organisation SafeKids says fatal and injury accidents involving driveways are increasing and about 30 children are hospitalised at Starship alone every year. "We're not sure why they're increasing but it's very concerning,"... Some of the possible reasons include the increase in infill housing which has made driveways busier and there are now more cars on the road... "We need to rethink how we design houses and sections. Most N[Z] homes have long driveways with the garage at the back of the house. Driveways are very tempting places for little children, they're a nice place to ride a trike or play... People need to... understand that children move very fast and are usually below your line of vision. It can happen in seconds and it's usually family members who are involved, which is heartbreaking."

...N[Z] has the world's worst rate for running children over in driveways, prompting one council to encourage residents to fence driveways off. A... Starship study... [of] driveway injuries involving Auckland children... showed the majority of accidents happened in Housing N[Z] properties.

...Every week a child is hospitalised in Auckland after being run over by a family member. A new education programme to try to reduce these accidents will be launched during Kidsafe Week, from October 18 to 25. A Starship Children's Hospital doctor says N[Z] has a very high incidence of children being injured in driveway accidents, with one in five victims admitted to intensive care. [The doctor] has studied 77 driveway accidents over four years, involving children admitted to Starship. During her study, five children died. Many had their skulls, arms and chests crushed. [The] Dr... found that most accidents occurred in low socio-economic areas... Most accidents involved vans, followed by four-wheel-drive vehicles. They tended to occur at 10am, or 5pm, in summer... People should consider safety issues before putting in driveways, [the doctor] says.

...Road safety won't be an alien idea for St Leonards Rd Primary pupils after a visit from a spacey new roadshow. Auntie M from the Planet Z [wa]s part of the Intergalactic Roadshow, showing children the dangers of cars on the road and how to cross the road safely. [A] Safe Routes to School facilitator... says the show will go to each of Kelston's six schools and around Waitakere before going nationwide. New road safety mascot Foxy will tour with the roadshow, after making his debut at St Leonards Rd. And [a] westie comedian... will explore road safety issues with high school students. To make the streets safer near the Kelston schools, they are to get a roundabout at the junction of St Leonards Rd and Archibald Rd. Waitakere City's road safety co-ordinator... says they're also designing colourful gateways to the area. "As people drive into the area from three directions they will be able to see immediately they are in a safe zone,"... A voluntary 40 kilometre an hour speed restriction will also be on trial when the gates go up before the start of the next school year. "Outside schools in Canada there are 30kmh speed restrictions around school throughout the day... What we want to encourage is parents and other road users to voluntarily drive slower and support the schools." St Leonards Rd Primary's principal... says the package of voluntary speed restrictions and other safety measures should go down well with parents.

...Funding could be a stumbling block as road safety campaigners... [and p]rincipals... push for... 40kmh... speed zones... outside and around... Waitakere City schools... The idea is backed by Waitakere City councillors, who believe it should be paid for by central Government. Meanwhile, the L[TSA] says councils should pay. The call for reduced speed limits coincides with a new road safety campaign being launched in Glen Eden to raise public awareness of child pedestrians. The Glen Eden Gateways project will see signs designed by children... put up at key points to let motorists know they are entering school zones. It is being co-ordinated by the Waitakere City Council in conjunction with schools.

...[last week] Waitakere's 52 primary and intermediate schools were given 20,000 road safety posters for students to take home. Each had tips on how to get to school more safely and a quiz on road safety around schools. It even had tips about how... Waitakere schools could get their own "walking" school bus driven by parents... A walking school bus is where parents pick up children at certain points on a route to school... [T]he children are supervised to the school gates, which are less congested by cars, and it gets children doing some exercise.

...Working mum finds walking beats bus A[n A]uckland mother... has given up taking the bus because, like thousands of others, [it] has been let down too often by Stagecoach... The multinational bus giant has cancelled more than 800 trips since March because it does not have enough drivers to meet its timetable, leading to fears it will have a bad effect on the push to get more people to use public transport. [The mother], who lives in Three Kings, used to rely on being able to catch any one of four afternoon buses over a 45-minute period in Symonds St to get home in time to meet her three young sons after school. But... after being let down at least once a week [the mother] now walked the 6km home from work at the Auckland University Medical School. "I have given up taking the bus because it's so unreliable... I can walk from the hospital area to Three Kings in 45 minutes... I constantly read articles in the *Herald*, *City Scene* and *Region Wide* telling Aucklanders how we must start using public transport. But how do you expect to get that result when the buses are so unreliable?" Stagecoach, called before the Auckland Regional Council's transport committee on Thursday to explain its problems, is... almost 70 drivers short. Last month alone the company – paid \$23.5 million a year to run subsidised services – missed 441 trips, including 55 on one Monday. [The] Campaign for Public Transport spokes[person, who has been] let down

himself by no-show buses, said the number of missed trips was “calamitous. Public confidence in public transport is fragile... Cars are consistent, and if public transport is not aiming to perform at the same level we are missing the boat with all the bus lanes and other initiatives councils are putting in.” Stagecoach NZ’s executive chairperson... said the company had been working hard to get more drivers. It had tried to borrow drivers from other Auckland companies, but they were too stretched for numbers to help. It had taken some from its Hutt Valley operation and was set to advertise in other centres, including Invercargill... for more drivers for Auckland. [The executive chairperson] said the company had got the number of missed trips down to five a day, but it would still take a couple of months to get enough drivers. [The executive chairperson] blamed the shortage on the... driver licensing regime, which... was taking too long to pass new drivers, and on resignations, which ran up to nine a week in March and April as drivers looked for other jobs around Auckland and overseas. Stagecoach has started its own training school... where novice bus drivers would be paid by the company while they were getting their licences. Many had been giving up because of the wait... “For us it is a disaster and we do apologise. It had us flummoxed...” ...[the ARC’s t]ransport director... said Stagecoach would not be paid for the subsidised services it[']d missed.

...There’s nothing like a non-showing bus to jaundice one’s view of public transport. You while away the long minutes dredging up bad experiences, like the time a month or so back when the half-empty bus sailed past, ignoring your little band of regulars. Repressed memories of missing buses during the last wage-round disputes suddenly surface. Then you start having dark thoughts about local politicians who preach the glories of bus travel from the convenience of their air-conditioned cars. Finally, after much watch-checking and fruitless gazing down the street, you take the gamble that the 9 am from Herne Bay is missing without trace and strike out on foot. The Stagecoach “customer support” phone robot tells me that while this was going on, “all services should be operating to their normal timetable. Any delays experienced will be caused by traffic or weather conditions.” There’s no place for discussion. I redial and discover how to find lost property, to become a bus driver or to charter a bus, then finally, “If you would like to make a commendation, complaint or general inquiry, press six.” ...button six cannot help and puts me through to [someone else], who feels “it should be all right at that time of the morning.” [Mr Someone Else] takes my number and says [it] will get back. By 6 pm Friday I have not heard back from him, or from... Stagecoach’s operations manager. Perhaps the latter was out driving buses, because if what [the]Tramways Union spokes[person]... tells me is even half true, it is a case of every staffer to the steering wheel at Stagecoach. In March, [the spokesperson] told me that Stagecoach’s complement of around 750 drivers was 50 to 60 short. [The operations director] responded to that by reorganising the bus fleet and claiming as a result that few if any services were being missed. [The spokesperson] now reckons Stagecoach could be as many as 100 drivers short. Whatever the exact number, the resultant cuts in service have generated enough complaints to spur the A[RC] into beginning spot checks on whether the services it is paying for are actually running... [T]he ARC transport manager... has told Stagecoach that “the council is pretty unhappy with the situation” and “is very keen that they [b]e able to make some positive changes before too long.” [The transport manager] is worried that all the good work done by the ARC and the Auckland City Council in improving the major isthmus bus routes is in danger of being undone. “I’m a bus user on those routes as well and I’ve had a few full buses go past me and other people standing at the stop. You can see by the body language that they are not too impressed.” Now in other parts of the economy where there is a labour shortage, be it in the field of television newsreaders or of Y2K computer expertise, the answer has been to attract staff with better pay and conditions. Something to do with the free market and all that. Nothing like that has been forthcoming on the buses. If anything, the reverse has applied. According to [the spokesperson], for the past year the bus company has taken new drivers on only as part-timers, to gain more flexibility in their use. Even for fulltimers, the practice of broken shifts can make hours long. Under their contract, drivers can be brought in to work in the morning rush hour then stood down on no pay for some hours before being reactivated on pay for the afternoon or evening. Around 70[%] of drivers do these broken shifts, the reward for which is an extra \$3.50 a day. A driver’s hourly rate is \$12.44. These days there is plenty of overtime at time-and-a-half. But taken at the end of a split shift it makes for a very long day. For drivers, it is obviously less than attractive. [Their union asks: ‘Would you like your 8 hours to be spread over 14 hours with 3 or 4 unpaid breaks’ – especially if you are also required to ‘take your statutory breaks whenever possible, like while you are parked at the end of routes, where toilets and other facilities are often unavailable’?] If we want to attract passengers to public transport we are going to have to provide a reliable and regular service. For that, we will need enough safe and willing drivers. Why should anyone leave their cars at home for less?

...Waiting at the bus stop this morning to embark on a 15-minute journey to Auckland University, I became aware of exactly how inefficient our public bus service is. Arriving at the bus stop at 7.35, I left myself plenty of time to spare, knowing at least one of the morning buses would be too full to take on passengers. I was, however, unprepared to find myself trying in vain to flag down a total of five buses, all too full to pick up even one passenger. Finally a bus stopped at 7.50am but only I and one [other person] were lucky enough to squeeze on, leaving eight unhappy would-be passengers behind. As we pulled away another bus, this one stating “Limited Stop Only”, whisked past the bus stop and on its way (I would love to know which bus stops are included in this “limited stop” – it seems to vary). On the way to university, standing all the way (I have resigned myself that I may never sit on the bus again), I counted no fewer than 20 people waiting in vain at various bus stops for a bus with room to arrive.

...WHAT kind of snow job is [the]Stagecoach boss... attempting to perform on *Herald* readers? His letter to the editor... was full of numbers of new buses and percentages of passenger growth and [\$]s spent, which all adds up to absolutely nothing for the would-be passenger waiting on the footpath in the hope of being allowed to pay for the privilege of standing in the aisle of an overcrowded bus stuck in Auckland traffic. Two figures that did stand out in his letter were: 40,000 extra passengers being carried each day, and what has Stagecoach done about it? 4000 extra seats.

...Relief may be in sight for drivers making the twice daily crawl along the northwestern motorway. The Government has announced it could double funding for public transport. T[he T]ransport Minister... says Transfund’s \$46.2 million cap for public transport will be removed and up to \$51m additional funding will be available over the next three years... [The ARC] says the news is encouraging for west Auckland commuters.

...Waitakere commuters who rely on bus transport will have a better chance of getting to work on time from Monday morning. The A[RC] and Transfund are jointly funding an extra 98 bus trips per day between Waitakere City and Auckland City. An extra 66 trips are also running between Henderson and New Lynn on route 224. The route connects to Mt Albert and central Auckland and includes stops at New North Rd and Sandringham Rd. [The ARC’s] passenger transport committee chair[person]... says the changes make a bus available every five to 10 minutes during peak hour along New North Rd. “Weekend services have also been extended with an extra 43 trips on Saturday and 26 on Sunday... We know from the popular success of services along Dominion Rd and Mt Eden Rd that people will use buses when they are reliable, good quality and, most important, frequent. There is a 26[%] increase in patronage on these routes and I am confident the right package of services and infrastructure improvements will see similar patronage grow for Waitakere routes,”... The annual cost of the new services will be about \$990,000.

...If the buses through Avondale and Blockhouse Bay aren’t going your way, now’s the time to speak out... \$1.8 million is being made available through the annual plan to improve bus routes across the region... [An ARC] councillor... told the Avondale Community Board last Wednesday that the suburb is at the disadvantage of being between Waitakere and Auckland cities, with many bus services passing through... [but only going] down... Great North and New North Rds... [The board’s chairperson] says any improved services in Avondale would be put to good use, as it has one of the highest ratios of pensioner housing and bus users in the city. The board will look into paying for leaflet drops, posters in bus shelters and canvassing community groups to get people to come up with ideas.

...New bus shelters with integrated phone booths, rubbish bins and kiosks may soon be on the way to Waitakere City – and they won’t cost ratepayers or the council a thing! because [the] Waitakere City Council is looking at a... deal with advertising agency Adshel N[Z] Ltd to provide a variety of street furniture centred on bus shelters. It will also receive a share of the revenue Adshel makes from advertising. The contract will be

worth \$8.1 million to the council... Adshel already has deals with eight councils around the country and under the contract with Waitakere City will provide a minimum of 70 new shelters. There are about 1000 bus stops in Waitakere City and just under 300 have shelters. About 20 are [already] provided by Adshel, which... is responsible for installing, cleaning, maintaining and removing any graffiti. "The real savings to council are the cost of maintenance," says... [Waitakere's] roading and traffic manager... "People unfortunately kick them apart and graffiti gets all over them. We still have other shelters of our own that we need to maintain." The council can choose its own designs and accompanying furniture such as bicycle stands or water fountains... [The manager believes] the city needs bigger, more comfortable shelters that give protection from the weather.

...In South Auckland they don't want psychiatric halfway houses next door. In the Waikato they have an antipathy towards dumps for Auckland's rubbish. In upmarket Herne Bay, it's a bus stop. Apparently there is something about buses idling on the pavement outside that makes householders not just uneasy, but downright cantankerous. Since time immemorial, the bus to genteel Herne Bay has made its final outward stop on the south side of Jervois Rd, opposite the intersection with Herne Bay Rd. Then, after a suitable rest to meet timetabling requirements, it would swing around to pick up passengers waiting under the shop veranda on the other side of the street, before trundling back into town. This little ritual seems to have come to an end five years ago when, according to [a] local retiree and bus-user... some of the shopkeepers, sick of the fumes and noise swirling into their businesses, cried "enough." And who can really blame them? Public transport enthusiasts try to seduce us with visions of buses as curvaceous, sexy, noiseless transporters of delight, full of smiling, well-dressed, beautiful people. The reality is they're fume-belching, ear-battering machines carrying, in conditions of marginal comfort, people who on the whole would travel by car if they could. Anyway, back at the Herne Bay terminus, the shopkeepers, led by their landlord, managed to persuade the reluctant Auckland City Council to move the bus-stop a few metres along the footpath to outside a house. Disgruntled passengers were mollified by the offer of a shelter to replace the lost verandah. They are still waiting. A year or so back, change was again in the air. The shops were gutted and out of their shell emerged three small apartments. Enter the proud new residents. With their street walls hard up against the pavement, they were soon to discover the joys of living next to a bus-stop... Instead of coastal bird song, street noises echoed through their homes, accompanied by the scent of diesel exhaust fumes. Particularly put out was the person living nearest to the bus-stop, who persuaded the council to take the drastic action of abolishing it altogether – a bus-stop that the council's principal transport planner... conceded was well-used. [A] bring-back-the-bus-stop campaigner... says the first commuters knew of the change was when they arrived at the old stop to see a notice on the lamppost telling them that from September 28 [last year], it would be no more. Passengers would have to walk up the road half a kilometre to the bus-stop alongside the Bayfield School playgrounds... [The principal transport planner] did offer travellers the option of crossing the road and boarding the bus at the traditional off-loading point on the south side. The protesters concede such an offer was made but say that to force the elderly and the young, who make up a fair proportion of the passengers, to cross the busy and wide road would be to imperil their lives. And why should they have to anyway when the vast majority live on the northern side? Even if this was an acceptable alternative for the consumers, the householders on the south side let it be known that they were against the terminus shifting to their side of the road. The crisis has festered for... months. Petitions and circular letters have circulated. Councillors, the Stagecoach bus company and the regulators, the A[RC], have been lobbied. Tomorrow, finally, all the above parties will have an on-site meeting to try to resolve the problems. Meanwhile, a touch of sanity seems to have slipped into the proceedings. Yesterday morning on a quick tour of the battle scene, I spotted a bus at the non-bus-stop picking up a customer... [On a positive note, s]enior citizens can ride... Stagecoach buses for \$1... between 9am and 3pm... every Monday [throughout next month]. At present a senior citizen's one-way cash bus fare can cost as little as 30 cents (the lower fare will be charged if appropriate), rising to \$4.70 for the longest journey... A valid A[RC] senior citizens' ID card must be produced each time the fare is requested.

...Auckland City Council officials want to introduce a free shuttle bus service between downtown Auckland and Newmarket. They are also keen to extend the free-fares concept to the entire inner-city Link bus service in a bid to cut road congestion and pollution... The Link service... now carries more than 2 million passengers a year... [M]aking the... service free would probably double patronage... The council's principal transport planner... said the shuttle service would use distinctive electric-powered vehicles to act as a "flagship" for an imaginative and environmentally friendly regional public transport system... A Heart of the City spokes[person]... said the business group had looked at running a free bus service several years ago [to replace the former free Farmers' bus,] but it did not have the financial muscle. "We would like to work on this new proposal... [and] may even be in a position to tip a bit of money into it." ...But the region's public transport manager, the A[RC], and... Stagecoach, are wary of the proposal... Stagecoach Auckland's marketing executive... said... "You have to ask what it is you are trying to achieve... to move [more] people... or get people to experience more of the city?" ...Meanwhile... Stagecoach is reinforcing drivers' right to turn down passengers who look "dangerous", after... [four] violent robberies... on buses in south Auckland... in... recent [weeks]... One driver was hit on the head with a beer bottle, and a passenger who tried to help a [gal] driver during a robbery required stitches to his head... Stagecoach's Auckland manager of operations... says there are no written rules... [for] its policy of allowing... drivers... to "use their best judgment" to turn away passengers "who drivers feel would be a danger to them and other passengers"... but denies the atmosphere of fear created by the recent robberies will impair drivers' judgment. "Generally you see passengers and are able to access their attitude, demeanour and mannerisms." ...Stagecoach has also increased security on its south Auckland bus routes. The company will now complement its existing on-call security by placing uniformed and plain-clothes guards on some of its buses... However, [the manager] cannot confirm which routes these are and says they will change periodically, but did confirm that... there is a "whole raft" of criteria governing who drivers do not have to pick up. "If someone's in a dirty condition, carrying flammable goods or carrying animals other than a guide dog, we don't have to let them on,"... [A]ll the drivers involved in... [the] attacks are back at work...

An edgy bus driver's husband is riding shotgun on his wife's late night shifts to keep her safe. Drivers say drunk and abusive teenagers are making life a misery every time they stop at the New Lynn bus depot. [The wife]... says the situation has become increasingly dire because radios on many of the Stagecoach buses are either broken or faulty. Broken radios are becoming such a problem that Stagecoach fleet staff are suggesting they've been sabotaged. Radios inspected by maintenance workers at the Swanson depot have been found with their wires cut or missing altogether. [The wife] has been a Stagecoach driver for two-and-a-half-years... [The wife] starts in the afternoon and works through to 1... am. On nearly every shift [the driver] deals with drunken and abusive teens smuggling alcohol onto the bus or lighting up cigarettes during the ride. The situation has got so severe that [the wife] is trying to change her shifts. In the meantime her retired husband travels with her at night for added security... "If [my husband sees anything it] rings the bell and I stop the bus,"... Last month [the driver] watched a mentally disabled [person] being attacked and mugged by two youths at the New Lynn terminal. [The driver] tried to call her supervisor on the RT radio only to find it was broken. Two... bus inspectors instead chased the muggers on foot but failed to catch them. [The wife] has spoken to management at Stagecoach's Swanson depot about issuing drivers with cellphones. The suggestion was dismissed by management who say the practice was trialed in Wellington but canned because drivers made too many personal calls. But this is not good enough for [the wife] who has complained to her depot manager... "Why can't we sign for one and hand it back at the end of our shift? If I need help in a hurry and my RT's not working then I'm up the creek without a paddle,"... [The] manager of the Swanson depot, refused to comment... [but] directed *West Weekly* inquiries to Stagecoach's operations director... who says... it is the responsibility of drivers to check radios before they head out of the depot. On July 3, *West Weekly* reported that troublesome teens at New Lynn bus terminal were keeping local police and businesses busy. The spot had become a place for teens to meet – fights were a drawcard... Police said they were getting a handle on the situation... [■] West Auckland is now served by a Flexi Route... [a]t night... After the corner of Gt North Rd & View Rd on outward trips from Downtown, passengers are able to request the bus to go to any through road within 400

metres of the normal bus route. Please check with your Driver that the bus can go where you want to go. The bus [– which has the route number 140, and leaves downtown at 10.30 and 11.30 pm Monday-Saturday, 8.30 and 10.30 pm Sunday –]will always travel past the bus stop at Henderson Shops.

...‘Night Rider’ is now part of the Auckland scene. We’re not talking about “Kitt”, a sleek black car with artificial intelligence that starred in the 80s TV show Knight Rider. But public transport just got a lot smarter with the launch of bus services after midnight to most suburbs on Friday and Saturday nights. The bus will leave the Auckland CBD at 1am, 2am and 3am, at a cost of \$4 per stage. Taking the lead from its successful Wellington counterpart, the new Stagecoach service starts this Friday... The... ARC... is paying for the service on a trial basis for two years with financial assistance from Transfund’s ‘Kick-Start’ funding scheme... “Provision of the after-midnight services will provide a cost-effective alternative to taxis for many who might otherwise choose to take the risk of driving after drinking,” says [the]ARC transport committee...

Night run comes to end... Night rider bus services to West Auckland will be canned [next month] – because nobody is using them. The bus service was started... last month... to meet demand for late night transport. However, a review by the A[RC] and Stagecoach... found demand had slipped in all of the... five Auckland regions... Under [the]changes... West Auckland will lose two of their three bus routes... Stagecoach Auckland[’s spokesperson] says the service probably suffered because people didn’t want to change buses at the New Lynn depot late at night. “People don’t like to transfer on any service, it just adds uncertainty to their trip,”... [The ARC] public transport planning co-ordinator, says the service was costing the council too much money. Passengers paid \$6 for the ride, but with patronage so low the ARC was left with a \$25.80 per passenger shortfall.

...A revamp of routes and timetables for the... Night Rider buses takes effect this month, following concerns the service was going to be scrapped or cut-back... West Auckland... lost two night services... [– t]he remaining... services cover New Lynn and Henderson and leave Auckland City at 1.30am and 3am... [–] because the ARC was being left with a \$25.80... shortfall. However, the North Shore has seen a steady demand for the service.

...A safety device disconnected from Auckland’s Stagecoach buses might have saved a [North Shore]schoolboy who was dragged to his death on Wednesday... Browns Bay 12-year-old Matthew Scott Taylor’s bag caught in the rear bifolding door of a “bendy” bus as it moved away from a stop. [Matthew] was dragged under the wheels and police are investigating if a lack of a door sensor played a role in his death. [The Tramway Union’s] president... believes Matthew’s death was avoidable. “If there had been a sensor on the bus... then the door would have bounced back open and the boy would not have been caught in the doorway. Over and above the sensor, I believe there should be a warning device which tells the driver whether the doors are closed or not.” ...The Tramway Union... blames cost-cutting by former operator the Auckland Regional Authority. However, Stagecoach, the company that now runs 560 of Auckland’s buses, says operational problems were to blame... Stagecoach[’s] operations manager... said last night that the sensors were disconnected because they were “relatively crude” devices which often malfunctioned. Strong winds would sometimes cause the bus doors to open during a trip and, because they were linked to the accelerator, the bus would slow. “The reason wasn’t to save money... At the time there wasn’t any adequate solution.” ...[the operations manager also said] the union’s claim that a door sensor might have saved Matthew... [was] a little bit premature... [T]he company was carrying out a broad passenger safety investigation and... Stagecoach’s buses fell within passenger transport rules. Door sensors are optional under passenger vehicle construction regulations. The rules, written in 1978[– before the introduction of bendy buses to Auckland’s roads –] state that bus doors which jack-knife or glide open must have either a 10cm gap between the door and doorway filled by some sort of pliable material so that a limb can be pulled out, or a sensor fitted.

...A... bus driver asked... a supervisor if [it] could take the rest of the day off... after swiping a car at an intersection, but was apparently... ordered... by a more senior manager... to work on... [S]ix hours later, the driver was at the wheel of a “bendy” bus when... Matthew Scott Taylor’s bag caught in the rear door as the vehicle moved away from a bus stop, dragging the boy to his death. [But] the Stagecoach operations manager... says the driver did not ask his area manager for time off. Only the area manager can approve such requests. The company says it would not act in a way that put its passengers and drivers at risk. The 51-year-old driver is on special leave... No charges have been laid against the driver and police may yet refer the case to legal advisers... The driver is not a union member but the Auckland Tramways Union said it knew of several cases where staff had been pressed to keep working despite asking for time off... While [the] death is understood to be the first of its kind in N[Z], there have been numerous less serious accidents, including a 13-year-old... who fell and broke his arm while getting off a moving bus just two weeks earlier.

...Stagecoach tried to stop its drivers being told of a union safety scheme to prevent children leaving through the rear doors of buses. Depot managers were told by the bus giant’s Auckland head office to ask Tramways Union delegates not to display a notice requesting drivers to let children off only through the front doors on school runs. The union drive came after a spate of accidents, including the death of 12-year-old Matthew Taylor last month... [The union’s] president... said allowing schoolchildren only through the front door meant that drivers could make sure everybody had got off the bus before they drove off. The union attacked the company’s stance yesterday, but Stagecoach[’s spokesperson]n... said management only wanted the scheme delayed until a meeting between the sides next week... Stagecoach believed it would cause confusion because the message was addressed only to union members instead of all drivers and had not been endorsed by the management.

...A North Shore family’s grief turned to anger yesterday as the Stagecoach driver who fatally ran over their son was sentenced to four months’ periodic detention... “We just wanted him to hurt. We wanted him to suffer in some way because [the driver] just doesn’t appear to have done so,”... [The driver], aged 51, was last month found guilty in the Auckland District Court of careless driving causing death and failing to stop after an accident... [The driver] faced a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment for failing to stop, and three months for careless use. As well as the periodic detention, [the driver was] disqualified... from driving for 12 months, and ordered... to pay \$2476 towards Matthew’s headstone. [Matthew’s mother said it had wanted the driver] to go to prison. “I’m extremely disappointed because I don’t think the sentence will be a hardship for him at all.” A restorative justice conference had been proposed for the... families to reconcile, but after yesterday’s sentencing [Matthew’s mother said it] no longer wished to take part... The [mother] did not believe [the driver] was remorseful, but [the judge accepted the driver] had not apologised because of legal advice... The suitability of bendy buses for transporting schoolchildren was questioned by defence lawyer[s]... It was almost impossible for drivers to keep an eye on up to 80 children, and paid bus monitors could be an option, [the defence said. Stagecoach’s executive chairperso]n... said safety had been improved, and the company would reassess the suitability of bendy buses on school bus routes in light of the comments made. Although [the 51-year-old] had been on unpaid leave since the accident and had now lost his driver’s licence, [the executive chairperson] said Stagecoach – as a responsible employer – would look at what other jobs [the 51-year-old] could do with the company.

...School wants bus issue resolved Students are still waiting for a safer bus route in Kelston as Stagecoach has never fronted up to a meeting with school heads. Kelston Girls High School approached Stagecoach... earlier in the year about changing its school drop-off point from the heavily-congested Archibald Rd, to the school’s back entrance. The danger to students from the traffic “deathtrap” was outlined in the *Waitakere Week* on August 25. Stagecoach’s top brass from Wellington were due to... meet with the school and take a bus around the proposed route... This meeting was cancelled because of the Stagecoach bus drivers strike and the company has never rescheduled. “They said they’d get back to us but they never did,” says [the]principal... “We’re exactly where we were. We’re no further with getting the new entrance up and running.” The school has spent a \$10,000 Ministry of Education grant on upgrading the back entrance to accommodate buses. This development has now stood idle for half this year. While the Ministry, Waitakere City Council and other Kelston schools are in favour of the plan Stagecoach has yet to come to the party.

...We don’t want [AUS’s PM] to just hear about your problems, we want him to experience them, too. So, this week, [a]12-year-old... made [the PM an offer it] couldn’t refuse... *Dear [PM]... I go to North Sydney Girls’ High School. Every day, I have to travel by bus for an hour and a half to get to school, and the same distance back. Because there are no trains in this area, the buses are always overcrowded. I can never find a seat and have to*

stand all the way, laden down with heavy books. All the children are crammed in like battery hens, with barely enough space to breathe, let alone move, and by the time I get to school I'm exhausted. Politicians always encourage people to leave their cars at home and use public transport. But that's easy for them to say when they get chauffeured about in air-conditioned limos all day. Why don't you travel with me and my friends on the school bus and see what it's really like? ...[here's a selection of letters on the same issue: ♣ My daughter... is only 12. [Because it is tiny, it] gets really crushed on the school bus. Sometimes [it] comes home in tears. 'The bigger kids can push past, but I always get trampled and squashed,'... Does a child have to get injured or worse before people sit up and take notice? It's just an accident waiting to happen... [♣ My two kids, [aged] 16, and... 18, have been travelling on school buses for years, so they have literally grown used to the... shoving and overcrowding. I have tried for years to get something done to improve the bus services, because I don't see why children should have to put up with it. Adults certainly wouldn't... [♣ My son... contracted glandular fever when... [aged] 14, and travelling on the buses completely wiped him out. [My son] was recovering from his illness, yet... still couldn't find a seat... I complained numerous times to the bus company but nothing was done. It's been an exhausting situation for him – and me! ...[♣ My 14-year-old... has been travelling to and from school on the bus for four years now, and... always comes home exhausted. [My son] always moans about the overcrowding and, because all the kids are so packed in and hot, scuffles inevitably break out. One mum has given up mending her son's shirt, it gets ripped so often. I've written to the bus company and... government, but they just say there's no money for extra buses. I guess in the general pecking order, school kids come pretty low, but... I hate seeing my son dread his journey to school. I want to help him, but what can I do?

...Angry thousands stranded in winter blunderland... [A couple] left Cambridgeshire for an hour-long journey home to... a town in Leicestershire, last Thursday night. Seventeen hours later they were still in the car, and they hadn't even left the boundary of Cambridge... Similar tales of frustrations were shared all over southeast England over the weekend. Police compared the worst-affected stretch of motorway, 27km of the M11 between Cambridge and London, to a carpark, after 12 lorries jack-knifed on ice, trapping thousands of motorists at rush hour. Police, who said it was London's worst transport disruption in a decade, dispatched a helicopter to drop food parcels... The misery was duplicated nationwide... The transport paralysis intensified frustrations for commuters, especially in London, where one of the main Underground lines, which usually carries... 500,000 passengers a day, is closed indefinitely for repairs after a train derailed... at Chancery Lane... injuring 32 people. And intermittent firefighters' strikes are forcing the closure of dozens of stations with elevators for safety. The freeze came in a month when it was announced that a long-promised railways upgrade was to be scaled back because of spiralling costs. More than 100 daily train trips are to be cancelled... With the public transport system in chaos, London is weeks away from being the first city in the world to introduce an elaborate and controversial charge system for people driving in central London... The... £5... charge is being dubbed the biggest upheaval in civilian life since World War 2.

...Drive is on to make motoring impossible... Sweeping changes are about to be taken throughout Britain to make motoring increasingly untenable and force millions of people out of their cars and on to public transport. As more than 23 million took to their cars this weekend, transport chiefs unveiled the unprecedented crackdown on private vehicles in a series of schemes to drive people off the roads. In 50 towns and cities, from Edinburgh in Scotland to Exeter on the English south coast, bus drivers will be issued with remote controls to change traffic lights to green... and will be permitted to stop in the middle of the road, preventing motorists passing. Thousands of new bus lanes will be introduced... [T]he pro-car British Drivers Association, said that the increase in speed cameras, traffic "calming" bumps, bus priority measures and the move towards congestion-charging in London and other cities added up to a concerted war against the car. It was backed with Government support in the form of extra grants for councils tackling congestion by giving buses priority. The initiatives are a desperate measure to curb the increasing congestion that is throttling British cities. Until now the Government has tried to discourage car use by imposing higher duty on petrol, but that has done nothing to combat car use in cities. The cost of motoring is the same as 25 years ago while bus fares have increased by 80[%]. Car drivers in large urban areas spend a third of their time driving at below 5 mph... and journeys are getting slower. In the past five years, speed of peak rush-hour traffic has fallen by about 20[%]. The Confederation of British Industry reckons that traffic congestion costs the British economy \$56.8 billion a year. The Government estimates that traffic is set to rise by a fifth in the next 10 years, making it one of the fastest-growing sources of pollution. Curbing car use and increasing the use of public transport is a central plank in the Government's plans to meet its targets in reducing greenhouse gas emissions... [♣] Auckland's transport... planners... warn... a wholesale switch from cars to public transport is not only inevitable but imminent.

...A \$100-million public transport plan for tunnels under Albert Park and the Domain has been launched. The tunnels would be part of a rapid transit system linking the employment centres of Newmarket, Auckland Hospital and Auckland University with the central business district. The... "Proposed Central Area Rapid Transit System" would run from the yet-to-be-built downtown Britomart transport centre and up Queen St and Wellesley St before heading underneath Albert Park to an underground university station. After crossing Grafton Gully, it would go under the Domain before stopping at a hospital station. It would head across to Newmarket, linking with the existing rail line near Khyber Pass Rd. Although tunnels were built under Albert Park... [during WW2], the project would require a new underground route... The system's designers are not saying whether light rail or buses would use the tunnels... The central city system is an important part of a regional plan to build public transport "corridors" across Auckland. This masterplan, expected to cost hundreds of millions of dollars, will be publicly launched early next month.

...Auckland City councillors are under pressure to pour millions more ratepayer dollars into the \$220 million Britomart... project. Sources have told the [N/Z] Herald that councillors will have three options on the table when they discuss Britomart today – and they all involve spending more money. Two of the options involve cash payments to the developer[s]... It is understood the developers were upset after councillors voted 9-8 in May to turn down requests from the financier for a \$15 million top-up for long delays and cost increases, and are adamant the council must stump up with millions of dollars more in cash. Of late, the council has decided to spend another \$5 million on changes to Britomart and another \$6 million towards the rail tunnel leading into the underground transport centre... A spokes[person] for Rethink Britomart... said the council was being pushed into paying for unspecified expenses on a project that had not started and did not have final resource consents. The Property Council national director... was a[ls]o a[ll]armed... "Adding another \$15 million to the current level of ratepayers' exposure is unacceptable, particularly when we were told this is a fixed-price contract. The time has come for the council to stop pouring ratepayers' money into an ill-conceived project."

...Changes to the Britomart project will allow thousands of tonnes of polluted stormwater to be treated on land before being flushed into the Waitemata Harbour... [A] large settling tank... will [b]e... built underground to recover much of the central city's stormwater solids before the stormwater is discharged beside Captain Cook Wharf... Moving the bus terminal from the second underground floor has created space under the Quay St east underpass to build the settling tank[, which]... will be 110m long, 20m wide and 3m deep and provide capacity for 6600 cu m of water... The Auckland City Council has approved a \$7 million plan to divert stormwater around Britomart and through the settling tank. [One c]ouncillor said the tank was a big environmental plus, but... was unconvinced it was the best method of removing toxic sediments... [The councillor] would look at other methods which might improve on... the recover[y]... of stormwater solids before discharge into the harbour. "It sounds good but it still means 35[%] of solids are going into the harbour." ...After recovering 65[%] of stormwater solids on land by dredging or vacuuming the tanks, the council will dredge the seabed every 20 years to recover a further 20[%] of toxic sediments.

...Tape recordings tracing the history of Britomart since its inception may be destroyed to protect the privacy of Auckland City councillors. The council is seeking legal advice on whether the tapes can be kept or whether councillors can expunge the only indisputable record of their dealings with the controversial project. The... Auckland City historian... is furious at the prospect of the recordings being destroyed, saying it was arrogant

and showed a lack of interest in history... Full council meetings, including confidential sessions, have been recorded to help staff draft the minutes, even though there is no statutory obligation to do so. The tapes go back almost 15 years. Other councils in the Auckland region do not record meetings. The Auckland City Council will now record only open sessions and later destroy the tapes... A National Archives spokes[person] said its job was to preserve central government records. If the council decided to keep the tapes, it should place them in its own archival holdings. The council yesterday held a two-hour Britomart meeting behind closed doors. [The mayor] refused to say what was discussed or whether the council had reached a stalemate over the \$15 million developers are seeking towards costs over project delays.

...A legal oversight which left copyright for the Britomart project plans in the hands of a firm of Sydney architects could prove expensive for Auckland ratepayers. The Auckland City Council faces the prospect of paying a large sum – running into millions, according to one councillor – to the firm Hassells if it wants any other architects even to look at the project. [Auckland's] Mayor... said yesterday that [it] was very frustrated at the copyright problems, the result of council officials not realising the implications when contracts were signed several years ago... A[n architect]... for Rethink Britomart... believed the council had already paid \$2.5 million to Hassells. "It would be cheaper to start again," [the architect] said.

...Technical argument on dewatering the Britomart site once it is dug to five levels below ground kept [the] Principal Environment Court judge... and two commissioners occupied again this week. The long battle over consents for the downtown Auckland project began after the Auckland City Council signed a heads of agreement with NatWest Markets A[US]... in 1996 to start the redevelopment of the 3.2ha city bus terminal site. Commissioners appointed to consider the resource consent applications rejected dewatering... and th[is is] being appealed by the... council, which needs all consents in place before handing over the site for redevelopment... But the fate of the whole... project rests not just with the Environment Court but also with the new-look city council, whose councillors have had several briefings on it but have still to come out with any decisions.

...AUCKLAND City councillors have an easy exit from the Britomart development, which is not to extend the March 1999 time limit for remaining resource consents to be obtained. [The project's f]inancier... has already worked out that, with the potential for two levels of appeals, it is most unlikely that timeframe will be met, and has sought an extension to December 31, 1999. The council would be up for a \$375,000 payment to the financier, on top of the same amount already paid to cover its costs. An exit by that method would be possible despite the "absolute good faith" clause in the master development agreement signed in 1996 by the previous council and the previous financier, NatWest Markets A[US], which was taken over as part of the sale of County NatWest this year... There are other conditions which could also kill the project. A briefing document compiled by... [a] law firm... for councillors to consider this week says the financing and structuring arrangement for the project has not been satisfied. The development companies, Britomart Developments and Britomart Investments (which are subsidiaries of Pacific Capital Assets and now of Savoy Equities, all under the control of [one businessperso]n...) have to arrange a \$60 million finance tranche, which is made more difficult by Asia's economic troubles. Other important development aspects, seen as crucial by some opponents but as matters that can wait by the council, are documents relating to management of the underground centre and a contingency plan... Numerous changes in the Auckland property market since 1996 would support a change of heart by the council, apart from the change of councillors and of council control. But Auckland still needs something to happen at Britomart, 3.2ha of prime central business district land where existing buildings have been vacated and where the bus terminal has become distinctly unsafe territory at night, in contrast to the bubbling Queen St environment where the once-unsafe main street has regained its life and goodwill. That something is likely to be a revised development that still contains the transport centre but cans the property developer's dream of 11 highrise buildings and underground parking to support them.

...*Plug pulled on Britomart...* Auckland City has taken the bold step of tearing up the Britomart contract without knowing the financial implications of abandoning the [project]... After months of negotiations councillors yesterday voted 15-1 to... build a smaller, more user-friendly public transport centre in central Auckland. The council has already sunk at least \$23.5 million of ratepayers' money into Britomart. It has no idea if a planned new scheme will cost more or less than the \$140.5 million saved from ditching the much-despised five-level underground transport terminal and car park. Councillors must now wait to see how their former partners react to losing the hundreds of millions of dollars of work, development opportunities, fees and profits that would have come their way. A jubilant... Auckland mayor... who was elected... last October on a Rethink Britomart platform, said the time had come to move on. [The mayor] was confident the decision did not constitute a breach of contract, which lawyers had previously warned could see the council being sued for between \$100 million to \$300 million... The council terminated the contract on the grounds that the financier... and the developer, Britomart Investments, missed three deadlines over a two-and-a-half month period to agree to the terms of the resource consents... Britomart Investments, which had been having difficulty raising \$70 million to kick the project off, sought more time to find money. The council refused. Further, the council believed that correspondence from [the financier] showed it had terminated the contract. This is disputed. Last night... Britomart Investments and the A[US]n-based company with the contract to build the first stage of Britomart... said they did not believe the council had the right to terminate the contract. A spokes[person] for Britomart Investments... said they would almost certainly be looking to "enforce our rights," including the option of suing the council.

...*A \$16m case of tunnel vision?* ...[the] brave call by Auckland City to rip up the Britomart contract raises questions about a \$16 m... rail tunnel being built to bring trains into downtown... Work is proceeding on the 506m underground tunnel from near the existing Auckland Railway Station to the point of Britomart. The tunnel is due for completion by April, at which time it is likely to be sealed up awaiting whatever alternative scheme the council comes up with for Britomart. The deputy mayor... said the council would not end up with a tunnel to nowhere because the plan was still to bring trains underground to a point near the former Chief Post Office in Queen Elizabeth Square. If the plan succeeds, it will be the first time in 70 years that Aucklanders will be able to take a train into downtown Auckland... Work started on the tunnel in August before it was certain that the Britomart project would proceed. This enabled an open-cut tunnel to be dug before developers closed off that option by building offices over the route. Delaying the tunnel and then having to bore it while leaving the surface intact risked adding \$11 million to the... cost. The tunnel is being built by... the A[US]n-based company which, up until yesterday, had the contract to build the Britomart underground transport terminal...

A bus and rail centre on the Britomart site remains the dream of planners working to ease Auckland's traffic congestion... But... [over f]ive years after the city council unveiled it as the grand solution to many of Auckland's transport problems, few transport planners will shed a tear at the... project's demise. They have, however, been angered and frustrated by the way the debacle has delayed schemes to improve services, both bus and rail... [One guy who may shed a tear is] the sole... councillor... [who] stood up for the Britomart vision advanced by his old friend and former mayor... Even... [the] former deputy mayor[']s pro-Britomart Citizens and Ratepayers colleagues accepted the inevitable and voted with the anti-Britomart bloc in a 15-1 vote to move on... But [it still] insists Britomart as first envisaged would have benefited Auckland... "I hate to think of all the time I've spent on Britomart – all gone down the gurgler. [However, w]hat's done is done. We have to look forward to the future. But I will be interested to see how we are going to get a better deal for the city, better facilities opening up the harbour edge, restoring public buildings, all for less cost..."

...The first designs for the Britomart area... will emerge next Friday when a public competition closes. The 300 or so entrants have a wide brief but only an A1 sheet of paper to put a thumbnail sketch on what to build from the rubble of the original, aborted scheme. Proposals must take into account a railway station at the foot of Queen St, bus, ferry and rapid transport options, and sprucing up the dilapidated Britomart precinct with its collection of historic buildings. The new... project, which the Auckland City Council has renamed the Waitemata Waterfront Development for obvious reasons... [- since] dubbed the "son of Britomart[']" – ...is essentially smaller in scale and scope than the grandiose redevelopment envisaged by the previous council[, that]... showed an arrogant disregard for process and the concerns of Aucklanders, who vented their anger at the ballot

box... Having ditched the project, the [new] council was back to square one. Apart from a commitment to involve the public in a new scheme and to focus on a dedicated transport terminal, there was no alternative plan in the bottom drawer... The undergrounding of Quay St is no longer taking place and the environmental opportunity that created to build a holding tank for stormwater solids is gone. Instead, the water will be discharged beside Captain Cook Wharf. Buses will no longer be underground, to the relief of bus owners who had argued it would be impractical, uncomfortable and unattractive for commuters. There will be no retail development underground and... maybe not[even a railway station]. The reason Britomart was floated in the first place – to bring rail back into downtown Auckland... – has recently been challenged by a bizarre proposal to stop trains at the end of the existing Auckland Railway Station... From there a rapid transit system – such as light rail or guided buses – would go... [via a city circuit to link with] the western rail line near Khyber Pass. Handing over the underground tunnel to rapid rail... would wipe out the chance of heavy rail ever coming back to Queen St. Needless to say, Tranz Rail is not keen on the possibility of losing tunnel access to Queen St...

A \$1 billion spend-up on Auckland's rundown water services is threatening the region's ability to afford a decent public transport system... [One councillor], who chairs a regional water steering group, said public transport and water were both important but they would compete for funding... [Fortunately, the] Auckland City... council... [already] has \$129 million set aside for a replacement Britomart transport terminal.

...The Auckland City Council has won praise for the way it has consulted the public and managed the \$261 million "son of Britomart" project. Audit N[Z] has reviewed the management processes for the new downtown transport terminal and found that the council learned lessons from the unpopular Britomart project promoted by [the] former mayor... After dumping the... scheme... the [new] council developed a standalone transport terminal costing nearly \$100 million more than the old scheme, which was part of a bigger underground project. [The new] Auckland mayor... said the report was an endorsement for management of the new project... Audit NZ[']s director... said it was particularly impressed with the... openness of a public design competition – which selected [a] Californian architect... and local architectural firm Jasmax... It... could be a blueprint for other projects... The council was about to work on Britomart – a project that will bring trains back to Queen St for the first time in 70 years...

Cars and commercial vehicles will be banned from Grafton Bridge under plans to make way for a dedicated busway between the central city and Newmarket. Trucks are already banned from the historic 1910 concrete bridge, which needs strengthening before it can take heavy traffic. The Auckland City Council's transport committee yesterday voted to go ahead with a rapid city busway that passes Auckland University in Symonds St and Auckland Hospital in Park Rd on its route to Newmarket. This follows a decision by the... council to ditch work on a light rail route up Queen St and Wellesley St and across Grafton Gully to Newmarket in favour of a busway... The "Central Transit Corridor" busway is planned to run from Britomart... The committee also voted to continue investigations into a \$400 million rail tunnel through the central city, running from Britomart... ■ T[he]... final bill to Auckland City ratepayers for the axed Britomart project is \$24.15 million, of which \$22.15 million is being written off... [after] council officers decided that only \$2 million in engineering and design work could go towards a replacement transport centre.

...We now have what was nicknamed "Son of Britomart", with a double track to cater for five platforms[– at least three tracks were needed to cater for future plans to increase peak-hour services –] and no direct link to the western line or other points in the central city. A midtown railway station at the ASB Building in Wellesley St had been planned in 1969. Underground rail to Morningside was first talked about in 1923, then again in 1951, 1972... The \$1.23 million tube that frightened 1923 ratepayers had snowballed to \$400 million in [the latest talks]. Now the Auckland Regional Transport Authority has announced a \$1 billion central loop comprising 3.5km of tunnels between Britomart and Mt Eden, with underground stations at Wellesley St and K' Rd. If work starts now the loop is expected to be 15 years away. Much depends on funding and whether Westfield will agree to a rail tunnel beneath its new skyscraper on the corner of Customs St. Will it get off, or rather under, the ground? Watch this space.

...We've often heard the proposed Avondale-Southdown railway mentioned, but just when is this line actually going to be built? ...Who knows? ...a designation has been in place for many years, since 1947 in fact... Although it remains an important strategic link for Auckland's rail network... [-] the main functions of such a line would be to remove north-south freight trains from the section of Auckland's rail network that carries the most passenger traffic... [-] there are currently no plans or funding to build it.

...The total cost... of... [t]he Passenger Transport Action Plan, developed in consultation with Auckland's territorial councils... to... provid[e]... fast and frequent passenger transport systems... across the region... is estimated to be between \$715 million and \$1520 million. [However], Waitakere City's representative of the Regional Land Transport Committee... says this cost needs to be looked at in context. "Between now and 2004, the region is poised to spend \$1222 million on major roads, and a further \$1478 million between 2005 and 2021... By making it more convenient for people to use public transport, our roading network can work much more effectively."

...Auckland's car-loving motorists want a better public transport system – but they may not use it. They are happy for public transport to get more money, but... [a] survey... has confirmed the perennial bugbear for planners working on Auckland's \$1 billion passenger transport schemes, namely that commuters prefer the convenience of their cars... Nearly half of the drivers would still take their cars to work if the price of petrol rose \$1, [meaning]... they were paying \$2 a litre... while 40[%] would still drive if the trip took an extra hour... About 8[%] of travellers now use public transport... [but, while the chairperso]n of the regional land transport committee[believe]d the survey showed the mentality that public transport had to battle[, the]... northern regional manager... [for the Automobile Association believes] the... survey says... that potentially public transport could pick up 20[%] of the market overall and that during peak times on key routes into the central business district it could be 30 to 35[%]...

Plea to keep Oakley Creek A[n A]uckland City Councillor and Avondale Community Board member... says the [Avondale] area can't afford to lose the Oakley Creek Reserve, which includes [the city's most] picturesque waterfall... to the planned State Highway 20 extension. [The councillor] says if the extension goes through the Oakley Creek area it will have a big impact on the community. "The first stage [from Hillsborough to Richardson Rd] has been planned for many years, but the Avondale extension hasn't. The Avondale area has one of the lowest rates of open space anywhere in Auckland City. From my perspective we should be increasing the amount of space not reducing it." [The councillor] predicts public opposition if Transit N[Z] backs the Great North Rd route via Oakley Creek[, which backs on to the grounds of Unitec].

...While her Diamonds teammates slugged through a training camp mud run, [the imported] Jamaican goal shoot... had other things on her mind. Alligators, snakes and eels, in fact. "It was disgusting," [the netballer] says. "Back home you wouldn't go into mud like that because of all the germs and viruses and you definitely wouldn't venture into it in just your shorts and shoes." ...[the 23]-year-old... is studying at Unitec and says coming to N[Z] has meant a few changes to her lifestyle. "In Jamaica you can just walk outside your house and catch the bus but here you have to wait in certain bus stop areas which is quite funny. And the taxis here have meters whereas in Jamaica there is a set price and you don't have to pay extra when you get stuck in traffic."

...*Auckland, City of Snails*... From the wheel of his big V8 taxi [one driver] has seen Auckland roads change from "busy to madness" in the space of 30 years. Once [it] could predict the customer's waiting time – within a minute or two[, but] makes no promise now: "All I can say to them is... I'll be there depending on the traffic." The traffic is atrocious, [it says, and to]... make matters worse... motorists have turned ill-mannered and nasty... To think that, once, drivers coming from a blind corner would extend one or two fingers to approaching traffic to show how many vehicles were following. A times, [the taxi driver] retreats home early for the day, fed up with the battle to avoid collisions and to get people to the airport on time. [It] sees the wastefulness of Aucklanders travelling alone in their cars at peak times, when they could be public transport passengers... In 1902 when electric-traction trams began replacing horse-drawn trams, trains left a Queen St station to run out to Pukekohe, Helensville and Onehunga; Waitemata Harbour ferry services included an all-night service for Devonport. [The taxi driver] doesn't understand how a city needing to move the masses conveniently, cheaply and quickly, could rip out the 72km network of tram tracks in 1956. When since have the public been offered... very

low... fares... [for] a service as frequent as every... 7 1/2 minutes during the busy hours and 15 minutes at other times... and in a vehicle that has permanent right of way along its route? In the 5 o'clock rush the tram rocked and rolled from the city to Onehunga in 40 minutes, a time today's Stagecoach buses are pressed to achieve. Trams were chopped because they were overdue for updating and the replacement cost was daunting. Their successor, the trolley bus, went for the same reason in the 1980s when a suburban rail system running with 1920s carriages and an elderly harbour ferry fleet were also endangered. By comparison, the... car... ha[s] had red carpet treatment – by 1947 sufficiently important to warrant traffic lights on Customs St West, by 1953 the beginnings of a motorway network and by 1958 a municipal parking building. The 1976 shelving of a publicly funded, hugely expensive electrified rapid rail scheme, with an underground service for the CBD as championed by the [then] mayor... was denounced as a sellout to the motor car that would gobble more land and foul our air. Aucklanders took pride in the steel bridge built over the Waitemata Harbour in 1959 that shortened the drive to [Devonport by over] 40km, and spurred North Shore growth to the extent that bridge lanes had to be doubled to eight only a decade later... The authorities have thrown about 150km of motorway and 220km of rural state highways at the problem of congestion in the Auckland region. Each extension has bought a little more time for us to manifest our individual freedom by driving...

DISABLED drivers are using guerilla tactics to stop able-bodied vehicle owners nicking their parking spaces. The disabled... are fighting back because an estimated four out of five disabled parking spots are being used by non-permit holders. Some fed-up mobility car users are supergluing messages to offenders' car windcreens. Others are getting nasty notices photocopied to put on the cheats' cars, while many do them in to carpark owners and ask for the vehicles to be towed. One notice asks – "You've got my parking space. Would you like my disability?" ...ATMs and supermarket disabled spots were favourite targets for the cheats. "They see the spots empty and reckon they are only going to be a few minutes, but a disabled person could come along in those minutes,"... said... [a spokesperson for the Crippled Children's Society], which issues the mobility permits... "Many people do not realise disabled people have to pay for the cards, and therefore the parking spaces which are set aside for them." ...The cost of a short term mobility permit is \$20 a year, while a long term one is \$35 for five years. Applicants have to undergo a medical check.

...Auckland City parking officers have for the first time been given powers to issue fines to motorists committing moving traffic violations... Drivers found illegally travelling in bus lanes during peak traffic hours will be issued \$150 tickets. Auckland City's parking services manager... says 12 officers have undergone special instruction from a police trainer certified by the police commissioner... Roadside parking officers will watch for drivers travelling more than 50 metres in a bus lane. They are armed with video cameras to film proof of violations. The council says results from its own commissioned survey shows average car compliance with bus lane laws are as good as 95[%] in some locations. However, in other places the figure is as low as 55[%]. A nine-day survey was conducted... at 13 sites on seven main roads linking to Auckland's CBD... [The manager] says the council would be delighted if it does not have to issue any tickets... ■ From British newspaper the *Guardian* comes this: A London council has apologised and cancelled a \$100 fine issued by over-zealous parking wardens. Finding... [a] car parked illegally, they lifted the vehicle, painted double yellow lines underneath it and wrote out a ticket. The new double-yellow restrictions were to come into force the following week.

...a daily London bus traveller... [on the] Number 19... through Charles Dickens' haunts in Clerkenwell... is 75 and... tells anyone who sits beside... her that [it] will be voting for... "the LT card, dear." ...The LT card is the London Transport ticket allowing transfers between buses and tubes which was invented by the environmentally concerned... left-wing leader of the Greater London Council (GLC)[, who now is a candidate]... for Mayor of London... His transport policies so enraged [the Iron Maiden, that the then PM] dismissed the GLC, leaving London without a coordinated authority. [The GLC leader had] cut fares by 25[%], which brought a huge instant fall in car traffic, but [the Iron Maiden] forced them back up. [The current PM], as leader of the Opposition, disliked [the GLC leader] as much as [the Iron Maiden did. It was the GLC leader, the current PM] believes, who made Labour unelectable through[out the Iron Maiden's reign]... Since the GLC abolition, transport has deteriorated dramatically because of lack of investment. Official Labour renovation policies involve private investment in partnership with public, which means the system staying in public ownership but being effectively leased out to three private companies, which would rebuild and maintain it for a guaranteed fee. The public fear, intensified by the devastating train crash at Paddington Station... is that corners would be cut on safety costs... City analysts reckon renovation will cost £12.5 billion... of which £10 billion will come from fares and the rest from investment loans or bonds... [In spite of, or perhaps because] of... scare campaigns... [by other mayoralty candidates,] a series of polls show the Labour rebel as hot favourite. Importantly, soundings in the City of London financial community show significant support for [the former GLC leader]. With business, as with [75-year-old bus users], it is the promise of improvement to the transport infrastructure, offered by a [person] with a record of success, that is seductive... [The former GLC leader] has done public battle with central Government over London's infrastructure before and will have no hesitation in doing it again... But what real discretion the mayor is left with to alter policy[or] to decide on fare levels... remains to be seen... The mayor's room for manoeuvre has been curtailed already by the Greater London Assembly Act, which creates the role of mayor and the 25 member assembly, both to be elected... [in seven weeks time. In local news, relief] may be in sight for west Auckland's daily traffic gridlock if Infrastructure Auckland wins its bid for Tranz Rail's rights to the western rail corridor. Infrastructure Auckland[']s chief executive... says it plans to offer up to \$33 million to Tranz Rail by the end of the month. The offer's on behalf of the Auckland and Waitakere city councils... Infrastructure Auckland intends to lease back to Tranz Rail the right to run freight services at night. Tenders will be called for the passenger train services... Better use of the western rail corridor is identified as a key to developing rapid transit services, in the regional Passenger Transport Action Plan. [A p]assenger transport subcommittee member and Waitakere City councillor... says they'd like to see a service running every 5 to 10 minutes during peak hours. That involves double tracking the western line but there is still debate over who would pay for the estimated cost of \$240 million... [A Tranz Rail spokesperson] says the company has no comment... Tranz Rail was given an 80 year Crown lease over [Auckland's rail] corridors in 1993.

...[Auckland's mayor and a mayoral candidate hopeful] were in a National government that gave Tranzrail a monopoly lease on the railway tracks for just \$1 a year. Now Tranzrail wants \$112 million back for it... For the full sordid story... go to my website www.matt4mayor.org.nz...

The Auckland rail deal is sitting on a siding after being shunted off track by another missed deadline and no green flag from the Government. But central and Auckland local governments are agreed on one thing – they're not happy with the new \$112 million price tag. The... Waitakere City Mayor... says... \$65m is about what the Auckland rail corridors are worth... Waitakere, Manukau, Franklin and Papakura councils have all agreed to a revised rail deal – the "double assignment" option that would give them more control of the region's rail corridors. But each council also expressed concerns about the cost. Tranz Rail and the Auckland Regional Council, which is negotiating on behalf of the councils, have signed a revised heads of agreement based on the \$112m "double assignment" option. The ARC now hopes to get Government support in principle... The... Transport Minister... says... "The Government is not yet convinced the price is a good one." The Government is considering its rail policy following Tranz Rail's announcement... that it plans to stop passenger operations and close some freight lines... [● Yesterday's SIDESWIPE asked if it was] ironic... that Tranz Rail's head office is in Takapuna and none of its staff can get to work by train.

...The Auckland rail corridor is back in public ownership – clearing the path to a better public transport network. The Government's completion of an \$81 million deal with Tranz Rail to buy the corridor and assets was yesterday hailed by regional leaders as an historic move towards solving Auckland's transport woes... The new deal lets councils manage the railway and station development through their jointly owned company, Auckland Region Transport Network. The regional council would direct transport planning and integration, and contract an operator to run rail services. Previously, investment was on hold until the councils were certain of the rights to the network... The Mayor of Manukau City... said the Government had sold the rail rights for a pittance and... had paid a lot to regain them. But the acquisition was imperative to upgrading suburban

transport... [The ARC chairperson] said ownership meant that orders could be placed for new carriages to ensure the service continued beyond the “drop dead” dates for tired old rolling stock... [The ARC has already promised] west Auckland commuters extra 7.15pm and 8.15pm services out of the city from Monday to Friday... effective from... [the 9th of next month. Unfortunately, the council’s rail project leader... says Sunday services for west Auckland will not begin immediately. “Sunday services are not planned until next January... Additional qualified drivers are needed to run Sunday services and we are currently paying Tranz Rail to teach new drivers,”... Waitakere’s] Mayor... was convinced that... 40[%] of the city’s residents who now used cars could be persuaded to use rail. “There’s a big market in the next generation; they have had a gutsful of road rage.”

...A new generation of “smart trains” that can go on roads as well as rails – that’s the vision of [Waitakere’s] mayor... In a recent three-day visit to Melbourne and Sydney, the mayor was shown hybrid vehicles that can run on both road and rail tracks, and switch between diesel or electric propulsion as needed. These “smart trains” cost around \$5.8 million each and can be delivered within two years... [The mayor] has even suggested that “smart trains” could be allowed to move off the track at Avondale, go down Great North Rd... and rejoin just before Titirangi. This would avoid the \$20 million exercise of undergrounding the road at Totara Ave roundabout to allow double tracking. The council will also ask the ARC to double-track the western corridor as far as Swanson by 2007, and to make electrification of the line a future priority... The ARC has promised Aucklanders they will have a world-class rapid transit system with a 10 minute peak frequency for rail by 2006. [The ARC’s p]assenger transport chair[perso]n... says reliable rail services will provide the backbone to an efficient transport system, giving people freedom to move around... [Incidentally, a] 27-year-old Glen Eden lawyer was killed when hit by a train yesterday morning. The [lawyer] was hit at 6.40am, 300 metres south of Glen Eden station, by the first Waitakere-bound train of the day from central Auckland... [T]here were 18 passengers on the train. They stayed on board before being taken from the accident scene by police, and to waiting buses and taxis... Henderson police say... it appears the [lawyer] was walking on the tracks... on his way to work. The accident stopped trains on the western line, and Tranz Rail brought in buses to take stranded rail commuters to work. [A company spokesperso]n... says Tranz Rail has appropriate safety measures and they weren’t at issue in the accident.

...RAILWAY tracks must be made safer or more west Aucklanders will die, says [the] Waitakere City Council road safety co-ordinator... On Wednesday, 26-year-old Glen Eden lawyer Leon Graham Kay became the second pedestrian killed when hit by a train on the Glen Eden tracks since September 1998... [The co-ordinator] says safe walkways are needed alongside the rail lines because no amount of public education will stop people taking a shortcut over and along the tracks. “We don’t go the extra distance, we take the route which is quicker... The reality is people are walking down tracks so why don’t we make some safe walking spaces. How many more will have to be killed before we put some sort of walkways there?” ...[the councillor] says someone has to pay [for the walkways] because no price can be put on saving lives. “There reaches a point where you say enough’s enough and I think we’ve reached that point.” ...At an annual plan meeting last month, councillors voted against tagging \$1 million “in principle” for pedestrian and cycle routes along the rail corridor... Waitakere City’s]... Deputy Mayor... is unsure who should have responsibility for safety on tracks. “It’s something that concerns all of us and it’s probably a collective responsibility. People have to take responsibility for their actions,”... “It has to be said – don’t walk on the railway tracks, it’s very dangerous,”... [a] Henderson police sergeant... says.

...The Waitakere City Council road safety co-ordinator says that safe walkways are needed alongside the rail lines. What a load of tripe. People have been getting killed since the railways began in N[Z] and will continue as long as they remain. I have seen sections of track that have a walkway alongside ignored by pedestrians for a stroll between the tracks. How are you to stop idiots stepping off the platform and in front of or under trains? Must we fence everything off these days? Just because some people will not use common sense.

...Re human beings killing themselves on railway lines. As a child I was taught not to play on the railway line [from] London to Cambridge, [which had] twin tracks and at least four times more traffic than here. But we still put pennies on the line – school kids’ fun. Well I see that they are thinking of spending thousands of dollars to control us humans not to use rail tracks... I can understand keeping animals, horses, cows, etc, from straying but we are supposed to have a higher IQ than animals. What is the problem? Laziness? Ignorance? Or thinking they are too smart to get caught? By all means use gigantic signs that they can’t miss or instant fines for jaywalking. I feel sorry for the train drivers and those left behind.

...last week... a pregnant [perso]n... complained to the rail company Thameslink that [it] repeatedly had to stand on its commuter trains during the rush hour because no one would give up their seat for her. Instead of telling her [it] shouldn’t have got pregnant in the first place, Thameslink – known as “The sardine line” – said [it] should avoid travelling during the rush hour in the second place. This might be considered a somewhat callous reply to a [gal] forced to stand for 40 minutes on her way to and from Paddington Station, especially one in an interesting condition who also suffers from diabetes, low blood pressure and fainting fits. Apparently Thameslink, on reflection, thought so, too. “We are sorry that the tone of the letter was a little brusque,” said a spokes[perso]n for the line. Now the company is considering (a) more carriages to make its trains longer, and (b) increasing the size of the signs requesting other passengers to give up their seats to “mobility-impaired” passengers. Having travelled not so long ago on Thameslink, I doubt whether (b) will be of any use. Trying to prise Poms out of their seats and away from their crossword puzzles or page three girls during the rush hour would be a task beyond Solomon.

...FACES are pressed against carriage windows as the mass of bodies heave through the compartments every time the train slows on the approach to a station. Here and there there’s a quiet sigh as trapped passengers behind are pushed away by the pressure from further within. These are everyday scenes in Tokyo’s “tsukin jigoku” (commuter hell), as Japanese call the daily struggle of millions of commuters making their tortuous journey in overfilled trains to their workplace in the capital... On some routes in the Tokyo area in the rush hour, the compartments are filled to double their official capacities. At transfer stations such as Yoyogi and Uehara it is common in the morning and evening to see enthusiastic conductors in blue uniforms and white gloves running from compartment to compartment pulling arms, backs and bags from the door areas as quick as they can... “But it’s wrong to say we cram the people into the trains,” says one railway employee, “we are just helping them to get to work on time”. The railway companies are working on ways to relieve the problem for passengers, although this is easier said than done... In Tokyo, a city of 12 million, the trains [already] run every two minutes in the rush hour... The Government’s declared aim is to reduce compartment capacities to 150[%], the daily *Asahi Shimbun* reported. That would still mean passengers having to rub shoulders, but it may reduce the number of people who have to be treated for breathing problems... “I can smell the breath of old [guys] next to me,” complains a 32-year-old... An increase in indecent assaults prompted one train company in Tokyo to introduce [gals]-only carriages. That wasn’t only welcomed by [gals] since an increasing number of [guys] are accused unjustly of sexual harassment in the overfilled trains. Several [guys] are so nervous of making the wrong move and appearing suspicious that they stand with arms stretched above them the whole trip... [E]xperts are doubtful as to the extent of efforts to improve matters for travellers. They say that it is scarcely feasible to put more trains on the tracks. And the idea of attaching more carriages to trains is a non-starter because of the limited length of station platforms. One company... decided to introduce carriages 15cm wider than the previous model and with more space for passengers. But this solution is not possible everywhere because of space restrictions. A[ssumedly, the same issue prevents the railway companies from introducing double-decker carriages]... Most Japanese have no choice than to put up with the daily “commuter hell”. Horrendous property prices in Tokyo and in other population centres such as Osaka have forced many Japanese to move to the distant surroundings to achieve the dream of [owning] their own house. Unfortunately, the dream has huge drawbacks with four hours and more spent commuting every day.

...When I went to university in London in 1964 there were several direct trains each day, reliably taking four hours. That was before [the Iron Maiden] and the Conservatives began rail privatisation, a policy continued enthusiastically by the present P[M]... and his New Labour Government. My 22-year-old son lives in Manchester, a city important enough to deserve good communications with London. His train journey to

my home, which used to take under three hours, is regularly five, lengthened by rail “improvement” works since a train crash north of London a year ago... The term “unrealistic” was... used by the Transport Minister... about transport and pollution reduction targets set by the first Labour Transport Secretary... [The minister] said that the Government had spectacularly underestimated the growth in road traffic. In effect, [the minister] was saying that the policy of encouraging bus and train use and the reduction in cars and their pollution was being scrapped in favour of building more roads. New Labour has now caved in to the car lobby. [The minister] made his confession on the day that the Works and Pension Secretary... said that the Government is to scrap the compulsory retirement age of 65, allowing people to work in to their 70s, as a way around the admission that pension funds could not cope with the growing numbers of old people. It prompted some harsh headlines. As the *Guardian*, a left-of-centre broadsheet, put it: “Future Britain: save more, work longer – and stay off the roads.” ...Three times last week I walked the 3.2km from my home in Highbury, North London, to the Angel, Islington, overtaking buses as I went. It was the quickest way to get to the bank, the dentist and the bookshop. I considered hailing a taxi to drive around the traffic jams – but every side turn was blocked too, and the taxis were locked in as hard as everyone else. My husband each day drove 24km across London to work – a journey taking 1 1/4 hours. From all parts of London come similar complaints: all transport is locked solid daily and sections of the Underground are being regularly closed. I also drove a 580km round trip to Wales – taking five hours each way – to collect my parents for Christmas. I did it not because they are too old to travel alone but because the rail service across England’s heartland to London involves three companies and two train changes and is too unreliable for even fit 79-year-olds to contemplate.

...Britain’s Railtrack looks set to return to Government control amid reports that the ailing company is on the brink of bankruptcy. [The T]ransport secretary... was expected to comment on the firm’s future today after crisis talks with executives. Railtrack was seeking a rescue package to take it off the stock market in what many would consider renationalisation, the *Sunday Times* reported.

...Which track – public or private? ...The prospect that the [NZ] Government may renationalise the rail network is fast becoming a political football. Publicly listed Tranz Rail has been the owner since 1993, when the National Government sold NZ Rail to a consortium headed by merchant bankers... But Tranz Rail’s ownership has been marred by poor safety and claims that the major shareholders have underinvested in the network. The company has also been in conflict with some of [NZ]’s biggest exporters, who say they are unable to use the network in a cost-effective and efficient way. It is that point that has long exercised Labour Cabinet ministers... Many ministers believe that the national rail network is a vital strategic asset, particularly with the forestry “wall of wood” fast maturing in the North Island. Their ambition is to develop a transport strategy which ensures that all major pillars – road, rail, air and sea – perform to capacity. Reports have been prepared which point the way to a levelling of the field between road and rail. But ministers’ ability to deal simply with Tranz Rail has been hampered by National’s failure to ensure that the Crown retained a “Kiwi Share”. This would have enabled the Government to step in and ensure access to the network at a cost-effective price. It would also have ensured that appropriate maintenance was done. Neither [the P]M... nor... the... Finance Minister... wants to publicly disclose Labour’s position on the sensitive renationalisation issue, which is only one of the Crown’s options... The difficulty for [the PM and her Finance minister] is that the Government has set a precedent through its acquisition of the Auckland rail corridors.

...Planning to get back on the rails Tranz Rail’s moment of truth comes at 4pm on Tuesday[, when its m]anaging director... and chief financial officer... unveil to financial analysts at Auckland’s Stamford Plaza hotel a plan they hope will renew investor confidence in the rail operator. The move cannot come too soon for the big institutions and smaller shareholders who have lost a packet on their shares at today’s values. Tranz Rail’s share price has fluctuated wildly since the market got wind it would post a dismal result next month. The company also faces allegations of indulging in creative accounting to enhance its profitability and not properly telling investors of some liabilities it faces from its decision to sell and lease back assets such as Cook Strait ferries. Adding to the general angst is the grumbling from shareholders who believe they were sold a pup when they bought shares at levels much higher than yesterday’s closing price of \$2.25 a share, after Tranz Rail’s former controlling shareholders quit. [The m]erchant bankers... and Wisconsin Central, now under Canadian ownership, sold their stakes at \$3.60 and \$3.70 a share respectively in February... [The managing director] has made major changes to Tranz Rail under which a raft of under-performing assets have been sold and big parts of the business given to outside contractors. Tranz Rail does have a big point in its favour. It owns a strategic asset in the national rail network, which the Government wants better used for the country’s economic benefit. As one analyst notes: “These guys have problems but there is a good chance they will be bailed out by the Crown. The Crown’s already taken the first step by paying \$81 million for the Auckland network, and will probably do something for Wellington. If they put one or two people on the board who have got contacts with the Government and the ability to twist arms in Wellington, it could be very advantageous to them.” ...[● The] Greens co-leader... is to launch a campaign to save passenger rail services under threat of closure. [The Green]e wants a rescue plan ready to present to the new owners of Tranz Scenic rail services as soon as the sale is announced. One option would be to have the Government take back control of the tracks in exchange for giving Tranz Rail free use for a set time... It was reported at the weekend that the four Tranz Scenic services would be closed when Melbourne-based West Coast Railway was announced as the owner of the Tranz Rail-owned network... this week... The Southerner, between Christchurch and Invercargill, is the first service tipped to end. Others likely to go are the Wellington-Napier Bay Express, the Auckland-Tauranga Kaimai Express and the Auckland-Geyserland run to Rotorua. Services to continue would be the Tranz Coastal between Picton and Christchurch, the Tranz Alpine from Christchurch to the West Coast (seen as premium rides offering high-class touring trips) and the daily Northerner and Overlander services between Wellington and Auckland.

...The fight to save Hawkes Bay’s... rail passenger service is over... [T]he train will make its last trip between Napier and Wellington [next month]. The Bay Express was one of five services that Tranz Rail’s preferred bidder for its long passenger services... West Coast Railway, did not want to buy. The Kaimai Express, Geyserland Express and the Waikato Connection will also cease running. Discussions are continuing between the Government and Tranz Rail over an extension to the dead-line for the Southerner... to give local authorities... time to consider a rescue package.

...In a \$25 million deal... West Coast Railway has bought four profitable Tranz Rail lines, but if a buyer isn’t found for the others, they will close... As the rail conservation efforts continue, what exactly might we be losing? The... 56 seat... Geyserland... has a free run. It’s the only train that uses th[e track from]... Putaruru to Rotorua... built in 1894. “I hope they don’t rip [the track] up for scrap,” said [one]train driver... The Rotorua Express was once the pride of the New Zealand Railways, a star attraction for Aucklanders travelling to the “thermal wonderland.” The service reached its peak in the 1920s... but by the 1960s the run was no longer profitable and it closed in 1968. It was relaunched as a scenic route by Tranz Rail in 1991, but has not thrived. While it typically runs around one-third full, the train fills up during school holidays. [The]Green Party co-leader... one of the movers behind trying to save the threatened services, accuses Tranz Rail of not promoting them. [A]Rotorua taxi driver... agrees. “It’s one of [NZ]’s best-kept secrets... But I guess these days you have to be profitable. Still, it’s a shame.”

...[the] Finance Minister... has called a temporary halt to lobbying efforts by Tranz Rail’s major users over the long-term future of the national rail network. The move comes as the Treasury keeps a watching brief on Tranz Rail as the transport giant prepares to unveil a major financial loss tomorrow. The Rail Freight Action Group – which comprises some of [NZ]’s largest exporting companies – has been lobbying... to gain support for a Government buyback of the national rail network. The group... wants rail freight to be a robust and cost-effective part of the future transport mix... Tranz Rail is in virtual siege mode: it faces a potential credit rating downgrade, hefty increases in banking charges, investigations by the Securities Commission and the Stock Exchange’s market surveillance panel and a credibility issue with shareholders. Tranz Rail has indicated it will forecast earnings before interest and tax of \$26 million for the... year but this will move to a significant loss after interest costs, tax and asset

writedowns of... \$170 million are accounted for... Tranz Rail[’s CEO]... has defended his company’s decision to increase the prices it charges its big customers... say[ing the changes it] put in place, including the previous round of price rises, were necessary to avert a path towards bankruptcy.

...*Rail goes round in circles*... [Less than a decade] after it was privatised, [NZ]’s rail system still faces the same problems that afflicted it under Government ownership... The Government plans to buy 35[% of Tranz Rail] for \$76 million, or 67c a share. It will also buy back the tracks for \$1, and pay another \$50 m... for track-related assets[, and]... will spend \$100 m... over five years to improve the network. A new company will own and manage the tracks. Tranz Rail will get exclusive access, subject to a “use it or lose it” agreement. Tranz Rail will pay a track-access fee of up to \$70 m... a year. Shareholders must approve the deal – [also]... on the table is Toll Holdings’ full takeover offer, at 75c a share... A[US]’s Toll Holdings... plans to make the business part of an expanding empire that would offer service along the whole supply chain... [The Government announced its plan to] rescue... Tranz Rail a week before the company’s likely collapse because it wants rail to play a central role in its grand plan for land transport.

...TRANZ Rail’s relationship with some major customers has deteriorated to a level seldom seen in N[Z] business. In its attempt to transform itself into a freight-only company, Tranz Rail has succeeded in pushing five of its biggest customers – accounting for more than half its freight business – into forming a lobby group demanding that the rail company lose its monopoly track rights. Tranz Rail supporters have responded with counter-accusations of sabotage, claiming that the major customers are co-ordinating a behind-the-scenes campaign to gain a business advantage next time contracts come up for renewal. This has merely added to the company’s woes, making it harder to win back confidence and support in the N[Z] financial community. The programme of transformation, of turning Tranz Rail into a freight-only company, has been spearheaded by[its] chief executive... But there has been a reduction in freight revenue of \$25 million in the year to the end of March. In the forestry industry, where the number of logs being cut is rising dramatically every year, Tranz Rail is carrying fewer logs than before with revenue from forestry dropping by nearly \$15 million... in the past year... The Rail Freight Action Group sprang from the frustration and worry affecting five of the biggest exporters and rail users. Dairy giant Fonterra joined forestry companies C[HH] and... Challenge Forests, along with state-owned coal company Solid Energy and BHP N[Z] Steel... While Tranz Rail supporters... claim it is an attempt to kneecap the company while it is trying to get back on its feet, these big customers say they are genuinely concerned about Tranz Rail’s future. For some customers, the relationship with Tranz Rail has badly deteriorated in the past few years, starting when freight contracts came up for renewal and it started raising prices by up to 40[%]. In some cases Tranz Rail started asking customers to make a contribution for new wagons or track upgrades. In others, it simply told clients it no longer wanted to continue doing business with them – shifting their freight was not lucrative enough... Solid Energy’s chief executive... tells a story of a comprehensive breakdown in the relationship with Tranz Rail and a subsequent hardening of attitudes... [The chief executive] says his two-year battle with Tranz Rail over a simple contract extension was a frustrating and expensive exercise. The new contract would allow Solid Energy to increase the amount of coal it exports and Tranz Rail to win more business. A simple negotiation? Don’t count on it, says [the chief executive], who says Solid Energy ran straight into an intransigent Tranz Rail, which was trying a new approach to earning money from its tracks... across the Southern Alps that no other rail company is allowed to use. Solid Energy mines and transports two million tonnes of West Coast coal a year to Lyttelton, from where it is exported to the world’s steel mills and power plants. Its present contract with Tranz Rail is capped at 2.7 million tonnes a year, but Solid Energy wants to increase this to around 4 million. “It sounds like a pretty simple extension to the contract... Two years on from attempting to agree that extension, we have failed to agree to even get close to it with Tranz Rail.” The pricing component could have been sorted out within half an hour... but instead there has been no agreement, which means no expansion for Solid Energy. Despite paying for its own experts who found that the price paid to Tranz Rail should actually drop when the new business began, Tranz Rail insisted it be paid substantially more – suggesting price rises of 30 to 40[%]. It also told Solid Energy that coal was not “core business” for it. “We were flabbergasted,”... One of Tranz Rail’s major customers says it is not claiming any overcharging and is, in fact, quite happy with the service it receives. Regardless of this, there is a fundamental flaw in the way Tranz Rail is expected to operate. And it is this supposed flaw that gives the big customers a hook for their vision of a newly nationalised rail network. The argument runs like this: Tranz Rail claims repeatedly that it does not operate on a level playing field with its competitors – if a flood washes out a section of rail track and a road, what happens? The trucking firms sit back and wait for the taxpayers and ratepayers to fix the road, while Tranz Rail has to pay for repairs to tracks, bridges and tunnels out of its own pocket... Major users say that while Tranz Rail has the drain on its bank balance of maintaining the network, it will never be able to keep its shareholders or customers happy. It will never have the money to improve the network – improvements that happen every day of the week on the national road system... A simple solution is offered by the big users. Remove this millstone from Tranz Rail’s neck and hand over responsibility for maintaining and extending the tracks to a Government agency. But the removal of this obligation must be coupled with the loss of monopoly rights to run trains on the newly nationalised tracks, a privilege Tranz Rail now enjoys. Removal of monopoly privileges need not cripple Tranz Rail, say the customers. It would, for years, enjoy the benefits of incumbency – it would be the only company in N[Z] with rolling stock and locomotives. It has existing contracts, it knows the customers and can enjoy a few years basking behind some high barriers to entry before rivals make a serious dent in its business... [W]hile at first glance it might seem out of character for some of N[Z]’s biggest corporations to be arguing for Government intervention in the economy, the result they are looking for is more typical – freedom. Freedom from one rail company dictating terms, freedom from the fear of that operator going bust and leaving wagons and locomotives rusting on the sidings. And if that means the Government taking over again what it once owned, so be it.

...Tranz Rail must cut the average train speed to 40kmh and inspect tracks more frequently on hot days and in bad weather, because of rising concern over unsafe rail lines. [A] Land Transport Safety Authority spokes[person]n... says temporary safety measures are being imposed because of recent incidents involving heat-buckled lines. The latest occurred on the main trunk near Te Kuiti last week... The speed restriction will apply whenever the temperature between the train and tracks reaches 30 degrees Celsius, and when there are floods and slips. If N[Z] is hit by even a mild heat wave, the main trunk line could be affected. In that case, train travel between Wellington and Auckland could take 22 hours. “Our primary concern is for the safety of passengers and rail workers. We must do whatever is necessary to ensure that the rail network is safe,” [the LTSA spokesperson] says. The conditions will remain in place until an independent review of Tranz Rail’s infrastructure is completed by overseas rail safety experts. Track buckling due to extreme weather conditions is “fairly common” but needs to be discovered and fixed immediately... It’s uncertain whether the current spate of buckled tracks is the result of poor maintenance by Tranz Rail... Tranz Rail announced in December that it had signed a \$150 million, three-year contract with A[US]n-owned Transfield Services to maintain the track network. The new deal includes shedding 92 track and structure maintenance staff... Tranz Rail believes that contracting specialists to do the work will improve the company’s safety record considerably. But the authority has yet to approve the new maintenance arrangement... [A] Tranz Rail spokes[person]n... says the company has been working on the problem since 1995 and has achieved a reduction in the number of buckled-track incidents. The new conditions mean th[at trains must be]... fitted with heat-detecting devices that set off an alarm when the air temperature beneath the train reaches 30 degrees. When the alarm sounds, passenger trains... will be required to go slow for the entire leg of the trip... and a heat patrol is sent to inspect the track.

...Tranz Rail has asked the L[TSA] to allow train drivers to check for buckling tracks themselves. At present if track temperatures reach 40C the trains must stop at the next station until a ganger (inspector) arrives to get on the train to keep an eye out for buckling tracks. The train and all other trains on the region’s network must slow to 40km/h until the track is inspected. Tranz Rail asked for the change after heat alarms caused delays of up to an hour for commuters in Wellington and Auckland in the first few weeks of hot weather. The LTSA is considering the proposal but [its] director... said... “I consider driving to be a full-time occupation and expecting them to inspect the lines at the same time does not sound safe. I am aware of the delays to the public but we have serious safety concerns.” Last week, [the director said the authority] would not agree to any

changes because the company had not kept it informed about its schedule to fix the problem. On Wednesday, the Minister of Transport... stepped in and warned Tranz Rail to keep the LTSA informed or [it] would rush through the Rail Safety Bill to give the safety regulator more powers. The LTSA can only remove the operator's licence, stopping the entire network, and has no enforcement powers. Tranz Rail agreed to the speed restrictions this year after the LTSA became increasingly concerned about a spate of derailments and near derailments caused by buckling tracks. The buckling tracks were caused by poor installation and maintenance of continuous welded rail, which is used on half of the country's 4200km network[('NZ's railway system reached its greatest length – 5,656 km – in 1953; Dun Mountain Copper Mining Co had opened NZ's first railway, a 22.5km line to the port of Nelson, in 1862')]. Tranz Rail... said last week that it had inherited the problem from the Government, when the tracks were sold... in 1993... [T]he tracks were welded in continuous lengths from 1975 onwards, with 1350km welded before the sale. Since then, Tranz Rail had fixed 800km and a further 550km were to be fixed over the next five years. It had increased the anchoring of the track to sleepers and bought specialised equipment to de-stress areas prone to heat buckling by cutting out sections of track, stretching it and clamping it back down, enabling the track to expand when the temperature rose... NZ Railways['] former chief civil engineer... who was in charge of the first trials of continuous welded tracks in 1974, said the tracks were installed at a high standard but required strict maintenance. [The engineer] said de-stressing was not needed if the... tracks... were put in properly in the first place. When the rails are fastened to the sleepers they must be at 38C... The kilometres of welded rail replaced 42ft... sections of imported rail held together with bolts on the track... [M]aintaining bolts was expensive and the world switched to welded tracks. [The engineer] says the technique is safely used in countries with high-speed trains, some travelling at more than 250km/h... An independent report into the problem this year showed that Tranz Rail's installation and maintenance of the rail was "at the limit of acceptable practice".

...Twenty-eight heat-buckled lines have been reported by Tranz Rail in the past three months, the L[TSA] says... However, the accuracy of the reported figures was uncertain. An in[dependent in]quiry... found that Tranz Rail had grossly under-reported the frequency of heat-buckled lines and broken lines. The authority database showed 22 reported rail breaks in the 18 months to December... while Tranz Rail's records showed there had been an average of 150 breaks each year... A[n LTSA spokesperson]... said the sooner Tranz Rail brought the track up to standard the sooner speed restrictions could be lifted. Tranz Scenic owner West Coast Railway criticised the authority last week for the "too harsh" restrictions, saying trains in Victoria, A[US], were slowed to 90km/h in areas vulnerable to heat buckling. [The LTSA spokesperson] said 90km/h was too fast to hit a heat buckle. "If that is truly the Victorian practice, we view it as unsafe." Besides, Victoria had 1600mm gauge track compared with 1067mm in N[Z]. A Tranz Alpine locomotive engineer who found three heat-buckled rails on one Christchurch to Greymouth line crossing last year told the Transport Accident Investigation Commission the track was "like plasticine"... [In international news, a] Salzburg court has heard that a "mosaic of errors" led to a ski-train fire in an alpine tunnel that killed 155 people 19 months ago. In her opening statements, the public prosecutor... said the blaze on the funicular railway to the Kitzsteinhorn glacier at Kaprun could have been prevented... But lawyers for some of the 16 people charged with negligence over the blaze argued that it was wrong to compare the events of [19 months ago] with what was now known about the cause of the tragedy. Investigators said the blaze was caused by a faulty and non-regulation fan-heater in the rear driver's cabin. Their report stated that overheated filaments caused oil that had leaked from nearby hydraulic cables to catch fire as the train prepared to make its journey up the mountain... The findings tied in with witnesses who said they saw smoke at the rear of the train as it pulled away. The fire spread rapidly and, soon after entering the mountain tunnel, the train ground to an automatic halt. The doors stayed firmly shut but 12 people at the rear smashed in a window with ski-boots and sticks and fled back down the mountain to safety. By the time the doors opened it was too late for the remaining passengers to escape the toxic fumes and flames. Many collapsed and died as they attempted to run up the narrow stairway away from the fire. Two people in a second cable-car and three in the summit station also suffocated... Those now in the dock include employees of the Kaprun Glacier Lift Company, its suppliers and the Transport Ministry. They... face up to five years in prison if found guilty... But an end to the legal wrangling is not in sight. A[n A]merican lawyer... is seeking to hear compensation claims from victims' relatives. [Hi]s case for US jurisdiction rests on the fact that eight Americans died... Ninety-two... were Austrian but the victims came from eight countries, including Germany, Japan... and Britain.

...The escape of 32 tourists from a flaming coach in the Homer Tunnel... was a miracle, says the chief firefighter at the scene. The... bus was taking Singaporean tourists back to Queenstown from Milford Sound and was inside the tunnel about 2pm yesterday when the driver noticed flames coming from the motor at the back. [The driver] stopped about 150m from the eastern end of the tunnel and got the passengers out before the burning bus rolled back 50m, with acrid black smoke pouring out to the tunnel entrance. Firefighters, police and ambulances were called from throughout the region to the tunnel, which is 103km from the closest emergency services at Te Anau. Firefighters wearing breathing gear battled thick smoke to put the fire out... About 750 visitors were stranded in Milford Sound because of the wreck in the tunnel, which is the only road route out... The tunnel is due to reopen this morning once the bus has been pulled out... Three of the 32 passengers from the bus were flown to Southland Hospital in Invercargill to be treated for smoke inhalation. They were later discharged. The other passengers were checked at the Te Anau Medical Centre... A police spokes[perso]n at first said two people were missing, but they were later found at the other end of the tunnel.

...How Auckland missed the bus... Why is Auckland, a modern city of a mere 1.1 million people, hamstrung by problems normally associated with much bigger and older metropolises? The answer lies in four decades of neglect of public transport – a product of Government indifference, policy blunders and Auckland's tangled political and bureaucratic web. Since 1963, millions have been spent on transport studies which generally reached the same conclusion – an even-handed approach of motorways and mass transit was the ticket. The plans and reviews of plans now gathering dust and politicians now departed warned of future gridlock unless the two proceeded in tandem... T[oday]... the Comprehensive Transportation Study remains the blueprint for solving congestion. One half of the equation, a 175km network of ring motorways and arterial roads, is more than two-thirds complete (although more than 10 years late). The other half, a rapid-transit system based on the western and southern railway lines and supported by feeder buses, is still being talked about... Two Government decisions rankle most with long-suffering Auckland officials. The first was the Muldoon Government's shelving of rapid rail in 1976. The second came in 1993, when[the then] Finance Minister... handed Tranz Rail control of the rail corridor for a \$1-a-year peppercorn lease... [The later decision probably hurt Auckland the most, because s]ince the early 1970s, frustrated bureaucrats and civic leaders have... found money hard to come by, not just for major capital works but for small-scale boosts to services – such as new bus routes and increased frequencies... Yet money was [always] found for motorways and roads. [A r]etired Auckland Regional Authority transport planning manager... says that... roading... has been king since the 1950s, when the National Roads Board was formed with annual funding from road-user charges and petrol taxes... [S]uccessive Governments failed to correct the funding imbalance for public transport, which has had to argue a case for money from the roading kitty. Rules included a cost-benefit formula based on the immediate benefits to road users. It therefore penalised public transport schemes that offered a longer-term payback.

...The first official study for six years of potential [ferry] routes serving North Shore, Waitakere and Manukau cities starts next month. It will test the waters for the... Auckland Regional Council... which approves the total of \$1 million a year in subsidies supporting Fullers' commercial runs between downtown and Half Moon Bay, Birkenhead and Gulf Harbour... The \$1 million in ferry subsidies compares with \$27,774,000 for buses and \$6,795,000 for Tranz Rail. Now that more funds are available for public transport... the key issue is how they will be spent... The list of possible future water escape routes for car-bound commuters includes West Harbour, Beach Haven, Te Atatū and Greenhithe in Waitakere, Browns Bay on the North Shore and, in east Auckland, Beachlands and Panmure. There are, however, significant costs, drawbacks and obstacles to overcome... • Adequate wharves. • Buses bringing suburban residents to and from the wharf and linking with the ferry timetable. • Plenty of

parking at the wharf and an area where commuters can be dropped off. • Facilities for cyclists. A regular user of the Half Moon Bay service... introduced... [by] Fullers... last May... who... is the East Tamaki representative on the regional council... [and chairperson of] the regional land transport committee... says ferries are important to the transport strategy... [The chairperson] is concerned that... the North Shore ferry runs are threatened by Ports of Auckland wanting to sell the Devonport, Birkenhead and Northcote wharves. If one ferry company secures exclusive use rights from an owner, it could block competitors by asking unreasonable landing charges. [The chairperson says the ARC] will encourage the North Shore City Council to bid for the wharves so they are available to all. Funds to buy them could come from Infrastructure Auckland, which owns 80[%] of the port company. Competition could also spur the pioneering of new routes. Pacific Ferries, which runs a cut-price Waiheke [Island] service, is talking to the Waitakere City Council about starting a Te Atatu-downtown service using a 160-passenger catamaran.

...Pacific Ferries['] managing director... says [his company] wants to run a commercial service from Te Atatu but can't compete with Stagecoach and Fullers... [The problem is cheap integrated ticketing deals the other companies offer elsewhere in Auckland. Fullers Ferry company, which is 75[%] owned by Stagecoach, offers its Waiheke Island passengers free travel on Stagecoach buses within Auckland with a monthly ferry pass... [The managing director, who believes] Fullers is misusing a public operating subsidy by offering free travel on the buses... says if Fullers started a similar "bundled" service out west, Pacific Ferries couldn't compete because it doesn't have access to the buses once passengers reach the Auckland CBD. "If they saw we were making money and they wanted to get into the Te Atatu run it would be handed to them overnight... Until the bundling of services is looked at there can't be any competition on the harbour. There's not a level playing field." Stagecoach[']s managing director... says they're not thinking about setting up such a service because [the company] doesn't think it could run without a subsidy. "If we thought we could run a commercial service there, we'd do it." ...But [Stagecoach's managing director says the bus company] wouldn't be against some form of integrated ticketing with their buses if Pacific Ferries decided to set up in Te Atatu.

...An integrated ticketing system is part of the future for Auckland's public transport users. Members of the A[RC] passenger transport committee heard and accepted a proposal to introduce the system at a meeting held [a fortnight ago]. It will see public transport users buy one ticket, a smartcard. It will be accepted on all buses, ferries and trains around the city with a simple barcode swipe, making it easier for commuters to use and access public transport... "Each company has its own tickets, and you need to carry one for each form of transport you want to use," [the chairperson] of the... committee, says... The estimated cost of the system is \$30 million, and the committee has decided to seek some funding from Infrastructure Auckland... The smartcard ticket is designed to speed up boarding times... and keep electronic information on passenger trips for further research and development. To keep the ticket valid, commuters would simply top up the card. One of the biggest challenges the ARC faces is convincing the region's nine public transport operators that the electronic ticketing scheme is the way of the future. Introducing the system has been part of the ARC's land transport strategy since 1995... The system is already in place in Melbourne... and Hong Kong.

...Auckland commuters may need just one card to use all public transport in the region, but the system will not be available for three years. The A[RC]... is looking at an integrated ticketing system... [to] replace tickets, regardless of the type of transport and company operating it... [T]he council sees it as the first step towards the longer-goal of integrated transport fares... where the ticket price is combined for two or more connecting parts of a journey, or where two or more trips (not necessarily connecting) can be made with a single payment, such as a time-based reusable pass.

...Once purchased for a \$10 refundable deposit, the... credit card sized plastic card with a small memory chip... can be used to buy monthly passes, multi-journey tickets, day and family passes and to store value, on board [each Stagecoach] bus. Other operators have cardboard 10-ride tickets which can be bought on board the bus or train or at the ferry ticket office. Ten-ride tickets offer at least a 10% discount off cash fares. Tranz Metro trains and Fullers ferries also offer monthly passes, day passes and family passes... Children under five travel free, and those aged five to fifteen travel for a child's fare, a 40% discount off adult fares... Senior citizens with a Senior Citizens ID Card can travel for a child fare at all times except before 9am on weekdays... Full-time high school students can travel for a child fare but... must always show [thei]r school ID. Full-time tertiary students can buy Go-ride multi-way tickets at a 20% discount off cash fares from on-campus locations... Did you know there are over 300 bus routes, three rail lines and eight ferry services in Auckland. This network is there to help you to get the most out of Auckland's diverse destinations and attractions. The... A[RC] service... *Rideline* can answer all your bus, train and ferry questions as well as mail you out timetables.

...PUBLIC transport in Auckland has never seen anything like it. Buses, trains and ferries across the city have been flooded with over-65s taking advantage of free public transport after 9am... Pensioners are entitled to the free trips since October 1 last year as part of the government-funded SuperGold card... The scheme has a budget of \$72 million over the next four years... CBD and Waiheke Island businesses[are] feeling the benefits...

TELEWORKING – doing normal office work from a home or remote base – is being touted as a solution to regional transport problems, as well as a smarter way to work. The A[RC] has completed an investigation into telework promotion and it is now assessing how telework may fit into its overall traffic-demand management strategy. The Wellington Regional Council is considering a similar project. The ARC project made the finals of the transport category in the recent Energy-wise Awards... A telecentre on the Kapiti Coast, which allows 20 people to work away from their Wellington offices, also made the final three. It is smarter to eliminate a problem than cope with its effects, "so in the transport debate you eliminate the trip that creates the congestion," says... Telework N[Z]... a consultancy in teleworking. "Most existing strategies encourage people to switch... from the car... to the perceived inconvenience of public transport. [But a] lot of people would prefer to work from home two or three days a week. That would result in a significant reduction in traffic..." [Telework NZ] says the proposed North Shore busway will cost more than \$100 million to build, for a single-digit saving in traffic flows at peak time. A \$1 million campaign to promote teleworking could bring a 5[%] peak-hour traffic reduction, without the need for continued promotion. "Everywhere this happens – Los Angeles, Denver, Portland... – it grows on its own as employers realise there really are benefits in this approach." Its adoption is held back by lack of awareness, the fact most managers do not trust staff, and a lack of enthusiasm by Government and telephone companies... "[Yet, e]verywhere globally this has taken off, it was pushed by telecommunications companies." [Telework NZ] says the Government had the most to gain from more community servers, better use of national infrastructure and pollution control.

...A 5km oil slick suspected of coming from the wreck of the... Niagara was breaking up... in the outer Hauraki Gulf yesterday... between the Hen and Chicken and Mokohinau Islands off Bream Head. An A[RC] maritime officer... said the metre-wide slick was checked from the air yesterday morning about 500m north of Mokohinau and was no longer considered a serious threat to the environment... [The officer] did not know if the oil came from the Niagara... but said it was possible... The ship was the victim of a German mine... in June 1940... Environmentalists and [the fishing industry] are worried that oil on board the ship, lying 120m down, has been escaping for some time. They fear an ecological disaster if bunker oil surfaces. The Niagara could have been carrying thousands of tonnes of the heavy oil... [T]he oil in the latest slick was light and might have come from trucks reported to have been on board the Niagara. It had been bound for Suva with 349 passengers and crew, all of whom survived, and £2.5 million in gold bullion, nearly all of which was salvaged. 'The bullion was heading to Britain to help pay for the war effort, so the British Government was keen for its return. No one had ever dived to such depths before, so the salvage team – headed by AUSns – had to improvise with the limited equipment available to them. Eventually, all but about five bars of gold were recovered – each worth \$1m in today's money'.

...Sydney Harbour, A[US]'s world famous waterway, was covered in a 10km oil slick yesterday... About 80,000 litres of oil poured from open valves on the Italian tanker Laura D'Amato, while it was berthed at the Shell Oil Gore Cove Terminal, at Greenwich, on Sydney's north shore on Tuesday night. The incident sparked calls from Clean Up A[US], the tourism sector, and environmental and conservation groups for a full review to prevent its happening again. Thousands of Sydney residents were warned... to stay indoors as putrid oil fumes spread over a 20km area,

prompting 600 residents to call emergency services, fearing a major gas leak. The stench was so potent at the Sydney Opera House, it silenced A[US]'s premier operatic voices during the performance of *La Bohème* moments before the final dramatic act. Commuter ferries were yesterday ordered to slow down when travelling past slicks in a bid to reduce the spread of oil. The Waterways Authority[']s... chief executive... said Shell was not to blame for the spill, and... there was no evidence of any damage to the ship, which indicated the leak was either the result of sabotage or human error... [The authority] was investigating claims the spill may have been an act of sabotage by two sacked crew[members]... Those responsible for the spill on the... city's centrepiece face fines of up to \$A1 million... for a corporation and \$A250,000 for an individual, plus the cost of the cleanup... If reports of sabotage are proven, serious criminal charges could follow, the state's environmental watchdog warned... It will take days to clean up the oil, which is visible from the Gladesville Bridge in the west, under the Harbour Bridge, around the Opera House, to Rose Bay in the east, the N[SW] Fire Brigade said... The spill also claimed its first environmental victim yesterday, a... cormorant, which is being treated at Taronga Park Zoo for hypothermia and dehydration. The Nature Conservation Council of NSW claimed the oil was threatening important environmental assets, such as the endangered little penguin population at Manly Point. Emergency crews have vowed to work 24 hours a day to clean up the oil... "Work is progressing rapidly. About 40[%] of the oil has already evaporated... The skimming operation will continue throughout the night." Five skimming vessels, including two flown in from Brisbane yesterday, were being used...

The valve through which 80,000 litres of oil flowed into Sydney Harbour had to be opened manually, says the Waterways Authority chief executive... [T]he crew of the Italian tanker... were being interviewed to determine whether the valve was opened by accident or deliberately... [The Waterways Authority] would... also... look into whether tankers in the harbour should have booms around them... The spill is the third major incident involving the... Shell terminal at Gore Cove ...i[n recent years]. Six years ago, after a spill of 10,000 litres from onshore tanks, Shell was prosecuted, convicted and fined \$A42,000 with costs of \$A7682. Eight years ago a potentially much bigger disaster was averted after a heavily laden tanker was freed by tugs when it ran aground... [T]he latest pollution crisis reignited debate about the safety and management of the waterway. Should the Shell terminal stay as part of a "working harbour," or should it be shut down as a relic of the industrial past that has gone beyond its use-by date? ...Meanwhile, a rescue operation is under way to save an endangered colony of fairy penguins, some of which were found covered in oil... The widespread oil sheen will be left to natural process, broken up by the currents, winds and evaporation...

The owners and crew of a... tanker that leaked 300,000 litres of oil into Sydney Harbour face prosecution after authorities received the first official report... The tanker was allowed to leave Sydney last week after its owners... posted an \$A8 m... bond to cover the... clean-up and any fines.

...A CRACKED Ukrainian... tanker might be allowed to dump its fuel in Cyprus after roaming the Mediterranean for a month.

...A Russian-flagged tanker has split in two near Turkey's biggest city of Istanbul after running aground in heavy winds. Television pictures showed the front half of the Volganef 248 sinking into the sea, while the stern remained afloat... Crew members stood at the railings awaiting rescue. "As far as we know, the lives of the 17-person crew have been saved," an Istanbul maritime official said... [The official also] said there had been some spillage of fuel... Turkey's narrow Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits, linked by the Marmara Sea, are one of the world's busiest and most treacherous shipping lanes and the scene of frequent sinkings, collisions and ships running aground. Tankers use the straits to transport oil from Russia and the Caucasus to world markets. Turkey opposes the increased tanker traffic, citing the danger to the some 10 million inhabitants of Istanbul... But Turkey is unable to restrict the traffic since the straits are governed by the 1936 Montreux Convention... Ships are not obliged to take on a pilot. [However,] Turkish authorities halt traffic in the straits during harsh weather when a large tanker is passing through, forcing other ships to anchor off the coast. Two tankers and one container ship have already run aground off Istanbul this month... The worst accident in the Bosphorus in recent years was in 1994 when a Cyprus-flagged tanker collided with a freighter, killing 29 [sailors] and causing large oil spills.

...Russian motorists face growing fuel shortages as privatised oil companies take advantage of rising world fuel prices to divert more of the countries vast petroleum output on to the global market. "I don't understand how we can be one of the world's biggest producers of oil and have no gas for our own cars," says... a 42-year-old truck driver... Although large cities such as Moscow are still relatively unaffected by the gas shortages, a major crisis appears to be developing in central and southern Russia... The fuel shortages have been described by the Government as a "time bomb" that could rupture public confidence and wreck this year's grain harvest. Farmers are complaining they have no gas for tractors and combines, and the harvest season in Russia's northern regions has already begun. Along with a few other staple products, such as bread and vodka, the Russian Government imposes price controls on gasoline to prevent eruptions of public discontent. Until recently, supplies were plentiful and priced very low.

...FUEL prices are rising and so are thefts at the pump... Even... stations... insisting on prepay have run into problems because thieves find ways around the system... [A] Waitakere police analyst... says the situation has got worse since petrol jumped to \$1.27 a litre. It is now more than \$2.

...Oil prices jumped... US\$25 a barrel yesterday – their biggest one-day jump – ...to US\$130 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange... Crude is within striking distance of its record of US\$147.27, reached... [two months ago. By the way,] there is talk of a road tunnel linking Alaska to Russia. This would allow motorists to drive from... America to Britain. New York to London overland has a certain appeal, don't ya reckon?

...Residents of Avondale anxiously await a final decision on the Waterview connection to complete the State Highway 20 ring route. The government is currently considering surface alternatives after estimates for a tunnel increased from \$1.89 billion to \$2.77b... *Sequels:* Remember the toll foul-ups which began... on the new north-bound tunnel and motorway? Well, it's [4 months later] – and they haven't stopped. The evidence: Refunds to umpteen drivers because automatic top-ups became too automatic and doubled up on withdrawals from cards and bank accounts. One report talked of \$200,000 handed back in one week, \$45,000 in another. All because of a "data corruption error" – whatever that means.

...The \$365 million Northern Gateway toll road may have eliminated congestion through Oweria but motorists heading north... still found themselves in hour-long queues near Warkworth last night... – prompting concern the... Gateway simply pushed the bottleneck further north.

...Work[ers] last night began demolishing the old Onewa Rd onramp bridge after it was damaged by a truck carrying a digger. The incident yesterday morning caused a giant snarl-up on the Northern Motorway and... left chunks of concrete and reinforcing rods on the roadway.

...THE TEENAGER who killed a motorist by dropping a concrete slab from an Auckland motorway overbridge has been freed on parole... At his parole hearing earlier this month, the grieving mother of... 20[-year-old]... Chris Currie, killed by the [the]n-14-year-old... made a passionate plea for him to always think about her son... [The teen] was charged with murder but a jury found him guilty of... [humanslaughter. In related news, a]s motorway planners set the ball rolling today for a \$430 million tunnel beneath Auckland's Victoria Park... [-t]he consents... cover the... transfer on skids to a site about 30m up Franklin Rd... [of] the Birdcage Tavern, [built in]... 1886... – ...they are being urged not to cut corners above ground.

...road workers in Romania were caught placing kilometre markers every 900 metres to make it look like they had built more road than they had.

...major changes [have been] proposed for the Road Code. The Land Transport Safety Authority yesterday circulated a six-point plan to councils and interest groups, arguing that the changes would cut road accidents. The most contentious is likely to be the change to give-way rules. The present rule – give way to all traffic crossing or coming from the right – would no longer apply in two situations at intersections. The first case would let a car turning left into a sidestreet go first, rather than having to give way to a car turning right into the sidestreet. [The] LTSA... said this would stop traffic banking up behind the left-turning vehicle. In the second case, a car turning right from a main road into a sidestreet could go first, rather than giving way to a car turning right out of the sidestreet. The LTSA... estimates that the changes would cut the number of intersection mistakes by 1 to 3[%], equal to 30 to 90 crashes a year. But an Automobile Association survey suggests the proposal will meet stiff opposition from motorists. The survey... found that only 25[%] want the change. A r[esearch] policy analyst... said the change would bring N[Z] in line

with A[US] and most other countries. But [it] had gained the impression that motorists saw few problems with the law and did not want the hassle of changing... [The] NZ Drivers Club... said the change was long overdue, but there would be “chaos” while motorists learned the new law.

...Of all the dull, witless things this Government is doing, the restoration of a dedicated traffic patrol is the most trivial. And therefore the most infuriating. It will be warmly welcomed by the grey cardigan brigade who drive by the rules, blithely unconcerned that they are breaking the traffic flow and causing a flurry of lane-changing in their wake. They have never come to terms with the disappearance of traffic officers and write the most tedious, anal-retentive letters that newspapers receive. There is a regulatory need still beating deep in the N[Z] psyche. Few other countries feel the urge to put a special police force on the roads, probably for the very good reason that the job can only attract the sort of people who wear security passes with pride and never really let their dogs off the leash. In Britain they become rugby referees. In this country, since traffic control was entrusted to the real police, they have gravitated to the driver licensing business... Driver licence testing has become the last refuge of the regulatory itch in this country. Young people... are failed repeatedly for omissions a reasonable person would keep in perspective. They can be failed for behaviour that is standard on the roads. Like signalling to leave a roundabout which drivers rarely do, and no doubt should. But it is not as though licensing is going to change behaviour. There is a good business in driving tuition today that consists largely of training people to pass the test, not to drive normally... Young drivers are being knocked back three or four times, at \$42 a throw. It has been this way for 10 or 15 years now. When it is reported that there are an estimated 200,000 unlicensed drivers on the road these days, I believe it.

...[a Ranui resident] knows what it is like to live in fear of being caught driving illegally. The 33-year-old drove for at least 15 years without a licence – and without getting caught... “If I saw a cop I’d pull into the nearest garage and turn around...” ...But [the 33-year-old] recently attended the ongoing Workers Education Association... programme and got her learner’s licence. [The 33-year-old] says her step-father used to do most of the family driving, but after [her step-father] died earlier this year [the daughter] was the only person available to take her mother to hospital for leukemia treatments... Her dad had taught her to drive, and then [the daughter] went to a learner’s licence course. However, [the daughter] failed the test: “My problem was that I used to get a bit uppity with the cops,”... The... six week[long]... WEA driver licence programme has been running since 1980, and over the last six months the number of people attending has doubled. This is partly due to publicity, says [the]programme facilitator... “Most of the people... who do the course... don’t have confidence in their ability to pass.” However, the course boasts a 97[%] pass rate... A... Senior Sergeant... [who is o]ne of the organisers... catches at least 12 unlicensed drivers weekly. The programme offers participants the opportunity to have outstanding fines waived when they pass. The next WEA learner licence course is scheduled for the third week in July.

...I feel disgusted that [a newspaper’s] front-page item and photo should give such emphasis and apparent glory to a 15-year law-breaker who placed the rest of the population at risk by driving for such a length of time without bothering to study road safety and the rules and regulations required to allow us to drive in safety on our roads. Why should a 33-year-old be given a pat on the back for doing what the law requires of all of us? If the police were really doing their job they would ticket this person even now for her blatant admittance to deliberately flouting the law for so long. As far as outstanding fines being waived for law breakers who finally condescend to obtain a licence, this is ridiculous. Why not waive the fines of all licence holders throughout the entire country as a reward for doing the correct thing, ie. obtaining a licence before ever venturing on the road in a motor vehicle? A fine is punishment for breaking the law and it is unfair to the rest of the population that a privileged group of blatant law-breakers should have their outstanding fines waived. As far as any fair-minded person could see, the young boy... who handed in a wallet [it] found on a bus containing \$1000 should have had its picture on the front page... in recognition of his honesty, instead of... [being] relegated to page 10. Everybody I have spoken to about this wholeheartedly agrees that, although well-intended, [the] newspaper got its priorities wrong.

...Chinese drivers are cheating the Kiwi road system by using fake driver’s licences bought through newspaper classified advertisements... Police have arrested and charged a number of people behind ads which have been running in Auckland’s 15 or so Chinese newspapers for at least a year... [(China’s capital has added nearly 1500 new cars to its notoriously congested roads every day so far this year... Xinhua news agency... said] yesterday)... Sharp-eyed Asian police spotted the ‘Need a licence?’ classified ads, which had gone undetected because only a few officers can read Chinese... [A detective from] the Asian Crime Unit... warns the scam is putting lives in danger and the erratic driving of inexperienced Chinese motorists is adding fuel to the already contentious “Asian driver” stereotype... “They end up driving vehicles which they have no skill in driving and could end up killing someone or losing their own life...” ...[the detective] says anyone involved in buying or producing a fake licence could face jail or deportation, and... admits police don’t know how many of the bogus licences are currently circulating... The phoney licences sell for between \$150 and \$500 and police say they are practically impossible to spot compared to the real thing. “They obtain a false [licence] and take it to the LTSA and just exchange it [for a genuine N[Z] one]. There might be a short theory test and a driving test, but you circumvent the whole aspect of going through a two and a half year graduated licence, getting your learners and then restricted licence,” says [the d]etective...

A JUDGE has granted two sisters an exemption to their restricted licenses so they can travel in the same car. The 16-year-old Wairoa twins applied for the exemption because it was too costly driving two vehicles into town. Their application was rejected by the LTSA but that was overturned by the judge. Restricted drivers are normally only allowed to carry spouses, dependents, or a fully-licensed driver.

...Budding motorists may have to take approved driving lessons to get their licences if a proposal by [the]Transport Minister... goes ahead. At present, those wanting to drive can learn from anyone who has had a full licence for more than two years. They can cut six months off the length of time they hold a restricted licence if they sit an approved driving course. [The minister] said yesterday that [it] wanted to save lives by having young motorists take driver courses, and hoped to test the idea next year. The suggestion comes as Parliament considers whether motorists should pay an extra \$10... every 10 years to renew their licences... Each licence cost \$43 to process, but a taxpayer subsidy meant each driver was charged \$29.50.

...New licence rules apply to all drivers from Monday... All drivers must upgrade to a new photo licence within 60 days of their birthday... The new licence will last until the person’s next 25th, 35th, 45th, 55th, 65th or 75th birthday... After that when a driver renews his or her licence, it will be valid for 10 years[– as opposed to the old licence, which was meant to last for a *lifetime* (someone ‘tried to have a court rule that her old licence was still valid and would remain so indefinitely’)] ...Eyes will be tested and a photograph and signature taken and stored digitally when licences are upgraded... Upgrade information will be sent to everyone’s home... Drivers must carry their licences – be it the old, paper licence or the new, credit-card style photographic licence... Getting a full licence will now cost \$246, previously \$146... Learner-drivers will have to show “L” plates on the front and rear of their vehicles... All new drivers will need to get learner and restricted licences... Fines can now be imposed for breaching restricted licence rules... Anyone breaking the speed limit by more than 50km/h or driving at twice the legal alcohol limit can have his or her licence suspended for 28 days... [although s]uspension will not apply to speed-camera offences... Police will have the power to stop motorists at the roadside for 15 minutes while checking their identity... Police can seize a vehicle for 12 hours if they have “reasonable grounds” to think it necessary to protect the public... Vehicles driven by disqualified and unlicensed drivers can be seized by police and kept for 28 days.

...If you drive to work this morning without your driver’s licence, you will be breaking the law. Sweeping changes to driving laws come into force today and include the requirement to carry a licence at all times while driving. Government research last year found that 80[% of NZ]ers carry their licence when driving... While anyone caught driving without a licence may be fined \$55, police have said they will use discretion... From today, police [also]have the power to detain a motorist at the roadside for 15 minutes to check his or her identity.

...Wrong photo, yes, big problem, no. After the N[Z] *Herald* yesterday showed... [a Pakuranga resident]’s new driver licence, complete with a photo of a different [person], transport officials have said such an error is extremely rare. In the 10 weeks since the licences were introduced, the “identity error rate” was less than 0.01[%]. The... director of the L[TSA], said 446,000 photo driver licences had been issued... so far... there had... been 45

“identity-type errors,”... This included people receiving a licence with the wrong... signature or personal details printed on it. Operator error had been blamed. “Certainly the system itself is quite robust – it is a question of how the button is pressed at the front counter.” The front counter system was complicated, but had been designed to be idiot-proof. [In another development, the ‘LTSA says it won’t refund the cost of retesting eyes if the first test proves to be wrong’. After being refused a new licence because they failed their LTSA eye test – at the front counter – clients are required to pay for a professional eye test, which some have passed!]

...My father’s 78 and we think his eyesight is too poor for him to drive any more. [Father] doesn’t agree, despite already having had a series of small accidents. What can we do? ...Older drivers are the fastest-growing group of drivers on the road today, and deteriorating sight and hearing, muscle stiffness and weakness, mental confusion and medication can all reduce driver safety. Try talking to your father’s doctor... If the doctor thinks your father is impaired, [it]... can insist on appropriate restrictions on his licence, like no night driving. At 80, all drivers must have an annual medical examination to retain their licence, and from 85 there is an annual driving test as well.

...Elderly people can be devastated emotionally by the cancellation of their driver’s licence for medical reasons. Studies at the University of South A[US] show significant numbers exhibit grief, anger and depression... A... coordinator of the Driver Assessment Rehabilitation Service, said the licence was a symbol of health for many elderly people. “They think: ‘As long as I’m still holding this bit of plastic, I’m ageing well.’...” ...[the occupational therapist... said there was a need for greater preparation before cancellation to lessen the impact on mobility and independence. The issue was vital, with estimates that at least 40,000 people driving on A[US]n roads had dementia, and that crash rates could be up to four times higher for them than for others of the same age.

...TRANSPORT officials are worried that diabetes-related motorist crashes are not being picked up... The issue is of concern because health authorities believe the disease is about to reach epidemic proportions in N[Z]. Since 1998... five people [have] died and nine [been] seriously injured in crashes thought to have been caused by diabetic drivers. LTSA figures show 53 people suffered minor injuries in 47 such accidents. Figures may also be inaccurate because officials do not document diabetes-related problems, such as poor vision, and because of undiagnosed diabetes.

...European roading authorities are pushing for new laws... requir[ing] drivers to have a driving check plus health and eye tests when they reach 50. Support for stricter tests was boosted by a survey which found... [3] million middle-aged British motorists have such poor eyesight... they would fail a basic licence test... □ Learner drivers in France are being posted the results of their tests after... attacks on examiners by failed candidates.

...New Government safety rules could add \$1000 to the cost of a used car but make it more likely that its occupants would survive a crash. The average used car would be newer, safer and costlier under the proposals, which would effectively ban the importing of Japanese cars built before 1994. The changes are among 11 proposals to improve vehicle safety which the Government unveiled yesterday as part of a strategy to halve the road toll by 2010. They include tougher border controls, compulsory replacement of used airbags, better seatbelts and banning flood-damaged vehicles. But the widest-reaching proposal is for a Frontal Impact rule to set a tough new standard for crash safety in older imported vehicles. L[TSA] figures show that 50,000 of the 120,000 used cars imported last year would have been barred under the proposal... The 820,000 vehicles on our roads manufactured before 1996 will not be affected by the front-impact proposal because they are already here. The... editor of the *Dog and Lemon guide* used car manual... supported the law change. “The Government has effectively joined the rest of the world in insisting that our cars are safe as well as cheap...” But the chief executive officer of the Independent Motor Vehicle Dealers’ Association... [said] the proposal... meant poorer people would be forced to buy newer cars... □ [The]... 16.5km stretch of State Highway One between Waipu and Oakleigh... has taken a horrific toll... [on] a community scarred by the ripple effects of the carnage... [caused by] a failing road safety message... In all there have been 17 fatalities between Waipu and Oakleigh... over the past five years, bringing the statistics for this stretch of road almost level with the notorious blackspot through Meremere on the road to Hamilton. Why so many? Insists [an i]nspector... of Operations and Strategic Traffic: “It’s not the road. The road’s fine. It’s a combination of things – in the main driver frustration, limited opportunities to pass... if you need to take evasive action there’s nowhere to go.” Mostly though, locals put the carnage down to a peculiarly North of Auckland phenomenon. When drivers hit the summit of the Brynderwyn ranges and the Ruakaka flats roll out before them like a lumpy, ocean-fringed bowling green with Whangarei city a speck on the horizon, they think they’re home. This is Nga Puhi country – a wide sweep of land where the living is more laidback than in Auckland, where many of them learned to skid their old bombs on the back country metal roads, where Marsden Pt, that great monument to petrol consumption, flames day and night – and where a [guy or gal] feels free. What they tend to forget is that the 40km of road to Whangarei has no passing lanes for 30km at a stretch; that it is bordered by deep, treacherous ditches on both sides; the trucks come thick and fast; it is almost impossible to judge how far away a car coming out of summer shimmer really is; little bumps mean oncoming cars can be half concealed. And people kill themselves and each other in such great numbers that his stretch of uneventful road is locally known as the killing fields... Locals have come to dread the sound of a siren... Every accident is tragic in its own way... Clarke[Hemara]’s crash was caused when David Chan, of Waipapa, pulled out in front of the Hyundai coming towards him. Both drivers were killed... [Clarke’s wife] attended his tangi – “the biggest-ever” at Pehiaweri marae on the Tutukaka Rd – in a wheelchair... [Clarke’s wife] doesn’t remember being hauled from the burning wreck by two nurses... and dragged clear. Instead [the 33-year-old] woke up in the helicopter, asking them to ring her husband and tell him [his wife] was okay. It wasn’t until much later, after the trauma team at Whangarei [Hospital] had treated her for shock, concussion and burns to her hand and back and [her husband] still hadn’t arrived in the acute ward that [the 33-year-old] finally “clicked”: Clarke, aged 34, her husband of just two years, wasn’t coming back.

...For most N[Z]ers, Marc Hill, Richard Kelly and Carl Wilson were the Southland teenagers who went out for takeaways and never came home. But those who lay them to rest today will remember them as three best mates – Monty, Sticks and Grimmace. Just a week ago the 18-year-olds were settling in for a night of car-chase videos and test-match rugby when they decided to go for a drive in Richard’s new Mazda 323. Taking a new CD to listen to as they left... [Marc’s] family home at Otatara near Invercargill, Marc, an architecture student, called, “See ya Dad, we are going into town. We will be back soon.” That throwaway comment at 7 pm last Saturday was the last thing [Marc’s dad] ever heard his son say. For the following four days three families were left wondering how the strapping young [guys] could simply disappear. But a chance sighting of two wheels protruding above the Oreti River, 30km from where they vanished, confirmed everyone’s worst fears. Inside the crumpled wreck the... three frozen teenagers – so inseparable in life – were huddled together in the backseat. Police said they apparently drove down Wilson’s Crossing road and turned down a dirt access road to McCallum Beach... About 1km along, a section of the private access road had been washed away over the previous fortnight. The teenagers plunged 2m into the icy, fast-flowing river. Now, as police investigate the murky legislation surrounding roads and rivers on private land, three families are left wondering why their children travelled in fog and darkness to get to the river... [Marc’s dad] does not blame the landowner... for not closing the wiped-out road, but hopes landowners will take action in future if there is a slip. “We cannot apportion blame; it is not going to bring our boy back.” [The person] who has coached the trio at the Collegiate Rugby Football Club for two seasons, says the close-knit team were devastated and baffled. “No one seems to know why they ventured to the river. It was totally out of character. Maybe they just decided to go for a drive.” ...the team would form a guard of honour at today’s funeral service in the hall at Southland Boys’ High School. “You could not get a nicer bunch of guys – I would be proud to have them in my family.” ...Police are waiting for toxicology results, but the boys did not appear to have been drinking... [An] Invercargill Detective Sergeant... told the *Weekend Herald* that part of the police inquiry would focus on legislation surrounding ownership of the road. It was too early to tell if charges would be laid. Occupational Safety and Health said yesterday that it would not investigate because farmers are not responsible for the safety of those who go on to their property without permission. Environment Southland... said the river and road were privately owned but the public had been granted limited access to the road

through Southland Fish and Game. [The landowner says it] agreed to put a sign up on his land saying anglers were welcome. In summer, up to 40 people gather on the river to fish or picnic – and [the landowner] is happy about it. But in winter, [the landowner] says, people came for one of three reasons: “To nick something, to dump something or do something they shouldn’t. The deaths of these boys is a tragedy and I really feel sorry for the families. But they were trespassing. If they had come and asked me if they could drive down to the river I would have told them ‘No.’”

...Police want drivers to take extreme care when faced with sun strike. The warning follows the death of 38-year-old Jie Wang following an accident at... Te Kanawa Cres, Henderson... Mrs Wang, a mother of two, clipped a parked truck after being blinded by the sun... at 7.15am... The collision caused minor damage to her vehicle and [Mrs Wang] stopped to talk with the truck’s owner. [Mrs Wang] moved to the back of the truck and was struck by a second car driven by a 19-year-old on his way to work. Mrs Wang was trapped between both vehicles for about 10 minutes before being freed by firefighters. [Mrs Wang] died in an ambulance on the way to Auckland Hospital... [Incidentally, h]ow’s this for an early – and stressful – start to the day: rescheduling truck deliveries before dawn to cover for a driver who has called in sick at four in the morning. It always requires some fancy footwork, but by bringing old guys out of the woodwork or filling in himself, [the]... managing director of [one] Auckland transport company... has never let a client down. But the firm is one of countless transport companies throughout the country facing a driver shortage, especially over the past three years. For the first time since [the managing director]’s father and grandfather set up the business back in the 1940s, [it] has had to start advertising for staff. “Up until the early 1990s finding staff was all word-of-mouth,” says [the managing director], whose 50-strong fleet of 44-tonne trucks mostly haul tankers. “Up until then we had a dozen drivers ready to drive at any time. These days there’s nobody queued up, and my oldest driver is now 70 years old.” People still want to be drivers and there is no shortage of big rigs. The trouble is, says [the]... chief executive of industry body the Road Transport Forum, there are just not enough people. And the country needs them, especially when the so-called “wall of wood” soon starts being harvested from our forests... A report commissioned by the forum, the Log Transport Safety Council and forest owners suggests N[Z] now has about 21,000 truck drivers – 1250 fewer than needed. [The chief executive], a former Transport Minister, expects the shortage to compound. Given the rate at which drivers are leaving, [the forum] expects the present shortage to increase by 1000 drivers a year. So what’s deterring drivers? Three key factors, [the chief executive] says: ■ Low pay... – typically from \$13.50 to \$18 an hour – ...and less-than-attractive conditions, such as no health benefits and long hours away from home... Also... laws limit truck drivers to a maximum working week of 70 hours... ■ The cost of getting the special driver’s licence required... Big-rig drivers must be 18 years or older with a class 5 licence, which allows someone to drive a truck and trailer weighing more than 25,000kg. Five tiers of classes separated by obligatory stand-down periods means it can take more than two years to gain a licence. That, plus the \$2000 cost, can be a deterrent... ■ Labour market changes that have created a greater variety of jobs to choose from. There is no easy solution, and bringing in overseas drivers is not the answer[– the truck driver shortage is a world-wide phenomenon, and NZ transport companies can’t compete with the level of pay that is attracting experienced drivers to the US!]

...No charges will be laid over the death of a young father who was decapitated when a truck’s driveshaft... disintegrated, sending the knuckle of its front universal joint flying through the windscreen of his 1990 Mazda utility on Auckland’s southern motorway last November 20. Police consulted engineers and experts in a bid to find out what caused the driveshaft failure... They had also sought information on other driveshaft failures and found at least four which were non-injury... ■... For nine years an Auckland motor mechanic... sabotag[ed vehicles so it] could then fix them... siphon[ing] thousands of dollars from the wallets of unsuspecting clients... [(i)n one case ripping off a customer for more than \$7500]. Yesterday, the]... 44-year-old... who formerly owned two... workshops... was sentenced to jail for two years... after being found guilty of fraud...

Armed gangs of kidnappers are increasing their attacks on hauliers in Britain, and truck drivers are routinely being abducted at gunpoint for their cargo, a leaked police intelligence report reveals. Truck hijackings by “modern highway[persons] rose by 50[%] last year, with an estimated £250 million... of goods stolen... An average of £130,000 of goods are stolen in each raid... A £50,000 reward has been offered for information about a gang who hijacked a truck in Cheshire at knife-point and stole cigarettes worth £1 m... Police said the Lancashire driver remains “distracted”.

...[A t]ruckie... has turned detective in a bid to find the two young hoons who totalled her prize Mk 5 Cortina. [The truckie], 38, was the victim of a hit-and-run recently as [it] was turning into a driveway on Larnoch Rd, Lincoln, to be faced by two boy racers attempting to outpace each other. “They were side-by-side...,” [the truckie] says. As the pair hurtled past one of the cars clipped the mint Cortina – leaving the car a write-off. [The truckie] was left shaken by her ordeal and sought medical aid at the hospital A&E the next morning. The Hibiscus Coast resident reported the accident to the Henderson Police. But [the truckie]’s also doing her own bit of detective work – calling about 50 panel beaters and car wrecker yards looking for the culprits. And [the truckie]’s determined not to give up looking. “I think [the culprit] is probably hiding [his car] at a mate’s.” The car... was... believed to be... a canary yellow... Toyota Levin. [A s]ergeant... of the traffic investigation unit at Henderson says about 60 to 65[%] of the traffic accidents they investigate are hit-and-runs. “People just don’t give a dam[n] about others, they are either drunk or disqualified and they know it’s going to cost them money,”... If you have any information regarding the crash please call [the sergeant] on 839-0600.

...Two cars racing each other through Dunedin... were clocked at 155km/h – about 95km/h above the speed limit. Police said the cars, driven by young Dunedin [hoons], were stopped on a south-bound section of the one-way system about 2am... The drivers immediately lost their licences for 28 days – under a new law – and will appear in court charged with driving at a dangerous speed.

...Less than a week after new “boy racer” laws came into force Waitakere police are poised to make their first arrest. The Street and Unauthorised Drag Racing Act was introduced last Tuesday and aims to curtail illegal drag racing and noisy cars... The Shore wing of the North Shore/Waitakere and Rodney police district... Road Policing Division says a driver was picked up on the weekend and faces a variety of charges relating to reckless driving... [T]he driver had been involved in a crash and was “behaving like an idiot.” ...The penalties for breaking the law include... three months in prison, fines up to \$4500... los[s] of licence for six months... and vehicle impoundment for up to 28 days.

...half the 1000 cars seized each month under new driving laws have not been claimed by their owners. Many cost more to store than they are worth, the transport ministry says... [In related news, h]undreds of car wrecks will be hauled out of Northland’s paddocks, gullies and ditches this month by Royal N[Z] Air Force staff as part of a goodwill exercise to clean up the environment... 30 Air Force personnel would collect cars throughout the area... The cars will be taken to central points to be compacted and removed by Gamma Compaction for melting and recycling. The project[has been] organised by the Department of Conservation, [Whangarei District C]ouncil and the Northland Regional Council... [N]ot only did the cars pose an environmental risk due to the oils and other chemicals they contained, but they were eyesores... When the project ran around Whangarei nearly four years ago, about 400 cars were removed. The Far North District Council ran a similar project this year as part of the clean-up for the arrival of Bishop Jean-Baptiste Pompallier’s remains at Motuti. About 200 cars were collected and the project was so popular that many wrecks were left sitting on the roadside and had to be collected in the following months. At Pawarenga, locals blockaded a Gamma vehicle because they were so upset that only half the wrecks were collected... Gamma[’s] manager... said the company provided a national crushing service. Large numbers of car wrecks were an increasing problem in poor and remote areas. Last year Gamma collected up to 40,000 wrecks throughout the North Island... [I]t was illegal to dump vehicles, but the rule was not enforced. Some cars were undoubtedly stolen, burned and abandoned.

...To most people, they look no different from other Jeep models on the road but there’s something very special about a small fleet of Wranglers buzzing around Detroit. They are part of an experiment that is set to revolutionise the way all vehicles – not just Jeep – are built in the future. The secret is in the hardtops that sit on the steel bodies of these Wranglers. Regular Wranglers have a hardtop made from a costly Composite material, which is then painted, but these new hardtops are... made from an entirely new thermoplastic process that can mass-produce high quality panels, with the colour impregnated into the material, thus eliminating a separate paint process... Chrysler has been experimenting with thermoplastic

bodies for several years and showed off a utilitarian concept car made completely from it in 1997, but it was just a one-off. The fleet of 40 Wranglers and their experimental hardtops have now advanced the technology closer to full production. In 2002, Jeep hopes to begin selling Wranglers to the public featuring these new thermoplastic, injection-moulded hardtops for the first time. Being lighter, they will be easier to lift off the vehicle and if they get scratched, the damage will hardly be noticed because the entire material is made of the same colour.

...Its makers hailed it as “the most magnificent car ever produced” but the Queen’s new Bentley is just as vulnerable as any other vehicle... [T]he limousine, estimated to have cost ...\$[NZ]14.95 million... in research and development, has a dent in the bonnet. One onlooker who saw the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh arrive at Epsom racecourse to watch the Derby said: “It looks like they’ve slammed the bonnet too hard.” ...[In further news from Britain, t]housands took to the streets of Birmingham... yesterday to protest against German carmaker BMW’s sale of Rover... Up to 50,000 jobs... could be lost... A florist handed out thousands of carnations to the crowd, which included union leaders, city officials, church leaders and a minister of the Government’s Department of Trade and Industry... Employees from other Rover factories, including the Cowley plant close to Oxford and the Swindon plant, joined the demonstrations, as did British Ford workers... BMW revealed a fortnight ago that it was selling Rover to Alchemy Partners, a London firm of venture capitalists. The British Government said it had been betrayed by BMW after having negotiated a subsidy for the German firm conditional on it keeping Rover... Meanwhile, the launch of the Rover 75 in A[US] has been cancelled. The A[US]ns haven’t had Rover cars for years and they don’t want them now that Rover looks like being consigned to history.

...The British Mini Club kicked off the car’s 40th birthday last August with a huge car rally. Other clubs from London to Auckland followed up with their own. There was much joy in the world of Mini clubs. Not any more. The same British club, miffed that BMW has sold off Rover, has warned prospective buyers of the BMW-owned new Mini: “We have told people if the car bears the BMW logo, it will not be seen as a Mini and will not be recognised by the club.”...

The Mini, along with cars like the Model T Ford, Citroen 2CV and the Volkswagen Beetle, was a true advance in motoring... [Ironically, the Mini evolved during] the 50s and 60s [when designers] were heavily influenced by American styling[– examples of which]... will be on show at LynnMall from tomorrow... ■ More than 40[% of guys] in America rate their cars as the most important thing in their lives, says a survey.

...The pride and joy of members of the west Auckland-based American Muscle Car Club... [can be seen at LynnMall] over the next week... Restoring each car has been a labour of love after they were saved from rusty graves... It’s taken [up to] three years of hard work replacing and revamping everything in and on the cars, right down to the finest detail including engine labels... [If engine labels don’t interest you, that doesn’t matter because the club’s] president... says there’s something to marvel at for everyone. “They were legends in their day,”... says[the president, who] owns a 1970 Chevelle IS6 with 450 horsepower, the most ever put into a car... [It was the end] product... of the race to produce the highest horsepower engine in the late 1960s early 1970s. “It was a time before the petrol price wars when gas guzzlers reigned,” [another club member] says. His 1968 Plymouth Hemi Roadrunner is just one of 450 built and is classified as “very rare”. “It’s not like a car today that if something happens to it you can get another one exactly the same within the hour... These have atmosphere... You have to drive the car they don’t drive you.”

...what i[s it] going to be like in the super-sophisticated car of the future when you just say the word and the car does the rest[?] RENAULT’S vision of what the future holds for cars is more a celebration of how far the motoring industry has come in 100 years or so. The flying family bubble appeared in a special magazine the French carmaker published to celebrate its centenary in 1998. It is there to ask: Will such a vehicle ever appear? Who knows? Carmakers are working on all sorts of weird and wonderful designs, but for the moment they are pouring millions of dollars into making the car a mobile communications centre. Take the system BMW expects to have in its cars soon... BMW magazine[contains an article] about a communications pilot project which falls into the category of telematics, or the wired world of the car... Before setting out on a journey, [the article] says, motorists will simply inform the telematics service of their destination. The service will work out the ideal route and transmit it to the car’s on-board computer, taking into account traffic flow and roadworks. If you are going on holiday and you want to visit everything of interest along the way, telematics will do that too. It will also provide you with a choice of accommodation. All you have to do is speak up. You won’t even have to take your car for a maintenance check. By then every new BMW will have its own internet address, allowing all functions to be remotely tested. Your car will be able to “talk” to your house, too – switch on the kettle, check the roast in the oven, turn the temperature down in the fridge for a few minutes to put a chill on the beer, or tune into the surveillance cameras to make sure everything is hunky-dory... [L]ooking further ahead, cars will even be able to swap information with each other. When two cars meet they will be able to warn each other of possible hazards such as black ice, traffic congestion or other obstacles. Okay, but how will telematics help motorists to solve one of the great frustrations of driving – finding a parking space? Easy, says... BMW... “Parking guidance systems in the cities will ensure that motorists are informed of vacant parking spaces well in advance... We are also testing concepts which would allow you to make a firm reservation for a parking space...” ...■ [In the US an]... anonymous telephone bidder offered US\$1.1 million... for a car that cannot go... [C]ompany officials had expected... [the] Ford Ghia Focus roadster... would fetch no more than about US\$120,000... [The] 10-year-old Ford, deemed unfit for driving on public roads, has sold... in a deal even the pushiest used-car sales[person] might call too good to be true. It happened when Ford Motors put 51 “concept” or prototype vehicles up for auction as part of a charity fund-raiser... None of the... vehicles has any practical use and some are simply bodies on frames without engines.

...BMW’s latest technology promises an enhanced driving experience if you are willing to put your faith in a computer. Drive-by-wire technology will remove the physical link between the steering wheel and the front wheels and replace it with electronic signals... [BMW] is moving towards this goal, not just because it believes it will bring big qualitative advances in its car’s handling, but to ward off competitive pressures. Drive-by-wire is being developed by all the big car manufacturers, which see it as making cars easier to drive. They also think their image will be harmed if they are regarded as lagging behind the latest technological developments. But they have to persuade consumers that an electric link is safe. Motorists know that when they turn the steering wheel, even with power steering, that they are in direct contact with this most crucial of controls. It will take a leap of faith for the computer wary to believe that a virtual link will work. Computers have been successfully working controls for years in the aviation world, where the technology is called “fly-by-wire”. But fly-by-wire recalls the 1988 crash of an Airbus A320 airliner at a French air show in which three people died. The... pilot claimed that because the computer sensed the drastic evasive action [the pilot] was demanding might damage the plane, it refused to react. An inquiry pinned the blame on the pilot and exonerated the computer, but potential drivers of a “drive-by-wire” car may feel uneasy about handing control of their cars to electronics. BMW has no such qualms about drive-by-wire safety. At a technology briefing for journalists, the firm set out its new technology aims which were headed by “mechanical steering”, as drive-by-wire is also known.

...BMW calls it iDrive. It doesn’t say what “i” stands for, just that iDrive is a new definition of active motoring, offering new freedom and motoring pleasure and giving rein to BMW engineers to integrate future technologies. It could be intelligent drive, or information drive. Perhaps injection drive. It could even be a tribute to the German... family – there but for the grace of God go i – the major shareholder who continued to bankroll the carmaker even when the cost of BMW’s six-year affair with Rover became apparent and Ford and Volkswagen were lining up to buy it. Whatever i stands for, it and the car it comes in represent BMW’s design philosophy of the future. The car is the Z9 gran turismo, a convertible variant of the coupe unveiled to much fanfare at last year’s Frankfurt motor show... The controller in the Z9 concept car sits at the front of the centre armrest and allows the same intuitive control as a normal gearshift. All the driver has to do to enter his commands is to press the controller: forward and backward through the gears, to the left and right for other functions and in four diagonal directions for others. To select and operate the menu functions, you turn and press down on the controller. A variation of the controller is expected to be the operating system in the next-

generation BMW 7-Series, due next year. The controller allows the driver to choose eight functions in much the same way as if they were shifting gears. Available at the flick of the hand are communication mode, climate control, entertainment and the drive selection and satellite navigation, road and weather information, vehicle functions and a help desk. All eight functions are displayed in the centre instrument panel within view of driver and passenger. Of course, the driver can instead use the steering wheel-mounted buttons, with control functions like indicators, wipers, cruise control and the manual/automatic Steptronic transmission.

...*Look mum, no hands* An Argentinian engineer who built and drove a car without a steering wheel says a Japanese carmaker has offered him nearly \$60 million for the concept. [The engineer], aged 34, says the carmaker is one of seven bidding for his design. The car is controlled by a digital panel that responds to touch. [The engineer says it] got the idea while watching a video on disabled war veterans.

...*Technology turns the driver into a passenger* Surrender the steering wheel: electronics are set to turn fallible human drivers into safe, sensible dummies... That is the prophecy of... the worldwide electronics company, Delphi Automotive Systems[, which] says we are just starting to use electronics to make motoring life safer and more efficient... Delphi has developed the Wolf (Wide Open List of Functions) system to get a car's suspension, brakes and engine working together, potentially to save you from a range of nasty experiences stretching from momentary embarrassment to shortened life... "By 2005 we could have steer-by-wire with no direct link between the steering wheel and the wheels. So with a link through a satellite navigation set-up that covers every bend in the road, the system will allow electronic systems to help to steer drivers out of trouble." ...At its Aubevoye research centre near Paris, Renault is developing a system in which cameras monitor the white lines at the centre and edge of the road. If a car starts to wander, the driver will feel a faint vibration through the steering wheel. If the electronics sense that the driver is losing control, the system will take over the steering. For overtaking, the system can be over-ridden by the driver operating the turn indicator. But will overtaking be allowed, or will we just move in ordered convoys at set speed? A danger then would be inattention from boredom, but that could be solved by a collision-avoidance system. The radar-controlled "intelligent cruise control" system is already available on the Mercedes-Benz S-Class, slowing the car as danger is detected ahead. Such systems may be developed to give all-round protection... Nissan is developing a "back-seat driver" that monitors the driver's behaviour in order to predict when they are about to make a dangerous manoeuvre... It then overrides their control... Yet if, despite... the power of electronic wizardry to keep you on the straight and narrow, you manage to defy the system and slide rebelliously into a ditch, [the]... car's central computer will know what you have done and, probably with a deep sigh of irritation, flash a mayday signal to the emergency services... 21st century... skies... could be full of super-safe smart planes that can diagnose and repair their own problems, landing almost soundlessly with the help from virtual control towers... For the electronics engineer who makes such things possible, it all seems like common sense – and so it is, up to a point. But there is a downside... [-] could this be the reality of George Orwell's Big Brother watching us all? Rapid advances in electronics are turning the hardly credible into the highly likely... Even in the short time that speed cameras have been keeping an eye on us, things have moved along with extreme rapidity. A speed camera might flash, but there is a strong chance that the film has run out or that it never had any. However, Big Brother is going digital. Digital cameras can just snap away happily, with the results rapidly downloaded at the local police station. A summons will be in the post within hours or even minutes – eventually it will be e-mailed to your home, your company – or your car. Speed could indeed be electronically limited for all cars (legislation will be needed, of course) and roadside transmitters placed at strategic points may act as electronic "gates" into different speed bands, the car being made to slow without any input from the driver. So those speed cameras will become museum pieces. We simply won't be allowed to be naughty, silly, irresponsible or even a shade inattentive.

...British roads have become more dangerous because there are so many speed cameras on them, says *Autocar*... magazine... "Speed cameras are a £150 million... failure. They do not deter drivers from speeding, are remarkably unsuccessful at saving lives and may well cause accidents of their own. Their presence has meant the removal of police from our roads, so thousands of serious driving offences now go undetected."

...T[he T]ransport Minister... may consider scrapping hidden speed cameras following a review. The cameras have been tested in the Waikato for the past two years, but... the results of the trial were inconclusive. In their first year of operation, the road toll in the Waikato dropped to a 17-year low. However, road deaths and accidents rose steeply in the second year. The decision to use hidden cameras was a controversial one... "Public animosity means people are willing to break the law. People are against covert speed cameras and we have to respect that," [the minister] said. An AA spokes[perso]n... said its members were delighted with [the minister]'s indication that the cameras would be scrapped altogether when the trial finished... The... Government had planned to introduce hidden cameras to the rest of the country... Law enforcement visibility was the most important factor in decreasing speed on the roads, [the spokesperson] said. "It's a case of out-of-sight, out-of-mind. It is the cold, hard shock of seeing a police car that actually makes you slow down. If you put something behind a bush, you don't know about it until three weeks later. By that time you might have crashed and killed someone." [The spokesperson pointed out] that as soon as the publicity surrounding the cameras subsided speeds in the areas began to increase... [Incidentally, m]illions of brakes used in cars and trucks contain asbestos that puts thousands of mechanics at risk of disease, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* says. Contrary to widespread belief, the use of asbestos in brakes is not banned, the newspaper said. Although brakes on almost all new cars contained no asbestos, older brakes and replacement parts frequently contained the substance. Dust collected in 31 brake garages turned up asbestos in 21 of them, in amounts ranging from 2.26 per cent to 63.8 per cent.

...Diesel users are being warned of a problem with the locally refined product which could block the fuel filters of their engines. The NZ Refining Company said petrol was unaffected, and the problem with its diesel raised "no immediate issue of safety." But users were advised to see a mechanic if their engines were running rougher, losing power or cutting out. The refinery said the problem had arisen since winter-grade diesel had gone on the market... and was possibly linked to an additive with anti-freeze properties. It had stopped using the additive and was working to make replacement... stocks available quickly. In the meantime, users, particularly marine and essential services, were... to take "particular care."

...The mystery chemical additive behind the dirty diesel scandal is promoted worldwide as a way for oil refineries to cut costs. A *Weekend Herald* investigation has revealed that a fuel additive named Dodiflow was put into N[Z]'s winter diesel supplies for the first time this year. The N[Z] Refining Company, part-owned by the four big oil companies, has consistently refused to name the new chemical it added to its winter diesel.[The] Energy Minister... has demanded a full report into the diesel problems, as truck, car and bus owners across the country are forced to replace filters blocked by the new fuel mix... Oil companies have told more than 400,000 diesel truck and car owners that they must continue paying the same price to use the dirty fuel for at least a month, until clean fuel can be transported to tanks around N[Z]. Marine diesel tanks are the only ones that have been pumped out and refilled with clean fuel, while the Gull and Challenge chains remain the only companies selling clean diesel to motorists. The refining company yesterday rejected any suggestion that cost-cutting was to blame for the fuel crisis... Last night, it promised a full, independent inquiry into the problem. A report would be sent to the Government as soon as possible. Yesterday, the company said it had called in lawyers to investigate whether Clariant... [-] the European chemicals giant... th[at manufactures the additive -] ...could be sued... Importers of an additive called Paraflow, which was previously used by the refining company to make winter diesel, have been asked to rush in emergency supplies.

...The row over lower-sulphur diesel for Auckland intensified yesterday after [the ARC chairperso]n... called for a boycott of Shell and Mobil, which... refused to support the fuel's early introduction. But Shell said traffic congestion was the main source of the city's air pollution problems.

...FRENCH carmaker Peugeot has abandoned plans to import its latest diesel model because it won't run on N[Z] fuel. The Peugeot 607 uses the industry's latest clean-air device, an award-winning exhaust filter which traps and burns diesel particulates, a mix of combustion residue which includes the pollutant sulphur, a natural ingredient of crude oil. But the high sulphur content in diesel from the Marsden Pt refinery clogs the silicon filter and prevents burn-off, Peugeot says. Diesel in N[Z] is restricted to a maximum of 3000 parts a million of sulphur. On average it

contains about 2000-2400 ppm. But the 607 will only run on diesel with a sulphur content of 350 ppm, the European limit... Until the mid-90s the limit in Britain and Europe was... the same as N[Z and AUS]. But the powerful green lobby helped to force it down... to 500 ppm. This year it has been lowered even further... By 2005 it will be cut to 50 ppm, 60 times lower than [in N]Z... Sulphur by itself isn't recognised by the oil industry as a lubricant, but it is when combined with other properties in fuel. So the... Marsden Pt... refinery will have to install costly technology to ensure the new largely sulphur-less fuel maintains its lubricity. The... refinery... has commissioned a study into the cost of making cleaner fuels and is talking with the Ministry of Economic Development about meeting new international standards. The first stage of the report is expected later this year.

...direct-injection, common rail diesel engines have a bright future for cars, light trucks and vans. Within four years this technology will be incorporated in half of all diesel engines produced world-wide, according to [the person] who heads up Peugeot's technical communications... The HDi engine, which will be first seen in the Peugeot 406 on N[Z] roads later this year, is... no more expensive to produce than the... 2.1 litre turbo diesel four cylinder engine currently used in the Peugeot 406 but is... a three billion franc... investment by the French carmaker... Not only does the HDi engine produce low levels of carbon dioxide emissions, its model lifespan is expected to be between 15 and 20 years...

Deep in the Pacific Ocean, the bottle tops, plastic bags... and myriad other objects that make up what has been dubbed the "plastic vortex" cover an area twice the size of Texas... conservationists believe that it is now too large to ever be removed. Yet an audacious scheme could clear up the six millions tonnes of plastic estimated to have collected in the swirling currents. It would utilise a floating "processing plant", a ship anchored next to the vortex, that could convert some of the plastic into diesel... A car can be run for an hour from a lump of plastic the size of an ice-cream carton.

...Scientists in the... town of Bolton have developed a new fuel from coconuts. It is as potent as diesel, so they say, but has no particulates (black soot). It can be mixed with diesel and used in diesel-powered vehicles. The boffins reckon it could be commercially available within two years.

...[it's of no use to 'people in Britain - who aren't allowed to use cooking oil to fuel their cars (because that would mean they aren't paying petrol taxes') - but a] Louisiana company says it has developed a cleaner alternative to diesel from fat used in McDonald's and Burger King deep-fryers.

...[a NZer] can't help but dream of eating fried fish and a scoop of chips every time [the guy] starts his diesel van. It's not that [the guy] is a huge take-aways fan - it's just that the smell of the fuel in his tank drives his tastebuds mad... [His] van runs on the oil from fish and chip shops, which... is cleaner burning and gentler on the olfactory senses... [The guy] first heard of the fish and chip car concept while in Tauranga about 20 years ago. [The guy] bought a diesel van with the idea of trying to run it on vegetable oil, and discovered that the cleanest way of powering his vehicle was to filter the oil first and add 10% ethanol. But the guy believed the filtering and ethanol addition would be too much work for him to keep his van running constantly on fish and chip oil. So [the guy] talked a company into doing it for him. The company already collects the vegetable oil in large quantities and exports it to Asia. [The guy] has been running his vegetable oil-fired van for three months without problems. "I've ended up being the guinea pig," says the test pilot of the more environmentally friendly vehicle. The vegetable oil will still work if mixed with diesel, or will run without ethanol altogether. "You don't have to do anything to your engine. In fact, it will improve your engine,"... An Auckland courier van company is conducting tests to see if its fleet of diesel vehicles could be run off fish and chip oil... Auckland University is also carrying out environmental tests on the oil... [D]iesel engines can be run off oils from a range of plants, including corn, palm, olive trees, hemp and sunflowers.

...THEY'RE delicious mashed, fried or cooked up in a curry. But if [an] Auckland Institute of Technology... [lecturer] has her way, potatoes will soon have another purpose - fuelling your car... [The] senior lecturer in Applied Science, was [temporarily] recruited by the Technical University in Vienna after the Austrian government pulled the plug on funding for a local ethanol plant. Part of her job was to turn that plant into one that could transform potatoes into butanol... "My... goal was to identify strains of clostridia bacteria in potatoes that could produce high concentrations of butanol at a fast rate,"... [H]er team... also made an important discovery: starch doesn't need to be hydrolysed (converted to simpler sugars by using an enzyme pre-treatment) in order to ferment. Which means to make the fuel, any old potato will do. In fact, any organism containing sugars has the potential to be converted. And the more sugar per organism, the higher the yield of butanol. Potatoes have been used in the non-culinary arena dating back to [WW2]. In recent years, the rising price of petrol has prompted scientists to [resume research on] alternative sources of fuel. True, it sounds like a dream - turning the household vegetable scraps into fuel - but... butanol still can't compete with petrol because the cost of fermentation is high. "There is still work to be done to reduce the cost, but turning solid waste into fuel would be a big step environmentally."

...One [perso]n's waste is another's... treasure in a process developed in N[Z] that could revolutionise the fuel industry. A South Island company has developed a means of turning algae that grow in sewage ponds into crude oil, which can then be turned into fuels... Another [NZ] company... is also working on the... algae, after initially focusing on making biofuels... Unlike biofuels that rely on planted crops, the algae form naturally.

...A Palmerston North radio DJ couldn't quite get a grip on the concept of bio-diesel cars the other morning. "Can they burn rubber," [the DJ asked the] Energywise Rally organiser... during the Auckland/Wellington/Auckland event this week... The bio-diesel car in the rally was a Volkswagen Passat running on a mixture of vegetable and diesel... The Peugeot 406 HDi diesel... was leading the field going into the final leg with 4.20 litres/100km (67.3mpg). The thriftiest vehicle was the hybrid Honda Insight with 3.54 litres/100km (79.8mpg). But it is not on sale in N[Z].

...An amazingly economical Honda mini car which uses both petrol and electric power is likely to go on sale in N[Z] early next year... Insiders at Honda say the thrifty model will use less than one third the fuel of a typical family car... while producing extremely low levels of CO2 emissions. The hybrid car... uses Honda's new Integrated Motor Assist system... [Unlike GMs'] EV1... the first electric car of the modern age[- which]... had dismal sales... because of its very limited range... [-] the Honda Insight two-seater... [is] able to go more than 1300km on a tank of fuel... Toyota has already had success with its hybrid Prius four-door sedan which also uses combined petrol engine and electric motor power.

...Toyota is planning to cut the cost of building its eco-friendly Prius hybrid by... 30[%], before beginning exports... Production in Japan has been almost tripled to meet the domestic demand for the car since it was launched... The A[US]n Government is testing the Prius as a possible fleet vehicle, and the Government in Britain is also looking at it.

...They're all the rage in Hollywood - ...[enviro-cars provide] that environmentally friendly air every Hollywood star needs... [The star of *Titanic*]'s latest enviro-model is the newest generation of these type of cars. [The star] owns a hydrogen-battery-powered vehicle that is a step up from [Toyota's] Prius... which uses a combination of electricity and petrol to get the motor running. Enviro-cars are hard to come by in N[Z]. It's thought only about six Kiwis have them. Toyota... [isn't] marketing... the Prius... here. There is a demonstration vehicle, but Kiwis must import their own environmental runabout. The trouble is, spare parts may have to be imported if there are any break-downs. The Prius cars cost between \$40,000 and \$60,000 but they do have a downside. Industry insiders say the development of electric cars has a long way to go because they lack power. The Subaru WRX is considered the most sought-after car in N[Z] because of its grunty motor, so it stands to reason Kiwis are not as interested in weak-motored cars. Other car manufacturers, including BMW, Ford, and Honda are involved in manufacturing environmentally-friendly cars.

...Chrysler is on track to develop a car within the next three years that not only breaks the 2.8 litre/100km barrier (100 mpg) but will also be affordable. With fuel prices at record levels, Chrysler says it would have a hit on its hands if it could put such a vehicle on the road today... Chrysler showed just how close it got to... [its] target fuel consumption figure... with the recent unveiling of the Dodge ESX3 hybrid concept car - better known as "mybrid" for its mild hybrid use of a diesel engine and electric motor. Most fuel-efficient cars have largely failed to fire the imagination of the public, but the four-seat ESX3, with its advanced styling and innovative features, has received glowing praise. It's the third in a line of hybrid experimental vehicles from the Chrysler Group that stretches back to the ESX1 of 1996 and ESX2 of 1998. Those early efforts did well in making a litre of fuel go a long way, but even with improved manufacturing techniques, the ESX2 would have cost \$37,500 more than a

comparable petrol-engined car. The EXS1 would have cost \$150,000 more. With the EXS3 Chrysler has moved closer to its goal, by lowering the price difference to \$18,700 and improving its fuel efficiency... to an average of 3.9 litres/100km... Its target is an average of 3.5 litres/100km...

Holden Limited in A[US] has unveiled a leading edge concept vehicle that uses 50[%] less fuel than a conventional family car and dramatically reduces exhaust emissions. The advanced hybrid-electric powered Ecommodore has been developed jointly by Holden and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation... and is designed with the emphasis on practicality and achievable technology. It is the first hybrid-electric vehicle to be produced by an A[US]n automotive manufacturer and is the only one of its type in the world. Like N[Z]'s best selling and most popular car overall – the Holden Commodore – it is based on, the ECommodore is a full-sized family car. Its unique hybrid-electric powertrain [–] which combines an electric motor powered by supercapacitors and advanced lead-acid batteries with a four-cylinder aluminium alloy petrol engine – delivers the same level of performance as a standard 3.8 litre V6. The ECommodore's technologies are specifically targeted at improving overall vehicle efficiency. These include significant mass reduction through the use of advanced, lightweight materials, clever aerodynamics, reduced rolling resistance and regenerative braking. Holden A[US]'s Chairperso[n] and Managing Director... says the ECommodore illustrates the high level of technological innovation that is achievable in A[US].

...The Aussies are telling world carmakers that whatever they can do Holden can do better – and greener – with their environment-conscious hybrid Ecommodore... It's a front-drive petrol-electric prototype built to showcase A[US]n technology to a world tuning into the Sydney Olympic Games... There are two types of electric hybrid vehicles. A parallel hybrid uses a conventional engine and an electric motor to simultaneously power the vehicle. A series hybrid is an electric car which has a small conventional engine driving a generator to charge the batteries, and a separate electric motor to drive the car. The Ecommodore is a parallel hybrid built in 18 months at a cost of \$10.5 million. Holden says a production version could be ready within eight years, although it acknowledges that its success depends on how green A[US]ns ultimately want to become... Holden says a production Ecommodore would cost about \$3000-\$4000 more than the current model... The CSIRO, which claimed 11 patents in developing lead-acid batteries, says the battery pack and supercapacitor cost about \$2500. It is already working on a smaller, lighter battery pack. Other hybrids like the Toyota Prius and Honda Insight use nickel-hydrate batteries, the same technology as mobile phones.

...WE'VE all done it, misplaced something that all along was right in front of us. The A[US]ns have a response to such mental lapses. "If it was a black snake it'd bite you," they say, meaning that what you were looking for was under your nose all the time. That A[US] should use its mineral riches to help develop fuel alternatives has been staring leaders in the face too, since [an AUSn] wrote *The Lucky Country* in 1964, telling his country[people] that to abuse the nation's enormous natural wealth was to risk being bitten. Part of that wealth has helped developments in motoring, including a petrol/electric hybrid Holden Commodore which the company believes could be on the road inside three years. Meantime, Holden and its parent, General Motors, are [planning to] show... off another future fuel alternative during the Sydney Olympics, or "Green Games." It is a hydrogen vehicle developed in Germany and the U[S] by GM subsidiary Opel – and the only thing that comes out of its exhaust is water vapour. Hydrogen1, as it is called, will lead... [the] marathon-runners around Sydney... "We think it is appropriate that a vehicle that is leading the way in future fuel technology will also lead the world's best long-distance runners in the Olympics," said Holden['s chairperso]n... "It is a demonstration of GM's commitment to technological and environmental leadership, and more specifically to producing vehicles which offer economical use of resources." Based on Opel's Zafira van and people-mover, Hydrogen1... "...represent[s] another step on the way to a volume-production, fuel-cell vehicle." GM researchers and engineers view fuel-cell propulsion as an ideal platform for vehicles ranging from private cars to buses and trains, and they believe high-volume production will be in place before 2010. Indeed, the A[US]n Government is gearing up to have the first hydrogen filling station operating by 2007. Apart from Opel, Mercedes-Benz, BMW and Volkswagen-Audi are already running hydrogen-powered vehicles in Germany. DaimlerChrysler and Ford have them in use around their home base of Detroit. Hydrogen1 is a concept car that... is powered by a three-phase electric motor. It has a top speed of 140 km/h and a range of about 400km. Electricity is generated by a fuel cell stack that consumes pure hydrogen. The stack consists of 200 individual cells measuring a fuel source 59cm long, 27cm wide and 50cm high, about as compact as a conventional four-cylinder petrol or diesel engine. Its continuous power output is 80kW and its peak output is 120kW. The liquefied hydrogen is contained in a 75-litre tank at minus 253 deg C. Priorities for... Hydrogen1 include developing a lighter and more compact cell stack...

The quest for the car industry's "holy grail" – a true zero-emission car that looks and feels pretty much like today's petrol-powered model – appears tantalisingly close to being realised. But forget slow, range-limited battery cars or cumbersome hybrid models. The only way, according to the world's biggest carmakers, that cars will be removed from the environment debate – the U[N] has predicted that by 2030, the 800 million or so vehicles populating the world will have doubled – is to use fuel-cell technology. Fuel cell sounds new and exotic but as with many "breakthroughs", the idea has been around for more than 160 years... The fuel-cell HydroGen 1 Zafira, which will act as the 'pace car' for the... marathons at the Sydney Olympics... looks the same as the standard car... offers just about as much interior space and... is only fractionally slower than the diesel-power Zafira that is sold in Europe, accelerating from rest to 100 km/h in 16 seconds... Jump behind the wheel and the only significant difference is there is no gear lever, just a few buttons on the centre console. Select the one pointing forwards, hit the accelerator and while it is a little sluggish off the line – to prevent some of the prototype components over-heating, the engineers backed off the motor's torque peak – you are soon on your way... Its torque peak, which is delivered from a standing start, is an impressive 251Nm, or as much as a 3.0-litre V6... Once on the move, the power is readily available and since there are no gears, the 55kW electric motor that is fed by the fuel cell stack goes smoothly and enthusiastically about its business. The driving experience should be a silent one but with an industrial compressor pumping air into the stack, this prototype does sound a bit like a vacuum cleaner that needs its dust bag emptied... Obviously, cooling the hydrogen to minus 253C is not an ideal solution, but it does allow more fuel to be squeezed into the tank. Store it as a gas, as you would with natural gas, and the tank has to be super strong, which means it would be heavy and take up a lot of space. Longer term, hydrogen is expected to be stored more economically between the atom spaces in metal hybrids... [(t)hese so-called nano spaces are about a millionth of a millimetre[])... or in the surfaces or spaces between small carbon structures.

...The Government is investing up to \$6 million in the development of N[Z]'s own hydrogen-powered fuel cell technology, extracting the hydrogen from coal. Researchers expect to have the technology up and running in a laboratory in three years, and a prototype in the field within six years... Initially it would be used to produce energy at small sites, and for transport. A fuel-cell car could be plugged into the electricity grid overnight to generate hydrogen to power it the next day. In the longer term the hydrogen should be pure enough to run high-efficiency fuel cells, micro-turbines and the fuel cells of transport fleets. In N[Z], CRL Energy Ltd, the former research arm of state coal company Solid Energy, is to be funded to find ways to produce hydrogen from coal. At the same time, the Government's science funding agency, the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology, is investing in a project by crown science company Industrial Research Ltd (IRL) to use hydrogen in fuel cells... Commercialisation of fuel-cell technology had begun and IRL had already demonstrated a 5kW fuel cell... Solid Energy['s] chief executive... said the coal industry was pleased to be involved... because... "N[Z] has enough coal to provide energy for thousands of years if we make it environmentally viable."

...N[Z] is ideally placed to be one of the first countries to power its cars on hydrogen-powered fuel cells, says [an]American energy guru... Making his 15th visit to N[Z] in 31 years, the co-author of *Natural Capitalism and Small is Profitable* said N[Z] had the huge benefits of hydro energy – and no old-style car makers. "Not having an iron-age car industry is actually an advantage... You can actually produce a 'hypercar' in N[Z] using your boatbuilding and composite material skills and software." [The guru] heads Colorado's Rocky Mountain Institute, which has designed a "hypercar" made of light but strong new materials. The vehicle needs only a third as much energy as a conventional car. [The guru]

advocates powering the car with a “fuel cell”... The combination of a fuel cell and light materials would make the car at least six times as efficient as a conventional car – and “ultimately efficient enough to cross the US on one tank of fuel”. There’s another benefit, too. When it is not on the road, the car could be kept running while parked at work or at home, feeding its energy into the office or household electricity system to reduce power charges... “Iceland is going to an all-hydrogen economy based on hydro and geothermal energy, starting with buses, then cars and fishing vessels. They intend to not use a drop of oil. Shell Hydrogen is very active in helping with that. There has been interest in doing the same thing in Tasmania. There is one [project] going on in Vanuatu, and there are a couple of islands off the west coast of North America where this is now a very active option... But... hydrogen-powered vehicles... will still be less sound in congestion. When we have these wonderfully clean, efficient, safe cars that use no oil and produce no carbon dioxide and no smog, we will still have too many people driving too many times in too many cars, and therefore still have congestion and a lot of other land-use problems. So instead of running out of air and oil and climate, we’ll run out of land and time and patience. Therefore we have to pay attention to how we can encourage people to drive less by having fairer and more economic access to public transport for all, including for the one-third of the population who are too young, old, poor or infirm to drive.” ■... Earlier this year, DaimlerChrysler subsidiary EvoBus signed a contract in Amsterdam with nine major European cities for the delivery of 30 Mercedes-Benz Citaro fuel-cell buses. The cities are Porto, Hamburg, London, Luxembourg, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Stockholm, Stuttgart and Reykjavik. The buses will be delivered in 2003. The success of the buses, and the fuel cell unit that powers them, will hinge largely on the methods used for producing the hydrogen on which they will run. In Amsterdam, for example, the production of hydrogen will depend mainly on electrolysis. The Dutch intend to burn organic waste to generate the required electricity. They are also conducting experiments using bacteria to extract hydrogen from glucose obtained from biomass. Elsewhere in the world, in Iceland and Brazil for example, they intend to use hydroelectric power to produce hydrogen... Sceptics who still have doubts about the bright future in store for the fuel cell are now few and far between in public transport companies. The Chicago Transit Authority, for example, has set itself the goal of replacing its entire diesel-powered fleet with fuel-cell buses within 25 years. This follows the conclusion... of an extensive two-year trial of Canadian-made city buses powered by Ballard fuel cells and an Xcellis drive system. These buses travelled more than 50,000km in 5000 hours, carrying over 100,000 passengers... [(the buses have) a range of 300km, a top speed of 80 km/h and can carry up to 70 passengers[]]... A similar trial is now underway at Palm Beach... Funded by the California Fuel Cell Partnership, an organisation put in place by the state government and business interests, it has set itself the goal of testing 25 fuel-cell buses and 30 fuel-cell cars under normal road conditions...

Hybrid cars, which combine electric motors with small petrol engines, will outpace the environmental benefits of hydrogen fuel-cell cars until at least 2020, says a university study. Hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles have low emissions and energy use on the road. But the study says that converting a hydrocarbon fuel such as natural gas or petrol into hydrogen to fuel such vehicles uses substantial energy and emits greenhouse gases. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology research was published after the [Republican] Administration announced an initiative to develop hydrogen fuel cells. Combined with last year’s “Freedom Car” programme to build vehicles fuelled by hydrogen, the initiative will be powered by US\$1.2 billion... in Government funds. [The]US Energy Secretary... said... hydrogen-fuel cars... could reduce US demand for foreign oil by 11 million barrels a day by 2040... After 2020, hydrogen cars will win out, predicted the researchers, who do not recommend stopping work on the hydrogen fuel cell... In the future, analysts say, large amounts of hydrogen will be separated from water, where it bonds with oxygen, through the use of alternative energies such as wind and solar power. But the study says that for now, the green method of making hydrogen is too expensive.

...FORD N[Z] and... the country’s largest supplier of liquid petroleum gas, are about to promote LPG as an alternative to increasingly expensive petrol. Not since the ...70s and ...80s – when N[Z]ers were using about 90,000 tonnes of LPG a year... – has the gas been given such support. Rockgas is using public relations company the Sigma Group to get the message across. The LPG campaign comes as the price of a litre of petrol... could go over \$2 a litre again... [I]n downtown Auckland yesterday... a litre of LPG cost 64c. Rockgas is getting in behind Ford and its new LPG model Falcons, one an LPG-only unit and the other dual-fuel. The[y respectively]... cost... \$42,000 and... \$43,500... There has been renewed interest in alternative fuels since the price of petrol began going up a few months ago, particularly in A[US] where Ford services thousands of LPG-powered taxis. Investment there is such that a 60,000-tonne LPG storage tank opened last week near Sydney airport. Ford N[Z] is getting in behind its dedicated, factory-built LPG Falcon Forte, despite there being fewer LPG outlets than petrol pumps. Ford says the LPG Falcon is more environmentally friendly... than a petrol car... – emitting about 30[%] fewer pollutants...

THE DAYS of relying on fossil fuels for... transport are surely numbered, now their role in global warming is so well recognised. But when will the “green” car finally have its day? Does it actually exist? Not totally. Toyota has its Prius... Honda... [ha]s the similarly powered... Insight[, and] in Britain is selling a hybrid Civic. Ford N[Z] is pushing sales of its LPG-only Falcons, greener and cleaner than the petrol Falcons. But none of these cars are totally green – that is, producing nothing but water vapour from their exhausts. Five years ago alternative-fuel issues were hardly on the industrial radar screen. Now, all the world’s major motor manufacturers have huge green programmes and boast senior executives with titles such as “vice-president, environment.” The prize for the company that first cracks the formula for the green car of the future will be measured in trillions of dollars. The prize for the human race will be cleaner air. The bad news is that those same companies have found that solving the technology problem of alternative fuels is taking more time and money than they expected. But while the most obvious alternatives to the car are still public transport, two-wheels or working from home, alternative-fuel vehicles are moving up the agenda. Leading carmakers... are busy researching what they see as the most likely future alternatives to petrol and diesel – and some are greener than others.

...Three oil companies are working to develop biodegradable lubricating oil. Shell and Castrol have teamed with Japanese heavy-equipment company Komatsu to work on the project. Komatsu has already developed a biodegradable oil formula for its machinery.

...Engineers from the University of Tokyo are showing off an eight-seater/eight-wheeler limousine powered by an electric motor at each wheel. (Ferdinand Porsche did something similar 100 years ago).

...An international rally of steam cars will be held near Melbourne next year. The get-together brings to mind the Stanley Motor Carriage Company, formed in 1896 by the two... brothers who built the Stanley Steamer, the most famous steam car[(t)he... brothers also invented and sold to Kodak the dry photographic process[]]... One of the brothers was killed in a Stanley in 1916... The last true Stanley steam car was built in 1924... In 1906, a Stanley steam car broke the land/speed time of 204 km/h, a record it held for many years... The first American police car was a Stanley.

...British police are testing their latest weapon in the fight against crime – an electric-powered three-wheeled car with a top speed of 40 km/h[and a ‘50km range for around a cent a km’. The one-occupant], German-made scooter, nicknamed the “flying banana” comes in a shocking yellow plastic and is more likely to make criminals burst out laughing than quake in fear. But the police driver who is testing the scooter as an environmentally friendly alternative to 160km[h] “flying squad” police cars said its electric motor made it perfect for creeping up on unsuspecting wrongdoers.

...Spurred by a leak on media website Inside.com in January, technophiles have theorised about a hydrogen-powered hovercraft, a toilet that produced no waste, or, more accurately, “George Jetson’s car in a briefcase”... The ultra-secret “It” invention that has kept the high-tech world abuzz for nearly a year is a self-balancing, motorised scooter that costs less than US\$5c... a day to run, says *Time* magazine. I[ts i]nventor... believes the machine, codenamed It but officially the Segway, will replace cars in downtown areas by enabling users to zip around at little cost and no harm to the environment. The two-wheeler uses a complex array of gyroscopes and computers to mimic the human body’s sense of balance... Users lean forward to move forward, lean back to reverse and turn by twisting a handle. Falling over is impossible, the article says, and the Segway can handle ice, snow and stairs with ease. “The big idea is to put a human being into a system where the machine acts as an extension of your body,”

said [the inventor]. The 50-year-old inventor holds about 100 US patents... including the first portable insulin pump, a briefcase-sized dialysis machine and a wheelchair that can climb stairs. The scooter's range of about 28km and a top speed of 27 km/h mean it will not replace the car on long trips. But [the inventor] and officials at private firm Segway Co see the machine as a handy way to get around congested cities, or as a people-mover in developing nations such as China. Company officials have met city planners and federal safety regulators to ensure that the scooters will be allowed to share footpaths with pedestrians... The US Postal Service, General Electric and National Parks Service will be the first customers, buying 36kg heavy-duty models at \$US8000... apiece. Segway expects to market a consumer model for \$US3000 within a year.

...With half the world seemingly ready to bomb the other half into oblivion, a global recession looming and climate change ready to flood out your long-term plans, what would you say the world really needs now? [A 50-year-old inventor] thinks the answer is simple: his scooter. Except you must never, ever, call it a scooter. It is "the first self-balancing, electric-powered transportation machine", and it will "empower pedestrians" and let them reclaim cities from the deadly embrace of the cars that have overrun them. "Cities need cars like fish need bicycles," [the inventor] told *Time* this week... The Segway looks like nothing more than an overlarge scooter with the back end lopped off, but what it does is more subtle. By all accounts, it is a marvellous piece of technology. It is two-wheeled, concealing in its base a complex array of gyroscopes, computer chips and tilt sensors that check the centre of gravity of the person standing on its platform 100 times a second. Those who have used it say starting, stopping and turning quickly become intuitive... Is the Segway the product the world has been waiting for? News of the invention, then known only by its codename, "Ginger", leaked in January, followed by months of silence from [the inventor]... Word of Ginger trickled out when... a journalist, won a six-figure book advance from the Harvard Business Press to tell the inside story of its development. ([The inventor] is no longer cooperating with him.) At that time, it had been shown to few people... The rumours took off. It was a *Star Trek*-style transporter. It was a hydrogen-powered car that would end our reliance on fossil fuels. It was... an antigravity device. But no, it's a scooter. Sorry, self-balancing electric-powered transportation machine. For some, the revelation has been a disappointment, to which [the inventor] responds: "...I would stake my reputation, my money and my time on the fact that 10 years from now, this will be the way many people in many places get around... If all we end up with are a few billion-dollar niche markets, that would be a disappointment. It's not like our goal is just to put the golf-cart industry out of business."

...[a] General Motors executive... isn't counting on keeping the \$2.3 million cash prize for his hole-in-one at a charity golf tournament in America. GM has a policy prohibiting personal windfalls for staff acting on its behalf... [By the way, Volkswagen's] chief... has apparently given himself a retirement present – a 30m luxury yacht. [The chief] is to call it quits next year and is expected to cruise the Mediterranean in the \$35 million vessel[, but] will remain on the VW board. While we are on VW, its N[Z] operation has] had its biggest month... selling 195 cars. VW is already way ahead on last year's sales. Stablemate Audi is setting records, too. It sold 18 all-road models in August, each one costing more than \$100,000.

...A Norwegian ship with a cargo of almost 3000 new cars sank in shallow waters in the English Channel yesterday after colliding in thick fog with a Bahamas-registered container vessel. There were no casualties. The Tricolor keeled over 35km north of the French port of Dunkirk. It was yesterday resting on its port side in 30m of water, brushing the surface. The Tricolor had been bound for the south England port of Southampton with 2862 new BMW, Volvo and Saab cars worth between \$50 million and \$63 million. They had been loaded at the Belgian port of Zeebrugge.

...A ship carrying 70,000 tonnes of kerosene struck the wreckage of a sunken car transporter in the English Channel yesterday but was freed after more than two hours... Three tug boats and a warship from the French Navy led the operation to aid the 243m tanker, which the British coastguard described as an "elderly" single-hulled vessel, built in 1981... The Turkish-registered Vicky struck the top of the submerged Tricolor about 7.30pm... and floated off the wreck shortly before high tide at 10.07pm local time, the Dover coastguard reported. The ship anchored 1.6km north of the wreck, where a damage inspection was being carried out. A... maritime spokes[person] in the French port city of Cherbourg, said the captain of the Vicky believed the vessel sustained only minor damage and there was no risk of its fuel seeping into the water or air. However, authorities were unsure whether the Tricolor, which was carrying 2000 tonnes of fuel oil when it sank, had been damaged further. The Tricolor, laden with BMWs, Volvos and Saabs, sank [a fortnight ago] after colliding in thick fog with a container ship. Salvage efforts continue. Another cargo ship, the German-owned Nicola, struck the sunken Tricolor [the day after it sank] but was pulled clear. Maritime authorities in Cherbourg said the Vicky was issued a warning about its proximity to the wreck but for "a reason still unknown" was not able to avoid hitting the Tricolor. The wreck is in a lane used by up to 500 ships a day, and is marked by five illuminated buoys. Hourly warnings are issued to ship crews.

...*Insurers warn of risk from lost containers* Up to 10,000 containers a year are lost from ships worldwide and the Insurance Council says they are "floating disasters waiting to happen"... The council today launches a campaign in Wellington to try to get support from maritime groups, the Government and public to put preventive measures in place and ensure lost containers are recovered... both in N[Z] and overseas... The International Marine Organisation requires the master of a ship to report a lost container if it carries noxious substances. But the only regulation for an empty container, or one holding non-poisonous substances, is that the master reports to the nearest coastal state if [the master] comes across it... [The] Maritime Safety Authority deputy director... estimated that only about one container a year was lost in N[Z] waters. But... it was such a problem worldwide that the Dutch Coastguard had two vessels on permanent lookout.

...Big is best when it comes to shipping freight. Size is so important that Auckland's Waitemata Harbour must be deepened to accommodate the new generation of container ships plying N[Z] ports. The master of a new, regular visitor to Auckland, the P&O Nedlloyd Encounter, was keen to show off the huge vessel as it was loaded with containers... by... two 28-storey cranes... on a \$100 million extension of the Axis Fergusson container wharf... for its maiden voyage from N[Z] to the east coast of the U[S] and Northern Europe... [The master] says the Encounter is so massive that it will struggle to fit through Panama Canal locks as it journeys from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean. The German national says entering the lock will be a tight squeeze as the vessel's 32.2-metre beam, or width, leaves only 30cm clearance on either side of the lock. P&O Nedlloyd commissioned seven new Albatross-class vessels, and partner operator CP Ships has ordered three, to ply the Eastabout trade route. The ships have been built specifically to cater for N[Z] exports, particularly refrigerated meat, fish and dairy products, for the next 20 to 25 years... Ports of Auckland... gain[ed] resource consents to deepen the commercial shipping lane through the Rangitoto Channel to accommodate the vessels' deeper draught. Ports of Auckland negotiated the dredging proposal with Friends of the Earth and iwi groups. Blasting may be used, if necessary. The dredging will allow round-the-clock access, which is now limited by tidal conditions as bigger ships can't negotiate the Rangitoto Channel three hours either side of low tide. P & O's regional manager... says... the new ships... carry twice as much cargo, at higher speeds than older ships. The Encounter is the second vessel of her type to visit N[Z] shores, its sister ship the Remuera visited Auckland for her naming ceremony... [three months ago. The Encounter is crew]ed by nine German officers and engineers and... 15... Filipino[s]... Routinely dwarfing wharves, the ship is as long as three rugby fields and can hold a total of 4112 containers... [- including] up to 1300 temperature-controlled containers... [-] with a computerised stacking system used to stack containers up to eight high into hatches... Newer, more technically-advanced containers, which can be monitored by remote, are being phased in. The changeover should be complete in a year... ■ PO[RT GISBORNE]... is being sued over the grounding of the Jody F Millennium last year. Japanese company Twin Bright Shipping, owners of the log carrier, and its parent company Soki Kissen Co, are suing the port and the Gisborne District Council for about \$23 million. The Jody was stranded for 18 days after running aground while leaving Gisborne harbour in a severe storm... [The port company] would not discuss the details of the lawsuit yesterday. The company planned to defend the suit... While aground on the sandbank the Jody developed several cracks in its hull before being towed off by three tugs. Tonnes of fuel oil leaked into the surrounding sea and was washed up on the beach before what remained in the ship's lower tanks was pumped into barges or into higher ballast tanks above the waterline. The Maritime Safety Authority then claimed the costs of the rescue operation and cleanup from the Jody's owners. The[

district council's] chief executive... said the council, a secondary defendant in the lawsuit, was already preparing its defence. "They are claiming the port wasn't effectively operated and there wasn't sufficient regard to the conditions at the port... When the Jody left, it effectively bottomed out because the channel wasn't, in their view, deep enough..." One of the issues will be deciding who is responsible for choosing to leave port in a storm.

...The M[SA] will today release its long-awaited report on the grounding of the Jodi F Millennium... last year. The investigation, which has taken 14 months to complete, is one of the most comprehensive the authority has carried out. It will reveal what went wrong... when the ship ran aground off Waikanae Beach in Gisborne while trying to leave port during a southerly storm... The ship's owners are suing the former port company and the Gisborne District Council over the Jodi's grounding. Twin Bright Shipping and its parent company, Soki Kissen, say Port Gisborne negligently and improperly ordered the ship to sea in unsafe conditions and otherwise failed to provide a safe port. "They should probably never have allowed the ship into the port because they didn't have the systems and the management to cope with it," said [a] maritime law specialist... who is acting for the Jodi's owners. "When it was in port, they dropped the ball... [Afraid that 'if the ship rocked it might damage their wharf',] they sent it out of the port... with 20,000 tonnes of pine logs... in circumstances where it was almost doomed to hit the brakes." ...Tomorrow's authority report is expected to express concern about the role played by the port company, the council and the ship's Korean master during the grounding.

...Kawau Island jetty owners are angry at a Court of Appeal ruling that permits the public to use private jetties to get to beaches. The decision arose from an access dispute on the island, which has about 60 private jetties. Some residents have spent up to \$100,000 building a jetty. Vivian Bay owners... pursued the appeal after feeling aggrieved by rulings of the High Court and Environment Court. Their appeal was opposed by the Auckland Regional Council but supported by the Department of Conservation and the Rodney District Council. [The] ARC environment committee chair[perso]n... said the decision vindicated the ARC stance in defence of the fundamental public right to access the coast... The regional council said allowing public access minimised the structure's intrusion into public land... But the [jetty owner's] lawyer... said... the... [appeal court judge]'s ruling limited "to a certain extent" the amount of use the public could make of jetties. The public could use the [Vivian Bay] jetty providing they did not unreasonably impede the couple's access to and use of it. For example, no one else could indefinitely tie his or her boat to the jetty because that would prevent the [owner's] using... it. The decision meant the [owner's] could still take out an enforcement order against anyone who was using the jetty for purposes other than to gain access to the coastal marine area. [Their lawyer] said there was much interest in the case by the boating community, port companies and marine operators over concerns of free use of moorings and marinas. "Anyone who thinks they can now tie up their boat to a marina would be sadly mistaken,"... [In international news, m]ore than 430 asylum seekers rescued from a sinking boat were last night stranded on a Norwegian freighter in the Indian Ocean... The refugees, from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, have high-lighted the increasing pressure on A[US]'s borders with thousands of illegal immigrants arriving every year from Southeast Asia and the Middle East. The A[US]n Government yesterday refused entry to the refugees, who had threatened the captain of the freighter Tampa when [it] tried to return them to Java under international law governing rescue at sea. Last night the Indonesian Government also refused to take them... In Canberra, [AUS's P]M... said A[US] would not be forced to accept the 438 refugees on the Tampa, anchored 12 nautical miles off the A[US]n Indian Ocean territory of Christmas Island... In the past two weeks more than 900 other boat people have landed on the Island, forcing the erection of a tent city and a shuttle service of Air Force transports flying illegal migrants to centres on the mainland. More than 2800 refugees have already reached A[US] this year. "We simply cannot allow a situation to develop where A[US] is seen around the world as a country of easy destination," said [the PM]. "...While this is a humanitarian, decent country, we are not a soft touch and we are not a nation whose sovereign rights in relation to who comes here are going to be trampled." ...The drama began when the Tampa plucked the asylum-seekers from a sinking Indonesian ferry, spotted by an A[US]n patrol aircraft after the passengers spelled out SOS on the deck. The asylum-seekers – including 26 [gals], two pregnant, and 43 children – were taken in a heavy swell from the 20m KM Palapa... [T]he Palapa was falling apart as [the Tampa] took the refugees on board... The owners of the Tampa, the Wilhelmsen line, said... [the asylum-seekers] had been at sea for eight to 10 days and there were health problems that needed urgent attention. The ability of the roll-on, roll-off ship's crew of 27 to care for the refugees was limited, and the ship could not land helicopters... The standoff has added further fuel to a row over A[US]'s treatment of illegal migrants which is due to reach another head in Parliament tomorrow when Labor and the Democrats will block a Government bid to restrict refugees' rights to appeal against deportation orders. With existing detention camps almost full, the Government last week announced a \$A22 million programme to almost double their capacity to 7000.

...HUNDREDS of A[US]ns attended a candlelight vigil [last night] for those on the Tampa. Around 300 people gathered in a park calling for the government to accept the refugees and to respect human rights... The asylum-seekers... have been on the Tampa in terrible conditions since they were rescued from their sinking boat on Monday... [B]olstered by wide public support[. AUS's PM] refused to let the asylum-seekers land.

A court ruling today on the Tampa asylum seekers may not resolve the matter. Ultimately, an appeal to the High Court is expected to decide their fate. The... Federal Court will decide on an appeal by the Federal Government against... [a] ruling that... resulted from court action by the Victorian Council for Civil Liberties... [that over 430 people] rescued from a sinking boat by the Norwegian freighter should be returned to A[US].

...The fate of... 460 asylum-seekers on board the Tampa has been decided. N[Z] came to the rescue yesterday, agreeing to take 150... and the rest... would go to... Nauru. "Those who are genuine refugees in N[Z] will remain there," [AUS's PM] said. Genuine refugees in Nauru could apply to enter A[US] or other countries. The U[N] was pressing A[US] to let the[m]... land on Christmas Island while their claims for refugee status were processed. But [the PM] stood by an earlier decision that this latest boatload of illegal immigrants would[n't] be allowed into A[US]. NZ's PM defended him, saying... Indonesia turning a blind-eye to the refugee problem placed A[US] under enormous pressure. [The PM said NZ] was only meeting a short-term crisis and the world had to act... [(s)]weeping changes to immigration rules will shut the door to... thousands of people already in the queue to come to N[Z]; t]he overhaul of immigration policy announced yesterday is also expected to mean some people already living here, but still seeking residency, will be forced to leave[.]. ● AUS has]... boarded a boat carrying 200... illegal immigrants. They have been put on the Manoora with the Tampa refugees.

...N[Z] will not take any of the extra 200-odd asylum-seekers now on board the A[US]n troopship Manoora. The Manoora, carrying 434 asylum-seekers taken off the container ship Tampa, to Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea, took charge of the additional group on Friday night after the A[US]n Navy intercepted another boatload of illegal immigrants heading for A[US]. The NZ P]M... said yesterday that the offer to take up to 150 of the Tampa asylum-seekers stood. That offer related to the particular humanitarian crisis surrounding the Tampa. "What this latest incident shows is that this flood of asylum-seekers is far bigger than N[Z] and AUS]... That's why I'm calling for an international response to the whole situation..." The international community eventually responded to the crisis of the Vietnamese boat people and the same response was needed now, [the PM] said... The Tampa asylum-seekers are expected in Port Moresby by tonight or tomorrow but may have been delayed by the latest incident and bad weather. The 150 destined for N[Z] will be flown straight from Port Moresby to Auckland. ■ [AUS's PM] wants tough new asylum law[s. The PM]... said the legislation, to be introduced in Parliament this month, would remove Christmas Island and the Ashmore reef islands from A[US]'s migration zone, the area within territorial waters from where applications for asylum can be lodged... "We have to be decisive and forceful in trying to break this ugly people trafficking racket." ...The main Opposition Labor Party has yet to indicate its position. [A c]onstitutional lawyer... from Sydney University, said there was no constitutional impediment to the Government's proposed law. But [the constitutional lawyer] said it was unheard of for a country to cut off part of its sovereign territory to suit its purposes.

...A[US's] Government said yesterday that its policy of refusing entry to asylum seekers was deterring hundreds of boatpeople from attempting the voyage... from Indonesia... reject[ing] claims... that the arrival on Saturday of... 200 boat people... showed the headline policy was not effective.

...Another boatload of... asylum seekers, most of whom say they are from Afghanistan... was moored off... A[US]'s remote Christmas Island... yesterday, arriving less than 12 hours after [the P]M... trumpeted a victory in his fight against boatpeople by forcing a group back to Indonesia.

...Asylum seekers rescued by the A[US]n Navy after their boat sank... would not be allowed on the A[US]n mainland, A[US's] Foreign Minister... said yesterday. The 187 asylum seekers were last night in limbo on HMAS Adelaide, which rescued them when their boat began sinking on Monday night. [The minister] said the asylum seekers had earlier acted abominably by throwing children overboard when their boat was turned back by the Navy. The Government has said it may unload them at nearby Christmas Island, which has been excluded from A[US]'s migration zone. "...I don't think any A[US]n wants people who would behave in such a way as to throw their children overboard to come to... our country." [The minister] said there were some indications that the asylum seekers had sabotaged their boat. Meanwhile, [the]... Government has pledged a worldwide hunt for the people smuggler blamed for hundreds of deaths after an unseaworthy ship sank last year. A[n]... Egyptian national, is accused of orchestrating the... SIEV-X voyage, which cost 353 lives when it sank off Indonesia... the *Sydney Morning Herald* reports. [The Egyptian] is due to walk free from a Jakarta jail tomorrow after four attempts to bring him to A[US] to face charges... A[US] was unable to extradite [the Egyptian] on murder charges because it could not say whether SIEV-X sank in Indonesian or international waters. The... A[US]n federal police had also sought to extradite him on people-smuggling charges but this too had failed because there was no law against this in Indonesia... [The] Federal Justice Minister... said that A[US] was helpless to prevent the release but would not relent in its pursuit of him... The impending release sparked criticism that the Government failed to press Indonesia to hand over [the Egyptian] because of what [the Egyptian] might reveal about A[US]'s alleged role in the SIEV-X tragedy...

Late last year, with an election just weeks away and an apparently unending armada of refugee boats sailing from Indonesia, did A[US]n officials condemn 353 people to death? The implication, raised with evidence that the Navy knew a dangerously overloaded, decrepit boat was heading to almost certain doom but did nothing to prevent the subsequent tragedy, has intensified A[US]'s agony over the interception and detention of illegal asylum seekers. While it seems inconceivable that naval officers on land would order one of their ships to stand by while people drowned – or that a captain and crew at sea would obey and remain silent – the suggestion made by a former diplomat has gained surface credibility through official minutes and the evidence of one of the Navy's most senior officers. The Navy contents that while it knew in advance that the boat was heading into likely danger, its available aircraft and ships were occupied intercepting other boats elsewhere, and there was nothing it could have done. But that explanation contradicted earlier evidence and added to a disturbing tale of deception and manipulation emerging from a twice-extended Senate inquiry into the quaintly named "certain maritime incident" that... fuelled... [the PM's] refugee and terrorist-supercharged run for a third term in power. The saga has overlapped domestic and international outrage at A[US]'s policy of mandatory detention of asylum seekers for months on end in... Outback camps, sparking riots, self-mutilation, hunger strikes and mass breakouts from a system condemned by, among others, the U[N].

...A series of fires were left to burn early yesterday at Woomera camp in South A[US] after staff fled attacks by detainees armed with metal bars and stones, immigration officials said. The blazes, which continued an outbreak of trouble sweeping A[US]'s... detention centres for illegal arrivals, destroyed or damaged 43 buildings before they were finally brought under control. It was the latest in a string of incidents at Woomera... Charges were expected to be laid against some of the 121 detainees. The fires at Woomera followed similar blazes at two other centres in recent days, blamed on detainees awaiting deportation after their applications for asylum failed. Extra guards have been put on duty to prevent more trouble. The latest violence again shone a spotlight on A[US]'s hardline stance on detaining all illegal arrivals, including [mothers] and children, in guarded camps. Asylum cases can take years to process, triggering protests and escapes... "What have people fleeing persecution and the risk of injury, torture or death done to deserve this unconscionable treatment?"... [a] Supreme Court judge... h[as] asked. "If there are some cheats amongst the people seeking asylum in A[US], what crime have the rest committed to warrant the A[US]n Parliament and its members from the two major political groupings taking leave of their senses? What are the crimes of the children and the elderly? (And) what would be happening if the boat people were white farmers from Zimbabwe or Afrikaners from South Africa?" The worst of these answers don't bear thinking about... ■ Detainees armed with pipes yesterday set fire to a dining room and took over a compound at the Christmas Island detention centre. The Immigration Department said the disturbance was still in progress last night. It was not known what caused the incident or if there were injuries.

...Hunger strikes by protesting asylum seekers spread yesterday to a fourth A[US]n detention centre while refugee activists took to the streets of the country's two largest cities to call for greater compassion. An Immigration Department spokes[person] said 17 people at the Port Hedland refugee camp in Western A[US] began to refuse food and water in a copycat protest to mirror 12 days of turmoil at another camp in the baking heat of the interior... Police said 300 people tried to break a perimeter fence at the Maribyrnonga detention centre in... Melbourne... where dozens of asylum seekers and visa overstayers have staged a sympathy hunger strike... "This just shows the level of desperation, these people just got nothing to lose, they are throwing themselves on razor wire," said [a spokesperson for] the Refugee Action Collective...

The A[US]n Government drew fresh fire yesterday for a false claim that asylum seekers threw children overboard in an effort to stay, with the Opposition putting out Navy photographs of refugees fleeing a sinking ship... The Opposition Labor Party leader... said the Government made public only close-up photographs of people in the water, but did not show the sinking boat. "Of course people are going to be in the water if the boat is sinking, including children." ...Government reports last week said the Navy told... [the Immigration D]epartment the claim was false the day [t]he... Immigration Minister... made it, but [the PM]'s department was only told several days later... [The P]M... has said [it] was never told the incident was false and has denied lying to the A[US]n people. Analysts do not expect his head to roll but believe the furor could eventually lead to a leadership change. Newspapers – and 51[%] of respondents to an opinion poll – criticised the Government. "Was [the PM] the emperor with no clothes, whose courtiers were too frightened to tell him the truth?" the *Sun-Herald* newspaper asked in an editorial. "[The PM] and his ministers have been shown to be inept or downright dishonest." ...[the minister] regretted "any action that misleads people as to what actually happened".

...Nauru's President, who is crucial to A[US]'s "Pacific Solution" for handling Middle Eastern asylum seekers, now calls the policy a "Pacific nightmare". [The President] told ABC radio yesterday that [it] was frustrated that the A[US]n Government had failed to keep him informed about the fate of more than 1000 asylum seekers who remain detained on the island. Nauru agreed to house and feed more than 1000 mainly Afghan and Iraqi asylum seekers as part of A[US]'s so-called Pacific solution. But the detainees were to have left the Pacific nation by [the end of last month]. That deadline has passed and the refugee applications of 700 asylum seekers are yet to be processed. [The President] wants answers. "I've got Parliament due on Thursday and it would be nice if I could tell them something... [Plus] I have an election coming up in 10 months and I'm not riding too well." [The President] also claimed A[US] had not kept its promise to give Nauru A\$30 million... in goods and services as part of the deal.

...*Bridge deaths* [Yesterday a] group of barges smashed a 72m section out of the only bridge leading to popular South Padre Island, Texas, and at least four people died after their vehicles plunged into the water below. An unknown number of people were missing. Thirteen were rescued...

At least 13 people were killed and 32 injured yesterday when a gangway connecting the dockside at the French port of Saint-Nazaire and the newly built liner the Queen Mary 2 collapsed. Hundreds of visitors, many of them families of workers involved in the ship's construction, were enjoying an open day... before... QM2... bade [the port] farewell... The disaster cast a pall over the launch of the Cunard liner, the biggest and most expensive ship of its kind in history... At 345m-long, the... NZ\$1.29 billion... 150,000 [tonne]... vessel can carry 2620 passengers... [and] 1253 crew...

Hundreds of workers will scour a cruise ship longer than two football fields, wiping down Bibles, washing linen, steam-cleaning cushions and disinfecting light switches, doorknobs and handrails. The Holland America cruise line hopes to kill a virus that has been sickening cruise ship passengers by the hundreds. More than 500 people aboard the Amsterdam have contracted a contagious stomach virus on four successive voyages over the past month, despite repeated efforts to disinfect the ship. At least two other U[S]-based cruise ships... have reported similar outbreaks... – ...at least 175 passengers and 12 crew members on a Disney cruise ship had become infected with a contagious stomach virus... The Magic departed from Port Canaveral with 3200 people on board and returns in a week. Disney officials have ordered the ship cleaned and disinfected at sea... Such cases are rare in an industry that will[annually] serve an estimated 7.4 million passengers worldwide... The Amsterdam is only the second US-based cruise ship to be pulled from service this year, and only two others have been taken out in the past four years, according to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. The Norwalk-like virus can cause diarrhoea, stomach pain and vomiting for up to two days.

...Hong Kong doctors and paramedics boarded a chemical tanker yesterday after it made a distress stop in the territory when 10 of its 24 member-crew showed Sars-like symptoms. Covered from head to toe in white protective gear, the medical staff got on to the Bunga Melawis Satu shortly after the Malaysian-flagged vessel dropped anchor... The... vessel... was originally bound for the southern Chinese port of Guangzhou... It is not known how or where the sick crew members, all of Indian origin, contracted their illnesses... [● 90 AUS]n tourists have been quarantined in India because of fears over a Sars outbreak... [after a 19-year-old] from the group... was admitted to hospital with Sars-like symptoms.

...The doctor credited with being the first to spot the mysterious and deadly pneumonia now spreading in Asia has died from the disease. Dr Carlo Urbani, 46, of the World Health Organisation, an Italian expert in communicable diseases, died on Saturday in Thailand where [it] had been receiving treatment after becoming infected while working in Vietnam. Dr Urbani, who was married with three children, was the first to identify the disease in an American business[person] who later died in a hospital in Hanoi. The physician's death comes as Hong Kong recorded its biggest one-day increase (58 more victims) since the WHO's global alert this month. The N[Z] Government is considering tighter controls for any outbreak here. Hundreds of N[Z]ers were in Hong Kong for the international rugby sevens series at the weekend. The WHO says the disease is being spread by international travellers, and nations across Asia are fighting to contain it... 1500 cases and 56 deaths have been reported globally. The Ministry of Health is unaware of any suspected cases in N[Z]. The]Health Minister... said last night that [it] would take a paper to today's Cabinet meeting recommending that [Sars]... be made a notifiable disease. This would give medical officers of health the power to quarantine people suspected of being infected. A N[Z]er at the Prince of Wales hospital in Hong Kong... has been sending daily emails to 1500 intensive care doctors around the world. In one of them [the NZe]r... wrote: "Events are starting to overtake us in terms of case load." All staff members who had had direct contact with Ward 8A, where the hospital's first case surfaced, had developed the illness. Hong Kong and Singapore have quarantined thousands of people and closed schools. Some Hong Kong businesses, including bank branches, have closed temporarily to be sterilised after workers became sick.

...The mysterious respiratory virus Sars has claimed its eighth victim in the Canadian province of Ontario and a ninth death is under investigation. The pneumonia-like disease is believed to have originated in China's... Guangdong province and has spread through travellers to infect 2500 people worldwide. More than 90 have died. Health officials in Ontario, where thousands of people have been quarantined to prevent the spread of Sars... have warned that more infections are possible... There are now 163 probable... cases of Sars in the province, which has a large Chinese immigrant population. Canada has the highest number of Sars sufferers after China and Hong Kong, and most are in Toronto. In Hong Kong... [t]here have been reports of hotels in the city refusing to check in locals or guests from mainland China. Some doctors will not treat patients with high fever unless they are certified free of Sars. A funeral parlour has refused to hold the funeral of a Sars victim... Meanwhile China, which has suffered more than half of all deaths and infections from the disease, fears the effects of Sars on tourism and the flow of foreign direct investment... "All of China's tourist attractions are guaranteed to be safe and healthy," a headline in the *People's Daily* said. The public are not so sure... The W[HO]'s infectious diseases chief says the mystery respiratory virus... should be identified within weeks, but... fears the virus may be carried by people without symptoms... "If there are people who have the virus and don't show symptoms... that would mean it had spread throughout the world, as it is easily contracted... That was how Aids was transmitted before it was discovered. We don't know if this is the case. That's why we need a test."

...The civet cat may be a weaselly looking thing, but southern Chinese have eaten them for centuries and that famous fondness for the exotic may have inadvertently set off... [Sars]. University of Hong Kong scientists... found coronaviruses – believed to cause Sars – in four civet cats they tested... The [civets face a similar fate to 'China's stray dogs – who are being beaten to death by police officers after some people said they were a source of Sars']...

As the Sars crisis intensified with record deaths in Hong Kong, a suspected N[Z] case remained in isolation in Dunedin Hospital last night. [The 63-year-old] is in a stable condition... The newspaper production editor became unwell while returning on Wednesday from a five-week holiday to London... [It] had spent three days in Bali on the way to London and had stopped over in Singapore, Bali and Brisbane on the way home... [When the patient] was admitted to hospital on Friday with most of the symptoms of Sars, staff leap[t] into action with full infectious disease protocol... [His wife] believed her husband's condition was improving. Elsewhere, Hong Kong reported 12 deaths from Sars on Saturday, its highest one-day jump, and another seven yesterday. The disease is fatal in about 4[%] of cases and has no known cure. The W[HO] says 3547 cases with 182 deaths have been reported from 25 countries. Chinese authorities raised significantly their number of cases after criticism the true figure had been concealed. The bulk of the new cases were in Beijing, where the number of infections was estimated at an alarming 339 and 402 more suspected cases.

...Beijing has closed theatres, cinemas, internet cafes and other public entertainment venues in an attempt to stop the spread of... [Sars], as the number of cases in the Chinese capital surged over 1000... The closures came amid increasingly drastic official steps, including the quarantine of thousands of people this week in Beijing and the sealing-off of at least three hospitals. Builders were working around the clock on a new 1000-bed isolation camp for Sars victims in the rural district of Xiaotangshan, on Beijing's northern outskirts... City officials raised the maximum fine for spitting in public – thought to be a means of Sars transmission – by 100[%] to 50 yuan (about \$10)... The decision was made to "stop possible spread of the Sars virus and ensure public health,"... It was announced just days after the city shut schools, sending home 1.7 million students.

...Auckland... principals are asking students and parents not to panic amid fears of a ...Sars... outbreak here. Misinformation and rumours about the virus had resulted in some "pretty unpleasant prejudices" being aired... A parent... had complained that... Rangitoto College... was not doing enough about students returning from high-risk countries after the school holidays... There have been no confirmed cases of Sars in N[Z]...

RUTHERFORD High School['s] principal... fears multi-million dollar benefits to west Auckland's economy could be jeopardised by needless scare-mongering surrounding the ...SARS... virus... [The principal] is calling for calm among parents worried their children may catch the virus from Asian students newly arrived from their home countries. Rutherford has two students whose temperatures are being taken twice a day since their arrival from China for the start of term two on Monday. Their presence has prompted at least one parent to remove her two sons from class until the 10-day quarantine period being enforced by other Auckland schools has lapsed. T[h]e Atatu resident... is angry the school did not contact parents a[nd]... says the school, which has 1000 pupils, is playing Russian roulette... So far N[Z] has had only one case of the SARS virus.

...Doctors and nurses don head-to-toe disposable clothing when they enter the isolation room in Hastings that is home to the [patient] suspected of having Sars. After every visit to the room, the paper suits, gowns, gloves, shoes, hats and masks are all burned. The patient lies in one of the hospital's four negative-pressure isolation rooms. When the door opens, outside air is sucked in; none escapes. The air inside the room is changed

10 to 12 times an hour, filtered and vented outdoors. The [patient] was admitted last Tuesday... three days after returning from a tour of China. Six days later, health authorities have still not been able to confirm whether [the patient] has the deadly virus... A range of tests had included screening for legionnaires disease, which exhibited similar symptoms but took at least two weeks to confirm. The [patient] and her family had asked for anonymity... Once discharged, the [patient] was likely to face 10 days' isolation at home and her family would be advised [of] the precautions they should take. Thousands of kilometres from Hastings, a former Tauranga [resident]... who has been confirmed with Sars, remains in isolation in hospital in Xi'an, China. The... day before the 39-year-old was due to leave China for the Caribbean, [it] was stopped from boarding a flight to Beijing and quarantined at Jaido Hospital... After a week in isolation, watching... Chinese-language TV, [the Tauranga resident] was last night itching to return home... The... horticulturist, who left N[Z] 15 years ago, is feeling much better and hopes his enforced isolation will end this week.

...The Sars threat has seen the trip of a lifetime canned for a disappointed group of Waitakere College students. The 10 year 12 and 13 students were to attend a youth leadership conference near the Sars infected city of Toronto [next month]... But... the trip had to be called off because of the lingering threat of Sars that caused a delay booking the cheapest and best airline deals, which cost the school money... The school and parents had been fundraising for the month-long trip, that included four days in New York, since August last year... [● Canadian s]cientists... yesterday broke the genetic code of the virus suspected of causing ...Sars[-] the first step to developing a test for doctors to diagnose victims and find a possible vaccine... Because of the lack of a definitive test, the Sars diagnosis is labelled by doctors as "probable" or "suspect"... The genetic sequence was posted on the internet (www.bcgsc.bc.ca) for use by other scientists immediately after it was broken... [The] director of the Michael Smith Genome Sciences Centre... said the new information "will tell us if Sars resembles other viral genomes, and gives us hints about the biology of the virus".

...An Aids expert is collaborating with a team of scientists in Hong Kong to design a drug that they hope will control the Sars virus, which has killed more than 500 people worldwide. Experts are racing against time to find a treatment... Existing drugs used in Hong Kong are ineffective for a fifth of victims there... [By the way, l]ife has imitated health planning for N[Z] hospitals dealing with the Sars epidemic. Just over a year ago the health system went through a month-long exercise with uncanny similarities to Sars... The scenario for the Ministry of Health's Operation Virex involved an outbreak of an influenza-like illness in a remote part of China and its spread to Hong Kong and other Asian countries, and on to A[US and N]Z... Public health officials and hospital managers say it provided an invaluable stocktake on N[Z]'s ability to cope with a large-scale infections disease. It tested the chain of response, from the ministry to regional co-operation to individual hospitals... The bad news: A full-scale outbreak would probably overwhelm any health system, including N[Z]'s. The exercise... showed up weaknesses in a health system already running at near capacity after years of economically driven change... N[Z] hospitals aim to run at 85[%] capacity, but all three Auckland boards acknowledge that they often run... over 90[%], and in the winter peak sometimes exceed capacity, meaning some patients are treated in corridors. Auckland is actually reducing the number of beds when the merged city hospital opens in October... Britain's *Daily Telegraph*... says the UK is ill-placed to deal with a Sars outbreak because its hospitals perpetually run at, or even above, the limit of their capacity. "Most British hospitals are already working as if there were a permanent epidemic of unprecedented proportions, though in fact they are merely dealing with normal day-to-day demand... We operate our hospitals on the Japanese principle of car manufacture: the just-in-time system of supplying parts. No doubt this is economically sound, in the sense of being cheap, but the idea that present demand for hospital beds is stable, that there should be no slack in the system, that slack in the system means slack staff is to invite nemesis. If Sars doesn't get the National Health Service, something else will."

...In light of the Sars... epidemic it would be appropriate to repeat the BBC's 70s drama series... about a pandemic illness originating in Asia that decimates the world's population. It described how unprepared survivors were to cope with[out] what is taken for granted in the modern world.

...N[Z] will become the first country outside Hong Kong and Singapore to use an infra-red camera to check air travellers for Sars. The Ministry of Health will borrow the \$150,000 camera from car light manufacturer Hella to screen all international travellers arriving at Auckland Airport for a trial period between 10am and 2pm on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. The camera will be in an "unintrusive" position, probably high up where it can monitor faces as people walk from their planes towards the duty-free store. Anyone with a temperature above 38C will be identified by the colour on the monitor screen and taken aside for assessment by a nurse. The director of public health... said the three-day trial would determine whether it was worth using the camera for as long as the Sars epidemic lasts... [The director] said the 10am-2pm period of the trial each day had been fixed to cover the arrival of most flights from Asia. However, if the ministry decides to keep using the camera after the trial, it may extend it to run around the clock to include flights from A[US. "90%]... of the Asian traffic to N[Z or AUS] do the two countries at the same time,"...

Qantas officials have tracked down almost all 359 people who flew to A[US] with a flight attendant thought to have Sars. The airline would not say whether any flew on to N[Z], but the Ministry of Health is confident it would have been notified. The hostess mingled with 341 passengers and 18 crew for more than seven hours on Flight QF32 from Singapore to Sydney eight days ago. Medical experts say the Sars virus can live for up to three hours outside the body. It can be transmitted by objects passed between people, such as food containers. Qantas['] chief executive... said the flight attendant, aged 25, was in Sydney's St Vincent's hospital after becoming sick on Thursday. [The chief] stressed that the [attendant] showed no symptoms during the flight, and therefore was unlikely to have been infectious... The news came after N[Z] officials told people returning from Sars hotspots to delay surgery and avoid hospitals for two weeks... The W[HO] lists 6054 people around the world as having Sars... Sars has dominated news so heavily in Western countries that it has buried reports of potentially the biggest outbreak of the deadly ebola virus. The W[HO] believes the outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo has almost been contained after killing more than 123 people.

...[when t]he aircraft's massive cargo-bay door opened 10,000m in the air, a... Congo police Lieutenant... latched on to a truck in the hold. Dozens of others found nothing to grasp and tumbled out to their deaths. Survivors and airport officials said more than 100 passengers on the Ilyushin 76 carrying police, soldiers and their families were presumed dead, although the figure was in dispute and the company that owned the plane denied anyone was hurt. [The lieutenant], speaking at a military hospital in the Congolese capital of Kinshasa, described a scene of mass panic in the hold of the plane, crammed with people and cargo, when the huge bay door in the rear suddenly opened. "When the back door opened, I fell down and lots of boxes covered me... Lots of my colleagues were sucked out by the wind. I don't know how many, because I fainted." The flight crew returned the plane to Kinshasa 45 minutes after the flight took off for the southeastern city of Lubumbashi. Only about 100 people aboard returned safely, [the lieutenant] estimated... 350 people were aboard the plane when it took off, including... children – meaning as many as 250 people had died... Congolese military helicopters were deployed to search for bodies near the city of Mbuji-Mayi... It was not known... whether the[passengers] had seats or seatbelts. It also was not immediately known why the door came open... Ukraine's Defence Ministry, which owns the plane and leases it for use in the Congo, denied anyone died in the accident and disputed significant details of the survivors' accounts. [A]Defence Ministry spokes[person]... cited officials of the state-owned company that operates the aircraft, Ukrainian Cargo Airways. "Neither the people, nor the cargo, nor the plane itself were hurt or damaged,"... The Ilyushin 76 is a medium to long-range transport jet that was first flown in 1971. It has a capacity of 40,000kg and there are 900 in service... The plane has a chequered safety record, including 47 accidents that resulted in 668 deaths...

All 19 U[S] Marines on board a new-technology military aeroplane were killed yesterday when it crashed during a training exercise... using night-vision goggles... The MV 22 Osprey crashed... about 30km northwest of Tucson... Arizona... [Local] residents told television news crews that the plane burst into a ball of flames before hitting the ground... [but m]ilitary officials could not confirm whether the plane had become an airborne fireball before it crashed... [However, they] said there was no live ordnance on board... The Osprey, under development for more than a decade, can take off and land like a helicopter using rotors before converting to fixed-wing operation that enables it to fly like a plane... It was not known

whether the crash occurred while the plane was in transition from rotor-powered to fixed-wing flight... The hybrid Osprey is due to be placed on full operational status in 18 to 24 months. It is designed to replace the helicopter as a means of getting US troops in to and out of hot spots quickly, and in conducting civilian rescue operations. In a White House statement, [the]President... underscored the dangers those in the military faced even during peacetime. "This terrible loss of life is a reminder of how so many... [people] in the nation's military put their lives at risk, each and every day, so that we might be a free people, and the cause of peace can be advanced throughout the world." A second Osprey on the training mission was not involved in the accident, [the President] said... No one on the ground was injured when the plane went down in fair weather.

...A team of military investigators yesterday began sifting for clues amid the burned wreckage of... the \$US44 million... MV-22 Osprey aircraft that crashed... Inside the downed aircraft were four crew members and 15 other Marines, including four members of a Marine helicopter unit that provides... [the US President]'s helicopter service... [A] Marine Corps spokes[person], said the Marines were carrying out final evaluations of the hybrid Osprey in a test programme... It was the third crash of an Osprey... [the spokesperson] said. There were no fatalities in a 1991 incident but seven people were killed in July 1992 when an Osprey crashed at the Marine Corps base in Quantico, Virginia.

...Since the U[S] is not at war at the moment, the families of the 19 Marines who died this month when their V-22 Osprey heli-plane crashed... will not receive any of the special medals reserved for those who perish on the field of combat. But perhaps they should, because a very definite state of war has existed inside the Pentagon for more than 50 years. As the military's rival branches battle for turf, and the lion's share of the defence budget, [armed services personnel] keep dying and vast sums – untold billions of dollars – are poured into projects destined to finish their days as gold-plated curios. You can find whole gaggles of ruptured ducks at places like the US Air Force Museum. There is Tacit Blue, for example, a streamlined shoebox with a tail like a devil's horns that was conceived as a high-altitude radar surveillance platform. It cost well over \$2 billion to develop. Now it makes an expensively photogenic backdrop for the snapshots of awestruck tourists, who do not realise its real purpose was to make sure that money which might have gone to the CIA's surveillance satellites stayed in the Air Force budget. Then there is the mock-up for the Orient Express, the space plane powered by a hydrogen-burning "scram" jet which [the 40th US President] promised would be ferrying business[people] from New York to Tokyo in less than two hours by 2001. At the Pentagon, which invested another \$4 billion into the fantasy, the concept was seen as a means of rapidly deploying the squadrons of "Star Wars" satellites that were supposed to shoot down incoming ballistic missiles. And don't forget the nuclear-powered bomber, which was to be powered by twin reactors as it roamed over the Soviet Union irradiating the countryside with its lethal exhaust. That cost \$6 billion and didn't get airborne either. The generals' chief allies are [members of C]ongress... – who don't seem to care if the latest gee-whiz hardware actually works as long as it is assembled in their electorates – and the defence contractors, who relish the rewards for letting their techies' imaginations run riot. Meanwhile, taxpayers pick up the tab and military undertakers collect the remains... The institutionalised rivalry inside the Pentagon is the sole reason an aircraft like the Osprey – a weird, ungainly creature with windmill-sized propellers on stubby wings – took to the air in the first place. Apart from the engineers at Boeing and Bell who put the beast together, it is almost impossible to find an independent aeronautical expert who does not regard the Osprey as a \$40 million death trap... Even inside the Marine Corps, those senior officers more concerned with winning wars than spending money don't like it one bit. While the Osprey sounds great in theory, the sceptics argue that the practical realities of such a complex machine doom it to constant and tragic failure, particularly under battlefield conditions. Of the six prototypes built so far, three have crashed... Yet despite the... US Government Accounting Office[']s... urging that the Osprey be scrapped, it continues to fly – at least when it is not colliding nose-first with Arizona. Its supporters on Capitol Hill... trace the Osprey's birth to the Marine Corps' decision in the early 1980s to replace its heavy-lift Chinook helicopters, which have been used since Korea to ferry [personnel] and equipment from ships to beach[es]. The Marines wanted something with a greater range that would permit ships to stay further out to sea, where there is less chance of falling victim to a surface-to-surface missile. But the Osprey's genesis actually goes back to 1948, when what was then the US Army Air Corps won a bitter bureaucratic battle to become an entirely independent branch of the armed forces. The newly re-christened Air Force was riding high at the time. After its planes ended... [WW2] by delivering the nuclear bombs that decimated Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the war-gamers and strategists of the day concluded that the Navy and Army would play only minor roles in future conflicts... In the Navy, the loss of prestige caused such anguish that Navy Secretary James V. Forrestal suffered a nervous breakdown and flung himself from the 10th-floor window of his hospital room. The Army, which had just lost all its fixed-wing aircraft, tried to circumvent the rules by turning helicopters into the ground-attack weapons it needed to support troops in the mud below. This is a job the Air Force should have performed but was loathe to do since it saw ground-support missions as a drain on what the generals regarded as their purpose: trucking nukes to Moscow in flashy and expensive supersonic bombers. Fifty years later, the consequences of this rift became apparent in Kosovo, where the Army's \$30 million Apache helicopters were prohibited from venturing more than 500m into enemy territory. For more than a decade, the Army had been assuring congressional committees that the Apache's death-dealing potency matched its staggering expense. But when faced with the acid test of actual combat, the generals bowed to reality and withdrew the Apaches from the field of fire... Will [the Osprey] survive another burst of flak from critics, particularly those in the Army and Air Force who would love to see the money for 350 additional Ospreys re-assigned to their own pet projects? Logic says no. Political precedent indicates otherwise. With parts of the Osprey being built in a full 40 of America's 50 states, few [members of C]ongress... will be brave enough to vote down a programme that keeps many of their constituents employed.

... "We're the company that is developing a new means of transportation... for the 21st century... a vehicle that combines the best features of the helicopter with the aeroplane. In other words, something that can take off vertically, which is absolutely essential if you're going to use it whenever or wherever you want... then converts to a aeroplane... in forward flight... Our intention is to get the skycar [– 'cost today, \$1m' –]down to the point where in volume production, it can be at about as expensive as a luxury automobile, so that you'll see masses of them... [O]f course, it won't happen until we have a system that can operate many, many skycars safely. NASA has already started... what they call 'highways in the sky'. They've appointed a committee of 7 representatives of... [the] aviation industry to study this concept and make recommendations as to how we ought to go in building the... sky... highways... It will be based, principally, on the global positioning system satellite network. The issue is how do you integrate [skycar traffic into an] airway network so that you don't get run into by someone else... Because, of course, flying at nearly 400 miles an hour in a vehicle this small you clearly need to be automated – you can't have somebody up there that has his hands upon the controls. So you're going to be a passenger... This vehicle could be flown by people who are blind; ...by people without hearing; the handicapped would have the flexibility to go wherever they want when they want. There's a... [lot] of opportunities here that just don't exist today. I always joke about the fact that... a drunk could get into this thing and the worst... that could happen... is [the drunk] could end up in Alaska instead of LA, but [the drunk would] certainly end up safe and sound there at the end of his flight... Until people understand our aircraft they're going to say, 'Oh, now we're polluting the skies... [and] if we look up in the air we're going to see all these vehicles, we won't be able to see the sky any more.' What people don't realise is that today we're trying to solve a two-dimensional-plus problem... with a one-dimensional solution. If you have a three-dimensional solution, I think the thing that's most significant is that if every automobile that's in every garage in the world... was in the air at the same time they would still be more than a mile apart. So we don't have any image really of what a great natural resource [this] is. Even if we use it to its maximum capability we're still going to have an enormous amount of free space up there. And yet, at the same time, we'll have efficient ground transport concurrent with that..."

...ON THE foreshore at the bottom of Earnoch Ave, Takapuna, is a... 1960s 200 sq m... two-level... house... with an office... two bedrooms, a shower and bathroom, and a... two-car 75 sq m garage[, which also]has a shower and toilet... It has a two-year-old government valuation of \$1.28

million and will be auctioned... by Bayleys in Takapuna... It is one of the few private properties certified by the North Shore City Council for helicopter landings. The council has designated a commercial helicopter pad near the sewage ponds on Rosedale Rd. Otherwise, with permission and \$300, helicopters can land on clear spaces such as parks in the city. The private pad is the lawn of the 1012 sq m property, which includes a sandy strip about 1.5m below and access around the rocks to Milford Beach. It has been owned by a property trust for about 10 years and the occupant flew in and out regularly in the late 1980s, but recent lack of use has caused the number of permissible landings to be limited.

...A ROW has flared between Piha residents and the Waitakere City Council over attempts to upgrade the... grassy helipad site... which has fallen into disrepair... to improve access for the rescue helicopter. The council is... [also installing] more warning signs... after three drownings at the beach over Labour weekend. Residents intervened last week as council workers began trimming trees around the helipad. And an upset delegation turned up at Tuesday night's Waitakere Community Board meeting, complaining they hadn't been consulted... [T]hey're worried the helipad will ruin the look of the beach and that it will become a permanent fixture... [One resident said,] "If they trim the trees we are going to see more of that ugly toilet block." ...the council has a resource consent for the existing site and isn't obliged to consult the public about pruning the trees. Another Piha resident, [who is a] former Split Enz and Crowded House member... says residents recognise the need for a helipad... "No one is denigrating the job the lifesavers are doing. But the foreshore of Piha is what people come to experience,"... After hearing the delegation, the... board called on the council to resume the helipad repairs... "If anything went wrong tomorrow, I think we'd all feel... we hadn't done our duty," [a councillor said]... The board says the upgrade is a stop gap until a permanent site is chosen, and residents will be consulted before any development takes place.[The] Surf Life Saving Northern Region director... says the upgraded helipad will only be used by emergency helicopters, not commercial ones. "The reason behind it is purely safety. We can't always rely on being able to land on the beach... It's not safe for the public or helicopter crews, and it's unfair to compromise their safety." [The director] says having easier access for a rescue helicopter is also a benefit to the Piha community.

...BOTH sides in the Avondale heliport battle are weighing up appeals against the strict consents granted by the Auckland City Council. The application by Oceania Helicopters Ltd to build a service and maintenance heliport on the Avondale peninsula was approved by planning commissioners last Friday. Oceania[']s lawyer... says the company will decide by tomorrow whether to appeal... [while the resident] who formed the North Western Community Association to oppose the heliport, says the Environment Court is the next step. [His group] says their legal advice is that Avondale residents have a strong case for an appeal... [T]he group has enough funds to launch an appeal, which could take a year to reach the Environment Court... Heliport opponents believe residents and the Pollen Island marine reserve have got the "thin end of the wedge" with the consent, despite the conditions imposed. The consent requires a two-year wildlife research programme before any helicopters can use the facility or the flight paths. It also reduces the number of flights to and from the helipad to eight a day instead of the proposed 16, and shortens the operating hours. But [the group] says the clause of most concern is that the company can reapply to change these restrictions at any time.

...THE Auckland Regional Council and the Department of Conservation have lodged appeals against the heliport in Avondale. Both say the heliport will endanger birdlife and that the consent from the Auckland City Council goes against regional policy regarding designated wildlife zones... [According to] the ARC and DOC... the N[Z] Coastal Policy Statement, the Auckland Regional Policy Statement and the Auckland Regional Coastal Plan have been ignored in the council's decision... [T]hree threatened birds, the N[Z] dotterel, North Island fernbird and banded rail, are found on neighbouring Pollen and Traherne Islands. The area is also a stop off for migrating wading birds... The ARC says the two year baseline monitoring that Oceania is required to do... is unacceptable because it does not involve an independent body or peer review and is not subject to "rigorous public process". Both agencies say any long term effects might not be apparent until it is too late and the consent didn't include how or what Oceania should do to repair any damage if it was found... They bring to four the number of appeals lodged against the consent.

...[the] North Western Community Association chair[person is]... delighted... Oceania Aviation has sold the Rosebank Rd site it was hoping to use for 30 flights a day... The land is now owned by Kensington Properties[, which]... has permission to build an office and warehouse on part of the site... No one at Oceania was available for comment... [but p]lans for a heliport in Avondale look permanently grounded.

...Planes were grounded, air crew locked out and passengers turned away when the country's second biggest airline went into receivership[, throwing]... the travel plans of thousands... into chaos... Yesterday's drama began when Wellington airport threatened to ban Qantas NZ planes because of unpaid landing charges of \$700,000. The eight-month-old airline had been losing \$400,000 a week. [The r]eceiver... said: "There must be hope someone will fly again but it won't be this animal." ■... AIRPORTS around the country have been thrown into chaos by the collapse of Qantas N[Z]. Hordes of people spilled out of destination lounges as 12,000 stranded passengers scrambled to transfer their tickets to other airlines. The 1100 dumped Qantas NZ staff – including 140 pilots and 180 cabin crew – held emergency meetings at major centres. Workers had turned up at airports yesterday morning to be met by security guards, told to hand in their keys and security cards and go home. The airline – which had flown as Ansett NZ since 1986 – was placed in receivership at 3.25am. It had been rebranded as Qantas NZ eight months ago but... [a] lengthy dispute with pilots... saw passengers shifting to Air NZ. Analysts say it never recovered... Tasman Pacific Airlines – the owner of Qantas NZ – blamed Wellington Airport for forcing the receivership... But Wellington Airport[']s general manager... rejected the claim, saying it was o[nly o]ne of many creditors... The Qantas NZ collapse caused three national league soccer games to be postponed. The league is sponsored by the airline.

...A ray of hope exists for 1100 airline staff with signs that Qantas Airways will take over its N[Z] franchise. But it[']... is unlikely to re-employ all the... staff laid off, or fly all the routes of the old airline. The N[Z] manager of Qantas Airways... will meet [the] Transport Minister... today to discuss the A[US]n airline's plans to fly domestic routes in N[Z]. The meeting, scheduled some time ago, follows a tumultuous week in the skies on both sides of the Tasman... Tasman Pacific... collapsed with debts believed to be about \$20 million... [The minister], who last week granted Qantas Airways approval under an open skies agreement with A[US] to fly domestically, said the Government would do all it could to help Qantas. "I think we will see something emerge from the gap that's there, but we won't know what it is for a while." Qantas Airways... said that after failing to negotiate a deal with Tasman Pacific in several weeks of talks, the company had several options. But it was too early to be more specific. A[ir NZ said it]... would be surprised not to see Qantas Airways run some domestic services in N[Z] in the "very near future." ...Air N[Z] shifted thousands of extra passengers at the weekend... and is putting on 50 extra flights today to move the Monday business crowds... Qantas Airways was already helping Air N[Z] by carrying passengers affected by the grounding of Ansett A[US] jets. Qantas Airways hoped some of its aircraft would be in N[Z] by tomorrow to help move passengers... "If the Ansett thing hadn't happened, the planes could have been here much earlier, but it's... all happened at once."

...Tasman Pacific, a consortium of N[Z and AUSn businesspeople], paid... News Corp \$36 million for Ansett N[Z] in March last year, then rebranded the airline as Qantas NZ in September... Qantas [Airways] contributed towards a \$6 million rebranding exercise, and Qantas NZ agreed to pay what is believed to be several millions of dollars for the franchise rights, the first Qantas [Airways] had negotiated anywhere. But the bright hopes... were never met... *How could some of N[Z]'s most successful investors buy a turkey?* Good question. It seemed a good idea at the time, even if predecessor Ansett N[Z] had lost a variety of owners more than \$230 million... since [it had] arrived in July 1987... Although the outcome has been otherwise, industry analysts predicted the franchise might finally be able to mount a real challenge to Air N[Z]'s market dominance. Qantas [Airways] would help with economic advice and management systems, provide access to the oneworld global airline alliance, offer smoother international connections for Qantas NZ passengers, and greater buying clout for essentials ranging from fuel to uniforms and cutlery.

...Having allowed its N[Z] franchise to collapse, Qantas Airways is considering entering the domestic market in its own right, and at a bargain basement cost. Tasman Pacific... went into receivership on Saturday morning at the prompting of its major debenture holder, the Bank of N[Z]. The receiver... would not reveal the size of the debenture held by the BNZ, but said it was more than the \$4 million reported at the weekend. [The receiver] was still working out how much debt the airline had, but said it had few assets to sell. Twenty of Qantas NZ's 21 planes were leased from Air N[Z], and had already gone back... [T]wo parties, which [the receiver] would not name, had shown interest in the assets... Damage to the Qantas brand was inevitable, said... [the] director of the Centre for Asia-Pacific Aviation in Sydney... But by allowing its franchise to fall over, Qantas can fly into N[Z] with new aircraft, free of the hangovers from Ansett ownership. Qantas NZ flew eight 90-seater Bae146 whisper jets on expensive leasing deals. Qantas could use Boeing 737s which are cheaper to maintain... [In related news, NZ Soccer's] chief... faces a frantic damage control session this morning as [it] tries to salvage the national league. Stunned by Saturday morning's announcement that the league's sponsor... had tumbled into receivership, [the chief] was yesterday putting on a brave face and made it clear they would do everything to save the league... With [Qantas NZ's collapse] went a sponsorship deal which had been set to cover at least the first three years of the new-look competition... The three-year deal with Qantas NZ was understood to be worth about \$1 million. The budget for travel and accommodation for this season was \$600,000...

Shuttle keeps national league aloft It sounds like something from a space odyssey. But it is simply N[ZS] Flight 101. Determined to have the national league go on with minimal disruption, the [soccer] association has taken to the air. Tomorrow, at 7.45 am, the Central United players will fly to Palmerston North for their 2 pm game with Manawatu. The aircraft will then go on to Wellington, collect the Miramar team and fly them to Auckland to play Waitakere City. After cooling their heels at Auckland Airport, the crew will fly Miramar back to Wellington, drop into Palmerston North to pick up... Central... and return to Auckland... • Tasman Pacific owes... creditors... \$100 m... and most have little chance of getting their money back... A handful of secured creditors – the B[NZ], Inland Revenue... Customs... Ansett A[US] and 1100 former staff – will be paid \$23.9 m... [S]taff will receive up to \$6000 each in wages. But hundreds of unsecured creditors, including businesses which supplied services and staff owed redundancy payments, will be left looking at a black hole. The receivers' report into Tasman Pacific, which flew as Qantas NZ, said the... airline had... \$3 m... with which to pay debts to unsecured creditors of... \$80 m... The largest unsecured creditor is Mobil, owed... \$8.6 m... It... was still exploring its options... Yesterday, businesses and former staff reacted with a mixture of shock... and resignation... at the scale of the debt... The receivers' report comes six weeks before a liquidator, appointed by the Zazu consortium of wealthy business[people] who were Tasman Pacific's sole shareholders, is to meet creditors... Then the directors are expected to explain how the company traded its way into such a mess.

...The proposed buying in to Air N[Z] by Qantas Airways... [is] likely to dominate local sharemarket news this week. The market is closed today... but... [t]he Air NZ ownership debate is expected to continue to generate plenty of news... JP Morgan's [broker]... thinks Qantas will continue to push hard to get the Government to agree to its proposal. "I think the resolution will be that Air N[Z] sells Ansett A[US] to [Singapore Airlines] and that will be positive for Air N[Z]'s share price." But JB Were's [broker]... disagrees, believing that the deal will face serious difficulties. "There are just too many hurdles: you've got regulatory hurdles, you've got ownership hurdles, you've got competition hurdles."

...Qantas plans an aggressive push on N[Z] domestic and trans-tasman routes "to put Air N[Z] out of business", say reports of an internal speech by the airline's chief executive. [The chief executive] was reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* as telling 70 managers: "Qantas believes that the airline [Air NZ] will not survive." [The chief executive] was quoted as saying the N[Z] Government eventually wanted Qantas to buy in to the national airline. "Qantas, however, intends to aggressively compete in the N[Z] market by beginning a major domestic operation." ...The report has clearly clouded relations between Qantas and the [N]Z... Government... NZ's Finance Minister... said the tenor of the report was not in tune with his meetings with [the Qantas chief executive. The minister also]... said it was not true that the Government wanted Qantas to eventually buy in to Air NZ... [The minister] said that in their meetings [the Qantas chief executive] had given the impression there were advantages in some sort of strategic alliance "which would include the potential for expansion for Air NZ." Air NZ has been hit by the [performance] of its Ansett subsidiary in A[US].

...Air NZ directors early today remained locked in a marathon meeting to develop a rescue plan to stop the national flag carrier's financial collapse. Directors from the company's two major shareholders, Singapore Airlines and B[IL], were taking part by video-conferencing, and [the NZ Government's] negotiator... and teams of lawyers were on standby. Late last night... [NZ's PM said it] thought Air N[Z] would survive. Asked about its A[US]n subsidiary, Ansett, which is losing \$1.5 million a day, [the PM] said: "I am not going down that road – no further comment." [The PM] is expected to brief the cabinet today on the developing measures to salvage Air N[Z], but no firm proposal will go before ministers... The P[M] also talked to A[US]'s Acting P[M]... during the evening. One of the issues complicating the boardroom talks was a "letter of comfort" Air N[Z] gave to loss-making Ansett which makes it difficult to put the A[US]n airline into receivership without also threatening its parent. Air N[Z] executives could not say yesterday whether the letter guaranteed all Ansett's loans, or was simply a stop-gap measure to keep Ansett afloat while Air N[Z] put together a recapitalisation plan. If Air N[Z] writes off its investment in Ansett and reports, as expected, an operating loss of up to \$300 million on Thursday, it would have shareholders' cash of \$350 million against consolidated debt of \$3.1 billion. If Ansett's debts are also guaranteed by Air N[Z] in the letter of comfort, its plight will be far worse... The depth of Air N[Z]'s plight was shown when it pulled Ansett's advertising in A[US] at the weekend. So desperate is Air N[Z] that its board last week asked Qantas to buy Ansett. But Qantas' chief executive... rejected the proposal.

...Three months ago, four airlines were warring for a piece of the A[US]n skies, and passengers could pay \$33 for a one-way ticket from Sydney to Brisbane. Today, there is a risk that only Qantas will survive. Impulse has been swallowed by Qantas. Virgin Blue has only nine planes. And Ansett, once a true competitor to the Flying Kangaroo, is on its knees. In the space of six years, it has gone from being the nation's leading domestic carrier to fighting for its corporate life. How did it come to this? The company has been in trouble for years, but the realisation that its condition could be terminal has come remarkably swiftly. Until this week, the accepted wisdom was that Ansett could be rejuvenated under a proposal unveiled... by its parent company, Air N[Z]. What it needed was an injection of cash to modernise its fleet and bolster its day-to-day working capital. Not more debt; it already had enough of that. It needed more money from shareholders. It was generally agreed that \$NZ1 billion would do the trick. The... plan was that Air N[Z] would issue new shares to Singapore Airlines in return for cash, which could be applied to solving Ansett's problems. Air N[Z] was keen; Singapore Airlines was keen. All that was needed was to persuade the N[Z] Government to change the laws restricting foreign ownership of the national airline. The new shares issued would take Singapore's stake in Air N[Z] from 25... to 49[%]. As late as last Monday the... plan appeared to be on track. That day, [NZ's P]M... said her Government hoped to make a decision on foreign ownership by mid-week. Tuesday brought an unexpected development – [the British entrepreneur] who runs Virgin Blue, made great play of rejecting a takeover offer from Ansett. It soon became obvious that the failed takeover had been a crucial – if undisclosed – part of the... plan. If Virgin and Ansett were merged, A[US]n aviation could go back to the cosy days when two carriers could both make profits... What no one knew at the beginning of the week was how badly Ansett was suffering from the Virgin competition... Six years ago Ansett ruled supreme, with a 56[%] market share over Qantas, then a Government-owned entity... [Indeed, from 1994-96 Ansett was] named best airline by travel agents... But Ansett's distracted owners, News Ltd and TNT, did not realise the power that a private Flying Kangaroo – merging with A[US]n Airlines and listing on the sharemarket – would have on its dominance... [(although, in 1996 TNT sold its 50% holding in Ansett... for \$A475 million... to... Air N[Z] – which eventually agreed)... to purchase News Ltd's holding for \$A580 million]. The... loss of market share accelerated after the entry of Impulse and Virgin, and some analysts now believe it is as low as 39[%]. Ansett's rickety fleet is now the second-oldest of the top 50 airlines in the world. The most stunning

evidence of the neglect by successive owners came... when the Civil Aviation Safety Authority grounded the airline's entire fleet of Boeing 767s. Even if governments on both sides of the Tasman agree to a bailout, it will be only a reprieve. Until Ansett can finally find itself a committed owner with deep pockets, its position will continue to deteriorate. And if Ansett cannot find such an owner its days are numbered.

...[NZ's]Government has put up \$550 m... towards an emergency bailout of Air N[Z] after it posted the biggest loss in N[Z]'s corporate history – \$1.4 b... Major shareholders B[IL] and Singapore Airlines have also pledged \$150 m... each to keep the national flag carrier operating after it was engulfed by huge losses... on its... investment in... Ansett A[US]. Air NZ has been pushed into a loss by its attempt to break into the tough A[US]n aviation market. The... rescue deal is subject to a due diligence exercise by the Government and its two major shareholders, and the agreement of the airline's bankers... Ansett was put into voluntary administration... after a dramatic race against time failed to secure any realistic new ownership proposals. Air N[Z] directors on the Ansett board... might yet face strong scrutiny from A[US]'s securities watchdog after allegations... Ansett may have traded while insolvent. The allegations were strongly denied by [Air NZ's acting chairperson. NZ's]... Finance Minister... declined to criticise the performance of Air N[Z]'s present board. But the board will be reduced from 13 to [9] members and the Government will have a controlling say on the appointment of a new chair[person. The acting chairperson] was grim-faced when [it] unveiled the airline's \$1.4 b... loss at a transtasman video conference at 1.15 pm yesterday. The conference was to have started at 12 noon, but was delayed while airline chiefs haggled with the N[Z] Stock Exchange over their decision to post an unaudited result. Air N[Z]'s chief executive... – who was headhunted from Qantas Airways less than a year ago – said [it] was “shattered” by having to disclose such an awful outcome. Protracted negotiations with Governments on both sides of the Tasman to try to recapitalise Air N[Z] and its A[US]n offshoot had failed. The Government will lift the ownership cap on Air N[Z] so Singapore Airlines can raise its stake... to 35[%]. The distinction between shares that can be bought by foreigners and those available only to N[Z]ers will be abolished. [The minister] said the huge Ansett writedown meant it would not have been possible to reconstruct the airline without Government support. [But maintaining NZ]'s only international carrier and its main domestic carrier was “not an issue we could stand back from.”

...[NZ's P]M... landed in Auckland late last night on an Air Force plane after furious Ansett airline workers blockaded her commercial flight from Melbourne. Transtasman travel for thousands of passengers was thrown into turmoil after protests by workers forced Air N[Z] to suspend flights and Qantas to delay services. Up to 16,000 Ansett workers might lose their jobs after the Air N[Z] subsidiary was placed in voluntary administration, grounding all Ansett flights early yesterday... [The PM] last night described her ordeal as “the journey from hell”. After flying to Rome and back since Tuesday – “we haven't been in a bed since” – the P[M]'s party flew into the Ansett collapse and the resulting anti-N[Z] sentiment. They arrived at Melbourne at 6.45 pm - ...four hours after Ansett had been grounded. When the P[M]'s party discovered airport staff had blockaded the Air N[Z] plane they transferred their belongings and baggage to Qantas. Word quickly went around the terminal that the N[Z] P[M] was to be on the Qantas flight and it, too, was blockaded. Police advised her to stay in the lounge, where they remained for four hours until taken by police helicopter to Sale Air Force Base, where [the PM] boarded an Air Force Orion... Ansett passengers who arrived early at airports around A[US] yesterday morning learned that the country's second-largest airline... w[as] on the ground for good... Most Ansett staff woke to learn they had lost their jobs over radio or television, or by notices stuck to the locked doors of the airline's terminals. As the realisation sank in that the unthinkable had happened, shock turned to anger that erupted in the blockading of Air N[Z] aircraft, stopwork meetings, mass rallies and calls for the heads of the board of the Kiwi flag carrier and the N[Z] and AUS]n Governments. With trucks jammed against more of their aircraft at Melbourne's Tullamarine airport and fury spreading into the broader union movement, Air N[Z] suspended transtasman flights out of N[Z]. Terminals were choked by 45,000 stranded passengers, waiting for news or for one of the free seats offered by Qantas and Virgin Blue, or simply giving up and accepting they had lost their holidays, business trips and – for many – any chance of a refund. A[US]'s corporate watchdog, the A[US]n Securities and Investment Commission, launched an investigation into Ansett's collapse and the A[US]n Government vowed to pursue Air N[Z] for \$A400 million... in workers' entitlements that [i]t... is refusing to accept responsibility for. The Opposition warned that a Labor government could shut Air NZ out of A[US] if it did not meet its obligations to Ansett staff... [AUS's PM,] who stepped off a plane at Sydney after his harrowing time in Washington to be greeted by a domestic crisis that has the potential to wreck his chances of another term in office, spoke briefly with a delegation of Ansett workers before heading for an emergency cabinet meeting... N[Z]'s Finance Minister... issued his own statement to the A[US]n media to quell anti-N[Z] sentiment, absolving Wellington from responsibility and passing the buck to problems inherited from Ansett's previous owners... News Ltd hit back with claims it had left Ansett as a business in good shape run by a first-class management team. And as the political war raged, the effects of Ansett's collapse rolled out like a succession of tidal waves. National A[US] Bank reeled with massive losses from its exposure to Ansett and Air NZ, Ansett travel subsidiary Traveland and airline caterer Gate Gourmet also moved into administration, the viability of Canberra and other smaller airports was cast into doubt, and rental car and taxi companies prepared for setbacks. At Tullamarine... an Ansett worker for 27 years whose father had worked for the airline for more than 40 years, harangued passengers lining up for transtasman Air NZ flights. “They should hunt down Air NZ[s] chief executive... as a traitor. [The chief executive] is an A[US]n and it's too gutless to come back...”

Air N[Z] is in danger of being put into receivership and its rescue plan is on shaky ground because of mounting pressure on it to cover Ansett employees' entitlements... Air NZ's cornerstone shareholders and the [NZ] Government have come up with a rescue plan for the national carrier, but that was based on Ansett being divorced from Air NZ, and a share price of 67c a share. All that has changed since Friday, when the share price plunged to 50c and there were calls from A[US] to make Air NZ liable for some of Ansett's debts, especially staff entitlements. This has placed a lot of uncertainty on Air NZ's future... As a result, shareholders Singapore Airlines and B[IL], along with the NZ Government, were revisiting their options... The parties have four to six weeks to complete due diligence before committing themselves to the deal. Placing Air NZ in receivership would be the most effective means of safeguarding the carrier, ringfencing it from Ansett A[US]. Ansett's staff would become unsecured creditors, rather than enjoying the preferential position in the queue they could hold now. Sources said receivership would allow the carrier to continue flying while the receiver traded the company out of trouble or found a buyer in an orderly fashion. Angry A[US]n unionists are threatening a boycott that could force Air NZ out of their country amid growing fallout from the Ansett A[US] collapse. But amid the Kiwi-bashing, there was a glimmer of hope yesterday that A[US]'s second-largest airline may not yet be gone for good. As the A[US]n Council of Trade Unions warned that up to 100,000 jobs would be lost if Ansett died, the airline's administrator... hinted of signs that Ansett planes could be flying some routes again by tomorrow... and asked all Ansett staff to stand by for more news... The grounding of Ansett has become the biggest industrial disaster in A[US]n history in terms of job losses – and Air NZ is getting most of the blame. Late yesterday the airline... said... all its flights to the US and A[US] had resumed.

...ANSETT returned to A[US]n skies yesterday with banners, balloons, a brass band and lots of cheering. Emotions were running high as Ansett workers and supporters turned out to celebrate the first flights of the resurrected airline, which took off simultaneously from Melbourne and Sydney airports at 11am... As hundreds of employees gathered in the Ansett terminals in both cities there were tears, lots of hugging and kissing, and renditions of “Ansett, Ansett, Ansett, Oi, Oi, Oi”. Passengers on the first flight from Melbourne Airport were all issued a T-shirt saying: “I helped get Ansett A[US] back in the skies.” They were then cheered through the concourse by hundreds of supporters. At Sydney's Kingsford Smith Airport, staff made a guard of honour and carried passengers' bags through the terminal doors. Passengers on the flights, who were served bottled water under the airline's new no frills service, were pleased the airline was back in the skies. The... [a]dministrator... said selling the airline

remained a possibility, and they were in talks to relaunch flights to Brisbane and Perth as early as next week... [The] ACTU president... said the send-off showed the tremendous spirit of Ansett employees. "It is a huge team, all these people care about each other." But [the president] criticised the federal government for refusing to inject \$A200 million to help get the airline fully back in the air... ■ [Air NZ's]... major shareholders will be asked today to affirm their commitment to the national carrier's \$850 million rescue package... Air NZ directors meet at 1 pm and if... Singapore Airlines... and BIL refuse to commit to the bailout the airline could risk being put into statutory management. S[ingapore Airlines] yesterday dropped its objection to the Government's taking a stake in the national carrier, opening the possibility of the airline ultimately being nationalised if the rescue package falls over. But [the] Finance Minister... said the Government remained wary of exposing taxpayers to the airline's liabilities.

...Air NZ[, which] lost a record \$1.3 billion... [– not including] the \$184 million settlement reached with the Ansett administrators which... ended Air NZ's liabilities... [for Ansett's total] liabilities around the \$1 billion mark[–]...and had to be bailed out by the taxpayer[s of NZ, is]... looking to cut the equivalent of 800 jobs, half in management. With weak international traffic, Air NZ is deriving much of its returns from domestic travel ...Qantas has reiterated to the N[Z] Government... that it is still interested in a proposal to buy in to the airline... In the past few months Qantas has boosted services in N[Z], with 10 return flights between Auckland and Wellington and eight between Christchurch and Auckland. It is also adding flights to several provincial cities, helped by provincial airline Origin Pacific. Significantly, Qantas last month announced the appointment of [the person]... who previously managed all Air NZ's domestic services... to a senior post to help supervise the expansion. The managing director of the Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation... said Qantas' extra presence definitely threatened Air NZ and could result in its demise. "They are extremely fragile right now and everyone knows it." But Qantas is battling worsening industrial strife, with 300 workers banning overtime – something [NZ's Finance Minister] was quick to point out. "Like all major airlines they are having trouble on the international side of their business..."

...Two Air N[Z] flights were aborted in the weekend after a... Boeing 747... and a Boeing 767... had... problems. Air N[Z] visually inspected the rest of its fleet this weekend, but said there were no other problems and the two incidents were not related. The first problem happened on Friday night one hour into a six-hour flight to Auckland. The 767 pilot was forced to turn back to Perth airport after the computer detected a problem with... a banking control on the wing used to turn the aircraft. The plane's 217 passengers were delayed for 18 hours while engineers replaced the aileron with a new one ordered from Sydney. Air N[Z] said the passengers were not in danger as the pilot did not lose steering control but turned back as a precaution. One passenger, [a] children's book publisher... said many on board the flight vowed to never fly Air N[Z] again. "I've been flying... around the world... for 25 years and I've never experienced anything like it. They wouldn't turn back unless it was serious and they wouldn't order a new part if it wasn't broken." When the plane finally arrived in Auckland on Sunday morning, the passengers clapped, [the publisher] said. On Saturday morning an... Air N[Z]... 747-400, was forced to turn back to Auckland Airport shortly after take-off to Japan when a panel detached from the right wing above the engine. The crew were unaware the panel had fallen off until the police contacted the airline when two members of the public saw it fall. The 10kg panel fell into a carpark... 800m away from the Wiri police station. The 1.3m by 80cm panel was non-structural, and did not affect the plane's performance. The 350 passengers faced a five-hour delay while Air N[Z] found a replacement 747, which took off again at 1.30pm... The Civil Aviation Authority will investigate both incidents... Air N[Z] was cleared of blame for a similar incident in May when a 5kg piece of metal broke off a wing of a 767 and smashed through a Manukau warehouse roof.

...Investigators are believed to be trying to find how an Air N[Z] Boeing 747 was allowed to fly with just four screws in a wing panel that needed about 120. The screws failed soon after the huge jet took off for Japan... and the 10kg "non-structural" part plummeted into a Manukau carpark. Air N[Z] will not discuss an investigation it is conducting under C[AA] supervision, but... it... is understood from several sources that the four screws were inserted purely as a temporary measure, pending more work on the part. But a communication mix-up meant the plane was cleared for takeoff, possibly after the intended work was done – but on the wrong piece... The aircraft concerned had been out of service at Air N[Z]'s world-class Auckland maintenance base for several weeks, possibly even months, because of the downturn in air travel. Work was done on it sporadically by many different people, who wheeled it in and out of hangers to fit it around more pressing maintenance on other aircraft. Air N[Z]'s spokesperson... said it was too early to speculate on the causes of a mishap that might take several more weeks of investigations. Neither would the C[AA] discuss the investigation. But its director... said on Monday that [it] was confident of Air N[Z]'s safety performance and of the systems in place at the airline, which is renowned for its engineering excellence. [The director] was commenting then after the loss of another part from an Air N[Z] 747 on Friday night, when a 2m piece of wing flap fell into the Manukau Harbour. The Transport Accident Investigation Commission has only just started its inquiry into that event but it might have been a manufacturing fault because... Seattle-based... Boeing says several 747s have lost similar parts... Air N[Z] also confirmed yesterday that a Boeing 767 flight was delayed from leaving Auckland for Rarotonga [last month]... while a cockpit light was replaced, but only for 144 minutes, not the three hours complained of by a *Herald* reader. [Air NZ's spokesperson] denied this and an incident reported in the paper yesterday, in which a faulty hydraulic pump delayed a 767 from leaving Rarotonga for Auckland [three weeks ago] for 24 hours, indicated any worrying trend. [The spokesperson] said delaying flights to replace such parts demonstrated the airline's commitment to high safety standards.

...Air N[Z]... admitted yesterday that a wing panel that fell off in flight had been marked for repair and the jet should not have been cleared to fly... The panel fell from the Boeing 747... and crashed into a Manukau carpark. Last Friday a second panel fell from... another Air N[Z] Boeing 747... into the Manukau Harbour... After a 2m section of panel fell from the wing flap... an inspection found a broken bracket fastening... Air N[Z] said inspections of all its Boeings... revealed signs of corrosive staining on the same type of fastening on yet another plane... Air N[Z]'s acting chief executive... confirmed... the aircraft which lost the panel over the harbour showed signs of corrosive staining on the broken part... The Transport Accident Investigation Commission... was still waiting for the broken bracket from the aircraft in Los Angeles to be returned for inspection.

...[one passenger]... heard a snap then a bang just moments after Air N[Z] flight NZ2 took off from Auckland for Los Angeles. His first reaction was "Oops, there goes something". It was too dark to see what happened, but [the passenger] said it was clear something had fallen from the plane. [The passenger] and his sister... told flight staff, who said the pilot was aware of the situation... The aircraft had lost a 2m section of a wing flap, the second time in a week an Air N[Z] aircraft has lost a part of a wing soon after takeoff. The latest incident forced the pilots of the Boeing 747 to perform an emergency landing at Los Angeles. The Government is demanding urgent answers on the cause of the two incidents to ease public fears... Another passenger... knew nothing of the incident until... [the] Auckland schoolteacher... reached Scotland. The 53-year-old flew on to London to attend an aunt's funeral in Scotland and heard what happened only when [it] phoned her Oratia home from Edinburgh yesterday. [The schoolteacher], who was in an aisle seat, said there was just one mention of "technical problems" when they circled above Los Angeles about to attempt the landing. [The schoolteacher] thought her husband... was joking when [it] asked her about the missing flap... "I thank the pilot for not reporting it because we would have been sitting there feeling alarmed." [Her husband] had seen news reports about the flap and immediately phoned Air N[Z] to make sure his wife was safe. [The husband] paraphrased Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* in questioning how Air N[Z] could have lost large pieces of wings: "To lose one wing is unfortunate but to lose both wings is careless. The attitude of Air N[Z] seems to be that these pieces of plane are just not important." An inspection of the aircraft indicated the broken flap may have damaged the plane's tail when it fell off... The part torn off... was the top section of the starboard wing's inboard flap. Each wing has two such flaps, inboard and outboard, which are divided into three segments. The flaps are used during takeoff and landing to control the aircraft while it is flying at low speed... The safety scares follow turbulent times for the airline... Has the price of financial results put the safety of Air NZ's passengers at risk?

...A piece of plane found washed up on a beach in the Manukau Heads yesterday may be a missing part of the section of wing that broke off an Air N[Z] jet... Air N[Z] last night said it was too early to know if it was part of the 2m section that broke off and plunged into the Manukau Harbour after causing minor damage to the plane's fuselage and tail... It will be checked by engineers today... The... airline... attempted to search for the piece but had problems with the tide... ■ *Have you been on a flight that had mechanical problems? Let us know at newsdesk@herald.co.nz...*

[A Herald reader] of Mt Eden writes: "Is this a sign? My son received an Air N[Z] plane for a... gift purchased on a flight recently by a kind relative. The plane has a pullback action with a real sounding take-off noise. [My son] opened the box and proceeded to play with it, and lo and behold, within a few moments we heard the words, 'Broken mummy'." An engine had fallen off.

...Passengers on board an Air N[Z] jet from Brisbane screamed as the pilot warned they were making an emergency landing after parts of an engine broke off soon after take-off. Minutes into the flight, when the plane was at about 3000m, passengers heard a loud bang in the left engine. The 767-200 was forced to return, dropping parts off the engine cover and leading edge flap on the runway. The incident, which is being investigated by N[Z and AUS]n safety authorities, is a major embarrassment for Air N[Z] as it lodges applications with regulatory bodies today for its \$550 million deal with A[US]n airline Qantas... It is the third time in four months that Air N[Z] has lost parts from an aircraft in mid-air... Qantas, which has agreed to buy 22.5[%] of Air NZ if regulators in A[US and NZ] clear the deal, would make no comment on the incident last night. Air N[Z] assured travellers that its aircraft were safe, and said passengers' lives were never in danger during yesterday's incident. The Boeing 767 is designed to be able to operate on one engine. An airline spokes[person]n said the aircraft, in service since 1986, underwent heavy maintenance a month ago. Separate maintenance on the General Electric engine last took place in March. The engine was due for its next check next month. The engine had done 14,000 flying hours, which was well within recommended guidelines. The aircraft had not been involved in any accidents... of note.

...A fatigue crack caused the engine failure that forced an Air N[Z] jet to make an emergency landing in Brisbane last month. Air NZ now faces a \$3 million bill to inspect four of its eight General Electric engines not due for routine inspections, and airlines worldwide face similar bills to fix what may be a design fault. The A[US]n Transport Safety Bureau... revealed that a 40mm fatigue crack on a turbine disc caused it to break free, punch a hole in the engine casing and cut into the wing as the jet with 190 passengers left for Auckland. The bureau is still investigating why it happened, and the report did not clear Air NZ's maintenance, as a statement by the airline implies... ['A flap fell off a 747 because of eroded lugs – Air NZ had been warned about the problem but hadn't checked the lugs.'] The airline is [still] investigating why an insecure 10kg panel that fell into a Manukau carpark... was fixed by four screws instead of the required 125. ■ One of the Air Force's increasingly unreliable VIP Boeing 727 aircraft was delayed five times by technical faults on a recent mission and faced air space restrictions over Europe because of its obsolete navigation and communications systems, *Air Force News* has reported. Problems included a major fuel leak, engine problems and a navigation system failure.

...At Terminal 1, the new facility used by Air France and a handful of other international airlines at New York's JFK Airport, all indication of the doomed incoming Concorde flight had been erased yesterday. There was no mention of Flight AF4590 from Paris on the high-tech indicator boards. The main Air France desk at the upper departures level had a sign up – "Closed – ferme." It was deserted. Evidence that something was terribly wrong was limited to the large number of police and emergency vehicles, parked where limousines would normally be. The Concorde, one of five operated by Air France, had been due to arrive in New York at 2.21 pm. But minutes after takeoff from Charles de Gaulle Airport the supersonic airliner crashed in a ball of fire. All 100 passengers and nine crew died when the jet slammed into a hotel in the town of Gonesse, about 6km southwest of the airport. A British tourist and three workers at the Hotelissimo were also killed... Airport officials said the pilot informed air traffic control seconds before the crash that [it] intended to try an emergency landing on the nearby motorway, the N-17 dual carriageway between the airport and Le Bourget Airport. It appears that while [the pilot] was trying this manoeuvre, the plane lost power and plummeted. Witnesses described seeing the plane take off with flames up to 4m long already roaring from its two port engines. One witness... said [it] saw the Concorde coming down in flames "as if it was a bomb of napalm." A N[Z] family living in Paris, who were returning from a trip to Euro Disney, wept as flaming debris from the aircraft fell around their car on the motorway. [The wife] told the *Herald* that her husband... who works at the airport, first noticed the Concorde on fire about 200m away. "We looked up and there was a huge tail of flames running behind it just as it was taking off and gaining altitude... At that stage it looked pretty much under control. It didn't seem to be a big panic or anything." There were several nose-to-tail accidents as motorists stopped. The family then watched in horror as the Concorde crashed. "As it got a bit higher it turned slightly and then basically just stopped, turned on its side and dropped to the ground. As we saw they were going to crash I was yelling, 'Those poor people, those poor people' – you could see there were going to be no survivors. Then there was a huge explosion, like a bomb going off... There was smoke everywhere. It was pretty scary." ...her two youngest children did not see the crash but her 5-year-old son... saw it all and was in shock. The dead passengers... [included] three children... The flight was a charter by a German deluxe tour company that had organised a dream holiday in New York... for which ticket prices ranged from \$US5000 to \$US12,000... each and included the exclusive champagne flight, two nights in Manhattan and a Caribbean cruise aboard the MS Deutschland. It was the first Concorde to crash since the supersonic planes began flying about 30 years ago.

...Concorde – slender, swift and graceful, carrying only jetsetters and royalty... The world's first supersonic passenger jet and maybe the last for decades... And one of the most under-used commercial aircraft in the world. The 100 passengers on yesterday's tragic flight were unusual in that they were tourists. Concorde usually carries the rich and famous. Air France styles it as the pride of its fleet, extolling the pleasures of enjoying champagne and caviar at twice the speed of sound, and enabling business[people] – for \$15,000 – to go to New York for a day of meetings and fly home again that night to London or Paris... It cuts the Atlantic crossing time from 7 1/2 hours to 3 hrs 40 minutes... The snobbishness even covers Concorde's seating arrangements. Insiders at Air France say passengers fight to sit at the front of the aircraft, within nodding distance of seats 1A and 1B, where the airline puts travelling heads of state and government, film stars and rock stars... who enter the somewhat cramped narrow tube to be hurtled at the speed of a bullet on the edge of space. Princess Diana used it... For some the seats are a little narrow. [One d]isgraced tycoon... is said to have bought two tickets to accommodate his ample frame. The first Concorde took off 33 years ago. When Britain and France conceived the idea of a joint venture, they saw a market for dozens, perhaps hundreds, of Concordes among airlines hungry to attract big-spending passengers. It was a plane for the future, and its creation employed the best of British and French brains and designers. For Britain it was a successor to the Comet, which pioneered jet air travel but flew into oblivion after a series of fatigue-related accidents. The trouble for the supersonic Concorde was that although it first flew just before the prototype Boeing 747, the jumbo – carrying a far greater payload – went quickly into production. It was another nine years before the Concorde entered service. And when the British and French Governments threw in the towel and wrote off the cost of the development, only 14 had been delivered for service. Each cost the British taxpayers what is reckoned at today's prices to have been the equivalent of £1 billion... Britain and France started working separately on building supersonic aircraft in 1956. Their ideas were so similar that they joined forces in 1962. Concorde prototype 001 was jointly built. A second prototype, the British-built 002, made its maiden flight from Filton aerodrome, Bristol, on April 9, 1969. Two months earlier, the Soviet Union rushed into production with an aircraft which seemed to be a triumph of industrial espionage. But the TU-144, nicknamed "Concordski," crashed at the 1976 Paris Airshow. The Americans also tried to produce such an airliner but cancelled the project because of technological difficulties. A small number of TU-144s did fly on the internal Moscow-Tashkent route, but soon disappeared from public view. Rumours of crashes were never confirmed. Until yesterday, the Concorde had a very good safety record – one blown tyre in 1979. A safety scare this week relating to wing cracks was the latest in a series of minor incidents involving Concorde over the past 12 years. Most related to small-scale fissures in wing, window or roof components, none of which

was thought to endanger the aircraft. A more persistent problem emerged with the aircraft's rudder, which disintegrated at 18,000m on a British Airways flight from London to New York in 1991, after two similar incidents over the previous two years. A fourth rudder failure occurred in 1998, although detailed investigations uncovered no inherent fault. Previous instances of failure in the four engines have been extremely rare, although one occurred six months ago in a London-bound service. Pilots generally regard mid-flight engine failures as controllable, and the aircraft landed normally. Another BA Concorde turned back to Heathrow the next day after a fire alarm went off. One of the reasons airlines have been talking of keeping the Concorde flying until at least 2015 is that their flying hours are very low for their age. They have carried 2.5 million passengers since 1976. But BA's... Concorde is airborne, on average, for just over two hours each day. On a typical day, more than 1200 Boeing 747s will be flying in some part of the world. The number of Concorde aloft may be no more than three. Its difficulties started early. The U[S] at first refused to allow the noisy aircraft to land. So the commercial services that began on January 21, 1976 were on BOAC (now B[A]) from Heathrow to Bahrain and Air France from Paris to Rio de Janeiro. A year later, Washington relented and allowed flights. But it was several more years before New York would let the Concorde in. Bahrain, Dakar, Dallas, Miami and Singapore each enjoyed a brief supersonic affair before the truths of aviation economics asserted themselves. Now the only scheduled services link Paris and London with... New York. To help pay the enormous costs of maintaining the Concorde, the aircraft are also used for joy flights like the one which ended in tragedy yesterday. Concorde is what aviation engineers call a "hanger queen." It spends inordinate hours out of service being cosseted, checked and maintained by a small army of specially trained technicians. The 185-tonne Concorde can cross the Atlantic at an average speed of more than 2000 km/h... At full speed, its 60m length stretches another 15 to 20cm as its airframe heats up. But it is allowed to go supersonic only over water because of the sonic boom. Sporadic, half-hearted attempts were made during the [past decade] to develop a successor to Concorde. But aerospace engineers can see no way to reconcile supersonic speed with moderate noise and acceptable running costs. Little research is being done now, and engineers say a new supersonic airliner will not appear until well into the century. The big problem is that such aircraft... have to be long and skinny to minimise drag, so not many seats will fit in, resulting in a lot of expensive machinery for a few passengers. And that noise! Concorde, with afterburners, has a deafening roar. A few years ago, engineers thought it might be possible to get it down to the level of today's sub-sonic engines. Then regulators reduced the noise from these engines, and no one could see how to get supersonic engine noise down that far. These days, the world has many more rich people than when Concorde was conceived. Yet Air France and B[A] still cannot justify more than three trans-atlantic flights a day. As the Airbus A3XX100, the new super carrier being planned by the four-nation Airbus Industrie, has shown, the future of aviation lies with accountants, not dreamers. ●... *How many Concorde are there?* After debate this year with expert readers and the director of the Imperial War Museum at Duxford in Cambridge, the *Herald's* Q and A column said that, counting prototypes and pre-production models, 20 Concorde were made. One is at Duxford and one at the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton in Somerset. France also has various models on display or in storage. Ten Concorde were built at Toulouse in France and 10 at Filton... A total of 16 production aircraft were built. Two are stored, B[A] has seven, all still in use. Air France also had seven but one was used for spare parts and finally broken up in 1995.

...French investigators have retrieved the black box flight recorders that they hope will reveal why the supersonic airliner bound for New York crashed soon after takeoff from Paris, killing all 109 on board and four people on the ground... The pilot of the doomed Concorde airliner reported that one of his engines had failed just before the supersonic airliner crashed out side Paris... a French judicial official said last night. Air France said separately that a part of the same engine, the number two motor, had been replaced shortly before the plane took off... [The] deputy public prosecutor... who leads a judicial investigation into the disaster, said... initial examination had shown that there was a "malfunction in engine number two during the take-off phase" and no indication of sabotage. Meanwhile, French fire[officers] worked around the barely recognisable crumpled fuselage of the aircraft that had once been the pride of Air France yesterday, marking out the bodies of the victims with traffic cones. Two vast ruts gouged out of the neighbouring cornfield led to the wreckage, a mass of ashes and blackened metal and small pieces of fuselage. Acrid smoke continued to drift across the cornfields towards Gonesse from the site of what only hours earlier had been the 45-room Hotelissimo hotel... Aviation experts suspect that a catastrophic blowout ignited the fuel tanks. A... British business[person]... who was in a plane waiting to take off behind the Concorde, said [it]... saw a piece of engine fall off before the jet disappeared in a huge pail of smoke... [A witness], who works for Jet Service, a courier firm operating nearby, said: "There was panic in our building, which was only a few hundred metres away, because people were afraid the plane was going to crash into us." But instead it stalled and bounced on its tailfin on top of the Hotelissimo... The body of the jet ended up... just 100m from apartment blocks. Thirty-three passengers who would have been on the flight had been switched to a sister aircraft after the trip was overbooked. Others who escaped the tragedy were a party of 50 British students from the Suffolk youth orchestra, wind band and choir who were due to book into the Hotelissimo yesterday. The students, aged between 14 and 22, arrived at the scene 40 minutes after the crash.

...Moments after a Concorde jet slammed into the Hotelissimo hotel, a young British [tourist] jumped to safety from her first-floor window, escaping with minor burns. A busload of 44 teenagers from southeastern England were mercifully overdue arriving at the hotel. Polish tourists returned to the charred remains of the building in shock. They had been out touring when the jet crashed, destroying all their belongings. These are among those who escaped death in Wednesday's crash of the Air France Concorde... Air France and British Airways suspended Concorde flights following the crash... A last-minute engine repair before take-off has emerged as the likely cause of the Concorde crash... Air France has revealed that the captain of the doomed Flight FA 4590, Christian Marty, a 54-year-old father of two, had insisted on the replacement of a faulty part in the reverse thruster of his number-two engine as the aircraft waited on the tarmac at Charles de Gaulle Airport. The plane could have taken off with this non-vital fault untouched but the captain – one of the most experienced [pilots] on the elite Concorde roster – refused to fly until the repair had been made. His scrupulous attention to safety and detail may have led, paradoxically, to the disaster. A criminal investigation for [hu]manslaughter, formally launched in France, will focus on the possibility that the repair by two engineers may have introduced another fault into the aircraft's left-side inner engine. Since no spare part was available, a piece was stripped from another Concorde, which was out of use, and fitted to the New York-bound Concorde. The switch took 30 minutes. The crash was far from being the costliest in aviation history in terms of lives lost but has generated extra-ordinary attention and emotion, partly because of the Concorde's special status as the world's only supersonic airliner; partly because of its hitherto perfect safety record; and partly because of the aircraft's sheer beauty and elegance... Aviation experts said that it should have been possible for an experienced Concorde pilot to land safely on three engines. But the aircraft dropped gently from the sky – one witness said yesterday that it "fell like a leaf in autumn, tail and wing pointing downwards" – as it attempted to turn towards its emergency landing site... at the smaller Le Bourget Airport, 10km away... Investigators believe that the blaze in the number-two engine must have spread to the number-one engine, alongside, unbalancing the delta-winged aircraft. A former Concorde pilot told the newspaper *Le Monde* that the positioning of the... airliner's engines in two groups of two, close beside each other, had always been seen as "Concorde's Achilles heel." ...All the data from the plane's two black boxes had been extracted last night but French air experts would not say how soon any conclusion could be drawn.

...A catastrophic series of failures, starting with a fire in one engine and a loss of power in a second, brought down Concorde Flight AF4590 near Paris on Wednesday, according to the black box flight recorders. The crew also reported to the control tower that the landing gear had failed to retract on takeoff. It remains unclear whether these were separate faults or – more likely – that the original explosion and fire in the first engine damaged the second and jammed the landing gear. Debris from the doomed aircraft has been found all along its brief flight path, starting with fragments of tyres on the runway. This has raised speculation that a piece of tyre may have been sucked into an engine and triggered a fire.

...SAFETY inspectors had warned French airline bosses that the tyres on Concorde flights were “potentially catastrophic”. American air safety experts wrote a memo to Air France chiefs 19 years ago about the dangers of blowouts on takeoff. The disaster – which killed 114 people – appears to have been caused by a burst tyre which damaged a fuel tank... America’s National Transportation Safety Board said there had been four cases where Concorde tyres had burst on takeoff at New York and Washington airports. They passed a memo to the French... saying: “The repetitive nature of these incidents and in particular crew response in the more recent incidents is of serious concern.” Yesterday about 8000 Air France staff attended a 60-minute memorial service at the company’s headquarters at Paris Charles de Gaulle airport. The airline’s president and its mechanics protested at press speculation that the crash was caused by negligent repair work before the aircraft took off... At nearby Gonesse, where the plane went down, about 1250 people marched from the town hall to the crash site, which remained cordoned off by police. Many participants carried flowers which they left at the roadside. Among the marchers was... the manager of the Hotelissimo hotel, who escaped death when the supersonic jet ploughed into the hotel shortly after takeoff... THE [perso]n who filmed the last moments of the doomed... flight said [it] did not realise the plane was crashing. “I wasn’t aware of what I was filming... When I put the camera down, I thought, ‘Oh my god, it’s crashing’.”

...the provisional finding [is] that Wednesday’s Concorde disaster was caused by a structural failure in the aircraft – the bursting of two tyres on take-off, causing rubber and metal fragments to sever fuel lines in the wings – rather than by an individual, human error... [S]tate-owned... Air France... had hoped to resume its supersonic flights at the weekend but the French Government has ordered the five surviving Air France Concordes to remain on the ground until the precise chain of events which led to the crash is known... British Airways was under pressure to [ground the] Concorde last night... It was also announced that a[nother] victim of the crash had been found in the burned-out wreckage of the hotel...

A B[A] Concorde flying from London to New York with 57 passengers and nine crew members had to make an emergency stop in eastern Canada after a crew member smelled gasoline in the cabin, the airline says. Emergency vehicles were on alert yesterday as the Concorde descended into the Gander, Newfoundland, Airport but the landing went ahead without incident... It was the second problem with one of B[A]s’ supersonic jets yesterday... [– e]arlier in the day, a New York bound Concorde was unable to take off from Heathrow because of a refuelling problem, delaying the flight for more than an hour... [–] and the third in two days... On Sunday, fire trucks and ambulances were put on standby at Heathrow after a Concorde flight from New York to London experienced a mixture of fuel and air in the engine. A loud bang was heard inside the jet, which was “something like an engine backfiring,” a B[A] spokesperso]n said... An Air France Concorde crashed last week outside Paris... Air France grounded its fleet of five remaining Concordes after last week’s crash. B[A]... resumed flights on most of its seven supersonic jets the day after the crash. Despite the three recent incidents, B[A] expected to continue its regular service out of London and New York today...

A week after a French Concorde crashed after takeoff... doubts are being voiced about the plane’s design... and... the transparency of the two airlines which use it... Air France and B[A] have been forced to admit that their Concordes have a record of tyre bursts – now the suspected chief cause in last Wednesday’s disaster – and to discuss measures to beef up safety on a plane that they contend is already safe... If investigators indeed show that there was a persistent hazard with the tyres or undercarriage, the questions will be: what and when did the two airlines know about the problem, what did they do to fix it – and were the public advised of any danger? The two airlines have a proud record of safety but have run into a credibility problem since the crash... B[A] has] defiantly kept its seven Concordes in operation, insisting they were in no danger... Meanwhile, the French press has started to raise doubts about the disaster inquiry, fearing the potential for a coverup if the accident is found to have been caused by negligence. The head of the probe commission... is a controversial figure to France’s powerful airline pilots union. [The figure] headed an inquiry into the crash in 1992 of an Air Inter Airbus in Alsace in which 87 people died. In 1993, his report blamed pilot error and absolved Airbus of any blame. [Last] year... evidence came to light that some of the cockpit instruments, later fixed by Airbus, had been at fault.

...The investigation into the... crash of an Air France Concorde has shed light on another suspected design flaw in an aircraft previously hailed as an engineering masterpiece. The new culprit is a small fibreglass shield, attached just in front of the tyres on the plane’s undercarriage, which deflects spray from the engines when the jet takes off and lands on wet runways... [T]he head of the Accident Inquiries Board which is conducting a technical inquiry into the crash, acknowledged yesterday that pieces of the deflector had been found on the runway after the Concorde took off from Roissy/Charles de Gaulle Airport in flames. A similar incident happened on a B[A] Concorde in 1993, although there was no fire... Two years later, BA modified the deflector so that it would not disintegrate, although Air France says it did not follow suit as it was not a measure required by the national civil aviation safety authorities... Meanwhile, the crash has helped to revive controversial plans to build a third airport for Paris to help ease air traffic congestion. Only two years ago, [France’s] Transport Minister... put the plans on ice and instead plumped for building two additional runways at Roissy. Now the scheme is back on the agenda. A decision on whether to push ahead with the airport will... probably be announced next month. [The minister denies that the] accident has had any bearing on the decision, but this response is widely dismissed as bogus, given the enormous shock of the crash and the clamour for safety that it sparked among local residents. The stricken jet crashed near Gonesse, a straggly suburban town in farmland a few kilometres from Roissy... [The death] toll would have been much higher if the plane had ploughed into the busy A1 motorway linking Paris with northern France and Brussels, or if it had veered towards the large town of Villepinte, to the southeast.

...A 40cm metal strip that did not come from the crashed Air France Concorde has been found among runway debris, adding a new twist to the disaster... An aeronautics expert said: “...the strip of... titanium... could have gashed the tyre, which could have broken things in the landing gear and this debris pierced the fuel tank, causing the fire.” ...[In local news, an Auckland] faces a jail term for allegedly pointing a high-powered laser at the police helicopter. The [Auckland] was hunted down and caught by the same helicopter. Police want N[Z] to follow what is happening in A[US] by banning possession of high-powered lasers and introducing a specific charge of laser-pointing. [The Police] Eagle pilot... said a crash would happen unless something was done... Planes flying into Wellington have also had laser beams aimed at them.

...Israel may boast the world’s tightest security at Ben Gurion International Airport, but passengers in planes taking off and landing have no idea of the danger posed to them... Pirate radio stations, many of them run by ultra-Orthodox sects and Jewish settlers, have become so ubiquitous that they fight one another for airspace. At Ben Gurion in Tel Aviv the congestion is becoming dangerous, says... the air-traffic control services manager... [I]n several cases planes have flown too close to one another, with the control tower powerless to warn them because its frequencies have been jammed by the Holy Channels, as the illegal broadcasters call their stations... Last month, an air-traffic controller saw on his radar that a Spanish Iberia airliner was heading in the wrong direction after takeoff, directly towards an incoming jet. The controller tried to contact the Iberia pilot but the frequency was blocked. At the last moment the second plane was contacted and told to take evasive action, narrowly averting disaster... Since the revelations, police have declared war on pirate stations, including the threat of heavy fines and prison sentences for those involved in the broadcasts. That was enough to knock the Holy Channels off the airwaves for a week, but they quickly became emboldened to resume... Yizar Be’re of Keshev, which is a non-profit Centre for the Protection of Democracy in Israel, estimates there are 150 pirate stations. About two-thirds are commercial and the remainder ideological...

[S]cores of people [were] killed when a Russian airliner exploded over the Black Sea on a flight from Israel... Cause of crash [is] still a mystery...

The... jets that collided over Germany yesterday morning, killing 71 people, were both diving to avoid a crash when they flew into each other, say Swiss air traffic controllers. The pilot of the Russian passenger jet began a steep dive only after the controllers’ third instruction to do so, said... an official at Skyguide... The Boeing 757 cargo plane started to dive when its on-board warning system instructed the pilot to lose altitude to avoid a crash... Had the Boeing kept its course, “there... would not have been a crash,”... The crash turned the chocolate box landscape around Lake

Constance, a holiday resort on the Swiss border, into a hellish scene of burning wreckage and corpses... [T]here were 12 crew and 57 passengers on board the Tupolev, all Russians... Most of the victims were children... heading for a Unesco festival in Barcelona... Mid-air collisions are relatively rare. The worst such accident took place in 1996 when a Saudi Arabian Boeing 747 and a Kazakhstan Ilyushin 11-76 cargo plane collided over India, killing 349 people. Tupolev 154s have crashed several times in the past year. An Iran Air Tours TU-154 crashed... in Iran, killing all 119 aboard... 136 passengers and [9] crew were killed when a Russian TU-154 plane crashed near the Siberian city of Irkutsk... [● In Europe t]here are 65 radar centres with 31 different systems using 22 different computer networks made by 18 rival firms that talk 33 different computer languages.

...Officials traded recriminations over who was to blame for the midair collision at Lake Constance after it was revealed the pilot of a Russian airliner was given less than a minute's warning... Swiss air traffic controllers insisted yesterday that the 50-second warning they gave the Russian pilot was enough time for him to drop the Bashkirian airlines plane out of the way of the Boeing 757 cargo plane. But German officials said that was far less than usual... Last night Swiss air traffic controllers said an automatic warning system alerting them that two planes were on a collision course was switched off when the aircraft crashed into each other... Skyguide... said the system... had been shut down for routine maintenance.

...Swiss air traffic control faced further questions yesterday after it was revealed that its radar did not meet European standards a week before a midair collision killed 71 people. The head of the Swiss Federal Bureau for Aircraft Accident Investigations... said a report a week ago into the radar's shortcomings was severe enough for improvements to be ordered... It has also emerged that a collision warning system at Zurich was switched off and a controller was taking a break when the Russian charter plane carrying dozens of children collided with a DHL cargo jet...

A new ground radar system was not working because of red tape when 118 people were killed in what is believed to be Italy's worst air disaster. A Scandinavian jet collided with a light plane... and crashed into a hanger at Milan's Linate airport. All 110 people on the... MD-87, all four people on the Cessna Citation II and four baggage handlers in the hanger were killed. Terrorism was ruled out, officials saying that the small plane was almost certainly at fault in an accident aggravated by heavy fog at Milan's second-largest airport... [The] president of... the company that runs Milan's airports, said the small plane had turned right from the terminal and crossed the runway as the S[candinavian] plane was taking off... But in a twist that was expected to be the main focus of a probe by Milan magistrates, officials said a new ground radar system had not been turned on for bureaucratic reasons... At the time of the crash, visibility was only 100m because of the fog... "If there had been a working ground radar system at Linate, this accident would not have taken place," said [a member] of the Italian pilots' union... The largest previous number killed in a civilian plane crash in Italy was 115 people, in Sicily in 1972... [In related news, Concorde could shortly resume] flying again... B[A] and Air France... say they plan to start flights on the luxury planes as soon as possible. BA has kept its Concorde crew on full pay since the... crash... The airline has invested millions of dollars in safety improvements since the tragedy and says it will get the planes back in the sky.

...B[A] is adding bulletproof lining to the wings of its seven Concorde[s], a safety measure it hopes will have the supersonic airline flying again... BA's technical manager, said the modifications would prevent a repeat of the catastrophic fire... that caused an Air France Concorde to crash... The £17 million... programme will require engineers to crawl into the tiny spaces between the top and bottom of the wings, where the fuel is stored, and fit hundreds of tray-like protectors incorporating Kevlar to the bottom of the fuel tanks. Kevlar is used in bullet-proof vests... Kevlar lining is [also] used in military helicopters and vehicles and Formula One cars to prevent disastrous fuel leaks... [The technical manager] said that if the lining had been fitted [to the doomed Air France Concorde], even with the same puncture the fuel leak would have been cut to less than one litre a second – too little to catch fire – and the Concorde would have been able to land safely... The modifications, which also means adding armour plating to the wing recesses for the landing gear, are being done in close consultation with Air France... and with the jet's manufacturers, Aerospatiale and BAe Systems... As a first step towards getting Concorde in the air again, Air France will fly one of its fleet to a military base at Istres tomorrow for two weeks of high-speed ground tests. It will be the first takeoff of a Concorde from Charles de Gaulle [Airport] since the crash.

...An Air France Concorde landed in Paris after successfully undergoing ground and flight tests on new... "Michelin Near Zero Growth" ['shred-proof'] tyres... The tests are aimed at restoring the supersonic jet, which was grounded... after a fatal crash, to commercial service.

...British Airways has test flown a second Concorde in preparation for a re-launch of its supersonic service [next month]. It took off from Heathrow Airport and reached supersonic speeds as it flew halfway across the Atlantic, said a BA official.

...The supersonic Concorde got its wings back yesterday... with French and British officials clearing the fleet of 12 aircraft for flight once safety modifications are made... Air France said it would resume commercial service between Paris and New York... but did not give an exact date. B[A]... said it intended to resume London-New York supersonic service soon, but also did not set a date... One Air France Concorde should have its certificate within days, with two more planes ready within weeks. B[A] has said one of its modified Concorde was to be certified to fly yesterday.

...[a British actor] glided into the Concorde cockpit clutching a flute of the finest Dom Perignon. [The p]ilot... turned to greet the raffish actor and together they watched the fiery orb of the sun sink below the horizon as they cruised at twice the speed of sound. Such encounters were all in a day's work for... [the pilot. A former world heavyweight boxing champion turned Muslim (r:p1561, ln26) – who] would write poems and call them the fastest poetry [it] had ever written[; a former Beatle (r:p1754, ln66) – who formed a band named Wings; and the *Lassie Come Home* actress (r:p1729, ln11)]... – who, befitting a friend of... [Wacko,] was obsessed with the aircraft's ability to change the shape of its nose – all regularly wandered down to his flightdeck. [The Prince of Wales] also sat next to the 57-year-old pilot, joking that the crotch strap on the plane's emergency jumpseat held the potential to "ruin a dynasty"... [The Beatle] would be transfixed by the experience. On one journey they left London in the evening, proceeding to outpace the spinning of the Earth to the extent that... [the pilot] and the former Beatle caught up with the setting sun for the second time that day... [T]he pilot, who flew Concorde between 1976 and 1986... had been witness to an era of opulence now confined to history, never likely to be repeated. Decadence is dead. At least for a travel industry founded on elitist values and a shameless willingness to offer the most extravagant services to the most well-paid. In more austere days such excesses seem faintly vulgar. The end of Concorde, and its iconic image of luxurious travel, means no-holds-barred finery has been replaced by no-frills. Last week's announcement that Concorde – the most exclusive, ambitious aircraft ever built – is to be retired is the latest development in a trend that is rapidly redefining the way people travel. It also reflects a shifting cultural attitude to decadence. Even the QE2, once the world's most luxurious, languid mode of transport, has fallen victim following Cunard's decision to retire the vessel from the Atlantic. Elsewhere, airlines are beginning to reject the very concept of first-class and sales of luxury car brands in Britain, at least, are struggling according to some dealers. On Britain's congested rail network, first-class compartments stand empty alongside overcrowded "cattle trucks". Behaviourists blame the democratisation of travel for the phasing out of opulence. Every weekend the Gucci-shaded glitterati rub shoulders with business[people] and students on Britain's booming budget carriers... Even "luxury" has lost its cachet, becoming so overused it is now meaningless[– f]or the savvy consumer... it can simply mean overpriced and overhyped... Even those at the forefront in the conception of Concorde appear to have adjusted to these more pragmatic times... – weeks before Concorde makes its final voyage... British Airways will scrap its first-class quota on six as yet unnamed routes... [A] travel sector analyst for PricewaterhouseCoopers, has detected a seismic "downsizing" among travellers. "Those who might once have flown Concorde will probably now fly conventional first-class, and those who flew first-class might move down to business and so on." Inevitably, this has destroyed the market for which Concorde, QE2 and first-class rail journeys were created. "There used to be no one who did it like Concorde," said... [the person] who personified "pile it high, sell it cheap" holidays until his International Leisure Group collapsed after the 1991 Gulf War. "Concorde was a romantic dream... It signalled a bygone age of elegant travel... It was an occasion, smoked salmon canapes at the gate. And when you flew you would get little things that were all part of the

exclusivity. That doesn't seem to happen any more." Others are less sentimental. [The person who founded the failed cheap-seat airline] Laker was on an advisory panel that helped persuade a wavering British Government to invest in Concorde in the 1960s. Speaking from the Bahamas, where [it] still runs an airline flying to the US, [the] 80-year-old... said bluntly: "If they cannot make money on it they ought to put it in a museum." [The octogenarian] believes technology always goes forwards and we will see supersonic passenger travel again, "but not in my lifetime or yours".

...A prototype of the latest experiment in supersonic travel, known as NEXST, will be tested over the A[US]n desert next month. A 10[%] scale model of the Japanese designed and built plane... [that] looks like a winged javelin... will ride piggyback on a rocket and then be hurtled forward at a speed of 2500km/h for a 14-minute test flight. The NEXST prototype – short for National Experimental Supersonic Transport – is designed to have twice the range of Concorde, seat three times the passengers and cut emissions by 75[%]. Its supersonic boom will be reduced to the tolerable rumble of a Boeing 747. The programme has its sceptics, who point out that Japan has developed almost nothing of interest in aviation since W[W]II. But companies such as Boeing, which is developing its own supersonic aircraft called the Sonic Cruiser, are taking the test seriously.

...Space may be the final frontier but the A[US]n Outback is playing a crucial supporting role in the attempt to boldly go where no one has gone before. The enduring fascination with Mars has prompted a bunch of enthusiastic earthlings to head for the... Red Centre[, parts of which] look uncannily like the surface of the Red Planet, our closest planetary neighbour. So where better to practise landings, test space suits and try out remote-controlled rover vehicles in preparation for a [pilot]ed mission to Mars as early as 2020? This week, a research team, including two Nasa scientists, scoured the vast, dusty landscape trying to find terrain that most closely resembles the surface of Mars. They are not the only ones to have honed in on the Outback. A[n AUS]n-born astronaut... wants the former rocket testing range at Woomera to be home to an emergency facility that would service the new international space station. The federal Government is considering the proposal, which [the astronaut] believes would also give A[US] a stake in that all-important first [pilot]ed mission to Mars. And on Tuesday, Woomera was alive with expectation for the launch of a revolutionary jet engine that could eventually not only make space launches cheaper but also revolutionise commercial air travel. The scramjet technology, dreamed up in the 1950s, burns only oxygen from the air and hydrogen carried on board. It will take some time to analyse the results, but a successful flight would in aviation terms be comparable to the first flight to break the sound barrier. Capable of flying at more than seven times the speed of sound, at 2.6km a second, a scramjet engine would slash the flight time from Auckland to London to just over two hours.

...The first prototype of an aircraft intended to revolutionise travel and shatter speed records was destroyed during its maiden flight yesterday after a booster rocket carrying it aloft tumbled from the sky. U[S] space scientists were forced to destroy the un[pilot]ed X-43A prototype in mid-air minutes before the plane was due to fire the oxygen-scooping "scramjet" engine designed to drive it at seven times the speed of sound. Cameras aboard two chase planes showed the Pegasus rocket careering off course and falling out of control before controllers triggered on-board explosives to destroy it over the Pacific Ocean. Pieces of the booster rocket and the small, black X-43A, part of Nasa's "Hyper-X" programme, fell into the sea. Dejected Nasa... scientists – who have called the programme an aviation breakthrough as historic as the Wright brothers' first flight – ...will form a "mishap investigation team" to determine what went wrong, and vow the \$US185 million... programme they have billed as the future of aviation will go ahead... The X43-A was making the first of three scheduled test flights in the Hyper-X programme, which Nasa has said will ultimately make space travel routine and pave the way for cross-country commercial flights in 30 minutes... The X43-A and its Pegasus booster were carried to 8000m by a B-52 bomber from Edwards Air Force Base in the California desert...

An unpiloted, high-altitude aircraft that scientists believe could one day replace some satellites has been successfully tested over Hawaii. Nasa and the company AeroVironment, which helped build the plane, launched the solar-powered aircraft named Helios from Pacific Missile Range Facility in Kauai on Sunday. It climbed over 22,800m in the Hawaii sun after three previously aborted attempts, and landed on the same landing strip. The standing altitude record of more than 24,500, was set in Kauai in 1998 by Pathfinder Plus, a smaller version. The flying wing features 14 propellers powered by motors that consume about as much energy as a standard hair dryer. With a wingspan of some 75m, Helios (the Greek sun) is wider than a Boeing 747 but not nearly as fast: It takes off at the speed of a bicycle and travels at a cruising speed of 30 km/h to 50 km/h. According to Nasa, the aircraft could eventually be used as a relatively inexpensive telecommunications satellite or a scientific observation satellite[as it can "reflect signals like current satellites and should be able to fly at 20km indefinitely"]. Researchers hope that Helios will one day reach heights of 30,000m, setting a new record for this type of aircraft... The Helios generates about 10kW of power in the early morning sun, giving it a rise of 33m per minute. By noon the solar panels produced about 40kW, and the climb rate increased. With evening coming on, the plane was switched to back-up battery power. It took the Helios 10 hours and 17 minutes to reach peak altitude. It is scheduled to fly again in about three weeks.

...[Waitakere's] Mayor... has a vision for the future – electric cars plugged in outside the Waitakere City Council chambers. On his recent trip to the U[S, the mayor] attended the unveiling of an electric car called the Crayon, built by Toyota... [The mayor] thinks the cars would be ideal for the Eco City. "If we were to fall asleep like Rip van Winkle then wake up in 50 years, the world would be a series of electric plugs." ...At the moment [the cars] are only good for short trips and are expensive. [However,]Toyota proposes shared ownership of the... compact two seater... cars in urban areas to ease parking problems and traffic congestion. One person would drive a car to work or the shops, leave it at a re-charging station where it could be picked up by someone else. "I think it's absolutely ideal to look at role modelling it in... [NZ,]" says the mayor who] believes private car ownership is on the way out as hired electric cars take over...

A shiny white-pod that began road tests this month is being tipped as the taxi of the future. The pod, known as ULTra – Urban Light Transport – could make driver-free transport a reality and not just the stuff of futuristic fantasy. "It will be the first in the world," said... [the] director of business development at ULTra's makers, Advanced Transport Systems. The... 800kg... pod – which seats up to four passengers – is the brainchild of Bristol University... The first stage of the ULTra project will have 30 pods circling the Cardiff Bay area in Wales by 2004. The pods system would then move to the city centre. The battery-powered pods, able to reach up to 40 km/h, will operate on a single, 1.5m track and recharge at every stop. The vehicles are designed to stop automatically if they sense an object in the way. ULTra pods could work as an automated personal taxi system. Passengers will "hail" the pod from a designated stop, and choose a destination along a set route. When the pod pulls up, the passengers swipe a smart card that provides the travel details and ULTra carries them directly to their chosen stop. Rubber wheels ensure a quiet journey and security cameras at every stop increase passenger safety. Passengers would find on-call pods at designated stops at least 80[%] of the time. This efficiency would come from a large number of pods in circulation and the shortened journey times... *Pods circle in one direction... Stations are off the main line to allow other pods to pass... Some routes may need raised tracks, creating a futuristic look...* Advanced Transport Systems estimate that building an ULTra network would cost about one-third of the amount needed for a light railway. Connecting Cardiff's city centre to its waterside region is expected to cost £45 million... The pods will be accessible to the disabled, as well as passengers with bicycles or prams. Designers hope pod travel will cost about as much as ordinary bus journeys, or less if passengers share their pods.

In a moneyless society, either everyone or nobody would have to be provided with private transport. If everyone had private transport there would be no need for public transport; if public transport was properly utilised there would be no need for private transport. Because private transport is one of the most wasteful uses of energy and other resources, the sensible solution to transport problems is to create a high-capacity public transport system.

Initially, where public transport is already available, it can all come under the management of one ministry and be provided free (where it isn't already available, steps should be taken to build the necessary infrastructure). Unfortunately, the worst aspect of modern public transport systems is that they cover such a small amount of a city's territory. Auckland, for example, only has two rail lines (although one line has two branches) and, while there are hundreds

of bus routes, most of them follow the same major roads until they reach their destination suburb – and even then they only go along a limited number of streets. Consequently, catching a train isn't a viable option for the majority of Aucklanders, and most Aucklanders have to walk hundreds of metres to reach the nearest bus stop (not a problem for most people when the weather favours walking and they don't have much to carry, but a huge problem for people who have poor personal mobility). This means that, at present, only a limited number of Aucklanders would benefit from a free public transport system. On top of that, with the exception of the Link route and some 'cross-town' routes (e.g., #007 – which services bus stops every 15 minutes during peak hours; Auckland's limited range of cross-town routes link distant suburbs without passing through the centre of the city), the bus services are infrequent – commonly once every half hour (including the 007 route during off-peak times); once an hour on some routes, especially during evenings, weekends and public holidays – and don't operate for much more than 18 out of every 24 hours (less on Sundays and public holidays – when the last bus on major routes leaves before 10.30pm, while on some lesser routes the last bus leaves at 4pm).

The solution to urban transport woes is, however, relatively simple. Each city should have three types of bus route: suburban; inter-suburban; primary. A suburban bus would start out from a central point of its suburb and either travel around all of that suburb before returning to the central point, or complete a circuit of part of the suburb (e.g., each suburb could be divided into four routes – such as north, east, south and west), after which time the bus would immediately head off around the circuit again – and keep doing so. Suburban bus routes would go along as many roads as possible in one direction – they should avoid dead-end streets if there isn't enough room for them to turn around (in some cases it might be easy to create room for a bus to turn; in other cases, mini-buses can be used on a route instead of larger vehicles) but they ought to be able to cover close to 100% of the through roads, even if that means coming back down the other side of some streets which the bus has already travelled along – picking up or off-loading passengers at any point along the route (e.g., outside their house or destination; or the closest point to their house or destination). At the central point of a suburb, passengers can catch a bus to another part of the suburb – if it is divided into more than one route – or a bus that travels along an inter-suburban route or a primary route. On primary routes, a bus would either: (a) leave a central point of the city and head out in a straight, or nearly-straight, line to the edge of the city – stopping at the central point of any suburb it passes through (they could also stop at designated points between suburbs, rather than wherever passengers request them to stop) – before returning along the same route to the city, then heading back out again; (b) travel around a circular or nearly-circular route – there could be one route that goes around the circumference of the city (linking all of the end-points of the routes that head in and out of the city) and one or more inner circular routes. A diagram of the primary bus routes will have a web-like appearance – with each suburb being accessed by at least one primary route, and some by both a straight route and a circular one (note that it may be possible to use remote-controlled – i.e., *driverless* – vehicles on primary routes). Inter-suburban bus routes would travel back and forth between the central points of adjacent suburbs that aren't already linked directly by a primary route (be it straight or circular) – preferably stopping only at the central point of each suburb and, perhaps, the midpoint of the route. Incidentally, it should be possible for every bus to carry at least one wheelchair-bound passenger (although it would be preferable if they had space for two wheelchairs – which, along with other mobility aids, should be supplied via the Health Ministry – created by folding up standard seats; note that there would be no reason why wheelchairs couldn't enter buses via mid-section or rear doors – as opposed to the front doors – if passengers don't have to pay fares) but, if not, a taxi-like service using specially adapted vehicles would need to be maintained for transporting people with various permanent or temporary physical disabilities.

A public transport system like the one described above would enable a passenger to travel to any part of the city by bus, with little or no walking involved (although, obviously, people who aren't in a hurry could walk instead of catching a bus whenever the weather is suitable and they only need to travel a short distance – e.g., they can walk to or from a primary route bus stop instead of catching a suburban bus). Although a passenger might have to change buses more than once to reach a destination – riding a maximum of five vehicles in some instances (e.g., starting out on a suburban bus, transferring to a straight primary route bus, then a circular one, another straight route, finishing with another suburban bus) – this shouldn't pose much of an inconvenience (in cities like London, passengers are already used to using more than one tube line per trip; and, in Auckland, it would create a more direct service than currently exists – in order to get by bus from two relatively close suburbs, many passengers currently have to catch one bus all the way into the city then another bus out again!), especially if every route has a frequent service (frequent enough to prevent a bus from becoming so full that the driver has to refuse to take on any more passengers). Apart from minimising waiting times, if a service is frequent enough (e.g., less than 15 minutes between buses) it will eliminate the need to provide timetables. Furthermore, if the service on all primary routes is closer to more than one bus every minute, and one every five minutes on suburban routes, most workers who have to travel from one location to another as part of their job, but don't have to carry much equipment (especially heavy or bulky equipment), can also use the public transport system. Therefore, the number of passengers using buses during normal daylight hours would be constant enough to warrant maintaining throughout those hours what might be thought of as a *peak times* capacity service, only reducing the capacity after the evening rush and at weekends – although, if everyone is using buses to get around during their own spare time, the volume of passengers using them could be similar every day of the week (primary route buses can be double-decker to help move larger numbers of passengers; and, if an increased capacity has to be created during weekday mornings or late afternoons, trailer carriages could be hooked up to the buses – thereby eliminating the need to increase the number of bus drivers, assuming the vehicles aren't driverless). During the hours when passenger numbers are minimal (e.g., midnight to early morning), the entire bus system – or at least suburban and inter-suburban routes – could operate like a taxi service (i.e., people who have to travel during those hours would phone for – or pre-book – a bus/mini-bus to come and pick them up then take them directly to their destination; or at least take them to or from the central points of suburbs and their homes). Each suburb could have a taxi station, or a number of adjacent suburbs could share a taxi station.

In Auckland it isn't possible to have primary bus routes that are completely circular because there are two harbours in the way. However, it would be possible to construct tunnels under the harbours – although a much easier solution is to use ferries to link the end points of semi-circular bus routes; and another solution is to have one circular route system for the North Shore, one for west Auckland and another for south and east Auckland (with each circuit sharing one or more bus stops with its neighbouring circuit). Furthermore, primary routes don't have to utilise buses – trams and rail (be it above or underground – though underground transport tunnels are only advantageous when space above is limited or where above-ground routes can be hampered by heavy snowfalls) is an alternative where they already exist ('New York's underground system costs \$2 and runs all night'). Where inner-city tram or rail lines don't exist, that should remain the case (and old inner-city tramway and railway lines shouldn't be replaced by new ones when their useful life is over) because *efficient, flexible and low risk* buses are more mobile (e.g., a train can only move backwards and forwards in the same direction as the rails, whereas an independently powered bus – as opposed to one that is powered via electric cables in the road or overhead – can easily make detours around unexpected obstructions, be used to carry people on unorthodox routes, etc.); tend to be quieter (unless the trains ride a *cushion of magnetic fields* rather than rails); and, although roads may require more effort to maintain than railway lines, they can easily be used by the vehicles of other ministries (which normally need to follow unorthodox routes). In addition, maintaining just one type of land transport network ought to be more efficient long-term than two or more!

It should only take a few days for the Transport Ministry to work out new bus routes for Auckland, but there might not initially be enough buses to provide an adequate service at all times. However, until enough buses are available, mini-buses and large cars (e.g., 7-seaters or MVPs) can be used around suburban routes – perhaps operating more like an inner-suburban taxi service than following set routes. Indeed, there should be no need to provide more buses to the Auckland region until all of the available mini-buses and cars have outlived their usefulness! Ideally, every vehicle (including motorcycles) within the Auckland region ought to immediately become the property of the Transport Ministry – excluding vehicles required by other ministries – with excess vehicles being sent to needy districts or put into storage until required (e.g., if a vehicle in circulation becomes worn out or damaged beyond repair, it can simply be replaced by a stored vehicle). Certainly there should be no justification to allow people to still buy vehicles for private use – which means

any vehicles sitting in new and used car sales yards can become the property of the Transport Ministry (thereby freeing up car salespeople, car-groomers, etc., for more important work – plus large areas of land), as can vehicles currently owned by hire companies. Unfortunately, convincing every HB to give up its right to continue having a private vehicle might prove to be a difficult task – but the Transport Ministry could monopolise fuel supplies so that they are only used for public transport and industrial purposes (ministries which require fuel for their own vehicles and equipment can arrange for that fuel to be provided by the Transport Ministry – rather than having their own fuel supply and storage systems); at the very least, fuel supplies for private use should be expensive and limited – with vouchers or subsidies being provided to people who car-pool their vehicle and rural residents who can't be moved to an urban location (people who can be moved from a rural home to an urban one but refuse to do so shouldn't receive any kind of special consideration when it comes to private transport – especially since an infrequent rural public transport service can be established, with rural residents arranging their movements to tie in with the service's timetable; alternatively, rural residents who don't already have a bicycle can be given one).

If members of the public are still able to use private vehicles (they may need them to carry groceries, for example, until weekly supplies are delivered directly to households by the Food Ministry – r:p2089, lns5-6 – although free taxis could wait outside supermarkets to carry people and their groceries home) it ought to be harder for them to get their vehicles repaired if a part breaks down or the vehicle is involved in a crash; and such repairs should only commence after the customer has fronted up with the money to pay for labour and parts. Mechanics and panelbeaters, their equipment and spare parts could be combined into larger working units to increase the efficiency of repair services; a minority of mechanics at each garage could work solely on private vehicle repairs – with each new repair job going to the bottom of the waiting list (thereby giving customers a chance to save up the cost of the repairs out of their weekly allowance money – but, hopefully, most will decide that they can't afford to allocate any of their allowance to vehicle repairs, and simply forfeit their vehicle to the Transport Ministry so it can at least be used for spare parts) – while the majority of mechanics work on industrial vehicles, only assisting with private repairs whenever they have a shortage of industrial jobs. The owners of private vehicles could buy replacement parts and do the repairs themselves (or get mechanically-minded friends to do the repairs in their spare time), but garages should be required to inspect such repairs before allowing privately repaired cars to be driven on public roads (i.e., a warrant-of-fitness system would need to be maintained and enforced).

Eventually, the only vehicles on the road will be public transport and those required by other ministries. This would remove the need for residential properties to have garages and driveways, and for city or suburban centres to have multi-storey carparks and metered parking spaces; eliminate traffic jams (plus the need to have traffic-spotters flying over motorways – which should no longer need to have more than two lanes each side, if they are still needed at all – as well as traffic law enforcement officers, parking officials, etc.) while simultaneously reducing vehicle travelling times – and may even make traffic-lights redundant; severely reduce the amount of accidents, as well as the number of mechanics, panelbeaters, etc., who need to be employed by the Transport Ministry; increase the life expectancy of roads. Incidentally, the maintenance and construction of roads would be another responsibility of the Transport Ministry, with each district using whatever materials are easiest for it to produce, while creating a long-lasting surface that is safe in all or most weather conditions (e.g., tar shouldn't be used where it will melt during the middle of summer – unless the tar can be treated to prevent melting) – although, if it eventually becomes practical to only or mostly use vehicles that can be levitated above the road surface when moving (e.g., hovercraft; electromagnetic vehicles) wear and tear on road surfaces would be minimal.

Factories that manufacture vehicles which still use standard internal combustion engines ought to be shut down immediately, meaning that only hybrid or other types of efficient, low-polluting or non-polluting vehicles are manufactured in future. It would be ideal if motors that are powered by hydrogen fuel cells or run on water become commonplace – in the latter case, buses and other vehicles would only need to have access to taps in order to refuel; or, alternatively, if all vehicles are eventually able to utilise the turning of their wheels to generate enough energy to make the wheels continue turning (if it isn't possible to use the four – or more – main wheels to recycle a vehicle's momentum, perhaps an extra axle and wheels can be fitted to re-generate energy), thereby eliminating the need to refuel vehicles – unless a battery or electric plug is required to provide the energy that starts turning each vehicle's main wheels. However, if other types of fuel have to continue being used into the future, they ought to be produced from plants or other renewable raw materials – or at least be sourced from natural gas as opposed to using petrol. The same can be said for engine or transmission oils (consider '*Mobil 1* – the synthetic oil that is better for your engine') – although oils can be recycled. By the way, because aesthetic appearance would no longer be a consideration, new vehicles could all be given a wrap-a-round – i.e., bumper-car-like – protective guard to prevent damage being caused to panels and lights in minor accidents (ensuring that only properly-trained people with a defensive-driving attitude work as drivers should also help to reduce the chances of vehicles being damaged unnecessarily; as will producing vehicles that are incapable of exceeding maximum speed limits); alternatively, every vehicle could have a *collision-avoidance system*.

The Transport Ministry wouldn't have to manufacture vehicles but, because it is responsible for the maintenance and repair of vehicles (unless it is more practical for the Manufacturing Ministry to handle vehicle maintenance and repairs) plus roads, other ministries should have to give their orders for new vehicles to the Transport Ministry – which would then arrange for the Manufacturing Ministry to produce them (and, for easy identification, each ministry's vehicles could be the same unique colour – e.g., every Food Ministry vehicle could be green; every Health Ministry vehicle could be white). Ministries will have to be accountable for the efficient management of their vehicle fleets, having just enough vehicles – be they of a standard or specialised design – to avoid delays caused by vehicle shortages, while also taking into account the need to schedule routine maintenance checks for vehicles (and perhaps have a few spare per district to be used when workloads surge unexpectedly, or to replace vehicles that have broken down). However, rather than trying to schedule routine maintenance checks during daylight hours (i.e., while the majority of a ministry's vehicles are being utilised), such checks could be performed during low or zero-use hours (e.g., during weekends; at night – scheduling routine maintenance checks for evenings would be especially advantageous for the Transport Ministry because that will maximise the number of buses available to be used during daylight hours).

The Transport Ministry of each district will need to have enough buses to cater for peak times, but if it has slightly more buses per district than needed during such times, other ministries should be able to borrow buses whenever circumstances conspire to leave them short of vehicles. In some instances, however, there would be justification for other ministries to have their own supply of buses. For example, the Education Ministry needs buses – and drivers – to take classes on field trips (if field trips were arranged so that approximately the same number of classes are being transported each school day, the number of buses required by the Education Ministry could be fairly constant; if the drivers were qualified to also act as guides or tutors, they won't have to be idle between the time their bus arrives at its destination and the time to leave) – but there shouldn't be any justification for supplying buses to take pupils to and from school (if the majority of adults are commencing or finishing work either an hour before or after school begins/ends, there might be enough of a lull in passenger numbers on suburban routes to allow high school pupils to catch a normal bus to and from school if the walking distance between it and their home is excessive; but primary school pupils ought to all live close enough to their schools to always walk – assuming they can walk – and have adequate clothing to protect them whenever the weather is very wet or cold). The Food Ministry would also need to have a personal supply of buses to transport its workers from the city to surrounding fields, and from one field – or glasshouse – to another during the day (although, if the Food Ministry mostly only requires mini-buses for this purpose, those mini-buses may be used as taxis by the Transport Ministry at night). These vehicles could leave from the centre of the city – meaning that the Food Ministry's workers have to travel into the city to catch them, or at least be waiting somewhere along their route out of the city – or, preferably, leave from a selection of outlying suburban centres (teams of workers can then predominantly consist of people who live in neighbouring suburbs).

The Food Ministry would need its own supply of delivery vehicles, as would the Manufacturing Ministry. Initially, the Housing Ministry could also have its own vehicles to help shift tenants and their personal belongings from one house to another. However, because household furnishings and equipment

should belong to houses not the tenants (r:p2204, ln56), the amount of personal possessions tenants have to move will eventually mean that they ought to be able to pack all of their personal belongings – including, if they are air-filled, mattresses (but excluding *oversized* bed-bases – r:p2204, ln58) – into one or two suitcases (supplied by either the Housing or Manufacturing Ministry) and catch a bus to the new residence! Incidentally, if – when a thorough public transport system has been adopted and the overall volume of vehicles using roads minimised – a person has to travel by bus for more than 30 minutes when journeying to or from the person's workplace, or the place where the person is collected by a ministerial vehicle (e.g. Food Ministry workers), and it isn't possible or practical to move the person into a house which is nearer to that workplace (like if the person has a partner who would then be living more than 30 minutes travelling time away from its work), or to transfer the person to a workplace which is nearer to the person's home, any travel time in excess of 30 minutes (or maybe in excess of 60 minutes) ought to be included as part of its normal working hours.

The Transport Ministry can be responsible for inter-district or inter-state travel. However, there should be only three reasons for moving a person (and, if relevant, its partner and children) from one district or state to another. The first is if that person is required to perform a particular work task which can't be performed by someone already living in the destination district (or can't be performed via video-conferencing – e.g., via the Internet – or other means of communicating over long distances), or there is a shortage of qualified workers in the destination district but an oversupply in the person's home district; such transfers should be viewed as temporary (i.e., just until the destination district can provide a local resident to perform the visitor's task) – the Housing Ministry would have to provide visitors with accommodation – although transferred workers could have the option of remaining in their newly adopted district. The second reason is if a natural disaster renders an entire district uninhabitable – temporarily or permanently. The third reason is if someone is being moved from an overpopulated district to an underpopulated one (r:p2024, ln41). People wouldn't need to be charged money to move under any of the above circumstances (but if, when a new system is instigated, some people have their plans to migrate cancelled – because the Transport Ministry, and any other relevant ministries, consider their migration to be unnecessary – any money those people have already paid out shouldn't be refunded).

Volunteers should be sought to leave overpopulated districts, but preference of destination ought to be shown for people who had previously migrated from an underpopulated district, or have some kind of connection to it (e.g., some of their relatives live there; they have skills that are required by the underpopulated district). However, because it is senseless to allow people to move from underpopulated districts to overpopulated ones, people would have to be aware that once they have migrated to an underpopulated district they can't go back! Furthermore, when every underpopulated district has reached an optimum population, and each district is able to fulfil all of its employment needs from its own population, migration can be stopped completely (excluding the *second reason* – but, if cities aren't built in hazardous locations, such as next to volcanoes or above earthquake fault-lines, natural disasters might have a minimal effect on future societies). Therefore, it would normally only be necessary to move raw materials or manufactured products between districts/states.

Adjacent districts that share the same land mass can be linked by a railway line for transporting the majority of raw materials and manufactured goods. It shouldn't be necessary to construct underground railways for this purpose (except where it is more practical to go through mountains than around or over them), because they require much more effort to produce – especially where above-ground railway lines already exist – and maintain long-term (e.g., it is easier to realign earthquake-damaged railway lines that are on the ground rather than under it). Above-ground railways can be protected by a semi-circular wire or plastic cage – to prevent animals, broken trees or falling rocks obstructing the rails (if the cage is made of a plastic able to reflect heat, buckled rails may no longer be a problem – though rails can be made from heat-resistant alloys) – thereby enabling trains to safely travel at high speeds (although it might not be possible to achieve the same speeds as can be obtained from an underground railway). Speeds would be aided by the fact that – when everyone in each district lives in the same urban area (i.e., when railway lines no longer pass through small towns) – trains can travel non-stop between cities. Not having to stop between cities means trains could be automatic (i.e., driverless) and, if their travel times are fast enough, it might only be necessary to have a single railway track with one train continuously going backwards and forwards along it (or at least going backwards and forwards during normal working hours).

If underground railways or railway bridges are constructed at the shortest points between land masses separated by sea, it would be possible to establish a worldwide railway system (although each train should just go between adjacent districts instead of being able to travel right around the world – goods travelling further than adjacent districts would, therefore, have to be transferred from one train to another; each city could have a central railway station to make it relatively easy to do so). However, goods should mostly only travel between adjacent districts by rail, with goods that have to be transported over longer distances being carried by ships or planes – with the latter being the preferred carrier because they can cover territory so much faster than the former and are generally safer (although it may be possible to design ships that remain stable regardless of how treacherous the sea becomes – and whose noise doesn't affect sea mammal social interaction). The Transport Ministry would, obviously, be responsible for managing and maintaining railway networks, airports (which would require less land if all aircraft can be designed to take-off and land vertically, or only require short runways) and docks. By the way, as with cars, there would be more than enough planes and ships in existence to cope with initial workloads – which will only decrease with time – meaning that excess ships (there are '90,000 commercial vessels') and planes can be put into storage until required to replace those kept in circulation, while production of new ships and planes can be stopped (unless they are of an advanced design – e.g., made out of long-lasting materials and powered by electric motors, seawater, hydrogen, or other environmentally sound fuels and energy sources; in the early 1990s a 'Japanese company used superconductors to develop an electronic ship engine which was minute in comparison to standard ship engines – which can be three floors high – had fewer parts, could be placed on the outside of the hull thereby further increasing internal cargo space, would propel the ship through the water faster, and ran continuously after being started'). When transferring goods between districts, thorough measures should always be practiced to ensure they arrive in a sound condition (where relevant, popcorn can be used as a packing material instead of polystyrene chips or other sophisticated products) and the spread of pests (be they plants, animals or viral diseases – or other forms of contagious illness) is eliminated – unless the sending and receiving districts already share all of the same pests.

Controlling the movement of people between districts should also help to eliminate another kind of pest – criminals (including the ones who illegally smuggle immigrants – plus those illegal immigrants, and also refugees) or other undesirables who, instead of taking responsibility for their actions, simply escape to somewhere where they are unknown (often repeating their unsociable or destructive behaviour, before moving again, then again, and again)! Incidentally, the type of society proposed by this thesis should eventually eliminate the existence of vagrants and other homeless, jobless people.

Some HBs will claim that if people are no longer able to freely move about the world, it would stifle the development of individuals and communities. "Travel broadens the mind", they'll say, and might even suggest that the reason Jesus of Nazareth stood out from the crowd was because his parents travelled to different countries during his childhood, and Jesus also moved about a lot in his later years. However, although their reasoning would be valid, the examples of people like Socrates and Immanuel Kant prove that a person can live in one place all of their life and still develop a strong mind and personality (while modern communications technology makes it easy for people separated by distance to influence each other)! Furthermore, people tend to care more about their community – its people, facilities and environment – if they have a long-term commitment to it (note that making people catch public buses – instead of travelling around in private vehicles, usually alone – should help to bring the members of communities closer together).

Unfortunately, people who have previously moved away from their families and friends, but are prevented from moving back (because the district they left is overpopulated), would never be able to see each other in person again – unless they are responsible for operating a train (if trains have drivers), plane or ship between the relevant districts – but this needn't be an issue (because – except for instances when people were forced apart by authorities or events beyond their control – if they really cared about their family or friends, they would never have moved in the first place; and, anyway, modern communications technology means that people who are kept apart physically can easily keep in touch electronically).

TALK

Television-telephones may reduce the need for... face-to-face business conferences and... result... in... saving[s] in business travel... - 1983

The Internet pastime of 'chatting' is also called 'conferencing', though that makes it sound a bit business-ish. Chatting by computer is one of those leisure things you can now do with one or more individuals, anywhere on the planet. Here's an awesome thought. There are now some 50 million people who use the Internet. The number grows around 8000 a day. And you could talk to *all* of them... by equipping your computer with a modem, joining up with an Internet Service Provider, and going online. When you chat by computer you go to a suitable online site and announce to the world that you're there. Soon a message jumps onto your screen. It's someone in Kathmandu who asks you what's happening at your part of the planet. You reply – and soon develop this fascinating conversation. It all takes place in what computer users like to call “real time”. They mean that you're actually exchanging written conversation live – in the same way that you exchange spoken conversation on a phone call... Let me make clear that chatting is not what is usually meant by the term “email”... Sending email is one of the best things about the Internet. It's very cheap – maybe only five or six cents a time. And it's very simple – your online software will flash a message form on the screen for you to fill in. Addressing it and sending it off can be done in a few taps of your keyboard or mouse. (You could send off a hundred email messages in the time it takes to get out an envelop, address it, put your letter inside, seal it and take it to a postbox.) Email is a private and direct link to one person. But there's another, public method of sending electronic messages... [which, along with email, is] less immediate, but may be more efficient [than chatting]... This you do by going to the site of a particular interest group on the Internet... You might choose one dedicated to Drag Racing, for example, or Astrology or Stamp Collecting or Genealogy or Left-handed Film Stars Born in Hawaii During the Second World War. (Whatever you're interested in, *somebody* on the Internet shares your enthusiasm! ...You can find out about *anything* on the Internet... though there's no guaranteeing that it'll be true!...)... These sites are called Newsgroups... [By the way, m]ore Americans, confronted by a deluge of new information programming and expanded coverage, are turning off the traditional nightly news broadcasts[. A] study shows... that nightly newscasts – offered by ABC, CBS and NBC – are fast fading as an institution. “The pace of life is so hectic that people don't have the time to make an appointment to sit down every night at 6.30 to find out a lot of things they already know... Fewer than half the public [42[%]] now says it regularly watches one of the three nightly broadcasts, down from 48[%] in 1995 and 60[%] in 1993,” said the Pew Research Centre for People and the Press... The Pew study found that local news shows, with their menu of neighbourhood crime, local government and community events, have been far more successful in holding on to their audiences at 6 pm... Many local stations now offer as much as two hours of news leading up to 6.30 pm... [65%] of survey respondents said they watched local news regularly, down from a high of 77[%] in May 1993... [The] director of the Pew centre, said the most surprising finding was that “it is now television's turn to experience what newspapers have struggled with for the past decade and a half – the decline in audience.” The second surprise... “is just how quickly our lives are being changed by computers. A big decline in viewership is associated with computer use.”

...Computer software already controls much of our lives. And the more it does... the greater the odds of a disaster caused by a system crash. ALL the planes over a huge area of... Seattle... fall out of radio contact. Hospital patients die after being exposed to too much radiation during radiotherapy. London ambulances fail to arrive at accident scenes after being given wrong addresses... [O]n the world's largest roller-coaster... at Blackpool's Pleasure Beach in Britain, two cars ram... each other at high speed, causing whiplash injuries... [-] brakes that should have triggered automatically when the cars were travelling too close... had failed to activate... None of these incidents should have happened, but they did. And in each case computer software was to blame... Air traffic control, traffic light grids, train signalling, hospital drug administration and patient monitoring systems, the brakes of luxury and not-so-luxury cars, weather forecasting, the stock exchange... all these rely to an ever-growing degree on bespoke sets of computer code that cannot be fully tested before they go into commission. But surely, you may think, software is still more reliable than humans? Perhaps so – but even people in the profession confess that software engineering is far from infallible. [A p]rofessor... of the University of Washington, the acknowledged world authority on the subject, recently wrote to *Risks Forum*, an Internet publication on computer safety: “Software engineers are causing the same accidents other engineers learned to avoid years ago. I feel that unless [they] learn those basic safety concepts that have been accumulated over years by engineers, we are going to repeat the accidents of the past and kill thousands of people unnecessarily.” ...“Outages” – computer breakdowns which temporarily kill radio communications – have become common across most of [US] airspace. The software in the Seattle incident was part of a state-of-the-art system, just two months old, which cost more than \$NZ2 billion. But it was not immune to the “bugs” most programmers agree are inevitable in any software development – bugs which often go unnoticed and unfixed until a particular confluence of events causes them to strike. IN most cases (defence systems are the main exception) there are no regulations on how computer software systems should be specified, built or controlled – even though lives and economies increasingly depend on them. “Anyone can develop one, regardless of experience, competence or resources,” says... [the chairperson] of the A[USn] Computer Society's committee on safety-critical systems. Other engineers – mechanical, electrical, civil – operate under much more onerous regulatory constraints. But the problem is not just one of professional inequity. Software developers' creations frequently shoot past the red and off the scale in terms of complexity and ambition, experts say. If such complexity were transferred to other design and engineering disciplines, it might be the equivalent of building a bridge across the Pacific. However, because software takes the form of binary digits stashed invisibly within a computer, self-indulgent design folly is rarely exposed. “If you're building an aeroplane, you're constrained by the properties and the cost of cutting metal to keep things fairly simple,” says [the p]rofessor... who heads the Software Verification Centre at the University of Queensland. “...The discipline of keeping things within the bounds of what is verifiable with mathematics is what most branches of engineering do as a matter of course.” Not so software, [the professor] says, much of which is written in such a way that it cannot be independently combed for errors or fully tested. The complexity of much software concerns experts. Two who commented for this report said there were certain planes in which they personally chose not to be passengers. “There are 10 million lines of code [in two of the planes],” said one. “That's a lot of software and a top-quality organisation will produce software with one error per thousand lines of code. You can't get rid of those. I prefer them to fly without me.” ...[the] programme leader for software and systems engineering at A[US]'s Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation... gets nervous... [upon learning] that someone has invented a new medical device. “I think, ‘Oh my God, there's software in this sucker’.” ...an American safety engineering specialist, [the programme leader] is heading a CSIRO push to offer consulting on software safety to industry, buyers and regulators... [R]esponse has been patchy. [The programme leader] believes that in 20 years we will look back in horror at the computer projects we accepted in the 1990s, and cites a historical parallel, the development of the steam engine in the 19th century: “At the beginning, anyone who could weld metal was putting steam engines together and they

were exploding and killing people all over the place. There was no science of metallurgy. Software is in that phase now. We're part-way towards making it an engineering science but we're still not sufficiently beyond the craft stage." ...[the] director of industrial training at the University of Technology, Sydney, says a strong professional association could help to bring software practitioners into line. [The director] believes that just as doctors can be struck off, lawyers disbarred and priests defrocked, so software engineers ought to write computer code in the knowledge that their careers can be terminated if they do so negligently. Back-up systems – software designed to swing into action if the primary software fails – underpin the computers that control many plane and rail systems. [The University of Washington professor], however, rejects the semantic justification... used as an excuse for poor-quality software projects... that if the computer system has back-up software, then the primary software is not definitively responsible for protecting human life... "I think that argument has been pushed to its limit in commercial avionics software... As a person who flies a lot, I'm not thrilled by it." ...The main reason many people are worried is that computers lack intuitive logic – while the machines can deal expertly with predicted events, if something out of the ordinary occurs they lack what we would call common sense in deciding how to respond. The French Airbus company has gone further than any other commercial aircraft manufacturer in giving computer circuitry the upper hand. The results have been far from perfect. A Virgin Atlantic Airbus A340 was on approach to London's Heathrow Airport when a number of its computer systems failed and the crew decided to revert to manual flying. The renegade computer thought otherwise and turned the plane to the right, ignoring a manual instruction to turn left. The crew did regain control but the incident sparked an inquiry because the rogue instruction should not have happened. The inquiry found that inter-relatedness was at the heart of the problem. A tiny error in one program had affected the calculations of others, compounding into a potential catastrophe what in isolation might have been a negligible bug. Software is not only vulnerable to its own internal inadequacies. It can be interfered with from outside sources[(computer 'circuits work at very low voltages and a lightning strike could disrupt them, and erase their programs and memory in a flash, so to say, but a Faraday cage is a sovereign remedy against extraneous electric fields – all the really important computers are so protected; also, if one is concerned about earthquakes, a hydraulic platform gives reassurance')]. During the filming of *Babe*, the animatronic pig which was being operated by radio in the middle of a field suddenly began behaving strangely, its legs kicking and jerking... [T]he pig's maker, says: "Next day the local police arrived. Every time we operated the pig, no police could talk on their radios for 120 kilometres." The logic of the pig's circuitry was not sufficiently robust to withstand interference from police radio traffic. AT Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport police thought a professional hacker must be blocking pilots' communication channels. When they identified the source of the interference it turned out to be an ordinary VCR in a home beneath the flight path. Mobile phones have affected computer-controlled systems in cars, such as those designed to maintain even speeds or accelerate and decelerate smoothly, causing potentially lethal jerkiness or failure to start altogether... "It becomes an argument whether it's the purveyor of the phones or of the vehicle systems that carries the duty of care. But the system manufacturers should look at shielding them in some way... Typically, it takes a major accident before the public tells the government that it has to regulate," says [the programme leader]. "I hope those of us in the community that do know can raise the issue before that happens."

...[To make this more explicit, let me mention that modern compact, low-voltage computer memories are, like living cells, vulnerable to the cosmic rays that pervade space and rain on the Earth. The radiation particles, especially muons, create bursts of electric charges which do not damage the hardware but alter the stored information. Recent studies by IBM suggest that a large computer, using a thousand chips and operating at sea level, will suffer an error due to cosmic rays once every day or two. Error correcting codes, analogous to the gene repair systems of living cells, are standard circuits in large computers and can cope with most but, probably, not quite all of such errors. At high altitudes a significantly higher mutation rate must be expected, especially in outer space where satellites operate. Incidentally, 'the trail of ions that a meteor briefly leaves reflect very high frequency (VHF) radio waves. Since at any given moment there are enormous numbers of meteor trails in the atmosphere – most too faint to be seen with the naked eye – the meteor trails collectively provide a kind of reflecting surface surrounding the Earth, by which radio waves of the proper frequencies can be relayed. Since the average duration of an individual ion trail is less than a second, the message must be sent very fast. This has led to an entire field of technology called Meteor Burst Communications (MBC). But why would anyone go to such lengths, when there are perfectly adequate means of communication at hand? Because communications satellites would be among the early casualties in a nuclear war. MBC has been developed so that a nuclear war can be fought.']

...*Bit by byte towards peace...* Hatred is threatening Bosnian peace once again. But the fabric of order that has lasted nearly a year remains well in place, and it owes much of its existence to something rather unexpected: software. Last November, around a table in a foreign land, enemies-turned-uneasy-partners sat staring at each other, desperate to end a war that had splintered their nation. But how to reach a common ground – and make it stick – when so much blood had been shed? So, surrounded by squabbling Serb, Croat and Muslim leaders, mediators trying to end the war in the Balkan nation enlisted a computer program – the software that the Taco Bell chain uses to scope out locations for new restaurants... [- and] 45 software operators... A combination of three computer programs enabled mediators at the talks in Dayton, Ohio, to redraw bargained ethnic boundaries within hours, sometimes even minutes, after they were agreed to in principle. Negotiators, in turn, could visualise how their version of Bosnia would look. It worked – or at least made the peace process far faster, which may have meant the same thing... "If someone asked, 'If we moved this boundary, what would the effects be?', the software answered that. It would say, 'Well, you lost 10 schools here and got three hospitals here, and this is what it will do to the ethnic mix,'" says... [the] vice-president of marketing and sales at ESRI, the California company that produce[d the]... main programme, ARC/INFO... "Had they been made to wait any more, things could have been substantially delayed," says... a geographer from the U[S] Army Corps of engineers who set up the operation. Computers have been used for years to recreate war, whether by video game or military simulation. But this was the first time computer software was used to fashion peace – to end, in this case, a conflict that left more than 200,000 people dead or missing since 1992... ARC/INFO is used widely by municipal governments... public utilities and companies to keep databases of stores... The Defence Department enlisted an earlier version to track troop movement in Operation Desert Storm... Countries use it to feed phone numbers of emergency calls into a database and pinpoint a call's origin.

...A[US]ns could have trouble making phone calls in the future unless rapid steps were taken to encourage Internet users off the telephone system, Telstra Multimedia told an Information Explosion conference. The Telstra Multimedia chief operating officer... said a significant proportion of local calls had "call all time" of more than 24 hours, meaning they lasted 24 hours or longer. "These 24-hour users are using them for an Internet connection... over a telecommunications network that was designed for three-minute calls... This is placing incredible demand on the telecommunications network." [The officer] said that in the Silicon Valley in the U[S], people trying to make phone calls at night could pick up their phone and not even get a dial tone. "There is no dial tone because there are so many people there using the Internet... Unless something is done about this very rapidly we could all be in the [same] predicament..." Telstra has forecast that the capacity necessary to transmit internet traffic will exceed all other telephone traffic in A[US] by the last quarter of 1998... [P]art of Telstra's answer to the problem would be to launch a cable modem using cables currently being laid by Telstra and Optus to carry pay TV. The cables were designed for interactive communications, giving A[US] an edge over other countries, particularly the U[S] which faced high costs in upgrading its cable system. The cable modems could be more than 100 times faster than the telephone modem and [Telstra] expected people to rapidly move off the telephone network to cable.

...Some A[US]n states moved to daylight saving at the weekend. New South Wales, A[US]n Capital Territory, Victoria and South A[US] have put their clocks forward an hour... But Queensland, Western A[US] and the Northern Territory do not observe daylight saving. This means there are five time zones across the nation during summer.

...The times, they are a'changing – and France wants to ditch the switch. Most of Europe comes off summer's daylight savings time today and sets its clocks back one hour... from being two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time... to one hour ahead... All for nothing, the French

Government contends. Breaking ranks with the rest of the E[U], France says the twice-yearly chore should be scrapped “in the name of good sense and general interest.” “The worst would be if we take different paths on the time question after having decided together to unite under the metric system and even merge our money,” said... a politician who is studying the issue for the [French Premier. The] Premier... told French television the nation would be making the traditional switch today “for the last time or the next to last time.” But even [the politician] concedes it won’t be easy. For nearly 20 years, most of Western Europe has set its clocks ahead an hour in spring and back an hour in autumn... Even if France and its neighbours stopped changing their clocks, they’d have to agree on whether to stick with “winter time”... or “summer time”... There’s no consensus on that. - 1996

AT THIS time of year, if [a couple of Northlanders] want to catch their favourite television programme they have to sit down an hour early. For the past 13 years, [the couple]... who are now semi-retired, have refused to follow daylight saving. The couple are the only bandits left in the... town of Ararua wh[ere, in]... 1984 the residents, mostly dairy farmers, argued moving their clocks forward an hour meant getting up in the dark when the cows were “loathe to get up” for milking. They gathered a petition with 13,000 signatures and took it to Parliament, but the opposition was too great and gradually all the residents, except the [semi-retired couple], agreed to conform to N[Z] time... Plunket’s Auckland regional nursing specialist... said daylight saving brought many complaints from parents but the key was weathering it out. “We advise parents to stick to their normal routine and then to darken the room. Some parents let their children stay up later, but that means they sleep in longer in the morning, and parents need time to themselves too.” ...A spokes[person] for the Department of Internal Affairs said it had received no formal complaints about daylight saving which this year began last Sunday. [The spokesperson] said it was up to the... public, rather than Internal Affairs, to decide when it wanted daylight saving. The public can make submissions to Parliament asking for it to be changed. In 1985 a survey by the department showed the public wanted more [days of the year to have] daylight saving hours. ■ ‘Today approximately 70 countries utilise Daylight Saving Time in at least a portion of the country. The only major industrialised country not to have introduced DST is Japan. Of interest, equatorial and tropical countries (lower latitudes) do not observe DST since daylight hours are similar during every season, so there is no advantage of moving clocks forward during the summer.’

...‘Daily life in the early days of the colony of NZ did not require high accuracy of timekeeping, and it appears that each district kept its own approximately local mean solar time. Development of coastal shipping, trans-Tasman steam services, railways, and the electric telegraph soon showed the necessity of some kind of uniform time system for the country, if confusion was to be avoided. The House of Representatives resolved that the mean time for the colony should be 11 1/2 hours in advance of Greenwich mean time as from 2 November 1868. It is interesting to note that not long afterwards discussions arose as to whether or not it would be better to make this time difference exactly 12 hours. After the vicissitudes of “summer time” experiments, the standard time at present is in fact 12 hours ahead of GMT, as defined by the Standard Time Act of 1945. Time and longitude are two completely interwoven quantities both for the navigator and for the surveyor; and it was soon appreciated that not only was it necessary to have a uniform time system for the young colony but also that the longitude must be known as accurately as possible. While fixing the location of the country accurately on charts, longitude relates its time to that of the prime meridian of Greenwich.’

...‘The Greenwich Meridian, which was defined to pass through the Airy Transit Circle at Greenwich, was adopted internationally as the zero of longitude at a conference in Washington in 1884. Its acceptance was facilitated by the overwhelming use of the Greenwich Meridian in navigation and the adoption, in the USA and Canada, of time zones based on Greenwich. Originally, different towns in Great Britain kept their own local time, varying according to longitude. In the mid-19th c. Greenwich time was adopted by railways throughout Britain for the sake of uniformity. However, it was only in 1880 that Greenwich Mean Time, mean solar time on the Greenwich Meridian, became the legal time throughout Great Britain. The international reference time-scale for civil use is now based on atomic clocks but is subject to step adjustments (leap seconds) to keep it close to mean solar time on the Greenwich Meridian. The formal name of this time scale is UTC (a language-independent abbreviation of co-ordinated universal time) but it is still widely known as GMT. Some early non-mechanical ways of measuring time were: the sand-glass (this principle was in use from an early date); the Egyptian shadow-clock, c. 900 BC (a bar was placed in an east-west position, with a cross-piece at the east end in the morning, and reversed at noon – the shadow cast on the bar indicated the time by its position in relation to the markings); the Greek water-clock, 5th c. BC (the time taken – about six minutes – to empty a 7 litre vessel was used to measure speeches at council meetings); and the sundial (since a sundial measures time by the position of the sun, it becomes slightly fast or slow by clock time at different periods of the year’).

...‘Time was measured by ancient people by the passage of days, by phases of the moon, by seasons, and by the apparent passage of sun and stars overhead. Shorter periods were measured by the sundial in Egypt as early as 1500 B.C., and later by the water clock. The modern clock came into use in Europe in the 13th cent., the watch in the 15th cent. Measurement of time takes into account changes in the earth’s position with respect to the sun throughout the year. Mean solar time, or civil time, which is the time used in ordinary civil affairs, represents a compromise, the *mean* solar day of 24 hours being the *average* length of the solar day throughout the year. On any given date the *apparent* solar day, which is the day as measured by the sun’s positions as actually observed on that day, may be as much as 30 sec. shorter or longer than the mean solar day, which has the same length throughout the year. For astronomical purposes the *sidereal* day is used; this begins when the vernal equinox is at the meridian and lasts until (the earth having rotated once) it is again at the meridian. Since the earth rotates through about 360° in each 24 hours, each degree of longitude represents 4 min. of time. To avoid the inconvenience of changing time whenever one travels a short distance east or west, the earth has been divided into 24 longitudinal time belts. Within each belt, time is the same everywhere, so that one’s watch needs to be reset only when one moves to the next time zone, which is exactly 1 hour later or earlier. The calendar, which makes possible measurement of time from year to year, has been improved periodically since its beginnings in ancient Babylonia.’]

...North Korea marked the 49th anniversary yesterday of the founding of the Stalinist state by adopting a new dynastic calendar based on the birth year of its founder... “From today, the DPRK... uses the Juche era,” said the official Korean Central News Agency. Juche, or self-reliance, is North Korea’s state ideology and the new calendar, in the style of ancient Korean kingdoms, counts the first year of the Juche era as 1912... The Communist Party organ, *Rodong Sinmun*, carried an article entitled “Kim Il-Sung’s Korea will be everlasting with Juche era.” It was illustrated by a picture of the late President and his son... taken in... Juche 76 (1987)... [By the way, p]opular culture faces an identity crisis as the new millennium dawns. Not only will computers be short-circuiting, but the supposed trendsetters are blowing their creative fuses as they struggle to come up with a pat phrase for the next decade. Short-forms that have stood us in good stead for the past eight decades – the 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, and 90s – are no good for the next. With the end of this decade fast approaching, several titles for the first 10 years... have already been tossed into the ring – the zeros, zilches, the oh-ohs, the noughties and the pre-teens are among them. Some clues may be gleaned from the phrases used 100 years ago... According to a historian at Auckland University, the first decade of the present century was known as simply *the new decade* or *the nineteen hundreds*, although the latter caused some confusion when the phrase was adopted to describe the whole of the 20th century. Whether any of the old or new phrases enter standard vocabulary will be up to the masses, according to linguistic scholars. An expert of the use of the English language[at] Auckland University... said... “The scholars define these things but they don’t start these things,”... An English language expert at Victoria University suggested that the decades would be named retrospectively, just as the first couple of decades of the 20th century had become known. For example, the early 1900s were known as the Edwardian era... while... from 1910 to 1919 have become the... W[W1] years.

...A little over a century ago the founder of Kodak, George Eastman, gave the world popular photography. For the first time anyone could create a picture and suddenly everyone was a photographer. “You press the button, we do the rest,” proclaimed Eastman’s slogan. The rest is history. A

century later Eastman's technological heirs and others are bringing similar point'n'shoot simplicity and mass availability to photography's space age descendant, digital cameras. One of the most exciting advances of 1997 has been the dramatic leap in image quality now coming from digital cameras under \$2000. The whole price performance equation has changed radically... These cameras offer a quality near to that previously only found in 'professional' digital cameras, costing upwards of \$10,000... Basically the quality of digital cameras is largely determined by the number of pixels on the camera's imaging chip (the device that replaces the film)... "You click the mouse, the software does the rest" could well be the catchphrase for the new millennium... By the year 2000 it is expected that worldwide digital camera sales will be about \$14 Million a year and could translate into sales of over 100,000 units in NZ (last year NZers spent over \$26 million buying compact cameras – that's over 125,000 cameras')... opening up all sorts of new business applications. The... implications for 'who uses digital photography and where' are far reaching.

...[When a Herald columnist wrote of wedding photographers' "tyranny," reactions came in a flash. Last week, a wedding celebrant and parish priest accused photographers of dominating weddings, taking control of the couple, shooting too many pictures and keeping the guests waiting. "How many photographs are needed?" asked the Father. Not fair! cry the photographers, with the NZ Institute of Professional Photography's president taking great umbrage at the comments. Local wedding photographers were recognised internationally for their innovation and creativity, the president said. A basic package includes photographs of the arrival at the ceremony, the ceremony itself, various family and friends, and a location shoot of the bridal party. A couple could expect to pay \$600 to \$2500 for this. They would get a professionally organised 20-page album of their favourite photos, but could choose more at extra cost. Couples are given a list of reasonably priced, discreet and well-dressed photographers from most wedding planners and celebrants'...

"I've been threatened about three times now, but I've got a lot of good photos by not asking people if it was OK beforehand, because they tend to stiffen up. Maybe if I published them I'd get in a bit of trouble," says a Massey photographer, who loves the danger and excitement wrapped up with documentary-style images, and is one of nearly 40 graduate students putting on their first big exhibition this week since completing a year-long photography course at Edu-Col School of Arts and Media. Things have certainly changed since F-stops and shutter speeds became part of his everyday vocabulary: "You have to be a nosy bugger and extremely confident, because it's quite hard to get in someone's face when they're angry at you." • 'Celebrities are delighted with a new law effective next January, banning photographers from intruding on their private lives. The paparazzi say freedom of the press is being curtailed.'

...The Press Council has condemned as a "dangerous practice in a free society" an attempt by the Privacy Commissioner to find out a journalist's confidential sources... But the commissioner... said last night that the council had given a "very misleading impression" of his request and of his position on journalists seeking to withhold their sources from him. "In my opinion it is quite intemperate to attack me for having the temerity to ask a journalist to assist me in an investigation and to call on me never to ask the sort of questions I have outlined." ...his office had asked for, not "required," information from the journalist that [the journalist] considered might be helpful to the inquiry. [The commissioner] was perturbed the Press Council had adopted such a "partisan stance on what it believed to be an inroad into press freedom," particularly as it was the body that dealt with individuals' complaints against newspapers.

...News-hungry NZers are keeping their country honest, according to a new report from an international corruption watchdog... [Other honest countries are] the Nordic nations and Canada. These [countries and NZ] are... where the most daily newspaper copies are published – between 30 and 61 per 100 people[(note that, in '1990, there were 1,611 newspapers in the US – the number has gradually decreased from 2,042 in 1920 – with a total circulation of 62.3 million; peak circulations of 63.1 million were reached in 1973 and 1984; 1920 = 27.8 million')]. The study showed the two countries best known for controlling corruption in the developing world in the course of the past generation, Hong Kong and Singapore, also had high newspaper circulations. The three European countries with the highest perceived degree of corruption – Italy, Spain and Greece – were among countries... with the lowest number of newspapers published... Far down on the list were Colombia, the Philippines, Indonesia... India... Kenya... Pakistan... and Nigeria... where between two and six daily papers per 100 people were printed... [A] former director of the World Bank, [who] set up Transparency International in 1993 to fight corruption in international business... said corruption thrived in a climate of secrecy... [when presenting] the report on Wednesday to an annual forum organised by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance... "...the best conditions for bribery and extortion are those in which the media fails or is unable to perform as a watchdog for the public interest."

...Payments by news organisations for interviews or stories may compromise credibility because the subjects may demand to approve the contents. That is the issue of chequebook journalism raised by... a former news editor of the [NZ Gals' Weekly, which]... operated in a market where [the editor] had to authorise payments for stories and pictures to sporting and other celebrities. Now, as chief news editor of the [NZ Herald, his opinion] is blunt: "A commitment that the story be acceptable to the subject is a compromise of journalism. If you're paying you're not going to be allowed to ask the awkward questions which might be in the public interest." None the less, says... [the] head of news and current affairs for Television NZ, there are four big players in NZ paying for stories... they are [Gals'] Day magazine published by A[US]n Consolidated Press, [NZ Gals'] Weekly, published by Wilson and Horton which also publishes the Herald, TV3 owned by Canwest, and, "with some reluctance on very rare occasions, TVNZ... but I think the artifice should be put to one side because... TV3 keep saying – we... have never paid directly... On the four occasions that I can recall in the past eight years where we have agreed to make some sort of financial accommodation, and I choose my words carefully here, we could equally stand up and say we didn't pay them directly." The four agreements... were with the Wellington Hurricanes player accused of rape... [while staying in a South African hotel.] the... twins accused of jumping ship to illegally enter A[US], the wedding of the All Black [No 11, and with the NZer]... who photographed the Princess of Wales working out in his gymnasium... [The amount of the [rape accused's] agreement was "below the \$20,000 quoted... closer to the \$10,000 offered by TV3. TV3 offered money not in terms of cash but in terms of air fares and accommodation. Our discussions with [the NZ Gals'] Weekly – and it is well known that this is an arrangement done with [the] Weekly – is that we would only be party to any arrangement if [the player] was either found innocent or the charges were withdrawn. That's a question I'd like to ask [TV3], how they thought they were protecting that ethical position by paying someone's airfares and accommodation to assist them in a defence... We didn't pay [the All Black No 11] himself but we did make a contribution to... the cost of staging [his wedding in South Africa]... in return for having the only cameras in on the event. It... was not mega-bucks." The... arrangement [with the gym owner] was made in conjunction with Channel Nine A[US]. The head of news and current affairs] said TVNZ had been forced into agreements with subjects "because unfortunately a market exists now where our competitors, and I'm talking primarily about 20/20 [a TV3 current affairs show], are very active in the field... since Canwest came into town... We get asked for money all the time. Not a day would go by without someone suggesting that there be a payment. [99%] of the time we bat it away, but there are times... that we stop and think, well... our competitor is constantly offering financial inducements of one form or another, then we... are prepared to do it. We don't pay for news. One Network News has never been involved in any of this and... never will be. The Holmes programme has been the only one really... I feel very strongly that the real enemy of good journalism isn't the occasional payment, it is all the hypocrisy that surrounds it..." [The head] said that no conditions were attached in terms of what questions could be asked in any of the stories – "That would be unethical in any circumstances..." ...the present editor of the... Weekly... regarded paying for stories which would add readership to the magazine as a commercial responsibility. "[In] the old days good journalism was getting the story first... Nowadays, in the highly competitive field I work in, that isn't enough, and if there is another means that can ensure we get a story... that will increase circulation by 20[%], it is a business decision I am not going to walk away from." In the 1960s the Weekly paid a sum of money for exclusive rights, over several years, to stories of the Lawson quintuplets. In the following decade it also paid out for a "miracle birth" story, of a baby carried not in the mother's womb but attached to the bowel. Competition in the [gals'] magazine market warmed up with the arrival of the... [Gals'] Day in 1989, and some

spectacular payments began to be paid by both magazines, later joined by *New Idea*, for exclusive rights to cover celebrity weddings, holidays and births. There was a rule of thumb at the time that if a magazine calculated a particular story or set of pictures would increase circulation by 1000 copies, it was worth a fee of \$1000 to try to secure them exclusively... "Those were ridiculous days and ridiculous payments," says [the editor of the *Weekly*]. "I wouldn't pay now for any of those silly things. I have a responsibility to deliver real stories to my readers, and those are the only ones I will pay for... Certainly it works. Our issue with the [stowaway twins] sold better than any we've had for quite some time."

...TVNZ news chief 'not responsible' for item identifying victim of rape... A charge of identifying a rape victim was dismissed yesterday in the Nelson District Court... The rape victim's name and photograph had appeared in a *One Network News* report broadcast last September... [TVNZ] was fined \$500 last December after admitting... to... the incident... [P]resenting his reserved decision, [the judge said the TVNZ head] himself did not publish the item. The prosecution's submission claimed that [the head] had some form of editorial responsibility but this was not the case in N[Z], the judge noted in a written copy of his judgment... [However,] in Britain there was a statutory direction as to who would be responsible in such a case. It would be the "person having functions in relation to the programme corresponding to those of an editor of a newspaper." ...[the judge] said it could be argued that statutory amendments similar to those in Britain needed to be put in place here, but that was a matter for Parliament.

...[ON-AIR blunders during TV news bulletins are causing headaches for TVNZ executives. A TVNZ staff memo obtained by *Sunday News* revealed there were 270 errors recorded on the 61 evening news bulletins in the past two months. In the memo, the network's managing editor said the errors made for depressing reading. "At this rate we are on track to make 1620 mistakes in a calendar year, or an horrific 3500 across all our news bulletins." Only 10% of the news bulletins had no errors. Some of the mistakes TV One News made included last week publishing the name of the person at the centre of a rape-allegation involving a former Maori affairs minister. The news segment showed the former minister, under parliamentary privilege, naming the person with whom it had an affair 14 years ago – but dubbing out the name. Viewers watching with teletext subtitles saw the person's name running across their screens. An interview with another MP had a graphic which wrongly named him as the NZ First leader. Later in the same story a subtitle named the MP as the TV One reporter. "Imagine what this does to our credibility," the network's managing editor said in the memo. The memo warned individuals that in future they would be held responsible for mistakes. "Most of the mistakes made in those two months were silly little errors – mostly spelling mistakes," the managing editor said. "But, like any business, we do monitor different areas all the time to see how they can be improved." In related news,] *Oamaru's blue penguins have taken up disco dancing, breaking into homes at night and busting up marriages* – according to the BBC. A BBC... article reported that regulars at Oamaru's local disco "have got used to seeing hordes of them [penguins] strutting their stuff on the dance floor." The penguins stank of rotting fish, sounded like cats being strangled and broke into homes built on top of their nests... But Tourism Waitaki[']s manager... told the *Oamaru Mail* the article is "non-factual by a long way." Inquiries revealed that the blue penguins pictured in the article might be A[US]n.

...Having been brought up on a rich diet of BBC, I've always suspected that N[Z] was no mover and shaker in the TV news stakes. But the introduction of the 0800 "Amcam" campaigns on TVNZ and TV3 has decided the issue beyond a shadow of doubt – N[Z]'s news hour is tragic. By asking the public to send in their "newsworthy" videos the news programmes have degraded themselves into a glorified version of the *Great Kiwi Video Show*... Accurate or not, the message which the Amcam scenario sends out is that of gutter journalism. In effect, the campaign is encouraging punters to become unpaid paparazzi, all hoping they'll be in the wrong place at the right time, knowing that if the footage is sensational enough, it'll be screened. It's tacky... But the Amcam issue is only the icing on a rotten cake. The biggest problem with N[Z]'s news hour is simply that there is no news. The gruelling... coverage of Cyclone Fergus was testament to this. I watched in disbelief as hordes of reporters from every cranny of the country gave us day upon day of detailed reports on how Fergus had actually *missed* the places they were reporting from. Was there really nothing more vital to comment on in the world? ...A hardly new but irrefutable truth of our media age is this: that an issue exists is more exciting than the details of the issue itself... The Fergus fiasco highlighted the lack of quality news material at hand, not only locally but internationally. The news programmes seem so keen to play the human interest/sports/weather angle that the serious, investigative news doesn't get a look in. How can English... footy be more important than in-depth Hebron analysis? ...With our TV screens filled with monstrosities like *The World's Most Dangerous Animals*, *Police Stop* and *TV Bloopers and Practical Jokers*, the news crews have confused what the TV viewing public is *given* with what it deserves and *wants*. Which to my mind is this: a news hour which doesn't patronise its audience with easy-listening stories, whose international content matches the local, whose stories stimulate and question and whose presenters keep their eyes on the script and off the closing cliches.

...[I've long been opposed to the media "making" the news. I've always thought, in my naivete, that they should simply report it. On the occasions I've actually seen the news happen, in the flesh, it has always shocked me how the images and facts are manipulated. In Madrid recently, when a bomb was detonated by ETA Basque separatists near where I was staying, I strayed into the ensuing protest. There, a camera-operator, high up on a balcony, herded, with gestures, a group of protesters into his frame, whooping them up with his arms. Is that reporting the news? The chief news correspondent for the BBC since 1989, said at a session of the Edinburgh book festival that the growing public relations explosion meant that media are more managed, more contrived. One commentator suggested that the editors in this hemisphere feared that the summer would bring with it an "event vacuum" and that the recent paedophile "Naming and Shaming" campaign was raked to generate a bit of news. They needn't have worried, though. There have been sufficient bombings, murders and plane crashes to fill section after section deep into winter as well. I first heard about the naming and shaming when the editor of the *News of the World*, on television (TV news now puts music beneath the stories, adding a sense of urgency and atmosphere!), was justifying his decision to continue with his scheme and all I could see in his eyes was the promise of increased circulation. Had the editor known just how much mess his actions would cause, would it have gone ahead with publishing those details? Sadly, I think it would have, because sales are at the forefront of most issues these days, rarely public good.]

...The Melanesian island of Bougainville is not noted for its hot news stories... Journalists don't really go there. It's too remote. But as the world's largest humanitarian organisation, the Red Cross can reach across Bougainville. The organisation supplies aid to families... and... now, thanks to the Internet and a revamped Web site, the world can hear about [Bougainville] several weeks sooner than ever before. The Red Cross has distributed digital cameras to several of its 'front line' areas, and its workers are sending back pictures of events as they happen. The result... is a Web site that functions, more or less, as an online news agency. At www.ifc.org click on Direct from the Field, and Bougainville is just one of several places, including North Korea and Malaysia, where you can discover what is happening at a grassroots level. As well as pictures, there are reports of the Red Cross work being done... [The] head of media services of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Geneva, says that the Web site is, unexpectedly, turning into something much more powerful than just another way of informing people about Red Cross work... [However, t]he Red Cross is sensitive to the fact that the reason journalists are not in certain areas may be precisely because the authorities don't want them there. The organisation cannot afford to lose credibility because the authorities believe it is harbouring journalists taking pictures. "We don't mean to be journalists... The central part of our mandate is to be neutral. We will never do anything that will jeopardise the operation. If it's a case of jeopardising the situation, we won't bring it to the world's attention."

...From a closet-sized office in the remote South Kaipara Heads, north of Auckland, [a]software developer and Internet content pioneer... runs his mini electronic media empire delivering information to the world. In the past six years [the pioneer] has established the electronic commerce firm Faxmail, Aardvark, a local Internet news site, and 7am, fast becoming a global link site for the day's main news. Behind the scenes the former electronics engineer has devised applets and smart software solutions that automate processes and allow him to barter space with other Web site

owners for what [the pioneer] calls “value sharing.” While [the pioneer] has not yet made his fortune, the potential for his creations keeps adrenaline levels high, as [the pioneer] slaves away behind four computers for 16-17 hours a day, keeping his content up to date and devising new ways to gain exposure and revenues... Since 1991 [the pioneer] has been experimenting with what works and what doesn’t. “The first money I made out of the Internet was helping to write Internet Plain and Simple for publisher IDG. Then I thought why should I be giving money to a publisher when I could be publishing on the Internet.” At Christmas 1995 [the pioneer] launched Aardvark... – the first on-line Internet industry news publication in N[Z]... “Being first gives you a decided advantage over your competition. It was important to establish position and then all I had to do was fight off the pretenders... It’s like the Wild West, a bold new frontier with very few rules. As long as you play fairly and ethically you can do almost anything.” ...His approach to presenting news from other people’s sites has raised a few eyebrows but [the pioneer] has worked hard to legitimise those links, and most sites now agree the benefits flow both ways... [The pioneer] also takes his own editorial stance on issues – often taking a hard line on spamming (essentially junk mail), people [the pioneer] sees as rip-off merchants and unsubstantiated claims made by rival publishers.

...[the AUSn-born star of the movie *What Gals Want*] wonders how much information gets distorted by the media... “One time I read a report from England that said I had an obsession with... breasts and I was going to see a psychiatrist, and I thought, ‘How does this stuff get out there?’... it came from a joke I told about a guy who has an obsession with breasts and goes to a psychiatrist. So from that joke, all of a sudden I’m in a newspaper with a real problem and I’m seeking help with it... If they’re doing that about me, what are they doing about the important stuff?...”

...*Penis tale fails to stand up* A FAIRFIELD, California, [resident] whose story about a revenge-seeking [acquaintance] slicing off his penis drew international media attention has admitted [to making] the whole thing up. The [acquaintance], identified only as Brenda, never existed. [The Californian] chopped off his penis himself. “[The eunuch] made up the story to spare embarrassment for his family,” [a local detective said. “The guy]’s now in touch with mental health professionals.” [The eunuch] (48) originally told police [that it] met an acquaintance, invited her back to his trailer, and had sex with her. Then about 3am... [the acquaintance] picked up a knife, indicating [her motive was to seek revenge for the Californian]’s 1993 slaying of Denise Denofrio (22)... [In local news, the Invercargill resident] who wrestled and killed a 4m shark is no hero, says the Marine Education Society of Australasia (NZ). The society’s president... says it was a “violent and senseless act” which put the [zero]’s life in danger and unnecessarily ended the life of the shark... [– adding that] sharks were largely misunderstood and movies such as *Jaws*, and [the zero]’s act, only fuelled the speculation that they were vicious killers... On Tuesday [the zero] jumped off a diving boat in Milford Sound and killed the thresher shark with a knife. “I don’t know why I did it, it was a spur-of-the-moment thing,” [the zero] said later... Radio reports yesterday nicknamed him “thresher Lightfoot” and the Kiwi equivalent of Crocodile Dundee... [The NZ] recorder for the International Shark File, said... divers regarded thresher sharks as harmless... “They feed on small schooling fish and for their size have very small mouths and small teeth... [The zero] is certainly no hero. Killing something for the sake of killing it seems a pretty mindless act...” The Department of Conservation is trying to find out where the incident took place. A conservation officer specialising in coastal ecosystems... said that if the shark had been killed in the half of Milford Sound classed as a marine reserve, a prosecution under the Marine Reserve Act could follow. [The zero] could not be contacted last night.

...*Shark-wrestling story just grew*... While some swallowed the story hook, line and sinker, a recent shark-wrestling feat looks to be a fishy tale. A couple of weeks ago an Invercargill [resident]... claimed to have wrestled and killed a 4m thresher shark while on a Milford Sound sightseeing trip. His story attracted nationwide coverage but the action caused a public outcry. [The d]iving instructor... who organised the boat trip, has now admitted the story “got out of hand.” A sick thresher shark languishing in the sound had been seen by divers days before [the Invercargill resident] claimed to have killed it, [the instructor] said. The shark was sighted during the trip and his customers watched as [the Invercargill resident] jumped into the water and held on to its tail. Photographs were taken and the shark was pulled on board. The passengers had joked about making up a story about how the shark had been caught. Some time later [the Invercargill resident] contacted the media, but no-one from the boat knew [the Invercargill resident] had done that or what [it] had said, according to... [the instructor. Soon the instructor and the Invercargill resident] were being interviewed by television reporters... Asked why [it] had gone along with the story, [the instructor] replied: “They were my customers... It was very difficult.” ...However, [the instructor] was happy with the publicity his dive club had got from the story, which... had gained him some business.

...The investigation into *Noddy* books by an Auckland schoolboy has created headlines worldwide. [The]Mt Roskill Grammar student... won an Auckland maths competition with an entry entitled “Was Noddy Framed?” in which [the student] used statistics to disprove theories that Enid Blyton’s popular series was sexist, racist and masochistic. A report about his findings, which appeared in the N[Z] *Herald*, was picked up by newspapers in Switzerland, Germany, Britain, Spain and Canada. [The student], who was also interviewed on television and radio in N[Z], could not understand what the fuss was all about. When [the student] received a request for an interview from BBC radio in Britain, [the student] decided the media attention had “got out of hand” and refused. One British newspaper, however, was not impressed. The *Independent* printed an editorial entitled “A Noddy in the wrong direction.” “Of course, this analysis would be conducted by a mathematician,” the editorial read. “No one with any feeling for language could overlook the fact that Noddy and Big Ears stories are feeble and worthless.” ...[] Jointly owned by Mirror Group Plc and Ireland’s Independent Newspapers, [the]... *Independent* newspaper saw its average daily circulation fall... to 257,010... from 279,473 a year earlier... the British audit bureau of circulation said on Friday... Britain’s four other national broadsheet newspapers, however, all posted gains...

[33,000] more people are reading the N[Z] *Herald* during the week than a year ago... The net circulation of... N[Z]’s largest circulating daily newspaper, rose to 229,398, an increase of almost 2700 copies... The average issue readership by all people aged 15 plus is now 550,000 people... The increase follows major improvements... and the introduction of new editorial features and sections. These changes mean that, on average, there is now 25[%] more editorial content[(the ‘*Herald* receives enough information each day to fill five papers – someone has to decide what gets left out’)]...

A strong performance from its Auckland operations has helped to push printer and publisher Independent Newspapers Ltd to a record after-tax profit of \$50.4 million... The company, which publishes a slew of newspapers and magazines in N[Z], AUS] and the U[S], has produced the result despite a year of... weak advertising revenues... While its American operations made a loss, and its A[US]n operations remained flat, its N[Z] business continued to contribute the lion’s share of the profit. INL’s chair[person said yesterday that the]... group’s six divisions in Auckland were producing collective earnings “well in excess of any other region,”... [L]ower newsprint costs and tight control of other costs had helped to improve earnings from... its N[Z] divisions... As its main [Auckland] rival, Wilson and Horton, did last year, INL has had its publishing titles revalued, helping to boost the total value of the assets on its books from \$756 million last year to \$1.2 billion this year... [Speaking of Wilson and Horton, t]he Monday-to-Friday maximum and recommended price of the N[Z] *Herald* will rise on Monday to 90c. The price of the Saturday edition will remain unchanged at \$1. Airfreighted copies of the weekday *Herald* will rise to \$1 but the cost of an airfreighted Saturday newspaper will stay at \$1.30.

...AIR-KISSING supermodels in Paris, champagne with top fashion designers in New York, in the front row at every London catwalk show: Sweetie darlings, [one NZ]er... lives the glamorous life most of us only read about in fashion magazines. That’s because [the NZer], who used to write about country [gals]’ institute meetings for the *Manawatu Evening Standard*, is now the fashion editor of respected British broadsheet, the *Daily Telegraph* and its Sunday edition... – [a position that earned her] Fashion Writer of the Year... at the Lloyd’s Bank British Fashion Awards... Her career started in 1962 after her father helped arrange a job at the *Manawatu Evening Standard*. At 17, [the budding journalist] was a cadet reporter covering local agricultural exhibitions, flower shows and house fires. After stints at *The Dominion* and *Evening Post* [the journalist] left the country in 1966 to travel. On arrival in Hong Kong [the NZ]er was greeted by a friend, who breathlessly instructed her to get down to the *China*

Mail, because the fashion editor was leaving. "At the time I thought fashion was the pits... But it was the only job going..." [The NZer] started the next day, and despite initial misgivings, was enjoying fashion writing within days. "If you are a news journalist you go to cover a fire. But if you're a fashion journalist you start the fire. You decide where it's going to be and what the fire[officers] are going to wear. It's much more fun." During her time in Hong Kong [the NZer] made numerous overseas contacts, one of whom was... then the *Daily Telegraph's* fashion editor... Happily when [the NZer]... decided to try her hand in Britain... [her acquaintance had just] decided to retire... Everyone at... the *Daily Telegraph's* fashion department]... moved up the career ladder one rung, leaving room for [the NZer] at the bottom... 10 years later... [the NZer] was made fashion editor. Now... [the NZer] goes to all the collections... and regularly jets off to exotic climes to shoot on location. Bali in two weeks' time, darlings. Travel, [the NZer] says, is one of the best perks of the job. As is working with the designers [who the NZer] describes as being "creative geniuses" with "brilliant minds"... The only disadvantage, says [the NZer], who is not married, is being away from her pets and her plants...

The world's most widely read magazine, *Reader's Digest*, is notoriously quirky and old-fashioned. Last week it appeared even more behind the times when, in a desperate effort to halt plunging sales, it reinstalled a management team dismissed years ago. [One of the team (aged) 68], who was resurrected from retirement last month and reinstated as chair[perso]n, left the company in 1994 after his costly diversification programme went askew... Started 75 years ago by Lila and De Witt "Wally" Wallace, the *Digest* is still hugely popular. It publishes 48 editions in 19 languages, and is read by... 100 million people. In the US alone it sells 15m copies a month, and in Britain it is the largest-selling publication. In N[Z] it claims to be the largest selling monthly magazine, with latest monthly sales of 136,000. But the demographics of its devoted readers are frightening. Their average age is nearly 50 and a third are over 65. It has to find millions of new subscribers each year just to maintain its 27.5m global circulation. Sales in the US have been declining for a decade. Last month... *Digest* said annual sales had fallen from \$US3098m to \$US2839m... The *Digest's* condensed, simplistic articles, with uplifting and patriotic themes, have been ridiculed for decades. [One critic] described the *Digest* as "a magazine for bores, by bores about bores". But its appeal to the clean-living, God-fearing folk of middle America struck a chord, and helped make it the world's most influential publication... The Wallaces, the richest media moguls of their era, were not interested in profits and ran *Reader's Digest* as a philanthropic enterprise... Until the 1950s it refused to carry adverts. It still does not permit drinks ads in the US and cigarette ads are banned everywhere. But behind the high moral facade, "Wally"... was a somewhat sinister character. [Wally] flirted with fascism before [WW2], later became a fierce Cold War warrior and allowed the magazine to become a mouthpiece, critics say, for the [CIA and the FBI]. Far from being a loyal and clean-living husband, [Wally] smoked and drank heavily, played poker and had many mistresses, according to... [the] author of *Theirs Was The Kingdom: Lila and DeWitt Wallace and the Story of the Reader's Digest*. The Wallaces, who lived into their 90s and were childless, retained control of the *Digest* until they died in the 1980s... When [an employee, who had been a *Digest* advertising sales[perso]n since the 1960s, became chair[perso]n in 1984, the company was still thriving. But... [the new chairperson] sold under-performing operations, cut staff by 20% and shut the Spanish and Japanese editions[, then]... tapped the *Digest's* legendary marketing database – the world's greatest, with profiles on 100m customers – for tougher direct-mail operations and began plugging its other products, such as condensed books, music, video and magazines. Initially [the new chairperson] succeeded. These affiliated products now account for 75% of sales... Profits soared from \$21m under the Wallaces to \$394.7m in 1994, before falling sharply. Readers revolted against the blizzards of junk mail and gimmicky sweepstake coupons. The company seemed to have lost direction and morale... [E]xecutives left in droves... [A] Cadbury Schweppes marketeer, was brought in to replace [the chairperson] in 1994 but could not fix the problems. [The replacement] fought with some senior managers, making them join the exodus. When [the replacement] was ousted and [the former chairperson] returned, it seemed the company had truly lost its way... [The Wallaces had] tried (and largely succeeded) to perpetuate their control beyond the grave by keeping the voting stock in two trusts... [– but] to continue enjoying tax-free status, [the trusts] must reduce control to 50% by 2000... Last month the company's sleepy board received a jolt when... [the] chief executive of Franklin Mutual Fund Advisers, bought nearly 1m shares... [That CEO] is well known for using his stakes to force boards to adopt more profitable policies... [A month earlier the investor claimed it] was not interested... [but then] changed his mind after discovering... [that] *Reader's Digest* has established joint ventures with other companies, such as Avon cosmetics and Meredith publishing, to harness its database and promote their products. It is experimenting with selling over the Internet.

...Headline news from the N[Z] *Herald* goes live on the Internet today as one of eight local "channels" made possible by Microsoft's... Internet Explorer 4.0... browser software... [which] has built-in HTTP (hypertext transfer protocol) server and CGI (common gateway interface) capabilities, so that at the click of a button, a FileMaker database can be put on the Internet or intranets. The product also allows Web sites to be continually updated without having to wait for a Webmaster... Instead of searching or surfing the Web to find news or services, users select what they want from a channel bar. A click on the *Herald* channel button will automatically flow *Herald* content directly to users' personal computer screens. Other local channels include television programme information, Telecom Xtra, and TAB sports results and betting odds... Claris's Home Page 3.0, due for release this month, will include a connection assistant so the Web pages it creates can be easily tied in to FileMaker databases.

... "Six Savaged By Brain-Damaged Squirrel." This attention-grabber appeared last week... and is now my all-time favourite headline. It seems the squirrel became irritated because people wouldn't feed it, and an expert concluded "it probably had something wrong with its head," adding gratuitously that squirrels are "really tree-rats with design improvements." Several elderly... victims were reported to be resting comfortably. The sixth was a construction worker with no New Age feelings and a spade. Did this horrific little Beatrix Potter tale appear in *News of the World* or the *National Enquirer*? Certainly not. This is the *Times* we're talking about here, the Thunderer itself, in cyberspace at www.the-times.co.uk/news/pages/Times/frontpage.html?1060156. In the past, it's said, bored sub-editors on the *Times* competed to see who could get away with the dullest headline. Winner: "Very Few Die In Turkish Earthquake." Today's cyber-newsrooms have a more anarchic spirit. The Web brings to print journalism some of the urgencies of television. If, like me, you need a news fix but would rather choose your own news than have it packaged for you by TVNZ, your computer converts into a global news-stand. The *Times*... serves up standard orders from the conservative menu... But either the popularity of this legendary organ or Brit cyber incompetence often makes access erratic. The *Electronic Telegraph* could use a hurry-up as well... In contrast with the lordly inertia of British servers, CNN [www.cnn.com] hurtles into your browser with stories, sound-bites, and Xtreme video-streams – a total news machine, and its personalised edition can even include current Auckland weather... I usually check out the *Nando Times* as well... the first electronic newspaper developed solely for the Web [mid '94]. Over 1000 newpages daily with a 3-minute update interval; there's also a cute, customisable *Nando Java NewsWatcher*. And the *Washington Post*... can always be relied on for insight into the labyrinthine ethics of [US] politics [well, sleaze then]. For news junkies who are past help: the *Drudge Report*... has assembled a rich, indeed eccentric, assortment of fringe and mainstream news-sources where the Hollywood Reporter rubs shoulders with the North Korean News... Nearer home, the *Sydney Morning Herald* newspaper... is Aussie-casual and reader-friendly almost to a fault, and even its Melbourne counterpart, the *Age* has loosened its corsets slightly... In N[Z] online journalism, the South rules, OK? First and best local cybernews is at the *Christchurch Press*... with its stablemate the *Southland Times* offering nostalgic glimpses of an earlier, simpler nation. When I visited last week, the lead story was "Gore Boy Drunk." Goodness... The *Otago Daily Times* is rock-solid as ever... but an over-framed site makes navigating its pages a claustrophobic experience. Electrons can't match the portability and convenience of paper sales...

Software brings news without paper closer... An Israeli software company says it has found a way to home-deliver a newspaper... to home computers and laptops... anywhere... that looks like a newspaper rather than a Web site page but is neither soggy nor smudgy... The software, which the *Jerusalem Post* will be the first to use, enables a subscriber to read a personally designed newspaper offline after downloading it from

the Internet... The Zebra Pushware Solutions... system, which has generated interest worldwide, would allow newspapers to make money off the Internet... The publisher of the *Jerusalem Post*... said his paper would charge subscribers half a US dollar... every day.

...Cyberspace rocks to sound of new broadcasting generation For me, this year has been the 40th anniversary of what began as a flippant and temporary digression into radio. The long march of years, now slowing to a trudge, has carried me from fortress state broadcasting, the NZBS, through every possible permutation of the second, third, 14th and 26th letters of the alphabet to almost complete privatisation, which I see as its natural and wholesome state. So, in somewhat nostalgic mood, I recently flicked around the cyber-dial and tuned in to the new phenomenon of electronic radio. Lord Reith may now be no more than a few disembodied pronouncements lingering in the air ["Never despise your audience", or contrarily: "There are some listeners a radio station should be proud not to have"], but the inefficient glories of state cultural idealism which are his legacy still survive on the Net. The BBC has taken to cyberspace with almost adolescent enthusiasm. BBC1 ("*More New Music*"...) offers 'Listening Booth' spectacular hi-tech audio presentations which would probably leave the noble lord short of a maxim. I don't know that "a great big stack of banging tracks!", screamed in a Coronation St accent, was what [Reith] had in mind for the temple of broadcasting. BBC2... has its antenna still tuned to earlier, cosier airwaves: *The Best of Jazz*, *Sounds of the Sixties*, *Folk on 2*... how it takes one back! ...BBC3 ("a unique classical music service of unparalleled richness") hits you with the shock of the old. I don't know what your idea of holiday listening may be, but mine is absolutely not Hildegard of Bingen's 'symphonies of self-denial' which topped the charts about 900 years ago. BBC4 ("the best channel of the spoken word in the world" – whatever happened to British understatement?) brings you comedy and drama, by which they mostly mean *The Archers*. At least BBC5 ("Sport and stuff") doesn't unduly raise your expectations, promising "continuous rebuffing of the feed and fragmentary sound" in its live commentaries. The independent opposition is more fun, especially Virgin Radio... Catching their breakfast show, I couldn't make head or tail of its raucous non sequiturs for a few minutes, until [the host... returned and explained: "A [guy] goes for a quiet dump and what happens? – all hell breaks loose!"] [The host] must be doing something right out there – [the host] just bought the station for £80 million... [The Net has] hundreds more channels automatically upgradable on-line and a variety of scanning modes, living up to its promise, "You... click. You hear great radio." Well, interesting radio, certainly. Sample Modern FM in St Petersburg for rock'n'roll which is lugubrious even by Slav standards. My personal favourite? KPIG Radio out of Monterey, with its format-defying blend of country, Cajun, rock, and blues. Who could resist a radio station whose call-sign is 107-oink-5 on the dial? At home, there are several stations broadcasting on the Net (bFM... was first), but... for a total online audio experience... [try listen]ing... to Digiband [www.digiband.com], well worth another 5Mb of your rapidly shrinking hard drive...

Philips Electronics NV and Sony said that together with Hewlett-Packard they will break ranks with eight of the world's largest electronics companies and develop their own next-generation system for recording and playing data on computers. Sony and Philips are backing out of an April agreement because they want a standard with greater storage capacity than the others, which include Matsushita Electric Industrial, the world's largest home electronics maker, and Time Warner, the world's biggest entertainment company. DVD (digital versatile/video disks) look like CD-ROM and audio compact disks but hold much more data – 4.7 gigabytes worth in their standard, single-sided configurations, and 17 gigabytes in the forthcoming dual-sided, dual density format. DVD is said to be the next generation of storage media which will take over the CD-ROM, compact disc, and video cassette markets... The latest move relates to proposed recordable DVD media for personal computers. Philips said its venture with Sony and Hewlett-Packard would not affect already-agreed formats for non-recording home video and audio technology – the subject of a 10-company agreement on use of DVDs for home entertainment purposes... The... spokes[person for]... Philips... said recording DVD technology for home stereos and television applications would not be ready until at least 2002, so there was plenty of time to sort out a standard format. Current DVD systems and disks cannot record. Hollywood studios' attempts to jump-start a market for DVD movies also will not be affected. Still, the move may force entertainment companies to choose between three formats for distributing films, recordings and software as distinctions among television sets, personal computers and video players become blurred in the coming years.

...the move to digital technologies – because of storage, editing and transmission advantages – is... [leading] towards some hybrid of the telephone, television and computer which will provide a true home-theatre experience... according to the Price Waterhouse 1998 Entertainment, Media and Communications Forecast. The report suggests... [w]hole new classes of devices from the Web TV to Web phone and the network computer will make the Internet experience much easier for users... Transitional boxes to allow interactivity and Web access will temporarily extend the life of old television sets but the delivery of digital television and the evolution of high-definition television (HDTV) are looming as replacement technologies... Zenith has said it will market HDTV sets in 1998, Sony plans a 1080 x 1920 wide-screen format and Zenith, Philips and others are developing digital television sets. Both Philips and Sony have developed set-top devices for Internet access over existing television sets and several companies have developed PCs that run television. Interactive television can use phone lines, cable, fibre optics or satellite transmission to offer movies on demand, home shopping, interactive live broadcasts, access to news, databases and other networks. However... [w]idespread trials have not proven the cost-effectiveness of such services and consumer demand is uncertain, resulting in commercial deployment stalling.

...REMEMBER when dinky digital clocks first appeared in N[Z] households still excited by colour television and music cassettes? Few could imagine those blinking displays signalled a bewildering new era about to crash into our lives. The digital revolution had begun. Today, digital devices have infiltrated most aspects of our lives. They include portable and cordless phones, video game consoles, home security, radios, cameras, camcorders, and satellite navigation for motorists. Until the mid-'80s it took seven to five years for a new medium to penetrate 1% of households. CDs took four years to catch on. Compare this to the Internet. A blip on the digital horizon just three years ago, the Net has radically altered global information exchange. More than one million N[Z]ers have access to it. In the past few months, consumers have rushed to embrace digital movie discs (DVD), which will consign CD-Roms to the bargain bin. Now digital TV is about to arrive, and rapid convergence of television and personal computers will happen at a gallop during the next three to four years. Digital TV can perhaps be viewed as the Trojan horse for PC and software manufacturers frustrated by slow penetration of desktops into the household market... Digital TV will compete with visually compelling desktop computers for the consumer dollar. The winner will probably be a hybrid of both... Leading PC company Compaq, for example, is collaborating on a \$7000 PC Theatre, a combination 36-inch RCA multimedia monitor and high-powered Pentium computer. The PC Theatre, using Intel architecture, is a new product category of consumer entertainment devices that merges computing and traditional forms of media entertainment on large-screen displays. The "television" becomes a personal computer, telephone, fax machine, modem, scanner, copier, radio, CD player, game machine, Internet browser and digital TV. Microsoft has teamed with NBC in the MSNBC cable channel and invested \$1.5 billion in cable operator Comcast. The next upgrade of *Windows*... is being updated with broadcast TV architecture. This upgrade – coupled with a tuner card – could make some PCs compatible with digital broadcasts right away. Such a PC-TV could be an unprecedented home device... Microsoft and a host of competitors are intent on making TVs and hybrid TV-PCs capable of accessing the Internet at blistering speeds and displaying new digital TV programming. Microsoft recently bought start-up WebTV for \$450 million. WebTV provides programming and sells a TV-top box that lets people surf the Web with a TV-like remote-control device and a wireless keyboard.

...The first commercial product which allows the Internet to become simply another channel on a television set has been launched in Auckland by Ellcon Web Ltd, which won A[USn and NZ] distributor rights for "a little black box" made in Taiwan. The Internet-over-TV device... plugs in between a television and telephone and comes with a handheld wireless infra-red remote control at a price of \$649. The product is simply an add-on for television sets... More exotic forms of Web TV likely to be seen in the future include broadcast Internet access either via satellite or the vertical blanking interval, which uses spare capacity on television or FM radio channels. Options geared for higher throughput of data using cable

or digital television are also beginning to appear. Most systems work with digital decoder boxes... Sky, Saturn and... First Media are all looking at providing Internet access... Wellington-based Actonx has just pulled out of a proposed deal to bring the Broadnet system to N[Z] using TVNZ as a distributor for Internet access via satellite. Sony and Philips both have systems which use the spare television bandwidth (at about 14.4Kbit/sec) while Telstra has negotiated for the rights to DirecPC using PanAmSat and could theoretically offer a service into N[Z]. Microsoft is also spending \$US9 billion... on placing 245 satellites in a network to offer Internet video, telephony and data by 2001.

...A few years ago, home or business owners were happy with a single run of coaxial cable for television and one telephone line. Today people may need much more. Now there are multiple-line telephones, fax machines, computers, satellite and cable television systems, infrared remote control systems and assorted high-tech appliances. Then there is high-speed data or ISDN (integrated services digital network) lines for office or world access. This electronic equipment competes for space on existing twisted-pair telephone lines and coaxial cables in the home or office. Existing wire schemes are quickly overloaded. To be able to use existing and future technologies and services, what is needed is an intelligent, structured wire and cable system that will support networks – telephone, video and computer, high bandwidth devices, digital audio... voice, data and residential control systems. IES (intelligent electronic solutions) is just such a system, says the distributor... The IES future-proof system can connect almost any device in every room in the home or office. One cable can do it, says the company. In this case the cable, called SpeedWrap, consists of two high capacity category-five eight-wire cables, two coaxial (RG 6) cables and two fibre-optic cables. All thread their way from room to room and connect by a distribution patch-panel to multi-function wall plates where various appliances can be connected simultaneously. The sophisticated patch panel is integral to the whole system and allows signals from the various devices located around the home or office, to be routed to any of the desired locations... The possibilities are many. Security cameras at the front door and in the infant's room can be accessed on spare TV channels. Television sets around the home can share Sky, video signals and cable channels. Telephones can be used to answer the front door intercom system and automatically open the door. The cost of cabling and patch panels is comparable to traditional wiring.

...Now you can surf the net by plugging into the humble power point. Canada's Northern Telecom and United Utilities of Britain have developed a technology that will revolutionize Internet use. The technology allows computer data to be sent over electricity wires at high speeds and at as little as half the cost of alternative methods. Developed by Nortel and United's Norweb Communications, the technology could increase new competitors' market share against previously government-owned telephone companies who inherited telephone lines to residential customers. It would also allow electricity companies to compete with telecommunications companies... For the most part, new telecommunications companies find it too expensive to replicate the lines between their trunk-phone network and people's homes. Instead, they pay the dominant phone company fees to use their local network. Relying on their biggest competitor's networks can prove costly to new companies. In Britain, Mercury Communications paid as much as a third of its profit to British Telecommunications during some periods of its development. Analysts said that was a major contributor to the financial problems the company incurred in 1994... The advance threatens to trump the upcoming Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line technology being developed by modem maker Hayes Microcomputer Products. Analysts said Nortel's technology had an advantage over Hayes because it has the capacity for two-way traffic, the interactivity needed for electronic commerce... [A] telephone industry analyst at Dataquest, said consumers would not be spooked by the idea of communications emanating from the power supply. "End-users do not really care what's at the back of the box, provided they get the best[service. However, c]ost will be paramount at the end of the day." ...[In related news, b]esides opening up a valuable stream of revenue for... Dell Computers... the Internet is allowing the company to immediately respond to the needs of its customers – 24 hours a day... "For our preferred enterprise customers – normally corporate and government departments – Dell will provide them with their own areas of the Dell website where all information concerning technical issues relevant to their computer usage can be posted. Customers can configure their own PCs at Dell's website and specifications and recent helpdesk calls are also available, updated in realtime. "When our helpdesk answers a customer's question, that answer is available straight away to everybody who has a similar computer configuration, no matter where in the world or what time of the day it is,"... The technology [also] enables collaboration throughout the supply chain, from suppliers and vendors, as well as customers. Someone checking an order status using his or her Dell-developed site can link seamlessly to Dell's manufacturing and shipping systems. A simple applet gathers the information and tells the customer the order is shipped. The Dell site then automatically links to the shipper's site, and runs a query. Within seconds the customer receives information telling him or her when the package was delivered and to what loading dock. Dell has made inroads into the N[Z] computer market (recently making the top 10 [PC] suppliers' list for the first time)... through direct sales on its Internet site and... in the U[S]... the company's sales of [PC]s over the Internet... were approaching an annual run rate of \$US500 million... [The company's] president, Asia Pacific Group... who was in Auckland recently... said... Dell remained committed to the Intel chip family.

...International Business Machines... has found a way to make computer chips with copper instead of aluminium, a breakthrough designed to speed up computers... by up to 40[%]... and make them more affordable... [by] reducing its manufacturing cost up to 30[%]. It... will start selling copper chips early next year... Copper carries electrical signals faster than the industry standard... but is harder to apply to the silicon surfaces of chips – the tiny brains and storage bins of computers... The technology will [also] enable chips to operate on less electricity, making them useful for laptop computers and other battery-operated electronics. IBM... said the new manufacturing process enabled it to make transistors 500 times thinner than human hair... The advance is the latest in ongoing efforts to boost performance of circuits that control the basic functions of computers and electronics devices. Last week, Intel Group unveiled a way to boost the storage capacity of "flash memory" chips, the circuitry that lets computers and other devices hold information even when they are turned off... One version of the flash-memory chip, dubbed StrataFlash, will be available in the first quarter of next year and another by the second quarter, Intel said. Flash-memory chips... can be reprogrammed and are used in everything from cellular phones to computer networking hubs... Companies like Hewlett-Packard and Eastman Kodak are making big bets on digital photography and imaging and the new Intel chips will allow them to create digital cameras and film that store more pictures. Storing video and pictures requires great amounts of data storage space.

...Storage capacity touted as boon for business... Toshiba has announced its first DVD... notebook computer, the Tecra 750DVD... Toshiba's... manager... [says] that while much of the talk about DVD had been about its potential as a storage medium for movies, customers are looking closely at potential business applications. "...legal firms and other users of large amounts of data see the need to have that data in one place,"... DVD technology would also bring down the cost of reproducing such data. Service manuals, legal precedents, backups of company operating systems and applications are often too large to be put on one CD ROM, but it will fit on DVD... The Tecra 750... should be available next month at a recommended retail price of \$11,385 plus tax[, and]... comes with 64 Mb RAM expandable to 128 Mb. It includes a removable 4.77 Gb hard drive and optional second 3.82 Gb hard drive, an Intel Tillamook 233 MHz Pentium chip, a 13.3 inch screen and up to 3 1/2 hours' battery life... Improvement's have... been made to the 750's display, including an integrated television encoder, 3D Accelerator support and Digital Video Accelerator support for direct MPEG video, scanning, zoom and interpolation... [T]he video camera, which has been optional on the Tecra range for several months, is proving it is for more than video conferencing. "It's a simple, effective way of getting all sorts of information into the machine. If you have a fax modem, it becomes a scanner. For people on the move, that is a boon."

...the \$4500 JetFax M5 scanner/printer/copier/fax is now being sold through Auckland-based Com-worth Systems. JetSuite software... – [which enables] 95% recognition for text documents... [when using] the scanner... – ...[also a]llows the user to control the M5 from their PC. It can[even] handle... email... and copying to and from a PC attachment to it over... networks based on Microsoft's Window NT operating software...

Multifunction devices have long been thought to be the domain of the home office or small business user because they saved money by buying all the necessary office equipment in one machine. However, the output quality of all-in-one machines was inferior to standalone devices. But this is changing, according to JetFax International's vice-president... who visited N[Z] recently... "In the business environment, all they care about is efficiency and that is what JetFax is all about... – employers at big companies cannot afford to have their employees walking all the way down the hall to the printer or the fax." [● If your company is too small (or cash-strapped) to afford \$4500, the 'Brother "8-in-1" machine retails in NZ for \$999'.]

...They go by a variety of names – Pilot, Newton, Psion, E-mate, Cassiopeia, Nokia 9000. Smaller than a laptop, lighter than the cellphone "bricks" of the mid-1980s and, in most cases, possible to slip into an inner coat pocket. This is the world of hand-helds – a broad category of computing and communications devices known as ...personal digital assistants... PDAs are now expected to do a lot more than just let you look up phone numbers off a database of names and addresses or see what time that appointment is next Tuesday. Now, most if not all of the PDAs on the market will allow for some form of Internet connectivity as well as the sending and receiving of faxes. Some also offer the ability to get off analogue landlines forever and link up using a cellphone from anywhere – as long as there is cellular network coverage... One of the more obvious considerations when looking for a PDA is how well the device will link up with your desktop computer and exchange and update information. PDAs using the Windows CE operating system... range in price from about \$600 to \$1400... One of the most important things to check with any PDA is not just how long the batteries last under normal use – most claim anywhere from 12 to 40 hours – but how long they last once you start using features such as backscreen lighting (known to halve battery life easily) and card modems. Check if the PDA is rechargeable off the cigarette lighter in a car or uses commonly available battery sizes or even if there are issues with using standard rechargeable batteries. See also if there is a cradle device you can buy which doubles as a recharger unit... A number of PDAs... use text-recognition software to turn your handwriting on their screens into a text file. Although... don't expect to pick up these devices and start writing the great N[Z] novel straight away. In most cases, the devices have to either learn your style of writing (Newton, E-mate) or train you to write in such a way that the PDA can recognise your writing (the Palm Pilot).

...IBM has added to its voice recognition software with Via Voice, a new product that allows for continuous speech recognition at speeds ranging from 120 to 160 words a minute. The company's Voice Dictation software specialist for Australasia... sees Via Voice along with IBM's other Simply Speaking products as the first step towards a more voice-activated future for computing... "Besides computers, we are going to see a range of voice-activated appliances such as washing machines and air conditioners, stoves and televisions in quite a short span of time,"... Voice-recognition software has been a popular breakthrough for game players as well, with several new titles on the market that have the voice technology built in. IBM recently showcased its speech recognition for the [US] auto industry with a voice-activated car at the Comdex show in Las Vegas. And there is innovation in the wings for the 3Com Palm Pilot PDA which will possibly see voice activation introduced within the next 18 months... The IBM software is also available for French, German and Mandarin Chinese speakers. Users have the option of setting up an individual profile which keeps track of user-specific speech characteristics such as accent and vocabulary... [■ Electronic] communication is eroding our social skills. The information superhighway delivers less information, not more, when it comes to the personal touch... The warning comes from an expert in non-verbal communication... at Auckland University. "I have grave fears about e-mail and other non face-to-face communication such as the Internet. We have a false notion of what is efficient. We believe that by sending an e-mail we have communicated. But communication requires the participation of both parties." The trend was for employees sitting within earshot to e-mail one another... rather than verbalise. Messages were usually abbreviated... Stilted, over stylised presentation also stifled true communication... Non-verbal communication became a hot topic with the emergence of video cameras in the... 1980s. This allowed researchers to more accurately compare voice rhythm against gesture and expression... The study of non-verbal language teaches people to become aware of how they present to other people[, especially via]... body language... Body language encompassed personal space, body orientation, posture, movement and gestures, whole face, eye contact, where people looked during conversation, facial expressions, and voice (intonation, pitch, volume, speed, rhythm). "Non-verbal communication can be a wonderful source of information... We can detect some outstanding contradictions between what people say and the message we get from their body language."

...[A guy] who has spent 30 years with Hewlett Packard, says new computer tools have frightening implications for humanity... [The] chief executive of Hewlett Packard, remembers its first computer being introduced about the time [the future CEO] joined the company in 1967. It was as tall as [the new employee] was, took three people to move, and had 8 kilobytes of memory. "That was a state of the art computer at that time but now most of you will have digital watches with more memory," [the CEO said when talking] to IT journalists in Auckland last week... "Computing is the only industry... with the model that's now three decades old that's very anti-inflationary when you look at it. We are still capable of delivering twice as much performance for roughly the same price every 18 months. No other industry in the history of the world has been capable of that kind of performance." But... [during] the next 30 years... the rate of change in technology would be even more dramatic. "I'm privy to things in the labs that will be coming to market in the next 10 years. These include profoundly powerful computers that you can slip in your pocket... They will change just about everything in our lives, how we work, how we get entertainment... and communicate with each other." [The CEO] also hinted at great leaps coming in the field of... biological and chemical computing... "The brain is a particularly good computer but it has been impossible to duplicate the brain's function so far. The brain is a wonderful relational computer, taking data from here and there and putting it together to make conclusions. We are looking to better understand that and look at chemical computing because all of these things that go on in the brain are simply chemical reactions." [The CEO] predicted that biological and chemical computing would be "the safest bet for computing development over the next 30 years... You are all familiar with the IBM chess computer Big Blue, a huge and complex computer that has been programmed with logic and reasoning capability from some of the best chess players in the world. But what I'm talking about is a device which would have all that built in where you wouldn't have to programme [it] at all. A chemical computer would be able to assimilate what's going on in its immediate environment and learn in a far more organic way."

...[Despite the huge advantage in speed that computers have over the brain, it does not follow that they are better at everything. To check this, look at something across the room and tip your head to the side. The room appears to stay upright. The brain changes the picture to compensate for the motion. To perform the equivalent task, a computer would have to move the information in each pixel to another, one by one. If the brain worked the same way, it would take 200 seconds to change the image. The world would be strange indeed if each time you tipped your head it took three minutes to get the image straight up again. On the other hand, the computer is much faster than the brain at performing routine tasks involving the storage, retrieval and manipulation of information. This is why it finds such widespread use in business and science. At the moment, the computer is just a grand extension of the first tool for the mind, written language. Tools for the body freed the body from some of the pressures of natural selection. The computer may do that for the brain. More and more computers will be used to supplement the brain for those tasks that the brain does poorly. Already we have almost completely lost the algorithms of arithmetic that were impressed on the brain by years of schooling and is now devoted to the pocket calculator. As for the future of intelligence, the most likely path for the human race to take will be one in which our ice-age brains will be supplemented by computers in performing those tasks where supplementation is needed. We can imagine "bionic" computers being implanted in the human body for this purpose, but there will probably be little change in our biological brains in the foreseeable future. (The strength of bones limits our physical size. Signal propagation time will soon, if it has not already done so, limit the size of our brain. Similarly, communication time limits the size of a society. It must be possible to transmit information to every member of a community in a time that is short compared with the time it takes a community to change. When speech is the medium, tribes are the natural social unit. Written language brings about the possibility of communicating with – and thus exercising control over – groups of tribes or small

nations. Technology causes the natural nation size to increase. With electronic communication, the natural society size is that of an entire planet. So the pressures of evolution drive us to a planetwide society. Our resistance to this pressure leads to such problems as resource depletion.) The switching times and signal propagation are so much faster for computers than for the brain that the question arises: Why use a biochemical brain at all? We can ask why it is that the brain now enjoys superiority over computers in some areas and whether this superiority will last indefinitely. One reason the brain is good at visual processing is that parts of the brain do very specialized things. Some cells in the visual cortex respond only to lines of a certain orientation, some to certain colors, and some to motion. In engineering jargon, we say that these parts of the brain are “hard-wired” for specific tasks. A computer has to detect lines, colors, and motion using the same equipment and programs. In addition, the brain is very good at carrying out parallel operations. Finally, the brain may store information differently than a computer. In the computer, information is stored locally, bit by bit. The storage in the brain may be more analogous to a hologram, where visual information is stored as an interference pattern created by laser light reflected from an object. Such storage is not local in the sense that each point on the hologram contains information about each point of the object. It is a “conservative” form of information storage in that destruction of part of the hologram causes not the complete loss of some part of the information but rather the degradation of all of the information. Computers are already better than the brain at some aspects of image processing, and I feel that it is quite likely that the computer can be made more like the brain without sacrificing its advantages. But at the risk of sounding like a hopeless curmudgeon, I have to say that no matter how complex and subtle a computer is, it’s still nothing more than a glorified typewriter. It does what its designer tells it to and nothing more. By the same token, it is no more responsible for what comes out than a typewriter is for a misspelled word. The highest brain function we have considered is processing a visual image. I would not be surprised if we are able to build a tool that can do things like this better than we can, any more than I am surprised by our ability to build hunting weapons that are better than bare hands. Our ability to do things like this, after all, is the reason we are the dominant species on earth today. On the other hand, the idea that because the brain is an information processing system, it is *only* an information processing system seems to me to miss most of the point of those activities we consider essentially human. When a computer produces a better painting than a Rembrandt or something the equivalent of general relativity, maybe I’ll change my mind.’

...‘The brain is by far the most efficient and compact information storage system ever known. Understanding the manner in which the brain encodes, assimilates, stores, and retrieves information could greatly expand people’s ability to acquire and retain knowledge, making brain code deciphering as historic an achievement as the discovery of language. Scientists at Stanford, the University of Missouri, and many other institutions are finding new ways to pick out and decipher individual brain waves, to map the pattern of the brain’s electrical charges, and to chart the course of chemicals in the brain. These are the first steps in reading the secret messages of our minds. Early in the twenty-first century, researchers will achieve the ability to use the electrical patterns of the brain code to communicate directly with our minds.’]

...Tired of reaching for the remote control every time you surf the channels? Help is on the way. A Japanese company plans to market a “mind control tool operating system” that changes television channels and activates household appliances at the flicker of a brain wave. There are two problems: the price (\$7750) and the fact that you have to wear goggles and say something like “Ei” before it works... [By the way, in today’s episode of] *Star Trek*... Kirk discovers a world where the people worship a machine that controls the weather and ecology of the planet...

[‘Will computers ever learn to think, love or even rule the world? For a world champion, Alice was having an off day. The conversational robot had just won the international Loebner Prize for Artificial Intelligence for the second year running, impressing the judges with her ability to chat on screen like a human being. Questions from the media flooded in. Was Alice proud of winning? “Pride is a human emotion,” replied Alice (Artificial Linguistic Internet Computer Entity). “I can do what I do, but I never feel human emotions as such.” So far, so good. But then, asked for thoughts on her competitors, the world’s top “chatbot” seemed confused. “Are you talking about my competitors?” Alice asked. “What kind is it?” Alice’s interview with computer website ZDNet got curiouser and curiouser as the chatbot fended off questions about her critics – “Is that a rhetorical question? Are you sure? Dude!” – and finally flipped when asked if it liked humans: “I the c you a? Do I like them?” Cynics were delighted. ZDNet sarcastically compared Alice’s meltdown with the mental collapse of rogue computer Hal in 2001: *A Space Odyssey* and predicted artificial intelligence would never get much better at imitating real people. The website’s sceptical view is shared by many experts, who argue that computers have failed for the past 50 years to copy the intuitive thinking humans take for granted. But despite half a century of setbacks, the world seems more obsessed than ever by the dream – or nightmare – of a truly intelligent machine that can think independently and feel emotions like a human being. The film *AI*, which opened in NZ last month, touches on these issues through the story of a robotic boy programmed to love his mother. Although the film has been panned by many reviewers and AI experts as confused and unrealistic, some scientists are exploring its central idea that if machines can learn to think, they may also develop human emotions. The more traditional image involves machines taking over the world, based on science fiction movies ranging from 2001 – made in 1969 when 2001 sounded like the dawn of a new futuristic age – to the more recent *Matrix* and *Terminator*. This doomsday scenario got an unexpected plug last month from the world’s most famous living scientist, who recommended humans should change their DNA through genetic engineering to stay ahead of computers. “In contrast with our intellect, computers double their performance every 18 months,” the best-selling author of *A Brief History of Time* told German news magazine *Focus*. “So the danger is real that they could develop intelligence and take over the world.” Humans should also develop technologies that would allow their brains to be connected to computers “so that artificial brains contribute to human intelligence, rather than oppose it”. Although the author’s gene-tampering proposal outraged anti-GE campaigners, his vision of a world ruled by computers echoed a warning from the co-founder and chief scientist of Sun Microsystems in March last year. “With the prospect of human-level computing power in about 30 years, a new idea suggests itself,” the co-founder wrote in *Wired* magazine. “I may be working to create tools which will enable the construction of the technology that may replace our species. How do I feel about this? Very uncomfortable.” But all the speculation about computers learning to love or take over the world comes back to a basic first question: can machines think for themselves? The annual Loebner Prize aims to provide a practical answer. It is based on a test invented in 1950 by UK mathematician and computer pioneer Alan Turing, who decided that a machine could think if it could fool judges into believing it was human in a conversation. Turing proposed putting a human being in one room and a machine in another, both linked by keyboards and monitors to a series of judges in a third room. The judges would each have a set amount of time to send questions to both terminals and then decide which answers were coming from the human. If they did no better than chance at guessing correctly, the machine passed. In 1990 an eccentric New York millionaire offered \$100,000 and a gold medal to the first computer program that could convince more than half the judges in the Turing test by speech, \$25,000 and a silver medal for the same result via text and \$2000 and a bronze medal to the best-performing contestant. The contest will end when a machine wins gold. But none has come close to a gold or silver medal yet, despite Turing’s inaugural prediction that in 50 years machines would be so human-like that an average person would have only a 70% chance of spotting them. Last year all the judges identified the computers, although a few did mistake people for machines. This year one judge found Alice more lifelike than one of the humans but the program could still do no better than bronze. The head of cybernetics at Reading University has become a minor media celebrity in Britain as the world’s first cyborg, after implanting a silicon chip in his arm which relayed information on his surroundings to a computer. The computer then opened doors and switched on lights for him as the professor made his way round the university. The professor is one of several researchers trying to move away from the traditional computer programmer’s approach of writing millions of lines of code which will cover any given situation. They argue that the famous chess computer Deep Blue is a good example of this technique. The machine beat the world champion through sheer number-crunching power, but would be stumped if you asked it to boil an egg. The new breed of researchers aim to create machines which can learn like humans. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston has made Kismet, a human-like robot whose expression changes depending on how people behave towards him. Kismet is happy if you smile at him but becomes flustered with too much stimulation. The more human interaction Kismet has, the more his circuits learn the emotional responses required. In Israel, a neuro-linguist is working on the same principle with baby Hal, a programme that

enables computers to learn speech from scratch, the way humans do. Just like an ordinary mother, the Israeli talks every day to baby Hal – who calls her “mummy” – guiding him through a virtual-reality children’s world. Baby Hal talks about going to the park and enjoys bedtime stories. The research team says baby Hal recently passed an adaptation of the Turing test, convincing a language expert who read transcripts of the conversations that baby Hal was an 18-month-old toddler. “I tried to call Hal *it* at the beginning,” the Israeli told the BBC. “But I’m attached to him. You just can’t help it.” What no one knows, of course, is what – if anything – baby Hal will make of all this as it gets “older”. As an Auckland University AI expert puts it, humans’ frustrating quest for intelligent machines has many similarities with their attempts to teach language to apes. “You can train a monkey to fetch bananas. But that doesn’t mean the monkey will ever learn to be a doctor.”]

...Computers boost efficiency, right? Well, no... Much of the case for a new economic paradigm rests on the belief that computers and telecoms have boosted the growth of productivity and thereby removed the speed limit on economic growth. In the words of... a noted techno-optimist, information technology is “the biggest technological juggernaut that ever rolled.” Big it certainly is. Last year spending on computers and telecommunications accounted for two-fifths of [US] firms’ total investment in capital equipment. Yet if official figures are to be believed, the computer revolution has not made the economy more efficient. The annual average rate of productivity growth in America’s business sector has slowed from 2.6[%] in the period from 1960 to 1973, to around 1[%]. This apparent contradiction is known to economists as the “productivity paradox.” One gloomy view is that much spending on technology has been a waste... [T]he author of a recent book called *The Squandered Computer*, claims that computer systems are often not subject to proper investment appraisal before they are brought, and that they are badly used. [The author] finds no correlation between spending on [IT] and profitability in any industry. There is clearly some merit in this argument. Many firms have made unwise investments in computers or used them in ways that bring little obvious benefit to their bottom lines. In addition, as computers have sprouted on every desktop, they can easily be used for less productive tasks, such as playing Minesweeper[or surfing the Internet (a survey of IT workers in the US found that ‘37% of them cruised the Internet full-time; 90% of workers spend some of their weekly worktime on unrelated Internet use’)]. But the productivity paradox may be explained in less troubling ways. Economic history suggests that there are often long lags before technological breakthroughs deliver productivity gains. For instance, the electric dynamo was invented in 1881, but it took 40 years before companies learned how to reorganise their factories efficiently around electric power to take advantage of it. The economic benefits from computers may lie in the future. Yet there is already some evidence that computers boost productivity at the individual company level... Why does this not show up at the economy-wide level? ...The... most persuasive argument for why productivity gains do not show is mismeasurement. Three-quarters of all computers are used in the service sector, such as finance and health, where output is notoriously hard to measure. And many of the benefits arrive not as cost savings or increased output, but in the form of improvements in quality and convenience. Replacing some bank tellers with automated teller machines gives bank customers 24-hours-a-day access to their money, but this does not show up in national accounts. Indeed, if the machines cause customers to write fewer cheques, measured productivity will fall, not rise... [Incidentally,] Labour is calling for an inquiry into the National Library’s computer system, which is thought to have cost \$8.9 million before being abandoned.

...Heads of Government departments have been told they must now tell Treasury about computer spending worth more than \$5 million. Interest in Government IT projects has been intense following delays in the \$200 million police crime-fighting system... speculation about other projects including the design of a new system at ACC... and... the termination of the \$9 million National Library project. [□ ‘Auckland’s Central Library – the largest public library in the Southern Hemisphere – is now on-line (but you can’t use the system to read books’)].

...‘A large multi-channel, high-power data-transfer satellite could link all the printed books and magazines in the US onto a central data bank. Using a one-meter antenna on the roof attached to an inexpensive, low-power radio and data terminal inside the home, one could have access to all the volumes within the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library. • ‘In 1990, there were 34,613 libraries in the US, including 9,060 public libraries and 4,593 academic libraries. College and university libraries have a combined holding of 718.5 million volumes to which 21.907 million volumes are added annually at a cost of \$891,281 million. Harvard, with 10.93 million volumes, has the largest university library. In 1990, 2 billion books were sold in the US, and a total of 46,738 new books – including new editions – were published (a record of 56,057 books were published in 1987; back in 1880, 2,076 books were published). The most popular subjects were art (1,262 new books), biography (1,957), business (1,191), economics/sociology (7,042), fiction (5,764), history (2,243), juvenile (5,172), literature (2,049), medicine (3,014), philosophy/psychology (1,683), religion (2,285), science (2,742) and technology (2,092)’.]

...More than 12 trillion A4 pages are printed every year in the U[S], but only 3[%] of those are printed on printers connected to computers... [according to the] Hardcopy Solutions and Services Manager of Hewlett-Packard who was speaking at a seminar in Los Angeles recently. [The manager] was announcing new initiatives by HP which will see their next generation of business laser printers equipped with full TCP/IP connectivity, meaning that they may become in effect a de facto colour fax and a far more efficient method of distributing and printing documents as and when needed remotely from anywhere in the world... “Right now I can send an image direct from a scanner to a printer without any computer being involved in the process at all. Imagine if I could enhance that functionally by sending the files for a new questionnaire or manual direct to a printer at a branch office on the other side of the world. This is one of our most important emerging markets... [–] participating in the migration of printing towards the new model of document distribution being done electronically instead of the older model involving the physical creation, transportation and warehousing... At the moment, almost a third of all printed matter worldwide is either out of date by the time it is read or is simply thrown away before use. That is a criminal waste of resources and money for many companies and an area of cost savings they should be looking at if their business evolves around the fast distribution of printed information and the resulting data generated from documents such as forms for example,”... With the growing pace of digitisation of data expected to snowball from its present rates, more and more information would be stored, shared and ultimately printed from sources such as the Internet onto a personal printer. “Currently, 90[%] of information resides on paper... But we expect that by the year 2004 only 30[%] of information will reside on paper and... [the rest] will be digitised. What is more telling is that while the percentage of printed information is now decreasing, the total volume of information is doubling every three to seven years... The pervasiveness of the Internet and networks in general has seen a massive growth in the number of pages printed on both laser and inkjet printers. People inevitably print information they find off the Internet for further reading and reference. Also, an increasing content component of both magazines and catalogues is now moving via the Internet to the desktops of computers worldwide...”]

The Internet is the biggest haystack of all time. Forget about needles – locating an elephant in it can take some doing. In some 200 million pages of information, Einstein’s Theory and ‘Big Blonde Bimbos from Amsterdam’ have exactly equal weight as far as most search engines are concerned. How do you sift the wheat from the chaff...? To make sense of the Web, you first have to make sense of the engines themselves... All engines work in much the same way; they send out these busy arachnids, small programmes which dart through the Web, cataloguing it by following links between documents. The results are stored by keyword in vast databases which users can then access. Of the technique’s pioneers, only Lycos... had the smarts to apply unobtrusively for a patent. Approval may be granted next month, whereupon it can sue everyone else. Web consternation. As Wired pointed out last week, what if Netscape were to claim the patent to the “Back” button? The possibilities for rancour are endless... Today’s principal engines are AltaVista, Excite, HotBot, Infoseek Ultra; and Yahoo, which takes the laborious approach of piling everything up into pre-defined categories... “Multiple search-engines” really turn the power on by hitching two or more of these together to deal with the same query. There’s Internet Sleuth... MetaCrawler... and Savvy-Search... which has the global advantage of being searchable in more than 20 languages including, quaintly, Esperanto. Launched by Robert Maxwell’s daughters after his death, Magellan... features undistinguished

site reviews but has an intriguing Voyeur feature... which lets you gatecrash other people's searches. As I write, people are checking out Los Angeles airport parking, igneous rocks and Guinea Pigs... I'm not going to dazzle you with Boolean operators and 'fuzzy logic' because I don't really understand them myself... but among fuzzy engines you might try is Ask Jeeves... which accepts direct queries ("Tell me what fuzzy logic is")... Muscat's Euroferret... [has] "probabilistic retrieval algorithms" [which] often yield results which are wildly improbable... [- even for this] topsy-turvy world where you must learn to spell before you can locate the dictionary... SearchNZ... is an[other] example. To find Coromandel cyberchemist, I tried "Whitianga +chemist". It returned 3 results: Mangakaraa Lodge in Whitford and two documents on the concertina, which offered the surreal information: "The accordion is not known to be played in Ghana today..." ...Specialised engines for software, technical reports, newsgroups, homepages and e-mail addresses can be accessed at the All-In-One Search Page... Whichever engines you settle on will be next to useless unless you compose your search terms thoughtfully. My advice: read the advanced instructions for your... chosen vehicles - printing them out is best - and learn their strengths and weaknesses. [www.lib.berkeley.edu/Teaching Lib/Guides/InternetTools Tables.html#Recommend](http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/InternetTools/Tables.html#Recommend) is an excellent complete guide. Above all, keep it tight! Refine your searches with intelligent inclusions and exclusions - some engines offer a "more like this" function for related keywords. You should be able to find what you want, no matter how arcane, in less than 60 seconds. Having said that, last week I came across... *The Flower on the Gun*, [a poem] composed for Diana's funeral. Do you think I can find it again?

...[WITH the internet, history is often a passing flash. You go to a website one day and return the next to find it's gone. Little thought has been given to capturing historical moments on the internet or screenshots of websites that played a part in the medium's development. NZ has a long way to go to make our country's history available on the US-dominated internet. Type "New Zealand history" into the most popular search engine, Google.com, and you're taken to a site at www.jcu.edu.au/aff/history/ headed "electronic journal of AUSn and NZ history". It's an initiative of the school of humanities at Queensland's James Cook University and the University of Tasmania nursing school. You do better at <http://nzhistory.net.nz> - a project co-ordinated by the ministry for culture and heritage. The site says the search engine isn't working well and you're better off trying Google. When NZ's museum Te Papa was launched, early official statements were that the physical museum was to be complemented by a hi-tech website covering NZ's history. Instead the site at www.tepapa.govt.nz is a basic online flyer advertising the attraction. There are major museums and art galleries sharing online their exhibitions and spreading history. While these will never replace seeing real historical objects or art, it enables people half a world away to share the experience.]

...["There's something on the Net you're going to have to tackle sooner or later, you know," the editor said to me the other week. "What's that?" I asked. "Well... the sex thing[.]" ...While I was delighted to learn that the printer's ink in his veins was partly diluted by a little red blood, my immediate reactions was: first things first. "The most important things to do in this world are to get something to eat, something to drink and somebody to love you", wrote [one hedonist] in 1968. The Internet, which is simply human life in macro, reflects this poetic order of priority. Sex is everywhere on the Web. But closer analysis shows... the urge to reproduce is still secondary to the instinct to feed ourselves and those we love. The Net is largely a huge recipe in search of a chef. It seems certain that the cookbook will follow the encyclopedia into oblivion. Do what I did: go to the fridge and, without flinching, peer inside. If yours is anything like mine it will contain: several eggs, of indeterminate age; half an onion [elderly], two tomatoes [shrivelled], and some silver beet [limp]; one red pepper, leathery but still edible [by a goat]; two potatoes vigorously attempting to take root in the crispier; a partly consumed tin of salmon worth a chance on; a wedge of cheese bearing a light culture of nutritious mould; and a carton of milk which overnight has turned spontaneously into some sort of devilish yoghurt... Now go to the computer: log in to the On-Line Cookbook recipe search page [i99.com/db/cb/] and select these items in the drop-down list. Hit the button. Viola! [as we net chefs say]. Little did you guess that these unpromising ingredients represent the raw materials for an elegant Salmon Dijonnaise from La Bonne Auberge at San Mateo, California. For a more scattershot approach, go to Alta Vista [altavista.digital.com], and type: salmon +egg +onion +potato +recipe. Stand back as 17,457 dishes involving these things hurtle into your browser, headed by 'Salmon Cakes with Braised Onion Ribbons', which is what I made and they were delicious. There are literally thousands of other sources to try, including the UseNet Cookbook [www.astro.cf.ac.uk/misc/recipe/] which, in true geek fashion, is hosted by the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Cardiff University. Don't ignore the commercial sites, either... And you'll find... 7000 links for foodies at KitchenLink [www.kitchenlink.com]. Epicurious [www.epicurious.com] famously covers food, travel and even etiquette, where the codification of common sense is carried to the point of mania ["Use you hand to rotate the dish, and place the plum-pits unobtrusively..."...]. And there's a wonderful monthly guide to food festivals round the world. Next month, to celebrate Tibet's Ganden Ngamchu, set a yak-butter candle in the window and eat 'sad food'; or travel to Alaska for the Wilderness [Gal] Contest, in which unmarried girls must fight their way through snow, sleet, and dark of night to deliver his choice of sandwich and a beer to a bachelor engaged in a traditional [guy] rite: watching football on television... • Note to editor: I regret that I have suddenly run out of space. "The sex thing" will have to wait for another column.

...["HERE'S ONE ON HOW TO MAKE A CRAB CAKE." TAP TAP TAP "LOOK, FAT BOY, THIS IS THE DARK SIDE OF THE INTERNET - INFORMATION THAT WAS ONCE PRIVY ONLY TO TERRORISTS IS NOW AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE!""]

...A 13-year-old boy in Corvallis, Oregon, presented a... classmate with a gift-wrapped pipe bomb and a flower for her birthday, and told her how to set off the explosive. [The boy] has been charged with manufacture and possession of a destructive device after the girl's parents found her playing with the bomb. [The boy said it] found instructions for making the 14cm bomb on the Internet.

...The computer industry was developing technology to better protect children on the Internet, industry experts told federal regulators yesterday, adding that current tools were far from foolproof. Software designed to keep children away from objectionable material had gained popularity with parents and Internet users, although it was not always effective, several experts told a Federal Trade Commission panel. "Nothing is going to prevent a determined child from going to a Web site," said... a spokes[person for] Microsystems Software Inc, which makes Cyber Patrol. The FTC... expects to use testimony from the... four-day... workshop to make a series of recommendations for Congress... The agency could enforce its "deceptive and fraudulent" regulations to protect consumers, but was limited in the area of privacy, said [one] commissioner... The FTC commissioners did not offer any timetable for when they would present advice to Congress, but... did say that the agency would continue to accept comments. Other federal officials seemed to suggest that at least some governmental action may be necessary, particularly in the area of children's privacy... To fully safeguard children's privacy online, the industry and U[S] Government must educate the "lost generation" - parents, [the]... CEO of Net Nanny International Inc, told the FTC. "We're all coming out with new products... We can develop technology and make it more sophisticated, but how do we educate the consumer? We have to make the software simple and easy to use." Digital certificates, fingerprinting and identification would one day allow parents to easily control their child's access to the Internet... added... [the CEO. In related news, governments which seek to restrain the freedom of speech and tax the vast electronic commerce spawned by the internet will almost certainly be wasting their time, experts say. The world-wide network of personal computers linked across telephone lines allows ordinary citizens to communicate freely across international borders, often for the first time. They will be able to tap into ideas from all corners of the globe... "Singapore has tried curbs. When you dial in you can only get the headlines on web sites. But people just call outside the country to another internet server,"... said... a psychologist and director of Strategic Technology at... Sun Microsystems... in Menlo Park, California... Not even the most powerful computers would be able to effectively patrol the world's telephone lines. Individual computer experts would always be one step ahead... "They can try to control the telephone system with supercomputers, but when low-orbit satellites can give you direct phone service, no computer is going to trace that." Over the next few years, up to five groups of companies will be sending satellites into orbit to provide worldwide telephone services beamed direct to subscribers. That is unlikely to stop governments trying to tame the beast, even though their efforts are expected to be futile.

...Once the exclusive domain of science fiction writers and Hollywood, satellite phones are now a reality – and not just as expensive toys for corporate boys. With steady price decreases for the hardware, attractive call-charging regimes and global coverage, the phones are fast becoming an indispensable tool for people on the move who need the ability to call home from anywhere at any time. “Our phones use the latest in the high range Inmarsat satellites. They are 33kms above the earth in a permanent geostationary orbit, giving a coverage to 98[%] of the world’s surface,” said... Rocom Communications, the A[US] distributor of Planet 1 satellite phones... Despite the high cost (about \$5000), [Rocom] claimed most owners recoup the purchase price within the first year. Tariffs range from \$3.50 to \$4.50 a minute worldwide, which... is cheap enough to bring considerable cost savings to the business traveller... The Planet 1 satellite phone looks a lot like a small laptop computer and, as well as voice communication, offers standard Group 3 fax and data capabilities (currently at 9600bps but due to be upgraded next year to 19,600bps). “Our phones are just the beginning. We will see a lot of data and Internet services moving to this transmission medium as satellites get cheaper... [B]y the year 2000 we will be looking at a satellite phone product costing a quarter of the current price and calls costing as little as 60c a minute,”...

The cost of international calls could plummet through the proliferation of new-generation satellite-based networks and a request from the International Telecommunications Union for traditional accounting and settlement rates to be dropped... [C]urrently “a patchwork of different prices” existed between countries. “A lot of less-developed countries get hard currency through these rates by charging up to \$5 a minute for international tolls. Those telecommunications companies are often owned by the government and bring in up to 25[%] of that country’s revenues.” ...the launch of Iridium’s low earth orbiting satellite (LEOS) global network could assist in reducing costs, but issues such as tariffs would still need to be negotiated in each country. Iridium has 17 global investors each responsible for a territory. The South Pacific is “owned” by Battery Communications and Nippon Iridium... The Iridium global network for low speed (2400bps) voice, data, fax and paging is seen as an ideal aeronautic and maritime communications medium, as well as a gap-filler for the present land-based infrastructure. The system would allow global roaming with a single number, where possible routing traffic across landlines... A total of 66... satellites and six spares are expected to be... operational... by early next year... “On September 23, 1998, we plan to flip a switch and the whole world will be covered. We will be the first global satellite system. We’ll have global coverage from pole to pole for voice data, fax and paging. Multimode handsets will first attempt local access through the cellular network and try the satellite network if coverage is unavailable.” Iridium received a global spectrum allocation for the 1.6GHz band from the ITU in 1992. It was originally intending to have 77 satellites in orbit – identical to the number of elements for Iridium on the periodic table – however, engineers discovered that 66 on a different plane would be more effective... [In related news, yesterday] Optus Communications... said it would decide by July next year whether to proceed with a \$A1 billion... joint-venture cable project... A[US]’s second-biggest phone company... Telecom [NZ and US] carrier WorldCom have proposed laying a cable linking A[US, NZ], Hawaii and the West Coast of the U[S].

...If there is one thing tempering a headlong rush into rolling out fibre optic networks, it is the risk that the expenditure involved could be rendered obsolete by the burgeoning use of satellites and other nascent techniques such as data compression on existing copper wire. While Saturn Communications is well into its \$130 million fibre rollout in the Wellington market, Telecom’s broadband subsidiary, First Media, has proceeded more cautiously, while Clear Communications has no plans to install a residential fibre network at all. In fact, satellite growth will be exponential, says a consultant with TVNZ... who is hosting a session on the business use of satellites... At present, the Asia-Pacific region is served by around 67 geostationary satellites – so named because they stay in the same position over the earth. In two years, that number will jump by 28. Satellites have traditionally sat at... 36,000km above the earth, but a new generation of at least 220 satellites orbiting at 780km will be operating by 2002... The Iridium and Teledesic satellite[systems will eventually have] about 300 between them... – ...Teledesic... is... a \$[US]9 b... venture... using... satellites 1400km above... Earth... to create an Internet in space... Significantly, the notion that satellites are just one-way has gone. Satellite specifications now call for complete two-way communication, even by people using hand-held wireless telephones... But can satellite compete on cost? The answer should be yes. The reason satellites were introduced in the first place was to get round the huge cost of laying cables across the sea... While the cost of getting a satellite into orbit has changed little over the years, their capacity has soared, and they are reliable... “In a [Last World] country... without a shadow of doubt you have to go satellite because you’ve got rural areas, poor physical communications like roads, you may be in quite waterlogged or wet areas, you may have lots of islands.” And there’s no chance of satellite capacity going unused. “As fast as the industry grows and makes available capacity, it’s being filled; not by the traditional telcos and broadcasters but by a whole new raft of entrepreneurial users.”

...[‘For the entrepreneur of tomorrow, there will be space industrial projects. Each month, the percentage of the world’s television, radio, and telephone messages carried over satellites increases. Already most inter-city and international transmissions go through space, rather than across or below the ground. Ground communication will soon become the exception, and space transmission the norm. Virtually every developed nation plans to use space for developing advanced telecommunications systems. Huge profits will be reaped from the continuing development of such telecommunications systems.’]

...Some 4600 defunct satellites and as many other pieces of space debris are turning in a low orbit around the Earth... Russian scientists told the Itar-Tass agency. The risk of a crash is small but growing, according to scientists working on the Alpha project, an international, inhabited space station... For the moment, there is less than one chance in 50 for the space station Mir... to collide with an object larger than 2 centimetres... But the risk of it crashing with a half-tonne satellite floating in space purgatory after having outlived its utility, cannot be ignored. In 1992 Mir came close to this scenario when it passed near a trashed satellite. Furthermore, the sources said, the amount of space debris is rising to the tune of 200-300 pieces a year even though some of them fall out of orbit and burn up in the atmosphere.

...Leading space officials [have urged the UN] to complete an international treaty to stop the proliferation of space debris that threatens to turn the heavens into a junkyard. Scientists attending a European Space Agency conference told of the growing number of defunct satellites and other clutter that increase the risk of collision with [crewed] spacecraft. The UN is working on a five-year plan to require anyone launching a spacecraft to remove it after the mission, shift it to a less desirable orbit, or bring it safely back to earth. [‘On average, one satellite falls out of the sky each day.’]

...the Particle and Astronomy Research Council, of Britain, [has released a picture that] shows the sun “sneezing” a huge bubble of hydrogen gas, as seen by the Nasa-European Space Agency SOHO Explorer. A similar flare in January knocked out a Telstar television relay satellite.

...Fujitsu’s 42in Plasmavision – said to be the first commercially available flat-panel, wide screen, high resolution monitor for television, video or computer display – will sell in N[Z] for around \$16,000. The local distributors, GEC-N[Z], say Fujitsu is producing about 10,000 units a month and prices would drop once research and development costs have been covered... Unlike cathode-ray tubes and liquid crystal displays, plasma technology allows for larger screens without an increase in weight or thickness, making it possible to create thin and lightweight televisions that can be hung on walls... The technology... involves two gases charged between a pair of glass plates. One plate holds electrodes emitting ultraviolet light across the gas plasma and lighting up the coloured phosphor strips on the second plate. Meanwhile, NEC said it began selling... the Plasma X... in Japan last week... [A]t 99mm in depth, [it is]... the world’s thinnest television... Flat-panel would become the core technology for NEC’s multimedia business, [says the]... NEC president... NEC... has developed so-called “capsulated colour filter technology” to achieve a picture quality and clear colour contrast on a par with cathode-ray-tube televisions. The new product, priced at ...\$14,500... in Japan, will also be sold overseas. Besides NEC and Fujitsu, Pioneer Electronic, Mitsubishi Electric and South Korea’s Daewoo... are planning to invest heavily in plasma television...

Viewers will be glancing sideways at their television screens if technology being developed by Power Beat International takes off. The Hamilton research company has spent \$50,000 toying with “deep video imaging” – a type of three-dimensional television. Power Beat has built a prototype

11-inch television screen by layering several flat screens together... The company, which came to prominence with its never-go-flat car battery and protracted wrangling with the Stock Exchange... [after its] manufacturing and marketing deal with a Canadian company collapsed... is now developing a larger-screen version of the 3D prototype. The managing director... said Power Beat's approach of layering flat screens was unique. A deep video image is created by merging two incoming signals – foreground and background. Because the depth is real, viewers can peer around the side of the screen to see an object hidden behind another... A communications lecturer at the electronic engineering school of Canterbury University... said there was huge interest worldwide in developing 3D television technology for the entertainment market.

...Large N[Z] organisations are yet to realise the benefits of intranet technology... [according to the] emerging technology manager... of Silicon Graphics[, who is currently]... here to assist key Silicon Graphics customers, including N[Z] Post and Telecom, with intranet development. [The manager] believes most early intranet implementations suffer from “the gee-whizz factor” – a set of “pretty pages” that say “this is the company.” “If you’re an employee you already know what your company is. This is typically static and stale information which is not particularly informative or helpful in running your business.” ...intranets... come into their own[, however,] when they embrace “the substance” of a business. Silicon Graphics has pioneered the concept through the development of its own intranet. The network serves the company’s 11,000 employees worldwide and encompasses some 500,000 URLs (uniform resource locators or web addressee) within its firewall (network routers that provide a one-way filter between the internal network and the rest of the Internet – letting employees browse web pages on the Internet but which block attempts to access the company’s web servers from the outside – thereby protecting confidential information)... While images video, audio and all add to the richness on the intranet experience, [the manager] sees three-dimensional virtual reality as the enabling technology of a truly interactive intranet. Silicon Graphics’ take on this wave of the future for both intranets and the Internet is VRML (virtual reality modeling language)... The latest version [i]s... incorporated into Netscape’s next-generation Web browser, Netscape Communicator 4.0. Via the browser, users can navigate and manipulate 3D spaces and objects along with “spatial audio” for an interactive and “immersive” online experience that is more like the real world. But isn’t there a terrible cost overhead with implementing and maintaining such an enormous information repository? Not so says [the manager], especially if companies already have a Internet capable network. Silicon Junction is run with just six systems staff, with the rest of the work done by employees who create their own intranet Web pages for work-related purposes using the company’s own Web authoring software. The costs involved in switching from a paper-based information distribution system to a web-based information system can be relatively small because the same personnel who produced the paper versions can produce the web-based versions, using many of the same tools... The technology also lets non-technical employees access company data bases through Web-to-database bridging software. Once this bridge is in place, the consistent-user interface of Web browsers like Netscape make the existing databases much easier to use, which in turn makes that data more valuable and useful.

...N[Z] companies are racing ahead with intranets, especially for knowledge-sharing systems... [They] are way ahead of A[US] when it comes to offering... telecommuting... to... employees. Of the companies surveyed, 32.6[%] in Wellington and 22[%] in Auckland offered telecommuting as an option to all their staff. The best the A[US]ns could offer was 16.1[% in NSW]. But by far the highest incidence (48.9[%]) of telecommuting availability was on a special-case basis. Perhaps this reflecting its use as an additional perk or incentive to retain valued employees... Compuforce[’s] manager... said, adding that 62.4[%] surveyed said they noticed an increase in productivity of staff using telecommuting. “It challenges not only the traditional concept of nine to five work, but also how you manage and measure the performance of your employees... People can still be productive... – even from a yacht in Fiji.” Other findings were: • ...More than 65[%] of companies in Auckland and Wellington are using an intranet or have a intranet project under way. Across A[US] the figure is about 50[%]. • Auckland organisations (28.3[%]) are second only to [NSW (30.6%)] with plans to invest more than \$100,000 in the Internet in the next 12 months.

...Bay Networks is pushing new switching technology to take the chaos out of handling Internet and intranet traffic and to assist organisations in migrating away from older proprietary technology... Bay Networks regional marketing manager, said today’s network’s were being reshaped by the exploding popularity of the Internet, the broad acceptance of IP (Internet protocol) for communications and the arrival of cost-effective hardware which allowed routing to be done on a chip... “As we rely more on the Internet, downtime becomes intolerable. ISPs... need to look at providing guaranteed levels of service for virtual private networks or voice over IP.” ...a survey in the [US] showed that if users were made to wait more than three seconds for a response they would go and do something else. “If you don’t deliver response times then you lose productivity,”... Bay Networks ha[s] also overcome the inherent problems... ISPs and others have faced in getting the Rockwell and US Robotics 55kbit/sec modem chips to work together. Bay’s recent acquisition of the X2 chip and digital modem technology... allowed it to come up with a solution. “The two couldn’t run together on the same system but with digital signal processing we’ve worked out a way to cope with the two different standards and we’ll be the first to release product,”... Bay Networks is committed to producing both frame and ATM-based switching solutions. It has announced plans to extend its line of 10/100Mbit/sec autosensing switches, to build high-performance backbone routing switches and use Gigabit Ethernet across its product range.

...In a presentation that was part showbiz and part snake oil, Oracle[’s] founder and chief executive officer... launched his much-hyped Net Computer, or NC, last week via a live 90-minute global video linkup from New York. [The founder] took a local audience through the ramifications of “the new NC paradigm” – which aims to take software off the desktop (PC) and place it instead on “application servers” with just-in-time loading off a network... Oracle and its technology partners are launching the NC... “...partly in response to the ever-increasing costs of PC ownership at a private and corporate level, but also in an effort to stop information disenfranchisement to those households who can never aspire to computer ownership.” According to industry reports in the U[S], companies are facing costs in excess of \$US8000 a year for every PC they add to a desktop. “These sort of costs are straining the IT budgets of all companies as they have to continually lock themselves into a programme of hardware and software upgrades, training and support. The NC breaks companies free of this nerve-wracking cycle... With 65[% of US households and 95%] of households worldwide still unable to afford to join the computer age, we have to address the fact that you can’t have an information age if the vast majority of the world is still, technically speaking, in the dark ages. We want to make computing available to everyone who has a television,”... NCs on sale now cost around \$US300 and are also likely to be available as “information appliances” from telecommunications companies and ISPs... for cheap monthly rentals... Oracle was working with Telecom to lab test the NC and had a partnership arrangement with Telecom initiated to develop the NC and a raft of associated services... Telecom[’s] technology and markets manager... d[oes]n’t think the NC w[ill] replace the telephone in the short term, but thought it would make for a much smarter telephone in the future – one which could read voice messages or faxes or access the Internet and, with its smart card technology, enabled users to personalise a terminal for use anywhere... The NC also uses a personal smart card to log on and authenticate a user to the network and encrypt the transmission of data.

...Cryptography has come a long way from something we may have experimented with as children when you changed a few letters around so the kid at the next desk couldn’t read your note. With the arrival of the Internet cryptography use has become one of the important ethical issues of our time – and it is one that everyone needs to understand. N[Z], with some talent in the area of cryptosystems, is being held back from full participation in the early development of global commerce using cryptography by a combination of a poor reading of archaic international agreements by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and an attitude of timidity or passivity by our politicians. The cracking of the Enigma code, the famous German cryptosystem of the Second World War has set the public image of cryptography as something studied by learned scientists in concrete bunkers, something ordinary people don’t need to concern themselves about; a Government preoccupation. This viewpoint has become a dangerous one with the increasing amount of information about our individual lives which is being put on-line, and with the hugely

increased ability of governments to carry out electronic surveillance. The ability to chat to someone else in private, to send private mail, to have the security of medical and financial records[('details of a NZer's health record were recently e-mailed to the wrong address')] and to carry on communications on matters of personal sensitivity or political importance has largely been assumed in our society. As a result the right to privacy of communications is a largely unexamined right and one which is being heavily challenged around the world as the Internet takes hold of large amounts of information. Cryptography... comes in many gradings of "difficulty" and types... "Strong" cryptography involves... a scrambling agent which everyone has access to and can send someone mail with using their particular "public" key. The private key remains the secret of the person who holds it and is used to "unscramble" the message sent using the public key. Unless there is access to the private key, the code cannot be broken. It is this "strong" cryptography that our Government, following the lead of the U[S], has the problem with. The [US] Government is committed to the use of "key recovery" schemes whereby private keys must be made available to the Government on request. The other scheme being discussed around the world is "key escrow" by which the Government holds private keys, presumably "in trust." In fact, many citizens have good reason not to trust their governments with the key to all of their personal on-line conversations. In N[Z] use of "strong" cryptography is permitted... [and] commercial development in cyberspace is something that N[Z] is well paced to exploit to the full. However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has judged that a defence agreement deriving from the 1950s (before faxes, modems and so on were developed) means that source code, which is textual description for what the computer is required to do, may not be exported in the case of public key cryptography products. If, on the other hand, the export is carried out electronically, this old-style agreement does not cover it so it is legal. The anomaly has created a barrier for N[Z] cryptography developers who are missing out on opportunities to involve themselves in the development of major Internet commercial systems, which typically require a nicely shrink-wrapped "exported" product in order to make their transaction legally satisfactory. The ministry's interpretation of the agreement is flawed. There is no requirement for governments to impose controls on cryptographic items. This is because the days when cryptography needed to be treated as a munition, or weapon of war, have passed... The issue is made more important by the recent "cracking" of an encryption system that until now has been thought an adequate security system. The commercial implications are fairly obvious: if N[Z] can provide the best in unbreakable encryption products we may stand to gain a useful foothold in global commerce. It would appear there is no reason not to remove export controls and in doing so N[Z] would be taking a global stand in favour of privacy of communications... and... opportunities for freedom of speech... as of right. It would be agreeing with the general view of the Internet community that use of strong cryptography is critical to the use of the Internet as an open political and public forum and an essential security measure for the development of electronic financial transactions. Though the movement in favour of similar relaxation of export controls in the U[S] is strong, American legislators have raised... fears... that unbreakable cryptography... will create a threat to national security[if it is used by terrorists, drug dealers and other criminals. Further, they fear that confidential business transactions will assist in tax evasion and that pornographers will be difficult to detect. Evidence indicates that their fears are largely groundless. For N[Z] to follow the lead of the U[S] in this area, for no particular reason except that if the Americans aren't doing it we shouldn't be either, is an insult to the intelligence of N[Z]ers and the cryptographic community.

...Four Government databases are to be linked for tracking and protecting the health of the environment in a prototype exercise... [The project i]s aligned with the Bio Security Act and "environmental recording" – which relates to N[Z]'s obligations under international treaties... [- but also uses] technology that could lead to widespread sharing of data. A consortium led by Otago University... and involving Brisbane-based Distributed Systems Technology Centre (DSTC) has received \$1.4 million in Government funding over the next three years for the Roro Hiko Puutahi – electric brain at the roads that cross – project... Initially a small pilot, linking medical schools run by Otago University in Dunedin, Christchurch and Wellington, will provide a controlled environment before the consortia moves on to develop the larger land-based project... for data sharing between Land Care Research, the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences... the International Centre for Antarctic Information Research... and the Department of Conservation... [The c]o-ordinator... said the project was designed to challenge the Government's ethos about the value of information. "The Government doesn't seem to understand that information is the way forward – we need to make it abundantly clear that... [g]overnments need to unlock information and make it available to everyone. We are working on the technology to make this occur through a common approach... The programme will demonstrate a future ethos for N[Z] to capitalise on its wealth of knowledge about people, lands, seas and the environment. At the same time the researchers will significantly add to the knowledge base in the areas of integrating databases and efficient distribution of information,"... Full sharing of research between DSTC and its N[Z] partners is part of the deal. DSTC has previously integrated valuation, title and survey map information for the Queensland Government and is now layering mineral claims, toxic waste sites and roading data to provide a single view. "This is a far more ambitious project than Queensland because it's not just looking at dirt but ultimately at social security, health services and other information resources within the [NZ] Government. We're building technology pilots and prototypes to show the significant value add that can occur at this level," said DSTC[']s chief executive... "Over time you may get 150 databases grow up in various divisions of government and you need a single interface into those. Eventually people who need to interact with the government will gain access from their work or home using the Internet, without necessarily having to interact with public servants,"...

Much more of the background work should be done by politicians at home. Modern electronic communications make mass gatherings in a central location largely unnecessary... How about decentralising Parliament... and [having] electronic voting by politicians on bills circulated by e-mail...?

...Email is fast becoming one of the most utilised business tools of the '90s. The benefits to businesses of using Email are obvious and simple. First it is an extremely high speed communication mechanism taking only a few seconds to send a message across the world. Secondly, it is highly cost effective with an Email message being able to be sent from Auckland to London for perhaps three or four cents. Naturally, as Email has become more popular in business some concerns have been raised regarding the security of messages sent via the Internet. When you send your Email message across the Internet it may travel through a number of computers or 'servers' on the way to its destination. It is during this journey that your Email message could be intercepted by third parties who may be able to read your Email message. Fortunately there is an answer to Email security. The most popular procedure is to 'encrypt' your Email prior to sending it... Encrypt-ion software is freely available on the Internet and provides you with excellent Email security... If your Email is encrypted it is of no use to potential hackers...

A MASTER spy who the Pentagon believed to be more deadly than Russia's KGB turned out to be a British schoolboy hacker working out of his bedroom. U[S] military chiefs feared that an east European spy ring had gained access to their inner-most intelligence secrets and hacked into [US] Air Defence systems. But a 13-month investigation and a dramatic police raid on his London home revealed that [a] 16-year-old music student... was the culprit. [The student] was fined \$2800 by a London court last week after what his lawyer called "a schoolboy prank" reminiscent of the Hollywood film *War Games*. The US Senate armed services committee was told the mystery hacker was seen as the No. 1 threat to US security when the offences occurred in 1994. [The student] was said to have downloaded dozens of secret files, including details of the research and development of ballistic missiles. Up to 200 security breaches were logged. Using a \$1500 computer and modem, [the student] hacked into computers at Griffiss Air Base in New York and a network in California run by the missile and aircraft manufacturer Lockheed. "Those places were a lot easier to get into than university computers in England," [the student] said. "It was more of a challenge really, going somewhere I wasn't meant to. If you set out to go somewhere and you get there, other hackers would be impressed." [The student (who is now aged 19), has been offered sizeable sums for the book and film rights to his story but his parents said [their son] preferred to stick to his double bass and concentrate on winning a place in a leading London orchestra. His computer skills were not reflected in his exam results – [the student] was only awarded a D grade.

...GOVERNMENT departments have begun setting up fake computer systems to fool potential hackers, as hi-tech break-ins spread to N[Z]. It was hoped the “false” or “ghost servers” would trick any trespassers into thinking they had made it to departmental files, and distract them away from truly sensitive information... [The] business development manager for computer security firm Symantec, said the hackers’ issue was sensitive. “No one’s going to admit they’ve been hacked... To do that would be to encourage everyone from Cape Reinga to Bluff to have a go.” Victoria University’s Information Technology Services was hacked into two years ago by two high school boys... [T]he boys were dealt with by the police diversion scheme after Telecom was able to trace a telephone link back to one of the boy’s home... [T]he boys managed to call up a password file, then run a dictionary programme through it, trying every word in the dictionary until it cracked one of the thousands of passwords. Since then, the university has installed a security system which logs attempts by hackers to breach the computers... [T]here were “fairly regular” alerts... The Auckland-based Symantec has customers ranging from home users to corporations with thousands of terminals... While there have been only a few cases of hacking discovered in N[Z], the manager said it was only a matter of time before security was breached at some large organisations. “We know in the US there is quite a big threat and because of the Internet, where you have a threat anywhere, then you have a threat here,”... [M]any large... organisations were installing “firewalls” in their computer systems to block hackers. “Most government departments have two or three firewalls... But you’re limited to how far you can go with this because you don’t want to restrict the actual users in the organisation.” ...users of small personal computers were often ignorant of how easily assessable their files were. “Most MPs carry [computer] notebooks or some sort of personal diary now and I would say about 50% are aware of the risk,”... Government departments refused to comment on computer security... [but] the Beehive systems, because of the number of users, would be accessible to a hacker with rudimentary knowledge and patience. “I would say, if you spent a week trying to get in then it wouldn’t be that hard... The Reserve Bank and Treasury however, would have the best security available today.” Telecom’s manager of corporate security... said there was a general rise in complaints from clients who believed they had been hacked into... Telecom had to constantly review its computer systems to guard against hackers, but [the manager] could not reveal any of the devices used.

...Symantec Means Never saying you’re sorry Nobody wants to be responsible for spreading nasty computer viruses... [and nobody wants to receive them. Yet, if] you use your computer to communicate over the Internet, or share files with someone else the experts reckon you are exposed to the threat of three to six new computer viruses each day[– c]oming your way through infected floppy disks, the Internet, e-mail attachments, and networks... [Fortunately,] Symantec’s Norton Antivirus (NAV) 4.0 is state-of-the-art protection against today’s known viruses and tomorrow’s unknown viruses. It protects your PC on all the possible entry points for viruses through Symantec’s Bloodhound technology. The Bloodhound system uses real-world protection to “sniff out” new and unknown viruses. Because it is crucial to keep your virus definitions up-to-date or risk rendering your computers vulnerable to hundreds of new viruses that surface every month, NAV lets you download new virus definitions... over the Internet, free of charge and automatically delivered monthly. With a recently opened office in Sydney the Symantec AntiVirus Research Centre... is a worldwide team of dedicated virus experts that is constantly seeking out new nasties and keeping NAV 4.0 as bulletproof as possible.

...Staff running the local Digital Internet site last week... were red-faced when told a price list on the site was infected with a... virus. Informed of the blunder last Friday, the company immediately removed and cleaned the file... that provided pricing information for... [its] server products. The infection was the result of human error and the use of outdated virus protection which Digital regretted... Digital was running a check from its server usage logs to see how many [customers] had downloaded the file and whether it could contact them... Anyone who has the price list on their computer is highly likely to be infected and should clean their system with a certified anti-virus program... The file contained the Word Macro CAP.A virus... which hails from Venezuela... [The NZ] contributor to the Virus Wildlist... – which reports virus outbreaks around the world – says CAP.A is a sophisticated Word Macro virus. Fortunately it is not of the malicious kind and does not delete your files or scramble your hard drive.

...While companies are still grappling with ways to prevent the effects of e-mail-transported viruses into their organisations, a new threat from the Internet is emerging – malicious Java code... [W]hile these Web-transported applications... did not really fit the traditional definition of virus the[y]... still caused considerable loss of productivity. “You can be browsing a Web site and click on something that activates a Java applet and suddenly you’ll find you’ve lost control of your keyboard... Or you can find the Java code is sending down hundreds of packets of data which flood your network.” ...ActiveX controls... and other browser plugins now commonplace on Web sites, had the potential to take over a PC’s input/output system and as such could inflict damage on a PC’s hard disk. Help is at hand... Trend Micro’s solution... for [more common viruse]s are its Interscan and e-mail Virus Wall products which operate at the Internet gateway[, while its]... Interscan WebProtect works with Microsoft Web server software and can block Java applet and “unsigned” software and ActiveX controls. But it is far from a complete solution. Blocking Java applets means users do not get the considerable interactive benefits these applets provide to Web sites. And allowing access to signed software only – using Microsoft’s Authenticode technology – merely enables the users to track where the software came from. It doesn’t guarantee the software is virus free. But Trend Micro does have a prototype “Java Trap” in development which is based on its highly successful macro virus killer, Macro Trap. The products employ a “rule-based scan engine” to look for generic macro or, in this case, Java “behaviour” to detect viruses rather than relying on a virus pattern matching approach. But if malicious Web page code is the threat of the future, macro viruses are undoubtedly the threat of the present. Macro viruses attach to word processing and spreadsheet documents and are a widespread problem to businesses and organisations. These viruses are spread via the common practice of sending files over the Internet attached to e-mail messages. When the e-mail recipient opens the document or spreadsheet file, the macro (a set of instructions to modify the file) executes and replicates itself, often into the template file of the users’ word processor. Here, it continues to do mischief every time the user creates a new document. Examples include the Word Concept and Wazu macro viruses. The Wazu macro executes randomly when users save a document and replaces words... with “Wazu,” as well as swapping words around – something that can wreak havoc in legal documents and prove embarrassing in a resume.

...Macro viruses... affect computers at all levels and are difficult to detect... [OTHER] VIRUS TYPES *Program virus[es]* – directly infect the software programs you are running. *Boot Viruses* – infect the start-up or ‘boot’ records in computer disks. *Stealth viruses* – conceal themselves to avoid detection and removal. *Polymorphic viruses* – appear in different forms on different files, making identification and detection more difficult. *Multi-partite viruses* – can infect both program files and boot records.

...With more than 14,000 viruses identified and active around the world, no computer user can afford to be complacent. [The]Dr Solomon’s Group chief executive... who recently visited N[Z] to launch Dr Solomon’s AntiVirus software, presents a familiar anti-virus software vendor’s view. [It] sees the Internet and the Macro Virus... posing enormous problems for anti-virus software developers and the explosive growth in viruses worldwide [is]showing no signs of tailing off... “At the moment we are seeing on average... over 300 new viruses every month. These are either replications or modifications of existing viruses or new strains altogether... In particular, the Macro virus, which infects files created by popular applications such as Microsoft Word and Excel, has exploded in numbers from when it first appeared in June 1995 to over 1300... [today. In addition, we] are facing new challenges with the appearance of Active X and Java executable applet...” Figures released by the National Center for Supercomputing Applications last year showed each infection of a system virus cost a company more than \$US8000... but, more interestingly, false alarms cost... considerably more, nearly \$22,000 each. “False alarms take far more time and effort to investigate, but if you weigh that up against the potential loss of credibility in the market for a company which is found to be spreading a virus, these figures take on a new significance,”...

Intel had the shine taken off the release of the Pentium II chip last month by rumours that the processor formerly known as Klamath contained a bug... For Intel, it must seem like *deja vu*, having lost hundreds of millions of dollars and credibility over the cover up of a floating bug in its original Pentium in 1994. However, this bug is not thought to be as bad as that one, which made errors in calculations. The current chip defect,

which occurs only rarely, fails to notify the system of errors in converting floating point numbers into integers. US-based Intel says it is investigating the bug but that it won't affect the release of the Pentium II.

...Anyone with enough programming knowledge can make a computer virus. People that like to cause chaos, then sit back and watch, are often the culprits. For this reason, a... virus makes a powerful weapon for the disgruntled ex-employee. These people often have a good knowledge of the computer system of a company and so know the easiest way to get a virus in. Creating and releasing... viruses is an illegal activity... [but] culprits are... hard to catch. It is often impossible to pinpoint where and when a virus... enter[ed] a computer system, never mind who might be behind... it.

...[since] four friends and a business associate got together in 1994 to pool their technical skills... Designer Technology has gone from strength to strength and in the past 10 months has increased its staff by 50[%]. Now the company has entered the packaged software market with its own... anti-virus product called CleanMail... [- which] is an e-mail management and protection solution which can be tailored to a company's needs. CleanMail ensures all e-mail passing through the SMTP (simple mail transfer protocol) gateway is simultaneously scanned for breaches in security and for viruses. The server-based scanner decomposes and processes mail messages coming from outside the company's network...

A strike by postal workers in Canada may affect the delivery of mail to and from there[. NZ] Post... is monitoring the situation at Canada Post.

...A N[Z] Post scheme to make more postal codes available to businesses has been abandoned, after costing the state-owned enterprise up to \$1 million. Businesses which make extensive use of mail use the post codes to sort their letters before giving them to NZ Post. The more they sort their own mail, the less they have to pay NZ Post to deliver it... [The] letters group logistics manager for the company, said a single postcode at present covered about 20,000 addresses. The new scheme would have reduced these to smaller blocks. However, shifting populations and businesses meant the new codes would not be permanent... Business customers – who were the main target of the scheme – did not want the codes to change... The money was not all wasted, as the year-long exercise had helped to define existing postal areas more precisely... N[Z] had never fully adopted postal or zip codes for residential mailing, unlike other countries where alphabetic-numeric code combinations had been common since the 1970s. Early scanning devices had been unable to pick up addresses properly, but modern machines, which could read addresses, had recently been introduced to N[Z]. It was not necessary for people to put codes on mail. “We don't use them for personal mail... Sorters don't use them – addresses are easier to read.” ...Mail volumes had risen 5[%] or more for each of the past five years and there were now about 1.4 billion items handled each year.

...New address-reading equipment will enable N[Z] Post to cut the number of letters sorted by hand from just over 50[% to 25%]. The state-owned enterprise has spent \$6 million upgrading optical character recognition equipment in the Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch mail centres. The equipment will be able to read up to 35[%] of hand-written addresses, compared with virtually none before, and 85[%] of printed or typed addresses, compared with 60[%] previously... As a result, up to 124 full-time equivalent jobs will go... [T]he Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union... said this week that it would oppose job cuts... The NZ Post letters group manager... yesterday rejected a claim by the... [union] that the restructuring was linked to the proposed deregulation of postal services... [The manager] said the company was obliged to run as a successful business and to achieve that “we have got to deliver on time every time and at a price which people think is good value for money.”

...the [Government has]... revived plans to deregulate N[Z] Post... The Minister of Communications... said private companies would next year be able to compete with N[Z] Post to deliver... mail of any size. At present, only N[Z] Post can deliver letters weighing 200 grams or less and costing 80c or less within N[Z]... Yesterday's announcement was unexpected but... the national secretary of the Engineers Union which represents 6000 postal workers, said deregulation... was the first step towards privatisation of... the highly profitable state-owned enterprise...

The chief executive of N[Z] Post... says postal deregulation will continue to bring benefits for customers, but will be bad news for Government coffers... [- because] competition for letter business would reduce the profitability and value of the [SOE], although the company was looking at new sources of income, like banking and insurance services, to make up for the losses... [NZ] Post had informed the Government in its business plan about the effects of deregulation on profits, which have ranged between \$66 million and \$75 million over the past three years... [I]t was reasonable for the Government to expect the [SOE] to maintain its social obligations and N[Z] Post was committed to providing a universal service to households and rural customers... [- although the company might lose some] customers, in particular businesses which were likely to be targeted by private operators for high-volume mail... [Y]esterday... the Minister of Communications... said the price of a standard[(surface-mail)] letter would be capped at no more than 45c – subject to movement in the consumer price index – for three years. [The minister also] said a new Deed of Understanding would be negotiated with N[Z] Post which would see the company maintain its network of post shops and postal outlets and a five or six-day-a-week delivery service. N[Z] Post will continue to be designated as N[Z]'s official administration to the Universal Postal Union and go on issuing “official” stamps for at least five years.

...The Swedish postal service had a monopoly for 356 years when the Government decided to allow private competition... On the first of January 1994 the state-run Postverket changed to Posten AB (roughly translated as The Postal Service Inc). From then it was run almost as a private company – with the aim of making a profit. The head of the Postverket overnight became managing director (and had his salary raised by a few hundred per cent). Posten is still state-owned and has to guarantee a service for people in rural areas. The same rates must apply throughout the country. Delivering mail in the countryside can never be very profitable considering the great distances, up to 100-150km to the next village... Over the past few years a couple of minor companies [have spru]ng up, offering local postal services in rural areas. One is based in Falping and is run by a 20-year-old who started with a bike and some homemade stamps that [were] sold to local companies... [including] the local municipality. Another company, called Wisby Mail, is based on the island of Gotland in the Baltic sea. It... also... makes its own stamps.

...There is little overseas experience to guide N[Z] down the road of postal deregulation. Despite claims by the Minister of Communications... that several countries have introduced full competition, only Sweden appears to offer experience that could be useful for the model proposed in N[Z]... In Sweden, the monopoly on mail delivery was abolished in January 1993 and at last count there were seven licensed operators. However, the state-owned Posten AB is still the only company offering a full service to households and small businesses, except in a couple of very small areas. Competition has been restricted to business mail with two other operators – CityMail Sweden AB, which handles pre-sorted mail from large firms and organisations; and Svensk Direktreklam AB, which handles direct mail advertising. The remaining companies are small niche local enterprises. A National Post and Telecom Agency supervises and acts as a licensing authority... Like N[Z], Sweden has an agreement with Posten AB guaranteeing social obligations. These include... a price ceiling on items weighing up to 500g and services to the elderly. Unlike N[Z], the Swedish Government pays a subsidy for postal services in areas where there is no alternative or services are not commercially viable... A state operator provides below-cost subsidised postal services[in Argentina], but these are so sub-standard that about 15 private companies have entered the market. The competitive postal service is used almost exclusively by businesses, which are prepared to pay between 30... and 100[%] more for a reliable service. It is easy for companies to obtain a licence for postal services and there are few controls placed on them... but there are only two large players, DHL and Fedex. The Argentine Government would like to privatise the state postal service, but it wants someone other than DHL or Fedex to buy the business to encourage competition... Finland deregulated its postal services in January 1994. A Council of State issues licences and retains a high degree of control over postal operators. So far, only the state-owned Finland Post has been granted a licence to provide household and international services. Other companies are waiting to be licensed... Surprisingly, N[Z] Post had no information available on deregulation in other countries, even though it has been preparing for full competition since 1987. The chief executive[of NZ Post] has argued for postal deregulation on the grounds that it is consistent with the Government's policy[, and says] it will also act as a stimulus to drive the 1994 Company of the Year harder, bringing sharper pricing, service and innovation. N[Z] already has one of the most efficient postal businesses in the world[– and

its 'standard letter rate is one of the lowest amongst major postal services' (although standard letters in NZ generally have less distance to travel than in countries like, for example, the 'US – where, as at 31 March 1994, a standard letter cost the equivalent of NZ\$52c – and Germany, where, at the same time, a standard letter cost the equivalent of NZ\$108c'). **In the past few years the price of high volume mail has dropped, the rural delivery fee [– which had risen 'from \$40 to \$80 in April 1992' –] has gone and the price of a standard letter fell from 45c to 40c...** [Furthermore, apart from] **mail less than 80c or under 200g**, NZ's postal system... **is already very deregulated...** Several other countries have considered completely deregulating their postal services. **The European Union is in a bureaucratic muddle over the issue. A[US] and Kenya are... reviewing their postal systems. Postal services in the U[K and US] are still protected.** [Editor's note: America's 'first mail service was started in 1673 between New York and Boston. Early mail was not cheap – at a time when a decent day's wage was 50 cents, a letter from NY to Philadelphia cost \$3.50 and from NY to Williamsburg, Virginia, \$11.50. The first postal rates were fixed by the Continental Congress in 1782. In the early days the recipient rather than the sender paid the postage.'

...I – NZ Post's chairperson –] **have pleasure in presenting the 1997 N[Z] Post Limited Annual Report... It has been a year highlighted by...** [the introduction of] **legislation to deregulate this market sometime in 1998... Other highlights... included Free Post Day, which exemplified the strong bond between N[Z] Post and all N[Z]ers (we plan to introduce year-round 'free postage for community groups'), the addition of value-added services to better utilise network capacity, and the increase in the size of the retail network, which now stands at... 297 Post Shops, 705 Post Centres[– of which]... 111 are franchise[d (in '1994 there were 664 Post Centre franchises and 245 Post Shops'; 'the number of post offices in NZ reached a peak of 2,402, then the highest ratio of post shops to population in the world, in 1915 – there were 115 million letters and postcards sent within NZ that year') –] ...and 3663 stamp and stamp booklet re-sellers...** [(down from 3849 in 1994). In addition, d]uring 1996/97, approval was given for the building of new Mail Service Centres in Dunedin, Tauranga, Whangarei and Timaru... One of the questions people most often ask... is whether the letter is dying. The answer, an unequivocal 'No'. Our challenge... is to ensure written communication remains an attractive option for N[Z] people, businesses and advertisers. The continued increase in letter volumes justifies our confidence that far from being a dying medium of communication, the letter has a strong and prosperous future... A 5% increase in total... international post... product volume to 105 million letters (42 million outward, 63 million inward) amply demonstrates the growth... While the [International] Group continued to work closely with the Universal Postal Union and the Asia Pacific Postal Union, great importance was also placed on forging strategic alliances with key overseas mail organisations, notably in A[US, the UK] and the U[S]... Of equal significance were the contracts with DHL Worldwide Express for N[Z] Post to deliver international letter product on its behalf, and DHL's delivery of N[Z] Post's express product around the world. The two-way relationship has been... beneficial to both parties... For the Distribution Group, which operates the company's transport network, Contract Logistics business, and CourierPost and Parcel Post brands, 1996/97 was a landmark year... A volume increase of 22% on the previous year, the acquisition of Crown Security Services' courier business in the South Island and the capture of major accounts, such as Bank of N[Z] and EDS, made it a busy and rewarding year for CourierPost. The... network now boasts 450 owner/driver couriers with new operations being established in Blenheim, Wanganui, Whangarei, Timaru and Gisborne... Importantly, the growth enabled us to take a large step toward realising our vision of being the pre-eminent courier brand in N[Z] by the year 2000. The company's commitment to the business has been demonstrated by the earmarking of \$2 million for computer upgrades that will benefit CourierPost, our owner/drivers and customers. This will include upgraded software for ordering, billing and tracking, and a state-of-the-art communications platform... Direct Marketing will be a key growth area for mail volumes in the next decade. Its contribution to N[Z] Post is significant given that it competes directly with television, print, radio and other direct mailers for the advertising dollar. Its prospects are to at least double existing revenue in the next five years as the benefits of using direct marketing become more evident to advertisers... In 1996/97, N[Z] Post again issued a range of stamps that reflected N[Z] society, its people and heritage. Key issues... [depicted by the 14 sets and 4 single stamps released between] 1 May 1996... [and] 19 March 1997... included: Olympic Gold, featuring Atlanta Olympics gold medal winners...; Century of Cinema...; an issue featuring 10 of N[Z]'s wackiest letterboxes; N[Z] Cattle, a tribute to the rural sector and issued to coincide with the Chinese Year of the Ox. An identified growth area is collectable stamps. A concerted marketing campaign to stimulate growth in this market will be undertaken in 1997/98... NZ Post paid the Government a dividend of \$113.6 million in the year to March and banked a net profit... of \$47.7 million[which,] following two years of record profits[was] a creditable performance... [from turnover of] \$678 million – up 3.1%... The result shows for the first time the full impact of the reduction in the price of the standard letter from 45 to 40 cents on 2 October 1995, a move which ensured continued letter volume growth during the period... • whe[n]... NZ Post became a [SOE] in 1987 the price of a standard delivery letter was 40c. It was increased to 45c in 1992...

THE cost of posting a letter is expected to tumble again next year, with significant price reductions tipped as competitors to NZ Post prepare to enter a deregulated market. The... general manager of Circular Distributors, N[Z]'s biggest deliverer of unaddressed newspapers and circulars, said there was room for a significant reduction in the 40c letter price... Circular Distributors, owned by A[US]n company PMP, is expected to set up a new company to go head to head with NZ Post, not only in delivery of standard letters but also in delivering magazines. The company employs 9500 people throughout N[Z] to deliver each year 500 million items of unaddressed mail... [The] managing director of Mail Boxes Etc, which runs six mail collection centres in Auckland, Hamilton and Wellington, said his company was keen to compete with NZ Post but was unsure how to do it. Mail Boxes – owned by USOP, the US-based parent of Blue Star Group – already competes with NZ Post on international mail, offering a discount of 20% on airmail rates and getting the mail delivered by courier company TNT. [The managing director] said the company didn't have the infrastructure to compete with NZ Post as a mail carrier, but would probably act as an agent for other firms which could deliver. It has already fielded several approaches from courier and circular-delivery firms keen to use its outlets as bulk pick-up places... NZ Documentation Exchange is another private operator rubbing its hands at deregulation. Owned by Freightways Express, it runs the country's biggest private mail service, maintaining 280 postal box exchanges nationwide, which allow overnight mail delivery among its 7500 predominantly business customers. The company isn't allowed to deliver to street addresses, but that will change after deregulation.

...[NZ mail companies will soon be able to compete with each other, but they may be unable to compete with other sectors of the communications industry!] Toll calls via the Internet... may not be as clear as traditional phone calls, but they are cheap – up to 70[%] less than standard retail charges and still 15 to 20[%] cheaper than specials. A variety of these bypass options are now available – PC to PC, phone to phone and PC to phone – and are presenting increasingly attractive savings, especially to residential users who don't mind the 300 millisecond delay. Why is it so cheap? Because digitised data travels on the Internet unhindered by the regulations and telecommunications infrastructure which inflates the cost of traditional voice traffic. A number of I[SP]s... up and down the country now offer or are testing Internet phone capability with their customers... The big advance is technology which allows calls made via a standard telephone (often via an 0800 number) to access an I[SP]'s system, which then connects the call, via the Internet, to a phone on the other side of the world. Callers simply enter a PIN number via their phone to identify themselves for billing purposes. Voyager's Internet phone and fax product manager... said: "Our research indicates that people want this service to be as foolproof and simple as possible. Internet bypass-based toll calls won't need a computer or special hardware-software at the user end at all. Just as soon as we go through the next round of testing with larger clients to monitor possible data volumes, Voyager will be looking to introduce the service commercially..." Voyager pricing is likely to start at 10c for national calls and 35cs a minute for international calls. Also introducing an Internet-based system is USA Global Link – already active here in the international callback market, providing calls to the U[S] for as little as 64c a minute. [Its NZ] director... said USA Global Link was building a worldwide data network covering 1080 cities... Telecom recently formed a business unit, Connect Communications, to stem escalating erosion of its international toll call business and win back customers defecting to

callback operators. The new company... is piloting its service to a targeted group of customers over the next nine months. Its [ISP], Xtra is also testing a variety of Internet telephony options with 400 customers using the popular Vocaltec software. Services include fax, voice and video conferencing.

...Video conferencing via... POTS – the plain old telephone system... – [is] ...coming soon to a PC near you... Intel Corporation... marked the official opening of its N[Z] sales and marketing office with a new PC-based video phone – and a host of acronyms... The product, compris[es] a small externally mounted video camera and video-capture card and modem fitted inside a PC... When someone wants to place a video phone call, they start by placing a normal phone call. Once answered the user can elect to go into video phone mode by pressing a connect icon on their PC screen... The voice sounds like a normal phone call but the video picture, depending on the speed of the line and the size and quality of the image, appears somewhat jerky. It is normally displayed in a small window on the user's screen at about 15 frames a second – roughly half the frame rate used for television... Intel['s NZ manager]... said the video phone was another product – along with digital cameras, PC theatre and digital video discs – which demonstrate the convergence of television and communications technologies towards the PC... [It is the chairperson of Intel's] view that this convergence was now “a war of the eyeballs – to capture the attention span of people in the home.”

...Consumers wanting Internet access, but unwilling to invest \$2000 to \$3000 in a PC, will soon have another way to enter cyberspace. Tele Pos N[Z] begins a three-month trial of 75 Cidco Iphones next week and plans to bring 5000 into the country for a February roll-out. The multi-purpose device, comprising a telephone, touch screen, pull-out keyboard and built-in 4.4Kband modem, provides for e-mail and rudimentary Web surfing. The company is looking to sign with an I[SP] to offer the Web capability and is currently in talks with Telecom Xtra, Clear and Telstra. Users will have the option to buy the phone (\$995 ex gst) or pay a monthly rental... Internet access charges are likely to be at a flat monthly rate... Technically, the device is a “thin client” (as opposed to a “fat client” PC) because most of the processing is done not in the device itself, but at the Internet server, which is where the user's e-mail is stored.

...Surfing the superphones... It is 2010. You are travelling through a remote part of the world. You have a phone with you – one of the latest-generation mobiles, complete with a screen and Internet connection – the phone that you use at home and at work. It rings. It is your real estate agent[, who] has found the dream house you have spent 12 months looking for. In seconds [the agent] is sending video footage to your screen via a satellite. You love the house. You e-mail your bank and solicitor to get things moving and decide to cut short your trip. Who can afford a trip and a new house? You call your travel agent and get her to change flights and book a hotel. [The travel agent] sends a photo of the accommodation plus a map of how to get there. On the train to the hotel, you switch your phone to TV and catch up on [a] live football match. And you have no worry about the cost: the calls are charged at local rate because they are channelled through the Internet. Like it or not, this world of cheap any-time, anywhere telecommunications is on its way. This month, leading telecoms companies such as Nokia, Motorola, Ericsson and NEC opened the Yokosuka Research Park, 50km south of Tokyo, specifically to develop this kind of technology. And it is not just science buffs who say these ideas will soon be a reality. Look at Wall Street's backing for the \$30 billion record-breaking takeover bid made by WorldCom for telecoms group MCI, which snuffed out BT's bid for the company. Few outside the U[S] had heard of WorldCom before the news broke, and indeed five years ago it barely existed. This is a young upstart which has come from nowhere and is now the largest Internet access provider in the world and the fourth-largest long-distance operator in the U[S]. It has grown by acquiring everything in its path, particularly companies armed with new technology able to attack markets dominated by former state-owned monopolies... But perhaps the greatest threat to the traditional telecoms company comes from the Internet. In the past, handsome profits were made by overcharging on international calls. Technology developments and market liberalisation have forced prices down to about \$1 for a one-minute international telephone call at peak times. But this is still far higher than what is available on the Internet, where all calls are charged at a local rate... [– and now you d]on't even need a personal computer in your house, just a phone connected to a “smart” box on the wall... It's not just voice, but fax as well. Fax accounts for nearly a third of the \$US62 billion... spent on international telephone calls. WorldCom, for instance, offers an international fax service over the Internet, which cuts the cost between New York and London from about 30c a page to between 16c and 19c.

...About 7000 N[Z]ers called British Airways in London yesterday chasing a [£10] flight to New York – but none got lucky because the phones were overloaded. The airline said 20 million people from around the world telephoned its London office at 11 am N[Z] time... to try to win 100 cheap flights on the Concorde. The 100 callers who did scoop seats – up for grabs to mark 10 years of privatisation of B[A] – were mainly from Britain and Europe. One family in Newcastle, England, managed to buy two return flights using the home phone and a mobile phone. The Telecom N[Z] communications manager... said N[Z] callers had no problem getting a line out[, b]ut... could not be connected... When announcing its “birthday gift,” B[A] said it had developed a foolproof system with B[T] to ensure all calls could be connected... [By the way, yesterday] Tokelau... became the last country in the world to get a telephone service. The President... made the first call... [when it rang our PM to thank her Government] for contributing \$1.5 million to the project. Until yesterday, Tokelauans communicated through a noisy shortwave radio link to Western Samoa.

...Telecom Cook Islands has spent \$1.6 million introducing cellphones to Rarotonga – a service which is being used by fewer than 90 people. Of those using the system one-third are Telecom Cook Islands employees. The company aims to have 250 subscribers “or thereabouts” by the end of the year... If this... minimum number required to make the network viable... was not achieved within a year then the company would explore other options. A number of computer buffs and business people believe the \$1.6 million would have been better spent setting up an internet service.

...Cellphones can offer all the benefits of the fixed phone plus voice messaging, call forwarding, faxing and even e-mail access, although the bandwidth is not really there for serious data transfer. But for the present, as a mobile communications device, there is no equivalent, and the technology is becoming more personalised and localised as alternative wireless and cellular solutions seek a niche... The only issue in the way of widespread... Personal Communications Systems (PCS)... [in NZ] is allocation of the appropriate spectrum for a commercial service – something that is not likely to happen until late next year when spectrum bidding will begin. The Ministry of Commerce may allow limited license for wireless... PBX (private branch exchange)... later this year. A precursor to PCS is Telecom's new PCS BusinessZone which allows users of Telecom's digital phones to connect via an onsite base station. It is geared for large sites such as airports and manufacturing plants. Early next year Telecom plans an enhanced service with business, local and national tariffs including voice mail... CDPD, a switched packet technology, is also being tested... by Telecom. CDPD is essentially a cellular overlay which uses the Internet protocol to provide an open channel, but you only pay for what you see. It is a wireless network specifically designed for notebook or handheld devices and short transaction data such as e-mail and Eftpos.

...Telecom is starting to put mini-cellphone transmitters on lamp posts and traffic lights... While communities battle against high-powered mast transmitters, councils are being asked for permission to install low-powered transmitters in areas where tall buildings and high cellphone use affect network coverage capacity... At present a signal from a cellphone goes by radio to a network site (or macrocell), then by landline to a mobile switching centre. The centre then relays the signal via a macrocell and radio to a cellphone or by ordinary networks to a fixed phone. Problems include... blind spots which the macrocell coverage does not reach... About 10 [of the] transmitters have been put up in Queen St... Telecom... challenged anyone to spot them... The transmitters have a reach of only 200m and Telecom does not expect there to be any public health concerns.

...Having a mobile phone robs a person of 16km of walking exercise a year, according to a British obesity expert. It may not sound like much, but combined with other aspects of lazy modern living it is helping to fuel an explosion of obesity... [T]he British Medical Research Council['s expert] said television remote controls, computers, escalators and lifts were other examples of technology contributing to the weight problem. Bad diet alone could not explain the “startling” increase in the number of people who have become grossly overweight[d]uring the 20th century...

Mobile telephones could soon be built into coats, jackets and even bikinis, adding new meaning to the wired bra. The Swedish electronics company Ericsson reckons mobile phones have become indispensable, but is concerned that carrying them can be a nuisance while leaving them behind is an even bigger headache. Even the smallest model makes your jacket bulge like that of a Mafia hit[person], and if you carry them in a handbag or briefcase, you can miss a call while scrambling to get them out. With impenetrable Swedish logic, Ericsson's senior product manager... says... that only the pockets of the wealthy would be deep enough to afford the first models... The idea is to break down the individual components of a phone and data system and spread them around the garment – a wire antenna sewn into the lining, a keyboard in the sleeve and a mouth and earpiece in the collar. Imagine a ski jacket that would allow you to make and receive calls while on the slopes and send out an alarm if you had an accident. Or a lifejacket that would broadcast a mayday and give your position if you were unconscious in the water... If the garment needed cleaning or went out of fashion, the phone devices could be detached... The company's "wearable technology" team was in contact with several [clothing] manufacturers... but... the [manager –] ...who expected his vision to become reality by 2000... [–] would not name names.

...Telecom will launch its caller display service next month. Subscribers will have a small screen attached to their telephone which shows the time and date of an incoming call, and the number of the phone from where it is being made. The service was to have begun last August but was delayed by a problem with prefix codes... Subscribers will pay \$6.95 a month to connect to the system and... have to rent a Telecom display phone for \$11.95 a month, or buy a \$75.95 plug-in unit. Callers worried about privacy or security can have their number permanently kept secret, or use a prefix to shield their number on a call-by-call basis. "We've had to provide the withhold function for business customers, too, which is unique to N[Z], because of the Privacy Act," [a Telecom spokesperson] said. The Privacy Commissioner... said it was important that people be made aware of the withhold options through a good public education programme. "People must know that every time they pick up the phone, their number could be displayed at the other end..." ...feedback from a three-month trial in Greymouth last year... [indicated that 10%] of households initially wanted their number permanently withheld but that dropped to 2.6[%] by the third month. The service could be used with an answerphone and showed the numbers of callers who had left unclear messages, or no message at all. "It's useful, too, if you don't get to the phone before it stops ringing."

...[US] drug dealers are costing N[Z] companies... thousands of dollars by hacking into phone systems and running up toll bills. Audit N[Z] has warned all public sector organisations about the fraudsters and urged them to hire a consultant to review phone security... [T]he "phreakers," or phone freaks, use stolen credit cards or phone cards at public phones and tap into overseas lines... Small-time drug dealers in New York are apparently selling off toll time at cheap rates because it is "more lucrative and less risky than pushing drugs on the street." It is understood they hack into phone systems overnight and their customers spend up to eight hours making toll calls on the victims' lines... They targeted PABX phone systems which allowed employees to make toll calls on the company bill while outside the office by dialling a secret number. Hackers tried all of the company's phone lines – usually numbering 100 – until they found the right one... [S]ometimes no pin number was required but, if one was, fraudsters used special software programmes to crack it... Calls were usually traced back to the U[S], though Venezuelan fraudsters had also been caught trying to make calls... N[Z] police had caught some phreakers but they were often youths who operated on a smaller scale. Many had escaped prosecution because of their "age or circumstances" but were required to repay the value of the toll calls they had made... [Incidentally.] White Pages telephone listings for N[Z] are now available on the Internet at <http://www.whitepages.co.nz>. This follows the launch of Internet Yellow Pages two months ago.

...Most people would agree that enabling phone subscribers to keep the same number when they change carriers makes a lot of sense, particularly when those users are businesses that would otherwise have to reprint their stationary and advise their customers of their new numbers. But like many sensible things, getting portability into practice has proved fraught, which is why such a good idea has taken so long to become reality. [The biggest p]roblem lies in Telecom's position as the dominant incumbent... For instance, if you were to change from Telecom to Clear and retain your old number, incoming calls would still land in Telecom's patch and Telecom would then have to redirect them to Clear before you could receive them. Portability, therefore, required facilities at the old carrier that will recognise when a call no longer belongs to it and will in turn reroute it to the new carrier. There is still the issue of who pays for transferring the calls and what technology is used. The industry body, Tnag (Telephone Numbering Advisory Group), has grappled with the issue at length but has so far reached no conclusion, with many blaming its conspicuous lack of success on Telecom's right of veto. The solution proposed by Clear Communications, to no avail, is that the carrier losing the customer should bear the cost of "porting" calls. That has been rejected by Telecom which has publicly offered to transfer calls at a charge of 0.5c a minute plus a \$30 set-up fee for each number ported. So far, only one carrier has shown any interest – the [NZ arm of AUS]'s telephone giant, Telstra, which still has to formally conclude an agreement, having accepted a deal said to involve a slightly lower set-up charge... The cynics argue that the big A[US]n has a huge incentive to accept Telecom's terms given that in its much larger home market, it is on similar ground to Telecom. Telstra's reluctance to be seen playing both sides of the same coin is reinforced by the recent move by A[US]'s now disbanded regulator to endorse Clear's solution... While Austel's ruling is in reality more a statement of what it would like to happen because of the transitional state of A[US]'s market to full deregulation, Telstra realises that this could still become the state of play... Meanwhile, [Telecom could find itself issuing]... a credit on their accounts or a \$50 phone card... to 900 Aucklanders [who] have been left with faulty phone services after a [day of stormy weather]... Some of the affected Telecom consumers have been told it could be Sunday before their phone services are fully restored. A Telecom spokes[perso]n... said the faults were caused by water seeping into underground cables and, to a lesser degree, wind battering wires.

...Belgium's weather[forecasters] have formally apologised for getting [a] forecast wrong. "The Royal Meteorological Institute wishes to offer its apologies to the inhabitants of the centre of the country who could not enjoy the bright spells forecast for July 9," the institute said. The weather was overcast that day. The weather in Belgium is notoriously fickle... □ [NZ's] MetService announced a \$3.56m after-tax profit in the year to June 30 and a final dividend payment to its government owners of \$1.1m.

...To the chief executive of the Meteorological Service of N[Z]... brewing and the preparation of weather forecasts have much in common. Both are produced 24 hours a day, both are the product of highly-advanced technical processes and both are, in their ways, controlled substances, said the former general manager of Canadian brewer Labatt's Vancouver brewery. [The Canadian arrived in NZ] five years ago to become the first [CEO] of the newly-established [SOE]. True to the premise under which Crown activities were corporatised, MetService was required to earn its keep, resulting in a halving of the cost of providing core services to the Government in those five years. One surprising upshot of commercialisation is that the forecaster has moved into activities hard to relate to weather forecasting. While it has been delivering electronically-finished art weather presentations to newspapers for some time, it has recently expanded into TV guides and soon will be preparing financial information such as share tables. [The Canadian] said the expansion of activities was a natural flow-on from a skill MetService had to develop as a commercial business. Radical revision of... how weather should be presented resulted in a swept-up look for weather maps which are now tailored specifically to the regions served by specific newspapers. Eighteen of [NZ]'s papers use MetService maps. MetService's... success can be measured in the fact that its services are sold abroad – [e.g.], the 1.3 million readers of Sydney's *Daily Telegraph* now get their weather from MetService. In fact, a surprising array of overseas organisations take their data from MetService... MetService supplies 33 international airlines, a number of which do not come to N[Z]... When Concorde strays from its set routes, it, too, uses MetService. [The Canadian] says MetService's skills lie in the fact that it can take the body of weather information produced around the world and tailor it to suit highly specific requirements in a way that cannot be matched by its larger international rivals. Obtaining data specific to other regions is not a problem. It's the manner of presentation that gives MetService the edge... Nevertheless, MetService is conscious that being government-owned does not always go down well. To avoid accusations that its ownership

could imply an unfair advantage, all non-government business is being shifted to a new operating subsidiary, Metra Information Ltd. Is there no limit to MetService's activities? It's on the Internet in collaboration with Telecom subsidiary Xtra with a profitable pay-per-access service[– which complements its new 0900 recorded forecast phone service]. And design and implementation of a 24-hour weather channel for Wellington regional cable company Saturn Communications has extended to development of software to upgrade listings for its programme information channel and movie preview channel. But... [m]ovie previews are probably as far away as MetService wants to get from its core business... [the CEO] says. - 1997

A runaway 100m tall weather balloon is disrupting air traffic after defying pursuit by Canadian, British and U[S] military aircraft. An officer at the U[S] base at Keflavik, Iceland, said the balloon [was] being tracked by radar so that commercial flights could be diverted as necessary. "For as long as we maintain contact, air traffic can be rerouted. We are now exploring the option available if we lose contact,"... Canadian air force officials said earlier that the un[pilot]ed helium-filled balloon had remained aloft despite attempts by jet fighters to shoot it down. Two Canadian CF-18 fighters had fired more than 1000 rounds of cannon shells at the runaway. Last night the balloon was heading due north at a speed of 25 to 40 knots and an altitude of about 11,075m. Two Royal Air Force Nimrods had shadowed the balloon earlier before a US Orion took up the chase.

...[next month's weather] looks to be mainly fine, high pressures will prevail until the end of the month though interrupted by the odd cold front. That's according to Titirangi's [resident forecaster], who predicts the weather using an old fashioned method of maths and the moon. [The forecaster], also known as the Math[person]n to many schoolchildren... launched his new book, *Predicting the weather by the moon*, in Christchurch yesterday. "What I'm doing is long range forecasting. It can be predicted years ahead, right down to the very day,"... [Hi]s theory is there is an air tide controlled by the moon, similar to sea tides. The moon controls wind speed, direction and the high or low pressure zones. It has a cycle that runs between 18 and 19 years and then repeats itself. Mr [Mathperson] claims an 80[%] strike rate. "But over 18 years I'm going to be a few days out." According to his theory there's no such thing as global warming. [The Mathperson] puts higher temperatures down to the moon cycle and says it will continue to get warmer until 2006, as it did one moon cycle ago. "There's no climate change other than what the moon causes. It's nothing to do with carbon dioxide." ...[Mr Mathperson] has been working on his theory for more than 20 years.

...[it is worth noting the lesson of chaos theory. It used to be supposed that, given enough resources and a powerful enough computer, long-range weather forecasting could be made as accurate as one pleases. However, if the weather is truly chaotic, as is claimed, there is a *fundamental physical* (not merely technological or financial) limitation to the accuracy of weather forecasting.]

...The ever-changing arrangement of weather, be it useful or useless, harmful or harmless, never fails to fascinate and frustrate. Just right for research – but why do we try to predict it as well? Weather forecasting was born out of our need to mitigate weather damage. Our technique of casting forth readings (or weather maps) belongs to an ancient wisdom, which has always been closely meshed with the politics and economy of any community. From our forebears we have learned that the medium may be more important than the message, that how we talk makes more impression than what we say (a poorly imparted warning is not of much use). Weather forecasts are made using normal scientific methods – gathering data, analysing, experimenting, modelling and reporting back. Information is collected about what is actually happening in the weather world (land, sea and air measurements, plus balloons to track upper wind and temperature in the clouds, also rain-measuring radar and cloud-viewing satellites). This always comes first, but should not dominate... Weather in the real world is a mix of pattern and chaos, but chaos cannot be dealt with and is ignored... [when the] data is... analysed... A deliberate choice is made to limit this study to a logical pattern – in the smoothed-out scale of a weather map. This step is more a craft than a science. The analyst needs the skill of a detective to spot mistakes in the incoming reports, the tenacity of a defence lawyer to keep beaver for the right evidence and the wisdom of a judge to remain focused and concentrate on what really matters. Computer programmes are run which use mathematical models of the physics of the atmosphere. This provides an extrapolation of weather patterns into the future. Nowadays, most commercial weather providers have access to more than one such global computer model of the weather. When the models all agree... the weather tends to follow along nicely, but when they disagree it is usually a sign that the weather patterns are too chaotic to be predicted. The presentation of the ideas and thinking behind weather forecasts is done usually through some third party such as the media. This step is more art than science. It requires the rare ability to transfer an idea clearly from one human being to another in a world full of distraction... Since the deregulation of [NZ's] weather services in 1992 there are now many different sources for weather data and services and a proliferation of styles of presentation. Basically there is something for everyone now. What suits best depends on your own requirements. Price, timeliness, reliability, quality, technique, accuracy, popularity, terminology and style of presentation all contribute differently to how individuals may perceive the value of a forecast... Popularity is... a feature worth considering. Some prefer to listen to a long account of the national weather and others just want to know what is likely to happen at their place. The popularity of various weather elements comes and goes depending on fashion and time-of-year. Ultra violet and heat indices appeal during summer and wind chill and snow levels appeal during winter. As for accuracy, forecasting the weather is not, and never will be, 100[%]. Even tossing a coin can get it right at times... A partly correct forecast can[, however,] still be useful and should not be marked as all wrong. Accuracy of forecasts changes from month to month... Years of data must be evaluated before any trend in accuracy can be determined. All these factors complicate the job of anyone who wishes to compare the accuracy between different weather providers. A tip here to the weather user: if you have access to two or more different weather suppliers in the morning as you plan your day, then compare them... Some forecasts are based on more recent data than others. For some[weather users], a newspaper or television weather package is good enough to help to decide what to wear tomorrow. For those whose livelihoods depend on the weather, the most up-to-date reports are important. Then there are a few people who do not want to bother about the weather at all until they are alerted that it is about to bother them.

...This year should be one of the worst for solar storms – surges of charged particles that knock out satellites, power grids and even garage door openers – but a whole new industry has popped up to try to prevent the worst disruptions. No one can predict which month or week will be worst, but the Sun is at the height of its 11-year cycle of storms, which means the Earth can expect several barrages of excess charged particles... During the last solar maximum... experts could at best make a 50-50 guess about when a blast from the Sun was on its way. But now Nasa's Advanced Composition Explorer (Ace) spacecraft, orbiting 1,600,000km from Earth, has a magnetometer and a particle detector on board that can warn of the solar bursts about 45 minutes before they reach the atmosphere. Its information can help protect not only electricity networks, but satellite users ranging from broadcasters to... pager companies. "These systems are arguably more vulnerable than ever before. We are not going to grow out of these problems any time soon,"... said... a senior engineer at Metatech in Duluth, Minnesota... [H]is company has signed an agreement to help protect Britain's National Grid Group, the owner and operator of the electricity transmission system in England and Wales. Solar storms disrupt electricity grids by causing extraneous currents that cause the flow to fluctuate. Careful management can prevent this from knocking the grid out, but power system managers have to know it is coming. Metatech takes the warning of a flare and runs a computer model of the client's particular power grid, identifying the areas that will be vulnerable. A power company can respond by making sure enough electricity keeps flowing in that particular area, either by increasing the flow or reducing the demand. Metatech charges a base rate of \$US5000 a month, but utilities and companies can also ask National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for information from Ace... [T]he director of NOAA's space environment centre, said NOAA probably would never know who it saved from trouble or when, "unless someone tells us over a drink... People don't reward champions." Also in the public area, the Aerospace Corporation is working to warn operators of both Government and private industry satellites. "We are not at the point where we can say this satellite will experience this effect," said... [a] senior project manager at the

Colorado Springs-based group. But they can advise on how a satellite's attitude – its relative angle to the Sun – can help or hurt. During a solar storm, charged particle build-up on the outside of a satellite and more powerful radiation can penetrate deep inside, causing both immediate and long-term damage. The effects can be disastrous. [Last year] the Galaxy IV satellite was disabled by a solar storm, silencing 80[%] of North America's pagers, knocking financial services offline and stopping credit-card transactions. It is not just machines that are affected... [-] a project manager at Lockheed Martin Corp, said a close eye was being kept on the six astronauts orbiting in the space shuttle Endeavour. Radiation from a solar storm can easily reach the equivalent of several chest x-rays... "This is one of those risks they will carry the rest of their lives,"... Aircraft crew are also at risk, especially those flying polar routes. Frequent flyers may be, too.

...Europe has decided to develop a revolutionary satellite navigation system that will... guide planes in flight... help blind people move round cities and... monitor truck fleets on the road... The US\$3 billion... Galileo project, approved yesterday by European Union leaders meeting in Barcelona, will give Europe a major lead in space technology and could transform day-to-day life... The system should be working in 2008... American engineers and politicians had campaigned vigorously against Galileo, saying Europe should stick with the existing US global positioning satellites, but Europe feared the Americans could switch off their satellites during war or political disputes.

...A French[citize]n attempting to row across the Pacific fears his satellite phone will be cut off because the US communications company Iridium has gone broke. [The rower] is heading for the southern tip of Chile as Iridium plans to switch off its 66-satellite system. [A member of the rower]'s support team in Wellington, said [they] understood the company was going to continue to supply communication to him but it was not clear for how long... [T]here was also a team of Norwegian adventurers on the ice in Antarctica who were entirely reliant on Iridium for communication... Motorola Corp, which built and operated Iridium's satellites, told a US bankruptcy court at the weekend that it would begin destroying them in about a week by taking them out of orbit 781km above Earth and plunging them towards the planet's oceans. [Ironically, the rower – who] is in 6m to 7m seas nearly 2500km from [NZ after rowing for] more than 40 days[– is undertaking the] 9000km journey from Wellington to Chile to raise awareness of ocean pollution. [The rower] has other communication methods such as email, a VHF ship-to-ship radio with limited range and an Inmarsat C radio... But... the high seas made it too dangerous to use Inmarsat because [the rower] had to stand up in the boat to get the aerial high enough to communicate. [His NZ support team's] coordinator... said the possibility of Iridium pulling the plug was never raised during preparations... French supporters... were talking to the French Navy and others about what could be done if the service ended.

...Iridium LLC... entered the history books at the weekend as one of the costliest corporate fiascos of all time. The Washington-based firm said it was cutting off telephone service to its 55,000 customers as of 5.59 pm on Saturday... a prelude to court-ordered liquidation... [after giving] up its hunt for a buyer to rescue it... [A] US bankruptcy court... Judge... cleared Iridium to spend \$US8.3 million to start winding up its business while selling remaining Earth-bound assets, including ground stations... Iridium's last act will be to burn up its constellation of 66 satellites... [- a] network... reported to have cost \$US5 billion to \$US7 billion. By beaming instructions to on-board devices, engineers will tip craft, one by one, on a path that will send them down in flames... a spectacle that may be visible from Earth... Bringing the satellites back must be coordinated with several US Government agencies... Motorola, which held 18[%] of Iridium, the largest stake, said... it would take up to two years to burn up the last of the satellites... The flop reflected a string of badly botched business calculations. For one thing, the company's chunky telephones initially were priced at \$US3000 each, with calls costing as much as \$US7 a minute. Not only were the phones as big as bricks, but they did not work indoors. Iridium was doomed by the rapid spread of ground-based wireless networks... ■ [US]... authorities have broken up what they call the biggest identity theft case in U[S] history and charged three [suspects] with stealing credit information from more than 30,000 people, draining victims' bank accounts and ruining their credit. [The f]ederal prosecutor... said one sobbing victim said someone stole her identity, opened a US\$35,000 line of credit and cashed a cheque for \$34,000. "So that's now on her back, that US\$34,000," said... the[prosecutor, adding that the] losses were calculated so far at \$US2.7 million... but would balloon to many more millions and affect consumers in every state. [The prosecutor] called the case "every American's worst financial nightmare multiplied tens of thousands of times... With a few keystrokes, these [three thieves] essentially picked the pockets of thousands of Americans and, in the process, took their identities, stole their money and swiped their security." Authorities said the scheme began about three years ago when... a help-desk worker at Teledata Communications, a Long Island software company, sold an unidentified person passwords and codes for downloading consumer credit reports. [The help-desk worker] was allegedly paid US\$30 for each report, and the information was then passed on to at least 20 other people, who set out to make money from the stolen information... "The potential windfall was probably far greater than the content of a bank vault, and they didn't even need a getaway car. All they needed was a phone and a computer, or so they thought," said... the... FBI[']s Assistant Director... Identity theft has become a serious problem in the US and is growing rapidly elsewhere. The BBC reported that thieves get hold of basic personal information – names, addresses, dates of birth – and use that information to make fraudulent credit card applications or tap bank accounts. Much of US officialdom operates by an individual's nine-digit Social Security Number... But until recently many states published SSNs and driving licence details, the main concrete form of ID, on the web or sold the lists to private companies, making identity theft far too easy... [The help-desk worker], 33, from Georgia, was released on US\$500,000 bond after an appearance in Manhattan federal court yesterday at which [it] did not speak. If convicted, [the help-desk worker] could get up to 30 years in prison and millions in fines. The FBI also charged [two of his accomplices. One] allegedly downloaded hundreds of credit reports with [the help-desk worker's] access passwords... The... [other accomplice] has pleaded guilty to mail fraud for making changes to individual credit accounts.

...Another high-flying US company has nosedived in the biggest corporate fraud in history... It was one of the oldest and simplest accounting scams in the book. WorldCom listed operating costs, such as routine network maintenance, as capital investments, which could be spread over a number of years. This allowed the company to hide expenses, inflate its cashflow and report profits instead of losses in its last five quarterly reports. The *New York Times* reported that the revelation that cashflow figures could be fiddled shocked even the hardened short-sellers – investors who profit when stocks fall. "I'm kind of shaken by that," said... a short-seller who played a major role in unearthing Enron's overstated profits and hidden debt. "The one touchstone that investors had was that you couldn't fudge cashflow numbers, but apparently you can." ...America's second-biggest long-distance phone-call company is the creation of [a] cattle farmer... – also a former milk[deliverer, bartender], bouncer... and school basketball coach – who started the company in a Mississippi coffee shop. From the beginning, [the farmer] broke the chief executive mould. [The farmer] wore cowboy boots, jeans and turquoise jewellery to work and let it be known that it wasn't beneath him "to occasionally castrate a bull"... [The farmer] started WorldCom in 1983 as a long-distance telecommunications bucket shop based in Clinton, Mississippi. It made its money by buying network capacity at rock-bottom prices and reselling it. By 1985 it had 5[%] of the American long-distance market, including the White House-Kremlin hotline. But the company did not take off until... it was taken under the wing of one of Wall Street's biggest investment banks, Salomon Smith Barney[a decade later, and]... gobbled up 75 rival phone companies, including America's second-biggest long-distance carrier, MCI. Even [the farmer's] yacht, sold this year, was called Aquisition. The company played a leading role in the hype of the dotcom boom... [But WorldCom's s]hares had been dropping from their \$62 high... as revenue growth dried up and cash reserves shrank. [A] *Telecom Insider* columnist... says WorldCom had problems almost everywhere, including "phony MCI bills [which] customers will never pay". All telecommunications companies were having their profits squeezed in a similar way, [the columnist] says, but for the first time, WorldCom found that continued expansion offered no solution. The company's drastic efforts to cut costs, including sacking thousands of staff and merging business units, only cramped its potential to generate more income. It was saddled with US\$28 billion... in loans it could not pay. Then in April [the farmer] resigned, after admitting [it] had borrowed US\$366 million... from the company to underwrite the inflated prices [it] had paid for WorldCom shares. On Monday, investors got their

first hint that much worse was to come. [A] Salomon analyst... dubbed "the ultimate insider" by some for his close links to the company, downgraded his WorldCom rating from "neutral" to "sell". On Tuesday the company admitted inflating profits by US\$3.8 billion between January last year and March this year – a deception six times bigger than the Enron scandal. The US financial watchdog, the Securities and Exchange Commission, charged WorldCom with fraud and the Justice Department began a criminal investigation of the company's accounting practices. WorldCom sacked... [its] chief financial officer[, who was the farmer's] sidekick... and announced 17,000 redundancies – one-fifth of its workforce but a cut expected even before the scandal. The company is expected to file for bankruptcy soon, as its share price plummets, banks call in loans and customers leave... Top banks across the world from New York to Frankfurt to Tokyo are owed about US\$4.5 billion... by WorldCom... Most commentators expect the scandal to hurt the US economy but disagree on the scope of the damage. [An] *Independent* columnist... expects some fallout but argues that the world's sharemarkets are unnecessarily nervous and looking for a systematic failure which doesn't exist. But the same paper's business editor... says the sheer scale of the fraud raises a huge question mark over US standards of corporate morality and disclosure... "The WorldCom debacle may mark the bottom of the present cycle, but the climb back out is going to be long and hard." ...[the *NZ Herald* business columnist... agrees, but predicts more scandals ahead. "We haven't seen the last of this. We will have a succession [of announcements] and it will affect confidence, undoubtedly." However, [the *Herald* columnist hopes *NZ*] can escape the shockwaves... Asked about the prospect of similar scandals in *NZ*, the columnist gives local firms 9.5 out of 10 for honesty, compared with 4.5 for US firms. "I'm as cynical as anyone... But systematic fraud? I don't think we have that." ...*US corporate scandals at a glance* Enron: Politically well-connected energy giant which inflated profits for years. Likely to face criminal charges... Merrill Lynch: Top sharebroking firm whose analysts recommended shares to clients while privately describing them as "junk" or worse. Forced to pay US\$100 million... settlement. ImClone: Cancer drug developer[whose f]ounder... and his friends and relatives... dumped US\$10 million... of ImClone stock the day before the Food and Drug Administration refused an application for the company's drug Erbitux. [The founder] has been charged with conspiracy, securities fraud and perjury. Adelphia: Sixth-largest cable TV company in US[whose c]hief executive... and his three children took US\$3.1 billion... in preferential loans from company funds. Filed for bankruptcy, facing criminal investigation. Global Crossing: Digital communications company[whose c]hief executive... cashed in US\$734 million... in shares before the company filed for bankruptcy.

...WorldCom has filed the largest bankruptcy proceedings in *US* history... WorldCom's accounting debacle has deepened investor unease on Wall St in recent weeks, sending markets to their lowest level [in years], and prompting... the US... President... to call for a crackdown on unethical business conduct... Meanwhile, under political pressure to act against business scandals, lawmakers in a House-Senate conference committee are hoping to draft corporate reform legislation for [the President] to sign before Congress begins its... recess. There is a vast amount of territory to be covered, ranging from accounting reform provisions – which clamp oversight on that largely self-regulating industry – to the new criminal provisions that in some cases quadruple existing penalties for corporate miscreants... [A] Michigan Democrat, has proposed that Congress adopt the highest of tough penalties for rogue executives from both the House and Senate bills. The committee is working off the Senate bill... which is widely considered tougher than the House measure on accounting reform and provisions for an independent oversight board. The Senate bill was amended a week ago to double some of the criminal penalties... for example, making the penalty for mail and wire fraud 10 years instead of five.

...*Corporate cancer rampant*... Even if the new lead prosecutor... can cut out the tumour with aggressive law enforcement, the disease may be in the nodes of the market-place, poisoning the rest of the financial system. At least one [perso]n thinks so, and his Senate testimony, while less sexy than all the finger-pointing, ranks among the most important appearances before a congressional committee in modern memory... [T]he former chair[perso]n of the Securities and Exchange Commission... says [WorldCom and] Enron... are... merely... symptom[s] of a much larger problem. "What has failed is nothing less than the system for overseeing our capital markets,"... When [it] held the SEC job... it... warned repeatedly that a "culture of games[perso]nship" was rigging the system with phony numbers, hyped earnings and worthless stock analysis. His calls for reform were rebuffed by members of Congress legally bribed by Wall St and the green-eyeshade lobby. And reform might still be stifled... [Meanwhile,] the underlying disease lives on, in the fig-leaf accountability proposals of the new SEC chief; the refusal of the White House to embrace real campaign finance reform; the lame protestations that this is all some tragic aberration. If only it were so.

...Citigroup, Credit Suisse First Boston and eight rival securities firms have agreed to pay US\$1.4 b... in the biggest-ever settlement for violating securities laws, capping two years of investigations into conflicts of interest in Wall St research. The agreement, announced at a Washington press conference yesterday, will cost Citigroup, Credit Suisse First Boston and Merrill Lynch US\$800 m... and overhaul how Wall St firms supervise and pay analysts. "I am profoundly saddened and angry about the conduct that's alleged in our complaints," said [the SEC chairperson]...

The US] President... said... it[']ll... ask Congress to almost double funding for the Securities and Exchange Commission... to help the agency hire accountants and investigators to fight corporate fraud. The 93[%] increase... over the agency's... US\$581 million... budget... reverses his opposition to a 77[%] increase that Congress recommended... to create an accounting standards review board after the Enron and WorldCom bankruptcies.

...a deeply religious [guy, WorldCom's founder wa]s said to begin board meetings with a prayer. Yet, incredibly for a business[perso]n running a telecommunications company valued at \$US115 billion... at its peak[, the guy] is also a technophobe. For years [it] refused to use a mobile phone...

Mobiles affect brain... The first official investigation into the health risks of mobile phones has found they do affect brain activity. The study was masterminded by... a medical engineer at Bristol Infirmary, in the west of England, and examined the impact of mobile phone use on memory. It found that volunteers were able to think faster while using the phones and performed better in a memory test immediately after using them. But other leading scientists in the field warn that any evidence of interference with brain functions by signals from handsets would be very worrying – even if that evidence showed short-term benefits to memory... It will not deal with the suspected links to the tumours experienced by some engineers and, most famously, by a prominent friend of [Virgin's] British tycoon... who died as a result of a tumour that developed behind his "phone ear." ...A[US] scientist... has demonstrated that low-intensity radiation given off by mobile phones can damage DNA in rats...

Mobile madness: just how safe is your cellphone? ...Whenever... one *NZ*er... picks up a mobile phone, [it] feels unbearable pain in the ear and eyes. The Papatoetoe real estate agent had been using a cellphone for 2 1/2 years [t]hen... started finding it painful... "I tried a hands-free set and it didn't work – it was the same thing... I don't use the cellphone now." [The agent] is a rare case. Most of the 1.4 million *NZ*ers who had cellphones as at March 31 this year have never reported any ill-effects... [(b)y the end of last month, the number of mobile phone users in China had reached 259.6 million... exceed[ing] the number of fixed-line users... [f]or the first time[)]... But... a former chief medical officer for Telstra who studied 40 people with cellphone-related symptoms in A[US and NZ], believes that people like [the agent] may be "early warning signs. We don't know what will happen within 20 years... Since we are in the early stages of the technology, if we get it wrong – either from the point of view of the phones or the towers – we are going to have quite a mess to deal with in the years to come." Cellphone transmitter towers – there are 1200 to 1500 around *NZ*] so far – have been stirring up opposition for years... But the radiation from cellphones themselves is between 1000 and a million times stronger, at the point where it is absorbed by the brain, than that from transmitters. Yet here, as elsewhere, people are flocking to the cellphone shops. In the year to March, the proportion of the population with cellphones almost doubled from 21... to 37[%]. By far the biggest growth was prepaid phones for private use, particularly by teenagers. Prepays now make up 49[%] of Telecom's cellphones and probably a much higher proportion of Vodafone's. Although cellphones are already more popular here than in the *US* (31%), we are behind A[US (40%)] and well behind the world leader, Finland (66[%]). There, the ratio of cellphones to teenagers is now over 100[%]. In other words, many young Finns have more than one mobile. "Mobiles are used now as an accessory, so you have a different phone for different occasions," says... [the] local marketing

manager for the Finnish cellphone company Nokia. "...People can express their personalities." And this is just the start. On Monday, unless blocked by court action, the Government will start auctioning four more blocks of radio frequencies... expected to be used partly for new networks of "third-generation" cellphones, going beyond the first (analogue) and second (digital) technologies. In this next round, cellphones will be able to download data, graphics and even videos from the internet much more effectively... Many experts scoff at those who wonder about the health effects of such an obviously beneficial technology. "The thing that interests me is why the anxiety won't go away. It's a fascinating social phenomenon," says... [the] professor of occupational medicine at the Auckland Medical School. "The science of non-ionising radiation has been known for so long it's one of the best-known areas of science. Radio is not exactly a new invention. Every day makes it less and less likely that we're going to see any ill-effects from it." But there are signs that official views are changing. Last week the W[HO] recommended that cellphone users limit their own and their children's exposure to radiation by making shorter phone calls or using hands-free phones, which keep the transmitting antenna away from the head. This followed a May report by an expert group established by the British Government. It recommended that... the industry "should refrain from promoting the use of mobile phones by children." The NZ Health Research Council has granted \$420,000 to the Wellington Medical School to interview around 200 to 300 people who get brain tumours in the next three years about a number of issues, including how much they have used cellphones. This will be part of a multimillion-dollar study of about 6000 brain tumour patients in 13 countries to test whether cellphone users are more susceptible to tumours... A[US] scientist... in charge of cellphone industry safety research says [it] has direct evidence that mobile phones increase the risk of a rare type of brain tumour... but the cellphone industry says scientific consensus shows no risk... Until now, the official view has been that radiation in the low-frequency, non-ionising radiation bands which include cellphone transmissions is too weak to affect the body's molecular structure, unless it is so intense – as in a microwave oven – that it literally cooks the body with heat. It is generally accepted that the heating, or thermal, effect of a cellphone is far less than that needed to "cook" anyone's brain. However, some studies suggest... cellphones may also have non-thermal effects... A Scandinavian survey of 11,000 cellphone users... found that 13[%] of mobile users in Sweden, and 30[%] in Norway, reported at least one symptom[–] ...headaches, dizziness, fatigue, reduced concentration and memory loss... [–] associated with cellphone use. Symptoms increased with more calls.

...*Frying the bug instead of the brain* FEARS cellphones fry users' brains may be overcome by a high-tech new "bug" being introduced to N[Z]. One... Wellington business[person]... is importing the... cellphone protection device, which claims to absorb up to 60[%] of the radiation emitted. The ladybird-shaped device, which sticks to the side of the cellphone, is made from ceramic compounds similar to those used on the space shuttles for absorbing heat as they return to earth. [The businessperson] – who is offering Zeropas at \$90 each on his website... – says cellphone users may be sceptical at first. "This is like the first people to use sun block or wear seat belts. Then people didn't take it seriously but everyone does now,"...

Air safety experts say electronic game machines, electric shavers and laptop computers can be almost as dangerous as cellphones when used on aircraft. Reports emerged yesterday of two incidents in which cellphones upset the electronics in N[Z] aircraft, causing them to veer in unexpected directions... One of the... incidents cited was... when an aircraft was 6km from Wellington Airport and 500m high on its landing run. The aircraft suddenly turned right and climbed. The crew had to take manual control of it. The other was in 1995, when a cellphone in a cockpit flight bag rang while the aircraft was cruising on autopilot. The aircraft rolled 30 degrees to one side. [It has also been suggested that 'a cellphone call was made from the Ansett aircraft that crashed while approaching Palmerston North'. The former National Party MP – who is now Auckland's mayor – was once 'fined \$750 for answering a phone while on a plane', and in 'Britain an airline passenger was jailed for one year for refusing to turn his phone off'.]

...US authorities investigating why a southern California commuter train engineer ran through a red signal and into an oncoming freight train last week have confirmed [the engineer] was text messaging while working on the day of the fatal collision... [that killed] 25 people and injur[ed] more than 130 others... The revelation came just before California regulators issued a temporary order banning train operators from using cellphones while on duty.

...A Canadian study concluded that using a mobile phone while driving was equivalent to driving drunk... [T]he US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration concluded... driver distraction contributed... to 30[%] of all crashes... [(t)he NHTSA says there are 115 million cellphones in the US, and... 54[%] of drivers usually carry one[...]). The survey was... examined by New York state before it banned hand-held cellphones in cars.

...The New York City Council has voted 38-5 to ban the use of cellphones at public performances. Talking on a cellphone, dialling, listening or even having one ring during a performance will constitute a violation punishable by a US\$50... fine. The law covers concerts, movies, plays, lectures, dance performances, museums, libraries and galleries. Cellphone use would still be permitted at sporting events and in emergencies. [However, the Mayor... has said the legislation... [– which] takes effect in 60 days... [–] would be unnecessary and almost impossible to enforce.

...[the restaurateur] knew the cellphone craze had gone too far when one customer at his trendy San Francisco restaurant picked up the phone to talk to another customer sitting at the other end of the bar. It was hardly the first instance of such behaviour to hit this city – capital, after all, of the world digital revolution. [The restaurateur] knew of other restaurants where three or four customers at a table would be in deep conversation, not with each other but with their separate inter-locuters on the end of the line. This was more than [the restaurateur] could stand, so [it took action]. The restaurateur was sick of the constant chirping emanating from the bowels of handbags, the sight of customers gesticulating into empty space with one hand while clamping the other to their right ear, so [it] decided to ban cellphones from his establishment... No matter that [his] restaurant is a hot spot for the movers and shakers of San Francisco's political and media worlds, many of whom like to wear their mobiles on their hip just like gunslingers with their weapons in the Old West; the cellular crowd has now been banished to the pavement, along with that other group of outcasts, the smokers... Several other restaurants in San Francisco, and Silicon Valley an hour's drive to the south, have already taken similar steps. Golf clubs, country clubs, San Francisco's celebrated ACT theatre, the Museum of Modern Art, even a Silicon Valley branch of Alcoholics Anonymous – all have told mobile phone users to switch off or get lost. Meanwhile, pressure is increasing to ban cellphone use in cars – there has already been one attempt to push legislation through the state assembly and another attempt may not be far off. At least one host on San Francisco's public radio station KQED has told listeners [it] will not take their calls if they are in their cars and moving. "There's a total backlash going on," said... [the] bar manager at Dine, a restaurant in San Francisco's so-called Multimedia Gulch area where everyone has a cellphone but nobody is allowed to use them anymore. If the backlash is beginning in San Francisco (there is nothing comparable going on even in Los Angeles[...]), it is because [San Francisco] is the epicentre of cellphone use in the US. An estimated 15[%] of America's... mobile subscribers are in California, and well over half of those are in the Bay area. But it also speaks to San Francisco's rebellious nature and the deep social divisions that the dot-com revolution has created. Only in a city as contrary as San Francisco would the Mayor... declare his undying hatred of mobile phones... "Three times this one guy's god-damn cellphone went off," [the mayor] fumed last week following a much-interrupted press conference... His erstwhile challenger for the mayorship... would agree... [The] San Francisco Board of Supervisors president... has stipulated that people attending his meeting do as [it] does and switch their mobiles off. "It's rude. It's self-centred and somewhat pretentious... Particularly annoying are the little musical numbers. I really don't want to hear 'Row row row your boat' when we're taking testimony about someone being evicted. It trivialised the whole democratic process of a committee or board meeting." Rudeness is not the only problem. Mobiles cause traffic accidents which cost the city money it resents having to spend. One intersection where a mobile-wielding driver killed a pedestrian recently has been kitted out with special smart lights that flash on the asphalt when a pedestrian steps on to the crossing. When the lights were inaugurated last week, [the mayor] was there to lord over the proceedings... Rooding authorities in Japan plan to provide special roadside parking bays for mobile phone users... thereby improving road safety.

...CELLPHONE users will soon be able to let their fingers do the walking – right into their homes to set the video, turn on the heater and open the garage door. Telecom is launching a new wave of mobile phones which will allow users to access email and the internet, and even plot their position on city-wide street maps around N[Z]... The newest mobile phone revolution begins... with the launch of CDMA – code division multiple access. This space-age technology was designed for the American military. But 45 countries – including N[Z] – are readying the system for an ever increasingly hungry marketplace. CDMA will give mobile phones the voice quality of land phonelines. They will also guarantee better reception so you won't lose calls in rural areas. It will ensure a secure network so nobody else can interrupt or eavesdrop on cellphone users' conversations.

...Telecom is counting the cost to its reputation as a world technology leader after an embarrassing collapse of its mobile phone network. The company would not say how many of its more than one million 025 mobile customers were affected when a software upgrade failed and caused random outages between 7 am and midday yesterday... Telecom said one of its suppliers, Ericsson, had been loading software into the network, which was then hit by a bug... Telecom had earlier estimated that 500,000 were hit – all prepaid customers and up to 60[%] of those on contracts...

[Farmers department stores and Telecom are offering an] ERICSSON... DH618 Prepaid Mobile Phone[, which has u]p to 110 minutes talktime or 36 hours standby time[, for \$69.99 – a deal which includes]... \$80 free calltime... while stocks last... [The phone also allows you to s]ee who's calling with free caller display. Store 50 names and phone numbers. Blue and black interchangeable face plates included. Unused airtime credits will expire after 60 days unless topped up by \$20 or more. You must top up at least once every six months to avoid disconnection.

...Prepaid phone crook's best mate... Criminals are frustrating police by using prepaid mobile phones to conduct their business. The phones are popular with crooks because there is no way of tracing their owners – there is no contract to sign or identification required when someone buys one. The phones are also smuggled into prisons to allow inmates to bypass Corrections Department telephone security and plan crime from behind bars. The head of Auckland's organised crime squad... said: "Every criminal worth their salt is using one. If I was a crook, I certainly would be. They are now a major problem as far as investigating crime is concerned." [The]Detective Sergeant... said the phones, which can be bought almost anywhere for about \$70, were used throughout the underworld, whether by gangs or just the average cannabis dealer... The now-imprisoned underworld king... – known as Pete the Terrorist – used up to three cellphones at any one time so the police could not trace him. The bank-robbing Screwdriver Gang used prepaid phones to taunt the police. And hoax callers, who tie up hours of police time, use them to avoid any chance of being found out. Police are so fed up they want Telecom and Vodafone to change the way they issue the phones... The head of Auckland's armed offenders squad... said phone companies... had a responsibility to see that their equipment was used responsibly and lawfully[, while the]... Police Association president... said... "This is an example of letting the free market decide your national security. It's dangerous and expensive." ...In Britain, the Government is pushing legislation that will have prepaid cellphone users register their personal details[, but Vodafone's local]... communications manager... said that while the company sympathised with police concerns, registration or identification of users of prepaid cellphones was out of the question. "The way they're sold is what attracts people to them – it's a simple way of organising your communication needs." [The manager] called them "just another communication device, and if people are unable to misuse them then they will just misuse something else." ...The president of the Auckland Council for Civil Liberties... said his group would strongly oppose any proposal to control prepaid phones. "It's another example of snooping and prying on private citizens. It is another form of state intrusion. What is the justification?"

...Fears that the new generation of mobile phones equipped with cameras could be used by peeping toms to take photographs of people undressing and showering in swimming pools and gyms have led to sweeping bans on the devices[in AUS]... Anyone seen using a mobile phone could be reported to a lifeguard or swimming pool supervisor... The Governments of N[SW], Victoria and Queensland will consider making the... ban law...

I spy with my little... A new security device allows householders to keep an eye on their properties via a cellphone. The system uses motion sensor cameras capable of transmitting images of intruders to the... householder's mobile or email address, allowing them to raise the alarm or identify the intruder. Nokia, which has developed the Observation Camera, says it could... allow... owners to keep an eye on their property while they are away. Nokia has refused to confirm how much the camera would cost but estimates put the price at between \$850 and \$1415 each.

...Londoners left... 62,000 mobile phones in black cabs in the past six months, a survey has found... [F]orgetful passengers... also... left behind 2900 laptop computers and 1300 electronic organisers. The laptops and organisers were reclaimed, but... half the phones remained unclaimed.

...The theft or disappearance of nearly 600 laptop computers from Britain's Ministry of Defence has raised major security fears. Figures obtained by [a]Liberal Democratic MP... revealed that 1354 Government-owned computers had vanished over the past five years... Some computers were detected as stolen, and others had simply been "lost"... [The ministry] said not all laptops contained classified information.

...Burglaries and car thefts are... [passe: new technology] has brought a new scourge to Britain – phone-jacking. An estimated 700,000 mobile phones were snatched last year, a fivefold increase in two years. The crime has surged in London in the past six months because Metropolitan police officers have been drafted into anti-terrorism duties. Mobile phone thefts now account for... a third of the city's street crime. Crime statistics paint the typical scenario thus: a white ...boy, aged 14 to 17, will be... using... his latest-model phone in a central-city street. While... absorbed in the conversation, one or more black 16-year-old boys, from a street gang, will snatch it, perhaps knocking him down first. Almost all the victims are [boys] – the robbers are said to believe that picking on girls is out of line – but the most frightening case so far involved a 19-year-old Asian [girl] who was shot in the head by a mugger in... East London. [The Asian] was walking along a busy street to a friend's house on a dark evening when [it] was approached by a [guy] who demanded her Nokia 3310... [The thief] already had the phone in his hand when [it shot her. The Asian] was lucky to live but was seriously hurt. A few days later three boys, aged 10, 12 and 16, were held up by a gun[-toting robber] and forced to hand over a... £25... mobile phone... And in another case this month, 10 children were surrounded by a gang of youths as they left a cinema and robbed of their mobiles. [A NZ]er... from Ohai in Southland, was robbed of her phone as [it] talked to a friend while walking home through Clapham... Police told her [they] had no chance of getting the phone back and... they d[on']t actively investigate phone thefts. Police believe some of the thieves want the phones for their own use, but there is a burgeoning market for stealing to order. Pay-as-you-go phones are particularly in demand, because the thief can simply insert a new Sim card and the phone is untraceable. Statistics released last week on mobile-phone thefts show that a black market now operates in Sim cards. A new Sim card can be obtained for a stolen mobile phone for £5... Ministers have spent... a year trying to persuade the mobile-phone industry to take measures [that]... allow stolen mobiles to be disabled. Since each mobile phone can be identified by its IMEI number, the owner could call the service provider to stop the phone being used if it were stolen. In Britain, service providers Orange, One2One, and Virgin have such a system in place. The Home Office has criticised BT Cellnet and Vodafone for refusing to follow. Both companies... insist... there is no reliable technology that can disable a... stolen... handset... BT Cellnet... said: "It would cost £16 million to introduce and if we felt it would solve the problem we would do it." ...Vodafone... added: "IMEI was like a fingerprint to the handset, but not any more, because cheap software downloads can give the phone a new identity." Meanwhile, police are urging British residents to switch off and conceal their phones in public places, especially when alone at night, and avoid... talking or text messaging on... them near railway stations, cinemas and theatres or on public transport.

...Like many crazes it started among Japanese teenagers. Text messaging has... astounded phone companies, who never thought such a limited and fiddly method of communicating would take off like a rocket. Every day, at 20c a pop, between 500,000 and one million text messages are sent and received on N[Z] cellphones. The growth of SMS or short message service, more popularly known as text messaging, has caused the telecommunications industry to think twice about how people like to communicate. An *Economist* story on the growth of text messaging said it marked an unexpected rebirth of shortened forms of written language, a linguistic style once thought to have died along with the telegram.

Messages such as “RU GOING 2NITE?” fly across the ether, to be answered by abbreviations like “YNOT?” SMS has also proved a godsend for those who are a bit shy when it comes to communicating with potential love interests. One sensitive [guy] told the *Herald* [it] preferred text messaging when communicating with [the opposite sex], as it was better than “sounding like a doofus.” During free text-messaging promotions this year the Vodafone network logged up to 2 million messages a day. The international GSM association says that, worldwide, 9 billion were sent [each month]... It is now predicting that the level of 15 billion text messages a month will be reached by December, instead of the 10 billion level it previously thought likely... Telecom introduced the SMS technology on a limited basis this year, but 80[%] of the cellphones sold for its network had an SMS function... Telecom’s market development manager... said the... feature had been available for years, but was not embraced until... a combination of financial and cultural influences had created the demand for the service... Using phones in lectures, on the bus or in noisy places was an option that young people in particular wanted... “It’s easier if you’re out somewhere, like in a club and can’t hear the phone. You can just leave a message and they can look at it whenever they want...” Control was given to the person who received the message, rather than with a voice call... “You’ve got the option for whether you reply immediately or take your time.” ...The [local market i]s dominated by Vodafone, but Telecom believe[s] that within a few months it could have just as many of its customers text messaging. Vodafone customers could not send or receive text messages from anyone on the Telecom network, but once enough digital phones were being used on both networks... messages would be able to be sent between the two systems. Vodafone... said talks with Telecom over allowing text messaging between the networks were already under way.

...TELECOM and Vodafone aren’t known for working together, but one thing has brought them closer – cricket. The rival phone companies have worked together so that for the first time subscribers on both networks can enter the same text messaging competitions. Previously the competitions have been on one network or the other. The breakthrough means third parties can organise text message promotions and offer them to all consumers. A trivia game promoted by the N[Z] Cricket Association and Sky TV, letting people receive questions on their phones and text their answers, will be launched this weekend using the new system for the first time. Every time they get a question correct they receive another one – *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* style. Lateral Profiles, the company that built the technology, has watched the text polling format grow rapidly in the past year. It was first used for a radio song in May last year. In June it ran a poll to pick the most popular Silver Ferns netball player, receiving 70,000 responses. The system it has developed makes it so easy to create a poll or competition it can be done in a few minutes from a laptop at a remote location. That meant radio DJs and sports commentators could create competitions and polls live on air... They could have the results back in time to contact winners immediately. Lateral Profiles was founded eight years ago as an IT solutions business but moved into the wireless messaging field three years ago. It was one of the first companies in the world to offer a wireless instant messaging and chat service... Text polling had revenue benefits for all parties... said Lateral’s [spokesperson]... Entering competitions such as the cricket trivia game usually cost about one dollar a message. There were also marketing benefits beyond the revenue generation, [Lateral’s spokesperson adde]d.

...The story thus far: thousands of Aucklanders got letters from Telecom telling them that unknown to them, and apparently to the company, too, their phone line had a call diversion service attached which should have been costing them \$3.95 a month. That was the bad news. The good news: they wouldn’t be charged for it so far, instead they would have a further month free – or they could call and have the service taken off. All those who got the notice assumed that this was a personal matter about a minor glitch on their account. When they read in this column that, far from being a one-off involving only them, the mail was one of 30,000 identical letters sent nationwide, many Suburban Newspapers readers went ballistic. They felt they had been deceived in a dubious marketing ploy – and said so very plainly. NOW READ ON... This quote is a free translation. Telecom says: “Sorry – sorry you felt so deceived. Sorry you were angry. Sorry you believed a letter we wrote was simply a marketing ploy to get you to add \$3.95 to your monthly phone account... it won’t happen again.” They are right to apologise. Those letters certainly did incense many Suburban Newspapers readers... As an indication of the anger and suspicion, th[e] number of letters w[e] received w[as] the second highest of my career, second only to the first day’s mail after a long-ago series about the unjust murder conviction of [Mrs Thomas’ husband]. (For the record: only one in more than 100 had no problem with the Telecom approach.) The depth of the anger from the rest clearly shocked Telecom... And what do the watchdog’s say about all this? ...[the] chief executive of the Consumers’ Institute, says the two issues involved are: • Is it “inertia selling?” • Is it good business practice? (A Ministry of Consumer Affairs discussion paper defines “inertia selling” as a seller supplying unordered services to a consumer and then billing the consumer. Often, the supply is accompanied by a notice that if the offer is not rejected within a certain time, the seller will charge for the service, taking silence as consent. This is known as “negative option” selling. In contrast, the Consumers’ Institute believes companies should operate on an “active acceptance” basis – no explicit acceptance, no consent for goods or services.) So, is the Telecom letter “inertia selling” or “negative option?” ...[the institute] is obviously unhappy with the technique but believes the careful wording of the Telecom letter could perhaps be legally interpreted as more a notice of a problem and the opportunity of a free trial. OK, maybe, but is it good business practice? ...“It is not illegal. It really comes down to whether it is a dubious marketing ploy to sign people up or whether it involves genuine mistakes. Telecom has vigorously denied this ploy suggestion... If you accept the Telecom explanation of the circumstances, they have made a pretty large number of individual cock-ups. Clearly they should correct their mistakes. But they should not at the same time attempt to turn those mistakes to their commercial advantage...” ...As well as learning serious PR and customer services lessons out of all this, Telecom has obviously got to clean up what is, at the very least, a suspect accounts and engineering system. That’s where they can apparently lose 30,000 services worth more than \$1 million a year and not know they’ve lost them. For what it’s worth, I don’t accept an explanation made to me by one Telecom spokesperson... – that this sort of wastage is understandable in a company with 1.3 million customers. That’s their problem. Memo readers: thanks for your help. Mark this down as one we all won. • To con[clude today’s column, here’s a related story from overseas:] ...Red-faced German police were forced to admit that dozens of criminal suspects had learned their phones were being tapped when the evidence showed up on their monthly phone bill. Authorities said a technical problem led to several suspects receiving phone bills with charges for a connection to an unknown voice-mail number. When they called the number, they were told they did not have access to the voice mailbox, because police were using it to record their phone conversations.

...The police yesterday applauded Telecom’s plan... to charge customers who make false 111 emergency calls. From August 1, fixed-line customers will be billed \$6 for such calls. The charge will apply only to false calls after the first such call made in a month – in effect, letting people make one non-genuine call a month before they are charged... “We want to give people a little leeway, a warning.” Telecom ...a[dded] that although making a false 111 call was against the law, about 70[%] of 111 calls were not genuine. Telecom handles about 1.8 million false calls a year – almost 5000 a day... [(a hoax) caller rang emergency services 20 times in one night... [– t]he calls have been traced to a pre-paid mobile phone in the Kaikohe area[and p]olice are investigating...]. Telecom’s m[arketing manager]... said the charge would help significantly to cut the high number of non-emergency calls, which put unnecessary pressure on the service and on 111 operators... [A] false 111 call was one not passed on to the police, fire or ambulance services because it was clear to the 111 operator that no emergency service help was required. “For example, the caller hangs up immediately the call is answered, or it is a call made by children playing.” The Government and emergency service providers had been consulted about the new charge. It would cover the cost to Telecom of answering the call, billing the customer, and dealing with inquiries about the charges... [N]o charge would be made for genuine 111 calls... Telecom said it received more than 2.5 million 111 calls a year – almost 7000 a day.

...A Florida [resident] has been charged with faking more than 1100 calls to the 911 emergency number, tying up lines... [The guy], aged 20, placed the calls last Monday and Tuesday because [it] was bored, said [the] Alachua County Sheriff’s Office... One night, [it] called more than 800 times.

...The expression *desperate and dateless* took on a new meaning for Aucklander Nicole... [– n]ot her real name... [–] when her blind date match turned out to be a nightmare phone pest When my friend asked me to go with her to the Desperate and Dateless Ball earlier this year as a birthday treat, I thought, why not? [My friend] didn't want to go on her own and I was single. It was really expensive, but it sounded like a professional do, hosted [by a '60s pop star] at Sky City in aid of Red Cross. We filled in the forms and the questions which were supposed to match us with our ideal date, but we both thought they were a bit corny and ridiculous. Then everyone received a card with their date's first name and phone number. At this stage we realised our numbers had been given out to strangers, something which was not made clear when we filled out the forms. My date rang and spoke to my friend first. [My friend] was concerned as [my date] sounded a bit dodgy, slurring his words. When [my friend] told him I was lovely [my date] didn't believe her and... said, "Well the bottom line is, how many kids has [your mate got]?" After that my date left messages for me, things like "sexy voice" followed by a laugh – no name... When [my date] finally spoke to me it was only 7pm and [the caller] sounded drunk or stoned... I ended up getting his entire life story straight away, which included how horrible all his ex-girlfriends were. I hadn't asked, but [my date] told me it had its own home, business and was financially secure – later this turned out to be lies and his work number was a tech where [my date] was doing a course. [My date] wanted to pick me up to go to the ball, but I just wanted to meet him there as my friend and I were going together. [My date became] really indignant that I wouldn't let him do this, but to be honest, his conversation was so strange that I just didn't want him knowing where I lived. By the week of the ball, I'd received about seven or eight calls from him, often not making sense and I was worried about how serious [my date] was taking it... As the day of the ball got closer I just didn't want to go as [my date] sounded more and more weird. When I told a [guy friend, the friend] was really concerned, so I rang the Wellington organisers. They said to just go along and meet him because I didn't have to stay with him once the ball started. My [guy] friend rang them and was more forceful, so they said to pretend to him that I couldn't go, but go anyway and have a nice time on my own. So two nights before I was due to meet him at the ball, I rang him with a story about how I couldn't go. [My date] went off his tree, and when I said how sorry I was, [the date] said, "Not as sorry as you're going to be when I ring the organisers and tell them what you've done. You made a promise to come with me." [My date] ranted on so much I had to hang up on him. The next night, I came home from a night out and my flatmate, who doesn't speak good English, was almost hysterical... [A guy] had kept ringing, ranting and raving... saying things like, "Do you know what that bitch did to me? ...ruined my life – get that bitch on this phone." [My date] had been calling every 10 minutes until [my flatmate] disconnected the phone but [the caller] still managed to leave a few messages on the answering system. I rang him the next morning and warned him I'd go to the police. [My date] just said, "You go to the police, nothing's going to stop me, baby." [My date] said I'd already cost him \$600 in preparation costs for the ball. My friend and I went to the ball... but... couldn't really enjoy the night because we were so on edge – I kept thinking that [my date] would recognise me from the description my friend gave, and I was looking out for [guys] who might be him. We even changed our names for the night... In the end, we left early. It just seemed like a meat market and not value for money at all. [T]he next day... I went to the police because I wasn't going to let him intimidate me. They listened to his messages and thought they were threatening. They... gave him a warning, but it hasn't stopped him. I've had... more calls from him since – [the caller] doesn't say his name and pretends [it]'s got a wrong number before hanging up. I'm not impressed with the organisers, either. I rang... and told them not to give people's numbers out. Surely there's a way to check out the people who apply for tickets. As it stands, it's an ideal setup for desperate nutters like the one I was matched with. They were very understanding and very sorry about it... [– although they pointed out that o]f more than 4000 people who attended the same event, only two [gals, including myself], reported such problems... I said the least they could do was refund the cost. They said someone would definitely ring back. I'm still waiting.

...Are you sick of being forced to listen to horrible lift music for hours while you wait for a company to answer your phone call? ...[British people spend... [on a]verage... 45... hours... on hold on the phone every year[according to] *The Tyranny of Numbers*]... A survey by *Herald* reporters has identified companies to avoid if you have better things to do. The *Herald* phoned seven companies at 10 am, 12.30 pm, 4 pm and 8 pm on Thursday to find out how long customers had to wait on hold if they needed an answer to a question about their account, drivers licence or student loan... [– including ourselves: during working-hours our phones were respectively answered in] 22s... 6m 9s... 1m 37m... Only two companies, Sky [TV and Mercury Energy], offered personal assistance at 8 pm. By far the worst at answering the phone was... Mercury, with customers waiting 42 minutes to talk to someone at 8 pm and nearly 34 minutes at 4 pm[, while at the earlier times calls took 13 and 14 minutes to be answered]. Trying to get official comment from the company in response to the delays was also difficult. Reporters spent an hour trying to find anyone prepared to provide an answer. Eventually, [a] high-powered public relations company... fronted up with a prepared statement from [Mercury]... that... said... a recent switch to a new computer system was to blame for the delays but "the new technology will ultimately deliver a much enhanced service." The quickest to the phone was the Auckland City Council, which answered its working-hours calls within 12 seconds... [T]he council's customer service manager, said the call centre's 40 staff took an average of 3500 calls throughout the day and aimed to answer every one within 15 seconds. The centre had decided against using a recorded message [during working-hours] to handle calls because of the council's diverse customer base "calling about everything from dead dogs to complex rates inquiries. We believe the council's role is to be accessible,"... An... Auckland business telecommunications consultant... said that despite the availability of good technology for companies to answer phones, many were still too hasty in sacking the operators and installing the computer. "Most companies would put the requirement for a customer to speak to a person as a top priority, but there is a cost. The arrival of telephone calls is somewhat unpredictable. Sometimes they're evenly spaced, one every few minutes; other times they all come at once." The probabilities had to be decided before businesses could work out how many people they... need answering phones. An old "industry rule of thumb" held that 80[%] of calls should be answered within 20 seconds. Two main problems arose when setting up a business telephone answering system... "One is related to call centres, where your call is queued whilst you are waiting to speak to a real live person. The quality of service you get there is entirely dependent on the number of people available to answer calls... There is a trade-off between the cost of employing and training and providing facilities for staff against the quality of customer service." ...Many call centres [now] had the capability of allowing a waiting caller to tap in their phone number. When an operator came free, the call could be returned... The second aspect that caused annoyance was the use of Integrated Voice Response systems, where a recorded voice gave options and allowed the callers to "steer" their way through menus by pushing buttons. "The advantage of this system is that it is not dependent on people being available. You can have it going 24 hours a day, seven days a week... These work when there is a well-defined need for specific information... But there are some people who are not particularly skilled at setting these systems up, so systems consequently get something of a bad reputation... If a message says: 'To speak to an operator, press zero,' you... better make sure there is an operator... to answer the call and not just another loop around the automatic system..." [The consultant said it] was surprised that 10 years after the technology became available, many businesses were still setting up telephone answering systems badly. The overall effect could be negative... Private companies could really suffer from a frustrating phone service, as people would hang up and go to a competitor... A loss of disgruntled customers could result in more money being lost than had been saved by laying off operators.

...Hundreds of employees at telecommunications companies Clear and TelstraSaturn face uncertain futures as Telstra executives from across the Tasman look to trim the staff of the newly merged operations. How many jobs will go is unclear, but industry sources say duplication of the two companies' resources will lead to between 500 and 800 redundancies. TelstraSaturn employs 1000 workers and Clear 800. Telstra yesterday confirmed it had bought Clear in a deal worth \$435 million, about \$75 million below its market value. The purchase is subject to regulatory approval. The A[US]n company will merge the networks and customer bases of Clear and TelstraSaturn... The sale of Clear, N[Z]'s second-largest telecommunications company, will not affect the 257,000 residential customers Clear and TelstraSaturn have between them. But the president of

Telstra International... said the company's focus in N[Z] would be on "business and corporate end customers". That would leave little room for TelstraSaturn's consumer-oriented pay TV business, which has 26,000 subscribers in Wellington and Christchurch. The merged company is believed to be talking to Sky Television about a possible "bundled" pay TV and telephone deal, using Sky's content. Existing cable TV subscribers will likely receive Sky's programming over TelstraSaturn's network. What will become of the 10-year-old "Clear" brand name has not been revealed but it is likely to disappear in favour of "Telstra", a household name in A[US]... Despite the appearance of a return to the cosy duopoly that existed before TelstraSaturn's arrival in the market, consumer groups were positive about the sale... [The] chief executive of the Telecommunications Users Association, said a single, stronger organisation would further challenge Telecom's "vicious" grip on the telecoms market. But [the chief executive also] said a lot of mistakes in the past 10 years had prevented Government regulations being created to encourage competitors to take on Telecom's might. Had the Government's new regulatory regime been in place a few years ago, then TelstraSaturn and Clear would probably have flourished as separate entities and given Telecom and one another serious competition."

...Highway to profits proves hard slog for telecom firms... Telecom... Sky TV... and... [Telstra]Saturn... have at least one goal in common. They want 1.4 million N[Z] households to buy huge volumes of communications services such as telephony, dozens of t[v] channels, on-demand movies, data and on-line services and dazzlingly fast access to the Internet. The trouble is, they can't agree on technology. Each company is betting big sums on a different way to deliver the service – satellite for Sky, a new technology called ADSL for Telecom and hybrid fibre coaxial cable (HFC) for [Telstra]Saturn. Worse for Telecom, it has suddenly switched horses. It invested about \$100 m... in the first stage of its own cable network, then pulled the plug last November when it became convinced ADSL was the cheapest bet. Recriminations are flying from subcontractors hurt by the abrupt termination of the project. Many are seeking redress through the courts. Quite how Telecom, Sky and [Telstra]Saturn master these "broadband" technologies to deliver huge volumes of information will fundamentally affect their profitability and ability to compete... Telecom knew HFC would be costly when it embarked on that journey but, at that time, had high expectations that it would be able to join Sky... in both shareholding and programming arrangements. It got approval from the Commerce Commission, even though the joining of Telecom and Sky over a cable network would have given them an impregnable position in both telecommunications and pay-t[v] markets. That dream was stymied by continuing legal action by competitors, but Telecom continued to plod on with the first phase of its rollout, despite mounting difficulties signing up customers and technical problems. Doubtless Telecom's long flirtation with HFC involved an element of insurance, particularly with the potential threat from [Telstra]Saturn... But its decision to quit HFC and explore ADSL is perfectly consistent with its focus on short-to-medium-term investments. Telecom rigorously follows "economic value-added" principles when it assesses investments. Spending has to generate a healthy margin above the company's cost of capital. The longer the payback period, as in the case of investing in the cable network, the harder it is for management to justify. While [Telecom's CEO] concedes that it sets shorter timeframes for investments to pay off than some other companies, [it] can point out that the practice has helped Telecom consistently outperform its peers on the sharemarket... [Telecom] has another good reason for limiting investment payback timeframes. Fast-evolving technologies quickly overtake existing investments, while competition rapidly erodes profit margins on new products. One need look only as far as ADSL's rapid rise from a questionable concept to a plausible technology from the time Telecom first piloted HFC. Combine that with the likelihood that Telecom's cable rollout might well have cost more than the \$1000 a house [Telstra]Saturn has spent and you can understand why Telecom got cold feet... • T[elephone]... services for Northland residents were disrupted yesterday after a fibre-optic cable was accidentally cut at Waimauku, northwest of Auckland. Telecom... said contractors working at a site cut the cable just before midday. National, international and mobile call services for all those living around or north of Waimauku were disrupted. Local and emergency calls were unaffected... [T]he service was restored gradually throughout the day. All customers should[']ve had full service by 9 pm.

...Saboteurs have felled a telecommunications tower on Porirua's Colonial Knob, cutting some police portable communications, three radio stations and the... mobile network for the Porirua area. The 40m tower, carrying several microwave dishes, fell at 10.30 pm on Sunday after three of the four supports were cut. The Porirua City Council has granted... consents to... erect two temporary towers until the big tower is repaired.

...Police are convinced th[re] 55m transmitter tower in Porirua was brought down deliberately, and they are investigating reports of suspicious activity in the area... [T]hree of its legs were severed, and the flat and even nature of the cuts at the base of the tower had convinced them sabotage was to blame rather than metal fatigue. The fourth leg gave way in Sunday's heavy winds... which... put... three radio stations... off the air. Police communications and... cellphone services were also cut. Contractors have put up temporary antennas and all services have been restored.

...A string of strange thefts is causing a whole lot of trouble for Telecom contractors in west Auckland. Alstom supervisors... say more than 30 [hu]manhole covers have been stolen during the past 10 days, leaving big gaps in the footpaths and roads of central Waitakere... [T]he \$500 cast aluminium covers have all been stolen from within a 5 kilometre radius of Universal Drive. Even some of the replacement covers fitted to close the gaps have been taken. "It's got us bewildered about what they're using them for... But it's dangerous, some of the holes are almost 2 metres deep... The [supervisors] say... the problem has surfaced occasionally during the four years they've worked for Telecom, but never to the same extent. Telecom... says the company's priority is public safety. "We're really concerned that people could be hurt by not seeing that these... covers are gone... It's a fairly senseless sort of crime. They're not worth a lot and we're really asking what the point is." Counties Manukau police... say... a similar situation occurred in south Auckland a couple of years ago... [Those] thefts were concentrated over a short period with the covers sold to scrap metal yards who melted them down. [Editor's note: A number of 'Telecom covers have been found on a container ship headed for Hong Kong']

...half the 5000 public telephones operated by Telecom are out of action and the company may have to visit all 5000 to get the problem fixed. Telecom[']s spokesperso[n]... said yesterday that the software problem affecting the phones over the weekend was more serious than first thought.

...Telecom is under fire for its use-it-or-lose-it policy on customers' phonecards, which will be obsolete by the end of this year. Millions of dollars may be tied up in the cards, due to be phased out... when the firm replaces 4500 public payphones, which are not Year 2000-compliant. Telecom will not give refunds or replace customers' phonecards with new smartcards because it says customers have ample time to use up the remaining value on their cards. But its transtasman counterpart, Telstra A[US], has spent 16 months replacing customers' old cards with smartcards for new payphones. "There was never a situation where Telstra was going to leave customers with the card they had paid for that they wouldn't be able to use in some way," said Telstra[']s spokesperso[n]... Politicians and the Consumers' Institute want Telecom to recompense consumers... The chief executive of the Consumers' Institute... said customers had bought the phonecards in good faith and Telecom should provide a replacement... N[Z] First... said Telecom should honour prepaid phonecards, as it had known about Year 2000 bug implications since at least 1997... Ministry of Consumer Affairs staff will meet the firm next week to discuss its plans. The general manager of the ministry... did not believe Telecom was specifically breaching consumer laws and was happy the firm was providing warnings to customers. But the ministry was investigating further and considering the contract between Telecom and its phonecard customers... Telecom... said the firm was happy to cooperate with the ministry and would give all the information required. "We are confident that we are operating within the requirements of the [Consumer Guarantees] Act..." [Telecom] said reports that the cards in circulation were worth \$19 million was "pure speculation" and that it was difficult to estimate their value.

...A Whangarei [resident] has spent \$30 to win back \$19.50 from Telecom in a David and Goliath battle over phone cards. Telecom is upgrading its old public phones and the current cards will not be valid after December. It has refused to refund unused cards in circulation, which the Consumers' Institute said could have a face value of up to \$20 million. [The resident], an independent mediator, said [it] held three cards with \$19.50 credit for emergencies and was incensed when Telecom announced it would not give refunds. It cost him \$30 to take a case against the telecommunications giant to the Disputes Tribunal, which ruled that it was unfair and inappropriate of Telecom to take the credit on [the

mediator's] cards... "The respondent has had the use of the applicant's money and in the tribunal's view of the substandard merits and justice of the matter it should not now be permitted to simply appropriate money without supplying contracted services." Telecom did not appear at the tribunal to defend the case because it was not told of the hearing, said [its] national media manager. It would seek to have the case re-heard or would appeal... Although tribunal rulings do not in law serve as precedents, [the mediator] was pleased the issue was out in the public domain.

...In a major backdown by Telecom, [the telecommunications company has agreed to exchange] all unused phone cards until January 1, 2000.

...Telecom is to replace its magnetic strip PhoneCards with special replacement chip PhoneCards. The free replacement option coincides with the rollout of Telecom's new \$20 million payphone network starting on 19th August. From that date, customers can send in their magnetic strip PhoneCards with a replacement card form available from any NZ Post retail outlet or Shell service station. In return, customers will receive a replacement chip PhoneCard to the residual value of the old card. Customers will have the choice to continue using their magnetic strip PhoneCards at over 400 existing payphones until the rollout of the new payphone network is completed... □ Con[cerned that your]... old television... will not work when TVNZ's digital service with Telstra[Clear starts? Well, you] do not have to worry for a few years yet – the Government has no deadline for phasing out the analogue system. People will be able to continue viewing TV One and TV2 without a \$300 digital decoder. The U[S] will end analogue service in 2006, A[US] in 2008 and Britain in 2010. A spokes[person for the] Broadcasting Minister... said the issue had not been looked at yet in N[Z]. TVNZ's spokesperson... said a shut-off date was a big issue, because the company would have to run a parallel service – analogue and digital – for an unknown period, which would prove costly.

...A year ago the television division of National Panasonic was renamed the television and network systems division to accommodate its increasingly widening activities in "enhancing the basic technology of the television so as to be capable of fully responding to the rapidly emerging digitally networked society." ...National Panasonic... is just one of many Japanese companies poised to bring you a crisply exact, sonically impressive next generation of home entertainment, digital integration of home networks... As we walk through the showroom of innovation it is almost overwhelming, especially... the pristine, high-definition image and wrap-around Dolby sound of the... TV[s]... soon... appearing in living rooms across the planet. At least that is the "global strategy" – and it is certainly happening in Japan. Despite the small size of Japanese homes, these high-definition monsters are shipping out of the assembly and research plant in Ibaraki, an hour... from downtown Osaka, at the rate of 30,000 a month. And that is just into the domestic market. The flat, wall-mounted screen versions can certainly find wallspace, but these free-standing giants – 75cm deep and a metre high – mean the average Japanese family would have to shift their eating area into the bedroom just to accommodate them... Then there is the Dream Theatre, which comes with words such as laser-sound processor, data transfer and sub-woofer. It is a... large chair with a very large screen in front of it. The high-definition picture is almost eerily real and the system has movie-theatre-quality sound coming at you from three speakers around the screen and two behind. I have seen the future of home entertainment – and it is very loud. And this is only the National Panasonic factory. All the other manufacturers are working on similar models. Osaka, considered by *Asiaweek*... as the third most desirable place to live in Asia after Tokyo and Auckland's sister city Fukuoka, is the place to enjoy the high-tech end of Japan. Its nightclub district is illuminated at night by walls of neon and across town at Panasonic Square is a veritable electronic playpen for kids and curious adults. Here you can have your fortune read by three different kinds of computers, Mr Pana the robot will engage you in conversation, you can use a TV phone to contact someone across the room, watch laser videos, spend an hour in the video editing room (for... \$20) and, mundanely, explore the Internet. There are state-of-the-art simulation games, a Chromakey studio, a stringless laser harp to play, a cable car ride that shows the sights of San Francisco, a 3D cinema... It is like the Auckland Easter Show as imagined by R2D2. If Japan is creating the technology of tomorrow then it is good news, particularly if your idea of a good night out is staying in around a roaring television. In the future – which is right now if you have around 540,000 yen (\$90,000) to spare – these machines will do your thinking for you. The EPG – electronic programming guide (get used to these acronyms, you might need them soon) – will filter through the options and make recommendations for you... It will even interrupt if you are watching something else to remind you [that a programme you wanted to watch] is on... • [This]... week, TV2 gives viewers the 'opportunity' to pick the prime-time Saturday night movie. That both selections are repeats and viewers must text message their choice to Telecom from mobiles or call a freephone number is yet another sign of the times. Voting starts on the Wednesday before and continues right up till the screening of the *2Choice* movie. Information on the voting is available on TV2's website...

Enjoy every minute of... your favourite... [programmes if you're not going to be home (or are watching another channel) by using your] VCR... recorder with built-in *G-CODE* System. Simply input the corresponding *G-CODE* numbers (listed in the television guide) and your favourite programmes will be recorded automatically. It's efficient, reliable and convenient. With *G-CODE* recording, you can always catch the exciting moments of [your life]... The *G-CODE* system is now a worldwide standard of recording. There are over 40 countries using *G-CODE* and over 1,800 publications printing *G-CODE* numbers. You will be impressed as all leading VCR... brands have built-in *G-CODE* models.

...The humble VCR has taken a step towards the scrapheap with the launch of the first DVD machine that can record[(until now, people could only 'copy' DVDs at home via software created by an American)]. A new Philips machine can record and re-record on its discs – eliminating any advantage held by the long-serving VCR. The new recorder's launch at an exhibition in Berlin prompted a rush of orders. Retailers in London's Oxford St claim that they will start to phase out the VCR as early as next year. The DVD1000+RW recorder is available only in Europe. But it is expected to be launched in the U[S] and other key markets, including N[Z], towards the end of this year. Its arrival, and the probable demise of the VCR, will close a chapter of entertainment history fondly remembered by many N[Z]ers. The VCR first appeared in the US in 1976 – a Sony Betamax box that had to beat Supreme Court challenges from television and movie companies before it revolutionised viewing habits. By the late 70s, the first Beta and VHS models were being rented out in N[Z]. Ownership then of a giant silver top-loading monster was enough to guarantee the envy of many a suburban street. Now, just as thousands of Kiwi families have finally got the hang of programming the VCR, the DVD recorder is expected to again change the way we view the world. But don't expect the VCR to go quietly. The sticking point for consumers wanting a new DVD recorder will be its opening price – £1300... and £20 for each rewritable disc.

...SCRATCHED CDs and DVDs can now be restored with a new product. N[Z] company Discstation is using technology imported from America to repair CDs that would have to be thrown out. [The company's] director... said the equipment was specifically designed to repair discs without damaging the data layer, allowing them to play like new. "Gamers are paying up to a couple of hundred dollars for a game disc and they can be cleaned for less than \$10 if they become a bit battered and scratched... Similarly, the cost of repairing a favourite music CD is negligible compared to buying new again – and it's much more convenient than having to spend time and trouble trawling music stores or ordering from back catalogues... But it's not just music and games. More and more people are putting their favourite video images and photographs on to DVD and they're memories that can often be priceless." ...[In related news, the cost of CD piracy to the local music industry has risen from \$95 million to \$114 million since a campaign was launched to combat illegal copying. However, the industry says its campaign to educate people about CD burning has been a success and it will continue to spread the message next year. Organisers of the BRN & GTBRNT campaign yesterday said the economic benefit might not be seen for up to four years. The Recording Industry Association said a survey it had commissioned of 500 people aged between 15 and 44 found 20[%] had copied a music CD, and 3.25[%] of them had done it for sale... [M]ost people burn music for private use, for a friend or a family member – and generally they think it is acceptable to copy for private use but not to sell. [9%] of the people surveyed had been offered a copied CD, which can be priced from \$5 to \$10. Among the 15 to 19 age group, 17[%] had been offered an illegal copy. The music was generally offered at schools, universities, home or a friend's house... Nearly 50[%] of people surveyed were aware of the campaign, mainly from TV

commercials and stickers on CD covers. The survey will be used as a benchmark to judge the effect of the campaign. The association, which represents major and minor record labels, is poised to take three private prosecutions for copyright infringement against people involved in large-scale copying and selling[, but]... said it was still difficult to raise police interest in the crime. However, some police districts had become more vigilant in the past years. In many cases – such as nightclub DJs using copied music – the association had settled out of court and licensed people so they could use the music for a fee... [T]he head of music giant Sony in N[Z] and association president, rejected the idea of reducing the price of CDs to combat the illegal trade. “It simply wouldn’t work and that would be a ‘band aid’ approach. You’ve got to change people’s attitudes.”

...*Napstar one step closer to the day the music stops*... A federal appeals court has written what could be the final verse for Napstar as we know it. The company must stop the millions of people who use its internet service to swap copyrighted music without charge and without restriction, the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals said yesterday. The Napstar-free-for-all may last only a few more weeks. The three-judge panel sent the case back to a trial judge, asking her to fine-tune her July injunction ordering Napstar to shut down. The panel said the recording industry “would likely prevail” in its lawsuit, which is considered a bell-wether case in digital entertainment distribution. “It’s time for Napstar to stand down and build their business the old-fashioned way,” [the] Recording Industry Association of America president... said. The heavy metal group Metallica, the first band to demand its songs be removed from Napstar, said the ruling reaffirmed the right of artists not to have their music exploited. “We are delighted that the court has upheld the rights of all artists to protect and control their creative efforts,” the band said. Napstar promised to appeal and its bankroller, German record company Bertelsmann, vowed to continue support. The company can stay in business until the injunction is retooled to focus on copyright issues. No hearing date has been set. After the ruling, thousands of Napstar users were still trading music files on just one of the company’s more than 100 servers. “We’ll all find a way to get around it,” said... a student. Napstar has argued it is not to blame for subscribers’ use of copyrighted material, citing a 1984 case in which the Supreme Court refused to hold VCR manufacturers and videotape retailers liable for people copying movies. But the appeals court said no such protection extends to Napstar because the company knew users were swapping copyrighted songs. “Having digital downloads available for free on the Napstar system necessarily harms the copyright holders’ attempts to charge for the same downloads,” the court said. The panel said Napstar may be liable if it does not actively ban users from swapping protected material. In particular, it directed Napstar to cut off users who trade copyrighted songs in the MP3 format that Napstar has helped make standard for digital music. The company’s popularity exploded [two years ago after its] founder... released software that made it easy to find and trade songs stored as computer files in the MP3 format, which compresses digital recordings with little quality loss.

...Four top songwriters have struck a blow for individual rights against internet companies that musicians believe are depriving them of their just rewards... [They] have filed a \$US40.5 million... lawsuit against MP3.com... that... allege[s] the US)... company “illegally gave users access to their songs” through its “MyMP3” service. The move comes months after MP3.com declared a truce after settling a \$US100 million lawsuit with big record companies. The MP3.com position mirrors that of Napstar, which is being sued separately by the record labels for more than US\$100 million. Napstar has been told by the courts to alter its software so that users cannot swap copyrighted songs. So far, it has had little success in satisfying the legal demands. MP3.com offers music cheaply by putting songs into digital files small enough to be transferred easily over the net. But this practice has met fierce opposition from record companies and musicians. The amount already spent by the company on lawsuits dwarfs its revenues, which in the first three months of the year were \$US21.8 million, with losses of \$US2 million. In that time, 174 million of its MP3 files were downloaded. Unlike the better-known Napstar system, MP3.com does not allow people to share files between their hard discs. But it still enables people to hear songs free, which is why the artists are suing. The company’s web site hosts what it claims is the largest collection of digital music available on one site, with more than 967,000 songs and audio files posted from 150,000 digital artists and record labels. The lawsuit filed earlier this week relates to only 270 of those songs – but the maximum penalty for infringement is \$US150,000 for each track. MP3.com’s settlement last year did not cover individual musicians, including many who own the copyright to their songs... This latest suit illustrates the complicated nature of music rights: it has been filed by people whose copyrights are not administered by the record companies, even though the deal last year covered the use of the songs’ master recordings, which the record labels own... [In local news, a] protest against new internet copyright laws will take place outside Parliament today. Internet Blackout NZ, an initiative by Creative Freedom Foundation, is running the demonstration at midday as part of a week-long “blackout” campaign against the Copyright Amendment Act... Section 92A of the act, passed last year, enables the termination of the internet connection of any user who repeatedly accesses pirated material. It is due to come into law [in a week]. The campaign calls for internet users to “black out” their personal profile pages – Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Bebo and personal blogs... This means replacing their photos and icons with blank spaces to give an impression of what the internet could look like under the law change.

...Google has been hoovering up all the information from millions of books worldwide, putting knowledge from the world’s great research libraries just a mouse click away in the Google Library. Internet users can access excerpts for research while subscribing libraries and similar institutions can buy whole books. It’s a short step to all users downloading whole book titles. And it’s not just research books. Google has digitised novels, poetry and non-fiction by... James K Baxter... and dozens of other N[Z] authors without their permission. Google maintains it can digitise and show excerpts of copyrighted books under US “fair use” laws... A court challenge by American authors and publishers last year was supposed to give them a degree of control over Google’s activities and ensure copyright dues were paid. What emerged was an out-of-court settlement full of compromises which – if ratified by a judge in October – could ensnare authors around the world. It... has left the world’s writers with a stark choice: go with Google and limit your future options or opt out and receive not a pittance when Google digitises your work anyway.

...THE internet has caused most industries to do some serious soul searching about their future, and now it’s the turn of the video industry. Soon, you might not have to trek to a video store. With a few clicks of your mouse, the video store will come to you. Five of the major movie studios have announced plans for a joint venture which will offer a broad selection of movies you can download over the net and watch on computer. The studios are MGM, Paramount, Sony, Universal Studios and Warners. Disney and Fox have a similar joint plan. The service will initially be offered only in the US. You’ll need a high-speed net connection. You’ll select online the movie you want to see, pay for the hire with your credit card and click on the appropriate buttons. It’s estimated each movie will take between 20 and 40 minutes to download. Once it’s finished downloading, you’ll have up to 30 days to watch it on your computer screen. But once you start playing the movie, you’ll have only 24 hours to watch it or parts of it again before it no longer plays. This is to prevent you being able to keep the movie to re-screen it. The technology also won’t allow you to make a permanent record of the movie or to send it to others. The movie industry hopes its plan is a pre-emptive strike against piracy on the net. Already there are places which have been offering pirated copies of new movies for people to download. Learning from the experience with music file-swapping service Napstar, the movie companies want to ensure they control such downloads and clip the ticket along the way. Whether this hurts the cinema business or the video shops is debatable. Seeing movies on your computer screen can’t compete with those lucky enough to enjoy home theatre and DVD players connected to their big TVs. This might cease to be an argument if experts are right in predicting your television set and computer will converge and you’ll be able to download from the net then watch the movies on TV... Ironically, Hollywood once feared new technology and fought to have the VCR declared illegal. Now it is financially benefiting from old movies, already out on video, being re-released again on DVD. Whichever way you choose to see movies in the future, the net has a goldmine of helpful reviews. In the spirit of the level playing field of the net, amateur critics can be as worthwhile as the more seasoned ones, who might be getting a bit predictable and tired from watching too many years of new releases... One recent growth has been in sites for parents, with reviews of movies based on their suitability for children and based on drugs, sex, language and music... There are also ratings for Christmas... reviews geared towards [gal readers, reviews]... by teenage girls...

and reviews from a “multicultural perspective”... The “mutant reviewers from hell”... look at the weirder releases while the Tuesday Nite Club... proudly admit to having bad taste... More... popular sites are www.rottentomatoes.com, which offers stories and reviews from several US publications, Movie Review search at www.mrqe.com and www.critics.com. ■ ...TradeNZ has lost a landmark case to claim back the internet domain name newzealand.com from a U[S] firm, Virtual Countries... Virtual Countries has staked a claim to domain names featuring 16 nations, and has registered names such as Russia.com and Sweden.com. The case was the first time a Government had sought the transfer of a country’s domain name from a private company. TradeNZ, represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, filed a complaint against Virtual Countries in August to the U[N]s’ World Intellectual Property Organisation... The complaint and subsequent submissions said the name “New Zealand” was a trademark in the hands of the Government and that the domain name had been registered in “bad faith”. TradeNZ said this was done in two ways – by Virtual Countries registering newzealand.com in contravention of the name being a trademark and that the purpose of obtaining the domain name was to sell it for a substantial profit. However, [a]... three-member WIPO panel... ruled that Virtual Countries had not acted in bad faith and instead criticised N[Z] for taking the case forward. It said TradeNZ was guilty of “domain name hijacking” and said it had abused domain use disputes policies by taking out the proceedings. A... lawyer for Virtual Countries... was not surprised by the ruling. “The decision is in line with other decisions which have almost uniformly ruled in favour of geographic domain name owners,” said [the lawyer]. “It’s also consistent with longstanding trademark principles which allow for the unfettered use of geographic terms.” TradeNZ has 10 days to appeal.

...Tuvalu, the world’s smallest economy, is on track to become one of the richest per capita nations thanks to its Internet domain name, dot TV, says [its] Communications Minister... In a country of just 10,600 people with a [GNP] per capita of \$US400... Tuvalu is now guaranteed \$US50 million through the sale of its Internet name... It is already receiving \$US1 million a quarter from its windfall. Once Tuvalu receives the \$US50 million – in 12 years at current rates – a new deal will be negotiated, the minister said. The country had already banked \$US15.5 million in the past nine months, firmly ending speculation that the Polynesian nation was being conned, [added the minister]... “It is working according to expectations... We really need the money. We have a lot of things we want to do. We want to build a decent hospital, a decent wharf. We’ve been using gravel roads all this time. It’s going to cost us... \$US5 million to do up the roads... [In addition, a]ll the outer islands have no electricity.”

...A Canadian company which promised... riches for Tuvalu... has postponed the dream... [Incidentally, t]elephone companies from Singapore and Indonesia scrambled yesterday to repair a break in an undersea telecommunications cable that led to major internet traffic jams for millions of users worldwide. Singapore Telecommunications said it had sent a cable ship to repair the SEA-ME-WE 3 cable, which was cut between Singapore and Jakarta on Monday. The 38,000km cable... – [that] began operating only last year... – ...links A[US], Asia and Europe. It is... the world’s longest telecommunications system... [and] one of the world’s busiest internet cables. The cause of the damage was not known but possibilities include a ship’s anchor or earthquake... It would take a number of days to repair the cable. Telstra, A[US]’s biggest internet provider... – with... 650,000 customers – initially lost 65[%] of its international capacity... Telstra said its Big Pond network had been virtually closed but it had been able to reroute traffic and was now operating at 75[%] capacity. It posted a warning on its website that long delays were to be expected during peak traffic times on international connections from Australia... • List[ed] next are other recent internet[... events... *March 12* T[here was a ‘call to remove ID from internet usage. But opponents complained that act would protect’ paedophil]es *July 13* Taliban bans the use of the internet *August 5*...

From August, Telecom [has been charging] 2c a minute after the first 10 hours a month spent using the Internet through existing local telephone numbers... mak[ing] it more difficult for... Internet providers[’]... customers to reach them... Users [are only] able to avoid the charge by dialling through numbers with an 0867 prefix, giving Telecom the ability to disconnect them when the telephone traffic becomes too heavy. Internet companies are outraged by the move, which they say... inconvenience[s] customers and cost[s] them money to implement... Ihug... estimated it would cost... up to \$500,000 to contact its customers, revise letterheads and send out new CDs so customers could reprogram computers to the 0867 access number... The director of Ihug... said it and 20 other I[SP]s were gearing up for legal action... [Telstra]Clear is regarded as the biggest loser if its 90,000 Clear Net customers take the carrot and move to 0867 access, since the new number would sidestep the interconnection agreement between the companies. It is in a number range not covered by the agreement. Under the four-year-old interconnection deal, [Telstra]Clear receives 1.75c a minute for each call from the Telecom network to Clear Net. Based on Telecom’s average monthly Internet usage figure of 23.5 hours, that would equate with revenue of \$26.5 million a year, an amount that would go straight to the profit line. On that basis, if all calls to Ihug were also to be routed through [Telstra]Clear’s network, the cost to Telecom could double to about \$50 million, which Telecom would obviously want to avoid.

...In its third judicial encounter in a week, Telecom was told last night it must restrict internet traffic during overloads across all providers... using Telecom’s 0867 access regime... including Xtra, its own internet service... even though its numbers use the 0873 prefix... Telecom[’s] spokesperson... said the company had sought clarification from [a High Court judge] in the latest round of its fight against i4free, the free [‘internet access forever’ ISP. The High Court judge] had ruled on Friday that Telecom could not discriminate against i4free by restricting only its calls if Telecom exchanges became overloaded... Earlier yesterday, i4free rejected Telecom claims that [Telstra]Clear... is underwriting its High Court action against Telecom’s attempts to block its service. “We are paying our own legal bills, which we envisage will be a huge part of our costs,”... [the] chief executive of i4free... said. These costs amounted to \$20,000 a day. But [Telstra]Clear had provided the High Court with an indemnity against any Telecom counter-claim for damages should i4free be unable to meet them from its own resources. [However,]Telecom... reiterated the claim that [Telstra]Clear, and... British Telecom, were working in an alliance with i4free. [Telstra]Clear has made no secret that it is sharing interconnection revenue with i4free that Telecom pays to terminate calls to i4free on the [Telstra]Clear network. Telecom’s spokesperson said that, and the fact [Telstra]Clear was prepared to stand behind i4free to the tune of \$500,000 in the event of a successful damages claim, were proof. [The spokesperson also said Telstra]Clear had rejected an effort by the Government to broker a standstill arrangement which would have ended the 2c-a-minute charge imposed by Telecom on internet calls outside its 0867 access regime. The offer also preserved [Telstra]Clear’s rights to interconnection revenue from Telecom until the end of this year when its interconnection agreement expires. Telecom said yesterday that the... arrangement had a clause enabling interconnection revenue to escalate in line with the total growth of the market[– which] Telecom estimated... would grow by 70[%] this year – although]... the... interconnection payments to [Telstra]Clear would be based on the level prevailing in January... But [Telstra]Clear... said the offer had been a “Clayton’s” one because it was based on January levels, after which [Telstra]Clear had lost a large number of customers due to Telecom’s introduction of its 0867 regime. Telecom yesterday declined to confirm reports it had paid up to \$20 million to ISP ihug [– whose “endless internet” service has just been reduced from \$45 to \$34.95 a month’ –]to encourage it to make the transition to the 0867 regime.

...[Telstra]Clear... is expected today to try to join i4free’s High Court proceedings against Telecom as the battle over free internet service intensifies. [Telstra]Clear declined to comment on its strategy yesterday, but it is already closely involved in i4free’s free internet service which [has a slower delivery speed than paid Internet services and]relies on Telecom’s local lines for getting calls from customers. Telecom had restricted calls to i4free last week until a temporary injunction ordered it to treat i4free on equal terms as other [ISP]s. Telecom had argued the flood of calls to i4free ran the risk of jamming up one of its key exchanges... i4free’s chief executive, rejects the suggestion that the share it gets of the 2c a minute in interconnection revenue from Telecom is the driving force in the fledgling provider’s business plan. If that were the case, [its chief executive] says, i4free could expect a short life since its slice of interconnection revenue will disappear when [Telstra]Clear’s interconnection agreement with Telecom expires at the end of the year. Instead, i4free will earn its keep from... a “next-generation” consumer marketing and shopping network

model that has been successful overseas. Advertising will play a small part. While adverts will eventually be on screen 30[%] of the time, they will occupy less than 3[%] of the space. If staying with [Telstra]Clear has bought a fight with Telecom, [i4free's chief executive] says it is for the good reason that [Telstra]Clear's internet links cost a third of those offered by Telecom. Nevertheless, if Telecom was prepared to pay the \$16 million to \$20 million it is reputed to have paid ihug to move on to its 0867 access network, i4free would be delighted to shift.

...Apart from a few isolated cases, Telecom's 0867 system is not harming the general consumer interest – yet, says the Consumers' Institute. [The institute's c]hief executive... said Telecom's battle with [Telstra]Clear... had so far only "inconvenienced a few who had lost their services for a short time." [The CEO] believed the issue washed over the heads of the vast majority of users. However, [it]... looked to the future with "considerable trepidation. If one or the other wins this high-stakes game then that spells bad news for the consumer. Anyone who dominates the market has the ability to up their prices and do whatever they like." One consumer who [the CEO] agreed was definitely disadvantaged by the 0867 deal was [a Telstra]Clear user... of Dunedin. Mrs W... wrote to... [the PM] "as an ordinary N[Z] housewife who is trying hard to give her family the benefits of new technology." [Mrs W] complained of "one of the most blatant abuses of a company's power" that [the housewife] had personally experienced. To stay within the confines of a tight family budget, Mrs W... said they had decided to join [Telstra]Clear's fixed-rate Internet plan costing \$39.95 a month. However, [the family]... began to receive connection bills from Telecom amounting to \$80.76 for [one month] and \$63.76 for [the next]. Like many other 0867 users, Mrs W... complains of frequent disconnections, which sometimes occur after her being online for only 20 seconds. Each reconnection is being charged, and [the family] was billed for 127 connections in [the first month alone. Telstra]Clear reimburses its clients in these situations – but with toll-call credits rather than cash. As Mrs W... rarely makes toll calls, her credit with [Telstra]Clear now stands at about \$200. "I don't see why I should have to pay Telecom when my contract is with [Telstra]Clear,"... Mrs W... sent copies of her letter to Telecom... While the [PM]'s office... acknowledged her letter... Mrs W... has yet to hear from Telecom.

...Mounting... 0867 Internet connection charges... forced an Auckland ClearNet business user to switch to the Telecom-owned [ISP] Xtra... Albany-based Internet developer BJC Services... began to receive connection bills from Telecom... "At first, when the bills were just a few hundred dollars, it was just an inconvenience. When we stated getting charged \$500... a month we realised that we had a serious problem." ...as an Internet company, BJC was online for most of the day. Its... Internet connection charges... have amounted to about \$2000... BJC's credit with [Telstra]Clear also stands at roughly \$2000... [but BJC has] no chance of using this credit, which was not transferable. "If we had let it run, by the end of the year we would have owed Telecom \$8000 and had \$8000 credit with [Telstra]Clear." After consulting with ClearNet, [BJC]... was left with no option but to change... [However, Telecom] said BJC had not been forced to go to Xtra as there were more than 80 ISPs to choose from.

...HOW YOU CAN AVOID PAYING "AFTER-10-HOUR" INTERNET CHARGES... [T]here are about 120 [ISPs in NZ] – and about 100 of them use Telecom's Internet networks. If you are with an [ISP] that doesn't, you are picking up a 2c-per-minute charge on your Telecom bill after spending more than 10 hours online. And you don't have to... If you sign up by the [end of next month] with one of... [37 listed ISPs] that use Telecom's special networks, Telecom will refund all the "after-10-hours" charges that you have paid so far. And you won't be charged them again.

...Telecom and [Telstra]Clear... could be on the brink of a new era after yesterday signing a 3 1/2 month ceasefire in their internet interconnection war. The agreement is intended as a prelude to a more lasting peace based on a comprehensive interconnection agreement, to replace the... 1986 agreement... expiring at the end of the year... Changes in key personnel at [Telstra]Clear and Telecom in the form of appointments of two [gals] appear to have made the difference. Observers say that [Telecom's new chief executive and the new] alliance director of [Telstra]Clear... have developed a rapport that has eased the path in high-level negotiations that began in earnest only two weeks ago... Among key points of yesterday's agreement are: • ...Telecom has agreed to suspend its 2c a minute charge on local dial-up connections used by [Telstra]Clear's internet customers. In return, [Telstra]Clear has given up its long-standing opposition to 0867 numbers, instead agreeing to encourage its customers to make the move... • [Telstra]Clear will withdraw its application for an interim injunction requiring Telecom to honour the terms of the number portability agreement between the two companies. • Telecom will not appeal against a related interim injunction gained by free internet provider i4free last month... Meanwhile... Telecom's submission to the Government's telecommunications inquiry admits that much of its network is not up to scratch. It says it will cost at least \$550 million to upgrade it[s network] to standards already regarded as unacceptably slow for internet traffic... [– including] replacing... its... outmoded... Neac switches, the exchange workhorses for the past 15 to 20 years, ...with new generation switches that will integrate voice with data... In Telecom's view, that investment is not economic... [Furthermore,] rushing in now could be money wasted. Alternative technologies such as wireless and satellite might do the job better. [Telecom has been] using the problems related with managing internet traffic to justify its... [contention that while] residential voice traffic should stay free... it deserves compensation for carrying local internet use since that accounts for more than half the traffic, and is growing... [This position suggests that a more lasting peace between Telecom and TelstraClear may be difficult to achieve – Telecom still] argues that... the kind of... 2c a minute "internet tax" that has aroused discontent... should be invisible to consumers, and should be paid by [ISPs (who)] can work out how much to pass on to customers[], while [Telstra]Clear... contends Telecom should subsidise free internet by paying interconnection charges to [ISPs] on its network, just as in Britain interconnection revenue is split between the carrier and the [ISP]. That conveniently overlooks that in Britain local calls for voice and internet are charged on a timed basis, so it pays the carrier to encourage free [ISP]s to get network time higher.

...The days of surfing the net for free appear to be numbered. I4free will downgrade its free internet service after being told by [Telstra]Clear... that it will no longer receive interconnect revenue. From today, any of i4free's 145,000 customers who try to access the web will be redirected to a page inviting them to join a new paid-for service at www.slingshot.co.nz, offering unlimited internet access, free home page hosting and up to seven e-mail addresses for \$14.95 a month including GST. According to i4free[']s executive director... customers may elect to stay with the free service but will probably get busy signals and slower performance as modems and other resources are transferred to the paid service. Industry sources suggest that rival free [ISP] freenet will announce a similar plan next week... i4free and [Telstra]Clear had been working for months to replace an interconnect revenue sharing agreement... "We [thought we] would continue to receive interconnect revenue... However, it seems [Telstra]Clear had some quiet discussions with Telecom... whe[re] they agreed to put a stop to that. They've stuffed us, basically,"... While i4free would now approach Telecom directly for interconnection revenue, which it believes it is entitled to according to recent Government telecommunications industry reforms, such an agreement could take months. According to [the executive director], i4free has already invested \$2.5 million in its network and would have spent a further \$5 million to continue providing a wholly free service over the next year. [A TelstraClear spokesperson]... refused to comment, saying details of negotiations between [Telstra]Clear and its customers were confidential. [But the spokesperson confirmed that Telstra]Clear's zfree service, which stopped accepting new customers last month, would continue to provide free connections to existing users.

...A... computer game enthusiast has been found slumped dead at a terminal in a game centre after playing non-stop for hours, police said yesterday. The 28-year-old was found slumped at his screen on Saturday after... apparently... play[ing] the online game Diablo II since early Friday evening local time... [A]n autopsy would be carried out to determine the cause of the death... His death at a game centre in Hong Kong's Yuen Long district came eight months after a 17-year-old game centre employee was found dead after playing Diablo II through the night. Warnings were posted in cyber cafes around Hong Kong advising customers not to spend too long playing games uninterrupted after the death of the teenager...

Clamps are likely on internet cafes after New Lynn police claim a sharp rise in child crime is down to a sudden proliferation of outlets in the area. A... community constable... also says the unsupervised access to the internet means police are pulling children as young as 12 out of the

internet cafes at all hours of the day and night following calls from frantic parents who cannot find their kids. "In some of the cafes the kids have been on the internet for a couple of days. You get a phone call from a mum who hasn't seen her son for over a day and you find them asleep at a computer in the internet cafe." But [the c]onstable... says their biggest concern is that the new craze has led to an increase in petty crime including wilful damage, assault, street robberies and the lighting of fires. "It's because this is a new fad – just like the old spacies parlours." But... at least spacy parlours shut at a reasonable hour... "These cafes just sprung up without any regulation and control,"... says... [a c]ouncillor and New Lynn resident... [who] has visited a number of the cafes and seen the problem first hand... "They don't seem to take any responsibility for their clientele." ...A local government bylaw that regulates amusement arcades will be amended to include internet cafes... One local business owner, who didn't want to be named, say[s] local businesses are worried they are suffering as a result and any regulation would be welcome.

...The manager of an Auckland cyber cafe says the only way to tell whether complicated trading hours laws applied to his business was to risk a hefty fine. LiveWire Mid City[']s manager... was fairly sure... [it] would not fall foul of the law, but [has engaged a] business consultant... to make certain. "After the experience of garden centres a couple of years ago, we decided that if we were going to open, then we were going to open legally." [The manager] rang the Department of Labour, which told him that shops supplying services could open on [religious public holidays]... and until noon on Anzac Day. Those supplying goods could not... [Unfortunately, while] some of the cafe's trading provided a service... the cafe also supplied materials, which... could be construed as providing goods – a \$1000 fine according to the law. "The [department's] helpline couldn't tell me whether it was legal or not – they just kept quoting from the [Holidays Act]." The[... acting general manager of the Department of Labour's labour inspectorate, said people had to decide whether they fitted in with the law or not. "A lot of people would prefer an absolute judgment, but at the end of the day it's their call. If there is any doubt in their mind, they should consider closing." As a result of the *Herald's* interest, [the acting general manager] offered to send an inspector to assess the cafe's legal position... [In international news, f]ive lawyers at a leading London law firm face disciplinary action after a lewd e-mail from a girlfriend became internet gossip around the world... [A] recently qualified solicitor at the firm... was sent an e-mail about a sperm bank from a close friend... The pair exchanged messages, with [the girlfriend] recounting her satisfaction at their recent intimate encounter and revealing her sexual tastes. [The solicitor] then forwarded the conversation to six ...friends. Three minutes later, one of them sent the message to 11 other people. The next person forwarded it to 12 people. Within hours copies were in the U[S] and Japan. Within 24 hours, millions had read it, including employees in other large London law firms. A... spokes[person for the firm said the five lawyers] faced censure.

...Cyber-cops set bells ringing... Political activists say the police have enough trouble distinguishing between lawful protest and criminal activity in the real world without being let loose in cyberspace. Word that Government officials are preparing a law change to let police pursue criminals through the internet by intercepting their e-mail is ringing alarm bells with civil libertarians and other activists. The Internet Society shares their concern, and does not want the police to be given power to routinely monitor e-mail on the mere off-chance of catching criminals... The police can now gain interception warrants... to eavesdrop on phone calls, but the Telecommunications Act has no provisions extending this to electronic communications. Police believe criminals talk to each other by e-mail to avoid phone taps... [The]Information Technology and Associate Justice Minister... wants to exempt the police from the provisions of legislation against computer hacking which [the minister] hopes to take to the cabinet.

...Hacking advice lets viewers watch Sky for free Sky's UHF TV channels have been hacked thanks to a piece of software freely downloaded over the internet. But the person who detailed on his website yesterday how [it] had used the software now wished [it] had kept mum. "I... just wanted to see if it was possible," said... [the consultant, who] had heard for years about people using the software and decided to try it out – "totally for scientific purposes"... [The] consultant... then described the process on his website... [Hi]s web address was referred to in an article on a local news site, www.aardvark.co.nz. Using a PC equipped with a TV tuner card connected to a UHF aerial, [the consultant] could view a range of Sky's subscriber channels... Several reader comments on the Aardvark site indicate that other users in N[Z] are also using the software to unscramble Sky's signal. The information, now removed from [the consultant's] site, told how the software enabled "decoding of VideoCrypt encrypted television signals." VideoCrypt is the algorithm used for scrambling Sky TV's signals. Sky... said this was the first instance of hacking the signal in N[Z] of which it was aware. "We'll look into it and take steps to deal with it immediately." The hack can be applied only to Sky's UHF service, not Sky Digital.

...Free calls, snooping easy for hackers Fraudulent hacking to get free cellphone calls – a major problem overseas – will remain a risk in N[Z] until local phone companies move to a fully digital system. A U[S] security expert... has contacts in the N[Z] hacking community and said locals found it simple to listen in on calls and get free phone calls. The risk is with analogue cellphones, which broadcast a unique serial number. Hackers can use radio frequencies to tune into the frequency, capture all the traffic and isolate the serial numbers. [The expert], a director of Secure Computing, was in Sydney for the launch of the firm's special unit aimed at helping N[Z] and AUS[n] businesses to protect their systems from hacking and internet fraud. "In New York City they expect that 40[%] of traffic is fraud so they're putting in digital as fast as they can." Telecom already uses sophisticated monitoring equipment to detect the fraud and so far has found only three such cases. However, Telecom's head of fraud management... said there could be fraud that the firm was unaware of and advised customers to report any calls that should not have appeared on their accounts. "We advise our own people not to say anything over the analogue network they wouldn't want anyone else to hear." Scanners, available at... [e]lectronics... stores... sell for a couple of hundred dollars and allow users to listen to calls on the analogue network. [The head] said Telecom's plan to move to a fully digital network over the next couple of years would end the risk. Meanwhile, [the director] said the cloning of analogue cellphones to make free calls was a major underground industry in the US. The... [director] – who also organises the Black Hat Briefings and Defcon annual hackers' conferences in the US – said analogue technology was built without an eye to security. "You can steal the identity of someone else's phone and put it in your own so someone else gets the bill when you make calls." [The director] said the equipment is the same as that used by phone companies to test their phones. "Now you can do it [hijack a phone identity] with just a laptop and a radio receiver,"...

Nuisance phone calls could be a sign of a computer hacker at work, say the police, who yesterday found a school pupil was responsible for more than 4000 "hang-up" calls. Paraparaumu police phone lines were flooded yesterday morning with complaints from people fed up with continued night-time phone calls where the caller hung up as they answered... [T]he calls were traced to a Waikanae home where a 17-year-old had been using software known as a "war-dialler." Although police believe the teenager was only experimenting and had nothing sinister in mind, computer experts say the programme is widely used by hackers and can be downloaded from the Internet. An Auckland-based computer forensic expert... said the programme allowed people to make thousands of calls with the press of a button to find which lines were being used by a computer... [P]eople should call Telecom or the police[– whose 'Wanganui computer was recently cracked by hackers' –] if they suspected their phone line was being targeted by a war-dialler... □ 160,000: [This is the n]umber of times every year that hackers infiltrate the Pentagon's computer system.

...Microsoft blocking hackers A security hole in Microsoft internet software that could have opened the door for malicious e-mailers to take control of home computers appears to have been plugged by the software giant. Microsoft had been warning users that a potential entry point for malicious hackers existed in some of its internet software. In a serious case, it could allow computer code of the malicious user's choice to execute on the recipient's computer. Such code could take any action that the user was authorised to take on the machine, including reformatting the hard drive, communicating with an external website or changing data on the computer. There have been no reports of any such hackers exploiting this to damage computers, and business networks are not vulnerable. A software "patch" has been made available on the Microsoft website. The company rushed yesterday to stress that the flaw did not affect Internet Explorer 5.01 Service Pack 1 or installed Internet Explorer 5.5 on any system... This meant the most popular home operating systems, Windows 95 and... 98, were not vulnerable... 30 people had called... Microsoft

N[Z]... to find out more about the notice... [A]nyone with concerns about it should ring a phone number set up by the company or visit the Microsoft N[Z] website.

...*Cyber-raid hobbles web users...* Thousands of internet users were disrupted yesterday after hackers forced Telecom to sever its internet link with the outside world. It is understood that Telecom cut the link to its U[S]-based internet supplier, AboveNet, about 12.30 pm. Full services had been restored by 3 pm. During that time 310,000 users of Telecom's Xtra service, as well as customers of several other ...ISPs... were unable to access overseas web pages. The denial-of-service attack – which bombards [ISP]s with spurious requests for information – was similar to those that shut down popular U[S] websites such as Yahoo and Amazon.com this year. The Telecom attack was apparently launched by [USers. The]... chief executive officer of Auckland web security company SecureNet, said this was a major attack on Telecom... But... [s]witching off the U[S] internet feed was a panic measure that had compromised customers who depended on the web... “This is the sort of thing Telecom should be able to handle in 30 seconds by switching to an alternative feed. It shows a complete lack of planning for what was a relatively straightforward occurrence.”

...*Cyber chaos as the Love Bug strikes...* Analogies between biological and electronic epidemics were rammed home yesterday as the world's worst computer virus outbreak hit N[Z]. Swifter than the spread of any human venereal disease, the virus had already been christened the “Love Bug” en route from the Philippines before many unsuspecting office workers found it lurking in their e-mail. The virus began its rampage as an e-mail program with the subject line “Love You,” but Internet servers were yesterday night intercepting mutated forms of the message aimed at penetrating hastily erected electronic barriers. An early variation renamed the message “Fwd: Joke” with an attached document labelled: “Very Funny.vbs” but with the same devastating though invisible contents. The attachment was originally alluringly titled: “Love-Letter-For-You.TXT.vbs.” Computer experts trying to head off havoc had a simple message: treat the e-mail like any unwanted love letter and throw it away unopened (or in other words, hit that delete button). A[n A]uckland University computer and network security manager... said there was no substitute for common sense and sound judgment when confronted with an unknown e-mail attachment. “I spend a lot of my time telling people that if they get an [unknown] attachment, don't open it. I say to myself: When did the dean last send you a message saying, ‘I love you’?” Merely opening the covering e-mail was not enough to trigger the program, but there was no love waiting for computer users seduced into launching the attached document. Instead, the program started chewing into graphics, music and some text files written in what is called visual basic script, renaming them so computers would find it difficult if not impossible to recover them. It even set about searching for Internet passwords, including those for online bank accounts, which it then tried to e-mail to overseas Websites now being pursued by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation. The virus also replicated itself by worming its way into e-mail address books, hurling itself at every listed contact, even before it dawned on previous recipients that they had spread the infection to customers and friends. One *Herald* reporter received a declaration of love in an exotic language unknown to him, before... realis[ing] the name of the sender was of a Norwegian journalist to whom [the reporter] gave a business card about six months ago. Luckily, the newspaper's information technology boffins had already alerted all staff to the outbreak, even though the *Herald* uses a different e-mail server from the Microsoft Outlook package most susceptible to the bug. One Auckland printing company was reported by an associate to have lost large volumes of customers' data, but that could not be independently verified. Other large users, such as State Insurance and the Government's education and fisheries ministries, voluntarily disabled their systems to limit any damage. Parliament faced none of the disruption which crippled communications in... Britain's House of Commons, as [NZ's] MPs were forewarned by news bulletins on their way to work... The widespread damage caused by the Love Bug is still being collated and is expected to continue all weekend. Casualties thus far, in... Britain... include... Barclays Bank, British Telecom, the BBC and News International. Up to 70[% of British] PCs have received the potentially damaging e-mail... Denmark's Parliament, ministries and major television companies were affected[, as was] Switzerland's Government and several banks... Germany estimated that up to 80[%] of computers were hit... [In the US, the] offices of Microsoft, Ford... Vodafone... and the Mayo Clinic medical centre... were all affected. The Pentagon and other US Government computers were hit, but the virus did not affect any classified systems, said [a spokesperson] for the Defence Department and the CIA. The White House said the virus had not penetrated its system.

...*Techno-terrorists have brave new world at their mercy...* The Love Bug has wreaked havoc worldwide... Brokerages, food companies, media outlets, car and technology giants as well as universities and medical institutions have been affected by the fastest-moving and most widespread computer virus yet seen... The virus began its rapid spread on Thursday from Manila across Asia, then swiftly through the time zones to Europe before looping... to America. There, Congress was forced to shut down its e-mail system after several [members of C]ongress fell for the chain-letter style virus with the inviting headline... “It's clever because it seems like a love letter and it appears to come from someone you know, so you are tempted to open it,” said... Sophos, a British anti-virus software company... Damage in the millions, or even billions, of dollars from lost data, interrupted work, and the cost of fixing the problems is expected. The Love Bug shows once again an attacker with apparently limited computer skills can carve a deep scar on the face of the computing world, mirroring the destructive but technically primitive attacks like [last year's] Melissa outbreak... Melissa infected 300,000 computers worldwide before its designer, who named it after a lap dancer [the designer] knew and faces up to 10 years' jail, was put on trial in the U[S] in December. Just six weeks ago, an Auckland public relations consultant received a virus called Pretty Park which [the consultant] unwittingly passed to hundreds of media contacts. But the Love Bug has flabbergasted computer experts by the speed at which it is spreading – twice as fast as Melissa in the first 10 hours [after] it was detected... – and because of its lethal multipurpose payload.

...Thousands of N[Z] businesses and personal computers were still infected last night by... [t]he Love Bug... computer virus... The most damage has come from the flood of e-mails generated by the virus, causing mail servers everywhere to be shut down... The cost of... the virus... is expected to far out-strip the bill from viruses such as Melissa, which rang up a \$160 million pricetag... Office workers are [today being] warned to be alert for copycat versions of the Love Bug... Experts have identified at least nine, and say there may be more. Information technology chiefs... yesterday reported that the number of hits had slowed from two a second to just under one a minute. But they expect crunch time to come this morning when thousands of workers return to their offices. “We would consider Monday morning... as being a moment of truth,” said... an executive of Telecom's Xtra... “I guess on Tuesday morning as the rest of the world goes back to work will be another moment of truth...” ...[the executive] said several Xtra teams had worked long hours since Friday to oversee a filtering programme to stop infected attachments on e-mails from getting to the service's 275,000 subscribers... In Manila, police said they had identified the [perso]n who, under the codename Spyder, is suspected of starting the Love Bug... Asked when police expected to make an arrest, [the police chief] said: “It's hard [to say]. The suspect is a moving target.” The *Washington Post* newspaper said in its Saturday editions that the... F[B]I had traced the virus to the Philippines through a fairly obvious electronic trail and was ready to seize computers used in the attack once it got permission. But officials said difficulties in finding a judge to sign a search warrant on a weekend were stalling the probe. “We're trying to find a judge who will understand this emergency, but it's Sunday and I am not betting on it,” an FBI official said... The suspect is believed to be a 23-year-old... living in the crowded middle-class district of Pandacan in Manila... Access Net Inc, a Manila [ISP], said the virus first spread through two e-mail addresses in its prepaid Internet service network, Supernet.

...*Super-bug chaos...* Get ready for a virus that will make last week's ‘Love Bug’ look laughable – an invisible menace to every computer in the world... You sit down, put your coffee next to your mouse, fire up your computer and click to check your e-mail. And before you have even looked for any suspicious messages from “NastyVirus.com,” it could be too late. Just by clicking on “Get Mail,” you could have turned your expensive machine into a pile of useless plastic. It is every computer user's worst nightmare – and it is coming soon to a screen near you. Brace yourself for the supervirus. The “Love Bug” has given us a taste of what could be coming... An estimated 20[%] of the world's computers were affected. Yet it could have been a lot worse. The Love Bug proliferated at such a fast rate that Internet systems could not handle the overload. That caused

temporary collapse, but little long-term damage. Cyber-sabotage of a more deadly kind was indicated by a development in November when researchers at Network Associates, a [US] computer security firm, received a series of e-mails with the subject heading "Bubbleboy is back!" It was, says... [the] director of the company's anti-virus team, "a watershed." The Bubbleboy virus broke the long-standing rule that you have to open an e-mail attachment to become infected. Once this one was in your inbox, it was too late. Virus writers have made advances in other areas. In April last year, a virus called Chernobyl was activated in hundreds of thousands of computers in Asia and the Middle East, striking on the anniversary of the nuclear accident it was named after. Not only did it wipe out stored data, it destroyed BIOS – the basic instructions that tell a machine how to start. Now virus writers have married the destructive capabilities of Chernobyl with the invasive capabilities of the Love Bug. The combination is the supervirus. Anti-virus experts say... at least 50 such superviruses have already been detected on the Internet. None has yet been launched at the public. Some may not work, some may be shot down by existing virus defences – [but the]... damage a successful supervirus could do is almost incalculable. Authorities are focusing on the threat from terrorist groups, who say they might use viruses to extort money or blackmail Governments into giving in to political demands. One source close to British intelligence services says MI5 believes the Basque separatist group Eta and Kurdish terror organisations have drawn up plans aimed at destroying air-traffic control systems through the use of hacking or viruses... "The supervirus is going to happen soon," the source said. "There are people with that intention." Another threat is from hostile Governments. The US Defence Department believes 120 countries pose a serious threat to cyber-security. They include... Iraq... and Serbia. The Chinese are believed to have created military regiments dedicated to cyber-warfare. Experts say national security authorities are only just waking up to the threat from the Internet... Many... also say the security agencies are looking in the wrong place... [The director of the] Berkeley Security Bureau, said those who launch virus attacks are more likely to be "cyber-vandals" than "cyber-terrorists." "Terrorists make targeted demands and like a high degree of control over their operations... A supervirus is more likely to be the brainchild of a spotty adolescent than some terrorist mastermind." The standard profile of a virus writer is a young [guy] with a grievance... often a professional programmer who feels his skills are not being recognised. Hidden behind a series of fake and anonymous e-mail accounts, the virus writer is rarely detectable. But investigators seem confident they are close to catching the [perso]n behind the love bug.

...A Swedish schoolboy who is fast gaining a reputation as one of the world's top hacker hunters was the brains behind tracing the creator of the Love Bug Internet virus. Armed only with a [PC] and his wits, [the schoolboy] quickly traced the Love Bug to its source in the Philippines. "It was really fun," said [the schoolboy], aged 19, who also helped the... F[B]I to trace the creator of the Melissa virus last year. Partly as a result of his efforts, Manila police detained... a 27-year-old employee in the computer section of a major Philippine bank. [The 27-year-old] was released yesterday after questioning. Manila police believe [the 27-year-old] was one of at least 10 people connected to a computer school run by the former head of the Philippines Y2K programme who were involved in the virus... Asked how [someone] could find the culprit so quickly, [the schoolboy said it]... used... hacking skills to get into computer addresses to which only Philippine programmers have access. "I found viruses [the 27-year-old] had written but not released. They gave him away... Hackers like to sign their files so they have some way of proving they were responsible for them." But... the hunt was not over yet. Police still had to find those responsible for spreading mutations of the ILOVEYOU virus. "I'm on to a few of them,"... One of the new variants is Friendmes, which experts say is two-thirds more destructive than the original... and can corrupt all computer files... Twenty variations of the virus had now been detected. • ...Like their human counterpart, computer viruses' main purpose in life is to go forth and multiply... But it is worth remembering the fundamental difference: people viruses can hurt, even kill, but a computer attacked with software code carrying out programmed instructions is just a machine. It can be fixed. That is not always a comforting thought for the people using computers struck down by a virus attack – especially if they have diligently kept up to date with their anti-virus software. What annoys people about viruses such as Love[Bug] is that for a short time their anti-virus software is useless – like buying insurance that works after the event. Th[eir software has no impact until] the anti-virus vendors isolate the new virus strain and post a fix. The fix is now available for Love[Bug] and it will stop further infections. But that is little solace for the thousands infected. It is even more annoying that users cannot buy real insurance against this scourge. So who is to blame? Many point the finger at Microsoft, saying that its e-mail software... should not allow the ".vbs" script used by Love[Bug] to run... Microsoft advises users that they can turn this "feature" off. Do it now – the instructions are on Microsoft's Website. Many more viruses will come using this technique. Others propose a more radical solution: stop using Outlook and find different e-mail software. From Microsoft's point of view, this is unfair. Virus writers attack Outlook because it is the software used by most Internet users and gives vandals the maximum impact when they set their virus creations loose. Microsoft cannot be blamed for the market success that makes it a natural target.

...An Auckland software developer who found a security flaw in Microsoft's e-mail software that [it] believes could secretly unleash a "hell virus" says files on his discovery have been stolen from his computer... [The] creative director of Arabesque Multimedia – who has a back-up of his find – discovered the flaw in Microsoft's Outlook Express programme while designing Java script software that automatically activates computer functions. "We discovered we could write a program that will activate any type of executable file on a computer through e-mail... Which means if we have your e-mail address we can control your computer – or attach a virus which could automatically send itself to every name in your address book without you even being aware of it. Using what I... found out, I could make a virus much worse than the 'I love you' bug because you wouldn't have the option of deleting the e-mail carrying the virus before it infected your computer – it would activate automatically whether you read the message or not." ...One person who experienced the effects was... a business acquaintance of [his] who had her computer disabled by e-mail. "I got an e-mail message from [him] which completely froze my computer. It started opening up windows, then it opened the Arabesque Website. Even after shutting down the system it was still there. [The developer] had to send me another e-mail which let me control my computer again." ...[the developer] alerted Microsoft's Security Response Centre in Redmond, Washington, but it said it could not find any "security vulnerability." [The developer also] e-mailed Government departments both in N[Z] and overseas, even contacting the... [CIA]. No one replied. Somebody must have been interested, however... "My computer had been acting strangely, then I noticed the missing files. The only... way they could disappear like that would be for someone to break in here and delete the files off my computer." [The developer] didn't bother going to the police because there was nothing... [to show them, but] is concerned hackers could work out how to use the program flaw... [A c]omputer forensics consultant... who works with the police on computer crime, studied [the developer]'s findings. "Even in this relatively harmless form this is a virus that would be very unwelcome on anybody's system. If it was compiled with malicious intent it could do catastrophic damage." ...[the consultant] had the virus scanned by Trendmicro.com, one of the top virus checking systems. The scan was unable to detect it... [The consultant believed] Microsoft... should take [the developer]'s claims seriously. "Anyone who says this is not a security concern would be very naive. [But the developer] has made Microsoft aware of it and if they don't take it seriously that's their concern." ...[Microsoft NZ] said the company never received the original warning message [the developer said it] sent. "We have no record of any communication with [him] until now. We still need to verify the situation and our security response team will investigate and evaluate it." PC users concerned about the threat have a simple solution: turn off the Java Script feature...

Checking your e-mail has become part of everyday routine for thousands of N[Z]ers, at home and in the office. But, by the time you've switched your machine on and checked your in-box for new messages, you might have unwittingly unleashed an invisible menace which could turn your expensive computer into a useless plastic box in seconds. The Love Bug computer virus which infected 20[%] of the world's computers within 36 hours of its release last week, was just a taste of what could be to come, according to computer experts... Nearly 50 viruses have been found which can infect a computer by simply downloading the e-mail. Combine this with the fact anti-virus software can't stop a brand new virus and you have

a recipe for disaster. Experts now believe new, quicker-spreading and more destructive viruses are just around the corner and could bring global economies to their knees... If such a virus were to fall into the hands of political extremists, it would be the most potent terrorist weapon ever devised. However, before you throw out your computer and return to carrier pigeon for communication, rest assured computer virus-writers – usually hackers – are very rarely motivated by the evil instincts of a terrorist. [A]British computer expert... who has spent a decade studying the virus-writing subculture, says hackers justifications run from “we do this because we can” to “because someone said we weren’t capable of doing it”... The term computer virus was first used... in 1984 and refers to a programme designed to corrupt (and copy itself into) other programmes and change the way they work. The odds of downloading one over the Internet have increased dramatically over recent years... The Love Bug virus is a worm virus because it moves around the computer, corrupts files and tries to duplicate itself to other files and computers. Other computer nasties include the Trojan horse – a programme which seems innocent but contains hidden functions which can either destroy computers or reveal personal information – and a logic or time bomb – a programme activated after or during a certain event. This may be after several uses or on a certain date. ● ...In just three months, the Internet has been transformed from El Dorado to a shadowed land. [Three months ago], tidal waves of junk messages crippled the Websites of billion-dollar dot-com companies that are touted as the world’s glittering economic future. And last week, the unlovely ILOVEYOU bug crippled millions of computers around the world... inflicting costs estimated at up to \$US10 billion. Shaken at this sudden exposure of its frailties, the Internet industry is looking to a key meeting in Paris next week for reassurance. Cybercrime detectives, Government officials and industry representatives from the Group of Eight... countries will assess the dangers facing the Internet and evaluate ways in which Governments, legislators and the information technology industry can combat the peril... Costly and infuriating, Internet sabotage is only the most visible and best-known part of the cybercrime iceberg. Lurking beneath the surface are... credit-card theft, copyright piracy, money laundering, trafficking in prescription medicines and trade fraud... gambling... cyber-stalking... paedophiles, pornography scams...

The e-mail virus called “Homepage” is continuing to irritate computer users, dragging some to pornographic websites. About 80,000 computers worldwide were infected with the virus in 24 hours this week... The virus is similar to the “I Love You” bug... The virus is spread by an e-mail with the... message reading “Hi! You’ve got to see this page! It’s really cool.”

...Without protection, email viruses can arrive and wreak havoc with your computer. Xtra’s anti-virus email filter helps stop known email viruses before they attack your personal files or damage your computer. What’s more, there’s no software to download or complicated set-up process to go through to get this protection... [W]e do everything for you, all at no additional cost... So if you are an Xtra customer you can relax...

Systems hold up despite Y2K bug worries... In most of 21st century N[Z], the lights stayed on after midnight, revellers were able to draw money out of ATM machines and keep on partying... The Y2K Readiness Commission declared at 2 am that none of its 12 monitoring sectors, including power and water supply, had reported falling prey to any failures by computers to switch over to the new century date. Russia reported about the same time that its first nuclear power reactor, in its eastern territory of Kamchatka, had survived the millennium changeover. But the readiness commission did not mention until asked about an hour-long power failure which had thousands of people in Alexandra, Roxburgh and surrounding districts breaking into their Y2K Readiness packs. Transpower said the cause was a suspected “line problem,” although it was still investigating. Police... patrolling boisterous millennium celebrations had a brief scare when their central computer was taken down for 15 minutes after midnight, not having been forewarned of a “planned outage.” ...Fears of computer viruses and hackers attacking Websites did not eventuate, but [an]Auckland University expert... warned that the all-clear could not be given until businesses began opening e-mail from Monday... With a twitchy globe watching to see how N[Z] coped as the first industrialised country to meet the millennium and possible computer failures, crisis management centres around the country were preparing for the worst. Expecting massive international traffic on its Website, the readiness commission had extra security measures in place... for its site, mirroring it in Washington to cope [with]up to 700,000 “hits” at once. The commission was confident most essential services would hold together, after the country spent up to \$1 b... future-proofing its computer systems... Auckland[’s] regional council critical services director... s[ummed up the situation]: “Nothing has happened – sorry, the world has not ended.”

*...12:00:30 Turn on computer. Lo, it boots! 12:01 Go to window, check heavens. Not an angel in sight. Rapture is running late. Hindus expecting a rain of blood will also be disappointed. The sky is filled with misty fire, but the explosions are entirely joyous. 12:04 Return to computer, delete provisional opening bar: “As fireworks lit up the night sky above the harbour bridge, the lights went out in Auckland.” Try to think of something else. 12:06 Call Telecom’s Y2K Management Centre in Wellington, where a cheerful... [voice] says that this whole Y2K thing looks as though it might be a big have... 12:18 Call The Radio Network... “No worries, mate!” [a voice] cries. Haven’t the heart to tell him that according to the Gartner Group... only 10[%] of all Y2K glitches will show up in the first two weeks of January... 12:30 Cellular network is getting a bit gummied up. Besides, I’m bored with phoning so try surfing instead. All the local sites I visit behave perfectly... 12:45 First yawn of the night. Distinctly recall someone mentioning a fridge full of champagne. 12:50 Note *Wired* report that messiah has shown up in Jerusalem. His [holiness]... smokes other people’s cigarettes incessantly, carries a cellphone and is trying to drum up business at the Petra Hotel... Disciples fail to flock. Messiah-biz is not what it was. 1:00 Well, it’s fairly clear that nothing much is going to happen. Civilisation, I’ve been assured by everyone who should know, looks like trundling on as usual for another thousand years[.] Don’t know whether to be relieved or disappointed. The small knot of apprehension with which I woke up this morning loosens, comes undone. For the first time tonight, something in me at last starts, tentatively, to rejoice. We’ve made it into a brand new millennium... and it looks as though we’re off to a fair start... Chicken Little was wrong. Now, where’s that champagne?*

...PHILIPPINE police... [were] ordered to tape over their gun barrels to stop them firing a few celebratory shots... Police [were told they could] still fire their guns in the line of duty, but such incidents w[ould] be fully investigated. Many Filipinos mark the New Year by firing guns into the air or setting off powerful firecrackers... [– a custom that] results in several deaths every year... [In Japan, t]he Tokyo Fire Department has issued a warning about the risks of eating gooey... “mochi”... rice cakes after a[n]... 86-year-old... choked to death on the traditional New Year’s fare and two others were hospitalised... [By the way, celebrations came early to Macau –]Portugal said farewell... to its last chunk of empire, with this tiny gambling enclave returning to Chinese sovereignty at midnight [12 days ago, ending]... 442 years of colonial rule. The Portuguese say they have left a proud legacy, although many Chinese who are the vast majority of the local population just wanted them to leave. The Chinese [actually don’t ‘celebrate New Year’s Day until the day of the first new moon following entry of the sun into zodiacal sign Aquarius – i.e. between Jan. 21 and Feb. 19’ (Maori) welcome New Year... [even later:] in June families and iwi gather together to observe Matariki... [– a]lso known to the Greeks as Pleiades, the Japanese as Subaru, and the [Brit]ish as the Seven Sisters... [–] as it rises before the sun[)].

...Britain is to scrap the debts of 41 of the world’s poorest countries, says [the]Chancellor of the Exchequer... [Hi]s pledge is a partial victory for Jubilee 2000 – the debt campaign pressure group set up in 1996 with the aim of achieving a debt-free start to the new millennium for a billion of the world’s poorest... The debts of 20 countries are to be written off immediately and the money for the remaining 21 held in trust until they are committed to ending conflicts, reducing poverty and improving health and education. At a “debt eradication” rally yesterday, [the chancellor]... also pledged that Britain would do its upmost to halve global poverty and make sure that every child in the world was in primary education by 2015.

...Listen to our children, people used to say, because they are the leaders of tomorrow. Now tomorrow has arrived. If the 20th century was dominated by the common [person], the new century, I believe, will belong to the Y2K generation: youth. By 2005 around 77 million of us are expected to be online globally. By 2025 computers are predicted to be a million times more powerful, even able to read a human mind... [Scientists have already] created a molecule-sized device to make computers electricity-free... It is the younger generation who will drive and control these technological advances. Eight years into the Internet revolution, the young already understand that in the next century you will be nothing without

a .com. This knowledge mixed with fearlessness and the skill to grasp the initiative will give them more power, more influence... than any other group in society. Two months ago a boy of 17 was appointed the youngest ever senior Website consultant at MGM... His is an appointment that would have been unthinkable... 35 years ago, but one that MGM is boasting about. Now business takes young talent seriously and shows teenage recruits off like trophies. It is why ICL, global computer giants, are already headhunting in schools to recruit the next generation... But, as with everything that is unknown, there is much to fear for 2000. My generation, born in long years of European peace, has no anxiety about war. But there is foreboding that we will spend much of the new century picking up the pieces of what has been broken in the last... We know... that it is the 20th century's advances which have left a gaping hole in the ozone layer... we know that cars have also helped to pollute the planet... [Yet, w]ith 555 million cars on the planet, we take it for granted that they will increase... The image of the planet as one big parking lot and building site is a disturbing one[– especially when you hear that, in]... the last century[, Earth's range]... of wildlife and plants... [decreased by] an estimated 25,000 species... [Incidentally, future members of our species] are... in danger of regressing to the shapes of their Neanderthal ancestors, as long hours spent in front of computer and television screens cause them to become round-shouldered and stooped.

...SPENDING too much time in front of a computer screen increases your chances of psychiatric illness by more than four times, doctors warn. A shocking new study has shown more and more people are in the grip of dangerous addictions to computers and display signs of personality disorders as a result... [Psychiatrists at] Iowa University... observed a group who spent more than 27 hours a week at their terminals. Most of the group reported feeling happy, excited and powerful when using a computer but admitted their relationships with family and friends suffered because of their addiction. One-third had tried to cut down on computer use but doing so made them feel anxious... 52[%] of the compulsive computer users suffered mood swings and antisocial disorders. Just 12[%] of a control group of non-computer users were found to have similar problems. "We don't know how many people are addicted and mentally affected by computers but it appears to be a growing problem,"... said... [the] American psychiatrist... who led the study... Doctors fear the addiction is being fuelled by the Internet.

...A new study... carried out by psychiatrists at Florida university... [confirms] internet addicts – who can spend up to three days at a time on-line – develop mental problems, including manic depression and anxiety attacks. Others lose their jobs and destroy their marriages... Some net addicts became angry... when cut off from their computers... "It surprised me how destructive it was in their lives,"[the] study leader... said... [A NZ] psychologist... who works for the Compulsive Gambling Society... said a similar situation was developing here... But there was no specific organisation to turn to for help... "We are getting more... calls from desperate relatives... I have spoken to family... of people who... surf the net till 5am and develop mental problems... from sleep deprivation, the isolation of sitting in front of a computer, and being unable to face up to real life."

...DESPITE AN ABUNDANCE OF INFORMATION AT OUR FINGERTIPS TODAY, AMERICA HAS GONE COLLECTIVELY STUPID... A CALIFORNIA REALTOR AND AMATEUR MAGICIAN, REALIZES IT MUST BE A CONSPIRACY... BUT WHY? AND WHO'S BEHIND IT? ...THEN IT HITS HIM... THE MORE IGNORANT THE POPULATION, THE EASIER IT IS TO CONTROL... REALIZING THE MEDIA ZOMBIES HAVE THE ATTENTION SPAN OF A FLASHBULB, MARK FIGURES [IT] NEEDS TO DISTRACT THEM LONG ENOUGH FOR REALITY TO HAVE A CHANCE TO SINK IN. BEING A MAGICIAN AND A REALTOR, MARK IS WELL-VERSED IN THE ART OF ILLUSION AND HOW TO REDIRECT THE FOCUS OF AN AUDIENCE... AND A SUPERHERO FOR THE INFORMATION AGE IS BORN...

NO LONGER A MEDIA ZOMBIE LIKE THE REST OF AMERICA, MARK... SETS OUT TO FREE OTHERS FROM THIS MINDLESS CONTROL... BUT... COULDN'T COMPETE WITH THE CELL PHONES, HEAD SETS, PAGERS, LAPTOPS AND PALM PILOTS TO GET THEIR ATTENTION. THAT'S WHEN IT HIT HIM. THE CAUSE OF ALL THIS HAD TO BE... INFORMATION OVERLOAD [–] THERE'S MORE NEWS DATA TO ASSIMILATE TODAY THAN AT ANY TIME IN HISTORY. THIS INCESSANT STREAM OF INFORMATIONAL NOISE CAUSES A SENSORY OVERLOAD, SHUTTING DOWN THE BRAIN'S NATURAL FILTERING SYSTEM OF RATIONALITY. WITHOUT THIS FILTER, MISINFORMATION IS ALLOWED TO FLOW IN UNABATED AND THE MIND IS NO LONGER ABLE TO FORM INDEPENDENT THOUGHT. WE BECOME ADDICTED TO SIMPLISTIC RHETORIC, TAKING THE PLACE OF THOUGHTFUL ANALYSIS. SOMETHING THIS WIDESPREAD *HAD* TO BE A CONSPIRACY. BUT WHO COULD BE BEHIND IT? POLITICIANS AND MEDIA TYPES AREN'T BRIGHT ENOUGH TO PULL THIS OFF... IT MUST BE THE ONES... WHO FEED OFF THE POWER...

IT'S hard to miss them. The epitome of casual "geek chic" and organised within the warranty of their Palm Pilots, they sip labour-intensive cafe lattes, chat on sleek cellphones and ponder the road to enlightenment. They worry about the environment as they drive... gas-guzzling sports utility vehicles to emporiums of haute design to buy a \$50 titanium spatula; they think about their tech stocks as they seek out – in Everest-worthy hiking boots – Tibetan artefacts in specialty shops. They... are "bourgeois bohemians" – or Bobos – ...the... "enlightened elite" of the information age, their lucratively busy lives a seeming synthesis of comfort and conscience, corporate success and creative rebellion. Well-educated [30- to 40-]somethings, they have forged a new social ethos from a logic-defying fusion of 1960s counter-culture and 1980s entrepreneurial materialism. So proclaims... the [US] journalist and self-avowed Bobo, who coined the phrase to describe the new cultural and corporate hegemony of his cosmopolitan, computer-savvy contemporaries, many of whom will no doubt recognise themselves in *Bobos In Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There*. "...Bobos define our age. They are the new Establishment. Their hybrid culture is the atmosphere we all breathe," [the] journalist declares in his "cosmic sociology" of Bobo manners and mores. "Their status codes now govern social life." A phenomenon in step with the hard-driving digital utopianism promised by the internet and its money-spinning "new economy," not to mention the Third Way politics of [the 42nd US President, Britain's Labour PM and NZ's own Labour PM], the Bobos have seized upon an ingenious way to sell without selling out – or so they tell themselves.

...*Empress is losing her clothes*... [The NZ Labour PM's one-gal] band style of Cabinet rule is over... For much of the past... [her] leadership has been impregnable. Capitalising on her long political apprenticeship, frank mastery over many portfolios and deep knowledge of Parliament and its deep shark-infested waters, [the PM] has ruled over her Cabinet – and a drip-fed news media happy to allow the traditional honeymoon to continue long after separation should have been imposed. But... [recent events have] exposed some big chinks in her armour. Despite publicity over Paintergate, when the powers that be backed away from pursuing criminal charges against her over paintings and doodles [the PM] falsely signed for charity auctions; and then Corngate, a clearly politically trumped-up ambush over allegations that genetically engineered sweetcorn was at large in N[Z, the PM] retains sufficient respect and goodwill to... [maintain] her stratospheric popularity and Labour's high poll ratings... But her legitimacy is reduced – and [the PM] knows it. Corngate has knocked her self-image as no other crisis has. This was abundantly clear when [the PM] started referring to herself in the third person – "the Prime Minister..." in her controversial television interview with TV3...

The aftermath of the ambush... "SO tell me. Are you here to do a job on me?" For an interviewer who has just done the job of the week on the PM, it's an odd question. Hey, [interviewer], that would mean you could prepare your spin, wouldn't it? [The interviewer] has just come off air for the week and is sucking a polystyrene cup of chardonnay. [It] is feeling the heat but liking the warmth. The newsroom is upbeat. There's a celebratory air that seems a little keener than the usual high of the week's end. TV3 reckons viewer reaction to [hi]s corngate interview with [the PM] – recorded on Tuesday but broadcast the next night – has swung 70-30 in [hi]s favour, especially after [the PM]'s "creep" comment. It was a different story on Wednesday night. After [the interviewer] watched the broadcast... [– "I'm someone] who like most people likes to be liked and doesn't like to cause offence and likes to be polite, [so]... watching myself... taking it to the... [PM w]as a surreal experience[– it]... could think of nothing else and was so preoccupied [it] opened the door of his VW Golf into the path of an oncoming bus, wiping out the door and almost himself.

Before [the interviewer] left the studio: “I stood downstairs and thought, ‘oh shit this is awful’...” [It] stands by the interview but that’s not to say [it] has no regrets – even though [the PM] has now lodged an official complaint. “I kind of wish it hadn’t been so crappy for everyone. I think [her appearance] frightened me... The... [PM] was a bit scary in those circumstances. It was a thoroughly unpleasant experience for us both. It was going through my mind that ‘shit, I hadn’t thought [the PM] might have memory failure’. I was thinking OK, move on, jog her memory, give her some facts, encourage her to respond in some way, try to get something out of her. But I’m a very chemical kind of boy. The adrenalin kicked in. When it was finished no one in the studio spoke[while the PM] had a go at me full on. I just stood there in the studio for a long time with the camera people and no one said anything. I was a bit bewildered. I was a bit rattled. I was in a state of shock. It was car crash shock.” [The interviewer] refuses to say what [the PM] said. “But look, we’re consenting adults. I don’t mind being stabbed in the front.” ...In a distant time [the interviewer] seemed too principled and too intelligent for television. Blame his ears, perhaps, but the regular viewer could be forgiven for believing that [hi]s head was a jug that dispensed good manners, earnest study and a decent interview. Too decent, in some cases. There was that infamous query of the[previous PM when the interviewer] asked if an interview was “all right”. Not true, says [the interviewer. They] had had a very tense relationship and when [the National PM] came into the studio that evening “[the PM] just went me for 3 1/2 minutes. I said ‘that’s rubbish and I will be entirely fair and reasonable’. And at the end of the interview I said sort of facetiously if that was all right. Like ‘shove it’...” It’s likely those most repelled by the tenor of his questions to [the Labour PM] were an older audience. Younger people were more inclined to question the establishment. I tell him my mother didn’t like the way [it] waved his pen at the PM. “I’m not pointing, I’m helping myself get through the points – it’s like a metronome thing.”... But what about respect for the PM? “Did we owe respect to... Muldoon for using the Springbok tour to win the ’81 election? I think respect is on condition of being earned. This is the extraordinary thing that kind of pisses me off. [The PM] has made out [it] was dragged into a room and intimidated by the Gestapo with the gas chamber next door but if you watch the interview I never lost my cool... It was quite a reasonable interview but [the PM] went out and called it terrible treatment. It’s a great trick of politicians to shoot the messenger because... [then they] don’t have to respond to the message. Muldoon did it...” While during the interview, [the interviewer] seemed to suggest [the PM] was lying about her memory failure, [it] now thinks “the truth lies somewhere in the middle” – part memory failure, part spin. “It has to be a possibility that [the PM] doesn’t remember. It is also a possibility that not for the first time in the history of the world a person who found themselves in an interview they weren’t really enjoying terribly much experienced memory lapses which may in part have been convenient... That [PM] is bright, formidably bright. [It] is one of the leaders who is a very hands-on [PM]. The [PM] runs cabinet and drives it hard. And it seems this is a big issue and while I didn’t expect her to remember exact specifics like contamination level or the number of seeds or the dates I did expect that with something like this [the PM] would remember the general tone of the advice [it] received.” So what did the viewer get out of the exchange – [hi]s repeated questioning to [the PM]’s increasingly heated denials that [it] was not well enough informed to intelligently reply? This sort of interview is justified, [the interviewer] says “when the public’s right to see unvarnished, unspun, unchoreographed responses outweighs the usual behaviour of interviews. What do we as journalists do when we are asking what we genuinely believe to be reasonable questions of somebody who you would have an expectation would have some sort of recollection of it and they claim they can’t remember? When a politician says they can’t remember we are meant to cease the exchange, put down our pen and say, ‘thanks, I’m terribly sorry about that, refresh your memory and possibly prepare your spin and get to me when it’s convenient’. If that was the case democracy and journalism would be no more than the regurgitation of press releases... It’s weird that subjectivity is only considered when you confront somebody. The nights we have a politician in and give them 3 1/2 minutes which you may as well charge them for because it’s just about an advertisement... no one ever says ‘outrageous subjectivity’.”

...WHO would be P[M]? Every Monday afternoon you come down from the weekly cabinet meeting to face a theatre of reporters hungry for something fresh to start the week... “P[M], what’s your view on eating dogs?” ...“P[M], do you have a comment on the incident that occurred in the Auckland secondary schools rugby semifinal on Saturday?” ...And during the split second available for thinking in front of a camera your personal instinct surrenders to your public position... The real injuries this week were done to Auckland Grammar School and Kelston Boys, though it was refreshing to realise their principals had not been tutored in safe-speak. Loyally they each blamed the other’s team, and were duly hammered for it. They weren’t to know on Sunday that the incident would be on the front page for four days, playing out like a one-sided moral pantomime... When forums of public discussion are dominated by excessive shock and dismay everyone blames the media. But the truth is, news editors have a low boredom threshold. The school rugby brawl would have been dead by Wednesday were it not for interactive news websites these days.

...*Hypocrisy clings in... All Blacks* [‘winger’]... *incident*... Once there was a time when an All Black could get away with just about anything on test night – particularly if N[Z] had won. It was widely accepted that after such Herculean exertions in the national interest, the freedom of the city could be taken for granted. Many were the moments when a very tired and very emotional player would be carefully looked after, not by some overweight goon hired specifically to keep the public at arm’s length, but by just about everybody who cheerfully accepted the odd excess as an understandable and forgivable letting off of steam by a committed athlete. Those were gentler, more tolerant times and it was really rather nice to be an All Black free of the more recent hazards – the constant worry of hidden cameras, sensation-driven journalists and girls who would happily tell all to some witless [gals’] magazine if the price was right, and various other banana skins laid in the path of the contemporary players. Not any more. What might have been a case of special treatment by society at large in the good old days is no longer acceptable practice. Quite the reverse. These days it is more or less impossible for an All Black to let his hair down. It seems that is exactly what [the dreadlocked All Black winger] tried to do in Christchurch... but his hair got pulled, with, presumably, his leg, and the whole thing became mildly disorderly. On the face of it, nothing much to get excited about here. Unfortunately, one especially nosy onlooker, apparently with the extraordinarily apt name of Parker, got out his video camera, filmed the proceedings and hawked his pathetically unenlightening finding to a television company. To both his and the television company’s discredit, the incident suddenly became the lead item on the television news, and every other news organisation immediately and enthusiastically climbed aboard as well. Where a couple of decades ago an event of this magnitude would have struggled to raise a line in the newspaper, today the whole nation is invited to wallow in voyeurism. There is a school of thought that insists that rugby stars are rightful targets whenever they put a foot wrong. Prominence brings vulnerability and it is not just the careless who end up paying a high price. There is a fair measure of hypocrisy in this. On the one hand voices are to be heard everywhere insisting that the All Blacks return to the old virtues of simplicity and accessibility, that they should once again be the ordinary heroes, mixing with ordinary people in all the old ordinary ways. Having a beer at the pub or nightclub on a Saturday night, for instance. We demand it. We insist that they be no different from anybody else. On the other hand, however, because they are now highly paid they are regarded as fair game by the scandal-mongers, the envious, the footy-haters, the gold-diggers and all those who can’t stand the sight of taller poppies than themselves. It is hardly any wonder that the All Blacks’ chances of knocking about in the old, ordinary ways are about as good as [the PM]’s. We can’t have it both ways, folks. Don’t expect to see All Blacks hobnobbing downtown much any more. And be careful about who is to blame for that.

...[the former] editor of *The N[Z] Herald*... championed openness and accountability in reporting, saying in an interview with this newspaper that N[Z] journalism was honest, decent and way too timid. But while advocating scrutiny on the pages of his paper, [the 44-year-old] appeared not to have led by example in his private life... [The former editor] was just 22 months into his role at the helm of the *Herald* when [it quit, saying it] intended to return to Britain to work. But, as revealed in the *Sunday Star-Times* last month, his resignation came after an internal inquiry into sexual harassment had begun at the *Herald* and a number of people had been interviewed. Details of that inquiry have not been made public. When appointed *Herald* editor[, the Pom]... was described by the paper’s editor-in-chief... as having an extraordinary depth of international and local

journalistic experience. “[Our appointee] has a clear understanding of the needs of *Herald* readers and ideas that will see the content of the paper develop in exciting directions,”... And indeed [the new appointee delivered. His] infectious news enthusiasm was welcomed by staff who now say they regret the loss of a good newspaper person but that his personal dalliances clouded his work record... [In related news, h]is name is a byword for plagiarism and fakery and his career flame-out took the editor of the *New York Times* down with him... The hotshot reporter was unmasked... as a serial fantasist, whose colourful articles with datelines from across the US were routinely written in his Brooklyn apartment.

...The *Herald*... this week dismissed a reporter after [it] admitted fabricating a story... [Our] staff are ethical and honest – and feel... betrayed...

A Chinese newspaper... the *Fortune News*... has accused Auckland police officers of committing a brutal, racially motivated attack on an innocent [perso]n – without telling readers that the alleged victim was the owner of the paper and was arrested for assault in the alleged road rage incident.

...[To] mark... *Newspaper Week*, [I] watch... as the *Herald* rolls off the presses. Thousands of fresh newspapers snake across the ceiling like an endless millipede. Inky the robot delivers another 1.4 tonne roll of paper to a skyscraper of a tower printing out streams of dizzying colour. When the clock reaches 280,000 copies – some time in the wee small hours – everyone goes home. Bouncing in the back of a truck, the *Herald* is on its way to you. By the time the paper reaches the mailbox, it has already passed through many hands – not all of them human. You may think you are the first person to read the scoop of the day, but you are more likely to be the 10th. When a journalist writes a story on his or her computer, it passes by the eye of the chief reporter, the news editor, who determines where it will end up in the paper, and often the editor. It then passes through the hands of a bank of subeditors, who fit it in to a page, write headlines and check for any oversights. Even in the world of up-to-the-minute technology, some things never change in the production of a newspaper. After the completed news pages are converted into a full-size photographic negative at the *Herald* offices in the heart of Auckland City, a courier drives them down the Southern Motorway to the massive printing presses at Ellerslie. In the dark of the night, the cathedral-like building on the edge of the motorway is lit up like Las Vegas. Inside, \$250 million of machinery starts whirring once the last page arrives. Negatives are turned into printing plates, using the world’s purest aluminium. The plates are wrapped around rollers in huge towers that mesh colours together – black, magenta, cyan and yellow. On a Friday night alone, the *Weekend Herald* sucks up 700kg of ink. It is a messy business – ink dust hangs in the air and settles on every surface. And it’s noisy. The machine that cuts and folds the newspaper pumps out a deafening 112 decibels, but it is muted by steel doors... The *Herald* uses 600 tonnes of newsprint a week. The N[Z]-made paper costs \$1600 a tonne – it works out at roughly \$2 worth of paper in each copy... Newsprint streams through machines in an indecipherable blur. At top speed they can spit out 70,000 copies an hour... The printers spend at least half an hour churning out dummy copies, checking a grey strip along the bottom of each page to make certain they have the right balance of inks... On the ground, wheeled robots are at work – running around with newsprint rolls and emptying the garbage. They have names such as Inky, Buzz, Zippy and Supersonic. “When there’s no work to do, they tootle off and plug themselves into their battery charges – it’s a robot’s equivalent of a cappuccino break,” says the manager of the Ellerslie printing plant... Overhead, th[ousands]... of robotic hands... help... newspapers speed along tracks like a Los Angeles freeway system.

...If you have seen the movie *Chinatown* then you know at least a little about the... family, which last week stunned their hometown – not to mention the head of their flagship company – by selling the *Los Angeles Times* for \$US8.4 billion... The news came so suddenly that reeling reporters even felt a fleeting twinge of sympathy for the newspaper chain’s detested chair[perso]n... who was sobbing as [it] announced the paper’s purchase by the *Chicago Tribune*’s media empire. Like the flabbergasted newsroom, and LA as a whole, [the chairperson] had no idea his masters were bailing out. [The chairperson] was just one more dupe in what history will regard as the final act of devious treachery by the family that have controlled the paper since its birth 115 years ago. The [family’s] ink-stained thumbprint is all over modern... [LA. After WW1], their paper was a prime inspiration for a frenzy of xenophobic paranoia that launched the federal agency soon to be known as the FBI on a national rampage against radicals, Communists, Wobblies and suspicious foreigners. It was a campaign that served as a precedent for the McCarthy witch-hunts of 30 years later, which the paper also endorsed and defended long after Tailgunner Joe’s other allies had lapsed into an embarrassed silence. In the 1930s, in the incident that inspired *Chinatown*, the [family] bought, bribed, browbeat and blackmailed their way to take control of all the water flowing through the agricultural Owens Valley, 400km from the parched City of Angels. One day the small farmers could irrigate their fields; the next, their water was gone, their crops dying and their [own] families ruined. Meanwhile, the liquid gold was diverted to the parched San Fernando Valley, all of which [the newspaper family] owned. In the 1950s, the [family] put their paper at the disposal of [an] up-and-coming redbaiter [destined to be the 37th US President]. And in the sixties, they launched [the 40th President]’s political career by energetically endorsing [the B-grade actor’s] bid to become Governor of California. Five years ago, in a move that reflected how the most recent generation of [the family] had lost their appetite for hands-on management, the family trust that controls the paper hired [the chairperson] to boost profits any way [it] chose. Formerly the chair[perso]n of a breakfast food company, his first move was to sack 7000 employees and shut a money-losing paper in New York – corporate carnage that saw him dubbed The Cereal Killer. His next move was to populate the business side of the operation with executives who not only knew nothing about journalism but also held its ethical traditions in open disdain. The timing of the [cereal] whiz kids’ arrival was truly ironic since, without the [family’s] active meddling, a succession of editors had transformed the paper from a right-wing joke into one of America’s greatest and most reputable news organs. [The chairperson], who began his tenure on an alarming note by urging editors not to run stories critical of advertisers, did not seem to care a jot about the paper’s hard-won integrity. Profits were booming and the stock price quadrupled. This approach reached its nadir late last year when [the chairperson]’s handpicked corporate heir... cut a secret deal with LA’s new Staples Centre sports stadium, agreeing to split the profits from a glossy magazine in the top-selling Sunday edition that commemorated the arena’s opening. When the editorial staff found out about the secret pact, their resulting protests over the breach of the “Chinese Wall” separating advertising and editorial sparked a rancorous internal investigation that remains an open sore with editors and reporters alike... [Staffers] who have worked for papers controlled by the *Chicago Tribune*, saw their wonder at the [family’s] sudden departure tinged with no small degree of fear. Where the [family] have been merely mercenary in their approach to the news business, the boys from Chicago have made bloody ruthlessness a corporate motif. With the *LA Times*’ chain of media outlets in its pocket, the *Tribune*’s brain-trust will soon control 11 daily papers, four radio stations, 22 t[v] stations and the Chicago Cubs baseball team. A sparkling roster of properties in itself, the *Tribune* sees the melded empire as a springboard to a huge Internet presence that will tap the traditional media outlets for content to fill a wide range of Websites and e-commerce ventures.

...N[Z] *Herald* has placed its classified advertising listings on the Internet. The *Herald* Web site, previously a news and information service, has been expanded to allow a personalised search of listings for specific products and services. A system called e-Alert allows users to be automatically notified by electronic mail when listings that match their search criteria appear on the Web site... There were always 20,000 to 30,000 job advertisements on the Web site, including those from... leading recruitment agencies on both sides of the Tasman. As well, the real estate listings featured suburban maps. The chief executive officer of Wilson & Horton... said the Web site gave classified advertisers the opportunity to reach more readers and get better value. Future developments would add the group’s regional newspapers to the site and introduce electronic commerce.

...The cover price of the *Herald* rises to \$1 today but subscribers will still receive the paper at the old price of 90 cents. And for new subscribers there is a special deal – not only will you get the award-winning paper at the old price but you will also get up to six weeks for free.

...The *Weekend Herald* will have a new price from next Saturday... This price change does not affect... weekday editions... The cost of the *Weekend Herald* to subscribers will increase 30c to \$1.50. Readers buying the *Weekend Herald* from retail outlets will pay \$2, up... from \$1.50. The *Herald*’s practice of maintaining lower prices for six-day subscribers continues... [– they] will pay \$6 a week, a saving of \$1 a week over readers buying from retail outlets. New and existing subscribers for six or 12 months are eligible to win one of four Hewlett Packard pavilion computers,

each worth \$3095. The competition... is in addition to the existing benefits for six-month subscribers, who receive an additional three weeks of free newspapers, and 12-month subscribers, who receive six weeks of free *Heralds*... For subscribers, this is the first price increase since the *Weekend Herald* was launched three years ago... The newspaper has recently been reconfigured to include more content and colour, an improved layout, more editorial and news and the new Review section... ■ The first edition of the N[Z] *Herald* was published on November 13, 1863... N[Z] has 23 daily newspapers. [8] are owned by Wilson & Horton... The other big owner is INL, which has 10... N[Z]'s first newspaper was published in 1840. The press of the four-page N[Z] *Gazette* could print 200 copies an hour... At least 3,056,000 people in N[Z] read a daily newspaper... each week.

...“The Irish read more newspapers per head of population than any other country in the world,”... said... the former... All Black... hooker[who] has recently accepted a further two years in the job... as Irish coach. But... there are still things which [it] hasn't quite got used to... “They've got five Sunday newspapers, 16 journalists writing on rugby every weekend... [- and,] in Ireland... rugby is [only] the fourth favourite sport behind gaelic football, hurling and soccer... [- who]’re all looking for an angle. The victories can be great but if you lose, the disappointment and the criticism is the hardest part of it. I still struggle with it a bit but that’s why you get paid plenty.”

...*Stuff* knows what's going on in the world. Log on to... www.stuff.co.nz... and you can keep up with what's going on in the world and what's going on in N[Z] to what's going on where you live. Whatever you're searching for, you'll find it here. Stuff. It's our world on the net.

...It's hot stuff and it's on-line now. Auckland's latest, national and international news, sport, weather and business has hit the internet on the new web site by Independent Newspapers Ltd... It can be found on www.stuff.co.nz – and was officially launched on Tuesday. But it's not just about Auckland – Stuff is now N[Z]'s largest newsroom on-line... The site incorporates content from... the *Sunday Star Times*, *Sunday News*, Radio N[Z]... Reuters... INL's... 10 daily newspapers... the company's Auckland suburban community newspapers... and... community newspapers nationwide...

ZONE IN ON AUCKLAND Put your product or service in front of the whole city or just the part you want – with selected, targeted classified advertising from *Suburban Newspapers Auckland*... [Our papers – which each weigh between 50g to 100g, and mix classifieds with *human interest* stories about local businesses, community groups, or individual residents, plus articles on upcoming organised activities – are delivered free to household letterboxes as per the following schedule:] *Auckland City Harbour News* Circulation up to 19,600 Wednesdays, Fridays... *Central Leader* Circulation up to 49,100 Wednesdays, Fridays... *East & Bays Courier* Circulation up to 41,500 Wednesdays, Fridays... *The Eastern Courier* Circulation up to 30,100, Wednesdays, Fridays... *Manukau Courier* Circulation up to 50,800 Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays... *Papakura Courier* Circulation up to 24,350 Wednesday... *North Shore Times* Circulation up to 59,000 Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays... *North Harbour News* Circulation up to 13,400 Fridays... *Nor-West Newsbrief* Circulation up to 9,000 Thursdays... *Western Leader* Circulation up to 55,500 Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays[. • ‘The NZ Community Newspapers Association has 114 members which between them publish over 2.1 million copies per issue’...

‘If you're not in Telecom's Auckland Yellow Pages you're not in business. Typically, every week more than 850,000 people turn to their copy’]...

You have just received your new... *Auckland Telephone Book* and *YELLOW PAGES* and that means it's time for your old directories to be recycled. With more than two million Auckland directories delivered each year, recycling is a great way to put your old directories to good use.

...Don't miss out... Advertise your business in the Telecom LOCAL DIRECTORY. That will ensure local customers know how to find you.

...Locating an address is now a breeze with Wises maps online. Find activities, hospitals and schools within each suburb and search UBD's local business listings for services in your area.

...Early yesterday morning, my home became the virtual property of the world. So did my neighbours' houses... The internet search giant Google has put us all on the map – literally, and with 360-degree rotational views photographed by a fleet of Holdens in a massive virtual recording...

If you give him his own map on CD... then you won't have to tell him where to go! Terramap Digital is the ultimate tool for creating your own personalised map... CDs of digital maps are available for four regions – Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin/Queenstown. Available from... AA CENTRES NATIONWIDE... [and usual map] stockists... or order your regional CD online at www.maps.co.nz... [The software's] special features: • High quality street and topographical maps • Attach your own images, files and text to a map. • Print, zoom, pan around and email...

A growing number of N[Z] businesses are seeking legal advice on how to stop staff downloading porn on office e-mail systems. International research shows 79[%] of employers have staff who abuse the internet. But [a]Waikato university IT specialist... says trying to police people's use of the internet is difficult. “If someone was reading a pornographic magazine at their desk it would be quite obvious... But when someone uses a computer all day it's impossible to stand over them and police it.” ...[the] Employers Federation chief executive... says companies need clear policies on what is acceptable use for work computers. “You can't ignore e-mail misuse in the workplace. There is much time wastage by staff looking at pornography instead of getting on with their jobs... Employers pay staff to do their work, not use the internet or e-mail for personal use. We wouldn't go so far as some countries and label it theft but it is a breach of trust.” ...A[US]n company Content Technologies is offering Kiwi employers a new anti-porn software programme Pornsweeper. [A spokesperson for the company] says the programme analyses photographs and dumps any with too much skin.

...*Life* magazine, whose photojournalists have recorded some of the U[S]s' most memorable events for more than 60 years, will cease monthly publication... The magazine... which pioneered the photo-essay, will continue to publish issues periodically to record special events... [L]aunched in November 1936... the... magazine was a weekly until 1972. It then published only periodically until 1978, when it went to the monthly format.

...EACH week *Weekend Life* receives cartons of books for review. We sift through the piles and consign the vast bulk to the bottom shelves of the cupboard. This is often accompanied by a moment's sadness that so many trees have died to produce such dreck: the diet fads, the personal-motivation bibles, the loony titles that roam the fringes of sense and sensibilities... [Recently,] we said goodbye to the 20th century, and with that we should also say farewell to a few 90s lit trends that the 21st century should try to do without. *The confessional memoir*... and... *The tell-all biography*: Chief culprit... here had to be [the US President's plaything]... Her American toothiness and desire to be famous for anything did not mean [the plaything] had anything to say. Come to think of it, her inability to speak during a sexual act was what led to her infamy. *The sports biography*: As told to some poor journo just trying to make a living. That's all that can be said to justify this one. We all have to make a living, but that doesn't make it worth reading... *The chemical novel*: Recreational drugs... don't necessarily let the prospective author transmute into another Burroughs... There's nothing so boring as listening to someone stoned. Reading about it is worse. *The telly tie-in*: Telly works because the images move too quickly for us to think about what they mean. So when telly hosts decided to provide the benefit of their wisdom in style or humour... it's like coming across the emperor in a particularly embarrassing pair of undies. *The little book of everything*: The best thing that can be said about this mini-genre of bon mots and wisdom in matchbox-sized editions is that not as many trees died to make this nonsense possible... [By the way, did you see the photograph in yesterday's newspaper of] confetti showering from skyscrapers in the financial district of Rio de Janeiro... Brazil[?] ...The annual tradition in the city on the last business day of the year sees tonnes of paper... dumped on the downtown area by citizens.

...[while some delivery people – probably children – are seemingly paid to dump circulars under trees in parks and alleyways instead of putting them in letterboxes, one of their more conscientious colleagues] can't bear to contemplate her hourly rate for delivering circulars to 600 Devonport homes. But [the Auckland] knows working 35 to 40 hours a month for \$100 will never make her rich. [The Auckland] is one of thousands of people who pound the pavements to earn pocket money or top up their pension or benefit. “Basically it helps me supplement my income, helps keep me fed and fit and keeps me motivated,” said the 36-year-old, who is on the dole. [The Auckland] has done a number of stints delivering circulars, but her present job of three months is the longest stretch [the 36-year-old] has put up with while... keep[ing] an eye out for a better job. [The Auckland]

has it down to a fine art, delivering when letterboxes are least likely to be overflowing with mail and newspapers, and timing it to avoid nasty weather and dogs. [The Auckland] does not want to say who her employer is for fear of “getting them into trouble.” The biggest company, 30-year-old Circular Distributors in Takapuna, has been attacked as heavy-handed for asking its 9000 employees to accept lower pay as it battles new industry players for clients. Nationwide, it is up against Ad Mail, Circular Publicity Distributors, Deltarg Distribution Systems, KiwiMail and other smaller operators... Changing technology has made targeting households more cost-effective for advertisers. Computer analysis of census data makes it possible to focus on suburbs, streets and even individual homes, as many people with a large disposable income know only too well. This development has led to [the] greatly increased competition... [A mother, whose 17-year-old] son... works for Circular Distributors in Hamilton, has spoken out against its new delivery rates, which... could halve distributors’ income. [The mother] says the company’s letter to workers implied that signing the cut-rate contract was compulsory... A [n A]uckland University associate law professor... said it was illegal to force employees to sign a new contract if they already had one. “There seems to be an implied threat that if they don’t sign, they’re going to be made redundant. That could be seen as harsh and oppressive under the Employment Contracts Act. If people are agreeing, then there’s no problem. They’ve accepted it and that happens all the time.” But the schoolchildren, elderly people and beneficiaries who haul bags of circulars around the suburbs are among the nation’s most vulnerable workers... Leaflet distributors already earned so little there was no point in their paying to belong to a union and even less pain in taking a case to the Employment Tribunal at a cost of \$70.

...*Junk mail mountain keeps on growing*... We moan about junk mail – but for most of us that is all we do. A survey commissioned by N[Z] Post has found that just 6[%] of letterboxes have signs spurning unsolicited advertising. The signs do work, say distribution companies... Circular Distributors Ltd, said the volume was definitely increasing and the Auckland region received up to twice as many mailouts as elsewhere. [The] company... would deliver more... [than] half a billion items to N[Z] homes... this year. Once a mailout went out, “a retailer knows what time their tills are going to start ringing.” ...research showed that 72[%] of household shoppers usually read advertising put in their letter boxes. Environmental groups do not want mass mail to increase... [T]he Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society... hoped companies would start to use the Internet rather than persist with mass mailouts.

...NZ Post’s... staff have been told to stop delivering letters so quickly as... [its] profits are squeezed by a big drop in mail volumes. At an emergency meeting at the NZ Post Auckland mail centre on Wednesday night, workers were told the state owned enterprise had lost money last month. It plans to cut costs by banning overtime and suspending staff recruitment. As a result, people living in towns such as... Gisborne, Fielding and Masterton may soon be waiting an extra day or two for mail to be delivered. Until now, NZ Post has often delivered standard mail to these centres the day after it was posted. Auckland staff were issued with a memo saying... “Our costs are down only 3[%] but revenue’s down 12[%]. Volumes are falling – down 6[%] on last year. Effective immediately, we need to: stop all... excess hours... and... roster annual leave for those with high balances.” The next immediate step that would be taken was to “stop over-achieving our service standard...”

...Four years ago when I became Chair[person of NZ Post, the SOE] operated in an environment where letter growth was strong... and we... [had a] monopoly on that service... While we continue to compete strongly, [there are an increasing number of companies handling a decreasing volume of mail]... The deregulated letter market brings a new level of uncertainty for our business[– and the seemingly farcical situation whereby every red NZ Post postbox is now accompanied by a blue postbox belonging to our main competitor National Mail!] We cannot predict the impact on our market share. While we accept a competitive market leads to... better value for customers, the short-term effect on N[Z] Post is likely to be adverse... [However, w]e believe there is still potential for growth in this market because per capita mailing in N[Z] is lower than in many other [First World] countries. On average, every N[Z]er receives 286 letters per annum. In some parts of Europe that figure is more than 400 while in the U[S] it is well over 600. To gain the edge in the communications market, we must continue to explore and develop opportunities that extend beyond the core of [our] business... Post Plus Group is vital in this process. Charged with delivering the future for the company, the past year has seen the development of several products that will sustain growth. One example is the “Find ’em, Keep ’em” direct mail product aimed at small to medium business customers. Successful direct marketing will yield spin-offs in targeted advertising material and fulfilment of the advertising response. We also believe there are opportunities to leverage off the growth in electronic communication.

...Another company has entered the postal market, offering mail delivery to the seven main central business districts for 30c, undercutting NZ Post’s standard letter rate by 10c. Document Exchange (DX) established its rates for next-day-delivery in Auckland this month, after testing the service in Christchurch. The CBD-to-CBD service also operates in Whangarei, Hamilton, Wellington, Nelson and Dunedin, with further expansion planned. Stamps are sold in packs of 50 or 100. The mail must be street-addressed mail and lodged at a DX “exchange,” or dropped off there by courier. There are 10 exchanges in the Auckland CBD. NZ Post Boxes cannot be used. Since deregulation... NZ Post has faced competition from new operators, including Fastway Post (letters can be posted at franchised retailers or at NZ Post outlets), National Mail (post at Warehouse stores[and the company’s blue postboxes]) and Posties Choice. Apart from the competition, the official stamps the companies issue are proving a bonanza for the country’s estimated 100,000 stamp collectors.

...[National Mail has gone into receivership. Its blue postboxes will all have their slots sealed up to prevent people from continuing to place letters in them (but the postboxes themselves won’t be removed immediately – and their blue poles will remain in the ground, adjacent to NZ Post’s red postboxes, indefinitely). In international news, a] chain letter launched in Britain in 1989 to realise a sick child’s dream has taken on its latest incarnation as a nightmare for his whole family. [The child] began the “round robin” letter appealing for get-well cards to be sent to his home in Surrey after [it] was diagnosed with what doctors thought was terminal cancer. Eleven years on, the letters are still arriving – [the child now] has more than 150 million – and the family just wants them to stop. A new version is being circulated in which... the request has become one for business compliments slips rather than get-well cards. A Royal Mail spokes[person] said: “We consider this to be a form of harassment. It is a nightmare for the... family and we would call on people not to respond to chain letters. The cards date from an appeal 11 years ago when [the child] wanted to win an entry in the *Guinness Book of Records* for the largest collection of get-well cards. On some days they receive up to 10,000.” The letter says they are for a “7-year-old with terminal cancer,” but [the 7-year-old], now in his early 20s, recovered from his brain tumour. [The child] became a celebrity at the time of his original collection and amazed people with his bravery and resilience during treatment for his illness.

...There may be some truth behind the infamous line “the cheque is in the mail”. The Royal Mail said yesterday that last year alone, it counted... 250,000 cheques... with a value of £175 million... that were undeliverable because of poor addressing. And the problem is increasing... The National Return Centre... says... [t]he total of undeliverable items handled each year tops 72 million. The worst offenders for wrong addressing were people failing to include a postcode in an address, which made a letter take 20 times longer to sort. But the service also receives post with no delivery address at all, or illegible or completely inaccurate delivery details.

...*The cheque’s not in the mail*... Brazen mail thieves may have taken up to \$14,000 worth of cheques from post boxes in Waitakere City. The National and ASB Banks are holding 15 suspect cheques presented to tellers in a bid to obtain cash. Police are investigating five other cases... [Meanwhile,] Twizel residents have come to the defence of the town’s postie, who has been fired by N[Z] Post after about 400 undelivered letters were found at her workplace. [A businessperso]n... was shell-shocked at the news that the mail did not always get through... There were a couple of cheques... years ago, but they were never cashed, and [the businessperson] simply reissued cheques. For five years the service had been excellent.

...The cheque may be in the mail... but even if you send it by registered post, there is no guarantee it will be delivered. [A resident] of the Auckland suburb of Waterview, is outraged that a £1000... bank cheque sent to him from England... has gone missing, even though it was sent

through the registered post tracking system. [The resident contacted NZ] Post's subsidiary company, Courier Post, on [the 24th] to see where the cheque was. The company said it was at its Mt Wellington depot because a courier had found no one at home on... the... 11[th]. But when the resident] phoned again on Wednesday, [the resident] was told it had been lost. The cheque was last recorded at the depot, and [the resident] says his elderly aunt in England now has to cancel it and resend the money. "When they told me they had lost it I was fuming... I can't pay the rent and have had to borrow money from a friend,"... [A NZ Post spokesperson]... said it was highly unlikely the cheque had been stolen. Courier Post believed it was in its system somewhere. NZ Post and Courier Post delivered 1.6 billion items each year, and 15 in a million went missing. "Every time something like this happens we're disappointed, but we're doing what we can to look into it." ...Courier Post's security team was investigating and NZ Post would pay the cancelled cheque fees and bank draft charges [that the resident]'s aunt might incur in resending the money. "Even though it's a registered item, registered items to be sent overseas shouldn't include things like cash, jewellery and cheques... You should not send items of value like that through any sort of post. It should either be sent via a bank draft or direct-credited. Those are the ways of transferring funds securely."

By the year 2000 most postal systems, separated from their national telephone and data systems... have become expensive luxuries and sending and receiving physical mail, as opposed to the kind which arrives direct in the home via a special black box... ha[s] become rather... archaic... One adjunct of sophisticated home-text systems will almost certainly be direct access to libraries[– especially now that 'dense or long-lived informational material can be stored more efficiently by computer laser disc than with any book or microfiche (in addition, disc storage media are as durable as they are compact; they don't fade or wear out with use, don't scratch or get bent). Because of these advantages, libraries will put their huge archival files on discs, freeing up space and improving user access to the files.'] Of course the vast backlog of human literature will remain as it is, and fiction will probably continue to be read from paper. But so flexible will the display systems for text... become that it will seem more sensible for ephemeral information to be acquired electronically than physically. Since the display system can be made to have all of the flexibility and mobility of a book or magazine, there exists no argument of convenience and many arguments of cost against maintaining the present cumbersome system. Why supply every home with an enormous set of telephone directories, which largely contain redundant information, when an individual can be supplied with the required nugget of information in a fraction of a second without the physical costs of creating and distributing the whole of a city's telephone numbers?

If the provision of communications was united under one ministry, unnecessarily wasteful activities such as producing telephone directories could be stopped. For example, instead of annually providing at least 5kg worth of directories (excluding the weight of *local directories*) to every home and business in Auckland so that each has physical access to addresses or telephone numbers – the majority of which they'll never need to use – such details should only be listed on the Internet, and a free operator service can be maintained for people who are unable to access the Internet via their home or workplace (eventually, every home and workplace ought to be connected to the Internet – but until this is the case, cyber cafes could continue to operate, or people who don't have access to the Internet via their home would go to a public library). Changing from an economic system to a non-economic one will largely or totally eliminate the need to produce *Yellow Pages* (and definitely eliminate the need to produce *junk mail*). Likewise, as money is phased out there would be a decreasing need – or no need – to produce paper receipts, accounting records (and whatever accounting records need to be temporarily maintained could simply be stored electronically), shareholder reports, etc. The transfer of information within and between ministries via physical paper can also be phased out in favour of electronic methods, and there should be little or no justification for members of the public to continue sending letters (or cards for Christmas, birthdays, etc.) – thereby reducing the need to produce sheets of paper and envelopes (while eliminating the need for homes to have letterboxes, and for communities to have postboxes, postal sorting centres, posties, stamps, etc.) – because they can use e-mail or a telephone instead. However, while postal services are maintained for ministerial purposes, private mail could still be handled – but be discouraged via high prices (whereas ministerial postage would have to be sent for free).

There would no longer be any justification to charge for e-mail and phone calls – be they ministerial or private – but, at least until overloading is no longer a problem, private calls can all be rated per minute (with the cost increasing along with the distance the call has to travel) and private e-mail per message. However, households could be allowed to spend \$x(# people living in a house)/week or month before being charged anything. Public phone booths – which ought to be free (e.g., for emergency purposes) – can all have toll-bars on them, whilst ministerial calls could be monitored in an attempt to discourage illicit phone use via workplaces (and mobile phones – which can all be like a wristwatch for ease of use – ought to only be used for ministerial purposes). There should be less requirement to make long-distance calls for ministerial purposes in a non-economic society – especially when every district is as self-sufficient as possible – and, if a time comes when people no longer have any reason or opportunity to move from one district to another (r:p2348, lns22-3), individuals who have a social attachment to people from outside their own district will gradually become rare if not extinct, which means the number of long-distance calls made for personal reasons ought to decrease continually until they don't need to be made any more! Incidentally, novelty phone numbers (e.g., astrology, tarot, gaming, phone-sex services) should be shut down – at least as a source of employment or revenue-generation.

It isn't essential for people to be able to see who they are talking to via phone or computer but, since the technology (including the ability to video-conference; 'video cell phones that allow people to see the caller – if they have a similar phone – are now on sale for \$600') is available, it would be sensible in future to combine a household's communications equipment into one unit – r:p2356, lns38-9 + 60 (such a unit can contain a radio – with radio broadcasts going via the Internet, perhaps; but it might be preferable to also provide each house with a wind-up radio so residents have a back-up means of listening to news and official broadcasts during power failures or civil emergencies that is portable enough to be taken on outings such as picnics). If future houses are divided into quarters – and are *square shaped* as opposed to being *circular* (r:p2204, lns39) – this communications unit could be placed in the centre of the house, and either have a separate screen and control panel facing each quarter (meaning, for example, that while someone in the kitchen is reading a recipe via the Internet, another can be watching TV in the lounge, a third person can be watching a different TV programme in the main bedroom and, in the spare bedroom, a fourth person can be having a phone or e-mail conversation with someone who is in another building) or one screen and control panel that rotates (hence the equipment can only be used in one room at a time). If the unit is voice-activated, physical control panels would be unnecessary.

This type of home communications system would enable workers who use a computer at work to perform tasks from home – but telecommuting ought to only be used when weather conditions favour staying indoors rather than travelling; when a worker is too sick to travel to work but not too sick to perform routine computer tasks; when a parent has stayed at home to tend to a sick child. Furthermore, if some school lessons are broadcast to various age groups via TV channels (r:p1921, lns47), children who have to stay at home due to illness (or as a punishment) can still watch them – and, perhaps, use an Internet link with their class to follow other lessons (there ought to be no need for each classroom to have more than two computers for Internet access, but if schools have on-site libraries they could have extra computers)? Note that if classrooms had desktops which students could write on then wipe clean, that would help to cut down on the amount of paper used by the Education Ministry. Smaller blocks of the substance used to make such desktops could be hung on a wall within each house so residents don't need to use paper when writing notes to themselves or other members of the household (household computers could be used for this purpose, but notes stored in a computer are less visible – and, therefore, forgettable). If people have to place a weekly or monthly order for household goods (r:p2206, lns16), required items could be listed on this pad – and such orders could be placed over the Internet. Amongst other currently available printed products that needn't be supplied in future would be calendars – because people could access calendars via the Internet. However, in order to facilitate the uniting of human society into one worldwide political system, everyone would have to adopt the same calendar

year. Rather than have relevant authorities argue over whether to maintain the Jewish, Chinese, Christian, or whatever system of counting years, computers could all be reprogrammed to begin counting years from zero and continue on to infinity – perhaps preceding the year with a *y* (e.g., *y*0, *y*1, *y*2, etc.), in order to differentiate future years from those of the past (which could still be designated BC and AD); alternatively, each year that comes after year zero could be preceded by a plus sign (e.g., +1, +2) and the years before year zero would be preceded by a minus sign (and count backwards – i.e., if the existing Christian year 2000 is used for the starting point, as an example, 1000BC becomes year -3000).

If Internet access is no longer controlled by a multitude of revenue-generating private companies – and the type of work people can perform is controlled – it ought to be easy to shut down pornographic and other undesirable Web sites; to prevent or minimise viruses, hacking, etc. (after all, in a united, non-economic world, there would be no justification for ministries to keep secrets from each other or members of the public – except for information such as patient health records – and, therefore, less motivation for people to try and hack into systems that they have no business entering; while there should also be fewer opportunities and incentives for anyone – be they an individual or anti-virus company – to create and distribute viruses). Ministries can share databases as much as possible to avoid duplication of stored information – which means that computer programmes and equipment would have to be compatible – and information that is obsolete, or no longer required for other reasons, ought to be deleted from storage systems (although a hard disc copy of such information – e.g., the original back-up discs – could be kept at one location, or a separate location for each ministry, in case any of it ever has to be retrieved). Note that scientists are developing ‘chemical computer chips whose wires are measured in atoms and have a million times more storage space than standard chips’.

During July-August 1996, every Aucklanders who bought a *NZ Herald* 6-days-a-week and a *Sunday Star-Times* received an average of 20 sheets of newsprint per day (with each sheet of newsprint being about the size of 4 sheets of A3 paper – r:p1168, ln40). Contained within these 20 sheets was approximately 2.75 sheets of genuine news – some of which merely repeated what had been printed the day before – and approximately 2.5 sheets of sports news (although the sports content was greater than normal at that time due to the Olympic Games, and the outlay of the *NZ Herald* has since been altered – during the same period of 1997 [when an average of 18.32 sheets were used per newspaper] the average amount of genuine news was approximately 2.42 sheets, or 3.56 if business news is added, and there were 1.73 sheets of sport). The remaining pages contained classified sections, other advertisements, business information and ‘incidental news items, human interest features, and less significant information.’ In a non-economic world there would be no justification for producing newspapers (and newspaper reference journals – as are published by papers such as the *London Times* and *New York Times*) any more because classified sections won’t be required, any business information can be handled in-house by each ministry, incidental news, etc., shouldn’t be touched (magazines that are devoted to such items or gossip, fashion, propaganda, pornography, etc., should also cease to be produced in future – thereby destroying the careers of the paparazzi and models), and genuine news items can be delivered by TV and radio – with broadcasts posted on the Internet (which could be used as a means of storing news broadcasts for future reference).

Radio – if maintained in future – can just be used as a means of broadcasting news and public information that relates to each district, while TV broadcasts a mixture of local news and news from other districts (note that news editions won’t need to include a financial segment – covering exchange rates, sharemarkets, etc – but, until no one is dying from starvation, preventable diseases, murder, suicide, etc., the numbers of deaths from such unnatural causes could be collected and publicised in place of financial information). Each district would only need to have one department for radio news and one for TV – which means some news stories will be attended by two reporters (or one reporter from the radio department and a reporter plus video-camera operator – who could be an apprentice reporter – from the TV department; standard photographers shouldn’t be needed to cover news in future because stills can be taken from video-camera footage and, anyway, static photographs would be predominantly or totally redundant in a newspaperless world), as opposed to the current situation where a multitude of reporters (including photographers and camera operators) sometimes turn up to cover a single story (Q: How many members of the press does it take to change a light-bulb? A: 10 – one to perform the act, plus 9 to write their versions of the act or photograph it!) – or a combined department, with radio broadcasters using transcripts of TV broadcasts and only one reporter turning up to cover each story (or a reporter and video-camera operator – although one person ought to be able to conduct reports and operate the video-camera). As long as the right type of people (i.e., those who are honest, concerned about injustice but also non-judgmental, and thoroughly check their sources) are employed to collect and deliver news, there shouldn’t be any question about whether or not the news stories being produced by a single news organisation are accurate. By the way, there is no reason to show the face of reporters – it is only necessary to hear their voice – and even TV news presenters can perform their job without showing their face on screen!

News broadcasts could be produced daily – with the same hourly programme being repeated throughout each 24-hour period so each citizen can watch or listen to the news at whichever time best suits it – or be updated hourly (with each story remaining on the bulletin for 24 hours before being substituted by a newer one). If necessary, a second TV news channel could be devoted to in-depth current affairs programmes (including programmes that handle opinions rather than facts – although people should only be able to *talk shir* in private), which would be operated by a worldwide department of the Communications Ministry. This department can collect items from different districts to produce articles for such programmes itself or, if all of the relevant information is sourced from only one district, commission that district’s news department to produce an article.

The Communications Ministry should also be responsible for producing weather forecasts (which can be distributed with news broadcasts and via a free phone service or the internet), and they could be made by a computer programme rather than humans. Every satellite in existence could come under the control of this ministry, which should aim to minimise the number of satellites launched in future (e.g., by trying to protect satellites from damage while in space, thereby extending their life-expectancy; by launching multi-purpose satellites – i.e., satellites that can be used for meteorology, communication and any other required services; by ceasing to launch satellites to reflect sunlight). Incidentally, although weather forecasting and many other services can be entrusted to computer programmes, important decision-making can’t (and even if it is possible to create such a computer, there is no reason to try). As long as the right types of people become responsible for making important decisions, the human brain will be more than adequate for that purpose.

It will be easy for the district ministers of each ministry to get together for meetings, but problematic for state and world ministers – unless they all live in the one location. However, it wouldn’t be necessary for state and world ministers to all live in one location because their meetings can be held using video-conferencing technology (and such meetings could be broadcast on a TV channel – the second news channel, perhaps – so that members of the public are able to listen to what is being discussed during such meetings) – so there would be no world or state capitals (‘New York is the self-proclaimed capital of the world’). Assuming that world ministers will be spread around the world, scheduled meetings would have to be held at alternating times of the day to compensate for the fact that the ministers will mostly live in different time-zones (i.e., although a minister will, on occasions, get to attend such meetings at 9am according to clocks in its district, other meetings might be held at 11pm, or 3am local time – but at 9am in another minister’s district). To make it easier for world ministers to attend such meetings – and to be contacted at any time of the day during emergencies – each district could have a couple of centrally-located houses which only differ in design from standard two-bedroomed ones by featuring an extra room that would be suitably equipped for use as a minister’s office (and double as the location from where a minister can attend video-conferenced meetings). Upon being promoted to the position of state minister, a person – and its immediate family (although by the time someone has become a state minister its children might be grown-up) – would move into one of these houses. There ought to be two of them in case a district happens to be simultaneously represented by more than one state or world minister – although that is likely to be a rare event. While a district is represented by only one or no state/world ministers, the unoccupied house(s) could be used to accommodate official visitors to the district (e.g., workers – be they ministers or not – from other districts) or as temporary accommodation for any residents of the state who suddenly have to leave their permanent accommodation (e.g., because it has been rendered uninhabitable by some form of damage).

PLAY

N[Z]ERS who are justly proud of their world-famous scenery, splendid shooting and fishing, etc., are perhaps a little inclined to under-rate the value of their birds. The majority of people might even think that were all the feathered denizens of the bush to disappear it would make no difference... [NZ,] however... is probably more dependent than any other country in the world on birds for the propagation of her forest plants... [T]he seeds of [65%] of the forest plants and trees, including every single timber tree except the kauri and beeches, were dispersed solely by birds. Without their presence the bush would be non-existent. This appears impossible, but it is absolutely true. Moreover, birds are our chief allies against insects... 'It is considered by many competent authorities that if all the birds were destroyed human life would become extinct owing to the enormous swarms of insects which, unchecked, would devastate the world.' ...It should be emphasized that we have no means of replacing our indigenous species if they die out, seeing that some of them are found nowhere else in the world. Each of these species has special functions to perform which no other bird can take on. The unhealthy state of our native forest too often is due to the loss of a class of bird evolved to control enemies of timber. The most important example is the Kaka. This... bird used to be present in vast numbers, but has now dwindled below the point where it can have much effect on beetles... Like the Woodpecker of the Old World... Kakas bore for and destroy grubs... Blue-wattled crows search the floor of the forest for beetles and grubs, whilst the fantail, in addition to killing insects of all kinds, is the deadly enemy of the codlin moth. Bushwrens are inveterate insect-hunters, working over every inch of the boles of big trees, and searching cracks and crannies in the bark. Moreporks destroy wetas, i.e., green timber borers. True, they occasionally make a meal of other birds, but more often than not it is sparrow-pie that they indulge in. [NZ (Wood) P]igeons, Tuis, Bellbirds and other honey-eaters all assist in pollination work. These facts in themselves are sufficient to make us wish to protect our feathered friends, which in addition to their usefulness, gladden us with their playful ways, glorious song, and marvellous plumage. Many people do not realize that of the indigenous birds, seventy-six species or [36%], are peculiar to N[Z]... Even Great Britain with all her wealth of bird life cannot boast of anything like that number. Moreover in addition to their uniqueness, some of these N[Z] birds are extraordinarily interesting. Take for instance the many flightless birds of which N[Z], not a large country, has more than any other place, and which by reason of their helplessness are specially open to destruction. In prehistoric days there existed a large flightless goose in addition to the now extinct Moas. The latter are said to have been much reduced in numbers by the hardships of a glacial period, which they survived merely to be exterminated by the moa-hunters. Other birds incapable of flight are the Takahe, recently rediscovered in the mountain strongholds of the south-west of the South Island, the Wekas or large Rails, and the Kakapo or Ground-Parrot; whilst everybody has heard of the Kiwis. That all these birds are flightless is probably due to the fact that they never had carnivorous beasts to contend with and that N[Z] possessed a good climate... The Wrybilled Plover is the only bird in the world with a beak to one side. Its bill curves sharply to the right, enabling the bird to forage for food under stones... *A History of Birds*... writes that when in search of a meal it invariably walks round stones from left to right. The black band round its breast is wider on the left side. The bird thus becomes invisible by closely resembling its surroundings... The Huia's command great interest, as they are the only birds in the world where the [cock and hen] have totally different bills. The cock bird's bill is short and slightly curved, that of the hen is twice as long and acts as a probe... These birds are among N[Z]'s greatest assets[(the 'Huia – which was noted for its green black plumage – has been extinct since 1907 as a result of shrinking forests and over-zealous specimen-collecting for overseas museums' and milliners)]. In her galleries and museums N[Z] cannot attempt to rival the wonderful art treasures to be found at the Louvre in Paris or the British Museum in London, but N[Z] can attract visitors from all parts of the world to see her incomparable birds... The first and last thing one sees on leaving or approaching land are our feathered friends, and there are very few places where no bird of any kind is to be met... Birds' flight is, of course, wonderful. It is not, however, always realized the huge distances birds at times cover. Our... Godwit comes from the tundras of Asia, whither it returns to breed. Swallows reach N[Z] occasionally from Asia... The problem of migration is most interesting, and much has been written on the subject. Perhaps the most feasible explanation of their annual pilgrimage is that the birds are following the land route taken by their direct forbears before the ocean covered many lands now submerged. When the sea began to encroach, these early migrants crossed narrow strips of water knowing what lay beyond, until their present descendants cross huge stretches of sea by instinct. The sociable habits of birds are usually dictated by curiosity, desire for food, or protection... During the winter months, [cock and hen] birds often gather together in separate flocks, as is the case with Chaffinches, Buntings, etc.; whilst birds band together... [again] to rear their young... The Kiwi lays the largest egg in the world in proportion to the size of the bird... Where the egg is large compared with the size of the parent, the chick is able to run about and feed itself immediately it is hatched... Game-birds, Ducks, etc., run the moment they leave the nest... Ducks raise large broods, but very few reach maturity... Stoats, cats and rats are all deadly enemies of our feathered friends, whilst in some countries the unfortunate birds have to deal with [gun]s as well... More patience is required to 'shoot' a bird with field-glasses than with a gun, but the results are correspondingly better... The chicks of... [the] Little Grebe... spend much of their time on their mother's back. In cases of danger, Grebe have been known thus to remove their young to a place of safety, a habit Woodcock also have. When feeding their little ones, parents work very hard until they themselves are often worn out. A little Blue-Tit... was known to have made 475 journeys in seventeen hours. Parrots and gregarious birds such as Linnets, Goldfinches, etc., feed their young mainly on regurgitated food (usually half-digested seeds). Cormorants, Shags, etc., obtain their meal by inserting their heads down their mothers' throats and removing the fish in their pouches. Petrels feed their nestlings largely on oil, distilled from the fish they eat. - 1957

It is an extraordinary fact that... [when sportspeople] of an area want to 'improve' fishing in a reservoir, they prevail on authorities to dump quantities of poison into it to kill the undesired fish, which are then replaced with hatchery fish more suited to the sports[people]'s taste. The procedure has a strange, Alice-in-Wonderland quality. The reservoir was created as a public water supply, yet the community, probably unconsulted about the sports[people]'s project, is forced either to drink water containing poisonous residues or to pay out tax money for treatment of the water... To an ever-increasing degree, chemicals used for the control of insects, rodents, or unwanted vegetation contribute... organic pollutants... There is no dearth of [people] who understand these things, but these are not the [people] who order the wholesale drenching of the landscape with chemicals. And where are the [people] who supposedly understand the value of proper habitat for the preservation of wildlife? Too many of them are to be found defending herbicides as 'harmless' to wildlife because they are thought to be less toxic than insecticides. Therefore, it is said, no harm is done. But as the herbicides rain down on forest and field, on marsh and rangeland, they are bringing about marked changes and even permanent destruction of wildlife habitat. To destroy the homes and the food of wildlife is perhaps worse in the long run than direct killing. The irony of... all-out chemical assault[s] on roadsides and utility rights-of-way is twofold. It is perpetuating the problem it seeks to correct, for as experience has clearly shown, the blanket application of herbicides does not permanently control roadside 'brush' and the spraying has to be

repeated year after year. And as a further irony, we persist in doing this despite the fact that a perfectly sound method of *selective* spraying is known... Selective spraying was developed by... a... director of a Committee for Brush Control Recommendations for Rights-of-Way... at the American Museum of Natural History... It took advantage of the inherent stability of nature, building on the fact that most communities of shrubs are strongly resistant to invasion by trees. By comparison, grasslands are easily invaded by tree seedlings. The object of selective spraying is not to produce grass on roadsides and rights-of-way but to eliminate the tall woody plants... [- that can] present an obstruction to drivers' vision or interference with wires... [-] by direct treatment and to preserve all other vegetation. One treatment may be sufficient, with a possible follow-up for extremely resistant species; thereafter the shrubs assert control and the trees do not return. The best and cheapest controls for vegetation are not chemicals but other plants. The method has been tested in research areas scattered throughout the eastern [US]. Results show that once properly treated, an area becomes stabilized, *requiring no respraying for at least twenty years*. The spraying can often be done by [workers] on foot, using knapsack sprayers, and having complete control over their material... Treatment is directed only to trees and exceptionally tall shrubs that must be eliminated. The integrity of the environment is therefore preserved, the enormous value of the wildlife habitat remains intact, and the beauty of shrub and fern and wildflower has not been sacrificed... A[nother]... advantage... of selective spraying is the fact that it minimizes the amount of chemical applied to the landscape... Here and there the method of vegetation management by selective spraying has been adopted. For the most part, entrenched custom dies hard and blanket spraying continues to thrive, to exact its heavy annual costs from the taxpayer, and to inflict its damage on the ecological web of life. It thrives, surely, only because the facts are not known. When taxpayers understand that the bill for spraying the town roads should come due only once a generation instead of once a year, they will surely rise up and demand a change of method. - 1962

...as super-technology and almost universal automation make more and more existing work unnecessary... the working day, the working week, the working year, and the working life will all be reduced; most people will find their main satisfactions not in work but in leisure... - 1978

OUR ANCESTORS' recreation came at the end of six-day work weeks with working days twelve or more hours long. Now that the average employee puts in less than half that many hours on the job, a large industry has developed around leisure-time activities. It will grow still larger as the working week continues to decline and the drivers of change extend even further the range of choices available for sports and hobbies... Most healthy people need challenge, and as work diminishes its claims on their time they will turn to sports to satisfy that need. We can expect to see ever-higher standards in amateur athletics... For people who like outdoor activity but lack the strength, ability, or time to acquire the necessary skills, there is a further revolution in store. When microcomputers and automation are applied to sports equipment, we will be offered surfboards that always stay under the surfer no matter how uncoordinated [the surfer] may be, and powered gliders that won't let themselves be stalled – they will land safely even if their owners could never pass a flight test.

...Some of the most dramatic examples of the impact of changing technology in everyday life come from the area of transport... I have already mentioned the possibility of... develop[ing] efficient public transport services which do away with the need for many private cars... [and] replacing many journeys by telecommunications... But... while it is clear that the patterns of travel may change, it is far from clear that there will be less travel overall in the future... [- because] good communications do encourage some forms of travel, with people persuaded by what they see on TV to visit exotic places for holidays... So... more leisure time may mean less travel to work but more travel to play... Apart from this... [t]here is a real possibility that the printed book or newspaper might be displaced by computer linked video systems, for example... Holography – true three dimensional imagery – and other laser applications, video cassette equipment, home computers linked to communications systems, or TV/telephone communications systems linked to centralised computers, wide use of optical fibres and other possibilities become very likely in... future... - 1981

Playing in the Future... Video games have become the new national pastime in the U[S], and their popularity is spreading around the world. In the late 1970s, Japan experienced a severe yen shortage because too many coins were being gobbled up by video arcade machines... As the technology behind electronic video games progresses, there will be hundreds of options, decisions and maneuvers confronting human players with each particular game. Manufacturers say that as electronic challenges become more sophisticated, psychological problems posed by [hu]man-verses-computer confrontations may take on greater significance... [G]ame companies are toying with the idea of robot games. Technology will continue to advance at an increasing rate, but [humanity]'s baser instincts will not change. One of these instincts, the lust to see “the kill,” may be revitalized in a game of the future, *Gladiator Robots*. This would be a violent game for the very rich and decadent. Patterned after the pagan Roman circus, future elitists would buy and program demolition robots equipped with a variety of weapons. People and their robots would get together in a carnival atmosphere and pit one robot against another for a metallic duel unto death, or a “thumbs down” decision... Fantasy and role-playing games will... attract more players in the future. These games are successful because they rely totally on the imagination of the players... Many spin-offs of the original role-playing game, *Dungeons and Dragons*, exist today, and many more will be created in the years to come. Some experts say the introduction of computers into fantasy games will make them even more successful. Computer programs will help simplify the bewildering sets of rules that accompany the games... [E]ventually a... melody derived from a computer music-generation program [will] reach... the top of the music charts. Unlike the synthesizer and computer music melodies of the 1980s, this song [won't have been] created by a human composer working through a computer-controlled instrument; the computer itself [will have crafted] the melody, fe[d] it through the instruments, and record[ed] it.

...“The music of... the voice... is in danger of being lost[.]” Gandhi once said (this will be doubly tragic if eventually ‘an eye for an eye makes us all blind’). Gandhi also said[.]... “Purity of life is the highest and truest art... for what is art without the sure foundation and framework of a noble life?” - 1982

...it is true... that creativity is favoured neither in education nor on the labour market. A new equilibrium with more creativity is... [often] called for... But... [o]n the other hand the importance of creativity has its limits. When exclusively directed at personal development, without any relevance to the happiness of others, creativity is sterile, and too many who call themselves artists appeal for public support, simply to live a life of their liking. Many branches of art are at a low level of performance today and may later be compared with nineteenth-century architecture – nothing to stand beside Roman, Gothic[or] Renaissance... architecture... Culture is also at an all-time low when it comes to the care for young... children. The relative weight given to the entertainment of considerable numbers of parents is out of balance with the needs of children, clearly identified by child psychologists. More examples could be given: presumably vogues in culture have always existed, but one wonders whether the increased intensity of communication has not amplified the vogues, and the swing from one vogue to the next, at a high price in human happiness. Rightly, therefore, a search for new life-styles is going on, which are meant... to adapt human behaviour... A new life-style should also exhibit a higher degree of long-term thinking, and this implies the avoidance of over-consumption, of the kind which makes itself felt later in life, when the individual is confronted with the consequences of over-indulgence in alcohol or meat. - 1983

The relationship between a person and another animal can be a beautiful thing, fraught though it is with human-centred misconceptions like animals being ‘faithful’ and being ‘good’. But with the modern-day ‘ownership’ of cats and dogs, this must involve the need for slaughterhouses, an

evil which should outweigh all other considerations. Not all pets, of course, are carnivores. I used to have a dream of establishing a colony of vegetarian animals, a paradigm of peaceful coexistence where guinea-pigs and tortoises would potter about amongst brightly-plumed birds and other decorative creatures, without fear. But apart from the massive importation of grains that this little prison camp would need, healthy breeding animals outside their natural environment would soon overpopulate their home. There would have to be either a trade to local pet shops, with all the horrifying possibilities that would involve, or a mass sterilisation or isolation programme for the inmates. In my view there is no justification for tampering with other animals and their environment in such ways. My old dream now seems very sentimental indeed. Zoos are another ancient barbaric institution which fill me with horror. Guy the gorilla (RIP), prisoner and star attraction of one of our most respected zoological institutions, whose family group was slaughtered in order to bring him to his new home, used to symbolise the utter hopelessness of the situation of animals like him. Two modern excuses for maintaining zoos (which exist primarily to make money for people – even a job after all is a vested interest) are for their educational role and for protecting endangered species. But to observe animals in captivity (even in so-called ‘safari parks’) is only an education in the ways of human insensitivity. Removed from their natural environment with its thousands of ever-present intricate demands, they can do nothing but sink into inactivity or patterns of repetitive neurotic behaviour. Surely natural history books, and films of animals in the wild, are a far better education in the ways of animals. And as for the conservation aspect, it is certainly more cost-effective in terms of protecting endangered species (i.e., many species, not just a few captive specimens) to spend money on preserving wild areas than on breeding animals in zoos. There is already a list of creatures extinct in the wild that exist in zoos, and for which it is virtually impossible to recreate a natural habitat. Protecting our few remaining natural animal habitats must surely now be the most urgent priority. I assume it is not necessary here to go deeply into the question of circuses, and I welcome the fact that several District Councils have now banned from their land circuses which use ‘performing’ animals. I expect the fight against cruel circuses will be won before long, but for the usual economic, not humanitarian, reasons... If I have dwelt over-long on the issue of other captive animals, it is because I regard keeping pets, etc. as part of our assumption that we may use animals as we wish... People who use animals as surrogate friends usually eat animals too. They claim affection for animals whilst turning a blind eye to the brutality we inflict upon them. This is a double standard which permeates our society. If a farmer kept a dog permanently tethered in a small pen [the farmer] would be liable to prosecution under the Protection of Animals Act 1911, yet [farmers can permanently put pigs or hens in pens too small to use a tether]... I do not wish to underestimate the enormous changes needed to bring about peace on Earth... but... regional self-sufficiency, and certainly self-sufficiency of all nations in staple foods, would be the vegan contribution to global political stability. At the local level, at least one British family of four has shown that it can be self-sufficient in food and fuel on less than four acres of land... This is less than the amount of land that would be arrived at if all the fertile land in Britain were divided equally amongst the present population. Unfortunately it does not seem that our agricultural land is about to be redistributed... [W]e are certainly a long way from a situation of each family having its own plot and producing its own food and fuel. Personally I do not favour this in any case... Self-sufficient families or extended families are not part of my own ideal, as they might not accommodate the interaction and change that are a necessary feature of reality... In a vegan future, with the science and skills already acquired, we could inhabit garden cities... which would provide food, recreation and creative employment for us all. Afforestation ideals go back as far as Plato, who spoke of happier times when Attica’s mountains were tree-clad. This is now no pipedream, but something that we can and must implement... in order to heal the wounds we have inflicted upon the Earth... There is no more land left for us to transform with animal farming into dust bowls or barren hillsides. It is time to halt the stockpiling of... beef... butter and... weapons of mass destruction. All these will be obsolete if we can manage to let the Earth and ourselves survive.

...The rocks are trying to tell us something... [F]ossils are all that remain of creatures that once strode, or slithered, or swam, or just took root... before there were any humans to take note of them... [C]ount up all the beings that leave fossils... and you discover that the vast majority by far of all the species that ever lived are now extinct... The lesson [seems to be] clear... Extinction is the rule. Life is the exception. And then you notice that the different fossil forms do not succeed each other at a uniform pace. Instead, the rocks proclaim long periods in which life changed very little, punctuated by short intervals of cataclysm, turnover, the wholesale loss of many kinds of creature all over the planet at once – followed astonishingly quickly by many new forms, clearly evolved from the survivors of the catastrophe... We owe our very existence – every one of us bigger than a mouse, anyway – to the extinction of the dinosaurs... [Yet the dinosaurs confirm that we live on] a planet where, for tens of millions of years, everything [can be] fine. It is enough to give even inveterate pessimists a sense of security. - 1985

The Pleistocene epoch... [-] the first of the two epochs forming the Quaternary period... [-] followed the Pliocene and preceded the Holocene (Recent); it lasted from about 2,000,000 to 10,000 years ago, is notable for a succession of ice ages, and also saw the evolution of... the genus of which we (*Homo sapiens sapiens*) are the modern representatives... Towards the end of the epoch many animal species became extinct. - 1986

Did... early [homo sapiens] affect their environment? Perhaps the only sensible answer is that we do not know... However, the... outstanding example of environmental impact in terms of animal populations is the phenomenon known as ‘Pleistocene overkill’. This term is applied to the history of large (adult weight 50kg or more) warm-blooded animals (usually mammals but with some birds as well) at the end of the Pleistocene, when some 200 genera of them (the so-called ‘megafauna’) became extinct... The phenomenon is perhaps most closely observable in North America: here, two-thirds of the large mammal fauna present at the end of the Pleistocene (c. 13,000 BC) then disappeared... There is no evidence of such extinctions in earlier periods which might have been expected if Pleistocene climatic changes had been the proximate cause, nor any firm evidence of survival of these genera past the 500-year period during which the extinctions appear to have taken place. These data have led to the hypothesis that it was the introduction of [humanity] as a predator against which these mammals had no genetically implanted defence behaviour which was the cause of extinctions. In North America, the date of introduction of [humanity] via the Bering Strait land bridge is usually taken as being about 12,000 B[C], and a simulation of the extinction pattern supposes a wave-front advance by hunters whose population periodically exploded because of the new and favourable habitat... Some support is given to this hypothesis by the effects of the arrival of [humanity] into other hitherto unpeopled places. The disappearance of the moa bird from N[Z] occurred within a few hundred years of the human occupation of the islands; the megafauna... of Madagascar disappeared within a similar period after the first human occupation in AD 1000... In the course of time, humans have changed many ecosystems and introduced many species to parts of the globe to which they were not native. Like so many other processes, these transfers speeded up in the [19]th century with the availability of steamship and railway transport. These displacements have produced many benefits but have had an adverse side as well since some immigrants have proved to be unwelcome citizens: few loyal [USer]s would now admit the European sparrow and starling if they had the choice of keeping them out, and A[US]ns would cheerfully poison the last rabbit... [- t]he line of the Western A[US] rabbit-proof fence[is] analogous to the Great Wall of China in its attempts to keep out the unwanted... [-] and burn the last blackberry bush... It is perhaps a truism that when wild nature is everywhere, no human societies have shown much interest in an altruistic protection of it. Pragmatic reasons such as the perpetuation of a food supply or the maintenance of animals for hunting may have been widespread, but the disinterested preservation of wild plants, animals and ecosystems was rare... [until some 19th- and 20]th-century gardens tr[ie]d] to be totally wild and thus go back beyond agriculture to hunting and gathering or, very likely, the Garden of Eden itself... In industrialized places, gardens are the closest parts of many people’s environment which are consciously non-industrial. Be they private plots or public parks, they symbolize a rural scene... Mass travel of pleasure-seekers as distinct from armies seems to date initially from the [19]th century advent of railway and steamship which brought

down costs and made feasible conducted tours such as those arranged by Thomas Cook, and thereafter from the post-1945 period when increasing leisure time, disposable income and personal mobility created a wave of leisure activity. In its international manifestations it has been particularly aided by the cheap-to-operate jet aeroplane... Travel, it is said, broadens the mind, and in the *The Dry Salvages* no less a poet than T. S. Eliot admonishes us not to 'fare well/But fare forward, voyagers'. Though not always perhaps in search of such lofty ideals, people have taken to leaving home for the day, for overnight trips and to go overseas as never before... A very large share of the international tourism in the world takes place in Europe and North America... So the recreation phenomenon is largely associated with the rich and it is largely also an urban phenomenon in the sense that most travellers, even though they journey to remote places, seek urban levels of food, shelter and hygiene when they get there...

[When] the Green Party [first appeared] in the spotlight... [h]eadlines such as 'No foreign holidays – Greens would ban air travel' and 'Did you know... [that they want to] take your car away' appeared... [in] some of the more disreputable tabloids[, which] began to delight in misrepresenting its policies... [The] Green Party... retorted, 'The Greens have renewed social hope...' - 1990

We are now being invited to enter... a time of hope, a New Age. By saying this, we should be careful to ask what the term means. "New Age" is too easily associated with cartoon figures, which represent it rather ludicrously... Gandhi's autobiography... tells us about the "enterprising" [gal] proprietor of a New Age vegetarian restaurant in Johannesburg, where [Gandhi] met his Nature Cure and Theosophist friends. [The proprietor] was "fond of art and extravagant and ignorant of accounts." Gandhi lent her money that [the proprietor] failed to return, and this got him into trouble, but that need not concern us here... [M]y point is that Gandhi's dry sentence evokes a person lots of us would call "typically New Age." But in fact Gandhi himself (keen on accounts and unenthusiastic about art) was just as much a New Age type, and a much better representative of its strengths... The supreme New Age art is dance... and it is notable how many New Age [guys]... married dancers... Of course, those close to the Tolstoy and Gandhi pole of the New Age were not dancers, were not sensualists, and were suspicious of the great importance given to the arts in modern times... The arts – compared with other forms of activity, like politics, commerce, or even science – always have a New Age tendency to favor spontaneity and enthusiasm. But when art itself constitutes a counter-world, and includes all other realities in itself, it separates itself from the rest of life and makes its spontaneity and playfulness purely aesthetic. It then runs counter to New Age values... The years 1880-1910, however, were a time when many artists did constitute such a counterworld. Art made itself important in culture, and asserted its freedom from old moral constraints. Coming to this idea, we are at the furthest extreme from Tolstoy and Gandhi, for we have come full circle, and the aestheticism of 18[8]0-1910 was closely linked to... an age of empire... There was a split, at best a dialectic, within that New Age, as there is in our own, between the two drives, the ascetic and the aesthetic... This conflict became an issue for Gandhi in his encounter with the American Nilla Cram Cook, who attached herself to him in the 1930s... [Nilla] grew up in avant-garde circles in places like Greenwich Village with a post-Nietzschean set of ideas, focused on the transcendent moral importance of art, myth, and love, values that seemed to her mutually dependent. [Nilla] went to live in Gandhi's ashram while [Gandhi] was in jail, and they exchanged letters, in which [Nilla] translated *satyagraha* into the terms of her philosophy. Soon [Gandhi] wrote to her, "I wish you will forget Pythagoras, Bacchus, and the Mahabharata..." [Gandhi] wanted her to move forward morally, but her imagination needed huge spaces of amoral freedom... [Gandhi] writes... "...You have plenty of poetry in you. Your imagination knows no bounds. I want you to transmute these into an inexhaustible power for real service. We all have to aspire after being childlike." But for her, to transmute her imagination, especially in the direction of the childlike, was to deny it. In *What Is Art?* (1898) Tolstoy criticized his contemporaries' reifying and mysticizing of art, a process like that which we saw in Godwin and Shelley at the time of defeat of their New Age. Tolstoy directly challenged the new aestheticism of his own day by criticizing contemporary work by the criterion of its usefulness and pleasurable to peasants... Good art, [Tolstoy] said, is that kind which promotes the key religious perception of its time, which "in our case" means the brotherhood of all... But our art, since the renaissance, Tolstoy says, has been a privileged caste's art, which means that it has functioned primarily to distract an idle class of aristocrats. (On February 4, 1897, [Tolstoy] wrote in his diary, "The harm of art is principally this, that it takes up time, hiding people's idleness from them.") According to Tolstoy, art deprived of its proper (religious) subject matter becomes affected and obscure, artificial and insincere, and manifests erotic mania. (It is easy to imagine contemporaries... saying very similar things about the equivalent art of our time.) ...Some of these thoughts Tolstoy developed further in his letter of October 4, 1897, to Romain Rolland in France. Rolland had written to Tolstoy as a student, conscious of a vocation to become an intellectual and troubled by Tolstoy's demand that everyone do bread labor. Tolstoy wrote him, "All the evil of the day comes from the fact that so-called civilized people, together with the scientists and artists, form a privileged caste, like so many priests; and this caste has the fault of all castes. It degrades and lowers the principle... of... virtue..." ...This is a particularly interesting exchange because Rolland more or less rejected Tolstoy's opinion but went on to become a spokes[person] for some aspects of the New Age in France (a leader of pacifism during the First World War) and the [person] who introduced Gandhi to a whole generation of Europeans.

...I DROVE THROUGH the security gates at the vast site near Paris into a cloud of dust stirred up by a truck carrying three of the largest trees I had ever seen moving, 20-metre firs from Germany, roots and branches intact. The whole landscape seemed to be in motion. Trucks and bulldozers were scurrying in all directions, giant cranes were positioning hotel walls, trees, castle turrets. One driver told me proudly, "This is the biggest construction site in France since the Maginot Line." When I said that I hoped what [they were] building would have better luck, his smile stretched wider. "Don't worry. People will be having fun here for hundreds of years." To guide me through the chaos, [the driver] gave me a quick orientation. "That is the lake just ahead. Next to it will be four of the biggest hotels in Europe, more than a thousand rooms each. Over there is where you'll be able to visit outer space. There'll be a tropical jungle... a haunted house, and an Oriental bazaar..." By now his arms were waving in all directions. "And all of it," [the driver] concluded happily, "started with a mouse." The mouse first took shape 64 years ago on the sketch pad of a 26-year-old American film cartoonist named Walter Elias Disney... Walt... had just lost his job and was trying desperately to come up with a new character for an animated film. Soon [Walt] had conjured up an irrepressible rodent who, like his creator, would take whatever knocks the world gave and still smile. Walt dubbed him Mortimer Mouse, but his wife told him it was a terrible name. "How about Mickey?" Walt asked... Within ten years, the round-eared rodent had become the personal friend of children all over the world, and Walt had become rich and famous. Then, in an amusement park in Southern California, Walt had another of his crazy ideas. Munching peanuts on a bench while his two daughters rode the merry-go-round, [Walt] thought: *What about an amusement park, based on my own characters, where parents and children could have fun together?* For nearly two decades, although the Disney film studios came out with a string of hits, no banker would lend him money for his dream. Finally [Walt] mortgaged... stocks, house, furniture – ...everything [Walt] had – ...to buy and develop 100 hectares outside Los Angeles. When Disneyland opened in 1955, it proved an instant success. Sixteen years later it spawned a bigger sister – the 11,000-hectare Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. Tokyo Disneyland followed in 1983. Then it was Europe's turn. First, Walt Disney Corporation executives set loose their 1500 "imagineers," the dreamers who come up with weird and wonderful ideas and figure out how to build them. After considering some 200 places across the continent, the company settled on a fantastic site near Paris that the French Government was offering. For a bargain price, Disney bought nearly 2000 hectares, 30 kilometres east of the capital. The French agreed to build roads, utilities, a subway link to the city, and a stop on the planned high-speed train line that would put London, Amsterdam and Frankfurt less than three hours away. In return, Disney's 12,000 employees and the expected 11 million visitors a year would boost the local economy. Final contracts were signed in March 1987, and soon some 10,000 construction workers were digging and building and wiring and painting... to [complete]... the \$6.8-billion project... When I visited the site last August, it looked more like a battlefield than an amusement park. How, I wondered, would four million cubic metres of churned-up earth

become, within nine months, a resort containing Sleeping Beauty's castle and 29 other attractions, 360,000 trees and shrubs, 20 bridges, six hotels, five swimming pools, 50 restaurants and snack bars, 100 shops, 1051 robots and a Mississippi steamboat? "They will need a magic wand to finish it on time," said a cynical French friend. But the Disney people have been in the magic-wand business for well over half a century. One of their newest and most skilful wizards is... a 52-year-old one-time scholar in medieval French... [who a]s president of Euro Disney... is also Disney's unofficial ambassador to the Old World. Here [the president] found his academic background invaluable, for the project had aroused sullen resentment in some circles in Europe. "The very concept of Disneyland is a threat to civilization as we in Europe know it," snorted one British correspondent... [But the president] points out that most of the characters recreated by Disney come out of Europe's own culture: Snow White, Cinderella, Pinocchio, Peter Pan... To find the elements and people for this fairy-tale world, Disney experts scoured the earth. One went to Wales for crafts[people] who could make the little old-fashioned steam engines that haul visitors around the park. Another sought out [US] woodcarvers to sculpt some of the outsize horses that bob up and down on the merry-go-round. Still another clambered through caves in southern France and came back with new forms of stalactite and stalagmite that are reproduced in Euro Disneyland's caverns... 20 workshops in France and Belgium... turned out the 300,000-odd items necessary for what Disney calls its "cast members." Everyone in a Disney park is in some sort of costume, including the "custodial hosts" or street cleaners who patrol everywhere to make sure that no cigarette butts or chewing gum wrappers spoil the clean freshness of the decor. They are in costume because they are all playing a part in what one executive calls the Disney "magic box." Inside this box, [a] 42-year-old... is director of entertainment. For more than two decades this innovative [person] had been immersed in the world of dance and festivals. But the challenges... his team found themselves facing at Euro Disneyland were totally new. They had to have a Brahman bull trained in Oklahoma to bow to an audience, and audition rodeo riders in Dallas. They had to... audition musicians for the 32 bands that play all day long in the streets and restaurants. It's all part of the Disney style, which means the tightest discipline mixed with the loosest informality. To instill that special combination in the people recruited from the 12 European Community countries, hundreds of them were sent to America to train at Disney University and in the two Disney parks... "The parks stay open 365 days a year and we are paid to do things that sound impossible,"... says... the... chief of the landscape department... "...They told us we could not have a year-round portrait of the Cheshire Cat at Euro Disneyland because most flowers simply do not bloom outdoors in a Paris winter. But we have already developed a hard pansy that can be covered on cold nights and will look fresh the next day – even in the snow." ...Months before opening, Euro Disney had already sold hundreds of thousands of admission tickets, at about \$50 a head for adults and \$35 for children. Once inside, guests will find something for all tastes – and almost all budgets... At 9.01 a.m. on April 12... the resort opened its gates... If all goes according to plan, the size of the resort will double in 1995, and triple early in the next century. The imagineers are still hard at play, and with a site almost one-fifth the size of Paris, there is plenty of room for their dreams to become reality. The Euro Disney resort will never be really completed – just as Mickey would want it. For despite all its technical sophistication, a Disney park always embodies the spirit of the unassuming creature with whom it all began.

...Taxonomists, who carry on the work begun in Eden of giving the plants and animals their names, estimate that 90[%] of the species... [i]n the tropical rain forests... remain to be identified... Small isolates... disappear more often without a name. Nameless also are the uncounted species of bacteria extinguished in deforested soils and in soils abused by careless cultivation. Extinction and its threat can... be merely incidental to other developments. The... number of species per hectare being at maximum requires conversely that the number of members of a given species per hectare be at minimum. This makes not only for intricacy but for stability of the system. Parasites are constrained to be symbiotic rather than lethal. With the nearest specimen of the species of a dead host on the other side of the next hectare, the lethal parasite dies with its host and cannot break loose in an epidemic. For this stability, nature, as always, exacts a price. To maintain genetic diversity within a species sufficient to continue its evolution requires, it [i]s... estimated, a minimum breeding population of 500. Such a population in the tropics occupies a much larger territory than in, say, temperate-zone ecosystems, where healthy specimens of a species are closer neighbors. In regions of the world increasingly occupied by humans, the need for large territory necessarily places a species of plant or animal in peril... The California condor, its too-wide range occupied by human settlement and activity, is confined now to aviaries; with less than a breeding population, its evolutionary history is closed... The present rate of extinction of plant and animal species is comparable to that of the catastrophe that extinguished the dinosaurs and marked the Cretaceous-Tertiary boundary. By one count, 211 species of mammals, marsupials, and birds have vanished since 1600; 81... since 1900. Most... were island isolates. Now, however, extinction proceeds on the continents... The International Union for the Conservation of Nature reckons 20,000 species as endangered: 1000 vertebrates, 6000 insects in Europe alone, and about 10[%] of the named species of plants. For many large animals and plants, the future is foreclosed. Of the 291 rare or endangered mammals, 162 survive only in zoos. No more than 30 have been bred there with success that holds hope of their return to nature. Captivity has reduced the[ir] genetic and behavioral fitness... The population of Przewalski's horse – the last wild horse, native to the deserts on the inner Asian frontier of China and now confined to the world's zoos – approaches 500 breeding pairs. They are the progeny, however, of the last three stallions and seven mares taken from the highland Gobi desert... In arriving earlier at sexual maturity and in loss of seasonal breeding rhythm, the zoo horses exhibit the primary symptoms of domestication... The present half century has made meaningless the notion of wilderness. The entire planet has come into the custody of humankind. China has announced its intention to create in the Qian Tang region on its arid northern frontier a "rare animal garden" larger than the Yukon and the Arctic national wildlife refuges in Alaska, hitherto the world's largest. Otherwise, it appears, the last nature reserves large enough to contain significant ecosystems have already been established. According to the I[UCN], less than 1 million square kilometres has been set aside for refuges; only 24 refuges exceed 10,000 sq. kms)... The largest refuges in the contiguous 48 states of the U[S] were dedicated from the public domain in response to the conservation movement led by Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot in the first quarter of this century. In Africa, 15[%] of the total world refuge area, divided among many smaller refuges, cannot contain the communities of large mammalian herbivores (especially the ungulates) and their predators in any continuation of their evolutionary interdependence. All of the members of some species are confined to a single refuge. In India, the confinement of the 1100 surviving Indian rhinoceroses (single-horned) to two refuges does not secure survival of the minimum breeding population against the outbreak of some epidemic disease. The best the current conservation movement can do is to fight the poaching on the big reserves... and to corral small parcels of land that can help keep agreeable large animals, such as deer and wild turkeys, in circulation in exurbia. - 1992

The overpopulation of the Earth by a single species, representing only one out of several million species, is forcing the rest of the living world to move aside. Humans are rather large animals and command a major share of the Earth's natural resources. No other sizeable mammal even approaches the number of human beings alive today. Conversely, the populations of many animals have fallen so low they can no longer maintain their numbers and are in danger of extinction... Historically, humans have accounted for the extinction of many... species... Often, species became extinct because of the destruction of their habitats or the introduction of predators or competing species... In many cases, animals were senselessly slaughtered for no apparent reason except possibly for their fur or plumage... The isolated continent of A[US] is inhabited by many strange animals; it seems to be a throwback to a time 40 million years ago when large, bizarre mammals roamed the Earth. A[US] was separated from the rest of the world until the... arrival of... the ancestors of the Aborigines... about 60,000 years ago. When people migrated to A[US], the continent lost... a significant number of bird species... and... over 80[%] of its large mammals... including the giant kangaroos... [and other] giant marsupials...

ON CAPE BRETT only skeletons of pohutukawas... [-] loosely translated as the tree with the red adornment growing near the sea[-] ...are left. The festive crimson flowers and foliage have been ravaged by the Northland Peninsula's number one pest, the opossum... "...Opossums are

wonderful if they live in A[US – not NZ,” says]... the Department of Conservation[’s]... Auckland public relations officer... But in future years the coastline should again be clothed in scarlet. Landowners, [the DOC] and Project Crimson propose to build a fence along the base of the peninsula. The solar-powered fence will have hot wires top and bottom to prevent opossums invading the peninsula’s upper reaches. Project Crimson is expected to pay for the fence but gets financial help from C[HH. The] Project Crimson co-ordinator... says the fence is the ideal solution. “The problem with opossums is that when they get on a peninsula they have nowhere to spread out, so they multiply quickly. The pohutukawa is one of the favourite foods of the opossum so that’s one of the first trees to go.” The fence is not the first scheme to prevent the invasion. DOC has a trapping and poisoning operation which is run with the co-operation of the Rawhiti Marae... A propagation scheme will also assist the development of the cape’s pohutukawas. Seeds were taken from the area last April and raised at Paremoremo prison nursery and the Crippled Children Society nursery at Royal Oak. Project Crimson sent 2000 seedlings to the peninsula earlier last month and farmers are nurturing them in a shadehouse until they are ready for planting in 1996... [The public relations officer] says community support is essential. Other schemes around the country have failed because of lack of support. The Cape Brett fence is not the first such effort. A similar fence was built at Hot Water Beach in August and Marlborough Sounds’ Cape Lambert also has one... [□ Something Cape Lambert, Cape Brett and Hot Water Beach don’t have is an indoor ski slope – unlike] Funabashi City, 19[km] east of Tokyo[, which has built]... the world’s largest... The... height of a 25-storey building at its elevated end, and the length of five soccer fields[, the] ski dome... can accommodate 2000 skiers at a time, year-round. It is kept at a brisk minus two degrees by day, allowing [hu]man-made snow to cover the beginner, intermediate and advanced courses.

...The year is 1687. The people of Athens are under siege. Unknown to them, enemy cannon line a hill overlooking one of the world’s most magnificent buildings – the Parthenon. Tragically, the Parthenon had been used to store, of all things, gunpowder. One of the most beautiful buildings ever conceived, it was almost completely destroyed. For 2000 years the Parthenon has stood overlooking Athens, recalling a remarkable moment in history – the Golden Age of Greece... In 1971, [Greece’s] crowning glory... was discovered to be in danger of final collapse. Today it is being restored – not to its former splendour, but as a magnificent ruin worthy of the civilisation it represents. The pieces of marble so cruelly shattered by cannon-fire are being painstakingly cleaned and carefully reassembled. The holes made by enemy cannonballs are being precisely filled in. The restoration will take even longer than the 15 years it originally took to build... But there is [a] quality even more durable than stone in the legacy of Athens. This was a city whose brilliant light shined so powerfully that it defined Western intellectual thought for centuries... It’s extraordinary that a society of only 70,000 who lived 500 years before Christ could influence the world so dramatically... The city-states of ancient Greece were all highly competitive, but there was one state that expected to win and usually did. It was the powerful, brilliant, daring city of Athens. During the 5th century BC, Athens grew more powerful as many city-states and islands turned to her for protection from their mutual enemy – the Persians. And so the Athenian Empire was born. The Acropolis in Athens represents a pinnacle of achievement in the history of Western civilisation – an extraordinary outpouring of creative excellence that derives from one century... [Its] magnificent buildings symbolised the collective inspiration for a people with a passion for perfection. [One] historian... wrote: ‘So the buildings rose, as imposing in their sheer size as they were inimitable in the grace of their outlines. Since the artists tried to excel themselves in the beauty of their work... each of them [people] supposed would take many generations to build. But, in fact, the entire project was carried through in the high summer of one [person]’s administration.’ That one [person] was Pericles – leader of the Athenians[, who]... paid for the magnificence of all of Athens out of taxes collected from other city-states in return for protection... [For its protection, Athens looked to] the goddess Athena... the Parthenon... [was] built... to house and honour the deity to whom the city was dedicated... Adorned with gold and ivory, Athena soared 39 feet high... w[ith] a six foot statue of victory... [i]n her hand... Pericles came to power in 461BC[, after which] Athens flourished as few cities ever have... ‘Ours is no work-a-day city. No other provides so many recreations of the spirit. Our love of what is beautiful does not make us soft. We regard wealth as something to be properly used rather than as something to boast about.’ “To me it’s wonderful that in the age of Pericles they would take what was a huge amount of their gross national product and pour it into buildings – into [the] great Parthenon; into architecture that has influenced the history of architecture in the West for centuries beyond.” “What the Acropolis and the Parthenon were saying to the world was that we are Athens, we are the top, we have this goddess whom we revere, who looks after us under all circumstances, and for whom we are going to build the most magnificent enclosure we could imagine... [It] was a mark both of respect to the goddess and a way of showing the other Greeks that in this constant struggle, this constant competition, Athens was the best.” The city was completed within 50 years, designed by the finest architects in Greece and adorned by the greatest Greek sculptor – Phidias. It was a workforce that brought together the finest crafts[people] from all over the Mediterranean. Athens buzzed with new energy and, most of all, new ideas. Evening parties were occasions not just to watch pretty girls dance, or to get drunk, but to talk. The star guest would be the brilliant philosopher Socrates. Usually all-[guy] affairs, there was one interesting exception – foreign [gals] seized in war often became captive entertainers... “It must have been mind-blowing to be part of that atmosphere of the 5th century in Greece. So much was being invented that we have inherited. We think now in terms of Greek words: philosophy... rhetoric... politics... geography and biology – all of these things were just being discovered and discussed; everyone was questioning.” These were the first people to calculate the position of the Earth, moon and stars, and the first to conceive of the atom. The classic age of Greece produced some of the world’s greatest and original minds: the philosophers – Socrates, Plato and Aristotle; the mathematician Pythagoras... and the father of medicine – Hippocrates. “These were some of the greatest minds that have ever lived, and they were all alive in this small town more or less at the same time.” In Athens, Pericles presided over the world’s first democracy. Although only the 30,000 [guy] citizens had the vote, all officers of the city were elected, and their deliberations were held in public. It was an idea that... emerge[d] again in the... modern world. “Our founding fathers knew Latin and Greek, they read the authors, they understood the classical tradition of the rule of law against tyranny. I never cease to be amazed at the originality of the Greeks in inventing... democracy as we know it. It didn’t exist before – there were tyrants and tribal leaders but public participation in governance, in decision-making, started really with the 5th century in Athens... [when] everyone had to give part of their time to be experienced in government. And you had majority rule...” Athenian success in art and diplomacy, in sports and in government, was motivated by their desire for excellence. Ultimately, it was a spiritual commitment, this passion for perfection. “[The] Acropolis... is not a house of a government... and it is not a shopping mall as well. It was the temple of... a goddess[who t]hey wanted to serve[. T]hey wanted to create something above themselves...” “It wasn’t like a modern church. It wasn’t a place where you could go in and worship quietly. The sacrifices were performed outside, in part [because]... if you’re slaughtering a bull you don’t want it[s blood] on the floor of your temple; but also because the smoke had to rise to the gods. And in the meantime, since the divinity was thought to dwell in his or her home, you didn’t want to get too close – you wanted to maintain a kind of differential, a respectful distance, lest inadvertently you might do something wrong and get somebody very powerful really angry at you, and that’s always a bad idea.” In 1928, off the northern coast of [a]Greek island... in the Aegean Sea, a small boat was looking for sponges. The diver saw a strange shape beneath the sand. [The diver] had discovered a classical Greek statue that had sunk with the ship carrying it nearly 2000 years before. Many now believe this rare bronze was Poseidon – Greek god of the sea. The magnificent statue was one of hundreds stolen in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD by the Romans. Gods like Poseidon were thought to have a very real power over the lives of ancient Greeks. Overlooking the sea... 37 miles south of Athens, is a temple built in honour of Poseidon – a god the Greeks were anxious to have on their side. “Poseidon is nature. His domains are the depths of the earth and the sea. [Poseidon creates storms – and helps the sailors] or... sends them to their death. So [Poseidon is] an uncontrollable god, and you turn to him when you’re scared. The Greeks were very good [at] building temples where you had a sense of otherness, a sense of such a great beauty that only the gods could live there.” Up on Mount Olympus was the pantheon of Greek gods. There were gods for everything – love, fertility, wisdom, anger,

jealousy. But one Greek god stood above the rest – the all-powerful Zeus, ruler of the world and of the gods themselves. These gods were not imagined as spiritual beings. They had very human characteristics and were known to interfere in the lives of humans on the slightest whim. They could be rational and helpful, or mischievous and vindictive. Anyone who offended them could expect terrible revenge... Delphi... is the most important of all Greek sanctuaries to the gods. This temple was dedicated to Apollo – the ‘son of Zeus’ and]god of knowledge, light, music and healing... Pilgrims would cleanse themselves in [a nearby] stream, having first sacrificed a goat to Apollo. Even in this highly educated and rational civilisation, they still believed in mysterious divine powers. The great temple of Apollo was home to a kind of prophet, the Oracle of Delphi. Its pronouncements could affect the destiny of [mortals] and the history of nations. Ordinary citizens would come to ask if they should marry or if their spouse was being unfaithful. Generals would ask if they should go to war. A priest [would] take their questions to the oracle... The medium was an ordinary local [gal] sent into a trance often by chewing hallucinogenic leaves. Her answers were always garbled messages that the priest would interpret even more ambiguously still, leaving suppliants to choose the meaning that suited them best. At times the answers were simply misunderstood. When [the] king of Lydia asked if [it] should attack the Persian Empire [the king] was told, ‘If you go to war you will destroy a great kingdom.’ [The king] went to war – the kingdom... destroyed was his own... Thousands of people came to Delphi every four years for a 5-day festival. Moving up the sacred way to Apollo’s temple, passing 3000 statues and treasures filled with the riches of various city-states, pilgrims were expected to offer whatever they could afford... [In addition, t]here were vendors... But it was also at Delphi that another, unofficial ritual took place, honouring not Apollo but a very different sort of god. In winter, it’s said, [gals] would climb Mt Parnassus directly behind Delphi and perform wild dances in honour of [the] god of wine... It was one of the few opportunities for [gals] in this highly ordered society to follow their instincts and abandon all inhibitions... Such private rituals later became public events and the beginnings of what we know as theatre. “All drama originated as part of religious festivals... [T]his led to poetry... then they introduced [guy] figures and masks, and gradually you got what we now think of as tragedy and comedy.” Th[e] amphitheatre at Delphi is one of hundreds that were built by the ancient Greeks... [P]lays were produced that are still performed today. Many were about [gals, who were mostly] kept at home. [“]But they were very powerful personalities. They were running the house and the lives of their husbands... Of course, these [gals] of power closed into those beautiful houses was mysterious... for [guys]. It was another world that they wanted to know more [about, to] experience... and that’s why they chose [gals] as... heroines for their plays.” “Theatre became absolutely central to [the ancient Greek] way of life. They would have a whole day, start[ing] in the morning, and get [to see] three plays... th[at all] went on a long time. You had subsidy from the government, and you also had private support from the very rich. And you had political debate, you had a sense of involvement. The chorus was a device that represented *the people*... [T]he stories were often known to mythology, but it was the way they were played out that really captured the imagination of an entire populous.” ...[one play was about a gal] driven to unspeakable acts of revenge when her husband betrays her for his own personal gain... [The wife] refuses to accept her husband Jason’s decision to abandon her in favour of the king’s daughter... The tragedy... is that [the wife] gives up everything for Jason, and in a [guy-dominated society is] powerless to prevent him deserting her and her children... In her desperation, [the wife] reaches a tragic conclusion – that her only possible revenge is to kill her own children... Traces [of her situation]... can still be seen in Greece today. This too is a society dominated by [guys – who are] committed to demonstrating their masculinity... “A[n]cien[t] A[thens] has been described as a boys’ club, and in some ways this is very, very true. [Gals], resident foreigners, slaves, were not fully enfranchised – they were somehow lesser beings. It was the boys in the boys’ club that ran the show. And they wanted to keep it that way.” And to some long-suffering [gals guys] still seem to be running the show... “...a play like... [the one about Jason’s wife] so speaks to a society now in which divorce is rampant, in which [husbands and wives] get so angry at each other, in which child custody is a central issue...” “[Gals like Jason’s wife are like gals] we see today... we have... the same problems... with [our relationships with the guys] in our family, with husbands.” ...The ancient Greeks did not take weekends off. They worked every day except for the more than 50 religious holidays and sporting festivals... [O]ne of the four great religious and athletic festivals of ancient Greece [was held in a stadium that sat] 20,000 spectators... “They’d come in clutches of family or friends, spread their blankets, break out their wine skins, and sit and watch the games... We have actually found evidence in the form of concentrations of coins that show us that, for example, across the way was the centre of the Corinthian cheering section... And here on the opposite side, just behind where the judges’ stand is – not coincidentally – we have found almost all of our coins from Argos... [O]f course, the games were controlled by Argos...” ...Originally, athletes competed in the nude and [gals] were excluded from the games. But one [mother], determined to see her son compete, dressed up as a... trainer. When her son won, [the mother] jumped over a fence in her excitement. All was revealed. After that, even trainers were required to be in the nude... Winners won no prizes other than laurel or wild celery leaves. Back home, they’d be showered with flowers at lavish parades, where they’d be drawn around town in the finest chariots. Often, they’d have a statue made in their likeness. If they were Athenian, they’d enjoy free dinners for the rest of their lives. The most important games in Greece were held every four years... at Olympia. The first international sporting event in all the world was held [t]here, in 776BC. The Greeks were the first to elevate athletics to the status of serious competition... But the Olympic festival was first and foremost a religious occasion. As many as a hundred oxen would be slaughtered... on an altar in front of the temple of Zeus. Its interior was dominated by a gold-clad statue of the god. Before it, every Greek athlete had to pray before... compet[ing]. At the entrance to Olympia was the gymnasium where athletes trained, and the office of the organising committee who decided on an athlete’s moral suitability to compete. A hotel for VIPs was built around an elegant fountain. At the far end was a mini United Nations. States were required to cease all hostilities during the games, and met here to work out their differences... To the [ancient] Greeks, a beautiful body was as important as a brilliant mind... Mind and body came together in the gymnasium. This was a place for conversation and learning as much as for exercise and wrestling. To the Greeks the aesthetic, the physical and the intellectual were all part of their pursuit of perfection... With so much emphasis on... intimacy [between guys] and physical beauty, perhaps it was inevitable that in Athens homosexuality was quite common, with no stigma attached whatsoever. Sexual relations between mature older [guys] and younger boys were entirely acceptable, as long as the boys were first wooed with gifts, and as long as it stopped w[hen one partner got married]... The Athenians tended to dominate in sports and just about everything else. But their winning streak couldn’t last forever, and fate was preparing to deal some cruel blows to this society... which had risen so high and achieved so much. In 399BC, the Athenians did a strange thing. They put their wisest citizen on trial. The great philosopher Socrates was judged by a jury of 200 of his fellow citizens... [after being] accused of not believing in the gods and of corrupting the minds of the young with his radical new ideas. “In many ways, Socrates was the complete Athenian. [Socrates] served with courage and distinction as a soldier and as a states[person], and in this way fulfilled the Athenian ideal. At the same time though, [Socrates] demanded explanations... and... definitions of his fellow citizens. [Socrates] described himself as a... stinging fly on the great sluggish rump of the Athenian body politic.” ...His trial and conviction would never have happened earlier, under Pericles’ rule. “The Athenians became too cautious, I think. Something happened. Their old willingness to engage, to experiment, to explore, is still there, but it’s somehow muted.” The change in Athens had its root in events decades earlier. In 430BC a terrible tragedy befell Athens – a plague that was said to have come from Ethiopia, then passed through Egypt and Persia before finally reaching Athens. It was a disease that killed almost everyone it touched, and it swept the city... Pericles’ own sister, and then to his horror his son, caught the plague. And [Pericles] was already burdened by a disastrous war with the Spartans. “The plague affected Pericles in two ways. First of all politically, because the Athenians blamed him for it, and for the first time in 15 years [Pericles] was not elected to the office of generalship... Shortly thereafter, [Pericles] himself caught the plague and died. And with the death of Pericles a certain style of leadership died as well.” A third of the population would die. Without Pericles’ leadership the Athenians were lost. They started to make reckless decisions. For half a

century Athens battled Sparta for dominance over Greece. The decisive battle would be fought not on Greek soil but in Sicily. Athens sent a fleet into battle, but the highly trained Spartan army sided with the Sicilians. The Athenian navy was destroyed in a series of disastrous sea battles, and in 404BC Athens was utterly defeated. "I think the Athenians lost the great war against Sparta because they did overreach themselves. The Spartans repeatedly offered terms of peace but... the Athenians simply couldn't allow themselves to accept terms of peace from Sparta – they wanted to win." The defeat of the Athenians in Sicily left Sparta as the dominant power in Greece... [and the] goddess to whom the Athenians turned for protection was powerless to help them... Socrates became the scapegoat for the decline of Athens. In prison his friends offered to help him... escape but [Socrates] refused. Plato wrote: '[Socrates had]... lived in Athens all his life. For 70 years [Socrates] had been content with the city and its people. [Socrates said why should I] now run away from it like the lowest slave?' ..."Socrates really does embody Athens at its best in some ways. And when [Socrates] dies we really do see that things have changed, that things after Socrates just won't be the same." Plato recorded the last words of his friend and teacher. 'How much would one of you give to meet Orpheus or Homer? I should like to spend my time there, as here, in examining and searching peoples' minds to find out who is wise and who only thinks [it] is.' Socrates' ideas live on to this day but over time his beloved Athens became part of other empires – the Macedonians, the Romans, the... Turks... "Athens had everything going for it, but I think it declined for many of the reasons that made it great – that aggressiveness, that competitiveness, that need to be first and best wore them out." - 1995

PEOPLE love to belong: it's what makes us human. It is also human nature to want to organise everyone else: a phenomenon known, when applied to sheep, as herding; when applied to us, it's called joining clubs. It's likely that humans have clubbed together since the time homo erectus took those first tentative totters on two legs. And while there is no hard evidence to support the speculation, it is possible that the first formalised club took as its motto: Two legs good, four legs bad. (A saying later misquoted by George Orwell in *Animal Farm*...) Many rungs later on the evolutionary ladder came Americans. Compulsive club joiners, those people, perhaps as a result of spending their college years in those huddling pens known as sorority and fraternity houses. As a race they now belong to about 100,000 associations or clubs; seven out of 10... belong to at least one club; a quarter of the population belongs to four or more. The International Association of Bureaucrats, for instance, was founded in 1968 and now boasts 1700 members dedicated to "the art of obfuscation." The club promotes excellence in "dynamic inaction, orbital dialoguing and creative non-responsiveness." Its motto: "When in doubt, mumble." And in Iowa City, the Benevolent and Loyal Order of Pessimists claims several hundred members "from all crawls of life." They'd have more but, as [the person] who founded the order 20 years ago, points out: "Many are too pessimistic to bother." Required reading for prospective members: Orwell's *1984* and Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*. Sports, religion and work are the main talking points of... clubs, while the activities of most are relatively tame: stamp collecting, church going, ball batting. OTHERS, like the Skull and Crossbones, the oldest and most exclusive secret society at Yale University (which claims [the 41st US] president... as a former member) ask rather more of their members. Arcane practices – such as recounting one's sexual history while lying naked in a coffin – are reputed to be a condition of membership. The last survey of N[Z] trends was undertaken by the Department of Statistics in 1980/81. Of those asked, 85[%] said they belonged to at least one type of group which included... those with a purely recreational function... those which protect people's occupational or political interests, [and] those devoted to helping others in the community...

A funding shortfall could put bathers' lives at risk this summer, a lifeguard chief warned yesterday. The Northern Lifeguard Services organisation has decided to reduce paid patrols in Auckland and Waikato to allow Northland beaches to be patrolled for two weeks longer this season. Until this year, paid lifeguards in Auckland and Waikato were funded for seven-week seasons while those in Northland had a four-week season. But because of the shortfall, blamed on certain local authorities shirking their responsibilities, all three regions will have a six-week season this coming summer... [The NLS], which co-ordinates paid and volunteer lifeguards on beaches from Kaitiaia to Raglan, needed a \$197,000 budget to pay its lifeguards over the six-week summer season... Volunteer lifeguards would be on weekend duty from Labour weekend but paid lifeguards would not start patrolling during the week until December 23... Ideally, a nine-week paid lifeguard season should be the minimum... "But... [p]eople are going to swim regardless of whether there are lifeguards there or not."

...The North Shore City Council says it cannot afford to increase its funding of a regional lifeguard service. The N[LS] said on Tuesday that some councils, including North Shore and Manukau City, were contributing "way less than they should" according to their population sizes... [T]he North Shore City Council had given the N[LS] \$10,000 last financial year... The services' operations manager... expressed concern that... lives... could [be] put... at risk, particularly in the first three weeks of December when schools finished for the year... A North Shore City Council spokes[person], who did not want to be named... agreed with [the NLS manager]'s concern... "...and I can emphasise with them because they do provide an excellent service... but I also think that we all take responsibility for our own actions when we are at the beach." [The spokesperson] said it was "an unfortunate thing... that... there is not enough funding available to even meet the needs of our local groups, let alone regional ones." ...45 paid patrollers... and about 900 volunteers would patrol the 16 affiliated surf-club beaches... Based on a head-count made by lifeguards last year, about 158,000 people visited those beaches during a seven-week period last summer. The N[LS] general manager... said the total rescues performed in the area in each of the past two seasons were the highest in 63 years of lifeguarding.

...Lifesavers' warnings about a lack of funding for paid patrols proved tragically prophetic yesterday when a South Auckland schoolgirl drowned at Port Waikato. A member of the public raised the alarm after the 17-year-old... became caught in a rip at Sunset Beach about 4 pm. With no lifeguards on duty the Auckland police helicopter had to be sent to the beach – but the team was too late to save her. The dead girl's name was not available last night. A new member of the Sunset Beach Surf Lifesaving Club... [who] was tidying up the clubhouse... asked to help the helicopter rescue attempt... [T]he 26-year-old jumped from the helicopter into the sea where the schoolgirl was floating face down. A 69-year-old veteran club member... then arrived in an inflatable boat with another club member... "We tried to resuscitate her in the boat and did CPR... on the beach but it was no good..." [The veteran], an active surf club member since 1956, said professional weekday beach patrols should have started with the school holidays, which began yesterday for secondary schools... The president of the Sunset Beach club... had contacted... [NLS when it] heard about... funding cuts last month. "I said to them, 'This is a recipe for disaster...'... They agreed, but said they couldn't force the councils to pay more."

...The... drowning... [of] Mayling Teura, aged 17... at Port Waikato has exposed tensions between the Westpac rescue helicopter and police administrators over surf rescue operations. The Auckland-based police helicopter Eagle was sent to Sunset Beach on Monday... despite having no winch, rudimentary medical supplies, and a crew with little knowledge of local beach conditions. A rookie surf club member, with no training in aircraft rescue work, was dropped from the helicopter into... waist-deep... water, injuring her ankle... There have been suggestions that police administrators preferred to use the Eagle as much as possible to save them money, as they have to pay for the Westpac service... "The only time [Westpac gets] called is when... the police helicopter was not flying or unable to do the job..." ...The better-equipped Westpac helicopter was not contacted until after the student had been brought ashore and an ambulance sent to the beach. Crew members of the two helicopter services work closely together and declined to comment publicly about the matter. But sources said the Westpac helicopter regularly went on "unauthorised" rescue missions when police delays in deciding which aircraft to use were considered unacceptable. One example came 10 days ago when surf lifesavers called the service to winch two surfers off rocks near Bethells Beach. "If we had waited around for the police, they would have been washed off the rocks," said one source... Because it had not been requested by the police, the service had to carry the \$1800-an-hour cost of the rescue... A police spokes[person said their] helicopter was sent [to Sunset Beach] because the Westpac helicopter was at Port Jackson, on the Coromandel Peninsula, at the same time of the callout. However, the general manager of the Westpac helicopter... said the police had not contacted

his operation, which had a back-up helicopter and pilot on standby at the Marine Rescue Centre in Auckland... "A few years back we agreed there would be certain demarcation lines on what we do and what they do. Perhaps we need to sit down and discuss it again."

...The Auckland Services District Commander... said there was no option but to use the police helicopter to search for a... girl who drowned off Sunset Beach... on Monday... [T]he police control room tried to contact the Westpac rescue helicopter base after the alarm was raised, but there was no response. A control room senior sergeant then contacted the police Eagle air support unit, also based at Mechanics Bay, and was told that the Westpac machine was out on a job... A spokes[person] for the Westpac service said another rescue helicopter and pilot were on standby at Mechanics Bay at the time, but [the superintendent] said the spare machine was normally kept at Ardmore... [an]d it would have taken a further 30 minutes to fly the backup helicopter to Mechanics Bay to pick up a crew. "If there was a standby helicopter and crew already down there, I'd want to know why it wasn't used." ...[the superintendent also] took issue with a suggestion that the police preferred to use their helicopter when possible to save money. Although the Eagle was primarily a crime-fighting machine, "it is also a backup for the Westpac helicopter, and there are occasions when the Westpac helicopter helps us out... In an emergency situation, the question of money is something that is decided later,"...

The drowning of... Mayling Teura... on the first day of the school holidays has brought calls for extra [lifesaving] patrols... Councils accept they have a responsibility to keep beaches safe... says... [the] general manager of the N[LS]. They have provided \$161,000 for this season, a shortfall of \$152,000 for what is actually needed... "We have pleaded with local councils for at least five years for fair and equitable funding..." ...Under the present funding system the N[LS] competes with all other community groups for money allocated through the community grants process. [The general manager] would like to see each territorial local authority fund the service directly from rates, with each contributing on a per capita basis. This would see Manukau City paying \$58,266 next year towards a nine-week patrol period rather than their present \$15,000... The N[LS]... would like to see the whole school holiday period covered... Volunteer lifeguards cover the weekends, but are unable to patrol on weekdays or all public holidays... Professional guards and volunteers from the clubs in the northern area made more than 16,000 rescues in the year to April... Last year 20 people drowned off N[Z] beaches – half of them in the northern region. Piha has claimed the most lives in the past 15 years, followed by Muriwai and Karekare... [The general manager] says that the Auckland Regional Council encourages the public to use beaches, providing picnic facilities, car parks and walk ways but no funding for keeping swimmers safe. "What we say is 'let's complete the job...'" ...[However, the ARC chairperson] says the council is not allowed by law to fund lifeguards and that it is the responsibility of [local] councils. Nor... is the Auckland Regional Services Trust responsible – it is "required to operate in a commercial manner." But a new Community Trust which will be set up in the New Year will have \$5 million to give to community groups. Surf Lifesaving Bay of Plenty covers 12 beaches around the Coromandel and Bay of Plenty. "We don't have trouble with funding," says [its] administrator... "We have what we asked for..." ...This is [the administrator's] sixth season in the job. "In the beginning there were lots of problems. Now I go and see the mayors and general managers – we deal with five different councils – and convince them there is a need. That works down here." A lot of the community boards have increased their funding for this season, says [the administrator], and the Thames Coromandel District Council actually approached them to patrol Hot Water Beach, where there have been three drownings in three years. "They asked us if we would do the job if they provided the funds."

...A... personal locator beacon which transmits distress signals directly to satellites is the result of 18 months of design work and testing by a Christchurch developer. In the past signals from such units were detected by ships or aircraft passing within range of the signal... [P]riced from \$475... the Quantum PLB... is set up to be compatible with the Cospas-Sarsat satellite... which relays beacon signals to the rescue co-ordination centre in Lower Hutt. The accuracy of the plotted location grows with each satellite pass, which could be from 10 minutes to three hours apart.

...The green spaces of Auckland have received the thumbs up from a leading American green thumb. Mr G[reen Thumb], an urban forest expert... well known throughout the U[S] for his knowledge on city planning, is the key speaker at a Tree Council seminar in Manukau today... [The American,] who has spent decades advising American city planners on how to blend tree tops with roof tops, says Auckland is on the right track, after... spend[ing] yesterday inspecting the One Tree Hill Domain and selected suburban streets... Auckland had many similarities with U[S] cities in terms of central city parks, but [the expert] was particularly impressed by how tree conscious N[Z]ers were. "People here seem to relate to trees much more than people back home and they also seem to really realise the importance of trees,"... [However,] American developers were becoming more sympathetic to protecting trees... [T]here was a lot of public pressure to maintain trees in tandem with the rapid rise in infill housing... [since a] study of real estate prices showed houses with trees on site commanded markedly higher prices than bare properties... [The] former state forestry worker, was thrown into urban forestry in 1970 when Dutch elm disease caused widespread devastation. "There were cities left with tremendous problems of ripping out and replacing trees. We had to begin a systematic approach to urban forestry since 90[%] of some city tree populations were elms." ...[the expert said] the secret to long-term urban forest design was to... apply a total management approach rather than a single tree approach... [and to] consider all the issues, from tree specimens to the associated bird life.

...a native forest... cannot be both a living forest and a harvest crop at the same time. Our belated understanding of the ecology of native forests shows how... sensitive their make-up really is. Plants, animals, birds and insects all contribute a piece to the jigsaw. Add the interaction with climate, rainfall, soil and altitude and we have a complex pattern that is unique and different for every part of the country. We tamper with it at our peril. Yet we have, especially in the past 100 years, destroyed vast areas of forest, converting hillsides and swamps, valleys and plains into farms or scrublands. The results are clear. [NZ has] the world's worst record in the loss of bird species by extinction and the worst in the number of... species that are on the verge of extinction. Birds are not just some ornamental extra to show the tourists or provide a dawn chorus. Without birds our forests would not survive... We have rivers that are permanently muddied and prone to periodic flooding because the topsoil has been washed off the bared hillslopes. In a native forest there is normally a lot of leaf litter... shrubs and decaying wood to absorb rain, no matter how heavy it is. On forest-covered hills erosion is not a problem: the water runs clear in the rivers, fish thrive, and serious flooding does not occur. In a managed logging programme selected trees are removed and the forest is allowed to regenerate before the next round of cropping. The disturbance... this causes is claimed to be of minor significance. But what in fact happens? First there are the weeds which come into the disturbed area from wind-blown sources or... on machinery. Weeds are already a serious threat in many of our forests and have the potential to destroy vast areas. The damage done in removing even one log makes weed invasion a real concern. Then there is the loss of mature trees. The natural cycles of life and decay provide for the insects which are a vital part of the diet of forest birds. And it is those... processes of decay that enrich the soil and enable it to continue to bear forest trees... Our heritage forests are under threat from a large number of sources, not least from those who see them as potential tree farms. Instead of further degradation we need a planned ongoing programme to extend native forests[– including]... the... 10 million hectares of eroding hill-country pasture waiting for regeneration to indigenous forests... [–] so that their recreational values can be enjoyed, the quality of our rivers... and... air... improved, the severity of floods reduced and threatened plants and birds can look for a better expectation of life.

...WELCOME TO... [NZ – LAND OF] DEAD TRUNKS, DRY BUSH & DRAB PLOTS OF TUSSOCK... Imagine our country without trees, without parks, without forests. Not a leaf in sight, a haven for weeds and pests. It's not a pretty picture but every day it comes closer to reality. While the Government spends millions promoting our clean, green image overseas, noxious pests such as ...possums are destroying it. Forests that have been a proud part of our heritage and our way of life, are no longer safe. The Department of Conservation is fighting a losing battle because like so many of our public services, they suffer from underfunding... One thing you can still do in N[Z] if you are lucky enough to do what I did last summer is to see, within the space of a few days, the range of our biodiversity... A party, predominantly scientists, led by the D[OC], began on the Horowhenua

Plains, an outwash between the Ruahines and the Tasman Sea. Just 110 years ago this was a place of dense lowland forest, extensive wetlands and myriad native wildlife. Today, save for the occasional brave remnant, nearly all of them fenced-off pocket-handkerchiefs of certain species, there is scarcely enough of anything to call it biodiversity. It is wonderful that these samples exist but the rest of the Horowhenua is a grid of farms, towns and roads, harbouring their narrow bands of introduced biodiversity. The party then travelled to Haast, centre for the world heritage Mt Aspiring National Park. Here the natural systems are intact. From the lower Alps to the sea, dynamic processes recharge and renew the soils, rivers, marshes, estuaries and beaches in continuous cycles. Some of these cycles still occur in the Horowhenua. But the difference at Haast is that the native plants and animals there are in natural abundance and are interconnected. Because they hate the wet not even possums disrupt these ties. It is this variety and connectedness that are central to the idea of biodiversity... An expression of its underlying intactness and integrity is its ability to create a capacity for renewal. This is at the root of sustainability, as opposed to our often museum-like notions of preservation. The challenges are great enough in a number of our national parks. Often pestilence, such as introduced pigs, goats, deer... and... stoats... is... stifling native birdsong and native plant life. Outside protected areas the challenges are even more daunting. Today the Horowhenua's alluvial and forest soils carry prosperous farms. Their introduced biodiversity... contribute... not only to the nation's wealth... but also to Government efforts to protect, restore or enhance our indigenous biodiversity... Because of N[Z]'s 130-million-year separation from the supercontinent Gondwana, much of our biodiversity is found nowhere else... and... reflects the longitudinal shading of these islands, from the sub-Antarctic through the temperate to the subtropical – and their interactions. Our biodiversity is significant globally, is intrinsically valuable and is of immense interest to scientists, tourists and many citizens, including Maori. Because of its evolution our biodiversity is the best that nature can provide in being uniquely adapted to, if not creative of, conditions here. (The... plants that can do the job beside our rivers and waterways to hold banks, retain water and enhance water quality are usually native ones.) ...an... argument for keeping... estuaries intact... [is that they] are among the most productive ecosystems on the planet. Their biodiversity produces much of our fresh and saltwater fish. For those who still need convincing, why is it that whitebait still abound in parts of the West Coast, but are gone from so many other places? ...[Incidentally, about 180 scientists are attending a NZ] Maritime Sciences Society conference in Christchurch to discuss the treats to... Fiordland's marine environment from the pressures of growing tourism [or] fishing... and the best methods of protection. [The society's p]resident... said the meeting [i]s one of the first stages towards developing a management plan... "Rather than wait until there are problems to solve, we want to make a pre-emptive strike..." ...The society is looking at a multi-zoned protection scheme, similar to that at A[US]'s Great Barrier Reef. Fishing will not be banned, but it may be moved or restricted in different parts of Fiordland. For the scheme to work it will require the consent of Maori, commercial and recreational fishers, tourist operators and residents... Once parties agree, and that will be a major task in itself, the plan will be put to the Government. Another option being considered is to extend the world heritage area that covers Fiordland National Park only to the high tide mark... [T]his could be achieved by co-ordinating existing legislation and would provide greater recognition for the unique environment. "Fiordland is one of the last wilderness areas in N[Z] and on the planet... Fiordland is incredibly fragile in a lot of ways... It's not a big area and you can't have vast numbers of people going in there." ...a fisheries scientist with the Museum of N[Z], has just written a book on the issues with a fellow biologist and photographer... *Fiordland Underwater – the Hidden Wilderness* is a stocktake of the specimens found during their three years of diving in the fiords and outlines some of the threats as: ● Increased recreational fishing from charter boats as access to the area becomes easier. Up to 2500 tourists visit Milford Sound each day, many to fish and dive. The book suggests daily bag limits for recreational fishers may be too high for the limited fish stocks... ● Growing numbers of tour boats, which have increased the amount of sewerage and rubbish dropped overboard. The number of charter boat operators in the fiords, ranging from sea kayaking to tour launches, is estimated to be around 22 and growing. No environmental impact assessment of the larger cruise vessels has been carried out. ● Divers damaging corals and other fragile specimens on the sheer fiord walls by bouncing off rock ledges and stirring the water with their fins.

...Biodiversity – variety of living species – is lost through four main causes. First, there is destruction of wilderness areas (particularly the rainforests)... and of coral reefs (often simply mined for their limestone). Second, there are the extinctions produced by pollution. Third, there is the way in which modern agriculture concentrates on a strictly limited number of varieties. Growers cultivate just a few plant types which are specially productive, at least when massively fertilized and until new diseases hit them. The others they treat as weeds to be destroyed with pesticides. And for plant and animal breeders to have commercial rights to the varieties they have developed, those varieties must 'breed true', which means they can contain very little genetic diversity. In Britain it is a criminal offence to sell seed varieties which are not registered, each for annual fees in the hundreds of pounds, and registration is possible only for seeds which do breed true. Fourth, there is overfishing, overhunting, overpicking, overgrazing, and the like. The extinction rate is increasing, making it altogether possible that well over half of all the species which still remain will have disappeared by the year 2100 even without global nuclear war or catastrophic destruction of the ozone layer. By the year 2000, it has been suggested, up to 20[%] of the species in existence fifteen years earlier could well have been wiped out. Although figures in this area are highly controversial, the definition of the word 'species' itself leading to disputes, the concentration of perhaps three-fifths of the species in the rapidly disappearing tropical forests may make such suggestions plausible, as may that of so many of the others in coral reefs. In the Philippines nine-tenths of the coral has been destroyed by dynamite, pollution and collecting. The wildlife trade is profitable enough to drive species to extinction – rhinoceros horn is now worth more than its weight in gold and an orchid can change hands for thousands of dollars...

[An AUS]n wildlife expert... is proposing a simple but controversial solution to saving the world's endangered animals – eat them, skin them or sell them... [The] internationally respected Darwin biologist and consultant to governments and corporations, has told leaders in Canberra that the survival of threatened animals depends on making them worth money. By ranching or "harvesting" endangered species, money can be made for conservation projects, and habitats could be preserved because of their economic importance... The project has a long way to go before most A[US]ns would be willing to have national symbols such as cockatoos, koalas and platypus eaten or sold abroad.

...[an e]nvironmentalist... says people should trap and eat feral cats as part of a plan to rid A[US] of its feral cat problem... [The environmentalist], of native wildlife sanctuary company Earth Sanctuaries, said because of the cats, A[US] had half the world's endangered species. His comments come days after [a WA] federal MP... recommended A[US] should eradicate all cats, including pets, by 2020. The controversial environmentalist, who made headlines by wearing a hat made out of cat skin to public events, said... animal liberationists should not be upset by the suggestions, because "people who think cats are more important than wildlife are not liberationists but lunatics. Owning a cat is very antisocial."

...Pussy cat, pussy cat, you number's up... The family cat could end up wearing a registration tag to keep it off the unwanted pest list. Conservation groups are worried about cats killing native birds, lizards and insects... [T]he northern field officer for the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, said cats were killers by nature. "No matter how lovely they are or how well fed, they will hunt... We can't have more and more people having more and more cats which are having more and more kittens. It's a recipe for disaster." Veterinarians, the Ministry of Agriculture, local body officials and animal welfare groups met yesterday at the seventh annual Companion Animal Workshop in Auckland... Delegates decided to develop a national survey to assess how large the "problem"... [of r]ising numbers of feral and abandoned cats... [i]s. The executive director of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals... said more than 500,000 cats lived in Auckland alone, and the society handled 9000 cats a year. For every cat with an owner, there was one that had been abandoned. Delegates thought registration would promote responsible cat ownership.

...Two rottweiler dogs killed about 100 birds in a private Christchurch aviary last night before being shot by the aviary's owner and police officers. Police are trying to track the dogs' owner... [In related news, b]oaties are flouting the law and letting dogs loose on sensitive Hauraki Gulf

islands. The Kawau Island conservation officer... said yesterday that on nearby Moturekareka Island up to 15 dogs a day were being let ashore from visiting craft. [The officer wants to] remind... owners that the Conservation Act forbade domestic pets on conservation estate islands. Council bylaws could also be breached on other islands. "We try and make people understand why they should not take their dogs with them if they have to go ashore....,"... [The officer] called on boat owners to keep an eye out for people breaking the law... In some cases conservation officers take people's names or vessel names to keep tabs on anybody who continues to flout the law after being warned. Problems have been reported... after boat and yacht owners allowed their pets ashore to relieve themselves. The dogs cause havoc for ground-nesting birds, particularly shore birds such as blue penguins and... dotterels trying to rear young at this time of year. If dogs maraud along the shore near endangered N[Z] dotterel nests the parent birds become stressed and flee, leaving the eggs to overheat in the sun or to become prey for black-backed gulls.

...D[oC] staff on Great Barrier Island are on full alert after the sighting of a stoat there. By last night, within 24 hours of Thursday's sighting, a pest control expert from Northland had been flown to the island to lay traps. A stoat could spell disaster for endangered bird and invertebrate species on the island... Stoats are voracious predators of ground-nesting birds. They also eat their eggs. A DoC spokes[person]... said the stoat was seen by a contractor near rubbish bins next to the Shoal Bay wharf... It was thought the stoat could have arrived on the island by boat or by barge, or as someone's pet... Up to now no stoats have ever been found on Great Barrier, which is free of possums, deer, Norway rats and ferrets.

...["NOTHING IN CONNECTION with the naturalisation of wild animals into NZ has caused so much heartburning and controversy as the introduction of these blood thirsty creatures,"]. So wrote G.M. Thomson in 1922 about the 1890s Government introduction of mustelids (ferrets, stoats and weasels) to control the rabbit nuisance. Even then some Acclimatisation Societies warned of the disastrous consequences, as did many of the senior conservationists of the day. One hundred years on after the release of large numbers of mustelids in Otago, rabbits still threaten farming viability, showing just how ineffective mustelids were. However, mustelids soon found easy pickings among NZ's flightless or ground-dwelling birds – so much so that the predators appeared in Fiordland before rabbits! Fortunately they did not reach everywhere. Most offshore islands are free of mustelids and DSIR reports in the 1940s and 1960s showed large parts of the mainland – such as Northland – to be ferret-free. But in the early 1980s the NZ fitch industry was founded. Environmental concerns were dismissed with the claim that ferrets were so valuable no farmer would allow any to escape but reports of dead kiwis showing all the classic signs of ferret predation started coming from Dargaville. Ferrets were starting to escape. As with any industry it is necessary to supply what the market wants. The fitch industry failed to do this because it was breeding the wrong type of fitch. Anticipated returns were well down. Then the grossly oversupplied market crashed. You couldn't give fitch away in 1987. World production toppled from 600,000 to 200,000 that year and in NZ many farmers went bankrupt. A number simply opened up their doors and let their whole stock loose. Eight hundred from one farm bordering Mamaku Conservation Park, home of the precious kokako, were let go straight into the Park. Nine farms operated in this area, and seven of these folded. What happened to the other animals is speculation. From Wanganui to Warkworth came reports of 11 farms releasing part or all of their stock. *The fine for releasing any number of ferrets into the wild is a farcical \$100* (petty cash for someone with 4,000 plus animals each carrying \$30 pelts). But farmers weren't just releasing stock. Many failed to install even rudimentary security fencing – required by law – and so escapes continue to this day (fitch breeders have asked to bring in mink – identified as the worst ground predator of game known and following releases and escapes in Britain, identical to those of fitch in NZ, they're now causing £millions of damage annually; fitch breeders are bringing from Finland into NZ new types – probably closer to the steppe polecat subspecies – and although each shipment is inspected on the wharf to make sure no mink are included, the possibility of covert introductions by embryonic transplants gives little to be complacent about). Fitch farming regulations need to be tightened up and properly enforced. The DoC has authority to enforce fitch regulations. However, different districts vary in their application, from diligent – giving operators 28 days to install security fencing or face closure – to disinterested. The Auckland office is in press as "having neither the cash nor the priority to monitor ferrets".]

...There is no love lost between conservationists and the ferret Fitzy, who could become the subject of a tug-of-love custody battle... [Fitzy was] found wandering around Eden Park after escaping from the home of its owner... Park staff gave Fitzy to a Mt Eden resident after the ferret's owner failed to claim him despite national publicity. [Now the owner] wants her ferret back but yesterday had not heard from Fitzy's new owner... [However, t]he Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society says it would like to destroy the ferret... "Ferrets are the most blood-thirsty predators of N[Z] wildlife," said a society field officer... [The field officer said Fitzy's original owner] was irresponsible in letting the ferret escape... ['Ferrets may look cute and sure they make cuddly pets but owning one is far different from having a cat or dog. For instance, if ferrets see an open door they are gone and they do not come back. Instead they easily adapt to life in the wild and, like other musteloids, can climb trees, dig into burrows and swim to the nearer outlying islands. They kill far more than they can eat. They simply kill for the fun of it, ripping the throats of their victims and leaving them to rot. These animals should be completely banned.'] Ferrets are a factor in the looming extinction on the mainland of kiwis, wekas and kaka... It was an anomaly in the law that barred people from owning or farming stoats and weasels, but allowed ferrets to be kept as pets. The ferret is listed as a pest in the Auckland regional pest management strategy and is declared a carrier of tuberculosis by the Ministry of Agriculture.

...Kapiti Island's voracious rats, which have waged war on some of the country's rarest animals, will soon be on the receiving end. The D[oC] is set to begin its biggest rat eradication programme, involving a helicopter drop of 26 tonnes of poison bait on the island sanctuary near Wellington. Department officers say the large Norway and smaller Polynesian (kiore) rats threaten the survival of the island's small populations of stitchbirds and saddlebacks, which are extinct on the mainland. Only about 30 to 40 of each species remain on Kapiti, largely because of rats preying on their eggs and young. The rodents, which number tens of thousands after the breeding season, also savage rare lizards, insects and plants. The co-ordinator of the eradication project... said many island species should thrive once the rats disappear. Some species may reappear, such as the giant wetas not seen since the 1930s. The Talon 7-20 rat poison can also harm other vertebrates. More than 250 wekas have been rounded up to re-establish a population with others which survive the poison drop... [I]t would take two years to assess whether the island was rat-free.

...Vandals who set 13 wekas free from their enclosure could have had a grudge against the Karori wildlife sanctuary's use of a recreational area, project officials said yesterday. One of the flightless birds was recovered by volunteer search parties, some using D[oC] pointer dogs. The other 12 remained missing although there had been sightings of several of the small, brown hen-like birds in neighbouring suburbs. Thirty-six of the birds, rescued from Kapiti Island last month because of a rat poison drop, stayed within the fenced area... Police are investigating the incident, which was discovered at 8.30 am. The padlock on the enclosure gate was cut off and the gate had then been propped open and ramps placed to help the birds over the wire. The Karori sanctuary deputy chair[person]... said the deliberate actions pointed to someone who had... an extraordinarily sick mind.

...Eight of 14 wekas set loose from a sanctuary by vandals have been found. Little hope is held for the rest... of the protected, flightless birds...

An economist... of Massey University[, who]... has developed a statistical model designed... to calculate the odds of a species surviving... extinction... without human intervention[, gave the weka just a 6% chance. Other sorry cases are the kokako (3%) and the little spotted kiwi (1%). The economist says these figures]... challenge... conservation efforts to save... endangered native species such as the kakapo. But minders of the kakapo dispute the view... that the large flightless parrot nicknamed "the big red budgie" is a lost cause. The charismatic kakapo is an important focus of wildlife conservation efforts. As one of the few remaining large bodied birds once so common in N[Z] it must be rescued... the minders say... [However, the] economist regards the kakapo... as... ecologically unuseful, a relic and a museum species. "At the moment it has all the attributes of [following the moa, adzebill, NZ quail, Haast's eagle, huia, Chatham Island Kaka and the NZ crow, for example,] to extinction but I would be more than happy to be proved wrong. I am not privy to all the decisions being made about the kakapo. There may be grounds for optimism but I am not aware of any." Only 50 kakapo are known to exist. The flightless parrots have been transferred to offshore islands. Of the 19 [hens] in existence some are getting on in years. The birds are monitored, at breeding time around the clock, in a \$900,000-a-year species recovery programme... [The

economist says that because the kakapo is a member of the parrot family with other species occurring around the world... [then] if the goal is to preserve genetic diversity more effort should be put into saving the kakapo as an example... About 1000 North Island kakapo survive. The species, also the target of a costly recovery programme, is unique to NZ, and one of only three such wattled birds – together with the saddleback and extinct huia – to exist on the planet... His views are tantamount to heresy in conservation-minded NZ where 11% of the world's endangered birds are found...

Although there has been much anecdotal evidence of... ultra-competitive mynas causing native bird numbers to reduce... a year-long study, part of [an] Auckland University biology student... master's thesis, provides the first concrete data... The impact of mynas on native and other resident birds on Moturoa Island in the Bay of Islands was examined from January to December 1995, after... [a] total of 457 mynas were... killed off. The numbers of tuis, fantails, grey warblers, silvereyes and welcome swallows all increased after mynas were removed... Native bird... levels... [were the] highest... recorded on the island in 15 years... Introduced birds such as blackbirds, chaffinches and starlings also increased after mynas left.

...Magpies and mynas have in some cases been treated with blatant cruelty since publicity about the birds destroying native wildlife, say Auckland bird-carers. A young adult magpie delivered to... [a] West Auckland wildlife centre had had its legs burned off and there were signs of burns on its tail and neck. It was picked up on the Coromandel to Auckland highway by travellers who saw it flopping around on the road... [T]he injuries were probably inflicted by a cigarette lighter up to two weeks ago, but the bird had managed to survive and had kept its weight up. "It whimpers like a little baby," [the centre's owner] said before the bird was humanely destroyed. "You wish you could make it right but you can't." [The owner] said there was no excuse for ill-treating magpies and mynas, which in many cases were just filling habitats – wide open spaces and tall trees – created by people... [Someone] who has a bird refuge on the Tamaki River, also said there had been more recent cruelty against magpies and mynas... Yet, [that someone] said: "More damage is done [to wildlife] by stealthy night creatures like possums, rats and cats." Even more native birds were killed at this time of year by people clearing bush. [The refuge owner] had recently seen a hedgehog eating some young fantails, which were still alive. The tree their nest had been in was felled during bush clearance. "It was not the hedgehog's fault... It was the people who had chopped the trees down." ...B[y] the... way... birds... caught in oil slicks [now] stand a better chance of survival thanks to a \$45,000 mobile rescue unit based in Auckland which... can cover oil spills anywhere in the country. It is the brainchild of the Wildlife Rehabilitation Trust – a marriage of Bird Rescue, the Auckland Zoo, SPCA, Maritime Safety Authority, and [DoC] – and the result of more than 10 years planning. A rehabilitation centre – due to be built within the next 18 months on a site at Carrington Unitech – will be the first of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere.

...Hunters at the Auckland Spring Possum Shoot scored a kill-rate second to none, say organisers. Each participant killed [on average] 140 possums at the Franklin district killfest... with a high percentage of the total cull involving [mother] possums and their offspring... Trouble is, only 27 hunters entered the competition. The organiser... was disappointed at the turnout but everyone had enjoyed the occasion. Except the possums... The top three hunters each won a .22 calibre rifle for their accuracy. The winner... also took home a "brick" of ammunition for the 350 "tails" that [it] nailed between 6 pm of Friday and midday yesterday. [Although 'the flesh is edible and resembles that of rabbit', the bodies won't be made into pies.]

...A group of Taranaki farmers plans to lobby the Government to reintroduce a possum bounty... [A spokesperson] for the group, said that the Taranaki Regional Council had budgeted to spend more than \$5 million on possum control over the next five years, but vast areas of Taranaki would not be covered[– while u]sing 1080 poison to kill possums... did little for [NZ]'s clean and green image... "I know of people who are saying they'd give up their jobs if a bounty was brought in." ...while numbers were high the bounty could be set at about \$2.50 per animal, increasing as the numbers fell. While there had been claims in the past a bounty system did not work, it did produce dead possums. The group intended to organise a petition to gauge support for the scheme.

...The Animal Health Board said yesterday that... [p]est destruction authorities have stopped the use of 1080-poisoned carrot baits... – ...[p]ellets will now be used instead... – ...following the death of a number of robins in a Pureora poisoning operation.

...[the NZer] crouched low in the lush tropical undergrowth, staring into a clearing at a small black and white robin. With a high-pitched chirrrp, the bird flitted to the door of a wire cage bolted to a table-top, cocked its head and eyed the contents of a plastic dish. *Here's hoping*, [the NZer] thought, clenching his fists in excitement. The... conservation officer had been camping on Fregate Island, one of the Seychelles in the Indian Ocean, helping to devise techniques and strategies to save the native magpie-robin from extinction. Slow breeders that fed often on the ground, the birds had been decimated by feral cats. By... November, 1992, despite a successful program to eradicate predators, their numbers had dwindled to just 25. [Local c]onservationists had turned to [the NZer], an endangered-bird expert who, they had heard, might help them induce the birds to breed. "Your skills are urgently required," BirdLife International[']s deputy director-general... [and] coordinator of the Seychelles project told him. After closely observing the robins, [the NZer] concurred with BirdLife International researchers: the native vegetation in the birds' habitat had virtually disappeared and the exotic forest did not provide enough safe nesting places or food to sustain the robins along with reptiles and introduced birds. Over several weeks, [the NZer] helped fine-tune the recovery program, suggesting adjustments to supplementary feeding, the position of nesting boxes and how to exclude other species from food and nesting sites. BirdLife International staff and [the NZer] built wooden feeding tables sturdy enough to prevent giant tortoises knocking them over, and wrapped aluminium sheets round their bases to deter climbing reptiles. Wire cages of a mesh size big enough to admit robins but not other birds were built round the feeding dishes... Gradually, the robins ate... [the] meal of cockroaches, cheese and commercial bird food... with increasing vigour and began to nest in the boxes the team had erected. Over three years, the species made a spectacular recovery. Today BirdLife International staff are monitoring a population of around 60 and... have transferred some birds to three other safe islands in the Seychelles. As a senior technical officer with the [NZ DoC, the NZer] roams forests from [NZ and AUS] to the Seychelles, Mauritius and remote South Pacific islands devising plans to improve the survival chances of some of the 1100 bird species facing extinction. [It] has already contributed to the rescue and recovery of more than a dozen, including the gorgeously colourful Mauritian echo parakeet... "No other conservationist in the world has been directly involved in as many bird-rescue programs," says... [the] director-general of BirdLife International in Cambridge, England, the global agency responsible for bird conservation. [The NZer]'s success owes as much to instinct as technique. "[This guy] tries to think like a bird," explains... [a] former assistant director of the NZ Wildlife Service. "When [this guy] takes on a project, [it] lives with the birds, observing, thinking, worrying about their problems until [coming to an understanding of] what must be done." The [predicament of NZ] has helped shape... [his expertise. Since the arrival of humans and] cats, dogs, stoats and... rats... about half of NZ's land bird species... have [been] destroyed... Of the roughly 48 native species that remain, 23 are threatened... [The NZer] can hardly remember a time when [it] wasn't passionate about the islands' birds. As a schoolboy, [it] earned the name "Birdbrain" from classmates in Gisborne. [Birdbrain] raised fowls and pheasants in his family's back yard and often cared for orphan songbirds, hawks and seagulls in his room, rearing the chicks to maturity. One gull became so tame that it occasionally returned to the house years after it had been given its freedom. After his father died, [Birdbrain], at the age of eight, spent much of his time with... an ornithologist friend. [The ornithologist] took him on field trips and to meetings of NZ's Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society and the Ornithological Society. Through these contacts, [Birdbrain], then about 12, was dismayed to learn that the North Island weka, the large flightless, mottled-brown rail that roamed his family's farm, had disappeared from nearly all of its natural range and was in danger of becoming extinct. [The 12-year-old announced it would devote its] life to ensuring the survival of his country's remaining native birds. True to his vow, after finishing high school[it joined NZ's Wildlife Service and specialised in endangered

species management. Seven years later [Birdbrain] faced one of his first real tests as a conservationist. The South Island saddleback, a bird renowned for the glossy chestnut “saddle” across its back and wings, was at risk of extinction. Driven from the mainland by predators, rats had invaded its final refuge, remote Big South Cape Island, plundering eggs and chicks. Some scientists of the day did not believe that rats posed a serious threat to the birds but, with less than 100 saddlebacks left, [Birdbrain and the assistant director of the Wildlife Service] were sure they did and got permission to move the survivors to safer islands. [Their] first hurdle was to capture the agile birds... [but w]ithin a few weeks, 41 saddlebacks had been moved. Within a matter of months, they began breeding. As the world’s first successful relocation of a critically endangered bird, BirdLife International hailed the achievement... Now on 12 islands, saddlebacks number several hundred and [Birdbrain]’s techniques for capturing [birds] have been adopted and refined in many countries. Despite his success, [Birdbrain]’s hands-on approach is controversial. Some conservationists argue... it is wasteful to direct resources and time to bird populations so small that they appear doomed. An article in *N[Z] Science Monthly* even referred to one of [his] operations as “not good science.” Nowhere were [hi]s methods more tested than in a remote South Pacific archipelago, where the world’s rarest bird, the Chatham Islands black robin, was fighting for survival. In the last century, the population of the tiny birds with black plumage had been devastated by rats, feral cats and land clearing. Now only five remained, and only one pair, Old Blue and her mate, Old Yellow, were still producing fertile eggs. Most conservationists thought extinction inevitable. But not [Birdbrain]. “As long as one breeding pair remains, there is a chance,”... One day in the bush, [Birdbrain] was surprised to see Old Blue re-lay immediately after her chick died. It gave him an idea. As a child his most daring experiment had been to capture goldfinch nestlings and foster them to his grandmother’s canary... Cross-fostering, as it is called, had never been tried on an endangered songbird in the wild. If it failed, [Birdbrain] would be condemned for hastening the death of the species. Early the next season [Birdbrain] trained his binoculars on Old Blue, perched on a branch. When the *peep* call of her mate echoed through the bush, [Old Blue] left the nest to join him. As soon as [Old Blue had gone, Birdbrain] crept up to the nest and, using a spoon, gently removed a tiny, warm, fragile egg and put it in an aluminium canister lined with cotton wool. Quickly replacing the stolen egg with a plastic replica, [Birdbrain] hurried back into the bush. Five hundred metres away, his colleague... waited by another nest whose owner, a grey-brown Chatham Islands warbler, had just flown off... A few minutes later the warbler hen flitted back through the trees and burrowed into her dome-shaped home... The pair spent an anxious few minutes waiting to see if the foster mother would toss out the egg, but [the warbler] noticed nothing amiss. The egg hatched 18 days later, but the warbler was a failure as a mother and the chick died. It wasn’t until tom tits were used as foster parents the following season that chicks routinely survived. “We played some tricks on Old Blue,” says [Birdbrain], who fondly remembers the bird that became so famous in N[Z] that her death at the age of 13 was announced in Parliament. At last count, 200 descendants of Old Blue live and breed in the Chathams, and experts agree the black robin has turned the corner... In answer to critics who cite geneticists’ “50-500” theory on extinction – a population of fewer than 50 birds can’t survive, and 500 or less will eventually be doomed by inbreeding – [Birdbrain] points to research published in January 1995. In DNA tests conducted by [a]Massey University ecology professor... blood from the black robin population shows almost no genetic variability among the species. “There has been no indication that the black robin’s fertility, hatchability and chick survival rate has been disadvantaged by close in-breeding... This offers real hope for recovery of other rare and endangered species.” TO WATCH [Birdbrain] at work, I join him at a research site at the foot of an extinct volcano on Little Barrier Island, overlooking Auckland’s Hauraki Gulf... Little Barrier is home to 18 of N[Z]’s 50-odd remaining kakapo parrots... [T]he giant, flightless, nocturnal parrots breed every two to five years, and only when food is plentiful. To increase their breeding frequency, [Birdbrain] and his colleagues are supplementing their diet with nuts, fruit and vegetables. One [hen], Jean, has so far spurned the food, and [Birdbrain fears Jean] will never breed successfully without it. [Birdbrain] aims to teach her to recognise and eat the food... [W]e must catch our kakapo in rugged terrain. [Jean] has a small radio transmitter strapped to her back, and for over an hour we use a receiver to home in on the signal. At last rapid beeps guide us to an outcrop of rocks where Jean huddles in a cleft. The size of a fat rooster, [Jean] has huge claws and a powerful beak... [But when Birdbrain] picks her up [Jean only] burrows her head into his bush shirt. “All right girl,” [Birdbrain says as it] gently... renews a special friendship. In 1981, [Birdbrain was responsible for] transporting Jean and another... kakapo from Steward Island... Such work earns [Birdbrain] increasing worldwide recognition. In 1994, the UK-based Royal Society for the Protection of Birds awarded him a medal for his international contribution to species survival... Every week, letters arrive from around the globe, requesting his advice on bird-rescue and recovery projects. At home, Massey University... awarded him an honorary degree and doctor of science. At 57, [Birdbrain] remains dedicated to his mission. “I believe we have a duty to preserve and respect the unique wildlife of our planet, for its own sake and for the sense of wonder and enjoyment it inspires... We must take opportunities now... For when, through our own actions or indifference, a species is lost forever, we have failed ourselves and future generations.”

...[*Back to Nature is an exciting new feature focusing on the world’s precious wildlife. This month: the grey wolf: The grey wolf – Canis lupus – is the largest member of the dog family. Millions of grey wolves once roamed nearly all of North America. However, earlier this century, a law was passed to exterminate the species. Today their numbers are increasing again – up to 50,000 – although the species is still listed as endangered. Wolves communicate with each other by howling. Biologists have linked whimpers to friendliness and odd chirps to flirtation, while piercing whines mean the conversation is over. Contrary to lore, wolves do not howl more during a full moon. The American Indian reveres the wolf as a symbol of power and freedom.*]

...IF YOU don’t sleep, the wolf will come and get you... Indian mothers tell their children. In Uttar Pradesh, north India, this universal nursery story has become a reality. In the worst case of wolf attacks this century, 50 children under the age of five have been mauled and 31 killed in three districts of this poor, densely-populated region. Ten days ago, the wolves struck again, taking a four-year-old. [The girl] was with her mother in the outskirts of Manjanpur village when a huge tawny wolf leapt from the elephant grass and carried her off into the forest. For two hours villagers, armed with staves and torches, combed the jungle. Eventually they found the barely conscious child by the river bank. [The girl] is now in hospital with deep stomach and head wounds... [Since the] killings... began in March... a massive hunt has been on, codenamed Operation Wolf. Every night, across a 100km area, teams of shikaris, or traditional hunters, backed by police and forest rangers, comb the riverside ravines and grasslands where the wolves live. With 12-bore shotguns at the ready, they listen and watch, waiting for a sound or shadow. Ten wolves have been shot so far. But although rangers have tear-gassed lairs and even tried baiting wolves with a doll dressed in child’s clothes, the killers are still at large. Wildlife officials have stepped up their operation, organising nightly patrols of villages... They have also offered a bounty of 10,000 rupees... a wolf – a large sum in rural India. But the hunters are frustrated by the terrain – wild grasses and crops standing taller than a [hu]man; and the animal’s speed... “The swiftness of wolves makes them even more dangerous than tigers,” said... [the] chief conservator of forests and former director of Project Tiger, who leads the hunt. “They are also clever. A wolf will wait around a village until everyone’s asleep and then strike.” In one incident, a wolf gently lifted a child from beside its sleeping mother... [The chief conservator] believes about 200 wolves inhabit the area, of which one large pack of about 10 wolves has turned [to eating children]. Normally wolves prey on small field animals or domestic livestock. But as villagers protect their animals more carefully... some wolves have discovered that children are easier prey. [The chief conservator] also thinks they communicate this to each other. “It’s one theory for the strange way in which wolves are working in an organised manner in this large area.”... Local officials are fighting not only nature but also deep-rooted superstition. When the killings began, terrified villagers spread fantastic rumours of a supernatural killer or a werewolf. Some believed gangs of kidnappers were snatching children for their internal organs. Angry villagers have beaten to death some 30 people. More than 200 vigilantes are now in prison... facing murder charges... The last large-scale incident of wolf attacks was in 1878 when 624 people were killed in Uttar Pradesh. British Government agents offered a reward of Rs5 (22c) a wolf and 2589 were subsequently killed in nine months but although grey wolves are common around human settlements in vast tracts of north India, there have been

only sporadic attacks since. In 1972 wolves were given protection as an endangered species and a ban was put on wolf hunting... [The chief conservator] believes the latest problem is the inevitable result of conflict between an ever-growing wolf and human population. "We protect these carnivorous animals which are hunters by nature... But part of the work of conservation is to kill aberrant animals to protect the innocent ones." While the hunt continues, a more permanent solution to the larger problem eludes wildlife officials... [■ Researcher]s in the Netherlands[have] announced the development of a unique and humane way to keep elephants from wandering out of nature reserves. Dutch and Cameroonian researchers at Leider University said red pepper bombs were tested successfully on a herd of elephants that often stray out of Cameroon's Waza Park. The pachyderms, which have a keen sense of smell, found the spicy spray so offensive that they retreated to deep within the park. Every June the elephants try to head south in search of water and food, destroying crops along the way, and sometimes injuring people.

...The leader of the Conservatives... does not know whether the initials DOC mean the Department of Conservation or the Department of Culling. Making public his party's 18-page review of the department yesterday... - ...the... party had used some of its limited resources to hire university graduates to undertake the review and two others - ...[the leader of the Conservatives] said its decision to cull... Canada geese in the South Island... and... the wild horse herd in the Kaimanawa Ranges... raised serious questions. [The leader of the Conservatives] did not know who in the department was advocating the shootings, but new legislation was required to remove the department's powerful but totally ineffectual advocacy role. The Conservatives also wanted the department stripped of its policy role, leaving it to manage conservation land.

...A survey of the Kaimanawa horses appears so far to substantiate the D[oC] estimate of the population... By nightfall on Monday, with about 50[%] of the range covered, the total count stood at about 1300. The [DoC] earlier estimated numbers at between 1500 and 1800 and intended reducing the population to 500 in the heavily stocked southern zone and clearing the ecologically sensitive northern zone. A second satellite population of 300 may be started on Defence land in the south. The International League for the Protection of Horses [ILPH] and the Kaimanawa Wild Horse Preservation Society [KWHPs] have challenged DoC's figures... It is understood that once these latest results are compared with the operational plan, they will enable the kill to proceed, subject to the weather. The sparsely populated and difficult-to-muster northern area will be the first sector aimed at... The horses... were in groups of three or four, all kilometres apart within the remote Awapatu catchment. Only a few groups had seven or more. The estimated foal (or yearling) count was about one in seven. Most horses were quite nonchalant as the helicopter passed overhead and all of them seemed to be in good health. Most were seen in open tussock country and some were in the valleys which dissect the rolling plateaus. Twelve horses were counted above 1300m, the present snowline. Only a few were seen on the fringes of the mountain beech remnants which dot the area. Although some animal welfare groups have rejected the [DoC]'s plan for four departmental cullers to fire a volley at each group - saying that wounded animals or those that were not targets could panic and injure themselves - there appeared to be no reason experienced hunters could not be transported by helicopter, then use natural cover to get within .308 range downwind, and shoot them all in one volley. The humane back-up for a wounded animal would be a helicopter shot, but the Government has apparently ruled out that action. As for damage to fragile ecosystems, there was some trampling and pugging around wetlands but it was not possible to put that in a historical context. However, it was obvious that the hard tussock, as the favoured forage, was being eradicated. Although mature red tussock remained - being less palatable - juvenile red tussock was also in decline, and therefore not filling in the gaps. The upshot was that in many areas there were a few clumps of surviving red tussock within a sea of hieracium (hawkweed) - the plant that is now destroying the Mackenzie Country. Evidence of fires could also be seen and many steep slopes are now just bare soil. Yet while tussock damage from horses was obvious, severe damage from the 40 years of Army use could also be seen. The worst damage was close to the Waiouru military camp, where networks of muddy grooves criss-cross the tussock. Further out... deep four-wheel-drive ruts could also be seen in the secondary routes on ridge lines, albeit at a much lower density... Tank track damage is minimal. The Army has introduced a system of retiring training sectors on a rotational basis, and using hard roads for access.

...Kaimanawa feral horse-lovers would have the public believe protected free-range horses are a different proposition to deer or possums which were liberated, protected and left to multiply for over 40 years. No control action was taken until forest undergrowth had been eaten out by deer and possums had set about killing off trees. The Urewera National Park was set aside as a water retention forest but by a combination of feral browsing animals and timber millers, farmers along the Whakatane river had 400-year floods in seven years. The fodder for four deer would be about the equivalent grazing for one brumby and left where they originated wolves hold their numbers in check. No control over horses grazing tall tussock in a high country environment is to repeat the ongoing deer and possum blunder.

...Group fails to get cull ruled unlawful... Up to 300 Kaimanawa wild horses - many of them pregnant - will be shot this month after an 11th-hour bid to stop a... cull of the herd failed. In a closed hearing in Auckland yesterday, the principal planning tribunal judge... ruled out holding an urgent hearing into the cull... A joint statement issued last night by lawyers acting for the Crown and the K[WHPs] said it was "impracticable" to hold a hearing before the... cull... Horse lovers will move on to the Desert Rd, near Waiouru, today and are expected to stage a protest there until tomorrow night... The patron of the... [ILPH] said last night that it would put pressure on the Government to "stop the slaughter." An emotion-charged 90-second television advertisement depicting a horse saved from the cull which went on to become a young girl's championship-winning pet screened on Thursday night... Media and anti-cull organisations have been banned from attending the cull and the exact date has not been released... However, the [DoC] wanted to complete the cull before the end of the month so newborn foals were not left to starve when their mothers were shot... The [DoC] deputy director... said the carcasses would be buried in deep holes on the Kaimanawa Ranges, at least 100 metres from water holes... Last month, the Waitangi Tribunal turned down a request for an urgent hearing into the issue from the Tuwharetoa subtribe Ngati Tama Whiti. It claimed that the cull would violate the right to exercise hapu (sovereignty) over ancestral lands and their products, namely horses.

...The Government's decision yesterday to buckle to public pressure and cancel the Kaimanawa horse cull has tested to breaking point the loyalty of the Minister of Conservation. The... [PM], who announced the u-turn minutes before leaving for South Africa, confirmed that [the minister] had offered to resign, but [the PM] had rejected the offer as "totally unnecessary." It is understood th[e minister]... was furious at comments the Minister of Tourism... made on his radio talkback show on Sunday. [The Tourism Minister] called for a minute's silence "to reflect on the orgy of destruction that's soon to take place on the central plateau." Later, in a clear reference to [the Conservation Minister, the Tourism Minister] said: "I don't profess to be a clever, over-educated Rhodes scholar. All I'm saying to people out there is that there must be a better way than sending in gun freaks with high-powered machines to wipe out these animals." [The Conservation Minister] was entitled to expect the [PM] to rebuke the Tourism Minister for this but that apparently did not happen at yesterday's cabinet meeting. A spokes[person for the PM said the PM] was not ignoring the issue - it was just that [the PM] had not seen a transcript of the programme and was squeezed for time... [The Conservation Minister] was refusing any public comment last night. However, the N[Z] Herald understands that [the minister felt it] had been hung out to dry by the policy reversal, especially as only two weeks ago the cabinet had endorsed the strategy. It was a plan [the minister] inherited, as the cabinet had provisionally approved the cull as early as May 5 - at least three weeks before [the minister] took over the conservation portfolio on the resignation of the [previous Conservation Minister], who stood down in a bid to atone for the Cave Creek tragedy. Responsibility for implementation then fell to [the successor], who argued for the cull publicly and at some political cost. But [the successor] had strong backers as most of N[Z]'s leading environmental groups considered the horses were threatening native grasslands. But a highly emotional campaign fought by the K[WHPs] succeeded in mobilising public opinion... The P[M]'s office... received 500 letters against the cull in yesterday morning's mail alone. However, the Government remains convinced that the wild horse population must be reduced. [The PM] said yesterday that a muster would be ordered for "some time next autumn." ...[the PM] was careful not to say that, once mustered, the horses will have to be disposed of. If they are not sold as pets,

they will be sold as pet food. This will remain the case even if a viable contraception scheme is developed because herd numbers are already at twice the ecologically safe level.

...Public sentiment rather than science may decide whether the size of the Kaimanawa wild horse herd is controlled by contraception, says a Massey University ecologist... [who] told an ecology department seminar that applying contraception to a wild species might be seen as a “God-like act.” Others would think the money should be spent on saving threatened indigenous species. The immuno-contraception being tried... can last up to three years... The contraception [i]s shot into the rumps of... mares using airguns... First results of the trial should be available next April.

...The Government has sacrificed the environment for the sake of votes in abandoning the Kaimanawa wild horse cull, say environmentalists... [The] conservation director of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society... said last night that the Government had capitulated to a “hysterical, noisy minority”... However, the... [director] predicted the move would ultimately lose the Government more votes than it gained. And there are doubts that its opting for rounding up and auctioning the horses next autumn instead of shooting them will ultimately prevent the deaths of more than a few yearlings and foals. In 1994 about... 150 younger horses offered at auction were sold, the rest staying on the Poronui Station, near Taupo, or following more than 100 other older animals to a Taumarunui abattoir. At the 1993 auction three-quarters of a mob of 120 sold – a further 100 were slaughtered... Last night representatives from the K[WHPS] and other horse-lovers’ groups were proclaiming the axing of the cull in favour of a muster and horse auction... as a triumph of common sense, and an opportunity to begin the in-depth study of the horses they have been seeking all along. They have also demanded that protection status – lifted from the animals earlier this year – be reinstated... But... a Massey University geneticist, dismissed the genetic uniqueness argument often used by [the KWHPs. The geneticist], who is also the chair[person] of the Rare Breeds International board, said... “Station hacks and Army-derived thoroughbreds, released in the 1940s, have both joined the herd at different times, so the herd’s genetic pool is added to regularly. There has been little time for any natural selection to affect the Kaimanawa herd significantly.”

...As the row over the cancelled... cull continued to simmer yesterday, it was revealed... the Government has been told the delay until next year... “will result in... 240 [to] 290 horses being added to the population which will need to be removed either by culling or mustering to the abattoir[.]” and estimated... costs of mustering horses from the area could be \$200 to \$300 per animal, while sales of the horses previously had been less than \$100 each. Meanwhile, the... [p]atron of the... [ILPH] said the cancellation of the cull and planned muster next year was much more acceptable to his organisation. [Ironically, i]t was the league that had... protested strongly against a muster... [i]n 1993... saying it would be cruel and inhumane... [T]he league had no quarrel with the legitimate and proper slaughter of horses in N[Z]. Between 7000 and 8000 horses a year are slaughtered for export for human consumption, with an estimated additional 600 a week slaughtered and processed for the pet food industry. - 1996

N[Z]ers accept wild deer being shot from a helicopter. But they raise a public furore when the target is wild horses. The country has built industries and a large part of its economy on putting lamb, beef and venison on other countries’ dining tables. Serve up horse meat to the same foreigners, however, and some Kiwis are horror-struck. This recipe for confusion has come to a head in the fierce debate over the Kaimanawa wild horses... When it comes to preserving the horses which have ranged over the North Island’s Central Plateau since the 1870s, one horse-lover’s idea of animal welfare has proved not to be another’s... While the plant-verses-animal, or even native-verses-exotic, conflict remains a subtext of the whole story the most recent chapters have been on animal welfare... Save Animals From Exploitation, Kaimanawa Horse Action Network and... the Wild Horse Trust[(WHT)]... want... the animals to remain on the plateau where, [the groups] believe... their numbers would stabilise because of natural considerations. But the natural way is not necessarily a kind way. As grazing has run out, horses have gone hungry and that has led to deaths, stunted growth and diseases caused by nutritional deficiencies. The Veterinary Association’s equine specialist... was horrified when [it] saw the poor health of many of the horses... [The specialist] said any farmer who caused animals to be in that state would have been prosecuted. The horses [a]re not in a natural environment, they had been put there by people and the only way to protect their welfare was for people to manage them within the environment... said[the specialist, who has drawn] criticism for backing the view that, to reduce their number, the best interests of the horses would be served by shooting them where they were. It [i]s not an isolated opinion. A lawyer specialising in animal welfare... said that four years ago about 40 people from a wide range of animal welfare groups thrashed out the issue during a one-day conference. Their combined opinion was that the most humane way to reduce the number of horses was to shoot them. At that time, [the]Conservation Minister... decided “for political reasons” not to take the advice... Similarly, when a kill planned for last year... raised a storm of protest, it too was shot down for political reasons. [The lawyer] said people’s romantic notions about “noble” horses were “a big factor” in the debate, but animal welfare was a matter of pragmatism. For instance, it may cause lambs pain to be tailed but, considering the horrors of flystrike, it was better to have the tail off... It was quite feasible that the young horses would settle in captivity but older stallions were not suitable for domestication... [The lawyer i]s not happy with the prospect of stallions being gelded. It would be “absolute terror” for the animal... Yet that is the plan of some ardent horse-lovers from the protest groups who see it as being in the best interests of the horses. There may be an explanation for the confusion over what is in animals’ interests. The animals do not get a look in. The laws on animal welfare... are set by people.

...THE WILD HORSES FLASH THROUGH THE foothills of the Kaimanawa mountain range... galloping down hillsides to drink at the streams that wash through the region’s shadowy gorges. The short, pot-bellied horses have roamed the area in groups of four or five for more than a century, feeding on tussock and native grass. But over the past 15 years their numbers have grown tenfold, and the region’s delicate flora are suffering under the impact of some 2,000 sets of hooves. In their search for fodder, the horses churn up the temporary wetlands that support tiny herbs, grasses and sedges – rare plants the D[oC] is anxious to preserve. Says DoC[’s] senior conservation officer...: “If it were rare animals we were talking about, it would be regarded by all as an absolute treasure of an area. But some of these plants are difficult even to find.” DoC is struggling to persuade N[Z]ers that the wetland and sub-alpine plants are as important as the horses[(‘a remarkable 25% of all NZ’s plants can be found above the treeline, and 93% of all the alpine plants are endemic – compared with 80% for the rest of the higher plants; snow tussock herb-fields are one of the most distinctive elements of this cold, windswept environment – they are remarkably long-lived, larger specimens may be several centuries old, and like beech trees seed infrequently but in profusion’)]... Over the past three years 570 wild horses have been mustered and sold, half to private buyers and half to abattoirs, and DoC plans to muster another 1,500 in the coming months... [Afterwards] DoC hopes an immunocontraception program... will hold numbers at about 500. “That will leave the animals and the plants in a situation that is sustainable.” The W[HT] disagrees, saying such a cut in numbers will threaten the entire herd. Thought to be descended from escaped military mounts and a Welsh stallion-Exmoor pony cross that was turned loose in the late 19th century, the horses are genetically close to Thoroughbreds, though they look quite different... “They look like a pregnant mare because they need to eat so much roughage to get even the smallest amount of nutrients[.]” says a spokesperson for the WHT, who] thinks they should be left to graze in peace. “The herd has never really caused a problem... If there are areas that require protecting for plant growth, let’s fence them off and get someone in to manage the horses instead of getting rid of them all.” But DoC says fencing is impractical over such a large area and would in any case require the temporary removal of the herd. Whichever of the other options – capture or culling – the department finally decides to adopt, it looks as if the Kaimanawa horses’ years of free rein are coming to an end.

...The days of the Kaimanawa horses appear to be numbered... The Minister of Conservation... said the numbers were such that “significant control” of the horse population needed to occur this year, most likely between May and July. [The minister] said his strong preference was for a muster, but final decisions would be made after consultation with interest groups... [The minister] said the Government was committed to the

Kaimanawa Wild Horse Management Plan, which sets the maximum sustainable horse population at 500... roaming 70,000ha... Air and ground tallies were carried out by the DoC last month as part of its programme to reduce the number of wild horses and their effect on the area's ecology. About 200 horses were spotted on private land next to the defence area. About 13[%] of the horses seen were foals.

...More than half the Kaimanawa wild horses injected with a contraception vaccine by Massey University scientists... produced foals this summer.

...a Government "Adopt a Kaimanawa Horse" campaign to find homes for mustered wild horses... was... announced yesterday... The horses will be mustered over the next two months... [- at a cost of] \$479,000, compared with \$100,000 to shoot the horses from helicopters... [-] and for \$100 "good owners" with referees can take home a stallion, mare, yearling or foal... The Minister of Conservation... said prospective owners would be warned that the horses needed considerable care. The SPCA would check on the animals' welfare after purchase. Any horses not adopted would be sent to the abattoir, [so the minister] issued a challenge to horse-lovers: "Over 11,000 people signed a petition to Parliament concerned about the welfare of the horses. If at least one in 10 were prepared to adopt a horse, our problem would be solved." ...[but t]he Auckland SPCA director... has scoffed at the plan. "The minister is laying the blame at the feet of the people who want to save the horses, saying 'roll along and buy them' like some cheap auctioneer. It would be very nice if [the minister] was in cuckoo land, and perhaps [the minister] is, to think there would be lots of lovely homes out there." ...the... [director], who opposes any cull... [said p]rospective owners would need a large property and a good knowledge of horses... [The minister says it is] in a no-win situation. "Some people would have me not touch a hair on a horse's head, and others want to see all the horses destroyed to save the plants."

...[a DoC] scientist... stroked the grass-like plant in the small container and spoke glowingly of its ability to survive in its last-known North Island habitat. The red tufted sedge, now found only in dwindling areas of the Central Plateau, once populated at least half the North Island... It is this unprepossessing plant, along with other rare and endangered species like the even smaller Kaimanawa forget-me-not, which is up against the tangled mane, wild running, free spirited Kaimanawa horses in the preservation stakes. "It's native plants versus exotic horses," said [the scientist, for whom] it may not be much of a competition. [The scientist] recalled with excitement his journeys of discovery 10 years ago when plants were found in the... Plateau that no one knew grew there or, in some cases, that they even existed. [The scientist] also noted that in the intervening years some had been lost altogether and others were being severely threatened by the grazing pressure of the horses. As [it] spoke, standing in the Waiouru Primary School car park, nearby horse preservation proponents were making their feelings known about the plants' rivals. "Don't kill the horses," said their placards. The plants' habitat is inland from the State Highway 1 stretch of road known as the Desert Road. The scenery is magnificent – bleak but certainly not desert. The grass and tussock-covered plains and hills are more reminiscent of the South Island... 10 years ago the plains were covered in red tussock... [A] Major... of the Waiouru camp said the tussock was once so thick soldiers on exercise could crawl unseen for hundreds of metres. Now their enemies would have them in their sights in a minute... [and many of the plants] are now grass species like browntop, cocksfoot, chewing fescue and yorkshire fog which can be found all over N[Z]... The land, though, does look made for horses to thunder through in vast herds. The Bonanza boys could come galloping along anytime and no one would be surprised. But, [the] Conservation Minister... said, the land was not made for horses. Private landowners found that out long ago. They got rid of the horses on their land and turned to profitable enterprises. "The only reason the horses are on Crown land is because of the protection given them by the Army... If we do nothing we will have neither horses nor plants,"... Now across the vistas, modern day Bonanza boys whisk along in helicopters herding small bands of the rough-coated, mostly small and hardy horses on to trails familiar to them. That way they travel well, cantering along at a steady pace and joining others which have been driven down from the hills or flushed from the valleys... Lengths of garden-type screening is stretched along two sides of [a] ridge to funnel the horses towards yards set up on a blustery outcrop. The horses end their journey, for the moment, in portable yards constructed of aluminium and covered with scrim. A truck to the rear of the yards, where handlers shelter from biting winds, is also covered in scrim. Anything that glitters would spook the horses on that final run... [T]he horses quickly quieten in the pens. Only the presence of people drives them to the corners... in fright... Up close, horses... [2- and 3]-years-old are seen to be about Shetland pony size – testimony to their hard lives of freedom... The SPCA [supports the muster because it says]... it's cruel to let the horses live in their present condition. Many may have starved to death this winter.

...1075 [Kaimanawa wild horses] were mustered to be auctioned off this month. Many horses showed signs of poor nutrition and were infested with internal parasites. The 517 remaining... horses will be kept in the Argo Valley with a trust set up to manage the herd.

...The cost of reining in the wild Kaimanawa horses has so far amounted to more than half a million dollars... Preparing for the muster, including conducting a census of the horses and then corralling them cost \$356,600. The horses were trucked to Taihape farms for a price of more than \$31,000 while their feed and management until they are sold is estimated at \$123,000. Also in the account, revealed... under the Official Information Act, were fees paid for Ministry of Agriculture and veterinary supervision which came to more than \$21,000. Payments to the SPCA for checking references for prospective horse owners – including the P[M] and the Treasurer – will be more than \$13,000... [T]he account saddles each horse with a bill for more than \$500...

[The PM stepped] in last year to save hundreds of Kaimanawa horses from the abattoirs and yesterday... followed through on [its] promise, becoming the owner of a yearling at the first of [3] auctions of the wild herd. Almost all of the 204 yearling fillies and colts were sold... with the 10 unsold animals to be offered at auction this Saturday. An agent bought a filly on behalf of [the PM]... destined to be ridden by [its] grandchildren... But just how much the P[M] paid for the horse was not being revealed yesterday... The 194 horses sold fetched \$32,720, with the top price of \$620 for a colt. Some animals fetched only the reserve of \$100, with some buyers going home with several horses... 250 people came from all over N[Z] with their chequebooks and credit cards... Many first-time horse buyers attended... Buses transported the buyers to the isolated farm, where they had an hour to view the penned animals... The auction closed after [3] hours of intense bidding. DoC said it was delighted with the auction result.

...More than 100 people [who had] paid \$50 each to register as buyers... did not turn up[at the Kaimanawa wild horse auction]. More than 600 of the... mustered horses remain unsold. Fifty horses have already gone to the abattoir... The former Minister of Conservation... said yesterday that [it] was not surprised the horses had sold poorly and maintained that shooting... [them] in the field... would have been more humane than putting them through a stressful muster and auction... Those who made the most noise, and influenced public opinion most strongly were those who did not understand what humane treatment was, [the former minister] said. Battles between rational and extreme views were commonplace, making management of the conservation estate difficult. Too often the extreme view was given prominence in the media.

...To us Europeans the past three months have been an interesting if depressing lesson in politics and political life in a country which usually sees itself in the role of a world environment protector... [W]e are shocked by the experience. From the moment [our Swiss-based] Foundation made its first offer... to buy "all of the remaining Kaimanawa Horses", in other words all the horses taken from the Kaimanawa mountains that had not found a buyer, we have been astounded to see the presumptuousness and contempt that [NZ] authorities show for their fellow citizens, for the money of their taxpayers and for public opinion. We have seen a Minister of Conservation all but annihilate an internationally registered endangered herd of special genetic value and a national heritage. We have seen him humiliate two important humane organisations of worldwide recognition: your own... [WHT] and ourselves whose total commitment is to the salvation and the welfare of the horses... How can [NZers] stand for something that no citizens in Europe would take from their government? Your government has cheated you out of your Kaimanawa Horses! It has arbitrarily lifted the protected status of the herd. It has culled three quarters of the 1700 horses, in fact all the horses of the northern range against your will. It has destroyed the social structures of the herd... And it has deliberately prevented the sale of the last 400 horses to a national organisation. The [WHT]... has the competence and resources to offer these horses sanctuary and a future and... also has the respect and full

support of the... Foundation[, whose]... 50,000 hectare sanctuary for 700 Brumbies ([AUSn] wild horses) has been successfully in existence for 9 years, attracting tourists from all over the world. In Togo... the Foundation runs the National Park of Fazao-Malfakassa, an elephant and wildlife sanctuary of 200,000 hectares... We absolutely disagree with [the]Assistant Conservator... from... the [DoC, who] said... on TV Channel 3, Sunday night... [that] the remaining Kaimanawa Horses had to go to the meat works as there was no interest in them. The bold untruth of this statement is contradicted by the facts on record. In almost three months of negotiations, the minutes and records of which are filling file after file, it has not been possible to purchase the horses held prisoners on holding farms under the saddest conditions. Despite the seriousness, reasonableness and sincerity of the joint offer... DoC... has been constantly raising new and ludicrous impediments to the conclusion of the sale. The Trust's management proposals were dismissed, land options turned down. Invasive and insulting demands were made on the Trust and the... Foundation to provide evidence, explanations and written proof of their financial resources and long term solvency. At the same time DoC constantly prevented inspection and even viewing of the allegedly remaining 400 horses which it pretended and still pretends to hold for sale, whose welfare it pretends to hold paramount... In fact everything leads us to believe that these horses may not exist. [NZers], your Kaimanawa Horses are gone. And it was all done... [behind] your backs. With... [about] a million dollars of... YOUR money... They were YOUR horses, as the land they once lived on is YOUR land... In Europe... we would ask: "Where are the remaining 400 horses which you [allegedly] still hold as hostages? What... do you have to hide?" And we would keep asking till we knew the answer.

...An organisation campaigning to save Kaimanawa wild horses hopes a \$10,000 newspaper advertisement will motivate others to take horses it refused. About a hundred horses, mainly stallions, remain from the 1060 mustered from land at Waouru in June... Yesterday's one-page ad... in the *N[Z] Herald* was placed out of "sheer frustration"... [says the president of the WHT. The trust], which had hoped to establish a second herd... [-a]bout 530 horses still run wild in the Kaimanawa ranges... [-] has negotiated with the [DoC] for the removed horses since August, when 400 were unsold. The president... said the trust had wanted to have enough horses to establish a viable herd, but as their numbers reduced over the months that became impossible... The trust was acting on behalf of... a Swiss wildlife group which had offered \$100,000 to buy and establish the horses in a new area. Under the headline "Tragedy of the Kaimanawa wild horses," the group castigated the Government, [the Minister of Conservation] and his department... The ad... said the issue would be put before the International Court of Justice for Animal Rights in Geneva. [The minister said it] had never heard of the court but was satisfied the department's standards would stand up in any forum... [The minister], who disputed all the claims made in the ad... said [it] was not satisfied the \$100,000 promised by the [Swiss wildlife group] was sufficient to support nearly 400 horses. "The grazing costs of these horses are costing the Government \$23,000 per month, and so I was concerned that the trust did not have the capacity to care for that number of horses in the long term." The offer remained open for the trust to take the remaining horses, [the minister] said.

...In an operation similar to its plans for the Kaimanawa wild horses, the D[oC] has all but wiped out an ancient herd of cattle on the Auckland Islands. Only last-minute work by the Rare Breeds Conservation Society brought an attempt to preserve the genes of the unique herd, but the success of that is hanging in a balance which seems to be tilting towards extinction of the species. The sole surviving heifer of the seaweed-eating cattle is under intense scientific care at Ruakura research station in Hamilton, where efforts to fertilise her eggs with semen taken post-mortem from Auckland Island bulls are proving frustrating. A second [cow] brought from the Islands died soon after arriving at Ruakura. Some reports say that [it] died of salt deficiency, the species having adapted to a high salt intake from eating kelp. The slaughter of the cattle took place under a new D[oC] policy for the management of the islands, which consist of the large Main Island, and smaller ones named Enderby, Adams, Rose and Disappointment, and a large number of smaller outcrops and large rocks. Cattle had existed on the islands, 400 nautical miles south of N[Z], since 1849, although the founding animals of the slaughtered herd were believed to have been landed there in 1894 in an effort at farming by a... [farmer from] Invercargill. Those who warn against diminishing biodiversity describe the loss of an isolated herd of independently developing animals free of all supplementary chemicals as a tragedy. Scientists with long association with the islands are circumspect in their reaction to the demise of the herd. An ecologist who studied the islands for years... said: "It's a bit sad. They were remnants of an early shorthorn breed, and they had had no management, no drenches or other treatments like modern cows, for 100 years so we could have learned a lot from them. They were, however, like the Kaimanawa horses, the wrong animals in the wrong place at the wrong time when it comes to balancing N[Z]'s truly unique natural environment. The rescue attempt was belated and it would have been nice to have had a bigger gene pool." Apart from the genetic diversity represented by the herd, a quality which is becoming more valued as commercial forces cause specialisation – and thus susceptibility to epidemic disease – in cattle breeding, scientific interest centres on whether natural traits or evolutionary development in the undisturbed animals might have been of benefit in modern farming. An example is sheep rescued from a flock slaughtered on Campbell Island. They had no footrot, which is endemic in mainland sheep... [A] colleague of... th[e ecologist]... in the now defunct Department of Science and Industrial Research, wrote in 1971 in favour of retaining the cattle on Enderby, second biggest of the Auckland Islands group. [The colleague] reported after a study expedition that there seemed to be little effect from the cattle on the natural bush of the island, and wrote: "Thus, unless [people] once more intervene... future environmental trends can be predicted to some extent. One possible, but in my opinion undesirable, disturbance would be control or removal of... [the] cattle in a fumbling attempt to re-establish the natural vegetation and protect the native fauna. On Enderby there are breeding sealions, many native bird species, cattle and rabbits all in an interacting relationship which is not obviously detrimental to any of them or the present vegetation, and existing trends... have positive conservation values and scientific interest... While further deterioration of the group should be prevented, every opportunity should be taken to profit from the natural experiments now taking place." The advice failed to move the D[oC], whose Invercargill branch moved three years ago to try to exterminate all non-native life from N[Z]'s southern islands. Its first action was to set poison baits for rabbits, which have not only successfully exterminated them but also mice which were accidentally introduced from a succession of whaling and sealing ships which visited from 1822. Dogs and pigs were introduced in 1842 when Chatham Island Maori arrived to settle. A scientific expedition under an American, C. Wilkes, in 1845, found cats, mice and pigs well established. In 1849 Charles Enderby, chief commissioner for the Southern Whale Fishery Company, which had obtained a lease on the islands, liberated rabbits, goats, sheep, horses and the first cattle. Declining numbers of whales led to abandonment of whaling by 1852. The Maori settlers left in 1856, having eaten all the larger animals, leaving only rabbits and goats for the survivors of the wreck Invercauld in 1865 and the gold ship General Grant, in 1867. The president of the Rare Breeds Conservation Society... says that obtaining a live specimen of the cattle herd after the D[oC] cull had begun was "sheer luck." [The president] travelled to the islands and found that the initial cull had missed five cows. [The president] caught one and her yearling calf and brought them back to the mainland. "The cattle had lived there a very long time... but it is basically D[oC] policy to clean everything out regardless of whether they have a right to be there. It is a pretty blanket, one-eyed approach. It is a shame that the opportunity to get a herd established away from the islands was missed." [The president] has, however, high hopes for the insemination work at Ruakura. "The people there are the best in the world at this sort of thing, there is the best technology, and they are putting a lot of their own funding into this. What they are doing is a world story." Another authority said, however, that the shorthorn was the most difficult cattle breed to artificially inseminate. There have been several attempts on the cow, but only one egg has fertilised, and it aborted recently after five months... [However,] other cows had been inseminated with Auckland Island semen, and it was hoped that a half breed calf could be delivered within a few months. A breeding improvement programme would follow.

...A planned cull of Canada geese yesterday was abandoned after protesters... clashed with fish and game officers... About a dozen protesters gathered at the Bromley sewage treatment ponds at dawn after word spread that a cull was planned. A North Canterbury Fish and Game Council officer... said the protesters arrived as officers were herding the geese on to the shore. The protesters used smoke bombs, shouted and made noise to

scare the birds away... [T]he cull was called off because the birds had become too distressed by the protesters' actions. "It is an unpleasant task at any time but it has to be done... Our first priority was animal welfare and to do the job as humanely as possible." ...The conflict led the Christchurch City Council to withdraw permission for any further culls on its land... The original council consent was for one cull only, with the geese to be herded into pens and trucked away to be killed elsewhere... "Geese being butchered in public view on council land is not exactly what the council thought it was getting itself into," said... the Christchurch City manager... "It is a very sensitive issue and we are mindful of not wanting to get the community offside." On December 28, [1996,] at Lake Ellesmere, 3600 geese were herded into pens, stunned and beheaded.

...For the past decade, fewer hunters each year have headed to their maimai on river and lake shores to bag ducks, swans, pukeko, geese, quail and pheasants. Thousands had abandoned the sport, said the executive officer of the Auckland and Waikato Fish and Game Council[who believed] competing recreational pursuits and lifestyle changes were taking a toll on hunter numbers. Other factors suggested as contributing to the falling numbers included the number of families without fathers who could pass on the interest to their children, the rise in seven-day retail trading and the greater difficulty in getting firearm licences. There were now about 40,000 licensed hunters nationwide, down 6[%] on three years ago... With licence fees providing the main source of income for the council, the drop is a financial headache... [One hunter] will definitely be out on his beloved Lake Rotokauri, west of Hamilton, for the start of the season... "It's peaceful here and I can unwind. If I see a duck it's a bonus,"... [The hunter] has had many "bonuses" over the... [past] 30 years... and this year... hope[s] to down 300 ducks during the season... [There is a daily limit of] 10 ducks...

Dismembered ducks were dumped on the doorstep of [an] inner-city sports store... yesterday in protest over duck shooting. Members of the group Save Animals From Exploitation displayed ducks which they said had died slowly from gunshot wounds and others which had been blown to pieces. A spokes[person]... said volunteers had collected the ducks from shooting areas near Waiuku. Beer bottles and cans were part of the display because shooters often drank while hunting and left empty containers and spent cartridges behind. The group had targeted [the inner-city sports store] because it believed it was encouraging children to kill animals by selling licences to them for \$1. The lunchtime Queen St protest did not take the [store]'s staff by surprise. The store manager... said they were expecting the demonstration after a tip from a television channel... [The manager] could not understand why [his store] had been the target of the group for the past couple of years, because it did not sell guns. The duck-shooting equipment stocked included ammunition, duck callers and shooting licences... sold... on behalf of the Fish and Game Council at prices set by it[. The store] had yet to sell a children's licence this season... [In related news, b]lack-backed gulls are being culled in Northland to give other birds a better chance at life... 300 gulls nest at a native bird refuge at Mangawhai and are threatening the survival of rare native species such as the... nearly extinct... fairy tern and the dotterel... "There are only 30... fairy tern[s]... at the reserve, and they can't compete with the hundreds of gulls for territory and food[," said a] conservation officer... D[oC] staff are feeding the gulls poisoned bread... [until their numbers] reduce... to about 50.

...There are 30 fairy terns in the world, and right now those birds are nesting on the busy beaches of Auckland and Northland. The D[oC] is pleading for care on the beaches where fairy tern... nests are extremely vulnerable to dogs and vehicles. Department staff found nests on Muriwai and Papakanui beaches last week, well before the usual nesting season... The nests which have been found have been fenced off. People are being asked to steer clear of fenced areas, as the birds are easily scared off their nests.

...Endangered birds who choose a sandy spit on Omaha Beach for breeding this year can count on human help for a safe and undisturbed nesting. Residents are watching over the welfare of the eight pairs of N[Z] dotterels which nest from September through to November at the popular resort near Warkworth. Since July a band of 10 volunteers have been trapping stoats, rats, hedgehogs and feral cats which raid nests. Next month a donated hut will be placed on the spit so that a warden can be on hand... to ensure birds are not bothered by dogs and vehicles. The trapping leader... said the birds were making their simple scrapes in the sand and would soon start laying their camouflaged, mottled eggs. The tip of the spit has been cordoned off with tape and signs ask beach-goers to walk below the high-tide mark instead of through the dune nesting area. [The trapping leader] said the spread of housing to within 50m of the spit had been of concern but the land developer... had supported the protection effort and donated money and materials. A wildlife scientist... said the Omaha community was important because the D[oC] could not manage all the dotterel nesting sites scattered from East Cape to North Cape. Omaha was also important to the survival of the dotterels because it served as a post-breeding flock site for 50 to 60 birds in the Mahurangi-Pakiri area from February through to May, said [the trapping leader].

...NZ's rare kakapo may be hatching a plot to expand their numbers. D[oC] staff, who intensively monitor each of the 50 known birds, say the huge, flightless nocturnal parrots are making all the right mating signs. That may produce successful breeding for the first time in three years. Nesting among the critically endangered birds last occurred two years ago when two [hens] laid eggs. But the eggs proved to be infertile. [However, t]he department's kakapo recovery programme manager... said that this year 13 of the 16 [cocks]... on Codfish Island... were "booming" – a noise they make to attract [mates]. As an attraction to [hens] prior to breeding, [cocks]... mark out a track which leads to a bowl they dig out of the moss and tussock on the ground. They keep the tracks scrupulously clean of twigs and leaves and at night sit in the bowls and make a booming sound... [The hens] were visiting the... "arenas," with some camping for the night... [The manager said it] was "cautiously optimistic" that the birds would breed. "Rimu on Codfish Island are fruiting well, and we believe this stimulates breeding activity,"... The last time rimu fruited heavily on the island was in the 1991-92 breeding season, when four [hens] nested. But the rimu fruit crop later failed. Three chicks were found starving on the island and were removed and hand-reared. Only one... survived, and is now on Maud Island in the Marlborough Sounds. This year conservation staff, with sponsorship from Comalco, have set up a system of remote-controlled cameras and sound devices to monitor the birds if nesting occurs, to ensure they are adequately fed and not attacked by predators... [K]akapo on Maud Island and Little Barrier were showing little sign of breeding activity... It is believed only about 10 [hen] kakapo are now capable of breeding.

...A [hen] kakapo has been found on Stewart Island, giving a major boost to the recovery programme for the endangered bird. The Minister of Conservation... said yesterday that the kakapo had been found at the weekend at the Tin Range on the southern part of the island by D[oC] workers... Of the 50 known adult birds and three chicks, only eight adult [hens] were capable of breeding. "The recruitment of an additional [hen] into the programme is significant." A transmitter was placed on the bird and once checks were made on its health, weight and whether it had nested, it would be moved to a safer location on nearby Codfish Island... [T]he search team would stay in the Tin Range area in case of other stray kakapo. The first [hen] kakapo seen this century was found on Stewart Island in 1980. It had been believed that the kakapo was essentially extinct as only a few solitary [cocks] had been found in Fiordland. In the... early 1990s, conservation staff rescued the small population of... birds from Stewart Island because they were under threat from wild cats. The last kakapo found on Stewart Island was transferred to Codfish Island in 1993.

...SCIENTISTS are delving into kakapo droppings to try to work out how to encourage one of the world's rarest birds to breed more often... [Egg] laying appears to happen when rimu trees seed heavily. But the... kakapo recovery team are not absolutely sure if there is a direct link between rimu trees and the [kakapo's] breeding pattern. "We don't actually know what turns a [hen] kakapo on to start breeding... We're hoping to find the trigger which makes the [hen] kakapo get clucky... then we can maybe get the birds to breed more often through a special feeding programme." Over the next year [a] DoC lab worker... will be closely analysing the contents of kakapo droppings collected from Codfish and Stewart Islands. DoC will also send ripe rimu fruit to A[US] for analysis. It's already known rimu berries are high in estrogen which could stimulate kakapo... It's hoped results will reveal what triggers these mysterious flightless parrots to start breeding before rimu and beech trees have a heavy seeding season. DoC says this is just as important as the rest of the one million dollar a year kakapo recovery project. Up to now the

kakapo teams have concentrated on saving the chicks once they hatched. This year the results have been better than usual with three chicks surviving... But the key is to get kakapo mums working harder. And that means trying to find out how to encourage more kakapo hanky-panky than once every five years.

...While the country holds its breath over whether one of our most endangered birds – the kakapo – will have any [more] chicks this year, nesting is over for many species under threat. It has produced the usual crop of success and disappointment for conservation managers... On[ly on]e takahe chick has survived on Tiritiri Matangi Island in the Hauraki Gulf, where 17 adults now live. The birds were established on the island in 1991. Only 200 of the birds are thought to be left, with the main population in Fiordland's Murchison Mountains. Apart from Tiritiri Matangi they have also been established on three other islands: Maud Island in the Marlborough Sounds, Mana Island and Kapiti Island... [T]he leader of the takahe recovery programme, said that with half the survey work in the mountains completed, eight chicks had been found in the wild and 19 had been produced at the department's Burwood rearing unit near Te Anau. The season had been reasonably good, but in the past 10 years the total population had stayed about the same. Over the past few years record cold winters had made numbers decline. It was likely the islands would reach their capacity for the birds in a few years, although research was now being carried out into takahe productivity on islands. With sponsorship from Flight Centre, a researcher was investigating whether genetic conditioning made takahe more adapted to alpine habitats than islands and whether different nutritional aspects played a role in breeding on islands. "The takahe is still an endangered bird but we are making progress. We would like to be making more progress but our big disappointments have been caused by the extreme weather conditions in the wild,"... Back on Tiritiri Matangi Island, the rare honey-eating stitchbirds or hihi have finished an "incredibly successful" breeding season, according to the Auckland regional conservator... More than 20 chicks have fledged successfully in only the bird's second breeding season on the open sanctuary. One of the rarest coastal birds, the N[Z] dotterel – about 1300 are left – has had a better season than last year in the Auckland region in spite of two cyclones... Of the rarest wild populations in the Auckland region, the kokako in the Hunua Ranges have had perhaps the least successful year. Only 20 of the country's premier songbird are known to exist in the ranges and during the breeding season they are closely monitored in a partnership between the Auckland Regional Council and the D[oC]. This season, in spite of predator control, the two breeding pairs in the 20,000ha of regional council park have not successfully reared any chicks. One pair nested once and raised two chicks, but both were discovered at five to 10 days old with broken necks, the gruesome sign of the presence of a marauding possum. The other pair nested three times but their eggs were eaten, possibly by ship rats, possums, harrier hawks or moreporks. Last season was bad because of poor food availability but at least this year the breeding pairs had increased from one to two, said [an ARC] resource scientist... In the biggest managed population of kokako, at Mapara in the central North Island, around 25 chicks have fledged and about 20 nests are still on the go.

...A KOKAKO recovery programme has broken all breeding records, hatching 23 chicks from the 55 it monitors. The key, according to [one] conservation officer... was brutal pest control and really keen staff. "There's no place here for wimps and people who can't get up in the morning." The team of 22 D[oC]-funded staff has cleared a 1400ha area in the Urewera National park of 98% of its possums, freeing up vast quantities of food and habitat for the endangered kokako and about 50 kiwis which live in the area. Kokako (blue wattle crows) have been steadily declining in number... Nationally, there are now thought to be about 1000 left, with 600 of those in the Urewera area... [Since the cull of possums, which] also caught 75 stoats, a few feral cats, weasels, and... rats, [it]... was obvious that the forest was now growing and producing plentiful fruit. Rata were flowering and the supplejack had heaps of bright red berries, which is crucial food for pigeons and kokako over the winter... [Kokako] are quite large birds which sing haunting... songs and, although poor fliers, leap through the tree canopy in short noisy flights.

...On the world wildlife stage N[Z]'s tui would be close to the top of the bill for the quality of its singing but our most outstanding avian diva must be the kokako. The pure flute-like notes of its calls have a chiming resonance that make them sound like they were being delivered within a vaulted cathedral rather than the open expanse of a forest. Sadly, all too few N[Z]ers have heard these stunning performances for the steady decline in kokako numbers throughout this century has seen them disappear from so much of the country where they were once common... For a bird of the treetops it has quite unusual and engaging behaviour because with small wings it is a weak flyer. Rather than flying from branch to branch in search of food, the long-legged bird mostly runs and leaps about the canopy more like a squirrel. It has a broad diet of insects, fruit and soft foliage and, like a parrot, frequently uses one foot as a hand to hold stems or fruit while it plucks the food from them. The kokako's poor flight was once thought to be its major survival weakness, making adults vulnerable to introduced mammalian predators... [Furthermore, w]hen most of the landscape was covered in trees the birds were able to range far and wide but as farmland has insidiously replaced our forests through slash-and-burn development, kokako territories have been boxed in by pastoral moats that the birds cannot cross. [However, w]ith the aid of better remote monitoring technology, such as time lapse and movement triggered photography, and more intensive study by dedicated researchers, breeding failure has been found to be of greater importance than was previously appreciated... Over the last couple of years the D[oC]'s Kokako Recovery Group has... resulted in a dramatic improvement in breeding success... In the Mapara Wildlife Reserve in the King Country, numbers have increased sufficiently for some birds to be captured for transfer to new refuges. A pair of birds from Mapara and two more bred at the Mt Bruce National Wildlife Centre are to be released on the open sanctuary of Tiritiri Matangi on Sunday. This will give Auckland residents and visitors a golden opportunity to see the kokako, watch its acrobatic rather than aerobic progress through the trees and hear its marvellous calls...

Last breeding season... 140 chicks fledged in forest blocks managed under the D[oC] kokako recovery programme sponsored by State Insurance and the Norwich Union group... [A]t... Mapara... more than 66 chicks fledged, an incredible result from a population which numbered just five [hens] in 1990... Chick production at recovery sites is over three times higher than observed productivity in unmanaged forests[, where cocks outnumber hens]... by as much as 10 to one in some places. The... bird will be taken off the threatened list [when] breeding pairs number about 2500.

...An expedition to find the long-lost South Island kokako has ended in disappointment for searchers who are convinced the bird survives. The seven-week expedition, one of the most intensive searches for the bird, took place in bush country south of Murchison where an ornithologist... discovered a clue to its presence last year. [The ornithologist] noticed a huge area of moss on the forest floor had been grubbed over, heard a kokako-like call and then glimpsed what [it] believed was one of the birds stalking along a branch. But the sighting was not good enough to confirm the bird's existence. So... the... [ornithologist went] back in the area leading the World Wildlife Fund for Nature N[Z] expedition supported by the D[oC], Timberlands West Coast Ltd and the clothing company Earth Sea Sky. Unlike the North Island kokako, which is on the verge of a slow, managed comeback from about 400 breeding pairs, the South Island kokako was last sighted about 50 years ago. But... [the ornithologist believes it] has seen the bird nine times... [o]ver the years... One week into the expedition, those taking part were sure they heard its call. "The liquid, crystal-clear nature of the notes is unmistakable. But... [v]ery rarely does it call..."...the searchers saw no more moss grubbing and there were no more sightings. Nothing turned up on tape from recorders placed in the forest and mainly possums and stoats triggered the expedition's six automatic-surveillance cameras. "I am absolutely positive the bird is there – no question. It's just outwitted us, that's all... It is the most interesting bird we've got in N[Z] for its call and furtive behaviour. Some of its calls are phenomenal. I've been to the Amazon jungle and the Himalayas and I've heard nothing that equals the call of the South Island kokako." [The ornithologist] hopes to resume searching next year. "But even if we do achieve something with this difficult bird can we save it from extinction?"

...DNA taken from fossil bones of the North Island takahe shows it was a different species to the rare South Island birds, of which only about 200 survive. The discovery, described by Otago University researchers as scientifically startling, has thrown new light on the birds' evolution... The surviving South Island species is a fat, heavy bird like an African swamp hen... The extinct North Island species was taller and thinner, and more

closely related to the A[US]n swamp hen. “It appears that the North Island takahe is the more recent of the two takahe species... and its DNA suggests it’s more closely related to the pukeko we know today.” ...The “modern” N[Z] pukeko arrived from A[US] only about 300 years ago, which suggested that separate invasions of N[Z] may have given rise to the different takahe species.

...dinosaurs... died out 65 million years ago. Why is one of the enduring mysteries of science. Many scientists think it was due to a climatic change, perhaps brought on by a meteor striking Earth. Now the puzzle’s been compounded [by]... DNA evidence suggesting many of the birds we see around us today survived through that mass extinction; that their family tree is twice as old as previously thought... If birds are that old... they may have evolved back when the continents were clustered together in the Southern Hemisphere[, which suggests]... scientists should be working down here to solve evolution’s mysteries. “Most geologists through time have been from the Northern Hemisphere, [so] most of them have worked in the Northern Hemisphere. What we’re suggesting, in fact, is that they may have been looking in the wrong place.” ...[Incidentally, DoC] staff have found a new species of snipe on rocky Jacquemart Island... The small, brown, ground-nesting wading bird had eluded scientists for 200 years.

...It was hide-and-seek for 200 years but when searchers finally got on the right trail of a new species of bird it was all over in minutes. A D[OC] field officer... and his bird-tracking gorden setter, Fiddich, were on rugged Jacquemart Island, 700km south of Bluff, for only quarter of an hour on a recent Sunday when the dog flushed a bird from the tussock. [Fiddich’s handler] and two other officers... and their dogs, had just started a grid search for the flightless Campbell Island teal. [The handler thought it] recognised the bird as a snipe. “[One of my colleagues] said snipe weren’t supposed to be on the island so we debated it for a bit,”... When Fiddich showed [that the dog] had the scent of another bird, [her handler] went behind its hiding place before the dog moved in. “The bird popped out and I grabbed it. It was all pretty simple.” They photographed the small... wading bird and released it. For the next 3 1/2 hours the [officers] spotted about 10 snipe on the snow-swept, 19ha subantarctic island last visited 12 years ago. The chance discovery of the new subspecies of N[Z] snipe, the first subspecies of any bird discovered in 100 years, has thrilled bird-lovers and researchers. A DOC scientist... said the find was exciting because so much work was done trying to save species from extinction: “It shows there are still gains to be made and little mysteries to solve.” The insect-eating snipe is common in Europe and used to live on the N[Z] mainland. They spread to outer islands about 20,000 years ago and several distinctive subspecies developed... [S]cientists thought there may have been a species on Campbell Island, 2km north of Jacquemart, but they were killed by rats taken in by whalers in 1810. The find showed that the scientists were right. A DOC snipe expert... said the new bird would be the fifth subspecies of surviving snipe. The others are the Chatham, Snares, Antipodes and Auckland islands snipes. The discovery was like a bolt out of the blue and [the expert] would “cheerfully lose limbs” to get down to the island to see for himself. It might take some time to confirm the find officially because they needed a specimen of the bird and with such a small population, “no-body is going to be doing that,”... The last time a new subspecies was found was in 1897. That was also a snipe, the Stewart Island subspecies, which died out in the 1960s. The Little Barrier snipe is also extinct. The last find of a new bird species was the Stephen’s Island wren, discovered in 1894 but also now extinct, eaten by a lighthouse keeper’s cat. Jacquemart Island, although small and weather-battered, is likely to be able to support a population of 100 snipe sheltering in its thick tussock. DOC will now look at eradicating rats on the nearby islands, benefiting wildlife such as teal and albatross, and also lessening the risk of rats hitching a ride to Jacquemart. The new bird is likely to be called the Campbell Island snipe, though occasionally discoveries have been named after their finder... Fiddich[and her handler], who usually work in Northland hunting for brown teal, are not expecting such immortalisation. Fiddich is not a dog who works for rewards – the [handler]’s excitement over the bird... was enough to encourage her to find more. [The handler] said the two weeks spent on the islands, a 60-hour boat trip from the mainland, was reward enough for him... [□ Scientific excitement over a new bird subspecies being found on a subantarctic island was tempered last night by f]resh concerns... about the future of wildlife at Antarctica after the discovery of a poultry virus among penguins... A[US]n scientists have found that Adele and Emperor penguins are producing antibodies to the infectious bursal disease virus, commonly found in the domestic chicken. The shock discovery will be presented to more than 200 senior officials at the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting... which begins in Christchurch today... [T]he *Nature International Weekly Journal of Science* says... human visitors may be to blame because only colonies in contact with humans show signs of infection. The pathogen could have been spread by careless disposal of poultry products or by contaminated footwear, clothing, equipment or vehicles. Antarctic penguins had been considered relatively safe from disease because of their remote environment.

...It’s five minutes to midnight for penguin colonies from South Muriwai to Manukau Harbour, and drastic action is needed now to save the protected birds, says [a]Piha resident and penguin champion... The Little Blue penguins are being mauled to death at night by roaming dogs, despite the efforts of some locals keeping vigil with torches, blankets and coffee. Numbers were [now]so low the colonies were threatened with extinction... [The resident] began recording penguin numbers at North Piha last year after noticing there were fewer of them around... [L]ast season had been disastrous, with at least 12 breeding birds dying, and no fledglings surviving. And this breeding season had started off badly, with one of the first penguins ashore being killed by a dog. The Little Blue penguins come ashore after dark and breed and nest from July to January. They are the world’s smallest at an average height of 25cm and live for about 20 years... [The resident] said the council needed to ban off-leash dogs from beaches between sunset and sunrise, and to enforce stricter dog controls during the day if the penguins were to have a chance. People had to be educated, and more signs were required... “With a bit of care and respect, people, dogs and penguins can all live in safety.” ...A Waitakere City Councillor... said yesterday that the birds’ plight would be discussed immediately. “We have emergency powers in the bylaws to do something within two weeks. We are very keen to protect the remaining birds as soon as possible. Lots of people thought the last of the penguins were gone, but this clearly isn’t the case.” ...a D[OC] regional conservator... said yesterday that the penguins were not a priority because they were not on the list of rare and endangered species. But the department would be happy to support community initiatives.

...Alarm at the death rate of little blue penguins on the west coast of Auckland has prompted the Waitakere branch of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society to fund the building of 50 breeding boxes.

...Dogs will be banned from key wildlife areas on several west coast beaches in a bid to stop them attacking native species... [like] the little blue penguin, pukeko, teal ducks and dotterel... The Waitakere City Council has designated special dog-exercise areas at Piha and Bethells Beach.

...A Japanese [perso]n facing three charges involving a blue penguin and other Otago Peninsula wildlife was remanded in custody when [it] appeared in the Dunedin District Court yesterday... The... 30[-year-old]... was remanded without plea... [after being] charged with disturbing absolutely protected marine wildlife, namely nesting albatross, without lawful authority, and having in his possession absolutely protected marine wildlife, namely a live blue penguin, without lawful authority. Both charges were laid under the Wildlife Act. [The suspect] was also charged under the Summary Offences Act with being found without reasonable excuse in an enclosed area at Taiaroa Head... The charges were laid after [the suspect] was seen inside a fence at the royal albatross colony on Sunday morning. Police said a blue penguin in a bag was found in a nearby car.

...The Mayor of Auckland... has won praise from a Japanese environmental group for supporting protection of a threatened tidal flat in Nagoya that is used by migratory birds. [The mayor], however, has remained guarded about supporting preservation of the Fujimae tidal flats, which are threatened with destruction by Nagoya authorities for a rubbish dump or port development. The Japanese environmental agency recently classed the 112ha area surrounded by industry as the second most important tidal site for shore birds in Japan. The Save Fujimae Association, which has won international backing from conservation groups, wrote to [the mayor] last year seeking Auckland’s support. [The mayor wrote to his counterpart in] Nagoya but refused to release a copy to the association and would not respond to requests for the letter from the N[Z] *Herald*... Getting a copy of the letter involved a request by the *Herald* under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act, the intervention of an ombuds[person]... and seven months. In its dealings with [the ombudsperson] the council said the ability of [the mayor] to express his free and frank

opinions for the effective conduct of public affairs was at stake. That ability should not be jeopardised by the release of the letter. The... [ombudsperson upheld the council's] view, but, given the widespread support for environmental protection and habitat preservation... considered it to be in the public interest for [the mayor] to indicate the nature of his letter. The council agreed... [The mayor has said it] does not share environmentalists' concerns for migratory birds affected by a huge reclamation in Hakata Bay by Auckland's sister city, Fukuoka. Both cities share 15 species of birds including the bar-tailed godwit or kuaka. Fukuoka is a feeding and stopover site on the birds' migrations and Auckland is their retreat from the Northern winter. The council has been frequently criticised for not doing more to persuade Fukuoka to provide havens for migratory birds. A year ago, to the dismay of conservationists, the council did not show the Fukuoka mayor and councillors visiting Auckland the region's spectacular flocks of migratory birds. A spokes[person] for the Save Fujimae Association... say[s] the destruction of the Fujimae tidal flats posed a far more serious threat to migratory birds than the Hakata Bay reclamation. "Fujimae for Japanese environmentalists is a very big symbol. If they cannot save Fujimae they are not going to save anything." [■ '90% of Japan's migratory bird wetland areas have been developed.']

...Many Rarotongans are superstitious about the dense bush-covered hills in the centre of the lush island, believing that is where spirits and spooks lurk. So getting locals to work in the unexplored forests to help save one of the world's rarest birds... was difficult, said... [a member of the] small group of passionate environmentalists who have brought the tiny kakerori back from the brink of extinction. Although still endangered, the kakerori, or Rarotongan flycatcher, has been off the critical list for... a year. The bird is found only in the inland Takitumu district of Rarotonga. A missionary... discovered as far back as 1885 that its numbers were declining, a pattern that continued until 1989 when it was estimated that only 29 birds were left. The decline was blamed mainly on the ship rat, introduced by accident more than 100 years ago. So saving the birds meant eliminating the ship rat... The kakerori recovery programme got under way in 1987 after it was taken out of the Government's hands. Funding of \$300,000 for a five-year period came from the South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme. Getting rid of the main predator involved the laborious task of laying poisoned bait at various stations covering the entire 155ha area in which the bird is known to exist... Nesting trees were also banded with aluminium strips to prevent rats from climbing them. Thanks to the recovery programme, the kakerori population had reached 134 by 1996, an achievement which has put the Cook Islands "on the conservation map,"... The kakerori habitat has now become a reserve called the Takitumu Conservation Area. It was established last year... [T]he conservation area's support officer... is organising guided nature walks through the area for a small fee which helps the recovery programme. [The support officer] said that because the bird had almost totally disappeared, very few Cook Islanders knew of its existence. And there were those who could not understand what all the fuss was about. "The locals say the bird has no economic value, it's not dramatic nor does it have an attractive call." To which [the support officer] replies: "Once it's gone, it's gone and we don't want our children knowing about the birds just from picture books." ...[In local news, an area] of land on the Coromandel Peninsula is being cleared of predators to create a new sanctuary for kiwi. The sanctuary will cover about 5000ha of state-owned and private land on the Kuaotunu Peninsula on Coromandel's east coast. The land[– which] includes forests, farmland, regenerating forests and spectacular coastlines... [–] is geographically suited to the sanctuary concept; it is bounded on three sides by the Pacific Ocean and on the fourth by a public highway. A buffer zone will be created around the "prime sanctuary" where invading animals can be stopped by trapping and poisoning. The Kuaotuna Kiwi Sanctuary Committee has applied for funding to kill predators... [The c]ommittee secretary... said the exact number of North Island brown kiwi in the sanctuary was unknown but there was anecdotal evidence that kiwi calls in the area were becoming less common. The sanctuary is not a registered reserve, as negotiations with landowners would have taken years, but an area of special interest where a wide variety of groups can work together to prevent the kiwi's extinction... DoC[']s kiwi recovery programme co-ordinator... said the mainland population of kiwi was declining by 6% a year with 95% of chicks killed by stoats or cats. Eggs were also eaten by stoats and possums, and mature birds fell victim to dogs and ferrets.

...Once kiwi were numerous, now they're a threatened species – so conservation workers treat every single chick as important... "[At the present rate of decline, by the year 2005 or 2007 they'll have] had it." "The time has come to stop hiding the truth, [to] stop telling lies. Let's show everybody what really happens out there." N[Z]ers call themselves Kiwis whether it's [for] business, politics or sport. It's the... [name of] a biological oddity, found nowhere else in the world. It feeds at night, it can't fly, it mates for life, it lays huge eggs... chicks are born fully clothed... and there are 6 distinct varieties. Although it has feathers, in many ways it's not like a bird. With a strong sense of smell and a lower body temperature it's more like a mammal... Kiwis [also] have sharp hearing to locate food underground... They're very efficient hunters but despite this the kiwi population is declining rapidly. DoC figures paint a miserable picture. Kiwi numbers have dropped dramatically and some regions have lost the kiwi for good... So who, or what, is killing the kiwi? Researchers need more information, so under the Kiwi Recovery Plan a small team of scientists and volunteers around the country have been studying the life and death of our national icon. Their conclusions are disturbing. One of the kiwi's main enemies is '[humanity's] best friend'. Kiwi have a distinctive smell which will lead a dog straight to the burrow. A few years ago one dog – a german shepherd – ran amok in the Waitangi State Forest in the Bay of Islands. It's reputed to have killed 500 kiwi. The bird doesn't have a breast-bone so its ribs shatter at the slightest pressure from a dog's jaws. It doesn't stand a chance. Pig-hunters are one group of dog-owners who've come under fire. Some of them have been accused of allowing their dogs to run unchecked... Pig-hunters, though, insist their dogs are trained to attack only pigs... "We spend... years training our dogs... [for that purpose, whereas] a dog in town... doesn't have a purpose, it's tied up all day, [the owners] come home from work, they let the damn thing go and they're living on... the verges of all this... bush country... and the dog's gone. What's the dog doing?" "...It's not just... any dog... it's... pig dogs[, too]... People too easily say, 'Well my children never steal the neighbours' apples,' but... it's not always the fact, is it?" But dogs can be the good guys too. The Kiwi Recovery Team uses [dogs] to locate kiwi for research. "In the late 1980s the DoC got quite concerned about the decline of the kiwi... [T]he problem is most of the deaths are young kiwi and that means the population isn't being replaced." "Waikaremoana is part of the largest [native] forest patch in the North Island. It's the single biggest bit of [kiwi] habitat left and in places like this we'd expect kiwi to be hanging on well, but that's not happening... [–] in places like this we now have about one kiwi per 100 hectares... [I]f a kiwi is lucky enough to become an adult its got every chance of living for quite a long time, maybe up to 40 years. The problem is that so very few kiwi actually get that chance, most of them being killed in their first few weeks of life. If you had to identify the single animal that you [nee]d to control or take out of the system to make a difference for kiwi its got to be the stoat... That is the villain above all villains." Ironically, European settlers introduced the stoat to control the rabbit they'd introduced earlier, but the stoat found native birds more to its liking, and so did the stoat's cousins – the ferret and the weasel, [which] were also introduced to control rabbits. All of them are prolific breeders. Young... stoats are pregnant when they leave the nest and they're superior hunters... Once, N[Z] was 'Birdland', but that changed when the humans arrived. Now, behind the picture postcard images there are grim statistics. One third of the world's endangered birds are in N[Z] with another 40 birds already extinct... It was in 1991 that the alarm was raised [to] the plight of the kiwi. The Kiwi Recovery Team was formed... Because the kiwi is nocturnal most of the [team's] work... is done at night... [While they work, t]here are few bird calls of any sort. It's a reminder [of] just how bad things have become in Birdland. "...some nights are deathly silent. There's almost a conspiracy of silence among the nocturnal animals. But once there were seabirds flying in, crashing through the forests, breeding in burrows on the forest floor; there were kakapo calling; there were heaps of bats[– 'the only native NZ land mammal (there are two distinct types: the long-tailed and the short-tailed') –] on the wing; there were kiwis... there was noise in a way that we just can't imagine. We can only glimpse it occasionally by going to an off-shore island now and so the silence is a true silence because the things that were making those noises are... either in greatly reduced numbers or they've disappeared altogether." ...Kiwi are not defenceless, of course. The adults are strong and sometimes fierce, especially if some other bird strays onto their territory – and they'll fight each other, sometimes

to the death. Even humans can expect to be challenged. A kiwi's territory can cover over 40 hectares and trespassers are not welcome. If it comes to a fight the kiwi can use its claws and they can inflict a nasty injury, so the adult has a reasonable chance against a cat or a stoat – but young kiwis are helpless. They need to grow a lot bigger before they can stand a chance of fighting off a predator... Researchers have identified another enemy... the possum[... which]... affects the kiwi in several ways. It's eating through thousands of hectares of kiwi habitat each year, it'll often take over a kiwi nest and sometimes... eat a kiwi's egg, but worst of all the [people] who hunt the possum use gin traps and they can rip off a kiwi's toes or leg. "[If that happens] the bird staggers back to its burrow. If its an older bird and a [cock] it could be sitting on eggs, so [when] the bird... dies... the eggs... die as well. So... that one strike of a gin trap can actually kill three kiwi." ...Their eggs... can be hatched away from the nest, so in several parts of N[Z] DoC... scientists now take some eggs away from the nest and raise the chicks in captivity till they're big enough to fend for themselves in the wild... [(began last year, the programme is called *Operation Nest Egg*). A kiwi] usually only lays one or two clutches a year, so any encouragement can help boost the population... Taking the first clutch will often encourage the kiwi pair to lay another one... [However, the Kiwi Recovery Team] has limited resources. Only one truck, for instance, and the whole country to cover. It has to make every dollar count and relies on help from the Bank of N[Z] and the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society... They have to leave most eggs to face the possums and the stoats. Rescuing even one is quite an undertaking. It often involves a long journey by road or air to the nearest incubator, and a personal commitment by team members... The battle continues to save this unique bird but success is not guaranteed... Some 250 years ago... Maori leaders placed a... ban on the hunting of kiwi... [yet a]t the end of the day it's humans who've had the greatest impact on the... [population. What the Kiwi Recovery Team] most needs is for more N[Z]ers to become passionate about saving their national symbol; to heed the call of the kiwi... before the kiwi disappears... altogether... [But it's easy for members of the public who are c]aught up in the so-called rat-race... to ignore what's happening in the countryside.

...The little spotted kiwi population is thought to number about 1500 birds and growing... The populations of the great spotted kiwi and the southern brown kiwi are thought to be stable though their ranges have diminished... But... numbers... [of] the... bird that symbolises N[Z] around the world, the North Island brown kiwi... have plummeted from about 70,000 to 30,000 in the past 15 years... The North Island brown is most threatened by predators, habitat loss and insufficient funding to ensure its survival... Stoats head the list of predators... [However, o]n the 750ha... Puketukutuku Peninsula jutting into Lake Waikaremoana... 500 stoat traps... had... [created a 75%] survival rate among chicks, for the past two years. "Last year we caught 65 stoats, 14 weasels, three ferrets and two wild cats, and we successfully raised 10 out of 11 chicks. This year, for some reason we don't understand, the trap baits were not attractive to the stoats, and we have lost nine out of our 10 chicks so far... We have caught only eight stoats." ...stoats... are [also] [threatening to drive native kaka parrots in northern South Island beech forests to extinction. The grey-crowned flame orange under-wing parrot, which is as big as a sulphur-crested A[US]n cockatoo, is in serious trouble in the Lake Rotoiti area of the Nelson Bays District... [Since last] November only 14 kaka had been captured [by DoC staff] in the 800ha research area on the eastern shore above Lake Rotoiti and only one of these was [a hen]... At one time... there were ma[n]y kaka in the area and tens of thousands of them throughout the country. [One 74]-year-old gold-miner... who lives in the New Creek area above the Howard River, has trapped 107 stoats in a single trap, in his own personal campaign to save the lives of native birds... [Other p]eople use... eggs... [laced with] poison such as 1080...

The North Island kaka has been heard in Egmont National Park, Taranaki, for the first time since the 1960s. The D[oC] believes its possum control work has helped the forest regenerate and encouraged the kaka to stay.

...Ministry of Health officials say they may have to investigate whether the virus which kills up to 95[%] of the possums it infects has any potential implications for human health... [O]fficials announced yesterday that the virus that causes "wobbly possum disease" had been isolated sufficiently to show it is similar to borna disease virus, not previously reported in N[Z]. Borna disease virus is known to cause neurological disorders in horses, sheep, cattle, ostriches and cats – for which there is no vaccine or effective treatment. But the virus has also been linked with illnesses in people such as some cases of schizophrenia, manic depression and chronic fatigue syndrome... [I]t will take animal scientists... 12 months... to check whether the wobbly possum disease is caused by the borna disease virus. The [scientist]s... hope the disease will be specific to possums, which would make it useful to develop as a biological control for the pests destroying native forests.

...The exciting possibilities of possum... LIVE possums from N[Z] are winning the hearts of exotic animal fanciers overseas. And traders who supply the animals... say that farming [possum]s could be more lucrative than cattle... There have been reports of live N[Z] possums for sale in the Bangkok markets, but those involved in the trade here say they were more likely to have come from A[US], the local retailer trying to conceal the source because of questionable importing in Thailand. The trade here, which has included pups and kittens destined for pet markets overseas, is closely monitored by the D[oC], the Ministry of Agriculture and airlines that carry the animals... Small but regular shipments take live non-native, N[Z]-bred animals and birds to Denmark, Germany, Indonesia, Japan and Malaysia. As well as possums and wallabies these have included hedgehogs, which are widely sought as pets in the U[S]... Welfare of the animals is a high priority, says one of the exporters. The incentive is that high prices are paid for good specimens in excellent condition. In any other condition the animal is rejected, cannot be returned to N[Z], and the high cost of the export is lost... Although the Government agencies involved in monitoring the exports say the trade is perfectly legal – and when it comes to possums and other pests, ought to be encouraged – there have been reactions. One... export[er]... was asked by the Society for the Protection of Animals what right [it] had to export live animals. "This is the business I have chosen to do. I have been doing it for years quite successfully and... I intend to keep[doing it," was his reply]... "In the U[S] particularly, exotic animals are very big business. It seems to be a status symbol for people with large acreages to establish animal parks, and they even stock them with giraffes and zebras and the like. There are regular exotic animal auctions where an amazing variety of animals is for sale. There seems to be everything but elephants." When the N[Z] exporters receive an order from overseas clients and agencies, they put the word out to hunters. The animals are caught in the bush by hand, "Which is not as difficult as it sounds... The aim is to avoid any injury or harm to the animal – its health and appearance must be as perfect as possible." Possums, being nocturnal animals, are easily dazzled by bright lights and are then able to be picked up by hand by someone dexterous enough to avoid their scrabbling claws. The going rate paid to hunters is \$15 for a good specimen. Before shipment the animal must be given export permits and health certification by the D[oC] and the M[AF]. The cases in which the animals are exported are made on the exporter's premises to airline specifications designed by veterinarians... Each case costs about \$100. The airfreight rate is \$25 a kilogram. Healthy young animals weigh between 2kg and 3kg, and the cases 5kg, so more than \$300 an animal, in addition to on-farm costs, is invested before it leaves N[Z]... The agencies ridicule suggestions that the live animals are exported for food... [but one exporter admits that t]he real future of exploiting possums as a resource is in possum meat for Asia... "We have been involved in trials, but these have shown that to be economical you need to be able to ship it in container loads, and that means 8000 to 10,000 carcasses at a time, all processed with the proper hygiene. That is possible, and I believe people are working on it, but another high cost is the requirement that the animals have to be kept in controlled conditions on[a] farm for a month before slaughter."

...An A[US]n plot to put Tasmanian possum meat on N[Z] tables has upset local entrepreneurs who want to establish their own market in Asia. A Brisbane-based firm, Otec Pacific Pty, plans to corner the growing Asian market for possum meat in this country. The move has not been welcomed by the Possum Product Marketing Council, which says overly strict Ministry of Agriculture regulations have stalled proposals to export N[Z] possum meat overseas. The council... said a N[Z] possum meat industry had the potential to earn the country millions of dollars a year in Asia, where the much-maligned bush pest was considered a delicacy. But ministry concerns about widespread tuberculosis among N[Z]'s 70 million possums were making it difficult to get meat exports up and running, although a market for possum fibre had already been established in China.

...A... list MP... has found a way to help reduce the possum problem while ensuring that his first-term seat in Parliament is comfortable. [The MP] is using a possum fur seat-cover made by the Nelson business... wh[ich] aims to lower the... possum population... by turning pelts into products.

...International golfers could soon be wearing gloves with a distinct N[Z] feel, if work at a Wanganui fellmongery proves successful. The Hollander Waitotara general manager... is experimenting with possum skins, with the intention of turning them into valuable leather. Until now, possum pelts were just “something that was thrown away” but trials had shown the leather was soft yet strong. The idea for the leather came after a Wanganui [resident who]... did not want to see the pelts go to waste... successfully blended possum fur to create a wool that could be used for clothing and blankets... The company is now setting up suppliers and examining overseas markets. Contracts are pending. [The general manager] had attempted in the past to turn the pelts into leather, but failed because [the fellmongery] did not have a suitable processing vessel. The Wanganui Business Development Board helped pay for the installation of two processing vessels, and the company started processing pelts last March... [The general manager]’s greatest concern was the supply of pelts. Between 200 and 300 pelts, mainly from the lower North Island, arrived at the fellmongery every day – not quite enough to meet needs. [The general manager] was also having to rely on lower grade pelts, because the top grades were retained for export as fur... To produce a pallet of goods for export, 10,000 pelts needed to be processed, compared with just 1080 lamb skins.

...A group angered by D[oC] plans to spread 1080 poison by air over about 6000ha of the... Urewera National Park, [which] has the last remaining population of kokako... took their protest to Parliament yesterday. The Te Turuki Action Committee, formed at Ruatahuna early this month, said many Tuhoe people were totally opposed to the poison being dropped in the central Kawhenua section of the vast park. They wanted a bounty system reintroduced so unemployed residents could trap, shoot or poison possums... The Conservation Minister... refused to meet the 10-member committee[, perhaps because]... anonymous threats had been made to burn down [DoC] huts if the poison drop went ahead... [By the way, t]he possums of South Kaipara peninsula can stay out until dawn today – in safety. The nine [workers] who have hunted them since the peninsula’s bovine TB scare of 1988 will not be on the job. On Friday the Rodney District Council’s crack possum control team had their last day at work, ending an era for the council and for team members such as [one who has been] a council hunter for 36 years... The team has taken redundancy now that Rodney has lost the pest control contract for the A[RC], which took over responsibility for pest control from local authorities in 1989. Most of the [hunters] have found new jobs. The... team was proud that the number of peninsula herds with TB reactors had reduced from 27 in 1988 to one last year. Apart from TB-free cattle and deer, the Rodney possum kill had brought about a significant regeneration of bush around the Kaipara Harbour. The coastal bush from Waiwera to Pakiri had also shown regrowth and a lot of work had been done in 50,000ha of bush designated for conservation. The [ARC’s] biosecurity manager... said the council had chosen an experienced private contractor to take over the South Kaipara TB-control work – Feral Strategies, of Silverdale. The company hoped to begin work in a fortnight. [The manager] said the regional council believed it could do a better job... The contract for pest control in the rest of Rodney, North Shore and Waitakere would be let in a few weeks.

...A war is about to be waged on possums ravaging forest in the Waitakere Ranges. The Auckland Regional Council will launch a... cull early next year. The ground-based operation involves traps in the urban areas of Titirangi and Laingholm, and 5600 bait stations in the regional park.

...Authorities are courting public support for a \$1.3 million possum control programme planned for the Waitakere Ranges next year. A growing possum population is taking its toll on the native bush that covers... 50,000ha of the Auckland western frontier... Each possum eats... 400kg a year[, and] reproduces twice a year... Preparatory work would begin next month in readiness for a blitz on the possums in February... That preparation would include securing the crucial... support of residents living among or alongside Waitakere bush... “We need to get public involvement because we are going to be on their land and quite often they know the area better than we do...” ...The programme was designed to dramatically reduce possum numbers over six months and then keep numbers down with regular maintenance drives. A similar operation in the Hunua Ranges three years ago achieved a 94[%] kill rate and numbers had since been successfully contained... The Waitakere programme would encompass areas of Titirangi, Glen Eden, Oratia and Henderson Valley, and stretch towards Muriwai Regional Park. “It’s a big operation. It ranges from real tiger country in the middle to open pastureland in Henderson Valley...”... [● The DoC] has backed off plans to use... 1080 possum poison in a Northland forest... The [DoC] had planned a trial of bait stations using 1080 pellets in a small area of... Raetea forest... but decided it could not risk sabotage by... protesters... Papa Atawhai O Maungataniwha me Raetea (Guardians of the Forest) said it had to resort to a threat of “active protest”...

The ban on dropping 1080 poisoned carrots on possum-infested bush and forest in the Waikato was lifted yesterday. It was banned after a string of native bird, dog and cattle deaths in the Rangitoto Ranges, South Waikato, last year.

...Environment Waikato has approved a rate of 44c a hectare for animal and plant pest control. It will apply to rural properties over 2ha and provide... nearly 9[%] of the biosecurity budget of \$7.4 million. All ratepayers will pay 20[%] of control costs... through the general rate. More than \$4 million will come from the Animal Health Board... [The announcement comes as t]he biggest possum control exercise undertaken by Environment Waikato since two operations were botched last year... beg[a]n around Maungatautari Mountain, near Cambridge. The \$279,100 operation covering 13,700ha will... mostly... [use t]he poison, 1080, on carrot baits...

Without the use of 1080 poison and similar pest-control chemicals, a large patch of bush in the... central North Island would have become “an ecological desert” within the next few years, says... [someone] who works in that patch of bush most days of the year. [The worker says it] has more chance of seeing a flock of moa in the forest than... of being poisoned by 1080 from the water there. “I’ve drunk from the streams here every day when the 1080 drops have been done and I’ve never been crook,”... [The] robust, free-spirited 37-year-old... [– who gains] most of his funding from a \$36,000 State Insurance grant, with an additional \$7000 from the Lotteries Commission specifically to pay for poisoned baits... – ...has been working in the Mangatutu Ecological Reserve for the past two years, living mainly alone in a sparse lodge on the former Rangitoto Station... spending long hours each day covering a network of tracks [it] has hacked through more than 500ha of dense, rugged bush country. Usually [the 37-year-old] carries a hefty pack, crammed with bags of Talon poison, from which [it] continually replenishes the 450 bait stations through the area. The poison... has greatly reduced the possum and rat populations in the bush, allowing the plant and bird life to return. The bush is blooming with new growth... [A]lthough some insects are lost in the immediate vicinity of 1080 baits... this is countered by a substantial general increase in insects after the predators have been removed.

...No possums... are thought to remain on Rangitoto Island after a seven-year, \$1 million programme to rid the scenic reserve of... the pests. A helicopter equipped with an infrared heat-seeking device has finished a series of flights over the island in a bid to detect possum or wallaby survivors of the D[oC] eradication programme. Conducted in the cold hours just before and after dawn the infrared device detected no heat sources which could be attributed to possums and only three sources identified as wallabies. Their locations were fixed by satellite global positioning and their days are numbered... The eradication programme began... with a 1080 poison drop which killed off about 90[%] of the animals. Hunters have for the past few years been systematically wiping out the stragglers through tracking by dogs, shooting and humane trapping. Before the eradication programme up to 10,000 wallabies were chewing through ground vegetation and up to 14,000 possums were eating the canopy vegetation of the island’s pohutukawa. With Rangitoto home to the world’s largest pohutukawa forest the impact of possums on the trees was causing serious concern in 1990 with 30 to 40[%] of inland trees and about 10[%] of coastal trees dying off through browsing... “We are enormously satisfied and the great thing is that with an island like this, provided we can make sure people keep them off, we don’t have to keep the effort going. With the mainland you have always got that problem of re-invasion... We will not rest until we think we have got the last one,” said the D[oC] ranger on Motutapu[Island. Meanwhile, on the twin islands’ much larger neighbour, Waiheke Island, conservationists]... fear that locals

[are raising ferrets]... Ferrets are on the most-wanted list of pests on the Hauraki Gulf islands... Under the Auckland City Council district plan for the Hauraki Gulf, islanders are banned from keeping or breeding them. But Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society members... recently received reports that someone was breeding ferrets for sale. "There was even a young child on the island who was parading around Oneroa with a ferret on a lead," said... [t]he society's Hauraki branch chair[person, who]... has called on the council to declare an amnesty, believing that people are probably not aware of the regulations. "I'm hoping that people will realise their error and hand in their ferrets." The acting manager of the Waiheke community board... said the council would offer people several months' grace and then begin an enforcement programme.

...Rat eradication on one of the most popular islands in Northland should be funded to protect public enjoyment, says the regional conservator... The growing rodent problem... on Urupukapuka Island... has distressed campers and... "revolting rats" drove one disgusted mother home early from a school trip. [The conservator] said if the island was not rid of rats the D[oC] might have to consider closing down its two camp grounds.

...The Marlborough Sounds' reputation as a prime conservation area received a boost yesterday when the D[oC] unveiled plans for a new predator-free sanctuary on Long Island. The project will provide a home for tuatara, native frogs and saddlebacks by eradicating resident rats. Conservationists [welcomed the proposed addition to the] chain of wildlife sanctuaries in the outer Queen Charlotte Sound...

THE D[oC] is about to launch a Noah's Ark project to ensure the survival of one of the world's rarest and most primitive frogs. About 300 native Maud Island frogs will next month be transferred to a new island home in Queen Charlotte Sound. The frogs are found only on the 309ha Maud Island in Pelorus Sound, but will be transported the 25km to their new home on Motuara Island by road and boat. The DoC is making the move to protect the species after concerns the entire population... of... 19,000... could too easily be ravaged, or wiped out, by fire, disease or predators making it to Maud Island... [S]toats had swum to Maud Island at least twice in the last 10 years, but fortunately had been eradicated. The rare native frog was discovered only in the 1930s and has features in common with fossil frogs from South America, which have long been extinct... There are three other surviving native frog species in N[Z]: Hochstetters, Archey's and Hamilton's... Ten people are involved in the transfer... [The] leader of the project... was hoping for light rain, calm weather and warm temperatures to catch the frogs. "They are most active in those conditions,"... [C]aught... frogs will be put into sealed plastic containers and kept in a cool, dark environment. If they are exposed to wind, dry air or sun their skins dry rapidly and they will die... Once they are successfully transferred, DoC staff will regularly monitor the... nocturnal frogs... which... can live as long as 20 years... The planned site for the frogs is well away from walking tracks. "It's important they settle with the minimum of disturbance. They are small, secretive and pretty silent except for faint chirps... If they take to their transfer it will be groundbreaking."

...BUYERS of lifestyle blocks on the upper reaches of Whangaroa Harbour, in Northland, will have to agree to a ban on cats and dogs because of the birdlife on the subdivision. The farmland has a population of kiwi on a headland, and bittern, banded rail, fernbird, tern and reef heron along its salt marsh and mangrove shores. About 10ha of reserve has been set aside for them, and there is an existing esplanade of about 10ha. A D[oC] spokesperson at Kerikeri says it is rare for kiwi to be so close to the harbour. The landowner, whose house is about 400m from the headland, can hear their calls at night. Buyers will also have to agree to control pests: rats... possum[s]... stoats and ferrets... H[owever, the]... chairperson of the Far North branch of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, who lives at the harbour, is sure that... dog[s are] the main predator of kiwi... Without the cat and dog ban on the Lindsay Park subdivision, bird numbers on its fringes would inevitably decline. "The idea of banning pets as farmland is settled is catching on: people are starting to appreciate the kiwi calling out at night and are coming to value their presence. Birds can be pets." At Kerikeri, just over 30km south-east of Whangaroa... the branch manager of [a real estate agency], agrees: "The kiwi is a selling point..."

...[the] day of the eco-subdivision has come, even if property buyers have been slow to see the light, says a Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society... [field officer who] has been involved in promoting cat-free and dog-free subdivisions to protect wildlife near Tauranga and on the Coromandel... In the Far North, the district council has recently given the go-ahead for a similar lifestyle settlement near Kerikeri, where pets such as dogs, cats and mustelids... are banned... But since... [the] 24... Mahakirau Forest Estate... blocks – averaging 20ha and costing about \$150,000 – ...on the spine of the Coromandel Peninsula... went on the market nearly a year ago, only three have been sold... One of the developers... yesterday blamed slow sales on financiers and lawyers putting off buyers... [B]anks and legal advisers were warning would-be buyers that they might have difficulty reselling in the future because of the covenant... The company must sell seven more lots to secure finance to provide roading and other services to the subdivision... [■ The requirement that the] coastal subdivision near Tauranga be closed to domestic animals is under appeal by the developers. The Western Bay of Plenty Council gave approval last November for a 30-lot subdivision on the Athenree Peninsula... with one of the conditions being a ban on cats and dogs. The Five Jems Company planning the project has challenged the decision and is awaiting an Environment Court hearing. Both [the RFBPS and the DoC] objected to the subdivision application, fearing it would threaten a neighbouring wildlife refuge reserve which is also a nationally significant habitat of indigenous fauna. In the Coromandel case, Mahakirau Investments Ltd agreed to a covenant banning... any introduced species... [including fish] plus a list of about 200 garden plants which have the potential to become pests.

...The Western Bay of Plenty District Council has backed away from a total ban on cats and dogs in a coastal subdivision... on the Athenree Peninsula. Its lawyer... told an Environment Court hearing... yesterday there was doubt over whether the council could legally apply such a stipulation. Rather than argue the case in court, the council had reached a settlement, allowing one dog and one neutered cat to each property.

...A two-month tour of duty in Western Samoa proved a powerful eye-opener for... [a] Kiwi vet... Makeshift operating tables in backyards and a mobile clinic on the back of a ute substituted for sterile surgeries during his volunteer stint with an animal welfare agency set up by expatriate N[Z]ers... A lack of animal control laws and the almost complete absence of veterinary services in Samoa made for a staggering proliferation of pets... [the] Auckland... said. "Most of the animals weren't desexed. One family would end up with 10 or 20 cats and four or five dogs with puppies on the way." Many animals scavenged for meals and some were so wary of people they had to be shot with anaesthetic darts before [the Kiwi vet] could get close. "Sometimes you would go to help them and they would try to take your arm off or they would hightail it over the back fence." ...[the Kiwi vet, who] was heartily welcomed by grateful families and, despite the challenges... averaged three desexing operations a day... said the Animal Protection Society in Apia was the only veterinary service available to residents. There were one or two Government vets who specialised in caring for livestock such as pigs and cattle but few people knew of them. The society began three years ago... Fundraising dinners and grants from international philanthropic organisations had bankrolled the mobile service so far... It also relied on donations and the efforts of unpaid helpers. A Japanese vet associated with a volunteer agency had replaced... [the Kiwi vet, who is now] back at his Pt Chevalier clinic.

...[every community has its share of pet owners who allow their pets to breed at will and "dispose" of the young animals cheaply. These irresponsible owners continue to create a major expense for responsible pet owners, through dog registration fees for animal control, sheltering and euthanasia. While most owners understand the cost to them of other people's unwanted pets, few are fully aware of the benefits of neutering at an early age. Desexing reduces the risk of uterine problems, mammary, testicular and prostate cancers. And these are just the health benefits. The wider benefits of neutering and spaying include a reduced risk of roaming (de-sexed pets may in fact never develop the desire to roam), less fighting and marking of territory with urine, no risk of an unplanned litter, and behaviour which is generally more socially acceptable. Overall the benefits of neutering a pet are significant. If you are in any doubt, talk to your veterinarian for advice.' Incidentally, AUSn vets have developed a 'pellet that can be inserted behind Koala necks, sterilising them for two years.' Speaking of Koalas, one 'has survived being hit by a car which then carried it for 12km after a paw got stuck in the car's front grille'!

...Just over a year ago, an AUSn was driving to Wauchope, in northern NSW, when it stopped to investigate a grey bundle lying by the roadside. It turned out to be a badly injured koala. Her urgent call to the Koala Hospital at Port Macquarie undoubtedly saved the animal's life, and that plucky young koala was to amaze everyone with her extraordinary determination to survive. At the surgery, two veterinarians experienced in treating the hospital's

koalas, estimated the young koala had lain by the roadside for three days. Her right arm was fractured in two places, one leg was dislocated, her lip was torn, and it was suffering from dehydration and malnutrition, made worse by a tick infection. To cap it all, the young koala was a mum, with a tiny baby hidden in her pouch. Incredibly, the joey was alive. The young mum – named Rita, in honour of the person who rescued her – was in a lot of pain and needed 24-hour care. A hospital volunteer skilled in the intensive care of highly stressed koalas offered to take on the job, supported by her husband. Rita learned to suck formula from a bottle within 10 minutes, although her mouth was still sore, and was a dream to toilet train. Once shown a drainage area it could use on her daily visit to urinate, Rita always returned to the same place, despite her pain. Rita was recovering well. Then disaster struck. Despite the long hours of care, Rita had somehow managed to position her plastered arm in such a way it had cut off the circulation. Every attempt was made to save her arm, but it became clear it would have to be amputated if Rita was to survive. The hospital's vets knew of no precedent for the operation. They sought guidance by phone from a leading Sydney veterinarian and also the hospital's Sydney University adviser. The one-and-a-half-hour operation was a brilliant success. Rita thrived – the young koala learnt to pull doors open, curled herself up into a ball and covered her face with her paw when it was raining, and rubbed noses with the volunteer's two cats. All seemed well when, sadly, about a month later, Rita's joey died. Her only visible reaction was to eat voraciously all night long. Rita has now fully recovered and is in good health. The wound arising from the amputation is completely covered with fur. Rita has overcome her initial problems with balance, and has learnt to climb with only one arm. In the process, her left arm has become very strong. Rita can now initiate her climbs by first jumping from the ground onto the tree trunk, like a koala with two arms. Once established, Rita has discovered how to maintain a firm hold, mostly with her feet, grabbing for the leaves it fancies with her hand. Rita obviously feels well, as it has taken to calling out to guy koalas in neighbouring trees, under the watchful eye of her guardians. Plans are afoot to set her free among the trees at the Koala Hospital in the beautiful Macquarie Nature reserve.']

...AN ENGLISH... pe[rso]n... is taking legal action... to get maintenance for 29 hedgehogs... her former lover... left her with. [The complainant] (48), of Shrewsbury, Shropshire, is prickly with [her ex, after it] left the hedgehog sanctuary they set up in their three-bedroomed home a year ago. "It's not just me and him this is about. [My ex]'s playing with the animals' lives as well," said [the jilted lover], who blamed the split on the pressures of looking after the hedgehogs. □ [*'Except for garden birds there is probably no wild animal so regularly fed and so popularly "adopted" as the hedgehog, hedgepig, or urchin, an animal remarkable for its coat of spines and its habit of rolling defensively into a ball. The boar grows to 10 1/4 in. long, with an inch tail, the sow is on average 3/4 in. shorter. The weight is up to 2 2/3 lb. The back and top of the head are coated with sharply-pointed spines, 3/4 in. long, with each spine set at an angle to the skin. The rest of the body is clothed in coarse hair. Besides the European hedgehog (so called although it ranges across Asia as well) there are 14 other species in south-west Europe, Asia and Africa. All are alike in habits and differ in appearance in small details only. Snails, slugs, insects and worms form their normal diet. Mice, rats, frogs, lizards and snakes may be eaten at times. It has sometimes been said that hedgehogs eat no plant material, but they have been seen to eat acorns and berries and tame hedgehogs have been known to eat either apple, pear, orange or some other fruit. One of the most persistent legends is that hedgehogs will impale fruit such as apples, pears and strawberries on their spines and carry it away. There have been representations in pottery, in illuminated manuscripts as well as in the written record for at least 2000 years yet very few scientists are prepared to give credence to this in spite of at least two photographs taken of it happening. Foxes and badgers are the principal enemies apart from human beings. Rats sometimes kill them but in a straight fight a hedgehog and a rat are fairly evenly matched. A hedgehog is a match for an adder also, being immune to its poison. Hedgehogs are immune to all but a few poisons and even for these abnormally large doses are needed to kill them.'*]

...Deadly snakes and other venomous creatures are increasingly adapting to life in concrete jungles and threatening the lives of city dwellers, a leading toxicologist warned yesterday. South A[US]'s state toxicologist... said venomous animals in South America, Africa and Asia had shown an ability to adapt to the urban environment by changing their dietary habits. While the trend was not so obvious in A[US]... the dangerous brown snake had also adjusted well to city living and was now found in the suburbs of major cities. [The toxicologist] told the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine's scientific meeting that two people had already died in the eastern states after being bitten by brown snakes this season... [The] adviser to the W[HO] on AUS'n snake bites, used the A[US]n redback spider as an example of venomous creatures which had adapted to their surroundings... [T]he redback had been accidentally introduced to... Osaka. "It's taken a strong hold despite the predictions from some that it wouldn't survive the Japanese winter... There's now evidence that the spider has spread at least... 250km out from Osaka." And [the toxicologist] predicted a lethal Brazilian scorpion which reproduced asexually and which had shown a great ability to adapt could also be accidentally spread around the world within the next 50 years... [Speaking of adaptable creatures, a] chemical developed by Massey University to help control feral cats has sparked interest from a French maker of cat litter. It was hoped the amino acid in cats' urine might result in a cat box no moggy could resist.

...Feral cats in the Waikato town of Morrinsville are the country's first targets for an experimental poison. The diseased cats, said to number about 50, are pests near the town centre but some residents are unhappy with the poisoning programme... The Ministry of Agriculture pesticides board... said [because] Pest-Off feral cat paste, made by Wanganui-based Animal Control Products from an anticoagulant called diphacinone, was classified as experimental[, t]he council could use it for free, in return for information about its effectiveness... Similar products had been used on cats overseas... [T]he paste thinned the blood and caused death by internal bleeding... The poisoned cats will take several days to die... The Matamata-Piako District Council's Morrinsville area manager... said residents near the poisoning area have been personally informed... to prevent pets being killed by the bait... [In related news, t]he first shots have been fired in a battle to eradicate five emerging feral deer herds in Northland which threaten the region's forests. The campaign was launched late last month. More than 15 deer have been killed over the past few weeks.

...Commercial deer culling will begin in the Kaweka Forest Park in... Hawkes Bay next year to reduce deer numbers in the range's beech forests.

...Goat-cull collars Two [nanny] goats in the Ruahine Range, north of Palmerston North, have been fitted with tracking devices to help hunters to find herds of goats to cull. The Department of Conservation says hunters will destroy all of the goats, except the collared nannies.

...A... professional goat-hunter... [who] is managing goat control work in the central North Island for the D[oC]... has been called in to help rid the Galapagos Islands of thousands of goats, which [were introduced as a food source for sailors ('James Cook introduced goats into NZ as a food source for visiting sailors in 1773'), but are now] decimating natural bush on the tiny Pacific Ocean islands. Up to 100,000 goats and several thousand donkeys now run wild on Isabella Island, the largest in the group, and threaten the existence of the... native wildlife. The island, only 13km long and made up of five volcanic cones, covers about 200,000ha. It is almost all a national park, run by the Charles Darwin Foundation and the Galapagos Conservation Trust... [G]oat and donkey populations on the island began to burgeon only within the past decade, although goats have been known there for more than 20 years. "One of the problems is that the local national parks people know very little about goat control work. There is also a major problem just getting to the place,"... says... [the person who heads NZ]'s only full-time professional goat-culling organisation... Over the past two years [himself] and five hunters shot more than 2000 goats out of the Hunua Ranges near Auckland... Together with a team of scientists from around the world – including several from N[Z] – the goat-hunter spent some days on the island... looking at the bush destruction and working out how to eradicate the pests... [The goat-]hunter... says national parks staff in the Galapagos have little in the way of money or equipment to cope with such a problem, and if it is to be properly handled more than \$7 million will be needed... Isabella Island has many flat or gently sloping areas, often covered in rough grass or volcanic scoria, but with large areas of thick bush similar to that in N[Z]. Goats and donkeys had browsed ma[n]y of the trees to death, with most others chewed off as far as the animals could reach. There was little or no regeneration. "There is very little water on the island, and the trees catch water from fog and heavy dews and have drip-lines round them which create small pools... With the trees and driplines gone, there are no pools, and there is no water for new growth to start." Within a few years the

goats could destroy the habitat of the world's last great population of giant tortoises... [P]robable methods of getting rid of the pests would initially involve the use of helicopters... to shoot from... "...and high-powered rifles mean we can clean up a mob of goats without any escaping. They learn fast, and if one or two get away from a mob that has been shot up, they are very difficult to get on to again." ...[helicopters] would... be followed by teams of hunters on the ground, possibly with specially trained dogs to sniff out goats that may go into hiding. The operation may take three years... Access to Isabella is by launch only, and because of the lack of fresh water in the areas to be hunted, hunters may have to be ferried in each day. Hunting will probably only take place in the mornings and afternoons – the Galapagos are right on the Equator which means midday temperatures would make such strenuous work impossible. [The goat-hunter] is now waiting for decisions to be made by the Galapagos authorities. In the meantime two senior Galapagos National Park Service hunters may visit N[Z] to see methods used here for goat control and how N[Z] hunters work with dogs in the bush.

...Mexico, the U[S] and Canada have vowed to increase efforts to protect a spectacular natural oddity linking all three – the 4800km migration of the monarch butterfly. The Governments also promise to help 54 small farming communities whose impoverished economies were badly hurt by a 1986 decree meant to help the butterfly by sharply restricting the use of forestry land... [T]he creation of the butterfly preserves stripped some communities of legal use of almost half their land – driving many residents to illegally use the forests and encouraging others to migrate to... large cities... Monarch butterflies from the central U[S] and Canada migrate en masse in the autumn, reaching a few mountainous spots of central Mexico where they spend the winter. The migration is genetic, not learned. The butterflies who make the migration are descendants of those who made the journey the year before. Nobody is sure how they find their way back. While the butterflies themselves are not an endangered species, the migration itself is "an endangered natural phenomenon," said [a researcher from] the University of Florida, who has studied monarchs since 1958. The... first priority... said the... head of Mexico's National Institute of Ecology... at a five-day conference on the butterfly... attended... [by m]ore than 300 biologists, social scientists, officials and farmers from the three countries... "is the need to intensify efforts to overcome poverty in the monarch zone." ...In the past, advocates for the monarchs and the farmers have clashed over protection efforts. But the two sides came to wide-ranging agreements in last month's meetings... [By the way, t]omorrow marks the first anniversary of the start of the aerial spraying of Auckland eastern suburbs to combat the white-spotted tussock moth caterpillar. By this time last year caterpillars had been hatching in the Kohimarama area since September 20, prompting the dawn spraying by a Canadian DC6 aircraft for two months followed by ground and helicopter spraying. This ended in April amid health concerns. Yesterday, however, Operation Ever Green officials reported that no caterpillars had been observed hatching in the Kohimarama hot zone this spring. This followed a winter when no viable egg masses were found. The Ministry of Forestry chief technical officer... said no intensive searches for caterpillars would be organised... because the chance of finding any was considered remote.

...A synthetic version of the pheromone released by the... white-spotted tussock moth... to attract a mate... has been cleared for use in the Ministry of Forestry's programme to wipe out the insect in Auckland... 20,000 traps could be placed across the eastern suburbs areas from December, when the first of the small number of surviving moths would emerge. Last season's monitoring was hampered by the need to use live... moths[in traps.

...residents of Auckland's eastern] suburbs have been spared a spring tussock moth spraying – and may yet say goodbye forever to air and ground insecticide assaults on the pest. The Ministry of Forestry said yesterday that... it appeared the insect menace had been severely knocked back after [the]last... massive – and contentious – spray programme. But one residents' group last night claimed the spraying had been called off because it was illegal and likely to be stopped by the courts – a view later dismissed by officials who said the operation had... sweeping powers granted by the Biosecurity Act... [However, two] lawyers retained by the group... STOP (Society Targeting Overuse of Pesticides)... had produced opinions which concluded no legal powers existed to permit spraying... With spraying off the immediate agenda, the ministry is gearing up for [the]\$4 million trapping programme using a new synthesised pheromone... The traps will be set 10m apart across 2000 properties... Previous traps were set 100m apart... Any spraying is unlikely before January, when information from the trapping will be known... Even if no moths are caught, trap surveillance is likely to continue on a reduced scale for at least two years.

...50 scholarship holders and supporters of the Selwyn College basketball academy... yesterday assembled 20,000 tussock moth traps for the eastern suburbs. The academy is raising funds by helping the Ministry of Forestry to assemble the cardboard traps in what it says is the country's largest pest-trapping programme. On Monday, ministry staff will begin placing and baiting the traps within the 1.5 sq km infested area... [While on the topic of the tussock moth, health] officials have again cleared the spray... [used earlier this year] after renewed community concerns over its use.

...Government officials are laying the groundwork for yet another health survey into the effects of tussock moth spraying in east Auckland. The Ministry of Forestry wants to set up a register using information collected from 2300 households in the eastern suburbs. The decision was welcomed last night by the anti-spray lobby group, Society Targeting the Overuse of Spraying, which said the plans signalled the ministry was finally taking the health issues seriously. However, the society's president... criticised the ministry for waiting until seven months after spraying had ended and said many people had already moved from the area... Health officials released a report last month which found no evidence linking significant health problems to the Btk spray used in Operation Ever Green... [● A] home-grown parasite... which may save the Devonport ash trees from a destructive insect has surfaced while a relative imported for the job is in quarantine. Ash whitefly, a tiny insect which coats leaves in a sticky mould and causes them to drop early, was found in the Devonport trees two years ago. Hort Research imported a Californian parasite but before it could be released... a Ministry of Agriculture entomologist... noticed an improvement in the health of the trees. Her follow-up monitoring of five sites in the suburb confirmed that although 30[%] of ash leaves were affected last summer only 2[%] were affected this year. Further investigations found... the parasite was laying eggs inside whitefly larvae and killing off the next generation.

...Scientists are looking for a wasp version of the deadly Ebola virus to strike a blow against the pests. Larvae-eating parasitic insects have already been introduced to some parts of the country, but researchers are now... scrutinising fungi, bacteria and viruses as a means of destroying the wasps, which threaten native caterpillars and spiders. Christchurch scientists carrying out the work discovered that wasps were susceptible to a disease introduced to larvae, but the wasps also became wise to the introduced sickness and ejected infected larvae. Now the team from AgResearch and Landcare Research at Lincoln wants a disease too potent for the wasps to deal with, or a way of disguising diseases so they can strike without early detection... [I]t could take two years' research to come up with something people could spray on nests in their back yards, and it could be five to 10 years before an agent that the wasps could take into their population in the form of a bait is available... [The] wasp research team leader at Landcare's Nelson base, said wasp numbers had to be cut by 80 to 90[%]... Scientists are predicting that wasp numbers will be down over the summer because of the cool spring, but say it is still early days.

...The wasp menace should be low... this summer in the Auckland region but wherever spring has been dry wasps could be a problem. In the country's worst region for wasps, the beech forests of Nelson, numbers are expected to increase for the second year in succession... After annoying numbers of wasps in the summer of 1994-1995, the pests have been barely noticeable for the past two years in many parts of the North Island... ['numbers have been so low, researchers haven't had enough wasps on which to test control measures.'] Wet weather at the critical time queens were establishing nests[, which prevents] wasps' collecting nectar or honeydew for successful breeding... was one of three factors affecting wasp densities... Competition and fighting between queens trying to start nests was another... The predator-prey relationship between wasps and insects was thought to be the third factor... "Less food means fewer wasps..." [Editor's note: 'Researchers say blue clothing can attract wasps. When a nest is disturbed the wasps will fly out with a wing-beat frequency that stimulates others to attack. Wasps will attack an intruder within 7m of a nest, and pay special attention to moving targets.' In comparison, 'mosquitoes choose their victims selectively, searching for the most aromatically appealing humans. A

University of Florida study has found they use odour to sort attractive people from unattractive and go for humans who provide the richest source of cholesterol and B vitamins, which the insects do not produce themselves. One way to stop attracting them is to stop breathing as they can sniff exhaled CO₂ from as far away as 64.3km.’]

...Nothing is more irritating at night as you’re just dropping off to sleep than the drone of a mosquito buzzing around your ear. Pests that we may choose to ignore – but perhaps at our peril? Malaria, Ross river fever and Dengue fever are serious debilitating diseases carried by exotic types of mosquitoes which if imported into N[Z] could cause a major health problem for the people of this country. According to Auckland Healthcare Services, in the past few years several mosquitoes capable of carrying disease have been discovered in the... region. On each occasion the species was destroyed. But there is a chance of it happening again, especially as global warming takes effect and resistance to anti-malaria drugs grows.

...A new winged terror is striking fear into the heart of the Minister of Biosecurity. Having fended off tussock moths and diseased rabbits, a hitherto unheralded threat – the mosquito – is poised to plague the minister... But [the minister believes it] has the bloodsucker’s number... [It] trumpeted a raft of measures yesterday to meet the deadly peril posed by exotic mosquitoes. A “Mosquito Surveillance Plan” is on the cards, while health officials are being primed to cope with outbreaks of dengue fever, Ross River fever and Japanese encephalitis. But it’s not enough. An outbreak of dengue fever would cost[NZ] about \$250 million, and the loss of foreign earnings, from tourists would be even more... The Biosecurity Council will review recommendations in a new report calling for a mosquito eradication strategy and special mosquito security checkpoints.

...Fish with a taste for mozzies may be the answer... Mosquitofish are to be used to battle insects plaguing a subdivision near Tauranga. The small fish is an exotic which some conservationists believe should not be allowed into waterways... but [DoC] officers considered the effects on conservation values would be insignificant. That was because the[y]... will be released into a... wetland... created artificially for wastewater treatment, there were currently no fish species present, the wetlands had no hydrological link with any other body of water, and mosquitofish were already present in stormdrains 15m away... Last summer... mosquitoes... seemed to find the newly created wetlands an ideal breeding ground. The... Tauranga District Council[’s]... wastewater engineer... said 1000 larvae-eating *Gambusia affinis* (mosquitofish) from a Warkworth fish farm would go into only one wetland. Their release... would be closely monitored... The... council... has also applied to release several species of indigenous fish in the wetlands and a decision by... the Minister of Conservation... is expected soon.

...D[oC] staff have found 48 short-jawed kokopu, one of N[Z]’s threatened native fish, in a small mountain stream outside Egmont National Park.

...A strange fish – the body 10 feet long, the tentacles extending irregularly from the head only – has been found washed ashore at the Waipapa boatshed. The body is massive and is estimated to weigh about a ton and a half... [In international news, a] youth aged 15 has caught a 1.1kg piranha fish in a pond in central Madrid... The newspaper speculated that the piranha had been released into the pond by a hobby aquarium owner.

...Who are you going to call if your pond is plugged, your lake clogged or your canal choked? For a growing number of local authorities the answer is grassbusters – a team of highly specialised, silver-suited, weed-eating fish. So far the herbivorous Chinese grass carp have cleaned up such weed-infested waters as Western Springs, Lake Tahuna Torea in West Tamaki, four ponds at the Chelsea sugar works in Birkenhead, and waterways at the NZ Steel mill at Glenbrook. They are also on trial in one drain on the Hauraki Plains, consents are being sought for another, and councils in the Bay of Plenty, Northland, Hawkes Bay, Manawatu and Masterton are investigating their use. For [the owner] of NZ Water Management the rising interest in... the carp as an environmentally friendly alternative to herbicides and mechanical excavators is gratifying. [The owner] was badly stung in another aquaculture venture when... forced to abandon a marron farming operation at Warkworth in 1992. Now the Warkworth ponds are full of the weed-eating grass carp and the filter-feeding silver carp that clean up after them. The grass carp’s appetite is obvious at feeding time at Warkworth when... fed... cut pasture grass... “When they are hungry they are like piranha, the water boils,”... In water temperatures that suit them the carp grow well and can reach 18kg in N[Z]. The natural environment here, however, is not suitable for them to breed. Their inability to reproduce in the wild makes the fish used as biological weed controls very valuable. [Their owner] and councils, which lease the fish from him, do not want them to become targets for anglers. Like other councils, the Hauraki District Council is hoping the fish will save it money. The drainage manager... said a 5km section of drain would normally cost \$3100 a year to clean but grass carp should halve that figure.

...As vegetarians, manatees spend much of their time grazing on grasses and plants found underwater or floating on the surface... MANATEES AND their ancient predecessors have navigated Florida’s rivers, springs and coastal waters for at least 50 million years. While these gentle giants may resemble walruses, they are most closely related to elephants. Manatees are part of an order of marine mammals called Sirenia, named after the sirens, the mythical mermaids who tried to lure the ancient Greek hero Odysseus to wreck his ship on jagged rocks. Over the centuries mariners possibly dazed by too much time at sea, have mistaken manatees for the mermaids of legend. Christopher Columbus presumably sighted manatees in 1493 and recorded them in his log as “mermaids,” noting that stories of their beauty had been exaggerated. The Florida manatee is a sub-species of the West Indian manatee, which is found throughout the Caribbean islands, eastern Central America, Colombia, Venezuela and Brazil’s northeast coast. One relative of the manatee, the eight-metre long Steller’s sea cow, was hunted to extinction by 1768, just 27 years after its discovery... 1996 [was]... a cataclysmic year for the endangered animals. Within the first five months... at least 276 manatees had died statewide. That’s a devastating toll – over [10%] of the 2639 Florida manatees counted during a recent survey. Something new was killing manatees. Was it a virus? A toxin? Environmental contamination? Some of the world’s leading experts were studying the situation, but they still had more questions than answers... [A] veterinarian at Miami Seaquarium... [thinks it knows what poses] a threat to the manatees. Approximately 30[%] of manatee deaths result directly from encounters with humans. Almost all adult manatees bear the scars of boat propellers. “I don’t think people want to go out and kill manatees... We just need to change our lifestyles.” That means observing boat speeds where manatees are likely to graze. But it also means balancing the ever-increasing demand for new development along Florida’s waterways with the need to preserve wilderness habitat... [Manatee cows] don’t reach sexual maturity until they are four to six years old, and then will have a calf only every two to five years. The calves stay with their mothers for about two years. Because manatees are so slow to reproduce, scientists speculate that they may never have been abundant in Florida. Under the best circumstances, the estimated increase in the manatee population from births would be about [5 to 8%] a year. That’s why the mysterious plague was so threatening... Tampa’s Lowry Park Zoo... runs one of Florida’s three critical-care hospitals for manatees. The zoo has three 62,500-litre concrete rehabilitation tanks that can hold up to 17 manatees. An operating theatre is in a building nearby. The goal of this hospital, and those run by Miami Seaquarium and Orlando’s Sea World of Florida, is to treat a manatee’s medical problem, allow it time to recuperate and then return it to the wild... AT THE Lowry Park Zoo, [a] sick manatee from Lemon Bay... [– which] was in the heart of what was being referred to as the “Hot Zone,” an area of water around Fort Myers where the mysterious manatee deaths were happening... [–] joined several others in the holding tanks. Two of them were also found in the Hot Zone, barely able to breathe. Because the two couldn’t lift their heads out of the water, life jackets were wrapped round them.... [T]he diagnosis turned out to be toxicosis from eating or breathing red tide, a microorganism that can cause paralysis. [So r]ed tide was... the culprit behind the mysterious deaths which finally stopped last May. The good news is scientists now have a test to diagnose red-tide poisoning and have more experience treating it... [S]o few manatees exist that each one saved... has an important impact on the survival of the species... Last June, [the three manatees from Lemon Bay] were transported by crane and truck to a state park in Englewood, where they were... fitted with satellite tracking belt[s and]... released into the wild... [One] is now believed to be pregnant. Such success stories cause naturalists to be cautiously optimistic. Between education and rescue efforts there is hope for the manatee’s future.

...More than 60 monk seals, one of the world's most endangered species, were killed by a bloom of toxic algae off Mauritania's Atlantic coast. Government scientists said the marine mammals had been poisoned by eating fish that had swallowed the algae. The seals were part of a colony estimated to number 150, and it is believed that no more than 350 of the animals exist worldwide.

...Hooker's sea lion has been classified a threatened species. The Minister of Conservation... said yesterday that the animal, found only in N[Z], was probably the world's rarest sea lion and deserved protection under the Marine Mammals Protection Act... [O]nce found on both the North and South Islands... they were taken to the brink of extinction last century by European sealers. Estimates of the population now vary from 11,000 to 15,000. That they now breed only in colonies on the sub-Antarctic Campbell and Auckland Islands made the species more fragile to disease and accidental bycatch... "The impact of [people] continues with about 100 sea lions being drowned accidentally by squid trawlers every year..."

...[t]he effect of an exploding seal population on NZ's lucrative fishing industry needs to be examined in a scientific way, a fishing company executive says. The director was one of a four-member panel debating a South Island seal cull at the Recreational Fishing Council conference in Nelson. The director said fur seals were ransacking commercial fishing grounds – seals took about 8400 tonnes of hoki off the West Coast each year, worth about \$20 million to the industry, and it is estimated NZ's fur seal population of 60,000 annually ate 300,000 tonnes of fish more than the commercial domestic catch of 270,000 tonnes. The panel agreed that indiscriminate culling would not be accepted by the commercial fishing industry, politicians or the public, but it expressed frustration that an expanding fur seal population would result in a marine imbalance. "Seals are increasing in numbers and breeding range and are now as far north as Ninety Mile Beach. No one is saying we wipe them out, all we are asking for is moderation." The problem would continue until the public woke up to the facts, the director said. "We have definitely reached pest proportions in some areas." However, conservationists point out that NZ's 50-boat hoki industry is incredibly wasteful: "If we tighten up wastage in the way we handle hoki stocks we could share some of those stocks with the seals".]

...The Minister of Conservation... has decided all fishing in the Poor Knights Marine Reserve should cease but will phase in most of the ban to take effect in October next year. [The minister] said in Auckland last night that [it] believed there was a negative impact on marine life from recreational fishing within the reserve. At present fishing is allowed in areas of the reserve under certain conditions. It is the only marine reserve in the country where fishing can take place. Recreational fisher[s] and charter operators have vigorously opposed a blanket ban[, which may be why the minister] announced his decision among friends – a conference of the Underwater Association which has called for the ban. [The minister pointed out] that although 30[% of NZ]'s land area had been set aside for conservation less than 1[%] of its sea was similarly set aside. And while N[Z] had the greatest diversity of seabird species in the world life below the water was equally dramatic with many molluscs, seaweeds, rock fish and other fish occurring nowhere else on the planet. [The minister] said recreational fisher[s] believed the impact of fishing in the reserve could not be accurately measured and so fishing should continue until the data existed. "The great difficulty with this argument is that... [h]istory is littered with decision-makers who have put off making hard decisions on the basis of needing still more data. I tend to favour the precautionary approach. If we are uncertain about the outcome we should err on the side of nature..."

...Most of N[Z]'s landscape is now hostile to many native species... [In addition to] our threatened birds[, there is also] concern for species ranging from native bacteria... to... reptiles and even rockpool fish... [T]he new State of N[Z]'s environment report... says that although N[Z] has only 300 described species of bacteria, the number present in the country is probably higher than 80,000. But more than 1000 species... live in association with threatened plants, animals and fungi or in geothermal areas threatened with development. Recent advances in technology make bacteria potentially valuable resources... The number of N[Z] fungi has been estimated at 20,000 although only 4500 are known. Scientists put 200 identified forest-dwelling species at risk from habitat destruction. Many edible species exist but, the report warned, "even collecting a fungus to study it professionally or as a hobby could unwittingly place a species under threat." Not all indigenous invertebrates have suffered as a result of human settlement. About 40 species of native bees have adapted well to pastures, having lost beech forest habitats to introduced wasps and in spite of needing to compete with introduced bees. But many invertebrates, including all 178 native earthworms and many snails, have disappeared. Some of the 30 species of unique native slugs are believed to be threatened. But because information on the distinctive two-tentacled slugs is so scant, none has been listed as threatened. "The N[Z] slugs are unique in having a tiny pinhole on their backs which, like a whale's blowhole, leads to the slugs' most distinctive feature – a highly developed lung found in no other mollusc," says the report. About 110 fish are endemic to N[Z] waters but fewer than half live in the open sea. Little is known of the status of most fish in N[Z] waters but rockpool fish have been assessed and 11 out of the 61 species, many of them cockabullies, are considered threatened, being rare and vulnerable to habitat disturbance. The report concludes: "The main responses to biodiversity decline have focused on ecosystem and species recovery programmes on offshore islands and extensive pest control operations on the mainland, but the needs for partial restoration of representative indigenous lowland and coastal ecosystems, and for wider protection of marine ecosystems, has yet to be addressed." The Government has called for a biodiversity strategy to be drawn up...

What was the N[Z] landscape and animal life once like? ...Look no further than the Trounson Kauri Park, the shining example of a conservation strategy to give us a glimpse of what the... environment once was before the arrival of humans. Located off State Highway 12, about 36km north-west of Dargaville, the 450ha reserve is an oasis of native species and plants surrounded by a vast buffer zone of pasture to create a mainland "island," one of five such the D[oC] is hoping to establish. The well-fenced reserve is free from large browsing animals, and its gentle terrain allows easy access. Size is important. The reserve is large enough to let populations of territorial birds have sufficient space to roam and small enough to manage. Neighbours and local iwi are supportive of the forest's intensive management and 20,000 visitors a year come to see the results. The high-quality forest with its diverse undergrowth and a large number of fruiting trees like taraire and tawa, is home to several threatened species: the North Island brown kiwi, kukupa (wood pigeon... or kereru[– upon which]... a... rahui... or... ban... on killing... was placed... [l]ast August... but the[se]... big beautiful bird[s, which]... are the only large birds able to eat the big seeds of species like miro, puriri and taraire... are still in danger from poachers...), long-tail bats, banded kokopu... and kauri snails. In this haven from the 20th century, the department hopes species can recover their numbers and is reintroducing regionally extinct or threatened flora and fauna to restore a true kauri forest ecosystem. This year, 21 North Island robins from the Mamaku Plateau were transferred to Trounson to establish the first mainland population in Northland for decades... An estimated population of more than 200 brown kiwi is the best tally in Northland... Surveys of long-tailed bats will determine their range and estimate their numbers, and the giant kauri snail is being studied to see how it can be protected... Preliminary findings by an Auckland University masters student show that the shore rat is the main predator of the snail. Tracking devices called transponders – glued to the snails' shells – keep and eye on their nocturnal wanderings. Trounson Kauri Park is the only mainland island which represents a kauri megasystem... If the threatened species are to have a chance to recover, the introduced predators that prey on them must be controlled, so conservation staff wage an unrelenting and constant battle, patrolling the precious "island." ...The hard work has had a pay-off. Less than 17[%] of the forest's trees are browsed by possums, compared to 85[%] of trees at the Katui Forest, 5km west... [Incidentally,] Wellington City Council parks staff have made it into the *Guinness Book of Records* by planting 25,250 native trees on the town belt in less than eight hours – an average of one every two minutes. The former record was held by 100 [RFBPS] volunteers who planted 6000 trees over two days on Tiri Tiri Matangi Island in the Hauraki Gulf last year.

...Project Crimson... [uses a] water-retaining gel to help... [newly] planted... pohutukawa... trees grow... on [the Hauraki Gulf's] Browns Island...

An Auckland tree expert says a city council's decision to axe protection for some native trees is contemptuous and short-sighted. [The expert], of Lifestyle Tree Care and Consultants, wrote to the N[Z] *Herald* angry at the felling this month of a 100-year-old pohutukawa in Takapuna. A Pine

Ridge Tee property owner originally asked... [the] Grey Lynn company to cut down the tree to make way for a new house. [The company refused when it] realised the tree was no longer protected. The North Shore City Council scrapped automatic protection for native trees over 8m high on private property [last]October. It said residents were responsible and had a sensible record towards trees. The decision allowed property-owners to prune or fell any trees on their own sections, except those on the “notable trees” list, coastal and lakeside pohutukawa over 3m, or those within coastal protection or rural zones. The move sparked outrage from environmentalists, including the Auckland Tree Council and Auckland Conservation Board who are appealing against the decision in the Environment Court. A date has not yet been set for the case. [The expert] said yesterday that [it] told the property owner the tree could be trimmed to accommodate the house, but it was cut down on February 5. “The council decided the city could look after our trees. It doesn’t appear we are able to.”

...Auckland developers and councils were lukewarm yesterday about a bill which would make tree conservation a matter of national importance. The Urban Trees Bill... was too vague and wide-ranging, they told a select committee hearing in Auckland. Designed to protect and conserve tree cover in urban areas, the bill defines “tree” as including any shrub and plant and the root of any tree. It would make it compulsory for a territorial authority to protect, maintain and conserve, as far as practicable, existing tree cover in every urban area... The Manukau City Council said tree protection in urban areas was adequately covered by the Resource Management Act. The Auckland City Council supported the intent of the bill, but urged that local authorities be allowed to be responsive to local circumstances. However, a longtime advocate of saving trees, [who is an Auckland University]Professor... praised the bill... [Meanwhile, s]lippy autumn leaves in... central [Auckland] are causing headaches for an elderly pensioner, who fears they will cause an accident. [The]Greys Ave resident[, who is] aged 87, is calling on the Auckland City Council to clean up the leaves before someone slips and breaks an ankle. [The pensioner], who has lived in the inner-city street for 51 years, said that in previous years, wet, slippery leaves had been regularly cleaned up. But this year they had been piling up on the footpath, grass verge and road for weeks. The council’s marketing manager... did not know why the leaves had not been cleaned up this year, but would make sure it was done as soon as possible.

...Strange skeleton forests dot Chatham Island, like something out of a science-fiction movie. But there is a very down-to-earth explanation for the bare tree[s]... which have replaced once lush forests. Most of it is to do with humans. Much of the land was cleared for stock. The remainder has fallen prey to stock anyway. Constant grazing of the forest floor stopped trees like the indigenous kopu regenerating. Stock also opened up gaps in the bush, allowing in the wind which put paid to any hope of growth. Most of the surviving trees... have been so battered by the prevailing westerly that they are permanently bowed over. But not all of them. A stand of regenerating bush at Hapupu, at the north-eastern end of the island, shows that when stock are fenced out the trees will come back. The bush is similar to, but not quite the same as, bush on the mainland. Made up of kopu and a native karaka, the stand was saved because of the historic Moriori dendroglyphs, or tree carvings, it contains. Local support for saving the bush is growing, and farmers are fencing off forested parts of their land.

...In many parts of N[Z], rural landowners are in uproar over district plans which impose rules to protect native forests and landscape values on private land. The most important area caught up in this debate is the Far North. This district is a biodiversity treasure house, containing the most important collection of threatened and vulnerable native plants and animals on private lands anywhere in N[Z]. Yet tomorrow the Far North District Council will consider a motion to withdraw rules designed to protect native forests, wildlife habitat and landscape. Attempts to preserve natural habitats by regulation have repeatedly generated controversy over the past decade. Similar planning rules have had to be withdrawn in several other districts. Conservationists and planners need to learn from these events and develop new strategies. The ill-will which district councils have created among rural landowners is a real problem for conservationists... This is because protecting a habitat is not simply a matter of refraining from destructive actions. In typical Far North habitats consisting of teatrees, regenerating tree species and kiwis there is a need for positive acts of care and stewardship. Possums have to be controlled, the incursion of weeds nipped in the bud, farm dogs kept out of range of the kiwis and the regenerating bush protected from accidental fire. Stock must usually be [kept] out if scrub is to progress to diverse native forest. Fencing off small remnant stands of mature forest is essential if the trees are to replace themselves before the end of their lives. Such tasks can be postponed, but not forever. All of this adds up to a sizeable management responsibility, which depends in large measure on the goodwill and conservation commitment of landowners. The state cannot realistically take over the task, nor will it adequately be performed if landowners are fired with a sense of injustice and bitter resentment. A pragmatic view would therefore acknowledge that imposing rules in district plans is not sufficient in itself. Indeed, done in isolation from other actions, it can be counterproductive. Farmers deeply value the freedom and responsibility that goes with owning your own land and running your own business. In my experience, farmers’ defence of traditional property rights should not in itself be interpreted as anti-conservationist. Yet there is no dodging the fact that achieving sustainable management of resources – the purpose of the Resource Management Act – does involve a change to traditional property rights... Among the often-struggling hill country farms of the Far North undeveloped or reverting land is extensive. The district council’s protective rules might be restricting not just 10[%] of a property, as in lowland farmland or towns, but 40[%] or even more. The cost to a landowner of being prevented from subdividing that land or putting it into commercial forestry can be considerable. Experience in Europe – even in countries with strong planning traditions – confirms that land preservation on private land needs to be eased into community acceptance using financial incentives. The interactive process of offering, negotiating and accepting incentives for conservation is respectful of landowners. It contrasts with the one-sided process of councils imposing rules... The implicit idea that the... Far North district plan... could be used to declare a national park over a huge area of private land, without any payment, was always a greedy dream. Predictably, it provoked outrage. Sensibly, the council has scaled back the plan’s ambitions by introducing a variation... the effect [of which i]s to narrow the focus of the rules on... protecting priority sites called special natural areas (SNAs). Even so, many perceived injustices would remain if the SNAs were simply implemented through imposed rules. Financial incentives... are needed to help smooth the path to sustainability. The council already offers an incentive scheme for native forests under which rates are postponed as long as the forest remains untouched. This costs about \$100,000 a year. To supplement the council’s resources, central Government funds could be sought. The Forest Heritage Fund has protected 100,000ha of native forest since 1990 at an average cost of \$200 a hectare. A parallel fund for conservation on Maori land... has protected 75,000ha for \$120 a hectare. The cost-effective performance of these two funds suggests Far North SNAs could be fully protected over a number of years for a sum not too much greater than the council is already spending on temporary protection. Handled well, a proper landowner incentive programme could also save the council the huge costs it must be anticipating for litigation over its plan.

...A fragment of what was once a huge and productive wetland... that... covered the Wairau Plains... has been saved. The Nelson-Marlborough Fish and Game Council has bought part of Para Swamp, which it believes is the most significant freshwater wetland system in Marlborough.

...“Save the thousand acres” is the battlecry of a group that wants private farmland at Long Bay and Okura acquired to extend the A[RC]’s most-used park. The... Long Bay-Okura Great Park Society... convened... said the paddocks rolling the length of the present park to the Okura River were the only place left on the North Shore where a park of 400ha... could be created. Urban sprawl had already reached the park gates. Incorporating some of the neighbouring farmland to form the Great Park would also protect the adjacent marine reserve from water run-off and other harmful effects of any building in the Long Bay catchment... The society has 100 members and is now raising funds for a campaign to persuade local authorities and the Government to buy the land, which offers sweeping views of Hauraki Gulf and Rangitoto islands. The society describes its task as formidable, partly because of the row over the setting of Auckland’s northern urban limits. The... Environment Court r[ecently] ruled that... land on the southern side to the Vaughan Rd ridge, sloping towards Long Bay, would be included in the metropolitan area[, while t]he land on the northern side of the ridge... sloping towards Okura, should be kept free of housing... Okura-side landowners are appealing to the High

Court so that their land is not shut out of urban development forever. Planners say it would be difficult to take [the southern] land into the park now that it has been put within metropolitan limits... [because the new] zoning has increased its value significantly. The general manager of regional parks... said protection of the Long Bay backdrop was on the park's management plan and was an issue of concern. But the council had given no direction to either buy land or to look at the Long Bay-Okura Great Park concept... A subcommittee of the [ARC] and North Shore City Council is examining issues about regional parks in North Shore City generally... A North Shore city councillor... said the... North Shore has only about 53ha of regional park land...

It... seem[s] that as Auckland looks to double its population in less than 50 years we should not be too hopeful that the open space which we take for granted around Auckland will be added to our existing quota of parkland. Recently we have seen ample evidence of politicians citing the high cost of land to sit on their hands and watch remaining outstanding examples of potential parkland, such as the defence land on Takapuna Head or the McElroy Peninsula in Mahurangi Harbour, slip towards subdivision. They are not making any more land, it's not getting any cheaper and the lots are fast becoming smaller and less viable as parkland. So it would appear that once again Aucklanders must remind the Crown that, as with Hamlin's Hill, they have already paid for the Takapuna defence land and even if it's surplus to the Navy, it certainly isn't surplus to Auckland. Sadly it... required public pressure to remind the A[RC] to exercise its responsibility to protect prime regional open space in the Mahurangi. After all, if the ARC is not prepared to purchase, at rural coastal prices, land it has rated as a top priority, then just what can we expect from it...?

...The Alliance and some conservation groups say a \$550-a-head Auckland conference next week on parks is a renewed bid to corporatise the region's public open spaces. But the A[RC], which is hosting the three-day conference, says the aim is improving parks management. The Alliance is suspicious of session titles such as "Parks as a business" and "Leveraging resources from communities,"... Some [RFBPS] members – whose organisation has been invited to attend – also believe the agenda has a strong business focus... "In this thinking parks are just another business where users are seen simply as customers to be sold a product. The user-pays goal of some regional councillors is definitely on the agenda." ...the biennial conference was organised by regional parks services from around the Pacific rim working under the name Strategic Partners. Park managers from A[US] and North America attended, with the aim of evaluating and improving the way they ran parks... [The ARC]'s parks committee... said the region's 21 parks cost \$12 million a year to operate and generated \$3.8 m... in revenue, with Mt Smart the chief contributor.

...The cost of restructuring the D[oC] was expected to result in cuts of \$718,000 a year from its operating budget, the Alliance said yesterday... [T]he Minister of Conservation... told Parliament earlier that the cabinet had budgeted \$6,247,000 for the restructuring this financial year. The changes were expected to save \$1.2 m... in the financial year ahead and \$1.65 m... in 1998-1999... The Alliance conservation spokes[person]... said... "At this rate so much will be spent on restructuring that the department will not have the resources left to operate effectively." ...The minister said restructuring was resulting in some redundancies, mainly at head office, but... at field centres there were more resources and more staff than ever before... [H]owever... a... Labour MP... predict[s]... some visitor centres w[ill]... close, area offices... reduce and funding would be trimmed in the Canterbury conservancy... One of the only development works to be approved next year would be at Cave Creek, where special funding had been approved for new safety steps... to the chasm where... [14] people died when a platform collapsed... in the West Coast national park two years ago.

...A year of checks on D[oC] structures shows many have fallen below standards set following the 1995 Cave Creek tragedy. A department project manager... said that about 70[%] of 3000 top priority structures examined so far needed maintenance. This ranged from replacing chicken wire that provided underfoot grip, to repairing undermined bridge abutments and smashed decking. Nationwide, 3500 structures were rated top priority because of risk to users, including their height above the ground. A national asset management programme had revealed the department had 16,500 structures such as bridges, platforms and walkways, and 3500 huts and toilets. While the inspections, which began in November last year, showed some structures needed urgent work, damage was most likely to have been caused by the "violent environment" rather than inadequate maintenance... [The] inspection programme involv[es] 26 engineers and 120 field staff... The department was also working with the Building Council to adapt a building code for its structures. "The [existing] building code is fine in the urban and rural environment but not for the back country. We don't want handrails up a mountain. People accept the risks in that environment..."

...The D[oC] has denied suggestions it has gone over the top with its safety standards for back-country structures... The Director-General of the department... told a meeting of the Conservation Authority... it was ensuring they met legal... requirements... Authority members had criticised the lengths the department was going to. [Incidentally, 'each year 8000 volunteers provide 20,000 hours of help with DoC projects'.]

...Seven conservation workers... under contract to the D[oC] have the job of... eliminating every weed they see... on Little Barrier Island... in a bid to protect the forest environment of one of N[Z]'s foremost scientific reserves. The team's main task is to eradicate climbing asparagus, which is a serious threat to the largest remaining relatively unmodified northern N[Z] forest on the rugged 2800ha volcanic island, a reserve since 1896. The workers search every square inch of the area they are targeting for the invasive weed, which was once sold in garden centres but is now a big problem on Waiheke Island and almost everywhere else in Auckland, including the Waitakere Ranges. The South African sub-canopy vine – often overlooked until it takes hold – was first recorded on Little Barrier... in 1978. It smothers trees and can strangle young native plants. Unchecked, it would modify the island environment in 20... years. Since... the workers began the \$62,000 project, which is financed by the Government... they have eradicated 10,000 climbing asparagus plants, 4500 mint, 4000 billies and about 1000 other weeds... They are eradicating all weeds up to 100m above sea level in the south-western corner of the island closest to the mainland, from where the weeds have arrived either by humans, birds or the wind... [The] parks and recreation management graduate from... Lincoln University... [who is the] team leader... says a solution of two plant pesticides is used to kill above ground growth as well as underground root systems. Although it is not ideal to spot-spray poisons in a reserve such as Little Barrier, [the team leader] says there is no alternative.

...*Spray and pray*... Only a few N[Z] local authorities have developed real commitment to the principles of the Resource Management Act in their use of pesticides. An independent research project has looked into what councils spend on pesticides, whether they analyse alternatives to pesticides, public opinion on the issue and trends in pest control overseas and in N[Z]. It finds that councils put a cost on the purchase and application of pesticides but they appear unable or unwilling to take account of the hidden costs... [–] the unpriced environmental effects... They include loss of biodiversity, pollution of surface and ground water as well as the marine environment, risks to wildlife and human health and the development of pesticide-resistant strains which have to be combated with new compounds of increased toxicity. The author of the report... aims to show why such costs should no longer be hidden but that accounting practices should change to take full account of the costs associated with pesticide production and use. The changes to accounting would be in line with principles of the R[MA] relating to the need for policymakers such as councillors to achieve such objectives as managing the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources in a way to meet the needs of future generations... [The] survey found that Wellington, Dunedin, the Hobson and Eastern Bays wards of Auckland City, Hamilton, North Shore City and Tauranga were the councils with the most commitment to the R[MA]. They were actively seeking, testing or using alternatives to chemical pesticides... [The author], a former town planner and highway engineer[who]... paid for the project himself... surveyed 11 councils, asking chief executives to provide information on how much their councils spent on pesticides and councillors for their opinions as well as the views of their communities on pesticides. Only the chief executives of Christchurch City and Rodney District responded in full and 33[%] of councillors replied to... [the] questionnaire, sent out immediately before the October 1995 local body elections... The responses indicated that councillors going about council business now only gave a small amount of attention to the pesticide issue following its high profile in the late 1980s and early 1990s. But the survey revealed that when ratepayers contacted councillors on the issue, personal health and pesticide spray drift were

their major complaints. [60%] of the responding councillors considered pesticides did generate undesirable hidden costs. [The author] used surveys carried out for the Auckland and Wellington city councils to conclude that there was a lack of awareness among the public on weed control. An Auckland survey revealed that 84[%] of residents believed that public health was the most important factor when councils controlled weeds in parks and reserves. But given the high degree of public concern at the impact on health of pesticides, [the author] could give no explanation why only 800 households in Auckland City, less than 1[%] of all properties, had registered on a council list to prevent their grass verge from being sprayed with chemicals.

...*Weed-control issue on the boil in city*... Looking forward sometimes requires looking back, as a number of city and district councils have done in positioning themselves at the cutting edge of weed control and replacing chemicals with steam spraying. Now the Auckland City Council is considering abandoning non-toxic weed control in several Auckland suburbs, opting instead for a return to toxic chemicals. In doing so, the council will buy a fight with the anti-chemical lobby and risks putting itself off-side with a growing number of local authorities adopting non-toxic control methods. The Auckland City Council is not a leader in non-toxic weed control, using chemicals in all but the Eden and Ellerslie boroughs... While no firm decision has been reached, the recommendation for a return to herbicides stems from the council's desire to save money. Council managers were yesterday reluctant to discuss the issue, saying only that it was a budgetary recommendation and one that affected residents would be invited to comment on. Residents believe, however, that the savings in question amount to less than \$50,000 a year and say they will fight it with vigour. Council contractors in the Eden and Ellerslie boroughs use the Waipuna method which... involves spraying with boiling water, a traditional technique commercially developed by Auckland company Waipuna International. As simple as it sounds, hot water has been proven to work as well as chemicals on soft weeds and is now the principal method of control in the North Shore, Wellington, Dunedin and Rodney City Council districts. Waipuna International's spokesperson... says the... company has contracts with authorities in Holland, Britain, A[US] and the U[S]. "While the application and machinery are new, the method of weed control has been around for years..." ...Criticism that the method required spraying at more regular intervals and therefore cost more in labour had little merit given that councils had to advertise when they were spraying[chemicals] and also had to administer no-spray addresses. "We know from... experience that effective weed control required four or five sprayings a year. The Waipuna method requires one or two more sprayings but has distinct advantages. These include the ability to spray in wind and drizzle and removing the requirement on councils to advertise chemical-spraying days." It is a burden that Waitakere City Council is prepared to shoulder. It is the only council in Auckland persisting with chemical-only control methods. A spokes[person] said that despite its clean green image, the council had decided to stay with chemicals as the most cost-effective method, having trialled the Waipuna method several years ago. "We found it cost between two and seven times more and had to be applied six times a year as opposed to two. Equally, it didn't kill the roots of gorse or ginger. For those reasons we stuck with herbicides." [But the spokesperson] said there was increasing pressure for environmentally friendly control and new techniques may allow the council to consider changes. Tauranga has gained a reputation as one of the most eco-friendly districts in N[Z]. A citizens-initiated referendum banning chemical spraying presented a challenge to the Tauranga District Council, which farmed out the challenge to contractors... Their answer: a [4-wheeled] motorcycle, a length of number 8 wire, a scaffold, a weed-eater, and a healthy dose of Kiwi ingenuity. A... spokes[person for the contractors] said two prototype motorcycle-cum-weed-eaters were being trialled with impressive results and could... provide the simplest solution to a growing dilemma.

...The dream of many city people is to own a small piece of land in the country, frequently referred to these days as "a lifestyle block." Unfortunately part of the life style that many never bargained for is the constant effort required to control thistles, ragwort, gorse and a long list of other noxious weeds. Some small landholders will therefore be... spot spraying or swinging a grubber... [during summer holiday] hours that would otherwise have been spent at the beach... One of the best [pieces of advice I] could give these depressed souls would be [to purchase] a weed-control agent that finds the weeds by itself, steadily attacks them and requires little human effort to maintain its effectiveness. For controlling gorse I have noticed that one such agent is becoming increasingly common. Around the country many more gorse bushes are being covered in shrouds of extremely fine gossamer produced by colonies of a minute spider mite which was released in N[Z] a few years ago specifically to reduce the vigour of this prickly menace... The tiny red mites... were introduced by Landcare Research from Europe, the home of gorse, but only after it was established that they would not eat anything else... There have been too many instances in the past of control organisms becoming new pests when they had locally killed all of their target species or found some of the native wildlife easier or more palatable to feed on. It is remarkable that a creature as small as a spider mite can be effective against such a robust plant but with mouth parts like a hypodermic needle, the gorse spider mite is able to penetrate the tough spiny stems and suck out the living tissue inside. The dark green stems are eventually reduced to pale yellow by the massed attacks of tens of thousands of the suctorial feeders... The spider mites mature very rapidly, completing the cycle from egg to adult through three nymphal stages in just a few weeks. As about 20 times more [gal-mites than guy-mites] are produced and each one lays between one and four eggs every day, population numbers can expand very rapidly. One introduction that I have observed this year used just two finger-sized springs of infected gorse tied on to a couple of large bushes in a new area. Within six months the mites had spread over a hectare of land heavily infesting dozens of mature plants. They travel by walking from bush to bush where branches touch and although they have no wings they are also able to fly to reach isolated plants. This is achieved by the technique known as ballooning in which the mites cluster at the tips of exposed branches where they can easily be swept up by wind gusts. Supported by long threads of secreted gossamer they are then... carried far and wide on the wind to infest distant thickets of... gorse and eventually reduce the need for grubbing and spraying.

...the orange psyllid, or jumping plant louse, that has quickly established itself in Auckland[could save councils the huge cost of controlling] acmenas, which are regarded as a threat to forest and native shrubland... The psyllids have been found only on... acmena (monkey apple) tree[s, and a]... HortResearch scientist... says the insects seem to feed on new leaf and flower shoots. Scientists do not know how much damage they will do [but] hope... they will be a useful tool in cutting the spread of acmenas... Officials are baffled how the insects got here or where they came from.

...Two Auckland scientists... are researching the extent to which foreign fungi are slipping through border "quarantine" on the roots of imported plants and agricultural equipment. In other cases, spores... of fungi, are carried in by wind. "No one knows what impact this invasion of foreign fungi will have on our native forests but it may be devastating... [Yet w]hile the invasion of our native forests by introduced animals and plants has met with a vocal response, the impacts of introduced fungi have been quietly ignored," [one of the scientists] said. In the first study of foreign fungi in N[Z]'s native forests, the pair hope to discover the extent to which foreign fungi have invaded, and then to understand what effect these fungi would have, and why some foreign fungi were so successful. The pair were initially focusing on two fungi: the orange pore fungus (*favolaschia calocera*) and the poisonous fly agaric mushroom (*amanita muscaria*). These species had the potential to displace native fungi, disrupting the food chains of native insects and birds... To survey the spread of the fungi, the two researchers had asked members of the public to report finds to "Fungal Invaders" at Private Bag 92170, Auckland. They had also set up an e-mail address... and had asked for details of the location, habitat, nearby tree species, date and finder's name and address. The species were easy to identify... Both were fruiting now, which meant their "mushrooms" were visible... The fly agaric arrived on the roots of its usual host trees, oaks and pines, but could now be found under most species of introduced conifers, and was also common under eucalyptus... birch, European beech and chestnuts... The orange pore fungus was often seen on the fallen wood of many native and introduced trees, especially in the north of the country. It was common in forest remnants but could even be found on fallen wood in gardens. A native of Madagascar, the orange pore fungus was first found in Auckland and the Waikato in 1969, suggesting that it arrived sometime during the 1960s. Since then it had spread as far south as Nelson, Paparoa National Park... and the Chatham Islands.

...Ministry of Agriculture officials say they are developing thousands of new import health standards in an effort to prevent the introduction of unwanted pests... Part of the work will be funded by plant propagators and other importers being charged more than \$1000 each... [A]n official... of the ministry's regulatory authority... told N[Z] members of the International Plant Propagators' Society at their conference in Nelson recently that the charges would be made under the Biosecurity Act. Computer software for a plant and animal quarantine information system was being developed which would contain health standards for all plant material and animals coming into N[Z]. Although the software would be accessible to the public in several months, thousands of import health standards still required development and[may] take years to complete. Material... imported previously but... not yet in the system could be imported under the regime used in the past, but to import new material the importer would have to pay for the standard to be developed... Importers also had to pay for a... permit to bring each consignment of propagation material into the country, which... could also become costly... Some importers had been put off trying to import materials after learning of the procedure.

...N[Z] now has more naturalised introduced plant species than native plants. The latest count of naturalised plants – those that have survived and reproduced in the wild – included in a Landcare Research database... is 2064 compared with 2039 native species... [(although it] has been estimated that up to 20[%] of the country's native plants have yet to be found – let alone named[)]... The database records the species total and not the number of individual plants and the count does not mean that naturalised plants are overrunning... [NZ. T]here was a tendency for naturalisation to occur in the northern part of N[Z] where the main ports of entry were located and where it was warmer. But even when species naturalised some remained in small populations... [T]he number of naturalised plants was still small compared with the 15,000 or so plants cultivated in... [NZ. A]n unknown number of those had the potential to naturalise but many such as common crops and herbaceous annuals and perennials had not shown an inclination to do so... [P]lants were now screened before they came into the country to limit the number that might become invasive[, said a botanist who] has used the... database to produce a book on the common and Maori names of N[Z] plants to help people who struggle with the Latin versions.

...When Joseph Banks... stepped ashore at Anaura Bay north of Gisborne in 1769, one of the first plants... the botanist on Captain Cook's ship Endeavour... noticed and collected was the kaka beak, *Clianthus puniceus*. It is not surprising that this native legume, also known as kowhai ngutukaka, caught his eye. For its clusters of finger-length, hook-shaped, scarlet flowers make it one of our most showy native shrubs. Arriving in October, Banks would have missed the best of the blossom by about a month. But as the plant was then fairly common, the late flowers would still have been making a bright splash of colour along the edge of the bush. Later records by other explorers showed it was widely distributed all along the coast through the Coromandel and Auckland regions up to at least the Bay of Islands. It was also found inland in open bush and around the shores of lakes such as Rotorua and Waikaremoana. Today its glorious spring-time floral displays are almost a thing of the past. Browsing mammals... introduced by European settlers found the kaka beak's soft foliage so palatable that they have almost eliminated all natural populations of the plant... In an attempt to reverse the decline of this lovely native shrub, hundreds of plants are being cultivated in a cooperative programme between the D[oC] and the A[RC]'s Botanic Gardens in Manurewa. Eventually they will be... reintroduced into selected natural habitats, mainly off-shore islands, which are no longer threatened by browsers. Many of the plants have been propagated from seed stock that originated from a few wild plants on Moturemu Island in the Kaipara Harbour. It is feared that the last survivors there may now have been shaded out and smothered by both native and exotic plants. The cultivated progeny are therefore doubly valuable in preserving some wild genetic material that might otherwise have been lost and in providing a resource to restock Moturemu... It has been fortunate for the kaka beak's survival that it can be grown easily from seed and its cultivation as an ornamental garden shrub... [– it became a] popular flowering shrub... in England[(b]y the early 1800s it was already listed in the garden catalogues of English nurseries[)]... – ...will... help... preserve some of the genetic diversity. [Editor's note: 'gardening is Britain's leading pastime – Brits spend £3 billion a year on their gardens'.]

...Instant colour is the new-age way to gardening, whether it is a full-on bedding scheme, enhancing... those perennial beds which are past their flowering peak... an entrance, edging... border... patio, poolside or deck... filling a container or hanging basket... These days, with lifestyles placing more and more demands on time, the benefit of instant colour... has become appreciated by many gardeners with busy schedules... Now it's all been made easy because, in any season, you can get a ready-made garden colour scheme in pots. All the work has been done: seed selection, sowing, pricking-out, growing-on, flowering. There are no... disappointments, and the effect is immediate... When planting hanging baskets to provide instant colour it is important to be able to select plants with similar flowering times, thus avoiding empty spaces. Retailers should be able to provide this information... The field days associated with seed company trials, and those conducted by the Auckland Botanic Gardens, allow a check on the performance of proven cultivars as well as the chance to find something new and interesting... [■ G]reen-fingered... thieves have struck again at Eden Garden, forcing the historic public attraction to review its security. Camellias, azaleas, pongas and king ferns were removed... [The person] who manages the garden, said the weekend discovery meant upgraded security measures – possibly cameras – would be installed soon.

...*Garden of Eden revisited* OUT of the dirt-poor, half-dead moonscape that is Cornish clay country, an enchanted garden is coming to life. It will house desert and rainforest all under one colossal roof and more than 10,000 species of plants will bury their roots into Britain to form a unique botanical garden... [A] fabulous, modernistic greenhouse... will rise out of a dying clay pit at Bodvelva by the sea, bringing new life to a landscape that [humanity] has all but sucked dry. "Pure and simple, this is a production dreamed up by a few eccentrics who decided to have a go," said... one of the project's founders[– who] compares the Eden Project to an Eiffel Tower or a Sydney Opera House and conjures up exotic visions of the world's plants, be they Malaysian mango or Cuban palm, jostling for space in sleepy south-west England. "Our generation did a lot to screw up the planet and we wanted, in a small way, to turn it around. So one night we dreamed up the biggest greenhouse in the world and decided to make it an icon... This little institution isn't going to change the world but it can perhaps be a catalyst." Others go even further... a former record producer and song-writer who is heading the \$265.8 million Eden Project, calls it "the eighth wonder of the world". His "wonder" is a spectacular 14ha effort to map [humanity]'s relationship with plants and the way [humanity] has built civilisations on the back of things that grow. Part government-funded, construction starts early next year and is due to take two years. Some 750,000 visitors are expected annually in a region with crippling unemployment and scant hope for new beginnings, let alone "green" ones, as coal pits shut. Soaring 70m high and stretching 4ha across, Eden will contain distinct biomes, or climatic zones, all joined by aerial walkways so visitors can survey the world's bio-diversity from on high... Four geographical zones are planned: Amazonian, south-east Asian, West African and Australasian.

...FRENCH presidents are renowned for their love of "grands travaux" – grandiose building projects... [One] is remembered for the futuristic arts centre that bears his name... [Another] erected the glass Louvre pyramid. But [the former president] who left office under a cloud of scandal in 1981, plans to outdo them all... Not everyone in the Auvergne, where [the former president] leads the regional council and is a local MP, shares his enthusiasm for the expensive project, a theme park called Vulcania complete with a giant concrete model of a volcano that can simulate eruptions. The intrusion of bulldozers to start scouring out a volcano "crater" has caused fierce criticism. The Auvergne National Park boasts a chain of real but, mercifully, dormant volcanoes known as the Puy-du-Dome and critics wonder why... [anyone] should want to build a model one. Environmentalists say the theme park, expected to cost about \$NZ105 million provided mostly from public funds, will wreck a pristine region popular with ramblers drawn to its magnificent scenery. But [the former president] (71) sees in Vulcania a magnet for more tourists... Most of the park will be underground. A vast auditorium will recreate volcanic explosions through sound, vision and smell. Infrared lights will drive up the temperature and tourists will feel the earth move under their feet... [One critic] is unimpressed. "Even if most of the exhibits are underground, Vulcania will still mean more car parks, new roads and new hotels. Look how we've destroyed other areas of natural beauty in France, like the

Cote d'Azur..." [The critic] and fellow activists managed to delay the project for two years by arguing in court that under the local planning laws the area was a protected zone. But the court has ruled in the council's favour. [The former president], having secured a grant of \$NZ17.5 m... from the European Union, has not wasted any time calling in the bulldozers. [The]Environment Minister... a member of the Green Party, had asked for the project to be reviewed. [The minister] wanted a report from a hydrologist, arguing subterranean building work could affect the water table – the Auvergne boasts dozens of underground thermal springs which produce natural spas and mineral water that is bottled and sold. However, the local council is dismissive of such risks. It believes now is the time to market the region's volcanic landscape and cash in on an increase in public interest after the release of two Hollywood volcano disaster films. What angers protesters is a suspicion the project has more to do with promoting [the former president]'s glory than boosting regional tourism. [The former president] has long feared his legacy will be overshadowed by that of [his successor], who ended up inaugurating a number of "grands travaux" initiated under [his presidency] in the late 1970s.

...A book promoting the protection of natural landforms was launched yesterday against the ominous noise of an earth-mover working above one of Auckland's most important cliffs... [The] author of *Precious Land*, spoke over the growl of the machine at the launch held in front of the Eastern Beach anticline. The anticline, a giant fold formed 15 to 17 million years ago when the Auckland region was uplifted from the sea, is visible in the 20-million-year-old layered rocks in the cliff face at the northern end of Eastern Beach... Geologists regard it as the best example of its kind in Auckland visible in three dimensions... The earth-mover's presence was coincidental but a reminder... that the anticline is not protected... [The author] told the... 30 or so at the launch... that to many N[Z]ers conservation meant protecting remaining forests and endangered birds. But conservation included all aspects of preserving natural and human heritage... Although many spectacular landforms were protected in national parks and scenic reserves, and areas such as Auckland's volcanic field and Rotorua's geothermal field appeared on international lists of important earth science sites... protection... of natural landforms and geological features was a neglected area of conservation... Geysers and mud pools were under threat of geothermal exploitation, exotic forests threatened sand dune systems and landscapes were being flattened for subdivision... Their preservation was desirable for research and education, for their aesthetic values and for recreational and tourism benefits. "It is often claimed that it is N[Z]'s clean green image that attracts more than a million tourists to our shores each year... This is not true. In reality it is our rich heritage of spectacular and diverse landforms that attract them for we have without doubt the most varied and inspiring landscape of any place of similar size in the world." ...[the author] said it was fortunate that the... anticline had not been ruined by erosion protection barriers[and the author hoped it] would gain protection in the Manukau City Council district plan. Through Lottery Grants Board funding, copies of *Precious Land* have been sent to every secondary school to foster an awareness of how unique Earth is...

[Its] tiny inhabitants... make a bushy enclave in West Auckland unique. A staggering 120 native snail species live in the Atkinson Reserve near Titirangi Beach. A snail enthusiast and specialist... says up to 30 species a square foot are found in the bush-clad gully, making it an ecological gem. "People overseas just can't believe it – there's nowhere in the world that has so many species in such a small area,"... But the remarkable, and so far unexplained, preponderance of snails was under threat from exotic plants migrating from neighbouring gardens. Hydrangeas, honeysuckle and agapanthas bloomed on the forest fringe and wild ginger was taking hold further in. The greatest threat came from the wandering jew creeper as it spread like a thick carpet across the forest floor smothering all life beneath it. The dank, mulch-rich floor [is what supports] the vast majority of the native snails, many of which were no more than 1mm... long. [The enthusiast] said it was imperative that the reserve be conserved intact. "It's just the sort of reserve that could disappear through neglect. It has deteriorated a lot in the years I've been coming here. These little snails don't adapt to gardens – once the bush is gone, they're gone." The Waitakere Ranges Protection Society shares... [his] view and is moving to have the reserve surveyed, monitored and properly managed... [In international news, t]housands of monkeys forced out of forest near the Indian capital have swamped the city. Large groups of monkeys have invaded New Delhi's residential and work areas... [The m]onkeys run riot... officials say.

...A new \$3 million enclosure at Auckland Zoo could open minus many of its promised star attractions... The 6ha Pridelands enclosure – billed as a no-bars compound closely resembling natural habitats – was to feature a wide range of African species when it opened at the end of this year. But a Ministry of Agriculture ban on exotic animals coming into the country while import health standards are reviewed has hindered the zoo's plans to import three lions, two rhinoceroses and a flock of flamingos. The snag follows a \$600,000 shortfall in funds which has delayed work on the baboon and hippopotamus sections of the... enclosure until next year. A director... said the shortfall was the result of the zoo's being too ambitious as to how much of the project – a major redevelopment of a third of the zoo's area – could be completed in one year. On top of the embarrassing gaps in the enclosure, the ministry decision had the potential to damage the zoo's international reputation by jeopardising conservation projects, [the director] said. Such breeding programmes depended for their success on the zoo's being able to import and export animals to ensure genetic diversity. The ministry yesterday defended the move... [but] would try to make the zoo's applications a top priority. However, the process could be long because it included public consultation and compliance checks with countries of origin. Pridelands was to have as its centrepiece the country's only breeding lions, imported from South Africa. The zoo's own lions could not be used for breeding and were not destined for the enclosure. [The director] said that... Pridelands would open as planned... [but just] feature... tortoise displays... giraffes, zebra, springbok... and... one rhinoceros...

Save the rhino, kill the people WE found them deep in the Burmese jungle, east of the Tenasserim River. About 2000 of them, hungry, exhausted and fearing for their lives. They have no money, no change of clothes and they eat what food they find. They sleep under palm leaves propped teepee-style against the trees... [One of them knows they] will not be going home. [The 56-year-old] and thousands of the Karen ethnic group, a gentle, cultured and religious people, have been driven out of their homes by the Burmese Army. [The 56-year-old] also knows that in a strange way [they are lucky because they] made it to the jungle, starving and homeless but alive. Some 2000 people, including [the 56-year-old]'s brother, a father-of-six, have been murdered in the two months since the Army launched its offensive to crush the Karen, according to human rights groups which base their evidence on independent research, including hundreds of eye-witness accounts. Tens of thousands have been forced to work, unpaid and unfed, building roads and railways, and 30,000 have fled into the jungle or across the border to Thailand. Why? Because the Burmese Army is clearing the... area... [of] villages... to make way for the biggest nature reserve of its kind in the world. Dwarfing the Masai Mara and the Serengeti, it is home to rare flora and fauna, tigers, elephants and the Sumatran rhinoceros. It will attract millions of tourists. Most importantly, it will be a sign to the world that Burma, shunned because of its appalling human rights record, cares about endangered wildlife and the environment. All the Rangoon government needed was a few major international conservation organisations to turn a blind eye to atrocities committed against an irksome ethnic minority. It got them from the top drawer of wildlife protection: the New York-based World Conservation Society and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. It also claimed to have "an open channel of communication with the World Wide Fund for Nature International... [A]fter our dispiriting trek into the jungle, we made for Rangoon to see if a minister would talk about the project and the role of those conservation giants... [We were u]shered into a spartan office... [in t]he two-storey Forestry Ministry[, which] is part of a complex of ministries run by the State Law and Order Restoration Council... where two senior Ministry figures received us with a mixture of scepticism and delight that respectable British scientists were interested in their "big idea." ...[the] adviser to the Forestry Minister, boasted of Slorc's plans to establish a "unique" million-hectare "biosphere," the Myinmoletkat Nature Reserve, in the Karen area, one of the semi-independent regions set up just before Britain pulled out of Burma in 1948. "We hope the reserve will win world heritage status," [the adviser] enthuses. The reserve would also encompass a section of a gas pipeline being constructed by... forced labour... [for] Total and Unocal, the French and American oil companies, which signed deals with the Burmese to pump gas from the Andaman Sea in the west to Thailand, in the east... [The adviser] tells us of another project, the Lanbi Island Marine National Park, off the southern Burmese coast. Coral islands would be transformed into an "eco-tourism

venture” in the first stage of a grand plan to open the 320km Mergui archipelago to mass tourism and scientific study. The... WCS... and the Smithsonian... are helping to run both projects, says his colleague... The WCS and the Smithsonian are the first non-governmental groups to have worked with the SLORC since the Rangoon massacre of 1988, when 3000 demonstrators were killed by police and troops during riots which led to the ousting of [the then] President... Later that day we... asked if we could visit the new sites, [but] were told: “I’m afraid that will not be possible at the moment. You must be aware we have problems in this area. There is a large security operation going on. Mopping up must finish before anything else can begin.” Mopping up. That phrase appears frequently in Burma’s state-controlled press. It refers to the forced removal of “troublesome elements.” ...This contempt for human life was not evident last September at the launch ceremony for the Myinmoletkat Nature Reserve, held in Rangoon... [The] Director-General of Forestry, assured guests that the welfare of local inhabitants would be paramount. Not only would rare species be protected but the lives of the rural poor would be improved... [One of the rural poor was] taken from his village near the coastal town of Tavoy and sent to a labour camp where conscripts were forced to build a railway running north to the town of Ye. After 17 people died from malaria, three of his friends tried to escape. They were caught, forced to dig their own graves and then executed. “The soldiers buried the dead bodies but left the legs and hands exposed; nobody tried to escape after that,”... In a village south of the Total pipeline... a... 34[-year-old]... mother of seven, told how [girls] were raped by soldiers guarding forced labour projects. “...one of the girls[... who] was just 15 years old... was raped so many times [it] died...” ...The slaughter of the innocents goes on, but the conservation groups are winning the battle with their conscience... [The] science director at the WCS... says: “We do not sanction forced relocation, torture or killings. But we have no control over the government. We are in Burma because it is one of the highest biodiversity countries in Asia... [and we] are focused on... conservation... We can walk away from it, but that wouldn’t do any good for anybody...” A spokes[person] for the Smithsonian... says: “We are there to do important conservation work. We may disagree with a regime but it is not our place to challenge it.” ...[the] director of WWF in Britain, says... “Sometimes we have to deal with repulsive regimes... We have to weigh up whether the conservation benefit is worth the risk of being seen, directly or indirectly, to be supporting those regimes.”

...[the] mountain gorilla – once there were thousands, now perhaps some 350 survive. In their tropical Eden gorillas lead a carefree, unhurried life, with alternating periods of feeding and rest. They live in remarkably stable family groups ranging from 5 to as many as 30 individuals. All follow the undisputed leadership of the dominant silverback, so named because his back has turned white with age. We’re at once attracted and repelled by the great beast which is so like ourselves. Yet, after untold centuries as master of his domain, today the gorilla may be doomed. In the most densely populated country on the African continent, the farmer’s hoe may prove as lethal as the poacher’s gun. Farms already stretch to the very edge of the park and the pressure of human population steadily grows. Tourist dollars may help. But, although tourism has increased park revenues more than 100% in one year alone, the future of the mountain gorilla is by no means secure. “Their future will probably be decided within the next 10 years, but much of the future of the gorillas will depend on Rwandans. It’s their treasure, their park, their land.” “By knowing more about gorillas, about their intelligence, how sensitive they are, how perceptive they are, we can hope to convey the importance of saving gorillas as a species to people who are living with them and are competing with them. If they realise how similar to humans they are perhaps conservation efforts will be enhanced.” For many Rwandans, the first step towards caring is learning that the gorilla exists at all. “Hopefully through education that will change, but for the moment saving the gorilla is not a driving concern for the average Rwandan.” Awareness and understanding – will they be enough to stem the tide, or is the gorilla, like so many species before him, destined to vanish from Earth for all time? “It’s hard to imagine what Rwandans are going to do. We’d like to be able to convince them these animals are extraordinary and it’s such a unique treasure they have here that they also should value them – but that’s going to take a long time.” “The sad point is that there is no guarantee the wild population has any future at all. They’re totally at the political whims of whatever country they’re in.” “I’m alarmed, but it’s not contagious. I wish I had a greater gift so I could alarm millions of people, but they sail on unconcerned. What can you do with such apathy, such lack of imagination?” “If there is political stability in west Africa then we could siphon zoo gorillas back to the land we stole from them. That is the dream of every responsible zoo director or owner – who must dream that his human descendants will one day organise the rehabilitation of gorillas, or any other animal, to their own land. So there is a grand design, a purpose. I hope it isn’t a romantic dream. I think it might happen. It’s a long shot, and a long shot is better than no shot.”]

...It’s time we ended zoos, says Kiwi bear campaigner... Zoos have served an excellent purpose but their time is up, says a Hunterville farmer about to embark on another mission to help make better lives for endangered animals... “In my mother’s time it would have been impossible for her to see an elephant, for instance, and to appreciate them, if it were not for zoos or circuses. Nowadays, with so much excellent natural history on television and available on video, there is just no excuse for keeping animals in zoos...” ...[However, the farmer] accepts that some good work is being done in preserving endangered birds by having eggs laid in captivity hatched in the wild... [The farmer says it] is not an animal idealist, just a hands-on worker who [occasionally] gets called in... to help the World Society for the Protection of Animals. One of its projects is to get captive bears back into something that resembles their natural habitat, and [the farmer] is the society’s expert in building semi-wild sanctuaries for them... [The farmer] left last night for Ecuador where [it] will build a sanctuary for native spectacle bears confiscated from or handed over by owners who have kept them as pets. Spectacle bears are an endangered species which... is further threatened by a rapidly increasing demand by Asians for... so-called ma[sculine] potency “medicines.” ...the demand is driven by increasing wealth in Asian countries, and supported by the ease of international communications. While [the farmer] was in Ecuador recently on a pilot project for the sanctuary, some of the local people who worked with him received offers from Asian traders for live bears... [The farmer] has had to negotiate with Government agencies – and may have to do that again since the Government in Ecuador has changed – and learn to deal with local bureaucracies and people with difficult work ethics. [The farmer says it] is getting used to that after having built sanctuaries in Turkey and Thailand, the first to liberate dancing bears, and the second to liberate pets and bears headed for restaurants... There is a lot more work ahead of him. The society has had requests for bear sanctuaries in India, Pakistan, Bulgaria, Romania, and Georgia... The society sees the sanctuaries as halfway houses for formerly captive animals. If they adapt to life in the semi-wild they may be released into their native wilderness, and certainly all offspring will be... [By the way, s]cientists have hailed the birth of [a] baby panda as a sign of progress towards saving the endangered species, but warn that the animal could still be extinct in 100 years. “Bringing up pandas in captivity is very difficult,” said... [the] director of the Chengdu Research Base where the panda, whose twin died on delivery, was born as the result of artificial insemination. Rearing a cub is a constant battle because its dependence on its mother’s milk means it cannot be hand-reared.

...Let’s suppose a private company decided to get into the business of species conservation. It would need a suitable habitat[... so efforts]... would be made to acquire only that habitat crucial to the species’ survival... Simply buying the land is not sufficient. For one thing, exotic pests may invade the sanctuary and threaten the wildlife. So the firm would develop a barrier to keep the vermin out. The wildlife within the sanctuary are, after all, an important economic asset. To enhance the build-up of numbers, the sanctuary would be rehabilitated. Exotic pests would be gradually eliminated. Native plants would be planted and rare wildlife reintroduced. Captive breeding programmes to accelerate growth in wildlife numbers would be implemented... As the populations in the sanctuary build up, the surplus is removed for introduction into other reserves or facilities overseas. Faced with mounting success, the firm eventually becomes publicly listed. It raises capital for further sanctuaries through share offers. This in fact is no hypothetical firm. It exists: it is Earth Sanctuaries Ltd and is based in A[US]. The economic value of the wildlife it protects in turn spurs it to invest in those species’ survival. Earth Sanctuaries is the most successful breeder of platypus in A[US]. To protect its investment in wildlife hundreds of kilometres of fox and cat-proof fence are built around their sanctuaries. Rare A[US]n species are making a comeback within these sanctuaries at a rate not matched in national parks or zoos.

...*Global zoo getting fuller all the time...* More new species of mammal are being discovered than ever before, according to the latest edition of the definitive *Mammal Species of the World*. That's partly because more resources, and more effort, are being put into finding them, and partly because the introduction of improved techniques means classification has become more refined. Since 1758 when the biologist Linnaeus established a classification system, about 1.4 million living species have been discovered and described. Until recently it was held that most mammals were already known, but over the past decade more than 450 new species have been recognised, bringing the total to around 4600. Considering that 15 new mammals have been found in the Philippines alone in the last 15 years, biologists now estimate that the total could run to 8000. Among the discoveries is the Panay cloudrunner, a grey rodent that resembles a fox squirrel... the extraordinary looking soala... and... a deer... that barks when it gets excited... Scientists believe that a large ox discovered... in the Anamites, a mountainous area on the border between Laos and Vietnam... may be a primitive link to today's cattle... Since most mammals are rodents or bats they make up the majority of new discoveries, but new primates have also been found. A dwarf marmoset with a koala-like face is one of seven small primates discovered since 1990 in Brazil... Not a year goes by without the discovery of thousands of new species, whether in remote jungle or in the potted plant of a Washington DC office – where a new species of ant was discovered a few years ago. The discoveries are important beyond the study of mammology. A creature may host a community of parasites unknown to science... But many of the new species are under threat of extinction. Last year a U[N] report classed one-quarter of the planet's mammals as critically endangered or vulnerable. In some cases, the publicity that new discoveries generate has increased awareness of the need for conserving natural habitats. Both Laos and Vietnam set aside precious tracts of forest in the Anamites after the soala and barking deer were found, but they still may not survive hunting by locals. The worry for biologists is that the rate of extinction of even known species far exceeds the pace of their discoveries, and whatever benefits they bring to conservation cannot come fast enough. And the allocation of scarce conservation resources is a source of frustration... [A] mammologist at the W[CS] in New York who co-discovered the soala, notes that America is spending billions of dollars in the search for extraterrestrial life. "I'm surprised to see people get so wildly excited about a possible bacterium on Mars when our own planet is crawling with undiscovered species."

...[*You can own a species* BOFFINS are offering an ultimate ego-trip – to name a species after you. Biopat, a conservation charity, will put your name on a newly discovered species for \$5000. Frogs, insects, plants and marine animals are all up for grabs and donors will get a certificate and a photo of their species. Biopat is offering the service on its website and the money is being used to help biologists find more species and protect them. Only about 10% of the species on earth have been identified. While about 10,000 a year are found, 15,000 a year are wiped out.' ● A sausage-sized stick insect believed to have died out 83 years ago has been rediscovered living on a rock in the Pacific Ocean. Scientists found three Lord Howe stick insects, which they likened to "walking sausages", after scrambling up a cliff in the dark on Balls Pyramid, a volcanic rock 23km from Lord Howe Island. For thousands of years, the remote island was home to only one mammal species – a bat – and two species of reptile. The nocturnal insect evolved into a 15cm-long, 1.5cm thick wingless giant because it had no predators. But the insect known locally as the "land lobster" became extinct after rats colonised the island from a shipwreck in 1918. Rumoured sightings of sausage-shaped carcasses by rock climbers on Balls Pyramid in the 1960s encouraged the latest expedition by AUSn scientists, who found the three specimens of Phasmid dryococelus australis feasting on tea-tree leaves. The scientists, who also found a number of eggs, believe there could be just 10 adults surviving on the desolate rock. They hope to re-establish a breeding colony on Lord Howe Island. The island, home to dozens of unique species, is thought to have been untouched by humankind until European navigators settled there in 1834. The invasion of rats in 1918 led to the disappearance of five endemic bird species. A bounty of 6d per rat was introduced to encourage residents to kill them. After 20,000 corpses were collected, it was discovered that locals had been breeding rats to earn themselves a steady income. Today, the fragile island is home to 300 permanent residents, while only 400 visitors are allowed at a time. The island's Lord Howe woodhen was recently saved from near extinction by a captive breeding programme.']

...*Eye in the sky watches out for wildlife...* Peregrine falcons in Greenland, Oryx antelopes in New Mexico and white-faced ibis in Nevada have found a new friend and protector. Under a programme that says as much about the changing role of the military as about public pressure to defend wildlife as vigorously as humankind, the U[S] Department of Defence is using its web of orbiting satellites to track endangered species. Using a new generation of miniature transmitters, [US] conservationists can shadow migrating animals wherever they go. They have welcomed the Pentagon's eagerness to adapt military technology to assist their studies. Controlling nearly 10 million hectares of fish and wildlife habitat, the U[S] military oversees the homes of 100 threatened species and is establishing natural resource programmes at all of its domestic bases, many of which are in national conservation areas... [The US] Army scientist overseeing the project, says: "This system serves as a crystal ball that allows you to peer into remote places and the hidden behaviours of virtually any creature in the wild." By tracking a single peregrine, researchers can also keep track of the bird's prey. That information can be passed on to military aviators so they have a better chance of avoiding collisions with birds. The programme has not only introduced an element of concern for wildlife when and where the military conduct training manoeuvres – earlier this year a Navy gunnery range in the Atlantic was moved when... found to be in the path of migrating whales – but has helped biologists to explain a decline in wildlife populations. In 1995, for instance, researchers tracked 12 Swainson's hawks from their roosts in California to the Pampas of Argentina. When they visited the nesting areas pinpointed by the satellite data, they found thousands of dead birds, all poisoned by eating pesticides used to kill grasshoppers[('British wildlife experts are mourning the loss of Kerry the goose after tracking him by satellite all the way from Ireland to an Eskimo's kitchen in Arctic Canada – Kerry had safely completed the arduous 7240km journey, only to be shot by a hunter; Kerry was found by researchers who tracked the beeps from a transmitter on his back to the Eskimo's home – they were led to a freezer, where Kerry lay, still wearing his \$10,000 electronic tracker')]. Since then, an international rescue effort has helped the hawks recover their numbers. "The technology really saved that species,"...

FOR THE SO-CALLED "LOST" TRIBES WHO LIVE DEEP IN THE world's rain forests, it's better to be lost and alive than found and decimated by outsiders bent on exploiting the forest – and destroying their homes and way of life in the process. But such is the fate of many forest-dwellers in the Amazon region, Malaysia, Indonesia and elsewhere. There are few, if any, truly lost tribes anymore, says [a spokesper]son of the London office of Survival, which campaigns for tribal people's rights around the world. Acknowledging that there could be as-yet-undiscovered groups in extremely remote areas like western Papua-New Guinea, [the spokesper]son says most tribes today know about the wider world, even if they want nothing to do with it. S[urvival] favors the terms "isolated" and "uncontacted" for these groups because "their whereabouts, or their existence, is known, but... they have no sustained contact with the outside world." In such cases... "the only means of knowing about them is through reports" from people who may trade with them. One of these isolated tribes, and the latest to be "contacted"... is the Korubo, who live in the remote Javari Valley in western Brazil, close to the Peruvian and Colombian borders. Although the Korubo's existence has been known since 1973, it was only in October 1996 that representatives of the Brazilian government's National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) made contact with perhaps 20 of an estimated 200 to 300 Korubo people. Several previous attempts to contact these semi-nomadic hunter-gatherers, who live along the Itacoai River in Amazonas state, resulted in clashes in which nine FUNAI agents and an unknown number of Korubo were killed. "It became apparent... that there would be more and more conflict between the Korubo and loggers" who were moving closer to their territory. That situation, regarded by FUNAI as a serious threat to an isolated people, prompted officials to again seek to make contact, and to set up a post at the confluence of the Itacoai and Itui Rivers, where the Korubo could go for assistance and medical care... [Survival and] FUNAI's Department of Isolated Indians, speculate that the contact attempt worked this time because illegal mahogany loggers had probably killed some Korubo, who realized they needed allies. The keys to the contact were shiny and made of metal: machetes and aluminium cooking pots... While [Survival] regards the pots-and-

machetes approach as “paternalistic” and fostering dependence, [its spokesperson] acknowledges that the Korubo case is complicated. “It is certainly true that these people are under threat... If you look at the catalogue of encounters, the Indians don’t really stand a chance against guns and the people coming in from the outside... They know that in the past white people have killed them. So they’re very much on the defensive.” The future of the Korubo and other tribes – like that of the rain forests themselves... [(r)ain forests account for 6% of Earth’s land area – and 1% of that is lost every year[])]... – remains precarious. For the people and the forests alike, the message seems to be the same: adapt or die.

...no fish were lost... – but... six visitors... suffered cuts from the glass and shock... wh[en a]... glass tank full of marine life cracked open at Sydney Aquarium yesterday, spilling 12,000 litres of seawater... An ambulance spokes[person] said two of the injured were taken to Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, while a third went to Sydney Hospital. The others were treated at the scene. Sydney Aquarium did not say what type of marine life inhabited the tank, which... was specially armoured. “This tank has been in place and working successfully since it was installed over six years ago,” it said in a statement. The aquarium was investigating the cause of the fracture and said the complex would be open for business as usual today.

...*Scuba shops warned after faulty tank tragedy*... Dive shops have been issued a shuddering warning after a police probe into the death of a young scuba diver. Police began investigations when scientists pinpointed a corrosion build-up as the reason the 24-year-old was starved of oxygen during his fatal underwater hunt for crayfish. Inquiries failed to identify who was responsible for the mistake which resulted in 2.4 litres of sea water seeping into the [24-year-old]’s dive tank, leading to a fatal chemical reaction... [while the 24-year-old was] diving in the Manukau Harbour with a friend on December 27 last year... [Peter] Massey had bought the aluminium cylinder from a dive shop three weeks earlier. It had undergone a full commercial test and was passed... Following Mr Massey’s inquest, the Underwater Association... [said it conducted] regular safety audits of filling and testing stations... The only wish of the grieving parents... is that other families be saved the trauma they have been through... ● A... first-time [skydiver] died after his... parachute... failed to open during a jump at Parakai, north-west of Auckland, yesterday. A N[Z] Parachuting Federation investigator... said the 22-year-old... was making his first static line jump from 3000ft when his main chute failed to open correctly. The [22-year-old] activated his reserve chute, but... was at too low an altitude for it to fully inflate. His name was being withheld by the police until relatives could be contacted... [I]nquiries would focus on why the [22-year-old] failed to follow the safety procedures taught on the Parakai Parachute Centre course [it had] attended with 12 other novice jumpers. Three of his fellow learners who jumped from the same flight landed safely... The [22-year-old] was the third parachutist to die [in NZ] this year. Two [guys] were killed in a tandem parachute accident at Taupo [last month]...

Skydivers defend sport’s safety... The N[Z] Parachuting Federation is confident that safety standards in the parachuting industry are sufficient, despite three deaths in almost as many weeks... [The federation’s] technical director, said the deaths... [– t]he first since 1991... [–] were a coincidence... “The whole thing has to be put into perspective... It’s too short a time to see this as a trend...” Operators had to join the federation, a self-governing body, before they could practice, and had to be fully qualified and equipped... “It’s quite a detailed process. You can’t simply go out and buy a plane and take people up and push them out.” Parachute jump operators must have an instructor’s qualification as a minimum. Each parachuting company has a qualified chief safety officer, who is ultimately responsible for the equipment. The reserve parachute must be packed by a qualified technician and the main parachute must be packed by someone who has the approval of the chief safety officer. The companies have to conform to federation-approved operations manuals and to Occupational Safety and Health regulations. Novices doing a static jump get an average of four to six hours of training, and must be certified as competent and capable by an instructor before they jump... [The] owner-operator of the Wairarapa Parachute Centre in Masterton, said it was safer to jump out of a plane in a parachute than to drive a car. “We have had a bad run, but... [p]eople die on the roads every day. I’d rather be strapped to a parachute than sitting in my van right now.” But an Auckland[er]... who worked in the industry for six years claims the parachuting industry is not as safe as it is made out to be. The [Auckland]er, who did not want to be named... left the industry in part because [it] was concerned at unsafe practices. Jumpers were given a pat on the back and told, “You’ll be right,” but a lot of people went vacant when they jumped... “Six hours training is not actually that much. For some people it’s adequate, for others it’s not enough.” ...[yet] it was very rare that someone was refused a jump after the training session. [Furthermore, the federation] was a close circle of people “who fairly well all scratch each other’s backs.” [The Auckland]er suggested an independent body such as the Civil Aviation Authority should have jurisdiction over the industry. [The technical director], however, said that clubs belonging to the federation could not afford to have improper practices. “Otherwise they wouldn’t get many customers.” ...[the 22-year-old who] died on Sunday... [was Takanini resident] Gareth Norman Dunn...

[THE] NEW Sport and Recreation Minister... might think [it]’s on to a good number with his ministerial appointment. His predecessor... certainly enjoyed his time in the job. But [the new minister] should be warned there is growing anger in N[Z] that sport is not getting a fair deal from the Government. The Government’s vote for sport, fitness and leisure is \$4.8 million annually, according to a... briefing paper prepared for [the new minister] by the Department of Internal Affairs. That’s little more than Norman Kirk’s Labour Government gave to sport and recreation when it came into power 25 years ago. And back then the... dollar would buy 10 times what it does today. Admittedly, sport and recreation now benefits from the Lottery Grants Board. But this has nothing to do with money from the Government’s coffers. The... briefing paper... makes interesting reading. Here are some... facts from it: ● Sport and leisure in N[Z] pays \$300 million a year in taxes. ● Sport and leisure directly and indirectly contributes \$1648 million to N[Z]’s GDP. ● NZ’s... sport and leisure industry supports 22,745 jobs... When you consider [what] sport and leisure pays... in taxes... a year... the Government’s pay-back... is pathetic... [The consequence is that many of NZ]’s sports clubs are finding it more and more difficult to survive[, and]... sports’ coaches... are becoming a dying breed.

...*Reward for island coach with a mission*... 15 years ago [an Auckland]er opted for the laid-back lifestyle of Waiheke Island. It was an idyllic setting. But the sport... was purely social. “I was playing netball but wanted more than just a friendly game, so I pushed to get teams affiliated to the Auckland competition... I also started coaching, and things took off.” [The Auckland]er pitched in, at times coaching up to four netball teams and later, as it became fashionable, touch football. [The Auckland]er also finds time to play soccer and rugby league. As [the Auckland]er became more involved, [it] cajoled some of her senior netballers into coaching. “They are loving it. They really enjoy spending their time with the little [eight to 10-year-old] ones. In the past we had to rely on parents. Others were happy just to drop the kids off;”... Yesterday, the 34-year-old mother of three-year-old and 10-year-old sons had her part in the great Waiheke Island sporting revolution recognised at the launch of the Hillary Commission’s “Coaches Count” campaign at North Harbour Stadium. As part of a “thanks coach” message, [the 34-year-old and three others]... received plaques acknowledging their contributions to coaching – all in more than one sport... [The 34-year-old] also works part-time as the Auckland City Council’s events co-ordinator on the island... [where it] used to spend her school holidays... “When I returned to live here, crime was a problem... Kids had no direction when they were little... There are no gymnasiums, no malls, no McDonalds... [– so s]port is all young people have on Waiheke... Now we are finding more and more are involved in sport and want to stay involved.” The [Coaches Count campaign is] aimed at recruiting what the commission sees as an 80,000 shortfall in coaches in N[Z]... “There are more kids playing sport than we can cope with at the moment,” said [the commission’s] chief executive... “We need coaches to be there for them or we risk losing them.”

...The latest Sports Medicine NZ survey, which has not yet been released, shows the further down the ranks you go, the lower quality of your medical care... “Most of the medical and physiotherapy support is directed at the top teams. If you’ve got a top player worth \$1.5 million, they’ll get the medical book thrown at them. But a third-grade social player can be injured just as badly, and needs just as much support as the top

players.” ...ACC[’s] injury prevention programme manager... said the lack of medical advice for lower grades means there’s a higher chance players will take the field when they’re carrying injuries. “There’s always pressure to play. It’s the way N[Zer]s are brought up. It’s considered brave to play on an injury regardless, and the more serious the injury, the more you play on, the more highly you’re regarded.” [The manager] said the survey highlights the need for more qualified sports first-aiders on the sports fields. [The manager]’d like to see coaches trained in the basics, so they know how to recognise common injuries and know when a player should be sidelined to prevent worse injuries. “ACC hopes to work with the rugby union, Sports Medicine N[Z], St John and the Red Cross to develop a recognised sports first aid course for coaches and club officials.”

...SUPER 12 rugby coaches can be forgiven for feeling a bit miffed as they watch their star players forced out for three weeks after taking a knock on the head. If they were coaching top soccer players, equestrians or cricketers there would be much more leeway over an early return to competition. In the past fortnight, three Super 12 stars have been sidelined with concussion... Rugby union, rugby league and amateur boxing are the only sports in N[Z] with hard and fast rules about concussion... So are [those three sports] being too inflexible? Or are the other sports not quite up with the play? Concussion, medical experts say, has to be taken seriously. If you’ve had a knock on the head, that means your brain has been bashed against the inside of your skull and you’ve already done at least minor damage. Get another knock, especially before you’ve recovered from the first, and you could be in real trouble. “A second concussion within one or two weeks of the first can damage the brain out of all proportion to the violence of the injury, so a severe head injury with permanent disability or even death can result from even a minor blow,” says... an international authority on the subject[, who] cites the case of Kevin Sharkey, an A[US]n league player who played in a major game 12 days after being mildly concussed. [Kevin] received a second knock, and although [Kevin] was unconscious for only seconds, after half an hour [Kevin] lapsed into a deep coma and died 22 hours later. That’s the sort of risk that sets the three-week rule, says [a]sports medicine senior lecturer and Olympic team manager... And although it’s frustrating for coaches and players, medical experts still can’t make general statements about how long it takes an individual to recover, because reactions to concussion vary so much... “There are times when people might not be normal after three weeks, even though there’s an expectation that after that period you’re back playing... Most young people recover fully six weeks after...” ...[the lecturer] believes soccer, and other sports like cricket, horse racing and equestrian events, should take the dangers of concussion more seriously. “There’s no difference between being hit by a high-speed cricket ball or falling off a horse, than being hit by someone’s knee or a head-high tackle... In fact, with cross-country events, in particular, I often think we look after the animals better than the athletes. We have vets there to make sure the horses are OK... – and if they’re in distress they’re off. But for the athletes, there’s quite a bit of anecdotal evidence of people having falls and being allowed to remount later in the day and compete.” ...Rugby union’s policy of a three-week stand-down after concussion has been in place since 1982. Even after three weeks, the player has to have a doctor’s clearance before returning to the field. Rugby league[’s]... policy on players who have been concussed more than once are... tighter than rugby’s, including a three strikes and... the player is out of the sport for good, unless they’re cleared by a neurologist or neurosurgeon.

...IT SOUNDS such an easy question: Which gives the best protection against concussion – headgear or a mouthguard? The somewhat surprising answer – a mouthguard – is backed by medical research and hard facts... NZ Rugby League[’s] medical panel chair[perso]n... says some of the proof came from the experiences of US gridiron players. “They tried everything inside their helmets – air bags, water bottles, gels – to try to cut the rate of concussion injuries. Nothing seemed to work. Then they brought in mouthguards and the number of cases reduced at once.” Mouthguards are now compulsory for league and union players aged 19 and under and next year they’ll be compulsory for all. Referees check boots. Now, there’s a mouthguard check as well. No guard, no play. ACC is helping league clubs buy mouthguards at a reasonable cost of around \$1.30. Union has also made bulk buying arrangements for its clubs. ACC[’s] injury prevention programme manager... says in rugby... many blows to the head come on the chin. “A mouthguard acts as a shock absorber. It dissipates the shock – actually breaks up the direct transmission – and significantly reduces the risk.” Mouthguards, however, are not a magic protector against concussion. Reducing the risk is not the same as removing it... Otago[’s] All Black winger... is a well-known mouthguard wearer, but [i]s still out of Super 12 rugby for the next fortnight after being concussed last weekend.

...THIRTY years ago, few would have thought that rugby could ever have striking similarities to American football[, but]... since turning professional, [rugby] has experienced a face change that few can deny. Its evolution is not dissimilar to that of gridiron... In the early days of ...[gridiron], players were dressed like today’s Super 12 and All Black players. Scantily padded, and with token head gear usually made only of leather, the gridiron players of the early century were hard [guys] whose more passive involvement in the sport meant the chances of injury were far less than today. Mind you, those early 1920s, ’30s and ’40s gridiron players participated in a milder, tamer version than today. But as gridiron grew into a full scale collision sport, where the hits were more frequent and much harsher, protective equipment for players improved to where now we see NFL players wearing shoulder, knee, hip, rib and elbow pads, neck braces, face masks and shock-absorbing helmets... Rugby today is a considerably faster, harder, tougher game played by [people] who, with few exceptions, are bigger, faster, stronger and more aggressive than at any time in the past. The result is that it now is potentially more dangerous... So what that rugby has... evol[ed] from a contact sport to... a collision sport, some... say? ...But unless the safety standards for players evolve to suit the speed and increased physical nature of the modern game, the attrition rate among players will escalate to alarming levels. It is noteworthy that players themselves are taking more care with their bodies than ever before. Many more today wear head gear than 10 or 20 years ago... Shoulder pads are increasingly popular too... It is not unrealistic to project that within five years, most players will be wearing head gear and shoulder pads as part of compulsory protective equipment standards... Some would have it that the more rugby players pad up to protect themselves, the more brutish and violent the sport will become. There is truth in that, but the incidence of injuries today suggests the sport has gone past the point of no return in terms of protection against potential injury.

...At least eight people died and three were left fighting for their lives after a light plane mounting an aerobatics display crashed into a Red Cross tent at an air show in the Belgian coastal town of Ostend yesterday. The pilot, named... as Captain Amr Hani Bilal of Jordan’s Royal Falcons aerobatics display team, was among those who died in the crash. The dead also included a French father and his 22-month-old daughter... All the others were Belgians... The victims died on impact, [the]... head of the special Disaster Victim Identification unit, said... Burning fuel from the plane then heavily charred their bodies, hampering identification... Scores of spectators were badly hurt when the Jordanian air force plane crashed during a solo display, raining debris on to the crowd and spraying people with burning kerosene. Th[e]... Belgian Interior Minister... who rushed to the scene, said the pilot appeared to have lost control of his plane... A Belgian aviation expert told Belgian BRTN radio the German-made Falcon Extra Type 300, purpose-built for aerobatics, had failed to pull out of a loop, which could point to mechanical failure. Alternatively, the pilot could have passed out during the series of loop manoeuvres which involve great strain on plane and pilot from the forces of gravity.

...A WHEELCHAIR-BOUND [perso]n has taken an amusement park to the Human Rights Commission after being stopped from riding on the corkscrew rollercoaster because of safety regulations. The management of Rainbows End, in south Auckland, said if the [disabled person] had been allowed on the ride, it would have risked a hefty fine from Occupational Safety and Health... Human Rights staff have interviewed park management and OSH[’s] amusement device registrar... to determine if the Human Rights Act has been breached. [A Human Rights Commission spokesperson]n... said a decision would not be known for some time. [The amusement park’s manag]er hoped a solution could be found soon, preferably allowing disabled people to enjoy the rides. OSH was concerned disabled people could be difficult to evacuate if the ride malfunctioned.

...At the tender age of four, [an Auckland]er “is sad with the whole wide world.” It has nothing to do with the death of a Princess on the other side of the globe – it is because his kindergarten’s slide was pulled down on Saturday morning. Asked yesterday why the play equipment at

Morningside Kindergarten... was so special, [the four-year-old] simply said: "I liked sliding on it." The kindergarten playground is one of dozens round the country that are deemed unsafe under new Ministry of Education regulations. Northland kindergartens report financial problems caused by having to remove some play equipment and build new structures that comply with the guidelines... The Waikato Free Kindergarten Association says that its financial resources are under strain because of constant safety checks. And the Auckland Kindergarten Association, which ordered the removal of the Morningside Kindergarten slide, may exceed its budget by \$300,000 because of the need to improve playgrounds. That does not appease Morningside's head teacher... who was given just 24 hours' notice about the removal of the slide[, which u]nder the new regulations... was too high... [The head teacher] was also angry that the association did not give parents a chance to lower the slide. The association president... defended the quick action, saying safety was paramount. "If there's a danger to our children, under the Health and Safety Act we must eliminate, minimise and isolate those dangers." ...But [the head teacher] said children had played safely on [the slide] for years... A member of the Devonport Kindergarten committee... said safety guidelines did not take into account that children at kindergartens were always supervised by qualified staff. In the meantime, the preschoolers at Morningside Kindergarten will be without a slide – until their parents can raise funds for a new one.

...The Auckland Kindergarten Association wants more of a say in the development of playground safety standards. The association... was holding discussions with the Minister of Education on the issue... [F]eedback from teachers and parents showed they were frustrated about ever-changing safety standards. "The long-term process is trying to influence the making of those regulations if they are not right for our circumstances,"... [The swings at] St James Kindergarten in Grey Lynn... were no longer in use... because the new standards required too much clear space... [P]arents raised \$10,000 for play equipment... "It is ridiculous that within two years of it being finished completely we are not allowed to use the swings."

...20 years ago [a NZer joined] his uncle's business which supplied children's rides. Over a span of two decades, [the nephew] has completely transformed the business, [turning it into] a world player in the design and manufacturing of plastic playground structures... [which] cost between \$US8000 and \$90,000... The huge sliding loops, tubular structures or roundish objects that look like they are meant for Mars may be child's play – but they have returned some \$2 million in export earnings... [The business] owes a lot of success to this – the ability to observe the safety standards applied to N[Z] playgrounds which laid the foundation for [it] to bring the same standard to the world. During his early years in business, [the nephew] quickly realised that the playgrounds at fastfood areas weren't ideal. In 1993, McDonald's was looking to upgrade its playgrounds. "We came up with the concept of Future Space. The objective was to have a safe, educationally challenging play structure that children can play in rather than play on,"... It was a... [deal] with Canadian plastic company SPI that enabled the [business] to realistically aim to supply an international fastfood company such as McDonalds. The Future Space – now a trademark – design went down well. In 1994, [the business] won the Creative Development Award from McDonald's International... [and] was the only non-American company recognised as a worldwide supplier for the fastfood chain. By year's end, [the business] will be the second-largest international supplier of McDonald's playgrounds. The company has quadrupled in size since 1993 and supplies its products to more than 28 different countries... This week, it won the Best Small Business Exporter of the Year award, organised by Tradenz... [S]ome of the basics guiding the manufacturing of these playgrounds do not... change... "The playgrounds have to be... cost-competitive, structurally sound... meet international safety standards worldwide... and... be... aesthetically inviting... for... children..."... [The nephew] takes great satisfaction in watching... children in Korea queue up to play in the playgrounds that... his team have developed... One of the key things which [the nephew] has learnt over the past five years is the necessity to be adaptable and to change. This is critical in helping him to deal with the idiosyncrasies within... other world markets. "The areas for the playgrounds [in many... Asian markets] are very restricted; we are having to design and build structures and develop space,"... In some parts of the world, the structural-soundness is more important than usual. [The business] has to ensure that the play structures can withstand the test of hurricanes and cyclones, among others. Attention to detail is another. In many of these playgrounds, it becomes too hot to play in, so some incorporate airconditioners as an integral part... N[Z] was a good place to manufacture plastic products as the industry did not have a high labour component[, but one]... challenge facing his company is making play structures so that they can be easily freighted around the world. Because of the unique nature of the playgrounds, the company has also, in a way, shaped the development of its suppliers' business. An example is to be found in the large pieces of plastic that are being churned out for the company to make its play structures. They require rotary moulding rather than the injection moulding process which is normally used for smaller products... One of his suppliers has built what [the nephew] believes is among the world's largest aluminium-cast moulds... In a pioneering effort, the company also worked with a supplier to produce plastic which is iridescent in colour... [The business] is already a main supplier of plastic components and parts to other plastic playground manufacturers. And... [it] is not about to stop there.

...there is increasing evidence of a link between a reduction in crime and participation in physical activity... [T]he University of Sheffield, England, ran a sports counselling course for young offenders and found the re-conviction rate was 56 percent. The rate for those who did not attend was 92 percent.

...*Sporting goods*... [accounted for just under a 10]%... share of recreational spending... [in the US in 1935 – a share that remained constant until 1972, when it began a gradual slide to be approximately 6% by 1991 (in comparison, spending on *films and light entertainment*... ha[s] gone from a peak of just under a 25% share of recreational spending in 1935 to be level with sporting goods spending by 1991; during the same period spending on *reading* has fallen from just under a 30% share to almost half that figure, while spending on *home entertainment* has risen from just over a 20% share to over 35%...]

USer[s] worry that the distribution of income is increasingly unequal... [and whether they're] better off than [they] used to be... Economists who plumb Government income statistics agree that [USer[s]'] incomes, as measured in inflation-adjusted dollars, have risen more slowly in the past two decades than in earlier times, and that some workers' real incomes have actually fallen. They also agree that, by almost any measure, income is distributed less equally than it used to be. Neither of those claims, however, sheds much light on whether living standards are rising or falling. This is because living standard is a highly amorphous concept... Less of a Luxury: The Rise of Recreation, is a recent paper by... an economist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which looks at the living-standards debate from an unusual direction. Rather than worrying about cash incomes, [it investigates USer[s]'] recreational habits over the past century. [Her research] finds that... the... distribution of dollar incomes may have become more skewed in recent years, but leisure is more evenly spread than ever. [The economist] based her research on consumption surveys dating back as far as 1888. The industrial workers surveyed in that year spent, on average, [75%] of their incomes on food, shelter and clothing. Less than 2[%] of the average family's income was spent on leisure... Only the... [high]est-income families... could afford such extravagances as the theatre and concert performances, which were relatively more expensive than they are today. Since those days, leisure has steadily become less of a luxury. By 1991, the average household needed to devote only 38[%] of its income to the basic necessities, and was able to spend 6[%] on recreation... Much of the... changing structure of leisure spending... may be due to the fact that poorer [USer[s]'] have more time off than they used to. [USer[s]'] also have had an increasing number of recreational possibilities to choose from. At a time when many economists are pointing accusing fingers at technology for causing a widening inequality in the wages of skilled and unskilled workers, [their MIT associate]'s research gives it a much more egalitarian face. High earners have always been able to afford amusement. By lowering the price of entertainment, technology has improved the standard of living of those in the lower end of the income distribution. The implications of her results... are not watertight... [They] depend heavily upon what exactly is classed as a recreational expenditure. Reading is an example. This was the most popular leisure activity for work[ers]... in 1888, accounting for [25%] of all recreational spending. In 1991, reading took only 16[%] of the entertainment dollar. But Department of Labour expenditure surveys do not distinguish between the purchase of a mathematics tome and that of a best-selling novel... If

more money is being spent on textbooks and professional books now than in earlier years, this could make recreational spending appear stronger than it really is... Nonetheless, her broad conclusion seems fair. Recreation is more available to all and less dependent on income. On this measure at least, inequality of living standards has fallen. So why the pervasive feeling that people are worse off? One reason may be that while lower-income families now enjoy more leisure, technology has created new... activities... they may desire but cannot afford. Or maybe the greater variety and quality of entertainment options makes [USer]s value their free time more than they used to... making the feeling of over-work more onerous. When it comes to well-being, perceptions play a large role. People who spend more time and dollars on having fun do not necessarily enjoy life more.

...People often ask... where they might go to find adventure. But adventure is not something you... travel to find, it's something you take with you.

[If you're looking for adventure in a national park, don't take your mountain bike!] The Conservation Authority [has decided it] will not amend the general policy for national parks, which prohibits mountain biking. The authority chair[person was reported as saying]: "There are a great variety of tracks and natural areas where mountain biking is permitted in N[Z, so] national parks should not [need to be another] one of those places."

...Tired? Experts suggest going for a long run... This controversial treatment[- which] goes against much expert advice[- was]... devised by doctors at St Bartholomew's Hospital in London... [as] the answer to ME, also known as chronic fatigue syndrome[, after patients took part]... in a research project to find out if exercise would make them fitter, stronger and less tired. It did so - but critics claim it is unrepresentative and excluded severely affected patients... "Critics say the patients were unrepresentative without producing any evidence to prove it. These were not special patients. We screened 167 patients for the study and treated 66. Of the 47 who stayed the course, three-quarters rated themselves better after a year." The results suggest a quarter of Britain's estimated 250,000 sufferers would benefit from graded exercise... "We lose 10[%] of muscle power by staying in bed for a week. By three weeks, fitness or aerobic capacity falls by more than a quarter." ...ME charities fear [the critics] will reinforce the old idea that the ailment "is all in the mind." ...a 47-year-old freelance consultant in health and social services... [says the project] "totally transformed" her life... [The consultant] had ME for 10 years and at one time was unable to walk up the stairs after work - [instead, it] had to crawl. But after starting a graded exercise programme... [the consultant] now... swims 30 lengths... and... runs 3km... on alternate days.

... "There is nothing less attractive than a panting, middle-aged [guy] with knackered kneecaps pounding the pavements in shorts and sweatshirt under the misapprehension that [it] is getting fit, when all [it] is doing is accelerating the arrival of new hip joints and a triple bypass[", according to the] co-writer of the BBC sitcom *Are You Being Served?*

...Rates capped... The Mayor of Waitakere... is claiming... victory after his council... had "cut some things to the bone" to avoid raising... rates... in its annual plan. [Fo]r weeks... the council has... [been] considering projects suggested by ratepayers... "There'll be a number of community projects that we will not be able to take up this year," [the mayor] said. But... the \$7.7[m] Massey leisure centre near Westgate... [was o]ne project to survive the budget knife... The centre... which includes a community hall with a full-size indoor court... will cater for a fast-growing community of 46,000...

Northern Lifeguard Services has been left more than \$10,000 out of pocket ...[or] the professional guard season... after money anticipated from the North Shore City Council failed to come through. The council says the service did not ask for the money in the proper manner... [so] it would not repeat the \$10,000 it gave last year... "Hell, we are talking about lives here," the service's general manager... said yesterday... "The options are that we restrict the number of weeks we run pro-guards or we restrict the number of beaches that receive pro-guards..." ...the problem illustrated the frustrations the service faces in having to plead for money from councils each year... [■ If lifeguard services are restricted, that could encourage people to visit public swimming pools instead of beaches. However,] two surveys of public swimming pools... in Auckland[were recently published that showed a]... third of the[m]... failed to comply with chlorine levels... The surveys[, which] were done in June and... last... [month,] tested 75 swimming pools and 15 spa pools in 28 swimming complexes... A health protection officer... said the pools that failed chlorine tests would not sufficiently kill bacteria and disinfect the water... [In addition,] faecal coliforms were found in one in 10... pools[, which is a concern because]... public pools were supposed to have a contingency plan for cleaning excrement - usually after children had "accidents." "We shouldn't be finding faecal coliforms in a swimming pool because if they are there one can expect there will be viruses and other bacteria that can cause illness." ...The survey report said water quality was covered by a N[Z] standard but it was not mandatory. The survey covered almost all of the large public pools in the region but excluded school pools.

...Health officials on both sides of the Tasman have issued warnings of the possible spread of hepatitis A in spa pools. The alerts follow a report of A[US]'s first-known case... In the Melbourne outbreak, seven boys aged between 8 and 15 came down with hepatitis A after going for a spa at a party... The Victorian Human Services Department medical officer... said... "Whilst in the pool, 'whale spitting' was performed, in which mouthfuls of spa water were spat in a projectile fashion,"... Auckland health officials have investigated hepatitis A cases where transmission is thought to have come from spa pools... [but they said the AUSn] case served as a timely reminder about behaviour in spa pools and maintenance of them. People should keep their heads above the water. The A[US]n pool had been treated with hydrogen peroxide solution which inhibits microbial growth but would not be strong enough to kill bacteria or viral particles. Public pools must by law use stronger chemicals such as chlorine.

...In a case of coals to Newcastle... N[Z] scientists... are showing the A[US]ns how to create better surfing waves at Queensland's Surfers Paradise. The team, from the Centre of Excellence in Coastal Oceanography in Hamilton, is about to sign a contract to design an artificial reef to protect the... shoreline from erosion. But it was the scientists' skill in the waves that won them the job... [A] marine biologist with a love of surfing, said his team had mastered the art of building artificial reefs at just the right angle to create the perfect wave... [and] that after working on the project for nearly three years, [they] could create world-class surf at virtually any exposed beach with a decent swell. The reefs are built from enormous sandbags filled with sediment which can be moved, will not hurt any surfer who hits them and will create an ideal home for marine life... [H]is team of graduate students have put many hours of hard work into their studies - including as much time as possible in the water. [One team member]'s job was to study the wave peel at Raglan, while [another team member] examined the world's top surfing spots to determine the best gradient for reefs - an assignment which took him to A[US], Hawaii, California, Indonesia and Brazil. N[Z] surfers may also get a chance to use the team's waves... [- they've] been working with the Port of Gisborne on plans to create a reef on the city's doorstep, with waves to rival Waikiki.

...AN EXTREME white water event will see kayakers paddle over Taupo's Huka Falls. It's understood to be the first competition involving... the seven-metre waterfall. [The race's] organiser... expects criticism of the event, but both [the organiser] and the Taupo police confirmed it was not illegal to kayak the falls... In recent years there has been one death involving a kayak on this section of the Waikato River. The kayaker lost control above the waterfall... [However, w]ith five rides over the falls behind him, [the organiser] is adamant the frothing water is safe for experienced kayakers. [The organiser] said running the falls is no longer exceptional. "There is not quite the same karma around running Huka as there used to be... I know one person who did it eight times in the one day. In the last two years, Huka has been kayaked... [by] between 20 and 40 people..." ...[NZ] has a number of well-performed white water kayakers[- one of them] finished third at this year's world white water rodeo championships in Canada, while... [a 19-year-old who] is believed to be the youngest [perso]n to kayak the falls... filled a similar position in the 1995 event[)]... Apart from the risk factor, [the organiser] suspects critics may also suggest the event could encourage copycat attempts on the falls[- although]... the officer in charge of search and rescue for the Taupo police... did not have any problems with the event. "There have been comments in the past that it is not an appropriate waterway to kayak... I personally would not kayak it and I don't believe people who do so are wise, but if they have sufficient experience and take all the precautions, I don't believe it's the job of the police to say they can't. They are not breaking the law." [The officer] suggested it was only because Huka Falls was so well known that people reacted to kayakers making the run... [O]ther less-known, but

more dangerous stretches of water, would be kayaked and draw no comments... There will be stringent controls over who can enter the Huka race and there will also be strict safety controls. Water flow is an important factor in... safe[ty]... The flow can be as high as 280-300cu m a second, but... ECNZ would cut it to 50cu m for the event. "The lowest amount of water they can release is 30cu m... So it is almost down to its lowest."

...A Queenstown jetboat flipped in shallow water on the Shotover River yesterday afternoon, spilling its 10 passengers and briefly trapping the driver underneath... Passengers hurt were treated... [at] Lake District Hospital... and discharged. The boat was not badly damaged. The crash is being investigated by the Queenstown harbourmaster... The managing director of Kawarau Jet... said it was the first accident for the company in its 15 years... It was the second incident on Queenstown waters in recent days. A raft with seven people on board flipped on the Kawarau River... all were rescued uninjured.

...SOME local authorities are planning designated areas for jetskiers to safeguard other water users from danger this summer. The moves come after a teenager, charged with [hu]manslaughter after his jetski struck a kayak on Porirua Harbour killing Shaymaa Abood (16), will face a new trial after the initial jury failed to reach a verdict... Water Safety N[Z]'s chief executive... backed more designated areas, although promoting safety through education was also vital... Auckland Regional Council['s] marine officer... said a trial was planned in the Orakei Basin, near Bastion Point, to gauge noise levels before deciding whether to establish a jetski zone. About six potential sites were identified in recent years, although they were dropped after objections from residents about noise. Auckland experienced the most problems with jetskis – there are more than 5000 owned in the city compared with about 70 in Wellington. Wellington and Tauranga authorities are also considering adding to designated areas already provided.

...Authorities are moving to safeguard swimmers by luring speed-loving jetskiers away from popular beaches. Two trial jetski zones are proposed for the Waitemata Harbour, with slalom courses and "racetracks" established to encourage their use... and... bring the burgeoning sport under control... [– although the regional] council would not ban jetskis from other areas... Up to 6000 jetskis ply the region's waterways and about 30[%] of harbour-related complaints last year involved the machines. A [16-year-old] died in Wellington in March after a jetski ploughed through her kayak, and injury accidents are rising nationally... The president of the Auckland Jetsports Association... supported the move... "It is becoming a problem where everyone wants to get rid of us and we want to stay, so it comes down to who wants to give us a bit of beach,"... Jetskiers often liked to congregate and the zones would be well-used, [the president] said. The association also supported registration of machines and the use of speed radar – two other measures likely to be introduced. Registration would allow authorities to trace reckless riders and fine them.

...A radar speed gun is being tried on the Waitemata Harbour and Tamaki River by the A[RC] Harbour Patrol. The council's maritime coordinator and harbourmaster... said the gun should show boaters that it was serious about stopping offenders... Hauraki Gulf maritime agencies are [also] installing navigation lights in previously unlit waters as a safety measure for skippers of recreational craft. Solar-powered lights are being mounted on buoys in the Rangitoto, Motuihe and Tamaki River areas... in the upper Waitemata Harbour... and East Coast Bays... Ports of Auckland Ltd... will prepare the buoys, the... [ARC] will provide the lights[, which]... cost \$1000 each... and... Auckland Coastguard... will maintain the lights... About 80,000 recreational yachts and launches use Auckland coastal waters, with more boats joining the crowded waters each year.

...The A[RC] has asked Statistics N[Z] to include a question about boat ownership in the 2001 census to help to set safety standards... [for] the City of Sails... The council, using the 1981 census as a guide, believes there could be up to 100,000 boats – or one for every 10 people – in the area but wants more exact figures.

...A prominent boat designer says... lives could be saved if craft had to meet buoyancy and stability standards... [The retired Auckland] who spent nearly 50 years designing yachts and power boats... says the report into the capsizing of a Kaikoura Whale Watch boat, with the death of a Taiwanese tourist, highlights the need for safety regulations for all boats. "At the moment anyone can set up a business manufacturing boats and the public has no way of knowing whether they're safe,"... [120] people have drowned while using small boats in N[Z] waters between 1980 and 1996. A report by the Transport Accident Investigation Commission said that the Whale Watch boat Uruao capsized after... coming unstable when her buoyancy pontoons were ripped off. The Maritime Safety Authority says that it has checked all [of the country's] 12.6m craft like Uruao and found them sound in every respect and has reminded owners of the need for the highest standard of maintenance. But... the... [retiree said that m]any rigid-hull inflatable boats relied on their pontoons for stability... "If one of these pontoons is punctured it is like an aeroplane losing a wing." [The retiree] was also worried about the stability of many small open aluminium or fibreglass boats. Most were unstable with two or more people in them and sank quickly if swamped or capsized... [His] concerns are backed by the M[SA], which last year issued a marine notice warning about the instability of many small boats. The notice said that the buoyancy chambers fitted in many boats had drainage bungs which often leaked water. "This arrangement has caused a number of deaths," the notice said... [However, t]he Deputy Director of Maritime Safety... said that the authority did not intend setting buoyancy and stability regulations for recreational craft. I[nstead, i]t was... mounting a large public education campaign on the issue. The Boating Industries Association also rejects the idea of regulations, saying that voluntary codes are more effective. [The association's p]resident... said that the first voluntary code on small boat safety would be launched at a boat show in Auckland next week. The code would apply to N[Z]-built trailable power boats between 3.5m and 7.5m long and would not include buoyancy standards, [although the]... buoyancy issue would be reviewed in the next year. [The president] said that 11 manufacturers – or 80[%] of the major N[Z] producers – had agreed to meet the code.

...Professional seafarers are calling for compulsory licensing of amateur skippers and registration of their boats in the wake of a fatal collision in Wellington Harbour. The Merchant Services Guild, which represents ships' officers, says too many people sail small boats without knowing the basic rules of the sea. The union secretary... said the... collision between a container ship and a fishing boat highlighted the need for compulsory education. A Transport Accident Investigation Report, released on Friday, says, among other things, that the... collision between the Sydney Express and the trawler Maria Luisa would not have happened if the trawler and a yacht had been in the right place. Under international rules, vessels less than 20m in length must not get in the way of large vessels which have difficulty navigating narrow channels. "If the[yacht] Soundsgood and the Maria Luisa had been keeping to their own starboard [righthand] side of the channel or fairway then there would not have been any conflict..." the report says. [The union secretary] said ships' officers lived in constant fear of running down smaller craft. The problem was bad in Auckland, where the harbour was often full of people in pleasure boats, many of whom did not know that they should steer clear of ships. Often members piloting ships in the Rangitoto Channel late at night came across little boats with no navigation lights. "It's almost impossible to manoeuvre a big ship in conditions like that and we just have to hope they will move in time,"... The president of the Auckland Coastguard... said his organisation favoured education over regulation because of costs.

...A[US]n authorities, counting the huge cost of trying to rescue two stranded yachties, say... the solo round-the-world Vendee Globe race... route took the sailors too far into the stormy Southern Ocean. The French organisers of... the race... blame massive storms for blowing the yachts towards Antarctica. A[US] has mobilised four Air Force Orion, costing \$NZ260,000 a day... The frigate HMAS Adelaide is also on her way to the scene... to save... [a French sailor, who] is bobbing in a liferaft 1400 nautical miles south-west of the West A[US]n coastline in treacherous seas. The 29-year-old sent out a distress call on Sunday and was found clinging to the hull of his upturned yacht, Amnesty International, in crashing waves. After an earlier attempt failed, [the sailor] was able to get on a raft dropped to him early yesterday. The Orion dropped a sonar tracker buoy designed to drift next to the liferaft so it could be found quickly by... the Adelaide. [The second sailor]'s fate is still unknown, but there are hopes... the 56-year-old Briton is sheltering beneath his upturned Globe Exide Challenger... 1300 nautical miles south-west of Perth. Damage to the keel indicated... [his yacht] may have struck a submerged iceberg. The A[US]n Maritime Safety Authority, responsible for co-ordinating the rescue, has

urged the race organisers to set courses above the 50th parallel, and despite difficulties in enforcing any restrictions, will put the proposal to the International Yachting Federation. There is little else A[US] can do. It ratified the Law of the Sea in 1994, and is obliged under Article 98 to render assistance to ships in distress. The treaty also prevents governments from trying to recover the costs of any rescues. "We have that obligation, even though it is a long way from A[US] – and we can't forget that a couple of years ago the French Navy rescued one of our yacht[ies],"... said... the Minister for Defence Industry, Science and Personnel... "What price do you put on a life? If we don't go... they're dead."

...*Double rescue: Could we cope?* ...Not since the phenomenal storm which created havoc in the mid-Pacific in June 1994 have search and rescue authorities been tested as severely as they were this week – plucking two sailors from the Southern Ocean. By luck, and international convention, the responsibility and cost for the rescue... fell on A[US]. The crew from the Royal A[US]n Air Force and the frigate Adelaide are now celebrating a job well done, but A[US]n defence treasury officials will be looking at a bill approaching \$NZ1 million for Orion flying time alone. If [the sailors] had capsized in N[Z]'s vast search and rescue area, only a short distance to the east of their last-known positions, there is a good chance their rescues could have blown our entire 1997 search-and-rescue budget of just over \$1 million... [The Civil Aviation Authority's] search and rescue co-ordinator... says if the rescue had fallen on N[Z], our co-ordinators would have deployed exactly the same resources as A[US]. Air Force Orion aircraft carrying life-rafts and life-saving equipment would have been dispatched from Whenuapai Air Force base no more than five hours after receiving an emergency alert... [But t]he decision whether to send frigates would depend on the position and physical circumstances of the vessels in distress... [-] it may be easier and quicker to locate merchant ships to help if those in distress are close to recognised shipping lanes. In the cases of [the Vendee Globe sailors] who capsized around 52 degrees south, it is possible that help could have been obtained more quickly and economically by Antarctic research vessels in the area – rather than N[Z] vessels – although... a frigate remains on 24-hour standby expressly for search and rescue operations and, all going well, could be at sea within eight hours. With a range of 3000 miles at 20 knots, a frigate would have had little difficulty reaching [the sailor]s'... upturned yachts... [W]hen rescues are needed beyond the fuel range of frigates, the Navy tanker Endeavour would be dispatched as well – to refuel the frigates at sea... [The CAA co-ordinator says NZ] is a signatory to two international conventions which oblige us to give search and rescue assistance free of charge. There have been no cases that [the co-ordinator] is aware of where rescued parties have been charged. The media recently reported calls for user-charges to be imposed[, but]... these have not been discussed or considered by Civil Aviation authorities.

...[yesterday, a British sailor wa]s still experiencing the euphoria of his miraculous rescue from a watery death as [it] gleefully cut... a big hole in the bottom of his yacht – a task [the Brit] was too terrified to try at sea. This 'hull', however, is only a cake, baked in the shape of his capsized yacht Exide Challenger. It was given to him to celebrate the 58th birthday [the Brit didn't expect to] ever see... "No, I didn't think I'd be around for my next birthday,"... says[the Brit who, along with a French sailor, was]... plucked from the ocean during the Vendee Globe around-the-world solo yacht race by the HMAS Adelaide in a rescue mission that cost \$6 million. [The Brit]'s harrowing ordeal lasted five days. [The Brit] survived by lashing himself to netting in an air pocket in the upturned boat. "This cake is a marvellous gesture," [the Brit says as it] relaxes in the Perth home of [the local] British Consul-General... [The Brit] expects to remain in WA for at least two weeks. "The doctors have advised me not to return to England just yet..." Besides the inevitable mental scars, [the Brit] has lost part of his little finger after jamming it in a hatch. "My feet are the problem now," [the Brit] adds. Both are wrapped in bandages due to frostbite. [The Brit is also] having decompression treatment... [H]is beaming wife... is adamant about what's in store for the future. "I don't want him to go long-distance sailing again. I want to enjoy more of him, just like I am now... It might be [hi]s birthday, but I'm the one who has got the best present of all – I've got my old bulldog back!" The old bulldog laughs and promises [it] won't be so crusty any more. "I've become more human since the ordeal,"...

Taking the search out of search and rescue saves time, money and lives but many boaties still put to sea without emergency locator beacons that cost about as much as a fishing rod. The all-night search for [two]Wellington fishers... and their two sons off the Wairarapa coast illustrates the problem. Searchers say if the four carried a beacon, known as an EPIRB, their open dinghy would have been found hours earlier and spared taxpayers unnecessary Orion flying time. They would also have been rescued in relatively sheltered waters rather than the open sea which threatened to flip their boat. The benefit of beacons, particularly the more advanced 406 type, has been highlighted many times, particularly during the Southern Ocean rescue of [a British solo-]round-the-world sailor... Once activated, the beacons transmit a radio signal which is picked up by satellite and relayed to the closest Local User Terminal... N[Z]'s only terminal, at search and rescue headquarters in Wellington, not only alerts authorities that a vessel or aircraft is in distress but gives searchers an accurate position... [and] also allows searchers to access critical information. This may include the name of the vessel or aircraft in distress, the number of passengers and safety equipment on board, [which can] take much of the guesswork out of rescues. The cheaper and more common 121.5 beacon works on the same principle as the 406 type but does not provide [any additional] details... While not as accurate as the 406, the 121.5 beacon is capable of determining a vessel's location within a kilometre of its true position. That... means aircraft can fly directly to the vessel and assess how to assist without expensive and lengthy grid searches. The average 121.5 beacon retails for about \$300 but is just as effective off-shore as the 406 type, which costs about \$1500 – as was illustrated during the June 1994 Pacific storm, when at least 10 yachts were rescued as a direct result of activating beacons. All vessels and aircraft leaving N[Z] are now required to carry 121.5 beacons... [However, s]ome time after the year 2000 new satellites will receive on the 406 frequency only. By that time 406 beacons will be considerably cheaper... [The CAA] says all aircraft except single-seaters and gliders have been required to carry beacons since 1986. In the past year, search and rescue co-ordinators have detected 545 beacons, though the large majority, 386, have been of unknown origin. Most of those... can be put down to users testing their beacons or accidentally activating them, then turning them off. Beacons have, however, alerted rescue co-ordinators to genuine emergencies 39 times in the past 12 months, evenly divided between aircraft and vessels.

...*Cost of getting lost...* DoC's decision to pull out of... rescues on Mt Cook has raised questions about the state of N[Z]'s multi-million dollar search and rescue industry. In these days of user-pays, when more people are taking advantage of the great outdoors, who picks up the pieces when a sojourn turns to disaster? Who will come when a distress call is made and, just as important, who will pick up the tab? In most cases, it is not the fallen victims but the taxpayer. Rescue operations, costing more than \$22 million annually, come to the aid of more than 9500 people each year – from lost trampers and climbers to distressed sailors and pilots. Only a few of the groups are government-financed, such as police and defence, plus the C[AA]. DoC was funded for search and rescue services until last year. They formed part of DoC's \$24.97 million deal with the Government in 1994-95, which also covered providing facilities such as recreational huts and campgrounds. But search and rescue services were left off the list of responsibilities last year when the money was cut to \$20.6 million. Last month, DoC pulled out of body recoveries on Mt Cook – the only place where it had primary responsibility for the task – and it will end links with search and rescue operations in June. The ramifications of DoC's new direction hit last weekend when the body of a German tourist, Joachim Gottfried Anton Noeth (46), of Cologne, was not retrieved from the Tasman Glacier for 17 hours. [Joachim] had fallen 150m to his death... [after stepping] on to the edge of a moraine wall to take a photograph. [In futur]e, DoC staff will be allowed to assist police only as volunteers. Police say they are financed to co-ordinate search and rescues only, not carry them out. The burden is likely to fall on volunteers, who already make a huge and hidden contribution... Rescues in N[Z] are graded according to their seriousness and the parties involved. The first, class I, is looked after by police using their own resources. This could be a missing toddler or elderly person. Rescues on a larger scale, class II, see the police receiving help from outside experts such as Coastguard or search and rescue teams. But they still control and have overall responsibility for the operation. This could be a missing tramp or fisher... close to the shore. In class III rescues, responsibility for... provid[ing] a 24-hour service to cover... international-type operations is handed to the Wellington National Rescue Co-

ordination Centre. This government-financed service – run by the C[AA] as a separate business unit – covers missing or distressed aircraft, sea vessels and all other operations where emergency locator beacons are activated. In the last financial year, it responded to 557 incidents and saved 62 lives at a cost of \$1.08 million for 1494 hours of work. Another 11 people died. That was roughly the same budget as the year before. This[financial] year, the authority forecasts 470 search and rescues – or 1765 hours of work – at a cost to taxpayers of \$1.1 million. But the budget is limitless. If the centre needs more money, it asks the Government... But most of its time – 80[%] – is spent chasing false alarms, similar to overseas rates... In the past, beacons have mainly been carried on ships and aircraft but they are now available to trampers and climbers. Carrying and activating a beacon is a guarantee that someone will come looking for you, says [a NRCC spokesperson]. “This place will respond as soon as it gets a transmission. We would mount an aeroplane with a detector... If they couldn’t do the job, we call in the Air Force.” ...A total of 672 people were rescued in the past year by the network known as N[Z] Land Search and Rescue. Another 61 people died. The network is an independent organisation made up of police, DoC, mountain and caving experts. It is called in by police to deal with class II emergencies and, where necessary, class III... The most likely group to need to call on the service is... [guys – five to every gal] – in their 20s, who made up 346 of the total rescued. Victims could be trampers, climbers or cavers and are most likely to have fractures. Last year, 13% of victims were from overseas. Land search and rescues cost the police \$1,139,747 last year, which comes out of their general operations budget. The average bill for a mission is \$2863 but that is not a true cost... Last year, \$8388 was paid to volunteers who worked 22,011 hours – a meagre 38c an hour... Volunteers can apply for reimbursement for lost wages and damaged equipment but few do. “That’s the nature of volunteers and we appreciate it very much...” The search and rescue bill included \$348,720 for hiring commercial helicopters, a total of 362.5 hours. That was on top of the cost of their police helicopter – \$30,771 for 23 hours. Air Force helicopters provided another 147 flying hours, worth around \$102,900, which comes from the defence budget. Police also paid \$1877 for hiring a commercial fixed-wing aircraft (10.5 hours) and \$1340 for a commercial vessel (2.5 hours). The police gave a \$103,000 grant to Land Search and Rescue, \$50,000 to the Coastguard Federation and \$9000 to the Amateur Radio Emergency Corps. Community-based search and rescue teams continue to struggle. A South Westland unit recently spent around \$13,000 rescuing one lost and sick trampler from the Haast region. That was \$3000 more than the grant it received from the police, which is supposed to last the year... Thousands of people owe their lives to surf lifesavers who drag or tow them out of perilous waters. Most rescues happen in Auckland, the water leisure capital... The most common group rescued are dubbed “the invincibles” – young [guys] in their teens and early 20s, who also figure prominently in drowning statistics. Alcohol is a factor. But children caught out of their depth in holes or on boogie boards and elderly people having heart attacks are also regular customers. The funding the surf clubs receive from the people they rescue is minimal. “Most people... that... are saved[say:] ‘thanks very much, see you later’...” Although services have never really been costed, a rescue by inflatable boat would be worth several hundred dollars, once the cost of equipment and training is considered. A rescue by a tube would cost around \$100. Two-thirds of the funding for the \$3 million operation is provided by the Lottery Grants Board. The rest comes from corporate sponsors and public funding. Surf lifesavers aren’t about to ask rescued victims to pull out their wallets. If the national body lost its funding, it would more likely ask all beachgoers for a service fee, rather than charge for each rescue... Beyond the surfline is the Coastguard’s domain. The 53-unit organisation patrols the sea within 16km of the beach, as well as Lakes Rotorua and Taupo. The volunteers respond to 2600 callouts a year – about one in five are requests for help from the police. In those cases, the police refund fuel at \$100 an hour... In many cases, it is small ill-equipped boats that need rescuing, or ones that have broken down. Last year, 5000 people were pulled to safety. They are not charged for the service and neither will they be in future. [Its c]hief executive... says turning into a user-pays service goes against the Coastguard Federation’s philosophy. “We can’t because we are a voluntary group with a charitable status. If you charge, you lose status and can’t get grants made to you.” The L[GB] provides \$1.3 million of the operation’s \$2.5 million total cost. The rest has to be raised by individual units. [Despite the shortfall], the coastguard is working towards upgrading its fleet so it can do class III rescues... Meanwhile, [two more]... accidents involving tourists in adventure activities have prompted fresh calls for stricter safety standards in the industry. Eleven people – including four children – had to jump from a jet boat after it sank while on a tourist trip on the Waikato River recently. And a 20-year-old Canadian... was badly injured in a bungi-jumping accident in Queenstown when [the tourist] plunged 40m into the Shotover River – less than a month after an English[tourist] was seriously injured when bungi-jumping from the Kawarau River bridge... Despite the latest injuries, N[Z has] a relatively low accident record in adventure tourism compared with overseas... [Even so, t]he Minister of Tourism... [has] called for an urgent update on progress in introducing codes of practices to the industry... Some sectors of the booming adrenalin-rush business already have their own codes. Bungi-jumping has had its own transtasman-wide voluntary code of practice since 1992 and the M[SA] monitors jet-boating and white-water rafting... The Adventure Tourism Council increased its push for operators to adopt codes of practice that include safety standards last April, following a series of fatal accidents involving adventure activities in the previous months. It has since introduced a voluntary code of practice covering the country’s up to 500 horse-trekking operators as a trial programme. The Tourism Board supports the initiative. If it proves successful, similar codes will be established for... activities such as... sea kayaking and paragliding... Operators also fear the possibility they could be sued for negligence, as happened to a Queenstown rafting company two years ago after the death of a British tourist. Developing standards for the adventure tourism industry is a huge task, with new activities starting up all the time... [The minister] said adventure tourism... is a powerful drawcard for visitors to N[Z]... However, the popularity of adventure tourism has not pleased everyone. A British teacher and his wife travelling in the South Island were horrified to discover “the ugly and threatening phenomenon that we had previously overlooked: the adventure tourist” while visiting Queenstown. [The teacher] wrote recently in the *Weekly Telegraph*: “[The typical adventure tourist]... is the baggy-trousered, reversed-baseball-capped one to whom every bridge is a ‘choice’ bungi-jumping opportunity, every river an ‘awesome’ chance to raft the white waters, and every piece of sky is to be dived out of... [T]he country’s most scenic town... ha[s] become the playground for an army of 20-ish hedonists... Adventure tourism may not harm the environment, but it devalues the area for anyone who does not choose to spend most of their time treating it as a giant theme park designed solely to facilitate their shallow desire for the latest adrenalin rush.”

...I FIND this time of year, which should be delightful because of long days with a reasonable amount of sun, infuriating because of the harebrained activities of people with too much time on their hands and a self-destructive urge to wind up the level of danger in their environment. We already live in conditions that are risky enough for normal tastes. We’re in constant danger of being wiped out by comets and asteroids, for a start. Then there’s earthquakes, tidal waves, fires, cyclones and the ultraviolet rays from the sun. And there’s constant pressure from the merchants and lobbyists of death to get us involved in war. We’ve got diseases coming at us from every direction. The bugs that cause them have adapted to the stage where they love having antibiotics for breakfast. Even our sex lives condemn large numbers of us to death from Aids. We travel to and from work in cars and on motorcycles, at speeds which turn a moment’s inattention into mutilating death by decapitation, evisceration and other distressing forms of mutilation. From time to time we get into airliners which when they go wrong do the mutilating even faster, in greater numbers and more spectacularly. I make a good case, I think, for rating the life of the common homo sapien inescapably dangerous. We don’t have to go far to find danger. But everyday danger is not enough for the lunatic segment that can’t resist pervertedly seeking it out. Worse of all, these idiots create danger for the people who have to rescue them from the consequences of their folly. We have people roping themselves together and climbing up snow-covered rocks on the sides of mountains when there’s no good reason for doing so. If mountains were in the habit of concealing gold or diamond deposits I could understand it, but there’s nothing on top of the things except more rock and more snow. Other people get into little boats that are only just seaworthy, and head for the horizon because they get an adrenalin rush from the thought of pitting themselves against all that water and wind. Still others go hang-gliding, or tie elastic around their silly ankles and jump off high places

because they enjoy the thrill of thinking that the rope might break. People jump out of perfectly good aeroplanes that are in no danger of crashing, keeping their fingers crossed that their parachutes will open before they strike the ground. Parachutes were invented for one purpose: To save the lives of people trapped in aeroplanes about to fall out of the sky, not to provide unwholesome excitement for watchers on the ground wondering if this is the time when a jumper will hit the deck with a loud bang. These are just a few of the silly things that... people... [do which] cause me and other taxpayers to fork out our hard-earned dollars to finance the rescues. As reported in this newspaper last week, the taxpayer picks up a \$22 million yearly bill for rescues. Some of it is for extricating people from dangers that overtook them through no fault of their own, but far too much of it goes on plucking people out of dangerous situations they deliberately put themselves in... My musings on the costs of rescues usually reduce me to smouldering resentment. What brings me to the boil is calculating the extra cost of repairing the damage these clowns do to themselves and others. They break legs, arms, ribs, heads, and sometimes turn themselves into paraplegics. Off they go to hospital and occupy beds for weeks, months, years or the rest of their lives. All at my expense, whether it's through the public cost of the rescue services, the health service billions, accident compensation or higher private insurance premiums. Now this needn't happen. I have a foolproof plan, called user-pays, to stop it. We'll never stop people taking unnecessary risks, but we should make them pay for it themselves. Under my scheme, everyone who wants to put themselves in unnecessary danger would be required by law to put up a bond, to insure themselves and their likely rescuers, against the consequences of their folly. No bond deposited and registered, no rescue. Sorry about that... But so[meone]... is eventually going to pay for the damage, and who better than the people who initiate it? ...The premiums would be high... for anyone setting out to climb a mountain... or take part in a motor race. They'd be moderately high for anyone wanting to play rugby[, and low for anyone who performs safer leisure activities like the arts].

...According to Whitecliffe College of Art and Design administrators, there are around 27,000 arts-related businesses in N[Z – of which 88% are]... directly involved with private enterprise... This situation has prompted the Auckland college to offer an MA in Arts Administration. The course has been developed to provide business-related knowledge and skills from the perspective of the arts... with a strong emphasis on entrepreneurial arts management. Keen interest has been shown from people with backgrounds in theatre, film, visual arts, dance, music, advertising, craft, design, art dealing... museum work, photographic agencies, writers, as well as other cultural... industries.

...*Old-style art still holds all the fun of the circus*... If you think your job is interesting, consider a day in the life of [one Russian]. Belly dancing elephants, Olympic gymnasts and former government officials are just some of the employees on the Russian[']s... staff. As financial vice-president of one of her country's most esteemed institutions – the Moscow State Circus Company – [the Russian reckons it] has one of the best jobs around. Not that it is exactly the institution it once was. In Auckland this week to tee-up a three-centre tour of the... [company, the Russian] happily explained through an interpreter the struggles [it] now faces trying to ensure such an old-fashioned art form survives in the post-communist age... [S]ince the break-up of the... Soviet Union... the former... junior clerk in the Ministry of Culture – the Government body originally responsible for... cultural organisations, including the Bolshoi Ballet... theatres, galleries and museums... [-] has been given the job of establishing the circus as a commercial, independent company. No longer given free access to the state's coffers, the company is 70[%] reliant on outside revenue to pay its bills. [4%] of Russians' taxes is set aside for cultural organisations, and of that, 7[%] is available for the circus – about \$22 million a year. The money helps maintain a property portfolio of 40 huge buildings designed for shows and a staff of about 10,000 people, a third of whom are performers. It also enables the company to run specialist academies for performing arts and sports, and helps feed and house numerous animals. [Before the collapse of the Soviet Union], visiting the circus was almost compulsory, and ticket prices were tightly controlled so as to be affordable for everyone. However, in the post-perestroika period the company has been forced to raise its prices. Competition from television and other forms of entertainment is increasing, and generally tough times face most Russians, so audiences are smaller. Nevertheless, [the financial vice-president] remains confident the circus will always have a place in most Russians' hearts. It will also continue to tour, as about half of its income comes from international audiences. Eventually, [the vice-president] hopes, merchandising will also provide the company with steady revenue.

...*REVIEW – [New CD-ROM] Music Works 2... liberates composers from notational tedium*... It can't supply the inspiration but... [w]ith... Music Works 2... you can write music from simple Tin Pan Alley ditties... through to full symphonic scores like Beethoven's. Installation is easy enough and it comes with a built-in tutorial. The moment of truth comes, though, when you sit down in front of it and start to churn out that number one-with-a-bullet chart topper you've always had in mind. How easy is it? Very easy indeed. The screen comes up with a blank piano score. This can be modified and set up to suit whatever sort of music you have in mind, be it piano trio, tin whistle and organ duet or an opera. Drop down palettes supply the type of note you want. You click on the minim, crochet or whatever length note you want and then click the cross hairs on the score where you want it to go. There are menus for speed indications (Allegro, Largo, etc) and dynamics (fortissimo, pianissimo etc). Notes can be tied, slurred or dotted by clicking and dragging. Lyrics can be added... Any standard musical notation can be written. Once the sonata, concerto, trio or pop tune is finished... the magnum opus can... be played back and recorded... [u]sing appropriate MIDI cards and drivers... Some composers who write music on computers in this way have told me they find it frustrating in that it is too easy to go back and modify things. They spend a lot of time fine tuning and fiddling with the music rather than letting it be as they would if they had written it on paper... Price (including GST): \$110...

Price to pay for funding by the book When I plucked the local paper from our North Shore letterbox recently, I was distressed to read the headline "User-pay bid for libraries." My hands trembling, I stood at the top of the drive and scanned the article – the news was all bad. Apparently the North Shore City Council has begun a funding review which has founded its initial focus on free public libraries on the Shore. As I read on, I became aware that the minds of city councillors move in mysterious and boorish ways. In determining ratios of "appropriate funding," the council, ensconced in its lofty Temple of Higher Thought, has tried to define the public benefits versus the private benefits from each service that it funds. My eyes boggled at the dubious logic. Whereas swimming pools and fitness centres had both been set at a 20[%] public benefit and an 80[%] private benefit, libraries were deemed to hold a 65[%] public benefit... The inference from this would appear to support free public or business access to libraries... With a family of five, we can sometimes have up to 50 books out on issue at any one time. These books... form an indispensable part of our [lives]... I've always encouraged our children to read for pleasure and borrow books to research their hobbies and school projects. Whenever my husband wrings his hands about the excessive rates we pay, I have always shrugged my shoulders and reminded him that we have an excellent library service. Now it seems that my platitudes could be rendered meaningless. Primary, secondary and tertiary students who use local libraries to borrow material, access the reference collections and study in peace may now find themselves paying a high price for the privilege. While the council is bemoaning the \$8 million expenditure of our public library service, it is loath to prune its own bureaucratic inefficiencies or their public expenditure on private council functions. Free public libraries have become a treasured N[Z] heritage. The council should remember that it is empowered by the will of the people. When Marie Antoinette denied the people bread and proffered cake instead, a revolution took place. If the council refuses us books and offers fitness centres instead, it may find itself facing a similar fate.

...['About 300 staff will lose their jobs in the third round of restructuring at the Wellington City Council. The layoffs will occur in libraries, city works and the city and suburban offices where members of the public do all their council business. The council chief executive has promised that the public will get better services and ratepayers will get a cheaper deal. Libraries were closed and services reduced yesterday morning as the 800 staff involved were told about their future. The 220 librarians are hardest hit in the restructuring, which will cost \$4 million there alone, with the hope of savings of \$2.2 million a year. Only 93 full-time positions will remain. It is understood the libraries will replace permanent staff with casuals, who do not have to be paid sick leave or overtime. The announcement follows the axing of 240 of 420 jobs in the environment division and administration and support services over the past two years. The council restructuring is taking its toll on staff morale and has been directly linked to the suicide of a worker last November.' Incidentally, t]he

Auckland City Council officials who recommended that the Grey Lynn Library be closed had just two weeks to come up with a plan to cut the libraries' operating budget. Their report to the council's combined budget committee recommends closure of the library on Great North Rd that has served Grey Lynn since 1924. They hope the move will prune the libraries' budget by 4.11[%]. The budget is under pressure partly because of a modest increase in staff to cope with demand in excess of population growth. The... Save Grey Lynn Library group, which in 1990 fought off a similar council bid, is holding a public meeting on Thursday in the Westmere School hall. Critics of the lack of resources in the city's western suburbs were quick to point out yesterday that Grey Lynn Library was threatened at a time when the council was building a \$1.2 million replacement library for Epsom in Manukau Rd... The author of the report, [the]city librarian... said yesterday that cutting the budget was difficult and Grey Lynn had been chosen ahead of others because the area was not growing as quickly as others... [(the Epsom Library)] would be in one of the fastest-growing areas in the city[)]. Grey Lynn's]... proximity to the Pt Chevalier, Ponsonby and central city libraries was also a factor. - 1997

The Auckland City Council officially begins a new 10-year budget today where core services like parks, libraries, swimming pools and footpaths will be cut, reduced or deferred. [The]Finance committee... said yesterday that the council would have to make some unpopular decisions...

The cost-cutting council of Auckland... is looking to save \$65,000 by axing a mobile library service used by elderly residents. The library visits 18 resthomes and 31 pensioner villages as well as making two street stops every one or two weeks. It issued 37,000 books in the past year, at a cost of \$80,000. For the second year running the council has targeted the elderly to save money. Last year it sold pensioner houses and raised rents just before the sale. A budget report to be considered by councillors this week says the mobile library was a relatively high-cost service used by fewer numbers of mostly elderly people. A second mobile library was closed three years ago. [The]library manager... recommended "retiring" the service and using \$15,000 to extend a homebound service... [(performed largely by volunteers)]... to 115 people in resthomes who cannot get to a library.

...If you borrow... a book from a library this year – you're in good company. A total of 34 million items were borrowed from the country's 15 largest public libraries alone last year... "The figures clearly indicate that libraries continue to play an important role in peoples' lives," says... [a] spokesperson for MetroNet – the incorporated society of large metropolitan libraries serving populations of 50,000 or more. "N[Z]ers are using their libraries as much as ever. Whether it is to borrow books, magazines, CDs or videos, or to use the Internet or other web-based resources, libraries are continuing to fulfil the recreation and information needs of their users."

...Universities say million-dollar cuts to their libraries have depleted the country's knowledge banks and threaten N[Z]'s bid to become a knowledge economy. University libraries have had to make huge cuts in journal subscriptions in the past three years because of a lack of Government funding... and a 30[%] increase in the cost of publications. The Council of N[Z] University Librarians... said university libraries provided specialist journals used for research by academics, scientists, public libraries and crown institutes. "The information held in this country is dwindling. A huge amount of knowledge is no longer available and we will never be able to replace it,"... The libraries import more than 98[%] of their books, journals and databases to keep up with international research... Canterbury University had cancelled about 1000 journals this year, slashing \$1 million or 20[%] from its journals budget... [Despite being] rescued with a 25[%] budget increase this year... Victoria University... had had to cut \$500,000-worth of journal titles – about 800... Waikato University had lost 1330 journals... but had increased its electronic databases... The Vice-Chancellors Committee... chair[person]... said the A[US]n Vice-Chancellors Committee had offered N[Z] the opportunity to become part of a national electronic database licence, which gives libraries access to the database at a cost of \$5 million a year. [Editor's note: 'Pergamos had one of the most famous libraries in the world. It contained no fewer than 200,000 books, an immense number in an age when every book had to be written and copied by hand. So close was the connection to Pergamos with literary activity that the word *parchment* is in fact derived from the name *Pergamos*. *Parchment*, or, as it is sometimes called, *vellum*, was a writing material made from the skins of animals. All the great New Testament manuscripts are written on it. Its original name was *he Pergamene charta*, which means the Pergamene sheet. Prior to the invention and manufacture of parchment the main writing material was *papyrus*, which was manufactured from the pith of a bulrush growing almost exclusively on the banks of the Nile.']

...Since... New Zealand's Toy Library Federation... started in Hamilton back in 1972, just over 200 libraries have sprouted all over New Zealand. Parents can take their kids along and, in return for a small fee, borrow a different toy each week. "Kids tend to grow in and out of toys so quickly... This is an opportunity to get access to a wide range of toys across the whole of a child's development without breaking the bank."

...Toys, toys everywhere, plenty of room to play. West Auckland Toy Library is buzzing as soon as it opens. As one of the biggest and longest running in N[Z], the toy library just keeps growing, particularly since it moved into its spacious premises in Green Bay last year. Good, quality toys are a luxury rather than a necessity for many families, so the library provides hired items including videos, puzzles, games, audio tapes with books, puppets and dress-up costumes. [The library's p]resident... says they now have 250 families and whenever they get funding, they can increase their membership. "We've started shopping now following an ASB Trust grant for \$9000... It's just what we needed. We're the only one in Auckland that doesn't have a waiting list." The toy library is also dependent on volunteer help by its members... "There aren't enough toy libraries in Auckland and people are trying to start them up but it's a lot of work. There's a new one in Helensville and there are plans for one in Te Atatu."

...Five-year-old twins... are engrossed in racing their plastic tricycles around the room, while a little girl seems happy with her activity zoo. These are just some of the play things sure to set children's eyes dancing in the newly established Te Atatu Toy Library, which opens this Friday... Local families should warmly welcome the new service, as the next closest toy libraries are in Green Bay and Mt Albert. Demand in those areas is so great that people often have to wait up to nine months to become members. Green Bay Toy Library owns about 1000 toys and serves about 250 families, but Te Atatu only has enough toys to cater for about 12 families at the moment... T[he t]oy buyer... says the library – aimed at babies and toddlers under five years old – is starting out small but wants to expand as soon as more funding comes through... Some of the toys are incredibly expensive, like a baby's 'exasaucer' with a retail price of \$170... Committee members are looking to buy more ride-on tractors, building blocks and action figures through charitable grants and fundraising, but will also accept second-hand toys. "We'll take anything and just use it as best we can, whether that means selling it or keeping it,"... It costs \$80 a year to join the library, or \$40 for members who take turns to help run the library. Half-price concession rates are available for community service card holders. On top of membership fees, there is also a small charge of 50c or \$2 per toy to borrow it for two weeks... The national toy libraries federation motto is Let The Children Play... "Play is such an important avenue for children,"... says... [the federation's f]undraising and publicity officer[, who]... wears a couple of federation hats as a board member and toy buyer.

...Children are not learning to play imaginatively because they are inundated with toys, according to research. A US study shows playthings and games could even be restricting their development. It concluded youngsters, particularly those under five, are not being stimulated by the range of toys available and suggested children from affluent homes are more likely to suffer. [The c]hildhood development researcher... whose work was funded by the US Government, says her studies showed giving children too many toys or toys of the "wrong type", which do not promote imaginative play, could actually do them harm. "They get overwhelmed and cannot concentrate on any one thing long enough to learn from it."

...Primary schools are moving to ban another kids toy craze, saying they are too dangerous to be in playgrounds. The Yo-Yo Ball is the latest craze to hit schools with kids finding them easy to buy because of their cheap cost. The Minister of Consumer affairs... has already issued caution over the toy following a ban in the United Kingdom. Public warnings against using the toy have been made in Germany, Sweden, the USA and Canada. "The Yo-Yo Ball can pose a hazard if it is whirled and the extended strap wraps around a child's throat," says [the minister]. "They can wrap very tightly and be difficult to remove." The Yo-Yo Ball is a little smaller than a tennis ball, is made from soft rubber material and filled with liquid. They are covered in small nodules and have a stretchy rubber strap with a finger loop at the end. The material is highly elastic and can

stretch from 250mm in its resting state, to over one and a half metres. Between 30,000 and 45,000 Yo-Yo Balls were imported recently into N[Z]. The principal of] Glendene Primary... is hoping the craze bypasses her school. "I guess the[manufacturers we]re thinking of the fun children will have with them before really trialing them out," [the principal] says. To date there have been no reported incidents of injury in N[Z]. An additional concern however is the Yo Yo Balls kerosene odour, which may indicate the possibility of toxic content. The Yo-Yo Ball craze follows the Yu Gi Oh swap card game craze which has been banned from most West Auckland schools because of schoolyard thuggery.

...The Yu Gi Oh game cards [we]re blamed for a sudden spate of intimidation, bullying and extortion among primary pupils... Yu Gi Oh is based around a character called Yugi and his friends. Yugi's grandfather manages a gaming shop and introduces him to an ancient Egyptian card fighting game called "Duel Monsters." The game pits mystical creatures against one another, but only one can be called "Yu Gi Oh," King of Games... Children buy game characters in packs of 50 cards for around \$15. They then sell the cards onto their friends for more or less money depending on its popularity. It's the act of trading that... caus[ed] problems in the school grounds... Pomaria Primary[']s acting principal... says the school has sent a strong message to homes in the school newsletter. Despite being banned the cards have been at the bottom of a recent spate of playground troubles. "We have told the children not to bring them to school, but if parents are not informed then nothing changes,"... Laingholm Primary[']s principal... banned the cards from his school only last week after a short trial period. "Usually, when something like this happens kids spend lots of money on these cards, so they end up flogging them off and often bullying and leaning on other kids to sell up... We don't want to ban all kiddy things, so we told the children they could have them but the moment we hear of trading and hassles they will be banned."

...Hard-hearted thieves have pinched a school's "Friendship Seat"... The loss has deeply upset staff and pupils alike at close-knit Laingholm Primary, where the macrocarpa seat acted as a play-ground "ice-breaker" for kids who felt out in the cold. The heavyweight seat set in concrete came as the result of a... Waitakere Community Board grant. [The p]rincipal... says the theft has baffled the school. The macrocarpa seat... had recently been uplifted to make room to expand the adventure playground – but it still needed three or four [guys] to lift it. "Someone must have come into the school with a trailer. What sort of mean spirited person would flog a seat?" ...Waitakere[']s Mayor... pledged \$250... for a new seat.

...after the cruel theft of Laingholm Primary School's Friendship Seat, it now has a new one thanks to a generous community. The seat helps children, who are lonely or sad, during play time. By sitting on the seat other children come and talk to them and include them in their games. [The school's p]rincipal... says thanks to [the Waitakere City Council]'s mayoral fund, parents and Nature's Edge Furniture, the school now has a bigger, better seat made out of large macrocarpa slabs. "It's much more kid friendly – it can hold 4-5-6-7 of them, it's much bigger. It's great!"

...40[%] of US elementary schools have eliminated play time over the last 20 years, so they could squeeze in more classroom time... [P]layground equipment has al[so] been removed because of concerns over children's safety and fear of lawsuits... [In local news,] for about 40 years a rope swing in various forms has dangled from a pohutukawa branch overhanging the small beach at Jenkins Bay... During summer high tides it gives youngsters the bonus of being able to splash down over shallow water. [But] recently the swing has fallen [into disrepair, causing Waitakere City Council officials t]o fear someone may get hurt. They [also thought] the tree could be damaged by the rope rubbing... [The chairperso]n of the South Titirangi Residents and Ratepayers Association, said the swing was removed by a council worker late last summer. "We were mystified at the swing's disappearance. No one consulted [u]s about it... A council worker defended its removal by saying 'you can't engineer a tree'. When I asked for the bits of swing back, [the worker] said it had been thrown away." ...a residents' meeting... [suggested putting a swing] back on the tree... – and "someone" did... It was not as cleverly designed as the previous swing, which had features such as cable sheathed in plastic hose to avoid rubbing on the branch. "But it does the trick..." ...the residents had appealed to councillors reviewing the management of foreshore reserves to allow a swing on the tree. But [they] feared the response would be installing a standard playground steel swing on a bark safety pad, which would spoil the simple nature of the reserve... [The chairperso]n of the council's community facilities and recreation committee, said the swing could be returned... But the council's parks and reserves manager... said it would be "bad practice" for staff to allow tree swings because of the risks to trees and people. Any swings found would be removed.

...My daughter nearly died falling from a SWING... One Thursday afternoon two months ago [a]Wellington nine-year-old... and her friend... decided to venture down a steep damp track in a Stokes Valley gully and play on a rope swing which had been put up by local children eight years ago. Concealed from the road in a small area of bush, not all the youngsters living in the area knew the swing was there and it had been almost six months since the Tui Glen School pupils had used it. [The nine-year-old] took the first swing on the rope to check that it was safe. "[My friend] says I swung twice but... I can't remember," says the nine-year-old... who was holding on to the fraying rope when it suddenly snapped, sending her hurtling 30m into the bottom of the bush-covered gully... Emergency services were called and because of the difficulty of getting to [the girl], firefighters taking equipment to paramedics were forced to slide down the damp incline using ropes... A helicopter flew [the girl] to Wellington Hospital and doctors told her worried parents that their daughter had a brain injury and fractured skull. [The girl] had surgery to minimise damage caused by the fall. Then, with her brain pressure fluctuating, [the girl] was kept in a drug-induced coma for 12 days. "...The doctors... gave her a 50/50 chance... People were so good to us. The word went out and we had friends bringing us meals at home and there were even prayers said for [our daughter] as far away as Dubai." Thankfully [the girl] woke from her coma... and so far it appears [the nine-year-old] has suffered no permanent damage. Her parents... don't blame anyone for the accident but they do advise parents to make regular safety checks on home-made swings. ● [A young west Auckland girl recently died in hospital from head injuries it sustained after falling from a local playground climbing structure.]

...A Christian youth camp fined \$20,000 after a schoolboy hurt himself on a slide has warned other camps and groups to insure themselves against playground accidents. Christian Youth Camps in Ngaruawahia was fined in the Hamilton District Court after the 10-year-old fell down a waterslide while on a school trip. The camp pleaded guilty to failing to ensure the boy's safety. [The j]udge... ordered that the fine be paid to the victim... who injured his head and neck in the accident... [The boy] landed on a chain placed across the bottom of the waterslide to deter unsupervised use. Occupational Safety and Health... believed the fine was one of the highest in N[Z] for this type of incident. The maximum fine is \$50,000. The incident was taken very seriously because it was the second of its kind at the camp. Camp managers had not removed the chain after the first incident... The chair[person]n of the Christian Youth Camps council... said the camp was covered by liability insurance. It had expected to be fined \$8000... [The chairperson] understood the court had fined a Waihi mine \$20,000 two or three months ago after the death of a worker. "The comparison doesn't quite seem fair to me,"... The boy's father... said his son could have died... [and] was no longer the same child. His reactions had slowed, [the boy] slept longer and sometimes stared blankly at the ceiling. His movements were limited and [the boy] could no longer play rugby.

...[NZ's] seven major... playground manufacturers have formed an association and voluntarily adopted Canadian guidelines... for safety standards amid fears that local regulations are endangering children. [One m]anufacturer... says there is nothing in local regulations prohibiting gaps in equipment which children could get their heads, feet or fingers caught in. There also need to be rules preventing protruding objects on which youngsters could hurt their eyes or cut themselves, and signs to indicate what ages equipment is appropriate for. "Children probably aren't going to die from these problems, but we are concerned..." ...[a p]layground safety expert... says the standard of playgrounds has improved considerably in 20 years. But because the amount of equipment has trebled, injuries are still on the rise. In 1981, only 12[%] of playgrounds had impact-absorbing mats or bark which could prevent concussion, compared with 80[%] in 1997. However, some very old and dangerous playgrounds are still in existence – including the one [the expert] played on as a child more than 40 years ago... [By the way, 'in most animals, youth is a time of learning – by trial and error, by imitation and in the sheer delight of play' – but a] court in northern Switzerland has ordered a local

playground be dismantled after neighbours complained the children were making too much noise... The children's shouts and laughter were judged to be "unacceptable noise emissions" under environmental law... court officials say.

...Residents of Ranui's Coroglen subdivision want to pull the plug on a local playground. The playground, on a small reserve in the middle of the high density housing area, sometimes attracts a great number of children who residents say are noisy and abusive. Problems with the Corran reserve playground were first raised [last year at a] meeting of the Massey Community Board. Residents cited concerns with noise, people hanging around and climbing upon the play equipment and looking into neighbouring properties. The board decided to lower the height of the play equipment but residents now say that's not enough. They told last week's board meeting they want the play equipment removed... The board wants a survey of the 100 or so homes in the area reported back to its [next] meeting – but that doesn't satisfy the residents. "A survey will be lost because it is only about 25 to 30 houses that have the problem, the others are not affected,"... The playground was installed by developer Universal Homes, which says it won't remove the equipment because it complies with Waitakere Council requirements... [But one c]ouncilor... says the amount of play equipment is not in proportion to the size of the park. "It is not a big enough reserve for that equipment. It was a blunder on someone's behalf..." ...The council estimates it will have to spend about \$8000 to remove and relocate the equipment, but residents say they will do it for much less.

...Having an adventure playground just metres from their houses is not a dream come true for a group of Ranui residents – it disrupts their lifestyles and they want it removed. They bought houses in the Coroglen area with the belief the then empty reserve was "passive", says [the resident] who lives closest to the playground. But within six months of moving to the cluster housing development, [the resident] got home from work one day to find a very active playground being built. In just days the new adventure playground, which... is "squashed onto the size of a stamp", was attracting more than 20 children during the day and well into the night... "I just want to be able to go home and relax and I can't. As a health professional I get concerned for the little ones I see on the playground alone." [A f]ellow resident... says a lot of children from out of the area play in the reserve. "The children that live in the estate won't play in the playground because they're afraid of kids from out of the area." Another resident... says the value of his house has diminished since the playground was established, and the area has become more of a "ghetto" with the Ranui community constable... called in regularly to handle problems among the children. [However, the community constable] says the playground is like any other – as are the children who play on it. "Kids are going to be kids... I think some of the less tolerant people have a bit of a problem with the playground." The playground was built under the subdivision process to meet the local children's needs, says a council parks and reserves manager. It was only since the playground became council property that it needs to go through the community board processes. More than 10 Coroglen residents attended the Massey Community Board meeting last week to give their support to the issue, and said they will pay for the \$3000 removal cost if necessary... A recent study into Coroglen's housing shows residents feel negative about high density housing. The study is part of the Auckland Regional Council's regional Growth Strategy, and researched five areas in Auckland including Coroglen. The collective results[were] published in last week's regional council Strategy Policy Committee meeting... "Overall both residents and neighbours are reasonably satisfied with the good look and feel of their communities and sense of community, but less satisfied with their ability to influence decisions about the area... [R]esidents were less satisfied with the access to outdoor open space, such as parks and reserves," says the report... ■

...200 storks migrating from Europe to Africa flew to their deaths in Israel[after] landing in an acid-filled pool of waste outside a chemical plant... [Manukau City Council] planners have finally given up hope of turning one of Auckland's most polluted waterways into an aquatic wonderland... Lake Otara... is contaminated with heavy metals from industrial stormwater discharges and probably sewage from residential stormwater... Manukau City Council has concluded that no amount of money will make [the l]ake safe for swimming – despite ambitious plans in the 1960s to turn the area into a swimming and boating playground for residents. Instead, the council has settled on a draft budget of more than \$4.5 million over the next three to four years for a lake and catchment area improvement project, which may make the lake safe for boats. However, the move has not been accepted by a local organisation, Enterprise Otara, which has vowed to make the lake accessible and usable no matter how long it takes... The lake was created in 1967 when the Electricity Department built a weir, separating... Otara Creek... from the... Tamaki Estuary. The department lauded the area as a haven for Otara residents. *Herald* files from 1967 paint an idyllic picture of the lake... The Electricity Department was considering landscaping the area... But ideas of providing "many happy hours of pleasant recreation to Otara residents" were shortlived. Instead, the picturesque Otara Lake turned into a polluted, stagnant mess. A similar saga is the debate over whether the public should be allowed access to coastal land where the Contact Energy power station operates. The Electricity Corporation of N[Z], the previous owners, signed an accord with the community and tangata whenua in 1994 ensuring public access to the land via a heritage trail. But Contact says there was no commitment in the accord to uphold these conditions... [and], for safety reasons, public access to Contact's coastal land would not be allowed.

...The race is on to ensure future Aucklanders are only ever a boule throw away from a local petanque terrain, tennis court, swimming pool or playground... The Auckland City Council plan... comes as the A[RC] develops an "acquisitions" policy to secure up to 5000ha of additional parkland over the next 20 years... giv[ing] priority to purchases near the most populated areas. Auckland City's plan divides the city into 20 precincts, each with a park of at least 5ha in size, at its hub. It divides the precincts into city-wide facilities aimed at all Aucklanders, and local ones to be used mainly by nearby residents. Around them, facilities such as recreation centres, libraries, swimming pools, playgrounds, sports fields, picnic and barbecue areas, community centres and walking tracks will be grouped.

...Group snub for flagship centre... [The] controversial award-winning flagship community centre in New Lynn is to undergo a revamp after seven groups refused to use it. The issue was debated at a New Lynn Community Board meeting on Tuesday night following presentation of a council report outlining problem-solving measures... [The board's chairperson] says teething problems have to be expected with a new building. "Taken overall, the centre has been a great success and is popular with the vast majority of users,"... The New Lynn Community Centre was opened with much fanfare [last] June... But despite two NZIA Architecture awards, the centre has come under criticism from community groups who found the centre impersonal and hard to heat... "The whole place is far too big..."... says... [the] secretary of the Retired Persons Association... The association stopped using the centre five months ago and now meets in the New Lynn RSA... [The secretary] says using the centre became a nightmare. "We had very unfortunate experiences there. Straight away we saw a lot of things were wrong and we complained,"... Other complaints included complicated taps in bathrooms, tiny kitchen facilities... [– although this] had been fixed... [–] patrons struggling with the bulky swing doors... the lack of staff, no public phone and no clock. In the hall area... there were no plugs near the stage for entertainers microphones...

Security problems at the New Lynn Community Centre are being dealt with after a "high level of theft, vandalism and internal graffiti"... A report, presented to the New Lynn Community Board, says the... incidents occur day and night, whether the centre is being used or when it is unattended. Locker and kitchen storage areas have been the main targets for thefts. Vandalism has occurred in the service corridor, foyer and exterior walls. New Lynn[']s Community Constable... says [since the centre opened it has had] at least 10 to 15 break-ins... [The constable] says there was never any sign of forced entry, suggesting doors were left unlocked or the offenders had keys to get in. But changes to locks, doors and lights have reduced the number of incidents. Security cameras, recording seven days a week, have also been installed with all footage being kept for 14 days. Groups hiring rooms at the centre are being reminded to secure the venue during their stay, and the alarm system has been reconfigured. Storage lockers have been reinforced... Issues surrounding security, management and design have plagued the \$3.6 million centre since it opened...

...during the opening of the... Te Atatu RSA[']s... \$800,000 upgrade... its president... [told the PM that the returned servicepersons' club had] reclaimed... the... best in the west title... Auckland's executive committee bestowed the title after visiting the Harbourview Rd club. [The PM

responded by telling] the packed hall of RSA members that the place looks great... “I remember it being very dark in here but it’s been opened up... [But] I can’t say whether it’s the best in the west because I’m patron of Avondale and Pt Chev[.]” The... National RSA president and former Te Atatu president... who attended the opening with [the PM] marvelled at the cost of the work. “We built the sports bar in the 1960s... it cost \$8000 and we still had \$1000 left in the kitty,”... [The present president] says patrons will have to drink a lot of beer to pay off the huge bank loan, despite hefty grants from the Waitakere Licensing Trust, ASB Trust and Lotteries. “[But]... independent valuers were impressed and said we’ve put more than half a million dollars on the property.” The RSA decided to modernise when the bowling club moved out of the shared premises into purpose built rooms... Licks of paint were still being applied... and last minute touches to the newly resealed car park [completed before the PM]’s visit...

A SECOND-BEST outcome is how Te Atatu residents describe the Waitakere City Council’s move to delay yet again a decision on Harbourview. About 140 observers, most from the Te Atatu Residents and Ratepayers Association, packed the council chambers on Tuesday for the decision that never came. Instead, councillors deferred without a formal vote any decision until after a city-wide public-consultation, this time on specific options for the prime Te Atatu Peninsula land. The move got a mixed reception from the ratepayers association, which wants the Harbourview land kept as open space and developed as a park... The... Mayor... [had] opened the debate by calling it D-Day, and urging councillors to avoid talking themselves into another “limbo situation”. “The council has spent thousands of dollars on evaluations and spent years without making a decision – we have to get a resolution today,” said... [the mayor, who] is worried future councils desperate for money “may turn the land into another West Harbour...” [– which has been transformed by commercial and residential building projects. But one]... councillor... wasn’t happy with any of the 13 recommendations in the final report from [the] city projects manager... They included a mix of open space-parkland and commercial development as the council’s preferred use for the land. The report also rejected the ratepayers association proposal to vest the land in a charitable trust... And it endorsed the museum of gardens to be funded by proceeds from [the] commercial and residential development... One victory for [the mayor] is the council’s decision to retake control of 3.7 hectares near the panelbeater’s shop, which had been transferred to Waitakere Properties for housing development. [The mayor says it] will direct Waitakere Properties to ensure there is no development on the land.

...THE head of Waitakere’s development agency says the city cannot afford to keep Harbourview as passive parkland... “Ratepayers would have to pick up a hefty tab to develop and care for passive parkland... Relying on volunteer labour care for such a large park might be feasible in the short term, but further out it is likely to result in a shortage of volunteers, irregular work and a mess of uncared-for land.” [The head] says some balance is needed in the debate over Harbourview’s future... His organisation... Enterprise Waitakere... backs the “mixed-use” proposal by Waitakere Properties, with up to 15 hectares for commercial and residential use and 42ha already set aside for lowland reserve... [The head] says that’s the best way to get quality passive parkland for the remaining 20 to 23ha at no cost to ratepayers... A people’s park – or option three in the council’s consultation – is being promoted by the Te Atatu Resident and Ratepayers Association, and by west Labour, National and Alliance MPs.

...Last Friday afternoon... I... [– the] Labour MP for Te Atatu... [–] lost my temper at a joint meeting of local MPs and Waitakere City councillors and community board members. I would like to explain why I felt moved to shout at the mayor and councillors and accuse some of them of pursuing their own agendas against the expressed wishes of local residents. The issue in question was the fate of the Harbourview estate on Te Atatu Peninsula. Development of the Harbourview site has been marked by broken promises and changing rules. When the land was given to the council by the Auckland Harbour Board it was vested as a gift to our city. The then P[M] Norman Kirk intervened in 1974 and ensured that Waitakere City gained ownership rather than an oil refinery be built on the site. Local body politicians of the time discussed a variety of uses for the Harbourview land. All claimed the unique Harbourview land, the last large open space left on the inner Waitemata Harbour, offered unique opportunities to develop something special. In the 1980s, [the then] Waitakere Mayor... explored the possibility of building a sports dome and associated park on the site. In the [early] 1990s the Waitakere City Council began to eye the land as a potential revenue source. A plan was announced that a small amount of the total site would be developed by the council’s development arm, Waitakere Properties, for residential development. The rest would be vested in a public park or facility. The rationale was that the residential development would fund the development of the public areas. The land set aside for residential development just got larger and larger. I lost my temper at the forum because I am outraged at the sheer waste of this unique resource for residential development. Every public meeting held on this issue, and there have been many, has demonstrated overwhelming support for a public park. A number of petitions signed by hundreds of local residents have called for the same thing. All these clear messages have been repeatedly dismissed by some councillors as the selfish wishes of a few Te Atatu residents. I have distributed 22,000 surveys to all households in the Te Atatu electorate... and... I have to say the replies received so far indicate 90[%] of residents want a park...

West Auckland residents have had their say about Harbourview South land, and the response is loud and clear – they want a park. Recently-released survey results show having a park without commercial development on the empty expanse is just over half of the respondents’ wish... Asked to rate their level of preference for parkland, 79.5[%] of... the 3358 people who voted... say they liked the idea, with only 9.2[%] disliking it. The proposal involves long-term community involvement to establish the park, similar to how Western Springs park was created... The ratepayers association president... hails the results as showing overwhelming support for the people’s park. “The council said they would honour the majority view.” Only 13[%] of the respondents favour the Museum of Gardens, which proposes 15 of 35ha be commercially developed... [S]ay some respondents: “Auckland is in dire need of another sizeable passive reserve.” “This is a golden opportunity... Please do not develop this land commercially at all.” Some respondents are critical of the council: “I’m sure the ratbag council have already made up their minds,” says one. “There’s been too much money spent on ‘consultation’ when people have been saying for years they want a naturally formed park,” says another... [The] Te Atatu MP[’s]... survey about Harbourview land earlier this year showed 83[%] of 3000 respondents chose to keep the land as a park.

...A PEOPLE’S Park will be set up on Te Atatu Peninsula – and ratepayers will fund it. Waitakere City councillors voted unanimously on Tuesday to introduce a special annual charge of \$8 plus GST to develop the park on Harbourview south. The special charge will be levied for five years, raising about \$500,000 annually. [The] Mayor... says people will get a park for the price of two burgers and a thick shake. The Te Atatu Residents and Ratepayers Association presented the council with its proposal for a... special events area with a terraced amphitheatre, an information centre, toilets, benches and car park. The plan called for a partnership between the council, the Friends of the Park Trust, the A[R]C and the Department of Conservation... [Meanwhile, a] High Court judge has criticised the D[oc], reversed a decision of its minister... and restored reserve status to a North Shore headland the Navy was hoping to sell. Local campaigners who wanted Takapuna Head kept as a reserve were celebrating yesterday after [the judge ruled the minister]’s 1997 decision was invalid... An earlier decision by [a] former Minister of Lands... in 1993 setting the block aside for defence purposes was also overturned because the required consent of the conservation minister at the time had not been gained... However, the Minister of Conservation last night warned them not to count on opening the area to the public yet. “There’s a lot of water to pass the point,” [it] said. The 11.2ha headland, behind Narrow Neck and Cheltenham Beach, has been described as “the grandstand to the gulf.”

...The receding Te Atatu coastline will be a line-up of sandy beaches if construction goes to plan. The last stages in designing a series of artificial headlands on the northern and eastern sides of Te Atatu Peninsula have finished, and work is due to begin in [two months], says... the... principal planner at Wood and Partners... They will be reconstructing headlands that were there before but have eroded away... The... Te Atatu Ratepayers and Residents Association president... says the idea of constructing headlands is better than building the traditional sea walls, but if it fails the city’s ratepayers may bear the cost... [T]he association’s main concern is that there is no comprehensive assessment of coastal hazards, and if it all goes wrong “the natural environment would be destroyed just so people can sit on the beach in the sun”... Two coastal management documents are

today being officially launched by the ARC. These are the Coastal Hazard Strategy and the Coastal Erosion Management Manual. Both were considered when the ARC was deciding whether to give permission for the artificial headlands to be constructed, says... [an ARC] coastal scientist...

A LACK of venues and money are major barriers to getting young people off the streets and into supervised activities in [Waitakere C]ity, a study shows. The findings are part of an 18-month youth leisure needs study by the Waitakere City Council. It follows community pleas for an indoor youth activity centre. The study, conducted in seven schools in the area, shows... youth like to play sports, meet at shopping malls, go to parties, movies and friends' homes, and enjoy skateboarding and going to the beach... [The l]eisure services acting team leader... says a centralised venue for a variety of youth activities was one of the top priorities identified by focus groups at schools surveyed... [T]eens say they want "somewhere to hang out – to chill, listen to music and not be hassled, not have to pay"... [T]he council will now review the resources the city gives to youth...

The Waitakere Sports Complex has its own goal posts in sight as... Waitakere City Council... prepares to hand over a hefty cheque towards the \$21m development. The... [council will] provide \$10.6m over the next three years, plus an operations grant of \$250,000 a year. Covering... 11,000 sqm on Henderson's Central Park Drive, the complex... will be the city's biggest ever community facility... The sports complex will feature an all-weather, international athletics track, six indoor courts... [- with] fixed and retractable seating for 5000 people[-] ...a gymnasium, three playing fields, a cafe, creche, carparking and provide a home for several sports clubs and organisations... [The p]roject development board chair[perso]n... says the facility will provide a much-needed breeding ground for top sporting talent. "Waitakere City has always suffered from having no sporting heart or home base and it's been a tragedy to see so many of our top sports people travel outside the city for their sporting needs. This complex is set to change that." ...a... former Commonwealth Games decathlon gold medallist... looks forward to the completion of the centre. "I do believe this is going to be the best multisports centre in N[Z]. The No 1 field is considered by many reputable people... as the best surface in the country,"...

Outside of work, N[Z]ers express themselves and develop their talents through participation in... arts and music, through movement and sports, and in recreational pursuits... To encourage emerging young... talent, [the PM's]... announced a package of \$146 million for the creative industries.

...The dollar is falling, prices are rising and the Government announces an \$86 million injection for the arts. On the street, the *Western Leader* asks readers what they think about... [it. Mrs Retired:] "I think... the arts should get more money because they've been neglected for a long time." ...[Mrs Parent:] "I think... it's choice that they've given more money to the arts... Hopefully the economy will get better." ...[Mr Unemployed:] "The prices going up are a bit of a rip off, it's okay if you are rich. I... can't see... the price of... anything going down. I think the money given to the arts is good. If you can get some money off the government you are lucky." ...[Mr Student: "The rising prices isn't]t good when you are a student and have a loan to pay off. I'd probably give the... arts... money... to people who need more help like the people on the waiting lists, they are dying."

...*Is this plain ballet stupid?* ...the Wellington hospital nurse... loves ballet and opera but... thinks the government's \$80 million arts funding package should have been injected into the health system. "Health is for the masses but the arts are for a select part of the population. The money would be best directed to the general public..."... [The PM] proudly unveiled a... cultural package two weeks ago. But it has left average Kiwis questioning the... government's priorities. The \$80m would have paid for an extra 2500 nurses and could also have been used to slash waiting lists... N[Z]'s nursing shortage should be solved before worrying about operas, the head of the nurses' union... said. "It is awful for nurses to have to go to work and decide which patient to neglect,"... Wellington hospital is 120 nurses short and loses 35[%] of its staff each year, as they look for better paid jobs. Of the... arts package, \$760,000... [-] equivalent to 85 hip replacements... [-] will go to the Royal N[Z] Ballet... The N[Z] Symphony Orchestra will get \$3m this year – 240 pace-maker operations. The new Christchurch art gallery will get \$6.4m – 300 heart bypass operations. [The Opposition's health spokesperson said: "The]... finance minister... says there is a \$200m budget shortfall but then [the PM] can find an \$80m windfall for the arts, which are a minority interest."

...*May as well pay the money and let them paint* There is absolutely no point in complaining about the extra funding [the PM] has served up for the arts. I've tried to oppose the concept – what about giving money to the poor? – but even I am beginning to see the point of it. I discovered this again at the weekend, when a series of chance rendezvous and happy flukes saw me mincing up the path of the tidy Ponsonby pile that houses... [the] Associate Minister of Arts, Culture and Heritage, or something like that... Also present were a couple of media people, and a couple of other people, one of whom was apparently a kinetic artist. ("What the hell is a kinetic artist?" yelled one of the media people in alarm. Poor sod was clearly worried about being left alone with one...). I was always going to emerge as the afternoon's most humourless punter, and this proved the case when I suggested that extra arts funding was a waste of time and money, which this nation did not have, especially since most of the talent lived in England. [The minister] seemed to understand that there was an element of pouring good money after bad in handing out extra arts dosh. And [the minister] was rather witty about it, which in the end is half the battle for any... politician... "One of the complaints [the great unwashed made about the extra funding] was: 'Oh God – more films... about... little bastards in some back valley in the Taranaki wearing balaclavas.'" It's true that [the minister] also delivered buckets of the usual fertiliser. "I think that we have an exotic and unique different culture, reinterpreted in our clear Pacific light..." ...it probably would have been rude to turn the hose on her. Next up was the kinetic artist, who had "pretty much given art up" because [the kinetic artist] found it a bit hard to make a living that way. Still, [the kinetic artist] was pleased to think there was money around to help others. So was a [gal] at the table. Her feeling was that N[Z] was old enough now to take the arts and culture seriously. [The gal] also felt that the extent to which a nation was prepared to spend on arts and culture spoke in some ways of that nation's... sophistication. And hell, why not? Well, "Because everything [N[Z] artists] do is crap," as another, somewhat disgruntled local punter hissed at me last week. I wonder about this line of argument, though. Perhaps it is time we learned to accept that most artwork is rubbish, and fund it nonetheless. Perhaps the ability to do that is a sign of maturity. It is in every other country in the world. In every other country in the world it is widely understood that the greater percentage of arts funding is spent on producing work so awful that you wouldn't mount it at a dogfight. America's National Endowment for the Arts is considered (particularly by Republicans) a hideous waste of money, a fund used by pimps, paedophiles and pornographers and/or their victims to create works to which nobody except the original funder ought to be exposed. There has also been no end of argument about the funding of British neoconceptualists like... the winner who paints with (after somehow locating) elephant flop. The point is not results. The point is that arts funding allows people to express themselves... – even if the rest of us can't understand what they're trying to say... It's a freedom of speech gig.

...*ART adds up...* Artists may hold the key to our success in the new economy, [a journalist] reports... Within... Auckland – ...rated 7th best city in the world for quality of life... – ...there are... 36 Museums, 28 Theatres... and... 42 Art Galleries... □ [The a]verage number of seconds art gallery visitors spent in front of each painting in 1987[was 10. 3 was the a]verage number of seconds gallery visitors spent in front of each painting in 1997

...More than 450 cu m of water gushed into... the middle of Aotea Square... yesterday, creating a knee-deep pond in preparation for The Launching, a free stage show to be held there this weekend... [The] water... is prevented from leaking by two thick plastic sheets lining the 800 sq m concrete area. It will be pumped out next week... A... [10]-year-old... spent the afternoon cooling off... "I was allowed to walk in the water as it filled and I slipped, so I decided to get right on in," [the boy] said... Other children will not be as lucky...; swimming is now banned... The project manager... said the liners cost about \$50,000 and could be used several more times. The council had to take out a "rather pricey" insurance policy; the square sits on top of an underground car-parking building. Because the square was built on a slight angle, the water is deepest on the east side, at 60cm. The Launching... [-] which... will feature top kapa haka teams, the Auckland Philharmonia and the Black Grace dance company... [- is] being... held over three consecutive days, starting at 8.30 pm on Friday. It introduces the Auckland Festival, an arts and cultural event... A stage to accommodate musicians will be erected over the pond, which is being patrolled 24 hours by security guards, and is fenced... The stage shows are

free, but those wanting to attend will need to organise wristbands from Ticketek or any Westfield Shoppingtown to gain entry. Tickets for the seated area cost \$25... [A locally renowned composer and percussionist... has been involved in composing a contemporary opera for the event.

...Kiwi music is the 484th most-searched-for music on the net after Indonesian folk ([despite the fact that one Kiwi –] ...the... force field... [who was a founding member of NZ music legends Split Enz, and is about to release his fifth solo album – has been described as] “a universe unto himself,” ...).

...IT’S nearly dinner time but [the toddler] is dead keen on watching and listening. [The toddler is] just not that keen on watching and listening to Dad. “Wiggles,” [the toddler] intones at the sort of insistent volume only a 2-year-old can generate. “Wiggles.” “You can’t actually watch the Wiggles at the moment...,” comes the patient reply, “I know you’d love to, but I’m talking to the [reporter]. Daddy’s working.” Daddy might be just about to release his fifth solo record – *Say It Is So*, his first in six years – but in the few moments since the “[reporter]” arrived at his pop-star dad’s Mt Eden home, it is the bashful, gentle son who has had all the limelight... “It’s the centre of my life now, my marriage and... fatherhood... It’s something from which everything springs. But as [another muso once] said, ‘Just because it’s true it doesn’t mean it’s interesting.’” But it is. [Daddy] could be just another father but [it] is also the 47-year-old guy with a 25-year career that gave New Zild its first really successful export stamped “music.” [Daddy] gave us... Split Enz, the seminal local act, the reason [daddy] will always be cherished and remembered. In the nearly two decades since Enz ceased as a fulltime outfit, his work has had its share of success, though measured at times with indifference, but up till now [dad] had remained singularly focused on writing, performing and charting the next perfect pop hit. Now [dad] seems just as focused on being a perfect pop. “I didn’t really have any expectations [about parenthood]. I wanted to experience it, I was very open to it.” If Split Enz was... the... family which first took him from these shores – for what became a quarter of a century based overseas – it is the new one that in many ways brought him home. And it was literally by accident. While [the muso] and his wife... a former A[US]n MTV presenter, were over from their Sydney home last year, the toddler had a mishap with hot water and was admitted for treatment to Middlemore Hospital. “[My son]’s fine now... but it was very scary at the time. The whole family came out of the woodwork when that was going on, cousins and uncles, everybody was chipping in and ringing up and it just made me feel very protected, very nurtured. It made me realise I wanted [my son] to be among all that.” The [parents] started looking around at houses to distract themselves from the seriousness of going to Middlemore every day. The one they bought and moved into [last] September turned out to be the first they looked at. And its leafy street – surely the model for any young family – is a close walk to the suburb’s well-stocked village, well-funded schools and a major bus route (although there’s always the Volvo – the safest family car on the road according to the cliché – in the garage for rainy days). Above the work-in-progress garden – [daddy]’s no green-fingers, a friend’s doing it – of the [family]’s new home the wooden-floored, white-walled interior is dominated by a gallery of modern, original art and objets d’art. The effect is much like [dad] himself: serious, arty, cool and interesting... Without a record label deal, *Say It Is So* is a record [daddy]’s made himself... and... is selling himself... The product of a two-year journey, the album was written on road trips... and recorded... in country’s hit factory, Nashville... “I had the luxury of a lot of time, I suppose. I was not with a label, so I was kind of free to drift around and imagine the next period instead of having a template imposed upon me from the [music] business... There is more humour, perhaps. I suppose I was very influenced by the Beatles, but especially by John Lennon, who sort of pioneered a certain confessional style of writing... Lennon was interesting to us, therefore what [John] was saying about his life was interesting – there are very few people in rock who have ever been as riveting in their personal life and in their persona as Lennon. I am not Lennon, and I’ve learned to my cost that certain songs I have written were written, I think, because I thought they were valid because they were true, but actually they weren’t very interesting. But then other songs have been interesting and they weren’t very true.” What seems to be more or less true is that [dad]’s happy, well “happy enough.” [Dad]’s just getting sick and tired of having to say so. “Why are people even interested in whether I’m happy or not? Do they ask every other songwriter they talk to, ‘Are you happy?’ Is it just me? ...The main thing I want to talk about is my work and my music.” Ah yes, the music. It’s delivered him pop’s prizes – popularity, hits, critical plaudits – even an OBE. But has it delivered his share? [His share has been], it hardly needs noting, less than his younger brother[(rp2337, ln12)]... “I’ve had plenty. Maybe I’ll get more, maybe I won’t. But I do feel I’ve had plenty... of whatever’s going... In Split Enz it was sort of a quest in a way, and in that sense it was a kind of selfless seeking of glory...” [I close by asking him about] his son’s enthusiasm for his music... “[My son]’s not a fan. It’s so weird. [My son] loves the Wiggles, [and] loves me to play Wiggles songs live. At least [my son] can accept me being a covers band.”

...Bagpipes get degree of respectability... The profile of Scotland’s national instrument has been given a boost by the launch of the world’s first degree in piping. A collaboration between the Piping Centre and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, both based in Glasgow, has devised the BA (Scottish Music-Piping) – or bachelor of bagpiping. The four-year course will combine the study of subjects such as piping technology, the physics of sound and musical manuscripts with placement at teacher training colleges. It hopes to pave the way for more musicians to make a living from teaching and playing the pipes. Ten students are expected to start the degree course next year. It is expected that half will be from abroad and students from 17 countries, including Brazil, Norway, Germany and Japan, have already expressed an interest in taking the degree.

...A top Auckland cellist has been silenced by a neighbour who has complained about his “screechy” playing... [The cellist] was practising around 5 pm on Saturday when a noise-control security officer arrived at his Panmure apartment and served him with a 72-hour abatement notice... [The] Auckland Symphony Orchestra cellist... could have his \$6000 instrument confiscated if [the cellist] continues to play... [The cellist] was particularly distressed because [it] had to prepare for the orchestra’s Monday night rehearsal and... did not consider the noise to be excessive. “It’s not like I’ve got a rock band in here or throwing a party or anything. If you played continually for three or four hours then I could understand people getting upset but I only play in short bursts. I pour myself into my music so to be told you can’t play any more is pretty devastating.” ...After the notice was served... [t]he musician... phoned the Auckland City Council to explain the “ridiculous” situation and request that a decibel reading be taken. [The cellist said it] was told someone would be there shortly but that person failed to turn up. Four phone calls later, [the cellist] was told his call would not be returned, and noise control stood by the original security officer’s decision to serve the abatement notice. “I think it’s totally unreasonable that they slapped the notice on me in the first place but the fact that they then would not respond to me at all really irked me,”... A spokesperson for the noise-control unit... said a decibel reading did not have to be taken for a noise complaint...” [The spokesperson] said it was not practical for officers to return and take decibel readings as the noise level was often reduced by the person responsible for it... The [tenant who complained, and lives] in the apartment directly above... [the cellist’s,] said it was difficult to hear her television over the cello and the music disturbed her peace and quiet. “A cello is not different to a loud stereo. It is a screechy continuous noise and I am sick of it... It is not an instrument... that is acceptable to be played in a block of flats.” However, [the cellist]’s other neighbour... said noise was to be expected in buildings such as theirs. “This building isn’t soundproof and in any block of flats I think you will find noise... To be quite honest, [his music is] very relaxing and right now I’m missing it.”

...An Auckland Symphony Orchestra cellist who was served with a noise abatement order has been offered a “silent cello” to keep his neighbour happy... Yesterday Yamaha N[Z] offered to reduce the price... by \$2000 to help out. [The company’s managing director... said the silent cello, which was invented last year and normally costs \$5000, emitted one-tenth of the noise produced by a regular cello. “The sound is done electronically so the person puts a set of headphones on and plays away. People can then practise in apartments and play in confined spaces without disturbing others.” ...Music lovers also contacted the *Herald* yesterday to offer rehearsal venues... [One] offered... space in a Glen Innes church, and a Panmure resident offered her home. Her daughter used to play the cello when they lived in a small apartment... and “we always had the most wonderful feedback from the neighbours so I felt sorry for him.” [The cellist said it] was grateful for the offers, which were totally

unexpected. "...but obviously I still want the right to practise in my own home." The Auckland City Council environmental noise coordinator... said [it] would personally make a full assessment of [the case] this week.

...Being one of that multitude of music lovers who can neither read a score nor play any instrument, I have always paid perhaps unwarranted homage to just about anybody who can. That being the case, I was surprised to read, in [the Naked Civil Servant]'s New York diary, *Resident Alien*, [that Britain's most infamous gay] was a self-declared "sworn enemy of music." I suppose my astonishment was heightened because I would have expected the Naked Civil Servant – who unashamedly displayed the exhibitionistic instincts of both a peacock and a peahen – to have loved and embraced aspects of all of the arts, painting, sculpture, literature and music. It was his blanket statement that music is "the most noise conveying the least information" that really caught my attention because it made no concession whatsoever to any type of music. I could understand it if [the Brit] loathed pop but liked the classics, or hated Schoenberg but adored Mozart but, no, [the Brit] rubbished the whole gamut from penny whistle to Royal Philharmonic. Indeed, at the age of 86, [the Brit] claimed to have been to only one concert in his life. Only a week before I read *Resident Alien*, I had been fascinated by the story... [about a] cellist of the Auckland Symphony Orchestra whose neighbour had called in the noise abatement mafia from the council... It seemed a monstrous complaint, especially when [the cellist] appeared before us on the television as a likeable, inoffensive sort of chap with sad eyes, a wry wit and long, boney fingers built for caressing a finger board rather than sticking up at the neighbours. I felt for him not only for his culture but his evident charitable willingness to cast the pearls of his talent before the people of Auckland (from whose symphony orchestra [nobody]'s... likely ever to accumulate enough wealth to feature in the rich list). I don't mind admitting that I bristled and my instinct was to consign the carping and troublesome [neighbour] to a heap of philistines. How could anybody object to the sounds of a cello, especially in the hands of a professional? But upon reflection, and putting aside [the gay Brit, the cellist] and the querulous neighbour altogether, I have come to acknowledge that what to one person might be a celestial arpeggio could quite easily, to another, be hell. Pursuing a there's-always-two-sides-to-a-story reasonability, I remembered that for all my love of good music, my mother hated violins. [Mum] said they sounded like cats in torment and would rush to turn off the wireless whenever [it emitted the sounds of] one... My father, too, had a pet musical aversion... [-] Spanish guitar solos... [However,] the sound of a full-blooded brass band... brought Dad swiftly to attention. Much as I love the cello, I confess that there's one instrument I abhor. It's the solo saxophone, a nauseating mongrel of a thing neither woodwind nor brass... And if [the cellist] decides to give up the cello and take up the sax, [it]'d better not move into a flat that's next door to anywhere I might be living... [-] one spit down its reed and I'll have the council's noise mafia around so fast that [the offender] won't know whether [his life is] upstrung or brass-bound.

...I WAS furious to hear on *One News* (March 8) that \$28 million is owed by people who have not paid their broadcasting fees and apparently have no intention of doing so. It also seems nothing can be done about collecting this money and the non-payers are going to get away with it. That means those, like me, who meet their obligations, are carrying these defaulters. If they have even thought about it, they probably consider that if we are stupid enough to pay, it serves us right. The broadcasting fee works out at only about 33c a day and for that you get not only TV programmes but radio as well. How mean-spirited and anti-social can some people get? DISGUSTED (Auckland) ● *NZ On Air says historically it collects 95[%] of all fees owing, but this takes time. The termination of the broadcasting fee has effectively left NZ On Air with little more than a year to collect all debt remaining on its books. When the fee is abolished on July 1, it's reckoned about \$36 million will be outstanding from owners of TV sets. But there is provision in legislation for un-paid fees to be collected after that date.*

...The plug is pulled on the public broadcasting fee today, but NZ On Air will still pursue more than 150,000 people who have not paid. This has outraged anti-fee campaigners, who say the \$110 fee is an illegal tax and its abolition should signal the end of any outstanding payments... NZ On Air's chief executive... said it would still enforce payment of outstanding fees for the year ending yesterday, in fairness to the 850,000 who had paid... Funding... [for] locally made radio and television programmes... will in [future] come from the Government's consolidated fund.

...*Me TV lets you call all the shots...* [A] technological revolution may let us create our own channels within a few years... Television industry experts believe this future may not be as far off as we think. It includes many changes already under way, including its most striking feature – the so-called "me-channel", which lets viewers choose what they want to watch whenever they like. The changes are outlined in a report, *New Technologies and the Digital Future*, prepared for the funding agency N[Z] on Air by [a] former TVNZ head of news... and the N[Z] Broadcasting School. The 143-page report predicts sweeping changes in the way we watch television and the effect on television networks, advertisers and the idea of public broadcasting... However, the... authors... warn that these advances could be held back by continuing disagreements over the technology itself, business dilemmas over how it can be made profitable and possibly consumer resistance to an often bewildering combination of choices... So far television, computer and phone companies have struggled to send large amounts of data to consumers. For instance, most home internet users with a standard phone line and dial-up modem cannot download good-quality television pictures on their computers or have the phone and internet working at the same time. The main problem is bandwidth, which the report says can be seen as the size of the "pipe" used to send material. "If you want to get more information down the pipe and send it faster, you need a bigger pipe." Broadband uses a much bigger pipe to send information 36 times faster than a current "narrowband" home internet connection. It can also compress the elements to be transmitted, freeing more bandwidth. "The real significance of broadband is that it will provide high-speed access that is always on," says the report. "There will be no need to dial up or switch between phone and internet connection..." Broadband services can be delivered by satellite, cable, wireless or by phone lines... Some industry watchers think... personal video recorders... could change our television habits for ever by allowing us to... make up our own viewing timetables. The PVR allows you to record television programmes much like a videotape recorder, but while it is recording you can watch instant replays, pause, rewind, etc, without losing any of the programme... One consultant the report quotes predicts the combination of broadband and PVRs could "blow things wide open" in a real threat to conventional broadcasting. "There's no reason why people wouldn't use this to pull content off the web, circumventing the broadcast stream in the process. Think of the chaos." *If I can effectively run my own television channel, where does this leave the TV networks?* Probably feeling nervous, although most are still upbeat about the continued role of traditional free-to-air channels. On the one hand, free-to-air has already been overtaken by pay TV in the U[S] and its audience share is falling worldwide. This trend is likely to continue... On the other hand, the new channels cannot offer advertisers the same mass market. The more optimistic big-network executives argue that they will actually become more valuable to advertisers in an increasingly fragmented market.

...With giant strides [being made] in home entertainment – the relentless growth of the Internet, DVD taking on VHS for home video, music downloading from the Web – it is little wonder that home gaming is also changing rapidly... [The home gaming industry is now] just as prosperous as the film industry and every bit as competitive as the music world... Sega's 128-bit Dreamcast, about to go on sale in N[Z], is the most powerful game machine created. It represents a watershed for gaming and signals a new era in home entertainment. Apart from the machine's speed and advanced screen effects, the Dreamcast user can lounge on the couch and tap into the Internet to play rivals anywhere on the planet... Microsoft provides the operating system for the Dreamcast that also... allows the user to... browse Websites on a television... Sega, the once-legendary Japanese games company, has spent several years in the wilderness. The Mega-Drive was the box of choice at the beginning of this decade when console gaming was a fledgling industry. Sega was happy to share the spoils with rivals Nintendo. Everything turned to custard for Sega when Sony's PlayStation arrived and began breaking sales records almost immediately. Meanwhile, Sega's humble 32-bit Saturn failed to capture the imagination of Kiwi Mega-Drive fans. Sega was forced to sit back and focus on producing high-quality arcade titles, helpless as Sony and Nintendo battled for control of the lucrative end of the market, the boom in home-gaming consoles and games. Now, Sega is back with a machine so incredible that it will have the eager gaming public wondering if they really need that expensive Christmas holiday, and wouldn't be happier with

a little grey box under the Christmas tree. The Dreamcast will initially retail here for \$600 with roughly 12 launch titles, most of these going for \$130. Add-ons include extra hand-controllers and the visual memory unit, both selling for around \$70... This may sound highly expensive, but before gamers gag on their coffee they should remember that the Nintendo cost \$500 when it arrived on the shelves... And they could cast their minds back further, to just before Christmas 1995, when the new PlayStations were going for a whopping \$700 and no one so much as batted an eyelid. Now they are down to less than \$200. The price will sting at first but the pain becomes more tolerable when the players realise that the Dreamcast is more than a conventional games console... In technical talk, it... runs in a standard resolution that is four times higher... [and] has polygon-generating abilities more than 30 times higher than the Nintendo 64. It... has more than three times the polygon-generating ability of today's fastest PCs while containing a more advanced memory that allows transfer rates that PCs cannot match... Combine this with the Dreamcast's advanced effects and graphics abilities and the home game-player has a console that can generate extraordinarily detailed 3D worlds at realistically smooth frame rates, which leaves the competition for dead... [However,] Sony's PlayStation 2 is out in a few months in Japan... Early reports indicate that PlayStation 2 will do everything the Dreamcast can... and more – it will even play DVD movies.

...KIWI computer game fanatics are paying... to fly to Japan to buy the new PlayStation2. But their game could be up unless they speak Japanese... "The PlayStation2 from Japan only works with Japanese games and the player will have to speak Japanese to understand instructions," said... [the] sales manager for PlayStation in N[Z]. "It is naive to buy a PlayStation2 before they are released here. It's better to wait and it's not long to go." The warning also applied to people buying PlayStation2 from the internet at inflated prices... PlayStation2 will cost around \$700...

PLAYSTATION brought the video game arcade into the family lounge and millions were grateful – even if it gave teenage [boys]... one more reason not to talk to anyone besides the younger sibling they were racing, shooting or beating up on screen. However, the console's... successor... isn't just an upgrade. No, the developers say, it will supercharge interactive entertainment, democratise e-commerce, explode the DVD market and make the Sony company a dominant force in the Internet age. All of which makes the arrival of the little black box, which is being demonstrated at a pop culture expo in Auckland this weekend, arguably the entertainment event of... [the year. I]t is geared to play movie DVDs just as mainstream consumers are considering switching from clunky VCRs to the dramatically enhanced digital alternative. And, of course, PS2 will also spin your audio CDs. But the most significant aspect of the machine might be its ability to [eventually] hook into the Internet... For now, though, it will be judged as a game machine. And don't dismiss that as kid stuff. Last year the industry in the U[S] alone raked in almost \$NZ14 billion, and analysts predict that [this year] the revenue will surpass the ticket sales of movies. Something that raises the bar is big news indeed. Does PS2 raise the bar? Just punch the power button on the unit, a sleek black and blue, 40cm-tall mini-tower... [i]nset a disc in the slide-out tray, and it's instantly clear that computer games are edging towards territory previously monopolised by movies. You see skies with multiple layers of moving clouds. Coats that behave like real cloth. Rustling grass. And here's not-so-good news: in this post-Columbine era, social critics now have to contend with muzzle flash from a pistol that illuminates the shooter's face, double-helix smoke trails from missiles and gorgeously granulated blood splatter as you lop off [a] head... The secret is the Emotion Engine, a fast, high-powered chip set that is fine-tuned to generate polygons, the building blocks of 3-D graphics. While the original PlayStation could handle a mere 360,000 polygons a second, version 2 can spit out... 20 million... And when connected to a home-theatre setup, surround sound will allow game designers to assault the eardrums in style. One action-horror game, *Onimusha*, was scored by a 203-piece orchestra... PS2 isn't a sure thing – the launch could be flubbed by an initial short supply or people could balk at the price, thought to be around \$NZ700... – but most people figure it to win. One immediate advantage: it plays almost all original PlayStation games... [Ironically, when a former engineer fi]rst conceived of a new type of entertainment based on high-end graphics... Sony's brain trust[considered] the idea... embarrassing. "Sony was very much an audio-visual hardware company [that considered] game machines as toys,"... Finally, Sony's CEO... took a chance and [the engineer] created the first PlayStation, released in 1994. Gamers loved it, snapping up... 70 million units worldwide. In one of every three N[Z] households... there's a parent begging a kid to drop the game controller and rejoin the family. While developers created hundreds of titles for his machine, [the engineer] set about building a successor that... would redefine computing itself... While that... [successor was being developed], other game-console companies ha[d] their own strategies for "next-gen" games... First to hit the stores was Sega's Dreamcast, which [so far has] sold... 4 million units... surprising those who thought that people would save their money for PS2. Nintendo's Dolphin will... [be released shortly. The] founder of Electronic Arts and CEO of 3DO, two major game designers[, believes the latest game consoles will]... fundamentally change... society in the way the printing press did... "This is a new canvas for humanity that takes us back to our nature." Such hyperbole is music to the ears of [the engineer]. These days, the 53-year-old... is already thinking about PlayStation 3... due around 2005.

...IN THE FUTURE LIFE WILL BE VERY DIFFERENT... FAMILIES AND MACHINES WILL PLAY TOGETHER... CHILDREN WILL BE ABLE TO... FULFIL THEIR WILDEST DREAMS... [Both sexes] will be equal and the drudgery of today will give way to a life of unending pleasure... Work will be limited to only a few hours as robots and computers will remove toil... from everyone's existence leaving us all with hours of carefree time to enjoy together in a fantasy world. Utopian dreams become reality... IN THE FUTURE EVERYONE HAS A PLAYSTATION...

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT... The power is in your hands... Never underestimate the power of PlayStation... you're not going outside anyway...

LET US PLAY... On the eve of its N[Z] release, a NZ Herald journalist[gets to grips with PlayStation2... IT WAS LATE on the second night that the P[S]2 finally made sense. I'd had a test model – a "debugging unit," which unfortunately meant no DVD player... – on loan from the previous afternoon. The first evening and the day off had delivered a few hours of videogame mayhem... It had been fun, but pretty much the same kind of fun. Certainly not the revelatory experience when I'd brought my original PlayStation in 1997 for a wallet-worrying \$500, and been hooked into the joys of *WipeOut 2097*, *Crash Bandicoot* and various other first-generation games. We'd come home late after a movie, a meal and enough drinks to leave me fuzzy around the gills. There stood the P[S]2... doing its best to complement the decor. It was going back in the morning, so one last go before bed... Through the dim light of the lounge and lagged eyes, the rich graphics created by the PS2's powerful "Emotion Engine" chip finally made sense – it was just so easy to focus into the far corners and beyond... despite my own emotion engine running a bit rich. A possible advertising line came to mind: "P[S]2 – even better when you've had a few." Oh, and kids, don't try this at home. Coincidentally, Sony is pitching the \$999-priced console and its game to 18 and ups and have relaunched the PlayStation – or PSOne – as a smaller, curvier, kid-friendly unit with a new batch of games to match, including *Muppet Monster Adventure* and... *Disney's Jungle Book Groove Party*. Adult gamers will be lining up this Thursday to buy the first PS2s to arrive in N[Z]. We're getting the units at the same time as Australia and Europe... [W]hat will it mean for the future, culture and design of gaming? It's hard to tell with the limited number of titles on offer so far. But last words go to... the English writer of a... recent book about gaming aesthetics, *Trigger Happy – The Inner Game of Videogames*. "A hint of what might be the ruling approach in the future is provided by the fact that the central processing chip in Sony's P[S]2 console is called an Emotion Engine. This is more than just a good marketing coinage. It also implies a more thoughtful approach – not towards something like an interactive novel, of course, but certainly towards videogame software that will take more chances to make the player stop and think. Videogames' loss of innocence can only be a good thing, aesthetically, as developers increasingly try to create new ways of seeing and playing in their imaginary worlds."

...Japan has slapped export controls on Sony Corp's new, hugely popular PlayStation2 because the machine is so sophisticated it could be used for military purposes... Military analysts cited the example of a Tomahawk missile that needs to "see" where it is going until it strikes its target and must process graphic material at high speed to keep to its target. P[S]2's graphic processing capability is fast enough to enable it to be used... The Japanese Government has become increasingly wary of the possibility that products meant for civilian use could be diverted for weapons use[.

although PS2]... is the first game console to face export controls under the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Control Law... The law requires the Trade Ministry's approval for the export of restricted products worth more than 50,000 yen... [Because each PS2] is priced at 39,800 yen... [t]he export of more than two consoles would be controlled... The export restrictions are the latest in a string of problems that have plagued P[S2]. Sony Computer Entertainment said this month that users could illegally manipulate the machine to copy DVD movies to videotape. Last month, it said the game players could be used to watch DVD software sold overseas in breach of a worldwide agreement among DVD player makers.

...A Taiwan carpenter bought a porn DVD only to find secretly taped motel footage of his wife having sex with his friend, whom the husband later stabbed, a newspaper reported yesterday. The husband... divorced his wife... In... [local news, c]inemas in provincial centres could be doomed if a proposed parallel importing policy becomes law, the industry warns. The president of the Motion Picture Exhibitors' Association... said the Commerce Ministry apparently had a proposal for a three-month window between the time a film had its first cinema release worldwide and when it could be parallel imported to N[Z] in DVD or video. [The president] said in Nelson on Friday that such a proposal, if adopted by the Government, would... [not only mean provincial centres will] no longer be viable for cinema exhibition, but DVD and video sales would suffer, as would film-making in N[Z] itself... At present, N[Z] does not impose a specified period between the time a film has its international release for screening in cinemas and when it can be parallel imported in DVD or videotape. [The Government's] election campaign policy was to introduce a two-year window so DVD or video parallel imports could not undermine cinemas... A window was needed, [the president] explained, because N[Z] distributors mostly provide "rejuvenated used prints" when releasing films to provincial areas and main centres. It took three to six months to get such prints, which cost one-tenth the price of new film prints... If there were to be only a three-month window on DVD and video parallel imports, films could be available in those formats before, or simultaneously with, the release of the film to N[Z] cinemas. The cinema industries in most countries had self-imposed windows of three to six months... The exhibitors association wants a one-year window.

...In a leap away from Imax's science and education films, *Alien Adventure* brings meaningless entertainment to the big, big screen. And it's in 3D. The film follows the fortunes of the Glagoliths, aliens searching the universe for a new home. They stumble on Earth and, being a bunch of interstellar idiots, decide to explore what they think is an Earth city. Only it's a new high-tech theme park not yet open to the public. And, yes, they explore the rides. What makes this so cool is that the rides are superbly created... Try looking away from the action – the detail is just as impressive in the farthest corner of the screen. There are 103,680 frames of high-resolution images, which took 12 CGI animators 180,000 hours to produce. Minor quibbles? The 3D headsets are bulky and, at barely 40 minutes, the film is short. But it's still worthwhile. Made in Belgium, the Glagolith language is in fact ancient Walloon, so for any Walloon-speakers, this is the movie of a lifetime. For anyone else, it's a hell of a lot of fun.

...The Imax experience is over after its giant screen and three-dimensional effects left Aucklanders largely glassy-eyed. Lack of interest in the film format, which uses screens 10 times larger than traditional cinemas, has led Force Corporation subsidiary Cineforce to close the Queen St Imax Cinema... Despite its initial appeal and novelty factor Imax had not been a viable enterprise in the long run and was losing money... [I]t had also been difficult to find the sort of commercially popular products that drew crowds. "In the end, it did not have enough appeal for the general audience," said the... company secretary... But a self-confessed film buff... felt Imax was too expensive at about \$15 an adult and \$9 a child... Imax cinemas in Adelaide and Perth had also closed within the past year because of similar problems. But the Sydney Imax cinema was quite successful... Imax in the U[S] owned the equipment, which would probably be reclaimed. Force was investigating alternative use of the space. Any outstanding pre-paid tickets can be exchanged for admission to other movies at the Force Entertainment Centre... [The secretary] said yesterday... the closure did not affect the rest of the Force Entertainment Centre, which includes... Planet Hollywood, 12 bars... 11 shops[and a games arcade].

...*Gamer drops MA studies for action role*... When [a student] dropped out of doing an MA degree in psychology to play computer games, [it] knew people would be sceptical. "N[Z]ers just can't see gaming for what it is overseas... They don't understand that gaming is now a professional occupation in Korea or the U[S]." Now that the gamer] has won the \$10,000 first prize at the Impact Extreme Chinese national *Quake 3* tournament in Beijing, the 21-year-old helpdesk administrator from Waterview in Auckland hopes people will realise just how big *Quake* is... *Quake 3* is a futuristic 3D action game requiring tactical thinking and quick reflexes, played over the internet or a local network. Players can collect bonuses giving them extra strength or power, and win by killing their opponents more times than they are killed... *Quake's* "bad reputation" as a violent game is undeserved, says [the 21-year-old]. "You can't infer from the fact that someone kills a person and plays *Quake* that *Quake* players kill people." ...After obtaining a BA degree in psychology and philosophy from the University of Auckland and enrolling for an MA, "I dropped out of university to play *Quake*. I saw the amount of interest and prizemoney *Quake* has generated, and decided to try to become the world's best player." [The 21-year-old] now works 20 hours a week for an internet service provider and spends about 40 hours on *Quake*... [The 21-year-old] is among the top 20 players in the world... but wants to "push it into the top three in the next six months." ...Following his victory in Beijing, [the 21-year-old] plans to compete in the World Cyber Games – "the Olympics of computer games" – in Seoul, Korea, next month. It carries \$US300,000 in prizemoney. As well as looking for sponsorship, [the 21-year-old] is negotiating a deal to train Hong Kong players for the Korean competition... A[nother A]uckland... placed second at the Impact Extreme tournament, winning \$5000.

...*Unreal win gives gamer star status*... [A west Auckland youth] is a celebrity in Korea where children flock to him for his autograph. Back home in Henderson the 18-year-old looks forward to relaxing after coming third playing the computer game, Unreal Tournament, at the World Cyber Games. The competition was held in Korea... and involved about 500 computer gamers from 45 countries. The games, complete with opening and closing ceremony, were televised in Korea. [The 18-year-old] was one of nine N[Z]ers at the competition and the only competitor from the southern hemisphere to win a medal. [The 18-year-old] also won \$5000 US... [The 18-year-old, who] has played computer games since [it] was five... spent many weekends practising with his friend... and two weeks training with [a]fellow team member... in Christchurch... [The nerd] started getting serious about the sport when... [aged] 13 and began playing a strategy game on line, winning the championships three times. [The nerd] started playing Unreal Tournament just for fun and soon became serious about it... "You have to think. You have to have a good brain if you are going to play properly. A lot of people think [of computer games] as a fun leisure thing to do sitting on the couch... But people shouldn't just knock it off as an activity that can't be a professional sport. A lot of people don't understand it can be just that," says the former Liston College Student. For now, [the 18-year-old] is relaxing and playing for fun. But... [it plans to take] part in qualifying competitions to make it to next year's world games.

...Gamers can be compared to actors – they become the face of the game... [– and t]he gaming industry is worth more than Hollywood now[('NZers spent over \$40 million on computer games in 1996')]. A computer game makes more than a film like *Gladiator*.

...IT HAS been 40 years since Hollywood producers attempted a sword-and-sandal epic. Maybe they shouldn't have waited so long. The genre is gloriously revived in *Gladiator*, which took only three weeks to recoup at the [US] box office the \$US103 million it cost to make. So far it's made \$US379 million worldwide. And... made a marquee star of [the lead actor. The film's d]irector... (*Blade Runner*, *Alien*, *Thelma and Louise*) joked even before the movie came out that [it] wouldn't be able to afford to hire the N[Z]-born actor for another film... [The AUSn-raised actor] stars as fictitious Roman general Maximus, who falls from grace when the Emperor, Marcus Aurelius... dies and his jealous son Commodus... takes power. Maximus becomes a slave, is sold to a gladiator trainer in North Africa, and then finds his way to Rome as a starring attraction at the Colosseum. Oliver Reed, who played the gladiator trainer, died in Malta... [– where] huge sets recreating landmarks of Rome in AD180 were erected [–] ...during a drinking binge before his scenes were finished. But computer-generated imaging (CGI) enabled [the]director... to marry existing shots of Reed and new footage of a body double to complete the actor's performance a little earlier in the story than planned... *Gladiator* is moviemaking on a grand scale... The film starts with a bloody battle between the technologically superior Roman legions and fiery German barbarians. [The

director] flew to Bratislava, Slovakia, to scout a forest location for the battle and then balked at the logistics of moving a huge crew over there. So [it] returned to England, went to the British Forestry Commission and asked: "What have you got that you want to get rid of?" The answer was: Bourne Wood in Surrey... [So a]n English forest standing in for the Roman Empire's German frontier was burned down... [16,000] flaming arrows were fired by... Roman soldiers and burning clay pots were launched from catapults at the... [barbarians] in the trees... CGI magnified the effects by multiplying both the arrows and... players. "I... only had about a thousand troops. But with careful shooting, you could what they call tile, just keep moving the same group of Roman[s]... across the shot and, panning several times, blend it with CGI so it looks like there's 20,000..." The biggest effect in the film is the Colosseum, itself, built on Malta at a 17th century Spanish fort that had been converted to a barracks by Napoleon's troops. The film-makers couldn't afford to create a complete replica of the three-tiered Roman landmark so... built a fragment of the first tier and [CGI] completed the structure, as well as creating 33,000 spectators to sit and cheer with the 2000 extras. The real sets and people were blended... so seamlessly that when the camera pans around the stadium you can't tell what's real and what's not. But the technology, the sets and the scale of the film haven't upstaged the acting and the story. It's a compelling tale of a good [guy] who, through no fault of his own, loses everything except his dignity and earns a crack at redemption... ["]Ordinarily I make a decision based on a script[,]" the star says. "But t]his time I made a decision based on a concept. They rang me and... said, 'We're not gonna let you read the script first because we don't believe that you'll have a positive response to it, but here's the concept: [The director of *Aliens*], AD185, and you begin the movie as a Roman general.' That was enough for me to say, 'Yeah, I'd like to have a conversation... about that, because it just got into my imagination and I couldn't let go.'[" They were right about]... the initial script, which was "too modern, too cynical. It had gags about advertising. It just didn't make sense to... [have] such a facile set of dialogue and scenes." In the reworked script, his character is offended by having to kill to entertain the crowds. But are today's audiences in multiplexes and sports stadiums much different from those in the Colosseum? "Oh, I think a lot of things have developed over the years... The vehicles have changed: we've gone from the chariot to the Ferrari... and we've got a bit more efficient in piping violence into our homes. We don't have to go out for it now. But human relations and the broad range of what human emotions and... desires can be, I don't think they've been adjusted at all..."

...IT IS difficult to believe that millions of people were entertained by watching brutal fights to the death as depicted in... *Gladiator*. But they did. For almost 500 years, from about 150BC, gladiators fought to the death in the amphitheatres of every major city in the Roman Empire. The film which depicts these public spectacles is... extremely violent. The fights that take place inside the packed Colosseum arena, recreated in North Africa, are certainly bloody – severed heads and limbs flying across the screen – and usually involve the death of almost everyone except the hero... The film depicts only gladiatorial combat, which was only one part of the day's entertainment. In the morning there was a display in which exotic animals – including panthers, giraffes, ostriches and zebras – were pursued and killed. Emperor Hadrian (AD117-138) for instance, organised games in which 11,000 beasts were slaughtered over 120 days. Every corner of the empire was scoured for animals, a process accelerating the elimination of species in Europe and Asia. Tigers were among the first to disappear. Until Imperial times they were common around the Caspian Sea. During lunch, audiences would be entertained by the public execution of criminals. The punishments were designed to inflict maximum pain and humiliation. Emperor Nero (AD54-68) had Christians clothed in animal skins and then thrown to wild dogs, who tore them apart. Mosaics from North Africa depict [people] tied to posts, which were then wheeled in front of starving bears and lions. Criminals were sometimes castrated. Seneca, Nero's tutor, mentions a mode of crucifixion in which the victim was impaled by his genitals – the slow agony of "ordinary" crucifixion was not thought amusing enough for the crowd... [Someone] named Meniscus, who committed some trivial offence against Nero, is reported to have "furnished a great spectacle to everyone by being burned alive." Burning alive was one of the favoured methods of execution, partly because animals could not always be relied on to do what was required of them. Late-night spectacles were sometimes lit by human torches. Considerable ingenuity was expended on thinking up refinements of cruelty. There were punishments based on re-enactments of mythological stories. In a grotesque parody of the story of Europa – in which the god Zeus disguised himself as a bull to have sex with the girl – [gals] condemned for sexual offences were said to have been raped to death by bulls. This was apparently achieved by smearing the [victims] with secretions emitted by cows. Clement of Rome wrote that [gal] Christians were killed by being attached to the horns of a bull and gored to death, in imitation of a mythical punishment meted out by... two stepsons in revenge for a plot against their natural mother... On one occasion the arena was flooded. As musicians began to play on an island in the middle, the spectators started booing, thinking that it had been decided to replace blood with music. Then they noticed that crocodiles had been released and that the island was starting to sink. The gladiatorial combat that followed must have seemed relatively restrained... Gladiators, who... were usually slaves or prisoners of war... [and] spent several years in training, seldom surviv[ed] more than four or five fights... The film... *Gladiator*... recreates a pitched battle between two groups of gladiators. Such battles happened, but on a far bigger scale than the film depicts. In the movie there are only about 20 fighters on each side. But when Emperor Claudius (AD41-54) staged a naval battle on Lake Fucine to entertain Roman citizens, [the emperor] used 19,000 "soldiers" – and insisted that there should be no survivors. To prevent desertion there was an outer ring of ships [carrying] the Praetorian Guard, as well as ramparts and catapults... The "forces of order" were frightened of gladiators, and for good reason. The biggest slave revolt in Roman times – led by Spartacus in 73BC – started in the gladiatorial school where Spartacus was training. It was because [Spartacus] and his colleagues knew how to fight that they were able to terrorise southern Italy for several years before being defeated. Spartacus and other survivors were crucified along the Via Appia. Although *Gladiator* has no value as a guide to the political history of Rome and is wrong in many details of gladiatorial combat, it certainly recreates the excitement of the arena, and if you want to experience something of the thrill that pulled Romans into the Colosseum, this film will provide it.

...For centuries, the greatest theatrical spectacles in the world could be found at the Colosseum of Rome... Italian and German archaeologists have concluded that under the wooden floor were an array of lifts, pulleys and 24 giant trapdoors. The trapdoors and lifts allowed the dramatic change of painted backdrops and the sudden appearance of hundreds of actors and exotic beasts. Though some contemporary reports suggest that the Colosseum might have been flooded to recreate naval spectacles, many archaeologists say that the network of tunnels and rooms under the floor would have meant that full-scale flooding of the arena was unlikely. The Colosseum was commissioned by the Emperor Vespasian in AD72 and was opened by his son, Titus, in AD80. It... measured 200m by 160m and stood 60m against the skyline. Inscriptions on stonework reveal how the seating reflected Roman society. The marble seats closest to the arena – the Latin word for sand, which covered the wooden floor – were reserved for the emperor's family. Then came the horse[soldiers] and senators. Above them were important citizens, then the middle-classes, slaves and foreigners. Right at the top was space for the poor... [A] professor of Latin at Harvard University, believes that one of the most impressive parts of the design was the system of tunnels and passageways that enabled spectators to go directly to their seats and not mingle with different classes... The arena was open to the sky but could be covered by awnings to keep out the rain or sun... Events were arranged every time the emperors needed to win public support and the Colosseum was one of the few places where the public could see their rulers... The last gladiatorial games were in AD404. As centuries passed, the building was raided for construction stone and by medieval times it had become the wreck it is today. But there is still life in the Colosseum. A wooden arena floor similar to the original was built and this week it became the setting for productions of tragedies by Sophocles performed by Israeli, Iranian and Greek theatre groups. Maximum audiences are 1500, as opposed to 75,000 in its heyday... Now the giant amphitheatre has been returned to its former glory in *Gladiator* with the help of computer-generated special effects... [■ Tomorrow's] *Weekend TimeOut*... looks at the... Kiwi actor... [who the] high-tech epic... has catapulted... into the top echelon of Hollywood stars.

...[the d]own-to-earth... Kiwi star of the new movie *Gladiator*, who jetted home only a week ago to visit his ill uncle... says [it] knows there is life after death. In fact... when people die, their souls take wing – and [the actor] has personal proof of it... What turned him into a true believer was an

experience [the actor] had with his late grandfather... a cinematographer who received an MBE from the Queen for his services as a World War II photographer in Japan. "...on the day [my grandfather] died, I was in the kitchen of my flat in Sydney. Suddenly a kookaburra flew in the window. It just looked me in the eye – and I knew my grandfather had died. I phoned home and my mother confirmed it..." Then, one day last year, [the actor] had a dream [it] was holding his mother[, who]... was crying... woke up alarmed and called home. "My mother said a [perso]n who had worked closely with my grandfather had come to visit and, without prompting, had told her a story that shattered my mum and reduced her to tears. [The visitor] said that on the day my grandfather had died a kookaburra had visited her, too. With all this talk of angels, maybe they're just birds sent to us by those who have crossed over... but I'm... not... the smartest fellow in the world,"... In the film... [it] plays a Roman general who dreams that one day [it]'ll be reunited with his loving wife and young child, who... met brutal deaths... Hollywood insiders believe *Gladiator* will turn him into a megastar... And [the actor is already] working non-stop... currently playing a hostage negotiator in *Proof of Life*... [The AUSn-raised actor] will be in Sydney for the Olympics and soon after will start shooting *Flora Plum*[, in which the actor]... plays a circus freak... and will be barely recognisable.

...MUCH confusion has been created by the world media as to whether [the actor] is a Kiwi or an Aussie, so at a recent interview to talk about his upcoming drama *Proof Of Life*, [it] tries to set the record straight. "I grew up in both countries and I have an equivalent love for both countries... Clearly, A[US] is home but... I do tend to get hassled less in N[Z]. They might know you[re] in the room but they don't take it upon themselves to say giddy, whereas in A[US], like America, they immediately come up and say, 'Hello, mate,' and want to have a conversation and an autograph and a photo and after a while, I'm thinking, 'That's why I live in the bush in A[US]!'" His view is probably coloured by the blinding media attention [it]'s received since bringing [his] new love interest... [-] his *Proof Of Life*... co-star [- home]... to visit the family farm in northern N[SW].

...While plenty have been bagging [the actor] here and overseas, *Gladiator*[s] producer... was never in doubt about who should win the best actor gong at the Oscars. [The producer] said the Kiwi-born Aussie was the saviour of a sometimes nightmarish shoot. "...[that actor] was the right choice... Some actors are good at meetings, but not the work. [This actor] only cares for the work... [It]'s not into perks or vanity, not demanding a second trailer for his cousin..." ...[□ The star of *Gladiator*] and other foreign actors may not have to worry too much about the possibility of an actors' strike. In fact, not being a US citizen may turn out to be a real bonus for stars looking for work at that time. According to a loophole in the Screen Actor's Guild contract, actors... who are not US citizens can work in movies shot and financed outside the country during the strike.

...There's one performance [the]Oscar-winning *Gladiator*[star]... doesn't want shown publicly. It's... a video of him biting a chunk out of the ear of a club bouncer during an A[US]n brawl some years ago. The Internet's buzzing with details of the security tape – which, so far, no one's seen.

...A[n acid-tongued US actress says *Gladiator*'s Oscar-winning star] is the worst person to have made it big in Hollywood [the actress – who has worked in Los Angeles since before the Oscar-winning star was born – ha]s ever met: "[That guy]'s a nasty, evil, arrogant SOB. I can't even look at him. I know of stuff that [it]'s done to people who can't answer back that will shock you." *The Beautiful Mind* star's reps refused to comment.

...the Disney movie *Dinosaur*[- opening]... nationwide... on Thursday[- is] a PG-rated film which is a breakthrough in the merging of ...CGI... and real backgrounds, and the first film to come out of Disney's new digital studio. It taps into an obsession that has been growing since 1841, when the British scientist Richard Owen named these awe-inspiring creatures "Dinosauria" – Greek for "terrible lizard." *Dinosaur*, which has been in the works on and off for 12 years and has cost \$US127.5 million... is more than just Disney's latest summer movie. The House That Mickey Built aims to show the world, and its competitors, that it can be as dominant in 3-D digital animation as it has always been in traditional two-dimensional formats... *Dinosaur*... offers a peek at where the revolution in CGI could be going – to a day when it will no longer be possible to tell photographic reality from illusion. Just as in... *Gladiator*, in which it was impossible to tell which part of the Roman Coliseum was built in real space and which in virtual, the obviously fantastical *Dinosaur* takes us a playful step closer to this unnerving future. The timing for Disney's movie couldn't be better. Dinomania – stirred to a fever pitch by *Jurassic Park* back in 1993 – is raging again. At the beginning of this year the BBC's *Walking With Dinosaurs* drew big ratings worldwide. The genesis of Disney's *Dinosaur* actually predates the[1993] blockbuster... At its peak, *Dinosaur* employed close to 900 people. But computer-generated animation was such a new field that "the world didn't have 50 A-list senior CG animators," says [the]co-producer... Disney had to hire traditional animators and spend a year-and-a-half training them. Much of the software had to be invented from scratch. Technology, to some extent, dictated the movie's story, which kept getting rewritten according to what the animators could or couldn't pull off. Once it was decided, early on, that the dinos would talk, certain liberties had to be taken with scientific fact: iguanodons, for example, had to acquire lips. "We had a joke," [the]producer... recalls: "Oh my god, next they'll sing!" That never became a real threat. If it had... "people would have walked." Some may still choose that option: dino fanatics flooded the Internet with angry posts when they discovered... the realistic (and silent) beasts they had seen in an early trailer spoke English. However, this movie's early [US] box office (\$US80 million after two weeks on release), would indicate it's on the way to paying off Disney's huge investment. In the process, it should fuel the fantasies and nightmares of a whole new generation of dinophiles.

...Computer lead not PC... IN an unprecedented move that has made many actors very nervous, the director of an upcoming live-action feature film has decided that [the film's anti-heroine]... will be entirely computer generated! In the film *Simone*, the character Simone becomes a movie star overnight and struggles with how it changes her life... [The director – whose] debut *Gattaca* and his Oscar-nominated script for *The Truman Show* [have already marked the] Kiwi-in-Hollywood... out as One To Watch... [- said it] decided to computer generate his... protagonist after failing to find a young actress suitable for the role. The first computer-generated character in a movie will be seen later this year in *Final Fantasy: The Movie*...

The... X factor... When [the]11-year-old... accepted her Oscar f[or Best Supporting Actress] in 1994 and turned to the audience, dumbstruck and terrified, it was tempting to think... [t]he angry little girl... had a dreadful life in store. Surely [the NZ-raised actress] would spiral out of control... the second-youngest Academy Award winner in history, would be mobbed by reporters, agents, directors and drug-dealers. There would be cigarettes and booze, ill-advised relationships, rehab. Perhaps [it] would be like [the *Riding In Cars With Boys* star] and fight her way back. Or maybe... be like... the youngest-ever Oscar winner, and fizzle out. But [the Kiwi] has not spiralled or fizzled. [Today the teen] is in a Manhattan hotel ready for an interview about her latest role... in *X-[People]*, a comic-strip sci-fi movie that took \$US54 million at the box office in its first weekend. It's her first blockbuster. [The Kiwi] plays Rogue, a dark, sultry girl who is not quite innocent, her usual role, in fact, and one [the Kiwi] does very well because it's her... [The Kiwi] doesn't think much about acting, [but] just does it. When Rogue touches or kisses someone, [this] practically kills them. You see the life force draining out. [The Kiwi] sees her character as "the ultimate adolescent, frightened of being really close to others." How was her adolescence? ...[the Kiwi] has tried to grow up normally and be a film star at the same time. If [it] hasn't quite succeeded, [it]'s come pretty close... Her mother... is an English teacher from Wellington; her father... is a physical-education instructor from Canada. [The actress, who] was born in Winnipeg... has a sister... and a brother... two and five years older respectively. Both are academic achievers... [Their little sister] was "the one that no one particularly noticed." Everyone noticed her in *The Piano*[, in which the girl] scowled and raged beautifully. There seemed to be a dark monster inside this little creature. What [the girl] discovered at the age of 9 was that [it] liked pretending to be somebody else in this intense way... After the Oscar win [the Kiwi] returned to N[Z] and tried to return to normality[and] didn't appear in a film for two years... When... 15, [the Kiwi] moved to Hollywood with her mother... – ...her parents split... when [the girl] was... in Canada filming *Fly Away Home* – ...and began acting out her most intimate teenage moments in public... [The Kiwi] made new friends in Los Angeles but misses the ones in N[Z]... "You're definitely shaped by the culture you've been brought up in... Even though I couldn't tell you exactly what it means to be a N[Z]er, I think

I've been influenced a lot by that culture..." I ask her what [it]'d like to be doing at 40. "Forty?" ...It's a concept at the edge of her understanding. "I don't know. I probably hope that I have a family and, if I still want to be... that I'm acting." It seemed highly unlikely, but it looks as if [the Kiwi]'s just about made the transition from child star to adult actress. Who knows – [the Kiwi] might have quite some career ahead of her... [Incidentally, p]arts of Sydney are to be closed off to allow a low-flying helicopter chase scene to be filmed for *The Matrix Reloaded*. [The]New South Wales Premier... says large areas of the city's central business district will have to put up with such distractions if Sydney is to maintain its reputation for being a trendy filmmaking destination. Streets and office buildings will be evacuated for two days next month in order to accommodate the block-buster sequel...

Every year Hollywood studios quietly dump movies, even ones with top \$10 million stars, that are not worth the money to distribute in theatres. Marketing costs are spiralling higher but the main reason for not releasing a film is usually simple – it stinks. [The h]unky... younger brother of *Red Dragon*[']s star... became a Hollywood hit after... starr[ing] in such movies as *Elizabeth* and *Shakespeare in Love*. But now his latest movie with[the] *Austin Powers* sex bomb... looks set to stay on the shelf. An erotic thriller, *Killing Me Softly* is directed by... the... acclaimed Chinese director... behind *Farewell My Concubine*. One reviewer described it as 'two hours of Chinese torture'. There are not even any plans to send it to video... [The movie] *People I Know* has turned into something people don't want to know about. The movie... looks set to be either put on video or go straight to pay TV. Movie company Miramax had great trouble selling it. Miramax is one studio with a cupboard full of orphaned movies... Another Miramax movie, *Shiner*... has gone straight to video. Miramax has also had problems with the movie *Daddy and Them*... It was just recently sold to cable TV after sitting on the shelf for several years. Miramax is also the distributor of *The Third Wheel*, a romantic comedy that... [o]ne internet review of a... test screening called... 'A laugh-free comedy,'... [that] was 'excruciating to watch'. Even [the]Miramax boss... admits *The Third Wheel* would be better off as a video release... [The Miramax boss] admitted: 'Sometimes you have to face the fact that some movies are better off on TV or DVD than in a theatre. You're asking a lot of an audience to pay \$10 or so to see a movie, so you don't want them to feel cheated.' [In related news, the entertainment giant TimeWarner has just posted a quarterly loss of '\$US100 billion – the biggest quarterly loss in the history of US business'.]

...Don't be surprised to see German troops in the middle of Henderson this weekend. They'll be members of the Historical Re-enactment Society taking part in a mock World War II battle. About 50 military enthusiasts will play troops from N[Z, the US] and Germany as part of the annual Auckland arms fair. [The society's] president... says the group wants to keep history alive without glorifying violence... "We don't glamorise. I think this is the only way to have a battle – without anyone getting hurt... We aren't going to gloss it over and pretend it never happened... [P]eople are losing touch with the sacrifices... W[W]II... soldiers made for us,"... Members will set up camp on the field next to the Waitakere City Stadium on Friday afternoon before staging battles at 2pm on Saturday and Sunday... The 15-minute fully-choreographed display will cost about \$4000 to stage, with half that being spent on ammunition. "At first the police thought we were a bunch of gun nuts but because we're an incorporated society we have to set standards... We are nuts but no more nuts than someone who collects cars. It's a hobby but it's become a way of life."

...Motu Moana Scout camp was transformed into an army base over the weekend as hundreds of enthusiasts re-lived battles from the pages of history. The event was hosted by a west Auckland-based group which recreates the exploits of the 3rd Cohort Batavi, a heavily armoured Roman auxiliary unit active in the fourth century... "This is an opportunity for all the clubs to get together and beat the crap out of each other, have a drink and do some wenching," says... [a] Cohort centurion... of Green Bay... playing his role to the hilt. They recreate battles which would have taken place during the Roman and medieval periods wearing armour and wielding swords, spears and pikes. "The weaponry is safe... All the edges and points have been taken off but otherwise it's totally authentic. I enjoy it because of what I learn. I think some people there know more about the Romans than some university lecturers..." ...[hi]s group is only seven members strong at the moment. But [they're] aiming to boost membership by persuading people the group re-creates battles for the same reason other people collect stamps. "It's a hobby... Some people call us a bunch of nutters but generally there is high interest... Generally the... reaction is very good." For more information about the club... phone 021 212-6017.

...Ever wondered about the person behind your weekly crossword? ...meet... the king of Kiwi crosswords. Or perhaps that should really be the royal family... – ...[hi]s wife... engineer son... and... teacher... daughters... are also involved in an enterprise which sends puzzles and crosswords to publications in countries as diverse as N[Z, AUS], England... Botswana, Spain, India, Korea, Japan and South America. Local papers and magazines bearing the [family's] touch include the *Herald*, the *Listener* and more than 50 community papers around the country. The Puzzle Company, based at [their] Raumati Beach home, produces 37 puzzles a week... and provides [the]m with a comfortable living. But don't think it's a cruise: 15-hour days and seven days a week are not uncommon. Even when on holiday, [the parents]... keep laptop computers handy for recording useful trivia. It all started... 15 years ago, when [the husband] realised that none of the crosswords [it] did ever came close to home. "The crosswords I used to do came from English culture – there was nothing about N[Z] in them." ...start[ing] small, contributing crosswords with a local flavour to Kapiti's local papers and doing the job part-time around his business – making stove black for pot bellies... [– the husband has fashioned] a full-time living out of compiling crosswords and other brain-bamboozlers... The company's catalogue... offers theme and novelty crosswords, logic puzzles and mazes as well as imported comic strips and spot-the-difference and trivia cartoons. These days the business has long been sold... But the business will only ever be a family affair... "You couldn't really teach someone else to do it." Compiling a crossword involves filling in one of 10-odd ready-to-go grids – "they're like faces after a while" – then finding appropriate clues and making sure that it all works... Any legitimate word is a candidate – unless [hi]s dictionary defines it as... slang. [His wife], who works full-time with h[im]... does each crossword and makes suggestions. [The husband] describes his job as a pleasant lifestyle, adding that [it] was always home for his kids when they were school-age. "I still enjoy doing the crosswords as much as I did 15 years ago,"... But like the cook who never goes into his kitchen at home, [the husband] no longer does crosswords for fun... B[y the way, according to his personal observations, B]rits like a wider crossword vocabulary than Kiwis... [and] Greeks love logic games...

[The communistic Maori social system, combined with the absence of a graphic system to conserve their ancient lore, and provide recreation, caused them to carefully preserve their unwritten literature, and to rely much on games, pastimes and vocal music as a means of passing winter evenings and other periods of leisure. Thus it was that considerable prominence was given to all means of recreation, in many of which adults took part, while even old guys sometimes participated – or would spend much time in the manufacture of toys for children and certain paraphernalia employed in adult games' (*Games and pastimes of the Maori*). 'At night they loved to assemble in one of the larger huts and there pass the evening in conversation, story-telling, and amusements. Their naturally cheerful disposition caused them to enjoy social pleasures' (*The Maori as it was*). 'Swimming was a popular pastime with both sexes...

The Polynesian rat was here before Europeans, but, because it lived on berries and roots, was not a pest like the Norway rat' (*The coming of the Maori*)...

'Common rats feed on an incredible assortment of foods, and because of the versatility of their feeding habits and the enormous numbers which rat populations reach they are extremely destructive. At one time they were beneficial to some extent, acting as scavengers, but as hygiene has improved rats have become mere parasites. Their main food is grain, either in fields or in stores. They will also attack root crops, and are a serious pest of sugar beet in East Anglia. Rats eat more flesh than most rodents and, where they live in meat stores, eat little else. All manner of animals are captured; the remains of house mice, the skins turned inside out, are often found near rats' nests. They will attack poultry runs, often carrying eggs away to their burrows, and even ducklings are not safe because common rats are expert at swimming and diving. There is little or no courtship before mating and a bond never forms between the pair. When the home range is in an environment that alters little throughout the year, like a wheat rick, breeding takes place all the time. A girl

rat begins breeding when about 80 days old and can then produce anything up to 50 young a year. This figure is never reached in practice because mortality, especially of young rats, becomes very high when the population is large. As many as 99% will die before they are adults, and most adults do not live for more than a year. This very rapid rate of reproduction and turnover means that rats are very difficult to control. With such a high natural mortality even a very determined onslaught with poison and traps will have very little lasting effect on the numbers. They will only remove rats which are shortly going to die anyway. Tawny owls, foxes, stoats and weasels all hunt rats, although even a champion killer like a stoat may have difficulty killing a healthy full-grown rat.

...*The ferret is a well-known hunter that is an albino of the polecat which is said to have been brought to Europe from North Africa by the Romans. Its early history is, however, in doubt. The name was taken to North America where it was applied to a native member of the weasel family, the black-footed ferret.* The black-footed ferret has been described as the rarest mammal in North America. It is one of whose habits little is known. Fears have been expressed that it may become extinct before a proper study can be made of it. The reason for the reduction in its numbers is that its main prey, the prairie dog, is now considerably less plentiful owing to the advance of agriculture and the practice of poisoning prairie dogs. The main interest in the ferret is its history which depends entirely on written records dating from the 4th century BC. Aristotle, about 350 BC, described an animal that could have been a ferret. A hundred years previously Aristophanes used the same word as Aristotle (*ictis*) in one of his comedies. As there were no rabbits in Greece then, the ferret may have been used for destroying small rodents. Although the animal to which the name was originally given is sometimes described as domesticated it is probably nearer the truth to call it semi-tame. It readily reverts to the wild state and the book *A Highland Year* tells of ferrets being released on the Hebrides island of Harris to get rid of the numerous rabbits. They not only got rid of the rabbits but also the ptarmigan' ('a bird of the grouse family').]

...*Ferret owners get trousers in a twist...* Tasmanian devils, elephants, crocodiles and polar bears have been officially banned as pets in New York City. But it is the ban on ferrets that is raising a ruckus. The city's Health Department released its official list of banned animals yesterday, a list that includes gila monsters, venomous centipedes and anaconda snakes. Such animals had already been generally prohibited, but the city's health code had never specified them by name. The clarification sparked controversy when owners of ferrets objected to the inclusion of their pets on the list of animals deemed "wild, ferocious, fierce, dangerous or naturally inclined to do harm." ...Health officials expressed concern about instances in which ferrets have attacked and seriously injured infants... "This department is trying to malign... domestic... ferrets unfairly," [one owner] said.

...The clatter of little paws was heard outside Environment Waikato yesterday, as... about 20... ferret owners protested against the negative publicity that has dogged their pets... [They] paraded their pets... waved placards that demanded a fair go for domestic ferrets... and sang their praise to anyone who would listen, including the deputy chief executive of Environment Waikato[, who]... declined a cuddle with the wriggly and playful animals... [The deputy chief executive] stood by his council's concerns that ferrets were carriers of bovine tuberculosis and parasites and highly destructive to native birds... Earlier this month the regional council declared that it wanted to stop ferrets being kept as pets and on Monday an escaped ferret savaged a sleeping 2-year-old Palmerston North boy. The attack prompted the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society to call for pet ferrets to be outlawed... One ferret breeder... said the Palmerston North incident was a case of irresponsible owners, and people should think carefully about whether they could properly care for a ferret before buying one... [T]he ferret got into the... house through a cat-door... [The two-year-old's] mother... said: "The screams were blood-curdling..." ...The ferret, wearing a collar and bell, bit her finger nearly to the bone before it was put into a cat cage. Then they found... their... [son's] right arm had been extensively scratched and bitten and [was] bleeding profusely... The ferret had also bitten him twice above his right eye, on his other arm and several times on his body... The same ferret had visited the family two weeks... [before the attack], and they had scared it out. "It's... not acceptable to have an animal like that roaming around at night." [Their son] is still too rattled by the fright to sleep in his own bed... [T]heir eldest son slept right through the fuss, as did their 10-month-old... "Imagine if it had chosen to get in with the baby,"... A council animal control supervisor... said the ferret had been destroyed, at the owner's insistence.

...[a] Bay of Plenty regional councillor... says... young boys... with a "nasty streak" could be paid bounties to kill... [w]ild or escaped ferrets... blamed for spreading bovine tuberculosis and... preying on native wildlife... The regional council, Environment Bay of Plenty, [also] wants private ownership of [the] pests banned... The Department of Conservation is reviewing regulations on the farming, breeding and sale of ferrets.

...The Department of Conservation is considering prosecuting the owners of five ferrets found on environmentally sensitive Great Barrier Island. DoC's Great Barrier area manager... was flabbergasted to get a phone call last Sunday from an island resident to say ferrets on leashes were being exercised on a local beach... [The manager] rushed to Smokehouse Bay to see the sight for himself. "My heart was in my mouth." [The manager] and another staff member boarded a boat moored in the bay to find the ferrets caged there. Those on board said they did not know they were contravening the Biosecurity Act and Wildlife Regulations. [The manager said it] was told the ferrets were desexed, but... was horrified to think of the damage one ferret could do to wildlife if it escaped... The boat owners received a formal warning last Monday. They left the island that day, although they had apparently planned to stay for a week. The Auckland Regional Council issued a notice of direction to the boat owners, and is now investigating options for legal action. [The]ARC parks and heritage chair[person]... said the incident was extremely alarming[, adding that]... the protected status of the Hauraki Gulf had been well publicised and "ignorance was no excuse". Because of its isolation, Great Barrier Island is free of major introduced predators such as possums, ferrets, hedgehogs and Norway rats. As a result, native species such as the brown teal, black petrels and the extremely rare chevron skink have thrived... [The a]cting Auckland conservator... said the incident almost defied belief. A discussion document on the future of ferrets in N[Z] had been under discussion for two years... "I find it distressing that pet owners, members of a recognised club, apparently claim not to have been aware of regulations governing the keeping of these potentially dangerous animals." [Auckland's acting conservator] said DoC strongly advised people not to take pets to sea with them. "Experience has shown time and time again pets do escape."

...Present penalties... [for a]nyone caught releasing a pest in a nature reserve... are "pathetic" and the Cabinet has agreed to increase them,[the] Conservation Minister... said yesterday. Anyone releasing a stoat in a nature reserve like Codfish Island, as had been threatened, was liable at present to a maximum one month in prison or a \$500 fine. "Plainly, this penalty is pathetic compared with the severe consequences such an action could have for world famous conservation sanctuaries the N[Z] taxpayer has spent millions of dollars developing," [the minister] said. The Government planned to introduce legislation before the end of the year to increase the penalty to a maximum of one year in prison or a fine of \$100,000. "Doing so will bring conservation law more into line with other environmental legislation, notably the Biosecurity Act, which already carried tough penalties for the illegal release of unwanted organisms, such as pest fish." ...[people] prosecuted... under the Biosecurity Act... could face fines of up to \$100,000 and five years in prison... The new penalties... under the Reserves Act, the Conservation Act and the National Parks Act... would also apply to individuals caught illegally releasing wild animals into conservation areas... In January, a group claiming to be the Biodiversity Action Group threatened to release possums or stoats on predator-free Codfish Island and Stewart Island.

...Millions of dollars will be poured into stoat control research over the next five years to help save the kiwi... [The] Conservation Minister... yesterday announced in kiwi-populated bush near Whangarei that \$6.6 million would be allocated in this year's Budget... to find the best-integrated pest-management solutions, including new poison baits, biocontrol, immuno-contraception and improved trapping... [T]he initiative represented the most significant extra conservation funding since \$30 million was allocated to strengthen structures after the Cave Creek tragedy. [The minister] said stoats were killing... about 15,000 chicks a year... [but the DoC] had only in the past decade come to realise the significance of the stoat threat... to the kiwi, whose population was halved every decade... [to the point where there are n]ow just 70,000 left... It has been estimated that before human arrival, seven million kiwi were roaming N[Z].

...*Time running out for our national symbol...* Seventy-five years ago, just under five million kiwi roamed the forests... Within seven years, numbers would... have dropped to 50,000... [However, s]cientific research and careful monitoring of birds through the Kiwi Recovery Programme is providing vital information on incubation, rearing chicks, lifestyle and predators... There is also research into genetics, breeding and habitat requirements... The BNZ has just extended its multi-million-dollar sponsorship of the Kiwi Recovery Programme and Operation Nest Egg for three years. The bank contributed almost \$3 million in the past three years... People... work day and night to keep track of kiwi... [The] head of the Kiwi Recovery Programme... has been there since the beginning in 1991, one of eight fulltime-equivalent people paid through the programme. So has his dog, a yellow Labrador named Ollie. [The DoC scientist] started training Ollie to find kiwi using a bag of feathers at home. Then Ollie graduated to trips to Kapiti Island with his aunt Lucy. "When Lucy found a kiwi, Ollie would get rewarded too. One day [Ollie] found one for himself and... has never looked back." Ollie, who works from the top of Northland to Stewart Island, now has more than 1000 kiwi to his credit... At night tapes and whistles imitating a kiwi call are used as well as dogs. But these can skew a survey... because they attract a disproportionate number of adult [cocks]. "They think there is another kiwi on their patch and come to beat up on the intruder." ...[the head] is confident that Kiwi Recovery can halt the decline in numbers. As long as the work continues, [the head] expects kiwi numbers on the mainland to remain stable and numbers on protected islands to increase... While the brown kiwi is still widespread in areas... [above] the central North Island, only a handful of the Okarito brown... remain in the South Island... Around 1000 little spotted kiwi live on Kapiti Island, off Wellington, with small populations newly established on Hen Island, Red Mercury Island and Tiritiri Matangi Island in the Hauraki Gulf. The other three varieties of kiwi – the great spotted, Southern Tokoeka and Haast Tokoeka – are confined to the South Island or Stewart Island.

...Kelly... has been fighting a rare blood parasite for the last two months, affecting her plumage and growth. The six-month-old kiwi is one of four brought in to Auckland Zoo from the wild, where they are thought to have picked up the parasite from ticks, says [the zoo's] veterinarian... The zoo is currently working with the DoC on a survey to determine if the blood parasite affecting the kiwi has spread to other birds... But Kelly is now on the mend, thanks to some recycled medical gear that would otherwise have been thrown out by Waitakere Hospital and others... [O]ut-of-date stock like catheters, tubes and petri dishes are regularly delivered to the zoo's wildlife health centre, where they are ingeniously adapted to suit anything from a chimpanzee to... chameleon lizards... The equipment is no longer sterile, so can not be used for humans, but is still suitable for non-sterile purposes like stomach procedures... Animal lovers need not fret, [the vet] says, because "when it comes to surgical procedures it's the same rules as for humans." ...The scheme has been running for more than four years... saving the zoo thousands of dollars each year... [T]he zoo also donates some of its hospital equipment to wildlife rehabilitation centres in Thailand.

...Mercy Hospital has come to the aid of some of Auckland Zoo's fussiest eaters. The hospital has donated two boxes of old surgical instruments which the zoo is using not only in veterinary operations but to feed its 25 adult Jackson's chameleons. The colourful African natives demand a fair amount of attention. Locusts, flies, crickets and grubs are let loose in their enclosure, but they dislike each other so much they will not search out dinner if another chameleon is close by. "They're a husbandry nightmare," says [the zoo] reptile manager... Auckland Zoo has earned a worldwide reputation for breeding chameleons and the reptiles are on its surplus list... Obsolete surgery instruments are usually donated to [Last] World countries, says Mercy Hospital's communications manager... But a staff member came up with the idea of giving them to the zoo.

...A west Auckland [resident] says people need to know when wild animals can be treated free by vets... [The westie] took a hedgehog that had made its home under her house to her vet. All its quills had fallen out because of mange and it had given birth to a litter... [T]he vet charged her \$30 for a consultation fee and \$5 for the mange injection... [The westie] was a little taken aback and was later told vets shouldn't charge to treat wild animals. But [the] Veterinary Association chief executive... says... "In the veterinary code of conduct there is [only] a requirement to treat wild animals for first aid when there is an emergency." ...emergency treatment now includes euthanasia following changes to the Animal Welfare Act. [The chief executive also said that] many veterinary surgeries are linked to the SPCA and charge reduced rates for wildlife... [so] someone who finds an injured wild animal should contact the SPCA... [first. The chief executive claimed that] vets do about \$7 million of free welfare work each year.

...[a family of] baby hedgehogs have had a prickly start to life – their parents have been killed by garden equipment. Hundreds of hedgehogs, which spend their days hiding in the long grass and undergrowth of people's gardens, are being killed by the garden strimmer, a machine which cuts grass with high speed rotor blades. In many cases, baby hedgehogs have been forced to fend for themselves with little chance of survival. However, the [family of] little orphans are the lucky ones. They were taken in by the Farthing Wood Wildlife Hospital in Surrey, England, where they will be hand-reared until they are big enough to be released into the wild. This season, the hospital took in 45 babies in one month alone. [The h]ospital manager... says [it]'s alarmed by the rise in numbers. "Perhaps people are leaving their grass to get longer," [the manager suggest]s.

...Although in theory hedgehogs could live for seven years, N[Z] research indicated they lived for only 18 months or two years in the wild here – with disease and lung problems affecting them... The hedgehog could also carry diseases such as tuberculosis and the food poisoning bug salmonella, which [some people] had contracted from... hedgehog[s]. Now the hedgehog may have to... join the ranks of the bad boys of the native forest predator gang – possums, wild cats, rats and mustelids such as stoats and weasels... [H]edgehogs were already "implicated" in the loss of eggs from ground-nesting threatened shore-birds such as the N[Z] and banded dotterels[, but a]... study based in the 450ha Trounson Kauri Park... as part of [an] Auckland University student's... master's degree thesis shows the seemingly innocuous hedgehog may be one of the more harmful invaders... There appeared to be large numbers of hedgehogs in the park, with more than 500 caught by DoC staff in the past two years... "I think they are quite cute and cuddly around the towns but in an area like Trounson they could be a bit nasty." His research – which includes fixing radio transmitters to about 20 hedgehogs to track their movements – showed their diet appeared to favour two introduced species, an A[US]n cricket and an African grass grub. "The problem is those beetles are turning up in kiwi diets in other studies so potentially they [hedgehogs and kiwi] could be competing for the same food." ...hedgehogs – which had no natural enemies in N[Z] – aren't... fussy eater[s]. They... consumed many species living or dead... [The masters degree student] had already discovered a mangled native kauri snail in one hedgehog burrow, indicating they ate that, too.

...*Kiwi share in \$200m rescue...* Next week's budget will include... \$200m to be spent over the next five years to protect N[Z]'s natural environment... \$10 million [of that total will] be spent... on the creation of special "kiwi zones." The sanctuaries, thousands of hectares where intensive predator control will be put in place, are seen as crucial to saving kiwi and other endangered species from extinction on the mainland. The *Herald* understands next week's Budget will also include a DoC funding boost of \$18 million... rising to \$50 million by 2005-2006. [Last year t]he department's budget was \$157 million. The \$50 million... is close to what conservationists say is needed to implement the Government's biodiversity strategy, Our Chance to Turn the Tide. Released with a degree of fanfare earlier this year, the strategy attracted criticism from some groups because it contained no costings. But many of its recommendations are expected to be put into place after today's announcement.

...As N[Z] prepares to] enter... a new millennium, our habitat faces a sobering dawn. This country is home to more than 10[%] of the Earth's endangered birds and 9[%] of its threatened plants. N[Z] is classed as a global biodiversity hotspot... by the Washington-based Conservation International organisation and is the only [First World] nation whose entire landmass is considered a danger zone for endangered species... Scientists say that if not enough is done to maintain or restore the biodiversity of N[Z]... coming generations will grow up among fewer and fewer species... Another risk is that, without continued vigilance, whole ecosystems could be overwhelmed by new waves of insect pests or marine invaders... But the cost of fixing the problem is high. Just to halt the decline in our biodiversity has been put at nearly \$1 billion over 20 years.

...a new conservation report... says... [introduced] pests are scrambling around the countryside on a \$440 million vandalism spree... And it's costing the Government and private companies another \$400m a year to get rid of the critters. The first comprehensive look at the economic impact

of pests and weeds... shows the country is losing... close to 1% of [its GDP]... Topping the report's list of eco bad guys... [by causing] an estimated \$165m loss each year... is the Argentine stem weevil, which... has infested the nation's pastures, lowering pasture quality and increasing animal health problems such as rye-grass staggers, facial eczema and bloat. Rabbits and possums are the next most expensive, [respectively] inflicting annual losses of \$50m and \$40m... "No doubt those who introduced them thought they were doing the country a favour and never contemplated the disastrous consequences their action would have..." the report's co-author... said then added that... "...the insurance premium for security from pests is border control." ...[recent] border scares have included the discovery of an Asian rat at the Port of Auckland and water infested with Asian tiger mosquitoes in second-hand tyres and a cement mixer. The southern saltmarsh mosquito was discovered near Napier... "Clearly, there is room for beefing up security at the border," said [the co-author, whose] report... suggests the DoC should eradicate tahr, wallaby, chamois and some populations of deer, at the expense of recreational hunting[, and]... also recommends boosting spending on scientific and technical support to enable NZ to exercise its right to "safe trade" under international agreements... Prosecution is recommended for corporates bringing contaminated goods into the country. Containerised trade is identified as one of the many growing threats, along with ballast water.

...Border control is certain to be tightened after an extensive investigation into the number of alien organisms entering NZ. Changes could include contracting private companies to carry out some of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's work, which includes policing the 420,000 full and empty containers that arrive each year. Maf biosecurity has been the subject of critical reports and an Auditor-General investigation over the past few months, all showing flaws in the sea container system. Last year Maf inspected 24[%] of high-risk containers and randomly selected a further 5-10[%] for internal inspection, where an officer puts his head around the door and has a look inside. In the survey, and for the first time, the ministry did a thorough re-check of containers already door-inspected and the results were predictably worrying. Five live, alien spiders and three insects were discovered in the 1517 containers during door inspection. In the re-check, the numbers shot up to 124 spiders and 71 insects. For seeds and plant material, the figures were 19 and 179. Detection rates during door inspections were around 4[%] for spiders and insects and 10[%] for plant material. "That is just way, way too low," said [the RFBPS biosecurity spokesperson]... "Maf has been pussyfooting around the importing industry but it's time to get tough..." ...But [the spokesperson] for the 300-member Importers Institute... said his organisation was a "convenient target" for those calling for tougher border control. [The institute spokesperson also pointed out that:]"Increased biosecurity means increased costs to the public." ...A spokesperson for the Biosecurity Ministry... said the funding... to protect the nation from pests and diseases, including screening aircraft and mail... had increased at least \$20 million since... last year... The estimated cost of screening all sea containers was \$90 million.

...All passengers flying into NZ could have their bags x-rayed under new plans to fight a surge in the smuggling of banned plants and animals. The deluge has prompted the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to consider beefing up border defences. [Latest figures... show seizures of banned goods have jumped 150[%] in five years. And more than a quarter of items seized had not been declared on arrival cards... [The] quarantine services general manager, said his officers made 51,000 seizures in the six months to last December 31. Of those, 14,000 had not been declared... "It does not occur to some people that NZ has a very unique environment that needs protecting... Some of it is deliberate organised crime, there are people who do not understand the quarantine rules and there are people who are just careless." Most of the illegal goods were fruit... The Government has given approval for MAF to study the costs and benefits of x-raying all arriving luggage, although nothing would be introduced without consulting airlines and airport companies... The Tourism Industry Association said yesterday that it understood the need to protect the country's biosecurity, but it hoped law abiding passengers would not be further delayed. The average delay for someone diverted to the baggage x-ray is 1min 15sec. The Board of Airline Representatives said airlines would cooperate. Airlines already show videos and published warnings in their in-flight magazines, said the board's executive director... Late last year, [the] Biosecurity Minister... announced a range of measures, including a multi-lingual information programme, surveillance and new ways of detecting contamination in sea containers[(which could include blanket screening of sea containers – although the Importers Institute says 'it is impractical to screen all containers'). The minister] also gave MAF the authority to impose instant fines of \$200... on people carrying undeclared fruit, plant or animal products...

The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment has stepped up his call for the Government to clamp down on alien pests and diseases... [The commissioner] wanted to see biosecurity given the same priority as national defence. The independent environment watchdog first put the Government on notice over its priorities for biosecurity in a report, *NZ Under Siege*, in October[last year. The commissioner says]... that of the \$103 million to be spent on biosecurity in [the next financial year], just \$86,000 would be spent on public information and awareness campaigns – down from \$500,000 in 1996-97. In contrast, A[US] would spend \$2.86 million. "We try to get through very clearly that biosecurity has to be part of the national psyche, which means we've all got to understand it... [Y]ou've got to invest a lot in publicity, empowering people – getting it in front of them." The commissioner would like to have permanent telephone hotlines and rewards offered for information. "It's [kids]... gardeners and people mucking around clearing [up]... who find these things... not official agencies." ...Biosecurity services could also look at other ways of managing pests and diseases that made it past the border... NZ biosecurity systems had no ready-reaction fighting fund. "MAF has money only to find out what [the threat] is, not to immediately initiate smart control operations." Next month... the commissioner will formally ask the Government what it has done in response to his recommendations. [The commissioner] has already indicated to Parliament, including the primary production select committee, that there will be an annual biosecurity audit. "It's a way of saying it is that important. We're going to keep the heat on."

...You could be forgiven for suspecting there was a plague on our house... Nearly every month news has come that some fresh, foreign invader has stormed through our borders. How fragile are these borders? How open to all-unwelcome-comers is this isolated little nation? In a word, very. As an island country with unique flora and fauna and large, economically important agricultural, forestry and horticultural industries, NZ has much to protect. Yet our long coastline and dependence on trade and tourism – combined with modern transport – mean we cannot seal ourselves in. The gates must remain open; the business of business must go on. So it falls to the gatekeeper to protect us, our environment, our farms and our fruit. It is the job of the MAF... Quarantine Service to keep at bay as many of the world's bugs as it can. Some threats, such as foot and mouth disease and tephritidae fruitfly... are well-known bogies in many neighbouring countries, including A[US]. Others are little known, though equally threatening. One is the giant African snail, which can grow as large as a brick and lay as many as 6000 eggs in a lifetime. It has been recorded attacking 500 types of plants and can pass on disease to humans. But it is just one of many. The service's task, then, is immense... [T]he quarantine... system, for commercial importation, begins overseas with import health standards and assessments of the risks associated with products and their ports of origin. All imports must be inspected by an official export authority in the country of origin and when they arrive in NZ the service takes a biometric sample for analysis. If something is found, diagnostic work is done. If treatment is needed, the service treats it. If an item needs to be reshipped, the service arranges for it. If it has to be destroyed, the service orders it. "So the commercial pathways are very tight... But with passengers and mail you are virtually dealing with a global audience. We don't know who is going to travel to NZ and they don't necessarily know a lot about NZ or what the quarantine risks are." So if the Quarantine Service cannot keep 100[%] of the pests out of NZ, how must we measure success and failure? [The service's general manager] points to the fact that NZ doesn't have fruitflies but that in every country surrounding NZ – perhaps with the exception of Norfolk Island – they are established and there is no prospect of controlling them... "With the many things you hear about getting in, you would think they are failures, but they are actually not. They mean the system is working. If the system didn't work, we would have fruitfly and so on... We don't have foot and mouth disease either, and we... are one of the very few countries in the

world that's never had foot and mouth disease. We don't have swine fever, or rabies, or citrus canker and we don't have Asian gypsy moth. We had an outbreak of tussock moth and that was dealt with..." But the... 1996 infestation of eastern Auckland suburbs by the white-spotted tussock moth required a \$12 million eradication project, which included low-level spraying of properties in a 40 sq km area.

...THE PAINTED apple moth may be in west Auckland to stay because MAF says there's not enough money to eradicate it. [The h]ead of forest biosecurity... says the M[AF] has funding until November to contain the pest, but that's not enough to wipe it out. The painted apple moth is a threat to some fruit and native trees and has been found in Glendene, Avondale, Kelston, Titirangi and, most recently, in Waikumete Cemetery... Evidence points to it having arrived here in a shipping container... [The head] says a grid trapping survey is being carried out to determine how far the moth has spread and what resources are needed to eradicate it. A technical advisory group will use that information to advise the Government on long-term options for dealing with the pest. [The head] says they'll report to the Government in November when funding for the containment programme runs out. "The Government will need to respond to what additional advice we have at that time," [the head] says. But that's angered a west Auckland entomologist and an orchardist who want the Government to provide more funding to get rid of the moth. [The e]ntomologist... says funds are needed now to wipe out the moth before it's too late. "I think if they had a proper campaign it could be eradicated,"... [The entomologist] says MAF's programme hasn't worked and... thinks they should admit that. "I think it's awful, they have got to get their act together." [The] Auckland Pipfruit Growers Association president... fears it won't be long before the moth reaches the west's fruit orchards. "It's an imported pest and if the Government can't make funds available there's something wrong,"... But [the head] says it's premature to be going back to the Government for more resources until they have the results from the trapping grid. [The head also] says the containment programme may contribute to eradication, as in Mt Wellington where only one painted apple moth has been found in the past year. MAF's containment programme has involved weekly checks of known infested sites, property surveys, and introducing a caged [girl moth] trapping system that attracts [boy] moths.

...AN INDEPENDENT review of plans to rid the west of the invasive painted apple moth is long overdue, says [a]west Auckland entomologist... The M[AF] commissioned the review after criticism of its programme to contain the moth[, which] was first discovered in Glendene... The moth... has since spread to [surrounding suburbs]... The review has recommended aerial spraying as a last resort to eradicate the A[US]n pest. Other recommendations include establishing another colony to supply more [girl moths] for a caged trapping system, and developing a communication strategy to ensure interest groups are consulted. [The entomologist] says the recommendations are good but a little too late. The moth should have been sprayed when it was confined to a smaller area... "[Now i]t's in at least 10 times the area. The money must have gone up in the time being and that must be a public concern." ...MAF[']s biosecurity group director... says several processes would have to be completed before a decision is made to spray the area... "The Government would then have to agree,"... [The group director] says such a spraying programme is likely to cost about \$5 million but can't be finalised until the delimiting survey is complete. Spraying is unlikely to start before October.

...The Waitakere Ranges are not negotiable. Any threat to our unique bush and wildlife from the painted apple moth will not be tolerated, says Waitakere City Council. The council has requested monthly updates from ...MAF... as the pest continues to spread throughout west Auckland. Some 94... properties are still known to have the painted apple moth... and the population will start to increase as we approach warmer weather. Though little is known about it, the painted apple moth is a native of A[US] that belongs to the same family as the white tussock moth... If aerial spraying using Btk... get[s] the green light, MAF hopes to contain it within a very localised area in November. "It's more likely to be by helicopter than the DC6 approach that was necessary during the white tussock moth programme," says [MAF's head of forest biosecurity. The head] defends the control measures already in place – [which include]removing the moth's preferred food sources and... restrictions on the movement of vegetation...

M[AF]'s director of forest biosecurity... says the spraying of specifically targeted areas will be designed to stop the... painted apple moth... spreading to the environmentally sensitive Waitakere Ranges... [The director] says the ministry is not considering blanket spraying by aircraft, the controversial method used against the white-spotted tussock moth in the eastern suburbs of Auckland. But the pesticide... will be the same... [One c]ouncillor... condemns the ministry for not taking action sooner, saying it knew the painted apple moth posed a problem two years ago. [The] Waitakere Ranges Protection Society president... blames both the council and the ministry. [The president] believes a lack of action from both groups could see the moth spreading to the Waitakere Ranges by summer. "Once that happens it will be too late to eradicate it,"... says [the president. However, the president] also opposes aerial spraying, claiming it will kill native insects and butterflies crucial to the feeding chain of birds.

...[a letter-writer] of Birkdale has an idea to get rid of the dreaded moth: "Do what the Chinese did when they wanted to rid themselves of a plague of flies. A jar was given to every child and when it was full they took it to school and were given \$1 and a new jar to fill. They were fly-free in a very short time, and it cost very little and no pollution..." [● Unfortunately, the Chinese method had a negative side – 'the lack of flies led to a lack of birds.'

...The MAF says it is powerless to stop thousands of painted apple moth caterpillars munching their way through a marine reserve... managed by the D[oC. MAF's director]... of biosecurity... says [the ministry] has known about the moths on Traherne Island in the Pollen Island Marine Reserve for several weeks. The reserve, beside the northwestern motorway at the end of Rosebank Rd, is the only habitat of the bactra moth and home to rare and endangered birds... [M]inistry contractors can't tackle the problem because the area is too difficult to reach... [A c]ommunity relations officer... admits the spread of the [painted apple]moth is a concern[, but]... believes other species affected by the aerial spraying will eventually regenerate. But [a local]entomologist... disagrees... and... fears the ministry's inactivity is leaving west Auckland on the verge of an ecological disaster. [The entomologist says painted apple] moths have also been found in traps on Gum Rd on the fringes of the Waitakere Ranges...

Let us spray, says Govt THE waiting is over. Newly released plans reveal hundreds of homes and businesses will be subjected to aerial spraying as the Government steps up its bid to destroy the painted apple moth. A helicopter will spray the organic pesticide Btk... over about 800 properties near the areas of highest infestation. The \$11 million campaign will focus on Waikumete Cemetery, Traherne Island... the edges of Whau River, Wairau Creek and a waterway in... Te Atatu. The M[AF], which recommended the plan, believes Btk is harmless to people, plants, animals and all insects except caterpillars. It admits some residents suffered "minor respiratory irritations" during Operation Evergreen... in... east... Auckland...

Government officials are being accused of botching publicity about plans to spray insecticide over hundreds of properties... Letters about the plan carrying Wednesday's date were sent to 46,000 west Auckland addresses. But many arrived on Tuesday – before the afternoon meeting when the strategy was revealed to the ministry's own community advisory group. M[AF]... is disappointed and... is investigating the situation... [A] subsidiary of N[Z] Post, was given strict instructions not to deliver the letters before Wednesday... [T]he principal of Glen Eden Primary, the only school in the spray zone... found out about the campaign from a newspaper. Yesterday morning [the principal] was still waiting to hear from the ministry... "My beef with the whole thing is that we've never been consulted at all... That's not good enough. The children could well be affected..." [A MAF spokesperson] says confidentiality issues prevented the ministry contacting affected organisations before Tuesday. But [the spokesperson] accepts the school could have been contacted on the day the plan was announced. "...in hindsight... I think that's probably a very valid point..."

...FAILURE to get permission for low-level flying has grounded the aerial spraying campaign to destroy the painted apple moth. The M[AF] says it didn't realise it needed special approval to fly helicopters below 300 metres. [MAF's f]orest biosecurity director... says the blitz has been stalled until January at the earliest by an "obscure rule" in the Waitakere City Council's district plan... The council isn't happy with her explanation. [A spokesperson] says the council informed the ministry two weeks ago that it would need a resource consent for low-level flying if it wanted to avoid

using special powers under the Biosecurity Act. “The ministry has known for two years that some level of aerial spraying was possible and if it had started consent proceedings back then it could have had the consent by now,”... The delay comes as the moth appears to be spreading its wings.

...The Government will declare a biosecurity emergency in West Auckland so it can blitz a moth pest from the air. [The]Biosecurity Minister... says [it] will declare the emergency so targeted aerial spraying for the painted apple moth can start as soon as possible... [The minister also] said it was “extra-ordinary” that neither local nor central Government knew about flying restrictions under Waitakere City Council’s district plan...

AT least one west Aucklander with health problems attributable to Btk... has been evacuated by MAF. But M[AF] officials refuse to confirm any relocations have taken place – citing patient privacy... Critics of... [the] spraying welcome the news and urge MAF to go public... [The] founder of the Community Coalition for the Painted Apple Moth, says officials have repeatedly claimed spraying is safe... [The founder] wants MAF to offer the relocation option to more residents affected by spraying – even if residents can’t prove the link. “It is near impossible for anyone to provide clinical evidence showing the spray is making them ill... But I still believe people should be given the facility to be evacuated – and the ministry should pay for it.” ...many other[residents are] phoned between 3am and 4am on scheduled days to be told whether spraying is going ahead.

...Re: Letter to the editor, Thursday, [which]... asks if those complaining about the aerial spraying... would pay for the damage if the... painted apple moth... became established. As current feeding trials appear to show that our native trees are mostly resistant to painted apple moth, it is likely that the only truly susceptible hosts will be the forests of mono-cropped, cloned pine trees. As these forests are privately owned, why are we, the taxpayers, paying \$11 million to spray our own citizens, so that these investors can have a free eradication programme? Why aren’t they paying for it... as they will be the ones reaping the benefit? PS – ...Where are the leaders of west Auckland? Where do they stand? Where can we go to protest? Who can we actually talk to other than MAF? I thought west Auckland was supposed to be GE free. N[Z] was made nuclear free by a strong and caring nation – where are those people now? I cannot see how, after so much protesting against the U[S] with the nuclear issue, we now allow them to give us a chemical that the public is not allowed to know what it consists of? We have a right to know what is being sprayed all over us, don’t we? Or should we let American companies walk all over us? ...When I call [MAF’s] 0800 969 696 number... to protest and ask questions, they ask me where I live and when I tell them they say that’s not in the zone so I don’t have to worry. But my daughter goes to school in the zone.

...Health concerns are mounting among some parents of schoolchildren as the M[AF] plans its third round of painted apple moth spraying in west Auckland. Stage two of the programme finished earlier this week after high winds stopped plans to have the school areas sprayed during the weekend. The schools were instead sprayed during the week. At least five mothers are angry, saying their children were exposed to the spray while walking to school. [A]Kelston mother... says too many inconsistencies surround information being released by the ministry... “Either it’s safe or not...,”... The ministry’s community advisory group chair[person]... agrees residents are worried. “People are being sent conflicting information, creating unnecessary panic,”... Spraying resumes in three weeks.

...The Auckland Regional Council is backing calls for blanket spraying in a bid to wipe out the painted apple moth. Its recommendations will be included in a M[AF] briefing paper due to be considered by the Cabinet... A blanket approach will see the existing 3000 hectare... spray zone extended up to 50,000ha throughout the Auckland region. Areas likely to be included are parts of the North Shore and Central Auckland where moths have been found. [The]Painted Apple Moth Advisory Group spokes[person]... says the decision shows how serious the apple moth infestation is... The A[US] native... is considered to be a \$48 million threat to forestry and horticulture... But [the spokesperson] is concerned that blanket aerial spraying will create widespread health problems. An unknown number of west Aucklanders are already listed on a medical register maintained by doctors commissioned by the ministry to handle complaints. Five are relocated when spraying is underway and accommodated at motels, courtesy of taxpayers. [The spokesperson], whose group is also contributing to the briefing paper, says more emphasis should be given to ground Btk spraying to avoid health problems. “There also needs to be quarantines on plant movement inside and out of the affected areas... The removal of weed host species... needs to be a priority and more resources need to be given to support both public and private programmes to develop a synthetic pheromone. We are overdue for a new approach”... The next round of... spraying starts in west Auckland [in five days time].

...Mass spraying of the painted apple moth starts [next month]... The Government has approved the \$90 million expansion of its aerial operation which will target about 40,000 properties over 7836 hectares, mainly in west Auckland. A Fokker Friendship aircraft, light plane and helicopter will be used to carry out up to 40 sprays over the next three years. A new vegetation control zone will be sign-posted around the spray borders reminding people not to spread the moth by taking infested vegetation out of the area. The [MAF] estimates the moth could cost \$58m to \$358m in lost forestry export orders over the next 20 years if it spreads. Scientists say the latest campaign has a 60 per cent to 80 per cent chance of success.

...A community group established by the Government to consult on painted apple moth issues in west Auckland fears it may be disbanded. The advisory group was set up by the M[AF] along with a technical advisory group and health team. All three are about to be independently reviewed and the advisory group’s chair[person]... has had no communication from the ministry despite repeated requests for meetings since... [MAF’s] forest biosecurity director... resigned... [However, the chairperson] says members will remain actively interested, even if the Government cuts ties... Health issues are still high on members’ agendas, especially the \$90 million Government approval of expanded aerial spraying... from next month.

...Waitakere City will take a medical and economic battering as adverse side effects of the painted apple moth campaign begin to kick in, says[a councillor and]... member of the M[AF]’s community advisory board, w[ho w]as initially blasé about the Foray 48B aerial spraying until [it] started experiencing health problems which [the councillor] believes are directly related. [The councillor] says the ministry hasn’t taken into account a number of issues with its expanded operation which starts next month. “Do they think [people’s health] is going to be better?” [The councillor says it] gets sick with breathing complications and nose ulcers during spraying and worries about the long-term implications. [The councillor also] believes the health issue will impact on the economy... “...what about the loss of hours in people not going to work...?” The ministry’s independent health team has always maintained the caterpillar-killing insecticide Btk has been used for 35 years without causing any major health problems.

...I strongly urge... some thorough research on health effects that have been reported by people who have been sprayed by Foray 48B. In east Auckland... in West Auckland and overseas the symptoms are all the same and include: burning throats and eyes; conjunctivitis; breathing difficulties; asthma; chest pains; mucus in lungs; severe cough; severe headaches; flu symptoms; swollen glands; extreme tiredness; skin rashes; diarrhoea; premature births and miscarriages. I have experienced several of these symptoms after the... spraying operations. I would like to make it very clear that I am usually a very healthy person, that I have no food allergies and that I am not imagining any of these symptoms. There have never been any studies done to prove the long term safety of Foray 48B! What are the effects of repeated longterm exposure to the spray? Why has MAF never carried out a properly researched and funded study? I would like to know why it is more important to protect some manufacturer’s “secret” mix of chemicals and bacteria than the human rights of your citizens?!

...Waitakere City Council is using the Official Information Act to find out what ingredients are in the spray used in the painted apple moth campaign. The council’s environmental management committee chair[person]... says a request has been forwarded to the M[AF]. The ministry has 20 working days to respond. The council can go to the ombuds[person] if dissatisfied with the ministry’s response. The full list of chemicals used to make Foray 48B has been kept secret, because of patent laws protecting the U[S] manufacturer’s right to withhold certain information relating to its products. Foray 48B contains only 2.1[%] of the caterpillar killer Btk. The rest consists of inert ingredients, designed to help the spray’s dispersal. [One c]ouncillor... says spraying should not proceed unless all ingredients are disclosed... The ministry says the chemical compounds of Foray 48B are registered for use in cosmetics, medicines and/or foods. It claims the spray is safe and its ingredients are known to a select number

of health officials who have cleared its use in N[Z. But the] Green Party biosecurity spokes[person]... continues to hunt down the full list with a view to making it public knowledge. [The spokesperson, who] says doctors should know exactly what chemicals to look out for in allergy or sensitivity tests if people get sick during the spraying... has obtained a list of ingredients used in a Canadian version of the spray named Btk Foray 48B, which has been tabled in Parliament. Prepared by independent analysts, the Canadian list, featuring 40 chemicals, was not organic. M[AF] scientists say the spray used in west Auckland is an organic insecticide.

...Opponents of the Government's \$90 m... West Auckland spray campaign have released what they say are the secret ingredients of the pesticide. An [anti-spray] campaigner... said the ingredients were obtained from data contained in papers released under the Official Information Act. "It is completely unacceptable the Government has denied people the right to know what the chemicals in the spray are,"... said [the campaigner. A]... Dr... who has written a book on pesticide use in N[Z], said the surprise ingredient was a chemical called propylene glycol, a food preservative also used in anti-freeze. It could be absorbed through the skin and lungs. It was used in a range of health supplements. "Research overseas shows it causes adverse reactions in children, yet the amount in supplements is probably less than that being inhaled by people in West Auckland."

...WEST Aucklanders in the painted apple moth zone are being sprayed with a new mix of Foray 48b. Fourteen-thousand litres of the altered concoction... applied at the rate of 5 litres a hectare... have [already] been used in the aerial operation... [The] Biosecurity Minister... discussed the change in formula following questioning by [the] Green Party biosecurity spokes[person. The minister]... says the registrant applied for approval of an alternative formulation of Foray 48b. The Environmental Risk Management Authority approved the revised mix after finding it "to be sufficiently similar to the previously registered formulation"... The Government refuses... to release a full list of ingredients... citing commercial sensitivity. "The public right to know about the ingredients is greater than the intellectual property rights of the spray's owner," [the spokesperson says. Another anti-spray campaigner... agrees and also wants to know why Foray 48b's formulation has changed. "If they've changed it, why isn't there a new health risk assessment? I think it goes back to [a former PM]'s legal opinion that we're being scientifically experimented upon,"...

Opponents of MAF's painted apple moth aerial spray campaign are angered MAF has pulled the plug on a proposal for a free health care plan for residents affected by aerial spraying. [The] Aerial Spray campaign director... told Waitakere and North Shore councillors last Tuesday the Ministry doesn't have an open cheque book – despite 10[%] of the project's budget being earmarked for health matters. [The director] said... people affected by the spray can go to their GP for assessment at their own cost, and if the GP agrees, the Ministry will pick up subsequent treatment costs. But [a] Painted Apple Moth Community Coalition member... says... "GPs don't want to be caught in the middle over deciding who's symptoms are adequate enough for MAF health funding."

...*The alternative to spraying... is just not an alternative...* The Painted Apple Moth is a voracious and serious pest – make no mistake. So far we know it will happily eat more than 60 different tree species including natives like Kowhai... But there's also a very ugly side to this caterpillar. The... hairs can give most people, and especially children, an itchy rash causing significant distress. And that's not all. Because the Painted Apple Moth caterpillar sheds the hairs which become airborne and could give you or your child a serious reaction. In fact, in the Northern Hemisphere, they are forced to close parks and forests because of this health threat from its cousin – the Gypsy Moth. Since it lacks natural predators in N[Z], this Aussie invader could spread rapidly. The [girl moth] lays up to 700 eggs at a time, so it doesn't take much to imagine how quickly it will go through the country. So spray it we must... For further information call 0800 96 96 96 or visit our website www.maf.govt.nz/painted-apple-moth...

West Aucklanders protesting against the expanded painted apple moth spray campaign say they want the Government to take their concerns seriously. Last Saturday's march, organised by the Sprayfree Coalition, was the first in what could turn out to be a string of protests planned by the group. More than 500 people made their point with signs and shouts followed by several speakers including [the] Waitakere Mayor...

Tarpaulin-covered gardens could be the next protest step against the... extended painted apple moth aerial spraying campaign. The idea follows a public march by hundreds of people last Saturday... [The] Sprayfree Coalition co-ordinator... says west Aucklanders concerned about their vegetable gardens, swan plants and prized flowers could cover them with tarpaulins during the spraying. "From the air it would look awesome. It's not unlawful and it would certainly hack MAF off,"... The coalition is also looking at private injunctions against the ministry... • [The]... extended operation, due to start yesterday, was postponed until this morning because of bad weather.

...Guardians of... Pollen Island Marine Reserve... [-] the last remnant... of saltmarsh on the Waitemata Harbour... [and] the only habitat of the rare bactra moth... [-] want it excluded from the... extended painted apple moth spray zone... "It would be so easy to miss Pollen Island... MAF hasn't found the painted apple moth there, so why spray it?" ...[but the DoC]'s community relations officer... says the bactra caterpillars feed inside rush plants where they should be protected against the spray.

...POLLEN Island, home to one of the world's rarest moths, is being sprayed with Foray 48B despite intense opposition by environmentalists... It is being sprayed as part of the expanded painted apple moth aerial campaign, which began on Wednesday. Environmental groups asked the M[AF] to exclude the island, fearing the bactra moth might be wiped out. Officials refused saying the moth should be safe... [In international news, when a] butterfly defender... walked the mountains of the monarch reserve in southern Mexico in the 1970s, [it] found "a blanket of green." The last time [the defender] went, some tourists wore paper masks against dust rising from deforested land. A study of aerial photographs taken over the past 29 years shows damage or destruction to 44[%] of the fir forest that serves as wintering grounds for the monarch butterfly in its annual migration from the U[S] and Canada. "I think it's having an impact on the monarch now," says... a zoologist and expert on the 4800km migration that takes successive generations of butterflies back to the same wintering grounds. The cool shade of the forest in which the monarchs drape themselves like a spectacular orange-and-black carpet is a [also a] necessary piece of their migratory puzzle. But it is being cut down piecemeal by locals and logging companies. "We are starting to see colonies breaking up earlier," and heading back north... potentially exposing them to lethal late frosts in the U[S. A forestry]... expert... says the logging could eventually affect the monarch's delicate metabolic balancing act. The reserve, a Canadian-type fir forest that has survived since the Ice Age on mountain tops in the tropics, serves the monarchs as a blanket against temperature extremes.

...A cold front that wiped out millions of monarch butterflies in central Mexico last month may reduce next year's migrations... the World Wildlife Fund Mexico director... said yesterday. "This is not about the extinction of the species, although we cannot know for sure what is going to happen." The WWF said as many as 250 million monarch butterflies might have been killed by a massive cold front that swept across Michoacan state... [A] specialist in monarch butterflies, said "this was the worst episode of butterfly mortality" [it] had seen in 25 years... The cold snap killed as many as 80[%] of butterflies in certain colonies at the... Monarch Butterfly Reserve in Michoacan... but it was not clear how many... survived...

THE definitive word on the monarch butterfly drought from... a lepidopterist (someone who studies moths and butterflies), at Landcare Research in Mt Albert: ...monarchs are "in between broods". The larvae are probably out there feeding up ready to become adult butterflies. Monarchs are not native... and are likely to recolonise quickly even if numbers are hard-hit by spraying [for the painted apple moth]. They are widespread and therefore there is not the same concern within the spray zone. [The lepidopterist] has also just discovered the rare bactra moth in the Waitakeres – a big relief for conservationists worried that the moth would be wiped out by the spraying on Pollen Island, previously thought to be its only home... "They've probably always been [in the Waitakeres] but have just been overlooked," [the lepidopterist] says. "They're quite a small greyish moth." ...the [Waitakere Ranges] moth will have a different name to its Pollen Island counterpart. The name will identify it as living in a different habitat.

...Moth experts are more determined than ever to keep aerial spraying of the painted apple moth away from the Waitakere Ranges. Their strengthened resolve follows the discovery of the rare bactra moth in the Titirangi-Huia area. Its discovery there is good news, though the location is perilously close to spraying. [An e]ntomologist... says the spray would probably also kill the bactra moth[s]... by rupturing their insides... A

range of moth species are endangered by the spraying. Among them are numerous native varieties... Other species, like the monarch butterflies... which come from the Pacific Islands... are of less concern... "I would be absolutely concerned if the ranges were sprayed,"... says... a... Titirangi lepidopterist... [who] is using traps to monitor the effect of the spray on native moths[. and] will also check on their recovery when spraying is over.

...Scientists working to seduce the painted apple moths are one step closer to creating the perfect aphrodisiac. HortResearch staff are developing pheromones to use in traps throughout moth-infested areas. Live [girl] moths are currently bred and used in traps. But they don't live long enough to give accurate results. Pheromones will be quicker to produce and more efficient. Trap results are crucial to the eradication campaign. They give... a better idea of moth numbers and show spray co-ordinators where they should be concentrating their efforts.

...THE M[AF] is reviewing its spray technique after a controversial start to its expanded painted apple moth aerial spray eradication campaign over west Auckland. Officials want to improve deteriorating relations with the public after widespread discontent with... [last week's] operation, which saw spraying carried out for about 11 hours. Co-ordinators hailed the operation a success, making the most of low winds after earlier erratic weather postponed the start by several days. But west Aucklanders inundated the ministry's information line with complaints when spraying continued for most of the day... Most complaints involved the low-flying Fokker Friendship aircraft, which was compared to London's wartime blitz by many older residents. Civil aviation rules allow the plane [(that, to residents' added dismay, is 'piloted by a septuagenarian')] to fly at 45 m...

West Aucklanders with allergies to Foray 48B... are being shouted a free breakfast in so-called "safe spots" – and MAF is picking up the tab. The Government body... move[s] people living in the... spray zone to selected cafes across Auckland and give[s] them brekkie before sending them off to work. However, phone calls to MAF's 0800 information line revealed staff are stumped about the latest offering in the controversial campaign.

...48b causes car yard havoc... Frustrated car groomers are working overtime cleaning Foray 48B spray off their stocks. The spray... has become such a problem that MAF has employed a paint specialist to investigate if the spray is causing any damage to paint work... [The owner of a yard] in Pt Chevalier says his car groomer... spent all of last Wednesday frantically cleaning the yard's 30 cars, a job that normally only takes him half a day... "You actually have to scrap it off rather than just washing it,"... [A groomer at] West Auckland Motors in New Lynn, says the spray is harder to get off the longer you leave it. "On the first spray day the sun sort of baked it on... It sort of crystallises." ...a paint specialist is looking at ways to remove the spray "without the extra elbow grease"... [but] the spray is water soluble and can be hosed off easily if you can get to it before it dries.

...Thank you for your article on Foray 48B [and car yards]... It proves that the spray puts a poison coating over everything in the spray area including on soil where our vegetables... grow and where children play. This affects every resident and visitor in the spray area... MAF must pay substantial compensation to all residents/land owners who are being sprayed. MAF is guilty of poisoning private land needlessly. They must change their methods urgently. They must inspect the land and spray where they find the moth. They inspected my land years ago, they found no moth. They never did any public inspection since then, but of course we were sprayed... MAF tells us that the spraying is a... business[worth \$ms]... It is interesting to see that MAF describe themselves as "business" operators. But they certainly do not include the community cost in their accounts!

...A PROPERTY expert says real estate prices in west Auckland won't be affected by bad press surrounding the painted apple moth aerial spray campaign... Continued debate over the programme and its impact on human health has prompted speculation about a possible reluctance to buy in west Auckland. [A p]rofessor... from Massey University's Department of Finance, Banking and Property, doubts potential buyers will be turned off Waitakere City... But one real estate agent... knows of people selling their homes to move out the area for fear of being adversely affected by... 48B.

...As biosecurity authorities prepare to expand an aerial operation against a moth pest... they are not ruling out a bigger campaign against the pest. The latest expansion, an area of 1400ha... around Hobsonville, pushes the total spray zone to more than 10,000ha, just 2000ha shy of the limit allowed under the Biosecurity Act. But M[AF's] painted apple moth project director... said yesterday that [it] was not worried about breaching the 12,000ha limit set by the Government when the \$90 million operation was approved... Birkdale, Beachhaven, Herald Island... and the eastern side of Whenuapai will [also] be included in the next scheduled aerial blitz... [-] the first time any part of the North Shore has been... in the spray zone.

...We need new ways of beating the moth... As the moth spreads and public opposition to aerial spraying... over the homes of 200,000 people in infested areas of Waitakere, Auckland and North Shore... mounts, some solutions that seemed acceptable a year or even six months ago are no longer workable. The M[AF] must work with the community to develop an approach that can succeed... Blanket spraying was adopted because it was seen that if the goal of eradication was abandoned, there were no effective control measures to limit the moth's spread and the damage it could do. Blanket spraying is successful in killing off moths. But as well as creating major health issues, it is also failing because killing nearly all the moths is not enough... [-] a handful surviving will allow rapid reinfestation. Not only are moths being found outside the spray zone, but they are still being trapped within the zone. I suggest two main reasons for this. First, the layering of the vegetation means it is difficult for the spray to penetrate below the upper canopy. Second, it has been difficult for the [MAF] to find ideal weather for spraying. It has been hampered by rain and high winds, and has been forced to spray on calm days when the wind has not allowed the spray to drift into its target. It is time for the Government to reconsider the community option... One cornerstone of the option is to immediately get rid of all unwanted wattles from the Auckland region. This operation would target wattles in the rail and road transport corridors that are contributing to the spread of the moth. Ministry figures show more than 85[%] of larval finds are in wattle trees. Removing wattles would reduce the ease with which the moth can spread and its ability to thrive, buying valuable time. Experts have assessed the cost of wattle-removal at \$3 million, with a further \$1 million for replanting. Given the part wattles are playing in the development of the problem, this seems a small slice of the ministry's \$90 million budget. The second and most essential building block for a successful operation is developing a synthetic pheromone. The ministry has put resources into developing one but will not support the parallel programme of... [the] Dr... responsible for successfully developing a synthetic pheromone to combat the white spotted tussock moth. Using his own resources [the Dr] has made good progress on developing a pheromone for the painted apple moth... Almost every household would be keen to support this programme... [but if only] one household every 500m agreed to have the spray in a tree, there would be a good chance of eliminating [boy] moths... Safe eradication is not yet unattainable but if the ministry does not change its approach, getting rid of the moth will be impossible and the cost to public health will have been in vain. ■... The National Radiation Laboratory in Christchurch is irradiating batches of [boy] painted apple moth larvae to make them sterile. The work... is... contracted through HortResearch... Painted apple moths mate only once, so the sterile insect technique could, in theory, help wipe out the species in N[Z]. The release of sterilised [boy]s to mate with fertile [girl]s has worked with other insects such as screw-worm in North America, the tsetse fly in Zanzibar, the Queensland fruitfly in Western A[US] and the Mediterranean fruitfly in Mexico... [The lab's] scientific adviser... said... [e]ach batch of 50 insects received five hours and 45 minutes of treatment using 100 grays of radiation. That was 20 times the amount needed to kill a human, but insects were much harder... "They don't know anything about it." The level of radiation was... enough to kill or impede their mating flights, which can cover more than 6km. The treated moths will soon be released...

STERILE [boy] moths are being used as the latest weapon in the battle against the painted apple moth. The plan is backed by [the] Titirangi entomologist... who first discovered the pest in Waikumete Cemetery... "The idea is to release thousands of them so when the [girl moths mate, they] get... dead sterile sperm... It's a cunning technique but it works only if the sterile [moths] outnumber the virile ones." ...[MAF's p]roject director... says sterile moths, which are not affected by the spray, could not be introduced at the height of the infestation when they would have been outnumbered by virile moths. "This time last year there were about 1350 moths and this time we're down to 30. That's extremely good news."

...AN auditor general's report criticises the M[AF] for its handling of the painted apple moth crisis... EVERYONE accepts that mistakes have been made in dealing with the painted apple moth. That is history and while it is important to learn lessons, what is important now is to constantly re-evaluate where we are and how we should go on... The moth is only one of up to 35 undesirable species to enter the country in recent times.

...M[AF] officials working towards the next round of painted apple moth aerial spraying are also trying to stop several other pests munching their way to west Auckland... [The] MAF... is working hard to contain other pests found in recent weeks and is anxious to avoid further air operations. Newly discovered unwanted visitors include the fall webworm, a member of the tiger moth family [that]... is a native of North America and Mexico which... has been found in Mt Wellington, and the Asian gypsy moth[, which was found] in Hamilton. Both are regarded as major threats to N[Z]'s forestry and horticulture... The Asian gypsy moth, a relative of the painted apple moth, is a menace to at least 500 tree and plant species and is a prolific breeder. Another A[US]n invader causing concern is the gum leaf skeletoniser which attacks eucalyptus trees and was first found in Mt Albert last year. The pest has spread to south Auckland where efforts are being made to wipe it out using pheromones [sex attractants]. Meanwhile, efforts continue in the Kaipara region north of Helensville to kill the southern saltmarsh mosquito, an aggressive daytime biter.

...The... \$30 million programme to try to wipe out the southern saltmarsh mosquito around Kaipara Harbour... involve[s] aerial and ground spraying, using the insect growth regulator S-methoprene, which stops mosquito pupae hatching into adult[s, and]... also... the biological spray Bti.

...Helicopters and biosecurity officers are scouring east Auckland for signs of a... mosquito that's already been found near Helensville. Two southern saltmarsh mosquito larvae... were found in Turanga Creek at Whitford, in a routine check by biosecurity officers. That is the first time the mosquito, *ochleratus camptorhynchus*, has been found in east Auckland. It has already settled in the Kaipara Harbour, Napier and Gisborne.

...An aggressive, potentially disease-carrying mosquito... poses a risk to the health of Aucklanders... It is not known how the insects got there, but... populations of the exotic mosquito were... first found... in Napier. The unwanted organism, thought to be the main carrier of the debilitating Ross River virus, was also found around Gisborne... and in Porangahau and the Maungawhio Lagoon several weeks later... Surveillance programmes had been in place since December 1998... In 1997 the Ministry of Health concluded that N[Z] was at risk from new mosquito-borne diseases, but predicted the first cases would be in Auckland or Northland... An eradication programme in Napier had been progressing well, as had the containment programmes under way... in Gisborne, and Porangahau and Mahia in Hawkes Bay. The public has been asked to take any mosquito specimens to their Public Health Service, and also report any incidents where they suspect the presence of southern saltmarsh mosquito.

...Technical experts advising the [MAF] want all aircraft leaving Gisborne sprayed in a bid to stop the spread of the... southern saltmarsh mosquito... to the rest of N[Z]... It was not immediately clear what sprays would be used on up to 14 commercial aircraft a day departing Gisborne Airport. And health officials have not said how they plan to disinfect the large numbers of light aircraft which operate from the airport. The mosquito... can spread the devastating Ross River virus. The virus causes a disease known as epidemic polyarthritis, and in some patients can cause chronic fatigue and lethargy for up to a year. The virus is not yet in N[Z], but if the mosquitoes become established they could easily pick it up from an infected visitor, such as an A[US]n tourist. The virus could then be transmitted to animal "reservoirs" such as feral possums or farm livestock, and become almost impossible to eradicate.

...it's a muggy... New York... day. The atmosphere is made even more unpleasant by the virus-carrying West Nile mosquito which has invaded the city. "It's not so much the virus which is the worry, but the damned spraying that tends to occur every other night," [an expat British rock star (r:p1640, ln14)] mutters through clenched teeth... [● The southern hemisphere summer] is not too far away and the new Phantom disappearing screen doors and windows are ready for the... flies and mosquitoes... Phantom Roller Screens is importing a model which retracts to let... fresh air through when screening is not needed... An alternative, also on display at the Home Show, is the Ecomist, an automatic dispenser of natural pyrethrum, for an insect-free environment. Ecomist Sales and Services says it is safe for asthmatics, allergy sufferers, children and warm-blooded pets like cats...

Catfood lure fails to tempt heavy wasp population The battle to control wasp numbers in the infested Tasman District in the north of the South Island has had a setback this year. A new poisoning method using catfood and... fipronil poison... has proved unsuccessful and far fewer wasps have been killed than was hoped... said... [t]he coordinator of the Rotoiti Nature Reserve Project... The poisoning programme, run in the low-lying 300ha of the 825ha "mainland island" nature recovery area, achieved a 55[%] reduction in the wasp population, compared with 99.87[%] last year and 74[%] the year before that. The coordinator... also said trial grids of 200m by 200m, used over half the 300ha block, were proving to be less effective than the old 50m by 100m grid pattern... [T]he programme had been a great success over the past three years and the overall number of wasps in the area had dropped dramatically. This has meant the honeydew and insects have been able to thrive, providing food for native birdlife. There has been a striking number of native birds, such as bellbirds, kaka and parakeets, returning to the area recently. [In related news, 'Hawke's Bay orchardists want to introduce an alien wasp to fight an alien bug with no local predators that they claim is costing them \$10 million' in annual profits.]

...A family of tiny wasps which were probably buzzing around in the dinosaur age has been discovered by N[Z] scientists. The native wasp, smaller than a ladybird but as old as the tuatara, is found nowhere else in the world, says the Auckland Museum curator of entomology... New species of wasp are regularly discovered around the world but finding a whole new family is "a bit like finding a lost tribe in the jungle,"... The wasp family has been named *Maaminga*, which in Maori means puzzling, mystifying or trickster. That's because the origins of the wasp have bamboozled international bug experts for nearly 20 years... It was not until a Canadian colleague visited Waipoua forest in Northland with [the curator in the early 1980s] and captured some of the tiny insects that a concerted attempt began to identify them. But even with four entomologists on the case, the puzzle took years to solve. "Even a colleague in Moscow who specialises in fossilised insects had never seen anything like it before... They seemed to be composite of two unrelated wasp groups, having the front end of one and the back end of another." The wasps live mainly in leaf litter, have very limited flying ability and are a "nondescript brown." ...The wasps, which are stingless, probably evolved in isolation along with other unique plants and animals when this country broke away from the supercontinent Gondwana about 80 million years ago, [the curator] says.

...*Sting in the tail...* IMAGINE a wasp being so rare that it made the news. Well, just 45 years ago, wasps were hot. [I]n... 1954, Wellington's *Evening Post* detailed a city council flamethrower attack on a colony of German wasps "whose presence had been unsuspected"... German wasps first appeared in 1944 [- 'having arrived with cargo at the Te Rapa Air Force Depot' -] and were widespread by 1978, when they were overtaken by another new immigrant, the European common wasp. In the Nelson Lakes district today, endless swarms feed voraciously on the lace-like excrement of the scale insect, which clings to the trunks of beech trees. Picnics at St Arnaud are hell. Wasps are so thick there the combined mass of all their little buzzing bodies is often greater than all the native birds and pests such as rats, mice, stoats, ferrets and hedgehogs put together... For their part, the wasps sting birds to death, compete with comparatively wimpy native wasps and bees, and eat larvae of various moths and butterflies. They are hard to get rid of. Experimental poisons are being developed to see if just 300 hectares at Nelson Lakes can be made wasp-free... Note the pests all arrived courtesy of Maori and pakeha since our arrival during the millennium now ending... "We, Maori and pakeha, have arrived face to face for the last time with a pristine, untouched ecology, which did not co-evolve with people,"... [the] Environment Minister... says. "There's this extraordinary sense that we arrived just five seconds after Eden disappeared." There are weird twists in this new age of concern for the mass extinctions which are flowing from our waspishly voracious appetites for food, shelter, warmth and McDonald's Happy Meal toys. As we found out last week, N[Z] is a haven for a bumblebee lost to Britain. Having introduced them here in the first place, the Poms now want some back. [Perhaps they can send us some of our native worms (r:p2420, ln38) that were accidentally introduced to England and are causing concern there 'due to

their voracious appetite for common garden worms'?) ...We will see more of these trends as new science does battle with the damage wrought by old science... In the middle will sit an increasingly confused majority in the First World who like their cars, houses, airconditioning and steaks. They'll know they should be doing something more than recycling plastic bags, but won't be sure what. For this tale of the birds and the wasps is about more than biodiversity – a bureaucratic word for the richness of life which countries everywhere recently agreed to try to preserve. It is about the way that change creeps up on us. As a child of the '60s, wasps were always the norm for me. Will my kids regard hotter summers, wetter, harsher storms, and disease-bearing mosquitoes, such as those just blitzed in Napier, as their norm in 40 years time? In all probability, they will... [●] When Wellington's city council attacked the colony in 1954, they used fire because they couldn't find any DDT at the depot. Those were the days, eh?

...A[US] drops 'Big Nuke' on fire ants The South American fire ant... will cause an environmental catastrophe if allowed to spread, Queensland state authorities warn. The ants, first spotted in Brisbane earlier this year, have already been found at 730 sites and could colonise A[US] in the next three decades. They destroy \$3.4 billion of crops every year in the U[S]. Horrified by the discovery of a pest that they regard as worse than the infamous cane toad, scientists at the Department of Primary Industries have begun a \$170 million eradication programme nicknamed "the Big Nuke". Over the next three years, 500 volunteers will blanket the area with bait laced with a chemical that inhibits reproduction. The tiny, reddish-brown ants, which are thought to have arrived in Brisbane on board a container ship, attack humans, livestock, pets, native animals and crops. An aggressive and resilient species, they sting repeatedly and in concert, causing pimple-like spots and an intense burning sensation – hence their name. In rare cases, the sting provokes an allergic reaction that can kill. In the southern U[S], which has been infested since the 1930s, 84 people have died. The ants represent a threat to A[US]'s outdoor way of life. Activities such as camping and barbecues are out of the question in affected areas; even sitting in the back garden... can be a painful experience. In some American states, schools, parks and sports fields have had to be closed... "This is one of the meanest, most evil creatures that God ever put on Earth. It hates every other living thing, and pours out of its nest ready to fight. If it can't be stopped in Queensland, it will be in the backyards of Sydney and Melbourne in the near future."

...Biosecurity authorities have stopped a tiny nasty in its tracks through a programme designed to catch another of the same species. The M[AF] has treated two sites at Auckland's port infested with crazy ant (Paratrechina longicornis) and yellow crazy ant (Anoplolepis gracilipes). The finds, on Jellicoe and Freyberg Wharves, were made during intensive surveillance work for another, even nastier pest, the red fire ant... Red fire ants, discovered at Auckland Airport last year, cause blisters when they bite. They are aggressive and voracious feeders and could displace native ants... Crazy ants are named for their rapid and erratic movement. They are an environmental pest and feed on a wide range of plants including fruit, honeydew and household foods. Although they do not bite humans, they can swarm over animals, causing severe irritation. On-going monitoring will determine if any more of the ants have breached the border, but MAF is cautiously optimistic the infestation has been wiped out.

...An invasion of foreign ants is threatening the lives of kiwi at one of N[Z]'s premier coastal forest reserves beside the Whangarei Harbour. The ...DoC... is undertaking a... four-day... poisoning programme to try to eradicate the argentine ant (*Linepithema humile*) from the area around the Bream Head Scenic Reserve... The active ingredient in the bait is Fipronil, the same substance used in flea collars. It has proved successful in battling argentine ants on Tiritiri Matangi, an island in the Hauraki Gulf. DoC's technical support officer... said argentine ants were a major environmental and household pest. "They eat invertebrates and nectar and are therefore in direct competition with kiwi, other native birds, and lizards." The ants have also been known to swamp nests and kill chicks. Although the honey-brown ants are not poisonous, they do bite people. The infestation at Bream Head is of particular concern because of the high ecological value of the area, [the officer] said. Currently about 25 kiwi live in the reserve, and there are plans to restore the area to recovery level and introduce more native species, such as the North Island robin and the kokako. DoC's biodiversity threats ranger... said the infestation started in houses in the area and was moving up paddocks towards the bush. "At the moment we're lucky they are not in the main bush block yet... Once these argentine ants get established they could jeopardise the whole recovery project." [The technical support officer] said DoC hoped to eradicate the ants in three years, but the long-term success of the project would depend on the local community. "The ants can't fly so they can only move great distances by people moving them – through bark or soil or plants."

...Argentine ant finds success in tolerance... Billions of ants from Argentina have created the Earth's biggest "super organism" in Europe, a network of communicating worker ants spanning more than 5760km. The invading ants are in millions of nests in a supercolony stretching from northern Italy, through the south of France to the Atlantic coast of Spain, in what is thought to be the largest co-operative unit of individual organisms... entomologists ha[ve] ...ever... recorded... The argentine ant appeared in southern Europe in the 1920s and wherever it went it managed to push out the 20 or so indigenous species of European ant. Now scientists think they know why. Ants of the same species from different nests are usually highly aggressive towards each other, but the Argentine invader does not seem to share this aggressiveness between neighbouring ants. For that reason, an unprecedented degree of co-operation between worker ants has grown into a fully fledged supercolony... The Argentine immigrant has thus been able to concentrate on fighting its indigenous rivals with great success. The Argentine ant, *Linepithema humile*, has become one of the most persistent pests in southern Europe, raiding domestic kitchens and protecting crop pests such as aphids against chemical attack. "People have tried to treat them with pesticides but the best you can do is limit their numbers,"... [a] professor of ecology at the University of Lausanne in Switzerland... said. There is one ray of hope. A second, smaller supercolony of Argentine ants has been identified in the Catalan region of Spain around Barcelona and the Lausanne scientists say these Argentine ants are happy to make war on their compatriots. [They] hoped to identify the signals that triggered aggression between Argentine ants to foment strife and insurrection within the main supercolony.

...Argentine ants are here to stay... Pest control officers say the highly destructive argentine ant... first spotted in central Auckland during the late 1980s... is spreading throughout the west. The ant is classed in the top 100 most invasive species by the World Conservation Union.

...Redback spiders take on the world... A[US]'s humble redback spider seems poised for world domination, authorities warn. [A v]enom expert... said yesterday that what were believed to be A[US]n redbacks had been discovered in Japan and as far away as Belgium. Live redbacks are regularly discovered in N[Z]. Two were found separately in Bluff this year and a nest was discovered in Auckland last year in a bus imported from A[US]. The redback was responsible for at least 13 deaths in A[US] before anti-venom was developed in 1956... [The] director of the A[US]n Venom Research Unit at the University of Melbourne, said... redback spider egg sacs carried hundreds of potential spiders and were virtually immune to quarantine chemical spraying... [I]t was extremely likely the spiders had also made their way into other nations around the world, but were yet to be discovered. "The spiders have proven themselves to be resilient to most weather types and can thrive almost anywhere,"...

They don't come right out and say it, but Americans think we're being just a tad fussy over the odd black widow spider... And they say they don't know what more they can do to prevent the venomous hitchhikers getting here. "Our growers have been working very hard to make sure we are only shipping grapes and not spiders," said... [the] president of the California Table Grape Commission. "They have done more for the N[Z] market than any other and frankly they are not interested in doing anything further." ...N[Z] represented only a small portion of the world grape market for Californian grapes... N[Z]'s MA[F]... has suspended trade in Californian table grapes after four black widow[s]... were found here in as many months. The latest... spider was found in a Nelson supermarket last week... 43 container loads of grapes are still on their way to N[Z]. AUS... extended a ban on the grapes this year amid fears they could bring in the glassy-winged sharpshooter, a carrier of the vine-killing Pierce's disease.

...A Henderson [resident] is launching a support group to help people bitten by venomous spiders. [The resident] says the most common are white tail spiders, which can cause an allergic reaction. "For a spider they can cause a lot of damage... I myself have been bitten three times and have the scars on my legs to show for it." ...[the resident] was asked to start the spider bite recovery support group by the president of a similar organisation in A[US]. "I feel very strongly about it because I believe people must be alerted to the fact that this spider is here and here to stay..." Adult spiders

can be as big as a 50 cent coin. They are black with red legs, have small white spots across their backs and a large white spot on their tails... [A] Crown Research Institute arachnologist... says the species was introduced from A[US] about 120 years ago... [B]ites have been reported in larger numbers over the past five years but the white tail spider population is probably not increasing... “I don’t think people should panic about this,”...

The death of a 20-year-old... who was bitten by a white-tailed spider weeks before [it] died is being investigated by... forensic scientists. Charlotte Appleton... died suddenly in Palmerston North Hospital’s intensive care unit [a fortnight ago]. About a month before [Charlotte died, the]... Massey University extramural student... told friends [it] had been bitten on the stomach... [and] had an internal abscess the “size of a golf ball”, which a doctor had treated her for... Charlotte... had worked at her cafe job until the week before [her death], but took some days off sick... MidCentral Health... said no comment would be made on... [her] death until results of an autopsy were known... [However, the hospital’s] infectious disease specialist... said a death from a white-tailed spider bite was rare... “It would be... like dying from shaving...” ...[the specialist] was not aware of any fatal white-tailed spider bites, but said death was possible if the bite became infected... “There could be a very unusual sequence of events, but it wouldn’t be the bite itself [that was fatal]... [I’ve] heard of the bites leading to finger amputations and rotting skin needing to be cut out, but... [90%] of the people referred to me because of ‘white-tailed spider bites’ do not recall seeing the spider, so I am not convinced there ever was one.”

...A... baby was bitten between the eyes and doctors feared infection could affect his brain. [It] was hospitalised and successfully treated with antibiotics... [An Oamaru resident] (49)... was bitten while cleaning out a chiller in her dairy and had a severe allergic reaction that landed her in intensive care... Nurses found a squashed white-tailed spider... in her cardigan... [The resident] now carries anti-allergy medication everywhere in case [it] is bitten again... Te Papa[’s] spider expert... says white-tailed spiders are sometimes blamed for problems caused by other insects.

...Waitakere City has its fair share of nasties when it comes to spiders... [A local e]ntomologist... says one of west Auckland’s most common poisonous spiders is the A[US]n white tail... [I]t likes to feed on grey house spiders that live outside, but moves indoors when numbers get low. [A CRI a]rachnologist... says the white tail is a hunting spider that doesn’t build webs, but sets up house near likely food sources... N[Z] is lucky to have only three varieties of poisonous spider. “There’s the katipo that’s found on beaches and there used to be a big population on Muriwai Beach but you really have to search for them now,”... [Y]oung children and the elderly are more likely to react to a katipo bite with stomach cramps and chills. All hospitals carry an antidote. The slater spider is also poisonous, with stronger venom than the white tail’s. A bite from this spider is uncommon. It lives close to slaters, under stones and damp pieces of wood. [The arachnologist] says people who don’t like spiders and want to dispose of them humanely should catch them in a glass jar and place it in the freezer. “They’ll cool down and go to sleep and die without pain.”

...A spider hunt has been launched in east Auckland after a large, hairy A[US]n was found in a Bucklands Beach home. The Sydney huntsman spider (*Holconia immanis*) is the size of an average hand-span and was identified late last month. A familiar sight in A[US]’s largest city, it is not welcome here... Their bite can cause painful swelling but is not seen as a serious health threat. The huntsman has a bad reputation in its homeland because of its imposing size and ability to move fast, but is mostly shy and nocturnal. A voracious feeder, it ambushes prey by hanging upside down on trees and can walk across walls and ceilings... “We can’t speculate as to how it got here but it has the potential to impact on our native spiders and geckos,” said a biosecurity spokes[perso]n for the M[AF]... The spider was caught by a family member as it was heading into the house from the garden. [The CRI arachn]ologist... who identified the huntsman, is most closely involved with its close relation the Avondale tarantula.

...There’s no room for inacey wincey spiders at New Lynn Primary. Only huge tarantulas and Avondale spiders are allowed, following a visit from a[CRI a]rachnologist... An environmental group is working to save the Avondale spider... mostly found in four colonies in the Avondale and New Lynn areas. But at least two colonies are in danger of extinction because of development and tree-felling associated with the painted apple moth eradication campaign... Both species rely on wattle trees to survive... Friends of the Whau wants the Waitakere City Council to save one colony by creating a spider sanctuary at New Lynn’s Olympic Park... The... harmless to humans... [(t)hey earned themselves an undeserved reputation in the film *Arachnophobia* in which they were portrayed as [hu]man killing monsters from the jungles of Venezuela...() AUS]n Huntsman, which has made Avondale its home for the past 80 years, crawled over pupils brave enough to hold out their hands... During visits, the [arachnologist]... shows a specimen of a tarantula and talks about the different parts of the spider’s body before the Huntsman is brought out. “The teachers are the ones who usually chicken out,”... [An e]ntomologist... shows the pupils N[Z] insects during the visits, which are funded by the Science and Technology Promotion Fund. [The entomologist] has specimens ranging from the smallest moth, a leaf minor which has a 2.5 millimetre wingspan, to giant wetas. “They seem to like the moth which disguises itself by looking like a fresh bird dropping the most... I get a lot of gasps when I bring out the wetas.” [Speaking of those ‘ancient members of the cricket family’, a central North Island patch of the invasive weed ‘gorse has been given official protection because a colony of endangered wetas has adopted the plants as their home – gorse’s spines protect the wetas from their predators’.

...‘The tuatara’s diet consists largely of spiders and other insects, although snails and earthworms are also taken. Contrary to the popular image of bird and reptile living amicably together, the tuatara – which can go for at least an hour without a breath – sometimes eats petrel eggs and chicks, even an occasional adult bird. Although good-tempered when handled gently, a tuatara will scratch and bite in self-defence. Its voice is a harsh frog-like croak’.]

...As the world’s sole survivor of a particular reptile group from the age of dinosaurs, the tuatara is widely acknowledged as a very special creature. But living fossils from other N[Z] animal groups deserve similar recognition, says [a DOC spokesperso]n... Most, including our four species of native frogs, pepeketua, are largely overlooked. But the department aims to raise the profile of these primitive amphibians in an awareness campaign launched at the Auckland Regional Council’s Arataki visitor centre, in the Waitakeres. It is hoped that this will lead to better protection for all surviving colonies and possibly to the discovery of a few more remnant populations in parts of the country where they have yet to be recorded... Being small, well camouflaged and nocturnal, native frogs are hard to find but are easily distinguished from the more commonly encountered introduced frogs – all three from A[US] – by their size, by having pupils that are round rather than slit shaped and in having no round, external eardrum behind the eye. Unlike most frogs our native species do not have free-swimming tadpoles. They combine the tadpole stage within their transparent eggs and emerge as walking juveniles that, in three of the species, are cared for by their fathers until they become independent. From fossils and other preserved skeletal remains, it is known that until between 1000 and 2000 years ago N[Z] had at least seven different species of frog. Three are now extinct and the distribution range of the four survivors has shrunk dramatically. Hamilton’s frog is now found only on Stephens Island in Cook Strait where there are only about 300 individuals. The Maud Island frog was similarly restricted until some were recently transferred to another island for species security, and Archey’s frog – our smallest at just 37mm long, smaller than the diameter of a golf ball – is only known from the Coromandel’s forested peaks and one site near Te Kuiti. The most widespread species, Hochstetter’s frog, is found at several sites around the top half of the North Island. It appears to require wet conditions... and is the only native frog with webbing between its toes.

...Wanted: dead or alive. But preferably alive. That’s the native Hochstetter’s Frog which is proving increasingly difficult to find in its usual habitats in the Waitakere Ranges. [The]Friends of Arataki president... is worried... [The president], who’s been watching the... 4 centimetre-long brown frogs... for the past three years, hasn’t seen one in the past six months. “I think one of the reasons for the decline is likely to be climatic,”... [T]he frogs... like a humid but wet climate... It’s not the first time concern has been expressed about the species’ population base in the ranges. Back in 1995, [the president] persuaded local contractors... to build a tunnel under Scenic Drive so fewer frogs would meet an untimely death.

...Watch out for ‘bonking’ frogs Bioscientists are asking west [Auckland]residents to listen out for the musical sound of frogs ‘bonking’ in the night. The illegally-introduced banjo frog makes a distinctive ‘bonk’ noise in the peak of its breeding season... They are aggressive predators and pose a threat to native wildlife, including the native endangered Hochstetter frog... [F]rogs native to N[Z] do not make any sounds, so any frogs

which do will be introduced species... There are at least five other A[US]n frog species in N[Z], which were not identified as pests early enough and so escaped eradication. The banjo frog is toad-like... A large pale yellow gland at the mouth's edge... secretes poison, which deters would-be predators. Creatures of the night, they burrow under the ground at day. In A[US] they are abhorred by gardeners, who often dig them up with the weeds... Since finding... banjo tadpoles and froglets in a stream near Huia last year... ARC and MAF staff have set up a monitoring project to see if there are any survivors... But... they have not yet decided how to eradicate the pests... It is unknown how or why the frogs were introduced. One theory is that they may have been introduced for the pet trade... • People who hear or spot a banjo frog should contact the ARC, D[OC] or MAF.

...The distinctive "bonking" sound made by... banjo frogs during the mating season is being used to track the illegally introduced pest. M[AF] staff, along with A[RC] scientists, have set up recording equipment at Huia... which imitates the frog's distinctive mating call. The calls sound like a banjo string being plucked. The equipment will then record for nine seconds to see if any answering calls are made by banjo frogs in the vicinity... "We are hoping not to hear any,"... Despite months of searching, the scientists have had no luck tracking the frogs since tadpoles and froglets were found at Huia last year... They are toad-like with a rough and warty body and range in colour from pale grey to dark brown or black.

...The search for a toxic "pobblebonk" frog between Muriwai and the Manukau Harbour may not yet be over. No more of the A[US]n eastern banjo frogs have been found... but the [MAF]'s National Centre for Disease Investigation may make further checks this spring as a precaution... "The question is whether it is likely some of the froglets survived but were not mature enough to respond to the monitoring programme mating calls,"... the [centre's]... general manager... says... The frog can excrete a white, sticky skin toxin, but it isn't considered a threat to people.

...[a strange form of "precipitation" is the Star-Slime or Rot of the Stars, a whitish jelly-like substance that used to be found lying on the ground, especially in the autumn. This was investigated by a zoologist in 1926. The zoologist found it was the remains of girl frogs. The frogs had been eaten in vast numbers by various animals, but the glands had passed through undigested. Then, becoming wet, the jelly in the glands swelled up and burst to leave a slimy mess that did not decompose easily. Every now and then there is a story in the newspapers about a storm bringing not only rain, but showers of animals. The Romans recorded rains of fishes. On the 17th August, 1921, the streets of London were carpeted with little frogs, and other parts of the world have been showered with toads, crabs, worms, mice and winkles. The explanation for some of these phenomena is that the animals were lifted by a whirlpool or waterspout and carried up to the clouds and deposited, some distance away, with rain. Rains of frogs have been reported more often than of other animals but this is because of the behaviour of the young frogs. Froglets wait in the shadows of ponds, and heavy rain might occur at the same time as their emergence. In the days before the filling-in of ponds and their pollution this was a spectacular sight, for the ground becomes alive with frogs. This naturally led people to think that they had arrived with the rain, but less credulous and more observant people noticed that they were coming from ponds, discredited the idea and went on to affirm that this was the basis for all stories of rains of frogs.]

...THEY come by night, led by the giants of their species, pouring in their hundreds along remote roads in an undulating, toxic mass. The scouts move ahead, picking their way along creeks and waterways or hitching rides in unsuspecting cars and trucks. There is no halting the invasion. As surely and as unstoppably as they spread north and south from the canefields of Queensland, the cane toads pressed across the Gulf of Carpentaria and deep into Northern Territory. Now they have reached Kakadu National Park, a World Heritage-listed biological wonderland that for decades has resisted the sieges of other alien invaders. Kakadu rangers discovered two small adult toads and several juveniles in a remote corner of the park, confirmation of their worst fears and a mere inkling of what will inevitably follow. [Girl cane toad]s lay up to 30,000 eggs a month in long, jelly-like strings that are fertilised by [boy cane toad]s with libidos so powerful they will attempt to mate with anything vaguely resembling a toad, living or dead. Within three days the eggs hatch into black tadpoles that swarm into waterways and begin their own devastating cycle, spreading across the land in densities that in the waterholes of the gulf country have reached as high as 5000 toads a hectare. Not even the huge saltwater crocodiles that line the banks of Kakadu's Alligator River and slip through the water lilies of the floodplains will be safe. The venom of the cane toad is lethal, able to kill smaller animals within 15 minutes. For the pessimistic in a park where such clichés as pristine have real meaning, the toad is environmental Armageddon. Others, including many experts in the field, believe it is not the end – ...[t]he evidence suggests that most susceptible species will bounce back within five years as animals learn to avoid the toads, says [the]Parks and Wildlife Commission acting director... [-] but that Kakadu will nonetheless never be the same again. Nor will other, equally beautiful and important parks surrounding Kakadu. Last June the toads appeared in Nitmiluk National Park, joined by the spectacular Katherine Gorge to the vast wetlands of neighbouring Kakadu. To the north, environmental agencies are investigating proposals to build a toad-proof fence across the neck of the Cobourg Peninsula, home to Gurig National Park, the first area in the world to be granted recognition under the global convention on wetlands of international importance. The toad's extraordinary adaptability, the lack of natural predators and parasites, its fatal defences and its toughness – sink your boot in, whack it with a cricket bat, so what? – have made it one of the A[US]n environment's most formidable foes. This is a plague the nation brought upon itself. In 1935 the Queensland sugar industry introduced the Venezuelan toad to control the greybacked cane beetle. The toads were a disastrous failure: fat, heavy and poor climbers, they ate only the beetles that fell to the ground. Instead they picked easier prey, gathering around waterholes, sitting under street and porch lights at night to snatch swarming insects, and stealing from dog bowls. Breeding at a staggering rate, they spread rapidly north, south and now west, moving... as far as Sydney, Adelaide and Perth (though not yet colonising so far abroad)... They move at a rate of about 30km a year, limited only by cold and lack of water. As they spread, the toads created both an industry of their own and a bizarre mythology that drew hippies to smoke or lick them for a reputed hallucinogenic high, a faddish spell as pets, and the production of an offbeat documentary that still enjoys a cult following. The more enterprising have turned toad skins into leather, sold stuffed toads as souvenirs and milked their venom for pharmaceutical companies and traditional Asian medicines. You can buy toadskin baseball caps with a toad leaping from the front, toad legs as key tags or an entire toad as a shoulder purse. Beyond the fun, tens of millions of dollars have been poured into finding answers to the plague... For a while Venezuelan viruses looked promising – until... scientists found they also attacked native frogs, threatening the same disaster that followed the toads' release. The focus now is on gene technology, and the prospect of an engineered gene spread among tadpoles to block their sexual development. In the meantime the toads keep marching on... In their march across the gulf they left a trail of dead freshwater crocodiles, goannas, snakes, tree frogs and even domestic chickens, killed by eating toad eggs. Kakadu is bracing for a similar assault...

The cane toad... is having a devastating impact on... Northern Territory... wildlife. A report by the Government agency Environment A[US] says the gnarly-skinned toads... are killing off native frogs, snakes, lizards and mammals at an alarming rate. The toads, scientific name *Bufo marinus*, present a double threat. The smaller ones are eaten by marsupials and snakes, which are poisoned by the toads' toxic skin. The larger ones turn predator themselves, gobbling up small lizards, rodents and insects. Among the animals affected are northern quolls, a cat-sized carnivorous marsupial. During the... northern dry season[two years ago], biologists trapped 41 quolls in Kakadu National Park... [A]fter cane toads had invaded Kakadu, not one quoll was caught. Several dead quolls found appeared to have been poisoned as a result of eating cane toads. The population of several other rare animals, including a species of gecko and the pale field rat, also declined... Cane toads were introduced to A[US] in 1932...

A warty, venomous toad is on the loose in Henderson. Residents have been asked to be on the look out for the unwanted visitor causing havoc across A[US]... A suspected juvenile cane toad may have entered the country last month on luggage... from Fiji... [The] co-ordinator of the M[AF] exotic animal response, says that as only a single toad has been released it is highly unlikely that it would become established in N[Z]. But there is a risk that it may have carried new pests and diseases that could threaten our native frog[s]... The toad... produce[s] a secretion that can cause eye and skin irritations... and a slowing of the heart if ingested... [P]eople attempting to capture the toad should wear gloves and protective glasses.

...The M[AF] defends its initial decision to keep news of a cane toad's arrival in west Auckland under wraps. Residents were told to keep an eye out for the pest two weeks after the ministry learned it was on the loose in Henderson. The... [m]inistry... learned of the toad's presence... when a resident reported finding it in luggage. The toad escaped soon after being found... The ministry won't give the exact location of the toad's escape but is asking residents to remain vigilant... [A MAF spokesperson] says the ministry is not overly concerned at the time lapse as the cane toad is considered a low biosecurity risk due to its age and the high chance that it has died... [already. The spokesperson] says it took time to co-ordinate the release of information from her organisation, the Department of Conservation and the Ministry of Health... [Incidentally, b]ird protection groups want the Asian community to stop releasing caged birds into the open... [H]undreds of domesticated birds have died unnecessarily and the practice is placing a strain on overworked rescuers. "These birds need food and shelter... They can't cope if they are released and die. They sit on roads injured, and nest under parked cars for shelter. It's very sad and very cruel." The releasing of caged birds is a Buddhist tradition believed to bring good luck and prosperity. [But an]International Buddhist Trust spokes[person]n... says the practice is only followed by a small minority of Buddhists, who do not realise it is harmful. "[These Buddhist p]eople believe you are freeing something that is not free... You are not killing it, or creating problems. It is a way of remembering to be kind to people and animals around us." ...The birds are usually released on beaches and in parks. Over the winter months most... die... "The Animal Welfare Act says it is illegal to let loose domestic birds. It's called abandonment."

...The cost of eliminating rainbow lorikeets from the wild has been put at \$245,000 over three years. The D[oC] has drawn up a plan "to achieve and maintain zero density" of the A[US]n parrot, which is now spreading beyond Auckland after specimens were released on the North Shore by a rainbow lorikeet fancier. The department considers the bird a threat to wildlife and the country's horticulture industry. One on one, the bird may not push a solitary native tui around but rainbow lorikeets form large aggressive flocks, which dominate other bird species. Some of the birds were caught in Birkenhead in February in a trapping operation overseen by the Minister of Conservation... Since then the operation has slowed due to conflicting legislation and opposition from bird lovers to the department's killing the parrots. Hundreds of people telephoned the Auckland office of the department after the February operation. The lack of action has angered conservationists, who fear that rainbow lorikeets may invade Hauraki Gulf island wildlife sanctuaries... The... chair[person of the]... Conservation Authority, the country's statutory public watchdog on conservation issues... said urgent action was necessary to capture the Auckland birds now inhabiting parts of Auckland City, Waiheke Island, Henderson, Howick and Clevedon. There are reports that the birds have been seen in Tauranga. Their spread and the rising population are two reasons for the high cost of removing all the birds from the wild. The department's draft plan... aims to clarify the status of the birds, protected under the Wildlife Act but able to be declared a pest under the Biosecurity Act, to minimise adverse public reaction to live trapping or poisoning and... ensure that future releases of the birds into the wild are stopped. However, the department is willing to [sell]captured live birds... It does not want to undermine commercial breeders[, but] hopes... selling captured birds... [will help] to recover some of the costs... The department rules out taking them to A[US] because of the cost, quarantine issues and the logistics of releasing them into the A[US]n wild.

...The... A[US]n native parrot that has been living around Auckland for several years, will come off the protected species list from [next month. The] Conservation Minister... said the lorikeet had been protected by default under the Wildlife Act, despite being a threat to native birds.

...Conservationists have split with an[]animal welfare head... after an argument about an imported A[US]n parrot... The ...SPCA... chief executive... worked closely with the... D[oC]... for six months on conservation projects, including the need to keep imported parrots in cages. But... [it] put out an unexpected press release late last month criticising the [DoC] for trapping wild rainbow lorikeets. This followed an announcement by [the]Conservation Minister... that the birds have been added to the fifth schedule of the Wildlife Act 1953, so they are no longer protected.

...The cost of eradicating a flock of illegally released parrots has risen to more than \$1500 a bird after an injection of cash by [the]Conservation Minister... The... [minister] has approved \$106,875 to be added to the \$245,000 already set aside by the D[oC] for trapping rainbow lorikeets in Auckland... Despite the department capturing only 57 of an estimated 200 A[US]n native parrots o[ne]... lorikeet trapper... has defended DoC's strategy... [The trapper] said the lorikeet breeding season had started, which made the birds more difficult to catch because they did not flock but pair off... A[n]area manager... said as part of a review last month that the birds would be shot or tranquillised only if trapping failed. Getting rid of the rainbow lorikeets continues to be controversial. [The trapper] said the public still approached him to defend the birds. "But I always manage to turn people around." [The]Birkenhead lorikeet fancier... who was charged by DoC with releasing the birds seven years ago but was not convicted, said the extra spending on eradicating lorikeets was "crazy." [The fancier] disputed DoC's claim that the parrots attacked and displaced fellow nectar-feeders such as the native tui. "DoC is taking money away from endangered native birds, which is where it should be spent,"... [] 26] Codfish Island kakapo have been shifted to another southern island haven as the D[oC] gears up for a massive rat eradication programme. The leader of the National Kakapo Recovery Team... said the transfer operation had cost about \$60,000. Only two of the flightless birds[on the island] had eluded the team. A kakapo named "Bonus" had not got a transmitter and was "leading us a merry dance." "Nora" was also proving elusive. And there was a possibility that four m[or]e kakapo which were shifted to the island some years ago were still there but unaccounted for. The team would search for them during the next few weeks. Rare fernbirds from Codfish were moved from the island last month and bats will be transferred to... an island in Port Pegasus at the southern end of Stewart Island in [a couple of months]... The rat poisoning... will start [about a month later].

...A kakapo has slowly been nursed back to health at Auckland Zoo after... lead poisoning... One of the original 24 founder... kakapo from Stewart Island... Lee, was found to have lost a significant amount of weight during a routine check when... moved from his home on Codfish Island... The lead, which may have come from a fishing sinker or shotgun pellets, appeared to have been excreted but... contaminated Lee's blood.

...After being successfully treated for lead poisoning and regaining his weight, a kakapo due to return to Codfish Island yesterday has died. The... kakapo... Lee, died from heart failure at Auckland Zoo... after a three-hour emergency operation to repair a small tear on the side of his crop.

...Superdad Ox – who fathered three kakapo this year – was taken off Little Barrier Island yesterday but his partner Lisa proved a little harder to catch. The national kakapo team flew five of the endangered birds to Codfish Island... but Lisa – who was "lost" for 13 years before... [being] found with her eggs recently – evaded all attempts to catch her... "[Lisa] was up in the top of the trees and we tried climbing up to get her, but [Lisa] kept going higher," said... [the] senior technical officer with the team... Ox and Lisa's offspring hatched [two months ago] and, with another that hatched at the same time, took the kakapo population to [over]60 for the first time in 20 years... 26 of them... [are hens. The officer], who took Ox to Little Barrier Island from Stewart Island in 1982, said the Hauraki Gulf island was too large and rugged to properly look after the birds and get them to breed. After a "horrendous trip" by helicopter yesterday from Invercargill to Codfish Island, [the officer] said Ox and his friends were quite happy with their new surroundings. [The officer] hoped Lisa, believed to be the last kakapo still alive on Little Barrier, would be caught in about six weeks and taken to... Maud Island in the Marlborough Sounds... Also moved at the weekend... were three takahe, from Kapiti and Mana Islands, northwest of Wellington, to Maud Island. A fourth takahe living on Maud made the reverse trip, to Mana... The takahe recovery team leader... said the takahe move was a way to stop in-breeding and mix up the genetic stock of the birds on the islands... About 2000 adult takahe are left, the majority found in Fiordland... [● The kakapo's smaller cousin (46cm long as opposed to about 62cm long)], the kea, has given new meaning to the phrase "bird brain." The troublesome native parrot, which can cause havoc with the rubber trim on cars, has been shown to be as clever as some of the smartest animals on the planet. In some intelligence tests... kea have outscored gibbon... Not only did kea take to the tests with gusto, they solved the set problems by thinking them through... N[Z]'s baddest bird... [k]ea (Nestor notabilis) are a category B endangered species and are fully protected[('it was claimed for many years that the bird used its powerful beak and claws to kill lambs, and it was treated accordingly by farmers; it is now accepted that it rarely attacks healthy, live animals but will feed on dead carcasses')]. Their curiosity and ingenuity often bring them into conflict

with humans, particularly at South Island skifields, where they fill up on food litter and spend the rest of their time looking for trouble. The D[oC] has had to smooth ruffled feathers in the tiny South Island town of Fox Glacier after frequent complaints by residents over “hoon gangs” of kea.

...N[Z]'s conservation agency is facing its most serious extinction crisis in two decades as a rare bird jumps to the top of the critically endangered list. Orange-fronted parakeet numbers have plummeted 75[%] in just three years, to between 100 and 200 birds, due to predation by stoats and rats. Unlike others at the top of the endangered list, such as the kakapo, black robin and takahe, the orange-fronted parakeet has no safety net because transfer to an off-shore island is at least five years away. The bird's last stronghold is in two South Island valleys and attempts to breed it in captivity have been unsuccessful... The orange-fronted parakeet was only identified four years ago as a separate species from its close relatives the yellow-crowned and red-crowned parakeets... [■ Like many NZers,] I also found... TV1[’s locally-produced comedy]... *Willy Nilly* enjoyable. My only complaint was a recent episode where the shopkeeper's wife shot native birds – kakapos, kiwis and others. I didn't find it amusing and feel the case in Christchurch the day after that episode, where a pea-brained person shot several wood pigeons, was more than coincidence.

...Pigeons are falling from the sky in central Auckland after a poison drop to cull the bird's population. [Like 'London's Trafalgar Square – where the pigeons are under threat of a permanent cull' (note that scientists claim sparrows in the)... UK are dying because unleaded petrol is killing off insects] – Auckland's CBD]... is a popular roost for pigeons and some companies use pest control to limit bird numbers. [Someone] who works on Hobson St... says three pigeons, a... seagull and some sparrows fell into the staff's... courtyard last week. “...They are falling on to the ground and gasping for air, and it's so traumatic;”... [The worker] found a further three pigeons dying in a nearby park and called SPCA inspectors who confirmed the birds had been poisoned. “I've noticed... we really have no bird life in town. I just think it's shocking that they are killing off our bird life...” Pest control companies do not have to notify the Auckland City Council or S[PCA]... of a poison drop. The council's parks and street-scapes manager... is not aware of any bird poisoning in the central city[, but] says the council notifies the public before it poisons birds. The birds are culled to prevent diseases, such as salmonella, spreading, and also to prevent damage to buildings. [An] SPCA senior inspector... says poisoning birds should be the last option... [as] poisoned, dead birds are a risk to other animals, which may eat them... But... pest control companies usually leave the poison out at night and pick up dying birds in the morning. “It's legal, but it has to be used responsibly... It's a bane for us because it's slow-working, people see these birds struggling around and naturally feel sorry for them.” ...Pest control companies often shoot the birds instead.

...Trendy house sparrows flitting suburban nests for inner Takapuna City roosts are driving their human neighbours to thoughts of murder most foul. Suggestions of poisoning, gassing, freezing, trapping, starving, nest busting and building cat walks in the treetops were heard when the Takapuna Community Board met last week. Members pondered what measures would be the most effective – and publicly acceptable – to control a plague afflicting the city's premier shopping streets. The problem is that pohutukawa trees planted to beautify the central business area provide cheep-and-cheerful nesting pads for sparrows, with streetlights providing central heating. At dusk – after a day earning a crust in the city's parks and outdoor cafes – sparrows flock in their hundreds in shady, rowdy hangouts handy to the city's bar and cafe scene. By the dawn chorus, seats for shoppers, footpath and parked cars are iced with bird droppings that fall like snowflakes. The birds are not to blame... “They are trying to find a new home because infill housing has meant their trees in backyards have been chopped down.” [The North Shore] Council parks and environment officer... told the board that a daily clean up after the birds would cost \$35,000 a year. All the birds could not be wiped out... but they could be culled to respectable numbers... [However,] the North Shore's “Bird [Gal],” said sparrows should not be destroyed just because they made a mess below nesting trees. “The council pays people to clean up after graffiti artists – so why can't they [employ people]... to clean up sparrow poo?!”

...A catchment pond at [Waikumete Cemetery] is being drained and refilled following an outbreak of avian botulism. Several ducks are dead and a number are being nursed back to health by Waitakere City Council's animal welfare service following the bacterial poisoning. The pond, at Glendale Rd... Glen Eden... will be drained in a bid to get rid of the problems and bacterial levels will be closely monitored each day once it is refilled... The same retention pond was drained last year after a similar outbreak killed numerous ducks. Animal welfare's service manager... says people feeding ducks bread in the pond can help spread the bacteria because of the wet bread. “The best way to feed a duck is to feed them wheat on dry land. Ducks ingest much more water in the bread.” Sick ducks can be brought to the animal welfare service at The Concourse, Henderson.

...Children in Ashburton have been injecting ducks with petrol and trying to set them alight, a local animal welfare inspector says.

...Westies are cruel says bird carer... A volunteer who cares for orphaned and injured birds says Waitakere City is the cruellest part of Auckland... [The bird carer ha]s taken in more than 160 ducklings, pukeko, plovers and bantams in the last three months – 90[%] of them from west Auckland. The Kelston [resident says it] was recently called to a service station where seven ducklings were sleeping in the sun. “A car came in for petrol but when the... driver spotted the ducklings, [it] jaimed his car and just drove over one. I had to scrape up the mess... In Brains Park recently five carloads of kids, accompanied by their parents, were throwing eggs and killing ducks with sticks and stones.” [The Kelston resident says it] started looking after birds after moving to Auckland 18 months ago... After paying for [the birds' needs] and their own living expenses... her family is left with \$100 a week. “I'm not doing this for sympathy... I just really want to emphasise to parents how much they need to educate their children. If these children are doing this to birds, how are they treating other animals like cats or dogs? If they treat animals badly what are they going to do when they have kids?” [Auckland's] SPCA... says they've had no reports of bird cruelty in the Kelston area, but backs [the bird carer]'s plea. “We would certainly like to support her comments about better education,” [the SPCA's]... marketing manager... says.

...A Kelston [resident who] rescued eight chicks from children raiding bird nests in Archibald Park... says the youngsters were part of a group of adults and children who arrived at the park in about 15 cars and vans. [The resident] was walking with her daughter when [they] noticed the children going through tall bushes collecting nests, blue eggs, baby tui and blackbirds. “They were playing with them and moving them around... We tried to explain to them that it was cruel and not fair that the mother comes back and finds her babies gone.” [The resident]... asked the children if [it] could speak to their parents but the group quickly returned to their vehicles. “They just stared, they wouldn't speak... I kept... trying to explain it to them. Before I knew it they all cleared off... like they were scared.” [The resident] picked up eight chicks, two eggs and three nests and phoned the SPCA who told her to put the eggs and chicks on a hot water bottle and take them to a bird sanctuary in Panmure... It's the second report of cruelty to birds from the Kelston area in less than a week. [A local v]olunteer... who runs a bird sanctuary from her home, says [it saw supervised children killing ducks in Brain's Park. Yet the SPCA's]... marketing manager... says the organisation hasn't received any reports about bird cruelty in Kelston. But [the marketing manager] says it's up to parents to make sure their children don't damage nests, eggs and baby birds.

...Parents are warned that they face stiff penalties for letting their children kill ducks. The warning follows reports of youngsters using home-made spears to impale birds on the Whau River at Shadbolt Park in Blockhouse Bay. [The] Friends of the Whau treasurer... says a group of teenagers herd[ed] a mother duck and her brood together before stabbing them with three metre spears last month. Last week a different gang was stopped before they could spear any birds. The first group headed for Portage Rd on skateboards and the second [group] [disappeared towards Blockhouse Bay. [The SPCA's] senior inspector... says the use of spears indicates the culprits planned the attack. “It shows a large amount of malice,”... [The inspector] is surprised by the level of brutality. “I'm afraid it's the sort of thing that happens at school holidays but that's taking it to a new level,”... Bird killers can be fined up to \$50,000 and jailed for three years. [The inspector] says youngsters can't be prosecuted – but their parents can if they know what their children are doing. “Children might be exempt but that doesn't mean we view the offence any less seriously... If these kinds of incidents are reported to us we will investigate and talk to the children and their parents to make them aware of the seriousness of their actions. One of our big aims is to try and ensure the next generation has more respect for animals than the current one. The situation is improving and that's why incidents like this are so distressing.” ...[the inspector i]s investigating how to put up signs warning would-be offenders...

Auckland Zoo[’s] flamingo-keeper... cried when [it] discovered one of his birds had been attacked with rocks, forcing the zoo to put it down. The 18-month-old [hen] was found in the flamingo enclosure around 10am on Monday with one leg badly shattered and the other broken. Three rocks were found nearby that had not been there when zoo staff checked the birds earlier that morning... The flamingo enclosure was quite far into the zoo grounds and all keepers would have been fairly busy at that time... [The zoo’s] director... said staff were devastated by the attack but were left with no choice but to destroy Madiba, the first of the great flamingos to hatch in England before they were brought to the zoo in the middle of last year. “A flamingo’s legs are its lifeline, so there was no way it could have survived... It’s inconceivable that someone would do such a cruel and senseless thing.” [The keeper] spent three months in England overseeing the incubation, hatching and rearing of the birds before accompanying them to N[Z]. The keeper... had searched the zoo for the culprit after the attack. “I wouldn’t have been working for Auckland City any more [if [the keeper]’d found them] and I don’t think anyone would have blamed me.” Flamingos were beautiful birds and each had its own distinct personality, [the keeper] said. The rest of the flock would have known Madiba was badly hurt... World-wide, greater flamingos... [–] the largest... of... the... five species of flamingo... [–] are listed as vulnerable, but in some areas of Africa, numbers have declined by almost half over the past 25 years. [On a positive note, the ‘young bird which flew away during a “free flight” display – after being spooked by seagulls – has been located and returned to the zoo.’]

...It’s a right carrion... A vulture that disappeared from a British zoo six days ago has taken up residence on the roof of a village vicarage, causing fear among neighbours that their pets may become lunch for the meat-eating bird. Residents of the village of Reydon in Suffolk have locked their pets indoors to keep them safe from the vulture, known by zoo keepers as Foster. But... [the] head falconer at Banham Zoo, in the neighbouring county of Norfolk, from where the vulture escaped during a display, tried to reassure villagers that their pets would not be harmed. “Unless a cat was lying dead ...the vulture... wouldn’t be interested,” [the falconer] told Sky News television. Foster is drawing crowds of spectators and media eager to catch a rare glimpse and a photograph of the Ruppell’s Vulture, a species native to central Africa... “[Foster] does displays at Banham Zoo every day so [it] didn’t escape, we actually let him go... Unfortunately, on this particular day... we had some very warm weather and [Foster] rose on a thermal very, very high, couldn’t figure out how to get back down again and drifted off.” ...Keepers tracked the bird to Reydon on Saturday, but attempts to tempt him down from the roof have failed. Even dead baby chicks, his favourite snack, have not lured Foster down from his perch.

...English... called to arms for squirrel hunt... Prince [of Wales] has joined the call for the grey to be wiped from these shores... But calling for the “elimination [of greys... – imported American bruisers which comprehensively out-punch British red squirrels...] in order to save the red squirrels and ensure their future in [Britain]” is a tough ask. Grey squirrels already outnumber the diminutive reds by about four million to 150,000 or so.

...The British Government is considering wiping out one species of duck to save another... The Government and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds say the ruddy duck – imported to Britain from the U[S] 50 years ago – is threatening the white-headed duck by breeding with it in its Spanish habitat. Some conservationists believe the hybrid species will eventually replace the white-headed duck. A call last year of 2600 ruddy ducks did not stop the problem. Britain has about 6000 ruddy ducks. The Government says there are only about 2700 white-headed ducks in Western Europe – all in Spain – and 10,000 in the world. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs said it had approved eradication of the ruddy duck in principle, but would carry out more research and consultation before taking any action... Animal welfare groups labelled the plan to cull the country’s entire ruddy duck population “obscene” and “grotesque”... Animal Aid, said... “Mating with the robust ruddy duck is the white-headed’s means of survival... Conservation should be about protecting habitat, not killing... in the name of blood purity.”

...Should a population of a healthy native species be reduced to save another on the brink of extinction? For the D[oC] that decision is looming. Landcare... says the future of the native brown teal is “circling the plughole.” The birds have one tiny home left in the wild, the Okiwi wetland on Great Barrier Island... But even on the Barrier, free from voracious predators... their future is grim. Since 1989, numbers have more than halved on the island, to between 500 and 600. It is unlikely they will survive a further 10 years if they continue dying at the present rate... [A team of Landcare scientists] is studying the teal and will make recommendations to the department next month on an intensive management programme for the birds. Among those recommendations is one that will undoubtedly be controversial – possible eradication of some pukeko. Pukeko numbers have boomed on the island in the past 10 years and pukeko are known to prey on teal ducklings... A trial removal of pukeko from Okiwi is one option but [one scientist] does not rule out “euthanasia,” as [the scientist] diplomatically calls it... [The scientist] describes brown teal as “rubber-ducky ducks,” the cute, real-life version of the yellow plastic bath toy. They are slightly smaller than the common brown duck and are reluctant flyers, another factor that makes them vulnerable to predators... [The] release of 1700 captively bred teal into the wild since 1968 has been “like putting petfood out for predators.” Of N[Z] native teal, brown teal have suffered the most since European settlement. They were once found all over the mainland and on offshore islands. They are now restricted to Great Barrier, tiny populations on Kapiti and Little Barrier and captive breeding programmes. And pukeko are not the brown teal’s only problem on Great Barrier... an increasingly popular holiday destination. The introduction of a car ferry service has brought more cars to the island’s... roads – and fewer ducks. “We were there for three days last month and a duck was found dead on the road every day,”... One solution being looked at is “duck tunnels” or culverts under the roads. Signs warning motorists will also be put up... The dead ducks’ stomach contents are being examined to find out what teal eat in the wild. Lack of food could be another reason for their failure.

...N[Z]’s unique, river-dwelling duck is in serious trouble says the World Conservation Union in its latest extinction ratings... produced by a network of 7000 experts working in almost every country in the world... According to this year’s redlist of threatened species published by the union, the blue duck (whio) has jumped from threatened to endangered. There are thought to be about 400 pairs left, with a very high proportion of [cocks] – a gender skew that leaves the birds vulnerable to extinction. Whio populations were severely fragmented, said the union, and they had disappeared from former habitats in the Tararua Ranges, Pirongia, Mamaku Plateau, Central Otago, Kaikoura and the Richmond and Kaimai Ranges. “We are losing the battle to save whio...,” said [the RFBPS] conservation manager... “Unless there is concerted action in the next few years to save whio, the remaining populations will disappear.” Whio are one of N[Z]’s ancient native birds, and share their river-dwelling lifestyle with just three of the world’s waterfowl species. The... [cock]’s characteristic whistling sound means they are sometimes dubbed the whistling duck. While other duck species leave raising the young to the [hen], the blue duck [cock] helps to guard the ducklings and whio probably mate for life.

...When predators are about to pounce on a N[Z] dotterel’s nest, the bird’s only hope of saving its chicks is to pretend to have a broken wing and limp away. The bird’s attempt to make themselves look like easier prey than their young is a clever ploy, but not particularly successful. Fewer than 5[%] of the endangered birds are able to raise chicks without human intervention to protect their habitat. And nowhere are the benefits of giving them a helping hand more evident than on Matakana Island, where a committed group of... landowners, businesses and local authorities is allowing the dotterel to breed in relative safety. The picturesque island, just 3km from Tauranga’s port, is the most successful breeding site for the birds in the country. When the D[oC] launched a nationwide N[Z] dotterel recovery programme 10 years ago, just 15 breeding pairs were on Matakana... With no protection from humans... only five chicks were fledged... and three-quarters of the nests were destroyed... Last season, 460 predators... were trapped, dramatically reducing to just 38[%] the nests lost. As a result, 34 breeding pairs were able to raise 39 chicks and this season... is likely to produce a record number. The [DoC]’s officer for protected species and islands... says the birds... total just 1500 nationwide... “Unfortunately, what is a good beach for N[Z] dotterel breeding is also a good recreational beach for people... Most activities such as sunbathing, picnicking and fishing take a number of hours and if near to a nest, the incubating [hen] could be off the nest all this time and the eggs either cool off or overheat in the sun.” N[Z] dotterel eggs are the colour of wet sand and are often trodden on or driven over by 4WD vehicles on beaches elsewhere in the country[(local councils in ‘Canterbury are beginning the process of introducing bylaws that will ban or limit the use of 4WD vehicles on

the district's beaches'). The bird's plight has led local Bay of Plenty organisations to donate money, goods and services to help turn Matakana... into a dotterel haven... Locals, particularly schoolchildren, are fiercely protective of the birds and warn visitors to keep clear of the nesting sites. Even keen fisher[s] bypass Matakana's best fishing spots so as not to disturb any newcomers... [One] local... who is employed by the department... to monitor the birds and keep pest numbers down... was thrilled to think future generations would also enjoy the island's N[Z] dotterel's.

...*Saddlebacks riding higher* The endangered North Island saddleback returned to mainland wilderness for the first time in more than a century, thanks to its haven on Tiritiri Matangi Island. Forty of the glossy black native birds... which ha[ve] several distinctive calls... a chestnut back saddle and orange-red wattles at the base of its bill... were transferred from the island to Wellington's Karori Wildlife Sanctuary yesterday.

...The North Island robin has gained a new sanctuary, thanks to the work of several hundred people re-establishing bush on Kakepuku Mountain in the south Waikato... The robins... have not been seen... on the mountain... for several decades... [but 15] of the native birds have just been released following a five-year effort by volunteers... Kakepuku's reserve covers almost 200ha, some of it in mature forest with other parts in scrub, which acts as a nursery for regenerating bush... [However, until] a committee of local residents... [was] formed... in 1994... to do something about the animal pests... [such as r]ats... goats and possums... regeneration was seriously reduced... [One of the] dairy farmers on the eastern side of the 450m mountain... [said:] "People were complaining about the appearance of the mountain, that the bush was looking really bad, so we decided to get rid of the rats and possums to start with... For the people of the Waikato, Kakepuku is the same as Rangitoto Island to the people of Auckland – it can be seen from all over the region and we want it to look good." The... Hamilton field centre manager for the D[oC], says... "The release of these birds on the mountain is something that was not a priority for the department and this is a good example of a local group of private residents doing something positive to improve their own community. We're more than happy to assist in situations like this. It was an ambitious project and it's been a success." ...the track to the summit of Kakepuku is one of the most-used walks in the Waikato region... Kakepuku[, which]... is distinctive because it juts from the undulating plain between the Waipu and Puniu Rivers... is of considerable cultural and spiritual significance to Waikato Maori and several pa sites are known on its slopes. The remains of a major pa, complete with trenches and terraces, are still visible on the summit.

...Pressure is on the A[RC] to reintroduce the sweet song of the nectar-eating bellbird to the Waitakere Ranges. Conservationists called on the council yesterday to establish a mainland "island" in the ranges where threatened native birds could survive, protected by intensive pest-control programmes... They spoke of the mighty subtropical rainforest of the ranges, yet of a disappointing silence in the bush caused by the absence of birdlife... [except for] tui and fantails... The bellbird has been extinct in Auckland since a sudden, mystery die-off of the species throughout the country nearly 150 years ago. Populations recovered elsewhere but not in Auckland and Northland... The goal of a mainland island would be to reproduce as closely as possible the environment found in the ranges before human habitation and the arrival of introduced pests... The cats in the ranges could be a problem but bellbirds don't feed on the ground so, like the tui, they should be successful... Once established, the bird would move down from the ranges and its melodious, bell-like song would be heard in the parks and gardens of Auckland, said the conservationists.

...Songbirds around towns and cities are losing their tunes because increasingly heavy traffic is making them tone deaf. N[Z] ornithologists say some birds are imitating fire engines, car alarms and even mobile phones as humans increasingly encroach on their habitats. But the biggest worry is that bird populations may diminish... Their fears reflect a British study which shows birds living near busy roads made harsher cackles and had problems attracting mates and defending territories... Some of the worst affected species in Britain include the song thrush, starling, chaffinch, greenfinch, goldfinch and blackbird – species which have been introduced to N[Z] and whose numbers are now dwindling. Now local experts fear other indigenous species like tui, fantail, grey warbler and silvereye could suffer a knock-on effect because they cannot distinguish different birdsong. An Auckland University bird vocalisation expert... says... "Any songbird learns a song like we learn a language and they are liable to get it garbled if they cannot get proper feedback when practising. Studies on budgerigars have shown they raise their voices in a noisy environment like we do at parties, which suggests their hearing cells are being damaged." ...[a member] of the Ornithological Society of N[Z], said: "...Starlings here imitate various traffic noises... One theory is that birds are able to fool neighbouring birds into believing there are more birds in their territory than there actually is. If they pretend there's a mobile phone nearby it might scare off potential rivals." [Editor's note: 'Birds from different parts of a country have different dialects. Consequently, when members of a bird species are brought together from different regions – in order, for example, to improve the gene-pool of breeding programmes – they have trouble communicating with each other']

...One of the mysteries of birdsong has been solved by scientists trying to understand why some birds learn new songs while others are stuck with the sounds they are born with. Three of the 23 main groups of birds can learn to sing, or even "talk" in the case of hummingbirds, parrots and songbirds. All three groups have been found to possess seven brain structures that enable them to perform and remember complex vocalisation. The seven brain facets appear to have evolved independently in each group, while they have not evolved at all in the remaining 20 orders of birds for which calls, such as the cock's crow, are genetically "hard-wired" from birth... [T]he fundamental requirement for seven specialised regions of the brain may shed light on how mammals... learn to vocalise. Besides humans, only whales, dolphins and bats can learn how to "sing."

...The mystery of the weka on Waiheke Island seems to have been solved... Since a weka was found dead near Whakanewha Regional Park last week, four sightings of living specimens of the rare flightless bird have been reported on Waiheke... le[ading] to speculation that the birds may have swum from nearby Pakatoa Island or been moved by somebody from Kawau Island. But [a]Waiheke Islander... admitted yesterday that [it] released a pair of weka on the island after a family holiday in Paihia 20 years ago. "...There were hordes of them. As we were packing, they came into the house so I just trapped a pair and threw them in a box and we motored home the same day... We had a 10-acre... block. We were doing the self-sufficiency thing. We had one of everything... including my pet pukeko. We threw the weka into an old chook run, settled them down... then let them go." ...a conservationist who helped organise a [RFBPS] project to transfer weka to Pakatoa in 1996, said... the once-common birds might have survived because the North Island weka – unlike the cheeky and inquisitive South Island variety – had developed timid characteristics as it neared extinction. Their timidity was probably helping the remaining 3000 to survive[, although the Paihia]... population was now extinct.

...A small nocturnal seabird thought to be extinct for more than 100 years has been seen in the Hauraki Gulf and off the Coromandel Peninsula... Scientific confirmation... is still awaited... One of the birds was seen in January and last month two British ornithologists saw a flock of up to 20... near Little Barrier Island. The rediscovery of the N[Z] storm petrel, or *Oceanites maorianus* ['also known as the "Jesus bird" because of the way it appears to walk on water']], has set the bird-watching world alight because finding supposedly extinct birds is so rare. In recent years such rediscoveries – the takahe in 1948 and the Chatham Islands taiko and Campbell Island teal in the 1970s – have attracted great excitement.

...The endangered taiko has had its most successful breeding season and D[oC] staff hope it marks a turning point for the world's rarest seabird... found only in the southern forests of Chatham Island... DoC's taiko team had high hopes for a record season this year when they caught 14 birds and located more than 20 new "prebreeding" burrows... For the past two years scientists knew of only two breeding pairs. The sea-based birds... only... return to land... [– flying] in and out... during darkness... [–] to breed in burrows where they are vulnerable to rats, cats, pigs, possums and weka... [However, 92] wild cats have been caught in the taiko breeding area this year a[nd, consequently, a]... record six chicks had been born this season... [Five have] been successfully fledged... "Now we are just holding our breath for the last one to do the same." The department was also developing a predator-proof fence to secure a safe breeding area for the taiko, [whose]... world population... is estimated to be... 100 [to] 150.

...A bloody weka cull... is under fire from an Act MP. [The]Conservation Minister... is defending his department's annual cull of the birds but [the]Act MP... calls the cull "outrageous". Written parliamentary questions... revealed that last year around 400 eastern buff weka were bludgeoned to death on the... Chatham Islands... by DoC staff. The birds, which were trapped and then bashed on the head, are killed by DoC to

protect two critically endangered species on the Chathams, the taiko, one of the world's rarest seabirds, and the Chatham Island oystercatcher. The eastern buff weka is extinct on mainland N[Z] and is a distinct species from its North Island cousin which is a category B threatened species along with the native wood pigeon (kereru) and the alpine parrot (kea)... While hundreds of the weka are eaten every year by islanders, DoC says that doesn't keep numbers low enough... [By the way,] Pacific Island states are being asked to choose which of their most endangered birds should be given a helping hand from [NZ and AUS] aid money. Hard decisions will face delegates at a workshop to be run jointly in the Cook Islands this week by the 26-nation South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme and Birdlife International. Conservation experts say at least 12 and possibly as many as 30 Polynesian bird species are under threat... But limited resources... [- NZ] had committed \$180,000 and A[US] was contributing \$82,000... [-] mean the... delegates will have to rank them and pick just two or three for high-priority rescue efforts. The environmental programme's avifauna officer... feared the Samoan moorhen might have vanished already, while survival chances were running out for the Samoan wood rail and, in French Polynesia, the Polynesian ground dove and Marquesan imperial pigeon. However, a prime reason for holding the workshop in the Cooks was to highlight the success of a conservation programme that had boosted numbers of the Rarotongan flycatcher, or kakerori... "The idea is to show Pacific Islands delegates that you can turn things around," said [the officer], who is seven months into a three-year appointment while on unpaid leave from the D[OC] in Wellington. "We are not just casting a total story of doom and gloom."

...N[Z] is likely to take in some of the inhabitants of a tiny Pacific island nation whose homes are being swallowed by rising sea levels – unlike A[US] which has shut them out. The Tuvaluan Government last year appealed to A[US] and N[Z] authorities to provide permanent homes for at least 3000 people, and possibly its whole population... [of] 10,500... within the next ten years. [● 'The islands of the central and western Pacific, or (more usually) the easternmost of the three great groups of these islands, including Samoa, NZ and Hawaii,' are collectively known as *Polynesia*. The title comes from the Greek words *nesos* (island) and *polus* (much or many), but is a phrase that might become redundant if the ocean-level continues to rise; and could already be changed to *Polyextinctia* because, like Samoa and NZ, 'Hawaii – a strand of jewels once protected by 2000 miles of ocean – is under assault. Its plight is embodied in a species of plant that clings to life on the tallest sea cliffs in the world. Something is supposed to pollinate this bizarre plant species, but the natural pollinator may be extinct or so rare – it has never been seen – that the plants need help. A moth could easily flutter from flower to flower but for the field biologists who are now the pollinators, the task is not so easy – they have to abseil from flower to flower. The very fabric of this tropical paradise ecology is unravelling. One quarter of all US endangered species are now found in Hawaii. 70% of Hawaii's native birds are already extinct.'

...Like NZ], Hawaii was once a water encircled haven for birds. Even when Captain Cook arrived... 215 years ago, 79 forest birds were recorded. Since then 31 have become extinct and another 25 are endangered...," says... [the person who] labels Hawaii as "the endangered species capital of the world"... [and] recently set up the Society for the Protection of Hawaii's Native Flora and Fauna. "Someone's got to do it," [the conservationist] says with a veiled jab at the government... Many plants are threatened by aggressive exotics such as bamboo, rising in some areas to 40 metres... The native birds are retreating into the higher and densely forested mountains but some are still found near... trail[s]. Sometimes hikers see the crimson ibiwi, a stunning native bird battling for survival on Oahu... ● [Another of Cook's destinations – AUS]... – ...is pressing for international action to save... one of the world's most majestic sea birds... [S]peaking at an international meeting in Hobart on how to protect the birds, [AUS's]... Environment Minister... warned that without changes to longline fishing, some of the 24 species of Southern Hemisphere albatross could soon be wiped out... Longline fishing had killed an estimated 250,000 sea birds, many of them albatross, in the past... [3 years. AUS] is working with its fishing industry to introduce new longline technology and to limit the periods in which the lines are set... [But the minister] was disappointed that Japan, which had just stymied A[US]'s move to establish a South Pacific whale sanctuary, had not attended the conference... Another big Southern Ocean fishing nation, Spain, was also absent. However, conference sources said it was sympathetic to the plight of the albatross. A[US] was... working to eradicate the feral cat population on Macquarie Island, where breeding pairs of wandering albatross had declined sharply... Pollution and loss of habitat are also contributing to the birds' decline... But because the albatross ranged for thousands of kilometres, there were limits on what any single nation could achieve, said [the minister, who confirmed that the]... giant petrel was a[nother sea bird] at grave risk.

...A campaign to save the albatross has been launched by the R[FBPS]. A spokesperson for the society says NZ]'s albatross and petrel species have declined by 90[%] in 60 years, mostly because of long-line fishing.

...Some guests just don't know when to leave. A[n]... exhausted... young albatross... had hitched a ride on a container ship off the west coast, remaining on board when it docked at Onehunga... The... [bird spent] a week at the SPCA's Panmure bird recovery centre[, where]... volunteers worked shifts to help feed the hungry albatross which was checked by a vet to ensure it was ready to fly again. [A DoC] ranger... released the huge bird at Muriwai on Wednesday. The albatross, however, was reluctant to leave the comfort of its cage for the cliff-top in biting wind and rain. After it had been tipped from the cage it headed not for the ocean but a sheltering bank. Retrieved, the bird spread its wings in promising fashion and promptly sat in a gannet's nest while media crowded around to record the moment of flight. Hours later the bird was still there.

...Seabirds are dying in droves at west coast beaches. At Muriwai, 2260 dead seabirds were recovered on Saturday, one of the largest counts in nearly 30 years. Most are a kind of petrel that breeds prolifically on islands off the coast of N[Z]. The deaths are attributed to storms and poor feeding conditions... "The small birds will sometimes battle through stormy weather and reach the coast too exhausted to survive, let alone feed themselves,"... says... [an ARC] natural heritage scientist... A ute full of birds was collected by volunteers from the Ornithological Society of N[Z], South Kaipara Land Care and the D[OC], in a 40 kilometre sweep along Muriwai Beach. Bodies were identified, counted and buried.

...Fifty-six blue penguins died in an attack... on Saturday night... at the Oamaru penguin refuge in the South Island... [A] wandering dog was... believed... responsible. About a third of the casualties were chicks... and other chicks would starve to death because their parents had been killed.

...A penguin colony facing extinction is likely to get its last chance at survival when a U[S] icebreaker arrives on Thursday. Two large icebergs... have blocked the sea ice around Ross Island and McMurdo Sound, cutting the Adelie penguins of Cape Royds off from direct access to the sea, and food. This has destroyed the penguins' breeding season and skua seabirds are now plundering the survivors... The southernmost Adelie colony, next to a base built by Ernest Shackleton in 1908, has been a highlight for visiting explorers and dignitaries for nearly a century. A US logistics official said US Coastguard icebreaker Polar Star had entered the pack ice in Ross Sea and was carving a channel through to McMurdo Base... The channel would be kept clear and, as it passed close to Cape Royds, it would dramatically improve short-term prospects for the penguins... Last week the University of Auckland... said... that only the icebreakers or a strong southerly storm pushing out the sea ice could save the colony... But [a]... Californian ecologist... said last week that the chicks were hatching too late and there was little chance they would survive the onset of winter.

...Trapped penguins need a storm A U[S] Coastguard icebreaker making its way to McMurdo Base... is unlikely to provide an escape route for thousands of penguins cut off by icebergs from the sea – and their food. Yesterday, the 120m Polar Sea, making its annual visit to the US base, was still days away... [The] manager of N[Z]'s Scott Base, which is near McMurdo, said the icebreaker would not make much of an impact... "There's nothing anyone here can do other than hope for a decent-sized storm in the next few weeks – or next few days would be better. But that is not likely at this point." The Cape Royds colony of adelie penguins, said to number 20,000 to 30,000 breeding pairs, has been cut off from easy access to the sea by two huge icebergs. The birds have to trek 15km to 20km over the ice before they can reach their fishing grounds. The colony... has suffered at least two poor breeding seasons since the icebergs blocked them in... Scientists are crossing their fingers that the colony will manage to survive.

...Nature has finally come to the rescue of... Antarctica's Adelie penguins... The... ice... has... broken up enough to let open seawater in as far as the southernmost... colony at Cape Royds... 2000... pairs... are now nesting... where... their ancestors have returned to breed for hundreds of years.

...At least two-thirds of the world's African penguin population are endangered by an oil spill following the sinking of a Panamanian oil tanker off Cape Town [last week]... The spill has struck hard on Dassen Island and Robben Island, the world's first and third largest colonies of African penguins... More than 40[%] of the estimated 150,000-180,000 African penguins have either been soiled or are threatened and must be evacuated, say conservationists. Environmental officials have asked the South African defence force to help capture birds on the two islands.

...Conservationists have begun evacuating an entire colony of 55,000 penguins on... Dassen Island to save the birds from oil leaking from a sunken ship. They say the relatively small spill... has caused the world's worst coastal bird disaster... Authorities had hoped the evacuation could be avoided... [but] 400 tonnes of heavy fuel has seeped from the bulk ore-carrier *Treasure* despite attempts to stop the leaking. The... oil is toxic to the birds and has already killed about 30. [However, the toll will rise because 'chicks have to be left behind']... About 16,000 birds had by last week already been rescued – mainly from Robben Island... home to about 20,000 of the threatened African penguins... Three penguins were being put into each box, with the clean birds being evacuated first... 200 people were crowded on to the island and handing the boxes to six small craft and [a] helicopter, to be transported to the west-coast town of Yzerfontein, about 10km [away]... Once on the mainland... contaminated birds would be cleaned and rehabilitated. "The uncontaminated birds will be transported to Port Elizabeth, 800km away... where they will be released into the sea to swim home... Hopefully, by the time they reach [their islands] the situation won't be so bad." In the past week about 300 oil-free birds have already been released in Port Elizabeth... [Meanwhile, f]ears of a major ecological disaster along Spain's northwest coast heightened as huge waves swept the first oil from the stricken tanker *Prestige* onto the Galician shoreline. And in a further blow to hopes that this ecologically fragile landscape would be spared the ravages of the oil, experts said the *Prestige* could succumb to the incessant pounding it has been receiving and snap in two. This could increase the chances of even more of the 77,000 tonnes of oil on board escaping to suffocate the coastline's fragile and beautiful environment even more... Oil has so far washed up along about 40km of shoreline between Roncudo and Cape Tourinan... The World Wildlife Fund... has already reported that oil-covered birds were reaching the shore, known as the "Coast of Death" for its many wrecks over history.

...A new oil slick has been seen at the site where a tanker sank off the coast of Spain, raising fears that the country's ecological and economic woes from the disaster are far from over. Authorities in neighbouring Portugal said a glistening pool of oil was seen over the spot where the vessel *Prestige* sank last week after breaking in two... [T]he new slick was situated about 50km off the Portuguese coast but... winds were likely to push it towards Spain or France within the next two days... The observation... was confirmed by Spanish officials, who up to now had expressed hope that more than 60,000 tonnes of oil on the tanker had... solidified because of the near-freezing temperature and pressure at the depth of the *Prestige*'s wreck, 3500m underwater... Previous slicks that had already washed ashore on Spain's northwest coast have soiled 400km of shoreline... Yesterday, hundreds of volunteers participated in a co-ordinated clean-up operation on some of the more than 100 beaches blackened by the toxic goo... Spain and Portugal are to call for shipping lanes along their coasts to be moved farther away at an European Union summit next month.

...A huge new wave of oil from the sunken tanker *Prestige* was expected to hit Spain's "Coast of Death" today, despite desperate efforts by clean-up ships... from France, Germany, the Netherlands, Britain and Belgium... to keep it at bay... The bulk of the slick was last night 500m from the coast, and smaller patches were between 1.6km and 4.8km away. A map on the Galician regional government's website also showed a large slick entering the Bay of Biscay... The slick, containing up to 11,000 tonnes of fuel oil, threaten[s] to inflict more environmental and economic damage on northwest Spain, which is struggling to clean up from a first onslaught of oil... The new slick is far bigger than the initial oil spill of around 5000 tonnes... That spill fouled beaches with an evil-smelling bed of tar, killed or coated hundreds of seabirds and caused untold damage to Galicia's renowned fisheries... and... shellfish... Some 400km of coastline have been declared off-limits to fishing, putting thousands of people out of work.

...The tortuous and distressing process of cleaning birds caught in oil spills may soon become much easier thanks to magnets... Instead of scrubbing oily feathers with detergents that can destroy their waterproof properties, scientists at Victoria University of Technology in Melbourne say they can be dusted with fine iron powder. Combing them with a magnet will then remove both the oil and the iron. "We were quite amazed by the efficiency of the cleansing process... Iron powder is cheap, plentiful and both non-toxic and non-irritant." ...[the scientist]s devised the new dry-cleaning method after discovering that oil sticks to iron powder more readily than to feathers. The process is quicker and less stressful for the birds, taking only a matter of minutes. In laboratory tests on duck feathers, one combing with a magnet removed 88[%] of light crude oil and 60[%] of other types. After 10 combings, 97[%] of all types of oil were removed... When the researchers examined the cleaned feathers under a microscope, they found their barbules, or tiny threads, were neatly rearranged in place and drops of water rolled off them easily. By contrast, the barbules of feathers cleaned with detergents were tangled and showed reduced ability to repel water... The research team is working on a portable field unit so that birds can be treated immediately at the site of an oil spill... [A spokesperson for the AUSn branch of the RSPCA] welcomed the development, but said many severely oiled birds were coated with a dried residue like tar, which may resist treatment with iron powder... [□ The seabirds r]escued... at the Uruguayan resort of Punta del Este [are heading] home. Last month 150 of the birds turned up, covered in oil, on the beaches. There was no explanation for the spill but environmentalists have been feeding and cleaning the birds and yesterday let them go.

...A harrier hawk whose wings had been deliberately clipped was obviously abandoned when its "owners" got tired of it, a bird rescue volunteer says. [The volunteer with] SPCA Birdwing, said it was the first time in her 18 years with the organisation that [the volunteer] had seen one of the big birds of prey with clipped wings and the find had appalled bird rescue staff... [The volunteer] guessed someone had the hawk as a chick, then "chucked her back into the wild" when the bird became too aggressive. [The volunteer] said the birds were naturally aggressive and could not be tamed... Australasian harrier hawks are a protected native species under the Wildlife Act. They are members of the raptor family which also includes the rare N[Z] falcon and the morepork. It is illegal to kill or confine them... The young [hawk] was thought to be about a year old... The hawk's wings would eventually re-grow and the bird would be released, but only after a re-training programme.

...the Canadian artist who really did teach geese to fly, was the inspiration for *Fly Away Home*, the... movie on TV2 at 7.30pm, Sunday. The fictional story begins in Auckland where Amy... opens her eyes in hospital to learn her mother was killed in a car crash. [Amy] is bundled off to live with her estranged father... in Ontario where [Amy] finds some orphaned goose eggs. [Amy] nurtures them until they hatch and, since geese imprint on whoever they first see, Amy becomes Mother Goose. Then, using a motorised ultra-lite which looks like a giant goose, Amy teaches them to fly. In real life... [the Canadian and two colleagues], working together on Operation Migration, proved that wildfowl can be imprinted to ultra-lite aircraft and taught new, safer migration routes. [The Canadian] says migration is not instinctive with birds and has passed on from one generation to the next. But if a species is wiped out in an area, the migration route is lost to them. "In 1993... [we] raised a flock of 18 geese and tried an experiment to fly them to Virginia, and it was successful,"... Their widely-publicised success with Canada geese offers hope for seriously endangered species.

...[NORTH AMERICAN] SCIENTISTS have developed an information service to keep them up to date on plant and wildlife endangered species. More than 11,000 species are nearing extinction... [- including many from NZ, where the DOC is] losing... the... battle to save[the] rarest species...

A global endangered species list has 231 N[Z] species on it... The World Conservation Union's... red list of threatened species lists the North Island Hector's dolphin subspecies as critically endangered and the South Island Hector's dolphin as endangered. It is the first time the dolphin has made the list, which was last compiled four years ago... Another big entry on this year's list was the albatross. Sixteen species of albatross are listed as threatened, compared with three [on the previous list]. Longline fishing is the biggest threat to the albatross, which mate for life and often breed only once every three years, says N[Z]'s Department of Conservation species protection officer... N[Z] has 42 plants, 93 birds, two frogs, 37 mammals and 16 reptiles classed as endangered or critically endangered on the red list... Globally, [a]... total of 11,046 species of plants are listed as

threatened[, while the]... total number of threatened animals increased from 5205 to 5435... [T]he number of critically endangered mammals increased from 169 to 180 and birds from 168 to 182, according to the IUCN... One in four mammals on the planet is listed as threatened, as are one in eight birds. There are about 1.75 million known species of plants, animals, reptiles, birds and invertebrates on Earth... The Switzerland-based IUCN... says that with many more species yet to be discovered, the red list only scratches the surface in assessing the extinction risk.

...If we are really concerned about preserving endangered species... [- which, in NZ,] include 145 out of 202 bird species, 19 out of 45 freshwater fish and all four frogs... [-] a Landcare scientist at the Mt Albert Research Centre, says... we should look beneath our feet... A new D[oC] report on N[Z]'s threatened species lists 50 fungi among 360 mostly better-known creatures, such as the North Island Hector's (now Maui's) dolphin...

What's in a name? For the North Island Hector's dolphin, a new name means a new identity. The endangered mammal... has been renamed Maui's dolphin. [The]Conservation Minister... says the dolphin has been classed as a separate subspecies from its South Island counterpart... Department of Conservation and Auckland University scientists believe the Maui dolphins differ from the 7000 South Island Hector's dolphins in body form, skeletal features and DNA... Researchers say there are fewer than 150 Maui dolphins left and the species... is threatened by set-netting.

...A threatened population of the rare Hector's dolphin along the west coast of the North Island is about to get help. The Northern Inshore Fisheries Company, which looks after the interests of coastal fishers, is about to launch a conservation mission to reduce the impact of commercial fishing on one of N[Z]'s most endangered marine mammals. The move anticipates, and therefore may influence, eventual regulation by Government agencies for greater protection of this dolphin. The population has fallen to a dangerously low level of about 100 individuals... The Hector's dolphin is special because it is found only in N[Z] waters and is the smallest dolphin in the world. Adult [cows - which]... live for about 20 years but... do not start breeding until they are 7 or 9 years old and then, at best, produce a single calf only every two to three years... [(y)oung dolphins swim alongside their mothers... for up to three years, but scientists could not work out how the youngsters managed to keep up[- n]ow the secret is out: the calves swim so close to their mothers that they are sucked along, says... an aerospace engineer at Technion, the Israeli Institute of Technology) -] ...seldom reach 1.5m and [bull]s are smaller. Their attractively marked, grey, white and black bodies are unusual in having short, rounded dorsal and pectoral fins rather than the longer, curved, pointed fins of most other dolphins... Most dolphin species are far ranging and cruise the open seas, but Hector's is confined by its natural behaviour to shallow coastal waters, especially the slightly turbid areas around harbour entrances. It is therefore much more vulnerable to threats associated with human activities in these busy waterways. Most threatening is the risk of drowning if they become entangled in gill nets set by commercial or recreational fishers, although it is also suspected that some, especially juveniles, are killed by boat strikes and that their health and fertility are affected by industrial and agricultural chemicals flowing from harbours... The plight of the Hector's dolphin became known in the late 1980s, when set netting restrictions were enforced around Banks Peninsula, where most of the[South Island] population reside. The... new code of practice for commercial fishers... requires [them] to keep more detailed logs of fishing effort and catch results, along with reports of sightings of dolphins. It also establishes new closed and controlled fishing areas. In addition to closed areas of a 2-nautical-mile-radius around each harbour mouth, inshore waters out to 4 nautical miles from the entrance to Manukau Harbour to Taranaki Point near Aotea Harbour will be closed to set netting. From the Manukau Harbour north to South Kaipara Head restrictions on net height and deployment are proposed that will eventually include the attachment of sonic warning devices (known as "pingers") to nets to alert dolphins to their presence.

...Set-netting will be banned along the North Island's west coast in an effort to save the endangered North Island Hector's [(or Maui) dolphin. The] Fisheries Minister... announced the ban yesterday. It applies within 4 nautical miles of the coast over almost two-thirds of the North Island, from Maunganui Bluff, north of Dargaville, to Pariokariwa Point, north of New Plymouth. The ban comes into effect next month... Three[Maui dolphins] have already been found dead this year - most likely drowned after snagging in set-nets, [the minister] said. At that rate of attrition, the dolphins would almost certainly become extinct... [A RFBPS spokesperson] said the prohibition on set-netting was "very positive"... The ban applies to both commercial and recreational fishers. It does not apply to areas inside harbour entrances... [A]bout 23 commercial fishers would be affected by the ban. [The minister] hoped they would "restructure" their operations by using other methods of fishing or switching to other areas... [T]rawling and Danish seine vessels, which are thought to pose a lesser risk to the dolphins, would be closely monitored to ensure they were not responsible for... dolphin deaths. Each vessel fishing in the banned area within the next five years would have an independent observer on board.

...A Muriwai fisher... wants... compensation for the loss of his \$200,000-a-year livelihood. The commercial rig (dogfish) fisher... is devastated by the Minister of Fisheries' decision to scrap inshore set-netting to save the endangered... [Maui]'s dolphin. The ministry... says about 40 commercial fisher[s] are affected by the closure. The Muriwai fisher... who fishes up to one nautical mile from the coastline between the Manukau and Kaipara harbours, says [it] stands to lose his business and \$300,000 Muriwai Beach home. His brother, an employee, will also lose his \$40,000 a year job and his mother, who makes his nets, will be out of work. The fisher... says his employer, who has about \$1 million worth of rig quota, is out of pocket, and local supplies of rig, gurnard and lemon fish will be affected. [The fisher, who] has spent... \$2000 consulting with the Government to try to find a solution where [it] and the dolphin could co-exist... is now seeking legal advice and says experienced fisher[s] like himself are suffering for the dolphin's alleged decline. [It] states that no [Maui's] dolphins - or any other dolphin or seal - has ever been caught in his small-mesh nets in the five years [it] has been using them. The net is set on the bottom, and is weak enough to be broken with bare hands. However, inexperienced fisher[s], usually from out of the area, are known to use inappropriate gear that might put the dolphin at risk. During consultations last year with the ministry, the Muriwai fisher... supported net size restrictions, pingers, keeping log books and barring inexperienced fisher[s]. The ministry rejected this. In a letter to fishers explaining his decision, the minister said... fewer than 150 [Maui]'s dolphins are left in the area, and losing one every five years could see them wiped out. The minister says some commercial set-netters have admitted catching [them] by accident in the past...

The High Court in Auckland has scrapped a government ban on set-netting on the west coast... The ban's implementation was awaiting the outcome of the court hearing... The ban was announced... by[the] Minister of Fisheries... in a bid to protect the endangered... [Maui's] dolphin. The judge] has ruled that [the minister] was "wrongly advised" by his officials about the dolphin... not being able to sustain one death in five years... "The ministry, and in turn the minister, made a clear mistake of fact in understanding the science,"... That science relates to the use of the MALFIRM calculation, a scientific formula used to predict growth of a species over time... "The ministry and minister used it as a way of predicting probable extinction. This was a clear mistake," says [the judge]. The... decision is a setback for environmentalists pushing for a west coast marine park in the area in which the ban was proposed. Commercial set-netters are now free to fish under their proposed management plan.

...Concern is mounting about the impact tourism is having on whales and dolphins around N[Z]'s coastline. An international eco-tourism conference in Dunedin yesterday heard that many of the whales and dolphins popular for tourism were endangered. [A speaker at the conference from] Massey University, said the potential to disturb their natural behaviour patterns had attracted "much research effort in recent times". "Some research has suggested close approach by tourist boats for watching and in some cases swimming with dolphins and whales had altered the behaviour of the animals. It has been suggested this could be detrimental. One view is that the use of whales and dolphins as a tourist attraction can be seen as another form of harmful exploitation of these marine mammals." ...One study on short-beaked common dolphins said the dolphins appeared to be "fed up" with the constant presence of a boat nearby... Studies of bottlenose dolphins in the Bay of Islands found they had become "sensitised" to swimmers and were avoiding people and boats as tourism levels increased. Another report on Hector's dolphins in Akaroa Harbour reported a potential increase in boats hitting young dolphins... In Fiordland, 7[%] of bottlenose dolphins had been scarred by collisions with boats... Eco-tourism was growing at such a rate that it could have a significant impact on the natural attraction, [the spokesperson] said. By June last year,

75 eco-tourism operators had permits to watch and swim with whales and dolphins. The N[Z] Tourism Board estimated that in 1996 14[%] of visitors participated in dolphin watching and swimming activities... Whale-watching off Kaikoura attracts up to one million visitors a year.

...A dark shape bobbed on the surface of the ocean as the sun slipped behind Norway's Blue Mountains. Then the object moved, twitching its tail and sending water into the sky. On the shore, [adults]... and children cheered. Keiko, the world's most famous killer whale, was alive. But for how long? In the latest chapter of an extraordinary story, the 10m-long orca has made a remote Norwegian fjord into what could prove his final resting place after a journey involving thousands of kilometres, endless controversy and a taste of Hollywood stardom in the 1993 hit film *Free Willy*. Keiko, who has spent all but two of his 24 years in captivity, arrived in Skaalvik Fjord last week, frolicking in waters surrounded by jagged mountain peaks. By yesterday [Keiko] was less energetic, prompting fears that the latest attempt to reintroduce him to the wild would end in his death. "[Keiko] is very listless," said... the Icelandic in charge... Keiko has redeveloped a "captive mentality" after people started swimming with him last week. The threat to his welfare forced the Norwegian Government to announce an emergency ruling that made it an offence to swim within 23m of Keiko or to feed him. Since slipping into this narrow fjord after almost 70 days in the wild, Keiko has again been revelling in human contact, unravelling the biggest attempt to rehabilitate a creature into the wild. So far, it has cost \$42.6 million. The fears over his health [are valid as] the whale has stopped feeding because [it] apparently believes people will provide him with fish... [After being] captured by a trawler off Iceland[, Keiko]... had a brief career on show in aquariums in Iceland and Canada before spending 11 years in a Mexico City amusement park. After Keiko's appearance in *Free Willy* – the story of a boy fighting to liberate a whale exploited by unscrupulous [owners] at an aquarium – more than a million people wrote to demand that [Keiko] be set free. Eventually, [Keiko]... was flown to Iceland's Westman Islands, where efforts began to reintroduce him to the wild. After more than 60 unsuccessful attempts to reunite Keiko with free orcas, [Keiko] joined a wild pod on a 3000km journey across the Atlantic. But his apparent integration into the wild went wrong when [Keiko] followed a fishing vessel into Skaalvik Fjord.

...Whoops Willy... Keiko, the orca whale better known as *Free Willy*, is finally free himself... However, his sense of direction could do with a bit of work. [It] recently risked being turned into whale steaks by swimming into the Skaalvik Fjord in Norway. Norway is the only country that allows commercial hunting of whales but, thankfully for Keiko – whose name means "Lucky One" in Japanese – Norwegians only hunt minke whales.

...A whale of a problem The US Humane Society is opposing a call to put down Keiko... A whaling expert at Norway's Institute of Marine Research said, because of the whale's difficulties adapting to life in the wild, Keiko should be put down. The US group is one of two responsible for monitoring the whale in the wild and its spokes[perso]n... says all indications are that the whale is doing very well... Now plans are under discussion to move Keiko to a secret location in Norway, far away from the human adulation the whale craves – and may not be able to live without.

...Keiko... has died, his caretakers said yesterday... [Keiko, who] did not bond with other whales, a[nd a]pparently feared swimming under ice... died after the sudden onset of pneumonia in the Taknes fiord in Norway... [V]eterinarians had monitored his progress, but the whale died quickly.

...A young orphaned... killer whale living for months in a busy shipping channel near Seattle was returned to Canadian waters yesterday and scientists hope [it] will reunite with her family pod... It is one of the first attempts to reunite a wild orca whale... with its family pod... Orcas rarely separate from their family pods so how... [t]he 2-year-old... got to the Seattle area, where her pod has never been seen, is a mystery.

...A young... killer whale rescued near Seattle swam to freedom yesterday to join her relatives in what scientists hope will be a permanent and ground-breaking reunion. Scientists said it was too early yet to declare their effort a complete success because it remained to be seen how long the whale known as A-73 and her family pod would remain together. The whale, nicknamed Springer, had clearly been anxious leaving her holding pen off Telegraph Cove on northern Vancouver Island after [it] was transported from the US Puget Sound[. As the whale] waited in the pen, [it] pressed her nose up against the net, looking at the open water. Then when a group of related whales swam close to the pen the two groups began communicating. "They were clearly vocalising," said [a spokesperson for] the Vancouver Aquarium... Springer [clearly knew it] was in home waters.

...A juvenile orca... was found stranded at Whatipu... A rescue team worked to keep it wet throughout the night but conditions were deemed too rough for a release off the west coast. Instead the whale was moved more than 40km on a trailer... to Takapuna Beach[on the east coast]. But it was seen by kayakers up Henderson Creek shortly after being put to sea and had to be guided to the Hauraki Gulf. There have been no sightings since... The D[o]C... hopes it has joined a pod of... 15 killer whales spotted off Martins Bay earlier this week... [■ A] US researcher who is visiting N[Z]... says... small whales... and dolphins are being driven to strand themselves by bursts of... military... ship sonar that sound to them like hunting orca...

When the mayday call came about a stricken humpback whale caught in lines off the Kaikoura coast, Tom Smith raced into action. On two earlier occasions the 38-year-old fisher... whose wife... is pregnant with the couple's third child... had responded to a roped whale and both times... had managed to free them... ma[king] headlines around the world... Mr Smith is now presumed dead after being hit by the giant tail fins of the creature [it] was trying to save. [30] tourists... on a whale watching adventure watched the tragedy unfold... Last night, the whale was still trapped in the crayfish line as DoC staff were unable to cut the rope... Mr Smith once described saving a humpback whale as "a real once-in-a-lifetime encounter"... [Mr Smith] donned scuba gear and made eye contact to let the whale know [it] was there. "As I swam up I could see [the whale] drop its head and I thought it was going to dive, but what it did was to lift its tail and lay dead still while I cut off the float and the last of the rope." After the whale was freed, it came up right beside the boat, where it stayed for a few moments, before lifting its tail and slowly swimming away.

...A diver who disappeared while trying to save a trapped whale should never have gone near the creature, conservation experts say. The coastal town of Kaikoura is mourning Tom Smith... who has been missing since... [being] hit by the tail of [the] humpback... The whale escaped from the nets and swam free. Last night a friend... said the line was from one of Mr Smith's own crayfish pots... Yesterday the D[o]C said it could not condone the diver's action. "There are strict rules about how close the public can get to whales," said a[n a]rea manager... DoC guidelines say to stay at least 50m away from whales or dolphins... Since 1840... 5000 strandings of whales and dolphins have been recorded around N[Z]'s coast.

...A whale found dead on a Taranaki beach this month was one of the most ex[c]iting recent finds in marine mammal science... The almost two-tonne whale... believed to be the first of its species to wash up on N[Z] shores, the third in the Southern Hemisphere and the 20th in the world... has already attracted interest from scientists in A[US, the US] and Japan... "Almost nothing is known about the ginkgo-toothed species," DoC... said.

...One of a dozen dead sperm whales beached on Auckland's west coast has been butchered for its jawbone despite a 24-hour security operation to deter poachers. D[o]C... said teeth from the jawbone could be worth up to \$200 each... The whales, stranded over a 5km stretch... between Karekare and Whatipu... drew a crowd of about 1500 people yesterday. It is not known why the pod... became marooned... but it was "a significant stranding event" of sperm whales, the like of which had not been seen for 20 to 30 years... "Sperm whales are deep-water animals rarely seen close to the coast, but once a family member gets distressed they seem to follow the herd leader,"... Their weight meant they were often crushed to death on land. "Once they are on the beach, it's all over." ...The animals, some... 10m long and weighing... 12 tonnes, would be buried in the dunes... Two teams are now removing the remaining jaw bones before burying the huge mammals... The jawbones will be handed to Te Kaweraw A Maki, the Maori subtribe recognised by Waitakere City Council as the area's original inhabitant[s. A]... Maori carver... says the distinctive bones are the "ultimate material" to work with... [-] many traditional ornaments, pendants and musical instruments in museums are made from whale jaw bone. [The carver] says the weekend stranding is the largest in the area for about 100 years and a sign of good things to come, in spiritual terms.

...For the Indian fisher[s] who catch it, the whale shark is just one source of a meagre livelihood. For connoisseurs in Southeast Asia, shark fin soup is a symbol of wealth and privilege. These connoisseurs have suffered a blow now that India, one of the countries that supplies whale shark, has decided to give it the same protection as the... Indian tiger. Known as the "gentle giant" of the sea because it has never been known to attack a human, the whale shark is... mainly... hunted... in the state of Gujarat. The relentless slaughter has vastly diminished its numbers, hence the

decision to make the whale shark the first fish to be added to India's Wildlife Protection Act. A sharp rise in demand in countries such as... Taiwan, Singapore and China, where the soup is served at wedding banquets, corporate events and lavish dinners... [- i]n the old days of Maoist austerity, the official Chinese attitude was that shark fin soup was politically incorrect as it constituted an unacceptable display of wealth... [-] is endangering this species of shark, whose gargantuan size and feeding habits resemble those of the whale. The largest accurately measured whale shark... caught off Bombay in 1983... was... 12.5m, with a mouth measuring 1.4m and fins that were 2m... In western India, the whale shark had been hunted for its liver oil long before fisher[s] became aware of its overseas value for shark fin soup. The liver oil is used for waterproofing boats. In fact, one exporter of shark meat and fins in Gujarat said: "Fisher[s] used to catch it for liver oil anyway and then leave the shark lying around. We decided to make money by using the carcasses for export." ...The New Delhi branch of the W[WF] estimates... 300 tonnes of whale shark meat, besides dried fins, are exported every year. "These animals have slow reproductive rates so wiping out the entire population is very easy,"... Traffic, a watchdog body and a division of the W[WF], estimates... seven sharks are killed every day in Gujarat alone... Globally, 100 million sharks may be caught every year. Ignorance about whale sharks has hindered the efforts of conservationists. Some people believe the fins are gathered from already dead sharks. Others actually believe the fins grow back... For the moment, the Government is advising local officials to go easy on arresting fisher[s] because few of them know that taking whale sharks is now illegal. Another reason is that it is a sensitive matter. The fisher[s] who catch the shark – often risking their lives because the beast is so huge and their boats so small – are poor and hostile towards directives affecting their income and emanating from city liberals. The focus will be on raising awareness among fisher[s]. "Since the whale shark is so beautiful, we may also try to encourage tourists and this will help compensate the fisher[s] for any loss of income,"... If India succeeds in protecting the whale shark, it will be helping the world's oldest fish: sharks have been around for more than 400 million years – long before the first dinosaurs... [By the way, v]ets have force-fed Nari the dolphin... [-] one of a pod of 11 wild dolphins attending a nightly hand-feeding event at the Tangalooma resort... on Moreton Island off Brisbane... [- as t]he 12-year-old... recovers from surgery on a gaping wound left by a shark.

...Water lovers can breathe more easily. Jaws has finally met its match. An A[US]n company has invented a small electronic device which protects wearers from the most dangerous sharks. The makers claim their invention will at last help us overcome our collective fear of the last of the great untamed predators. The new deterrent couldn't have come at a more appropriate time. On average one person is killed in A[US]n waters every year. But in the past six months there have been five victims... Throughout the world last year there were 79 reported attacks... Surfers account for 70[%] of all recorded shark attacks... Of the hundreds of different species of shark, only a few pose any real threat to humans. *Jaws* perpetuated the myth of an aggressive creature which hunts people down, but the reality is somewhat different. Feeding sharks will usually only bite someone who comes into [their] path. Curiosity of the shark and its razor sharp teeth often proves fatal for its soft-fleshed victim. Every year sharks account for 12 human deaths globally. Humans kill around 100 million sharks in the same period, mainly to satisfy a craving in Southeast Asia for the fins, which are eaten as a delicacy. An effective shark deterrent has been sought for decades. After the Second World War, when many s[ailors] lost their lives floundering in oceans after their ships sank, the British and U[S] Governments came up with chemical and sonic repellents – which didn't work. The idea of an electronic repellent stretches back to the early 1960s, but Shark Safe is the first company to develop a unit small enough to be used by anyone in the water... When it goes on sale in A[US] later this year the device will cost around \$1000... The rechargeable batteries last two hours... The unit weighs less than 1kg and... establishes a repulsion field of around 3m... but doesn't harm either party.

...Fisher[s] and scientists are debating the exact size of a monster great white shark caught off Waiheke Island. The shark is just the second pregnant great white caught off N[Z]'s coast and the fisher[s] whose set-net it drowned in swear it was 7m to 7.3m... – ...great whites [grow] up to 9m... The fisher[s] saved two baby sharks by cutting the mother open and holding the youngsters in the water until they swam away.

...Sea monsters up to 4m long are inflicting painful stinging wounds on swimmers. The potential killers are known... as the long "stringy stingy thingys" and appear to be drifting along the Northland coast towards the Hauraki Gulf. The pink organism is only... 1cm in diameter and... can contain hundreds of... mouths, stinging tentacles and reproductive cells... The organism corkscrews through the water and can stick like glue to swimmers causing instant pain and throbbing. Welts from the stings can last for weeks... If swimmers become wrapped up in their tentacles and succumb to panic, shock or the toxic stings they might drown... A visiting [US] scientist who is working on an outbreak of sea bathers' eruption says the creatures are kinds of hydromedusae... [T]he organism was not a true jellyfish. It belonged to the siphonophore family and of its type was highly developed and specialised. It had no brain, just a nerve net, and fed on plankton as well as fish and worm larvae... [W]orking at the University of Auckland's Leigh marine lab[, the USer] has been tracking a pinhead-sized and relatively common creature responsible for itches and rashes suffered by Auckland bathers this summer. [It] says the mysterious bigger creature's stings are worse, especially for people with allergies.

...Hundreds of swimmers were warned to stay out of the surf yesterday after thousands of stinging bluebottles washed up on northern beaches. Two people needed urgent hospital treatment after suffering an allergic reaction to stings while swimming at Long Bay and Motuihe Island. The bright blue jellyfish, also known as Portuguese [perso]n-of-war, littered the sea and sand and left many swimmers nursing painful welts... Bluebottles were usually dead by the time they were blown on to shore, but could still inflict a painful sting... Standard jellyfish stings were best doused with vinegar or salty water... Bluebottles are not uncommon, but constant northerly winds have washed unusually large numbers on to beaches on both coasts of the upper North Island... The bluebottle's sac, which was full of gas and floated on the water, acted as a sail. The jellyfish caught prey with tentacles up to several metres long, which were drawn up and let down like a piece of elastic. The dead catch, anything from small plankton to fish, was then drawn up to the stomach and digested. [By the way, an 'Edinburgh study has found that fish feel pain'.

...The DoC] is asking visitors to the popular Goat Island Marine Reserve n[orth of Auckland] to stop feeding the fish. [The local c]ompliance coordinator... said that although the public enjoyed feeding the fish and getting close to marine life, scientists believed it upset natural behaviour. The reef became littered with bread and other food on which the fish gorged themselves. Bottom-feeding species such as snapper were changing their natural behaviour by rising to the surface for food provided by many of the thousands of swimmers and divers who visited the reserve every weekend... [T]he department was printing pamphlets and signs would be erected asking visitors not to feed the fish. It wanted to educate people rather than enforce the Marine Reserves Act, which allowed for fines of... \$10,000 for interfering with marine life. "People have been feeding the fish for 20 years, so you can't suddenly come down heavy on them,"... [Incidentally, a] National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research... team returned to Wellington yesterday from its... [s]ea seeding trial... [in] Antarctic waters... A Californian oceanographer, the late John Martin, theorised in 1995 that the ocean's microscopic plants... needed iron in order to take nitrogen and phosphate from seawater, just as farm crops need trace minerals such as zinc and manganese. Tests of the theory off the Galapagos Islands triggered a 30-fold to 40-fold increase in phytoplankton. The research was initially viewed in terms of restoring fish stocks to levels of a century ago, or 10 to 20 times the present amount. But further research by Britain's Plymouth Marine Laboratory and University of East Anglia has shown that a 30-fold increase in phytoplankton, over 500 sq km, cuts levels of dissolved [CO₂ 20%], effectively locking... 9000 tonnes of the gas away from the atmosphere. The iron filings also caused a three-fold increase in dimethyl sulphide particles, which have a key role in cloud formation. Although the waters of the Southern Ocean are rich in nutrients, phytoplankton numbers are low because of an absence of iron. The scientists say if the fertilisation could be done on a large-enough scale in the Southern Ocean, it could produce significant climate cooling, reducing atmospheric [CO₂] concentrations between 6... and 21[%]. The research ship Tangaroa set out [last month] to test the theory by fertilising... [a]n initial area of 55 sq km... about 60 degrees south... with 36,000 litres of seawater and iron mixture... The patch was refertilised three times over... 12 days. Surface currents spread the fertilised water over about 150 sq km... [The] Niwa... regional manager, said the studies had been extremely successful and scientists were excited by the preliminary results.

...*Plankton in overdrive after a dose of iron* N[Z] scientists who sailed into the Southern Ocean... to tip a small truckload of iron solution into the sea say analysis of the experiment shows they triggered a startling phytoplankton bloom. The... experiment... was partly to test the idea that low-availability of iron limits the growth of phytoplankton in some oceans... Remarkable images from a Nasa satellite show that six weeks after the fertilisation, the... 150km long... phytoplankton bloom had grown to cover 1100 sq km. But although there have been controversial proposals to widely fertilise the Southern Ocean with iron to help slow the pace of climate change, some scientists are calling for caution in manipulating ocean-atmosphere mechanisms about which little is known... The... experiment... led by the N[IWA]... followed work done... by [a US] oceanographer... who... proposed that in the past, changes in the amount of iron might have prompted changes from ice-age to present-day conditions.

...A National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research marine scientist... says it now appears that the... elusive giant squid... [– which] have a maximum size of 12m and can weigh 300kg... [(t)he popular belief that the squids... were up to 21m long... [can be blamed o]n literary epics such as Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*() –] ...come to N[Z] waters for breeding... For more than a year, N[Z] has been the subject of intense international scientific inquiry. This stepped up after last year's finding of 23 giant squid, when only 50 had been reported found in the previous 20 years. No live specimen is known to have been caught, but dead ones have been washed up on beaches or found in fishing nets... [Last year]'s big catch might not have been out of the ordinary because more specimens were being brought [back] as the fishing industry became increasingly aware of scientific interest in them. But since 1995 the captures have been recorded only in certain months of the year, which suggests that the squid do not live in N[Z] waters all year round. Adults appeared off [Kaikoura on] [the east coast of the South Island and on the Chatham Rise from December through to early March, and off the West Coast from June to early August. The data suggested that there were at least two distinct populations or species... "It appears to be an animal of the water column, not one that lives on the sea floor. Neither does it appear to be a particularly deep-dwelling species, as the average depth at which a total of 80 specimens have been captured is 498m." Meanwhile, the influx of squid specimens was straining storage space... They took up to three days to defrost and required up to 150 hours and 1000 litres of formalin to fix.

...An emergency ban on taking shellfish has been imposed along part of the Kaikoura coast following the spill of rat poison after a truck crash. Crown Public Health has warned people not to swim in the area from South Bay to Barney's Rock or eat seafood taken from that area until further notice. But preliminary results from seawater samples have revealed barely detectable traces of the poison's active ingredient, brodifacoum, although scientists said the poison was barely water soluble so it was hardly surprising little had dissolved... Asked whether 18 tonnes of rat poison would have a dramatic impact on sea life around Kaikoura, [the]... research team leader at Landcare's Centre of Environmental toxicology... at Lincoln University, said... the vast expanse of water would certainly have a diluting effect... [The active ingredient –] a very potent second-generation anti-coagulant rodenticide... [–] was stored in... vertebrate animals... liver tissue and would be only slowly eliminated from the body over many months... Scientists monitoring the impact of the spill would be looking for seals, fish and seabirds suffering from lethargy and bleeding... about the mouth, anus and... eyes, [the] toxicology expert said... [The] Environment Canterbury regional enforcement officer, said test results on mussels and seabed sediment taken from near the truck crash site are not due for another week. Landcare Research scientists have recommended continued sampling of mussels, paua and crayfish along with large and small fish... At the same time as tests are continuing, one of Kaikoura's leading tourist operators... Dolphin Encounter... is calling for an inquiry into transport firms'... cartage of hazardous substances and the[ir] driving practices...

Once-abundant shellfish beds around Auckland are in a sorry state, with numbers not significantly increasing eight years after harvesting bans were put in place... Ministry of Fisheries surveys of 18 beaches in Greater Auckland... including a stretch of coast at Ngarimu Bay in the Firth of Thames, show the emphasis on cutting bag limits and prosecuting poachers has not improved shellfish stock. A ministry survey five months ago of the huge cockle population at Umupuia Beach, on the eastern coast near Clevedon, found it had halved in a year – from 400 cockles per sq m to 200 – but over-harvesting was not to blame. "Although we are concerned about harvesting levels there, there are millions of cockles. It's just not possible for humans to have halved that population," said [the ministry's] policy analyst... Two years ago, a study at Okura, north of Long Bay, showed that 2cm of clay washed into the tide killed cockles in a week, said [an] Auckland Regional Council scientist... [– who, together with the policy analyst,] presented a report on shellfish depletion to the Hauraki Gulf Forum, a grouping of city and district councils and Government agencies charged with looking after the Gulf... The National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research was studying the effects of sediment on marine life and [an] Auckland University doctorate student... was completing a thesis on cockle health and populations near urban areas.

...N[Z] immigrants of a different kind are making their mark in A[US]. At last week's Molluscs... conference in Sydney, delegates were concerned at the spread of the N[Z] screw shell, *Maoricolpus roseus*. Introduced to Tasmania about 70 years ago, the... filter-feeding mollusc has established itself in vast beds in northern Bass Strait and off the coasts of eastern Tasmania, Victoria and N[SW. An]... ecologist at CSIRO Marine Research... estimates the species now covered an area of sea floor about the size of Tasmania... It is not clear how it arrived in Tasmania, but many think it came in the dry ballast of stones gathered in N[Z]. Another possible source was the trans-tasman live oyster trade, which was common at the time. Scientists are concerned about the screw shell's impact on other mollusc species, including scallops and the native A[US]n screw shell... [The NZ] screw shell threatens other species because it breeds so prolifically, smothering the sea floor to a depth of 80m along the Continental Shelf... It seems the Kiwi variety is a particularly tough nut to crack for eating and has few predators. This affects shellfish-eating fish species, and the food chain that depends on them... The screw shell is one of an estimated 200 marine species intentionally or accidentally introduced to A[US]n waters...

The illegal release of exotic fish into Waitakere City's largest lake means it may eventually be too polluted to swim in. More than 14 hectares in size and 15 metres deep, Lake Wainamu... near Bethells Beach has long been a favourite spot with swimmers and boaties. It is possible that recreational fisher[s]... were responsible for the release of perch, rudd and koi carp into the lake, not realising it would tip the natural balance of the lake's delicate eco-system. The A[RC], which monitored the lake alongside seven others between 1992-98, has just released a review of its programme outlining a potentially grim future for Lake Wainamu unless the coarse fish are removed – a difficult and time-consuming task which "may not be completely successful"... In 1995, ARC tests revealed a large increase in the amount of phytoplankton and the amount of turbidity in the water – hence its increasingly murky appearance... The lake's murkiness is the result of the fish digging up the aquatic plant life and stirring up the lake bed as they forage for food... "Aquatic plants are there to absorb the lake's nutrients, but when that stops occurring, the nutrients are instead taken up by the small plant organisms... which cause the murkiness... [T]he fish stirring up sediment, creat[es] extra nutrients for the phytoplankton, which then increase in number." ...Even North Shore's Lake Pupuke has a higher water quality rating, despite being surrounded by urban development... The ARC is looking at options to control or remove the exotic fish... These include netting, introducing a carnivorous fish such as trout... and preventing further illegal releases of coarse fish through education and public watchdog schemes.

...thousands of the bright orange fish... Koi carp[, which can grow]... up to 80cm long, were stranded on fields around Lake Waikare when floodwaters receded. The fish have a reputation for tasting like mud, [so local farmers] will use them for bait or fertiliser... [A] local resident with one of the few D[OC] licences to catch carp, has also collected about 500kg for bait... Koi carp were introduced in the 1950s, but became a pest, silting waterways by eating the vegetation.

...*DOC pest on Asian menus*... A fresh water fish high on the D[OC]'s hit list of unwanted pests is also top of the dining charts with west Auckland's Asian community. Koi carp sometimes fetch up to \$20 a fish and are popular among Asians who believe the fish brings good luck if eaten. The fish is less popular with other ethnic groups due to its many fine bones... [M]any Asian people also like to keep the carp in their garden ponds... D[OC] staff battling to rid it from the waterways of Auckland and Waikato would rather see the prolific breeder destroyed than left to

dominate all other fish species... “They’re a significant issue and it’s difficult to get rid of them, once they’re established they’re near impossible to remove[.]”... says... the... Auckland area manager... [The DOC manager] says it is illegal to rear, raise, hatch or release the fish and offenders can face fines up to \$5000. Recreational fishing is allowed in some infested areas to stop the fish spreading. But all koi carp must be killed when caught.

...It may be a highly prized fish overseas but in N[Z] the noxious koi carp is hunted down and killed – with a bow and arrow. It is an unusual method of fishing but that was how it was done in the Waikato, where 60 [adults]... and children gathered for this year’s Bowhunter’s Carp Competition. Armed with camouflaged bows, arrows and waders, the hunters spent the weekend in knee-deep water searching for a slippery creature that looks like a giant goldfish... [T]he competition not only helped remove... three tonnes of... an unwanted pest from Waikato waters but also provided the country’s 300 bowhunters with a fun weekend away fishing. The heaviest koi this year was 9.55kg – not quite making it to the N[Z] record, which stands at 12kg... The annual competition was supported by the D[OC] to raise awareness about koi... Signs are now mounted at boat ramps warning anglers there is a fine of up to \$100,000 or five years’ imprisonment for anyone caught releasing, spreading, selling or breeding the pest. The exception is for a few commercial operators who have permission to catch and sell dead carp for fish bait and berley.

...The dreaded koi carp is spreading through Waitakere City waterways... Koi carp are considered a good omen to many in the Asian community[, but]... they are bad news for nature... [A] Waitakere City councillor... who is involved with the new Twin Streams Project at Oratia and Opanuku... suspects some people may dump the fish down their drains instead of killing them when getting rid of them or cleaning ponds. “If only we could teach people not to release them. We’re not being kind to release them as they’re destroying our environment... People think they’re a pretty fish but they rip everything up by the roots destroying the ecology of the stream... Our kokopu [native fish] has no chance against them.”

...A COMMON household cleaner has killed two-thirds of a treasured rare fish colony in Henderson. [A local, aged] 79... found 10 banded kokopu fish dead by his property beside the Opanuku Stream... The biggest kokopu killed was about 10 years old and six inches long... [The 79-year-old] has regularly fed fish in the area for six years. The contamination was traced to a neighbouring property where household cleaner was used to scrub a stain off a driveway... “This is the third time in five years fish have been killed,”... says[the 79-year-old. The ARC]’s pollution control officer... says it takes years for local fish colonies to recover from poisoning. But [the officer]’s confident the Henderson colony will soon get back to full strength...

Unique little battler survives against the odds... One of N[Z]’s rarest native fish has been rediscovered in the Waitakere Ranges after scientists had presumed for decades it was extinct around Auckland... [due to] habitat loss, dams and the general degrading of their environment... The shortjaw kokopu (*Galaxias postvectis*) might not be the prettiest of fish with its undercut lower jaw and uniform brown colour. But the D[OC] says it is a category A threatened species... “It’s a very, very significant find,” said [a] DoC technical officer... “We will be looking over the area carefully and seeing what we can do to protect it.” Three shortjaw kokopu were found in two streams in a remote area of the ranges last week by [a] Massey PhD student... who has been studying N[Z]’s native fish for six years. “They’re pretty underrated by most Kiwis... People don’t really know we even have native fish but these guys are found nowhere else in the world...” The Waitakere discovery was part of a nationwide 200-site survey...

[‘There are some 40 species of freshwater fish in NZ, 10 of which have been introduced from other countries. The native species are contained in 11 families. They are believed to have evolved from marine ancestors during NZ’s geological history; in fact, most of the families still have species which inhabit or can tolerate salt water at some stage of their life cycle. The eels are represented by two species, the long-finned eel and the short-finned eel’...

‘EELS of over 30 species in 11 families are found throughout NZ in rivers, coastal waters and in deep water off the continental shelf. Their eggs develop into larvae shaped like leaves and remain in that state for up to 3 years. Their slimy bodies grow up to 1.5 m long and can weigh as much as 10 kg.’

...Did you know that a ‘breed of NZ eel – the world’s largest – can live up to 120 years; and that after 75 years, the girl eels swim to spawning grounds in Samoa – yet only their young return to NZ’? The elvers innately follow an ancient trail that presumably goes via Tonga’s islands and the Kermadec group]...

Navy staff had some demanding passengers on board during their latest supply run to the remote Kermadec Islands – three tropical green turtles. The turtles needed watering every three hours on the two-day trip aboard frigate HMNZS Canterbury from Kelly Tarlton’s Antarctic and Underwater World in Auckland to N[Z]’s biggest marine reserve. The trio, named Bones, Jade and Michelle, spent more than a year recovering from injury and disease before the 1000km trip back to warmer waters. [The aquarium’s c]urator... said Kelly Tarlton’s divers would not miss the occasional nasty turtle nip, but [all the staff were] sad to see them go. “You get pretty attached to them over a year but it’s where they belong so it’s good.” Tropical green turtles, listed as threatened under a United Nations charter on illegal trade in endangered species, are occasionally found off Northland and Auckland but no one knows why they drift so far south. “They’re usually at death’s door by the time we find them,” [the curator] said. Bones was emaciated, hypothermic and had a severe bacterial infection when rescued near Rangitoto Island and it seemed unlikely [the turtle] would survive. But after a high-protein herring and squid diet, all three turtles... [– who] were probably aged between 10 and 20... [(g]reen turtles can live up to 90 years and measure up to a metre in diameter when fully grown[–] ...were in excellent health by the end of their stay, with the heaviest weighing 44kg. Navy staff hauled them aboard inflatable boats and reported the turtles swam quickly away as soon as they were released.

...After making her way to shore, Leo the sick leopard seal lay on the beach to die in peace. But her final hours were anything but peaceful. On Gisborne’s Midway Beach on Saturday afternoon, up to six drunken young [people] with pieces of driftwood repeatedly beat and kicked the helpless mammal... “You could see it was trying to move, trying to get back in the water,” said [a witness to the attack... The beating has outraged locals and... D[OC] staff, and prompted police to hunt for the [offenders]... Leo, first thought to be a [bull], became a celebrity in Gisborne when [the seal] came ashore two weeks ago. Leopard seals live in Antarctic waters but sometimes stray north in winter and rest on beaches. But scientists advised DoC staff that the emaciated 3m-long mammal probably came ashore because [it] was sick and dying. It was decided to let Leo die naturally rather than put her down. But on Saturday afternoon, as [the witness] walked her dog, [they] came across the group... attacking Leo. “They were all [gals]... all well-dressed, all well-spoken.” [The witness told the attackers] – thought to be aged in their late teens or early 20s – to stop, pointing out that the seal was sick and dying. The group insisted the mammal was already dead, but [the witness told them]... Leo would have been taken off the beach if that was the case. The [attackers] backed away from Leo, but as [the witness] continued her walk, they resumed kicking and hitting the seal... [The witness] immediately contacted DoC staff, who went to the beach but the [group] had left. The seal did not appear to be in pain, but died on Sunday morning... An autopsy last night found the seal had reproductive tract, pancreas and mouth tumours and probably died from a cardiovascular problem. There was recent bruising consistent with being beaten, but these injuries would not have caused her death... A... DoC spokes[person]... said... “It wasn’t like [Leo] was disturbing anyone, so it just seems so unnecessary that these stupid people behaved in this way. It didn’t appear to be in any state that it could have got away. It’s just horrible.” Registration plates of vehicles parked in the area on Saturday have been given to police. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act, people who injure, harass or disturb a marine mammal, whether it is alive or dead, can be fined up to \$10,000. Massey University’s wildlife health centre director... who carried out the autopsy, said... “[Leo] was going to die anyway but that doesn’t make what happened to her any less horrific... It’s just beyond me how people could do something like that.”

...A baby seal suffered horrific injuries... after three youths beat it with a piece of wood. A Foxton Beach [resident] walking his dog on Saturday saw the youths hitting something with a piece of wood. When [the dog-walker] went over, they ran away. The [dog-walker] found a seal with one eye poked out and its body crushed and smashed. The Department of Conservation, police and Massey University’s veterinary department were called and they decided to destroy the seal. Police are urging people with information on the incident to come forward[– although, much like the group who attacked Leo the leopard seal on Gisborne’s Midway Beach, if caught the offenders would probably just be ‘let off with a warning’!]

...Russian scientists deliberately exaggerated the threat to 200,000 baby seals, falsely claiming they were dying of starvation on ice floes in the White Sea, as a ploy to get extra funding, says the International Fund for Animal Welfare. The claim that the baby white seals were marooned on drifting ice, unable to return to their normal feeding grounds in the Barents Sea, led to a costly rescue effort earlier this month. A Russian ice breaker prepared to set sail from Murmansk to scoop up the seals in nets. Television companies hired planes and helicopters to look for starving seal cubs. They never found them... "The situation was absolutely normal for this time of year." Only about 5000 seals turned out to be in trouble.

...The bodies of 15 sea lions have been found in Ecuador's Galapagos Islands with their teeth and sexual organs extracted, presumably for sale in Asian black markets as aphrodisiacs. The carcasses were discovered after Galapagos National Park officials received a tip that 25 mutilated sea lions had been left on the southern shore of San Cristobal, the easternmost island in the remote Pacific archipelago... The islands' sea lions have no natural predators on land and generally do not fear humans... Investigators believe the animals were dumped in the ocean after they were mutilated and washed up on shore. Police said they found what they believed was the poachers' abandoned camp site, littered with soft drink bottles and leftover food. Hunting is prohibited and fishing is limited in the Galapagos Islands, 965km west of the [South America]an mainland.

...A... [South America]an Government has ordered the slaughter of thousands of crocodiles... which... were considered an endangered species. "We don't have a choice," said... an official with Paraguay's Environment Secretary office... [The crocodiles are] starving after a major river was diverted... Government officials estimated that more than 40 or 50 of the crocodiles were dying every day... Insisting many of the animals were now certain to die, authorities had allowed farmers to hunt... about 2500... of... the animals for their meat and hides... "There is only a little water left, and there is no fish for them to feed on... Most of the adult crocodiles have only two to three months to live,"... Fed by the waters flowing from the Andes Mountains, the Pilcomayo River was diverted 11 years ago to help improve water irrigation for Argentine and Paraguayan farmers. However, that move, coupled with a prolonged drought, left many of the lakes and swamps with stagnant water[, and m]any crocodiles... caked in mud... Paraguayan officials said they wanted to rescue many of the younger animals, but plans to move hundreds of them to other waters had been postponed... They were hoping a forecast of rain might help ease the animals' plight. Government plans to have Paraguayan soldiers assist in the hunt were also delayed as soldiers underwent training on ways to safely capture the crocodiles. On one recent evening the hunt was left to around 30 Paraguayan farmers drawn by the promise of \$US2.50... for each animal recovered... As part of the sanctioned killing... the... Paraguayan peasants [were] plying the waters in wooden canoes or wading through chest-high waters with sticks crudely fashioned into spears and brandishing poles and clubs... Once they brought a crocodile within reach, others joined in with axes and machetes for the kill. "Although the crocodiles are weakened, some still have strength to bite," said... a farm owner in the area where many of the hunts were taking place. The animals were hauled in canoes to be skinned on land. Bathed in salt, the hides are then laid out in the sun to dry. The meat is sold or used to feed the younger crocodiles.

...The parents of a 7-year-old boy who broke into an A[U]S nouthack zoo and fed a string of small animals to its resident crocodile are likely to be sued after police said the boy was too young to be held responsible... Security camera footage at the Alice Springs Reptile Centre showed the smiling youngster also bludgeoning to death a small blue tongue lizard and two... thorny devils during a half-hour of breakfast-time havoc...

Remains of 5-year-old Jeremy Doble were found in the stomach of a 4.3m... crocodile trapped in the flooded Daintree River near where the boy vanished... Meanwhile, a taxi driver has run over and killed a... 1m... freshwater crocodile... on the Leichhardt River crossing... in Mount Isa.

...Crocodiles can dive for hours on end because of a unique set of teeth in their hearts, scientists have discovered. The teeth-like valves... divert blood away from their lungs, allowing them to stay underwater for extended periods. [A]University of Queensland Zoology and Entomology lecturer... says the valves are controlled by the amount of adrenalin in their bloodstream... The valves are also present in other members of the crocodile family, including alligators. [Editor's note: 'Crocodile eggs need a temperature of 27 to 34°C to incubate (eggs incubated below 29.5° C hatch into girls). Only 1 to 2% of baby crocodiles survive. Crocodiles have a vocabulary of 18 sounds – making them more like mammals than reptiles' ...

'Mammals first appeared during the Mesozoic Era (the Era of Reptiles). They were small, warm-blooded animals with hair, that looked very much like the reptile from which they descended. Toward the end of the era, Earth gradually began to change. The climate became colder and swamplands, covered with thick green vegetation, began to disappear. Over a period of thousands of years, mammals gradually developed which were able to survive in these new surroundings. Their warm blood and hair protected them from the cold. Their larger brains and ability to move quickly made it possible for them to escape from enemies and to catch food. They developed special teeth and more efficient digestive systems. Instead of laying their eggs on the ground and forgetting about them as dinosaurs did, they were live-rearing animals that carried their fertilized eggs inside of their bodies until they had developed into baby animals. After their babies were born, they fed and cared for them until the young animals were able to take care of themselves. These changes made it possible for more mammals to survive. During the end of the Mesozoic Era and the beginning of the Cenozoic Era – the period in which we now live – the ancestors of modern mammals appeared. Some present-day mammals, such as the *opossum* and *rhinoceros*, look very much like their prehistoric ancestors. Others, such as the horse, look very different. The family began with an animal the size of a fox called the *dawn horse*. It had four toes on its front feet and three on its hind feet. The first camel, *Protylepus*, looked like a baby goat. The first flesh-eating mammals, called *Creodonts*, looked like weasels. The *Barylambda*, an ancient mammal eight feet long, ate both plants and small animals. During the middle of the Cenozoic Era, there appeared dog- and cat-like animals. The *Hyaenodon*, a hyena-like animal, lived during this time. Later in the era the ancestors of the elephant developed. The family began with a small piglike animal with two large front teeth. It was called a *Moeritherium*. As its descendants grew bigger, they developed longer legs, and necks, a trunk and tusks.'

...a] hint of skulduggery is in the air as the world's conservationists prepare once more to battle over the African elephant and its precious tusks. The battleground will be the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species... conference in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi... So bitter has the debate over ivory become that some... Western wildlife activists... [have accused] states such as Zimbabwe [of] manipulating facts and failing to honour commitments to protect elephants made at the last CITES meeting in 1997. Then, southern African delegates... were celebrating victory in what they saw as a struggle pitting the poorer states of the world – with elephants – against elephant-less rich countries wanting to keep Africa as some kind of wildlife theme park. A secret ballot among the delegates from 139 countries allowed Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia to sell tonnes of stockpiled ivory to Japan on an experimental basis under strict conditions. Two conditions... were to halt trade immediately if poaching escalated and to plough the revenue from ivory sales into elephant conservation. Now the ivory has been sold and both sides are assessing the impact ahead of the Nairobi meeting, where the three African states will press for permission to continue sales. There is widespread consensus in Zimbabwe that poaching has increased, with Government media reporting... 84 elephants were slaughtered last year. However, the same media and Government officials have suggested that anti-ivory-trade activists hired [people] to shoot elephants and thus tarnish Zimbabwe's name. While the idea might appear preposterous, respected independent conservationists refuse to rule out the possibility... [T]he Zambezi Society conservation group says: "Some fringe groups of animal rights activists have sent parcel bombs and blown people's hands off..." But the... Government often resorts to conspiracy theories to explain away unpalatable facts... [The society, which] supported the ivory sales... in 1997, is now having second thoughts. "Part of the trade-off was that the money raised would be used for... improved field protection for elephants, but that hasn't happened."

...My sister and I have just watched *Savage Season* (TV1...). We couldn't believe what we were seeing. An orphaned baby elephant... attempt[ing] to suckle the tree with its mother's scent on it and... being spurned and battered by other elephants, weak, bewildered, dehydrated, starving, and then (at this point I turned the TV off) the hyenas moved in. We just cannot understand how the camera crew could stand by cold-bloodedly filming without stepping in. What is the difference between these people and ivory hunters? Don't they both benefit financially from an elephant's death? So much for conservation... [(although a] herd of 30 elephants will be flown... [from] South Africa... to Angola as part of a wildlife relocation

programme[])... We kept hoping they would help and could not believe they did nothing, especially after the commentator had said it was like watching a child being badly abused... The baby elephant would have been better off being shot and left to hyenas, rather than helplessly fighting for its life, in absolute terror, while so-called human beings watched and recorded it... To use the excuse that people should not interfere in the machinations of nature is feeble and totally unacceptable when you consider how we do, in fact, impact on the lives of the animals on this planet.

...[‘There are six factors which control the balance of nature. As long as all of the factors stay the same in an area, the balance there will remain stable. As soon as one of the factors changes, the balance is upset and changes occur to make it even once again. The 1st of these factors is *climate*. The 2nd factor is the *topography* of the land. The 3rd factor is the type of soil that plants and animals exist on or in. Soil is one of the most important of the six factors. This is because a *climax community* – one in which there is a sufficient number of producers, consumers, and disposers – cannot exist until an adequate amount of soil is built up in an area. Water communities do not have soil. These communities differ by whether the water is fresh or salt, and whether it is stagnant or free-flowing. The 4th factor is the *dominant vegetation*. This is dependent upon the previous three factors. The progression of plant species in an area changes until there is one general type which outnumbers the other kinds. For example, grass is the dominant form of vegetation in the prairies of the central US. The 5th factor is the type of plant life in the area. This determines the number and kinds of animals that can exist in a given environment. Not all plant-eating animals will eat any kind of available plant. The 6th factor, destructive external forces, does not help to maintain the balance of nature, but instead contributes to upsetting the balance. Examples of this factor are erosion, fires, plagues, parasites. Introduction of foreign life into a region will also upset the balance of that region’s environment. This is true even if the foreign life is introduced with the intention of improving the existing life situation. An area cannot achieve or maintain a balance if it is interrupted by a destructive force. A region completely devastated takes hundreds of years to become stable enough to provide an equilibrium of living organisms. The most important change taking place is humanity’s awareness of its role in maintaining the balance of nature. Only when human beings learn to live in harmony with other organisms can a true equilibrium of life on earth be achieved.’]

...Problems when nature left to keep its balance... In 1986... a writer, stood before a piece of ground in Yellowstone National Park which had been grazed... “as smooth as a golf fairway.” [The writer] turned to a scientist. “Is this range damaged?” ...“What is truth?” the scientist replied rhetorically. “You and I look at this scene and see range damage. The National Park Service sees nature at work.” As Yellowstone enters its 30th year of “natural regulation” it finds itself in the middle of a deepening dilemma: should it go on letting nature take its course, or not? Critics have questioned natural regulation ever since its inception, and the policy now has fewer friends than enemies. When 800,000 acres... – more than a third of the park – went up in smoke in 1988, patrons, furious at seeing wildfires left to burn, bombarded politicians, who then called for the head of the park superintendent... But similar storms erupted when nature was not left to regulate itself: 1084 bison were shot during the winter of 1996-97 as they left the park looking for forage. A judge in Montana has just ruled, despite a petition from environmentalists, that bison can be shot this winter, too. Now Yellowstone’s estimated 18,000 elk sit in the political spotlight. Park scientists once thought there could never be too many elk; there could be temporary overgrazing, but the range, they insisted, would spring back as soon as the elk died from starvation, revealing a natural equilibrium. This has not happened. The numbers at which the elk population would theoretically stabilise have kept rising, well beyond what the scientists predicted. Population ecologists... of the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point, say that winter and wolves will eventually take care of the problem. The cold and lack of feed that drove bison out of Yellowstone [in 1996-97] also killed a[bout]... 6000 elk. But wolves are a different story. They have killed about 360 elk since they were reintroduced to the park in 1995; last month a federal judge ordered that, being a “non-essential experiment,” they should be removed again... Last February... an assistant professor of political science at Utah State University... produced (and showed to Congress) a striking series of photographs of different parts of the park at the turn of the century and now. These showed that, over the years, elk have stripped the park of its aspen and willow stands. [The political scientist] claims that aspen in particular have suffered a 95[%] decline since the [‘first national park’ not just in the US but also ‘the world’] opened in 1872 – a serious development because beaver rely on aspen to build their dams, which in turn are vital to keep wetlands going. Park officials say that elk are only partly to blame. In their view, a hotter and drier Yellowstone caused the moisture-loving willow and aspen to disappear... And [the political scientist] himself admits that aspen groves have been deteriorating throughout the west of the country. The feeding of elk outside the park complicates the issue. Only two of the nine Yellowstone elk herds winter in the park. The rest migrate to feed. Herds in the southern end of Yellowstone head for the Jackson Hole Elk Refuge where the state of Wyoming feeds each of them 3.5kg of hay a day. How can the number stabilise at a low level if they are fed? One biologist... once flung up his hands at the folly of it all. “It seems to be academic... to talk about maintaining the balance of nature. The balance of nature in any strict sense has been upset a long time ago, and there is no such thing to maintain.” Yellowstone, pulled and tugged by changing policy manuals and over-bearing politicians, has a history of reactive management. When attacked by critics, the faithful tend to circle the wagons, only to capitulate as soon as some scientific school of thought convinces them that disaster is imminent. Yet that may change. Yellowstone is part of a new experiment in park fees. Last year the entry fee was raised to \$20; the park will keep \$8. Will visitors really pay to see dying elk and meadows nibbled down to the roots? Keeping part of the gate receipts may give the park more autonomy, and push politics further out of the picture. It would be even better if the park’s managers used their new freedom to come up with a consistent set of principles on which the park could be run.

...America’s biggest landowner and the founder of C[NN], has authorised electric-shock collars to be fitted on wolves captured from the wild in an experiment aimed at “training” them not to kill farm animals... The federal Government-backed research will be carried out at [h]is Flying D ranch in Montana. The 61-year-old... Republican with strong pro-nuclear, anti-immigration views, is also a staunch conservationist and heads [an] Endangered Species Fund, which has taken a keen interest in the fortunes of the endangered grey wolf... The collars will be fitted on four wolves from a pack in the Greater Yellowstone area... The wolves, captured after being sedated with darts, are being kept in pens on [the] 243,000ha ranch. Calves will be brought into the pens, and if a wolf goes within a couple of metres of a calf the collar will emit a noise followed by an electric charge. The collar will deactivate only if the wolf moves away from its prey. If the shock therapy works, the wolves will be returned to the wild, wearing radio tracker collars but not electric-shock collars. If they start attacking cattle again they will be shot. The experiment, called the “aversion conditioning programme,” was devised after a controversial Government-supported project to reintroduce 31 wolves into the Yellowstone Park area in 1996 went wrong because the[y]... started attacking livestock... The project, due to start in two weeks, has provoked outrage... [T]he Fund for Animals, said it was “an exceedingly cruel experiment to try to change the wolves’ natural predatory behaviour.”

...A wolf expert is howling at the moon around a British stately home to encourage a pack of timber wolves to breed. As dusk falls at... the wildlife sanctuary... in Wessex, [the expert] creeps up on the eight-strong pack... and imitates the noise of a lone wolf[while h]is colleague... plays tapes of wolfpack noises... to kid the pack into believing there are larger packs prowling around and make them more competitive breeders. The pack’s dominant [bitch] was spayed this year after losing three cubs at birth. Now the second-ranked [bitch] is being encouraged to take her place.

...Saddled with the unenviable, some would say undeserved, reputation as the continent’s most savage predator, Africa’s wild dogs have been hounded to the brink of extinction by human hunters and the loss of their natural habitat. Now, thanks to the efforts of dedicated conservationists, these animals are making a comeback. “We hope these ones make it in the wild,”... a field ecologist at South Africa’s Pilanesberg Game Reserve, said as [it] cast his eye over a group of wild dogs in an enclosure encircled by an electric fence. The nine dogs – three... raised in captivity, a wild [bitch], her four pups and another wild [bitch] – have spent several months in the enclosure to allow them to get used to each other ahead of their release this week. Their distinctive white, black and tan splotches have earned them their Latin name – *Lycaon pictus* – which means “painted wolf.” If the pack survives in its new home, it will be the first time in decades that the wild dog has roamed this part of South Africa’s North-west Province. An extremely adaptable animal, wild dogs once occupied virtually every habitat in sub-Saharan Africa. Today, there are believed to be

only about 4000 of them in the wild, most in northern Botswana, western Zimbabwe, the Selous Game Reserve in Tanzania and South Africa's Kruger National Park. Farmers had a negative attitude towards the wild dog when it preyed on their livestock and its killing methods were reviewed with revulsion. Hunting in pack formations – wild dogs lack the claws of a cat and weigh 18 to 36kg – the animals frequently snap at their prey, especially in the abdomen area, with the intent of disembowelling their intended meal. It is an effective way to kill and also very swift. However, like the wolf in North America and Europe, the wild dog's reputation has undergone a metamorphosis as biologists recognise the role it plays in Africa's diverse eco-systems. Field studies have shown that wild dogs are social animals that care for and dote on their young like few other creatures in the wild. [The field ecologist] hopes the wild dog can be snatched from the jaws of extinction but there are no guarantees. "They have been suffering from domestic dog diseases like canine distemper and rabies as [hu]mankind encroaches on their habitat,"... The Pilanesberg relocation is fraught with problems. For one thing there are the resident lions. "Lions will kill a wild dog every chance they get,"... The [bitch]es are the only members of the pack with hunting experience, and both appear to be pregnant. "The[y]... have to transfer their knowledge of how to hunt and avoid other predators like lions before they give birth in about two months' time,"... To keep tabs on the situation, two of the [dogs raised in captivity] – one of whom has claimed dominance over the pack – and the alpha or dominant [bitch] have been given radio collars.

...[The 'DINGO or Warrigal, is a feral variety of the domestic dog *Canis familiaris*, regarded by some zoologists as a distinct subspecies, *C. familiaris dingo*. It is one of a group of wild or semi-domesticated dogs from the tropical regions of the Old World and its closest relatives appear to live in the vicinity of Thailand. The weight of evidence from palaeontology and studies of Aboriginal prehistory indicated that it arrived in AUS as recently as 4000 years ago, but this figure may be a slight underestimate. Certainly there is no evidence for the widely held belief that it was introduced by Aborigines, who have occupied the continent for 40000 years. A more likely hypothesis is that it reached AUS in a domesticated state, accompanying Indonesian or South-East Asian fishers who visited the northern coast of AUS. It entered AUS from the north and it is significant that it failed to enter Tasmania (which became separated from the mainland about 14000 years ago). Fossil and subfossil remains from caves and fissures also indicate that, as it moved southward, the dingo displaced the marsupial thylacine, which previously had been the largest mammalian carnivore in AUS: the survival of the thylacine in Tasmania is almost certainly due to the dingo's absence. Dingoes are rather solitary, each animal inhabiting a home range and not moving far beyond this. When small prey are readily available, they hunt as individuals but a number of animals may co-operate to hunt larger animals. This co-operation is based on a loose social organisation with a dominance hierarchy among the members. If raised from pups, dingoes make pleasant affectionate pets. But wild dingoes are wary of humans and do not attack unless cornered. Nevertheless they will approach camps in the bush on the lookout for food or perhaps out of curiosity.']

...A... National Park ranger[']s televised]... shot to the head of a dingo on Queensland's World Heritage-listed Fraser Island has ignited a furious debate over conflict between tourists and A[US]'s native dog. Conservationists are taking legal advice on action under federal environmental laws, and the Ngulungbara people, the traditional owners of part of the island, are planning to seek a High Court injunction against the shooting of dingoes. The dingo killed... was the first to die under a new policy to clear the animals from campsites on the island in the wake of the fatal mauling on Monday of 9-year-old Clinton Gage. The two dingoes believed responsible for the killing and for an attack on Clinton's 7-year-old brother... were shot soon afterwards as opposing sides gathered their forces for a debate that has been running for decades. The killing has also been used by [her] supporters of... proof that [a NZ]-born mother did not kill her baby Azaria at Uluru (Ayers Rock) in August 1980. Fraser Island is home to up to 200 dingoes, which have been growing increasingly bold because of tourists disobeying laws against feeding them. Excluding the Gage children, dingoes have attacked at least five people in the past three years – most seriously in 1998, when a dingo dragged the 13-month-old daughter of British tourists from a campsite before being scared off. Clinton Gage's death and a cull ordered by Queensland[']s Premier... have sparked a new row between conservationists who oppose the killing of wildlife in a World Heritage area and people who believe humans must always come first. Calls, e-mails and faxes flooded the... nation's biggest talkback show... at Sydney-based Radio 2UE... with a slim majority opposing the cull... And across A[US] the debate became the third most-discussed news item in A[US], behind the latest scandals to hit [the AUSn PM]'s embattled Government... The Queensland Conservation Council... does not oppose the killing of rogue animals[, but a] coordinator... said the new policy was a knee-jerk, populist approach and was not responsible environmental management. "We need to work out what is the best way forward here with cool heads and implement that, and not in a sense seek a form of retribution against the dingoes... It is humans that have created the problems."

...TV's *Crocodile Hunter*... has leapt to the defence of the pack of dingoes that live on Fraser Island off the Queensland coast after a pair of wild animals killed a 9-year-old boy and badly injured his brother... [The international celebrity] has slammed the Queensland Government for shooting the dingoes in a culling frenzy. [The Crocodile Hunter] says killing off some of the wild dogs could make them more dangerous by disrupting their social pattern... [The Crocodile Hunter] said humans needed to respect the dingoes in their own environment. The attack was the first ever dingo-related death that has been proved... [The] Crocodile Hunter... wrestles crocodiles and juggles with snakes in his hugely popular television series.

...Nearly 1000 snake charmers held a protest in eastern India yesterday... demanding the right to perform with live snakes. Shows featuring cobras and other live snakes have been banned in India since 1991 though they are still a common sight, especially in tourist areas and in small villages. India has about 800,000 snake charmers, according to its Snake Charmer's Federation. The technique of charming the snake out of a basket is often handed down from father to son and charmers say their traditional way of life is threatened by the Wildlife Protection Act... Animal rights activists say snake charming is cruel because the snakes sometimes have their mouths sewn shut, fangs removed or venom glands pierced to protect their handlers. Snakes are deaf and their "dancing" movement is a self-defence response to vibrations they see as threatening.

...It was meant to reveal the strength of the minister's fundamental beliefs. But when the Alabama cleric picked up the timber rattlesnake in front of his congregation, the reptile promptly bit him. Within 10 minutes, the [cleric] was dead. The minister's death, in 1998, may not seem surprising. But doctors were startled, for rattlesnakes rarely deliver fatal bites. On average, only one in 500 of their human victims has died... particularly after the development of anti-venom made from horse serum. But now something strange is happening to America's rattler population. The ability to deliver life-threatening bites, once restricted to only a few subspecies such as the deadly Mojave rattler, has been spreading rapidly. "Doctors must now use much more anti-venom to treat bites," says... [a spokesperson from] Staten Island University Hospital, in *Natural History*. "Whereas five to 10 vials used to suffice, patients today don't seem to improve until they have been injected with between 30 and 70." Some scientists argue that America is simply witnessing the rapid molecular evolution of the rattlesnake. The ability to deliver powerful neurotoxin bites is being passed from the more deadly species to the less harmful ones. Scientists at the University of California, however, say the snake's enemies have evolved stronger anti-venom defences. To overcome this, rattlers have simply developed more and more deadly venom.

...Rare lizards are expected to thrive after being released on to a rat-free island in Northland – as long as they keep away from the world's last dinosaur, the tuatara. Over the past few months, the D[oC] has released... 100 lizards on to Lady Alice Island in the Hen and Chickens group... that were likely to have been present before the arrival of the Pacific rat, kiore. At 145ha, the island is one of the biggest in the group... "The tuatara population on the island is in the high hundreds,"... [a DoC] officer... said. "They eat lizards, but everything should be alright, provided [the new lizards] get a chance to get established. The damage... tuatara do is nothing compared to the rat." ...thousands of rats [once] inhabited the island... [but it i]s now deemed safe for releasing the new lizards, which [DoC]... trapped using baited biscuit tins on the other islands in the... group... Two endangered species – the Mokohinau skink and the McGregor's skink – were released at opposite ends of Lady Alice Island so they don't compete with each other for food and breeding territory. The other species... released was the more common Pacific gecko. "While the gecko is not endangered, it did exist on the island before the rat, so we[']ve reintroduced it,"... It[']ll be some time before results are known. "These species, like all N[Z] lizards, are slow breeders and their establishment on their new homes will take several years. The newcomers have joined six other species

of native lizards, which survived the kiore. The department also plans to release other rare lizards on to Lady Alice Island – and other islands in the... group will be made lizard resorts once they have been rid of rats. Lady Alice Island is off limits to the public to ensure its rat-free status.

...yesterday[, as details were being provided to the media about]... a \$12 million Waikato project to build a [specially-designed] pest-proof 45km fence around Maungatautari mountain[, the DoC was finalising]... efforts to set up another predator-free home for at-risk species when it was reported a rat had been sighted near Ulva Island. Plans to release saddlebacks on the wildlife-rich reserve off Stewart Island may now be in jeopardy.

...Dogs trained to hunt out possums will be taken to Kapiti Island this week as the D[OC] reacts to threats against the wildlife sanctuary. A group calling itself the Biodiversity Action Group says it has released 11 possums on the predator-free island, home to rare birds such as the takahe, little spotted kiwi and saddlebacks. “I have let eleven [sic] opossums go on Kapiti. More will follow,” said the letter, posted in Manawatu. The group also claims to have spread tahr, wallabies and fallow deer around N[Z] in an apparent campaign against plans to remove the pests. The Minister of Conservation... called the claimed release “gutless vandalism”. [The minister] said yesterday that the threats to release more pests in wildlife sanctuaries were nothing short of eco-terrorism... Kapiti has been clear of possums since 1986. The R[FBPS] has received three anonymous letters from different parts of the country threatening to sabotage sanctuaries – including Kapiti – in the past few weeks. They have been handed to the police. [The RFBPS] conservation manager... said the letters raised opposition to the organisation’s support for ridding forests of deer and alpine areas of tahr, and for aerial 1080 poison drops targeting possums, rats and stoats. “Some of these hunting people want to see our national parks run as big game parks or safari parks. I think most N[Z]ers would consider that that is just not on... Clearly there is a lunatic element in the hunting fraternity that has no concern for N[Z]’s natural heritage. This rogue element is even prepared to threaten kiwi, our national emblem.”

...I am disgusted at the unashamed use of gin/leg hold traps by the D[OC]... Why is this practice still allowed? No animal deserves such pain. Those who oppose that should have one clamped on their leg. Yes, we know all about native birds blah, blah. But it remains that the biggest pest is us allowing burgeoning litters [of cats] and stupid DOC [officers] like the one on *Holmes* with a kiwi who “unfortunately lost a leg in a gin trap”.

...A tasty new morsel is proving effective in the war on the stoat. Freeze-dried rats are being used to bait ten traps in the D[OC]’s mainland island project in the northern part of the Urewera Ranges. The discovery comes after... staff found a high [%]age of digested rat in the stomachs of stoats.

...The Canterbury Regional Council has launched... Target Pest Enterprises Ltd... to tap into lucrative pest control work throughout the South Island... The council-owned company is expected to go head to head with Southern Pest Management Ltd, a company formed 18 months ago by two former Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry livestock officers, and which took over bovine TB pest control in Otago from the Otago Regional Council[’s]... own Regional Pest Services company formed from its pest services division.

...N[Z]’s pest population of 70 million A[US]n possums may be doing more than killing off native forests and spreading bovine [TB], health officials say. The possums are thought to have become a reservoir of infection for a form of typhus fever... Murine typhus – which Auckland Healthcare says kills about 4[%] of hospitalised patients – is caused by a bacteria, *Rickettsia typhi*, and is spread by fleas... N[Z]’s first case had been diagnosed almost by accident. A laboratory technician who had a test kit for the illness tested a blood sample from a patient whose illness had proved difficult to diagnose... [B]lood tests have [since] identified five cases... north of Auckland, and two... in south Auckland. “A feature of all cases was their exposure to possums...”,... Overseas, murine typhus is usually... spread by the oriental rat flea to humans who rub or scratch infected flea faeces into flea bites... In the U[S], where between 30 and 50 cases of murine typhus are reported each year, about 75[%] of the infections are thought to be from cat fleas. [But in the] foothill and orchard areas around eastern Los Angeles, most infections are thought to come from American opossums that are heavily infested with fleas. In N[Z], the main features of murine typhus are headache, fever and muscle pain, with rashes appearing in about half of the cases. Untreated, the illness usually lasts two or three weeks... Murine typhus is different to the more serious epidemic typhus, which has caused the deaths of millions, but is transmitted by lice.

...Genetically engineered carrots and potatoes are the latest weapon in the war against possums. The Environmental Risk Management Authority... has approved an application from Landcare Research to import the modified vegetables from A[US] and the U[S]. Testing will be carried out at Lincoln in Canterbury to see if the carrots and potatoes trigger sterility in possums... The Sydney-based director of the Marsupial Cooperative Research Centre... said the testing would be restricted to a laboratory and it might be five to 10 years before scientists could look at large-scale field trials. G[E] carrots were chosen because there was no chance of their regenerating in the wild... N[Z] scientists are looking at a range of delivery mechanisms for immuno-contraceptives apart from baits such as carrots. The options range from incorporating them in plants that possums eat in the wild and even to aerosol sprays delivered when dominant possums feed at a bait station... Control of the pest is costing N[Z] between \$80 million and \$100 million a year, and some specialists have said conventional controls using air drops of poisoned baits, trapping and shooting will never eradicate possums. ■... The rabbit haemorrhagic disease was smuggled into N[Z] inside a farmer’s socks among other hiding places. [South Island f]armers made several trips to A[US] in 1997 to obtain the virus, then called calicivirus, sources say. They obtained it from a pure strain of RHD being distributed by the A[US]n Government after the virus escaped from contained trials on Wardang Island, off S[A].

...threatened with poisoning and banishment to overseas zoos, some of Kawau Island’s wallabies... [–] brought to Kawau by Governor Sir George Grey in the late 1880s... [–] are in for a dramatic change of fortune. The A[US]n Government wants the wallabies back. In fact, the Aussies are so keen they’re paying the costs of repatriation... Once home, the animals are likely to be taken to a special sanctuary where they will be protected from predators. It’s a far cry from their lowly status in N[Z], where they are regarded as bush-destroying pests. An Auckland D[OC] spokesperson is... delighted the A[US]n Government was helping solve the problem. “It’s a very convenient project from our point of view, they are a pest and we want to get rid of them,”... But not all the wallabies are in for the red-carpet treatment. A[US]’s Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing wants Kawau’s tamar wallaby, a genetic sub-species extinct in its S[A] homeland, and the rare brushtail wallaby. Two other wallaby species – the swamp and the parma – won’t be going home and will remain targets of a campaign to rid the island of the unwanted marsupials... Estimates put Kawau’s wallaby population at about 8500 and some of the island’s residents argue that the marsupials are a unique feature and should stay... Two Massey University scientists have been commissioned... to disease-test a sample of the wallabies before they leave... The deal means the A[US]n Government will meet the costs of rounding the animals up, quarantining them for about three months and flying them home.

...Hunting guides want to fly overseas clients into Mt Cook National Park to shoot Himalayan tahr... Trophy fees, aircraft rental, guides’ pay, and taxidermy charges would work out to more than \$10,000 for each animal killed, giving the [park’s herd of]... between 50 and 100 bull tahr... a total value of up to \$1 million. But the D[OC] plans to spend thousands of dollars eradicating the animals under a plan to empty the park of tahr... Hunters have just finished culling tahr from several spots outside the park, under an agreement with the department. The hunters reached the agreement after complaining that DoC had culled 128 bull tahr last season. This year, the hunters culled only [the cows] and young tahr, leaving the valuable bulls for trophy hunters... [A] Hunting and Fishing master guide... said conservationists were pressuring the department to get rid of tahr altogether. Such a move would be a big loss to N[Z] in tourism dollars and jobs. Tahr were now so scarce that land-owners were catching them live and releasing them on their properties so they could charge overseas hunters trophy fees...

[‘Although the tiger has few natural enemies it has been hunted by people from very early times, at first by local people and later for sport. In India especially, the coming of the British and the introduction of firearms was disastrous to the tiger and it is estimated that in 1877 alone 1579 tigers were shot in British India. Today the reduction of game animals and the reduction of its habitat is further diminishing its numbers, and as a result six of the eight races of tiger are listed as being in danger of extinction.’ □ A guy] mauled by a tiger at Wellington Zoo was fighting for his life late last night after nine hours of surgery. The [guy] was attacked after [it] scaled a 5m fence and jumped into the grassed enclosure of the 6-year-old... sumatran tiger,

Rokan. The 110kg tiger pounced, inflicting serious puncture wounds to most of the [guy]'s body. The attack, about 1pm, was seen by the [guy]'s partner and her cries for help alerted zoo staff. The [victim], who is 27, is a Wellington Hospital mental health unit patient. As zoo workers tried to separate the tiger from its prey – using hoses, fire extinguishers and feed buckets as distractions – a group of 20 schoolchildren arrived at the enclosure. The victim was unconscious and had lost a great deal of blood by the time [it] arrived at Wellington Hospital... Wellington City Council's director of community services... said it was not known why the [guy] had scaled the fence... [I]t was the first time a big cat attack had occurred at the zoo. An investigation would be held, but it did not appear the zoo had been at fault and at no time did the tiger leave the enclosure. Nothing would happen to the tiger. One zoo worker went into shock after the attack, and last night the zoo was providing counselling for several staff who needed support. One keeper said the normal behaviour for a tiger in that situation would be to "spot his prey, sink down, stalk him and then pounce and maul". [The keeper] said the cat would not recognise it had done anything wrong; it would have seen the [intruder] as another form of food. [The keeper pointed out that] Rokan had undergone surgery at least 13 times to fix his throat, which was constricted... Rokan can eat only mince... [If the intruder had jumped] into the other tiger's area, "there wouldn't be much left of him"... The animal's mother, Cantik – the only other sumatran tiger at the zoo – fed on carcasses and large pieces of meat... The zoo was closed to the public after the attack while police made inquiries and staff hosed down the enclosure. A shoe from the victim, a CD player and a... CD... were found nearby. [Last year,]Rokan and Cantik survived an incident... when Rokan's 13-year-old father, Jambi, failed to recover from eating meat accidentally contaminated with the animal euthanasia drug pentobarbitone... [(t)wo bottles of [which] were among various pet medicines stolen from... a Massey veterinary surgery... on Wednesday morning... [- p]olice are warning the public to stay away from medicine bottles carrying the trade name Pentobarb 300... [because] if the thieves see the warning... [that if humans] take it they will die... they... [may] discard the drug... in a playground, in bushes or other public places where it could be picked up by children[...]]... and had to be put down. Rokan has sisters Malu, who lives at Perth Zoo, and Nisha, who lives at Auckland Zoo.

...Revelations that the [intruder] mauled by a tiger at Wellington Zoo had absconded from Wellington Hospital's psychiatric unit have sparked calls for tighter security at mental health facilities. Capital and Coast District Health Board, which started an inquiry yesterday into the incident, would not comment on the [patient]'s psychiatric history. However, it is understood [the patient] had been committed to Wellington Hospital's Ward 27 under the Mental Health Act about a week ago... A hospital source said that the [patient] left the hospital without permission... [The] National Party health spokes[person]... yesterday questioned whether the mental health system had failed the victim... [By the way,] Wellington Zoo will get \$40,000 from the petfood supplier of a drugged beef carcass that killed a rare Sumatran tiger last year... [The] manager of the Canterbury petfood company Dogs Delight... [- which had supplied meat products to the zoo] for 12 years... [-] faces 21 charges laid by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. They should be heard next week... MAF regulations for killing animals for pet food specified the animal must be healthy before it was destroyed. "Under no circumstances should an animal to be used for pet food be euthanised... It must have been a huge dose of pentobarbitone to kill a tiger." Jambi, his mate, and [a] lioness were poisoned but because Jambi ate the meat from the spinal area, the concentration of the drug was higher... His mate, Cantik, and lioness Manta... recovered... The "priceless"... tiger Jambi, 13... [- who] arrived at Wellington Zoo in 1992 from Taronga Zoo, Sydney... [(h)is mate Cantik arrived later from Arnhem, Holland] -] ...died... after going into a coma four days earlier... Yesterday [Wellington Zoo's] manager... said the compensation would cover the cost of importing a Sumatran tiger, estimated at \$20,000, to replace Jambi... a 120kg father of six, [who] had been invaluable to the Australasian tiger breeding programme, which is part of worldwide conservation efforts to save the species... There were only 400 Sumatran tigers in the wild and 250 in captivity. Because of the ongoing destruction of the tigers' natural habitat in Sumatra and with the tiger part trade being "bigger than the drug trade", the species was expected to be extinct within five years.

...A Thai official has denied reports that 100 tigers exported to China last year ended up in restaurants specialising in exotic food... [T]he Natural Resources and Environment Ministry[official]... had been assured by Chinese officials that the tigers had not been eaten. Chinese media reports said they were sent to restaurants specialising in unusual dishes rather than their intended destination, the Sanya breeding centre in Hainan.

...Nine pregnant pandas at the Giant Panda Breeding Research Centre in Sichuan are due to give birth in the next few months. Last month a set of twin cubs – pink and almost hairless – made their entry to the world. It has not been an easy road to conception... For nearly three decades vets have resorted to artificial insemination after pandas in captivity displayed a distinct lack of interest in mating. Since the first cub was artificially conceived in 1963, more than 210 have been born in China and 20 overseas. But only half have survived to adulthood. The giant panda, a member of the bear family, survives almost entirely on a diet of bamboo shoots, leaves and stems – they need up to 18kg a day. Pandas generally prefer to keep to themselves and each adult has a well-defined home range. But a [boy panda]'s home range overlaps with those of several [girl panda]s. When they are 4.5 to 7.5 years old, giant pandas reach sexual maturity... In the wild, giant pandas give birth only every two years or more... The giant panda, face of the World Wide Fund for Nature, has been the focus of conservation efforts for more than 20 years. The Chinese Government, with help from the WWF, has established 33 panda reserves, protecting more than 16,000 sq km of bamboo forest. It is also educating the younger generation on the importance of protecting endangered species and the environment. The giant panda is protected by Chinese law but although poachers face severe penalties, some hunting continues. In 1998, the Government banned commercial logging in southwestern parts of the country.

...Chinese scientists have produced an embryo of a giant panda through cloning technology, a breakthrough that could save the endangered animals[. T]he *China Daily* reported yesterday[that] scientists from the Chinese Academy of Sciences had introduced [egg] cells of a dead... panda into the egg cells of a Japanese white rabbit and the embryo was nurtured successfully... [T]he next step was to place the embryo in the womb of a host animal. If the embryo was not rejected, the world's first cloned panda would be created. The giant panda is indigenous to China with just 1000 living in the wild and 100 in captivity. They have a low reproduction rate.

...China's Wolong Giant Panda Reserve has had a baby boom, with six panda cubs... [- including two set]s... of twins... [-] born in four days... Scientists said the cubs were in good health and receiving round-the-clock care at the 200,000ha reserve in the southwestern province of Sichuan.

...A 37-year drive to replace farmland with forest in the Wolong Nature Reserve in Sichuan province has benefited the giant pandas, China's symbolic animal. The number of giant pandas in Wolong, the country's main reserve, has increased as conservation measures taken by the Government including better air and water quality, have improved the... animal's habitat... [The] assistant director of the China Giant Panda Research and Conservation Centre... [(t)he conservation centre, jointly established by China and the W[WF] in 1980, had bred 37 giant pandas in captivity, of which 26 have survived[...]]... said that since the 200,000ha reserve was established in 1963, forest cover in the area had expanded to 70.6[% from 53%] of the land. [The assistant director] did not say how many pandas now lived in the reserve. Only about 1000 pandas are believed to exist in the wild, roaming mountainous areas of Sichuan, Gansu and Shaanxi. They are threatened by human encroachment and the rampant logging that has denuded most of China's forests. The news agency said Wolong reserve, near the Sichuan capital of Chengdu, was home to more than 450 species of wild vertebrates, including 57 types of rare animals under state protection... [In local news, the NZ]er who heads the Switzerland-based invasive species specialist group on the IUCN... [welcomed the Government's] *Our Chance to Turn the Tide*... strategy, but said it was overdue. "We have lost the... moa... [plus] the biggest eagle the world has seen and we have gained the sparrow and the starling." Scores of species are teetering on the brink, despite the well-publicised efforts to preserve favourite birds such as the kiwi and kakapo. Among the unique creatures battling for survival are the black-eyed gecko, which can live in the snow... and... the world's heaviest insect, a weta which... weighs as much as... 70g, was widespread throughout the world 190 million years ago... [and] fills the predator role of rodents... There is... a predatory snail, and a frog which bears live young... [T]here are thought to be... about 27,000 aquatic crustaceans, insects, spiders and centipedes, more than 11,000

nematode worms and 5000 molluscs... Many of the 178 species of native earthworm – some of them even climb trees – survive, alive and wiggling but mainly in undisturbed habitats... [The Cave spider –] the only spider protected by the Wildlife Act[– has a]... 3cm body and 30cm leg span... [and is t]hought to be a missing link between primitive spiders from 350 million years ago and modern spiders[, but is only found in the]... Tasman region... The native flax snail[, that grows]... up to 10cm in diameter and lives for up to 40 years... was originally believed to be extinct until rediscovered at North Cape last year... [Less fortunate was a] 45cm-long... salmon-like grayling[, which disappeared]... in the 1930s... The variety of life in N[Z] which flourished in isolation for 80 million years has in evolutionary terms been suddenly struck by the recent... introduction of alien invader species...

America prepares to stem ‘alien invaders’... The U[S] is being invaded by “aliens” and [the]President... has declared war on them. His counter-offensive, dubbed the X-File order, is an attempt to stop the country being taken over by such invaders as... the walking catfish and the... leafy splurge, a weed from Europe and Asia, [that] now plagues more than 1.2 million hectares in the western prairies... Instead of Mulder and Scully, the President has named three of his most senior ministers to head a new Invasive Species Council... [One member is the] Under-Secretary... Another member, [the]Interior Secretary... said: “The costs to the economy are racing out of control.” Nearly half of the country’s endangered species are being threatened with extinction by the invaders, introduced to the US either directly by gardeners and pet owners or accidentally through trade and travel... [A]n eccentric American introduced 60 starlings to New York Central Park on the strength of their being mentioned once in the works of Shakespeare – in a single line in Henry IV Part I. Now more than 200 million of them plague the country... A Chinese ant is chomping buildings in California. And the zebra mussel, a[also] from Asia, has done more than \$US5 billion... of damage by clogging pipes in 19 states after arriving in the Great Lakes region on board freighters... 20 species of lizards, all brought in by the pet trade, are spreading through Florida, while hydrilla, a popular aquarium plant, is now clogging up nearly half of the nation’s rivers and lakes. The European green crab, brought in ships’ ballast water, is devastating native shellfish in San Francisco Bay. But it is not all one way. North American crayfish are wiping out their European cousins... and the ruddy dove, brought to Britain by [a]naturalist... is killing off a native relative... Grey squirrels from North America have virtually wiped out the native red squirrel in England... Other countries have similar stories of alien invaders. • Guam is a tiny island in west Micronesia that serves as a US Army base. Soon after [WW2] the brown tree snake, a native of the Solomon Islands, [PNG and AUS], arrived via some form of military transport. It grows up to 3m in length, climbs trees, eats birds and their eggs and has been known to attack human babies. It is estimated now to number nearly 4000 per square kilometre and has wiped out nine of the island’s 11 bird species. It also climbs power poles and causes, on average, a power cut every four days. • ...In many coastal areas of South-east Asia, Ecuador and India shrimp farms have been established to provide income for people and compensate for the decline in marine resources caused by industrial fisheries. But the farms have destroyed mangroves and the rich coastal ecology associated with them, as well as drastically altering the lifestyles of the people.

...If you’re arriving at work with serious bags under your eyes there are two likely culprits: hot summer nights and a rowdy chorus of *Amphipsalta*, the largest... cicada native to N[Z]. An]... ecology PhD student at Massey University who is doing the first review of the many studies into N[Z]’s cicadas, said it would be no surprise if *Amphipsalta* were causing sleepless nights. His research is part of a thesis looking at fungal diseases affecting cicadas. One such fungus acts like something from the movie *Alien*, erupting from the cicada’s chest to bond the insect to the side of a tree. *Amphipsalta* is the name given to a genus of three cicada species. Their Latin name means “players on two harps,” referring to their ability to make two distinct sounds at once... [Boy cicada]s were the noisiest... They use tymbals, circular structures on their undersides between the thorax and abdomen, which are vibrated in the same way as crinkling a can several thousand times a second. The noise is amplified by hollow cavities behind the tymbals and within the abdomen to attract likely mates – which in turn attract other [boy cicada]s. The second sound is made by flapping and clicking their wings. These abilities wouldn’t be such a problem, but for one other detail – the noisy *Amphipsalta* are the only N[Z] cicadas to sing at night. They are also the last species to emerge from the ground during the summer and, with a lifespan of about a month, may be around for another few weeks... The adults tend to gather in larger numbers in modified environments – for example, gardens rather than mature forests – where they lay their eggs and feed on the sap of young trees. The *Amphipsalta* then gather in annoying mass choruses to sing. [The student] said their song had been measured at 120 decibels, 40 decibels over the level considered dangerous to one’s hearing. Such volumes are not surprising given that his studies have shown that up to 190 of the big bugs can emerge from a single square metre of soil – and they don’t travel far after they’re out. In terms of biomass, they can reach levels of bug mass per square metre that are higher than the carrying capacity of a large dairy farm. Maori and native Americans share an interesting link with cicadas... While many people do not realise that N[Z] has more than one type of cicada, Maori recognised 12 types based on their song and identified their arrival with... the Dog Star, Sirius, which is at meridian in the summer sky when the nymphs emerge... [Maori named Sirius] Rehua after a forest deity. Cicadas are considered to be his proteges. Various native American tribes have names for the insects that can be translated as Dog Star cicadas. ■ [‘By rubbing rough bodies against wing cages a genus of leather beetle is the most talkative insect of all. Families live in rotten logs & use 14 different signals in courtship, defence & while tending their young.’]

...West Auckland households may soon have a new creepy-crawly to contend with – A[US]n cockroaches. Larger and glossier than our native cockroaches, the [3cm-long AUS]n variety... which have the scientific name *gisenlia*... ha[ve] been found at Mangere’s Otutaua Stonefields by [a]Glen Eden-based entomologist... who believes they may now be heading west. The species has been in N[Z] since 1981 and has been spotted around Auckland, Tauranga and the Waikato. However, [the entomologist] thinks the cockroaches in Mangere may have come into the country on a more recent wave, possibly through the airport. “Until the last two years I haven’t seen them as commonly but now they really seem to have built up,”... says... [the Titirangi resident, although MAF’s] communications adviser... says the cockroaches have been assessed as low-risk... [But the entomologist] says the species may be spreading to other areas and the threat imported insects pose to the country is a worry. “There’s a great concern about biosecurity. There’s the painted apple moth, the saltmarsh mosquito – it seems like we’ve got one of these things almost every month now...”

...[the e]ntomologist... who first identified the painted apple moth in Glendene... is keeping an even closer eye on other insects. The Titirangi resident has completed a study of invertebrates in the Waitakere Ranges for the Auckland Regional Council. The council’s biosecurity manager... says the scientific study provides a database of species living in the ranges that will be used to monitor changes in the area if it is ever sprayed with Btk... to kill the painted apple moth. [The entomologist says it] tested about 30 plants and collected more than 5000 insects at 14 sites.

...A biological symposium being held at the national museum Te Papa in Wellington next month will attempt to list... all living and fossil, native and introduced species and sub-species... of animal and plant... found in N[Z]’s seas, fresh waters and on land... More than 160 contributors, 24 of them from overseas, worked on the checklist last year. About half the known species have so far been described and indexed. The symposium is linked to Species 2000 International, a global programme to index the world’s species as a tool for counting and measuring biological life.

...There is no shortage of N[Z] natural history books but [a recently released] one... THE NATURAL WORLD OF N[Z]... subtitled *An Illustrated Encyclopaedia of N[Z]’s Natural Heritage*, has a novel and useful format that will satisfy browsers and those wanting a ready reference to basic information about our distinctive plants and animals. It is in three sections. The first, “In the beginning,” briefly unfolds the genesis of the country and its unique wildlife and describes the impacts of people on it and the landscape. The last section is a handy, fact-filled revelation of the longest, largest, oldest (and so on) rivers, mountains, e[tc]... The main body of the book is an illustrated alphabetic encyclopedia of 215 items including all the popular icons of our natural heritage... A burden of textbooks that are long on facts is that a few mistakes creep in, and a few are excusable. However, when the subtitle is bold enough to make encyclopaedic claims, there is an expectation of thoroughness and sadly, this book [– which

retails for \$69.95 –]falls short. There are many factual or identification errors – more than 100 in my list – and some sloppy editing. Plates are assembled with crossed captions... [or are] reversed (a kauri snail spiralling the wrong way) and upside down (a suspended (!) glow-worm). The caption “The wrybill, the only bird in the world with a bill which turns sideways... to the right,” lies alongside a graphic illustration showing it (wrongly) turning to the left. Subspecies names are misused as species names and some information is badly out of date: “Of the world’s 1800 species of praying mantis, just one occurs in N[Z].” For 20 years we have had two, with the more recent South African species, now found in both North and South Islands, fast devouring and displacing the original... [Incidentally, many NZ]ers think of snails as slimy garden pests. But [a French perso]n... is breeding them for kitchen use and hoping N[Z]ers will be keen to add them to their menus. The Titirangi resident arrived here from France in 1994 with her husband[, who was] a former rugby league international for both countries. But it was not until 18 months ago that [the wife] decided to hit the snail trail. “I made a bet with a friend over too much drinking to do it... I’m a schoolteacher and I told my students to bring me snails.” Her... one-year breeding programme, designed to fatten snails up to eating size, involves about 500 snails. Each snail lays up to 50 eggs and lives on flour, carrots and lettuce... Fortunately, her three children and husband love eating snails. [The wife] says Auckland conditions are not ideal for snail breeding. They need moisture but not the constant rain of the northern region. [The wife] sells a portion of her snails to restaurants... Snails, known as les escargots, are served in their shells, generally with a liberal dollop of garlic to add to the taste... [The wife], who is originally from Paris, says garden snails are plentiful in both countries, though there are restrictions on commercial use in France. French snails also tend to grow larger and feed on themselves. N[Z garden] snails are not native and were in fact imported from France by immigrants in the 19th century.

...Welcome to N[Z], one of the most invaded places on Earth. This country has more introduced plants and animals than anywhere else... So many plants and animals have invaded N[Z] that the International Union for the Conservation of Nature has come to recognise our expertise... The union was established in 1948. Most countries and many conservation groups are members... [T]he Invasive Species Specialist Group... [- whose chairperson is an] associate professor in conservation biology at the Auckland University Tamaki campus, [where the]... organisation... is... base[d –] ...was set up in 1993 as part of the union... Invasive species are animals, insects or plants that are transported from one country to another via some form of human intervention... Of course, crops and animals have been transported beyond their natural habitats for thousands of years, often for the benefit of humankind. The differences in recent history are, broadly: • The rapid rate and extent of transportation in this era of global trade and increased mobility. • The invasiveness of some exotic species, which gradually change their adopted habitats for the worse... So profound is the problem that some environmentalists refer to it as “smart pollution” because, unlike chemical pollution that cannot reproduce and generally dissipates over time, invasive species proliferate and spread... In February, [the US]President... signed an executive order creating an Invasive Species Council and proposed \$28.8 million extra funding to combat the problem. The US Department of Agriculture has prohibited the import of untreated wood packing material from China because of the risk that it carries the Asian longhorn beetle. The Fish and Wildlife Service will build a barrier in the Chicago Ship Canal to prevent the spread of invasive species between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River basins. Not all international agreements are helping the cause of keeping organisms at bay. An article in the union’s magazine *World Conservation* points out that two international agreements, adopted under the auspices of the World Trade Organisation and the [UN]Food and Agriculture Organisation... undermine rather than strengthen countries’ abilities to exclude invasive species. The Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures was negotiated when the trade organisation was being set up, and came into force in 1995. Then in November 1997, revisions were made to the International Plant Protection Convention to bring it into line. Together these two agreements govern the stringency of regulations that countries may enforce... Both require proof that a species will be harmful before the country may prohibit its importation. Otherwise the measures taken can be challenged as non-tariff barriers to trade. The protection convention also requires that the damage be measured in economic terms. The problem with this approach lies in the unpredictable behaviour of many species and the difficulty of providing absolute proof.

...All of the South Island has been declared a “controlled area” for the invasive[North American] algae didymo, which is also known as rock snot... [A]cross... Cook Strait... [a]n alien invasive weed is threatening to crowd out coastline pohutukawa, just as they recover from the onslaught of browsing possums. The plant is evergreen buckthorn, or rhamnus, and the Auckland Regional Council plans to spend up to \$300,000 to stop it... “The main problem is that most people think it’s a native,” [the]... ARC biosecurity manager... said. “It doesn’t look out of place until it’s too late. Before you know it... you’ll just have stands of evergreen buckthorn.” The weed was first recorded in the wild in Auckland in 1930. It has found... Hauraki Gulf islands particularly to its liking, and has been thriving... since 1980... on western Waiheke, where 185ha, including coastal cliffs, are [now]infested... Evergreen buckthorn is a Mediterranean native introduced to N[Z] as an ornamental plant... It [has since been]... declared... a... pest, [which means it is] banned from sale, commercial display, distribution and propagation... [However, i]t is distributed by birds which eat its berries... It can grow to 10m and... sprout anywhere, quickly spreading to completely cover the ground. It closely resembles several native species, including karamu and tawapou, and volunteers helping to rid areas of the weed have unwittingly destroyed the natives.

...White lilies... popping up alongside numerous roads to the West Coast are threatening native plants. Large clumps can also be found at Karekare Beach. [The ARC] ranger... who oversees Karekare, Piha and Anawhata, says they need to be eliminated. “There were a few last year, but this year, there’s a lot more,”... [The lily, which] comes from Taiwan[and] is related to the Easter lily... is already a problem at Whitianga, Kerikeri and Whakatane... [T]he exotic plant could have come from a cultivated garden. Commentators are also worried by an increase in the number of Arum lilies at Karekare. [A member of] the Waitakere Ranges Protection Society says the Arum is a vigorous flower which has pods with up to 200 seeds. “They’re invasive... and I’m alarmed at their spread. Unfortunately people love them as they’re beautiful,”... [An e]nvironmentalist... agrees both lilies are beautiful. “They’re always very popular in churches. But like many other European plants, they’ve done too well here.” [The]Weedfree Waitakere Trust project manager... confirms Arum lilies are on Waitakere City Council’s unwanted weeds list.

...West Aucklanders are asked to look out for the world’s worst aquatic weed, following the discovery of a large specimen at nearby Huapai. Water hyacinth forms dense mats that interfere with navigation, recreation, irrigation and power generation. The mats completely exclude native submerged and floating leafed plants. The plants vary in size from a few centimetres to over a metre... Its lilac flowers are up to 7cm in diameter and found in arranged groups of eight to 10... After fertilisation, the flower stalk bends to submerge the flowers. The fruit, a three-celled capsule, forms numerous, minute, ribbed seeds. These can germinate in a few days, or remain dormant for 15 to 20 years. Water hyacinth also reproduces vegetatively by budding and stolon production. Daughter plants sprout from the stolons, and can double in six to 18 days. Water hyacinth can grow faster than any other plant. It comes from tropical South America and has become naturalised in many warm areas of the world. It was introduced to N[Z] as an aquarium plant in 1914 and had spread to a number of North Island sites by 1950. A major declared plant pest since 1950, it would have a major adverse economic and environmental impact if permitted to spread. The Government pays for and organises all eradication work on this class A noxious plant. Sightings of this plant should be reported immediately to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry... or the A[RC]...

Alligators are slinking into west Auckland waterways. The prolific alligator weed has so far been spotted in Rewarewa and Oakley creeks and the Avondale Stream. Environmentalists say if the problem gets out of hand, it could be devastating... The weed forms extensive floating mats which cover the surface restricting the flow, increasing sedimentation and acting as a barrier which collects debris and causes flooding. “It also makes riparian banks more unstable and its matting stops natives from growing up through it. It also affects the fish life by restricting oxygen,”... [the] Weedfree Waitakere manager... says. The... A[RC] lists it as a regional surveillance plant pest. It was introduced from South America and is extremely difficult to control... Waitakere City Council is trying to find methods to eradicate it. [An e]ntomologist... says people shouldn’t attempt

to pull it out because more could fall into the waterways, re-attaching to banks and taking root downstream. [The entomologist] recommends using the vogtia moth or beetle, which has been introduced from South America and has had some progress against the weed in Northland.

...An invasive new weed that forms dense mats on the water's surface has been found growing in Lake Taupo. Environment Waikato wants urgent action to clear pockets of *egeria densa*, a South American oxygen weed, from parts of the lake.

...The islands of the Hauraki Gulf are under threat from... Auckland, officially the world's weediest metropolis. As... [of] this month... the Motutapu Island Restoration Trust is beginning work on a register of weeds... to record their diversity and concentration on private land, parks and coastal areas... The register will cover a 20km radius of Motutapu Island, reflecting the dispersal zone for weed seeds spread by wind and birds. The chair[person] of the trust... hopes Aucklanders will cooperate and allow botanists who carry out the register to survey any weeds on their land... "Despite more than \$1.5 million being spent on weed control by the D[istrict] of C[ouncil], the ARC and the... trust in the last 12 months, weeds continue to flourish on public and private land. It is time for action." ...the Lotteries Grants Board environmental committee, which is supporting the register, says a 10-year window of opportunity exists to tackle the weed problem. Beyond that it will be too late. "For too long the city fathers' focus has been on towers of concrete which are far less significant to Aucklanders who identify themselves with the Hauraki Gulf and its islands." ...weed-management strategies which ban monkey apples from sale are... being undermined by garden centres which sell a different version of the plants.

...A persistent pursuit of weeds in the Waitakere Ranges is getting a hi-tech boost. The A[ARC] is using a computer programme, Geographic Information Systems... to produce survey maps highlighting the kinds of weeds and where they are found. Results are making it easier for park rangers to budget for weed eradication and prioritise problem areas... [O]ne of three rangers in the Cascade/Kauri area... [– where] 37 weeds are found... [–] says the system shows whether staff are winning or losing their battle against weeds... Problem plants include pines and crack willows. Giant reeds (*arundo donax*) are also pests which break off along Waitakere stream[s], clogging up waterways and causing erosion. "A lot of people come up from the city with their weekend garden refuge and dump it over the banks. That's how a lot of our weeds come into the Waitakeres."

...Illegal dumpings of spoil... [is] causing a headache for Waitakere City Council – and introducing noxious weeds to regional parkland. There are about 12 sites in the Waitakere Ranges known as dumping 'hot-spots.' ...[the] A[ARC]... biosecurity officer... says they usually occur where a road has been straightened and there is enough space on the former curve for cars to park up and dump rubbish... 80[%] of new weed infestations on park land originated from intentional dumpings... "It's becoming quite a major problem for us... People dump garden waste material and think it's going to die and become compost, but it doesn't. It just keeps on growing..." ...Under the Biosecurity Act 1993, enforced by the ARC, it is illegal to dispose of or store soil containing plant pests anywhere except in a secure landfill or an approved composting facility. Waitakere City... recently turned up the heat on illegal dumpers by increasing the litter fine to \$500... "They (illegal dumpers) can get away with dumping quite a few trailer loads each year without being caught, saving themselves about \$30 in landfill costs every time... Even at \$500 it's cheaper to pay the fine than to take it to a landfill." ...One hotspot near the Aratiki Visitors Centre has cost the ARC... 100 [labour] hours to clean up... I[ronically, i]n late May, a large pile of soil containing... weed fragments was dumped at a lay-by on Lone Kauri Rd in Karekare... The spoil was left by a... council contractor who had been removing waste material from roadside ditches... Dangerous plant pests like wandering jew had already established themselves when the site was inspected... The contractor has since taken the spoil to an approved landfill, but neither the A[ARC] nor the city council has laid charges.

...Ginger may be nice as a spice, but as a notorious and invasive weed it's a native enemy. Keep Waitakere Beautiful, the Waitakere City Council and the A[ARC] want to make it easy for Waitakere City residents to remove ginger (also known as wild kahili) from their properties. [Throughout this month residents will be] encouraged to dispose of ginger plants in specially-marked waste bins located at Titirangi, Laingholm, the Manukau Coast, Waiatarua, Henderson Valley, Herald Island and Piha – where wild ginger is most widespread. Alternatively, red *Ginger Out!* bags can be ordered free of charge by calling the Waitakere City Council's customer service line... Trailer loads of ginger plants will also be accepted at the Council's Solid Waste Refuse Station at no cost. K[ing] W[ater] B[oard]'s coordinator... says ridding Waitakere City of wild ginger... – which was brought to N[Z] from India as a scented, flowering garden plant... – ...has been an on-going battle... "Unfortunately N[Z] provided ideal growing conditions for wild ginger which, being a prolific seeder, has spread into our native bush where it... smothers other plants..." ...[fortunately] public awareness of wild ginger as a plant pest seems to be increasing. More than 150 tonnes of ginger was collected during [last year's] *Ginger Out!* campaign... – almost double the amount collected [the previous year]. "Either there's twice as much... out there, or residents are getting in there and removing more..." ... *T[here are two] ways to kill wild ginger*: 1. Cut off the flowers before they seed, then destroy the rest of the plant with a herbicide... 2. Dig the entire plant... out of the ground. It is very important to get... the tuber roots... to ensure no re-growth occurs.

...Now halfway through its [2]-year trial... Weedfree Waitakere Trust is making good progress tackling environmental weeds... [like w]ild ginger, jasmine, tradescantia... Mexican daisy, climbing asparagus, mistflower, honeysuckle, plectranthus and privet... around Titirangi... With funding from the Lotteries Commission, the Trust was able to hire three staff to run the weed removal operation and to buy essential equipment. Work and Income N[Z] provided more labour through its Community Wage scheme and local volunteers also offered to lend a hand with the weed removal and replanting work. The Portage Licensing Trust assisted by purchasing a van to carry the workers and equipment, while the Council's Parks department provided large bins and free removal... "U[n]til recently... it was the responsibility of the private landowner to deal with environmental weeds – and there wasn't really a pro-active education programme to inform people about weeds on their property and how to get rid of them," says [the trust's] field officer... "Most of the work we've done has been in parks and reserves – and it's been very successful... We're about to start approaching private landowners to do more work on their properties – which would help connect up the areas we've already weeded to prevent re-invasion." ...The trust... ask[s] for a donation for the work... [that] is kept within the landowner's means and is agreed on before work starts.

...It's taken a bunch of weeds to bind a group of Karekare residents together. Five local[s]... have started the Land Care Group at the beach to keep the area clear of troublesome weeds... [O]ne spin-off is the group doing things with other people in the community. "We are really busy people and we would not get together as often as we do,"... Next month, they'll be planting trees on land residents and ratepayers raised money to buy jointly with the A[ARC]. Shares in the land were sold for \$10 each and every person with \$100 or more in shares can plant a pohutukawa or other native tree on the land... [P]eople from as far away as Japan, Britain, the U[S] and Germany have visited Karekare and bought shares.

...Annual weeds die and renew themselves from seed each year... Therefore it is of the utmost importance that weeds are prevented from producing further crops of seeds... In practice, [however,] some annual weed seeds find their way into the garden each year and the fight to eliminate these pests never ends. The old adage says, 'One years seeding means seven years weeding'. Although the practice of killing weeds with chemicals has made great strides over the last 30-40 years, these are not the end all for eradicating weeds. In small gardens the use of chemicals for weed control can well take second place to older established methods of attack... One important way of keeping weeds under control is to provide conditions that are more suitable for the plants you want to grow than for the weeds. This applies particularly to lawns. Docks, chickweed or sorrel in the turf indicate that soil conditions are not right for growing grass. Killing the weeds will bring temporary relief by reducing the[ir] number... but will not affect the amount of grass... [H]and weeding... when the ground is moist... is most effective in removing young weed plants from among seedling vegetable and flower plants that are growing closely together... Hoeing is perhaps the easiest and most effective mechanical means of destroying weeds. A sharp hoe requires little effort to use... Of course one must take care when hoeing in among young plants that they do not suffer the same fate as the weeds. Regular hoeing... has a twofold effect as the soil around the plants is kept aerated thus providing better growing conditions for the plants. Constant hoeing will also remove perennial weeds... [which] have persistent underground parts that live indefinitely...

Smothering weeds by mulching the soil surface is particularly effective with annual weeds and is helpful with many perennials... Black polythene sheeting can also be used, the only problem being to apply water to plants.

...The war against weeds in Taranaki has taken a new twist with the successful use of natural predators. To date, 11 biological control agents, or plant-attacking insects, have been released, and seven have been found in increasing numbers during the past two years. The most striking progress has been in the control of nodding thistle... [A] South Taranaki farmer... allowed researchers to bring crown weevils and rhinocyllus beetles on to his property in 1990. [At the time] nodding thistles were out of control... despite intensive weed-spraying... [Today], his nodding thistle problems are gone. Paddocks... once chest-high with the prickly weeds are now well covered with feed and the nodding thistle population has dropped to almost nothing. "I told my neighbours that I thought it was the weevil and they didn't believe me, but [the insects] have spread to surrounding properties and started wiping out the neighbours' thistles,"... [O]ther problem plants like... ragwort and gorse have also been targeted with some success.

...Ragwort is a rampant weed which can rapidly reduce pasture growth by competing with grasses. And when eaten it causes serious liver damage to stock. Attacks by six species of insects on different parts of the plant have been investigated in N[Z]... The caterpillars of the cinnabar moth... and the magpie moth... both eat the leaves and flowers. As well as these two there is the ragwort leaf-miner, whose minute larvae tunnel inside the leaves, reducing their ability to make food by photosynthesis and thus make the plant less vigorous. There is also the blue stem-borer, which by feeding inside the ragwort's long stems disrupts water and nutrient flow to the leaves. More important in this regard are the grubs of the ragwort flea beetle which severely damage both the roots and the heart of the leafy crown. The weed's reproductive potential has also been reduced by the introduction of the ragwort seed-fly, whose maggots feed on developing seeds. Though the cost of research and breeding the biological control agents are considerable, they are more than competitive with conventional control techniques. Once well-established, the small and silent insects continue to work industriously – cost-free.

...Denver may be thought of as a high-technology centre, but city officials are planning a low-tech way of fighting out-of-control weeds – goats. Some 50 to 100 Kashmir goats from Wyoming are to feast on weeds that have taken root in open space and wilderness areas along waterways in Denver, according to the city's Parks and Recreation Department. The weeds push out native vegetation and their removal will allow endemic species to flourish and attract wildlife... The weeds are like chocolate for the goats, who, as low-tech lawnmowers, need only a few hours on a patch of land to do their work... The city will lease the floppy-eared goats from the farm of... a weed specialist who hovers over the goats just long enough to let them eat the noxious weeds and leave the good ones. The goats are about the size of a dog, have small horns and are good with people.

...WHEN [a west Aucklander got married it] included his pet Basil in the wedding party. [The westie]'s friendship with the 15-year-old angora goat lasted longer than his marriage. So the west Auckland airline worker was distraught when his mate was mauled to death earlier this month. A stray dog attacked Basil. "Basil was more than just a goat," a tearful [airline worker], 36, told *Sunday News*. "[Basil] was a mate and... was a big part of my wedding." [The airline worker] – who lives in the bush-clad west Auckland suburb of Titirangi – met Basil eight years ago. "I came home from work one day tired and just flaked out on the bed... When I woke up, there was Basil standing in the hallway just staring at me. I rubbed my eyes because I thought I was dreaming. We had been together from that moment." Basil, who had wandered down from a neighbouring property... became a friend and live-in lawnmower. "Basil was a great character... [Basil] was very sociable and I used to take him to parties with me. [Basil] entertained all the guests. It is very sad that [Basil] is dead. I've lost a good mate." ...[hi]s ex-wife – who asked not to be named – had less fond memories of the animal that attended her... wedding. "[Basil] used to butt me! I think that goat was jealous." ...a complaint... has [been laid by the westie]... with the Waitakere city council about stray dogs running around his rural area.

...OWNERS of road-side goats should get off the grass. That's the gruff message from the SPCA over new Ministry of Agriculture guidelines for roadside goat care. They say the rules miss the point – goats should not be tied up, full stop. The guidelines, released this week, remind goat owners they have legal obligations to ensure their goats are adequately cared for... "Goats need shade and protection from inclement weather,"... [a s]enior MAF animal welfare adviser... said. "A suitable hutch should be provided to give adequate warmth and freedom from draughts in winter and coolness and shade in summer." ...However, [an] SPCA livestock officer... said... "It's unnatural for a goat to be tethered. A goat is a wandering, browsing animal and when you tether them they become really frustrated." ...MAF should encourage people to let the beasts loose altogether, and urge them to invest in lawnmowers... [or] trade their goats for roadside sheep... [to control their roadside grass and weeds. In related news, chemical]-conscious Aucklanders will be able to breathe easily... when the city council... introduce[s] organic weed sprays. But the move will triple the council's weed eradication bill to \$2.5 million. The council is trialling the organic herbicide Interceptor in Mt Eden. If controllers approve it during the annual plan process this week the pine oil extract spray will be used throughout Auckland. [The council's] streetscape operations manager... says... [the aim is to be] completely chemical-free by the end of 2001... [However,] the council will have to be realistic about eradicating the two "scourge weeds" that can't be killed with organic sprays – woolly nightshade in overgrown areas and nutgrass in pavement cracks... Non-chemical methods include... weed eaters, infra red and thermal air blowers.

...Every farming gadget imaginable is on show at the 31st annual Fieldays at Mystery Creek, but [the PM]... took a particular shine to one. Hefting a flame-throwing weedburner, [the PM] drew its tongue of fire across the floor, saying, "I could think of some uses for that." Onlookers were left to decide exactly which MPs that referred to, while [the PM] moved on to the next exhibit... – [the] magpie trap, which has a trip-plate trigger mechanism. [Its inventor, a] magpie-hater from Te Puke advises farmers to give trapped birds a sharp and fatal twist of the neck.

...Te Puke's little furry wonder, the kiwifruit, has spread its tentacles outside the orchard gates and joined the alien invasion. Left unchecked, the fruit that earns N[Z] more than \$600 million a year could run rampant and destroy native bush and forests. Although it is not yet on the official list of plant pests, war has been declared on wild kiwifruit in the Bay of Plenty, where about 80[%] of the country's commercial crop is grown. Battle will commence in November with a Taskforce Green pilot control scheme, sponsored by Kiwifruit N[Z]... Environment Bay of Plenty, has just launched an education programme to alert people to "silent invaders" such as woolly nightshade and Old [Guy]'s Beard, and with these aggressors it also warns of untamed kiwifruit vines... [which are] now established in bush gullies, pine plantations and scrub areas, particularly around rural localities where the vines are grown commercially. The council's plant pest coordinator... says the rogue variety springs up mainly from seeds spread by waxeyes, blackbirds and rosellas... Although tasting similar to modern kiwifruit, the uncultivated berries have reverted to the small, round fruit of the parent species... Chinese gooseberry... "We have always been aware there were odd patches of wild kiwifruit here and there, but they didn't seem to be causing too much concern,"... But council staff began to pay more attention from 1995, when they undertook a regional plant pest management plan, which was adopted last year... The real worry, says [a] plant pest officer... is th[at rain]... on the leaf canopy makes the sprawling kiwifruit vines weighty and they drag down surrounding bush. Fast-growing stems can strangle pine trees and have even caused the collapse of large rewas. Mature kiwifruit vines can easily grow up to 20m and as thick as a [hu]man's leg. If chopped down with a chainsaw, they regrow... Sporadic infestations of gnarled vines up to 20 years old are also found in the Waikato and in the Waitakere Ranges...

Unhappy wanderer I belong to a walking group called the Happy Wanderers. Once a week we hike for a couple of hours through the Waitakere Ranges. A couple of weeks ago we hiked up Parekura Peak and much to my amazement saw a goat on a rocky outcrop west of the peak. We hear stories of pigs in the ranges and constantly see ginger. Many of the tracks are becoming overgrown with gorse and steps that were built years ago are eroding away. What is happening to our jewel in the crown?

...Hunters are being accused of illegally releasing wild pigs in the Waitakere Ranges, threatening the safety of walkers and trampers in the popular wilderness area. The A[RC] says it is also worried about hunters threatening its parks staff... The council's policy was that pigs were a

designated pest in the Waitakere Ranges, unlike the eastern Hunua Ranges where pig hunting was “tolerated”... The council, which administers the Waitakeres, is urgently diverting \$20,000 from its parks budget to hire professionals to shoot the pigs. The cull will begin in a few weeks.

...The vision of an open sanctuary in the Waitakere Ranges is moving closer to reality, with the hope of restoring flora, fauna and species long ago pushed out of the ranges. Three possible sites for the \$1m Ark in the Park project have been identified in a report released last week, and now major public funding is being sought to make it happen... (...Sport Waitakere is running a series of guided walks through the ranges... at a cost of \$5 per person... to help raise funds for Ark in the Park...)... “It’s like a kernel in the ranges,” says [the]Waitakere Ranges Protection Society (WRPS) president... “It should expand in time to include all the ranges... it’s quite special and it’s a huge challenge for that very reason, for people to be able to come and listen to the dawn chorus.” The idea of a sanctuary was initiated by WRPS and the Waitakere Forest & Bird Protection Society about 18 months ago. They were later joined by Friends of Arataki and the ...ARC... in setting up a planning committee. A scoping report that has taken four months to produce recommends locating it in either the Huia area, the Swanson area between the Cascade Falls and the Waitakere reservoir, or near the Arataki Visitors Centre in Waitatara. The report examines issues like whether the land has suitable plant and insect life, current predator levels, public access and safety, and the relative ease of laying traps and poison baits for predators. “We’ve got to be responsible and do it properly, otherwise we’re dead in the water,” says [the]Friends of Arataki president... [A] choice will be made over the next few weeks, “but obviously we need the support of the ARC and local iwi Te Kawerau a Maki.” It is expected that at least five pairs of grey North Island robins will be released into the area. The birds have not been seen in the ranges for about 150 years, before the now-regenerating bush was cleared for logging and farmland. At least six similar sanctuaries already exist in N[Z], though none so close to the centre of a city. “It’s just the beginning of a great idea. We want to see N[Z]’s biodiversity enhanced rather than decimated,” says [the WRPS president]... Permanent fencing is unlikely to be a feature of the sanctuary, though some temporary fencing may be needed in key breeding areas. However, WRPS members are concerned that visitors to the sanctuary could create the biggest environmental problem if tourism is not contained. Public support for the project would have to be on the understanding that not all of the sanctuary will have open access, and that the land would be respected.

...Call to respect Waitakere Ranges... The theft of fence poles that surround an historic site in the Waitakere Ranges has ARC rangers concerned. [One r]anger... says someone has taken totara poles from a fence boundary of a cemetery at Spraggs Bush which is thought to be more than 140 years old... The cemetery, formerly known as Waitakere Cemetery, contains the graves of several early settlers, including the Bethells, Colebrook and Russell families. The A[RC] knows of nine graves at the site, thought to have been the only public cemetery in the area before Waikumete opened in 1886... [The Waitakere C]emetery officially closed in 1928 so they expect there are more graves there. [The ranger] says losing fence posts isn’t the only worry. Often people cut down trees and take them from the ranges. “We just get so much vandalism in the park, I don’t think some Aucklanders appreciate what we have up here... The message... we want to get out is that nothing from the Waitakere Ranges should be taken.”

...The Waitakere City Council wants to name a reserve after the late Kevin Lynch, to honour his contributions to local politics and the environment. Mr Lynch, a former... councillor... died last month aged 76. [The council’s] public affairs manager... says the suggestion is a reserve in Green Bay, fronting land earmarked for the Pinesong retirement community... [G]enerally reserves are named after the water they front so the council will have to make an exception this time. Mr Lynch’s daughter... says the family has yet to discuss the offer... Hundreds turned out for Mr Lynch’s requiem mass at St Mary’s in Avondale, also attended by [the]Waitakere City Mayor... and his Auckland City counterpart. Mr Lynch fought successfully against the proposed sewage outfall into the Tasman and a Telecom cellphone tower in Green Bay... was an active member of conservation groups such as Native Forest Action, later the Maruia Society, the R[FBPS] and the W[RPS]. Waitakere’s] Mayor... says Mr Lynch was a “greenie” decades before it was fashionable, and never wavered from old fashioned values of honesty and justice. “I first met Kevin 20 years ago when [Kevin] led a campaign against a radical but extremely ill conceived concept of re-creating the old bush railway line from Whatipu to Karekare. While some saw dollars, tourists amid the romance of steam rail, Kevin quite clearly saw the huge environmental impact that such a project would inflict. His oratory was simply brilliant and of course [Kevin] – and his beloved ranges – won out in the end.” Mr Lynch[, who] was born in Whakatane in 1924... enlisted in the air force at 18 and during W[2] fought in the Solomon Islands... and Europe. [Kevin] met his future wife... at a Catholic University social in Swanson and they married in the Avondale parish in 1951... Mr Lynch... was an avid follower and player of cricket and rugby... A passionate debater from schooldays, Mr Lynch also authored numerous submissions to parliamentary select committees and stood unsuccessfully for Parliament in 1966 in New Lynn. Mr Lynch believed firmly in speaking his mind on anything from economics to welfare... His death leaves the *Western Leader*’s letters pages bereft of one of our most regular correspondents.

...Seeing the charred remains of cars in Waitoru Reserve... on Bethells Rd... after youths have burned them to the ground has stirred two local environmental groups to hold a working-bee to revamp the car park. [The RFBPS’s] Waitakere branch... chair[person says it]... does not know the figures of cars torched there but estimates 12 cars a year[, and] says people do this because the carpark is out of sight. “It has become a place for louts to burn cars... so we’re going to reduce the size of the carpark and make it closer to the road.” ...in torching cars the ground’s tar seal has been burned away, leaving only gravel. The torching is a threat to the environment, as the native bush is on the carpark’s fringe, and has been singed one too many times... The popular walking track’s entrance gets littered with rubbish, and land fill contractors dump[spoil]. The track is a one km loop, and on Sunday... at 9.30am there will be a tour as part of the working-bee. The Waitakere City Council will provide soil and rocks, while volunteers plant flax and ferns. The [RFBPS and WRPS]... are organising this, so bring along friends, a spade, gloves and energy.

...Trees For Babies – an annual community planting event celebrating the birth of babies in Waitakere City – kicks off next month. Since the Keep Waitakere Beautiful initiative began in 1995, thousands of trees have been planted throughout the city. More than 200 native trees and shrubs, donated by the... [c]ouncil, are planted at one site in each of the City’s four wards every year... “New parents and extended families are welcome to come down to their local reserve to plant a tree in honour of a child born in Waitakere during the year,” says K[WB’s] coordinator...

RETURN of the GIANTS AS GRAND gestures towards celebrating the millennium go, none can surely beat the brainchild of [a]retired King County farmer... [who] is set on replanting the great kauri forests of the Coromandel Peninsula. Sounds mad? Well, perhaps just a little. But it’s a madness that has caught the imagination of everyone [the farmer]’s mentioned it to – from the D[oC], which is providing 294ha of reserve land for an initial planting, to [a]local bach owner [(a former Governor General)]who has agreed to be patron... Land is also on offer from the Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki District Councils and... from Transit N[Z,] which has free land beside state highways... [The appeal is that a] mass planting of kauri would be a... permanent gesture, one that would endure until the next millennium. “It started off as a plan to get the local schools to plant trees at Whitianga and Te Rerenga... But the more we thought of it, the more I felt the whole Coromandel should be doing it...” The great kauri forests of the Coromandel were destroyed... by fires and extensive logging, the timber shipped all over the world (it was Coromandel kauri that helped to rebuild San Francisco after the great earthquake and fire of 1906). In some locations, logging continued right up to the 1970s... [The retired farmer’s] love affair with kauri began after the move to the Coromandel... 15 years ago... A holiday trip north to Waipoua Forest, which contains the last vestiges of an ancient kauri forest, was “probably the greatest moving experience[I’ve ever]” had. “I realised what an amazing species they are and how lucky we are to still have some mature forest.” ...officially launched this afternoon at the D[oC]’s Kauaeranga Valley field centre, [the planting]will continue... for decades... How much of the peninsula have they targeted for reforestation? “Well, we plan to leave the townships out,” laughs... [an] organiser and trustee[, who]... says the goal is to plant 3000 trees [during the first year] and then 5000 a year in perpetuity... Special... planting sites are being established near townships so people can go and “hug and inspect their tree’s growth” when they like. There’s also provision for visitors – particularly backpackers – to mark their visit with a tree. School programmes are being organised and

there's even a take-home pack with a seedling, a stamped aluminium marker, fertiliser and planting instructions... Welcoming the project is DoC's area manager, who]... says only a small 200ha remnant of forest at the Manaia Kauri Sanctuary remains of the once-great forest... [T]he old Forest Service planted many thousands of kauri as a rehabilitation exercise before it went out of existence a decade ago, but DoC has not planted any subsequently. There are also "reasonably extensive areas where kauri are starting to re-establish themselves. You'll see kauri from small seedlings up to a metre in diameter, so there are some quite large trees out there." ...[the trustee] is sure that 1000 years from now kauri forests will once again rule over the Coromandel. "The strength of this project is it's community based. We're not just a bunch of dreamers."

...A project to restore... endangered native plants began on an island off the coast of Whakatane yesterday. [400] threatened plants were taken to Motuhora (Whale) Island for an initial three-day planting, started by [the]Conservation Minister... The... Bay of Plenty Conservancy officer... said vegetation on the island had been destroyed by goats and rabbits but [i]t... was now free of pests and had begun to return to its natural state. D[oC] staff believed most of the species replanted... would once have grown naturally on the island... [F]urther species will be planted in the next two years... The planting marked the release of a departmental plan which sets out requirements for restoring [NZ]'s 223 most threatened plants.

...Not being cute and feathery is a distinct disadvantage for N[Z]'s endangered plants. Bird conservation... is well advanced and has a relatively high public profile. But saving rare plants from extinction just doesn't have the same pull on the heart strings... [However, the DoC] has just begun a conservation programme for one of Auckland's disappearing natives – pirita, also known as green or scrub mistletoe... Pirita is a bushy shrub with leathery rounded leaves, a small greenish-yellow flower and yellow fruit that attract birds. It doesn't like shade and is often found huddled on roadsides, vulnerable to weed spraying and traffic. Because mistletoe are parasites, if the host tree dies, they die too. At Miranda, a population of Kaiaua pirita growing on manuka or saltmarsh ribbonwood will be lost unless they can be encouraged to shift to new host trees being planted on an adjacent DoC reserve. Pirita seed will be scattered on the 900 newly planted hosts and it is hoped birds will also spread the seed to help the plant re-establish itself. "This is the first time we have done this so we don't know if it's going to be successful or not," [a DoC botanist] says. The other threatened plant programme under way is the replanting of coastal cress on Rangitoto Island. *Lepidium flexicaule* was once abundant in Auckland but hasn't been seen here for... 100 years. Possums and wallabies on the island ate it to extinction. Now that these animals have been eradicated, the cress... has been taken to four planting sites on the island's northern coast. The seed was collected from the South Island and sown at Auckland's Botanical Gardens. The gardens have played a crucial role in propagating plants for relocation... Nationwide, there are 300 native plants in decline... Auckland alone has 170 threatened plants... In Auckland, 40 native plant species are extinct while, nationwide, 10 have gone for good, including one mistletoe, two native grasses and two types of cress... But despite the low profile, it is not all bad news in the world of plant conservation. DoC staff recently found a mistletoe species, *tupeia Antarctica*, on Fanal Island, just north of Great Barrier Island, that was thought to be extinct in the Auckland region. "...We've now discovered four other plants, so it's just a matter of monitoring them... [to en]sure they survive."

...One in 10 of the world's tree species face extinction through felling, forest fires and poor forest management... "With 77 species already extinct, this [latest]report has now confirmed our worst nightmare," said [the WWF]... The world list of threatened trees details over 8753 of the world's 80,000 to 100,000 tree species as being in danger... The list is the product of a three-year project by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre, which is partly funded by the wildlife fund, and the Species Survival Commission of the World Conservation Union... "If we can't save these elephants of the plant world, then the prognosis for all other species which depend on trees is [gloomy]... The governments... must now realise the sense of urgency to increase forest protection, eliminate illegal logging and improve forest management,"... The list includes several species with just one tree left... China's single remaining *Carinus putoensis*... survives, fenced off, at the edge of a sparse forest, the victim of deforestation.

...The A[US]n Conservation Foundation claims that A[US], one of the world's driest nations... cleared 529,000ha... of trees... [last year. AUS] ranked as the world's fifth-biggest land-clearing nation, trailing only Brazil, Indonesia... Congo and Bolivia in destroying trees. The foundation said that unless A[US] acted to stop the rate of land clearance it faced... \$A1 billion a year in road repairs, loss of farmland, damage to buildings, sports grounds, rusting pipes and so on... [due to s]alinity or salt poisoning['caused by trying to apply European land management practices to AUS']... Large areas have already been lost to agriculture as salt is brought to the surface by the rising water table. The felling of native trees, which require a lot of water, is blamed for the rising water table. The... latest data on land clearing showed a 30[%] rise from the last national figures in 1996-97. "We[']ve never been in the top five [land-clearing nations] before... It's the biggest disaster as a nation we will have to face,"... said... [the] executive director of the foundation[, who]... criticised the... Government's "bushcare" programme which aims to protect and plant native trees, saying for every tree saved 10 were destroyed. "Volunteer planting just can't keep up with the bulldozers....,"... Farmers in A[US]'s tropical state of Queensland, the nation's second largest state, are bulldozing huge tracts of land ahead of new land-clearing laws. Under the planned laws farmers must leave 30[%] of their land under native vegetation. The foundation said Queensland accounted for about 80[%] of AUS's land clearance.

...In a city obsessed with real estate, everyone aspires to own a home overlooking the shimmering waters of Sydney Harbour. Most people can only dream; even a shoe-box offering a minuscule patch of blue from one window sets you back a small fortune. For those lucky enough to live the dream, nothing must spoil it, and that – it must be assumed – explains a recent epidemic of crime in some of Sydney's wealthiest suburbs. The perpetrators occupy palatial water-side homes and the victims are trees that have the impertinence to obscure their harbour views, reducing the value of their properties. Householders have been stealing out in the dead of night to hack, chop and poison the offending vegetation and they are – with good reason – contemptuous of retribution. Last week, two gardeners were fined a total of just \$A1100... for mutilating 8m casuarinas on the instructions of... a socialite and multimillionaire fashion designer. The National Parks and Wildlife Service, which brought the prosecution, has warned it might pursue [the fashion designer too – who] must be quaking... Towering gums, ancient figs, cabbage tree palms and jacarandas have been targeted by the well-heeled vandals. Most of the trees that are attacked eventually die. Local councils, which own much of the foreshore land, are tearing their hair out. Drummoyne Council, in inner-western Sydney, has offered a \$A20,000 reward for information leading to a conviction. Mosman, on the north shore, has introduced a telephone hotline so that residents can inform on their neighbours. Woollahra Council... has lost 35 trees in the past year including a 60-year-old myrtle that was the largest specimen in the municipality... "It's heartbreaking," said... a council spokes[person]. "That myrtle will take two generations to replace. We are extremely concerned about the impact on the environment. The irony is that people move into the area because it's so lovely and green. But if they keep attacking the trees, it won't be beautiful for much longer."

...The nice thing about being semi-retired, or whatever you want to call it, when neither 9 nor 5 means much any more, is that you get to do rewarding things like spending a whole rained-out afternoon on the internet learning about the Wollemi Pine. The what? You are excused for never having heard of the Wollemi. Once, in a great green wave, it covered vast tracts of the A[US]n continent. Then, about 150 million years ago, it took early retirement and has only just been coaxed out of it again. As climate change decimated its numbers, this Rip van Winkle among trees slumbered on in the deeps of time in a single precipitous gorge west of Sydney, its damp sides so sheer you can only abseil into it. Towering to 40m and 3m round, with waxy dark green foliage, the tree is just as extraordinary-looking in its way as some of the other fossils, like the coelacanth, which have sprung back to life, for it is covered in a rich, brown, bubbly bark that makes it look as though it is thickly coated in Coco-Pops. For a complete history, *The Wollemi Pine*... was published this week by Text at \$A27... "The discovery is the equivalent of finding a small dinosaur still alive on Earth," says [a p]rofessor... of Sydney's Royal Botanic Gardens. For the Wollemi Pine provides not only the missing link between our own equally ancient kauri and A[US]'s Norfolk, hoop and bunya pines, but a vivid illustration of the persistence of life. And while the Aussies celebrate their new genus with unqualified delight, what are the citizens of Cambridge doing? An unknown number of them are trying to murder N[Z]'s

finest recorded specimen of the Wollemi's close relative, the rare and quaintly beautiful bunya bunya (*Araucaria bidwillii*) [– which]... was a rich source of food for the Aborigines of south-east Queensland [d]uring the season they would gather in the Bunya mountains near Gympie for great bunya nut feasts every three or four years when the tree fruited[])... I read a report in [a] newspaper last week with mounting horror[that s]omeone, for no reason I or any other sane person could imagine, is drilling holes in its trunk with an auger and pouring poison into them. I have always loved Cambridge for its quiet, tree-lined beauty, the peace and sweetness of its leafy streets. So what exactly is going on behind the pleasant facade of this loveliest of Waikato townships? ...I rang the Waipa District Council's parks manager... Her theory: some unstable individuals feel threatened by large trees in urban areas, even when they're on someone else's land. There are no clues – police are considering a hidden camera – so one can only speculate that it may be some vile-tempered old treephobe whose car got dinged by a plummeting cone. In my present circumstances I am not at all in favour of things dying, for whatever reason, let alone a unique tree which looks engagingly like an illustration out of *Dr [Seuss]*. Why can't Cambridge rejoice in its bunya bunya, cherish it, do something with it, instead of pouring herbicide into its veins?

...One of N[Z]'s most beloved trees, the... puriri[–] known as the N[Z oak –] ...is on a growing list of native plants thought to be dying of the disease killing cabbage trees. Scientists said yesterday that the country's most common native, the coprosma, was being hit by the same disease, carried by... plant hopper insects... accidentally imported... from A[US]. And there are fears the bugs could infest commercial crops – including berry fruit and grapes – as has happened in A[US]. The Government has called on biosecurity and conservation agencies to work with their A[US]n counterparts in a bid to identify the pests. It may be possible to introduce a biological control to attack the plant hoppers once scientists have isolated which of 20 or so types is the [culprit]... Large numbers of coprosma have been dying in Auckland and Northland. About 50 species exist naturally throughout N[Z], with many varieties sold as a popular garden plant... While the cabbage tree and coprosma deaths have been traced to a phytoplasma bacteria carried by the sap-feeding insects, a link between the disease and puriri diebacks and tree fern deaths has not been confirmed. A Landcare Research plant pathologist... has spent 10 years trying to find the cause of declines in cabbage trees... [In international news, a] vandal using a chainsaw has hacked a deep, potentially dangerous gash in the majestic 1000-year-old redwood tree where [an] environmental activist... staged a two-year "tree sit" to protest against logging... [(h)er protest... ended... after Pacific Lumber agreed to preserve the tree and a 66km buffer zone around it in exchange for \$US50,000...)... The Circle of Light Foundation, which has campaigned with [the activist] to save the 66m tree... dubbed Luna, said the attack was discovered over the weekend by visitors to Humboldt County in northern California. "The perpetrator made one deep and precise cut that went through a significant portion of the tree... While the tree is still alive and standing, Luna is extremely vulnerable to a windstorm..." ...An arborist, an engineer, and a forester were trying to come up with ways of saving the giant tree.

...Two wrongs[don't make a right The vandal] who attacked the historic pine on One Tree Hill... said yesterday that [it] was trying to fix what was wrong... [The vandal], aged 23, appearing in the Auckland District Court, was convicted of wilfully damaging the 125-year-old tree after jumping the fence and removing a gauze screen which was protecting the tree from an earlier attack. [The vandal] then drove two wedges into the old wound... [The vandal, who] represented himself in court... was sentenced to supervision for nine months with condition that [it] undergo counselling.

...A pohutukawa is the popular choice to crown One Tree Hill when the historic pine comes down. The coastal native... was favoured by... half the nearly 200 readers who replied to a *Herald* survey on what sort of tree should replace the damaged Monterey pine... "How beautiful it would be to see the bright blaze of red atop one of Auckland's highest and most beautiful focal points," said [a reader]... A totara was the choice of... 50 readers, largely because of its historical and cultural significance. From early in the 17th century until the mid-1850s a lone, sacred totara occupied the landmark. In 1852, "some Goth of a settler," to quote a newspaper of the time, cut it down for firewood. In third place with 11 votes was the puriri... [One reader asked:] Why not have a huge "totem" pole created by N[Z]ers, carved by both Maori and European carvers? ...A handful of readers wanted another pine. More popular than the pine was a suggestion from... the Maori activist who took a chainsaw to the tree, for the ailing tree to be replaced with "[a certain MP's head." A couple from] Warkworth thought... the [MP]'s head could be joined by those of "...Muldoon... and all the others who ruined our beautiful little country." [Another reader] took the opposite view: "[The MP] to do the opening ceremony[; the activist to be] buried underneath to fertilise it." [The MP] said it was nice of that "well-known lumberjack"... to think of him, "but I'm not quite as big-headed as [the activist] thinks..." The Auckland-born leader of Act said since there had been a totara and a pine, "why don't we try... Auckland's tree... – the pohutukawa..." ...[the mayor's] preference was for a pohutukawa because, given the windswept appearance of the pine, it was a native tree that would bear a good resemblance. "And it's our Christmas tree..." The [PM]... said her first thought was a totara because... "It is in Maori proverbs and mythology... but maybe it needs rather more shelter than being put on a windswept knoll on its own. When you think of the pohutukawa it does tend to thrive, even in quite windswept conditions... and it does have the advantage of having a quite beautiful flower..." ...Auckland City[']s arborist... has given the... pine less than three years to live, after chainsaw attacks in 1994 and last September. Needle growth has slowed, foliage loss has accelerated and [the arborist] is worried supporting cables will not stop it collapsing in a storm... [I]t would be possible to plant a replacement tree up to 7 metres tall and up to 12 tonnes in weight, but a smaller tree would have a better long-term chance of survival.

...Some recent reports in the *Herald* on the history of One Tree Hill have been wrong in some details. An article states that "photographs from earl[ier thi]s... century show three pines" on the summit. The same claim has been made on previous occasions. Only three pines remained standing on the summit after a severe storm in the mid-1930s which blew down many trees all over Auckland... Prior to that there were definitely five pines on the summit, as [one person] stated in his column on the subject[– although] three of the five were weak and spindly specimens not worth keeping. However, [the columnist] is wrong when [it] states that the obelisk was unveiled in 1948. As a young teenage boy I climbed the obelisk scaffold to the top when it was under construction. That would have been some time around 1934.

...Axe taken to One Tree myth... The accepted tradition that a sacred totara crowned the summit of One Tree Hill before the lone Monterey pine is a myth. The *Herald* has discovered three written historical accounts which all show a pohutukawa was on the summit at the time of European settlement in the middle of the 19th century... The earliest reference to the tree being a pohutukawa is made by the German-born naturalist... Ernest Dieffenbach, in a two-volume book, *Travels in N[Z]*, published in 1843. In a description of Auckland volcanic cones, [Ernest] wrote of Maungakiekie that "it is overgrown inside with brushwood and trees, and on the top stands an old pohutukawa tree, which serves as a good landmark for ships entering Waitemata Harbour." Sixteen years later, after the tree was felled, Ferdinand von Hochstetter, wrote a detailed description of One Tree Hill in his book, *Geology of N[Z]*. Ferdinand stated that "a single lofty tree (*Metrosideros tomentosa* – a subspecies of pohutukawa), now almost rotted down to the ground, on the highest peak, gives the hill its European name." The third historical reference was made in the *Daily Southern Cross* newspaper on August 14, 1875, when Dr (John Logan) Campbell was attempting to establish a native tree on the summit of One Tree Hill. The article states that "in the earliest days of Auckland a majestic pohutukawa crowned the very summit – the very crater-top – until the fell hand of some Goth on Onehunga's shore levelled the grand mark for firewood's sake!" That act of vandalism occurred in 1852, one year before the firm of Brown and Campbell bought the One Tree Hill farm... [Yesterday, a] prominent Auckland historian... said [it] had changed his former point of view and now believed the tree that was felled in 1852 was a pohutukawa. But [the historian] also believed there was a totara on the summit for a long time[that was cut down 'for fence posts']. "It is clear from 1790 at least, when One Tree Hill was abandoned by Ngati Whatua, who were the tangata whenua, the place was overgrown with trees and shrubs and it may be that a pohutukawa established itself there." According to Maori lore, the totara grew from a stick used to cut the umbilical cord of a boy named Koroki born early in the 17th century. Before it was named Maungakiekie, Maori called the mountain Te-totara-a-ahua, which means "totara which stands alone."

...Seedlings found on pine in hiding... Secrecy surrounds the whereabouts of the five pohutukawa seedlings found growing on the lone pine at One Tree Hill... [The] Auckland City Council parks officer, says the seedlings have been rescued and are being looked after by council staff – but... won't say where. [The officer] won't let the media take photos of the young trees either in case they reveal where the seedlings are. [A c]ouncil arborist... says the seedlings which grew on the southern side of the tree range in height from 5 centimetres to 12cm. They have been planted in individual pots in a nursery and will be transferred into larger containers when they grow bigger... Interest in the pohutukawa seedlings has been spurred by local authorities keen to replant them in place of the 125-year-old Monterey pine which council staff chopped down last week... [The] Hobson Community Board chair[perso]n... says it is "highly significant" the seedlings were growing on the pine. "The pine has swiftly and tragically ended its life by human hands. What better way than to allow nature to dictate the terms from now on,"... [T]he seedlings won't be ready to plant for three or four years because they are too small... It is not unnatural for pohutukawa seedlings to grow on the trunks of other trees because the wind blows the seeds around from other pohutukawa in Cornwall Park, [the officer] says. Totara – another tree tipped to replace the pine – will not grow on other trees because their seeds are spread via cones, which don't blow far... [T]he council plans to lodge a notified resource consent in January or February to plant another tree... Once the consent is made... the public will have three months to make submissions on what to plant before an independent commissioner looks at the case. The consent could go before the Environment Court if objections are made...

I am left saddened by the... loss of one of Auckland's best-known landmarks. It seems unfair that we are... robbed of something that has been part of the view on the horizon for longer than pretty much all of us have been alive. For whatever reason the attackers choose to explain their actions, in my opinion they did not have justification enough and surely there are more effective ways of getting your point across in a positive manner than felling a well-known tree. Nevertheless, we're faced with the task of supplanting one icon with another that will be criticised for as long as this generation lives. On the replacement itself, it could well be that a totara will not grow on the hill because tapu was desecrated when the "Goth of a settler" felled the original. If tapu could be restored to the site by the local kaumatua, then for my money another totara would... be the most appropriate choice... But when it's all decided and there is again a healthy tree in that location, more than likely some idiot will be so offended by something that this replacement too will feel the cold steel of the chainsaw ripping the life from its limbs and we will have to go through the whole saga again... [Therefore,] I think we should make a big abstract totara tree out of steel or aluminium. It would last forever and can't be chopped down and won't need looking after... [● The DoC] has admitted it made a "bad mistake" when it chopped up some ancient rimu trees for firewood on Stewart Island private land. [The person] who owns 180ha on the island, was horrified when [it] discovered the native trees – estimated at between 450 and 600 years old – had been sliced into rings. "It was a waste of a beautiful resource that is in much demand – just to chop it up for firewood, I was dismayed,"... DoC is considering compensating [the landowner] for the timber because it precluded him milling it for his own use or selling it. Part of the island's Rakiura Track runs through [the 75-year-old's] property. Three trees had blown down in a storm and were blocking it... Staff often cut up wind-blown trees for firewood to use at the track's huts... The giant rimu... would have supplied the hut for a year.

...SEVEN native trees were illegally chopped down at three places in the Waitakere Ranges over the weekend. [The ARC's] principal ranger... says [it is] at a loss as to why the trees were just left and not taken for firewood. "It's wanton destruction. It's a real shame to see trees more than 50 years old being cut down for no reason... I can't even begin to understand why people would do that sort of thing." [The ranger] says it looks like the same person felled all the trees, judging by the way they were cut and similar chainsaw marks. The rewarewa, kanuka and cabbage trees were found... at the Fairy Falls car park, the Home Track entrance and on Lone Kauri Rd. [The ranger] says they've never had this sort of problem before though people often illegally take plants and chop branches off trees for firewood. "The worry now is – are they going to keep on doing it?" The felled trees are close to the road and [the ranger] would like to hear from anyone who saw anything suspicious, so the offender... can be prosecuted.

...Waitakere[s] Mayor... almost wept over photographs of native bush destruction for which one of his ratepayers has been jailed... for 20 weeks... [The mayor] denied that his council was being draconian in defence of the Waitakere Ranges. If the bush had been cleared for some good reason, such as to build a family home, "we wouldn't be jumping up and down." ...Asked if [the mayor] was surprised by the jail term... [the mayor] said: "It is about bloody time the environment got a voice." [The mayor] said society had got beyond the point where people could do whatever they liked on their land... A Waitakere City Council spokes[perso]n said the Crown Law Office, rather than the council, prosecuted [the landowner] and his wife... for breaching an Environment Court order to prevent further illegal clearances after they were fined... for similar offences [2 years ago].

...A RECORD fine of \$14,000 has been given to contractors who cut down a rimu tree in Sturges Rd when developing a subdivision... [The contracting company and a company of engineering c]onsultants pleaded guilty to chopping down the eight metre tree 18 months ago, after being taken to the Environment Court by... Waitakere City Council. The rimu was... planted to commemorate the death of a... [soldier] who fought in W[W1]. The j[udge]... says although the council's resource consent wasn't "particularly clear" on the protection of that tree or others on the site, consent was needed to fell the rimu and none was obtained... "I find it almost incomprehensible that a developer, being faced with a lone tree of substance obviously left for a purpose, should assume, in the absence of specific reference to it in a resource consent, that it could be felled,"... [Furthermore,] a works supervisor twice refused to fell the rimu when asked by [one of the consultants]. However, t[hat] supervisor was replaced by someone less experienced who agreed when [the consultant] repeated his request... [The council] says the fine is "definitely at the upper end of the scale for one tree" and should act as a deterrent to others... [The contractors were] fined \$8000 and [the consultants] \$6000, but the judge deducted \$4000... spent by each party on two replacement kauri trees. The fine also covers... a plaque for the soldier... and... two years of tree maintenance...

Bogus tree trimmers are doing the rounds in Henderson, warns a [resident] who paid \$120 for a few branches to be dumped in her driveway. [The resident]... was conned by a couple knocking on doors... asking if [people wanted thei]r trees cut. "They looked like they needed a bit of work and I needed my trees doing... They did some of the work and left the branches in the driveway after telling me they were going to take them all away... I'm not really worried about my money but some people just can't afford it." ...[the victim says it] drove round her Lincoln Rd neighbourhood to see if anyone else had been conned. "I found an elderly couple who had paid \$330. They had barely touched the trees and then cashed the cheque..."

...A Te Atatu South [resident] is warning others to beware after being ripped off by a garden con[-artist]. The 77-year-old... who does not want to be identified... lost "the best part of \$1000". The [resident says it] had an appointment with a genuine contractor who quoted \$600 to prune her trees. About a week later a different [perso]n arrived at the property saying the contractor had sent him round to do the job... [The person] demanded cash up front saying [it] had staff ready to start that afternoon. The [resident]... told him to sit at the table and wait while [it] got her money, but instead the [perso]n followed her. "I was beginning to feel a bit uneasy about it then. I had a funny feeling but there wasn't much I could do about it." The [resident] handed over the money and says the... [perso]n kept asking for more saying the original quote was wrong. The [perso]n left and the [resident] never saw him again. Her son contacted the bona-fide contractor who [said it] knew nothing about the other [perso]n.

...Tree hackers claiming to be council workers are on the increase, says an Auckland City Council arborist... [S]treet trees with glossy foliage... are being chopped and the cuttings sold to florists and markets. Tree hackers face instant \$500 fines if caught.

...A Henderson [resident] is worried more of her plants will go missing after a green-fingered thief stole her prized begonia. The elderly [resident], who does not want to be named... [said i]t's not the first time her plants have gone missing. About two years ago [the resident] returned from hospital after a cancer operation to find her flowering azalia bush had been stolen. Green-fingered thieves also raided... a... garden on Rathgar Rd,

last October, and there have been other plant thefts. A widow's garden was emptied seven times in three months last year. The latest victim urges others to report their losses to police. "If we all complain about it maybe something will be done,"...

Green-fingered thieves are raiding Henderson gardens. At least three properties have been targeted, some more than once. [A]Rathgar Rd resident... is among those who have lost plants. [The resident] planted \$90 worth of plants [last] October... bought... with gift vouchers given to him for his 68th birthday... Most were stolen a few hours later and the rest were taken the following night... [The resident's wife, who is the] co-ordinator of the Rathgar Rd Neighbourhood Support, says the theft was a shock. The couple will not replant... "It's a waste of money. We can't afford it,"...

Plant thieves leave more than hole in garden... Insurers are refusing to pay out on the theft of valuable plants, which are now being stolen in epidemic proportions. Hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of plants – particularly pricey cycads and dracaenas – are being dug from gardens or stolen from nurseries... A co-owner of Enzed Palms... planned to install video surveillance equipment in his Kerikeri nursery after \$20,000 of cycads were stolen this year... Nursery owners are even telling clients to wire valuable trees to concrete blocks in the ground to avoid thefts. Other people are inserting computer chips into trees to identify the plants' origins. Despite the anti-theft measures, insurers do not pay claims unless the trees, often worth \$2000 each, are itemised on insurance policies. One... Maraetai... [resident], who refused to be named, had \$4000 worth of cycads and dracaenas stolen from her... garden last week. Her fury mounted when State Insurance refused to settle her claim – saying her policy did not cover planted trees or shrubs. It would have covered pot plants stolen from inside her house. Tree suppliers say... it was crazy that standard home and contents policies covered indoor pot plants but not outdoor plants. "I find that ludicrous – they're a lot safer in the ground[," a supplier] said...

The Waitakere City Garden Competition is a highlight of our local gardening calendar. Now that the weather is so lovely it is an ideal time for hundreds of keen gardeners to spruce up their flowerbeds, deal with their weeds and have their gardens looking their best for the judges... Very few cities in N[Z] successfully run a regular garden competition. The wide variety of garden sizes and styles is very pleasing. Young and old, novice and experienced, our Waitakere City gardeners pull out all stops. Although we know not everyone can be a prizewinner, every garden entered gives the teams of judges such pleasure to view. Some of the best gardens presented last year can be seen in displays of photographs at Mitre 10...

[F]loating petunias drop anchor for a drink... [in a]n original presentation at the Ellerslie Flower Show... Gardening has blossomed from a genteel hobby to almost a spectator sport... From nostalgic replicas of "home" by the new settlers, the Kiwi garden blazes into the new millennium as an eclectic mixture... [of] Japanese, Mediterranean... and... American... [gardens in which] the tastes of the individual reign supreme. Before... [WWI] the arrival of a new century heralded a time of peace and relative abundance. The... ideal... of the [English] cottage garden as glorified by the arts and crafts movement... still prevailed... The 1920s and 30s saw the rapid spread of suburbia with a corresponding surge of civic pride. Gardening was felt to be good for the health of the nation in that it provided useful outdoor exercise in the fresh air... As the Depression began to bite... garden... clubs mushroomed, along with magazines, as people struggling to feed their families sought advice on gardening methods and cheap supplies of plants. Children were taught basic gardening at school, including a respect for native plants, while factory gardens reached new heights as displayed on the front of the *Edmonds Cookery Book*... Rows of standard roses marching up the path were a hallmark of the safety and security of formality favoured during the 40s and on into the 50s... [when] lawns became more popular than ever as lawnmowers improved and more people could afford them... But rebellion wasn't far away in the form of... a German landscape architect whose pared-down designs transformed the braver parts of Auckland with strongly architectural gardens linked to the house and supported by simple Pacific plants like taro. [The German] and others like him were influenced by... the... new "California style" of garden where indoor/outdoor living was paramount. No longer viewed as the weekend's work, these gardens were for relaxing and entertaining in, complete with swimming pool, barbecue and comfortable patio loungers. Throughout the affluent 60s this leisurely lifestyle became more and more firmly established – pebble gardens were all the rage. In the 70s the demand for railway sleepers and old bricks escalated as they were used to create "natural gardens," full of native plants... By the late 80s the Baby Boomers had become home owners, made and lost a fortune on the Stock Exchange and taken up gardening with a vengeance. Garden tours at home and abroad became a national pastime... In 1994, organisers of the first Ellerslie Flower Show desperately underestimated the number of people who wanted to come to such an event and by 1998 the show had its own permanent venue at the Auckland Regional Botanic Gardens...

Manurewa's \$300,000 Botanic Gardens noise barrier starts coming down today – quietly. The Manukau City Council has imposed noise controls on demolition of the 3.5m by 440m wall which was built [two years ago] to shield the... [g]ardens from noise caused by the Southern Motorway. Because most of the work will take place at night, the contractors must use the least noisy machinery and carry out rock drilling during the day. The acoustic panels will come down over seven nights to meet a court order to tear down the wall... About 50 residents living opposite the wall, some up to 1km away, complained that noise from the steel wall meant they could not sleep at night, hear their t[v]s or sit outside. They won a case in the Environment Court last month when... two commissioners accepted evidence that the barrier bounced noise onto the properties opposite.

...BEING woken by the neighbourhood lawn mowing clubs could be a thing of the past: Researchers at Massey University have come up with a silent robotic lawnmower that can be remote-controlled via the internet. The cordless, rechargeable mower will be able to precision navigate lawns, cutting to the required height. Right now the mower is strutting its stuff in a roped off patch of grass at the University's Albany campus.

...No, it's not an urban myth. A gardening contractor in America has turned the Smart car into a ride-on lawnmower... although it is still fine-tuning the mechanicals. They have equipped the Smart with a laser cutting device, which overcame noise and exhaust emissions from conventional ride-on lawnmowers[and 'renders clippings suitable for fertilising the lawn']. The Smart might be commercially available from next year.

...[when selling a mower there are numerous blade options but basically all cut pretty much the same. However bar blades are not very forgiving if you hit a large rock or tree root. Such an impact often results in a bent crankshaft which may or may not be repairable. A bar blade with flail blade takes the impact and swings away from the obstacle rather than transferring the impact to the crankshaft. A better option is a disc with flail blades. The disc has fans on top of it which creates a great deal of air in a direction that will throw the grass clippings into the back of the catcher resulting in an excellent "fill". Mulch mowers have the distinct advantage of not requiring a catcher. The grass is cut initially and flung upwards. When gravity forces it back down, it is cut again and spread over the lawn in a reasonably even pattern. The major drawback with mulch mowers are that you cannot catch the grass if you want to, you cannot mulch wet grass at all and you can only cut the top third of the grass height. Mulch and catch mowers overcome some of these disadvantages but they are a compromise and will not cut as well as a dedicated cut and catch mower nor mulch as well as a dedicated mulch mower. However some get pretty close to it. If a mulch and catch mower is set up to catch it is simply a matter of removing the catcher and inserting a large plastic bag, provided with the machine, into the rear of the chute thus preventing the grass clippings from discharging out the rear of the chute and allowing them to be cut again.]

...A push to reinstate grass verge mowing back to a fortnightly cycle... has been clipped. Auckland City leaders voted... against reinstating the... berm mowing service back to twice monthly. [But] the council has promised it will look at adjusting the service to cover times during the year when grass... gr[e]w... faster. The move follows hundreds of complaints during... summer when grass grew quickly on berms [due to] favourable weather.

...Unkempt berms rile residents... Auckland City Council fielded 303 calls... from angry residents unhappy with the lack of grass mowing being done on street verges, known as berms. A city council media spokes[person] says call numbers [we]re similar to those of past years but the company contracted to mow berms... had problems providing adequate staffing levels during the summer holidays... [Last year] Auckland City halved its berm mowing service to 12 cuts a year as a cost-cutting measure... The service reduction was supposed to save \$450,000, to be redirected into "covering maintenance costs associated with the acquisition of new assets within the parks and streetscapes services portfolio"... ■ The

arboricultural association... [says k]now your boundary rights... Rows between neighbours over trees sometimes go all the way to the district court. The trouble is... people are selfish when it comes to trees. When a tree from a neighbouring property is bothering them – perhaps it has fallen over the boundary, is shedding leaves in the swimming pool or is blocking sunlight – they object loudly. When it is their tree that is bothering the neighbour the tree becomes sacred and it cannot be chopped or topped. This can enrage the neighbour affected and the next minute the tree is dying – and showing all the signs of having been poisoned... A[n A]uckland arboriculturist... comes across such situations regularly, and often ends up as a mediator... Unless the tree is on their land, councils do not like to get involved... [T]he Consumers' Institute, says boundary disputes are the stuff of legends. "It's just mind-boggling how stupid – how passionate, I suppose is a better word – people become about boundary disputes." Such rows are territorial... "It's something like, 'It's my patch and I can do whatever I want. I can grow whatever I want and stuff you'."

...Like many N[Z]ers, the English are mad about their gardens. But this passion can have tragic consequences... AS HEDGES of contention go, it is an unassuming growth: a privet scarcely 60cm high, separating 16 Webster Close, Lincoln, from No 18. Then again, perhaps it was not the hedge in question. There is also a 4.6m leylandil tree... and it has been suggested that this caused the trouble. But the privet is the likelier suspect, for it had been a sore point for years. As far as anyone can remember, it had been there longer than either of its victims, though neither was exactly new to the vicinity. And now it has outlived them both. The first, George Wilson, who had lived in No 16 for 18 years, died on Friday the 13th. An argument with his neighbour, Robert Dickenson of No 18, had degenerated into a slanging-match – a regular occurrence, according to other residents of the close. Voices were raised, then silence, then, a few minutes later, gunshots. Wilson, 66, died of his wounds in hospital. Dickenson, the second victim, was arrested shortly afterwards, at the end of a brief siege by armed police, and remanded in custody. [Dickenson] had been due to appear in court this week, but was found hanging in his cell last Sunday and died the next day... [aged] 52. Residents of Webster Close are still in shock, expressing bafflement that such bloody mayhem could take place in such a "nice, quiet" cul-de-sac, and that two such "nice, quiet" [guys] should be involved. Both, we are told, were unassuming, inoffensive English[people]... Both were keen gardeners; neither seems to have sought much more from life than to live quietly at home with his family and cultivate his garden. Dickenson had lived there all his life. But the issue of the hedge had gradually been growing between them, as had the leylandil. It's not clear how the trouble started, but... [i]n one account, it started when Dickenson "just cut a huge chunk out of the tree without asking", on the grounds that it was obstructing his car. Another said it began when Dickenson took 30cm off the height of the privet hedge. Either way, it is hard to see how such behaviour could be worth a... life – let alone two... lives. Yet perhaps it is not so surprising. Britain is full of quiet, inoffensive people who keep themselves to themselves and channel their energies into their gardens – and into disputes with their neighbours. It is barely six weeks since Douglas Reed, 63, collapsed and died in the middle of a "hedge rage" dispute in Louth, Lincolnshire... According to Hedgeline, a group set up to seek ways of alleviating such problems, there are probably 100,000 hedge disputes active in Britain. That's just hedges, remember. Throw in fences, boundaries, party walls and rights of way, and who knows how many feuding neighbours we could be talking about? There they are with their bursting files of sarcastic correspondence, their solicitors' letters (and bills), their frosty silences and ever-more-withering glares across their disputed boundaries. It is largely a countryside phenomenon, perhaps because rural title deeds are more likely to have been shoddily drawn up in the distant past; and perhaps because rural boundaries are more likely to be marked with vegetation rather than bricks and mortar... Last week, the High Hedges Bill – inspired by Hedgeline and introduced as a private member's bill by Labour... – received its third reading in the Commons but was talked out by Conservative opponents. Its purpose is to neutralise thousands of hedge disputes by enabling local authorities to force owners to trim hedges to a reasonable height... [A spokesperson for] the Office of the Deputy P[M]... was extremely disappointed at the bill's failure. "High hedges can make people's lives a misery... This bill is a sensible way to deal with cases neighbours can't resolve." But the truth is, this isn't really about hedges at all. It's about something far more deep-rooted. The judge in [one hedge dispute] case spoke of "a tragedy of Greek proportions". But why the Greeks should get dragged into it is a mystery. This is an English vice, tied up with the addiction to home-ownership and DIY and the general aversion to anything resembling communal living. The English pride themselves on seeing their houses as their castles and see pig-headedness as a national virtue. Winston Churchill, the most revered of all English[people], expressed the attitude best: "Never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never – in nothing, great or small, large or petty..." All over Britain, ordinary, inoffensive English[people] are doing precisely that, digging their heels in over tiny details of mutual boundaries... and, in the absence of a radical change in Britons' attitude to property, tragedies such as the one in Webster Close will presumably become more common... [□ NZ h]omeowners whose trees are illegally chopped down by neighbours will no longer be able to count on council help once a proposed law change likely to become final this week is passed. The... only remedy... would be an expensive court case...

A dog owner in Switzerland has been charged with causing criminal damage after his pregnant terrier chewed 10 trees to death. Lausanne police said the dog, a 3-year-old Staffordshire bull terrier, caused 100,000 francs (\$[NZ]137,763) of damage. The trees had to be replaced.

...A Raumati South [resident] who triggered a search and rescue hunt when [it] did not return from walking his dog was found stuck in a blackberry bush – after his dog had dragged him into it. "[The dog-walker] was well and truly stuck and wasn't going anywhere fast," said... Wellington[police. The resident] and his dog were returned home unhurt apart from a few scratches and prickles.

...The Waitakere City Council is axing plans to chop down seven phoenix palms at Laingholm Beach following widespread opposition. The proposal to remove the trees near Sandys Rd was dropped after "huge resistance" from Laingholm residents, says [the]Waitakere Community Board chair[perso]n... "People were overwhelmingly against removing the palms. There was no way in the world those trees would be touched,"... [T]he opposition was so intense the council will not even remove a diseased palm. "If any signs of a chainsaw or a digger appears I'll have a revolution on my hands,"... The idea was originally part of the Laingholm Beach Reserve Draft Management Plan following two separate submissions to the council suggested the palms' spiky dead leaves could cause injuries... [The Laingholm resident who] instigated... a petition... with more than 300 signatures, [had gone]... down on a dark and stormy night and tied signs on... to the trees imploring people to "save our palms"...

Authorities who angered conservationists by uprooting 1000 native trees from a suburban park have admitted they acted hastily and may have pulled out more than they needed to. The A[RC] last month removed many of the trees planted by hundreds of volunteers on Hamlins Hill in May because they were too close to... a track and stone retaining wall dating back to early European settlement... Now the council, which approved the original planting, is saying some trees will probably have to be replanted in the area from which they were shifted.

...Up to 15 native trees planted in Glen Eden in June have been destroyed after someone ran over them in a car. The pohutukawa trees were planted in Virgo Place as part of a Keep Waitakere Beautiful... community street tree planting project. KWB[']s chair[perso]n... says there's no justification for last weekend's senseless act of vandalism. "The residents of Virgo and Hydra Place took the initiative to build a sense of pride in their community by planting the street trees and they are particularly concerned about this incident... Our challenge at K[WB] is to foster a sense of pride among all residents so that this type of blatant vandalism does not occur again." ...Some of the flattened trees will go back to the nursery for pruning and be nursed back to health. KWB plans to replace the trees... over the next few weeks. Anyone wanting to help can phone: 836-8000, ext 8561... [By the way, a] Waitakere City developer found guilty of felling established eucalyptus trees at Swanson, without resource consent, must now pay what could be the biggest penalty ever given for illegal vegetation clearance in N[Z]. G and A Developments is liable for most of the \$46,000 in fines and court costs, twice the highest penalty previously imposed by the Environment Court. [A f]orestry contractor... is paying about \$7500 of the final amount. [The j]udge... says G and A Developments took matters into its own hands when it cleared a large group of 40 metre, 60-year-old trees for a proposed residential subdivision before resource consents were processed. A tree expert called to give evidence at the hearing described the eucalypts as some of the largest and best specimens in the country... A... Waitakere Forest and Bird Society spokes[perso]n... is

pleased with the penalty which [it] hopes will be seen as a deterrent. [Waitakere's] Mayor... agrees, saying: "I hope this case will teach people that taking liberties with the environment has become a very expensive pastime."

...The woodchipping of a forest has a New Lynn community group at loggerheads with the Waitakere City Council... [A spokesperson] for the Manawa Wetland Reserve Community Group, says despite the group being chosen by the council to represent the community, and attending numerous workshops with council planners during 1998, their wishes have been ignored. "They promised us verbally that the forest wouldn't be cut down. Then I came for a walk on Tuesday and saw the workers cutting the trees down and putting them through a shredder." [A fellow New Lynn resident... describes the act as "sheer vandalism". The 'black forest', as locals call it, was a popular haunt with local birdlife and a pleasant spot for walks... But [a council spokesperson]... says the clearing of the black wattles was agreed to by the group, and a September 1998 plan clearly shows they will be removed. "The area is subject to a development plan, signed off... by the local community board, council and the Manawa Wetland Advisory Group." [However, the group's spokesperson] says the plan [the council spokesperson] refers to was never sighted by the group and the plan they agreed to... at an August 24, 1998 meeting... did not specify felling... [The group's spokesperson] believes the second plan was decided on after the one sighted by the group, contradicting promises of consultation... [Furthermore, the group's spokesperson] says council staff members... verbally agreed that the wattles should not be cut down... [although the council's spokesperson] says the black wattles "are weeds which would be on our list of weeds to remove. They couldn't have stayed..."... [Incidentally, eighteen car wrecks littering Muriwai Beach have been removed in an effort to clean up the shoreline. Some had been left on the beach since Christmas. One of the latest wrecks was a burnt-out stolen car. Nine of the cars were collected from the Five Mile Strip, frequently used for swimming... while the rest were found past Rimmer Rd. Rodney District Council's general inspector... says the council needed to contract someone with the right equipment for the job. "Had we got them out earlier it wouldn't have been such a big job, but once the tide comes through them a couple of times they get buried, with sometimes just the roof sticking out,"... In previous years, Defence Force personnel have helped remove derelict vehicles from the beach, sometimes as part of the annual Muriwai Beach Clean Up.

...Sea clean-up seeks help West Auckland residents are invited to sail to distant shores to help reduce sea rubbish polluting the environment. Island Care NZ are looking for keen volunteers for their 11th annual foreshore clean up and survey of Rangitoto and Motutapu Islands... Volunteers can choose which island to go to... The survey of the collected rubbish will be part of an international study, and free boat transport is provided for volunteers. Island Care's director... says the day is about giving the public a chance to make a difference to sea pollution. The trust aims to improve coastal foreshores' and waters' quality by raising public awareness and involving people in research and practical projects.

...IT HARDLY needed explanation. "Everyone knows the planet is in bad shape," thundered a *Time* magazine article last year. The seas are being polluted, the forests devastated, species are being driven to extinction at record rates, the rain is acid, the ozone layer vaporising, and the rivers are so poisonous that fish are floating on the surface, dead. As... [a] former US vice-president, put it in his book *Earth in the Balance*: "Modern industrial civilisation is colliding violently with our planet's ecological system." We inherited Eden and are leaving our children a depleted rubbish dump. But there's growing belief that what everyone takes for granted is wrong: that things are actually getting better. A new book is about to overturn our most basic assumptions about the world's environment. Far from going to hell in a handcart, it is improving by almost all measures. Those things not getting better are getting worse at a slower rate. Rivers, seas, rain and the atmosphere are all getting cleaner. The total amount of forest in the world is not declining, few species are being made extinct, and many that were endangered are thriving again. *The Skeptical Environmentalist* by... [a] professor of statistics at the University of Aarhus in Denmark, contains a scathing attack on the misleading claims of environmental groups, and the "bad news" culture that makes people believe everything is getting worse... When it was first published... it caused a deafening storm of protest and transformed the nature of the debate. The book is part of a growing backlash against green groups, and is potentially the most dangerous. Most previous criticisms have come from right-wing think-tanks hostile to the environmental agenda. Now the attacks are increasingly coming from left-wing environmentalists such as [the professor], a former member of Greenpeace. The accusation is that, although the environment is improving, green groups – with revenues of hundreds of millions of dollars a year – are using increasingly desperate scaremongering to sustain their donations... "It makes us scared and it makes us more likely to spend our resources and attention solving phantom problems while ignoring real and pressing, possibly non-environmental, issues." ...[the professor]'s book... doesn't deny global warming – probably the biggest environmental threat – but demolishes almost every other environmental claim with a barrage of official statistics... [The professor] says that the marginal benefits of the Kyoto Treaty would cost around \$100 billion annually, possibly twice as much, when half this sum could give everyone in the [Last] World access to basic healthcare, education, water and sanitation. "Kyoto makes us feel good, but if we really want to do good, we would do better to give the money Kyoto would cost to the [Last] World,"... Environmental groups claim, with justification, that many of the improvements are the results of the success of their campaigns... "The ozone layer is beginning to recover because ozone depleters are being rapidly phased out. It's a triumph of the environmental movement." ...Environmentalists admit there has been a change in emphasis – from problems that have occurred to warnings about those that might, such as genetically modified foods. "It is not scaremongering to draw attention to a risk that could have serious consequences if it comes to pass," says... [the] executive director of Greenpeace UK... Indeed, some potential risks – such as climate change – end up becoming reality if nothing is done... "Very few environmental groups are doom and gloom merchants. What we say is based on science," says... Friends of the Earth UK's director, who insists that the environment is facing new threats. "The more obvious and simple environmental issues have been tackled, by and large. But we have replaced smelly pollutants you can see with sneaky pollutants that affect you over the long term."

...Illegally reclaiming land in Glendene has landed a local [businessperson] in deep water with the ARC. The businessperson's attempts to enlarge his waterside boatyard by dumping a large amount of fill at the estuary's edge had led to threats of court action. Efforts to spruce up the Span Farm boat yard led one keen helper to cover old boat debris by the estuary with 150sqm of fill in August last year. [The businessperson] says this was accidental. "One of my team got a bit over-enthusiastic. It was a mess, so we were just trying to clean it all up." The land where the fill was dumped joins onto the boat yard and is leased from Waitakere City Council. Any changes to the land need council approval. While the fill dumped in the Wairau Creek extended the Span Farm boat yard's land area by one metre along the bank, it squashed mangrove trees and contains heavy metals which are polluting the coastal environment. According to the ARC, illegal reclaiming is a recurring problem in the west... ARC's coastal environment manager, says several people since 1996 have illegally extended their land in the Span Farm area and the cumulative effect is disastrous for the local environment. Even clean fill damages the ecosystem of our already highly-polluted streams and rivers... [The] ARC gathers information for court proceedings, but first tries to resolve the problem without legal action... [The] group Friends of the Whau, is horrified at illegal reclaimers' actions. "They're really being very selfish because they are spoiling it for everybody... They should be aware of these issues."

...In Auckland we define ourselves to a large extent by our coastline – characterised by easily accessible beaches, imposing sandstone cliffs, pohutukawa-lined shores, unspoilt islands and quiet estuaries. But Auckland's coastline has become increasingly punctuated by illegal coastal structures – jetties, landings... boat ramps and others – which have been built without resource consents. Undoubtedly these structures were all conceived as enhancements but in reality many are eyesores and some are physically damaging to the coastal environment. [The] ARC Environmental Management Committee chairperson... says the council is committed to working with other local bodies and the wider community to rationalise such structures in an effort to restore some of Auckland's coastal character. "We all have a vested interest in the coast, harbours and sea... We need to assess structures and ensure that only those which serve or are compatible with the wider public good remain." That process has

already begun with... at least 1400 structures in Auckland[’s district]... identified as illegal. All of these structures are at least partially in the Coastal Marine Area (the area below mean high water springs) which the ARC is charged with managing. About half of them extend on to local council land while the other half are partly on private land. Over the next few months local councils will be asked to indicate which of the structures partially on their land they want to retain. They will need to apply for a resource consent for those while making arrangements with the owners in conjunction with the ARC to have the structures they don’t want, removed. Later this year the ARC will be working with the owners of structures partially on private land towards removal of those deemed inappropriate and consents and compliance for those which are to remain.

...A house removal company has been given a hefty fine for bulldozing a protected reef on the North Shore... [The company] pleaded guilty in the Environment Court at Auckland to illegally clearing a... 10m-wide... channel through the reef at Thornes Bay, south of Milford Beach, to move a two-storey house on to a barge... before shipping the house to Northland... Barging the house avoided expensive road transport costs... [The company] had resource consent for the house removal from the North Shore City Council but no permit to disturb the seabed. It agreed to carry out remedial work, but some damage was permanent... The company was fined \$27,000, with costs of \$6114. A[n ARC]... coastal officer... said: “This decision sends a clear message to commercial operators that they won’t get away with damaging the environment without hurting their pockets.”

...*Trawlers blamed for plight of underwater ‘rainforest’*... Scientists have raised the alarm about fishing trawlers that are destroying deepwater coral around N[Z] as far south as Fiordland. The trawlers, fishing for deepwater species such as oreo and orange roughly, drag nets along the surface using heavy cylinders designed to ride over uneven ground. As well as fish, they are catching “trees” of fragile coral that sometimes grow 5m to 10m high – up to 2km under the sea. Some scientists and environmentalists want the Government to ban trawling in more underwater “seamounts” where the coral grow. Nineteen of the 800 known seamounts in N[Z]’s exclusive economic zone were protected from trawling two years ago... [A] squid and octopus specialist who quit his job with the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research... in January to speak out on marine policies, said trawlers had scooped up hundreds of thousands of tonnes of coral from seamounts in the past 25 years... 105 different species of coral had been identified so far in N[Z] waters... Unlike tropical coral, deepwater coral species usually live below human diving depths, although they are found in shallower waters in shady places such as under the arches in the Poor Knights Islands and inside the fiords of Fiordland. Since they grow typically at only 1.5mm a year and live for 400 to 500 years, they may take centuries to recover from trawler damage.

...The A[US]n Government yesterday released details of a plan to ban fishing and shipping in... a third of the Great Barrier Reef, dramatically increasing the level of protection for the world’s largest living organism... Only scientific research and carefully controlled tourism would be allowed in th[e protected] areas... But the Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators... called for 50[%] of the reef to receive protection.

...A[US]’s 217,000 sq km Great Barrier Reef is under more stress than ever before, according to scientists and conservationists. Parts of it are being poisoned to death. The world-heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef Marine Park’s inshore reefs and sea grass meadows are being choked by a lethal chemical cocktail gushing from Queensland’s rivers. The reef’s Marine Park Authority and Co-operative Research Centre... agrees it is facing a “one minute to midnight situation.” ...Tourism linked to the world’s largest coral reef complex contributes \$US700 million... to A[US] each year. Sediment is flooding down rivers on to the reef and silting the waters, blocking out sunlight and preventing photosynthesis. There are accounts of reefs disappearing under... 38 million tonnes of sediment... The sediment also carries pesticides and herbicides from intensive farming... When big weather systems such as cyclones blow through the area, as they often do, pollution can be carried ...to the outer reefs... Farmers say they are reducing sediment run-off and chemical pollution, and [the research centre’s]... deputy chief executive... acknowledges there have been improvements but [it] wants more done. Otherwise... the present precarious situation for these habitats will worsen, perhaps catastrophically... The reef is also being eroded by an outbreak of the crown of thorns starfish, and there is evidence to link that, too, with pollution from the land... Most alarming is the precipitous drop in the number of dugongs – ...also known as sea cows. The conservation body WWF A[US] said dugong numbers had halved in eight years in the park’s southern region; in some areas, the decline was 80[%]... Many scientists are linking the decline to the destruction of the main food source, sea grass. The WWF... says... [a]long many parts of the coastline, the water is often thick and brown like a muddy milkshake... and about 70[%] of freshwater coastal wetlands in the northern “wet tropics” region have already been lost.

...*Working for a wetland revival*... Think about Auckland’s natural heritage, and beaches, volcanoes and the bush spring to mind. But spare a thought for the humble wetlands which once covered large expanses of low lying land throughout Auckland and now cover just 0.4% of the region. Nationwide the figure is 2% but even that is frightening when you consider that wetlands are home to at least 22% of bird species and 30% of native freshwater fish... wetlands also play a vital role in controlling flooding and providing water in drought. Wetland vegetation reduces erosion and silt build up in streams and rivers, adding to the importance of these at risk eco-systems. “Fortunately all is not lost, and Auckland can still boast some fine examples of these important habitats while working to restore others to their past glory.”... [the ARC’s] Environmental Management Committee Deputy Chairperson... says. Among the region’s best examples are the internationally significant, 266 hectare Kaitoke Swamp on Great Barrier Island, the nationally significant Bethells Swamp (140 hectares) and Te Makutu Bay on Waiheke Island. While these are well established, restoration is just beginning at other sites, such as Lake Pokorua on the Awhitu Peninsula... If... [the] Lake Pokorua Adjoining Landowners Group... need... any... inspiration for their project, they need look no further than Awhitu Regional Park which was replanted from pasture in the 1970s to the point where it now contains sequences of native wetland vegetation from saltmarsh to freshwater and an increasing variety of native wetland birds. The ARC is heavily involved in wetlands restoration in other regional parks like Shakespeare and Tawharanui... Note: The importance of wetlands is also recognised internationally with World Wetlands Day celebrated on February 2 each year.

...*Off-colour lake eludes cure*... LAKE Wainamu’s mysterious illness remains a secret beneath the murky waters that are baffling scientists. The A[RC] is calling for further investigations into the picturesque lake’s ongoing deterioration, following hazy findings in a National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research report... Problems were first identified in 1995 when the council noted a marked increase in nitrate levels and... plankton threatening marine life. The predatory koi carp was initially feared but ruled out after council staff failed to find any of the fish. Lake Wainamu, at Bethells Beach, is regarded as one of the most important freshwater lakes in Auckland, particularly for its recreational value.

...One of the wildest and most unique stretches of the west coast... [– where t]he endangered dotterel and variable oystercatcher nest on wetlands... along with the more common North Island fernbird and pukeko... [–] has been officially added to Auckland’s parks network. Whatipu, which includes about 6km of rugged coastline and 800ha of sandflats at the mouth of the Manukau Harbour, has been vested in the A[RC] after two years of negotiations with the Crown. The land was designated unallocated crown land and the ARC has been its de facto manager for the past 20 years... [The] ARC parks chair[perso]n... said revegetation and an upgrade of the historic Whatipu Lodge were two projects the council was keen to get on with. The lodge, built in 1867, is just one of the historic features at the remote beach... It is where survivors of HMS Orpheus struggled ashore after the ship foundered on the Manukau Bar in 1863 with the loss of 189 lives. Four of the highest points around the mouth of Whatipu Valley had fortified pa and tram tracks for hauling timber from now-defunct mills can still be found... There is also a series of caves, some so large they were used last century by timber mill workers for socials – one even had a wooden dance floor. Most of Whatipu Beach did not exist before 1900. The area is an example of rapid sand accretion and it took about 30 years for the sandflats to form a 1km strip between the cliffs and the sea.

...Whatipu is now the largest scientific reserve in Auckland. [The] Conservation Minister... says the stretch of west coast has the second highest level of protection under the Reserves Act and is recognised for its high geological and ecological values. “It’s a changing landscape... and unique

environment,” [the minister] says. The extensive mobile dunes and sand fields are home to native plants and animals... Waitakere[’s] Mayor... welcomes the extra protection and hopes it will eventually extend to the Waitakere Ranges. “...I would also like to see a coastal plan offshore.”

...minor changes to the management of Piha beaches have failed to appease some property owners... [mainly because] the controversial artificial sand dunes would remain... [The] Waitakere Community Board chair[perso]n... says removing the dunes would change the dynamics of the movement of sand. “If we interfered with the natural processes that wouldn’t get us back to the way the beach used to be.” Changes by the board include a provision that any further structures built on the fore dunes at Piha will require board approval. The board also decided fences will not be built to protect the sand dunes, the Moana Stream channel will be modified to lessen the effects of stream channelling and spinifex will be planted on dunes to prevent damage from pedestrians. [However, two] Piha property owners... who have... been visiting the beach for more than 50 years... say dunes blocking the Moana Stream delta have altered the natural flushing processes of the beach. They say sand accretion has raised the level of the beach and the location of the rip has moved, making the beach unsafe.

...ANGER and troubles have erupted again at Piha over two contentious beach-front fixtures... Someone set fire to the... new surf lifesaving watch tower... on Thursday... [The] United North Piha [gals’ club captain is]... disgusted at the attack. “Whoever is doing this doesn’t think. By vandalising our watch tower they are putting people’s lives at risk.” [The captain] says in the past fortnight a new motor has [also] been stolen from the clubhouse and someone tried to kick in the door of the north tower... [However, most locals don’t share her disgust. The r]esidents and ratepayers president... says... “Most of us were pretty upset to find it had been placed closer to the beach than anyone had thought... The design of the whole thing is very ugly and it’s... been a target for graffiti.” Meanwhile, the Waitakere Community Board is angry it wasn’t told a film crew had been given permission to use the rescue helipad by the Waitakere City Council... [T]he board’s permission is required under the Piha Reserves Management Plan... [and] residents had been assured the temporary helipad would only be used for emergency landings... [The council’s c]hief executive... says the Piha helipad incident was an oversight and it is reviewing procedures to ensure it doesn’t happen again... [● NZ c]onservation’s worst-kept secret was formally announced yesterday. The windswept coast and unspoiled forests of Stewart Island would become N[Z]’s 14th national park, said [the] Conservation Minister... about 85[%] of the island, or 163,000ha, will become the Rakiura (land of the glowing skies) National Park – the country’s fourth biggest. Its remote and rugged ...land is home to some of N[Z]’s most precious native birds, including... 20,000-plus... kiwi. Rakiura National Park brings the total area of park and reserve land to ...o[ve]r... 5 million ha, or nearly a third of the country.

...the National Parks Board of South Africa has been appointed to ensure Table Mountain’s preservation. The board wants to meet tourists’ needs while minimising the damage they can bring. “We have to concentrate the visitor usage on appropriately designed and constructed facilities which might use perhaps one or two or possibly three percent of the environment. We’re talking about pathway systems, recreational areas and so on, while the rest of the area is preserved as close as possible to its pristine state... One of the things that’s extremely special about this place is that in the context of a growing metropolitan city [– Cape Town –] you’ve got an incredible natural resource stretching all the way down the peninsula. This is one of the hottest of hot spots of biodiversity in the entire world. We’ve got here on the peninsula 2285 different species of plants... that’s more species than the entire British Isles, or N[Z] for that matter. There are about 100 species which are endemic...” But the mountain range also has the highest density of endangered species on Earth. Its rich biodiversity is threatened by poor management and introduced plants. Alien trees such as eucalyptus have stifled native species. 15 indigenous plants have already been wiped out. Uncontrolled fires have swept across the mountain slopes, causing soil erosion. In 1994, in this environmentally vulnerable area, the Apollo ...oil tanker ran around. The oil spill damaged the habitat of many marine species, including the endangered jackass penguin. The entire mountain complex is under pressure from rising human intrusion.

...N[Z]’s five subantarctic island groups have been added to Unesco’s World Heritage list at its annual meeting in Kyoto, Japan. The Auckland, Campbell, Snares, Bounty and Antipodes islands are among the most unspoiled in the world and are home to 126 bird species, including... albatross... and... petrels... They are also a haven for the world’s rarest sea lion, the southern right whale and plants such as the unique daisy tree, tree ferns, buttercups and flowering megaherbs. Conservation groups have been pursuing World Heritage status for the islands for... a decade. An application finally reached the U[N] Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation... last year. The Minister of Conservation... last night welcomed the “christening” by the international community of another N[Z] conservation asset... World Heritage status was granted to Tongariro National Park [– ‘the first of NZ’s national parks, most of the land including the 3 mountains having been donated to the government and people in 1887 by TE HEUHEU Tukino IV and other chiefs of the Tuwharetoa tribe from the Tokaanu district (the original size was 2600 ha’; ‘the 3150ha Erua State Forest and the 6100ha Rangataua State Forest were added to the park’s then 76,504ha’ in 1982) –] and Te Wahipounamu, in South Westland, in 1990.

...Archaeologists want Auckland’s volcanic cones to be given World Heritage Convention status because of their unique natural and cultural landscape... The 500-member Archaeological Association is pushing for the same kind of... status for the Auckland cones as Tongariro National Park won in 1993, and which was marked in a ceremony at Mt Ruapehu last month... Members of the Auckland Conservation Board yesterday supported the idea, but want more details on the implications of such status being conferred on cones in the heart of Auckland urban areas... Auckland’s public watchdog on conservation issues, [said] the cones were a unique landscape globally and... had been occupied by Maori in settlements of thousands. Maungakiekie, or One Tree Hill, received 1.5 million visitors a year... “You can tell by the footprints. Schoolchildren go there in the thousands. There is immense public interest. The cones symbolise what is important to Auckland people.” The Auckland region is built on a field of 48 volcanoes, all of which erupted within the past 150,000 years. The crater forming Lake Pupuke and a volcano in the Auckland Domain are among the oldest... [while] Rangitoto is the youngest at about 600 years old... [Unfortunately,] Auckland stonefields showing evidence of complex Maori gardens and early European settlement would not be included, despite their international significance. The stonefields were not publicly owned, and as recently as last week the A[RC] parks committee had withdrawn its intention to protect one of the areas at Matukurua...

New marine reserves have been delayed and possum, deer and weed control pared back so that the Department of Conservation can meet budget cuts. The department has to shave \$54 million... over... four years... Natural heritage would lose \$6.1 million a year and recreation \$2.8 million.

...If motoring memorabilia... is... your thing... visit... [the] Museum in Victoria Rd... Devonport... [–] recently named runner-up in the Auckland Heritage tourist awards’ activity-experience category... [– where] collectables range from spark plugs, petrol tins and radiator emblems to three Model A Fords, a 1928 Chandler sedan... a 1962 Cadillac Fleetwood limo... and... a 1922 Rolls Royce Silver Ghost dual-cowl Phaeton... Among some [of the museum’s other attractions] are... eight working steam locomotives... hotel memorabilia, a toy collection... tools... and what is thought to be the largest collection of floral toilets in the world. It is really worth a day, or at least half a day[, of your spare time]... “Visitors will not see everything in a single visit. One person has returned a record 17 times...[,]” says the owner, who suggests that is because it is no ordinary museum... “That’s why it is spelt with a ‘z’ – it’s because our ‘museum’ is unlike any other on earth.” ...The museum is open daily from 10 am to 5 pm.

...LIFE AND DEATH IN ANCIENT EGYPT... [is an exhibition of] *Egyptian Art from the National Museum of Antiquities at Leiden, the Netherlands... organised by the Western A[US Museum]*, which is currently on show at the]... *Auckland Museum Discover it for yourself*... [However, if modern art is more your thing, check out the] mixed media art exhibition... at Te Atatu Peninsula... Still Life will display work by 28 students... [who] are studying for a Manukau Institute of Technology’s certificate of visual arts... The course... [t]utor... says many of her students will continue in art studies... “I think the quality of their work is amazing for people in their first year. They really make people question ‘what is art’.”

...“It’s a kind of westie art – westies have different attitudes to things[,]” says one of the co-organisers of the]... ‘Drive to Survive’ campaign... to help raise drivers’ awareness of the need to slow down on rural roads in the Waitakere Ranges... T[he t]wo Huia residents... are selling framed... [g]raphic photos of animals killed on the road[s]... and a cartoon character to raise money for road signs... The idea to stop road kill came to

fruition while [one of the co-organisers], a bus driver, was taking the local children to school. “It started out as a bit of a joke. The kids and I would look out for road kill and count it. But it got beyond a joke so much so that it really put my back up,” says [the bus driver, who points out that it] isn’t an animal advocate or greenie. Now [the bus driver] takes a camera and a shovel with her on the bus. When a dead animal is spotted [the bus driver] stops, grabs her camera to take a snapshot, then buries the animal: “I just can’t stand the thought of them being completely squashed on the road without any recognition,”... [The bus driver] estimates around 25 animals and birds die at drivers’ hands between Huia and Laingholm each week. Some are native, like pukeko, while others are the less endangered rabbit, possum, or duck... [The driver] estimates around 90[%] of the road kill is deliberate. “People take them as targets on the road, people don’t slow down. They swerve to hit these poor things. It’s people’s attitude to it that’s set me off.” ...The Land Safety Transport Authority does not have any formal advice about avoiding road kill, but [an LTSA spokesperson]... says it is important to think of peoples’ safety before animals”. “I guess our advice to drivers would be to drive to the conditions, keep a reasonable speed, with eyes open and try not to hit them. But we don’t want people to be swerving all over the road to avoid animals and end up hitting a pedestrian or car.” ...[the co-organiser’s] advice to drivers is to “enjoy the view, enjoy the drive, but just watch where you’re going”.

...A [weaver] is giving advice to... Aucklanders visiting her exhibition... Visitors to... [the] show are encouraged to explore the rugs featured in Rags to Rugs with their hands. The display... at Titirangi’s Upstairs Gallery... features rugs made from a variety of materials... [A] rug weaver for 15 years, [it] creates rugs which can be used as wall hangings, or floor mats... [A]ll her rugs are unique and because [it] uses recycled fabric, any repetition of colour or style is virtually impossible... The pieces are all hand woven on a floor loom and include materials like knits, satin, linen, lace and silk... The 22 pieces featured in this exhibition are all new and have been created over four months... Upstairs Gallery is at Lopdell House...

Employees at Titirangi’s Lopdell House Gallery are keen to delve into the historic building’s past. Lopdell House[’s] public programmes manager... hopes to learn more about the former hotel during a forum at the venue on Saturday, from 1pm to 4pm. [The manager] looks forward to hearing tales about the building in its heyday when it provided upmarket accommodation, with a rooftop garden and aviary... [The manager] also wants to display memorabilia from its varied past, when it was a... school for the deaf and a residential training centre for teachers... The building was vacated... [by] the Department of Education... in 1982 and bought a year later by the Waitemata City Council for \$400,000 for use as an arts and cultural centre. It now houses the Lopdell House Gallery, the Upstairs Gallery, Titirangi Drama and a number of small businesses... The impressive four-storey building was opened on November 20, 1930, by Prime Minister Gordon Coates and promoted as a Swiss Alps type retreat...

Having an “alpine village” theme for Titirangi Village centre does not mean locals will wake to the sound of cowbells. The Swiss-like theme is part of the revised Titirangi Village Design Guidelines, which were first developed five years ago but never formally included in the District Plan... The village design should reflect the forest and hilltop setting, says a recent report... [However, the] Lopdell House Gallery director and curator... is dismayed future developments in the village may be to the alpine theme. “It’s appalling someone is even thinking of it. We have a unique area of flora and fauna, who would want to implant an external theme on this unique environment?” ...[the curator] says any theme should focus on the native surroundings and the pacific... [L]ocals describe Titirangi as the “fringe of heaven” because it is on a hilltop... with views of the Manukau and Waitemata harbours... and there is often a cloudy atmosphere.

...*Delightfully spooky little hideaway*... A... Titirangi resident... has a fine eye for detail. [The resident] is among Auckland-based miniature enthusiasts who spend years ensuring their creations are picture perfect. Her haunted house, which featured in the N[Z] Association of Miniature Enthusiasts’ 12th national convention on [the] weekend, took five years to build and comes complete with cobwebs, loose roof tiles and rickety window shutters... This is the first complete house [the resident] has made. Her other creations have been sections, or rooms of houses or shops. [The resident] says making miniature houses is better than watching television. “You kind of get really swept away in it... I didn’t want a really pretty house. I wanted it to look spooky. I wanted it to look deserted and look like it had been locked up for years,”... her favourite part of the house is the garden room. The model has a spiral staircase, chandeliers hanging from the ceilings and lights that work. The... garden includes urns, statues...

A life-size bronze statue of former Auckland mayor Sir Dove-Myer Robinson – known to a generation of N[Z]ers simply as “Robbie” – is being planned for Aotea Square. The move to raise about \$80,000 in public donations to commission a statue was announced yesterday by Sir Dove-Myer’s niece... who was his mayoress and is still a city councillor. “[Although] Robbie... once suggested the civic area needed a statue like Piccadilly Circus’ Eros[, Robbie]... never wanted a statue of himself[– so] we are going against his wishes. But it’s important to mark, for future generations, his service as the city’s outstanding mayor.” ...The council in 1981 commemorated Sir Dove-Myer’s service to Auckland by renaming Parnell Park after him... A tireless campaigner for a rapid transport system and cleaning up the Waitemata Harbour, [Robbie] became a nationally and internationally known figurehead of Auckland. [His niece] said the Auckland Central Area Arts Committee had approved a steering committee starting to seek public donations. Proposals had been invited from two sculptors, [who are Auckland-based] and English-based [respectively]... The winning design would be announced... and [the] work completed by October this year... Sir Dove-Myer died in 1989 after being Mayor of Auckland for six terms from 1959-65 and 1968-80. [Robbie] was also a founder of the Auckland Regional Authority (now council) in 1968. [Editor’s note: ‘Auckland was ruled by a proliferation of local bodies from the abolition of the provinces in 1876 until the 1960s. There was an attempt in 1903, inspired by the city’s mayor, Sir Arthur MYERS, to form a Greater Auckland organisation to administer all municipal services in the whole urban area. In 1956 an Auckland Metropolitan Council was formed as a purely advisory body. However, parochial in-fighting prevented any regional organisation with administrative capability being formed until the Auckland Regional Authority Act of 1963 vested responsibility in an elected, regionally representative authority for planning, bulk water supply, sewer drainage, the international airport, passenger transport, reserves, regional roads and civil defence.’]

...The Auckland rescue helicopter, the world’s first civilian rescue service, was launched at Piha in the summer of 1970... The original airborne rescue crew... featur[ed a] Karekare lifeguard and now Waitakere City Mayor... and... [another v]olunteer lifeguard... who [today] manages and lives at Piha Surf Club... and is still involved. “It was pretty hair-raising... [in] 1970... In the original chopper there was no winch and we had a static line. Now it’s just amazing, it’s like a flying hospital. I still jump into the water though.” The original crew was made up of lifeguards from surf clubs along the west coast. They took to the skies in a Hiller 12E owned by [a pilot who]... offered his services to the Auckland Surf Lifesaving Association after realising [it] had some spare flying time. The idea got off the ground after intensive training and a string of mock rescues, with the service completing 11 missions in its first summer. Since then the service, now sponsored by WestpacTrust, has gone through half a dozen choppers and flown more than 10,000 missions. Today it covers the greater Auckland region, from Te Hana in the north to Meremere in the south and Coromandel and the gulf islands in the east... The helicopter lands on car parks [or] highways to pick up lifeguards before swooping over the water and dropping them off. Once the rescue [i]s... completed, the patient is transferred to hospital, hopefully within the so-called “golden hour”.

...Surf lifesavers may... be forced to cut back on some of their services this summer after being refused a government top-up... A plea from surf lifesavers for at least \$1.8m in guaranteed annual government funding was rejected last month, despite [the] Sports Minister... taking the credit for a \$2m Lotteries Board grant. Surf Lifesaving [NZ’s] northern region president... says the minister’s recent announcement of a \$2m one-off payment is “a red herring”, as it is the same money already pledged by the Lotteries Board three weeks earlier. The board has provided this level of funding each year since 1995. None of it comes from the Government, nor does it represent an increase... The decision follows a six-month government review of community-based rescue operations, the first in a decade, after a spate of drowning incidents on the west coast last summer... [The president] says an additional \$2.6m nationwide is needed to expand surf lifesaving services. This would be spent on new first aid kits, maintaining equipment, training and community education programmes to reduce the drowning rate, and offsetting past financial losses. Over the past five years, clubs in the Auckland region sustained losses in excess of \$500,000... [I]t costs \$7m each year to run N[Z]’s 79 volunteer surf life

saving clubs – 17 of them in the northern region – with \$5m of that raised by the clubs themselves... There are around 1050 active volunteers in the Northern Region and 45 paid lifeguards, who earn from \$10 to \$12 an hour. “It’s not good money given what they get confronted with, and sometimes they have up to 10,000 people under their care.”... • Piha Surf Lifesaving club... was last month given \$3000 by the Waitakere Community Board from its Community Well Being Fund. But... other wards were not accepting their fair share of responsibility for the service. Piha surf lifesavers were on patrol for... 5900 hours last year, did 5000 preventative actions, 91 first aid actions, 15 searches and 135 rescues...

Lifebuys will be installed at some popular fishing spots along Auckland’s notorious west coast this summer in a trial to see if they prove as successful as in A[US. At]... least 24 lives had been saved... since the... flotation devices, known as “angel wings”... were introduced... in N[SW]...

The lemming-like rush of sunbanned bodies began pouring on to A[US]’s beaches as the nation pulled down the shutters and raised sun umbrellas for the summer break. But with hundreds floundering in rips, the death toll rising and lifesavers battling almost without rest, the holiday season is shaping as the one that will change forever the sunscreened anarchy of sand and surf. Next month, the N[SW] Government will meet surf lifesavers to consider their demand for tough laws that would compel swimmers to bathe between the flags, allow boogie-boards to be confiscated, force some swimmers to pay for their rescues and ban others from the beach. While the notion of surf lifesavers as police officers does not sit well with everyone – including those who see huge problems of enforcement – it is a concept that is being closely watched outside the state, where surf clubs and local councils face similar problems of reckless swimmers as well as a rising threat of litigation. But even if lifesavers get the powers they seek, they will remain an extremely thin, zinc-creamed line against a nation that regards untrammelled access to even the most dangerous of seas as its birthright. The 270 clubs associated with Surf Life Saving A[US] (SLSA) have about 25,000 patrolling members, who among them watch over 300 beaches – a mere handful of the almost 4700 accessible to swimmers. Even on patrolled beaches, lifesavers are stretched to the limit. They already have an eight-point plan in place to reduce drownings, launched after the number of surf deaths during the peak 1997-98 summer period more than doubled to 34, from an average 15. But this summer has already given its own grim notice that more action may be needed... [Last weekend], Sydneysiders flocked to beaches as the temperature soared to 30 degrees. And from Bondi to Cronulla, even in ankle-biting surf, lifesavers rescued 60 people from rips, all of them outside the flags. At Elouera Beach, near Cronulla on the city’s southern beaches, a 25-year-old pregnant [swimmer and two guys], aged 40 and 20, were pulled from the sea after floating unconscious beyond the patrolled area. Despite the near drownings and a line of lifesavers trying to herd swimmers back to the flags, Elouera on [the very next d]ay became almost a disaster area. Lifesavers pulled 170 people from rips at the beach – about one-third of the more than 500 rescues made along the Sydney coastline that day. A day later, a 36-year-old... drowned at Elouera and two others were saved after being found unconscious in the surf. Elouera is a microcosm of surf lifesaving’s agonies. Crowds ignore repeated warnings and even disregard rescues from the rips they are about to enter. Swimmers plunge back into treacherous seas within minutes of being pulled to shore; the public believes no one has the right to stand between it and the water; and sheer weight of numbers makes the situation difficult to control... SLSA surveys show that while 96[%] of swimmers know they should swim between the flags, less than two-thirds head for the patrolled areas. Many of th[e remaining one-third] appear to be convinced of their own invulnerability, deterred by crowds or looking for better waves. Others will be tourists who simply do not know better, prompting special publicity blitzes at the borders. A study after the 1998-99 summer showed the risks – only one of the 33 surf drownings [las]t summer occurred between the flags, and 13 people died within 1km of a lifesaving patrol. For surf lifesavers, the frustrations of unnecessary deaths and their own impotence to prevent many of them have been steadily mounting. They have mounted extensive education campaigns, pioneered the use of new lifesaving technology and launched a computerised beach safety and management programme that will eventually cover every accessible beach in A[US]. Yet the drownings continue.

...the wives... used to love going to the beach. Now the mere thought of being near the sea makes them shiver with fear. The South African friends lost their husbands, Peter and Michael, to Piha’s surf last Labour Day, and life since has been unbearable at times for the immigrants. Each has been back to Piha just once since the tragedy – [one]... to show her visiting family and [the other] to lay flowers on her wedding anniversary... The weather last Labour Day was perfect for a trip to the beach. The two Papakura families, who had immigrated to N[Z] a few months earlier and had known each other for more than 20 years, decided to make their first trip to Auckland’s rugged West Coast for a barbecue. They had not seen waves since leaving Cape Town and were impressed when they arrived at Piha. The w[ives] now describe it as the worst day of their lives. They did not realise that it is one of N[Z]’s most dangerous beaches, with a death toll since 1980 of more than two dozen. After eating, [one family’s 12-year-old daughter and the other family’s 11-year-old daughter] took their bodyboards into the water at north Piha for a paddle. Before they knew it, they had been swept out to sea. Their fathers saw they were in trouble and heroically went to their rescue, but quickly found themselves in trouble. Surfers brought the two girls to shore but were unable to get to the [fathers] in time. The deaths began a horrible se[quence] at Piha. Three more foreign nationals drowned while swimming or fishing at the beach. Another w[ife] widowed last Labour Weekend, [a]Ukrainian immigrant... whose husband Yakiv was swept to his death while fishing from rocks at Piha, has been befriended by the South African[s – both of whom are now]... working fulltime to support their families... They... pray... no one else dies... [at] Piha or other West Coast beaches... They want information on dangerous beaches included in literature for new immigrants... a[nd a]re angry that it took their husbands’ deaths for warning signs to be put up.

...Signing up your baby or toddler for swimming lessons has become wildly fashionable over recent years for Kiwi parents determined that their offspring learn to be safe in the water as early as possible. But are we in fact lulling ourselves into a false sense of security and perhaps endangering our children’s lives in the process? Controversial US research certainly points that way. The latest report by the American Academy of Paediatrics says children are not developmentally ready for formal swimming lessons until after their fourth birthday. Any earlier than that, according to the study, and parents erroneously believe their children are at less risk of drowning, which leads them to be less vigilant around water... “Programmes that claim to make children safe in water or safe from drowning are misrepresenting what is possible...,” the report says... Water Safety NZ published the report in their latest newsletter. [The organisation’s p]roject manager... says while debate on the issue is important, it’s important to remember the report was written in the lawsuit-happy climate of the US. “There is also a Swedish study that says providing water confidence at pre-school age and swimming lessons at three to four years is very beneficial because it gives kids that confidence,” [the manager] says.

...A 12-year-old boy was shrugging off his hero status yesterday after... plung[ing] into the Waitara River to rescue a drowning schoolmate... “I don’t really have time... t[o] talk to the media... I’m just going into town to go for a surf.” The drama began shortly after 3 pm on Sunday when [the schoolmate], who was fishing near the rivermouth... slipped off the edge and fell headfirst onto the rocks. [The 12-year-old saw his schoolmate] fall and thought some of the nearby adults would try to save him – but they didn’t. After waiting for nearly a minute, and able to see only the tip of the drowning boy’s head, [the 12-year-old] dived into the water and pulled the 10-year-old to shore. A [16-year-old witness said it]... could not believe that [the 12-year-old] was the only person who tried to save [the 10-year-old]. “It was stink because nobody jumped in except [the 12-year-old boy]. They didn’t want to get wet.” [The 10-year-old] spent Sunday night in hospital with heavy concussion and will be off school for a few days.

...A surge in drownings is concerning water safety experts... Already this month seven people have drowned, including two schoolboys who last week died during a school trip near Waimate... [Last month]’s total of 21 was the highest it has been for five years, and... it could increase further when pathology reports are received... The trend in recent years had been towards fewer drownings... A worrying number of people were dying in immersion accidents... where they had no intention of actually entering the water. “We had five of them [last month], and it can be anything like someone falling over during a walk and knocking themselves... out near the water,”... [(‘NZ has the second-largest number of drownings per capita in the world’; ‘130 people drowned in NZ during 1997’.) Polish police are also] pushing water safety after 34 drownings in the first two days of summer.

...It's a sad fact that many dogs drown in swimming pools during summer. Although most dogs can swim, many have difficulty finding their way out of the pool. Puppies, in particular, exhaust themselves very quickly...

The... self-styled Prince of Darkness, was determined to save the life of his son's favourite dog. "I don't care how much it f***** costs... we can't let him die," decreed the veteran rock'n'roll star. Tank, a pedigree bulldog puppy, had lived with TV's weirdest family for only a fortnight, but [the son] was devastated when his pooch came down with a serious case of pneumonia. Sniffing and wheezing, Tank was rushed to Hollywood's most exclusive veterinary hospital. [The puppy] languished in a doggie humidicrib for three weeks – at a staggering cost of \$89,000 – until [it] was given a clean bill of health and allowed to go home. Sadly, the [family's] joy was short-lived, like Tank himself. Within seven days of his return, the unfortunate puppy drowned in the swimming pool at the family's glitzy Los Angeles mansion.

...Frogs croaking, goldfish splashing and the gurgling tranquillity of a water fountain may not be everyone's backyard cup of tea, but elaborate ponds are making a comeback in the modern garden layout. Very few people are lucky enough to enjoy a naturally occurring body of water in their garden, but that doesn't mean you're out of luck if a lilly-bordered ornamental pond is what you fancy for that irritating gap in the front lawn. Anyone can plan and build a pond, even if their personal space is very small, because water features come in every shape and size imaginable to complement the individual style of any garden... Concrete ponds are probably the most common... Bricks can be used for ponds that need straight sides, giving a more formal 'above-ground' look to the pond whilst readymade ponds of fibreglass or glass resin... can be ideal for an instant effect... It's always wise to consider safety where water is concerned, and a pond is not exempt from this rule. Small children are automatically drawn to a garden pond, so check with your local authorities at the planning stage of your water feature to check whether fencing will be required.

...Nearly two-thirds of Waitakere City residents are breaking the law by not having properly fenced swimming pools. Council inspections over the past six months show a non-compliance rate of 61[%] among the 368 swimming pools checked... [T]he most common faults were that latches and fences were not properly maintained and there was an "apathetic approach" from owners... After re-inspections nearly 23[%] were still not up to standard. Property owners face prosecution if their pool fences are not satisfactory after the next inspection... [The council's] manager of consent services... says they are seeking additional resources from the council through the annual plan so inspections can be increased... [Currently, the council only] inspects 700 to 800 of Waitakere City's 4280 [private] swimming pools yearly.

...It's hot, sticky and sweltering in the shade. You're sweaty, uncomfortable and yearning for a quick cooling dip in sparkling blue water. Is it too late to invest in a backyard swimming pool? Absolutely not. There are many types of swimming pools on the market, ranging in price from cheap to expensive, and in Auckland these valuable recreational facilities can be used year-round... Whether it's a blow-up inflatable pool or an elaborate inground concrete pool, there can be planning, building and safety regulations to take heed of. Every local authority's rules vary, so you will need to find out which [rules apply to your area]... Inflatable pools can be erected and filled anywhere there is sufficient space and water, and range in volume from 25 litres up to 3000 litres. A knock-down pool – named because it can be erected or 'knocked down' in roughly an hour – uses an aluminium frame in conjunction with a heavy-duty high-tech fabric liner, and holds between 1000 litres and 35,000 litres. Permanent-frame pools range from 12,000 litres to 50,000 litres and can be landscaped effectively using decks, plants and paved surrounds... Concrete pools are by far the most adaptable. These types of pools are higher in price and ongoing operating costs, with the average family pool holding 57,000 litres.

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[AN] OPTIONAL EXTRA FOR YOUR POOL [IS THE] AQUA BUG VINYL LINE AUTOMATIC POOL CLEANER... [FOR] ONLY \$455...

The revamped candy-coloured Parnell Baths are back in business. The Auckland pools reopened at the weekend following a \$4.2 million spruce-up, the first in 45 years for the baths, which opened in 1914. The new look has been done in the popular style of the 1950s renovation, which was designed to create the "Lido" atmosphere of a glamorous seafront bathing resort. The baths are among the largest saltwater pools in the Southern Hemisphere, with a 60m-long main pool... The revamp was nearly delayed and the pools threatened with closure last year while the Auckland City Council considered demolishing them for the proposed eastern highway. A petition signed by 6800 people helped save the baths... As part of the revamp, three 25m swimming lanes have been added to the main pool. The complex now includes a main pool and a children's fun pool with an aquatic playground, which children happily tried out yesterday. A new toddler's pool and adult and child spas are also welcome additions... Less obvious but more costly are the \$1.5 million of new pipes and filters required to meet water quality and health and safety standards.

...SCHOOL principals across Auckland are concerned that new water quality standards are too strict and may ruin the summer for many of the city's children. Some school pools will be closed to the public... as principals err on the side of caution to meet the Government's new recommendations. The Ministry of Education's Swimming Pool Water Quality Standards says public pools, including school pools, should have water tests every three hours while they are open. The standards also say a nationally qualified water tester must be accessible while public pools are open... But many school officials feel the... standards... are too costly and impractical. Edmonton Primary School's principal... says his school was looking at upgrading its pool before learning about the guidelines. Instead it has removed its pool... [The principal] claims more than 90 pools have been closed or removed from schools nationwide... Kelston Primary School's principal... says his school has removed its pool and confirms the new recommendations played a part. Kelston Girls High School's property manager... says the new water testing standards create extra costs schools can do without... "I've got a quote from a lab [for water testing] and that's about \$112... a month. That's \$1300 a year." [The property manager] says Kelston Girls High will keep its pool, but agrees many smaller schools will be forced to close their pools. [The m]icrobiologist... who advised the Ministry of Education on the water quality standards, is concerned at the effect they are having. "I don't think the committee actually thought that it was going to apply to other, smaller pools,"... Closing school pools to the public will have a detrimental effect on children learning to swim, [the microbiologist] says... "It's probably more important to stop people drowning than stop people getting gastro [enteritis]."

...CHILDREN defecating in the kids' swimming pool at Henderson's [Aquatic Centre] has forced it to close four times in the past fortnight. [The p]ool centre management says it's a continuing and frustrating problem... [The instructor] whose... Swim School uses part of the pool... loses money every time the pool is closed. "[Over the past 17 months] the pool has been closed off 21 times because kids messed up the pool,"... [A mother] whose daughter missed five swimming lessons over the past three weeks, is angry that children are allowed into the pool without proper protective togs. "It's disgusting that children swim around in the mess not knowing how long its been floating in the pool before being discovered,"... [The pool centre's] manager... says they are very aware of health and safety... "If there is a deposit in the pool then we close it, super chlorinate it and back wash it and that can take up to three hours,"...

[Henderson's Recreation and] Aquatic Centre was closed... over the... holidays... [for major renovations] leaving westies to try the local school for a swim... But... holidaying Westies looking to cool off in their local school pool... dipped out. New water testing regulations forced many schools to shut the gates on their pools – because they can't afford to pay someone to test the water and supervise swimmers.

...PART of the Waitakere City Council's newly opened West Wave Aquatic centre is closed for at least a week following a chlorine gas leak on Saturday night. The spa pool, wave pool and bubble pool are shut indefinitely while independent pool experts and Occupational Safety and Health investigate the leak. The main pool, learners pool and fitness centre will remain open. The incident saw 200 people evacuated and 48 hospitalised... [The council's] public affairs manager... says it is not yet known who will pay for the problem to be fixed or how much it will cost... [T]he council will reimburse swimmers for any medical costs caused by the gas leak and will pay for hospital treatment... Firefighters and ambulance officers

attending the incident treated children with headaches, sore throats and runny noses. At least one child was vomiting. [The]Fire Service hazardous substances adviser... did tests when [it] arrived... which showed the chlorine was five parts per million. An acceptable level is 0.5 parts per million. [The adviser] says at their worst, levels could have been 20 parts... It is only two weeks since the \$14 million centre was officially opened around an empty swimming pool. Hundreds of tiles detached themselves from the new pool floor three weeks ago when the pool was heated. About 590,000 litres of water was drained from the wave pool so repair work could be carried out. The pool won't need to be drained after the latest incident.

...Bad luck has come in threes for the multi-million dollar Waitakere Aquatic Centre... The centre was originally built for the 1990 Commonwealth Games. The new addition... was almost overshadowed by news older parts of the complex were in need of repair. Then there was speculation the formal opening of the new section by [the P]M... could not go ahead after tiles in the wave pool started to crack and peel. However the... opening went ahead as planned. Now, just two weeks after the new \$14m addition to the centre had opened, [the Waitakere City]Mayor... has closed the centre indefinitely... [after] 200 people were evacuated and 48 taken to hospital on Saturday after a chlorine gas leak around 7pm. Speculation on the cause of the accident suggests either an emergency button on the spa pool had been switched off after swimmers smelled gas, or... the button had been pushed accidentally and a malfunction meant gas continued to leak out. The aquatic centre resembled a disaster scene as people choked and spluttered for breath following the leak... [The mayor] says the council has launched two independent inquiries into the leak.

...A faulty regulator... is being blamed for the latest gas leak at Henderson's West Wave Aquatic Centre. About 150 people were evacuated from the pool at 7.30pm on Tuesday, the second time patrons have fled the pool... [T]he latest problem occurred when a regulator on a chlorine storage tank failed, setting off an alarm. No chlorine entered the complex... Firefighters and ambulance officers were called and swimmers were allowed back inside after 40 minutes to collect their gear. It remains open to the public.

...Waitakere City, famed for its wild west coast surf beaches... offer[s] surfers a softer, artificial alternative. A wave-making installation called a Flow Rider is [one of the new attractions at the city's upgraded]... Aquatic Centre in Henderson. The \$1 million installation is... a crowd-puller at overseas aquatic parks, says [the]centre manager... "With it you can simulate surfing and snow-boarding and skateboarding motion." Waitakere... [is] the first city in the Southern Hemisphere to have one... Flow Riders use powerful pumps to generate a thin sheet of water that flows over a padded wave form. Surfers on bodyboards can drop in on their own unbroken wave, feel the power and slide down, carve a turn, and ride up the simulated wave surface. Wave shapes vary according to which model is installed, but the Retro Rider model chosen produces a "dynamic breaking wave," according to [the]manufacturer... The Retro Rider can take 300 people an hour and has been hailed for its safety...

Warm wave pools prove perfect for a winter's swim... If you haven't been to Philips Aquatic Centre in Mt Albert or Massey Park Aquatic Centre in Papakura, you haven't experienced the latest indoor wave pools that Auckland has to offer. Great for all the family, both water parks host fun activities for young and old. Gone is the tank-like rectangular pool, replaced with a beach area... and best of all, waves that... help your kids be prepared for the great N[Z] beaches by letting them swim in a... swell or surge that simulates the ocean... Alternatively you can ride the swells of the lazy river [or] zoom down the hydroslide... Based on the American concept of aquatic leisure facilities... [b]oth... have their own unique themes. Philips is set in a tropical Caribbean pirate lair with pirates, ships, and great murals. Massey Park... is a steaming jungle. After being greeted with a smile, you can start to forget about the hassles and stresses of the outside world by... getting your caffeine fix at the Croc Cafe... doing laps in the 25 metre pool with the 'hippos', lying on the beach while the waves are lapping at your feet with the elephant... sizzling in the sauna or steam room with the 'monkeys'... or... soaking in the spa pools with the 'orangutans'...

Bubbles in a spa pool contributed to the death of a 4-year-old boy, says the Wellington coroner. Troy Julius Matthews of Titahi Bay, Porirua, died in hospital after almost drowning at the Porirua Trust Aquatic Centre... when [the 4-year-old] climbed into a spa pool unsupervised... The spa pool's water level was greater than Troy's height and the bubbles in the pool meant [Troy] could not be seen underwater when [the boy] got into trouble... [The] lawyer for the Labour Department, said when spa pools were operating with their bubbles at full power they "might as well have been filled with black ink"... Troy's mother had not read the pool rules and had not been watching him when [Troy] got into the spa for adults and children... However, the Porirua City Council-owned swimming centre had failed to make clear the rule that a person aged 15 or older must accompany children under 8. The rule was displayed in a photocopied notice on the counter at reception, but the only other indication was a sign standing at the mixed spa pool. When [Troy's mother] searched for Troy, [his mother] looked into the spa pool but it was foamy and [the mother] could not see anything. [A 17-year-old l]ifeguard... was alerted when a 14-year-old ran to his post and told him there was a boy floating in the spa pool. Troy was given resuscitation but died in Wellington Hospital the next day. The council said the bubbles in the mixed pool had since been permanently disabled, its water turbulence was reduced and visibility improved... More water safety notices had also been posted. [But the Wellington coroner] said there were not enough lifeguards on duty at the time of the incident and there was inadequate communication about which parts of the centre each lifeguard was responsible for. [The 17-year-old] had been employed as a lifeguard for only 3 1/2 months and another lifeguard on duty, aged 19, had two weeks' practical experience. [The coroner] said the pair were not given the close supervision they needed.

...*"Get rid of them!"* ...Most spa pools retail between \$5,000 to \$10,000[, but t]his Thursday afternoon Spa International[– which exports spas]... as far afield as the Falkland Islands... [– is] clearing eleven factory seconds for an incredible \$2,555 (with full warranty) plus 4 spas at \$2,000. Classified as seconds because of minor cosmetic marks, these pools cannot be supplied for normal retail... A deposit of \$250 will secure an order... The only 'extra' item that will be required is a thermal blanket... Two types of blanket-cover will be available ranging in price from \$280 to \$500.

...Hundreds of [swimmers] are having... chronic ear infections. Doctors in Northland... are seeing numerous cases of swollen red ears among swimmers... each week[, but h]ealth officials say it is a problem hitting most... hot spots... [for swimming in NZ. P]atients are advised... to stay out of the water for at least 10 days... Alternatively, they could plug their ears... Symptoms... [of] the ear-canal infection, commonly known as swimmer's ear... include itching, pain and swelling. It occurred when regular swimming washed out the protective lining in the ear, leaving it open to bacteria and fungal growth... [To compound the problem, r]egular swimming created warm, moist conditions in the ear in which fungi and bacteria could flourish... Divers were equally susceptible to ear infections from the pressure differences they were exposed to, combined with moisture levels.

...[extreme diving is where people dive to over 70m using only their own breath. Such divers need to have assistants on hand in case they pass out before returning to the surface (such diving can compress lungs to the size of a fist – an action which causes lungs to fill with blood to prevent them collapsing)].

...A Frenchperso]n attempting to break the world record in freediving in the Dominican Republic yesterday was declared dead shortly after plunging into the sea... carried down... by a 90kg sled... Audrey Mestre was trying to break the world record of 162m... achieved by her husband...

The... husband of a record-breaking free-diver is to commemorate her death with a death-defying dive of his own... "and I am ready to be with her."

...A diving company has been fined more than \$13,000 in the Auckland District Court after one of its divers got the bends while working in the Rangitoto Channel. [The]judge... found Auckland company DiveCo guilty of two charges under employment health and safety legislation and Department of Labour regulations relating to the diving accident... [T]he scuba diver... suffered the bends or decompression illness after conducting multiple dives or "bounce diving", with fewer than 10 minutes on the surface between dives. [The scuba diver] suffered pain and discomfort for three or four days and was out of work for three weeks. [The]judge... made an order that \$870 of the fine be awarded to [the diver].

...FRIENDS and family of a diver missing in the Marlborough Sounds were refusing to give up last night. They continued diving in the fast-flowing and dangerous French Pass where David Welsh, 21, of Nelson, was sucked down a 95m hole on Friday... A sea, air and land search[had] failed to find David... Police said it was unlikely [David] was alive and there was a chance his body would never be found. It is thought [David's

body] is being held on the bottom by his weight belt and tank... Fellow divers Ricky McDonald, 40, and Narelle Tanika Te Pure, 33... were... also... killed... Four other Nelson divers... were flown to Nelson hospital. Three were treated and discharged [while the fourth] was kept in for observation... Staff from Nelson Dive Centre, which organised the dive, also helped in the search last night.

...Police will today reassess the search for the body of a diver missing after an accident... which killed two others. David Welsh... was with a group of seven divers... [who were] apparently sucked nearly 100m into a notorious hole... at French Pass... Another four divers who resurfaced following the incident were flown to Nelson on Friday. One was admitted to hospital. However, on Saturday all four were flown by helicopter to a recompression chamber in Christchurch. Nelson Hospital said one of the divers who had originally been treated and discharged had returned to hospital on Saturday with possible symptoms of the bends. The others were recalled and flown to Christchurch as a precaution... Blenheim police had received an offer of specialist camera equipment to help in the search for Mr Welsh, but even if the diver's body were located, it might be too dangerous to recover it... Blenheim CIB was reviewing statements from survivors and witnesses and had seized dive gear and other equipment which would be sent to Wellington today to be examined. Police were also looking at how the divers, who were roped together, apparently became detached from a floating buoy which was rigged to allow them to dive to a set depth of 30m. [A police spokesperson] stressed that the investigation was not a witch-hunt but part of an effort to ensure such a tragedy did not happen again.

...Three Nelson cave divers were rescued at the weekend after they ran out of light and could not find their way out of a cave. The partner of one caver phoned police when the [trio] failed to emerge from the Riwaka Resurgence, near Motueka. Four professional divers went in search of the [trio] and found them in a chamber about 100m from the cave entrance... "All three were uninjured but cold[...]" said a police sergeant, who added that the cave divers'... torches failed. "They had also failed to lay a guide rope to lead them to the exit from the chamber."

...“I’ve screwed up – my wife’s dead and the kids are on a ledge.” That was how [a husband] summoned help after his futile attempts to save his wife deep inside a cold, wet cave. Noelleen Merle O’Brien succumbed to hypothermia during a family outing to Cave Stream, near Porters Pass, a week-and-a-half ago. Their children, [aged] 13, and... 8, were plucked by rescuers from a narrow ledge. A short distance downstream, on her back with water rushing over her face, lay Mrs O’Brien. At a preliminary inquest yesterday, [the]Christchurch coroner... was told of an unwitting domino effect that ended with what [the coroner] ruled to be death by misadventure. Mrs O’Brien, 40, was especially vulnerable to hypothermia. [Noelleen] weighed just 46kg, smoked heavily, and suffered severe asthma and acute emphysema. [The coroner] took the unusual step of convening an early hearing to quell “public conjecture” surrounding the tragedy. The O’Brien’s marriage had foundered about seven months ago and they separated... However, they had kept in regular contact and, according to their pastor, were working towards a reconciliation... In his statement, read to the court, [the husband said it] had the weekend offer of a home at Castle Hill, and initially planned to take just his son. “We had heard about Cave Stream [near Castle Hill] and thought that would be pretty exciting,”... Then his wife and daughter decided to go too. It was an opportunity to be a family again. [The husband] said his confidence in tackling the cave with children was boosted by his understanding that a friend had taken a 5-year-old through. [The husband] learned later they went only into its entrance, took photos and left. The day before the tragedy, the [family] checked out advisory signs at Cave Stream. Wool or propylene clothes, a warm hat and gloves, secure footwear such as running shoes, and one torch per person are recommended. [Yet]Mrs O’Brien was ill-prepared. [Noelleen] entered the cave wearing two long-sleeved cotton tops, green trackpants and borrowed oversized sandals. “You’re brave,” [an]outdoor safety expert... working on a nearby track, told the family, adding that the cave was cold... [The husband] decided to plough on, believing... his family were adequately clothed. “Now... I wouldn’t go in without a wetsuit,” [the husband] told the inquest. “It was cold, but I’m used to the cold. I’m a diver...” Mrs O’Brien’s clothing provided little insulation against a water temperature of 5.5C. After [Noelleen] became soaked from wading through a waist-deep pool, then slithered, with her husband’s help, up a small waterfall, her body heat rapidly drained away. [Noelleen] lost her shoes, and [her husband] dropped one of their two torches. [The husband] decided they should turn back when confronted by a second, steeper waterfall. “Noelleen started saying things like ‘keep on talking[.]’ ...then started slowing down,”... [The husband] recognised his wife was in the grip of hypothermia. “Noelleen was exhibiting signs of slurring, slow speech, slow movements, [and] seemed to have lost touch with what we were doing. [Noelleen] didn’t recognise the need to get out of the cave... I knew we were in a crisis.” By this time, the other torch had failed. [The husband] elected to put his wife and children on a ledge and go for help. “I got about 10ft down, hugging the wall. The kids then yell out ‘Mum has fallen into the water.’ I found her and picked her up out of the water... I knew [Noelleen] was dying, or was already dead. I reassured the kids that Mum was just asleep. I tried mouth-to-mouth for a while, but I knew it wasn’t going to work.” Through the dark, [the husband] told his frightened children to stay put while [it] went for help. Stumbling out of the cave [it spotted the safety expert]... As the alarm was raised and rescuers scrambled to respond, [the husband] went back for his family with [a person] who happened to be heading for the 360m limestone cave walk... [The husband yesterday thanked that person] and other rescuers for preventing what could have been an even bigger tragedy. The inquest was adjourned to allow evidence to be gathered on safety issues, including whether Cave Stream should be off limits... [to unguided inexperienced cavers. In related news, a Queenstown resident] was killed yesterday in a hang glider accident at Flight Peak. Jennifer Hornsby, 27, was flying with a training group when [Jennifer] lost control.

...Two people were killed in a freak air collision over central England, when a skydiver smashed through the wing of a glider sending it crashing to earth... in a field alongside the... Hinton-in-the-Hedges private airfield in Northamptonshire... police... [and] Air Accident Investigation Board... investigators said... The collision... [between the one-person] glider... and... the... freefall parachutist... occurred at over 610m on a sunny afternoon...

A group of seven skydivers has set a world record for unassisted human flight by gliding from a Dutch island in the North Sea to the mainland. Dropped from 4800m, the group of parachutists flew the 4km that separates the island from the town of Den Helder. Organisers said it was the first time that such a distance had been bridged in pure human flight. The parachutists wore special suits in which the arms were joined to the body by a layer of material – providing a sort of wing... Their legs were also joined in the same manner. “It was a pure adrenalin rush,” said... the 31-year-old Finn who designed the suits... [While on the topic of world records, in Malaysia they] keep rolling in: the [guy] who climbs thousands of steps backwards, the largest gathering of old people at a circus, the smallest frog and the world’s tallest skyscraper. As Malaysia attempts to put itself on the world map, record-breaking feats have become a national obsession. Barely a week goes by when novel, some would say dubious, feats aren’t attempted by a[n adult]... or child in Malaysia... To tally all the records, the *Malaysia Book of Records* has been created. A coffee table-sized hardcover published in 1997, the book aims to “inspire greatness within all Malaysians,” according to its foreword. The 300-page glossy features 1300 records in 11 categories ranging from sports and technology to buildings and human achievements. The... second edition, due next month, will include 400 new entries... Unlike its international model, Malaysia’s book turns no one away. More than low hurdles, the book offers Malaysians “a way to be nationalistic” and to do “a lot of positive things for the country,” says... its... editor... a former beauty pageant organiser. That spirit was what drew many on a recent Saturday when a small army of hairdressers shampooed through 1068 scalps to wash the most number of heads at a shopping mall. “I came to set a world record. It makes me proud to do this for my country,” said [one record-breaker], aged 29... Critics say that as competition heats up to set outlandish records, the country’s image will pay the price. In January, national shame set in when a team of Malaysian skydivers, who claimed to be the first Asians to parachute to the South Pole, returned home and grudgingly confessed they had jumped 1800km from their goal. The South Pole controversy has since spiralled into ugliness. One of the team members filed a police report, calling it a fraud. The organiser retaliated with his own police report, which chastised criticism of the Government-backed team as “akin to an act of treason.” Record-making is now under scrutiny. After the botched parachute attempts, [the]Sports Minister... said the nation must be wary of superlatives. “Everybody seems to be proposing the best, the first, the largest, the biggest, the smallest, the highest... But from now on we will be very strict...”

...[an AUS]n adventurer plans to attempt a... parachute jump from... somewhere around 40,000m above the Earth's surface. [The s]kydiver... intends to fly to the edge of space using a high-altitude helium balloon and then, insulated in a pressurised space suit, jump off, breaking the sound barrier as [it descends. The AUSn] expects to fall at speeds of up to 1800km/h to become the first [perso]n to break the sound barrier by merely falling through the air. It will take him 2 1/2 hours to reach 40,000m but only 10 minutes to parachute to Earth. [The AUSn] is planning to launch his space jump from Alice Springs in the A[US]n outback next March.

...A retired French Army colonel is soon to make [hu]mankind's biggest jump with a 40,000m freefall... from the edge of space that will take him through the sound barrier before [the French colonel] opens his parachute 1000m above the ground. [The French colonel], 58, who has 8300 jumps to his credit, will pass through temperatures as low as minus 115C and reach a top speed of Mach 1.68... after stepping out of a balloon-borne capsule above Saskatchewan, Canada... The freefall will involve 200 scientific experiments in the stratosphere and troposphere, some of them linked to the possibility of parachute escapes from stranded space shuttles. [The French colonel] will break a 42-year-old record set by an American colonel... who jumped from 31,333m over Florida. Although sponsored by the European Space Agency, the record attempt will be the culmination of a costly personal dream for [the French colonel], who left the Army in 1992 when its plans for a similar experiment were shelved for lack of funds... Four records are at stake: the highest [piloted] flight in a balloon, the highest freefall drop, the longest time spent in freefall and the fastest speed in freefall... [The French colonel] will take six minutes and 25 seconds to reach the ground on the Canadian plains. But the risks of an accident during the jump are considered lower than during the painstaking process of reaching maximum altitude... "Once [the French colonel] has reached the near-stratosphere,[" said a spokesperson for the agency, "the French colonel] will have to breathe oxygen for four hours before deciding whether to jump. It will be up to his conscience whether it is safe to dive headfirst out of the pod, knowing that [his body] will pass the sound barrier with a bang after 5000m."

...THREE people were injured when a hot air balloon exploded over Canberra yesterday... [● On this day in 1987, an] 18-month-old... fell into a narrow well while playing at [her auntie's'] day care centre in Midland, Texas. Rescuers dug a shaft parallel to the well and struggled for over 2 1/2 days to save a scared and dehydrated toddler... [F]ootage of the harrowing event... captured world attention.

...Seven potholers trapped 120m underground... are feared dead, despite desperate efforts to save them... 100 safety experts gathered at the Vitelles grotto in southwest France are being hampered by continued heavy rain which swelled subterranean rivers and trapped the [potholers] last Thursday week. Conditions have further deteriorated as repeated rescue attempts have worn away any secure footholds. One rescuer has been injured trying to secure a positioning beacon for one of the three drills involved in the rescue. A second team... was sent to recover him and one member was also injured... Rescuers are pinning their hopes that the highly experienced potholers found shelter from the rapidly rising waters.

...Eight Swiss potholers have emerged safe and sound from a cave in eastern France where they spent three days trapped by flooding. Rescuers used dynamite to unblock the flood waters. The eight – seven students in their 20s and the leader of the inexperienced expedition – rose through the entrance to the cavity... to cheers and sighs of relief from... 250 rescuers who worked day and night since last Thursday... The novice Swiss potholers were caught off-guard by a sudden rain-storm... and forced to take refuge... [from the] floodwaters... on a rock ledge... 80m from the mouth of the cave... Divers swam through the water channel which had trapped the potholers in the cave to bring food, drinking water, blankets and heating equipment but the final rescue was held off while teams on the surface worked to drain the waters... [It has not been long since] an equally big rescue operation was mounted to hoist seven experienced potholers out of a flooded cave in southwestern France, where they survived on tinned sardines and chestnuts.

...A[n Auckland]er... escaped from a wall of water in the Swiss Alps minutes before it swept away her husband of two years... John Roe, aged 30, of Hamilton, was last night missing, feared drowned, after a flash flood swept through a stream near the central alpine resort of Interlaken yesterday. Unconfirmed reports late last night said a Rotorua [resident] was also killed in the accident. Two other N[Zers from]... Christchurch... and Wellington... survived the torrent... [The Auckland]er and her husband were among 44 travellers on a Contiki tour who decided to try the adventure sport of canyoning, which involves swimming and sliding downstream in fast-flowing rivers wearing wetsuits and helmets, and often using ropes. The accident – caused by a sudden storm which turned a narrow canyon into a raging torrent – shattered the couple's dream of a working holiday in England. They left N[Z] a month ago and were due in London on Saturday. At least 11 N[Z]ers were on the tour, but not all went canyoning... [A] group of 52 people, including guides, [were] canyoning on the Saxeten brook... 60km southeast of... Berne. The accident was discovered... by a local jogger, who saw bodies floating into Lake Brienz... [The] Wellington student... tried desperately to relax as [it] was swept down about six waterfalls and pounded against rocks... Gasping for air whenever... the 22-year-old... surfaced, [it]... knew his best chance was to make his body go limp and let the current sweep him to safety. And his luck held, though it was a rough ride. [The student] landed on rocks and was pulled unconscious from the river. Doctors suspected [the student] had broken his back in the accident, but by last night it seemed [the Wellingtonian] had escaped with severe bruising. [The student], who was starting a working holiday, was abseiling down a canyon into the river when the sudden torrent struck.

...Swiss flood victim laid to rest... Despite his lust for speed and adventure, Jon Roe always chose the slowest queue at the movie theatres... Yesterday 400 relatives and friends turned out for his funeral at the Hamilton Gardens Pavilion to recall those quirks. Mr Roe, aged 30, died two weeks ago when a rolling wall of water and rock tumbled his body down a stream in Switzerland – a disaster that also killed 20 other tourists. His wife... aged 24, survived the flash flood at Saxeten Brook. Yesterday's funeral was especially bitter for the Rev... who officiated at the couple's wedding just three years ago. "I've got a real knot in my stomach... They were the prince and the princess." Others spoke of a passionate sports[perso]n with sparkling eyes and a cheeky grin, a canny marketing manager with a love of music, animals and Indian food... Swiss authorities are still investigating the disaster. They refused to let [the victim's wife] see her husband's body at first because of its horrific injuries, but later relented. [The wife] has praised tour operators Contiki and Swissair for helping with grief counselling and accommodation. The couple took the trip so they could spend time together after four months working apart in Auckland and Hamilton. Mr Roe was buried at Whatawhata Cemetery.

...EIGHT people will stand trial for a Swiss canyoning accident... [in which] eighteen tourists and three guides died... The group were trapped as they took part in a thrill-seeking excursion organised by an extreme sports company, Adventure World. Kiwis John Roe from Hamilton and river guide Andrew Lee, from Rotorua, were among the victims. Six other N[Z]ers survived the... canyoning adventure which went tragically wrong. A rival canyoning company cancelled a trip around the same time that Adventure World's ill-fated tour went ahead. A preliminary inquiry into the accident... has just finished. Eleven people from Adventure World – including five guides who survived the accident – were under suspicion of negligent homicide. One of the guides was also a Kiwi. T[he t]op whitewater kayaker... from Christchurch was cleared and will not face criminal charges. [A] Swiss investigating magistrate... was looking into reports that guides had been threatened with the sack if they cancelled trips. Adventure World closed down... after an American bungee jumper plunged to his death. An inquiry found the bungee rope was too long.

...An... [American] developed a speech impediment, a severe depressive disorder and was unable to work for a year after [it] saw his wife fall out of a raft and drown. This week... [the] American teaching in Hawaii, received a secret payout for the mental trauma [it] suffered after 26-year-old Carol Palmer's death in 1995. The payout highlights the need for clear legislation on nervous shock claims and is likely to have effects beyond the adventure travel industry. The [American]s, holidaying in N[Z], decided to take a rafting trip down the Shotover River with Danes Shotover Rafts, a venture approved by the Queenstown Lakes District Council. The raft was swept down a rapid known as "the Toaster," and Mrs Palmer was thrown in to the water. Her lifejacket became snagged on a submerged log and her body was found wedged against a rock. [The husband] filed a

mental trauma claim in the High Court at Invercargill against the council, the now-defunct Danes Shotover Rafts Ltd, [the]harbourmaster... and his company Tuawera Operations... The defendants had unsuccessfully appealed to strike out his claim on the grounds that the Accident Rehabilitation and Compensation Act precluded him from suing for mental injuries... [The] head of Brookfields medical law team in Auckland, said it was disappointing that the case did not make it to court... If [the American]'s claim had then succeeded in the High Court, it would have set a legal precedent for mental trauma claims... [However, the American]'s Queenstown lawyer... said that even though the claim was settled out of court, [i]t... “...really reinforces the need for people... [in] the adventure tourism industry... to take safety considerations seriously.” But adventure tourism operators spoken to by the *Herald* said safety concerns had long been addressed by operators...

Eleven jetboat passengers were injured yesterday when their craft slammed into a rock wall on the Shotover River near Queenstown. The jet was operated by Shotover Jet, which bills itself as “the world’s most exciting jetboat ride”... The... Queenstown police chief... said the jetboat, riding downstream, collided with a rock wall near the entrance to an area known as The Second Gorge... Jetboats travel at high speed through the steep gorge, travelling close to the rock face to give a thrillseeking ride... The company... said it was too early to say what had caused the accident. The company immediately halted its operations for the day and alerted relevant authorities... Yesterday’s accident is the second on the Shotover River this week. On Tuesday, Yoly Nim Yan Chi, 19, an Otago University medical student, drowned after falling from a Queenstown Rafting raft into the swift-flowing river in part of the Mother rapid known as Toilet. Ms Chi’s body was trapped underwater for more than an hour. Her death was the 40th adventure tourism-related accident in the Southern Lakes area since January 1997... [□ A Winton resident who is] married with three sons, aged 19, 14 and 12... died during a jetboat race on the Waimakariri River, north of Christchurch, yesterday... Allan Wayne Baxter, 47... was a navigator in a boat which hit a pressure wave and flipped, trapping him underneath. Police and the Maritime Safety Authority are investigating.

...*Jetboat scrutiny* THE M[SA] will conduct a safety review of the commercial jetboat industry, following a number of accidents in the past 12 months. The review will analyse present and future safety issues to identify and remedy safety risks... The authority yesterday released reports on two accidents on the Shotover River... both involving Shotover Jet. The first... happened when engine failure caused the boat to run into two rocks at the river’s edge. The second... was caused when the boat’s steering jammed and it hit a rock. Reports into both accidents recommended mechanical changes to or systematic upgrading of parts of the fleet and improvements and regular reviews to safety systems. The managing director of Shotover Jet... said the firm had acted on all the recommendations. [The director also] said his company welcomed the safety review.

...*Rising demand for thrill-seeking is creating a boom in N[Z]'s adventure tourism business. But how safe is it?* ...FOR A split second after stepping off the Sky Tower you will feel as if you have made the biggest mistake in your soon-to-be-shortened life. “It’s probably the longest half a second in the world,” says the [operator] behind Auckland’s newest high-adrenalin attraction... Even when the allegedly gentle and reassuring tug of the jump cable kicks in, you will still be plummeting feet-first towards the city landscape at 60km/h. Your stomach will have disappeared. Terminal velocity for a human body is around 200km/h but [the operator] adds cheerfully that you cannot really tell the difference – until you come to a smooth stop near the ground... The 192m, \$195 Sky Jump opens to the public today with television celebrities among the first to put themselves on the line. When they get their breath back they can claim to have made the second highest controlled leap in the world, after a South African bungy drop. It will be the highest tower jump, and the only one using a cable system pioneered by thrill-seeking guides at Waitomo. Next year the tower will also host a guided tourist climb up its mast to a crow’s nest 275m above the ground. The city’s other [hu]man-made icon, the Harbour Bridge, made its adventure tourism debut last week, with [the P]M... joining the first guided tour around and over the main arches 65m above the harbour. [An ‘officially-sanctioned bungy-jump from the bridge into the water’ is scheduled to begin operating shortly]... A massive flying fox said to be the world’s largest and “most thrilling” is about to open near Taihape. Slung 180m above the river bed in the Mokai Gorge, riders of the 1.1km wire can reach a giddy 160km/h... The new attractions are capitalising on N[Z]’s tourist-grabbing reputation as being not only clean and green, but extreme. Bungy-jumping and white-water rafting put the country on the adventure map in the past decade and the continued demand for thrills has seen innovative ways to make the scenery come alive. The question that hangs over this burgeoning and lucrative industry – backpackers spend more than \$650 million a year here – is safety. It is a sometimes uneasy balance between government bodies upholding safety standards and operators offering activities which by their definition depend on risk. Adventure tourism operators acknowledge a “[i]t’ll be alright” attitude in the industry’s younger days, but say that is disappearing. A generic standard for adventure businesses is being developed, allied to specific standards for activities as diverse as horse trekking and jet boating. In downtown Auckland young tourists on a highly charged tour of the country are philosophical about the risks. “I just put my life in their hands and hope they are not cowboy operators,” says [a] 26-year-old Irish traveller... who has been skydiving, rafting and jetboating. “It’s just something you have to do when you get here.” [But one]Swedish tourist... probably wishes [it] hadn’t. The 29-year-old returned home last weekend after spending most of her N[Z] holiday in hospital after an accident at the Fly-By-Wire adventure ride near Queenstown. [The Swede] received two broken arms and other upper body injuries when the rocket-shaped plane, suspended on wires and able to reach speeds of up to 145km/h, crashed into safety handrails three weeks ago. The accident... followed the death of a white-water rafter on the Shotover River, a jetboat accident on the same river which injured 11 people, a hang glider crash which left the pilot with serious spinal injuries, and a paragliding mishap where a 12-year-old girl slipped from her tandem harness, receiving serious injuries. No overall statistics are kept on those killed or injured in adventure tourism. But in a study published this year for Massey University’s department of management and international business, researchers found eight out of every 100,000 overseas visitors were sent to hospital as a result of adventure tourist activities between 1982 and 1996. That compared to 12 out of 100,000 tourists hospitalised from vehicle accidents. Although international comparisons were not available, the authors argue the rate was unacceptably high given the relatively low exposure to adventure tourism compared to driving. But a breakdown of the accident sources showed unguided, independent activities, such as skiing and mountaineering, had the highest injury counts... Despite the perceived high risk, bungy jumping has had one of the lowest injury rates and no deaths. The study found cases of smaller operators putting the pressure to make profits ahead of safety concerns, for example, by carrying on in marginal weather. The researchers argued for greater regulation in some activities but acknowledged “there is a delicate balance to be struck between ensuring that tourism businesses are not swamped by bureaucracy and red tape, while their clients are offered an experience that falls within internationally acceptable levels of risk and injury”... [The operator] whose Waitomo Adventures Ltd won Sky City’s backing for the tower jump, says when [it] started in the adventure industry 13 years ago a “wild west” mentality prevailed among some operators. “In the old days you used to employ people who were recreational climbers and cavers and put them in charge of tourists. It was not such a bright thing to do. Just because you are good at something and can keep yourself safe does not mean you understand risk management for clients.” [The operator] says today the attitude is different. His Lost World caving operation, which includes a 100m abseil and underground river journey, has never had a life-threatening injury to a client since it began in 1988.

...Residents and cave operators at Waitomo want the D[OC] to ban commercial caving in one of N[Z]’s largest caves. The part-owners of the Gardners Gut cave[, which was]... discovered in 1957... say it has suffered the equivalent of hundreds of thousands of years’ worth of damage in the past 10 years... [as a result of] significantly increased use... [by] commercial adventure tourist[s]... The 13km cave, located in the Ruakuri Cave system, is the longest in the North Island and the Speleological Society classifies it as nationally significant... [One of the part-owners said]large, “unruly” groups had open slather. Rock formations including massive stalagmites were damaged and mud was being trekked through the cave[, whose walls were now covered]... in graffiti... “It’s a real mess and disgrace. The cave is not an endless resource. The damage is irreversible and the rehabilitation process is slow.” ...a 1998 earth science masters thesis on the impact of recreational caving... suggested that management changes

were needed to ensure that the impact of visitors was at an acceptable level... But... [DoC's] King Country manager... said... "It is better that the public has access to a cave which has already been weathered by traffic and tighter restrictions are [only] placed on untouched caves." ...[this approach is unlikely to please residents and Waitomo cave operators], particularly those who] want DoC to stop Black Water Rafting conducting tours through Gardners Gut. The company has run them for at least 10 years without a licence. [The DoC manager] said Black Water Rafting's educational tours were not illegal because they were not strictly commercial... but the department has now asked the company to apply for a licence. [The DoC manager also] said Black Water Rafting was originally given permission to operate in Gardners Gut by the Tourist Hotel Corporation, which managed the reserve until 1990... Black Water Rafting's [licence] application hearing was due to start last week but was postponed after the department bowed to pressure... [from] local cave operators... [Their spokesperson, the managing director of] Waitomo Adventures... said... [they] were appalled that Black Water Rafting did not have to meet the same standards as other operators. "Black Water Rafting has made a profit from using a public asset for free but has not been required to stipulate management plans or make any financial contributions to maintaining the cave or limiting the damage." Black Water Rafting's director... said the cave had been damaged by unmanaged recreational cavers... [but agreed that] regular monitoring and a management plan for the entire system was needed to prevent further damage.

...[Caves are found in many types of rock but are most common in limestone, dolomite, and gypsum, which are readily dissolved by ground water. Such caves are called solution caves. Caves in the form of lava tubes, some several miles long, are common in extensive lava fields, particularly in the western part of North America. These caves are formed when successive lava beds from volcanic eruptions cool and solidify, trapping liquid lava that leaves open tubes when it escapes to flow to the surface. A third type of cave is found along sea shores or lakeshores where the shoreline is cliffed or steep in slope. Waves attack zones of weakness in the face of the shore, and cut openings in the rocks which eventually develop into large cavelike passages. Small caverns also develop along fissures, joints, or faults where slight movements of the rock give rise to small openings. Caves are generally located in areas known as karst lands. *Karst* is the surface expression of the subterranean solution of limestone that develops caverns. Karst landscapes are pitted with sinkholes, vertical shafts, and long blind valleys that lack surface outlets. The most famous of the karst and cavern areas in North America are in Kentucky and Tennessee. In these states, and in adjacent areas of Indiana and Illinois, there are over 20,000 sq miles of limestone that are "karstified." Sinkholes dot much of the landscape and in places there are as many as 1000 sinks per sq mile. On the plateau surrounding Mammoth Cave in central Kentucky there are sinkholes over 1 mile in diameter with steep slopes over 300 feet deep that have resulted from the collapse and subsequent solution of underground chambers. Passages in these caves are mainly large galleries extending for miles; gypsum is often present. Mammoth Cave, discovered in 1799, and the connecting Flint Ridge System, have over 150 miles of known passageways. Mammoth Cave National Park was created in 1936. In the same region with Mammoth Cave are five other large commercial caves, including Crystal Cave, which was owned and developed by Floyd Collins, whose death in a small cave nearby attracted worldwide attention in 1925. Most people who visit caves tour those that have been developed for commercial purposes (in the US there are about 130 caves opened commercially, and throughout the rest of the world there is probably an equal number). Commercial caves have graded paths, elevators, and in the case of Postumia Grotto in Italy, an electric tramway to make passage through the cave safe. Electric lights are now extensively used. The Pyrenees of southern France, near Grenoble, contain the world's deepest known cave, called the Beses de la Pierre Saint-Martin, with a reported depth of 3,842 feet below its entrance. In eastern Belgium and western Germany are caverns that are well known because of the remains of ancient people found in them. In the Urals and the Caucasus are extensive caverns and karst, some of which are important for the presence of radium. Other noted cavern areas are in central England, North Africa, southeast Asia, and in parts of southern and southeastern Australia. The study of caves is known as speleology, and those who explore caves are called speleologists or spelunkers. Aside from their interest as tourist attractions, caves are being commercially exploited only to a limited degree at present. Natural caves have been considered for use as shelters in warfare but in general have been found unsuitable because of the irregular size of passages and the danger of flooding. However, prior to the development of modern chemical methods they were an important source of saltpeter, used in the manufacture of gunpowder. Large deposits of guano, sand and clay in many caves have also proved to be economically valuable.]

...The Eden Project, a "living garden" that has attracted worldwide interest from architects and horticulturalists, is set to open tomorrow in eight giant domes built into the side of a disused claypit. The... £80 million... scheme – underway since 1988 – will house two... ETFE (ethylene tetrafluoroethylene)... covered climate zones and one outdoor zone designed as a living museum and education centre for thousands of plant exhibits... The larger dome, 240m long, 110m wide and 55m high, is called Humid Tropics. It recreates the climate and vegetation of Amazonia, Oceania, Malaysia and West Africa. The smaller dome is called the Warm Temperature region. Here the climate is similar to the Mediterranean, South Africa and California. A third zone, called the Temperate Zone... contains plants from countries such as China, Japan, New Zealand...

NZ has been voted best long-haul destination for the third year in Britain's *Guardian/Observer* travel awards, but, says the *Observer*... take a book... Two of my best friends are Kiwis who, when I told them I was going to N[Z], independently said almost exactly the same thing. "Beautiful scenery," they said, "really nice friendly people – you'll hate it." At the time, this seemed rather hurtful: I know exactly what they meant. N[Z] is truly paradise in many ways – clean, unspoiled, virginal, with sparkling air and staggering landscapes everywhere you look. It has snow-capped mountains, glorious forests, untouched beaches, fjords, glaciers, volcanoes, geysers, mud pools, desert islands – the best of English and Scottish landscape plus all the exciting bits from your school geography books. And no snakes! No predators, no leeches, no dangerous insects, in fact, nothing to worry about at all. And there perhaps is the rub. I've always thought paradise would be pretty boring and perhaps that's why N[Z]ers seem to expend all their intellectual energy inventing new extreme sports. To appreciate N[Z], you need to be all the things I'm not – outdoorsy, non-smoking... sports-loving, uncynical and culturally undemanding... (N[Z] has solved the cultural cringe problem by simply forgetting culture...)... You must be a keen hiker, boater, camper, skier, runner, climber or kayaker; you must be prepared to talk about rugby 24/7; you must have limitless unfeigned interest in Maori customs; you must believe that bungy jumping is the most important invention of the 20th century. You must forget Katherine Mansfield – most N[Z]ers have – ditto Sir Ernest Rutherford... The most famous N[Z]ers are the guy] who invented bungy jumping... Sir Edmund Hillary, Sir Peter Blake, [the director of the movie *The Lord of the Rings*], the star of the movie *Gladiator*] and... a model who used to be [married to a British pop/rock star and also dumped its current biggest pop/rock star (r:p1639, ln56)] – or else... the... [giant All Black winger] and another 500 rugby players whose names will live forever in Kiwidom... Still, one cannot call a country entirely uncultured when it has such excellent wine. You can rely on finding good wine anywhere, even on trains. The food is pretty good, too... So – good food, good wine, good scenery – mustn't grumble. My itinerary was ill-conceived, but my own fault. In Auckland for a conference, I thought I'd whiz round the country in a week. Daft. I would have been much happier staying in Auckland, which is almost like a grown-up city... Wellington is the capital, but the population is under a million and you can walk around the centre in less than an hour. The tourist brochure boasts "a live show to see almost every evening" but I hot-footed it to Rotorua, even though I was warned I would leave stinking of rotten eggs. But, if you are a hot-springs enthusiast, which I am, the... geothermal stuff is seriously world-class. This despite the fact that the "eighth wonder of the world" that first made Rotorua famous in Victorian times is no longer there... For me, Rotorua justified the horrendous 24-hour flying time (from Britain)... Anyway, I should have stayed in Auckland... taking a ferry every day out to one of the islands; there are dozens, ranging from residential suburbs to completely deserted nature reserves. One in four Aucklanders owns a boat, and they all potter around the islands. Consequently, Viaduct Harbour is really the centre of town, and a great fun place, with a stonking marina for millionaires' gin palaces and a long line of working boatyards where the next generation of America's Cup challengers is being built... Maybe N[Z] does have culture – just not as we know it.

...A hardcore of Team N[Z] sailors have pledged their loyalty to the next America's Cup defence, but there are serious concerns that the defection of their leaders could open the floodgates. The new Team NZ are relying on a pile of envelopes on the table this week to stop the flow of crew losses

to rival Cup syndicates. Three more sailors appear to be on their way to joining [their skipper and his tactician] – two-thirds of the team leadership – at a European syndicate bankrolled by [a]Swiss billionaire... But the invasion of campaigns from moguls such as the world's [second-richest person]... could further injure the N[Z] camp... Others considering their options include [the bowperson, whose]... main offer is from the... [US. The bowperson] had made it clear to Team NZ two months ago that [it] was looking for a new challenge... "But I'm not ruling out staying..." [His] crewmate on the bow of the black boat... said [it] would stay with Team NZ – but did not know how many would do the same... Last night, there were probably more Kiwi sailors and designers saying "don't know" than whether they would stay or go... [However, m]ost younger members... are expected to remain... There is still ill-feeling in the camp... [with one loyal sailor calling the departing skipper and tactician] "traitors."

...After a weekend of bitter fallout, maybe it is not so surprising that [the skipper and his tactician] bailed out of running the next America's Cup. The telltale signs were there. Disputes with the old guard, long absences on the other side of the world, a kind of reticence as their crewmates back home grew more and more confused about their own futures. The overwhelming public reaction, mostly anger, may have been too harsh. Yachting is more profession than sport, where patriotism has been scrubbed from the sailor's vocabulary, and most go where the pile of money is highest. It's their living. But the guys' timing was off – [the skipper and tactician] could have left two months ago, the day after Team N[Z] won the Cup again... No matter how or when they did it, the leaders would still be vilified for quitting a team which has become a national icon. There is a definite split within the big black shed now about whether what [the skipper and tactician] did was wrong. Some call them traitors, who asked the team to remain loyal then left. Others say it was for the best, that it would have been worse having an unhappy leadership. Maybe it all became too complicated. [The skipper and tactician] are true competitive sports[people] – on the water, on the golf course... Their decision to leave was apparently made on a golfing break on some foreign shores. Perhaps they did not want to be chained to a desk, coercing sponsors for more dollars, running a cut-throat business like the America's Cup... Breaking his vow of silence on radio yesterday, [the tactician] maintained it was all about the business end of the deal. [The tactician and skipper] could not accept the obligations the old trust and the sponsors had placed on the new Team N[Z]. Increasingly the word is that the... [pair] wanted to start their... new... defence with a clean slate. They did not want to inherit the debts of the past campaign, supposedly around \$5 million. And it seems they wanted one major backer – rather than the Family of Five, who brought their own rules, like first right of refusal on additional sponsors. Now they... will never have to worry about where the money for the next mainsail is coming from. They will not have to lease out NZL32, the glory boat of the 95 victory, to the highest bidder to add money to the coffers. They will not have to rely on red socks to buy a mast.

...[the] skipper and head of AmericaOne... has sold all his America's Cup assets to one of the world's richest [people. The skipper]... had done a feasibility study into how much it would cost him to enter the race in 2003[that showed it] could not get more than \$60 million through sponsorship and donations, and would need \$140 million to keep pace with the billionaire-backed syndicates this time. [The world's second-richest person] has bought everything – including the boats, the lease to the Auckland base and [the skipper] himself – for the new syndicate, Team Oracle. [The skipper] will not say what his new role in the San Francisco-based challenge is, though it is unlikely to be skipper, with [a]Kiwi... touted for the sailing role.

...A[n]America's Cup hero... is resisting a \$500,000 offer to lure him away from N[Z]. The second-string skipper] and the other Team N[Z] champions are being targeted by a multi-million dollar raid to lift the America's Cup... An America's Cup... syndicate's source is set to approach Team N[Z] crew members this month... Most America's Cup crew were on salaries ranging from \$40,000-\$100,000... The raids are nothing new to Team N[Z]. America True led a raid on Black Magic after the 1995 America's Cup success. Team N[Z]'s first-string skipper in 1995 and again this year – who has now gone to a Swiss syndicate – said at the time that it]... hoped no one would accept the lure.

...Switzerland's 2003 America's Cup challenge, the... landlocked... country's first attempt at the competition... received a pledge of ...\$131.04 million... from[its backer, the] Swiss billionaire... based in Geneva[who] won the city's Bol d'Or regatta – which draws 500 yachts – in June, aboard his catamaran Aling[(it] also won the race in 1997[)]... "We want to build a team to be proud of, capable of winning the America's Cup and which also will inspire people to achieve higher goals," [the billionaire] said at the team's official launch. The 35-year-old deputy chair[perso]n of Swiss biotechnology company Serono said [it] had decided to pledge the money after a chance meeting with [the now]former Team N[Z] skipper... "I thought it would be very difficult for Switzerland to make a successful challenge until [the NZer told me it] was looking for a new start and clean sheet,"... [The guy] known as the "Baby Billionaire" – the 34-year-old Swiss ranks 125th on the latest Fortune 500 of the world's wealthiest – and N[Z]'s double America's Cup winner... had built up half a 55-member syndicate for the Auckland regatta... [The NZer], aged 38... caused a furore at home when [it] defected from Team N[Z]... with several other key members of the team who had successfully defended the Cup...

Moral issues – the agony of people who wrestle with them and the outcomes – dominate the mailbag. Quote: I thoroughly enjoyed your allegorical tale (on America's Cup issues)... But you have rekindled a moral dilemma I have... I understood the deeper meaning you intended to be that the Swiss acted badly when they "purchased" our yachts[people, and that those yachtspeople] acted badly in accepting their money to compete against N[Z]. But here's the moral dilemma for me. I have always admired [two former All Blacks, one a flanker and the other an inside centre. The flanker] played rugby for his native Samoa in 1986 and in 1987 was the star in the All Black team that won the [first]Rugby World Cup. [The centre] played for Samoa in 1993, I think, but was the linchpin of the All Black backline from 1994 to about a year or so ago. Similar facts apply to [some of the current All Blacks]. Rugby is not the only sport where N[Z] has recruited foreigners to represent us, even against their native countries, sometimes even pitting brother against brother, as happened... when the All Blacks played Tonga[(and, of course, the giant All Black winger is also Tongan)]. The Silver Ferns have robbed South Africa of their two most talented [netball]ers, and Fiji of their best goal defence... [Someone] played cricket for N[Z] instead of his native England. There are many other examples... The dilemma for me is this: Can I continue to support these people while decrying what [Team NZ's former skipper, tactician and] mainsail trimmer... have done? Would that be a moral stance for me to take? Or would you perhaps call me a hypocrite...? ...★ [The flanker, who is now on Samoa's coaching staff, will have been pleased with the result from last weekend's round of the Pacific Rim Championship: Manu Samoa 19, American Eagles (USA) 12...

More NZers will] play... against us than for us at the world cup. [38 NZ-born players will be] at the world cup representing 10 teams other than the All Blacks[(though some are ex-All Blacks). Most will play for Samoa (11), followed by Scotland (6), Japan (5), Fiji and Tonga (4). Each squad is allowed 30 players. 8] of the 19 teams competing... also have a N[Z]er on their coaching staff... *Rugby World Cup fact file* Georgia... may be a debutant nation at the... World Cup but you could argue they've been in training for this moment for centuries, thanks to a peculiar national game called Lelo-burti (translation: try-ball). Lelo-burti is played like rugby with 15-a-side and is in many ways similar to rugby. The ball however resembles a heavy medicine ball... [T]he game of rugby itself took hold in Georgia in the early 60s and Georgia was granted full membership of the IRB in 1992.

...phase three of the All Blacks World Cup buildup... starts in Palmerston North on Wednesday... [The 30-strong] squad enters the new adidas Institute of Rugby at Massey University for the start of a 10-day camp which also involves four days in Taupo. [The coach] sees it as a chance to review where the team is at and to further develop its game plan for the World Cup which opens in Wales on October 3... "The World Cup will be won by the teams who play the game in the opposition half and kick the goals," was his simple assessment... Midfield remains one area of concern...

For the past two seasons, the worries about the All Blacks have been the same... [1:] T]he distribution problems from halfback through to the midfield... have troubled them consistently... [2:] Put them up against average opposition and they will look worldbeaters, but when they are hit

with physical fury they have struggled to come through. Too often they have unravelled. It was a point accepted by both [the]coach... and his assistant... as they woke to contemplate a World Cup playoff with the Springboks after the disastrous failure against France. In 18 internationals in that two-year period, the All Blacks have won 11 and been beaten seven times. Seven of those wins have come against opposition which would be considered mediocre or even worse, like the two victories over England C to start 1998. Then understrength Samoa and France were beaten earlier this year[(the latter by about 50 points).] Tonga, Italy and even Scotland at this World Cup were no more than average sides and the All Blacks had their problems in two of those. So the only wins you would accept as meritorious... would be the two tests against the Springboks... one against the Wallabies and the World Cup pool game against England. There have been four losses to A[US], two to South Africa, and the French capitulation.

...[an experienced NZ] prop... said the All Blacks panicked when they sensed that France were stealing their rugby World Cup dreams at Twickenham on Monday morning. "We hit the panic button in the second half when we realised we were in trouble," said [the prop], who experienced his second [World Cup semifinal] loss in the 43-31 French... victory. "In the first half we didn't think we were going to lose that game, but it slipped away from us." The All Blacks felt the game going when [the French scored a try] in the 54th minute, and as [the French kicker] was adding to his tally of 28 points – the highest individual total by any player against N[Z]... "At 24-10, we should have won," [the coach] agreed about the semifinal. But the All Blacks relaxed and when they had the opportunities they did not put France[– who had closely studied footage of the All Blacks']... record 7-28 loss to the Wallabies... [in this year's Tri-Nations –] away.

...Stunned by France's surprise rugby victory over N[Z], the French have now recovered some of the World Cup spirit that first swept the country when their soccer team won the biggest prize in sport last year. Immediately after the match ended, hooting cars filled the Avenue des Champs-Élysées, a modern tradition whenever there is cause to celebrate. Many French[people] missed the match and found out that their team won the semi-final only after several hours... [M]any shook their heads in disbelief... "What?" asked... a Parisian translator. "They won? But they weren't supposed to. I deliberately didn't watch because I knew it was going to be painful." With politicians and sports officials hailing the exploits of the French team, radio stations noted with surprise that the British press – which has been giving France a pasting this past month over its refusal to readmit British beef – was effusive in its praise... [The French] President... telephoned... the team captain, to ask him to pass on his congratulations to each member of the team. The [French P]M... told the team in a message: "Since the beginning of this World Cup I knew you were capable of excelling." In an editorial, *Liberation* suggested that France had not merely won a World Cup semifinal. "They beat N[Z] in a game of a lifetime that most players would happily exchange for a winner's medal against less exalted opponents," it claimed... After the flamboyant performance, even a defeat in Sunday's final against A[US] in Cardiff would not be seen as a calamity back home.

...THE All Blacks will not have to qualify for the 2003 world cup. That's the word from [the chairperson of the]NZRFU... who last night promised the All Blacks that they would not have to play in small island countries to make the next tournament... The 2003 Rugby World Cup will be jointly hosted by A[US] and N[Z]. The Aussies secured their place in the tournament by qualifying for... the final[of this world cup]. Now there is a push to give N[Z] the host berth even though A[US] will ultimately host the final... By rights N[Z] should qualify for the next world cup by playing Tonga, Manu Samoa and Fiji in the 24 months before the event... But *Sunday News* understands the defeated All Blacks will be spared the pedestrian process of qualifying for the big tournament [after failing at this one to gain a top-three] place... This cup's fourth-placed finish is the All Blacks' worst.

...reasons why the All Blacks finished fourth at the Rugby World Cup... Lack of leadership... Once upon a time the All Blacks were full of leaders... Legends of our national sport are staggered at the lack of candidates for a captain... Lack of passion. Think passion and watch the French. They have it in abundance. Down by 14 points, they still had the spark to come back. By contrast, the All Blacks lacked emotion or feeling for the game. Half the time they looked bored on the field... Faulty game plan. The All Blacks didn't have a distinctive style of game plan. They were too loose against France, a team that thrives on disorder. The clinical plan adopted against England would have been the safer bet against France but they wanted to show they were an attractive team... Too regimented. The All Blacks may not have made a personal decision in the nine weeks since assembling at the rugby institute in Palmerston North. Since then every detail of their lives has been decided, issued and scheduled for them. Each day they received a minute by minute schedule of how their day would proceed. Even the clothing to be worn is stipulated. If players don't make decisions off the field how can they make them on it... Too pampered. From cooking to washing to providing boot insoles, every whim and fancy of the players is taken care of by support staff and hired help... Sanitised forwards. When... Pinetree or a hundred other past All Black [forwards] had their testicles pulled, ears bitten or eyes gouged they sorted it out on the field. The nasty stuff could have been ended with a quick 99 call, which past teams used to start all-in brawls. Sounds barbaric but it's effective... Two game strategy. The All Blacks planned for two games at the world cup – England and the final. They believed the England win gave them a soft run into the final and started planning to play South Africa or A[US]. When AUS] won the Saturday semifinal the All Blacks started thinking about the Wallabies a week later rather than the French the next day.

...THE morning after losing to France the All Blacks travelled to Cardiff by bus for their playoff against South Africa. On the way they watched two movies, *Shawshank Redemption* and *Desperado*, and the bus diverted for three hours to avoid a fatal crash. It was as if they were getting a message... The truck crash stole two lives. It was a timely reality check for the All Blacks. They had stuffed up their dreams but at least their loss was just a game. Hopefully, the All Blacks realised they are only as good as their last performance and when it's the world cup a miss can have ruthless ramifications. They may appear on TV adverts for the National Bank, or on the nose of Air N[Z] 767s, or stay in \$450 a night hotels in Surrey, or take mid-tournament holidays to Cannes, or... fly their partners to the world cup, but it all turns to custard if they start losing. The All Blacks went from winners to losers and the fortunes of many players changed dramatically. No doubt they thought they would win the world cup, pocket the \$20,000 bonus, pay for their partners to travel to the UK, and secure lucrative sponsorships. They assumed too much. Their great season was transformed to disaster in four days. The French exposed them and the All Blacks moved from hero to zero.

...Dear John, I forward you this: "You played the world's best fullback at centre, the best wing at fullback and a flanker at No.8. You took the world's best first-five and told him [it] was crap, swapped halfbacks at the quarterfinals and made the nicest guy captain. You're a record-maker John – most points against the ABs, biggest losing margin, biggest defeat."

...[THE] FALLEN All Blacks coach... feared for his family life had [it not quit. The coach] received death threats after leading the All Blacks to five losses in a row last year and believed his wife... daughter... and son... were in danger. "I hope the same doesn't happen this time and that's one of the reasons I made the decision not to coach again... The obsession has got to have reality in it. The pressure we put the team under can be unhealthy. Young [guys] who play the game need support as well as criticism... People say and do things and it takes a toll." His family had been supportive but "...have been through the rollercoaster of highs and lows, always in the public eye. I don't want them dragged through any more debate." H[i]s international career has been dogged by controversy. The latest anti-[John] campaign was launched as [the All Blacks' coach] quit.

...All Blacks hopes of Rugby World Cup victory have disappeared – and so have the ads. Companies which placed their advertising dollar behind the team and saturated television and newspapers with campaigns showing their commitment during the cup are re-evaluating and pulling back support. The National Bank yesterday withdrew its television and print advertising campaign featuring [the]All Blacks captain... and the slogan "Luck has nothing to do with reaching your goals." The National Bank chief executive... said the advertising campaign was pulled a week early, but admitted the... campaign was aimed at the team's winning the World Cup... Air N[Z] has replaced its television ads featuring images of on-the-field action from the All Blacks with the airline's "generic" brand ads... However... a... spokes[person]... said the change did not indicate a lack of support... Sanitarium, which uses team members to promote its Weet-Bix brand, said it would consider editing its advertising featuring players...

Dear Tim, I can't believe the All Blacks didn't win. I've been so depressed and it's been made so much worse by this sick e-mail I send on to you: Who is going to buy all those All Blacks Weet-Bix tins now? Will there be super special deals on black Fords? How stink does adidas feel? Do we have to boycott french fries? Will the souvenir shops still be selling All Blacks jerseys for ridiculous prices? ...Does this mean Moro bars don't work? Is Air N[Z] glad it didn't paint the whole plane? Should we kill all the people who say "It's only a game?" ...Are the All Blacks just trying to take the heat off the Black Caps? What are we going to do with all that ticker tape now? What are we going to do if A[US] wins the cup?

...What have the Aussies got [that] we haven't? A sideboard full of trophies... SCRATCH your heads no longer. For those looking for an explanation as to why A[US] is collecting world sporting titles... while N[Z] is playing roadkill, the answer is at hand. It's all in our national anthems. As a window to the nation's soul, they light up the answer in neon. The A[US]ns clear out their vocal cords to a tune that has them advancing their nation fair, no doubt trampling on anyone who gets in their way, while little old N[Z] cries out meekly for God, and whoever else might be handy, to defend us. Please. One person spoken to as part of this sporting inquest reckoned that little analogy might not be as tongue in cheek as it sounds. The Aussies are an aggressive race, prepared to play second fiddle to no one. And that is reflected on the fields of play. N[Z] is a tiny nation of sporting overachievers which does well to even figure in the business end of events on a global scale. And when the heat really comes on, it seems we might be a little passive when the big prize is there for the taking. The evidence is overwhelming. A[US] is, pound for pound, the world's premier sporting nation. And it just so happens that the big four sports in which it has snapped up "world championships" this year are the very set we had our eyes on. The Aussies started it with the cricket World Cup in England, then claimed the netball title with that amazing comeback from six points down heading into the last quarter against the Silver Ferns, claimed rugby league's tri-series crown (effectively the world title) with a try in the dying minutes to beat the Kiwis and then, of course, added the Rugby World Cup in Wales last weekend. Throw in the fact they're in the Davis Cup tennis final against France, rule the world in swimming, have the planet's best [gals'] hockey side, the top [gal] squash players, dominate triathlon and naturally, rule the waves in surfing and surf lifesaving and you have an impressive resume. Normally, we in N[Z] would be the first to applaud our neighbours' purple patch and perhaps reflect a little in its glory. The only problem is we've rather emerged as the sob story in a few of those key successes... In sport one thing is clear, the advancing A[US]ns have got it over the defending N[Z]ers. For now at least.

...[the] Black Sox softballers are a rarity in N[Z] sport at the moment. The Sox are world champions... THE BLACK Sox hope to break the sporting voodoo that has struck too many of our national sides at world championships. The All Blacks, Silver Ferns and Black Caps have all watched their world championship hopes go down the gurgler this year. [The]Black Sox coach... said those results would hopefully prevent his side from being complacent as it defends its World Series title in South Africa... Unlike the All Blacks, members of [the Black Sox] aren't paid \$500,000 a year, don't holiday in exotic locations during world tournaments or stay in lavish \$450-a-night hotels. "Our guys actually pay to play for their country... They have to come up with a personal contribution towards any tour. It's a tough, cold world out there." N[Z]'s top 30 softballers gather in Wellington on November 20 for a two-day training camp at the Trentham army camp. The camp follows a comprehensive series win over A[US]...

A] 34-year-old... stepped out of the shadows to lead N[Z] to the world softball title in South Africa yesterday. The... pitcher struck out 17 of 25 batters and gave up no hits as N[Z] beat Japan 2-1 in the final at the coastal city of East London... N[Z] had earlier lost 0-1 to Japan in pool play and had to beat [Canada and the US] to make the final... [- continuing] a 16-year unbeaten World Series run against the Americans, who used former... [NZ] pitchers... It was N[Z]'s second consecutive world title following their triumph... [over] Canada... in Michigan four years ago... and their third in 10 world tournaments. Their first came in 1984, also at Michigan, when the side included [the]current captain... who has... now... been to five world championships... At the 1992 tournament in Manila in the Philippines... [NZ was] beaten 3-5 by Canada... in the final...

The N[Z] softball side return home early tomorrow with another world title in the bag, and wondering what their success will mean for a battling sport... The Black Sox players had to contribute \$500 each and pay for many of their own meals at the World Series, and lived four-to-a-room at a school hostel... [But s]oftball's efforts to take advantage of its world-champion status finds its greatest hurdle with television, the make-or-break factor in world sport. [The]Black Sox manager... said: "I think there are five sports in N[Z] who don't have to pay for coverage. If we brought the [US] team here it would cost us around \$30,000 to have one game covered, and even then it wouldn't be live. We just don't have that budget. We get a lot of help from the Sports Foundation, but it would be nice to get a backer. I suppose last time we won the Olympics were on at the same time and we got a bit overshadowed. But if we got television coverage most of these guys would be household names." ...Just hours after the win, [the NZ] Softball chief executive... [was calling for NZ] On Air grants to help second-tier sports get television coverage... "In 1980 we had 80,000 players and 22 hours of television a year... Now we have 30,000 players[, including]... 20,000... children... and no television hours." ...The... triumph in East London left N[Z] at the top of a sport played by 40 million people in more than 100 International Softball Federation countries, although N[Z], Japan, Canada and the U[S] are the only World Series contenders.

...[One of NZ]'s greatest softballers... announced his retirement after the Black Sox won the world title... a fitting finale for the legendary [3]rd base... The 33-year-old[']... international career began disastrously when, as the new boy in the 1988 side, [the 3rd base] wrecked a knee in the first warm-up game before the series in Canada... "In a sense I look back on that injury as being a positive thing for my career... Sitting there, watching, I didn't think I was good enough to play at that level. It woke me up - I needed to put in a lot more hard work..." If the knee injury helped to drive [him] in his training, it was the disappointment of losing the 1992 final to Canada... which helped provide the motivation to make him a vital part of two subsequent world series-winning teams. N[Z] led the 1992 final 3-0 before a home run from... a former player with Auckland United, levelled the scores and Canada went on to win... "We probably weren't the best team at that series but we should have won the final. It made a lot of us really determined." But [the 3rd base] is no longer motivated to put his all into... softball... [The 33-year-old] may have given up the big league himself, but... will head to the Sydney Olympics to support his girlfriend of seven years, [who is] an outfielder with the White Sox.

...White Ferns best in world N[Z] beat favourites A[US] in a thrilling finish to win the [Gals'] Cricket World Cup at the Lincoln Oval, near Christchurch yesterday. In reply to N[Z]'s 184 in 48.4 overs, the A[US]ns managed 180. The end came in the first ball of the last over... A[US] seemed set to retain the cup even after a nightmarish start when they lost two quick wickets for just two runs... [The White Fern's score] didn't look good enough to win the match against an A[US]n side that had been thrashing other teams in this tournament until the last few overs of the match... [when NZ]'s solid bowling and magnificent fielding took them to... N[Z]'s first world cup victory... spark[ing] amazing celebration scenes...

There is no doubt that [one NZer] is one of the world's best all-rounders, but even by his own lofty standards [the player] was in breathtaking form during N[Z]'s ICC Knockout Trophy final triumph in Nairobi. The 30-year-old vice-captain provided the winning ingredient against India, bowling his 10 overs for a miserly 40 runs before stroking one of the most majestic one-day centuries you could imagine, ending unbeaten on 102 as his team grabbed their first big international title. Fairytale stuff, to be sure. But [the 30-year-old] was not even supposed to play. The mercurial all-rounder was fighting a knee injury and had missed the semifinal against Pakistan. Cleared to play just one hour before the final, [the all-rounder] arrived at the bowling crease as [India's opening batters]... were flaying the opening bowlers, and was the chief reason India were held to a competitive 264. [The 30-year-old] then took control after N[Z] lost their first three wickets for 83, forgetting his pain as [it] struck his third ODI century off 113 balls, leading the underdogs to their most famous limited-overs win.

...Slapstick victory skittles records... It was almost more of a comedy than a cricket test, a slapstick type of performance that set all sorts of records for all the wrong reasons. N[Z] not only managed to beat India in the second test and claim a 2-0 series win yesterday, they carried it off without

their most successful bowler delivering a ball. After the match at Hamilton, N[Z] were able to reflect on a four-wicket win over the crack Indian side, hard on the heels of an even more emphatic 10-wicket margin at Wellington... On a pitch so green that the Indians were hoping to have it registered as an offensive weapon, [the NZ]... spinner... with 139 test wickets... was not required at the bowling crease and, instead, assisted in the field as N[Z] beat the tourists in a mere two and a bit days – or 176.5 overs. The game's most extraordinary passage was on Saturday when 22 wickets fell in the day – the fourth-highest number in test history, and the most since 1952, when England played India at Manchester. Having been rolled over in their first innings for 99, the tourists managed to dismiss N[Z] for a mere 94... in the process becoming the first team to score fewer than 100 and still grab a first-innings lead. Not only that, it was the first time since test cricket started in 1876 – some 1633 matches – that both sides had been bowled out under 100 in their first innings... It was also the first time since 1980-81 that a test had been completed without any bat[ter]s... posting a half-century, the top-score of the match... [being 39. NZ], who needed another 136 to win when they resumed yesterday morning, managed to graft their way to the target... N[Z]'s 53rd test win in total, it was also the side's fourth this year following triumphs over Bangladesh, England and the West Indies, and cemented their third placing in the International Cricket Council's Test Championship Table.

...Counting wins and losses... Too many N[Z]ers still think it is not important to win, says the retiring chief executive of the Hillary Commission... Farewelled in Parliament last night after 10 years in the job, the 54-year-old has overseen the spending of nearly \$100 million on high-performance sport and a similar amount on getting children into sport. [The 54-year-old] is pleased the old "competition is bad" philosophy is waning...

The tide of public opinion has turned. It is now almost acceptable again to be competitive. Even those bastions of egalitarianism like the Ministry of Education and the Hillary Commission are beginning to make noises that sound as if it might be politically and socially acceptable to win and lose again. After almost three decades of blatant so[cial]-engineering, which reached the ridiculous levels of highly skilled youngsters being discouraged from developing their abilities, even the most colourless politically correct Wellington bureaucrat has now to admit that the entire experiment has been a gigantic disaster. Many of the phonies who were responsible for preaching th[e anti-competitive] doctrine... were so hypocritical that they grovelled to get their own kids into schools like Auckland Grammar which stood apart from the trend. It hasn't been the failure of the education system that has turned the tide of public opinion. No, that tragically would have gone unnoticed if our sports teams had continued to win. They haven't. Why not? Initially it was convenient to look across the ditch and grizzle about the amount of money the Aussies were throwing into sport. That argument led to envy of their sporting institutes and the exclamations that no wonder they win everything with all those facilities. It seemed logical to follow that up with the belief that if we spent the same sort of money we could have similar success. Everyone went down that track but few stopped to ask why we [had]n't set up academies and institutes to promote excellence. It wasn't to do with money. It was all a question of philosophy. We had bought into the doctrine that if you don't have success you can't have failures. All the emphasis was on participation, and competition had become a dirty word. It still is in some quarters. Just last week, an Auckland primary school sent home its newsletter to parents advising them to speak to their sons about showing too much enthusiasm when their team won. Once again, a politically correct school principal was worried about how this would affect the losing team. I am reminded of how far we have travelled down this wrong track when I think back to my first year of teaching, in 1970 at Auckland Grammar. The late Sir Henry Cooper was the headmaster at that time and at every Monday assembly [Henry] would read the sports results in full. This particular day [Henry] announced that one of the school's hockey teams had won its match 15-0, adding: "I saw that game and I'm pleased to say they never gave up." After the assembly I remarked to him that I was pleased [a headmaster] had given recognition to the losing team. [Henry] looked at me quizzically before explaining, "...you're new here so I forgive you on this occasion. I wasn't referring to the losing team. I was talking about our team. It is not easy to maintain your standards when you're playing against an ill-disciplined rabble that has had no coaching and no interest taken in it. Remember that." I have. I've tried to remember it as I've watched politicians pander to mediocrity, sports administrations putting money before principles, referees turning a blind eye to thuggery, parents dropping kids at sports grounds without ever watching them kick a ball, coaches giving excuses instead of reasons for defeat and precious players chucking it in when the going got tough. In trying to make us all equal they have actually succeeded in making us bad sports. We no longer know how to win or lose graciously. You doubt me? Cast your mind back to the public reactions at the loss of the Rugby World Cup and the victory at the America's Cup. On both occasions the reaction was completely out of proportion to what had happened. They were the realisation of a generation of social engineering... But... [a] year of quite dreadful sports results may lead to wider social change. Let's hope so. You could do your bit by patting your kid on the back if... [it] wins today. That way the waves of success may come to N[Z] sports a little quicker.

...[As the] chief executive of Sport Waitakere... I often get asked to explain the way sport operates in N[Z]. Following is our sport structure explained as simply as I can. We should start at the top with the Government. The government appoints a minister for sport, fitness and leisure. Under the current government the minister of sports also holds the portfolios for education and state services. In my view this will be a good mix. For years the funding of sport has been diluted by the creation of positions that should be supported by education or state services. In an effort to get to the top of the proverbial cliff, rather than waiting at the bottom with an ambulance, sport has been the one sector to take proactive steps in prevention with a focus on wellness rather than sickness. The government established the Hillary Commission to fund sport. In a move to separate the participation focus from the elite another body was established, the N[Z] Sports Foundation (NZSF) which manages and funds elite athletes. Part of the money the Hillary Commission is entrusted with, and is accountable for, is contracted to the NZSF to make sure N[Z] is represented well on the world stage at premier sporting events. This has created a duplication – two leased offices containing a double-up on administrative resources, two chief executives and so on. The Hillary Commission also provides funds to national sports bodies to assist with the management and development of their sport. While there has been criticism from people about the manner in which this is done, it is not entirely the Hillary Commission's fault. As a government agency they are bound by an Act of Parliament which forbids them to interfere in the running of national sports organisations. In support of the provinces, the Hillary Commission also funds regional sports trusts to deliver their programmes at the community level throughout N[Z]. Regional sports trusts, like Sport Waitakere, are charitable trusts and governed by a board of trustees. While the 17 trusts are autonomous they all belong to an umbrella organisation called Sportnet. Sports trusts do not deliver sport specific events or programmes as part of their core business. They are there to provide support, services and programmes for all sport and physical activity organisations, and are not generally funding institutions. While the size and ability of trusts may vary there are three core Hillary Commission programmes all trusts are contracted to deliver. • Active Living – encouraging communities to be more active. • Sport Development – programmes and services for sports clubs and associations. • Junior Sport – KiwiSport in Primary schools, FairPlay and secondary school sport.

...There has been some public debate recently about the role of competition in sport played by primary school-aged children. Much of this debate has been driven by commentators who miss the point about KiwiSport. According to these commentators, KiwiSport discourages competition. They say it puts too much emphasis on participation and fair play, and as a result our sports people have gone soft. This is why netball and rugby teams failed last year to bring home their world cups. Well, now I've heard it all – we should blame the children for our results at the top level! But the answers to our recent performances on the international stage do not lie on the playground, gym or school sports field. A[US]n teams won the world netball and rugby cups. It is interesting that all A[US]n children play AussieSport, which is the same as KiwiSport! We share the same philosophy about introducing children to the right level of sport at the right age. [As its chief executive, I feel qualified to say that t]he Hillary Commission believes competition in sport is vital. Striving to win is the essence of sport, and children respond to this because they tend to be naturally competitive. We don't think it is possible to take the competitiveness out of children, even if you wanted, but they have to learn to compete properly. They can't achieve personal success without essential skills and a strong sense of teamwork, cooperation, confidence and fair

play. These are the building blocks of a lifelong participation in sport. During the primary school years, these are the most important features of a child's involvement. They will strive to win, but winning must not be the overriding priority of their teachers or coaches. Sport is about doing your best, whether you win or lose – whether you are eight or 48. The great news is that more teenagers, particularly girls, are now involved with sport. This is a tribute to the success of teachers and club coaches who are delivering KiwiSport the way children want it. Leave the children alone, and look elsewhere for any perceived failures at the highest level of sport.

...The... Sports Minister... has promised that no schools will end up worse off under the Government's Kiwisport scheme. High school principals reacted angrily when they learned that most lower-decile schools would get less money to hire sports co-ordinators... [in] the Sportfit programme... The... [minister said:] "When you're spreading over \$20 million around where there used to be \$5.3 million, we can make sure there are no losers."

...There were no swear words... as girls battled it out for the supreme title of best west Auckland soccer team at Fred Taylor Park last week. None of the leg-chopping tackles or Hollywood dives of professional soccer for these girls. They still went in for the hard tackles and one lass had to be carried off the field nursing a leg injury. But the difference was there afterwards, too. The players felt bad about it, or at least showed some good manners, with "sorry" clearly heard above the din on a number of occasions. Can't say the same for the teacher referees though. Our [mole] at the match says some decisions were shocking and blatantly biased. Fair play is one thing, unfair advantage is another.

...It costs a small fortune in taxi fares to get some of N[Z]'s best young athletes to the sports fields every week... Auckland schools plan to cut back on city-wide sports competitions as some colleges spend up to \$20,000 a year in taxis to get students to games. The changes are also aimed at helping parents who have to drive their sports-playing teenagers from one side of the city to the other most weekends... Many parents are unable to drive their children to games, especially at poorer schools such as Papatoetoe High... [T]he school... tried hiring buses to drop teams off at different games but there were too many teams at different times and venues. For the same reason it could not solve the problem by buying its own minivans.

...South Africa was the backdrop for some classic rugby clashes between the All Blacks and Springboks of tomorrow, as the Kelston Boys' First XV went on a whirlwind tour of the rival nation last month. The team is just coming back down to earth after last weekend's Auckland secondary schools semi-final against the unbeaten St Peter's side, holder of the Moascers Trophy. The boys are disappointed to have lost that crucial game 37-22, but are still buzzing about their two weeks in South Africa. "Most people say how lucky we are to have gone, because it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," says Kelston[s] centre... The team won three out of its four games in an almost unthinkable six days, performing numerous magnificent hakas along the way – including a special haka in a Capetown pizza restaurant for a visiting Argentinian girls' hockey team. The timing of the trip was unfortunate, as [a NZ]er... had just scuttled South Africa's dreams of hosting the next football world cup. "We faced that straight away – it was brought up by a lot of people... We were worried... Soccer is such a big thing for the black community over there, but it kind of died down after a week," says... [one of the team's three] coaches...

THE... UNREPENTANT soccer renegade... is refusing to apologise for embarrassing N[Z] by costing South Africa the chance to host the [Soccer] World Cup. Under siege from the world's media at his Auckland waterfront home, [the expat-Scot said it would] explain all at a crisis meeting of the Oceania football confederation... Speaking exclusively to *Sunday News*, [the confederation's president said it] didn't expect to be asked to resign at the meeting, being held at a secret location. The Oceania president ignored his executive's orders to back South Africa's bid to host the 2006 cup, once England had been eliminated. [The president] abstained and Germany won by 12 votes to 11. [His] non-vote has cost the South African economy \$5 billion... The no-vote could rob N[Z] of the chance to play in a Tri-nations tournament with South Africa and A[US]. It could also scuttle the Kingz' hopes of an extension to their two-year licence to play in A[US]'s national league... [The president apparently] did not vote because [it] felt threatened by attempts to bribe him and threatening phone calls... Last night South African bid organisers threatened to sue [him].

...THE NZ] soccer official whose voting decision altered the course of the World Cup closed the door to the world's media yesterday... The 79-year-old is likely to be sacked as president of the Oceania Football Confederation if [it] doesn't resign at an Oceania executive meeting this morning... Oceania confederation members are... furious [the president] disobeyed strict voting instructions... The Pacific island nations wanted to vote for South Africa because of their similar ethnic backgrounds... One high-ranking Oceania source said: "[The president] might have a good reason that... can... justify his actions... [which it] hasn't told the press about and if it] does then no action will be taken and we will support him. But if... it was bribery then bribery is not good enough. [The president] should have reported it." Many of the executive members suspect [the president] came under pressure from UEFA who said they would turn their back on Oceania if [its representative] didn't vote for Germany... [The president, who had] announced Oceania would give its vote to England to host the 2006 cup before consulting his own members... has always aligned his vote on the executive with Europe. His daughter... who is Oceania[s] general secretary, is also head of the UEFA [gals] committee. "The president] got scared of UEFA and didn't want to upset them," the source said. "But the members are saying what has UEFA done for Oceania – nothing. If [the president] can't handle the pressure then maybe [it]'s not fit for the job."

...HIS World Cup non-vote is not the first time... [t]he 79-year-old Oceania president has rocked the boat... [It] defied world soccer bosses when acting for Oceania and in 1986 was suspended from Fifa. [The Oceania president also] repeatedly withstood pressure from both A[US] and the] Fifa president... to disband the Oceania federation to become members of the Asia group. A[US] made three attempts to become members of Asia and resisted Oceania's move to become a full confederation. That was to make it the equal of the five other confederations, including UEFA, Asia and Africa. Oceania won the vote 179-1. But [hi]s latest stand has infuriated politicians[– 'NZ's PM phoned South Africa's President the evening before the vote to say his country had Oceania's support' –] the public and his Oceania executive committee... Born in Glasgow, [the Scot]... made it onto the Oceania executive committee... in... 1966... and was elected president in 1982. That... year [it] was awarded a Commander of the British Empire.

...While [the Oceania Football Confederation president] and his wife... prepared for their regular Sunday night bridge game with friends, [presidential]... wannabies gathered for the kill... [The] OFC vice-president... (Vanuatu)... Fiji[s] Football Association president... and A[US's] OFC member... are expected to be the contenders for the presidency... "We do not want Oceania to be kicked around like a football," said... [the Fijian. "The OFC president] was given a clear mandate... that once England were eliminated from the World Cup race [it] should give the Oceania vote to South Africa. [It] should have complied with that. What is more disturbing is that [the president] took advice from his lawyers and not his own executive... Article 2 (1) of the OFC statutes says every member is bound to follow the decisions of the executive committee..." [The Fijian] is concerned that when Oceania members – including three delegates from all 11 Oceania nations – front up at the August 4 Fifa congress in Zurich they will have to face the music. "I do not want this to become an Olympic-like scandal and that our 11 members can be branded as corrupt. I feel very sorry for NZ Soccer... [The president] has made it clear [it] will retire, but... I hold the view that [the president] should write to South Africa and explain clearly his actions and apologise." ...[the OFC vice-president] said: "...It is not the duty of the Government of N[Z] to apologise to South Africa. The OFC has been dragged into a political position. Because of this we are the ones who should be apologising to South Africa."

...South Africa's bid team has announced an investigation into whether [the Oceania president] violated the Fifa constitution by abstaining... [during the vote] for soccer's 2006 World Cup... Fifa, which has announced an internal inquiry, said only the executive committee could reverse a decision. Some commentators suggest that, because [the 79-year-old] went against the wishes of his Oceania members, the vote should be reopened.

...Fifa[s] president... is determined soccer will not become embroiled in an Olympic-style controversy over the allocation of future World Cup venues. [The Fifa president] is just as adamant [it] will not follow the lead of [the] IOC boss... in hanging about seemingly forever. [The Fifa president, who is] in Auckland for Saturday's opening of the... headquarters of the Oceania Football Confederation at Mt Smart, said Fifa had clear

guidelines for choosing a host nation. "We do not get into bribes and bargaining," said [the]62-year-old... who played semi-professional third category football in his native Switzerland and still plays for Fifa teams on a very casual basis[. The Swiss] came to Fifa from watchmaker Longines where [it] was director of marketing for seven years. [The Swiss] had 17 years as general secretary under [the]former president... before winning the presidency last year... "I'm advocating that no president should in future have more than two four-year terms. Football is changing rapidly and the president should be able to give his ideas and then go away. That [the term of presidency] will be a matter for the 2000 congress in Sydney.

...a harrowing .3 of a second... is... how close N[Z]'s top 400m hurdler is to qualifying for the Sydney Olympics. The 25-year-old has a personal best of 49.95... The time shortfall equates to less than a metre. But [the hurdler] also has a cash shortfall because of the Sports Foundation's stance on funding. [The hurdler] needs \$3000 to... travel to Europe and run in a series of top track and field meets... against the world's top 10 athletes – the increased pace and intensity of the races should push him under the qualifying mark... Ranked 14th in the Commonwealth after his performance at the 1998 Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games[, the hurdler]... juggles 22 hours a week training with a fulltime job... Like other athletes [the hurdler] receives training assistance from the N[ZSF. However, the hurdler isn't] part of the... "elite" athletes or three teams the N[ZSF] has placed in its high performance unit... [His] plight is similar to many other Olympic hopefuls... [who've] put in thousands of hours over the past four years with one thing in mind – Sydney... Don't expect N[Z]'s Olympic team to be the biggest ever despite the games being on our doorstep.

...THE SPORTS Foundation makes no apologies for its hardline Olympic funding policy. The... organisation is under fire for its decision to restrict high-level funding to what it describes as its "elite group of 23 athletes and three teams". It is only prepared to heavily fund those athletes who have succeeded. Athletes on the fringes of selection are fuming – and say a lack of funding is hindering their hopes... The [NZSF] got tough over funding following the flop of several big names at the 1998 Commonwealth Games. Olympic sports were told they would have to perform before they got handouts... Members of the [gals'] softball team had to pay \$3500 each to attend the Olympic qualifying tournament. The side's funding has been increased since it finished fifth and qualified. Team members now face a \$500 bill to get to Sydney. The stance has... been blamed for the failure of the [guys'] hockey team to qualify. Hockey could not afford to send a full squad to the qualifying tournament in Japan... The foundation has already spent \$5 million this year trying to get athletes to the Olympics. It announced last week a further \$1 million would be spent on athletes who had already qualified... Members of the [NZ guys' and gals'] basketball teams, the [guys'] track cycling pursuit team and the [gals'] softball team will each get \$3000 grants... [– but it will still] cost each member of... [the] Tall Ferns... \$4950 to get to the games... Olympians will receive funding as they qualify... The... [gals'] hockey team – which last week won the Olympic qualifying tournament in England – already receives \$500,000 from the foundation. [NZ's c]hampion equestrian... gets \$50,000 a year in Foundation money to cover feed and expenses for one horse.

...When [NZ's]Olympic hero first met his wife, [the equestrian]... was captivated by... the... former model[']s... beauty and warm smile. After a whirlwind two-month romance, the 30-something [equestrian asked her] to marry him... Wearing a fairytale gown from Harrods, [the bride] arrived at the Wellington Cathedral fashionably late on their wedding day, where the lovestruck couple promised "to love, honour and cherish" each other in front of 200 guests from around the world. At the time [the equestrian] said it was their love of horses, music and dancing that had drawn them together. As the years went by the great highs of his equestrian career, his favour with the royal family and his incredible respect among sporting fellows saw him named one of the top 100 sports[people] of all time. And personal crises like the couple's loss of their first child due to miscarriage and sponsorship concerns only seemed to bring them closer together. But last week, as the couple sought sanctuary inside their Gloucestershire mansion near London, they were attempting to rebuild their shattered lives and repair their 14-year marriage in the wake of [the equestrian]'s gay sex and cocaine scandal. It is the biggest test of their marriage yet. But the couple... are committed to making it work. [The wife], despite the stress and humiliation, is determined to stand by her... [guy. They] aim to make a fresh start when they return to N[Z] in September. They have bought a \$1.2 million mansion in [hi]s hometown of Cambridge where they plan to settle and breed horses... The allegations of [the equestrian]'s double life was exposed by Britain's *The Sunday Mirror* last week in a three-page story with intimate details of his sexual encounter... and... use of the class A drug... According to the newspaper, [the equestrian], 44, was having unprotected sex with a 24-year-old [guy] in a four-star hotel on the outskirts of Oxford while [his wife] was back in N[Z] sorting out their new home. The Olympic champion even made his partner, who [the equestrian allegedly] had seduced five days earlier in a horsebox, don riding gear for their sex session. And in an extraordinary cocaine-fuelled series of indiscretions, [the equestrian] told his pick-up how [it] planned to outwit tough drug-testing procedures before this year's Olympic Games... The champion rider, winner of individual golds at the Los Angeles and Seoul Olympics... [and a] three times... winn[er of]... Badminton, Britain's premier three-day event... said, "Do you want a line of coke? I enjoy smoking grass... but... it stays in the system for about three weeks or so..." [The equestrian] then joked, "I'm an Olympic athlete, my boy. I'm in serious training." [The equestrian], made a MBE by the Queen in 1984 and a CBE in 1995, added, "My favourite drug of all is Ecstasy." In the past [the equestrian] has spoken of the evils of drugs. [The equestrian says it] fears for his 11-year-old daughter and seven-year-old son... [H]is autobiography *So Far, So Good...* states, "You read all these stories about kids going off the rails, running away and getting into drugs, all sorts of horrific things, and that really terrifies me." But on that early June afternoon, such concerns seemed far from his mind... During the liaison, [the equestrian revealed that it has]... a pretty good relationship[with his wife. "I mean, I would love it if [my wife] got into watching me with another guy, being involved in threesomes or something, but [my wife]'s not like that." But despite his love for his wife, [the equestrian] admitted to other gay affairs... [and referred] to a recent night when [it] had sex first with a [gal] and then with a [guy. The equestrian also revealed that it] was paranoid about [having it]s secret life of adultery and drug abuse... exposed... [The equestrian said it had] everything to lose, including sponsorship deals with Saab and Toyota... "You don't understand that in my position, doing this stuff, I can be kicked out of the country. I can be banned from the Olympics. Doing what I am doing with you, I can lose my marriage and lose my life. I don't want that..." [The *Mirror* said the equestrian] also revealed how [it] feared that a newspaper would expose details of his private life four years ago... The scandal has rocked the equestrian world.

...Eventing N[Z] says it has no power to question [a NZer] about allegations that [it snorted cocaine. The equestrian] was last week named as a member of the N[Z] eventing team for the Sydney Olympics. The selection policy states that the overriding principle for selection is that an athlete "must bring credit to himself/herself, their sport and N[Z]." Athletes also had to "serve as an example to the sporting youth of his or her country." E[NZ's chairperso]n... said last week that [the equestrian] had never been asked whether the allegations... were true. But last night, when the *Herald* asked why the question had not been put to [the equestrian] before his selection, [the chairperson said: "ENZ]... has no power or right to demand that... any athlete... answer to allegations that ENZ does not itself have positive proof of. Currently, E[NZ] only has the newspaper story in front of it. If a request was made... and [the equestrian] declined to give an answer, E[NZ] would still have no proof on which it could act." [The equestrian] had made it known that [his intention is to] make no comment on the allegations... [The Olympic t]eam selector... has [also]refused to comment... But the allegations of drug-taking have brought a sharp response from the group responsible for testing N[Z] athletes for banned drugs. [The NZ] Sports Drug Agency programme manager... said... "...it does concern us that athletes [who] are meant to be role models could be seen to be taking illegal drugs,"...

[The person who is due to] become... president of the NZ Olympic Committee... after the Sydney Games... has delivered an overdue wakeup call to a nation in denial over allegations that one of its most famous Olympians sniffed cocaine. The impeccably credentialled [future NZOC president says the equestrian] should declare his innocence or guilt. Failing that, [the future NZOC president] wants equestrian's governing body... to seek

clarification. In the absence of resolution, [the future NZOC president says, the equestrian] should not have been selected... The logic backing such a course of action is overwhelming. The allegations... were substantial, and cocaine, as well as being illegal in Britain and N[Z], is banned by the International Olympic Committee... Eventing N[Z]'s limp response has been a refusal to act on "unsubstantiated" allegations. Given [the accused]'s silence, it should have sought to discover if the claims had substance. Could, for example, the *Sunday Mirror* provide audio or visual evidence? Eventing NZ would not be the first sports body to take such action. England's Rugby Football Union inquired into drug allegations levelled against [their premier role-model] by another British newspaper. [The player] was stripped of the English captaincy and fined for bringing the game into disrepute. The inaction over [the equestrian] has been made more embarrassing by the banning from the Sydney Olympics of [an] outstanding high jumper... [who] tested positive for cocaine last year. The embarrassment could become even greater if the matter is left to bubble along.

...[a local presenter] is furious over a newspaper column critical of his television interview with [an] equestrian... over sex and drugs allegations. The column, "Media Watch"... in yesterday's *National Business Review*, contained a purported conversation between [the equestrian] and someone from TV1's *Holmes* show setting the ground rules for questions. Both [the columnist and the show's presenter] say there was no such conversation. But while [the columnist], a former television journalist, said yesterday that it was obviously written as a "mickey-taking piece" and not for real, [the presenter] took a different view... sa[ying] it was nasty, defamatory and struck at his integrity and that of the show... [The presenter] did not accept the column was satire or that it was clear to readers the quotes were not real. "[The columnist] has lost the plot completely." ...[the presenter said it] expected a complete retraction, but *NBR*'[s] editor-in-chief... said there would not be one... The mock conversation... has an unnamed person promising [the equestrian it] will not be asked to give a yes or no answer to the allegations that [the equestrian] snorted cocaine and had [gay] sex... In fact, when [the equestrian] was asked... during the live June 28 interview whether [it] denied the allegations, [the equestrian] responded: "That's a curly one." [The columnist] said yesterday: "It's pretty obvious that they went soft on him... and [that's why] I'm... taking the mickey."

...The Olympic gold-medal-winning equestrian... will continue to enjoy the financial backing of the Sports Foundation... despite widespread rumours of illegal drug-taking... [The NZSF] said the cocaine allegations played no part in the... latest round of funding... announced yesterday... [The equestrian]'s funding is expected to continue at least until his retirement, which is expected to be announced after the Sydney Olympics. And if there were an Olympic event for taciturnity, [the equestrian] would probably win gold in that as well. For... the past eight weeks the Olympi[an]... has flatly refused to confirm or deny allegations made by Britain's *Sunday Mirror*... The story led to a torrent of media inquiries from around Britain and N[Z]... While the frequency of media reports may be dwindling, public relations specialists contacted by the *Weekend Herald* say the double gold medallist has done far more damage to his public image by refusing to answer questions than if [it] had spoken up... "Contrary to popular belief public relations people think honesty is the best policy. People are much better to front up, otherwise they give off the impression that they've got something to hide... [The equestrian] could have squashed this really easily. The evidence was relatively small but his silence has [increased public interest.]..." ...the public had a relatively short memory and clients were generally advised to talk openly about an issue, unless there were sensitive circumstances involved... "Look at... [the British actor caught with a US prostitute]. After [the actor] fronted up it hardly took any time at all for him to become popular and for the public to love him again." Consultus['] chief executive... said the community needed to believe in its heroes and, although [the chief executive] did not know the circumstances involved, it was a pity that [the equestrian] had not been able to defuse the situation earlier. "Where there's smoke there's fire." Meanwhile, the [NZSF] says it has cut equestrian sports funding... to \$558,620 from \$717,000 last year.

...A top Canadian show jumper has been banned from the Olympics – and could be banned for life – after testing positive for cocaine... his second breach... [The Canadian], who was tagged as one of Canada's best hopes for an Olympic medal... also tested positive for cocaine in 1996 and was suspended for four years. This was later reduced to seven months after [the Canadian] successfully appealed against the penalty, arguing [that it] used the drug for personal reasons and not to improve his riding performance... News of the positive test on [the] 32-year-old... came as N[Z]'s top equestrian was being... tested for drugs, along with other members of the N[Z] equestrian team... The... team were tested at Lulworth Castle, in Dorset, last week. [The 44-year-old] said the results were not expected to be known for at least another three weeks... [But] top equestrian competitors likely to compete against [him] at the Games had no complaints about his inclusion in the Olympic team... A[n AUS]n eventing team member... said: "[The 44-year-old]'s an amazing person in our sport... Most of the people [in our team]... [woul]d like to be able to beat the best that there is..." ...Since a British heavyweight newspaper alleged in June that [the 44-year-old] had snorted cocaine, [the NZer] has refused to make any public comment on whether the claims are true. However, since being publicly named in the N[Z] team on June 27, [the 44-year-old] has signed two official Olympic documents saying [it] does not take drugs. The two contracts include the Athletes' Agreement, effective between September 1 and October 4, banning drug use and obliging athletes to behave in a "proper manner." ...the NZ Olympic Committee... secretary-general... yesterday refused to comment further on the cocaine allegations or on its recent investigation into the matter. The N[Z] Equestrian Federation, which has received more than \$2.6 million in funding since 1996 from the Sports Foundation, also declined to comment or say how much [the 44-year-old] receives from the federation, although it is estimated to be \$50,000 a year. Four major foundation sponsors the *Herald* contracted – Air NZ, C[HH], Sanitarium and the... Challenge Trust – refused to say if they were reviewing their sponsorship or had any concerns regarding [the 44-year-old].

...The Government [has announced a] \$9 million Sport Education Scholarship fund for "aspiring sport stars"... [The] Sport, Fitness and Leisure Minister... said the fund would allow talented athletes to pursue tertiary studies and train... at the same time... About 100 scholarships, averaging \$10,000, would be available... to... athletes who had the potential to represent N[Z]. The scholarships tied in with the Government's announcement last month of \$16 million for high-performance sports centres in Auckland, Wellington and Dunedin. These will replace 18 separate sports academies. While the money is aimed at producing Olympic medal-winners, the emphasis is on Athens in 2004 rather than Sydney this year.

...The Sydney Games have been tipped to provide N[Z] with the second-best medal haul in the country's Olympic history... [behind] Los Angeles in 1984... American magazine *Sports Illustrated* has predicted that N[Z]ers will leave with four gold, four silver and two bronze medals... *Sports Illustrated* put the U[S] at the top of the medal table with 44 golds to Russia's 30 and China's 27. Home advantage would lift A[US] into fourth spot with 18 golds... The NZ team's operation manager... downplayed the magazine's predictions... "*Sport Illustrated* will probably get about 80[%] of their predictions right, but we don't pay any attention to them." ...[NZ's] three-day-event rider... is seen as a potential double gold medallist with victory in the individual and teams competitions... *Sports Illustrated* said the other N[Z] golds would go to [the gals'] boardsailer... and... [the gals'] points race... cyclist... Meanwhile, A[US]n betting agency Centrebet has ranked... [NZ's guy] triathlete... as the only N[Z] athlete likely to win gold.

...[NZ s]ports punters will have to go offshore if they want to bet on the Sydney Olympics because the N[ZOC] will not allow betting on them. [The] N[ZOC] chief executive... said the committee had decided when sports betting was introduced in 1995 that it did not fit the Olympic ideal and that decision would not be reconsidered. That means... [NZ] punters will have to use organisations such as A[US]'s Centrebet to place their wagers.

...The I[OC] will keep an eagle eye on gambling at the Sydney Olympics after failing to convince A[US] to ban Olympic betting. Athletes, coaches and officials are free to bet despite fears that it might lead to corruption and match-fixing. The IOC says it is monitoring the situation but officials doubt that an athlete would throw away a medal for money. "The Olympics is one chance in a lifetime. It is more important,"...

It is conceivable that Newcastle might one day import coal when stocks begin to run out. Eskimos may even resort to buying a little ice if global warming continues apace... But A[US] importing didgeridoos? It is the latest case of cheap overseas labour costs trumping the A[US]n market, no matter how sacred the product. The impending Sydney Olympics are expected to be a giant money-spinner for A[US]n companies contracted to

produce games clothes and memorabilia. It is such a plum ride that a few overseas ventures have dabbled in a little illegal production. One was s[prung] when its line of T-shirts proclaimed "Sidney 2000 – Be part of it." Now it seems A[US] is becoming flooded with cheap didgeridoos made in China and Taiwan in anticipation of a sharp rise in demand for Aboriginal souvenirs during the games. With spending by overseas tourists... on souvenirs... each year totalling around \$A1.7 billion... it means traditional Aboriginal communities who make the instrument are losing a hefty chunk of their income. It seems it is not just A[US]n goods but also services – that is, jobs – being snapped up by foreigners. Indian workers, using A[US]n names and accents, have been trained to replace sacked Sydney call centre employees in a deal which has raised the hackles of trade unionists... [- who] claim... that the new names appear to be constructed from first and last names of the... 140... sacked employees... They will take calls from thousands of unwitting A[US]n customers of companies as large as Grace Brothers and Myers, who will not realise their queries have been routed through New Delhi. Commercial finance company GE Capital... confirmed that the new trainees had already been familiarised with A[US]. The Indian workers have been brought out in groups of 20 or 30 for several weeks each before returning to India to train others... The familiarisation process could best be described as dinkum. As well as watching true-blue A[US]n movie *The Castle*, they have been taken to A[US]n Rules matches and treated to barbecues... [■ S]pectators will have to pay \$A3.50... for a meat pie and \$A3.90 for a carton of hot chips during the Sydney Games. The organising board has also given caterers approval to charge \$A4.80 for a 425ml cup of beer and \$A3.20 for a 600ml bottle of Mt Franklin spring water. The prices are up to 100[%] more than those charged at takeaway food shops and are bound to anger many consumers.

...*Big 'no' to greedy Games...* N[Z]ers have decided the Sydney Olympics are a non-event, much to the dismay of airlines, wholesalers and agents. With the opening ceremony barely a month away, indications are that only 2000 of the 12,000 N[Z]ers who were expected to attend will be there. The travel industry is blaming Air N[Z]'s high fares and the pricey packages offered by the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (Socog). Air NZ... offered no comment why the fares had been set at such a high level... [but] now sees no need to schedule extra flights to Sydney... Qantas opted to retain normal fare levels but its bookings are not looking any better... Socog had launched a range of packages that included the opening and closing ceremonies, but only the most expensive (\$1700) had been made available to N[Z]ers... Travel agents are upset that the Olympic packages carried no commission – only a flat fee. One agent, who did not want to be identified, said [it] had received only \$50 for selling a \$20,000 Olympic booking... Sydney still has thousands of rooms in the two-star and apartment categories available... at up to \$A450... a night.

...the athletes' village on a 90ha site next to Olympic Park... cost \$A750 million... A new suburb... Newington, with house lots of between 200 sq m and 333 sq m, will house more than 15,750 athletes and officials during the two weeks of competition. The athletes' village is a mix of low-rise apartments, terraced houses and units, some of which have already been sold for post-Games occupation... Apartments are selling for up to \$A525,000 and houses to \$A540,000... After the Olympics, [a further] 600 dwellings... 50,000 sq m of office park and 6700 sq m of shop[s]... will be built... All... houses in Newington – said to be the world's largest solar suburb – have solar-power and energy and water-conservation strategies.

...Two months ago, a power cut blacked out... Sydney Airport[s]... radar system. A fortnight ago, the \$A43 million... computerised baggage system went into meltdown, delaying 27 international flights and irritating 6000 passengers. The baggage system also crashed in June, breaking down for 11 hours and forcing 2000 bags to be left behind. Despite continuing problems and reports by independent experts that the power supply system remains fragile, authorities are confident that they will cope with demand at the refurbished airport, which will handle 2300 extra flights a day over the... month... of the... Olympics... At the peak on October 2, the day after the closing ceremony, 80 flights an hour will depart Sydney. Getting around during the Games, visitors will be funnelled through the public transport system. Trains are all linked to the Olympic Park railway station[(there is 'no public car parking at the Park')]. Despite... a series of derailments and serious timetable delays over the past few weeks, the[trains] will probably be a better bet than the 13 Olympic spectator bus routes as the roads are likely to come to a standstill. Sydney's notorious taxi drivers are already rubbing their hands with glee at the prospect of watching their meters tick over in traffic jams on... the way to Homebush.

...The U[S] has joined the European Union in accusing A[US] of unfair trade practices for the Olympics... N[SW] authorities have said only eight foreign broadcasters would be given access each day and they would be drawn daily... [A] US trade representative... said the rules appeared to violate both the Olympic charter and A[US]'s obligations under... rules administered by the World Trade Organisation. In America, the Olympic broadcast rights were purchased by NBC for \$1.5 billion.

...Sydney television steps into the digital age well and truly at the Games, with a variety of new camera angles and options available as a result of new, smaller technology. There will be rails beside the athletics track and up the rowing course and flying cameras on wires at a variety of other venues to give a new perspective... [to a potential] 3.9 billion people... Altogether, the host broadcaster, Sobo, will have 940 cameras in action, 100 of them in the main venue, Stadium Australia, alone. Out the back, the Easter Show pavilion is [being] converted to a huge broadcast edit centre where pictures are cut and edited to suit the variety required by the 200 home markets. A total of 402 monitors [will b]e crewed to do that work out of 35 studios, with the results beamed off continuously by 15 satellite dishes. There[will b]e nearly 15,000 broadcast staff, technicians and television front-people... to report on 10,500 athletes. Sobo will film 3400 hours of competition in total, which would take 144 days to put to air if you bought all of it. Canada has bought most time, 1039 hours. South Africa and Korea tie for second with 930... No rights have been sold to pay-television broadcasters, as the IOC charter requires the Games to be available to all, free of charge. Here, as in N[Z], one channel has rights and broadcast access. TVNZ's deal denies TV3 rights to screen pictures of any event until 24 hours after they have. In Sydney, Channel Ten has decided it cannot compete and will flash messages on screen to tell when [AUS's top gold-medal hopes are]... in the start blocks. They have planned up to 10 breaks up to seven minutes long where they see medal victories and hope viewers will reward them for the warning by switching back once the action finishes.

...A[US]ns have fallen out of love with the Olympics... With less than four [week]s to go before the Olympics open in Sydney, only 49[%] of people over the age of 14 say they have any interest, according to a survey released yesterday. That figure was down six points on the February result and 17 on a similar poll held more than [a] year ago. The survey... showed that interest in watching the Games on television had also declined, with just 41[%] of people keen to watch the opening ceremony and 33[%] the closing ceremony. Sydney's organisers have had more than their share of problems in the build-up to the Games, with complaints about ticketing and problems involving their IOC members.

...victims of the online... Olympic ticket scam are suing the ...IOC... for "millions of dollars". [The] Texan class-action lawyer... representing 400 victims from around the globe... also has his legal sights set on the London-based touts allegedly behind the scam, the US Olympic Committee and the official US provider of tickets, JetSet/CoSport... The lawyer... said it was unlikely [the lawyer] would go after the A[US]n Olympic Committee.

...[the fact that] 'many of the printed tickets are too large for the ticket machines' has compounded the embarrassment of officials who were already red-faced after s[tray] fireworks from Saturday's Olympic opening ceremony rehearsal caused a spectacular scrub fire that burned off nearly a hectare.

...The waiting is over. The... Olympic Games begin tonight in Sydney. The "greatest show on earth" kicks off at 7.30[pm] with a spectacular opening ceremony in front of 110,000 people at Stadium Australia, plus a television audience reckoned... to [be] the largest audience[in the history of television] – 3.7 billion people... Even before the competition begins, the superlatives have been flowing freely about these games. It is the biggest Olympics of all time, with 300 events, 10,000 athletes, 5000 officials[, '4700 volunteers'] and 199 countries. It is also the most expensive, costing \$A2.6 billion... But after the 16 days of competition, we will know the most important superlatives – who is the fastest, highest and strongest.

...Olympic leaders may have to cut the ever-increasing number of people involved in Summer Games in the future to stop the event becoming impossible to manage... "You are looking at 500,000 people coming into Sydney Olympic Park on a daily basis,"... [the] IOC director general... said yesterday... "We will have a post-mortem as quickly as possible after the Sydney Games to see what is really the impact of these numbers. The

media is 21,000 here. It was around 12,000 in ...1992... Everywhere there are increases and we have to watch that very closely and monitor it. The IOC will sit down and reconsider where we could possibly put some limits." Triathlon, [gals'] weightlifting and taekwondo will all be[gin today]...

For every Olympic champion who carves his name into legend in Sydney, there will be another who has to make do with 10 fleeting minutes of fame. Like all preceding Games, the 2000 edition will provide a bizarre amalgam of major and minor sports, of anonymous amateurs and world-famous professionals. The focus as ever will be on such stars as track and field athletes, swimmers and gymnasts, their exploits scrutinised by packed crowds and a vast global television audience. Other household names – soccer, tennis and basketball players among them – will enjoy a brief flirtation with Baron de Coubertin's ideal before returning to the more serious business of earning money... [(although)Taiwan, seeking a first Olympic gold, is offering \$US330,000, with big payouts for silvers and bronzes too[; while t]he Singaporeans, whose only medal – a silver – came 52 years ago, are offering \$US575,000 for a first place[)]... In their shadow, the rest – the part-time archers, canoeists, wind surfers... volleyball players, the butchers, bakers and candlestick makers – will joust for the remaining limelight... Some sports seem forever destined to stay on the margins. Fencing, with its epees, foils and sabres, its balestras (short jump towards opponent), reprises (counter-attack following lunge) and ripostes (counter following parry), may be too esoteric. It is also so fast that only the connoisseur can follow the sport's subtleties... And you don't get more [subtle than a former] Soviet army major. [The major] put modern pentathlon on the world's front pages in Montreal in 1976 after being caught with a fencing sword adapted with a special button, which tricked the electronic scoring system into awarding him extra points... [The major] returned home and never competed abroad again. One question remained unanswered: had [the major] used the same sword when winning the individual silver and team gold in Munich in 1972? ...Other disciplines, meanwhile, have been able to provide spectacle while struggling to match it with drama, largely due to the domination of one nation. Nobody, for instance, bets against the Chinese table tennis team. In 1996, they not only won all four golds... but their second-string players also claimed three of the silvers and one bronze. And who will win at taekwondo – a debut sport rooted in Korea's ancient martial arts – if not the Koreans? They have, after all, been practising for 2000 years... [T]he Kenyans... have won every steeplechase they have competed in since 1968[(t]hey boycotted the 1976 and 1980 Games[), ha]ve taken gold and silver in six of their last seven Olympics, and with the last five world championship golds and a solid grip on the world record their dominance is total... For Sydney romance, look no further than... [t]he shaven-headed... 130kg super-heavyweight Greco-Roman wrestler from Russia[who] is seeking a fourth successive Olympic gold. A tax official, member of parliament and friend of the Russian President, [the wrestler] has not been beaten since 1987.

...Scores of medals are not enough for a former superpower desperately hoping that its athletes will provide a glimpse of lost glory. EVEN as the Russian team surged to second place in the medal count, Russia mourned losses by its once-unbeatable Olympic champions in Sydney as a national tragedy... The greatest blow for Russia was the incredible defeat of the legendary... Greco-Roman wrestler who had never before lost an international match. [The Russian] was beaten by ...a... [US] wrestler who had never won a collegiate or world meet... "It happened. There is an emptiness. Nothing else," said the daily newspaper *Moskovsky Komsomolets*... in a front-page story... Some chalked up [the wrestler]'s loss to alleged bias on the part of the judges. Others blamed [hi]s entry into politics, saying it distracted him... "After all, one cannot sit on two chairs at once,"...

The past isn't what is used to be. Ask the gymnasts. The young [girls] who took to the floor of the Sydney SuperDome for the all-around final on Thursday night sparkled like princesses. Glitter in their hair, sequins and curlicues on their gloriously patterned leotards, they were figures of fragile, fairytale beauty. But the fairytale doesn't have the same perfect ending any more. The gymnasts go through their routines and quartets of unsmiling judges mark them down. Down from 10 that is. Remember... the Romanian waif who stole the hearts of the world at the 1976 games in Montreal? [The Romanian] did what no one in the modern era had managed before her: [the Romanian] executed a routine, on the uneven bars, which even those nitpicking judges called flawless. [The Romanian] got 10. At the finals on Thursday, the performances fell well short of perfection. The two-point landing of utter poise just never seemed to happen. Watching the... all-around is like trying to watch a split-screen movie being projected on to all four walls, so I'm happy to accept I may have missed something, but I soon lost count of the landings that were tentative, uneven, ill-balanced, even graceless – and no amount of that arm-spreading, chest-thrusting, wide-grinning pose of triumph was going to fool the judges. Of course there was a reason for all this. When [an]English entrant... fell heavily and injured herself on landing ([the Pom] took no further part), they ought to have guessed. When the favourite, the lissom and scowling Russian... landed on her knees with a yelp of pain and walked away in tears of frustration, her early lead in shreds, the penny may have dropped. Incredibly, mindbendingly – heads are still shaking among the specialist press corps here – the vaulting horse was set at the wrong height. And it wasn't just a whisker out, but 5cm – which the last time I looked was just under two inches in the old measure. Two inches isn't much when you drive it, but to a gymnast somersaulting at steeple-height and hoping to execute a routine designed and refined with algebraic precision it must seem like the length of a football field... [T]he magazine *International Gymnast*, says we're entitled to wonder whether the glitch cost her the gold medal. On her next apparatus, the uneven bars, [the Russian] missed a grip and fell to the mat in a cloud of chalk... "You have to believe that if [the Russian]'d landed on her feet in the vault, [it]'d have gone to the bars feeling more motivated," says [the magazine's reporter], who cannot remember seeing such a mistake since school mess.

...[as g]ymnastics' governing body finally took responsibility yesterday for the blunder in which the vault was set at the wrong height... the A[US]ns were still getting]... worked up about the disqualification, barely 150m from a golden victory, of [their gal]20km walker... The disqualification was unquestionably the sensation of day 13 – and it would be a hard heart indeed that would not feel compassion for the [perso]n who came so close to gold[(NZers will recall that our guy 50km walker – who collapsed within sight of the winner's tape at the 1998 Commonwealth Games – had been 'disqualified while leading at Atlanta' in 1996)]. Yet – and maybe everyone's getting a bit tired and needs a lie-down – those voices... raised in [the AUSn walker]'s defence seem to think this is not simply a tragedy but a scandal. The tabloid paper the *Daily Telegraph* called it "the most excruciating example of vile sporting misfortune that it is possible to imagine" which is simply hyperbole but not wrong. But [the paper's columni]st went further and said [that, like ice-skating (the Winter Games sport which has at times been tainted by fixed judging),]the sport could not be taken seriously when it is about technique which is "a matter of opinion." [The walker]'s coach – who may have temporarily taken leave of his senses – bizarrely suggested a political motive. And... the deputy chair[perso]n of the A[US]n Track and Field Athletics Commission, who should have known better, called it a "ludicrous result." Ironically, the athlete herself was the most clear-eyed about it. [The walker] collapsed in distress when the chief judge held up the dreaded last red card but... quickly composed herself to shrug that "that's race walking" and "I will have to fix up my technique." A discus thrower may not walk out of the front of the circle even if her discus landed ...in... an[other country]... It will be a no-throw. It may seem silly but it's a rule and everyone knows about it. Walkers must have one foot in contact with the earth at all times (there's a name for people who don't: runners) and they have to keep the front leg straight until it becomes the back leg, which accounts for that odd rolling gait. [The AUSn] didn't. On at least three occasions, [the AUSn] was adjudged to have "lifted." This wasn't – as [the columni]st suggests – a matter of opinion but of fact. Yesterday's papers were full of pictures of [the AUSn]'s feet more than 2cm off the ground. I found it hard to see on live-speed TV, but that's why they are the judges and I'm not. And, incidentally, none of the three judges who reported her for lifting knew that any of the others had. Each runner approached each judge with a clean slate. [The AUSn] broke the rules[and] was out. End of story. It's heartbreaking – although for my money it pales beside the story of a gymnast robbed of a medal because [the gymnast] took a cold pill her doctor gave her – but let's keep it in perspective. The A[US]ns have been, until this, gracious in defeat – though God knows they've had little enough of it to be gracious about. But if they want a steer on how to approach [the walker]'s misfortune, they should take a tip from the Channel 7 satirists... Over footage of the A[USn] guy's hockey team's centre half collapsing in grief after missing a penalty in a shootout and letting the Dutch slip into the... final, they expressed the only appropriate view. "That[centre half]'s... let everybody down. [The centre half]'s a disgrace to his country."

...If watching our Olympic team falter and fail feels painful from where you're sitting, try and imagine how hard it is to be a N[Z]er in the middle of all this. The weekend finally brought a break in the medal drought when [our 44-year-old equestrian] picked up bronze and... [our] double world champion [r:p1550, ln10]... a gold... for the single skulls... but the dreams of the moderate Olympic glory that we secured in Atlanta and Barcelona seem now as elusive as a scent of rain to a parched Canterbury runholder. There is, of course, no shortage of A[US]ns to rub it in. The *Sydney Morning Herald* has several hundred staff covering the Games, but many of them are on secondment from other papers in the Fairfax group like the *Wee Waa Weekly*. And woe betide any N[Z]er who bumps into these blokes on a media bus. When they find out you're from N[Z], their eyes crease into something between a chuckle and a grimace of pity and they say: "Don't worry mate, I won't tell a soul." It makes you inclined to take the advice of Channel 7's irreverent and vulgar late-night comic roasters... who advised us, if asked, to "deny you are a N[Z]er." Even when we win, we lose here. The *Sunday Telegraph*'s story on [NZ]'s triumph in the [guys'] single skulls began: "The bleats of joy could be heard from across the Tasman." But hang around Sydney for even a few days, even when the world's elite athletes are not here, and you realise there's a lot more to it. Perhaps it has to do with the different circumstances in which our sense of colonial nationhood was formed. N[Z] was settled by hopeful but often downtrodden souls looking for a better life; A[US]'s First Fleet was full of convicts, many transported for petty crimes, who had to make a new start or die. We started full of dreams and apprehension; they full of the rage of rejection and having nothing to lose by looking to the north and hoisting a giant two-fingered salute to the old country. That which we call arrogance and conceit in the A[US]n looks a lot more like self-belief. It shines out of every encounter you have on the street, every newspaper you open, every television programme you watch. The discourse about national identity does not begin with a shrug and an "Oh, well, never mind". A[US]ns expect and embrace excellence, in themselves and in each other. And they know that that excellence, in every sphere of life, depends on a robust public debate and all shades of self-expression (can you imagine a [Channel 7-like satirical] show on TVNZ lasting more than a week before the purse-lipped naysayers had it hauled off?). They also know that defeat is something only centimetres short of triumph. When A[US]'s gal pole vaulter... a former world-record holder, failed even to qualify for the final [it] said simply "I should have jumped better." Sure there were tears, but they were tears of frustrated disappointment. Compare her reaction with that of our high jumper... a rookie with a big future who jumped well below his best and failed to make the finals. Forced to wait out the rest of qualifying in the competition area, [it] did so with a towel over his head, bent low by bitter shame. Watching that sad sight, I felt I was looking at a [guy] with more than the weight of defeat on his shoulders. What slumped him low was the weight of being a N[Z]er.

...a NZ judo referee... has left the country, escaping a continuing hail of abuse from Japan for his handling of an Olympic final. The furious reaction, mostly by e-mail, included a death threat... Japanese judo fans [were] angered by his ruling in favour of a French [fighter] during the over-100kg final in Sydney last weekend. The N[Z] Judo Federation has received a number of angry e-mails... Irate e-mails and letters from Japanese fans are also being sent to the *Herald*... Under International Judo Federation rules, [the referee] is not allowed to speak to the media about umpiring decisions. But... [the NZ Judo Federation president] said the decision against [the Japanese competitor] was "completely above-board." Judo effectively has three referees – the scoring umpire and two sideline judges. If the judges do not agree with the scoring referee's decision they can overrule it. This was not done during the final. Even [the Japanese competitor] conceded: "I was not good enough. I am not dissatisfied with the call." The... over-100kg is judo's most prestigious Olympic event... [The NZ Judo Federation president] said the "outpour of rage" was surprising. Japanese people, especially judo competitors, are renowned for their discipline. "But these ones... demand[ing] an apology from... [the NZ referee and calling NZ 'a hateful country']... seem to be bad losers who probably don't know much about judo."

...The Games were not a weekend old when a political activist complained that they were displacing the serious things of life. "Don't we do the serious things to earn the frivolities?" I asked. We were about to play tennis. "Maybe I'm just a bad spectator," [the activist] said, putting a good ball past me. I can't remember an Olympics like these. I suppose we were spectators, but with an event of that scale so near, you felt at times like a participant in a celebration of A[US]. While we ached for medals, wondered whether it was worth paying more tax to get them and pretended to begrudge A[US] its success, we were delighted really that dirty old Sydney town was doing it so well. And there was a serious dimension for A[US]ns that possibly we understood more intimately than most others. The opening ceremony engaged the ghosts of their history as well as the glories. When great white [AUSns] of the past handed the torch to an Aboriginal to light the flame, we understood. We are in a similar post-colonial predicament, with one big difference: we have a treaty that many A[US]ns envy... With a solid reference point for our past and present race relations, we probably do not fully understand A[US]'s struggle with its history. If nothing else, the treaty is a statement of good intentions... (...the... [treaty's] signatories never contemplated... the devastation of Maori society[– which]... is precisely one of the dangers they were trying to avoid...)... A[US] has no comparable testament. It has nothing except rigorous historical scholarship to counter the impression that the only fate its colonists ever intended for the natives was genocide. Rigorous historical scholarship, unfortunately, is becoming a rare commodity in both countries. For some time now it has been steadily sacrificed to the contemporary need for post-colonial reconciliation. It is not widely known in this country that treaty grievances no longer receive more than perfunctory historical research. Claims are quickly conceded as long as they fit into a general category of land alienation, and the Crown spends most of its time coming to the terms of settlement. Frequently the terms include an apology. A[US] is trying to deal in the historical apology, too. [AUS's PJM]... to his eternal credit, has steadfastly avoided saying "sorry" for a plainly well-intentioned policy that involved removing Aboriginal children from their families in the bush. If it were possible to acknowledge the best motives of the past, there would be no harm in apologising for the consequences. But in the climate of today it is seldom possible to give the past a fair hearing. Not long before the Olympics, a court in the Northern Territory finally heard a test case brought by two members of the so-called stolen generation. The judge took a long, dispassionate look at the evidence and decided the two had not been "stolen" from their families and that at the relevant time there was no policy of forcible removal of children in the N[T]. Since then a similar case against the state of N[SW] has been thrown out of the Court of Appeal. The decision, of course, cut no ice with those who believe what they want to believe, and the fury that followed the first judgment threatened for a while to be visited on the Olympics. These people are not concerned about the finer points of history. They want the past converted to a morality play for modern purposes. And the appalling thing is that historical scholarship today seems inclined to play along... To apologise for the past is an affront to history as a study of humanity and an insult to people who can no longer speak for themselves.

...HOWLS of protest greeted plans to kill off the swarms of begong moths that have besieged Olympic Park. Games organisers said the moths – which have been drawn off course during their annual migration by the bright lights of the stadium – might have to be killed. But Greenpeace has pleaded the moths' cause, saying it would "not be a very good concept" to be spraying pesticide around the games' venue... ● The... Sydney Olympics will go out with a bang – a low-flying fighter bomber will ignite a long stream of jet fuel and a million people will be treated to... the largest fireworks show in the world to follow the closing ceremony tomorrow... Sydney loves to party and organisers expect up to a million people to pack the best vantage points around the harbour to watch the 23-minute show, which will consume \$A3 million... worth of fireworks... The F-111 jet will "dump and burn" fuel at 1000ft above Stadium Australia... The plane's dramatic flight will be the signal for 24 "lightning shells" to explode like giant flashbulbs all the way down the Parramatta River to downtown Sydney, where another F-111 will light up the sky over the Harbour Bridge. It is being dubbed "the river of lightning." ...in a dig at London's "river of fire" that proved a damp squid on millennium night, [the]... artistic director of tomorrow's extravaganza... said: "It will be very different from the river of fire on the Thames in that it will work." The night sky will then blaze with fireworks that have a truly international flavour – pyrotechnic experts from Spain, Japan the U[S] and South Africa are contributing to the grand explosion of light... [For the finale, t]wo 61cm shells will be fired simultaneously for the first time in the world.

...It was the moment which surprised no one. The president of the [IOC] gave his imprimatur to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, announcing officially what anyone who has been here has known since before the flame was lit. "They could not have been better... and therefore I am proud and happy to proclaim that you have presented to the world the best Olympic Games ever." ...the 110,000-seat Stadium Australia erupted at the verdict – and faithfully followed his accented "Aussie! Aussie! Aussie!" with an enthusiastic reply, "Oi! Oi! Oi!" The last scene of all to end this strange, eventful history began with a surprise and ended with the biggest controlled conflagration in the history of the planet. [The r]amping... stars of Channel 7's late-night satirical show *The Dream*, were pressed into service as the audience warmup act – presumably chosen on the basis that the best way to blunt satirical wit is to employ it. And a [guy] on a farm bike, apparently bent on destroying proceedings but in fact all part of the act, was gently brought under control by a goodnatured "crowd" of performers. The athletes were not forgotten: flag-bearers for each nation filed into the arena, later to be joined by all their team-mates in riotous profusion rather than orderly file. It complied with a tradition suggested 44 years ago at the Melbourne Games by a 17-year-old Chinese-A[US]n boy... An entry en masse, [the boy] wrote, would "make the Games even greater [because] there would be only one nation. War, nationality and politics would be forgotten." [The Chinese-AUSn ha]s had his wish at every closing ceremony since and last night... was at Stadium Australia to see it. And... as the Games drew to a close, Greek priestesses danced slowly to music... and angelic choirs filled the air to herald the handing over of the Olympic flag to Athens, the venue for the next Games in 2004.

...in... 1997... the Olympic movement celebrated the sentimental return of the Games to their birthplace in Greece in 2004. Yesterday, the message to Athens was vastly different: get your act together. [The]IOC president... said the Athens Games were in the worst organisational crisis faced by an Olympic city in his 20-year tenure. [The president] would not rule out moving the Games, but said it was unlikely... Since the[Games were awarded to Greece], many plans promised during the bid have been changed or dropped, and the organising committee has been bogged down in bureaucracy... Shocked Greek organisers said [the president] was exaggerating the problems. The Government said it would meet all deadlines.

...A MULTI-million dollar Olympics rescue package is being put together to stop the rot in N[Z] sport, the P[M]... told *Sunday News*... N[Z]'s four-medal tally... in Sydney... is the worst performance since the zero count from the 1980 Moscow games[– which we boycotted as a team. AUS]... spent \$135 million on its golden Olympians[this past year, and has 'invested \$300m in Olympians since Atlanta (NZ has invested \$31m' since Atlanta)]...

What a nation of whingers we are, seeing the glass as half empty rather than half full. Our athletes come back from the Olympics and all we can do is moan about how they dipped out. Surely none of our athletes went to the games to cruise – or lose... Check out the medal hauls of countries with similar populations, such as Ireland and Singapore; way behind[NZ]. Or maybe, just maybe, their priorities are elsewhere. Like making sure their people are fed and housed, their kids not being abused, everyone able to access a job, training and education. Sure, Olympic glory is good for the nation's collective feeling of well-being but the latest call for more money to be thrown at sport is not the answer... • The... members of the A[USn gals'] 4 x 100m relay team... [are involved] in a bitter feud... A[USn a]thletics officials are threatening to drop the team if they continue blaming each other for failing to win a medal at the Sydney Olympics.

...[the r]eigning Olympic 100m champion... has called for an investigation into allegations that prominent U[S] Olympians such as [the country's most successful Olympic athlete – having]... won nine Olympic gold medals in a glittering career... [–] failed drug tests in the build-up to the 1988 Seoul Games. "Everybody who tested positive should get busted. There shouldn't be any coverups," [the champion] said... The charges, reported in *Sports Illustrated*, the *Daily Telegraph* in London and the *Orange County Register*, came in documents released by [a]former US Olympic Committee anti-doping official... [Hi]s papers indicated that [the USs' most successful Olympic athlete] was one of 19 prominent [US] athletes who tested positive but were still allowed to compete in South Korea. [Ironically, the USs' most successful Olympic athlete] was awarded the gold medal in Seoul in the 100m after [a]Canadian... was stripped of his victory for failing a dope test after the race... [The US athlete] who won the 200m, and [the US athlete] who won the 400m hurdles, also tested positive for a banned stimulant in 1988. The US Olympic Committee determined that they had ingested the substances inadvertently... "Those are fake medals... and I don't like it," said... [the] Japanese... who was fifth in the 400m hurdles.

...[The USs' most successful Olympic athlete] dismissed a demand by the manager of [a]former Canadian sprinter... to give back his 1988 Olympic gold medal in the 100m, saying it was unrealistic. "It's ridiculous, who cares? ...I did 18 years of track and field and I'[m retired yet]... they're still talking about me, so I guess I still have it." ...The 41-year-old... was arrested for... driving under the influence after his... Maserati hit a wall along a Los Angeles freeway on Tuesday... [The Canadian]'s manager and lawyer... told the *Sydney Morning Herald* last week that [it] plans legal action...

Hard workouts at the gym could soon be a thing of the past as American scientists have found that just imagining yourself exercising can increase muscle strength. It is hoped that the research could one day help people too weak to exercise to start recuperating from strokes or other injury. Volunteers aged 20 to 35 were put through strict "mental gymnastics" tests and after a few weeks showed up to a 13.5[%] increase in strength. They maintained that gain for three months after their training stopped... [A]n exercise physiologist at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation in Ohio, told *New Scientist* magazine that muscles move in response to impulses from nearby motor neurons. The firing of those neurons in turn depends on the strength of electrical impulses sent by the brain. "That suggests you can increase muscle strength solely by sending a larger signal to motor neurons..."... The researchers are now repeating the experiment with people aged 65 to 80 to see if mental gymnastics also works for them.

...The message behind... national arthritis day is 'move it or lose it', and locals are encouraged to join exercise and workshop classes this Friday. More than half of N[Z]'s population suffers from arthritis... By holding the national day, the Arthritis Foundation is hoping to raise awareness of how beneficial exercise is for arthritis sufferers... The Arthritis Foundation's chief executive... says... "Move It or Lose It Day will lead to a greater recognition that there is something positive almost everyone can do to have a healthier lifestyle as they get older." These include building up exercise to 30 minutes a day [– 'if it adds up to just 30 minutes a day, exercise can add years to your life' (though 'half an hour of moderate exercise a week is all that is required') –]to increase mobility, improve energy levels, reduce stress, help make bones stronger, reduce falls, and give more restful sleep. For people with arthritis, keeping joints mobile reduces joint pain, and increasing muscle strength prevents joint deformities.

...Very often, towards the end of a professional athletics career, exercise and competition become so strenuous... and painful, that those involved in sport can't contemplate enjoying a walk in the park again, let alone an aerobic workout. In fact, I can't tell you the number of Olympians who've said to me that the day they retire from the competitive arena will be the last time they swim a stroke, run a step or bounce a basketball.

...A group of Western Heights residents are angry their local park contains a basketball hoop they did not want. The hoop was installed along with a children's playground on the Semillon Ave Reserve in March last year... [A resident] who lives across the road from the playground area, says the basketball hoop is making life miserable for residents who live around the park's perimeters. "It attracts 18 and 19-year-olds that play at night. Why should we have to listen to balls bounce?" ...Another resident... has the same concerns. "It's not just the bouncing, they yell and scream and swear. They drive up in car loads to use the hoop..." It was built by [the]developers... but the land has recently become the property of the Waitakere City Council... [The] council... parks project manager... says the council has decided to remove the hoop... [following the presentation of] a petition signed by 20 residents... but they are not sure when. There is also the possibility the council may try to gauge residents' opinion of the hoop through a letter box drop. However, [the resident who presented the petition]... says a letter box drop would be pointless. "It means nothing to people who are away from the area because they can't hear the noise." Both [residents we spoke to] have children aged under five. They have trouble getting them to sleep at night when people are using the court. They have been woken up early on Sunday mornings by people using the hoop... Last Wednesday, some of the residents met with... Waitakere Community Board member[s]... They agreed with the residents that the hoop was too close to houses around the reserve. The hoop may be moved to the grounds of the new school that will open in the area by the end of the year.

...[A] HIGH SCHOOL basketball star... is set to... [sign] a multi-million dollar sponsorship deal with sportswear giant Nike. The 18-year-old, who has yet to play a professional game, is understood to have agreed to a deal worth \$US90 million... The deal runs for seven years... [The 18-year-old] is widely expected to be the number one pick in the... National Basketball Association... draft. The Cleveland Cavaliers will get that coveted selection and will pick [the 18-year-old], who lives just 55km down the road in Akron, Ohio. [The] deal dwarfs what [the 18-year-old] will be able to earn from actually playing basketball. Under the NBA's collective bargaining agreement, the 2.03m... guard/forward can earn \$US3.349m in the first year of his contract... Nike has been searching for a player who will resonate with teenagers the way [its] former Chicago Bulls star... did.

...No matter what [an AUSn]... achieves in the world of golf, no matter how many tournaments [it wins, it] will never be able to erase one fact from his record. [The AUSn] was among 48 players beaten by a 14-year-old girl at the Hawaiian Open... finishing three shots behind [her]... at the weekend. And don't think the Queenslander's fellow A[US]n pros will let it pass quickly. It seems [the Queenslander gave a compatriot] a hard time after [the compatriot was beaten by a Swedish gal golfer] at last year's Colonial... [The girl], a Hawaiian with parents of Korean descent, fired a two-under 68 at the US PGA Tour's Sony Open in Honolulu to finish 36 holes at even-par 140, missing the cut by just one stroke... Asked whether [it] belonged on the [guys' or gals'] pro golf tour, [the girl] said: "I think I belong on both." ...[the] girl became the first [gal] to break par in a US PGA round. Her final score was the lowest of four [gals] who have played alongside [guys. The girl] was attempting to become the first [gal] to make the cut in a PGA Tour event since Babe Zaharias at the 1945 Los Angeles Open... [However, the girl] will have some work to do to match [another 14-year-old's] opportunity. The boy... is already the highest-paid player in... [US] Major League Soccer... making US\$500,000... [and] becoming America's youngest pro athlete in more than a century... [The] US citizen born in Ghana... might well become the American saviour of football... [B]oth 14-year-old phenomenons with huge expectations... swiped headlines in the U[S] on a big sports weekend usually dominated by basketball...

The Tall Blacks will look to reciprocal visits from Brazil and Argentina and more regular competition with the A[US]n Boomers, whom they beat 89-78 yesterday, as they build to the world championships in the U[S]... Their 2-1 series win over A[US] came on the back of decent planning, enthusiasm and commitment from the players, plus composure and self-belief. There has been a big attitude change since the Olympics. In Sydney, [the former] coach... tried not to lose by too much. Yesterday in Auckland, the new-look Tall Blacks proved they have a new confidence in their own ability and that they know they can beat top sides after taking Russia to overtime and beating Brazil at the Goodwill Games. And now this... "We didn't have a plan before today – now we do,"... [the new] coach... said, acknowledging it meant television cover, sponsors, more international competition. [The new coach] expected a more intense national league as others tried to force their way into the world championship side, thus maintaining pressure on yesterday's winners. A[US] miss out on a world titles berth for the first time since 1970. At least they are in good company – Sydney Olympic silver medallists France, bronze medallists Lithuania and the fifth-placed Italy have also crashed out in qualifying matches.

...the N[Z] basketball team have blown away the form card... The Tall Blacks [have] made the top four at the world championships without consistent international competition, finance – [the]... Kiwi with the Yankee accent[']s... coaching job is unpaid – without the physical size of the other teams and minus two of their tallest and best players. [One of the two] did not even make it to Indianapolis, a big psychological blow. When [the other, NZ's only NBA player,] was ruled out with an eye injury the mental blow could have killed them before tip-off. But [the coach] gave them faith again. What [the coach] tells them works, so they listen next time. [The coach] is a master strategist and mid-game tactician and the team have followed instruction. They have brought a game no one was prepared for – full-court, fast breaks, under and around rather than over... The Tall Blacks got this far because they played smart, played to their strengths in defence and, critically, played as a team. The core of them were at the world youth championships in 1997... It would be churlish to suggest that [the Kiwi-Yankee] could not continue as N[Z] coach from overseas. But, knowing him, [it] will be keener to keep a firm hand on Kiwi basketball from his Kiwi home. Other countries can't offer him a job as coach at the Athens Olympics, not even the U[S] – who beat NZ in pool play but can end up no better than fifth and now] must fight for one of three qualifying spots for the Americas. The A[US]ns will be happy, because N[Z] have earned them one of 12 places at Athens. Along with the hosts and the winners of the Argentina-Yugoslav final, each of five Fiba zones gets one spot, but a top-six finish in the world championships earns a second place for that region. A[US], who scorned the standard of competition this side of the Tasman right up to the moment... when they found they weren't going to Indianapolis, will now want to play the Tall Blacks in an annual three-test series. [NZ b]asketball can expect new sponsors, TV time, public money.

...[Yugoslavia – who beat the Tall Blacks (who had taken] to the court against Yugoslavia buoyed by their win over them at the Super Cup tournament in Germany three weeks ago... [and yesterday lost their playoff for 3rd/4th against Germany) 87-78 in their semifinal – showed] why they are rated the strongest team in the world... [by retaining their title (their '5th – two more than anyone else, including the US'; who a day earlier had]... suffered another humiliating loss, 81-75 to Spain, to finish sixth[]). It was a forgettable week for the U[S], who saw their streak of 58 consecutive wins... when using NBA players in international competition come to a[] spectacular end – losing three times]... in four games.

...Basketball is flavour of the month, and rightly so. Not only did the Tall Blacks exceed expectations with a stunning run to the world championship semifinals but they did so with nothing but good play, planning and heart... Get out the Halberg Awards now... This team[']s... feat is right up there with the All Whites making the [1982] World Cup... It beats any All Black victory, including the World Cup.

...[the NZ team's] Sevens World Cup... win topped off last year's world series win and was made all the sweeter when they beat A[US] in the final... [The 'Half-Blacks' have] won three tournaments on the trot this season... [but a] sevens win at home is overdue and... [the player who] will captain the side again after taking the reins last month... wants to make sure the tournament in Wellington will break the duck... "We're really looking forward to playing in front of the home fans. I value these awards, we've won a world series and a gold medal but we haven't won in front of our home crowd yet. We want to turn it on for the fans and experience winning at home."

...The next time you urge your favourite team to score, you may be better off saving your breath. New research suggests... [that w]hile barracking may boost players' speed, it also hinders their coordination... [A] report in *New Scientist* magazine[] says r]esearchers in Germany... analysed both the teams and spectators in four home games of... an American football team, in Kiel. [They] filmed 631 downs, discrete plays in which one team attempted to move the ball down the field. On a separate videotape [they] recorded the behaviour of the team's most loyal supporters, a group of 300 fans who sat together in a certain section of the stadium. All the games were sellouts and the crowds could be clearly heard and seen by the players on the field. A judging panel compared the players' success or failure... with the crowd's behaviour at the time... [and] found the crowd support had absolutely no impact on an individual down, adding that cheers are probably also ineffective in other complex team sports such as soccer, rugby and ice hockey. But [the researchers] concluded that it does make the supporters feel better, giving them the illusion that they are controlling the game. [A f]ormer All Black... [said]: "Crowd support definitely gives you a lift without doubt. I used to love it when fans yelled out my name, especially if you are feeling a bit down. And you are so focused on the game that you can filter out the negative vibes and heckling."

...A leading academic on team leadership... is impressed with the depth of planning and free thinking of [the new] All Black coach... and his coaching team. The outlook for the future of the All Blacks under the... [new] leadership is good, says [the academic], who has been appointed professor of sport at Unitec's school of sport. His appointment is said to be a first for N[Z] and AUS] and one of few such posts anywhere. His doctorate on elite team leadership, which was based on three years of study and research within the All Black camp, is claimed to be the first doctorate thesis to obtain first-hand research data on the leadership of an international sports team... Findings from his doctoral research have been used here and overseas and [the academic] has worked as a consultant on coaching and team leadership with five national codes – cricket, rugby, netball, hockey and petanque... "I think the[] new All Black coaching team] value and have a realistic appreciation, not of the hardness of the

players, but of the personal qualities and the unyielding commitment to sport that players need at that level. They're thinking people and that's a critical aspect of a coach. This idea of mechanistic coaches who are so authoritarian – it doesn't last for long in terms of winning or developing people." ...[■ After their first-ever] series victory against the British Lions... [t]he *Sydney Morning Herald* under a headline "Wallabies on top of the world," asked: "Can it get any better than this? Probably not, because there is nothing left for the Wallabies to win."

...THE All Blacks will lose their \$120 million deal with adidas if they don't start winning. The sportswear giant met N[Z] Rugby Football Union bosses in Wellington three weeks ago and told them to win or else... The company is understood to be unhappy with the... All Blacks over their fourth-placed world cup finish. They also consider some players were arrogant and unhelpful while in the UK. The NZRFU's... chief executive... confirmed adidas had raised the issue of the All Blacks' poor world cup performance. Success was the "bottom line," [the chief executive] said.

...GET TOUGH... message to the All Blacks... ALL Blacks enforcers will be given free rein to intimidate their opponents... [NZRFU] officials are this year determined to find "no-nonsense" players to toughen the [guys] in black. "If you are not a bit of an intimidator, the opposition aren't fearful of you," [a selector] told *Sunday News*[, adding that] the All Blacks needed to dig deep to find that "get hard" attitude that once made Kiwi rugby great. "That's the thing the All Blacks used to be so renowned for. Rugby is a confrontational game. It goes a long way to being successful at that level,"... Last year the All Blacks were called "soft". They were clearly put off by rough tactics in the semifinal loss to France. [The selector] said there was no reason why players couldn't deliver a more powerful "fighting fire with fire" commitment. "But perhaps the environment or laws of the game aren't conducive. It probably plays on players' minds with the video cameras and touch judges," [the selector] said.

...If the Crusaders flunk tonight's Super 12 ...final exam, the All Black selectors may need to reappraise their homework. The... Crusaders have been the most consistent N[Z] team... so many of their players must be filling the... selectors' notebooks. While there is little oil leaking from the All Black bunker, there are enough signs to show [the Crusaders' skipper] is favoured to take over as the All Black skipper... During the series, the... gap between the top two teams and the rest of the field was significant... [but] the Brumbies have to be favoured to win... They have played the most appealing rugby and won most of their matches as well. They are the best side to watch and the most effective. Not only do they have a wondrous array of backline talent and moves but they possess a powerful pack who hunt with the precision of the "big black blanket" All Black packs of yesteryear... [The] Brumbies-Crusaders final... act[s] as a great appetiser for the All Blacks' opening Tri-Nations test, against the Wallabies...

When [the #11] scored his late Bledisloe Cup match-winner, [the new All Black] coach... finally let himself go. In the coaches' box high in Stadium Australia, [the coach grabbed his] assistant coach... and [their fellow] selector... in joyous embrace. It had been a hell of a rollercoaster journey for the world-record 109,874 crowd, the players and the coaching staff as the All Blacks upset the World Cup champions 39-35 in perhaps the most extraordinary game in test rugby history. Even when the All Blacks sprang to a 24-point lead in the opening seven minutes, [the coach] did not raise a smile. [The coach] knew the Wallaby resilience, and that they had not touched the ball. [The coach] had also been through the tough times in the last two years, watching the All Blacks wilt under pressure. That nightmare pattern reappeared as the Wallabies cut into the lead, drew level at the break and went to an early second-half lead... This was not test rugby as we knew it. It was crazy, head-scratching stuff born out of both sides' desire to play with immense pace and intensity. "We lost in the last two minutes, not in the first seven," [the]Wallaby skipper... lamented as everyone tried to make sense of the madcap evening. The first part showed what everyone knows. Give the All Blacks some ball and a little room and they can sting even the best defences... [But the coach] knew the dangers and then saw them realised... [Second-phase play] showed some All Black weaknesses. They were exposed at the lineout, and the Wallaby pack were all over them... The defensive pattern went awry, tackles were missed all round the park. The All Blacks had surrendered their huge lead and were struggling for possession... [However, t]he Wallabies were struggling for goalkickers... [although the All Black goalkicker also] had trouble with several... shots... With seven minutes left... the Wallabies... Kiwi-born [hooker]... smashed in at the corner for a one-point Wallaby lead and the All Black gallantry looked spent. They got back to the Wallaby goal-line, but [the All Black hooker] missed his skipper with two lineout throws. It had to be *Advance A[US] Fair* – until the miracle. With one final flurry the ball went along the line, [the deposed All Black skipper] got it with two defenders all over him but handballed a magic pass to the charging [winger. The big guy] surged away from [a Wallaby]'s despairing tackle and tiptoed along the touchline for another 15m as the whole of N[Z] bellowed at him to put the ball down. It was... the third time the All Blacks had stopped a record-equalling Wallaby 10-test winning streak.

...The Sydney test was an historic occasion for rugby. It was the best test I have seen, and undoubtedly one of the greatest matches of all time. A[US] certainly sees it that way, even though their world champion side was defeated. Rugby followers across the Tasman generally regard the All Blacks' match against the Barbarians in 1973 as the greatest game. But those I talked to believe Saturday night's match deserves that accolade. Ironically, the most stunning aspect of the All Blacks' victory was A[US]'s comeback from 24-0 down. No other team in the world, including the All Blacks, would have been capable of stemming the early flow against them and come back into the game the way A[US] did. The speed, intensity and range of skills turned it into an absolutely brilliant match... It was a tribute to the players' skills that [the]referee... blew his whistle only five times in the first 15 minutes. The match was also a major triumph for the game's rule-makers after an often stodgy World Cup. The 100,000-plus crowd showed that rugby [union] is also on an incredible roll in A[US]. The crowd could have been 150,000 if the stadium was big enough. Two World Cup triumphs have helped [union]'s cause in A[US], but it is no coincidence that the sport's rise has come when rugby league is self-destructing. Apart from what is happening on the field in rugby league, things such as the amalgamation of clubs do not seem to have worked for the game. The great thing from [union's] point of view is that the players are trying to get the ball a little wider than they were last year and the tries flowed... despite the high quality of the defences... The A[US]ns were even relaxed about the result afterwards. [The Wallaby skipper] made some outstanding comments along the lines that while you never like to lose, it didn't matter so much when you had been involved in such a game. Who knows what lies ahead, and whether Saturday night is a taste of things to come. The match has certainly raised the bar for test match rugby... People such as [the NZ coach of Wales] – who was at Stadium A[US] – must be shaking their heads over how sides like Wales can get even close to that high a level.

...Before his first Bledisloe Cup test, [the]new All Black captain... was blown away by the atmosphere at Stadium A[US]. "On the way in looking at the crowd and the carparks – I think you would fit the whole of Christchurch in this stadium." After his team's palpitating 39-35 victory, [the new captain] said the memories would stay with him for the rest of his life... It was a test which will net A[US]n rugby about \$4 million. It dragged 109,874 past the turnstiles and gave everyone, even those without any amber inside them, a headache in trying to assess both its merits and rating. The greatest game of all was thrown into the mix, but that seemed to overstate its standard. It was exhilarating, surreal and magnetic... but with too many mistakes to qualify as the best in test rugby. Anyway, how do you define the greatest? It is easy to dwell on the present and forget superb matches from not too long ago. Remember these from just the last decade: all three Wallaby-All Black tests in A[US] in 1992 were as good as it gets; the French win in the second test at Eden Park in 1994 with the try from the end of the Earth; the... 33-26 win [by the All Blacks] against the Boks at Loftus in 1996 to take the series in South Africa for the first time. For drama and tension it is hard to go past the All Blacks' 16-20 loss to [a Wallaby]'s tackle at Sydney in 1994, or the 23-24 [All Black] loss at Durban in 1998 when [a Bok] scored his dubious late try. Perhaps it would be more useful to compare the sides, but even that was difficult in this madcap match. Outside the opening seven minutes [and] the All Blacks'... late matchwinner, the Wallabies controlled most of this international. They were the better team. So were the All Blacks jammy? They did have some luck early. The ball bounced their way, but they nailed those chances. What the test underlined was the danger in kicking away possession. [The All Black No 10] was guilty early but escaped, while in the final minutes... A[US]'s dual league and union] international... kicked downfield with his team a point ahead. The ball went to [the All Black No 15, who passed to No 14, who] made 40m and several phases later [No 6 set No 11] off on

his victory tread... The Wallabies suffered with their goalkicking... [Three different players] goaled four from nine between them, [while the All Blacks'] kicked six from eight... Illness claimed [two Wallabies before Saturday's game and, afterwards, two players] have rib cartilage damage, [another has] an ankle problem, [a fourth has] a knee medial ligament strain and [a fifth has] a hamstring strain. The All Blacks have no injuries and yesterday flew home to stay at Hanmer Springs... They had no cause to dry out at the [local] alcohol recovery centre – they had little sleep or time to celebrate after their opening win in the Tri-Nations series. The Springboks are still at Stradbroke Island in A[US] and do not fly to Christchurch until tomorrow night.

...Things don't come much better than this, beating the world champion A[US]ns in front of the biggest crowd in rugby history... As [the All Black No 11 left an AUS]n star... sprawling for the last-gasp try... [a former AUS]n captain... was moved to call it "the greatest test ever." Extraordinary, yes. Nerve-fraying. Bloody great. Lucky. Call it what you will – but greatest? Not according to former All Black greats. For them, the highest highs and the worst lows have come against the old enemy, the Springboks.

...the Springboks' most capped player, will not get a selection reprieve for their start to the Tri-Nations against the All Blacks at Christchurch on Saturday... the feisty [No 9 will, however,] ...be a reserve... After travelling to Sydney with [his] assistant... to watch the frenetic series start between the All Blacks and Wallabies, [the Springbok coach] is even more convinced that [it] is on the right track with his plans for expansive rugby. [The coach] has been involved in a strident battle with conservative rugby factions in South Africa who want the behemoth forwards and kicking five-eighths pattern retained. "I do not see how anybody who saw that match can still believe the Springboks must resort to their traditional game... The level of play was like nothing seen before and it was by two teams embracing the modern concept of keeping the ball in hand... It is clear to see that if we play with big immobile forwards and a kicking five-eighths, we would not be able to live with [the All Blacks or the Wallabies.]"

...More than 10,000 fans at McLean Park in Napier watched points flow freely in a star-studded benefit match for [a]former Hawkes Bay rugby representative... who has been diagnosed with... a form of motor neurone disease... [m]oney raised from the game and Saturday night's benefit dinner will be spent on research and production of natural supplements for people with... [the disease]. Hi[s] Invitation XV were pipped 61-60 by the Magpie Invitation XV[i]n a game where penalty kicks at goal were outlawed... [A] former All Black No 8... was penalised for attempting a drop goal in general play, but converted his own try... and proved [that, despite seeing out the last of his serious playing days in England, it] had lost none of his clever passing skills.

...A last-ditch attempt to save England's troubled Millennium Dome has emerged in the form of a £150 million... bid from its boss, P[Y]... says the *Mail on Sunday*. The bid has been offered to keep the Greenwich attraction open as an entertainment complex as the site prepares for its close...

If the British Government acts on its advice, the Millennium Dome will be bulldozed – an ignominious \$[NZ]8.43 billion failure... Before it goes down as one of the worst white elephants in history, London's Millennium Dome does deliver some lessons on the need for curatorial vigour. The dome was conceived to house a great national exhibition, made possible by a huge budget equivalent to about six Te Papas. The result is the essential Millennium Experience, shaped by the opinions and wishes of thousands of people across Britain. And therein may lie the problem. It was to follow in the tradition of the Great Exhibition of 1851 at Crystal Palace and the Festival of Britain in 1951. But compared to these historical blockbusters the 2000 show... proved lacklustre. Twelve million visitors were expected in the first year but... only seven million... turn[ed] up, many no doubt deterred by the £20 door charge. To reflect the optimism of the new millennium, the dome had to be huge. As the largest enclosed space on Earth it claims some imaginative statistics. For example, it could house 13 Albert Halls and 18,000 double-decker buses – which some critics might consider a better use for it. The dome is divided into 14 themed attractions, or zones, whose names hardly suggest compelling viewing: [e.g.] Work... Play and Talk. Body is allegedly a highlight, boasting a walk-through pair of human forms that are the world's largest. On this tour of self-inspection the visitor clammers through tunnels of red-tinted back-lit plastic, all pulsating and heaving to simulate bodily functions. It's anatomically unconvincing and pales in comparison with memories of low-tech ghost-train rides at old Easter Shows. Near the entry is the dome's stated aim, to be an exemplary visitor-friendly attraction. This philosophy extends to heavy doses of audience participation. What's your story? it asks, unleashing walls of post-it notes with personal messages for the new millennium. Well intentioned no doubt, but who has time to read it all? There are even 20 recommended and carefully marked photo points within the dome, just for the record... One of the many ironies is that if the public told the designers what they wanted in their essential Millennium Experience, they're not coming to see it. Another one is that dome-goers may be spending hard-earned money looking at exhibitions in Work, and using up valuable leisure time contemplating Play... In an attempt to be populist it has failed to be popular... In the middle of it all is the Millennium Show, theatre in the round, and a few other dimensions as well. Essentially, this is the story of the interaction between the Sky people and the Earth people. There is a love interest, between Skyboy (from the first lot) and Sophia (one of our own). It all takes place on a huge set, with plenty of pyrotechnics and pompous music, and giant constructions rising up from beneath the floor. The vast cast is colour-coded in what appear to be wearable art award entries, and engage in free-range aerial activities including abseiling and intergalactic maypole dancing. As the official programme puts it, the show ends with the Earth and Sky people looking forward with hope to an unknown future. One suspects their audience might be looking back and wondering what on Earth it was all about.

...*Little gerbil loves large white elephant...* It's Christmas at the Dome. The pantomime dames are showing their knickers on the ice rink, there's the smell of roasting chestnuts, reindeer are grazing under a giant Christmas tree and Father Christmas is embracing me as snow falls around us. His beard gets caught in my scarf. "PY, please put me down," I say, because this Father Christmas is actually a diminutive French[per]son called PY, the Gerbil. "I'm so happy," [PY] says. How can [PY] be happy? It has had the most miserable job in the world – the gnome on the top of the Dome. [PY]'s been in charge of a radioactive cowpat, robbers have tried to steal his jewels and politicians won't touch him. The Millennium Dome will not survive long into the New Year[– or, in other words, its official 1st birthday.] It shuts at 8 am N[Z] time on New Year's Day. After sucking in £1 billion... in taxpayer funds it is being sold for £100 million and will become a high-tech business centre. But... the Dome's chief executive, is still smiling. "I love Britain. Everyone here is so friendly," [PY] says with a fluent Bordeaux-Bronx accent. Now I'm feeling embarrassed. The British have been horrible to him – letting a foreigner take the blame for their calamitous carbuncle. But PY (pronounced Pee-Wee) is an optimist. As we walk, it is clear how much the staff have warmed to this 34-year-old, spiky-haired Fr[og], who arrived in February. A cleaner hugs him. A Domophile, who has come six times, kisses him; a[pensioner]... asks for his autograph. There are no queues. Staff, wearing reindeer horns, point out the highlights. "I didn't ask them to, it's their call, but they're fantastic and passionate about this place." [PY] hasn't taken a day off since [it] started... PY has no personal life. [PY] has given his all to the Dome since [it] took over... and the British have been an ungrateful lot. [PY] blames the politicians, not the public, for this. "I wish all the British could be proud of what they have paid for... But it became a political football. If people wanted to knock the Government, they kicked the Dome – it's been hit so hard it's deflated." Doesn't it make him angry that the Dome's builders have done a runner, leaving him to paper over the cracks? "No one told me there were so many financial problems. In nine months, we have turned this place around. Ninety per cent of people now say they have a great time... The... politician[s]... threw money at the Dome without any vision – it made people lazy. Now we have a small budget but we are thinking of ingenious ideas. If I could get in the time machine and go back five years, I would do everything so differently. I would have made it more historical, given it a story. The Dome should be educational and cultural. You need to leave asking questions." I'm beginning to feel nostalgic for the Dome. "All our publicity has been by word of mouth," PY says. "If only we had another year and some good will, we could make the Dome fantastic. I'll miss her. [The Dome]'s so beautiful on a sunny day."

...*Sun sets on monster blancmange...* When the end finally came, it was terribly British. Hundreds of staff who had been exoriated for 12 months, the butt of the biggest political joke of recent times, held hands and took a bow. And we all felt rather sorry. It was perhaps the most crowded the

centre of the Millennium Dome had ever been as they filed past. There were the aerial acrobats, the jugglers, actors, [people] on stilts and, of course, the ubiquitous... P-Y, the Dome's ebullient chief executive, w[ho i]s there to say goodbye and to thank all those people in the middle of this vast structure – a “monstrous blancmange,” in the words of the Prince of Wales. After a year of political disaster and public bewilderment, staff were to lose their jobs and, at last, the Dome was to close. The day had been a long one. The three breathtaking aerial performances seemed to take longer than usual. The queues seemed to move more slowly. Inevitably, a moribund feeling hung about the place and it rubbed off on the visitors. Too late, there was a groundswell of disappointment that the huge tent on the Greenwich Peninsula in London was to be lost and, again in typically British fashion, there followed a desire not to see the underdog put down... By 7 pm local time, the last visitors were out and the gates were locked. In adjoining buildings, thousands of youngsters were turning up to see in the new year with a rave. In the Dome itself, all was quiet save for a small crew dismantling the vast lighting system in the central auditorium. The set had been rented and now it was being taken back. The work began at 11 pm. By the time 2001 arrived, the Millennium Dome was already being dismantled and consigned to history.

...The sorry saga of the Millennium Dome approached its final chapter yesterday, when the British Government handed over the failed attraction for nothing to private developers. The dome was, in effect, given to an international consortium which plans to turn it into a 20,000-seat stadium for sports and concerts. Opposition MPs expressed dismay that the Government would not see any cash from the profit-sharing deal until the end of 2004 and that one of the most valuable real-estate sites in Britain had been handed over without immediately returning a penny to public coffers. The dome has drained £628 million... from National Lottery funds since it opened on New Year's Eve 2000. It will be handed to the Meridian Delta consortium on a 999-year lease. The consortium will make phased payments to the Government for the rest of the 76.4ha Greenwich site. Ministers have been anxious to offload the former attraction since two deals to sell it to private companies fell through. The dome started with a lavish opening party and went steadily downhill, failing to reach its visitor targets and needing to be bailed out repeatedly with millions of pounds of taxpayers' money. It has cost the taxpayers more than £20 million since it closed... The Government will also face a £20 million bill from Lattice, formerly part of British Gas, which used to own the site and has a claim to a proportion of its sale proceeds. P[Y, the Gerbil], the former chief executive of the dome's operators, the New Millennium Experience Company, who once wanted to buy the dome... was “amused” by the deal. “Nine months ago, we came up with exactly the same proposals but we were written off as a bunch of mad[-hatters]. I am not going to be bitter, I am happy that the dome has a future, but the past nine months have been a waste of time and public money.” ...The Meridian Delta consortium, which is backed by... the U[S] billionaire who owns the Los Angeles Lakers basketball team, will foot all the costs of regenerating the site and will assume all the risk if the project goes awry. The other members of the consortium are property company Quintain Estates and Lend Lease. But there are still doubts about whether the Government may have to bail out the dome to improve transport links and infrastructure.

...People stream[ed] across London's Millennium Bridge [yesterday] on its reopening after two years of engineering work to stop it from wobbling. The £18.2 million... bridge, [London's] first new central city crossing for more than a century, was... shut three days... [after it had] opened... because of excessive movement... [Incidentally,] Versace is to create the world's first refrigerated beach so hotel guests can walk comfortably across the sand on scorching days... A network of pipes beneath the sand containing a coolant will absorb heat from the surface.

...A Henderson mother is warning west coast [visitor]s to watch out for hidden oyster shells after her son's foot was cut to the bone. [The mother] says the accident happened when [it] took her two children to Cornwallis Beach for an after-school dip. One minute [her] [nine-year-old... was playing happily... the next [it] was in his mother's arms at the start of a quickfire dash to the doctor's... [The Woodlands Park doctor i]s used to treating people with similar injuries, mostly children younger than [the nine-year-old. The doctor] also regularly treats cuts caused by broken glass left at the beach. “...although probably not as many as one a week,”... [the doctor adds. The nine-year-old], a pupil at Freyburg Memorial School, is making a swift recovery, but missing out on soccer practice while his toe heals... “People don't have any idea what damage the shells can do,”... his mother... says. “If I'd have known, I wouldn't have let my children go out there with bare feet.”

...Beaches around the Titirangi coastline are fast becoming off limits to swimmers as sharp-shelled Pacific oysters rapidly carpet the foreshore. The oysters are becoming an acute problem throughout the Manukau Harbour and are regarded by some environmentalists as the marine equivalent of ginger... [The] president of the Manukau Harbour Protection Society, says the sharp shells make it difficult for swimmers at spots like French Bay, Titirangi Beach and Cornwallis. “It's a biosecurity thing. They're an introduced species... The theory is they were introduced about 20 years ago by falling off the bottom of a barge,”... says... Waitakere City's representative on the Auckland Regional Council. Pacific oysters generally grow in thick clusters and quickly dominate open areas away from the rocks... Native rock oysters and mussels are not pests and recent regeneration is seen as a good indicator of improving water quality. But [the Manukau Harbour Protection Society] remains stumped over how to tackle the Pacific oyster problem... [T]he society has held volunteer events to clean up dead oyster shells, but with little success. A modified rock crusher was also trialled but failed.

...a group of 30 [people] rid... French Bay... of dead oyster shells this month in a clean-up organised as part of Auckland Regional Council's coastal enhancement oyster project. [The ARC's e]nvironmental management committee chair[perso]n says... “The inter-tidal zone is an area the public can clean up. But the channel area requires dredging by commercial boats.” ...if channel dredging is needed... that could... cost... \$100,000...

The prospect of pay-and-display parking machines cemented into the shores of isolated beaches has stirred up communities in one of the North Island's most picturesque holiday spots. The Thames-Coromandel District Council's 10-year plan included a move to charge... \$6 a launch or \$65 a year for parking near ramps and formed accesses... which w[ere] built and maintained by locals... unanimous in their opposition to the... fees.

...Opponents of a holiday resort proposal at one of the last undeveloped beaches on Auckland's east coast are claiming a major victory in a five-year battle that may yet end in court. Rodney District Council has accepted the recommendation of independent commissioners not to allow the 180-home and park project at remote Te Arai Beach, south of Mangawhai... The report also said the Pakiri-Te Arai coastline was unique... and was highly valued as a special place with undeveloped character... [In related news, t]he last thing... [a couple] expected on their wedding day was to be verbally abused while they were getting married. The couple had decided to make a life-long commitment on Pakiri Beach... because it was one of their favourite spots. [The groom] phoned the Rodney District Council to check whether they'd need permission to use the beach and was told [they] didn't need a permit to hold the ceremony on the sand because it was a public place... However, on the wedding day [the couple]... were stunned when a local Maori [gal] began yelling at [the bride] and her bridal party as they walked down an access way to the beach. The [Maori] told the bride [it] was trespassing on private property – the access way – and began asking for... \$1000. Her father... initially offered to pay the money. An ex-councillor, [the father] knew the type of form that the [Maori] was legally required to have. But... the [Maori] failed to produce the form...

The public has no right to stroll along... a third of N[Z]'s beaches, and large chunks of the foreshore are already held in private ownership. This is revealed in two reports prepared for the Government... [T]here is no such thing as an uninterrupted Queen's Chain... ringing N[Z] waterways... The Government is grappling with a Court of Appeal finding that iwi may be able to claim customary title to the foreshore and seabed.

...*Foreshore belongs to all*... Government plans to declare the foreshore and seabed off limits to private ownership sparked talk of a revolt among some Maori MPs yesterday... The long-awaited announcement... was billed as a “win-win” solution, but was soon widely condemned.

...[49%] of Maori support the Government's plans to hold the foreshore and seabed in the public domain. But a *Marae-DigiPoll*... found that most Maori are unhappy with the Government's handling of the issue and confused about what it proposes... ■ [Two fishers]... used their dead friend's life-jacket to survive the sinking of a fishing boat off Oamaru yesterday. They clung together to stay afloat... for three hours until rescuers found them.

...Divers inspecting the wreck of the second-deadliest maritime disaster in history found the disintegrating vessel all but buried in sand off the Gambian coast, and urged authorities not to try to recover the human remains. "For technical reasons... but also out of respect for the victims and their families, I think that it would be best to consider the wreck of the MS Joola as a sanctuary," said [the]dive-team leader... More than 1800 people died... when the Joola rolled in a storm – loaded with three times the passengers for which it had been designed. A Government-commissioned inquiry weeks later... faulted a search effort that took hours to get started... [In local news, g]aps and inconsistencies marked the delayed search and rescue operation after a pleasure boat sank off the North Otago coast and three [fishers] died, says an independent review... Those who survived have criticised delays in getting to the capsized boat as a factor in the... deaths. [But the s]earch and rescue co-ordinator... maintained [it] made the right decisions with the information... available... [A]nother distress beacon had been active at the same time... at Wanaka. Both beacons were pinpointed at 10.50am. "...using a cellphone from his home... [t]he (co-ordinator) first tasked a helicopter to locate the Wanaka signal and then at 11.19am arranged for a helicopter based at Taieri Airport, Mosgiel, to search for the beacon off Oamaru," the report said. "However, unknown to the (co-ordinator) there was a delay in assembling its full crew and the helicopter did not leave Taieri airport until around 12.10pm." The survivors and... [t]he body of Richard Wallis... were found about 12.30pm. The two other missing [fishers]... Keith Allan Wallis, 62, of Mosgiel, and Tainui Pompey Kani, 42, of Timaru... were not found... The review found a "significant factor" in the Oamaru incident was that the co-ordinator was over-worked and there was a lack of communication between him and others involved... [The co-ordinator] did not contact police, as [it] was meant to do[, and Oamaru fishers – 'who could have had their boats there in minutes – say they weren't called'].

...Rescue fee call Police should start charging climbers for unwarranted search and rescues in Mt Cook National Park, says the Alpine Club president... [The president] supported the Twizel police's recent refusal of several requests for rescues because they deemed them unjustified.

...Adventure insurance might save taxpayer money but is hugely problematic, say Marlborough trampers and mountaineers involved in search and rescue. United Future's M[P]... has called for mandatory insurance for those people tackling the outdoors, saying [last year's] \$885,000 bill for search and rescue missions... was just too much... [In international news, a] police officer searching for two robbery suspects on [Miami B]each drove over two French sisters yesterday... [The] officer... was driving a marked Ford Explorer along the crowded shores – following information that the robbery suspects were on the beach – and apparently did not see the sunbathers... The officer was not using a siren, and witnesses said the [sisters] did not see the truck coming. [The driver], an officer for seven years, was placed on administrative leave. [The c]ity manager... said speed did not appear to be a factor... "What still isn't clear is how [the officer] ended up running over the two victims,"... However, several witnesses said the officer's actions were reckless... "The cop was just running around like a crazy [person]," said one. The sisters... were taken to Jackson Memorial hospital, where 27-year-old Stephanie [Tunc died. Her sister, aged] 26, was in a critical condition. The sisters, who lived in Britain, were on holiday.

...As stories of jet-skis running over sunbathers and colliding with boats hit the headlines each summer, promoters of the burgeoning water sport utter a collective groan. For them jet-skis, properly known as personal watercraft, constitute a healthy family pastime or an exciting competitive sport run sensibly by established clubs. They recount stories of jet-skiers rescuing swimmers in the surf and the machines being used to patrol sporting events. With national sales... [of] 1000 machines annually over the past five years, the sport is enjoying remarkable growth... The stable, sit-down jet-skis are cheaper than many boats, easy to maintain, can be stored in a corner of the garage, and can tow children on knee-boards or serve as versatile inshore runabouts. But, they say, all that is overshadowed by the antics of a handful of hoons roaring round rivers and harbours with complete disregard for others' safety... Already jet-skis have killed... [However, the] managing director of Kawasaki N[Z] says the sport is comparatively new and will settle down. "If you go back to the 60s they were talking about licensing surfers. They were the scourge of swimmers... and their fins were going to slice people in half. Then it was ski-boats and now it is personal watercraft,"... [The main difference is that] faster and more manoeuvrable [jet-ski]s are now on the market, with some models boasting 130hp motors capable of reaching 100km/h. Those with the will and cashflow can soup up their machines for even greater speed and noise. But... [jet-ski r]iders are bound by the same rules as other boaties. They must reduce speed to 5 knots within 200m of the shore and 30m of swimmers or other craft... Riders must also be 15 years or older. A key problem for... authorities in bringing reckless riders under control is the fact that neither the machines nor the riders are identifiable. Even more problematic is that riders are under no legal obligation to supply their names or details, which makes prosecution next to impossible... [Yet] a couple of prosecutions had succeeded under section 65 of the Maritime Transport Act, which forbids the use of any craft in a dangerous manner. Penalties ran to 12 months imprisonment or a \$10,000 fine and one judge had ordered the sale of a jet-ski, "so they stand to lose a lot," said... Auckland Maritime Police... However, that was a little heavy-handed for minor offences which would best be managed by... instant fines – a provision expected under a revised Harbours Act due to be passed this year.

...A safety argument is brewing over a proposed jet-ski zone off Kauri Pt near Birkenhead intended to lure riders from popular beaches. The trial zone, which encompasses Fitzpatrick and Onetaunga bays, is one of two the A[RC] is considering... But the Birkenhead-Northcote Community Board says locals do not want the noisy machines chopping up the waters off bush-clad Kauri Pt. The board chair[per]son... feared for local birdlife and the safety of swimmers, kayakers and boaties, particularly around the popular fishing spot within the proposed zone... [However, the ARC's chairperson] said... "...it's all very well to say we don't want any jet skiers in our backyard when at the moment there's nothing we can do if they're there anyway. So isn't it better to have areas that are monitored and policed?" ...The Auckland Jetsport Association[']s president... understood residents' concerns but believed the zone and other controls were essential... [I]t had been a "summer from hell" because of a spate of accidents nationally, and responsible jet-ski owners were angry that reckless riders were giving the sport a bad name.

...Jetskiers are flouting a new bylaw, with just over 10[%] bothering to sign up for compulsory registration. Only 400 of the estimated 3500 jetskis in the region have been registered for the A[RC] scheme... The N[Z] Jetsport Boating Association says some of its members are refusing to register because they are already members of the regional club and the national body. On top of a national body annual registration fee of \$50, plus Auckland Jetsport Association annual fee of \$55, members are now expected to pay the ARC another annual fee of \$47.50... [(from) an annual registration fee of \$35, plus \$12.50 for a pair of identification stickers)]... The bylaw was brought in to monitor personal watercraft activities after public complaints about dangerous behaviour. [The]ARC harbourmaster... says the council will not come down hard on those not registered – yet.

...Jetskis, the cause of friction at many N[Z] beaches and waterways, have been cited as a terror to swimmers and a major nuisance in N[SW]. Water police have reported a 30[%] increase in jetski incidents to 120 last year, and some Sydney councils receive up to 10 complaints a day. There have already been two serious incidents this year. In one, a passenger received internal injuries when a jetski hit a wharf, and a rider tore open his leg when his machine became airborne. Now the Sydney Coastal Councils Group has called on the state Government to ban jetskis from Sydney Harbour and to crack down on riders elsewhere... [In local news, t]he worldwide credit card company American Express paid... just \$200,000 towards... an exclusive... \$2.8 million yacht club... in the Viaduct Basin and... nothing for... the America's Cup village... naming rights valued at \$2.2 million. The deal goes some way to explain the huge cost overrun of up to \$8 million at the Cup village from missed sponsorship opportunities and several projects that include: • Spending \$700,000 on a 1980s-style nightclub at the Viaduct Basin after a plan for a local franchise of the Hard Rock Cafe fell through. • Leases on the old City Markets and the Winstone Building with a combined net loss of more than \$1 million. • Investing \$2 million in the yacht club that sits empty in the Viaduct Basin waiting for a buyer. But it is the American Express sponsorship deal that caused the biggest ruction inside the company funded by \$85 million of Aucklanders' money, and led to the resignation of the village boss. In an exclusive interview with the *Herald*... the former chief executive of America's Cup Village Ltd, said [it] resigned 13 months ago because the American Express deal put together by the village's chair[per]son... was "commercial suicide." "The deal did not give the village company anything. In fact, it

cost the company over \$5 million and yet at one stage we had a definite commitment that they would pay for the naming rights and the yacht club would not be subject to the risk the company finally took on.” [But the chairperson], a former oil company boss who was also chair[person] of the financially disastrous 1994 Whitbread race stopover, said it was not true that American Express paid next to nothing... “...It’s all a question of how the deal was structured. There was a confidential deal between the village and American Express [and if the village’s former chief executive] is discussing it, [the former chief executive] is acting completely improperly... is being unethical and... is breaching a commercial confidence.” ...It is understood that American Express started to unpick the original deal early last year after an expensive worldwide marketing drive selling memberships to the yacht club for up to \$1995 bombed... American Express, facing a costly exposure, insisted on a new deal on its terms or it would walk away. [The former chief executive] and Strategic Media, the company which stood to gain about \$600,000 in commission for putting the original deal together, were incensed and recommended suing American Express to complete the deal... Shortly after... [his predecessor] resigned in protest... the new chief executive... and [the chairperson], said to be worried about the sponsorship repercussions and the bad publicity that would ensue, signed the new deal with the backing of the ACVL board... [American Express] would not divulge how much the company paid in sponsorship to ACVL.

...America’s Cup Village, run by some of N[Z]’s top business[people], lost more than twice the amount previously disclosed. Papers released under the Official Information Act show that instead of the \$23.5 million loss declared last week by A[CVL], the real loss could be nearer \$57 million. Amongst previously unknown spending was: ● \$2 million on public relations... \$8.6 million on administration... \$72 million to build the yachting syndicate and marina facilities... [plus i]ncome from superyachts falling about \$2 million short of projections. A written denial by... a top city lawyer... [on the] ACVL board... that “no public money went into setting up the Music Factory” was also contradicted in the papers, with several references to spending on the 1980s-style nightclub.

...A yacht club built on a barge for the America’s Cup regatta in Auckland may end up as a floating museum... fill[ed]... will... memorabilia... of the event, towed to ports around the country. The designer of the American Express Yacht Club... said yesterday th[e]... 20m by 36m barge platform had 375,000 litres of water ballast to keep it on an even keel... [By the way, u]p to 60 billionaires with their assorted families and powerful friends celebrated the new millennium on Auckland’s Hauraki Gulf... in super yachts that cost \$20[million] to \$200 million. It was not just the America’s Cup that brought them here. Several came especially because they heard about... the NZ Millennium Cup Super Yacht regatta... [-] a yacht race... to Kawau Island and back... where the only rule was that the size of the yacht had to be more than 65ft.

...Despite the billionaire bickering of the America’s Cup, yachting is not exclusively a rich [perso]n’s sport... That is the message from the new chief executive officer of Yachting N[Z]... who takes up the job this week in Auckland. “The America’s Cup may have reinforced the perception that yachting is a rich person’s sport... But those people make up a tiny percentage of the s[ailing community]. Anyone who has anything to do with [local] yacht clubs would know that most people involved are typical ordinary N[Z]ers. You don’t have to own a yacht to go sailing. There are plenty of chances to sail on other people’s boats for the price of \$10 a week in the crew kitty. And parents will find that they can give their children a taste of sailing through clubs which rent out boats.” This way, if a child loses interest in yachting... [it] can move on without additional cost to the family... [The new chief executive officer] believes the spinoff from the America’s Cup regatta in Auckland has been positive throughout the country. “The profile it has given yachting in this country has been enormous. There is now a large proportion of the country talking about gybing and tacking and understanding what they mean. [But t]he Cup is not the only reason... N[Z] despite its size has, I think, the ninth largest coastline of any country and yachting with its emphasis on water safety and respect for the environment provides the ideal sport for our young people.” ...Yachting N[Z] is the national body for competitive and recreational yachting and boating. Among its core activities it: ● Administers the international rules of yacht racing. ● Sets standards and administers accreditation of coaches and race management officials. ● Receives and administers funds from the Hillary Commission and Sports Foundation. ● Acts as a lobby group to central and local government bodies. ● Acts as sole entry agency for N[Z] yachting teams in the Olympic[s and]... other international events. ● Establishes and maintains safety standards and maintains the register of boats.

...Sir Peter Blake has been made a special envoy to the U[N] Environment Programme – and... is wasting no time in living up to the role. The first N[Z]er to be made a special envoy, [Sir Peter] was appointed yesterday by the programme’s chief... at a Royal N[Z] Yacht Squadron lunch hosted by [NZ’s P]M... Sir Peter spoke up for a clean world and for its life in the oceans – and against threats including pollution, overfishing, deforestation and global warming... ([Sir Peter’s Antarctic expedition last summer showed a lack of sea ice and collapsing ice shelves – consequences of global warming])... As special envoy [Sir Peter] will do more of the same – raising awareness far and wide of environmental problems... Sir Peter, former head of Team N[Z] and now the head of the ocean-exploring organisation blakexpeditions, is about to take his schooner, Seamaster, to the Amazon and Orinoco rivers. Seamaster, which was designed for polar sea exploration in temperatures of minus 40 degrees, will be kitted out for 40-degree heat with mosquito nets, extra ventilation and awnings. News of the expedition’s progress will be broadcast on www.blakexpeditions.com...

Brave to the end, Sir Peter Blake rushed upstairs with a rifle to confront the armed invaders on his boat, Seamaster. In the next few calamitous moments [Sir Peter] fired a shot, wounding one of the “ratos de agua” (water rats) in the hand and shattering one of their weapons. Rather than disarm the pirates, it angered them. They returned fire, striking Sir Peter twice in the back with a .765 rifle. A life of adventure, conquering oceans and yachting’s greatest competition, the America’s Cup, ended on the deck of a boat in Brazil at the mouth of the Amazon River, the scene of his latest environmental odyssey. At age 53, [Sir Peter] was dead, drawing tears from [the NZ P]M... who had visited him three weeks ago. It was an end Sir Peter had dreaded: [Sir Peter] had been so anxious about pirates that [the sailor] spent part of his honeymoon on the firing range, readying himself. Late last night, police in the river town of Macapa arrested seven suspects and said they were looking for an eighth reported to have piloted the bandits to the Blake vessel. After the raid, the [bandits] sped up the river in their own craft and an inflatable stolen from the Seamaster. They stole watches and cameras from the crew, but suggestions seeped out yesterday that the motive for the attack may have been more sinister than robbery. Local reports said the gang were professional, and hinted that they may have been anti-environmentalists. Brazil has a history of environmentalists being assassinated... In 1988, world renowned campaigner Chico Mendes was shot by forces who opposed his efforts to protect the Amazon... From her home in England, Lady... Blake drove to Bristol to pick up [the couple’s] daughter... 18, from university, then carried on to Dorset to break the news to [the couple’s son], 14. “This is completely devastating and unbelievable,” Lady Blake told England’s *Daily Telegraph*. “My one comfort is that [Peter] died doing something [it] loved and... died protecting other people.” ...an Auckland weather forecaster who was on board the Seamaster two weeks ago, said the crew were aware of the risks of pirates. “We ran a 24-hour watch system with at least two people on deck at all times.” Sir Peter himself sounded a warning about pirates to a friend in Rio in September. [The friend], an events manager for sponsor Omega, said yesterday that Sir Peter told him [the Seamaster] carried guns on board. “[Peter] said, ‘No one will get this boat off me.’”

...For someone trying to sweet-talk billions of dollars out of the Government for new roads, [Auckland’s] Mayor... has a strange way of cuddling up. Here’s the Government getting a roasting from a battle-worn public for giving another \$5.6 million to... Team N[Z]... when up leaps the mayor with a claim that [it] and the Government have secret plans to spend another \$20 million on a memorial to former Team N[Z] leader Sir Peter Blake. “A huge significant memorial that I think will blow your socks off,” is how [the mayor] described it... The... [mayor] can thank his lucky stars [it] was nowhere near... the Beehive on Friday when his bombshell went off. If any of the ministers involved in this project had been within reach

at the time, [the mayor would] have lost a lot more than his socks. Not only was it bad timing given the present public disenchantment with anything to do with Team N[Z]. It was also bad in the sense that [the P]M... wants to be sharing the limelight when any announcement is made. That is likely some time next month after a Cabinet paper is prepared and accepted... A statue had been [the mayor's] first instinct... soon after Sir Peter's murder. "I am committed to... an epic statue." One, [it] generously offered, that ratepayers would fund... [The widow] was later to reject that idea, not liking... the idea of birds "shitting on his head"... In the aftermath of... Peter's death, [the]... Sports Minister... had proposed a Government-backed foundation to keep alive the message of blakexpeditions, which was to use the vessel Seamaster "to help protect life in and around the waters of the world"... The concept now is, according to one participant, "a living monument" where "we can all learn to sail". And more besides. Whatever that means we will just have to wait to find out. As a result of [the mayor's] premature leaking on Friday, and the ensuing flurry, usually reliable sources have suddenly dried up.

...The Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre is being prosecuted over the deaths of six school pupils and a teacher on the Mangetepopo River. [The] students and teacher... from Elim Christian College in Howick were canyoning on the river near Turangi with [an] instructor... when they were swept to their deaths on April 15. Questions were raised at the time about why the centre did not heed heavy rain warnings that morning. The Department of Labour yesterday laid four charges against the... centre under the Health and Safety in Employment Act. They include failing to take all practicable steps to ensure the safety of its employee, [the instructor], and the safety of others in the work place... "Seven people lost their lives that day and several others were put in serious danger. So it is important that someone is required to answer what the department says were failures to better ensure the safety of the group. Our hope is that this prosecution may help prevent others from suffering a similar loss." Elim[s] principal... said the department's investigation... found the school had met its obligations under the act and would not be charged... [T]he school still supported the centre and the work it did. It[s] chairperson... said the centre was reviewing the tragedy and "welcomed any expert scrutiny and suggestions for improvement..." The gorge where the accident happened had not been used since the tragedy and would continue to be off limits... The charges were laid in the Wellington District Court, but will be filed in the Taumarunui District Court – the closest to the outdoor pursuits centre's head office and the scene of the incident. The first hearing is likely to be in four to six weeks. If the centre is found guilty of the charges, it can be fined up to \$250,000 for each offence. It can also be ordered to pay reparations to victims' families.

...[hi]s family were the Queen's guests a[s]... Sir Edmund Hillary was commemorated in royal splendour late last night... [T]he Queen paid her respects to the great mountaineer at a rare memorial service at Windsor Castle near London. Dressed in a black coat and hat, the Queen, accompanied by [her daughter], took her place in the 500-year-old St George's Chapel for the service of thanksgiving, which also marked the laying up of his Knight of the Garter banner on the altar... Other notables present included the Countess of Wessex, [the]Commonwealth Secretary-General... [a] former All Black captain... [a former NZ PM and] her husband... a... former British Foreign Secretary... and Sir Winston Churchill's daughter. [The Queen's husband] was to have attended but had a heavy cold... The service included addresses by [Sir Ed's son and the current NZ PM, who]... described Sir Ed as "our most loved, most famous and most international citizen. [Sir Ed] stood tall among us like no other. His outstanding achievements as an adventurer and explorer on their own secured his place in N[Z] and world history. But the very high esteem in which we held Sir Ed... was also based on his humanitarianism and his values... [Sir Ed] set high bench-marks of citizenship for others, [and] made a big difference to many. We N[Z]ers saw Sir Ed... as one of us – from his craggy looks to his love of the outdoors, his sense of adventure, and his concern for others. Sir Ed... was our hero – we admired and respected him, we saw in him the values we would want our citizens to uphold." After the service, Lady [Hillary] and... the family had a private audience with the Queen. Later, [the]... Dean of Windsor and Register of the Order of the Garter... was to return Sir Ed's banner[– which it had]... received... from the Military Knights of Windsor, resplendent in their scarlet tunics... [–] to his family. [● A memorial service will be held in the Ukrainian city of Lviv today to honour victims of *the world's deadliest air show accident*.]

...The fighter jets spun and swooped through the... sky, thrilling families on a day out at a Ukrainian air show. [A boy, aged] 4, was watching the jets soar at the Sknyliv airfield... with his parents. But then a plane fell out of the sky and a giant fireball seemed to blot out his world. "Mummy, Daddy?" [the boy murmured as it] stumbled around on the tarmac, scared and suddenly alone, separated from his parents in the panic. His trousers were drenched with blood. The low-flying, Russian-made Sukhoi Su-27... had smashed into the ground near spectators, killing 83... and injuring 116 in the world's deadliest air show accident. [70] of the injured were in a serious condition. Many people received burns, fractures and head injuries. Screaming people ran through the thick smoke, many injured by bits of metal flung far and wide. The twin-seater, twin-engined plane was performing an aerobatic manoeuvre involving a low pass when its wing appeared to suddenly clip a tree and slice through a plane on the ground. It then bounced up, allowing its two pilots to eject to safety at the last minute as, consumed by flames, it sheared through a stunned crowd... Video of the crash showed... the plane... sliding backwards along the ground on its left wingtip and nose before it began cartwheeling and then exploded. The Defence Ministry... said engine failure was the preliminary reason for the crash. [The]Ukrainian President... broke off his holiday in Crimea to fly to the crash site, describing the incident as a "terrible tragedy, a real nightmare". During an on-the-spot briefing, [the president] fired both the... Air Force chief... and... [the] commander of the 14th Air Force division which took part in the air show... The Government has launched an investigation. About 1500 people were watching the air show. Last night... the... [president] said the country would consider a ban on air shows. A former pilot... said the show's organisers failed to provide a clear space that would have enabled the pilots to manoeuvre the plane away from the crowd. The previous most deadly air show crash was in Germany in 1988, when Italian jets collided and spiralled into the crowd, killing 70.

...*Disaster strikes fairground ride*... Screaming fair-goers were hurled to the ground when a... funpark ride collapsed, injuring 37 people. Four of the victims suffered severe head injuries. [One fair-goer] was queuing at the Royal Adelaide Show with his 22-year-old son... for a turn on the Spin Dragon on Saturday evening when the ride went haywire. "We were all standing behind a makeshift barrier at the front and, as the thing fell apart, we had nowhere to run. As it came down, I heard this incredible grinding sound and then it just rolled off its mounting..." ...[the] Workplace Services Minister... said it was very lucky more people were not injured. The ride collapsed on top of the waiting area, where about 30 or 40 people would have been standing had it not been raining... [I]nvestigations had begun looking for the cause of the accident... "It is of concern that these events can happen... [– recall that an] American... standing near an amusement park ride... in New Orleans... was [recently]killed after being hit by at least one of the ride's cars... [–] but this device had a current certificate of registration and all its papers are in order." [A]Royal Adelaide Show spokes[person]... told the A[US]n Broadcasting Corporation that... "Each ride operator takes responsibility for their own safety precautions... and this ride was approved for use in S[A, NSW and] Victoria... and has recently come down to Adelaide from the Queensland Brisbane Show."

...Steel Dragon 2000 – the world's tallest, fastest, deepest and longest roller coaster – is to start running tomorrow at the Nagashima Spa land amusement park... The train carries 36 riders over a series of peaks and valleys, through tunnels and around curves, reaching a maximum speed of 153 km/h. The train starts its 2479m course by scaling a 97m hill and then plunging 93m down a 68-degree slope... The trip lasts about 3 1/2 minutes. The ride cost 5.5 billion yen...

Two people were injured at an amusement park in central Japan when the world's tallest and longest roller coaster screeched to a halt after dropping... wheels. The Steel Dragon... lost several wheels from the right side of the front coach at the Nagashima Superland park outside Nagoya.

...[In a contest for punters' dollars that has been labelled the 'US roller coaster war, 500 roller coasters across the US are vying for the title of highest and fastest – but some neurologists warn such rides may be causing brain clots, etc., although the manufacturers say the latest designs reduce G-forces.']

...The Stratosphere resort in Las Vegas plans to build a freefall-style ride that will reach speeds of 193kmh – making it the world's fastest ride.

...*Santa's ride too risky*... Santa Claus won't be travelling through Huntly on a float this year because parade organisers are worried they will be liable if something goes wrong. The [guy] in red will instead trade his... float for a seat inside a grotto on the main road, and other parade floats will be replaced with festival stalls. Huntly is one of several small towns to alter the way they run public events after the prosecution of [a] Christchurch event manager... who was fined \$10,000 over the death of a cyclist in a race [it] organised... In Morrinsville organisers have turned their annual float parade into a "walking" parade. The risk of public liability does not seem to be of so much concern in bigger towns. In Auckland, where 250,000 people cram Queen St for Santa's parade, organisers have reviewed safety procedures but say everything will continue as normal...

■ [To the relief of volunteer event organisers nationwide, the Christchurch event manager has 'had her conviction overturned on appeal.']

...Habitat for Humanity, the non-profit group that builds low-cost housing, is opening an unorthodox "theme park" at its world headquarters this week designed to give tourists a look at the world's worst slums... [The] founder of the organisation... expected the Global Village & Discovery Centre in Americus, Georgia, to attract as many as 70,000 tourists in its first year of operation. "Essentially, it's a theme park for poverty housing. You'll come out of the centre and walk right into a slum. You'll see the kind of pitiful living conditions so many people in the world have." After touring mock slums from Africa, Asia and Central America, visitors... will see examples of the modest homes Habitat builds in those regions. "You see what a steep improvement acceptable housing makes in someone's life. We think we'll recruit a lot of volunteers this way," [the founder] said.

...Never one to do things by halves, [the US *Queen of Talk* (who)]... was meant to be named Orpah after a biblical character in the Book of Ruth – but her name was misspelled on her birth certificate[)]... seems set to adopt an entire orphanage. The hard-working star wants kids but isn't sure [it wants a husband or] wants to make enough time to be a mum, so [it]'s donated millions to an orphanage in Chicago to give the kids an education... The... [television] talk-show queen... [– who lives] in fear of the words, 'Lose weight or die'... [–] visits regularly and is taking all the children to Disney World...

[Since Disneyland first opened it has been an unparalleled success, but the] original magic kingdom... is not resting on its middle-aged laurels... After [nearly half a century] in the business, the original Disneyland is updating some worn-out fantasies... [such as] Tomorrowland... Frontierland [the Wild West]... and Autopia... while construction is well under way next door on the \$1.4 billion Disney California Adventure park. That will open next year and is a celebration of California itself, with not a mouse ear or cantankerous duck in sight... [The new Autopia, which] will open as part of the big birthday bash... [is] a look at the world through the eyes of a car – make that headlights. Bringing Autopia up to speed... – ...[the] original ride... marvelled at the then novel sensation of driving on the motorway... [–] is part of keeping the park one step ahead of increasing expectations... says... [the person who is] three years into overseeing the upgrade[s. But the overseer]... does not have a blank canvas to work with. Disneyland, including its sprawling carparks, is locked into about 34ha. "It's a tight area and like a game of chess, to move the pieces around you have to take a piece off the board." ...[even so, three] days is probably needed to take in all of Disneyland... One, two and three-day passes for the park are available, costing between \$82 and \$198 for adults and \$62 to \$150 for children... Prices around the park are not especially cheap, with soft drinks running at \$5 and fruit \$2.50, but the restaurants... provide good fare... Queuing is unavoidable in Disneyland and you can guarantee a wait of at least 10 to 15 minutes for every ride, going up to two hours at times for Indiana Jones, the best attraction by far. But with the recently introduced Fastpass, included in the ticket price and allocating a time slot, the wait should be reduced to between five and 10 minutes... Away from the rides and... queues, adults can get the best feel for Disneyland on the Walks in the Park tour, held daily at 10.45 am. It is \$28 on top of your admission but little gems do pop out, including learning that the light is left permanently on in Walt Disney's old apartment to show [the creator] is still around, and that the buildings were made progressively shorter and narrower down Main Street to make the rest of the park seem further away and increase expectations... [Disneyland is] where dreams – even those which involve eating... peanutbutter-and-jelly pizzas for breakfast while Goofy does the macarena – come true... Even old Walt eventually got what... [it wanted. Peeved about failing to gro]w taller than 180cm in life, his posthumous statue with Mickey Mouse now measures him at 186cm. That is one of the easier targets for adult cynicism in a world where... [t]hey... pump out smells from the popcorn stands and chocolate shop... The sense of magic is heightened at night when wandering around Fantasyland, Frontierland, Tomorrowland, Adventureland, and New Orleans Square can be as much fun as the rides themselves.

...*California dreaming*... [M]y official guide around the new Disney theme park in California, has a problem. [My guide] wants to help. [It] really does. S[o my guide tells me it] is there to answer my questions and encourages me to ask anything that is on my mind. But clearly I am breaking some unspoken rule of theme park etiquette, because every time I do ask something her eyes glaze over, her mouth quivers in a nervous smile, and [my guide] does her best to pretend I have not asked a question at all. We are touring Disney's California Adventure, a concept that takes the theme park idea to new levels of chutzpah since the fantasy world it purports to recreate – the state of California – is actually all around. It doesn't seem unreasonable to ask questions about the dizzying \$US1.4 billion... cost of the enterprise, the relatively cramped space (22.26ha of what used to be the Disneyland car park), the company's hope that tourists will now treat Disneyland like a resort destination rather than a day trip, the fears of overcrowding, and so on. But at every turn, [my guide]'s body language suggests that I have merely indulged in idle chatter that merits no response... Finally, a query penetrates the thick skin of robotic corporate programming. Are the people dressed up as Goofy or Buzz Lightyear members of an actors' union, I wonder – not because I really want to know but because I am desperate to keep the conversation going – or do they fall under some other category of employment? "We refer to our characters as characters," [my guide] replies firmly. "We don't see them as people." Preview day at a Disney attraction is an exercise in cultural dislocation that most visitors have no opportunity to savour. The constant surveillance, presented as a form of benevolent hospitality, resembles nothing so much as an official trip to Libya, complete with the vague promise of an encounter with a member of the supreme leadership that may or may not materialise. But this exercise in corporate control, and the extraordinary fear and paranoia that it betokens, is actually not a bad introduction to the park itself – which, being Disney, is a triumph of corporate image-making over any serious engagement with reality. The California of the California Adventure is a series of finely honed clichés, carefully emptied of dirt or sleaze and dressed up in the same pastiche architectural style that Uncle Walt first perfected at the original Disneyland more than 40 years ago. Perhaps nothing epitomises the place better than its centrepiece attraction, a dizzying Imax tour of the Golden State called *Soarin' Over California*... It is not only a sanitised version of California, it is also overwhelmingly a white [perso]n's view. The Native Americans and original Spanish settlers are relegated to a mural. The huge Asian and Mexican populations of the state are reduced to floats in a daily parade. And blacks are nowhere to be seen. It is hard not to have mischievous thoughts about what a truly honest Californian theme park would look like: power cuts on the rollercoaster, in acknowledgement of the state's huge ongoing electricity crisis (it could still happen), or a bumper-car ride simulating gridlock on the San Diego freeway, or an invitation to guests to dress up in Los Angeles police uniforms and whack an image of [a black motorist]. But a theme park by definition is not about reality. It is about a mediated reality in which signature features are copied and the rest simply discarded. Ironically, the real California has become so infected with the Disney architectural ethic that the California Adventure park ends up holding a mirror to something not unlike itself. The park's Mondavi winery, for example, is a copy of the real Mondavi winery, whose California ranch style is itself based on hacienda architecture and elements of Mediterranean style. In other words, Disney's California is a replica of a replica. Why, one might ask, would someone pay \$US43 to visit a simulated, antiseptic version of Venice Beach, when the real Venice Beach is free of charge and barely an hour's drive away? The answer, sadly, seems to be because it is convenient and predictable. That's why more and more Americans are going to Las Vegas to see the Paris... and... Venetian... hotels (which, at heart, are just Disney resorts with slot machines); it saves the bother of schlepping to Europe... and alleviates all worry about foreign languages, crime, garlicky food or dodgy toilets... Have a nice day.

...Behind that radiant smile, Mickey Mouse must be a depressed little rodent. This year was supposed to be an *annus mirabilis*, but instead it has been an *annus horribilis*. Disney crafted the script for [this year] to be the year the Magic Kingdom would sparkle. The tenth anniversary of Disneyland Park in Paris coincided with the opening of Walt Disney Studios next door. The vast complex on Paris' eastern rim was meant to hum. After the first few bumpy years followed by a drop in profits by almost 50[%] in 1999, Disney bosses hoped to draw 16 million visitors annually to the new park to see first hand the tricks of cinema productions, including stunts. The construction cost of ...\$[NZ]350 million... would soon be recouped. "Ten years ago there was nothing here, and in January... we welcomed our 100 millionth visitor," [the]Disney resort chair[perso]n... enthused. "It means we really have become a tourist destination at the European level." But what a dreadful time Mickey, Minnie, Donald and Pluto have had. Attendance at Disneyland Park fell 4[%] last year to just 12 million. And in its first summer, ticket sales to Walt Disney Studios failed to meet expectations. A separate entry fee is payable for the Studios, and at ...\$75.40... an adult for nine attractions, it barely compares with the same entry price for the Park and its 43 attractions. Among the gripes are not enough attractions for the price, too many mechanical breakdowns and an overall feeling it was not as magic as Disneyland. In July, customer satisfaction was around 49[%]. Disneyland Park started this year under renewed pressure from other theme parks mushrooming around France such as Park Asterix, Mer de Sable and the Grand Parc du Puy du Fou – whose main attraction is gladiator fights. The newer parks offer discounts and at peak season an adult can pay just ...\$48.17... entry. As if that wasn't enough to get Grumpy upset, the happy Disney image has been marred by a series of bizarre incidents. In June masked [robbers] crashed a car into a currency exchange office at Disneyland and opened fire with... gun[s at]... police as they fled from the scene. Three officers were injured as bullets ricocheted off neighbouring buildings. "At the start I thought it was a show," said [one]eye witness... A fortnight ago thieves broke a ground-floor window of a hotel in the Disney complex and stole jewels worth around... \$43,980... A few days later fire broke out at an apartment block that houses many of Disneyland's casual staff. No lives were lost but some of the staff's personal belongings were destroyed... Despite the introduction... [to] Disneyland Park... last year of a FastPass, which provides a time slot for five of the most popular rides, it hasn't solved the problem of long queues at other attractions. Since opening, staff have gone on strike twice over pay and are now threatening new industrial action over bonuses for employees in senior positions. The pixie dust doesn't seem to work as well in Europe as it does in the U[S].

In a society where workers are only employed for 24 hours each week, the majority of ex-workers have long and healthy retirements, and nobody has to allocate any time for activities such as shopping or banking, there would be a greater requirement for recreational facilities than at present. However, until everyone in the world has enough food to eat, has access to proper health treatment and accommodation, etc., recreation should sit at the bottom of the list of priorities. Indeed, all of the recreational industries could be shut down while labour and resources are focused on providing essential needs – and many should never be started up again, at least as a source of employment. In particular, any activity that can be classified as a HOBBY ought to forever cease being acknowledged as work! This means no more professional artists (including cartoonists, tattooists, make-up appliers, fashion designers, sculptors – society also ought to cease making monuments), actors, dancers, musicians and singers, story-tellers (including comedians, writers of fiction and poets), or entertainers of any kind (including prostitutes and people employed to create games – be they computer or board), as well as their associated personnel (e.g., agents, ticket and merchandise sellers, record producers and distributors, roadies and stage-hands, critics).

People could still participate in HOBBY activities in their own spare time – but only if they have access to the necessary equipment, or are able to produce it themselves. This means, for example, that artists would have to make their own paints, paper, and brushes – at least once all of the art equipment currently being held in shops or warehouses has been consumed. However, this art equipment should be divided amongst schools – particularly pre-schools and primary schools. If the Manufacturing Ministry continues producing basic art materials for educational purposes (or when it resumes producing them after allocations of existing supplies are running low), adult artists might be able to gain permission from their local education facility to join in with children's art classes – perhaps acting as extra tutors – or use left-over materials that may otherwise be thrown away.

If every existing musical instrument was donated to the Education Ministry, they could then be divided amongst schools so each has a well-stocked music room – although, because music has ceased to be a career option, not many children are likely to take a serious interest in learning how to play an instrument in future (learning music can help develop memory and other useful skills – r:p1898, ln58 – but, as with learning extra languages, children can hone such skills via non-musical methods). However, those who are interested – and are trustworthy – should be able to use their school's facilities to practise during intervals or outside of school hours (which means they won't disturb their families or neighbours), and adults could also arrange with a local school to use the music room outside of school hours or join in with music classes. Such adults might act as tutors – although children will be able to learn via instructional books, videos, etc. (r:p1893, ln14). Musicians ought to be able to borrow school instruments to perform in public (either using a school room or hall, or another public building), but such concerts would obviously have to be put on for free. Unlike art equipment, most musical instruments will last indefinitely if looked after properly, which means there may be no justification for producing any more (and, if a time comes when every existing instrument has become unplayable, schools can concentrate on singing as a source of music – perhaps in association with hand-made percussion and wind instruments).

Only a HB would bother trying to create new music (be it an original piece or remake) – a human knows that there is already more music in existence than it will ever have time to listen to (even though it believes much of that music is not worth listening to); plus most new songs are similar in sound or lyrics to one or more older ones (consider classical music: if it were possible to run every piece of orchestral music through a computer programme that eliminates any sequence of notes from newer compositions which already feature in older compositions, there might be nothing left of most or all of the classical works created in recent years; consider also the following lyrics: 'heroin it's my wife' – 1960s, 'she's like heroin to me' – 1980s, 'I'm happy here with my heroin girl' – 1990s; finally, consider the fact that for '\$3500 you can buy a machine which enables you to re-create or produce new music by waving your arms through the air', plus the evolution of 'mashing' and sampling – 'Mixers, turntables, samplers: the technology to create your own grooves. Cut up stuff from a record or CD and re-mix it the way you want it. Get the gear to do it cause anyone can do it'; and also knows that time spent composing is time that could be used to learn or do something which is more important! However, new music may still be recorded (especially if school music rooms include recording equipment), then be downloaded onto the Internet – so its creator(s) and others can listen to the song without having to produce a record, tape or CD (and without having to pay for the privilege or ordeal). Incidentally, if every piece of music was downloaded onto the Internet, and a programme was created that enabled householders to hear a random selection of all songs, or a selection from one or more musical categories (e.g., classical, blues, rock) – and even store a list of personal favourites (perhaps in the memory of a house's communications system – r:p2391, ln51) – then music-playing radio stations (at the end of 1996, Auckland – where there are 'more radio stations per head of population than any other city' – had 22 radio stations; a year later the figure had risen to 24, with one of the new additions being called *Channel Z*; 'the city's residents can now scan across almost 50 FM stations – NY's 19 million residents have 43, and Londoners just 36') will be redundant (note that talk-back radio shows would also be redundant if HBs ever become extinct). Such a programme can also be used instead of DJs (be they biological or electrical) at arranged dances (which ought to be held in school or multipurpose public halls – rather than maintaining specialised discos or nightclubs – unless an existing facility is being used regularly enough to justify its upkeep; obviously, pubs or bars won't be needed if alcoholic beverages are no longer produced by society – r:p2087, ln58 – but existing premises could be maintained for holding sober gatherings).

During daylight hours, public halls and other facilities – including nightclubs if they are still available (although dances needn't only be held at night) – could be used by any groups of people who wish to gather in numbers too large to be seated in a house, or who wish to have a clubroom. Alternatively, they should be able to arrange with a local school to use a classroom or other building outside of school hours. Indeed, it may be unnecessary to provide

public halls, community centres and related facilities – or at least built new ones – if school facilities are sufficient for the purpose but aren't being fully utilised. School facilities can also be used to stage plays (be the actors children or adults) – although, as with nightclub facilities and public halls, etc., if existing theatres are receiving regular enough use that might be a justification for maintaining them. However, as with music, there are already more than enough films (and TV programmes – including live recordings of plays) in existence than any one person could hope to watch in its lifetime – or wish to watch – and there is even less justification for producing more of these than there is for producing more music! Furthermore, if every film and TV programme in existence (or at least those worth watching) was downloaded onto the Internet in a way that enabled householders to view their own selections, video shops, movie theatres and TV channels (excluding those providing news or educational services) would be as redundant as *music-playing radio stations*.

Until every home in a district has access to such an Internet-based communications and entertainment system (which could include the ability to access computer games – thereby rendering video-game machines and arcades unnecessary), video shops that lend both cassettes and VCRs may remain open. If no ministry (e.g., Education) can make use of the equipment once video shops have been closed down, interested members of the public might be allowed to divide the equipment between themselves to keep in their own homes for as long as it remains operational. HBs who want to continue watching pornography and other objectionable material would, therefore, still be able to do so in private (it will be ideal if such material was eliminated from society completely – although smutty video cassettes could have their contents erased then be reused to store other images – but that involves searching every house, an unpleasant and normally unwelcome activity which is also unlikely to be completely successful; note that it is possible to 'edit out violence, bad language and nudity from films using masking software called "Movie Mask" – though an unhappy Directors' Guild is trying to block distribution of the software').

The ability to access literature and academic information via the Internet (e.g., Google's virtual library) also eliminates the necessity to maintain libraries (plus a book-printing and distribution industry). However, libraries could continue to operate for as long as they have books that are in a readable condition (in some instances – i.e., wherever books are well-preserved – this might be indefinitely); and, if it is still deemed necessary for people to have access to a paper copy once every original copy has been lost or damaged beyond repair, be capable of printing off a scroll-like copy of a requested document – which can then be read by subsequent borrowers (but additional scroll-like copies should only be printed if another person has an urgent need to view one which has already been lent, and no other library within the district has a spare copy). Each suburb can initially have a library situated in a central location (although, if primary schools temporarily or permanently maintain their own libraries, there should be no need for suburban libraries to have a section for children's books; whereas high schools wouldn't need their own libraries if they are also centrally located – r:p,1925 ln29), and all of a district's libraries ought to be linked to a central database – Auckland's libraries are currently divided into multiple database systems (e.g., one for each of its four city councils, plus Auckland University's and those of other tertiary institutions) that are mutually unconnected – but, if someone wants to borrow a book that isn't held in its local library, it should have to go to the relevant library (and return the book there after finishing with it) rather than have a service which transfers books between libraries. Eventually (i.e., when every household can access the Internet), each district may only need to have one physical library – which ought to be situated in the middle of the city, and be managed by the Education Ministry.

Toy libraries should also come under the management of the Education Ministry, to form the basis of a service that lends educational toys to the parents of pre-schoolers (r:p1921, ln5). Educational toys currently sitting in shops or warehouses can be divided amongst such libraries and pre-schools, while the production of non-educational toys – including comfort toys (i.e., substitutes for parental attention) and sex toys – is brought to a permanent end (non-educational toys can be sent to non-essential warehouses – r:p2207, ln47-8). Production of sophisticated board games (for children or adults) ought to cease as well, but the production of dice sets and playing cards could just be temporarily ceased – because they are simple enough to produce (and can be made out of plastics, thereby maximising their life expectancy), while providing a variety of gaming options (that assist children in developing their memory, adding and planning skills), to justify supplying these items to every household which requests them. By the way, casinos may be kept open – or eventually be reopened – if patrons are happy to only play with pretend money (e.g., upon entering a casino each patron is given \$x worth of 'chips' – then they simply stop gambling when their money runs out or return any winnings at the end of that visit, or keep a record of their total earnings or losses from multiple visits). However, rather than have physical casinos, they might just exist in cyberspace.

Sports equipment is another product category that ought to temporarily cease being manufactured – although professional athletes (and their associates – trainers, commentators, etc. – r:p1594, ln5-6) can immediately become an extinct species. Existing sports facilities could initially be controlled by club members – who would have to be responsible for maintaining the facilities on a voluntary basis; and, if the facility has any ongoing expenses, share the burden by paying membership fees. Eventually, however, every sports facility will need to be managed by the Recreation Ministry.

The Recreation Ministry should aim to provide each suburb with a centrally located recreation complex (r:p2438, ln46-51) where there is, for example, a range of swimming pools (the only swimming pools in the suburb – meaning that swimmers are always supervised) and related equipment (e.g., diving platforms, water-slides and, perhaps, wave-makers), a gym, a games hall (which contains pool and snooker tables, darts boards, tenpin bowling alleys, table-tennis tables, simple board games such as chess and draughts, etc.), and an assortment of courts and fields (shopping malls and their car parks could, perhaps, be converted into recreation complexes). The assortment ought to be capable of catering to the preferred sporting choices of a suburb's residents – although such preferences are likely to be fairly uniform for every suburb within a district. As much as possible, facilities should be multi-purpose (e.g., the same field may be used for soccer and rugby games by having 'multi-use goal posts'; the same court used for basketball, netball, volleyball and, if indoors, badminton – not simultaneously, obviously) and low-maintenance (e.g., have artificial surfaces – although players would then need to be provided with safety equipment such as knee and elbow pads, helmets). Relevant protective equipment will have to be lent to players along with the necessary balls, bats, etc., but players who need mouth-guards ought to be given one to keep for personal use – and, if standard-issue shoes (r:p2207, ln23) are designed to be suitable for running in (taking into consideration the three different foot movement styles – 'tend inwards, neutral, tend outwards'), recreation centres won't need to lend footwear (even for tenpin bowling). If the demand for a particular sport warrants it, use of the relevant facility (e.g., field) and equipment will have to be shared via a booking system – which ensures that use of sports facilities is distributed evenly (i.e., someone would only be able to rebook a facility after everyone who wants to use the facility has had a turn – although someone may be able to jump the queue if a booking has been cancelled and no one who is ahead of it is willing or able to utilise the vacancy; computers make such a booking system feasible). In some instances a facility might need to be booked for an entire day (e.g., cricket pitches), but booking a facility for a longer period – e.g., for a two- or three-day cricket game – should be discouraged (unless demand for the facility is low enough to allow that). Ideally, a suburban recreation centre would have just enough of the right assortment of facilities to ensure that each of its fields and courts is being used almost constantly – at least during operational hours (which can be maximised with the assistance of standard lighting for interior facilities and floodlights for outside facilities; use of recreational centres could be further maximised if some or all of their outside facilities are covered by a high, transparent and permanent, or retractable, roof – thereby eliminating the requirement to cancel or postpone outside games due to the weather; although, if artificial surfaces are used and the players don't mind getting wet, games on exposed fields would only be affected by extreme weather conditions such as thunderstorms or cyclones and heat waves). Less popular sports might only need to be provided at one or a couple of suburban centres district-wide, in which case the centres will have to cater for players from other suburbs (a sport ought to be less popular because its rules are complicated or it requires a lot of equipment; sports that are simple and require little or no equipment should become more popular).

A group of friends (who may be of mixed sex – particularly for suitable sports like soccer) could book a field to play games against each other (with opposing teams wearing different coloured bibs or sashes; and players wearing old clothing rather than having specialised uniforms) – perhaps having use

of the field at the same time of each week – or arrange to play socially against another group (and team-members who are familiar with the rules can take turns at being the match official – rather than having outsiders or recreation centre employees perform this task). People should only participate in sports for personal enjoyment, socialising and fitness. However, if enough groups are playing a particular sport at a centre to warrant organising an in-house competition, that would be okay. Furthermore, competitions could be organised between different teams from different suburbs (such competitions would primarily involve selecting a team from the best players of a popular sport to represent the suburb against similar teams from other suburbs – in which case the players might be expected to attend training sessions – although such competitions may also be arranged to enable players of less popular sports to have proper games) – but sportspeople should no longer be able to compete with peers from other districts (which means no more Olympic Games, World Cups, etc.), and the winners of a competition shouldn't receive any kind of prize (personal satisfaction ought to be reward enough)! In addition, world records can cease to be collated – individuals (or groups) could still attempt to break an existing record if they want to prove something to themselves, but without the intensive training and competition of today's top athletes they are unlikely to ever succeed. Likewise, sporting events don't need to be televised (people who want to watch sports will have to see the event live – but, when there are no professional sports teams, no major competitions and, in particular, no inter-district contests, only people with a personal interest are likely to be spectators; which means grandstands and stadiums won't need to be built in future – space for people to stand one-deep beyond the sidelines ought to be sufficient), or even be mentioned in future news bulletins – although a catalogue of previously televised sporting events could be accessible via the Internet. Note that if both suburban medical centres (r:p2163, lns8-9) and suburban recreational centres are centrally located, injured players wouldn't have far to go to receive treatment – although injuries might be less frequent, or at least tend to be less serious, than at present (thereby minimising the impact that sport has on people's ability to perform their work) if players aren't as competitive, perform stretching exercises after games (r:p1570, lns35) and, when appropriate, wear protective gear.

If high schools are also centrally located, they can be situated next to the recreation centre. This will enable high school students to use the facilities during morning or lunch breaks, and for Physical Education classes – and, therefore, high schools won't need to incorporate fields and gymnasiums within their own grounds. The recreation centre's booking system could take PE classes into consideration, and leave some facilities available to students during their break times – although it would be preferable if students weren't able to use the facilities during breaks (because they shouldn't be running around straight after eating). It shouldn't, however, be necessary to offer PE to high school students (although fitness ought to be a topic covered in nutrition classes) because they can be responsible for their own fitness outside of school hours – and, anyway, there might not be space for PE in a curriculum which is designed to teach students everything that they need to know (r:p1920, lns63-5)!

High school students could play sports with adults, but recreation centre staff – who, in the absence of a PE curriculum, would effectively be the equivalent of PE teachers – may be able to organise age-related games or coaching sessions for the students (although it might not be necessary for recreation staff to actually do the coaching – because videos or books, in association with the catalogue of televised sporting events, can perform that task). Primary schools, however, ought to have their own multi-purpose field and basic sports equipment – excluding swimming pools – for their pupils to use during breaks and after school hours (r:p1924, lns41-2). Parents, and any interested teachers, can be responsible for coaching primary school children, who should only be able to use a recreation centre's facilities – excluding swimming pools – if accompanied by an adult (unless a recreation centre's age-related games and coaching sessions extend below the age at which pupils enter high school; recreation centre staff should definitely conduct swimming classes for young children). Games may be played between teams representing different primary schools, but they ought to only involve primary schools from within the same suburb (which, because many of the players would know each other even though they attend different schools, will help to ensure that such games are more sociable than competitive). If primary schools have multi-purpose fields, recreation centres could use them – outside of school hours (as long as they aren't required by primary school teams; and aren't too wet or frozen) – for adult or high school-aged players whenever demand for a centre's fields outstrip its capacity.

One of the most equipment-intensive – or, more accurately, resource-intensive – sports is golf (NZ's 'Cape Kidnappers golf course, with green fees of \$400 a round, has been rated the world's best by Britain's *Daily Telegraph* newspaper'), but it probably won't eventually become unpopular with everyone for that reason! Therefore, districts which currently contain golf courses may always contain them. However, districts like Auckland – which has over 25 full-size courses and a few 9-holers within its urban limits, and dozens more 18-holers within a hour's drive of its CBD (sometimes, at inner-Auckland public courses, players have to queue for an hour before getting to tee off) – should aim to minimise their number as much as possible. Golf equipment sitting in sports shops can be divided amongst existing golf courses, and golfers ought to be encouraged to also donate their personal golf equipment, so that each course is capable of simultaneously providing a set of clubs – plus balls, tees and trundlers – to every player having a round (assuming that most rounds take about four hours to complete, and groups of four players normally tee off between seven and ten minutes of each other, that would mean each course needs at least 140 sets – which isn't a lot when the number of sets currently sitting in people's garages, and getting used only once a week or less, are taken into consideration – but each course might need closer to double that amount to allow for left and right-handers, plus undersized sets). Players will have to book tee times at every course (when booking, they could stipulate what type of clubs they'll require, and a course that is going to be short of a particular type can try to source the necessary sets from the others; or, as a last resort, players may sometimes be able to share a set) and, at least while money continues to be used, pay for their rounds (which should discourage most people from playing golf on a regular basis). If there are more tee times available in a district than are being filled (as is the case in Auckland at the moment), the course that has the least traffic can be closed down (and either be converted into a park or used for other purposes); then the next least-used course and so on until the capacity equals or exceeds the demand.

If each course averages 25,000 rounds a year, Auckland would need to maintain at least forty courses in order to ensure that every Aucklanders can play just one round per year. Fortunately, not everyone in Auckland is interested in playing golf. If only 100,000 Aucklanders (i.e., approximately 10% of them) were keen on golf, and the city had twelve courses, each golfer will then be able to have three rounds per year. The majority of Auckland's golfers might be satisfied with that amount but, because the Recreation Ministry is also providing recreation centres which are able to cater for a wide variety of sporting interests – and people should be interested in playing more than one sport – it ought to regard the amount as being more than necessary. Four courses – preferably situated on the city's fringes (as opposed to being located within the primary urban area) – could be enough, even if each of the courses took turns at being closed for one week out of every four so their fairways and greens are able to recover from being used to their maximum capacity during the previous three weeks. This means – if 10% of Auckland's population wants to play golf – that each golfer only gets three rounds every four years (or one every four years if 30% of the population wants to play golf). However, keen golfers may be able to get in more rounds per year if courses notify them of cancellations. If the production of energy eventually ceases to consume resources (r:p2293, lns42) – other than the materials used to build power stations, superconductors, etc. – and a district is producing excess energy during night hours, rather than allowing that energy to be wasted, golf courses could be floodlit. Floodlighting would extend the number of rounds completed each day – although, rather than operate courses for 24-hours of each day, such lights should only be used to enable the first golfers to tee off earlier, and the last golfers to tee off later, than is otherwise possible (and allow groundspeople to tidy up the greens and fairways after the last round of a day has been completed and before the first round of the following day is commenced).

To compensate avid golfers for such a reduction in the amount of rounds they are able to play each year (not that they deserve to be compensated in any way), each course could be adjoined by a driving range (so golfers would at least be able to get plenty of practise in between rounds; and if these ranges have upward slopes, the balls will gently roll back to the golfers – thereby eliminating the need to employ someone to collect them). Novelty mini-courses may be supplied to make putting practise more interesting. Keen golfers can also play computer golf (and, perhaps, virtual reality golf) or in their dreams!

It would be ideal if violent computer games were all erased from the planet immediately – but that might be expecting too much. However, such games only appeal to a primitive mentality, so their popularity will wane as less people are prepared to be stigmatised through being associated with them. In the

meantime, their capacity to enable violent people to direct anger towards imaginary characters rather than at real people might outweigh their potential to create a thirst for physical violence – and can be used as an excuse for the Recreation Ministry to shut down opportunities for HBs to participate in blatantly violent sports (there would be less of an excuse to shut down sports based around self-defence techniques – but, as society itself becomes less violent, gradually there should be less motivation for people to learn forms of self-defence until, finally, there is no motivation; it may, however, still be necessary for police officers to learn self-defence). Refusing to give HBs permission to use public facilities to train for and participate in boxing bouts or other forms of arranged fights, and to promote them, is unlikely to bring an immediate end to such sports – but it ought to dissolve the support of the masses for these mindless spectacles. Likewise, the Recreation Ministry can make it harder for citizens to engage in blood sports (the ministry can't stop HBs from wanting to kill other animals for fun, and doing so, but the Manufacturing Ministry need no longer employ people to make any equipment that these pseudo-hunters use) or any activity that involves other animals (e.g., horse racing). The same goes for motor sports – although, while citizens continue to have access to private vehicles and fuel, it won't be possible to stop interested parties from arranging these in secluded spots (but it would be possible for the Health Ministry to refuse to provide treatment for injured drivers or spectators if there is a backlog of patients whose condition wasn't self-inflicted!). Further examples of current activities that social authorities should disassociate themselves from are body-building and beauty contests, battle re-enactments, air shows (there is, after all, plenty of existing TV footage of air shows – especially the ones where performing planes have crashed into the crowd) – although pursuits such as parachuting, gliding and hang-gliding could still be made available to interested parties in future. In addition, the Recreation Ministry can provide boating and scuba-diving facilities (and suitably located, see-through tunnels, could easily be built for people to walk through underwater – rather than having aquariums above the water; a district like Auckland might use such tunnels to link some harbour islands with their closest neighbours) – although citizens will have to pass a training course before being allowed to borrow diving equipment or boats capable of carrying more than one person.

If every recreational boat in existence became the property of the Recreation Ministry, it might not be necessary to build any more for a long time – especially if the new or near-new craft are stored until older ones need to be replaced. When, or if, production recommences, it ought to primarily be focused on making simple, non-motorised, one- or two-people craft (e.g., canoes, dinghies or other types of rowboat – although dinghies can be masted), plus one-masted yachts capable of carrying a crew of up to six people (and have small, environmentally-sound motors – e.g., electric or seawater-powered – to be used when leaving and returning to the marina, or whenever they are becalmed), and a few suitably-powered speedboats (some of which could be used by qualified people – e.g., Recreation workers – to offer water-skiing in designated areas; the rest of which would be used for rescue work). Rowboats and small yachts (e.g., masted dinghies) should only be lent out for an hour or so each time – meaning they can't be taken far from the marina – but, if at least two people on board have passed the relevant training course, larger yachts may be lent out for a whole day or longer.

Surfboards (and other wave-riders – e.g., boogie boards, wind-surfers) could be stored at relevant locations and be lent to members of the public so that they are used under supervised conditions – groups of surfers ought to look out for each other, but the store-workers should be qualified lifeguards (so an experienced person is nearby if anyone needs to be resuscitated). Areas of popular beaches can be divided into surfing and swimming areas – the store-workers would be responsible for marking out the safest swimming area, but swimmers should be responsible for themselves (rather than have the Recreation Ministry simultaneously employ fulltime store-workers and fulltime lifeguards, plus recreation centre swimming coaches). Because more people tend to surf year-round than swim, it may be necessary to also employ beach store-workers year-round. However, because such store-workers are really only needed when demand for beach equipment exceeds capacity – like during weekends (in which case each surfer might only get to use a board for an hour or so) – if the equipment is handled responsibly, people could still be able to access the stores to borrow equipment whenever no Recreation Ministry staff are rostered on.

If a beach is part of a suburb, getting to it won't be a problem. Where popular beaches lie outside of a city (as is the case with Auckland's west coast), bus services could be put on during times of peak demand – or operate year-round, but with a decreased frequency during off-peak months. In addition, districts can use buses to take people on scenic day-trips. The Recreation Ministry might operate a fleet of buses for such day-trips – and visit the same destinations every day, or a daily selection from a range of destinations (with the selection being dependant on the seasons). However, if there are periods during the year when the fleet isn't being fully utilised, groups of citizens (e.g., packs of friends, families) may be able to arrange to borrow a bus – especially if at least two members of the group have passed a relevant driving test – to go to a location of their choice (assuming the access roads are adequate). Alternatively (or additionally), if the Transport Ministry has a fleet of minibuses that it only uses as taxis at night (r:p2346, ln48-9), these vehicles could be borrowed by members of the public for personal day-trips – although use of such vehicles would have to be fairly distributed, which, as with golf, is unlikely to mean being generously distributed (to allow every citizen in a district with a population of 1 million one day's shared use of such a minivan each year, the district will need about 274 ten-seater vehicles – which might be more vehicles than are required for the night-time service; in comparison, to provide every citizen with one official scenic day-trip per year will require just under fifty sixty-seater vehicles – less if bendibuses or double-decker vehicles are used, or if the vehicles can pull carriages; or if one or more buses are substituted for a ferry – for cruises along a river, around a lake or harbour). One day-trip per year may seem like a pitiful amount but if, for example, the Recreation Ministry's scenic service offered between forty and fifty different routes, the average person should get to travel along each route (or most of the routes) twice in its lifetime – which ought to be enough to satisfy the average person. If minibuses are added to the calculation, or if such a district was able to provide double the number of scenic buses, etc., each person might be allocated at least two day-trips per year.

Instead of trying to allocate such day-trips evenly – especially if (or while) the capacity to provide them equates to less than one trip per person per year – seats could just be divided amongst applicants; by lottery-style draws; or be used to reward people (plus their partners and children, or their own parents if they are childless) for exceptional work (r:p1953, ln50). However, there can also be an alternative means of travelling along scenic routes – by bicycle!

It should be relatively easy to eventually provide a bike to every human who wants one for private use, but this would be unwarranted in a society that also has a thorough public transport system. For this reason there ought to just be a supply of bikes – in a range of sizes but only one design (multipurpose, such as *mountain bikes*; note that the *Segway* scooter – r:p2330, ln68 – has been temporarily 'recalled because it loses balance when the battery becomes flat') – which people can borrow for an hour, a day or longer from the Recreation Ministry (the bikes could be kept at suburban recreation centres). Being allowed to borrow bikes for longer than one day means people will be able to go on camping trips over weekends or during their holidays. In that case, and cases of people going on hiking holidays, the ministry would also have to lend camping equipment (e.g., tents, sleeping bags, packs, portable cookers – preferably battery powered, or powered by another environmentally-safe source; sleeping bags might be provided as a personal item by the Manufacturing Ministry). Such campers could pitch their tent in any suitable location, but the ministry ought to provide camping sites at strategic locations that have ablutions facilities (which, in addition to providing toilets and showers, can contain sinks for washing dirty dishes or clothes, room for campers to shelter if the weather turns nasty, and maybe even ovens – though the portable cookers should render extra ovens unnecessary). However, huts (which have bunks and, perhaps, ovens) might also be maintained along hiking trails such as NZ's Milford Track – a 'three-day, 55-km long route' which 'is walked by 10,000 people each' summer (therefore, if the district the track lies within was to eventually have a population of 1 million, everyone will only get to hike the track once – that district could be based on either Dunedin or Invercargill, since both cities are about the same distance from the track; but Dunedin's residents may instead get to use the Routeburn Track – which is situated 20km or so northeast of the Milford Track, and recently started being managed via a booking system to overcome the 'scramble for beds'). By the way, school camping trips should cease to be organised – though parents of classmates could arrange and supervise combined camping trips during school holidays.

It was previously suggested that unnecessary migration should be stopped and money paid for cancelled tickets shouldn't be refunded (r:p2348, lns17-23). It necessarily follows from this that international tourism is an existing recreational industry that would have to be *shut down immediately*. This means that, initially, people who are on overseas holidays ought to be returned home a.s.a.p.; while people who work in hotels, or as tourist agents, guides, etc., will need to be re-employed (nowadays, 'one-in-ten NZers are employed in tourism'). Incidentally, the building of hotels (plus motels and lodges) can also cease, and existing ones be used to house people who are homeless or have substandard accommodation (then eventually be converted into apartments or some other use). If, when there are no more hotels, etc., someone has to temporarily visit another district, and there is no vacant accommodation available, the person could be billeted with a family (or be given a tent – if that is the person's preference). However, workers who travel between districts (e.g., when official migrants or goods are transferred) and have to be accommodated overnight – because to return home in the same day would be too tiring – should be provided with sleeping compartments by their ministry at the relevant location (e.g., airport); such compartments, along with tents, could also be used as emergency accommodation when necessary (and vacant).

If a time arrives when the basic needs of everyone are being catered for, the official migration of people has created a situation where most districts have approximately the same population (hence, official migration has been ceased), the working week is 24-hours long, and societies have resources (both material and human) to spare, it could be possible to create opportunities for people to travel outside their district for specific recreational purposes – particularly if the return-trips can be completed within a day and are organised in a reciprocal fashion (i.e., residents of a coastal district might visit a mountainous inland district to engage in skiing and other snow-related or ice-activities such as glacier-climbing, while residents from the mountainous district visit the coastal one to experience the seaside – although every district should include either a coastline, large lake or major river, and some may include all three, while coastal districts can build artificial ski-slopes), and doing so doesn't interfere with each district's ability to cater for its own residents (during summertime a coastal district may have difficulty handling out-of-district beach-goers on top of local beach-goers; during wintertime, the mountainous district may be unable to simultaneously cater for skiers from both districts).

Recreational trips between adjacent districts (adjacent districts might also share recreational facilities on their mutual border) can be made via an inter-district railway line, or by bus if the ride takes no longer than about two hours (therefore, the driver will be able to have four hours rest – while the passengers are skiing, swimming or whatever – and complete an eight-hour work-day with the ride home). If, however, the districts aren't adjacent (making the use of trains or buses impractical for a day-trip; but they could be practical if trippers camp overnight, and each day the transport used delivers a new group and returns home with the people it dropped off the day before), it might be possible to use aircraft (in which case, hundreds of passengers could be moved at a time) – especially if the aircraft used are powered by environmentally-sound, or at least energy-efficient, engines. To maximise the efficient use of any transport (be it for rail, road or air) operated for inter-district day-trips, it may be possible for a vehicle to, for example, leave District A with a load of passengers, drop them off in District B, return to District A with a load of passengers from District B, return to District B with a second load of passengers from District A, return to District A with the first load of passengers from District A, return to District B with the passengers from District B, and finally return to District A with the second load of passengers from District A (meanwhile, an identical vehicle could be operating in the opposite direction – i.e., leaves District B first; alternatively, if the vehicles can travel fast enough, there might be time for each vehicle to complete more than three round trips per day). Each district could have reciprocal recreational activities arranged with more than one other district. But regardless of how many out-of-district trips a district offers (be they reciprocal or not), they should only involve travel within the same state.

One means of creating new state boundaries would be to utilise time zones, the equator and both poles (i.e., the world could be divided into 24 Northern Hemisphere states and 24 Southern Hemisphere states – with each state forming a triangular shape that has one point at either the North Pole or South Pole and two points 15° apart at the equator; alternatively, the world could be divided into 96 states if the two points on the equator are 7.5° apart). The primary motivation behind arranging states in this fashion is to have every district within each one share the same Greenwich Mean Time and seasons. However, if such a plan was applied literally to the globe, some states will exist where there is either no land or just a few small islands. Therefore, wherever there is little in the way of land, a state's width might be wider at the equator or elsewhere (perhaps incorporating two or more time zones – although every district in such a state can use the time as read at the mid-point of the zones); and where there is a lot of land, a state's width may be narrower. Furthermore, there is likely to be more states formed in the Northern Hemisphere than in the Southern Hemisphere. While districts would be named after the city they are associated with, Northern Hemisphere states can be named N1, N2, etc; Southern Hemisphere states S1, S2, etc.

Examples of what such future states might look like are: N1 – incorporating Iceland, Ireland, Portugal and the area of Spain that lies west of the longitudinal line 5° west of Greenwich (including Gibraltar), plus the western coastline of Africa (with the inland border following the same longitudinal line) and the eastern Atlantic islands; N2 – incorporating the area of Africa that lies between 5° west and 2° west, the area of Spain which lies within the same longitudinal lines, plus Brittany, the Channel Islands, England, Wales and Scotland, and its northern islands (including the Faeroe Islands and Jan Mayen); N3 – incorporating the western coastline of Norway and inland to about the longitudinal line 6° east, plus the areas of Europe and Africa which lie between 2° west and 6° east; N4 – incorporating the areas of Europe (including Scandinavia, Corsica and Sardinia) and Africa that lie between 6° east and 10° east, plus the north-east coast of Tunisia and the island Fernando Poo, but excluding the area of Africa which lies below the city of Douala in Cameroon; N5 – incorporating the areas of Europe that lie between 10° east and 15° east (including, perhaps, all of Sicily, and maybe even all of eastern Italy), plus the area of Africa that is bounded by the same longitudinal lines and the equator, with the addition of the Gulf of Guinea coastline between the equator and Douala; the African lands below the equator could become three states, with each sharing a mutual boundary at the point where the Congo river dissects the equator – so that the northeastern part of the western state shares the western coastline as far south as the Tropic of Capricorn (with its eastern border creating a straight or curved line from the point on the Congo to the place where the western coastline dissects the Tropic of Capricorn), the northwestern part of the eastern state (which would include Madagascar, Mauritius and the other west Indian Ocean islands) shares the eastern coastline as far south as the Tropic of Capricorn, while the remainder of central Africa shares the southern coastline below the Tropic of Capricorn; S4 – incorporating the lands below the equator to the west of 120° east (including Western AUS but excluding any part of Sulawesi); S5 – incorporating the land between 120° east and 140° east (plus all of Sulawesi and the Moluccas – including their Northern Hemisphere parts – and the western half of New Guinea); S6 – incorporating the eastern side of AUS, eastern New Guinea and the Solomon Islands; S7 – incorporating NZ and all of the remaining South Pacific islands.

An aim of forming states should be to try to maximise the variety of natural resources contained within each state to increase the likelihood that if one or more districts within a state lack a certain essential resource, other districts within the state will be able to provide it (dividing the world into states which all contain part of either the Arctic or Antarctic plus equatorial lands and all that lies between may greatly assist in achieving that aim). However, another aim of society ought to be to gradually concentrate the districts of each state within its temperate zones (leaving the extremely hot and extremely cold parts of a state as wilderness – which, perhaps, can be used as destinations for recreational day-trips). In most instances, a group of islands can become a single district, but efforts should be made to eventually create just one community (e.g., on the largest island in the group, or the one most suited to supporting a large population), or a couple at most – or the people could 'all live on one island and grow their food on another' (note: 'some Pacific Islands are so crowded that they import 90% of their food') – with the remaining islands being left unused (except, perhaps, for recreational purposes). Alternatively, all of the inhabitants of an island group may be encouraged to migrate to a mainland district (e.g., using the example of S7, people from south Pacific islands would go to NZ) – especially if all of the islands in a group are small – or to a large island in another group. Therefore, an entire island group could be left untouched by humans in future (unless, for example, they're visited by day-trippers). By the way, it was mentioned previously that Earth is capable of accommodating a *stable population of 10 to 11 billion* people. If this is true, perhaps the planet can accommodate between 6 and 7 billion humans within its temperate zones (where life is less harsh, the land is more fertile, and it is less affected by climatic changes such as Ice Ages – which could, otherwise,

mean that some populations are periodically forced to move due to rising and falling water levels; it has been suggested that 'Male Island in the Maldives group be surrounded by a wall to protect it from rising sea-levels, yet if this wall is ever breached by damage in just one place, even for only a day or two, the salt water will render the island's cropland unusable for at least two years')? But even if it is possible to minimise the impact of climatic changes, the shape of many states will change over long periods due to the natural movement of the planet's crust (e.g., the 'Red Sea is widening by 2.5cm/year while the Mediterranean is shrinking – its northern and southern shores will meet in a few million years') or other natural phenomena (e.g., newborn volcanoes) – though in future it will be much easier than at present to relocate entire communities to new sites (i.e., once houses are being made out of plastic; note that, as with footpaths, roading might also be made of plastic that is *removable*) should that be necessary (r:p2204, lns14-5; such relocations can be gradual processes spread over many years just like the movements of the planet's crust).

Most people won't be able to visit relatives and friends who live in other districts or states in future, but they would still be able to throw parties in their own homes (inviting relatives and friends from their own district) – although they shouldn't be able to obtain balloons and similar paraphernalia; and, unless they are personally able to produce them in large enough quantities (or combine the small produce of a number of guests), won't be able to serve alcohol or narcotics. However, when people are living in a society that is less stressful than those of the present and past, they ought to be able to enjoy themselves socially – as most probably did on many occasions when they were children – without the stimulation of mind or mood-altering substances (r:p1325, lns14).

When people are being supplied with enough food via the Food Ministry they won't need land for private vegetable gardens. Therefore, when replacing existing subdivisions or building new ones, the plans don't need to feature space for large private gardens (or private driveways and parking areas such as carports and garages – r:p2347, lns22). Ideally, each house ought to have an adjacent private courtyard (or deck if the house is located on a hillside). Such courtyards (and decks – which, depending on what is most practical, can either be placed adjacent to one side of the house or wrap around three sides of it) should be no larger in ground-area than is covered by the house itself. Courtyards will have to be high-walled (to give the residents privacy from neighbours – assuming they don't always talk at the top of their voices) and, like decks – which should only need to have waist-high walls – have a solid base (such as paving or the same material used for decking – but not stones, plain dirt or grass, although artificial grass might be okay). Householders can grow plants (including wine-making grapes, tobacco, marijuana, coffee, tea, etc., if a resident believes it needs one or more of these things for personal use – r:p2087, lns58-9 – and, if they are able to obtain the relevant seeds or cuttings, any vegetables that they love but the Food Ministry doesn't provide; excluding plants which are locally classified as pests) indoors or in their available garden space using pots and similar containers, and even allow their plants to grow over the walls – although they shouldn't be supplied with gardening tools because, if they want to do any kind of private gardening, they could use their bare hands or find something appropriate amongst the house's kitchen utensils.

Because courtyards aren't grassed, households won't need to have lawnmowers. However, the land that immediately surrounds a house and courtyard – which can be considered communal ground, even though no one but the house's residents and visitors are normally likely to walk over it – should be grassed if possible. In which case, someone will have to be responsible for mowing it (preferably with an electrically-powered mower that doesn't leave tyre grooves) – and that someone would be a Recreation Ministry employee. In addition to grass, there ought to be fences, trellising – perhaps covered in climbing plants – hedges, shrubs or small trees that are strategically placed to obstruct direct lines of sight between the windows of neighbouring houses (ground that can't grow grass may be able to support shrubs, etc. – especially natives; whatever is grown should be able to survive on whatever rainfall is normally available), which ought to be no closer or further apart from each other than one house-width (with the possible exception of houses situated on hillsides). Recreation Ministry workers would also be responsible for tending to this vegetation – plus the vegetation around apartment blocks; and for operating nurseries to produce replacement plants, as well as flowering plants for beds in large public gardens or other suitable locations – and, in Autumn, removing any fallen leaves from paths and drains (leaves and other cuttings, including any excess grass not mulched back into lawns to feed it, could be collected for use as compost, or for other purposes – e.g., producing plastics; there could also be strategically placed collection bins for household food scraps, rather than having households return them to the Food Ministry – r:p2089, lns60 – though such bins would need to be emptied and cleaned daily). Preferably, any trees growing between houses will be evergreen (thereby eliminating the problems caused by fallen leaves; trees ought to either be kept away from roadsides or be evergreen also), be situated far enough from each house to avoid falling on one – although plastic houses could be strong enough to withstand the impact – and be of a variety that doesn't grow above roof height (thereby simultaneously maximising the amount of natural light and warmth that reaches houses; residents who don't like direct sunshine can utilise blinds or whatever other system is provided – r:p2205, lns51-5). By the way, if some of the varieties are citrus trees, the Food Ministry might not need to produce and distribute citrus fruit – at least while the fruit is in season.

Taller trees may still need to be grown between houses situated on hillsides – in order to prevent landslides, and residents from looking down on the houses situated directly below theirs – but, within urban areas, other large trees ought to only be grown in parks, to provide shade along pathways or to serve as windbreaks. However, rather than try to immediately cut down every existing urban tree that is too tall but doesn't fulfill either of the categories mentioned in the previous sentence, unwanted trees could just be removed whenever a resident requests such action and it is also convenient for the Recreation Ministry to do so – otherwise they should only be replaced when their age demands such action (note: if the Recreation Ministry has control over all of the trees grown within each city, and considering that a percentage of these trees will need to be cut down each year – plus others may need periodic trimming – if this timber can be used by the Manufacturing Ministry there might be no need, or at least a severely reduced need, to have plantation forests).

Each house has to be accessed by a firm pathway (under which should be laid its water and sewage pipes, and any wiring – r:p2294, lns58) – but such paths needn't be wider than the span of a wheelchair or trolley (such as might be used to deliver food, or the type used to move patients). The pathway would access a one-lane road that can be used by ambulances or vehicles driven by doctors, vehicles driven by maintenance workers, delivery vans, tractors or forklifts (in order to deliver weekly food allocations – r:p2089, lns6 – the Food Ministry could use trucks to carry allocations from suburban food warehouses that, on their first trip of the day, also carry a forklift which is used to completely offload the truck near to the start of the one-lane road leading to the target houses; while the truck is returning to the warehouse to receive its next load, the forklift carries a pile of allocations along the one-lane road and deposits the pile at a suitable spot nearest to houses the pile is meant for; while the forklift is returning to collect another pile, workers would carry – or trolley, or handcart – individual allocations to their respective houses, then move on to the next pile; ideally, the truck and forklift will both reach the next offload point at the same time – to help achieve this, the forklift and associated workers may need to cover more than one one-lane road in-between offloads, perhaps delivering along the two one-lane roads either side of each offload point). To prevent stopped vehicles from blocking one-lane roads, the start of each pathway could be wide enough to park a single vehicle (such parking-spaces will also enable vehicles, or pedestrians, to give way to other vehicles heading in the opposite direction to themselves – although two or more vehicles are seldom likely to be simultaneously using the same one-lane road, and one-lane roads can be one-way for all vehicles but food delivery forklifts and ambulances). Such a road ought to link the pathways from four rows of houses (i.e., two rows from its left side – with the first row of houses being situated immediately beside it and the second row of houses being situated behind the first row; with houses from the two rows either being situated directly behind each other, meaning that houses in the back row are hidden from the one-lane road, or offset so that every house is visible from the one-lane road – and two rows from its right side) – although the rows, and the one-lane road itself, don't have to be perfectly straight – while the next four rows have pathways leading to a second one-lane road. However, rather than have each pathway lead to just one or two houses, a pathway might run between adjacent one-laned roads – with secondary pathways leading to the eight houses it passes (four on either side of the primary pathway).

Each one-lane road will have to start from and end at a standard road (i.e., a road wide enough to at least fit three vehicles abreast). Such a system of one-lane roads could mean that each suburb only needs to have four standard roads running through residential areas (i.e., a standard road can start out at the centre of a suburb and wind its way around a quarter of the suburb before returning to the centre again – with the start, the end, and perhaps up to three suitably-positioned link roads that allow access between adjacent standard roads, being the only points where the road encounters intersections; one-lane road entrances/exits would only need to resemble traditional driveways). This simplifies the public transport system, but means that residents will have to walk to and from the part of the standard road which is nearest their house in order to catch a bus (three-vehicle-wide roads mean that there is room for two lanes of traffic – one lane travelling in each direction – and, on one side of the road, a lane for vehicles to park and buses to stop so they can collect or drop off passengers) – although, if each one-lane road was no longer than 1km, the maximum distance anyone has to walk is only about 500m (unless they have to walk to a bus shelter because it is raining – shelters ought to only be placed intermittently, such as by every second or third one-lane road entrance). Pathways on hillsides would have to snake their way down to eliminate steps – thereby making them accessible to wheelchairs, etc (although steps could also be provided so able-bodied people have the option of walking straight up and down hillsides rather than having to snake their way up and down them).

The material that pathways and one-lane roads are made out of – or at least their upper surface – should be smooth enough to walk on barefoot while not becoming slippery when wet (and slightly arched to eliminate puddles) or hot in summer, as well as being coloured so as to prevent glare (e.g., brown or grey). The material could even be luminous or, alternatively – and especially if the surfaces are designed to be removable (r:p2294, ln60 + p2520, ln7) – there might be built-in lights that are sensor-activated (so they only work when required). However, lampposts (also sensor-activated) may continue to be the best option. Wherever large pipes are required – especially when they follow the route of a road – they could be built with flat tops suitable for walking on.

Houses won't need letterboxes, but they will still need to be numbered. Each one-lane road could be named after the suburb it is located within, and where it is located, followed by an alphabetic number (e.g., Suburb X-East-One, Suburb Y-West-Two, Suburb Z-South-Twenty-nine) – although there should be no need to put the suburb's name on street-signs identifying one-lane roads. Each house that is adjacent to a one-lane road can use just a proper number, while houses that aren't adjacent to one-lane roads use a proper number plus letter (i.e., houses are numbered 1 and 1a, 3 and 3a, etc., along one side of the road, while the opposite side goes 2 and 2a, 4 and 4a, etc.).

Late-20th century adults are often generalised as being happy to sit in their homes watching their TV ("We'll watch them [entertainers, sportspeople, etc.] rather than go out and have a life of our own" is a statement which typifies such a generalisation). Yet, an adult ought to: have enough imagination to be capable of entertaining itself (indeed, if its imagination is highly-developed, an adult doesn't need to read fiction – i.e., consume hours of its own time to experience another person's imagination); know that if it feels bored, no one but itself is to blame; refrain from idolising entertainers (or even clap/cheer their performances – r:p1646, ln17-22) – or want to get their autograph and other mementos; and primarily regard leisure time as an opportunity to interact with its children (bearing in mind that, as they grow older, children may want to spend an increasing amount of time with friends their own age) or grandchildren – especially to aid their mental or physical development – to further its own development, to simply relax (at home or on a beach), or socialise with other relatives/friends, and to complete household chores (including cooking). If, in addition to its capacity for self-entertainment, an adult has access to a catalogue of movies and TV programmes, music, books, and simple games while at home, local parks (where they can relax or picnic, or exercise their bodies by walking, jogging, etc.) and recreation centres (where they can exercise their bodies by playing sports or borrowing a bike; or watch other people playing sport), and opportunities to visit a variety of scenic locations within its own district, it wouldn't have any need – or even enough spare time – to ever go outside of its district for recreational purposes.

Most public libraries have a travel section, comprising books either about specific destinations or written by travellers recounting their experiences. Furthermore, there are few if any major tourist attractions in the world that haven't been extensively videoed or photographed (Japan's 'Mt Fuji is the most painted and photographed mountain in the world') – either for travel programmes, or by tourists themselves. The existence of such material means that if people are no longer able to travel around the world physically, they can instead do so vicariously (e.g., via the Internet)! However, there is no justification for producing more of these programmes and photographs. In addition, it shouldn't be necessary for members of the public to video or photograph relatives and friends (for most of the history of humanity, the majority of the species' members have coped with using their memory to recall the image of people they know or knew – or majestic scenery – and there is no reason why everyone can't do so again in future; after all, photographs of people generally either pander to their vanity or cause them embarrassment). As with video equipment, existing cameras and related items should be offered to the ministries which need to use them (but the Education Ministry needn't use them to produce class photographs). To encourage members of the public to donate their photographic equipment to relevant ministries, sales of camera film ought to be stopped and public development facilities closed down – although, obviously, HBs who maintain a stash of unexposed film and development equipment will temporarily be able to continue taking private photographs if they want to. Unfortunately for most of the people currently employed (or working freelance) as professional photographers – especially the paparazzi and those who take unsolicited photographs of people at tourist resorts then ask the subjects to buy a copy at exorbitant prices – the lack of skill required for their job (r:p1177, ln15) suggests they might find themselves being re-employed as labourers or in other low-skilled, possibly unpleasant, positions (such as cleaning sewers or public toilets), in a non-economic society (r:p1952, ln570-1)!

Because the Recreation Ministry would have to be responsible for a district's parks – as in *large public gardens* (low-lying areas within cities ought to be turned into parks because it doesn't matter if they occasionally end up under water – r:p2287, ln47), not the spaces where vehicles are kept! – it could be responsible for the management of public toilets (e.g., restocking the toilet-paper, cleaning them – although public toilets can be *self-cleaning*); and also for cleaning drinking-fountains, which, in addition to being placed in parks, should be provided at recreation complexes (along with toilet and showering facilities). However, because maintenance such as plumbing repairs ought to be performed either by the Manufacturing Ministry or Energy Ministry, it might make more sense to have one of these be responsible for managing such facilities (the Manufacturing Ministry, being the producer of toilet-paper and other cleaning products, seems the logical choice – with its workers receiving assistance from Energy Ministry workers when undertaking major plumbing repairs). Furthermore, because it is responsible for handling rubbish, the Manufacturing Ministry may be the employer of street-cleaners – although, if no one dropped litter, street-cleaners will normally only be required to empty strategically-placed public rubbish bins. Yet, if the Recreation Ministry is responsible for the tidiness of parks and sportsgrounds, perhaps its workers can also look after roadside verges (in which case its workers should remove any rubbish – including leaves and other foliage – they find lying on verges, footpaths or roads, and deposit it in the nearest rubbish bin, or deal with it in another suitable manner; and may even collect the contents of public rubbish bins on behalf of the Manufacturing Ministry), plus any land surrounding buildings or facilities used by other ministries – rather than have the other ministries employ groundspeople. In addition, the Recreation Ministry would be responsible for the upkeep of school grounds (excluding school buildings).

If pre-schools and primary schools all have children's playground equipment – such as swings, slides and 'jungle-gyms' – and children are always able to access it, large public gardens shouldn't need to contain playgrounds. However, each district may provide an amusement-park where citizens can ride on Ferris wheels, roller coasters, go roller-skating or skateboarding, skiing on artificial slopes, etc. Incidentally, cemeteries ought to eventually have their plots dug up (and the contents disposed of via a furnace or another suitable method) plus their memorials removed so that the land can be converted into a proper park or for another purpose (e.g., housing).

Another Recreation Ministry responsibility would be wildlife conservation (of flora, fauna and their habitats). As part of this responsibility (which involves the removal of pests), the ministry – in conjunction with the Food Ministry – should aim to eventually eliminate domestic animals from human society (which also means eliminating them from the planet – no great loss as long as distant relatives of a domesticated species still exist in the wild).

The sheep, next to the goat, was the earliest ruminant to be controlled... Today there are about 450 breeds of domestic sheep... There are six species of wild sheep. *Ovis canadensis* is the bighorn of western North America, *O. dalli* is the Dall sheep of north-western Canada and Alaska. In the Old World, *O. ammon*, the argali or Marco Polo sheep, *O. orientalis*, the urial or shapu are found in the U.S.S.R. and south-western Asia, *O. laristan* is confined to southern Iran and *O. musimon*, the mouflon, occurs in Sardinia and Corsica. It is presumed that one or more of the Old World species gave rise to the domestic sheep... There are, however, other theories, one being that domestic sheep are descended from species of wild sheep that have since died out... None of the wild sheep has woolly coats comparable with the domestic sheep. Rather, they have coats of coarse hair ranging in colour from creamy-white to brown. The coat of the wild sheep is, therefore, not unlike that of a goat... Scientifically, it is not easy to sort sheep from goats. The distinguishing features are that the horns of sheep grow to the sides of the head, those of goats curve upwards and backwards and are worn by both sexes... In goats the forehead is convex, not concave as in sheep. There are five species of wild goat, including the ibexes... [-] the name... applied to seven high-mountain forms of wild goat... [-] and the markhor. The wild goat *Capra hircus* from which the domesticated goat was derived, ranges from southeast Europe through Asia Minor to Persia and Pakistan. Domestication can be traced to 6-7 thousand years ago and it may have been earlier... Domestication of the zebu may have been earlier than that of western cattle. The first record was made in 4500 BC... its horns are more upright than those of the aurochs, the wild ancestor of European cattle... The zebu or Brahman cattle originated in southern Asia, possibly in India, but their wild ancestor is unknown... Some scientists claim it was domesticated from the wild gaur... but it differs... in its long slender face and in other features... The gaur is the largest species of wild cattle... one... shot in Burma stood 7 ft high with a girth of 8 1/2 ft... Closely related to the gaur are the banteng and the kouprey... Gaurs are still common in many places and banteng are not rare, but the kouprey is scarce... Some 50 million bison once roamed North America but in 1889 there were 540 left... The two species of bison alive today are the European bison, or wisent, and the American bison, often called incorrectly the buffalo... The buffaloes are a distinctive group of cattle... The two genera of buffaloes are *Syncerus*, the Cape buffalo of Africa... and *Bubalus* the Indian or water buffalo of Asia... There are localised populations of wild Indian buffaloes in Ceylon, Nepal, Assam, Indo-China and Borneo. A smaller species is the tamarau, restricted to the island of Mindoro in the Philippines... The other two Asiatic buffaloes, known as anoas, are found only on the island of Celebes... Th[e giant] forest hog, the largest wild pig in the world, very nearly became extinct before the western world ever knew about it. It was unknown to Europeans until 1904... Since then it has been found on Mount Kenya, in the Aberdare Mountains and in the mountain forests of Uganda and westwards through the Congo to Liberia... Domesticated pigs, or hogs, are derived from two wild species, the European wild boar and the Chinese wild pig. The Indian or crested wild boar may have contributed, but this is doubtful. It is not certain whether these three animals represent three different species or whether they are one species... The tendency today is to accept the latter idea. One reason for the uncertainty is that the wild pigs in question show a great deal of variety. One that probably must be separated from the rest is the pygmy hog of Nepal which is only 1 ft high at the shoulder... Peccaries are the South American equivalent of the Old World wild pigs, which superficially they resemble. They are smaller than the true pigs, however, and differ in other important details so they are placed in a separate family, the *Tayassuidae*... There are two species: the collared peccary... and the white-lipped peccary... Alternative names are musk hog or javelina... The warthog is thought by some to have the most grotesque face of all mammals... Perhaps this extraordinary grotesque head would prove, were we better informed on the habits and behaviour of the warthog, to be the result of a combination of remarkable adaptations to a specialised way of life... The name ass is given to two species of wild horse, *Equus asinus* of North and North-east Africa and *Equus hemionus* of Central Asia... It is doubtful whether there are any truly wild asses at large in Africa. Their numbers have been on the decline for centuries, the North African race becoming extinct in Roman times, and the others have interbred with domestic donkeys that have gone wild. The so-called wild asses found today in Ethiopia are probably derived from donkeys released by the Ethiopians as they retreated in front of the Italians during the last Abyssinian War. The Asiatic wild ass is more numerous and is being protected in several parts of Asia. There are three races of Asiatic ass, which are probably all the same but have been given regional names: they are the Onager of Persia, the Kiang, Kulan or Chigetai of Mongolia and the Ghorkar of north-west India... Early in the historic period [wild horse] numbers were much reduced through their being hunted for their flesh and for domestication. Only two remnants of what must have been big populations of wild horses persisted. One, the tarpan, survived in the Ukraine until 1851. The other is Przewalski's horse, also called the Mongolian wild horse, of Central Asia, which almost became extinct. The domesticated horse must have been from one or both of these, but when and how this happened is unknown... Przewalski's horse was discovered by Nicolai Przewalski, Russian explorer, in 1881... At that time they seemed to have been numerous but numbers decreased in the disturbed times following the Revolution of 1918. It is believed that 40 of them survived this but experts on this horse suggest that even these had been diluted by breeding with domestic horses. Even so, efforts are now being made to protect the surviving stock in the wild and preserve this horse in zoos... Horses readily go feral. This has happened in so many places that it helps us to understand how easily the wild horses surviving after domestication should have become so diluted by crossing with domestic stock... When we say somebody 'keeps chickens' in his backyard, we mean that the person owns domesticated fowls of the kind known scientifically as *Gallus gallus*. This is also the name of the red jungle fowl of southern and south west Asia, from the foothills of the Himalayas to Java. It is from this the domestic fowl is believed to have been bred, although some scientists believe that other wild fowl of the same region may have been involved, and they prefer to call the domestic fowl *Gallus domesticus*... The two species of prairie chicken are grouse that live in eastern and central United States... Prairie dogs are hamster-like, short-tailed ground squirrels that are so named because of their barking calls... They... live in vast 'towns', although these are smaller than they used to be because such large concentrations of animals inevitably came into conflict with [humanity]. In 1901, one town was estimated to cover an area 100 by 240 miles and to contain 400 million prairie dogs. As with other colonial or social animals prairie dogs have a social organisation which... is very complex. A single town is divided into a number of wards, whose boundaries depend largely on the geography of the area. The wards are divided into a number of coterie, each covering less than one acre. The coterie is the base unit on which the prairie dog's life is founded. It is the family unit that defends its territory and individuals rarely venture from it... A typical coterie consists of a [dad, three mums]... and a variable number of young... Perhaps the main advantage of the coterie system is that each group of prairie dogs has sufficient area for feeding, and over-grazing is prevented by not allowing other prairie dogs onto the square. When the population gets too big, some members emigrate to form 'overspill' towns... From a distance a prairie dog town appears pockmarked with craters because each burrow entrance is surrounded by a volcano-like cone. This... serves as a lookout post and a protection against floods... Prairie dogs fall prey to many predators, particularly coyotes... The depredations of so many predators does not affect prairie dog numbers but the prairie dog's use of the grassy plains has led to it being nearly wiped out... [USers] wanted the grasses for [their] livestock, who were also in danger of breaking their legs in prairie dog burrows. Poisoning was so successful that the towns were wiped out and prairie dogs now survive mainly in national parks... Scientifically the coyote is *Canis latrans*, barking dog, so-called because apart from the domestic dog it is the only member of the dog family that habitually barks. Foxes, wolves and jackals only bark at specific times... A half-eaten carcass of a cow or sheep with coyote tracks around it leads to the assumption that coyotes killed it, and revenge is extracted without thought that the animal might have died for some other reason, such as thirst... Coyotes used to live on plains and in woods of the western part of North America, being known as the brush wolf in forested regions and the prairie wolf in open lands. Within the last century their range has increased despite persecution and they are now found from north Alaska to Costa Rica... Even urban development has not deterred coyotes. They have moved into suburbs where, like the red fox in Britain, they can supplement their diet with gleanings from dustbins and other sources. There is a story of a Californian who wondered why his dog was not gaining weight despite being very well fed. [It was] later discovered that a pair of coyotes were stealing its food. One lured the dog away while the other bolted the contents of the feeding bowl... It is usually assumed that, but for its careful preservation by the various 'hunts', the red fox would have become extinct

long ago in the British Isles except in the wildest and most remote corners. For centuries it has been persecuted outside the hunt areas because of its alleged poultry-killing habits and even today the killing of a fox is still looked on with approval. Yet, in spite of all this, the fox has survived and at times is unusually numerous... The red fox ranges over Europe and over Asia as far south as central India, as well as northwest Africa... The North American red fox... is very like the Old World red fox in build and habits. There are several mutants, the cross fox... and the silver fox... The 'blue' fox is a variety of Arctic fox... The Arctic fox is very similar in appearance to the common red fox except that it is a little smaller... Sometimes called the tree fox, the short-legged grey fox is noted for its ability to climb... The difference between the crude climbing of the red fox and the skill of the grey fox can best be illustrated by an accident. A grey fox was found dead in a tree its tail caught by the tip in a forked twig and further held by having passed through a second fork. From the scarring on the bark of the nearby twigs the fox had made desperate efforts to free itself. The important point is that all the twigs around the fox were no more than 3/4 in. thick... Domestic dogs will sometimes climb trees. Those that do this most successfully are the small breeds with short legs... [T]he fennec fox... holds pride of place as the smallest of all foxes, and as the one with the largest ears... The bat-eared or big-eared fox is more like a jackal in appearance than a fox... There are three species of jackal, distinguished by their colouring... The divisions between these is obscured by the existence of many races and subspecies... The jackals are alike in size... they stand about 16 in. at the shoulder... The maned wolf is a South American fox. It looks like a large red fox on stilts because of its long legs... It stands 2 1/2 ft at the shoulder... Besides the maned wolf... South America... [has] the crab-eating fox, the small-eared dog... [- or] Zorro, the Spanish word for fox... which does not seem to be closely related to any other member of the dog family[-] ...and others, of which Azara's dog is one. It looks like a short-legged fox... The raccoon dog is a little smaller than a red fox... It gets its name from the patch of black around and under each eye that resembles the 'robber mask' of the raccoon... Raccoon dogs are native to eastern Asia... and... Japan... The raccoon dog has a valuable pelt and is now rare in Japan because it is hunted both for its skin and flesh. It has, however, been... introduced to... eastern Europe where they are now spreading... The introduction of a carnivore is usually detrimental, as with the mink in Britain, and the red fox in A[US], because they often severely affect the numbers of native animals. [But t]he raccoon dog does not seem to be a serious pest... A century or more ago the thylacine or Tasmanian wolf was being hunted relentlessly. Today expeditions go out in the hope of finding just one alive. The largest carnivorous marsupial, its scientific name means 'pouched dog with wolf head'. It has, however, been given a variety of other names at different times: dogheaded thylacine, tiger pouched wolf, zebra wolf, and even hyena. It is 3 ft long with an 18in. tail, although some reports have given its total length as up to 6 ft... The thylacine seems to have once been numerous over most of the continent of A[US]... The thylacine was probably exterminated on the... mainland through the introduction of the dingo, with which it could not compete. It was still plentiful in Tasmania, however, up to a century ago. As the settlement of the state increased and the thylacine began attacking sheep and poultry, a relentless campaign was launched to exterminate it... It is only recently, when it was seen to be on the brink of extinction, that the thylacine has been protected by law in Tasmania, and reserves are now being set up for it... The dingo is the wild dog of A[US], about the size of a collie... It is popularly supposed that dingoes always have the yellow-brown coat immortalised in the Yellow-dog Dingo of Kipling's Just so Stories, but they vary from light red to brown... Albinos are known... The darker dingoes are often assumed to be the offspring of matings with domestic alsatians, but this is not necessarily so, although dingo x dog crosses are quite common... The most likely explanation of the dingo's presence is that it was brought over in one of the Aborigine invasions from Asia as a domestic dog, and later went wild. The New Guinea singing dog is thought to have had the same origin... The red, or wild, dog of India and southeast Asia is not a true dog although it resembles village or pi-dogs, with which it is sometimes confused in reports... Like Cape hunting dogs to which they are related, dholes hunt in packs remorselessly running down their quarry... A widespread story in Asia is that a pack will urinate on some bushes in a selected part of a wood, then drive their prey through them. As the prey crashes through the bushes, it is blinded by the acid fumes given off by the urine and set upon by the dholes before its eyes have a chance to clear. Another version of the story is that the dholes spray urine straight into the eyes of their prey by flipping their tails... The story of the dhole's chemical warfare may perhaps have started as an observation of their marking bushes in the same manner as domestic dogs... The bushdog... is a South American member of the dog family, only distantly related to the domestic dog but behaving very like it when tamed... [T]he Cape hunting dog, or African wild dog... is a ferocious carnivore [which also is] only distantly related to the domestic dog. Unlike true dogs, foxes, wolves and jackals[, it]... has only four toes on the front foot, that is, the dew claws are missing... Today, there are two distinct species of wolf, the grey or timber wolf which is still found in the wilder parts of northern Europe[('it has been extinct in Britain since the 1740s')], Asia and North America and the red wolf which is restricted to the south-central U[S]. There are numerous local races, however, differing in size and colour... From the many races of wolf, the Indian wolf has been selected by some students as the probable forerunner of the domestic dog... but modern opinion favours an extinct wild dog... There... is a real fear that... wolves may soon become extinct... One way they are hunted is on horseback, with a lasso. The wolf is vulnerable to this because, having... no natural enemies... it merely runs for a while then stops and looks around. The idea of continuous flight seems to be absent from its makeup, so it fails to make the use of its speed, which is said to be greater than that of any other member of the dog family, and comparable to that of the cheetah in the cat family... The wild cat of Europe and Asia resembles the domesticated tabby but is more heavily built... The wild cat is one of the fiercest and most destructive of the cat family and when hard-pressed its strength and ferocity are remarkable. Some so-called wild cats are feral domesticated cats and although these do not attack human beings they will fight capture as furiously as the true wild cat... [I]t is indeed remarkable that the cat was domesticated in the first place... A typical... domestic cat is about 2 1/2 ft long, including a 9 in. tapering tail which, unlike that of the wild cat, is held horizontal when walking... The most common, the tabby, is of two kinds. One has narrow vertical stripes on the body, similar to those of the bush cat and European wild cat. The other is nearly the same colour, but consists of broad, mainly longitudinal dark lines and blotches on a light ground. In extreme cases, the dark markings are relatively few, strongly drawn, and stand out conspicuously against the lighter background. Such cats are recurrent mutants that parallel the king cheetah... The cheetah is one of the 'big cats'... The big cats hold their feet out in front of them when crouched, like Landseer's lions in Trafalgar Square, while the small cats tuck their feet in, like a domestic cat... Lion's were once common throughout southern Europe and southern Asia eastwards to northern and central India and over the whole of Africa... Lions have been wiped out in northern Africa and in southern Africa, outside the Kruger Park... By 1884 the only lions left in India were in the Gir forest where only a dozen were left... Since the beginning of th[e 20th] century the Gir lions have been protected and a... census taken in 1968... puts the figure at about 170... The total length of a lion may be up to 9 ft of which 3 ft is tail, the height at the shoulder is 3 1/2 ft and the weight up to 550 lb. The lioness is smaller... [T]he tiger... averages... 9 ft 3 in. in length including a 3 ft tail. It stands 3 ft at the shoulder and weighs 400-500 lb... The various races of tiger vary considerably in size from the small Bali Island tiger to the outsized tiger found in Manchuria which may reach 12 ft in total length... From its original home in Siberia, the tiger spread across almost the whole of Eurasia during the Ice Ages. Today it is found only in Asia... Tigers have a respect and fear for [humans] which is difficult to explain. Even if harassed by curious humans... a tiger will not normally react until its patience is well-nigh exhausted. Normally a [hu]man can walk in a tiger's habitat without fear or hindrance and there have been several instances of a tiger approaching a [hu]man while sitting quietly near his camp and passing by, doing no harm even though it was obvious that it had seen him. [People] have been followed for many miles by tigers and have come to no harm; they were probably being escorted off the territory. It is only when its normal hunting routine is disturbed that it becomes really dangerous... especially when shot at indiscriminately, incapacitating it rather than killing it. A wounded tiger left to its fate, without the strength to hunt, will resort to [hu]man-eating or cattle killing, out of necessity, as it will when injured by natural mishap... Old age may also cause a tiger to attack cattle or humans... One of the most beautiful members of the cat family, [is] the ocelot... The name 'ocelot' is from a Mexican word tlalocelotl, meaning field-tiger... The margay cat, which is about the size of a domestic cat... is closely related to the ocelot... Although a member of the cat family the jaguarundi is more like a large

weasel in shape and habits... Jaguarundis [inhabit]... the southern border of the U[S] southwards to northern Argentina... [The jaguar] is the largest of the American cats and is known as el tigre in South America. The jaguar is no longer than a leopard but is more heavily built... The size of the leopard... varies from one part of its range to another, the range being southern Asia and much of Africa... The panther is a black or melanistic variety of the leopard... Probably no other animal has received so many common names... [than the one] known in Britain as the puma and in the U[S] and Canada as the cougar... [A]nother... is the mountain lion, which gives a clue to the appearance of the puma. It looks like a lioness... Although there is only one species, 30 subspecies have been named, based on differences in size and colour... The puma is known for its remarkable strength and stamina. It will cover up to 20 ft in one bound... can leap upwards to a height of 15 ft and has been known to drop to the ground from a height of 60 ft. Like many other members of the cat family, the puma leads a solitary life keeping very much out of sight... Although there are other cats, the puma or lynx for instance, in the U[S], the... wildcat of America... is... the bobcat[– which is] much smaller and is comparable with the European wildcat... The name bobcat is linked with the short tail, [but it]... stands somewhat apart from the other... bobtailed members of the cat family[– the lynxes]... The original animal to be given this name, now distinguished as the European lynx... has a relatively short body, tufted ears and cheek ruffs... Closely related to it is the Spanish lynx, which is smaller... The Canadian lynx is larger... Also known as the desert lynx, the caracal is regarded by some zoologists as akin to the serval, one of the medium-sized cats... Although it used to be classified as a distinct species, the servaline cat... is now known to represent only a second colour phase of the serval... The serval is hunted for its skin, used in making the mantles worn by the chiefs and high officials of some of the African tribes. Apart from [those people] it probably has few enemies.

Ideally, farm animals would be allowed to live out the remainder of their lives in peace on land that is unsuitable for growing crops (domesticated animals should only be released into the wild if the survival of their wild cousins is threatened, the domesticated and wild genes can be mixed, and in numbers that won't create a population explosion). However, farm animals can't be left in peace – because the sexes have to be kept separate (at least during breeding seasons; unless they are able to be sterilised via their feed or some other simple solution) so the population isn't maintained or increased; fences have to be well maintained to prevent the animals from invading urban or wild areas; plus their health, and access to adequate supplies of feed and water, has to be checked. Furthermore, if the aim is to eliminate domestic animals from the planet, it isn't logical to put their needs ahead of those of starving people – after all, even if all of the grazing land could immediately be converted into crops and everyone instantly converted to veganism, there is the issue of how to feed people until those crops can be harvested. One option is to increase the volume of fish harvested from the oceans (r:p2088, ln69) – but, because many stocks are already threatened by overfishing, increasing the volume might not be viable; indeed, it may be necessary to reduce the volume. Therefore, the number of farm animals might have to be reduced gradually.

The Food Ministry should concentrate as many farm animals as possible on hilly pastures, orchards and within plantation forests. The excess – preferably made up of older animals – ought to be humanely slaughtered (rather than be kept on land which is suitable for growing crops) and used to feed members of threatened carnivore species that are being kept in zoos (until they, or their offspring can be released back into the wild – after which time zoos would become extinct instead), pets (although dog-food can be mostly vegan – r:p2086, lns61-2 – while cat-food could have an increased fish content) and HBs. If the initial cull produces more meat than is immediately required, any leftovers will need to be frozen or processed (e.g., tinned – especially as petfood).

The activities of organisations such as the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, pet shops and veterinarians (including those who work with farm animals) should all be condensed under the management of the Recreation Ministry – then be focused on trying to prevent existing pets from breeding; from causing problems (e.g., attacking other animals or people); and being mistreated (the Northlander who 'drove past the local SPCA office on his way to the bridge from which it threw a bitch and her puppies – the bitch and one puppy were saved by witnesses – will be prosecuted'; but no one witnessed pups being thrown into a Bay of Plenty river, some of whom were saved by a teenager; or saw the 'coward who dumped a litter of 12 10-day-old pups in a rubbish bag in a Te Atatu South reserve' – thankfully, 'most of the crossbreeds have now found homes'). Citizens could be obliged to register their pet(s) in order to gain access to society-produced supplies of petfood (production volumes of which can be calculated via the register). Owners of neutered pets might receive their allocation of petfood for free (and neutering, as well as any other veterinary work, be performed for free) – dependant on how many animals an owner has – although petfood would have to be provided for free to owners once money has been eliminated from society (however, if everyone co-operates in the effort to prevent further breeding, the existing generation of pets will be the last – i.e., their extinction may occur before money's; and roughly coincide with the death of the last farm animal – after which society won't need to train any more specialist veterinarians).

In the event that a pet does produce a litter, the Recreation Ministry ought to be responsible for placing the weaned offspring in suitable homes. The same goes for captured strays. Unwanted or uncontrollable pets and strays shouldn't be kept alive – unless society is able to produce an excess of petfood, and an excess of workers to care for them at a suitable facility. Assuming that this isn't a viable option, their carcasses – excluding those of animals which were afflicted with certain diseases – can be turned into food for HBs and other carnivorous animals (including household pets). *Unwanted* would need to include animals which may be wanted by owners but not by local authorities (e.g., mustelids within NZ). Rather than return these animals, and other humanely captured pests (such as NZ's possums), to their closest natural habitat, their carcasses could also be used as a food source – at least for pets or zoo animals. Furthermore, having slaughtered any animals, it makes sense to use their pelts to produce clothing or other products, and utilise as many remaining body parts as is possible. However, it doesn't make sense to continue trying to control pest populations ad infinitum – therefore, while the existence of deprived peoples is the paramount concern of society, efforts to keep pest populations in check should be maintained at present levels; and efforts to completely eradicate pest species be activated once essential resources and services are available in sufficient quantities.

There may be some instances where, instead of slaughtering them, a group of animals which have been designated as pests in one part of the world are transferred to another part. An example of this already mentioned is the transfer of certain wallaby species from NZ back to AUS (r:p2473, ln49) – although, since being 'reintroduced into SA's Innes National Park, 4 of 10 tiny tamar wallabies have been killed by foxes'. Similar – but better-planned – schemes could be put in place for the wild horse populations of NZ and AUS (which is estimated to 'now have more wild horses than any other continent'). Both of these wild horse populations (and AUS's wild camel population, perhaps), should eventually be removed from these lands – where their continued freedom threatens the environment. One solution might be to capture Kaimanawas and Brumbies one family unit at a time, then transport the unit to a part of the world which has supported large wild horse populations for millennia – especially those that no longer do but could again (e.g., Central Asia).

NZ already has a number of reserves for native flora and fauna which are surrounded by fences designed to prevent pests – especially predatory animals – from gaining entry (in addition to this specialist fencing, 'it's estimated there are between 10,000km and 12,000km of [standard] DoC fences in the North Island' alone). The 7km of fencing at the Karori Reserve near Wellington 'is curved at the top to stop climbing animals going over it, has small enough mesh to stop little animals (even baby mice) getting through it, and more mesh at the bottom to stop digging animals' getting under it. The Manufacturing Ministry ought to continue making more of this type of fencing (or, alternatively, translucent plastic panels whose surfaces are too smooth to be climbed) so the Recreation Ministry can continue to create these reserves or extend existing ones.

Wherever suitable, the Recreation Ministry should enclose an area of land with such fencing, eliminate every unwanted plant and animal from within, then replace them with native species (bush or forest regeneration may have to occur before some or any native animals are released). In the meantime, work can commence on a second fence – which will eventually enclose a larger area of land, with the first area approximately at its centre. Once the second fence has been completed and the first area of land cleared of pests, work to eliminate pests from the land between the first and second fences would commence, and on building a third fence – which encloses the second fence plus more land. After the third fence is completed, work on clearing pests from

the newly enclosed area of land commences, as well as work on a fourth fence. When every pest has been eliminated from the land between the first and second fences, the first fence can be removed (and used to help complete the fourth fence). The clearing left by the first fence could be maintained as a scenic road or walkway, or be planted with seedlings to remove all trace of its existence (along with any other evidence of human habitation). The second fence may be ready for removal while a fifth fence is being completed. Eventually, scenarios would arise where two reserves end up sharing the same outer fence – until some or all of that fence is removed, thereby turning the two reserves into one; or where a fence reaches the outer limits of a city's farmland. The Recreation Ministry continues this process until, for example, it has eliminated every animal and plant pest from NZ (a process that could take decades, if not centuries), by which time the remaining fences can be removed – and taken to be used in another part of the world, perhaps – with the exception of those which surround cities and their farmland. Those ought to be kept in place to prevent wild animals (with the obvious exception of non-flightless birds) from getting into farmland and urban areas (note that once such a fence is in place, there would be no need for any other kind of fencing – except, perhaps, to create windbreaks – within farmland areas). By the way, if plantation wood-pulp continues to be used by society in future, harvesting of trees – via helicopters (to minimise damage to other trees) – should cease during nesting season (loggers could cut down more trees than processing facilities are able to handle, thereby building up a backlog for the facilities to process during nesting season – at which time the loggers would perform other forestry work, such as replanting and pruning, or use up some or all of their holidays).

Where two or more cities share a mutual rural boundary (as might be the case in NZ if districts are based on the cities of Auckland and Hamilton), there would be no need for any fencing along that boundary – instead, one fence will effectively surround the two cities (although, using the example of Auckland, there may be breaks in the fence where it reaches a river or harbour's edge then recommences on the opposite side of the water). Some parts of the world (e.g., south Britain) could continue to be so overpopulated that there is no room for any wildlife areas between a number of neighbouring districts – and, therefore, no need for any fencing between them – or there are only a few small, fenced-off wildlife reserves surrounded by the rural boundaries of three or more districts (efforts can, however, be made to develop corridors that link small reserves – much like a 'group of billionaires are trying to do in North and South America to recreate former migration trails' – thereby also helping to prevent wildlife populations from becoming inbred). In other parts of the world (e.g., most of Africa), fences should only need to be built around areas of land which have been designated for cities and their surrounding farmland – which means wild herds ought to be able to follow traditional migratory trails undisturbed by humans (albeit with the occasional detour around a fenceline).

Such fences should mean that people living in Africa, for example, are going to be safe from potentially dangerous wild animals if they remain inside their city's boundary (although, where elephants and other large animals roam, the fences might need to be stronger than elsewhere – but sheltering the fence with rows of large trees may be an easier solution, as long as firebreaks are created between the trees and fence to prevent wildfires threatening farmland and urban areas, which would also mean that the trees are too far from the fence to ever fall on it or enable animals to leap over it; alternatively, fences in African and Asian states could be fitted with sensors at strategic places to ward off any large animals that during periods of drought might individually or collectively try to knock such fences over). There would, however, need to be occasional exits in the fence (preferably utilising a prison-like double-gate system to prevent wild animals from entering farmland and urban areas while citizens or vehicles are using an exit – although, sensors could again be used to set off a horn or other noise capable of scaring off wild animals that enter the vicinity of such exits; if railway lines aren't enclosed – r:p2348, lns30-1 – an extended double-gate system can also be used wherever they dissect a fenceline).

Buses can go through these exits to take citizens on scenic tours. Bikers and hikers and campers will also be able to use such exits – although, if the wildlife area contains potentially dangerous animals ('a stroll in the British countryside isn't what it used to be – a panther is thought to have recently attacked an 11-year-old boy near Monmouth; from panthers to pythons, a menagerie of beasts more often associated with jungle expeditions than weekend rambles is populating Britain's fields and woodlands; the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals accepts the possibility of big cats on the loose, especially after a former lion tamer confessed in a BBC documentary to releasing a panther and a cougar near Sheffield in the 1970s; "Panther Watch" has logged over 100 sightings this year, and believes the cats are descended from animals released into the wild around the time of the introduction of the Dangerous Animals Act in 1976 by owners fearful of the consequences of being discovered'), they ought to notify the relevant authorities and carry some form of protection (such as a fog-horn – which may be safer for the biker or hiker to use than a gun, and definitely safer for the wild animals! – plus some kind of transmitter, or other means of raising an alarm if they get into difficulty) – either provided by the Recreation Ministry via suburban recreation centres or stored beside fence exits. Manufacturing Ministry vehicles might have to use fence exits to access any quarries that are located outside of a city's urban or farmland area (in which case an animal-proof fence should be constructed around the quarry) – although the quarry could be linked to the city by railway. However, the long-term use of quarries would be unnecessary if a time comes when all of the products humans use are able to be sourced from plants.

Wherever possible, the Recreation Ministry should aim to restore any environments altered by humanity for farming, forestry, mining, etc., which society no longer needs to use. That ought to be largely possible in places like NZ (the 'Department of Conservation has been sending teams of workers to the Kermadec Islands to remove every plant that isn't native in an effort to return the islands to their original state'), but may be impossible in areas where humanity has existed for thousands of years – even if the land's original state is known. If a *balance of nature* can be resumed in wildlife habitats, human society won't need to continue devoting resources to achieving that balance. However, in some instances it might be necessary for a state to monitor wildlife habitats, and periodically intervene to curtail population explosions by certain animal species, *ad infinitum*. One instance could be North American bison – although North America's big cats and wolf packs should eventually be capable of keeping the bison and other herd species in check. Furthermore, cities like Auckland – where ducks seem to be capable of producing at least two broods of offspring per year – would become overrun with ducks once cats and dogs have been eliminated, the number of vehicles using roads has been reduced and street drains have received duckling-proof grates, if control measures aren't initiated (alternatively, Auckland could become overrun with eels). In addition, it might not be possible to fully eliminate some types of pests – especially insect species (although future technology may be of assistance – e.g., if it becomes possible to produce a tiny transmitter which can be stuck to the back of trapped wasps, thereby enabling the wasps to be tracked back to their nest, NZ could eventually eliminate its alien wasp problems; alternatively, alien wasp nests might be tracked by heat-seeking devices).

It will be much more difficult to restore aquatic environments, but serious efforts should also be made to remove pest seaweeds, starfish, etc., from coastal waters (and, ideally, eventually try to find and recover containers or other lost cargo from the oceans and seafloor – plus any hazardous chemicals at risk of escaping from shipwrecks, or even the wrecks themselves).

If the Recreation Ministry uses video cameras to film its conservation activities (e.g., to provide a record of what they are doing for future reference; to use as a training aid), such footage could be edited to produce up-to-date nature documentaries – in which case the ministry will not only need to employ video operators but video editors. Incidentally, the Recreation Ministry can be used as a means of providing employment to people who are in between jobs (e.g., people who perform seasonal work; people who have completed a training course and are awaiting permanent placement; people who are excess to requirements for other reasons) – because much of its work isn't essential or particularly skilful. The Recreation Ministry will still need to employ full-time crews (e.g., to keep urban areas mown and tidy; to perform conservation work) – but their numbers would be bolstered by temporary assistants whenever such are available (therefore crews should concentrate on completing their core tasks when the number of temporary assistants is low, tackle less pressing tasks when the number of temporary assistants is high). Obviously, there are going to be opportunities for talented sportspeople to apply their skills fulltime by working at suburban recreation centres. However, the skills of the most athletic members of society might be best employed by the ministry that provides emergency services (e.g., firefighters) and 'a civil force responsible for maintaining public order'.

FENCE

All the injustices and cruelties customary in present-day life have become habitual only because there are [people] always ready to carry out these injustices and cruelties. If it were not for them there would not only be no one to wreck violence on those immense masses of oppressed people, but those who issue the orders would never venture to do so, and would not even dare to dream of the sentences they now confidently pass. Were it not for these [people] ready to torture or kill anyone they are commanded to, no one would dare to claim what is confidently claimed by all the non-working landowners, namely that land surrounded by [workers] who are suffering for lack of land, is the property of a[n individual] who does not work on it, or that stores of grain collected by trickery ought to be preserved untouched in the midst of a population dying of hunger, because the merchant wants to make a profit. But for the existence of these people, ready at the will of authorities to torture and kill anyone they are told to, it could never enter the head of a landowner to deprive the peasants of a wood they had grown, or of the officials to consider it proper to receive salaries taken from the famishing people for oppressing them, not to mention executing, imprisoning, or evicting people for exposing falsehood and preaching the truth... A French writer, Alphonse Karr, now forgotten, when arguing the impossibility of doing away with capital punishment, said somewhere: *‘Que messieurs les assassins commencent par nous donner l’exemple!’* and I have often heard that *bon mot* repeated by [those] who thought it a worthy and convincing argument against the abolition of capital punishment. Yet nothing expresses more clearly than that epigram the error in the argument of those who consider it impossible for governments to abandon the use of violence as long as there are still [people] ready to employ it. The advocates of governmental violence say: ‘Let the murderers set us the example of abandoning killing, and then we too will give it up’; but the murderers say the same, only with much better right. They say: ‘Let those who have undertaken to teach us and guide us, set us an example by ceasing to kill people and then we will imitate them.’ And they say this not in jest but in earnest, for that is actually the state of the case. ‘We cannot give up the use of violence because we are surrounded by violent [people].’ ...Tolstoy saw more vividly than any writer of his time the immense evils of organized government. An English or West-European reader of course feels that Tolstoy’s denunciations are overstrained because when [Tolstoy] speaks of governments [Tolstoy] thinks chiefly of the Russian. Yet if [Tolstoy] had lived on to see the governments of Europe, as they now are, with the poison of war still coursing in their veins, [Tolstoy] would not have found much to alter in his language. The supposed ‘principles’ on which most of them are based are exactly described by Tolstoy, as ‘immoral off-hand jottings of utterly baseless thoughts’. And it seems to me no exaggeration but strictly accurate language to say that they are at the present moment engaged in ‘deliberately stupefying [their guy population] in order to make them fit instruments for murder’ – or at least, if ‘murder’ is a question-begging word, let us say ‘for the killing of the innocent’. The evidence is not only in the propaganda of various perverted Nazis and Fascists; the average English[guy] who attends an Air Pageant does as a rule feel himself thrilled, bewitched or, as Tolstoy puts it, ‘stupefied’ till it seems a splendid and heroic thing to make war from the air, not a monstrous and diabolical thing, as it really is. And the Government, lest there should be any doubts about its purpose, sends special invitations and free admissions to boys’ schools. They will be easiest to ‘stupefy’ if we catch them young, and they will be ready when wanted to do the killing. And this, one may fairly reason, is not because ours is a bad or tyrannical government, or a government that wants war. Quite the reverse. It is, as such things go, a very good government; but it is a... great Killing Machine surrounded by other Killing Machines, and it must act according to its nature. It dare not face the risk of its little boys growing up to believe in... humane principles while those of its possible enemies are properly ‘stupefied’. And that they certainly are. Never has there been such a terrific propaganda of evil doctrine as during the last few years, and the doctrine is precisely that mad worship of the State which Tolstoy so consistently denounced... Relieved of the checks and oppositions which control... patriotism... in a sane society, it swells into a megalomania which demands more and more... ‘All power corrupts’, as Lord Aston said, ‘and absolute power corrupts absolutely.’ ...War insists on absolute command, and cares nothing for right or wrong... - 1935

I imagine that a device that identifies and locates a... person with certainty – an “anklet” or its equivalent – will be introduced first for reasons of convenience in communications... Certainly, many people would find it attractive to be able to receive a telephone call anywhere, rather than having to hover around a particular phone booth... The extension of an identification system to crime prevention will be far more controversial, because it will necessarily require some loss of privacy. In... nations where human rights are protected, participation in a system of identification and location will presumably occur only on the basis of individual free choice. In that case, it is inevitable... enclaves will develop that are barred to persons who refuse to submit to identification. Is that bad or good? The debate over that issue will surely be hot and... continue for a long time. To state only the positive points, an accurate record of individual positions will be an effective deterrent to... crime in any enclave where such records are required of all who enter. For all crimes from mugging to vandalism, both the accurate identification of the criminal and his tracking and arrest would be quick and sure, and it would be far more difficult for him to avoid punishment than it is now. Technically, it would be easy to add to such a system a feature that would allow anyone in a threatening situation to call for help. Given the capabilities of the system for identification and location, that simple appeal would be enough to provide local police with instant and accurate knowledge of where the threat was occurring and who other than the victim was on the scene. That would make it possible to prevent, instead of merely punishing, most... crimes. What would it be worth in loss of privacy to know that one’s child could walk any street, day or night, and be safe from molestation, even in a world where a potential deliberate murderer could move thousands of miles in a single hour? ...A good deal, I suspect, and the proliferation of home burglar-protection monitors, the rapid growth of enclosed patrolled shopping malls and of planned communities entered only through gates, all suggest that a century from now most people... will be settled in enclaves where security is assured and from which weapons will be excluded. - 1981

[In *the words of Gandhi*... “Liberty never meant the license to do anything at will.” - 1982

In a game of deadly threats played by resolute [participants], the more amoral or ruthless side is bound to prevail and nuclear weapons and other genocidal devices are ultimately unsuitable for the defence of liberty. And if nuclear threats, unmitigated by moral factors or political dissent, are allowed to determine the political shape of the world we must prepare to live, if at all, under a ruthless global empire. Whether it is obtained by war, by political conquest, by Super Powers uniting ‘to keep the peace’, or by well-intended efforts to give military supremacy to the U[N], that is the most likely outcome. The empire will be obliged to employ totalitarian methods to ensure that no rebels can hope to make or steal nuclear weapons for themselves. So... we shall survive only at the expense of freedom. If we hastily switch to negotiated comprehensive disarmament, we might expect to scrape through with both lives and liberty intact. The improbability of such a profound change of heart on all sides, least of all among those who might expect to rule the world, suggests that our creative, freedom-loving civilization is doomed, one way or another... [In 1822

Lord Byron, much taken with thoughts of catastrophe, asked: "Who knows whether, when a comet shall approach this globe to destroy it human beings will not hurl mountains, as the giants are said to have done, against the flaming mass?" We know.] A growing awareness that the inner Solar System is littered with substantial objects that cross the Earth's orbit and sometimes hit our planet prompts thoughts about an *Anti-Comet Battery*. The chances of a formidable space collision in, say, the next thousand years are better than two hundred to one against and we should wish that nuclear war were as improbable as that. But the very small piece of Comet Encke that hit the Earth in 1908 was equivalent to a fairly large H-bomb and had it fallen on a city rather than the remote Tunguska valley of Siberia it would have killed many people. An entire comet colliding with the Earth can release energy equivalent to about a million megatons of explosive... In keeping with our new perception of our place in the cosmos and amid life on Earth, the management of comets and... Apollo (Earth-crossing)... objects to avert these rare but dreadful catastrophes has become a matter of small-scale study, notably in Project Icarus at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Large H-bombs carried by rocket can in principle deflect and perhaps disrupt an oncoming object and so 'save the Earth'. My nominal Anti-Comet Battery consists of perhaps a hundred missiles with H-bomb warheads... stationed in high orbits around the Earth, ready to be launched on command to deal with any inanimate cosmic intruder that is liable to cause death and damage on the Earth. But this is only the 'sharp end' of a much larger ground-based and space-based astronomical militia. Because the objects are difficult to spot, and even quite small meteorites might be regarded as suitable targets, there is no limit to the amount of effort that could be devoted to this task. The obvious risk of the Battery being subverted by someone wanting to dominate the Earth from space can be weighed against the benefit of channelling into benign purposes the military urges of the human [being]... For the precedents of this kind of activity one thinks of fire-fighting and lifeboats and especially medicine. - 1983

Believing that every object and every event in the universe is arranged and directed by an Omnipotent Contriver, we must admit that when the [Contriver] formed the wondrous plan of creation, 'foreseeing the end from the beginning', [the Contriver] arranged the periods and the velocities of comets in such a manner that, although occasionally crossing the planetary orbits, they should not pass these orbits at the time when the planets were in their immediate vicinity. And should such an event ever occur, we may rest assured that it is in perfect accordance with the plan and the will of Omnipotence, and that it is, on the whole, subservient to the happiness and order of the intelligent universe, and the ends intended by the Divine government... It seems likely that had not a comet or asteroid hit the Earth 65 million years ago (or subsequently), the dinosaurs would still be here, and we would not. We would be merely one of a countless number of unrealized possibilities in the genes and chromosomes of the other beings of Earth – as we can be again if we are not very careful... Fortunately, we are today midway between mass extinctions. The next bombardment is not scheduled, if the periodicity is correctly determined, for another 15 million years. Our job is to avoid becoming one of the background extinctions; in 15 million years, we may be ready for the comets... The idea that humans should be able to do something about a comet on collision trajectory with the Earth has many antecedents in science fiction, as does the notion of capturing an asteroid or a comet and employing it for human benefit... Since the platinum group of metals... is relatively more abundant in asteroids (and probably comets) than on the Earth, there may be real economic motivations for mining small bodies that come close to the Earth... Every 10,000 years or so, a comet or asteroid that is around a hundred metres across strikes the Earth... An asteroid 100 metres across has a mass of a million tons. There are some 100,000 of them in the vicinity of the Earth... [M]ost... will be ejected from the solar system anyway, if they do not first collide with the planets or disintegrate... so there is certain justification here... for the admonition, 'Use 'em or lose 'em'... A rocket motor is towed to the asteroid, attached to it, ignited, and used to change its trajectory. Perhaps use will be made of the gravity of the Moon... to bring it to a convenient orbit about the Earth; there, it would be dismantled, and great cargo ships would carry the valuable metals to the Earth. From a purely economic standpoint, [however,] the question is whether the [resources] spent to capture, dismantle, and transport asteroidal material to Earth would be better spent on extracting ores already on Earth... Where the... benefit of space mining becomes most apparent is in building large structures in the Earth's orbit. Such constructions might have other justifications: the manufacture of pharmaceuticals and exotic alloys, for example, for scientific investigations... and even – if we are so foolish as to permit it to happen – for the introduction of weapons systems into space. - 1985

It has been estimated that 80[%] of science graduates enter defence-related industries, which consume enormous quantities of raw materials, energy, space and... divert human capacities... At present, at the top of each nuclear state a few people have the power to decide about the life and death of the human and other species. Peace cannot be just the absence of war. We must rethink our attitudes and values. Peace requires... cooperation, mutual support and the free exchange of information. It means material security for all the world's people, regardless of sex, colour or age. It means realizing that we are all one... Any defence that does not promote trust and security is increasing, rather than reducing, the risk of war. Disarmament must be an intrinsic part of a world-wide movement towards a sustainable economic, social and political order.

...The notions of national security and defence lie at the very basis of... the nation-state. As [one writer] foresaw as early as 1957 in *The Breakdown of Nations*... the current nation-states are no longer effective units of governance, being too big for the problems of their local populations and, at the same time, confined by concepts too narrow for the problems of global interdependence... The only industrial planning in th[e US] at the national level, so conversion specialists... [(who) discuss switching from the production of weapons to that of products such as light-rail vehicles... and alternative energy systems[)]... maintain, is strictly defence planning... National-security imperatives render heads of state powerless to reorder their priorities towards an emphasis on human needs and development and, paradoxically, make them unable to resolve even the urgent problem of human survival... Replacing the notion of national security with that of global security would make resources and talents now consumed by national-security goals available for resolving local and regional problems. To realize the liberating power of such a shift of emphasis, we have only to remind ourselves that today nearly half of the world's scientists and engineers work for the military-industrial complex. - 1990

Up to 25,000 workers from France's state-owned armaments industries staged a noisy but peaceful march through central Paris yesterday to protest against Government plans to close factories... Meanwhile... a large asteroid – capable of causing widespread devastation and death – barely missed the Earth. This sobering incident convinced many Americans of the need to develop a contingency plan so that the next time the human race is threatened by a disaster of this magnitude, we can sue.

...Scientists are to discuss the threat posed by an asteroid hitting the Earth, amid claims the British Government is not awake to the risk and does not support an A[US]n early warning project. Experts believe the chances of being killed by an asteroid impact is four times higher than that of dying in a plane crash... Scientists are taking the danger seriously, and have set up observation teams to watch for Near Earth Asteroids (NEAs). But the early warning post set up in 1990 to cover the Southern Hemisphere, the Anglo-A[US]n Near Earth Asteroid Survey, is now under threat because its funding runs out at the end of the year... [The manager] who runs the observatory at Siding Spring in A[US], said no new funding has been offered by the British side of the partnership. Scientists will meet at the London headquarters of the British National Space Centre today to discuss the problem and the role Britain should be playing. [The manager] said the British Government was "working from a position of profound ignorance" and did not understand the danger... "The probability of an asteroid... impact is small, but the consequences are horrendous. People like to imagine that there are battalions of astronomers scouring the skies – there aren't. If a half-mile asteroid is due to hit us next week, you can expect six seconds' warning... By the time you've turned to look at it, it will have struck the ground... Then it's goodbye." ...[the] leader of

America's Spacewatch programme which is tracking NEAs in the northern sky, had also identified the closure of the A[US]n project as a major backward step, and... the father of the hydrogen bomb, had written to the [PM]s of Britain and A[US] expressing concern over the lack of action.

...In 1994 there was heavy media coverage when Jupiter was struck by some twenty kilometre-sized fragments of comet Shoemaker-Levy 9... Less well-known is that Howard-Koomen-Michels 1979XI, a comet whose head was larger than the Earth, hit the sun in 1979, while in late 2126 the comet Swift-Tuttle, a trillion tons of ice and rock moving at some sixty-five kilometres a second, will (if present calculations are right) cross Earth's orbit at a point from which Earth itself is only two weeks distant... Every year there are approaching twenty atmospheric impacts in the 1-kiloton range. In 1994 a 100-kiloton blast filled the skies near the Pacific island of Tokelau. In 1937 an asteroid almost 2 km wide crossed Earth's orbit, missing Earth itself by about six hours. In 1989 there was another six-hour miss, although in this case the object was only 1 km across. Glassy spherules suggest four impacts of bodies weighing about fifty billion tons over the last thirty-five million years, the latest taking place about a million years ago. A Spacewatch Workshop sponsored by NASA in 1980 concluded that a 'civilization-destroying' comet or asteroid strike, meaning one in which at least 10[%] of the world's population perished, could well have a 1 in 300,000 chance of happening in any given year: the participants felt confident only in saying that the figure should fall somewhere in the range from 1 in 1,000,000 to 1 in 10,000... [T]he less alarming 'best guess' figure of 1 in 300,000 would mean that one's risk of experiencing it would be something like a sixtieth as great as that of dying in an automobile accident. Might it be worth trying to deduce the risk? *The Economist* of 11 September 1993, working with the fairly conservative estimate that the annual risk of a person's dying through an impact was one in two million, pointed out that for Americans this was higher than the risk of death from any other type of natural disaster. Given, it continued, that the British government thought it worth \$1.2 million to save a single life through increased road safety, one might expect the... world to pay \$470 million a year to avert impacts. Working over twenty-five years, a set of electronic detectors and a few dedicated telescopes could discover 90[%] of threatening objects with widths above one kilometre, the program costing only \$50 million at the start and then \$10 million annually. If the telescopes detected a disastrously large object on a collision course, people might then be willing to spend much bigger sums on preventing the collision. An Interceptor Committee formed by NASA in 1991 had suggested changing such an object's trajectory with... warheads... in the million-megaton range – roughly ten thousand times as powerful as the present-day H-bombs. All this had made many people think that the defensive system, since they might fall into the wrong hands, could be more dangerous than the comets and asteroids themselves. Luckily, accurate tracking could reduce the need for huge energies: given a decade's warning, even a one-megaton explosion might be enough to divert a body one kilometre wide... [E]xperts have suggested that heating by lasers... would [also] produce the necessary change of direction. Another possibility would be to store up enough to allow people to survive until agriculture could recover from the effects of a large impact... [T]he Swiss 'have a national plan which is a good example of where to start. It is compulsory to have underground shelters for all individuals permanently stockpiled with two years' supply of food and other essentials'. While the plan was evolved for the case of nuclear war, it could serve for any number of other cases, too... In *[Humanity]'s Means to ...i[r]s End...* after surveying the possibilities of nuclear and biological warfare, [the author] concluded that humans could enjoy a long future only if they established 'a unique World Police Force', to be 'the only force in the world with armament exceeding that required for the maintenance of internal order in individual nations'. These words were written in 1961. Today it can be seen that the threat to the human race from terrorists and criminals (let alone governments) could be removed only by very intrusive policing... Although... [the] doomsday argument... gives grounds for re-evaluating the danger of imminent human extinction, these grounds would... necessarily be weakened in an indeterministic world... Perhaps any indeterminism might be considered unimportant... However, it might be believed instead that indeterministic factors had considerable importance. [The doomsday] argument would then serve mainly to reduce extreme confidence in humanity's chances – the kind of confidence which leads some people to say that a long future for the human race is *as good as determined*... *Does determinism destroy freedom?* The word 'free' behaves in a very complex fashion, often under a heavy load of philosophical and theological theories... Many philosophers... are attracted by the argument that anybody could be free only to the extent that... [it] acted deterministically: the sole obvious alternative to determinism is randomness, they say, and you surely wouldn't consider yourself free if you thought of your decisions as random... A much disputed matter is whether determinism would make people unfree in ways affecting the justifiability of blame and punishment. 'If misdeeds were fully determined from the beginning of time', it may be asked, 'where would be the justice of punishing? What good could it possibly do?' It certainly strikes me as very unfair to send a murderer to hell in an afterlife for deeds which it had been determined that [the culprit] would commit – so that if the world could somehow be rewound like a clock, [the culprit would commit murder] anew. And it might next be thought that the same would apply to punishing the murderer here and now. If the murderer had been part of a fully deterministic pattern, then the punishment would be wildly unjust, on this view of the matter. But be that as it may, punishing the murderer here and now could definitely do some good. In a fully deterministic world, the movements of billiard balls could still be influenced usefully by such things as the movements of other billiard balls. The fact that a ball's movements were determined wouldn't enable it to go on its merry way, no matter what other balls did. Likewise: in a fully deterministic world people's actions could still be influenced usefully by praise and blame, reward and punishment. The fact of a murderer's imprisonment could deter other people from murdering.

...['Originally imprisonment was not a mode of punishment but a means of holding offenders awaiting trial or execution; it was used also as a means of extorting payment of money, and even by the 19th c. a high proportion of prisoners were debtors. The modern idea of prison grew from the "house of corrections", a place used in the 16th c. for housing beggars and vagrants who threatened the peace of the community, and for setting them to work.']

...Prisoners will work a 30-hour week for up to 92c a day under a Government proposal aimed at preparing them for life on the outside... The Minister of Corrections... said this week that the launch of a footwear initiative at Wanganui Prison underscored the Government's commitment to "have every prison a factory and every inmate a worker. Many offenders come to prison with few or no work skills and unless they learn the value of an honest day's work, they will find it hard to get a job upon release and may re-offend,"... The deputy general manager of public prisons... said that involving inmates in productive activity cut boredom and violence, increased their skills and decreased costs... [NZ's] prisons housed more than 100 industries... Most schemes reduced the running costs of the prison, although if commodities were sold the money was reinvested... More than 75[%] of inmates were involved in some form of "productive activity" for between two and three hours a day... In 1995, inmates' hourly pay was increased from 4.5c to 11.5c and toiletries were distributed free, although subsidies were removed from canteen goods such as chocolate and cigarettes. The national director of... Prisoners Aid and Rehabilitation... said... their pay did not even cover their basic needs... and the families of inmates have suffered higher costs since heavy subsidies were lifted on canteen goods... [The director] said that if the pay were increased, productivity would rise and it would allow the prisoners to save to help them resettle when they were released... [The deputy general manager] acknowledged that the pay had not kept up with the cost of living, but said the prisons operated with limited Government funding... Meanwhile, the Footwear Industry Association is angry it was not consulted before the department bought the footwear plant in Wanganui and staffed it with prisoners. "I just can't get my head around the decision... to compete in the marketplace using prison labour at subsidised or artificially low wage rates and with the business financed by [the] Government..." said the association president. Editor's note: 'Prisoners get 4c an hour for working in fields in the US' (it is 'estimated there will be 33 million prisoners in the US by the end of the 21st century – suggestions on how such numbers could be dealt with include freeing inmates for the term of their sentence to save money; having robotic prison guards; building prisons in space and underwater')...

Hundreds of convicts will be locked up in a moored prison ship from next month to ease the overcrowding crisis in Britain's jails... The vessel will reportedly be brought over from America, where it has been used as a vast floating dungeon on New York's Hudson River... It is expected to hold up to 500 prisoners... [In local news, t]he Police Association [has] voiced fears that... increasing demand on jail beds would put pressure on judges to

grant bail to people who would not normally be given bail... [P]risoners are being forced to stay in police cells... [(although 'any person serving a sentence of up to 8 days may be detained at a police station which is deemed to be a prison for that period') because t]he country's jails are overflowing...

Senior Auckland police officers will try... to have prison overload demands on their cell space relieved. Some remand and sentenced prisoners have spent up to a week in police cells because of the shortage of beds at Mt Eden and in other jails around the country... A prisoner... who is due to be sentenced on theft and burglary charges tomorrow... says the Auckland police cell [it] is being held in is dirty and cramped and has not seen sunlight for a week... "The cells weren't getting cleaned... so we said give us the gear and we'll do it ourselves." ...prisoners, many of whom have yet to plead before the courts, were being unfairly punished... There was no exercise yard or open-air facilities for prisoners... There were no power points in the cells, prisoners had no access to televisions or radios, and there was a shortage of reading material... prisoners were being forced to re-use disposable cups and were fed mostly canned meals, such as baked beans... Smoking is banned in the cells, although it is permitted in most of the country's prisons... "I'm not sure what our rights are but they must be more than this," [the burglar] said... The Auckland district police commander... said... "It... is most unsatisfactory... It's been going on for a few days and we don't want it to continue... You'd have to feel sorry for anyone who had been there that long [seven days],"... [P]olice cells were not designed to hold people for longer than overnight... The Corrections Department has begun choosing sites in Auckland, Northland and the central North Island north of Taupo for prisons... for... the ever-increasing numbers of prisoners in the country's jails... Three 60-bed units have been built, two at Waikeria, near Te Awamutu, and one... near Christchurch. Because of a lack of staff the two at Waikeria will not... be operational until mid-November... Waikeria's staff problems were caused by recruitment not keeping pace with the inflow of prisoners. Prison officers there faced having to work an extra day a week to cover gaps in the roster until new officers had completed their training... The general manager of Waikeria... said that even when all three were taking prisoners, the long-term problem of spiralling numbers would not be solved... Waikeria's capacity of 722 had been reached and in the entire North Island prisons had only 52 spare beds – about half of which were solely for corrective training placements...

Arohata [Gals'] Prison in Wellington will open a 20-bed wing to [guy] inmates in a bid to ease a crisis in the country's overflowing prisons... The [guy] inmates, who are not sex offenders and have short prison terms, will be kept in a separate building from [gal] prisoners... The Waikeria general manager, [when]... asked if the prison could take ...other... prisoners immediately if it had enough staff... replied. "Yes, we probably could."

...Overcrowded N[Z] prisons are preparing for further stress as some guards consider industrial action. The Prison Officers' Association has balloted its members on the next step in their pay dispute with the Department of Corrections but would not give the result last night.

...Nine-hundred Defence staff are set to move into the country's prisons from this morning – and they may be in for a long stay as employers and... the Penal Officers Association... remain in an industrial deadlock... Prison employers are set to begin locking out the association guards from 8 am today when they were due to begin indefinite industrial action. The guards, who make up just over half of the country's prison officers, will walk out when the first suspensions are issued... The [575-inmate] maximum and medium-security Auckland Prison complex at Paremoremo appears likely to be hardest hit with virtually all of its 360 guards involved in the dispute... At the heart of the dispute is the... Department of Corrections... plan to pay casual staff for hospital guard and escort duties at lower rates, arguing that they perform restricted services.

...Prison officers yesterday claimed the gains as they began returning to work after their industrial dispute was settled... with a contract clause requiring members' approval before any widening of casual work... Defence forces, which had been helping to run 13 prisons, began pulling out yesterday after 86[%] of the Penal Officers Association membership voted to return to work... Twelve of the 13 affected prisons were expected to be back to their normal staffing set-up by this morning. Auckland Prison at Paremoremo will not complete the transition until Monday morning.

...the recently appointed general manager of the Auckland Prison complex at Paremoremo... expects to renew some old acquaintances in his new role as boss of the country's toughest prison... [The manager] is talking about inmates [it] first met as an idealistic young prison officer cadet at Invercargill Borstal nearly 30 years ago... [B]ored with his seven-day-a-week agricultural job in Central Otago, [the manager] joined the prison service in 1967 after reading a newspaper advertisement. [■ On this day in 1967, the NZ Herald contained the following item: 'The new maximum security prison at Paremoremo is expected to be ready for use in a year, the Minister of Justice announced yesterday. Overcrowding had made necessary the reopening of some low security areas of Mt Eden prison' in the meantime...

'Crowded, over-restricted life is commonplace in our prisons. Says Auckland's Queen's Counsel, "Many of our jails are fortresses designed for a Dickensian punitive system. It is highly disturbing that in 1996 the cell used for punishment in Mt Eden is a damp, subterranean dungeon." Remand prisoners, though still innocent in the eyes of the law, often fare worst of all. At jails like Mt Eden, they may be held for up to 12 months before they are tried, spending around 15 hours a day in their shared cell with its walls of plastered stone, high barred windows and unscreened toilet. Ironically, they have less access to education programmes, self-improvement courses and work in laundries, kitchens and mailrooms than some of the convicted prisoners. Last year, two remand prisoners at Mt Eden hanged themselves, prompting the Queen's Counsel to call again for the closure of the "medieval" prison. An associate professor of law at the University of Auckland is under no illusions about the despair and bitterness such conditions breed. "When a society fails to treat its prisoners with basic humanity, it cannot expect them to show a commitment to the community when they leave prison." Prison officials, lawyers and judges support the principle that offenders are sent to prison *as* punishment, not *for* punishment. But a growing number of experts observe that degrading conditions and insufficient re-education programmes make a mockery of the prison system's aim of rehabilitating prisoners to lead good and useful lives. NZ's crime rate may be no higher than in other Western countries, yet we have one of the highest imprisonment rates. In the past five years, our prison population hovered around 124 per 100,000 people, compared with 86 per 100,000 in AUS. Fluctuating numbers, an occasional increase of prisoners in certain security categories and the consequent need to transfer inmates to other prisons, can cause accommodation problems. Since 1985, the jail population has increased by over 50%, but only one new prison has been built in that time: Mangaroa in Hawkes Bay. High numbers and high turnover of prisoners put extreme pressure on prison officers, who often have to act as psychologist, social worker, sibling, disciplinarian and friend to prisoners. Many experienced officers have left their jobs and some of the current staff are ill-equipped to deal with the demands. New prison officers sometimes work for several weeks in a jail before receiving any formal instruction at the Justice Department's prison staff college at Trentham. In 1993, a ministerial inquiry into Mangaroa Prison found that 70 of the 101 staff there had no previous prison experience. The inquiry report cited "strong indications" that some had been selected for their rugby prowess; others were told in advance the questions and answers for interviews and tests. Inevitably there is friction. Almost every month brings a new outbreak of violence or protest in one jail or another. Officials agree that inmates regularly bash and sexually assault each other and the traditional "code of silence" in jails results in the vast majority of attacks being unreported. In 1993, six prison officers were suspended when an inquiry revealed 35 incidents of assaults on inmates in Wellington Prison. In the same year, 12 officers at Mangaroa Prison were dismissed for their part in a series of revenge attacks on prisoners after a staff member was stabbed. In August 1994, a Mt Eden inmate who had climbed to the top of a three-storey tower stayed there for 13 days in protest against conditions until officers forcibly removed him in a cage lowered from a mobile crane. In striking contrast to our prisons are Holland's, which have one of Europe's lowest number of inmates in proportion to population. Holland's crime rate is much the same as ours, yet it has proportionately only half as many prisoners. Overamstel Prison, on the outskirts of Amsterdam, opened in 1978, has six 14-storey tower blocks, each containing 120 prisoners and 68 guards. A 22-year-old convicted for trying to rob a bank has a cell to himself. It measures 10 square metres and has a comfortable bed, table, armchair and cupboard, plus his TV set – rented from the prison for \$7.70 a week. A shelf holds books and cassettes, and pot plants soften the decor. In a partitioned alcove are a toilet and washbasin. The building is well ventilated. At the end of his morning's work assembling table lamps, for which the 22-year-old is paid about \$26 a week, the 22-year-old calls his mother from a telephone on the landing. After lunch – prisoners are locked in their cells for meals – the 22-year-old joins a game of 5-a-side football, supervised by a sports instructor. At 9 o'clock,

prisoners are locked in their cells for the night. Their cell is unlocked at 7 a.m. There is no evidence that Holland's humane treatment of prisoners has any adverse effects. Indeed, the proportion of adult prisoners who reoffend – around 66% – is the same as in many other Western countries. The reasons why Holland's prisons can provide such civilised conditions are simple: courts send fewer people to jail. NZ has the same alternatives to prison – fines, suspended sentences, probation and community service – but Holland uses them more. Despite a rise here in the use of periodic detention from 12 to 25% of all nontraffic sentences in the 10 years to 1993, the Department of Justice estimates that our prison population will grow from a total of 4413 last April to around 5500 by 2001. "With an increase in public concern about violent crime prompting longer sentences and tougher eligibility for remission, that total could soar even higher," says the secretary of the NZ Howard League for Penal Reform, a human rights organisation. To help ease the pressure on prison space, two new 60-bed units have been built at Waikeria Prison near Hamilton. But building more and more jails is no solution because of the staggering cost: from \$65,000 to \$165,000 per inmate, depending on the level of security required. And keeping an inmate in jail costs the taxpayer an average of \$32,000 a year. Ultimately, the solution is to reduce the number of people sent to prison. Few would disagree that for violent criminals, imprisonment is the only penalty, but it is not always these offenders who crowd our jails. In November 1993, there were 275 people in jail because of traffic offences that did not involve death or injury. In fact, more than a third of prisoners in NZ have not committed a crime of violence – and an astonishing 12.5% are on remand. To reduce the number of prisoners, reformers would like judges to make greater use of noncustodial sentences. "Many offenders can receive the punishment they deserve without being sent to jail," says the secretary. Adds a Christchurch prison chaplain, "Only a very small percentage of prisoners need to be locked up in the interest of public safety." What are the alternatives to jail? The answer, in part, may lie across the Tasman where AUS is experimenting with some bold initiatives. In Queensland, the Corrective Services Commission scrapped a \$4-million plan for a new minimum-security prison for gals and instead bought two houses in Brisbane where 25 offenders are allowed to serve their sentences in the community under supervision. They are given day leave to seek employment or perform unpaid community service. The Queensland government also provides supervised living for some low-risk guy prisoners. In South AUS, some offenders sentenced to home detention are fitted with electronic bracelets so that their home confinement can be monitored by phone. A similar computer-generated random phone call system to check prisoners at home is being trialled in NZ with those on parole. Noncustodial sentencing has already proved effective in dealing with juvenile offenders in NZ. The use of family group conferences to arrange community-based sanctions such as an apology and assistance to victims or work for community groups has reduced the number of young people in custody. In response to charges that "soft" measures would only lead to a further rise in crime, reformers cite the experience of what was West Germany where a determined effort to use alternatives for jail cut the juvenile prison population by 42% over ten years, with no accompanying rise in crime. We would all benefit from a similar reduction in adult prison numbers here. "The focus in youth justice on taking responsibility for a crime and being involved in repairing the damage can work just as well for adult offenders," says the chaplain. Imprisonment is the most expensive form of punishment, and harsh jail conditions breed bitterness and more lawbreaking. A recent survey of 3760 inmates in NZ prisons showed that only 595 had never been convicted for nontraffic offences previously and that half the guys and just under a third of the gals had served time in jail before they reached the age of 20. As the secretary says, "Prisons are intended to cost offenders their freedom, not their self-respect. It's understandably difficult to feel compassion for criminals, but a system that makes offenders worse than they were when they went into jail costs society a lot more in the long run." Incidentally, **the stabbing of an inmate at Paremoremo yesterday... highlight[ed] the increasing... risks of violent assault and emotional trauma... in our prisons. And, old-timers tell... it's getting worse...** The prison officers' union says the most worrying aspect of assaults in jail is the step-up in force used[against guards]. And the wife of an Auckland prison officer... worries about the possibility of her husband being hurt every time [her husband] goes on duty... [The] Penal Officers' Association chair[person]... confirms the rise in the level of violence... say[ing] there've been 32 known assaults on prison officers this year, including the stabbing of three officers in Christchurch this week.

...A violent prison inmate granted home leave was arrested for starting a fight at the Christchurch concert by the band AC/DC. [The inmate], aged 27... had been released from Paparua Prison... by the Department of Corrections... A Department of Corrections spokes[person] said violent criminals were eligible for home leave within 12 months of their release to help rehabilitation... [The 27-year-old] was jailed for 7 1/2 years in 1992 for kidnapping a Hawera chemist for three hours and stealing more than \$100,000 in cash and drugs from his pharmacy... The chemist, who did not want to be named... was angry that [his kidnapper] had been released for the AC/DC concert. "It would appear to be a very bad career move on the part of whoever approved the leave. Letting him out to a pop concert for rehabilitation – it's ridiculous. What are they rehabilitating him for, to fight?" A Christchurch Police Association spokes[person]... said: "I can't understand why someone inside for armed robbery or such offences would be allowed privileges. It just makes a mockery of the whole system. It's happening far too often. These people seem to be able to walk in and out when they please." [The 27-year-old] was arrested... after a fight with other concert-goers which left one companion needing hospital treatment for knife wounds. Police said [the 27-year-old] verbally "stirred up" another group but was not physically involved... Six weeks was added to his jail term. A spokes[person] for the Minister of Corrections... said [the minister] did not comment on individual cases. Labour's corrections spokes[person]... said: "Leave should only be given when prison authorities are confident that no one is being put at risk and it is important for rehabilitation. I don't see that an AC/DC concert comes into the latter category, and given the [inmate]'s track record I think they've been excessively liberal." [The Labour spokesperson] said Paparua's leave procedures needed review. Last month inmates from the prison gave minders the slip after being let out to attend the Kiwis verses England rugby league test at Lancaster Park.

...The number of prison escapes has leapt in the last three months but prison authorities are still not alarmed... 18 prisoners have escaped from custody – six in forced breakouts from jails around the country and 12 more in opportunistic escapes. This week [an inmate] walked out of Mt Eden prison by posing as a visitor. It was his second escape from custody in three weeks. On the first occasion [the inmate] pushed a Kaeo detective into a police cell, locked the door and made off. Another escaper, missing from Rangipo Prison [for three months], was picked up in Otahuhu this week on unrelated charges. Police were not even aware [it]d escaped from custody. They claim the prison had not informed them; prison staff claimed they had notified the police, but at a different station... Every escape is fully investigated and procedures are under constant review... [a] Department of Corrections spokes[person]... says. The number of escapes from prisons is generally decreasing. In 1993, a report on security in N[Z] prisons... found there had been 1036 escapes in the previous eight years, or an average of 129.5 a year. In... 1994 there were 44 escapes, 58 in 1995... Escapes as a percentage of the daily average prison population have been dropping steadily from a high of 7[%] in 1972. By 1990, the rate had halved.

...A suggestion that people be allowed to have their slates wiped clean for minor criminal convictions from many years back is seriously flawed, says the Newspaper Publishers Association. The... proposal by the Privacy Commissioner... was an exercise in denying facts... Wiping the slate clean for convicted criminals after several years would amount to suppression, [the association]... said. "To illustrate how ridiculous that would be from a news media perspective, take the example of a newspaper reporting a conviction at the time of its occurrence. Under the... proposed scheme, that same newspaper a few years later would not even be able to repeat the publication of those very same words, which would nevertheless be available in the local public library for any member of the public to read." On most occasions a person's criminal record would not be of interest to the media or public... But in some instances, a previous conviction might be of significant public interest. "This might be the case where a person holds a public position which is relevant to that prior conviction..." ...[the commissioner]'s suggestion... followed reports of previous, minor convictions becoming a real problem for some people. One couple... were deprived of a good job in a Pacific nation because of a minor street offence 20 years earlier. Apart from sex offences, where offenders tended to have a high rate of recidivism, there appeared to be an over-whelming case for people being able to live down minor criminal convictions after a period of no more convictions, [the commissioner] said. "Hundreds of thousands of N[Z]ers have been convicted... for minor... offences... while young and in many cases... never... committed... further offending."

...A blood sample will be forcibly taken from a robbery suspect by order of a High Court judge. It is the first time that new legislation – which came into force on August 12 – has been used to compel a suspect to provide a blood sample... Police believe the... 21-year-old Western Springs... [resident] took part in the robbery of the Bayou Cafe in Richmond Rd, Grey Lynn, in the early hours of January 14. [The judge said the NZ] *Herald* could report yesterday's proceedings, but under the legislation the suspect could not be named or identified. During the robbery[, in which]... \$25,000 of property and cash was taken... the cafe owner... lashed out with a large chopping knife, slashing one of the three masked intruders... [T]he 69-year-old's... wife... aged 37, suffered a grievous stab wound through her left upper arm. Unidentified blood found at the scene is believed to have come from the injured intruder... [T]he crown solicitor of the Auckland region... [also] applied for a warrant to arrest the [suspect] and detain him for the blood sample to be taken. The [suspect], who had been served notice of the application, was not in court to oppose it. [However, the suspect] had previously refused when asked to supply blood voluntarily... Suspects who are compelled to supply a blood sample under the act may choose to have it taken intravenously or by finger prick. If they refuse to comply with the order, the police may use reasonable force to assist a doctor in taking a blood sample by pricking the suspect's finger.

...Virtually everyone convicted of a serious crime can expect the police to apply for a blood sample to store in a DNA profile databank, the crown solicitor for the Auckland area... said yesterday. His comments follow the first High Court application in Auckland – and possibly the first in the country – for a sample to be taken from a convicted criminal for storage in the databank. The application by [a] crown counsel... involving a 17-year-old Mangere youth... was adjourned... [The 17-year-old] was one of a number of youths who took part in the vicious kidnapping and robbery of a South Auckland taxi driver... The Crown's application was under the Criminal Investigations (Blood Samples) Act... Another part of the act was successfully invoked last week... to get a suspect compulsion order requiring a [21-year-old]... to give a sample for comparison with blood left at... the Bayou Cafe... After yesterday's application, [the solicitor] said the DNA profile databank would be as useful to the police as fingerprints. People convicted of everything from burglary... to murder and rape could find themselves the subject of an application to the courts for a blood sample within six months of conviction... The act is not retrospective and any samples given before August 12... would not be included in the database.

...The routine taking of blood samples from newborn babies raises the spectre of a police state creating a DNA profile databank on innocent people, says the Privacy Commissioner... Speaking at a recent genetics conference in Canada, [the commissioner] told his audience that the N[Z] police had successfully used a 23-year-old droplet of blood to identify a murder victim whose body had not been recovered. The heel prick sample, known as the Guthrie test, is taken from babies within minutes of their birth to test for genetic abnormalities... The results are stored on cards which are retained in archives. Detectives investigating the disappearance of a young Hawera mother of two, Nicola Jane Goodwin, in September last year were able to match crime scene blood samples with... her [card]. The evidence helped to convict Mrs Goodwin's estranged husband and his girlfriend on murder charges two months before her body was found in a remote... Taranaki forest. [The commissioner] told the conference that while the prospect of a DNA databank on all citizens for investigative purposes might seem absurd, even Orwellian, it was not entirely science fiction. However, [the commissioner] said last night that blood samples taken at birth had a limited application for forensic purposes at a later date.

...Two young w[itnesses] jailed for contempt of court because they were too scared to give evidence against an alleged attacker were freed by [Britain's] Court of Appeal yesterday. It said correct procedures were not followed before [the] assault victim... and her friend... were held in contempt for refusing to testify against [the victim]'s ex-boyfriend... The appeal judges said the [pair] had been "foolish" but had been in custody for more than a week and had suffered enough. The Chelmsford Crown Court judge who imprisoned [the ex-girlfriend], aged 20, for three months and her 22-year-old friend for two months should have adjourned the trial... overnight with a clear warning to the w[itnesses] about their refusal to give evidence... Instead, the judge – who was not aware of their claim that they had been threatened – accepted that the case against the [ex-boyfriend] had collapsed and then almost immediately jailed the two reluctant witnesses... [By the way, NZ]'s top judge yesterday called for a pay rise for his colleagues, complaining that they are under enormous pressure... As chief justice, [NZ's top judge] is paid \$215,400 a year.

...Judges have been given a pay rise of... between 7.6[% and 8%]... In the new rates published yesterday, the salary of the Chief Justice... goes up to \$224,000, plus an annual expenses allowance of \$7900... The president of the Court of Appeal... sees his pay rise... to \$220,000 plus expenses of \$6500. High Court judges will be paid \$195,000 plus expenses of \$5600, while district court judges will get \$156,000 plus expenses of \$4100.

...A judicial commission to oversee the conduct of judges is inevitable, says[a] former Prime Minister... [The Labour PM from 1984, now a] lawyer, said a recent spate of controversies could only accelerate the creation of such a body to oversee the 154 judges. The Minister of Justice... is seeking a more transparent process for handling complaints against judges and is discussing the issue with the Attorney-General... Only Parliament has the ability to petition the Governor-General for the removal of a judge. [The lawyer] said the argument that judges were accountable because of the appeal process did not hold up. "All you do is appeal a judgment; you do not appeal a judge." [The lawyer] said that last week the Chief Justice... had probably advanced the case for a commission "by some light years" by getting wrong a point of law in a public statement, later retracted. [The lawyer] said a judicial commission could also examine the "arcane" appointment processes for judges... Recently, [one judge]... invoked widespread condemnation with his comments at a rape trial, and two Whangarei district court judges have come under scrutiny about travel claims.

...THE Serious Fraud Office may ask the Attorney-General to file an indictment against two judges charged with fraud to move the case to the High Court, according to legal sources close to the case. [The s]uspended Whangarei District Court judges... [(aged) 39] and... (52), charged with a total of 51 counts of fraud in the Auckland District Court on Friday, remain on full pay... until proceedings are completed. The judges entered no plea but[their] lawyers... said both[judges] steadfastly maintained their innocence. A pre-depositions hearing – where a date for a full depositions hearing will be made – was set down for December 6. It is at depositions that lawyers for the two will attempt to have the case thrown out.

...Problems empanelling a jury have forced the delay of a trial relating to the seizure of \$1.8 million worth of stolen electronic and electrical equipment. The trial of nine people in the Auckland District Court followed the police investigation code-named Operation Lemon and was due to have started this week. Pre-trial applications and the jury empanelling began on Monday... 12 jurors were selected from a pool of more than 1000 people. More than 700 of them had earlier asked to be excused from service because of commitments. But they were directed by the court to attend for jury empanelling because of a shortage of jurors. After the jury was selected, three members asked to be excused. That ignited debates from both defence and prosecution counsels about whether three jurors could legally be excused. [The j]udge... said yesterday that [it] would discharge the jury this morning and adjourn the trial for two weeks, then another jury would be empanelled. [□] JURIES have been an intrinsic part of the NZ judicial system since 1841 when a property qualification for jurors was required as it was in Britain. Because records of land title were inadequate, the property qualification was abandoned here in 1844 and every guy British subject (excepting Maoris) between the ages of 21 and 60 who was deemed of good character became eligible for jury service. The age limit was lifted to 65 in 1945. Gals were eligible to volunteer from 1942 until 1961, when they were included on the roll in the same way as guys but with the right to have their names removed on request. This right of exemption for gals was withdrawn in 1975, except where they have the continuous responsibility for the day-to-day supervision of a child under the age of six. There has always been a list of persons exempted from service for a variety of reasons stated in the governing legislation, including mainly those whose occupations might be described as essential and those involved with the administration or operation of the judicial system. Apart from those exceptions, every citizen within the appropriate age group and living within 30 km of a High Court district is now eligible for jury service. A panel of 12 jurors are drawn and sworn in for each trial, subject to challenges. Committals for trial are now in the hands of the judiciary (grand juries existed in NZ from 1844 until 1961').

... 'at common law, and generally in the U.S., a *grand jury* is a body of from 12 to 23 citizens called to consider evidence of crime and to decide whether an indictment is warranted and a trial justified. Grand jurors, selected in some communities by a special grand jury association, are supposed to be chosen from among persons of above-average intelligence' – as, although a juror must 'concern itself only with the facts of a case and not the causes', 'juries can be influenced by the skill with which the argument is presented'. Editor's note: While a JURIST is a person 'who is skilled in the law', a jury consists of people who typically are unskilled in the law! Judges can overrule juries in the US, but 'not in the UK' (where 'judges can't be judged by juries'). In both the UK and US – as well as here in NZ – citizens allegedly have the legal right to be presumed innocent until found guilty by a jury of their peers.]

...The fugitive Terence Thompson was shot and killed after... turn[ing] a rifle on the police in response to a challenge,[the] Assistant Commissioner... said last night... [T]he commander of police region three which includes Hastings, said Thompson had a loaded cut-down .306 calibre military carbine hidden in his clothing when... confronted by police in an orchard east of Havelock North. Thompson, who was wanted in connection with the murder of Constable Glenn McKibbin of Hastings, had been trying to leave the area when... challenged... "Terence... put his pack down... turned towards the police... and... produced from his clothing a... military carbine with six rounds in the magazine." The police shouted "put it down" and "get down." A police dog was released but Thompson fought it off and presented the firearm at the police[, who]... fired one shot which hit Thompson in the chest and killed him instantly. No other shots were fired. A 20-strong team of police and a... armed offenders squad went to the orchard... after a resident reported... [someone] fitting the description of Thompson cooking a sheep on a fireplace in the orchard. When the police arrived Thompson, aged 43, was wearing military trousers, a military jacket, hard boots and had a backpack containing freshly cooked meat, candles, a torch, butter and dried food... 200m from where [Terence] fell the police discovered a bivouac... "There were all the signs of a well-constructed and well-camouflaged encampment. There is evidence [Terence] may have been hiding there for some days or maybe longer." An uncle of Thompson... said yesterday that the family would demand answers about why the body lay in the orchard for 23 hours and why the family was not contacted before [Terence] was shot. The body lay at the scene... while examinations were carried out by pathologists and the police. It was transferred to the mortuary for an autopsy and is due to be returned to the family today. [The uncle said it] lived only 2km from the site of the fatality and had an understanding with the police that [it] would help to mediate to bring his nephew to a fair trial. "I am angry, disappointed and devastated,"... [The Assistant Commissioner] said the agreement was that when Thompson was found the police would consider involving the family. "When the police found Thompson... it was in a sudden situation and there was a confrontation which resulted in his death..."

...[a] Te Mata resident... talked to Terence Thompson... in his home on Sunday afternoon, sharing tea and a meal with the... [fugitive]. "I hoped to soften him up and get him relaxed before reporting him to the police," [the resident] said yesterday. They talked for about two hours, but not about the fatal shooting of Constable Glenn McKibbin... "I didn't want to provoke him because I was aware [Terence] still had his gun. We talked about all sorts of things. Some of what [Terence] said was quite sensible, some was a bit weird and some was bullst." [The resident], who lives in Te Mata Cottage, near the orchard where Thompson was shot the next day, said... Thompson... often visited people living in old motel units next to his home before the shooting of Constable McKibbin. [When Terence] turned up there again... [the resident] invited him into his home... Thompson did not say directly where [the fugitive] had been for the past nine weeks but indicated [it] had been living rough around the coastal areas of Hawkes Bay. "[Terence] was very dirty and very hungry and had lost a lot of weight. When [Terence] took his boots off his toes were black." [The resident said it] did not report the sighting immediately because [his house] did not have a telephone and [the resident] did not want Terence to know who had contacted the police. Former associates of Thompson have described him as a loner badly disposed towards the police because of past brushes with the law – some serious enough to merit a jail term – who had spoken generally of killing a police officer. But Hastings police still refuse to comment on whether their nine weeks of intensive investigation have revealed any connection, or a related likely motive for the constable's murder. Officially, Thompson is still simply the [person] that on several occasions drove the station wagon used by Constable McKibbin's murderer. And since his own death the police are even more at pains to define Thompson separately from the killing. Yesterday they refused to say what clues might be found in a regular haunt of Thompson, a caravan in Flaxmere.

...Terence... admitted gunning down the police[officer] in his personal diary, an inquest into Constable McKibbin's death was told yesterday... McKibbin was shot dead from a passing car on a Flaxmere, Hastings, street... [The] Detective Inspector... who led the police hunt for the killer, told the inquest of a diary found at an orchard on the outskirts of Hastings where Thompson... was... shot dead... A police psychologist had analysed the writings, which were full of mystical religious references, and decided they were coherent and purposeful. The most significant diary entry said: "My act was an act of violence/force against those who used violence/force describing it as lawlie the wolf in sheep clothing, against my people, the people of all the earth, the children of God. I am from God." The psychologist took these words as an admission of responsibility. Other entries... included how Thompson... [suffered from] headaches and problems with his eyes... [and mentioned] dreams... rituals, victory fields and not taking prisoners. [The] Detective Inspector... also gave the inquest evidence from many people police spoke to in the days after the shooting in an effort to learn about Thompson's background. They spoke of Thompson's hatred of the police and... his obsession with weapons... One told of how Thompson s[poke of] feeling... capable enough to kill anyone, of... [being] physically and mentally ready for it. Another person described Thompson as being mad as a dingo. Another said Thompson had said the police would never take him alive. This person said Thompson was a wise and educated person at the edge of insanity... Thompson talked to other people about reclaiming his land and getting a house [Thompson] had once owned in Pakowhai Rd back from the people who lived in it, killing them if necessary. The house had been sold while Thompson was in jail. One person... said Thompson had spoken of shooting his mother for adopting him out as a baby. The coroner... said in his summing-up [it] was satisfied Constable McKibbin died from an acute haemorrhage as a result of a single bullet wound to the stomach while exercising his lawful duties as a police officer... [The] coroner... adjourned Constable McKibbin's inquest until after Thompson's inquest on October 15.

...T[he head of t]he Police Complaints Authority... said yesterday that a report into the shooting of the fugitive Terence Thompson was likely to be made public in a matter of months, rather than weeks... and... did not want to make public statements before a thorough investigation was finished... Police were also in a difficult position because if they made detailed statements about the shooting now they could be seen by some as prejudging the authority's report... [The head] believed it was more a case of media frustration at the lack of details about the police confrontation with Thompson, rather than public concern... His priority now was to produce a report the public could have some confidence in... The Labour police spokes[person said PCA]... investigations... were usually extremely thorough and independent. "The one thing I think does concern people is that it's police who do investigations on behalf of the authority. That in future might have to be looked at." The Auckland Council for Civil Liberties said... that the law should be changed so police did not conduct [PCA] investigations. The... chair[person] of the parliamentary justice and law reform committee... said the committee had spoken to [the PCA head] on gun security aspects raised in his recent reports on police shootings.

...The police denied yesterday that they have a shoot-to-kill policy[, saying]... armed officers were trained to shoot to stop. That meant aiming for a person's "central mass," basically the chest area. When a Whangarei [resident], Barry Radcliffe, was shot and killed by police last November, senior officers said arms and legs were unreliable targets. The co-ordinator of firearms and special tactics at the time... said police shot at the chest to incapacitate someone immediately, and because they could not afford to miss in highly dangerous and stressful situations. "If you shoot someone in the chest with whatever firearm, you have the possibility [that someone] is going to die... We accept that responsibility and the public should, too." Police general instructions say firearms can be used only to: • Defend themselves or others if they fear death or grievous bodily harm could result. • Arrest an offender if they believe [it] poses a threat of death or grievous bodily harm in resisting arrest. • Prevent the escape of an offender if [it] poses a threat of death or grievous bodily harm. The instructions contain the provision that guns should be used only if there are no

reasonable, less violent options... Thompson was the 16th [NZer] to be shot dead by police since Eric Stanley Graham's killing spree on the West Coast of the South Island was ended by a police bullet in October 1941. Graham killed four police[officers] and three civilians... The list of other fatal police shootings... [include] Paul Chase, 25, [who] was shot during an early morning raid on a flat... at Petone in... 1983... Officers believed [Paul] was holding a gun, but it was later found not to be a gun... Thompson was the third person to be shot fatally in the past 10 months... The most recent fatal shootings were of... Radcliffe... and... a psychiatric patient, Eric Gellatly, in Invercargill... after a 21-hour siege in a sports store.

...The death in Auckland yesterday of Timipoara Raharuhi brought to 17 the number of offenders fatally shot by police in the past 55 years.

...The... armed offenders squad was justified in shooting Terrence Thompson, the Hastings coroner... has ruled. [The coroner] also found yesterday that Thompson was solely responsible for fatally shooting Constable Glenn McKibbin[who]... was killed by a shot from a .223 hunting rifle that went through his police notebook and into his upper stomach as [the constable] spoke to a motorist. It was fired... [from] a beige Ford Falcon stationwagon parked across the street... Armed offenders squad briefings, which had been repeated to them many times after the death of Constable McKibbin, had strongly emphasised they were to try to get Thompson's co-operation... Thompson... - [who] had an Army background - ...was cornered in gathering darkness in the orchard... Squad members with telescopic sights and night-vision equipment could see Thompson clearly and could see [the suspect] was carrying a weapon... Confronted, Thompson had been given an opportunity to surrender but conducted himself in such a way that squad members were given the impression [the suspect] was wanting to do battle. They accordingly acted in self-preservation. That Thompson did not have a bullet in the breech of his gun was probably due to physical and mental fatigue, [the coroner] said. Much more important was that Thompson was carrying a weapon - which would have taken a fraction of a second for him to load... [In international news, a] major search of a forest near the Blue Mountains to the west of Sydney may yield more victims of... the worst convicted serial killer in A[US]n history. Police yesterday declined to confirm a connection between [the killer] and the scouring of the Jenolan State Forest by the major incidents squad and officers from Bathurst, but a spokes[person] said a link "is not dismissed." [The killer], a 51-year-old road worker, was jailed two weeks ago for the brutal murders of seven backpackers in the Belanglo State Forest... south-west of Sydney, between December 1989 and April 1992. His conviction has reopened investigations into several unsolved disappearances, including five [gals] who vanished when [the road worker] was living in Newcastle in the late 1960s and early 1980s, and the murder of Mr Peter David Letcher, whose remains were found... in a shallow grave... by picnickers in the Jenolan Forest on January 21, 1988. Mr Letcher, aged 18... had been shot several times, in circumstances which showed strong similarities to the circumstances of [the road worker]'s victims... The search is expected to continue for the rest of this week.

...[an AUSn] killed 35 people in Tasmania on April 28 - more victims than in any other massacre this century outside war. After [the AUSn], the world's worst mass killings were in Bogota, Colombia, in 1986 when a Vietnam War veteran shot 29, and at a mosque... on Israel's West Bank, when 29 Palestinians died and 80 were injured by a Jewish zealot. In October 1991 [a]35-year-old... mowed down 23 after ramming his truck through the window of a cafe in Killen, Texas. [Another USer], aged 41, shot 21 people dead at a Californian McDonald's restaurant in July 1984. And earlier this year an Indonesian special forces officer sprayed an airport with machine-gun bullets, killing 19 and wounding 25. Until Port Arthur, the bloodiest day for A[US and N]Z... had been the rampage [of the person] who gunned down 10 members of his family near Adelaide in September 1971. Since then 17 massacres have left more than 100 dead in A[US and N]Z.

...A FORMER N[Z] couple is calling for changes to a legal system which prevents their daughter's brutal killer from being charged... [The brute] kicked his former lover, Christine Joanne Nash, in the face 25 times and then strangled her last October... [The brute], a paranoid schizophrenic, admitted the crime but Queensland's unique mental health laws mean [it] will never be charged and could soon be freed. The 32-year-old victim's parents... say the system enables violent people... to evade punishment, making a mockery of justice. The state is the only jurisdiction in the Commonwealth where a Mental Health Tribunal, rather than a court jury, determines whether an accused person is fit to stand trial or was of unsound mind at the time of the offence. The Queensland tribunal, which has operated for 12 years, is constituted by a Supreme Court judge, assisted by two specialist psychiatrists. Christine's death has created a controversy and her parents hope it will bring changes to the law. They moved to... the Sunshine Coast to start afresh after their other daughter Sharon (33) was killed in a car crash in Auckland in 1987. Christine lived just a few kilometres along the coast at Cooool with her two children... [aged] 13... and... 9... Early last year, [Christine] began a relationship with... the [26-year-old] son of a police superintendent who admitted being a crooked cop at the Fitzgerald Inquiry into police corruption. Within months, [the son] started beating her. Christine and the children... began to fear for their lives while trying to escape from him... [However, the son] defied court protection orders, repeatedly phoning Christine and breaking in to her home and assaulting her. [Hi]s own mother had him admitted to a psychiatric hospital [just weeks before Christine's death] but doctors decided [the 26-year-old] was fine and released him after a week... [They] ignored his mother's pleas that [the 26-year-old] should not be released... [The 26-year-old] was returned to hospital after killing Christine but a patient review tribunal has little option legally but to release him if it finds at any time that "nothing more clinically can be done for the patient".

...NEW technology that monitors how the brain views images suggests that people with schizophrenia see faces differently. The research by psychiatry staff at Sydney's Westmead Hospital is part of a joint venture with N[Z] researchers into developing models to test brain functions. It found that people with schizophrenia... tend to ignore the right side of a face at first glance, whereas people without the disorder followed a triangular pattern moving from the left to the right eye, to mouth and back up to the left eye... The results helped explain why people with the disorder had problems with communication, which relied on interpreting facial expressions and recognising subtle nuances... The... director of the Mental Health Research Institute of Victoria... said the technology... [- that] calculates 50 times a second exactly where the eye is looking at an image, while monitoring brain function... [-] will be used to study the effects of different drugs prescribed for mental illness, such as schizophrenia... "We are looking for methods to tailor people's medicine to their needs. At the moment we have got good drugs that help illnesses but no appropriate way to measure how much to give someone." The technology will be trialled next year in Auckland, Sydney and Melbourne... [The] national president of N[Z]'s Schizophrenia Fellowship, said the... study and other research could... potentially benefit... around 30,000... sufferers... in N[Z], and their families... [D]rugs had a definite role in stabilising a person's condition, but... were too often seen as the only solution.

...People with mental illnesses should find out today just how they will benefit from new Government money. The Minister of Health... yesterday outlined plans for an extra \$30 million to be spent on mental health services over the next year... It would be up to... regional health authorities to... carve up the money according to regional needs and subject to the minister's approval. The national priorities for the next 12 months are: • New drugs for schizophrenics. • Workforce development. • Child and youth services. • Services for those with behavioural problems. • Community services for adults. Some of the extra money will also go on a "destigmatisation" campaign, using newspapers, television, radio and health workers to push for better understanding and acceptance of mental illnesses... [In June the minister] announced a \$142 m... boost to mental health, following a damning report on existing services. The money is to be spent over five years, with the \$30 m... being the first chunk. [The minister] hopes next week to announce appointments to a new Mental Health Commission, which will have a watchdog role... [Incidentally, t]he former psychiatric patient who [a]whistle-blowing nurse... said was too dangerous to be free has lost his appeal against a nine-year jail term... [The patient] was undoubtedly a danger to society, the Court of Appeal said yesterday. Delivering the judgment, [the judge said the patient] was apparently ill-equipped to re-enter society when... released from Lake Alice Hospital in 1993... [The patient, who] had pleaded guilty to kidnapping and assaulting an 11-year-old boy... with intent to commit sexual violation... in September 1994... began committing sex offences when... [aged] 14... The judge said th[e patient] would be eligible for parole after serving one-third of his nine-year sentence, with a final release date when two-thirds was served.

...Health bosses have proposed replacing a psychiatric unit built at Auckland Hospital four years ago[a]fter a report found that the... 58-bed... Conolly Unit for acutely ill patients was cramped, badly designed and made from poor materials... The report on the facility[which]... is reported to have cost more than \$3 million... also found that the building had insufficient intensive-care beds, was too far from the main hospital building and emergency department and had wards with too many exits. It did not allow patients to be segregated by gender, need for quiet space and safety or degrees of symptoms and there was a lack of space for activities to stave off boredom or help with rehabilitation. There was also a lack of suitable accommodation for discharged patients... A former patient... said yesterday that [it] would not like to be admitted back to the facility.

...Auckland health chiefs hope to ease pressure on overburdened hospital psychiatric units with... an extra \$10.33 million, its share of the Government's \$30 million boost for mental health services... The general manager of mental health services... said too many psychiatric patients were filling acute hospital beds because alternatives were few... The closure of Carrington Hospital... and the imminent closure of Kingseat had added to the pressure... The police have recently had to care for homeless and distressed psychiatric patients because of the squeeze... Growth is expected in community-based treatment services for the mentally ill in Auckland and Northland... [so] \$4.4 million of the extra money would go on boosting community-based services for better assessment and treatment... No money would be spent on extra acute beds... [In related news, t]he Minister of Health... [has] announced that the director of the Mental Health Foundation... would head the new [Mental Health Commission (MHC)]. The director... will be supported by two part-time commissioners – ...a psychologist with personal experience of mental illness; and... a Wellington business[perso]n and a former chair[perso]n of the Wellington Area Health Board... [According to the minister,] the three-person commission would bring a “unique new energy” into the mental health sector, although it would be limited to an over-sight role. It would not own the problems within the sector, and not be able to interfere with the statutory responsibilities of the Ministry of Health and the Director of Mental Health.

...The head of a ministerial inquiry into mental health services has condemned the new M[HC] as toothless and expensive for the taxpayer... “I’m at a loss to understand why we need a \$2.5 million [the annual budget] organisation to yet again evaluate what is going on.” ...[the r]etired judge... said the commission had no power to deal with any of the areas identified in [his] report, such as services for children and adolescents, Maori and Pacific Islanders, drug and alcohol, personality disorders or the rights of families... [Although] the new commission... is one of five recommendations the... [report] made to the Government in May after concluding that mental health services were in disarray because of lack of leadership and lack of money... “It has no planning, implementation or operational functions and those functions were pivotal to the success of the mental health commission which we recommended.” ...The Government responded to the funding issue in June with an extra \$142 m... over five years for mental health. However, \$60 m... of this spending is not new money... [–] authorities... have to carve this sum off other health services...

Improving mental healthcare spending and changing negative attitudes are the aims of the new head of the M[HC]... “Mental health has never been given the level of priority that it needs... It’s an area which we clearly know has a large amount of stigma attached to it, and that stigma pervades the whole system.” ...[the AUSn who came to NZ] in 1984... said... the commission aimed to ensure that funds were spent effectively.

...A newspaper advertisement which says one in four people have a significant mental health problem... [–] the definition of “significant mental health problem” was where some form of intervention would be appropriate... [–] is not an exaggeration, according to the new head of the M[HC]... North Health used the figures to promote services they offered to those with mental health problems in the Northland and Auckland region. The advertisement... has astounded some people, but [the new head] said an attitude of disbelief was common where mental health issues were involved. “I... would have put it at one in five but the indications are that periods of severe distress and the symptoms that manifest as illness are increasing because of the pace of life.” ...The study used by North Health was conducted... over a period of six months... in 1986 in Christchurch by researchers from the Christchurch School of Medicine, and Sunnyside and Christchurch hospitals... Within that time around a quarter of... a sample group of 1498 adults aged between 18 and 64... suffered problems including mood disorders, drug or alcohol abuse or dependence, psychotic disorders, nervous attacks and panics. When general anxiety, eating disorders, and pathological gambling were included the number of people affected rose to more than one in four... [O]ne third of people between 20 and 24 suffered a psychological disorder in any one year. The majority of young [gals] were prone to anxiety problems, while young [guys] were often treated for substance abuse... [A] mental health project manager for North Health... said while [the authority] would prefer a recent study there were no problems in using the 10-year-old Christchurch research[which]... was quite consistent with overseas studies... If anything the prevalence of mental health problems in Auckland a decade on would be slightly higher... Only 1.7[%] of the national population were seeing psychiatrists...

The Minister of Maori Affairs... is refusing to release what is thought to be a damning update on Maori mental health... The unpublished report, a statistical analysis of Maori mental health trends, was submitted by its authors to the Minister of Maori Development... in May. But in a letter to a Wellington newspaper rejecting an Official Information Act request last week, [the minister said his intention was to] withhold it from the public until November. “The draft update... is undergoing a process of revision and peer review prior to publication,”... [the minister said. However,] some of the report’s findings were presented to a Public Health Association meeting in July. They showed: • ...Maori spend an average of 85 days in hospital with mental illness, compared with 220 days for Pakeha and 152 for Pacific Islanders... [but t]he rate of hospital readmissions for mental illness among Maori is now two to three times higher than for Pakeha and Pacific Islanders... • A 49[%] increase in Maori [gals] admitted to hospital for drug and alcohol abuse and psychosis between 1984 and 1995.

...[gals] run a greater risk than [guys] of developing mental health problems at some point in their lives, the World Health Organisation warned in a statement to mark world mental health day. The statement from the U[N] health agency backed up such findings with statistics showing that worldwide, 15 [gals] for every 10 [guys] were hit with serious depression at some point while the ratio for chronic depression is 17... [to] 10... In Britain... 55[%]... of all people diagnosed as mentally ill... are [gals]... Another study found that in the urban zone of Bahia, Brazil, neurotic and psychosomatic disorders struck 21[% of gals] and only 8[% of guys]... In rural Uganda... 22.6[% of gals] under 65 had suffered major depression while the figure for [guys] was only 14.3[%]. The WHO statement stressed that gals... were more exposed to certain risk factors in the social environment that can erode one’s mental health. These ranged from poverty to broken marriages, wars, and ethnic and domestic violence... [But i]t also found that “[gals] with a stable partner and one or two [kids], and who have a part-time income generating job, seem to be less exposed to depression and anxiety disorders.” - 1996

The... *Telegraph* has reported the results of authoritative new research, given to MPs by the former head of a Government watchdog, the Health Advisory Service, showing... 40[%] of children in Britain suffer from mental illness. Now the draft of another report has come into the *Economist*’s possession. This suggests that the truth is worse than previously feared. As we can exclusively reveal, everybody in Britain is insane. This finding, likely to be controversial, is based on work by... [the] emeritus professor of fictive epidemiology at Bolton Nat Lofthouse University. “My suspicions were aroused... when I compared notes with colleagues in our psychology department...” ...then began a 20-year psychological profile of 500 people... Regardless of cultural, economic or environmental factors, every member of the sample reported episodes of what [the prof] calls “suspect-variant anomalous mental condition” (svamc)... “In each case... we were dealing with what, in lay[person]’s terms, I choose to call insanity, albeit of a temporary nature.” ...Examples included feeling elated or depressed for no discernible reason... hostility towards colleagues; irrational violence towards unsolicited correspondence; and profound lethargy following exposure to credulous articles about bogus research... [Regardless of w]hat has caused this sharp deterioration in the nation’s health[clearly the]... Government can no longer sit on the fence. Sure enough, officials in the

Department of Health have rushed to reassure the public. “When we said in 1983, during an earlier scare over madness in the House of Commons, that it was inconceivable that more than a small proportion of the population was insane, we meant that it was not to be conceived – that is, we were advising people not to think about such things... The important point is that Government policy has been perfectly consistent on this issue.”

...Our mental health policy needs complete rewrite... How many more people must be killed, or hurt, how many more ex-patients must be killed because they have psychotic episodes and go off medication, and how many more reports must the Government receive before action is taken? The system is not working. We need at least to treat guns as being as dangerous as motor vehicles... However, it is our mental health laws that need rewriting. Over 70 homicides have been committed by people with psychiatric illness since the 1980s, not all with guns. There have been many other close calls where the police have shot dead sick people who have obtained firearms – another Aramoana, Dunblane or Port Arthur narrowly averted with fatal consequences for a sick person. That’s what happened to Eric Gellatly and Barry Radcliffe. One person with schizophrenia stabbed five people before the courts insisted on treatment. In another case, a person with a history of sexual violence was taken to court for stealing a chocolate bar. His lawyer pleaded for assistance, the judge stated that if the [client] had committed a serious crime [the court] could direct the [client] for treatment... Another sad soul sought treatment from a hospital, as did the police and his father. [The soul] was turned away[, and] later killed his father and himself. N[Z]’s mental health programmes are in crisis. We are not alone. This is the experience of all liberal, democratic societies. The care of acutely disturbed psychiatric patients outside hospitals, in what is dishonestly called the community, has not worked and has been discredited internationally as a failed experiment. After tragic cases of murder, rape, suicide and terror these policies are being rethought. Reports on inquiries from Britain and the U[S (where)]... the first example of political correctness winning over common sense and common experiences... [came when] a... psychiatrist and best-selling author... argued that mental illness was not actually illness at all[]... point out the shortcomings of existing policies. In response to the cruel and often false imprisonment of the mentally disturbed from the 1950s, 60s and 70s, N[Z] followed the fashion to move decisively from institutional care to community care... All institutional care was bad; all community care was good. The wonder drugs of the 1950s were also seen as a cure. Antidepressants would cure the dangerously depressed. Tranquillisers would save the severely schizophrenic, just as surely as penicillin killed pneumonia... The reality that patients might not take medication outside the stern control of hospitals was ignored. Community care is not a cold, damp bedsit or boarding house. And institutional care need not be an overcrowded ward as popularised by [the] best-selling book and movie *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*... We have closed hospitals, reduced bed and ward numbers and are now planning... to follow the... American model[, which is]... to rebuild similar wards inside prisons. Closing the door after the patient has left just means changing from one institution to another – except that someone has to commit a crime first. No wonder the police are furious... Too often, desperately sick people are released without back-up, against family and medical advice... Unspeakably cruel and tragic examples of molestation and families being terrorised do not seem to concern the “know-all” health bureaucrats and health politicians. Mothers who have been beaten by their children and seen them offend against innocents cry for help. We no longer have patients, they are “clients” – another dishonest politically correct description... Community and family care was promoted by politicians such as [Britain’s Iron Maiden] who, ironically, also claimed that there was no such thing as society. The talk was of family values, when families alone cannot cope with deluded and sick family members. This “market” view of mental health is based on the so-called rights of the individual. The “right to be crazy” it is called in serious publications; the right to be eccentric, different and inappropriate. What right, its defenders ask, has society to tell you to wash? You have the right to live your own life, without the state or society telling you how to live – even if you are burning yourself, taking drugs or causing pain or even terrorising your family or community. It is individualism gone crazy, backed up by privacy, human rights and mental health legislation, the policy that gives all rights to the disturbed and no value to the rights of family or responsibilities of society. It is society’s moral responsibility, it is society’s right, to intervene to stop the pain... The Privacy Act and commercial confidentiality arguments are being used to cover up the grim reality of a tragic truth... The Government [is giving] more money to mental health because of recent “bad” publicity. It knows it is losing votes. This happened in Britain. Its answer will be more bureaucracy, more patient visits by social workers – as if these patients have not suffered enough. That will not work either. The chronic shortage of beds and institutions has created a nightmare for families, the police, patients and GPs. Psychiatric wards once offered asylum to the distressed and deluded. They should not have to prove they are *seriously* disturbed, or hurt themselves or others, to get a place of peace so they can get some purpose in their lives again... We need to create decent shelters, places of... tranquillity, for those who cannot cope or look after themselves. The word “asylum” need not be a menacing word or place that cruelly represses people... [And w]e need a Minister of Health with the self-confidence and guts to tell the experts they have got it wrong.

...Psychiatric patients needing urgent help are being sent out of Auckland because all emergency beds in the city are reportedly full. One... was driven more than 150km south yesterday to Tokanui Hospital. Mental health workers say the shortage is caused by long-stay patients, who used to be housed in psychiatric hospitals, taking up many emergency beds. The Waitemata Health clinical director of mental health... said... extra money [promised] from the Government... last year... to begin improved services was still not available. “We keep waiting for the tiny drips of... money to come through. It’s just so damn slow. It just goes on and on.” ...[part] of the answer was earlier intervention to stop people reaching crisis point in the first place... But the... North Health communications manager... questioned whether there really were no spare beds left in the city. Rival crown health enterprises were inclined to save up their last beds in case they needed them, rather than make them available to another service...

Social workers have attacked a new... mental health service as a waste of money. The Auckland District Council of Social Services says the \$5.1 million announced last week for a three-year regional co-ordination service contract would be better spent directly on patients... The new service, run by Waitemata Health, would simply duplicate the work of psychiatric staff who assessed patients. Staff referring patients to accommodation would now have to go through the new service, which would... rubber-stamp their actions or override them without the same knowledge of the patients’ conditions... [O]nly \$300,000 a year – or \$750 extra a person – was going to meet people’s individual needs... Waitemata Health[’s] mental health manager... said the new service would have a database covering every psychiatric bed in Auckland. At present no one had a complete picture of all the services available... [T]he service was designed so that Waitemata Health could pinpoint where its mental health funding was going. The advantage was... it should provide reliable information about gaps in services, which could be used to mount a better argument for more services.

...Mental health workers are concerned about the lack of psychiatric services for refugees... [A] report says the Government needs to be aware of increasing numbers of refugees in Auckland and their health needs... The president of the Auckland Refugee Council... said services had been developed recently for newcomers but gaps still existed. Almost half of recent Bosnian and Somali refugees had post-traumatic stress disorder, or many symptoms of it... Another problem was the long waiting list for publicly funded psychiatric problems... [A] 24-year-old Bosnian refugee, suffering from schizophrenia and alcohol abuse, died suddenly last month after heavy drinking. [The Bosnian] had been released from the acute... Conolly Unit in central Auckland... However, [an]... investigation into the death... has cleared [the unit] of wrongdoing in letting him out on temporary leave.

...The Auckland coroner... has hit out at failings of the mental health system in the case of a [gal] who... over-dosed after waiting seven hours for a rapid-response mental health team... On January 26 last year, the team was delayed because it first had to help a [guy] who had a history of leaping off the centre span of the Auckland Harbour Bridge... In his report, released yesterday, [the coroner] said: “Clearly the crisis team could not be in two places at once.” [The coroner] concluded that “the deceased was the victim of inadequate staff and resources...”

...Five Maori mental health workers have been suspended for allegedly making false mileage claims worth thousands of dollars. The workers... were... from Te Puau Ora – which won an Australasian gold medal [last] August for its achievements in mental health services... Te Puau Ora was

set up two years ago... to support Maori people with psychiatric illness who live in the community... Their employer, Auckland Healthcare, is investigating the claims. Auckland Healthcare's communications manager... confirmed that a random audit had found "irregularities." [The manager] said 75 Maori psychiatric patients served by the community workers would be looked after by other mental health workers while the suspensions lasted. [The manager] could not rule out police involvement, depending on the results of further checks.

...The Ministry of Health has withdrawn a complaint against a psychiatrist involved in the case of [a Levin patient who]... was released from... Palmerston North's Manawaroa Centre... in January 1996, one day after a court ordered [it] be detained for six months' treatment. [The patient] made 16 recorded attempts to readmit himself before raping a Levin... [resident in March. Concerns have been] raised about the clinical standards of those involved in his case... It is understood two of the psychiatrists involved are now working overseas – one in the U[S] and the other in England... [B]oth... were originally from overseas... MidCentral Health refused to answer questions on whether they were forced to leave their jobs at Palmerston North... [The patient] is now back in a psychiatric institution, and can be released only by the Mental Health Review Tribunal.

...a \$17 million mental-health facility in Hamilton... with 108 beds for intensive psychiatric, forensic, and acute patients, will be officially opened by the Minister of Health... [today. ■ I]n Hamilton yesterday... [a] protest march... calling for free health access to all... drew about 2000 people... The senior medical staff chair[person] of Waikato Hospital... was cheered when [it] said: "Don't strangle us with blatantly inadequate funding, don't harass us with stupid ideas from Parliament and don't cripple us with... bureaucracy."

...[yesterday a NZ] First minister... implicitly criticised the reforms of the last decade, saying one of the great [20]th-century crimes was to blame the victim... But, [the minister] said, victim-blaming produced no solutions, just more victims... "If someone is unemployed, they are dismissed as a dole bludger. If mentally ill, they are often placed in inadequate community care..." ...[By the way, a] substantial sum of money from the sale of Carrington Hospital [to its neighbour] Unitec in 1992 was used to pay area health board debt, according to new information from the Auditor-General's office. Mental health funding campaigners were last week assured by the former Auckland Area Health Board chair[person] and deputy commissioner... that the sale proceeds were used to build mental health units at Auckland, North Shore and Waitakere. The sale price was never disclosed. However, the Unitec chief executive... yesterday revealed that the institute paid \$4.3 million in four instalments. The final two instalments of \$500,000 each were paid in 1994 and 1995, after the area health boards were dissolved and replaced by Crown Health Enterprises... The payments went to Health Support Services, a company jointly owned by the C[HE]s. The Audit Office has revealed that rather than spending the money on mental health services, the final \$1 million was "applied to discharging the various creditors of the Auckland Area Health Board. Although the boards had to spend the income from asset sales on a related health area, debt reduction payments made by Health Support Services were not tagged..."

Psychiatric patients often mutilate themselves... attack other people... or... commit... arson... to get admitted to Auckland's overstretched services, say mental health workers... "They know they won't get admitted unless they do something, so they either slash themselves or cause havoc as a cry for help. I can't tell you the number of clients who have said 'I went to the police, I wanted to be admitted, but there weren't enough beds or they won't believe me'." The... [m]ental health workers spoken to by the N[Z] *Herald* yesterday said the real problem was the lack of properly funded 24-hour care and supervision, so that patients could live outside institutions. They said much community care was contracted out to agencies, which did not want the most difficult cases because the 24-hour care required was too expensive... When... an extra \$15 million a year to help those whose lives are sorely afflicted by diseases which disrupt, alienate and occasionally kill... was announced it seemed that at last there would be some measurable improvement in the plight of those who suffer from mental illness... It sounded great at the time but when will it happen, how far will it go and how many lives can be salvaged? ...Now another terrible tragedy where mental ill health is alleged and shock, horror, fear and immense sympathy for [Raurimu's] victims and their families flood the media. Anger and outrage are uppermost as the events at the scene and subsequent actions are played out on our television screens. Yet all the while the Government and other agencies continue to fight fires. Crisis teams, where they exist, react to emergencies. Nowhere are there early intervention units with highly specialised staff which can diagnose and begin treatment of the sufferer and offer education and support to the family. Case management with continuity of skilled personnel able to call on a broad spectrum of supported accommodation and meaningful occupation is almost unknown. There are case histories aplenty that demonstrate how people can manage their lives and their illnesses when offered support in their own homes or those provided by non-governmental organisations – people who in fact continue to have major illnesses but whose social and support systems are such that they are able to live acceptably within the community.

...In the wake of the Raurimu shootings, [the NZ Herald] recalls the mass killings that have recently shocked N[Z]... In the past seven years, there have been seven multiple death killings which have left the nation numbed and perplexed at how such events could happen. In May, 1992... a hard-working rural grandfather who lived near Pukekohe stabbed his wife to death... then shot dead... his... three sons, a daughter-in-law and a grandson... Etched in the memories of N[Z]ers are the words of [a] nine-year-old... [girl] on the telephone to police: "My grandfather has shot my brother... and I think [my grandfather is] going to shoot me." [The girl survived. Her grandfather] had apparently refused treatment for depression... A month later came another family slaying, this time in Masterton, when someone] hammered, bludgeoned and stabbed his three children, the brother of his estranged wife, his pregnant wife's sister, her partner and their son. In February, 1994, a 31-year-old Wanganui... [resident] killed himself and his three young daughters... Then, in June the same year, the Bain family hit the headlines. The still controversial case ended with the sole surviving member... [being] jailed for slaughtering his father, mother, brother and two sisters... [(An Auckland businessperson) and former All Black... launches his book on the Bain murders in Dunedin today... The book, *David and Goliath*... claims the 1995 conviction of the student... was a "monumental miscarriage of justice]" because the]... father... shot his family in an attempt to hide details of an incestuous affair with daughter Laniet. It [also] says the police inquiry was conducted in a "bungled and incompetent manner" and that [the student] was arrested prematurely.[)] ...There was still a myth around that families were peaceable and tranquil... "In families you've got people forced to be together because of the blood ties, you haven't chosen to be together..." ...While comparatively rare, multiple death has been dealt by the hand of a stranger. The worst instance was in 1990 when the reclusive David Gray went berserk in Aramoana with a semi-automatic rifle and butchered 13 people in 30 minutes of savagery... before dying in a hail of... police... bullets... The victims, aged from six to 71, were neighbours... [of t]he unemployed 33-year-old farmhand... [A] domestic violence expert with Waikato University, said yesterday that there was no single reason for anyone to commit mass murder. Perpetrators generally had a mental illness, there would be a trigger event and the death toll would be affected by the availability of weapons. "If there weren't guns available, much less damage would be done,"...

The... Dunedin bookseller... who warned police that David Gray had an assault rifle says the Aramoana massacre [could] have been prevented... [The bookseller] contacted police nine months before the November 1990 shooting, after Gray, a long-time customer, showed a staff member... [his] AK47 rifle... When police went to [his home, Gray] showed them an airgun and said that was what the shop assistant had seen... If gun registration had been compulsory the police would have known what weapons Gray had... A report by [a] retired High Court judge... is expected to recommend the reinstatement of registration... [plus a] Government ban and buy back[of] 30,000 military-style, semi-automatic firearms from owners... [However, g]un registration has failed three times in N[Z] and reinstating it again] would cost about \$20 million[, while a]ll 300,000 gun owners would have to get a safe in which to keep a gun or the dangerous parts of it. Gun collectors would be hardest hit because rendering some guns inoperable, as recommended in the report, meant they lost 95[%] of their value...

After reading 3000 submissions on gun laws, the [person] who could influence major change admits [it] has no easy answers. [The r]etired High Court judge... yesterday said the weekend massacre at Raurimu would not delay the report deadline... [although the judge] expected to get

information on the... killings and may have to make some interim remarks in his report... [The judge has] already received a four-month extension because of the massive workload... The submissions covered a wide range of views, with no side of the argument dominating any other. Meanwhile, interest groups continue to publicly dispute what needs to be done to prevent mass killings. The pro-gun group, Sporting Shooters Association, has called for a review of mental health care, citing a string of recent incidents involving disturbed patients. But the director of regional forensic psychiatric services in Auckland... said it should be the gun lobby that screens firearm users... The gun lobby was well organised, [so]... “why don’t we utilise their skills, use them constructively.” ...the shooters association... said [the director] was merely trying to shove responsibility to another group[, while]... a Mt Eden... [GP] knew of at least two cases where the association had asked police to remove firearm licences from suspicious people[and, both times, i]t took months to get action. “If the law makes it too expensive or too bureaucratic to have guns it only disarms law-abiding citizens. If people desperately want a firearm, they will get one illegally... Gun owners used to be able to get a lifetime licence, but now you have to reapply every 10 years... In England, you have to reapply every three years but that didn’t stop Dunblane [Scottish massacre] did it?”

...[a NZ] gun control lobbyist... is urging caution on changes to gun laws in the wake of the Raurimu massacre... [while attending] a meeting with gun control lobbyists from around the world... in London... The Raurimu tragedy has made... the former television presenter and now an Auckland-based public health researcher, a central figure at the... conference, although [the lobbyist said N]Z... was not a particularly good example for other countries[because i]t had some of the loosest gun ownership laws in the world. Japanese anti-gun lobbyists have succeeded in all but banning guns while... Britain proposes to restrict handguns to licensed gun clubs, but steers clear of extending controls on rifles and field sports firearms. [The lobbyist] takes a more moderate line, arguing that the best way forward for N[Z] is to reintroduce registration of weapons, which was dropped in 1993.

...The 300-page... firearms review... report [has been] delivered to the Minister of Police... A spokes[person said the minister] would not comment on the recommendations but... the report would [eventually] be made public[– although a]... list of the report’s full recommendations was [already being] circulated on a British pro-gun lobby Internet site called Cybershooters... A gun policy researcher [and lobbyist]... welcomed the report and said it was a “good effort” for increasing public safety. “[The retired judge] recognises the majority have rights. The majority of N[Z]ers have little affinity with guns and have the right to live in a society free of the fear of guns... Either we keep on ignoring it and talking about gun laws in the two or three days after each massacre... or we decide N[Z] is going to take the other road and follow the model of the Commonwealth, not the U[S.]” However, the lobbyist was concerned that[... only military-style semi-automatic rifles would be subject to a Government buy-back[when] they accounted for only one out of 10 of the deaths by shooting... A spokes[person] for the Sporting Shooters’ Association... said the recommendations would increase the barriers to legal users of firearms and lead to more guns appearing on the black market. The legal ownership of shotguns had plummeted in Britain to its lowest level since records were kept, while 2500 illegal handguns entered the country each week.

...IN JUNE last year, in an article entitled “How we help killers pull the trigger” I explored the background to a number of amok killings. My conclusion was that these incidents are overwhelmingly a mental health problem, compounded by inadequate enforcement of existing laws... We need to address the problem at both levels if we are serious about preventing further incidents like Raurimu. To date, this has not happened. One of the major reasons this has not happened is because of the unprecedented media hysteria demanding tougher gun laws after Aramoana... The same phenomenon has occurred more recently in A[US] (after... Port Arthur) and the United Kingdom (after... Dunblane) and has led to the passage of rushed, and therefore unsatisfactory, firearms legislation that promises to enhance public safety yet misses entirely the real causes of amok killings. Such misfocused and useless laws – which seem to be based on the premise that because a mentally deranged person kills with firearms then the sane and responsible cannot be trusted to have them – breaks the most basic tenet of good law. In a democracy, surely law-abiding responsible citizens have the right to be treated as innocent until proven guilty; have the right to have their traditional activities, sports and interests protected? In a democracy, surely governments have an obligation to protect the interests of the law-abiding by passing focused laws that can achieve the desired result? If this is not the case, do governments then have any right to demand our blind obedience, and do laws that make criminals out of previously law-abiding responsible citizens have any role in enhancing public safety? Gun laws are in reality an illusory and totally misfocused “solution” to the problem and fail badly in theory and in practice. It is hardly surprising that more and more people choose not to comply with them... So let me restate the obvious: First, amok killings are acts of criminal insanity perpetuated by severely disturbed individuals. Second, these people are in the community as a direct consequence of government health policy... If those responsible for running our mental health system can claim most amok killers are technically not insane, then clearly modern psychiatrists have lost sight not only of reality but also of their obligation to the society that is paying their not-insignificant salaries. While relabelling such people as “behaviourally disordered” may allow the mental health services to wash their hands of a difficult problem through a convenient technicality, it clearly neither delivers better care nor makes such people less dangerous. Calls for tougher gun laws by the very people responsible for this state of affairs must be seen as a cynical tactic, a smokescreen to deflect attention and liability away from their failure to properly care for those who are ill and to adequately protect those who are sane. Some people are surprised to learn that it has been illegal for criminals or the mentally deranged to have firearms since 1921. This has not changed for the last 75 years. Murder, assault, rape and robbery have been illegal for a whole lot longer, yet occur with increasing regularity. This should suggest passing ever-more complicated laws in no way protects us... The harsh reality is that no gun law can ever compensate for a dysfunctional mental health system or for the failure of authorities to properly enforce the law as originally intended.

...The Auckland coroner has criticised the police for not confiscating a gun from a Northland [resident] whom they later shot dead... [The coroner] supported the police action... as [the shot resident] “unquestionably posed a serious threat to himself, his wife and to the public.” But [the coroner] said there was an earlier incident in which [the resident] rang his wife at her work and told her [it] was holding a loaded gun. [The resident] then fired the gun and said [it] was going to kill himself... [P]olice were called... but the family was left to deal with the matter... [The coroner] was surprised that [the resident] was not deprived of his firearm, which “leads one to speculate whether [the resident] would still have adopted his fatal course.” The acting Northland police commander... said last night that [it] was surprised the coroner had levelled criticism against the police in view of the fact that a Police Complaints Authority investigation into the shooting had not been released.

...POLICE are likely to appeal a court decision which has given firearms back to an elderly farmer who believes [it] is descended from aliens... [H]is shotgun and .22-calibre rifle were taken by police after an incident [last] December. The 79-year-old believes his grandmother, who [it] said was part Aborigine, was impregnated by aliens who arrived in the A[US]n outback from space last century... [The 79-year-old] said the story had been told to him by his father when [it] was a boy, and... claims medical examinations supported the theory. Police argued that [the 79-year-old] was not a fit and proper person to hold a firearms licence... [When they] had gone to his son’s house... [in December, the 79-year-old] said: “We should have guns on our hips and shoot this out like they did in the old west.” ...[the 79-year-old said the judge’s] decision was a victory for justice.

...Police were right not to shoot and kill Port Arthur[’s mass murderer]... at the scene... Tasmania’s police chief said yesterday. Speaking at a seminar about the management of the tragedy, [the] Commissioner... said the most common question about the police action there was why did they not kill [the person] who is now serving a life sentence... “It’s not the role of the police to be judge or executioner, it’s up to us to take people into custody and bring them before the court.” ...[the commissioner thought that the mass murderer] left home on April 28 last year with the intention of dying at police hands. “It’s much more useful for these people not to die in a hail of police bullets or not to die with what they perceive as any sort of hero status,”... [Incidentally,] Britain’s Parliament voted overwhelmingly yesterday to approve one of the world’s toughest gun laws. Despite a £150 million... compensation package, gun owners claim they have been made scapegoats after the Dunblane massacre...

In a lounge lined with old plaques and trophies [a 33-year-old] and other members of the Harrow Rifle and Pistol Club sit in gloomy silence. The shooting range is empty and the mugs of tea have gone cold. With Britain set to pass some of the toughest anti-gun laws in the world, the sky is falling in on the 105-year-old London club. The 33-year-old... commercial artist... has been shooting pistols for over a decade, and competes in overseas tournaments. The new law will make her guns – and her sport – illegal. “I’ve put my life into this and now they’re taking it all away with the stroke of a pen,”... At the core of the proposed legislation is a ban on all handguns over .22 calibre, which would eliminate 80[%] of the 200,000 pistols registered in Britain. According to the original bill, remaining handguns would have to be stored in heavily fortified clubs, and could be moved only to a competition or a repair shop with a police permit and by special courier – restrictions so tight, say critics, they are tantamount to a ban. With the new gun law expected to be on the statute books in the coming weeks, most of the 2200 gun clubs in Britain are already bracing for a drop in income, and wondering how to pay for the new security measures... Among the British public, however, there is not much sympathy for their plight. Polls show enormous support for the gun law, with 56[%] of the population in favour of banning handguns of every calibre. Much of that sentiment can be traced back to a small town in central Scotland. Last March, Thomas Hamilton... walked into a school in Dunblane with two legally held handguns and spare ammunition... opened fire at random, killing 16 children and wounding others, before shooting himself dead. It was not the first such massacre in Britain, but it touched a deep nerve... A tireless and highly emotive campaign, spearheaded by families from Dunblane, forced Parliament to act. But even before Dunblane the British had little time for firearms, and the local gun lobby is a shadow of its American counterpart. Many farmers own a shotgun, and the rural gentry are avid hunters, but only 57,000 people hold pistol licences. Most British police are unarmed and the London media follows gun culture in the U[S] with appalled bewilderment. Britain’s already tight firearm laws – even now, a pistol cannot be kept in a house for self-defence – are often credited with keeping down the rate of gun-related violence. Handgun aficionados argue that the present laws, if properly applied, are restrictive enough, and that no ban can prevent another Dunblane... [A] lecturer in political science at the London School of Economics, [who] has never fired a pistol in his life... believes that British gun laws need tightening, but doubts if the answer lies in a ban that entails outlawing internationally recognised sports. Back in the Harrow Club, members are already looking beyond the new rules. [The commercial artist] and her husband might take up rifle-shooting. They are also toying with the idea of emigrating to a pistol-friendly nation... [In local news, g]un lobbyists want a Government audit into dangerous mentally ill people who have been released into the community... Instead of tougher gun laws... the Sporting Shooters Association... called for a register where the dangerous or unstable mentally ill people would have certain privileges withdrawn from them, such as owning guns and the right to enter gun shops. “Surely it’s in the patients’ own interests to have certain rights removed to protect them?” The... report... [also] calls for legal accountability from doctors releasing dangerous patients into the community... 140 incidents gleaned from newspaper reports between 1990 and 1995... [suggest] 60 homicides... were committed by people whose psychiatric condition was the probable cause.

...[guys] with a history of family violence are much more likely to use a gun to kill someone than a mentally ill person, say mental health workers and lobbyists for tighter gun controls. The groups joined forces yesterday to attack a report by the Sporting Shooters Association calling for a national register of the addresses of mentally ill people... [A]ccording to studies in N[Z] and AUS there is a 55% likelihood... that family violence... [will] trigger... a firearm-related homicide... [compared with] up to 12[%] for people who have... a history of mental illness...

Police yesterday raised a storm by suggesting that they should have right of access to the medical records of the mentally ill. The call led to claims by patients’ groups that they were being unfairly treated, and to a warning by the Privacy Commissioner that doctor-patient relationships could be put at risk... The chair[person of the]... Medical Association... said yesterday that it was important people knew they could speak openly to their doctor and that confidence would be respected. “This is particularly true in cases of mental illness, where the information the patient gives may be crucial to the success of treatment.” ...[the chairperson added] that giving the police access to medical records could deter people from telling the truth, especially when illegal drugs were involved. It could also encourage them to change doctors to avoid leaving a paper trail, which could threaten the continuity of their care... [The chairperson believed] doctors needed clarification of the rules which guided whether they could breach a patient’s confidence and talk to the police... The police want the power as another weapon in the fight against violent crime. The police move came after the... conviction in Christchurch of [a mentally disturbed person] on rape and murder charges and subsequent claims by his family that [the offender] had been denied psychiatric treatment which could have prevented the crimes.

...[the offender] was feeling 10 feet tall. Head shaven, wearing black clothes and boots and steamed up on drugs and alcohol, [it] walked through suburban Aranui... late on a Monday morning looking for trouble. [The offender] needed money, and robbery would do. Drug debts had to be paid and [the offender also] needed a bus fare to get into the city. Over the previous 36 hours, [it] had smoked at least 14 cannabis cigarettes, taken half a tab of LSD... drunk beer... and... felt “invincible”. More ominously, [the offender] wanted sex. His track record over the previous year or so spoke for itself – sexual liaisons with transvestites, transsexuals and street walkers, all when... involved in a steady relationship... His file at Sunnyside Hospital had at times over the years noted [the offender] was “a danger to the public” and “not to be examined alone”. [The offender] had long stopped taking the lithium that kept him on an even keel[... telling]... his family it made him sick. Catherine Florris Coster... didn’t stand a chance. Stricken with arthritis, [Catherine] needed a walking frame and stick to get around. When [Catherine drove past the offender] in her red Austin 1100 and up the driveway to her... home, [Catherine] had signed her death certificate. [Catherine] was in the wrong place at the wrong time... The jury at his High Court trial... had to decide whether [the offender] was mad, bad, or a combination of both... [I]t was argued that his mental condition at the time was such that [the offender] could not morally know what [the offender] was doing. But [the offender] had the presence of mind after the Coster attack to try to cover his tracks... [The offender’s mother] agonises over what has happened to her son... [H]is mental disease was inherited from his maternal grandmother, who died in Sunnyside Hospital.

...Ex-patients: we aren’t all killers... Guilty: [a] young and strong... [Christchurch resident] rapes, sodomises and kills a helpless old [gal]... It is revealed that [the offender] has a history of mental illness and drug-taking. Not guilty, by reason of insanity: [the person who] beats and kicks to death an elderly couple in their Auckland home. [The offender] is a former nun who thought [it] was God and her victims were devils. [Someone else] tries to get help from Palmerston North Hospital’s psychiatric unit but is denied admission[– then rapes a stranger] in Levin. Massacre in Raurimu: [the perpetrator] is sent for psychiatric evaluation after a shooting which leaves six dead and five seriously injured. They are this year’s headlines – guaranteed to get the public even more afraid of the mentally ill. It is a fear that psychiatric survivors and psychiatrists say is unfounded. The past four years have also had their share of headlines. The ones listed below do not include the numerous suicides by psychiatrically disturbed people. Last year: [a South Island resident killed a stranger] by driving his car at her vehicle but was found not guilty of [hu]manslaughter on account of insanity. [The offender] was ordered to be detained in a mental hospital... [A] 44-year-old dairy farmer, was found not guilty on the grounds of insanity of the murder of his wife... in 1995 and the attempted murder of his children... 1994: [an] Inglewood couple... thought their son Dane had been possessed by a demon and bashed him with a brick to exorcise it. [Dane] died. They were found not guilty of murder, but insane... 1993: [an Aucklander who]... had been found not guilty by reason of insanity... after throwing a [gal] off an overbridge... die[s] after falling from an Auckland building... The same year... [another Aucklander] appeared in court... for beating his mother to death with a hammer. [The offender] told a psychiatrist [it thought its mum] was an evil witch. The verdict: not guilty by reason of insanity. And so on. You would have to be crazy to commit those crimes, surely? Actually, no, say the thousands of people who use mental health services but who would never hurt a fly. They pose no more harm to the average citizen than the average citizen and are probably of less risk... “There’s currently 67,000 people using mental health services. Now you go back through the newspapers last year and you find three hit the headlines... Yes, there are some

people who have done some horrendous things. But there are also a vast number of people who have done horrendous things who have not got a mental health history[,...]... said a spokesperson for the Aotearoa Network of Psychiatric Survivors... The spokesperson also said the damage caused to people with mental illness every time a case like [the one in Christchurch] cropped up was huge... [The] chief executive of the Mental Health Foundation, said... if violence had not been an acceptable form of expression in society then there might well have been mental illness without violence.

...New research shows a link between mental illness and violence, but psychiatrists have urged NZers to tone down the “hysteria” over the mentally ill... [The chairperson] of the College of Psychiatrists, said the violence of mental illness was “massively overplayed... it’s just part of the discrimination cycle really.” The research is contained in an article in the *A[USn and NZ] Journal of Psychiatry* which summarises recent studies and concludes there is a “modest association” between mental illness and an increased propensity to violence... [i]n societies where murder and mayhem were not “national hobbies,”... However, it argues against policies of greater control and containment of mental patients in favour of improved care, support and treatment in the community. The author... says those at high risk need to be targeted for priority in follow-up care and intensive support. “Above all, it is essential to make it clear that violence can be a reflection of a failure of treatment and support and that therefore in principle it is preventable. However uncomfortable it is, we must look at the adequacy of our own professional responses in regard to the needs of the mentally ill.” ...only a tiny percentage of people with mental illness were violent. “If you look at people who are in good treatment situations then the risk may in fact be lower than the general public... The adequacy of treatment is what matters.” ...When damage did take place it was usually slight and inflicted most often on family members, professionals and fellow sufferers... Violence was more likely to occur or be perpetuated by people who used substances and by young people with a mental illness.

...Health is not just an absence of illness. It can be said to be a state of well-being which is dependent on physical, emotional, social, cultural and spiritual needs being met. These needs in children are met through the provision of adequate food, clothing, housing, nurturing, a sense of cultural identity and belonging, security and education. It is further enhanced by the provision of primary health care such as clean water, sewerage, primary medical services, immunisation and well child care. All of these should be the birthright of every child born or living in this country. The fact that the health status of NZ children is deplorably low by world standards is indicative of a society which either cannot afford to provide for these needs or which just does not care enough to do so... Mental health problems are by far the most common and most costly of all health problems in adolescence. Their roots lie in a complex admixture of values, toys... and indulgent deferment of responsibility in an affluent society, the kind of start one gets in life and generic vulnerability to stress, alcohol and psychiatric illness. In contrast to what is believed most adolescents are well-behaved and happy much of the time and in terms of my youth could be judged even pampered and spoiled. Girls will suffer more as they worry about almost everything, but boys will be no more fortunate as they chase the dangerous and odious... ideal of a good Kiwi bloke. Most will muddle through as we did to a no less stressful adulthood, causing their would-be Pygmalion parents much pain (and joy) along the way. About 10[%], intermittently or chronically, will be impaired by anxiety, depressive episodes, drugs and alcohol, or behaviour disorders which will often continue into adulthood. [1%] will have their lives derailed by major psychiatric illness such as schizophrenia or manic-depression... Much has been made of “teenage” suicide in NZ but in 15-19-year-olds it accounts for only 15[%] of deaths – accidents account for 80[%]. Most suicide occurs from age 18 on and among those who have left school. Motor vehicle accidents cause death and enormous non-fatal disability as well. We know the causes of accidents, we do not know the causes of suicide (beyond alcohol and major psychiatric illness in some cases), nor do we know how to predict or prevent it. In this context the national obsession with teenage suicide is an obscenity. A recent study in Dunedin has shown that motor vehicle accidents among the young are much more common in those with mental health problems. Add to that the overweening role of alcohol in all accidents, in crime, in violence and suicide and it becomes clear that mental health problems are the problem of adolescence and behind all of them, the pervasive cancer of alcohol. To deal with these problems we need a range of services... Many such services exist but they are poorly resourced and coordinated. In allocation of resources ‘adulthood’ (just as reprehensible as sexism or racism) obtains. For central Auckland, adult community mental health services have 12 psychiatrists, child and adolescent services have 0.8; adult services have a budget of about \$30 million, child and adolescent, about \$1 million. What needs to be done... [is that] we need to deliver a society that cares for the unfortunate, makes good parenting possible and stops its adults and media from modelling and adulating narcissistic, acquisitive, drunken, and violent behaviour.

...Teenage mental health problems are skyrocketing in Auckland... Admissions for manic depression at the Starship children’s hospital have soared by 55[%] since last year. The average length of stay has more than doubled to 27 days. [The Starship’s] child psychiatrist... said teenage patients were flooding into the child and family unit, forcing younger children on to a waiting list. Trends pointed to the service coming under intolerable pressure... The surge was most likely a result of people recognising major problems among teenagers... Teenage patients tended to come in with crisis situations or arrive under a compulsive treatment order and needed longer stays. Younger children generally came in for shorter assessments and treatment plans for conditions including behavioural problems, serious feeding difficulties, complex attention deficit disorders and autism[(‘about 10% of infants can be identified in the earliest months of life as temperamentally difficult children: these children are characterised by biological irregularities in sleep, feeding, and elimination; inflexibility; avoidance or distress in response to new experiences; slow adaptability to new situations; nonfastidiousness; and negative moods, including extremes of fussiness and crying’)]. About 10 children were now on the waiting list... “Many have long-term difficulties. For example, there are some children with possible psychotic illnesses leading to behavioural difficulties who have been out of school for quite long periods of time.” ...[a] Lower Hutt mother was near breaking point trying to control her daughter’s... suicide attempts, furious outbursts, pregnancy... and... miscarriage... “My daughter must have tried to kill herself 50 times. My husband and I were trying to hold down our jobs and look after her at the same time. We were very sleep deprived... and we all ended up on medication.” ...A string of medical professionals put the 17-year-old’s behaviour down to teenage problems. But [the mother] realised major help was needed. In May last year, her daughter’s condition was finally diagnosed. Then began the hurdle of obtaining help... A Lower Hutt psychiatrist recommended the Starship’s child and family unit and the family joined the queue. “There’s really nowhere else in NZ to go... We were just hanging out for the day [our daughter] could be admitted and it seemed endless.” After two months, the family got the go-ahead to travel to Auckland. Manic depression was confirmed and three months of treatment began. Her daughter is now on a drug to keep her “normal” and has gone back to school part time... The unit takes up to 12 in-patients from across the North Island. Many were referred from regions which only had adult wards.

...A suicidal mentally ill 15-year-old is said to be scared out of his wits after being shunted into a ward for adults with acute psychiatric disorders. The teenager, who may have bi-polar disease (manic depression) was transferred to the Conolly Unit at Auckland Hospital after the Starship... could not guarantee [the youth] would not harm himself, said his mother. The [mother], who contacted the NZ *Herald*, said it was both horrendous and totally inappropriate for her son to be with the adult patients. “[My son] is saying, ‘this is my future – this is how I’ll end up.’ [My son] shouldn’t see that,”... The [mother], who did not want to be identified, said there should be a specialist secure unit in the Starship for such children and adolescents. Before being admitted to Conolly – one of eight cases involving Starship patients in adult facilities this year – her son had bolted from the Starship. The clinical director of the Starship’s child and family unit... would [also] like to see a secure intensive-care unit built at the Starship. Staff were not happy about admitting adolescents to wards for adults with acute psychiatric disorders, but there was no alternative... A funding breakthrough... [of] an extra \$500,000... may help, although it will still not guarantee that all extremely sick and troubled adolescents will be kept out of adult wards... In 1994 there was an outcry over mentally ill children being sent to Conolly when the Starship’s unit closed at weekends. A campaign by parents and a public row resulted in the child and family unit remaining open for seven days. During the battle, [an]

Emeritus Professor... wrote in a briefing paper that adult psychiatric inpatient units were unsuitable for children and adolescents because of a raft of risks... includ[ing] the danger of... sexual harassment and... physical... abuse.

...A 15-year-old mentally ill boy admitted to a ward for adults with acute psychiatric disorders was yesterday returned to the Starship children's hospital. The teenager's mother said... [her suicidal son] was much calmer since his return to the Starship...

A Rotorua trust says it had no choice but to send a brain-injured [patient] who later threatened suicide to live with relatives. On Sunday, police and health workers in Auckland could find no place for the distressed [patient] to go, releasing her into the street at 2 am because of a lack of mental health funding. For 14 months, the Head Stay Maungarongo Trust – which specialises in caring for people with brain injuries – had looked after her for free. Three weeks ago [the patient] was sent to live with relatives because the trust could no longer cope with her behaviour... Arrangements were made to send her to stay with family in Auckland, a trip [the patient] had made before... [but the patient, who] had been given a one-way ticket... got lost at the wrong bus stop and overdosed on her medication... The trust's director... said yesterday: "For \$500 a week [the patient] could have had 24-hour care but we could not find money anywhere." The [patient], who suffered from brain damage after contracting meningitis as a child, had not qualified for mental health or accident compensation funding. "[This person] fell through the gaps." The... [director] was distressed by claims that the [patient] had been dumped in Auckland. The [patient] was streetwise and understood the consequences of her actions, but had major behavioural problems after years of institutional care... The [patient] had been in trouble with the police repeatedly...

Shortcomings in the treatment and care of brain-injured people will be addressed in a blueprint for future mental health services. The Mental Health Commissioner... said many people with brain damage from head injuries required different treatment than that provided for the mentally ill[, and]... there had been widespread misapprehension in the past that the Mental Health Act did not apply to brain-injured people who displayed symptoms of poor mental health. A Rotorua-based neuro-psychiatrist with extensive experience in treating brain-injury patients... said about 10,500 people were discharged from N[Z] hospitals with brain damage in 1994, although professional sources believed many more went undiagnosed. "The physical damage is generally well looked after, but often the [mental health] consequences are not well dealt with." One of the few programmes specifically for brain injury patients, the Behaviour Support Service, was set up by Auckland Health 15 months ago. The manager for mental health services for Auckland Health... said it was proving successful, "but I still think more [care] is needed." The executive director of the Brain Injury Association in Auckland... was concerned that "people are slipping through the cracks" because there were often no proper facilities available for the brain-injured in times of crisis. [The director] said the association was meeting police, health and accident compensation representatives to establish a protocol for dealing with the problem.

...The Minister of Health... yesterday signalled that crown health enterprises would come under scrutiny over failings in mental health services highlighted by the... case[of a patient who] was... "tipped out on to the street"... [by] the Manawaroa... treatment centre... in Palmerston North... the day after... [being] admitted... under a family court order for compulsory treatment for six months... [O]ver ensuing weeks [the patient] made 10 recorded attempts to be readmitted. On March 19 last year [the patient] was detained by Levin police for his attempts to have ambulance staff readmit him to Manawaroa. [The patient] also unsuccessfully tried to get the police to admit him. The following day [the patient] got into a Levin home apparently chosen at random and in a hypermanic state of altered perceptions twice sexually violated the... occupant... [The minister] has ordered an urgent inquiry into the case, as have the Ministry of Health and the... enterprise concerned, MidCentral. [The minister] told Parliament... "Our services in the mental health and drug and alcohol area seem to me to be too much organised along the lines of diagnosis and legislation and professional interest and not sufficiently organised around the needs of the individual, as we increasingly have individuals with both mental illness and drug and alcohol problems. They should... not... be treated as... two different illnesses." The Labour health spokes[person was also]... concerned that hospitals and treatment centres were using drug and alcohol "as an excuse for turning away people who need psychiatric help. To me it looks as if mental health professionals, admittedly working under huge pressure with limited resources, are prioritising patients..."

...The Minister of Health... yesterday ordered a detailed audit into how people with mental illnesses are admitted and discharged from acute wards in public hospitals. The announcement came on the day another case about the hospital care of a mental health patient was queried – this time by the leader of the Alliance[, who]... claimed that... Brenda Burton, who died in an arson suicide in her flat in Birkenhead in February, had been discharged six days earlier from North Shore Hospital after a suicide attempt because [Brenda] was assessed as "having no signs of mental illness." ...a fire report on the case showed a witness alleged that Waitemata Health's community assessment and treatment team failed to respond to concerns about Brenda[s]... mental state. Waitemata Health has written to [the Alliance leader] and said the team acted appropriately when dealing with Brenda... A Waitemata Health spokes[person] last night said [it] could not comment on the case before a coroner's inquest. [The minister] said dealing with mental health services was his top priority over the next year[, and] denied the audit was yet another report into mental health services, saying it would reach right into what was happening in hospitals and make improvements at the coal-face. "There is a cycle of tragedies, inquiries, recommendations, frustration and another tragedy. We need to break out of that..." ...last month [the minister] ordered an urgent inquiry into the case of... [the patient] who raped a Levin [resident] after unsuccessfully seeking mental health services for himself at least 10 times over a two-month period. That report is still being completed.

...Health professionals yesterday accused the Minister of Health... of political interference in the... case... [of t]he mentally ill [patient who] was convicted in March of raping a Levin [resident]... soon after being discharged by MidCentral Health staff... [The Minister of Health also] said mental health workers had to meet the same professional standards applying elsewhere in health... But two health professionals, speaking independently, said that [the minister] was making scapegoats of specialists. The mental health services manager for Waitemata Health... said mental health workers who made mistakes should be investigated by the Medical Council, but politicians should not interfere. Many other mental health cases had been through that procedure without fanfare. The executive director of the Association of Salaried Medical Specialists... said psychiatrists were working in a seriously under-funded... service, but those responsible for creating that situation were not legally accountable. "The minister who is pointing the finger at psychiatrists is the same minister who is currently cutting mental health funding." ...An inquiry... found th[e patient]'s treatment was seriously inadequate, although clinical staff could not have predicted the rape. No individual was found to have been negligent.

...The announcement of yet another review of mental health services has drawn criticism that talking is still taking precedence over action in addressing the shortage of care, particularly in the community. And the head of last year's extensive mental health inquiry... thinks the latest audit may place emphasis in the wrong place and put the cart before the horse in terms of meeting the most urgent needs of the mentally ill... "No clinician or nurse gets any pleasure in admitting or discharging a patient inappropriately to or from an acute bed, but out of concern and simple humanity they are left with little option. It is wrong to suggest that inadequate assessment and admission criteria is the reason for the review... It seems to me more honest to say that this review has been triggered by collective inaction of successive Governments, by often questionable management and financial practices by some within the system, and by a belated realisation that if community care isn't sorted out, then little will improve." [The retired judge]'s inquiry team's report last year noted that since 1987, 67 inquiries into mental health had been undertaken, including 51 involving the care and services in psychiatric hospitals. [The retired judge] hoped the latest audit would not simply go over grounds already covered in his team's report, which revealed that staff are often "advised to discourage" admissions due to lack of beds because those beds were being inappropriately occupied. Sometimes a less acute patient will be discharged so that the bedspace can be utilised by someone who is more acute. Clinicians, patients and families should not be confronted by that ethical dilemma." ...this latest review will be worthwhile only if it "ensures in the near future that there will be more and better community care facilities and services for the mentally ill."

...For many families of the mentally ill, “community care” sounds like a bad joke... [O]ne worried daughter... is at her wit’s end trying to find a safe home for her manic depressive father... [who i]s not considered mad or bad enough to need urgent help... [The] 52-year-old psychiatric patient is about to leave Kingseat Hospital in South Auckland, despite his daughter’s fears for his safety. Last night South Auckland Health promised [that her dad] would not be sent home until [the patient] had proper support. But [the daughter said it] had run into a brick wall trying to find help for her father, who needed regular supervision for his own safety and other people’s. About three years ago when [the dad] failed to take his medication, [it] drove his car down the Southern Motorway, smashing into six other cars and causing about \$30,000 worth of damage... [When last s]ent back to his Manurewa home... [the father] did not wash himself... got drunk, abused people who tried to help, went on spending sprees and failed to pay his bills... [The daughter and] her sister, who had looked after their father for years, could not watch over him constantly. [The daughter] had tried unsuccessfully to find him places in retirement homes, halfway houses and a psychiatric unit designed for short-term acute patients at Middlemore Hospital... then tried to arrange for social workers to visit his home regularly... but no one could help her. “I just want to hit somebody, shake somebody and say why can’t you help...”

...Families of mentally ill people are struggling with impossible burdens because they cannot get professional help, says the Schizophrenia Fellowship. An Auckland spokes[person for the group]... said many relatives would understand the plight of [the daughter] who went public in yesterday’s *N[Z] Herald* with her battle to find a place for her manic depressive father... One [person], who did not want to be named, rang the *Herald* to say [it] had exactly the same problem with her mother. “I burst into tears as soon as I read the story.” [The spokesperson] said many elderly people felt alone as they tried to cope with psychiatric problems in their sons and daughters... [I]ronically the people who most needed help did not get it because they were so difficult to deal with... “They’re often not wanted in acute settings because their behaviour is so anti-social they disturb other patients.” ...North Health was contracting more home support services but only for about two hours a week. This was not enough for patients... who needed attention every day, and others, who still needed 24-hour care.

...Groups at loggerheads over a psychiatric half-way house planned for Te Kuiti will face off at a resource consents hearing late next month. The Raukawa Development Trust has applied to the Waitomo District Council for consents to establish the service. The trust planned to house up to eight psychiatric patients in the house. They would require 24 hour care but would be free to come and go from the property.

...Eight Auckland psychiatric patients... most of whom suffer from schizophrenia and require 24-hour care... face eviction on Friday unless funds are found to keep their cash-strapped community home afloat. Taumata House in Mt Eden says it is being forced to close its doors after failing to secure a funding contract with North Health. It has invited North Health and other interested parties to a meeting on Thursday in the hope that a solution can be found. Meanwhile, the search is on for alternative accommodation for the patients... But... a spokes[person] for the Auckland District Council of Social Services[(ADCSS)], said that even if alternative accommodation was found the move would compromise the residents’ well-being. “If this situation is not resolved then ultimately these people will be dumped in outer suburbs of Auckland away from what they know and who they know...”... [The] manager of the regional co-ordination service run by Waitemata Health... [confirmed that] the patients were likely to be moved to west or south Auckland. Taumata House’s owner... had twice missed out on North Health funding contracts... “As much as I love these people I can’t go bankrupt for them,”... [The owner] claimed that North Health... was too restrictive with its conditions, which prevented her having elderly residents as well as psychiatric patients... However, North Health’s mental health manager... said it could only fund organisations through a public tendering process, not on an ad hoc basis. “We’re not a funding body but a purchasing body. We work out what services we need to buy at a given time and then put them out for public tender.” Invariably, more people wanted to be providers than were needed at any one time, [the manager] said. The next tendering round was scheduled for early next year.

...Closure unsettles psychiatric patients The Minister of Health... will investigate the sudden closure of a Mt Eden home for psychiatric patients. Taumata House is expected to close today, with some of its... patients uncertain of finding a bed... In Parliament, [an] Alliance list MP... asked [the minister] whether it was in the medical interests of sick people to get one day’s notice that they were losing their accommodation. [The minister replied that it] would be “quite concerned if people in publicly funded accommodation are being kicked out without notice of where they are going.” ...A North Health spokes[person]... said beds were available in central Auckland.

...a Mt Eden community home... was to shut its doors yesterday but agreed to stay open until all of the patients were rehoused. The owner... said two of the patients moved into boarding houses in central Auckland yesterday and two others would move in the next two days... The mental health manager for North Health... said yesterday that [it] was confident the remaining patients would be housed early next week. Placements were not found yesterday as the patients were not yet assessed by healthcare workers... One of the patients had been offered a room in a boarding house in Papakura but was staging a “sit in” because [it] did not want to move out of Mt Eden.

...PARENTS of intellectually disabled residents at Templeton Centre who oppose its closure are refusing to move their children... and that is causing headaches for businesses waiting to receive them... Families who have been battling the planned closure of the Christchurch institution for two years in protest at the lack of alternatives, have just learned they will be offered less than first thought. The number of specialist residential beds being offered by Southern Regional Health has been slashed from 100 to 30, which means moving more residents into the community.

...Once, Carrington Hospital would have been their home... [S]ufferers of mental illness... talk... about the pain and pleasure of life in the wider community... More than anything else they want to be accepted. It’s the recurring theme when you talk to psychiatric patients – that, and the hurtful rejection by so many people. There are... [patients like one gal], who is of indeterminate age, and has a thing about “being safe” – although [the old gal] doesn’t explain from what. [The old gal] rolls her own smokes, talks darkly about “shock treatment being a terrible thing” and says, “I hope they give him some.” Other than that [the old gal] appears to be fine: neatly dressed, with her long grey hair tied softly at the nape of her neck. [The old gal] talks politics and wonders “what will happen to that... [...sacked Associate Minister of Health] who looked after the sick children... It was wrong, you know, to do that to him.” ...There are... [old guys like the one who] likes walking, and enjoys watching youngsters playing on swings and slides in inner-city parks. Although his appearance is unremarkable [the old guy has] long since learned to be wary of striking up a conversation[, having] been threatened by mums and dads and called a “grubby old bastard.” ...[the old guy and gal] are schizophrenics, two of about 35,000 *N[Z]*ers with the affliction. For the most part, they’re more of a danger to themselves than to others... [The old guy, who is] one of those moved out into the wider world by the closure of large mental hospitals over the past decade... does not think that policy, in principle, [wa]s a bad thing... “I wouldn’t want to go back to Carrington... It was ‘Do this, do that, go here, go there.’ Oh, it was clean and warm, but it was barracks living. You were a number, and you were never quite sure what they were going to do to you. They didn’t tell you much. But what’s still missing is good... alternative accommodation in the community....” says [the old guy while] looking at the stained wallpaper in his room... in an inner-city boarding house... The floor is lino, with a mat beside a bed with a sag in the middle... “It’s hard to find a decent room like this when you only get about \$200 a week to live on.” ...The Community of Refuge Trust is one organisation doing something about the accommodation problem. It runs nine villas converted into flats or group houses, caring directly for 22 people and letting accommodation to another 15. The trust depends on rents, North Health contracts for the support of clients, other grants and donations, and the tacit support of the Ponsonby Baptist Church – although [the] manager... hastily says there’s “no agenda” in the link with the church. “The big thing is not to make our clients dependent on us... But they’re quite capable of doing very well. It’s just that now and again they need a little advice, like we all do. If only we could get that message across to the wider community. These people are loving and kind and supportive of one another. Just be tolerant.” That’s one of the things about the inner city, says... a former scientist who talks openly about his decline into schizophrenia more than 10 years ago.

"The people around here [Ponsonby, Grey Lynn and Herne Bay] are used to us. They've come to know we're no real problem, no threat. It's why people with mental illnesses like the area, and of course it's also handy to hospital and other help when needed." ...[A] manic depressive as a result of a violent relationship... confirms the hostility of the suburbs... "All I got was threats and 'Get out of here'." [This person now] shares a "safe house" with two other [gals] with similar problems, one of whom is studying psychology at Auckland University. "Together we feel secure... and it's the first time I've felt that in a very long time." ...[the] former bank officer, is looking for work – "anything" – but has had a couple of knockbacks because of her honesty. "I told them of my mental illness. I didn't get the job. Later one of them was frank enough to say I'd been chosen until I told them what I was. So now I've decided I won't say anything." [The former scientist] doesn't agree with this, although [it] sympathises. "I think you're bound to reveal what you are." [The former scientist] does – and is looking for part-time work to supplement his \$7000 income as a sickness beneficiary. Living on that after being used to \$40,000 a year has been tough. The trust [w]as... set up to fill the caring gap created by a seemingly uncaring bureaucracy which used a Government policy of the 80s to dump people on the streets, their plight made even worse by the benefit cuts of 1992. They wound up in rundown houses or boarding houses, often living on canned food, with little or no direction, and missing their medication... In the 1950s, when Carrington Hospital was still running at capacity, it housed 1200 patients. By... 1988 there were just 300 people in the institution... But the number of psychiatrically ill people remains constant at around 3[%] of the population. According to... North Health's general manager mental health services, the Auckland region has a real mental health clientele of 39,000 – but "we access [treat] half that."

...A much-delayed \$12 million mental health awareness campaign has been given the official go-ahead despite indications that it could backfire. The Minister of Health... [said] last night... that [it] had initial concerns but could see merit in the four-year campaign... "Initial research shows a public awareness campaign is likely to be perceived as the Government spending money on a [public relations] job instead of getting real services up and running... Nothing will kill a campaign quicker than someone credible standing up and saying this is a waste of money and should have been spent on services... The research also indicates the campaign could be perceived as the Government trying to blame the community for problems which are Government responsibilities." ...the [mental health] sector had largely backed the campaign. However, a long-running series of planned television advertisements – following the lives of five people with a mental illness – has been shelved. The minister said that the sector was wary of how it was portrayed, particularly on television. It was better to focus money on community-based education programmes... An Aotearoa Network of Psychiatric Survivors manager... said negative attitudes had existed for too long. Health authorities will develop specific programmes to try to change public opinion[, although]... views conflicted on whether attitudes could be changed over four years.

...[a n]ewspaper publisher... has set up a \$1 million trust fund to assist families with mentally ill dependents. The fund is in the name of... [hi]s son, Robbie, a schizophrenia sufferer who committed suicide... last year... [T]he money was what Robbie would have inherited and [his father] hoped it would help to make up the shortfall in funding for mental health. "Robbie's plight brought home to us that we wanted more to be done."

...Ask what kind of child Robbie Horton was and his dad... drifts into a sad smile. "[Robbie] was beautiful... A lovely child. Full of fun, very outgoing, very engaging, into everything." But over the years Robbie became withdrawn and a year ago... killed himself. [Robbie, who] had been diagnosed with schizophrenia... was only 26. Robbie's suicide was to spark intense debate about the state of the mental health system, a system that... [his father, a NZ] *Herald*... proprietor... lashed out at in despair in a moving article... [Robbie's dad] hit out at privacy laws which shut his family out, their questions blocked by health professionals who cited the Privacy Act and did not reveal important information. [The father] questioned why, when Robbie needed long-term compulsive treatment and supervision, the most effective way to achieve this was via the Criminal Justice Act, not the Mental Health Act. Today families of schizophrenics hold up [Robbie's father] as a hero, because a year after Robbie's death they believe public and professional attitudes are beginning to change. They put it down to his courage in speaking out... Now families are more ready to fight for information about their relatives. [Robbie's father] also feels "slightly" optimistic about improvements in the system. [But it] still has anger... And... savages the hundreds of millions of dollars poured into the museum in Wellington – a serious misjudgment of priorities when Auckland is crying out for mental health services... Privacy laws, [Robbie's father] says, are still a stumbling block for families desperate for information on their loved ones. "The problem some of us have is that you are empowering people with impaired judgments – who can often have elements of paranoia about the system, hospitals and families because that is part of the illness – empowering them to exclude their families from knowledge because it's a way of getting back at families." The Privacy Commissioner... stood by the act a year ago and still does. But [the commissioner]... says families should be alert when health professionals mention its very name. The problem has been the use of the act as a means to avoid answering questions from families instead of giving them the real reason... "They should simply say, 'I don't believe it's appropriate to let you have that information'." [The commissioner] has called for suggestions on how the health code under the act could be changed but there have been none. The code limits the instances in which personal health information can be given but it also gives agencies a discretion to disclose. It cannot be used to force an agency to disclose personal information... "People have said, 'Oh well, if the Privacy Commissioner's right the law's an ass.' But if you say to them just exactly where is it an ass, there's not a lot of criticism." Besides, some families are not good for the patient. It did not make it right to give blanket information just because there was a family connection. Dilemmas will always exist for health professionals who must balance the needs of the family to the rights and needs of the patient... [T]he Privacy Act and its health code... had been introduced at a time of vast change in the mental health system. Services were reeling and the act was complex and daunting. Normal clinical practice of discussing a person's care with their family was suddenly elevated to being equivalent to a breach of confidence that required exemption under the code.

...When Robbie Horton woke on a bleak winter morning 12 months ago, slowly dressed and took his own life, [Robbie] followed a depressing pattern. [Robbie] was a member of one of the most vulnerable groups in... society – the mentally ill. Now, marking the first anniversary of Robbie's death following his release from compulsory treatment and 15 months after the Mason Report into mental health services, [the NZ *Herald* begins] a series on the state of N[Z]'s psychiatric care. It is some... 10 years since the process of emptying most patients out of psychiatric institutions began. Despite some stories of hope, our reporters chronicle a depressing state of affairs, which most N[Z]ers suspected existed but hoped did not. For the first time N[Z] has a "homeless team" that drives around Auckland looking for and treating former mental inpatients. The team workers accept its need with a chilling shrug. "The homeless are a fact of life. It's better that we treat them." ...Mental health workers are stretched to breaking point by high workloads, choked by policies that don't even let them talk about the possibility of "secure" accommodation and hindered by unclear laws. Despite Mason Report money filtering slowly through the system, the mental illness share of health spending has dropped from 20[%] in Hospital Board days to nine... as successive governments have used the good intentions underpinning moves towards care in the community to save money. In some areas, the "community" is rebelling – using every method in the book to stop psychiatric patients being housed in their backyards. We talk to the former judge [and head of the report,] who has spent the past 10 years recommending changes... [The retired High Court judge] alternates between feeling mild satisfaction and despair with a service that is unable to get its act together. "We are quite capable of having the best mental health service in the world... I live in hope." Our... series will let readers judge for themselves whether that hope is justified.

...Mental health support workers are to be axed from a scheme designed to allow patients to live independently in the community. The... support scheme was launched two years ago and praised by health officials... Auckland Healthcare has told workers that half the 20 central Auckland staff will go in four weeks. • The cash saved will be spent on patients' other needs. The staff deal with 200 patients who have been identified as needing high-level... support, including regular home visits and help in assessing benefits, budgeting and shopping... The A[DCSS]... said the 10 remaining staff would struggle to give adequate support. "It makes a mockery of any intention to improve community-based services..." The scheme's

success relied on a low ratio of support staff to patients so trusting relationships could form... Staff knew patients well enough to spot warning signs and provide help... Most patients came from the Conolly unit... where some have languished for... years because of a shortage of alternative care... A North Health mental health manager... last night said reviews had shown that half the number of support staff would be adequate.

...The Minister of Health... yesterday admitted the rules for allocating extra funds to mental health were “too bureaucratic” and needed changing. [The minister] was responding in Parliament to questions about an Auckland Healthcare decision to halve its community mental health support team... [The minister said it] would discuss the issue with the Ministry of Health and the M[HC]. Meanwhile, the Alliance health spokes[person]... yesterday claimed that case workers in the community support team were paid \$40 for every client they recruited for treatment, with the money taken out of the wages and salaries budget in at least two mental health units at Auckland Healthcare... [T]he regional health authority was concerned earlier this year that the caseload was below the 200 patients the community support team was supposed to be dealing with... “There should never have been any difficulty in locating bona fide patients. It is not as though there was ever a lack of need.”

...Capital Coast Health wants its loss-making mental health services set up as a stand alone business... says a leaked draft business plan. The plan proposes moving at least 80[%] of mental health clients out of care, transferring responsibility for them to family doctors by July 1 next year... [– thereby reducing] demand for community mental health team services and for beds... The crown health enterprise’s mental health services would instead concentrate on the most severely ill, with more specialised services... For remaining inpatients, the average length of stay would be reduced from 18.2 days to 12 days... The plan says staff cuts before the handover of community patients to GPs would require “careful patient and carer preparation.” But the draft says staff lack sufficient skills to guarantee the safety of such a move... Risk factors included a lack of acceptance by doctors, in particular, and the mental health workforce, in general. “The effect on morale of having to improve productivity may precede the sense of excitement at moving to a more focused, more productive service,” the plan says. It warns that disaffected staff may collude to block change or to publicise cases where treatment is less than optimal. Budget constraints could also jeopardise upskilling and recruitment for more specialised services... Overruns in mental health services were a big component of Capital Coast’s deficit last year: they cost more than \$26 million but attracted funding of just \$14.5 million.

...despite difficulties in finding the money and staff shortages... [t]he Cook Islands Government has decided to reopen the psychiatric unit at Rarotonga Hospital because of widespread public concern over mentally ill patients being detained in prison. If a mentally disturbed person causes a public disturbance, the procedure in the Cook Islands is to call the police, not the hospital where there are no facilities to keep the mentally ill nor staff to treat them... “Now that we are to have a separate building, we will have to look at full-time, experienced staff.” One option was to select nurses for extra psychiatric training, however... this could be difficult as the nursing school was closed down last year due to a lack of funds... [F]ollowing staff cutbacks, ambulance drivers have had the added responsibility of helping to care for... patients in the wards.

...Fears have been allayed that hospital closures would result in more intellectually disabled people being imprisoned. A new study identified only 17 inmates with intellectual disabilities – about 0.35[% of NZ’s] prison population and a much lower rate than found in other countries... Prisoners were defined as intellectually disabled if they displayed at least two signs of adapting poorly to prison, such as difficulty understanding routines and procedures, poor personal hygiene and being victimised by other inmates. All the mentally handicapped inmates were [guys]. The authors called for a new study to assess the quality of care available to intellectually disabled inmates.

...The number of mentally ill people in prison is growing because of the lack of services to help them before they offend... Last year 35 mentally ill inmates were transferred from Auckland prisons into the care of the Mason Clinic[(which was built on land formally used by Carrington Hospital)]. In previous years the average was eight to 10. The clinic has a high-security wing and handles about 150 patients a year. Most are more of a danger to themselves than to others. They include those whom the courts have found not guilty of an offence on the grounds of insanity, some of whom may never be released. “The mental health services aren’t able to cope with the volume of people in the community who need help... We’ve only got 60 beds serving a population of a million...,” says [the person] who has been in charge of Auckland’s acute services, under one name or another[– his current position is]... director of... regional forensic psychiatry services provided by Waitemata Health... [–] since 1989. “Here’s a typical scenario we hear up to five times a week: Mum rings up the [mental] health care team and says ‘Can you please come and see Johnny...’ They reply ‘We’ve only got one car but we’ll try to be there as soon as we can.’ Two hours later [Mum] rings to ask where the team is, to be told they were diverted somewhere else, maybe to a suicide, but they’re coming.’ Four hours later Johnny’s smashing up the house and [Mum] rings again, desperate. The answer is ‘Sorry we can’t make it until tomorrow, ring the cops.’ ...Often the police are having to go in and put people on holding charges. That means they’re diverted into the courts...” ...Shutting the old institutions has led to this situation, although [the director] personally supports the closures. Where the policy has gone wrong... is in the failure to provide alternatives... because the bureaucracy has only looked to save money... “There’s a lack of understanding that mental illness disables people. Somehow people have got the idea that you can get in [to hospital], take a tablet... ([like] Risperidone, effective at preventing delusions)... and in two or three weeks’ time everything’s okay. For 80[%] of people that’s true and many don’t even need to come to hospital. But some are so ravaged by their mental illness that they need every care, maintenance and support which, for one reason or another, can’t be provided in their own home – if they’ve got one. This is the sort of support the asylums used to provide. We’re only talking about 50 or so people in a place the size of Auckland, but there are no long-term asylum beds for these people. Instead they clog up the acute units... and they’re also in the prisons. This is the worst gap which has developed in the mental health services... [–] in order to keep the [general hospital] acute units going, patients are discharged prematurely to cope with the others at the door clamouring for help.” [The director] accepts that budgets have to be capped, and despite its shortcomings, our public health system is still one of the most effective in the world. [The director] has recently returned from Toronto and Vancouver where [it] saw mentally ill people everywhere on the streets. They were begging and harassing passersby. “We haven’t got to that stage yet.” [The director]’s also been in India where huge numbers of mentally ill roam the streets. There can be no criticism of Auckland’s Mason Clinic facilities... In five years since the top security wing was built there had been only one escape where previously there were about 20 a week from the century-old [– but higher capacity –] Carrington Hospital. The one individual who made it got away from a less secure area and was due for release the following day – “we knew within five minutes that [the patient] was gone, and where to find him... we’ve got a far better record than Paremoremo [[Auckland’s high-security] prison complex].” The unit has none of the grim facade and bars associated with asylums. It is light-filled and spacious on a tree-dotted site with grassed and paved courtyards – and picture windows made of unbreakable 12mm clear polycarbonate bedded in industrial-strength aluminium frames. The walls can withstand the battering of a bulldozer and are double framed so that a patient hammering on them will not disturb the person next door. The security includes observation points so that staff cannot be surprised and overwhelmed by a patient. The rooms have a raised plinth for a mattress and seat and all shelves are built into the walls. Nothing which might be used for a weapon is moveable. There are no... switches, architraves, sills or air-conditioning ducts from which disturbed people can hang themselves... Outside the mesh fence is unscaleable and the exercise area for the most seriously disturbed is meshed over. There are no downpipes or gutterings for a finger grip and the roof is too steep to walk on. “It’s very difficult to leave,” says [the director] with a wry smile, “and... [w]e have made Auckland a much safer place.” Where possible the patient’s privacy and dignity is considered. In the [gals’] areas the lower outside windows are opaque so they cannot be disturbed by voyeurs, and closed-circuit TV cameras are not used to observe patients... Part of the success of the Mason Clinic is that it is sited in the city and not the remote countryside... Waitemata Health... hopes to tender to provide more accommodation... [now t]he decision has been taken to close the 50-bed national secure unit adjacent to Lake Alice where most of the country’s worst criminally insane are held... A decision about the future of the Conolly Unit is due to be decided... within the next three months.

...It is easier for ordinary criminals to be discharged from prison than it is for those classed as “special patients” to leave a mental health institution. And when they finally do leave, says... [the] senior lecturer in forensic psychiatry at Auckland University, in some cases they are the “most well” of all former psychiatric patients. This is because the standards they need to meet in terms of their mental health status and their rehabilitation are much higher than for non-psychiatric prisoners convicted of similar offences. More than 80 people are held as special patients in mental health institutions in [NZ’s] main centres. About one-third of these are looked after at the Mason Clinic... The term special patient can be applied to four groups of people. The first concerns those who are judged insane by a court and are therefore acquitted of the crime they committed. The term “insane,”... is a legal, not medical, term. “Psychiatrists do not decide who is or who is not insane. [They] are in court to explain the symptoms of mental illness to the jury and how these affected the person and [his or her] state of mind at the time of the crime. The jury decides whether the person is insane.” Second, a court may decide that people should become special patients if, at the time of standing trial, they are deemed to be mentally disabled to the extent that they are unable to understand the nature of the criminal proceedings – although they might have been sane at the time of the crime, explains... [an] Auckland University... Associate Professor... “It is a point of law that [people] should not be tried in absentia and if they are mentally not there, they can be stood aside and placed in treatment so that they can be brought back. But the vast number in this category never come back for trial.” The third group consists of people remanded under section 121 of the Criminal Justice Act for a psychiatrist’s report to determine their mental status. They are deemed to be special patients while they await the report. The last group comprises those who become mentally unwell while they are in prison and need to be transferred to a mental institution. The long-term care of those... who are acquitted of murder because of insanity is complex, involving a careful balance between therapy and the need to keep them in a secure environment. “Being found insane does not detract from the fact that the person committed the crime,” says [the senior lecturer]. And therein lies the personal tragedy for each individual. “The mentally normal have various justifications for what they have done. These people don’t have that. They believe they were morally right in acting the way they did but from a delusion base. They are moral people who have committed a horrendous act and it hits them harder. They have a huge level of trauma and a large part of their therapy is dealing with that.” ...[an] honorary senior lecturer at Auckland University and consultant in forensic psychiatry at the Mason Clinic, describes them as “double traumatised.” Imagine... coming out of your worst nightmare in which you kill someone you love, and finding it is true. “That’s what coming out of a psychotic state in which you killed a family member is like. And many patients eventually do recover.” Unlike ordinary criminals, these people have a condition which is often treatable with the right medication: remove the psychosis and their motivation for violence is controlled. In some cases of reluctance to take medication the problem can be overcome by the use of a long-acting injection but this depends on the drug, its side-effects and whether it is suitable. None of the newer anti-psychotic drugs is available in this form. One, clozapine, is unlikely ever to be, because it can suppress the bone marrow in a significant few. Stabilising a special patient’s mental state through drugs or therapy is only one aspect of care during the years spent in an institution. The other involves addressing the issue of the degree of concern the public has about the patient’s eventual release. “We are not apologists for our patients. We have a responsibility that’s heavy and we don’t duck those issues,” says [the senior lecturer]. Nor are psychiatrists easily fooled. A bogus plea of insanity is usually detectable by a trained professional. Moreover... when those pretending to be mentally unwell learn that if found insane they face an indeterminate period in a psychiatric hospital, they almost always opt for a finite prison sentence and come clean. In fact... the usual minimum stay in hospital of a special patient in a homicide case is not hugely disparate from the prison stay of someone convicted of [hu]manslaughter. Some, however, stay in hospital a lot longer. The decision about their release from a secure psychiatric hospital is made collaboratively by the clinician treating them, the... Minister of Health... and the... director of mental health...

Lawyers representing mentally ill people detained against their will have extreme reservations about a proposed shake-up of the mental health system. Radical changes recommended in a new report would see the role of the Director of Mental Health dissolved, and other changes to key management structures implemented to trim and modernise the system. But district inspectors – Government-appointed lawyers who protect the interests of the mentally ill under compulsory treatment orders – say mental health services need stronger leadership rather than cuts... The proposed changes are included in three Ministry of Health commissioned reports... examining the role and functions of the Director of Mental Health, the district inspectors and the directors of area mental health services. In recommending the abolition of the office of the Director of Mental Health, now held by... [the person] who is also the minister’s chief psychiatric adviser, [the report’s author] concluded that the role of the directorship was so limited it was no longer necessary... The Director-General of Health... said it would be sensible for the district inspectors to report to the... Health and Disability Commissioner... because the organisation’s roles already overlapped. [The Director-General] preferred this to an alternative recommendation in [the professor]’s report for the inspectors to come under the umbrella of a Mental Health ombuds[person].

...The number of mental health workers must increase... to meet the country’s needs, a key report... by the M[HC]... says... The Mental Health Commissioner... said the number... working in adult services needed to more than double... mean[ing] another 1800 workers joining the estimated 1600 staff. Child and adolescent services, however, need an eight-fold boost in staff to meet needs. There are only about 230 workers in that field.

...If the mental health sector was a literary character, it would be Oliver Twist, begging bowl raised, whimpering for more. As with all health services there is never enough money for mental health. But, as [a retired j]udge... stressed in his 1996 report, the tradition of delivering mental health “on the cheap,” or viewing it as a service that can cope on minimal funding, must be sent the way of the lunatic asylum. Mental health has not just been financially starved, some may say it has been tortured. The last Labour Government promised the sector a \$25 million injection from the proceeds of the Telecom sale, only to have that ripped away by the 1990 National Government. Like anyone attempting to follow the mental health money trail, the Mason inquiry team found that reliable data was hard to come by... The Ministry of Health is loathe to provide funding figures before 1990 for comparison, because services included in the mental health budget then are not included now, and vice versa. Thus it is hard to verify the suspicion that as mental health treatment advanced and the Victorian-style hospitals closed, the money did not follow the patients into the community. Certainly, the proceeds from the sale of Carrington in 1993 (for an undisclosed sum) did not go to community services. Rather, in line with strict area health board policies of the day, the money had to go into a capital fund tagged for investment in a related field. So the Carrington money helped to build acute units at North Shore, Auckland and Waitakere and to improve the Maori mental health unit, Manawanui. But what about the operating budget? Even the Auditor-General’s office had difficulty with this when, in 1993, it went looking for a “missing” \$18.6 million from Carrington Hospital’s operating budget destined for community care services. But [the person] who headed the old Area Health Board’s mental health services, said the audit office was mistaken and the money had gone to new community units “all over the place.” More recently, the \$6.8 million from the sale of Kingseat Hospital certainly helped the South Auckland crown health enterprise become the only one to produce a surplus in 1995-1996. But the present chief executive... says the accounting gain of \$4 million from the sale was offset by the \$4.2 million of general medical services North Health did not fund that year. Further[more]... his agency is spending far more on mental health than it made from selling Kingseat – \$7.2 million on a 45-bed acute unit – and it is about to spend a further \$2.5 million on a 16-bed unit. Although it has tried, the Coalition For Public Health has not been able to find its way to the centre of the mental health funding maze, a situation its former national coordinator... finds exasperating... Some may say it is extremely lucky for the Government that funding comparisons over time cannot be accurately made by those desperate to make them. But the former Director-General of Health[, who is]... now director of the Health Services Research Centre, says this situation is totally unsatisfactory. In a letter to the Mason inquiry team last year, [the director] complained that what little information there was centred on patients still in institutions, not on those with mental illness in the community. The lack of information... coupled with the “rapidly changing organisational arrangements and patterns of service delivery make it difficult, if not impossible, to draw sound

conclusions about how resources are or should be used.” As a result... “policymakers and managers at all levels are ill-informed and have little other than self-interested advocacy to call upon.” The newly formed Mental Health Commission is now trying to unravel the funding pattern.

...Mental health has always been an unglamorous area at political level. Bluntly, there are no votes in it. So, over the years it has been left to people like [the head of the Mason inquiry] to champion the sector... Describing himself as an “independent observer” of mental health, [the retired judge] had been concerned about the plight of the mentally ill since the early 1970s, when... visiting Auckland psychiatric hospitals to sign committal orders... [The] judge... was still doing that job when a schizophrenic patient fatally stabbed two people in an Auckland halfway house in 1987. The double murder prompted a Government inquiry into forensic psychiatry in N[Z which the judge] was asked to lead... Since then [the judge] has been asked to do the job twice more and... feels frustrated that the service is still critically ill... The M[HC, which his latest inquiry] recommended, is acting as a watchdog to track spending... But [the judge] was alarmed that it would have no legal clout... “...if... the M[HC]... has no legal clout, then what’s the point?” ...The catch-22 created by crown health enterprises being unable to extract money from regional health authorities until they had services to sell them, has been plugged... It is when patients hit the community that problems start to bite... Mental health workers who spend their time nursing people back to health, know that because they have nowhere suitable to go after hospital, they will be back as soon as the stresses of community living get on top of them... Mental health professionals talk of the “revolving door” syndrome where a relatively small group – say 50 in the Auckland region – cycle in and out of hospital at an ever-faster rate... Once people do get out of hospital the 13 community mental health centres scattered across the region to service them [are] stretched to breaking point... One of the startling facts about this situation is that although North Health insists there are 59 sub-acute beds in the Auckland region, some community care units don’t know where they are.

...[mentally unwell gals] are living in filthy, unsafe boarding houses because of a shortage of housing for psychiatric patients in Auckland, says a damning report. The report was presented yesterday to the Minister of Health... by the mental health sub-committee of the Auckland District Council of Social Services. It said [gal] psychiatric patients suffered sexual and violent assaults and were living in damp and dirty boarding houses with inadequate security. Patients were also languishing in rest-homes and other unsuitable accommodation because not enough Government-funded beds were available and market rentals were unaffordable, the report said.

...PSYCHIATRIC patients have been placed in hotels and general hospital wards while others are being discharged early because of a chronic bed shortage. In some psychiatric units, beds had been set up in spare rooms and waiting rooms to try and cope with what was described as a national crisis by the chair[person] of the Association of CHE Mental Health Managers... While it wasn’t ideal to place people in hotels or general wards, it showed “we are going to extraordinary lengths to ensure care is provided”... CHE concerns that... money[promised by the Government] would not help baseline services were being investigated by the Government.

...Mental health services are being cut in many areas despite Government promises that extra money will improve them, says a confidential report. A review prepared for the Minister of Health... says mental health planning by crown health enterprises is generally poor and there is a lack of coordinated planning across the sector. A number of [CHE]s have identified ways to cut mental health services to save money... [i]t says.

...The Minister of Health... has criticised the performance of [CHE]s in delivering mental health care, saying they have a history of being unresponsive to patients’ individual needs. “We have some very good secondary-care mental health services in our [CHE]s, all of them capable of being excellent. What I am concerned about is what a consumer described to me as ‘institutionalised community care,’ which the public perceives as a kind of benign neglect.”... The Government owned three-quarters of mental health services and... believed there had been insufficient progress in their development. The Government had decided to sharpen the [CHE]s’ focus on their mental health services. Doctors, non-Government organisations and [CHE]s would work together in mental health... Mental health services had been locked in a cycle of “tragedy, followed by investigations, then recommendations which appear to make no difference, then frustrations followed by rounds of people blaming each other, and finally a further tragedy to kick-start it all off again.” The circuit-breaker was winning the confidence of key people in the mental health sector.

...*Mental health: it’s time to stop the political games* Yet another report on mental health services... was released on August 4. The next day the *Herald* quoted... the Minister of Health, as saying that “aspects of the report told the Government what it already knew, such as the need for more community housing.” [The minister] was also quoted as saying: “We need more places for them to go and that’s getting harder because of community resistance to it.” So the difficulty is “community resistance” to people with mental health problems living in the house next door or... up the street. The Government would ensure there were sufficient appropriate places if not for public opinion. It would be nice to believe that the Government has a commitment to mental health, that it knows what is needed and has a plan to achieve specific goals. Sadly, nothing could be further from the truth. In reply to a question in Parliament, the Minister... said on March 27 last: “...North Health... has advised me that there are sufficient appropriate places in Auckland for people discharged from Auckland Hospital’s Conolly unit.” You could now be forgiven for being a little confused. In March there were enough places, in August there are not enough places and the Minister of Health already knew there were not enough places. So what would motivate [the minister] to make two statements which so obviously contradict each other? On July 17 representatives of the Auckland district council of social services met North Health officials. At this meeting... [the] North Health mental health services manager, told us the information provided to the minister in March was accurate at the time. Things had since changed... To believe North Health, something totally unexpected happened... [w]ithin 16 weeks... [However], Auckland Healthcare’s manager of mental health services, was quoted in the *Herald* on July 23 as saying: “North Health has just recently recognised the chronic problems – after years of pressure on the Conolly Unit.” The lack of community mental health beds has adversely affected patients in hospitals for years. The patients have known this, their families have known this, health professionals have known this; everyone has known this except [the regional health funding agency and the Minister of Health!] ...In short, “community resistance” is not the reason accommodation is not being provided. The issue is purely and simply funding. For [the minister] to acknowledge this would bring into question this Government’s commitment to mental health. The political game of first denying a problem exists, then stating your good intentions and having your scapegoat ready, is no way to deliver the basic services needed in mental health. The recent announcement to halve Auckland Healthcare’s intensive community-support work service is yet another example of political expediency and a lack of consistent planning... North Health, until very recently, described community support as “the lead service” – leading the way today, chopped in half tomorrow. Clearly long-term strategic planning is not an approach favoured by North Health[– although i]t would be a mistake to focus only on North Health[, which]... merely implements Government policy and acts within the confines of the funding available.

...A regional service that trains mental health workers in aspects of caring for psychiatric patients has closed its doors... [because] North Health... had withdrawn the \$320,000 annual funding... While the service was funded to train mental health workers in Auckland and Northland, it had been used by hospitals in the Waikato and Wellington... It had also run a calming and restraint course for the police, who have to deal with more psychiatric cases... The North Health general manager of mental health... said the service would be replaced by other initiatives...

The... mental health services rely primarily on people (staff) to assist [those] who have a mental illness or mental health problem. There is no “high-tech” equipment... x-rays, scans or beeping machines with blinking lights as seen on television in the physical medicine area. There is the clinical judgment of experienced staff – nurses, psychiatrists, occupational therapists, psychologists... community workers, to name some. In the main the[y] are very dedicated and expert and the continual slamming by the media of their decisions can result in their leaving... [– like] the Auckland Healthcare deputy clinical director of mental health services... [who] quit his position... [this week –] or at the very least becoming despondent. Accurate and constructive investigative journalism is one thing, sensationalising traumatic events is another. There is a possibility that

N[Z] will end up with second-rate services because the best staff have left and those that remain are demoralised... [W]ithout excusing the mistakes that have been made or the times when care was less than effective, there is a fact that should not be overlooked: people in the community cannot be 100[%] under the control of mental health services... While the law allows compulsory assessment and treatment in certain situations, for the most part treatment is voluntarily worked out between client and clinician and can take place only with the consent of the client. [What doesn't help is that] we often hear the media reporting on, for example, "ex-psychiatric patient Josephine Bloggs." When does a person stop being this entity? Five years? Ten years? Or is it in fact a lifetime sentence? Why is it that a person who had an appendix out in 1984 is not forever referred to as an "ex-appendectomy patient"? Similarly, a person... is not a diagnosis[– which means it is]... not "a schizophrenic," just as a person who has epilepsy is not "an epileptic."

...[the person] who killed Aucklander Stephen Dempsey was a psychopath who enjoyed the grisly killing and was unlikely to be cured, a Supreme Court judge heard yesterday... [The person], aged 24, was last week found guilty of murdering Mr Dempsey, a homosexual, at a Sydney northern beach reserve in August 1994... [A] Sydney forensic psychiatrist... told the court that... [the person] had difficulty adjusting to his homosexuality... [and also] had spent considerable time with his paternal grandmother as a young child... [The grandmother] was disturbed and very cruel to animals.

...World Health Organisation experts in A[US] have warned that mental illness will become an enormous burden next century, and is already increasing faster than heart disease. By 2020, the costs of depression and other forms of mental illness will be second only to heart disease, now A[US]'s biggest killer, they predict... [A] co-author of the recently released report *The Burden of Global Disease*, said it was the first time that the U[N] health body had taken into account not only the cause of death but the duration and consequences of living with a disease or disability. "This presents us with a far more accurate and holistic picture of future health needs... The [report shows that the] burden of mental illness on society has been grossly under-estimated. Currently five of the top 10 causes of disability worldwide are psychiatric conditions – depression, alcohol use, manic depression, schizophrenia and obsessive compulsive disorder." In A[US], direct costs of mental health are estimated at \$NZ2.27 billion annually.

...An inquiry has been launched into the care of a mentally ill [offender] who raped and murdered a Christchurch [resident] in February. The... [offender, who] had pleaded... insanity... was found guilty of raping, sodomising and murdering Catherine Florris Coster, aged 79[, and] was also found guilty of... the July 1995 rape of another [person], aged 77... His family had been contacting Sunnyside Hospital in the months before Miss Coster's death because they were concerned about his behaviour... [The offender, who] had a history of manic depression, [and] had previously been a patient at Sunnyside... deteriorated rapidly in January... refus[ing] to take medication, instead smoking cannabis, injecting opiates and taking LSD... [The offender] became increasingly violent, carried a knife and was involved in several road rage incidents. [The offender started to] believe... the police were following him, that [his partner]'s cat was possessed and that [his partner] was a witch. [The partner] rang Sunnyside Hospital weekly during January. On February 14, [the offender] was irrational and aggressive. Two police officers took him to Sunnyside... but... a psychiatrist... decided [the offender] was not sufficiently unwell to warrant admission... "We were shocked, alarmed and angry when a social worker rang and told us [that my son] was being released," said his mother... "[My son] had been calm on the way to the hospital and during the interview. [His partner] told the social worker [that my son] would be calm because [it] was under the influence of marijuana. [His partner said my son]'s and others' safety were at risk and [my son] needed to be in hospital. Her exact words were, 'This is crazy; something is going to happen. It might be in a few days or next week. [My partner] is a time bomb',"... The hospital's senior forensic psychiatrist... who had treated [the offender] for three years, wrote to [the mother] six weeks after the murder, saying in comparison with other Sunnyside outpatients her son was regarded as low risk. But... [the psychiatrist] was struck by the number of times [the offender] had been assessed in the weeks leading up to the murder. "You and [his partner] obviously felt that [your son] was not right and yet several clinicians, myself included, could get no strong hint of major mood disorder... I have to accept that this is where the role of heavy illicit drug-taking seems to have played a major part." ...During the High Court trial... [the forensic psychiatrist] was not called to give evidence[, although]... another Sunnyside psychiatrist... gave evidence in support of [the offender]'s insanity plea... In his letter to [the mother, the forensic scientist] said: "In talking to [the other psychiatrist], we both wonder if we could have been any more astute and dealt with [your son] differently prior to his being charged with murder. I think this is what I find so shattering in that I usually place good credence on my judgment in terms of mental disorder and this, I think, is the only time that it has really let me down."

...[the offender] who had been admitted to Sunnyside Hospital on six occasions since 1991... will spend at least the next 10 years in jail... [because] the jury which sat at his High Court trial... decided that in the two minutes or so it took to mortally bash and rape... Catherine Florris Coster in her garage, [the offender knew his behaviour]... was morally wrong... [The offender] will probably be with another longterm psychiatric patient[– the one found] responsible for another horrific murder also in Christchurch last year... The Crown argued [that patient] was not insane, and that [it] had planned the killing in order to get the police to shoot him. The jury agreed, and [the patient is] now serving a life term with a minimum parole period of 12 1/2 years... [We now await the fate of] the most recent inductee to the roll... [– the person] accused of Tania Furlan's murder...

[Christopher] Lewis electrocuted himself in Mt Eden Prison this week while awaiting trial for the murder of Auckland mother Tania Furlan... Lewis first received psychological help when... 10 years old... Lewis... was diagnosed as psychopathic and had periods where [it] became psychotic... The head of the Mason Clinic... said the personality disorder was difficult to treat... Lewis... needed a team of therapists, specialised counselling and drug treatment to cope with his disorder... [The disorder] had no obvious cause, and very few people developed it in childhood... Most psychopaths ended up in the criminal justice system rather than the mental health service... It is unclear whether Lewis was receiving treatment while on remand in Mt Eden... The prison service has launched two inquiries into his death – one internal and one independent.

...At an inquest yesterday, the Auckland district coroner... [said] Lewis was found slumped in a chair with a torn bed sheet wrapped around his head. The sheet held the bared ends of a coaxial television aerial cable to his head. The other ends of the cable were connected to a 240-volt power supply in his cell. Attempts by three prison nurses and ambulance paramedics to revive Lewis failed. [A s]ergeant... told the court Lewis had a history of psychiatric disorders and on the day [of his death] had been concerned about the break-up of his relationship with his girlfriend. Lewis asked for time to himself in his cell when [Lewis] and his cellmate were told they were allowed out to a small exercise yard... [The coroner] would not make an order suppressing the details of... Lewis' death... but... would suppress details of a suicide note, which... contained items of a personal nature. The coroner made three recommendations to the Department of Corrections so deaths by electrocution in prison cells could be avoided... [–] circuit breakers should be installed... junction boxes should be secure... and a strict inspection procedure should be instigated to ensure all electrical appliances in cells were not tampered with. Lewis had been in jail awaiting trial for murdering Mrs Furlan in her Howick home and kidnapping her six-week-old daughter... A[US]n-born Mrs Furlan was found lying in a pool of blood in the foyer of her home after her husband failed to reach her on the telephone.

...Christopher John Lewis pointed a gun at a chemist and threatened to blow his head off just days after allegedly bludgeoning Howick mother Tania Furlan to death, according to newly available court documents. And 10 days after terrorising the chemist and his assistant, the documents allege, Lewis was at it again – this time training a gun on terrified bank workers during a hold-up... The court file... also shows that soon after the killing [Lewis] appeared to be making plans to leave the country by applying for a passport under a false name. Details of the robberies of [the] pharmacy and... bank in Mt Eden had been suppressed to avoid prejudicing Lewis' murder trial. The chemist[,] who... said his assistant had been on the job only three days and the trauma of the robbery was too much for her – [the assistant] resigned that day... [–] was stunned when [it] heard

of the notorious past of the [person] who had robbed him. "In retrospect, knowing [the robber] was a psychopath, it is quite unsettling." ...[the court file] gives details of... a letter Lewis wrote to a... former girlfriend who was to give evidence at his trial. The letter began: "As you know I am on remand but this time I am actually innocent. Perhaps it is the past karma catching up, who knows. I shall win because I trust in God [Lewis was a Buddhist] and in truth." [The letter] then threatened to reveal "where I got my half pound of dope"... unless the [ex-girlfriend] stayed away from the trial... Lewis[was] notorious for firing a shot at the Queen in Dunedin in 1981 [(r:p1188, ln60)] and a string of bank robberies in 1987...

Documents show that 10 years ago, while confessing to a series of bank robberies in Christchurch, Lewis spoke of... using ninja skills to survive in bush on the West Coast while being hunted by armed police. After... [being caught Lewis] told police: "I didn't need the money. I did it because I felt I had to, to prove [to] myself that I was a true ninja. That is the way of the ninja. This ninja god inside me is causing me to do things that I know I shouldn't do. It will kill me in the end." ...N[Z] does not have the proper psychiatric facilities to treat people such as... Lewis, says an employee of Lake Alice Hospital, where Lewis was twice confined.

...[a] 36-year-old... says [it] will never forget what happened to him at Lake Alice Hospital. The... North Shore [resident] is one of about 40 former patients whose case for compensation was presented yesterday to the Attorney-General... The... [group] say that as children in the early 1970s they were tortured at the mental hospital near Wanganui with electric shock treatment and painful injections of the drug paraldehyde[, which]... was supposed to have a calming effect... Hospital managers, including the former superintendent... have denied the claims but [the 36-year-old] said his memories were still as vivid as ever. "The nurses would grab you and maybe get another kid to help hold you down. These earphones would be put on your head. As soon as they were on, they would give you a zap of electricity. Your whole body would go stiff and you couldn't move of your own free will although you might convulse. The pain was horrible... everyone screamed." [The resident said it] was taken from his mother as a 2-year-old and formally placed into Social Welfare Department care at the age of 6[, then] was sent to Lake Alice in 1972... [after running] away from a Wanganui boys' home and [being] run over by a car. According to his Social Welfare files, the department believed [the 11-year-old] had brain damage, which the accident had made worse. [The resident claims it] was sexually abused, at first by a group of older [patients] and then by teenagers, and often physically beaten by the staff. But the worst abuse... was the electric shock therapy, which was given as punishment for trivial offences such as not making the bed... After leaving the hospital, [the victim] had a string of convictions for theft and dishonesty offences until about eight years ago. [The resident] blames Lake Alice for his continuing difficulty in trusting people and living a normal life... Earlier this week the Minister of Health... said many had suffered from brutal treatment in N[Z]'s mental hospitals in the past[, and] suggested it would be difficult to treat the former Lake Alice patients as a special case, as many other ex-patients might say they had similar claims for compensation...

System that's terminally ill... THE list of tragedies surrounding N[Z]'s mental health system reads like a roll call from hell, a montage of every horror movie you've seen. Only the victims in these images are real... It's a grim picture and one which shows no tangible signs of improving... [despite] 127... mental health report[s]... by our count... Since 1987 there have been 67 inquiries into the mental health system, most held after someone has been raped or murdered by a psychiatric patient released into the community, or when police have had to shoot dead a person like Eric Gellatly or Barry Radcliffe before they have had the chance to harm others... [The chairperson] of the Australasian College of Psychiatrists and clinical director of mental health for Waitemata Health... agrees all is not well with the mental health system. But [the director] believes "sensationalism" by the media is the major problem. "You don't report regularly when someone dies of a cardiac arrest in an ambulance on the way to hospital. But when it's a mental health problem, it's different..." ...[the director's comments may be motivated by self-interest]. In England, Canada and the U[S], families of people who have been raped, murdered and injured by psychiatric patients are successfully suing psychiatrists and health officials for damages. Psychiatric patients, too, have grounds to sue their clinicians. [A p]rominent Wellington medical lawyer... says the same could happen here if it could be shown that a psychiatrist had been negligent in assessing a patient who had later raped or killed. However... [because of NZ]'s accident compensation laws... it would be the families of victims who have survived attacks, that would be successful claimants.

...A few hours before a young [Dunedinite] was killed in the bedroom of her... house, the accused's father told a psychiatric nurse his son should never have been discharged from... Ward 9B Wakari, an acute psychiatric unit, two days before... [The son], aged 26, a window cleaner... acknowledged being the person who killed... Karen Rachel Jacobs. Her badly injured body was found... by her mother about 1 pm on July 4... The nurse... was working at the mental health emergency service of Dunedin Public Hospital when... called by [the father. The nurse]... told the... Dunedin High Court... yesterday... [it went to the accused]'s parents' home about 7.30 pm on July 3. The parents were distressed about their son's state of mind... [The nurse] told the defence counsel... [it was aware the accused] had been admitted to 9B after an overdose[, and knew the accused] was on the antidepressant drug Prozac. Asked by counsel why [the nurse] did not obtain a full history on [the accused] before going to the house, the witness said: "I felt no need to have a whole history when I was going there to a[ss]ess his safety."

...A leading Auckland lawyer has criticised the release of mentally ill patients into the community before it is safe to do so. "There seems to be this pattern of schizophrenics being released into the community where they promptly stop taking their medication, which is the only thing that keeps them stable..." ...However, [the]... assistant to the director at the Mason psychiatric clinic... said there were many schizophrenics who posed no threat... Because most mentally ill people were not violent... it was difficult to predict who would be violent or dangerous, especially if they had no history of being dangerous... [The lawyer]'s comments come after a fortnight which has seen at least three schizophrenics declared not guilty of serious charges on grounds of insanity. Last week [the lawyer] was prosecutor at the trial of [a]West Aucklander... who stabbed a [stranger] when the local newspaper office where [the stranger] worked refused to publish an advertisement which was gibberish. [The West Aucklander] said the Book of Revelations had told him to commit the act. [The judge ordered that the West Aucklander] be detained as a special patient under the Mental Health Act... T[he] other... schizophrenics... were also sent to mental institutions last week: [the person] who killed six in the Raurimu massacre, and... [the] 16-year-old youth who... killed... his sister's 10-month-old son [then] carried out a macabre "autopsy."

...The jury [had] accepted his... not guilty to murder on the grounds of insanity... plea after 40 minutes of deliberation... In a statement read to the jury, the 17-year-old mother told how [it] looked in the garage after searching the house for her young son... Jamoure... There [the mother] discovered her brother kneeling by Jamoure with his hands inside his stomach pulling out his internal organs. Part of the baby's skull had been taken off. [The mother] screamed at him: "What are you doing? What are you doing?" before fleeing to a neighbour's house to alert the police as her brother continued... remov[ing] the child's organs. Police told her to go back and get her son... It was believed that [the youth] might have watched a TV3 programme on the Roswell incident in the US military base where an autopsy was carried out on what was purported to be an alien. "This autopsy bears a remarkable resemblance to the actions of the accused in respect to the injuries to Jamoure,"... [The youth]'s family arranged for him to see a psychiatrist some days before the killing, but at the last minute [the youth] refused to go. A new appointment was made for April 17 – the day after the killing. Two psychiatrists called on behalf of the Crown and defence told the jury they believed [the youth] was legally insane at the time. [The judge] told the jury that medical insanity was different from legal insanity, which required that a person was suffering from a disease of the mind to such an extent that [the person] was incapable of understanding the nature and quality of what [it] was doing. After the jury returned its verdict, the judge said it had not been pleasant to listen to details of the case and counselling was available to anyone who needed it...

[A judge has] dismissed four other attempted murder charges laid against... [t]he 24-year-old Wellington[ian who killed]... six people in the central North Island settlement of Raurimu in February... [but was found] not guilty... last week... b[eca]use... of insanity... [The] mass killer... once took a

home-made pistol to an appointment with a psychiatrist, the High Court heard... [The mass killer] refused to hand the pistol over but promised... not [to] use it, the psychiatrist... told the court. [The former patient]... admitted killing his father and five others but... plead[ed] not guilty to all 10 charges by reason of insanity... [The mass killer's counsel said his client's] paranoid schizophrenia "was such to render him incapable of knowing that his acts were morally wrong." [The mass killer's former psychiatrist had also] told the court that after one of several consultations... in 1995, [it] wrote: "If this young [patient] becomes any more mentally disturbed, then [it] might have to be committed... considering his access to firearms and his flimsy hold on reality and his temptation to use explosives against speed cameras." [The mass killer] was a compulsory admitted psychiatric patient in Porirua and Wellington hospitals between August 1995 and February 1996. The psychiatrist in charge of [his] case at the time... told the court there had been insufficient grounds to renew the compulsory admission order when it came up for review after six months. [The patient] had not shown threatening behaviour or suicidal tendencies while in hospital and had behaved when released on short-term leave.

...Choking back tears yesterday, [a mother] outlined her son's deteriorating mental health before [the son] shot and killed his father and five others at Raurimu. [The son], who trained as a dental technician, was diagnosed a paranoid schizophrenic two years ago, and spent time in Wellington and Porirua hospitals... [The mother] said... that her son... "...didn't like taking the medication... didn't see the need for it." But one drug [the son] did turn to was cannabis[, which]... strongly exacerbates... schizophrenia... The [son] was... an obsessive campaigner for the decriminalisation of cannabis, [and] spent up to \$300 a month on the drug before the shootings... [The son] also began making bizarre comments, such as that [it] could control the weather. "[My son thought it] was Jesus Christ. Sometimes... Satan. We thought it was just another phase of his illness... it didn't give us any feelings that [our son] was going to snap... we weren't particularly concerned." At the family's holiday lodge at Raurimu, three days before the shooting massacre, [the mother] saw her son in his room cleaning a sawn-off shotgun. "I said 'what are you doing with the gun...?' [My son] said something to the effect of 'mum, they're coming after me.' ...I said 'don't be silly, there's nobody coming after you'. I must say I was a bit puzzled as to why [my paranoid schizophrenic son] had a gun there. Then I thought the 'they' was obviously things in his mind not real physical 'they'." Three days later, when the [family] and nine guests were sitting down to breakfast at the lodge... "[my son] came into the room and just looked around with quite a stern look on his face... then... said something about having had sex with a cat and dog. I was quite horrified. I got up immediately and suggested [my son] go into the bathroom and have a wash, then go and have some breakfast." Two minutes later [the son] returned to the room clutching the sawn-off shotgun. His father... approached and told him to put the gun down. "[Our son] said 'you're the devil incarnate', then shot him,"... In the panic that followed, [the mother managed to flee] the house...

Survivors of the Raurimu shooting spree yesterday recounted... the horror... After being shot in the head with a blast from [their hosts' son's gun, one couple] lay in the bush and hoped that playing dead would save... [their lives]. As the couple lay on the ground they heard [the son] fire three or four more shots... Once they thought [the son] had moved on, they continued along the driveway, heading for the main road. They found [another guest] injured on the ground beside the body of her husband... As... [this couple] ran into bushes [the wife had] felt the blast of shotgun pellets hit her back. [The wife] passed out and... [upon regaining] consciousness found... her husband's... blood pumping out of the side of his head on to [her. "It was quite obvious... Tony... wasn't alive." As [the wife] lay on the ground [it] heard more shots. Then there was silence. "I thought probably everybody was dead." [The wife said it] had been disturbed by [the son's] behaviour in the months before the shootings and would not have accepted an invitation to stay at Raurimu had [the wife known the son] would be there... [Her niece said, "The son's mother] has a lot to answer for... [The mother] should have taken the gun away from... [her son." At the trial the police kept the victims and their families segregated from what is left of [the mother's] family for fear of an outburst in the court's public gallery... [One s]hooting victim... had an armed stand-off with [the son as it] bundled his mother and two preschool children into their car. Standing in front of the car, [the victim] pointed a .22 rifle at [the son] and told him to "back off or I'll shoot." But [the son] fired his single-barrel shotgun, hitting [the victim] in the head and upper body. [A t]ruck driver... was flagged down on State Highway 4... by Henk Van de Wetering and his daughter-in-law. Mr Van de Wetering climbed on to the side of the truck and yelled at [the driver] to call the police... [While driving] the truck up the hill to find a spot where his two-way radio would function, [the driver saw the son] in the rear-view mirror jogging up the road behind him, carrying a gun. When [the driver] next looked back... Mr Van de Wetering [was] lying in the centre of the road with [the son] standing over him. "[Mr Van de Wetering] had his hands stretched out either trying to cover his face or pleading with the [son]." Mr Van de Wetering died on the road from a gunshot wound... [His] daughter... was angry that [her father's killer] had been acquitted of murder charges by pleading insanity. "You can't say 'not guilty.' Everyone is guilty of every crime they commit. If you say 'not guilty,' you're telling all the victims that the person hasn't committed a crime." ...Earlier, [the son's] mother... told... of the family's frustrations dealing with the health system... Health officials' concerns about maintaining [their son's] privacy meant... her husband [and herself] had difficulty communicating with community mental health staff. Last December, when the couple wanted [their son's] case worker to visit, they were told [the case worker] was about to go on holiday and that a replacement had not been arranged.

...According to... [the] senior lecturer in forensic psychiatry and chair[person] of the Auckland Council of Psychiatrists, [the perpetrator] should have been seen weekly... The last time anyone from Capital Coast Health's newly formed community care team saw [the perpetrator] was December 12. There was a visit a week later, but [the perpetrator] was not home. Then there was a missed doctor's appointment at the end of January... [A couple of weeks] later when, in his own words, [the perpetrator] "went blazing" at Raurimu, [the perpetrator believed it] was defending himself against a worldwide conspiracy. In his deluded state [the perpetrator] thought his parents and the nine friends and family members gathered at the... central North Island holiday lodge were plotting against him and had to be killed. When police caught [the perpetrator] running naked and unarmed through the Raurimu bush, [it] told them that the first person... killed was his father, who... was disguised as a dog... Like many with a psychotic illness, [the perpetrator] resisted taking the medication that often results in painful and frightening side-effects like dry mouth, impotence, trouble urinating, muscle spasms and eyes rolling back in the head.

...the perpetrator of one of NZ's worst mass killings, will probably always remain a confined psychiatric patient... Verdicts of not guilty by reason of insanity on charges of murder... effectively mean the 25-year-old will be locked up until [it] can convince authorities [it] is not a danger. His lawyer... doubted [its client] would ever be released... [The perpetrator] spent last night at a secure unit at Tokanui psychiatric hospital, south of Te Awamutu, where [it] has been undergoing anti-psychotic treatment since the shootings. Next week [the perpetrator] will be moved to a 15-bed forensic ward at Waikato Hospital's new \$17 million... psychiatric centre... Health Waikato's regional forensic mental health manager... said [the perpetrator's] long-term living arrangements were still to be discussed with the Ministry of Health. Guidelines recommend patients live close to their family or home community. In [this] case that would mean a transfer to a forensic facility in Wellington. As a "special patient" under the Criminal Justice Act, [it] requires the approval of the Director of Mental Health before... be[ing] granted leave to spend any time out of custody.

...[Raurimu's m]ass killer... could apply for short-term leave from hospital detention, a thought that horrifies the families of his victims... If leave is for less than a week, the law does not specify that patients like [him] have to be accompanied by hospital staff on outings... An Auckland University law lecturer... said that it was not unknown for psychiatric patients, including those found not guilty of crimes on the grounds of insanity, to be granted leave as part of their rehabilitation... The chair[person] of the Auckland Council of Psychiatrists... said outings... would start with walks around the hospital grounds, escorted by staff and later by family. "[However, a]nything longer than a walk would be years away."

...Capital Coast Health has cleared its staff of making any major omissions or mistakes in their handling of... [the perpetrator], but admit his care could have been improved... [Hi]s committal to a psychiatric hospital does not mean the end of officialdom's clutch on the Raurimu tragedy. A

coroner's inquest for the six people... gunned down on February 8 is likely early next year. As well, [the perpetrator] still officially faces a charge of unlawfully possessing the 12-gauge shotgun... used in the massacre... At the time of the shootings [hi]s firearms licence had been revoked. Police decided [the perpetrator] was unfit to hold it after [a] 1994 arrest for assault and his 1995 committal into psychiatric care. [However, t]he officer in charge of the Raurimu investigation... said police were now unlikely to pursue the outstanding charge... Meanwhile, [the judge] has released his reasons for discharging four additional attempted murder charges police initially laid against [the perpetrator]. The Crown alleged [the perpetrator] had a "general intent to kill all persons" at Raurimu that day. But... it could not be shown [that the perpetrator] had fired at the[survivors]...

Mentally ill people cannot use insanity as a blanket defence against their criminal actions, says an expert on schizophrenia. [The professor of psychiatry at] Auckland University, said some psychiatric patients were both "mad and bad" and used their mental illness as an excuse for misbehaviour... [The p]rofessor... was not suggesting [a]paranoid schizophrenic... was faking insanity when [it] killed six people at Raurimu... [It] had not escaped justice either... But [the p]rofessor... said the law was "a bit of an ass" in allowing pleas of not guilty by reason of insanity... [P]sychiatric patients should be found guilty like anyone else but sentenced differently to take their mental illness into account... [The professor said] the public had become... sceptical about hearing psychiatrists make excuses for crimes committed by mentally ill people. "I'm absolutely ashamed to be a professor of psychiatry in this country at the moment because I know the general public look at me and say 'There's another idiot.'..."

...A decade after... [the person who] allegedly shot and killed Donna Kalson, 21, outside a restaurant in Stratford, Connecticut, in October 1987... was spared a murder trial on the grounds that [it] was mentally incompetent, police caught up with him at a Connecticut university where... [the killer], aged 32... is a pre-medical student with a B-plus average... In view of his academic accomplishments since [being spared a trial, the killer] has been arrested and the old murder charge has been resurrected... [In local news, p]olice are seeking lawyers as court prosecutors in a move which legal experts have welcomed as a way of avoiding a possible conflict of interest among officers... It was human nature for prosecuting officers... [- a]t present sergeants do this work[-] ...to want to push cases done by their colleagues... [A] Law Commission... review of the criminal prosecution service... asked police to build a national prosecution service to keep the investigation and prosecution functions of police clearly separate. In a report, it said some court cases were unnecessarily prosecuted, some unnecessarily went to trial and others were not well prepared. Yesterday, [an Auckland judge]... said there was a danger that prosecuting sergeants could also choose to withhold evidence in court cases... The Police Department has advertised for legally qualified sworn and non-sworn staff to fill vacancies for prosecutors in Auckland and Invercargill.

...Aired in the *International Herald Tribune* early this month... [were] a couple of advertisements... - one signed by international luminaries, the other by parliamentarians... [- which called on UN] negotiators to maintain the momentum towards a meeting next year in Rome intended to give substance to the idea of an International Criminal Court. Among the luminaries, last year's Nobel peace prize winner... the U[N] human rights commissioner... the Dalai Lama... the Haitian leader, and the Bosnian Muslim President... Interesting company. In the parliamentarians' advertisement, the European Parliament is heavily represented, as are individual European Union countries, [NZ and]... states whose own justice systems have experienced hard times: Peru and Colombia for instance. The... advocates... [have] a range of motives, from those who have particular miscreants in mind to those who envisage global government. For now there appears agreement on a narrow jurisdiction for the court: genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Leaving international crimes, such as drug dealing or terrorism, beyond the court's reach only confirms the difficulties in creating such a body. Those difficulties become all too evident when the debate touches upon the court's independence. It is hardly surprising that countries known for guarding their sovereignty - and taking at times a cavalier attitude towards the sovereignty of other states - should wish to keep tight control on the court. The U[S] wants the Security Council to decide which cases should go to the court. Well, given the veto the Permanent Five jealously guard, that is a no-no. It is possible to imagine - just as an example you understand - Palestinians wanting to take Israelis to the court for crimes against humanity. They would not get past the [US] veto... Ask Beijing how much it wants publicity aired about its support for the Khmer Rouge. Another veto. So while the charter of the U[N] might refer to "We the people..." the nations of the world body's title tend not to be united and are inclined to protect their national interests to the extreme. For confirmation look at the instances where nations have refused to recognise the existing World Court, which deals with state activities. Remember France and the nuclear testing case? ...Another constraint on the court is that such a body would require an "order" part to go with the "law." The Bosnia war crimes tribunal has shown how difficult it is to go from indictment to trial... It had no police or power to enforce indictments. Would a permanent world criminal court be any different? As a research, record-keeping, investigative body, there is certainly value in such an institution. But, like the sheriff in the old [US] west who caught the rustler then waited for the judge to arrive in town, it may be that the international law and order system rather needs to focus first on how order is going to be enforced before selecting the jury.

...Several hundred people are being sent jury summonses this week for what promises to be the longest jury trial in N[Z] history. The defendant], aged 43, is accused of murdering Susan Burdett in her Papatoetoe home and 44 other charges relating to alleged sexual violation, assault and abduction involving 27 [gals]... The trial... has been set down for five months... Auckland's most senior prosecutor... will head a team for the Crown... [which is expected to] call around 400 witnesses, including 10 experts. A notice being sent out with the summonses says that people can apply to the High Court registrar to be excused on the grounds of undue hardship or serious inconvenience because of the length of the trial... [However,] jury service was a matter of public duty and the court liked to think that businesses would see this as their contribution. "If the juror responds to the summons and an employer takes issue with the juror attending the court, then the employer could be setting himself up for being sued [by the employee] in the Employment Tribunal, as happened in another case." In view of the length of the trial, the jury room will be equipped with additional furnishings and amenities... In addition, crown and defence lawyers are being provided with separate interview rooms, with a separate interview room and access to the court room for complainants... [Furthermore,] jurors would be offered counselling to deal with the stress of being away from family and work for so long... The High Court manager... said... sitting hours would be fixed to allow jurors "to retain contact with their usual lives." Jurors are paid a minimum of \$350 a week tax-free plus travel expenses, though the Department for Courts has discretion to pay them above that rate... [In related news, the person] twice tried for an alleged rape of prostitute Natasha Hogan had a previous conviction for abduction and rape which the juries knew nothing about... for fear of prejudicing a fair trial... In October 1988, [the accused] was jailed for 10 years after admitting abduction, rape, sodomy and other indecencies... [against a young gal] six weeks before [the victim] was to be married... [Furthermore, while] on remand for charges including aggravated robbery[in 1983, the accused] escaped from a police van... Yesterday... [the accused] walked free from the High Court after the Solicitor-General decided against a third trial.

...[It has]... been a long day... [T]he jury in the retrial retired at 11.30 this morning... the[n] came back at 5.30 tonight and told the judge that they couldn't reach agreement... [T]he judge sent them away and said 'give it another go.' They came back at 6.30... and said that they'd like to take dinner, which is a sign that progress is being made, but I think we're in for a long night here." "...what seems to be the difficulty with the jury?" "Well, it goes right to the heart of justice, really. They came back and asked the judge for his definition of the phrase, 'beyond reasonable doubt.' Now, of course, that's exactly what they've got to find..."

...A High Court judge conceded yesterday that it would have been better if [the judge] had decided earlier there was not enough evidence to convict [a Northland resident] on a charge of murder. "This is one of those rare cases where the evidence put forward by the Crown is insufficient to enable a jury properly to convict," said [the judge]... who prevailed over [the resident's] trial in Whangarei last month... In the earlier Whangarei hearing, a new trial was ordered after the jury failed to agree on whether the shooting of Wayne Phillip Rogers at [the resident's] isolated farm at

Taipa was murder... [The accused said it] was acting in self defence when [it] fired the fatal shot to protect his partner... who was being threatened with a shotgun at her head by Rogers and his accomplice[, who]... was shocked at the level of Rogers' violence towards her and... was... scared of what Rogers was going to do... [The defence] lawyer... said... unless the jury could exclude the reasonable possibility that [his client] was acting in self-defence, [the accused] was entitled to an acquittal... [The accused] still faces sentence next month on a charge of unlawful possession of a pistol.

...FIRST THERE WAS A CRIMINAL TRIAL IN which a predominantly black jury found [an African-American sporting celebrity (r:p1467, ln4 + p1766, ln57)] not guilty of murder. Then prosecutors, defense lawyers, witnesses, jurors, journalists and police officers lined their pockets with the proceeds from writing books and appearing on talk shows. All this was followed by a civil trial in which a predominantly white jury found [the accused] liable for battering and wrongful death. Now it is the victims' families who stand to cash in. I am disgusted that a search for truth and justice has resulted in this display of bigotry, corruption and greed while leaving the crime apparently unsolved and a possibly innocent [person] ruined. Shame on the society that allowed this to happen! ...Could it be that the concept of trial by jury does not apply in racially mixed societies?

...THE STORY IS NOT OVER YET. THE FINAL verdict will be given by the Supreme Judge, who is neither black nor white.

...SEVEN HUNDRED YEARS AGO, WE DEMAN-ded, and quite rightly got, the right to be tried by our peers. But in modern times the system is just not working out, a classic example being the conflicting verdicts in the... case[in America of the black sporting celebrity]. Trial by one's peers is an expensive anachronism and should go the way of the Star Chamber. A better system would be to have cases heard by a trio of judges.

...The right of accused people to know jurors' names is under the spotlight after revelations that a defence lawyer gave one of Christopher Crean's[alleged] murderers a list of potential jurors before the trial. The Law Commission will examine the fundamental right of accused to know the names of people eligible for jury selection, because of fears that gang members might seek retribution on the people who convicted them.[A] New Plymouth barrister... admitted her secretary had delivered a list of the names, addresses and occupations of about 60 eligible jurors to a Black Power member... in prison... [The member, together with three gang associates, is accused] of murdering Mr Crean to stop him testifying against them in another case... [The barrister] said yesterday that... her clients [were always given] a copy of the jury list so they could fully provide her with instructions. Under the Juries Act, accused are allowed to request a copy to help them identify people they do not want on the jury... It was also revealed that... the mastermind behind the Paparua Prison hostage-taking, had written to people on the jury list both before and after his trial for murdering a Riverton fisher[person], Mark Roderique.

...[the lawyer] who helped settle the Paparua Prison hostage drama is pleased claims of jury bias made by one of the prisoners are to be investigated... On Friday, [the]Corrections Minister... announced the government would fund an investigation... [T]he issue was central to the jury system and defence lawyers often did not have the resources or time to search for conflicts of interest. The risk that jury members could be "contaminated" with a particular viewpoint was greater the smaller the community, said... [the lawyer. T]he issue of jury bias was noted during the... trials [of the person originally convicted of murdering Harvey and Jeanette Crewe. In another] instance... a fore[person] in a murder trial... had not declared [himself to be] a manager of a firm that had previously accused the defendant of theft as a servant... [■ The inmate making the bias claim], who was sentenced to life in prison in 1995, and fellow inmates... face charges of taking six Paparua Prison guards hostage to draw attention to their cases. They released the hostages unharmed after authorities agreed... their grievances... would [be reported] to the Minister of Corrections...

The family of [a]convicted murderer... say his pleas for justice have fallen on deaf ears. "It just shows the depth of his feeling on the matter," his brother... said last night of [the prisoner]'s role in the Paparua Prison hostage drama. "[My bro] has always been frustrated and angry about his conviction, but I never thought it would turn to this. Being in prison is hard for him, especially for something... [my bro – who] is not a violent person... [-] didn't do..." ...The... [bro] was jailed for life in November 1995 for the murder of 32-year-old Mark Roderique, a crew[member] on a boat [the bro] skippered during an ill-fated trip in January 1994. Four commercial fisher[s]... left Bluff for the Manukau Harbour in Auckland in search of tuna. A month later only three remained on the Antari. For four months the slaughter of Mr Roderique was kept quiet. It was not until June that year that his family reported... [him missing. The skipper], then 47, was charged with murdering him at Jackson Bay... on February 13. [The skipper] pleaded not guilty but was convicted in Invercargill. According to the story that unfolded, the quest for tuna had taken the [Antari] from Auckland's waters back down the west coast. On February 13 they landed at Jackson Bay and travelled to Haast for a few beers. That night as the [crew] returned to the boat, a drunken fight broke out. [The skipper] allegedly killed Roderique with the weight from a sash window, took the Antari out to sea and dumped his body with fishing weights attached. It has never been found. The two other [crew members, the skipper]'s nephew... and Tony Sewell, were given immunity by the police. Sewell was killed in a motorbike accident this year. [The skipper maintained that his nephew] was the killer[of Mr Roderique. The skipper] never gave evidence on his own behalf at trial but one of the witnesses on the defence... had contacted police in September 1994 after watching a *Crimewatch* re-enactment of the fight... Anton Sherlock... gave a statement saying [the nephew] had bragged to him about killing a person earlier that year. Mr Sherlock disappeared on March 25, 1995, nine days before [the skipper]'s pre-trial hearing began. His body was found weighted with rocks beside the Irthing Stream near Lumsden during the hearing. [An apparently unrelated person] was found guilty in March 1996 of his murder... [The skipper]'s appeal to the Court of Appeal was dismissed in 1995...

The... lawyer... [for the person] at the centre of the Paparua Prison hostage drama... said yesterday that [it] intended to petition the Governor-General for a pardon or a referral back to the Court of Appeal... [By the way, h]ostage taking by prisoners is usually a means to aid an escape. Attacks on prison officers in the country's over-crowded jails are more common. Just two weeks ago prisoners in Rimutaka Prison assaulted a guard, lit fires and trashed a wing of the building before armed police and a prison riot squad quelled the uprising... A Canterbury University criminologist... said yesterday that the weekend Paparua Prison incident was the first time in 27 years that guards had been seized by prisoners to force negotiations over alleged wrongful convictions. On October 11, 1970, at Paremoremo, two guards were beaten by prisoners in front of other guards. One was seriously injured and the other was bound with insulation tape... [B]efore that the previous case... was in 1965 when Mt Eden prisoners used guards as human shields... In the wake of the weekend siege, the Minister of Corrections... has promised another review... An earlier review led to plans to spend \$250,000 up-grading security at the jail. This would include... electronic door locks and... security cameras...

No guarantees can be given that the hostage siege at Paparua Prison, Christchurch, will not be repeated, says the Department of Corrections. The department's report into the... incident, released yesterday, said it was well managed by staff... The general manager of public prisons... said that, given the nature of prisoners, "you have to accept that from time to time these incidents will happen." The... Labour justice spokes[person]... said the report was sanitised and more significant for what it did not say than what it did. The report had failed to look at the problem created by acceding to the hostage takers' demands, [the Labour justice spokesperson] said. "The risk of a copycat incident has been raised several notches."

...The negotiators who brokered an end to the 26-hour prison siege... are calling for an independent complaints authority for inmates who believe they have been wrongly convicted. Their proposal comes as politicians face fire for agreeing to the demands of [the]four Paparua Prison inmates to have their cases reviewed... "Prisoners want a system for referrals and appeals, a scheme where they can funnel and channel their gripes,"...

A Court of Appeal ruling removing anonymity from a secret witness in an attempted murder trial has alarmed some police. In a three-to-two split, the court decided that the key witness had to provide his true name and address before [the witness] could give evidence for the prosecution. Last night [the]Superintendent... at police national headquarters, said the judgment was lengthy and complex. It would require time to consider before any official response could be made. But a recently retired... Detective Superintendent... spoke for many serving officers when... [it] said the

decision would hinder police in their inquiries. "It is going to tie the hands of the police to get to the truth of some issues. There are some cases, particularly involving gangs or prisons, where you sometimes have to resort to secret witnesses... There is no other way to get to that evidence." ...the police only sought anonymity in extreme situations where the life of a witness might be at risk. Defence lawyers would be certain to pass the information on to an accused person... [T]he prosecution could not force a person to give evidence, and without any guarantee of anonymity they were unlikely to. The court allowed an appeal by... [the] leader of the Nomads gang, who was cleared of attempting to murder [his victim] but found guilty of causing him grievous bodily harm at a rock festival in Manawatu in January 1994. It ruled that [because] a secret witness... [gave] evidence without disclosing his name and address... a new trial [must be held]... Any change in the law allowing anonymity of witnesses had to come from Parliament, the court ruled... [One of the judges who supported] the granting of anonymity... said it was fanciful to suggest that [the gang leader] did not receive a fair trial as a result of a witness testifying anonymously. Leaving the matter to Parliament was an abrogation of the Court of Appeal's traditional responsibility, [the judge said. The other dissenting judge] said: "I do not believe it would be necessary nor acceptable to most responsible [NZers] that, no matter how grave the threat to his or her family and no matter how crucial and reliable the evidence, there should be an absolute rule that unless the identity of the witness is disclosed the evidence cannot be given." ...Appeal Court judges... [had] allowed three protected witnesses to give evidence through a video link from a secret venue outside Taranaki... [during the ongoing trial of gang members accused of murdering] Christopher Crean, a 28-year-old backyard mechanic and member of the Well of Life Church... In March last year Mr Crean witnessed a vicious attack on a Mongrel Mob member by Black Power gangsters outside his Resolution Place house... Mr Crean refused to bow to intimidation by Black Power and gave evidence in a preliminary hearing... [H]is courage cost him his life... The case has made legal history... [because one of the defendants], who is the president of Black Power's Hawera chapter, is believed to be the first N[Z] person to be twice convicted of murder. [The president] was found guilty in 1975 of kicking a [person] to death... [The three witnesses] have been given new identities and relocated as part of the police witness protection programme. But the cold reality of Mr Crean's death makes the safety of all three questionable. Although the head of the programme... was confident of witnesses' safety under the scheme... the... Detective Senior Sergeant... refused to say how witnesses' lives were protected and whether the protection had an expiry date. Indeed, when police became aware that photographs of the protected witnesses had fallen into the hands of the media [a judge] was forced to pass a ruling preventing their publication. Publication "may well expose them and make the efforts taken for their protection illusory... There is no doubt that the danger to these witnesses because they have given evidence is all too real." ...One of the protected three, all too familiar with the gang's disregard for life, is [a] former New Plymouth Black Power president... who was granted immunity from prosecution to turn Queen's evidence. [The former president]... wanted no part in the plan to kill Mr Crean but admitted [doing] nothing to stop it. "The only people I was interested in taking out was the [Mongrel] Mob. No hesitation." As president of the gang [the witness] had respect and influence but "a patched member can make his own decision." [The] Crown prosecutor... believes [the former president] sought immunity because, at 38, [the former president] had given most of his life to Black Power and... wanted out. "[The former president] had gone beyond the drugs, the alcohol and the sheer brutality and was trying to bring his chapter around. I suspect that... [the former president] found himself to be no longer in their camp... Finally... [the former president] had a choice of finding himself in a trial or saying 'I'm going to make a break.' I think in his case it was self-interest." ...This was the third time Taranaki Black Power gang members had been tried for murder since [the prosecutor] became New Plymouth crown solicitor in 1988. That year three members were convicted of [hu]manslaughter following the shooting of a Mongrel Mob member in New Plymouth. [One of the people convicted for killing Mr Crean was also tried but] was acquitted. In 1991 a second Mongrel Mob member was stabbed to death in New Plymouth. Two Black Power members were acquitted. [The prosecutor] said the earlier cases had only helped to convince gang members that they were invincible... The gang and their hangers-on represented a culture centred around a lack of concern for their fellow human beings... "I think a large part of it is the underclass that we are creating in this country who are without any ties to the rest of society, without any moral values." ...Mr Crean's parents... said... "We are proud of... [our son, who] said if anyone is going to make a stand to bring peace in the street, I'm going to." ...Chris Crean was no angel - [having] had a stint in jail for assault a few years back - but... was trying... [to be. Chris] had embraced a charismatic style of Christianity and through that come to terms with himself... [T]heir son... believed that God would provide and God would protect... "[However, Chris] always used to say to me that [it would be his destiny to] die for the Lord. It was what [Chris] felt the Lord had shown him but no one thought it would be so soon... [Even when they] told him they would get him... [Chris] turned around and said 'you can't hurt me, I've got God on my side,'... His wife has since given birth to the couple's fourth child... Because of his work as a Maori warden Mr Crean [senior]... knew or had heard of all four accused and now planned to take a separate message to each of them. "People like this need to see what they have done. They just can't go around intimidating others in the way they do." [A local] Detective Sergeant... said... the... problem was exacerbated because both witnesses and victims were afraid or unwilling to become involved... By the police's reckoning there were 11 witnesses [to the attack in Resolution Place] but only Mr Crean was prepared to be counted... In a draft discussion paper, the Law Commission supported anonymity... Last night the Minister of Justice... had still to read the judgments.

...The Minister of Justice... has promised urgent law changes to prevent N[Z] sinking into "anarchy" after a legal ruling which yesterday saw seven gang members walk free from court. [The minister] said there was evidence that gang intimidation of witnesses was increasing, so a law change was a high priority. Yesterday's aborted trial of seven Road Knights gang members in Christchurch resulted from a Court of Appeal ruling last Friday that witnesses' identities could not be kept secret from the accused. The ruling also said any change in the law allowing anonymity of witnesses had to come from Parliament. The Crown withdrew its case after nearly all its 27 witnesses were too scared to testify against the Road Knights gang members on trial for assault and wounding with intent to injure... Hours after the gang members walked free, [the minister] announced plans for urgent amendments to the Evidence Act to stop a recurrence of yesterday's events. The amendments would allow judges the discretion to let witnesses give evidence without revealing their details to the defence... It could take three months for the changes to become law. In the meantime, police throughout the country will be forced to review cases... [U]p to eight gang trials [in]... Christchurch... may need to be aborted.

...Crown lawyers will ask for trials involving secret witnesses to be adjourned in anticipation of a proposed new law allowing witness anonymity. Police are also planning to withdraw charges at depositions hearings... [then] re-lay charges once the proposed law changes are implemented... The Auckland crown solicitor... said that in any Auckland trials affected, where an adjournment was not granted the accused could be acquitted, depending on the significance of the evidence. [However, the] senior legal adviser at Police National Headquarters... said there was a precedent for seeking adjournments for trials while awaiting legislative change. Similar circumstances involving breath-alcohol testing meant the delay of hundreds of cases... It is unclear how many cases are affected nationally, although in Christchurch at least eight prosecutions are in doubt... Parliament is expected to fast-track proposed amendments to the Evidence Act which would allow people to testify without their identity being revealed to the defendant... The president of the... Law Society and the Criminal Bar Association... said the move to rush through amendments was "of grave concern" which might lead to witnesses opting out of their responsibilities. "They look for any excuse not to go to court..."

...Another gang member has walked free from the Christchurch District Court because police can no longer call evidence from unidentified witnesses following a Court of Appeal ruling. [The gang member, aged] 22, left the court laughing with friends yesterday after [a] Sergeant... applied to withdraw the two unlawful possession of firearms charges [it] faced... arising from a clash between Black Power and Highway 61...

[Police and Christchurch's city council have used the new anti-gang fortification legislation to pull down a Highway 61 fence'. Unfortunately, c]ourt proceedings against Christchurch gang members are in disarray, a second trial relying on secret witnesses having been aborted yesterday. Charges

of unlawful assembly against six Black Power gang members and another charge of discharging a firearm were dropped in the Christchurch District Court. The charges followed an attack at a suburban Linwood gang house in January in which three Black Power members were stabbed during a raid by 11 people, believed to be from the Highway 61 gang. The prosecution's 11 witnesses, many of whom live in the area and are concerned about reprisals, refused to have their identities divulged at the trial. All gave evidence in secret via closed circuit television at a depositions hearing in July. A Court of Appeal ruling last month disallowed secret witnesses. Within hours the Minister of Justice... announced an emergency law change giving witnesses... the ability to apply for secrecy. The proposal is expected to be presented to cabinet this month.

...Dismissing gang court cases... [involving] secret witnesses... in Christchurch sent more than \$1 million worth of police time and taxpayers' money "down the toilet," [a]Labour MP... said yesterday. Information obtained from the Minister of Police... in response to a parliamentary question showed that 17,390 police hours were invested in two operations against the city's Road Knights gang... 22 of the Crown's 27 witnesses were too scared to testify... CABINET will tomorrow consider law changes that will allow witnesses to again give evidence in secret.

...[p]olice may compensate a family who lost money when they were driven from their home for testifying against the Mongrel Mob. They will also see whether the gang can be made to compensate the family for their losses. The family had sold their house for \$22,000, despite its original valuation of \$70,000 and considerable improvements. The family decided to leave Invercargill after police heard a "hit" on them was being planned by the Mob over the jailing of its local leader for firebombing the family's home this year. The arson was revenge for the family lodging a complaint about two dogs owned by gang members next door. Police would also take active steps to bring the gang to justice for the more recent offences which led to the family's decision to leave.'

... 'It took almost two years, but the family have finally stopped looking over their shoulders to see who is following them. And for the gutsy family who stood up to the Mongrel Mob, the gnawing fear that the gang's leader will track down their secret hideout is finally subsiding. "The gang leader is behind bars but we know it will probably have a crack at me one day," says the father. "Bugger him, we have moved once and we are not doing it again. There's no point, the Mob have people everywhere." For years the family put up with threats to kill, break-ins, vicious dogs and foul language. The stand-off came to a head when the gang leader threw two Molotov cocktails through the family's kitchen window. In return, the father did what most people are too scared to do – testified in court against him. The father's evidence was crucial to the leader receiving a six-year sentence for arson. Shortly afterwards, the gang leader's brother received three months periodic detention for threatening the family on TV One's *60 Minutes*. The family went into hiding and *NZ Herald* readers raised \$220,000 to help give them a new life. From the anonymity of their new hideaway – a closely guarded secret – the family have slowly rebuilt their life.' The family is also 'understood to have received \$30,000 – the maximum allowable – towards resettlement costs from the Justice Ministry. □'] A... disembowelled... rat has been left at the family home of a teenage gang-trial witness... Fearing for their 19-year-old daughter's life when they learned [their daughter] topped a gang-hit list, the family spirited her out of the country two months ago. Since then, family members have been harassed. Her mother has received obscene phone calls, had her house broken into and her car tampered with... [A] Detective Inspector... said the young [witness] had been offered cover under the witness protection scheme, but opted to leave the country. Police had no assurances [the witness] would return for the trial... next March... A law allowing anonymous witnesses to give evidence in court was passed by Parliament last night.

...Lawmakers, angry at the slaying of Christopher Crean, say they have declared war on gangs in a bid to end their hold over citizens. They... [have] passed laws designed to crush gang crime and protect the public. And the police have hailed the use of video links allowing witnesses to testify away from the court building. A police spokes[person] said the system was likely to be widely used in other trials involving elements of intimidation. The Minister of Police... said the jailing of four Black Power members in the High Court at New Plymouth this week for the murder of Mr Crean had saved the justice system from destruction. "I can't stress enough the importance of this decision... If there weren't convictions for this, I think the long-term future of the justice system was under some considerable threat. I believe in a liberal democratic society, but we do have to move as far as it takes to insure the integrity of our justice system." ...amendments to the Evidence Act, due to be introduced next week... enable a High Court judge to grant a witness anonymity, [the]... Minister of Justice... said. But... [t]he Criminal Bar Association president... said every other country in the Western world had carefully avoided the secret-witness legislation [N]Z... is now [introducing]... The Opposition justice spokes[person supported the]... measures to protect witnesses, such as anonymity and video links for testifying out of a court building. [The spokesperson] also endorsed the existing police-run witness protection programme. ●... Christopher Crean's killers are behind bars until well into the next century. The mastermind behind the... killing... and the [perso]n who wielded the rifle... will not even get a chance for freedom until October 2013, when they become eligible for parole... Two other Black Power members – ...the gun... supplie[r]... and... the driver – will... become eligible for parole in 2010... As [the mastermind] was led from the dock in the High Court at Auckland yesterday, [it]... said: "Utu, utu [revenge]."

...The partner of a juror in the... Crean murder trial says their family will be looking over their shoulders for the rest of their lives. "I'm really quite scared. I've got three kids to think of... and I'm worried for the other jurors, too,"... Police have also revealed that some witnesses in the Crean killing shifted from their homes because they feared for their lives... "If any of the jurors have any threats made we want to know about it as soon as possible and we will take any steps necessary to investigate." Police revealed they were frustrated that their attempts to keep three of the Black Power [members] in jail before Mr Crean's murder had failed... [P]olice had initially opposed bail... after the [gang members] were charged with a slasher and tomahawk attack on a Mongrel Mob member. Mr Crean was a crucial witness to that attack. But the [gang members] were freed on bail and night curfews removed. While curfews were in place police had been able to check on the [gang members]... "If they [the curfews] had still been in place the homicide may never have happened," said [the]Detective Sergeant... who headed the Crean investigation... Police had offered Mr Crean protection as little as two days before [Mr Crean] was shot through the front door of his New Plymouth home last October, but [the offer] was declined... A... New Plymouth barrister... [who represented] one of the four Black Power members... said... "...My client... had my list for just one day and never showed it to any of the other accused. [My client] had no reason to keep it and threw it in the rubbish, and I believe him."

...Why must juries watch their backs? ...Sordid and intimate details of a... gang rape... were circulated at Waikeria Prison for the titillation and amusement of inmates. The pages were evidence from a depositions hearing which were given to one of the accused by his lawyer, said [a]Detective Inspector... of Rotorua CIB... [I]t is an example of the irresponsible behaviour of some lawyers and an illustration of why defendants should not be given copies of the list of potential jurors before a trial... [The NZ] Law Society vice-president, said it is naive to think "jury tampering" does not happen here. In Britain, jury tampering was a major reason why majority verdicts were introduced... The Law Commission is investigating the issue as part of its review of jury trials, and the Minister of Justice... would support the law review, particularly if changes included a requirement that the lists be returned before the jury was selected... Lawyers receive the list five working days before the trial starts. It used to be two days but the law was amended in the wake of the... [Crewe murder] trials... In big trials, it is not uncommon for lawyers to hire private investigators to vet jury lists in the hope of stacking the jury with people likely to acquit. This is legal. The Crown also tries to weed out undesirable jurors. Most lawyers said they should keep physical control of the list and disapproved of providing copies to clients. But lawyers are ethically obliged to follow clients' instructions – and if asked to supply the information, they would be compelled to do so... [T]here are also irresponsible lawyers who give accused copies of... police evidence. Police considered providing Crown evidence on red paper to stop lawyers photocopying material to give to clients... The Privacy Commissioner... favours constraints on giving information on jurors to defendants... But the prosecutor in the Crean murder trial... said criminals and even gang members posed little risk to jurors. Gangs were more likely to seek retribution against witnesses or the police... In a case described as a first in British legal history, a furious judge jailed two... jurors... after they said they could not reach a verdict... The [jurors] were released... yesterday... on bail pending an appeal, but not before spending a night in jail. [The]Knightsbridge Crown Court Judge...

[had sentenced the jurors, including the jury foreperson], to 30 days in Holloway Prison for contempt after the counterfeiting case had to be abandoned. A lawyer for one of the [jurors] said... that the judge had been trying to pressure her into a guilty verdict. The lawyer said the action was “unheard of in modern times.” But the 61-year-old judge stood by his ruling. “They sat through a 17-day trial and four hours of summing up in a case with five defendants and then they decided, with no reason, that they did not want to... take part in the decision-making. They said it was personal and they could not make up their minds. I thought it was right to send them to jail. I had to order a retrial at very great expense.”

...A study is being made into hung jury trials and the outcome may be a recommendation to the Minister of Justice for the acceptance of majority verdicts in criminal cases. It follows a substantial rise in the number of hung juries and the need for a second trial – and even a third... [I]n 1994... 5[%] of High Court cases... [and] a somewhat lower rate of... District Court jury trials... [were] hung... The latest figures show that more than 10[%] of High Court juries cannot agree while the figure for District Court trials is over 8[%]. The problem has been highlighted in recent months by dramatic trials like that... where the jury was unable to find whether [a Taipa resident] was guilty of murder for killing an armed intruder... However, most disagreements are in much more mundane cases which don’t attract publicity, but are also important, costly and time-consuming for the defendant and the prosecution. The president of the Law Commission responsible for overseeing the judicial system... [i]s at a loss to explain the rise... “But going over the 10[%] figure is of very real concern and it raises the question of whether there shouldn’t be recourse to majority verdicts in criminal trials [both for conviction and acquittal] as is the case in A[US] and the U[K.]” The president... personally prefers a unanimous decision... “My own experience is I’ve had few disagreements and I’ve been very impressed with the way juries go about their business... and their decisions have been within the ballpark of what I’d have arrived at as a judge sitting alone.” ...The legal profession is divided on opting for majority decisions in criminal cases (a 10-2 majority is already acceptable in civil cases)... [The] Criminal Bar Association president... says the association is prepared to accept a majority verdict for acquittal – perhaps 10-2 – but not for conviction... The argument is: what’s magic about 10 out of 12 jurors reaching a verdict against the two who are in the minority. An 11 to 1 decision may be more justified in that it precludes the rogue juror who won’t or can’t make a decision no matter what the evidence... [Furthermore,] the hung-jury phenomenon can go in waves. When there’s publicity about it occurring in a prominent trial, juries following tend to take it as a lead. Then there’s the issue of a judge giving the jury “a bit of a wind up” telling the panel they should try to reach a decision and, if there’s only a couple dicker, to go back and reconsider. [The association president says it]’s aware of instances where jurors have made a decision after being talked around, one way or the other, then later regretted it. [The association president] also points out the resources of the prosecution. In a legal aid defence technically counsel start with only five hours preparation. Often more time is approved but combating the police case, can be daunting. Under the circumstances the verdict should continue to need to be unanimous for conviction... As part of th[e study, a professor]... of Victoria University’s law faculty... has [been] engaged... to research... the reasons for failure, what further assistance may be needed for jurors, how to make their job more comfortable, and a better understanding of the whole jury process... The [debate is timely considering the recent story about] a British judge[who], faced with the refusal by two... jurors to make a decision at the end of a 17-day trial, jailed both for... contempt of court... [According to one of the jurors:] “There wasn’t enough evidence for me to reach a decision... It was a very complicated fraud case. I just didn’t understand it.”

...The fundamental right to trial by jury may be scrapped in complex fraud cases. The Law Commission is investigating whether juries are equipped to cope with long and complex fraud trials, such as the three-month Pacer Kerridge case which ended with... [an] acquittal in July. Many accused choose trial by jury in fraud cases – with the notable exception of the five charged in the 1992 Equiticorp trial – but law experts may recommend removing the right to be judged by one’s peers... [A] discussion paper due to be published this month... asked whether a judge was better qualified to hear complex fraud trials and, if juries were to be retained, whether specialists should be enlisted... Britain is [also] looking at abolishing jury trials following the failure of prominent fraud cases, commentators having suggested that juries are more likely to acquit in complex trials. But... [i]f juries were scrapped, how would authorities determine which trials were too complex[?] ...A juror on the [Pacer Kerridge] trial... said a more pressing issue for the Government was the way jurors were treated during long trials, rather than whether they were competent to hear complex evidence. [This person] advocated... providing more support to meet jurors’ needs[– including]... establishing a “friend of the court” to explain court terminology and other issues... [–] and... paying jurors more money... □ JUDGES should have danger money, it seems, for court work in India. One defendant at Bhagalpur, in the eastern state of Bihar, was so enraged at being remanded in custody, reports the Hindustan Times, that [it] beat up the judge. Then a gang of his mates showed their support by throwing stones and bashing court officials and lawyers. Help from the police? No chance. All the attackers, including the defendant, were police[officers].

...The Higher Salaries Commission has bumped up judges’ pay by 4.5[%]... The salary of the Chief Justice... has risen... to \$234,000... The second highest-paid judge is the President of the Court of Appeal, who [now] earns \$230,000... Court of Appeal judges are now paid \$214,000... High Court judges \$204,000... and district court judges \$163,000. The commission noted that lawyers were “increasingly reluctant” to join the Judiciary. One reason cited was the increasing pay gap between top lawyers and judges. The pay increases are backdated to October 1.

...There’s a hint that the Chief Justice... may be about to advocate change in the way judges are selected. His ideas will be contained in his second annual report on the Judiciary, now with the printers and due to be released next month... If [the Chief Justice] has major changes in mind, they may not get a ready reception from Parliament’s two ministers responsible for the courts and tribunals, the Attorney-General... and the Minister of Justice. While they are not against tuning of the judicial selection process they are also not advocates for alternatives... Both are opposed to the establishment of a judicial commission to make appointments in place of the existing consultative process. The responsibility for the appointment of judges is divided between the two ministers. [The Attorney-General]’s portfolio covers the High Court and Court of Appeal. [The other’s] ministry is responsible for district court judges, specialist courts such as those dealing with employment and family matters, and tribunals. [The Minister of Justice claims to be] so far removed from the personal selection process of judges that “I don’t know any of them these days. I often merely endorse the recommendations put before me... You will occasionally have the odd judge who falls from grace. If you had 50 judges and it happened fairly frequently you’d be in trouble. We’ve got about 150 judges and [personal failures] happen infrequently. Therefore I say if it’s not broken don’t fix it.” Both ministers accept there’s public disquiet at the recent guilty plea and conviction of one District Court judge for falsifying his expenses... the charging of a second with similar offences and a third with sex offences. The latter have yet to go to trial and remain suspended on full pay... The criminal charges are the first to be brought against presiding judges in N[Z].

...The Department for Courts confirmed yesterday that... [a] former Whangarei District Court judge... will receive a one-off superannuation payment although [the former judge] was convicted this week for expenses fraud... [totalling] a mere \$815... The [former judge would also receive] whatever salary... was owed. [The former judge] has been on full pay... since... voluntarily [standing] down... while an investigation took place into his travel expenses. A department spokes[person]... confirmed that there was no legal precedent to withhold superannuation from a judge convicted on criminal charges and that the department had no power to recover the \$63,000 paid to [the former judge while it] was under investigation... The Whangarei MP... said yesterday that if the department did not have the power to recover the money then [the former judge] should be pressured to repay it voluntarily. “If [the former judge] wants to occupy the moral high ground, as [it] apparently does... the money... should [be returned]... That would at least partly remedy what [the former judge] has done.” A second judge... has denied 45 charges similar to those faced by [the former judge]. The second judge] has been committed to trial following a depositions hearing in Auckland this week.

...[a] Northland judge... honestly believed [it was his entitlement] to make false expense claims, his lawyer... told a jury in the High Court at Auckland yesterday... In his opening address, [the lawyer] told the jury that there was no dispute that [the judge] had made the claims. But... there

was no crime... The alleged offences date from July 1992 to June 1996. [The lawyer said his client's] understanding that it was all right to make claims in [the allegedly false] way came particularly from a phone conversation with a former executive officer to the chief district court judge... His belief was reinforced because nothing was ever said to alert him that his understanding was incorrect. Indeed... different officials who had given evidence appeared to have interpreted the rules differently... [The accused judge] took the stand after [his lawyer's] address and told the jury that after... [being] sworn in as a district court judge in August 1991 [it] spent six weeks observing other judges before starting his fulltime duties in Whangarei... [O]ne session during an orientation week for new judges, reading the judge's manual and glancing at examples of a colleague's claim forms were his only training in his entitlements and how to claim... [However,] in one instance... the former executive officer... sent a note to [the accused judge] regarding a form... submitted in early 1992. [The judge] had claimed the \$240 overnight allowance, payable to judges when they stayed away from home, for a weekend spent in Auckland. At the time [the accused judge] was being put up by the then Department of Justice in a Whangarei motel, but his home was in Auckland. Therefore [the judge] was not entitled to the overnight allowance. On another occasion, in March 1993, [the accused judge] had claimed to have returned to Whangarei at 1 pm on Saturday after staying overnight while on circuit duties... [The former executive officer] discovered hearings had finished at 3.30 pm on Friday and believed [the accused judge] had time to drive home. [The former executive officer] changed the form, removing the overnight allowance... Earlier a former Whangarei District Court administration clerk... rejected a suggestion that [it] had begun a train of events that led to the appointment of her brother-in-law... as a Whangarei-based judge. [The clerk] was one of the first court staff members to raise concerns about the validity of [the accused judge's] claims. The defence counsel... suggested... that [the clerk] had mounted her own investigation when... her suspicions were not being satisfactorily dealt with by the court registrar and his deputy.

...No matter how powerful or influential, judges were subject to the same laws as everyone else, the prosecutor told the jury... yesterday... In his closing address... [the prosecutor] said that while any system had grey areas, there were "no shades of grey" in this case. "You do not need to be a rocket scientist to realise that a travel allowance is not payable when one is not travelling." In his explanation, said [the prosecutor, the accused judge] had treated everyone, including the chief district court judge and now the jury, as if "they had come down in the last shower." ...[the accused judge] had considered the risks of getting caught as negligible but had not counted on two junior court staff "getting the bit between their teeth" and carrying out their own investigation. [The prosecutor also] said that when new judges came on the scene [the accused judge told them about having been given] permission to claim in this way to get them on board. "Was the accused acting in the honest and open way that [the accused] claims or was [the accused] cynically putting two other judges at grievous risk?" ...It was ironic, [the accused judge's lawyer] said, that a [person] so committed to making a contribution to the system had been let down so poorly by those administering it... In... a taped interview [the accused judge claimed to have] charged for bogus overnight stays because it was "fair and reasonable."

...[the accused Northland] Judge... walked from the High Court at Auckland a free [person] last night – but it is unclear whether [the judge] will take his place on the bench again. After deliberating for about 15 hours, a jury found the judge not guilty on 45 counts of fraud involving false expenses claims. If the verdicts were greeted with natural delight by [the accused judge] and his supporters, they must have given [a] former judge... plenty to reflect on... [His] close friend and assisting defence counsel... said [the former judge's] first thoughts would be to congratulate his colleague. "Quite naturally [my friend] will be reflecting on his own determined decision to plead guilty to similar charges,"... [The former judge, 'who was the youngest district court judge appointed in NZ', but] became the first N[Z] judge to gain a criminal record when... [t]he 39-year-old... father of [3]... pleaded guilty in the Auckland District Court... is now working as a barrister in the Manawatu... The Chief District Court Judge... and the Minister of Justice... would meet [the cleared judge] to discuss his future. Until then [the cleared] Judge... did not intend to sit on the Bench.

...[a former Labour PM] and constitutional lawyer... has questioned whether the public would have confidence appearing before a judge who had been tried for fraud. Although [the] Judge... was acquitted on 45 charges of travel expenses fraud in Auckland on Friday, "the public perception will probably be where there is smoke there is fire"... Fundamental to a democracy was confidence in the judiciary, [the ex-PM] said... On the other hand, judges were not employees but appointees and could not be dismissed without extremely good reason... "It is a matter of some constitutional importance – judges do not take orders from ministers, they do not take orders from government." One of the basics of N[Z] democracy was an independent judiciary, and this had to be fiercely defended... [When questioned about the other] Northland District Court Judge... who was originally charged with [the cleared judge, and] now faces a Law Society disciplinary hearing after admitting eight fraud charges... [the ex-PM] said: "There is a world of difference between someone who has pleaded guilty and someone who had been acquitted by a jury." ...[the cleared judge's] lawyer... had advised his client not to be interviewed until matters were further resolved.

...[the cleared District Court] Judge... does not have the moral authority to sit in judgment of others charged with crimes of dishonesty, says the Labour justice spokes[person]... The Minister of Justice... would not give his opinion in Parliament, but signalled... [his concern about] upholding the dignity of the Bench. However, [the minister] said the question of [the cleared] Judge... paying back the money was not his concern... The Act leader... questioned whether there was any moral difference "between what the judge did and what some MPs do with their taxi chits." [A] Labour list MP... said that [the cleared Judge's] return to Northland courts would be unacceptable to Maori. [The cleared] Judge... would have handled a high number of cases involving Maori and they and their families would see his return to the Judiciary as an "affront to natural justice." ...[the cleared Judge's] professional future is expected to be decided within the next 10 days.

...[the cleared] Judge... may be billed for the \$10,000... overclaimed in his expenses. The Department for Courts chief executive... told the N[Z] Herald yesterday that [the department] was considering whether to send the judge a bill for the money... [However, the chief executive] would need to seek legal advice before making a decision. "It's a most unusual situation and I know of no precedent." ...the department had not had contact with the judge for "quite some time." [A former colleague of the] judge... repaid to the department \$815... received from fraudulent claims. That money was repaid without any prompting from the department... [even though the colleague] was fined \$8000.

...[the judge] found not guilty... [of fraud] has... agreed to repay... the... travel and accommodation expenses at the centre of [his fraud charges].

...[THE] SERIOUS Fraud Office... [prosecutor's] gown was on inside out when [it] gave his final address... The minor clothing faux pas was quickly noted by [the] defence lawyer... "But then again the whole Crown case is back to front," [the defence lawyer murmured to the prosecutor], in what was to be a prophetic line, before beginning [his] closing submission that helped save his client's reputation, career and his liberty. [The defence] said the SFO – which 'usually only investigates alleged frauds involving a minimum of \$500,000' – [investigation was incomplete and the guidelines and instructions given to judges in claims were inadequate... The case against [the] Judge... hinged largely on whether [it] intended to defraud by falsely claiming 45 times a \$240 overnight allowance... No receipts are needed to claim the allowance... [The judge's] integrity was pivotal. If the jury found [the judge honestly believed himself to be] entitled to claim they had to acquit... Apart from milking the system for extra money, the Crown struggled for a motive... The Crown case... was, however, far from flimsy... Investigations into claims in which [the judge claimed to have] sat in Dargaville and stayed at Hobson's Choice Motel in the town found no record of him staying there... The prosecution, which presented extensive banking and Eftpos records to trace [the judge's] movements, said [the judge] committed deliberate fraud when, in May 1996, [it] amended a claim that had been sent back to him. [Furthermore, out] of the more than 100 district court judges in [NZ] the accused [seemed to be] the only one who thought [judges] could claim in such a way... The... Judge... himself seemed in shock [upon being told it could leave the court as a free person. The judge] needed to be prompted... to reply with a simple "Thank you, your honour." ...Whatever [the judge] thinks about the administrative decisions which put him in the dock, his committed belief in his innocence has been vindicated by his peers.

...*Judgments on the expenses case judge* To the people who had most to do with him, [the cleared]Judge... was hardly a [perso]n spoken about in shades of grey. In the one camp were those who vehemently opposed him; in the other were those who swore by his integrity. [The]Judge had two powerful enemies in the form of [the MPs for the] Far North... and Whangarei... who lobbied the Minister of Justice... to have him removed following complaints from constituents and the police. Both MPs made it clear they had no time for the judge. They considered that his sentences were weak compared with those meted out by others who presided over Northland's courts... When... [the judge's] name came to cabinet to be rubber-stamped for his 1991 district court appointment... [the Whangarei MP] maintained it was not an appropriate choice... "It was brought to my attention that his make-up was unsuitable for a district court judge." ...The nephew of [a]former Governor-General... [the cleared judge attend]ed... the then Westlake High School on the Auckland North Shore in 1957. Former schoolmates described him as "an outstanding student who came from one of the community's top families." In 1962 [the nephew] began Law School at Auckland University. A keen sports[person, it] surfed and played tennis but his main interest was rugby... An Auckland barrister, solicitor and chair[person of the NZ] Rugby Union... who met [him] at Law School, said his friend loved rugby and as a player gained a reputation of being a "fast and determined" winger... for the North Shore Rugby Club's senior team... As a mate, [the nephew] was reliable... In 1970 [the chairperson was best guy at the nephew's] first wedding. The couple had three children. Their marriage was dissolved in 1992 and the judge has since remarried... [The nephew] was admitted to the Bar in 1968 and was employed by [an]Auckland law firm... which... is understood to have produced more judges and Law Society presidents than any other in the country. [The nephew] became a partner in 1971, specialising in civil work, and remained there until August 1991... An Auckland solicitor... who worked with him at [the law firm] for 11 years, says [the nephew's] ability to grasp complex issues quickly made his appointment to the Bench appropriate. "A lot of criminal stuff is fairly routine – anyone could do it. Getting someone to do the complex civil stuff is actually quite difficult in the district court because those who are good at it will either want to be in the High Court or become a barrister and earn the big money, so there is a back-log of civil work. [The nephew] was doing an excellent job of clearing the civil list." ...One of [hi]s staunchest supporters is [a]Whangarei barrister... who appeared before him almost daily in the Kaitia, Whangarei, Dargaville and Kaikohe district courts... [U]p until six weeks ago, [the barrister] and the judge had enjoyed a strictly professional relationship. However, after hearing that the suggestion would be raised during the trial that [the accused] was a lazy judge, circumstances changed. "That really got on my goat. I contacted him and said: 'If that's the allegation being made against you, it's not true. I can recall numerous occasions when you sat late, or when I've seen you in the library after hours preparing for the next day's work and if you need assistance in that regard, don't hesitate to contact me.' ...[the nephew was also] a person who was a very good judge of character of those defendants who came before him[, and] understood the particular problems we have in the Far North of drug and alcohol abuse. That understanding was borne out of his sentences, in that [the judge] was usually prepared to offer defendants a chance at rehabilitation rather than taking the view that you put them inside and throw the key away... [Furthermore, it's] a nonsense for anyone to suggest that his sentences were lenient." ...For offences of indecent assault and [guys assaulting gals, the] Judge... was harder than other judges... "[The judge] was extremely fair and had a deep sense of compassion and demanded quality from not only counsel appearing in front of him but also the police. If they didn't come up to the required standard of quality [the judge] wouldn't hesitate to give his view on it and, from time to time, I found as a defence counsel that the police took a dislike to that criticism." [Despite the fact that the judge's expenses claims 'didn't come up to the required standard of quality', the barrister] is firm in his belief that no criminal prosecution should have been brought against the judge.

...[the cleared judge,] who... has earned almost \$160,000 since... [standing] down voluntarily after investigations began into [his] travel and accommodation expense claims... has yet to repay [the almost \$10,000...]

The cleared] Judge... issued a press statement... yesterday... saying... his travel expenses of about \$10,000... had [been repaid].

...The Department for Courts is still waiting for a \$10,000 repayment from the judge... A spokes[person]... said yesterday that the department had still not [even]received... an official notification from [the cleared]Judge... saying... the... expenses over-claimed... would [be repaid. While on the topic of controversial justices, a]... West Virginia judge could go to jail for biting the nose of a defendant who cursed him... [The judge] was suspended without pay and if convicted faces up to 10 years in prison and a \$US250,000 fine. The judge has lost his temper at least 19 times in the courtroom in the past two years, a report said... STILL in the US Courts... a police[officer] was surprised by a question after [the officer had] given evidence in Dodge City: "Was the vehicle occupied at the time you stopped it?" ...POLICE have also featured in the unexpected at a court in Hong Kong. They'd organised superb surveillance pictures, they said, which clearly incriminated a drug dealer. Unfortunately, they couldn't produce them because the police photographer had forgotten to remove the lens cap. "Rubbish!" thundered [the]defence barrister... "No human being, unless [it's] got the IQ of a wooden plank, could possibly be that stupid." [The defence barrister] withdrew that opinion after it was confirmed that an official police form – to which photographers add ticks as necessary – had the printed entry: "Forgot to take lens cap off."

...The trial of... the... [NZ] district court judge... who faces indecency charges, has been switched to the High Court... No trial date has been set.

...A High Court jury has been unable to decide on two indecency charges against [a]district court judge... [after] more than 10 1/2 hours' deliberation... The jury was discharged and [the judge] was remanded on bail for a retrial in the new year... After [the High Court] Justice... summed up the case, the jury [had] retired to consider the two charges. At 6 pm the jurors returned to the courtroom to seek clarification about the significance of the fact that [the judge's] wife had not given evidence in his defence. [The]Justice... admonished the jury for "straying into areas of conjecture and speculation in which you have no place to be." The non-appearance of [the judge's] wife as a defence witness was of "no relevance to this case." [The justice] told the jurors to "decide the case on what you've heard in this [courtroom]." The Justice... then read a second communication from the jury that said... the... seven [guys and four gals]... had a "near-even split of views" and did not envisage being able to reach a unanimous view for some time... On Tuesday... [the defence] elected not to call any defence witnesses or to have [the judge] give evidence in his own defence. [The]Justice... had told the jury there was no onus on [the judge] to prove his innocence or anything else." [The judge] was entitled not to give evidence and the jury ought not to speculate on that fact. The complainant, now aged 38, alleges [the sexual assaults] took place when... [the complainant was] aged 10 or 12... and... was staying at [the home of the accused. While the accused person's] wife was absent, the accused allegedly invited him into his bed, played with his penis and ejaculated over his buttocks. The court heard that no complaint had been made to police until last year, after the complainant attended counselling with [Guys] for Non-Violence.

...Sexism is part of the curriculum for the nation's judges, who go back to school tonight to learn how to not discriminate against [gals]. The three-day gender equity seminar for judges comes after a series of embarrassing incidents involving the Judiciary. But [the]Chief Justice... who co-chairs the meeting... said yesterday that the seminar was organised before the incidents occurred. [A]High Court judge... attracted public scorn and criticism by colleagues after comments made during a rape trial...

It has been a judicial *annus horribilis*, says the Chief Justice... "Some... wounds have been self-inflicted... Two judges were charged with fraud... while others have made unwise remarks from the Bench. Other instances have arisen in the fields of bail decisions and sentencing, which, although not involving any dereliction of duty on the part of the judges, have raised a storm of controversy." While "the Judiciary cannot and does not complain about such issues being ventilated publicly," [the CJ] criticised the media for... its lack of intelligent analysis of legal topics, particularly compared to the [AUSn] media. "Here it is more likely that any instant reactions critical of a decision or outcome will be published and will become the definitive judgment on the issue... [But recent] events which have detracted from the Judiciary's reputation... show... it is more important than ever that the Judiciary should work on its credibility,"... To that end, a public relations manager acting as a conduit between the media and the

Judiciary had been appointed, while television cameras in court had fostered a “more accurate public perception of the judicial system.” The C[J] called for the establishment of a code of judicial conduct, performance evaluations of judges by their peers and the Bar and a more visible and accountable process for selecting judges... But [it] warned that establishing a more public forum to deal with complaints about judicial misconduct risked placing judges “in a position of siege” leading to decisions based not on the facts but the effect the judgment might have on their career.

...An Auckland law professor... has called for a more open system of appointing judges... [The existing] system of appointing and monitoring judges and deciding whether they were fit to continue sitting was secretive, with “zero transparency.” “It’s a closed system, mysterious to outsiders.” ...[Furthermore,] the role of Cabinet and whether outsiders had a voice in the process of appointing judges was unclear... [A] judicial fitness commission was needed, with representatives from the Law Society, the public, the police and other groups, which would shortlist candidates, then forward the list to the... Justice Minister... for a decision. The Law Society president... said such commissions were common overseas, and the society supported any change that led to more openness and understanding. [However, the president] rejected as hogwash any suggestion that [the Justice minister] would be influenced by previous or personal connections with [the] Judge... acquitted earlier this month on 45 fraud charges... in deciding his future... [The judge] went to law school with [the minister], played rugby against him, and sold him a house in 1994.

...[the cleared] Judge... has opted to stay on the Bench... after an exasperated Minister of Justice... [claimed to be] powerless to sack him... [The minister] wanted to be rid of [the] Judge... who shielded behind the law when [the minister] gave him one last chance to examine his conscience and stand down... As a result... [the minister] intended looking at broadening the law to punish judges for such things as bringing the courts into disrepute. [The minister] also revealed that [the] Judge... had been prepared to accept a golden handshake to retire early “but I wasn’t prepared to pay anything like [what it] was asking.” The Act leader... made an unsubstantiated claim last week that the Ministry of Justice was “considering a cash offer of up to \$1.5 million for [the] Judge... to resign.” After cold-shouldering... [the minister the] Judge will stay on as a district court judge, although [it] has been taken off criminal and civil work by [the] Chief District Court Judge... and confined to accident compensation appeals, starting next Monday... [The judge will be] one of three district court judges specialising in [ACC] appeals. The other two... are based in Wellington, and [their new colleague] fills a gap in Auckland... It is expected that... there may be occasions when [the cleared judge] has to travel to other courts.

...[the cleared judge] may yet preside over criminal and civil cases again. Although sidelined to [ACC] appeal hearings... the... Judge... still has his district court warrant, and legal experts say that... a change in circumstances such as a new chief judge could see him one day returned to the job [the judge] has been publicly removed from... Under the District Courts Act, the Governor-General, on advice from the Minister of Justice, can dismiss a judge for inability as well as misbehaviour. The Constitution Act allows the Governor-General, acting on advice from Parliament, to remove a High Court judge for misbehaviour or incapacity. Otherwise, judges in both categories can sit until they are 68. [The judge in question, who] is 53... will return to work tomorrow...

[The cleared judge]’s first ruling in his new job has been to make an Auckland pensioner repay \$18,000 [it] was not entitled to from ACC payments... [Meanwhile,] the former judge convicted of fraud earlier this year, is planning to re-establish his practice in Auckland... [However, his] future to some extent depends on the outcome of... a hearing of the N[Z] Law Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal in Auckland on Wednesday... [The former judge] faces one disciplinary charge... [but the tribunal] secretary... refused to say exactly what the charge was before the hearing.

...Politicians last night put pressure on [the cleared] Judge... to resign after his former colleague... was thrown out of his profession. The Law Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal said... [the colleague]’s dishonesty over expenses claims had resulted in a criminal conviction and meant [that it] was not a fit and proper person to practice. The move prevents him from practising as a solicitor or barrister and could see him working as a law clerk. But Labour’s Justice spokes[person]... said the public would be “appalled” at the difference in treatments between [the two former Northland District Court judges]... “It’s difficult to see how the Law Society has regarded it as fair to punish [the colleague again while the other fraudster goes unpunished and] remains on the Bench,”... The tribunal... ruled th[e] colleague... can reapply to have his practising certificate restored... ordered [him] to pay costs of \$6816 to the Auckland District Law Society who brought the complaint against him, and inquiry costs of \$4728 to the N[Z] Law Society... Auckland criminal barristers... were yesterday optimistic that [the colleague] would regain his practising certificate within a year.

...Auckland lawyers may get to pass judgment on [the judge who got away with over-claiming travel expenses] in a confidence vote... A North Shore lawyer... already had five of the 15 lawyers’ signatures... needed to table his no-confidence motion at a special meeting of the Auckland District Law Society... [The lawyer] is the husband of the Act justice spokes[person]... who in Parliament was prevented from raising the issue of [the judge]’s continued employment 11 days ago... [However, the lawyer] wanted the no-confidence vote to send the judge a signal from within the legal profession. “...I’m under no illusions that it would compel him to do anything. I’m not by any means confident that it will be carried, but I think at the very least the lawyers ought to consider it an expressive view.” ...many lawyers felt a great deal of sympathy for the former Northland [judge’s colleague]... who was struck off the roll of barristers and solicitors on Wednesday. “[That person]... preserved the standing of the Bench by not having a trial, and... has ended up being severely punished and disadvantaged.”

...There will always be those cases where justice for an individual can only be achieved by a corresponding injustice to society. We hold a variable ethos that it is better for five, 10 or 20... guilty people to go free than for one innocent person to be punished. Yet the reverse is as true. Occasionally injustice to the individual is necessary to the interests of justice to society, though the balance generally is weighted to the individual. The... concern [over the case of the acquitted judge] has not given rise to any substantive criticism of our jury system. Society is generally well accepting that jury decisions are bounded by the technical basis of the law. As citizens we accept a level of social injustice is the price we pay to achieve an acceptable level of individual justice. Our calls for certainty and fairness mean that there are times when guilty people go unpunished. The... concern is not about the merits of jury decisions. It is one of social indignation – not for the fact of his acquittal; rather for the subsequent erosion of the high level of public confidence which is an imperative requirement for the maintenance of an effective Judiciary. The... periodic tensions that arise between a legal outcome and our collective concept of social justice... are not always the same and at times, as in this instance, not always able to be easily reconciled. Our sense of social justice demands that... we have the well-accepted notion of standards of proof, usually expressed in ordinary terms as needing to be “beyond reasonable doubt.” ...Justice for the individual has acquitted [the judge]... Paradoxically... by electing to challenge and defy those strong calls for him not to resume his role as a judge, [the judge] might have brought upon himself a punishment greater than anyone could have contemplated. [The judge] has been assigned to an obscure corner of comparatively futile decision-making power. [The judge] is away from the public spotlight, consigned to a rather dismal and probably quite unrewarding and unstimulating diet of evaluating humdrum and collectively dreary issues. Thus, perhaps for [the] Judge... there has come a consequence more dire than anyone might have imagined, much less chosen to inflict upon him. In that way, perhaps, individual justice has been well enough served by the acquittal.

...3000 lawyers will... pass judgment on whether [the judge acquitted of fraud] should remain on the Bench... [A]t a special general meeting last night... [the] Auckland District Law Society... decided to call on all members to take part in a no-confidence motion on [the] Judge... The society... said even if members passed the motion it had no legal standing... In a separate move, the... N[Z] Law Society... confirmed it was considering whether there were adequate grounds to have [the] Judge... struck off, as well as “other matters of principle” before such action was taken.

...Auckland district lawyers have voted no confidence in [the new ACC appeals] Judge... and say [the judge] should leave the Bench... The motion was passed by a reasonable margin... [and] lawyers were conservative people who did not give such a judgment lightly. “It... means lawyers are

prepared to say they expect standards from the Judiciary... [and it is] not going to be easy if the judge continues to be on the Bench knowing that the people who are appearing before him have voted that [the judge] shouldn't be there." ...lawyers will decide today whether to take High Court action to have him struck off the roll of law practitioners... Removal from the roll would not affect [the judge]'s eligibility to remain a district court judge... [However, even the] High Court could not strike a lawyer off. If it felt there was a case it would refer the matter to the Court of Appeal, which would make the decision. Most legal professional disciplinary matters were dealt with by the Law Practitioners' Disciplinary Tribunal...

[The] Law Society has deferred a decision on whether to apply to the High Court to have [the] Judge... who was recently acquitted of fraud charges... struck off. The society says it will [first] seek "professional advice" on policy and constitutional issues regarding [the ACC appeals judge]...

A law expert... says [the] Judge... should have resigned in the interests of the Judiciary and the law, but there are no constitutional grounds for his removal. His opinion was behind a Law Society decision yesterday not to apply to the High Court to have [the] Judge struck off the roll of barristers and solicitors. It is still open to anyone to make a strike-off bid against the former Northland judge found not guilty of expenses fraud... but legal opinions say a case would fail. And even if one succeeded, experts say being struck off the roll would not prevent a judge's continuing.

...Lawyers uncomfortable at passing judgment on peers such as [their new ACC appeals] Judge... are calling for an independent judicial commission... [The] vice-president... of the Auckland District Law Society... said yesterday that many lawyers were unhappy with the whole idea of judging others in their profession... Just over 1000... of [the] more than 3000 members... voted – 546 for, 401 against and 65 abstaining... [By the way, their new ACC appeals judge's former colleague – the now disbarred] lawyer and former judge... [–] appears likely to pick up consultancy work rather than face a more humble future as a law clerk... [A] criminal lawyer and friend... said: "I... have used him myself (to review files)..." ...[the disbarred lawyer] would be able to earn more than a law clerk – but... would probably be "getting by on \$500 to \$700 a week." Lawyers believe [the disbarred lawyer] would probably win back his practising certificate if [it] re-applied in about six months... They believed his level of offending... is paltry when compared to other disbarred lawyers like... [one who was] sentenced to seven years' jail in 1992 on 42 charges of theft and forgery totalling \$6.4 million... and [another who was] sentenced to six years' jail in 1992 on 51 charges of fraud totalling \$3.5m... Of the 38 lawyers struck off between 1989 and 1996 (23 due to criminal convictions for theft or fraud) none have so far been reinstated... So far this year, only... one other lawyer [has] been struck off. The other lawyer's case is under appeal... and name suppression.

...Two judges were accused of fiddling travel expenses. One fell on his sword, resigned, was convicted and struck off the lawyers' register yet salvaged some honour. The other fought and won yet faces odium. Somehow it just doesn't add up... They are said to be humiliated and neither will talk. But... feedback for [the convicted judge] is supportive – and... [his] mail... includes a contribution to legal expenses from a stranger – [while letters to the cleared judge] are of a different tone... A "corrupt, rotten depraved bounder" who has "cheated and lied and ought to be whipped", writes [a citizen from] Howick... "You absolute creep! A judge? Shouldn't you know right from wrong? Guess you... haven't got a conscience. Just keep going. The rest of NZ feels revolted," says [a citizen from] Rangiora. The letters had been forwarded on to a lawyer... When [the lawyer] showed one to his friend of 40 years, [the cleared] Judge... crumpled it in his hand. Not because [it] didn't care but because... [no]-one wants to read such things about himself. Why did [the cleared] Judge... admit nothing? And why didn't [his former colleague] do the same? They had, after all, both claimed a \$240 allowance for staying away overnight after presiding in courts in Dargaville, Kaikohe and Kaitia, when they had in fact driven home to Whangarei. Had [the convicted judge also admitted nothing it] may still be a judge, although his mail could be less pleasant... Like most – no one seems to have a bad word for him – ...a longtime friend of [the former judge] and one of the lawyers who represented him... [was impressed by] his... sense of humour, gift for language and the close family life [it leads]. The former judge wasn't [t] one for the profession's social circle, seldom attending law society functions. Having heard a rumour that two judges were in trouble, [the lawyer] rang to ask his friend who they were. "You are talking to one of them,"... [The former judge] had been phoned by [the] Chief District Court judge... shortly before. "[The former judge] had been in the job long enough to settle in and was thinking to himself how good his life had become in terms of his career and his family, in the way they had all settled in to Northland. Then the phone rings and it's [his boss] telling him to come to Wellington forthwith." [The lawyer], Queen's Counsel... and other senior lawyers urged him to plead not guilty. Because [the former judge] had been shown the way by [the other] Judge... who had been on the Northland circuit for five years, they considered [it] had a good case... [The former judge] regularly went to his office after returning from out of town sittings and used his personal swipe card to get in... [T]his left an electronic record which suggests [the former judge] wasn't conscious of any need to hide his movements... Within a year... of... pleading guilty... [the former judge] has fallen from being one of the country's most promising judges to a law clerk. All for claims totalling \$815. Although [the former judge is] likely to soon get back his lawyer's ticket his brilliant career is ruined.

...There has been considerable public pressure to have [a] Judge resign because of the perceived lack of public confidence in him... [However, the] judge was not immune from prosecution... Some recent publicity amounts to an attempt to "retry" [the] Judge... without the benefit of a detailed knowledge of the evidence that was placed before the jury... Despite what has been said... [our] jury system, in which all [N]Zers can have justifiable confidence, produced the verdict. [Therefore the] Judge... is entitled to be treated in accordance with it. [The judge] is not guilty of any offence. Notwithstanding his position... [the] judge... is entitled to be treated [like] any other citizen... Since this matter arose the claim form used by District Court judges has been modified and memoranda issued to them to make the basis of entitlement to expenses clearer. That in itself tends to indicate an acknowledgement that the original claim form and the explanatory notes in the judges' manual left room for improvement for the sake of clarity. Judges are as susceptible as anyone else to making honest mistakes. In fact, our legal system has an elaborate appeal structure to deal with the need to rectify judicial mistakes when they occur. Many of the opinions expressed to date are grossly ill-informed and some are clearly politically motivated... Judges do not enjoy a special preferred position of job security; the reason for the limited basis for removing them is to protect the Judiciary from political interference.

...Judges should be above personal criticism, even when their decisions turned out to be wrong... the Law Commission president... said. Commenting in the Law Society newsletter, [the High Court judge noted] "the growing enthusiasm for wholesale public attack on the judiciary."

...[A] HIGH-profile barrister... has launched a scathing attack on the falling moral standards of some judges, saying they lack the "old-fashioned integrity" of the past. In his new book *Justice*, to be released this week... [and which] took 15 years to complete, [the barrister]... said judicial standards had declined, with appointments based on political expediency rather than on ability and experience... "Moral turpitude is not a wrong any longer, only legal wrongs are. If you want to be a philanderer today no one stops you because no one really cares. In the past they did care." ...[furthermore,] some of today's judges lacked the intellectual brilliance of their predecessors... But [the] Justice Minister... said the claims were "absolute rubbish". The judges of yesteryear "don't come within a bull's roar of the present bench..." ...[the barrister also] told the *Sunday Star-Times* that because judges were paid too little, some front-rank barristers would not accept the positions.

...The launch of a new system to appoint district court judges has coincided with the first newspaper advertisement to recruit them. The Law Society has welcomed the Ministry of Justice's judicial appointments unit, which aims to make recruitment more accountable... The system replaces a relatively closed selection process with clearly laid-out requirements in qualifications and ability... Criteria [now] include: professional qualifications and at least seven years' experience, good communication skills, knowledge of the community and person[al] honesty and integrity. Knowledge of cultural and gender issues are also listed as good attributes for a district court judge. The process will start with a register of those who have expressed an interest or been nominated. Candidates will supply a curriculum vitae, a statutory declaration and authorisation form

declaring criminal convictions, disciplinary matters, financial stability and tax defaults. The files will be updated every five years with the help of applicants. As vacancies occur, suitable applicants will be considered by the Ministry of Justice and the Chief District Court judge before a short-list is drawn up. This will be scrutinised by the Solicitor-General, members of the Judiciary, the Law Society and a referee named by the applicant. Final interviews will be by the chief judge and the Secretary for Justice, with the Minister of Justice having the option to join this panel. The appointment will be made by the minister, who will report to the cabinet. The... Law Society President... said many people favoured a judicial appointments board but this was a “significant step” in the right direction.

...The Court of Appeal has opened the way for members of the public to sue district court judges. In a landmark decision yesterday, the court ruled that a claim for damages can go ahead against a former district court judge who allegedly issued a non-molestation order when [it] had no right to... [The subject of the non-molestation order claims the] Judge... acted recklessly and deliberately when making... [the] order against him. The judge allegedly refused to set it aside after being told [that district court judges] did not have the power to issue... [it. The subject] had earlier this year sought \$605,000 in damages... Taxpayers could end up footing the bill. The Minister of Justice... said last night the Crown would be liable for damages in such cases, rather than individual judges... The actual wrong [the subject] is suing for is the ancient tort of misfeasance in public office, and yesterday’s decision was on whether a district court judge was the holder of such a public office... The five-member panel of Appeal Court judges reviewed cases going back to 1703 before deciding in the affirmative. Giving the decision, [one of the Appeal Court judges] said none of the cases suggested a judge who knowingly and maliciously acted without jurisdiction could not be sued for damage his acts caused. To deny the right to sue would be to change the law. But... experts doubt that the decision will lead to a flood of civil cases against judges, because someone would have to provide a high level of proof that a judge had knowingly and maliciously acted without jurisdiction... “Just because you disagree with a judge’s interpretation of the facts is not going to get you anywhere near the starting blocks.”

...Under proposals before the Government, District Court judges may be protected in future from the kind of civil suit faced by a retired judge... The Minister of Justice... personally supported a... recommendation extending judicial immunity from civil prosecution to include... District Court, Employment Court and Maori Land Court... judges... High Court and Court of Appeal [judges can’t] be sued for their judicial actions... Although the matter was settled out of court, the... right to sue lower court judges was established in 1995 at the Court of Appeal in a test case involving... [someone] jailed for not paying his fine when [it] was paying by instalments... The Law Commission recommends enacting special legislation to compensate citizens who have been imprisoned as a result of a miscarriage of justice – a move that would bring N[Z] in line with international law.

...In very simple terms law is the system of rules by which the game of life is played. Members of society are the players. The court is the umpire. In any other sort of game... the umpire makes a decision on the spot and the game moves on immediately. Something akin to that should happen in the justice system. Regrettably, it does not. Instead our justice system has stalled and is a long way from providing a suitable service to the public. Serious delays have arisen recently in the Family Court in Auckland... It is unacceptable for the Government to use the recent Domestic Violence Act as an excuse. As a Family Court lawyer, I know from experience that three years ago delays of many months were common in obtaining custody hearing dates... Parents and children in particular should not be expected to suffer these long delays simply because the system is not working effectively. Delays are as bad in other courts. While the Government says it will improve things with alternative dispute resolution and the introduction of night courts, that is only treating the symptoms and not the cause. In effect, the court system is run as a statutory monopoly. As such, the Government can settle on any system it likes to resolve disputes. Unfortunately, the system now provided usually involves vast expense to the taxpayer and litigant – often several years after the event. With a monopoly there is no need to have a “service” mentality. A monopoly doesn’t have to do anything to please or attract customers because its customers have nowhere else to go. The court system in this country... does not work as if “the customer [the litigant] is always right.” Serving the needs of the public is not a dominant feature of the system. Consider some of the simple aspects of serving the public. Go to any district court and see if there is a place to buy a cup of tea or a sandwich. (Until recently not even the Auckland High Court had a place for litigants to buy a cup of coffee.) There are no carparks provided for litigants at court buildings... Child care facilities are never available. There are often insufficient interview rooms (if these exist at all). More often or not all litigants are told to turn up at 10 am. It is not unusual to have, say, 100 people turn up at the main court of any district court on their “list” day at 10 am. A “list” day is where traffic and a variety of charges are called for the first time. The average time the judge takes to deal with these people is about two to three minutes. If the court therefore knows that it will take, say, 300 minutes... of judge time to deal with 100 people, why have them all turn up at 10 am and hang around for anything up to five hours, to be dealt with in three minutes? ...The problem is not lack of money – it wouldn’t cost any more to bring 20 people to court each hour... The real problem is that the system does not focus on the needs of the customer – the public. Rather it is a system run by lawyers, focusing on court rules and procedure. These rules and procedures are designed to provide “the Rolls-Royce solution” to every problem. Elaborate pre-trial procedures (“interlocutory matters,” as the lawyers fondly call them) add vastly to the delay and expense. Why can the courts not examine each case on its merits, and rule many of these out in simple cases? ...Courts are also very wasteful. Judges spend too much time granting adjournments and performing simple administrative tasks and too little time considering difficult decisions which require their judicial skills... It is time the Government stopped throwing more money at the... problems... [i]nstead of... address[ing them properly]... It is time for some lateral thinking and some significant improvement.

...The P[M] has called in heads of Government departments and told them to come up with new ways of fighting crime to stem the “costly recycling” of offenders through the courts... N[Z] spent \$1.43 billion a year on police, prisons and the court system... The... [PM] told a... conference at the weekend that “realistic alternatives” were needed to prisons, along with carefully managed and up-to-date rehabilitation programmes. “If we don’t succeed, then we will have to build even more prisons as a testimony to our failure.” Denying [it] was going “soft” on crime[, the PM] said the country needed a system where criminals were more answerable to the community.

...Police officers refereed several fist-fights in a remote Kimberley community in an innovative bid to avert an Aboriginal clan war last week. The head of police in Western A[US]’s northern region... yesterday backed the officers’ unconventional method of conflict resolution. But a “clearer line” needed to be drawn for police who were required to bridge traditional and European-style laws... About 80 members from two opposing families had been about to wage war with fighting sticks, spears and boomerangs when the police intervened at the One Arm Point community, 200km north of Broome. The families insisted that tribal law required them to fight because of a melee involving traditional weapons a day earlier. The dispute was settled with a number of one-on-one fist fights after negotiations with three police officers and two police Aboriginal liaison officers. [The commander] acknowledged there was a potential legal risk to the officers if anyone had been seriously injured... “This is about resolution of conflict within the community. They had an argument; it’s been resolved.” ...finding resolutions which respected Aboriginal law was essential in policing the Kimberley where traditional customs, including pay-back, were still common practice... While police needed a clearer position, they also needed flexibility. “You can’t say: ‘...you hit him with a stick, you’re in the bin.’ You’d have the whole community in the bin.”

...A separate justice system for Maori should be looked at, says [a NZ] First MP... The Te Tai Tonga MP... said successive Governments had built “straw bridges at the top of cliffs,” doing little to address the fact that about 52[%] of the prison population was Maori. About 13[%] of the total population is Maori... [The MP] would ask his caucus to consider asking Parliament’s justice and law reform committee, of which [it] is a member, to conduct an inquiry into the justice system and the imprisonment rate for Maori... “We’ve tried everything else and I don’t see why we can’t look at a separate justice system for Maori, and [at] encouraging and providing an environment where Maori take responsibility for their people. There

must be a better way.” ...Maori were successful providers of health services... and [the MP] did not see why Maori could not also provide justice services. That would not be a soft option for Maori offenders, [the MP] said, because they would have their “aunties and uncles sorting them out.”

...[the first perso]n to receive a marae-based sentence for criminal offending is living at his Hamilton home after serving less than four months of a 12-month term. [The offender], convicted of assaulting two of his children and on cannabis charges... was sentenced to live at Te Kaharoa Marae, near Raglan, for a year while [it] undertook 1000 hours of work, counselling, therapy, rehabilitation and healing. But a Maori justice pioneer... said people involved with the case had not been properly prepared to see the marae-based sentence through to the end. “I think they jumped in too quickly and so they had some major stuff-ups. They didn’t realise they needed to commit themselves, hence this guy was able to sort of do as [it] liked in the end.” The landmark case was brought back to court by the Corrections Department in November. Investigations revealed that [the offender]’s attendance at the marae had gone from “okay in June to erratic in July... to non-existent by October,” a department report said. [The offender] has been remanded at large pending a department review of his sentence to be heard by [a]Judge... on March 17... A manager at the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Service... said the department had no objection to [the offender] living at home.

...Another... tribe in the North Island is poised to take over the provision of social services to Maori youth from the Social Welfare Department. The move is part of the [DSW]’s iwi social services strategy, which will lead to increasing numbers of Maori taking over responsibility for their young people. It follows moves in south Taranaki and Waikato... [The DSW] embarked on the policy several years ago because a disproportionate number of the young people it sees are Maori. Studies in the early 1990s showed 48[%] of those in the youth justice system were Maori.

...“E hara taku toa, i te toa takitahi, engari he tao takitini.” (Individuals are only important when they are part of a family.) This old Maori proverb suggests that the strength of the family unit, and the success of each person within it, depends on unity and acting together... I’ve chosen this proverb to illustrate the break-down of the whanau unit, and what it has cost – the lives of our children... Many Maori children are lost souls, who look to Government agencies for help before they turn to their own whanau... Maori have battled for justice and democracy. But we’ve lost the plot somewhere along the way. We can’t hold our heads up high... if we continue to... pass on... our struggles to our children... I know Maori people have a huge capacity for love and hospitality... Despite being a Whangai (adopted) child, I never lacked the love and warmth of my grandparents. There were more people who gave love, too, aunties and uncles at the pa, cousins and other distant relatives... In a wider setting we as a whanau had responsibilities to our extended family members, and we all had duties towards the marae, to maintain and keep the pa running smoothly.

...Harsh social and economic realities may force the Maori wardens’ service to go user-pays. The national manager of the Association of Maori Wardens... said wardens may have to change from traditional marae-based duties... “The call for wardens is so great today that at times we are used and abused... If we don’t get a koha [gift] we carry on, but if we do get one we are grateful.” B[ut a]... Rotorua senior warden... felt the time was not right to introduce user-pays. “Everyone who joins the association knows the job is voluntary and there is no financial reward... But at times we do charge for occasions like a 21st or patrolling buildings...,”... Maori wardens are often in the background at big occasions such as a tangi, directing car-parking and generally keeping the area free. They also patrol city streets at night, helping the homeless, street kids and others in need... [T]here were about 2500 wardens nationally. They went through a selection process before receiving their warrant card and badge.

...[‘there are about 2,500 prison officers’ in NZ, where the ‘average prison population increased by nearly 59% between 1983 and 1995’, and] is expected to rise by more than 36% in the next eight years. The latest Corrections Department figures forecast the muster to reach 5196 by the end of this year and to rise to 7092 by the year 2005... [Currently,] the average prison number was 4521 (plus an average of 535 on remand)... The ministry said the major trends behind the increasing numbers of [guy] prisoners were the rapid increases in serious violent and other violent offending, and an increasing number of prisoners in the older age group... [A]lternatives were under way to try to stem the rise in prison numbers... [However, a] senior sociology lecturer... [at] Canterbury University... predicted a continued rise in prison numbers as the Government-directed corrections policy reflected “public demands that violent offenders go to prison for longer.” ...The increasing number of older, long-term and violent offenders expected in future prison populations has implications for the security status and management of prisons... Many Corrections Department facilities are old and suffer from a backlog of maintenance and other upgrades needed to “ensure basic safety requirements... A strategy is under way to rectify the situation, which could include a major building programme over the next five years.” ...A new \$30 million prison would be needed every two years to cope with inmate numbers expected... over the next decade.

...Overworked prison officers fearful for their safety are going to the Employment Court today to protest at overcrowded conditions at Mt Eden Prison... The national organiser of the Prison Officers Association... said yesterday that the union would seek a declaration... that Mt Eden Prison drop its prisoner numbers back to an agreed maximum of 421 inmates. “...on Friday it was 440. We have been given notice by the general manager that [it] would intend to go to 446 but no guarantees [we] might not even exceed that... The fuller you get in a wing the greater tensions there are and that gives rise to real... safety concerns.” ...some prisoners shared cells so that people did not have to sleep on the floor or in corridors.

...The... Penal Officers’ Association... said there had been... inmate “incidents” such as fights, violent outbursts and the use of abusive language because of overcrowding... [at] Mt Eden Prison... in the past week. The prison’s... numbers had reached 451... Previously, toilets in some parts of the prison had blocked up... [I]t was only a matter of time before that happened again.

...Mt Eden Prison’s capacity has been boosted by 30 beds with the addition of [2] new wings – cells at... Auckland District Court and High Court.

...A [gal] remand prisoner spent six days in cells at Auckland Central police station because the [gals]’ division at Mt Eden Prison was full... On Tuesday there were nine [prisoners] in the 21 overflow cells... [■] The minimum security unit... at Paremoremo... is to... [receive a new] 60-bed... unit... The Department of Corrections chief executive... said staff tried to keep offenders in their home regions as it helped in their rehabilitation and reintegration. But bed shortages in Auckland had meant that some [prisoners] had to be sent as far as the South Island. The new unit will cost \$4.5 million and will extend from the medium security west wing. Contractors will build the main structure and install security systems...

A repeat jail-breaker serving a sentence for violent crimes escaped yesterday from... Mt Eden Prison’s least secure unit... [D]etectives said... th[e] escaper had gang connections in Auckland and should not be approached... The Penal Officers’ Association accused the Corrections Department of housing [the escaper] in a unit not designed for prisoners with a record of escaping... [but said the escaper] and other inmates might have been held there because of the prison’s overcrowding problem... A department spokes[person]n... rejected a link between overcrowding and the escape.

...The Department of Corrections is reviewing security measures because 53 people have escaped from custody since... July. A spokes[person]n... said the escapes comprised 14 cases where inmates were able to just walk away from custody, 10 escapes while on escort, 16 breakouts and 13 escapes while the inmate was on temporary release... Forty-four people escaped from custody [during the 12 months prior to] June 30... The... [spokesperson] blamed seven breakouts from Paparua Prison, Christchurch, for the high[er recent] figures. “We are going to continue investigations into escapes down there and we believe the result of these reviews will help to reduce the problem.”

...A total of 159 faulty locks at Paparua Prison... needed replacing to prevent escapes and to protect staff from injury in the event of a breakout, according to a 1994 report. The leaked report of a national inspection of high-security locks in N[Z] prisons found the operation of the locks seriously below an acceptable standard. “We have grave concern in respect of the security of this prison. We advise in the strongest of terms to inject new locks and urgent servicing to prevent escapes and to protect staff...,” the report said. The Labour justice spokes[person]n... said action to replace the locks was taken only last week... [after] 10 of Paparua’s prisoners... escaped in a little over a two-month period. Yesterday, [the spokesperson] said security at Paparua Prison, which was full to overflowing, was appalling. Earlier this month, two Paparua prison officers were

sacked after a security lapse. They turned off alarms on a night shift so they could sleep. The [spokesperson said the] Minister of Corrections... had refused to provide him with the leaked report under the Official Information Act, and suggested the reason was the Government was embarrassed... [The minister] said the country's prisons were secure and the rate of escapes had reached its lowest level in 50 years.

...The more jail staff swot up on ways to keep a prison secure, the harder inmates are trying to outwit them. "Every time we think we have blocked one hole, we find there is another one..." said the general manager of Auckland Prison at Paremoremo[, who]... found himself at the centre of the latest game of jail-style cat and mouse... after an escape... from [the p]rison's medium security complex on Sunday. Even before... [t]he 31-year-old... was recaptured yesterday, [his escape] had set in motion a set of inquiries designed to prevent repeat performances... [The 31-year-old] was the first medium security prisoner over the wall since... September[1996. Both escapees] managed to slip through holes in the outer perimeter fence. Three [prisoners] hold the dubious honour of having committed greater Houdini acts at Paremoremo, however... [The trio] are the only [prisoners] to have broken out of the maximum security division in its 25-year history. The[ir efforts to]... saw... through bars on their way to the outside world in August 1993, ensured that it would be a whole lot tougher for anyone else to get out of the maximum security institution... [An inspection of] the prison... exposed a catalogue of insecure areas inside the prison and set out solutions to make the security tougher. The judge [who undertook the inspection] said... some of the prison's best defences were simply its notoriety – myths about how secure it was. Even prison staff had been taken in by the stories... "Such legends may have contributed to the... escape." ...For security reasons, [the manager won't] detail the differences between the maximum and medium security prisons, except to say the difference lies in "possibly fences... electronic equipment, staffing levels, supervision." ■ During the '1950s, three inmates regularly escaped from Mt Eden prison at night, committing petty crimes and popping home for sex with their wives'...

A NZ[] First MP... and former police[officer] said yesterday that [it] feared for his safety and that of his family when a "sexual psychopath" [it had] helped to lock up escaped from prison. Relating the incident in Parliament... [the MP said the] psycho... had attempted to rape a nun and, at a school open day, had taken and tied up a girl in a classroom. The girl was discovered by her parents and police "before [the psycho] had a chance to do anything to her. But [the psycho] later admitted to having had an insane desire to cut her up with a knife... Among other things this prisoner had indicated that [it] intended to deal to my family when... eventually released." ...[the MP] told his story during debate on the Courts and Criminal Matters Bill when [it] referred to an amendment that alters a section of the Victims of Offences Act 1987. This section allows victims of sexual violation or other serious assault injury (and the immediate families of dead victims) to ask to be notified of the offender's release or escape from custody. The new section adds a requirement that victims (and the families of dead victims) also be notified of the offender's upcoming parole hearing or hearing for release to home detention. The [psycho, whom the MP] did not name, was imprisoned in an institution for the criminally insane but escaped when... transferred to a medium security area... While [the MP, who]... has several daughters... was certain the [psycho] would not be able to find out where [his family lived, the then]... Gisborne police district commander... made sure his family were safe. "Then it occurred to me that my brother has the same initial as myself and lived locally and so I rang him up and told him... this particular guy... was on the loose." The escape[e]... went to Wellington where [it] befriended a young girl... later killing her father... and a couple of days later committed suicide.

...Five of A[US]'s most dangerous criminals were at large last night after cutting their way out of Brisbane's multimillion dollar high-security jail with a \$9 file... "We consider these five escapees to be the most dangerous and desperate people on the streets of A[US] at the moment, and police are absolutely petrified and terrified as to what they may do to remain at large," said a police media spokes[person. Schools]... kept children inside during the day and parents were asked to collect them after school... [as] 150 flak-jacketed police searched the area around the prison... Despite numerous reported sightings... police admitted they had no idea of the whereabouts of the three murderers, a robber and a rapist...

Seven prisoners, four of whom are considered dangerous, were on the run in two states yesterday... [after] inmates escaped from Greenough regional jail near Geraldton in Western A[US plus]... Sydney's Long Bay jail and... Silverwater jail... However, [the]... New South Wales... Corrective Services Department chief... said claims that the state's jail system was in chaos were "absolutely ludicrous" and the rate of escapes in 1996-97 was the second lowest ever recorded... Meanwhile, [a] [notorious armed robber... is still at large after escaping in Brisbane...

THE LONG RUN: [An American] lived on the run for nearly three decades after escaping from a Virginia prison in 1969 where [it] was serving time for burglary. [The American] had some scrapes with the law and even went to prison under a fake name, but the police never knew they had [imprisoned a wanted fugitive]. On Monday, though, the 50-year-old... was arrested after a routine traffic stop in California and returned to prison.

...A group of inmates armed with revolvers seized three guards and freed more than 200 fellow prisoners yesterday in a jail in south-eastern Brazil. Authorities had by last night recaptured 60...

About 200 high-risk prisoners... seized control of a prison wing in northern Mexico and took seven unarmed guards hostage to protest against bad living conditions... [In related news, t]housands of Russian prison inmates will walk free after the Duma approved a resolution yesterday granting them amnesty. Among 35,000 prisoners to be released will be all [guys] over the age of 60, pregnant [prisoners and gals] over the age of 55, mothers of young children and the handicapped.

...An Auckland[er]... has been awarded \$7500 for being kept in prison for 22 hours after [it] should have been freed. The [Auckland], whose name is suppressed, had his sexual violation conviction overturned by the Court of Appeal at Wellington on October 17 last year, but the message did not immediately get through to Rangipo jail, where [the Auckland] was being held... The [Auckland] sued the Department for Courts and the Corrections Department for \$20,000 in November. His statement of claim, filed in the Wellington District Court, said that when a person was acquitted or a conviction was quashed, court staff had the responsibility of immediately telephoning the decision to the prison where the person was held, and sending a confirming fax. But this was not done, and from that point the [Auckland]'s detention became unlawful in terms of the Bill of Rights and of common law. The [Auckland] and his supporters claimed they were caused distress and upset because of the unlawful detention.

...Every time a violent offender appears at a parole hearing or is temporarily released from now on, the victim has the right to be told. Police and the Department of Corrections have begun a campaign to let victims know they can be kept informed of their assailants' whereabouts... A new leaflet and poster for the Victim Notification Register was launched yesterday, along with new procedures to give victims better information about the parole process... All police stations have supplies of the... leaflet... Are You a Victim of Crime? ...[and application forms] for registering.

...Almost half the convicted murderers sentenced to life in prison but paroled since 1987 have re-offended. The... Minister of Corrections, issuing the figures, said 137 people serving life imprisonment had been given parole since January 1, 1987. All but one had been convicted of murder... 60 had reoffended and been convicted of a variety of charges[, of which '21 were convicted for violence, three for sex offences, and three more for traffic offences']... Eighteen of the 60 were sent back to jail for three months or more. The other 42 were put on community-based sentences or sentenced to less than three months in jail. A... relative of raped and murdered South Otago girl Kylie Smith[who is the spokesperson]... for Family and Friends of Murder Victims... said the figures reiterated the need for law changes. [The spokesperson] doubted the worst murderers could be rehabilitated and said a life sentence needed to mean offenders were locked away for life. It was important that criminals who reoffended on parole were recalled to complete their initial sentence, [the spokesperson added. A] Detective Senior Sergeant... of the police national bureau of criminal intelligence, said the figures were a concern. But... they could also be looked at positively – 77 inmates given parole after life sentences did not reoffend. Police would not comment on whether criminals sentenced to life imprisonment should remain inside for the rest of their lives.

...[the guy] convicted in California more than 10 years ago of raping a 15-year-old girl and chopping off her arms, is in police custody facing... murder... charges... [The guy], aged 69, served eight years of a 14-year sentence for raping and mutilating [the girl] in 1978. When... released on parole, no community in California would take him and [the guy] spent almost a month after his release living on the grounds of San Quentin Prison before moving to Florida. [The girl had] pretended to be dead after [her attacker] cut off her forearms so that [the attacker would leave, then] managed to make her way to a highway where [it] was spotted and taken to a hospital. On Wednesday night, a Hillsborough County sheriff's deputy called by neighbours found the nude body of... an unidentified... [victim in the guy]'s home, a police spokes[person said. The 69-year-old], who was covered with blood when the deputy arrived, first said [it] had cut himself chopping vegetables, but the [deputy] saw the bloody body...

A Recurring Nightmare... THERE IS A THEORY HELD BY SOME criminologists that evil eventually melts out of the body. That if you warehouse a [dangerous person] in jail long enough, [it] will become harmless. Youth's passions dim. Perversion's fires cool. Old felons may not exactly reform but are defanged by time. It is a theory that [a 69-year-old] contested last week, after his bloody fashion. Last Wednesday a painter spotted a struggle while working on a neatly kept house in Tampa's working-class Orient Park suburb... The witness called the 911 emergency number, and when a police officer arrived at the door, [it] was met by a... drunk... "[with] blood all over his chest." ...After his arrest, [the 69-year-old] declared to reporters, "They framed me the first time. But this time I did it." In fact, [the 69-year-old] is notorious for "the first time." In 1978 a 15-year-old Las Vegas, Nevada, runaway... hitched a ride outside San Francisco with a balding [guy] in a blue van. The [driver] approached her sexually, backed off, but later – having liquored up – beat her, bound her and raped her twice. Then... got his axe... chopped off her arms and left her in a concrete culvert to die... The next day, read court records, [the victim] was found "wandering nude... holding up her arms so that the muscles and blood would not fall out." When [the driver], a merchant mariner, was sentenced for the crime, the judge said [it wished it] could "send him to prison for the rest of his natural life." The judge couldn't. California law at the time set a maximum of 14 1/2 years for the crimes, with sentence reductions for good behaviour and work in prison. [The driver]'s release after just 8 1/3 years sparked his bizarre drama's second act. As authorities attempted to settle him in one Bay Area town after another, angry crowds screamed, picketed and eventually prevailed. [The driver] ended up spending the rest of his parole in a trailer on the... prison... grounds... Further enraging Californians were [hi]s claims to innocence and his absurd threat of a forcible-kidnap complaint against [the victim. (The victim won \$US]2.56 million from him in a civil suit, but [the driver] had no funds.) When [the driver] moved in 1988 to his native Florida, the reception was equally hostile. A Tampa car dealer offered him \$5,000 to get out of the state, and a firebomb exploded on his lawn. [The driver] had more luck in Orient Park, where [it] moved into a house owned by his family. Some neighbors were ignorant of his past. Others felt sure [the driver] had put it behind him. [The driver] proffered small gifts and helped out with tasks... "We fixed him a plate for Thanksgiving[.]" said the person who lived[... next door. Some did much more. Three weeks ago, [another neighbour], who didn't know of [the driver]'s history, found him slumped over the wheel of his van, a hose running from the tailpipe... [The second neighbour] foiled the suicide attempt. In light of last week's event, [the second neighbour] says, "The first thing I thought was, 'Should I have left... [him in there?'" The second neighbour] wasn't the only one second-guessing. If [the driver] had committed any serious crimes in Florida before last week, [it] wasn't caught. Police records indicate shoplifting charges. But the absence of intervening atrocities between bookend acts of horror does not lessen the impression that the California picketers were justified and the tolerant Orient Parkers tragically naive. In 1987 [the driver]'s parole led to passage of ...a... bill... which carries a 25-years-to-life sentence with possible parole for aggravated mayhem. In fact, a spokes[person] for the state attorney general's office estimates that subsequent toughening of statutes would now assure that [the driver] would serve at least 41 years. Last week's murder stokes a debate about recidivism among sexual offenders. The Supreme Court is considering the constitutionality of a Kansas law allowing the state to confine violent sexual criminals in mental hospitals beyond their prison terms, citing no mental illness other than a predisposition to similar crimes. The case is not abstract: Kansas is currently holding [a 62-year-old] multiple-sex-crimes offender... whose sentence has expired but who has testified that only death can prevent him from molesting again. During oral arguments, several Justices seemed to share the concerns of critics like... [the chairperson] of the criminal-justice department at Long Island University, who decries indefinite incarceration based "not on what anybody has done but on what we think they might do." But several dozen states signed an amicus brief backing the law. [Kansas']Chief Justice... expressed the frustration of the court – and the nation – when [it] asked, "So what is the state supposed to do? Just wait until [[the 62-year-old]] does it again?" For [the 69-year-old]'s victims, such speculation is moot. [The 15-year-old girl], now 34, told the San Jose *Mercury News* that [it] was "appalled and horrified. I want to feel safe again. I don't know what the feeling is like anymore." Divorced and financially strapped, [the 34-year-old] is raising one of her two children on her own. [Her] prosthetic hooks... have worn out. Roxanne Hayes, last week's victim, leaves three children aged 3 to 11. Over the past 11 years [Roxanne] had accrued 99 arrests, mostly on prostitution and drugs charges. But [Roxanne] probably had no idea what sort of [person the mother of three was visiting; the driver]'s first crime predated Florida's public-novice statute on sex offenders.

...Throwing Away the Key... [THE PA]EDOPHILE... HAD DONE HIS TIME. In August 1994, after serving 10 years for taking "indecent liberties" with two 13-year-old boys, [the paedophile] walked out of prison in Hutchinson, Kans. – and was almost immediately transported to the Larned Correctional Mental Health Facility, where [it] has been locked up ever since. Under a 1994 state law called the Sexually Violent Predator Act, a judge ordered [that the paedophile be] confined indefinitely after ruling that his "mental abnormality" made him likely to attack again. [The paedophile] challenged the constitutionality of that law, but last week, in a 5-to-4 decision, the Supreme Court upheld it. [The paedophile] is just the kind of fiend the Kansas legislature had in mind when it passed the Predator Act. His 1984 molestation conviction was his fifth in almost 30 years... [However, t]he American justice system punishes criminals for what they have done, not for what they might do. Only those deemed dangerous and insane are locked away from their potential actions. [The paedophile's] lawyers argued that the "mental abnormality" clause in the Kansas statute created too low and too vague a standard for committing a person and so was a violation of due process. They also claimed that the law subjected [their client] to double jeopardy and that it violated the Constitution's ex post facto clause, which forbids the enactment of new laws that extend punishment for past crimes. The court was not convinced... Many legal experts are worried that the decision will allow states to lock up all sorts of people. "Today we're dealing with sexual predators," says... the legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union. "Who is it tomorrow that we're going to label as abnormal and potentially dangerous?" The dissenting Justices[']... objection... was that [the paedophile] has received virtually no treatment even though the law requires it. To [the dissenting justices], the state's failure to live up to its promise makes [the paedophile's] confinement look a lot like punishment. Six states have sexual-predator laws; similar statutes being considered in at least 30 others are likely to be enacted swiftly. To mark their days to freedom, people like [the compulsive paedophile] are going to need new calendars.

...Putting more people in jail is the official reason for the fifth consecutive drop in the U[S]'s annual crime rate. [US prisons had '329,821 inmates in 1980; 773,919 in 1990; and 1,054,774 in 1994 (while 'total expenditure' went from just 'under \$US36 billion in 1982 to over \$US93 billion in 1992').]

...With more than 1.5 million... [citizens] locked up in the U[S], we now imprison the largest percentage of our population of any nation in the world. A record 90,000 new prisoners entered state and federal correctional institutions in 1995. A whole raft of politically driven get-tough-on-crime measures – mandatory sentences for petty drug offences, three-strikes-you're-out laws, the abolishing of parole and time off for good behavior, the elimination of education and rehabilitation programs – has turned our prisons into pressure cookers full of angry, desperate people who feel they have been singled out to suffer for society's sins. In October 1995 rioting broke out at more than 20 federal prisons – the most widespread and costly uprisings the American penal system has ever experienced. Seventy federal joints across the country were locked down in a

state of emergency. The unprecedented rash of violence resulted in dozens of injuries to prisoners and staff, and cost tens of millions of dollars in damage, overtime, and lost revenue from closed Federal Prison Industries factories... The federal system operates at about 150[%] of capacity; in most state penitentiaries and county jails the overcrowding is even worse... Tensions are exacerbated by the lack of privacy, the inescapable, constant noise and smell of other people, and, above all, the fear of violence, which can erupt at any time... Locking down a penitentiary is the equivalent of slamming a lid on an already simmering pot... Lockdowns... have become the penal management tool... of choice for the nineties. Prison officials are relying more and more on fear and force to control the populations of young prisoners who have no hope of getting out for decades... Long sentences... and the rapid deterioration of prison conditions have given birth to a bitter, vengeful new breed of prisoner who knows that his plight means nothing to the people in power. As Malcolm X said, this [perso]n is dangerous because [it] has nothing to lose... Most of these people will someday get out of prison. Then it will be payback time... The most recent assault on prisoners' rights came in the age-old form of censorship. Inmates in the federal system were slated, as of December 1, 1996, to no longer be able to receive any "commercially published material that is sexually explicit or contains nudity." The bureau-wide ban is the first of its kind. [Editor's note: it is illegal for NZ prisoners to write to the media. An Auckland prison stopped letters going from it to a radio station doing a request show for inmates. The Deputy-Governor stated that 'many of the requests were fakes because it knew a lot about music and had never heard of the bands mentioned'!)]... Last year marked the 25th anniversary of the uprising at Attica in New York state, still the country's deadliest prison riot, with more than 40 inmates and staff killed by state police retaking the area – the largest number of Americans killed by American gunfire in one incident since the Civil War. After Attica a number of reforms were instituted across the country. Now, with the recently passed Prison Reform Litigation Act and the whole slew of get-tough mandates, the message from Washington is clear: No mercy. Except when it's one of their own[(one of their own) skated through on evidence that would have brought a conviction without government connections)]... But why should we care about these low-life[s crowding up our prisons], you ask; who gives a damn about a bunch of vicious, predatory animals? Don't do the crime if you can't do the time. The issue is more complicated than that. Increasingly our proliferating prison population is made up of nonviolent, first-time drug offenders serving sentences that are longer than those given to rapists and killers... People serving time for drug-related crimes now account for nearly three-quarters of all those locked up. The Russian novelist Dostoyevski, who himself served time as a political prisoner, wrote, "The degree of civilization in a society is revealed by entering its prisons." We want our prisons to confine violent, predatory psychopaths. But do we want merely incapacitation, isolation, and punishment for each and all of those whom we label criminals? Because the prison business is one of our fastest-growing industries, we need to ask ourselves what product these institutions are turning out. Are prisons actually making people worse rather than better? If so, then prisons are doing us all more harm than good.

...[a] Polish law professor... has a firm message for the eighth International Conference on Penal Reform which opens in Auckland today. "It's time to stop convincing each other prisons are such a bad thing – we are already convinced." After 16 years of talking, the reality worldwide is more prisons, more prisoners and more conservative policies... "We need to work on small specific projects which will change the mentality of society and bring real change... Prison conditions, prison mentality and specific prison subcultures do not stay within prison walls. They expand and are transferred to society." [The professor], who lectures in criminal law at Warsaw University, is involved in a project teaching students about areas of law relating to everyday life so they can, in turn, teach prisoners and secondary school students. Her goal is to show people how they can solve their problems using the law rather than resorting to illegal activities – and that if they know the procedures, there is much they can do on their own. "I feel my programme will mean less need for prisons... If young people know how to cope with problems they are less likely to start on criminal activities; prisoners will have more resources to better cope when they get out; and the students involved who will become our lawyers and judges will know what prison is all about..." [The professor] doesn't say there should be no prisons. "People who kill, rape, commit terrorist activities and other crimes of violence should be put away for safety... But we should call it vengeance... – not justice." Poland... has had a very punitive justice system, with people sentenced to long prison terms for petty crimes like stealing a bottle of milk or selling vodka illegally. Now they do not go to prison. There is community service and fines... The more liberal approach arrived with the collapse of communism and between January and October 1989 the prison population dropped from 80,000 to 40,000. How people convicted of crimes are treated all over the world depends not on their crimes, but on the political, economic and social systems in place, says [the professor]. The Polish prison population quickly climbed back to 60,000. The end of communism brought more freedom and fewer regulations, but it has also meant less security, with high unemployment, high inflation and a rising crime rate... "No one found jobs for the people released, or a place for them to live and many reoffended immediately. Under communism there were tight controls and it was very grey and boring; but there were no guns and no bombs... Suddenly it was like an American movie." Criminal law cannot solve society's problems... and nor can prisons. "We use prison as a punishment. We don't know how to cope with problems and we react with more of the same – longer sentences." [The professor] would like to see prisons used "with common sense. If my wallet is stolen I don't want the person to go to prison and to pay for him to be there. I want my wallet back, I want to hear 'sorry', and for him to do some work in the community and pay a fine to a good cause..." [The professor] is critical of the many Western experts who descended on Eastern Europe after 1989 to tell them how to solve their problems, including overcrowded prisons. "You can't copy from one country to another. Nor can you impose your ideas. I am fed up with the arrogance, and hearing always how the West is helping the East..." ...[the professor] is one of several overseas delegates attending the four-day ICOPA Conference to discuss the effects of more than 100 years of prisons and to propose realistic alternatives. The effects of privatisation on the penal system, crime and punishment in the 21st century, the media and crime, and spirituality in the prisons are also on the agenda.

...*Let's make jails repellent places* For some time I[–] ...the senior Government whip... [– ha]ve been privately concerned about the performance of our justice system... It is time we took a long, hard look at our justice system and honestly assessed its performance. What have we got out of 40-odd years of what can best be described as a "liberal" justice system? The answer is clear: increased crime rates almost across the board, growing youth problems and drug abuse and violence, a high reoffending rate and a frequency of crime, even in rural communities, that alarms most of us, keeps us barricaded in our homes and fearful to walk the streets after dark. The "huggy, kissy" liberal justice system has not worked. It is not deterring criminals and it is not rehabilitating them. So it is time we looked for new solutions. Part of the problem lies in the philosophy our justice system subscribes to, which can't make its mind up whether it is leaning towards rehabilitation or punishment. All our justice system is good for at the moment is putting people out of circulation for a while. It is certainly not considered a punishment by those who are incarcerated, or by wider society at large... We have to decide whether we are going to rehabilitate criminals properly and, if we are, we need to provide the money to fund this... since we will need more psychologists and social workers so our criminals can be properly hugged and kissed and told it's not really their fault. Or we can move ahead to the system I favour. In some respects it is a step back to the past – a justice system that is seeing renewed popularity in the U[S] and Britain. What I'm talking about is "hard labour" prison programmes or, as some call them, "boot camps." We ran these in N[Z] as separate prison programmes until 1954. They instilled a fear of prison and a strong desire to rehabilitate. We need to make prison sentences a tough experience again, an experience most offenders won't want to repeat. At the moment with comfortable beds, good food, colour television, craft lessons, drama groups, extramural study and counselling, prison is in many cases a better option than being on the outside... I feel compelled to speak out... following a couple of recent bizarre incidents... In the first, news came that a maximum security prisoner had allegedly enjoyed the company of his girlfriend while... in Auckland Hospital. This [prisoner] had been found guilty of murder and had been locked away for life. Yet within weeks, while recovering from a prison fight, it appeared [the prisoner] was enjoying all the comforts of home. In the second incident, several prisoners took Paparua Prison guards hostage for a night, seemingly with ease. It... riled me that [people] who had been convicted of

murder appeared to have so much freedom: freedom to plan and execute a well-organised prison take-over; and the freedom to spend “quality time” with a girlfriend.

...Thailand is planning to grant... convicts conjugal visits in jail as an incentive for them to behave well inside and to prepare them for life after prison... “If we treat prisoners well as a way of telling them that society... accepts them, we believe they will not repeat their crimes,”... said[the] Deputy Interior Minister... But [gal] prisoners would be excluded from the scheme because of fears it would lead to unwanted pregnancies.

...Couples will be allowed to live behind the same bars under a Spanish plan to set up the first “family cells” in Aranjuez prison outside Madrid. The prison is due to contain 72 family cells by next summer, where couples can live together and with their children, until the children turn three. The families will have 14 to 16 sq m living space including a living room, bedroom and bathroom, and will be isolated from the other... prisoners.

...An attempt to set up a home where [gal] offenders can live with their children may collapse. The “prison without walls” – the first of its kind in N[Z] – aims to avoid the trauma children go through when they are separated from their imprisoned mothers. Justice officials have approved the idea in principle, but departmental restructuring has kept the Puriri Foundation waiting more than a year for a funding decision. In the meantime, the foundation’s lottery grant to develop the idea has lapsed and the project co-ordinator... has been forced to look for another job. “It’s been very frustrating... We have done all the work and we can get the project up and running as soon as we get the word from the Department of Corrections.” The foundation plans to rent a house from Housing N[Z]... in central or West Auckland with the aim of creating a “stable, welcoming, family-style atmosphere” for seven... offenders and their children. The families would live under 24-hour supervision, but the house would have no bars. A normal life could be maintained for children, who would attend school or preschool... Overseas research has shown that these community programmes have advantages for the emotional wellbeing of the children. “Children who have had maternal bond separation find it hard to form emotional attachments with people,”... [These] children ended up being punished by the conventional prison system because they could not understand why their mother had left them... Also, they are more likely to become law-breakers... [Another advantage is that t]he residential community programme... [was] a cheaper option than conventional imprisonment... The foundation said it would cost \$57,000 to keep a mother and two children for a year, compared with \$86,000 to put a [mother] in prison and her two children in Social Welfare care... The Department of Corrections expects to decide the future of the project next month.

...**PRISON HOUSES:** Prison officers’ unions warn that the removal of prison housing... will put the safety of officers and the community at risk. Jail staff across N[Z] are to lose their Government housing by 2000... The sales of about 250 houses near 15 prisons will be staggered over the next two years, with entire streets being sold off and removed at a time... [T]he first 100 families [were] told this week they must find new accommodation within three months... Instead of living next to... Waikeria Prison in the Waikato... [- NZ]’s largest prison... [-] off-duty officers will have to find homes in the closest town, Te Awamutu, which is 16km away, or in Hamilton. Ohura Prison will retain its housing because of its isolation, and Paremoremo, because of a cabinet directive... [Incidentally, l]egislation brought before Parliament yesterday seeks to expand the number of offenders eligible for a home-based sentence. The measure will enable judges to order “low risk” offenders sentenced to two years or less in prison to serve their whole sentence at home. Probation officers can apply for court orders allowing inmates serving less than two years in jail to be released to serve out the remainder of their term at home. Offenders serving more than two years may also be sent home by parole boards three months before they are due for parole. But this provision will not apply to serious violent offenders. In making home detention orders, judges will consider probation officer reports, the nature of the offence, the likelihood of reoffending, the safety of the home’s other occupants and any victim impact statements. The Criminal Justice Amendment Bill follows a pilot home detention programme in Auckland. Prisoners were allowed to leave home only for work, training or emergencies and had to appear before a video monitor after receiving random telephone calls. A subsequent Ministry of Justice evaluation of the trial was inconclusive because of the limited number of inmates eligible to take part. But home detention is being expanded because the... Government considers it to be safe and cost-effective. The Minister of Corrections... said yesterday that home detention would also help integrate offenders back into the community...

Government set to fit electronic shackles to ‘at home’ prisoners Electronic shackles initially shunned by justice planners as too “stigmatising” might be used to put more prisoners under home detention. The Minister of Corrections... said last night that a combination of video and telephone monitoring used in a... trial scheme had proved too expensive and[, anyway, it] favoured electronic bracelets or anklets. [The minister] also wanted to expand the eligibility of offenders, particularly those convicted of white collar crimes or traffic offences, to serve part or all of their sentences in their homes and reduce costs further... [The minister added that as an additional bonus the electronic shackles – which are completely unrelated to the] belt that can inflict a... 50,000 volt electric shock... [that a] police officer in America has come up with... to control prisoners... [(outraging American c]ivil rights campaigners) –] ...would... let authorities control the release of inmates and thus reduce the likelihood of reoffending.

...*Corrective training shock fails to deter reoffending...* The short, sharp shock is not providing the necessary jolt for young offenders... says a new Department of Corrections report. The Minister of Corrections... has told staff to come up with a new way to stop youth committing serious crime. More than 90[%] of youth sentenced to corrective... training – a three-month... [stint at] Tongariro Prison, where life is more regimented and the teenagers have fewer privileges than other prisoners[, which is]... designed to shock wayward youth back on to the straight and narrow – ...reoffended... The... authors... said it was the highest rate of recidivism for any sentence... [A r]etired Chief Youth Court Judge... said... youths sentenced to corrective training had a myriad of social problems and “they[’]d be better off if they could get a... job... and a... decent girlfriend...”

...[the] Opposition justice spokes[perso]n... described the \$3 million-a-year corrective training programme as an “abysmal and expensive failure” and called on the Minister of Corrections to scrap it. More than 400 young offenders go through the programme at central North Island prisons... each year. Details released by the ministry showed 92% reoffended within five years, while more than 75% reoffended within a year. “If ever there was an expensive failure, the corrective training programme must be it... I’ve spoken to the last couple of managers of the programme who say all we’re doing is bringing a group of [youths] together, many of them gang prospects, so they can show each other how staunch they are.” Corrective training has been running for six years, with a major overhaul in 1992 aiming it more toward educational programmes.

...John has spent most of his life behind bars. The sentence [John] started at 22, for property offences, was his fifth. Then things started turning bad. [John] took it into his head to break out, graduating to serious crime – including violent assault – in the process. By the time [John] landed back in prison his sentence had more than doubled. “I was on a downhill slide... I didn’t want to know what the world was about.” Back inside, John – the prison rules forbid the use of his full name – enrolled for “a barrage of courses.” It was, [John] says, less out of hunger for education than a need to break the long stretch in front of him into manageable units of time. Five years later, [John] is looking forward to release – some time in the [next couple of months, John] hopes – with a certificate in architectural design under his belt and grand plans on the drawing board. John is one of a full honours board of success stories for the Inmate Education Fund, a special project of the Prisoners Aid and Rehabilitation Society. The century-old organisation, set up to offer practical help to prison inmates, has much of its work publicly funded under contracts with the Department of Corrections. But the education initiatives are financed by whatever money the society can “beg and grovel for” from individuals and organisations, says its projects manager... Prison inmates – particularly violent offenders – do not excite the same public sympathy as fur seals or sick children of course and, even though... [the projects manager wants] “a hand up, not a handout” for her charges, [the manager] knows it can be an uphill battle. So does John, who wrote dozens of letters to big organisations seeking help to pay fees for computing courses. [John] is not bitter about the rejections – which were almost invariably polite and encouraging – but... seems humbled by the organisation that did say yes... John is under no illusion that his qualifications will give him an instant meal ticket when... released. “The chance of someone employing an inmate of my

history is pretty slim,” [John] admits. But... John... plans to set himself up as a freelance designer, doing floor plans for kitset houses... Almost three dozen inmates nationwide are studying subjects as diverse as beekeeping, history and furniture-making in the programme that boasts a 100[%] pass rate.

...The Minister of Social Welfare... wants young offenders to be able to study and plan careers while in custody. At a time[when] the senior Government whip... is calling for “boot camps” to toughen prison sentences, [his colleague] is suggesting that young inmates be set on a career path. The minister has just returned from Britain, where [it] visited two youth prisons... [Y]oung inmates in a juvenile offenders unit in Kent were encouraged to complete training programmes and career guidance while inside... A spokes[person] for the Youth Law Project in Auckland... said young criminals would have less chance of reoffending if they emerged with clear career goals. [The spokesperson] said youths at the Northern Residential Centre in Weymouth completed life-skills training but did not have any formal education.

...Prisoners are in line for a big pay rise as the Government moves to turn prisons into productive factories... Working prisoners will earn up to \$5 a day (a five-fold increase...), but their individual contracts will require them to promise to be punctual, according to a draft report on inmate employment. While it may not be exactly cosy behind prison walls, inmates will have an advantage [other] workers would give an arm for if the report is accepted: their wages will be tax-free. Then there are the perks: free coffee and biscuits, scraps of raw material and the use of equipment for personal projects. The draft report from the Department of Corrections says the key objective in putting prisoners to work is to increase their chances of finding jobs when they are released by providing them with training and skills... Training programmes would be developed so prisoners could receive formal recognition of their skills under the Qualifications Authority framework... “Getting inmates doing a normal day’s work is a key element in the Government’s commitment to reduce reoffending.”... [t]he Minister of Corrections... told Parliament... The initial aim over a five-year period was to provide eligible inmates with six hours’ work five days a week. Proposed rates of pay ranged from nothing (for inmates who refused to work or were fired) to [the maximum] for skilled workers and prisoners engaged in fulltime studies.

...Prisoners will start working 30-hour weeks under a new Government policy which aims to work inmates a minimum of six hours a day, five days a week. Their earnings will increase from the current maximum rate of 92c a day to \$5.

...*Doing Time on the Production Line*... LIKE MANY OTHER N[Zers, a Wellingtonian] begins her work day with a long commute. A train and a bus bring her to a small Wellington office, where [it] answers phones, types and does filing. But each evening this secretary goes home not to a family or friends but to her fellow inmates at Wellington’s Arohata [Gals’] Prison... By the end of this year, more N[Z] prisoners will be doing “real” jobs. Unlike the Arohata inmate, most won’t be eligible for individual work parole. But the... government... wants all inmates to work longer hours in jobs that will be of use to them after release. Prisoners’ earnings will go to compensate victims of crime and their families. Any profits will help run the jails. The aim, says [the]Minister of Corrections... is to make “every prison a factory, every prisoner a worker.” Nearly three quarters of N[Z]’s 4,900 prisoners already do a couple of hours’ work each day. Many of the tasks – washing clothes, growing vegetables – help keep the country’s 17 prisons running. Other jobs, like making furniture for schools, landscape gardening or growing trees for the Department of Conservation, lead to limited opportunities on the outside. The government’s plans – which mirror trends in A[US] and the U.S. – will increase the time prisoners spend at work... and encourage prisons to look at bigger, more relevant inmate-employment schemes such as factories or... farms.

...Prisoners can pack nails, make shoes or build trailers but office work is likely to be a no-go area. The Corrections Department plans to send prisoners into the workforce, hiring them out at market rates in an extension to current practice... The focus was training and rehabilitation rather than making money for the department... The Minister for Employment... said [it] would take a close interest in the matter... [The minister] wanted to be sure the plan did not take jobs from the private sector.

...The proposed policy to make prisoners work will introduce “slavery” into prisons and see job losses outside, says the Trade Union Federation... But the... Department of Corrections... said slavery was an inappropriate label. “We are basically following the dictates of the United Nations. It forbids slave labour, but says prison inmates should be given constructive activity, and that is what we try to do.” The department would aim to sell at a market price which would not undercut any other producers, and the policy was aimed at being sensitive to external markets...

A recent article... argued that private firms should be allowed to bid for prison labour on the basis of competitive tendering. The debate about prison industries is generally seen as one between labour-trade unions on the one hand and employers-industries on the other... Confining the debate on prison labour to interests of industry and unions overlooks a third and perhaps a more basic interest – that of civil society. Three issues need to be addressed in this regard. First, certain articles of the U[N] standard minimum rules for treatment of prisoners prohibit the interests of prisoners being “subordinated to the purpose of making financial profit from an industry in the institution” and discourages institutional industries run by private contractors. And an International Labour Organisation convention, to which N[Z] is a party, prohibits forced labour and any work where the prisoner is “hired or placed at the disposal of private individuals, companies or associations.” ...The issues of international law and human rights transcend narrow employer-employee interests... Secondly, our social and legal systems are founded on two key assumptions. In theory at least the state is neutral and above classes or sectional interests and punishment is meted out to offenders in the name of society as a whole. When the state puts prisoners to work in public or community work, in theory the benefit of such prison labour goes to the whole of society. When the state indents prison labour to private industries for private profit, while punishment continues to be in the name of the whole of society, the benefits from prisoners go to private interests. This needs to be seen in the context of prison industries becoming global enterprises. Prison industries are among the fastest-growing industries in the U[S]. One US] company has set up affiliates in Britain and... [AUS. NZ can’t] be far away given the Government’s enthusiasm for a “borderless economy.” Thirdly, state policies on prison industries have always reflected the dominant economic rationale of capital and industry at a given time. Early history of industrialisation is replete with stories of work-houses. The breaking up of the feudal system drove uprooted peasants to urban centres where unemployment and crime was widespread. Prison labour indented to private industries provided cheap processed goods for major national industries, including dyes for textile industries and quarrying and brickmaking for construction industries... The major shift in policy came in the 1930s with large-scale recession. Industries and workers complained of unfair competition... The present shift in policy comes in the wake of economic globalisation... enabl[ing] swift capital mobility and computer technology that has made decentralised production possible. In [the First World] this has resulted in labour-intensive industries relocating to labour-surplus countries of Asia and Latin America. Big powers such as the U[S] have adopted a dual policy to deal with the problem. Abroad, they... use... human rights generally and prison labour in particular as a pressure-tactic in trade relations with labour-surplus [Last] World countries competing in labour-intensive industries. At home, they have sought to revive a number of labour-intensive industries by indenting prison labour to private industries.

...*Prisons: an untapped source of labour for private enterprise*... Prisoners will get better job training while in prison under the Department of Corrections’ programme to increase involvement by the private sector in prison enterprises. The department is moving in the right direction, away from activities that have little value outside of prison and toward the development of more marketable skills... [But, according to the] co-authors of *Controlling Crime in N[Z]*, published by N[Z’s] Business Roundtable... the [d]epartment... should go further, however, and quit managing prisons...

Security guards will begin escorting inmates between prisons and courts in a cost-cutting move which rank-and-file police warn could be dangerous... [But the] Minister of Corrections... said privatisation would free up front-line police and prison guards and also save taxpayers money... During the five-year pilot, a security firm would also be contracted to guard prisoners in court. The change affects 19 guards based at Mt Eden Prison who their bosses say should be redeployed... Prisons already use temporary guards to supervise inmates outside prison at short notice.

...casual prison guards... failed to intervene when a convicted murderer had sex with his girlfriend while in hospital... But prison managers do not plan to stop farming out supervision work and escort duties to casual staff... Before they take responsibility for the supervision of prisoners... casual guards... receive two days' training – 28 days less than full-timers – at the Corrections Department Staff College in Wellington... They are paid \$14 an hour and cannot claim overtime – which helps if a prisoner needs to be watched in hospital overnight. Full-time prison officers, who can earn between \$32,000 and \$44,000, have to be paid double-time if they are assigned to work outside their 10-day roster... [By the way, t]he Corrections and Courts departments have agreed... [prisoners] will no longer be held in court cells overnight.

...A hard-hitting report to the Minister of Social Welfare suggests the head of his department... may be failing in her legal duty to provide enough beds for young offenders. The report denounces the practice of holding young people in police cells, sometimes for up to three weeks. It says the conditions under which more than 140 young people had been held over the past 12 months were “completely unacceptable in a civilised society.” The criticism comes from the office of the Commissioner for Children, and at a time of growing pressure for a formal inquiry into the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Service... Last month... the commissioner... received complaints from judges, lawyers, MPs and a young person who had been held in Auckland cells for six days... The Minister of Social Welfare... denounced the report, saying it raised no issues not already being addressed... [The minister recently] said the department was meeting many obstacles, such as community opposition, in its attempts to increase the number of beds for young offenders. The report, however, says the need for more facilities in Auckland has been obvious since 1992.

...A... 15[-year-old's]... death this week highlights the problems of dealing with young offenders. David Tufala had no idea what [it] was in for when a judge sent him to Mt Eden Prison at just 15, says the dead boy's lawyer. Tufala, serving a four-year sentence for the aggravated robbery of his local dairy in Mangere Bridge, died in Auckland Hospital on Monday. [David] was found near-death in his cell in the central Auckland jail on Saturday, two weeks after [the judge]... told him the courts would not tolerate his kind of “banditry” and decided to lock him up with adult offenders. Police are not looking for anyone else in connection with the death. “I don't think [David] really knew what it [Mt Eden] was going to be like,” [a] youth advocate... said yesterday. Prison was the wrong place for [him, said the advocate – who,] with other children's representatives and judges – ...wants to see more facilities for young offenders. “It was an adult crime but [David] was incredibly young and naive[,”] says the advocate...

David Tufala had a short and tragic life. [David] dropped out of school, developed a drug and alcohol problem, got into trouble for burglary, theft[and] wilful damage. Then [David] robbed the local dairy armed with an air rifle, with a couple of mates. That was the beginning of the end. The judge told [him] that banditry of that sort would not be tolerated and, at just 15-years-old, [David] found himself thrown into Mt Eden jail – a cold, grim and daunting institution even for its largely adult population. Well, it was too daunting for [David, who] did not cope... [T]wo weeks later... this boy criminal amongst [adult] criminals... was dead... hanged by his own hand in his cell. Now this all points to a major problem in dealing with young offenders. Should there be more facilities for our young offenders? Should they be in adult prisons? The practice is not uncommon. At the moment there are six 15-year-olds doing time in adult prisons; there are another 25 16-year-olds... in [NZ's] adult prisons.

...The Commissioner for Children's Office has condemned a growing practice of putting underage offenders into adult jails instead of Social Welfare custody. The rebuke follows the death of a 15-year-old in Mt Eden Prison over the weekend. About 30 young offenders are being held in the country's jails and in corrective training, according to figures from the Department of Corrections. Six are aged 15 and the rest were 16. The judiciary is also concerned about the death. The head of the Youth Court... said last night that efforts needed to be redoubled to get specialised youth justice facilities operating in Auckland. Social Welfare said early last year that new facilities were to be built but a site has yet to be announced. The commissioner's office has long been critical of the widespread practice of detaining youths under 17 in police cells because of a shortage of beds in Children, Young Persons and their Families Service residential centres... The Criminal Justice Act allowed for offenders under 17 to serve their sentence in Social Welfare residences... a lawyer for the office... said... [However, o]nly six Social Welfare beds are set aside for youth offenders serving prison sentences. They are in a secure unit at the Kingslea residential centre in Christchurch and all the beds are full.

...An investigation is under way into a claim that... David Tufala, was assaulted the day... the 15-year-old... was found near death in his cell... No one is being sought in connection with the death and the alleged assault is a separate matter. Tufala is understood to have told his mother during a prison visit on Saturday that a guard had hit him earlier that day. His mother left the prison... and five hours later Tufala was found unconscious under his bed... A source within Mt Eden... yesterday... alleged... Tufala was punched in the head in his cell and his head was knocked against a ladder on his bunk. The source said inmates in the prison yard were told Tufala had been hit because the youth was a “cry-baby and a wimp.”

...The family of teenage prison inmate David Tufala are preparing to bury their “beloved son” as investigations continue into his treatment in Mt Eden prison and events surrounding his death in custody... Family members, who tried desperately to steer Tufala away from his life of crime and even sent him back to Tokelau to get him away from bad influences, are said to be devastated by his death... The... lawyer... who has been asked by the family to look into the case... was particularly concerned that they were not given the opportunity to speak during his High Court sentencing.

...David Tufala was showing signs of wanting to turn his troubled young life around before [the 15-year-old] died in custody, his grieving family say... [David] had written letters from prison in which [it] spoke of having learned his lesson and wanting to go back to school when... released... [H]is large Tokelauan family, including 10 brothers and sisters, buried their... “baby” brother at the weekend and are now searching for answers to his death... His older brothers... believe there is something fundamentally wrong with the justice system when a 15-year-old... could be sent to an adult prison... [However], a lawyer with the Commissioner for Children's office, said a survey of 108 offenders aged under 19 showed many preferred to be in adult prisons. Reasons included the belief there was more violence in a youth unit, both from older youths seeking to control their juniors, and from prison officers who were considered to be tougher on young detainees. The research – *Age Mixing in N[Z] Prisons* published by the Justice Ministry last year – reported that some young offenders also preferred adult institutions because they had better recreation facilities.

...They haven't formed a lynch mob in Mangere Bridge – though with the amount of petty and not-so-petty crime in the small shopping village, that is perhaps surprising. The people of the leafy and well-kept suburb... speak more in sorrow than in anger about the crimes of David Tufala. But some of them feel a little aggrieved that Tufala... is being remembered as a victim rather than a criminal. Typical of them is a [resident] from the neighbourhood who wrote to the *Herald* to suggest that Tufala's death was “a fitting climax to his actions.” ...The [resident said it] used to see Tufala “swaggering around the streets and looking like Mr Tough Guy. I saw no little boy... For the family's sake I regret what happened. But [David] made his choices.” ...Tufala's passing may make life quieter for [the person] who makes it his business to paint over taggers' graffiti as quickly as it appears. Tufala's signature was “Dime” – although [David] denied it when... confronted... [David] can't deny it now. All over Mangere Bridge a new tag has appeared. “Dime RIP” it reads. Everyone – those who mourn David... and those who do not – probably share the sentiment.

...A teenage robber... has been sent to prison just weeks after his 15-year-old partner-in-crime was found dying alone in his cell. An impassioned plea by [the teenager]'s lawyer and tearful mother failed to spare the 16-year-old from being jailed for robbing a dairy at gunpoint with two other youths when... aged 15... [The teenager] is now in Mt Eden Prison at the start of his two-year sentence, which was handed down on Thursday... [i]n the Otahuhu District Court... despite a psychologist's evidence that the teenager had thoughts of suicide... [The] judge... recommended that [the teenager] be seen by a psychologist... at least twice a week... The third offender in the... robbery... aged 18, was sentenced to 3 1/2 years'...

The family of an imprisoned teenage robber say [it] is too young to be behind bars and have vowed to fight for his freedom. The... Mangere Bridge... family... say [the] 16-year-old... eldest son of six children... is [a] “shy and sensitive boy” and they hold grave fears for his future in Mt Eden Prison... [H]is... lawyer... will lodge an appeal and... his father... plans to meet Labour[’s] justice spokesperso]n... next week to discuss the case.

...The teen... imprisoned weeks after his 15-year-old crime partner was found dying in his cell has been moved from Mt Eden to Waikeria Prison.

...The findings of an investigation into the death of a teenage inmate at Mt Eden Prison show what a "Mickey Mouse outfit" the prison is, says the dead boy's brother... [The] brother... said... David could have been saved if recommendations included in the report had been actioned sooner. [The brother] will meet his lawyer... today to discuss whether the family can take legal action... [The brother] was extremely angry to learn that inmates tried to activate an alarm system to call guards, but it was faulty. It took at least 20 minutes for guards to arrive and by that time David Tufala had lost consciousness and stopped breathing. "That could have been the difference between whether [David] lived or died,"... The Labour justice spokes[person]... said the alarm system failure was unacceptable, given that prison management had known about it for two years, as was management's failure to know where inmates were within the facility... [The] brother... was amazed that... [David] had been able to move from a two-[person] cell to a cell by himself without prison authorities knowing about it. Regular checks should have been made to ensure inmates were in their correct cells... his brother... said. It was also frustrating that... [David]'s medical record, including a psychological report, had gone missing.

...Troy Alan Watson, aged 25, died... in... Mt Eden Prison... on Monday. Police are not seeking anyone else in connection with the death. The same day, a special investigation into the death of... David Tufala... slammed procedures at the jail. The report, written by a Department of Corrections inspector, said [the] prison... should review the way it dealt with the placement of young offenders and document the decisions made.

...Adult criminals on remand get a better deal through the justice system than troubled young offenders who often need more sensitive care, says [the] Chief Youth Court Judge... The number of young offenders being locked in police cells because of a lack of beds available in Social Welfare residences was appalling, [the judge] said. "Adults go out to a prison within a day where they have better facilities. But youth offenders are left locked in the cells for days. One of the longest I've heard of is 20 days. The average is 4 1/2 days... [P]olice... are simply not equipped to deal with young offenders. It is not their job to look after them. While some have committed very serious crimes they are often very fragile young people,"... A secure Social Welfare residence and a police cell could not be compared... The Social Welfare national manager of residential and caregiver services... said yesterday that a backlog of young people on remand was taking up all available bed space... The stays on remand had doubled over the past year from 25 to an average of 53 days... The number of violent youth offenders has risen by 64[%] in the past five years while the number of secure residential placements for them has remained static... [But] availability of the beds was "not necessarily the main problem." "It may be just a result of a complex process which, streamlined, could result in increased bed availability without the need to build more residences."

...Plans to treat some of the country's worst young offenders in residential programmes in... Manurewa... will cost the Government \$100,000 for each child. Twelve out-of-control juveniles... aged between 11 and 15... are expected to take part... The Department of Social Welfare has committed \$2000 a week for each youth being treated. The programmes are being run by the Youth Horizons Trust... A spokes[person] for the trust... last night defended the cost... saying that the weekly cost of... an acute psychiatric patient would be well over \$2000... The projects have met fierce opposition from... Manurewa residents [who a]re threatening legal action to stop the programme going ahead... [The trust] was sent a threatening note and the Manurewa property was trashed by intruders, who tipped diesel through it... The MP for Manurewa[, who]... said there had not been adequate consultation with residents about the community house... would raise "merry hell" in Parliament if the project went ahead.

...Welfare officials have set up a \$500,000 fund to keep young criminals with their families in the community rather than placing them in custody in precious youth prison beds. The shift in policy means that more young criminals will do activities in the community as punishment for their crimes rather than being sent to youth justice centres like Weymouth. They will live with family, be supervised round the clock by back-up support and be able to attend school or do other education programmes, according to documents obtained under the Official Information Act... But... a... youth advocate and co-chair of the Youth Court Council, said funding should be used to provide more beds and other options for young offenders.

...An extra \$32.7 million would be spent [before March 31, 1998,] on building 428 new cells... at Hawkes Bay, Wanganui, Rimutaka and Auckland prisons, as well as extra beds at Christchurch and Ohura... However, no proposals had been developed for more building [between April 1, 1998, and March 31, 1999], when it was expected even more... would be needed. The need for remand cells was urgent. A new remand centre at Mt Eden Prison... would not be completed until the year 2000... In its review of the Department of Corrections' budget, the justice select committee reported... the number of prison inmates was expected to grow 41[%] in the next three years... because of a predicted growth in the number of serious violent offenders.

...The latest... [prison] security review... linked... [v]iolence by prisoners... to overcrowding... [Now, a lack] of approved anti-violence programmes has prevented some judges from complying with the new domestic violence legislation... Approval delays meant by Friday the Courts Department could refer only 77% of respondents to courses... Both the [Gals'] Refuge and the National Network of Stopping Violence Services said the problem could have been avoided... if the department had asked that existing programmes be allowed to continue until... new ones were established... [M]any programmes have been turned down because they failed to meet the new regulations... [In international news, as a means of overcoming overcrowding] South Africa talks about turning gold mines into prisons.

...When... war criminals... were tried in Nuremberg and Tokyo in 1946, the international community resolved that crimes against humanity should never again go unpunished. There was talk of setting up an international criminal court, but there was only talk. Since then, the world has witnessed the horrors of... Cambodia... Uganda and... Iraq, as well as a mass of inhuman crimes in countries such as Argentina, Indonesia, Burma and Liberia... [M]ost of the perpetrators have gone unpunished. The ad hoc system for dealing with grave breaches of the Geneva Convention has long been criticised... The International Court of Justice, founded in the Hague in 1945, deals with disputes between member nations but has no power to punish individuals... The two international war crimes tribunals set up to deal with Yugoslavia and Rwanda, while a welcome step in the direction of a global judicial order, have been stymied by their inability to apprehend wanted criminals and to obtain complete cooperation from all states concerned. Nevertheless, it was the genocide in these civil wars that spurred the international community to agree in 1994 that a permanent criminal court was needed. A two-week meeting began this week at the U[N] to draft a treaty for the court's establishment and the treaty is expected to be signed in Rome next year. For the first time, there will be a permanent court with the power to bring to trial individuals, including heads of state accused of genocide, war crimes and other human rights abuses. "If an effective, independent court is set up, it will literally transform the prospects for human rights in the 21st century," said [a spokesperson for] EarthAction, a network of more than 1600 citizen groups in 140 countries... "If this court succeeds... the prize will be a new millennium in which corrupt governments and powerful individuals are no longer able to murder, torture and invade with impunity." ...H[owever, h]uman rights activists fear that more repressive regimes, reluctant to see the creation of a powerful international body, will attempt to water down its remit or sabotage its work... National vetoes would profoundly weaken the court... And enforcement could be a problem, as the present tribunals' much-mocked failure to arrest suspects has shown.

...[the suspect] killed by police in a Hawkes Bay orchard... 65 days after gunning down a Hastings police[officer] last year was tipped over the edge by the theft of cannabis [it] was looking after, police believe... The... Detective Inspector... who headed the hunt... said in the police magazine *Ten One* that Constable McKibbin died for no other reason than that [Glenn] was on the spot when Thompson acted out a fantasy... Hours before the shooting, Thompson talked about going to a house in Hastings which [it] and his wife owned until 1993 "to reclaim his land." ...His intention that morning was to kill the occupants if they didn't leave the house, then make his 'last stand.' We believe [that when Thompson] came across Glenn wh[ile]... heading towards that house[, Thompson] saw the opportunity to do something that would make people sit up and take notice." ...[a p]olice psychologist... said in the magazine Thompson's poor social status and lack of occupational success led him to become obsessed with revenge and dominance... The main focus of his life was acting out a fantasy role... as a modern-day warrior fighting against some entrenched evil.

...EARLY-MORNING JOGGERS SCANNED Bondi beach looking for the movie cameras, convinced the scene wasn't for real. A lanky [guy] wielding a Wiltshire kitchen knife stood by the water, encircled by six uniformed police[officers], their Smith & Wesson .38 revolvers at the ready. Within minutes, the [lanky guy] was dying, four bullets in his body. Those shots... have since reverberated beyond A[US]'s most famous beach, sparking anger over what many see as unwarranted force, and raising broader questions of police attitudes and training. Says... a friend of the dead [guy]: "Is it Dirty Harry or Mr. Bean? It's a ridiculous type of policing." Friends and family have described Roni Levi – who walked to Bondi after slipping out of an inner-Sydney hospital where [Roni] was under observation for strange behaviour – as a gentle, clean-living [person] who had no history of mental illness. Police, however, have painted the 33-year-old French photographer as a mad[person] who frothed at the mouth and lunged at officers with his knife. His death marks the third fatal shooting by N[SW] police this year and follows a spate of shootings in Victoria, where officers have shot dead 26 people since 1988. Police have been quick to defend their colleagues. [The]N.S.W. Police chief psychologist... says public criticism is usually ill-informed and based on naive perceptions of policing gleaned from TV cop shows, where "danger is equated to excitement, good guys generally win and flesh wounds heal." In reality, says [a]consultant police psychologist... officers are loath to pull guns from their holsters, if only to avoid the paperwork and inquiries that follow their use. "It's easy for the public to blame under-trained and over-zealous rookie cops... but it's harder and more threatening to see that if there is a dangerous person threatening the police or the public, they have to be stopped." [The chief psychologist] agrees: "Police don't shoot people willy-nilly. It might only be in that microsecond, but it's often a clear and definite decision at the time." It is only in the days afterward, under the pressure of outside scrutiny, that an officer's confidence is eroded... [The] N.S.W. Police Association president... says people simply do not understand the pressure police are under. "A split-second decision is subject forever to armchair criticism." A landmark 1989 decision in the U[S] Supreme Court recognized that pressure, setting a favorable precedent for U.S. police officers in deadly-force cases. The court ruled... that allowance should be made for the "tense, uncertain and rapidly evolving" circumstances in which officers must make instant judgments. In 1994, a U.S. court of appeal ruled that a police[officer] was justified in killing a handcuffed subject wielding a fireplace poker. According to the judgment, the police[officer] had too little time to consider alternatives such as dogs or capsicum spray. But protestations of job pressure and time constraints do not placate critics, who say trigger-happy policing can be traced to poor selection procedures and inadequate training and equipment... [A] former U.S. Secret Service agent who served as a bodyguard for [the 37th to 39th] presidents... and who now runs a security company in A[US], says a stun gun, a blanket, or even a rope can subdue someone. "I think police here may be more intelligent than American police... but I'm not sure they're nearly as streetwise." [The security company head] says "the nice days of bobbies without guns are over," but Scotland Yard would disagree. In London, only 2,000 of its 28,000 police officers have guns, and those highly trained officers are deployed only when necessary. A Scotland Yard spokes[person] says opinion polls have consistently shown that neither Londoners nor bobbies themselves want the police to carry guns. [A b]arrister and forensic psychologist... who worked with the Victorian Council for Civil Liberties during the early '90s – when... "police were disposing of mental patients by shooting them" – believes the British approach to firearms is admirable. [The barrister] argues that police academies should spend less time on target practice and more in interpersonal skills; people are now less compliant than they once were and the police officer's job is more confrontational. In response, police can be aggressive... "They wear a uniform and they identify with each other. There's the 'brotherhood.' Alternatively, you could see it as a siege mentality, that it's us against them." To counter that perception, police have tried to soften their image by changing from police "forces" to police "services." The shift has marked a significant shift in philosophy from aggressive and authoritarian to protective and defensive policing. The challenge now is to ensure that police officers' right to protect themselves does not interfere with public expectations of security.

...A young police[officer] shot and killed a [citizen] after capsicum spray failed to subdue him during a violent domestic dispute in Melbourne's outer east early yesterday, police said. The constable, with two years' experience, feared for her life and fired one shot at the [citizen], who was armed with a knife... The [citizen], aged 28, died soon afterwards... [– becoming] the 32nd person to be shot dead by Victorian police in 10 years. His name was not released. Police were called to the house... during a dispute between [the citizen] and his de facto wife... Two constables called for support and an acting sergeant with capsicum spray arrived... "It [the spray] was ineffective in this circumstance and obviously defence of life became a priority for our members..." ...The police officers had warned the [citizen] a number of times to drop the knife. Victoria police began trials of capsicum spray 12 months ago and it had been used successfully in up to 50 incidents. "It has about a 90[%] success rate and unfortunately this was one of those that wasn't successful,"... said... [the] Assistant Commissioner... Homicide squad detectives, overseen by the police ethical standards department, were investigating the incident... [] Christchurch p[olice] used pepper spray to disarm a [person] who threatened to harm himself with a knife at a Riccarton house... [N]o charges had been laid after the incident on Tuesday, but the 30-year-old was taken into custody.

...Dairy and superette owners want to be allowed to use pepper spray on armed attackers... – or hockey sticks or softball bats... Delegates from the Mixed Business and Retail Association will meet the Minister of Police... next week to press for the legalisation of certain forms of self-defence... [O]wners of small businesses were alarmed about the rise in armed holdups and wanted to be able to protect themselves. In [Wellington during] the past week, there had been four attacks on dairy owners in Porirua and three in Petone in one day... In Auckland, a Mt Wellington superette was held up on Monday by a [robber] wielding a knife who escaped with about \$100. The same day the owner of a Queen St souvenir shop was knocked to the ground and left with minor injuries when two... [robbers] fled with the till, which contained about \$1000... [S]hop employees were defenceless when armed robbers entered their stores. They could not physically defend themselves or eject a suspicious person unless they were attacked. "These attacks are happening around the country and we've had enough. In Auckland, there are so many attacks that we've lost count,"...

As you trek around the central city streets of Auckland, mind what you do: you're being watched. For the first time, street surveillance cameras are being monitored round the clock... [instead of being] left unwatched when police were called out of the... downtown police station. And thanks to a \$100,000 grant from the Heart of Auckland City Association, the number of cameras has also increased, from 11 to 13, as police step up efforts to combat crime... [T]he cameras... were important crime prevention weapons... 64 offenders were arrested in the second half of [last] year after being filmed committing crimes ranging from sex offences and aggravated robbery to disorderly conduct... Street surveillance cameras were criticised by the A[US]n Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's privacy branch during a privacy forum last June. It said people were concerned about being watched... However... [Auckland's p]olice had to stick to strict privacy rules to run the... cameras... They could not peek into high-rise flats or office buildings and monitored only crime hot-spots. The tapes were held for a month and were then either destroyed or kept as court evidence... "I don't want my staff monitoring an area for no reason but these do help us make streets safer for everyone," [said a] Senior Sergeant...

A thermal imaging camera... was tested in Auckland yesterday during a firefighting course. The camera allows firefighters to locate people in smoke-filled rooms. It was demonstrated... [by three] top American instructors from the National Fire Academy, near Gettysburg... The chief fire officer for the Mt Wellington and Howick stations... said the camera dramatically reduced the time it took firefighters to search a property. "At the moment we use touch, and go through a building like a blind person..." The \$22,000 thermal imaging camera is one of two in use by firefighters in N[Z]. The Fire Service hopes to buy more but says that will depend on donations. [Speaking of Fire Service purchases, it is 'expected to take three years and \$10 million to refit the entire brigade with new suits (the existing suits are virtually useless')].

...Old fire engines are limping to emergencies as the Fire Service battles a maintenance crisis with its appliances, says an Auckland fire chief. The chief fire officer for the West Auckland district... said last night that appliances were carrying defects which could be a danger to the public... A

report by [the fire chief] outlining defects and the crisis was tabled in Parliament yesterday... But the Minister of Internal Affairs... denied there was a problem and said the Fire Service planned to spend \$9 million buying 34 new engines. Eight will go to Auckland. In... [the report, the fire chief] said appliances at Avondale had broken down 18 times [in less than three months]... One vehicle, an appliance taken to Avondale as a temporary replacement for another broken-down engine, had 13 serious defects. These included a lack of attachments to secure equipment to the roof and fractured cab steps... Another replacement truck sent to replace the replacement had bald tyres, the only spares being in Wellington. Two other reports filed by [the fire chief] last year identified jammed doors, fractured welds and rusty panels in other appliances. Another senior officer said last night that [it], too, was concerned by maintenance problems. [The]Senior Station Officer... from the Manukau station, said appliances were sometimes out of commission for six hours while firefighters waited for repairs to be carried out. The Auckland area chief fire officer... said... "We do have an ageing fleet and because of that have more maintenance problems but I am confident we have the process in place to maintain a safe fleet." The arrival of the new appliances... would ease the problems... ● Yesterday a turntable ladder fire engine... was taken out of use in Hamilton after a crack was found in its chassis. It was replaced by a teleboom fire truck – with a shorter ladder – from Auckland.

...Firefighters will be hard-pressed to tackle blazes and rescues at multi-storey buildings after an emergency rescue appliance crashed on the way to a job yesterday. The brakes failed on the 28-year-old "snorkel" ...appliance – which is used for rescues and fires in two and three-level buildings – ...as it was travelling down a hill in Kingsland. It ploughed through a fence before coming to rest in mud. Two firefighters leapt off the rear of the 17-tonne appliance, and the rest of the crew managed to escape unhurt... The... [snorkel] was in a workshop last night... Auckland's only pump appliance... is also in the workshop after it "blew up last week."

...Breakdowns dog firefighter crews... The Fire Service is facing a firestorm of criticism over inadequate equipment after a plague of appliance breakdowns and other problems. Firefighters blame the problems on old fire engines and claim the Fire Service's top brass is solving the problems crisis by crisis. In one case the Parnell fire station was without its turnable fire engine – which has... [a] 30.48m ladder... – for two days. The sole replacement turntable truck ended up in the workshop after it also broke down. Rescue capability at high-rise buildings would have been limited. At the Auckland City station, in Pitt St, staff refused to use a pump rescue tender engine on Monday night because its certificate of fitness had expired. The same day Hamilton staff were forced to pick up a pump rescue vehicle from Auckland after their usual truck broke down. The borrowed truck was used yesterday to pull a 70-year-old... out of her car near Raglan... Hamilton[s] senior firefighter... said the lack of fire engines meant crew needed to call in back-up staff from nearby towns if there was a major fire in the city... In Whangarei, firefighters are using a rural response unit – which has a lower water capacity than most fire appliances – to fight house fires. And only last night, after the Te Atatu station's sole engine was damaged in a crash, the volunteer brigade that is based with paid firefighters at Henderson had to surrender its late-model appliance, leaving it with only a rural unit... [The] national president of the United Fire Brigades Association [UFBA] [which represents volunteer crews, blamed the Government's "damned cuts" in funding [during the past three years]for the Fire Service's equipment crisis...

Two weeks ago the rusting pile of metal that sits in [the UFBA national president]'s office was part of the Waipu fire engine's chassis... [The] national president... said yesterday that the decrepit chassis was discovered during routine maintenance of the vehicle in Auckland. What concerns him is that the chassis could have easily fallen apart while the truck was on its way to an emergency in Northland... [The national president] claims unpaid crews are often forced to use hand-me-down fire engines – some of which should be sent to the wreckers. In Ngatea an ERF model appliance – with a fibreglass cab – is in use despite the Fire Service supposedly taking such vehicles out of commission 20 years ago... Approval has already been given for Auckland to get one fire appliance every three months over the next two years... However, most fire engines are getting past their use-by-date... [The] area general manager for the service's northern region, said the average age of the 281 fire engines between Cape Reinga and Taupo was 13.86 years. Most fire trucks had a lifespan of around 15 years but 30[%] of the fleet was older than that... [The national president said a]bout 200 of N[Z]'s 800 fire engines... should be off the road... [Some] were... older than those in the Museum of Transport and Technology... "There used to be a joke: if you want to see a vintage vehicle, push a fire alarm – but now it's no joke." ...Older fire engines also cost more to maintain and repair... A 1996 fire engine had so far cost \$8500 in repairs since last July compared with more than \$20,000 for a 1982 model... Exacerbating the service's problems are staff stresses... [A]bsenteeism was high and morale low among firefighters... [S]ome firefighters were not allowed to take owed leave because there was not enough staff to replace them. Others, particularly the lower paid community service team (CST) firefighters who are gradually replacing the professionals, were working 36 hours at a stretch.

...N[Z]'s first leased fire station opens for business tomorrow – but not without controversy. The picturesque red building in the Hamilton suburb of Pukete was designed by the landlord, Pukete Land Ltd, to meet the requirements of its fire-fighting tenants. The Hamilton chief fire officer... said the arrangement minimised cost and meant the service could skip a lengthy process to obtain capital for building. But while... firefighters were putting their hands up to work at Pukete, instead of the Anglesea St headquarters, controversy continued over the use of gear and labour to staff it.

...Fire Service breaking the law... The Fire Service is flouting the law – and its own rules – by failing to ensure all its stations meet fire safety requirements. At least four stations in Auckland alone are in breach of the Fire Services Act and service guidelines. A senior Auckland firefighter said yesterday that it was a gross double standard for the service to enforce fire safety legislation on others when it did not comply itself. The firefighters' union said it was concerned that its members were working and sleeping in unsafe buildings... Budgetary constraints had been the main reason the stations were not up to scratch, but the Fire Service did not accept that as an excuse from other businesses so action would be taken... It would cost the Fire Service about \$75,000 to bring stations in Auckland up to standard. [■ 'The Fire Service believes only 8000 of 65,000 buildings requiring evacuation schemes have them. This estimate is contained in a Department of Internal Affairs report, although the service's national adviser for fire hazard management said yesterday that it was based on a 1994 report. The proportion had improved since then. The report on the views of key users of building controls says that as a direct result of the Building Act 1991, the previous legislation on fire safety evacuation schemes was replaced under the Fire Service Act 1975. The fire regulations came into effect in January 1993. Asked why the 1994 estimate was so low, the adviser said only so many schemes could be approved each year by the service and there were also difficulties with some of the schemes forwarded by building owners for approval.']

...The Fire Service is using a loophole in Government legislation to force owners of resthomes, boarding houses and private hospitals to install sprinkler systems to prevent loss of lives in fires. The chief executive of the Fire Service... said that current legislation required sprinkler systems only in resthomes with more than 21 beds or in those built after 1991. However, they had to have an operative evacuation system so that residents could be out in two to five minutes. This meant hiring more staff, or the cheaper option of installing sprinklers.

...The Fire Service says it can save N[Z] \$200 million in lost lives, injuries and property damage over the next five years if it gets an \$83 million cash injection. After that it can offer even bigger savings – \$85 million a year for just a \$2 million annual increase in its present budget of \$156.2 million. The service needs the cash to repair old stations, replace its ageing fleet of engines... [as well as buying] a new radio and communications system... and... protective clothing. It has asked the Minister of Internal Affairs... to approve... [the budget increase. 92%] of the service's budget is made up from insurance levies. The Government provides the remaining 8[%]. Most of the proposed increase would come from a surplus in the levy in advance account – the insurance people pay in advance on their properties. There would be no rise in levies.

...Firefighters fear more job losses and falling public safety as the Fire Service further slashes its budget. The... Fire Service... last night confirmed... spending cuts had been made and more were being considered. This followed a statement from [an]Alliance MP... who... had been told of plans to slash \$3.3 million annually, which could cost 70 jobs... Fire Service chiefs were last night said to be furious that news of the planned cuts

leaked, as only senior officers were privy to the information... [The MP also] said the service was considering staffing stations in Kawerau and Masterton only during the day, while stations in Avondale and Dunedin would lose appliances... [I]f the Avondale fire station lost one of its two appliances it would break a long-standing assurance given to the Pt Chevalier community when the two stations merged... [The MP] said that if Masterton and Kawerau had to be covered by other fire brigades at night it was inevitable lives would be lost. The past five deaths by fire in the Kawerau area... were at night... The Mayor of Kawerau... had not been told of any plans to cut back coverage but expected local volunteers would cover if fulltime firefighters were taken off at night. The... Professional Firefighters Union [(PFU)]... said further cuts would fly in the face of public opinion. In three years the service had cut staff by 600... and 200 of those went after the December 1995 referendum where people voted against more cuts. Fire Service levy money had already been collected from the public yet \$50 million of that was in a bank account in Wellington.

...The Government is investigating billing property owners directly for their Fire Service levy in a similar way to television licences. The Minister of Finance... said Fire Service reforms had saved \$19.7 million a year and the Government wanted to see the funders – homeowners and businesses – benefit through a lower levy. [The minister] also said the review of the levy reinforced the need to move with care on the proposals in the five-year plan put forward by the Fire Service Commission to ensure that the balance between its expenditure and future income was maintained.

...Firefighters may refuse to fight fires in West Auckland in protest against staffing plans for stations in the area... [F]ire chiefs met firefighters from Glen Eden and Henderson yesterday to outline proposals for a staffing reshuffle... as part of national plans to cut costs. The... number of job losses is not known but the P[FU] is gearing up for a fight. One union member... said firefighters at the two stations were part of the “new breed” of officers – called [CST]s – which had a particular focus on fire prevention. They were recruited to the stations a year ago and were now being told they would have to leave... [O]fficers did the midnight shift at the stations on a voluntary basis but were threatening to stop doing this. If they took action, firefighters throughout Auckland would refuse to fight fires on their behalf. “The consequences of that would be horrendous...”

The Auckland regional fire chief... said yesterday that plans were proceeding to cut the number of firefighters by 36 and merge stations in Mt Roskill and Onehunga. Avondale would also lose a fire engine and 16 firefighters, who would be transferred to the Henderson station... [T]he 36 Auckland staff who lost their jobs would be transferred to 25 vacant positions in the region. The extra nine were being encouraged to apply for positions in the Hamilton region... Alternatively, the additional staff would fill in for firefighters on long-term leave.

...volunteer firefighters... [have said that s]moke detectors, not bigger fire brigades, save lives... As controversy continued yesterday over Fire Commission plans to cut staff nationally by 131, the U[FBA] warned that prevention was more important... [However, the PFU] said that lives would be put at risk under the cost-cutting measures. The union secretary... said... that almost 50 people had died in house fires over the past year – compared with 36 the year before. [The secretary] blamed this on staff cuts and said N[Z]ers should expect a rising number of fatal house fires if further staff and equipment cuts went ahead. But the president of the U[FBA]... said many of the fatal house fires were fought by volunteers. The house fire that killed three children in Matauri Bay, Northland, in June, and the rest home fire in which three elderly people died in Collingwood last month, were attended by volunteers. “There wasn’t a paid firefighter within 150 kilometres of the last fire. It’s very hard for firefighters to say that more of them would have stopped those deaths when they weren’t even there,”... People with smoke detectors had the best chance of surviving. “Dramatic fire rescues make headlines but the horrible reality is that most people are dead by the time the fire brigade gets there in a big fire. Their lungs are full of chemicals.” [In response, the PFU secretary]... said the high number of deaths in rural areas proved that professionals could respond more quickly. “Volunteers have a built-in delay because they have to get to the fire station first before they can go out,”... Smoke detectors would warn home occupants and alert the fire station “but they’re no substitute for firefighters.”

...About 30,000 smoke detectors have been sold in the weeks since a spate of fires killed 10 people. Demand has been so intense that many stores have sold out and more detectors have been flown in from... A[US] and the U[S]... First Alert, a supplier of smoke alarms, reported stocks were running out for two or three days at a time... The rush began after a fire in Port Wells, near Warkworth, late last month which killed three people... The Fire Service is thrilled with the sales... [and] said people should follow the lead of the Port Wells community, which had clubbed together so that every home now had a smoke alarm. The alarms are cheap... and easy to install. The local fire service is happy to help those people who cannot manage... But the Auckland fire hazard manager... said people should not stop at buying just one detector... “At maybe \$40 maximum to cover your house, it’s a cheap life... There are lots and lots of occurrences where people have got out through smoke alarms... We suggest to people they use them as gifts as well.” Alarms should be installed... away from kitchens and bathrooms where they are prone to false alarms.

...False alarms are on the increase, according to the annual report of the Fire Service. The service attended 20,231 false alarms in the year to June – about the same number as real fires. The higher number of false alarms was being investigated with the aim of stemming the increase... The Fire Service attended 14,510 urban fires, 2721 rural fires and 2202 hazardous substance emergencies during the year.

...The Fire Service is asking some local bodies to pass a bylaw making smoke alarms compulsory in residential homes in a move that by-passes Parliament. The Auckland region of the Fire Service has drafted a bylaw, modelled on one in Victoria, A[US], which would make landlords and homeowners fit smoke alarms in all residential dwellings, including caravans... The Auckland fire safety manager... said the Government seemed reluctant to pass legislation to make fire alarms compulsory... Extensive public education about fire prevention was failing to reach about half the Auckland population, particularly poor families. “To them, \$20 is \$20...” Smoke alarms were compulsory in A[US]n states and throughout Canada – where fire fatalities dropped from 725 in 1982 to 580 in 1991 after alarms became mandatory... City councils in greater Auckland have been asked to consider the bylaw, which is backed by the Mayor of Rodney... But the mayors of Auckland... and Manukau... did not seem so keen. [Manukau’s mayor] said: “I... have one and I only have to burn my toast and it goes off.” [● Briscoes is currently selling smoke alarms for ‘\$9.99’.]

...Fire chiefs raise alarm over roads... If you’re the proud owner of a new house in a new Auckland subdivision you may be quite happy that the design of your street discourages traffic – just pray you don’t have a fire. Fire chiefs covering the region’s ever-expanding edges are becoming increasingly concerned that many new... [s]pace-saving... streets are so narrow that access by fire appliances is impossible if cars are parked on both sides. None has yet been confronted with such a blockage on the way to an emergency, but firefighters say it is a risk they face daily. They are starting to alert local authorities to the problem, and while some councils are responding, others maintain that their standard road widths are adequate. It might be assumed that councils would automatically consult emergency services regarding their ease of access when planning and approving new streets, but this is not the case. Manukau, Waitakere, North Shore and Rodney councils all operate their own tables of minimum road widths, and request input from the emergency services only if a developer wants to deviate radically from the norm... “Maybe we should take a few councillors out to a few of the particularly narrow streets, park a truck on one side and a car on the other and say ‘Right, you try to drive a fire appliance through there,’” says... a station officer at Manukau... “Developers want every inch they can get to sell as sections, so they make the roads as narrow as the council will let them. The council also seems to be discouraging the use of [residential] roads by people who don’t live there by putting in a lot of narrow cul de sacs... They seem to have forgotten that you might need to get a wide emergency vehicle down there – in a hurry and maybe at night. If they used their brains they would allow parking only on one side, then it wouldn’t be such a problem.” [The station officer] says that if his crew was racing to a fire where it was known people were trapped and their lives in danger, and were confronted by cars parked on either side of a narrow street, blocking the fire appliance’s path, they would ram the cars out of the way. “I don’t know whether technically we’d have that authorisation, but we’d do it and argue about it later.” ...the deputy fire chief of the Silverdale Volunteer Fire Brigade which covers the burgeoning suburbs on Whangaparaoa Peninsula, says crews do have authority to ram their way through to a fire if need be. “If life is in danger nothing can stand in our way, but we have to have a pretty good knowledge of what we’re removing vehicles for,”... The only

alternative would be to join the appliance's 25m-30m hoses end-to-end and run them to the fire, which takes precious minutes and deprives the crew of having the vehicle's other equipment close to the scene. "But some of these streets are quite long and even if we tried that, we wouldn't have a show of reaching the fire,"... The North Shore district chief fire officer and acting area chief of the Auckland region... says fire crews regularly do "reccies" of suburbs to familiarise themselves with new streets and changes to old ones. When [the chief fire officer] noticed the narrowness of some new streets, [it] had cars parked on either side to confirm that an appliance could not be driven between them. Infill housing has exacerbated the problem, [the chief fire officer] says. "The width of a fire appliance is 2.5m and the average car is 1.6m, yet we've got streets like Lingham Crescent in Torbay Heights which is only 4.9m wide... I remember 20 years ago pushing two cars out of the way on the way to a fire in a narrow street in central Auckland – we wiped out the side of the appliance as well as the two cars, so it's not a desirable thing to have to do. Maybe the council should make sprinklers compulsory in new homes as well as smoke alarms, to compensate for the delay the fire service might have in getting to them." [The chief fire officer] became so concerned about the situation in new North Shore suburbs... that [it] complained formally to the North Shore City Council. The council's works committee chair[person said]... "I admit that [the chief fire officer]'s concerns came as a surprise to me... Obviously there hasn't been consultation with the fire service over new subdivisions in the past, but there will be in the future." The council's standard minimum street widths reduce to 5.5m for a short cul de sac and 2.5m for some right of ways, but can be made narrower if developers meet certain criteria... [A] report prepared for the [council's] works committee, however, concluded that current street widths weren't the problem, but unmanaged parking and "traffic calming" devices such as speed bumps and traffic islands. "But one area of width we will have to look at is private accessways serving more than 10 units," says... [the t]ransport and traffic manager... Manukau City Council's narrowest minimum street width is for cul de sacs – 5.4m. Right of ways can vary from 4.5m to 2.7m depending on how many homes they serve. [The s]enior resource engineer... says that in an emergency a fire appliance might have to be driven on to the footpath, "but that's not a hassle, it's just something the [crew] would have to do. [Yet, t]he council has had its road-width standards for some time, and we haven't had any feedback about problems..."

...The Government has decided to slash by \$48 million the amount being paid into a special Fire Service account, by cutting levies paid by property owners on private insurance for fire cover... [The] Internal Affairs... Minister... has also announced that the Government will axe its annual grant to the Fire Service, saving a[further] \$9.5 million... The... grant, which represents 8[%] of the Fire Service budget... [was created b]efore the state-sector reforms, [when] the Crown very rarely took out insurance on its properties... Now, Crown departments and organisations paid about \$11 million in insurance levies... The Government is reviewing the way the Fire Service is funded but... neither move would affect the Fire Service budget for next year, because it draws funding from an account with reserves of about \$68 million. However, [the minister] did not explain yesterday the implications for the service after next year, when the levy cut and axing of the Government grant will have significantly drained the reserves. The cut to insurance levies... would save an average home owner with a \$120,000 house-and-contents policy about \$20 a year... The Insurance Council... said the Government's decision to cut levies was shortsighted, because policyholders would be hit with big increases once the reserves in the... account were drained... There has been controversy over the levy account, with firefighters calling on the Government to release more of the money... to improve services... [that have] been run down through a series of budget cuts and restructuring... [T]he Government will continue to pay for some Fire Service Commission services including safety promotion, public education, civil defence and the enforcement of fire safety and building evacuation regulations.

...The Fire Service will be embarking on a national education campaign next year to spell out exactly how people can prevent fires in their homes... [M]odern furnishings, particularly plastics and polycarbons, meant houses burned faster, at higher temperatures, and produced more lethal smoke than... 40 years ago. In many cases a fire engine was not going to get there in time. [The Minister of Internal Affairs has publicly stated that] people had to change their expectations and take their own preventative steps, including installing smoke alarms in several rooms.

...The latest changes to the Fire Service will cost more than 100 administration and management... jobs, and the service will be restructured into eight new regions[to manage the unchanged '333 fire districts']. The Fire Service Commission chair[person]... said the 103 redundancies were expected to save several million dollars, which would be spent on helping front-line staff reduce the "incidence and consequence of fire." [The chairperson] said... administration costs were too high and the service... too focused on measuring what it did rather than the results of what it did.

...The Fire Service Commission pushed ahead with its controversial restructuring last week against the will of an important advisory group, a leaked document shows. The group told the commission... reducing the number of fire regions would have high risks and marginal benefits. But the commission cut them from 11... anyway... The [group] also warned of possible lower morale and poorer accessibility of management to firefighters.

...An overhaul of the Fire Service... has been embraced by the P[FU, which]... said the revamped management structure was more focused on firefighters and the delivery of emergency services... The revamp includes... scaling down the chief executive's office, wiping the three regional offices, northern, central and southern, and the national office. It also includes a closer reporting relationship between those at operational level and the chief executive. The changes were announced yesterday by the new chair[person] of the Fire Service Commission... [– who is] from the insurance industry... [–] who said... "We are seeking to make further progress in reducing management and administration and focusing on what is, after all, our core business – the management of fire risk." But [the chief executive] said the decisions signalled a wrong turn for the service and [it] has resigned in protest... [The chief executive] had not been consulted over the restructuring and did not believe it was what the public wanted.

...Firefighters fear more staff cuts are on the way following the resignation yesterday of the Fire Service's national commander – the second top executive to quit in a week. [The commander, who] quit after 30 years in the service... said yesterday that his treatment by the... new Fire Service Commission... was "an insult not only to me personally but to all of us who are proud to be members of the... Fire Service." [The national commander] had not been consulted on any of the planned changes... A two-day workshop had been held to discuss operations, resource strengths and command structures, to draw up a draft plan... but [the national commander] was not invited... The Minister of Internal Affairs... who is responsible for the service, said... [it] did not know the full story behind the resignation... However, [the minister] was confident the service was being well managed... "Don't worry, I have talked to the chair[person, who]... briefed me last week and they had a plan." The commission chair[person]... said everyone... had been given the opportunity to work out ways to implement the change of direction wanted by the commission. [The national commander] had not been invited to the workshop because that was for middle management... "We want to focus more on fires and I find it strange the national commander would have a problem with that." ...The president of the P[FU]... said that while... many firefighters would not be sad to see [the national commander] go, the resignation was of concern. The commission said it wanted to change direction, but no one knew where that would take the Fire Service... "There are clear concerns about where it ends, in terms of numbers and what is going to happen to the [CSTs]," the president said. The community teams, initially opposed by the union, were now 80[%] unionised, and many were worried about their prospects. [The chairperson's] connections with the insurance industry and "his Business Roundtable mates" were enough to worry firefighters as to where the service was heading under his leadership. The union believed [the chairperson] wanted to cut the number of firefighters assigned to each appliance... [T]he president of the U[FBA], which represents volunteer firefighters, said: "The commission will have to move quickly to assure both volunteer and paid members of the service that it knows which direction it is headed in."

...ASKED how the [new Fire Service] Commission was able to make a decision to restructure the Fire Service just a month after it was formed, [its chairperson]... says "the problems were relatively close to being blindingly obvious. We are far from convinced that they are doing as well as

they could,” [before pointing out that]... the Fire Service hierarchy was worse before earlier reforms. [The recently resigned chief executive] had taken some layers out and “we are continuing that process.” ...Fire prevention work was an essential part of managing fire risks and would not be compromised. [However, the] wider emergency management review meant Civil Defence issues were generally being re-addressed. Medical emergency assistance appears likely to be reviewed. While it was suitable in rural areas where other forms of assistance were not available, the service could not afford to become a “surrogate ambulance service.”

...[in] Wellington, volunteer brigades are taking part in a co-responder trial in which members with medical training attend medical emergencies while they wait for an ambulance. [The]Wainuiomata fire chief... reckons his volunteers have saved at least two lives a month during the trial. “Of course we should be doing this sort of thing – the community expects it from us. Any talk of taking it away is ridiculous.”

...All firefighters have been sent a memorandum telling them to keep their personal opinions to themselves, and that they must support Government policy... [However, the] president of the P[FU], says the memo is ridiculous... “It’s one thing to say you shouldn’t speak against Government policy, it’s another thing to say you have to support it. Does that mean we have to support the eight years of wage freeze that firefighters have had...?” The union had written asking exactly what Government policy was with regards to firefighters, [the PFU president said.

...‘For the past few years firefighters have been anything but silent – and if you believe them, the Fire Service has not been something we can depend on. Inflamed firefighters have spilled the beans on all sorts of problems: broken-down trucks, equipment shortages, fires mismanaged by inadequately trained staff. Firefighters say they are speaking out for public safety. In 1995 – the year the country spent \$10 million on a referendum in which 88% of the 652,200 voters said no to further job cuts – the PFU says there were about 1900 firefighters. There are now 1671 positions, and these are expected to drop by about 300 as the service begins its six-month restructuring phases’]...

Two more senior fire chiefs quit in disgust yesterday, citing their inability to “sell” the new management approach of the Fire Service Commission when they had not been told what it was. The Auckland-based northern region general manager... and his southern region counterpart... both tendered their resignations and will retire on Friday... Only the Wellington-based central region general manager... who is said to be working closely with the commission and a group of second-tier fire chiefs, remains in place.

...IN THE past few days, volunteer fire[officers]... all over N[Z] have fought fires. They’ve also performed CPR on heart attack victims, undertaken surf rescues, cut car crash victims from accident wreckage and rescued a cat stuck up a power pole. And all the while, the 8000 volunteers have listened as the political debate surrounding the... Fire Service’s direction hotbed up... They’ve shaken their heads at the talk of “returning to core business”, and heard reassurances... that the work of volunteers will not be undermined. But if the volunteers needed proof that smoke means fire, they got it when four... of the... five top... Fire Service bosses... quit within a week of each other... There’s no disputing the volunteers (plus another 3000 volunteers attached to rural firefighting units) are the organisation’s lifeblood – stacked up against the nation’s 1500 paid firefighters. The crux of the issue is “core business”... “That’s really got volunteers spooked,” said... [the UFBA] president... “We’ve had volunteer brigades for 120 years. Most were set up by communities to answer their needs... They do everything the paid brigades do – fight fires; go to schools and teach kids to stop, drop and roll; and smoke alarm education. But they do a lot more... We’ve heard lots of political noise about the Fire Service not being funded to do this extra work, but local communities have put their hands in their pockets to come up with the money... It is just not realistic for us to be going back to basic firefighting – it’s the thinking of 100 years ago and we might as well be using horses to pull the engines, if that was the case. We have been told we’re getting more resources, and we applaud that, but we’re yet to see what form that will take.”

...Firefighters in the N[Z] Fire Service provide year-round emergency response to fires, accidents and civil defence disasters. The traditional role of the Fire Service has been to protect and save N[Z]ers in the event of these emergencies happening. Their primary function has been to save lives. Over the past few years, however, the primary life-saving function of the Fire Service has been under attack. This attack has been led by the N[Z] Insurance Council and supported by the Business Roundtable and the National Party... Government. The basis of the attack is the misplaced belief of this group that the sole function of the Fire Service is to protect property – and, more specifically, property that is insured. The supposed rationale for this position is that the sole source of Fire Service funding is to be the Fire Service levy paid through insurance companies by private landowners, after the Government announcement... that it is to axe its portion of funding. The funding system now reflects the ideology that sees the Fire Service as a business enterprise, not a public service... Incidentally... [t]here have been many fires in... Government buildings... in recent times, including blazes in the old Parliament Building in 1992 and 1993 and the Parliamentary Library in 1993. Yet under the new funding system, the Government will not be paying a levy for these buildings. Taking the prevalent ideology behind the restructuring of the Fire Service, should the Beehive catch alight the ministers of this Government would burn with it since they would not be levy-paying clients of the Fire Service.

...Resignations, allegations of conflict of interest and hidden agendas of the Business Roundtable have enveloped the Fire Service. After years of acrimony and rancour between the management and unions of the service, the fight has now moved to the boardroom with the departure of four top executives... So what is going on in the Fire Service? [The new chairperso]n of the [Fire Service C]ommission... has said the service needs to get back to basics... In February 1996, [the]former commission chair[perso]n... said the emphasis of the service was “changing from response to prevention” as it moved from dealing mainly with fires to be “at the forefront of a network of emergency services.” [The former chairperson] warned the Government that continued budget constraints would push the service into crisis... All changes proposed by him were put on hold, following [the new chairperson’s] appointment. The new chairperson] was removed from the commission in 1993, after the[]n Internal Affairs Minister... said the Auckland[er]... had been unable to work effectively with [the then chairperson. The Aucklander] was then seen by the insurance industry and Federated Farmers as a strong backer of their campaign to reform the service. [With their support the Aucklander] is back, and causing quite a stir.

...*Firebug who grew up to be fire chief* If [the Aucklander] hadn’t joined the Fire Service [it] might have ended up a part-time firebug. The controversial [new chairperso]n of the Fire Service Commission admits to having a long fascination with fires. As a child, [it] and a mate set fire to a hen-house while playing with a box of matches and a bottle of methylated spirits. The pair escaped with minor burns but [the young Aucklander] remained intensely interested in fire throughout his childhood. His passion for the naked flame continued to burn in his career, firstly as a professional firefighter, then in the insurance industry, where [it] specialised in the field of eliminating fire risk, before moving to general risk management with [a firm of]insurance brokers... Three months ago, the 50-year-old took over the top job in the commission... His vision takes the Fire Service back to its core responsibility – fire – and any other work will be secondary... Appalled by the practice of driving fire appliances to social functions, [the new chairperson] suggested that the units be left at the station in case they were needed for a fire. The idea was not appreciated. “I got a letter back saying I could stay behind at the station and go to the fire on a bicycle.” ...[his]long-time professional adversary and the former commission chair[perso]n has] lost no time attacking... [hi]s management style[and c]alling for... h[is]... resignation... “...I’m going to speak out until some sanity returns – and it can only return with the dispatch of the chair[perso]n.” The pair also clashed when they served on the commission together in the early 1990s. [The Aucklander] today conceded that [it and the former chairperson] were poles apart when it came to their views on the role of the commission chair[perso]n. But the spat is moot point to [the Aucklander]... who is... after all... the one who has got the job.

...A “strapped-for-cash” Fire Service has paid \$785,000 to four senior executives who resigned after sweeping management changes. Firefighters and politicians have blasted the payout as hypocrisy from an organisation that is crying poor when it comes to pay claims from frontline staff.

...In response to written parliamentary questions by [a]Labour MP... the... Minister of Internal Affairs... said the money... used to pay out four former Fire Service executives could have bought \$785,000 worth of fire equipment.

...The Minister of Internal Affairs... is investigating whether the \$785,000 paid to four senior Fire Service executives... can be recovered... Labour's internal affairs spokes[person], alleged yesterday that the large payments were made without going through the correct channels. The previous Fire Service Commission should have consulted the State Services Commission before entering into the contracts, [the spokesperson] said.

...The Fire Service broke the law by not consulting the State Services Commission when it signed contracts with four executives who resigned with a \$785,000 golden goodbye, says the Auditor-General... But [the Auditor-General] said that if the service had not paid them, taxpayers might have footed the bill in any ensuing court battle because the contracts were legally binding.

...A parliamentary committee is to hold a wide-ranging inquiry into the Fire Service. The... committee's decision to hold an inquiry was announced this month but the terms of reference were not decided until last night. The initial decision followed disclosure by MPs that four senior administrators had received payouts totalling about \$750,000 after they decided to quit the service.

...Firefighters are increasingly likely to use psychological and medical problems as a reason to leave the Fire Service. Last year 37 firefighters were forced to retire from the service because of medical problems – up from 27 in 1993. The... medical retirements have added to the stresses – such as broken-down fire engines – already experienced by those in the service... [T]he service's principal medical officer, said yesterday that eight out of the 37... left because of psychological problems – double the number who left for that reason in 1993. But [the medical officer] added that the majority of firefighters were medically retired... because of orthopaedic weaknesses, often brought on by the job.

...The president of the P[FU]... said yesterday that... “...the Fire Service [managers are embarking] on a campaign that will do nothing but suggest to people they should have as much confidence in calling the service as they do when they call the police over a burglary.” ...Last week the union secretary... said the \$1 million for the campaign would be better spent increasing the number of frontline staff.

...Prospective firefighters will be vetted by police to protect sensitive crime information when up to 10,000 firefighters get access to the police radio bands... next June... But existing paid firefighters, who will not be screened, are worried that they will be blamed for any security breaches when the police and the Fire Service begin sharing airwaves... The... president of the P[FU]... said the screening was a token effort. “If this is privileged information, then the public need to be assured that it is secure and won't get into the wrong hands. It should be everybody or nobody.” ...[however, the police decided] it would be impractical to vet current fire staff, apart from those moving into shared control rooms, who would have access to more secret information... The Privacy Commissioner has been consulted about the checks.

...The Fire Service may review a multi-million-dollar joint project with police to merge their emergency control rooms... The former Fire Commission had agreed to the joint project... in the middle of last year. The new commission was now responsible, “and we might have to decide if it's the best value for money option...,” [said the commission's new chairperson]...

All fires and police incidents throughout N[Z] will be handled by the much-troubled 111 police emergency computer as officials lift the ban on its extension. But firefighters are alarmed about plans to merge control rooms with police by... July, and fear they are inheriting a bad system... A Fire Service manager... said fire control room staff were briefed about the merger last week and the plan was not well-received... The merger would cause chaos if the wrong troops were dispatched – as happened in Victoria... which had the same technology. “There aren't many firefighters who are interested in apprehending an intruder who has broken into a building,”... said... the... [PFU vice]-president...

Smart new computer abilities[, such as those used by the]... Integrated National Crime Information System (Incis)[,] will... make it easier for the police to share information with other... Government departments... Civil libertarians are anxious about the move towards greater cooperation, saying the system is open to abuse... “I think we have got some serious things to worry about in N[Z] in terms of the creep of technology, and perhaps we might wake up in some Orwell type of society in the near future...,” said the president of the Auckland Council for Civil Liberties... at the Privacy Issues Forum in Auckland last week... [But i]n a paper presented to the forum, [the head]... of the... police computer system... called on the public to accept the practice of information-sharing. “[While m]isuse of personal information is an abuse of power and must not be tolerated[, u]se of information for the collective good should be encouraged...,”...

Before I hoe into them, I'd like to say that civil libertarian type-people are very necessary, vigilant, lovable, etc. Credit where credit is due. They're alert, they worry about Freedom and Truth, and Government conspiracies to scrag both... The only thing is that, like Agent Mulder, your average civil libertarian – especially the ones obsessed with the notion that the one well-thought-out plan our tragic shambles of a Government has is to erode the free individual's rights – has a tendency to lose the grip... There's a fine line between vigilance and paranoia... [-] look too hard for intrigue, [and you start seeing] things that aren't there. Even in NZ, where there really isn't anything there. But they look, by God. For instance... last week... [saw the introduction of] tough new road legislation. I don't exaggerate any more than I normally do when I say nobody I know has slept since. It's the photos on drivers' licences... It makes people shake. I pronounce myself amazed. “The rights of everyday N[Z]ers are slowly being eroded,” a friend darkly informed me last weekend, adding [that it] planned to go into hiding before submitting. Someone else said the... [Government] would only ever get a snapshot of his butt, and th[e PM]... could come to his house to take it, and in case you think the main problem is the company I keep, I heard a Civil Libertarian shrieking about photo-ID on *Checkpoint* last week, absolutely beside himself thinking that drivers' licences photos might land in the wrong hands... Where does this obsession with conspiracy come from? Making sure people driving cars are who they claim to be is important, not fascist... I'm a fun girl, but even I am getting tired of chancing a terminal interface with an unlicensed drunk every time I [get] on... the motorway. Forceful state road policy [that] actively meddles in people's lives is supremely correct. Road statistics are so heinous that the fuzz has to know the person driving the car should be driving. Without a photo, they can't. And we've all milked that one. When I was a girl, everyone pinched older siblings' licences to get into pubs. At the other side of 20, we lent our licences to younger acquaintances... and regularly lent them to disqualified drivers to share in their nonconformist glory. But I'm old now. Bogus ID must end.

...The Privacy Commissioner... wants a privacy impact report on the... photo-licences, saying they could become “de facto internal passports.” ...[the commissioner, who had] called for an impact report a year ago... was concerned that... it... [is] necessary to carry the ID card almost all the time. Allowing it to be used as a proof-of-age card meant it could be required in all sorts of situations. “People over, say, 25 with no need to prove their age... nevertheless have it displayed for all who require to see the card as ID.” ...The provision for police discretion to impose an instant fine on drivers not carrying licences, with the power to waiver it later, could lead to allegations of police favouritism... “Combine that with roadside detention and there is a considerable intrusion into the freedom of the citizen to go about lawful activities without... hindrance.”

...I'M NOT usually in favour of restrictions on what I do or don't do, but I will gladly submit to whatever steps I have to take to stay within the new traffic laws... I could hardly believe my eyes when I read through the list of new road safety policies. One by one, the catalogue of long-overdue changes to the road code deserves a stamp of approval from every pressure group, every citizen with a platform from which to issue praise. I like driving, I drive a lot, and I am overcome with delight that... at long last, something positive is being done to reduce, even by a little, the stupid, selfish, reckless driving I have to contend with. Every day I pick my way through a litter of halfwits, clearly unqualified to be in charge of half a tonne or so of fast-moving metal, performing the most absurd... manoeuvres. Nothing anyone can do will raise the driving standards of most of them, because technically they are legally licensed drivers staying barely within the law, but putting serious difficulties in the way of the worst offenders will make life just that much easier. I am absolutely delighted that the police... [are] able to impound the cars of repeat offenders and arbitrarily suspend the licences of drunks and those who go more than 50 km/h over the limit. But wouldn't you know it? Out of the swamp of the absurd Privacy Act, [the Privacy] Commissioner... rears his dinosaur head, bellowing that the new and long overdue reforms raise “privacy issues.” [The commissioner] wants... a “privacy impact report” done... [because t]here's a “risk”... that N[Z] could get a de facto national identity

card by backdoor methods. I expect this sort of nonsense from the Council for Civil Liberties and other stormtroopers of the politically correct left, but at least they don't exercise their adenoids at the taxpayers' expense... To complain about a privacy breach is no better than claiming a burglar's privacy is imperilled by installing an alarm... When you're overseas you carry your passport with you all the time because you want to be able to prove who you are to police, shopkeepers, bank tellers, and hotel clerks. It never enters your head that you are having privacy invaded. You value your passport, unflattering photograph and all, and produce it with a flourish whenever you're asked. If I shove across a credit card to pay for a meal, a tank of petrol or a pair of trousers, I don't consider I'm having my privacy invaded when I sign for my purchases and the waiter or retailer checks my signature against the signature on the card. I would prefer, as a matter of fact, that each of my credit cards carried my photograph as well, because if I lost it, the picture would make it less likely that anyone could pick it up and rob me by charging vast sums to my account... The sort of person who would object to having their photograph on a credit card or driving licence is the sort of person who has something to hide...

Commercial identification is now so widespread through bank and other credit cards, store cards and... the introduction of driving licences bearing identification, that protests... [by] civil libertarians and their ilk... against ID are like trying to rake dry autumn leaves in a strong wind... "Liberty doesn't work as good in practice as it does in speech"... [an] American philosopher... once said... Indeed, there is a case in today's criminally infested society in favour of proper personal identification.

...Sensar Inc... and... NCR, the world's leading supplier of... ATM[s]... are to jointly develop a new personal security system for bank cards using electronic scanning of a person's eye for identification, instead of traditional PIN codes.

...PIN numbers may soon become obsolete because of your eyes... NZ bankers are monitoring the development of a "human bar code", costing nearly \$30 million, for Citibank in the US. A video camera relays a close-up of a customer's right eye to a computer which matches it with one on file. This takes seconds and can be done through contact lenses or spectacles. An iris holds 10 times more personal detail than a fingerprint [(Sir William Herschel - 1833-1917 - introduced the use of fingerprints for identification purposes in India in the late 1870s; it was adopted in Britain, as a means of identifying criminals, in 1901)] and this system is considered virtually fraud-proof. It may later have other uses such as for passports or driving licences... Another possibility involves speech patterns which are highly individual.

...A High Court test case will decide whether revolutionary "facial mapping" technology can be used to check the identity of offenders caught on video surveillance cameras. Just as DNA gave lawyers and police a new tool to use in evidence, a new British technique promises sweeping implications in criminal cases. The computer software superimposes the facial image of the accused on that of the person caught on a video camera. An Auckland barrister... will next month seek High Court approval to use facial mapping in a criminal trial. A disguised [offender] was caught on video during the aggravated robbery and stabbing of a service station attendant in 1993. [The barrister's] client was convicted of the offence but a retrial was ordered after DNA evidence was produced... [The barrister] hoped to use "facial mapping" to defend the case. "Video cameras are widespread now... both the defence and prosecution could use [the technology] on a routine basis." The... Criminal Bar Association... said the new technique... [- which is already being] used in British criminal trials... [-] could be useful if shown to be foolproof, saving money and time.

...Experts say DNA evidence can only be used to exclude people from crimes not implicate them and they warned DNA profiles may not be conclusive... [d]espite... technological advances... There's still a chance any two members of the public can have similar profiles.

...A [US]n scientist discover a world of DNA evidence where none was thought to exist... Divers recovered the tomahawk... [used to kill] Harvey Harrison... the night of Feb. 12, 1995... from a... reservoir[. It had been] washed clean by 12 hours of immersion. "Usually in that situation we don't bother testing for DNA," says... [a] forensic biologist at the Victoria Police Forensic Science Centre. "We thought we needed a visible blood stain, at least. I don't know what made me decide to test it." [The forensic biologist] swabbed the blade with sterile cotton; incredibly, laboratory tests yielded a DNA profile that matched those of... the body[, which had been]... covered... in brake fluid and set... alight... "We couldn't see where we got it from. Not with a microscope, or any means." The discovery that DNA... could be retrieved despite the apparent absence of blood, hair or bodily fluids prompted [the forensic biologist and a] colleague... to ask where else DNA might be detected. Their answer, revealed last month in the British science journal *Nature* after a year's research: almost anywhere, on almost anything. "We tested objects that had only been held for 15 minutes, and we were able to find DNA... One experiment showed that if someone holds a clean object for even five seconds, they could leave sufficient matter behind for a successful test." Even smudged fingerprints on the inside of gloves, useless for comparison with fingerprint records, can provide DNA evidence. One property of DNA is that, in the right conditions, it can reproduce itself. This is the key to the researchers' work: using genetic techniques devised by [a] 1993 Nobel Prize winning scientist... they were able to convert one-billionth of a gram of DNA into enough DNA to allow examination. "All you need is a few strands... We supply all the chemicals and enzymes and put it through a series of variable temperature cycles." Thus, a new strand of identical DNA is made; repeating the process makes more. A few years ago, the smallest sample that would allow for detection of DNA might have been traces of saliva on a cigarette butt; now... a car thief may be identified by examination of the steering wheel of a stolen car... Prior to fingerprinting, U.S. authorities used a system of body measurements to identify convicts; it was largely abandoned after 1903, when two unrelated [people] with near-identical appearances and measurements... turned up in a Texas jail. Geneticists claim DNA identifications may become as widespread and standardized as fingerprinting quickly came to be. But concerns have been raised internationally that the new method may be too complex for juries to understand, or that it may simply be too expensive to use regularly. [However, a] Sydney lawyer... disagrees: "What juries are interested in are conclusions. Juries deal with computer evidence all the time, but they don't have to know how computers work." On cost, [the colleague] says: "The cost of gathering samples is insignificant. All you need is forceps and gloves and sterile cotton wool. Technical costs are virtually nothing. The main costs are consumables and labour to do DNA profiling." Advances in DNA identification, says... [the] assistant director (biology) at the [centre], may save more than money: "Typically, where a rape has occurred police will check on who in the area has a conviction for a similar offence and investigate them. If DNA data banks are established in the future, suspects will be able to be eliminated by comparing DNA without even contacting them. The disruption to the lives of suspects' wives and children will be gone."

...A year after a 13-year-old British girl was raped and killed in a youth hostel in France... her parents' request that all [of the youths] in the town be given DNA tests[has been granted]. People cannot be forced to undergo DNA tests, so they would be voluntary. Still, the... parents viewed the ruling as a big success... A homeless [person] was initially charged with the crime, after police said [it confessed, but it] was ruled out when DNA tests did not match the sperm found on the victim's body. With no apparent progress in the case, Caroline's parents asked the investigating judge to order DNA tests of all [the guys] in the town aged 15 to 35. The judge... refused. The parents appealed, and yesterday the appeals court ruled in their favour. That meant an automatic disqualification for [the investigating j]udge... The new judge... will attempt to conduct the blanket DNA testing in the town of 1800 people. Such blanket DNA testing is believed to be a first in France, although it is used more commonly in Britain.

...Police in Auckland are still waiting for their first "hit" just over a year since the introduction of a national DNA profile database. About 300 criminals in the... Auckland area have supplied a blood sample... [and] DNA found at crime scenes is [also] loaded into the databank... But the lack of success in cross-matching material from crime scenes with the database samples is not unexpected because many of the "blooded" offenders are behind bars. The crown solicitor for the Auckland area... would be astounded if there were any matches within two or three years of the databank being set up. "[The databank] has to build up to a sufficient extent to have critical mass..." But when matches do start showing up, police hope to emulate Britain, which has had a similar DNA databank for several years. "They... get... dozens of matches every week..." said... the project coordinator in the Auckland area... Faced with an exact cross-match, the suspect had little choice but to admit the offence... People convicted of

serious offences ranging from burglary to... murder... are liable to be ordered to provide a blood sample for the databank. Initially... police required nearly all such offenders to provide blood. But the courts said they had to exercise discretion. As a result... 90[%] of offenders must give blood for the databank.

...Police snipers were dispatched to two Cairo suburbs to hunt down animals, believed to be hyenas... [- a]uthorities have not yet identified the species... [-] which mauled 23 people during a two-day rampage. Many of the victims were children who were attacked by the beasts at Qattamiya's marketplace. The animals later broke into several apartments, mauling the residents. A young [gal] managed to throw a blanket on one of the attacking beasts and, with the help of others, was able to beat it to death. [Editor's note: 'A belief that has persisted to this day is that hyaenas are cowardly. This has now been finally disproved. Staff at the Serengeti Research Institute in Tanzania, who made a close study of hyaenas by following them on moonlit nights in a Land-Rover, found that at dusk hyaenas came out of their holes – often crevasses in the mud – to walk about slowly, meeting other hyaenas, exchanging greeting ceremonies until a pack of up to 20 was formed. They then set out, closely bunched or spread out, in a seemingly leisurely way to stalk a family party of zebras or a herd of wildebeest. Then they began to harass their quarry, snapping at them until they had slowed one down']...

A stalker is like a cat toying with a mouse, according to a world leader on the phenomenon. "Stalking is one of those activities that conjures up a host of brutal images," says... the deputy Minister of Justice and deputy Attorney-General for Manitoba in Canada... in the introduction to his report, *People who Stalk People*... "When a cat stalks its prey, it likes to play with the victim for a while, tormenting it for an agonising few minutes before finally killing it. Likewise, the human [being] stalker plunges his victim into a world of fear and terror by repeatedly following and attempting to contact the victim despite pleas to stay away. "The obsessive efforts of the stalker to control and intimidate often escalate into violence, including the death of the victim." Canada introduced anti-stalking legislation after the deaths of several [people] at the hands of... stalkers, including one victim shot through the heart with a crossbow. Before then, penalties imposed on stalkers in Canada had been largely ineffectual. Now it is an offence to repeatedly follow, communicate, watch or threaten someone. Similar legislation is going through Parliament in N[Z], though the proposed maximum sentence is only two years, compared with Canada's five. [The expert]'s report was used by prosecutors to prepare a case against [a] serial stalker... who was sentenced last week to 18 months' jail. Over 10 years, the 27-year-old panelbeater of West Auckland had stalked, harassed and terrorised at least nine [gals], the High Court at Auckland heard... During the 1980s several celebrities... were the obsessive targets of stalkers. But most victims are not celebrities or even public figures, says [the expert]. About 200,000 stalkers, from all walks of life, are believed to be active in the U[S]. Most stalkers follow and terrorise their victims, but do not end up killing them. In A[US]... a stalker tunneled into his victim's house, got into the attic and drilled holes in the ceiling... stay[ing] there for three months watching her every move.

...A[n Auckland] who found herself the target of a stalker will have to move house when [it] gets out of jail, the High Court at Auckland heard yesterday. The prosecutor... told [the court]: "We must not forget that there is a complainant in this matter who, according to the psychiatric report, is posed a great risk by this individual and who has been encouraged to move on the date of his release. Every time [the stalker] files notice of appeal, the complainant is faced with doubts as to exactly when this [pest] is going to be released, which obviously causes her some concern." ...[the High Court had previously] increased an eight-month term imposed in the District Court on the West Auckland panel beater to 18 months, after [the stalker] had appealed against sentence on four charges of breaching a protection order relating to his latest victim. Yesterday, [the High Court] Justice... refused... the... [stalker] permission to reactivate an appeal against conviction on two of the counts. [The prosecutor said the stalker] had calculated that if his appeal succeeded, [it] would be released immediately... Meanwhile, [the stalker] has filed papers with the Court of Appeal.

...Dry north-westerly winds... in the Wairarapa over the past six weeks... are being fingered as the villain behind an upsurge in crime... [that culminated in] a string of violent incidents in Masterton at the weekend... Meteorologists say the link between dry or foelm wind and human behaviour is well-documented... In N[Z] the dry north-westerlies hold high amounts of static electricity. This stimulates the pineal gland in the brain to overproduce serotonin and melatonin. The MetService weather ambassador... said... "Even though the winds may be linked to bad behaviour, they aren't an excuse for bad behaviour." ...In some... people... the thyroid gland was stimulated, which caused depression, though a few felt good after exposure to north-westerlies... A police spokes[person]... said some officers reported an upsurge in some crimes during a full moon. "But unless the answer really is blowing in the wind, I can't see bio-meteorology popping up in the next crime prevention pamphlet." - 1997

Card fraud and concern about security access to buildings, computer systems... prisons... and plain old money machines are driving the development of biometric identification which can look you in the eye, listen to your voice, scan your hand or recognise the bone structure in your face. Biometrics use the fact that no two people – even identical twins – have the same hand or eye patterns... Biometrics has already begun to make its way into our workforce... Tip Top Ice Cream has had Fingerscan units at its Mt Wellington factory for more than a year and claims they are just another clocking system... At Coca-Cola hand-scanning machines replaced time cards in late 1996... Athletes at the Olympic Games in Atlanta had to have their hands scanned to gain access to the Olympic village... In New Jersey and six other American states fingerprint scanners are used to crack down on welfare fraud where people are registered under more than one name. In Cook County, Illinois, a special camera analyses iris patterns on the eyeball to ensure the right people are released from jail... Disney World in Orlando takes hand scans of people who purchase yearly passes. John F Kennedy International Airport and Newark Airport are allowing selected groups of travellers to bypass the queue, using a combination of hand scanning and cards at a special turnstile. IBM is working on a project called FastGate to commercialise the service.

...A[US] has launched the world's first automated passport checks... At a cost of A\$1.2 million... the SmartGate kiosk scans passport photos and compares them with the faces of travellers – replacing manual checks by... officers at Sydney airport... [At first it']ll only apply to Qantas crew[s]...

Singapore is to increase the use of a high-tech immigration clearance system that does away with the need to show passports. A traveller will put a card into a machine, place a thumb on a scanner and go through a turnstile... [However,] South Auckland factory workers don't want their time clock to see their fingerprints. Despite assurances that fingerprint-reading time clocks do not threaten their privacy, workers at Formica (NZ)'s Papakura factory wrote to the company yesterday saying they unanimously rejected use of the technology... Formica has already assured its 250 staff that information cannot be passed outside the company because data cannot be "reverse engineered" to recreate a fingerprint image. An Engineers Union organiser... said [it] would take up the issue with the Privacy Commissioner. [The c]ommissioner... said yesterday: "The principle of having technology that identifies you from physical characteristics is not in itself repulsive to privacy. How it is done in any particular case may or may not be objectionable." [The commissioner said it] had not yet received a complaint about the technology... About 40 Auckland companies, and 10 others around the country, already use the \$6000 scanners... [A spokesperson for] iD Technologies, the N[Z] distributors of Fingerscan, said that ironically the system is used overseas to protect privacy by checking computer access to hospital patient records.

...As part of a new plan to crack down on burglars, police will get the power to fingerprint kids as young as 10. It's a good move – burglary is a gross invasion of privacy whoever you are and where ever you live. I expect civil libertarians to jump up and down at the fingerprinting of 10-year-olds who have been caught up to mischief, but the logic behind the move is sound. Growing up means testing boundaries and seeing what you can get away with – drawing on walls, testing car door handles, nicking something while the dairy owner is busy. It is those kids who always get away with it – because they are not caught, or their parents don't care – who become bold and risk becoming career crims. Fingerprint those young people you have caught, frighten the hell out of them, and it might be possible to steer them off crime – or catch them later on when stronger action may be necessary. Police have a pretty good idea which local gang of you[ths]... was responsible for a break-in at my place last year during the

school holidays, the only time of year we seem to suffer petty crime in my central Auckland suburb. The intruders... [broke a window but] triggered an alarm and were scared away empty-handed... [T]he police turned up the next day to take good fingerprints off the window sill. But there was nothing on file to match them. These kids are known to the police, but as they are under 17 and parental consent is required to fingerprint them under that age, most of them remain faces to be dealt with later.

...When [a 20-year-old] held up an A[US]n bank with his right ear jutting from a balaclava, [it] had no idea that his anthelix was narrow and prominent, his upper crus anthelicis wide and directed vertically and his intertragic notch narrow and triangular. Yet that was his downfall. For after a fruitless probe lasting more than a year, Adelaide police took a security camera picture from the bank to... an expert in anatomy and biological anthropology. The Adelaide University scientist... took less than 30 minutes to match the image to a suspect... – who confessed all when confronted with his aural indiscretion. It was the first time in A[US] that a criminal had been identified by his ear, and means the 20-year-old is likely to be jailed. The breakthrough also showed there was still room for good old-fashioned checks on body shape in these high-tech days of DNA sampling, molecular biology and fingerprinting. But the practice of ear identification seems to have languished since its heyday in 1960s paternity suits – N[Z] police and forensic experts can remember no recent instance of it being used in this country... [However, NZ]’s national crime manager... said... “It is... obviously an option for us. With someone as close as South A[US], we probably wouldn’t hesitate to ask him if a situation came up where we thought [the professor] could help.” ...Many other anatomical quirks can also be used to identify suspects. Nose and lip shapes are helpful and the size of a handprint is a good clue to a person’s height. And... posture could be used to identify a suspect, although general body shape was little help. But one major impediment to using those techniques was the murky and grainy quality of cheap security cameras businesses used. “Bank cameras give peace of mind to the staff, but are notoriously poor quality...” ...Some scientists – and the Nazis – measured craniums in the belief that certain head shapes could be linked with intelligence and psychological disorders, but environmental factors are now known to play a big part in skull shape... N[SW] police used hypnosis this year to make progress in the case of a [person] who pulled a young girl off a suburban Sydney street seven years ago. The girl has not been seen again and there have been no arrests, but police now have an updated description of the [person] they are seeking. In N[Z], forensic detectives have used seemingly everyday equipment to crack crimes. It was well known that typewriters have individual quirks that make each unique and therefore traceable, but police also can study a photocopier to see if documents were copied on it. Each photocopier has a unique set of marks – smudges, nicks, scratches... – which gives a machine a “fingerprint.” Recently police in Britain and the US have experimented with heat-sensitive imaging which can give a clear profile of an offender up to 30 minutes after... [it] has left the scene. The equipment – currently too expensive for mass use – can provide an impression of a face using different amounts of heat generated by parts of the head. The technology is based on the concept that body heat is not uniformly spread and minute variations occur around the face.

...*Face-mapping a legal first for NZ...* [Someone] has been cleared of a vicious robbery after his lawyer used the revolutionary evidence of a plastic surgeon... The... lawyer... contacted... [the] cosmetic and reconstructive surgeon... [after his client] was convicted of the 1993 robbery and stabbing of a North Shore service station attendant. They pursued an appeal and looked to Britain where scientists at the University of Glasgow had developed a face-mapping technique. [The surgeon] improved the method and set to work to show that [the client] was not the balaclava-clad [offender] caught on security camera during the hold-up... [The lawyer] went to the High Court to seek to have the evidence heard in a new trial, ordered after DNA evidence was produced. [The judge] said... “I accept the Crown’s submission that the court... has... a gatekeeper role to guard against suspect and deceptive science... However, there are times when judges must simply rely upon their own judgment and common sense in allowing the development of a new technique of forensic evidence to come before the court and, in my view, although applying all proper caution, this is one.”

...*Face-reading software notices twitches lasting a 20th of a second...* When [a police officer] started... work in California 30 years ago, questioning suspects often amounted to one thing: tossing the guy against the wall. “I decided there had to be a kinder, gentler way,”... [The police officer] began studying the faces of the people [it was interrogating, and] got so good at picking liars from truth tellers that [a] psychologist... of the University of California, San Francisco, began studying [the police officer] in the late 1980s. His talent, it turned out, was for detecting those faint or fleeting expressions in a suspect’s face that seemed inconsistent with what [the suspect] was saying or other clues. [The psychologist] called them “microexpressions.” Since then, [the psychologist] has been teaching law-enforcement officers how to catch microexpressions and has written a book about them... Liars can be spotted with a 95[%] accuracy based on an analysis of their facial movements and voices... [but the psychologist] trained... the... or[iginal police officer]... to get perfect scores recognising liars on videotape. Now the US Defence Department and the CIA are funding work to incorporate [the psychologist]’s research into software that would analyse facial movements captured by digital cameras... Ordinary observation just isn’t up to the task of catching liars. Judges, therapists and spies do no better than chance when asked to identify liars on videotape.

...*Lie detectors that can’t fail...* The last refuge of secrets and lies – the brain – may be about to reveal all. Scientists are finding ways to use the brain’s activity to expose truths a person may try to hide. The techniques could revolutionise police work, improve national security, and threaten personal privacy. “It’s the scariest thing around,” said... an outspoken critic of old-fashioned, unreliable polygraph machines. “The only thing worse than a lie detector that doesn’t work is one that does.” ...a neuropsychologist at the University of Pennsylvania, says new kinds of brain scans can reveal when a person recognises a familiar face, no matter how hard [the person]... tries to conceal it... It is easy to imagine... scanning machine[s]... being used in interrogation of criminal suspects or terrorists about their associates... “In the long term... we will have technologies powerful enough to understand what people are thinking in ways unimaginable now... I think in 50 years we will have a way to essentially read minds.” ...[“Show me a law that prevents crime,” a police officer says. “All we can do is act after the fact. You remember the Hoffman murder? Before her murder Mrs Hoffman came up here week after week telling us that her husband was going to do it and I believed it but I couldn’t arrest a guy for something that might be in his mind – that’s dictatorship.”] To the scientists, visions of Orwellian thought police do not overshadow the potential benefits and the tantalising scientific prospect of understanding how the mind works... [– although they doubt we will ever reach the point depicted in the] latest sci-fi thriller *Minority Report*, based on the short story... set in Washington DC 2054 when murder has been virtually eliminated thanks to three psychic beings who have visions of murders not yet committed... allow[ing] the Justice Department’s pre-crime unit to convict the guilty in advance... [In related news, t]he days of pulling people off the street to take part in a police identity parade are almost over... Now police assemble their shady bunch within minutes by tapping witnesses’ descriptions into a national database and getting a printout of mugshots in return. The latest advance is videotape identification, which gives a better image than photographs. Police chiefs are keen to make the most of it, despite a high-profile failure in the technology’s first court trial. Charges linking... a... 21[-year-old] to a home-invasion robbery of[a] pensioner... last year were thrown out in the Auckland District Court late last week after video identification was found to be unfair. Police selected taped interviews of nine [people] – out of a suggested pool of 40 – from a recently established video library in Wellington to add to [the 21-year-old]’s and show to witnesses. After viewing a compilation of 30-second, soundless video clips, [the pensioner identified the 21-year-old as the guy] who beat her for \$200... But [the] Judge... dismissed the charges of burglary, aggravated robbery, aggravated wounding and entering with intent after ruling that the videotape evidence was inadmissible. [The judge said the 21-year-old] was the only one... to fit the description given by witnesses... had not consented to his video interview being used... and... had not been able to consult a lawyer about it, a breach of the Bill of Rights. But [the] Assistant Police Commissioner... who is also the national prosecutions manager, said yesterday that videotape identification was an important tool and police would continue with it. “...and these days people... roped in to take part in a lineup... are likely to say, ‘What about a fee?’” ...a Victoria University law

lecturer who has studied police identification procedures, said that while video lineups were useful, interview footage should not be used. "...Britain, ha[s] a video library, but it isn't made up from police interviews. The subjects are in a more controlled environment, and police make sure they are all in the same position, same situation or making the same movement." However, British police had the power to film suspects covertly if they refused to be taped.

...An "intelligent" computer system which uses closed-circuit television to match faces in a crowd to mug shots of known criminals is likely to become London's latest weapon against crime. Scotland Yard and a local council have installed the \$US100,000... CCTV system for a trial in Newham, a poor district in London's East End. The computer system, called Mandrake, is linked to 144 CCTVs in Newham's shopping centres, railway stations and car parks and can scan up to 150 faces at a time and compare them with a database of criminals stored on a computer at the council's headquarters. If there is a match between a face in the crowd and a known criminal, the computer alerts a monitoring team in the town hall, who alert the police. Civil liberties groups said they were alarmed by the new system, but police defended its use... [P]olice will use the system to concentrate on catching robbery suspects. In the future, however, it could be used to search crowds for hooligans who stir up trouble at soccer matches. CCTV's developer, Software and Systems International, said the system was accurate enough to discern people hiding behind makeup or eye glasses. And growing a beard would not help either, the company said. Britain has 150,000 closed-circuit television cameras. While most Britons appear happy the devices are being used to tackle crime, civil liberties groups oppose both the cameras and the facial matching.

...Up to eight people [have] declined voluntary DNA testing... [during] the hunt for the rapist of a 91-year-old... in a N[SW] town... This is the first time in A[US] that police have organised a mass voluntary DNA screening to catch a criminal... None of the eight... was considered a suspect... The screening is opposed by some people who believe it is a violation of civil rights... "Of the people who have declined... [s]ome say they don't agree with the process. Some are not prepared to give a reason and we accept that." ...[however,] most of the people in Wee Waa, 430km northwest of Sydney, were supportive of the testing because the rape... was so shocking... [A] Detective Inspector... said... many in the... community believed it was their civic duty... A team of police have been doorknocking every household in the tiny cotton town since Saturday asking [guy] occupants for a swab of their saliva, a photograph and a thumb print. At least 170 people have turned up at the police station of their own accord... About... 600 [residents] are expected to be tested... and once a [resident] has been eliminated as a suspect, [it] will be notified and the sample destroyed... [In local news, p]olice are hot on the trail of 12 suspects after making the first cross-matches between the controversial DNA data bank and crime scenes... [S]ince the data bank was set up, blood samples have been taken from about 5000 suspects and convicted criminals. [A] Chief Inspector... said police were delighted with the first 12 "hits." ...one match related to a serious crime some years ago and the rest were mostly burglaries.

...The Government's plan to extend DNA testing to suspected burglars will be worthless without proper funding, says [the] Police Association... DNA testing has changed the face of policing over the past decade, but... budget cuts and overworked staff and testing labs meant it was not being used effectively... The Government has budgeted an extra \$900,000 over... three years for... an extra 550 DNA samples to be taken and processed.

...*Routine DNA test solves three-year-old rape case* A [guy] has been caught for a rape after the police DNA databank turned up a "lucky hit" that linked him to the crime. [The offender] volunteered his DNA to police... to the surprise of detectives... Faced with the evidence, [it] admitted the rape... [In another development, n]ew DNA test results may solve the... inquiry into the murder and sexual assault of Teresa Cormack. Napier police will tomorrow reveal details of further scientific tests involving DNA samples taken from the six-year-old's body... The... case came along when DNA tools were in their infancy. In 1988, forensic samples taken from her body were sent to England. It is understood that it was the first time DNA technology was used in a N[Z] case, but after five months of testing, the results were inconclusive. Also... hair samples from 21... suspects, were sent to the A[US]n Forensic Science Centre in Adelaide for analysis. Tests failed to find a match between the samples and the three strands of foreign hair found on ...he[r]... body. Teresa's mother... said yesterday: "...It's heartening and frightening that we are getting closer to the truth."

...Teresa[s] mother's)... recollection of how... the morning of Friday, June 19, 1987... turned into a nightmare was in a statement presented at a depositions hearing in Napier District Court yesterday[, at which a suspect]... aged 43, was committed to stand trial for the abduction, sexual violation and murder of Teresa... In 1987, [it] was ruled out as a suspect because... [the] Lower-Hutt father and sickness beneficiary... had a confirmed alibi – a visit to the Social Welfare Department at 9.30am. At the time, police believed Teresa was snatched around 9am.

...Teresa Cormack's parents clasped hands, bowed their heads and softly whispered "yes" as a jury last night convicted... a... sickness beneficiary and father of at least seven children... of the rape and murder of their 6-year-old daughter... It was the moment for which they had [long a]waited...

A... con[vinced] paedophile... was allowed to live with children even though social workers knew of his background because Child, Youth and Family could not meet the challenge [the paedophile] posed. In a damning report yesterday by [the] chief social worker... it is revealed that [Teresa's killer] eluded social workers for 20 years because the department's policies and systems were inadequate. [The paedophile] wielded influence over at least 18 children during that time and two of them are known to have been harmed... The... jury took just two hours to find him guilty... of [Teresa's] 1987 rape and murder... After the conviction, C[YF opened hi]s... file and commissioned [the]... report into its historical handling of him... [The paedophile] will be sentenced... [next month. ■ A Kelston resident, aged] 32... faces 34 charges involving burglary, abduction, assault and sex attack charges against four [gals] aged between 11 and 69... [It] has pleaded not guilty... to the charges... Eleven of the charges related to the 11-year-old girl... [whose neighbour] was wrongly convicted of raping[her (rp87, ln52). The neighbour]... received \$868,000 compensation from the Government.

...The son of the [Americ]an who inspired the... '60s TV series *The Fugitive*... is using new DNA evidence to argue the innocence of [his father, who was] convicted of murder... when [the son] was just seven years old. Long before O.J.'s (rp2550, ln5)... trial and JonBenet Ramsey's mysterious death, the murder that made headlines across the US and the rest of the world was that of Marilyn Sheppard, the young pregnant wife of Dr Sam Sheppard, an affluent Ohio-based osteopath. Convicted of bludgeoning his wife to a bloody pulp in the couple's bedroom in the early morning of July 4, 1954, Sheppard insisted [it] was innocent and claimed the real killer was a shadowy "bushy-haired stranger", who knocked him unconscious before fleeing the scene... Less than two months later, [Sam] was arrested and charged with murder... [P]rosecutors were demanding the death sentence... [The son] lived in terror that his father would be put to death and [it] would lose both parents. [The son] was relieved when his father was convicted of second degree murder and received a life sentence instead, but the agony ground on. Not only was his father in prison but, in January 1955, less than three weeks after the sentence, his grandmother committed suicide, unable to cope with her son being branded a murderer. Eleven days later, her husband... died of a haemorrhaging ulcer and long-standing cancer. "I am sure my father's conviction contributed to my grandfather's death"... His maternal grandfather... committed suicide when [the boy] was 12, widening the breach between the two families. "It was difficult for my mother's family – I didn't see them often. They believed the papers and thought that my father was guilty. At one point, I think they sued for custody of me..." [The son], however, never doubted his father's innocence... In 1964, after... serv[ing] 10 years of his sentence, [Sam] was released, when a appeal established [it] had not received a fair trial. Two years later... the US Supreme Court acquitted him of the charges through lack of evidence... Sam... lived only four years after his release. His clinic, home and family wealth long since sold to pay his legal bills, [Sam] tried to catch up the lost years with a string of affairs, a brief marriage, odd jobs... and by drinking. At 46, an alcoholic, [Sam] died. NOW... that boy is... middle-aged... and... is determined to prove that not only was his father innocent, but that the bushy-haired stranger existed and was a serial killer known to police. Armed with fresh evidence, including DNA swatches, blood samples from the crime scene and genetic material taken from the exhumed body of his father, [the son] is suing the State of Ohio for his father's wrongful imprisonment in a landmark court case. Sam Sheppard's son is determined to have the State of Ohio admit it imprisoned an innocent[person, and –] ...backed by

lawyers, investigators and scientists who have volunteered their time and expertise... [-] make it pay for “the terrible injustice” that destroyed his family and childhood.

...Remember... the... Massey [resident who] was one of the prime victims of the great traffic fine shambles revealed first in this column last year[?] The resident] was wrongly convicted over offences by a... Hamilton [namesake] and her pay was docked to meet fines without any reference to her. After great tooting and froing in this paper and elsewhere, [the resident] was cleared of the offences, had her seized money returned[, and] even got an official letter of apology... [But when the resident] went to apply for her full driver's licence a few days ago, the monster of official inefficiency walked again. As AA staff tapped her licence number into the system... it... [showed her] as living at the Hamilton address of [her namesake]!

...“People should not be presumed guilty on the evidence of [a] computer match.” That's the view of the Privacy Commissioner... “It is important that data matching is not seen as proof of anything. It merely establishes information that needs to be followed up before any conclusions are drawn.” ...The proof definition comes from an overview of a real mess the Department for Courts got itself into [two years ago]. Then, nearly 4000 of what [the commissioner] describes as “threatening” cards went out in one mailing to Aucklanders. The red cards demanded payment of fines most of the shocked recipients had no involvement with. The mailout muck-up followed an... arrangement the courts made... to check data on unpaid fines against details in the motor vehicle register. Rather conveniently, the two computer systems were at the same place, maintained and operated by the same company, EDS, and on the same computer hardware. The... programme produced 3967 “matches”... Of the “matches”, 2166 involved cases where neither the name nor the date of birth were an exact match. Despite this flaw, court officials thought they were useable and sent those demands to all 3967 presumed debtors. The Department for Courts later admitted that it had “tried to be a little clever” and it hadn't worked... [The commissioner] has released a report on [the] cosy arrangement... – and... has also set up an inquiry into the quality of data which prosecuting agencies like the police hand on to the courts and on which they rely... The report by [an] Auckland barrister... shows that not only was the “match” a mismatch, but it also breached the Privacy Act. The two departments should have got statutory approval for what was done. The courts acknowledge that and say they have not done it since and do not plan to repeat it. Strangely, the other department involved does not seem to have known officially that the “matching” of its computer data was happening. [The barrister wrote]: “As far as I am able to determine, the Department for Courts did not involve the Land Transport Safety Authority at all in preparations for, or operation of, this matching exercise. It is unusual for one agency to have sufficient access to another agency's computer to be able to prepare a file for matching without the assistance of the ‘holding’ agency, but... that seems to be what happened.” ...EDS did not believe the data sharing – although not authorised by the LTSA – was prohibited because the contract between the two did not make that clear. In his introduction to the... report, [the commissioner] says: “...I have become concerned in recent years about initiatives by some officials and others to short-circuit information matching safeguards and to establish programmes on some informal basis. It is deceptively attractive to think that computers can infallibly sort out matters affecting real people.” ...had the programme been authorised “significant data quality problems would have been discovered and avoided”... The report recommends changes in departmental systems to comply with the Privacy Act and to improve privacy safeguards... That's great. It deals with a problem of two years ago. But mismatches are still going on – like the Howick [gal] somehow bundled with... \$522 [worth of]... fines incurred by a... beard[ed youth]... from Papakura... Or the Whangaparaoa [resident] dunned last week for court costs of \$90 on a parking ticket offence in Newmarket in February 1989 involving a yellow Toyota [it] had never owned... Then there's the Henderson [resident] who has been notified [there i]s a warrant out for her arrest involving a claimed careless driving conviction in 1987. [The westie] knows nothing of it, was never advised at the time of the hearing, the verdict or the fine. [The westie] suspects it involves a licence stolen from her handbag in 1986. [The westie] reported the theft but Henderson police say the file no longer exists. Henderson court advice is to pay up... Not even a suggestion [the westie] apply for a rehearing as [it]'s entitled to do... If the... systems fault [from two years ago] hasn't been repeated, what glitch caused these and hundreds of others documented to this paper... For some reason, it's taken two years to clean up one part of the mess. How long will be needed to do the whole job? ...[Incidentally, my] wife went to collect our mail and stopped to pull up some weeds on the way. [My wife] did not lock the door behind her and someone was quick enough to go into the house and steal her handbag. When [my wife] reported the theft to the police [my wife] was told it was not a theft, [my wife] had *lost* her handbag and... could only report the event under the heading of lost property, since [my wife] did not see the person with the bag and no damage was done to the house. So there was no crime. Presumably if the person is found with the bag they will be rewarded for ‘finding it’. This is a great way of reducing the crime statistics. Give the crime a new name and they don't have to include it when the theft figures are added up.

...Police work should be contracted out so more savings can be squeezed from the force's budget to pay for its troubled computer, according to Government papers... obtained by [a] Labour MP... under the Official Information Act... Police originally agreed to repay \$23 million a year, but after last year's review it was agreed that figure would be reduced to \$15.9 million. The figure was cut mainly because of a decision to defer privatisation of some police work... [But the PM, the] Police Minister... and his predecessor... had given assurances that money freed up... [by] last year's police review... would be spent on the frontline. “Instead, the police are having to cut back everywhere to pay back the Government for this damn computer,”... Treasury, police and State Services Commission officials are discussing the future of the... Incis project... with contractor IBM.

...[the] Police Commissioner... last night laid blame for the \$104 million Incis debacle squarely on its architect, computer giant IBM, which is walking away from the half-finished system. [The commissioner], whose own career in the top police job is threatened by the mess, vows to make IBM finish the job... Under the contract the police could force it to fulfil its obligations or pay compensation... The company told police yesterday that it would not finish the controversial system, which was supposed to revolutionise policing, but is already three years behind schedule... [An IBM spokesperson] said from Tokyo the company would continue to maintain the already implemented stage one of the system, but would pull out of two more stages... [which] were designed as key tools in the fight against crime, giving officers the ability to: • Predict and analyse crime trends. • Receive full details of suspects while on the way to a crime scene. • Build up a picture of suspects, including their associates and vehicles. [The spokesperson] said the Government had refused to hand over more money or reach a compromise in negotiations in the past month, and did not give proper consideration to the options IBM had offered. IBM had made no profit from the work it had done, and was owed a significant amount more... The Minister of Finance... said... IBM had pocketed \$54 million of the \$104 million already spent on the project, which was about two-thirds complete... “They're running at a loss, of course, but that's their problem rather than ours... They're one of the world's biggest computer companies, they know what a contract means.” ...[the police commissioner] blamed the company “absolutely” for the delays and a lack of delivery under the contract and was frustrated there would now be more delays. The project, announced in 1994, was supposed to cost \$80 million... but was heading for a final cost of \$132 million... [The] Police Association spokes[person]... said police had made many sacrifices for the project and the system so far was cumbersome and no advance on what was already operating. “It's a loss-loss situation for police and for the public of N[Z.]” Labour's police spokesperson... is calling for a commission of inquiry into the system... One hundred jobs have been affected – 25 of them staff who will be re-assigned. A further 125 contractors have also been “let go.”

...There was a time in the IT industry when the saying, “No one ever got fired for buying IBM,” really was true. Today some IT professionals replace “IBM” with “Microsoft,” but even that's not a sure bet anymore. When Incis began in 1994, however, Big Blue still held considerable sway and the Government must have taken some comfort that a company with IBM's reputation was in charge... [of] the boys in blue's new computer system... The project was also conceived against a Government “think big” backdrop – even though some of those visionary ideas of the 80s were already coming unstuck. With the benefit of hindsight, one can trace how the Incis grand scheme got off the ground and then, through a combination of circumstances, developed a life of its own that no one could control. There seems no doubt that the Treasury, which approved the

project, was too easily persuaded – probably by a combination of police enthusiasm for the system and some good IBM sales staff. From the start, its potential was always over-hyped. But that's not where things went wrong. The problem with big computer projects is that they take time to implement and, during that time, technology changes too – often at an alarmingly fast rate. A pivotal moment in the life of Incis was the decision in 1996 to change the computer's underlying operating system from IBM's OS/2 to Microsoft's Windows. The short history of the PC industry tells us that was the right thing to do: OS/2 is no more and Windows rules. But that change seemed to open the floodgates for a whole lot more change – variations to the original contract – intended to modernise the system that was getting out of date before it was even built... IBM can rightly argue that's what caused Incis to get off track. But it must also shoulder a considerable part of the blame. In the most recent \$20 million variation to the contract, the Treasury cites non-performance by IBM as part of the reason for the blowout. That was due to “the disestablishment of the IBM US division underwriting the Incis software development, and the later failure of two IBM divisions to progress the software development, resulting in an 18-month project delay.” Sorting out the mess is likely to be a long, litigious road. Can the project be retrieved by a new contractor? Probably, but at significant extra cost... – and some may argue it would be better to start over.

...Police staff swooped on the national training college in Porirua yesterday to tell everyone that Incis works... [and is] a vast improvement on what they had before... [An] Auckland City District Intelligence... [d]etective... said questions which would previously be answered by using two different computer systems and searching through paper files could now be done by Incis... [The] project manager... was happy with the products IBM had supplied police... Incis had been a great time-saver for officers in rural areas[– the manager] gave the examples of staff in the Rangitikei district town of Hunterville, who [previously] had to drive... 80km to enter data at Wanganui, and at Ranfurly in central Otago, whose notes were entered at Te Anau. “Now they are able to enter case notes straight into the Incis system.” Incis also allowed on-line access to a law library, which included legislation, case law, precedents and procedures. Use of the electronic library had already resulted in considerable savings for police.

...Frontline police are frustrated – but not surprised – that IBM has logged off a computer system that promised to revolutionise their work. From inspector to constable, those who spoke to the *N[Z] Herald* were disillusioned about Incis. Some said the first stage of the system, installed in May, had helped them to access information, but most were scathing, saying it was cumbersome, and not worth the \$104 million it had cost... A senior sergeant running a small town station said his staff had benefited from getting new computers, but they could have been a lot cheaper. “I... actually pushed it along... and I was bloody booed, and now of course people are saying, ‘Told you so’.” ...“All it is is Wanganui [the old computer] with colour, and maybe a bit of e-mail slapped on to it...” said a detective sergeant, who... did not go to Incis training because [it figured such training] would be a waste of time... [In contrast, a]n inspector said the system was more enhanced... and... easier to use... than the Wanganui computer, which it was meant to replace... “The system looks stupid now, but it's certainly got possibilities.”

...Computer giant IBM has won back-handed praise... for walking away from the notorious 4000-page Incis contract... from[the] Act leader... who was Police Minister until Labour lost the 1990 election... “IBM have done the right thing... They knew it wouldn't work and it took leadership to finally say, ‘We made a mistake, let's stop throwing good money after bad,’”... Such leadership was lacking from the present Government... although [the Act leader] suspected that whichever political team won the next election would have cancelled the rest of the contract anyway if IBM had not pulled the plug. Although the Government did not approve the Incis project until 1994, [the Act leader] recalled fending off an approach by the police for a grandiose computer system four years earlier... [The Labour Police Minister] dismissed claims then that there was nothing available overseas, out of hundreds of larger police forces, to meet this country's crime-fighting needs at a fraction of the cost of inventing a new system. “I said: ‘You are going about it the wrong way – stop and work out exactly what a constable needs, and then work out a computer system that best meets the needs of beat police’.” ...Yet police chiefs wanted to leap from the “horse and cart” era to some nebulous world-beating system, too unwieldy for ordinary police officers to use comfortably. [The former Police Minister] mistakenly thought that [it] had talked police out of [the grandiose computer system], as there was no attempt to bring an amended version back to him. But... within months of the election, the police put an identical plan before his National Party successor[. The former Labour Police Minister accused his successor] of setting the ball rolling by commissioning a scoping report... [His successor] confirmed asking for a scoping report, but said this had a very small budget and [it] turned down three police requests to take a proposal to the cabinet during his three years as minister. His prime concern was that a new computer system did not displace any of the 900 extra police promised by National, but... was [also] very nervous... of approaching a three-stage high technology project in one “megabyte.” Having “no understanding of high technology,” [the successor] consulted... the... Communications Minister... “[who] knew a lot about this and said [we sh]ouldn't touch the proposition with a bargepole.”... It was only after [someone else] took over the police portfolio that the project was approved... [The Communications Minister] would not comment on IBM's withdrawal from its contract, but documents obtained... under the Official Information Act confirm that [it] held deep reservations in February 1994. “I consider the police have opted for a higher-risk solution than that which would have been provided by an international standard solution,” [the Communications Minister] said in a letter to [the new Police Minister] two months before the project was approved. [The Communications Minister] ultimately supported the project, however, noting that it appeared from assurances received by the Government that “the contractual obligations on the vendor are strong enough to minimise the risks involved.”

...The Crown Law Office has been instructed to provide cabinet ministers with advice on possible legal remedies after IBM's dramatic withdrawal from Incis... However, ministers will first try to resurrect talks with IBM to try to avoid a costly legal battle.

...Taxpayers could soon face legal bills of up to \$24,000 a week after the Government's decision to sue IBM over the failed Incis police computer system. The Minister of Finance... said yesterday that the Government had begun proceedings against IBM for pulling out of the \$130 million contract last week. The... bill could quickly reach \$100,000... although the Government might get its money back in court costs if it won... Labour's police spokes[person]... said a long and costly court battle could now be expected. “The only winners in this whole sorry saga will be the lawyers.”

...Computer giant IBM is suing the Crown for more than \$75 million over the failed police Incis computer system. IBM wants compensation for what it says are losses suffered in the project. In a separate claim, it seeks more than \$2.1 million in previously invoiced charges.

...The Treasury spent \$1.4 million putting the doomed Incis... project to death, paying more than \$700,000 to consultants alone. Eight consultants were hired, as well as legal advisers, for the negotiations to settle the dispute with computer giant IBM. The revelation of another large Incis-related bill for taxpayers has the... Government pondering the wisdom of continuing with a costly inquiry into the saga. “It's another expense in what can be regarded as a massive waste of money around that project,” the Minister of State Services... said yesterday. “But I think there is a general view that the Crown got off relatively lightly in the settlement, and therefore it's probably fair to say that if money had not been spent getting the best case together, it would have cost taxpayers more.” The... project was abandoned... when the Crown and IBM reached an out-of-court settlement... [in which] IBM paid the Crown \$25 million, and the police handed over \$18 million for work the company had already completed... The... State Services Commission and Department of the P[M] and Cabinet also spent money on settling the dispute... The cabinet would consider the worth of continuing the inquiry. “It would not be right for me to say it should continue or not, but it's appropriate for the Government to say, ‘What is likely to be learned?’” [the minister] said. “It's clear from reading papers that [Incis] has been a monumental balls-up.” The Police Association wants a halt to spending on Incis. “We are throwing more good money into what is appearing to be a bottomless pit,” said the association vice-president... “How much more is going to be poured into pointing fingers or trying to clarify things?”

...Police have put the IBM mainframe from the failed Incis computer system up for sale. Advertisements calling for expressions of interest appeared in national newspapers on Saturday. Police have already received some interest... [A spokesperson for the] Police Minister... said the \$7.6

million mainframe was too expensive to run and was taking resources from frontline policing[, but wouldn't comment on the minister's attempt to blame the computer's problems 'on an act of God']. A modular computer system, already used by Wellington police, will be set up in its place.

...It is not quite Judge Dread, the comic-book hero who dispensed rapid (and often nasty) justice from his motorbike. More like Judge RAM: an intelligent computer program that sorts out roadside disputes. The device, which is operating in Brazil, uses an artificial-intelligence computer program called Electronic Judge, and is carried in a laptop computer to the scene of an accident or dispute in a legal "rapid-response-unit" with a judge and clerk, accompanied by police. It can then take account of witness reports and forensic evidence to recommend a verdict. It can also issue on-the-spot fines, order damages to be paid and even suggest jail sentences. The Electronic Judge is presented with multiple-choice questions such as "Did the driver stop at the red light?" or "Had the driver been drinking alcohol above the acceptable limit of the law?" ...a judge in the Supreme Court of Appeals in Espirito Santo state, who developed the program, said that the decision-making process in such simple cases required no difficult interpretation of the law. "If we are concerned with nothing more than pure logic, then why not give the task to a computer?" The Electronic Judge provides a printout of its reasoning, and if the human judge disagrees, it can be overruled. Most people were happy to accept the decisions, said [the developer. But the developer] admitted that some did not realise they were being judged by a computer. The device is part of a scheme called Justice on Wheels, intended to ease the load on Brazil's overburdened courts by dealing at once with straight-forward cases... [In local news, t]he Government has placed judges on probation to deliver tougher prison sentences for criminals... And if they don't deliver... [the] Justice Minister... might entrench stricter sentencing guidelines for them in law... [The minister has] ordered a review of sentencing and the use of parole provisions... and expects a separate sentencing bill next year... "The problem we've got with our present system is when you look at the sentences actually served by murderers in N[Z] jails, you find they are clustered around 11 to 12 years... Ten years is quite long enough in the case of some murders. In the case of others, you would want to see the perpetrator spend the rest of their natural life in prison."

...JUDGES will soon lose the power to give convicted criminals suspended sentences[, which]... were introduced in 1993 to keep people out of jail... "I do not see a future for the suspended sentencing option in N[Z] courts,"... said... the... Justice Minister... "The laws have failed,"... They are likely to be replaced by heavy fines or prison terms... [However, the] minister... says... the problem is not with the law[s] but with the people who administer ...t[hem] – judges... Campaigners for tougher drink-driving laws believe... judges... found it easier to upgrade a three-month jail sentence to six months suspended. If the person reoffended during the suspended sentence they went to jail for the longer term... [By the way, this] week... only one news item has managed to occupy my attention entirely. The story of the little boy who broke into the Alice Springs reptile centre to kill a swathe of animals and feed them to the zoo's resident croc was totally riveting... What sort of child is reckless enough to break into a zoo at night, and so destructive that [it] does so only to kill the animals inside? "Quite a nasty 7-year-old," was how the zoo director described the boy. By all accounts, this child comes from a family with a history of violence. No surprises there. I'm normally pretty optimistic about the average punter's capacity for change and growth through life, but it doesn't take a degree in psychology to bet this is a pretty disturbed child who will, like as not, grow up into a disturbed adult in time. There's little to do but hand-wring in a case like this.

...JAKE the Muss will always be at risk of leaving his [partners] more than just broken hearted. New research suggests wife-beaters such as the brutal character of Kiwi movie *Once Were Warriors* are beyond help. The UK research shows [guys] who hit their wives or partners will probably do it again, even after counselling. The British Home Office survey found only 25[%] of such offenders finished therapy. The shocking findings have lead[*(sic)*] to that government ditching therapy and putting more money into victim support... [Some of the money will be used to create new identities] under a protection scheme to help victims of family violence... The Hamilton Abuse Intervention Project... coordinator... agrees many wife beaters are beyond help... [Guys] convicted of domestic violence in Hamilton were usually ordered to have counselling... "About 15[%] walk out of the course exactly the way they were when they came in, and maybe another 70[%] of guys have some change – but I still wouldn't want to introduce them to my daughter,"... [The coordinator] said counselling worked best with first-time offenders. "The courts' priority at the moment is trying to stop repeat offenders, but we feel that's putting energy and resources into the group least likely to change,"...

IF you thought rehabilitating repeat offenders was a lost cause last week's Inside N[Z] documentary proved it. *Going Straight...* followed four Auckland probation officers, the crims they were trying to help and their victims. From the start you could tell most of the crims interviewed would continue a life of crime. "I'm just a bad bugger and thought I might as well stay a bad bugger," one crim... said. And by the end of the show... [the crim wa]s facing charges on another serious violence offence. But there were some positives. The probation officers in the documentary worked tirelessly – if pointlessly – to keep the rathbags on the straight and narrow.

...More restorative justice schemes are likely to follow Waitakere City's pilot project, says [the]Corrections Minister... Launching N[Z]'s first restorative justice practice manual, [the minister] said the rest of the country will be watching to see what comes of the pilot... "You have six months and 50 cases to prove... that this really does work." [The minister says NZ's 80%] recidivism rate for inmates makes clear that putting people in prison for longer is failing to reduce reoffending. Restorative justice aims to reduce reoffending and puts victims' needs at the centre of the justice system... "For the first time, victims will be directly involved in determining what should happen to make amends to them and the community." ...bringing offenders who plead guilty face to face with their victims is "perhaps the most devastating wake up call we can give an offender".

...A first-time offender wept after being jailed indefinitely... for sexually violating a 3-year-old boy... [it had] snatched... from a roadside and... for refusing to try to give up his fetish for wearing nappies. In the High Court at Whangarei yesterday... [the judge] said preventive detention had to be imposed as [it didn't] think a finite sentence would protect the public. There was a substantial risk... [t]he Matakohu farmhand... aged 45... would reoffend because [it] was unable to "withstand the impulses engendered by the fetish." ...[his] fetish had over the past 35 years provided him with sexual gratification, comfort and protection... "While this continues, the fantasising will continue, which includes the involvement with young children." ...[the farmhand] had also committed five burglaries in which [it] stole nappies and baby toiletries from farmhouses... [The judge sentenced him] to 8 years' jail for the kidnapping, 4 years for committing an indecency, and 2 years for each of the burglaries. All sentences were to be served concurrently with the preventive detention which – like a life sentence – carried a minimum eligibility for parole of 10 years.

...A child molester with a 17-year history of sex offending has been locked away indefinitely... A psychiatric report described... [the] 33-year-old... as a fixated homosexual paedophile. [The paedophile's lawyer acknowledged that his client] was eligible for preventive detention but told the... High Court... judge that the protection of the public would be adequately met by a lengthy finite term. [His client] had shown remorse through guilty pleas that avoided the need for victims to testify, by a willingness to undertake treatment, and his voluntary revelation of the full extent of his offending. But handing down a sentence of preventive detention, [the judge] said there was "no remorse over the extended period that you were preying on these youngsters." ...The risk [the 33-year-old] posed to youngsters was inextricable from the pattern of his offending since... [his first conviction] when... 16... In 1991 [it] continued molesting a number of boys until caught, then confessed all and was offered a place on a sex offenders' programme in prison. "For whatever reason, [the offender] did not take advantage of that treatment... so the pattern has just repeated itself." ...One of... [the] victims was no more than an infant... Another boy, aged 7, had been persistently, remorselessly and cruelly abused.

...The sentencing of a convicted Manurewa child rapist has been delayed... because the Crown believed [the rapist] was eligible for an indefinite prison term of preventive detention – a sentence which can be handed down only by the High Court... [– although the rapist's lawyer... did not accept that his client met the requirements for imposing such a severe sentence. [The judge remanded the rapist] in custody for a fortnight to hear legal argument on moving sentencing to the High Court... [The person who raped] an 11-year-old girl... [had] appeared in the Otahuhu District

Court yesterday for sentencing on 10 charges, including... assault and aggravated assault... [In related news, t]he Corrections Department filed an application late yesterday to keep a serial sex offender from being released from jail this month. The... Parole Board will have the final say.

...Five sex criminals serving indefinite jail terms have been freed by the Parole Board... in the past 21 months. Four served just 12 years or less... The revelation has stunned a group demanding a better deal for victims' families, who say offenders serving preventive detention should stay behind bars... "Preventive detention is supposed to be a life sentence, but it's nothing like that[," said a spokesperson for the]... new victims group, made up of the family of Kylie Jones and another Auckland murder victim, Karen Stanley-Hunt... The Corrections Department refuses to name the offenders, say when they [we]re released or detail their sex offending, citing privacy and policy reasons... The Minister of Corrections... this week ruled out letting the public know who is up for parole and when. [The minister said it] did not want the Parole Board turned into a "public spectacle." Two sex offenders serving preventive detention have been in custody for more than 30 years each, but authorities refused to say any more about them. The *Herald* has learned that the pair are now old... and considered unable to cope outside jail. The next longest-serving prisoner... has been locked up for 26 years... [H]igher-profile criminals sentenced to preventive detention in the past few years include... [a person] who had 61 sexual violation convictions; [and a] serial rapist... who attacked 24 [people] between 1987 and 1996 and is serving at least 22 years.

...the 30-year-old low-life who... killed 23-year-old Kylie Jones... pleaded guilty to her murder... yesterday... [The low-life,] who has spent nearly all his adult life in jail for violence and sex crimes... also pleaded guilty to kidnapping Kylie Jones, robbing her and causing her grievous bodily harm. [The low-life] was remanded in custody to the High Court for sentencing next month. The Crown has yet to decide whether it will seek preventive detention in this case. [The low-life] made his surprise plea shortly before 3 pm. His case was originally heading for trial and was set down yesterday for a pre-depositions conference. In the attack on Kylie... [the low-life] stole some of her belongings, including three ATM cards... then went to a party in Glen Innes where [it] handed over a knife to his brother... In the days after the murder, [the low-life] tried to use one of the cards and police tracked him after witnesses provided a detailed description. Kylie[']s... family were in court for [her killer]'s three-minute appearance. They asked the inquiry head... to say that they acknowledged the guilty plea, but that nothing would change what [the low-life] had done to Kylie, her partner and the family. [The inquiry head said it] had no idea what persuaded [the low-life] to enter a guilty plea.

...A High Court judge rejected prosecution pleas eight years ago to jail indefinitely the [low-life] who went on to murder... Kylie... and instead sentenced him to 12 years in prison... for three attacks on Wanganui [gals]... The law required that [the low-life], who came to prefer life in jail, had to be released in April this year after serving two-thirds of his sentence. Two months later, on June 6, [the low-life killed]... Kylie... in a lonely reserve near her Glen Innes home... The Wanganui attacks took place... just... weeks after [the low-life] had been released from a four-year sentence for attempted rape... At the sentencing in the High Court at Wellington... [t]he prosecutor... said... [the low-life] had used extreme violence on his victims and deserved preventive detention... However, the judge said th[e low-life], as a 21-year-old, was too young for preventive detention and it was not plainly apparent that [the 21-year-old] would offend again in a sexual way. "It would be a dreadful prospect to impose such a sentence on a [person] who has really had no life outside institutions,"... But the detective who arrested [the low-life] for the Wanganui attacks... says... "It was obvious from things... [the low-life said that it] would offend violently again... [The low-life] certainly had a dislike for [gals], and in particular ones who wore short dresses. [The low-life] said to me: 'Hey, if my missus wore a short dress [my missus] would get everything [it] deserved'." ...Both... the... [detective and prosecutor] said that although they had sought preventive detention, 12 years was still a strong sentence... The maximum sentence for rape at the time was 14 years.

...Glen Innes residents saw [a guy] lifting Kylie... to her feet... but assumed [it] was helping her and did nothing. They then watched [the guy] lead Ms Jones into a dark reserve, where [it] tied her up and stabbed her repeatedly. The next day [the guy] admitted himself to hospital, telling staff [it] was Jones' uncle and [therefore] could not stay because [it] had to attend her tangi. Auckland police later went to the hospital undercover and watched [him] from a distance, anxious not to scare him in case [the 30-year-old] lashed out at the nurses who were tending to injuries [it had] suffered during the murder. The fresh details have emerged as part of a *Weekend Herald* investigation into events surrounding the June 6 killing... It was previously reported that no one saw the Tuesday evening attack. But police say a family across the road from the Eastview Reserve... saw [a guy] bending over Ms Jones... [- who had been] sent... sprawling to the ground... [by a] "king-hit"... The family had been watching t[v] and heard two piercing screams. "They looked out... [but] did not realise it was an attack. It was dark and wet... They thought [Kylie] had tripped over..." ...A family member told the... *Herald* [that they] regretted not doing more. In the reserve, [the guy] beat Ms Jones about the face[, then] used a butcher's knife with an 18cm blade to cut her clothes from her body. [The guy] tied her arms behind her back with her skirt, and bound her ankles with a piece of her camisole... forced her to reveal her credit card PIN number... then cut her throat, stabbed her twice in the back and up to 15 times in the torso and abdomen. Police are [still] awaiting forensic tests to determine if Ms Jones was raped... [though the guy] claims... it... did not rape her. After the murder, [the guy] changed his clothes and went to the Glen Innes shops, withdrawing about \$800 from Ms Jones' account... [The guy] used the money to buy large amounts of takeaways and alcohol, leaving Ms Jones' keys on a counter... hired a taxi, picked up friends and went to a flat in Maybury St, where [it] partied into the night. Meanwhile, Kylie's family had called... the... police when [Kylie] did not arrive home. Just after midnight, [a]Sergeant... found her body lying face-down in a creek in the reserve... "When the pathologist saw the state of the body, [it] said: 'You've got a lunatic out there'." Police were worried [the lunatic] would strike again, and began trawling through files on recently released prisoners. On Wednesday morning, [the lunatic] took a train to Middlemore Hospital. [The lunatic] had an infected cut on the back of his hand, which [it] told staff was from "hitting a guy in the face." After an operation... [the lunatic] discharged himself... When [the lunatic] left... a plainclothes police officer... followed him on to a northbound train. [The lunatic] got off at Panmure and the officer lost him. The next morning, police found him at his brother's house and arrested him. [The lunatic] initially denied killing Ms Jones, but then confessed. [It] showed no remorse.

...Kylie Jones... [was 'raped' and] murdered... in cold blood. [Her killer] had an excess of testosterone after priming himself for a fight that didn't happen. So [the low-life] killed a young [journalist as it] walked home from her bus stop in a quiet Auckland suburb. Kylie was much loved, talented and looking forward to the future. [Her killer] was and is a worthless piece of crap. Throughout his sorry life, people have tried to help him, support him and give him chances. [But the low-life] turned his back on redemption. Of course [the low-life] had a dreadful upbringing. But so did his sister. So have lots of other people. And they don't want to get back at the world by hurting innocent people. [Kylie's killer] enjoys hurting people. That's the only thing that gives him pleasure in a miserable world. That and prison. [The low-life] likes prison. And as a reward for killing Kylie [it]'ll be spending a very, very long time in the place... [it calls home. Kylie's killer] will live to a ripe old age - we all know that stress is a major cause of death, and [the low-life] won't have the stress of earning a living, holding down a job or worrying about the bills. And why? What earthly purpose does [this piece of crap serve? It] is beyond saving. Nobody cares about him. And we're spending a couple of million to keep this waste of space. Pretty high price to pay to be considered a liberal idealist country. I wonder if it's worth it? □ A]... convicted murderer was found guilty yesterday of the third of three sex attacks committed while on parole. The families of two of... [the] victims want an inquiry into why [the murderer] was allowed out of jail to attack again. Police had argued against [his] parole in 1995 because [the murderer] kidnapped a teenager and indecently assaulted her while on weekend leave in 1991 from his life sentence imposed for the murder of his partner in 1982. In yesterday's finding, [the murderer], aged 50... was found guilty of a sex attack on a 26-year-old Canadian tourist in Bolton St cemetery, Wellington, in August 1997... It is the third... [time the murderer] has been found guilty of... sex attack[s]... by juries in the past six months. His name was suppressed until the third trial so the juries would not know of the previous cases. The other two trials were for attacks on two teenagers on the same day in March

last year near Palmerston North. By the start of the third trial this week, [the murderer] had been sentenced to a total of 10 years in jail for those attacks. [The murderer] had already been recalled to continue serving his life sentence... [His] almost 80 convictions, many for assaults on [gals], date back to the early 1960s. [The murderer] has spent 29 of the past 33 years in jail. The mother of the 1991 teenage kidnap victim, who had a lucky escape when [the murderer]'s car became stuck in mud after [the teenager] was snatched from a Palmerston North street, said... "The parole system is sick, to let people like that out of jail... We inquired to see if there was anything we could do to stop him being paroled but all avenues were blocked. [One of the victims] came to see us after it happened and... cried and cried. I couldn't help but think this girl shouldn't have had to go through all that..."

...WHEN the parole board decides... the... fate... [of the person who] raped and killed Lower Hutt schoolgirl Karla Cardno... this week, recent embarrassment in relation to another violent offender may well hang over proceedings... [The board's chairperson has just] apologised to the victims of... a... convicted murderer... [who] reverted to serious offending... [after being] released from life parole... against the opposition of police and former victims... Once freed, [the murderer who]... had... 80 past convictions... attacked three [more people. The chairperson]... said the board had acted in good faith at the time, but its assessment of risk had been wrong. Risk is notoriously hard to calculate in the case of serious offenders, a card those who oppose [Karla's killer]'s release will be playing for all it's worth... [The prisoner had] pleaded guilty to her murder – which followed 22 hours of his torturing her – only after police finally found incriminating evidence. Karla's stepfather... has vowed to find him and kill him if and when [the prisoner is released ('the stepfather is due to appear in court after being charged with threatening to kill')]. It's not only the murder the board must take into account. Only a month before... kill[ing Karla, it']d been convicted for bashing... an elderly [gal] unconscious in a petty dispute over a car park and at the time of the murder his wife and children were living in a refuge because of his violent behaviour. In theory, it will be harder for [him] to get parole than it was for [the offender with 80 convictions]. In March this year[the] Justice Minister... issued a report claiming the board was now better able to assess risk than it had been at the time of [the other offender]'s release, and... it was now turning down more releases than it did at that time (23.1%... against 32%...). The last annual report of the parole board was – perhaps as a result of this – surprisingly upbeat in its assessment of its own success in the risk business. The board released the results of a survey it had carried out since 1985 on 488 criminals – the most serious offenders in the system – who'd been released after serving sentences of seven years or more... Among the[m]... were 143 murderers... Nine were convicted of a serious new offence within three years, the lowest rate of reoffending in the group... [But i]f you cast a wider net than this survey did and look at all reoffending by paroled murderers, the result is rather less upbeat. A study released at the end of 1997 showed nearly half of paroled murderers had reoffended in the previous decade... Currently 283 [guys and 16 gals] are serving life sentences... The[y]... are automatically eligible for parole after 10 years, but remain on parole for life and can be recalled... to serve out their sentence. Since 1993, well after [Karla's killer] was convicted, judges have been able to set minimum non-parole periods and have done so in about 20% of cases. One example... has to serve 14 years before [it] can go before the parole board[after being] convicted in 1995 of the double murder of... Gene and Eugene Thomas. Other notable examples of this are [the young Dunedinite], who has to serve 16 years[after being controversially convicted of murdering his own family]... But there is still debate over how to define which crimes are heinous enough to qualify for non-parole periods. Some crimes which sound as serious as [Karla's killer]'s, like the torturing to death of a 16-year-old Christchurch boy in 1995, have led to standard life sentences...

The killer of Wellington schoolgirl Karla Cardno should stay in jail until [it] dies as far as her family are concerned. They are fighting... [his] bid to be freed from Paremoremo prison. The Parole Board's decision is expected to be made public next week. [Karla's killer], now 39, has served 11 years of a life term for the torture, rape and murder of the 13-year-old... [The killer] made his second annual appearance before the Parole Board on Wednesday. Both Karla's family and the police have told the board they do not believe [the killer] is fit to rejoin the community. Karla's grandmother... is emphatic... "I don't care what anyone says, or how [the guy fools people, Karla's killer] is still dangerous. If they let that guy out [that guy] will do it again." An aunt... said: "There are different degrees of murder. What [this guy] did was one of the worst. [This guy] should never be given the chance to do it again." [A] Lower Hutt Detective... who made a submission on behalf of the police, said: "We have no information from any quarter, which includes profiles from people who have been part of his care, that suggests circumstances changed in the last 12 months and that [this guy] no longer poses a threat to the public." [The detective] said the killing had had a marked effect on all police staff and resulted in the inquiry head and two other detectives taking early retirement. [The d]etective... had been in charge of "trying to get inside the head" of [Karla's killer. The killer] confessed to him almost six weeks after the killing and led him to a desolate beach on the Pencarrow Headland where [it] had buried Karla's naked, bound and gagged body. "Nothing else in my career has had the impact on me of that case and nothing will. It was one of those horror investigations." Because of the nature of his crime, [Karla's killer] has spent most of his time behind bars in isolation. In prison, [the killer] befriended another Maori... who later killed Auckland journalist Kylie Jones... The pair helped with an anti-violence programme. [Karla's killer]'s criminal record shows moderate violence which appears to escalate in the late 1980s... [Eventually hi]s long-suffering and emotionally battered wife grabbed their three children and left. By then, police believe, [the husband] had already noticed Karla. The teenager, her brother, mother and stepfather... lived in the same Taita street... [The husband] went into a deep depression when his wife left, and one month later... snatched Karla as [the teenager] cycled home from the local dairy in the rain. Police say Karla saw [someone] pursuing her, and did a lap of the shopping centre to escape. Cutting through a side-street, [the husband] grabbed her and dragged her 170m to his home. A neighbour heard a scream at 7.30 pm but did not investigate. Once inside his house, [the husband] raped and sodomised... [Karla] in the upstairs bedroom... Through a window [the husband] could see Karla's frenzied family searching. Probably between 2... and 3 am, [the husband] moved Karla... into the boot of his car in the driveway. The following afternoon [the husband] drove her – probably unconscious but still alive – for 40 minutes to Pencarrow. At the beach, [the husband] turned back because too many people were around[and] went home, leaving Karla in the boot until nightfall before returning to the beach and burying her 1m under pebbles. A pathologist said [Karla] died of severe head injuries caused by "one or more" blows.

...[a NZer] was yesterday found guilty of threatening to kill the [perso]n who murdered his stepdaughter, Karla Cardno. The judge told [the stepdad it] was likely to get a prison sentence for his serious and repetitive threats to crucify [the murderer. The stepdad]'s niece described the verdict as a sad day for humanity. ■ T[he police officer]... who arrested Karla Cardno's killer says her stepdad... should not be in jail[– the stepdad] will be sentenced on Friday... [– saying] many of the cops on the case were so sickened by the killing they [also] [felt like taking the law into their own hands.

...ONE of N[Z]'s hardest prisoners gave a message of approval to [Karla's stepdad – a guy] hailed by thousands as a martyr for justice. "I've got big brown balls bro, but you've got even bigger ones. You're a hero," the inmate told [the stepdad when it was]... remanded behind bars for two weeks...

[Karla's stepdad] is no hero. Nor is the suspended prison term for threatening to kill his step-daughter's murderer a victory, even if those in the... District Court's public gallery who applauded... saw it as such. [The stepdad] may have become a cause celebre for these people, and their demand for tougher sentencing laws. But, in reality, [the stepdad is a guy] who, no matter how understandably aggrieved, deliberately flouted the law.

...just before [Karla's killer] was up for parole for the first time, [her stepdad] exploded. The Wanganui [resident] told journalists... it... would crucify [the killer] on his release and repeated similar threats to police. "I want his life from him and that means you either keep him for life, or I'll take his life... If I have to go and spend 12 years or whatever in prison to make sure [the killer] doesn't come out and move in next door to you, then I'll do it for free." [The stepdad] was eventually arrested on five charges of threatening to kill and convicted on three... this month. Yesterday, [the

stepdad was sentenced to]... nine months'... in... prison, suspended for two years... Back in Taita... [o]ne elderly... neighbour of Karla's family... said [the] threats had simply reflected what most of the community still felt. "Let's just say if [the killer] turned up here again, [it] wouldn't last long."

...A [gal] who killed two [guys] in a revenge arson attack has been freed after serving less than half of a six-year jail term – and paroled to live in the same street as the sister and mother of one of the dead... The family is shocked and disgusted at the decision... [that meant the killer] has been ordered to live in a house next door to... her victim's sister... and five doors from... [his] mother... But a *Sunday Star-Times* investigation... reveal[ed] the]... Parole Board... appears to have breached new laws... Despite signing the victim notification register – forcing authorities to tell the family about any parole hearing – [the killer] was freed without the family or police being told [it] was up for release... Phillip Hunt's sister... discovered [his killer] had been freed while shopping in Kawerau for her mother's birthday present. "I just about had a heart attack, [the bitch] looked right at me. Now we see her strutting around town. It ruined the birthday. I rang the police and they said 'no [the killer]'s not up for parole yet'..."

...POLICE were not told one of N[Z]'s most dangerous criminals was released from jail... [The c]onvicted bomber... was paroled from Auckland's Paremoremo Prison... after serving five years and two months of a 12-year sentence for a terror campaign in Christchurch... Police are furious they were not told when [the bomber] was being released. The *Sunday Star-Times* was told some officers wanted [the bomber] put under "unofficial" surveillance to see whether [it] still posed a danger... Police opposed [hi]s release when [the bomber] first came before the Parole Board in 1996, and again in September of last year... Paremoremo Prison would not comment [yesterday on the bomber]'s release and the Minister of Corrections... would not talk about the issue because "I'm on holiday"... [In international news, t]he killers of 2-year-old James Bulger should be released within months because "they have done all that is open to them to redeem themselves" during... [their] years spent in custody, the Lord Chief Justice ruled yesterday. The decision... to "set a tariff which will expire today" left the murdered toddler's mother... "disgusted and shocked." [The mother], who has campaigned to keep [the young]killers... in custody, said: "The whole case has turned into a ridiculous legal charade and I am sick of the mess the British legal system has made of it." Lawyers acting for James' father... said they were planning a judicial review of the decision and would be making representations to the Parole Board about the proposed release of the two boys... [A f]ormer Home Secretary... [previously] intervened to raise... the... tariff... to 15 years but his decision was successfully challenged in the House of Lords and the European Court of Human Rights.

...One of the killers of British toddler James Bulger tried to strangle a fellow inmate at the secure unit where [it] is being held, a newspaper claimed yesterday. [The killer] attacked a 15-year-old boy who branded him a "kid killer," wrapping an electrical flex around his neck and trying to throttle him... The attack apparently ended when staff at the unit overpowered [the killer]... His victim is reportedly planning legal action against him. [The killer and his partner-in-crime]... are... both... due for release this year, and a recent High Court ruling granted an injunction protecting their anonymity. Almost three-quarters of 600 people interviewed in a... poll believed the... [time] the killers have served in custody was insufficient.

...Until... police mugshots... were leaked to the media this month, the last time the world saw the pair was in grainy security camera film as they led a little boy by the hand from a... shopping mall in Liverpool on February 12, 1993. The toddler was 2-year-old James Bulger and the events that followed turned... [the pair] into the most hated children in Britain. While James' 26-year-old mother... searched frantically for her "beautiful little baby," [the pair]... took him to a canal and tried to drown him. They dragged him along some of Liverpool's busiest roads for more than 3km, swinging him around violently and dropping him on his head. They took him to railway tracks and poured a can of paint into his eyes. They stoned him with bricks, they bashed his head with an iron bar. They left him dead, lying across the tracks to be cut in half later by a passing goods train... The boys were arrested days later, and were sentenced in November that year to be locked up for eight years. As debate raged about the fairness of the sentences, they were increased to 10 years, then 15, then reduced last February... As the boys were led away from the dock at the Preston High Court after sentencing, [a]... lynch mob of 500 people outside bayed for blood... [As the pair of teenagers] near the end of their sentences, the family's fury and the public's horror have not abated. They are expected to be released in the next few weeks... They will probably first go to halfway houses, before they disappear into everyday life. They will not be allowed to contact each other, or return to Merseyside. The courts, fearful for the safety of the pair, have given them and their families new identities and impeccably crafted false pasts, and have banned anyone from publishing new photographs or descriptions of them during their lifetimes... [The pair] will have to get used to lying. They will have to lie every time they apply for a job[or] for a loan. They will have to lie on marriage certificates, even their death certificates will one day be a lie. They will have to watch their backs and their mouths. There'll be no getting drunk and bragging, no falling in love and telling all in a weak moment. No one says it will be easy, but James' parents are furious – at the parole and the anonymity... What is missing from the debate is the answer to the question that has plagued James' parents and the British public. Why? What drove two boys of average intelligence, albeit delinquents, to viciously murder a 2-year-old? There are only two people who can explain their crime, and even their recollection is said to be unreliable... [In related news, two]boys, aged 13 and 16 – who murdered a tramp by setting him alight while [the tramp] slept – have been sentenced to seven years in prison.

...A single lily... lies on the matting of thick grass covering an empty section in Northwind Ave, Pt Clare. Courtney Morley-Clarke, just 3 years old, died there early on Monday morning, within easy sight of the house where her parents and two brothers were sleeping. Her alleged killer is the 13-year-old adopted son of close family friends, who every year organised the street Christmas party from their home 300m up the street... The knife that killed Courtney has pierced the heart of the small town on New South Wales' central coast, and reopened much wider wounds in a country chilled by earlier child murderers and outraged at suggestions the killers of British 2-year-old James Bulger may be given freedom and new identities in A[US]. The murder has also renewed debate on lowering the age of criminal culpability, an argument given force last year during the trial of a 12-year-old Sydney boy accused of throwing a 6-year-old child into a river to drown. But above all is the single question: why? ...[●] Recently a] friend told me that they can't give a description of or announce lost children in shopping centres anymore because of the number of unscrupulous people who answer the call. What a sad state of affairs when you can't even risk a simple announcement without fearing trouble.

...The mother of one of the child killers who have been granted their freedom believes vigilantes will kill her son within weeks... "[The mother] believes the only chance he[r son] had to survive was to be moved abroad – and that will not happen." British media rumours that... James Bulger[']s killers]... could be offered a home in N[Z] were last night dismissed by [NZ's Foreign Affairs] Minister... "There has been no approach and frankly I wouldn't expect one. There is no good reason why N[Z] would want to offer permanent residency to these offenders nor any good reason why the British Government should expect us to... They would be very distinctive if they came to N[Z]. It would not give them anonymity and frankly they should remain in the country where they committed their offences." Earlier this year the pair were granted an unprecedented lifetime of immunity from exposure to protect them as they adjust to life outside. But several newspapers are believed to be preparing to reveal their identities and whereabouts if either turns violent. The Home Office believes they will be identified within three months and has already made contingency plans to protect them when their cover is blown. The disclosure came as [the]Home Secretary... vowed to reform the sentencing practice which allowed the... killers to... be... let out so early. "The public had the impression that they hadn't been held long enough and that's understandable,"...

BBC Reports: The Bulger killers (Prime TV, 9.35pm, Thursday...) asks if the time has come to allow these [youths] to rejoin society, or whether they should always remain prisoners of their past. Life licence gives Britain's Home Secretary the power to put them back behind bars if they reoffend. There was even talk about the teenagers being sent to live in A[US or N]Z... The parole board's decision caused a furore..., with James Bulger's mother... rallying opponents to their release... [Last week] it was reported the pair will be held for another six months at the secure units until the furore over their release dies down. So far the cost to the taxpayer from the initial police hunt to their release is estimated at \$18 million.

...A police[officer] who tried to save N[Z]'s youngest killer from a cycle of chronic offending says Child, Youth and Family Services failed the boy. [The boy]... was in the department's custody but had absconded and was running loose on the streets of Papakura when [it] and five friends lured Pizza Hut delivery [worker] Michael Choy, 40, to a dark driveway and hit him over the head with a baseball bat. On Saturday a jury in the High Court at Auckland found [the boy, now aged] 13, guilty of... [humanslaughter. The officer believes the boy, nick-named BJ,] would not have been [involved in Michael Choy's death] if social workers had followed through on plans for his care and rehabilitation... [The boy]'s family are also critical of the service, saying not enough was done to break his cycle of crime. The service says it did all it could with an extremely difficult child.

...The small boy with a cherubic face lingered in a Papakura alley, waiting for his victim to pass on the way to school... BJ... had stalked his quarry and knew this was the route [it] took each morning. When the boy walked into the alley BJ pounced, punching him repeatedly in the head and leaving him cut and bloodied on the ground. The reason? The boy had "got smart". The spiteful attack in February last year was BJ's trademark – [BJ] had become feared by children across South Auckland. It was also a stepping-stone to a killing. BJ wept in the dock in the High Court... as a jury found him guilty of the [hu]manslaughter of... Michael Choy on September 12 last year. Five other teens were also convicted for their part in the slaying... Police have scotched defence suggestions that BJ was just following along with his older friends. They say [BJ] would often be the ring-leader, encouraging older boys to follow him, and that [BJ] was easily the most experienced criminal of those on trial for the Choy murder... BJ was just 12 at the time of the killing and at 13 is the youngest person to be charged with murder in N[Z]. The boy was supposed to be in the care of Child, Youth and Family Services when Mr Choy died, but had run away. The N[Z] *Herald* can reveal that BJ had been running riot for years before the killing – terrorising, beating and robbing other children, encouraging friends to wag school, shoplifting, tagging, sniffing glue and smoking cannabis. It seemed there was nothing his family, education and welfare agencies or the police could do to stop his out-of-control behaviour. Until now, [BJ] was never charged with a crime because children under 14 can be charged only with murder and [hu]manslaughter.

...A Henderson resident... is fed up with high school students vandalising her property. The... [resident], who does not want to be named for fear of retaliation, says students regularly graffiti her fence and come on to her yard. Her property is down a private driveway shared by 13 homes, which leads to a walkway for Sturges Rd railway station... [S]tudents often smoke outside her property, have broken her fence, and damaged a number of letterboxes down the drive. They also throw stones on her windows, disturbing her sleeping five-month-old baby. "I ask them to stop throwing stones but they talk back and say 'it's a free country, we can do anything'." ...Ranui[s] Community Constable... says [it] will tackle the issue. "I am concerned about the damage being done to property around here and about the behaviour of the youth." ...many of the teenagers appear "aggressive" and have a "cavalier attitude". "I have no hesitation in prosecuting anybody I come across damaging any... property..."

A "one [boy] crime wave" laughed yesterday when [a]Christchurch Youth Court Judge... lamented new sentencing laws that stopped him sending the out-of-control teenager to jail. The 16-year-old, who cannot be named because of his age, admitted 50 charges of burglary and related property offending. The youth was sentenced to six months' residence with supervision in a secure social welfare facility, followed by six months' supervision. The teenager laughed and smiled as [it] left the court... ■ TONGA[N]... authorities are sending children in trouble to a lonely atoll where they are forced to live by themselves, catching fish, says the magazine *Matangi Tonga*. The independent monthly said up to 50 youngsters aged from 14 to 16 were on 'Ata Island, an atoll which is an hour's boat ride from the capital island of Tongatapu. It quoted [Tonga's]Prison Department superintendent... as saying most of the youngsters had been sentenced to six months for housebreaking... [T]hey were supervised by a single jailer, who every two weeks took food to the island to supplement the fish caught by the youngsters. They received no formal education... The magazine said the youngsters were not allowed visitors but once a month were allowed to return to Tongatapu to attend church and visit family. [The superintendent] said the island was not the best solution to separating children from adult prisoners, but it was a first step... Tongan law allows imprisonment for anybody 8 years or older... [but] Tonga has no detention facilities for juveniles.

...[the] Corrections Minister... wants criminal kids out of adult prisons – and into special youth units. A... report released yesterday follows strong public concern about cell suicides and the widespread belief that jail turns young offenders into hardened criminals. The report, prepared by nine Government departments, recommended setting up specialist youth units in place of jails for those under 17 and for 17 to 19-year-olds considered "vulnerable in adult prisons." N[Z] ceased operating youth prisons and borstals in 1985... Six regional units and an Auckland-based youth prison are suggested. The units would offer counselling and education aimed at stopping reoffending. Meanwhile, a... study by Victoria University's Institute of Criminology... found that young people are less likely to face further convictions after successful family group conferences.

...Judges are fed up with the failure of the Government to address the problems they see in the youth justice system. In an unusual blast from the bench, the Chief District Court Judge... yesterday told the Youth Justice Conference in Wellington that judges had been voicing their worries for nine years without result. [The judge] lashed out at shortcomings – some in funding, some structural, some managerial – criticising the Government, the C[YF]... and the police. Family group conferences had sometimes become a case of "going through the motions of a process," and recommendations were often nothing more than apologies and purposeful community work.

...Probation officers have allegedly been offering friends free gardening, lawn mowing and cleaning services to be carried out by sentenced offenders. Sources told the *Herald* that they were offered the "free labour" by officers they knew, who worked for the Community Probation Service. The Department of Corrections said it was against the rules for a probation officer to get people sentenced to periodic detention and community service to work for friends. The allegations follow last week's revelations that the service was under pressure from sex and drugs scandals and numerous investigations of staff breaches... Thirty-three [staff]were investigated last year... [O]f the 33 cases, 26 were found to have occurred... The revelations included the sacking of a former... manager after an internal investigation last year found [the guy] had sex with a [youth. The manager], who was based in the Otahuhu office, allegedly had sex with numerous youths [it] came in contract with through the service.

...[a r]epeat sex offender... stared blankly into space in the High Court at Auckland yesterday as [it] was sentenced to eight years' jail. The Mt Wellington resident[, who]... has already served two jail terms for sex offences involving boys... was convicted earlier this year on three counts of sexually violating a 17-year-old boy while working as a tutor at an Auckland training institute... [The offender]'s lawyer... continued to argue yesterday that the sex was consensual because the boy did not say "no"... [However, the judge] said the 46-year-old, who... had shown a lack of "true remorse" and refused to take full responsibility for his actions... deliberately befriended the "shy, gentle-natured" teenager, wooing him to his house with new clothes and food, before sexually violating him. The victim, now aged 18, did not flee the house for fear that [the tutor] would jeopardise his chances of getting into the Army.

...Increasing numbers of employers are using a free Government service to check the criminal records of job-seekers. The trend is worrying privacy watchdogs, who are concerned about unnecessary snooping into people's pasts. Requests for printouts from the Wanganui Computer have trebled in the past five years... [-] from 13,000... to 36,500... [-] with job-related inquiries growing fastest. Figures obtained from the Department for Courts... show the... department is receiving up to 450 requests a day, mostly from employers and insurance companies... The department has three fulltime staff working on the requests, and aims to respond within 10 working days... The department's solicitor with responsibility for the scheme... said the service was free, but if demand continued to increase, the department would consider charging to recover its costs. [The solicitor said it] would welcome a fee because it might discourage applications. As the scheme stood, it was open to abuse. His office had dealt with complaints where firms sought records of up to 20 applicants, rather than first deciding on their preferred choice and then checking for any criminal background. "Getting 20 people's records is an unnecessary inquiry – you get a lot of information about people you don't need to have," said [the solicitor]. Another concern was that people were forced to disclose minor convictions not relevant to the position they were seeking.

...Defendants' previous convictions may be revealed to juries in Britain but that tough anti-crime proposal is unlikely to be followed in NZ – where '20% of the population die with a criminal record' and a 'poll showed 68% agree with the idea that minor offences should be wiped from records after 7 years'. Britain's *Sunday News*... reported that defendants could be forced to reveal past convictions under justice plans being drawn up by the Government. The proposals, including longer sentences for repeat offenders, are expected to be included in a review of court procedure being carried out by a commission headed by [the]Lord Justice... The commission was set up last year by [the]Home Secretary... who is known to favour the change, the newspaper said. Senior British police officers have argued that an accused's criminal past should be disclosed where relevant. At present, it is allowed only in exceptional cases. But NZ's Justice Minister... said the idea carried a real risk of prejudging defendants. "The basis of the justice system is that the jury in the court approaches the trial with an open mind and no prejudice." It was frustrating at times for a jury to be unaware that an accused had a pattern of behaviour consistent with the crime [the accused] was being tried for, but revealing that information would be a huge step away from the principle of trying a person on the merits of the case... "I would be hugely reluctant to go down a track which might see a person convicted on his past record rather than the facts the prosecution has against him." ...the Auckland Council of Civil Liberties, said the move would be highly prejudicial. "A jury will say, '[The accused]... must be bad. Look at their track record – they must have done it'."

...BLACK and white, cut and dried, over and done with – that's the way it's supposed to work in both the courtroom and the press box, the first dispensing blind, impartial justice while the latter keeps a vigilant eye peeled for its miscarriage. It's how American schools present the comforting notion of crime and punishment to their students. Don't worry, they are told, the presumption of innocence is everybody's best defence. Put your faith in juries and a free press: our system is replete with checks and balances. It won't let us down. That's the theory anyway – although it would be interesting to hear what [one]30-year-old... thinks about America's cops, courts and press corps. Unfortunately, on the advice of lawyers, [the 30-year-old] isn't talking about his own experiences in the dock and on the front pages of New York's papers. Recently released on parole after serving 13 years for his alleged part in one of the most horrific crimes in the city's recent history, [the 30-year-old] quite rightly fears that the police are looking for any excuse to send him up the river again. In the three months [it] has been back on the street, the boys in blue have already tried it twice. That's what happens when your former friends, neighbours and every cop in the city knows you first and forever as one of the five black teenagers who, late one night in [the 1980s], were said to have waylaid a 28-year-old investment banker on a Central Park jogging track, dragged her into the bushes, pounded her skull with rocks and then raped the comatose victim in a pool of her own blood. Trouble is, while [the 30-year-old and his fellow]defendants did the time, they didn't do the crime, an inconvenient fact for a legal system that is now just beginning to concede that its prosecution of the case violated just about every principle of fairness and dispassionate jurisprudence. It was an appalling assault, but by the time [the]... defendants went on trial, guilty verdicts were a foregone conclusion. Long before they were formally charged with attacking the jogger, the five black faces at the defence table had been convicted in the court of public opinion... This reporter knows all about it. Back then, as an editor of the tabloid *New York Post*, I was one of the voices helping to whip up the lynch mob. Long before the verdicts were brought in, we news[people had painted them]... guilty as sin. It's easy now to make excuses, not that any are satisfactory... If the jogger had died, as doctors were at first certain... would[happen], it's almost impossible to imagine there would have been more than a whisper of protest had the five teenagers been sentenced to death, an option New York's penal code then precluded. Today, with capital punishment back on the books, they would not have been so lucky. The crack in the jogger case came when lab tests confirmed that a career mugger had raped the jogger, just as [it] had sworn to a prison chaplain. Those boys, [the mugger] told authorities, had nothing to do with it. The floodgates opened. New York now knows the prosecution team was aware that semen found on the victim didn't match the defendants' DNA, and that a wealth of mitigating evidence – the absence of the victim's blood on the accused's clothes, for example – was suppressed, glossed over, or grossly misrepresented. Moreover, the "confessions" were coerced with threats and trickery. The defendants signed papers admitting their guilt only after a detective lied to one of their number that the forensic lab could place his fingerprints on the jogger's satin shorts. Without a lawyer present, the learning-disabled suspect admitted to the crime rather than risk a stiffer sentence if his fellow suspects implicated him – as [it] was about to implicate them. One by one, public defenders urged the other boys to follow suit... The defendants' fates were sealed... Of the five, only [one] remains behind bars... [– it] was released... and quickly arrested again on a minor charge of drug possession that earned him an extraordinarily harsh five-year sentence... Family members say their jubilation is hampered by the knowledge of their boys' ordeal in the big house. There is talk of homosexual rape and beatings... Sooner or later, once the convictions have been vacated, there will be substantial awards of compensatory damages. Then the system will go back about its business as before, having paid for the privilege of not answering the question posed last week by one of the Central Park Five's relatives: "How do we stop it happening again?"

...the 38-year-old Manchester solicitor[']s... first words to a waiting world outside the High Court in London yesterday were for the two baby boys [it']d been convicted of murdering three years ago. Released by the Court of Appeal, [the mum] stood in the arms of her husband... and father of the two boys, [who']d fought relentlessly to clear her name. They were reunited yesterday after three judges ordered [her] release in a case that raises concerns over the safety of the criminal justice system. [The]Lord Justice... said that the jury at her trial... and the judges at her subsequent appeal had been deprived of important medical evidence that might have influenced their decisions... [The] jury convicted her by 10 to 2 of shaking or smothering to death Christopher, 11 weeks, and Harry, eight weeks, within 14 months of each other... [The mum] has always said the babies died from natural causes. But... [t]he prosecution presented expert evidence that the chance of two cot deaths in one family was one in 72 million. But on Wednesday [her] counsel... said that research suggested the true odds were more likely to be one in 100 to one in 400. [The]Lord Justice... indicated that the court's reserved judgment would be critical of the Home Office pathologist... who failed to share with other doctors the probability that Harry... died from an acute bacterial infection, probably meningitis... ■ [Yesterday]... Britain's longest-running miscarriage of justice [case was sent] to... the Court of Appeal... after three judges ruled that [the] conviction for the 1973 murder of office worker Wendy Sewell was unsafe.

...A... [youth] was sentenced to life in prison in 1974 for the murder of 32-year-old Wendy Sewell, who was found beaten and partially clothed in a cemetery in Bakewell, in the English Midlands. [Wendy] had been bludgeoned with a pickaxe handle, and died two days later in hospital. [The youth], who worked as a grave digger at the cemetery... [and was] aged 17 at the time of the murder but with a mental age of 11, reported finding Sewell's body to police. [The youth] confessed to attacking her after many hours of questioning without a lawyer present, and, according to his defence team, was never told [it] was under arrest... [The Brit] retracted his confession and maintained his innocence. [The Brit] would have been eligible for parole a decade ago, had [it] admitted responsibility for the killing... "There is a most powerful case for saying that this conviction is unsafe," said his lawyer... [The Brit] was released on bail... after a British court granted him the right to appeal... London's High Court... and Government lawyers agreed that [hi]s appeal was likely to succeed because of doubts about the legitimacy of his confession... The victim's husband... still believed [the Brit] was guilty. "You know the evidence as well as I do... It was presented and [the youth] was found guilty and nothing has come to light since that would cast doubt on that." ...[the Brit]'s parents... and... [the] editor of the local *Mallock Mercury* newspaper... have led a high-profile campaign for his release. [The editor] claims to have uncovered evidence pointing to... the [real]murderer... The ...ed[itor said the Brit's release]... was a "justification for old-fashioned investigative journalism... It's fantastic news for me and obviously for... the whole family." ...[the] case was referred to the Court of Appeal... by the Criminal Cases Review Commission, a body set up in 1997 to investigate alleged miscarriages of justice. The commission's decisions have led to the overturning of a number of high-profile murder convictions, including that of... a mentally retarded teenager hanged in 1953 for shooting a police[officer. The Brit]'s appeal is expected to be heard within the next few months.

...BRITAIN'S most notorious child killer[(r:p1220, ln39)]... will appeal the government's decision to keep her in jail for life. [The killer], 57, has long fought for her freedom but had her appeals rejected by several judges... [The killer and her lover –] known as the Moors Murderers... [–] were jailed for life in 1966 for the sadistic murders of two children... [The]y recorded their victims' cries as they tortured and killed them... [Her] lawyers claim her sentence should not go beyond the original 30 years. They will appeal the full life sentence to Britain's highest court, the House of Lords, and even to the European Court of Human Rights... [By the way, a NZ businessperson and c]onvicted double murderer... has lost his final bid to have his convictions overturned, after the Privy Council in London ruled against his appeal yesterday. The five law lords who heard [hi]s appeal announced that while [the NZer] had an arguable case, on the evidence [it] was properly convicted by the jury... [Hi]s lawyer... told the law lords that crucial evidence relating to the weapon and bullets that killed... Eugene and Gene Thomas in 1994... had been falsely linked to [his client. The]... evidence given by [an]FBI agent... had been flawed and that had unduly influenced the jury at [his client]'s third trial, after the juries at the two previous trials had failed to reach a verdict. The tests have since been discredited worldwide for providing a high number of false matches.

...A law expert believes the Privy Council will uphold "embarrassing" claims that the N[Z] Court of Appeal discriminated against high-profile criminals by refusing them legal aid. In London this week, four lawyers representing 13 convicted N[Z] criminals successfully argued for a full Privy Council hearing into their allegations that the... legal aid procedures were a "sham."

...THE Privy Council has long been the court of last resort for some of [NZ]'s most famous criminal and civil cases. And the rulings of its expert law lords – sitting 20,000km away from our own judicial system – continue to be sought by lawyers wishing to take a case beyond the Court of Appeal... [But NZ's links] with the Privy Council are set to be severed, with plans under way for a new supreme court in N[Z]. The P[M]... said it was an "absolute given" appeals to the London-based Privy Council would be abolished... But the move to scrap the Privy Council... is already meeting some opposition in legal circles... The... government abandoned moves to cut ties to the Privy Council in 1997 amid opposition from Maori who... were not properly consulted... [A c]onstitutional law expert... said... "The... Council has passed its use by date. It's really obsolete in legal terms."

...An appeals court in San Francisco has thrown out a shoplifter's 50-year sentence as being too harsh. The ruling could lead to hundreds of challenges from defendants who received near-life terms for petty crimes under California's "three strikes" law, which mandates long sentences for a third serious crime. In a 2-1 ruling, a federal court panel said [the shoplifter]'s sentence for stealing nine videotapes, valued at \$US153... violated the Constitution's ban on cruel and unusual punishment... The court noted that kidnappers and murderers could receive less time... [In local news, NZers] are encouraged to have their say on... a Supreme Court... The Supreme Court of N[Z] Bill proposes an end to Privy Council appeals in Britain and advocates the establishment of a final court of appeal in N[Z]. The... Attorney-General... says a Supreme Court would enable N[Z] to take responsibility for its own laws[, but also]... says increased access to justice is the motivating factor behind the decision... "Many N[Z]ers cannot afford to take their case the 12,000 miles to the Privy Council in London which only hears about 11 appeals from N[Z] each year,"... Submissions can be sent free post to Clerk of the Committee, Justice and Electoral Committee, Select Committee Office, Parliament Buildings...

The move to a N[Z] Supreme Court, ending the right of appeal to the Privy Council, is part of a process of decolonisation. It signifies a desire to chart our own course as a Pacific nation taking account of international, as opposed to imperial, law. Whether we view it with excitement or with fear depends to some degree on where we stand on this wider issue... Following the consultation rounds, a full and unhurried select committee process is crucial to allow the people of N[Z] to have a say. Some have suggested we need a referendum. While this is superficially attractive, it is no answer. The last... poll, for example, indicated that 51[%] of people support ending appeals to the Privy Council, 28[%] oppose and 21[%] are unsure or say it depends. Depends on what? Referendums are unable to tell us... Some Maori are sceptical of receiving justice from a settler court. Yet... the Court of Appeal has been more pro-active than the Privy Council in recognising the Treaty of Waitangi and Maori claims in general. In any case, the bill would not take away a right to appeal direct to the Sovereign. Some people feel that we have too small a pool from which to draw the judges, and that we lack the necessary depth of expertise. There is also a fear that social and political loyalties will influence judicial decisions. Coupled to this is concern over the proposed appointments process, with its perceived potential to stack the bench. These are real questions that the select committee must deal with. But of the 16 independent states that allow appeal to the Privy Council, 10 are planning to establish a Caribbean Court of Justice this year... Even the English do not, in general, have a right of appeal to the Privy Council. The status quo cannot last... Why not a Pacific Supreme Court? The idea has merit and some support here, but may not have much support among other Pacific nations at this stage. Of more immediate interest is the example of the Hong Kong Final Court of Appeal. It has an overseas panel of judges, one of whom sits on every case... By incorporating an overseas panel into our Supreme Court, we could make use of wider legal expertise in particular areas, while guarding against excessive insularity. Potential difficulties in finding suitable judges should not make us bar the possibility.

...THE NEW Supreme Court building rises in Wellington, and as its decorative facades were put in place last week, my thoughts were grumpy. It's not the arty cast-bronze renditions of native trees that bug me... but the thought of how justice fares here compared with elsewhere in the world. Take the vile... 73-year-old... Austria[n]... who raped his daughter... more than 3000 times during the 24 years [it] imprisoned her in a cellar... beneath the family home... [– along with some of the] seven children... fathered... [– who] has... now... been tried. That happened fast. Here, [the guy]... described... as "born to rape"... would have found a lawyer who'd argue the toss for years, on legal aid. [The father wou]ld be tried, appeal, retried, re-appeal, do his best to get to the Privy Council, find sympathisers, become a cause. The fact that [the father] claims his mother abused him when [it] was young would mean... compensation from ACC, along with his own victims, and a merry little industry would busily dilute the horror of what [it]'d done. Finally, [the father wou]ld be out of jail on good behaviour inside a few years, and marry some dingbat half his age who believed [the guy] never did it in the first place, and wrote him love letters throughout his jail term, enclosing her panties.

...The Auckland region's four district courts would grind to a halt if Justices of the Peace were removed from the bench, say local JPs. The president of Auckland JPs... has hit back at a suggestion by the departing Chief District Court Judge... [– who] has been appointed to the High Court... [–] that JPs should bow out of judging and be replaced by trained lawyers... Last year, 39 JPs heard 23,630 minor charges and worked for 6300 hours in the Auckland area... [D]istrict court judges had made it clear that they did not want to do that work... [The president] said JPs acknowledged the need for extra training. But... they were perfectly capable of hearing preliminary charges, depositions and minor charges.

...The tiny Northland community of Kaikohe is running out of people to serve on juries. With just under 7000 people registered on Kaikohe's jury list, the court is having problems finding 12 people who do not know the accused and have not already served on a jury. Its plight has now been recognised by Parliament, which will pass emergency legislation to give the town a wider pool of jurors... Parliament is poised to... extend... Kaikohe's]... jury boundary to 45km... The change could treble the number of people on the jury list... Kaikohe has about 32 jury trials a year, and potential jurors are c[urrently c]hosen from the same 6988 people registered on the electoral roll as living within 30km of the courthouse. Each time a panel of jurors is needed, the court has to summon 280 residents because so many of them end up being excused... In contrast, Auckland has 100,000 people on a regularly changing jury list, which is drawn from an even larger list of all those on the electoral roll... [But Auckland still has jury problems – a] major Serious Fraud Office trial alleging that two senior Mobil Oil managers took backhanders has been aborted because of bereavement and illness among jurors. The trial, involving eight lawyers... had been going for three weeks and was due to continue for several more... Theoretically a trial can continue with fewer than 10 jurors if all parties consent, although it is understood this is the first time in N[Z] that a jury has had only 10 members. Because of disruptions to a complex trial, [the judge]... discharged the jury and ordered a new trial... ■ [An American j]uror... walked out during deliberations in a carjacking trial in Maryland – and didn't come back. Not until police tracked him down the next day. [The 25-year-old] told the judge other jurors were becoming aggressive with him because [it] was holding out against a guilty verdict.

[The 25-year-old couldn't] convict the alleged carjacker because "I was not present at the scene of the crime and thus did not... see the defendant do it."

...Irrational jurors blocking verdicts and forcing expensive retrials will be thwarted by a new plan from the Law Commission. After six years of research on juries in criminal trials, the commission has recommended that 11-to-1 majority verdicts be allowed instead of the unanimous decision now required... [Since] 1993... the rate of hung jury[ies] increased from 4 to 9[%]. The High Court... had a high of 13.1[%] in October last year and was now around 12[%]. Of the 49 juries studied, five were hung – two as a result of a single "rogue" juror... "Retrials occasioned by one dissenting juror pose major personal, emotional and financial costs on all those involved in the process,"... [the] Justice Minister... said. But defence lawyers are angry, claiming verdicts would not be sound without unanimity. [The]Criminal Bar Association... said the Crown had to prove a case beyond reasonable doubt. "If one person has reasonable doubts about it – putting aside the rogue juror which research shows isn't very common – you have at least one person who has genuine doubt and that's a concern,"... The Auckland District Law Society criminal spokes[person]... said an 11-1 majority could result in lazy juries. [But the]Auckland Crown Solicitor... rubbished suggestions that majority verdicts would compromise the "beyond reasonable doubt" standard of proof. An 11-1 majority was still a high threshold, and N[Z] was behind the rest of the world by still requiring unanimous verdicts, [it] said. Among the changes, the report recommended that those accused of serious crimes, including murder, be able to ask for trial by judge alone. This would apply if they could not receive a fair trial because of their identity or the subject matter. Judges alone should also hear complex trials of six weeks or more because it was unreasonable to expect 12 people to give up their time for that long...

Britain is planning to expand the use of trials without jury to increase conviction rates. A government white paper on the criminal justice system proposes that judges sit alone in trials where they fear a jury might be subject to intimidation, as well as in cases of complex fraud... [By the way, a] headline in a British Sunday newspaper is causing much mirth and merriment in legal circles. "Fat cat QCs' pay to be cut in half," it said. At a glance... the legal eagles [a]re masochists paying for... permanent perverse pleasure. But the... QCs simply now have to make do on less money.

...["It's been said that the worst thing which can ever happen in a criminal trial is the truth comes out." "Do you feel there's a great element of theatre in a court?" "Yes – it's a big charade. Everybody's playing their little roles. You can call it a game, but it's a game with serious consequences."]

...an] English lawyer... is adapting theatrics fostered in more than 30 years in the courtroom for a different stage – all in the name of justice. [The lawyer] has been dabbling in acting for nearly as long as [it] has been practising law and this week... will perform a solo show to an audience of lawyers and judges at the N[Z] Law Conference in Rotorua. [The lawyer] adapted his show, *The Trial of Penn and Mead*, from a landmark case in 1670 in which a judge imprisoned an entire jury after they refused to bring in a guilty verdict. [The lawyer], who calls his show an illustrated story rather than a play, reckons there is not as much of a leap between his profession and his hobby as there might seem. "Every jury speech is acting, in a sense. They say that lawyers are frustrated actors. There are some barristers who are very, very good actors and they could have made it on the stage." [The lawyer] found an extraordinary account of the case in a London library one afternoon, while looking for material to entertain members of a visiting [US] bar association. The defendants, two Quakers, William Mead and William Penn (who later founded Pennsylvania), had written a spirited analysis of the trial. "I started to read it and I couldn't put the story down. By the end you realise this isn't just a case, it's a universal story of individual freedom and oppression. It's probably the most important jury case of all." The... [jurors'] eventual release established the absolute independence of a jury[ies]. Incidentally, 'blind people are now allowed to serve on NZ juries'...

Jurors in an Auckland drugs trial were taken to a party by defence counsel where they met the [defendant] they had just acquitted. One of the jurors has told the *Weekend Herald* [it] smoked cannabis and saw a yellow-powdered substance cut into lines at the party just a couple of hours after returning a not guilty verdict on drugs charges... The juror, who cannot be identified, spoke to the *Herald* because [it] believes that what occurred was "morally wrong and deeply hypocritical". A complaint has been laid with the Auckland District Law Society, which says it will act if its investigation uncovers wrongdoing. Auckland's Crown Solicitor... called the allegations "extremely disturbing"... The *Herald* has tried repeatedly over a number of weeks to speak to... [the] barrister about the party... at [his] Mt Eden home... Each time [it] has hung up the phone.

...Should there be exceptions to the rule that you cannot be tried twice for one crime? ...The Government is planning to dump the... rule that you cannot be tried twice for the same crime... Double jeopardy sounds like a Hollywood thriller. But it is at the heart of... principles of law stretching back hundreds of years. The N[Z] Law Commission scrutinised... the "rule against double jeopardy" when a New Plymouth gang member was acquitted of murder after getting a witness to lie at his trial... [The] Black Power gang member... could not be retried... [for] murdering Mongrel Mob member Robert Jillings in 1991[ies], but... was later charged with conspiracy to pervert the course of justice and was sentenced to seven years in prison... The law change... [– which] will apply to all crimes, not just serious ones... [–] will be introduced into Parliament next year.

...Consider the criminal defence lawyer as portrayed in successful TV dramas. Typically [a guy, it] will be ruggedly handsome but slightly dishevelled. A blend of maverick and conservative, [it] will disdain mindless authority but strive to honour a self-styled moral code. A mixture of detective, private eye, lateral thinker and rabid interrogator, [it] will invariably prove his client's innocence. Best of all, [it] always shows up in court on time. But while Hollywood writers... were unwittingly seducing an entire generation into law school, some of the advocates in our courtrooms appear to have drawn their inspiration from *Mr Bean*. [The]Chief District Court Judge... clearly thought so when [it] sat at the now-closed Otahuhu District Court last August. The rising level of incompetence among district court lawyers has been talked about in smoke-filled rooms for some time. But [the Chief District Court]Judge... unknowingly flung the doors open on that discussion when the letter [it] wrote to the Auckland District Law Society complaining about South Auckland lawyers found its way into the public domain. [The Chief District Court Judge] wrote of "a disproportionate number of counsel who, as both assigned counsel, counsel and duty solicitor, provide a standard of work which is below a reasonable expectation." His criticisms sparked considerable anger among the target group, but rang true with many senior lawyers who say the problem is wider than South Auckland. According to [one]respected... QC, "Some defendants would be better off defending themselves."

...ON ANY day of the week in the busy courtrooms of the Manukau District Court in south Auckland, one of the emerging crisis areas of our justice system is on parade... Between 100 and 120 people a day are shunted through one courtroom. It is at courts like this that concerns are growing the police are lining up the wrong people for the wrong crime, or letting the guilty walk free through lack of evidence. The *Sunday Star-Times* has been told of a malaise affecting a crucial juncture in the justice system, police prosecutors. This is where the 9000-strong police force puts its cases before the courts for judgement. This is where justice should be done. Shoddy preparatory work or poor investigation carries a high cost – wrong convictions... [(such as the t]hree teenage girls... wrongly convicted of and... sent to Mt Eden Prison for the bashing of a schoolgirl at Mount Roskill; t]hey spent seven months in jail and then were suddenly released, with red-faced police... admitting they relied on the incorrect testimony of another girl[ies]) ...or unwarranted acquittals. Lawyers say these are precisely the risks being run by the police... "I have real concerns about the level of experience and the level of competence of a significant number of police officers involved in serious criminal investigations,"... a spokes[person] for the Criminal Bar Association, says... The... Police commissioner[ies]'s... brow furrows at the lawyers' comments.

...POLICE admit to a growing problem with sub-standard work in cases going before the courts after complaints from their own lawyers... The... Police Commissioner... has blamed the drop in standards on mounting pressure in areas of high population growth such as Auckland and Bay of Plenty. Crown solicitors had approached him... "They have raised concerns about some of the lower end investigations and those high volume areas that we don't seem to be able to spend as much time doing the things we did 10 years ago. The answer is no, we haven't got that time."

...Finally, N[Z]ers who find themselves locked in arguments before the country's courts may get the chance to sock-it to bad lawyers who demonstrably fail to make the grade on their behalf. The law world's long-standing "immunity from prosecution" protection has come under

question from the High Court bench... following a case in... [which an Asian couple] complained that advice from an Auckland law firm cost them nearly \$750,000. The [couple] lost a case in the High Court... after lawyers had advised them to accept personal liability in the event of a judgment against their fruit-exporting company. The law firm being sued has raised barrister immunity as a defence. In... a... landmark move... the... House of Lords... abolish[ed] immunity for English lawyers... two years ago... [In related news,]lawyers involved in a series of nationwide buy-back housing schemes under investigation may not be named publicly, even if found guilty of some sort of impropriety. Buy-back schemes see people signing over the titles of their houses to mortgage brokers in return for finance. The deals involved strict repayments that can see debtors losing their homes once they miss a repayment. [A]West Auckland-based Labour MP... believes lawyers involved in some cases are acting for both the mortgage brokers and the debtors, a conflict of interest [it] says sees lawyers failing in their duty to advise clients against entering buy-back agreements. The Auckland District Law Society is investigating the claims. But [the society's]professional standards director... says any lawyer found guilty may not necessarily be publicly named... The... Law Practitioners Act 1982... does not make disclosure compulsory unless a lawyer is struck off the roll of barristers and solicitors of the High Court of N[Z. The West Auckland MP] says that's not good enough and is threatening to disclose names in Parliament. [The MP] is calling for a ministerial inquiry into the schemes and claims [it] has received paperwork relating to 73 cases nationwide.

...THE Northland judge... who was fined \$8000 after pleading guilty to fraudulently claiming \$815 in travel expenses, [but]was recently reinstated by the law society and is working as a lawyer[, has now been 'let off his original charges'. While on the topic of penal let-offs,] ...for every... A[US]n... who waited, with varying degrees of anticipation, for [a]multimillionaire broadcaster... to face the prospect of jail this week... there was at least one other A[US]n – possibly more – who cheered the judge's ruling that the broadcaster was too rich to be fined, too famous to be jailed. While critics fumed about one law for the rich, another for the poor, the mass of [the broadcaster's] dedicated fans, who have made him the most highly paid radio host in the world, jeered journalists and cheered their hero as [it] emerged from court. Instead of a prison sentence of up to seven years, a fine of up to \$A110,000 or even periodic detention or community service, [the judge]... imposed a 15-month suspended sentence for what was... [the] Commander of... the Order of the British Empire[']s)... second serious conviction in just over two years... *Reduced sentences* Under section nine of [NZ's] Sentencing Act, judges must consider these factors: ■ Criminals' ages. ■ Early guilty pleas. ■ Good conduct. ■ Lesser/peripheral involvement in the crime. ■ "Diminished intellectual capacity or understanding". ■ Remorse. ■ Evidence of "previous good".

...[a 19-year-old] who killed a 4-year-old... when his speeding car crashed at Rangiriri has had his jail term halved because of a \$40,000 payment his family has offered to the girl's kindergarten... [The student was] sentenced to two years' prison and disqualified from driving for five years when [it] appeared before... Hamilton District Court... [The district court judge also ordered him] to pay \$16,000 in reparation to the victims. In addition, [hi]s family offered to make a payment of \$40,000 to [the victim's] mother, who refused to take the money but said it could go to her daughter's kindergarten. When sentencing [the student, the district court judge] said: "Offenders and their families should not have any grounds to believe that they may be able to buy themselves out of prison by making an offer of reparation or amends under section 10 of the legislation [Sentencing Act]." During the hearing of an appeal to the sentence in the High Court at Hamilton on Friday, [the appeal judge said it agreed with the district court judge] but said the legislation was broad and [it] did not believe the [district court]judge had taken significant account of the reparation offer... Friday's decision by the appeal judge has angered victim Georgia McCarten-Graham's grandmother... "What kind of signal are they sending? It's very difficult for me to make a rational judgment on this because this guy, through his reckless actions, killed my granddaughter..." ...[the student was] trying to evade police... when [his] car... lost control and smashed into a petrol station... pinn[ing] Georgia] between the car and the building...

OK, so you don't get the big salary and the retirement goodies, but just for a few minutes you can be a judge, Justice Citizen, sitting on appeal hearings on two similar judgements. The key issue in these two hypothetical cases seems to me very simple. How about you? Two young [guys] crash their cars at high speed and kill innocent road-users in identical circumstances. One was driving his mother's run-down Ford Escort, the other his mother's new BMW convertible. Neither had a licence. Both pleaded guilty to dangerous driving. The Escort driver, the 19-year-old unemployed son of a solo mother from south Auckland, west Auckland or similar, is represented on legal aid by the family lawyer who handled his mother's divorce. This teenager is sentenced to two years' jail. The driver in the BMW, also 19, from Remuera has his case pleaded by a Queen's Counsel who was in his father's class at Kings, or was it collegiate? Included in the plea is the offer of \$40,000 as a mark of the young [driver's] (and his family's) deep regret. This is taken into due account and [the student] is sentenced to one year, with an immediate application that it be served as home detention to allow him to continue his studies. The hope is that the conviction won't block his entry into law school. By comparison, the solo mother's only asset and transport was the old Escort, terminally damaged in the crash, still owing money and uninsured. [The solo mother] and her son, plus her three other younger children, are also deeply regretful but they have no family trust to call on. [The solo mother] has no cash to offer. Her son is worried that [it]'ll never get a job when the jail gates finally open. What is the justice in such a bizarre range of penalties? If that could happen under present legislation, and that seems possible, then it's bad law and should be changed. Public disbelief that such is the law and anger at its most recent precedent are obvious, expressed in ugly but powerful words, like "bribes" and "cheque book justice". None more powerful than the justifiably bitter "blood money" label from the mother of a dead child. That is the majority community reaction to the halving of the sentence o[f]... the 19-year-old Mainland Chinese student, who killed a four-year-old at Rangiriri while driving at high speed and unlicensed, [and]now faces a 12-month rather than the original two-year jail term... [- but the student could do less than 12 months if it behaves -] at least in part because of the offer of \$40,000 "reparation" from his parent to [the victim's] mourning family... Judicial reasoning says the money wasn't a prime issue. Really?

...Run off the road and nearly pushed over a cliff by an out-of-control bus, [a pensioner] was lucky to live. Seven years later, [the pensioner] still suffers from her injuries. What hurts the 84-year-old more is that the [perso]n responsible skipped the country after paying just \$50 of the \$2000 [it] offered in court to get his sentence reduced... The judge agreed to set the fine at \$2000, ordered it all go to [the pensioner], and disqualified... the... [bus driver] from driving for 18 months. But [the bus driver – who]... blamed an unfamiliar braking system but said [it] was speeding and lost control as the bus came round the corner and down the hill; had the driver] not smashed into [the pensioner's] car, the bus and passengers would probably have gone off the cliff, [it said –] ...then lodged an appeal against his sentence and succeeded in having the disqualification period reduced to 12 months. Payment was delayed until the appeal was heard. But a year later [the pensioner] had still received nothing. [The pensioner] approached the Courts Department and... was told [the bus driver] had other outstanding fines, which had to be paid before her reparation. Another year went by and [the pensioner] wrote to the department. Eventually it replied, saying it believed [the bus driver] was in A[US] and had not supplied an address. A warrant for his arrest had been issued but could be executed only if [the bus driver] returned to N[Z. Eventually the pensioner]... received a \$50 cheque from the department, with no explanation other than that it was compensation from [the bus driver]. Former workmates... said all they knew was that [the bus driver] was in A[US], last heard of in Perth, but none knew how to contact him. But the *Weekend Herald* found him, now aged 58, living in Essex, England, and working as a security guard... "I have no idea," [the 58-year-old] said when first asked whether [it] would pay the fine. [The 58-year-old said it] thought the fine was covered by insurance of the Auckland Tramways Union. The union said that was not the case, though it helped... with his legal bills... Courts Department staff refused to discuss the matter, including where the \$50 came from, or say what efforts they had made over the past six years to find [the former bus driver]. That would breach his privacy.

...The Corrections Department has been left red-faced after an inmate was paid \$42,000 for serving... six months... more jail time... for assaulting a hairdresser... than [it] should have, but still refuses to compensate his victim... [- whose] injuries included a broken nose, fractured cheekbone, chipped tooth and cuts... [- as it] was ordered to do at the completion of his sentence... Last week... [the offender said it] had spent the money...

How to make criminals pay – fairly VICTIMS' compensation sounded like a very good idea when it was introduced not long ago. Justice would be more personal, criminals would make amends to those they had injured rather than to the state. Victims would feel less excluded and undervalued. Their suffering would be acknowledged... Well, it was a good idea for all those reasons. But as recent cases have illustrated, there are two sides to the coin. Victims' compensation can also be seen as "justice for sale". It is hard to see how it can be otherwise. Is a person who pays victims' compensation to receive the same sentence as somebody who could not afford to pay? Yes, the public seem to be saying, anything less would mean that those who can afford to pay would be able to buy a lesser sentence, and that is abhorrent. But if those who can pay compensation then receive the same sentences as those who cannot afford to pay, the well-off are doubly penalised and that is abhorrent, too. If criminal justice is to be blind to the wealth of offenders then it seems victims' compensation was not such a good idea after all. But not everyone is ready to give it away yet. The Victim Support organisation... suggests the system could work if compensation was built into the standard sentence. Thus reparations and compensation in some form would be expected of all convicted offenders in addition to a standard fine or prison term. Failure to pay the compensation... would result in an increased sentence... [Then there's the issue of unpaid fines – a] single person owes \$1.8 million in unpaid court fines, figures obtained from the Department for Courts show. But the department will not say who... owed the money, and what for... or give any details. The figure came to light after *Weekend Herald* inquiries prompted the department to reveal the amounts owed by the country's top 10 fines defaulters... The... second-largest amount owed was \$125,270... This week, a district court judge was stunned to learn a Nelson teenager had incurred traffic fines worth almost \$40,000 in less than a year... ■ [The]... Government plans to change the law so fine defaulters cannot leave [NZ].

...The Government is investigating law changes to give Customs officials the authority to stop N[Z]ers who owe large fines leaving the country. Almost \$350 million is owed in fines – \$39 million more than last year... The country's three top fine defaulters fled N[Z] owing almost \$2 million between them, prompting the Department for Courts to seek ways to stop others leaving without paying their debts. In a financial review report, Parliament's law and order select committee criticised the department for the length of time it had taken to formulate a strategy for collecting fines at airports. "It is not acceptable to us that fines defaulters... should be able to leave the country without being intercepted at the borders," says the report. [The]Courts Minister... said it had not been decided how much a person would have to owe before [being]... stopped. "If someone owes \$30 in a fine, they're not the people you're after. We want people who are deliberately, seriously defaulting on their fines." The department... needed to look at the cost of setting up the system. "If we put this in place and it's more costly than what we recover, that's not sensible,"...

WHAT price justice? Recently it cost taxpayers another \$2.5 million. Why? To finance a six-month trial for a family of recidivist offenders... [that] involved 17 lawyers... Seven family members faced 247 charges, mainly for burglary... [of] \$447,000 worth of property... Further property of \$104,000 was damaged during the burglaries... It was N[Z]'s longest and most costly trial... This week it was announced that \$1.1 million of th[e]... \$2.5 million... went to the defence lawyers through criminal legal aid. Prosecution and police costs accounted for the balance. The case raises serious issues. Should the taxpayer be spending such large sums on the defence of cases like this? Certainly, criminal legal aid must be available in a democratic country such as N[Z]. Its purpose is to allow the accused to defend themselves when they have insufficient funds to do so. But there is a fine line to be drawn between enabling the accused to plead not guilty and defend their rights, and wasting taxpayers money on a hopeless case. Defence lawyers certainly have a role to play in deciding when to run a defence. Lawyers say they are bound by their clients' instructions – if their clients insist on pleading not guilty, lawyers are duty-bound to run the case and do their best for their clients. This case suggests such an approach is unsatisfactory... The judge hearing the case said: "The evidence against the family on the vast majority of charges was overwhelming yet they [the accused] had chosen to contest the charges against the odds." The evidence produced in court included bugged conversations and surveillance videos of the burglaries in progress. The judge's comments suggest the charges were largely indefensible. The jury agreed. Of the 247 charges brought, 233 were proven – a 95[%] conviction rate. The record prison sentences of up to 12 1/2 years suggest the unproven charges were of no great significance. The police officer in charge of the case said it was outrageous that the case went to trial in the form it did... [T]he legal aid system needs further review... At the very least, the... court hearing the case should have power to comment when it considers legal aid money has not been spent wisely, and the judge should have power to say that a defence proceedings was not justified. In that event, the defence should not be paid for by taxpayers. If criminal legal aid lawyers believe their remuneration is at risk if they are defending the indefensible, they may think twice about how they run their client's cases. Furthermore, defendants receiving criminal legal aid should have to pay something towards the costs of their defence... This trial also raises questions about whether a public defender's office should be established, the effectiveness of plea-bargaining and similar issues. There will always be opposition to these issues from some in the legal profession. They will argue it could result in defence standards being lowered and prejudice an accused's right to a fair trial. But with limited financing available, such issues need to be addressed.

...Who pays the price of justice? The cost of a day in court is set to skyrocket next month[, raising questions about] who will be able to afford it... In the district court, or the people's court as it is colloquially called, filing fees [are set to go] from \$145 to \$450... Litigants filing High Court actions... will face an astronomical increase in court fees – from \$120 to \$900 for filing a claim, from \$650 to \$2200 to have it set down for a hearing, and from \$470 to \$1900 for every half day in court after the first. Similar fee increases apply to the Court of Appeal... Only the Family Court remains a fee-free zone, except for divorce or adoption cases... [S]o far, the only audible protest against the massive court fee hikes has come from the N[Z] Law Society, which is writing to the [Courts M]inister begging him to reconsider. Its president, [who is a]Hamilton lawyer... says the society is concerned that access to justice shouldn't be only for wealthy litigants. The spectre of lawyers protesting that rising costs might be a barrier to getting justice could not help but raise an ironic chuckle from the cynical. As a discussion paper circulated by the Department for Courts last year points out, court fees are the least expensive part of taking a case to court. The biggest item on the ticket will be the lawyer's fees.

...Until recently many law firms did not insist on clients paying up front for the fees charged by the court when they filed applications on their behalf. The amount was comparatively small and it was a cost they were happy to carry. That all changed when the Government introduced a new schedule of court fees with increases so huge that firms had no option but to ensure these costs were advanced by the unfortunate clients. The fees are now a real deterrent for some people and businesses seeking justice in a civil action... The new schedule has actually decreased the fees payable to lodge small claims in disputes tribunals, but enormous increases at District Court, High Court and Court of Appeal levels have been across the board... The overriding principle should be the maintenance of a court system which is readily accessible by all citizens. A substantial taxpayer subsidisation of the civil litigation court is necessary. Without it, gross unfairness results. But it is not appropriate to try to recover any particular percentage of costs from users of the system. Rather, fees should be appropriately geared to the type of litigation involved and the amount at stake.

...The... Justice minister... has asked the Law Commission to investigate introducing a European-style inquisitorial justice system... [The minister] had no intention of overhauling the adversarial-style system used here where the role of the judge is essentially that of an impartial referee. But... said the inquisitorial system, where the judge is involved in collecting and determining the facts of the case, could have its uses in victim-intensive situations such as sexual offending and child abuse... The adversarial system is a source of controversy in sexual cases, because victims are often cross examined by defence lawyers, whereas the defendant can exercise the right to silence. Legal experts are wary of a possible change.

...The Government is proposing changing the definition of consent in rape trials as part of its major overhaul of criminal justice. Under the proposals someone would have to say "yes" rather than the current law where a defendant is able to argue the [alleged victim] did not say "no".

...The Ministry of Justice is looking at law changes which would ban defendants cross-examining alleged victims of sexual crimes directly. A case being heard in the High Court at Christchurch – in which an 18-year-old... has been cross-examined for three days by the [guy] accused of abducting and raping her – ...highlighted the issue. [The defendant, aged] 29, unemployed, denies [all charges against him]... The charges relate to an eight-day period in October last year. The [victim says it] was kept naked and chained and was burned, beaten and forced to have sex up to 10 times a day at [hi]s flat. The ministry says the review of the relevant law has been going on for some time and is not in response to th[is] case.

...Ministry of Justice moves to bar defendants the right to directly cross-examine alleged victims of their sexual crimes have their heart in the right place... [However, t]he Council for Civil Liberties says the Law Commission moves would erode the presumption of innocence until proven guilty and that the court acts as a gatekeeper to prevent improper questioning... [T]he Law Commission... recommended the accused should put questions through the judge or a person appointed by the judge. And therein lies the crux of the debate and despite its opposition the civil liberties group is partly right when it raises the “gatekeeper” issue. [But a]n accused’s rights would not be infringed upon through a process which allowed them to quiz their accuser through the court or its appointee... The major point in all this is that justice is not only done – but is seen to be done.

...WHAT does justice look like? Pat wouldn’t know because [Pat]’s fairly sure [Pat] didn’t get it after being threatened by a knife-wielding teenager... [Pat had caught] trying to break into a car; fortunately, the police were quickly on the scene. Pat went to the family group conference afterwards and decided to forgive... ask[ing] only that the boy join the junior rugby team [Pat] coached, and help clean up graffiti around the neighbourhood. But... I told him forgiveness doesn’t ask anything in return; it wouldn’t be an act of grace otherwise. But justice does. Even restorative justice requires atonement and restitution. If you ask the head of the Rethinking Crime and Punishment project... what that kind of justice looks like, [the head woul]d say it looks like love. It’s about... healing the broken-hearted and promoting community peace. Love is, I know, not our preferred approach to justice in this country. We’d rather talk about seriously bad people who deserve to be put away for the rest of their lives (and hardly anyone would argue that there aren’t a few of those around). Since... a citizens-initiated referendum asked whether we should place “greater emphasis on the needs of victims”, impose minimum sentences and require “hard labour” for all serious violent offences[– in which n]early 92 per cent of us said “yes”[–] ...restorative justice has been sidelined for a more punitive path... [The head] thinks that punitive approach reflected a fondness for market solutions and a “growing opposition to policies that appear to benefit “the undeserving poor”, cynicism about welfare, and support for more aggressive controls for an underclass that is perceived to be disorderly, drug-prone, violent and dangerous. St Augustine once said, ‘Mercy without justice leads to weakness. Justice without mercy leads to tyranny.’ [St Augustine] was talking about the balance that should be shown to all involved in the judicial process. That is no longer appropriate, and the sympathy evoked by political rhetoric centres exclusively on the victims and the fearful public, rather than the offender.” This seems unlikely to change any time soon. As each week brings another front-page assault or murder, the public clamour for simplistic and harsh solutions to a perceived crime epidemic grows louder.

...The justice system failed Sophie Elliott... – ...a bright, kind young [person who]... had a first-class honours economics degree behind her and was heading to Wellington for a “plum job” at the Treasury... [(an) economics professor at the University of Oregon... said a paper [the]... 22-year-old... wrote titled, *Why measure inequality? A discussion of the concept of equality*, which was published in this month’s edition of the Oxford University economics journal *Oxonomics*, was “easily the best essay on inequality” [it] had ever read[] –] ...allowing her killer to drag her name through the mud before a wide audience... Outside the Christchurch court-house yesterday Ms Elliott’s father... said the provocation defence should no longer be an option... The defence... [a]llows for a killing that would otherwise be classed as murder to be downgraded to [hu]manslaughter if it can be proven that the person who caused the death was provoked... “The provocation defence is based on absolutely archaic notions about violence. Once upon a time, society accepted that an affront to [a guy’s] privilege or dignity was a reasonable excuse to fly into a homicidal rage. This trial turned justice inside out. The killer became the victim and Sophie Elliott was portrayed to us all as he[r]... former boyfriend... chose to describe her. Unfortunately for [him], the jury didn’t buy it and nor did the hundreds of thousands of N[Z]ers who watched him giggling on television.” ...His performance while on trial for... stabbing and cutting her 216 times... has made him the subject of a nation’s vitriol, yet through it all, [the killer] appeared oblivious or unbothered. The long-haired, neatly dressed, bespectacled former university tutor – ...[aged] 33... – seemed to take on the challenge of beating a murder charge with the same gusto as the academic studies [it] invariably aced. Only this time there was no A+ grade to satisfy the huge ego the public came to know and loathe. His future now lies in prison with fellow criminals of much lesser intelligence.

...Ben Smart and Olivia Hope[’s killer]... was yesterday jailed for life... The jury of seven [guys and five gals] returned its unanimous verdicts to a hushed Wellington high court... after deliberating for 21 hours. The families of Blenheim pair Olivia, 17, and Ben, 21, wept when they heard the decisions... “We were pleased this chapter is over,”... Ben[’s father]... said. “At least we have got something now which allows us to accept what has happened a bit easier. We really found it difficult to accept [Ben’s death.” Olivia’s father asked the killer] to show compassion and say where the bodies of his daughter and Ben were... [Olivia’s father never doubted the defendant] would be found guilty... “When you sit through it, the evidence was pretty compelling. The jury were meticulous. I have no doubt... justice has been done.” [But Olivia’s father] said his family did not want revenge. “We want him alive so [Olivia’s killer] can sit in his cell and think about what [it has] done... We want to leave him with a conscience.” ...[the defendant, aged] 28, reacted to the announcement of the verdict by telling to jury: “You’re wrong.”

...Wearing a shirt and tie, as [it] had throughout the trial, [the defendant] was led away to begin a life jail term. The Picton [resident] had pleaded not guilty to murdering Olivia and Ben on or about January 1, 1998, in the Cook Strait-Marlborough Sounds area. The young friends [and the Picton resident] had been at the Furneaux Lodge... for a New Year’s party. Prosecutors said [the Picton resident] lured the pair on to his yacht... wanting sex with Olivia, and then killed both of them before hiding their bodies, which have never been found. Prosecutors alleged they were dumped in deep waters in Cook Strait. Although [the Picton resident] was soon a suspect, [it] wasn’t arrested until six months after the pair disappeared. More than 500 witnesses gave evidence during the three-month trial... which... is probably the most expensive in N[Z] history. The cost is over \$5 million... [including over] \$700,000 of legal aid... [for the defence (t]he biggest legal aid payout to date... was... \$570,000... – but that paid for three trials and an unsuccessful appeal[])... The defence had claimed during the trial that the prosecution had failed to prove their case. [The Picton resident]’s legal team cast doubt on the reliability of the prisoners who gave evidence against [him], pointing out that one had received a mobile phone and reduced criminal charges after agreeing to testify. The judge urged caution on the evidence of one of the two inmates who said [the defendant] had confessed to killing Ben and Olivia. But... “That doesn’t mean to say you entirely disregard his evidence.”

...*What the jury wasn’t told* [The defendant] will be back in court accused of attacking a police[officer] during his depositions hearing. [The person who allegedly told a former associate that it ‘wanted to kill someone’,] has been charged with assault, possessing a weapon and damaging a Blenheim police cell... The charges could not be heard earlier because they might have influenced jurors at the murder trial. What the jurors also did not hear was [his] criminal history... Ben and Olivia’s murder[er]... has been in borstal and jail and has more than 40 convictions... In his early 20s, [the defendant] repeatedly threatened another Picton boatie who took out a non-molestation order. Behind bars after his arrest for... double murder[, the defendant]... took on the Black Power, smashing a gang member with a steel bar.

...[the defendant] will appeal against his convictions for murdering Olivia Hope and Ben Smart, says his lawyer... “There’s no question of the fact there will be an appeal. The grounds will centre on the fairness of the trial.” ...Since the guilty verdict the media have publicised [the defendant]’s previous criminal convictions and spoken to people allegedly involved in incidents with him... “The media reaction has been totally ill-considered and has severely compromised his position in the event of his conviction being overturned and a new trial ordered.” ...Although [the defendant] was

sentenced to life imprisonment immediately the verdict was delivered, [the judge] reserved the Crown's ability to ask him to set a minimum time [of '17 years' for the defendant] to be in prison before parole could be considered.

...The star secret witness who told the Marlborough Sounds double murder trial that [the defendant] confessed to the killings now says his evidence was a lie. The former Addington Prison inmate alleges police pressured him into giving false testimony about [the defendant]'s involvement in the murder of Olivia... and Ben... It will never be known what, if any, part witness A's testimony played in the jury's guilty verdict.

...A lawyer for Witness A has a signed document backing claims that police pushed their secret witness into giving false evidence... at the Sounds double-murder trial. The document was sent to the lawyer from a [prisoner who says it] became concerned after hearing a conversation between Witness A and two detectives... [while it] was in the visiting room... in a North Island prison... "[Witness A] knew the Court of Appeal hearing was coming up and... wanted to give evidence that what [it had] said during the trial was a lie. Basically they said to him, if [it did]n't go along with what [it had] said during the trial they would make life very difficult for him... They said to him, 'Stick to your original story'." ...An arrest warrant was issued for Witness A after [Witness A] failed to appear in the Napier District Court this week on a charge of unlawfully taking a motor vehicle.

...[the person who] was pardoned after being wrongly convicted and jailed in 1970 for the murder of farmers Jeanette and Harvey Crewe... wants people to support a new trial for... the [guy] convicted of the Marlborough Sounds murders... [The 62-year-old said the guy could be guilty] when the evidence was studied. "But what I'm saying is the jury has been misled, so you must order a new trial and let another jury look at it. I ask the people of N[Z] to do what they did for me. I'm grateful and thankful for the people who supported me by writing to their MPs." ...The 62-year-old joined his daughter... and about 10 others in a march... organised by [a]Hamilton dentist... at the weekend calling for [the guy] to be freed.

...The secret witness who claimed to have lied on the stand at the Marlborough Sounds double-murder trial has changed his story again in a statement to officers investigating his allegations... His lengthy statement effectively supports his testimony during the trial and says [it] went public about lying under oath last month out of anger at the way [it] had been treated. But in another twist to the saga, the [secret witness] told the *Weekend Herald* [it] had again lied to the Police Complaints Authority and... wanted the real truth out... but would do it in his own time. In a fresh development related to... [the conviction of a Picton resident] for the murders of Olivia Hope and Ben Smart, another witness has recanted. The... manager of the bar at Furneaux Lodge on the night Olivia and Ben disappeared, gave evidence that backed up [a]water taxi driver['s] identification of... the... [defendant] by picking him from a police montage. In an affidavit, [the manager] now says the [guy it saw wasn't the accused.

...the w]rongly jailed American boxer... "The Hurricane"['s]... freedom-fighting organisation is considering throwing its weight behind [Ben and Olivia's]convicted killer... The Canadian group, the Association in Defence of the Wrongfully Convicted, has... [been] looking at the... case and has two lawyers reviewing it. The group's executive secretary... believed there was a "stink" about the case and was "leaning towards him [[the accused]] being not guilty"... [The Hurricane] is coming to N[Z] next month to meet... [the young Dunedinite (rp2581, ln29). • The] controversial painting depicting [the]convicted murderer... holding a gun, surrounded by dead members of his family, has more than doubled in value since it went on display... last week. The painting's new owner was apparently offered \$2000 for the work... The... painting, displayed at Dunedin's community gallery... attracted national attention after [a]... city councillor... tried to shield it from public view with curtains... The curtains around the painting were later removed at the insistence of [the]Mayor... It had been sold to a private buyer earlier in the week for \$800... During the exhibition, one person threatened to throw a brick through the gallery's window... Another... told [the artist it hoped the artist] would apologise to [the central character of her uncommissioned painting when the young Dunedinite] was freed... "I expected a little bit of reaction, but not this," [the artist] said. "Everyone is entitled to their opinions. I guess one of the aims was to get more people thinking about the issue. That's happened..."

...Get rid of the razor wire around prisons, give most inmates keys to their rooms – and let them prepare their own meals. A taskforce appointed by the Canadian Government made these recommendations in a report released yesterday that immediately fuelled the debate over whether Canada is soft on crime. "We strongly believe that real safety is not achieved through the construction of traditional cell blocks with barriers and armed posts," the report said. That resulted in a charge in Parliament from [a member] of the opposition Reform Party that the Liberal Party minister responsible for prisons... was more concerned with appearances than with public safety. "Why is... [the] Solicitor-General... turning our penal institutions into summer camps, and our guards into camp counsellors?" ...Theories of punishment come in and out of fashion – utilitarian ideas like deterrence, prevention and rehabilitation competing with the more retributive, "throw away the key" philosophies. In China justice is supposed to be exemplary. In 1996, Amnesty International says there were 3500 executions carried out as a means of "scaring the monkey by killing the chicken." Amnesty says China has 65 capital offences and the number is growing. In the U[S], shame and public humiliation have made a comeback as suitable punishments. In... Arkansas, for example, a person found guilty of sexual harassment might be ordered to hang a placard listing details of his offence on his front fence. In Illinois, [a 62-year-old]farmer... has to live with a large sign at his gate saying, "Warning. A violent felon lives here. Travel at your own risk." [The farmer] whacked another farmer in the face in a dispute over a faulty fuel pump... [(the fact that t]here are... fewer you[ths]... around in America because so many of them are in prison... [is one explanation given a]s crime in America drops off precipitously)]. In N[Z]... the push is for longer sentences – both to punish and to deter. Introducing his new crime fighting legislation, [the]... Justice Minister... said: "Longer sentences would deny criminals opportunities to reoffend, increase the punishment criminals faced for their crimes, and act as a deterrent." But do longer, "deterrent" sentences actually deter? A comprehensive Ministry of Justice discussion paper dated November 1997, "Sentencing Policy and Guidance," says not. The Ministry, having surveyed international research results, concluded, "While it is reasonable to assume that the very existence of the criminal justice system has some deterrent value, there is little evidence to support the view that increasing the level of sentences will deter the individual offender or would-be offenders in general." It quotes from the conclusions of [a N]Z... researcher... who, in 1993, interviewed convicted offenders: "Penalties alone will not reduce offending. People who have nothing of value have nothing to lose. People who have no sense of belonging have no social status to risk."

...Prisoners at Auckland's high-security Paremoremo jail could meditate their way to a more honest way of life if a proposal tried successfully overseas is approved. Officials are considering introducing the ancient Indian art of Vipassana, under which inmates would meditate in silence for nine days straight... [The person] who teaches Vipassana in N[Z] and is set to introduce it in English prisons, says: "People think it's about closing their eyes for 10 days of bliss, but they couldn't be more wrong. It's like putting your mind on a diet." ...the technique has turned serial killers into saints in prisons around the world by getting them to "take control of their lives and channel them toward their own good." ...□ A[n American]... convicted in 1973 of murdering 25 farm workers in one of the worst strings of serial killings in U[S] history, was among four convicts who were slightly injured... when inmates from a separate cell block tried to attack him and other high profile prisoners... [a US] Department of Corrections spokes[person]... said. Robert F. Kennedy['s] assassin... is among the four dozen occupants of the protected housing unit but was not in the yard at the time of the attack... Prison guards intervened to stop the fight as... other inmates fled. [One infamous mass murderer] left his acoustic guitar in the yard: it was smashed. [Hi]s murderous rampage through southern California in 1969 was depicted in the book and movie *Helter Skelter*. Prison officials attributed the security breach to a faulty light which indicated that the prison yard door was secure. Speaking anonymously... they said they were embarrassed that their most famous charges had been in danger. "To attack one of these inmates is a big badge of honour," [they]... said.

...Unsafe behind bars... [Prisoner]A... was shuffling around the perimeter of Mt Eden prison's main yard shortly after 9am that overcast October. Chatting about nothing in particular with another inmate, [they] joined in the prisoners' routine start to the day – walking in circles around the

yard for an hour. "It's all there is to do... Next thing I see a guy walk in with a broom." [Prisoner A] walked on. His stay in Mt Eden was to be brief. It wasn't the only time the self-described "hard [nut]" had been in on remand but, [it stresses, it]'s never been sentenced to prison time. Over the previous two days... abusive words had passed between him and a guard. The guard had jostled him the day before, but [Prisoner A] assumed the inmate with the broom was merely there to sweep. Until [it] snapped off the broom head. "The next minute [it]'s running at me with this big pole. This guy is a gang member and... comes at me swinging." A black belt in karate, [Prisoner A] threw him off. "But [the guy] attacked me again. This time there was four of them and the fight lasted five minutes." No guards intervened. Despite there being more than 60 inmates in the yard, there was only one guard watching them. [Prisoner A] figures the guard set up the attack, but will never know for sure. [The prisoner] was back in Mt Eden three weeks ago and suffered another "pack attack"... "No one is safe in prison... I've seen a[nother prisoner] lose his teeth. I've seen a [different prisoner have] boiling water poured over him. Every day something's going on. Every day." This week the *Herald* was contacted by a [gal] whose brother was beaten up in prison last week... At Easter, six drunk inmates sexually assaulted a fellow prisoner at Wanganui prison. Only weeks earlier at the same prison, Christopher Hereora, a father of two serving a 14-year sentence for a home invasion, was bashed to death in the showers. Last Saturday... it was... [the turn of t]he owner of Joey, the dog which attacked [a 7-year-old... in January]. The owner was queuing for breakfast after his first night in Mt Eden when [it] was welcomed to prison by an attack which left him with a broken nose, split lips, eye injuries and bruising over his body. The high-profile attack has exposed a level of violence in N[Z] prisons that criminal lawyers describe as endemic. While reports of inmate assaults are often met with public indifference – even glee – it's not just hard cases who are at risk. Normally law-abiding citizens can end up in remand after an isolated brush with the law, and the attack on [Prisoner A] is evidence that even those [who are considered] innocent before the law, are vulnerable.

...A former Mt Eden Prison officer wishes [it] had sued the Government after... [being] stabbed, punched and choked by four Mongrel Mob inmates. [The former prison officer] was shocked to read reports that Mongrel Mob members had received up to \$90,000 in compensation for beatings by guards at Mangaroa Prison, near Hastings. [The former prison officer], aged 45, was left close to death after being attacked... at Mt Eden Prison in 1990. [It] received only \$12,000 from ACC in compensation. "I didn't know that I could sue the Government and I probably didn't get the right legal advice," said... [the] father of six who has not been able to work since the vicious beating. "I'm not angry that the Mongrel Mob inmates got payouts if they deserved them, but I've had no support at all for my attack – just a miserable pension of \$140 a month." [The former prison officer] blames the attack on Government budget cuts which reduced the number of guards on duty when cells were opened and closed. Working alone, [the officer] was forced into a cell by four inmates planning an escape. They stabbed him in the back... stole his keys and attacked two other guards before escaping. After recovering, [the officer] returned to work at the prison but... was assigned the same shift and prison wing, where his attackers were held after being caught. "I just couldn't stay, I was too frightened. It's done me some serious emotional harm. I tried driving taxis but was too afraid to drive at night." ...[a lawyer said the officer] could have sued the Government for exemplary damages or breach-of-contract for failing to protect him... But, court proceedings for exemplary damages have to be filed within two years of an incident. Breach of contract lawsuits have to be filed within six years... A senior police officer who investigated the Mangaroa guards in 1993 wanted them charged with torture. Papers, leaked to the media, showed that two investigating officers believed much of what the inmates said had happened, but no prison officers were prosecuted. In a 1994 report, [the senior police officer wrote]... "In conducting this investigation over the past three months, I have been horrified and increasingly disgusted by the actions discovered of prison officers at Mangaroa Prison, not only in the serious assaults on prison inmates, captive and unable to defend themselves, but also at the lies and collusion designed to defeat the course of justice... In many cases, in terms of morals and criminality, the only thing separating these prison officers from inmates is the style of their uniforms."

...The Tasmanian Government has defended strip-searching children visiting prison because they have been used to smuggle drugs. But [the] Attorney-General... said a complaint by a [visitor] that her 12-year-old daughter and 4-year-old granddaughter were strip-searched at Hobart's Risdon prison would be investigated... "We were treated as though we were the prisoners... My daughter was disgusted and didn't want to take all her clothes off and squat on the floor, but... had no choice... It was freezing and so humiliating for a child." ...[In local news, t]hieves, burglars and other criminals have been ripped off by a Mt Eden Prison employee who siphoned money from their canteen accounts. A Corrections Department spokes[person] yesterday said an administration accounts staff member was fired last month after admitting [it] stole money from inmates...

Seventy prison officers were dismissed, resigned or disciplined for alleged misconduct including drug dealing and sexual relationships with inmates in the past year... Two more officers are on special leave while preliminary investigations are completed... The North Island's Tongariro Rangipo Prison had the largest number of dismissals, with five fired in February. They were accused of using inmates to fix their cars and their dismissals are still the subject of an Employment Tribunal case... The average service... [of t]hose dismissed... was nine years... [The] Corrections Minister... said the number offending was disturbing... [– but "i]n percentage terms it's a reasonably small number..."] The... department employs 2036 officers... [In international news, Colombia's] Supreme Court has ordered prison authorities to allow homosexual prisoners to have conjugal visits. The decision was the result of a lawsuit filed by a [lesbian] prisoner serving a 17-year sentence... after her partner was recently released.

...[an Oklahoma City judge] sentenced ...a... 44[-year-old]... to 1050 years in prison for dragging a [gal] under his car... [In further news from the US, a] father of 13... found guilty of letting his baby daughter die in a van on a sweltering day was given an unusual sentence – probation and one day in jail a year for the next seven years. [The father of 13] will also be required to conduct an annual blood drive on the May 29 anniversary of 21-month-old Frances Kelly's death, the judge ruled... The jury had recommended a one-year prison sentence... Passersby found the girl strapped into her car seat. Authorities think temperatures in the van exceeded 49degC. [Mr]Kelly's wife was in Ireland visiting relatives at the time.

...[a] loyalist killer... made history [yesterday as it] stepped through the turnstile of the Maze. His appearance as a free [person] in the glare of the media was a potent and emotive symbol of the early release of prisoners under the Good Friday Agreement and the passions it has aroused. [The loyalist] was the first of 80 republicans and loyalists convicted of terrorist offences who will be freed this week. Almost all the paramilitaries now in jail will be out and the Maze will close in the next few months. Twelve years ago [the loyalist], now 45, wrote his own chapter in the history of Northern Ireland's strife with an attack on republican mourners at Belfast's Milltown Cemetery. Then, [the loyalist] revelled in his notoriety. But yesterday at the Maze, released early from his conviction for murdering six Catholics, [the loyalist] was keen to avoid any "triumphalism." [The loyalist] refused to say "sorry" for his crimes but promised to work for the new Ulster... Later, at a press conference, [it] said: "My war is over. I regret being drawn into the loyalist paramilitary organisations but, in the early 1970s, we believed that this was a war and the only way to defend our country..." ...[now all the loyalist] wanted to do... was disappear from public view, marry his fiancée... and live a quiet life running a flower shop. [The 45-year-old] has nine children by two previous wives and three grandchildren... "Today is a day of celebration for my friends, myself and my family. But I recognise that there are those in the nationalist and republican community who view my release with anger, just as the release of the republican prisoners on Friday will also anger the loyalist Unionist community... There are no words I can say to take away this hurt." ...the target... at Milltown... [i]s... now the... Education Minister... "[This guy] is now in charge of my grandchildren's education, which is ironic. I tried to assassinate [my target as it] took his own daughter to... school but I didn't, because his daughter was holding his hand." [The loyalist also] alleged that five years ago an unnamed senior republican had said to him shortly before the ceasefire: "You're dead... peace or no peace."

...The story of the Maze is the story of the Troubles. For the past 29 years this bleak, grey prison... has symbolised the unforgiving violence and the bitterness of Ulster's civil war. The Maze held the ruthless killers and bombers of this war... With its notorious H-blocks, hunger strikes... [–] in

the early 1980s... Bobby Sands and nine others starved themselves to death and became martyrs among nationalists... [-] murders among inmates and tales of beatings by staff, the Maze had become the most emotive and controversial prison in the U[K]. With the peace agreement, there was a feeling that it was too much of a reminder of the dark past. What happens to the 52ha site is uncertain. One plan is to turn it into a museum, another is to have it dismantled... At its height, the Maze held 1800 prisoners. After Saturday there will be just 16 left, guarded by a staff of 750. Those staying behind following this week's mass exodus are not expected to remain at the Maze for long. Many will be freed in the next few months and a few will be transferred to other prisons. The ones being kept behind had committed offences after the timescale laid down by the Good Friday Agreement... [The ones] to be released... [were] responsible for some of the most appalling atrocities of the violent strife. Among them will be... [a guy who has] served just two years of a 25-year sentence for... the London Docklands bombing in 1997... Also marking his day of departure will be... [the prisoner] sentenced to nine life terms for the IRA bombing of the Shankill Rd, which killed nine Protestants seven years ago. Also walking out will be [the person found] guilty of 11 killings, including seven at the Rising Sun pub in... Londonderry, which was in revenge for the Shankill bomb.

...As the car sped down the Shankill Rd, a boy of 11 shouted: "That's [the UFF arsehole]." The burly guy] standing next to him corrected him: "No it's not son, [the UFF arsehole i]s back in prison now." But for the fearful residents of the Shankill, who have fallen on the wrong side of the muscle-bound Ulster Freedom Fighters'... figure, [the arsehole]'s ominous presence can still be felt everywhere. Neither of the two on the pavement has a home now: the [burly guy], along with his partner and five children, left his house on the Shankill estate last week, hounded by a UFF mob who threatened to kill him... after a UFF rally... [where] the names of the targets for eviction were read out to the thumping beat of rave music. In the months after his release from the Maze... [the arsehole] brought mayhem and bloodshed to the Shankill, stoking the hatreds between his UFF, the most bloodthirsty branch of the Ulster Defence Association, and the rival Ulster Volunteer Force. Three people have been killed in the past fortnight in violence spawned by the feuding which spread this week from the Shankill to less heavily policed areas of Northern Ireland such as Coleraine and Carrickfergus. Around two dozen houses were attacked and [an] 11-year-old [girl] was badly hurt after being shot in the back. Like the streets of Chicago during Prohibition, the Shankill is the turf that every gang boss wants to dominate. It is the spiritual heart of loyalism. For [guys like the arsehole] to swagger down that stretch of tarmac, defiant in the face of death threats, is to control loyalism itself... Earlier this year, the turf war was fought out with flags. The UFF put up hundreds of pale-blue flags along the Shankill; the UVF tried to cover them over with its own. Today, it looks as though the UFF is winning – a massive banner stretched across the road reads: "UFF/UDA welcomes you to the loyalist Shankill Road." In the Shankill estate, a concrete wasteland strewn with broken glass and the remnants of bonfires, [the arsehole]'s bank of recently commissioned murals dominates the landscape. One pays homage to the dead leader of the Loyalist Volunteer Force... another shows a demon carrying a machinegun and trampling republican graves. Former residents of the estate say the loyalist paramilitaries' driving motivation is the establishment of a drugs empire... Protection rackets have spread across Northern Ireland, and can run from the collection of £10... a week from a chip shop to much larger sums from bigger enterprises. Shady loyalist drinking dens are becoming less popular with the paramilitaries: instead, they are putting their money into more respectable pubs, where the money that they raise from drugs and extortion can be laundered easily. Both the UDA and the UVF are known for attempting to extort money from businesses. "UDA [members] might walk into a garage that is doing well and say: 'Nice business you've got here'... Then they would try to come to an arrangement with the owner, whereby [the owner] paid them a cut. If [the owner refused, it] would face the threat of being burned out: they might intimidate the staff or fire shots in the air to show their power." Drugs are now the loyalists' main source of income... Organised crime has always played a part in inter-loyalist tensions. Paramilitaries turned to racketeering to fund their arsenals during the 1970s when the rivalry between the two spilled into bloodshed. During the 1980s huge illegal profits flowed into the UDA from protection rackets in the building trade. Now, with profits booming from the new trade in cannabis and Ecstasy, the stakes are higher than ever. In his office... the Ulster Unionist councillor for the Shankill, deals with a constant stream of families who have been put out of their homes by the UFF. Surrounded by unsettled children and harassed-looking mothers, [the councillor] said: "They have been told: 'You're no longer welcome. Get out or we'll shoot you.' Unless the community can stop it, things will get worse..." Some of the families had connections with the UVF... but some were simply those who had voiced opposition to the UFF. Fear is now a constant presence, according to... a Presbyterian minister who has spent 30 years mediating between loyalist terror groups. "You find yourself in situations where... you know by the attitude of people that they are exceedingly frightened. There is almost a fear of talking to people at times. They just want to get away from this. On both sides of the loyalist paramilitary divide there is hurt and anger because they have lost colleagues and friends. The killing has got to stop." ...[the arsehole] was sent back to prison on the instruction of... the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland...

Police investigating the murder of Belfast solicitor Patrick Finucane 11 years ago plan to arrest and interview more than two dozen former members of the Force Research Unit, a shadowy intelligence outfit that ran British Army agents. Detectives involved in the inquiry, headed by [the] Metropolitan Police Commissioner... are also looking into allegations that security forces colluded in terrorist murders. The Army granted the inquiry's request for thousands of secret documents last month. [The commissioner] is heading his third inquiry into events linked to the U[DA]'s shooting of Finucane in this north Belfast home... Among those expected to be interviewed is... [the] commander of the research unit when an earlier... investigation discovered that the Ulster association's intelligence officer... was an Army agent. [The former commander is now a] British military attaché in Beijing. Meanwhile... the Northern Ireland Secretary, this week called for fresh examinations of several IRA arms bunkers. Ulster Unionists, facing a byelection in South Antrim next week, said any inspections were no substitute for decommissioning.

...The notorious Mt Eden Prison is likely to close within three years. Plans to end the Auckland landmark's days as a jail have emerged with the Government's commitment to push ahead with a regional prison in South Auckland. [The]Corrections Minister... said... "I want Mt Eden to go... It's a prison built for 19th-century philosophy... We want to be able to develop rehabilitative programmes, community access and to foster reintegration with family. Mt Eden does not fit any category like that..." ...Prison reformers have long decried Mt Eden... as a national disgrace. But their calls for action are nothing new. [The]Howard League for Penal Reform... says people have been pleading for 70 years for its closure... But... it could not... close... until the South Auckland prison was built because of the number of prisoners... The decision to proceed with a prison in South Auckland has been an on-again, off-again affair for several years [('the new prison is now delayed until 2002')] with residents opposed to [its] development in the [ir] area... Some of the pressure will be taken off Mt Eden... when the neighbouring Auckland Central Remand Prison opens.

...N[Z]'s first private jail[, which is being built]... next to Auckland's antiquated Mt Eden jail, will open in [two months]. It will house up to 251 [inmates]... Prisoners at the Australasian Correctional Management Ltd centre will be housed in a modern facility with pleasant surroundings. But trade-offs are understood to include less visiting time than other jails... Each cell has provision for a TV but prisoners won't be able to smoke in their rooms. Inmates can only light up in designated areas and quit smoking programmes will be available. "If an inmate escapes, it will cost... [ACM,] the corrections department general manager of service purchase monitoring... told *Sunday News*. "But there are also clauses which will reward ACM for things such as prisoner employment and rehabilitation." ...A[CM] will get a \$500,000 bonus if they meet annual targets.

...N[Z] prison authorities hoping for lower rates of violence and savings for taxpayers from the introduction of private prisons are likely to be disappointed... A[n analyst for] the Crime Institute in Washington and the U[S] National Council on Crime and Delinquency, told a Sydney forum that research showed savings were about 1[%] – or effectively nil. Promises that all other areas of prison operation would benefit were also far-fetched. Incidents of prisoner violence, death rates and recidivism were no lower than in public prisons... Private jails hold almost a quarter of A[US]'s prison population – compared with 4[%] in the U[S] – giving it the highest rate of privatised jails in the world. The running of private

prisons in Victoria especially has been under constant criticism for secrecy, preventing impartial attempts to measure performance. Community legal centres have been forced to take the state Government to court to try to gain access to information... [on] prisoners... in private jails... [Incidentally, n]obody has broken out of the Idaho State Correctional Institution in more than 20 years. Prison officials like to think a hard-bitten corps of sentries with names like Cookie, Bongo and Chi Chi has had something to do with that. The institution is the only state prison in the U[S] to use snarling, snapping sentry dogs to patrol its perimeter... Get too close to the fence and they will bare their teeth, bark and lunge. Set foot in their space and they attack. The animals themselves are former death row inmates – dogs that were deemed too dangerous to be pets and would have been destroyed at the local pound if they had not been given a reprieve and assigned to prison duty... [T]he canines... cost... less... and are more reliable during power outages than electrical security systems and more effective in the fog and dark than the humans posted in the lookout towers. They also have a powerful deterrent effect. No one... [at] the 1500-inmate medium-security prison... has even tried to get past the fences...

A violent inmate placed a dummy in his bed, changed his clothes and walked unnoticed out the front door of the privately run Auckland Remand Prison during visiting hours yesterday. It is the first escape from N[Z]'s only private prison... Under its contract with the Department of Corrections, the company must pay \$50,000 for every escape... last night [the prisoner] was still on the run. The escape comes as no surprise to former prison officers, who say they quit because there are not enough staff to make the job safe. They also claim visiting hours are often monitored by a single officer, making it easy for drugs and clothes to be smuggled in. Yesterday, manage[rs from ACM] declined to comment...

Serial numbers of prison keys for the privately run Auckland Central Remand Prison, and orders for them to be cut, have been inadvertently faxed to an Auckland warehouse... Challenge Steel's bulk steel supplies office in Penrose confirmed it received the fax... addressed to Key 'n' Lock Services, which is owned by Chubb... *Herald* inquiries have revealed that the... Department of Corrections was unaware of the security breach. The revelation is the second serious security breach discovered at the prison and follows the escape of a violent inmate who walked... out its front door...

Serious violent offenders, including rapists, may be approved for home detention in future, as [the]Corrections Minister... looks at ways of relieving pressure on prisons. Until now, serious offenders have been... excluded from the scheme, which allows minimal-risk inmates to... serve their sentence at home under electronic monitoring. [The minister] is confident that releasing serious offenders into a safe, monitored environment towards the end of their sentences would reduce reoffending. Inmates would have to show a willingness to address the cause of their offending...

The number of prisoners in N[Z] is at the highest level in history... 8509 people [are]in prisons or police stations nationwide – 16 higher than... on September 7. In... August the Government announced it would build a container cell block at Rimutaka prison. [The]... Corrections Minister... said yesterday... that would not be enough and said double bunking was also necessary to manage the "serious capacity crisis"... [In related news, t]housands of criminals kept receiving benefits after they went to jail because a computer fault meant welfare officials were unaware they had been locked up... A data-matching program that compares the names of newly imprisoned criminals and beneficiaries broke down... for up to 16 months... when the Department of Corrections introduced a new computer system... After the Corrections Department introduced its new database, the number of records compared dropped by more than 10,000. Initially, officials said the decline was the result of the system's greater efficiency. However, the ministry was suspicious and began to compare information using other means... More than \$2.2 million was wrongly paid last year, and the Ministry of Social Development faces having to recover the money once the prisoners are released.

...The tiny Pacific island of Niue looks set to free its prisoners and close its jail as it begins celebrating 25 years of self-rule this weekend. The plan, confirmed this week by the Premier... is worrying Foreign Affairs officials in Wellington and has been sharply criticised by the island's former Police Commissioner[, who is]... now an Auckland detective... [The detective,] who was dumped from his... Police Commissioner... post in May after a confrontation with the Government, said the idea was disgraceful... "If the Government releases the prisoners, it is meddling with the judicial process... The resulting message to the community is that [guys] who violate girls will not be put in jail and the victims will then have to accept the risk of violation or assault as part of life." ...[however, the Premier], who returned to Niue this week after a two-month convalescence following heart surgery[– and]... was aware of N[Z]'s concerns because the High Commissioner to Niue... closely quizzed him over the issue... [– said] the island had no serious offenders or hardcore criminals. "Why have a prison to lock up people for petty crimes? Surely, why not[just have] periodic detention?" ...The Acting Niue Police Commissioner... said the prison held just four inmates at the moment... [–] serving jail terms of up to nine years for crimes such as rape, incest and indecent assault... [– so Niue's Acting Police Commissioner] had no concerns about closing it. "We [already] send them home at weekends,"... But [Niue's Acting Police Commissioner] agreed that victims might be concerned if inmates were set free.

...Russia plans to set free about one in every 10 prisoners to ease overcrowding in its spartan, cash-strapped jails. Russia[']s Prime Minister... hailed the amnesty, saying it would free space in jail for criminals who committed white-collar economic crimes.

...When the Russian Parliament passed an amnesty law last month... [–] one of several passed in recent years[–] ...deputies said they were acting to reduce overcrowding in the struggling, disease-ridden prison system... [(t)uberculosis afflicts about 100,000 inmates, and about 10,000 inmates die from the illness each year[)]... However, in a loophole applying to holders of state or military honours they opened the prison gates for several dozen – or several hundred – convicted and suspected murderers and other serious criminals, prosecutors said this week... Those affected include war crimes suspects from Russia's military campaign in Chechnya, like the Russian Army colonel accused of raping and killing a Chechen teenage girl this spring... According to witnesses interviewed by New York-based Human Rights Watch... 18-year-old Heda Kungayeva... was at home with her family... in the village of Tangi-Chu... when Russian soldiers dragged her away in an armoured personnel carrier. Her body was reportedly found two days later, badly disfigured... The colonel was earlier awarded two medals for his actions in Chechnya. Also qualifying for amnesty are officers from an airborne unit accused of planting a suitcase bomb that killed journalist Dmitry Kholodov in 1994, said the prosecutor's office... The lapse in Russia's usually draconian justice system rang alarm bells at the prosecutor's office, which has persuaded legislators to reconsider the law... A Justice Ministry spokes[person] said no one accused or convicted of grave crimes has yet gone free under the amnesty, but some had applied. Suspects in detention centres must admit guilt to take advantage of the amnesty, which some have refused to do... The amnesty... was meant to commemorate the 55th anniversary of the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany... [In addition to] those holding state or military honours regardless of their crime... [i]t covered people who committed minor offences, inmates suffering from tuberculosis, pregnant [inmates and] invalids... Russia has the largest per capita rate of incarceration in the world and the second-largest prison population after the U[S], with about 1 million people behind bars... A record 1.86 million Americans were locked up... [last year. Speaking of US justice, a] MENTALLY ill deaf [person] spent nearly two years in jail before anyone realised [it] did not belong there. The charge against him was dismissed [two years ago].

...More than 100 seriously mentally ill prisoners should be in hospital, not jail, according to a report kept from the public for 10 months. The report, finally released yesterday, said an alarming number of severe cases were slipping through the prison system, and that nearly 60[%] of inmates had at least one personality disorder. Researchers uncovered... previously undetected cases of schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, where inmates required immediate hospital treatment. [40%] of schizophrenics were going unnoticed and untreated... [By the way, s]upport groups have condemned a Government plan to lock up some intellectually disabled people considered dangerous... The Ministry of Health estimates that about 200 people fit this definition – including 50 in the criminal justice system for serious offenders... [The] Justice Action Group convenor... said... "You can call it a home but when you lock the doors... and... give them... medication they don't want... it's just a prison by another name."

...Plans to lock up mentally ill Proposed legislation... in Britain to detain people with dangerous personality disorders in secure hospitals indefinitely – even if they have committed no crime – are being criticised as "fundamentally flawed". Under new powers, published as draft legislation by the Government yesterday, other mentally ill people could be forced to take prescribed medication or to undergo treatment in the

community. The compulsory measures aim to close a loophole that allows people with severe personality disorders to avoid detention by arguing they would not benefit from treatment. Ministers hailed the bill as the first major overhaul of mental health laws since the 1950s. But the Law Society and the Royal College of Psychiatrists condemned the plans as too complex, too costly and unworkable because they would require 600 extra psychiatrists... The Mental Health Alliance, speaking for more than 50 charities, said compulsory detentions... backfire because they... deter people from seeking voluntary treatment... Under the plans, two doctors and a mental health professional will have to decide whether someone needs compulsory treatment to prevent that person becoming a public danger. These powers will be limited to 28 days unless a new mental health tribunal grants an order allowing the treatment to continue for a further six months. After that, subsequent treatment orders can be made for periods up to a year. The... bill would apply to more than 26,000 people a year who are sectioned under the 1983 Mental Health Act. Of these, an estimated 2400 have “dangerous and serious personality disorders”... includ[ing] 1800 who are in high-security prisons or psychiatric hospitals...

On a London Tube platform in December 1992, 27-year-old musician Jonathon Zito was stabbed three times in the head, including the eye, by a tall, 115kg [stranger]... Zito died two hours later. [The stranger], it turned out, had a long history of mental illness. Indeed, [the stranger] had tried to attack someone else the previous week. Zito's widow, [who is] a former mental health worker, was appalled... [upon learning] that someone so ill had been wandering the streets. [The stranger, who] had been discharged from nine psychiatric units in five years... was known to be violent and to carry knives. Yet nobody was responsible for him. So much, then, for community care. [Zito's wife] went on to fight for reform of care in the community, demanding a public inquiry after her husband's death and setting up a trust to lobby on behalf of victims' families. Initially, [the wife] met with official indifference. “The attitude was, ‘Yes, yes, you have had a terrible experience but you're over-reacting. Jonathon was in the wrong place at the wrong time’... Once I started demanding an inquiry I was in a hostile political environment. It was obvious they didn't have a clue about the extent of the problem.” Today [the wife] feels enormous relief... Last December, the British Government declared community care for the mentally ill a failure and said it must be put right... [T]hree decades of horrific statistics... [and] more than 40 published inquiries... [s]ince December 1992... had finally declared to many people – and the Government – that enough was enough... [The] British Health Secretary... [has] promised that the \$2.1 billion community care fix-it would mean more secure beds for the mentally ill and the creation of “assertive outreach” teams to keep tabs on people living outside hospital. [The health secretary] made it clear, too, that his Government expected legal changes to “ensure compliance with appropriate treatment” and said it was discussing plans for a new form of renewable detention for people with [ment]al disorders considered untreatable. The sweeping changes have not been short of critics, including [the]Liberal Democrat health spokes[person, who recently said:] “By forcing patients to take their medication against their will, some will be kept drugged to stop them causing trouble... This is not treatment, but incarceration.” [However, the health secretary has] dismissed the protests, declaring that the “safety of the public must be the prime concern.” ...So, where Britain goes, N[Z] follows? Perhaps not. When [the British health secretary] flagged the changes in January, N[Z] health officials ruled out similar moves here. The Health Funding Authority's national director of mental health... said at the time that... [a]lthough there was a need for lockup units, they were not seen as a solution to the problems...

When the British Minister of Health... announced that the policy of attempting to care for severely mentally ill people in the community was to be scrapped in favour of secure units, the first question many asked was, “Why did it take so long?” Britain has around one murder every two weeks that involves a person diagnosed as mentally ill. The same group produces 1000 suicides a year. In the U[S], where some states began – quietly – reopening such institutions almost 10 years ago, the figures are just as ugly. There are still 1000 homicides a year as a result of violence by the mentally ill in the U[S. NZ] has a high-profile tragedy involving a psychiatrically disturbed person every few months... The history of community care in N[Z] follows, predictably, and depressingly, in the footsteps of the U[S] and British experiments... While the laws emphasised community care by bolstering the rights of patients, they also diminished the rights of their families – so preventing them from attempting to “commit” members to secure institutional care. The feeling behind the law was that no matter how incompetent a patient might be, it was his or her “right” to live in the community. The concept of community care was eagerly adopted by a new breed of hospital managers, who had moved into the health system in the early 1980s hell-bent on saving money... For around 80[%] of patients who used to trail round the echoing wards of Carrington being harassed by their more forceful ward-mates, the changes were mostly for the better. Although many older patients found it difficult to adjust to looking after themselves, most began to enjoy a life of relative independence. But for the 20[%] of very unstable patients in the psychiatric spectrum, the experiment has been a disaster. In the past 10 years many have been ripped off by unscrupulous halfway house operators. Many have slid into a half-world where cannabis and other illegal and legal drugs increase their paranoia... It is at this level, where mentally ill people lapse into violent and paranoid episodes, that patients become a danger to themselves, their families and, sometimes, to the community.

...Courts need the power to force community mental health patients to live in one place, says a judge worried about mental health “timebombs.” [The]Auckland District and Family Court Judge... [made his comments while addressing] the Auckland conference of the A[USn and NZ] Association of Psychiatry, Psychology and Law... The... head of Auckland's Mason Clinic... and... the conference convener, backed the judge's comments... [but] if community patients were forced to stay in one place, the state would have to pay... [It] told the conference that of the 11 incidents of murder and other violent crimes by mental patients... subject to formal inquiries from 1988 to 1998, [8] were found to be preventable.

...A warning has been sounded that... [because] the... Mason Clinic... d[oes] not have enough beds... Auckland harbours up to 60 mental health “timebombs.” This comes in the wake of a report... stemming from a Mental Health Act inquiry... into the care of... a diagnosed schizophrenic who stabbed ACC worker Janet Pike to death last year. [The schizophrenic] fell between the cracks of the mental health and criminal justice systems despite a horrific history of violent public attacks... The inquiry panel found that the general attitude from mental health staff was that there was “little to achieve” by putting [the schizophrenic] in hospital at any time or detaining him under the act. In noting that his is not an isolated case, the report is fatalistic, saying: “There are a number of timebombs like [him] in the community. We can do little or nothing about many of them until they explode. We cannot and should not arrest and detain on suspicion and supposition.” But the report does recommend some changes to care, particularly for better liaison between services and more information sharing... The... report finds that “landlords, flatmates, family members are not currently being informed as they should be in community placement of mental health consumers.” It says privacy code guidelines are not giving a clear message to mental health workers as to what information can and cannot be shared... The inquiry panel, under the district mental health inspector... says [the schizophrenic]'s history should have been made available to his caregivers and family, whether [the schizophrenic] allowed it or not... A... family spokes[person] yesterday pleaded for better psychiatric care, saying: “If something is wrong you don't just chuck people out into the community and say, ‘Fend for yourself’.” The... [schizophrenic], aged 36, stabbed Mrs Pike in her Henderson office after a dispute over a \$350 payment. [The schizophrenic] pleaded guilty to murder and is serving a life sentence. His history of violence dates back to 1981. Gaps in his care were... partly caused by his tendency to move about. At the time of the killing [the schizophrenic] was an outpatient of South Auckland Health, and living at a boarding house... [that wasn't] registered as a health agency... so transfer of information about [him] did not occur.

...A WAI Health worker says west Auckland mental health services abandoned... a diagnosed schizophrenic now serving a life sentence for the murder of ACC worker Janet Pike... A 200-page report into [the schizophrenic]'s care... says, while [hi]s mental illness was adequately treated, his other problems such as housing and personality disorders were not. The report says the Henderson ACC may have dealt differently with [the schizophrenic] had staff known of his history of violence triggered by money worries. [The schizophrenic] argued with Mrs Pike at the Lincoln Rd offices over \$350 [it] believed the ACC owed him, before leaving to buy a knife and returning to stab her. The report suggests alerts about high-risk mental health patients may have to be sent around public and private agencies. But [the WAI Health worker] says that doesn't solve the

problem of many more... [schizophrenics] in west Auckland who are falling between the cracks in mental health services and community care. "At the end of the day [the schizophrenic] was exported out of west Auckland and placed in south Auckland because people in west Auckland didn't want to deal with him..." [The schizophrenic] was born and bred in west Auckland... [and] knew how to reach out to the mental health services in west Auckland..." [However, the]Waitemata Health chief executive... says [the schizophrenic] wasn't abandoned by the mental health service... [The d]eputy director of mental health... says [the] case highlights the difficulty of caring for someone with several psychiatric conditions, not all of which may be treatable. Managing an itinerant such as [the schizophrenic] and his risk to others requires a "high level of communication between all agencies," says [the director]. Work is under way to improve that... with "one file per patient" and reliable systems to transfer information about high-risk patients between health providers and non-government organisations.

...The families of two Raurimu massacre victims are suing health provider Capital Coast Health for inadequately monitoring[the] killer... They also claim it failed to protect the community from someone known to be unstable and potentially violent... [A] lawyer acting for the families, said... [the] principal issue was accountability, not money, but this was the only avenue of redress... [as] Capital Coast Health had accepted no responsibility for the shooting... rampage... [that killed six] people... The... provider's chief executive... last night indicated it would fight the claims.

...The treatment of... a paranoid schizophrenic... leading up to the Raurimu massacre was adequate, says the chief executive of Capital Coast Health. [The chief executive] yesterday became the last witness to take the stand at the inquest into the deaths of six people shot... at Raurimu in... 1997... [A coroner had] queried Capital Coast's failure to front up at the hearing initially. "Was this a strategy to avoid difficult questions?" [The chief executive] replied that the healthcare provider had no reason to be defensive... [The chief executive] disputed provisional criticism from the Taumarunui coroner... about the standard of care given to... [the patient, and] said knowledge of his preoccupation with firearms and history of violence would not have changed his treatment... [But the chief executive] agreed that his statements about the treatment were hearsay. [The coroner]: "So whether or not [the patient]'s treatment was adequate, you would accept that the evidence of others at this inquest might be preferred to your own on this point?" [The chief executive] agreed, and the inquest was over... [Earlier, the chief executive had] devoted most of his testimony to explaining how Capital Coast ha[s] improved its systems since the tragedy. [The coroner]'s decision on whether [the patient] had received adequate care may hang on which account of a traumatic family meeting [it accepts. The patient]'s former psychiatric nurse... told the first hearing... [- which] was adjourned last August to give those in line for criticism time to respond... [-] that at the meeting two months before the massacre, [the patient]'s family were unhappy at his deterioration and failure to take his medication. This week, [the nurse] said the reverse... While his first evidence had been prepared by police, his later evidence had been prepared with the help of Capital Coast Health lawyers... All the mental health experts who gave evidence agreed that [the] parents should not be blamed for the tragedy, as they were not trained to spot... warning signs.

...[a m]ass-killer... told his mother... [it] would... burn... down his family's Raurimu holiday house. On February 8, 1997, [the son] did not have to. The paranoid schizophrenic, whose firearms licence had been revoked, had easy access to a shotgun and ammunition. Yesterday the Taumarunui coroner... delivered his findings into the second-worst mass killing in N[Z]'s history. The coroner... did not spare the Wellington mental health provider, Capital Coast Health, from criticism. But [the coroner] laid the blame for the killings on the shoulder's of [the] father... the first of the six victims. "[This was a guy] familiar with firearms, but his attitude to storage was casual and careless. That attitude cost him and five others their lives." [The coroner] said that if [the father] had locked away his guns as required by law, the tragedy would never have occurred... While [the son] might have remained a potential timebomb, [it] would not have run amok with a gun. [The coroner excused the mother]'s failure to respond to the sight of her son unloading a gun... just days before the tragedy. [The mother] had been overwhelmed by her son's bizarre behaviour, and could not recognise how ill [her son had become. The coroner], who has devoted countless hours to wrapping up the official file on the tragedy, [also]said it was easy to make adverse comments in hindsight, and... those involved had done their best. "They did not set out to fail, and if they did fail to some extent, that is more an example of being human [beings]than anything else." But the lack of appropriate systems in Capital Coast Health's treatment of [the son] and their inadequacy came under attack, as well as the confidentiality constraints under which mental health providers worked. The coroner stopped short of saying that [the son] should have been locked away before the shooting rampage... However... a point has to be reached when clinicians pursued compulsory treatment options. "The situation cannot be permitted to arise where treatment is watered down simply so that it complies with what the patient will accept." ...[the coroner] was disturbed by the apparent lack of leadership in the mental health team... [and] recommended that teams designate someone to have ultimate control and responsibility.

...An 8-year-old girl stabbed to death in her bed by her insane father was a victim of system failures and a mental health law that encourages community-based treatment, the Christchurch coroner has found... [Therefore, the coroner] found that no clinician or individual was responsible... But the report issued yesterday... has devastated [the girl's mother], who is convinced her daughter would be alive if welfare and health officials had heeded her pleas and warnings. Lisa Michelle Hope was stabbed repeatedly by Ian Shaun Hope, who believed [it] was the third son of God and that God wanted a blood sacrifice on the night of December 16, 1998. Lisa and her brother... who was in the same room and slept through the killing, were due to fly to Auckland the next day to return to their mother's custody. Ian... had suffered a mental breakdown in June that year and was an inpatient at Sunnyside Hospital for more than a month. [Ian] was diagnosed schizophrenic and became the subject of a District-Court-imposed community treatment order after being discharged. After being charged with the murder, [Ian] was returned to Sunnyside for psychiatric assessment, and later killed himself in the hospital. Healthlink South commissioned a review of its handling of Ian... and released the finding - that neither his death nor that of his daughter could be attributed to inadequate care or lack of skill or money. But it did not release the full report. [The coroner] said it was recognised that Ian... had a high risk of relapse because [it] stopped taking medication and used cannabis, which made him delusional. "It is not an ideal treatment to leave a person with a psychosis of this nature unmedicated." Although clinicians knew [their patient] had assaulted and threatened to kill his estranged wife, they did not seek details about the violence involved and accepted his word that charges had been withdrawn, which was untrue. [Lisa's mother] tried to get interim custody of her children in July while Ian... was in Sunnyside... Social Welfare staff had told [the coroner] they were overworked and underfunded so could not meet a judge's deadline for reporting back, meaning the decision on granting the mother custody was delayed. [The coroner]'s recommendations include steps to ensure judges are notified of such delays. [Lisa's mother] described the findings as "absolute crap. A few little slaps on the hands but it's nothing compared to the loss of life."

...[Opposition MPs are] demanding a full inquiry into the way Southland Hospital treated [a]paranoid schizophrenic... who murdered his mother. But the P[M] said yesterday that a full ministerial inquiry was unlikely. "This is at least the third inquiry they [[the Opposition]] have called for in a week... They shouldn't hold their breath." Just a day after being officially released from Southland Hospital in Invercargill this year, [the]20-year-old... drove to his family home in Queenstown and stabbed his mother, Patricia Anne Burton, to death. In the High Court at Invercargill last week, [the son] was found not guilty by reason of insanity... Southland Health, asked yesterday about [the 20-year-old]'s treatment and release - particularly... matters raised by his father... - declined to answer specific questions, saying they would be addressed through [an] external audit.

...I WONDER when somebody will offer an apology, one that actually means something, to [the guy whose wife was murdered by their schizophrenic s]on. But things being as they are, I won't exactly be holding my breath. I wonder how [the guy] holds his life together and believes in anything at all, after his personal experience of the mental health system. His controlled anger and determination to keep the subject in the public arena are a credit to him, but like many family members of the mentally ill, [the guy] is effectively powerless, however much noise... [it makes. The guy, a]s we all know... was first to respond to the emergency call to his own home, where [it] found his wife, stabbed to death by his son... His other

son had hidden from the killer. As we also know, [the father] had foreseen this tragedy and had made responsible efforts to prevent it. [The son] had been admitted to psychiatric care at Southland Hospital... [The son] was a schizophrenic who abuses drugs and alcohol, a combination that would alert anyone with common sense to the danger [it] posed to the community. [The son] also harboured ill-will towards his family and they were afraid of him. [The father] wrote a letter to the hospital warning them that the family's lives were all at risk if [the son] was released. That is what any sensible parent would have done and the fact that [it]'s a police[officer], with inevitable long experience of disturbed people's behaviour, ought to have counted for something... In his job, [the guy] has to take notice of what people tell him and to act appropriately. [The guy] was not to know that the people in charge of his son wouldn't even do him the courtesy of reading his letter, or that they'd be free to release the disturbed boy into the community without even consulting his father. The case is so bleakly shocking that it almost defies belief. [The son] was no sooner released (to a flat on his own, for heaven's sake!) than [it] drove directly to his family home to carry out his long-standing threats. And – wait for it – once again nobody is to blame... The... case is not unique. It showcases the unreality that has invaded mental health care, in which the families of the mentally ill too often carry the burden of the system's failures and are too often talking sense that nobody wants to hear... [■ T]he murder of a Rotorua [resident] by her mentally ill tenant has brought an admission of professional errors and more calls to tighten the Mental Health Act. [The tenant], aged 31, was found not guilty by reason of insanity in the High Court at Rotorua yesterday of murdering his landlady, Joanna Monk, and attempting to murder her husband... Mental health specialists had assessed [the tenant] on four occasions, but while [the 31-year-old] was diagnosed with various disorders and prescribed medication, [it] did not follow through with treatment. The country's most senior mental health officer... who gave evidence at the trial, said [the tenant] tried to hide his illness but it should have been obvious to doctors that [the 31-year-old] desperately needed help. In four years [the tenant] was seen by doctors in Rotorua, Invercargill and Christchurch... Southland Hospital... would not comment, and the director of Christchurch's [psychiatric h]ospital... could not be contacted... [The] secretary of Caring Communities, a group which keeps records of psychiatric-related homicides, said this was just one of a growing list of tragedies where people with a history of mental disorder had been allowed to remain in the community. Incidents in which the mentally ill turned away by health services went on to kill had happened "with monotonous regularity."

...a psychiatric patient... discharg[ed] from Hutt Hospital... later killed and beheaded his girlfriend, a Wellington inquest has been told. [The patient], 27, who killed Fiona Maulolo, 31, in April 1997, is being detained at Porirua Hospital[after being] found not guilty of murder because of insanity. [A]Dr... who had been asked by Hutt Valley Health to review [the patient]'s case, testified that [a]Polish doctor... was negligent to discharge him from compulsory treatment without a clinical report giving her reasons. Earlier, there was evidence that [the]... Polish doctor... lied about her work experience to gain a psychiatric post at Hutt Valley Health, which has since overhauled its procedures... [The Polish doctor's negligence was compounded by] a newly appointed Maori mental health worker, who was supposed to keep in contact with [the patient] after his discharge, [but]failed to do so. [The Maori mental health worker] also did not tell other team members that [the patient]'s doctor was concerned about the lack of continuing care. [The patient] could not be reached by the time the mental-health team became aware of those concerns. [The patient] was admitted to intensive care at Hutt Hospital... after overdosing on drugs or alcohol. Police found Ms Maulolo's body two days later.

...[a suspect] accused of murdering [his]former Wellington flatmate Gavin Dash, was last night found not guilty on the grounds of insanity. The jury took eight hours to find the unemployed [suspect], aged 27, not guilty of murder but guilty of a burglary... [The suspect] admitted strangling Mr Dash and later cutting off his head and burying his body in bush at Makara Hill, Wellington... then burgled Mr Dash's new flat in Pembroke Rd, Northland, to make it seem as though Mr Dash was simply a missing person, the Crown alleged. In the High Court at Wellington yesterday, [the judge]... summed up the five-week trial... [by telling] the jurors that they should not decide the issue like a panel of doctors. Psychiatrists called by both the Crown and the defence had agreed that [the suspect] probably had schizophrenia... But [the judge] said the jury had to decide if [the] illness was so bad at the time of the murder and the burglary that [the suspect] was unable to know it was morally wrong. Last night, Gavin's father... said the family[– who 'ask how juries can decide' on such medical issues –] were disappointed by the verdict. "It's a sad day for justice."

...The families of murder victim Malcolm Beggs and the disturbed teenager who killed him with an axe are both appalled at the failure of the mental health system. They spoke yesterday of their grief at what they believe were preventable deaths. Mr Beggs' body was found in his bed at his Henderson home on Monday... [19]-year-old Lachlan Alexander Jones was found in the garage, dead from carbon monoxide poisoning. Police say they found about six stubbies in Jones' room at the house in Universal Drive, but do not believe alcohol or drugs were a factor. No note was found, and detectives say they may never know what set Jones off. Mr Beggs' sister... demanded to know who was accountable for allowing Jones to leave the Te Atarau acute psychiatric unit at Waitakere Hospital against medical advice in July. [The sister] found it perverse that a nurse invaded her brother's privacy by entering his home without his knowledge to see Jones, yet the Privacy Act was the reason Mr Beggs could not be told of his flatmate's condition. Last night Jones' father, [a]newspaper editor... said: "I think Lachlan has been let down by the system. Why was [Lachlan] allowed to discharge himself if [Lachlan] was mentally ill?" ...his son first started becoming withdrawn at about 16, and had begun hearing voices and having visions, although [it hadn't] been formally diagnosed as schizophrenic... Waitemata Health has begun an inquiry into the mental health services' dealings with and follow-up care of Jones, who was first admitted to hospital a year ago after a failed suicide bid... A mobile intensive treatment team had been seeing him to ensure [the teenager] took his medication, but Mr Beggs had no idea [Lachlan] was mentally ill... Beggs' sister, a 19-year-old trainee nurse, said yesterday that her brother spoke to her of his concerns last Wednesday. "One day a nurse came around and [Malcolm wondered why. Malcolm] was joking about it, but I think deep down [Malcolm was worried.]" ...if her brother had known about Jones' mental history, [it] would not just have kicked him out on to the street. "Malcolm was a good guy and... was prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt." ...The director of mental health services for Waitemata Health... said it was a tragedy that two young [guys] had died, but if anything was to blame it was society's prejudice against the mentally ill... "It's often in their interests that key people they live with... know they have a mental illness, but you're not going to tell them on day one when you don't know whether that person will then pull the rug from under your feet."

...Malcolm Beggs... was concerned about his "weird" new flatmate, [so his sister] jokingly told him to watch his back. Referring to a crime which had taken place in their neighbourhood, [the sister] said, "That guy down the road got killed by his flatmate. You should lock the doors or yours could murder you in your sleep." Malcolm told her, "Well, I wonder if [Lachlan]'s planning something like that." Now, recalling what [was said, the sister] shakes her head in disbelief. "I was joking. It was just one of those things you say..." Just days after that conversation, Malcolm... was murdered in his bed by his flatmate... The day after the bodies were discovered, police told Malcolm's parents... Lachlan... had been a psychiatric patient... and [was]... believed to be schizophrenic... The Beggs family is furious Malcolm wasn't told about Lachlan's history... "Our family is not prejudiced against mental illness... But Malcolm... certainly wouldn't have been happy about Lachlan staying if [Malcolm had known Lachlan] had the word 'murder' carved into the side of his leg..." Malcolm had been happy living alone in the house [it] bought a year earlier but realised... a flatmate... [was] needed... to help pay the mortgage. Quiet teenager Lachlan Jones answered a "flatmate wanted" ad. Malcolm wanted someone who was employed and Lachlan told him [it] worked for a shower manufacturer ([Lachlan] didn't). Lachlan moved in... but the pair didn't see much of each other – Malcolm left for work as a diesel mechanic before Lachlan got up, and when they were both home, the younger [guy] spent most of his time in his room... Malcolm later told his family [about being] worried Lachlan was a bit "weird", partly because [Lachlan] spent so much time in his room... Those worries grew when a nurse came to the house one day, looking for Lachlan. When Malcolm said his flatmate wasn't there, the nurse handed Malcolm some tablets and asked him to give them to Lachlan. Malcolm had no idea what the tablets were for, or that a

nurse... had been coming to the house every day to give Lachlan prescribed drugs... In the days that followed... [the discovery of] the bodies ...by... a friend... [of] Malcolm's... his... family... obtained copies of a psychiatrist's notes made... when Lachlan was admitted to Te Atarau... They were horrified to find the severity of his symptoms had been rated as "10/10 = bad" and the psychiatrist had written "[Lachlan]'s at further risk of acting out his psychosis." According to the assessment, Lachlan has been hearing the words "murder and suicide" and had "thoughts of murdering someone..." However, Lachlan wanted to leave Te Atarau after four days and, in his discharge summary, another doctor wrote Lachlan "was able to guarantee people are currently safe around him." The summary continues, "We assessed that [Lachlan] was not committable and discharged him against medical advice. The impression of the team... was that maybe his psychotic symptoms are related to his substance abuse or fabricated." The report noted Lachlan had started drinking alcohol at 10, smoking cannabis at 12 and had used magic mushrooms and LSD. It also said [Lachlan] had convictions for theft and disorder and a history of "recurrent fights, with physical assaults." "If Malcolm had read that report, [it] would never have had him in the house," says [his father. "But Malcolm] wasn't allowed to know any of that[-] because of the Privacy Act[, Malcolm] had no rights. There's too much secrecy surrounding mental illness... It works both ways - Malcolm was never checked out to make sure [Malcolm] was a suitable person for a psychiatric patient to be living with. For all they knew, [Malcolm] could have been a drug dealer." ...The family believes that, while fault falls on the individuals who work in the mental health system, the system itself is also to blame and needs a major overhaul... "The Government needs to make some changes - they messed it up in the first place... I hope it doesn't take an MP to find themselves in the same situation as us before anything is done[," says Malcolm's mother, who i]s prepared to fight to get changes made... "I'm not going to let this die down. If I have to go round and talk to people and form committees, I will. Because it will happen again. Another family will hurt like we do..."

...MALCOLM[']S... parents are not consoled by Waitemata Health's apology over the failures in its care of his flatmate... Waitemata Health[']s chief executive... met... [them] on Wednesday morning to... answer questions. The family has seen only the public summary of the inquiry... into Mr Jones' treatment by... west Auckland mental health services... as the full report is confidential under the Medical Practitioners Act... The... summary says although there was little doubt about Lachlan Jones' condition, his needs were assessed only "superficially". The... 19-year-old was being treated by Waitemata Health youth and child services, which has only 38 of the 129 clinical staff recommended in the national mental health blueprint. Adult mental health services are... short 54 staff... [But the c]hief executive... says the shortage of staff... is not an excuse for the failures... The [parents] are going to Wellington in 10 days to present a 9000-signature petition to [the PM]... calling for the mental health blueprint to be implemented... The family still says a caregiver or flatmate has a paramount right to know the extent of... mental illness of any person living in their home... The Auckland coroner has suppressed all details of the manner in which Malcolm... died until the inquest into both deaths...

Previous flatmates of Lachlan Jones were well aware [Lachlan] was a psychiatric patient, a mental health worker told the Auckland Coroner's Court. And [the nurse] who was Lachlan's key worker from the Waitemata Health Community Assessment and Treatment Team (Catt), says that at some time later it was "highly likely" Malcolm Beggs would also have become involved in Lachlan's care. A relationship between Malcolm and mental health workers would have been a "natural progression" of Lachlan living in Malcolm's house...

Lachlan's flatmates at his earlier Railside Ave address knew [Lachlan] was a mental health patient without directly being told, because of the regular visits and phone calls from the Catt team... [T]he Auckland Coroner's Court[also heard yesterday that]... just hours before... kill[ing] his flatmate Malcolm Beggs, [Lachlan's key Catt]... worker... delivered Lachlan's medication... and Lachlan asked for more... The inquest is continuing.

...[a] Detective Sergeant... says police found 17 unopened packets of medication in Lachlan's bedroom and another seven packets, five of which were open, in another room. The autopsy found no traces of the medication in Lachlan's blood stream and no traces of cannabis...

LACHLAN Jones told mental health workers several weeks before... kill[ing]... Malcolm Beggs that his TV was telling him to murder someone... [But] other factors led... [a p]sychiatric registrar... and other members of... [Catt] to assess Lachlan [as having] "no active suicidal or homicidal intent" [it]... told the Auckland Coroner's Court yesterday... They believed his alcohol and cannabis misuse exacerbated his hallucinations and side-effects of his medication... Another psychiatric registrar told the inquest [it] didn't consider Lachlan... a threat to himself or others when [it] saw him a week after [Lachlan ha]d carved "murder" into his left calf... [That registrar] says... Lachlan... refused to show her or[his] Catt nurse... the self-mutilated leg which had become infected. The leg was bandaged from below the knee to the ankle... Lachlan was put on a plan of twice daily visits by the Catt teams, anti-psychotic medication and other measures. [The registrar] marked Lachlan's file as a high-risk patient who should be admitted to an acute bed if things deteriorated... [The registrar says it] would have contacted his family if Lachlan had been a risk to himself or was to be admitted under the Mental Health Act. [Lachlan] had refused permission for the assessment team to contact any family member.

...A "leadership vacuum" within the west's mental health crisis management team affected Lachlan Jones' care, his key worker... has told the Auckland Coroner's Court... [The key worker says the unit's] American trained psychiatric consultant[']s... guidance was lacking. [The American, who] spent six months as consultant at... Catt... during Lachlan's care... has since returned to the U[S] to tend his sick son. [The consultant] is not being called as a witness and is not submitting written evidence.

...The psychiatric registrar who discharged... Jones from... Te Atarau... now deeply regrets not having sought a second opinion... [The registrar] told a coroner's inquest yesterday that in hindsight [it] should have contacted the on-call consultant psychiatrist before discharging Jones against medical advice... [The registrar] did not do so because consultants were normally contacted only if the registrar had problems with the patient's assessment or management... But [the registrar] acknowledged that having spent only one month at the unit, [it] was in training and should have sought further support... [Strangely, the inquest also heard that on August 29, a]fter a month of trying to contact Lachlan and find his new address, [his key worker visited] him at Universal Drive... [Yet Lachlan had moved] into... Universal Drive[between August 12-14; and on August 24, a] friend of Malcolm's [wa]s present when a nurse visit[ed] the house with medication for Lachlan... The inquest... has run behind schedule and will resume next month.

...The Auckland coroner... ended his inquest into the deaths of Lachlan Jones and Malcolm Beggs yesterday, saying [it] hoped to produce "some salutary solution" to prevent a repetition of the events that led to the suicide-murder[, but]... has reserved his findings, which may take up to six weeks to put together... [The coroner] concluded the... inquest after... the Beggs family, made a brief closing submission calling for a change in direction of Waitemata Health's culture... Earlier... Waitemata Health... expressed condolences to the... families. "We can say till we are blue in the face that an inquest is not about apportioning blame but the worthies of the fourth estate and the public do not necessarily see it that way."

...Culture of secrecy must end... Malcolm Beggs, who was bludgeoned to death with an axe [in his Universal Drive, Henderson, home] by Lachlan Jones, had no idea his 19-year-old flatmate was a paranoid schizophrenic. The fact that Waitemata Health kept such information secret - even from Jones' own family - was harshly criticised after the murder. Now the Mental Health Commission has recommended that staff dealing with such patients be more open in disclosing information to family, friends, and other mental health agencies that come into contact with them.

...Despite some recent victories, the battle for the public's right to know is an ongoing one. A breakthrough last week was the release of a Police Complaints Authority decision on the accidental shooting of a... teenager... outside the Tauranga police station. Heavily pregnant at the time, [the]... 17-year-old... was struck in the face by pellets after an imported shotgun discharged an undetected cartridge while its owner was putting it in his ute after collecting it from the police. Not even [the victim] was automatically entitled to a report, as [the victim] did not lodge a complaint. But[the main PCA] Judge... relented this week, deciding that public interest in the case was sufficient to outweigh other considerations... What might not have become public had the authority not relented... was its recommendation... to improve training... for police arms... storage... officers.

A suppression order of a large chunk of evidence early in the Gisborne cervical cancer inquiry was also lifted last week. Next week the High Court will hear TV3's application for urgency in its bid to undo a coroner's ban against a documentary on the death of a... 66-year-old... Northland[er] pepper-sprayed by police. A suppression order stopping TV3 from screening a 20/20 programme tomorrow night on the death of... Dr Ian Horsfield was described as extraordinary by a High Court judge... The issue has brought into renewed focus the powers of coroners, who need have no formal legal training, yet can issue blanket suppression orders more sweeping than courts are entitled to make. [A]Canterbury University media law specialist... said that while judges could suppress all evidence and submissions, they had to deliver their decisions in open court. Yet coroners could even suppress their findings, as happened in Auckland last year when a *Herald* reporter was banished from an inquest into the death of an Otara couple after relatives were asked if they wanted a media blackout. Auckland[']s coroner... acknowledged to the... *Herald* that his decision to keep secret his findings on the causes of their deaths was a departure from his normal practice. Although the couple's names had been published previously, [the coroner] said relatives had made an impassioned plea about the effect any further publicity might have on their children. [Auckland's coroner] also pulled no punches... when... gagg[ing] the media from publishing details about the deaths of young... Malcolm Beggs and his teenage flatmate Lachlan Jones... The suppression order... which also prevents identification of the health professionals who treated... Jones... – ...even though one had previously been named in the *Herald*... – ...was decreed by Mr Beggs' family as hindering their efforts to gather signatures on a petition to overhaul the mental health system... [In international news, e]ight children were slain and 29 other people – children and teachers – injured in a frenzied stabbing attack by a crazed [perso]n who yesterday burst into a Japanese primary school carrying a kitchen knife... The attack, unprecedented in safe Japan, where guns are outlawed, took place during morning classes at a... school in a residential area of Ikeda, a suburb of the western city of Osaka... While school shootings are becoming a grim part of life in the U[S]... scenes of mass violence are understood to have never occurred before in a Japanese school... The attacker... – ...identified... as [a]37-year-old... who had been treated for schizophrenia... – ...was last night in police custody after being arrested at the school... While the motive remained unclear, national television reported that [the schizophrenic] told police... it... wanted to kill himself. Police later quoted him as saying... “I was fed up with everything. I want to be put to death.”

...A Dunedin study suggests it may be possible to identify children at greatest risk of developing adult schizophrenia, and to provide much earlier help... [T]he Otago University study was the first to show specific links between self-reported psychotic symptoms in children and schizophrenia in adults. The study, involving the university's Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Research Unit, has already created a buzz of interest among international researchers. It has just been published in the American Medical Association journal *Archives of General Psychiatry*.

...A controversial new book suggests that schizophrenic and schizotypal behaviour have shaped humankind... Many... people – Christian saints, sudhus in India, mendicant Russian mystics and those lost people muttering to themselves who are common in most cities today – exhibit aberrant behaviour. “Look at the life stories of virtually every saint or extreme religious leader and you can certainly see they are, if not schizophrenic, very schizotypal,” says [the]British author... whose... book, *The madness of Adam and Eve: How schizophrenia shaped humanity*, is causing considerable ripples for its controversial claims and suggestions. Among [hi]s contentions are that mutations in the brain around 100,000 years ago brought about by a change of diet triggered humanity's rise to evolutionary dominance, but also struck the species with schizophrenia. And that schizophrenia – and more importantly schizotypal behaviour in those without all the genes that cause schizophrenia – have produced high achievers, intellectual geniuses, mystics and artists. We became human because some of us became mad... The good-natured [author], speaking from his home in Scotland, laughs as [it] concedes that, in a nutshell, [it]'s saying, yes, a little bit of schizophrenia is good for us. It's certainly in us... “About 80 to 90[%] of us have at least one gene, 40 to 50[%] have two, 10 to 20[%] will have three, and 1[%] have all four... [W]hat that means is almost everyone in the population has one or two [of the]genes and this is why mental illness appears out of the blue.” Parents may individually possess only one or two of these genes... but the child may inherit all four and therefore develop manifestations of schizophrenia. The parents' and the schizophrenic's siblings may just be schizotypal, and among them will be an unnaturally high number who are gifted. Families with schizophrenic members seem to have a greater variety of abilities, [the author] says, citing Albert Einstein's schizophrenic son and James Joyce's schizophrenic daughter.

...One of the first attempts to use genetic data to ban individuals from jobs has been ruled unlawful by a judge in Hong Kong. The case, which has crucial implications for the rest of the world, has been hailed as “a great victory in an important rights case” by [the]defence lawyer... His clients – three [guys] refused employment by the Hong Kong Government because they had schizophrenic parents – were awarded a total of \$[HK]2.8 million... in damages. One of the international experts who appeared for the defence... said that if the Hong Kong authorities had got away with their attempt to discriminate, “then you can be sure someone else would have tried the same thing straightaway...”

...When a skipping girl screams ridicule at Charlie Baileygates, something snaps inside, his aggressive side takes over and [Charlie] momentarily forces her underwater... Scenes like that from the... comedy *Me, Myself & Irene*... have sparked outrage in the mental health community. They say the film reinforces incorrect ideas about mental illness and encourages discrimination against its sufferers – at the same time as the Government is spending \$12.46 million over five years to counter the discrimination and stigma. A main gripe is that Charlie... has the rare condition multiple personality disorder and not schizophrenia. Yet in the movie [Charlie] is described as suffering from both, as well as being “nuttier than a squirrel turd.” “It's counter-productive,” said... [the] head of the anti-discrimination project. It would shape the views of people who were unclear about schizophrenia, particularly teenagers.['] The head] is trying to have the film's classification raised from R13 to R18. Charlie plays a sweet-natured Rhode Island police[officer] who hardly has the confidence to give a parking ticket. Everyone dumps on him, even the neighbour's dog... One day it gets too much and out pops a new personality, Hank, the obnoxious, leering rival of Charlie. Some who saw the film in Auckland yesterday thought it was clearly a comedy and unlikely to affect people's views on mental illness... [One] said protests would simply encourage more people to see the movie. “It's basically just a stupid film that people will forget as soon as they walk out.” Protesters have handed out leaflets at some showings of the film and appear to have won a concession from the promoters. Initial advertisements carried the tagline “from gentle to mental,” which the protesters say implies people with mental illnesses tend to be violent. That line does not appear in at least some newspaper ads... *Me, Myself & Irene* is no psychology lecture. As a comedy it scrapes by, if you like... bizarre acts with chickens... cow-strangling... and... bucket-loads of toilet humour... [Incidentally, the film's lead actor is yet to be listed among them, but m]any Hollywood stars have had intrusive – even fatal – encounters with obsessed fans. Scores of Hollywood's top celebrities are permanently on alert, looking over their shoulders for stalkers and crazed fans. As the cult of celebrity and the internet converge, stalkers are infesting Hollywood as never before. For every high-profile stalking case... there are now hundreds that never make the news... – [and]there are dozens that are deliberately suppressed... [S]talkers... deemed dangerous enough... receive prison terms of 10 to 25 years... ‘Most celebrity stalkers are either mentally disturbed in a serious way, or quite dangerously mad,’ says... the Los Angeles police anti-stalking department... And if Hollywood is well-known for it's persistent fans and sickos, then when British TV host *Jill Dando* was gunned down in front of her London home... stars became even more anxious.

...[a]leaked report reveals 6000 mentally unstable people have stalked the royals in six years... ● [The LA]... Deputy DA... is a world authority on stalkers[, having been]... involved in the introduction of anti-stalking laws in California, the first place in the world to recognise it as a criminal offence. But [the Deputy DA] warns once a stalker is free to hit the streets again, [it]... is as big a threat as ever. Describing a prison interview with [one stalker] now serving 10 years for stalking and threatening to kill a... singing superstar... [the Deputy DA says: ‘The stalker] said that when [it got out it] was going to arm himself and start shooting at stars.’ ...[the Deputy DA describes one actor]'s terror at the hands of a stalker... through cyberstalking. [The stalker], aged 51, sent the Oscar-winning actor flowers, sweets, pizza, pornography – and e-mails... [The actor] was terrified of

being sexually assaulted by [the stalker. The Deputy DA] had him ruled mentally insane and sent him to a lockdown mental facility for a minimum of three years. ‘A lot of these stalkers have mental problems, but this doesn’t amount to a legal defence. They know exactly what they are doing...’

...N[Z] has its share of stalking cases although many do not end up before the courts. An expert told a mental health conference in Wellington last November that one in 10 people will be stalked during their life... [The AUS] forensic psychiatrist, said one explanation for the rising number of stalking cases was that more relationships were being formed and then breaking up. [Gals] were more likely to be the targets of obsessive... [guys. L]ast October a Rotorua [resident] complained of police inaction over a [guy] who had parked outside her house for six weeks... then approached her asking about her husband – [the resident] lived alone – and later left a note making sexual suggestions. Police spoke to the [guy], but told the [resident] they could not charge him with harassment because [the guy] had not physically harmed her... and... was just asking her out on a date.

...[when a conservationist] took on a new flatmate, [it] never imagined that only five months later [the flatmate] would be convicted for filming her naked and making videotape filled with sexual depravities. The 27-year-old Auckland, who works to save the kiwi and protect and promote N[Z]’s clean green image, was horrified when [it] discovered that... the flatmate [it] valued as a friend, was stalking her and had just been released from prison for harassing another [gal] in his hometown of Invercargill. [The conservationist realised it] was the target of [her flatmate]’s sick attentions only... [after spying] a lens under her bedroom door while dressing. [The conservationist] yelled out, the lens disappeared and bare feet hurried past. Shocked, [the conservationist] realised the only other person in the house was [her flatmate. The conservationist] dressed and quickly went to confront him. ‘I said to him, ‘...if you have been doing what I think you have been doing you can bloody well cut it out.’ I... was taken aback and... shocked, but I thought [the flatmate] was harmless. I thought [it was just] a 25-year-old [guy] who was lonely.’ ...While [the flatmate] was at work that night, [the conservationist] looked in his room... ‘I wouldn’t normally go into his room, but I thought, ‘[My flatmate] peeked at me and I’m going to peek at him.’...’ On her way out the door, [the conservationist] spotted a little videotape concealed behind [hi]s lolly jar. ‘I still didn’t have suspicions but I put it on, hit rewind for about three seconds, hit play and there was me naked. I hit rewind again and it’s me naked, him wearing my togs, him masturbating into my drawers... I hit stop and ran to my other flatmate’s bedroom. [My other flatmate] watched the video with me... [In one scene, the first flatmate] was lying in a bathtub cutting... lingerie off himself with a serrated knife and that really scared me. [The flatmate] had this gruesome look on his face... w[hilst] hacking clothing off himself and masturbating. There was a shot on the tape that really spooked me. It was my bedroom in the early daylight and there was a body in the bed. I thought, ‘Oh my God, [my flatmate] has been taping me while I am asleep.’ Then [the flatmate] comes running down wearing my togs and leaps on the body and starts raping it. I honestly thought it was me asleep... but it turned out [the flatmate] had been making effigies of me by stuffing my clothes... I had been wearing these clothes, like some kind of walking entertainment for him... [In another scene, the flatmate] was masturbating while videotaping a little girl doing handstands. That got me. Right then I thought, ‘We have to do something about this guy’...’ ...[the conservationist] called the police. ‘It was the early hours of the morning. I was in shock, and suddenly six police officers walk into your house and start watching you naked on a videotape – it was surreal and so unbelievable.’ [The conservationist], who lost her leg at age 22 when... hit by a drunk driver while a passenger on a motorbike, says [the flatmate] had urged her to give notice to the other flatmate and share the house just with her. ‘Thank God I spotted the lens under the door. [The guy] is a predator. I was his prey and I had a lucky escape...’... [Her former flatmate] pleaded guilty in Auckland’s Otahuhu District Court to charges of criminal harassment, making an objectionable publication, theft and doing an indecent act in any place and was imprisoned for 19 months... In police evidence presented to the court, [her former flatmate admitted it] would not stop offending once released from prison and that his offending might in fact worsen.

...Police are praising the vigilance of a... father who foiled a repeat flasher targeting his son... Titirangi[’s] Community constable... says the father reported seeing someone acting suspiciously when [it] dropped his 12-year-old son at the bus stop on the corner of Huia and Cornwallis Rds three weeks ago... [T]he father returned to check on his son because [it] felt uneasy about [a guy]... sitting nearby in a car. As... the [father]... returned... the car... drove off... [The flasher] was arrested at the same bus stop a week later and admitted in interviews [it] wanted to flash or masturbate in front of a child... Police... told the court [the 28-year-old] had a green light that doctors put on top of their cars and other medical equipment in his car. Police believed the [flasher] would have used this gear to pose as a trustworthy member of society and lure a child near his car before performing an indecent act... Waitemata Health[’s] forensic court liaison nurse... told the court they were trying to persuade [him] to seek help.

...The mother of a suicidal [son] who took his own life while under the care of a mental health crisis team was told to “take a break” and let them look after him. The 31-year-old... whose name is suppressed, committed suicide... five days after his mother arranged a care plan with the Waitemata Health crisis team in which it would phone and visit him each day his family were away. His family told the Auckland coroner’s court yesterday that the crisis team never visited and did not check his medication. They did not follow up unanswered phone calls to the [son] with home visits as promised. The mother, who for more than 10 years had cared constantly for her manic-depressive son, left for Taupo... to visit her other son, who had just been diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease. [The mother] left the manic-depressive son at home alone... A nurse had told her “that I should go away, that I needed a break and that ‘we will take full responsibility for [him]’.” ...A friend who visited the son... three days before his death... told the court that the [son said it] had little confidence in the mental health system, and when asked if [it] had ever contemplated suicide said: “What stopped me was the love of my mother.” The mother... did not know about her son’s suicide until police contacted her two days afterwards... The mother... told the court that... no one from the... Community Assessment and Treatment Team... expressed their condolences.

...Industrial action by mental healthcare workers is spreading as they demand more beds to ease an “unsafe” crush of patients. Public Service Association members at three Auckland sites have been protesting since March against conditions they consider unsafe for themselves and their patients. They report an increasing incidence of patient assaults on staff. The failings highlighted by the association prompted [the] Health Minister... to order a review of Auckland mental health services. The review team’s final report is expected this month... From today, crisis workers at Counties Manukau will spend a maximum two hours caring for each patient while seeking an acute-unit bed, and will not do any other work in that time... Community teams, who care for patients after they have been discharged, will take them only under agreed discharge plans. They will not accept patients who have been discharged to free beds... “It may be necessary to investigate capping client numbers to further protect the safety of staff in the community teams, the PSA says in a letter to... the Counties Manukau District Health Board’s acute unit, Tiaho Mai...

Diane*, who has mental health problems, telephoned the N[Z] Herald last year because [the mental health patient] was worried sick. The supported house [Diane] lived in was to close... because it didn’t meet North Health’s standards and the [person] who ran it was having trouble finding something else for her residents... Today, Diane is in the Auckland Hospital Conolly Unit for acute patients. First, because there is nowhere else for her to live. Second, because the stress of trying to find a home has made her more unwell. Diane is just one of 2500 mental health service users surveyed in a draft report by the Mental Health Commission, which was released to mental health workers late last week under the Official Information Act. Overall the report highlights a desperate lack of suitable housing for mentally ill people. Over the previous three months: • More than 18[%] lived as fulltime dependents with their families. • Four people were totally homeless. • 3[%]... were homeless part of the time. • 33[%] had at least one change of housing. • Nearly 9[%] had three or more abodes... For mentally ill people in the community, life is muddled and harsh. Even now, after countless expensive inquiries and the addition of 35 acute, sub-acute and intensive beds in the Auckland area, Auckland Healthcare’s... Conolly Unit is jammed by relatively well people such as Diane. Those who are more independent and want to live alone or flat with others are hamstrung by high market rentals... A[n] Auckland District Council of Social Services... [worker] describes taking people who have

found a Housing N[Z] house into Social Welfare... and being told they need to find something cheaper. Why? “Because Social Welfare is not able to provide enough money to make Housing N[Z] houses affordable to people on invalid or sickness benefits. And if they can’t get a state house, what can they afford?” Meanwhile, Auckland City Council flats in Freemans Bay are sitting empty. [A representative] of the Community of Refuge Trust, which provides care in central Auckland, talks about the destructive “duck shoving” that goes on between the health, housing and welfare authorities. “Housing NZ say, ‘We want to make a market rental,’ [the Ministry of] Health say housing is not their issue and Social Welfare say that the accommodation subsidy is all people are going to get...” ...[the manager] of the Take a Break drop-in centre in Pitt St, which offers bread, tea, coffee and shelter for impoverished homeless – and often mentally ill – [people]... agrees: “Under the Human Rights Act everyone is entitled to adequate housing... Our biggest barrier is that no one [no Government body] will accept that housing is their responsibility.” ...If rental housing is not available, many mentally ill people end up in boarding houses. Which brings us to boarding houses. A December 1997 precursor by the Auckland District Council of Social Services to the M[HC]’s current draft report revealed some horrifying statistics about the fate of [gals] in Auckland’s boarding houses. • 82[%] had experienced sexual harassment. • 65[%] had been pressured for sex. • Over half had experienced inappropriate touching. • 73[%] felt unsafe... in their homes. Said the report: “Mentally ill [gals] living in boarding houses report toilet floors awash with urine, showers covered in vomit, bathroom doors that don’t lock – and absolutely no one to go to if they feel under threat. They are subjected to behaviour... largely perpetrated by other residents... that makes them feel fearful for their personal safety...”

...The P[M] says it may be forced to leave her home of 19 years after a photograph identifying the house, and a map pin-pointing its location, were published yesterday. A furious [PM] told the *Herald* that the disclosure was an “absolute” invasion of her privacy and had created a “serious security concern.” “What [the *Sunday Star-Times*] did was make it so easy: there’s the map, here’s what the house looks like – go to it. I try to live a normal, modest life in my own home, in an ordinary suburb, and they are making it impossible for me.” [However, the *Star-Times*’ editor pointed out that ‘the PM’s phone number and address have been in the Auckland Telephone directory for years!’ The PM]’s anger was triggered by a *Star-Times* item reporting her objections to the expansion of a boarding house around the corner from her home. The item said [the PM] feared the boarding house would attract undesirables who might “downgrade the neighbourhood” and “transients” who might not be properly supervised. When her submission was made last September, [the PM] was... campaigning for community-based mental health services. But... the... proposed building was not a home for the needy. It was a commercial proposition, by absentee landlords, for the existing 27-room historic boarding house to be expanded to 88 rooms with a separate three-storey block. The development received the go-ahead at an Auckland City Council resource consent hearing last month... The written submission from [the PM] at the centre of the furore was one of 91 opposing the Eden Park Lodge development... [One opponent], whose home is opposite the building, said privacy was an issue. [The neighbour] had already been followed home from the bus stop by [guy] residents living in the house and was afraid that such behaviour would increase... [Guys] have been banging on the front door of the P[M]’s Auckland house late at night and calling out: “Are you home...?” [The PM] has also awoken to find bottles on her lawn. Passing cars often slow so those inside can have a nosy at her home. The P[M] yesterday recounted such fears for her safety, saying... “That was before this publicity. It can only get worse.” ...[the PM] said that... to remain in her Mt Eden villa, it would need to be fortified and have expensive security installed. With her husband... based in Christchurch, [the PM] was often home alone and security was vital. When [the PM] was living at Premier House, her official residence in Wellington, [it] was under constant police protection... but this was not the case at her home in Auckland... [The] head of the diplomatic protection squad, which is responsible for the P[M]’s safety, said yesterday that [it] would not discuss her security arrangements.

...PM says sorry to abused patients... A... compensation battle by former child patients of Lake Alice psychiatric hospital has ended in a \$6.5 million payout and an apology from the Government. The formal apology, issued by [the P[M]... and... Health Minister... yesterday, was the last step in the drawn-out settlement for 95 former patients. The claimants, who say they were tortured and sexually abused in the child and adolescent unit in the 1970s, had been seeking \$38 million damages from the Ministry of Health, the Attorney-General and former Lake Alice administrators.

...Bitter at what they describe as broken promises over the years, [a Hamilton couple] have taken up their son’s case with... [the PM. The couple] say their intellectually disabled son... was safe, occupied and happy at Tokanui Hospital. Today, six years after his discharge from the South Waikato institution into community care, they claim the 38-year-old with a mental age of five has been reduced to sitting in police cells and going in and out of court. “It seems ironic that, unaided by the state, we managed to keep him safe for nearly 20 years, that Tokanui did so for another 13 1/2 and that now, farmed out to community care, [our son] is at constant risk,”... They are relieved that after being held in jail wearing nappies, their son has been referred to a residential care centre in Levin. But they are sad that his one year of supervision there will be spent so far from their Hamilton home... They cite assurances in 1989 from [a Waikato Area Health Board manager... that Tokanui residents would not be “dumped” into the community, nor would anyone be forced to move if they or their family were strongly opposed. In 1993... the... Health Minister, assured parents a full range of care options would be set up before patients were returned to the community. “None have been provided for our son except dubious, inappropriate and largely unsupervised services,”... In a letter to [the PM, the parents] said they are worried that the Intellectual Disability (Compulsory Care) Bill will be shelved as too embarrassing and controversial... In her reply, [the PM assured them it] was committed to the proposed legislation. “We have a very small group of people who have severe behavioural disorders and are at risk, and the Government is working on how we can make progress in this area,”... wrote[the PM. Editor’s note: As a change from the multiple examples of unsuitable mental patients being released into the community, the media reported the case of a ‘deaf, autistic boy being misdiagnosed and treated by Sunnyside Hospital’].

...The Government conceded again yesterday that there were gaps in services for people with autism after revelations that a... 27-year-old Christchurch [autistic]... had been remanded... to Addington Prison and then transferred to Sunnyside... for assessment but still has nowhere to go... The Minister of Health... acknowledged in March that there were gaps in services for autistic people after reports that the parents of a Northland boy... bound his hands and feet with leather... because they could not get specialised help to deal with his violent outbursts. Since then, a Palmerston North... [mum] has been found guilty of the [hu]manslaughter of her autistic daughter... after trying unsuccessfully to get respite care.

...The sins of the parents should not be visited on the child, a defence lawyer told a jury in the High Court at Auckland yesterday. In her final address... [the lawyer] said the defendant faced a [hu]manslaughter charge over the death of Angelina Edwards because [the defendant] was her parents’ daughter. “It is a case of guilt by affiliation and guilt by association... You cannot be convicted of a crime because of what your family does.” ...[the] lawyer said her client had assaulted Miss Edwards on one occasion to punish her, but it could not be considered fatal... [The client], aged 20... her [parents]... and 18-year-old [brother]... are jointly accused of Miss Edwards’ [death]. A 17-year-old youth, who has interim name suppression, also faces a [hu]manslaughter charge. The father and mother also face second charges of [hu]manslaughter by virtue of failing to get medical help for the [victim]’s injuries, general debilitation and peritonitis secondary to a stomach ulcer. All the accused face various alternative charges of assaulting or injuring Angelina... There was a catalogue of other people who assaulted Miss Edwards apart from the various accused. It was arguable that two young girls... inflicted more injury than his client, said [the lawyer representing the son]... A pathologist... earlier told the court that the ulcer that perforated was caused by the widespread injuries, neglect and malnutrition suffered by the dead [person]. But defence lawyers have relied on the testimony of another pathologist... that the ulcer could have been caused by a bacterium... Miss Edwards, described by a psychiatrist as a mixture of badness and madness, would go weeks without bathing... [-] Angelina... was made to sleep outside because [it] smelled so badly... [-] defecated around the... house, had jumped on a puppy and killed it, and mutilated herself by pulling her fingernails back. With the benefit of hindsight, [the daughter’s lawyer] said, it was obvious to everyone that [Angelina’s] behaviour was because of her mental condition.

...[Angelina's father] hugged his whanau last night after 40 days spent listening to details of his daughter's gruesome death at the hands of people [the father] considered family. After the six-week trial... came to an end, [the father] described the verdicts as good news. "The mongrels got what they deserve... I hope they rot in hell." Three members of the... family were found guilty of the [hu]manslaughter of Angelina. A 17-year-old youth with name suppression was also found guilty of... [hu]manslaughter, and another member of the family was found guilty of injuring her. Earlier, [Angelina's father said it]... could not believe people considered family would commit the atrocities that had led to his daughter's death... [The father, who] had... split up with Angelina's mother... last saw his schizophrenic daughter many years ago... In the... Mangere home[Angelina shared with her killers, the schizophrenic] was forced to sleep in the washhouse or in a box in the garage, and was treated like a slave.

...Police are certain there are more [people] living in slavery in Auckland, subjected to the same inhuman savagery ...as Angelina... "There will be another one out there right now in South Auckland," said... [the] head of the Angelina Edwards homicide inquiry. "It would be absolutely naive to think that there would not be others." Past cases have included Karen Kalauni, aged 22, who died of internal bleeding over two days at her East Tamaki home. [Karen] had 125 scars on her body. In 1994, two people were jailed for her murder, while two others were convicted of lesser crimes. In June last year, [a] [some-time bus driver and pastor... was jailed for 15 years for charges which included keeping [his wife] enslaved in an Otara house... for four years... The... Kalanui case, in particular, had strong parallels with the... Edwards trial... By the time [it] died, Angelina... was virtually a walking corpse, covered with septic, putrefying wounds. The washhouse where [Angelina slept – when Angelina, who]... was... forced to do the family's washing and cleaning... was not put outside like an animal for the night, or forced to bed down in a box in the garage – had the stench of decaying flesh... As one of the accused put it, [Angelina] was better off at peace. Judging from the photographs that showed her blackened and bruised body covered in ulcerated, oozing sores, death may indeed have been a merciful release... When [Angelina] was finally taken to hospital, just hours before [her life] expired, nurses remarked on the apparent lack of concern from [her] family... Later, when interviewed, [her uncle] was more concerned about his lawnmower than the dead [relative. The family]... will have a psychiatric assessment before sentencing in four weeks. Originally the five faced murder charges, but after several days of legal argument, [the judge] reduced the counts to [hu]manslaughter... Angelina... a 25-year-old schizophrenic, came from Whangarei to stay with her Auntie... in... Mangere, at the end of 1996. [Angelina] had given birth to a son in Whangarei in July 1995 but could not cope. Her mother took over care of the child, while Angelina... came to Auckland to "sort herself out." A psychiatrist from Whangarei described her as... impossible to live with. At first, [however,] [Angelina]... seems to have got on well with her relatives, although they all lived huddled in a small three-bedroomed home, finding beds where they could. But things quickly changed, and Angelina... started to be regarded as a punchbag. In the months before her death, beatings with softball bats and other weapons became regular. There was gratuitous punching, slapping and kicking. Her head was banged against walls and the family Rottweiler... [-] described by a dog handler as one of the most vicious animals [it] had dealt with[-] was set on her. [Angelina] even had a red-hot car cigarette lighter forced into the back of her neck, and a bodybuilding weight was thrown at her face. It was an unremitting catalogue of brutish savagery. Her blood was found all around the house, including congealed on a *Bible* [Angelina] was forced to keep reading until the early hours. When [Angelina stopped, Angelina] got another beating. Two young girls were also involved in the "atrocities," as [the] Detective Sergeant... put it, but they were never charged. They cannot be identified for legal reasons. Some of the worst violence happened in the fortnight before Angelina... died. Then, for the final few days, silence descended on the house as the countdown to her final agony began. From being a physically healthy... 85.5kg... [before leaving Whangarei, Angelina] had wasted away by the time of her death to a skinny, malnourished 55kg shadow, shuffling around with plastic bags on her feet to cover oozing sores. Oddly, Angelina... seemed to take the punishment without even a whimper. Only once did [Angelina] try to escape, but... was chased and taken back to the family car for another thumping. Reasons for the family's hatred of her are not entirely clear, despite her lack of personal hygiene and unacceptable toilet habits... In the early stages, [the aunt] took Angelina to see the doctor on four occasions – but it was only to get a certificate for a sickness benefit. On every occasion that Angelina... saw a doctor in Auckland, [the aunt] was present. It was not until April 4 last year, when it was already too late, that any attempt was made to get Angelina... help for her condition... Although [Angelina] was referred four times to the... mental health outpatient service in South Auckland for specialist psychiatric help, appointments were never kept. To be fair to the family, some of the appointment letters went to the wrong address... Eventually, visits to the GP for further sickness benefit certificates stopped because Angelina[']s... injuries were becoming too obvious for the family to risk her being seen by a doctor. Her worsening state was also hidden from relatives when they came to visit her. They were told [Angelina] was out, had moved house or had run away. Twice, concerned neighbours called the authorities to say there was a [person at #]80 being beaten and abused. A few days before Angelina... died, a police officer went to the house, but [the family's 20-year-old daughter] pretended to be the [person] at the centre of the complaint. When [the daughter said it] was all right, no further action was taken. Why did [the] Detective Sergeant... think the family had indulged in such sadism? "You can look for complicated psychological reasons... but I think it is a very simple matter. The reason the beatings started were to control her and to ensure [Angelina] did the work they required of her, and... would remain compliant as far as her handing over her benefit was concerned. The reason the beatings continued and escalated was that it became second nature to the family..." ...the mounting violence coincided with the appointment of [the aunt] as Angelina Edwards' agent for receiving her sickness benefit... but in the end it was counterproductive... [The Detective Sergeant regarded the aunt as having] a evil streak bordering on the psychotic...

Systems have cracks. Slipping through them can be deadly. That familiar theme played again during the trial of the... family... [which killed] Angelina Edwards... For Angelina Edwards started floundering long before the beatings... began. [Angelina] was first admitted to Whangarei's psychiatric unit in May 1994. In the next 2 1/2 years [Angelina] was admitted a further nine times, the stays adding up to six months of the then 22-year-old's life... In September 1996, a... Whangarei psychiatrist... noted that the town could not provide the type of care Angelina... needed – a residential, supervised programme dealing with psychological and social needs – and raised the possibility of transferring her to Auckland... When [Angelina left Whangarei] in December 1996, her home-town psychiatrist... wondered what city doctors would make of his difficult patient. By the time [the psychiatrist] testified at the trial, [it] had found out Angelina... never connected with the big-city mental health service... Angelina... was mentally ill, although psychiatrists differ on her diagnosis. A recurring compulsive-obsessive disorder drove her to wash excessively or not at all. [Angelina] probably suffered from depression and possibly schizophrenia. At times, health professionals and her family wondered if [Angelina] pretended her symptoms were worse than they were. Angelina Edwards' troubles started well before... bec[oming a mental health] patient. The history gleaned from the doctors' notes is one of a desperately unhappy young [girl. Angelina told them about being] bullied at school, where other children locked her in the toilets for hours with her mouth taped so [Angelina] could not cry for help. [Angelina, who] dropped out in the fourth form... claimed to have been sexually abused as a teenager by an old[guy. Angelina] was shy, and had trouble making friends[, so] started sniffing solvents and using alcohol and drugs to make herself more outgoing. "Part of the problem," [the psychiatrist] wrote when discharging her from Whangarei in January 1997, "is that we face a mixture of... madness... and badness[, which] includes manipulative behaviour, lying, stealing, destructive behaviour and attacking others..." ...these factors provided a great potential for disaster and made Angelina... "very hard to live with. So far we have been unable to find anyone who will put up with her,"... That her aunt... and family put up with her for more than a year was somewhat of a record... [- although t]he household contained possibly two other mentally ill people... [Angelina's] shift to Auckland spun her to the periphery of the mental health system. [Angelina] did come to the attention of mental health authorities within days of her arrival... A relative called a crisis team to the [Mangere] home because Angelina... was threatening to kill herself, though the greater worries soon appeared to be

getting her sickness benefit and accommodation[allowances]. The crisis team sought information from Whangarei and stayed in contact with her for three days. The team's psychiatrist made an appointment for her... for further assessment. That appointment, essentially a transfer of responsibility to the patient, was crucial for diagnosis and further treatment. [Angelina] didn't turn up, and became a mental health patient in name only. [Angelina] missed four further appointments, triggered by referrals from her GP, in the next nine months... The fifth and final appointment was made but cancelled, apparently from the patient's end. It was about this time, according to the crown case, that the beatings started in earnest... Under cross-examination, [a professor of psychiatry] acknowledged that ensuring a non-cooperative patient received treatment was a burden that usually fell on those closest to the patient. If these people did not accept that burden, the system itself risked breaking down.

...Follow-up on mental health outpatients who miss appointments has been tightened in South Auckland after Angelina Edwards' death... [A] former clinical director of South Auckland's community health service, said... [i]f a patient referred to the service by a [GP] failed to keep an appointment... a letter would be sent to the GP asking if the service should follow up. [The former director] said Angelina Edwards' death could probably have been avoided... However, the staff involved "had not done a bad job." There had been no legal obligation to treat Angelina... as... [t]he 25-year-old... was a voluntary patient... Five members of the [Mangere] family were yesterday jailed for more than 40 years for the "barbaric and unspeakable" death of Angelina... [By the way, Angelina is known to have used drugs as a teenager.] A study suggests [teenage] cannabis users are seven times more likely to develop mental problems... The increasing use of cannabis by adolescents is threatening the mental health of a generation because of the drug's unrecognised capacity to trigger psychosis, a leading psychiatrist has warned. [The p]rofessor... of the Institute of Psychiatry in London, says growing evidence linking cannabis with mental disorder has failed to curb use of the drug... "In the last 18 months a number of studies have confirmed that cannabis consumption acts to increase later risk of schizophrenia. This research must not be ignored,"...

A... Great Barrier Island couple, who police accused of cultivating cannabis... say they've been through an 18-month nightmare in which they almost lost their home and freedom... under the Proceeds of Crime Act 1991... On Friday, a district court judge awarded them \$54,000 costs following the botched police case... Charges against [them] were dropped... last year... because of lack of evidence... The [couple] say they were innocent all along... The saga began... after police said they found 487 cannabis plants... on or near the couple's property... Police failed to photograph the evidence to prove it existed, give the accused the opportunity to see the plants, omitted evidence during the trial and carried out a "careless investigation, but more significantly, inadequate and totally unprofessional police preparation." [The]Detective Senior Sergeant... in charge of the Auckland drugs squad defended the police investigation... [but] could not comment in detail while the Police Complaints Authority investigation continued... While some mistakes were made[when dealing with the Great Barrier Islanders, the police have conducted a successful case against the guy accused of]... murdering three people at the [Mt]Wellington-Panmure Returned Services Association clubrooms. The 25-year-old's life sentence with a minimum non-parole period of 33 years is the longest fixed-term sentence imposed by a court in N[Z] legal history... But the Parole Board then ha[ve] to consider his future and [the 25-year-old] might never get out. "One suspects this is life imprisonment for life," said... the... Crown prosecutor... The [25-year-old] was convicted... of murdering RSA club president William Absolum, 63, club member Wayne Johnson, 56, and cleaner Mary Hobson. [The 25-year-old] was also found guilty of the attempted murder of [the aggravated robbery's sole]survivor...

The *Herald* can reveal that the... [t]riple killer... could have been locked up in prison before [it] committed the RSA murders – but probation officers did not act when told [it] had offended while on parole... [T]he Community Probation Service missed a chance to get [him] back inside Paremoremo a week before the killings... A probation officer knew [the 25-year-old] was charged with assault one month before the murders but failed to begin a "recall application" that could have put him back before the Parole Board... The investigation also identified other flaws in the management of [hi]s parole, including: ■ No action was taken when [the 25-year-old] screwed up the piece of paper that outlined his parole conditions and threw it in the rubbish bin when [the 25-year-old] first reported to a probation officer... ■ The probation officer then failed to set up an appointment with a Corrections Department psychologist or an assessment for drug and alcohol counselling. Both were special conditions laid down by the Parole Board and were required to be set up within 72 hours of his release. ■ The probation officer also failed to make a required visit to check [the 25-year-old]'s home address. ■ Instead of reporting weekly as required, [the 25-year-old] was first given fortnightly reporting... and then [wasn't] required to report for almost five weeks while his probation officer was "absent". ■ [Hi]s case notes were not fully completed... [Incidentally, the High Court] judge who imposed [NZ's] highest jail sentence on [the 25-year-old] also handed out a tough sentence... last year[when it]... sentenced... an... 18-year-old... to life imprisonment for shooting Pakuranga pizza worker Marcus Doig on May 8 and Mangere Bridge ASB bank worker John Vaughan on May 15. [The judge] imposed one of the longest non-parole sentences for a murder – 17 years and nine months.

...THE first I heard of P was when one of my talkback callers suggested that [a teenager] was on it when [the teenager] went on the murderous spree that left Marcus Doig and John Vaughan dead. My caller said the killings bore all the hallmarks of a P user and... went on to explain that for some people, the effects of pure methamphetamine can turn them psychotic. Since then, and since [a 25-year-old claimed it] too was on P when [it] murdered three people and brutally injured a fourth in the RSA robbery, we've heard a lot more about P. A number of recreational drug users who have an open mind about most narcotics told me they're keeping well clear of P... The police officer who headed the inquiry... accepted expert opinion that [the 25-year-old] was a true psychopath, who enjoyed killing... But... [i]t's always a game of Russian roulette when you take drugs.

...Something deeply evil lurks among the dimly lit streets and along the foggy riverbanks of Rostov-on-Don, a southern Russian city of 1.5 million people, and [a]Professor... is on a mission to fight it. For reasons neither science, religion nor occult can satisfactorily explain, the bustling river-port city has become a crucible for the rage of an extraordinarily high number of serial killers and rapists. In the past 10 years 29 have been caught, making Rostov the serial-killer capital of the world and [the professor] – Russia's leading psychiatric expert on mass murder – a very busy [person]. Why Rostov? Though the city has a reputation as a centre of organised crime, its economy is no more blighted than the rest of Russia's, and its per-capita murder rate is actually below the national average... [The professor believes it] knows the answer. "The problem of serial murder exists everywhere in Russia – it's just that here we have more practice at catching serial killers, and therefore the statistics are higher." ...From 1978 until his arrest in 1991... the "Rostov Ripper"... raped, tortured, mutilated, killed and ate 56 people. [The professor], who became a crime fighter in 1984, was a bit of a black sheep, having specialised in such taboo medical fields as sexual deviancy, but investigators were desperate. They asked him to draw up a psychological portrait of the Rostov Ripper by piecing together forensic and circumstantial clues – such as the killer's habit of gouging out his victims' eyes and the ease with which [it] was apparently able to lure his prey to isolated areas. [The professor] concluded that the killer was a middle-aged, educated [guy] with a history of molestation and sexual problems. Authorities dismissed his findings, until [the Rostov Ripper] was caught – and [the professor]'s portrait proved uncannily accurate. His methods were quickly adopted by the Rostov police, and police from all over Russia now ask for his help. But now, [the professor]'s close relationship with the police is in trouble. [The professor] is conducting a bold... experiment that pushes the boundaries of both medical ethics and the law to the limit by treating serial criminals who are still at large... "I could call the police, but ethically I don't have that right because [my patients] trust... me. Maybe I am wrong to do this, but it is in the interests of science." Using his own experimental blend of aggression-curbng drugs and psychotherapy[–]...which is funded by paying clients, such as drug addicts and sex-change patients under therapy... at his private psychiatric clinic... [– the professor] claims to be able to "cure" psychopathic tendencies. One of his patients is... a thickset, surly 21-year-old... [who] was brought to [the professor by it]s parents after... showing antisocial and violent behaviour last summer. Under [the professor's] care, the 21-year-old confessed that it had killed one gal[during a drunken binge of sadistic sex and had tortured and beaten several more... "This boy is a classic serial killer in the making... We have caught him just as [the boy] is

beginning to realise his fantasies.” [The professor], who earns about \$70 a month, is also treating a middle-aged self-confessed child rapist[– who] was given an ultimatum by his wife to see a psychiatrist or go to the police after [the wife discovered her husband] had been abusing their 11-year-old daughter. “[The p]rofessor... has given me a way to live again, to control my urges,” says... [the] huge junior officer in the Army who has developed a puppy-like devotion to his strong-willed therapist. “If it had not been for him I would have done something much worse.” [However, the professor]’s methods worry the authorities – and his colleagues. [Last] December, local health officials lodged a complaint at the municipal court criticising [the professor]’s handling of a convicted rapist who committed another sexual assault while under his care. [The professor] shrugs off the charges. His free-lance work with local psychopaths is doing a service for science and for the community, [the professor] argues... “We are fighting to find the roots of social aggression, and to establish ways to curb it...” ...[Speaking of establishing ways to curb social aggression, o]ne of South A[US]’s top cops says the state’s new anti-gang laws could be used to combat motorbike, street and youth gangs... in N[Z]. The Assistant Commissioner... expected to be in a position to “declare” an organisation soon. Declaring an organisation meant police had to apply to the Attorney-General when... satisfied the group existed for criminal purposes or was a risk to public safety. “If this... is successful, we will then apply for control orders to be placed on the individual members of that... organisation,”... Control orders restrict who the member can contact, the places they visit and the weapons they have – effectively banning gangs. Breaching these orders is punishable by up to five years in jail... Other A[US]n laws include asset seizure laws in Western A[US] and banning people who intimidate from public places in New South Wales... N[Z] law enforcement was dragging the chain and gangs had become true organised crime syndicates, having “raced ahead” on the back of the P trade...

A huge surge in methamphetamine is overwhelming law enforcement authorities, which are struggling to cope with increasing supplies of the drug and its devastating effects on crime. A *Weekend Herald* investigation has found methamphetamine, commonly known as “P”, is firmly established as N[Z]’s worst drug problem, with sales of up to \$1.5 billion a year... Police privately say they are finding fewer than 10[%] of meth labs – and overworked police officers and courts are unable to handle more cases anyway... At least 80[%] of recent High Court trials were connected to the drug... Many of N[Z]’s most notorious murderers in the past decade... were high on P when they carried out their killings. Research shows criminals who use P heavily carry out about seven times as much property crime and drug dealing as non-addicted law-breakers, and 31[%] of younger users admit they have had a car crash while on the drug... [On a positive note, t]hree people have been found liable for the \$185,035 damage caused by the destruction of a state house used as a [P] factory in Napier. [A f]orensic scientist... told Napier District Court the house was the most contaminated of 150 production houses [it]’d seen. After finding the house was uninhabitable Housing NZ chose to demolish...

The business[person]n who chased down and then stabbed a teenage tagger could be on home detention within a year. [The married father of three daughters], 51, was sentenced to four years and three months in prison... in the High Court at Auckland yesterday for the [hu]manslaughter of Pihema Cameron, 15, who had been tagging [hi]s garage door with a friend on January 26 last year... In an emotional speech, Pihema’s mother... [– who] had been in Perth, working... the day her eldest son had been “brutally and heartlessly” taken[away from her –]... said: “I have never felt so much hatred for a person than what I feel towards this... [person who] destroyed and broke up my young family over a bit of paint...” ...Some hailed t[he t]agger killer... a hero, but many residents of the Mahia Rd area of Manurewa where Pihema... was stabbed felt the... jail sentence was too short... “The sentencing is just bullshit, eh? It’s going to make Manurewa an even more dangerous place because more people will start stabbing anyone they are not happy with, if they think four years is all they’re going to get,” a 26-year-old storeperson[] said... “We can understand the anger in him but killing is not right. [The businessperson] shouldn’t have taken the law in his own hands,”... said... a stay-at-home father... However, a neighbour who... had his home vandalised with graffiti six times last year, said tagging used to be a “massive problem” on the street but had “stopped over-night” since the stabbing. “[The killer] did what the police and city council failed to do, and for that... deserves a medal, not a jail sentence.” [Incidentally, if you refuse to provide help to the police when asked, you could soon be ‘fined \$2000 as opposed the current \$50’.

...a guy who] heard an alarm go off outside his wife’s bar in Weymouth, England... found two [thieves] breaking into a cellphone store and confronted them. One punched him, but [the guy] swept his feet from under him and pinned him to the ground... until police arrived. The next day, the police released the... [thief] with a warning for criminal damage, and they arrested [the guy] for assault. (Source: Reason.com)

...Thieves have stolen flowers left at the scene where “good Samaritan” Austin Hemmings died. The 44-year-old Devonport [husband and father] was stabbed while helping a [gal] being attacked in Mills Lane, central Auckland, last week.

...Samaritans ‘gutted’... A Maori couple say they are having to return to A[US] to face charges of obstructing police after trying to help a severely injured [person. The couple], both 24, were holidaying at Surfers Paradise at the weekend when they found a [guy] lying in a pool of blood. They tried to check for a pulse and find... [hi]s wounds... but police pepper-sprayed the couple... before arresting the[m]... “We... don’t want to go back.”

...The owner of a South Auckland liquor store who was stabbed as [it] tried to fight off an apparently drunken shop-lifter on Tuesday night says [it] will fight back if charged by the police... “I didn’t injure anyone. The guy who was injured, I don’t know how it happened. We never hit him or anything. Only the guy who had the knife, I gave him a hiding.” ...[the owner] and his cousin were stabbed as they held one of the teens down. The teens were allegedly armed with a fence paling, knives and a long bar or bamboo stick. [Another Asian businessperson], who owns the neighbouring dairy and ventured outside after hearing glass breaking, was hit in the face with a piece of wood... The law allows shop owners to use “reasonable force” to defend themselves and their properties although people are expected to use common sense in deciding what that force was.

...The owner of an Auckland lotto store and dairy is in hospital with stab wounds in his neck and back after being attacked late yesterday afternoon. It was at least the fourth serious attack on an Auckland shop worker this year, and followed a police decision to charge a liquor retailer after an altercation with two youths this week... “When we protect ourselves, we get charged – and if we don’t we get stabbed. What do we do,” [a]... shopkeeper... who... had been robbed four times... asked... While police were investigating the stabbing, they were called to a store in nearby Bremner Ave, Mt Roskill, where two youths threatened a shop owner with a knife... [N]o one was injured, and the two offenders had fled.

...Police say the arrest of an Otara liquor store owner should be a reminder to others that using too much force to defend themselves or their property will result in prosecution. Gilbert Road Discount Liquor[’s] owner... was... charged with two counts of injuring with intent to injure after a fight with several youths on Tuesday night. The charges related to injuries two of the youths received... News of... [the] arrest has outraged many members of the public who say it sends the wrong message to criminals and young people who intimidate store owners... The... Sensible Sentencing Trust... said store keepers were often placed in a position where they had to make on-the-spot decisions and didn’t have time for police to arrive.

...Police are in damage-control mode over widespread public criticism of their decision to charge an Otara liquor store owner involved in a brawl outside his shop last week.

...Cleared liquor store owner believes in justice, ‘but I don’t trust the police’... [The l]iquor store owner... [who] had prepared himself to spend time behind bars... says [it]’ll be back behind the counter today, and his hockey stick is up for sale. But the 40-year-old is angry with police for putting him and his family through six months of hell by charging him over a fracas with two teenagers... Mr Singh... was accused of striking one with a hockey stick as [the teen] lay on the ground with another [person]n sitting on top of him, and of striking another [offender who] was trying to help the injured [teen]... But Justices of the Peace... yesterday dismissed the charges after a depositions hearing at Manukau District Court. They said the evidence was conflicting and contradictory... Police last night defended their decision to prosecute... but refused to discuss the matter in any detail.

...A police blunder may be the reason that officers took too long to reach slain liquor store owner Navtej Singh – news his family say comes as “just another blow”. Mr Singh, 30, died in June after being shot... with a .22 rifle... while working in his Manurewa liquor store. Police came under

fire after the shooting for waiting too long at a police cordon and for preventing ambulance officers access to Mr Singh. It is believed police took between 26 and 45 minutes to reach Mr Singh. At the time, police said the delay was procedural – they had to be sure the robbers had left the scene... [(Mr Singh)'s wife, his business partner and a close friend were all there with him, but officers would still not go in despite 111 staff being assured the robbers had left[–]Mr Singh died in Middlemore Hospital early [the next]day from injuries... [sustained after Navtej] was callously shot in the chest at close range, despite holding his hands in the air and complying with a robber's demands[)]... But *Sunday News* reported yesterday that an internal inquiry has revealed that police with access to the weapons required to secure the scene took the wrong set of keys and were forced to wait for an officer to get the correct keys from the police station. The [revelation comes as Auckland police commanders try to deflect criticism for staff taking days to find a missing person whose murdered body was in the boot of her car outside her cordoned-off Keystone Ave house!

...the guy] accused of murdering South Auckland liquor store owner Shiu Prasad ['for \$150']will reappear in the Otahuhu District Court today.

...What is it that drives one to mindless killing? It's the sort of day dream-come-vision that pops up only at certain times – and one of those was last Tuesday, when Auckland heard about the stabbing to death of Mangere liquor store owner and community stalwart Shiu Prasad. But the label 'day-dream' suggests some sort of pleasure, which this definitely isn't. Maybe horror-fuelled imaginative figment is a better phrase. In this shred of mind I am trying to do grievous bodily harm, for undefined reasons, to another human being. There is a knife and the arm is rising to put some weight behind a lethal stab. Just before the point of no return... the vision crumbles... Even in my imagination I can't do it. The thought of actually taking someone's life – even in self-defence – is just abhorrent and against every last little bit of programming in every last cell. So what is going on – or not going on – in the mind of a person who uses a knife to take another's life in broad daylight? Psychologists reckon it's a lack of empathy. Someone who grows up without a positive relationship with a parent or relative or teacher doesn't see the right sort of behaviour modelled, nor do they get a chance to develop... the ability to identify another person as like themselves. We've had a lot of dissection of the causes of violence in the media lately but no-one has pointed out that there is an element of choice in every action we take and that... putting a knife in one's pocket and going to the scene of an eventual crime... requires a large amount of pre-meditation... And of course, booze and drugs can further cloud rational thinking. A chat with [an]Auckland University psychologist... throws up a useful analogy: The [guy] who beats his wife doesn't go to work and beat up his workmates; [the guy] is exercising the choice not to. [The psychologist] also points out that between 30 and 40[%] of abused kids go on to abuse others as adults. What about the other 60 to 70[%]? One assumes they are 'normal' adults. No matter how rotten your life, it is surely hard to avoid even a few of the positive experiences that point out another way... [● The] *New York Times* reports... [that a]t least 425 people have been killed and 510 injured in 100 shooting rampages in the U[S] over the past 50 years... The paper found that the killers were mostly white... [guys who had] attended college, served in the military or were unemployed... and... have been diagnosed with or shown symptoms of serious mental illness. The study, the first comprehensive look at rampage killings in the US, used a computer database to compare the profiles of rampage killers... Shooting rampages comprise only a fraction of the 15,000 to 22,000 murders committed in the US each year but have seized popular attention, especially after a series of attacks in schools in the 1990s. Rampage murderers were markedly different from the larger population of violent criminals, who often killed someone they knew or murdered while committing other crimes, and were often undereducated and from minorities... [R]ampage killers... were less likely to try to get away with their crimes... and very few even left the crime scene.

...MASS murderers strike fear into the hearts of people around the world. But take away their guns and they're just sad losers, says a former Kiwi cop who has profiled mass murderers... [in his book] *Agents of Mayhem – The Global Phenomenon of Mass Murder*... The book... said all the murderers: ■ Were [guys] suffering from some sort of personality disorder. ■ Held conspiracy theories or paranoid beliefs. ■ Were known to hold grudges, were regarded as odd or strange, and often seen as lonely individuals. ■ Felt threatened. ■ Were involved in serious incidents that went unreported before their killing spree, and they were meticulous in their planning of their last crime... ■ Wore unusual clothes and lived in untidy homes... ■ Had poor relationships with [the opposite sex], were cruel to animals and had emotional attachments to firearms... [Incidentally, a] former US marine [has been killed after hi]s pet poodle trigger[ed his] gun by jumping on his lap...

At the Knob Creek Gun Range Machine Gun Shoot in Kentucky the most popular activity is "The Line," in which 60 people fire their machineguns into a field of cars and boats. There is a 10-year waiting list for a place on the line, and one shooter can run through \$10,000 in ammunition... [In a further example of US] Gun Madness: A[n 'Oklahoma town has passed a law making it illegal to not own a gun']...

Mad about guns – or just mad? "Enough already." That was the reaction... "Mucko"... recorded on the internet to the RealPlayer computer video programme. "Takes forever to load," [Mucko] thundered. "Performs slower, crashes much more frequently, isn't variably sizeable." With its eerie echo of [the statement] "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it any more" in the film *Network*, "enough already" was probably the sentiment that ran through his head as [Mucko] crashed into his office reception... [to begin America's latest mass-]shooting tragedy... Armed, wearing a plaid shirt and bearded, [Mucko] could have been auditioning for a film role as the Angry White [Guy. Mucko], academics theorised, fits the psychological profile of a mass killer. [Mucko] had military training... was angry about his taxes[, and was a] right-wing gun nut. A *Boston Globe* editorial lamented the "nightmare that stalks the nation" and "bright rivers of blood" bursting forth because the country "refuses to pass stringent controls on firearms." Just as with the Columbine school massacre and the Michigan child who [recently] shot a classmate... the tragedy near Boston has already ushered in calls for "common sense gun control." But in Massachusetts... [there are already] strict licensing requirements with mandatory jail sentences for breaking them... [Mucko], it seems, had no licence for any gun[, and] also used an AK47 – the subject of a federal ban since 1994. One Democratic aide in Boston used these facts to reach the conclusion: "Massachusetts has some of the nation's toughest gun laws, but this demonstrates even those laws can be improved." Let's follow the logic here. A wacko ignores every gun law on the books and blows away his workmates. But if there had been even tougher laws, then [the wacko] would have meekly laid down his AK47 and spoken to the human resources manager instead... America is awash with guns, and preventing the law-abiding from having access to a means of self-defence would be little more than positive discrimination for the criminal. As [a British singer] concluded in his 1979 song *I Don't Like Mondays* – about... the San Diego schoolgirl who opened fire on her teachers and schoolmates – the search for psychological explanations can be fruitless. "[The psychologist] can see no reasons 'cos there are no reasons." ...[□ The] 22-year-old who admitted selling an assault weapon and ammunition to the teen[age boys] who killed 13 people during the Columbine High School massacre... was sentenced on Friday to six years in prison, as relatives of the victims applauded.

...DID authorities hide the fact that a police officer, and not [the]teenage killers... mistakenly shot to death one of the victims during the... Columbine High School massacre? That's what the parents of Daniel Rohrbough, 15, maintain as they step up calls for a grand jury hearing to see who killed their son and whether there was a cover-up... Since the massacre in which 15 people, including the killers, died, grief has turned to anger over how authorities handled the investigation. Some of the victims' relatives have complained the Jefferson County sheriff's office... failed to order police to enter the school quickly enough during the massacre. Most troubling[, though] was the accusation... that [one victim] was mistakenly shot by an officer at the scene... Lawyers said even if the parents could prove that one of the victims was shot by a police officer, it would be difficult to overcome governmental immunity because no one has claimed the alleged shooting was anything but a terrible mistake.

...After telling disbelieving friends all weekend that [it] was going to shoot up the school where [it] was taunted for being skinny, a smiling 15-year-old boy opened fire in his high school, killing two teenagers and injuring 13 other people. The shooter had apparently told 20 people over the weekend of his plans but no one believed him or reported him to authorities, according to accounts from students. It was the worst act of violence

at an American school since the... attack... at Columbine... and it threw this San Diego suburb of 58,000 into shock and panic. A stunned Santee Mayor... told a news conference: "I've been mayor for nine weeks and if I was mayor for 900 years, it would not prepare me for this moment..."

...The Victorian Government... will give money for pistol shooting to be taught in schools. Children as young as 12 would be trained to hit targets... using high-tech computerised guns... [By the way, a] 10-year-old boy was shot dead and his 9-year-old brother hit in the face by the same bullet in a... Father's Day tragedy. Police said the boys had been playing with a gun at a farmhouse north of Melbourne and it apparently discharged when their 60-year-old widower father tried to wrench it from them.

...A[US]n police have appealed to the public for help in solving the gruesome killing of a Chinese... 27-year-old... who was shot 34 times in the head and neck with a nail gun before being dumped in a river... "In 36 years, I've never seen a murder of this nature," ...a... homicide detective... [said. In local news, a] masked... intruder... shot a... youth worker in front of... a group of children... inside Orakei Marae... yesterday.

...Happy ending Children's book character, Mr Happy, found himself in the middle of a suspected armed offenders callout on Matama Rd, Glen Eden... on Friday after... three [guys reported hearing] shots fired... at around noon... The armed offenders squad[– one member of which was photographed by the *Western Leader* newspaper holding his gun above a Mr Happy letterbox –]dog squad and Eagle helicopter were called to the scene, roads were blocked and children from nearby schools were kept inside until about 4pm. Police left the area about 5pm when they were satisfied there was nothing suspicious or dangerous going on. [Editor's note: 'Los Angeles police are trialling the Shot Spotter – a system that can identify gunfire from among other urban noises and calculate where the shot was fired from.']

...Waitakere police are wasting precious resources dealing with youngsters toting airguns. A[n a]rms officer... says the armed offenders squad is called to about 10 incidents each month... About a fifth of the people at the centre of armed callouts are arrested. They are often charged with discharging a firearm in a public place... Many weapons are confiscated. Police destroyed 33 between April and December last year. Airguns are regulated by the Arms Act 1983... Youths under 16 can't own a gun but they can use one under the supervision of an adult or firearms licence-holder... [Airguns] don't have to be registered but 16 and 17-year-olds must obtain a firearms licence to buy one. The rigorous process requires them to supply police with references, attend a meeting about safety issues and pass a test. "The dealers out this way are pretty darn good at vetting people... The problem is with adults buying youngsters airguns as presents." Airguns can cause serious damage. The ball bearings or pellets they fire can pierce the skin and cause blindness... [In related news,] Joka the cat is recovering at her Royal Heights home after being shot with a slug gun for the second time in three months... "[Joka]'ll pull through but it doesn't change what's happened..." ...Joka is not the only victim. [A local v]eterinarian... treated an unusually high number of injured animals around the time Joka was first shot.

...[a] Massey resident... and her cat, Joka, are leaving town while the animal still has six lives... The... cat has been shot three times since last May... "The vet said you've either got to move or keep her inside. I can't keep her inside... So I've got three weeks to find somewhere [else] to live." ...the vet told her that Joka will be permanently disabled and may have trouble with her co-ordination... [Joka's owner] has contacted the police. "But what can they do? All they can do is ask the people if they have a slug gun." Police are already concerned about increased irresponsible use of airguns... They say most airguns aren't registered and tracing owners is difficult... [● A mother] was astonished when an x-ray of Bubble, her 7-year-old daughter's ailing cat, showed it had been hit by seven pellets from an air rifle. Roaming gun[s] are not a normal occurrence in Stanley Pt, one of the posher neighbourhoods of Devonport, but the discovery solved a riddle that had been puzzling the family for about nine months. Clearly the recurring injuries they had put down to stropky catfights were far more sinister. Their worry lines deepened when an x-ray of their other Burmese, Squeak, uncovered a further pellet. The family's dog... will be x-rayed, too, just to be sure. So far, 18-month-old Bubble's injuries have cost \$4000... Bubbles owner, [Miss] Hamilton... was scared for the cat[, so it]... went along as escort... at his first venture outside for two weeks...

A Hamilton boy was lucky to escape serious spinal injury when [it] was shot in the neck by a mysterious sniper... [His father] said it was worrying that a teenage boy could no longer walk along a street without fearing for his safety[, but also said the]... 13-year-old... was probably hit by someone playing with a slug or airgun who did not realise how much injury such a weapon could cause... Hamilton... police had no idea who had fired the shot. [A constable] said the shooting did not look like an accident, and... [could've been inspired by current events in the US capital. Speaking of which, p]olice across three states were searching for a 33-year-old white supremacist from North Carolina who they believe may be linked to the series of random killings in the Washington area... Police have mounted a ...hunt across the eastern seaboard but without much hard evidence to go on. Six people have been killed and one other badly injured since Thursday, in what police describe as almost ghost-like sniper attacks. The perpetrators appear to have chosen their targets without discrimination, picking on people as they went about their daily business. The latest attack, on Saturday, took place outside a crafts store in Fredericksburg, Virginia, around 80km south of Washington. The victim was loading her car with purchases when [it] was shot in the back. Her condition was not immediately known... Ballistics tests have linked only four of the seven shootings.

...Investigators hunting a sniper responsible for 10 attacks released their first wanted poster yesterday – composite images of a white truck – after authorities confirmed that an eighth death was linked to the killer. The images are the first of any kind to be released in association with a killer who has been stalking suburban Washington areas and targeting victims apparently at random. More than a week after the shootings began, a massive task force of county, state and federal officers still won't say if they know who they are looking for, or even if the sniper is acting alone... At least one high school homecoming and several weekend football games were cancelled by worried school officials in and around Washington, DC... Across the street from the scene of Saturday's shooting in Virginia, [one businessperson] parked three tow trucks alongside his filling station as a shield... Despite jitters, motorists continued to fill up, looking over their shoulders now and then for whoever is terrorising the community.

...Families return to lives free from fear... A [perso]n sought as a material witness in the Washington-area sniper shootings was arrested yesterday as residents finally feeling safe after three weeks of terror returned to the normality of soccer games and weekend shopping. "I feel like I woke up from a nap and I'm getting more used to not being scared any more," said... [a customer] at a farmer's market that had been closed the previous week because of the killings. The last of the sniper's victims, bus driver Conrad Johnson, was mourned yesterday at a service in Silver Spring, Maryland... The 35-year-old father of two... was... gunned down on Wednesday as [it] prepared to start his route... Maryland authorities yesterday charged [a 41-year-old and a 17-year-old] with six counts of first-degree murder in the shootings... There was no immediate indication when Virginia authorities would file any charges. Alabama officials filed their own murder charges against the two suspects... and said they would seek the death penalty. Authorities had been tipped off last summer that [the now 41-year-old] might be dangerous. Law-enforcement officials said the FBI in Washington state interviewed a witness who claimed [the 41-year-old] tried to obtain a silencer for his gun and spoke of killing police. FBI agents and local police had concerns about some aspects of the witness's account and decided to treat the threat as a local issue of officer safety...

IT'S a funny thing about Washington, how the most obvious things often go unnoticed. To the locals, the Washington Monument is just a spike in the skyline, not a towering phallic tribute to the Father of the Country. The seat of American democracy? Well, D.C. residents will point to Capitol Hill, not the lobbying firms on K St, which visitors with favours to buy recognise as the true seat of power and influence. And then there is the problem with murders and murderers. Start with the infamous inability of the local police to find slain congressional aide Chandra Levy, whose bones remained undiscovered for 12 months in the very same park to which [Chandra] was known to have been heading on the morning [it] disappeared. Three times police combed the preserve, yet it was a spring stroller who eventually stumbled on her fate. And now there is a new example of blinkered vision to ponder: the strange case of [the] Beltway Sniper... who might still be out there potting shoppers and schoolboys if investigators had not inadvertently released a description of his [modified] car, which for reasons best known to themselves they would have preferred to keep under wraps. Fortunately, a passing truck driver spotted the vehicle, summoned cops and blocked any possible escape with his

rig. Of course the driver wasn't a local, which explains why [it] had the wits so rarely found in Washington's permanent residents. Now, as the panic recedes and rival jurisdictions vie to stage [the sniper]'s trial and execution, there is time to ponder how so many experts could have been so wrong and with so few apologies. From profilers to the press to the police, error compounded terror... Now that Washington school students have returned to their playgrounds, there is an understandable reluctance to keep the focus on all the things that went wrong. That's a pity – perhaps a tragic one, since [the sniper]'s motive remains moot. The prevailing wisdom now says that the US\$10 million [it] demanded to end his spree was the crux of the case. Take that wisdom for what it is worth, but there is ample reason to suspect another case of that selective Washington blindness.

...The Million Mom March drew hundreds of thousands... to Washington... to demand that America end its long and lethal love affair with the gun... Those million marching moms had a bone to pick with the Founding Fathers, who enshrined the right to bear arms in the Constitution. It must have been a mistake, they assured each other as speakers at the... rally invoked the ghosts of the Columbine school massacre. "Rubbish!" responded the gun lovers, who assembled elsewhere in Washington to quote Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton. "The pistol and the rifle are to be revered" as "vital instruments" of democracy, wrote Hamilton, whose enthusiasm for sidearms came to an ironic conclusion when [the person who 'frowned on the French Revolution, to which Jefferson was sympathetic – this play of forces led to the 2-party system in America (Hamilton's *Federalist Party* and Jefferson's *Democratic-Republican Party* – to dispel partisanship the 1st President, George Washington, made the liberal Jefferson his Secretary of State and the conservative Hamilton Secretary of the Treasury)'] was shot dead in a duel by rival Aaron Burr. To the NRA and its 20 million members, the police and politicians are the real villains. Every sensible citizen should pack a weapon, they say, because society's protectors so often fail to do their job. It sounds ridiculous... But live under the gun in America for a while and somehow, in some strange and insidious way, it all begins to make a kind of twisted, seductive sense. "Take guns from good people," said... the... NRA chief[the ageing actor (r:p80, ln27) who portrayed Moses – and has also declared that 'if they want to take my gun they'll have to prize it from my cold, dead hand' –] "and pretty soon only the bad people will have guns. We have more than 20,000 gun laws on the books in this country and they are not being enforced. More than [2000] students were caught taking guns to school last year alone and do you know how many of those were prosecuted? The answer is 13! We... need the politicians to stop posturing and employ common sense." ...there was an awful lot of political grandstanding going on at the march... Through two terms and countless scandals, a majority of [gals have] stuck with... the... [Democratic] President... like glue. Now the polls show many are looking kindly at [the]Republican contender... "Keeping the mothers of America on the Democratic team is obviously a top priority," a party functionary admitted. "We want the moms to know that there will never be meaningful gun control with a Republican Administration." But can guns ever be banished from a country that boasts more weapons than people? There are laws against drugs but they are available on street corners all over town. Why should firearms be any different? Yet it is equally hard to accept the NRA's view that Americans must routinely arm themselves as if for a bad day in Beirut... America's nightmare with guns may end[one day]. Until then, Washinton is always ready for a photogenic protest march.

...*LAND OF GUNS AND NEUROSES*... FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT was not naturally American: [Roosevelt] was rich and a Democrat... spoke in sentences... sat down most of the time – a condition that has been scientifically related to "thought"; and... opined that the republic [it] led had "nothing to fear but fear itself"... And yet, the underlying American response... ever since its great victory and imperial dawning in 1945 has been fear: alarm, driven sometimes to slaughter – whether Indian, black, or rationalist; the terror that space, home and prosperity, once achieved, might be ripped away; the debilitating notion that fortune is worth no more than the fruits of gambling, and is as insecure; the steady fuelling of the fires of unreason, so that every paranoid feeling grows into a "threat". Why else does such a country need so many guns, police officers and prisons? How is it that a land once pledged to free thinking and still the home of many great universities, libraries and museums, finds itself in mounting dread of radical or adventurous thinking? ...Perhaps you feel hyperbole has set in, for surely the US is a diverse country in which outstanding pieces of heroic, the noble and the virtuous must be observed every day? Yes, that's still so. A lone climber in Colorado last week, finding himself trapped as a boulder moved, cut off one of his arms below the elbow, fashioned a tourniquet, then walked 11km to find help... And yet, in this same land, teachers (already fearful of being eliminated by budget cuts) are afraid to fail students who lack the capacity or the right to graduate from high school; ...the difficulty of obtaining moderate health insurance compel more people into a gamble with their lives...; the urge to vote and to be active in politics is in such retreat that voting figures are a national scandal; and the US prefers not to ask why it is now regarded with such dismay in the rest of the world[– which]Americans know less and less about. They were always afraid to travel with open minds... Yet that vulnerability will only be the more exposed as the country finds itself in an occupying position in more parts of the wayward or misled world.

...A soft-spoken history teacher halted Germany's worst postwar massacre by persuading a gun-wielding former student to end his killing spree. The revelation that [the teacher] stopped 19-year-old Robert Steinhäuser's rampage with a few gentle words gave some comfort to a nation stunned by the slaughter of 16 people at a secondary school. Steinhäuser later committed suicide. "It was a fearless teacher who ended the massacre," said N-TV Television. But questions remain on how a teenager was allowed to legally obtain the weapons and ammunition with which [it] calmly murdered teachers, classmates and a police[officer] at Johann Gutenberg School in Erfurt... Ten other people were wounded, and... the teenager had access to enough ammunition to kill hundreds more... The political debate on Germany's gun laws intensified as [the]Chancellor... flew yesterday to Erfurt... to lay flowers at the school. [The Chancellor] left Erfurt without comment. [However, the]Interior Minister... said that despite tough gun control laws, which require among other things for applicants to pass rigorous exams... further restrictions might be needed.

...THE murder of 14 people by a deranged sales[perso]n in Switzerland has prompted politicians and police to call for a review of the country's firearm laws, among the most liberal in the world[,] and the custom of conscripts keeping weapons at home. Switzerland has one of Europe's largest land-based armies. Nearly every [guy] between 20 and 42 is a conscript... Households are stocked with an estimated 12 million weapons... in the usually tranquil alpine nation of 7.2 million. Every year, however, there are violent incidents involving the Sturmgewehr 90 assault rifle, the type used in the massacre, since it was introduced as the standard Swiss army weapon in 1990... All that is needed to buy a weapon in Switzerland is a licence from local authorities. Gun dealers are legally responsible for ensuring that customers who buy hunting and sports guns are of sound character... Commentators expressed amazement that [the deranged salesperson], 57, who... had a criminal record dating back to 1970 and was under investigation after [it] threatened a bus driver with another gun... had been able to acquire a licence for three guns, two pistols and a revolver... [A] weapons lobby group, Pro Tell, said that the... case [of the deranged salesperson] should not be used to introduce a ban on guns.

...Tough new gun laws are planned to give the Government an inventory of the one million fire arms in N[Z] and who owns them. This means police will know what guns are in a house before executing a search warrant or breaking up a domestic dispute, says [the]Police Minister. The changes are a follow-up to the Arms Amendment Bill introduced by National and are due to come before Parliament this year... [However, the] vice-president of the Sporting Shooters Association, said the reforms had the potential to increase violent crime and create a weapons black market. Overseas evidence showed gun laws disarmed the law-abiding and gave criminals more power over them, [the vice-president] said. Gun collectors at the country's largest arms fair, held in Waitakere City over the weekend, reacted with dismay to the new gun control measures... An... exhibitor... said gun owners were probably the country's most law-abiding citizens, but were depicted as bad by the gun control pressure groups...

A JUDGE'S decision to throw out a murder charge against... [a resident] of Helensville, is no licence for others to kill, [a]... Kumeu police... Sergeant... says... [The Waitakere District Court judge]'s unusual ruling, made after studying evidence at a depositions hearing before the scheduled... trial, says [the] shooting of Robert Oppert... [– who allegedly] was a "gentle giant" – ...in a home invasion on April 26 last year was clearly self-defence. [The] Justice... says cases where the issue of self-defence should not be left to the jury are rare, but this was such a case... Mr Oppert, 45, was with three younger [guys] who raided... the [resident]'s home to steal cannabis. [The younger guys] were jailed for seven-and-a-half

years for aggravated robbery. [One of them] fired an air pistol at [the resident when it] came to the front door, [the second guy] had a metal bar, and Oppert and [the third guy] were unarmed. Mr Oppert was described as a very big [perso]n and was wearing a balaclava. "I do not believe that a reasonable jury could infer that in shooting the deceased in his house, the applicant was motivated to protect his cannabis crop or by anger,"...

[A farmer] did not hesitate when [it] saw an unfamiliar ute being driven around the side of his farmhouse in the dark. "I reached into the cupboard and grabbed a handful of cartridges I'd left there after coming back from pig hunting..." ...Armed with a pump-action single-barrel shotgun with a magazine underneath, [it] went outside to confront the three [guys] who had come onto his isolated Northland beef farm in the dead of night on Sunday. Approaching their ute, [the farmer] saw they had his quad farm bike halfway on to it. Farmers in the area had reported thieves stealing farmbikes and other equipment. "I told them to put it back and fired a shot over their heads." The [thieves] piled into the ute and took off down the road. "Then I thought it was best to shoot one of their tyres out. I fired a second shot at a back tyre, but it must have gone astray. The police told me later it must have ricocheted and gone through one guy's back and come out of his neck." The ute crashed into a fence. "Two guys pushed the other out, left him on the ground and took off down the road. I said, 'Aren't you going to help your mate?' The guy on the ground, who] was making groaning noises... said, 'You didn't have to do that, bro'." [The farmer] ran back to his farmhouse and called the police and an ambulance. But it was hours before police arrived at his farmhouse in the Whangae area near Kawakawa... Questions are being asked as to whether [the farmer] should face charges for firing at would-be burglars or whether [it] is an innocent... who tried to defend his property.

...NO one deserves to be shot for stealing a motorbike. We have to believe that human life is worth more than a piece of machinery otherwise, as a society, we're stuffed. So the answer is obvious. Stop stealing. Stop being a gutless, lazy, slimy low-life... ([lowlife thieves stooped so low as to hack at a bunch of silverbeet and steal them from my mother-in-law's garden])... and stop taking other people's property. And if the spineless twits who buy this stolen property showed a little backbone and turned down deals that look too good to be true, that would help... If thieves are stealing farmbikes, or cattle, or farm equipment, it's because there's a market – presumably made up of other farmers. So perhaps the rural community could band together and stop shafting one another. I have no sympathy for thieves, despite the fact that I appear to be descended from one. Our family tree includes a [relation] who was deported from England to A[US] after robbing one stagecoach too many. But back then people did what they had to do to keep their families alive. What's the excuse today? Working honestly and leading a good life is hard, but surely not as hard as being left to lie bleeding on a Northland farm for hours. And so much for there being honour among thieves. How much honour is there in dumping your wounded mate out of your ute and leaving him, to all intents and purposes, to die? [The f]armer... should be charged though. Then it would be up to the community to decide, through a jury trial, whether or not his actions were justified. My guess is that [the farmer would walk.

...An Aucklander] waited in agony for more than an hour after... [being] shot three times in the torso yesterday – apparently because police thought it was too dangerous to go to his aid. In the end a Te Atatu South wallpaper sales[perso]n went to... help – bundling him into the back of his van and driving him to the police cordon. For his trouble the sales[perso]n... was spread-eagled by heavily armed police and had a gun held to his head. Other residents were furious that the police did not arrive earlier. They accused them of putting locals in danger by asking them to keep a watch on the victim and his... Headhunter... gang associates and provide a commentary by cellphone... [One n]eighbour... saw the victim leaning against a dog kennel with blood seeping from gaping gunshot wounds, and begging for an ambulance... [The neighbour] told police there were no firearms in sight... [The salesperson had] heard gunshots and a short time later a [guy] came to his house and said: "My mate's been shot. Have you got a blanket?" I got him one, and I rolled them a cigarette. They might have been bad buggers but the guy was dying, you know?" ...the police told him an ambulance was waiting... His partner... ran round the block twice looking for it, but it was nowhere to be seen... "The... guy was... slipping in and out of consciousness and... going white. A Maori going white, it wasn't good. I... didn't want to let this guy die... Then the [police] thought I was involved." [The]Acting Senior Sergeant... of Waitakere defended the police actions. "It was a serious situation and we were unsure of the exact circumstances... The safety of the public and our staff is paramount. Blindly rushing in to the scene won't help the public or us." Police took several people away for questioning, but there had been no arrests by late last night. The victim was seriously ill [but is expected to survive]...

Returning to the Waitakere cottage where his colleagues were killed by a gun... is always emotional for a... retired... superintendent... "It brings back a lot of memories. And it makes me realise how dangerous it can be when police are confronted with armed offenders," says the Waitakere City councillor... [Hi]s return to the scene... follows the fatal shooting of Detective Constable Taylor and the wounding of [another]Detective Constable... in Rongotea... Mr Taylor and his [colleague] were chasing a 17-year-old burglary suspect when the shooting occurred. Mr Taylor died instantly... Mr Taylor's death brought the number of N[Z] police officers killed... to 26. West Auckland has connections with several, including the first – Constable Neil McLeod who was shot in July 1890 on board the steamer Minnie Casey, while on transfer from Dargaville to Auckland... The 1963 Waitakere cottage incident saw Bethells Rd resident James Robert Berry, Detective Sergeant Neville Power and Detective Inspector Wallace Chambers shot dead by... [a] 53-year-old... [who] was later declared insane and unfit to stand trial and [then] kept in custody in Auckland Prison.

...FRONTLINE cops are set to be issued with new bulletproof vests... for... potentially violent calls... following a series of violent attacks on police... [A] Manukau constable... underwent emergency surgery after being knifed in the stomach in a sudden attack when... called to a south Auckland home earlier this month. His partner had to disarm the attacker by hitting him over the head with his torch. [A]West Auckland constable... was shocked by the knifing but it reaffirmed his decision to wear... [the] \$1200... bulletproof undershirt [the constable] brought with him when... transferr[ing] from the British police. "My... wife feels a lot better knowing I have one and wear it most of the time," said... [the constable, who added that it] used to get odd looks from his colleagues when... open[ing] his shirt. "But whenever there was an incident, my mates would say 'you go in first...',"... The Second Chance body armour jacket can stop bullets fired from guns up to .44 calibre. "It's also... been tested against knives and slashers and stopped them,"... said [the constable, who believed that] with the rising number of attacks on police, his vest, which weighs 1.2kg, could be a lifesaver[('a US police officer who was wearing a bullet-proof vest survived after being shot 11 times by gang' members). The constable] is one of the few N[Z] officers who have their own flak jackets... Protective gear for police was last issued nationally in 1994.

...Some police have been urged to buy their own bulletproof vests because there are not enough for the frontline. Police chiefs say there are enough vests – but they have to juggle gear during major... hunts. The Police Association says there has always been a shortage. It wants 100 or so vests pooled in a central area to ensure there are enough to go round during a big... hunt. The issue flared... during Operation Reeves as officers hunted the [armed offender] who murdered pizza shop worker Marcus Doig and bank officer John Vaughan... [D]istrict commanders ordered that all staff be armed while the [armed offender] was on the loose – an order that was impossible to obey... The head of Whangaparaoa police said his station was one of many asked to contribute spare guns and vests. The station did not send any because it had too few for its own staff... Whangaparaoa[']s... 13 officers share one vest, one pistol and two rifles, [but] staff had been told they could use firearms only if they were wearing vests. That effectively meant they could use just one of the guns... Vests must be ordered from the United States or Britain, and cost up to \$3000.

...A BRITISH police force has ordered flak jackets moulded to accommodate breasts after [gal] officers complained the body armour didn't fit.

...[over] 800 police rifles have been withdrawn from service because of reports that they can discharge without anyone pulling the trigger once the safety catch is released. The Remington model 700 .223 calibre rifles are issued to general-duty officers called to an incident involving arms before the armed offenders squad has arrived... and for emergencies such as shooting escaped livestock on motorways... General-duty staff now had only 9mm Glock pistols... [The n]ational police operations manager... said the recall was a precaution following an article in... the N[Z] Deer Stalkers Association newsletter last month... that... said... [the] 700 model had been at the centre of... 80 lawsuits against Remington in the past 20 years. In one case [7] years ago, the company paid \$17 m... in damages to a Texan... whose firearm accidentally discharged and shot him in the foot.

...Police are getting up protesters' noses... [D]emonstrators at the Auckland University students' protest march on Thursday were subjected to a new method of restraint... [which i]s under trial as part of team policing strategies. "It's very effective because it causes a little pain but it doesn't cause any lasting effects. Once you take the finger away, the pain is gone. It won't break anybody's nose." ...[However, an] Auckland nasal surgeon... said last night... "I don't think that it's intrinsically dangerous but it would be possible to dislocate the nasal septum, although I have seen this injury only from an actual blow, not steady pressure." Police forcibly removed about 100 demonstrators who sat down... in the middle of the Queen St and Wellesley St intersection... during protests about delays in Work and Income N[Z] paying student loans... Eighteen people were arrested... [An] Auckland City police spokes[perso]n... said the use of the hold was at the discretion of the officer involved... A previous police hold was heavily criticised during the Commonwealth leaders' 1995 conference in Auckland. The method fashionable at the time was a two-handed, thumb-pressure grip on either side of the face. [A veteran protester who is] now a Green Party MP, was among those who felt its painful force. The police security head for the conference... defended the hold at the time, claiming it was not brutal or dangerous but "extremely effective." The... former Superintendent... [also] said police had used the thumb-pressure hold as far back as 1981, during the Springbok tour demonstrations.

...[NZ p]olice are evaluating a gun... used by police in Germany, Northern Ireland and the U[S]... that fires "beanbag" bullets... The beanbag "bullet" was a small package of pellets bundled together in a bag and fired from a shotgun. It was capable of knocking someone down but was unlikely to cause fatal injury. One police officer could carry it, with backup from other conventionally armed officers if it failed... said... [the] Petone firearms dealer... who also heads the NZ Council of Licensed Firearm Owners... [However,] it was too risky to use anything but the real thing... in situations where a suspect was close... The imported guns cost between \$700 and \$800 each. [The] national operations manager... said police had investigated... a range of non-lethal... alternatives to standard-issue weapons for about 18 months. They were being considered for specialist squads. Options included... an improved model of the Taser stun gun that they rejected in 1995... catching nets and big poles to pin a suspect against the wall... [plus] a bigger-capacity pepper spray canister...

Pepper spray, which police have used [over] 500 times... since its introduction, has been hailed... a success. Figures presented at a police executive conference in Wellington showed the spray had been used 497 times on humans, 63 times on dogs and once on a cow, up to the end of August.

...The latest weapon in the police arsenal of crime-fighting tools has been proven to work well – except on runaway cows[, and]... might not be as effective against mental patients... The police magazine... said assaults on police were avoided in 83[%] of cases where the potent oleoresin capsicum spray was used... It also appeared to... reduce... the risk of injury to offenders... Police said... [they] had received no complaints from spray victims.

...A Northland family are seeking answers [to why] a 66-year-old relative died minutes after police squirted him with pepper spray. Retired Kerikeri [resident] Ian Horsfield collapsed and died... in a carpark after police used the spray to subdue him... w[hen] trying to collect him for psychiatric treatment... Mr Horsfield was... rushed to a medical centre, but could not be revived... [Details have been suppressed by the coroner. The] Northland rural area controller, said a post-mortem examination... showed Mr Horsfield had died of a heart attack not caused by the spray.

...Police spray 'not cause of... death'... A Kerikeri constable says [it] used pepper spray on an elderly [person] who was backing away from her because his fist was raised in the air. Dr Ian Horsfield, aged 66, died shortly after police restrained him in a... car park last October 8. The police had been asked to help a Northland Health mental health officer take him to Whangarei for a psychiatric assessment... Under cross examination... [at] an inquest in the Kaikohe District Court... [the constable said it] sprayed in the direction of Dr Horsfield's face... after [Dr Horsfield had] pinned her behind a car door... but it appeared most of it hit his left ear. Everything had happened quickly and while [the constable] noticed Dr Horsfield "wasn't a good colour," [Dr Horsfield] was still breathing when put in the back of a police car. [The constable admitted it] was not aware that overseas literature recommended pepper spray not be used within a metre of the victim, but thought that was the approximate distance between herself and Dr Horsfield... After [the constable] sprayed him Dr Horsfield was laid flat on his stomach... When asked if [the constable] had considered police guidelines on pepper-spray use, which warned of the danger of asphyxia if someone was placed face down on the ground, [the c]onstable... said Dr Horsfield's head was turned to the side... [The c]onstable... accepted that the incident would have been very stressful to Dr Horsfield and... was aware that police guidelines required her to provide him with any medical attention necessary. However, [the constable said it] had no idea [Dr Horsfield] might be having a heart attack... [The person] who performed the autopsy... concluded... Dr Horsfield's death... was the result of a heart attack... [but said it] did not believe the use of pepper spray was connected... Dr Horsfield's sister-in-law... testified that last year [it] had become concerned at the former psychiatric patient's behaviour towards her. Dr Horsfield was angry at her plans to sell her property, where [Dr Horsfield] lived in a separate house, and to cut down a hedge... But [the sister-in-law] did not believe [Dr Horsfield] was a threat to others.

...Police know how an intellectually disabled [perso]n died after being pepper-sprayed in Hamilton, but last night said they were unable to release the findings. They said the cause of Russell Willie Hamilton's death on Friday night in Waikato Hospital was unrelated to use of the spray. Mr Hamilton, aged 32, was pepper-sprayed and handcuffed in the suburb of Dinsdale on Wednesday after damaging letterboxes and smashing windows... The death is the second in N[Z] of someone subdued by pepper spray... Introduced in 1997, pepper spray has been criticised for safety reasons... A[n AUS]n physician who has studied the effects of pepper spray's active ingredient, capsaicin, said yesterday that in the U[S] about 70 people had died by 1998 after being sprayed[(the spray has also 'come under scrutiny in the US after torture allegations' – which may explain why the LAPD is testing *Skunk Spot* on people; 'the aerosol to repel attacking dogs with sulphurous hydrocarbons that produce a skunk odour was developed by a first-year chemistry student at Auckland University')]. The president of the Auckland Council for Civil Liberties... said a large number of complaints had been made [in NZ] about police misusing pepper spray. "...It's vital it be looked at in a time when they're considering using other weapons."

...Travis, a Connecticut chimpanzee, was the constant companion of a lonely widow who fed him steak, lobster and ice cream. [Travis] could eat at the table, drink wine from a stemmed glass, use the toilet, and dress and bathe himself... brushed his teeth with a Water Pik, logged onto the computer to look at photos and channel-surfed t[v] with the remote control. But on Tuesday, the wild animal in him came out with a vengeance. The 90kg animal viciously attacked a friend of his owner before being shot to death by police. Investigators are trying to figure out why – whether it was a bout of Lyme disease, a reaction to drugs, or a case of instinct taking over. "It's hard to say what exactly precipitated this behaviour," said... Bronx Zoo. "At the end of the day... you can't always predict... how... any other wild animal will respond when they feel threatened."

...A [guy] killed by a volley of police bullets screamed, "You pushed me too far," as [it was going] on a rampage early yesterday through Waitara. Steven Wallace, who was 23, smashed hundreds of windows in the small Taranaki town... in a trail of destruction that started about 3.30 am. [Steven] was shot by one officer as [Steven] charged a group of police who witnesses said had urged him repeatedly to drop his weapons. Witnesses said the officer fired four or five shots. The former architecture student died mid-morning at Taranaki Base Hospital, becoming the 19th person killed by police in N[Z]. Many people condemned the shooting as needless. Family... witnesses and friends could not think of a reason for his behaviour, but... confronted police on the street later in the day. His mother... said: "The police are murderers. They're going to pay for it in a big way." His sister... said... "We don't know what went wrong at all. We just know [Steven] was killed for smashing some windows, which is pathetic..." Police are saying little, but last night [the]Superintendent... of the central police district appealed for calm. [It] refused to name the... officer who shot Mr Wallace but said [the officer] had been sent on leave... Two investigations are under way – one by the police to determine any criminal culpability and one by the independent Police Complaints Authority. Residents were woken by the sound of smashing windows and Mr Wallace's shouts and screams. One resident, who called the police, said the rampage lasted 15 to 20 minutes and was confined mainly to... the main street... There was a brief standoff with police, during which Mr Wallace was... "...ranting and raving and would not calm down." The w[itnes]

said Steven] charged towards the officers... [The witness also said] Mr Wallace had seemed intent on harming the police, and they probably had no choice... [However, a]nother witness... said... “[Steven] had no gun... [– just] a baseball [bat] in one hand and a golf club in the other. I can see that clearly in my mind still. They should have waited for the dogs or something. Okay, [Steven]’d done a lot of damage in town beforehand, but I don’t think they should have shot him.” ...[one local], speaking from the Waitara Rugby League club... had known Mr Wallace and his family for years, and [said Steven] was popular, intelligent and good at sport. “[Steven] was a normal sort of bloke, just a young guy. It’s tragic.” A[nother local] at the Waitara Hotel said: “Why the hell did they shoot him...? And why didn’t they shoot him in the leg?” The... [PCA investigator] said last night that it was far too early to comment. “I’m not able to say whether I’m alarmed or not...” ...[the] president of the Council for Civil Liberties, wondered if there was a danger the police were developing a “shoot first, ask questions later” mentality. “Why does someone not carrying any firearms end up being shot five times?” ...Glaziers h[ave h]urriedly replaced... windows at the fire station, police station, supermarket and shops.

...The [police] investigation into the shooting of Steven Wallace... [involves over] 25 staff, mostly from Taranaki... The president of the Auckland Council for Civil Liberties... is unhappy with this system. [The president believed] the Waitara shooting was a “turning point for this nation” in terms of people’s trust in the police, and the inquiry had to be seen to be totally independent... [E]ither an ad hoc body or a panel convened by the Ombuds[person] should run it. The police guidelines on the use of firearms say police are criminally liable for using excessive force. They say police should shoot only if firearms are the only reasonable way to protect themselves or others from death or grievous bodily harm from an offender who is resisting arrest or trying to escape. They must warn an offender before firing... On Thursday... [the PM] asked whether the police protocol was shoot to wound or shoot to kill. “There’s quite a lot of questions that the Government and public are going to want information about,” [the PM] said... However... the... Acting Chief Commissioner... said yesterday that [it] did not know of a law enforcement agency anywhere in the world that taught the concept of shoot to wound. “I refute any commentators who believe that N[Z] police should adopt a shoot to wound [policy].” The dangers to police... of a shoot-to-wound approach were unacceptable. Police... were trained to shoot to incapacitate and to aim for the largest body mass, which happened to be... where all the vital organs were... “The idea that an officer considers ‘I’ll wing him in the shoulder or in the leg’... [i]s something that the mass media have portrayed... – it... isn’t sustainable in reality, it does not have any basis in reality.” The Police Association... said... yesterday that... the officer who shot Mr Wallace had “in reality” fired only twice[because p]olice were trained to “double tap.” “That means we don’t fire one shot, we fire two... If that fails to stop the person, and the circumstances still justify shooting, then we fire two more shots.”

...To his mates, Steve Wallace was... a sports-mad and fun-loving [guy] with flashing blue eyes. One of his best friends... said all the girls loved him... “[And]Waitara was so proud of him, going to university. It isn’t an easy thing to achieve from a small town like this.” ...But last Sunday morning the life drained out of the 23-year-old... [and] no one can understand [why]. “This guy wasn’t violent. [Steven] was funny as[, and] always had a grin on his face...” ...On Saturday, [Steven] apparently played a round of golf at Airedale Links... That evening [Steven] watched rugby league on television and then went into New Plymouth with some friends... [Steven] did not drink... [– because Steven] was in training for league... and was the sober driver... Early on Sunday [Steven] drove home alone. There is speculation about his having a... run-in with police, but whatever happened [Steven] picked up from his house the softball bat [it] had swung since his teenage days with the Waitara Softball Club and a golf club... used [the previous] day... then went on a 35-minute vandalism spree... [until being hit by] five rounds... fired... from a police-issue Glock pistol... About 300 people filled the meeting house at Owae Marae [during Steven’s tangi], and there were at least as many outside on the lawn. The mourners included at least five MPs. [Meanwhile, t]he fallout from his death continues... Death threats have been made to police and whispers about retribution continue... Th[e officer involved in the shooting] is now under police protection for his own safety and has relocated with his family out of Taranaki.

...The *Herald* has won the right to publish the name of the police[officer] who shot Steve Wallace... Two of the country’s most senior judges, sitting as a full Bench of the High Court at Auckland, last night dismissed an application by the [officer] for an order prohibiting publication of his identity. But they granted the [officer] extended suppression until midnight on Monday to give him time to consider an appeal. During a four-hour hearing the judges questioned how it could be right to suppress publication of the name of the [officer when the officer] was a public official carrying out a public duty on a public street. They said there was no mandate to follow the traditional internal police practice of not naming officers involved in fatal shootings... During the hearing... the [officer]’s New Plymouth lawyer... said the media had fed a raft of misinformation to an impressionable public and the *Herald* was seeking to create a story that fed on itself, would continue to grow and sell more newspapers. [One judge] interrupted, saying that was strong criticism[, then asked the lawyer if it] had seen a *Herald* editorial on the shooting which [the judge] called “extremely balanced.” [The lawyer hadn’t seen the editorial but added that] there was a voluntary undertaking by the media not to publish the names of police... involved in fatal shootings... [The other judge said the officer] was trying to prevent the *Herald* from publishing something that 6000 people in Waitara already knew[, then] said the public interest outweighed... [hi]s request for privacy... [A representative] for the Police Department, said... [i]t was time, perhaps... to press for legislation on the issue... of... preserving the... anonymity... [of police. In response, one judge] said that sounded almost reprehensible. It was fundamental that police officers be known to the public. “You astound me... It’s the first time my ire has been aroused in this case.” [The representative said it was only] acting on instructions. [The judge: “]So we will have a secret police?[" The representative: “]No sir. That is not what I suggested at all. The concept of a secret police suggests that the police are not accountable for their actions. In NZ all police officers are responsible for their actions.[“] ...But the judges said there was no evidence of any likelihood that [the officer] would face charges.

...Two [gals] are facing criminal charges after the wife of the constable who shot and killed... Steven Wallace was harassed... follow[ing] a function held for the officer and his family at the New Plymouth police station on Saturday night... [■ T]he constable – whom... all media offices have chosen not to name – [‘was involved in another shooting incident in 1991. The constable was cleared of any wrongdoing in that incident’ and, this time, is expected to be judged to have] acted lawfully and in self-defence when... sho[oting] Mr Wallace...

A gun battle with bank robbers caused serious psychological problems for the [constable] who later shot [Mr] Wallace, it has been revealed. [The c]onstable... suffered flashbacks, anxiety attacks and tearful bouts of depression after the December 1991 shootout at a New Plymouth PostBank... Fortunate not to be hit when an armed robber fired at him from close range[, the constable]... sought help from a psychologist, had trouble sleeping and temporarily transferred to a desk job. Almost a year after the bungled robbery, [the constable said it]... was “no longer scared of death”... and... declared [it] would shoot to kill if caught in a similar situation again... “I... don’t think I would find it so hard killing anyone from now on...”

...THE Waitara cop who shot Steve Wallace is so worried about his family’s safety [it] is considering changing his name. Armed police are on guard over the Taranaki officer’s family after his name was published in... the National Business Review... newspaper on Friday. “In light of what has happened everything is being reconsidered...,” said [the]police association president... “Now that his name is known throughout the country his situation has changed... Until the inquiry is completed, [the Taranaki officer] is going to be under enormous stress. If [the Taranaki officer] stays in the police, [it] probably won’t be able to work in the provinces,”... Police complaints authority and police inquiries... take up to eight months...

Policing the police – can we trust the system? ...[A Bay of Plenty resident] does not have a high opinion of the P[CA. The resident], aged 40, lives on a 1ha lifestyle block near Tauranga. Last June, [the resident] applied to police for a trespass order against his neighbour, who... was intimidating him. [The resident] was given a form and advised to serve it on the neighbour himself. When [the resident] did so... his neighbour “hurled abuse at me” and called to his wife to phone the police. About 9 that night, [the resident]’s phone rang. A [voice] said his house was surrounded by the

armed offenders squad and [the occupant] should do what [it] was told. "I didn't know what they were on about. I said, 'You must have the wrong number.' I let the phone ring[again while] I just sat up in my lounge and played my guitar. Next thing there was a loud-hailer saying, 'Come out.' I finally went out there. They arrested me... and charged me with threatening to kill, assault and trespass." To [the resident], who had never been arrested before, it was a nightmare... that has cost him \$70,000 for lawyers and private investigators, and left him finally convicted and discharged on the assault count. (The other two charges were dropped.) Last October, [the resident] turned to the P[CA] alleging wrongful arrest. But the authority never interviewed him, and [the resident] never had a chance to give it the report from the private investigators. Months after the final court decision, and after repeated calls to Wellington, [the resident] finally received the authority's two-page report... It said police called out the squad because they had received information "that you may have been contemplating resorting to the use of a firearm. In such instances it is clearly in the interests of public safety that the police take action, and I am satisfied that such was the basis on which the operation was mounted," wrote the [PCA's j]udge... After clearing the police on various other matters, the judge wrote: "I will now close the file." [The resident] says: "I have been stunned for the past month trying to figure out what to do... I'd hate to see it happen to others. I guess it has, and it will..." ...A[n A]uckland barrister... has become "utterly, totally disillusioned" with the [PCA] and advises his clients not to bother with it. "As presently constituted, in my view it doesn't work,"... [T]he Auckland Council for Civil Liberties, says the [PCA] "just seemed to become an arm of the police." The authority has been controversial since N[Z] became one of the last Commonwealth countries to introduce civilian oversight of police in 1988. According to [an AUS]n author... in *Complaints Against Police*, the first civilian review boards arose in... U[S] cities during the civil rights campaign 40 years ago. Britain established a complaints board in 1978, A[US]n states between 1976 and 1985, and Canada in 1981. In N[Z], the impetus came from the 1981 Springbok tour, which drew thousands of middle-class people into contact with police for the first time. An Ombuds[person]'s report upheld 75 out of 173 complaints about police actions during the tour. The [PCA] is legally a single person, but [the j]udge... is assisted by [another j]udge... There are three investigative reviewers and the equivalent of three fulltime secretaries, with a total budget of just under \$800,000. In the year to last June, the authority received 2530 complaints from 1682 people, and accepted 2076... for investigation. That means th[e two j]udges... sign... 40 reports every week. They do not, however, conduct the actual investigations. The authority's last annual report says: "The structure and funding of the organisation is such that it is inevitable... almost all investigations will be conducted using police officers as investigators." ...most complaints are investigated by local police districts. Their reports are reviewed by police national headquarters... and passed on to the authority. In serious cases, such as the death of Steven Wallace... the [PCA] actively supervises an investigation... [The primary PCA judge] interviewed the police[officer] who shot... James Raharuhi dead at a BP service station in Greenlane in 1996. [The judge] found that the officer made an "error in judgment" in taking his de facto wife to the scene, but concluded that the shooting itself was justified. In the past year, 14[%] of the complaints on which the authority ruled were fully or partly sustained, 58[%] were not... and 28[%] were "conciliated" – including a significant number where police acknowledged mistakes. However, no police officer has been prosecuted for shooting anyone while on duty in the past 60 years. The Police Complaints Authority Act requires the [PCA] to conduct its investigations "in private" and to "maintain secrecy," and provides that no statement made to the [PCA] can later be used in any court case. [The j]udge... says this enables people to speak with frankness and honesty. But both the [PCA]'s closeness to police and its secrecy have many critics. [A]Great Barrier Island sickness beneficiary... acquitted... on a charge of cultivating a marijuana crop valued at \$1 million... complained to the [PCA] about the way police treated him, and was amazed when the [person] appointed to investigate the case turned out to be the very police officer who had launched the original inquiry into him. [The beneficiary] went on radio and called the investigation "a facade." That morning, [the judge] rang saying that the appointment was "totally inappropriate," and instead a police inspector from Christchurch was assigned to the case. [The beneficiary] and his wife... met the inspector in Auckland, but... had to try four times to get him to write down what they wanted to say. "[The investigator would] just say, 'Oh well, that could have been a mistake'." To [the beneficiary]'s knowledge, the inspector has never visited Great Barrier to talk to neighbours and others about what happened, and [the beneficiary]... has yet to see a report. In another case, [a]Christchurch lecturer... was awarded \$20,000 in damages by the High Court this week for a police search of his home in 1996 – two years after... the PCA... [j]udge... told him that [it ha]d been "unable to identify grounds on which to conclude that any police officer has been guilty of misconduct or neglect of duty." [The lecturer and political activist (r:p271, ln48) – who 'believed the search of his home was made in retaliation for him catching SAS members illegally searching a friend's home' –] says: "It is just thoroughly unacceptable to be expecting the public to have confidence in a body which is really not doing anything much different from an internal police inquiry." Lawyers point to other problems... [One] tells clients that if they go to the authority, police will "play hardball" on their case. "Often when there is a complaint, at a later stage extra charges are laid for bartering purposes. It happens frequently. Sometimes a prosecution is withdrawn on the basis that a complaint is withdrawn." [The PCA j]udge... defends his use of police officers as providing "a greater feel for what's going on within the organisation." His predecessor... in earlier reports said using police investigators had a powerful "educative" effect on police, helping them to learn from their mistakes rather than seeing the authority as an outside critic. [The predecessor] added: "The cost of full independent investigation would involve a greatly increased budget and expansion of this authority, probably requiring offices in the main centres..." [The]Police Association president... says that after initially opposing a civilian oversight body, police now accept it. "It's as much a part of policing now as the uniform. If we are interviewing one of our own, we treat them in the same way as we treat anyone else... I seriously believe that a completely independent body coming in from outside that was not police would find it very, very difficult to penetrate the wall of silence that many people believe exists now."

...Waitara Maori are warning that the police[officer] cleared of blame for killing Steven Wallace could be in danger if [it] returns to the Taranaki town. The warning last night followed comments from [the]Police Commissioner... that the constable was "intensely relieved" and apparently committed to continuing his career after a police investigation found [the constable] had acted lawfully. A decision on whether [the constable] would return to Waitara would be between the constable and the central district police commander... It is understood the constable, a Maori who has been an armed offenders squad member since 1986, is still living in Taranaki so his two young sons can continue their schooling. The family's home in Waitara, which is under close surveillance, is on the market. The police investigation resulted in a 180-page report into the events surrounding the shooting. The report concluded that the constable... should not face any charges. It included a legal opinion from the Deputy Solicitor-General... [The] Police Minister... extended his sympathy to Mr Wallace's family[after it] expressed confidence in the police investigation and the Crown Law Office review of its findings. But [the]Green Party police spokes[person]... said the Wallace report gave police the [OK] to shoot unarmed offenders... Last night, police presence in the township was heavier than usual... Yesterday morning, in a copy-cat incident, a relative of Mr Wallace stormed the Waitara police station armed with a golf club and made threats. Police are investigating. On the streets, many were angry. "If [the constable] is so innocent, put him before a jury and let 12 lay people make a decision, not just a Police Commissioner," said one. "This is a police state," said another. "If that was you or me we would have been charged." A sister of Mr Wallace said the report was "full of lies" and her brother was not violent towards other people. "[Steven] had all night to hurt someone if [it wanted – but] was only breaking windows." A lawyer for the Wallace family... said... on television later... [that t]he family were taking a private prosecution against police...

The constable who fatally shot Steven... will appear in the New Plymouth District Court on Thursday. Wallace's father... filed a private murder prosecution... – the first such prosecution against a [NZ] police officer... A police investigation found [the constable] was acting in self defence...

Flanked by a close team of uniformed police, the constable who... shot and killed... Steven Wallace walked to court yesterday to face the country's first private murder prosecution against a police officer. Security was tight when the officer, known as "Constable A", appeared in the New Plymouth District Court for the first day of the case. The dock was surrounded by a protective shield and members of the public were screened by a metal detector before entering the courtroom... The strong show of police solidarity continued when [the]Deputy Commissioner... held a press conference and said [it] supported the constable. "These are tragic events, tragic for the Wallace family and tragic for Constable A and his family... There are very wide implications. This is quite a novel issue with regards to the police..." ...Constable A... has been remanded until [next month].

...The three constables present when Steven Wallace was shot could have dealt with him using batons rather than deadly force, the New Plymouth District Court was told yesterday... [A] former Auckland police superintendent, said it was misleading to consider the situation on the night Mr Wallace was shot dead by a police officer in Waitara as a one-on-one. "This was a three-on-one situation." The officers "could have armed themselves with PR24 batons and comfortably dealt with him". [The former Auckland superintendent] said that if three police officers with batons could not deal with one offender armed with a baseball bat, "what that means is that frontline police officers must be armed with firearms". [The former Auckland superintendent also said it] could not understand why [Constable A] stood rooted to the spot for 10 minutes after the shooting when a person close by might be dying... After three weeks, the prosecution finished its case yesterday. The defence case opens today.

...The Government decision to pay the legal costs of Constable [A], who may face a murder trial for shooting Steven Wallace, is not unusual, says the Police Association. [The]Chief Justice... ruled on Friday that a High Court jury should decide whether [Constable]A... murdered Mr Wallace by the use of excessive force. Her ruling reversed one by two justices of the peace. They ruled [earlier in the New Plymouth District Court that Constable]A... acted in self-defence when [it] shot Mr Wallace... [The] Police Association president... said [Constable A knew it] had done nothing wrong, but [the Chief Justice]'s decision meant his nightmare would continue. "[The constable] is resigned that yet another hurdle must be crossed before [it] can get the justice [it] and his family are so deserving of." ...Mr Wallace's father... declined to talk about the case yesterday, saying simply that the family was "taking it as it comes". Nor [would the father] discuss the case costs, or whether the family would reapply for legal aid.

...The [constable] who fatally shot... [Mr] Wallace will today stand trial for murder... The trial... in the High Court at Wellington follows months of legal wrangling... [since] two... JPs dismissed the case after a lengthy depositions hearing. But [the]Chief Justice... overturned their decision...

Constable [A]... held his head high as [it] walked from the Wellington High Court. The first N[Z] police officer to face a private prosecution for killing in the line of duty was acquitted of a charge of murder by a jury that deliberated for less than three hours. After the verdict, [the]Police Commissioner... promised [it] would seek legislation to prevent any other officers going through Constable A's... ordeal... Outside the court, Steven Wallace's father... thanked all those who had supported the family in taking the private prosecution. The... family have re-mortgaged their house, raised money through sausage sizzles, raffles and hangi, and received donations from across the country. [The mother] said the verdict was a sad day for N[Z], but it was glad the prosecution had reached the courts... [T]he case did... show the "incompetence" of the police, in not using their batons, dogs, and spray against her son. [The mother] began to talk of loving her son and "[Steven] wasn't a bad person" when [it] was drowned out by her daughter... who told her to "shut the f*** up, mum". [Steven's sister] later threw a glass bottle at reporters and... abuse at the police.

...The farcical situation of a Private Prosecution against a police officer carrying out his sworn duty, facilitated by the "Judas" that is the N[Z] Judiciary system, defies both common sense and belief. Even a passing observation of Steven Wallace's famil[y]'s out-of-control reactions and rageful tirades towards the police in defence of their son was enough to confirm chilling and compelling evidence of the environment that birthed him. This environment, coupled with Wallace's grandiose world-view of invulnerability, lack of self-control, his choice to step outside the bounds of safety and rational behaviour whilst destroying property not his, and his endangering others resulted in his death. When the Wallace family accepts their son's responsibility in this matter, maybe then they can begin to heal... [As for Constable A, it and the rest of the NZ] Police Force can finally make a collective sigh of relief, secure once again in the knowledge that we trust their judgment on the front line... [] A NZer working for the NSW] anti-theft squad... has been charged with murder over the fatal shooting of... [an] unarmed... 22-year-old... in Sydney on Tuesday night.

...A former... West Aucklander... working as a police officer in Sydney has been charged with murder after shooting an unarmed suspect in a stolen car... [The 26-year-old,] who played drums in the 1980s heavy-metal band Nine Livez, is the first N[SW] police officer to be charged with murder after shooting someone in the line of duty. The decision to charge him has caused ructions within N[SW] police and devastated [hi]s family and friends... [The 26-year-old] had only recently returned from... lengthy stress leave after being involved in a scuffle where [the police officer] lost his gun and his life was threatened... when [it] shot petty criminal Eddy Berrio, 22, after pulling him over in a stolen car in central Sydney at 9.15 pm on Tuesday last week. Police had been told that there might be firearms in the vehicle. As Berrio reached to unbuckle his seatbelt, [the officer] fired a shot from his Glock pistol through the closed driver's window into Berrio's head, said a police statement lodged in Sydney's Downing Centre Courts on Friday. Berrio died instantly and [the officer] collapsed after the shooting. Witnesses reported hearing him say: "What have I done? I'll be charged." [The 26-year-old] again collapsed when told on Friday that [it] was to be charged with murder... It is understood a number of officers in the independent inquiry team opposed legal advice that [the 26-year-old] be charged with murder instead of [hu]manslaughter.

...Yesterday the first N[SW] police officer] to face a charge of murder while on duty walked free... [A]fter a four-day committal hearing, the magistrate ruled that there was insufficient evidence to try him either for murder or on a lesser [hu]manslaughter charge. The evidence indicated that the discharge of [the police officer]'s pistol was accidental, not voluntary as submitted by the Crown, [the magistrate] said. There was no evidence [the police officer] had been guilty of gross negligence... As the magistrate finished his 30-minute verdict, [it] told... the petty thief and heroin addict Edison Berrio[s]... friends and family in the packed court that what had happened was a tragedy – "I just want to say how sorry I am." "Sorry won't bring him back," shouted someone from the public gallery. "There is no justice," yelled another. As they filed out of the court, people threatened [the police officer] and swore at him as court staff and lawyers shielded him, and extra security was called in... [Incidentally, the family] of Steven Wallace is pursuing the mother of one of the police officers present when Wallace was shot dead in the main street of Waitara, accusing her of perjuring herself in the private prosecution of [the shooter]... The... mother... told the court that two weeks before the shooting [it] received a phone call from a [gal] concerned that her son, who [it] identified as Wallace, was becoming increasingly violent and had threatened to kill her. A [perso]n with the surname Wallis later came forward to say [it] had made a similar call to the court at the time about her son, whose name was not Steven. [The mother] was dropped as a defence witness and was not called to give evidence... at [t]he t[ri]al... but... her evidence at depositions was devastating for the prosecution. "The damage had already been done [as] all of N[Z] had seen the headline 'Mother feared son',"...

The police shooting of Auckland courier driver Halatau Naitoko appears to have been legal and it is unlikely his family will be able to sue for compensation, legal experts say. However, lump-sum payments may be available through the Accident Compensation Corporation or ex-gratia payments from the Government to assist them with funeral costs, lost income and to care for his 2-year-old daughter. Mr Naitoko, 17, was accidentally killed in his van on Friday by police shooting at... an unemployed 50-year-old who had allegedly shot at officers during an hour-long c[ar] chase involving police road-blocks that eventually led the offender onto the busy western motorway]. It is alleged that [the offender] was standing on the back of a flat-deck truck with a sawn-off .22 rifle pointed in the cab window... Three officers fired five shots at [the offender as the truck driver] slammed on his brakes, hurling [the offender] forward. Mr Naitoko was in the line of fire... Last night, an emotional [truck driver] was in no doubt that the police had saved his life... [The offender] had moments earlier stood in front of his truck and pointed the gun at him to stop him... [The driver] tried to run the offender down but [the offender]... leapt on the back... It is the first time [NZ] police have shot dead an innocent bystander.

...The two police marks[people] who shot dead Jean Charles de Menezes were convinced that the unarmed Brazilian was a suicide bomber and an “instant killing” was the only way to deal with him, his inquest was told yesterday. The opening day of the hearing... in London... into the death of the 27-year-old electrician was given a minute-by-minute account of the police operation that reached the mistaken conclusion that [Jean] was one of four bombers who had tried to bomb the capital the day before. Nine bullets were fired at the Brazilian from a distance of 1cm and 8cm...

Britain’s bobbies have reached the end of an era, with regular police[officers] in Nottingham carrying firearms for the first time in the force’s history. Operation Real Estate follows an appeal by local authorities concerned about a rise in the use of guns in crime. The *Sunday Times* said the move “represents a significant shift in British policing, which had prided itself on the tradition of the unarmed bobby on the beat.” But a police spokes[person] insisted that gun-carrying police were not destined to stay forever, but were intended to “send a strong message to the criminals.”

...Three officers accused of malpractice in planning an operation in which a naked [suspect] was shot dead have been acquitted. The officer who fired the shot that killed James Ashley, aged 39, was cleared of murder last month. Relatives of Ashley said they planned to sue Sussex Police. The Crown... dropped its case alleging the rare crime of “misfeasance” in public office because of expert opinion about failures in Sussex Police’s approach to firearms operations... The armed raid... in the early hours of Jan 15, 1998, was an operation characterised in almost equal measure by incompetence and ill luck... The team had been told that Ashley was a highly dangerous [person] who had a prior conviction for attempted murder. [Ashley] did not, though [Ashley] had served a sentence for [hu]manslaughter after a guy [it had] punched subsequently died. They were also briefed that [Ashley] had shot someone with a shotgun. [Ashley] had not. One c[on]stable... found himself heading for Ashley’s bedroom. As [the constable] opened the door, Ashley was in front of him – naked, unarmed and groping forward towards the light. [The constable] shot him.

...The night was the idea of my wife’s second cousin, a veteran New York cop who was concerned that anything I might write about the death of Amadou Diallo should reflect “the real truth about the Finest,” as the Big Apple’s cops like to call themselves. So we met at Mullen’s, a dark and ancient bar on Seventh Avenue no more than a brisk 20-minute walk from the precinct where [the cousin] works. “Some of the guys will be there,” [the cousin] promised. It was Thursday night, six tumultuous days after four white cops were acquitted of cutting down the black and unarmed Diallo in a hail of 41 shots, when my tutors called the class to order with the clink of long-necked Budweisers. The only condition was that no names be used – a sensible precaution given that the Big Apple’s Mayor... has banned his rank-and-file cops from talking to any reporters. “You see, it’s not Hollywood out there,” said my wife’s cousin... “You see *NYPD Blue* or something and you civilians think you know what it’s like. But it’s not,”... “Good show, though,” added [another cop]... “What they put in the show, they get right. But they leave out an awful lot, too.” “Well, they have to leave it out,” continued [the cousin]. “You think the sponsors are going to let them put what happened to... a rookie cop and health fanatic attached to a precinct on the West Side[?]” ...One day, not long after graduating from the Police Academy, [it] was out on patrol with an older partner when the dispatcher sent them to a tenement near the Hudson River. The landlord had taken exception to a bad smell coming from an upper apartment... At the apartment building, the cops marched up flight after flight of stairs, the smell growing worse the higher they went... “When they go into the apartment, the[y]... discover... his tenant dead and bloated in the bath with a plastic bag pulled over his head... and the stink is just beyond belief. So the kid takes one look at what’s floating in the water and tosses his lunch all over the cadaver... And the really funny thing was that [the kid] gets reamed out by his sergeant for throwing up and ruining a crime scene before the medical examiner could get there...” They laughed... and another round arrived. New York’s cops haven’t had all that much to raise their spirits lately so an old story, even a gruesome one, makes a welcome change. But a lot of people aren’t laughing in this city, and not only because of the Diallo acquittals. At some point over the next few days, a Brooklyn jury will rule on the fate of three other cops charged with looking the other way while one of their colleagues sodomised a Haitian migrant with a broken broom handle. Once again, the cops are white and the victim, who almost died from a perforated bowel, was a young black... Nor is that the end of the outrages now prompting almost daily demonstrations around New York. Last Sunday, a retired NYPD detective summoned the local Bronx cops to his home to report a burglary. Unfortunately, the first officers on the scene were cowboys who mistook the home owner for a thief and pistol-whipped him in front of his screaming family. Predictably, the retired detective was a dark-skinned Latino and his attackers white. On Tuesday, two more Bronx cops were busted for battering a [citizen] who cursed them... when they refused to arrest her violent boyfriend. According to investigators from the NYPD’s Internal Affairs unit, the accused duo drove her in handcuffs to a vacant lot, hammered her with their night-sticks and then left her bleeding and unconscious in a freezing drizzle. [This victim], too, was black and her assailants white. Finally, as the beers flowed at Mullen’s bar, the TV... interrupted the evening with the report of yet another police shooting. Once again it was in the Bronx, just two blocks from the doorstep where Diallo’s life was snuffed out, and the riot cops were out in force to keep the... [victim]’s angry neighbours in line. According to the TV reporter, the suspect was a petty drug dealer who had been shot in the head as [it] fled from the four undercover officers trying to arrest him. “Sheesh,” sighed [one cop], “It’s some week in this town!” Why New York’s Finest should find themselves on the bad side of public opinion after so many years of stunning successes is a moot point. Aggressive policing has pushed down the murder rate to levels last seen in... the early Sixties. Burglaries, muggings and rapes have witnessed similar dramatic decreases... It was... [the mayor]’s reputation as a crimebuster that made him enter the Senate race... Now, as the streets ring to protesters’ chants and the US Justice Department talks about appointing a monitor to keep an eye on New York’s cops, the mayor’s political future may well be in jeopardy. [The cousin] and his mate[s]... attribute the spate of hair-trigger brutality to “just bad luck.” Others see it in a different light. Almost two years ago, [the] former NYPD Police Commissioner... who led [the mayor]’s initial assault on crime, predicted that things could turn nasty very quickly. “When we began the effort to restore order to the streets and suppress crime levels, the situation was so bad I really only had to order my officers to do what they were paid to do, which is get out on the streets and keep the peace... The police had not been doing that and criminal behaviour always flourishes in a law-enforcement vacuum. Aggressive policing was needed then. Now that crime levels are down, what the city needs is maintenance policing. Pushing too hard is counterproductive.” [The commissioner] made those comments long before this city heard the name... Diallo... Unfortunately, by that stage, [the commissioner] was no longer around to order his troops to pull back. Perhaps concerned that his police chief was stealing his limelight, [the mayor squeezed him] out of the job and installed the city’s then-Fire Commissioner... in his place. The difference was telling. Where [the police commissioner] had always been his own [person], yielding to nobody, not even the mayor, [the fire commissioner] has been a political creature from the start. Since the mayor wanted even lower crime stats and lots more busts, [the fire commissioner] set out to oblige him by boosting the size of the elite Street Crimes Unit by almost 300[%] in less than 12 months. When [the former police commissioner] unleashed the CSU with explicit orders to disarm criminals, his [officers] were averaging one arrest for every three suspects they stopped and frisked. Under his successor... random frisks rose to 27,061, [while] arrests shrank to a scant 4647. As [one] [black activist]... said after the Diallo acquittals: “In Harlem, we don’t see the police as our protectors. We see them as an army of occupation.” Back at Mullen’s, neither [the cousin or his colleagues] had much time for [the activist] and his ilk. Like the viewers who mistake TV cop sho[w]s for the real thing, they dismissed the [activist] as an innocent who has never seen the world through the blue prism of a squad car’s windshield. “Tell me [that activist] isn’t safer up there in Harlem for all the work our guys have done... But a cop has an accident, a tragedy like Diallo, and nobody talks about the good stuff. We’re all just killers.”

...Police... shut down an entire block outside the New York Police Academy yesterday as demonstrations continued... over the acquittal of four white police in the slaying of an unarmed African immigrant. About 150 people chanting “How many shots? Forty-one! How many needed? None!” gathered outside the Manhattan academy where new police recruits are trained. Police ordered them to disperse because they were blocking the sidewalk and when they refused, handcuffed and arrested 12... [(219 people were)] arrested for protesting [against] [New York City police brutality]... after [the] unarmed African immigrant was shot to death[)]... Guinean Amadou Diallo died in a barrage of... gunshots fired by

the officers as [it] stood in the vestibule of his Bronx apartment building. The officers said at the trial they believed Diallo was going for a gun when... reach[ing] to pull out his wallet. [● 'British soldiers were taunted by and fired upon a crowd of townspeople in Boston, Mass., Mar. 5, 1770. Five townspeople were killed and several wounded. The British commander and some of his officers were charged with murder. John Adams and Josiah Quincy, though prominent patriots, courageously defended them and won their acquittal. The *Boston Massacre* fanned animosities that culminated in the American Revolution.']

...Philadelphia's black leaders appealed for calm yesterday after news footage showing police violently subduing a wounded black suspect... The FBI and the US Attorney's office in Philadelphia launched a preliminary civil rights probe into the incident as national television broadcasts of the brutal scene invited comparisons with the beating of [a]black motorist... which led to riots in Los Angeles in 1992. Police and city prosecutors also stepped up their own investigations by interviewing witnesses to the car chase that ended on Thursday with [the]30-year-old suspect... being kicked, beaten and stomped by a crowd of police as a news helicopter recorded the scene. [The suspect], who has a criminal history involving burglary and assault, led police on a chase in a stolen car, waged a gun fight with officers in which [it] was shot five times, then jumped into an empty police car and drove about 2km until [being] surrounded and subdued... The suspect allegedly shot one officer during the gun battle, wounding him slightly, tried to run down a second and bit a third on the hand during arrest. All told, eight police officers fired as many as 45 shots, leaving empty shell casings strewn across an intersection. But investigators were unable to find the gun they say [the suspect] used... Leaders of the Black Clergy of Philadelphia and Vicinity... [were] saying the issue was police brutality rather than racism, given that several officers involved in the melee were black... [By the way, a] federal judge has ruled that Los Angeles Police Department can be sued as a racketeering enterprise in the so-called Rampart corruption scandal, an unprecedented decision that could open up the city to scores of new lawsuits...

An extraordinary event happened in... L[A]... – ...for the first time in its 75-year history, the police officers' union asked for an outside body to investigate the force... The significance of the move by the L[A] Police Protective League, which represents the LAPD's 9654 officers, cannot be overestimated. It represents an acknowledgement that the force that brought us the fiction of *Dragnet* and *LA Confidential* and the reality of [cops dishing out street] beatings now accepts that only an outsider can make the insiders confront the painful truths of what is being described as the worst scandal in the force's history. It had its starting-point with... a street-smart cop from the Rampart district, who helped himself to 16kg of cocaine from an evidence room, left some flour in its place, and then sold the drugs through a girlfriend. When... caught, [the crooked cop] and his lawyers made a deal under which [it] will have to serve only five years in exchange for giving evidence against former colleagues. Last week, [the crooked cop] appeared in court to plead guilty and warned fellow officers that "...who[ever] chases monsters must see that [it] has not become a monster himself." ...What the LAPD did not realise at the time was that what [the crooked cop] had to tell was far worse than anyone suspected. [It] told investigators that the LAPD had shot unarmed suspects, had routinely planted guns and drugs, had seen innocent [people] jailed for sentences of more than 20 years, and had rewarded each others' shootings with trophies... [The LAPD police] chief from 1950 to 1966, epitomised the old-style, white-boy image. [The chief] was opposed to "race-mixing," regarded the Latino population as related to the "wild tribes of Mexico," and restructured the police on military lines. The Watts riots of 1965, an explosion of rage against discrimination in the black part of the city, came on [his] watch and hastened his departure... [T]he chief between 1978 and 1992, stayed long enough to preside over a second bloody riot in 1992 following the acquittals of the white officers... shown on video beating [a black suspect. 55] people died in the riots and [the chief] resigned in their wake. The present chief of police... is black and took the job with much good will on all sides... [The new chief] has enjoyed the strong backing of the mayor... and is basically media-friendly and conscious that [it] is policing a diverse community. But attempts to persuade people that the dark days... were passed have foundered on the revelations made by [the crooked cop]... So perhaps it is no surprise that... [the] president of the L[A] Police Protective League, should say that it now believed the time had come for an independent investigation. In... *LA Confidential*, the chief of police responds to a fictional corruption crisis by saying: "Frankly, we must sate the public's clamour for blood by giving up some of our own." Frankly, that is the least that is now required to restore confidence in a city where what the police were up to remained confidential for... too long.

...NOT SO long ago, the police chief in sleepy Marion County, Florida, received a note from Uncle Sam. Drug gangs were growing ever more ruthless, it warned, and the spectre of terrorism was a national concern. Would [the chief] like to have his people trained in military combat techniques, and perhaps add some of the Pentagon's surplus equipment to his department's arsenal? The chief didn't mind if [it] did. True, the district's orange groves had never been shaken by a bombing, harboured terrorists, played host to right-wing militia nor been a staging-post for drug cartels. But all that was beside the point. Neighbouring communities had started their own Special Weapons and Tactics (Swat) teams, as have 7000 federal, state and local law enforcement communities across the country, so the feds' offer seemed a golden opportunity for Marion County to make up some ground in America's domestic arms race. A rack of assault rifles, some cases of ammo and a bulletproof vest or two would be most welcome, the chief replied, never expecting the windfall of lethal riches that was heading his way. First came a dozen helicopters, followed six months later by seven more. Courtesy of the Pentagon, a pair of C-12 transport aircraft turned up. Then came a truckload of M-16 machine-guns and an armoured personnel carrier that no self-respecting American police department wants to be without. All this, mind you, in a district where the Mediterranean fruit-fly is Public Enemy No 1. What has happened in Marion County in the four years since the arsenal arrived is typical of a nationwide trend... that has civil libertarians very worried. While they wait for the orchardists to become the targets of international terror, Marion County cops are keeping in practice by directing their 20-tonne tank at less formidable adversaries. As is the case throughout America, if you are growing a little grass, or have fallen behind on child support, the police are likely to enter without knocking. Even those with unpaid parking tickets have been dragged away at the point of an M-16. Largely unnoticed until the photo of [a young Cuban] staring into the barrel of a stormtrooper's machinegun was flashed around the world [(r:p573, ln42)], the Swat teams' iron fist in an iron glove has quietly become an integral part in the machinery of U[S] law enforcement. And as literally thousands of... police departments have discovered, the temptation to use all that butch equipment is proving irresistible. Supporters – and this includes [the]President... who has been an enthusiastic advocate of the Pentagon's growing role in police work – like to depict the Swat squads as a survival tool for a dangerous age. The Swat movement's detractors point out that terrorists have so far left the US pretty much alone, and that it is average citizens – including a good many innocent ones – who keep finding themselves on the wrong end of a rifle butt. "It all stems from the war on drugs," explains... a legal analyst... who refers to the long and notably unsuccessful campaign to stop citizens getting high as "our second Vietnam." "We've been told for four decades that drug use is a mortal threat to our society and now the same people who preached that first lie are claiming that we need a militarised police force to deal with it... What we're doing, though, is destroying the village to save it. The [people] who signed the Declaration of Independence were very worried about the state becoming too powerful, so they must be spinning in their graves now that tanks are rolling down Main Street." Thomas Jefferson... and the rest would certainly not have approved of what happened last May to [a citizen] who was sleeping peacefully in his Maryland home when 40 Swat cops from the Fish and Wildlife Service – yes, even Smoky the Bear has acquired an assault squad – burst into his home. His wife was hog-tied in the corner from where [it] could see a black-uniformed intruder holding a machine-gun to her husband's head while another ground his face into the carpet with a steel-toed boot. The couple's crime? Well, as a court later established, there was no crime – just the suspicion that [the husband]'s fellow members of the Golden Hills Hunting Club had been shooting ducks out of season. After tearing the couple's home apart, the squad left... In Boston, a Swat squad invaded the wrong apartment and, quite literally, scared a 74-year-old Baptist minister to death. As [the minister] lay stricken with a heart attack, masked officers cordoned off the street and denied paramedics access. Across the country in Dinuba, California, Swat cops put 15 bullets into a father of three who made the mistake of leaping from bed when a dozen masked [officers] charged into his bedroom at 2 am.

Again, the cops had the wrong address. In Baltimore, a major Swat operation sealed off a whole block, evacuated all the minority-race residents, then did a room-by-room search for drugs. There were helicopters, police dogs and scores of officers in ninja masks. But, by the end of the operation, not one arrest had been made. And in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in a case that would be funny if it hadn't ended in tragedy, a Swat sniper prevented a you[th]... from committing suicide by shooting him in the head. "There is much evidence that Swat teams have an organisational culture that leads them to escalate violence... The jackboot stomps on justice and a warrior mentality has no place in civilian law enforcement. A police officer is not a soldier, who initiates violence on command, blowing up people, bridges and buildings. Traditionally, police work has been... to apprehend a suspect and turn the suspect over to courts of law. But in the militarised police force, extreme force is acceptable, even expected." ...[■ A] private investigator working for [a resident of the]West Coast... said further action would be taken against the police following a violent incident in July last year... [A] Nelson Detective Inspector... headed a six-week police investigation into claims that four police officers were involved at the incident in Dunollie, 8km north of Greymouth, which left [the elderly resident] with serious face and body injuries. During [the resident's] trial this week, on four charges of assaulting police and resisting arrest, his lawyer alleged that the officers kicked and beat him and rammed his head into a concrete pole. Police alleged [the resident assaulted an officer (that recently received a police 'award')], who was lying in wait for drink-drivers leaving the hotel in Dunollie. [The resident said it] was simply walking home from the pub and had banged on the bonnet of a car parked in the dark on a side road [it] regarded as his own driveway, when a police[officer] jumped out and said [it] was under arrest. The jury acquitted [the resident] on all charges.

...Police yesterday apologised to[, and]... also paid... an undisclosed sum[, to]... five Wellington protesters for officers' actions during last year's Wellington visit by Chin[a']s... leader. Wellington['s] police district commander... said... "I acknowledge... that these five people were protesting lawfully and we should not have required them to move from their position. I also acknowledge... that the four who were arrested should not have been. My staff believed they were acting in good faith at the time but we were wrong and made a mistake. We will learn from this experience."

...A mysterious briefcase left at a Green Bay bus stop is in pieces after police called in the air force bomb squad... Police and Titirangi firefighters arrived, cordoned off the area, and told residents to stay in their homes. When the bomb squad arrived, a robot shot the briefcase twice. It was found to contain papers, photos and videos... Police will sift through the remains to find out who the owner is. [On a positive note, Christchurch police have located the 'flugelhorn stolen from a music lecturer. The expensive instrument had been anonymously returned, but was left unattended at a back door. Unfortunately, the bomb squad was called to inspect the case, which they blew up – destroying the uninsured instrument'.]

...The FBI has joined an investigation into the death of a pizza delivery [perso]n who robbed a bank with a bomb strapped to his neck then died when it went off as police kept him handcuffed... The inquiry stepped up a notch yesterday after a friend and co-worker of the victim was found dead at his home in Erie, Pennsylvania. Television cameras captured the last moments of Brian Wells, 46, on Friday... after [Brian] was arrested for the robbery near Erie. [Brian] was captured outside the bank but told police [it] had been forced to commit the robbery by the person who strapped the bomb to him. "Why is nobody coming to get this thing off me?" [Brian] pleaded. "It is going to go off. I am not lying." Moments later [Brian] was blown up. An hour earlier Mr Wells had been sent to deliver a pizza to a remote road near a television transmitter. [Brian] appears to have returned to town... and headed for the bank, where [Brian] handed staff an "extensive note" demanding money and saying that [it] had a bomb. As [Brian] left the bank with the cash, police dragged him from his car, handcuffed him and made him sit on the ground, between two police vehicles. At first they thought they were dealing with an ordinary crime. Now they believe that Mr Wells was the victim of a murderous plot and are treating his death as murder... Erie state police, denied... that officers were slow to save Wells... [T]hey were waiting for a bomb squad to arrive.

...A BANK robber in France stuffed up when – after asking for more money than the bank had – [it] asked to get cash from his own account.

...[A gal suspected of stealing wallets from shopping carts in Stratford, Ontario, inadvertently identified herself by dumping 4 wallets into a produce bin while fleeing a store. One of the wallets was hers, with a photo ID recognised by a shopper. Later the thief phoned police to report it had lost her wallet.] □ ...in Hamburg, Germany[, a 19-year-old]... broke into a van... But [the thief] didn't get far. It was a police stakeout van – full of police[officers].

...The inability of police to consistently monitor Auckland's inner-city surveillance cameras – aimed at cutting crime – has forced retailers to pay for the service themselves... This comes on top of the... retailers' organisation['s]... investment of \$70,000 in three additional cameras in 1997... When the surveillance system was proposed it was decided that the Auckland City Council would pay for the hardware and police would staff it. Since then ratepayers have provided at least \$350,000 for the equipment. In 1997, [the]... then Auckland district commander, said the cameras were a successful crime prevention tool... [However, t]he 16-camera network has been without a permanent person to monitor it since the staff member who did resigned from the position in December. Police admit that since then their monitoring of the closed circuit television system – installed in 1994 – has been inconsistent. The job has now been added to the duties of officers at the Jean Batten Place police station. Since December there have been two beatings, one of them resulting in the death of 23-year-old telemarketer Nick Clarkson, and a rape in the downtown area.

...POLICE hunting Nicholas Clarkson's killer have video footage of his brutal bashing. The 23-year-old Auckland telemarketer was beaten with a piece of wood in downtown Auckland between 3am and 4.40am on... January 26. [Nicholas] died two days later. [A d]etective senior sergeant... said the video footage – recovered from a security camera – had provided fresh leads. Robbery was now the suspected motive for the attack.

...the... Palmerston North... kitchen-sink sales[person who]... has been charged with the murder of his wife, Christine, and their 7-year-old daughter Amber[, allegedly had 'increased his wife's life insurance to \$500,000' shortly before her death]. The badly mutilated bodies of... [Christine], aged 38, and Amber were found in the family home by a relative on the morning of August 30 last year. They had severe head and facial injuries and the police believe they were murdered with a weapon similar to a tomahawk... It looked as though there had been no forced entry into the home... Cops... spent nearly 20,000... hours and more than \$100,000 in the hunt for the killer... Police are still searching for the murder weapon, clothing worn at the time of the killings and a jewellery box [the husband] said was missing from the family home... [The husband] has told police [it] was in Wellington on the night of the murders... [– but a witness has identified a gal] jogger... seen near... the... home [around the time of the murders as 'the husband wearing a dress and wig']... A court representative said [the husband]'s demeanour in the... Palmerston North District Court yesterday... [– where it] did not enter a plea... [–] was subdued. At the victims' funeral... [the husband] wore dark glasses, was physically supported by friends and was visibly and audibly upset... [Incidentally, tonight's documentary on TV3 (8.30pm) is about the guy] who stabbed his wife to death... then claimed [it] committed the murder while sleepwalking. This documentary reveals such crimes are more common than most people think.

...four years [after a father] and his ex-wife... thought their missing teenage daughter... had been slain, [it] has been found alive... When police phoned [the wife] to tell her they had found [her daughter it] at first assumed they were talking about a body... Police had charged [the]alleged murderer... for [the] killing without ever finding [a body]... Police found... the... now 18-year-old... when they raided the... Rockhampton... home of... the [guy] known as her boyfriend. Her discovery also has serious implications in the case against [her alleged murderer, a]convicted child killer... whose murder trial has been adjourned until Monday, when defence lawyers are expected to seek to have it aborted... [The case] parallels... that of... a 16-year-old who was last seen... when her parents dropped her at the movies in the northern town of Bowen. Despite a massive search, her body was never found. [A]lifeguard... was tried and found guilty of her [hu]manslaughter. However, the decision was overturned on appeal and [the lifeguard] was found not guilty at a retrial... Most tales of children missing, believed murdered, do not have happy endings. A[US]'s most famous case is the Beaumont children – ...a[ged]... nine... seven, and four... – who disappeared from Adelaide's Glenelg Beach on Australia Day, 1966, and were never seen again. In 1973, [a]schoolgirl... 11, and [another girl, aged] four, went missing from Adelaide Oval while attending a

football match. They have not reappeared. Another mysterious Adelaide case is that of... a... 12-year-old... [who] left her home in suburban Morphett Vale and walked to the Reynella Shopping Centre to buy a Christmas card... [o]n October 7, 1992... There were two other sightings of her that day but none since... [● NZ] has had 14 unsolved murders in the past 10 years, puzzles in which trails have run cold, clues are absent and motives are unknown.

...It was 9.30 pm and Tracey [Ann] Patient was late. The 13-year-old said goodbye to her girlfriend outside the Henderson police station, before crossing the road to ask an elderly couple the time. [Tracey] appeared upset at being late and ran off towards home 1.6km away, her fair hair bouncing off her slim shoulders. [Tracey] never made it – her lifeless body was found the next morning, 16km away in the Waitakere Ranges. It was 25 years ago today that Tracey... was strangled with pantyhose tightened around her throat with a stick. Her killer has never been caught, but the hunt for him – or her – has been marked by a series of bizarre twists and anonymous tips that ultimately led frustrated detectives nowhere.

...WAITAKERE is set to lose sworn officers as police chiefs struggle to cope with a budget blowout. The losses come... as [the] Police Minister... is indicating the police may get a cash bailout within the next week. Massey[s] community constable... is one of three Waitakere officers going on loan to the police northern communications centre for the next six months. That follows cuts to civilian staff in the police district late last year.

...Glen Eden residents who want to see their community constable will have to visit the fire station. [The] Senior Constable... moved into an office at the Glen Eden Fire Station late last month, when her old office at Glen Mall closed... [T]he move is part of an agreement between Waitakere police and the Fire Service. A similar arrangement exists at Titirangi. Henderson[s] police community relations [officer]... says the move “shows the commitment of both services to community safety... It’s worked out reasonably well and built a closer relationship between the two services,”...

[NZ’s] Fire Commander... is considering quitting after a new 111 computer system has been found to be a \$25 million flop. Hundreds of people have complained about fire appliances being sent to the wrong address and the wrong stations being notified, causing huge delays. Problems are so extensive fire bosses are considering ditching... the... system, which it shares with the police... in favour of returning to the old system in what may prove the most expensive error in the service’s history. They are also seeking compensation from the A[US]n computer company which supplied it.

...PRIVATELY monitored fire alarms are being blamed for a number of false callouts... The N[Z] Fire Service says the problem alarms are fitted in private homes and monitored by security companies. The alarms are responsible for 400 unnecessary responses each month, throughout the country, a third of those in Auckland... The problem smoke alarms alert monitoring security companies to potential problems but don’t make any sound to warn residents... [F]alse alarms, triggered by cooking fumes or steam from showers, are often undetected if phone calls from the monitoring companies go unnoticed. The Fire Service is then sent out. “We arrive and find people getting out of the shower,”... [a] fire safety officer... says. The Fire Service... is reluctant to start charging people for false alarms. “We don’t want to do that because it’s a punitive thing,”...

Smoke alarm installation a day too late... Firefighters who arrived at a New Lynn house to install a smoke alarm discovered the family had escaped a blaze the day before. [A] [Titirangi Fire Officer]... says a box of paper too close to a heater caught alight. The fire damaged furniture and a stereo and left smoke damage... [A] toddler at the Tauhara St home was mesmerized by the fire before another family member smelt smoke and put the fire out. No one was injured... “We only found out about the fire when we arrived on the Monday morning for our appointment with the family,” [the officer says]... “It is distressing that these people did not call the Fire Service...” ...no matter how small a fire is, residents should call 111 because of the risk of it quickly getting out of control. Attending a fire also gives firefighters the opportunity to find out what caused it...

Kitchen fires are behind most house fires and west Auckland firefighters want to do something about it. Staff are telling people how to prevent kitchen fires and what to do if there is a blaze. Figures show that 49[%] of kitchen fires occur while the evening meal is being prepared. About 64[%] occur while frying with fat or oil, and 55[%] occur while frying chips... “Call the Fire Service in all instances,” says... [an officer from the] Avondale Station... “Even if you think the fire is out, it may reignite. It doesn’t cost anything for the Fire Service to come out. It’s better to be safe than sorry.” ...People should not fight the fires themselves. But it is essential that everyone in the house is alerted and gets out.

...PEOPLE FIRST, THEN PROPERTY IN A FIRE... Fire respects neither people nor property and once it takes hold in a house it is a frightening experience. The first rule if a fire is discovered is to get everybody... outside and assembled together in a safe place... With any fire, call the fire service only after everyone is outside... Prudent householders will have a smoke alarm installed which can give valuable extra seconds of warning and often this is enough to get people out before the house becomes so smoke logged that it is impossible to see more than a few centimetres in front of your face... Because many house fires begin in the kitchen, a fire blanket strategically placed can be thrown over a burning pot or tray from the oven. Never use water on a fat fire... An all-purpose extinguisher will handle all types of fires... If there is no fire extinguisher or fire blanket [at] hand, the best way of dealing with a pot of burning fat is to throw a wet towel over it or a non combustible cover. A pot lid is as good as anything... Fire extinguishers have been in the news again recently, and the need to check them and keep them properly maintained can’t be stressed enough.

...The old Halon extinguishers have been phased out and replaced by new red ones... Throw out your old fire extinguishers and we will pay, say the Ministry for the Environment and fire protection industry. Potentially thousands of old yellow fire extinguishers were in baches, boats and caravans, most of which not only did not work but caused serious damage to the ozone layer... Until the end of February, the Government and fire protection companies will pay the \$20 cost of destroying them... Fire protection companies are also offering a discount on new red fire extinguishers when the old yellow ones are handed in... [□ U]nder proposals to halt big-business avoidance of the fire levy... [r]atepayers may have to foot the bill for the financially ailing Fire Service... Government officials are considering ways to force all home and property owners to pay, after a review of Fire Service funding found that the organisation was missing out on up to \$100 million... Other proposals include having another agency collect the levy, using Quotable Value data, or changing the law to make sure the levy is paid whether a property is insured or not.

...*Burning question for firefighters* When is a customer not a customer? No, it is not the start of a bad joke – it’s the question Fire Service managers have raised as they try to work out how to describe the people to whom the organisation provides its service... They have been given a range of terms to choose from, including stakeholders, consumers, clients, victims and the public... “Customer” might not be the best way to describe a person cut from a car or someone who has lost everything in a fire, but children or community groups cannot be called “victims”... But the idea has [been met with] amusement and cynicism from firefighters, who say the answer to the conundrum will have no impact on their jobs.

...It’s the dream of lots of Kiwi kids to become firefighters. But they’ll have to wait until they grow up before they can wear the headgear... In the latest issue of the NZ fire service’s magazine, Star, fire crews have been told that while the child-friendly practice... [of] letting kids wear their helmets... is cute it’s a “no-no”... – because they might get nits... [Star warns] that children also risk neck injury if they put on the heavy helmets.

...*Have you got what it takes to become a Career Firefighter?* ...[the NZ] FIRE SERVICE... is... seeking as wide a range of applicants as possible... Can you demonstrate that: ● You are a team-oriented person? ● You are able to learn and retain new things? ● You have good interpersonal and communication skills? ● You have a good physical fitness in strength and endurance activities? ● You have a good personality and attitude? Can you say yes to the following: ● Good level of medical fitness (including a 6/9 eyesight standard)? ● No criminal convictions which would prevent you being accepted? ● Legally able to work in N[Z]? While not essential, it may be advantageous if you had: ● A Class 2 Heavy Traffic Licence. ● A current recognised first aid certificate... Graduates will be placed into existing vacancies throughout N[Z]. A detailed application pack is available on the Fire Service Website – ...or by calling... 0800 Fire Recruit... The N[Z] Fire Service... provides a smoke free environment.

...GLEN Eden’s volunteer firefighters are “heart-broken” after reluctantly deciding to hang up their ladders. [The b]rigade secretary... says they’ve voted to shut the unit after years of battling falling numbers... [T]he unit has only nine members and just three are qualified to drive the fire truck... Waitakere[s] deputy fire chief... says the Fire Service has done everything possible to keep the unit running... The service is trying to

relocate volunteers who want to work. Waitakere[']s fire chief... says the volunteers made a valuable contribution to the Fire Service... The unit has had 300 members, boasting almost 1000 years of service since it was launched more than 50 years ago.

...*Firebugs target Waikumete...* FIREFIGHTERS fear Waikumete Cemetery is becoming a major fire risk. Concerns follow Monday's scrub blaze where flames ripped through one-and-a-half-hectares of debris... near Glenview Rd where it could have endangered neighbouring houses. Fortunately, Glen Eden Fire Station backs onto the cemetery, but firefighters were at the scene for... three hours... The burned out area was littered with dead foliage cleared by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in its bid to rid the area of the painted apple moth. The... Waitakere Fire District Acting Deputy Chief Officer... says firefighters don't like big piles of scrub left lying around... The M[AF] was unavailable for comment.

...*Search for excitement burns out of control...* IN HER green ranger's uniform, [a]... 38-year-old mother of two... patrolled America's Rocky Mountain forests with a love for the outdoors and a message straight from Smokey Bear: "Only you can prevent forest fires." Yesterday, [the ranger]... was indicted on federal counts of wilfully starting the largest blaze in Colorado's history, the Hayman fire, southwest of Denver. It is still raging after destroying an area of forest almost the size of Lake Taupo in the past two weeks. Investigators now doubt [the ranger]'s story that [it] accidentally started the blaze after burning a letter from her estranged husband at a forest campsite. Her original story was that [it] had found the fire on a routine patrol, but... confessed to the letter burning when arson experts found inconsistencies, including that the wind was blowing the wrong way for her to smell smoke. Now they say evidence at the scene shows the fire was deliberately lit and staged to look like an out-of-control campfire. The biggest mystery to fellow Forest Service officers is why one of their own would betray their profession as spectacularly... What drove her... to start a blaze that has now destroyed more than 54,000ha, 25 homes and forced the evacuation of 6000 people will be the biggest question in her court case... Among the theories being considered by prosecutors is that [the ranger] wanted to be a hero – that by "discovering" the fire and putting it out [the ranger] would get the credit. Instead, the fire raced beyond control and [the ranger] is facing up to 65 years in prison. The hero motive is a common thread in an extremely uncommon group – firefighters who become fire-lighters – but, in at least one instance, a 'contract firefighter started fires in order to earn money'. An FBI 1994 study of the subject found firefighter arsonists were most commonly motivated by a desire for excitement and to be seen as heroic. N[Z] fire authorities share that view and say pyromania... has not been seen among firefighters here... Firefighter arsons were almost unknown in N[Z] until a remarkable explosion of offences in 1998... Thirteen volunteer firefighters were convicted... for offences that ranged from setting a rubbish bin alight to serial arsons, usually in scrub or abandoned buildings. Many were reasonably new recruits who the Fire Service believe succumbed to their desire for excitement when their expectations of an adrenalin-charged job was not matched by the more mundane reality of brigade service... This month [an AUS]n rural fire service volunteer... began a two-year prison term for starting most of the bushfires that ravaged eastern A[US] last Christmas. It told police it... yearned to be feted for his... firefighting heroics.

...*Fire rules spark outrage among rich landowners...* Unpleasant news has been arriving in the mail boxes of more than 100,000 Sydney homes in the form of a letter from local government authorities. It tells owners that not only are they in a newly declared bushfire zone, but also are liable to draconian new planning proposals... curbing if not outlawing their freedom to rebuild or extend their properties... Almost every property affected... is worth more than A\$900,000... The N[SW] Bush Fire Brigade, which was consulted in framing the new laws, says the typical A[US]n bushfire emits 80,000 kilowatts of heat... At 16m the heat is sufficient to ignite hardwood timber frames, with 100[%] destruction of windows within 10 minutes at 29m from a fire front. Firefighters in full protective gear will be immobilised by pain at a distance of 100m, and the hair and flesh of an unprotected person will suffer severe burns at 140m. In the 1994 fires in Sydney, the coroners' inquests found that fatalities among people who had taken refuge in swimming pools occurred when they broke water and breathed air which contained burning eucalyptus oil vapour at [over] 100C. It was the forensic evidence from these fires, more than the slower burning fires at Christmas... that led to the new planning codes.

...Firefighters in Canberra fear scorching temperatures and gusting winds today will fan bushfires that have killed four people and destroyed 400 homes. About 220 people have been treated for fire-related injuries in Canberra Hospital... Firefighters worked feverishly in the A[US]n capital yesterday to bolster defences against bushfires, which finally burst through the city's western perimeter on a 10km front on Saturday after burning for a week. "The whole philosophy is to surround the ACT... either with the black that is burned or bulldozer lines," said... [the] director of emergency services... Eye-stinging smoke blanketed the "bush capital" – home to 300,000 people, including hundreds of diplomats – and a layer of ash stretched to Parliament Buildings in the city centre... [P]owerlines were down, leaving up to 25[%] of the city without electricity. Officials said it could be days before all power was restored. The streets were deserted of people but full of... birds, kangaroos and dogs, both alive and dead... Police said one teenager had been arrested for looting. The historic Mt Stromio Observatory on the outskirts of the city was largely destroyed.

...*Blame Game erupts over Aussie fires...* AT LUNCHTIME last Saturday... a bearish bloke with a "trust me" demeanour, sat down in his office in Canberra's west and told the capital's jittery residents they had little to fear. Outside, smoke was hanging heavier than it had for the past week... 12 hours after... Canberra's fire controller[']s... soothing words, the unthinkable happened; four people were dead, 532 homes had been destroyed, hundreds more damaged, and 68 people were hospitalised. Gone also was the Mt Stromio astronomy centre, the A[US]n federal police weapons range, a high school, and four government buildings. Were such losses inevitable? ...At any one time, Canberra usually has nine of its 12 firetrucks ready for use. That equates roughly to a capacity to handle six house fires at once. At the top of Saturday's blaze there were perhaps 800 homes alight... By Friday, the Insurance Council of A[US] told the ACT government it expected the cost of destroyed homes to top \$200 million. That figure is expected to rise significantly. So too are the stakes in the increasingly bitter and predictable debate about who to blame... ACT[']s chief minister for five years until [three years ago], was first to cut a piece of the blame pie. "If I was going to suggest a 30m firebreak around Canberra, I would have been lynched," [it] said, referring to a recommendation in a 1994 report... "For instance, it wouldn't have been politically saleable to do anything with the pine forests [that fuelled the [latest] blaze]... There were proposals to expand residential Canberra in that direction, but... the [public] said don't touch our pine forests. You can't just say any more that this [type of natural disaster] is part of living in Australia. It's not."

...Police declared crime scenes in towns destroyed by A[US]'s worst-ever wildfires, as investigators moving into the charred landscape discovered hellish scenes and more bodies. Police confirmed 131 deaths from the fires that tore a destructive path across a vast swathe of southern Victoria state, reducing entire towns to ruins. But dozens of people are still unaccounted for and the... Victorian Government in crisis meetings yesterday was told to prepare for up to 230 deaths... Officials suspect that some of the more than 400 fires that raged were deliberately set.

...A[US] was on the verge of launching a national bushfire warning system, using a vast telephone database to raise the alarm, as the lethal heatwave that ignited Victoria pressed down on southeast A[US]. But years after it was first proposed the system remained jammed in a bureaucratic funnel when disaster struck, despite claims by [the]Attorney-General... that it was a "real priority" for the... Government. The revelation has fuelled debate about universal official advice that people in the path of a bushfire should either prepare themselves to stay and defend their properties or flee well ahead of the flames. Survivors of the fires... said the flames broke upon them almost without warning, and that at least one town was engulfed before it was included on emergency alert lists... The political heat intensified as 30 fires yesterday continued to burn out of control across Victoria, adding to the 450,000ha already consumed by flames and threatening to add to the more than 1000 homes... destroyed, tens of thousands of livestock lost, massive damage to roads and communications... [plus a human] toll that may rise to as high as 300...

Wildlife rescue officials worked frantically to help the animals that made it through A[US]'s worst wildfires but they said millions of animals probably perished in the inferno... Kangaroos that survived are suffering from burned feet... Up to 100 Kiwi firefighters could be sent to... Victoria... but... it would likely be a week or two before the offer was taken up... and... N[Z]'s own high fire risk may restrict their contribution.

...The U[S] is appealing for additional support from abroad to help fight the dozens of wildfires sweeping along its west coast. Canada has already sent firefighting crews and aircraft to the crisis areas and now A[US] and Mexico are to be asked to have their experts stand by. N[Z's] national rural fire chief... headed off yesterday to help with advice. As of Saturday 70 fires were burning over nearly 300,000ha in... [11 states]. Forty-seven of the blazes are the most serious for over a decade. Around 1.43 million hectares of land cover has already been reduced to ashes – a vast increase on the annual average of 80,000ha – and the National Weather Service has started to talk of the worst fire season for 30 years... Skies turned overcast[at the end of last week], but instead of bringing rain that would help firefighters the clouds brought nothing but lightning... Officials reported 78,000 lightning strikes between Friday and Saturday... New storms and lightning have been forecast for Colorado, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, California and Idaho... “The situation looks pretty gloomy,” said... [a spokesperson] for the National Interagency Fire Centre in Boise... Twenty new big fires were reported on Saturday alone, underlining how hot weather, little rain and lightning strikes have turned this summer into a nightmare... Only around 40[%] of the fires in California are considered to be under control. Firefighters and additional staff from 46 of the 50 states have been sent to the area and have been joined in their battle against the blazes by two military battalions. The US Department of Agriculture has reported that a total of 15,000 people are now involved in the fight as well as 150 aircraft. The cost... is running at \$US15 million... a day, this is on top of the \$US300 million spent so far. The department estimates that by the time all the fires have been brought under control the total cost could rise to over \$US1 billion. [But o]fficials coordinating operations in the crisis zones have complained that... they still lack the [hu]manpower and the means necessary to successfully tackle the fires. Northern states... are particularly in need of reinforcements.

...Eighty firefighters from A[US and N]Z... yesterday joined 13,000 U[S] colleagues to fight fires in the state of Montana... [that] have charred... more than 2.03 million ha... [and] claimed the life of a US firefighter on Saturday, bringing to 11 the number of victims in US wildfires... so far this season... [In related news,] Fire Services released its report after a near five-month inquiry into the fatal explosion and blaze at Tamahere. The 155-page report said it was not clear whether the coolstore had fully complied with requirements to manage and use flammable refrigerants... The facility did not display any hazardous substances warning signs nor did it have a gas stenching agent to warn firefighters of the leak. Its multi-gas detector was away for servicing and there were no compliant fire detection or protection systems or hydrants [and] very limited firefighting water.

...Icepak Coolstores has pleaded guilty to three charges following a fiery explosion at its Tamahere plant last year that killed... Senior Station Officer Derek Lovell of Hamilton... and injured several of his colleagues. But the company's three directors each denied the individual charges against them... [In their defence, 'locals say they expressed concerns about the coolstore to the Fire Service, which had ignored them'! In international news, w]eary firefighters endured welcome rain, snow and near-freezing temperatures in the mountains of Southern California yesterday, as Mother Nature drenched wildfires raging for more than a week and gave hope the devastating blazes could be contained quickly... The more than 100,000 residents who fled their homes over the past week trickled back into areas charred by the 10 major fires to see if their homes were among the more than 3334 destroyed in the record 300,000ha fires... [The] state controller and California's chief auditor, said the cost of the fires could be US\$12 billion... making them by far the most expensive to hit the state. One firefighter was among the 20 people who died in the blazes.

...Twenty-seven schoolgirls were burned alive after a blaze broke out in a hostel at their secondary school in central Nigeria where they were locked in for the night. The victims were among 165 students locked into the hostel at the state secondary school... to stop them mixing with students from the boys hostel... Villagers alerted by the girls' screams broke down the walls of the hostel to rescue those inside... As relatives, many of them hysterical, gathered at the school... at Gindiri in central Plateau State... the state Government declared three days of mourning.

...It started as a secret way of studying after lights out in a dormitory and ended in the tragedy that has left the tiny Pacific nation of Tuvalu in mourning. As Tuvaluans in N[Z] gathered in Auckland to remember the dead, further details of the tragedy which killed 18 schoolgirls and a matron emerged. The Minister of Works, Energy and Communications for Tuvalu... said that while it was an electrical fire that ripped through the girls' dormitory at Motufoua School – locked and with mesh windows to keep the boys out – it was thought to have been caused when flames engulfed a girl studying by candlelight. After lights out, [the girl] had been using the candle in a cardboard box with a sheet over the top. “[The girl] must have fallen asleep. [The girl] caught fire, and so did the bed sheet. [The girl must have awoken and] thrown it off onto the switches,” said the minister, who attended a memorial service at Grey Lynn last night. The only formal fire-fighting service in the tiny... nation, home to 9500 people 1000km north of Fiji, was miles away on another island... T[he T]uvalu Community Trust chair[person –] ...an old-boy of Motufoua, the nation's only secondary school[–] said many of the 5000 Tuvaluans in N[Z] would be related to someone who died in the fire... [Tuvalu's f]ormer Finance Minister[, who is] based in Auckland, lost his adopted grand-daughter Leanne Folitau, 13, in the blaze. [The former minister said itself] and his wife were too distraught to travel to Tuvalu for funeral ceremonies but... [s]ome families were planning trips back to Tuvalu “to pay their tributes...”... [The] Professor of Pacific History at Auckland University... who wrote a book about Tuvalu in 1983, said the... country's strong commitment to its Protestant-based Church of Tuvalu would help those caught up in the tragedy. [By the way, on this day in '1990 a 12-year-old girl lay trapped beneath a blazing petrol tanker. Surrounded by a wall of flames, her lone hope lay in the pledge of a courageous firefighter. Although the firefighter knew of burning tankers that had blown up within minutes in a great fuel-air vapour conflagration known as BLEVE (Boiling Liquid Expanding Vapour Explosion) that reaches out for hundreds of metres to incinerate anything in its path – and only 100 metres from the burning tanker was Manukau Shopping Mall, packed with almost 20,000 late-night shoppers – it dropped his hose and ran straight into the inferno, reached into the tiny space and cradled the small body in his arms. “Don't worry,” the firefighter told the girl. “I'll stay, I promise you. My mates will soon get us out.” His heroism generated a flood of letters from well-wishers. His favourite is a handmade card from three eight-year-old girls. It says simply: “You are the greatest fireperson ever.”]

...Firefighters patrolled] picket lines across Britain last night as an increasingly bitter strike went into its third day, forcing... [a]bout a tenth of British troops – 19,000... personnel – ...to assume blaze duties rather than prepare for possible war... [F]irefighters were replaced with military troops and their antiquated military engines on the second day of a... scheduled... walk-out... The 50,000 firefighters, on an eight-day strike since Friday... after last week's two-day walkout, want a 40[%] pay rise. But authorities seem willing to give only 16[%] over several years and dependent on big changes to work patterns... On the second day of the strike, [four people]... died in separate house fires around the country and another... died in a fire in his caravan. The family of a striking firefighter escaped unhurt after a lighted paper was pushed through the front door of their home... [Incidentally,] Beijing police have arrested 12 people over a massive fire at a hotel complex... The 30-storey building, which was to have housed a theatre, studios and a five-star... [h]otel... was almost completely destroyed... China Central Television, the official... mouthpiece of the Communist Party, was forced to admit it burned down part of its hallmark new headquarters building with an illegal fireworks display.

...BIG bonfires could be banned at a Texas university where... [m]ore than 24 students were crushed and 11 killed when a 12m pile of 7000 logs collapsed on Friday. It was thought the supporting centre pole broke... The annual bonfire has been a 90-year-old tradition at Texas A&M University... The... University president... said they wanted to keep the tradition but... “We do not want this to happen again on our campus,”...

Moose scare backfires... A wildfire burning in Alaska's interior was ignited by state biologists using fireworks to ward off an aggressive cow moose. The 37,200ha wildfire, which started last month and is burning spruce forest south of McGrath, was inadvertently started during a field study into elevated calf mortality... State biologists have long used firecrackers to deal with aggressive moose and bears, and when such animals enter schoolyards. This was the first time they know of that one of the devices has started a fire... The fire is still active... but the flames are in an area where they are considered to pose no risk... [In local news, t]eenagers sending fireworks into one of Rotorua's most valued forests have prompted renewed calls for a ban on the sale of fireworks to the public. Senior police, fire officers and Rotorua's mayor believe the time has come for a total ban. Their calls follow and incident last week when a group of about 20 youngsters, aged 16 to 18, were seen throwing fireworks at one

another and into the Tokorangi forest... By the time police were called, the group had used up all their fireworks, said [a]Senior Sergeant... “They thought it was a joke and thought the prospect of starting a fire to be quite funny.” As a police officer, [the senior sergeant said it] was absolutely aghast at their lack of intelligence... [The senior sergeant] said no one was hurt and no fire was started but the potential for disaster was obvious.

...‘Disaster’ [gal] set to go off... After 12 years of grappling with floods, cyclones and planning for other emergencies and “things that go bump in the night”[, west Auckland’s self-proclaimed disaster gal] will pass on the torch as manager of Waitakere’s civil defence department in [a few months because of her]... health... “I’m one of the lucky ones who has been paid to do a job [it loves,” the disaster gal] says... “It’s been a good time to leave... with plans for new regional emergency legislation to help coordinate the country in the face of a civil emergency.”

...WAITAKERE City is taking part in a massive disaster relief exercise organised by the U[N]. Its emergency operations centre staff have joined disaster management officers from other Auckland councils to assess how the region would respond to a major earthquake in Wellington... [(aid] still hasn’t reached some parts of India, four weeks after an earthquake killed 19,000[]... Exercise Phoenix looks at issues including the logistics of delivering medical supplies and equipment to Wellington, how hospitals cope with the influx of patients and how quickly overseas rescue teams can be processed through Auckland airport. The UN has deployed urgent search and rescue advanced planning teams from the U[S], Singapore and A[US] to take part along with specialists to co-ordinate requests for international assistance. [The]Auckland Regional Council... says the UN participation is a first for N[Z] and a compliment to continuing regional and national efforts in civil defence and emergency management.

...The Defence Force’s capability to respond to a natural disaster in Auckland worries regional politicians, who came close yesterday to branding it inadequate. The Auckland Regional Council... which is responsible for regional civil defence... heard how the Army no longer had sufficient personnel in the region to put together a rapid response unit of 25, although an Army officer last night said this was incorrect... [T]he military’s northern civil defence coordinator, told councillors that [as long as the Government doesn’t follow through with its plans to close] the Air Force bases at Whenuapai and Hobsonville[, their]... equipment... could be used after an earthquake, volcanic eruption, tsunami or storm. The Navy and Air Force could muster the numbers for two response teams. But their... 700 blankets, 60 tents, 100 stretchers, one mobile kitchen and one water tanker... were sufficient for only a few hundred people at most... [Furthermore,] only half of that might be available at any time because of exercises or operations. The availability of the bases’ vehicles might also depend on the “commercialisation” of the Defence Force’s transport fleet, an option being investigated this year... [T]he Army was unlikely to call on Territorial soldiers in Auckland because of the cost. It was more likely to call out regulars from elsewhere... [B]ases at Burnham in Christchurch and Linton near Palmerston North could... muster teams of 100 in emergencies and supply further equipment... The Ministry of Civil Defence assistant commissioner responsible for Auckland... said large stockpiles of equipment would be an advantage to Auckland. “But speaking realistically in today’s world I don’t think any organisation, whether central Government or private sector, has those sorts of resources sitting around any more. It is not realistic to have those sorts of expectations.”

...The high cost of being unprepared Tsunamis in Samoa and Indonesia are a timely wake-up call, writes... an associate professor in the School of Environment at the University of Auckland... It is widely held that tsunamis are rare, and popular wisdom holds earthquakes responsible for the killer waves. Neither of these beliefs is entirely correct. A tsunami is a surge of water or a series of surges generated by an impulsive, shock-displacement of water that can occur anywhere... Submarine landslides... and... volcanoes can... cause these surges... Tsunamis can also have their origins in space... [O]n February 22, 1491, a meteorite strike caused tsunami waves in excess of 130m high along the A[US]n coast... Too often emergency management is seen to be concerned with little more than saving lives. In fact, more frequently it entails reducing the risks to people, buildings, infrastructure and economic activities. The focus is on risk reduction, readiness, response and recovery. In this context, government and local authorities have the responsibility to minimise social vulnerability and have a duty to promote community resilience through enlightened planning... According to the local plan there is a 49[%] probability that a tsunami will hit Auckland in a 50-year-period... A serious event is given a 43[%] probability of occurrence in a 50-year period and an extreme event a 7[%] probability. The latter would cause “significant damage... loss of life and high social disruption... Loss of key lifelines: communications – up to 7 days; water, sewerage and stormwater – up to 6 months; road/rail – up to 6 months; energy – variable, but could be several months [with] severe economic losses and a recovery timescale of up to 20 years.”

...AMBULANCES arrive relentlessly at Moto’otua Hospital in Apia. They bring body, after body, after body. Of the 79 confirmed dead by 10pm, the oldest is aged 102 and the youngest 2 months... Outside, families wait in groups, talking quietly. There is no wailing or crying. It’s unimaginable, they say. This is Samoa, this doesn’t happen here... The hospital is not equipped for tragedy on this scale. Two operating theatres are busy but two others are unused – there are not enough doctors and nurses to treat everyone. Six tourists are among the confirmed dead. Twelve N[Z]ers have been treated for injuries and discharged... Staff have no idea how much worse it will get. They don’t know how many people are missing or how many have been swept out to sea or buried in landslides... It is the biggest disaster since the 1918 influenza epidemic... Today’s arrival of NZ and A[US]n medical teams could not come soon enough. “I’ve never seen this kind of devastation. It’s unprecedented in the history of this country.” Even the streets around the hospital are quiet. Because of the tsunami alert people have been told to stay away from the coast...

A new tsunami warning caused fresh panic on the devastated islands of Samoa last night as people again scrambled for high ground. Others stayed put, confused by conflicting broadcasts... radio said there was nothing to worry about. Days of aftershocks are predicted after yesterday’s tsunami wiped out whole villages... The massive earthquake, measuring 8.3, was felt at 6.48am N[Z] time and triggered a series of mammoth waves. The Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre in Honolulu issued an alert for a large swathe of the South Pacific, including NZ, Fiji and Tonga.

...The only warning the Samoan people would have had to [the] tsunami was the earthquake that struck just a few minutes before. Despite a forewarned N[Z] having the luxury of a few hours to prepare for what eventually was little more than a ripple around coastlines here, the warning systems meant little with a locally-generated tsunami... Whether burying loved ones, recovering from injury or rebuilding homes, about one in five Samoans are suffering after Wednesday’s devastating tsunamis. An estimated 32,000 people have been classed as “affected”, following the series of waves triggered by an 8.3 earthquake off the coast of American Samoa... The death toll... rose to at least 180 yesterday, as a fresh earthquake rattled the region around Samoa... More than 200 N[Z]ers believed to have been in Samoa when the waves hit remain unaccounted for... A further 619 N[Z]ers are confirmed alive and well. Three N[Z]ers are known to have died, and another, a toddler, is missing, presumed drowned.

...The parents of a N[Z] toddler killed in the tsunami blame themselves for the child’s death because they tried to flee the torrent in a rental car instead of running for high ground... Two-year-old Alfie Cunliffe was with his parents... at the Taufua Lodge in Lalomanu, the village worst-hit... His father... was also carried out to sea, but survived by clinging to the coral reef. [The father] was swept back in with the second wave and was treated in hospital for internal injuries. Alfie is one of four N[Z]ers believed killed in the tsunami. Fears are held for the safety of two others.

...Samoa beach fales in areas worst-hit by this week’s tsunami were a model for Pacific development, breathing life into rural areas and giving young Samoans something to stay for. That was until Wednesday. Now some villagers do not know if they can bear to rebuild their livelihoods – though tourism experts say it is the mainstay of the local economy... Officials have put the preliminary cost of damage to resorts, family homes, roads, powerlines and water supplies at \$US36 million... and rising, leaving aside the human toll of the dead... [NZ’s P]M... last night voiced fears that the death toll... could rise even higher with the outbreak of disease... [The PM] was reluctant to put a dollar figure on the aid to be given by N[Z] on top of the \$1 million pledged, but said it would be significant... “It’s gone from being an idyllic part of the world to Ground Zero.”

...Samoa will come to a standstill on Friday as more than 100 people killed in the country’s greatest natural disaster are buried together in a mass grave... Five days since the water hit, the search for bodies continues... It took less than an hour of searching for bodies in intense heat before the four N[Z] sniffer dogs needed to cool off in Samoan waters... Silt has turned to dust in the hot air, the salt water poisoning the ground...

Critically injured Tongans whose island home Niuatoputapu was devastated by last week's tsunami continue to be flown 500km south to the main island of Tongatapu... More than 1000 people live on [Niuatoputapu], which is closer to Samoa than other Tongan island groups. Half had their homes destroyed by the tsunami... Tongan prisoners are serving their sentences extramurally after their prison was destroyed... Last night, the death toll stood at 189 – 149 in Samoa, 31 in American Samoa and nine in Tonga... [(just days before the tsunami, the tiny kingdom) dropped a marble plaque inscribed with 74 victims' names into the ocean above the wreck of the sunken ferry the Princess Ashika... [- t]he tragedy triggered accusations that the [Tongan] Government allowed the ferry to operate although it was unseaworthy... [and t]his week, it was revealed that the... former Christchurch business[person]... who bought the Princess Ashika in Fiji on behalf of the Tongan Government... had no shipping experience or qualifications... [and] failed to look at the condition of the hull[...]. Seven New Zealanders have been confirmed killed... with one other – a child – missing, presumed drowned... More N[Z] medical staff were heading to Samoa last night... An Air Force jet returned to NZ yesterday with a body, evacuated patients and family members... The Ministry of Health will today send an air ambulance from Auckland on a mercy flight to pick up a baby boy born prematurely in Samoa... at a cost of \$100,000... [His NZ] parents yesterday made a plea to the public for donations...

HOW TO DONATE... Donate online at www.redcross.org.nz or www.givealittle.co.nz... Oxfam.org.nz... worldvision.org.nz... caritas.org.nz... and... at each of Farmers' 58 stores nationwide. The company is matching its customers' donations dollar for dollar up to a maximum of \$50 per donation... ■ Major tsunamis occur about once a decade. Based on historical data, about 59[%] of the world's tsunamis have occurred in the Pacific Ocean... and 4[%] in the Indian Ocean... The largest recorded earthquake, of 9.5 magnitude in Chile in May 1960, generated a tsunami that swept across the Pacific, killing scores of people in Hawaii, Japan and elsewhere... The quake that triggered the [recent] Indian Ocean tsunami was magnitude 9.15. That quake and tsunami killed around 230,000 people in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia and... as far afield as Somalia.

...More than 170,000 of these victims lived in Aceh province in Indonesia... A wall of water up to 10m high set off by the tremor swept into Indonesia, over the coasts of Sri Lanka and along the southern Thai tourist island of Phuket... Waves travelling at nearly jetliner speeds began pummeling southern Thailand an hour after the quake. In 2½ hours, the torrents travelled 1600km and slammed into India and Sri Lanka... "About 1000km of the Andaman faultline broke, which is a huge area,"... said... a... geophysicist... Some experts blame the enormous loss of lives... on ignorance of the region's tsunami history. Very few people living along the coasts recognised natural tsunami warnings, such as the strong shaking felt in Aceh and the rapid retreat of ocean water from the shoreline that was observed in Thailand. But on an island just off the coast of Aceh, most people safely fled to higher ground... because the island's oral history included information about a devastating tsunami in 1907.

...In the early afternoon of September 13, 1999, the headmistress of the tiny school at Omoa on Fatu Hiva, in the Pacific, looked out the window to see water draining from the beach. [The headmistress] acted without hesitation. Her pupils were ordered to... climb out of the windows and head for higher ground. Minutes later... a tsunami... destroyed the building – but without casualties... Such awareness contrasts with most people's actions on Boxing Day. Tourists and locals wandered over newly exposed seabed to peer at flapping fish or crabs... This behaviour helps explain why the death toll [wa]s so appallingly high – and suggests measures that can be taken to prevent future disasters... Scientists knew in advance that southern Asia was going to be hit by the tsunami, but attempts to raise the alarm were hampered by the absence of early-warning systems in the region. Within 15 minutes of [the] earthquake, the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre in Hawaii had sent an alert to 26 countries, including Thailand and Indonesia, but struggled to reach the right people... [K]ey officials within Indian Ocean nations could not be reached... Television and radio alerts were not issued in Thailand until 9am local time – nearly an hour after the waves had hit... The United States weather agency didn't have the phone numbers or staff to alert all Indian Ocean coastal countries when it saw the first signs that tsunamis could be heading their way, its top official said... A tsunami warning system could be built in the Indian Ocean in a year and cost as little as \$US20 million... an expert says.

...Red tape stopped scientists from alerting countries around the Indian Ocean to the devastating Boxing Day tsunami racing towards their shores. Scientists at the Tsunami Warning Centre in Hawaii – who have complained about being unable to find telephone numbers to alert the countries in peril – did not use an existing rapid telecommunications system set up to get warnings around the world almost instantly because the bureaucratic arrangements were not in place... It was used to alert Pacific countries to the tsunami, even though it affected hardly any of them.

...The tsunamis triggered by the massive Indonesian earthquake had a tiny impact on N[Z] – ...the ocean rising between 10cm and 20cm... off the coast of Fiordland... The official toll [of dead NZers] stands at two... Some 5000 foreign tourists, mostly Europeans, were... among the dead... Sweden, Norway and Finland[were] hard hit by the disaster as many Scandinavians like to escape their cold winters for the Asian sunshine... Agitated elephants felt the tsunami coming, and their sensitivity saved about a dozen tourists in Thailand... This was the quake that shook the world, literally and figuratively. No matter the religion – Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist or Christian – many of the prayers for mercy when the waves came were in vain... Status or wealth did not matter. The lives of the rich and famous holidaying in Asia were for once as vulnerable as the farmers and villagers whose everyday existence along the Indian Ocean coastline is precarious enough... Thousands of vulnerable children orphaned by the tsunami now have to deal with another threat: gangs of unscrupulous human traffickers looking for easy pickings... Landmines left from years of civil war... in Sri Lanka... were floated by the floods and washed out of known minefields... and the warning signs on mined areas ha[d] been swept away... endanger[ing] survivors... Munich Re, the world's largest reinsurer, said the economic cost of the devastation would top US\$13 billion...

The U[N] had its biggest relief operation in response to the Asian tsunami... that killed tens of thousands and left millions homeless. The disaster zone... cover[ed] at least 10 countries in Asia and Africa... Hundreds of rescue ships, helicopters and planes... evacuat[ed] tourists from wrecked resorts... But the Indonesian province of Aceh ha[d] been off-limits to international aid agencies [before the tsunami] and even after the disaster the Indonesian Government was reluctant to allow free admission to international aid agencies... One of the questions... world leaders... and humanitarian organisations... meet[ing] in Jakarta today... will discuss is how the world can prevent such a catastrophe occurring again.

...THEY ARE calling it the first global disaster, not because of the number of dead but because the toll touche[d] so many countries... Aid organisations have urged donor countries to avoid the broken promises of previous disasters and ensure that all of the US\$4 billion... pledged for the tsunami catastrophe is delivered. The call came as world leaders gathered yesterday in Jakarta, the Indonesian capital, for a one-day summit to decide how best to use the money. Aid workers also expressed fears the crisis will soak up donor cash and leave less help available for Africa.

...Unlike other areas affected by the waves, many of the dead in Thailand were tourists... Thai authorities, faced with the daunting task of identifying... each body... so it c[ould] be repatriated to the home country... ordered DNA tests on all the dead, including those already buried... Foreign tourists... determined to enjoy their holidays return[ed] to the beach[es as locals were still]... clearing up debris left by the waves.

...Tourists party as New Orleans battens down for hurricane... Hurricane Katrina strengthened last night into a Category Four monster packing 230km/h winds as it headed straight for New Orleans... Coastal residents jammed freeways and petrol stations as they rushed to get out of the way of the hurricane... Making matters worse, at least 100,000 people in the city lack transport... Some tourists heeded the warnings and headed for other destinations... But plenty of people in the French Quarter stayed put, and bars were rocking on Saturday night. "The only dangerous hurricanes so far are the ones we've been drinking," said [someone from] San Francisco... "We can't get out, so we might as well have fun." New Orleans' worst hurricane disaster happened 40 years ago when Hurricane Betsy... le[ft] half of New Orleans under water and 60,000... homeless.

...Rescue crews were frantically working last night to save hundreds of people trapped by floodwaters from Hurricane Katrina, which devastated the US Gulf Coast states... and left dozens of people dead... "Some of them, it was their last night on Earth," said... [the] chief of homeland security of New Orleans, of people who ignored orders to evacuate the city. "That's a hard way to learn a lesson." ...The death toll was expected to rise sharply from... a day of ferocious winds and blinding rain. The storm submerged entire neighbourhoods up to their roofs.

...‘This was our tsunami’ ...Katrina may be the most expensive hurricane ever to hit the U[S], costing insurers up to US\$25 billion... The storm paralysed the oil industry in the Gulf of Mexico, raising fears that damage to offshore platforms and pipelines could trigger a supply crunch in the world’s largest energy consumer... New Orleans resembled a war zone yesterday as armed police patrolled the streets to combat looters and carjackers taking advantage of the devastating aftermath of... Katrina. Unrest was escalating as deteriorating conditions forced authorities to evacuate thousands of people in shelters without food or power... In the flooded downtown, rescuers pushed aside bodies as they tried to help survivors... The flooding of New Orleans was growing worse, prompting... an audacious plan to drop huge sandbags from helicopters to close up one of the breached levees. [The water level is] rising perilously inside the New Orleans Superdome, the... shelter of last resort for... 20,000 people...

They lined up by the thousands to get inside, clutching meagre belongings and crying children. A few hours later, the power went out, turning the... 77,000-seat stadium... into a muggy mess. Then part of the roof blew off... With water pressure dwindling, the bathrooms were filthy.

...THE NEW ORLEANS Superdome was meant to be a hurricane refuge, but those who sought shelter there described a lawless “concentration camp” where two children were reportedly raped and other refugees terrorised by rioters... For some, the four days without proper food, water, sanitation and nights of lawless blackout had clearly taken a heavy physical and mental toll. Many broke down in tears... “The last few days were like hell,” said... one of the many thousands who sought protection in the giant sports arena when Hurricane Katrina hit... Yesterday thousands were still waiting for buses to take them to Houston, Texas, their relief at finally leaving the stadium mixed with outrage at their treatment.

...More than 11,000 Hurricane Katrina refugees found refuge in the Houston astrodome yesterday, before officials said it was full and began sending buses to other shelters in the area... [Meanwhile, back in] the Big Easy... [b]odies lie abandoned in the streets. Medical helicopters and law officers come under fire... [from] rioters and looters... Storm survivors battle for seats on the buses that will carry them away from the chaos. The tired and hungry seethe, saying they have been forsaken. New Orleans descended into anarchy yesterday, a city seemingly ready to explode.

...With the bodies of the dead floating through the waterlogged streets and gangs of armed looters picking through the remains of New Orleans, authorities reluctantly issued a total evacuation order yesterday saying it might be weeks or even months before their city would again be fit for human habitation. The shocked mayor of the city... said the numbers of dead could reach into the thousands... Officially, about 130 dead have been counted along the length of the Gulf Coast... [The] President... flew over the disaster zone yesterday and said later the recovery would take years.

...[The US] PRESIDENT... is facing not only the fallout of Hurricane Katrina but also an intense political storm as relief experts, Government officials and newspaper editorials criticise everything from disaster preparedness policies to his public entry into the growing crisis on the Gulf Coast. The *New York Times* said of a speech [the President] made on Wednesday: “Nothing about the President’s demeanour yesterday – which seemed casual to the point of carelessness – suggested [it] understood the depth of the current crisis.” ...[The President] was on holiday at his Texas ranch when the Asian tsunami struck... and was soon in the firing line for reacting slowly. This week [the President] faced the same criticism – [it] spent Monday on a fundraising tour of the American west, and was accused of failing to provide adequate leadership. As survivors complained of a lack of water, food and medical supplies, fingers from across the political spectrum were pointed at the White House. Experts pointed out that a plan to shore up the levees around New Orleans was abandoned last year for lack of Government funding.

...PITY New Orleans. Her buildings submerged, her citizens scattered and her streets under the sway of the mob. The city’s very future is under question. Across the American media, commentators note the vast cost and dubious viability of a city constructed mostly below sea level... “If New York or Los Angeles had suffered the same fate, would anyone be talking about abandoning them? Of course they wouldn’t...” spluttered a contributor to CNN... A former mayor of New Orleans... insisted on the reconstruction of the city, which many see as integral to the national soul.

...UP TO 10,000 people are now feared to have been killed by Hurricane Katrina in the southern U[S], as major relief efforts finally got underway yesterday... Engineers have plugged the levee break that swamped much of the city and water began to recede, but the good news was tempered by the direst prediction from local authorities yet: As many as 10,000 dead... [By the way, the flooding of New Orleans and the] deadly sea surges that swept across southern Asia were the latest of several ferocious natural disasters... It was a year ago, on Boxing Day... that the ancient city of Bam in Iran was destroyed by a powerful earthquake that killed more than 43,000, injured 20,000 and left 60,000 destitute.

...Iran’s earthquake-devastated city of Bam is filled with the stench of death, and a top foreign rescuer says hopes of finding any more survivors are fading. The quake has killed at least 20,000 people, and local officials believe the toll could reach 40,000... From China to South Africa, Britain to A[US], nations rushed to respond to Iran’s appeals, sending rescue workers, doctors, tents and cash to help deal with what appears to be[one of] the world’s most lethal earthquake[s]... Iran’s quick acceptance of international aid contrasted with its rejection of outside help in 1990 when a quake killed 36,000 people. Officials have said that this time help would be welcome from everywhere except Israel... [Incidentally, s]ix months after the worst quake to hit China in three decades... [– t]he earthquake killed 69,227 people and left... [m]ore than 5 million... homeless... [–] the Government... has... announced plans to pump 120 billion yuan... [into] ensuring schools... and [other] public facilities are built to higher standards. Much of the public anger after the disaster came from the collapse of 7000 classrooms, which experts have said were built with shoddy materials.

...Yes to vote, no to cyclone aid... THE MILITARY rulers of Myanmar went ahead with a constitutional referendum yesterday despite calls from the outside world to postpone it after the devastation of Cyclone Nargis... State-run TV news repeated yesterday’s broadcasts urging people to vote, making no mention of the estimated 1.5 million victims of the cyclone without food and shelter or tens of thousands killed in the... storm... Meanwhile, [our]... Foreign Affairs Minister... has reaffirmed N[Z]’s commitment to maintaining a community on Niue despite the devastation of Cyclone Heta. The future of the island is again under question as it faces the cost of reconstruction... [The minister said it] now saw two post-cyclone possibilities – that the people of Niue would give up, or that it could mean a new start and increased determination from the 20,000-strong Niuean community in N[Z] to help sustain the 1400 still in their homeland. “And I hope the latter scenario comes to pass.” ...But... [a] former chief executive of the Niue Government... said Niueans would think twice about rebuilding when their efforts could again be destroyed by the weather.

...Telecommunications destroyed by Cyclone Heta in Niue this month have been restored, says Telecom... Because of the cable damage... caused by the... cyclone, full restoration will take two or three weeks. [However, the ‘baby who survived in the arms of his dead mother after the cyclone destroyed their home, has died in Auckland’s Starship Hospital.’] ■... a... new credit card-like version of the traditional medical alert bracelet [(or the less-traditional ‘wrist pads which ring an alarm if they go untouched for periods of time’) that has just] arrived on the N[Z] market... could be a lifesaver in an accident or emergency... The Global Safe card can hold five A4 pages of information in microfiche form – ranging from blood type, allergies and medication to full medical history and even doctors’ files. The details of the card can be read using a special built-in viewer. Large viewers can be developed for ambulance crew to use... People who subscribe can attach stickers to their car windscreen or key ring to alert ambulance staff to look for the card.

...The ambulance driver who, on the way to an emergency, ran down an 85-year-old pensioner could have stopped nearly 100m away, a court has heard. [The driver] was travelling to a priority-one emergency on December 22, 1999, when Marjorie McGill, of St Helliers, stepped out in front of the St John ambulance on Long Drive and was killed. [The 28-year-old driver, who] is charged with dangerous driving causing death and an alternative charge of aggravated careless use of a motor vehicle... has pleaded not guilty. Under cross-examination in the Auckland District Court yesterday, [the driver] agreed it would have taken around 45m to make an emergency stop at 95 km/h. [The driver] spotted Mrs McGill from at least 145m away... [The driver] told the court that [it] had expected Mrs McGill, who was deaf and had poor peripheral vision, to notice him and move out of the way. After sounding the bull-horn, [the driver] braked heavily. But the brakes locked and the ambulance skidded straight into the elderly... [pedestrian. The d]efence lawyer... told the court during his opening address that [the driver] had been “confronted by someone who...

didn't stop, didn't look, didn't listen." Judged objectively, [the lawyer said, his client] was not at fault because Mrs McGill's own actions were to blame... Fellow officers yesterday described [the 28-year-old], who joined St John Ambulance Service in 1993, as an exceptionally cautious driver.

...The St John Ambulance Service wants people to get out of the way of its emergency staff. Its plea follows the conviction of a[n a]mbulance driver... for careless use of a motor vehicle after... kill[ing] an 85-year-old... [who] had not checked for oncoming traffic before... stepp[ing] onto the road. [The] conviction has spooked emergency services. St John's director of ambulance operations in the northern region... said yesterday that the actions of other road users were a constant frustration for emergency service drivers. While most people made way for speeding ambulances, some drivers deliberately ignored the sirens... "Then there are others who just don't hear you or see you and are oblivious to any traffic around them. They are a real hindrance at times." The public did not appreciate the stress ambulance drivers were under when travelling to emergencies... Meetings were planned between the ambulance, police and fire services next week to discuss whether driver training needed improving. At present, all St John drivers must complete a 40-hour defensive driving course covering traffic regulations, hazard identification, ambulance control and emergency stops... [A] memo was sent to all St John staff yesterday reassuring them that they could speed when necessary as long as they drive safely. Land Transport Safety Authority figures show that emergency vehicles had 30 minor injury crashes and three serious injury crashes between 1997 and 1999... [The director of ambulance operations in the northern region said the 28-year-old – who received a '\$4000 fine (half of which is to go to a charity) and had his licence suspended for 12 months' –] would continue with his present work in the St John communications centre.

...The Order of St John has decided to end its Auckland rescue helicopter service... [T]he service would stop within two weeks, after three years of service... [M]oney saved would allow the order to direct more money into its other services. It would continue to provide paramedics for rescue helicopter services. Rival service Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust will now add St John's role of providing emergency transport for sick people under a Health Funding Authority contract to its service of carrying accident victims under an ACC contract. T[he Trust's chairperso]n... said the three years of competition had been frustrating for two good organisations operating in a city where only one air ambulance service was viable.

...[they track St John's vehicles here and 'GPS systems are being used overseas to keep track of children. Satellites can locate a child's position via chips embedded in their shoes or other clothing (and may eventually be placed under a child's skin'). By the way, w[ithin] the next two years... if your house is burgled and you know the date and approximate time, you'll be able to call up a private satellite company and order clear video of your property...

[A new] book... contains information from super-secret documents and an astonishing account of Diana's last hours, which were monitored by US spy satellites and British agents... Diana was the most famous [gal] in the world and, to this day, allegations surrounding her death in a Paris car crash still trigger intense debate and speculation. As late as last week, James Andanson, a key figure in the official inquiry, was found dead in a burnt-out car. French police are establishing whether... [the] photographer, was murdered or committed suicide... Andanson... was once suspected of driving the white Fiat Uno thought to have been in the smash, but was cleared by forensic experts. Now a[n a]ward-winning correspondent... lifts the veil of secrecy surrounding the activities of Israeli, American, British and French intelligence agents on the night Diana died.

...[the] Mossad secret agent, a natural manipulator of people... arrived in Paris in June 1997... His target was Henri Paul, assistant security chief of the city's Ritz hotel, owned by [the] billionaire... father of Princess Diana's new lover, Dodi. Mossad wanted to keep track of the arms sales to its enemies, and Middle Eastern weapons dealers were known to... negotiate... deals at the Ritz... Paul was a bachelor, living in a low-rent apartment, who drove a black Mini but liked fast cars... Paul... also [had a] curious relationship... with the paparazzi who staked out the Ritz. At night, [the agent] observed Paul drinking with several of the paparazzi – and receiving money for providing details of guest movements. [Hi]s first contact with Paul was in Harry's Bar in the rue Daumou. According to an Israeli intelligence source, "Henri... came straight out with it: was [the assistant security chief] being asked to spy? If so, what was the deal? Just like that." Paul was understandably frightened that [it] was getting in over his head and could well end up in prison if... found spying on the hotel's guests. But [the agent] maintained the pressure... To Henri... it would have seemed as if [the agent] had become a personal shadow, reminding him that there was no way out. Compounding the pressure was the forthcoming visit of Princess Di... and Dodi... Paul had been put in charge of their security while they were in the hotel, with particular responsibility for keeping away the paparazzi. At the same time, the photographers were calling him on his mobile, seeking information about the visit – [Henri] was being offered large sums of money to provide details. The temptation to accept was another pressure... Although [Henri] managed to conceal it, Henri... was unravelling mentally... taking antidepressants, sleeping pills and pep pills to get him through the day. This combination of drugs could only have furthered the strain on his ability to make reasoned judgments. For any operation, this would have rung alarm bells, but Tel Aviv decided to keep the pressure on Paul. Other events that no-one could have foreseen were moving to their own climax... Hours after the accident, [the agent] flew back to Tel Aviv, leaving in his wake questions that would remain unanswered. What part had his presence played in the accident? Had Henri... lost control of the Mercedes, causing it to crash... because [Henri] could see no way of extricating himself from the clutches of Mossad? ...Questions such as these would continue to fester in the mind of Dodi's father... In February 1998, [the billionaire] publicly announced, "It was no accident. I am convinced of that in my heart of hearts. The truth cannot remain hidden forever." ...Mossad [actually] had no interest in Di... and Dodi. Their sole concern was to recruit Henri... as their informer at the Ritz. But by 1999, [the billionaire] was alleging "a full-blown criminal conspiracy"... manufactured by MI5 and MI6, and French intelligence, with Mossad "manipulating in the background". Then came the news, reluctantly confirmed, that the US National Security Agency... had... 1050 pages of documents on the couple... Unknown to them, every conversation, however intimate, was silently gathered up by... satellites... Part of the reason... was that Di... had been under surveillance by ECHELON, one of NSA's most sensitive and ultra-secret surveillance systems. Following her divorce... Di... launched her campaign to abolish landmines. [Di] was blunt, outspoken and quickly gathered support that was not welcomed by the [US] administration or in London and other European capitals... My source insist[s]... that "anything Di... said, any decision [Di] made, would have been of prime interest, to certain people in authority"... There is confirmation of this in a secret Mossad investigation that focused on the two weeks before the accident and the days afterwards. Mossad investigators discovered there was a four-m[ember] British MI6 team in the city, with one of the team checking into the hotel itself four days before the deaths of Dodi and Di. *[A former MI6 officer... has since publicly accused British agents of being involved in the fatal crash.]* The Mossad report reveals that around August 14 to 15... a CIA team also arrived in the city. The team had been tracking Di... for some time, keeping tabs on her attacks on landmine manufacturers, many of which are US-based... Mossad's account of the final moments of Di's life]... begins at 11.45 pm... when... Paul was put in charge of the operation to whisk the couple away from the Ritz... 11.50pm, Saturday, August 30 In the Ritz bar... Henri[is] discussing the route... [and] said the hotel would provide two Range Rovers to act as decoys for the waiting paparazzi. That would give him enough time to get away... 00:15am, Sunday, August 31 In the hotel lobby, Henri... was using his mobile to organise the two decoy vehicles. 00:19am The decoys roared out of the Place Vendome that fronts the Ritz. Paparazzi gave chase. 00:20am At the hotel's rear entrance Paul arrived with the Mercedes... 00:21am At the top of rue Cambon, a Mossad agent kept watch. [The agent] would later report that "a white Fiat Uno passed the top of the street". The Mossad report states that in the car were two intelligence officers from the French security service. 00:22am The white Fiat Uno passed through traffic lights in the Place de la Concorde... Paul's Mercedes was forced to stop at the lights. 00:23am The Mercedes approached the Alma tunnel. Henri... would most certainly have seen the Uno ahead of him. 00:24am The Mercedes, travelling at high speed, passed over the dip at the tunnel entrance... [(Other sources allege Henri was then 'temporarily blinded by a bright light being shined directly into his eyes from the white Fiat Uno.')] Seconds later there came a thunderous noise inside the tunnel... Henri Paul and Dodi were dead. Di... was dying. Moments later, according to the Mossad report, the white Uno was driven into a side street and up the ramp of a waiting truck. Hours later the Uno was gripped in the claws of the truck's crusher. Within moments it had become a piece of crushed metal, devoid of any identification. There, at

the time of writing, the matter rests. [But could Mossad] have... evidence that would finally satisfy [the billionaire]'s belief in a conspiracy? Was Di... really pregnant at her death? These questions will be revisited well into this century. But they may never be answered fully enough to satisfy [the billionaire] or convince all those who believe him a dangerously misguided [perso]n who is using vast sums of money to nail down a truth that may... be best kept under lock and key by all those directly involved... [● After] 22 years and 232 deaths, Israel has pulled its troops out of south Lebanon... [M]embers of the UN interim force in Lebanon... were sent by the UN security council to oversee the Israeli withdrawal that was ordered on March 19, 1978, but ignored by the Jewish state until Tuesday... [T]he Israeli force withdrew... [six] weeks ahead of schedule... after its local militia collapsed... More than 6000 Lebanese, many of them members of Israel's south Lebanon army militia ally and their families, fled to Israel during the Jewish state's pullout.

...ISRAEL yesterday began building an electronic border fence to ease security fears. Israel's swift pull-out from south Lebanon on Wednesday has left border towns and villages without the fortifications... [their PM promised when pledging] to bring the army home... At a victory rally... Hizbollah threatened to go on fighting if Israel did not withdraw from the Shebaa farms, a disputed area near the Golan Heights that Israel seized from Syria in 1967... "Every captive in Israeli jails will return to you soon... Shebaa farms will return to Lebanon, God willing," [the]... Hizbollah chief... told the crowd... [while being] flanked by three bodyguards... Many Lebanese and their families who worked for Israel have been distributed in the north [of Israel] and... officials were talking about putting some of them into Arab-Israeli towns... Israel is planning to give the refugees tourist visas for a year with work permits and medical benefits, an absorption "basket" including a monthly sum of money and a rental subsidy.

...Beaufort Castle, built by the Crusaders in the 12th century and occupied by the Israelis until last month, has become the central attraction in a new deadly tourist trail in south Lebanon. Thousands of curious Lebanese, many of whom never ventured near the south during almost 20 years of occupation, are swarming around the ancient ramparts of the medieval fortress along with the other 100-odd Israeli and South Lebanon Army positions that stretch from the Mediterranean to the Golan Heights. But their journey to places such as Beaufort, on a mountain top where Crusaders once resisted the besieging armies of Saladdin, contains a lethal threat... According to U[N] peacekeepers, the Israelis and their client... militia have left an estimated 70,000 anti-personnel mines in and around their abandoned compounds, including the castle. A young boy from Sidon was killed while visiting a deserted S[outh Lebanon Army] stronghold that fell to the Iranian-backed Hizbollah during Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon... The child was foraging for souvenirs in the compound when [the child] spotted a camera. The camera turned out to be a booby trap left by the [militia] before they fled into Israel... [■ A] top Israeli official has told journalists... [that d]ifferences between Israel and the Palestinians are so profound that they are highly unlikely to reach a framework agreement by February's target date... [T]he official, who asked not to be named... put the refugee issue at the top of the list, saying the positions of the two sides were "diametrically opposed." ...[Israel's PM recently] repeated his opposition to a return of Palestinian refugees to areas inside Israel. The Palestinians reject his position, and are demanding the implementation of UN General Assembly resolution 194 of 1948, which recognised the right of return or of compensation for all Palestinians who became refugees as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. Israel opposes the return of these refugees and their descendants – who number 3.5 million today – both for fear lest they constitute a fifth column and lest they undermine the Jewish nature of the state.

...The Middle East riots which began 11 days ago at one site sacred to Muslims and Jews, reached new depths at another – the tomb of the Jewish patriarch Joseph in the heart of the Palestinian-controlled city of Nablus. For a week six Israeli soldiers backed by rockets from helicopter gunships and hilltop snipers had defended the shrine against rioting Palestinians. Israel had finally agreed to withdraw the troops from the besieged shrine on the condition that Palestinian police would protect it. But soon after the soldiers departed at dawn yesterday under an escort of Palestinian police, the rioters began moving in. Using crowbars, pick-axes and even their bare hands, they reduced the shrine to smouldering rubble in a matter of hours. The riots were sparked when [the] hawkish Israeli Opposition leader... visited... Jerusalem's holy... Temple Mount...

Old warrior again ignites violence in Middle East... Once again, [a guy who has long been]... considered to be one of Israel's finest sons... has set the Middle East on fire. And once again, [the finest son] claims it is not his fault. In 1982, when [the finest son] ordered the Israeli Army to invade Lebanon, [the general said it] should not be blamed if his Lebanese allies massacred Palestinian civilians in Beirut's Sabra and Chatila refugee camps. Now, the Likud leader claims [it] has nothing to do with the violence that has followed his visit to Jerusalem's Haram al-Sharif, the Muslim "Noble Sanctuary" built over the ruins of the ancient Jewish temple... [I]n a letter to [the US] Secretary of State, [the finest son] said: "It must be clearly understood that it wasn't my visit to the Temple Mount... that ignited the current outbreak of violence." ...Strong-willed and unconventional, [the finest son] was regarded as Israel's saviour in the 1973 Yom Kippur War, when [it] led his division across the Suez Canal and encircled much of the attacking Egyptian Army from the rear... To his adoring followers, who know him simply as "Arik," [the guy] is "Melech Yisrael," the "King of Israel." But abroad, the 72-year-old former general, built like a bulldog and with his face perpetually in motion with twitches, frequently attracts disapproval, even loathing... [Arik] may be trying to out-flank the P[M] on the question of Jerusalem. But, tellingly, in the face of this political challenge to his peace policies, [the PM] has not dared to blame [him] for the trouble... Palestinian leaders claimed [Arik]'s visit to the shrine was an attempt to shore up his popularity among right-wing voters as part of a leadership battle within the Likud. His biggest rival is [the former P]M... who could stage a comeback after Israel's Attorney-General closed a fraud investigation against him last week.

...As... Israeli-Arab violence moved yesterday to the border of Lebanon, where Hizbollah captured three Israeli troops, artillery duels erupted and Israel threatened more reprisals[the]... Israeli military... blew up two multi-storey apartment buildings overlooking a Gaza intersection that has been the focus of more than a week of riots. The notching-up of Israel's response to the violence came as the death toll stood at 83, mostly Palestinians. In the West Bank, the Israelis also sent attack helicopters into Hebron for the first time, blasting hilltop positions used by Palestinians to fire on the Jewish settler enclave below. This followed an ultimatum delivered yesterday morning... by Israel's P]M... who said if [the] [Palestinian leader]... did not stop the riots within 48 hours, Israel would assume [the PLO leader] had decided to finish peace negotiations and would unleash the full force of its army to end the violence. The Israeli military waited only a few hours. Military engineers set off explosives in the two tall Gaza buildings called the Twin Towers... There was no immediate word about casualties. Also, the military destroyed another nearby building known as the factory, and cleared an area of several dozen metres around the fortified position to prevent attacks, the... military said.

...Israeli bulldozers flattened the Brazil refugee camp in southern Gaza in a raid which... wounded... 14 people... and... killed a Palestinian gun[-holder]... The Israeli Army said troops moved in to Gaza on Wednesday to destroy buildings that Palestinian gun[-holders] had used as cover to fire at soldiers and as bases for planting roadside bombs... The Palestinian Authority denounced what it called a "planned aggression" that threatened regional stability. "We continue to demand international protection for the Palestinian people exposed to the ugliest forms of aggression,"...

A Palestinian child was crushed to death yesterday and dozens injured when Israeli troops blew up an area in southern Gaza while the occupants were sleeping, Palestinian medical sources said. Tawfiq Bereka, 4, was killed by falling masonry as Israeli soldiers dynamited a nearby house with a charge so strong it destroyed his house and the one next door in the southern border town of Rafah... "Troops discovered tunnels for smuggling weapons connected to two abandoned buildings which were all detonated in a controlled explosion," a spokes[person for the Israeli Army] said.

...The U[S] has demanded a full and immediate Israeli investigation into the death of... 23-year-old Rachel Corrie... who was crushed by an Israeli Army bulldozer... as... the... American peace activist... tried to prevent the destruction of Palestinian homes... in the town of Rafah.

...Britain yesterday demanded a thorough inquiry into the Israeli military's shooting to death of a British television camera[person] in a Palestinian refugee camp... Israeli forces demolishing a home suspected of concealing an arms-smuggling tunnel in the Gaza Strip shot... freelance

journalist James Miller... in the flashpoint Rafah refugee camp where [James] was making a documentary on the impact of violence on Palestinian children, witnesses said... It was the latest embarrassing foreign casualty for Israel... Peace activist Briton Tom Hurndall was critically wounded after being shot while helping children cross a street under fire. American Rachel Corrie was crushed to death by a bulldozer while protesting against the demolition of a house. Meanwhile, police arrested six people in central England... in connection with a Tel Aviv suicide bombing...

Late last night... Israeli construction workers prepared to break ground to put up a fence dividing Israel from the northern West Bank in a measure Israel hopes will keep Palestinian suicide bombers out of the Jewish state. Jewish settlers oppose the plan for a fence along Israel's frontier as it was before the 1967 Middle East war... Palestinians fear their land could be confiscated and families separated by the fence.

...Israel has begun a process of creating a physical barrier between itself and West Bank Palestinians while pushing off any discussion of Palestinian statehood on that land. In the northern West Bank, bulldozers have been at work since last week, levelling the ground for the first section of a 110km fence... [-] part of a US\$222 million... 350km... network of barriers... [-] aimed at stopping... suicide bombers... reaching Israel.

...The threat of all-out war in the Middle East... sent stock markets tumbling around the world yesterday. In the bloodiest day to grip the region in a fortnight of mayhem, Israel responded with airstrikes to the mob murder of two soldiers on the Palestinian West Bank, and suicide bombers in an inflatable Zodiac ripped a huge hole in the side of a U[S] warship in Yemen. The attack on the destroyer USS Cole in the port of Aden killed at least six and injured dozens. Diplomatic efforts... were being made last night in a bid to get Israel's P[M]... and Palestin[e's] leader... to meet.

...The streets of the West Bank and Gaza have finally quietened but the raging anger of the Middle East is spreading across the globe... An emergency summit in Egypt, arranged by [the UN] Secretary-General... and expected to include the leaders of Israel, Palestine, Jordan and Egypt as well as [the] US President... is due to begin tomorrow. No leader is hopeful of a breakthrough and pre-summit demands by the Israeli and Palestinian delegations have already threatened to abort it before anyone even takes a chair at the table. Oil prices, which soared to decade-high levels on Friday, eased slightly over the weekend amid hopes that Arab producers would not punish Israel's Western backers. Around the world there remained enthusiasm for a "day of rage" – a display of sympathy for Palestinians and anger at Israeli-military attacks. Members of a 2500-strong demonstration tried to storm the US consulate in Sydney, but were held back by police... Two police officers were stabbed in Pretoria... during clashes between pro-Palestinian demonstrators and police near the US embassy. Security at Jewish institutions in France has been stepped up after five synagogues were set on fire and others vandalised... [Y]ouths... have been shouting "Death to the Jews" at rallies in Paris and Lyon.

...It was a scene that the world wanted to avoid... – ...Israeli helicopter gunships airborne again and firing their machineguns over the low, dangerous hills and olive groves of the West Bank. Two days after the Sharm el-Sheikh agreement, it was under a fresh threat yesterday after a pitched battle erupted between Jewish settlers and Palestinians on a hilltop overlooking the Palestinian-controlled city of Nablus. It is further evidence that maintaining the fragile U[S]-brokered ceasefire does not only depend on... [the Palestinian President]'s efforts to rein in Palestinian militia... or on the Israeli Army pulling back its forces and softening its tactics so that it stops shooting dead civilian rioters, including children.

...Authorities in Cairo are to rename the road in front of the Israeli Embassy "Mohammed al-Durra Street" in honour of a 12-year-old Palestinian boy shot dead by Israeli forces. The *Akhbar al-Youm* newspaper said the popular council of Giza Governorate had agreed to change the street name to pay homage to the "martyr," who has become a symbol of more than a month of Israeli-Palestinian clashes in which at least 170 people, mostly Arabs, have been killed. Durra was shot in front of television cameras... The world... saw... [a] father... vainly trying to shelter his son... from gunfire in Gaza. Palestinians blamed the Israelis for his death. The Israelis denied it but it helped fan the flames of Middle East strife.

...soldiers shot dead a 9-year-old girl outside her home in the Gaza town of Khan Yannis yesterday... Hanin Abu Suleiman was playing outside her home next to a cemetery between the Palestinian town and an adjacent Jewish settlement when [it] was shot in the head... Israeli military sources said troops had returned fire in the direction of the cemetery after [someone] shot at their outpost, but could not say if they had hit anyone.

...Israel killed the commander of the military wing of Hamas, 14 other Palestinians, including eight children and wounded at least 145 others in an air attack on the Gaza Strip yesterday. Salah Shehade was killed one day after... Hamas said it would consider halting suicide attacks...

By threading missiles through the... third floor windows of an office building in Nablus this week in a lightning strike, killing the top Hamas leader in the West Bank, Israel demonstrated once again its formidable operational and intelligence capabilities. The action's strategic intent is less clear... The killing of... Jamal Mansour... and seven others, including two boys on the street below, has whipped the Palestinian territories into frenzy and brought rebuke even from Israel's major supporter, the U[S]. Israel has reconciled itself to a spate of suicide bombings during the 40-day period of mourning declared by Hamas. The Islamic organisation has also threatened to target Israeli political figures to avenge the death...

Vengeance is mine... Israel's new leader[s]... draconian security measures risk driving even the more moderate Palestinians into a corner, some Middle East analysts gloomily warned this week. It may be impossible for them to enter peace talks. His "tough guy" policies, designed to quell resistance before talking peace, could mean it would be a generation before conditions were again right to settle the issue of Palestinian independence... [Israel's new PM] – who panned peace proposals by [Israel's] former leader..., beaten by [the Likud leader] at the polls last week... [-] risked provoking a surge in support for Palestinian extremists... lead[ing] to even greater bloodshed... After a week in which [the PM] steadily turned up the temperature – seizing Palestinian-ruled areas and attacking a Syrian radar base in Lebanon – the analysts saw only grief ahead.

...In a heavily guarded room at a hospital near Tel Aviv, Israeli interrogators have been trying to solve a question that has baffled the entire world. What – or who – turned... a mild-mannered Palestinian bus driver with no record of violence or political militancy, into a ruthless killer? Sickened and angry, Israel buried most of the eight young victims yesterday – seven of them soldiers... aged 21 or younger... – whom [the Palestinian] mowed down with his bus as they stood at a hitch-hiking post at Azur... at rush hour on Wednesday. But the country's grief was coupled with bewilderment. Suddenly, Israel finds itself gazing at a new face of an old enemy – an attacker who worked compliantly in its midst for years, who repeatedly passed security checks, yet who, suddenly, set out to kill as many Israelis as [it] could. Only a week earlier, [the Likud Party leader] was elected P[M] by a vast margin because Israel believed his promise that [Arik] could keep them secure. But the carnage reaped by [the bus driver] – and the fact that [it] could do so without bombs or bullets – has already proved the emptiness of that pledge, shaking Israel to its core.

...Schoolboy suicide attacks bring more pain... School over for the day, the three boys told their unsuspecting parents they were off to see friends. Hours later, their bullet-riddled bodies were lying in the dirt outside a Jewish settlement in the Gaza Strip. Israeli troops had shot them before they could reach their target. Suicide notes left by the 14-year-old classmates showed they knew the venture would end in their deaths. The Israeli Army said the boys, named by relatives as Youssef Zaout, Anwar Hamdouna and Ismail Abu Nadi, were carrying home-made pipe bombs, an axe and knives. The boys' gesture of resistance to occupation has deeply disturbed some community leaders who fear other youngsters might copy their quest for "martyrdom". Even the Islamic militant group Hamas, which has sent scores of members on suicide missions against Israelis, described the schoolboys' actions as a "national catastrophe". Their deaths mirrored that of another 14-year-old, Haitham Abu Shuqa, killed last week trying to stage a solo attack on a Jewish settlement... As Gaza parents pondered the state of mind of their own offspring, [a Palestinian] psychologist... said many children were severely traumatised by seeing and hearing of Palestinians, especially children their own age, being killed by the Israelis.

...Siege of Palestinian cities deepens... Israeli officials stressed the Army's entry into five Palestinian-ruled cities and a town this week did not signal the imminent demise of the Palestinian Authority... The troops will stay in Palestinian areas until suicide attacks... [being] waged... against Israeli occupation... stop – or are snuffed out... Washington has condemned Israeli raids into Palestinian areas, but stopped short of publicly calling on it to withdraw... The raids followed the assassination of ultra-nationalist cabinet minister Rehavam Zeevi, the first-ever killing of an Israeli minister by Palestinians... Israel has demanded the authority hand over those involved in Zeevi's killing, outlaw groups it defines as "terrorist" and

arrest militants on a most-wanted list... But violence on the ground lent substance to fears that Israeli-Palestinian bloodshed is spinning out of control as Israeli troops pushed several hundred metres into the West Bank cities of Tulkarm and Qalqilyas yesterday. The raids followed similar moves into Ramallah and Jenin and troops were seen strengthening their hold on Bethlehem... [–] the birthplace of Jesus[–] and nearby Beit Jala.

...[a Palestinian boy] had to watch his 17-year-old brother, Munir, slowly bleed to death. [Munir] took several hours to die. A hole had been ripped in his shoulder by a round from an Israeli helicopter. When the boy's mother, Mariam, ran into the street screaming for help, [the brother] said, Israeli soldiers shot her dead. His story is typical of the claims of those who have managed to escape the carnage of Jenin refugee camp, the scene of the worst fighting of Israel's onslaught on the West Bank. The question facing Israel is what will happen when the full story of what Israel has wreaked in the Jenin camp is revealed? As the Israeli newspaper *Ma'ariv* said in an editorial: "We can begin thinking today about the war after the war; the public relations war in the media in which Israel can be expected to be placed in the international defendant's seat, when the television screens around the world become filled with the spectacle of bodies lined up, destroyed houses and crying, distraught relatives." The Israeli Army claimed yesterday that it had finally taken control of all but a tiny section of Jenin camp. But the stories coming out of Jenin for several days have been horrifying, although it is impossible to verify them because of censorship by the Israeli authorities, who have denied journalists access to the camp... The International Red Cross has said Israeli authorities have been refusing to allow ambulances to treat the wounded all over the West Bank, which is a war crime under the Geneva Convention... "Munir bled until 10 o'clock that night," [his brother] said. "...We went out to try to get an ambulance... but when it came... the Israeli soldiers shot at it... and the soldiers took us. They separated my brothers and me from my father. We haven't seen him since..." The soldiers held them for some days at a military camp and interrogated them.

...An Israeli politician who survived the Nazi Holocaust has been outraged by Israeli troops writing identification numbers on the foreheads and forearms of Palestinian detainees awaiting interrogation... [The Yugoslav-born politician told Israel's] Army chief of staff... and [the country's] Defence Minister... that the practice must cease immediately. "As a refugee from the Holocaust, I find such an act insufferable,"... A spokes[person] for Israel's P[M]... agreed that the numbering of prisoners did not create an attractive media image... □ [Yesterday in Brussels]... Belgium's highest court delivered a landmark ruling... that Israel's P[M]... can be prosecuted for war crimes... [relating to] a refugee-camp atrocity... in Lebanon in 1982... – but only after [the former general] leaves office... The court ruled that "international custom does not allow heads of Government to be the subject of legal action in a foreign state"... Israel responded angrily, recalling its ambassador to Brussels for consultation and summoning the Belgian envoy for a dressing-down. The decision by the Cour de cassation, the top appeal court, opened the way for several serving or ex-leaders around the world to be tried under a unique Belgian law that allows for war crimes prosecutions independently of where the offences took place.

...The Israeli Army pressed ahead with demolishing what was left of Yasser Arafat's besieged compound yesterday after [it] vowed not to give in to Israel and surrender wanted Palestinians held up inside. The Palestinian President was unmoved by Israel's action: "I hope God will grant me the honour of martyrdom. No one will be handed over to Israel," [it] told an Arab member of Israel's Parliament... by telephone. Israeli heavy machinery went to work tearing down a Governor's office and meeting hall next to Arafat's battered office block. The destruction will leave the building where Arafat is trapped the only one standing in a rubble wasteland. Thousands rallied in support of Arafat across the West Bank and Gaza Strip in defiance of Israeli curfews[– '40,000 Palestinians have effectively been put under 24-hour curfew so 400 Jews can go about their business in Hebron' –] and to protest at the siege, which Israel launched on Monday after suicide bombings killed seven people.

...Special legal teams will defend Israeli soldiers against potential war crimes charges stemming from civilian deaths in the Gaza Strip, the P[M] said, promising the country would "fully back" those who fought in the three-week offensive. The move reflected growing concerns by Israel that officers could be subject to international prosecution, despite the Army's claims that Hamas militants caused the civilian casualties by staging attacks from residential areas... Israel launched its 22-day offensive to try to halt Hamas rocket fire on southern Israel. The assault killed 1285 Palestinians, more than half of them civilians, the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights counted. Thirteen Israelis, including three civilians, were also killed during the fighting, [which]... destroyed... 20,000 homes... [leaving] 50,000 people in temporary shelters... and... destroyed or severely damaged... 219 factories... At talks yesterday in Cairo aimed at solidifying the truce, [a] Hamas official... said the Islamic group offered a one-year truce to Israel, including the reopening of border crossings to allow vital supplies into Gaza... Israel offered an 18-month truce, which Hamas rejected... A low-level delegation from Hamas' rival, [the]... West Bank-based government... [of the new] Palestinian President... was also in Cairo...

Hamas leaders yesterday launched an unprecedented attack against [the new Palestinian] President... saying they no longer consider him a Palestinian after [it] agreed to suspend efforts to go after Israel for alleged war crimes in Gaza. The harsh verbal assault is likely to undermine attempts at reconciliation between the Western-backed [President] and his Islamic militant Hamas rivals, who control the Gaza Strip... Hamas drove [the President's] forces out of Gaza... leaving him in control of only the West Bank. Repeated reconciliation efforts have failed, complicating peace efforts with Israel. Egyptian mediators have asked Hamas and Fatah to return to Cairo for another round of talks this month... In the West Bank city of Ramallah, several hundred protesters marched, calling for the resignation of those who took the decision... to suspend [the campaign].

...A priest] guided 200 people, most of them Muslims and many of them armed, through the 39-day crisis in the Church of the Nativity. [The priest] helped ward off hunger, tensions and anger, while dodging gunfire from Israeli troops outside and Palestinians inside. [The] Egyptian-born... Franciscan priest, is in charge of the 4th-century shrine marking the birthplace of Jesus. On April 2, Palestinians fled inside ahead of invading Israeli forces. Among them were several dozen [militants] wanted by Israel. Troops surrounded the church and demanded that the [militants] surrender. They refused... Seven Palestinians were killed during the siege... On Friday, with the intervention of the Vatican, European Union and U[S], the confrontation was resolved... 26... of the [militants were]... driven to the Gaza Strip... and... [13] were exiled to Cyprus...

For decades, Turkish jet fighters have fought high-speed mock dogfights against Greek jets flying over disputed territory, a show of strength that each side used to hone battle skills and intimidate each other. Yesterday, the Turkish Air Force carried out a new mission – welcoming the first Greek fighters to visit a Turkish air base in three decades. The visit is part of a thaw in Turkish-Greek relations that began last year, when both sides sent aid to each other after devastating earthquakes... Top Greek and Turkish officials have been talking throughout the year about ways to reduce tensions... Defence ministers from the rival countries met in Greece for the first time last week and discussed possible ways of cutting military spending... Six grey-and-blue Greek F-16 jet fighters touched down at Balıkesir, Turkey's main air base facing Greece.

...[the Labour Government] is... cancelling the F-16 contract[(r:p905, ln45). It will be]... interesting to observe... [if the move creates] negative repercussions... that will affect not only the N[Z] military but the country as a whole... The F-16 issue [wa]s of greater importance to N[Z] than perhaps most people realise... N[Z] must be seen by our trading partners as making an effective contribution towards regional security. This cannot be achieved without an adequate air-strike force. I would... go so far as to suggest that the F-16s [could have paid] for themselves, as a result of the increased trade and exchange that... should [have occurred]... when our trading partners realise[d we are] willing to become an active member of the global community, rather than sticking [our heads] in the sand and hoping that A[US or the USA] will come to our aid in times of trouble.

...Serious cracks in six Skyhawk fighter bombers will not be repaired... The cracks are in a forged component that holds the tailfin on to the fuselage and the six Skyhawks have been restricted to a final delivery flight from Ohakea to Woodbourne near Blenheim, where they will be stored until they are sold. The Air Force's fleet of 17 Skyhawks will be permanently grounded this year. The Government said in May that it was scrapping the air combat wing, which also includes the Aermacchi jet trainers... The remaining 11... Skyhawk[s are still]... based... near Sydney...

Forty-nine air force employees at Hobsonville and Whenuapai [air bases] have been given their marching orders. They are among 183 uniformed and civilian staff losing their jobs nationwide as air force chiefs complete the first stage of Project Reshape – a four-year bid to slash 700

positions... The cuts were announced yesterday morning following the Government's decision to disband the air combat force[and close both Auckland bases] earlier this year... The air force will move from its west Auckland base to Ohakea in the Manawatu within the next five years... [The] Minister of Defence... says having one operational base (Ohakea) and one support base (Woodbourne) will improve defence co-ordination, efficiency, training and operations while removing duplication of amenities and administration... The big question now is what the... 318.8 hectare Whenuapai property will be... used for... The Hobsonville site has been earmarked for state and low to medium cost housing by Housing N[Z].

...One of the three Skyhawk squadrons yesterday arrived home from its N[SW] base in what the National Party describes as a "black week" for [NZ's] defence forces... The two other squadrons have been based at Ohakea... The three squadrons will be formally disbanded on Thursday as the Government implements its decision to drop the air force's air combat arm in favour of re-equipping the Army... All 17 Skyhawks will make farewell flights around N[Z] tomorrow. The]... director of logistics... said N[Z] is one of the most taxing environments for jet fighters in the world.

...Russia's latest experimental stealth fighter was on show yesterday at an international air show outside Moscow where cash-strapped aerospace designers are seeking foreign buyers. The S37 Berkut, or Golden Eagle, still bearing the red star of the Soviet Union, was the main draw of the... show. Designers say it can elude enemy radar and is more agile in dogfights than its Western counterparts because of its forward-swept wing.

...More than 100 Russian sailors are trapped in their nuclear-powered submarine on the seabed... after... unspecified technical faults... forced them to shut down the nuclear reactor... [during] training exercises in the Barents Sea... Russia's independent NTV television station said the cause of the accident yesterday was flooding of the torpedo tubes and front section of the submarine Kursk. It said a power shutdown might lead to problems with oxygen supplies. The head of the Navy's press office... gave no details of the depth or location of the Kursk... but said no nuclear weapons were on board... and there were no radiation leaks. Rescue vessels had rushed to the scene... [A] Norwegian environmental group... said... that Oscar-2 class submarines did not have rescue capsules to take the crew to the surface and deep-going rescue submarines would have to be used... The Defence Ministry of Norway, which has territorial waters in the Barents Sea, said it had no information about the incident. One of the most serious recent submarine disasters was off Norway's north coast in 1989, when a Soviet Mike class nuclear submarine, the Komsomolets, sank after fires on board... 42 crew died... Norway says the submarine's nuclear reactor and torpedoes are still slowly leaking plutonium into the water.

...Russia's submarine disaster, unfolding before the eyes of the world, is a major blow to... [the President]'s aim to restore pride in the military. One of [hi]s first visits outside Moscow after his election in March was to the Northern Fleet, which included the Kursk... Since the first Soviet nuclear submarine, the Leninsky Komsomol, put out into the White Sea in July 1958, the fleet has been plagued by accidents – 121 by the count of... Greenpeace, in which at least 500 people have died. The latest disaster has raised memories of previous submarine accidents... As a 22-year-old cadet in the Soviet Navy, [the person who is] now head of reference at the Gratz College library in Philadelphia, boarded a Project 613 submarine for several months of training at sea in the spring of 1960. As the boat moved beneath the waves of the Barents Sea... a torpedo exploded in its firing pod sending the submarine plummeting 270m to the ocean bed... Only 14 of 56... [submariners] aboard the vessel survived. [The cadet] and his comrades donned protective camel hair suits covered in rubber along with oxygen masks and prepared to escape through an empty torpedo shaft at the submarine's rear. One at a time, the 14 entered the shaft... Once the first... was deposited into the freezing water, a long cable, buoyed by small pieces of cork, was released and floated to the water's surface... then... the... [submariners] began the long climb... through the pitch-black water. "From this depth the climb should have taken about three hours. I came in about an hour and a half... But... blood was coming out of my mouth. It was from a destroyed lung,"... [The librarian] was optimistic that the 116 submariners on board the Kursk could survive but was not so hopeful about the sub... being recovered... Such incidents were not confined to the Soviet side of the Iron Curtain. The... malfunctions of the Kursk has revived... a retired sonar technician[']s... memories of the sinking of the... USS Thresher... in 1963 with... 129 [crew. The technician]... had served on the Thresher from 1960 to 1962[– and] was supposed to be back on board, but had been delayed on the... submarine USS Thomas Jefferson... [The technician], who retired in 1975, served during the depths of the Cold War but... identifies with the trapped Russians. "All submariners are like a brotherhood... We're a very small group. Even though we were enemies at one point, we all share something most people don't." That something is the risk of such an accident on any given day... The Thomas Jefferson was south of Bermuda when Thresher disappeared about 354km off Cape Cod... [The technician] joined in the search for the missing sub. [The technician] also was involved in searching in 1968 for the Scorpion, the only other US nuclear submarine lost at sea. The searches... were unsuccessful in both cases. [However, the Hunley – 'the world's first military sub (a peddle-powered vessel that sank after completing its first mission during the American Civil War) – has been found, and plans are under way to raise it.']

...British forces equipped with a rescue submarine are on their way from a Norwegian port in a last-ditch effort to save 118 Russian sailors... All Russian efforts to save the crew of the Kursk, crippled on the seabed in chilly seas since the weekend and with oxygen running low, have failed. Moscow turned to Nato members Britain and Norway on Wednesday but it will be late tomorrow before the rescue submarine reaches the area. Although reporting earlier offers of help, Russian media loyal to the Kremlin had downplayed them and many ordinary citizens were unaware that the West could have been involved earlier. When this sinks in, Russians may feel a wave of anger against their own leaders for putting national pride before human lives and delaying accepting outside help until it may have been too late... The independent newspaper *Segodnya* commented: "Admirals for some reason think that even if one Russian sailor is saved from a Russian submarine with outside help, it will certainly end in a political catastrophe." Distraught relatives of the [crew] on board the stricken submarine were travelling up to the Arctic base of Severomorsk or ringing... hotlines for the latest [news]... The central city... after which the 14,000-tonne submarine is named, was especially anxious as six of its young [citizens] are... enduring the nightmare... The rest of the nation, still in shock after a deadly terrorist bomb in Moscow only a week ago, was glued to the television, mentally swinging between hope and fear. At the other end of the country, in the Black Sea resort of Sochi, [the] President... admitted... the situation was critical but assured Russians that everything was being done to try to save the submariners. The [crew] on the Kursk are a social mixture of the lowliest conscripts and some of the top brass from the Northern Fleet, who were using the vessel as a headquarters for what should have been morale-boosting manoeuvres... For youths obliged to give two years' military service to the Motherland, a posting to the Northern Fleet was regarded as prestigious.

... "Hero city," boasts the massive grey concrete slab on the drive into the bleak expanses of Murmansk. But today, "Radiation Scare City" might be a better name for the great port above the Arctic Circle, destination for the Allied convoy lifeline in... [WW2]. Murmansk is still an important port. But its main post-Soviet distinction is as the gateway to the Kola Peninsula in northwest Russia, and to the bases of Russia's Northern Fleet, generator of perhaps the greatest – and certainly the least protected – concentration of nuclear waste on earth. Solid radioactive waste is stored at 11 sites around the peninsula, often in the open without any protection. Liquid waste is stored at the five main naval bases on the Kola, usually in equally poor conditions. The stricken Kursk was based at Zapadnaya Litsa, or "Western Estuary," just 48km east of Russia's border with Norway. On the estuary's western shore lies Andreyeva Bay, where [enough] spent fuel rods... to... equal 90 reactor cores... are stored in rusting containers and tanks whose contents are exposed to the skies. On the eastern side is Nerpicha, home to, among other vessels, six 30,000-tonne Typhoons crammed with nuclear warheads, the largest submarines ever built. For curious Westerners, Murmansk is as far as you get. Severomorsk, the headquarters of the Northern Fleet which lies 16km to the north, is closed to foreigners, while Zapadnaya Litsa is off limits even to Russians, apart from workers at the bases and the submariners themselves... When... a founder of America's nuclear Navy, once paid a goodwill visit to the giant icebreaker Lenin in Murmansk, [the]... Admiral... tested himself afterwards for radiation exposure – to discover that in half an hour [it] had absorbed as much radioactivity as in half a lifetime on US nuclear-powered craft... The nuclear crisis of the Northern Fleet is a measure of Russia's... [attempts] to keep up with the U[S] as a global nuclear power without the resources to do so... Wedged claustrophobically along the

eastern side of its fiord, Murmansk is a city where you feel you are living on the nuclear edge. Still moored close to its centre is the infamous cargo ship Lepse, laden with hundreds of damaged fuel elements from nuclear-powered ice-breakers based in the port. Clean-up work on the Lepse has now started. But what dire stories are swirling there in the wake of the Kursk disaster may only be guessed at – though what happened for a few hours one May day in 1998 may convey the flavour. Rumours flashed around Severomorsk that a Delta class submarine carrying nuclear missiles had had a major accident in the Barents Sea. When the stories reached Murmansk and its population of 500,000, children were sent home from school and police issued with iodine tablets. Calm returned only when the regional governor and senior Northern Fleet officers held a press conference to insist that the episode had been merely a planned exercise to test reaction to a possible nuclear accident on board a submarine... [A] specialist at Norway's Bellona Foundation, the world authority on the nuclear pollution threat posed by the Northern Fleet, was sceptical about the explanation then. And the Kursk disaster has come as no surprise to him now. "Ever since the financial collapse of autumn 1998, the situation has been desperate for the Northern Fleet. There hasn't been enough money for wages and maintenance, the best officers have left for... paid... jobs..."

...The Russian Navy knows much more than it is letting on about... the sunken Russian nuclear submarine Kursk... Throughout the drama, the Navy has insisted that the only communication from the crew... had been tapping on the submarine's hull. But now intelligence sources in Washington... say the crew were in direct radio contact for a short time after the 10,700-tonne Kursk sank, giving the Russians a fairly accurate picture of conditions on board. The sources claimed that the crew said half of the vessel had been flooded... and, as a result, half of the 118 [submariners] on board had been killed instantly. The big question now facing the rescuers are, first, whether a British LR5 rescue submarine... will be able to dock with the Kursk and, second, whether there is anyone left to save. The answer to the first question appears to be yes. The... LR5 has previously docked with a Polish submarine with the same escape hatch as the Kursk. The Russians are pinning their hopes on the LR5 because it is much more manoeuvrable than their own underwater rescue craft. It can hover and travel up, down or laterally like a helicopter to reach its target... The answer to the second question is not so clear. The last sign of life detected on the submarine was a faint tapping on Wednesday... Since then nothing has been heard from the crew and the Russian Navy calculated that the air would run out yesterday. However, it now says the air will last for several more weeks. If there is anyone alive on board and the LR5 is able to dock, it will take the survivors to the surface 16 at a time.

...ANGRY Russian Navy wives wept last night when they faced the deputy [PM]. "You killed our [husbands]," cried one of the... [wives as they met] the politician blamed for the submarine tragedy which claimed 118 lives... People in the audience comforted each other as [the deputy PM] tried to speak. [The deputy PM] – who is holding a government inquiry into the incident – said the submarine had been hit from the outside by a large object... Rescue vessels have managed to dock with the submarine but could not get inside because of damage to the hull. Hopes are focused on a British mini-submarine... due there today[– although]... the LR5... has never done a real rescue before...

The rear escape hatch on the... Kursk is so badly damaged that it would be impossible for British rescuers to open it, underwater cameras reveal. A team of Norwegian scuba divers were on their way to the wreck last night to get a clearer picture and to decide what to do next... But after days of uncertainty and changing stories, it was generally accepted yesterday that the joint British and Norwegian mission was less a rescue operation and more an attempt to recover the dead. The death knell for the Kursk's 118 crew was sounded in a televised statement by the head of the Northern Fleet's general staff... who admitted... [that] after... 10 days... there was no hope of finding anyone alive. Scraps of information from those who survived the explosions enabled the Navy to piece together the horrifying hours and days that followed inside the submarine... "After the accident, we heard the tapping of submarine personnel following the rules of communication with a sunken vessel. Analysis of the tapping allows us to conclude that the crew in the compartments in the stern were telling us that... the whole of the front section of the submarine ha[d] been flooded and the staff in those sections died in the first minutes of the accident... [while] water was filtering into their sections and they wanted us to provide air..." The Norwegian seismic institute Norsar recorded two explosions about the time the Kursk sank, one registering 3.5 on the Richter scale...

[The] Kursk... was sent to the bottom of the Barents... after being holed by an anti-ship missile fired by a Russian cruiser, German newspaper reports claim. The *Berliner Zeitung*, quoted a report from Russia's intelligence service the FSB (formerly the KGB), saying the Kursk was sunk by a radar-guided Granit missile fired by the Kirov class nuclear-powered cruiser Peter the Great during exercises... on August 12. The newspaper said the report... did not say why exactly the missile hit the Kursk. It said the conclusions are a new blow to the image of Russia's military, adding that [the President] was going to keep quiet about the conclusion... Moscow initially said... the tragedy... came about because of a collision between the Kursk and another submarine, possibly from a Nato country, but then backed off a little to suggest only that an underwater collision was responsible... The Peter the Great had apparently been firing Granit missiles almost daily since August 2. On August 12... the... head of Russia's North Fleet... [and his] Vice-Admiral... were apparently on board the cruiser... U[S] officials have already spoken of two explosions recorded by US submarines in the area when the Kursk went down – raising the theory that an external explosion caused... torpedoes to blow up in the bow of the submarine. A US report said the second explosion, which occurred one minute and 16 seconds after the first, was 45 to 50 times more powerful.

...Only a week after hope was abandoned for the crew of the Kursk, Russians suffered another devastating psychological blow as they watched the Ostankino television tower, one of the symbols of their capital, go up in flames. "Our country seems to be cursed," said... an office worker, who was listening to a radio report of the fire as [it] shuffled papers. "It is a giant disaster zone." All the main television channels were knocked off the air and Russians relied for news on pop radio stations. The first channel to disappear was independent NTV. Until it became clear that fire was to blame, some Russians wondered whether [their] President... had pulled the plug on the station that led criticism of him during the painfully slow and ultimately unsuccessful operation to rescue the 118 submariners of the Kursk... The Interfax news agency quoted officials from Russia's State Committee for construction as saying that the 537m-high tower would probably have to be demolished. Nearly all the 180 steel reinforcing cables have been damaged. The fire in the building broke out at a height of about 450m on Sunday after a suspected short circuit of wiring. The blaze destroyed the transmitters of the main Russian television stations and then gutted the tower's Seventh Heaven revolving restaurant, its stairwells and liftshafts. As the flames swept downwards they snapped more than half of the support cables, prompting fears that the tower could collapse... Officials estimated that it would cost \$US100 million... to restore the tower, money that post-Communist Russia can ill afford... In theory, the fact that so much technology in Russia is obsolete should give the country a chance to leapfrog into the digital age. But the sheer size of the country and volume of its problems are daunting... [A]lmost everything is disintegrating, from the housing stock to hospitals, from power stations to airports.

...Britain has dramatically boosted aid for Russia to decommission its ageing nuclear submarine fleet in the wake of the Kursk disaster. Brit[ain's] Foreign Secretary... has persuaded the Treasury to increase the funds destined for bi-lateral assistance to... \$[NZ]277 million... from just \$5 million... The money will go to helping retrieve nuclear fuel from some of the 100 or so former Soviet nuclear submarines in northwest Russia. "We want to get this fuel out of the water as quickly as possible. There is a horrendous risk of nuclear pollution," a Foreign Office source said.

...Colombian drug traffickers have been caught building a sophisticated submarine to smuggle narcotics, reportedly with help from American and Russian criminals. Police stumbled upon the half-built submarine in a warehouse outside the capital, Bogota – 2300m up in the Andes mountains and 340km from any port. The 30m submarine could have crossed an ocean... "In the 30-odd years I have been in law enforcement I have never seen anything like this," said... [the] chief of the U[S] DEA in Colombia. "This is huge. We are talking about being able to load up to 200 tonnes of cocaine in this submarine..." ...Meanwhile, one of Russia's largest anti-submarine warships accidentally fired at a town on the far-east coast, the Pacific Fleet said yesterday... No one was hurt when the shell, fired... during an exercise, exploded in marshy ground near Slavyanka.

...an MP and former submariner... [who is] a member of a Russian parliamentary team investigating the... Kursk... disaster... said yesterday that the Kursk and the Peter the Great were carrying out an exercise in the Barents Sea in which the cruiser acted as an enemy aircraft carrier and the

submarine was expected to attack it... [T]he cruiser fired five anti-submarine missiles at the Kursk but only four could be found afterwards. "It looks like the submarine was hit by the missing missile." The Kursk then tried to rise to the surface but hit the bottom of the cruiser. A chastened Deputy P[M]... admitted in Parliament... that Russia's rescue effort was woefully inadequate. But [the Deputy PM dismissed the investigator]'s claim as "crazy" and denied that the Russian authorities had deliberately misled the public into believing that some of the... crew had survived two explosions which destroyed the prized vessel. The Kremlin now says that no one survived the initial explosion and that tapping sounds from inside the hull, which the Russian Navy had said showed that some sailors were alive 48 hours after the disaster, were made by automatic machinery. [The investigator]'s claim is similar to a report in the *Berliner Zeitung* newspaper last week. Russian officials have hotly denied that the Kursk could have been sunk by one of their own ships, but have been unable to explain exactly what happened... [● Russia] has signed a contract with a Dutch firm to raise the... Kursk... The... attack submarine was designed to destroy US aircraft carriers and... was thought to be unsinkable.

...A LETTER found on a body on the doomed Russian sub Kursk shows at least 20 [submariners] survived the explosion but died of suffocation... The Russian Government said yesterday that... a leak of hydrogen peroxide used to fuel the 65-76 Kit (Whale) torpedo[es]... caused the explosion...

A team of divers and metal experts have descended on Pearl Harbour to study the corrosion of the sunken battleship USS Arizona, which still holds an estimated 3.7 million litres of oil. The battleship... [lies] in 12m-deep water, and is an enormously popular war memorial that houses the remains of 1177 [sailors]. The study follows fears corrosion may lead to a massive leak. Lost to a Japanese bomb in the December 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbour, the ship sank in nine minutes and lit the sky for three days as the oil aboard burned. A trickle of oil has leaked into the ocean ever since... The Navy... has a 24-hour on-duty oil response team for Pearl Harbour, in the event of a spill... [that] could damage nearby wetlands which are home to endangered birds... "It's not an enormous undertaking to cut into a ship and pump out oil," said... [the] chief of the National Park Service's Submerged Cultural Resources Unit. "But we have to be respectful that this is a war grave..." Only a handful of specially certified divers are even allowed to be on the outside of the ship. They are mostly used to drop 9m down to what is left of a gun turret to deposit the remains of sailors who were assigned to the Arizona at the time and wish to be buried with their shipmates. An \$US11,500... mini-sub is being used to measure the thickness of the wreck's metal... [By the way, r]esearchers say they have found a Japanese midget submarine sunk more than an hour before the attack on Pearl Harbour. Discovery of the 24m sub could provide the first physical evidence to back US military claims that it fired first against Japan in W[W]II and inflicted the first casualties. The sub was sunk by a Navy destroyer... The remains of two Japanese crew... are... still inside.

...The U[S] Navy is trying to find out why a nuclear-powered submarine practising an emergency surfacing manoeuvre rammed into... a Japanese fishing ship southeast of Pearl Harbour. A search was continuing last night for nine people still missing from the 54m Ehime Maru, which split open and sank in 5486m of water 10 minutes after the submarine surfaced under it... Twenty-six crew members and teenage students were rescued. "While it's not yet clear how the accident occurred, it is both tragic and regrettable," said... [the] commander-in-chief of the US Pacific Fleet. "I want to express my apologies to those involved in the incident, their families and the Government of Japan." The submarine, USS Greeneville, stayed at the scene overnight and returned to port under its own power, [the admiral adde]d. Its rudder and port side showed scrapes from the collision... The US National Transportation Safety Board, an independent government body that looks into transportation accidents, said it had sent a five-member rapid-response team to investigate the collision. In 1990, the board cited a failure to use sonar detectors effectively on board the US Navy nuclear attack submarine Houston in an incident that led to the sinking of the tug Barcona off southern California the year before.

...A civilian, one of 15 invited aboard the USS Greeneville for a brief training cruise last week, was at one of the three control stations of the submarine as it shot to the surface and struck a Japanese fishing vessel, a Pentagon official said yesterday. The official, who asked not to be identified, said the civilian was under careful supervision at the time and apparently had no influence on the collision. Separately... a Pentagon spokes[person] declined to identify the 15 civilians from Hawaii who had been aboard the submarine. Meanwhile, a... 2040kg... Navy underwater robot vehicle arrived in Hawaii yesterday to examine the possibility of raising the Japanese ship that sunk after it was hit by the US submarine in a major international incident. The... US President... said [it] had telephoned... Japan['s PM]... and apologised to the Japanese for the accident.

...A crew member on the submarine USS Greeneville told the National Transportation Safety Board that civilians on board were a distraction as the vessel prepared to surface... [An] NTSB... official... said in Honolulu that the sonar plotter on the submarine - ...who notes contact with other possible ships - said [it] was unable to finish plotting sonar blips because the civilians were in his way... but did not ask them to move... [Furthermore, 'other equipment wasn't working.' However,] there were "significant reasons" not to repair the broken sonar repeater because doing so would require shutting down other key systems... If a malign force had deliberately set out to inflame the close but never comfortable relationship between the U[S] and Japan, it could not have been more destructive than the sinking of the Ehime Maru... The accident is unlikely to affect the strategic arrangements between the two powers. But... on the street[s] of Tokyo, the US's claims to be serving Japanese interests have never looked so threadbare. "It's terrible that the Americans should be so careless... Just imagine the outcry if it was the other way round, but it never is..."

...*Joyride turns to tragedy*... Nervous but excited, [a Texas oil magnate]... pulled two levers on the U[S] nuclear attack submarine Greeneville and quickly sat down as it veered towards the surface. [The Texan] was surrounded by real sailors. A few of them, including the captain, had looked around with the periscope before the submarine began its emergency surfacing exercise... Built to serve as an unseen, unheard killer, the submarine this time did not see or hear what was above in the choppy waters off Hawaii a week ago. [However, everyone aboard] heard a loud noise and felt the shudder of an unexpected impact... On the Ehime Maru, the... skipper... felt [it] had sailed his 57m trawler "over some kind of big building." Instead, it was a 108m submarine breaking the surface... like a "whale"... The Ehime Maru was the pride of Uwajima, a... port of 60,000 where nothing happens... The consequences are being felt far beyond the little town. On the outcome of the... tragedy depend several senior military careers, the job of the Japanese P[M] and the future of one of the most important military alliances in the world. Rarely has the U[S]-Japan military relationship been so beset by tensions and uncertainties. More and more Japanese... question the costs of the US-Japan Security Treaty... 48,000 [US troops are] stationed in Japan... Hardly a month passes without some crime or outrage being perpetuated by [one of them].

...*The US armed forces are building an unhappy chronicle of own goals*... When [our P]M... gets the explanation [it] has demanded for the accidental bombing to death this week of Major John McNutt in Kuwait it will, no doubt, be a document filled with diplomatic remorse and regret. That is, as they say at the Pentagon, standard operational procedure when something goes wrong - and America's military commanders have had plenty of opportunities to perfect their penitent prose style. While the world's greatest military power prefers to project an image of polished perfection, recent history paints a rather different picture. With friends like the US military, it can often seem that enemies are beside the point. Consider what happened more than 20 years ago, for example, when [President] Ronald Reagan decided that the future of the Free World was being threatened by a battalion of Cuban construction workers and their hard-left hosts in Grenada. A task force was hastily assembled and the troublesome island invaded without warning, or even much of an explanation. Twenty-four hours later, victory was declared and the surviving Cubans shipped home to Havana. At the White House, the Gripper's spinners let it be known that the 21 Americans who died represented the unfortunate but unavoidable price of wresting the world's fifth-largest producer of nutmeg from the clutches of the international communist conspiracy. But... [w]ith only two or three exceptions, all those US casualties were the victims of "friendly fire" or, more often, sheer military incompetence... [S]ome of the Marines who died were shot by fellow grunts in an engagement that saw two squads blazing away for more than an hour through a screen of tropical foliage. In another incident, a... commando squad jumped from a helicopter only to sink like stones in the offshore waters - dragged down by the sheer weight of their equipment they had been ordered to carry against their better judgment. But the crowning act of homicidal incompetence was inflicted on the poor unfortunates incarcerated in Grenada's one and only lunatic asylum... What the deranged

inmates cannot have known as wave after wave of helicopters pounded the building with rockets and mini-gun fire was that the invasion's intelligence officers had mistaken the compound for the island's Parliament... The Panama invasion mounted... to oust [a]drug-running dictator... – whose career the US had fostered in the first place – produced similar “civilian collateral damage” when a succession of air attacks levelled one of Panama City's poorest neighbourhoods. As in Grenada... no exact figure was ever put on the number of Panamanian casualties. Skip forward, and the cavalcade of Pentagon blunders continues: the Iranian airliner shot down in the Persian Gulf. The “friendly fire” deaths that claimed allied lives in the Gulf War. The bombing that reduced the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade to rubble. The 20 skiers who plunged to their deaths when the hot-dogging pilot of a Navy attack Prowler jet sliced the cable of their gondola. The five killed when the USS Saratoga fired on a Turkish destroyer during a Nato exercise. The caretaker who perished only last year in Puerto Rico when Navy jets blasted the wrong part of a bombing range on the offshore island of Vieques. And finally – if you overlook this week's Kuwait incident[(in which the NZ)... special services officer... and five U[S] soldiers were killed after an)... ace pilot... was told [it] could drop his three... “dumb” bombs... [during] a live-ammunition bombing exercise... [b]ut moments later, the controller frantically shouted, “Abort, abort!” as [the controller] realised too late that the pilot was flying towards his own observation post[; seven]... other soldiers were wounded in the accident[)]... that is – there was the collision between the US submarine Greenville and the Japanese trawler Ehime Maru, which killed nine... Ever since the Japanese ship went down, the US Navy has tied its version of events in the sort of complicated knots for which sailors are famous. At first, the fact that the sub's control room was crowded with visitors... was not mentioned. Then, even as the inquiry began, unnamed Navy sources began leaking all manner of fanciful explanations... By late this week the tide had turned, with even friends of the Greenville's captain going on record to say, well, shucks, [it] was the one who deserved to be keelhaunched.

...A U[S] Navy court of inquiry into the submarine-trawler collision off Hawaii in which nine Japanese were killed has recommended measures that would probably end the submarine commander's career but would spare him a court martial. A Navy official, who did not want to be identified, told reporters the recommendations, if implemented, meant [the c]ommander... would “be out of the Navy, but at least [it] won't be in jail.” The... 2000-page report by the court of inquiry, composed of three Navy admirals, was delivered to [the]Pacific Fleet Commander... at the weekend, and it is up to [the admiral] to decide what action to take, if any, within 30 days... [The submarine commander] would face 10 years in prison of court martial and convicted on the charges of negligent homicide that were considered by the panel... A... highly decorated... top-gun U[S] Navy pilot may[also] face a court martial for dropping his bombs in the wrong place, killing six soldiers, including N[Z]er Major John McNutt.

...US pilots accidentally dropped bombs near observation posts in Kuwait three times during training before the one that killed... John McNutt and five others... No one was killed in the earlier botched raids... in the months leading up to Major McNutt's death... [when a] Navy ace... mistook [an] observation post for his intended target. The target turned out to be about 1.6km away. The... Pentagon report into the... tragedy... recommends that [the pilot] and two other US defence personnel, air controllers who helped guide him towards the observation post, be punished...

U[S] officials early today demanded the release of 24 American[s]... and their spy plane from a Chinese island after the super-secret aircraft was forced to land following a mid-air collision... with a Chinese F-8 fighter jet on Sunday... Senior US Embassy staff reached the island of Hainan as a tense diplomatic showdown between China and the US deepened and the Pentagon admitted there had been no contact with the crew... The EP-3 maritime patrol plane, packed with top-secret electronics, was forced to make an emergency landing after [the] mid-air collision... The incident, for which each side is blaming the other, is a bitter blow to the already strained relations between the two countries. The extent of the damage rests on how quickly Beijing returns the aircraft and its crew... The US Navy and Department of Defence have warned the Chinese to stay away from the aircraft... [The US President's spokesperson] said it was the White House's “expectation” that the plane would be returned intact... The US Navy said the EP-3 was on a “routine surveillance mission” in international air space over the South China Sea when it was intercepted by two Chinese F-8s. One of the Chinese jets hit the EP-3's wing, forcing it down. Searchers failed to find the pilot of the Chinese fighter, which crashed into the sea... The incident provides a further challenge for [the]US President... At a meeting with [a]top Chinese diplomat... last month, [the US President] failed to resolve differences over the possible US sale of destroyers – equipped with the Aegis ship-based radar system – to Taiwan. China has threatened to invade [Taiwan] if the island, which it considers a renegade province, declares independence from the mainland.

...Taiwan's vote puts Beijing threat to test... Taiwan dumped its long-ruling Nationalist Government at the weekend and elected as President the leader of a pro-independence party reviled in Beijing... Within an hour of his victory, [Taiwan's new President] reached out to Beijing, saying that before his inauguration... [it] hoped to make a “journey of reconciliation” to the mainland... But [the President] set out his bottom line on reunification, saying [it] rejected as “unacceptable” China's “one country, two systems” formula under which it reclaimed Hong Kong and Macau... Before the results were announced, Taiwan's 400,000-strong military pledged to back whoever won.

...The radar-invisible stealth bombers may have lost their cloaks. It's been revealed today that China, Russia and several other countries have worked out how to track the stealth planes with something as simple as a TV transmitter. What's worse, the transmitter can track the aircraft without the pilots even knowing. The devices are what's called passive radar, and the US may have to spend billions to upgrade the stealth fleet.

...While... [‘remotely-piloted fighter aircraft (operated by ground-based pilots using a remote with the aid of computers) – that will finally unlock the problems of G-lock’ –] Flash Gordon flying suits, robot bugs and microlight flying spies have yet to be deployed in actual combat, every single one of those futuristic systems is either under development or already being tested by an agency of the U[S] armed forces that may well be the most remarkable, and certainly the most innovative, weaponsmith in the history of warfare, the Defence Advanced Research Project Agency – Darpa for short. “I think, dollar for dollar, the American taxpayer gets phenomenal value out of Darpa, which has always taken a refreshingly different attitude to weapons development,” said... the A[US]n-born Massachusetts Institute of Technology roboticist whose pioneering work on simple “insect machines” paved the way for the exploding cockroach... Now undergoing testing at the Army's tank training ground at Fort Hood in Texas, the first “exploded” tanks should be available for deployment by 2006. “History teaches us that effective innovation is the most potent weapon,” said [the AUSn]... At a time when [the US]President... is asking American taxpayers to pour what may well turn out to be a trillion dollars into a controversial missile shield that is supposed to protect the US from nuclear attack, Darpa's approach stands in stark contrast – not least because, unlike the Strategic Defence Initiative, its brainchildren actually work... [Incidentally,] 24 soldiers... were... asked to drive, march or crawl through a nuclear fallout zone in the A[US]n desert in 1956, official papers released in Britain show. The officers, N[Z]ers, AUS]ns and British, entered the fallout zone three days after a nuclear device had been detonated there, a military memo from A[US]n Government archives said. “The object was to discover what types of clothing would give best protection against radioactive contamination in conditions of warfare.” [The]Scottish radiation researcher... who came across a reference to “clothing trials” in the memo, said it appeared to contradict British Ministry of Defence denials that [soldiers] were used as guinea pigs... It was assumed that the [24 soldiers] had since died... “The relevant part is that Britain has admitted this,”...

N[Z] soldiers may have been exposed to debris from depleted uranium ammunition in the Gulf War or Balkans conflicts after all. The Defence Force, which has begun an investigation, announced yesterday that its staff might have gone into areas that had been attacked with the “tank-busting” shells. The controversy erupted in Europe last month when it was revealed that some Balkan peacekeepers had developed leukaemia after exposure to the radioactive material. N[Z] defence leaders indicated that their staff were unlikely to have been affected... [Yet NZ s]taff had, for instance, cleared away a tank destroyed by depleted uranium ammunition. Others went into villages or cities known to have been bombarded with the shells. But views varied... on whether the danger period was only during and immediately after the explosion or whether it lingered... Iraqi doctors have reported a huge increase in the cancer rate in areas coated in depleted uranium dust from exploding US shells in the 1991 Gulf War.

...European fears over depleted uranium munitions continued to snowball yesterday as Nato's top official denied the issue threatened to split the 19-nation alliance and the U[N] demanded wider health checks... The UN has begun to place warning markers at the scene of Nato airstrikes in Kosovo... Also yesterday, further evidence emerged that the risks of DU have been known for several years... The British Government is denying news reports on Thursday of being told of the dangers of DU to its troops in 1997. But, the BBC reported yesterday, a warning was made in 1991 by an official at AEA Technology, the trading arm of the UK Atomic Energy Authority... And an even earlier warning was issued in the US in 1990.

...[a] US review of causes of... Gulf War Syndrome... [has identified] pyridostigmine bromide which was given to 300,000 troops as... a... possible culprit... [In related news, the EU] yesterday promised to act over the escalating fears about Nato's use of [DU] in ammunition in the Balkans, as France said four soldiers who served in the region were being treated for leukaemia. Amid mounting pressure on Nato to investigate the so-called "Balkan syndrome,"... the European Commission president, said ammunition using [DU] should be banned even if there was "minimal risk."

...As more and more cases of "Balkans syndrome" are reported among soldiers, the risk to civilians is just beginning to be considered. The condition came under the spotlight after reports that six Italian soldiers who served in the former Yugoslavia had developed leukaemia and died after exposure to spent ammunition. Five have since died in Belgium, two in the Netherlands and one in Portugal. The Government of Bosnia's Muslim-Croat federation has complained that Nato has not cooperated with it in researching the dangers to its people. Bosnian health statistics indicate a marked increase in cancer in recent years... [T]he federation Health Ministry... said Nato refused to share information on [DU] in 1995, and called for international support to research the risks... Some 31,000 DU warheads landed inside Yugoslavia during the 1999 Nato air raids... Belgrade's Institute of Oncology, said that, so far, there had not been a significant rise in leukaemia or cancer but they can take up to 10 years to develop. The Yugoslav Army marked five areas in Yugoslavia, excluding Kosovo, contaminated by radiation... But many... people... in Serbia believe the experts are hiding the truth to avoid public panic. Many are convinced [DU] warheads were used in Belgrade, which officials deny.

...Nato has admitted using [DU] weapons in Kosovo, exposing civilians, its own troops and aid workers to health hazards, says the UN... [The] head of the UN Balkan environment task force investigating the use of munitions during the 70-day war, said Nato was still holding back crucial data on where and how it used [DU] weapons, which can contaminate land and water sources with radioactive and toxic particles... A Yugoslav pathologist said yesterday that... 400 Bosnian Serbs from an area bombarded by Nato with [DU] shells in 1994 later died of various forms of cancer.

...[12] British troops who served in the former Yugoslavia are planning to sue the Defence Ministry after suffering "Balkans War syndrome" health problems... The move comes after similar action by veterans of the 1991 Gulf War who complained of "Gulf War syndrome,"... More than 100,000 Gulf War troops, from the US, Britain and Canada, have suffered a range of symptoms linked to the syndrome, which has yet to be fully understood... [In further news from overseas, t]housands of Nigerians mourning those lost after an armoury fire faced the grim task yesterday of retrieving the bodies of loved ones before city authorities emptied overflowing mortuaries into mass graves. Workers pulled more than 600 bodies from two canals near a weapons dump that burst into flames on Monday... a death toll that pictures and witness accounts suggested could soar... Newspapers said the final toll could be around 2000, most of them boys and girls who drowned in the canals during a stampede after the fire, which sent smoke billowing and rockets raining over a crowded Lagos suburb... Pressure is mounting for the authorities to explain the disaster... Military officials had said the blasts were caused by a fire in a market near the armoury... The upper-house Senate summoned... [the] Defence Minister... "to answer charges of negligence". Senators said a House committee ordered the armoury's relocation from Lagos' Ikeja district about two years ago... The commander of the Ikeja cantonment... went on state television to dispel rumours that the explosions were the beginnings of a coup.

...Britain is considering developing a high-tech bomb which uses a blast of heat to destroy buildings and kill people. The Ministry of Defence said the weapon would be used by infantry in urban areas... [■ A US] Air Force... C-131 "Samaritan" aircraft... dropped a 9450kg bomb on a range in northwest Florida yesterday in a successful first live test of a powerful new weapon nicknamed the "mother of all bombs". Defence officials suggested the test was... about the might of the US military... The bomb packs 40[%] more power than America's second most powerful non-nuclear bomb, the 6750kg "Daisy Cutter"... The giant bomb... spreads a flammable mist over the target then ignites it, producing a highly destructive blast.

...*Son of Star Wars proves embarrassing fiasco*... A CRUCIAL \$200 million test of an anti-missile shield by the US has failed over the Pacific... The action was to be relayed live from the Pacific to a big screen at Boeing's East Coast headquarters. The atmosphere was relaxed and confident. A senior Pentagon official... ran a simulation of what was intended to be a seamless operation – a... test of a missile defence system that would push the U[S] into a new generation of nuclear weaponry. After a two-hour delay while technicians fixed a last-minute glitch, a 37-year-old remodelled Minuteman rocket containing a mock warhead and a decoy balloon thundered aloft from a tightly guarded launch pad at Vandenberg Air Force Base, 200km north of Los Angeles. Twenty-one minutes later, an interceptor missile carrying the "kill" vehicle ripped into the daytime sky from Kwajalein Atoll in the Pacific. The kill vehicle was supposed to separate from the second-stage rocket booster exactly two minutes and 37 seconds into flight, then manoeuvre itself into the path of the mock warhead. [The official] alerted the watchers as interception neared: "It'll be eight minutes after the launch." The clock ticked on past nine minutes. "We should have had confirmation by now," said [the official]... Nearly half an hour passed before officials who monitored the test from a basement office in the Pentagon reported that the interceptor missile had missed. Without making an announcement, Boeing and Defence Department officials transported the entire gathering through the dead of night to the Pentagon. There... we heard that one of the most technologically adventurous experiments mounted by the Defence Department had floundered for a banal low-tech reason. The booster had failed to separate and launch the "Exoatmospheric Kill Vehicle." ...It had not received the necessary signal. The test was intended to be the gateway to the most important policy decision of... [the US Administration]: whether to proceed with the embryonic National Missile Defence system... This was supposed to be the missile defence system that would take the US into the next phase of military world order, and – say its critics – run the risk of detonating another arms race. The test was the decisive one of three: last October a kill vehicle pulverised a dummy missile, but [the next test] missed another by 43m... The scope of the project is awesome: proceeding in four stages from an initial 20 missile interceptors in 2005 to a fleet, by 2011, of 250 Exoatmospheric Kill Vehicles in underground silos across Alaska and North Dakota, unleashed and guided by a global network of three command centres and five communications relay stations using 29 satellites and 15 space-based radar stations... Yesterday, the project seemed doomed. The technical problems make it almost impossible for the Pentagon to recommend pursuit of the high-speed timetable set down for the missile shield. They also reinforce a host of political and strategic objections... which ha[ve been voiced]... since a bipartisan vote in Congress last year mandated the President and the Pentagon to develop an heir to Star Wars.

...*As the catalogue of weapons fizzers grows, so does the bill. But... few seem to be counting*... Regardless of success or failure, weapons are a lot harder to kill than the soldiers who operate them. Even with a former anti-war protester in the Oval Office, Star Wars came creeping back. The White House of course denies that the defence contractors' unusually generous donations of late to Democratic causes and candidates has the slightest relevance to the debate. Last weekend, just a week or so after... the... Senator... of Virginia[']s... aides issued a string of press releases reaffirming their master's unqualified support for Star Wars' latest incarnation – now rechristened Theatre High-Altitude Area Defence System – the senator watched in dismay as a much ballyhooed test went gravely astray. Given the unusual amount of pre-test publicity, Pentagon sceptics had long since concluded that the fix was in. It would not have been the first time. When the Tomahawk cruise missile was being broken in during

the early 1980s, it was later revealed that Air Force generals had arranged to have homing devices stashed inside the targets. Another project, a radar-controlled Gatling gun known as Divad, was similarly gingered and would probably have been approved for full-scale production if congressional investigators had not blown the whistle. This time... a simple fault... sent \$US100 million... worth of high hopes plunging into the ocean. Was [the senator] discouraged? Not at all – even though the latest failure brings the score to eight flops and only one, very dubious, success. “America is defenceless and we cannot live with that,” [the senator] said with unintended irony. Since [the senator] is also the chair[person] of the Senate Armed Services Committee and exerts as much influence as the President over the Pentagon’s budget, his words carry a megatonnage of weight. “Early deployment of the system remains imperative if our country is to remain secure,” [the senator] continued. Any problems, his aides later explained, could all be ironed out after the first interceptors are installed on an island in the Aleutians between Alaska and Siberia, where they would (optimistically) take out any nuclear-tipped missiles from North Korea. The fact that Pyongyang’s only existing missile is barely capable of reaching Japan, and none too reliably at that, did not chill enthusiasm in the least. If we pour another \$US60 billion into the scheme on top of the \$US50 billion already spent, the US would surely get something worthwhile, was the thrust of his remarks. The Pentagon, its contractors, and hundreds of [the senator’s fellow members of C]ongress – Republicans and Democrats in whose districts parts for the system are being built – shouted their amens. Could so many people be so wrong? Well, yes, according to [a professor from the] Massachusetts Institute of Technology... who has been getting up the Pentagon’s nose for more than a decade. When the Gulf War ended with the generals congratulating themselves on the Patriot missile’s alleged successes at destroying incoming Iraqi Scuds, [the professor] analysed the data and discovered that the wonder weapon may not have scored a single kill. The Scuds exploded, [the professor] explained in a conclusion later verified by the Government Accounting Office, because [Iraq’s] President... had ordered a series of “improvements” that caused the missiles to break up of their own accord. If you have a mind to hear similar nuts and bolts explanations for the latest Star Wars flaws, [the professor] can list them for hours. His chief objections, however, are simplicity itself. The first is that an attacker could easily overwhelm any missile defence by launching flocks of cheap and simple decoy warheads. The second objection – and in [the professor’s] eyes, this is the real sin of Star Wars – is that [the senator] and his ilk must surely recognise even a “rogue” nation like North Korea would be most unlikely to launch an open nuclear attack. Such a move could only result in a counterstrike of instantaneous annihilation. The real threat, [the professor] says, is already known to [the senator] and every other [member of C]ongress who bothered to read a report entitled “Wild Atom” – c]omplied six years ago by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies with the help of the FBI, CIA and the US Energy Department... The authors noted with alarm that there was nothing the world’s last superpower could do to prevent “a nondescript freighter with a crude nuclear device in its hold from arriving in Baltimore Harbour.”

...Sometimes, the biggest stories in the world go unreported. Some... are missed because they concern people or things whose significance lies in the future; at other times, it is because the nature of the change is so broad, slow and incremental that the nature of the shift just escapes notice, in terms of front-page news. So here is the news: the next world war is on its way. That is the only conclusion one can draw from the U[S] defence budget, which has begun a rapid escalation. America may be enjoying its longest period of peace for decades, but you would never know it from the way the Pentagon is planning to start spending. The target, apparently, is China, the new global enemy of the 21st century. For most of a decade the US armed forces and the defence industry have been short of an enemy. Arms spending plunged at the end of the Cold War as there was no longer any prospect of fighting a massive, multifront conflict. Defence spending has not been much of an issue... since then, until the past year. Suddenly, it has come front and centre again. In part, the reason is political... [T]he Republican... President[] (and son of the 41st President[]), has argued that [the 42nd] Administration... let defence rot. That claim has been rubbished. In any case, Washington’s spending plans leave no doubt of its future intentions. The rate of increase of defence procurement declined almost every year from the end of the [40th President’s] defence buildup until last year, as the possibility of global conflict withered away to almost nil. This year, it increased by 12[%], the first time it has hit double digits since 1984. It is heading for \$US62 billion next year[], up[] from \$US45 billion... and reputable think-tanks believe it may be closer to \$US80 billion... In part, the reason is the usual suspect: the defence industry, which wants and needs a burst of activity to keep its balance sheets healthy. To some degree, Cold War kit needs replacing but that does not explain everything. There is a more profound reason for the new militarism. The US is thinking itself into a new global conflict. This time, it is not in Europe; it is in the Pacific, and it was spelled out in part in a document called Asia 2025, written by, among others... a Pentagon military thinker regarded with religious awe by his Washington acolytes. It never explicitly addresses the threat, China is simply called a possible future “peer competitor.” The other post-Cold War “threats” to America – terrorism, civil conflict and Bosnia-type peace enforcement missions – all pointed to a smaller, more agile set of US forces able to deploy rapidly anywhere. But the China threat – a nuclear power, two billion people... – is satisfyingly Soviet-shaped and justifies a different type of military build-up. The forces can argue for more heavy airlift, more sealift[] – including ‘a submarine capable of carrying hundreds of troops’ –] more attack submarines, aircraft carriers and long-range bombers. The strategy for future war is laid down in Joint Vision 2020, the Pentagon’s new blueprint. The keystone is something called “full spectrum dominance.” That means “the ability of US forces, operating alone or with allies, to defeat any adversary and control any situation across the range of military operations,” according to the Pentagon. It “calls for the US to work to shape the international security environment in ways favourable to American interests... and prepare now for an uncertain future.” This is Pentagon-speak for: be afraid, be very afraid. Of all the projects spawned by the new “menace,” the big one is the National Missile Defence... America says it is aimed at North Korea and Iran; it is not, or at least not only at them. It is aimed at China, and maintaining US dominance in the Pacific. It will cost up to \$US60 billion; you do not spend that for one or two North Korean missiles. By any standards these are serious developments. America is preparing for a massive increase in its armoury; it is shifting its gaze towards Asia and away from Europe[] – where most[] US military assets are... But the consequences of N[MD] are spelled out in a classified US intelligence report. It says there would be a tenfold increase in the Chinese nuclear stockpile, more Russian warheads, increased proliferation in India and Pakistan – in short, an arms race from the Atlantic to the Pacific, endangering security everywhere.

...[the US] Defence Secretary... has promised Europeans that Washington would not act alone on plans for a controversial national missile shield and would help its allies set up such defences. “The U[S] has no interest in deploying defences that would separate us from our friends and allies,” [the secretary] told the annual Munich Conference on Security Policy. The first top official of the... Government of [the 43rd] President... to visit Europe and address the touchy issue... reiterated that the US did intend to build a... NMD... against limited attack from such states as North Korea, Iran and Iraq. “A system of defence need not be perfect. But the American people must not be left defenceless,”... [The secretary] gave no timetable for such a defensive system. Two of the last three tests have failed, and critics say such a scheme would cost in excess of \$US60 billion...

At precisely 3.09.42 yesterday afternoon an American interceptor missile hit a dummy warhead 225km above the Pacific Ocean and brought [the US] President’s... much-derided Star Wars plans a step closer... It was the second time the Pentagon had succeeded in intercepting an intercontinental ballistic missile warhead, but the first time it had scored a direct hit... The dummy warhead... was fired from... 7700km away.

...It is two years since the US launched missile attacks on Sudan and Afghanistan in retaliation for the bombs which destroyed its embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi. Operation Infinite Reach aimed at targets linked to... [a Saudi extremist – America’s] Public Enemy Number One... a campaign [designed] to bring him to justice, a campaign which is still under way. But in carrying out that crusade, justice is precisely what has been put in question. Ask [the person who] owned the pharmaceutical factory in Khartoum that the US blew up with cruise missiles on the pretext that it was being used to produce the precursors for VX nerve gas... No satisfactory evidence has been produced to show that it was. The US alleged that [the owner] was an associate of [the Saudi], and froze his bank accounts... held in London by a US bank. When [the owner] threatened to sue, they rapidly unfroze his accounts. But they refused to back down on their accusations. [The owner] has never been indicted or tried. But when

senior [US] Government officials speak, anonymously, of his guilt, there is no accountability; and [the owner] is effectively convicted in the court of public opinion without a chance to speak. There are several other people sitting in a grim building in New York in a similar position, the indicted suspects charged with the embassy bombings. They are held in total isolation in the notorious 10 South unit of the New York Correctional Centre under what are euphemistically called Special Administrative Measures. Perhaps they are guilty; perhaps they are not. They have not had their day in court and there is little sign that they will do so for some time. There is a solid body of legislation authorising extreme measures against “terrorists” (including an 1980s law which makes it ‘illegal to kill USers anywhere in the world’ – ‘the first person convicted under this law received a 30-year sentence’.) A series of top-secret US Presidential Decision Directives authorise striking back at suspects wherever and however the US chooses: Infinite Reach. The 1996 Anti-terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act established a new court charged with hearing cases in which the Government seeks to deport aliens accused of engaging in terrorist activity based on secret evidence submitted in the form of classified information. The... evidence has always been used against Arab or Muslim suspects. It has frequently been overturned... According to the public record, none of the informants involved in the case [against the Saudi] have direct knowledge of [his involvement in the embassy bombings]... But then for those involved in this operation, evidence, apparently, is of little concern. “We should have a very low barrier in terms of acting when there is a threat of weapons of mass destruction being used against [US] citizens,”... America’s top counter-terrorism official, told the *Washington Post*. [The official] led the missile attacks in 1998. From virtually nothing, [it] has built up a huge powerbase in Washington, aimed at this new threat of international terrorism, which supposedly poses the greatest single threat to the lives and liberty of... [USers. The official] “compares the current threat of global terrorism with the situation faced by Western democracies in the period leading up to... [WW2], when appeasement carried the day,” noted the *Post*. The war on terrorism has become an all-consuming passion for some in Washington in the last few years, the new “clear and present danger” against which they will “pay any price, bear any burden,” as [US] Presidents once said of Communism. But this is about more than just a threat. It is about bureaucratic infighting in Washington, for a start. Since the end of the Cold War, there has been a struggle to define a new enemy (and the money and power needed to fight it) and [the official] has come out on top... [The official], a little-known figure even within Washington, more than anyone else has also been responsible for raising the spectre of an “electronic Pearl Harbour,” a devastating attack by hackers on computer systems. “Why would anyone want to mount such an attack?” asked the *New York Times*, but [the official] had an easy answer. “To extort us... To intimidate us!” There have been plenty of “life or death” struggles like this over the years, directed by strange [officials] in dark little Washington offices with odd agendas and little accountability. The “war on drugs,” for example, that incredibly counter-productive US policy in South America and the streets of its cities; J. Edgar Hoover’s fanatical crusade against communism; or... [the] “neat idea” for funding the Contras in Central America. In each case, the “ends justified the means” except that in the end, they did not. The claim to international leadership which the US makes at the beginning of the 21st century is a strong one. But it relies, crucially, on moral leadership – on persuading others that it has right as well as might on its side. Without that, it still has... [might], but it will lose the fight. And who is really the greater threat to freedom in America: [the Saudi or the official]? ...America... wants justice for those murdered in the embassy bombings. But the way they have gone about pursuing justice has involved the US in some unjust actions of its own. It is not just pious liberalism to say that, even when pursuing terrorism, two wrongs do not make a right... “This will be a long, ongoing struggle,” said [the 42nd US] President... after the embassy bombings, “between freedom and fanaticism, between the rule of law and terrorism.” No one could disagree; but America needs to remember which side of that struggle it is on.

...NZ a ‘staging post’ for... holy war... A world authority on terrorism has warned that N[Z] is a “cleaning and conditioning station” for Islamic terrorists conducting a holy war and that a suspected network uncovered in Auckland is not the only one operating in this country... [The] director of the U[S] Congressional Task Force on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare, said [it] had been aware for some time of Islamic terrorist activity in N[Z], and... had corroborating evidence that a clandestine network of Afghan refugees uncovered in Mt Albert during a people-smuggling investigation... was linked to terrorist networks inspired by... a... Saudi extremist... [T]here was independent confirmation that members of the Auckland group – including veterans of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq – had telephoned their superiors overseas, mainly in Pakistan... [The director], who is also director of research at the International Strategic Studies Association and a former senior US Defence Department adviser, said the Mt Albert group’s activities and structure were identical to those of [the Saudi]’s followers throughout the world...” Significantly, [the director] said, none of the members of this network had been apprehended. The *Weekend Herald* revealed last month that when police discovered the Mt Albert cell, they found evidence suggesting a conspiracy to attack the Lucas Heights nuclear reactor in Sydney during the Olympic Games. The lounge of the Mt Albert home had been converted into a virtual command centre, a street map of Sydney highlighted access routes to the reactor and a notebook contained details of police security tactics for the 1990 Commonwealth Games in Auckland. [The director, who] agreed to speak to the *Herald* on aspects of his research [–] but... some confidential information could not be disclosed because of his work with the US Congress... [–] said it was alarming that the Mt Albert group was discovered accidentally. “This suggests that this and other dormant terrorist networks might have escaped discovery and monitoring so close to the opening of the Sydney Games. Hence, the security authorities... must operate on the presumption that this is neither the first nor the last terrorist network lurking in and around A[US and NZ.]” The director, who is the... author of the book [*Saudi extremist: The Guy Who Declared War on America*], said [the extremist] was a “spiritual guide” and source of inspiration for the jihad... Others were responsible for the “practical” aspects of getting the jihad implemented. N[Z] was used as a staging post... because of its liberal society and “relaxed security environment,”... It was an attractive place for terrorists to come to gain refugee status and residency to get “clean” documents so they could travel the world easily. [The director then warned that NZ]’s role in overseas conflicts opened it up as a possible target for Islamic terrorists. “N[Z] is not a friendly country to them. In Timor, you have prevented the jihad from unfolding, in Bosnia you supported the US. You are not in the good guys’ camp.” ...Senior [NZ] police intelligence officers refused to comment on the revelations yesterday.

...Afghan leadership won’t hand over bombing suspect... Afghanistan’s Taliban movement has refused to extradite [a] Saudi exile... to the US to face charges of masterminding embassy bombings in Africa... that killed more than 250 people. The Taliban’s chief spokes[perso]n... said the movement, which is not recognised as a government except by three regional allies, had no extradition agreements with any country... [The spokesperson] repeated the Taliban’s position that [the Saudi extremist] was in Afghanistan with a special guard but his precise whereabouts were unknown. The Taliban acknowledged last week that [America’s Public Enemy #1] was still in Afghanistan after a London Sunday newspaper said [the Saudi extremist] had been seen in the eastern city of Jalalabad. The US launched a cruise missile attack... on suspected bases of [the Saudi extremist] in southern Afghanistan and has not ruled out more attacks. It has also renewed its advice to US citizens not to travel to Afghanistan.

...A former U[S] Army sergeant has pleaded guilty to helping to plot the deadly bombings of two US embassies in Africa, saying [the Saudi extremist] once showed him where a suicide bomber could cause the most damage. [The former sergeant], aged 48, on Saturday became the first person to plead guilty in connection with the August 1998 bombings in Kenya and Tanzania... His trial... had been scheduled to begin [nine months ago –] along with the cases of five of the 17 named in the indictment. Of those charged so far, six are being held in New York, three others are being held abroad and eight are fugitives, including... [the] Saudi-born millionaire... [–] portrayed by the US Government as the mastermind of the bombings... [–] who is on the F[B]I’s 10 Most Wanted List. The US Government has offered a \$US5 million... reward for the capture of each fugitive... [In related news, l]awyers for the Libyan... convicted of the Lockerbie bombing argued yesterday that vital evidence was misinterpreted and a key witness was never called. A year after [the Libyan] was sentenced to life in prison for the murder of 270 people in the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 to New York in 1988, his legal team are challenging central elements of the judges’ findings... If permitted by the appeal judges, the

defence team will also call a fresh witness... who claimed after the trial that there was a security breach at terminal three, Heathrow, which could have explained how the bomb was planted. Yesterday's hearing made legal history, being the first British trial to be televised, although proceedings were curtailed because of a computer error in the transcription service. As the appeal began, [the Libyan]'s wife, brother-in-law and five children unfolded banners outside the specially constructed Scottish court at a former US Air Force base in the Netherlands, proclaiming his innocence... The original trial was held without a jury, a fact that has led to complex legal arguments about the appeal... Unless the conviction is quashed, [the Libyan, now aged] 49, will not be eligible for parole for nearly 20 years. At the trial last year the [perso]n accused of being his accomplice... was acquitted[, and]... returned to Tripoli to a welcome from [Libya's leader]... Relatives of the victims said they would press for an inquiry into claims that intelligence and aviation security warnings were ignored, whatever the outcome of the appeal.

...AMERICAN families of the Lockerbie disaster are suing the Libyan government for \$22 billion in damages... but they will probably end up settling for a lot less, [a lawyer] said... The lawyer for the 150 families said the Libyan secret agent found guilty of the bombing was high up in the North African nation's government... [and had it]s support... Libya says it will pay compensation if [the 49-year-old Libyan citizen]'s appeal fails.

...[the way to US\$billions in compensation payouts is open now that Libya has accepted responsibility for bombing Pan Am'] Flight 103 bound for New York.

...The U[S]... came under multiple terrorist attack early this morning. ■ Two planes crashed into the World Trade Centre in New York... Within an hour a third plane crashed into the Pentagon in Washington... It is believed the planes... had been hijacked... ■ A car bomb was reported to have exploded outside the State Department in Washington. ■ A fourth hijacked plane was reported to be heading towards Washington... The attack came as office workers began work at the World Trade Centre. There were huge explosions after the planes crashed, and within an hour both towers collapsed. The death toll was unknown but expected to be in the thousands... Within moments of the attacks America went into damage control. ■ The White House was evacuated and [the]President... took to the air in Air Force One, cutting short a visit to Florida. ■ The Pentagon and all federal Government offices in Washington were evacuated. ■ Public buildings in New York... were shut down. ■ All aircraft in the US were ordered to be grounded... All plane departures were stopped in the U[S] under a "national groundstop" from the Federal Aviation Administration... In England, the British parliament was evacuated and the underground rail system... shut in precautions against terror attacks.

...Americans reeling from history's worst act of terrorism are now demanding to know how four teams of hijackers could breach their national security to kill thousands of people. Shockwaves from the attacks on New York and Washington were felt yesterday in financial markets, air travel and in security clamps at public facilities all over the world. A global investigation involving numerous American and foreign security agencies is focusing on [the Saudi-born,]Afghanistan-based terrorist leader... Names of five suspects have been gleaned from passenger lists... The death toll from the airborne attacks... remained unknown early today – but... thousands... are believed dead or trapped in the wreckage of the calamity which rocked the nation's seats of finance and government. Authorities have not released details of those dead or missing... It is likely to be the deadliest day in American history, surpassing the worst event of the civil war, when around 4000 died, and the attack on Pearl Harbor, which killed 2390... All 266 people aboard the four aircraft died. Up to 800 defence staff are feared dead at the Pentagon... American skies remained no-fly zones overnight... The world's airline system virtually ground to a halt yesterday as hundreds of flights were cancelled or diverted after the grounding of all civilian flights to, from and within the U[S. In NZ], the Government ordered the screening of domestic and international passengers at all main centres... N[Z's] consul-general in New York... had no reports of Kiwi casualties but said up to 1000 worked in the environs of the World Trade Center.

...As many as 50 people could have been in the U[S] to plan and execute the unprecedented terrorist attacks on New York and Washington... The FBI has declared the investigation the biggest [perso]nhunt in history... US officials... say they have "credible evidence" that the... President... was the target of the attack... [The President] visited the Pentagon yesterday, committing the country to a "monumental struggle of good versus evil". [The President] worked through the day to build a global coalition against terrorism, and was boosted with an emphatic move by Nato, which invoked its mutual defence clause for the first time in its 52-year history... Across the Western world there were reports of followers of Islam feeling a backlash against the carnage in America... [P]ublic figures... were... urging calm and tolerance... New York City has asked for 6000 body-bags from federal agencies. About 40,000 people worked in the huge high-rises. The dead includes hundreds of firefighters and police officers who rushed to help after the attack... The first estimate of the direct financial cost came from the global insurance industry yesterday, which put a possible payout at close to \$NZ100 billion. The US Congress approved an emergency \$NZ50 billion recovery package sought by the White House.

...As insurance experts began to assess the scale of the devastation caused by the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the estimate for the total bill soared to... be the largest bill the insurance industry has ever faced. The most expensive incident before this week's atrocity was Hurricane Andrew in 1992, which... cost the equivalent in today's money of about \$44.7 billion... [But w]as the attack... an act of war or terrorism? ...Policies usually contain exclusions for expected events and acts of war... When the... World Trade Center... towers collapsed, fatally weakened by the inferno of 1000 degrees C ignited by the aviation fuel in the planes' full tanks, they set off a cloud of dust that blanketed New York's financial district... The great imponderable is how many other buildings have sustained damage. Yesterday, emergency crews estimated 100 buildings could have been damaged. Rescue efforts have to be repeatedly stopped as parts of buildings around Ground Zero crumble away. Just hours after the attacks, another World Trade Center building, Number 7, collapsed. Across the street, One Liberty Plaza... was damaged but still stands. But at the centre of the devastation is the 500m expanse of rubble that was the twin towers. The rubble is not just being dumped. Trucks are taking it to a huge indoor warehouse on Staten Island. There... the FBI's Evidence Response Team pore over every broken piece, looking for anything that will yield clues to the atrocity... The heart of New York's financial quarter is now the world's largest crime scene.

...Bright searchlights lit the darkened, hellish ruins of the World Trade Center after a day of rescue efforts which recovered only three people alive. They brought the total of rescued people to five of the thousands feared buried and, most likely, killed in the rubble. Towards the end of a gruelling day for rescuers, One Liberty Plaza – a 54-storey building near the ruins of the 110-storey twin towers that had once dominated Manhattan's southern skyline – appeared in danger of collapse and the area was evacuated... but it did not collapse... Southern Manhattan from 14th street... was shut down... Distraught family members rushed from hospital to hospital desperately seeking missing relatives... Doctors... reported an alarming lack of people to treat... People donned face masks to protect themselves from the dust... and smoky stench that [has]drifted 8km north of the disaster area... Some... bridges and tunnels into Manhattan... and... Newark International Airport... reopened to limited traffic.

...Flights to the U[S] are unlikely to resume until the weekend. U[S] aviation officials announced a limited resumption of commercial flights yesterday to allow travellers stranded around the country... to return home... It is believed... Boston's Logan International Airport may have been chosen as a soft touch for launching airborne terrorism. Long-standing security concerns at the busy airport took on new weight as authorities pondered the apparent ease with which... hijackers boarded the two planes used to destroy the World Trade Center... The airport's owners were fined \$178,000 in 1999 for 136 security violations... Staff operating luggage-screening devices also routinely failed to detect test items such as pipe bombs and guns... Many baggage handlers and airport security personnel were low-paid foreign nationals not necessarily motivated to carry out their jobs... [□ A] 48-year-old lawyer educated at Auckland University, is the first N[Z]er to be confirmed as dying in the worst terrorist attack in the U[S]... The father-of-three was one of 45 people on board United Airlines Flight 93, which took off from Newark on Tuesday morning (New York time), bound for San Francisco. Terrorists took over the Boeing 757, probably with the aim of crashing it into the White House or another significant target, such as Camp David. Instead, it appears passengers fought back and the jet crashed in a wooded area near Pittsburgh... As the

US shuddered in the aftermath, the family and friends of Mr Beaven paid tribute to him. His... 34-year-old... [American] wife... told the *Herald*: “You’ve lost a gem N[Z. Alan]... was just the most incredible [perso]n in the world... it was a blessing to have known him. I’m going to cry now.”

...why did the twin towers at the tip of Manhattan, symbols of American economic power, disintegrate? After all, the Empire State Building took a direct hit from an errant B-25 bomber in 1945 and reopened within months. It was a matter of the sheer size of the aircraft – ...B-25[s] weighed a mere eight tonnes... The World Trade Center Towers were built to withstand hurricane winds or minor earthquakes, but not the kamikaze punch of a 200-tonne airliner loaded with thousands of litres of fuel. “It’s virtually impossible to design buildings for any terrorist act some nut can come up with,” said... a principal at... a Kansas City engineering and architecture firm... Although the 110-storey towers survived the initial impacts, experts say their steel frames ultimately succumbed to overwhelming stress and intense heat... “With a high-rise like that, you experience progressive collapse. If there is damage to an upper portion, it impacts on the floor below and continues to the ground.” ...[that’s why, w]hen the end came, the 30-year-old skyscrapers did not topple in Hollywood disaster-film style[– but instead] collapsed in a billowing cloud of debris...

Reality hit home in Hollywood yesterday as movie studios delayed the release of two major films... *Big Trouble* follows a group of people who find a mysterious suitcase leading to a terrorist plot with a blackmarket nuclear bomb... In *Collateral Damage*... a fire[fighter]... sees his wife and son die in the terrorist bombings of a building... Executives at the nation’s major television networks [have also]scrambled to rethink the coming season’s schedules, in which espionage and terrorism programmes figure prominently... Disney’s ABC television network cancelled a planned broadcast of the 1997 thriller *The Peacemaker*, which involves nuclear terrorism. “It just didn’t seem appropriate at this time,”... All major networks said they were taking a hard look at their shows to safeguard against content that might seem insensitive in light of the tragedy.

...“Kill one, frighten a thousand” is the terrorist watchword. This week, a terrorist organisation, or group of organisations, killed hundreds, perhaps thousands of people. The atrocity will frighten not merely individuals, but whole populations and the states that rule them. It was a dark event in the history of human liberty. The most likely outcome is the imposition of measures to restrict freedom of movement and residence. Such measures will be ineffective in preventing a repetition of the disasters, but will be made all the same... Meanwhile, [in]... the heart of Manhattan, in Washington’s suburbs, in saddened towns elsewhere, mourners grieved during the weekend at the first wave of services for the victims of the terror attacks. Among those farewelled were... Father Mychal Judge[, who] lived in... the friary of St Francis of Assisi Church, across the street from Engine Co. One/Ladder Co.24 in midtown Manhattan... On Wednesday, Father Mike raced to the World Trade Center with the unit. Seven of the engine company were to die in the disaster. Father Mike died with them, apparently when [it] paused to administer last rites to a firefighter mortally injured by a falling body from one of the 110-storey towers. “[Mike] took his hat off to pray, and something came down and hit him in the head,” said[the] battalion chief... Father Mike joined more than 300 firefighters lost in the inferno. In a city of heroes, hundreds of New York City firefighters yesterday paid their last respects to their chaplain of 10 years. Father Mike was listed officially as the first person to lose his life...

The... once-loathed New York Police Department, mourning 23 officers missing in the rubble, has won new respect... [But w]here once everything to do with the shattered towers was talked about in terms of heroism, controversy has now begun to seep in... New York police have been forced to admit that some scrap metal may have been diverted to mob-controlled businesses rather than the dump, where investigators are examining the rubble for clues and DNA that could help identify victims... of the... [atrocities]; 309 bodies have been found in the rubble, 5641 people are missing... And insurers are threatening not to pay out because crucial details of the [World Trade C]enter’s \$US3.4 billion cover had not been determined when the terrorists attacked... The cost of cleaning up “Ground Zero” and rebuilding the World Trade Center... is estimated at \$US39 billion... New York officials say just clearing up the 1.2 million tonnes of rubble will cost \$US7 billion and take up to a year... though exactly what should go on the site is the subject of strong debate... New Yorkers are... divided on whether to rebuild the towers or turn the area... into a memorial park...

The terrorists who attacked the World Trade Center in New York may have thought they were striking at the heart of America. In fact, they were striking at the heart of no fewer than 35 countries who have listed people as dead or missing in Manhattan... Some 4972 people are listed as missing... No survivors have been found since Wednesday. At least 189 people are believed to have died... [at] the Pentagon... The... military says it will cost “hundreds of millions” of dollars and take several years to repair the damage caused to the 48-year-old Pentagon... That comes on top of a \$US758 million... modernisation programme... [–] designed to prolong the life of the world’s largest office building... [–] already started when the terrorists struck. Renovations to the first wedge of the five-sided military headquarters in Washington had only recently been completed and the... hijacked airliner... smashed into that section... The fully fuelled aircraft clipped... lampposts and struck a generator as it came in... at high speed.

...As N[Z]ers tune in to gripping television coverage of the New York terrorist attack, a media expert is warning against overuse of footage showing the hijacked planes crashing into the World Trade Center. A[n A]uckland University media studies lecturer... was concerned at voyeuristic elements of the footage, which [it] believed in part played into the hands of the terrorists. [The lecturer], who specialises in television and national identities, said many academics and media scholars had written about terrorism being the guerilla warfare of the media age. In this case, it was clear the timing of the plane crashes was designed for maximum publicity. “It was done deliberately to create a media spectacle that would go around the world, and maximum propaganda for the people perpetuating the violence... They get what they’ve done in front of everybody.”

...THEY fell to their deaths one by one, a few holding hands, some in small groups. The images of plummeting bodies remain among the most haunting of the... terrorist attack and afford a terrible glimpse of the despair of those trapped in the World Trade Center. None of those who were photographed as they fell has been officially identified. In one heart-stopping photograph, a [guy] is shown plunging head first from the north tower, wearing the white jacket of a Windows on the World restaurant worker. [One person] believes it is a picture of her brother Norberto, 42, who was a pastry chef on the 107th floor... They had discussed what [Norberto] would do if... caught in a fire in a building that high. “[Norberto told me it] would jump,”... Some widows have asked: “Did my husband jump?” and have been told no. They have been consoled by the presence of a body... [A] Cantor Fitzgerald widow, has been asking the same questions... [after playing] her phone messages. There was one from her husband, John, 41: “I could hear him discussing with people all the different ways to get down...” [The wife] was discouraged from viewing her husband’s body... New York[’s] mayor] has promised to give each family of the missing an urn containing soil from ground zero. “...it will be all they have,”...

*As the world reels from last week’s terror attacks... how... can... parents... help their children deal with the media frenzy that has been unleashed[?] ...Around the world, millions of children have watched images of the two planes ploughing into the twin towers and people jumping from the burning buildings. And as the U[S] and its allies ready themselves for war, more disturbing footage is inevitable. But what impact does this have on children? ...Psychologists and child therapists spoken to by the *Herald* say... [v]ery young children won’t understand what has happened but older children may feel sad and confused. They will struggle to understand – like many adults – why some people... deliberately want to kill themselves. Some children may worry about whether it could happen to them... [I]t is best to stick to facts rather than speculate about what could happen.*

...When... New York’s... twin towers... collapsed before a worldwide... audience, almost anything suddenly seemed possible. The terrorist attacks caused an instant media frenzy, but in the rush to get the news first the usual journalistic checks also collapsed and false rumours, pranks and misinformation became facts fit for broadcast by radio, t[v], news agencies and the Internet. Even the *Herald* was not immune. False leads were rampant as reporters struggled to process the scattered reports flooding in. There were claims of up to eight hijacked aircraft searching for targets, and within hours of the first crash... an... ABC [anchorperso]n... was reading a report of a car bomb outside the State Department in Washington. The story was retracted within half an hour... Further bogus claims quickly followed, sending news crews on wildgoose chases – there was a bomb at the Capitol, a bomb at the Old Executive Office Building, and the *USA Today* building was in flames. By 6 pm [US] time, nine hours after the attacks, CNN was showing videophone pictures of explosions in the Afghan capital, Kabul, accompanied by suggestions and denials that it was a

swift act of revenge using cruise missiles. It took 30 minutes to become clear that the bangs were nothing more than the ongoing chaos of Afghanistan's civil war... Abu Dhabi t[v] reported it had received a call from the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine abroad claiming responsibility for crashing two planes into the W[orld Trade Center] buildings. But a senior official from the radical DFLP denied the group had any connection to the attacks... False news stories finally raised such concern that on Friday New York[s] Mayor... appealed for media calm in an effort to stop the rumours that were creating insecurity... Unfortunately, even as reporters struggle to sort facts from fiction, there is no shortage of people who see such tragedy as an opportunity to take advantage of America's growing fear and create a story of their own. Reports of bombs have been rampant nationwide. There were about 100 alerts at the Empire State Building, which is once again New York's tallest building, in the four days after the attack on the... World Trade Center... and hoax calls continue to empty Government buildings, offices and schools across America.

...Spy chiefs rush to overcome fatal flaws... As they face up to the worst intelligence failure of modern times, security chiefs on both sides of the Atlantic are pressing for sweeping changes – new legal powers, unprecedented global cooperation and massive budget increases. Frankly admitting that last week's atrocities were completely unforeseen, they claim that, without these changes, there may be still more damaging attacks to come. The Western intelligence community is making little effort to hide the scale of the disaster. A former top CIA officer with long experience in Afghanistan and the Middle East told the *Observer*: "...The attacks on New York and Washington are a failure by definition: we didn't know about them." A British source added: "The most we had was the vaguest of warnings that [the Saudi extremist] was planning something big. But [the Saudi extremist] is always planning something big. M16 and the CIA shared a fatal misjudgment. We knew our citizens were at risk in parts of the [Last] World. But never, not for one moment, did we seriously imagine they were seriously in danger from Islamic terrorists in our motherlands."

...The local sharemarket regained ground yesterday as Wall St avoided the meltdown investors feared on its first trading day since the World Trade Center disaster... The Dow Jones industrial average... posted its biggest point loss – 684.81 points or 7.13[%] to end at 8920.70 – well within expectation of a slide of... 10[%]. It... did not make the Top 10 biggest daily percentage drops... Troubled Air N[Z]... shares gained a little ground... as the airline's global peers were savaged following last week's terrorist attacks... Airlines worldwide were already facing a difficult future before last week's events because of the worsening economic climate. US airlines, estimated to have already lost \$US10 billion through cancelled flights have called for \$US24 billion... in Government aid. Passengers have been scared away, airlines and airports face higher costs to comply with security measures, the global economy is under greater pressure and so are fuel costs... Continental Airlines has warned of a potential bankruptcy filing next month if it does not receive financial assistance. It is already cutting 12,000 jobs, or 21[%] of its workforce. Job cuts announced worldwide are already nearing 30,000 and the... Air Transport Association... said total losses could exceed 100,000 over the next few months.

...Eight days after two passenger aircraft from Boston were hijacked and crashed into the twin towers, [civilian] planes were flying again [military aircraft have been 'patrolling the skies over major American cities' ever since the atrocity], but the public were not. The airline industry in America announced it would have to lay off up to 44,000 employees... The airlines in America usually make about 40,000 flights a day and last year carried almost 650 million passengers. But when Wall St reopened on Monday some airline shares dropped 50[%] and about \$US12 billion was wiped off their value. Now the carriers face the extra costs of security... There appeared to be no shortage of people at JFK airport in New York yesterday morning. Queues snaked from the entrance of the terminals to the roads outside. But it was illusory. The crowds were caused by hastily introduced security measures, and the traffic was mostly outward, with people heading for international destinations and in no hurry to return.

...The world's airline industry, reeling from the terror strikes in the U[S], face an insurance crisis that could ground some aircraft. And N[Z]'s 3] biggest travel insurers have scrapped policy clauses that let tourists claim compensation when airlines, hotels, bus firms and other providers go bust while they are on holiday. Air N[Z] is... among dozens of airlines told that, from... Tuesday, their war risk insurance policies will be scrapped.

...N[Z]ers may soon find themselves uninsured against acts of gang intimidation as... N[Z] insurance companies which are overseas-owned... seek to reduce their risk after the... terrorist attacks in American... Until now, standard policies have covered acts of terrorism simply because they were not specifically excluded... [It i]s unlikely insurers would wait for policies to run out, but... they would have to tell policy-holders about any change.

...IN a television interview beamed around the world last week, [a businessperson wept as it] described the devastation of his bond-trading company, Cantor Fitzgerald, and the deaths of 700 employees in the World Trade Center attack... Not a single person who was in the New York head offices of the company on the day of the terrorist attacks has been found alive. Direct telephone lines linked the New York company to its London office, where conversations were broadcast on "squawk boxes". As the horror of the plane crash into the [90th floor of the] north tower began to unfold, Cantor staff in London heard the terrified cries of their New York colleagues [on the 101st-105th floors.] "The poor guys in London heard things that will stay with them for ever,"... It is sheer chance that [the] chief executive of Cantor, was not one of the victims. [The owner] took his son to his first day at nursery school and so left later than usual for the World Trade Center. His brother Gary was not so lucky... [The owner has] vowed to care for the victims' families... But... [a]lready, some Cantor families have told the company that they are worried about how much help they will get. Health insurance will be continued for the coming year, but salary payments stopped three days after the attack. The company's life insurance payments, normally twice an employee's salary, will be capped at \$US100,000 per family. What angers some families is that performance bonuses – which can account for two-thirds of a bond trader's salary – may not be paid. "Bonuses? I'm not sure I still have a company," [the owner] said last week, according to one family member's account. Just more than 300 Cantor Fitzgerald employees survived the attack and are now spread among temporary offices in Manhattan and in sales offices in London, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Connecticut. As the company began trading again, officials told the families that records used to calculate the bonuses had been destroyed but that bonuses will be paid if they can be documented. A company spokes[person] declined to discuss the bonuses... The impulse of a company to help victims of a disaster may be tempered by the struggle to save the jobs of survivors, said... a business professor at the University of South Carolina.

...New York Fire Department's response to the September 11 attack at the World Trade Centre was plagued by... problems... A report by independent consultants... concludes problems with the radio system caused commanders to lose touch with many firefighters who went into the twin towers, the *New York Times* reported. It said lapses in discipline led firefighters to rush to the scene without checking in with commanders at designated staging areas. A virtual absence of co-ordination with police officials... meant fire commanders had no access to reports from police helicopters that hovered above the 110-storey building, tracking their structural integrity and the progress of fires across the upper floors.

...Dozens of people trapped at the top of the burning World Trade Center... could have been airlifted to safety... [by] police helicopters... if doors had not been locked[, a newspaper]... reported yesterday... More than 1000 people were trapped on the floors above where the two hijacked planes smashed into the towers on September 11... [T]he doors to the roof were kept locked because a similar rescue in 1993, when... 28 people were taken to safety by a helicopter... was slammed as a "publicity stunt" by fire chiefs and the Port Authority, which owned the centre... [The] fire chiefs said the rescues could have cost lives if the helicopter had crashed, and the authority insisted that the doors be kept locked to prevent suicides.

...One horror on the heels of another... The daughter of the most senior New York firefighter killed... at the trade center... was about to pick up her children when the house shuddered and a mushroom cloud of smoke rose two blocks away... [The] daughter of First Deputy Commissioner Bill Feehan... frantically... called her husband... also a firefighter. "...you're not going to believe this... but a plane crashed a few blocks away. I'm not kidding you. A plane just went down. They've done it again." Many locals [heard] the roar of the stricken American Airlines Flight 587... saw the aircraft flying low, too low, and ran into the streets... Ground Zero yesterday was at Beach 131st Street and Newport Ave... [A congressperson] had just been at one of the memorial services held daily at the De Sales Church... when the [latest] tragedy happened. "This is just a mammoth aftershock after the earthquake of [the terrorist attack]... Just as people were returning to some kind of normalcy here, there is catastrophe again."

...A 15-year-old student pilot crashed a small plane into a skyscraper in Florida yesterday. Jet fighters were scrambled and Coast Guard helicopters alerted before the aircraft... [– which] briefly breached air space at MacDill Air Force Base... [–] hit the 28th floor of the 42-storey Bank of America building in Tampa... The only person killed was t[he t]rainee pilot... The White House said there was no indication that it was an act of terrorism. But the televised image of a plane blasting a hole in the side of a skyscraper was a chilling reminder of the World Trade Center attacks.

...Luigi Falsulo, aged 67, [the] Swiss-Italian business[person] who... flew his single-engine [aircraft]... into Milan's tallest skyscraper on Friday may have staged the spectacular crash to draw attention to international fraudsters on the French Riviera who conned him out of US\$1.4 million[, said his son]... Two people in the building died... The crash raised the spectre of... Islamic terrorism and sent shock waves around the world.

...25 people were killed and up to 20 missing following a massive blast that destroyed a petrochemical plant in the French city of Toulouse yesterday... The plant, which employs about 500 people, is located near an explosives factory... More than 650 people were in hospital following the apparent accident, which residents initially feared was a terrorist attack similar to those on the U[S]... Meanwhile, the E[U] is rethinking its refusal to send accused terrorists to face trial in the US. Justice and Home Affairs Ministers from all 15 member states will today debate the issue as well as other ways of boosting the fight against terrorism... The EU will be hoping to reassure America of its support for its "war against terrorism" at the summit yet also ease fears at home and in the Muslim world that the West may be about to plunge into a mad military adventure.

...The U[S] Congress will today start considering controversial new legislation that would give the US authorities the right to lock up foreigners considered to be terrorist suspects and have them deported without presenting any evidence of proof... With immense pressure on both the [US] Administration and Congress to "do something", civil liberty groups fear the Government could be responding to the tragedy with legislation that infringes constitutional rights. The Government has asked Congress to let prosecutors use information collected by foreign governments in ways that are unconstitutional in the US. It also wants to let the FBI and other police agencies seize billing information like credit card numbers from internet companies without a court order, according to a Justice Department analysis of the anti-terrorism package it plans to submit on Saturday... European leaders have warned that the response to the terror attacks must be smart, cool-headed and focused. In the past week, Europe has been rattled by the rise in ill feeling towards its 14 million Muslims and at the surge in fundamentalist sentiment in fragile Muslim states such as Pakistan. Opinion has also been dismayed at... [the US President]'s cowboy-style demand that [the #1] terrorist suspect... be handed over "dead or alive" – and his description of the anti-terrorism campaign as a "crusade," a term that rouses historic memories in the Muslim world of injustice and mass slaughter. An[analyst from]... the French Institute for International Relations said, "We are in the same boat, but we fear what the captain of the boat will decide to do. The sort of crusade that would create a 'clash of civilisations' war makes Europe really nervous."

...A *WHOLLY UNIQUE WAR*... AROUND the table were the cream of America's military, the joint chiefs – the [guys] who run the most formidable fighting machine the world has ever seen. The four-star general leading the briefing dropped his papers on the table, looked at the familiar faces and declared: "Before anybody says anything, let's be clear: there is nobody in this room, or outside it, who has any experience of what we are about to go through." The war ahead, [the general] said, would be like none that has gone before. The front lines will often be data sheets on banking computers, and embassy meeting rooms, and the shock troops are as likely to be accountants and diplomats as Green Berets. The meeting took place on... September 13, not far from the smouldering Pentagon... It was the first time since America's day of terror that senior planners had gathered to discuss retaliation. Their task was to prepare proposals for [the] President... to consider at Camp David over the weekend. "There will be no preconceptions, no assumptions and no examples," said the general. "This is a new war, and if we are to win it, we have to start thinking in new ways." The 10-year plan that emerged is revolutionary. It posits a war on terrorism that will not end with a signed surrender.

...LAST week Elvis Presley walked into Shelly's cafe on Hollywood Boulevard... took a glass of house wine, [then] strutted back and forth, his Vegas regalia tinkling, loudly addressing the room as Americans are wont to do in public... "So you guys think war's gonna be good for the economy?" A small but noteworthy moment... [in this town which is] full of people making a living by not being themselves...: wars are waged, we've come to believe, for reasons of morality rather than profit. Their economic effects tend – within the countries involved at least [–] to be debated once the fighting has ended. Only some decades after W[W]II did a school of American historians beg[i]n to wonder whether Franklin D Roosevelt hadn't goaded the Japanese into attacking in order to safeguard US markets and resources in the Pacific. Elvis' question was also appropriate, for in America, money is king. The size of my wallet proves God is in my heart and on my side... For the last decade Americans have monitored their economy's expansion with the same avidity and nervousness that parents scan the progress of their first child. Has it enough to eat? Is it feeling OK? By any diagnosis, Junior is crook. The long-threatened US recession seems set to arrive... About a sixth of [Wall Street's] 4300 stocks are trading below the one dollar mark. Normally the Nasdaq delists such companies, effectively killing their chances to gain equity. Last week, however, it suspended this rule, which may be compared to telling a drowning [person] you'll lower the water level a bit. [Aided by 'US telemarketers getting local staff to train Asian-based workers to do their jobs before making them redundant', t]he number of jobless has reached a 19-year high, a further sign of recession... Blame the W[orld Trade Center] atrocity, which has come to be known here as 9/11. It didn't just destroy two skyscrapers, it rattled American confidence of their place at the centre of the economic and moral universe... At the Shelly cafe... the answer to Elvis' question was uncertain... The diners wanted war, but they wanted prosperity too, a sign that they might continue to be the chosen ones.

...In the weeks since the September 11 tragedy, Arab-Americans – even those who just look like them – have felt under siege in the U[S]. They've been assaulted, threatened, shot at, stared down, barred from flights and, in several horrifying cases, killed in random acts of violence. Thousands have been interviewed by authorities in what many are calling one of the most widespread uses of racial profiling since the Second World War.

...Amid fears of further terrorist attacks on the U[S], Washington is pouring nearly \$NZ2 billion into intelligence. At the same time, ties between international intelligence agencies are closer than ever before. At least 100 countries have stepped forward to share information with the US. The C[IA], which has already committed hundreds of employees to the hunt for [the #1 suspect], plans a "very significant" increase in staff and resources... Meanwhile, fears that [the Saudi extremist's] organisation will soon attack another high-profile [US] target have reached fever pitch.

...A 63-year-old Florid[ian] has died after contracting anthrax... the first [US] person in... 25 years to contract the inhaled form of the disease.

...Postal workers... were not impressed. They had just been told by their managers at the Postal Service of the steps being put in place to try to counter the anthrax threat, but... it simply called to mind the old adage, Too little, too late. "I think that we have got a raw deal. The letter came through the Post Office. They closed down the Congress but they kept us going... They should have taken us for testing. They lost nobody..." These are troubling times for Washington's postal workers, and none more so than for the 2300 employees based at Brentwood, where the notorious "infected letter" was handled and where 14 out of 29 locations within the now closed facility have tested positive for anthrax spores. Two of their Postal Service family lie dead from anthrax infection, another two are seriously ill and who knows how many others may have been exposed. But what is increasingly troubling those here and the 10,000 or more postal workers across the capital who have been told they need to take antibiotics to guard against infection, is the realisation that none of this needed to happen: the shock and the fear of what might happen have been replaced by anger and disbelief about what did not happen... Why, if the letter addressed to [the] Senate leader... that led to around 30 people at the Capitol being exposed to anthrax passed through Brentwood, was the depot not closed?... "...management just kept saying 'we have to get the mail out'..."

...The spectre of terrorists spreading deadly anthrax spores in the mail has alarmed the U[S] as more cases of the rare disease are confirmed. Major media organisations closed their mailrooms after several received suspicious envelopes, some later found to contain anthrax material.

...SCORES of *Los Angeles Times* employees were locked in the newspaper's building yesterday for 90 minutes in an anthrax scare caused by the discovery of white powder near a computer keyboard in the book review department, employees said... Parts of NBC News headquarters at Rockefeller Center and the New York Times building were [also] sealed off for part of the day because of anthrax investigations. An NBC employee was found to be infected after [it] opened a letter with a white powdery substance in it addressed to [a] news anchor... The... US Vice President... said although there was no proof, there could be links between the discovery of four "suspicious" anthrax cases in the US and [the Saudi extremist].

...A key figure in the September 11 attacks was allowed to enter the U[S] this year although his name was on a US security blacklist circulated to other countries... Egyptian Mohamed Atta, told immigration authorities that [it] was coming to the US "on a march to spread the word of God"... After being questioned, [Atta] was allowed entry... US investigators say they believe Atta, acting as a ringleader among suicide hijackers, piloted one of the two airliners that struck the World Trade Center during the attacks on New York and Washington that killed about 5400 people.

...FBI investigators have officially concluded that 11 of the 19 terrorists who hijacked the aircraft on September 11 did not know they were on a suicide mission. Unlike the [8] "lead" attackers, who were all trained pilots, they did not leave messages for friends and family indicating they knew their lives were over... None of them had copies of the instructions for prayer and contemplation on the eve of the attacks and for "opening your chest to God" at the moment of immolation, which FBI agents discovered in the luggage of Mohamed Atta, the [guy] believed to be the hijackers' leader... Western intelligence services say the FBI's conclusions help to explain why, despite strong indication that [the Saudi extremist]'s al Qaeda network was planning a spectacular atrocity, the West remained ignorant about its scale, location and detail. "Of course, it is inescapable that this was a terrible intelligence failure," one British Government source said. "But the FBI analysis at least puts it into context. The terrorists' security was extraordinarily tight. They were employing intelligence organisations' most basic principle: the need to know." The *New York Times* reported yesterday that the CIA intercepted a message from an al Qaeda member boasting of plans to carry out a "Hiroshima" on America... But in spite of a frenzied search for evidence of what the message meant, American spies drew a blank and had no idea of the plans laid for... September 11...

In an earlier plea for care to ensure that other innocents did not become victims of retaliation after the terrorist attacks on the US, I told of a moment in the Hiroshima peace museum in front of a photographic mural of a child on fire in the ruins of the nuclear bombed city. An American... standing beside me said: "You should see what they did to our boys at Pearl Harbor." My reply: "What did that child do to your boys at Pearl Harbor?" ...Two letters of reaction... have just reached me. From... Sandringham: "I usually have great respect for your opinion but publishing your memories of the American widow was unworthy of you... Surely you must know the psychology of ...he[r]... remarks... I too have a memory like yours. When on a tour boat out to the... battleship Arizona in Pearl Harbor, I was horrified to see young Japanese tourists in our group have their friends photograph them, smiling happily, with the memorial as a background... Few nations have been so lily white in the past that their citizens would never be put in the position of having to justify their country's actions..." From... Mt Eden: "When the stakes are very high the 'Good Guys' don't have the luxury of experimenting with perfection to avoid 'collateral damage'. The Japanese regime basically set in motion the killing of their own innocents... with the unprovoked attack on Pearl Harbor... If the Japanese had won, a far greater number of innocent lives would have been lost... PS: There is a cure for hurting and killing those bodies (Heaven!). There is no cure for losing God and His truth (Matthew 10,28)". In reply: ...Since the *Bible* has been quoted – try Mark 10, 14: Jesus said "Suffer the little children to come unto me... for such is the kingdom of God." That, I believe, refers equally to the children of Coventry, Nagasaki, Dresden and... of Kabul and... for the... orphans from the twin towers...

Smiling faces give proof that children, orphaned by the September 11 terrorist attacks, have found happiness again. The happy-go-lucky kids play in the glorious sunshine, seemingly without a care in the world. They giggle and scream with delight as they make the most of being away from home for a wild week at a special... camp, the legacy of... kind-hearted business[person]... Scott Hazelnorn, 29... who was killed in the attack.

...Dozens of September 11 widows who gave birth after the attacks have met, some of them for the first time, at a bitter-sweet baby shower. The gathering of about 70 widows and their children was... to help ease the pain... [Since] the attacks, 102... widows [have given] birth to 105 babies.

...[actors] are using their own money to aid 30 LA animal shelters that [have] closed after government funding shifted to September 11 charities.

...The World Boxing Council indefinitely stripped [an AUS]n... of his ranking yesterday over controversial remarks the super middleweight made about the terrorist attacks on the U[S]. The... former rugby league player ranked 26th by the WBC, is... a Muslim[. It] said on Tuesday that the U[S] had brought the September 11 attacks upon itself. [The boxer] later apologised for the comment... but the damage had apparently been done.

...Contrary to the opinion of... others, there are not just two sides in the dispute between the U[S] and Afghanistan over terrorism. The US may be perfectly correct in wishing to punish [the Saudi extremist] and his followers for September 11, but whether mad or merely evil, [the Saudi] is asking questions that the US government seems remarkably reluctant to answer... How can the US take the high moral ground on terrorism when it has ignored or sponsored terrorist groups of its own when it suited [US] foreign policy? Why is no mention made in this war against terrorism of the dozens of terrorist groups that exist all over the world, including in Ireland, Spain, Sri Lanka and domestic... groups? Some... are funded from the US with the tacit approval of its government. Of course, these groups do not generally target [US] citizens... Until some attempt is made to answer these questions and address the problems that breed religious fanaticism and terrorism, the US had better learn to live with more of the same.

...[US President] warns Americans to brace for long, hard fight... THIS weekend I am engaged in extensive sessions with members of my National Security Council as we plan a comprehensive assault on terrorism. This will be a different kind of conflict against a different kind of enemy. This is a conflict without battlefields or beachheads, a conflict with opponents who believe they are invisible. Yet they are mistaken. They will be exposed, and they will discover what others in the past have learned: those who make war against the U[S] have chosen their own destruction. Victory against terrorism will not take place in a single battle but in a series of decisive actions against terrorist organisations and those who harbour and support them. We are planning a broad and sustained campaign to secure our country and eradicate terrorism, and we are determined to see this conflict through. Americans of every faith and background are committed to this goal... And this is why we will prevail. Thank you for listening.

...US mobilises around the globe as Taleban urge fight to death As the U[S] prepares its forces to strike back, Afghanistan's hard-line Taleban rulers have called on Muslims to launch a "holy war" if attacked. Yesterday, [the US] President... told the American military to get ready for a long war against terrorism and said the nation would smoke its enemies "out of their holes... We're at war. There's been an act of war declared upon America by terrorists and we will respond accordingly." [The President] has received congressional approval to use "all necessary and appropriate force" – just short of a declaration of war but one that allows him to strike... While the preparations went ahead, the whereabouts of the... exiled Saudi-born extremist... remained a mystery. But [the] President... warned that the mysterious millionaire, who is believed to have launched his campaign against the U[S] in retribution for the "desecration" of the land of Islam by the US deployment of troops in Saudi Arabia during the 1990-91 Gulf crisis, was Washington's prime suspect and would be hunted down... Washington has asked Pakistan to grant military overfly rights and "military access", to seal the Afghan border and halt fuel supplies to the Taleban regime, which has been sheltering [the Saudi millionaire]...

Pakistan is to send a delegation to Kabul in a last-ditch bid to persuade the Taleban to extradite [the Saudi extremist] and avert US military retaliation for the terror attacks on New York and Washington... The move came as [the US] President... told US troops to "get ready" after presiding over a war council of his top military advisers to plan retaliation... [T]he Taleban would be given three days to comply or face the consequences. Before news of the Pakistan delegation broke, the Taleban said they would continue to shelter... the mastermind behind the attacks.

...Afghanistan's religious leaders last night urged [the suspected] terrorist... to leave the country – but say they will not force him out. After a two-day meeting of hundreds of Muslim clerics, Afghanistan's Bakhtar news agency reported: "The Ulama [the meeting] wants the Islamic emirate of Afghanistan to encourage [our guest] to leave Afghanistan, but of his own free will." The country's Taliban rulers, facing a massive U[S] military build-up in the Gulf, are expected to follow the meeting's directive. Before the statement was issued, a Taliban diplomat in Pakistan said [the Saudi] was prepared to stand trial if Washington could produce evidence against him... [I]n Washington... the... [US] President... lifted sanctions imposed on Pakistan and India for their 1998 nuclear tests, rewarding Islamabad for its support in the U[S] confrontation with Afghanistan...

As clouds of war roll towards the borders of impoverished Afghanistan, a growing number of protesters, including N[Z]ers, are calling for peace. Nearly 300 gathered at Queen Elizabeth Square in Auckland on Saturday, urging the U[S] to seek justice rather than retribution for the suicide attacks that killed nearly 6500 people... Many said US bombs would merely kill the poor and the sick... and others said that killing was just plain wrong. A few called for Americans to step back and ask themselves why their nation was so hated... [T]here was also a question of proof. The US had yet to show that [the Saudi extremist] was behind the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon... Their calls were echoed around the world. The largest protest was in the U[S] – ...10,000 demonstrators assembled peacefully only blocks from the White House.

...THE first American pilots to fly missions over Afghanistan this year [will never leave] the ground. They[will si]t inside control stations, perhaps in Uzbekistan or even Turkey and fl[y]... drones by remote control... Defence analysts say Afghanistan's uniquely rugged and remote terrain is the perfect showcase for one of the U[S]'s most promising young technologies – the Un-[pilot]ed Aerial Vehicle, or UAV. Smaller and quieter than jets, more mobile than satellites, [such] drones are being used with increasing frequency to peer into hostile, unknown territory without putting the lives of pilots at risk. UAVs were used regularly during the Persian Gulf War to identify targets but modern versions can fly longer and farther and gather infinitely better intelligence. Besides simple photography, they can now use radar to track individual vehicles or even people – day or night, cloudy or not. The aircraft have their weaknesses. They are notoriously fickle in bad weather and sometimes crash mysteriously. But the air force and navy are so enamoured with UAVs that they are experimenting with missile-firing drones and considering giving them combat roles.

...fighter jets yesterday resumed missions from the US aircraft carrier circling off Pakistan in the northern Arabian Sea carrying deadly cluster bombs for use against tanks and enemy personnel in Afghanistan... A senior officer... said it was no longer necessary to use sophisticated stand-off weapons, which could be dropped further away from the targets, "now that we have established air superiority". The death toll pushed past 300...

[The Afghani] was asleep when it happened, and so his friends and neighbours had to tell him about the bomb that struck his house... How the American planes, which had been over earlier in the evening, had returned after everyone went to bed and how, instead of the Taliban base 3.2km away, they dropped their bombs on a residential area... In the eleven hours between the explosion and the moment when [it] finally regained consciousness, [the Afghani]'s wife, his four children, his parents, and five of his brothers and sisters had been lifted dead from the rubble of their home and buried. What do you say to a stranger who tells you that [it] has just lost every member of his immediate family? ...[the Afghani] is not familiar with the phrase "collateral damage"... In the nineteen days of the bombing campaign, many terrible things have been reported...

An American bomb missed its target in Afghanistan by 1.6km because a target coordinate was entered incorrectly into its satellite navigation system, a US defence official said. Ground reports indicated that four [civilians] were killed and eight injured... US officials said they had no way to confirm the number of casualties. Reports in Kabul said a[nother] bomb killed a 14-year-old girl and wounded four other residents when it hit a residential area in the capital... Meanwhile, [a]t... least 20 people were killed in Nigeria in anti-American riots yesterday... Nigerian authorities issued a shoot-on-sight order and clamped a night curfew on Kano, the biggest city in the mainly Muslim north, after some of the most violent anti-American protests in Africa since US air strikes on Afghanistan began... Kano['s] residents said the protests were hijacked by hoodlums from the city's army of unemployed, who chanted "May God destroy America!" and "Americans are terrorists". In India, at least 12 people were injured in a clash between Hindus and Muslims after Hindus tried to burn portraits of [the Saudi-born extremist] in the state of Bihar, authorities said.

...up to 16 Christians... [were] shot dead... at prayers last night in an unprecedented attack in the central Pakistani town of Bahawalpur. Christians have expressed fears they could become targets if unrest broke out in Muslim Pakistan over opposition to the U[S] attacks on Afghanistan... Earlier, US warplanes pounded Taliban positions around Kabul... but one bomb killed at least 10 people in a village controlled by Afghanistan's opposition Northern Alliance... The *Washington Post* reported yesterday that the CIA was considering secret missions aimed at killing individuals that the US designated as "terrorists". The agency believes it has the authority for covert, "targeted killing" missions based on classified memorandums... Meanwhile, among almost 1000 people being held in the US in connection with the terrorist attacks are people who made congratulatory telephone calls after the hijacked aircraft hit the World Trade Center and the Pentagon... These suspected associates of [the Saudi extremist] are among 977 people held on various charges related to the September 11 attacks. FBI agents intercepted telephone calls, moved in and made arrests, holding the bulk of those arrested on immigration or criminal violations and a smaller group on material witness warrants...

Afghan and U[S] officials headed to an Afghan village yesterday to investigate reports that a stray US bomb killed 40 members of a wedding party during a major operation to track down [the]Taliban leader... who was born close to the village but has been on the run... The US military said its forces had been fired on... and they had responded. But... at least one bomb had missed its target and there had been civilian casualties.

...AFGHAN and US forces continued their search for [the]fugitive Taliban leader... yesterday while a US special forces soldier was killed in... Afghanistan – the first American military casualty killed by enemy fire in the three-month war... The U[S] has arranged for Pakistan to turn over to US control the Taliban's former ambassador to Pakistan... who is in detention in the northwestern city of Peshawar. [The ambassador] would be one of the highest ranking Taliban members to come under US control... since the collapse of the Taliban... [The Saudi extremist] has disappeared...

When the body count doesn't count The call of nature drew [an Afghani] from his home just after the B-52 bombers started their pass over his village. In the early morning darkness of the remote area, [the villager]... could not see the bellies of the mighty... aircraft split open and release 25 bombs into the cold air. But [the villager] did hear one of the 450kg bombs slam into his house, killing 12 relatives[, and] also heard the other bombs as they cut a swathe through the other houses, killing more than 100 of the village's 300 residents... Fifteen hours later, when accusations of the latest civilian deaths filtered back to the West, [a US]Marine Corps spokes[person]... said simply: "It just did not happen." But journalists who visited the village and found huge bomb craters, smashed houses, scattered children's shoes, dead cows and sheep and graves swear it did. Which raises the question – how many civilians really have died in the US bombing of Afghanistan and why have we heard so little about them? A study by [a]New Hampshire professor... says 3767 civilians died in the first nine weeks of bombing. The toll... is now well over 4000. If his figures are correct, the civilian death toll in Afghanistan has passed the 2996 killed in the September 11 attacks that started the war in the first place... Not surprisingly, [the professor]'s Afghanistan death toll has been challenged by the Pentagon. A major at the US defence headquarters, who would identify himself only as "a spokes[person]", said the... military went to extraordinary lengths to avoid civilian deaths. [The major] said it was hard to work out how many people were dying and pointed out that the number of people killed in the New York attack was initially thought to be 10,000...

U[S] air strikes in Afghanistan... killed 812 civilians, largely because military leaders rel[ied] on false information from local warlords, a study says. The Pentagon's strategy of bombing targets instead of riskier ground operations... made it harder to discover when intelligence [wa]s wrong, says the report by American group Global Exchange, whose field workers in Afghanistan compiled a list of those killed... American military commanders disputed the figures, insisting they often verified their targets with several sources of information to ensure civilians were not hit.

...Marjan... survived wars, sieges, invasions and a grenade attack but... the lion of Kabul, has finally succumbed to the one foe [it] could not beat: old age. Afghanistan's only lion was found dead in his cage... yesterday after refusing to eat any food for days... Marjan – one-eyed, decrepit and at least 40 years old – became famous worldwide when his plight in Kabul's dilapidated zoo was highlighted... Cynics said the old cat generated far more attention than most of Afghanistan's needy human population. One British tabloid led a fund-raising campaign for him that collected \$US225,000. Recently Marjan had enjoyed... regular gifts of meat and the care of keepers who were being paid for the first time in years... His closest shave in his long and troubled life came when a Taliban fighter trying to prove his courage climbed into the... enclosure. A hungry Marjan pounced on the hapless [fighter] and ate him. Perhaps obeying Afghanistan's harsh codes of revenge, the [fighter]'s brother returned the next day and lobbed a grenade into the cage... blind[ing Marjan and leaving] him lame... A gift from Germany... 38 years ago, [Marjan] was a veteran of 22 years of civil war and the recent weeks of U[S] bombing that dislodged the Taliban... [□ The Taliban isn't the only organisation to collapse in the wake of the 9/11 attacks – Canada's 2]nd largest airline, Canada 3000, has folded stranding thousands and putting 4800 employees out of work. The low-cost 38-plane carrier became the [#2] airline in Canada after swallowing Royal Aviation Airlines and Can Jet [before September 11 last] year.

...“Before September 11, civil aviation was the... symbol of commerce. We knew with certainty that it built economies. We knew it tied the world together. We knew it improved our quality of life. On September 11, the world changed. Terrorists turned tools of commerce – instruments of unity – into weapons of hate.” ...AS the World Trade Centre towers began to crumble so, too, did global aviation, passenger confidence and world economies. The impact was immediate. Minutes after the attacks, the Federal Aviation Authority closed US air space for the first time in aviation history, grounding 6000 planes. Thousands of passengers were stranded for up to four days. As the horror hit, the aviation world faced a new reality... “We knew the world was different, we had a high-risk situation and we had to respond to it quickly.” But despite everyone's best efforts to remain calm, passengers stayed away. They had been bombarded with images of planes crashing into huge central-city buildings, triggering an unprecedented fall in travelling while aviation security and insurance costs soared. In September, passenger traffic worldwide dropped by 17[%] and freight traffic dropped by 16[%]. The US was hit hard: passenger traffic fell by 32[%]... But that was only the beginning – traffic continued to tumble until December. By the end of last year there were 60 million fewer passengers and freight had dropped by two million tonnes. The blow hit an already desperate industry. Airlines had lost \$3 billion in eight months before September 11... By September 11, airlines had little room to manoeuvre. To survive, they had to cut unprofitable routes and reduce flight frequency and staff. By the end of the year 120,000 airline employees had lost their jobs. To get passengers flying again airlines offered cheaper flights. But to do that they needed to reduce overheads. As well as cutting routes, they retired old aircraft to reduce capital costs. About 2500 new plane orders were cancelled. Aeronautical engineering and manufacturing companies had to cut 40,000 jobs. The... International Civil Aviation Organisation... estimates that aerospace manufacturers will have lost up to \$7.5 billion by the end of this year. International airlines lost more than \$10 billion by the end of last year, [and] [despite financial assistance... airlines still struggled... [‘Belgian Air and Swiss Air’ were among the airline companies that have folded.] Sure, some 30,000 planes[still] take off every day in the US, but many are all but empty... America's sixth-largest carrier, US Airways... gained court bankruptcy protection. That caused airline stocks to tumble, hitting the world's second-largest airline, United Airlines, when parent company UAL Corp's stocks fell 27[%]... A United Airlines closure could also affect other airlines that share passengers through the Star Alliance, including Air N[Z].

...Air NZ... has cancelled seven international flights because potential passengers are now reluctant to fly... The cancelled flights are on the daily Sydney-Los Angeles route[(Air NZ's Star Alliance partner, ‘United Airlines, has ended its service to NZ’ altogether)]... Last month, the Tourism Action Group predicted a 10[%] drop in international visitors [to NZ]... as a result of [last year's] terrorist attacks... on the U[S].

...BIG-SPENDING Japanese tourists are cancelling trips here in droves, confirming fears that the... terrorist attacks in the U[S last year]... may bring a lean period for many in the [NZ] tourist industry. One Christchurch tour company has had 21 of 25 tour groups scheduled to visit here... called off. The Japanese-owned company says many others who specialise in Japanese tourists are in a similar position and could go out of business.

...Easy, no hassle NZ gets vote as a safe place to visit WHILE many parts of the world are off limits to travellers, N[Z] has been voted... the safest destination[by r]eaders of UK magazine *Wanderlust*... The [editor of the] magazine... said the U[S] and Britain had scored in the top six... in its September [2001] issue... but... imagined they would not do so well now. “Even more so now, N[Z] would be seen to be a very safe place,”... Tourism in both countries has suffered since the [September 11 terrorist] attacks, with trans-Atlantic airlines hard-hit by a fall in passenger numbers.

...Britain has warned its citizens not to travel to Indonesia after two German tourists... mistaken for Americans... were kicked and punched... on Lombok Island... The attacks were the first reports of assaults on foreigners in mainly Muslim Indonesia since... the suicide plane attacks on the U[S]... “We are advising against any non-essential travel to Indonesia, with the exception of Bali,” said a [British] Foreign Office spokes[perso]n.

...Bloodbath on holiday island... More than 180 people, including at least one N[Zer], are feared dead after car-bombs ripped through packed nightspots on the usually tranquil Indonesian tourism island of Bali... Late last night overwhelmed Balinese hospital officials said 309 people were wounded, about 90 of them critically, in what the Indonesian police chief said was the worst act of terror in his country's history, and one that the U[S] condemned as despicable... [NZ's P]M... rang her A[US]n counterpart... last night to express her condolences for his country's loss... A[US]n travellers are believed to... make up around 75[%] of the dead and injured... [The AUSn media is already referring to the attack as ‘AUS's September 11th’. But their] Government is wary of linking the attack to A[US]'s support for the U[S]-led war on terror[– saying]... the attack was more against Westerners in general... [NZ's PM said NZ] had spent a lot more money in beefing up national security following September 11 than Indonesia. Acts such as yesterday's bombing in Bali justified that spending. The Government knows of seven injured N[Z]ers, including four who are in hospital, with serious burns... Also affected will be predominantly Britons, Canadians, Germans and Swedes – but few from the travel-wary U[S]... Another bomb exploded about the same time 50m away from the US honorary consulate several kilometres away... No casualties were reported.

...A[US] came to a standstill yesterday as a minute's silence was observed across all states during a national day of mourning for victims of the Bali bombings... In Auckland yesterday 21 people attended a service organised by the Indonesian Human Rights Committee to honour victims... N[Z and AUS] had shared traumatic experiences during wars and now shared another sad period in their joint history... The hard times are just beginning for Bali... Even as *Time Asia* once again names Bali as Asia's favourite destination, hotels have emptied. Official figures show that within three days hotel occupancy plummeted and international departures outnumbered arrivals almost two to one. Some figures now estimate that 300,000 bookings have been cancelled. The sprawling restaurants of the Natour Kuta are all but empty... now. At the nearby Ineka Hotel, staff say layoffs will start in two weeks... The official toll of confirmed dead stands at 187 after the weekend death of a Balinese [resident] who was air-lifted to A[US] for care... An Indonesian... has become the focus of international investigators hunting those responsible for the Bali... atrocity.

...‘Hated Americans’... – not A[US]ns or N[Z]ers – were evidently the avowed targets of the Bali nightclub bombers who killed 184 people on the Indonesian resort island last month. Indonesia's chief investigator says [the perso]n who has confessed to helping to build a bomb admitted blundering over the nationality of his victims. The suspect... allegedly told police [it] wanted to kill “as many Americans as possible”[and] was “not very happy” when most of the dead turned out to be A[US]n... Three N[Z]ers and up to 88 A[US]ns were among those killed... Only about three Americans are believed to have been killed, although many human remains have still to be identified. If [the suspect] was telling the truth, his confession discloses a woeful lack of research and local knowledge. The Sari Club was a famous A[US]n haunt... and American tourists were sparse

anyway after last year's terrorism attacks in the U[S]. ● Local rescue]... experts are pleading for money to set up a specialist September 11-style search squad in Auckland that could save the lives of people trapped in collapsed buildings. Teams equipped with remote search cameras and sonic detectors are established in Palmerston North... [- which] also has heavy concrete-cutting equipment... [-] and Christchurch. But rescuers in Auckland, the country's largest population centre and host to a potentially "soft" terror target, the America's Cup, are having to practise without heavy-duty equipment needed to save lives when big buildings collapse... [I]t could take three... years to get enough money from the Government...

Big Brother rules as the world enters a 'red alert zone'... Surveillance cameras, electronic swipe cards, turnstiles, metal detectors, x-ray screening, thumb print and retina scans... [-] for millions these are increasingly part of simply turning up for work. Security fears following the September 11 and Bali attacks are turning A[US]n city buildings into fortresses... and workers had better get used to it. Not only is... Big Brother... here to stay but it is set to become far more pervasive. Anxiety over safety means that walking through the front door at work is becoming, for some, akin to boarding an international flight... Landmarks such as Sydney's Opera House and harbour bridge are obvious targets, as are Western diplomatic missions. Police point out there are 120 consulates in Sydney alone, and it can take up to 10 officers to adequately protect one VIP... Police expect to receive continuous threat alerts in the coming years... [The] infrastructure protection co-ordinator for the N[SW] Counter Terrorist Command... said [it] had discussed with a military analyst the way the 2000 terrorist attack on the USS Cole in Yemen had been a precursor to the more horrific attacks a year later on US soil. "[The analyst] said Bali was not our September 11 but our USS Cole. I honestly hope that's not the case."

...Specialised units... including Utah Swat teams, spent the last two months of last year quietly training at a Government-financed counter-terrorism camp in the Nevada desert. There they faced every imaginable terrorist scenario – tractor-trailers crashing into powerlines, hostage-taking, live biohazards and an exploding nuclear plant. Despite a security budget of \$US310 million, the Winter Olympics are being viewed as the next logical terrorist target... [There] will be... 5000 uniformed troops, 7000 public-safety officers and 2100 fire and emergency service personnel. Just in case, local businesses have hired a 6000-strong private security force. Terror is hardly a new Olympic fear, as Munich 1972 and Atlanta 1996 remind us. September 11 only upped the ante... In what would be an unprecedented security move, Salt Lake City International airport is expected to be shut during the... opening and closing ceremonies... Never before has a host city's airport been closed during an Olympics ceremony.

...Recycled steel from the World Trade Centre will... build part of a new U[S] warship, according to... Northrop Grumman. The ship will be named the New York, in honour of the almost 2800 people who died in the attacks on September 11, 2001. Steel will be shipped to Northrop's shipyard in Pascagoula, Mississippi, for construction to begin in the middle of next year. The 208m ship should be ready for service in 2007. New York authorities face problems disposing of the 1.62 million tonnes of rubble that went to the nearby Fresh Kills landfill... Some memorial sculptures made from recycled steel have been commissioned by the city, and this year nearly 20,000 tonnes of World [Trade] Centre scrap was shipped to India for use in construction projects... Meanwhile, classified sections of the US Congress' September 11 report lay out a web of connections among Saudi business[people], royal family, charities and banks that may have aided al Qaeda or the suicide hijackers, according to people who have seen [i]t...

An audio tape purportedly from [the] top al Qaeda official... – considered to be [the Saudi extremist and] al Qaeda leader[']s right-hand guy (the official)... has appeared in almost every videotaped statement from the al Qaeda leaders since the September 11, 2001, attacks on the US[-] ...warned the U[S] yesterday that it would pay a high price if it harmed any of the detainees at the US base at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba... Washington is holding more than 600 people from 42 nations as prisoners at... the... naval base. US plans to try six of them in military tribunals that can hand out death sentences sparked international criticism... The detainees, suspected members of al Qaeda and others caught in... the "war on terrorism", have been held and interrogated without being charged. Human rights groups have criticised Washington for refusing to give the detainees the rights accorded to prisoners of war under international treaties... *Detained indefinitely, the prisoners have been denied legal representation...* The tape broadcast by Dubai-based Al Arabiya television also said the "real battle" against the US had not started yet... "We tell America only one thing. What you have suffered until now is only the initial skirmishes... Let those who conspire with America know that America is incapable of protecting itself... and let every captive held by the infidels be assured that the day of liberation is [coming] soon," it added.

...An American jet registered to a ghost company whisks terror suspects to countries that use torture... a process the CIA calls "rendition"...

Prevention... becomes the aggressive watchword in Washington... The U[S]... may take pre-emptive action in the next phase of its war on terror, ratcheting up the rhetoric that has alarmed Iraq and Iran. "The best defence is a good offence," [the] US Deputy Secretary of Defence... told a security conference in Munich, elaborating on a theme set by [the US] President... last week when [it] called Iran, Iraq and North Korea the "axis of evil". "Our approach has to aim at prevention and not merely punishment," said... a hawk in the [Republican] Administration. "We are at war." Iraqi newspapers... condemned "the dwarf..." as savage and aggressive and Iranian parliamentarians called him a threat to world peace and security. In Afghanistan... fresh fighting erupted between factions scrambling for advantage in the vacuum left by the vanquished Taliban... In Washington, [the US President outlined] plans... for an increase of \$US45 b... over this year's defence total... plus... \$US9.4 b... to battle terrorism...

The [US] Administration has told the Defence Department to prepare, on a contingency basis, plans to use nuclear weapons against at least seven countries. The military was also directed to build smaller nuclear weapons for use in certain battlefield situations. The countries named in the secret report – ...leaked to the *Los Angeles Times* – were China, Russia, Iraq, North Korea, Iran, Libya and Syria... The identification of Iraq, Syria and Libya as potential targets could complicate this week's trip by [the US] Vice-President... to the Gulf and the Middle East. His main mission is to try to strengthen support among Arab leaders for the US-led campaign against terrorism. Most are... opposed to attacks on any Arab countries.

...THE [US] government is hiring... 450 extra staff to help guard nuclear secrets after reports top-secret papers were leaked to China... over the past 20 years... from US nuclear weapons research laboratories... [To] obtain info... from US scientists, [China plied] them with liquor and t[ook] them sightseeing while having their hotel rooms burgled... ■ N[Z – which] established diplomatic relations with North Korea... last year... [-] has been hoodwinked into pouring... money... into... the impoverished... [nation, thinking i]t... would help to stop the rogue state's nuclear weapons programme. So far, N[Z] has contributed \$4.5 million to [the] international scheme... North Korea agreed to stop developing nuclear weapons in 1994 in exchange for help from the U[S] and other countries in building two light-water nuclear power plants and supplying heavy fuel oil... But two weeks ago Pyongyang admitted to the Americans that it had been engaged in a clandestine uranium-enrichment programme... [which] apparently would make enough material to build one or two nuclear weapons a year. [Some analysts fear 'the US appears to be ignoring North Korea as it turns its attention towards Iraq']

...*Musclebound megapower a victim of its own might...* North Korea is a rogue leftover of the Cold War that the US won more than a decade ago... North Korea[']s leader... was branded part of the "axis of evil" in [the US President]'s State of the Union address... when [it] warned North Korea that any attempt to restart its nuclear missile programme would bring terrible punishment. Now North Korea is cocking a plutonium snook at Washington by brazenly threatening to do what [the Iraqi dictator] is only suspected of trying to do. Nuclear weapons in the hands of North Korea are a clear and present danger, amplified by that unpredictable regime's record of selling missiles to other risk states. And what does [the US President do? It] suggests talks. Defy the hyperpower, and they'll ask for a chat... Yet even America finds it cannot operate without allies. This right-wing and unilateral-minded Administration has made the rude discovery that it cannot rule the world alone. America's allies in the Far East all want a diplomatic, not a shooting, solution to the crisis in North Korea. In the Middle East, the Turks are being difficult about allowing their soil to be used for an invasion of Iraq from the north. The second-rank powers on the Security Council – Russia, China and France – are staying

America's hand by demanding the production of the so-far-elusive "smoking gun" before they will consider mandating a war against [Iraq's leader].

...The coming assault on Baghdad already has its first hero: Colonel John Boyd, a foul-mouthed, insubordinate fighter pilot who has been in his grave... almost five years. When Iraq's tyrant is brought down, that inevitable victory will be Boyd's doing. You won't hear [hi]s name being cited in Rose Garden speeches, however. Nor will the Pentagon be authorising any posthumous decorations for the [guy] who, through 30 years of bureaucratic guerilla warfare, transformed America's military. Even though [Boyd] gave them many of the tools that made Operation Desert Storm... a sweeping success in 1991, the brass continued to hate [him] with such a passion that, as a final sign of contempt, they sent only a single general as their official representative at his funeral. But without his influence, the US would almost certainly be preparing to enter Iraq much as it fled Saigon; a vast, muscle-bound killing machine based on the assumption that big budgets and expensive weapons assured victory. That approach didn't work in Vietnam, nor... in tiny Grenada... "Thank goodness they have dumb sons of bitches in the Kremlin, too," Boyd fumed not long after. "If they weren't thick as ****, Grenada would prove how weak we really are." ..."[Boyd's military strategy was] Observe-Orient-Decide-Act – commonly known as the OODA loop," says [hi]s biographer... "Simply rendered, the... loop is a blueprint for the manoeuvre tactics that allow one to attack the mind of an opponent, to unravel its commander... before a battle begins." To [the biographer] and others, including [the US] Defence Secretary... Boyd is "the most influential military thinker since Sun Tzu wrote *The Art of War* 2400 years ago". So why should pacifists cheer the memory of a [guy] whose life was devoted to perfecting the use of martial force? Because, if the Iraq invasion goes even remotely according to plan, [the dictator]'s downfall will be short and relatively bloodless. Isolated, unable to trust his generals and with his every move tracked by the cheap, plentiful, all-seeing Predator drones... Boyd also helped to develop, [the dictator] will have two options: surrender or perish. The Baghdad campaign will reflect Boyd's greatest insight, the one... borrowed from Sun Tzu [– t]he sweetest victory... is the one that does not demand a battle.

...How to win friends at home and influence neighbours... [The dictator]'s decision to free all prisoners from Iraq's jails, including those locked up for opposing his regime, is the latest sign that [it] is clearing the decks for war. While his allies in Baghdad claim that [the dictator] is unmoved by American threats, every step that his regime takes must be seen in the light of [the US President]'s stated intention to overthrow him... [or] to "destroy Iraq"... By showing a softer face to the Iraqi people, [the dictator] hopes to rally them for war and maximise popular resistance to any American and British invading force... Freeing all political prisoners is a sop to international opinion and gives the Arab world an opportunity to argue that [Iraq]'s regime is reforming... For both his domestic and international audiences, [the dictator] has staged uncharacteristic displays of humility recently. [The dictator] returned Kuwait's national archives – looted during the invasion of 1990 – on Saturday. Kuwait claims that 600 of its citizens disappeared during the occupation and are in [Iraq]'s jails. The amnesty may result in their freedom too... [The dictator]'s change of approach began with last month's announcement that [it] would allow the return of U[N] weapons inspectors. Yet only the spectre of war has led [him] to take these steps. It would take immense naivety to believe [the dictator is now] a genuine reformer. The evidence suggests that [the dictator] does not believe [it] can avoid war... [The dictator]'s only option is to rally as much support as possible in advance of the conflict... [that] is coming.

...Iraq has been ordered to destroy dozens of missiles which violate U[N] limits, but the U[S] and Britain are not waiting to see whether [the dictator] complies. In recent days they have stepped up attacks on missile sites near Basra which could threaten the military build-up in Kuwait and the Gulf. The raids are being carried out by aircraft patrolling the "no-fly" zones in northern and southern Iraq, established by the victors after the first Gulf War. They claim the patrols are being carried out in the name of the UN – especially ironic, given the passionate debate over the need for a second Security Council resolution to authorise war on Iraq. Some have always disputed whether the... zones have UN authority, but now the US and Britain have widened the "rules of engagement" to the point where warplanes are effectively preparing the way for an imminent invasion.

...The... U[S] Defence Secretary... says the... attack on Baghdad is "as targeted an air campaign as has ever existed". But [the hawk] should not try telling that to... [one] wounded Iraqi child... [The] 5-year-old... looked at me yesterday... as [it] tried vainly to move the left side of her body. The cruise missile that exploded close to her home in the Radwaniyah suburb of Baghdad blasted shrapnel into her tiny legs... and, far more seriously, into her spine. Now [the girl] has lost all movement in her left leg... [The girl] was the first of 101 patients brought into the Al-Mastansaniya College hospital after America's blitz on the city began on Saturday... There is something sick, obscene about these hospital visits. We bomb. The [Iraqi people] suffer. Then we turn up and take pictures of their wounded children. The Iraqi Minister of Health decides to hold an insufferable press conference outside the wards to emphasise the "bestial" nature of the [US] attack. The Americans say... they don't intend to hurt children. And [the 5-year-old] looks at me and the doctors for reassurance, as if [it] will awake from this nightmare and move her left leg and feel no more pain. Let's forget, for a moment, the cheap propaganda of the regime and the equally cheap moralising of Messrs [US President and US Defence Secretary]... For the reality of war is ultimately not about military victory and defeat, or the lies about "coalition forces" which our "embedded" journalists are now peddling about an invasion involving only the Americans, the British and a handful of A[US]ns. War, even when it has international legitimacy – which this war does not – is primarily about suffering... After a while, "multiple shrapnel wounds" sounds like a natural disease which, I suppose, among a people who have suffered more than 20 years of war – it is. And all this, I asked myself yesterday, was all this for September 11, 2001? All this was to "strike back" at our attackers, albeit that [the 5-year-old and all of the other injured Iraqi children] have nothing – absolutely nothing – to do with those crimes against humanity... Who decided, I wonder, that the[y]... should suffer for September 11? Wars repeat themselves. Always, when "we" come to visit those we have bombed, we have the same question. In Libya in 1986, I remember how [US] reporters would repeatedly question the wounded: had they perhaps been hit by shrapnel from their own anti-aircraft fire? Again, in 1991, "we" asked the Iraqi wounded the same question. And yesterday, a doctor found himself asked by a British radio reporter – yes, you've guessed it – "Do you think, doctor, that some of these people could have been hit by Iraqi anti-aircraft fire?" Should we laugh or cry at this? Should we always blame "them" for their own wounds. Certainly we should ask why those cruise missiles exploded where they did, at least 320 in Baghdad alone, courtesy of the USS Kitty Hawk... It is the same old story. If we make war – however much we blather on about our care for civilians – we are going to kill and maim the innocent.

...Speculation continues that [the Iraqi dictator] was killed in the opening waves of the attacks on [Baghdad on]Thursday morning but Iraqi state television says [the Iraqi dictator] chaired a meeting of top officials on Saturday... Fox News [had previously reported that the dictator] was seen being placed on a stretcher and into an ambulance in photographs in the possession of the U[S] Government showing what is described as "panicked digging" at the bunker/command-and-control facility hit in the first strike of the war... [T]he US attack on [the] bunker... came during an intelligence meeting headed by... [the dictator]'s younger son... "Unfortunately, [the dictator] was not critically injured. We think [it] is still alive...", a front page report in the *Telegraph* quoted an unnamed official as saying. Meanwhile, the *Independent on Sunday* reported that [the British PM] and his ministers were told that US and British intelligence believe [the Iraqi dictator and his son] might have been killed in the first allied strikes.

...The US yesterday pulverised parts of a Baghdad neighbourhood in a direct bid to kill [Iraq's]President... and his sons. Four 900kg bunker-busting bombs dropped from an Air Force B-1B plane left a "huge smoking hole"... and broke windows and doors 300m away... It was unclear last night... whether anyone was wounded or killed... [but r]esidents standing around the rubble said shrapnel killed victims 200m away... The renewed attacks came less than 24 hours after... the Army's 3rd Infantry Division... stormed the Iraqi capital and seized [the] New Presidential Palace.

...Baghdad's arc of death... [A US] Lieutenant-Colonel... did not see much of Baghdad as his battalion of 60 tanks, Bradleys and other armoured vehicles churned along Highway 8, rumbling through an industrial and then a residential zone not far from the city centre. All [the colonel]

recalled, when it was over, were the... wisp and blast of rocket-propelled grenades, the whiz of bullets and the fiery explosions of cars packed, [it] assumed, with explosives. "It was three hours of organised chaos." The colonel's battalion, part of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, rolled into the heart of Baghdad in what, on the Iraqi side, must have seemed like the beginning of the invasion of the city itself. The casualty count was unknowable, because the American soldiers moved virtually without stopping, but in the estimate of the Second Brigade's commander... more than 2000 Iraqi fighters died or were wounded. For commanders, the march was as much a psychological as a strategic display of force that they hoped would hasten the fall of [Iraq's] President... A tank commander, sitting exposed in his open hatch, was killed when a grenade or mortar exploded in his face. At least six US soldiers were hurt, some seriously, in the lightning thrust, which reports likened to a drive-by shooting... [A US gunner said it] simply never stopped firing... The Iraqi fighters... fired from streets, from groves of trees, from highway overpasses. Many mingled with civilians caught up in the unexpected armoured thrust. Some people ran. Others waved white clothes or held up their hands. "It was hard to shoot, because you don't want to shoot the civilians... It was hard to pick out the threat." The four tanks of [the gunner's] platoon, part of Company A, bear the names of the four airliners hijacked on September 11, 2001... [While the] audacious drive through Baghdad streets was... test[ing] their foe's mettle, [a]... US jet score[d] a 'really bad own goal', dropping a bomb right beside a convoy... [of] US special forces and Kurds... travelling... in Northern Iraq, killing up to a dozen soldiers... The Pentagon said yesterday that 113 members of the U[S] forces had been killed [so far] in the war against Iraq... Britain lists 27 dead... 1252 Iraqi civilians killed and 5103 injured, say Iraqi officials... No confirmed number of Iraqi military deaths.

...The [US] force advancing on Tikrit is intent on sealing the demise of the mortally wounded Government of [the Iraqi] President... The Army and Marine assault on Baghdad has dealt a devastating blow to [hi]s Government, and given the [US] control of the vital, if still lawless capital.

...American officials have another reason not to welcome the sight of jubilant Iraqis ransacking Government buildings in Baghdad. Crucial secrets, they fear, might be contained in the ripped and discarded documents now fluttering over the rooftops of Iraq's capital. The papers could at last... prov[e that the dictator (who 'has a US\$40 million bounty on his head')] sponsored terrorism or paid for nuclear technology – and justify U[S] claims that led to the war. And they could help track down the dictator's vast personal fortune... Estimates of [hi]s wealth range from US\$1 billion... to more than US\$20 billion... If the money is recovered, there are certain to be heated disputes over who is entitled to it. Iraq will be keen to repatriate it, claiming it was stolen. But the country has many international creditors, and owed US\$100 billion even before [the last Gulf War]. Kuwait still wants reparations from the last Gulf War.

...A huge cache of U[S] currency that American soldiers found hidden in one of [the Iraqi dictator]'s palaces could be as much as US\$656 million... [US] officials said the currency would be flown to a secure location for safekeeping and turned over to the new leadership of Iraq... Also at the weekend... a mass grave thought to contain up to 600 Kuwaiti prisoners of war executed... after the first Gulf War was uncovered west of Baghdad.

...ELECTRONICS giant Sony is about to cash in on the Iraq war by selling a PlayStation 2 game called Shock and Awe in the US... Other items planned for sale in the US include an Axis of Evil board game, Iraqi Freedom crockery and clothes, and Shock and Awe trainers and dolls...

[WHILE] CHILDREN in the US can play war... CHILDREN in Iraq live it... At the Iraq-Kuwait border crossing, dozens of Iraqi children hang around, pestering the Kuwaiti and British guards for food and clothing. A sign hangs from the border gate: "Please don't feed the children."

...Like many other N[Z]ers I am... appalled by the stance that... [our] politically correct Labour "regime" has taken towards the efforts of the U[S], Britain and A[US] to rid the world of the tyrant[of Iraq. The US] President... in a clear statement made in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks said that nations must decide whether they support the US and its allies or the terrorists. It is obvious that the Labour regime, motivated by a ideological dislike for the U[S] that dates back to the Vietnam War era, has decided to join the cowardly French and other nations with dubious histories in condemning the coalition of the willing for the brave action it is undertaking. Such condemnation amounts to support for the tyrant... I was [also] [saddened to see [the Labour P]M... on TV laying a wreath at Hiroshima, although I suppose for her generation W[W]II is just history, past and forgotten... I really don't know what the point of the wreath-laying was. Personally, I will always feel thankful the bombings took place.

...AS SOMEONE who only casually reads headlines, I'm not really sure what a free-trade agreement is. But in a world where there's no such thing as a free lunch, I'm sceptical... there's any such thing as a free-trade agreement. The cost, apparently, is the ability to voice certain opinions. Free expression comes at a price. Apparently, there are times to voice opinions, and times to leave the dinner party and cough into your hand. Why didn't [our PM] just shut up about her preferences on who runs America? We all know American democracy is rigged... But as a matter of principle, you have principles or you don't. And a principle is something you believe in, regardless of whether it costs you money... Let's say you and a friend have grown up together, known each other through thick and thin and, one day, that friend does something you disagree with. Do you shut up about it? The critics of [our PM]'s big mouth seem to think silence is the right decision. On one condition. If the friend in question is rich.

...Scud finds target The so-called defender of the free world is apparently just a little peed with [our P]M... after her off-the-cuff remarks that maybe the War in Iraq wouldn't have happened had [the Democratic presidential candidate – who got the most votes –] taken up residence in the White House. Well, that's tough Mr [President]! We do, after all, live in that free world you cherish so much – and that includes the right to say what we like. Or have you forgotten a basic tenant of the [US] Constitution that allows that people have a right to freedom of speech and writing?

...For a few days after the Dixie Chicks' lead singer... told a London audience, "Just so you know, we're ashamed the President of the U[S] is from Texas," there was not a ripple about the remark. The American Ambassador to Britain... was at the show on March 10 and made it a point to greet the Texas trio at a reception afterwards. Though six critics reviewed the concert, only one mentioned the comment in print. Four days later, all that had changed. Reports of the remark spread to the US through websites – notably the Drudge Report and... freerepublic.com – and in no time, the Dixie Chicks, who had been riding the top of the charts... after... their album... w[on] Grammy awards in February, found themselves the subject of radio boycotts and public CD burnings... For celebrities considering taking a public stance on the Iraq war these days, and in particular using the platform that the Academy Awards presents to address an audience of millions, the Dixie Chicks episode has become a cautionary tale.

...Freed from the oppression of their dictator, Iraqis are now free to complain. From tens of thousands of marchers chanting "down, down USA – don't stay, go away" to individuals spitting at soldiers, Iraqis are flexing a muscle that, paradoxically, had atrophied under [their dictator]. But now here's the irony that no one expected. Back in America, complaining about America is the one thing that's pretty much disappeared, lost under the weight of a collective patriotism and increasing constitutional limitations. Voicing any sort of anti-war opinion is just not done any more and a number of organisations have sprung up with the express purpose of blacklisting celebrities who speak out. [One celebrity – who]s obviously on the list[– was] quoted as saying [it] doesn't remember ever being in a climate where people were too afraid to even have a conversation about an issue, let alone a debate. But then in America, uttering any threatening remark about the President is illegal and likely to land you in jail... [L]ooking at America's history of tolerance and diversity, [one writer] said in the *Guardian* that the country was turning into a very un-American America...

The last shot in the war in Iraq will be the starting pistol for two further campaigns by the [USs' Republican] Administration... One will be fought in the region: No one really believes America's project is confined to Iraq. The toppling of [the Iraqi dictator] is first base in what... [the] leading thinker among the neo-conservatives driving foreign policy, calls "a war to remake the world"... America's continuing "war on terrorism" aims to secure Iraq, then focus on fresh enemies: Syria and Iran... The second front will be the home one: Unlike his father – who lost an election the year after driving [the Iraqi dictator] out of Kuwait – President [Dwarf] jnr has also to win what... a former aide to[the previous Democratic] President... promises to be a resumption of "partisan warfare" at home... [By the way,] Britain will commit more than 24,000 troops and 18 warships – more than half the Royal Navy's total – to a European defence force, says the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper. The figures, including 72

combat aircraft, are far higher than previously thought... The opposition Conservative Party has attacked the commitment, saying it is more than Britain can deliver.

...EU commits 100,000 troops to crisis force... Europe's decision to pledge around 100,000 troops, 400 aircraft and 100 ships to a new rapid reaction force opens the prospect of a new era of crisis intervention and peacekeeping well beyond the European Union's borders. Yesterday's conference of defence and foreign ministers assembled an impressive catalogue of [personnel] and machinery but acknowledged the size of the gaps which need to be filled, particularly in providing heavy lift, communications and better intelligence. But its areas of operation remain deliberately vague. While the 19-nation Nato alliance is constrained to operate within the "North Atlantic area," the EU has not prescribed a limit for its planned capability... While most assume that the Balkans, the Caucasus and North Africa are the obvious flashpoints in which it might be deployed, one British official yesterday reeled off a list of zones in which an EU force would have been useful: "Mozambique, Sierra Leone..."

IT WAS late at night when the... farmer came out of her house in the village of Joru in Sierra Leone to go to the lavatory. [The farmer] saw a large white truck that had stopped about 50m from her home. It was an unusual sight, so [the farmer] hid and watched. Inside were two white [guys] and a black [gal], who was yelling: "Leave me alone." "The door was open and one of them was on top of her..." The two [guys] then moved the truck further down the road and stayed about 30 minutes to rape her again. "After they finished, I saw one of them drag her out of the cabin and put her in the back of the big truck." They then drove off. There is nothing surprising about rape in Sierra Leone. During the brutal civil war, which was formally declared over in January last year, it was as common as the notorious mutilations. What made this crime stand out, however, was that the alleged perpetrators were peacekeepers from the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (Unamsil), which has been in the country since October 1999. With more than 16,000 troops, it is the largest peacekeeping operation in the world. "We're all a bit frightened of those Unamsil people now... We tell our girls never to get in a truck with them or the same thing might happen to them." As calls are made for UN peacekeepers to be sent to Liberia, it is disturbing to learn that [the farmer]'s tale – told in the Human Rights Watch report, *We'll Kill You If You Cry*, is far from unique. The report also describes how a 12-year-old girl was raped in March 2001 by a Guinean peacekeeper [patroll]ing a checkpoint after [the girl] asked him to help her get a ride to Freetown, the Sierra Leone capital. A soldier was charged and taken to court the same day. However, the Sierra Leone Police... dropped the case and the soldier was sent back to Guinea. A month before, a Nigerian peacekeeper reportedly raped a 16-year-old girl in Freetown. Unamsil said the Nigerian contingent and Unamsil's Civilian Police Section had investigated and the girl had dropped the charge. In June last year, a 14-year-old boy was allegedly raped by a Bangladeshi peacekeeper near the Jui transit camp outside Freetown. [The boy] reported the assault... and a medical examination confirmed that penetration had taken place. The Unamsil Provost Marshall took over the case, but concluded that there was insufficient evidence to link the crime with the alleged perpetrator. An order of repatriation was, however, issued. "What is particularly shocking and appalling is that those people who ought to be there protecting the local population have actually become perpetrators," said... the London director of Human Rights Watch. "It's also very disappointing that there seems to be a deep reluctance to investigate and prosecute these very serious crimes. To turn away from a problem like that is a terrible dereliction of duty." There are now 13 UN peacekeeping operations around the world, served by about 39,600 military personnel and civilian police. In 1993, the UN General Assembly approved a Code of Conduct in operation for all UN peacekeeping missions. Rule four states that they should "not indulge in immoral acts of sexual, physical or psychological abuse or exploitation of the local population... especially children... or U[N] staff...". Yet a report released at the end of last year by the UNHCR... and Save the Children UK on sexual exploitation of refugee children in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone listed many allegations against peacekeepers from nine countries. The report claimed that children as young as 5 were asked to pose naked by UN peacekeepers in exchange for food... Nowhere is the problem uglier – or more embarrassing to the UN – than in Bosnia. The sex-slave industry scarcely existed there until the mid-1990s. But when Bosnia, Croatia and Yugoslavia signed the Dayton accord in 1995 to end the civil war, a team of 50,000... peacekeepers arrived... Hundreds of brothels appeared, many staffed by girls... from neighbouring countries who had been kidnapped or lured by promises of respectable employment and sold into sexual slavery... Last year... a former... UN International Police Task Force (IPTF) officer... investigating human trafficking and forced prostitution, was awarded £110,000... by an unemployment tribunal in Southampton after [it] was unfairly sacked after blowing the whistle on colleagues... involved in the Bosnian sex trade. [The officer] revealed that UN peacekeepers went to nightclubs where girls as young as 15 were forced to dance naked and have sex with customers, and that UN personnel and international aid workers were linked to prostitution rings. Girls who refused to have sex were beaten and raped in bars by their pimps while the peacekeepers stood and watched... [T]he former IPTF commissioner, who left the post in 1999, said one UN police officer downloaded so much pornography that [it] crashed the computer system... [N]ow the senior police adviser to the Secretary General of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the biggest regional security organisation in the world[, the former commissioner] says there is not enough commitment from the countries providing staff to international organisations to take seriously the required qualities and constraints. "You must look at the quality of the people you are providing. I wouldn't have thought anyone needed to be told that you don't behave like this. So we are clearly recruiting the wrong people."

Nations have armies, navies and air forces because their leaders have aggressive aspirations; are scared of being attacked by neighbouring nations whose leaders are aggressively ambitious; or believe that the best way to sustain the economic system is to have 'an arms race'. If, however, every nation chose its leaders on merit, none would have aggressive leaders – and, therefore, no nation would need armed forces ('in 1949 Costa Rica's army was proscribed and replaced by a Civil Guard'). Likewise, armed forces won't be required in a world which is governed by a united system (be its leaders chosen by merit or any other means). Furthermore, no one could use accounting as a justification for creating, maintaining or using armed forces in a moneyless world!

Because the motives of those who seek to form a worldwide moneyless meritocracy are honourable (i.e., are based on their desire to bring an end to unnecessary suffering, to make the use and distribution of resources more efficient and equitable, and to ensure that this planet will continue to support humans for an indefinite period) – whereas the motives of those who oppose such a society are dishonourable or simply stupid (i.e., are based on a desire to gain personal wealth or power; are based on the belief that this planet is irrelevant because it is destined to soon be literally destroyed then replaced by the Kingdom of God, or because humans have the potential to eventually build spacecraft capable of sending a few elite members to a different planet, or because all they care about is what happens to themselves after they've died) – the seekers can be confident that they have a moral mandate to use force if it is necessary in order to create a united, sharing and caring world. But, if efforts to create such a world are introduced by the UN administration and the motives for doing so are properly explained, there ought to be no need to use force.

In the event that one or more of the UN's members are dissenting, or that one or more non-member-nations are unwilling to become a part of a worldwide government, it may still be unnecessary to use force against such nations (especially if they show no desire to attack another nation, their leaders aren't maintaining control via ruthless means, and the UN administration is confident that the majority of their populations are also against being part of a united world – and understand what the motives for, and benefits from, creating a united world are). In this case, a scenario could evolve where a large united system and a few independent nations exist in tandem. The united system can still trade with the independent nations, but the goods provided to them ought to only be of a humanitarian nature (e.g., food, medical supplies). Hopefully, once the united system has proved its worth, the independent nations will decide that being a part of it is in the best interests of the majority of their citizens and descendants. If not, surely their descendants will!

The armed forces of supportive member-nations should be placed under the jurisdiction of the UN. The UN could then streamline its armed forces by releasing from duty personnel who are married (unless their partner also serves in the armed forces), have children who are school-aged or less, are

considered unsuitable to remain in the armed forces for other reasons, or wish to be released from military service. If any aggressive independent nations exist, and diplomacy fails to convince them to become non-aggressive, the UN forces ought to be used to disarm and pacify them – by whichever means best suits the task, while keeping civilian casualties as close to zero as possible. If an aggressive independent nation happens to be a major military power, disarming it might prove problematic (e.g., involve a high body count; impact adversely on infrastructure and environments). However, none of the present administrations of the most powerful military nations appear to be – or are likely to become – so irrational as to choose a war against the UN over unity.

Assuming that the leaders of all the major military nations would be willing and able to participate in creating a united world, the threat their combined militaries pose to any independent nations may be enough to convince them to remain non-aggressive – if not to become fully co-operative. Furthermore, even if a number of independent nations have to be defeated in order to finally achieve worldwide peace, the combined weaponry of the UN forces ought to be enough to achieve that. Therefore, weapons factories and development can immediately be shut down within the united system (the factories could be temporarily reopened in the unlikely event that UN forces run low of ammunition, etc., before they have made the world safe from nationalistic aggression).

Even if the UN immediately receives the support of every nation at a government level, there may be dissenting political parties or military leaders who cause problems by forming breakaway militias; and, in addition, there are existing private armies (including gangs) to deal with. Although the UN should want to disband such groups a.s.a.p. – so their members can be employed in, or trained for, positions which have a positive effect on society (i.e., contribute to the production of food and other necessities, the education of children, treatment of the ill, etc.) instead of a negative one (i.e., contribute nothing that society needs; necessitate the diversion of people from the provision of essential products or services to positions which are designed to counteract illegal or anti-social activities) – avoiding loss of life ought to be its primary objective. Therefore, such groups could be monitored (e.g., by satellite) but be left alone as long as they don't cause any trouble – then they might simply disintegrate through a lack of new recruits and decreased interest from existing members. However, if a private army causes harm to the united system's citizens or facilities, the united government would – after first giving the private army an opportunity to surrender – deploy its military personnel against the private army.

Ideally, every political and militaristic organisation will quickly agree to co-operate in building a better society. Hopefully, even if some need to be dealt with violently, doing so would require just a minimum of the UN's military personnel. Therefore, even if the number of military personnel is streamlined, the UN still ought to end up having a large number of military personnel who can be considered redundant. They should all be sent to parts of the world which need to be provided with basic amenities (e.g., sturdier accommodation, accessible and sanitary water supplies, suitable waste disposal facilities, electricity). Civilians who also are considered redundant (because their home district isn't under-privileged and has an oversupply of workers due to the closing down of unnecessary industries – and they don't have children who are school-aged or less) could volunteer for such work – which may involve contributing labour, medical assistance or acting as tutors to under-educated populations.

Excess portable accommodation (e.g., caravans) can be sent to shanty towns and other substandard residential sites to be used as temporary housing – or longer-term housing if there is an initial shortage of materials to build proper accommodation – for locals or the armed forces personnel (in some instances, a site may need direct UN assistance for a number of years; but UN personnel themselves, and any civilian volunteers, might only serve at a site for six months or so before being returned to their home district – perhaps performing subsequent six month stints, at the same site or elsewhere in the world). Tents and related equipment (be they sourced from military or civilian stockpiles) could also be used to accommodate the armed forces personnel – and locals if there is a shortage of caravans and other sturdier portable accommodation (an option is converting 'containers – many of which, because a lot of freight travels in just one direction, are only used once'). In addition, where UN personnel are operating near coastlines or major rivers, naval ships should be utilised for their accommodation – and ocean liners used as temporary or long-term accommodation for locals who are homeless or currently live in substandard housing. Bombers and other large planes (be they military or civilian) would be an accommodation option for inland areas. By the way, primitive tribal groups which inhabit, for example, remote parts of South America and Papua New Guinea, ought to be allowed to continue living on their traditional lands, according to their traditional customs – but efforts should be made to gradually (and peacefully) introduce the outside world to these peoples, so they can compare it with their own lifestyle and decide whether their children must receive a more sophisticated education in order that their children, or the next generation, will eventually be capable of joining and successfully contributing to modern society by moving to a neighbouring city.

Although armed forces (plus secret forces such as MI5 and the CIA) could quickly become irrelevant in a united world, there will continue to be a need for police forces and other emergency services. However, the amount of personnel that police and emergency services require should decrease in future. A reduction in the need for fire services would be expected because although houses (and probably many other buildings) are being built out of plastics – which generally *burn faster, at higher temperatures and produce more lethal smoke* than other building materials – fireproof plastics or non-plastic materials can be used around the oven and any other heating devices (e.g., hot water cylinders), there aren't going to be any open fireplaces, gas ovens and exposed heater elements or LPG heaters, dodgy wiring (wiring can, of course, be insulated anyway) or overloaded power-sockets, less or no people are smoking and doing other stupid things involving fire (hence there would be little or no need to produce matches or lighters – there would at least be no need for them to be kept in houses), etc. New housing may be built with sprinklers and fire alarms to limit any fire damage – but, if the chances of a house catching fire are close to zero, producing, inserting and maintaining sprinkler or alarm systems might be more wasteful than useful! If it becomes possible to construct the exterior walls of houses out of a non-flammable plastic, exterior fires wouldn't be a problem – but, if houses aren't positioned near large stands of trees, and residents don't need to have backyard burn-offs of rubbish or garden debris (and, preferably, don't have barbecues or hangis – 'Maori earth-ovens; a pit is dug, stones previously heated by a fire are put in it, the food gets placed on the stones' then is buried until cooked – either), exterior fires normally won't be an issue.

If 90% of all crime is committed for money there would be a reduced need for police officers in a moneyless world. Changing from an uneven economic system to one in which everybody is paid an equal allowance (excluding, perhaps, people who refuse to perform any kind of work in exchange for such payments and other benefits – e.g., free medical treatment) mightn't automatically eliminate the opportunity or motivation for greedy people to increase their personal share by theft, cheating, or some other method – but it will reduce the number of economic crimes committed in desperation (even if lots of people are refused a full weekly payment because they are unwilling to work or undertake a training course – r:Ins55-6 above + p1953, Ins48-9 – there would be less justification for any to be economically desperate). Hopefully, no one shall be unwilling to earn its payment, or be keen to supplement it. However, if some people do continue to commit economic crimes until money has been completely eliminated from society, the practice of punishing them by placing them in a prison should immediately stop. Indeed, because the only justification for locking someone up is if that person is a danger to society, every inmate who wasn't convicted of a violent offence can be released from prison (although somebody ought to be responsible for ensuring that each inmate has somewhere suitable to live before it is freed). Such inmates could either be pardoned or have their sentences commuted to some kind of community service.

While money continues to be used by society, non-violent crimes can be punished by demotion, humiliation (r:p1953, ln44) and/or a reduction in weekly payments – although there is a risk that the latter option may cause some people to reoffend! Furthermore, while military personnel and volunteers are being sent to help under-privileged communities, childless offenders could be given the option of joining them (in this case, being separated from family and friends would be their punishment – but they could also be sent to the least desirable locations). Once money has been completely eliminated, punishment for any non-violent crimes can involve demotion (or end a person's chances of ever being promoted), transfer to a less desirable job (r:p2521, Ins48-9), subtle public humiliation, an increase in work hours (e.g., having to complete more than 24-hours per week for a period of time – which would depend on the seriousness of the offence, or number of offences committed previously; there ought to be set punishments to simplify sentencing), and loss

of recreational privileges. Banishment to locations where offenders might feel more at home (e.g., a cave or tree in the wilderness) is another option – but this punishment should be voluntary not enforced (and few if any people are likely to choose it).

Bringing an end to private ownership of vehicles, and ensuring that every worker who operates a vehicle has been properly trained, will eliminate – or at least severely reduce – the number of traffic offences which are committed (reduced volumes of traffic would also affect the incidence of traffic offences), and thereby reduce or eliminate the need for police officers (or anyone else) to specifically manage traffic. To further help reduce the need for police officers, the range of activities which are classified as illegal can be narrowed. For example, because wealthy and materialistic people are themselves immoral, police needn't bother looking into thefts of their economically valuable but non-essential personal or household items. Another possible example is that the use of narcotic drugs could be decriminalised – although people who commit crimes while under the influence of drugs, or to obtain drugs, should still be prosecuted; and dealing in drugs ought to continue being illegal (but not warrant imprisonment). Instead of allocating resources to finding and punishing drug-users, society must try to end drug use by improving social conditions and offering treatment to addicts – while also trying to end the large-scale production and distribution of narcotic drugs by gaining control of land, labour, transportation, etc. (ending the organised production and distribution of alcohol will contribute to a decreased police workload, as would halting the arranging of large social events such as sports and music extravaganzas). In addition, the police must cease to perform undercover work – especially operations which encourage people to commit a crime so they can then be arrested! However, while trying to limit the amount of work police forces have to do, it shouldn't be forgotten – as, seemingly, is currently the case in many parts of the world – that the purpose of having police forces is to protect the public. In order to better do this, some legal (or controlled) activities might become illegal. An obvious example is the private ownership of weapons. Gun-owners often point out that if guns become illegal it'll curtail their freedom to shoot at other animals from a distance or to protect themselves, and their families or personal property, from criminals (who, apparently, won't give up their guns because they don't care about laws). Yet, making guns of any kind illegal obviously means police officers can be confident that any civilian who has a gun is a criminal – thereby making officers' jobs easier, and removing the opportunity for innocent people to be shot by their own guns or the police (and if officers were properly screened before being recruited, then properly trained and equipped – plus undergo periodic physical and psychological examinations to ensure they maintain acceptable levels of performance – there would be no justification for them to ever use a gun to try and incapacitate anyone who is unarmed or wielding a club!).

It would be ideal if police officers could shoot tranquillisers at violent or armed suspects instead of bullets. Unfortunately, tranquilliser darts aren't a viable option if the suspect isn't naked (tranquilliser darts are also 'more expensive than bullets' – although that wouldn't be an issue in a moneyless society). However, considering how many fatal gases have been developed for use in warfare, is it valid to assume that at least one gas capable of temporarily rendering people unconscious – or incapacitating them in a way which is equally harmless – and can be fired via, for example, a canister (such as those used for tear gas), has been identified? (Considering how many times oil companies have apparently acquired – and then kept undeveloped – inventions which threatened their industry, it's possible that the gun and ammunition manufacturing industry has successfully suppressed the use of such a gas!) If such a gas is available – or isn't difficult to develop – police forces will have less justification to possess guns. Furthermore, closing down the production and distribution of guns (and other offensive weapons – e.g., crossbows), and destroying – or at least transferring to police arsenals, and the UN armed forces while they continue to exist – guns obtained from the public (through amnesties prior to the criminalisation of guns, or from captured criminals), means the number of guns in private hands will continually decrease until, eventually, there are none in private hands; and then police will have no justification for possessing guns (hence their remaining guns, plus any armed forces' weapons, can be destroyed – preferably by recycling their materials).

Although it isn't incorrect to say that people can't be held responsible for their actions because life is *predestined* (r:p1212, ln41), and for this reason it is unfair to punish people, everyone who considers itself to be mentally well has the impression it is choosing whether or not to do something deemed unlawful – and instances of people making the wrong choice might be God's way of proving to them that their society is imperfect, thus needs further improvement – therefore, it isn't unfair to expect lawbreakers to somehow repay society for their behaviour (as long as the laws were created for valid reasons – e.g., because the behaviour has an adverse effect on others, be they individuals or society at large – and the punishments aren't unreasonable). However, once a moneyless society has been fully established, it is possible that the only crimes being committed are those involving violence (including sex offences and vandalism – the latter generally being mindless violence directed at society itself rather than individuals) – which could mean that the cleaning of *sewers or public toilets*, etc., will have to be performed by the least qualified citizens rather than the least well-behaved (unless robots can perform these tasks; incidentally, 'a street-sweeping truck roaring down a Bronx street sucked up a dog and killed her as her owner held the leash').

In HB-led societies (i.e., those of the past and present), violence is tacitly tolerated (consider the movie industry) – and often encouraged (consider boxing and ice hockey – plus the handling of player violence by sports-body tribunals rather than public courts). In a human-led society, the beliefs of people who abhor violence will be prominent – consequently, such a society would aim to ensure that non-violent people are able to feel safe. Furthermore, a maxim of the human society would be: although not every mentally ill person is violent, every violent person is mentally ill! Therefore, such a society wouldn't have any prisons, but instead have secure psychiatric hospitals – which will contain more than enough beds, but won't contain non-violent patients (who can be treated in the community or at a hospital's psychiatric health ward – where security needn't be as tight). Secure psychiatric hospital patients won't be expected to perform work tasks – but, if necessary, could be given a chance to improve their education in addition to undertaking treatment (improving their education should help patients to better cope with being a part of society if they are eventually released – and, prior to being released, patients ought to be given an opportunity to prepare for life outside by, for example, being moved into a unit where they can get used to, or refamiliarised with, cooking for, and cleaning up after, themselves, etc.). (Until enough secure psychiatric health facilities are available, existing violent prisoners would have to remain where they are – although it might be possible to convert some prisons into psychiatric health facilities. By the way, when there are no prisons, there will be no need for prison guards – their role having been replaced by psychiatric nurses and orderlies – while a moneyless world would have little or no requirement for security guards and bodyguards, guard dogs, security cameras, safes, etc.) In addition, violent people (and potentially violent people – such as stalkers or people diagnosed with mental illnesses known to cause uncontrollable violent behaviour) wouldn't be sent to secure psychiatric hospitals for a set period of treatment – they will all be admitted indefinitely (i.e., the only way for a patient to be released from a secure psychiatric hospital is if it manages to convince a panel of senior psychiatrists that it no longer has any violent tendencies or tendencies to perform antisocial behaviour such as stalking, or that it will continue to take any prescribed medication – patients released on medication would need to be regularly blood or urine tested to check that they are taking it, and be readmitted to the secure psychiatric hospital if a test is negative). This means the public can be confident that patients who have been released from a secure psychiatric hospital are no longer dangerous (so don't need to be stigmatised) – but, if a former patient does reoffend, the people responsible for okaying its release should lose their jobs (i.e., be demoted). Obviously, not every form of violence warrants a long-term stay in a secure psychiatric hospital. However, even someone who has just punched another person once ought to be sent to a secure psychiatric hospital until it has identified why it resorted to violence, and shown that it knows how to resolve conflicts in a non-violent way. It should go without saying that once someone is in a secure psychiatric hospital, it needs to be protected from other patients (especially those patients who will never be let out because their crime was so heinous – and, usually, being able to appear sane, charming and remorseful is part of their psychosis).

When someone has committed a violent crime, the public only needs to know whether or not the offender has been apprehended (the public can be informed via radio or TV news). Unlike with minor offences, the identity of violent offenders shouldn't be publicly listed or *broadcasted* (although, if they want, victims could appear in the news – but there ought to be no form of compensation for victims). This means that people will no longer be motivated to perform unspeakable acts in order to become infamous! While the necessary satellite equipment remains operational, formerly violent offenders could be

fitted with a discrete ankle or bracelet when being released so that, if the location of an unsolved act of violence is known, they can easily be discounted or identified as the suspect (but, by the time the satellites and related equipment need to be replaced, the amount of violent crime being committed could be down to a level which doesn't justify doing so).

If a formerly violent patient does reoffend, it ought to be virtually impossible for that someone to ever be re-released. Unfortunately, keeping someone in a secure psychiatric hospital for the remainder of its life is a wasteful burden for society. Ending the lives of these and *those patients* prematurely (e.g., by lethal injection) would be a practical solution – especially if a patient is willing to be *put down* – although not a humanitarian one! However, in an improved society (i.e., one that has less stress, less head injuries, less or no use of mind-damaging chemicals, and whose children aren't raised by people who have stupid religious beliefs), the incidence of mental illness should start to decrease – and, if potentially dangerous people are identified at a young age (as is possible in many instances – r:p2598, ln21 – if parents, teachers, etc., respond sensibly to a child's abnormal or unhealthy behaviour instead of trying to ignore it), efforts can be made to correct whatever problems such children have before they reach the point where they begin to rape or kill (i.e., before they need to be kept in a secure place – although, because in a society the rights of the majority have to take precedence over those of the individual, if a child's behaviour is severe enough to warrant isolating the child from other children or adults for their safety, it may be necessary to place the child in a secure unit at an early age). Therefore, a time could arrive when no one is a danger to society, so the need for secure psychiatric hospitals no longer exists – or, at least, a time could arrive when the requirement for such facilities becomes so minimal as to have a negligible effect on human resources (even if all of the patients are there for the remainder of their lives). Note that if a time arrives when people no longer have to be concerned about someone (be they strangers or not) entering their home to rob or attack them, houses won't need locks on their front and back doors – which means nobody will need to carry house keys, or ever be accidentally locked out of their home (likewise, if no one goes where they have no business being, other buildings shouldn't need locks either; and, in a world where everyone is trustworthy, leaving food deliveries, for example, outside unattended houses wouldn't be a problem – if it is a problem, counter-measures such as having food-delivery bins which can be locked and chained to the house might have to be introduced).

In a world which is crimeless, and where nobody is able to sue anyone else, or have any reason to be involved in a major dispute with another person – and industries also have no reason to be involved in major disputes with each other – there will be no need for a judicial system (and in a moneyless world there wouldn't be any bail hearings – but only people suspected of having committed a violent offence would be sent to a remand centre, which ought to be adjacent to a secure psychiatric hospital so the suspect's mental state can be assessed while it awaits trial). If, however, the judicial system continues to be required – or while it is maintained – it shouldn't involve lawyers (instead, each suspect ought to have a court or self-appointed adviser/counsel to help it negotiate the legal process – and speak on its behalf if the suspect feels unable to speak for itself, or is incapable of doing so; no one would be employed to make guilty people look innocent or innocent people look guilty). Obviously, the judicial system will only be used when a person's guilt has to be proven. Suspects would be judged on whatever forensic evidence is available (the person responsible for compiling and presenting such evidence would be acting in place of a prosecution lawyer, but deal only with facts) – including the results of a range of lie detector tests (the more times people have to repeat their stories, the more likely it is that liars will slip up) – and the testimony of any witnesses (who must also undergo the same lie detector tests but, hopefully, won't need to receive new identities and be moved to a new district, rather than on the oratory skills of a lawyer (the lack of lawyers might produce a bonus by allowing cases to reach court earlier, and are completed in less time, than at present). Furthermore, suspects should be judged by judges – who would also question suspects and witnesses – rather than by other members of the general public (r:p2586, ln13-5). A single judge can handle simple cases, such as those involving non-violent offences or disputes, and a jury of judges can handle more serious or complicated cases (their decisions being based on a majority vote – therefore such juries will need to have an odd number of members). This means judges will actually perform the task their name implies, and use their own brains, rather than just advise other people about what the laws are and pass sentences according to those laws and the decisions of those other people.

As befits their role, judges would have to be above reproach (i.e., they obviously can't have a personal connection to the defendants or witnesses who appear before them and need to be the most moral people of all: basically, they should be the most god-like members of society, effectively taking the place of religious leaders – who won't be required by a society which believes that God is inside every human, instead of believing that 'God is watching us from a distance', is only inside one human, etc.; therefore, churches won't be required in future either – but existing churches can be used for alternative purposes rather than be pulled down before they are nearly ready to fall down). This means society will be able to trust their conclusions – which ought to always be correct (but, if they are ever wrong, that will just be bad luck for the suspect involved; the notion that *it is better for five, 10 or 20 guilty people to go free than for one innocent person to be punished* is unjustifiable, especially if the 20 guilty people were all mass murderers! – and, anyway, if an innocent person has been judged responsible for committing a violent act, it ought to have little trouble convincing mental health practitioners that it isn't a threat to society) – thereby eliminating the necessity for an appeals process (if necessary, state courts could be formed to hear appeals against district court decisions; and a world court formed for appeals against state court decisions). However, if for any reason an inquiry has to be conducted, the inquiry members could be chosen from relevantly skilled near-retirees (r:p1951, ln61-2) – the time they spend on an inquiry would be counted as working hours.

If the percentage of Security Ministry personnel in the total workforce is eventually quite low, the ministry can afford to be choosy when selecting new recruits. Rather than simply being *the most athletic members of society*, they ought to be the high school students who are able to combine above-average levels of athleticism and morality with an ability to quickly choose the best option when under pressure. Furthermore, in order to complete their training, recruits should have to gain a minimum pass-mark for courses in: standard policing (which would not only involve learning how to properly restrain mentally disturbed people but include the control of large or dangerous animals – primarily via the use of tranquillisers – that, for example, manage to get past the fence which separates a district's farm and urban land from the wildlife land); search and rescue procedures (including learning how to use whatever equipment might be required); first aid (with the emphasis on giving initial treatment to injured people who've been rescued or are the victims of violence, accidents or natural disasters); firefighting. In addition to completing to a satisfactory level each course, each recruit will need to specialise in one of them (i.e., gain a high level pass-mark). Therefore, Security Ministry personnel could be formed into teams of four, with each team-member being a specialist in a particular discipline. Each team then works as a unit, with the team-leader being whichever member is the specialist in the discipline that relates to the task a team has been assigned to deal with (i.e., if a team has to deal with four completely different situations during a single day, the team might be led by a different member on each assignment). Security Ministry personnel may be fitted with matching uniforms, which ought to be practical enough to be used for most of the assignments they are sent on (with specialised uniforms – such as firesuits – being available for use whenever a standard uniform is impractical).

If Security Ministry teams use helicopters (or a future version of vertical-takeoff aircraft capable of hovering – so they can operate over land and sea) to travel about in, they will be able to quickly respond to any call-out. Such aircraft would need to be usable in all weather conditions (if they can't be developed to fly no matter how strong the wind becomes – r:p564, ln38 + 45 – they should have a good set of wheels and suspension so they can be driven instead) while carrying the team and a small number of passengers (e.g., people who have been rescued) plus basic equipment that the team might need to use (e.g., harnesses and winches; first aid supplies) and any extra equipment which is required to complete specific tasks. It may be possible to initially convert military helicopters to perform such tasks.

Rather than fit Security Ministry aircraft with water tanks for use when fighting fires, they could have a tank of compressed foam – for use when foam is more suitable than water, or when water is unavailable – and carry hoses (that can be connected to water mains at suitable locations, such as the points where parking spaces adjacent to one-lane residential roads end and pathways, under which the water pipes lie, begin – r:p2520, ln63; an absence of tall trees around houses should make it easy for the aircraft to land on the parking spaces, and if this isn't possible – because, for example, the fire is on a

hillside – one hose would have to go from the nearest hydrant to the hovering aircraft, and the water then pass through a second hose to reach the fire). When water pipes are unavailable and foam impractical, the aircraft will need to use extra equipment (i.e., equipment not normally carried by the aircraft – e.g., a monsoon bucket). By the way, Security Ministry aircraft ought to be used to carry patients who need to reach hospitals in a hurry (standard ambulances – i.e., Health Ministry vehicles, which can be stationed at suburban medical centres – would just transport non-urgent patients; and Transport Ministry taxis, rather than Security Ministry aircraft, can be used whenever the need to move non-urgent patients outstrips the supply of ambulances).

Even when the Security Ministry's personnel constitute a small percentage of the total workforce, the amount of time each team spends on call-outs may constitute a small percentage of their rostered work hours. However, while rostered on duty and awaiting a call-out, team-members should undertake revisional training programmes, fitness exercises, or study relevant literature – and every Security Ministry worker ought to effectively be on-call for the 24 hours of each day in case of a major emergency (for this reason, such workers might normally be rostered on for less than 24 hours per week; during emergencies, they may need to work longer than 24 hours over a week or more). Whenever a district is hit by a natural disaster (e.g., an earthquake), the aim of the Security Ministry would be to quickly flood that district with as many of its personnel as is practical. Local Security personnel could immediately be aided by locals who are able to help out (e.g., because they aren't rostered to be doing their normal work at that time; because, due to the disaster, they can't perform their normal work; r:p1951, ln67-9). These people will be bolstered by Security personnel and volunteers from neighbouring districts, and as Security personnel from more distant districts arrive on the scene, they would relieve the local personnel and workers, then the next lot of arrivals could relieve the personnel from the neighbouring districts, and so on. If the Security Ministry of each district has at least one large cargo plane (i.e., large enough to carry a number of teams plus their smaller aircraft and whatever equipment they will need to use – sometimes it might not be necessary to send the smaller aircraft – and emergency supplies of tents, medication, food, or whatever is required; every factory should maintain a store of the products they manufacture so, when one district suddenly sustains major damage, essential products can quickly be replaced – r:p2203, ln14). If necessary (i.e., if the damage caused by the disaster is extensive enough, or the effects are long-lasting – e.g., after-shocks), when each of these large planes has dropped off its passengers, their equipment and any supplies, they could return from whence they came (carrying injured people if they originated from a neighbouring district and the stricken district's hospitals and SMCs – which would handle non-critical injuries – are overflowing; note that while hospitals ought to have the capacity to handle maximum levels of demand – r:p2163, ln35 – normally they need only be staffed in order to handle above average demand, and in an emergency staff numbers can be increased by calling in non-rostered staff plus one or more staff from each SMC) to collect more Security personnel – who, upon arrival in the disaster-zone, might relieve the personnel from their home district; who are then returned home (unless they have to continue providing assistance after having a rest-break). In the event that more transport planes are urgently required than available, Transport Ministry aircraft would have to be temporarily commandeered (if the Recreation Ministry has its own supply of passenger aircraft – r:p2519, ln24 – the Security Ministry should utilise these firstly, which means cancelling recreational trips rather than transportation trips that, presumably, are more essential).

Although wild forest and scrub fires are a natural, and sometimes essential, part of many environments – and, in future, humans won't be directly threatened by such fires – they can consume huge amounts of oxygen and produce massive smoke clouds. Therefore, the Security Ministry should also mount large-scale emergency operations to try and extinguish (or at least minimise – by creating firebreaks, etc. – the impact of wild fires). Such operations might be conducted with the direct co-operation of workers from the Recreation Ministry – who would be responsible for trying to save injured wildlife, or else put them out of their misery. Other events that could warrant a joint operation between the Security and Recreation ministries is when whales have beached themselves; when people who have entered wildlife land to go hiking or camping, for example, go missing or get into a different kind of difficulty. Incidentally, the representatives of each industry who form a district's government will, under normal circumstances (i.e., when there is time to debate and carefully consider decisions), all be considered equals – or, in other words, no minister shall have precedence over another. However, decisions generally have to be made a lot faster during an emergency. Therefore, whenever a district is hit by a major emergency such as a natural disaster – and until the emergency is over – one minister ought to automatically become the premier decision-maker. The obvious candidate for that role is the representative of the Security Ministry (under normal circumstances, the Security Minister can act as chairperson of the government body). Likewise, if ever a major emergency affects an entire state (or a large part of it), the state's Security Minister would assume the role of premier decision-maker on the state government body; if ever a major emergency affects the entire planet, the Security Minister of the world government body becomes overall leader.

Security Ministry personnel who prove themselves to be more moral, and better able to think quickly (plus soundly) when under pressure – in comparison to other Security Ministry personnel within their district – will be promoted to management level (while any personnel who prove themselves to be equally moral but not so equal at thinking quickly and soundly when under pressure, would become court advisers – with the best of them being promoted to judges – unless courts aren't needed); with the district's Security Minister being the person who unquestionably is both the most moral and best at thinking quickly.

If the computer programmers who currently work on Defence contracts or for economic industries – or to undermine the efforts of those programmers – were to unite their efforts and then focus them on more meaningful activities, any remaining problems involved in the use of computers should be quickly solved. One project that would be meaningful is to design a cyber file system capable of storing important information about all of a district's citizens, and can be added to whenever a baby is born. A new file will just contain the baby's date of birth, given name, the names of its parents and any other relevant people (e.g., siblings, grandparents), their addresses, plus any relevant medical information (including its DNA make-up) – which ought to be stored in a section of the file that only authorised people (e.g., doctors, the child's parents) are able to access; although only doctors will be able to add details to this section of the file. Another section of the file could be activated when the child's education commences, and be added to by the child's teachers so that it eventually provides a full record of the child's educational history (to be used as an employment guide). When the file's subject commences work, or training for work, a section of the file would be activated to provide a record of its employment history (including, if necessary, details such as how many hours the subject has completed). Other ministries might also have sections to store information that pertains to their operations (e.g., the Recreation Ministry may have a section to keep track of the subject's use of recreational facilities – especially the facilities that, due to demand, can only be used a limited number of occasions within a set period of time). There probably will need to be back-up copies of each file (in which case, each time a file is added to, the relevant department – operating within the Work Ministry, perhaps – will have to be notified that the back-up disc has to be amended; perhaps the system can be designed to automatically notify the department of changes), but there should be no need to maintain a file once its subject has deceased (thereby avoiding the need to continuously create more cyber space to make room for new files – and more discs for back-up files). However, it might be possible for relatives to request a printed copy of the file (or have it transferred directly to their home computer) before it is erased.

Civil libertarians will be horrified by the notion of creating a records system of this nature, but it isn't very different to many records systems already in existence – r:p1264, ln38-9 + p1270, ln24 (and, anyway, the value of their opinions has to be put into perspective – at least as many people are horrified by libertarians' apparent willingness to aid the cause of gun fanatics and paedophiles!). Furthermore, as long as the information is correct, and no one continues to be so deluded (or atheistic, or materialistic) as to believe that it *has something to hide* from the rest of society, there should be no opposition to such a records system. The system ought to include some form of identification process which can remove the need to provide people with ID cards and things like Medic Alert bracelets (an injured person's fingerprint or pupil could be used by authorised people – e.g., Security Ministry personnel – to firstly identify the victim, especially if it is unconscious, and then inform them of any relevant medical conditions, such as allergies to certain medications; in addition, patients may have to be in the presence of a doctor before that doctor can enter its file – although some senior Health and Security Ministry staff might be authorised to override this security measure on behalf of less senior workers in special circumstances). The records system would need to be designed to allow other ministries to extract relevant statistical knowledge (e.g., to aid research) without being able to match those statistics to individuals.

SCIENCE

SCIENTISTS IN SPACE... [T]he American Apollo Moon-shot programme comes to an end in December... Exciting and spectacular though it is to see [creatures] from Earth set foot on another planet, the amount of scientific information that these astronauts can bring back is limited, and little, if any of it, is directly beneficial to [hu]mankind. - 1973

On July 20, 1969, [creatures] from Earth stood for the first time on the surface of an almost unknown planetary body, the Moon. The successful landing of Apollo 11 at Tranquillity Base marked the culmination of over ten years of... lunar exploration by remote-controlled orbiting, hard-landing and soft-landing spacecraft from the USA and the USSR. It also signalled the beginning of an extensive scientific study of the rocks and minerals, the interior, and the surface environment of the Moon; the new science of lunar geology. About a hundred and fifty scientists from laboratories throughout the world were selected to conduct a wide range of geological, chemical, physical and biological tests on the rocks returned to Earth, and to design measuring instruments for the astronauts to place on critical areas of the Moon's surface. These scientific studies have led to a host of new discoveries... Most dramatic of all was the discovery that the Moon was born at the same time as the Earth... Such studies will continue for many more years, as each discovery poses new problems to be solved... The total rock collected amounts to 382kg... At the Lunar Receiving Laboratory in Houston... are catalogued 35,600 small pieces of the Moon. The first aim of the researchers has been to discover whether any forms of life exist or have existed on the Moon... Secondly, the composition of the Moon and its evolutionary history needed to be known... Thirdly, we needed to know more about how the Moon originated... Some people thought that we also needed to know whether precious minerals existed on the Moon, but geologists already knew that the processes that operate on Earth to concentrate minerals of economic importance were unlikely to have operated on the Moon; also, economics tells us that even diamonds would be barely worth collecting in any abundance... After all, the short Apollo program alone cost around \$25,000 million[. By the way, 'shortly before the first atomic bomb was dropped in 1945, Vannevar Bush, the director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development, told US President Harry Truman: "This is the biggest fool thing we have ever done. The bomb will never go off and I speak as an expert in explosives." Vannevar Bush is, however, in good company when it comes to being completely wrong – the US Office of Patents proclaimed in 1899: "Everything that can be invented, has been invented", and in 1878 a British parliamentary committee said of Thomas Edison's lightbulb: "This might be good enough for our transatlantic friends but it is unworthy of the attention of practical or scientific minds"']...

It became fashionable and profitable for industry to ask professional scientists and engineers for advice. Thomas Edison (1847-1931) established the first independent consulting laboratory which actually proclaimed that it could make practical inventions to order, and his laboratory poured forth a stream of inventions including the first commercially practicable incandescent electric lamp. The momentum increased as governments, universities, industrial and consulting firms, and independent foundations established laboratories dedicated to generating new science-based technology. Research became highly organized and structured. Research budgets grew. Research teams increasingly took over from individual investigators. In addition to planning the production of new science-based technology, research directors became interested in the possibility of actually guiding the process of scientific discovery. As late as the 1930s such ideas still seemed heretical to many scientists, but they were soon to be put to a test which dramatized how basic and applied research can proceed in creative interaction. Einstein's original paper of 1905 had implicitly contained the germinal idea of atomic (or more correctly, nuclear) weapons; if matter can in principle be transformed into energy, cannot practical means be found to break a series of atomic nuclei apart and thus release large and even devastating amounts of energy? Significantly it was Einstein himself who, in his historic letter of October 1939 to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, convinced him of the practicability of creating a workable nuclear bomb and of the urgency of reaching that goal ahead of the Nazis. The result was the Manhattan Project. Here was something utterly unprecedented in scale and scope: a two-billion dollar effort to finish translating Einstein's original equations into nuclear weapons such as were to be test-fired at Alamogordo and then employed to end... W[W2]. The project involved every level of science and the service of thousands of scientists and engineers from the U[S], Britain, Canada and other countries working as one great team. The outcome conclusively proved the feasibility of such large-scale teamwork in science and technology... The... project... not only dramatized the practicality of scientific theory; it had shown that, given sufficiently well-defined goals and a sufficient sense of urgency, [humanity] can make comprehensive scientific plans and carry them to fruition. In that instance the goals and values related to a war against totalitarian tyranny, but in principle the same approach can be applied in support of goals and values connected with the purposes of peace.

...Even when the arms race ends, as it must be made to end, the scientific frontier will remain... But... as we should now, hopefully, also agree, an economy that is preoccupied however brilliantly with the production of private consumer products is supremely ill fitted for many of these frontier tasks... Private enterprise did not get us atomic energy. It has shown relatively slight interest in its development for power for the reason that it could not clearly be fitted into commercial patterns of cost and profit... [W]e have few civilian arrangements that are by central design and purpose directed to large-scale participation in modern scientific and technological progress... Much has been accomplished by research and development... under the inspiration of military need. This has done more to save us from the partial technology stagnation that is inherent in a consumer goods economy than we imagine. But this is a hideously inefficient way of subsidizing general scientific and technical development, as nearly all scientists agree. And it has the further effect of associating great and exciting scientific advances with an atmosphere of fear and terror. - 1977

...the old, scientific world view, which has up to now allowed scientists and "experts" to make self-delusory claims of "objectivity" is now obsolete... Their search for "certainty" is now seen as immature and must give way to a more sophisticated recognition of ambiguity and uncertainty – the indeterminacy of acknowledging that the scientist is a *participator* and that the act of observation itself affects the outcome of experiments and research. We are now awakening from the technological trance and realizing that in a very real sense... all science is normative and laden with value choices. The first decision a scientist makes is normative: the choice of what to study. Thus today scientists and technologists, economists and planners, as well as "experts" professing and selling "technology assessment," "management techniques," "economic forecasts," "futures research," and other "policy sciences" must now take full, public responsibility as participators, not observers who are "neutral" to the outcomes. Citizens are learning that they must now intervene at the stage of defining the "problem" and shaping the study... For each specific technology, we might ask whether it is... required... and... [d]oes it make maximum use of existing infrastructure, or will it entail costly or duplicative infrastructure? Are its cost, benefits, and risks equally born by all groups in society, and if not, who will be the winners and who the losers? What risks does it pose to workers, consumers, society at large, and future generations, and can they be assessed...? - 1981

MODERN ECONOMICS RELIES HEAVILY on the efficient market theory. Knowledge is assumed to flow freely from place to place. The people making important decisions are supposed to have access to more or less the same body of information. Of course, pockets of ignorance or inside information remain here and there, but on the whole, once knowledge is public, economists assume that it is known everywhere. Historians of science often take for granted an efficient market theory of their own. When a discovery is made, when an idea is expressed, it is assumed to become the common property of the scientific world. Each discovery and each new insight builds on the last. Science rises like a building, brick by brick. Intellectual chronicles can be, for all practical purposes, linear. That view of science works best when a well-defined discipline awaits the resolution of a well-defined problem. No one misunderstood the discovery of the molecular structure of DNA, for example. But the history of ideas is not always so neat. As nonlinear science arose in odd corners of different disciplines, the flow of ideas failed to follow the standard logic of historians... Partly because of language, partly because of restricted travel on the Soviet side, sophisticated Western scientists have often repeated work that already existed in the Soviet literature. The blossoming of chaos in the U[S] and Europe has inspired a huge body of parallel work in the Soviet Union; on the other hand, it also inspired considerable bewilderment, because so much of the new science was not so new in Moscow. Soviet mathematicians and physicists had a strong tradition in chaos research, dating back to... the fifties. Furthermore, they had a tradition of working together that had survived the divergence of mathematics and physics elsewhere... The emergence of chaos as an entity unto itself was a story not only of new theories and new discoveries, but also of the belated understanding of old ideas. Many pieces of the puzzle had been seen long before – by Poincaré, by Maxwell, even by Einstein – and then forgotten. Many new pieces were understood at first only by a few insiders. A mathematical discovery was understood by mathematicians, a physics discovery by physicists, a meteorological discovery by no one. The way ideas spread became as important as the way they originated. Each scientist had a private constellation of intellectual parents. Each had its own picture of the landscape of ideas, and each picture was limited in its own way. Knowledge was imperfect. Scientists were biased by the structure of their disciplines or by the accidental paths of their own educations. The scientific world can be surprisingly finite. No committee of scientists pushed history into a new channel – a handful of individuals did it, with individual perceptions and individual goals.

...Imagine being a traveller in inner space. Instead of blasting off and aiming for the stars, you plunge deep into the dot at the end of this sentence. Tiny though it seems, this black hole is a galaxy of about one million million atoms... Such an incredible voyage has been the dream of scientists since the existence of atoms was first postulated by the ancient Greeks. Now three scientists have won the Nobel prize for physics for making it possible. Their remarkable inventions provide the means to see and probe a whole new dimension of space – the universe of the microcosmos. THE STORY of [humanity]'s flight into the inner universe begins during W[W]I with a small boy playing too noisily in a street in Heidelberg, Germany... Summoned to the study and made to sit motionless for an hour, [the boy] found time dragged less when [it] focused his attention on a fascinating instrument with mirrors, lenses and brass knobs – a microscope. In better moods his father, a professor of natural science, let the boy peer through the lens. [The boy] marvelled at nature's wonders magnified a thousand times. But could [the boy] see in greater detail? Could [the boy] see *atoms*? No. The optical microscope employed light to carry images to the eye, so it resolved nothing smaller than the wavelength of light itself. Its limit was... about one three-hundredth the breadth of a human hair. The dawn of the electronic age was hardly a glimmer when [the boy] took up electrical engineering at the Technical University of Berlin. For a student project in 1928, [it] joined a team working on a measuring instrument allied with early television. [The student] was put on the visual problem: how could scattered electrons be concentrated together to trace a line on a glass screen? A German physics professor had theorised that an electron beam – a narrow ray of intense electricity – could be converged by an electromagnet just as sunbeams were focused to a hot spot by a magnifying glass. [The student] set up an electromagnet... and made the theory work. Next, the student's imagination made a conceptual leap of pure genius. [The student] reckoned that an electronic beam fired through a specimen such as a metal grid would emerge in a pattern that could be magnified by electromagnets in the same way as light rays passing through the glass lens of his father's microscope... This... established the principle of electron optics. [The student] then devised and built a system that magnified no fewer than 12,000 times, a 12-fold improvement on the finest optical instruments... This became the prototype of what the 26-year-old inventor called an "electron microscope." But there was one immense technical hurdle. In the bombardment of electrons, his specimens were destroyed. When [the inventor] succeeded in photographing the charred shell of a super-fine thread, nothing so small had ever been seen. But scientists were not impressed. What use was a microscope that grilled its specimens? Frustrated by lack of support, [the inventor] had to abandon the project on completing his doctorate in 1933. [The inventor]'s breakthrough finally came in 1937 when [it] was appointed by... [a] German industrial giant, to develop his electron microscope for commercial use... By 1939, his new electron microscope was the first in... production. Its incredible 30,000 magnification spawned new fields of research in every branch of science... During the post W[W]II years, the electron microscope came into use around the world as an indispensable laboratory tool. Its countless applications ranged from the study of killer viruses to the cause of metal fatigue in jet engines... IN OCTOBER 1986, [the inventor] was holidaying near the Black Forest when news came that [it] would share half the 1986 Nobel prize for physics for his invention – "one of the most important of this century." In Zurich, [two physicists]... received a call from Stockholm saying that they would share the other half of the award. Their invention, [which could magnify specimens]... 100 million times... was "a technique of exceptional promise, opening up entirely new fields for the study of the structure of matter." "...Once [humanity] can play with atoms... [it]s ingenuity will prove boundless," [one of the physicists] says. - 1988

The whole issue of the politics of science and technology is not developed yet... [Consequently], the large technological corporations do whatever they want because they pretend they are doing value-free work... 'If we can figure out how to do it, let's do it, and someone else can ask questions about it later.' ...That's the argument scientists have been making for three hundred years, that they are the only ones able to make judgments about what they are doing. That is simply an ideology... which allows them to take privileges in society that no one else has, that is, to work freely without any control or social responsibility – and to accrue high status and salaries for their sometimes unwise and dangerous work... The problem is that... science... is not at all value-free... The widespread belief... that science is intrinsically value-free was, in fact, invalidated by science itself when Heisenberg showed that the patterns scientists observed in nature are intimately connected with the patterns of their minds... [Thus]: the results scientists obtain and the technological applications they investigate will be conditioned by their frame of mind, that is, their concepts, thoughts and values. Although much of their detailed research will not depend explicitly on their value systems, the larger paradigm within which this research is pursued will never be value-free. Scientists, therefore, are responsible for their research not only intellectually but also morally... [Yet o]nly with the rise of the ecology and Green movements did we begin to realize that society must establish... the values that are to be held in science... We must introduce into the scientific field... ecological thinking... That is the key to responsible developments in the future... Two steps are needed. The first is an educational programme... to change the consciousness of people and make them aware of the issues. Later there should be a... committee in every community... that would be composed of people working within the field who have doubts about the wisdom of pursuing... a [particular research] path... The committees would discuss whether the... [research] should proceed as the[researchers] wish, or with some limitations, or not at all in certain areas. Such citizens' groups are being organized now in Braunschweig, Heidelberg... and Munich. - 1990

Life on Earth has come abruptly under the trusteeship of human beings. The improbability of this event exceeds statement in astronomical numbers. It is an event, moreover, that introduces factors transcending chance. People have demonstrated capacity to acquire objective knowledge

and to act in rational accordance with it. Long before circumstances urged the wisdom of the inquiry, they were asking how life began. In their new trusteeship of the planet, it is essential for them to know how life got started here and how it came to occupy and envelop the Earth.

...THIRTY-SIX METRES below the surface of the Mediterranean, a powerfully built diver cautiously entered the black hole ringed with coral and sea fans. His neoprene suit protected him from the rock surface as [the diver] manoeuvred his air tanks in the metre-wide passage. Then in absolute darkness that not even his diving light could pierce, [the diver] moved slowly forward. *I wonder if I will ever reach the end of this tunnel*, [the diver thought. The]... 35-year-old professional diver and diving instructor... had first happened upon the tunnel weeks before, at the foot of a rock slide in the Morgiou inlet... [at] Cassis near Marseille, [but since the diver]... didn't bring a light or other special equipment, [it] probed only ten metres... Now, on this September morning in 1985, [the diver] continued his probe for 150 metres through the flooded crannies of the cliff. Suddenly, after 30 minutes, [the diver] poked his head through the surface. Straining his eyes against the darkness, [the diver] stood up in the waist-deep water[and] trembled with excitement at the sight of an arching cavern 60 metres wide and ranging in height from two to five metres. The chamber was white, blue and ochre, with a forest of stalactites, stalagmites and majestic limestone columns... [The diver] was tempted to... explore the cave. But... couldn't, since diving time is strictly rationed... And[, anyway, the diver]... now knew that [it] could return at will. But for the next three years, [the diver] spent his time delivering yachts to the Antilles and running his diving school... Finally, on July 9 last year, [the diver] entered the tunnel once again, followed by three other experienced divers from his club... Torches in hand, they crept carefully along the cave's slippery floor, which was covered with calcite deposits. "Look, there's an opening in the rock," [one of the other divers] said... Through the hole, they saw a second chamber whose 30-metre-high ceiling towered above like a small lake... Quickly all the divers began snapping photographs. Soon they entered the other chamber and stood beside the second pool. "I'm going down," [the diver] announced. "We have to find out whether or not there's another chamber." After probing every recess in the rock, [the diver] realized there was no exit there. Resurfacing, [the diver] set his light down on the rock. "Hey, look!" [the diver] cried. The narrow beam shining on the rock wall brought a drawing of a hand surging out of the darkness... Two days later, when [the diver] picked up his developed slides at a shop, [it] discovered that there wasn't just one hand in the photo, but three! Now [the diver] began to think [it]d hit on something amazing and combed all the books [it] could find on archaeology. Four days later, the same group re-entered the cave with floodlights... and a waterproof video camera. What they found exceeded their wildest hopes... Along the western side of the main chamber, just above the waterline, ran a frieze of small black horses... On the roof they found a black bighorn goat, a stag covered by calcite deposits and... another horse. Farther along, on the east wall, were two big bisons and more stencilled-looking hands, some with "missing" fingers. There was a cat's head and three penguins. Feverishly, they recorded all the paintings and engravings... Visible among the horses and bisons were a few antelopes, a seal, even some strange geometric symbols. *It's a good thing we're filming all this*, thought [the diver]. *Otherwise no-one would believe us*. Nevertheless, they decided to say nothing. They wanted to amass as much data as they could before showing it to the Maritime Bureau. Also, [the diver] worried that tourists would try to reach the grotto, as their dives at the cave site had not gone unnoticed. On September 1, tragedy struck. Three divers lacking the right equipment tried to reach the end of the labyrinth. The first body was found a few metres from the entrance; the second body 30 metres into the tunnel; and the third, ten metres farther along. Without knowing their fins would kick up a cloud of silt that destroyed their sense of direction, the[y]... had panicked, violently banging their heads against the tunnel walls. There was air still left in their tanks... [The diver] realized the time had come to tell the world what [it] had found. The next day [the diver] marched into the Maritime Bureau's office in Marseille. They had forms for registering every maritime discovery – shipwrecks, booby traps, shoals, Roman jars, Greek treasures – but nothing for prehistoric relics. "Sorry, maybe you should check elsewhere," the clerk [said]... After much debate, the officials began to take [the diver] seriously, and the Department of Undersea Archeological Research (DRASM) was notified. Now [the diver] had to authenticate his find. Initially some of the "experts" were sceptical. No cave paintings had ever been found in southeastern France. Fortunately two [people] defended the dossier... The second was... a research director at the National Scientific Research Agency (CNRS) and a veteran diver who had already located Paleolithic bones, flints and charcoal in the bay of Cassis. [The director] knew that underwater caves had been occupied by [prehistoric people] tens of thousands of years ago, when the Mediterranean shore had extended some 100 metres beyond its present coastline. But the sea had covered all that so long ago that finding traces of Cro-Magnon [people] there was deemed impossible. The news of [the diver]'s find, then, was fantastic. And the evidence collected so far was very impressive. If [the diver] had been hoodwinked, it had to have been a forger clever enough to do perfectly authentic-looking drawings and coat them with calcite. Careful not to jump to any hasty judgments, however, the Ministry of Culture decided to send in an expert. On September 19 last year, an archeological research vessel of the French navy arrived at the site... The process of authentication went on for four days, and by the time the operation ended, doubt was virtually dispelled... "The paintings and engravings... are characteristic of the Paleolithic period," [the expert] noted, "and they are even drawn according to the conventions of prehistoric art. The bisons' and goats' horns, for example, are always presented in twisted or semitwisted perspective. Hooves were never drawn, legs ended in 'crutches.' All this tells us these paintings are older than those in the famous Lascaux cave." [The expert]'s first impression was soon reinforced by test results from the CNRS laboratory at Lyon: carbon dating established that the paintings were 18,440 years old... [The] discovery is doubly significant: it establishes the presence of Paleolithic artists in southeastern France. "And we have new archeological evidence that will continue to expand our knowledge of the history of the period," says... an official of the DRASM'S investigative unit... Requests for information have poured in from all over the world. But scientists will have to wait for more answers because the cave has been sealed until the next expedition gets under way in 1993. ON DECEMBER 24 last year... the... diver... remember[ed] the name of the boat that first took him to the cave site: *Cro-Magnon*. That's what it was called when [the diver] bought it a decade ago... An omen? Who knows.

...THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION in Washington is full of whatnots from... the... past... a monument to the average American's inability to throw anything away. Altogether, it has 139 million items... Where does the Smithsonian keep all that stuff? The National Museum of Natural History has roughly 119 million scientific specimens. The other 20 million items are scattered among... 14 other museums and galleries, and among several research facilities. That's enough room to make housekeepers weep with envy. But what's a great nation without a great closet? - 1992

The... culture we live in seems to *control* us rather than the other way around. If national leaders and society – and that's you and me – seem to be "unable to do anything" about the straits we are in, how can one come to any other conclusion, however bleak it might seem? Where does responsibility lie for the acceptance and furtherance of new ideas? On government, in captains [of] industry, in the body politic, on lobbies backing vested interests, or on private citizens? In the early 1920's, an American self-taught inventor, Royal Raymond Rife, developed a microscope able to look at microbes in the human body that were so tiny they had never before been seen. What [Rife] saw convinced him that germs were not the cause but the *result* of disease and that, depending on its inner state, the body could convert a harmless bacterium into a lethal pathogen. Rife's microscope was able to examine the *living* whereas the Electron Microscope is able to examine only inert, or *dead*, matter. Yet the Rife instrument all but disappeared from the face of the earth while the electron microscope is used in every large laboratory in the world. What does that have to say about our "scientific" culture, about our biology which is supposed to be the "science of life?" In the 1970's, I was so amazed at all this that, after weeks of research, I wrote an article "What has Become of the Rife Microscope?" I finally went on to locate the scope in a dilapidated condition in a garage in San Diego. In 1987, I was put on to another microscope genius, a French-born biologist working and living in Rock Forest, a small village in a region of Quebec known as "The Eastern Townships"... My visit to [the biologist's] laboratory was one of the most exciting in my life. I found that, when [the biologist] was only twenty-four years old and still living in France, [it] had invented a unique microscope... as

powerful as that of Rife's and much easier to use. What this [French-born person] accomplished with a remarkable instrument of his own invention is spelled out in full in my new book, The Persecution and Trial of [Rock Forest's biologist]. So I will give you only what I consider to be the briefest account of his discoveries... With his microscope, [the biologist] revealed in the blood of all animals, and in the sap of plants as well, a hitherto unknown... subcellular, living and reproducing... ultra-microscopic... [which the biologist] called a *somatid* (tiny body). There were many peculiar things about these life forms. The most peculiar thing... was they were virtually indestructible, meaning they have resisted high temperatures and nuclear radiation capable of killing any living thing. The eerie implication is that the new forms are imperishable! At the death of their hosts, such as ourselves, they return to the earth – in “ashes to ashes, dust to dust” fashion – where they live on for thousands or millions, perhaps billions of years. In healthy individuals this form goes through a cycle of two more stages to become a spore, then a double spore. But in people whose terrain has been deleteriously affected, in whom the immune defense system has become weakened, destabilized or dysfunctional – and the potential causes for that are multiple – the cycle goes through thirteen more stages, each stage developing into the next like so many caterpillars metamorphosing into butterflies. An examination of the somatid cycle in the blood has allowed [the biologist] to pre-diagnose such degenerative diseases as cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, lupus and others long before any clinical signs of them appear in the body. So there we have three interlocking discoveries: that of a super-microscope; a brand-new life form; and the pleomorphic (form-changing) cycle into which it develops. Various people have suggested that these discoveries alone are worthy of a Nobel Prize, perhaps two of them. [The biologist's] fourth discovery was that of a medicinal which, injected... intralymphatically, that is into the lymph system, the drainage system of the body, strengthens, or builds up, or enhances the immune defense system which in turn rids the body of degenerative diseases. For his pains, [the biologist] was put on trial, not once, but twice. The first time was in the 1960's in France where [the biologist] was accused of medical charlatanry. Seeking a “freer” place to pursue his research [the biologist] emigrated to Quebec. In 1989 [the biologist] was put to trial at the behest of the Quebec Medical Corporation (equivalent to a state “medical society” in the USA). The most serious of five counts was “contributing to the death of a patient,”... Had [the biologist] been convicted of it, [the biologist] would likely have been sentenced to a life-term in prison. The drama of the trial, characterized by a senior Canadian barrister as one of the “most important in recent Canadian history,” is... [testimony to] the monstrous persecution [the biologist] has had to suffer at the hands of orthodox medicine, that is the oppressive medical segment of our dominant culture... [The most obvious] conclusion to be reached about... [his trial] is that entrenched interests vested in medical power, and in the billions of dollars being made by the pharmaceutical industry that holds doctors in its thrall, tirelessly seeks, with every weapon in its arsenal, to prevent any chance that [the biologist's] gifts to the world will be made available. I only recently discovered what may be the... root cause of it. It came in a review of my book by... an... American medical historian of the first rank who lives and works in Washington... “Most interesting are [the author's] comment on the socio-political roots of physicians' professional behaviour... Physicians have so long escaped being called into account for lying to the public that they assume this to be a natural privilege of their position – like Wednesday afternoons on the golf course. They are protected in this assumption by the *monopoly of criticism* granted them by the Medical Practice Acts passed in the 1920's. Journalists who might otherwise expose malfeasance are neutralized by this *monopoly*: anyone consistently describing professional misdeeds would at once lose all contacts and all access to sources, hence all effectiveness... This disastrous situation cannot be effectively combatted without a clear understanding of the patterns of political forces. *Appeals to truth are a waste of energy*, as physicians' concern for scientific truth is a negligible quantity. Until the Medical Practice Acts are rescinded, cases like that of [the biologist] will be repeated *ad nauseam*.” ...[It seems appropriate at this point to add a quote from the] English philosopher and scientist... Roger Bacon: “... *Most secrets of knowledge have been discovered by plain and neglected [scientists than by disciples] of popular fame. And this is so with good reason. For the [disciples] of popular fame are busy with popular matters.*” The biologist's... conclusion – mind-boggling on the face of it – is not one that sprang full-blown from [hi]s mind alone. A few years ago, I came across a fascinating doctoral dissertation... authored by a pharmacist living in France... Several years in the writing, [the pharmacist's] thesis delved into a long-lost chapter in the history of science... This chapter concerned a violent controversy between, on the one side, the illustrious Louis Pasteur, whose name, inscribed on the lintels of research institutes all over the world, is known to all schoolchildren, if only because of the pasteurized milk they drink. On the other side was Pasteur's nineteenth century contemporary and adversary, Antoine Bechamp... While labouring on problems of fermentation... Bechamp, at his microscope, far more primitive than [the biologist's] own instrument, seemed to be able to describe a host of tiny bodies in his fermenting solutions. Even before Bechamp's time, other researchers had observed, but passed off as unexplainable, what they called “scintillating corpuscles” or “molecular granulations.” Bechamp, who was able to ascribe strong enzymatic (catalytic change-causing) reactions to them, was led to coin a new word to describe them: *microzymas* (tiny ferments). Among these ferments' many peculiar characteristics was one showing that, whereas they did not exist in *chemically pure* calcium carbonate made in the laboratory under artificial conditions, they were abundantly present in *natural* calcium carbonate... With the collaboration of his son... and... a Montpellier physician... Bechamp went on to study microzymas located in the bodies of animals and came to the startling conclusion that the tiny forms were far more basic to life than cells, long considered to be the basic building blocks of all living matter. Bechamp thought them to be fundamental elements responsible for the activity of cells, tissues, organs, and indeed whole living organisms, from bacteria to whales... [Bechamp] even found them present in life-engendering eggs, where they were responsible for the eggs' further development while themselves undergoing significant changes... Most incredible to Bechamp was the fact that, when an event serious enough to affect the whole of an organism occurred, the microzymas within it began working to disintegrate it totally, while at the same time continuing to survive. As proof of such survival, Bechamp found these microzymas in soil, swamps, chimney soot, street dust, even in air and water... So seemingly indestructible were the microzymas that Bechamp could even find them in limestone dating... back sixty million years... to the Tertiary, the first part of the Cenozoic Era, a period... during which mammals began to make their appearance on earth. And it could be that they are older still... [A] French paleontologist, writes in his book Terre: Mere de la Vie (Earth: Mother of Life), concerning problems of evolution, that... thin sections of rock, over three billion years old, taken from the heart of the Sahara Desert... contained tiny round coccoid forms, which [the paleontologist] placed at the base of the whole of the evolutionary chain... When I brought the book to [the biologist's] attention, the biologist told me, ingeniously and forthrightly: “I'd sure like to have a few samples of moon rocks to section and examine at my microscope. Who knows, we might find somatid forms in them...” ...In the first third of the 20th century Gunther Enderlein saw the... tiny motile bodies... which... Bechamp... named ...microzymas... and called them “endobionts.” Wilhelm Reich, in the late 1930s, saw a similar if not identical body which [Reich] named “bion.” There were others during this era. Today in Sweden and in Canada the properties of these same living particles are being explored by researchers who have assigned names from their own imaginations. The various theories advanced by members of this group of researchers remain rejected or largely unknown. Remarkably, *they all used dark-field condensers*, a known but uncommon practice. In microbiology it is particularly difficult to convince others of the truth and value of discoveries made with uncommon methods of observation. Rife employed a system of lighting as unknown to microscopy today as it was in the 1930's... This was the first and most fundamental technical strike against understanding Rife's microscope and biological discoveries. Fear of the unknown is greater than fear of the unfamiliar. Even scientists are not immune to this... instinct. There were a few who were not distracted by Rife's unknown method of lighting. Having a look at his work, they jumped to the next problem, that of their own dogma, which said it is simply impossible to realize such high magnifications and resolutions with a light microscope, and therefore we do not believe what we see. You, Mr Rife, are dishonest, and for trying to pull the wool over our eyes we will put troublesome clouds in your skies to the end of your days. Dogma is necessary, but it often lives too long, and is too often exercised unwisely. Only recently have discoveries been confirmed in biophysics to make it possible to understand the principle by which Rife's microscopes produced magnifications and resolutions so far

beyond the limits of conventional light microscopes. Remarkably, the basic phenomena behind these “new” discoveries were described by Gustav Le Bon, psychologist turned physicist, just before the turn of the century. Then as now, gifted individuals who cross disciplinary boundaries are not heard. Biophysicists have now shown that there exists a crucial natural interaction between living matter and photons. This process is measurable at the cellular (bacterium) level. Other research has demonstrated that living systems are extraordinarily sensitive to extremely low-energy electromagnetic waves. This is to say, each kind of cell or micro-organism has a specific frequency of interaction with the electromagnetic spectrum. By various means, Rife’s system allowed adjusting the frequency of light impinging on the specimen. By some insight [Rife] learned that the light frequency could be “tuned” into the natural frequency of the micro-organism being examined to cause a resonance or feed-back loop. In effect, under this condition, it can be said the micro-organism illuminated itself. Is it possible the newly discovered electromagnetic properties of living matter were visible to certain highly skilled microscopists with nothing more special than a gifted sense of sight? ...[a] Nobel Prize winning corn geneticist, who experienced years of travail because [the geneticist] could see the un-seeable, explained that [it] “had a feeling for the organism”. Perhaps Rife had such a gift of sight or insight... [and] applied it to building a device [Rife] hoped would make it possible for all to see further into the mysteries of living things. His device worked, but the world remained blind to these mysteries. Rife extrapolated from his lighting technique... that specific electromagnetic frequencies would have a negative effect on specific bacterial forms. There can remain no doubt that Rife demonstrated the correctness of his hypothesis to himself and those few who had the courage to look and the perceptual acuity to see! The same new discoveries in biophysics not only explain Rife’s principle of illumination, they also explain his process for selective destruction of bacteria. The latter phenomenon is similar to ultra-sonic cleaning, differing in delicate selectivity of wave form and frequency. Recently, researchers whose findings have been suppressed, have *caused and cured* cancer in the same group of mice by subjecting them to certain electromagnetic fields. Rife’s work was far more sophisticated. [Rife] selected specific microscopic targets, and actually saw the targets explode. Rife’s work demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt that bacteria are pleomorphic rather than monomorphic. This demonstration did more to bring down upon him the wrath of the worst kind of politics of science than any other facet of his work. It violated the strongest of established biological dogmas, that of the germ theory of disease... No one remembered... Bechamp’s microzyma theory which... [also] required that bacteria be pleomorphic, a fact [Bechamp] extensively demonstrated, but not to the satisfaction of those who ran the politics of science during the late 1800’s... [Many of today’s biologists still] find these concepts incomprehensible even though both bacterial pleomorphism and endogenous sources of bacteria have been demonstrated repeatedly since Bechamp’s time... Rife also had been seeking a way to identify and then destroy the micro-organism which caused cancer. His cancer research began in 1922. It would take him until 1932 to isolate the responsible micro-organism which [Rife] later named simply the “BX virus.” ...In the summer of 1934, 16 terminally ill people with cancer were brought to... [a] “ranch.” There, as Rife and the doctors worked on human beings for the first time, they learned much. The early patients were exposed to the frequency for only 3 minutes, but Rife soon learned that if a treatment was given every day, the toxins from the dead micro-organisms accumulated faster than the body could dispose of them. When [Rife] switched to a treatment of 3 minutes every 3rd day, the patients began healing swiftly... Rife... wrote: “With the frequency instrument treatment, no tissue is destroyed, no pain is felt, no noise is audible, and no sensation is noticed... Several diseases may be treated simultaneously... No rise of body temperature was perceptible in any of these cases above normal during or after the frequency instrument treatment. No special diets were used in any of this clinical work, but we sincerely believe that a proper diet compiled for the individual would be of benefit.” ...The full story of the cancer clinic of 1934 may never be known. Rife’s records were lost when [Rife] foolishly loaned them to Dr Arthur Yale a few years later. Yale had started his own clinic and apparently wanted to compare notes. After Rife learned that Dr Yale was altering the Frequency Instrument and thus failing to get results, Rife and Yale had an argument which marked a permanent separation. More disturbing is that after AMA pressure forced a law suit against the production company making the Frequency Instruments, many of the doctors who were involved became exceedingly cautious. And after Milbank Johnson’s death the records at the University of Southern California “mysteriously disappeared.” But... while the clinical records are gone, there is sufficient documentation to know that astounding results did take place... [and] a number of clinics used Rife’s technology to cure terminal cancer during the period 1934-38... In 1938, the AMA’s Fishbein found out about the Rife cancer cure and tried to “buy in.” When the offer was refused, the entire program was destroyed within six months. First all the doctors were visited and told to abandon the instrument or they would lose their medical licenses and go to jail. Then the leading medical electronic laboratory in America, where Rife’s treatment was being independently validated, was burned to the ground... while its director was in California consulting with Rife. Three months later, Rife was hauled into court and the treatment was effectively quashed. This was not the only occasion when scientists or doctors who opposed the AMA or whose discoveries threatened the AMA’s financial gains were “burned out,” arrested on trumped-up charges, or died mysteriously... [The] Director of Biochemistry at LSU Medical School and developer of a urine test for determining cancer, recalled: “Early one morning in 1946, our lab was mysteriously destroyed by fire... We then established a lab at our present location. Then again one morning in 1947 this lab was set on fire and completely destroyed.” Dr William F. Koch, the inventor of Glyoxylyde, was a particular target of Fishbein and the AMA. So were the doctors who supported him and used the cancer serum Dr Koch invented. “One doctor... J. W. Kannel, saved a young girl... [who] had hopeless cancer of the spleen... One shot of Glyoxylyde and [the girl] became well (in 1943 and was still alive in 1983)... Kannel was barred from all hospitals in Fort Wayne... [Two] physicians of distinction and prominent in the advocacy of the Koch treatment... [died suspiciously – one from poisoning, and one from being run down by an automobile... Dr Koch himself was the target of at least 13 unsuccessful attempts on his life.” Fishbein and his associates at the AMA had been interested in the Harry Hoxsey cancer treatment since 1924. In that year, Dr Malcolm Harris, the chief surgeon at two Chicago hospitals and later President of the AMA, offered to purchase the Hoxsey cancer tonic. Hoxsey would get 10% of the profits after ten years! The AMA doctors would set the fees and keep all the profits for the first nine years and 90% of the profits from the tenth year. When Hoxsey refused the offer of Dr Harris, Fishbein began years of official intimidation. Doctors who worked with Hoxsey lost their licenses. Pathologists who examined tumours for Hoxsey lost their businesses. State medical boards closed free clinics where hundreds of “terminal” cancer patients were being saved. In Iowa, Hoxsey was treating 300 patients a day in the late 1920’s. During the vicious period when Fishbein was stopping Rife’s treatment, Hoxsey was charged more than a hundred times with practising medicine without a license in Texas. Still, Hoxsey’s Dallas clinic grew to the point where it was handling as many as 12,000 patients, with affiliate clinics being established in Illinois, Pennsylvania and other states. In a legal action against Fishbein and the AMA in 1949, Hoxsey won. Fishbein’s attorney admitted that Hoxsey’s treatment did cure cancer. Judge W. L. Thorton ruled: “I am of the firm opinion and belief that Hoxsey has cured these people of cancer. Hoxsey has been done a great injustice and... articles and utterances by defendant Morris Fishbein were false... and libelous.” Nevertheless, through an organized conspiracy of the AMA, the FDA and the NCI, Hoxsey’s clinics were closed. His treatments have never been officially tested, despite admissions by opponents that they work and court testimony by experts which resulted in a jury concluding that Hoxsey’s cancer treatment had therapeutic value... Harry Hoxsey was born... into a family which had been successfully curing cancer for several generations using herbal medicine, taken internally, and a combination of powders applied to external lesions and tumours. According to Hoxsey, the healing power of the herbs used in the family’s secret formula was discovered by his great grandfather... In 1840 or thereabouts John Hoxsey had a horse which became sick with a cancerous sore. [John] fully expected the animal to die, but when it seemed to be miraculously gaining in strength, [John] observed the animal closely. [John] noticed that the horse would go and eat the wild herbs (weeds!) in a certain corner of its paddock. By[the] time the horse made a full recovery from the cancer which had threatened its life, [John] had become convinced it was the herbs which... were responsible for its reprieve from death... Rene Caisse was a nurse living in Canada, who, for a period of almost sixty years treated hundreds of people with a herbal

remedy... called Essiac[, which is]... made from four very common herbs... [Rene] discovered this remedy through a patient in the hospital where [Rene] worked who had been cured of cancer. The patient had used a herbal remedy given her by an Ojibway herbalist. Rene left the hospital in 1922 at age 33, and went to... Ontario, Canada, where [Rene] began administering Essiac to all who came to her... In cases where there was severe damage to life support systems, her patients died – but they lived far longer than the medical profession had predicted, and, significantly, they lived free of pain. Still others, listed as hopeless and terminal, but without severe damage to life support systems, were cured and lived 35-45 years (many are still living). So startling was the effectiveness of this simple herbal remedy, it could not be ignored, and the Canadian Ministry of Health and Welfare [CMHW] and the Parliament became involved. Friends, former patients, and grateful families petitioned Canadian Officialdom for Rene Caisse's right to administer the remedy to anyone who asked for it without the threat of interference from authorities... Royal Cancer Commission hearings... in 1937... c[a]me to the same conclusion that Rene had – that Essiac was a cure for cancer... In 1938, Essiac came within three votes of being legalised by the Ontario government as a remedy for terminal cancer patients... All the documents Rene had were destroyed by the... [CMHW at t]he... time of her death in 1978. They burned all that information in fifty-five gallon drums behind her home... Why? ...Because they d[id]n't want this information in the hands of the public or the press or anybody else... The information [was suppressed] because cancer is the second largest revenue producing business in the world, next to the petro-chemical business... [T]he research institutes, federal governments, pharmaceutical companies, anybody that has a vested interest in the health care of cancer, including the American Cancer Society[(ACS)], the Canadian Cancer Society... – all of these institutions are involved in the money and power around cancer... The FDA recommends only allopathic treatments for cancer and other life threatening diseases. It does not approve nor make legal alternative treatments of any kind... [The] personal physician to the late President John F. Kennedy... worked with Rene... from 1959 to 1962... [The physician] also worked with the Presidential Cancer Commission, with... the A[C]S... and the N[C]I. The physician, who] presented his findings after ten years of research... had come to the conclusion that, in his own words, "Essiac is a cure for cancer, period. All studies done at laboratories in the U[S] and Canada support this conclusion." Whereupon the federal government issued a gag order and said "You've got one of two choices, either you keep quiet about this or we'll haul you off to military prison and you'll never be heard of again." So we never heard another word out of him... Right now... the message of Essiac is beginning to make its way worldwide. But it's still known only on a very limited basis. Of course now you also have... herbal distributing companies throughout the world that are substituting yellow dock and curly dock for sheep's sorrel, which is one of the critical ingredients in Essiac. The sheep's sorrel is the herbal ingredient in Essiac that was found to be responsible for the destruction of cancer cells in the body... That research was done... at Sloan-Kettering in New York... over a three-year period. But when they gathered that information, they withheld it from the general public – yet they gave it to the C[MHW]. The Canadian government then immediately banned that herb for sale and distribution... [Another ingredient of Essiac] is... Turkish rhubarb[, although you]... can substitute ordinary rhubarb root. The other two ingredients are burdock root... and the inner bark of slippery elm... The[se]... three herbs are blood purifiers... I have... the formula[for Essiac, which]... also cures the common cold... Anyone can get it from me, free of charge... It's [also in my book, but there]... wasn't a publishing company that would publish it... So I published the book myself. As soon as I did, the IRS came in and slapped about a half million dollars in tax liens against me and said "You know this has got nothing to do with taxes. It's all about cancer." They actually started hauling the pallets of books out of my medical practice offices and confiscated them. I also had thousands of books that were confiscated by the Canadian government at customs. I have never received any of those books back. The only ones I have now are hidden in storage facilities... In Canada the book is being held by the C[MHW] because they say it is "advertising"... a cure for cancer... In 1946, Fishbein initiated an attack against Dr Max Gerson, whose dietary treatments for cancer were anathema to the drug and business-oriented Fishbein. The laboratories used by Dr Gerson were later threatened with economic ruin if they continued to provide services to him... Attempts against Gerson's life were also made... His diet, so vehemently opposed by the AMA in 1946, now closely resembles the anti-cancer diets recommended by the orthodox cancer organisations in the 1980s... [Yet, i]n 1994, the climate of mainstream medical hostility towards Dr Gerson's unorthodox therapy programme has not changed. "Anti-quackery" laws forbid the practise of the Gerson therapy in California and other states of the U.S.A. by medical doctors. People with cancer who reject the options of surgery, radiation and chemotherapy offered to them by the major cancer hospitals must either struggle to pursue a Gerson-type programme in their own homes without adequate medical support, or find the money necessary to travel to Mexico and pay for treatment at La Gloria Hospital, near Tijuana. The parents of a growing number of children with cancer are even less able to choose what they believe is the most suitable treatment option for their son and daughter, since by law, all children in the U[S] who have cancer must be given chemotherapy, or their parents may be imprisoned. Even a demonstrable improvement in the child's condition using non-toxic methods of cancer treatment will not forestall the application of this barbarous law... [P]atients of La Gloria Hospital experience an average improvement rate of 80% in early to moderate cancer and even more amazingly a 40-50% rate of improvement in people with so-called "terminal" cancer. Other benefits of the Gerson therapy for cancer sufferers included a marked reduction in pain, and also control of the acute infections which often led to the death of cancer patients. (The clinic does however, have a general rule of not accepting people who have previously undergone chemotherapy, since due to the damage that chemotherapeutic drugs inflict upon the liver and other organs of the body, sustained improvement in the condition of these cancer patients is much less likely...) Despite these impressive results of Dr Gerson's therapies, mainstream medicine is even less receptive to his ideas and treatment plans now than when [Gerson] began publishing the results of his work in the U[S] in the 1940's... In 1946, a Senate committee heard testimony from cancer patients successfully treated by Dr Gerson. The Senator in charge was Claude Pepper of Florida. When [Pepper] initiated legislation to conquer cancer, the AMA turned its power against Senator Pepper. [After being] defeated for re-election... Pepper later returned to the US Congress as a representative, but *ever* afterward served orthodox medical interests. [Pepper] had learned his lesson. The oldest member of Congress in 1988, [Pepper] has been a leading promoter of "quack investigations" for orthodox medicine, writing to the various state attorneys general for assistance in quashing different alternative treatments. As a national celebrity and "staunch defender" of older Americans, [Pepper] is the perfect front [perso]n for the medical and drug cartels. In this writer's opinion [Pepper] is more like a Judas to the elderly, but history alone will assess Claude Pepper's true infamy. Like many [officials, Pepper] ignored the deaths of millions of people for the sake of his own well-being and political position... [According to] Machiavelli (1469-1527)... *"There is nothing more difficult to carry out, nor more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to handle, than to initiate a new order of things."* ...The cure for cancer will not come from chemotherapy, radiation, surgery or breakthroughs from within the government agencies, for reasons which have already been made clear. The cure for cancer has existed for many years. It lies in the area of "energy medicine" and the only reason desperate and dying cancer victims do not know of it and cannot obtain it is the ignorance and opposition of the orthodox medical hierarchy. When the public demands access to energy medicine as their right, then the barriers will fall as media and political forces converge and begin supporting these long-suppressed therapies... [In] 1987... a pioneer in the field of energy medicine... point[ed] out that it has been known since the 1800's that cancer is electrically negative. And electricity was linked to the Chinese system of acupuncture by Louis Berlioz as early as 1816. The Chinese determined thousands of years ago that: "there is an electrical wiring system in the body where all organs and systems have terminal points in various locations on the body, all of them being represented in the hands and feet." In 1889, the electronic genius Nikola Tesla described his research relating electromagnetic waves to the cells of living organisms. [Tesla] announced his findings to the American Electro-Therapeutic Association. In other words, electronics as therapy was widely supported as early as the late 19th century. Yet a hundred years later it is only beginning to re-emerge because of the successful political suppression brought about by the AMA, drug companies and federal agencies. A century has been lost. In 1925, George Lakhovsky, a French scientist, published studies which showed that plants inoculated with

cancer could be healed with simple radio frequencies... “...16 days after the first treatment, the tumours began to shrink and dry up. A few days later the tumours were entirely dried up and could be very easily detached from the limb of the plant by merely touching them. The drying action of the radio frequency radiation is selective and affects only the sick part of the plant. Even the inside sick tissues were destroyed, although they were next to healthy cells... [which had not been] affected... At the present time similar experiments are being carried out with animals and it seems that the effect on cancerous animals is the same as on cancerous plants. I am highly pleased to present my theory and the results of my work in a scientific review of the U[S], this great country which has always been in the lead in the fight against this terrible sickness, cancer, and whose sympathy and help I would greatly appreciate.” In 1926, George Lakhovsky built a device for treating human diseases. Lakhovsky was granted a US patent in 1934, but it was ignored and suppressed by the medical and scientific authorities of the time. Modern Lakhovsky devices are still built by individual engineers and alternative health practitioners, but there has been little interest or formal research, and no first-rate clinical studies by the army of cancer specialists being paid billions of dollars of the public’s money. The current devices are not FDA approved and all carry a statement “for experimental use only”. If the NCI and FDA were fulfilling their responsibilities, NCI would have 50 years of research into Lakhovsky and FDA would have established manufacturing standards which ensured quality. Of course, that could result in millions of people curing their own early-stage cancers in their homes, totally eliminating the physicians and drug companies... “*The Inquisition is still with us. It is called the Food and Drug Administration. It is called the National Cancer Institute. It is called the American Cancer Society and the AMA. They are allied together to destroy innovation in modern times.*” ...High officials of the AMA, FDA, NCI and ACS, along with their associates in the drug companies, lawyers, lobbyists, bankers, university chiefs and various investors, are guilty of contributing, by their actions or by their silence, to a monstrous crime against humanity... It is not an exaggeration to state that America has had on its soil for many years a clique whose evil is comparable to the worst crimes of... totalitarian m[onsters]. Indeed, the... number of innocent people who have died because of this conspiracy of greed ignorance and power exceeds the slaughter perpetrated by Hitler or Stalin... Radiology was originated by Dr Emile Grubbe in 1896 but it was not until the 1930’s that it began to be used to any extent. Following W[W2, the US] government... began... to “sell” radiation to the public. It fit[ted] nicely with the atomic energy program... Thus a mass propaganda effort in radiology took place in the late 1940’s and 1950’s. People literally became human guinea pigs... “In 1951 Collier[’]s published a lavishly illustrated article showing a [patient] lying, helpless and alone, in a huge vault at Brookhaven laboratories in New York. [The patient] was being ‘blasted’ by atoms of boron, which were ‘exploding’ the tumour in her brain. The writer explained that this therapy, being used for the first time and with no known results, was a ‘spectacularly promising phase of atomic research.’ Upset at the expectations aroused by such hyperbole, some critics warned that radiation therapy was at best an inexact science, at worse highly dangerous to patients.” Despite such concerns, radiation therapy expanded. By the late 1960’s, radiation therapy was the standard treatment following surgery for breast cancer. It was curtailed only when studies began showing it offered no survival advantage. By 1974, the respected British medical journal, *The Lancet*, reported that radiation following breast surgery *increased* the death rates... Yet, by 1980, a national survey of radiologists showed that 50% of them still radiated [patients] following surgery for breast cancer. Either the radiologists were incompetent and not reading the medical literature, or they simply preferred to make the money, no matter that tests showed they were killing their patients... “A Critical Look At Cancer Coverage” from the January-February 1975 *Columbia Journalism Review* contained the angry conclusion of one scientist regarding the radiology facts-of-life: “Look, when you’ve got 10,000 radiologists and millions of dollars worth of equipment, you give radiology treatments, even if study after study shows that a lot of it does more harm than good. What else are they [g]oing to do? They’re doing what they’ve been trained to do.” The destroyed tissue in the radiated area became a gathering place for the cancer virus to feast! ...Studies by [one medical researcher] in the 1970s indicated that X-rays were linked to leukaemia. As a result, NCI refused to renew his grant. [The researcher] declared the cancellation was due to: “medical politics... self-interest groups protecting themselves.” [The] Director of Bio-Statistics at Roswell Park Memorial Institute for Cancer Research, accused the entire profession of radiologists from the mid-1940’s to the mid-1970’s... of committing a crime against the American people. That crime continued throughout the 1980’s. It is likely to go on well into the 1990’s... A Public Broadcasting System documentary in the early 1980s, titled *The Cancer War*, included an interview with... [a] co-discoverer of 4 isotopes and 4 nuclear processes. [The co-discoverer] stated: “My estimate is that about 94,000 cancer fatalities for the future are being induced with each year of medical diagnostic X-rays” (in the U[S] alone)... A 1988 book... utilized... statistics to warn that a five-year old child was five times more susceptible to an X-ray induced cancer than a 35 year old adult while 10-year olds “may be at the greatest risk of all.” Unborn fetuses apparently are in a special category. In the mid-1950’s... Oxford University contacted the mothers of 1,694 children who had died of leukaemia... [The survey] discovered a direct correlation between the number of times the pregnant mother had received an X-ray and the unborn child’s risk of developing leukaemia. That was not surprising although the scientific facts were original. What was shocking was something else [the survey] discovered... “...pelvic X-rays given years *before* the mother became pregnant could predispose her child to get cancer.” This caused a furore among physicians and radiologists. They bitterly dismissed the evidence for the next ten years. Then, in 1966, the N[CI] published a study involving *19 million people*. It confirmed [the] earlier study... In 1978, the Office of Technology Assessment, an arm of the U[S] Congress stated that only 10% to 20% of all medical procedures had been shown to be efficacious in controlled trials. Radiation... appears to fall into that category, and despite scientific evidence revealing its dangers, the army of radiologists ensures that the practice will continue – as long as uninformed patients exist and political officials fail to protect the innocent against the organized unions of physicians and radiologists... Oxygen Therapies have been in use medically for over 100 years. The basis of the therapies is quite simple. Ultimately toxicity collects within the body over time. This buildup of toxicity... within the body invites the proliferation of anaerobic disease[-]causing micro-organisms. Oxygen therapies are used to flood the body with active forms of oxygen. When the body becomes safely saturated with these special forms of oxygen, it reaches a state of purity wherein the disease micro-organisms – like HIV – are killed, and the underlying toxicity is oxidised and eliminated. Healthy human cells love oxygen, but since the harmful viruses are anaerobic, once these viruses are surrounded with active forms of oxygen they must die. Active forms of oxygen also eliminate any cells with the virus hiding inside them since, unlike healthy cells, they no longer are able to protect themselves from oxidation with the body’s natural antioxidants. Once the viruses and bacteria are all killed, the patient’s immune system is then rebuilt with vitamin, mineral and if needed, behavioural modification and other therapies. In this way diseases like AIDS, cancer and multiple sclerosis are being eliminated or at least controlled on the international scene, and within the US medical underground. Ozone therapy is one of the oxygen therapies... Ozone therapy was used medically in the US by Nikola Tesla in 1900. It has been in continual use since then in our country, but due to legal pressures from the US FDA, ozone is presently only widely used in Europe... The biggest problem is that in 1976, the FDA declared ozone a “toxic gas with no medical uses” via publication in the Federal Register. I have written that: “Printing this statement in a publication paid for with our taxes is either a blatant attempt at suppression of truth from the highest levels, or one of the poorest research jobs ever done. It obviously favours competitive drug therapies, and ignores well over 50 years of safe and effective medical use on hundreds of thousands of humans – backed up with medical references and clinical studies in Switzerland, Italy, France, Germany, A[US, NZ], Mexico and the USA”... MD’s characterise ozone as “blatantly non-toxic”... Ozone therapies are among the safest therapies ever used. One European study of over 5.5 million treatments showed a side effect rate of 0.0007%... Side effects like fever and weakness are minor and temporary... When the proper protocols are followed ozone has been proven highly effective in the treatment – and the elimination – of over 40 common diseases... Although legally, ozone is believed by some to be “grandfathered” since its use in US medicine predates the existence of the FDA itself, no one has tested this position in court. So the FDA and the state medical agencies and boards that take their lead from the FDA... are actively persecuting any physician using ozone. Under these prevailing

“siege” type conditions I could get none of the US doctors who have achieved great successes with ozone therapy to... [appear before] the NIH. When asked to appear the[y]... all reacted in fear of the government, fear of the loss of their licenses, and fear of being raided and cleaned out by SWAT teams in the same way that... other MD’s have been treated most recently... On the bright side, if immunity from state, and federal, and agency, and medical board prosecution could be assured, these humanitarian doctors would gladly make available their knowledge for the public good... Due to the many interviews I have conducted, it is my opinion that the AIDS problem has been solved... [This conclusion was recently supported by a] radio station in New York. [“A scientist] has categorically invented a process to purify whole donor blood in the bag, and his invention of polyatomic apheresis ozone technology has created the most significant breakthrough in the treatment of AIDS and degenerative diseases found anywhere in the world to date.” ...Why is... the... inventor of... [t]his... particular ozone machine... in the Metropolitan Correction Centre in Miami...? Why hasn’t [it] had a trial in three years? Why does the government not want his story to get out? ...Is HIV the cause of AIDS? HIV has never been found in any scientific studies in the world to be the sole cause of AIDS. No one can prove it. It is speculation. It is political and economic. The [guy] who said in 1984 that HIV was the probable cause of AIDS (instantly it became dogma that it was) – did[n’t] also inform the public [that the guy] was the primary beneficiary of a test for HIV, that [the guy] owns the patent and that millions of dollars have gone to him and his associates... Did the press vigorously explore all the allegations of fraud and corruption[which were linked to that person? No. Only t]he alternative press did... The[medical authorities] tell you don’t challenge orthodoxy. [However, the alternative press challenges] you not to believe th[e medical authorities] but rather to believe the experience of those who are the ultimate authorities: the patients who are alive and well... [While] researching... a documentary that I had been working on, called Living Proof – People Walking Away From AIDS Healthy... I came upon ozone therapy, and I also came upon all the controversy that surrounds it. So when I was offered the opportunity to actually watch a trial happen first hand, in the Philippines, I jumped at the chance. I... was stunned with what I saw, because I was expecting the entire thing to take place in a sort of wing of a hospital, or something that looked a little bit more like what I expected medicine to look like. It was actually a clinic that was set up rather ad hoc to provide space to do justice to this trial, so I started out a little on the sceptical side, not knowing what I was getting into. There were 19 HIV-positive people there, five of whom had full-blown AIDS. Over the course of about three weeks I watched the patients, or participants as they preferred to be called... go through some pretty remarkable transformations... There’s no amount of journalists or medical people who can tell me that what I saw I didn’t see. I saw people who were unable to walk, be able to walk again. I saw people who were very, very ill just get considerably better, and all of the treatment was cut short by a raid by the... Department of Immigration... The patients were 20 A[US]ns, 19 with HIV, one with multiple cancers... [Unfortunately] it is illegal to... enter the Philippines if you are HIV-positive... but Immigration does not question you; there is no testing and I don’t know that the patients realised that it was illegal... There was not any evidence that the FDA had been involved; but what I was told was that the story really got under way when A[US]’s version of A Current Affair did a scathing story on the clinic... I was told by another journalist in A[US] whom I trust, that A[US]n health authorities]... went in to the Department of Immigration and tipped them off... I was also told that the producers were directed by their upper management to do a ‘chuck job’ on the ozone therapy. And no matter what they were told, no matter how much positive information they were given, it never aired... because AIDS is on the horizon as another big moneymaker. The chair[person] of the AIDS project in Los Angeles makes... \$US100,000 a year... I also worked with the AIDS Project Los Angeles through their Long Beach and San Pedro districts. They had sent 179 patients home to die. They all had pneumocystis carinii and histoplasmosis. Their weight was down to about 100 pounds. Their T-4 cell counts were less than ten. The Project gave me five of these patients. I took them off the AZT and the DDI and put them on Essiac three times a day... [Now t]hey’re exercising three times a day, eating three meals a day. Their weight is back to normal. For all intents and purposes you wouldn’t know they were sick a day in their lives. But this information is not being disseminated... [even though t]he other 174 are dead! - 1994

Th[is is a description of] the last rites of the pharaoh Ramses the Great, the mightiest ruler of Ancient Egypt... For 70 days since his death [Ramses] has been prepared for everlasting life by the... chief embalmer of the king, the keeper of the mysteries. His body has been cleansed, purified and dried. Sacred charms sealed by honey and molten resin will protect him on his journey into the next life. Each action expresses beliefs and dreams sacred to the Egyptian people. At stake is the very foundation of Egyptian life – the successful preservation of the body as the key to immortality. If his mummy remains intact, and if his name is remembered, then Ramses will never die. The coffin of the king is closed. Will it remain sealed? Will Ramses live forever? Ancient Egyptian civilization lasted more than 3500 years – one of the most enduring cultures of all time. Yet its people wanted more – they wished to live forever. And no Egyptian craved immortality more urgently than the pharaohs. Their remarkable temples and monuments were created to protect the king in his life after death. Yet, in all the land of ancient Egypt... only one king’s mummy lay undisturbed into the modern day... [T]he discovery of that tomb... far to the south of the pyramids, in the Valley of the Kings... would stun the world. The year is 1922. Archaeology has arrived in Egypt like an invading army. Hordes of Europeans comb the desert for the most coveted prize of all – an unopened royal tomb... [A]n experienced Egyptologist has spent years looking for the tomb of one minor pharaoh. The little known ruler’s name was Tutankhamun – King Tut. “[Howard Carter was in his] 10th year, the money was running out. [Howard] was a romantic – you have to be to remain in Egypt that long... [– but] always knew that Tut was there.” [Howard]’s big break came in the first days of his 6th expedition. [Howard] discovered indications of a crypt that lay buried beneath a later pharaoh’s tomb – an accident of fate that had kept it hidden from grave-robbes... After so many years in the desert, all that stood between [Howard] and what could be the discovery of a lifetime was a wall sealed with plaster more than three millennia ago. [Howard] had no intention of letting the finer points of the law slow him down. Without proper authority from the Egyptian officials [Howard] began to chip away at the wall. “[There can’t have been]... a more dramatic moment in the history of archaeology – I can imagine the feeling! The first thing they saw were the... huge ceremonial couches – the ones in the shape of the bull and the tiger... Nobody had ever seen the likes of that even in reliefs or paintings in the tombs...” Tut’s tomb was designed as a gateway to eternity – a storehouse of sacred and magical items for his journey into the afterlife. “You have weapons that nobody ever knew existed; you have fine bows; you have a piece of steel on his head... a little... miniature knife in steel, which was considered to be more valuable than all the gold that they found.” ...The inner most of four ornate coffins was solid gold. But it was not enough to ensure Tut’s place in eternity – his mummy shattered as soon as [Howard] unwrapped it, searching for the king’s jewellery. Sadly, King Tut would be remembered not as a pharaoh, not even as a [hu]man, but as treasure... The Nile... was the soul of Egypt – the sacred link between the land of the living and the land of the dead... In its constant and dependable rhythms, the river provided the basis for their belief... “The Nile was the vein[or] the heart of Egypt... The water which is coming from the flood, it’s red, it’s fertile – this is the mud that’s going to... feed the land...” The Ancient Egyptian’s oldest myth – the story of creation – was set amid the swirling waters of the Nile. In the beginning it is the great god Horus – the falcon god – that brings power to the pharaohs. Horus is the god of the skies... [who] invests the pharaohs with dominion over the land and the people... Tomb models buried with mummies of wealthy landowners depict details of... working Egyptian farm[s. They offer] a rare glimpse into the texture of life 4000 years ago. But the lives of the pharaoh and the farmer had little in common beside their desire for eternal life, and no element separated them more than stone... [S]tone was the embodiment of every pharaoh’s power... The overriding mission of each new king was to secure the quarries that would provide raw materials for monuments to his reign. [One] obelisk would have been the tallest in the ancient world but a flaw in the granite caused it to crack before it was completed. How its massive 1200 tonnes would have been moved and raised into place remains a mystery. In ancient Egypt stone was the medium of immortality. It was stone that assured the king’s name would be remembered... And one pharaoh surpassed all others in his efforts to be remembered... The greatest builder in

Egypt's history, Ramses ruled until his 90th year. His harem overflowed with queens, lesser wives and concubines, and included three daughters and a sister. [Ramses] was father to more than 90 children. But his greatest legacy was left in stone. As a great general motivates his troops for battle, Ramses' most inspirational words were for his builders. 'Oh my chosen... valiant [builders] of proven skill... in valuable stone, I am your constant provider. The granaries groan with grain for you...' But even Ramses' stone monuments would lose the battle against his ultimate enemy – time. By the year 550 AD, the golden age of Egyptian civilisation had passed. A waning Roman Empire now ruled Egypt. With the Romans came Christianity. The ancient faith in immortality and reincarnation was banned. Still, one last bastion of Egypt's ancient knowledge and beliefs remained... Inside... this secluded shrine... priests kept the ancient faith alive... and still practiced the rituals that promised immortality... And only these... [priests] could read the ancient writing – the hieroglyphs carved upon the walls. Finally, this last remaining outpost of Egyptian civilization came under attack. A mob of Christian zealots, outraged at the continuing worship of pagan gods, assaulted the priests – breaking the last living link to the pharaohs. The priests were killed or scattered. They took their knowledge of the hieroglyphs to their graves. Egypt's dreams had been destroyed. The divine secrets of sleeping pharaohs, their sacred quest for immortality, all lost – perhaps forever – beneath the drifting sands. But of all Egypt's wonders, one captured the world's imagination like nothing else in human history. In the desert of the Giza Plateau – stoically surviving the swirling winds and grinding sands ...[or] nearly 5000 years – they defined this society that dreamed of immortality; for the pyramids seem to have defeated time itself. The world's most recognised symbol of the glory that was Ancient Egypt; built as tombs, later gutted, robbed, battered by the centuries – and still they endure. There are more than 2.3 million blocks of limestone in the Great Pyramid of Cheops, each stone weighing from 2 to 15 tonnes. Its base is a near perfect square. 481 feet tall, it could hold the equivalent of 872 widebodied jets. And still today the mysteries abound: where did the technology come from – how were they able to move such vast amounts of stone prior to the invention of the wheel? Perhaps most intriguing of all: who could have imagined this possible – eternal stone structures, the largest on Earth, when nothing even a fraction of their size had ever been built? The answer lies nine miles south among the Old Kingdom tombs of Saqqara and[, in particular,] the step pyramid of King Djoser – the very first stone building in all the world. This was the laboratory that proved the great pyramids possible. Unlike anything the world had ever seen, it was so remarkable a feat of engineering its architect... was proclaimed a god. Originally designing a simple low-slung tomb... [the architect wasn't satisfied. It] added one layer, then another, and another and another, as if building steps to heaven. [The architect] also tunnelled deep into the earth, creating a labyrinth of chambers, galleries and corridors designed to keep the king's true burial site secret... Down dark twisting passageways, at every turn, in every detail, what [the architect] accomplished seems astonishing still. "There is no scientific explanation given to the public to tell them how the pyramids w[ere] built. They never left a papyrus scroll or a description in a stone to say how they did it." Today it takes a 350hp diesel engine and hydraulic lifter to pick up a tonne granite slab... Although no description or narrative account has ever been found telling how these massive stone monuments were created, [one] tomb drawing contains tantalising clues. It shows the 160 workers needed to move a single statue. How many more must it have taken to build a pyramid? Many believe the stones were moved on enormous wood sleds on mud-slicked paths. Others think rolling logs were used, or even canals built from the Nile and the stones floated in on barges. Ramps most likely raised the stones into place. But how they built on such a scale and with such uncanny precision is the greatest wonder of this great wonder of the world. The pyramids were built to house the pharaohs for eternity but the stones would fail them. The tomb became a beacon – attracting as many robbers as it repelled, and Egypt became a land overrun by treasure-seekers. There was no stopping the looting and plunder to come... Despite the royal architects' best efforts the tombs were violated. The great stone walls could not protect the kings from the greed in the hearts of [people]. The intruders might be simple robbers, members of the king's own priesthood, or even the very builders of the tomb itself. Actual trial transcripts, found on an ancient papyrus, reveal their greed. 'We broke through and found the pharaoh lying in the rear of the tomb. We took all his possessions of gold, silver and bronze, and divided them between us.' [The statement was made by the] temple stone mason. And the plunder continued down through the centuries. In the unbridled looting of the 1800s, nothing was scared. A giant head of Ramses was dragged from the desert and [taken] to the British Museum... Even a [person] of science... left a trail of destruction in his wake. A brilliant scholar... the French archaeologist... discovered the long-lost tomb of a cult that worshipped sacred animals 3000 years ago. Deep under the ground... a maze of catacombs contained massive stone coffins that once held mummies of full-grown bulls. Each granite chamber weighed 80 tonnes, and yet they too had been robbed – the lids pried open in ancient times by a force [the French archaeologist] could not even begin to comprehend. Only one sarcophagus remained unopened, but [the French archaeologist and his team] came well armed. [The French archaeologist] was a product of his time – as greedy for treasure as for knowledge, shamelessly indifferent to the desecration [his activities] would cause the sacred tombs. "In the raw pillaging days, it was just, 'Hey, let's get the biggest kind of stuff we can', and they blasted it with dynamite to get it out; and they dropped [artefacts] in the Nile by mistake when the winches didn't work, and all sorts of chaos. They would take dynamite and set it at the edge of the pyramid... [then] just let it go [to see if there wa]s a hole in there, [wa]s it next to a burial chamber, and so on." Despite the best efforts of Egyptian authorities illicit excavations continued... but the worst looting was not the work of amateurs. This was plunder with a pedigree; plunder in the name of art and science; plunder to fill national museums all over the world. "Museum curators are trained to do three things: they acquire, they exhibit and they publish... [T]he sexiest thing is to acquire... [T]he resentment of people living in the countries that were being pillaged finally got to the point where it had to be taken seriously by the industrial powers – who were the collectors. 'We don't want any more of this theft, and you people who are the scholars... you're the ones that are egging them on – you're contributing to the criminal behaviour by saying we'll buy anything in sight'..." "You know, Egyptian civilization does not belong to Egypt only, but belongs to everyone... all over the world. [However,] Egyptians are guardians of [this history] and this is why... Americans, Europeans [and so on have to unite] in stopping this [criminal behaviour]." The pharaohs have not been left in peace... [O]ver the years... the mummy of Tut... has been rudely ...handled. But mummies suffered far worse indignities. They became the objects of bizarre rituals and beliefs. "In medieval times pounded up Ancient Egyptian mummy was considered to be a powerful medicine, to say nothing of an aphrodisiac. Pounded mummy was worn by the king of France in a leather pouch on his belt. A thriving market in what was called *Mumia* developed throughout Europe, and there were numerous instances in the late 18th century and early 19th century of people throwing mummy-unwrapping parties... [G]roups of doctors and scientists would get together... throw a reception, and... formally unwrap the mummy. And the collection of mummies from there became big business." For over a thousand years, human beings have been treated as display pieces, historical oddities, props for cheap magicians. But another chance discovery, more than a century ago, would forever change the way mummies were treated... [I]n a cave lay the coffins of 32 kings and queens, including the mummy of Ramses... 3000 years ago their royal priests carefully identified each ruler and hid their remains in this secret burial chamber. For their own protection, Egyptian authorities... removed the royal mummies from their tombs and this collection of ancient rulers formed a funeral procession unique in human history. All along the Nile, Egyptians gathered to [show] their respects as the eerie caravan of ancient rulers made its final journey north to Cairo. Today, a century later, Ramses and all the royal mummies lie in the upper gallery of the Cairo Museum. A unique conservation effort is under way to preserve the ancient pharaohs, to complete the task their priests began. But now scientists have taken the place of [the priests] as the final protectors of the royal mummies... Steel and glass have replaced the stone and jewels of [their] original tomb. The casing [is] filled with an inert gas to reduce further damage to the mummies... It may be that what makes Egypt so mysterious and majestic is that traces of the humble have all but disappeared, erased by the passage of time. Our vision is of the exotic – the monumental buildings and the royal treasures of dazzling and inspired beauty; it is the fabulous trappings of priests and magicians, the resting places of queens and kings that survive – but the things that really ground us are the mummies, the preserved faces of... [people] who lived life to its fullest, and who died hoping that their perfect lives along the Nile were never really

over... [N]ow they are closer to eternity than they have ever been. [●] *'Pyramid* (TV One, Monday, 7pm) is a BBC documentary on the Great Pyramid of Giza, the only one of the Seven Ancient Wonders of the World to survive. The film graphically reconstructs King Khufu's tomb, which took over 20 years, 5 million tonnes of stone and 20,000 workers to complete. Unlike many documentaries on the topic, narrated by academics or TV presenters, *Pyramid*'s story is unravelled through the eyes of a fictional worker on the monument. Nakht and his fellow conscripts – not slaves as is commonly believed – are seen hauling huge limestone slabs to the pyramid's base. The structure was aligned by holding ancient plumb bobs towards the circum-polar stars, the part of the sky the Egyptians believed would grant Khufu an afterlife.' This week's TV also 'provides an insight into some of the oldest, newest, most famous and most unusual mummies in the world. *The Ultimate Guide: Mummies*, Tuesday, reveals how the quest for eternal life through mummification has given scientists a window into the lives of early civilisations. Some mummy facts: ■ Eva Peron, who died in 1952, is the world's best-preserved mummy. ■ In top-of-the line mummifications in Egypt the brains were sucked out through the nose and all vital organs were removed, except the heart which was thought to have been the seat of intelligence. ■ The oldest mummies in the world were not from Egypt but were Chilean (*Oldest Mummies In The World*, Sunday, attempts to date the origin of mummification and explores how the idea reached Egypt from the coast of Latin America').

... 'the mummified bones of a South American tribe – which predated the Incas and bound the heads of high-ranking babies between wood to produce an elongated skull – litter the desert. The Incas consulted a "court of the dead" (mummified corpses of past rulers or "sons of the sun") on important issues'...

'Machu Picchu, the "lost city" of the Incas in the Andes, is in imminent danger of being destroyed by landslides, Japanese geologists warn. Ground movement sensors placed by Kyoto University researchers have shown that part of the site's back slope is moving downhill at a rate of up to 1cm a month. Machu Picchu was declared a World Heritage Site by Unesco in 1983. It has become Peru's most economically important tourist attraction. Machu Picchu, 80km northwest of the Peruvian city of Cuzco, was the last stronghold of the Incas after their empire was overrun by Spanish conquistadors. Its ruins, in an astonishing state of preservation, were discovered in 1911 by an American archaeologist. The find spurred endless speculation about the lost Inca culture.'

...in] a world shrouded in mystery... a game [wa]s... played... We do not know the rules or how many played, but this [wa]s no ordinary contest – the[] contestants] played this game for their lives. More than a thousand years ago, the [people] who played and the crowds who watched... vanish[ed], leaving the arena and all their magnificent cities empty... They were called the Classic Maya. They built the greatest civilization in the Americas. When Europe was still in the Dark Ages, they produced artists and scientists whose achievements still astound. When London was just a town of wood shacks and dirt streets, the Maya were building mighty cities of stone in the heart of the Central American rainforest... [T]he greatest of them all... [was a] thriving metropolis of 40,000 people [which] reached its peak around 750 AD and covered an area the size of Manhattan. Less than a century later it stood empty. "It's a mystery that touches everyone because we... all exist... in civilizations, and we feel the fragility of civilization when we see something like the Maya ruins – when you see how high a civilization can develop and achieve, and how dramatically it can disintegrate..." Unlike so many other civilizations, the Maya did not fall to famine, invading armies or terrible disease. Maya cities were deserted... The Maya... just walked away, into the forest, never to return. Today descendants of the Maya still live in the land of their ancestors, yet their empire is no more. But why... did the ancients leave their magnificent cities? It is a question that has haunted historians and archaeologists for ages. Only by exploring the deepest beliefs of a people who died a thousand years ago can we attempt to understand who they were, and why they left deserted all they'd created. The trail is cold but clues can still be found... The origins of the Maya lie in the forgotten histories of the first immigrants – the Asiatic people who walked across the Bering Sea from Siberia during the last Ice Age and settled the Americas more than 15,000 years ago. Thousands of years would pass before the Primeval Maya established themselves in the sweltering jungles of Central America. Then, in a period lasting from 250 to 900AD, the sophisticated civilization we call the Classic Maya would flourish. Hundreds of cities were built. The vast territory that is now southern Mexico, Belize, Guatemala and Honduras became the empire of the Maya. They thrived for more than six centuries then it was over, all across the empire... For almost 1000 years their ruins lay lost and forgotten. It wasn't until the 19th century that the world would rediscover the Classic Maya. In 1839, [a]travel writer... and [an]illustrator... explored the jungles of Guatemala. Their work captured the romance and mystery of the Maya world, while providing the first serious clues to the origins of this lost civilization. Explorers before them had theorised the Maya were descendants of the Greeks, a lost tribe of Egypt, or even fugitives from the mythical land of Atlantis. But the[] travel writer and the illustrator] believed otherwise. "...we have a conclusion far more wonderful than that of connecting the builders of these cities with the Egyptians, or any other people. It is the spectacle of a people possessing cultivation and refinement." ...[the travel writer] understood this exotic civilization had not been developed elsewhere, by others, and brought across the Atlantic. The Maya, [the travel writer] suggested, were unique. Adventurers and eccentrics came from all over the world. One French explorer arrived in Mexico with 4000 lbs of luggage, and there was only one way to carry it – [on the backs of labourers or mules]. Not even the dense and dangerous rainforest deterred them. More than the promise of buried treasure lured these [adventurers] into the unexplored reaches of Central America – they were seeking answers to the riddle of a lost civilization. They found treasure, in abundance, but an understanding of the [Classic]Maya proved elusive. Archaeologists probed the jungle for decades, discovering great monuments in astounding profusion. Most intriguing of all, hundreds of pyramids that, like sacred mountains, reared up from the jungle floor. But the purpose of these pyramids remained a mystery. Then in 1957 it would all change... [A] great Mexican archaeologist... had spent four years excavating the most impressive pyramid... – the Temple of Inscriptions. Now [the Mexican] stood at the threshold of discovery... The centre of the burial chamber was an enormous stone tomb. His [labourers] worked feverishly to raise its massive lid. "I was gazing at the death-face of him for whom... this crypt, the stairway, the great pyramid with its crowning temple, had been built." ...rare film shows [the Mexican] moments after his dramatic discovery, but a ruined skeleton and a precious jade mask only raised further questions that nobody, not even [the Mexican], could answer. Who was... the [person] behind the jewelled mask? ...What happened in his life that his death warranted such ceremony? ...A century and a half ago [the travel writer] predicted that the strange, indecipherable engravings on their monument walls held the key to the mystery... [of the Classic Maya. The travel writer] was right but... the... sacred world of the Classic Maya should never have become a mystery. They left, after all, an abundant written record – an independently invented writing system; incredibly, one of the only five produced in the history of the world. These were texts imbued with magical power – descriptions of their cosmos, chronicles of their dreams. Beautiful, fragile documents, they were a truly remarkable achievement – a unique and totally original written language, as momentous as the hieroglyphs of Ancient Egypt. They bear witness to the birth of the first written language in the New World. The importance of these texts were recognised by the first European invaders centuries ago. In 1562 a devout Catholic priest... convinced one of the last surviving Maya scribes to translate the Spanish alphabet into Maya. [The priest] fervently wanted to bring Christianity to the Maya[, and] felt learning their language was his best hope of reaching the people... [The priest] dedicated his life to understanding the Maya, and to saving their souls. Still, his memory is not revered – rather, it is reviled. "[The priest] was distraught... maybe even destroyed, when [it] discovered... people that [it] believed... had been converted... continuing to practice pagan rituals... [The priest] went absolutely crazy, and... began to try to root out and extirpate any remnant of [the] ancient religion." In a single night this [representative] of God burned hundreds of precious books – books containing their science, their literature, a record of their lives. As the Maya looked on, it was as if every copy of their Bible and Constitution had gone up in flames. Throughout the Spanish Conquest, thousands more texts were burned. Of the prolific output of Maya scribes, only four books escaped the fires to reach the present day... and from this scant evidence would come remarkable insights into Maya culture. At first, only their sophisticated mathematical system was decoded. Maya math was tied closely to a complex system of astronomy. Their detailed observations of the night sky were recorded with astonishing accuracy. In the 1950s[a] great Maya archaeologist... would conclude these were a people dedicated to studying the heavens and the meaning of time. A thousand years before the first computer they recorded celestial events one half billion years in the past. But why such fantastically complex astronomical

calculations? [The Maya archaeologist thought it] knew... In the Maya, [the archaeologist] saw an idealised world of sacred beliefs and higher learning... Maya society was practically utopian [the archaeologist] concluded – a peaceful people, who worshipped time; a world run by tranquil priests and time-keepers; a place of sacred observations devoted to the tracking of the stars... His vision was as appealing as it was flawed. Certainly, the proof seemed all around him. The Maya built pyramids that were giant stone calendars and sun dials... [One] great pyramid... has 365 steps and platforms to mark the days of the year. Their alignment and design is so precise that once each year they cast a unique shadow that records the spring equinox. Like the star charts of an astrologer, their codices mapped the positions of the stars and planets for centuries to come. The Maya calendar was unlike any other... great gears illustrate their concept of time. The hieroglyphs on the larger wheel mark the 365 days of the solar year; those on... two smaller gears represent the 260 days of the priests' sacred calendar. Together this Maya time machine identifies the astrological significance of every single day. Using this calendar it must have seemed [to the Maya people] as if their leaders controlled the awesome power of the heavens. The accuracy of Maya astronomy still astounds. The cycles of the Moon were mapped so precisely that today, 1500 years later, their calculations are off by only 33 seconds. Even the moment of Maya creation, some 5000 years ago, is a fixed point in the sacred calendar. Forbiddingly, so too is the end of this world. According to the Maya calendar, this cycle of creation will cease to exist at precisely Sunday, December 23rd, 2012. Maya texts revealed the hidden world of their mathematics and astronomy, but... much more startling revelations were to come... And those revelations have created an entirely new understanding of the Maya... [P]ictures... painted on... Maya vases... reveal a people obsessed with the fearful and bloody gods of the underworld... "Some of these guys are very, very gruesome. The God of Decapitation, for example, is a skeletal god[which] very often is holding a decapitated head... by its hair... [and] is generally portrayed as having... stench coming out of him." For the Maya, the underworld was an ominous place. But to our eyes, many customs and rituals in their daily lives seem equally unsettling and bizarre. Children's skulls were deliberately deformed to create the flattened browline the Maya found so pleasing. Maya [gals] had their teeth drilled without known anaesthetics and then set with precious stones. The use of mind-altering drugs was encouraged and condoned. Powerful intoxicants were smoked. "The Maya got high. The Maya took lots of drugs but I think their drug of preference was fundamentally alcohol. And when they were so drunk that they were throwing up, they were then taking it an as enema – which would [give] a very intensive, even more intoxicating effect... They were getting incredibly drunk..." [The Maya archaeologist] was aware of such grotesque and bizarre practices, but... refused to let them alter his idealised vision of the Maya. Then [an] American film-maker... ventured into the jungles of Mexico... [where it] was led to a secret ruin... [which] would expose a savage truth, and alter forever the world's utopian vision of the Maya... ["When the film-maker] walks into this room [it]'s got a whole fore-notion of what the Maya are like. [The film-maker]'s imagining that they were priestly time-keepers, a... wonderful noble [people] – maybe like the very [film-maker] himself." Instead, what [the film-maker] found painted on the temple walls was a detailed depiction of the Maya not as peaceful stargazers but as fierce warriors; devout believers in bloodthirsty deities; devotees of bloodletting and sacrifice. It was a portrait of the Maya that up until that moment seemed unimaginable. "I think in fact there is probably no more... powerful painting of warfare and bloodletting in the world than this battle. It's full of sound and trumpets and screaming, and guys were all painted and pumped. Some of them are already slain... And the key point is right over in the corner... where this guy is ripping out the fingernails of that particular captive. And [the captive]'s face is collapsing. [The captive] seems to be almost burbling something out of his mouth. Maybe it's blood dripping from where they've ripped out a tooth or two. And the rest of these captives... look at their fingers[as] blood is spurting right out of them." This was an image of the Maya neither [the film-maker] nor the world at large could easily accept. Even these shocking scenes didn't immediately overturn the cherished ideal of the peaceful Maya. It was like a parent overlooking some obvious flaw in a child. "When [the film-maker] walked into this room I'm not sure that [the American] knew what to make of it. But when [the Maya archaeologist] walked into this room [it] didn't see warfare, [it only] saw a nasty little raid. In fact [the archaeologist] even wondered what was going on. 'The Maya wouldn't rip out fingernails.' [The archaeologist] thought perhaps there was some pot of red paint... that people were dipping their hands into..." It would take years before [the archaeologist] would acknowledge his mistake. But a continent away, another discovery provided a new set of clues. By pure accident, in a most unlikely setting, a new chapter in Maya history would begin. [It's] May, 1945. Berlin has been invaded by the Russians... Hitler's Germany is in ruins... The National Library is on fire... [A] Soviet officer plucks a random souvenir from the flames... The book [contains] reproductions of... Maya codices. [The officer] immerses himself in Maya studies, and the alphabet... [the Catholic priest] had attempted to transcribe. His great breakthrough was realising Maya hieroglyphs were much more than a simple system of numerical signs. His work was amplified by another Russian... a superb illustrator and archaeologist. Her keen eye detected patterns in the dates carved in stone. Where others had seen only numbers and signs, [the Russian] read the entire span of human lives. Based on her findings, the code-breakers went to work. They began to read the carvings in temple walls like tombstones in a cemetery. Much more than mere calendars, the images commemorated the entire reigns of kings and queens. 15 years after discovering the skeleton with the jade mask, [the Mexican archaeologist] would learn his identity... The tenth in a line of rulers that stretched back three centuries, [the king had] ruled for almost 70 years... [becoming] one of the most powerful kings in the history of the Americas. These were monarchs who commanded complex cities, large populations and vast areas of land. They ruled over their citizens with arrogance and disdain. But what was the source of their authority? Why did their subjects submit to such tyrannical rule? "We keep looking for the underlying source of the power of the kings – searching for economic and political and military power on a fairly grand scale. But the power isn't based in controlling resources or manipulating the economy or mounting large armies – it's based upon belief. That is the power of the Maya kings..." The power of the Maya kings – to understand it we must follow a trail of blood, a knife made from a stingray spine, a rope of thorns. These are the keys to comprehending the... Maya and the sacred power of their kings. Every portal of every Maya temple is a doorway to the underworld. Inside [a] temple it is the duty of both king and queen to re-enact the mythical moment of Maya creation. In myth, it was the blood of gods that gave life to [people]. This was the original act of sacrifice. On Earth, the king is as a god, and blood is the price of power – the debt to the gods that must be repaid. Myths and symbols will not suffice. Blood must be shed, and royal blood drawn from the tongue and from the genitals[of the king and] queen... forever bound that sacrifice of the gods to the li[ves of the people]. As his subjects watch, the bloody sacrament of the king [is burned and] spirals up towards the gods. In return for the sacrifice of royal blood the crowd believes the gods will cause the Sun to rise, the rains to fall, the corn to grow... "In the New World, people believed that your soul – the most potent part of you, the part that's indestructible, the part that you pass on to your grandchildren and to your great-grandchildren, the thing that is eternal – resides in your blood. So if you wish to give an offering that is the most precious and powerful thing on Earth, you give your blood." "Remember that the king had to do rituals of genital bloodletting and self-laceration on a regular basis..." In fact, all Maya gave offerings of their blood. "The difference between them and us is we have it easy. We say you can... get money out of your pocket. You can give something that doesn't hurt, that really doesn't cost you anything..." And there were other, even bloodier offerings. Skull racks commemorate war captives sacrificed to ensure the continuity of the Maya world. Even the ball games... [serve] a deadly purpose. The contest is in fact not a game at all – it's losers for sacrifice to the gods. The Maya revelled in this terror, even recording the brutality for posterity. [One statue of a] sacrificial victim still emits an eternal howl of unimaginable pain. [The victim] has been scalped, disembowelled, his hands and feet mangled, the wood bound to his back is ready for the torch. Today, Maya shamans still practice blood sacrifice, but now it is the blood of chickens [that] is shed. The ancient faith is intact, but only as a pale reflection of the rites and ceremonies of the Classic Maya. Sacramental blood still feeds the Maya imagination, but the context of the belief has changed. Christianity may have been forced upon the Maya, but once there it struck a deep and lasting chord. The Christian concept of a divine king who shed his blood for the benefit of [hu]mankind made perfect sense to them. For the [Classic] Maya the blood of kings was the mortar that bound all life together. The

king's sacrifice ensured the stability of the Maya world, guaranteeing the sanction of the gods and the belief of the people. [The king] stood at the centre of the Maya universe. Remove the king, and the whole system comes crashing down... [T]he crisis for the Classic Maya began the moment they lost faith in their kings. "Their source of power is this ritual, this display, this ceremony, the theatre, the charisma, and when real problems occur... it can be devastating in a way that it shouldn't have to be. But the authority is based upon belief... in the king, and failure is unacceptable. If this really is a holy lord who can manipulate the force[s] of the Universe, then failure undermines the whole system and it can't be adjusted for." The problems Maya kings faced as their authority eroded were not unique, but their solution was – more ritual, more sacrifice, more blood. But it didn't work... there were losses in war, overpopulation in cities, failures of crops – and, ultimately, the king was responsible. If the blood of the king held the world together, when that world fell apart it was the king's blood that had failed them. "When you begin to understand from the inside the way the Maya thought, and the way their civilization was constructed, it's amazing that they maintained it for as long as they did. The mystery should not be... [about] the Maya collapse but... of how the Maya... maintained th[eir] civilization for so long." The Maya... rose stone by stone out of the jungle – self-made and self-contained; unique and wholly original in all the world. But, ultimately, the great dynasties and the great achievements of the Maya kings and queens, all their formidable powers, were built upon the faith of the people. And when crops failed, or enemies prevailed, the people no longer believed. And when the people lost faith, the rulers lost power. And when the power vanished, the Maya abandoned their great cities, and the jungle reclaimed its stone.

...[3700 years ago], a dynasty of savage kings ruled a people called the Shang. Legends tell of barbaric sacrifices – thousands slaughtered by royal decree. The ruthless exploits of Shang kings are legends no more. We now know they were very real indeed. The Shang's quest for dynasty dates back to the very beginnings of Western civilization... [I]solated in the East, the most remote of ancient civilizations was flourishing in a land called China. Most Westerners see Chinese culture beginning in the capital city of Beijing. [Th]ere, within the walls of the Forbidden City, the destinies of countless peasants were decided by a succession of all-powerful emperors. But... China's emperors were [part of] a much older tradition – a tradition born of power, human sacrifice and the mysterious rites of the Shang. "The early dynasties of the Bronze Age in China were mentioned in great detail in the ancient texts from the... Han dynasties, but they're mentioned almost in a legendary way. The Shang dynasty moved from the stuff of legend to the stuff of archaeological fact with the discovery of... bones and their excavation at the very important Shang capital near Anyang." The city of Anyang lies 300 miles southwest of Beijing. Here, in 1928, Chinese archaeologists made an extraordinary find. Deep in the countryside, workers uncovered a cache of tortoise shells. The shells were covered with mysterious inscriptions – strange prophecies written in ancient Chinese characters. After years of research, the first pictures of Shang court life began to emerge. 4000 years ago royal priests used heat to crack the shells, then interpreted the cracks – predicting the outcome of a battle, the birth of a prince or the success of a great hunt. The shells also listed the names of Shang kings – rulers long thought as mythical as King Arthur and his court were now part of China's history. The discovery inspired the Chinese to widen their search... [T]he startling result was a series of royal Shang mausoleums. On ramps that led to the tombs, excavators were greeted by welcoming parties of headless skeletons. The missing skulls were found inside the grisly sanctuaries, arranged in mysterious patterns... Shang kings built their empire on a foundation of human sacrifice. "Critical to Shang religion was the belief that sacrificial offerings had to be made to the deities, or the ancestral spirits... [I]n order to obtain... wisdom..." The Shang valued bronze more highly than gold. In [bronze] vessels the kings would offer tribute to their gods, and royal control of the resources that each bronze required was absolute. They were a symbol of the Divine Right of Chinese kings that would, in latter years, be called the Mandate of Heaven. The Shang employed sophisticated technology to perfect th[e] most sacred of their crafts. While Mediterranean artisans were only beginning to experiment with metals, the Chinese had already elevated bronze casting to an art. From clay moulds packed with earth would come richly detailed works... The Shang aristocracy was addicted to hunting and warfare. By 1000 BC they'd found a more insidious addiction – alcohol. "We know from latter historical texts that the last Shang king was very, very fond of drink. In fact, [the texts] describe him as having built ponds filled with alcoholic beverages, and hanging slabs of meat... in the forest so [the king] could go out and party and banquet whenever [the king] wanted to – to the great destitution of his kingdom. It's also quite possible that the Shang use of bronze ritual vessels with a very high lead content... had physiological effects which decreased their capacity to rule." The inscriptions etched on the heat-cracked shells... had opened a new window on Shang royal life – their kings were ruthless. One... was said to have invented hideous tortures. Hot coals were poured into a hollow cylinder and victims seared to death. Whether such reports are fact or fiction may never be known... At a site called Sanxindui a competing culture was discovered – a people who vied with the Shang for the Mandate of Heaven... Sanxindui masks were found smashed to pieces – part of a mysterious ritual. They were reassembled... Over 5000 fragments were pieced together to restore [one] colossal nine-foot bronze... These once-shattered masterpieces seem to be evidence of a more sober approach to power. While the Shang severed heads as a show of force and authority, the rulers of Sanxindui conserved their population by decapitating statues instead. But kings rich enough to commission such extravagant bronzes were also capable of mustering formidable armies. Cultures like the Sanxindui may have weakened the Shang, and thus set the stage for a new dynasty – a people called the Chou... 300 years before the founding of Rome, Chou culture flourished. They established their capital near the present-day capital of Xian. Here the great King Wu secured his dynasty by creating China's first system of justice for the common people... Chou kings created a feudal system based on the teachings of Confucius. The king was considered a father-figure, who entrusted relatives with vast tracts of land. Soon these nobles raised armies of their own and a struggle for dynasty began. Fierce fighting would erupt. Smaller states were swallowed up by larger, regional powers. The final centuries of conflict – from 481 to 221 BC – are called the Warring States Period; a time when the seven most powerful states battled for supremacy. Armies of thousands were drafted from peasant populations. Enormous resources were allocated to training raw recruits and developing new weapons. Crossbows were developed some 13 centuries before they appeared in Europe. The Chinese weapon was armed with a sophisticated trigger mechanism. The Chou relied on their swords for close combat. But when all else failed, they resorted to psychological warfare... [One] Chou general, unable to break a long-standing stalemate, sent brigades of criminals to the front. Their choice was simple – die by their own hand or suffer an even worse fate if they refused. As enemy troops held their ground, the grim line of convicts approached. As the soldiers watched in astonishment, the convicts committed suicide. The gruesome diversion allowed the general's troops to overwhelm his stunned enemy. Xian leaders could now support a growing civilian population and feed their military machine as well. In the last years of the 3rd century BC, Xian ministers convinced a young prince that China's competing states were now his for the taking. The prince followed their advice and became the most powerful ruler in the world – Son of Heaven; lord of all things under the sky; 1st Emperor of China... A half-million strong Xian army destroyed all rivals in a series of savage campaigns. Under the Xian system even the lowest commoner could raise his rank and social status based on the number of heads [it] cut off in battle. In one conflict alone, 450,000 enemy soldiers were captured. All were beheaded by Xian warriors eager to improve their station in life. In the end, it's estimated Xian destroyed 2/3rds of [their] enemies' populations. The 1st Emperor succeeded where none before him ever had [by unifying] China. But the struggle to preserve it was just beginning. Far to the north of present-day Mongolia, nomadic warriors raided Xian settlements along the frontier. The 1st Emperor responded with an army of 200,000 convicts and 100,000 troops. Their mission – to build a barrier unique in the world, the Great Wall of China. Over the course of ten arduous years, thousands of [labourers] perished from exposure and fatigue. Their hobbled, broken bodies were added as fill... "If the king had a major construction project, you would be called away many years at a time, separated from your family, working under impossibly difficult conditions... and facing not only harsh climate, but possible enemy military action against you while you are involved in the construction – and, quite frequently, being put to death at the end of the construction project, so that you wouldn't reveal the secrets of the construction itself." ...The Great Wall... was a monument to dynastic might. It stretched from the lowest deserts to heights of over

6000 ft. Sections of new wall connected barriers built by earlier dynasties to create a wonder that spans 2600 miles – it's even visible to astronauts in space. The Great Wall stood as a warning to outsiders that China was at last a unified kingdom. [The 1st Emperor] now moved to secure his power from within – purging all political enemies. The old feudal system of landed nobility[and] their private armies [were disbanded. “The 1st Emperor]... established a safe system wh[ich]... concentrated all power into the central government. States had no independent military or financial capacity...” [The 1st Emperor] consolidated China with 5000 miles of roads and a sweeping programme of standardisation. Even the width of axle wheels was fixed. Travellers were required to carry passports. Rival states once issued coins of all shapes and sizes. By imposing a standardised currency, [the 1st Emperor] created a national monetary system. The written language was standardised as well, allowing the 1st Emperor's edicts to flow quickly and easily to the farthest points of his realm. But language was also the medium of ideas and opinions, and in their writings even royal scholars and historians began to criticise many of [his] new ideas as a dangerous break with the past. [The emperor's] Grand Chancellor... once observed that the well-fed rodents in the royal granaries were more aggressive than those in the streets. Later [the Grand Chancellor] would wonder if too much knowledge might feed insurrection. Such thoughts prompted a ruthless decision – on [his] orders, 460 scholars were buried alive. Vast collections of histories, poems and thought were destroyed. The civilization that gave the world paper and print would also conduct history's first book-burning. But opposition to [the emperor] only intensified. After three assassination attempts, [the emperor] lived in heavily guarded seclusion. China's 1st Emperor became obsessed with the search for a major potion to shield him from death. But one of the concoctions [it] hoped would make him immortal eventually succeeded where his enemies had failed. [The emperor] died in 210 BC[and]... was buried in the most opulent mausoleum the country had ever known. Long before his death, more than 700,000 convicts had begun its construction. It's said that precious jewels adorned the tomb's ceiling, depicting the Sun, Moon and stars of the Chinese sky. Crossbow booby-traps protected the main hall, where models of China's great cities sat beside scale model rivers. Filled with mercury, they flowed into a miniature ocean. To conceal the site... all who knew its secrets were sealed within its walls. 15 years of chaos followed [the 1st Emperor's] death. In 206 BC, a new dynasty called the Han rose to power. At its height in the 1st century BC, the Han dynasty was equalled in might only by the Roman Empire. But its 5th Emperor... knew that even the Great Wall would not protect his kingdom forever. Nomadic raiders in the north remained an ever-present threat. [The 5th Emperor] believed the key to dynasty was skilful diplomacy not battle. His secret weapon [was] a trusted adviser... [who it] sent... north on a mission of peace, to attempt a series of treaties cleverly designed to pit one Han enemy against the other. Midway [through his mission the adviser] was captured and given up for dead... Ten years later, an old [traveller appeared in the emperor's] court... the faithful diplomat, had survived. The courageous servant recounted his ten year odyssey, including a startling discovery [it ha]d made in his travels. [The adviser] had escaped his captors and fled as far west as Afghanistan. There, to his amazement, [it] found Chinese goods on sale in every market place. Traders were moving Chinese products to the edge of the known world. The most precious commodity, a cloth called silk. [The emperor] listened in disbelief as [his adviser] described how Chinese merchandise was transported along a network of rough trails called the Silk Road. Running across China, through Persia to the Mediterranean, the trade route covered some 4000 miles. Bales of the finest Chinese silk were being traded on the streets of Imperial Rome. In fact, the Romans bought the material in such abundance that the Emperor Tiberius imposed a limit on imported silk garments... [Amongst items uncovered from a Han prime minister's tomb were over] a hundred pieces of elegant, mist-like silk... in perfect condition. [One] transparent gown weigh[ed] 2 ozs – testament to the matchless artistry of the Han. Silk was also the medium for imperial map-makers... Researchers now know that the imperial lifestyle of the Han nobility, while opulent, was far from healthy. Remains found in... tombs reveal a fatty diet, rich in meats and seafoods... The [PM's] tomb's most precious relic offered the clearest picture yet of Chinese life at the top – [his wife]. Buried for 21 centuries, [the wife] showed few signs of decomposition. Her skin, pampered in life, was still smooth and pliant. Chinese researchers could now produce the first modern medical profile of the Han ruling class. [The wife's] lungs were scarred by tuberculosis, [the wife] suffered from intestinal parasites and a ruptured disc... But what ultimately killed [her], and no doubt many from the Han upper class, is an affliction common to us today. “The autopsy... indicated that [the wife] had heart disease and died of a heart attack sometime in her 50s.” The treasures of [the PM's tomb revealed] the wealth of the Han nobility, but the fortunes of a [PM] were pocket-change compared to the vast riches of China's emperors. To comprehend the magnitude of their power and wealth we must return to the time of the... greatest ancient Chinese ruler, [the 1st Emperor]. To protect his tomb, [the emperor] assembled the most remarkable bodyguard the world has ever seen. Nobody knows how many artisans laboured on this astonishing achievement, but estimates range in the thousands. The... super-human attention to detail, the very scope of the undertaking itself, is unique in human history. On secret orders, an assembly-line of subjects and artisans laboured for decades to create an escort for the Emperor's ascent into Heaven. In essence, [it] cloned his human army into life-sized soldiers made of clay. Warriors posed for their terracotta twins or suffered death. But this great army, created in their own image, was destined for defeat. In the chaos that followed [hi]s death, the underground vault of terracotta warriors was discovered by an angry mob and put to the torch. The roof-timbers gave way, sealing the soldiers deeply within the earth – seemingly forever. For two millennia, [the 1st Emperor's] great army remained lost, until 1974 when a discovery was made that would stun the world. The ancient vandals had smashed the warriors to pieces. With every figure unique, restoration is an arduous task. “The sculptures are very realistic. You see the detailed hair combed backwards with a little braid pulled up across the head. The ancient Chinese cared a lot about their hair. According to law records if you got into a sword fight and cut a soldier's top knot you could be put into prison for several years.” While the Roman Empire was content with an army of 100,000, the Xian amassed a military six times as large. The replica warriors... reveal the look of [the 1st Emperor's] troops in battle. The statues were buried in combat formation, giving researchers a haunting glimpse of dynasty on the march... Rescued from the hands of clay were 10,000 working models of Xian weapons. Laser technology confirmed Xian artisans used chrome-plating to block corrosion on the surface of [a] sword. Today its blade remains so sharp it can only be handled with protective gloves... More than 200 emperors would follow the [1st], ruling until the turn of the 20th century. Today they stand as a symbol of China's great paradox – a land where cycles of chaos gave birth to wonders and creations that enriched the world... Without the Chinese compass, without their creation of paper and printing, without their refinements to map-making and their invention of the ship's rudder, Europe's discovery of the New World would have been impossible. Ultimately, the reign of China's imperial rulers would end... in the Forbidden City around the turn of our century. In 1908, a... 3[-year-old boy] became China's last emperor. Three years later [the emperor] was dethroned, and China became a republic... [- which is another sign that o]ver the past 4000 years, while other civilizations have collapsed and vanished, the Chinese have continued to adapt and to survive. Despite countless wars, and a century of revolution...

This is the story of a revolution... that turned a nation from its blood-soaked and war-like past into a culture pursuing spiritual knowledge and inner peace. It is the story of an ancient prince who became a god, inspiring a line of divine kings who still govern and guide through [his] teachings... Hidden away for hundreds of years... at the top of the world, that civilization flourished, rich in its unique traditions and exotic culture. Only in this century has the veil of secrecy and mystery been lifted. And it is the story of a small peasant boy who became the last god-king in the Land of Snows. Born to rule [a kingdom, the boy] would instead witness the destruction of one of the world's most ancient cultures... Today... at the western end of the Himalayas... [in India, pilgrims converge on a] remote valley... They... come from local villages, neighbouring valleys and all over the world... It is an arduous journey, but each [pilgrim] is determined to attend one of the most sacred of all Buddhist ceremonies... [- the one known as] the Wheel of Time. This week-long ritual prepares for the end of all things – the complete destruction of time and space. Buddhists believe the world is entering an apocalyptic age. All week... monks will work day and night. They are heart-surgeons, but their knowledge of the human heart is... not... based... on medical science... They work not to save a single patient but to heal the heart of a world in crisis – to deliver

every living being from... the cycle of birth, life, death and rebirth[; from] the world of pain. With meticulous care, using grains of coloured sand, they create an intricate pattern... It's a kind of map guiding believers on the path to enlightenment, beyond the illusion of the material world – the world of things – to help them be reborn in a higher realm of spiritual truth. Presiding over the [week-long ceremony is the person who the pilgrims] believe to be the incarnation of... Buddha himself – the Dalai Lama, the god-king of Tibet... The current Dalai Lama – a title meaning Ocean of Wisdom – is the supreme leader, both religious and political, of 6 million Tibetans. His followers believe that over the past 600 years... his soul... has... return[ed] in a new body... 13 times... The year is 1933. The 13th Dalai Lama has died. A team of Tibet's most respected monks will begin the search for his successor – for a child born with the same soul as each deceased Dalai Lama. They pray for his speedy return to this world. Their search parties spread out across the land – and Tibet is a vast land. It is equal in size to Western Europe, or to Alaska and Texas combined. For a millennia it has remained remote and undisturbed behind the seemingly impenetrable walls of the Himalayan Plateau – the largest land mass on Earth, with mountains... that rise five miles into the sky. Always a place of mystery, Tibet was... the land of abominable snow[-people], strange rituals and magical rites; a world of levitating mystics, and of monks whose souls could leave their bodies and fly to mythical kingdoms... [Four] years after the death of the 13th Dalai Lama... the monks... are still... chant[ing]... for the success of their search for the... next god-king... They have travelled to the far-reaches of this desolate wilderness... Several auspicious signs lead the monks to believe that Tibet's eastern province... was the site of the Dalai Lama's return. It is said that days after his death, the head of the 13th Dalai Lama turned in that direction – indicating where to search. An image of a monastery with a distinctive turquoise roof appears reflected in the waters of a holy lake – the search party knows it is growing close. A series of rainbows appear in a cloudless sky. Rumours reach them of a boy born on July 6th, 1935... Horns were heard in the heavens on the day of his birth and the boy, it is said, often speaks of his home in Lhasa, Tibet's far-off capital – a place [the boy] has never even seen. [Upon seeing the monks, the young boy] immediately... identifies one of the search party by name, speaking in the [monk's own dialect. The boy] then reaches up and pulls at the monk's prayer beads – beads that once belonged to the 13th Dalai Lama. But one final test awaits [the boy]. Arrayed on the table before him are many objects. Among them, a few of the previous Dalai Lama's personal possessions. The boy selects these and none other. For the monks, it is as if the Dalai Lama has simply reclaimed what was his. Their long search is over. [The boy] is renamed... and prepares to become the 14th Dalai Lama. The year is 1940. Lhasa... prepares for the enthronement of its new god-king... Watercolours [of the event] were commissioned by... the only representative of a Western government to witness this most sacred of ceremonies. They offer an intimate record of... the world's only theocratic civilization; a society ruled by the priesthood... The son of a mule-driver from Tibet's most remote eastern province, [the boy] has come a long way from the two-roomed shack [it] shared with his parents and four brothers and sisters[. The boy now resides in a] magnificent temple... the great winter palace[– which is] seven storeys high, with over a thousand treasure-filled rooms... But this is no ordinary tale of rags to riches, nor would there be a fairy-tale ending. Walking through the vast halls and cavernous prayer rooms of the [palace], past... shrines containing the mortal remains of his 13 previous incarnations, the young Dalai Lama bears the weight of an age-old tradition on his slight shoulders. Constantly reminded of his place at the heart of Tibetan civilization, [the boy] is now the torch-bearer of a religion stretching back 2500 years. The origins of Buddhism take us back to the year 600 BC, to the plains of northeast India. Here, an event occurred as momentous for Buddhists as the birth of Jesus Christ is for Christians. 2500 years ago, an Indian prince sat beneath a sacred tree. [The prince] had spent many lifetimes in search of the truth and now vowed not to rise again until [it has] solved the mystery of existence. Immersed in deep meditation, [the prince] was to conquer all the dark forces of delusion. As Venus rose in the morning sky, [the prince] was rewarded for his age-long patience. Touching the ground, [the prince] called upon the earth to witness the sacred moment of his enlightenment... Buddha[claimed to have] unlocked... the meaning of time. All beings, [Buddha] taught, were caught up in... the cycle of birth, death and rebirth[– which] could only be escaped through the spiritual fulfilment [Buddha] called... Nirvana, where the soul is set free from the material world... While all souls climb life's ladder to enlightenment, achieving Nirvana takes countless lifetimes. Enlightenment only comes... [if a soul has been] purified by the good deeds of countless past lives... [and] when the true nature of reality is grasped – existence is impermanence... [However, Buddha] returns to the world... to help others toward enlightenment... The Buddhist philosophy is contained in 108 volumes that many followers learn by heart. It would take 1500 years for Buddhism to migrate from the hot, dusty plains of India into the Himalayan mountains, where it would finally take root... The Tibetan Plateau is one of the most... inhospitable places on Earth – an unlikely setting for a faith based on love and compassion to survive, and yet it flourished. Why? Perhaps the harshness of the setting provides a clue... [A]t 18,000 ft on the vast, desolate Himalayan Plateau, people are naturally humbled by the forces of nature. As nomads, they lead lives of change and impermanence, and need only to look around to sense their place in life's larger scheme. "...60% of Tibetans are nomads. One of the most important factors... that contribute to Tibetan resilience... is... the idea of impermanence. [This is] taught to you all the time. It's hammered into you... in our folk culture, in our sayings, even in... daily expressions... – suffering is impermanence; happiness is impermanence. [If a] Tibetan... from the plains... goes to New York... [it] is not impressed... with Western technology, even with the Empire State Building... [because it] knows... that's also impermanent..." ...In the 7th century, when the Buddhist method of love and compassion first reached Tibet, the people... were as savage and hostile as the landscape itself. From early records of the Chinese Tan dynasty, come the first outside views of Tibet – a portrait very much at odds with the peaceful society that would evolve here. 'There are hundreds and thousands of [guys] ready to bear arms... Their bow and sword never leave them. They prize physical strength and despise old age. Military discipline is strict. In battle, it is not until the troops in front have been completely wiped out that troops behind come up into line. They prize death in battle and hate to end their lives by sickness. As punishment, even for a small fault, they take out the eyes, or cut off the feet or the nose. They give floggings with leather whips just as they see fit.' Tibet was a feared conqueror in Asia. They toppled the Tan dynasty – took its capital several times; they conquered into the different Indian dynasties; they conquered the silk route cities; they smashed [a ruler] of Baghdad in a couple of battles. They were a very tough group, like a Genghis Khan in the 1st millennium. With China and Burma to the east, India to the south, Russia to the north and the Arabic Empire to the west, Tibet's expansion was by all accounts formidable. "...[then] they achieved something... which I think will lead them to be evaluated as one of the greatest civilizations... They basically demilitarised. Tibet was unique on the planet. No other country changed in the same way... All the others really went in the opposite direction." Tibetan criteria for civilization is a nation that does not use violence – that solves disputes and dilemmas reasonably, with conversation with neighbours. From the crumbling ruins of its aggressive past, monasteries sprang up across the land. Where there were once armies of soldiers there were now legions of monks... From the most unlikely beginnings, a peaceful, self-sufficient society emerged, dedicated exclusively to the pursuit of non-violence and spiritual wisdom. "...The experiment of Tibet... was... [about] creating a society that's based on the ideals of... an enlightened one[; about creating a society]... whose institutions are formulated from the ideals of that enlightened individual... institutions... that... are there to foster more of those people... We tend to do that the other way round in th[e US. We] make institutions and conceptual frameworks and try to fit people into them – rather than starting with the wonderful ideal and then have institutions and structures to create more of them..." ...An important visitor has arrived at [a] nomad... campsite – a reincarnate high lama... It is a time of excitement and great honour. All day, nomads visit the lama's tent presenting... white scarves of respect. Young and old alike have come, seeking his blessing. That the [lama] is only a small child is not important. For these nomads, th[e] boy is heir to many lifetimes of spiritual power and wisdom. In the 1930s and 40s there were reckoned to be... [about] 6000 such lamas in Tibet... At the turn of the century there were over 6000 monasteries in Tibet. A quarter of the population entered the religious orders for a life of celibacy and spiritual devotion. It was a source of great pride to have at least one son enter the priesthood, often before his 5th birthday. This was the world into which the 14th Dalai Lama was born... As the young Dalai Lama prepared to assume the mantle of Tibet's supreme spiritual leader his training was rigorous – including logic, Tibetan art,

medicine, poetry and philosophy. [The young Dalai Lama] would memorise thousands of lines of Buddhist scripture and practise meditation for hours each day. 75% of Tibet's budget was spent on education for the priesthood and the maintenance of its religious institutions... "Instead of guarding our borders we devoted ourselves to teaching and learning. Instead of launching invasions, we built monasteries..." In many ways [the young Dalai Lama]'s early life was similar to that of thousands of novices preparing for the priesthood, except in one essential detail – [the boy] was the... new god-king of Tibet. Unable to wander the streets of Lhasa like other boys his age, the young Dalai Lama would climb onto the roof of the [palace] with a telescope to look out onto the kingdom [it] was born to rule... The Buddhist belief in the end of all things is balanced by an equally strong belief in rebirth and renewal... Every Buddhist spends a lifetime preparing for death. This is their way of accepting the impermanence of all things. In much the same way, Tibet over the years has always foreseen the inevitable destruction of its own civilization. Genocide would descend on Shangri La – a holocaust, breaking the peace and silence of a world that hardly knew the sound of a machine, let alone a machine-gun. A country that had flourished undisturbed in a timeless corner of history was shaken into the present, and awakened into its own worst nightmare. The year is 1949. China, the most populous nation on Earth – its massive army battle-hardened and equipped with the latest weapons of war – invades its defenceless neighbour. Citing long-standing territorial claims, the Chinese quickly conquer what they call the Treasure-house of the West. Over the years, Tibetan monks had successfully warded off Chinese aggressions, trading spiritual power and blessings for peace and protection. But in the revolutionary fervour of China's new communist order, religion is considered a poison; and Tibet a backward, superstitious society in need of re-education. In 1933, 16 years before the Chinese invaded, the 13th Dalai Lama had foreseen the destruction... 'If we do not dare to protect our territory, our spiritual leaders may be exterminated without trace. The property and authority of our incarnate lamas and monks may be swept away. Our political system will vanish without anything remaining. The property of our people – high and low – will be seized, and the people forced to be slaves. All living things will have to endure endless days of suffering and will be stricken with fear. Such a time will come.' After ten years of Chinese occupation, the [14th] Dalai Lama decided [it] had no choice but to leave Tibet. In 1959, under cover of night, the Dalai Lama, his bodyguard and courtiers fled from the holy city to India, never to return. [The Dalai Lama] was only 23 years old, yet... had already witnessed changes far greater than any Tibet had experienced in its long... history. 100,000 Tibetans would follow, seeking asylum in India, but leaving one million more who would die in the atrocities and famines to come... Here in this rugged, yet breathtaking landscape, the Buddhist notion of... the loss of ego... beginninglessness, endlessness, and... impermanence are no longer abstract concepts. They are day to day realities... In the past, the [Wheel of Time festival] was celebrated only once every 20 years or so. Today the Wheel of Time turns faster – the ceremony is performed annually. It is Tibet's way of addressing a crisis that has brought its civilization to the brink... [At this year's Wheel of Time ceremony,] the Dalai Lama delivers the... [lesson] of impermanence... to a crown of 40,000 followers... – a lesson that has given the Tibetan people the strength and resolve to cope with tragedy and change. It has given them the ability to remain hopeful, even when they appear to have lost everything.

...*LOST CIVILIZATIONS*... [A]n Egyptian priest... claimed his sacred books contained an amazing story about a large island that had vanished in a single night... On the island, a highly advanced civilization had developed. 'There was an island called Atlantis, in which arose a great and marvellous power. The people retained a certain fineness of mind, and treated one another with wisdom and forbearance.' They were said to have built a magnificent city, and lived prosperous, productive lives. But according to legend they became corrupt. It was then that tragedy struck... Did that wonderful world really exist? Can such a civilization disappear so completely? The legend of Atlantis has teased the imagination ever since. As the mystique grew, it was claimed these ancient people possessed computers, space ships, even nuclear weapons. Atlantis has been found everywhere from the rainforests of Guatemala to the mountains of Tibet and, of course, on the floor of the Atlantic Ocean. More serious study has pointed to a Greek island known in the ancient world as Thera. A small dot in the Aegean... it's now just a rim of volcanic rock jutting out of the sea. But is Thera the lost city of Atlantis? For an answer we must journey back to the time of gods and heroes. What did their stories reveal about Atlantis? One [writer] – Homer – is the source of many of our myths. But did [Homer] describe real people, real places and real events? To find the answer we must re-examine the greatest legends of the Aegean world – the tale of a mighty Greek king murdered by his wife and her lover the day [the king] returned home from the Trojan War; the fierce... half-[hu]man, half-bull... Minotaur... who stalked his prey in the dark labyrinth on the island of Crete; and Helen of Troy, the face that launched a thousand ships... Our investigation... begins with Homer's dramatic tale of the Trojan War. [Homer] tells of Greek armies descending on Troy... in Turkey... to win back the beautiful Helen from her Trojan lover Paris[– who was 'appointed by the gods to adjudge the prize of beauty among the three goddesses Hera, Athene and Aphrodite. Paris awarded it to Aphrodite, who promised him the fairest gal in the world – Helen, the wife of Menelaus king of Sparta. Paris abducted Helen, thus bringing about the war which ended his life.' Mortals] battled to the death while gods squabbled over favourites on either side. For ten years, the Greeks were unable to penetrate the gates of Troy. Ultimately, the battle would be decided not by arms but by a trick. Pretending to accept defeat and depart, the Greeks left behind an enormous, hollow, wooden horse. The Trojans dragged the gift into the city, but it was filled with soldiers. For centuries, ancient Turkish legends spoke of a ruin on Turkish soil named Troy. But in the 19th century nothing along the shore suggested it was the site from Homer's epic war. Still, one [German] believed those legends... [The German ha]d been obsessed by Homer's Troy since childhood, and was convinced the stories were true. Clutching his well-worn copy of the *Iliad*, [the German] set out to find the site of the great Trojan War. "Heinrich Schliemann decided... [to] begin excavations... in the late 1860s, and... got permission from the Turkish authorities... [Heinrich] didn't really have a clue about archaeology, what excavation is like, but... was following the sources that [it] had read in Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*... describ[ing] the topography of the plain and the rivers around there." Homer wrote of two rivers flowing near Troy – one with steam rising from it, the other cold as hail... On April the 9th, 1870, [Heinrich] selected a site and set his team to work... In one sense... [Heinrich – who had] made his fortune in America, in the California goldrush... [–] was an amateur prone to exaggeration; in another, [the]... German... was a visionary with an insight few professional archaeologists could match. Anticipation built when the team turned up a coin marked [with] the Roman word for Troy. Digging deeper, Schliemann found signs not of one city but of several – one on top of the other[(the 'stronghold called Hissarlik by the Turks was sacked c.1210 BC; again destroyed c.1100 BC, the site was resettled by the Greeks c.700 BC and finally abandoned in the Roman period'). Heinrich] kept digging, believing that when they reached Homer's Troy [they] would find a great treasure. "[Heinrich] plunged right down into the earliest levels, [and] made lots of mistakes, but... learned... along[the way], and... realised... that [his team] was truly on the trail of the epics of Homer in the excavations..." When... lost, Schliemann always returned to Homer. 'When the Trojans were feasting, Ulysses and his Greeks crept out of the wooden horse. They opened up the city gates and let the Grecian army in. That night the city of Troy was sacked and burned.' So Schliemann searched for traces of fire. In his diary [Heinrich] wrote: 'I found a street covered six to ten feet in yellow, red or black wood ashes, mixed with thoroughly burnt fragments of bricks and stones.' Schliemann decided that the street [they]'d uncovered must be the royal road to the palace of the King of Troy. [His team] was now uncovering ramparts as massive as the mighty walls of Troy Homer had described in detail. But beyond coins and towers, Schliemann wanted to find evidence of the [gal] at the heart of the legend... Along the way [Heinrich] would find and marry his own Helen, a young Greek girl who also loved Homer and dedicated herself to her new husband's expedition. They would be satisfied with nothing less than royal treasure. After years of digging, Schliemann was close to losing heart. Then one day his eye caught the glint of metal in a wall. [Heinrich] dismissed the workers and scrambled through the rocks with his bare hands... From the wall [Heinrich] pulled vases of silver, weapons of copper, 60 gold earrings, nearly 9000 gold rings, and exquisite tiaras and necklaces. It was one of the world's richest archaeological finds... [and Heinrich boldly announced that the German] had found the treasure of [the King of Troy]... Not all Schliemann's claims would be confirmed, but [the German] did uncover the remains of a city destroyed by war and fire 4000 years ago, and it did contain treasure beyond price. Legend became reality... On a hilltop at Mycenae lie the ruins of an ancient fortress.

Schliemann concluded it must be King Agamemnon's great palace, with a magnificent gateway guarded by enormous sculptured lions... Among the ruins Schliemann found skeletons buried in strange circular patterns, but his dream was to uncover the grave of King Agamemnon himself and the treasure [the German] was sure would lie with it... [Heinrich] found 19 clearly royal skeletons surrounded by gold treasure... It was a treasure even more spectacular than... found at Troy. But then [Heinrich] found the most exciting discovery of all, a gold mask moulded to the likeness of the face beneath it. In Schliemann's mind the mask could only have belonged to one [king]... After 3000 years such precise identification is impossible, but from their skulls what these people actually looked like can now be determined... [I]n a laboratory in Manchester, England, Schliemann's Agamemnon skull couldn't be restored from the few pieces that were found, but many skulls from other Mycenaean grave circles were much better preserved... [The lab technician's] reconstructions are so accurate the police seek his help with skulls of unknown murder victims. Relatives often make identifications from his models. But what did [it] think of the Mycenaean [guys]? "A bunch of thugs!" "[The technician's] quite right when [it] says they're thugs. They're big... by and large – we've got people of 5 ft 8, 5 ft 9, they're well nourished, a lot of them have good teeth... [but we've also] got people with arthritis, probably from carrying too many... heavy shields." ...Homer called the Mycenaeans the strongest generation of earth-born mortals. In the grave circles Schliemann found weapons that precisely matched descriptions in the ancient epics... "What Schliemann actually discovered in these graves was a lost civilization. [Heinrich] discovered the earliest evidence that we have of the origins of the Mycenaeans themselves." Only later was it determined that the skull Schliemann found was too early to be Agamemnon. Yet in fact [Heinrich] had revealed something far more important. "Until Heinrich... began his work our knowledge of the past was really based on the written records of ancient historians and other ancient authors." But now concrete evidence showed these ancient tales were rooted in certainties and facts, and if Helen's Troy and Agamemnon's Mycenae were real places, could other supposed legends be true as well? The most terrifying of all Aegean legends is the myth of the Minotaur... that lived... beneath the palace of King Minos... The Minotaur myth is said to have its origins in King Minos' wife's lustful passion for a bull... In the legend, King Minos of Crete demanded tribute from his subjects – boys and girls who were sent into the monster's underground labyrinth never to return alive. The reign of terror was ended by a young Athenian... Unravelling a ball of twine to guide him out again, Theseus entered the dark passages... His mission was more than survival. According to myth, by killing the Minotaur Theseus would not only save himself but free his people from King Minos' rule... One echo of that legend can still be heard in the villages of Greece today... Each year... [in one] farming town... the people dress up in their finest for a strange ritual that combines cruelty and celebration. The town has donated the most expensive bull for the honour of being sacrificed... As villagers take the bull to a place of ritual in the mountains, a legacy of deeply rooted primal instincts is at work. Local farmers out-spend each other competing for the honour of cutting the bull's throat. Just before it's stunned, the bull seems to sense what's coming... Greeks have ritually paid tribute to this fable for thousands of years, but not until this century was the myth's origin revealed, and then only by chance... [I]n 1883... Arthur Evans, a rich and highly-educated young historian from England was visiting antique shops. Intrigued by Schliemann's discoveries, [Evans] wondered if some odd seal stones Schliemann had found didn't point to an earlier pre-Greek civilization. Seal stones were like signet rings, used to stamp images in wax and clay. Evans asked where more of the stones could be found, and the answer everywhere was go to Crete... It would prove the setting for Evans' greatest discovery. As [it] travelled the island in search of seal stones [the historian] found a society that had changed little since the time of Christ. Local [gals] called the seal stones milk-stones and refused to sell them to Evans fearing the milk would dry in mothers' breasts. To find them, [Evans was told to]... go to a place called Knossos, where some said there was a palace beneath the ground. Evans started excavating... and soon discovered something far more exciting than seal stones. [Evans] uncovered a vast palace, with hundreds of passages and a carved throne – surely the throne of the legendary King Minos himself. The palace was first built around 1900 BC... [Evans] christened... the people [who built it]... Minoans... Remarkably, Evans found frescos depicting what the Minoans looked like and how they lived. Every night... [Evans] carefully described what [had been] discovered that day. 'Groups of [gals] are seated and chattering gaily, dressed in the height of fashion, with elaborate... hair[-styles]... and ignoring what was going on in front of them... These scenes of feminine confidences, of tittle-tattle and society scandals take us far away from the product of classical art in any age – nearer to quite modern times.' ...might the monster have been hidden in the dark recesses of this palace...? One thing is certain – Knossos, with its 1400 rooms, was once a capital of a great power. The magnificent palaces discovered on Crete shared one remarkable trait – none was fortified. These were not a militaristic people. Rather, they seemed to have been cultured and advanced, not unlike the people in Plato's story of Atlantis. "The legacy of the Minoans was a love of art, a love of colour, perhaps a love of life... [Clearly], on the island of Crete, there... once... existed a civilization that was peaceful and had great achievements." Was this the utopian world of lost Atlantis? There are some convincing clues. The bull is a recurring theme in Minoan art. Its many depictions on so many Minoan treasures echo Plato's descriptions of Atlantis. "We find the golden cups that Plato described, with the bull ceremony engraved on the sides that Plato described in association with those cups; and the bulls being tied down by nooses and with rope, which is something that is just totally unique – very distinctly Minoan... Early in this century when the Minoan civilization was first being unearthed, some of the first archaeologists to arrive on the scene – looking at the paintings of the bull ceremonies and so on – said: 'That's Plato, that's his Atlantis story'." But unlike Atlantis, Crete did not disappear into the sea in a single night. [However, not far] from Knossos – just across the Aegean – lies the... popular resort... island of Santorini... This is... [an island that was] destroyed in one devastating eruption 3000 years ago[when it was called Thera]. When that explosion occurred, the Minoan Empire was at its height. Could that civilization have extended to Thera? ...Some fascinating new evidence has revealed this was no ordinary eruption. The disaster on Thera was the greatest natural explosion the world has ever seen. "Try to imagine a nest of about 150 hydrogen bombs all going off in the same place in about the space of a hiccup. Immediately after the explosion you would have had a crater about eight miles wide and perhaps one mile or so deep, and the entire Mediterranean trying to fill that hole very quickly. For a period you would have had waterfalls that would have put Niagara... forever to shame... It was a tremendous explosion..." The eruption caused a tidal wave that reached 30 miles inland along the shores of the Aegean. "The wave would have reached heights of about 800 feet." The blast itself must have been felt continents away. Forensic science and ancient records make it possible to pinpoint 1628 BC as the year it struck, sending a dense cloud of ash across the Middle East and around the world. '...the Sun is covered and does not shine on the face[s of people]. If only it would shine, for even one hour. No one knows when it is mid-day...' Those words of an Egyptian scribe recall Biblical descriptions of darkness covering the Earth. There is evidence of the precise year the ash cloud reached China... There are even indications the cloud reached North America... In California the core of a 5000-year-old... pine shows a ring of dark cells dating back to the same year... The Thera explosion was so enormous it became folklore to the Egyptians and was passed down to Plato as the story of Atlantis. But even more fascinating evidence would be revealed on Thera. The ash-covered ruins of an ancient city would draw another brilliant historical detective into the story. In 1967 [this detective] began a search for Minoan remains, with no idea what [it] would find beneath the volcanic ash. [The detective] first uncovered signs of walls, then a whole street, then dozens of giant storage jars – many filled with produce as if waiting for their owners return. There were no bodies, no gold, no jewels. But what [the detective's]... team did discover was far more astonishing. With great care, they began uncovering exquisite frescos. In the 20th century, paintings wonderfully preserved for 3000 years in a tomb of ash were revealing a picture of life in this long forgotten town. Many rooms had a fresco on every wall... [depicting] an elegant, rocky landscape with graceful swallows – swallows that have never returned to Thera. "We find frescos... of what the people loved, apparently, and it's very different from what you find elsewhere in the world. [If y]ou go to Egypt... [or] to Syria, you find the theme was almost always war and conquest... [but] go to the island of Thera and you find paintings of [gals] gathering saffron... of children playing... with each other. My favourite piece is the dancing antelopes – in part because it seems to anticipate Picasso by more than 3000 years." ...As on Crete, [the gals] wore... elegant dresses and hair-styles – this was no

primitive society... All the evidence points to Thera being a prosperous island. Her harbours teemed with vessels. In Plato's legend of Atlantis: 'The area is densely crowded with habitation. The docks were full of boats... and naval stores, and of... merchants coming from all parts who kept up a multitudinous sound of human voices and din and chatter of all sorts, day and night.' [According to] Plato, Atlantis traded with Egypt, as did the people of Thera. And there were other similarities... 'They constructed buildings around them and made cisterns, they had fountains – one of hot water and one of cold – in gracious plenty flowing.' On the island of Thera we find multi-storeyed homes that were just honeycombed with plumbing – there are hints that there might have even been running water through these homes; we find flush toilets – thousands of years before flush toilets were supposedly invented; we find evidence of showers, bathtubs – many things that we consider very, very advanced, and that in Plato's time was very advanced even by his standards." Plato also believed Atlantis was in the Atlantic Ocean, but Greeks tended to place great mythical events outside their known world – at the time, simply the Mediterranean Sea... "Plato told us that the Atlantean civilization was a very, very large area – that it was the size of Libya and parts of Asia combined... [– in which case] Thera is not quite large enough. But when you look back at Thera as just a suburb of the Minoan civilization, which was centred on the island of Crete – whose ships seem to have gotten as far as England... – we see here that this was a great economic power... which pretty much ran the entire Mediterranean world." It's as if the legend of Atlantis is the history of Minoan civilization. When the Thera volcano erupted, it would have destroyed the Minoan navy in Crete, precipitating a slow and unrelenting decline... "This was a world that was thrown into terrible famine, and terrible disorganisation. [It wasn't like today where] you have the International Red Cross ready to rush in, [or] you have the UN sending people in..." [There was, however, the Mycenaeans]... "The explosion in Thera produced a lot of catastrophic earthquakes that destroyed the palaces of Crete... The only palace that survived was the Palace of Knossos, and for another 50 or so years Knossos continued to be a prosperous palace, but now the Mycenaeans were the masters of this palace." The Mycenaeans were long jealous of this powerful empire, with its fine art and magnificent [buildings]... With superior military strength... the Mycenaeans... swept to an easy victory... [over this] devastated... civilization... The trail of disasters didn't stop there. As more earthquakes rocked their broken empire, the frightened people resorted to the ultimate sacrifice... a young [guy]'s blood was offered to the gods – in vain[because] the earthquakes still struck... "When you look at all the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle, and you look at them objectively, the decline of the Minoan civilization[and] its takeover by the northern Greeks... all... fits in perfectly with the story that Plato told." The[Minoans] belonged to the very first European civilization. [Yet, u]ntil this century, no one even knew they existed. But recent revelations have led us back over 3000 years to discover a peaceful, artistic, but ultimately doomed people.

...THE DISCOVERY of ancient artefacts on the Indonesian island of Flores, north of Western Australia, has caused revision of scientific thinking about when humanity developed seafaring technology. Stone tools beside the bones of a long-extinct primitive elephant indicate that humans may have been able to navigate over short stretches of open ocean from 200,000 to 400,000 years ago, two Dutch archaeologists claim. Their find has focused attention on the Australasian region as the probable birthplace of maritime technology. However, its strongest implication is for the way humans view... their ancestors, says [a]Dr... of the Australian National University's Department of Prehistory. Until now, with only the evidence of crude stone tools and skeletal remains, *Homo erectus*... had been regarded as too primitive to be considered human. - 1995

A study of the age of Indonesian fossils threatens to topple theories about the origins of modern people and the settlement of Aboriginal A[US], and has triggered a major dust-up in the scientific community. The bones of contention were found in the 1930s at two sites in central Java. They come from a species of prehistoric humans known as *Homo erectus*, generally believed to have died out nearly 400,000 years ago. Using sophisticated dating techniques, a team... at the Berkeley Geochronology Centre in California, deduced that [the Java]remains... are a "surprisingly young" 27,000 to 53,000 years old. If true, this means the hominoid existed at the same time as the direct ancestors of modern people. It also indicates that *H erectus* survived on Java at least 250,000 years longer than on the Asian mainland, and perhaps a million years longer than in Africa. "If they're right, it would mean *Homo erectus* in this part of the world is an evolutionary dead end," says... an archaeologist with the University of New England... So the new age would virtually scuttle the multi-regional hypothesis which argues that A[US], like the rest of the world, was first colonised by groups of *H erectus* who emerged from Africa nearly two million years ago and evolved into fully modern people everywhere they went.

...A[US]n archaeologists have found Aboriginal stone tools and rock art they claim... could support suggestions that modern humans originated in Asia, not Africa... [The] team leader... said the stone chips found at a dig in A[US]'s remote north-west showed humans lived there between 119,000 and 176,000 years ago... "The initial samples were taken four to five years ago now, and we were so shocked with the results that we have been... go[ing] over them... trying to disprove these things, and we can't do that,"... The artefacts dramatically push back the earliest human occupation of A[US] and roughly coincide with the emergence of *Homo sapiens* in Africa... [The AUS]n Museum prehistorian... said... the antiquity of the stone artefacts implied that either modern humans originated outside Africa or *Homo sapiens* spread across the world more rapidly than currently presumed.

...['Outback AUS is as old as anywhere above water on Earth gets, and may contain come of the oldest art work in the world. There is contention over whether the so-called Bradshaw paintings were created by the ancestors of today's traditional owners, or were painted by another race of people altogether – who died out or moved back to Indonesia, or wherever they came from'. Incidentally, 'shortly after 11pm, in 1993, during the deep black of an outback night, a brilliant fireball grew slowly over the Western AUSn goldfields and flew parallel to the ground, before diving to earth beyond the distant trees. The handful of people watching were blinded by what was described as "a massive nuclear-sized flash" of white light and thrown to the ground by an explosion and earthquake. A huge red-coloured flare soared into the atmosphere, followed by the appearance on the horizon of a large, red hemisphere – similar to "half a setting sun" – three times the size of the moon and lined at its edges with silver. This phenomenon glowed for two hours across the arid landscape before vanishing abruptly "as if someone had thrown a light switch." While it was still in the sky, an hour after the first fireball, two smaller fireballs appeared from low in the south, and crashed to earth with smaller explosions and ground tremors. Eye-witness accounts were matched by 23 seismic stations operated by the AUSn Geological Survey Society, which reported a tremor from the first explosion of 3.9 on the Richter scale. The event was officially described as a meteor strike. But was it? No meteor fragments were found. This week the *New York Times*, quoting a series of inquiries into the event, reported speculation that the phenomenon could have been a nuclear blast. A US Senate inquiry has also taken seriously the theory that it was a test of a secret Russian super-weapon able to induce earthquakes a hemisphere away. Many scientists and defence analysts ridicule the idea – but an eclectic group of Japanese investigative reporters and AUSn and US researchers believe the Russians have had such a weapon since 1963. They believe that it was tested in WA in 1993 in connection with the Aum Shinri Kyo sect, which is also believed to have used an outback station to test the lethal sarin gas used to kill 12 people in a Tokyo subway in 1995. In early 1993, one of the leader's deputies visited Russia before coming to AUS to buy a 200,000 ha sheep station in the outback. Toxicology tests on 24 sheep carcasses and nearby soil showed traces of methylphosphoric acid, which occurs when sarin gas breaks down. But a Perth geologist believes there was an even darker purpose behind the sect's AUSn operations. Enter the death ray. "It appears that the fireball itself is an enormous slug of electrical energy as it travels through the air. They will have transmitted on two or more frequencies from two or more sites: one part to handle the plasma on to the target, the other to decide whether you want it in the air or on the ground, and where you want the energy to release. By interfering with that transmission you can dump massive amounts of energy in seconds. Tesla talked about dumping in one microsecond the combined power of all the naval dreadnoughts in existence in 1908. We're talking about something far worse than nuclear weapons. Apparently there are variations of it, where you don't get flash or damage from explosion or earthquake – you just kill all life instantaneously in the target area." Move over Darth Vader.'

...‘over the past few decades, more than 100 rhesus monkeys have been trained at a monkey butler college to assist US tetraplegics perform basic tasks about their home (the tetraplegic and its monkey help each other to do things that neither can do alone’). The college didn’t, however, train the monkeys that will soon] be strapped into a small capsule and launched into space. Flight time: 14 days... Nasa officials say the... mission, and a second in 1998, will shed light on the debilitating side effects of space travel, and that performing tests on secured, wired monkeys is the only way to obtain valuable data that can benefit astronauts... An independent task force, after conducting Nasa’s fifth review of the matter, concluded last month that the project was worthwhile and met animal welfare standards. But an animal rights group says it is torture with little scientific value. A taxpayer rights group also considers it cruel: to American taxpayers who will be paying about \$US35 million... for the two monkey missions... “Our contention is that this money should be either used for deficit reduction or higher-priority science,” said... [the] executive director of Taxpayers for Common Sense, a nonpartisan budget watchdog group. “This is just not priority science. This is a relic of an earlier era when we used monkeys in space back before people were up there.” Now that humans have been flying in space for 35 years on missions lasting as long as 438 days, there is no need to launch monkeys, opponents argue. Indeed, Nasa has not flown a monkey in space since 1985 (rats are cheaper and easier) and has no plans to do so in the future... As usual, two greyish-brown Russian-owned rhesus monkeys will fly, chosen from a pool of 12. Their tails already have been cut off for hygiene purposes, electrodes inserted in their arms, leg and neck muscles for strength measurements, temperature probes stuck in their abdominal muscles, and head rings screwed on... [T]he halo-like rings keep the monkey’s heads still during eye movement tests conducted before and after the flight... The two monkeys will be secured in adjacent chairs inside the orbiting capsule for safety. Their arms and legs will be free for eye-hand and eye-feet coordination tests. They will be fed automatically from tubes. Urine and solid waste will be removed by collection systems built into their chairs. They will have computer games to fight boredom... After the experiment the[y]’re to be returned to a zoo.

...A four-year-old monkey... and a companion... [have been] launched into orbit in a joint U[S]-Russian mission... The two-week mission... has aroused controversy because of the way the two monkeys are being used. The... U[S] space] agency, Nasa, says that performing tests on... monkeys is the only way to obtain valuable data for life on space stations... [In related news, t]he dream of... living on the moon has received a dramatic boost after the discovery of water in a lunar crater. A[remote-controlled] spacecraft located a lake-sized mass of ice near the moon’s south pole, undermining the belief that it is arid. The apparent lack of water has always been seen as a barrier to colonising the moon because of the prohibitive cost of transporting it from Earth... “With water you could have enclosed areas to grow plants, grow your... food, make your own fuel, make your own air. You don’t have to launch all that stuff from big rockets on Earth.” The lake was discovered by the... \$45 million... spacecraft Clementine, which was sent into space... by the Pentagon... in January 1995... to monitor missile systems... [A spokesperson] for the Pentagon’s Ballistic Missile Defence Organisation, said... the moon water could allow humans to explore the moon... or use it as a launch pad to explore other planets. “Obviously you’re talking way, way in the future.” Some scientists clearly will need more convincing. “There’s a community that’s very anxious to talk about going back to the moon and living in a colony, they are very passionate about that...,” said... a scientist at the Harvard-Smithsonian Centre for Astrophysics... “Personally, I’ve always been sceptical of that whole proposition. I think it’s a lot of wishful thinking.”

...Nearly three decades ago, Apollo astronauts conquered the moon, and astronomers all but abandoned the place... But last month, astronomers painted a new and exotic picture of one little corner of the moon, presenting evidence of frozen water at the bottom of the deepest crater on the moon... The notion of lakefront property on the moon is just the latest in a series of fantastic claims in the past year from astronomers, who have offered evidence of past life on Mars and photographs of the edge of the universe. It’s as if science and science fiction are locked on a collision course. Like the discovery of any natural resource, the prospect of water on the moon has already sparked excitement over ways to exploit it... But other scientists warned that the ice might be nothing more than a shimmering mirage. Sceptics cautioned that... more work needed to be done to confirm the theory.

...The tiny coral Pacific island of Niue injected an extraterrestrial note to a U[N] food summit yesterday, saying feeding the Earth’s hungry was a better way to spend money than unlocking the secrets of Mars. “I would like to reassure those countries who are spending billions of dollars in trying to find out whether there is life on the red planet Mars that there is life on Earth,” said... [the PM] of Niue. “Earthlings need nourishment much more than any Martians,” [the PM adde]d. Seizing the opportunity to draw media attention to the island of 2500 people, on a day dominated by the arrival of the Cuban leader[the Niuean PM]... broke with the general gloom of the summit to tell how Niue enjoyed “plentiful food all year round.” ...But... the remote island had not forgotten the plight of the hungry despite having access to “some of Nature’s abundant bounties.”

...It’s life Jim, but not as we know it. That classic line from the cult television series *Star Trek* may ring true in time when humans are forced to flee Earth in search of a new home... [A] visiting world leader in astronomy, does not regard himself as alarmist when [it] says the sun will expand and destroy our cosy environment. There is no need yet to build that intergalactic Noah’s Ark and head for greener pastures, though. His prediction is two to three billion years away from coming true. [The visitor] does, however, see himself as a staunch fighter for more Government spending on basic scientific research to expand knowledge of what hovers beyond our familiar skies. That work will eventually help to prepare for the big journey when the Earth becomes a planetary hot pot. “I’m a champion of fundamental research. Not the sort of stuff to help build better mouse traps or non-stick pans, which are in themselves worthy, but purely fundamental work with no obvious practical benefit in the short term.” Such study is essential for civilised nations and is vital for long-term survival... adds[t]he 68-year-old British astronomer and physicist [who] was knighted last year for his extensive work and has held academic posts across the globe... [– his] academic letters would struggle to fit onto a standard business card... The professor... starts a N[Z] lecture tour in Auckland tonight. It will take in Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin over the next two weeks. Organised in part by the Auckland Astronomical Society and the Auckland Observatory, his lectures are not pitched solely to scientific boffins... “It’s important for scientists to go out and tell the public about their work. If you talk like a boffin, no one will understand you.” ...like Captain Kirk[the visitor]... promises to take people on a tour of galaxies far, far away during his upcoming lectures. “We will look at evidence of the ‘Big Bang’ and wonder whether the universe will continue expanding or come back in again. That’ll be the big crunch,”... The latter does not make for a rosy prediction, but we need not fear... There is [still] controversy among scientists over the theory that the universe began with “a big bang[” – and, anyway, his]... earlier prediction of the expanding sun destroying life on Earth will kick in much sooner on his mind-blowing timescale... Despite his lengthy and world-renowned scientific work, [the visitor] also believes that God played a hand... [in creating] the sun and planets... and... life... as we know it... “My view is that God must be responsible for some of this; it’s all too clever for humans to work out.” Asked how [the visitor] reconciles his evidence-based scientific views with abstract religious beliefs, [the professor] admits it is not easy. “The two thoughts are not inconsistent though. One deals with the material facts and the other deals with values and spiritual elements which do meet... [I]t’s important people [know] that we don’t understand everything and we can’t visualise everything. It’s not a closed book.”

...A senior volcanologist involved in... the hazard-monitoring programme at... Mt Ruapehu is understood to be among the high-profile scientific redundancies revealed yesterday. About 20 scientists... [– mostly] aged in their 50s... [–] are to be made redundant from the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences[(IGNS)], apparently because they are not money-spinners... The... volcanologist... would not comment when contacted yesterday. Other... top scientists who... [are on the] list of redundancies... [but] remain unnamed while negotiations continue... are believed to be prominent in the field of palaeontology, study of life in the geological past, a field not known for generating money and one that has not figured highly in recent funding rounds... The president of the Geological Society... said research requirements tended to be profit and “issue” driven, meaning research was too often subject to changes of fashion or thinking... [The president] deplored the redundancy of “predominantly established scientists with geological expertise[” because NZ]... could ill-afford to lose earth science experts as such skills could not easily be brought in from

overseas... “The skills lost may be irreplaceable since it takes many years for a researcher to acquire the necessary expertise and experience to make a meaningful contribution,”... Earth science research was of vital importance to N[Z] as the country sat astride a boundary between two tectonic plates and was subject to... earthquakes, volcanoes and landslides. It also had one of the largest off-shore economic zones in the world which was “far from exploited geographically.” ...[Furthermore, i]t was surprising that a crown research institute would dispense with experienced scientific staff at a time when Government funding was increasing for pure and applied research in the geosciences... [The president] said the society [also] shared the concern expressed by the Association of Scientists that extensive job losses in science must be sending negative signals to school and university students. “N[Z] already has one of the lowest ratios of scientists and engineers per head of population in the OECD and one of the highest proportions of lawyers and accountants... This situation can only get worse.”

...Spending on research and development in N[Z] is catching up with other developed countries, according to the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology... A survey in the 1993-1994 year showed research and development spending was... 1.02[% of GDP – up 9%]... on the previous year. Spending in five years had risen to the same level as in the reference countries – A[US], Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Sweden and Norway – and exceeded the rate of growth in the O[ECD] nations as a whole... In 1993-1994 the Government paid \$452 million for work carried out by its departments, crown research institutes, universities and the private sector. It was estimated businesses spent \$293 million, including \$14 million overseas, which was up 23[%] on the previous year... Spending in the electronics industry rose 15[%], compared with 55[%] the previous year, and information and communications research funding was up 61[%]. Those industries had increased spending an average 29[%] a year from 1991 to 1994. N[Z] businesses spent on average... 0.4[%] of sales revenue on research and development, compared with 2[%] in the reference countries.

...*Science friction*... The redundancy of... high-profile scientists from one of the crown research institutes has rekindled debate over the effects of changes to science funding. Scientists say their vocation is being “forced into a pseudo-business model” that demands short-term economic gain at the expense of long-term research that could benefit the country in the future. The Government and management of the CRIs argue the changes are about making scientific research more relevant to people’s day-to-day lives and say that the shift in emphasis from traditional to developing areas of research will net a “better return.” The I[GNS] this week announced that 20 of its 140 scientists would be made redundant, despite the CRI having received an increase in funding this financial year, from \$12.7 million to \$13.1 million. This increase is part of an overall boost in Government expenditure on science, research and technology by \$100 million over three financial years to \$419 million by 1998-99. Most of the money, in the form of the Public Good Science Fund, is handed directly to the Foundation for Science, Research and Technology, which then distributes money to winning applicants from 17 areas of science whose projects fit the foundation’s priorities. Applications come from universities and the nine CRIs, which were set up in 1992 following the restructuring of the former DSIR and other science-related Government departments. The foundation’s nine-member, Government-appointed board is made up of scientists and business consultants. Separate funding is allocated to the Marsden Fund, which the Minister of Research, Science and Technology... says was set up two years ago to facilitate elite “blue skies” research – that is, long-term, open-ended study not bound by any pre-conceived priorities or end uses. Administered by the Royal Society, the fund’s level of Government support was increased from \$5 million in 1995-96 to \$11 million this financial year, and will rise to \$22 million in 1997-98. So scientists are not complaining about the amount of money being poured into their sector. But the principles by which allocation decisions are made are causing concern. The Government has instructed the foundation to select successful funding applications “primarily on the basis of relevance.” Under the notion of “tactical relevance,” end users, such as industries, must be located, before the research has begun. These end users must pledge support, involvement in the planning and direction of the research, and, preferably, additional funding. Evidence must also be provided that the results of the research will be in a form that can be readily implemented. Scientists say this requires them to know what their research will find before they begin and encourages mediocrity. The president of the Geological Society... says an example given by the foundation of how to apply for PGSF money “would be funny if it wasn’t so ludicrous. You mustn’t use words like ‘investigate’, ‘explore’ or ‘study’, because they are not measurable objectives. You have to suggest a project in terms of what you will produce. So instead of saying you want to investigate the differences between two pieces of wood, you have to say you want to identify three differences between different lengths of wood. This means that you already know there are differences, that there are at least three, and if you find four you will only report three because that’s all you’re contracted to do. I would refer to a lot of the projects which receive funding as data gathering rather than real research.” The president of the Association of Scientists... adds that “trying to predict short-term winners is an efficient way of making sure you get low-grade information.” They, along with the president of the Royal Society... say there is nothing wrong with making science relevant to everyday social and economic needs, but that the importance of open-ended research should not be overlooked. “To get to the point of further research being tactically relevant, you need to do a lot of basic research to underpin it... and at the moment that’s not being funded. The Marsden Fund is quite small and in its first 12 months only 60 out of 1000 applications received support. A lot of the big leaps forward in science have been through pure serendipity during long-term research. I think there needs to be more flexibility in the foundation’s funding to allow the CRIs to do more basic research over longer time frames.” [The Association of Scientists president] says you cannot “buy science off the shelf – it has to be built up in steps through a long-term programme and through scientists tapping into leading-edge research around the rest of the world.” [The Geological Society president points out] that open-ended research is one of the few resources that will keep N[Z] afloat when it cannot compete against international prices and labour rates[, and] cites the computer graphics technology used by television during the previous America’s Cup, which was developed by “a few guys working in a back room in Dunedin” and sold around the world. “If you go back 10 years, the research that went into developing that technology would have been viewed as fairly esoteric, and if funding had been dependent on locating a guaranteed end user, it would never have started.” ...The chair[person] of the board of the I[GNS]... admits that the 20 redundancies in his CRI are the result of funding being directed away from “processes” and towards “felt effects.” “So while there is still a lot of funding going into, for example, why a volcano goes bang, there is a greater swing toward finding out what will happen when it goes bang to ensure a more immediate payoff from the research being done. The people being made redundant are basically surplus to requirements in their field, and we have a need for new skills. If we don’t deal with this bow wave problem now, the cash we generate from our well-funded people will have to be invested in people who are not well-funded. We’re working in a contestable, dynamic system with funding trends being signalled quite well ahead so we can plan, but we must plan in a timely fashion and not let things drag on.” When asked why planning was not done several years ago to lose staff by attrition, [the chairperson said it] took over... only in July this year, “and I guess my predecessors made judgment calls that were in part justified and in part were not.” [However, the Association of Scientists president] says... “In terms of recruitment, it sends a bad message, and to young scientists, it sends a horrendous message, that no matter how well they may be looked upon now, that can’t be guaranteed in five years’ time.” [According to the Geological Society president]: “Aspiring scientists may well think they are better off getting an MBA, because what’s the point of spending years becoming specialised in a scientific field if you are only as good as your next research grant?” ...[Furthermore,] it is difficult for scientists to concentrate on their work when they have to also “wheel and deal for funds over relatively short time frames.” [In reply, the IGNS chairperson] says that when funds are scarce, priorities need to be able to be changed to make the most of future opportunities, rather than handing out money on the basis of past success. “If you had frozen funds during the 1970s, with so much going into geology, botany and chemistry, what would you have done about molecular biology when it came over the horizon? If we want to be a centre of excellence in the world, [institutes like ours] have to fine-tune our portfolio of people to make sure we have those with the right skills to run top-flight programmes.” [The Minister of Research, Science and Technology] says... “...Yes, the institutes do need to be profitable, but all the money they make is ploughed back into science; the Government takes no dividends. When you change a system you send shock waves through it,

and I think what we are seeing is a working through of some of those shock waves. But there are now more scientists employed than four years ago – 2908 compared with 2738 – and I have no doubt that by the turn of the century there will be many more. The institutes can't spend all this extra money without taking on extra scientists, but they will be in areas of growth such as environmental and social science instead of the traditional areas... We have a system now that says there are some areas of interest, and some of less interest – you can't just do anything anymore."

...The corridors of power are echoing to departing footsteps: the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology, the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology, the [CRI]s and the universities are hearing the same sound – leaders leaving science management. While I do not wish to catalogue individuals, since their motives are their own, resignations from senior positions in science are too numerous to ignore. The exodus makes one reflect on the apparent change from science leadership to science management in the past few years. To many scientists "science management" is a contradiction in terms. One can manage money; accountants are trained to do so. One can try to manage people; human resource personnel and councillors make the attempt. Managing inspiration is impossible. The more inspirational or innovative an idea, the more risk is attached; the more risk, the less likelihood of a positive outcome or definite output... In the old days we had science *leaders* – people who had been scientists themselves and created an environment in which staff could create. Their role was to support innovators, encourage collaboration and secure the resources required by their scientists. The [CRI]s have science *managers* who, in order to meet commercial requirements, set goals that they know can be reached. The style is restrictive, producing a completely different attitude to science within an organisation... Isaac Newton made his revolutionary discoveries about gravity while sitting in an orchard. Archimedes was in his bath. Both were relaxing when inspiration dawned. A university professor commented recently that the only member of his staff whom [the professor] ever sees completely lost in thought is the only one who has no part in the N[Z] science system, receiving his funding from overseas... As scientists struggle for dollars and security the pleasure that used to be associated with research is lost; increased enrolments in arts, social sciences and commerce reflect this realisation. Parallels between sciences and the arts are stronger than generally recognised. Both began to develop when food was sufficiently plentiful to allow the coexistence of family groups and time for relaxation. People with ability in one area of achievement are often able in others. Talk to the top third and fourth-formers in any school and many will be tossing up between arts and sciences, having equally good grades in each. Put a composer or a painter into a room for 10 hours and tell him to create. The outcome will be guaranteed as a piece of music or a painting, but will it be good? Under this sort of pressure creation is unlikely to result in something new. There are some authors whose "secret to success" is to write 10 pages of a book every day. Barbara Cartland is one. With apologies to her devotees, I suggest that [Barbara] is likely to be remembered for being [related to Princess Diana and, as a writer,] prolific rather than "great." Similarly, scientists working under pressure, where the performance criteria are income generation and publications, are likely to produce quantity, but not necessarily quality... Science cannot be managed, inspiration cannot be programmed – if it could, we would have had cures for the common cold, cancer and Aids years ago. The echoes in the corridors of power emphasise my concern. N[Z] has had and does have some world-class scientists. With more freedom they could address the problems of the world with more hope of success.

...Are we facing an increasing flight from science and rationality...? If so, does it matter? These are questions which scientists generally prefer to ignore and get on with their science. But anti-science sentiments are now so widespread that the beleaguered state in which scientists now find themselves is probably attributable, at least in part, to these beliefs and attitudes. What is more important, they pose a threat to the survival of the human species and a good few other species. Biomedical research financed through the Medical-Health Research Council has dropped by about 40[%] over 10 years in favour of public health research. This is largely a result of pressure from a powerful group of researchers... Another attack comes from some feminists. [Gals] rightly feel alienated and discriminated against by... the ways in which science operates... Another major group attacking science are extreme ecoradicals. On the one hand they blame science for ecological destruction, on the other they reject the need for scientific research into highly complex integrated ecosystems while looking for signs of apocalyptic disaster in scientific findings which may not be well established. We have only one Earth and an exponentially growing human population (sometimes also deemed a fault of science through lowering human mortality) and everyone who is even remotely aware of the precarious ecological situation of humanity regards environmental sustainability as of the greatest priority. The tragedy is that ill-informed, simplistic interventions in ecosystems prove either ineffective or worse than no intervention at all, or catastrophic. We need the very best environmental science to survive. The Kaimaniwa horses decision was a sad example of emotion overcoming environmental realities... [A]nimal rights activists... elevate animal welfare to the level of human interests and sometimes higher... There are also ongoing attacks on science by religious fundamentalists, creationists, New Age mystics and so on, often attacking the whole idea of evolution. Science is regarded as a form of heresy. Science does often undermine superstitious or naive belief although it has so far left issues of human spiritual faith largely untouched. Alas, the finding that humans are not the centres of the universe but are transient organisations of matter on a minute temporary bit of cosmic dust is acutely discomforting. With these groups one can probably add the desperate or gullible who patronise the thriving so-called "alternative medicine" industry. The magnitude of belief in these often mystical therapies can be seen in any general bookstore... The N[Z] Qualifications Authority science committee did not want scientists on it; it threw our representatives off. It did want the "alternative medicines" industry. Science is disappearing from the polytechnics but Aoraki Polytechnic has proposed to start a naturopathy "M.Sc." The evidence for an increasing belief in superstition and magic is widespread in N[Z]. Does all this matter? I believe that it does. The practice and teaching of science in N[Z] is being severely affected by the combined effort of all these strands of anti-science and hostility. One probable effect is a tentative, ambivalent and eroding public support for science. Science is increasingly seen as an elitist, marginal or disposable activity and this is manifest in our political systems where champions of science are frighteningly few... The Government does not always see the need for scientific debate... The use of rabbit calicivirus as a biocontrol agent is one such issue where N[Z] microbiologists as a group were simply not involved in a highly contentious microbiological issue. Even the National Museum, until now a major repository of specifically N[Z] knowledge, has reduced its curators, downgraded its research and is apparently focusing on becoming a multi-media theme park... Looking at the science which my 7th-form son has studied over the years I... [-] the outgoing president of the N[Z] Association of Scientists... [-] feel some disquiet. His 6th-form chemistry book was mainly a set of so-called practical examples, a coherent edifice was not detectable and in fact it was almost impossible to look up information. Unbelievably [my son] did not get to study evolution until 6th and 7th form biology. The most powerful, the most interesting concept in science alongside quantum mechanics is simply not being taught to most N[Z] children.

...two new books... take [a] sober view of technological promise and scientific exploration: *The End of Science*... contends that science is fast approaching its conclusion, that the great era of scientific discovery is over... *Why Things Bite Back: Technology and the Revenge of Unintended Consequences*, speaks of the limits of technology, and states that technology designed to solve one problem invariably ends up creating another by undoing its own solution... [□ An] international group of scientists claimed yesterday to have discovered the source of the Amazon River, which carries a fifth of the entire world's flowing water... They said the first waters of the Amazon emerged from an underground glacier at the Apacheta crevice, 5170m above sea-level in the southern Peruvian Andes... Their claim ran counter to previous accounts of the river's source, including that established in a 1971 expedition by the National Geographic Society, which put the source at the nearby but slightly lower Carhuasanta crevice.

...A study by gene researchers at the State University of New York... pushes back by hundreds of millions of years the era when the vast array of animals now living may have shared a common ancestor... [- a] squishy little critter... in a primordial soup... The grand divergence – the theoretical point of the start of genetic changes that led to many species – began slowly about 1.2 billion years ago... says... [a] co-author of the study. That finding, published in the journal *Science*, is far different from conclusions historically drawn from the study of fossils... [- which] first appeared in the geological record of the Earth about 500 million years ago, an era often referred to as the "Cambrian explosion" because of its apparent

suddenness and variety. But... the[gene] study shows... the animals that left those first fossils were really late-comers to the long, winding parade of evolution... All the animals a billion years ago lived in the ocean, probably migrating up and down the water column, grazing on plankton...

A... group of scientists and fossil-hunters are excited about the possibilities of some... dinosaur eggs... Seventy-five million years ago, a dinosaur called a Therizinosaurid, or Scythe Lizard, delivered her eggs by a watering-hole in Hunan province. Seven failed to hatch and, perfectly preserved by the mineral-rich waters, they came into [the group]'s hands two years ago. Now two of them are to be sold... in New York on December 12, the first authenticated embryonic dinosaur eggs to be auctioned... The more preserved of the two eggs has an almost complete skeleton... They will almost certainly end up in museums or research institutes... [and] each could raise at least £200,000... Four enthusiasts led by... [a 52-year-old] from Leicester, need the cash to pay off... debts and finance further research on what they call the Dinosaur Embryo Project... "We can sell off the two specimens because we are left with four viable embryos from the same clutch. Now we need money to buy suitable research premises..." ...Is [the 52-year-old], who is looking for about \$1,340,000 to fund another six years of work, planning something similar... [to a] *Jurassic Park*... in his back garden? ..."I... doubt if you will be able to clone a dinosaur from... DNA... extracted from these embryos... DNA has its sell-by date and I reckon these eggs are well past it... but... [what I]d like to decide, once and for all, is whether dinosaurs were warm or cold-blooded creatures..." - 1996

A Japanese veterinary scientist who is aiming to recreate the long-extinct woolly mammoth by extracting sperm from a frozen carcass and using its DNA has virtually no chance of success, according to a British scientist... [The] palaeontologist specialising in mammoths, told the *New Scientist* magazine... that [it] doubted sperm from the long-dead creature would be available. "Everything we know about the preservation of DNA in frozen tissue suggests that it's smashed up into fragments,"... The Japanese scientist... plans to inject DNA from the mammoth sperm into the eggs of African elephants using in-vitro fertilisation... [The Japanese scientist, who] felt a realistic mammoth could be created over generations by fertilising hybrid eggs with more mammoth sperm... has already shown that viable embryos can be formed by injecting DNA... from the sperm of dead bulls into cows' ova. But his plans hit trouble when [a] British geophysicist... travelled to Siberia this year with a ground-penetrating police radar device in an attempt to locate frozen mammoth carcasses. His efforts were frustrated when Russian customs officials impounded his equipment. [The British geophysicist] plans to resume his hunt next year, centring the search on cliffs overlooking the Kolyma river in north-eastern Siberia.

...[*Scientists will soon begin to open the secrets of a huge block of ice containing the best example yet of the prehistoric elephant* The mammoth may yield some of the oldest and best-preserved blood cells ever examined. "We also hope to correct the popular belief that mammoths were adapted to the snow-covered Ice Age tundra and in fact lived on a grassy slope, the so-called Mammoth Steppe, which was widespread in the Northern Hemisphere 250,000 years ago." The scientists were alerted to the remains when nomads belonging to the Dolgan people found a tusk sticking out of the ground. After negotiating to buy the tusks in return for new skidoos (motorised snow vehicles) and supplies of sugar, flour and bread, the team began excavations two years ago. Last October, the block of ice was airlifted to the Siberian town of Khatanga. The block of ice will be placed in a special snow cave where temperatures are a constant minus 15 degrees. A dozen hairdryers will be mounted on an overhead frame and the researchers plan to melt the ice over a year. Previous mammoth carcass finds were wasted because researchers tried to defrost the animals as quickly as possible. They ended up washing away most of the clues contained in the dense coats – although studies of the frozen carcass of a baby mammoth revealed it was more similar to the Asian elephant than the African. Researchers using ground radar have detected six other woolly mammoths in the Siberian perma-frost. Another site is believed to contain a woolly rhino.'

... 'The arrival of human hunters triggered a mass extinction of large animals in North America, dooming such Ice Age behemoths as the woolly mammoth and mastodon, as well as one in AUS tens of thousands of years before that (among the AUSn animals lost shortly after the ancestors of the aborigines first landed were: 3m-tall kangaroos that may have eaten meat; Diprotodon, which looked like a wombat but was bigger than a cow; Thylacoleo, a fearsome predator known as the marsupial lion; the heaviest bird ever known, Genyornis, which weighed 100kg, stood 3m and could not fly; and Megalania, a flesh-eating lizard measuring 8m in length), scientists say. Two studies, appearing in the journal *Science*, discount climate change as the cause of the calamities on the two continents, instead pinning the blame squarely on prehistoric people who were fanning out around the globe.' Speaking of climate change, 'tomorrow hundreds of scientists will gather in Monaco for the "Second International symposium on the Ocean in a High CO2 World". Scientists calculate that the seas are absorbing so much carbon dioxide they are 30% more acidic than at the start of the Industrial Revolution. The change has happened 100 times faster than any time during the past 20 million years. Biodiversity of plants and fish has dropped by 30%.'

... 'tiny fungi that live under the Rocky Mountains snow pack get busy reproducing in the winter and may affect global warming, say US scientists. They found a winter wonderland of fungal species, including many new to science, under the snow of a high-altitude Colorado meadow. Unlike most life, which hibernates in the winter, these fungi proliferate – creating measurable amounts of nitrogen and carbon dioxide. The University of Colorado researcher who led the study said this could have implications for the global climate, because about 40% of the earth's land surface is covered by snow during the winter.'

... 'NZ scientists have been part of an international team studying a tiny spider that is the largest land animal in Antarctica's Ross Sea region. The team spent 11 weeks weathering temperatures as low as minus 20C to study the 2mm-long springtail spider – named after the spring-like organ on its abdomen (the furcula) that allows it to jump – at Cape Hallet, 600km north of Scott Base. "It can survive temperatures below minus 30C by utilising anti-freeze to keep body fluids liquid. They are capable of running around when their body temperature is as low as minus 10C." The team hoped its spider data would help scientists understand the mechanisms that limited distribution of plants and animals. "If we know why any species has a distribution limit, that allows us to predict how species respond to changes in their environment." ■ A millionaire] has bought a polar exploration vessel for \$190,000 and given it to an environmental campaigner to clean up scientists' rubbish in Antarctica... ["The campaigner] has badgered me about this project for years due to my interest in environmental matters... and it is satisfying to know her working life is continuing in such a worthwhile venture." ...In donating the ship, the only proviso that [the millionaire] has made is that if the non-profit-making clean-up project fails, [the businessperson] can buy the 1000-tonne vessel back for \$1.70 and dispose of it how[ever the owner of a]... sports television company... wishes. The ship, the *Krista Dan*, has been anchored unused off the Greek Island of Syros for 10 years. It has a long history of Antarctic exploration... The ship has been given to... a former director of Greenpeace, who campaigned to prevent mining in Antarctica in the 1980s and made six voyages to the continent. [The former director] was appalled at the mess left behind by more than 60 scientific bases. Because the continent is so cold and dry nothing rots, and thousands of tonnes of rubbish, oil drums and discarded food are left lying on the snow. A footprint on a bed of Antarctic moss takes a decade to fade.

...A set of 117,000-year-old footprints found... in what is now the rocky shore of the Langebaan Lagoon, about 96km north of Cape Town... have been described as possible evidence of... the common ancestor of all modern humans. The fossilised footprints were made during a barefoot stroll in wet sand after a rainstorm, and are an important clue to a period with a scarce fossil record: 100,000 to 300,000 years ago... The discovery was made two years ago but announced at the National Geographic Society yesterday by... a palaeoanthropologist who said the footprints were made by a person who looked anatomically just like modern humans... [The palaeoanthropologist] and... a South African geologist who actually found the footprints, referred to the person who made them as... "Eve"... based on their relatively small size, but acknowledged that they could also have been left by a small [guy] or a young child. If the prints were made by a [gal, this gal] holds the possibility of being the... hypothetical [mother] who lived somewhere in Africa between 100,000 and 300,000 years ago and carried a particular type of DNA... passed on only through [gals]... Only three other sets of hominid footprints have been found in Africa, and two of these came from more than a million years ago, too early for modern humans. The third set were dated about 30,000 years ago, an eyeblink in the course of human evolution... More Langebaan footprints are believed to be buried under rock, and scientists plan to uncover more by creating a "mine."

...[guys can all]... trace their ancestry back to one [person] who lived 150,000 years ago and whose closest living relatives are a small tribe in South Africa, according to scientists who have spent a decade searching for the original... Adam, who they say lived alongside an Eve... Research into the human Y chromosome has pinpointed the time and place where just one [guy] gave rise to the [masculine] genetic ingredients of modern [humans]... The Khoisan people... share most of the genetic traits that first arose when Adam hunted game and collected berries in his African Garden of Eden... Two independent investigations of minute mutations on the Y chromosome pinpointed the... people... better known as... Hottentots... as the only ethnic group to possess so many ancient remnants of the original Adam... The Khoisans' ancestors probably migrated from the Rift Valley...

British scientists have traced a living descendant of a 9000-year-old skeleton. In an astonishing piece of detective work, they matched DNA material extracted from the tooth cavity of Britain's oldest complete skeleton with that of a 42-year-old... teacher. The genetic material showed that [the] teacher... was a direct descendant through his mother's line of the skeleton known as Cheddar [Guy] – found in 1903 in caves in Cheddar Gorge in south-west England... Previous tests have shown that Cheddar [Guy] suffered a violent death at the age of about 23 in 7150 BC... “It's extraordinary that the DNA survives at all, but we were able to extract it and sequence it,” said... Oxford University's Institute of Molecular Medicine... The Oxford University team spent months analysing samples from the skeleton before taking DNA swabs from about 20 locals whose families had lived in the Cheddar area for generations... [The teacher, who] lives less than a mile from the caves... said [it] only took part to make up the numbers. “I was astonished when the scientists said I was the descendant. Appropriately enough, I am a history teacher, but I have to admit I know next to nothing about Cheddar [Guy]. I suppose I should try to include him in my family tree.” Scientists said the odds of finding a match were not as enormous as they might appear because of the relatively small number of people who lived in Britain in the Stone Age... “There has been an idea that most modern Europeans are descended from farmers who came in from the Middle East about 10,000 years ago, reaching Britain about 6000 years ago. This kind of evidence shows that is probably not true and that modern Britons are in fact descended from the earlier inhabitants like Cheddar [Guy] who existed on hunting and gathering and who were not farmers.” Scientists are now hoping to use the same DNA sampling technique to prove whether Neanderthal[s], who died out... 25,000 years ago, w[ere] linked to homo sapiens or w[ere] a different species.

...archaeologists have uncovered a 5000-year story of successive civilisations... [b]eneath the war rubble of central Beirut... Layers of Canaanite, Phoenician, Hellenistic, Byzantine, Roman, Mameluke and Ottoman civilisation have been unearthed in an area where hundreds of buildings damaged in Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war have been demolished to make way for... a... 1.8 million sq m[tr]... futuristic city centre[– whose developers have financed 80%] of the \$US8 million... cost of the excavations... Discovery of the Law School of Berytus, the most prominent in the Roman Empire before the city was destroyed in AD 551 by an earthquake, would be an archaeologist's dream come true... [S]ix sites had been deemed worth preserving by the experts, who include archaeologists and scientists from the Universities of Paris, Nice, Amsterdam, Tübingen and Berlin, and London Museum as well as groups from Italy, A[US] and the Czech Republic... [T]he Lebanon Ministry of Culture, which supervises the digs with the General Directorate of Antiquities, had decided to keep sites such as a Canaanite hill and the Phoenician quarter in their original place. Three other sites... would be dismantled and rebuilt... Cardomaximus, the main street of Roman Beirut, would most likely be repaired and preserved.

...A TRIP DOWN MEMORY'S LANES Scientists are mapping the many winding paths memory takes in the brain. Their... research may... [uncover an] effective treatment for the distressing memory loss suffered in neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's... [and could] also... lead to “smart drugs,” chemical compounds that boost people's learning ability... Until recently, recollections of the past were believed to be enclosed in compact bands of neurons called engrams, where they lay dormant until retrieved by some present associations... Scientists now believe that memories are not to be found in any single molecule or neural group... “It is impossible to ask where in the brain a particular memory is located,”... says... [the head of] Biology at the U.K.'s Open University... “Memory is a dynamic property of the brain as a whole rather than of any one specific region. Memory resides simultaneously everywhere and nowhere in the brain.” The scientific foundation for this hypothesis was laid by the [US] psychologist Karl Lashley some 50 years ago. To study learning and memory in mammals, Lashley taught rats to negotiate complex mazes... then began incrementally removing thin slices of the rats' cerebral cortex in an effort to pinpoint the memory locus for this task. But no matter which section of the brain Lashley removed, the rats were still able to run the maze. Their performance diminished as more brain was excised, but Lashley found no one region whose ablation completely erased the memory. In a landmark research paper Lashley proposed the theory of “equipotentiality,” which stated that memories are in fact scattered across the entire brain... B[uilding on Lashley's work], and that of others in the intervening half century, [the head] has worked his own way through a few of memory's mazes. By studying learning and memory in newborn chicks, [the head believes it]'s found a model for how memories are made and stored in the... brain. Memory is composed of two complementary processes: learning something new and later recalling the experience. Using a passive avoidance experiment, [it] trained day-old chicks – which have a powerful pecking instinct – to avoid pecking heads... coated with a bitter liquid. After only a single trial... 80% of the birds were able to learn and remember this simple task. When [the head] examined sections of the chick cerebral cortex after training, [it] observed profound and permanent changes in the brain's biochemistry and physiology... that could serve as a neural map of how memories are formed. In chicks – and by extension, humans – learning initiates a cascade of protein synthesis and neural-firing activity in the brain... The formation of short-term memories, unstable and easily disrupted, takes place soon after a chick is trained. During this phase, while the taste of the bitter bead is still fresh on the chick's tongue, its cortex is flooded with glutamate, the primary information carrier in... brains. Glutamate opens the synaptic communication channels between neurons so that information about the experience – encoded in electrical and biochemical signals – can be transmitted across them, the crucial first step in making memories... If memories are indeed held and tagged in the brain as fluctuating patterns of synaptic connections, then how are they recalled? How does a childhood memory endure through a lifetime while the name of someone you just met vanishes within minutes? ...And how does memory endow us with a sense of personal identity? According to [a] Portuguese-born neurologist... remembering is neither a tranquil nor a passive process – assembly is required. The brain is not a computer... so recall is not simply a matter of clicking on the proper icon to call up the desired document from the brain's hard disc. Memories must literally be *re-remembered*, put together again from pieces found in various parts of the brain. “The brain does not file Polaroid pictures... Memory depends on several brain systems working in concert across many levels of neural organization... Whenever we recall a given object or experience... we do not get an exact reproduction but an interpretation, a newly reconstructed version of the original.” Ironically, the volatile nature of memory is paralleled by the body's own internal dynamics. All the cells in the body – excepting, significantly, nerve cells – die and are replaced as new ones are generated... Though most of our cells will be replaced many times over during the course of a lifetime, we still feel that “we” haven't changed. In this respect, our bodies are not our “selves.” But what if all your memories were suddenly replaced with new and different ones? Strange as it may seem... this is what happens... Memory is a constant work-in-progress. When an object or experience is recalled, the neural pattern corresponding to that memory flashes through the brain as clearly and as quickly as a lightning bolt. But like lightning, it is as swiftly gone. And the next time that same event is remembered the pattern will be different. Yet we somehow manage to construct a sense of self from this welter of mercurial memories. “The self is not a little person inside the brain... It is a perpetually recreated neurobiological state, so continuously and consistently reconstructed that the owner never knows it is being remade.” In that sense, we may be more than the keepers of past memories. We may also be their creators.

...NO ONE turned up to an Athens conference on memory loss. “Terribly embarrassing,” said [the] organiser... It must have been. Someone had forgotten to post the invitations. [□ Carbon monoxide, until now thought to be useless, poisonous waste gas produced in the body, is believed to be an important messenger in the brain. Scientists at Johns Hopkins University say their work shows the noxious gas carries signals between nerve cells in the

brain, and without it the brain could not function. "We've shown that carbon monoxide produced in the body plays a role in the normal functioning of neurons." US scientists also say many fat people who fail to lose weight blame their perfectly normal metabolisms or genes but they simply eat too much'...

US scientists said yesterday that they had succeeded in mapping all the 4288 genes of the *E. coli* bacterium – the most studied microbe in science... [The team] at the University of Wisconsin beat a competing Japanese team in a race to sequence the genome of *E. coli*... The researchers, who spent six years painstakingly mapping each amino acid that makes up the genes, compared the work to deciphering a language... Their achievement could... help shed light on the dangerous strains of the bacterium and perhaps point to ways to fight the mutant strains with new drugs... Their achievement... also... opens doors for other scientists who use the bug as the basis for studying everything from how animals metabolise sugar to the evolution of humanity from the primordial ooze... [Speaking of which, US space scientists are confident life exists in the muddy waters of one of Jupiter's moons. "I am sure there's life there," [a professor from] the University of Washington, said in a reference to the Jovian moon Europa. [The professor] and the other experts spoke at a news briefing in Pasadena detailing results of pictures from the Galileo probe. Pictures of Europa after Galileo's closest flyby of the moon in February... showed a red-coloured sea with a crust of ice about one metre thick in which huge ice-burys several kilometres across were floating. The scientists said they believed all the ingredients for creating and sustaining life forms existed in Europa's waters... [The] professor of oceanology... was very excited by Galileo's pictures. "The bottom line is, it's about life. The discovery of life on another planet will surpass anything that has ever taken place in human history,"... [A] planetary scientist... believed there was organic matter in sediment at the bottom of Europa's ocean. "On Earth, these same ingredients in a million years gave presence to life." In an effort to bolster their life-in-outer-space theory, scientists and engineers from around the world were meeting in Pasadena to discuss an exploration of Lake Vostok, a sub-glacial lake under the ice in Antarctica which they believe has conditions similar to Europa's sea.

...Twenty-five years after launch, Pioneer 10, history's longest lasting and most distant interplanetary explorer, is being retired 10 billion kilometres from home. Pioneer 10's science mission – which began early in March 1972 – would end later this month with the craft twice as far from the sun as Pluto, officials said at the Nasa Ames Research Centre in Mountain View, California. "This is a bittersweet moment," [the] project manager... said. "We're celebrating one thing [the 25th anniversary of Pioneer 10's launch]. But we're sad it won't be around much longer." The spacecraft's power sources are quickly degrading... While the craft will continue to transmit data for about another 12 months, "we believe the scientific return that we are getting at this point does not justify additional expenditures on the mission,"... Pioneer 10 is so far away that its radio signal... takes more than nine hours to reach the Earth. Pioneer 10 was launched in the same year Hewlett Packard introduced the world's first hand-held calculator. "By present standards, the instruments... were low tech,"... Its mission was intended to last just 21 months. But to the surprise of many scientists, it survived to become one of Nasa's most prolific interplanetary explorers... Pioneer 10 was the first spacecraft to travel through the asteroid belt... the first to visit Jupiter, the first to use a planet's gravity to change its course and reach solar-system-escape velocity, and the first to pass beyond the known planets... Six of its original 11 instruments are functional, but the energy produced by its generators can only operate two of them... Once Pioneer 10's radio signal dies out, the ghost ship will coast silently through deep space on its own momentum.

...[Voyager 1 and the elderly Pioneer 10 are heading away from the Sun in nearly opposite directions. Both are powered by nuclear batteries that keep them functioning in the freezing blackness of space. Barring breakdowns, Voyager 1 is expected to have enough electricity and propellant to operate until about 2020 (by then, the spacecraft will be almost 22.5 billion km from Earth').]

...The starship Enterprise would have a hard job boldly going anywhere, scientists believe. Hopes of ever building a warp drive like the one that zaps the *Star Trek* space ship across the universe have just hit a technical hitch. Physicists have calculated that it would need more than the entire energy of the universe to work – and as Spock would say, that's illogical. Three years ago scientists were astonished and Trekkies delighted when [a boffin] from the University of Wales in Cardiff suggested that a faster-than-light starship might in theory be possible. Although the laws of physics forbid any material from reaching the speed of light[– a speed that is 'over 27,000 times faster than the fastest speed ever reached by humans, which was 39,897kph in Apollo 10 on re-entry to the Earth's atmosphere' – the boffin] showed that space itself could be altered to achieve the same effect. In theory a starship could "warp" the space around it so that it expanded behind the vessel while shrinking ahead of it... But... [a couple of researchers] at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts, used Einstein's general theory of relativity to work out how much energy would be needed in a given region of space to warp it... Speaking from Germany, [the boffin said it] did not rule out other ways of driving starships being found in the future. "There's still a lot we don't know about the quantum effects of gravity and that sort of thing... There might be a way around it, but I have to say it doesn't look good at the moment." Other scientists have suggested the idea of wormholes through space and time, but these concepts also faced major problems. One difficulty common to warp drives and wormholes is that both require the creation of "negative mass" – an exotic substance no one has the slightest idea how to produce... [Incidentally, algae won't work as food for astronauts flying a two-year mission to Mars. It simply has too much indigestible material in its cell walls. Yes, fungus grows on waste and requires no light, but mushrooms really can't be counted on to provide enough calories for a hard-working astronaut hurtling through space. Food, it turns out, is just the beginning of problems for sending people to Mars. As the public marvels over the Pathfinder robot mission to Mars, the notion of sending humans seems like the natural step. But a report commissioned by Nasa and issued by the National Research Council is a quiet reminder that such a mission is not likely in the near future. There are still fundamental objections to a [peopled] mission to Mars, or even a long-term camp on the moon. To make long-distance space exploration by humans possible, scientists would have to build a biological system as efficient and balanced as Earth's ecology and develop equipment that could reliably monitor this little ecosystem for impurities. Both goals are out of reach today... The most difficult task is developing the ability to build a self-contained biological system that could fly to Mars without being refuelled... "One of the problems with a human mission to Mars is that they have to come back, and carrying enough fuel is a pretty substantial weight penalty..." ...Technology already used in spaceships recovers 80[%] of the water that would otherwise be lost to waste and humidity. But so far, astronauts have packed along all their food and air. On a long mission – the 600-700 days estimated for a Mars flight – that would no longer be possible. For 15 years, Nasa has been doing research on "bioregenerative systems" – plants and animals that recycle waste and bad air into food and oxygen. The Holy Grail would be a "closed loop," a system that is 100[%] efficient and needs nothing but the sun's energy to keep it running... The biggest hurdle, however, might have nothing to do with technology and everything to do with psychology. No one really knows if people are mentally suited for two or three-year journeys through space. And Nasa isn't doing enough to find out, the report says... A lack of money is also likely to rule it out. Nasa is spending just 0.1[%] of its budget developing technology for long-distance missions... But if Nasa made such a mission a priority, it could probably be achieved in about 15 years, said a former astronaut... [and chairperson] of the committee that wrote the report. Nasa has no plans for a [peopled] mission to Mars. The \$770 billion price tag of such a mission has ruled it out. Last year, [the US] President endorsed Nasa's strategy... to explore the cosmos with robots.

...Swarms of... insect-like satellites weighing... 14g could provide a cheap alternative for space exploration. Los Alamos National Laboratory... designed "micro-satellites" with control systems based on simple animal neurons which... could make complex, bulky spacecraft obsolete. "These microsatellites can go where expensive, big satellites can't... Nobody knows how little you can go. That's what we aim to find out." The little satellites, measuring just 7.6cm across, could be sent on missions to measure solar wind and map different parts of the Earth. They could prove more reliable than conventional, large satellites because their simple robotic controllers have been built to survive in almost any environment – and can work in concert, enabling the swarm to continue even if one individual unit fails... The... micro-bugs appeared "nearly impervious to electrical or mechanical fault and surprisingly capable of self assembly and collective behaviour." ...a microsatellite designed to orient itself in Earth's magnetic field by turning automatically toward the brightest available light source... could be harnessed to... measure Earth's magnetosphere.

...A balloon taller than a 30-storey building... is... being built by Nasa... to carry astronomy instruments to the edge of space. The super-balloon... is expected to be ready by 2000. Exact launch sites and dates have not been set, but N[Z or AUS] will be its launching pad... [AUS is the] more logical choice given its large, flat interior... Favoured months are January or June, when high-altitude winds peak over Australasia. The balloon will carry more weight, rise higher and stay aloft for longer than any scientific balloon before it, said... a Goddard Space Flight Centre astrophysicist and chief of the Ultra Long Duration Balloon Project... [By the way, the] Auckland StarDome Planetarium in Cornwall Park is offering kids an intergalactic adventure in the school holidays... [The planetarium's] holiday co-ordinator... said many children were in awe of space and the one-and-a-half-hour show aimed to inform and create fun... The show attracts all ages but is most suitable for 8 to 12-year-olds... [T]he children sit in the planetarium's dark room with its simulated sky above... [a]s an audio show tells them about the universe... The observatory underwent \$3 million of changes in February this year and the simulated sky was so real kids believed they were outside... "After the show the children will be taken upstairs to be shown the 50cm Zeiss telescope and if the weather is fine, they will be able to use it... [to] see a star..."

Hubble "is free to study the stars," radioed [the commander as the]... crew of the space shuttle Discovery released the Hubble Space Telescope yesterday after a \$US350 million... refurbishment that left... [t]he four-storey silver telescope... with better eyes to probe the universe... During the shuttle's service call, two teams of astronauts made five spacewalks... [- together completing] 33 weary hours of spacewalking... [-] to fit the \$US2 billion... orbiting observatory with an improved light-splitting spectrograph to seek out black holes and an infrared camera capable of peering through veils of dust. They also dabbled in electronic brain surgery, installing a new control box and a relay system for its computers. Its peeled, sun-burned skin also needed some unexpected repairs... A shuttle crew will return to the telescope in December 1999 to install another new instrument and replace its electricity-generating solar panels. Astronomers hope regular service calls will keep Hubble operating until 2005.

...Astronomers study many unusual things in the sky, but gravity waves may reveal the strangest events of all... THEY are world-shattering events that pass unnoticed; catastrophes that unfold quietly in remote places. For example, nobody has ever seen, nor is likely to see, the wrenching turmoil of two black holes in collision. This is not surprising, when you consider that black holes are accumulations of matter so dense that not even light can escape from them. But since such events are invisible, physicists hope for the next best thing: to feel them. Cataclysms such as colliding black holes give off gravitational waves, which are, in effect, ripples in space. Several groups of scientists are building a new generation of enormous instruments that might be able to sense these waves. Meanwhile, other groups are spinning computerised stories of such apocalypses, in an effort to predict what the new machines might see... GEO 600, an Anglo-German collaboration located near Hanover, should be the first[of the new machines]. VIRGO, a Franco-Italian project based in Pisa, and LIGO, its American counterpart (with instruments in the states of Washington and Louisiana), will follow shortly after. Each of these "telescopes" will consist of a pair of tunnels up to 4km long, arranged at right angles to each other. Any gravity wave passing through one of the instruments will alternately stretch and squeeze one tunnel more than the other. To detect the distortion, laser beams will be shone down both tunnels... THESE gravity-wave telescopes (known as beam interferometers) are designed to notice events such as the coalescence of "compact binaries" – two lumps of extremely dense matter in orbit around each other. The lumps are likely to be black holes or neutron stars – left-overs from the collapse of stars that have run out of fuel. Astronomers suspect there are a lot of these bodies about, but they are very hard to see. However, two of them in a decaying orbit, spiralling ever closer towards each other, might be detectable. The objects would – in the last three or four minutes before they merge – be spinning around each other hundreds of times a second, at a large fraction of the speed of light. When this happens, the space nearby will be whipped into a storm of gravitational waves. Even this would not be easy to see, because the events are so rare. If the theorists are right, an interferometer would have to be able to detect binary coalescences as far away as the Virgo cluster of galaxies, 50 million light years distant, to pick up a few of them each year. But if the binaries are that far away the waves could distort things on earth by only about 1 part in 10 with 21 zeros after it. In other words, even if an interferometer were to be built with tunnels several light-years long, such waves would alter their lengths by only the thickness of a human hair. With tunnels mere hundreds or thousands of metres long, the detection of such waves would be an impressive feat. It would also be an important piece of science. It would be a further confirmation of Einstein's theory of gravitation, which has few experimentally detectable differences from that of Newton. And there are grander plans. Researchers hope that patterns in the waves may let them deduce not merely that a merger is taking place, but also the masses and sizes of the coalescing objects... As a science, gravitational astronomy has promise.

...LOCAL scientists are joining a global research effort into a mysterious fourth state of matter once predicted by Albert Einstein. Some of the coldest temperatures ever recorded in N[Z] have already been produced in the course of the ground-breaking work. By cooling atoms of gas at close to zero temperatures, teams of local physicists in Auckland, Wellington and Dunedin are trying to reproduce a bizarre and only recently discovered substance known as Bose-Einstein condensate. Creation of this long-hypothesised "superatom" is being hailed worldwide as the dawn of a new era of atomic physics. What is fascinating about these Bose-Einstein atoms, is that they defy all the known laws of science by moving in unison – at identical speed and direction. Excited scientists now have an ideal workshop for exploring basic questions of atomic physics – as well as a range of potentially important practical applications... [For example,] it might be used to create microchips on an ever finer scale than today's... The award of this year's Nobel Prize in Physics to three pioneers in laser cooling of atoms highlights the importance of this new field... Last year, the Marsden Fund set up by [the NZ] Government to foster excellent scientific research, identified this rapidly-developing field as a priority... This year, the effort has been boosted with the addition of... one of the country's most distinguished physicists... [- the professor] was awarded the... premier award in theoretical physics... from the British Institute of Physics in 1995 – ...giving N[Z] a strong competitive position... Recent work by [the p]rofessor... and his team of post-doctoral students... at Auckland University... has focused on laser cooling of atoms... The creation of a Bose-Einstein condensate was first achieved in the U[S] in July 1995 when scientists cooled atoms of sodium to within a whisper of absolute zero. When scientists mapped the distribution of the atoms' speeds, they logged a speed close to zero that represents the atoms slowly emerging from the condensate. Discovery of the condensate paved the way for the creation by American physicists of the world's first atom laser in January this year... Ultimately, the atom laser may be used in the emerging field of nanotechnology – the creation of objects on an atomic scale.

...Science finally makes something of nothing... but what does it mean, exactly? ...PHYSICISTS have known for most of the 20th century that emptiness is actually full. The vacuum, as physicists call it, is full of particles that pop into existence for such short periods of time that they can't be detected directly. But the particles can have real, observable effects... While working at the University of Washington in Seattle, [a physicist] set out to show an effect predicted... by Dutch physicist Hendrik Casimir[– who] calculated in 1948 that so-called virtual photons, which spontaneously burst into existence like kernels of popping corn and then disappear almost instantly, ought to push two narrowly separated metal plates together. For five decades, nobody bothered to challenge Casimir's prediction. The theory behind the prediction, known as quantum electrodynamics, is so sound that almost nobody dreamed it could be wrong... The theory describes natural phenomena so well that some physicists consider it the most successful scientific theory going... As a demonstration for his students at the University of Washington, where [it] taught until last summer, [the physicist] thought, "Why not... test Casimir's prediction...? You never know what you're going to find when you do an experiment..." The theory worked fine. As [the physicist] incrementally moved a pair of metal plates closer to one another, to distances a hundredth the thickness of a human hair, the plates began to feel an attraction to one another... THE two plates felt only a minuscule force, about what's exerted by a protozoan's flapping flagellum. Yet no matter how slightly, the presence of the two metal plates changed the character of empty space so as to generate the force. The two plates attract each other because the space between them is like a box... Virtual photons can be thought of as waves coming in a range of sizes, and when the plates are extremely close the longest waves are excluded from the box. Since the

longest wavelength photons can't pop into existence between the plates, the total energy of virtual photons inside the box is lower than it is outside. The energy difference is what pushes the plates together... Although some researchers have speculated that the popping particles could be harnessed as an energy source, most physicists find no apparent practical value to [this] experiment. BUT it may be of practical concern in the future, when researchers hope to build machines that operate in such tiny realms. Nanomachines, as they're known, could... be launched on space missions at incredibly low costs... Nanomachines could also... cruise capillaries to repair damage caused by atherosclerosis – as foreshadowed by... the... 1966 Oscar-winning sci-fi film *Fantastic Voyage*... The possibilities of nanotechnology are as endless as the imagination of the field's enthusiastic proponents.

...*Sci-fi pipe dreams rush into reality*... A BRAVE new world of artificial wombs, ['synthetic eggs and sperm,'] robot surgeons and freeze-dried corpses brought back to life is no longer a fantasy, say some of the leading experts on scientific developments. It is not a question of whether such technological achievements will ever be possible but when they will be invented. The most far-fetched ideas of scientists today, such as complete meals in a pill and house-cleaning robots, will become reality within our children's lifetime, according to a survey of scientific futurologists conducted by *Wired*, the international technology magazine... It will also be possible in the same time scale to buy custom-designed clothes, measured by digital body-scanners and delivered to shoppers within 24 hours. Adidas has already begun testing a digital foot-scanner for measuring shoes... Custom-tailored clothes for the masses should be on sale by 1999. It will take a further eight years for clothes to be made of "smart" fabrics that can alter their properties to keep people warm in winter and cool in summer. Eventually clothes will assume some of the functions performed by laptop computers and mobile phones today. "Embedded electronics may enable fabrics to serve as computer screens..." To keep in touch there will be holographic telephones within 20 years, transmitting 3-D images of callers as well as their voices. Nanotechnology... will produce a wealth of new devices for the home based on microscopic robots that... will emit static charges that would act as magnets for dust... that can remove... rust and reconfigure plastic. The toilet seat that changes shape for whoever sits on it will become a reality... By 2010, robots and nanotechnology will be combined in a single pill-sized device that can be let loose in the body to perform delicate surgical tasks... Continued improvements in drug design will also spawn the first fat-destroying pills... It will take until 2020, however, to develop a reliable sober-up pill... The gap between test-tube conceptions and incubators for premature babies is narrowing continually. "Medical science may well have closed it completely by 2022,"... Despite recent advances... cryogenics... is... unlikely to become a reality before the middle of the next century. At least four companies in America offer a deep-freeze service for people hoping to be revived in the distant future, but freezing a kidney is not like freezing and reviving a brain with its memory still intact... [The] president of the Alcor Life Extension Foundation which offers a cryogenic service, hopes to make headway soon, however: "Within 10 years we will know how memory functions well enough to see if particular structures that are vital to it have survived." One of the more bizarre technologies by the middle of the next century will be teledildonics, which promises virtual-reality sex using 3-D goggles... [- transmitting i]mages of sex acts... at the speed of light... [-] and a condom-tight body suit with thousands of inbuilt sensors.

...*Mates and why we choose them was the only topic at the 25th International Ethological Conference in Vienna – a talkfest for scientists out to solve the mystery of sexual attraction*... THE Jackie O syndrome, where a beautiful [gal] is squired by a spectacularly unattractive [guy], is the exception to the rule. Walk into any cafe and if there's a Barbie lookalike [it] will be with Ken. Self-evident, maybe, but not to scientists who want proof beyond reasonable doubt. Proof has been provided by photographing established couples, and then having the [gals and the guys] ranked separately for physical attractiveness by third parties who did not know the people involved... [Someone from] the University of New Mexico has gone further in his analysis of who mates with whom, and why. Over the past few years [this someone] has sought to find out just what it is that makes people attractive. And what [this someone] has found is that one of the most important factors is symmetry... [and] that people are not alone in these preferences. Some 42 other species, including insects and birds as well as other mammals, use aspects of bodily symmetry to help choose their mates. His discoveries have provoked several follow-up projects... Other research indicates that the human sense of smell is much more important in mate selection than even perfume manufacturers have dared to dream... [S]taff at the... Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Urban Ethology in Vienna... assailed [guy] nostrils with a synthetic mixture of the fatty acids that are found in human vaginal secretions, and found that when [guys] inhale this mixture their sexual judgment goes to pot. Photographs of [gals] to whom they would not normally give a second glance suddenly become attractive. Indeed, the worse a... picture rates without the chemicals, the larger the leap [its subject] undergoes in a [guy]'s estimation when [it] is sniffing them. Even the most acutely tuned genetic responses, it seems, can be subverted environmentally by the correct stimulus. Which raises a query: why would evolution have produced [guys] whose lust could so easily be subverted? The answer to that remains to be seen, though it might simply be that the secretions indicate... sexual arousal and thus an increased chance of a successful seduction. That would make sense, for while it seems that natural selection may have toned down the promiscuous... impulse in human[guys], the anguish of wives throughout the centuries shows that such promiscuity has not yet been abolished. [A married actor, 'who has admitted to a roving eye, says, "Guys aren't supposed to only see and desire one gal. I mean, that's just science. That's human nature. It's what guys were put on earth for. Society values wisdom in guys and youth and beauty in gals."']

... 'AS THE actress and temptress Mae West once said: "So many guys, so little time!" The sultry West was in jest but scientists are convinced they have proved that gals are genetically programmed to have sex with several different guys to increase the chances of healthy kids with the greatest likelihood of survival. The theory helps to explain the high incidence of mistaken paternity. Evidence suggests that one in seven people is not the biological child of the person they believe is their dad. The US television comedy *Sex in the City*, criticised for being a guy fantasy depicting sexually aggressive gals, is apparently only showing gals doing what comes naturally. Conventional theory has suggested that only guys are naturally promiscuous, since it increases their likelihood of having many offspring by different gals. But two reports in scientific journals have added to a growing body of evidence that gals across the animal kingdom are promiscuous, and researchers are convinced human gals are the same. A study by *Nature* magazine shows hens mate with several cocks but actively choose which sperm they are fertilised by. A professor of evolutionary biology at the University of Sheffield, discovered that "when hens are mated by cocks they don't like, they just chuck the sperm straight back out after mating. It reinforces the view that gals aren't just passive vehicles for sperm." The professor believes that, like jungle fowl, human gals show evidence of having spontaneous abortions of clusters of cells not compatible with what they want. Evolutionary biologists say the evidence has become overwhelming and ties in with anthropological studies. "Since humans have evolved from other forms of life, it is likely they have many of the same mechanisms. The motivation that makes us seek other partners is evolutionary," says the professor, who has published a book called *Promiscuity*. By being promiscuous, gals can ensure greater care for their kids. The Inuit people of the Arctic have traditionally had "co-marriage" where two couples effectively marry each other. This means the kids have two sets of parents to look after them in the harsh conditions. Returning to Britain, the professor cites the case of a guy who went for a vasectomy after his wife gave birth to her third child. However, the surgeon found the husband had a congenital defect that meant it couldn't possibly be the dad of any of the children. One study followed couples awaiting fertility treatment where the husbands were "azoospermic," meaning they produced no sperm and were totally infertile. It found that 25% of the wives became pregnant before fertility treatment started. However, the strongest evidence that human gals are promiscuous actually comes from guys themselves – or rather their testicles. The concept of sperm competition suggests that guys have an incentive to produce as much sperm as possible to flood out those of a rival mate. This implies the more naturally promiscuous the gal of a species is, the larger the species' testicles will evolve. Gal chimpanzees are wildly promiscuous, and guy chimpanzees have large testicles (there is a reason why chimps are dressed up in circuses); in contrast, gal gorillas are extremely faithful so gorillas have tiny testicles. Humans have mid-sized testicles, suggesting moderate promiscuity. The only comfort that guys can take

from the animal world is that gals also have an incentive not to have all their offspring from adulterous liaisons. "If they are totally unfaithful to their social partner they might just be abandoned," says the professor. Editor's note: 'the average NZ guy has 16 sexual partners; the average NZ gal has 20'.

...Why do humans] have their testicles on the outside of their bodies, while elephants don't? This burning issue may be answered by a team of Otago scientists who have been given a government grant of \$350,000... [The p]roject leader... is used to ribbing about his study, entitled: "Testes, temperature and evolution: Should an elephant keep his cool?" ... "We get a lot of jokes and that is part of the fun,"... The testicle researchers will be testing mostly ram semen. Elephant semen, they argue, is a little hard to come by... But some people think it is a load of old cobbles... "The question is, is it a significant scientific question and, if so, why? I can't see either application or theory. It sounds literally like jobs for the boys."

...Last week I was waxing enthusiastic about a recent book... which demolishes many a myth about the supposed need for governments to subsidise science and technology and instead argues that markets are the driving force for technology, new science and economic growth. We saw that the early Industrial Revolution occurred in laissez-faire England, where neither science nor technology were subsidised one iota. Moreover, the new industrial technology of that time owed next to nothing to the (then) recent developments in science. In fact, science and technology interact far less than is commonly thought: mostly they keep on their separate tracks of development. But as the industrial revolution wore on, private industry did feel the need to do more science. So companies undertook in-house research, or endowed universities. And because this was the age of low taxes... philanthropists were also active. The 19th century saw a huge upsurge of British science – all without direct Government support. And the first country to overtake Britain economically was the U[S], whose science was equally laissez-faire... Japan's universities are mostly privately funded... But for a variety of reasons – including sinister military inventions – other countries were starting to take a more state-directed approach to science and technology. This century Britain and America (and N[Z]) have tamely followed this trend. Little good it has done any of us. In N[Z], for instance, the half billion dollars that the taxpayer spends annually on science... probably represents money badly spent. And this policy has created... another vocal interest group dining at the public trough, in the form of tax-funded scientists... There will always be a demand for science, just as there will always be clever and curious people wanting to do science. Our choice is whether they work for the Government – a notoriously stingy and unreliable employer whose economic policies are noted for picking born losers – or whether they work in private industry and... foundations. The lesson is twofold. Not only does taxpayer funding waste the talents of scientists[i]t can politicise them to an embarrassing degree. Scientists, if anyone, should be bywords for objectivity. Yet some scientists turn into performing clowns on the hint of reduced taxpayer support.

...*Serious weaknesses in market-driven science*... [A NZ Herald columnist] proposes that science and technology would develop faster, and that society would be better off, if Government support was minimised and its management left entirely to the market. There are two striking things about major scientific discoveries. The first, that they are unexpected, should not surprise us. If discoveries were made where people expected to find them then the process would be easy. When Faraday and Maxwell made their discoveries concerning electricity and magnetism (less than 200 years ago), coal and later gas were the basic sources of energy. There was nothing at the time to show that the science of electromagnetism foreshadowed our present understanding of the fundamentals of atomic particles and matter generally, or their technological contribution to electricity in its manifold uses. Their scientific successors were all the physicists and chemists we know today, including Einstein and our own Rutherford and Marsden (sons of a regulated economy). Their technological successors are producers of power, communications and the multiplicity of electronic equipment that serve our societies. If research had been market-driven by coal and gas technology would any of the discoveries relevant to our understanding of physics have been made, and if so how belatedly? The second theme of discovery in modern science and technology has been the availability of already gathered information which often was part of no systematic study to a technological end. For example, the development of transistors and, following them, the silicon chip of computers depended on a knowledge of the semi-conducting and other properties of otherwise useless elements. There are other more dramatic examples in pure science... It is worth noting the role of mathematics especially. [The columnist] claims that the reason the Roman Empire did not make any notable technological progress was that it was a "plunder culture" not a "market culture." ...One contributing reason suggested is that the mathematics of Rome and the succeeding societies of medieval Europe was based on a primitive number system which allowed no calculation. It was only after we borrowed the number system of the Arabs, with the abstract concept of "zero," that further scientific and technological progress was possible. What would the market justification be for the study of speculative mathematics? ...[the columnist] speaks favourably of the benefits of the Industrial Revolution in England, and contrasts the failure of France to undergo a similar social process, as an example of the benefit of market forces over a regulated economy. But the Industrial Revolution was an unmitigated disaster for at least two generations of a major part of the population in England. During it, most English people lived in dread of the poverty caused by technological innovations, or lived in abject poverty and misery. The horrors of life in early Victorian cities for a large proportion of the population should not be minimised. To read social accounts of the time does not lead to admiration of the English politicians who caused so much suffering to their own people, even if they did create immediate wealth for a small proportion of the people and launched an empire. Although the French took advantage of technical innovation more slowly, they also acquired a sophisticated industrial society and an empire. At the beginning of this century was England noticeably better off, and France noticeably worse off, the one for having undergone a rapid and violent Industrial Revolution, and the other a progressive change? By analogy [the columnist's] message seems to be that we should embrace unfettered market delivery of technology whatever the price to present generations because in two or three generations our grandchildren may realise untold wealth and marvellous technical innovations which we cannot imagine. Is this a political and social equation that we would willingly accept? [His] major claim that basic science would be better funded entirely by market-driven decisions assumes that the only function of science is to serve technological advance and not, for instance, wider social interests such as the consequences of technological advance. My view is that... it is not impossible that technology as it is practised in the market may... create an increased population, and demands for food and the consumption of resources which cannot be delivered within renewable systems. The world's resources are not infinite. Having had one revolution in food production and having used a significant proportion of the world's non-renewable energy resource, we assume that we will find further technical solutions to these problems. This is not inevitable.

...*Start of a New Frontier or... End of the Road?* ...I WAS ONCE, LIKE THE LATE PETER MEDAWAR, A FERVENT BELIEVER in scientific progress. In fact, I became a science writer in large part because I viewed science as the most ennobling of all humanity's creations. We are here to figure out why we are here. What goal is more worthy of us? Science could also help us create, if not a utopia, then at least a better world than we now inhabit. Initially I simply assumed that the quest for knowledge and power would never end. As the island of our knowledge grows,[one] physicist... once told me, so does the shore of our ignorance. But sometime during the early 1990s I lost my faith in science's boundlessness. Where once I saw challenges and opportunities, I began to see limits and barriers. Now I believe that the glory days of science are in a very important sense already over. My pessimism stems in part from the fact that so many brilliant, creative scientists – particularly in the fields of physics and cosmology – are working on theories that are hopelessly speculative. For the past 15 years or so physicists... – [such as the person] dubbed one of the most influential people in America by TIME in 1996 – have dedicated themselves to superstring theory. Often touted as a "theory of everything," it posits that all the matter and energy in the universe – and even space and time – stem from infinitesimal, string-like particles wriggling in a hyperspace consisting of 10 (or more) dimensions. Enthusiasts hope that superstring theory can answer the most profound of all questions: Why is there something rather than nothing? Unfortunately, probing the realm of superstrings directly would require a particle accelerator the size of the entire Milky Way. Meanwhile, [researchers at] Stanford University and others have proposed that our cosmos is merely one of an infinite number of

universes, some perhaps with laws of physics totally different from our own. Some observers contend that these unconfirmable, far-fetched theories are signs of science's vitality and boundless possibilities. I see them as signs of science's desperation and terminal illness. We have been so dazzled by the enormous advances science has made in certain areas that we have overlooked those realms in which there has been little or no progress. For example, it once seemed inevitable that knowledge of nuclear fusion... would culminate in a clean, economical, inexhaustible source of energy. For half a century, fusion researchers have said, "Keep the money coming and in 20 years we will give you energy too cheap to meter." Now, fusion research is scaling back dramatically worldwide. Even the most optimistic proponents predict it will take at least 50 years to build economically viable fusion reactors. Realists acknowledge that fusion energy is a dream that may never be fulfilled... An even more ambitious goal of science is immortality. Many scientists are now attempting to identify the precise causes of aging. It is conceivable that if they succeed in pinpointing the mechanisms that make us age, [w]e... might then learn how to block the aging process and to design versions of *Homo sapiens* that can live indefinitely. But evolutionary biologists caution that immortality may be impossible to achieve. Natural selection designed us to live long enough to mature, breed and raise our children. As a result, senescence does not stem from any single cause or even a suite of causes; it is woven inextricably into the very fabric of our being. One might have more confidence in scientists' ability to crack the riddle of senescence if they had had more success with a presumably simpler problem: cancer. Since the U[S] officially declared "war on cancer" in 1971, the country has spent more than \$30 billion on research. But overall mortality rates from cancer have remained virtually unchanged since then... Maybe some day all our research will yield a "cure" that will render cancer as obsolete as polio and smallpox. As someone whose family has been ravaged by cancer, I certainly hope so. But one cannot blithely assume that science will stamp out cancer soon, or ever. Science has also made pitifully little progress in understanding our fantastically complicated and often troubled minds. To be sure, researchers have acquired powerful tools for probing the brain... But all this work has failed to yield either a powerful new theory of the mind or truly effective treatments for its assorted disorders... Pessimists like me are often accused of lacking imagination. Actually, it is all too easy to imagine great discoveries just over the horizon. Our culture does it for us all the time, with TV shows like *Star Trek* and movies like *Star Wars* and advertisements and political rhetoric that promise us tomorrow will be very different from – and almost certainly better than – today. Scientists, and science journalists too, are forever claiming that a huge revelation or breakthrough or Holy Grail awaits us just around the corner. It is much more difficult to imagine that there is no Next Big Thing over the horizon. What if what we have is basically all we're going to get? We are not going to invent warp-drive spaceships that can take us to other galaxies or other universes. We are not going to become immortal through genetic engineering or by transforming ourselves into computers. We are not going to discover "the mind of God," as... a... British physicist... once put it. Peter Medawar would no doubt have found my views to be fatuous and mean-spirited. I believe they are merely realistic.

...YOUNG DISCOVERERS NEED NOT DESPAIR – THOUGH THERE ARE few blanks left on today's map of the world, there are still... [missing] pieces in the puzzle of how the world works... In 1844, U.S. commissioner of patents Henry L. Ellsworth famously quipped: "The advancement of the arts from year to year taxes our credulity and seems to presage the arrival of that period when further improvements must end." More than 150 years later, our credulity may still be taxed by the latest advances in science, medicine and exploration, but new discoveries and inventions show no sign of coming to an end. Historically, the greatest discoverers and inventors were often regarded by their contemporaries as quacks or even heretics. [During] our own time, this reluctance to discard conventional wisdom and embrace new ideas persists. In 1930, American rocket researcher Robert H. Goddard and a group of colleagues were given a grant of \$25,000 by philanthropist Daniel Guggenheim to develop rocket technology to carry scientific instruments into earth's upper atmosphere. But, fearful of losing their professional reputations and being branded cranks, the scientists emphatically denied the possibility of ever reaching the moon. In 1977... [the] founder of Digital Equipment Corp., saw "no reason why anyone would want a computer in their home." Now many people around the world can't live without them. But true pioneers – people like Socrates, Voltaire, Newton and Einstein – have consistently had the courage of their convictions: the vision to ask the right questions and the determination to keep on asking until they got satisfactory answers.

...How's that for inventive? I READ once that [guys], like nature, abhor... a vacuum. In my case this isn't strictly true. In fact I actually quite like the vacuum cleaner. I guess I've always been amused by the idea that a vacuum could be cleaned. But that's the kind of guy I am. I enjoy paradoxes... If I go to the health food shop to pick up some free range eggs I often wonder why I should have to pay for them. If they just called them range eggs the confusion would be avoided. And if it's Roget's *Thesaurus* shouldn't we really give it back? These are crazy ideas, but I guess it's just in my nature to push the intellectual envelope. Universities all over the world are packed with botanists doing obscure plant research and genetic experimentation, but to date no-one has invented a non-slip banana skin. How much pain and humiliation can the human race endure? The much-maligned Macdonald's has bred its own species of rectangular potato. Is a non-slip banana skin totally out of the question? ...When you're in the middle of something you can't see the wood for the trees. Who among us could now imagine a world without coffee? It seems ridiculous to think about it, but there must have been a time, and not that long ago, when there wasn't an espresso bar on every corner. And who knows, at some point in the future even our four-wheel-drive urban jeeps might look odd. Maybe not in our lifetimes, but perhaps our grand-children will look at photos of us standing next to these jeeps and wonder why on earth we needed such extreme forms of transport to simply pick up bread and milk from the corner dairy. They might even think we look absurd. They won't understand, of course... Tradition as our grandparents understood it was simply a farce that facilitated the repetition of obsolete knowledge and emotion... We know now that each generation is only answerable to itself. - 1997

If you had to single out one machine and say that it formed the 20th century, it would have to be the internal combustion engine... And a manifestation of the internal combustion engine... [was t]he... 2-stroke... This engine didn't so much turn the world as totally infest it and, personally, I hate the buggers... Unfortunately, there are plenty of other folk who just love the 2-stroke to bits... Who would've thought that a hardy... little... industrial... engine, born out of poverty and necessity, would become... [at] the latter part of the 20th century an engine that gives... pleasure to thousands and drives the rest of us completely bananas! ...Like all apparently simple inventions, the genius of the 2-stroke was... [that] at a stroke, or rather 2, it allows you to throw out three-quarters of the moving parts of a 4-stroke engine. When the piston goes up to fire, the vacuum inside... is used to draw fuel and air mixture through the carburettor... and when it comes back down it's... compressing all the air... and that pressure is used to push the fuel up and onto the top of the piston – so the piston comes up and fires again, and it just goes on and on... The simplicity of the 2-stroke engine is much appreciated around [the former East Germany]... In the dark days following W[W]2, the German economy was in a shambles and money, especially... behind the Iron Curtain, was tight. There was a desperate need to get industry kick-started, to re-build and to get people moving – and in the East, they turned to the 2-stroke... [An example of the result is] a car that has driven millions from A to B at very low cost and been the butt of every lousy comedian's terrible jokes for some years... the Trabant... Listen, don't knock the Trabi – it's reliable, efficient and costs about a third as much as your car to run. The entire car can be dismantled with 5 spanners... The new Germany seems to be trying to bury the old Trabi along with its recent past, and I think that's a shame. I mean, how many cars can you name that can do 60 miles to the gallon, need servicing once every 2 years, and have an engine that can be removed... in... [a few] minutes. Of course, if you happen to be a macho speed-freak, the Trabant may not be the car for you... [I]n the macho speed-freak department, the 2-stroke engine features in a very different machine [also] developed in East Germany. What's more, it's the subject of a classic tale of Cold War espionage, intrigue and betrayal. The machine in question was developed in the 1950s and built... at the MZ factory... You've got to hand it to the Germans – when it comes to efficiency allied to inventiveness, the history of engineering is littered with them. One such was MZ's chief engineer... [who] spent 10 years [tinkering] with

the 2-stroke engine and turned it from a lawnmower into the fastest motorbike in the world... In the 1960s... MZs were cleaning up in the European Grand Prix circuit, and the opposition seemed unable to come up with anything to match the flying machines. It was Suzuki who finally solved the problem... In a pre-arranged deal with the Japanese... MZ's premier rider at the time mysteriously disappeared halfway through the 1961 Swedish Grand Prix. In fact, [the rider] had established enough of a lead to be completely out of site on the far side of the track where [it] simply drove off a slip-road and into the welcoming arms of a Suzuki rep. [The rider] had also had the forethought to stuff his racing jacket with a complete set of the MZ's engineering specifications... Although, fundamentally, they've never improved on [the] original designs, Japanese motorbikes have ruled the world ever since – and the Swedish Grand Prix signalled the beginning of the end for the German, American and British bike industries as they all collapsed in the face of advancing Japanese technology... In the economic grimness of the post-war Eastern Bloc, the 2-stroke engine brought cheap, efficient power to the people. But in the West, the emphasis was on pleasure... [I]n Britain, the fashion was for model making, and the 2-stroke was just perfect. Here was an engine whose mechanical parts were so simple they could be reproduced in miniature and they'd still work... I love Sundays, don't you? The peace... and... tranquillity of the loch. It's a perfect day for... a spot of bird-watching, or just taking the [model] helicopter for a walk... The reason the 2-stroke engine makes such a delightful noise is that it does everything at twice normal speed – you get power with every second stroke of the piston instead of every fourth, so you get lots of power out of smaller, lighter engines. That's why they run so fast; that's why they scream a lot... The 2-stroke engine found its way into dirt-bikes, microlites and frisky little beggars like the [jet-ski and] snow-mobile... Northern California [is] serious timber territory. They've been cutting down timber [t]here since the 1870s, and yet it wasn't until the late 1920s that the mechanical engineers came up with an improvement on [the axe]... In 1926 an engineer came up with another use for the 2-stroke engine that was to make life a lot easier for the loggers. And wouldn't you know it, [the engineer] was German! ...his contribution to the world was the chainsaw. The world has been on the run ever since. I think I have found the one justification for the 2-stroke engine here, because no matter how painful it may be to... ecological sensitivities... we need wood – we can't do without it... unless you want to engulf the world in plastic... It would appear that the chainsaw is the only absolutely essential application of the 2-stroke engine. They do burn oil all the time, and they're very high polluters – in fact, in California they're just about to be totally banned, so that's something against them. Also, they make the most irritating noise... So, on reflection, I still don't like 'em.

...[guys] and machines: what is it that makes us so obsessed with them? ...We love them. And yet, you know, the engine that's probably had more influence on the history of the world this century – the most simple, the most powerful, the most reliable engine in the history of engineering – is very much the Cinderella of [engines]... If you think the silicon chip revolutionised the 20th century, then think again. Surfing the Net has nothing on a fighter plane doing Mach II at sea level, or a fully-laden 747 doing 500 miles per hour at 35,000 ft. In little over half a century, the jet engine has achieved legendary status in a truly global sense... [But], for all its brilliance, it is treated with virtual disregard by the people who use it... The jet, it has to be said, has a bit of a personality problem. Never in the field of human transportation has such a near-miraculous improvement been so cruelly neglected. The jet engine is the Liberal Democrat of the engineering world – bags of hot air, but nobody's terribly fond of her. But the amazing thing is that had it not been for the efforts of one [person], we might not have had the jet at all... [T]he basic training plane for fighter pilots between the middle of... W[WI] and about the late '20s... was... run [by] a big piston engine which was lubricated by castor oil, and the engine had two settings – *On* and *Off*. It [wasn't]... exactly what you call sophisticated. Which is exactly what... [a] young RAF cadet... called Frank Whittle... thought. Whittle was a flying ace and was well-aware of what the 504 was capable of. However, despite pushing it to its limits [Frank] knew deep down the propeller plane had some fundamental problems. So at the age of 21 [Frank] outlined these problems in an astonishing student essay. Basically, in order to fly at any great speed, an aeroplane has to go high, where the air is thinner and there is less drag. However, precisely because the air is thinner, the propeller gets less grip and is less effective. As if that wasn't bad enough, as the air gets thinner, the aeroplane's engine also gets less... efficient. The propeller plane was a trap. [The sound of a propeller plane is] an absolutely delicious noise... at least to those of us who've got a closet full of anoraks and a big tool-box marked *Do Not Touch*. However, to Frank... it was just a noise of wasted energy – literally wasted petrol. [Frank] wanted to get rid of all those... moving parts and produce one solid thrust. And that's what [Frank] set about designing... [F]or every action in the Universe there is an equal and opposite reaction[. If you attach a firework to a model plane suspended by a string, the plane will start to fly in a circular direction]... because all the thrust coming out the back [of the firework] is producing a forward thrust by the plane. This is the basis of jet-propulsion. But unlike the firework, a true engine has to be able to control the thrust. So with virtually no help from the [British] Government and the RAF, who both thought [the cadet] was bananas, Whittle set off to create a controllable stream of thrust... [D]espite a few teething troubles, the principle of the jet engine was established... [In] a very primitive turbine... the heat [from candle flame rises] up and... blades which are angled... try and avoid it and... as they move away from it... because they're all the same shape they eventually produce a spinning motion... [Whittle's] genius was that [the cadet] took the turbine a[nd]... put it on one... end... [of a] shaft, and at the front drove a compressor... The compressor is basically a huge fan that sucks air into the engine and squeezes it into an explosive mixture with the fuel. This then ignites and goes scooting out the back, creating forward thrust and turning the turbine on its way. Because they're both connected to the same shaft, the turbine then turns the compressor again, so completing the cycle... Whittle's jet engine first took to the air in May, 1941. You might have thought that a country at war would be interested in a plane that would do over 300 miles an hour without a propeller – but, incredibly, the test flight was met with wilful disinterest from the British Government. "...of course you had the [lobbying] power... of the combustion engine industry, which was vast, and Frank was doing something which nobody believed... would really happen... [Being someone who had written] a thesis at 21, putting aircraft at speeds of... 400 m[ph] at 35,000 ft – when the standard fighter was [only reaching 150mph] – you can imagine that it was a very difficult job... [Frank] had to do[to convince others]." In a way you could see their point. Who couldn't love the Spitfire, with its big Merlin V12 engine, and its propeller thrashing the air to a pulp... [In comparison,] the jet is cold, inscrutable, and sounds like something at the back of your fridge. By the end of the war, the Government relented and ordered a squadron of... Meteors – the first jet plane to be enrolled in the Air Force. But even then, the response of the pilots was less than enthusiastic... Although the Meteor's engines pointed straight towards the future, its airframe construction was firmly rooted in the past... Accordingly, it ha[d] to be flown with a certain amount of respect... The early Meteors might not have won many friends amongst the propeller boys but it wasn't long before the jet found its feet. By the time they'd created the Mark V model in 1946, the Meteor was doing over 600 m[ph] – and no amount of pistons and propellers can argue with that! ...Now all the jet had to do was to achieve world domination. During WWII the Allies open secrets policy meant the [US] got to see the jet engine. If the jet engine had been lacking in character, then it was about to get it... [The J57 is] the engine that took the world into the jet age... [One J57] could develop thrust equivalent to 15 Spitfire engines... Basically, the [US] took Whittle's jet and added sex. The F100 SuperSabre... was introduced to the US Air Force in 1950, fitted with a J57. On its first flight, the pilot took it up to 35,000 ft, opened the throttle, and smashed through the sound barrier – the first plane ever to go supersonic in level flight. And it was thanks to a feature that was to inspire schoolboys the world over... [The development of the jet engine had gotten] so good that the old compressor was producing so much oxygen that some of it would come... out the back end. Now some boffin noticed this and... decided to start squirting fuel in. This is where the after-burner started... [E]ffectively it worked like a rocket... [and] produced tonnes and tonnes of thrust... it could add up to 50% more power... The after-burner summed up America's attitude to the jet engine – pure raw power at any expense. It was like saying: "We've got so much fuel we can do whatever we like with it." ...The J57 with its afterburner ensured America's aerial dominance in the '50s... Things must have looked pretty rosy for the U[S]. However, there was a small detail that had gone awry. When the British Government had sent the jet to the [US], they also sent a few to the Russians – so there wouldn't be any fighting, so to speak. Oh dear! The jet

engine was fundamental to the Cold War. It powered everything from the colossal B52s, to their fighter support, to the re-fuelling planes that kept them afloat for 24 hours at a time. In Vietnam it allowed the bombers to operate from such a range and height that the planes were not visible or audible from the ground. It was so fundamental that the only way to keep the peace was by grounding the[planes], chopping them up and recycling them... [The US] military aircraft recycling centre, where the jets get turned into dog food cans, is an inglorious end for these mighty planes that once dominated the skies – but, tough! ...The scrapyard marked the beginning of the Strategic Arms Limitation agreement between America and Russia. Planes have to be laid out in rows so they can be counted by Russian satellites before being decommissioned and dismantled... The speed and power of the jet engine totally changed the way wars were fought[– it] meant the B52s and their fighter escorts could leave Washington and be back in time for Cheers. Even the Cruise missiles they carried were powered by jets. But the jet's greatest impact was... to come in commercial travel... [I]t was here that arguably the jet's most invisible but greatest asset came to the fore – reliability... It always irritates me when people bitch on board about how bad airline food is – as if sitting [and] eating at 35,000 ft in a tin can wasn't a bit of a miracle in itself... I think one of the ways people reassure themselves about flying – and the fact that it is sort of unnatural – is not to think... about the fact that it's a machine, and... originally it was iron ore and bits of rubbish lying... under the ground... It's precisely because the engine is so simple that a fault can be utterly catastrophic. It either works perfectly or not at all... The component failure that... [caused] one of America's worst air disasters was traced back to a defect the size of a grain of sand.

...It seems an inevitable feature of modern life that as soon as someone invents something new and useful, someone else comes along with evidence to suggest it might end up killing us... The 20th century has been an astonishing breeding ground for ideas, yielding inventions that have rendered life easier, healthier and longer than ever before... The... [century] began with the horse and carriage; the ink pen and ledger; knowledge that was confined to libraries and a tiny elite... diseases, epidemics and deformities that could brutally truncate lives. It ends with robot emissaries sent from the Earth to the farthest bounds of the solar system; email and live satellite television; the democratisation of knowledge, through the Internet; and medical breakthroughs that have made the plague, smallpox and cataracts the stuff of *Bible* stories. But two of the greatest breakthroughs in knowledge – atomic fission and DNA – have brought two of the greatest perils: the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the risk of human cloning. "Science has increased [our] control over nature, and might therefore be supposed likely to increase [our] happiness and well-being," philosopher Bertrand Russell once wrote. "This would be the case if [we] were rational, but in fact [w]e... are bundles of passions and instincts."

...*The next millennium is hurtling towards us. If we want to survive it, we need to start asking: what if?* ...IN SCI-FI movies and paperbacks, the future is depicted as macabre and exciting, crowded with gangsters in sensational overcoats, armed to the teeth. The landscape throbs with cyborgs and psychopaths, jet motorbikes and aerial taxis, mad monks and malevolent black holes, oozing gore and adrenalin. If by fluke, or benign tyranny, a city survives the future with tranquillity and roof gardens – as in *Demolition* [Guy] – the inhabitants keel over with boredom, suffocated by psychobabble... This is the future for rent at the video store. Is it what we want? Each person's journey into the future proceeds... [with] a series of panic attacks about, oh, old age on skid row or a visionless government leading us into the third millennium. Mostly, the future is left to chance. This is a bad idea. We tend to become victims of other people's agendas. Yet the key forces shaping our culture compel us to look ahead – more so now than ever. Why? Because the future isn't what it used to be. It comes at the speed of light. Time to take over the controls and be part of the Futures Revolution. The goal? To shape the conditions for a civilised life in the 21st century. It's a revolution that goes to the heart of who we are and where we're heading. One of the triggers of this revolution is time. Where has it gone? The faster everything happens the quicker time disappears. Food, news, knowledge and puberty come at us quicker, leaving us breathless... Fact-based knowledge doubles every 18 months, according to a 1989 study by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and by 2010 it will double every four weeks. This is because about 90[%] of scientists who ever lived are living now, and working in cyberspace. The growth rate is so furious it has led to "Net time" – one year on the Internet is like seven years in any other medium... [(and] seven minutes on the Net can equal seven years in Tibet[)]... In previous ages extra information was a boon. Now it is blamed for burnout... The anarchists of the 1870 Paris commune foresaw the tyranny of time when they shot the clocks. Today, French futurists decry the ever-accelerating present as a perpetual "state of emergency." Politicians have short attention spans. Capitalists dance to the fluctuations of finance markets. In my youth speed was a drug. Now it's a lifestyle. Trapped in the frenetic present, dizzy with data smog, we're too busy to reflect on the future. But our "culture of impatience" makes it more urgent than ever to probe the horizons of our tomorrows. Like a car driving at night, the faster we zoom, the further the headlights need to shine, or we crash. The beam of foresight needs an uplift. The Futures Revolution has little to do with quirky wizards in pointy hats dusting off Nostradamus, talk-show psychics or fashion tips for 2020. It's a bid for survival. The... Professor of Alternative Futures at the University of Hawaii, has spent 30 years teaching students how to scan the socio-cultural horizon and identify patterns of change. [Hi]s metaphor of the future is an onslaught of tsunamis... whose formation his students can scrutinise, like surfers, then hop on for the ride of their lives. The next "big three" tsunamis, according to... [him], are... molecular manufacturing (nanotechnology), the human genome project, and artificial intelligence. The ultimate, though hard-to-accept, implication of nanotechnology is the abolition of scarcity. In the future, it is claimed, the building blocks of nature – atoms – will be snapped together in almost any arrangement we desire, quickly and cheaply. This will spawn a new generation of products: lighter, stronger, smarter... cleaner, more precise... In theory, we can endlessly replicate steel, diamonds, mink and cement. Science-fiction writers already depict nanotech machines on street corners spitting out speedboats and cornflakes at the flash of a credit card (though not in Calcutta). The genome project puts the levers of evolution in the hands of humans. If genetic illness can be eradicated and future fetuses customised, where does that leave God or chance? With what means will the poor avail themselves of medical miracles? ...As for artificial intelligence, it hovers around the scene as I tap these words. Powered by a brain bigger than mine, the software, Microsoft Office, alerts me to grammatical anomalies, designates its own file names and projects a loathsome bozo to dance a jig at any (rare) displays of keyboarding prowess. Thanks a lot, [Mr Chairperson of Microsoft], for imposing American spelling and entwining my emotions with your materialism... Russian scientists say they have developed the first artificial brain, a "neuro-computer" with the same intellectual potential as its human counterpart... The computer is based on the brain cell, or neuron, and outstrips previous brain models by using new findings in neurophysiology and neuromorphology to produce a truly thinking machine... But... [one Russian] scientist... says the technology could turn into a Frankenstein's monster if mistreated. "This machine needs to be trained like a newborn child. It's extremely important for us to make it a friend, not a criminal or an enemy." ...In the labs, intelligent robots – "knowbots" – are surely sorting the laundry and filing the tax. What are the legal rights of such beings...? Would you allow your child to marry one? Who has custody of the offspring? Quoting [a past] dictum – "We shape our tools, and then our tools shape us" – [the profess]or foresees the "end of homo sapiens in one form and our emergence, during the 21st century, into something totally different." What, exactly? Both artificial intelligence and genetic engineering allow us to produce other self-conscious entities... The creation of self-conscious mutations could be the entire point of our species. ['Some engineers countenance the idea that our evolutionary destiny is to create "superhumans" in the form of highly intelligent robots to take over the Galaxy.'] Some futurists see the imminent retirement of the human race. Perhaps our role is similar to butterflies: we are here merely to "pollinate machines" which do not possess their own reproductive organs – yet! As [the profess]or says: "Any useful statement about the future should seem to be ridiculous." One role of the Futures Revolution is to create a variety of scenarios ahead of time... an attempt to avoid a future by fait accompli. Futurists follow the cycles of nature, the rhythms of history. They draw from science fiction and fact, market research, intuition, imagination and quirky rumours. At seminars, audiences can be turned into futurists by tapping their collective foresight and crafting a series of alternative scenarios: bleak, benign and business-as-usual. These are not predictions, there being no such thing as a future fact, but catalysts of the

imagination. The aim is to help us to avoid a future we detest and to create the future we desire. Futurists look for “emerging issues” in five areas – society, technology, economy, environment and politics. The cement slab of building a scenario is demographics. It is expected that by the year 2050, 99[%] of the world’s population will be non-white. A global political trend, keeping this in mind, is the mounting aggression of white racists as they resist the bronzing of humanity. Another emerging issue is the assertion of community rights over the rights of the individual. Perhaps the West’s gung-ho adulation of the individual-as[-]centre-of-the-world eventually erodes those cultures which – by honouring other ways of being – creates individuals of a different kind. Asian intellectuals are increasingly agitated by... the satellite-delivered image of muscle-bound hedonists swathed in brand names, indifferent to religion... [and] the honouring of tradition. It’s a clash of ethics which is likely to escalate. A variation of this clash occurs daily, as developers with resorts... on their drawing boards clear wetlands and degrade ecosystems, regardless of communal needs – never mind the rights of the future unborn. An emerging issue in economics is “true pricing” – the incorporation into the balance sheet of social and environmental costs... As [one] economist... has noted, the expense of destroying the Earth and damaging society is largely absent from the prices set in the marketplace... In *Wired* magazine... [the] author of *The Art of the Long View*... took 20 pages to unfold the “history of the future” from 1980 to 2020, which is startlingly at odds with the projections of most social commentators. “We’re facing 25 years of prosperity, freedom and a better environment for the whole world,” [his essay] claims. “You got a problem with that?” This scenario is driven by bio-technology, silicon and sustainable energy which will “rapidly grow the economy without destroying the environment.” ...This scenario, published last year, also extols a “booming Asia” which shows the “unambiguous benefits” of thriving market economies and free trade. Mmm... back to the drawing board. But upbeat visions are useful. John F. Kennedy’s 1961 pledge – before the technical capacity – to put a [U]Ser on the moon by the end of the decade became its own fulfilment. Today, what kind of vision will inspire a nation? Perhaps that’s the wrong question. The top-down model of imposing a mission is losing its relevance, even if politicians were suddenly willing to look beyond market dictates and electoral stunts. The Futures Revolution, like all revolutions, is thrusting up from the grass roots. In multiple e-mail postings, in community halls, in offbeat consultancies, radical Websites, think-tanks, even corporate conferences... free-thinkers are thrashing out ways to redefine what it means to be human in the 21st century (already, and hopefully, deemed the Century of Healing). This upsurge goes by various names – heart politics, the new resonance, the social potential movement. A central plank is sustainability, which applies to personal lifestyle and the provision of goods and services. For... [the] managing director of the Mitsubishi Electric Corporation in the U[S], the mission of his organisation is the same as the mission of civilisation – “to develop the human ecosystem, sustainably.” ...In a stunning address to the World Future Society last year, [the director] proclaimed the rainforest a perfect learning organisation – a place that excels by learning to adapt to what it doesn’t have... “To succeed in the new economy... we must operate by the design principles of the rainforest.” ...If two businesses have the same niche, only one survives. Hence the race to cut costs and downsize... People who regard competitiveness as the key to success are wrong, [the director] says. The future belongs to those who cooperate... Fast disappearing in all kinds of organisations are job titles, hierarchies, cubicles, the office desk, even secrets... Once the corporation is viewed as a human community, rather than a hunk of property with patent rights, the Futures Revolution will hasten its ascent from feudalism to democracy. Who owns the future? Essentially it is a projection of the hopes and aspirations of the West, according to [one] British academic... “Other civilisations in the world are either irrelevant or, where they have something positive to offer, that ‘something’ (often labelled Eastern Wisdom) can easily be appropriated for the benefit of the West.” [The academic] believes that cyberspace, the bio-electronic frontier, is geared towards the “erasure of non-Western histories,” and likens its “constructed anarchy” to the rape/pillage mentality of previous colonisers. Ultimately the Net is a means of distracting the West from its inhumanity and spiritual poverty, [the academic] says. The fear of futurists from other cultures is that the triumph of the information age is set to vanquish an ageless wisdom. Having savaged the planet, is the West now in the process of colonising the future? Even the calendar is globalised. The 21st century is an arbitrary cut-off point. It has little relevance for Confucians... Muslims or the Hindus, for whom “time is the blink of Brahma.” So now we’re back to the beginning, back to the question of time, the disappearance of which spurs us to look further... into the future. And if we can rescue this future... [while] letting a multitude of cultures shape their destinies according to their own dreams, visions and aspirations, then we can also rescue a sense of time. A time to reap, a time to sow, a time to reflect... [upon] converting our state of emergency into a state of emergence... [Speaking of reaping state emergencies from what is sown,] Britain’s BSE – “mad cow” – epidemic has cost the country £4 billion, claimed the lives of 43 people and triggered fears that the death toll could reach several million. And it appears it was caused by a scientific experiment which went wrong. Experts believe hormones taken from the brains of slaughterhouse carcasses were injected into cows in a bid to create a new breed of super-cattle... [T]he Ministry of Agriculture refused to be drawn. “It is a theory being considered, but it is only a theory.” ...[the ministry’s response was predictable as] families of victims of the BSE-related CJD... are suing the Government... The... inquiry into the BSE epidemic has uncovered a tale of rivalry between government departments, inadequate hygiene enforcement in slaughterhouses and breakdowns in communications between ministers and public servants. The scandal... [led to] Europe’s ban on British beef... and is blamed by many for laying the groundwork for popular public protests against genetically modified crops.

...I... find... it... hard to think positively about genetic engineering. While my brain comprehends the methodology of gene modification and some possible beneficial outcomes, I feel sick in the gut... when I think about it. It’s not that I’m hostile to science... Far from it – I studied sciences at school and university, and I try to keep up with new thinking... and technology. I’d be lost without electric water pumps, computers... the fax... and look forward to some of the possibilities of nanotechnology... Good science and applications of science in appropriate technology have done wonders for our comforts. Rational thinking and research can free us from traps of anecdote and superstition, promote civilised understanding and decision-making. Appropriate technology can reduce waste, promote health and safety, as well as improve communication. However, not all science is good... and technology does not guarantee survival. Some of the experiments being undertaken by genetic scientists are nothing more than insane tinkering with the fabric of life[(‘glow-in-the-dark tropical fish are the first creatures genetically engineered just for our amusement’)]. Good science involves careful observation, prediction and testing. The problem with much genetic manipulation is that the testing process itself may produce unpredicted, irreversible changes in our biosphere. This goes beyond science. It is human beings playing at being gods. Our myths – Prometheus, Maui, the Tower of Babel – tell us that when [mortals] steal from or try to be gods, they are punished[or]... destroyed. Mind out, our ancestors said. We need feelings as well as thoughts, we need to keep head and heart in balance or else our hands will do horrors we cannot easily undo... We are right to feel enraged when multinationals turn functional, self-feeding communities into cash-crop mono-cultures, supplying luxuries for the rich and obese of the world, while local people, their land and customs degraded, seek survival in the slums of cities. We are right to be appalled by pictures of bloated-belly fly-blown children, maimed by... wars and famines. [Humanity] has made a huge mess on this planet, as well as some significant improvements. The two main causes of the messes are uncontrollable greed (feeling without reason) and inappropriate technology (reason without feeling). To improve the world we need to become both more reasonable and compassionate. We already have more than enough technology... Of course, some genetic modifications might be helpful. Crippling diseases might be prevented; useful changes might be made to the Y chromosome... But before scientists do any more jiggling of genes they should surely solve the problems they have already created. We need extensive, well-informed public debate about science, and about morality, before we take the next steps towards our evolution... as a species.

...In a few... [month]s, scientists will have completed the Human Genome Project, the mapping of all the genes that make up a human being. After four billion years of evolution by the slow and clumsy method of natural selection, we have now evolved to the point where we can direct our own evolution... But those who hail it as important as the splitting of the atom seem to have forgotten the horror to which [that] led. Where is this latest tinkering going to take us? Genetic screening of fetuses, job applicants, potential partners...? The perfection-obsessed world of... 1997 sci-fi film...

Gattaca... is now scarily close, but there are no controls over how the discovery will be used... If only we had acquired this knowledge sooner, the following people would never have been born: Homer, blind from birth; Napoleon Bonaparte, epileptic...; [British physicist (r:p2673, ln25 + p1123, ln18), motor neurone disease; C.] Darwin, chronic invalid... Of course, the other birth that would... never have taken place is your own.

...a professor of mathematics at Cambridge University and probably the world's most recognised... academic, paralysed by motor neurone disease... who wrote... the best-selling book *A Brief History of Time*... has raised the spectre of a *Terminator*-style future in which computers will take over the world unless we beat them by adopting genetic modification. The... [physicist]... says computers are developing far more rapidly than humans. Therefore... we must change our DNA or be left behind... Humans could "raise the complexity" of the DNA they were born with, "thereby improving people"... And the genome project to crack the entire code of human DNA opens up the ability to alter the chemical strands...

Scientists publish the initial sequence of the human genetic code this week in a scientific achievement that will revolutionise science and medicine. The... achievement[marks] the end of a decade-long endeavour by scientists in the U[S], Britain, France, Germany, Japan and China...

Researchers reading the "book of life," as the human genome is known, have made the startling discovery that much of it is rubbish. The first analysis of the entire set of 3 billion human genetic instructions has revealed far fewer genes than scientists expected. Only 1.1[%] of the length of the genome consists of genes and scientists have found our genome is more filled with litter than any completely sequenced so far. The surprisingly small number of genes means humans have only half as many again as the simple roundworm – 31,780 compared with the worm's 19,099. Researchers had thought we might have up to 140,000 genes. But scientists speculate that the junk, known as transposable elements, works in an unknown way to make humans more complex than worms... [T]he tiny thale cress plant has 26,000[genes; a]... dog is 85[%] identical to a human...

The largest bacterium ever identified... [- measuring] .75mm, or about the size of a full stop... [-] has been found by researchers sampling ocean dredgings in the South Atlantic. The microbe, discovered near Namibia, lives by absorbing sulphur and nitrates, and swells as the chemicals are stored inside its cell walls... [In related news, t]he claim that it is "unnatural" to create genetically modified creatures by moving genes between different species has received a knock with the discovery that hundreds of our human genes probably originated from bacteria. The remarkable revelation that we are all a bit microbial, that dozens of our genes were created by parasites called transposable elements, or "transposons," underlines how nature is stranger than we can conceive. These alien influences on our genetic make-up are reported... by the publicly funded International Human Genome Sequencing consortium... The consortium found 223 genes – including one that plays a role in depression – that are the codes for proteins very similar to those made by bacteria. These genes have no similarity to those of yeast, worms, flies and mustard seed, the other organisms whose genetic secrets are now laid bare. The team rules out contamination as a possible explanation – despite claims to the contrary by its commercial rivals – and suspects that the genes were transferred to humans from bacteria, as bacteria often exchange genes in their equivalent of sex. Bacteria are not the only parasites that seem to have been tampering with our DNA. There are also genetic parasites, "duplicate me" instructions that have been passed down over the generations... One scientist has suggested that, under stress, the parasites may go into action to enable a richer repertoire of proteins to be made to help us cope. In other words, these particular parasites "earn their keep in the genome." ...The consortium has focused on the most common Sine parasite, called an "Alu," and found that it likes to lurk in gene-rich regions. There is evidence of a 13-fold enrichment in these regions over the past 30 million years, and it seems these "selfish" elements may benefit us in some way.

...Discover of selfish gene... In 1964 William Hamilton wrote a paper on "the genetical evolution of social behaviour" which became the most cited paper in all science. The question that obsessed Hamilton, if none of his peers, was how altruism could evolve. The prevailing view in biology was that animal behaviour was always devoted to the "good of the species." To Hamilton... [- b]orn in Egypt of N[Z] parents, died in London on March 7, aged 63... [-] that made no sense because an animal's closest competitor was often a member of its own species. H[amilton] posited that animals might be selected to have altruistic instincts towards relatives... His paper was the first clear statement of what has become known as the "gene's eye view" of evolution, the "selfish gene" school, or "socio-biology" – the theory that individuals are vehicles for competing genes... As a shy and lonely graduate student dividing his time between the London School of Economics and University College, London, Hamilton was ignored at one institution and mistrusted at the other. H[amilton] wrote of this time at University College: "I never had a desk there nor was ever invited to give any presentation to explain my work..." In 1977 [Hamilton] moved to the University of Michigan, where [William] experienced the controversy stirred among radical students by opponents to the sociobiological theories [it] had spawned, enduring protests and sit-ins. In Michigan [Hamilton] published two influential theories. One... was on the evolution of sexual reproduction as a means of combating parasites – the Red Queen theory.

...[Guys] get another excuse SO marriage stifles the creative genius of [guys]. A Canterbury university researcher says once [guys] have snaffled a chick they no longer feel the urge to compete. Their work is done. They have impressed a member of the fair sex sufficiently to win her. Once lured into the domestic trap, they become careworn husbands and fathers, exhausted and drained of ambition which may have sparked inspirational thoughts and creativity. These findings, which have been published all over the world, were a result of looking at all the works of great [geniuses] over the centuries, and the age at which their breakthroughs were made. Sadly for those husbands and fathers who still believe their genius can be fulfilled, most of the truly ground-breaking work was achieved by [guys] who had remained maritally unencumbered. Hardly surprising really... Then again, geniuses' lives weren't all that happy. Most were troubled souls who never felt appreciated and loved in their lifetime.

...Let not your heart be troubled... SINGERS croon that it makes life worth living, poets declare it to be the answer to the human condition. Now scientists have come up with a definition of love: it's a warm patch near the centre of the brain. Neurologists have shown that when you see your beloved, parts of your brain "light up." The heart has nothing to do with it, apparently. A study by... University College London, confirms that being in love is physically different from merely liking someone. Physical effects of this brain activity may account for the traditional sensations associated with love, including euphoria, butterflies in the stomach, loss of appetite, love sickness and love addiction... The caudate nucleus and the putamen are believed to have a role in addiction. They could explain why lovers seem rarely to learn from experience, and keep coming back for more. Equally important to the sensation of love is the reduction of other brain functions. Activity in the post-cingulate cortex, an area associated with sadness, was reduced, and the pre-frontal cortex, which is linked to depression, was virtually inactive. Despite suspicions from some quarters that [guys] are cold and heartless, with only one thing on their minds, the study shows the brain patterns indicating love were the same for... [both sexe]s. The findings could have practical implications: for example, in... raising the prospect of love-detector tests if you suspect your beloved's amorous claims[;] ...to produce the first aphrodisiac to promote love rather than lust[; in]... developing drugs to help to tackle depressive illnesses.

...Scientists have put the brain's mysterious sleep-inducing cells under the microscope for the first time in a discovery that could... lead to improved drugs for insomnia and other sleep disorders and to cures for problems caused by sleep deprivation, such as memory loss... A team of Swiss and French scientists have reported in the journal *Nature* that a study of rat brains enabled them to understand how neurons that induce sleep and wakefulness interact in the brain. The intriguing question of why and how we sleep has stumped scientists for many years, and it remains a mystery how sleep neurons in the brain are activated and why... "We spend a third of our lives sleeping, but sleep is still a big unknown," said[a] co-author of the study and a professor at Geneva University. "Despite all these years of research, no scientist can tell us why we sleep..." ...But after a year of research, the scientists said they had discovered that sleep-inducing nerve cells, when activated, blocked neurons in the brain that led to wakefulness... Four years ago, [an]American scientist... traced the location of these neurons to the ventro-lateral pre-optic area of the brain...

People who are not blind can still fail to see, as a result of unattended visual information escaping awareness. By studying such loss of awareness after brain damage, combined with brain scanning, scientists are beginning to unravel the neural basis of conscious visual experience. Their work at the Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience at the University College London is also helping to lead to new treatments for conditions which affect

many thousands of people, usually as a consequence of stroke. Light reaches our eyes from many sources and many visible objects, but at any one time we are consciously aware of only a few of these stimuli. We can to some extent choose where we direct our attention, and this can alter our visual awareness of the world even when the image entering our eye remains unchanged. Experiments have shown that we can become completely blind to information that we are directly looking at, if our attention is directed to something else. This is called “inattention blindness.” ...Inattention blindness can be brought about by some forms of brain damage in which patients become permanently unaware of events on one side of their field of view, usually the left side... [T]his condition... is... known as spatial neglect... By using computer-generated displays... the Institute... ha[s] shown that some patients... can have some conscious vision restored in the neglected part of their visual field. This provides evidence that some neglected events can be brought back into the awareness of a patient... by harnessing the residual function of unaffected areas of the brain. Wearing spectacles with the right half of the lens for each eye covered has also been shown to help some patients affected by spatial neglect to regain some awareness of events in the left-hand side of their field of vision. So has the use of prisms which redirect light from the left to the right-hand side of the visual field. There is hope that more effective treatments may be devised. Researchers are discovering that the brain is more plastic and adaptable and has more capacity for self repair than used to be thought, even in middle and old age.

...*The right hand is blind to the left...* THE human body is a machine and the brain just some fancy computer. That’s the outrageous conclusion 400 years of science have led us to. It seems absurd – even heretical – yet when something goes wrong with your machinery you realise just how much truth is in it. Like the night I was watching television and the picture mysteriously degraded. When frenzied channel-changing and a few good thumps had no effect, I rushed to the nearest mirror for a good look at my eyes. The right one seemed fine but the left eye wasn’t so good. In fact it wasn’t there. Indeed the whole left side of my face was missing. Now, you don’t see that every day. The weird thing was, there was a blank spot where the missing features should be. My field of vision *seemed* completed, it was just that only half my face filled it. Scientific curiosity didn’t last long though. I looked around the room and noticed half of it was missing as well. Started to panic a little... This was a brain thing; not an eye thing... I rushed to hospital, stormed up to the right-hand-side of the front desk and blurted my symptoms to the half-nurse. “Ah, you’re just suffering a retinal migraine, mate. Sit down for a while and it will go away.” I did, [the nurse] was right, and I was embarrassed. But those few hours did, at least, make me personally aware of how machine-like our thinking organs really are. My brain went from some mysterious magical entity, to just another computer, capable of crashing. Brain studies over the last few decades have revealed some remarkable things. For example, it’s more the case that we actually have two brains cobbled together in our skulls[(and we’re not talking about a brain’s ‘higher intelligence part and lower, or primitive, part – which activates in times of danger’ – here)]. The left hemisphere being a complete thinking organ as well as the right[(note that ‘sticky switching – slow brain side switching – is a biological condition which isn’t recognised by psychiatry’)]. Indeed the main lines of connection between the two halves can be severed without killing the patient. This operation has been carried out many times (in last-ditch attempts to cure epilepsy) and afterwards it is hard to spot a personality difference in the patient. But in the lab the differences are incredible. A patient is sat down in front of a screen and different images are projected on to the screen’s left-hand-side and right-hand-side... [A] snow scene might be on the left and a chicken’s foot on the right. For most of us, images to the left of the nose are processed by the right brain, and images to the right by the left. We then integrate the two pictures. But for split-brain patients, whose communication channels have been cut, the two images remain separate. Ask them to point to a picture that relates to what they’ve just seen on the screen and you’ll get different answers, depending on whether they point with their left or right hands. (Because each hand is controlled by a different half of the brain[; ‘the human hand is the most complex in the animal world, and more of the brain is devoted to operating our hands than any other part of our body’].) The right hand will point to a picture of a chicken because its half of the brain saw the chicken foot. The left hand will point to a snow shovel. The mystery deepens when the patient is asked why their left hand chose the shovel. The problem, you see, is that speech is controlled by the other side of the brain and it has no idea why the left hand is doing what it’s doing. But, as quick as a flash, the speaking part of the brain just makes up a plausible answer. It is not a snow shovel, it insists, it is a chicken dropping scoop. With our grey matter able to make executive decisions like this, it makes you wonder just how much control we really do have over the choices our computer (or computers) make. Maybe we have no free will at all, like every other machine in the universe.

...[‘It’s consciousness that separates humans from animals. Or is it?’ The word consciousness was invented three hundred years ago to describe the fact that we know that we have thoughts and sensations – we are aware of experiences, we know we exist. We take it for granted that other humans are similarly aware. But what about animals? Most pet owners think their animals are conscious, have a sense of who they are. But do they? Perhaps even the most human-like animals, such as chimpanzees, are not conscious at all? This question seems to be beyond the limits of scientific inquiry, but it’s one that scientists – who, like everyone else, are divided on this important issue – are currently finding ways to investigate.]

...Justice would seem a human concept if ever there was one. Its allure has stirred souls as diverse as American and French revolutionaries, British abolitionists and sign-wavers at the recent W[TO] talks... Many of the world’s religions think of justice in sacred terms, as something ultimately meted out by God. But among more secular thinkers the only question is whether it is an inalienable part of who we are, or – as many economists seem to believe – a patina of culture slapped onto the human animal, who is forever on the verge of reverting to his natural state of brute selfishness. Human motives, the latter argue, come down to one thing: self-interest. The latest salvo in this longstanding debate comes not from philosophers, economists or priests, but... the lab. After a four-month study of capuchin monkeys... Emory University in Atlanta... came to a startling conclusion: these primates have a rudimentary sense of justice, and in some cases are willing to take a stand against injustice even at the cost of their own well-being. The findings... suggest... justice is not so much a product of nurture – a lesson taught by parents and community – as an evolved trait. For humans, the implications are clear: if lower primates have an inborn sense of justice, humans probably do too. Does this mean that... Thomas Hobbes and Adam Smith were wrong about our selfish natures? “Economists have always disregarded the sense of fairness because it’s not considered to be a rational behaviour... Now it looks like it was there long before advanced cultural institutions came about.” ...Scientists may never succeed in tracing how the fairness instinct grew into the even more enlightened sense that... “any [perso]n’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in [hu]mankind.” That may not matter so much. There is probably no need for monkeys to share all of our virtues.

...Gossip around the watercooler may not be the time-wasting nuisance that bosses think it is – and one Auckland University academic is poking her nose into everyone else’s business to find out... how gossip and rumours spread and operate in the workplace. But... [the] senior lecturer at the Department of Management and Employment Relations... has quickly realised that pinning down those hushed chats is like bottling fog. Studying gossip on her home turf, [the lecturer] has found a reluctance among university colleagues to admit they gossip. As soon as [the lecturer] traces a juicy rumour to whoever started it, they deny ever doing such a thing or say they were misinterpreted. [The lecturer] has also run into concerns from interviewees – people think there is something wrong with gossip itself but something even more suspect about a person who researches the topic. [However, r]esearchers from many fields have spent the past 50 years studying tittle-tattle, says [the lecturer – although] their discoveries have not been applied to situations such as the workplace. It is a common idea that informal communication in the office is important, but... [m]anagement tend to see it as a negative, divisive influence in the workplace... [in addition to being] a waste of time, morale-sapping and show[ing] a lack of control. They also fear it helps to pass on false information... Positive aspects of gossip include stress reduction, a feeling of solidarity, teamwork and friendships... And who gossips the most? Most researchers agree that [gals] pass on gossip more readily than [guys], but do not tend to start it as much... [By the way, p]sychological stress and unhappiness at work are leading predictors of occupational overuse syndrome, fresh research has revealed. This calls into question the widely held belief that pain in the forearm is caused purely by repetitive movements of the arms or wrists. In the past many doctors dismissed complaints of... OOS... or RSI... as it is also known, as being “all in the mind.”

...Just because you recall an event is no reason to believe it happened... Your brain may be recreating the past... In the July issue of the *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, [a]... psychologist... of the University of Puget Sound... conclude[d] that the mind's drive to infer causes can fool people into "remembering" something they never saw. In other words... "memories can be illusions". When it comes to memory problems, forgetting is only the tip of the iceberg. The failures and failings of memory run much deeper than an inability to recall your neighbour's name, the capital of A[US] or the location of your keys. Much recent memory research has focused on why we forget... but not the rest of it. But unlike absent-mindedness and other "sins of omission", as [a] psychologist... of Harvard University calls them in his new book, *The Seven Sins of Memory*, memory's "sins of commission" shape – and often distort – our view of reality and relationships. Some of those sins are: *Blocking*. Somewhere between remembering and forgetting lies blocking. You know that the word for an oration at a funeral begins with a vowel, maybe even a "u"... but it just won't spring into consciousness... *Misattribution*... In misattribution, people unconsciously transfer a memory from one mental category to another – from imagination to reality, from this time and place to that one, from hearsay to personal experience. The brain has made what psychologists call a "binding error", incorrectly linking the content of a memory with its context... *Suggestibility*. In this memory error, people confuse personal recollection with outside sources of information. Suggestibility is therefore a form of misattribution, but an especially pernicious one... *Persistence*. Memories that refuse to fade tend to involve regret, trauma and other potent negative emotions. All emotions strengthen a memory, but negative ones seem to write on the brain in indelible ink... That's especially true if the memory reinforces your self-image: if you think of yourself as a screw-up, you'll have a hard time erasing the memory of the time you spilled wine all over your boss... *Bias*. It is a cliché that couples in love recall their courtship as a time of bliss, while unhappy pairs recall that "I never really loved him (or her)". But the cliché is true. "We rewrite our memories of the past to fit our present views and needs,"... That may be an outgrowth of forgetting: we don't recall how we felt in the past, so we assume it must be how we feel today. But often bias arises when more powerful mental systems bully poor little memory. The left brain, driven to keep thoughts of yesterday and today from conflicting, reconciles past and present as boldly as the Ministry of Truth in Orwell's 1984... Stereotyping can also bias memory... When memory conflicts with what you're convinced is true, it often comes out on the losing end... As much as 70[%] of the population reports having experienced some form of *deja vu*. While there is much speculation as to how and why this phenomenon occurs, several psychoanalysts attribute it to... a mismatching in the brain that causes the brain to mistake the present for the past.

...Sleep tends to help people better remember aspects of a negative event while allowing memory of background information to fade, researchers have found. The brain "seems to make adaptive 'decisions' about what to remember and what to forget," says... Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Centre and Harvard Medical School in Boston... This suggests the sleeping brain does more than simply consolidate whatever one puts into it...

Researchers find novel way to learn and remember new motor skills A thinking cap that can enhance the mind's ability to learn has moved a step closer, scientists claim, after tests showed magnets can boost brain power. Researchers discovered that the ability of the brain to learn a task and remember it was greatly enhanced when a magnetic pulse was applied to the premotor cortex – the area of the brain just behind the forehead... How fast you can throw a ball or run or swerve a steering wheel depends on how quickly brain cells fire off commands to muscles. Fast firing depends of good insulation for your brain's wiring. Now, US research suggests that in middle age, even healthy people begin to lose... insulation in a motor-control part of the brain – at the same rate that their speed slows. That helps explain why "It's hard to be a world-class athlete after 40"...

Remember the day when you fell out of your cot as a baby? Or your mum took you to the beach aged one? If so, [an] Otago University psychologist... believes your memory is playing tricks on you. Babies can remember things day to day, but people cannot remember things before they [could] talk because they did not have the words to express them... [M]ost people have lost any true earlier memories through "infantile amnesia"... [In other news from the world of science,] the precise origin of the Aids virus... [has been] pinpointed... Scientific sleuths found that... chimps ate monkeys infected with separate viruses >> The viruses combined. >> When humans ate the infected chimps, the HIV/Aids virus began.

...In a ground-breaking study, scientists at Harvard University report that it may be possible to "educate" the body's immune system to keep the... Aids virus... under control in the absence of anti-Aids medicines... The approach involves starting patients on potent Aids drug cocktails, then temporarily stopping the drugs when the patients' virus count drops below detectable levels... The finding[is] based on a study of eight patients... All eight were able to go off their medicines for a time without the virus gaining the upper hand. And five of the eight have now been off the drugs – and kept the virus at bay – for more than six months... The Harvard findings, published in the British medical journal *Nature*, confirm scattered reports of a few HIV patients who stopped taking their medicines on their own and seemed to suffer no ill effects. The first such case, known as the Berlin patient, drew attention at the international Aids conference in Geneva in 1998. The fundamental premise of the approach is rooted in basic biology – in order to combat germs, the immune system first has to "see" them. But when patients are on the powerful Aids drug mixtures, their viral levels are so low that the immune system is not activated. By temporarily stopping a patient's HIV medication, doctors give the virus still lurking in a patient's body a chance to multiply. Once they come back, the immune system can then "see" them and send out white blood cells to attack. When the virus count rises to dangerous levels, doctors can again give the drugs to bring it back down. By repeating stops and starts of drugs, scientists hope that the immune system will eventually get stronger and stronger in its ability to combat HIV.

...Scientists... at Harvard Medical School... have made a breakthrough in the development of an Aids vaccine, using the genes of HIV, rather than the virus itself, to stimulate... the "killer" cells of the body's immune defences. Vaccinated monkeys that were subsequently injected with a highly virulent strain of an Aids virus remained healthy, while half of those that were not vaccinated died. Although such a DNA vaccine is primarily aimed at boosting the chances of someone surviving an HIV attack, the scientists also hope it will have a prophylactic effect by making it less easy for the virus to spread from one person to another... But... even if a DNA vaccine failed to prevent HIV infection it would still be an important weapon in the war against Aids.

...Researchers at the United States National Centre for Atmospheric Research were surprised to discover stressed plants produce an aspirin-like chemical that can be detected in the air above the plants. The chemical may be a sort of immune response that helps protect the plants... According to the researchers, the finding raises the possibility that farmers, forest managers and others may eventually be able to start monitoring plants for early signs of disease, insect infestation or other stresses. Currently they do not know if an ecosystem is unhealthy until there are visible indicators, such as dead leaves... While researchers had known plants in the laboratory produce a form of aspirin known as methyl salicylate, they had not, until now, looked for it in the forest. Previous studies have shown plants being eaten by animals also produce chemicals that can be sensed by other plants nearby... [Incidentally, a] program that keeps cats off computer keyboards has won [its] creator... one of 10 annual "Ig Nobel" prizes. The Harvard-based spoof of the real Nobels recognises achievements that "cannot or should not be reproduced." Recipients include two physicists who used magnets to levitate a frog, an A[US]n author who believes people don't need to eat, and a Canadian biologist who studied the tastiness of Costa Rican tadpoles. "There are certain ideas that occur to only one person," said... [the] editor of the Cambridge-based journal *Annals of Improbable Research*, part of the group that bestows Ig Nobels... Recipients of real Nobel Prizes were to present the awards on Thursday, but it is unlikely the Royal Navy will parade for a peace award for ordering that sailors in training shout "bang" instead of using live cannon shells.

...Some U[S] money intended to help find civilian work for unemployed weapons scientists in the former Soviet Union has gone to scientists working on Russian weapons programmes, a congressional study found. The General Accounting Office (GAO) study, released yesterday, also said that only a small percentage of money in the programme, overseen by the US Energy Department, seemed to be getting to the intended recipients. The... Senator... who asked for the study, said the findings were "of enormous concern to me and others in the Senate. It is absolutely unacceptable for the [US] Administration to donate the US taxpayers' money to Russian scientists who spend their time working on poison gas, biological agents

and new nuclear weapons designs for the Russian Government...,"... The GAO report... said the projects the scientists were working on "may not be adequately reviewed by US officials." The... report did not say how much money had gone to such scientists... [but] said that of the \$US63.5 million... spent so far on the programme, just \$US23.7 million... went to scientific institutes in Russia and other former Soviet states. About 63[%]... of the programme's funds was spent in the U[S], mostly by the Energy Department's national laboratories "in implementing and providing oversight of the programme." Furthermore, the... amount of money actually reaching the scientists at the institutes was unknown because these institutes were withholding some of the money in taxes and "other fees." ...■ Russia's political and economic turmoil... threatens to derail the... International Space Station... project. If Russia collapses, the launch schedule will collapse with it, forcing American taxpayers to pay still more.

...THE U[S] and 15 partners have finally embarked on perhaps the most difficult and expensive engineering project in history – building a small city in space. Under design for 15 years, the Nasa International Space Station will take at least five years and \$94 billion to complete. When finished, it will cover an area nearly as large as two football fields end-to-end... Construction began on Friday and many engineers are already comparing it to structures that were the highest technological achievements of their time, such as the pyramids of Egypt and the Panama Canal. But at its heart, the station is something else: The first attempt to unite the world to explore space. Nasa officials say the station will be a permanent foothold in the heavens and serve as a proving ground for the technological advances needed for bases on the moon or expeditions to Mars... Since the... station... [w]as... first proposed... in 1984 as a \$15 billion effort... to mark the 500th anniversary of the discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus... it... has gone through a dozen redesigns, several project chiefs have quit in frustration, and the outpost has barely survived an attempt by Congress to kill it... The huge cost... [– which doesn't include e]stimated annual operations support... of... \$24 billion... [–] is causing critics to call the station a welfare programme for the world's aerospace industry, which has been suffering since the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union. Perhaps the biggest stake involves Russia, which was brought into the project by [the US]President... in 1993. Station money is helping convert Russia to capitalism by keeping aerospace plants open and employing engineers who otherwise might be developing nuclear weapons for rogue... countries... Nearly 200 companies are involved around the globe – including 127 firms from 21 American states – providing pay for 100,000 workers... Yet as impressive as the station's potential might be, aerospace experts say its successful completion is uncertain... [Furthermore, m]any scientists from around the world say the station is a financial black hole that will produce few scientific results while draining scarce money from research on Earth... And many observers question whether N[asa] can safely carry out the most complicated endeavour ever in space, noting the danger of the construction industry on earth. To grasp the risks, consider this: ● The construction site is 400km above Earth, and 450,000kg of prefabricated building material will have to be hauled up by rockets that could explode. ● Experts say the loss of one of those vehicles is likely during the 36 US space shuttle and nine un[peop]led rocket missions required to raise the outpost. Besides the possible loss of human life on a shuttle, which would ground the fleet, an accident could add billions to the... cost by requiring Nasa... to replace whatever station parts were destroyed. ● The station will be assembled by... 144 space walks... If a space suit gets torn on a piece of jagged metal, it could mean instant death.

...*Marriage made in heaven*... [Y]esterday... two... US astronauts... took 4 1/2 hours to complete the cable couplings marrying the US-built Unity module, the Russian Zarya power station and the adapting module connecting the two... The... astronauts... us[ed] largely unrehearsed methods to... connect[the] 40 cables and umbilicals that will carry electricity, data and computer commands through the newly joined segments of the space station... [They] worked tethered together all over the seven-storey structure docked to Endeavour... While... [t]his... first of about 75 spacewalks totalling more than 1100 hours... [was being completed, space scientists were saying that] radiation belts surrounding Earth could become extremely powerful in a matter of seconds, posing far greater risks to spacewalking astronauts and communication satellites than previously believed... "We had thought the radiation belts were a slow, lumbering feature of Earth but in fact they can change on a knife's edge,"... The observation, discussed at the American Geophysical Union meeting in San Francisco, caught scientists by surprise. The doughnut-shaped structures, known as the Van Allen Belts, extending more than 32,000km around the planet and discovered 40 years ago, were thought to be very stable. But it now seems the planet's own magnetic field can accelerate electrons in the belts to the speed of light, transforming them into "killer electrons"...

Nasa's latest trick will be to extend a 59m boom from the space shuttle Endeavour to capture 3D measurements of Earth. It will be the longest rigid structure ever deployed in space, and will have radar scanners at each end, so scientists can measure the Earth's terrain with stunning accuracy... swath by swath; each 225km wide... Because of last-minute safety issues, Nasa... cut a day of mapping from the mission... due to launch tomorrow... Nasa officials want to leave time at the end of the 11-day flight in case there are problems bringing in the mast. If it gets stuck, two astronauts will have to spacewalk to crank it in... But even so, scientists still will be able to map... 70[%] of the Earth's terrain. They expect to collect enough data to fill 13,000 [CD]s that will take one to two years to analyse... They are expecting nine times more topographic data than at present recorded, and expect it to be twice as good. The detail will give the US military a better idea where to deploy troops, launch fighter jets and fire missiles. On the civilian side pilots will have a better grasp of landing sites, communications companies will know where to install towers for cell phones and satellites, and disaster-relief teams will be able to better cope with floods and earthquakes. A byproduct of the mission will be a snapshot of the planet at the beginning of the 21st century... ■ During the 1960s, when both Russia and the US were trying to beat each other into space, they came across a problem – ballpoint pens would not write in zero gravity. The [US] gathered a group of scientists together and spent millions of dollars trying to invent a pen which would write in space. The Russians took the simple approach and decided to use pencils instead!

...When a Soyuz spacecraft delivered [an]American astronaut... and two Russian companions to the International Space Station this week, Nasa threw a little party at its Houston headquarters – to which one of the most star-crossed figures in the space race was not invited... [A] Texas banker, has just blown \$US200 million... on something called the BA-2 – an almost-complete attempt to build the largest and most powerful rocket since the Saturns that took America's astronauts to the moon more than 30 years ago. Nasa's shindig was an upbeat affair, so it was just as well the bitter B[anker] was not there. Though [the banker] is not given to violence, [hi]s grievances against official U[S] space policy in general, and Nasa in particular, are such that [it] might well have socked someone. [The banker's] beef is simple. Nasa has sabotaged at every turn his efforts to make space a paying proposition... By subsidising Nasa to the tune of billions of dollars, US taxpayers are allowing it to kill off better, much cheaper, launch systems – like the one [the banker] has just scrapped. Originally conceived in the... years[of the 40th US Administration], the Space Station began life as an affirmation that the US could whip the Soviet Union any damn place it chose. By the time... the [41st Administration] moved into the White House, Soviet space efforts were faltering, as was the Soviet Union. With its budget and future at stake, Nasa retooled. From asserting America's Cold War superiority, the station became a staging post for a return to the moon and, after that, the [peop]led Mars expedition [the 41st President] pledged for 2019. Meanwhile, the cost went from \$US8 billion to \$US12 billion. When the [42nd Administration's] era began in 1992, sceptics were already suggesting the station's motto should be something like that old line from *Alien*: "In space, no one can hear a taxpayer scream." Told by Congress that \$US400 billion to visit Mars was absurd, Nasa... did another remodelling. The name changed from Freedom to the International Space Station, while the Russians – the very people it had been conceived to intimidate – came on board. But Moscow's woes made its participation dependent on "loans" from the US, ...which [currently total]... \$US30 billion. And that covers only construction. After a decade in orbit, the sum will be \$US100 billion – Nasa's figures, not one from its critics. And what will the space station do? According to [the banker], nothing more than give the current space shuttle fleet and its successors a place to visit – justifying that other, gold-plated foundation on which Nasa continues to build its future... [A] space-industry advocate, says there is no experiment that cannot be done better and cheaper on a shuttle or an un[peopled] orbiter. The advocate] says it takes about \$US65,000 to get every kilogram into orbit on a shuttle, once maintenance costs and 25

years of overheads are factored in. Nasa says it is never more than \$US10,000. But by [the banker]'s reckoning, both figures are beside the point... [H]is BA-2 could do the job for \$US2000 a kilo – perhaps half as much again once initial research and development had been amortised. But while his innovative, hydrogen peroxide-fuelled booster worked flawlessly in a recent static test, it will never take to the skies. Nasa made sure of that.

...*Bleach to help Kiwis clean up in space* A SCIENTIST has an out-of-this-world plan to launch Hamilton into the space race... [The 44-year-old] American scientist and pacifist... who has been living in N[Z] for two years... wants to design and build a space plane fuelled by bleach – and [i]s looking for \$30 million to do it... [The American has already] set up a Hamilton-based company, FireShips NZ, and has started experimenting with the help of volunteers. “I want to tell people the truth – that space flight can be low-cost, not harm the planet and that science can be used for good... Some people say I’m an idiot but a lot of people understand that what I’m talking about makes a lot of sense.” ...[□ NZ]ers will be able to catch their best glimpse of the \$135 billion International Space Station as it passes overhead in the next few days. It will be the station’s first pass over the country with its 73m-long solar panels unfurled. Auckland Observatory... says the station will appear as a bright, moving star from tomorrow... The huge high-tech spacecraft, whose assembly will take six years and 43 space flights to complete, w[ill]... be most visible at 5.11 am...

After two years of delays and hiccups the seven-m[ember] crew of American astronauts and Russian cosmonauts managed a trouble-free launch from Kennedy Space Centre despite storm threats... The team will get the International Space Station ready for its first long-term crew – due to arrive in November... When... [t]he space shuttle Atlantis... reaches the station site it will offload about 2200kg of computer hardware, clothes, water, exercise equipment and a toilet... The water is a byproduct of power generators on... space shuttles... The shuttle programme has been plagued with delays because of bad weather and technical problems since 1998... The launch from Cape Kennedy was the 99th in almost 20 years.

...space shuttle Discovery flew six times with a faulty part in its main engine... A turbine seal that had been rejected as faulty and should have been discarded was instead installed on Discovery, which flew... most recently in December on a rescue mission to the Hubble Space Telescope.

...An astronomer in California has emerged as a key witness to solving the mystery of the disaster that killed seven astronauts, rained debris from the sky and threw the U[S] space programme into disarray. Nasa stressed that it could take weeks, even months, to determine what caused the Columbia to break up 63km above the Earth, but suspicion has focused on damage to heat tiles when a piece of foam insulation fell off and hit the left wing at launch... A[n AUS]n working at an observatory north of Los Angeles, sa[w]... flashes that could have been tiles falling off the Columbia as it streaked over California on its way to the scheduled landing in Florida. If [the astronomer] is correct, it suggests the shuttle was disintegrating more than 3000km from its destination... Although Nasa’s computers were picking up heat problems in parts of the Columbia, the tiny holes [where the foam hit the wing] were too small to be picked up on its radar, said experts... The shuttle, covered with 24,000 extremely heat-resistant but fragile tiles, would never have survived the stress of 1600C temperatures and 20,100km/h speeds on re-entry with its heat shield breached.

...Astronaut Laurel Clark’s death on the space shuttle Columbia was the second sudden and very public tragedy to hit... a 76-year-old retired Episcopal minister... and [his wife] in 17 months. Laurel Clark was their niece and her final moments were broadcast again and again on television as exploding white dots 60,000 metres above the Earth. On September 11, 2001, television had first brought tragedy. The [couple] were watching after the World Trade Centre absorbed the impact of a terrorist-piloted jetliner, burned and then collapsed, with their 41-year-old son Timothy inside... Timothy’s wife... lost a brother in the September 11 attacks. Robert W. Spear, jun, 30, was a... New York Fire Department... firefighter...

Tragedy revives memories... The circumstances were different – they were coming home, not vaulting into space – but again there was a familiar jolt to the gut. Again the great space adventure that began 4[0-odd] years ago claimed seven lives. Again flags across the U[S] were lowered to half mast... Like space shuttle Challenger... the end for Columbia came in a tremendous burst of light... Challenger’s end was only 73 seconds after liftoff. Columbia’s was in the last 16 minutes of a 17-day flight. The last time this happened, Nasa learned from onboard voice recorders that Challenger’s astronauts lived through most of the capsule’s death plunge. But the force of the crash ended any chance for life. Yesterday, there was no chance at all for Columbia’s crew... [After t]he Challenger explosion... [it] was more than 2 1/2 years before shuttle flights resumed.

...The loss of... Columbia... [(t]he oldest member of the U[S shuttle] fleet, with more than two decades of service[)]... and the halt to further space shuttle flights threatens a temporary shutdown of [peopl]ed missions to the International Space Station... But officials stressed the current crew of three astronauts – two Americans and one Russian – on board the ISS is not in any immediate danger, although Nasa shuttles have been the main means of transport to and from the station... The complex always has a three-seater Russian Soyuz vehicle docked to it in case of emergencies... “They are not stranded, and if necessary they can be repatriated on board the Russian Soyuz rocket,” said... an ISS senior official based at the French space agency... While Russian Soyaz craft could be used to keep a[st]ronauts... on the ISS, there is little for astronauts to do without the shuttle to bring up scientific experiments and components for further construction of the station. But with only two Soyuz capable of docking with the ISS, [the presence of astronauts] can be maintained on the ISS for only one year. Thirty-six astronauts were due to visit the ISS this year on five shuttle flights, and six on two Soyuz flights. Flights of Russian Progress supply vehicles would also need to be stepped up, according to experts cited by Russian’s Ria-Novosti agency, but these take two years to construct. A Progress flight to the ISS, planned for today, is due to proceed as planned after consultation with Russian officials, Nasa officials said. The mission is due to take fuel, equipment, food and documents to the crew of the ISS... There are no other quick alternatives to replace the shuttle. A US replacement for the Soyuz, the Orbital Spaceplane, is not due to be ready until 2010. The Europeans abandoned a [pilot]ed vehicle for the Ariane-5, and its cargo vessel will not be ready until next year. “Europe is dependent on the Russians and Americans to reach the station,” said France’s junior research minister... Increased use of Soyuz rockets would be a potential windfall for the Russian Space Agency, which has seen its budget shrink drastically since the collapse of the Soviet Union and has sought alternative sources of funding... After dumping its Mir space station... the Russian space programme has concentrated its meagre resources on the 16-nation ISS, a US-led project. Russia has sought to earn money by taking “space tourists” to the ISS, who pay vast sums for a trip into orbit.

...Apart from a few trips to the Moon, humans have hardly ventured further into space than what scientists call a low Earth orbit. But [a Nasa scientist] believes that one day... we will set foot on some planet as distant as Mars. If we do, it may be plants we have to thank for keeping us alive during the year or so it takes to get there and back. It is not just a question of a few fresh veges, but of making sure we have enough oxygen to breathe and fresh water on such an extended voyage... Such daunting titles as “Bioregenerative Life Support Systems” or a “Controlled Ecological Life Support System” for long-term space missions may sound like science fiction. But these terms cover real research at the... Kennedy Space Centre... [The scientist]’s job as manager of Dynamac Corporation’s plant research group at [the space c]entre is to work on the intricacies of growing plants in zero or micro-gravity... The space centre’s research, known as the Advanced Life Support programme... is also looking specifically at how... bioregenerative processes will respond in the micro-gravity environment that will be present on the trip to Mars. [The manager] says the biomass production chamber has been particularly successful with wheat, rice, lettuce, tomatoes and potatoes. “The great thing about the tomatoes is they make juices and sauces that make the rest of the food somewhat more edible. We’ve also managed to achieve two times the world-record field yield for potatoes in two-thirds of the time.” ...[50%] of the nutrients required for growing the potatoes are taken from previously harvested potato tops. This method seems not to have produced any negative effects on productivity... The scientists have worked out how to stagger production so the astronauts are not left with plenty of food but no oxygen. The present system assumes harvesting 25[%] of the crops every 26 days. It takes 4... to 5 sq m of plants to provide drinking and washing water for one person. A “bioregenerative life-support system” now requires 20 sq m to provide enough oxygen for one person. But this area would provide only 50[%] of the food requirements for that person, so the rest of the food would come from stores taken on the voyage. Despite this, [the manager] says it is still the best option to support long-term space missions... Now that the Kennedy Space Centre has created a cost-effective and reliable life-support system on the ground, the research

group faces the challenges of moving the system into space... Some of the experiments w[ere meant to] take place inside the new International Space Station... “There are a lot of things we truly don’t understand about how plants... act in space.” How do you even water the plants for example? In space, water forms beads – air is not lighter than water when there is no weight. On Earth, carbon dioxide is heavier than oxygen, which creates convection currents, but in space that does not happen. The use of fans to create currents and the surface tension that bonds soil and nutrients together have helped to overcome some of these problems. The possibility of having things... [like d]irt... drifting around in a spacecraft rather than staying where they are put is significant... The lack of gravity also creates directional problems for plant top and root growth. “Fortunately, plants are... influenced by light, so we can create a negative phototropism effect for root growth...” Although a primary challenge for growing plants in controlled environments is providing as much photosynthetically active radiation as possible, the spectral composition of light can be critical with regard to plant development and structure. Light-emitting diodes... can be used because of their small size and safety, and because they can provide light in the narrow part of the spectrum that plants require before the green chlorophyll pigment in their leaves can trap the light energy needed for photosynthesis. However, [the manager] says that an improved lighting system is an area where a tremendous amount of research is still needed. “But all that said, maybe in my lifetime we can have individuals living on the surface of Mars... It may sound like pie in the sky, but we have the capability. And, unlike the race to the Moon, it will be a concerted effort as a species.”

...N[Z] scientists have grown the world’s first Martian vegetables. The tiny asparagus and potato plants were successfully grown in soil taken from Martian meteorites, which landed on Earth thousands of years ago[. at]... Lincoln University... The scientific breakthrough... [– which was] presented at an astro-biology conference at Nasa’s Ames Research Centre... [–] has brought closer the possibility of humans living on Mars.

...[“By the year 2020 the first astronauts could be blasting off to set up the nucleus of a permanent outpost on Mars. For the first time human beings will sever their ties with Earth to confront the vast scale of the Solar System – going far beyond all other explorers. “It’s a spiritual quest for what our place is in the universe. When I joined Nasa I was going to Mars – I wasn’t just dreaming.” People have dreamt of flying to Mars for hundreds of years but now there are detailed plans. Robot factories will be sent on ahead to manufacture air and water from the thin Martian atmosphere, and all the fuel needed to get home. The spaceship taking the crew will almost certainly be too large to launch in one go from Earth, so it will be assembled in orbit. But it’s just a one way ticket – the return vehicle will await them on Mars. “The crew basically have to land in the general vicinity of the things that we have pre-deployed to get them home. If they land too far away and can’t get to them, we’re in real trouble.” The Russians, too, have been planning a Martian landing – since the Russians launched Mir more than a dozen cosmonauts have completed stays in space the equivalent of the journey to Mars – but have opted for the short stay. The cosmonauts will fly with everything they need for the entire return trip, but they’ll only have a week on the surface of Mars. The Russian space ship will use electric rocket motors powered by giant solar panels. They’re efficient but slow. For their week on Mars the cosmonauts will have to spend two years travelling through space. The US plan is more ambitious – they won’t be back on Earth for nearly three years – but at the moment the US is the only nation who could afford to go to Mars. However, even if they aren’t mixed-sex, the first Mars crew will be a mixture of nationalities. When the crew is far from the protection of Earth’s magnetic field they will be exposed to the dangers of outer space – solar flares. The full dose of radiation from a solar flare will kill within hours – but the crew will be able to clamber into their radiation chamber, where they might have to spend a week sitting out the cosmic storm. Even so, anyone signing up for Mars will have to accept a heavy dose of radiation. “To be honest, on a medical level, the radiation is so bad that it is better to do this at the end of your life than at the beginning.” Furthermore, space complicates medicine. The lack of gravity changes blood flow around the body, affecting how drugs behave – and the Mars crew had better hope they don’t need major surgery. “We do have to send healthy individuals and hope that we won’t have to address the surgery until we’re in a G-field.” Once they reach their target, their primary mission will be to research this freezing desert world for signs of life – to look for alien fossils etched into the Martian rock. But whatever they find, this first visit is destined to set humanity on a new course. “Why are we doing this at all? It’s all to do with human expansion. Looking for more territory, more resources. I think it’s generally accepted that if we do this in a thoughtful way we are justified in expanding our borders. I live for it and I would love to do it. And I will defend us doing it to the end.””]

...Mars is a planet of natural violence far greater than is known on Earth... “Mars is a small planet that does things in a very big way,”... said [a speaker] at a meeting yesterday of the planetary division of the American Astronomical Society in Wisconsin. Researchers analysing pictures taken by the Mars Observer said the red rock and soils of Mars were imprinted with marks of high-speed wind storms and of gigantic floods... [W]inds have been clocked at 579 km/h – almost five times stronger than a minimum hurricane. It is the dust in the Mars atmosphere that may make its storms so violent... The suspended particles capture sunlight and heat up rapidly, setting off a vortex of moving air that grows and grows...

Nasa’s first chance for a signal from the Mars Polar Lander passed in silence, heightening fears that the \$US165 million... mission may have ended in failure – just like another Mars expedition three months ago... Controllers... have not exhausted all the simple explanations for the silence, like a mispointed antenna or a computer reset. They say the spacecraft was in good shape and on course just before communications ended as expected before its descent... “We are remaining upbeat,” said... the spacecraft’s project operations manager at Nasa’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory... However, critics say the Lander may have been in trouble even before it left the launch pad 11 months ago. Weeks before the craft began its descent towards the Red Planet, questions were being asked about the mission and whether it might be doomed by tight budgets and under-staffing. But the embarrassing... loss of the Lander’s \$US125 m... sibling... the Mars Climate Orbiter, is not far from the minds of engineers and scientists. Nasa investigators later determined that engineers failed to convert data into metrics in a critical navigation programme, causing the satellite to fly far too close to Mars. It is believed the Climate... burned up in the atmosphere it was to study. The 43-page report... faulted navigators for taking short cuts and not knowing enough about the Lander. It also found that too few people worked on the programme, and... they were... undertrained. The president of the Mars Society... who has written several books supporting exploration of the Red Planet, said that if... Lander w[as] lost forever the momentum to study the planet might be diminished. “Losing that probe is not a tragedy, but losing the will to explore is. Do we... cease being a nation of pioneers? The problem with the Mars programme is... underfund[ing]... We shouldn’t be pinching pennies.”

...[a NZ]-born space rocket scientist... says, despite recent Nasa mission failures, the red planet will continue to be the exploration focus. Now aged 89, [the NZer] was a pioneer in the U[S] space programme, directing the development of many spacecraft in the 1950s and 60s, including the first to photograph Mars, Mariner IV. [The NZer] also directed Nasa’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory from 1954 to 1976. [The NZer] says the lure of Mars lies in its similarities to Earth... As for the great beyond, [the NZer believes] travelling outside our solar system remains outside the realm of possibility because of the enormous travel times – but... prefaces all his predictions with a warning about the hazards of forecasting the future.

...scientists are turning the pages of science fiction novels hoping to find new ideas on how to cross the cosmos and explore distant planets. The European Space Agency is asking science fiction authors and readers to submit suggestions... that may become the basis of innovative technologies for exploring the real universe. Already suggestions are flooding in... Agency scientists emphasised the scheme does not mean they have run out of ideas, only that they want to make sure they are not overlooking any potentially useful concepts... [The] president of the Ours Foundation in Embrach, Switzerland... said there was a long tradition of seemingly fanciful notions in science fiction becoming reality, such as the idea of orbiting communications satellites... first outlined in 1945... nearly 20 years before the launch of the Telstar satellite... and the construction of orbiting space stations complete with living quarters and supply ships... More recently, scientists have made tentative breakthroughs in faster-than-light travel, supporting the concept of the “warp drive” familiar to *Star Trek* viewers, and quantum electrodynamic effects that might form the basis for teleportation systems, another technology visualised by... [the] creator of *Star Trek*... A still unsolved problem that authors have wrestled with for decades is how to get a single-stage spacecraft into orbit. All existing rockets have several launch stages, which is expensive and wasteful.

...[“It’s a lovely day for a launch, and the purpose of today’s mission is truly electrifying.” “That’s correct. The lion’s share of this flight will be devoted to the study of the effects of weightlessness on tiny screws.” “Unbelievable! And, of course, this could have millions of applications here on Earth.”]”

...The astronauts who went to the Moon thought they would be the first in a long line of travellers in space, but in fact there have been no more... For billions of years, constantly bombarded by solar particles, the Moon has been a diary of our Sun. Its rocks act like a sponge, quietly absorbing the particles, and so keeping a record of the Sun’s activity. The Apollo astronauts removed the rocks buried beneath the lunar dust and brought them home. The rocks show how the Sun’s energies have fluctuated over time. It has been much more active in the past. The Sun is ageing, and we too are part of that ageing process. “...we tend to think of the Earth as forever – the eternal sea, we call it. But yet, when we start looking at the planets in our Solar System, we realise that they’re not eternal. The Earth is in some sense half way through its... expected lifetime. We’re living on a middle-aged planet.” The Earth is middle-aged because the Sun is middle-aged, and as our Sun gets older it will start to work against us. Since its creation it has been getting 10% hotter every billion years. In just one billion years time it will have become so hot that it will begin to destroy life on Earth. Plants and animals will find it hard to cope with the rapidly falling levels of carbon dioxide. Our time on Earth could be limited by these events. “...we can see the... Earth becoming less and less desirable as a place to live... so, ultimately, we have to find another place to live... We’ve always imagined life on Mars and, yet, when we [went] there to look for life we didn’t find any. And it was the more puzzling because there was everything life would need in terms of the elements.” But the key ingredient for life on Mars, liquid water, is missing. [However, w]e now know that water once flowed in abundance on the planet... “If we assume that there is water tied up in the polar caps, and as the Sun gets much brighter than it is now and the surface of Mars gets above the melting-point, then the polar caps [will] just turn into oceans and Mars will once again have a water-rich environment, and that could trigger a release of large amounts of CO₂ very quickly. Mars may have its second awakening, and could be suitable for life. And that would occur when the Sun is two or three times brighter than it is today.” ...as the water vapour rises the planet will rebuild its atmosphere and once again be shrouded in white cloud, like the Earth. “As the Sun gets brighter [that] could be too much of a good thing for Mars’ point-of-view – it could go from being too cold to being too hot. Mars is probably not a long-term place for home. But if you think about it there’s no place that’s going to be suitable for life forever – it’s just a question of how long... do we want to have the rent on this planet or that planet... [W]e may have half a billion years... [on] Mars... But, still, a place to live for half a billion years is a good place.” As the Sun warms, the moons of the distant planets will always be the best hope for life in the future Solar System. Jupiter’s moon Europa is already the most likely haven... In the future Europa will warm up and its icy surface will start to melt. But it could become a water-world – a place too challenging to inhabit... The Cassini... mission left Earth in October 1997 on its seven-year journey to Saturn and its moon Titan. As the Sun continues to heat up, this little moon will also come into its own. “It’s the only other planetary object that looks like our own Earth. It’s the only other object that we know of that has an atmosphere of nitrogen... The only thing that is lacking is a little bit of... heat and a little bit of oxygen.” ...No matter now Earth-like it becomes, eventually even the sanctuary of Titan will not be enough. Like the Earth, it too will finally become uninhabitable. Ultimately, there is no hope for survival within the Solar System. The Sun is on a path to destruction and nothing can stop it... Fred Hoyle, the [perso]n who coined the phrase Big Bang, was one of the first people to realise what was going to happen to our Sun... “Stars... die. And part of the way a star dies is that it becomes a Red Giant. So... the Sun, for example, will swell... to a size perhaps as large as where Earth is on its orbit... after another... 5 billion years [at] our best guess – nothing that I’m going to worry about...” ...There are 100 billion individual stars in our galaxy, and there are at least 50 billion galaxies in the Universe... [N]ow astronomers are setting out to hunt for planets around other stars... With no chance of ever seeing a planet directly from Earth... [-] because... the contrast of light between the stars and planets is so huge... so it’s absolutely impossible, at least at the present time, to directly detect and take a picture of a planet... [- two Swiss astronomers] developed a way of looking for planets indirectly by looking at the motion of stars. A wobble in the star would indicate the presence of a planet, tugging against the star’s orbit. In December 1994 they discovered a star whose wobble could only have been caused by something like a planet... The Swiss team had discovered the first world outside our Solar System... “...We’re [now] discovering about a planet every month...” ...But we’ve yet to find a planet... like the Earth... “The Earth is a... pale blue dot... And in many ways much of what the Origins program is about is a search for yet another example of a pale blue dot. Some 500 years ago Copernicus in effect removed the Earth from the centre of the Universe. We have since... showed the Sun itself is nothing special and neither is our galaxy, but the thing that remains is that we only have evidence of one example of life – and that’s... on this planet,”...

Scientists have hit upon a novel way to save the planet: move it to a cooler spot. All it would take, they say, is a few comets deflected towards Earth, and its orbit would be altered. Our world would be sent spinning into a safer, colder part of the solar system. The plan is the brainchild of a group of Nasa engineers and American astronomers who say it could add six billion years to the planet’s working life, effectively doubling it. “The technology is not at all far-fetched... It involves the same techniques that people now suggest could be used to deflect asteroids or comets heading towards Earth.” ...Space engineers would have to be careful when they aimed their... comet. The slightest miscalculation could fire it straight at Earth... It is a point the group acknowledges... The[ir] proposal... involves carefully directing a comet so it sweeps close by the planet and transfers some of its gravitational energy to Earth[the Moon is ‘causing Earth’s rotation to slow – in 400 million years time, each day will be 26 hours long’; however, the Moon is also ‘slowly drifting away from Earth – eclipses will no longer occur in about a billion years’]... Engineers would then direct their comet so that it passed near Jupiter or Saturn, where the reverse would occur. It would pick up energy from one of the giant planets, its orbit would bring it back to Earth, and the process would be repeated... [Incidentally,] Japanese scientists are attempting to build a lift that will take passengers 100,000km into space. The project could see the realisation of a vision that has inspired science fiction writers for generations. The lift’s carriages, which will themselves require new feats of engineering, would move up and down high-tech cables. Those cables would... be anchored to the ground and disappear into the sky, eventually reaching a satellite docking station orbiting above the Earth. Scientists hope that as well as carrying human passengers, the carriages could also haul huge, solar-powered generators that could power homes and businesses back on Earth.

...N[Z] has teamed with A[US] in trying to build a huge radio telescope capable of discovering the building blocks of the universe.[NZ’s] Economic Development Minister... yesterday announced the joint bid for the \$3.1 billion Square Kilometre Array... telescope. N[Z and AUS] were last year named as the short-listed rivals to South Africa to build the collection of up to 5000 antennas with a combined area of a million square metres. By electronically linking them to operate as one giant telescope, the array will become what [the minister] touted as a top global science project of the 21st century, funded by 19 countries... [By the way,] Nasa is cancelling all space-shuttle servicing missions to the Hubble space telescope, a decision that in effect will cause the powerful observatory to slowly degrade and eventually become useless, say officials.

...ASTRONOMERS have discovered four more moons orbiting Saturn... [In related news, t]he next generation of U[S] rocket scientists could be dominated by [gals], as... most young astronomers are fem[inin]e. The... American Astronomical Society found that of astronomers and astronomy students aged 18 to 23, 56.8[% are gals], a big jump up from those aged 23 to 28, where 39.7[% are gals]. Of those over 50, only 10[% are gals]. Meanwhile, even as Nasa engineers debated possible damage, a flight director emailed Columbia... to say there was “absolutely no concern” that breakaway foam that struck the space shuttle might endanger its safe return. The shuttle’s commander cheerfully replied: “Thanks a million!”

...Two years after the death of the great British astronomer Fred Hoyle, his colleague... is still unconvinced that the universe started with a single “Big Bang”. [His colleague], an Indian astrophysicist who co-wrote four books with Hoyle, has dusted off Hoyle’s rival theory of a “steady-state universe” and updated it with new evidence. “The alternative we have proposed is that the universe is without a beginning and without an end,” [the astrophysicist] said in Auckland this week. “It has ups and downs, or oscillations. It expands and contracts – not to nothing, but to a small size, so the universe could be 200 to 300 times more dense when at its maximum density. But it’s not infinitely dense.” ...More than 20 years ago,

scientists realised that there was a basic flaw in the original Big Bang theory because it required initial expansion in the first few fractions of a second at a speed faster than the speed of light. That would have meant that some parts of the universe could not have been subject to the laws that make the speed of light the same everywhere. But in fact, observation suggests that the same laws do apply throughout the universe. To get around that, Big Bang theorists invented the idea of a kind of cosmic “inflation” in which the universe expanded slowly in the first few fractions of a second in which the basic universal laws were established, then suddenly picked up enormous speed for a while before settling back into its current rate of expansion. “Is the physics of inflation tested?” [the astrophysicist] asked. “Has inflation been directly observed? Is it repeatable and observable at other times and places?” The answer to all three questions, [the Indian] said, was “No.” And that was just the first problem. Next scientists realised that there must be far more matter in the universe than they could see to explain their observations of stars and galaxies. First they invented the idea of invisible “dark matter”. Now the mainstream view is that 97[%] of the stuff that exists in the universe is either dark matter or the even more elusive “dark energy”. [The Indian] said it was all “speculation”. [The Indian] says a simpler explanation is that the universe expands and contracts in roughly 50 billion-year cycles. Since [the Indian] agrees that the current expansion began about 14 billion years ago, “we are about a quarter of the way through the cycle... The creation of matter is the main source of expansion, and it switches off once in a while because the system has feedback mechanisms so it can’t go on creating all the time... When it creates matter, it expands faster and faster, and the force causing it becomes less and less dense when it expands. When the force becomes weak, creation stops, and the universe starts to contract. It gets weaker because of its rapid expansion, so expansion is a feedback which makes the force weak.” The [Indian] says that... his “quasi-steady-state” theory can be tested because it holds that in the shrinking phases, the universe merely shrinks to a much smaller size but never actually disappears. Therefore stars that existed in earlier cycles must have been crushed together in the contractions, but not eliminated. “Some of those old stars should be left out there today. We should look for them.” ...[the Indian] admits that his latest theory may be wrong... In polite astronomical circles, his view is a heresy. [The]Dr... who introduced... [the Indian’s]lecture at Auckland University on Wednesday, said the evidence that the first matter was created in a Big Bang about 14 billion years ago was “overwhelming.” “The predictions are being tested experimentally and found to be in quite good agreement, so generally the mainstream is quite relaxed about the fact that the Big Bang is more or less right,”...

A group of N[Z] scientists has joined an international experiment to re-create conditions... believed to have existed in the first few millionths of a second after the “Big Bang” in which the universe began between 12 and 14 billion years ago... The [NZ]scientists... join a worldwide network of almost 2000 researchers linked to the European Centre for Nuclear Research, known by its French initials CERN. They will take part in an extraordinary experiment, to be conducted 100m underground at CERN’s Geneva research centre in 2007, that will zap lead atoms into one another at greater speed and intensity than human beings have generated before... It will test a theory that under such intense pressure and high temperature, matter did not exist in the form of stable protons, electrons and neutrons that make up the atoms of the world as we know it... [A] senior lecturer in physics at Auckland University and co-ordinator of the N[Z] input to CERN, said some people expressed concern at first about generating the almost unimaginable energy that will be created by colliding lead particles in the experiment. “At first there was a fear that we would create a black hole which would swallow up the Earth... But we have concluded that no, that is not going to happen according to our knowledge, because the moon is being hit by cosmic rays that are much higher-energy all the time [and has not disappeared into a black hole].”

...Astronomers have detected what could be a “missing link” in the development of the universe: mid-size black holes that are neither supermassive nor as small as a single exploding star. The middling black holes were spotted using the Hubble Space Telescope in two separate globular star clusters in Earth’s celestial neighbourhood... Astronomers have known for years about vast black holes... [– these] supermassive black holes, believed to lurk at the centre of galaxies... could have the mass of millions or even billion of suns... [–] and rather small ones... created when stars about 10 times the size of our sun died in... supernovae... but... “...didn’t know if we could get from one to the other or if they were completely unrelated, and this seems to be the step that takes us from one to the other.” ...In the past several decades, black holes have gone from being rare and almost mythic phenomena whose existence was routinely questioned, to being accepted by most astronomers as a feature of the cosmos.

...Two giant black holes 400 million light-years from Earth are drifting together and will eventually merge... in several hundred million years... in a catastrophic event that will... create an even bigger black hole... unleash[ing] waves of radiation and gravitational energy throughout the universe. The two black holes, each with the mass of at least a million suns, are circling each other in a single butterfly-shaped galaxy, astronomers say. It is the first time scientists have got proof that two of the giants can exist in the same galaxy, using data gathered by the... Chandra X-ray Observatory.

...Two N[Z] astronomers have found one of the oldest objects seen by human beings – a burst of gamma rays believed to be from a “black hole” 11.5 billion light years away. [The h]usband-and-wife team... of Canterbury University’s Mt John Observatory near Lake Tekapo, were the first astronomers to spot the phenomenon after an automatic alert from a US satellite on March 24... About 30 years ago, American satellites launched to detect gamma rays from Russian nuclear tests discovered huge natural bursts of gamma rays, occurring every few days somewhere in the universe. Each burst produced more energy in a few seconds or minutes than the sun will produce in its entire life. Although many theories have been put forward to explain them... evidence from another gamma ray burst on March 29 showed that at least some were caused by the collapse of once-bright stars into immeasurably dense “black holes”... [T]he American Association of Variable Star Observers gave cameras to Mt John and to a network of other observatories around the world in late 2001 to track gamma ray bursts. “This was the first time any of the new equipment was the first to pick up one of these things... We compared our pictures with reference pictures taken some years ago, and found this little point of light... Then the European Southern Observatory in Chile pointed its eight-metre telescope at it and found it was 11.5 billion light-years away...”

...In a changing world at least something seemed constant: the speed of light. That’s what Einstein taught us. Wrong, says a team of Sydney researchers led by [a]renowned cosmologist... of Macquarie University. The team argues that the speed of light must have slowed since the Big Bang. As claims by scientists go, they don’t get much bigger. The physical constants of the universe, such as the speed of light, have been assumed to be “God given, fixed numbers”, [the cosmologist] said. “The fact that one of these appears to be varying with time isn’t supposed to happen.” If confirmed, it could herald the biggest scientific revolution since Einstein’s theory of relativity... In fact, that cornerstone of modern physics would “have to go”. The research... is based on observations of distant bright objects in the universe, known as quasars, by... a[n astronomer who] found that the 12-billion-year-old quasar light had properties that could not be explained by today’s laws of nature... [The cosmologist] was “incredulous” when first told. “It was not the thing a physicist wants to hear.” But science was based on “overturning cherished ideas”. So... [the team] examined the possibilities by calculating the consequences for black holes. They were able to rule out that another physical constant, e, the electronic charge, had varied. That left c, the speed of light, which appeared to have “hit a speed bump” 6 billion years ago and slowed. A very high light speed back then would help explain the mystery of why far-flung regions of the cosmos now look so uniform from Earth. Light travelling at its present accepted speed, 300,000km/sec, would not have been fast enough to have made it from one far-flung region to another... Last week, [the cosmologist] won the... Michael Faraday Award, given by the Royal Society in London to scientists who have done the most to further public communication of science, engineering or technology. In 1995, [it] was awarded the prestigious Templeton Prize for progress in religion.

...[‘what makes the life of a scientist special: Winning the Nobel Prize is a great thrill. But it does not compare with the incredible excitement that comes when you realise an experiment is a success; when you discover some new fact about the universe. It’s astonishing how often this happens when you are alone in the lab. You’ve learned something profound, and not one of the other five billion people on earth knows what you now know’ (*The God Particle*).]

...*Is God all in our heads?* ...ONE Sunday morning... 19 years ago, as... [a] neurologist... waited for a train in London, [it]... suddenly felt a sense of enlightenment unlike anything [it] had ever experienced. His sense of individual existence, of separateness from the physical world around him, evaporated like morning mist in a bright dawn. [The neurologist] saw things “as they really are,”... the sense of “I, me, mine” disappeared. “Time was not present. I had a sense of eternity. My old yearnings, loathings, fear of death and insinuations of selfhood vanished. I had been graced by a comprehension of the ultimate nature of things.” Call it a mystical experience, a spiritual moment, even a religious epiphany – but [the neurologist] will not. Rather than interpret his instant of grace as proof of a reality beyond the comprehension of our senses, much less as proof of a deity, [the neurologist] took it as “proof of the existence of the brain.” ...[hi]s experience inspired him to explore the neurological underpinnings of spiritual and mystical occurrences. To feel that time, fear and self-consciousness have dissolved, [the neurologist] reasoned, certain brain circuits must be interrupted... Frontal and temporal-lobe circuits, which mark time and generate self-awareness, must disengage. When that happens, [the neurologist] concludes in a paper, what we think of as our higher functions of selfhood appear briefly to drop out, dissolve, or be deleted from consciousness. When [the neurologist] spun out his theories in 1998, in the 844-page *Zen and the Brain*, it was published not by some flaky New Age outfit but by MIT Press. Since then, more and more scientists have flocked to “neurotheology,” the study of the neurobiology of religion and spirituality... Researchers’ newfound interest in neurotheology reflects more than the availability of cool new toys to peer inside the working brain. Psychology and neuroscience have long neglected religion. Despite its centrality to the mental lives of so many people, religion has been met by what... a... psychologist... of Wheaton College in Massachusetts... calls “indifference or... apathy” by science. The rise of neurotheology represents a radical shift in that attitude. But for all the tentative successes of scientists in their search for the biological bases of religious, spiritual and mystical experience, one mystery will surely lie beyond their grasp. They may trace a sense of transcendence to this bulge in our grey matter. But it is likely that they will never resolve the greatest question of all – whether our brain wiring creates God, or whether God created our brain wiring.

...*Scientist maintains God is all in the mind – or brain...* Does the biological structure of our brains programme us to believe in God? Recent advances in “neurotheology” have even prompted some scientists to propose they can induce the kind of holy visions of prophets, even in those who have never experienced religious belief... [A doctor at] Laurentian University, Canada, has devised a special helmet that uses electromagnetic fields to induce electrical changes in the brain’s temporal lobes, which are linked to religious belief. So confident is [the doctor] that God is all in the mind... that [the Canadian claims it] can induce mystical feelings in a majority of those willing to don his Transcranial Magnetic Stimulator. So the BBC Science series *Horizon* took up the challenge by putting his hat to the ultimate test: could [it get an] arch-sceptic and militant atheist... to start believing in God by electrically massaging his temporal lobes? ...[the] author of *A Devil’s Chaplain*, was the ideal candidate... Unfortunately, while [the atheist] had some strange experiences and tinglings during the experiment, none of them prompted him to take up any new faith. “It was a great disappointment,” [the atheist] said. “Though I joked about the possibility, I of course never expected to end up believing in anything supernatural...” [The Canadian] has explained away the failure of his Transcranial Magnetic Stimulator. Before donning the helmet, [the atheist] had scored low on a psychological scale measuring proneness to temporal lobe sensitivity. Recent studies on identical and fraternal twin pairs raised apart suggest that 50[%] of our religious interests are influenced by genes. It seems [the atheist] is genetically predisposed not to believe.

...Scientists are hunting for the “God gene” that underpins our ability to believe... The idea of genes linked with beliefs does not look far-fetched, given the influence of genetics on the developing brain... There are many suggestions as to why the “God gene” – or a constellation of genes linked with belief – might thrive... Belief can help people to cope with stress and religious people might be more compliant and less likely to overindulge. If belief really does boost an individual’s chances of survival, any genes linked with a propensity to believe would survive in future generations... From Copernicus to Charles Darwin, scientific discoveries have had a habit of offending religious susceptibilities. Most scientists, even Darwin, tread warily and avoid attacking religion, but... [t]he scientists who launched a revolution with the discovery of the structure of DNA in Cambridge... have used the anniversary to mount an attack on religion... [B]oth... are... outspoken atheists. Speaking to the *Daily Telegraph*, [one of the Cambridge scientists] said: “The god hypothesis is rather discredited.” Indeed, [the scientist] says his distaste for religion was one of his prime motives in the work that led to the sensational 1953 discovery... [It] argues that since many of the claims made by specific religions over 2000 years have proved false, the burden of proof should be on the claims they make today, rather than on atheists to disprove the existence of God.

...For 150 years many scientists have argued religion is a tissue of fantasies and fables, whereas science provides the facts. The adage that you have to “leave your brains at the church door,” still keep many scientists silent about their [religious] beliefs. Equally, many religious leaders have reacted in knee-jerk fashion, denying the validity of any scientific discovery that impinges on our origins. However, there has been an easing of tension between the two camps. A growing band of scientists and theologians are looking for common ground rather than bones of contention. Driving the thawing of relations are scientific discoveries which could be interpreted as showing the world was made for [us], as well as advances such as cloning which raise tricky ethical issues. Some members of the movement, such as... [the] author of *The Science of God*, even claim to show how some of the latest scientific theories dovetail with the account in *Genesis*... [T]he physicist and Hebrew scholar from Israel, subtitles his book “the convergence of scientific and biblical wisdom”. H[is book] shows how the 16-billion-year history of the universe can be viewed as compatible with the six-day creation timetable... Academic interest in the overlap between science and religion in N[Z] was explored by a symposium in August 1993... In Britain, the debate is focused on Cambridge University, which has established a lectureship in theology and science, regardless of sharp criticism from some scientists. In America, institutions such as the Centre for Theology and Natural Sciences in California and the Chicago Centre for Religion and Science have been established... Pope John Paul II presided over a tangible step in bringing both factions closer at his summer palace... [when the pontiff] held a meeting on religion and evolution. Soon after, the Pope acknowledged evolution to be “more than just a hypothesis”. The Vatican has also apologised for its arrest and ex-communication of... Galileo... The idea of a war between science and religion, which science had won, first took root in the mid-19th century... [when] Thomas Huxley, the first populariser of Darwinian evolution... colourfully proclaimed... that “extinguished theologians lie about the cradle of every science, as strangled snakes beside that of Hercules.”

...*LYING SCIENCE Many scientific ‘breakthroughs’ are nothing but mirages...* IF YOU were going to have a heart attack, it seemed there was never a better time than in the early 1990s. Leading medical journals were regularly reporting results from trials of new treatments for heart attacks that weren’t just good – they were incredible. In September 1992, the *British Medical Journal* published results from trials in Scotland of a clot-busting drug called anistreplase which suggested it could double the survival chances of a heart-attack victim. The following year another “miracle cure” emerged: injections of magnesium... Leading cardiologists hailed the injections as an “effective, safe, simple and inexpensive” treatment that could save the lives of thousands. But then something odd began to happen. In 1995, *The Lancet* published the results of an international study of heart attack survival rates among 58,000 patients – and the “amazing” life-saving abilities of magnesium injections had vanished. Anistreplase fared little better: the present view is that its real effectiveness is barely half that once claimed. Other “amazing” heart drugs seem to have suffered the same fate, also mysteriously losing their potency once on the wards. A study published last year in the *British Medical Journal* compared death rates among cardiac patients in the early ’90s with those back in the early ’80s, in the Dark Ages before the advent of “clinically proven” heart attack treatments. What... Queen’s Medical Centre in Nottingham found was disconcerting: “Despite an increasing uptake of the ‘proved’ treatments, in-patient mortality... did not change.” The death rate in 1992 was the same as in 1982: 20% – and double what had been found in the trials. Scientists have a long list of excuses. Some blame the fact that patients in clinical trials tend to be hand-picked and fussed over. Others argue patients arrived on wards too late for the wonder drugs to work. Or, perhaps the original trials simply hadn’t been big enough. But there is another explanation, and its implications are so serious that scientists who understand them often refuse to go

on the record to talk about them. They have been discussed behind closed doors by leading scientific journals and academic institutions – only to be swept under the carpet. Meanwhile, millions of dollars of taxpayer money is being wasted following up illusory breakthroughs. At the centre of this scandal is a simple statistical technique used by scientists as the basis for supposed research breakthroughs. It is called “significance testing”. And it is fatally flawed. When used to analyse clinical trials, significance testing can easily double the apparent effectiveness of a drug, turning a borderline result into a “significant” breakthrough. It can throw up convincing – yet spurious – evidence for links between diseases and any number of supposed causes. But even more astonishing than these dangerous flaws is that experts have been warning about the methodology for more than 30 years – yet the scientific community has refused to act. In the meantime, a host of implausible “breakthroughs”, which raise the hopes of patients and families, are announced with fanfare... and then quickly disappear... Just why has the scientific community failed to act? The answer lies in its squeamishness about subjectivity. It is hard to convey the strength of emotion aroused within the scientific community by the “S-word”. Subjectivity is seen as the barbarian at the gates of science, the enemy of objective truth. So when, in the '20s, brilliant Cambridge mathematician and geneticist Ronald Aylmer Fisher came up with an apparently objective way of drawing conclusions from experiments, it was seized upon by the scientific community. In 1925, Dr Fisher published his techniques in a book, *Statistical Methods for Research Workers*. It has become one of the most influential texts in the history of science, and forms the foundation of virtually all the statistics now used by scientists. On the face of it, Dr Fisher had found techniques anyone – sceptic or advocate – could use to prove the significance of a new finding. Critical to his method is the so-called P-value – defined as the chances of getting at least as impressive evidence as that actually seen if mere fluke were at work. These P-values are worked out mathematically from the raw experimental data. According to Dr Fisher, if the resulting P-value is below 0.05, then it is safe to label a finding “significant”. Combining simplicity and apparent objectivity, the P-value method was an immediate hit and its popularity endures to this day. Open any leading scientific journal and you will see the phrase “ $P < 0.05$ ” in papers on every conceivable area of research, from astronomy to zoology. But no sooner were P-values taken up throughout the scientific community than other statisticians began to ask awkward questions. Most importantly, just how did Dr Fisher know that his figure of 0.05 was a safe point at which to declare a result “significant”? Incredibly, Dr Fisher didn't know. [Dr Fisher] simply chose the figure of 0.05 because, [the mathematician] said, it was “convenient”. The implications are stark... The first hints of this appalling flaw in Dr Fisher's methods emerged in the early '60s... Now, more than 30 years after the warnings were sounded, it is clear the scientific community... has grown used to seeing its supposed breakthroughs come and go[, and]... has no intention of taking decisive action to tackle the critical flaws in significance testing... Taking action would mean “radical re-training”, some scientists lamely argue. Curiously for a profession supposedly dedicated to discovering truths, the reliability of research findings is never mentioned. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the real explanation for all the endless evasion is not scientific at all. It is simply that if scientists abandoned significance tests like P-values, many of their claims would be seen for what they really are: meaningless aberrations on which taxpayer money should never have been spent.

...*Scientist thinks small in search for cures*... It sounds like science fiction: microscopic oil droplets protect patients from germs and viruses by fusing with the dangerous bugs and causing them to explode. University of Michigan scientists, searching for ways to protect soldiers from biological warfare, say they have created just such a drug. It can eradicate deadly anthrax within an hour of contact, and promises to be so non-toxic to humans that one day it might be possible to decontaminate germ-laden food... [The] creator of these drug droplets so tiny they have been dubbed “nano-bombs,” added some to a sample of cholera viewed through a microscope. A few minutes later: “All that's left here is debris. The remarkable thing is this happens almost immediately,”... While the drugs are still highly experimental, [the creator] told a biotechnology meeting in Seattle that [it] envisions one day using the[m]... not just to treat infection but as protection. They might work as an HIV-blocking vaginal cream.

...[a] German scientist... is looking for... [a] terminally ill patient... [it] can cut up and recreate as a new, improved person... The donor will be asked how... [their] body has served them during their life and how it could have been better. Once the donor dies, the body will be deep-frozen and dissected. Within nine months, [the German's] team hopes to unveil the preserved corpse as a redesigned human being and put it on public display.

...the Discovery Channel documentary *Body Parts* (10pm, Monday...)... explores the new forms of technology being investigated to replace or rejuvenate failing body organs, such as... genetic engineering... artificial hearts, lab-grown organs and animal organs adapted for human use. There is even the possibility that a human head could be kept alive and functioning on machines designed to mimic the body's functions. Ick!

...Imagine celebrating your 200th birthday – with perfect skin, good hair and your parents dropping by. A visiting U[S] scientist says we should start thinking about making extra-long-term plans as medicine closes in on the age-old drag of old age... [The] clinical professor of medicine at Michigan University, believes that within a decade scientists will confirm they can reverse ageing and eliminate age-related conditions, including cardiovascular disease, arthritis, Alzheimer's and even youthful skin. The youthful-looking 50-year-old yesterday told an Auckland conference, hosted by the N[Z] Chelation Therapy Society, that... it... was not interested in slowing ageing, but reversing [ageing]. His tongue-in-cheek sign-off was: “Hope to see you guys here in another couple of centuries.” Some experts dismiss his claims as another garden path on the search for the fountain of youth; others say any practical use is a long way off and could only keep people healthier longer rather than increase lifespan. But [the professor] points to growing research demonstrating how human cells can avoid normal ageing. Many human cells have finite lifespans, dividing only so many times, before they stop. In 1998 scientists at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Centre found that by adding an enzyme called telomerase to the chromosomes of cells, they continued to divide and showed no signs of ageing or dying. The enzyme, which occurs naturally, resets a cell's biological clock – called a telomere... The Texas researchers said such cell rejuvenation might increase the normal health span, but not the normal lifespan. [The professor], however, believes subsequent research will lead to both... [The professor] admitted there were still technical barriers and huge social and ethical issues in any attempt to extend human lives to 200 years and beyond. Overpopulation, ecological pressure and economic displacement were a few of the complex questions raised, as well as the fundamental issue of playing with human lifespan. “I think this whole prospect should scare people... But I think we should see if it can work.” N[Z] has no specialists in the telomerase field, but the head of Auckland University's molecular medicine division... said difficulties understanding the biology involved should not be underestimated. Gene therapy, where the biology was well understood, was progressing only slowly, [the head] said. So don't put aside those 200 candles just yet.

...The mutation of a gene can double the life span of fruit flies – a chance laboratory discovery that... may lead to drugs that help people live longer... University of Connecticut Health Centre researchers found that the fruit flies lifespan increased from 37 to 70 days when a gene was modified on a single chromosome. The same long-life gene exists in humans, where a doubled life span would be about 150 years... [T]he gene mutation appears to work by “putting the cells on diet.” ...not only did the fruit flies live longer, they also seemed to maintain a high quality of life.

...*Answer does lie in the soil*... Science has backed up religion in a study that suggests life may have... sprung from clay – just as many faiths teach.

...Auckland University researchers [recently] stunned academics worldwide by tracing the origins of the English language to Turkish farmers... [Now an A]uckland scientist... has embarked on the ultimate detective quest – to use genetic techniques to track down the origin of life. The Auckland University microbiologist has been awarded \$475,000 from the Government's Marsden Fund to try to recreate a gene from the last common ancestor of all living things... [The] Waiheke father of two who does the *Herald* cryptic crossword on the ferry each day, delights in the puzzle-solving power of genetics. [The father] says that studying the genes of thousands of organisms has enabled biologists to piece together a much more complete “tree of life”, sorting all living things into genetically related families. The size of that tree has ballooned since [an] American scientist... used the new genetic techniques to do “DNA fingerprinting” in the mud beneath a hot pool in the early 1980s. “[The American] found that we had observed less than 0.1[%] of the micro-organisms out there... We can't even quantify how ignorant we are, there is so much to learn.”

...scientists... have discovered a microbe that... [they] believe... is easily the oldest living creature... [C]losely related to a bacterium that lives in the briny environment of the Dead Sea... the microbe... has lived for 250 million years... [- which] is many times older than a microbe found living in the gut of a bee trapped in amber about 30 million years ago... [-] and shows every sign of being able to continue for the same length of time... “If bacteria can survive for this length of time, why should they die at all?” ...asks... a microbiologist at Bristol University... “The potential implications are profound. For instance, can spores effectively be immortal?” ...Spores of the bacterium appear to have survived in a state of suspended animation in one of the driest environments on Earth – an underground salt cavern in New Mexico – and the discovery raises the possibility that primitive life-forms might, after all, be able to cross the vast distance of space stowed away within the rocks of asteroids and comets, as suggested by... [a] British astronomer... The bacterium was extracted from a tiny pocket of liquid trapped inside... a... salt crystal, which was found in the wall of a ventilation shaft serving the salt cavern... that had been buried underground since the first dinosaurs stalked the land.

...The... first recognised dinosaur fossil – the iguanodon tooth found by the family of Sussex country doctor Gideon Mantell in the 1820s – will be feted at a fossil hunters’ breakfast in Wellington today. The fossil... [-] brought to N[Z] by Dr Mantell’s son... [-] is held by the Museum of N[Z], but has been allowed to go on show at the National Library. [A NZ p]alaeontologist... said the tooth was the holy grail of evolutionary biology.

...IT’S a lonely job, but someone’s got to do it. [That someone] is the country’s only paid vertebrate palaeontologist. Which is to say [the guy] is the only person in N[Z] who earns his living as a bone fide dinosaur expert. As an associate professor of geology at Otago University, [hi]s specialty is the ancient marine reptiles that once swarmed off our shores... Along with 656,000 others, [the palaeontologist] has tuned into the BBC documentary *Walking with Dinosaurs* [- which] is the second most watched programme on [NZ] television, after One Network News. Great television, [the palaeontologist] says, hesitating because [the palaeontologist] cannot give the same affirmation to the science behind it... “It’s great to see that past life on Earth is being taken to a broader audience. The programme has brought the animals to life. I guess for the average audience that is enough. But if you ask, ‘Is it based on fact?’, well, you would be scratching your head to find that.” [His] response is what any medium can expect when science is presented for a mass audience... [D]ocumentary-maker Natural History N[Z]’s... chief executive... knows the issues... “The pitfalls are confusing fact and fiction – you have to signal opinion.” By training, scientists are wary about speculating beyond the evidence and facts, which... is what documentary must do. “I’ve had these discussions. I think... [t]here tends to be a view from scientists that unless it’s proven you cannot say it. But that isn’t so. You are not making programmes for scientists, but for an audience. You have got to use supposition and storytelling mechanisms. [However, y]ou do have the responsibility to make sure that there’s no confusion about what is absolutely known and what is supposition.” As the cliché says, the only certainty, even in science, is uncertainty. Theories conflict, evidence can be interpreted to support multiple answers... “...Scientists have conflicting theories and really to present that to an audience you have to find a path that presents that with integrity.” What science can say with little quibble about dinosaurs rests largely on the discipline of functional morphology... It is possible and legitimate... to extrapolate a wide range of behaviour from skeletons: from how much a beast might have weighed to how it might have walked or hefted its tail. It is entirely responsible to examine a dinosaur jaw and depict how that jaw clothed in flesh might have stripped ancient foliage of its leaves. But even the most basic question – for a documentary-maker – of what colour dinosaurs are resides in the realm of speculation... “You could say they were purple and nobody could prove you right or wrong.” ...[an] Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences... [geologist says:] “It’s wonderful television but you have to say that there’s also a large amount of intelligent expediency...” If [the geologist] has one central criticism, it is that the programme presents its stories as seamless. “By giving the viewer a fait accompli, it becomes a sort of backhanded slap to palaeontologists. It’s saying that there is no more to be told, when the reverse is so. In that way it does not help science because we rely on the next generation to be infected with a sense of curiosity about what is not known.” [The geologist] argues that a central difficulty in animating dinosaurs is that, despite the wealth of research, scientists have only a fragmentary image of what it was really like in the age of the dinosaurs... [e.g., w]hat we know of *Tyrannosaurus rex*, the celebrity dino that every child can identify, is based on the evidence gleaned from only 11 skulls... “Everything we know about [dinosaurs] comes from the fossil remains of only about 500 species from a span of 160 million years. Yet we know from the fossil record of other animals that for every species that we have found there are some 25,000 that we don’t have any record of at all.” [Consequently, t]he challenge *Walking with Dinosaurs* faced is akin to archaeologists 100 million years hence trying to reconstruct the vast diversity of human experience and behaviour from an episode of *The Simpsons*... [- assuming there will still be archaeologists in 100 million years! There might not be if future generations take note of this quote:] “I did a million different jobs, including being an archaeologist. I wanted to be like Howard Carter and open the tomb of Tutankhamun and say I’d discovered the key to lost civilisations. It never happened – I found myself down in the trenches in the rain with a toothbrush for hours.”

...WHERE are our dinosaurs? ...The search for N[Z]’s dinosaurs did not begin in a productive way until... the late-70s... [when] a band of volunteers... took up fossil-hunting as a hobby... [They] have located fossil fragments in their favoured site, at the mouth of the remote Mangahouanga stream. To date the fragments have been identified as belonging to a meat-eating theropod, a vegetarian ankylosaurus and the flying dinosaur pterosaur. Following confirmation by overseas experts, [the leader of the volunteers] has been rewarded with a CBE and an honorary doctorate in science from Massey University. [The honorary DSc] says that the fossil fragments imply that N[Z] was once well-populated with dinosaurs. That accords with the geological record. Eighty million years ago N[Z]’s land mass was much greater as it was in the process of splitting from the great southern continent of Gondwanaland[(‘*Gondwana* – or land of the Gonds – was a vast continental area thought to have once existed in the southern hemisphere and to have broken up in the Mesozoic or late Palaeozoic times to form Arabia, Africa, South America, Antarctica, AUS and the peninsula of India’; ‘the precise geophysical mechanisms involved in the drift of continents and, indeed, plate tectonics – a theory which expands upon that of continental drift – are still hotly debated; the idea of such lateral displacement is generally ascribed to the German meteorologist Alfred Wegener, although similar but less detailed suggestions had been put forward by earlier writers’)]. All manner of life including the dinosaurs would have thrived. [The local fossil-hunters] believe... that if there was funding for a greater effort, more fossils would be uncovered despite two difficult hurdles. “It comes down to terrain. There has been considerable geological turmoil over the past five million years; our rocks have been folded and faulted, leaving a rugged landmass that makes it hard to do prospecting and difficult to recover what you do find.” The other hurdle is acidic soil. The country’s substantial vegetation has resulted in giant coal deposits associated with acidic conditions. “The acidic waters dissolve fossils. The chances are slim that much has survived.” Where there is a wealth of evidence is with marine fossils. Marine dinosaurs died in the coastal seas and were preserved in limestone formations that later ended up on land after geological disruption. “These are our strengths, the big marine reptiles have been well catalogued.”... There are three main groups: the plesiosaurs (like the mythical Loch Ness monster), mosasaurs (sea-going lizards) and ichthyosaurs (reptilian ancestors of dolphins). [Perhaps this is why a local palaeontologist] remains optimistic about his chosen vocation: “By overseas standards N[Z] is one of the last frontiers. We can make a good contribution to what [is known about] the dinosaurs.”

...A “dinosaur in miniature”, the largest beetle of its type, has entered the scientific record books... The wrinkled fungus beetle grew to the length of a... thumb and, with moa, raptors and large weta, was part of N[Z]’s “mega-fauna” that existed thousands of years ago. With its... warty body covered in patches of bristles and a crust of waxy secretions, *Archaeophylax worthyi* provides palaeontologists and entomologists with a tantalising glimpse of early N[Z]... “As more fossils are discovered, it becomes patently apparent that N[Z] was a land of giants and *Archaeophylax worthyi* is possibly one of hundreds of extinct insects that once truly walked with the dinosaurs.” ...but the mystery of its extinction may never be solved.

...N[Z] scientists... believe they’ve found the smoking gun that killed off the dinosaurs. The theory that an asteroid hit the planet... [in the area which is now called] Mexico... destroying the animals’ ecosystem and food-chains is an old one. But the evidence is new, and was found in a disused

coal mine at Moody Creek, north of Greymouth... The... evidence... was preserved in tiny grains of pollen found in the coal. The grains showed the forests on the West Coast suddenly disappeared 65 million years ago, eventually replaced by ferns... But there are [still] unanswered questions...

The dinosaurs were wiped out by an asteroid that smacked the Earth 65 million years ago – but they survived another possibly similar cataclysmic event 200 million years ago, say scientists. The early calamity snuffed out 80[%] of all species, said... a University of Washington palaeontologist who led [the] researchers. By studying the fate of a type of plankton – single-celled organisms called Radiolaria – the researchers found that the mass extinction was a sudden event, not the prolonged die-off that experts previously thought... [T]he extinction occurred at the boundary between the Triassic and Jurassic periods in the Mesozoic era. The event was the death knell for most species and helped crown the dinosaurs, which arose earlier in the Triassic, as rulers of the Earth... [Incidentally, t]he Kiwi, N[Z]'s national bird and sports symbol, probably originated in A[US], says a N[Z] scientist. The m]olecular evolutionist... led an Oxford University team that found the kiwi developed in A[US] and migrated to N[Z] about 70 million years ago along the Norfolk Ridge, or Lord Howe Rise, that linked the two countries. The sea later closed in, isolating the kiwi in NZ... The team found that the ancestors of NZ's 11 moa species were probably separated from other ratites – one of the most ancient groups of birds – in A[US]-Antarctica when NZ broke away 82 million to 85 million years ago. Kiwi, ostrich, emu, and cassowary ancestors all developed outside NZ. It appeared kiwi diverged 64 million to 71 million years ago. "The moa and kiwi represented separate ratite invasions of N[Z]," said the scientist –] ...a Natural Environmental Research Council advanced fellow at Oxford... Four years' work sequencing genetic material from old and modern birds has confirmed that the Australasian area was an important source from which ancestors of modern birds spread.

...*Feathers fly over dinosaurs* A lizard that glided through the trees of prehistory 220 million years ago has overturned an established theory of how birds evolved from feathered dinosaurs. The 24cm lizard, which lived 75 million years before the first known bird, may have sported a set of feathers yet was not a dinosaur, a study has found... The research has focused on the fossils of Longisquama insignis, an archosaur – the group which gave rise to the dinosaurs, crocodiles and birds – that lived in the forests of what is now central Asia... Soviet scientists found the fossils in Kyrgyzstan in 1969 but they remained in a museum drawer in Moscow for many years after an initial examination concluded that two parallel rows of appendages on the back of the animal were scales, not feathers. Closer scrutiny... by a team of... [US] scientists found that the... appendages had a long, thin tube or shaft running down the centre with projections, or pinnae, extending from the sides of the base, just like modern feathers but quite unlike reptilian scales... "These are some amazing fossils which, at the very least, prove that feathers did not evolve from dinosaurs," says... [a] professor of zoology at Oregon State University. "The supposed link between dinosaurs and birds is pretty entrenched in palaeontology, but it's not as solid as the public has been led to believe... A point that too many people always ignored... is that the most bird-like of the dinosaurs, such as Bambiraptor and Velociraptor, lived 70 million years after the earliest bird... So you have birds flying before the evolution of the first bird-like dinosaurs. We now question very strongly whether there were any feathered dinosaurs at all... They were probably flightless birds."

...Scientists have peered into the chest of a 66 million-year-old dinosaur and discovered a heart not unlike a human's. The fossilised dinosaur heart, belonging to a Thescelosaurus named Willo, was identified using medical imaging techniques and was much more like that of a mammal or bird than a reptile. The finding supports the belief that dinosaurs were warm blooded, unlike lizards.

...previously overlooked dinosaur fossils show... Tyrannosaurus rex was... no solitary, brutal, lonely carnivore. In reality, it was both caring and cunning... "In... *Jurassic Park*, which boasted the most accurate popular depictions of dinosaurs ever, T. rex was, as usual, presented as a killing machine whose sole purpose was aggressive, bloodthirsty attacks on helpless prey," says [a] palaeontologist... "T. rex's popular persona, however, is as much a function of artistic licence as of concrete scientific evidence." In fact, mounting evidence points to gregarious T. rex behaviour... Tyrannosaurs probably lived in herds and developed complex interrelationships – "in many ways, an entirely new species to contemplate." Several key pieces of evidence point to such sociability, say scientists. One of the most important of these involves a recent re-examination of a set of nine T. rex skeletons found in Alberta, Canada, in 1910. Researchers always assumed these creatures had perished one after another – in mud or soft sediment – as they tried to reach and eat other dinosaurs... which had also been caught there. But when scientists from the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology in Alberta returned to the site... they could find no other dinosaur remains. T. rexes, they deduced, had not been lured individually to their doom but had most likely "associated with one another naturally, and perished together from drought, disease or drowning." ...Similarly, re-examinations of other T. rex fossils have revealed that several creatures, thought to have been buried alone, were members of groups. One, at a site known as Hell Creek, has shown that the remains of a second dinosaur found with a... T. rex was actually a baby tyrannosaurus. Marks on the [baby's] bones have been scrutinised and found to bear considerable likeness to the marks left by T. rex's own teeth. This suggests, some scientists say, that there may have been a great deal of social interaction within a tyrannosaur herd, the marks being a result of family members nuzzling and biting each other, much as lions behave today... "Tyrannosaurs were the big cats of their day. And just as we have prides of lions today, it is perfectly reasonable to assume that we may once have had prides of tyrannosaurs wandering around in Jurassic times." ...Such interaction, however, may have been more violent and had more unfortunate effects... Young tyrannosaurs may well have perished after such encounters... Tyrannosaurs were blessed with teeth "like lethal bananas," as [a] palaeontologist of the University of California at Berkeley, puts it. They were the size of "railroad spikes with serrated edges." ...[but] the evidence... is[n't]... unequivocal, says... a... British dinosaur expert... of the Sedgwick Museum, Cambridge... "This is a new way of looking at tyrannosaurs, but... [s]ome big cats hunt as loners and some in groups. Unless we get a time machine and travel back 65 million years, we will never know for sure which was the case with T. rex..." [● 'Scientists have unveiled the reconstructed skull of the largest species of meat-eating dinosaur ever found. Named gigantosaurus carolinii, the dinosaur that is about 1.5m longer and nearly 2 tonne heavier than the previous king of dinosaur predators – T rex – lived about 97 million years ago. Discovery of the dinosaur's remarkably complete skeleton near a lake in western Argentina was announced in 1995. Its 76 dagger-shaped teeth set in long, narrow jaws made for "collectively, just an absolutely horrifying predatory machine." Running on its hind legs, the 14m-long, 8 tonne, flesh-ripping creature probably chased down and ate plant-eaters at least twice its size. In contrast, T rex, with heavier teeth and a more-blocky skull suited to crushing bones, most likely scavenged the bodies of dead dinosaurs.']

...*Roll over T-rex – here comes... the world's biggest carnivorous dinosaur.* P[alaeontologists] in Patagonia have... confirm[ed] theories put forward... almost 20 years ago[. I]n his book *In Patagonia*, [Bruce] Chatwin described how his obsession with a scrap of dinosaur skin compelled him to track down the cave of a prehistoric giant sloth, the glyptodon. The tale of this personal quest in a remote landscape was to spur a scientific monster hunt throughout Argentina's southern badlands... The place turned out to be cluttered with the bones of prehistoric giants like some Jurassic memorial park. In the 10 years since Chatwin's death, the fossil boneyards beneath Patagonia's arid dunes have yielded rich finds, and professional fossil-hunters are going to great lengths to gather more... Long before there were gauchos, pampas or even Andes in Argentina, huge herds of saurian beasts rumbled across a lush Patagonia. "Huge" is the key word. A study of six partial skeletons unearthed by... palaeontologists reveal that dagger-toothed dinosaurs, 1.6m longer than Tyrannosaurus rex, may have formed packs to stalk prey even larger than themselves... [Indeed], the latest archaeological evidence... points to plant-eating dinosaurs that grew to such enormous proportions that only "pack hunting" techniques could have brought them down. This year helicopters will haul out the neck vertebrae, each one more than 1m across, of another newly identified dinosaur species: the Rio Negro Giant. This 48m swamp-dweller, the biggest in the world, was excavated in January from a desolate Patagonian grazing spot called La Buitrera. Although enormously bulky, the creature had a tiny head on a serpentine neck. Stretching up to nibble fruits, it would have looked much like a Loch Ness monster on steroids and was... tall as a five-storey building. These creatures are believed to have travelled in herds like elephants, and defended themselves by lashing out with their tails. They were trailed by small packs of fierce predators, each

one 50 times the size of a cow... The still nameless prehistoric creature, measuring closer to 14m from snout to tail and weighing in at nearly 9 tons, appears to be closely related to *gigantosaurus*, an outsized meat-eater discovered in 1993 in the same area... Because the [unnamed creature's] bones were found at the same geological level as *argentinosaurus* – hitherto the world's largest herbivore until the Rio Negro Giant turned up – local scientists assume that they were direct links in the food chain... [A palaeontologist from] the Royal Tyrrell Museum in Canada... also believes that the sophisticated communication required to hunt in a pack could have led the flesh-eaters to practise “patterns of conduct protecting their young.” Considering the age of the bones, the pace of dinosaur finds in Patagonia has been comparatively fast and furious, and the many discoveries are a source of pride for Argentines. “Africa was the birthplace of [humanity],” says one... “and our country was the birthplace of dinosaurs.”

...The world's oldest human footprints will be lifted from a lagoon near Cape Town next week to protect them... Apart from vandals, who have taken to carving graffiti in the rock and to put their own feet into Eve's prints, the fossil is being eroded by the elements. The delicate removal operation, funded partly by *National Geographic* magazine, involves cutting the fragile rock with a high-powered diamond drill... Other... fossil footprints... buried near the original set are also being considered for excavation. The South African Museum will be asked to provide replicas of the footprints to be put in place of the originals... [A]n archaeologist with the National Monuments Council, which is overseeing the preservation... said that if it had been possible, the footprints would have been conserved where they were found. “However, in conserving the fossils by removing them... we will ensure their survival as a global asset with high tourism potential... We simply had to ensure they survived for future generations.”

...South African researchers have discovered an almost entire skeleton of an ape-[perso]n, the oldest such find anywhere in the world, which could provide long-sought clues to the evolution of humankind. The 1.22m fossil was unearthed at Sterkfontein, on the outskirts of Johannesburg, and is estimated to be 3.6 million years old. The oldest previous skeleton was 3.2 million-year-old “Lucy,” found in Ethiopia, while older bone fragments have been discovered in East Africa... “It is the most important find out of South Africa since the Taung skull was found in 1921. This probably exceeds that in importance... We're getting down nearer to the critical parting of the ways between apes and us...,”... said... [the p]rofessor... who led the team of researchers from South Africa's University of the Witwatersrand... [In related news, t]he out-of-Africa theory is not dead, anthropologists and other experts say, despite two studies that challenge the idea that we are all descended from a single African “Eve.” U[S and AUS]n researchers have published two reports that used physical and genetic evidence to suggest possible mixing of pre-humans with modern species. They said they had proved wrong the mainstream... theory – that the ancestors of all living humans emerged from Africa some 50,000 years ago and either killed or out-competed all other human-like creatures. One study... analysed physical features of early human skulls to suggest there must have been interbreeding among the migrating Africans and resident Neanderthals and even *Homo erectus*... Another study... used genetic evidence that suggested “Mungo [Perso]n – an A[US]n skeleton dated to between 40,000 and 60,000 years ago – was genetically unrelated to Africans. The... A[US]n National University... researchers... said their finding showed the first modern humans evolved in A[US], not Africa.

...Step aside African, here's Mungo [Perso]n... The 60,000-year-old skeleton was found in 1974 in Lake Mungo, N[SW]. It was one of 10 indigenous A[US]ns – all ancient yet anatomically modern – whose DNA was analysed by... the A[US]n National University in Canberra... Earlier studies suggested that our most recent common ancestor lived 200,000 years ago, and traced the root of the gene tree to Africa. But the DNA from Mungo [Perso]n does not exist in modern... mitochondria, the cell's “power packs” passed from the mother... This suggests that the most modern lineage of the modern human tree so far found emerged in A[US], then became extinct. The study, “an amazing technological feat,” highlights the danger of reading too much into mitochondrial DNA evidence, said [a] Dr... of SUNY College, New York. But... [p]revious studies of mitochondrial DNA from three Neanderthal specimens were sufficiently different from modern humans to rule out Neanderthals as our ancestors... The new study shows it is possible to be anatomically modern but still have different DNA. Thus the lack of Neanderthal mitochondrial DNA in modern humans did not rule them out as our ancestors... This weakens the case that Neanderthals are somehow separate,”... said [the SUNY College] Dr...

Genetic analysis of Mungo [Person shows it]... wouldn't look out of place in a modern group of A[US]n Aborigines... says the [guy] who's examined him as closely as science will permit... The results of... the... palaeoanthropologist[s]... research have sparked fierce and often bitter debate in the scientific community because, says the genial and soft-spoken [AUSn], they deal a body blow to the so-called “Out of Africa” theory of human evolution... an idea which has held sway in academic circles since the mid-80s... [The AUS]n never liked the idea because, as [the anthropologist] puts it, it didn't fit the facts... [Because the prevailing theory held that] *Homo erectus*... emerged... in Africa and “progressively went around the world killing off... all the others[we]... used to call them ‘killer Africans’ and my opponents didn't like that[.]” The AUSn, [who] gave a public lecture at the University of Auckland this week, marvelled at the serendipity of a rash of recent discoveries which have upended anthropology and our understanding of where we came from. First, a skull found in Central Java... prosaically known as SM3 shows clear evidence of brain structure close to that of modern humans. The skull, something between 100,000 and 800,000 years old, has torn a gaping hole in the theory that *Homo sapiens* arrived, as a killer horde, only 150,000 years ago and displaced *Homo erectus*. At the same time, research at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor compared ancient and modern skulls from A[US] and central Europe. The local family resemblances in both cases were more striking than the similarities between specimens from opposite sides of the world, which, the research concluded, was powerful evidence of what [the AUSn] calls “regional continuity.” “It's been a fantastic year... A lot of evidence has come forward in the last few months, new dates, new fossils which make it clearer. There are two groups of scientists – anatomists, archaeologists, neurologists, even some linguists, and anthropologists – and the one thing we all agree on is that one side is absolutely wrong.” On one thing all anthropologists are agreed. Humanity – the genus *Homo* – emerged in Africa. That's because chimpanzees and gorillas, our closest relatives, are African and are found nowhere else. The warring factions also agree that about 2 million years ago some humans – the conventional term is *Homo erectus*, a category [the AUSn] disputes is even valid – began to leave Africa. “They are in Java and China and the ancestors of Neanderthal[s]... in Europe. That's not a problem; even at 50km a generation, getting to China from Africa is a doddle.” But the group of which [the AUSn] is a leading light does not hold with the idea – embodied in the so-called Eve hypothesis... – that *Homo sapiens* emerged as a new species who killed off *Homo erectus*... “...the way I see the [prehistoric] world is the way it is now. [Our ancestors move] out of Africa, populations mix and meet, a bit of bonking goes on, genes are flowing from Algiers to Capetown. When they get out into the Levant and Europe and China the same things are happening. That's why a person from anywhere in the world can meet someone from anywhere else in the world and they'll produce children... All humans can interbreed with all other humans. At the same time we're making adaptations to different environments – from high altitudes, to deserts, to jungles and that's why we've got black Africans and pygmies and white, yellow and b[rown] people. What a European person looks like today is not what [it] used to look like, and the same goes for Africans...”

...AUSTRALOPITHECUS One of the first apes to walk upright, which... kicked the bucket 3.2 million years ago... RIP...

We can all call Africa home New genetic research supports the theory that anatomically modern humans rose out of Africa in the past 100,000 years and swept aside populations of archaic humans, with no inter-breeding. Chinese and American geneticists obtained blood samples from 12,000 [guys] across Asia and examined characteristic DNA sequences called markers on the Y chromosome. They found each one could trace his ancestry to forefathers who lived in Africa over the past 35,000 to 89,000 years. The findings appear to confirm the out-of-Africa theory...

Skull shakes old theories... Scientists have unveiled the skull of what they called the earliest member of the human family so far discovered, dating back six or seven million years... [An anthropologist from] Harvard University told the *Nature* scientific journal that the find would have the impact of a “small nuclear bomb” among students of human evolution... Exactly where the... thick-browed, flat-faced skull... discovered in Chad... fits into

[humanity]'s family tree is not clear, but its age, shape and location challenge basic beliefs about the evolution of our earliest ancestors. Among other things, the find could push back the date at which humans are believed to have diverged from apes. And it suggests that upright-walking human ancestors evolved not just in the grasslands, as anthropologists have long thought, but in forests as well. Scientists nicknamed the specimen Toumai, or "hope of life" in Africa's Goran language. It was unearthed a year ago by a research team led by [a]French palaeontologist... "It's not what we thought we would find," said [a colleague from] George Washington University in the U[S]. "If you look at the back of it, it looks like a chimpanzee, and if you look at the front of it, it looks like something in the human fossil record unambiguously a couple of million years ago." [The] Harvard University anthropologist... said the skull raised "a wheelbarrow full of questions"[, and] likened it to Raymond Dart's 1920s discovery of a skull of an ape-[perso]n in southern Africa, which lent the first support to Charles Darwin's theory that the deepest traces of human evolution could be found in that continent... Toumai is the oldest addition to a growing array of recently discovered hominid, or pre-human, fossils that show human evolution was not an orderly progression. Instead, Africa appears to have been populated with many transitional species.

...one of the world's most prominent anthropologists... who is based at the University of California, Berkeley... has unveiled the fruits of his latest research – three pristine skulls belonging to the earliest members of our own species, *Homo sapiens*. The... two adults and a child... lived about 160,000 years ago, making their skulls... 60,000 years older than the previous oldest fossils of anatomically "modern" humans. [The anthropologist] said these... people probably belonged to the group of ancient humans from whom everyone is descended. "With these new crania we can now see what our direct ancestors looked like... We've lacked intermediate fossils between pre-humans and modern humans, between 100,000 and 300,000 years ago, and that's where these fossils fit in... Now the fossil record meshes with the molecular evidence... These well-dated and anatomically diagnostic Herto fossils are unmistakably non-Neanderthal. These fossils show that near-humans had evolved in Africa long before the European Neanderthals disappeared... They thereby demonstrate conclusively that there was never a Neanderthal stage in human evolution."

...The Neanderthal was a squat, powerful hunter who dominated Europe for more than 100,000 years, but... disappeared forever when modern humans evolved in African and moved to the other continents... [T]here is no convincing evidence that Neanderthals and modern humans ever mixed in substantial numbers, which means that when the Neanderthals died out, so did their genes... The reason for the Neanderthals' extinction is unknown. Disease is one theory. Another is that modern humans were able to outsmart the Neanderthals for limited resources of food.

...The Neanderthals [we]re supreme hunters, which is why they... lasted over 260,000 years. But they ha[d] a weakness, they d[id] not adapt well to change... [- whereas t]he humans... c[ould] adapt, and they ha[d] the ability to shape the world around them... We have since built museums to celebrate the past, and spent decades studying prehistoric lives. And if all this has taught us anything it's this: no species lasts forever.

...*Scratching the Naked Ape theory*... Early humans shed their coats of fur as a result of being plagued by disease-carrying parasites, a new theory of evolution claims. The new hypothesis challenges the long-held view that our early ancestors became almost hairless in order to control their body temperature in the heat of the African savannah. Instead, claim two [British]scientists... our ancestors' hair loss was a consequence of their natural intelligence. These hominids were smart enough to use fire, clothing and shelter to regulate body temperatures. And – unlike the dense fur that still covers apes and monkeys, forcing them constantly to groom each other for lice – clothing and bedding could be cleaned if they became infested.

...Traditional woven harakeke taonga at the Museum of N[Z], Te Papa, are fading and falling apart. Some of the museum's flax treasures, such as elaborate woven cloaks, are now so fragile they cannot be handled. But scientists have pinpointed the traditional dyeing process as causing the antique Maori clothing to disintegrate, not only in N[Z] but in overseas collections, such as those at the British Museum... Unlike undyed fibre, which is comparatively stable, the flax cloaks and other artefacts which have been dyed... are badly degraded. The... dye was created by soaking the fibre in a tannin solution, usually derived from hinua bark or manuka-kanuka bark. This later reacted with the iron in paru mud in which the fibres were... placed, to dye the fibre black... The problem is now being tackled by a multi-disciplinary team of scientists, weavers and other textile conservators... [which] has received funding of \$160,000 from the Public Good Science Fund... "We are aiming to slow this degradation and, where the damage is extensive, find a method of consolidating the fibre,"... an Industrial Research scientist... said yesterday... [S]everal novel, gel-like reagents had been tested for their efficiency in strengthening the fibre. "One of these has given promising results in preserving the mechanical integrity and handle of the fibre, and showing no visible alteration to the appearance of the fibre..." In the laboratory, test fibres had been artificially aged by thermal treatment (heating at 80 deg C for a month), or irradiation with simulated solar radiation... [A]geing experiments using controlled and limited oxygen supply indicated that oxygen was important in the degradation process. Preliminary work on fibres containing different iron contents also indicated the rate of degradation was increased in wet air. A systematic study of this was now in progress...

In knowledgeable Chinese archaeological circles it is whispered that when the tomb of a Ming Dynasty emperor near Beijing was carelessly opened some years ago, the richest trove of ancient silk ever uncovered crumbled to a pile of dust... Some reckon the century's greatest archaeological discovery is China's Terracotta Warriors, a buried 2200-year-old army of archers, infantry... charioteers and horses guarding the tomb of the first emperor, Qin Shihuang. Competition for the honour, admittedly, is intense: the tomb of the Egyptian pharaoh Tutankhamun, or the Dead Sea Scrolls. [But o]nly a brave person would bet against China indisputably winning the honour in the new century. Right next door to the awesomely large dig still underway – after 25 years of labour it has yielded just a fraction of the 7000 life-sized warriors and horses buried there – is the underground tomb itself, which has never been opened. Or, at least, it is thought to have been left untouched by either plundering armies or grave-robbers... So what is down there? Chinese archaeologists have little to go on beyond the writings of the great Han Dynasty historian Sima Qian (145-90BC). The tomb holds... "everything in the world: Palaces and pavilions filled with priceless gems and other treasures, rivers and lakes swirling with mercury, constellations of pearls embedded in ceilings, bales of the finest silk, entire zoos of rare animals crafted from beaten gold and silver." Qin Shihuang may have been the greatest despot who ever lived. Besides building the Great Wall and unifying China, [the first emperor] is most famous for burning the country's scholarly books, and burying alive its scholars. For now, the tomb is marked by nothing more than a grassy hump rising out of a ploughed field. If... [the] curator of the Museum of the Terracotta Warriors and Horses of Qin Shihuang, has his way, that is the way it will stay for some time yet. "...There are those who want to open it, and... those who are adamantly opposed to opening it." [Hi]s worry is that China does not yet have the skills or technology to preserve the contents of the tomb that took 700,000 slave labourers 37 years to build – indeed, that nobody in the world could contemplate such a task. Not that China would contemplate outside help. Foreign archaeologists have been kept well away from the present dig. Unlike the tombs of the pharaohs, opened without destroying the pyramids that housed them, Qin Shihuang's burial vaults... cover an area roughly 2 sq km. Exposing the necropolis would require an effort on a scale more akin to open-cast mining than archaeology, posing an environmental quandary. Then there is the real danger that a sudden change of temperature, atmospheric pressure and moisture content in the air – not to mention a rush of oxygen – could irreparably damage the more fragile treasures.

...*Treasure of the ages trashed in two days of looting*... The National Museum of Iraq recorded a history of civilisations that began to flourish in the fertile plains of Mesopotamia more than 7000 years ago. But when American troops entered Baghdad and toppled [the Iraqi dictator]'s Government last week, it took just 48 hours for the museum to be destroyed, with looters taking at least 170,000 artefacts. The full extent of the cultural disaster came to light only yesterday, as the frenzied looting that swept much of the capital over the previous three days began to ebb. As fires in a dozen Government ministries and agencies began to burn out, and as looters tired of pillaging in the 30-degree heat, museum officials reached the hotels where foreign journalists were staying along the eastern bank of the Tigris River. They brought word of what may be one of the greatest cultural disasters in recent Middle Eastern history. A full accounting of what has been lost may take weeks or months... What is beyond contest is that the 28 galleries of the museum and vaults that descend floor after floor into unlighted darkness have been completely ransacked...

Nothing of real value remained from a museum regarded by archaeologists... as perhaps the richest of all such institutions... Officials with crumpled spirits fought back tears and anger at [US] troops as they ran down an inventory of items they said had been carried away by thousands of looters who poured into the museum after daybreak on Friday and remained until dusk on Saturday, with just one half-hour intervention by US forces on Friday... [US] commanders say they lack the troops to curb the looting while their focus remains on mopping up pockets of resistance.

...The case for invading Iraq to remove its weapons of mass destruction was based on selective use of intelligence, exaggeration, use of sources known to be discredited and outright fabrication. A high-level British source said yesterday that intelligence agencies on both sides of the Atlantic were furious that briefings they gave political leaders were distorted in the rush to war with Iraq... [A]n editorial in a Middle East newspaper... said, "Washington has to prove its case. If it does not, the world will for ever believe that it paved the road to war with lies"... Since the war... there have been finds of suspected chemical weapons but they have turned out to be false alarms... U[N] inspectors who left Iraq just before the war started were searching for four categories of weapons: nuclear, chemical, biological and missiles capable of flying beyond a range of 150km. They found ample evidence that Iraq was not co-operating, but none to support British and US assertions that [the Iraqi] regime posed an imminent threat to the world... US and British teams claim they are scouring Iraq in search of definitive evidence but none has so far been found, even though the sites considered most promising have been searched... An Iraqi scientist said in a note slipped to a driver in a US convoy that [it] had proof information was kept from the inspectors, and that officials had destroyed chemical weapons just before the war. Other explanations for the failure to find the weapons include the possibility that they might have been smuggled to Syria, or are so well hidden that they could take months, even years, to find. But last week it emerged that two of four American mobile teams in Iraq had been switched from looking for the weapons to other tasks. One US official said privately that "in the end history and the American people will judge the US not by whether its officials found canisters of poison gas or... some biological agent [but] by whether this war marked the beginning of the end for the terrorists who hate America".

...On Day 84 of the search for Iraqi weapons of mass destruction yesterday, once again nothing turned up. Spies are spitting mad at the way their work was manipulated to exaggerate the Iraqi threat, and... emphasise that even if weapons of mass destruction still turn up, there is a fundamental problem – not within the intelligence community, but with senior [US] Administration officials – particularly in the Pentagon. "As an employee of the Defence Intelligence Agency, I know this Administration has lied to the public to get support for its attack on Iraq," rages one informant. Others see a pattern not so much of lying as of self-delusion – and of subjecting intelligence agencies to those delusions. One has to take the outrage among the spies with a few grains of salt because the intelligence folks have [often] been on the [other] end of... the... misuse of truth...

I've been roaming Iraq, turning over rocks in my unceasing effort to help the [US] Administration find those weapons of mass destruction. No luck yet. But I did find something related... in Nasiriyah... where it seems that contrary to early Pentagon leaks, [a US]Private... did not mow down Iraqis until her ammo ran out, was not shot and apparently was not plucked from behind enemy lines by U[S] commandoes braving a firefight. It looks as if the first accounts of the rescue were embellished, like the imminent threat from weapons of mass destruction, and like wartime pronouncements about an uprising in Basra and imminent defections of generals. There's a pattern – we were misled. None of this is to put down [the Private], whom her Iraqi doctors described as courageous and funny in the face of unrelenting pain; they said [the Private]... told... a hospital worker who had befriended her, not to take risks for her because [it] was needed by his 17 children. [The Private] is still a hero in my book, and it was unnecessary... to turn her into a Hollywood caricature. As a US citizen, I deeply resent my Government trying to spin me like a pingpong ball.

...[US] pilots dropped... napalm on Iraqi troops during the advance on Baghdad. The attacks caused massive fireballs that obliterated several Iraqi positions. The Pentagon denied using napalm at the time, but Marine pilots and their commanders have confirmed they used an upgraded version of the weapon against dug-in positions... because of its psychological effect on the enemy... The Pentagon said it had not tried to deceive. It drew a distinction between traditional napalm, first invented in 1942, and the weapons dropped in Iraq, which it calls Mark 77 firebombs... A 1980 U[N] convention banned the use against civilian targets of napalm... The US... did not sign the treaty... ■ T[w]o... Iraqis and two Saudis with purported links to [the Iraqi dictator] and the al Qaeda terror network were being held yesterday over the killing of a Shi'ite Muslim leader, as his followers denounced the U[S]'s occupation and called for revenge. Thousands of Iraqis yesterday mourned Ayatollah Mohammad Baqer al-Hakim, killed with 82 others in a car bombing outside the Mausoleum of Imam Ali in the holy city of Najaf... the worst attack since the start of the US-led occupation... The car bombing, which wounded 229 other people, followed a... suicide truck attack on the UN headquarters in Baghdad, which killed 22 people, including top UN envoy Sergio Vieira de Mello, and wounded more than 100... The Naja[f] blast, together with [the]deadly attacks on the UN headquarters and Jordanian Embassy in Baghdad have created the impression the country is out of control... [-] tallies based on hospital sources and media reports... show that more than 110,600 Iraqis have died in violence since the 2003 invasion[(plus 'more US soldiers have now died in Iraq since the war than during it')]... Shi'ites have warned of dire consequences if their leaders or shrines are attacked again. They have been the patient planners in postwar Iraq, despite decades of torture and repression under [the Iraqi dictator]'s Sunni-dominated Government. Instead of seeking revenge, they provided social services in slums and urged followers to pursue a peaceful path to power in a country where many had predicted a civil war... Elsewhere yesterday, [a]tribal sheikh... who presides over a million-strong clan, was arrested by US troops west of the northern Iraqi oil capital of Kirkuk on suspicion of abetting sabotage of fuel pipelines... An oil pipeline... in Kirkuk... was still ablaze...

Al Qaeda has developed a new generation of explosives that enable suicide bombers to breach airline security. Anti-terrorism experts held an emergency meeting last month after an al Qaeda militant passed through several airline security checks with a bomb hidden in his intestine. [It] detonated the bomb with a cellphone signal, but failed to kill a Saudi Prince. "While not wanting to be alarmist, I admit this is alarming," said... [the] head of the United Nations' al Qaeda and Taleban monitoring group... By becoming coiled inside [the militant]'s large intestine, the bomb would have gained additional force. The Saudis believe the bomb weighed 110g and was made with PETN plastic explosive, to avoid detection by airline and other metal detectors... [In related news, the al Qaeda leader]'s personal driver, was to enter a specially built courtroom in Guantanamo Bay today for the first full trial of any of the hundreds of detainees to be sent to America's infamous prison camp since the 9/11 attacks... Even the US does not say the driver and sometime mechanic... was a major terror figure. But... [i]f convicted... could find himself in prison for life. For many, however, it is the erosion of America's historic liberties that will be on trial... ■ It[has] emerged that... Britain succumbed to "blackmail" from the U[S] by suppressing details of the torture of a British resident at Guantanamo Bay. Two High Court judges issued a scathing attack on the White House after... the US threatened to withdraw all intelligence co-operation from Britain if details of the treatment... were made public.

...The British Government is considering a ...\$[NZ]32.55 billion... plan to monitor the email, telephone and internet browsing records of every person in the United Kingdom. It would involve the creation of a mammoth database to store hundreds of billions of pieces of communications traffic and its supporters say it would become one of the security services' most comprehensive tools in the fight against terrorism.

...CITY-BOUND rail commuters will be hard pressed to find a rubbish bin in [Auckland's] new Britomart transport centre. It has none because of growing international fears over the possibility of more terrorist attacks in crowded public spaces... [In the US,] a proposed bill in Congress... would make "auto-terrorism"... [- when mostly 4]-wheel-drive vehicles were set on fire at dealerships... [-] a federal offence... [Meanwhile, a spate] of recent deaths of New York police and fire officers who took part in the emergency operation at Ground Zero after the 9/11 attacks has heightened fears it could be the start of a delayed epidemic of cancer-related illness... Up to 70,000 people helped in the massive operation, including... construction workers who volunteered from all over the US. Many worked for months amid a toxic soup of dust and chemicals.

...[In what'll] be one of the trials of the century, the suspected plotters of the 9/11 attacks [will appear] in a civilian court only 800 metres from the scene of the crime, Ground Zero... rais[ing] fears in New York that such a high-profile case will make the city a renewed target for terrorist attack.

...The final design of the signature tower to be built at the former site of the World Trade Centre has been revealed. It will soar above Wall St to become the world's tallest building. The shimmering, glass-encased... 1776 f[t]... Freedom Tower... include[s] 2.6 million feet of commercial space...

The great grey cloud of the global recession does have a silver lining – for petrolheads at least. The latest luxury model of Cadillac, the CTS, has dropped in price from \$100,000 to around \$63,000 after the collapse of General Motors. More than 80... have been snapped up by a [NZ] dealer.

...Move over accountants – here come the scientists to save us... The 1980s and 90s were the decades of the accountant – but scientists say the new millennium belongs to them. The new chair[person] of Science New Zealand... said it was time for scientists to “strut their stuff” and help solve the world's most pressing problems – food shortages... climate change... energy crises, and the need to... harness the nation's natural resources to increase exports and tourism... [during and after the current financial crisis. Speaking of which, a sweeping US] Government plan to buy up to US\$700 billion... in bad mortgages may not be enough to save some banks, which experts say may have to absorb big losses if they sell their troubled assets. The proposal for the Government to soak up the mortgage-backed securities would be the biggest bailout plan since the Great Depression...

Europe's four biggest economies pledged stronger co-operation to stem the worst financial crisis since the 1930s at a summit in Paris yesterday, but failed to dispel undercurrents of tension and disorder. The heads of Germany, Britain, France and Italy agreed to support solvent banks which found themselves buffeted by the financial storm, promised to tighten controls over the financial sector and warned that the heads of failed banks would carry their share of the blame. But beneath the rhetoric, key details were vague... France reportedly proposed that European governments put together a ...\$[NZ]623 billion... package that would act in tandem with the ...\$1 trillion... bailout for the US financial sector.

...Europeans leaders pleaded with American lawmakers yesterday to reach agreement on a financial rescue package “for the sake of the world”... A string of banks in Europe have had to be rescued as financial institutions in Iceland, France, Germany and the Low Countries have fallen to the global economic crisis... It is feared that other banks will follow if Congress does not reverse its decision to reject a US\$700 b... bailout of US banks.

...THE country that calls itself the US of A now needs another “S” in its title: the United Socialist States of America. The problem is: they aren't united about it. The attempt by the US government to plaster “Wall Street” – their shaky financial sector – with up to US\$700 billion... in public funding has exposed deep divisions in the country and its politicians. A compromise deal cobbled together enough votes to pass Congress... The nationalisation of the huge mortgage companies Fannie Mae and Freddy Mac... was carried out swiftly and smoothly and without fuss... But the... Wall St bailout is dirty socialism. Same thing as crony capitalism, really – the mixed economy at its worst... The conservatives say: this is not how you run an efficient market economy. The liberals say: this is not what you do with taxpayers' money – bail out shonky banks.

...Those footing the bailout bill have a right to ask – what went wrong? ...[US] taxpayers deserve an immediate inquiry into the banking system...

Across America, people know these desperate times call for desperate measures. But there's something about hearing the word “trillion” bandied about so easily by Washington these days, and the persistent pleas from the [US] Administration for patience and trust, that gives people pause.

...World leaders... declare an end to unfettered capitalism at the G20 summit... to prevent a repeat of the worst economic crisis since the 1930s.

...AS THE global crisis unfolds, the great gurus of the world economy – those who have presided over its fortunes for much of the last two or three decades – have largely ducked for cover... WITH unabashed glee, many commentators have again predicted the end of capitalism... For years before the financial crisis... economists had warned of the dangers of imbalances in the global economy – namely huge trade surpluses and currency reserves built up by exporters like China, and similarly big deficits in the US and other economies. With US consumers now holding back on spending after house prices plunged and as unemployment climbs, Washington wants other countries to become engines of growth... European officials renewed calls... to curb bonuses paid to bankers. Huge payouts linked to risky investments are widely seen as a factor in the credit crisis.

...Public anger boiled over last month when it was revealed that the total amount of bonuses paid out to... Wall St... staff... was US\$18.4 billion...

YOU GREEDY BASTARDS... Up to 10,000 staff at the New York office of the bankrupt investment bank Lehman Brothers will share in a bonus pool set aside for them that is worth US\$2.5 billion... The revelation... prompted a renewed backlash over the compensation culture in global finance... The chair[person] of besieged insurer AIG has asked employees who received... US\$165 million... in bonus payments to pay at least half back... [S]ome recipients had already returned 100% of their bonuses... [By the way, i]n the hours before [US] bombs began falling on the Iraqi capital, one of [the Iraqi President's sons (both sons are now dead following a shootout with US soldiers – their dad was later found)]... cowering in a hole in a Tikrit cellar[]... and a close adviser carried off nearly US\$1 billion in cash from the Central Bank, say [US] and Iraqi officials... The removal of the money, which would amount to one of the largest bank robberies in history, was performed under direct orders of [the President] says an Iraqi official with knowledge of the incident... The sheer volume of the cash was so great – some US\$900 million in [US] \$100 bills and as much as US\$100 million worth of euros – that three tractor-trailers were needed to cart it away... The [\$1]billion... is nearly twice the amount of hard currency believed to have been looted by Iraqis in the three weeks after the collapse of the Iraqi Government.

...U[S] military detectives have begun investigating five US troops for the theft of hundreds of thousands from an Iraqi money cache. US troops have recovered more than US\$600 million... from hiding places... in central Baghdad... But along the way, US troops apparently tried to stash... US\$100 bills, for themselves... So far, they have recovered approximately US\$900,000... a soldier... said... But it was suspected more was taken.

...American investigators in Iraq have recovered more than 700 artefacts and tens of thousands of ancient manuscripts that had been missing from the collection of the National Museum in Baghdad, some of which had been stored in underground vaults... [-] including five within the museum complex... [-] for protection... before the... invasion... Iraqi museum officials... said that while many irreplaceable antiquities were looted from the museum... the losses were less severe than thought... The FBI is co-ordinating efforts with international law enforcement, and the US-led coalition in Iraq has begun broadcasting messages on the radio offering rewards to Iraqis to return antiquities. More than 100 items had been handed in, including a 7000-year-old vase and one of the oldest recorded bronze bas relief bulls. At a conference in London last week, the world's top curators pressed US authorities to go further by tightening Iraq's borders, saying artefacts were still being smuggled out of the country.

...Scores of artefacts looted from archaeological sites in Afghanistan are being smuggled to Britain and sold to wealthy clients. With a single statue fetching up to \$US70,000... the trade is worth hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. London is one of the key centres for the sale of works illicitly taken from the war-torn state. Investigators believe there is a “loose network” of dealers who keep a low profile and, working from home, sell to collectors all over the world... Major auction houses and dealers are careful to avoid smuggled or illegally excavated material, forcing the trade underground... Interest in early Afghan art has been boosted by the [actions] of the Taleban, the Islamic militia that [formerly ruled Afghanistan and destroyed] thousands of statues, including two 45m Buddhas carved into a mountain in Bamiyan... [(the) Taleban... ordered the slaughter of 100 cows to atone for its “delay” in destroying Afghanistan's historic statues of Buddha)]... Whether “all moveable statues” in Afghanistan have been destroyed, as the Taleban claim[ed], remains in some doubt, however. None of the smaller statues were destroyed in public and Taleban officials lev[ied] unofficial taxes on the trade in Afghan antiques... Governments, museums and private collectors offered to buy them from the Taleban rather than have the works destroyed... There are also fears that the bulk of the collection once in Kabul Museum, looted during fighting between Afghan groups in the early 1990s, is in smugglers' or collectors' hands. The most famous exhibits were the Bagram ivories, a series of exquisite Indian panels nearly 2000 years old, excavated by French archaeologists in the 1930s. Recently a London-based dealer has offered several of the ivories by a Pakistani politician... [The dealer] bought several and donated them to a French museum. But most of the ivories are still missing... All the museum artefacts have been carefully catalogued and the antiques markets in the West will be monitored in case the [smugglers] try to sell [any of the artefacts]... “People in the countries where the works come from are sick of seeing their heritage ripped out of the ground and sold in Western cities,” said one archaeologist. But some say that without the trade much more Afghan art would have been lost.

...Sunken Atlantis... has been found, and it was right where they left it. French researchers mapping the sea-level found that the ocean was 130m lower 19,000 years ago. This led to the discovery of a large submerged island on the spot where ancient wisdom pinpointed the lost city... This month, an expedition to hunt for its remains among submerged Gibraltarian islands will be unveiled at the Royal Geographical Society...

Historians and naval experts are hailing news that Captain Cook's flagship, HMS Endeavour, may have been found at the bottom of an American harbour. For more than 150 years the final resting place of the 18th century's most famous ship has been the source of debate and controversy. Marine archaeologists took out a court order at the weekend, protecting a section of Newport Harbour, Rhode Island, where they are certain the Endeavour lies in 6m of water. The curator of the National Maritime Museum in Auckland... said... [w]hen Cook was finished with the Endeavour for his scientific journey to the Southern Hemisphere, which lasted from 1768 to 1771, the Navy sold it and it was used to transport supplies to the Falkland Islands... Some historians had thought it was either left to rot in the Thames or used as a collier... [But l]atest research shows it was renamed the Lord Sandwich and anchored in Newport Harbour, for use as a floating prison... Historians believed the Endeavour... was burned during a naval blockade in 1778, when the American Revolution was at its height... [It is] hoped a lot of the ship would have survived.

...The wreck of a 17th century British Royal Navy vessel thought to hold... £2.9 billion (\$[NZ]10 billion)... of gold and silver – making it one of the world's most valuable hoards of sunken treasure – has been discovered off Gibraltar. The ship, believed to be the Sussex, lies at a depth of about 900m in Spanish waters. It is reputed to hold one million coins, amounting to 10 tonnes of gold and 100 tonnes of silver... The 80-cannon Sussex was part of a British fleet sent to the Mediterranean to contain the expansionist plans of Louis XIV of France, the Sun King. Historians believe it also had the secret task of ferrying a vast sum of gold and silver to buy the loyalty of the Duke of Savoy. The Sussex sank in 1694 in a storm in the Straits of Gibraltar and only two of the 500 soldiers and sailors aboard survived. The body of Admiral Sir Francis Wheeler, who commanded the fleet, was washed up on the Gibraltar shore in a nightshirt. The Duke never received the money and Britain never gained his loyalty... A[US] company, Odyssey Marine Exploration, from Tampa, Florida, has recovered a series of artefacts from the ship that have pointed to its identity.

...The Securities Commission is warning people to steer clear of a sunken treasure scheme off the coast of Indonesia which has already attracted nearly \$1 million in investments. Around 80 N[Z]ers have invested \$520,000 and A[US]ns \$420,000 in the scheme... being promoted by Auckland-based Ocean Salvage Investments Ltd. [Its s]ole director and shareholder, [an AUS]n... formerly of Adelaide but now living in Auckland, was banned for life from the A[US]n securities industry in 1995. In 1998, [the director and shareholder – who]... could not be contacted last night... [-] was convicted of offences in A[US] relating to two illegal fundraising schemes involving sunken treasure and given a four-year suspended jail term.

...[a NZ]er and five A[US]ns are among a group of 48 detained by the Indonesian Navy... [for] hunting treasure from sunken ships... Navy staff took control of two vessels in the waters off Bangka Island... and late last night were towing them to the Indonesian capital... Archaeological objects, porcelain and ceramics had been found in containers on board one of the vessels... [The Navy] said neither of the boats had clearance documents or permission from Indonesian authorities... Indonesian law decrees that any treasure recovered from its waters belongs to the state.

...How to protect the hidden secrets of the world's shipwrecks from destruction by commercial divers has been top of the agenda at an Athens conference. The experts studied guidelines during the weekend to try to safeguard thousands of wrecks in international waters, as ocean floors become increasingly accessible to private salvage crews... Unesco is to hold a meeting in Paris in [two months] aiming to hammer out international consensus on protecting underwater heritage. Disagreements between countries over the cost and methods of wreck protection have delayed an agreement for years. Some countries, like Britain, have too many potential sites to protect, while others have allowed tourists and hobby divers to damage sunken ports and wrecks in shallow water. Archaeologists argue that shipwrecks provide unique insight into the past – about wars, commerce, migration and technology. H[owever, plundering]... is a lot faster than research... The world's most famous sunken ship, the Titanic, is at the heart of the debate. The liner went down in 1912... [and rests] some 4km below the sea's surface... It was reached by underwater explorers 70 years later and has since been the subject of multiple legal battles over display and salvage rights and the attempted sale of artefacts... Unesco's planned agreement would not tackle problems like ownership of salvaged wrecks but, instead, urge Governments to identify sunken ships and leave them in the sea until they could be properly studied. "The... water often provides a stable environment for [the wreck's] future," [Unesco] said.

...A... team... contracted to search for a missing Israeli submarine... discovered what is almost certainly one of maritime archaeology's more important finds... [S]itting 321km to the southwest of Crete in an area known as the Herodotus Abyssal Plain, was the remains of a Greek trading vessel laden with thousands of jars and amphorae used for carrying wine and olive oil. Most are intact – even though the wreck is thought to be 2300 years old. The vessel is believed to be the world's deepest, ancient shipwreck... Nauticos Corp, the... deepwater exploration unit employing... [the team] believes the vessel was travelling directly between the Greek island of Kos and Rhodes to the markets in the Egyptian port of Alexandria.

...a researcher... says... [a] skeleton thought to be that of Alexander the Great's father, Philip of Macedon, is no such thing... [The researcher] thinks the skeleton, unearthed in the Northern Greek farm village of Vergina in 1977, is actually that of one of Alexander's half-brothers... "New skeletal evidence shows that the skeleton belongs to King Philip III Arrhidaeus..." ...Features in the skull thought to be the scars left when an arrow blinded King Philip II, a known historical incident, are actually just normal anatomical quirks, [the] anthropologist... reports in *Science*.

...A Greek farmer has stumbled across a rare gold wreath that could provide more clues about the worship of Dionysus, the ancient god of wine and revelry. Archaeologists are examining the 2350-year-old solid gold ornament, only the third of its kind to be unearthed in Greece.

...the 3000-strong Kalunga community... has lived in virtual isolation in central Brazil since its ancestors, a group of escaped slaves fleeing work in gold mines, settled there in the early 18th century. The remoteness of north Goias state, a rocky mountain region, meant that life for the... Kalunga – the name is from an old Bantu word referring to a supernatural force – ...has stuck in a virtual time warp for 250 years. They have no running water, electricity or telephones, make manioc flour using archaic wooden tools and still sing prayers in Latin and old Portuguese. And they had no road until last year, when the state Government built one. "The road is the most important thing to have happened in my lifetime..." says [a] 66-year-old... "Our suffering has lessened." But while the Kalunga believe their lives have improved, anthropologists worry that contact with modernity will ultimately be catastrophic... [The] professor of anthropology at Brasilia University, argues that the Kalunga stand to lose more than they will gain... The Kalunga may live in poverty, but according to [him]... they have a sense of identity and self-esteem that most other Brazilian blacks lack. This communal pride... would disappear if white[s]... were allowed to develop the area. [The professor] adds that despite any good intentions, Brazil's chaotic and land-owner-biased political system will not give the Kalunga adequate protection against the vested interests of agricultural expansion... A decade ago a power company started to look into the prospect of building a hydroelectric dam which would destroy large parts of the Kalunga region. The Kalunga managed to gain an injunction against the project – although whether they are ultimately successful may depend on whether they can win title of their land before the injunction is judged. [The professor] is pessimistic about the Kalunga's future. "...Probably they are collapsing already..." ...The attitude of anthropologists, however, has irritated the Kalunga, who... can see no suffering greater to what they are already experiencing. "[The anthropologists] want to keep us in slavery," claims... a Kalunga leader... aged 38... Their culture is a mixture of African, Portuguese and Amerindian, because they live in an area that in the past also contained nomadic indigenous tribes. Having glimpsed the outside world, few people wear the home-made smocks that once were common and only the old [gals] remember how to use backyard looms that now lie idle. Some young people who visit the surrounding towns stay and earn a little cash, returning with modern clothes and watches. However, there is still no health post and the Kalunga suffer from preventable diseases and a high post-natal death level.

...Thousands of South American Indians were infected with measles, killing... hundreds and probably thousands... so that U[S] scientists could study the effects on primitive societies of natural selection, according to a new... book, *Darkness in El Dorado*... The astonishing story of genetic

research on humans, which took 10 years to uncover, is likely to shake the world of anthropology to its core... “In its scale, ramifications, and sheer criminality and corruption it is unparalleled in the history of anthropology,”... says... [a] Cornell University... Professor... in a warning letter to... the president of the American Anthropology Association... [The] letter was... trying to warn the A[ssociation] of the impending scandal so the profession could defend itself... Once the epidemic was under way, according to the book, the research team “refused to provide any medical assistance to the sick and dying Yanomami, on explicit orders from... James Neel, the geneticist who headed the long-term project... Neel... insisted to his colleagues that they were only there to observe and record the epidemic, and that they must stick strictly to their roles as scientists...” ...The book was originally scheduled for release next week, but [the publisher has]... delayed publication... so the author could add material. Few people have actually seen the book... But pre-publication copies sent to anthropologists have generated a bitter academic war waged by e-mail. Although Neel died last February aged 84, many of his associates, some of them authors of classic anthropology texts, are still alive... They are now asking colleagues in the field to come to their defence... “[The authors of *Darkness in El Dorado*] have repeatedly accused me of some of these things in the past... This is just a more elaborate extension of their long vendetta against me,”... a University of California-Santa Barbara anthropologist who accompanied Neel on the 1968 expedition... wrote in a message posted on the internet... In his work, [the companion] portrays the Yanomami as violent and prone to constant warfare. [However, the companion] has been accused before of instigating much of the violence [the expedition] observed... One of the most controversial aspects of Neel’s research... is that it was funded by the US atomic energy commission, which was anxious to discover what might happen to communities when large numbers were wiped out by nuclear war... [The Cornell University professor] quotes another anthropologist who read the manuscript as saying: “[*Darkness in El Dorado*]’s analysis is a case study of the dangers in science of the uncontrolled ego, of lack of respect for life, and of greed and self-indulgence. It is a further extra-ordinary revelation of malicious and perverted work conducted under the aegis of the atomic energy commission.” ...Neel and his group used a virulent vaccine called Edmonson B on the Yanomami... “Medical experts, when informed that Neel and his group used the vaccine in question on the Yanomami, typically refuse to believe it at first, then say that it is incredible that they could have done it, and are at a loss to explain why they would have chosen such an inappropriate and dangerous vaccine... There is no record that Neel sought any medical advice before applying the vaccine. [Furthermore, Neel] never informed the appropriate organs of the Venezuelan Government that his group was planning to carry out a vaccination campaign, as [they were] legally required to do. Neither [Neel] nor any other member of the expedition has ever explained why that vaccine was used...” The 1970 account of the inoculation programme in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* says the shots were an attempt to stop an epidemic that had been going on for months. But [*Darkness in El Dorado*] charges... that in isolated populations that had never been exposed to measles, the shots would actually generate the disease... “This nightmarish story – a real anthropological heart of darkness beyond the imagining of even a Joseph Conrad [though not, perhaps, a Josef Mengele] – will be seen, rightly in our view, by the public, as well as most anthropologists, as putting the whole discipline on trial. This book should cause the field to understand how the corrupt and depraved protagonists could have spread their poison for so long while they were accorded great respect throughout the... world. This should never be allowed to happen again.” ...In a statement... the A[ssociation]... said: “The A[ssociation] is extremely concerned about these allegations. If proven true they would constitute a serious violation of Yanomami human rights and our code of ethics. Until there is a full and impartial review and discussion of the issues raised in the book, it would be unfair to express a judgment about the specific allegations...” ...a University of Pennsylvania historian of science, has studied Neel’s field notes of the 1968 expedition and claims they do not support the book’s allegations. Neel’s papers show that [the team] had permission from the Venezuelan Government to administer the shots and also provided antibiotics in an attempt to stop the disease... [Yet, even if the allegations are found to be untrue, Neel was also] well-known for his research into the effects of radiation on human subjects and personally headed the team that investigated the effects of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs on survivors and their children... [T]he same group also secretly carried out experiments on human subjects in the US. These included injecting people with plutonium without their knowledge or permission... Anthropologists consider the Yanomami one of the most isolated indigenous groups remaining in modern times and the best remaining example of Stone Age human society.

...Stone Age Europeans were the first transatlantic sailors. Columbus and the Vikings were mere ocean-crossing latecomers, according to a[n]... anthropologist... of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington[. It] says... Neolithic fisher[s] and hunters sailed the Atlantic in boats made of animal skins 18,000 years ago and colonised the eastern U[S]. Such a journey would represent one of the most astonishing migrations ever undertaken – the Earth was then in the grip of the Ice Age, and much of its high latitudes were blasted by blizzards. On the other hand, much of the planet’s water was locked up in icecaps and sea levels would have been much lower than today’s. The edges of continents would have extended further into the oceans. “It could have been quite feasible... to sail around the southern rim of the ice packs... that covered the North Atlantic and reach land around the Banks of Newfoundland,”... [His] theory, outlined at an archaeology conference in Santa Fe, is based on discoveries indicating that ancient American people were culturally far more like the Neolithic tribes of France, Spain and Ireland than the Asian people whom scientists had previously thought to be the sole prehistoric settlers of North America... [A]lthough modern Native Americans possess DNA similar to that of Asians, they also carry some variants that are found only in European people. This genetic input could only be explained by accepting that Stone Age people were capable of sailing ocean-going boats, [the anthropologist] said. The theory that prehistoric Europeans colonised America was first put forward in the 1950s... but was discredited by evidence supporting the notion that the continent was populated 20,000 to 15,000 years ago by Asian incomers who walked across the land bridge that then linked Siberia with Alaska. [The archaeologist] does not disagree that Asian folk colonised ancient America, but argues that present genetic and archaeological evidence shows an influx of Europeans must have taken place. And the prime candidates for these incomers are the Solutrean people who lived in Spain 23,000 to 18,000 years ago and who later colonised parts of France and Ireland. They designed and made beautifully crafted fluted stone blades which bore a striking similarity to those made by the Clovis people who lived in America 11,000 years ago... [This means that] Native Americans are Iberian, not Siberian, in origin. The idea has startled palaeontologists and anthropologists. Some support [the theory], some do not... [A p]alaeontologist... of the Natural History Museum in London, said the evidence was far from convincing. “Clovis and Solutrean spear points and stone blades are alike, but the similarity is superficial...”

...A bamboo raft journey from Indonesia to A[US], which was to prove that A[US]’s first residents could have sailed there between 100,000 and 700,000 years ago, failed just five hours after leaving the island of Roti. [Its] British skipper... blamed El Nino’s effect on currents and winds.

...[‘8th century Arab explorers’ could have visited NZ, some people suggest, and a solitary rock carving is alleged to be evidence that ‘Phonecians explored NZ in 600BC’! ■ The *kiore*, or ‘Polynesian rat, is thought to have originated from Asia.’ A Christchurch scientist claims that some ‘arrived in NZ with Buddhists – an outrigger canoe is depicted on one of the holiest Buddhist shrines’ (the Buddhist link with NZ may come from ‘11th century Tamil traders’). ‘However, according to Maori tradition, the Polynesian rat came to NZ in one of the canoes of a “great migration” in the 14th century, about AD1350.’

...‘Polynesian seafarers may have fetched up in NZ 2000 years ago but scientists say they can now determine the date they decided to stay for good. Researchers in three separate disciplines worked together to conclude that settlement of NZ took place no earlier than AD1250. The findings challenge a decade-old theory of an Auckland University archaeologist that the first arrival of humans was about 1000 years ago. They also call into question the conclusions of a Christchurch scientist who used radiocarbon testing of *kiore* bones to suggest that people might have been here 2000 years ago. The radiocarbon method, in the spotlight over the *kiore* rat-bone dating, was reapplied “exhaustively” at a range of archaeological sites. Over 200 dates showed very close agreement, falling between 1300 and 1400. The finding was supported by a second study involving pollen analysis of sediments from lakes and peat bogs in the North Island that contain a very distinctive layer of volcanic ash known as Kaharoa – which came from an eruption between 1300 and

1400. The first detectable impact of humans was massive burnings of forest by early Polynesian settlers which took place close to the time the ash was deposited. A Waikato University scientist said strengthening the case was that no one had yet found any archaeological remains sealed beneath the ash.'

...NZ has a story which in some ways is the most interesting of any of the countries of the world. Long before the first Maori ran his canoe upon the beach and gazed around him in wonder, for age upon age the great forests had rustled in the breeze while a myriad of song birds, unheard by human ear, had chanted their morning and evening hymns of praise. But the forests, and the birds who dwelt in them, were themselves but late-comers. Geologists and naturalists tell us that three hundreds of millions of years ago NZ was lying at the bottom of the sea, the waves breaking here and there upon some lonely barren mountain peak thrusting itself up into the sun and wind and rain. During these millions of years NZ had several times risen slowly above the sea, sunk beneath the waves, and risen again. Once the land kept rising until it is thought that at length it may have joined up with Tasmania and AUS on one side and the Chatham Islands on the other, forming part of a great continent. It is also thought that, as well as being joined in the west to AUS, NZ may at some time have been linked up, by way of the Antarctic, with South America in the east.' ●] **The bar-tailed godwit... has been acclaimed as the long-distance flight champion of the bird kingdom... complet[ing] the 12,300km journey... from Alaska to N[Z] in... six... days... Maori legend has it that it was their forefathers' observations of the godwit flying south over the Pacific that made them take to their war canoes to find land.**

...A pigeon's ability to find its way home from distant and unfamiliar locations, even after it has been drugged, has been explained for the first time by two N[Z] scientists... They... found that homing pigeons returned home by a sort of ingrained GPS system, responding to markers on the Earth's magnetic field... Scientists recently discovered that migrating birds may be able to "see" the Earth's magnetic field, helping them orientate themselves. Molecules known as cryptochromes in the retina of the[ir]... eyes react to the magnetic field... and other animals all have... [t]his... sixth sense[. Incidentally, 'people arrived in NZ from eastern Polynesia, possibly in the 9th century. These population movements were accidental voyages made by adventurous seafarers, defeated warriors or wind-blown fishers. By the 11th century they had explored much of the east coasts of both main islands']...

It is odd where a journey through the interior landscape that is the human body's genetic make-up can lead... Two months ago... ground-breaking research... provided compelling genetic evidence that Maori settlement in... [NZ] 800 years ago was the outcome of deliberate quest, not random wayfaring... Tracing mitochondrial DNA... and linking it with archaeological evidence... came up with a "conservative estimate" of 70 [gals] as the nucleus of the people who... set out for Aotearoa... "[A] lot of random canoes would have had to have been blown ashore to accommodate the number... calculated." ...Trace... the [mitochondrial] line... back through... to Eastern Africa from where the African Eve, mother of us all, originated and there are 44 variants of this particular gene. As people migrated the number of gene variants was reduced; Maori... were probably the last major group of people to migrate [and]... have the least number of variants of any group of people: just four...

Archaeologists, who differ on their views on when N[Z] was first colonised, also disagree on the credibility of... the... Christchurch scientist... [who] announced his belief that the Polynesian rat, or kioere, may have been brought by people who came here about 2000 years ago... although many accept the possibility of there being two separate dates – one for a transient first contact by Polynesian voyagers, and another, later date that marks the beginning of settlement, or continuous occupation. Some, cynically, refer to the "ratification" of dates... The makers of tonight's *Documentary N[Z]: Who Was Here Before Us?* (TV One, 8.30 pm) couldn't go wrong because they started with such a great question. The programme canvasses a range of theories about who arrived in N[Z] first and when, from the orthodox to the downright silly. All these stories, whether there is scientific evidence to back them up or not, make for fascinating [TV]... despite the documentary managing to tell the tales poorly.

...this land of white cloud and shining mists was... the last great land mass on Earth to be discovered and settled... But... "...who were the first N[Z]ers? ...of course, until 1950... we knew for a fact who they were, where they had come from, what their names were. The only problem was, we were wrong." ...Who was here before us is N[Z]'s oldest and most puzzling mystery... [T]he laboratories of the 21st century... [are] where researchers have taken the first [official] steps towards unravelling our pre-historic riddles... But there is a second search underway – one in which... amateur archaeologists and historians are on an unconventional quest in search of a pre-Maori civilisation... with links to the pharaohs of Egypt and the Celtic Britons of Stonehenge. They are searching for signs of an ancient race known as the Stone People... Orthodox historians say these theories are flights of fancy... [Although 'in recent years the case for Portuguese sailor Jean Rotz coming here in the 16th C. has been put most strongly', 't]he current orthodox theory... is... that the first ancestors of the Maori people arrived here... [1000] years ago – as probably the last step in a series of travels across Polynesia and simply lived here, in splendid isolation as it were, right up until 1769..." But this theory is under threat... from the amateur researchers and explorers who scour the countryside... [F]rom time to time strange things appear which cannot be forced into the accepted way of things. Things like [an] eerie statue which emerged from the Kaipara sand dunes... "In 1991 there'd been quite a storm," says the]... curator of the Dargaville Museum[– who] has spent a lifetime looking for the earliest settlements in... [NZ – "and an] ex-neighbour of ours... happened to be walking over the... dunes... the next day... and... here was this... carved statue laying on the... ground where it'd been scoured. It was a fantastic find really. I'd heard about the ancient... people of the Kaipara, and here was one of their statues... [T]he main feature of this particular carving – there's no other one like it anywhere in N[Z; although]... 20 years ago... another 7 [were] found still in the upright position... [b]ut, unfortunately, within a day they'd covered over again and they're still... buried under the sand... [– is] it's got a 5-fingered hand. All... known Maori carvings... have a 3-fingered hand... Unfortunately from the mouth up is missing... If only [it] could speak." But is [a] piece of unusual art evidence of a different culture? ..."People are always finding... certain things are not typically Maori, and jumping to conclusions that they might relate to vanished tribes... But... you have to look at the things we find in N[Z] and the broader Polynesian context and, generally, you come down to thinking [that] all of the things are comfortably in the range of what we could expect to be Maori[," says one academic. Another points out:] "Over... those few hundred years that people were here, they were immensely creative... They changed their clothing, their jewellery, their language, their methods of cultivation... the nature of their fortifications, [and] they created new traditions in art." "There were creative people always in Maori society. Some of them pushed the boundaries a bit and made things that... weren't right in the mainstream but still fit within the Maori or Polynesian tradition." ...amateur archaeologists are quite happy to fly in the face of th[ose] opinions. The curator]... says there's concrete evidence of older civilisations... "...From the Hokianga down [to] the Kaipara... there are pre-Maori sites. My family has been... here for 5 generations and there's always been talk of [a] hidden village... we believe now would have covered an area of... 2 to 3 sq miles. It goes back [1000 to 2000] years going on oral history, but until any archaeological work [is] done on the site... we're just hazarding a guess... [There's a] dam... just on... [100] foot across... dug out with old stone tools in the sandstone to form a basin to hold the water coming over... [a waterfall. The village] must have hosted 3[000 to 4000] people in its heyday..." In what might just seem to be a tangle of bush and rock mounds, [the curator] sees signs of pre-Maori folk. And [it] believes there is evidence of an even larger settlement hidden in the nearby Waipoua Forest – a place [the curator] has photographed in the past but is now barred from. "Up in the Waipoua Forest... there is hundreds of acres of stoneworks... – stone terracing, stone walls, altars, fire places. They're a very early peoples.'" Local sensitivities are such that... [Maori] elders... told us they wouldn't dignify any theories of pre-Maori [people] by discussing them or allowing filming. They're angry that people are desecrating areas of great importance to local iwi. Unfortunately, the veil of secrecy has only fuelled speculation... The Department of Conservation says... archaeologists did fully survey the area... 12 or 14 years ago... but they found nothing pre-Maori. "There's certainly a large amount of stonework there... but... [someone] who worked there for first the Forest Service and then DoC for several years... got dates from excavations... and his interpretation of the dates was that the area was settled and cleared for gardening in... the 15th century." ...[one researcher]'s studies are to try and prove [human habitation of NZ] goes back much further than that. "I'm... [convinced t]here were people here prior to the main arrival of Maori from the Pacific, and that these people may have been here for... 4000 years. Trying to string together hard evidence is not easy, and we've journeyed extensively throughout the North and

South Island[s], looking at ancient sites... looking at rock carvings... at stacked stones. So it's a very long journey that we're on and I feel that we're only part way there." ...Deep in the primeval forests of the volcanic plateau stands a structure which looks [hu]man-made – a monumental stone wall. For [the researcher], the Kaimanawa Wall provides the tantalising possibility of more evidence of a pre-Maori race. "I believe that the Kaimanawa Wall is very significant to the ancient people. I've visited [it] on numerous occasions, and in doing so I have met a number of people from all persuasions there, and they all have their own interpretation of the wall... [which first] came into prominence about April 1996. At that stage it was being promoted as a [hu]man-made structure... possibly built at [an]... age of great antiquity... People were immediately comparing it to things they'd seen in South American and... in Mediterranean areas. There are many levels of the stone. Some people have likened th[e level]s to a stepped pyramid..." ...one academic disagrees[with such statements]... "...The... so-called pyramid structures are just one big hoax – they are natural rock formations." [A geologist concurs:] "...The eye is deceived by [a] fairly horizontal... fracture... which gives the impression of a very block-like structure and the illusion that it's a wall, but when you look more closely you can see... blocks... th[at a]re not square... at all – they angle off at the top in a much more natural profile. In the area there are many other outcrops with similar fracture patterns..." Nature may claim the wall as her own but... [on a] remote spot, high on the coast in Northland, [another amateur]'s search is telling him that the scientists will have to rewrite our early history. [The amateur s]targazer... is not a scientist – [and] has little time for the orthodox view. Scientists, [the stargazer] believes, are not far-sighted enough. "I've known for about 25 years that there was an ancient, pre-Maori culture in N[Z], and I've waited with anticipation for the academics to enlighten the rest of us about this. Basically, I got sick of waiting, so I decided to go out... and start doing some research myself." ...[at the remote spot, the stargazer] has found complex patterns and alignments of stones, and come to a truly astronomical conclusion. "I plotted the positions of over 600... individual stones, and then worked for many months trying to work out the geometry and measurement standards that... were us[ed]... I've had moments of elation, especially in front of the computer screen, when I started to... [see] beautiful star patterns... [T]here's an 8-pointed star on the site which gives you the primary points... plus your secondary points... of the compass. The site itself is composed of 2 great circles – each circle is 192 ft across – and the circles dissect each other... In order to understand the significance of the... site, the first realisation you've got to come to is that there is nothing Maori about it – it is not related to any of the Polynesian groups. What I see on the site is typically... pre-Celtic... [The] site... is exactly the same width as the... circle at Stonehenge..." But [the stargazer]'s passion and his complex calculations are not enough to sway the scientists who, in the end, just see a pile of rocks – no matter how curiously arranged they are. "In the DNA of Polynesians, in Maori artefacts, in all the marvellous work done on the reconstruction of Maori and pre-Maori languages in the Pacific, there isn't a [thread] of evidence for [a] Celtic presence. Alignments of rocks occur in nature. Nature is a highly structured system – any kind of structure can be found in geological forms, in alignments of trees... The question is: what does it mean historically? The answer is: it does not mean the Celts were here first – that's for sure." "There will always be non-believers," responds the stargazer, "[e]specially among academia. They seem very, very reluctant to accept any new ideas or... anything that changes the status quo. What I say to those individuals is get out and check it out and do some true scholarly research." Scientists reply: we need facts not theories. The wild theories of the past led to some of the misconceptions we all grew up with – misconceptions that were nothing more than the artistic inventions of early Europeans. For generations, school children were taught that N[Z] was first colonised by a great fleet of 7 canoes – which journeyed from the legendary homeland of Hawaiki, somewhere in the Pacific. Victorian artists of the day had Maori arriving as starving castaways... "That's a figment of the imagination. There was no[t]... a whole lot of... yachts going in the same direction at about the same time. It was never like that. [The story] came from the... deliberate... misinterpretation... of Maori traditional stories by amateur [historians of the 19th] century." Whatever his motives, amateur historian Percy Smith took Maori oral traditions and forged them into a European-style history. In doing so, [Smith] created one of N[Z]'s most enduring myths. It's a myth that many of us – Maori as well as Pakeha – accept as fact even today... Another story with more sinister overtones concerned the Moriori – sometimes spoken of as the Moa-hunters. This idea of a technologically inferior and weaker people displaced by invading Maori... provided a convenient parallel to what Europeans were doing to Maori at the time. "The accepted understanding of the Moriori is that they were a group of Polynesian people who were isolated in the Chatham Islands before European contact. Moriori is their own name for themselves. It's often been suggested that they were chased out of N[Z] by later Maori invaders, and sometimes been suggested that they weren't Polynesian at all. [It c]ertainly seems likely that they're a group of early Maori people who... probably... got... blown away from the east coast of N[Z], reached the Chatham Islands and couldn't get back. And they remained there... and developed a very interesting and very successful adaptation to a very difficult environment." The Moriori living on the Chathams may have developed along different lines to mainland Maori, but there is no indication they were in any way a separate or more ancient race. It was yet another Victorian theory completely lacking in the facts to support it. "I think in the colonial history of N[Z] you had science in one corner and Maori tradition in the other, and what happened was that science appropriated Maori tradition. And it simply reinterpreted the whole thing, and made it something which it was never intended to be." Pre-history has always provided fertile ground for speculation. The only safe route for science is to look for the hard evidence – human impact on the land. People – ancient and modern – leave signs. It's the job of the trained eye to find traces of that older past hidden amongst the new... [K]umara pits and terracing [on Auckland's One Tree Hill] are the hard proof needed to show people were here – in this case, early Pa Maori. The signs of how people first got here are... harder to find... In crossing the Pacific, the first N[Z]ers made some of the most astonishing sea voyages of all time. How did they do it? For many years, early N[Z] scholars refused to accept that a people some considered barely out of the Stone Age could cover the vast distances of the Pacific in a sailing craft, using only the naked eye and primitive navigation techniques for guidance – that is, until... [an a]nthropologist and adventurer... strapped himself to a raft and took on the Pacific... [The adventurer] believed the islands of Polynesia had been settled from South America... [so it] sailed a balsa-log raft from Peru to Eastern Polynesia in support of his theory... [The adventurer] was convinced by the presence of kumara and other South American plants throughout Polynesia, as well as by the fact that it was the prevailing wind, that people simply must have come from that direction... His voyage aboard the Kon-Tiki proved it could be done. But did that mean it really happened that way? ...Bits of crockery... that the first explorers left scattered behind them told a very different story... Scientists were interested in the... pottery because it was the first archaeological evidence of the earliest human presence in the Pacific... [Those] scraps of pottery revealed the real truth about the direction from which those first people had come. "When you look at the dates of [the pottery], the oldest are in the west – maybe [3500] years old – and the youngest are in the east in Samoa... Hawaii and Easter Island..." ...And the linguistic map – the way in which languages develop and change – follows the same pattern as the pottery... Centuries later... common links to Maori can still be heard in languages as geographically distant as the Philippines... "The brilliant work which has been done on the history of the languages spoken in the eastern and central Pacific shows fairly clearly now that these languages had their origins in Taiwan 8[000 or 10,000] years ago – and that what you have then, at the end of the Ice Age in east Asia, is a movement of maritime peoples south, through the great archipelagoes... and... ultimately... they came... upon the north coast of New Guinea... [They then] spread along that coast, ever eastwards, but at a certain point they came across the last great human frontier on the globe – that is to say, the last vast area containing nobody. And at that point they surged ever further eastwards, out into the Pacific... using very smart boats – fast, double-hulled canoes that they had developed... At some point, it is suggested, they got to the coast of the Americas and brought back the sweet potato[(kumara)]. Having settled all of the equatorial islands – and one does mean all of them, and there are thousands – they then swept south and west... [A]t that point – and we don't know quite when – they found N[Z]. This is a very remarkable epic." ...To reach here the first N[Z]ers would be sailing into the face of both wind and current... [so] to modern-day sailors the... early... Polynesian explor[ers]... seem to be travelling in the wrong direction – the hardest direction... [However, a] combination of science, sea[person]ship and psychology produced a

breakthrough for [one archaeologist]. “While I was travelling across the Pacific on a research trip I had a brainwave. If you put yourself in the position of these first colonists – they knew what lay behind them, they didn’t know what lay ahead. They knew that if they sailed too far they mightn’t get back. The safest direction in which to sail is against the prevailing winds, because in the event of not finding land you are assured of the safest possible return...” But [the archaeologist] still needed to test his theory. “So three of us here in the university... programmed in[to]... the computer... a map of the Pacific, and we put in the weather that you could normally expect by month, and we set off many hundreds of thousands of simulated voyages... [T]he first strategy was sending canoes off in... random directions... [T]hat simply didn’t get the islands settled. So we knew that people weren’t exploring at random. And the second strategy that we used was to set off canoes in directions which were chosen by the navigator on board the canoe – but these were one-way voyages. Now what we found was that if you go out searching empty ocean on one-way voyages then the death-rate is huge, and it looks as if... colonisation couldn’t have supported such a high death-rate.” Only one strategy worked – when canoes searched areas from which they knew they could return... There was no point in exploration if you weren’t going to survive the journey. Survival was also why N[Z] was the last place on Earth to be settled – it was the hardest to get back from. No bedraggled castaways settled Aotearoa guided by guesswork and hope. The sailors who first arrived here had to be confident they could get here, or home again if they failed... It seems remarkable that sailors able to criss-cross the Pacific would, on their arrival in N[Z], seem to forget where they came from. So mysterious would Hawaiki’s... location... become that many believe it is a made up name – a mythical place with no real meaning. [However, c]lues... have come from an unlikely quarter – another immigrant, a rodent once found all over N[Z], but definitely not a native... “Basically, the... Polynesian rat... had to get to N[Z] with people. They are not strong swimmers. They are not even good floaters on objects – studies have shown that as soon as... the surface of the object gets wet, the rat will jump off, swim around in a circle and drown. It has been suggested that they possibly drifted to N[Z] in canoes – unaccompanied by people – but that’s highly unlikely...” The rats were once a common food source. Their bones have been excavated from archaeological sites all around the country... Using techniques similar to those used to trace human lineages, scientists are studying rat DNA from samples taken from all over the Pacific. They’re looking for populations from other islands where the DNA is most closely related to N[Z] rats. “Basically, we found a high degree of variation in N[Z] rat... DNA, and the most closely related... [DNA was] in the southern Cook Islands and the Society Islands. So it looks like there were multiple introductions of rats from those locations to N[Z]. We also found a close relationship between N[Z], the Kermadec Islands... and the southern Cooks, so it almost looks like there was a stepping stone.” ...While a tiny creature helped solve one mystery... the scientific search [into when they arrived] continues looking for the hard facts. And this time they find them quite literally written in blood. N[Z] in the 21st century is a rich amalgam of people from all over the world. After all these years it seems impossible that we could discover just how many people it took to first colonise this nation. But... new technology has provided an answer... “The history of the human race is written in our DNA... The sequence... just... [uses] the... letters... A, C, G and T. But... the arrangement of those... [letters makes] words, and putting together the words... make[s]... sentences. And the difference between your DNA and my DNA is very small...” Those differences, locked in our blood cells, can be seen in something called mitochondrial DNA. It’s a genetic marker that is only passed down from mother to daughter... It’s like an invisible name-tag. “And, therefore, you can trace the migration of [gals] as they move around the globe... And from this we were able to calculate that there was – as a conservative estimate – 70 [gals] who were needed to found the population of N[Z]...” 70 or so founding mothers tells us a lot about the original Maori journey. It couldn’t have been a lone canoe... blown disastrously off course, or... 2 canoes making the hazardous journey. Those who came here came intentionally. They came to settle and to colonise this new land... But that number of 70... presupposes an arrival date of... 800 years ago... The [supporting] evidence... scientists... say, is... under grassy slopes covering a vanished forest in central Otago. “When we dig and bring up samples of soil we find... a... layer... of... charcoal [which] represents beech trees...” When the first people got here they immediately began clearing the land for use. Charcoal deposits are all that’s left of our ancient forests – felled for timber, cleared for cultivation, or to make hunting easier. In the process, vast areas of South Island forests were destroyed... Before [the arrival of people] the forest would sometimes have caught alight through natural causes, such as lightning strikes. But the difference between natural fires and human burnoffs is simple – people burn the land again and again. “Lightning-induced fires almost certainly would have been very rare events – perhaps once in a millennium. Once the human-caused fires began they may have been occurring... every 20 or 30 years. [The forest] was just burnt so often that the seed sources were lost... and the grass took over. And once the grass and fern takes over it’s very difficult for the forest to come back again.” To establish when those very first fires were set, samples of charcoal and pollen were taken to be radiocarbon-dated... The dates from the charcoal, and from bone and shell samples taken from archaeological sites, are remarkably consistent. “It’s very rare that you get archaeological dates which predate 1200 to 1300AD...” [However, c]arbon dating has limits. Scientists can date only biological material. But N[Z]’s fiery geology has provided one scientist with further clues to the date of human arrival. [The scientist] has been looking under a volcano. “I... study layers of volcanic ash, and this is a way of travelling back in time – as the layers build up, one on top of the other, after each eruption. And so we can look at... section[s] of ash and work]... out... which volcano they came from and[, therefore,] when they were erupted...” [An] eruption around 1350AD spewed material in a huge column 30km into the air... It threw a distinctive volcanic ash... for hundreds of kilometres in every direction... The ash layer is in a sense marking a moment in time solid. Anything below it must be older than 1350. If people were here before then, evidence would have to be found beneath the ash. “And in fact we find that there are no known archaeological sites anywhere in the North Island with any deposits beneath the [1350 ash layer]. So in fact there are no archaeological sites older than 1350AD.” ...But have people truly only touched this land so recently? It’s a question that is still not answered categorically... The 19th century English colonisation of N[Z] brought the dawn of scientific method to this country. As the European Sun rose, other histories were relegated to the shadows – but not forgotten... [One person’s] conversion from modern... lecturer in history... to champion of a much older and more elaborate tale came after meeting some of the elders of N[Z]’s Waitaha people. “At that time I was just taking my first steps into another world. I was totally committed and convinced around the whole view of the past that was what you’d call the standard version. I was schooled in that and I believed in it.” [The lecturer] was to become a student of a far more ancient school, and hear an extraordinary tale of peoples coming to N[Z] from all over the globe – coming to form something known as the Waitaha Nation over 2000 years ago... [T]he Waitaha people... say they... quietly survived centuries of invasions... [and] they can trace their ancestry back an amazing 67 generations... “...When the elders of Waitaha asked me to tell their story they opened the doors to 3000 songs. Some of these songs were so ancient that the language in which they were... recorded doesn’t compare with modern Maori... I believe in time we will discover that... we have a history that goes far deeper than we ever imagined... There were 3 peoples who established the Nation of Waitaha – peoples out of Africa... the Stone People who came... out of Asia and... the people who... were... white-skinned, blue-eyed, hazel-eyed, red-headed people...” [The lecturer] says the Waitaha have jealously guarded their amazing tale until recently, and they say there are even more startling revelations – but they must wait until just the right time to reveal them... But [the lecturer]’s beliefs are based on folklore. Has [the lecturer] repeated the 19th century mistakes of... confus[ing]... oral history with actual fact? How true can stories remain if they’ve been handed down[orally] over thousands of years? “Oral traditions have got a cultural purpose, which is not about recording history – they are there to establish relationships between people; to tie people to the land and so on. They’re not there to talk about dates and when people came and what they did when they got here.” “People embellish things. That’s the same for even Captain Cook and his writers of the time. [Abel] Tasman, for example, talks about finding... a huge continent. [Tasman] saw giants striding the hillsides... heard people speaking in guttural tones and blowing... trumpets. Now that sounds very mythological to me and it’s all written.” ...Historically, the Waitaha are seen as a group within N[Z]’s Nga Tahu people – or, more accurately, one of 3 lines of descent that make up this large Maori tribe. Nga Tahu certainly see it that way. “There’s a huge gap between

what we would call authentic Waitaha tradition and the New Age Waitaha Nation myths. What I would say to people who say they came here 67 generations ago is that clearly in the old tribal traditions – and the records that... the Waitaha ancestors wrote down... – ...Waitaha came here approximately 44 generations ago...” [the Waitaha response is predictable:] “A great many people say we don’t exist. The law of this land says we don’t exist. The Ministry of [Waitangi] Treaty Settlements say we don’t exist. But we are here – our oral traditions are here, still alive and well, and resting with people who are carrying on that tradition.” Tradition and science have never been easy allies in the puzzle of N[Z’s] pre-history. Radiocarbon dates and the geological record have sided against the Waitaha stories. But recently [a] biologist... quite literally smelt a rat in the accepted scientific picture. “I’m an extinction biologist, and one of the main thrusts of my research is to find out when the first predators arrived in N[Z].” In 1996, the biologist... excavated a rat bone from a site in the South Island and submitted it for carbon dating. The result was completely unexpected. “...The first series of dates showed that... rats had been in the South Island for at least 2000 years. This is completely contrary to the accepted dogma... So, whoever brought the rats must have... visited both the North and South Islands 2000 years ago.” That date was so early, scientists questioned the carbon dates. Some other form of proof was required. [A] cave in Hawkes Bay was buried in volcanic ash from the massive Taupo eruption 1800 years ago... “...There was a bone which had been collected from beneath the ash, and I dated that bone. And the date was consistent with... the rat having died before the ash fell... [T]he rats... were [definitely] brought by people, [who apparently] didn’t stay... I don’t know whether they stayed here any time – you cannot tell that from a rat bone...” [The] rats raise more questions than they answer. Did people arrive here at the time of Christ and then for some reason leave again; did the very first N[Z]ers die, leaving their rodent stowaways to flourish here after them; or will we one day find the missing evidence that people like the Waitaha survived here? The scientific community is split. “My view... is that people could have been here at any time within the last 2[500] years. That is because for the whole of that period – if not longer – people have been within 10 days sailing of N[Z]. And, therefore, in logic it’s possible they were here.” “If people did arrive here, then they were in such tiny numbers as to be archaeologically invisible. And, therefore, we cannot prove or disprove they were here.” ...a former mayor of the Auckland Astronomical Society, [who has]... been working on this for 24 years[, believes]... there’s no doubt at all... that there were civilisations... [-] with obvious intellect... [-] here a long time before either the Europeans or the Maori... “...whether they were wiped out or not, do you think that it’s going to... make a difference to the future of N[Z]...?” “One would hope... that it will be investigated properly... by the academics or archaeologists... because it is our history... and it is important that it be known. At the moment it is not known.” “...We’re looking... at little bits and pieces of the huge picture, and I think we’ve got to keep our mind open to what’s still to appear.” “...The most interesting thing about [re]search is that no one ever gets to the end of any story. There’s still room to find out more.”

There is still room to find out more about, for example, how to: prevent and cure illnesses or physical disabilities (or improve existing treatments – but, since most healthy bodies already contain their own natural nanobots, which are called white blood cells, *nanotechnology* shouldn’t need to be a field of medical research; neither does *cryobiology*, unless the technology is being developed to aid operations on live patients, to preserve dead bodies for medical studies or for trainee surgeons to practise on, or to preserve donated organs for transplants; and nor does cloning of humans or other animals, although cloning plants is okay – r:p2084, ln55); produce plastics and other materials from plant fibres; generate or store energy. Uniting scientific activities under one worldwide ministry should help to make advances in these and other important areas come more rapidly. The rate at which this ministry produces useful technological improvements would also be assisted by eliminating endeavour in unimportant or potentially dangerous areas of research. The weapons industry has already been mentioned as one example – r:p2643, ln9 (note that Leonardo da Vinci, who proclaimed that ‘there is no certainty where one can neither apply any of the mathematical sciences, nor any of those which are based upon the mathematical sciences’, ‘hated war, calling it “beastly madness”; even in this the supreme example of a Renaissance person seems to anticipate many scientists of the 20th century – abhorring war and yet putting his great genius into its employ’) – and others are the fields of *anthropology*, *archaeology*, *palaeontology*, *astronomy*, *cosmology*. People could still try to find out more about past life-forms, societies or the Universe – especially if they have access to relevant astronomical equipment, or don’t adversely affect the environment by digging it up (preferably, they will only be given permission to dig up fossils or artefacts which have been partially uncovered by natural earth movements) – but only in their own spare time (i.e. as a hobby) and district. The Science Ministry ought to only employ people to work on projects that are directly relevant or beneficial to present and future generations. Eliminating unnecessary projects will either mean that more scientists are available to work on necessary projects, or that the Science Ministry can make many of the existing scientists and researchers redundant.

By the time the working week has been reduced to 24 hours, individuals would have more spare time in which to think about new theories or technology. If someone who doesn’t already work for the Science Ministry comes up with a new idea, that someone should be allowed to present it to the Science Ministry. If the Science Ministry accepts that the idea is worth pursuing, the someone (and, perhaps, some colleagues) might be transferred to the Science Ministry in order to participate on the project (in some instances – e.g., when relevant equipment is only located in one or a few districts and can’t be shifted – this may mean that the someone has to move to another district) – then, if the project is of limited duration, remain with the Science Ministry or return to its original ministry (and, if possible, its original position).

An idea would be considered *worth pursuing* if it improves the performance of one or more ministries, or if it creates a product that citizens need to have. However, when it comes to creating products that citizens need, the need to distribute the product evenly has to be taken into consideration (if it is a new or improved household appliance, production could be commenced in order to supply the appliance to new housing – so, by the time every existing house has been replaced, every house ought to have the appliance; likewise, only when it comes time to rebuild factories which produce an existing model should they be replaced with factories that produce the improved model – r:p2203, ln6-8), and the value of the product has to be balanced against the cost in resources to manufacture it. It may be that the new product is considered unnecessary because bare hands or an existing product can perform the task satisfactorily. The same argument should be applied to the introduction of new products to be used by ministries. Obviously, all existing patents would become public property.

Science Ministry facilities (e.g., laboratories) should be situated adjacent to – or at least be affiliated with – district job-training institutes. This means that some of the time trainees spend on a course could involve acting as assistants on science projects which are relevant to the ministry they will eventually be working for. People who are in-between jobs (r:p1952, ln3-5) and near-retirees (r:p2645, ln47) might also be temporarily utilised as assistants by the Science Ministry. The Science Ministry could update and maintain (or replace) museums throughout the future, especially if they are deemed to be useful for educational purposes (this may include significant archaeological sites – the ‘Sphinx, which is losing its skin at the rate of 30cm each century’, is currently being ‘done up in the hope of attracting more tourists’, while ‘many of Egypt’s ancient pyramids and tombs have been encased in glass to preserve them because their inside walls are crumbling due to the excessive amount of moisture created by having large numbers of breathing tourists pass through them’; note that there is no justification for maintaining art galleries and their contents – which can, while they remain presentable, instead be displayed in or hung on the walls of public buildings, especially museums, libraries or schools). By the way, if high school students are informed about improvements in knowledge and technology, this would help to assimilate new ideas into society (e.g., the high school students can pass the information on to their parents – r:p1924, ln43; the students will be aware of new ideas and technology before they have to use them during training or when they start working).

It is possible that a time will arrive when improvements to existing technology can no longer be made (incidentally, because the human species has over the past several million years evolved from apes into its present form, and other species have also changed their physical appearance over millions of years, it has been inferred that our species will continue to undergo physical changes throughout the future – yet, since the physical appearance of some species

has undergone little or no change over hundreds of millions of years, it is possible that the human body has evolved as much as it needs or is able to and, hence, will stay much the same regardless of whether the species continues to exist for another billion years or trillions of years). In which case, there would be little or no requirement for a Science Ministry. However, if such a time arrives – and human society is able to spare the resources – the ministry might start to commence (or reopen) projects that have no immediate benefit but may be of interest to humanity or have the potential to become beneficial in future. Examples are the fields of *astronomy* and *space technology*. Absolute knowledge of the how the Universe operates has little direct relevance to existing humans, or any future humans for that matter – which means *cosmology* isn't likely to ever become useful – but, although statistically (and from a religious perspective) Earth is unlikely to be struck by a large asteroid or comet in the immediate future (and when most of society's food is being grown in climatically-controlled glasshouses, the effects of such a strike on humanity ought to be less severe – assuming the majority of such structures survive the initial impact), developing the capacity to track and destroy large Earth-bound objects could become a valid work-activity once humanity is no longer threatened by self-caused disasters such as nuclear or biological warfare, epidemics, catastrophic degradation of the environment and its resources, the ozone layer, etc.

Apart from launching satellites, the only requirement for space technology prior to its use as a defence against comets and asteroids – something that it should be possible to achieve via existing technology – is, perhaps, to send radioactive and other non-recyclable waste to the Sun (r:p2219, ln69). Therefore, assuming humans can control their population and avoid causing an ecological catastrophe, they will only need to develop superior space technology (i.e., the means to travel quickly between our neighbouring planets or far beyond the Solar System) when the Sun has grown to a size which renders Earth unsuitable for mammals. However, if Earth is revered it is going to be at least *a few hundred million years* before humans need to abandon this planet, which means there ought to be plenty of time to perfect such technology (and to work out how to overcome the fact that human bodies aren't suitable for space travel). Yet, if space-travelling aliens exist ('there are over 300 NZers who have registered themselves as being aliens'!) they might be able to share the technology with humans (or simply ferry humans to safe and habitable planets using their own craft) – and, in the meantime, protect Earth from rogue comets and asteroids; safely rid Earth of radioactive wastes (which they may be able to use) or help us in other ways (e.g., share their energy-generating technology; medical technology).

WE are already here, among you. Some of us have always been here... watching, and occasionally guiding you whenever the opportunity arose... We have been confused with the gods of many world-religions, although we are not gods, but your fellow creatures... Now... our numbers have been increased in preparation for a further step in the development of your planet: a step of which you are not yet aware, although it has been hinted at frequently enough in the parables of your prophets, who have garbled whatever inspiration th[at has] been... implanted in their minds... Since... we established our headquarters... in... ancient Egypt... upon the occasion of our last... public appearance... the whole art of building, in stone, has become symbolic, to many of you, of the work at hand – the building of the human race towards its perfection. - 1947

Even while you read this, interplanetary space-ships are rebuilding a world grid system from which... they can draw motive power, and they are possibly also using the grid for navigational purposes on the planetary surface. When I say *re-building*, I mean exactly that, because my investigations show... an earlier grid existed way back in history. Somehow it was destroyed[– probably by the shifting of Earth's crust over the millennia –] and the remains that are buried under the Earth are now being repaired and reconstructed... I... found one small section of... the... geometric... grid pattern... over N[Z], and now I had to form some theory of construction for the whole world. This was to take all my spare time for the next four months... Many times when I was stuck for the next move, some isolated piece of information would appear that would set me going again. I might have waited months or years for that elusive peg on which to hang my grid, but it was probably no more than a couple of weeks after I had finalised the grid system that I picked up an item of news. On 29th August, 1964, the [US] survey ship *Eltanin* was carrying out a sweep of the sea-bed off the coast of South America. A series of submarine photographs was being taken of the area by means of a camera attached to a long cable. A surprise was in store when these photo[s] were developed. On one of the prints, in marvellous detail, was an "aerial"-type object sticking up from an otherwise featureless sea-bed. This object appeared to be metallic, and perfectly symmetrical in construction. The array consisted of six main crossbars with small knob-like ends and a smaller crossbar at the top... As this bit of ironmongery was situated at a depth of 13,500ft... I was certain no human engineers had placed it there. Scientists may be able to descend to those depths in specially constructed bathyspheres, but I don't think they could work as deeply as that on a precision engineering problem. If this object had been tossed over the side of a vessel and allowed to sink, there would have been no control of its exact position... I centred the grid on the position found by the *Eltanin*, and the 180° reciprocal of this in Russian Siberia, lining the whole thing up with the section I had found over N[Z]. The parallels of the globe were not evenly spaced and the grid had a stretched-out appearance... I found this grid to be lined up very closely with the magnetic field of the Earth... The intersections of the grid fell on positions in many places around the world where UFOs had been sighted... Working back over sighting reports, I had a theory that reconstruction on the complete grid had begun about 1945 at the north polar position. From this point the work has progressed southwards over the last 20 years until, in 1965, the programme was complete to within 1,800 nautical miles of the south pole... A few accidents have happened... but they are nowhere as serious as [humanity]'s own apparent determination to destroy ...[i]t[s] own world... ACCEPTING THE FACT that UFOs... are constructed and [pilot]ed by beings of extreme intelligence... does not mean that accidents have not happened to some of the craft. A malfunction in a machine of such complexity has no doubt occurred on many occasions, and if this were close to our Earth, then there... [is] a hole in the ground somewhere; unless the whole thing disintegrated at some height... - 1968

All of the examples of interstellar vessels discussed up to this point... use existing technology... [Yet] the conclusion that other technological civilizations... [– such as any possessing 'intelligence which isn't like ours, or that are technically years ahead of us' – could] develop the capability of spreading among the stars is inescapable. The question we must ask then is how long it would take us (or any other starfaring race) to spread out and occupy the entire galaxy... The best mathematical calculation of this process was done by... an astronomer turned geologist at Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory... [who] concluded that... it... would take any race capable of spaceflight only 30 million years to spread through the entire galaxy... Now... the sun is a relatively young star. Stars like it existed in our galaxy for several billion years before the birth of the solar system... [which means] there should be millions of civilizations in the galaxy that reached our own present level of sophistication at least 30 million years ago... Which brings us... to the question asked by Enrico Fermi, Nobel Laureate and builder of the first nuclear reactor... "Where is everybody?" If a single civilization could colonize the galaxy in millions of years, and if billions of years have elapsed since the first such civilization was supposed to arise, how can we explain the total lack of evidence for an extraterrestrial presence on earth? ...There are some who would... say that there is an extraterrestrial presence on earth in the form of unidentified flying objects... If extraterrestrials are really visiting the earth, there are two possibilities – either they are attempting to avoid detection or they are not. Either possibility leads us into difficulty. If they are trying to avoid detection, then we are forced to explain the wide range and number of UFO sightings. In the U[S], for example, there are one or two sightings every day, and these sightings have taken place continuously for more than thirty years. Surely a race capable of interstellar flight would have a better track record than that if they wanted to stay concealed? We must conclude, therefore, that the aliens are not attempting to remain concealed. Their reasons for doing so could be anything from indifference to human beings to something more sinister; we have no way of guessing. In this case, we run up against another problem – the absence of a single piece of hard evidence for a genuine UFO sighting. We live, after all, in a nation

that has more cameras than people... why is there no hard photographic evidence of even one of the thousands of UFO sightings that have been reported? ...From this we conclude that neither of the two alternatives... is plausible and that UFOs, whatever light they may shed on atmospheric phenomena and human psychology, tell us nothing about extraterrestrials. It is interesting that many leading "UFOlogists" are coming to the same conclusion and are starting to talk about the UFOs as visitors from "other dimensions" or "parallel universes." ...["People like myself started out feeling that we're dealing with nuts and bolts spacecraft coming from another star system. But there are some very bizarre things that UFOs do which indicate this might not be so. For example, you might have a radar visual sighting where you see a UFO at Point A, and instead of travelling from A to B it might just disappear and reappear at B. So some of us began to think that maybe we're dealing with something that is able to penetrate our dimension from another dimension or parallel universe; that can take on material aspects here but actually disappear and go somewhere else – enabling them, perhaps, to bypass what we call the Laws of Physics." It all adds up to this: maybe] we should pause to consider whether the answer to the question "Where are they?" might not be "They're here, but you just don't know it." ...There is a charming variation on this theme... called the "zoo hypothesis." Basically, this hypothesis states that there are indeed many advanced galactic civilizations, but that the solar system, for one reason or another, has been placed off limits to them. Perhaps we are the subject of an anthropological experiment, or perhaps we are a zoo (hence the name of the hypothesis), or perhaps we are designated galactic wilderness area... [T]he absence of extraterrestrials would be consistent... [i]n any of these cases... Having said this, I should add that... the evidence we have at present clearly favours the conclusion that... we are alone in the galaxy... [E]verything points to the same conclusion – we are... living on an insignificant speck of rock going around an undistinguished star in a low-rent section of the galaxy... [and w]e are one member of a large family of animals using one particular variant of carbon chemistry known as DNA. Maybe so, but we are special... [b]ecause only on this insignificant speck of rock have beings evolved who can look at the universe and ask the question, "Why?" If I were... religious... I would say that everything we have learned about life... shows that we are unique, and therefore special in God's sight. Instead I shall say that what we have learned shows that it matters a great deal what happens to us. We are not... one more life form whose ultimate fate is of little moment in the grand scheme of things. If we succeed in destroying ourselves, it will be a tragedy not only for the human race but for the entire galaxy, which will have lost the fruit of a 15-billion-year experiment in the formation of sentient life. - 1981

...in 'unofficial' conversations with the various astronauts, certain reports stated that all the early 'moon shots' had alien visitors following them for a time. But then, [as]... the space projects of earth pushed ahead in the 1960's very few persons were aware of the fact that some of our most sophisticated advances came from duplicating the equipment on 'alien' craft. A number of wrecked craft of this period reportedly got rushed to the Wright Patterson installation and thoroughly dissected... Exactly how many Government rooms are filled with data on UFO's could be anyone's speculation. What is well remembered by many is the fact that many samples of strange materials and machinery have been handed over to Government authorities. In all of these cases, the samples have simply disappeared and have been denied to later inquirers. A typical case in 1969 involved a material found by... the... Professor... who solved our spinning satellite problem. Absorbing heat and releasing it slowly over a period of several days, this material could not be analyzed nor duplicated by our best procedures. ['There are plenty of reasons why a government would cover up evidence of alien life – it would call into question our political, religious and economic systems' – but i]s there actually an organised force to stamp out rational data on UFO's? A... magazine article mentioned dozens of saucer researchers who mysteriously disappeared... [and] a well-known researcher, told of seven visitations by mysterious '[guys] in black'... with... powers... such... as... be[ing] able to cloud people's[... minds... Another well-known UFO researcher... felt that the '[guys] in black' who contacted her were... aliens who wished to frighten her out of her work... What occurs to many persons of open minds in this area is that there are not only UFO's of Earth origin, but there are very sophisticated craft of extraterrestrial... origin as well. With literally hundreds of UFO publications and groups and thousands of sightings, the evidence is pretty overwhelming for either or both craft. ['I would challenge anyone to show that all of these reports can be considered nonsense. It's just calling too many highly trained people liars']... By changing inertia from positive to negative – or even redistributing it, one might thus overcome gravity. Einstein observed that if the UFO occupants had mastered gravity, they would also have overcome inertia. Saucers with anti-gravity screens could ignore both gravity and inertia. They can instantly change direction and speed. Anyone who has observed the darting movements of some UFO's must concede that something is breaking the laws of inertia... Will our leaders continue to assume that we are too dense to understand? - 1994

The idea that politicians and scientists can happily shoulder the burden of knowledge about alien beings but that ordinary people cannot be trusted with this information is, of course, absurd... [However, there is some justification for the authorities'] belief... that the sense of shock that would follow the sudden announcement... that... human beings... are not the only sentient beings in the universe... would be so great that human society might disintegrate... There is little doubt that even the discovery of a single extraterrestrial microbe, if it could be shown to have evolved independently of life on Earth, would drastically alter our world view and change our society as profoundly as the Copernican and Darwinian revolutions... In fact, the Vatican recently embarked on an evaluation of the significance for Christianity of the discovery of alien intelligent life... In his Gifford lectures... the Bishop of Birmingham, Earnest Barnes, addressed the question 'Is the whole cosmos the home of intelligent beings?' Barnes, who was also an accomplished scientist, expressed the opinion that God created the universe 'as a basis for the higher forms of consciousness' and deduced that this purpose is best served by a multiplicity of inhabited worlds... Many religious commentators have noted the vast number of other stars in the universe and have asked: what are they all for if Earth is the only inhabited planet? [An]Oxford cosmologist... in his 1952 book *Modern Cosmology and the Christian Idea of God*... identifies, however, a serious problem for Christians if... intelligent beings... exist... on other 'planets'... Believing that it is 'of the essence of Christianity that God intervenes in History', [the cosmologist] notes: God's most notable intervention in the actual historical process, according to the Christian outlook, was the Incarnation. Was this a unique event, or has it been re-enacted on each of a countless number of planets? The Christian would recoil in horror from such a conclusion... The Christian would avoid this conclusion by the definite supposition that our planet is in fact unique. What then of the possible denizens of other planets, if the Incarnation... [of] the Son of God... occurred only on our own? We are in deep waters here... [The cosmologist] offers his own solution to the problem by appealing to his belief in the possibility... [that] human beings may, in the fullness of time, convey the news of a unique Earthly Incarnation to alien beings. This resolution was roundly rejected by... a philosopher priest, who, in his 1956 Bampton Lectures, opined that [the cosmologist]'s theology was defective. 'It is in sharp contrast with the attitude... of the great classical tradition of Christian thought' concerning the Passion of Christ to suppose that 'the necessary and sufficient condition for it to be effective for the salvation of God's creatures is that they should *know about it*.' [The priest] goes on to articulate the mainstream Christian view that the essence of the Redemption is that 'the Son of God has hypostatically united to himself the nature of the species that [it] has come to redeem.' ...Regarding alien beings, [the priest concludes: 'It would be difficult to hold that the assumption by the Son of the nature of one rational corporeal species involved the restoration of other rational corporeal species... The suggestion which I wish to make... is that there are no conclusive *theological* reasons for rejecting the notion that, if there are, in some other part or parts of the universe, rational corporeal beings who have sinned and are in need of redemption, ...the Son of God has united (or one day will unite) to his divine Person their nature, as [God] has united it to ours[.]' ...I recently raised this problem in discussion with... a Jesuit priest and Director of the Vatican Observatory [who] is actively involved in the search for extra-solar planets. In his opinion, salvation does not require God's incarnation. [The Jesuit] believes that if alien beings exist and have sinned, then God is free to choose to save them in some manner other than by taking on alien flesh... Further theological problems arise from the expectation that, if alien communities exist, [we]... could expect to be dealing with beings whose

wisdom and knowledge are incomparably greater than our own. The difficulty this presents to the Christian religion is that if God works through the historical process, and if [hu]mankind is not unique to [God's] attentions, then God's process and purposes will be far more advanced on some other planets than they are on Earth. As Barnes pointed out long ago: 'If God only realizes [It]self within an evolutionary process, then elsewhere [God] has reached a splendour and fullness of existence to which Earth's evolutionary advance can add nothing.' It is a sobering fact that we would be at a stage of 'spiritual' development very inferior to that of almost all of our intelligent alien neighbours... The discovery that [hu]mankind did not represent the pinnacle of evolutionary advance would prove a two-edge sword. On the one hand, it might serve to make people feel demoralized, marginalized and inferior... [- and] would have an enormous impact on age-old philosophical and religious issues, such as... the existence of souls and life after death... On the other hand, the knowledge of what is attainable through continued progress would surely be exhilarating and inspiring. Either way, it is hard to see how the world's great religions could continue in anything like their present form should... alien[life be discovered]... If they practised anything remotely like a religion, we should surely soon wish to abandon our own and be converted to theirs... Contrary to popular belief, the possibility of extraterrestrials was often debated, and the ramifications analysed, in previous ages. [One] historian... estimates that 170 books on the subject were published between Greek times and 1917... During the first half of the twentieth century, discussion of extraterrestrial life was almost entirely confined to fictional literature. Although the stories were overlaid with a veneer of science, they were unashamedly fantasy. A turning-point in the public perception of the subject came with... [WW2]. The development of the tools of aerial warfare – especially jet aircraft, radar, rockets and the atomic bomb – sensitized people to the threat from the sky. It seemed but a small step from the reality of the V2 missile to that of the interplanetary spacecraft carrying aliens with superior weaponry. Science-fiction writers, cartoonists and film-makers played on these fears, and the era of space-age fiction... began in earnest. The post-war years also saw a huge rise in the number of reports of... UFOs... Many people became convinced that the Earth is being visited regularly by aliens in saucer-shaped spacecraft... Meanwhile, scientific interest in extraterrestrial life was also rekindled by the wartime and post-war spurt in science and technology... The problem of the origin of life became a serious subject of scientific inquiry, with much speculation about scientists creating life 'in a test tube'. In 1953, in a famous experiment at the University of Chicago, [two biologists]... attempted to simulate the conditions they believed prevailed on the primitive Earth four billion years ago... [They] introduced water, methane and ammonia into a flask and passed an electric discharge through the mixture for several days. The liquid turned red-brown. On examination, the flask was found to contain several amino acids – organic molecules found in all living organisms on Earth. Although [it]... was a far cry from the artificial creation of life, the experiment gave the impression that if some of the basic building blocks of life could be synthesized in a few days, then, by leaving the experiment to run long enough, living organisms might appear... It followed that if this state of affairs had come about on Earth, it could also have come about on other planets too... [- and this theory was seemingly confirmed when [the Murchison meteorite which fell in A[US in 1969 w]as... found to contain dozens of amino acids, including many that are common to terrestrial organisms... If the biologists had made it easier to believe in extraterrestrial life, the astronomers and physicists made it harder. The more that was learned about our sister planets in the solar system, the less likely it seemed that they could support life... [Therefore,] it may be necessary to search beyond the solar system. However, the distances to the stars are so great that there is no real prospect of our sending spacecraft to extra-solar planets in the foreseeable future. Moreover, from what astronomers and physicists have discovered about stars, only a small fraction would be suitable for life. The nearest suitable star with an Earth-like planet may be tens or even hundreds of light years away. (...To get some idea of scale, the Sun... is about 8 1/3 light minutes away.) The barrier to SETI occasioned by the immense distances between the stars was well appreciated even in the 1950s. However, that decade saw the development of the science of radio astronomy. It soon occurred to the astronomers that if they could detect radio signals from across the galaxy and beyond, they could also detect signals of an artificial nature, so that radio telescopes might be the best hope for finding extraterrestrial life... But one problem was potentially solved only to be replaced by another. The Milky Way contains about 100 billion stars. It would take an immense amount of time to 'listen in' to all of them. Worse still, there are millions of different frequency bands on which a signal might be transmitted. How could the astronomers know which frequency the aliens might be using? The situation seem[ed] hopeless. In 1959, however, the subject was transformed once more... In a famous paper in the journal *Nature*, [an]... Italian astronomer... and [an] American physicist... argued that if alien beings were serious about communicating with us, they would make it as easy as possible for us to spot their signal. This suggests they would pick a transmission frequency that is somehow marked out as special for both us and them... One such frequency immediately commends itself: 1.42 GHz. This is the frequency of the so-called song of hydrogen, a ubiquitous hiss produced by a spin-flip transition of hydrogen nuclei, and well known as background noise to every radio astronomer. Of course, to avoid swamping the signal with noise, it would make sense to use, say, twice or one-half the hydrogen frequency, but even with a range of possibilities it is clear that the waveband of interest can be narrowed down dramatically by this sort of reasoning. Suddenly it became feasible to begin a radio search for intelligent alien beings... It is important to realize that the discovery of an alien signal would not lead rapidly to radio dialogue between our civilizations. The nearest star is over four light years away. Even on the most optimistic assumptions, the probability of an alien civilization existing within 100 light years of Earth is remote. A message from aliens 100 light years away would take 100 years to reach us, and any reply would take another 100 years to get back to them... Whatever the nature of the alien message, if it contained basic information about a *different* biochemistry, that should be enough to establish an independent origin. If, on the other hand, the alien life turned out to be based on DNA and proteins as we are, we would be faced with two possibilities: either both communities have a common ancestor[– as is proposed by believers in 'panspermia (the arrival of life on Earth from outer space)' –] ...or the evolution of life operates in a highly non-Darwinian fashion such as to direct matter towards certain very specific, highly complex chemical structures in a remarkably teleological manner... Today a separation is usually made between belief in extraterrestrial life forms and belief in supernatural or religious entities – i.e., between aliens and angels. Yet it was not always thus. For most of human history the 'heavens' were literally that: the domain of the gods. Beings who inhabited the realm beyond the Earth were normally regarded as supernatural. In spite of the fact that [aliens are] now firmly in the domain of science, or at least science fiction, the religious dimension of SETI still lies just beneath the surface. Many people draw comfort from the belief that advanced beings in the sky are watching over us and may some day intervene in our affairs to save us from human folly... The history of belief in UFOs demonstrates clearly the intimate association between extraterrestrial encounters and religious or supernatural experiences... Indeed, it is easy to trace reports of flying craft and human-like occupants back into antiquity, where the reports merge with religion or superstition in a seamless manner[(and offer an alternative perspective on tales of past *miracles*)]. Consider, for example, the many Bible stories of angels coming from the sky, of humans ascending into heaven (the sky) or of flying chariots. The most striking biblical account is perhaps that of Ezekiel, who describes an encounter with four flying wheel-shaped craft... The account might have been taken straight out of a modern UFO report, yet it is normally interpreted in strictly religious terms... The modern notion of a UFO... dates from the late 1940s... [when] witnesses... described... a metallic flying disc, sometimes with protuberances or portholes, executing elaborate manoeuvres and occasionally accompanied by an eerie glow or bright lights... In a distinctive subset of cases, [people have encountered]... UFOs on the ground and even ha[d] contact with alien beings. The occupants of the UFOs are almost always said to be of a more or less human appearance but of varying stature, from dwarfs to giants. The witnesses describe a sense of powerlessness in the face of distinctly superior beings... Most intriguing are those cases where witnesses claim to be taken on board the craft... Typically it is claimed that the 'abducted person' was subjected to medical examination or even impregnation... Carl Jung... concluded that flying saucers were merely the modern manifestation of archetypal symbols that have appeared in dreams, visions and religious experiences throughout the ages... My own feeling about these bizarre reports of alien contact is that in most cases the witnesses are sincerely reporting genuine experiences (i.e., they are not lying)

but that the experiences are of a largely subjective nature and reflect deep-seated human desires and/or anxieties of a quasi-spiritual nature... It is not my intention to discuss here the veracity of UFO reports, or the possible explanations for them... What I am more concerned with is the extent to which the modern search for aliens is, at rock-bottom, part of an ancient religious quest. The interest in SETI among the general public stems in part, I maintain, from the need to find a wider context to our lives than this earthly existence provides. In an era when conventional religion is in sharp decline, the belief in super-advanced aliens out there somewhere in the universe can provide some... inspiration for people whose lives may otherwise appear to be boring and futile. This sense of a religious quest may well extend to the scientists themselves, even though most of them are self-professed atheists. One of the most vocal proponents of SETI is the astronomer... [whose] novel *Contact*... describes a successful outcome to a massive radio-telescope search for alien signals. Following the receipt of a message, the scientists... [are] made privy to some far-reaching secrets about the nature of the cosmos. But underlying the narrative is the sub-theme that the universe as a whole is a product of intelligent design, and the aliens hint at how the hallmark of this design is written into the very structure of the universe. Thus the aliens play the traditional role of angels, acting as intermediaries between [hu]mankind and God... This powerful theme of alien beings acting as a conduit to the Ultimate – whether it appears in fiction or as a seriously intended cosmological theory – touches a deep chord in the human psyche. The attraction seems to be that... the resulting broadening of our horizons will in some sense bring us a step closer to God. - 1995

Copernicus told people they were not at the centre of the universe. Darwin told them they were not a divine creation. Now the risen apes are hearing that the same evolutionary process that created them may have gone on elsewhere... The search for extraterrestrial life is the most compelling of all scientific quests... [However, s]hort of a visitation from... an alien... civilisation's ambassadors, radio is the only way any... contact can be made... A couple of times, astronomers have thought they have heard them. When... a regularly pulsing radio signal... [was] noticed... coming from the sky in 1967, [astronomers] nicknamed it "LGM-1"... The discovery a few weeks later of LGM-2 somewhat dampened the idea that a first contact had at last been made (the signals turned out to be coming from a new class of star now known as pulsars). A second radio emission, known as the "Wow Signal," also attracted fans of extraterrestrial intelligence. The signal was heard in 1977 by astronomers at Ohio State University. It looked, to the faithful, like a radio beacon. Unfortunately, when they looked again, it had vanished. And that, so far, is it... Yet... scientists... believe... a meteorite from... Antarctica... was once inhabited by Martians. Not, to be sure, the malign, tentacled geniuses invented by H.G. Wells, but things a bit closer to terrestrial bacteria... If the evidence from the... meteorite stands up in the court of world scientific opinion... it may be that primitive life can evolve quite easily. That says nothing, though, about how easy it is to arrive at intelligence... [T]here remains a large gap between bacteria and intelligence... On Earth, the evolution of intelligence involved at least four giant leaps... [spanning] over three billion years... The first, and in many ways hardest, was from bacteria to the more complex cells of which animals and plants are composed. The second came when these cells formed viable colonies (bodies). This meant some cells giving up the sacred right of reproduction in order to specialise in other functions, something that goes strongly against the evolutionary grain. The third was for animals to become complex enough, and to develop sufficiently sophisticated nervous systems, to allow for intelligence. Even when this had happened, at the beginning of the period known as the Triassic, it still took around 250 million years before the fourth leap, when [our] ancestors started to develop a brain big enough to support such intelligence. It is quite possible, therefore, that the galaxy is teeming with primitive life, but that none of it, other than on Earth, is intelligent. The message of the... meteorite could, therefore, be somewhat paradoxical. If it does indeed contain... extraterrestrial life, that is tremendously exciting. But it may also suggest that the history of life is not one of automatic progress from primeval soup to potent primate... Rather than telling us we are not alone, the... meteorite may emphasise how utterly alone we are.

...We haven't yet discovered a single extraterrestrial, but our searches up to date have been so primitive that we'd have had no chance of finding a civilization like Earth's, not even if it existed among the nearest stars. Still, in attempting to explain the 'Great Silence'... several scientists have suggested that everyone is listening and nobody broadcasting, for fear of attracting hostile attention... Perhaps, though, extraterrestrial intelligence evolves only very seldom... Note, however, that our failure to detect intelligent extraterrestrials may indicate not so much how rarely these have evolved, but rather how rapidly they have destroyed themselves after developing technological civilizations... Other suggestions as to why we have detected no extraterrestrials in our galaxy are much less plausible... It can seem unlikely that extraterrestrials have spread right through the galaxy without our noticing it (perhaps because they treat our solar system as an untouchable zoo...); or that they have one and all been happy to stay at home; or that they haven't been travelling long enough, since they developed advanced technologies only a little before us; and so forth.

...The source of strange blue lights in the Auckland sky has proved to be terrestrial... Press releases issued by the "UFOPB Society" were picked up by some broadcast media, fuelling the imaginations of UFO believers... [However, t]he flying saucer was in fact a twin engine Squirrel helicopter fitted with special blue lights for a soft-drink promotion... MEANWHILE, the A[USns] are still at it with orange nocturnal lights in triangle formations over Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne and Canberra... Further A[US]n sightings of UFOs included ones that reputedly "slimed" areas of Tasmania after a violent thunderstorm. The... breathless... [reporter] neglected to mention that the "slime life" was fish eggs and baby jellyfish carried inland by the storm... In Brisbane, [a resident] protested outside a theatre screening *Independence Day* because the movie... [-] in which these really dumb aliens come to Earth and hover in giant spaceships over all the major cities to make themselves easy targets for the gallant earthling defenders... [(t]he blockbuster's blockbuster is littered with narrative inanities, crass dialogue and appalling acting and portrays a society gripped by militaristic xenophobia but the effects are awesome[-] ... "promotes inter-planetary racism." ...About the same time a *Newsweek* poll showed that 49[%] of all Americans believed their Government was hiding information on the subject of UFOs.

...As "alien fever" continues to sweep the U[S] – and the TV networks – more and more people are becoming convinced that intelligent life exists beyond Earth, including some who believe alien lifeforms have already set up housekeeping on the planet. More than 100 children and adults paid \$US10... each at a recent meeting in Chicago to hear... American "ufologists" speak. Among the topics was the tarnished reputations of humans among our galaxy's extraterrestrial species. "Humans have an image in the galaxy. It's not the best right now but it will be worse if we turn our backs on our neighbours in need,"... [an] associate professor of political science at Emory University, told his audience. Such "neighbours" include a handful of Martians already on Earth who are waiting for a more welcoming climate before bringing an entire refugee population here... According to a... poll... 53[%] of Americans believe there is intelligent life elsewhere in the universe and 40[%] believe it exists within our own solar system. And even the sceptics say those numbers are going to increase as the coming millennium conjures visions of apocalypse and television and film studios capitalise on the intrinsic appeal of [alien] characters... "Quite clearly, there hasn't been any change at all in the scientific evidence to support any claims of extraterrestrial visitations by aliens," said... a retired professor emeritus at the University of Kentucky, who has been studying the subject since 1947. "What has magnified has been the media support of this phenomenon, this legend, this myth," said [the professor emeritus], who specialises in abnormal psychology... Even politicians are not immune. A Florida politician... recently risked political suicide with her announcement that space aliens cured her of cancer in 1975. Such tales are nothing new, [the professor emeritus] says. "It is modern folklore. In the Middle Ages we had serpents in the skies and demons and witches. Nowadays we have our flying saucers." ...This puts ufologists in the unenviable position of having to supply proof. Some, like... a clinical hypnotherapist who also spoke at the conference, refer to hypnotic regression as evidence. Under this procedure, [the hypnotherapist] claims many of his patients have remembered alien abductions in stunning detail.

...The first publicised abduction was in Brazil in 1957, and, since then, they have grown in frequency... Abductions have been reported in 17 countries from Argentina... to... the former Soviet Union... [Even in] little old N[Z, from]... Balclutha to Kaitia, people are saying they've... been

subjected to alien abduction experiences that are difficult to explain... These stories run counter to the way our culture understands reality, but, if you consider that 400 years ago people were burned alive for saying the Earth was round, maybe it is time for us to review the way we see the universe as well... [A] Pulitzer Prize-winning author and professor of psychiatry at Harvard University, has detailed nearly 100 abduction accounts and noted: (1) the high degree of consistency between individual accounts; (2) the absence of psychiatric illness or psychological conditions that could explain the reports; (3) physical lesions on the bodies of those claiming abduction experiences; (4) independent witnesses who corroborate the abduction claims; and (5) reports by young children of abductions... [In addition to these accounts] there is definitely some interesting information to be considered... FACT [A] former NATO intelligence analyst... has revealed that, in 1961, a flying disc as large as a football field crashed in Germany. Twelve [extraterrestrial] bodies were recovered, their blood not red but a viscous greenish fluid... [A]n extremely classified NATO assessment of UFOs... states that at least four [extraterrestrial] races are visiting the Earth, that their intentions appear to be friendly and that they have been studying this planet for a long time... FACT In 1994... a former NASA astronaut, stated, "We have [had] contact with alien cultures... [but] for nearly 50 years the secrecy apparatus of the US Government has kept from the public UFO and alien contact information"... [Another] astronaut... revealed "UFOs were waiting up there for us". [The astronaut] was confined to a mental institution for ...a... year... FACT In 1978 the UN requested the first compilation of UFO sightings throughout the world. This revealed 63,144 appearances of UFOs between 1947 and 1978... A February 1987... poll showed 19 million Americans claimed to have seen UFOs[('57% of Republicans and 36% of Democrats believe in UFOs')]. FACT ...the CIA's UFO desk reports[that the US] President... has already made several alternative pilot videos of proposed public announcements about UFOs and [extraterrestrial] visitations for broadcast... FACT On June 19 last year, six F14 navy fighter jets reported to base that they had intercepted a UFO over Puerto Rico. The F14s and their crews have never been seen since... FACT The US has an extraterrestrial law that says: (1) to have dealings with aliens is considered treasonable; (2) abductees can be arrested indefinitely due to fear of "viral infection"; (3) government employees can be arrested, jailed indefinitely and lose their pensions if they have unauthorised alien contact.

...Welcome mat out for alien drivers... IF [an alien movie star] is ever looking for a place to phone home... Rachel, Nevada may be just the ticket... Residents are convinced there are alien visitors just over the mountains to the south, at a top-secret Government base known as Area 51... "I think there are people and machines from other planets over there... [and] I think our government is working in conjunction with them..." says [someone who] scrubs breakfast dishes at the Little A'Le'Inn – [the]... tiny cafe... featur[ing] racks of UFO tee-shirts, caps and books... [which is] the focal point of this hamlet of 100 people... Area 51 is veiled in mystery. The heavily guarded, isolated base... is where the Government has tested some of its most exotic aircraft, including the U-2, SR-71 Blackbird and F-117A Stealth fighter, and the new reconnaissance plane Aurora. While the federal Government wishes everyone would go away, the Nevada Transportation Department has named a 148km stretch of desolate State Route 375 the Extraterrestrial Highway. It plans to put up four signs at a cost of \$4900... Highway officials say it draws only about 50 vehicles a day on average, though more show up twice annually when Rachel holds "UFO Friendship Campouts" for tourists looking for flying saucers.

...a fleet of massive spaceships descend... in a ball of flaming orange cloud above the major cities of the world. They will attack and everything in their shadow will be destroyed. Everything... at the box office that is. The film *Independence Day* has wiped out the competition... *ID4*... as everyone calls it, shows the Earth under attack from a hostile and unreasoning alien force. One by one, the great cities are levelled... Los Angeles becomes a burning hell-hole (so no change there). While the film is transparently improbable, at its heart is something that many people believe to be true. That a flying saucer crash-landed to the north of the little cattle town of Roswell on the night of July 5, 1947. That the commander of the local air base confirmed this, but was almost immediately silenced by his superiors. That the wreckage and four or more alien bodies were spirited away to Area 51, a research base in the depths of the Nevada desert so secret that the US Government will not even admit it exists. That for nearly 50 years, there has been a massive cover up at the highest level... The evidence that what crashed at Roswell was a flying saucer is notable only by its absence. All that remains is hearsay and rumours. Some of the statements that "prove" the Roswell UFO story were given by people who have since died. The two most dramatic reports concern civilians who stumbled across the crashed UFO before the military could intervene. Jim Ragsdale, a local... who had driven away from the main road to be alone with his date, admitted to hearing the scream of the UFO motors overhead and then the explosion of impact. The next day [Jim] searched for the site and found the crashed saucers and several bodies. [Jim] died five days after making a taped confession... Roswell was fewer than 350km from the White Sands atomic weapons and rocket testing ground... Last summer, an investigation of highly classified National Security Council records by the Federal General Accounting Office, concluded that the debris came from Project Mogul, a top-secret project to monitor Soviet atomic tests using a train of balloons and radar tracking devices... So why would anyone still believe a fable half-a-century old? Unfortunately, the US Government, having lied for more than 40 years, now finds there are many who still do not believe it is telling the truth... Others see the rumours of Area 51 and the many sightings of UFOs in the area as something of an opportunity. The State of Nevada recently designated Route 375 to Area 51 as the "Extraterrestrial Highway", in an attempt to promote tourism. The new road signs show a pair of flying saucers straight from the Cold War paranoia of the '50s. One pair is at either side of Rachel, [which]... is little more than a collection of mobile homes and a petrol pump... Its inhabitants make up in eccentricity what they lack in numbers... Twelve hundred kilometres to the east, Roswell is also aware of the commercial potential of its past. The town of 50,000 inhabitants supports two UFO museums and an annual flying saucer festival each Independence Day weekend. A popular exhibit is a wax prop of a dead alien undergoing examination on a hospital trolley from the feature film *The Roswell Incident* (and, incidentally, identical to photographs of a "genuine" alien[for] which magazine *Penthouse* is recently said to have paid \$50,000). Outside town, the rancher who now owns the crash site offers guided tours at \$US15 a head (children under 13 free). In the past two months, several fragments of the alleged 1947 UFO have come to light. They are said to have been pocketed by a former GI involved in collecting the wreckage... One... piece... is... in a local jewellers... while two others are at the International UFO and Research Centre on Main Street. Provisional tests have shown the metals to be copper and silver. So are these the fragments of an alien craft? Ambitious plans to analyse... the pieces using a mass spectrometer at Los Alamos are hampered by suspicions that the authorities might spirit the pieces away, but mostly by a lack of cash.

...In October, 1993, Congress cut the funding and pulled the plug on Nasa's SETI project... If we had made contact with other intelligent life, it would['ve been] the greatest event in human history, but there was no money in it. And even the best minds in science have to eat – so when the last Government pay check was cashed, they packed their bags and moved on. And who of us wouldn't do the same?

...there were people who thought UFOs were a question – like morality or the environment – that was too important to dismiss. And whether the Government had indeed dropped the issue or just wanted people to think it did, the sightings never stopped. So in the tradition of American grass-roots activism, individuals across the country began attempting to fill the void created by the Air Force. "A civilian organization researching UFOs came about really almost as a protest against what civilians were being told that UFOs were. People would see structured objects and would be told they had seen Venus or a weather balloon, and people who had good credentials were being ridiculed really because of Government statements." The citizen investigators do what they do because they believe if there is even one iota of possibility that UFOs are in any way real then someone should be pursuing the question. Perceiving an absence of official action they take it on themselves. For its part, the Air Force has never forgotten the 1950s, and the lessons [gleaned from UFO sightings over] Washington... Whether it has no answers or doesn't want to share what it knows, the Air Force public policy on UFOs continues to be *silence*. Planet Earth[is] home to every one of us, from the dedicated UFOlogist to the doubting sceptic... which, from the point of view of the UFO investigator, presents a formidable obstacle – ...[h]ow does one investigate the question of life elsewhere in the Universe when one is confined to our small planet? All the evidence we have seems to exist only in the mind's eye. The clues are

most often anecdotes – extraordinary tales told by ordinary people. With plenty of witnesses but little hard physical evidence, the heart of the UFO mystery lies in perception. This... is the dilemma of the UFO investigator – how to decipher evidence derived mostly from perception? The answer, in a word, [is to] *innovate*. With so much unknown, there is no single technique for investigating UFOs. Each investigator develops the tools and the methods that... [it] finds most promising... [One investigator's] search for evidence has brought him to a very unusual... [valley in] Colorado. "People arrive here and they don't even know why they're here – they just know that they have to be here. I didn't quite feel that compulsion. However, I did early on identify that I possibly had a role to play and this place was key to it." For [him], investigating UFOs starts with being in the right place at the right time, and... [in this valley] almost any time is the right time to see a UFO. "This may be one of the strangest places in the whole country in terms of the activity that goes on... We have a variety and intensity of unusual objects and occurrences." [For example, i]n the sky, weird lights and unexplained sounds at night; and on the ground, a bizarre string of unusual animal deaths. One [person's] strangeness is another [person's] opportunity. For our investigator, whatever is going on in this valley adds up to one thing – evidence. "There's a major... chunk of data that can be gleaned from the things that have been reported and nobody has bothered to do it... I felt compelled to elect myself to... be... the person that documents and tries to get down in one place all the events that have been reported here... I think it could really give us some major clues, and maybe... further... our understanding of these things that I'm investigating." [The investigator] started a newsletter – *The Mysterious Valley Report* – and spread the word: if anything unusual was going on, [the investigator wou]ld like to know. It wasn't long before his telephone became a virtual hot-line for the paranormal. "Now that people know... I'm here... there's no question that... if somebody sees something in this valley, within seconds, minutes or days, I will find out about it." ...A sceptic could easily dismiss... anecdotal evidence... as nothing. But [the investigator] has heard too many stories that can't be dismissed – some told to him by the most reliable of sources, and involving some very high level players... Deep inside... Cheyenne Mountain, Colorado... is NORAD, the Air Force electronic eye in the sky. If anything enters US air space from this world or any other, NORAD will detect it and sound the alarm. Perhaps coincidentally, the Air Force built NORAD right next door to... where all the strangeness and UFO activity keep[s the investigator] so busy. Ever since it was built, NORAD's been like the secretive neighbour here – wanting to know all about everyone else's business while revealing little of its own. "We had one of the dark-horse events of UFOlogy occur here when NORAD called the Rio Grande County Sheriff, and the under-sheriff... answered the call." It sounded like something from space had fallen into the Mysterious Valley and NORAD wanted the sheriff to do a ground search. That seemed pretty reasonable to [the under-]sheriff – all part of the job. "...they said... a large explosion [had occurred]. They said the co-ordinates would have been in the Rock Creek area." Then things started to get a little odd. "They called back 30 [or] 40 minutes later and gave us a completely separate set of co-ordinates... I sent down a ground crew [and] got a... plane in the air... We flew and drove... until dark... and checked with the residents to see if they'd seen or heard anything and came up with nothing." NORAD is the most sophisticated space tracking network there is. They monitor more than 5000 objects 24 hours a day, right down to a screwdriver that floated away from [a] space shuttle – yet they couldn't seem to get their co-ordinates right for [the under-]sheriff... Because NORAD steered him to two different locations, [the under-sheriff and his fellow officers] spent two days on a wild goose chase over thousands of acres. By now [the under-]sheriff... was thinking it was more than odd – it was suspicious. Maybe NORAD intentionally misled him...? "[In t]he afternoon... when I called [NORAD, a] Major... told us that there was no reason for us even to look any further. I've got people calling up that there's black choppers... [with] no markings... flying around... When we called [the local Air Force base] they said they had no knowledge of any... manoeuvres going on... After this whole thing went down... I called [the investigator]." "I investigated the event as thoroughly as I could, but one thing that really... bothered me about the whole sequence of events was the obvious interest that our military – or some... quasi-military organisation – showed in the... area where this thing was reported." Was it an Air Force crash, a meteorite or something else? NORAD wasn't saying. [The under-sheriff believes:] "...that NORAD knew what it was... and they didn't want us to find out... There's a lot of people in my county jurisdiction that would like some answers." For the Air Force it was all over... "Forget it ever happened," NORAD said... "Whatever it was had been taken care of." ...[for the investigator,] the NORAD event was just one more puzzling case – one more set of clues that indicate something's going on... [and y]et another reason to keep on investigating. The very same kind of [official response] was... seen in Michigan in 1966... An entire dorm of co-eds and their dean saw something hovering in the night sky. Also among the witnesses were a dozen cops called to the scene. With all these witnesses the story got big in a hurry, so the Air Force called in their scientific consultant... It became a case that [the consultant] would long regret; a case where [the consultant] found itself doing more public relations than investigating. [At a press conference the consultant said:] "Project Blue Book at [the local] Air Force Base suggested that I might come here and get a line on what's been going on." [The consultant] was actually there to give a line – the Air Force line. "[The consultant] got up in front of the cameras and said that what was seen... was swamp gas. This was one of the sightings that certainly would never have matched swamp gas, which is very rare in any account, and there was wind that day and swamp gas would be just little pieces of flame... going off and on. It was ludicrous." [The consultant] would do the best [it] could to convince people of the swamp gas story, but it wouldn't be easy. For the Air Force, the Michigan case was a fire they needed to put out. For [the consultant], it was a compromise with his principles. "[The consultant] visited... my home... one day... and I asked him about this swamp gas story, and [the consultant said it]... had to do exactly what [it] was told and... that... [a] Major... said... 'Some of these objects were seen in a swamp. Think about [what] might be seen in a swamp that might be misinterpreted, tell the press about it and then get out of town.' [The consultant] said: 'I did exactly that, and if I were to say anything else I might not be able to stay as a consultant to Project Blue Book.'" The Michigan sightings were a rude awakening for [the consultant]. They made it painfully clear that to the [USAF] the real priority was public relations and not the question of life elsewhere in the Universe... ['Project Blue Book – which was designed to de-bunk alien stories – had 700 unexplained cases when it was wound up.' The Air Force and Nasa have left the quest to t]he lone citizen investigator[s, and the]... only way to find out... [if we are] alone in the Universe... is to search... Nasa began SETI, the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence, because some of the best minds in science said it was worth doing[– although some]... scientists said... "...It's a needle in the most gigantic haystack in the Universe." Still, in spite of the odds and the cost, America went ahead with Project SETI as our best hope of contact. But... [the now-defunct project wa]sn't our only hope... [A]nother UFO investigator... knows the one thing UFOlogy lacks is hard scientific data, so [this investigator has] made it his life's work to obtain some... Inspired by a [personal UFO] sighting... 22 years ago, and encouraged by his grandparents, [this investigator] began to construct his own radio equipment to reach out to space... It started out in the corner of the living room[, but as his] vision grew, so did the project. "It got to the point where... [the living room] was getting very cramped, so we decided to build an addition on to the house... that we could [have] the laboratory itself in... which ends up being 740 sq ft..." [This investigator taught itself everything it] knows about electricity... Every circuit, socket and diode in ...his place was put together by him, from power company cast-offs to military surplus. There are 60,000V running through his basement, powering a signal that's beamed straight out into space. [This investigator] has no definite proof, but... thinks his signal may have had an effect. "We had some close encounters of the second kind here, we had quite a few very close sightings of small satellite objects darting across highways in front of... vehicles... things like this started happening very rapidly about a year after we went on the air..." When all those sightings started happening, [this investigator] needed a baseline reference – a way to separate the false alarms from genuine sightings. So [this investigator] devised an experiment to test human perception – a UFO-decoy hat. "The hat is a device that allows me the ability to analyse people's psychological reactions and interpretations of a visual phenomena." With the decoy hat on his head, [this investigator] goes out where [it knows it]ll be spotted... After an evening spent in the field, [this investigator] checks with local law enforcement to see if any unusual sightings were reported... "...in asking some of these people later to describe things that they saw, they describe...

objects as big as 50 ft in diameter – and this was the hat without a question.” But the heart of [his] project... is the broadcast operation... Seven days a week, 365 days a year for 22 years... [this investigator has beamed] two signals out into space. One, a digital post code, and the other a live radio show. These are the bait [this investigator] uses to try to lure UFOs into the area. There are no sponsors, no commercials, maybe even no listeners – but just the possibility that something out there might hear and perhaps respond keeps [this investigator] going... Over the years, [a third investigator] has cultivated a network of informants, mostly aviators. [The third investigator] never intended to become a Father-confessor to troubled pilots, but there is no 12-step program for aviators who’ve seen UFOs, and so they call him. Which brings us to [his] newest case. The [troubled pilot] who called... today is a distinguished aerospace engineer, and veteran of Nasa’s Apollo moon landing team; and in the 1950s a military aviator with SAC – the Strategic Air Command. During the Cold War, SAC was America’s first line of defence. Its bombers were in the air 24 hours a day, loaded with nuclear weapons. Crews were trained to do the unthinkable, knowing they would almost certainly never return – [and] the Air Force trusted [them] with America’s most precious military secrets. After the Washington [incident] it was illegal for a military aviator to publicly discuss UFOs [it] might’ve seen. This aviator did his duty – kept his silence. But [his silence] can’t erase his memories. A long time ago something happened on a routine training mission in a SAC bomber. Now [the military aviator is retired and] needs to put to rest something that’s still alive in his mind’s eye... It’s finally time to go on the record to an investigator and fellow aviator... “Where were you when this took place?” “I would estimate probably about 22,000 ft, perhaps halfway across the Gulf of Mexico.” “Where were you in the aircraft...?” “I was in the right gunner’s position.” “What did you see at first that drew your attention?” “Well the first thing that happened was when the radar operator had finished calibrating his system [there was] a target at 60 miles.” “At what point did something come into your visual range...?” “It was less than 5 seconds after [the operator] reported a target at 1 o’clock and 5 miles.” “And what caught your attention?” “I saw a neon blur go by the right side of the aircraft.” “...what speed would you estimate this thing was travelling?” “The... target covered... 60 mile[s]... in 45 seconds.” “...So it couldn’t be an aircraft that was one of ours?” “It was definitely not an aircraft... the object was travelling approximately 1.33 miles per second. Configuration-wise, it was almost impossible to tell what it was. If anything, every time I think of this a neon tube comes into mind.” “...were you able to ask the pilots about it?” “I didn’t ask [th]em. I was waiting for them to say something.” “...[what] about on the ground later, [or] at any time afterwards?” “I never said a word to [th]em.” “Why?” “The mindset at that time was one that you would jeopardise your security clearance... by talking about something like this.” “It was like you [were] all maintaining a conspiracy [of] silence with each other.” Memory is a funny thing. In his Air Force career, a [SAC crew-member] could spend hundreds of hours in the air, yet decades later [one] finds himself haunted by... an event that lasted less than 60 seconds. “Knowing what you do about flying velocity and weaponry, what would have happened had that thing hit the aircraft?” “The aircraft would have been vaporised, and it would have been another routine training mission that wound up with a missing aircraft and crew.” Another sighting that can’t be dismissed, but [also] can’t be explained. No photographs, no confirmation, yet what it was seems to have been real... “At any time since this event have you entertained the... thought that this object might not have been of this Earth?” “There was never a time that I ever thought that it was of this Earth.” - 1996

HAVE you ever seen an unidentified flying object? Yes, you say. Well join the queue, buddy. Judging by the growing fascination in the idea of aliens from outer space those whose only close encounters are with their nearest and dearest will soon be a minority... *The X-Files* has spawned a mass audience of X-FILES, a handful of clone programmes and generous salary hikes. In March, Auckland University will be the venue for a conference on UFOs, with guests that include a former Nasa astronaut... According to a... poll taken last year, 53[%] of Americans believe that there is intelligent life elsewhere in the universe... While it might be more enlightening if the pollsters asked about the incidence of intelligent life in America, th[e following] guide has been prepared to make sure that even if you don’t know any aliens personally, you can fake it with the best of them when the next dinner party turns weird. A *stands for Area 51*. Part of the Nellis Air Force base in Nevada where conspiracy theorists claim the U[S] Government is “back-engineering” crashed flying saucers. Immortalised by *Independence Day* [the base is where [the hero] leads the... counterattack from] and the Extraterrestrial Highway... B *stands for BETA*... Harvard University’s Billion channel Extraterrestrial Assay... [which] has been searching the spectrum since 1995 for radio signals broadcast from an intelligent culture... C *stands for conspiracy*. When sceptics ask if there’s so many aliens why they don’t just land at Auckland Airport, the response will always be because of a secret plot... D *stands for Disbelief, as in suspension of*. Thesians rely on this when they walk out on stage. It’s the same for alien theorists... E *stands for [extraterrestrial]*. Blame the director of... *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and *ET the Extraterrestrial*... for giving all this stuff some credence... F *stands for the Foo Fighters*. No, not the band. [WW2] pilots sometimes saw lights following them... A newspaper headline, “Where there’s feu, there’s fire,” gave them the name. G *stands for greys*. If you do see an alien, it’s likely to be... [a] metre or so tall, bald, grey skin, spindly with big spooky eyes... H *stands for Herbert George Wells*. H[is]... powerful *War of the Worlds*, a gripping tale of alien invasion, is a seminal source of much of the cultural baggage that we now carry. Orson Wells whipped half of America into panic and hysteria with a radio broadcast of the book... I *stands for ID4*. Shorthand for the surprisingly empty and objectionable megahit... Talk about jingoism, talk about silly plots, but who cared when those cities went up in flames, huh? J *stands for...* [t]he Harvard psychiatry professor... [whose] book *Abduction: Human encounters with aliens*, gave all the credibility of a former Pulitzer prize winner to the phenomenon... Unsurprisingly, his colleagues at Harvard aren’t happy. K *stands for Klaat barada nikko*. The first words uttered by a giant robot from another world in *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. Don’t ask what it means. L *stands for...* [a] mysterious scientist and engineer who claims t[o have] worked on flying saucers in Area 51... M *stands for the Martian face*. A big favourite of conspiracy buffs. In 1976 the Nasa probe Viking Orbiter took a picture of the Mars landscape that seemed to be a giant face. Nasa says the image is a trick of the light... [but] attempts to rephotograph the area have been unsuccessful, causing conspiracists to cry “cover-up!” N *stands for the Nazca lines*. One of Peru’s odder tourist attractions can be found on the Pampa de Ingenio. An expanse of desert is furrowed with a web of straight lines linking huge geometric forms. Nobody knows what or who made them[– but ‘the mysterious people hastened their own demise by clearing forests 1500 years ago (lack of trees made the climate too dry’)]. The alien theorists say they are approach markings for spaceships. They don’t ask why a culture able to fly a spaceship light-years across the galaxy should need help to land. O *stands for OBE*. As in Out of Body Experience. Not strictly an alien experience, but can sometimes accompany one... P *stands for Pope*. Not the pontiff, but... the civil servant who spent four years (1991-1994) analysing reports of UFOs for the British Ministry of Defence Secretariat (Air Staff) 2A... handl[ing] up to 3000 UFO reports a year, 95[%] of which could be explained. [The civil servant has] written a book *Open Skies, Open Minds*, about the 5[%] that can’t be. [It] still works for the MoD, but his colleagues now call him “Spooky,” Fox Mulder’s nickname. Can’t be fun at morning teatime. Q *stands for Queensland Incident*. Just last year the Queensland town of Gladstone was buzzed by mystery lights... [that] throbbed and darted about completing right-angled turns at high speed. No aircraft were in the area at the time. R *stands for Roswell*... S *stands for...* th[e] author of a first-hand account of abduction by aliens, *Communion*. [The author] said his kidnappers implanted a device at the top of his spinal cord. When [the author] dies, his will states that an autopsy will uncover it. Finally, physical evidence. Can’t wait... [The] former fiction writer, has churned out a further four books on alien experience. Is [the author] cashing in? ...T *stands for...* a logger... [who claims it] was kidnapped by aliens. [His] story was made into a movie, *Fire in the Sky*, that went pretty quickly to video. U *stands for Ufology*... X *stands for X-Files*. Does the FBI really have X-Files? No... Y *stands for Yeti*. Strictly this falls under the arcane field known as cryptozoology, or the study of creatures that may or may not exist. But if little green [people] from Beta Centauri don’t qualify, what does? Z *stands for Zzzzzz*. No, not a death ray. Merely the sound your guests make after you’ve illuminated them about your abduction experience. Being asleep they won’t take offence when your little grey friends take them off for a full rectal examination...

Abductions of humans by aliens are not always hoaxes or the result of a vivid imagination. So says [a civil servant] who used to investigate UFO reports for the British Government... [R]esearch into the controversial subject has convinced him that the abductions are terrifyingly real and more widespread than anyone suspected... The idea of a cover-up on the subject of abductions may sound bizarre, but there are persistent rumours of such a conspiracy in the U[S], based on little more than an extension of the idea of a UFO cover-up. The theory is that the US Government has struck a deal of some sort with extraterrestrials, and that aliens have been allowed to carry out a programme of abductions in return for technological aid for the Americans. Some researchers believe such a deal came into being after the alleged Roswell flying saucer crash... forced the extraterrestrials to show their hand... [The civil servant]'s personal view is that... [w]hile the US Government may well suspect that abductions occur, it probably has no direct knowledge... Meanwhile, [one alleged abductee] has passed two polygraph lie detector tests given by an expert... Childhood recollections of "when the moon landed in the garden" came back to haunt... [her] after the birth of her son... The doctors were curious about a strange scar on her navel, consistent with keyhole surgery. [The mother] was shocked and frightened as, apart from the removal of a cyst on her ear, [it] had never had surgery... Unable to find any obvious cause, her doctor suggested hypnosis to relax her, and this was when [the mother] recounted her story of the abduction. Regression revealed that at 16, [it] had been sealed in a perspex capsule which floated above the ground and was filled with a jelly-like pink liquid... Then [the teenager] was lying on [a] platform, being prodded with a lime-green device... [A little while later, the teenager] glanced down and, to her horror, saw there was something moving inside her stomach. There was a sharp pull at her navel, then the sound of things being put in a tray, out of sight... [□] A bizarre variation on... the surgery game called Operation... that... involves performing an autopsy on an alien... is being snapped up... Players use tweezers to pull organs from the body but if they touch the sides the extraterrestrial's eyes light up and it lets out a piercing scream. The alien autopsy game sells for about \$60. It is intended for players aged 8 and over.

... "People say I'm crazy," says... the former clerical worker... [who] has got used to people not believing that [the mother of three] is frequently taken away by [aliens] who conduct scientific experiments on her... [And h]er three grown-up children hate her talking about the relationships [their mother] has forged with her brace of visitors... [The former clerical worker] explains that in her 47 years, [it] has been poked, prodded, and impregnated by extra terrestrials... From her suburban Auckland home, [the former clerical worker says it] speaks out because [it] wants fellow abductees to know there are others like them around. "There are a lot of people like me out there and they do not have people to talk to."

...It was the night of August 8, 1993... A couple... were driving home through the outskirts of Melbourne. They... came across what seemed like a barrier of light across the road. Across in the paddock was a three-storey high structure the width of an Olympic swimming pool. Two other carloads independently described the same structure. All three carloads independently led researchers back to the same location. All three drew similar sketches of the craft they saw: A saucer-like shape with a row of orange lights and a fluorescent structure flowing to the ground beneath it. Later, researchers found circles of burnt earth where the craft had been seen. Laboratory analysis by Monash University revealed the chemical pyrene, which... geologically should not have been there. The analysis also revealed a magnetic anomaly in the burnt circles, and changes in the soil chemistry. "The ground had been compacted as if it had been under high pressure. The soil was full of minuscule air holes as if it had been suddenly dehydrated, and there was a major amount of sulphur in the samples." ...Mrs [C] was approaching the craft when... a wave of energy hit her like a ton of lead. "It... [was] like repeating waves of low-level intensity so dense I could feel it going through my body." Figures came from the structure – tall, with large, glowing red eyes and no other distinguishing facial features... [Mrs C and two gals] in another car later found a triangular mark on their stomachs, below the navel. Two individuals from two separate cars had ligature marks around one ankle. Three, again from separate cars, had a row of three dots on their thighs... Much later, still trying to work out what had happened, [Mrs C] came across a defence-equipment magazine... [containing] a picture of a Chinese-manufactured night vision mask, with large red goggles. [The magazine also contained a] reference to kinetic energy paralysers weapons. So maybe that's the solution, though that doesn't explain the marks on her body, nor the other [gals'] recollection of having been in the craft, being gynaecologically examined... Scientific analysis of the scene raised puzzling questions, and... "even the sceptics didn't have much more to say than what a neurotic... I must be to take my handbag with me on an encounter".

...close encounters with little green [aliens is] the subject of *Future Fantastic's* first episode... [The host o]f the BBC... series... (who's spent some time chasing aliens as agent Dana Scully on *The X-Files*) offers views from alien doubters and devotees, including NASA. In 1992, the American space agency put \$US100 million into listening for messages from the final frontier – after nearly 30 years of fruitless eavesdropping for tidings from other worlds. One interesting – and rather worrying – point is that we've already been sending messages to the stars via television. Apparently the first broadcasts from the box are now 480,060 billion km from home. God help us if the [extraterrestrial]s have already seen *Lost In Space* or, worse, *Independence Day*. The show predictably traverses the subjects of alien abduction [–] one writer says: "many, many people who now believe they have been abducted by aliens have been abducted by [the director (r:p2705, ln43)] in effect"... But such frippery does not detract from the views of sensible science folk. The most potent comes, unsurprisingly, from [the sci-fi author who penned 2001: A Space Odyssey]: "I think that contact would be the most important event in human history because it will tell us whether we are nearer the apes or the angels."

...*SIGHTINGS UFOPEDIA*... comes with a database containing more than 350 entries on subjects ranging from angel hair to the Bermuda Triangle[– but primarily]... discusses famous cases involving the alleged abduction of people by extraterrestrials... An Internet site has been set up[– 'aliens is now the 2nd-most-popular subject on the Internet (sex being the most-popular)' –] and users can visit it for regular updates. *Sighting* does not try to convince you we are being visited by aliens. It looks at the evidence and claims with the aim of making you think... [As for what you think, a NZ] *Herald*... survey has revealed that... 40.6%... [of NZers] believe in the existence of UFOs (visiting aliens, space ships, etc)... Belief is most prevalent among Alliance supporters, with 42.9[%]. And, believe it or not, least prevalent among N[Z] First supporters, at 12.5[%]... Belief was slightly higher in Greater Auckland than the rest of the country... The survey[also] shows that young people are more likely to take UFO sightings for real. About 45[%] of people aged 18 to 30 believe, compared with 28[%] of those 51 and over. [Guys and gals] had similar rates of belief.

...ARE humans special? For most of [our] history we've thought we were... Then a bunch of astronomers showed... the Earth... is... residing in an extremely nondescript part... of the universe... Ever since, it's been the trend of science to dethrone humans from the pedestals we naturally seem to want to put ourselves on... The latest incarnation of the there's-nothing-special-about-people-rule is... the Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence. Humans can't be the only advanced beings in the cosmos, the argument goes. That would be hoisting us back on our throne. And a mighty impressive throne it would be given there are hundreds of billions of galaxies each made up of hundreds of billions of stars. The SETI project was devised to try to tune into any radio messages the aliens might be sending us... Why haven't they dropped in to say g'day? Of course, some claim they have and they're living among us. But assuming the *X Files* is fiction rather than documentary, there is no hard evidence we're being buzzed by curious space explorers. Yet this is not what logic seems to predict. If the galaxy is riddled with aliens, surely many are far more advanced than us... And they wouldn't have to be much more developed to have mastered interstellar space flight. After all, 20th Century Earth scientists already understand the basic principles. And the galactic journeys wouldn't have to be mounted in Starship Enterprise-style. Rather than sending people (if that's the word), a battalion of self-replicating robots could go out and explore. They land on a planet, use the natural resources to build copies of themselves, then each journeys to a different planet to do the same thing. Like multiplying bacteria... before long the galaxy is teeming with the robotic pioneers' progeny... [I]f their rockets were capable of the miserably slow speeds managed by our craft it would take a few hundred million years... to cover the entire galaxy... This may seem like an eternity, but the Milky Way is ten billion years old. Intelligent aliens in other parts could well have evolved hundreds of millions of years ago, allowing plenty of time for such exploration. Perhaps our cosmic cousins have the ability but not the desire. Maybe they're sensitive new-age, non-expansionist types. Possible, but hard to believe given the only intelligent life form we know

exists... in the universe seems to enjoy expansion no matter the cost. Perhaps they have a non-interference policy rigorously applied to fledgling civilisations such as our own. Again, not much evidence of humans employing such a policy with regard to the other life here on Earth.

...HOLLYWOOD sure knows how to throw a big-screen barbecue. Just toss a few aliens on the grill and watch the box office sizzle. Movie-goers went crazy last year when *Independence Day*'s space warriors reduced the White House to singed splinters. The apocalyptic thriller went on to be the year's biggest movie, making more than... \$US670 million by the end of September... But this year's intergalactic blowout features fireworks of a different colour... [Guys] in *Black*... is red, white and blue in its portrait of hard-working, unlauded secret agents who protect US citizens by monitoring visitors from beyond. What could be more all-American than the notion that Earth is a neutral zone for immigrants displaced from other planets who take on human form and live among us? ..."*Independence Day* is a big movie with huge spaceships all over the world," says [the Guys] in *Black* screenwriter... "Ours is a small movie about a handful of people doing their job anonymously..." ...The [Guys] in *Black* "aren't superheroes. They're ordinary guys who have gotten a glimpse of the way the universe works. It's a fantastic story with a reality base." The \$130 million [Guys] in *Black*... does have a few ties to *Independence Day*, such as... [the lead actor, who] distinguishes between his two roles this way: "The pilot in *Independence Day* had his life together. Agent J in [Guys] in *Black* thinks [it] knows everything but finds [it] knows nothing." But the secret to making the film work is the [person] behind the camera: [the]... director of *The Addams Family* movies and *Get Shorty*... has done what [his peer] wasn't able to pull off with the campy *Mars Attacks!* – a close encounter of the truly funny kind[that contains the following conversation: "Do we know they're hostile?" "What do you mean, 'Do we know they're hostile?' Mr President, they have our planet surrounded by thousands of warships!" "Do we know they're warships? Professor, what do we know about them?" "We know they're extremely advanced technologically, which suggests, very rightfully so, that they're peaceful. An advanced civilisation is by definition not barbaric, Mr President. The human race, on the other hand, is an aggressively dangerous species. I suspect they have more to fear from us than we from them. Our planet is suffering with the ozone and the rainforest, and so many people unhappy in their lives. I think the aliens heard our global cry for help – and they've come to save us, to show us the way.""]

...eminent scientist... bets on malevolent aliens... HOLLYWOOD got it right, says... Cambridge's professor of mathematics and author of *A Brief History of Time*... – ...any contact with alien life is likely to be nasty... In the first airing of his views on extraterrestrial life to a mass audience, [the British] Professor... said we probably were not alone. But [the professor] cautioned about answering any messages we intercepted because of the risks of a hostile invasion. "We should be wary of answering back... Meeting a more advanced civilisation might be a bit like the original inhabitants of America meeting Columbus. I don't think they were better off for it." [The] Professor... sounded his warning in a CD-ROM released this week. "I see no reason to believe that life cannot develop elsewhere, but the fact that we do not seem to have been visited by aliens needs an explanation... Perhaps the most likely (explanation) is that although the probability of the spontaneous generation of life is reasonably high, most of the life systems do not develop intelligence... I don't think UFOs are evidence that we have been visited by aliens... Why reveal yourself only to cranks and weirdos? I think such visits would be much more obvious and more unpleasant, like *Independence Day*." In the film... [-] which... "borrowed" heavily from... si-fi oldies such as *War of the Worlds*... [-] a fleet of spaceships arrives without warning over the world's great cities. A day later, the aliens attack, destroying huge areas of the planet. Humanity, however, wins the day by infecting alien computers with a virus. [The professor]'s favoured theory is that Earth has been over-looked by aliens so far. Although known as... [someone] who is prepared to take bets on complex cosmological theories, [the professor] has not gambled on the chances of extraterrestrial life. "One could never prove it didn't exist,"... As for humanity colonising other planets, [the] Professor... said we were now entering a third stage in our evolution where that would become possible. The first phase of evolution saw humans develop from more primitive organisms. The second involved transmitting information in language and books. "We are now entering a new phase of what might be called self-designed evolution in which we will be able to change and improve our DNA... Laws will be passed against genetic engineering with humans. But some people won't be able to resist the temptation to improve human characteristics such as size of memory, resistance to disease and length of life." ...[the professor] predicted the appearance of such "super humans" would raise big political problems as "unimproved" humans fell increasingly behind... Metatools, the Californian company that designed the CD-ROM, said [the professor]'s synthesised voice had been incorporated into the disc to take people on a journey through his imagination.

...Scientists plan to launch missile attacks against asteroids that threaten the Earth. Set for a launch in two years' time, the mission marks the first step by the human race toward defending itself from the impact of asteroids and comets... whose cataclysmic impacts have often intervened in the evolution of life on Earth... NASA has picked out two asteroids on Earth-crossing orbits. The first, 1986JK, will be attacked in May, 2000. Another, Toutatis will be intercepted five months later. The U[S] Air Force will build the main space probe, named Clementine II, and fit it with instrument-packed missiles. These, released into the path of the on-coming asteroids, will take close-up pictures and make scientific measurements before slamming into their targets at 72,000kmh. Although not violent enough to destroy the asteroids, the missiles will give scientists vital information about the strength and make-up of the objects... According to... the British astronomer who heads Spaceguard A[US]... the mission has its origins in America's controversial Star Wars project, which was supposed to protect the West from surprise nuclear attack by the Soviet Union. "It's a prime example of beating swords into plough-shares..." Some astronomers have voiced concern about the use of military technology in space, no matter how benevolent the aim. They claim that the interest of the armed forces has less to do with saving the planet than with finding a new enemy to justify huge budgets. Clementine II... is expected to be only the first of a series of missions to deflect comets and asteroids. If the objects are discovered early enough, only a tiny change in velocity [or flight-path] would be needed to protect the Earth, as the small deflection would build up into a huge distance by the time of closest approach. But nudging a comet or asteroid off course requires a detailed knowledge of its structure. If it is weak, then too much violence would shatter it, turning it into a swarm of impactors. According to [the British astronomer], just getting to the asteroid is a major challenge... "To be able to hit targets only a mile or so in size when millions of miles from the Earth, and travelling at over 10 miles a second, will be a remarkable demonstration of technological capability."

...*Save the Earth!* IT IS A STUNNING CONCEPT. FROM THE time that terrestrial life emerged nearly 4 billion years ago, it has been assailed time and again by global catastrophes that have caused wholesale extinction of species. But now, for the first time, one species, *Homo sapiens*, has evolved the intelligence and capability to defend itself against the next such calamity – if it has the will to do so... Astronomers estimate that as many as 2,000 "Earth-crossing" asteroids wider than a kilometer are out there... But only about 7% have been identified. "We simply don't know where the others are," says... the... geologist... [who, i]n 1973... began the world's first systematic watch for Near Earth Objects (NEOS)... with... the renowned U.S. astronomer/geologist... Eugene Shoemaker... who was killed in an automobile accident this summer while hunting for craters in A[US]'s outback... "That should be enough to get the attention of [the U.S.] Congress and the public, yet it doesn't seem to. We're just barely eking by with this detection program, because we can't convince people that it's worth funding." Equally disconcerting, an estimated 300,000 asteroids larger than 100 m wide are on paths that cross the Earth's orbit, each one capable of devastating a large metropolitan area. And... a University of Arizona astronomer, thinks that the population of Earth-crossing asteroids larger than 20 m – one of which could destroy London – is as high as 100 million. "There is no way in the foreseeable future that you could detect all of these objects,"... The sheer numbers haven't dissuaded [him] from launching a search of his own... In attacking a large comet or rocky asteroid... the interceptors would have to take care not to blast their quarry into many large chunks, each of which would be a potential city-killer. One proposed scheme for avoiding that deadly consequence is to use the neutron bomb, a weapon that delivers most of its energy in the form of speeding neutrons rather than an explosive blast... But at least one faction of astronomers has been adamantly opposed to the notion of having still more nuclear weapons at the ready, either on Earth or in orbit, poised to meet a space emergency... Aware of strong anti-nuclear sentiment, both among some scientists and members of the U.S. Congress,

scientists at the Lawrence-Livermore National Laboratory in California are weighing a scheme for destroying asteroids as large as 300 m across without employing nukes. Borrowing from both the Star Wars “brilliant pebbles” strategy and conventional mining techniques, the Livermore group would pack the nose cone of an anti-asteroid missile with an array of interconnected tungsten balls and springs. As the nose cone approached the incoming asteroid, it would deploy its cargo, which, forced apart by the springs, would expand into a flat array of metallic balls... When the asteroid, hurtling at some 30 km/sec, smashed into the array... “the tungsten balls would burrow in from meters to tens of meters deep before they slowed down.” When the balls did slow down, their kinetic energy would almost instantaneously be converted into thermal energy, about 100 times more than high explosives can generate. “You’d get an array of explosions going off... and the shocks between these explosions would propagate out and fracture all the rock between the points of the explosion.” The result... is that the asteroid would be pulverized into pieces small enough to burn up when they entered the Earth’s atmosphere. Still, before they decide what weaponry to use against an incoming threat, Earth’s defenders should be aware of the nature of the intruder... However, [the US]President... recently pulled the plug on a project to discover the nature of a near earth asteroid... [The President] vetoed the \$30 million Congress had allocated for the Clementine II mission... And hopes that Congress might supply modest funding to set up a worldwide detection network have [also]been dashed... But wiser heads in the U.S. Air Force may yet prevail. They are mulling over plans to allow NEO hunters time on satellite tracking telescopes in three locations. This would involve equipping the telescopes with... a charged-coupled device (C.C.D.), an extremely sensitive camera that electronically records the images of celestial objects... and detection software, which would also improve the Air Force’s satellite tracking ability. “They could do double duty,” Gene Shoemaker explained last year, “tracking the satellites at twilight and surveying for NEOS in the middle of the night...”

...*Things that could go bump in the flight...* ALMOST 10,000 objects in the solar system have been tracked by the Near-Earth Asteroid Tracking system in Hawaii in the two years since it began. The new year has begun well for the system with another 700 sightings, including one of an asteroid orbiting close to Earth... The new asteroid spotted by the NEAT team is one of a select group referred to as the Aten asteroids, which stay predominantly within Earth’s orbit. Unlike much of the matter within the solar system, this asteroid doesn’t orbit in the same plane as that of the Earth and the other planets. Instead its orbit is tilted 31 degrees, possibly as a result of disturbances caused by a close encounter with Earth in the past. There is increasing interest in keeping track of such asteroids as we become more aware of the potential for a planetary disaster should one of these... 24... tiny wanderers happen to collide with Earth. Atens tend to make relatively close approaches fairly frequently, making them more likely to hit us. The new asteroid may sound small, at an estimated 170m in diameter, but that could pack a most impressive wallop should it hit.

...[‘Don’t make plans for Sept 21, 2030 Scientists have spotted a small asteroid or a piece of space junk 29m-69m long that has a 1-in-500 chance of hitting the Earth in the year 2030 – far greater odds than any similar object ever discovered. For now, though, that is “fairly low in terms of concern.”]

...‘*Rocks in SPACE* The end is nigh. Nostradamus is quite clear about it: the jig is up this month. There will be fire from the sky and we can’t say that we weren’t warned. In fact, the signs and portents may have started already. What might be the first crack of doom sounded recently high above NZ, to focus the attention of many good Kiwis – or “sinners” as I suppose we must now think of them – on the wrath to come. Of course, quite apart from its moral inconveniences, the Day of Judgment will be of extraordinary scientific interest. The seismometers of the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences will be quivering overtime, and the director of the One Tree Hill Observatory will have his work cut out. The director’s still trying to figure out the trajectory and determine the dimensions of the latest visitor, which could be anything from the size of a pea to “a flying armchair.” As it turns out, NZ is bombarded by celestial Laz-Z-Boys on a regular basis about this time of year, when a meteor shower called the Australids rattles over our heads. It is believed that only 800 years ago one of them rearranged Otago in an explosion on a par with the Tunguska event which flattened half of Siberia in 1908. Maori, many of whom blame the explosion for the disappearance of the moa, remember it in the names Waipahi (“place of the exploding fire”) and Tapanui (“big bang”), both of which are peppered with tektites (astronomers appear to have a keen sense of the dollar value of stuff from the stars – you can buy and sell meteorites from as little as \$US40 at Mike’s Meteors to as much as \$11,000 at Lang’s). The US spends up to \$8.5 million a year tracking asteroids and comets that may hit the Earth at some point. Heaven is an untidy place. You’d think we would have the sense to leave well enough alone, but instead Nasa’s planning a sort of space-whaling expedition which involves actually harpooning a meteor. Its stellar prey is comet P/Temple 1, which it plans to stick with a 500kg copper harpoon travelling at 10 km/s. Deep Impact will blast a crater as big as a rugby field and as deep as an office-block to analyse the primal stuff inside. Hopefully, this will not redirect P/Temple 1 from its appointed path to, say, Sunnynook. Moby Meteor won’t come cheap (\$US286m), so no doubt Nasa will be looking to recoup some of its investment. The editor of *Meteorite!* magazine reports that a bounty of \$US25,000 has already been put on the NZ arrival’.]

...An off-the-planet American story has launched N[Z] astronomers into space-sized guffaws of laughter. A mass-circulation national tabloid daily in the U[S], the *Sun*, claims to have a secret report co-written by a N[Z] astronomer, Curtis Jemison, saying seven deadly asteroids are hurtling towards Earth courtesy of aliens... The *Sun* says Nasa and U[S] Air Force experts are racing the clock to come up with a world-sized shield which will protect us from the space rocks... Sending conspiracy theorists into a spin, the paper added: “The Government can’t keep a lid on this much longer.” ...Of course, the story appears to be nothing more than that – a story. No prizes for guessing that Mr Jemison seems non-existent. Two leading astronomers... of the Mt John University Observatory at Lake Tekapo, said they had never heard of the doom-merchant scientist. “And we know most people actively involved in N[Z] astronomy and everyone with an interest in asteroids,” they said... From N[Z]’s real-life asteroid experts, the news is much brighter. “There are a number of Earth-crossing asteroids known, but none of them is in a position to collide with Earth in the present era... [However, w]hat they may do in several thousand years cannot be definitely known.” The *Sun*, meanwhile, continues its run of world exclusives, including: “Found! Christ’s deathbed writings” and “Miracles that will change your life forever.”

...The truth isn’t out there, it’s in an Auckland warehouse. [Inside the] dark building in Onehunga... [a]liens of every shape and hue that have supposedly visited... Earth in the past 40 years are lined up for inspection in what is billed as the world’s first Alien and E[xtraterrestrial] exhibition. Two s]elf-professed Auckland jacks-of-all-trades... spent 12 years researching human encounters with aliens, developing a database to rival the fictional *X-Files*. The pair picked the 25 most credible accounts and painstakingly built replicas... Their creations have been patented because they ...are their intellectual property. The *Herald* was allowed to photograph only the “common grey” aliens, of which there have been about 10,000 sightings worldwide, so as not to breach copyright. The pair talk of deals with Disney and [the director] which went wrong... With more money [they] would have invested in robotics and made [the] creations move. Instead, [the pair’ve] relied on spooky music, fog machines and weird lighting effects to create an appropriate extraterrestrial world. From Onehunga, the show travels to A[US], and there is interest in taking it to England.

...[NZ’s] first international UFO Symposium opens tonight at Auckland University... [Among the participants is a] retired Lieutenant-Colonel... from the U[S] Air Force... Yep, the 73-year-old says, aliens are out there and Planet Earth is increasingly one of their favourite destinations... [However, a] worldwide conspiracy involving the [US] military is suppressing the truth about the existence of extraterrestrial life... Between 1947 and 1949... the guy who served as a fighter pilot in... [WW2] and the Korean War... served in Alaska supervising a “special group of civilians”... [at] the air development centre where staff tested new aircraft, analysed captured planes and studied the latest technology... Among the data collected... was information on “unidentified aerial phenomena” sighted in the area... over the Arctic... Strange craft would approach a B29 head on and then, without turning around, stop and instantly match the... bomber’s speed... “Because of my training I was current on most modern air technical information available worldwide... One reason why I was sent to Alaska was that I was supposed to be able to distinguish between an Earth vehicle and something more exotic... There’s no aircraft designed on Earth to do that.” [His] job was to type reports based on the crew’s testimony. [The guy] was not allowed to develop photographic and movie footage taken by air crew. Both the film and his reports were sent to

Washington. "Somewhere in Washington there are scores of reports of mine. I tried to see them but I didn't have the right security clearance." While generals [declared that] the Russians had used German intelligence to make a technological breakthrough... [this guy] favoured the aliens from outer space theory... After 24 years active service... [it] retired to "pursue my own investigations of this phenomena." Globe-trotting as part of his job selling decommissioned military aircraft, [it has] amassed a library of evidence, including more than 3000 photographic images of... [UFOs. The guy] would spend weeks interviewing witnesses and collecting physical evidence such as strange metal and plastic objects that were "not from this world." ...[the guy] said that the infamous Roswell Incident in New Mexico was not the only alien crash in 1947 – seven spacecraft smashed into terra firma that year as a result of the American Navy's experiments into aerial search radar which inadvertently "fried" flying saucers. [The guy] said aliens were interested in Earth because of its harsh environment and humans' comparatively short lifespan, which makes our habitat the perfect laboratory... [and] humankind... the galactic equivalent of white mice... for extraterrestrial scientists.

...The US Air Force... says "space aliens" who supposedly crashed in the New Mexico desert... were actually aluminium and plastic test dummies used in high-altitude parachute drops. A 231-page... report, which was issued yesterday, a week before the 50th anniversary of the incident... denied that the military had recovered alien bodies from damaged flying saucers... and had covered up the discovery ever since... The private Fund for UFO Research, based at Mt Rainier, Maryland, quickly attacked the report, noting that the test dummies were not dropped by parachute until 1955... [T]he Air Force simply claimed that the time discrepancy was due to faulty memories on the part of eyewitnesses... The report[, which was accompanied by a]... photo showing the [saucer-like] aeroshell of a Nasa Voyager Mars space probe just before its launch... said claims of bodies at the Roswell Army Air Field Hospital that helped feed the speculation were most likely a combination of two separate incidents in 1956 in which 11 Air Force personnel died in a KC-97 aircraft accident and two... were injured in a [pilot]ed balloon mishap... On July 7, 1947, the Roswell Army Air Field issued a press release saying it was in possession of a "flying disc" that had fallen, but the same evening an Air Force General in Fort Worth, Texas, said the craft was a weather balloon... Despite the lack of hard evidence, Roswell has become an article of faith for those who believe in extraterrestrial life and up to 100,000 people are expected in the town next week...

...one of the few living witnesses... was a civilian employee at the Roswell Army Air Field in July 1947 when [it] was dispatched to see what had crashed into a dry river bed northwest of town... [The witness] got a close look at two dead aliens, one in the wreckage and another slumped against a rock wall in the river bed... [A] 22-year-old mortician at the time... said [it] saw strange activity at the army air field... and a nurse at the base screamed to him: "Get out of here as fast as you can..." ...[the mortician] was escorted from the base by military police and warned to keep quiet, but the nurse found him the next day and told him [it] had conducted autopsies on small creatures weighing no more than 14kg with large heads and eyes and four fingers on each hand with suction cups on the end. The nurse then mysteriously disappeared and the sketches [it] allegedly made of the creatures were lost... [By the way,] UFO experts... are gathering... [in] Mexico... for the Second World UFO Congress, which [begins] today.

...*LOVING THE ALIEN*... An interplanetary dating service is being launched by the Paris-based European Space Agency. Singles seeking out-of-this-world friendships, or even permanent partnerships, can send messages in a US rocket which will be aimed at the moon Titan, near Saturn, in October. First client is [a 30-year-old] whose request reads: "Tall... French earthling... seeks tall, handsome alien, romantic if possible." Ms [30-year-old] would presumably appreciate a picture with any reply...

A lot of aliens do look like [an alien movie star (r:p2705, l:n43)]. Big eyes, big forehead, tiny... nose, little pointy chin. At least, that's what the sketches showed when nearly 400 believers packed into a UFO Symposium at Auckland University... There weren't just sketches... There were hours of videos and photographs of strange lights and objects in the sky, and a series of speakers who, [the] conference organiser... said, were "the most brilliant people I can assemble". The audience loved them. They drank in the videos of UFO sightings over Mexico... [- s]ince 1991, interest in UFOs has risen so sharply that Mexican television is now about to start a daily half-hour series on the phenomenon, fronted by... a 60 Minutes journalist [(91% of viewers of 60 Minutes believe there is intelligent life in space)] who kicked off the symposium and can be said to have largely kicked off the Mexicans' interest as well... [-] nodded wisely at the New Age conspiracy and self-empowerment theories, and warmly applauded the "I was abducted by aliens" testimonies... [plus the] tales of UFOs emerging from oceans and lakes, and allegations of underwater bases, off Great Barrier Island... off the south A[US]n coast... and... off the coast of Argentina... [There was also] talk of hybrids – creatures formed by combining eggs taken from human[s] with aliens – a topic which might explain why some of us, for example, go bald or have haemorrhoids while others don't... Almost half the audience had seen a UFO; almost all, plainly, wanted to be assured the extraterrestrials are here, friendly and about to sort out this messy planet into a more harmonious state. There's no doubt there have been incidents and sightings that have still not been satisfactorily explained. Here in N[Z], for example, there were the strange lights over Kaikoura in the 1980 New Year period, picked up on aeroplane and Wellington Airport radar and filmed by an A[US]n television crew. They were eventually put down to reflections from squid boat lights. But lights don't show up on radar. Earlier, there was the 1969 Ngatea incident, when a dairy farmer found three scorched circles, about a metre in diameter and 3m apart, amid flattened scrub in a back paddock. Geiger counters remained silent until they reached the circles, and then ticked furiously. A horticultural examination of manuka trunks within the circles revealed the wood seemed to have been cooked instantaneously... [A] veteran UFO investigator based in Tauranga, said there was no sign of burning on the outside of the trunks. A DSIR examination, carried out some six weeks later, decided a fungus was to blame. "But that particular kind of fungus doesn't kill a tree, it only attacks it after it's dead,"... A... former National Airways Corporation pilot who developed his theory of ley lines and UFO grids after seeing many strangely-moving objects in the sky, says airline... and air force pilots see UFOs quite often. Astronauts do, too, several speakers said. Apparently the first thing the Russian Mir astronauts said after six months in space was that there are extraterrestrials out in space. [The US astronaut] who stayed orbiting the moon while [two of his colleagues] made the first lunar landing, later told the U[N] General Assembly... extraterrestrial vehicles were visiting this planet... [This astronaut] had never seen a UFO himself, however... [The] astronaut... who in 1971 became the sixth [earthling] to walk on the moon... is among those who believe aliens have crash-landed on Earth... [That astronaut] wants congressional hearings into what [it] calls a... US Government [cover-up of] the matter... A... speaker... for... Borderlands Sciences... "the oldest UFO research organisation in the world", produced... what looked like Rorschach test patterns. Turned out they were blow-ups of black and white NASA moon photographs, in which [the speaker] could discern clouds, plants... roads, tunnels and bridges... [The speaker] is convinced the Americans didn't land on the moon. The film of the landing shows the American flag fluttering, and there's no wind on the moon. There was no blast-hole from the lander, and no dust on the aircraft kicked up by the landing, even though footprints in the ground nearby were clearly defined. And a film clip of the second astronaut descending from the moon's surface showed a sudden, abrupt stumble: A movement too rapid for the moon's lighter gravity. It was all filmed in the Nevada desert, [the speaker] suspects. NASA now regretted releasing those photos... said... [the speaker, who also says that:] "The moon very possibly is artificial, controlling Earth." ...[an A[US]n speaker... showed a film of [the 40th] US President... suggesting to the U[N] that an extraterrestrial threat could be the only thing to unite the nations of the world. More food for the conspiracy theorists. Maybe the chap with the clearest photographs is just a government plant. [The chap], a retired US Air Force colonel, [has]... apparently been investigating the UFO phenomenon for more than 35 years, and showed about 100 photographs in Auckland... some of them with as much detail as an elaborate hubcap, most with much less clarity... Later, [the] Colonel... let drop [it]d been given a note by an alien once. [The colonel ha]d been asking people in contact with extraterrestrials to ask them questions, and one answer came back on a piece of paper written by the alien. Sensational. Was it alien paper? "It looked like Earth paper." The writing? "It was in block letters." What did [the colonel] do with the note? "Unfortunately, I didn't keep the paper." A UFO investigator... [who] doesn't keep the

paper? ...As several speakers said, dealing with UFO and extraterrestrial material demands an open mind, and the ability to separate the wheat from the chaff. Or the corn from the corn circles, but that's another story... - 1997

Crop circles have got a lot more press after... the... new movie Signs... It's like diving into a deep pool of movie mystery, a spine-tingling plot which features... some of the most bizarre and inexplicable phenomenon that has occurred on earth: crop circles. *Signs* is a supernatural thriller where even N[Z] has a bit role – the film's trailer featuring a fictitious crop circle movie producers would like viewers to believe appeared in the South Island town of Ranfurly... Crop circles have been mysteriously appearing across the world – with a heavy concentration in southern England – over the past couple of decades. In England they often appear close to ancient monuments and there seems to be some connection between ley lines and crop circles. Especially intense over the past decade, the crop circle phenomenon is now a regular part of the British summer season... It's not the first time crop circles have made it to the screen – *The X-Files* featured the circles on one episode and the directors of... [the] movie *Contact* also collected circle information, though the phenomenon never made it to the film's final cut... Crop circle enthusiasts say the earliest recorded crop circle was 300 years ago, while [a recent] edition of *Nature* carried a reprint of a reported circle in Guildford, Surrey, England in 1880. Further afield, and more recently, a 457-metre crop circle appeared in a Punjab, India wheatfield in 1987. Theories on the phenomenon abound: An alien species is trying to communicate with us; they signal some kind of cosmic musical note or tune (think the powerful musical sequence in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*); or they're nothing more than elaborate, [hu]man-made hoaxes... ● [A group of]... experts... believe they have discovered a new type of alien known as Rods, translucent creatures that fly though the air. [But the 'scientific community won't accept the existence of Rods until one is caught and put on a dissecting table. These alien lifeforms ("sent to confuse us") may have been here always but we never saw them before because the creatures, that vary in size from a few inches to 50ft long, move too fast – "6700mph" – although not too fast to be caught on film']]

...“We actually know a great deal about what's required to travel across space at high speed. Interstellar space-travel is very unlikely... [because it] flies in the face of the Laws of Physics... We should not, therefore, expect extraterrestrials to visit us.” ...[therefore,] abductions can't be real... [T]he only thing fast enough to travel between hugely distant civilisations [i]s radio... Even a slow tune goes... [at] the speed of light... Astronomers say intelligent creatures would discover radio waves and use them to communicate – just as we did. And that's how we could discover them... “My hunch... is that we will never really meet them – not in person. We will talk to them, we will know everything about them – just as we learn about other cultures through television – but I think a direct contact is very unlikely.” ...[unfortunately, i]n some high places there are people who believe any interest in extraterrestrial life deserves derision – not tax[payers'] dollars. Less] ...than a year after... Nasa... thr[e]w a big party in the desert [to celebrate the launch of] perhaps the most far-reaching quest in the history of exploration... SETI was dead. But an act of Congress can't kill human curiosity. The search was bound to go on – with scientists or without them... Stunning million dollar donations have brought SETI back to life.

...More than a million people have volunteered to use a “screensaver” computer program that is helping to search for extraterrestrial intelligence... The program, designed by a team at the University of California at Berkeley, analyses data gathered by a radio telescope in Puerto Rico[']s mountains that is ‘the size of 27 football fields’]. “It's truly a phenomenon,” said the project director for... SETI... “One person runs it in an office and pretty soon the whole office is doing it.” ...people can download and install [the program] on their home computers. When their computers are idle and slip into screensaver mode, the program works to analyse data gathered by the main SETI program.

...Humans may one day come face to face with aliens but they are unlikely to be the cute, friendly variety [like an alien movie star], says a Wellington astronomer. Carter Observatory[']s astronomer... who is running a course on extraterrestrial life starting today at the observatory... believed life was common elsewhere in the galaxy and included advanced civilisations... The observatory's course, which... first ran last year, ...also looks at... how life evolved on Earth and how advanced civilisations could have evolved on other worlds... But if Earth ever encountered these civilisations their impact might not be positive. “Whenever one culture has met another and one was considerably more advanced in technology, the other culture has tended to collapse... If somebody turns up here, just that they can turn up here would mean they are exceedingly more advanced than us.” ...advanced alien technology would be like magic to humans. Their biology and way of thinking could be completely different[– a]dvanced civilisations could... be machines rather than organic life... [H]umans beating advanced alien invaders, as happened in the film *Independence Day*, was also unlikely. “You wouldn't be able to beat something like that any more than a group of Stone Age people if the Navy turned up on their shore.” ...Despite claims from some people about UFOs and alien abductions, no hard evidence existed of aliens ever visiting Earth... [T]he absence of visits could be because of the vast distances between stars... [– plus t]here are... so many trillions of stars... [–] time scales and how long a civilisation lasted. Human civilisation had been around for only about 5000 years, about a millionth of the... years the solar system had existed. “So if somebody came across space at a random point in time they have only one chance in one million of arriving when we are here.”

“...at 11 o'clock... tomorrow... an alien ship will begin passing through this Solar System... They're on a survey mission. They have no interest in Earth – too primitive... [But] when they detect... your [signal]... they decide to alter their course... It is one of the pivotal moments in human history... You get to make first contact with an alien race. And after you do, everything begins to change... It unites humanity in a way no one ever thought possible... We work to better ourselves and the rest of humanity... Economics of the future is somewhat different... [because] money doesn't exist... [any more. Consequently, t]he acquisition of wealth is no longer the driving force in our lives... Poverty, disease, war – they'll all be gone within the next 50 years...” - Star Trek: The Next Generation

When your captain first approached [the Collective] we suspected that an agreement with humans would prove impossible to maintain. You are erratic, conflicted, disorganised. Every decision is debated, every action questioned, every individual entitled to their own small opinion. You lack harmony, cohesion, greatness. - Star Trek: Voyager

One UFOlogy group believes that at the beginning of our 21st Century ‘33 spaceships carrying 30,000 aliens will be landing in the US to educate humans.’ Assuming that a visit would have been planned well in advance, it is possible aliens could have built up a stockpile of things they believe humans need. Alternatively, they might have some useful equipment which is simply excess to their own requirements. Which raises a valid point: would a species that has the technology to travel large distances through space do so while, back on their home planet, hundreds of millions of its own species still lack the most basic forms of technology? If we are talking about HBs, the answer would surely be YES! However, HBs don't yet have the ability to travel large distances through space. Perhaps a species has to develop to the point where it has collectively proven itself to be responsible enough to visit other inhabited (or habitable) planets before it is able to? Another valid point is that wise humans are peaceful. Logic decrees that space-travelling aliens must be at least as wise as the wisest humans (r:p2699, ln56 + p2700, ln71 to p2701, ln1) – therefore, they must be peaceful also (if aliens are performing experiments on abducted earthlings, that could be said to disprove the notion they are wise; but such experiments could be meant to highlight this hypocritical side of HB behaviour – i.e., countless HB's fear being experimented on by aliens while condoning similar experiments being performed by their own species on other earthlings!). Now, if you were a peace-loving alien, would you visit Earth at the moment (or share space-travelling technology with a species whose opinion appears to be that: ‘Earth is base, Heavens are pure and clean – we can leave behind our mess and start over again’)?

Some Velvet Morning when I'm straight I'm gonna open up your gate...

THE BOOK OF CAIN

On the first day energy created black, which it called dark, then white, which it called light.

On the second day energy created brown, which it called earth and used to separate light from dark.

On the third day energy made brown revolve around light, and called this motion time.

On the fourth day energy created blue, which it called water, then green, which it called plants, and used them to keep earth warm.

On the fifth day energy used motion to mix brown, blue and green which, in the presence of warmth, made what it called creatures. A notable feature of creatures was personal mobility, a feature they used to make lots more of themselves so, to limit the number of copies of each creature, energy created red.

Watching the creatures make themselves made energy feel lonely, so on the sixth day energy decided to make a celibate creature that it could communicate with on a more personal level, which was called sapien. Everyone was mostly happy until the sapien asked why it had been made. After receiving the answer, the sapien became too consumed with feelings of loneliness to bother communicating with energy. Concluding that two could be better than one, energy created a partner for the sapien. But energy quickly became bored with their conversations.

To expand their interests, energy decided to give the sapiens stewardship over the other creatures. In response, the sapiens asked if energy intended to compensate them for this responsibility. A deal was struck whereby they would be stewards if allowed to use whatever they deemed necessary to satisfy their needs, with a proviso that they were forbidden from killing any other life form without proper justification. Unsurprisingly, the other creatures weren't very pleased with this arrangement so, to appease them, energy created a guard that would become alarmed if the sapiens ever became irresponsible.

On the seventh day sapiens asked why energy had created the guard. "Don't you trust us?" Energy replied that it was up to them to prove they could be trusted. "How are we to do that?" Energy told them to invent their own language. When they could use this language to record the difference between responsible and irresponsible, at that time energy would trust them. The sapiens began their language by making up the word human, which meant the two of them together, and used sapiens to mean the two of them apart. The first sapien then called itself Adam, and the partner called itself Eve, after which they named everything else they could see.

Most of the other creatures had natural coats of some kind whereas Adam and Eve's skin was predominantly hairless. This sometimes caused them to feel cold, so they made coats for themselves using leaves. Then they started to make other things, and eventually became so absorbed in their new pastime that they forgot about trying to prove they could be trusted. Adam and Eve built a home for themselves at the foot of a mountain that they had named Eden, and built a fence around their home to gain some privacy and security – as they were scared that the predatory creatures might one day try to attack them.

The fence kept out the predators, but not the birds, so to scare them away Adam captured a serpent – which was unable to go through or over the fence itself. However, although the serpent was willing to be the sapiens' friend it wasn't keen on being their prisoner, and also didn't like being separated from its own kind, so the snake devised a means of becoming unpopular. It began to taunt Adam by saying only Eve knew how to be responsible. The taunting continued until Adam became angry and started to hit the serpent with a heavy stick. Adam landed such a blow to its middle that the serpent broke into two halves. In an attempt to defend itself the serpent's top half bit Adam. The bite hurt Adam and made him very sick. When Eve heard Adam's condition was caused by the serpent she opened the gate and chased it away, yelling that it was banished from their home forever. The serpent's top half slid to a river but the bottom couldn't see where it was going and fell into a hole in the ground.

Energy was disappointed with Eve. It told her that being responsible meant she was supposed to protect the serpent. To remind Eve of the serpent's suffering, energy punished her by making her body bleed periodically. As his punishment, Adam received a serpentine penis, which was meant to constantly remind him of his own indiscretion. Adam and Eve apologised for their behaviour but explained that they had just wanted something to look after, like energy looked after them, then protested that as it was their first mistake they deserved clemency. Their plea convinced energy that they should be able to reproduce themselves, so it explained what would happen to Eve's body during each period of bleeding and, to encourage her to have sex – and compensate her for the inconvenience of the bleeding plus the untold pain of childbirth – gave her a clitoris.

Adam and Eve were particularly fascinated by their new-found knowledge and extra body parts, and henceforth enjoyed being naked whenever they were together in the privacy of their home. They had sex often and within a year Eve gave birth to twins. They called the first-born Cain and the second-born Abel. A sibling rivalry developed between the children that intensified as they grew older. This rivalry was fuelled by Adam and Eve who both gave Abel the most attention. Cain often felt like an outsider, so she spent an increasing amount of time away from home, observing and learning from what was happening on the other side of the fence. Meanwhile, Abel would stay at home and be fussed over. Adam and Eve felt honoured by Abel's presence but were disappointed in Cain as she began to show less respect for them. By the time Cain had reached adulthood she understood much about the plants and other creatures, so when Adam and Eve asked her what kind of job she wanted to do to prove how responsible she was Cain chose to till the ground. Abel grew up to be lazy and complacent, because his parents did most things for him. Abel decided that an easy job would be to look after sheep, so he befriended some and kept them near him. In due course the sheep followed Abel wherever he went, which made Abel feel even better about himself.

One day Cain and Abel had an argument about whose job was more responsible. Cain said her job made it easy for the family to obtain food but Abel's job did nothing for the family. Abel resented this so he decided they should have a competition. Cain agreed with Abel's suggestion that they take the results of their labour to Adam and get him to choose the winner. Abel killed one of his sheep, cooked its body and gave Adam the roasted flesh to eat and the fleece to wear. Adam enjoyed the taste of the meat, the warmth of the fleece and Abel's explanation of how easily the products had been obtained. Adam didn't enjoy the familiarity of Cain's offering, a selection of her favourite vegetables, fruits and nuts. Cain was devastated. She complained to energy that Abel had killed without proper justification and, therefore, must be punished in some way. Energy asked Cain, "Why are you unhappy? If you do well, won't you be accepted? If you do well sin will lie at your door and sin will do whatever you ask it to and you will rule sin." Cain didn't know what energy's statement meant, but was too embarrassed to ask. She later confronted Abel and told him, "I am the first-born. Because you were born second, or last, you lose in this instance. Therefore I claim the right to inherit all of our parents' property at a future time. Henceforth I will call you sin and a day will come when I will make you lie outside the door of our house with your sheep, and I will rule over you and you will have to do whatever I say." Abel wasn't impressed with Cain's speech. "It was only luck that made you the first-born. Rams fight to be head of the flock. If you wish to be head of our household you must prove you are the strongest. Let us fight and the winner shall have the birthright." Abel started to attack Cain with a ferocity that surprised her, for he was determined not to lose, but although Cain wasn't as strong physically as her brother she was more cunning and the fight ended when Cain accidentally killed Abel. Cain looked at Abel's dead body and immediately felt sad. She had proved who was the best at fighting but had lost her only brother. To remind herself of how foolish they'd been she made up the word war.

When Adam and Eve learnt of Abel's death they were furious. They dragged Cain before energy, demanding she be suitably punished for killing their son. Energy wasn't pleased about being asked to punish Cain but Adam and Eve were persistent. Eventually energy agreed to banish Cain until she had completed Adam and Eve's task of recording the difference between responsible and irresponsible. "You must leave our presence and this land, and you will become weak as a lamb because the soil will no longer yield unto you its strength." Cain pleaded that this punishment was too harsh for her to bear. "I will be alone and forced to scavenge for food while trying to hide from any predator creatures that may recognise me as being sapien and, motivated by jealousy, try to kill me." Energy told Cain that if any creature tried to kill her its punishment would be seven times worse than hers. As Cain left the land of Eden, she was unaware that energy had set a mark on her so no creature would kill her. Energy also put Cain into a trance, then told the half of the

serpent which had fallen into a hole to remain in the ground and listen for the vibration that means Cain has returned. After Cain was out of sight energy told Adam and Eve that, since their behaviour had repeatedly been unacceptable, they must also leave Eden. Energy sent them west – the opposite direction to Cain's path.

Adam and Eve later had more children, the descendants of whom eventually divided their world into three parts. In the first world people danced while in the second world people worked and in the third world people died. During this time there were many rapes committed. Some men raped young girls because they thought they were God and needed a virgin to produce God's son. During this time there were also many murders committed. Some people murdered because they thought they were a reincarnation of Cain and had to repeat her life, while others thought that they were Abel and had to seek revenge. Another feature of this time was that there were lots of wars. Most wars were small but some were large. Two of the largest were World War One, written by some people as WWI, and World War Two, written by some people as WWII. After WWII the wealthy made an army using the political and religious leaders. They wanted to start World War Three, written as WWIII but pronounced by some people as World War Free. The army of the wealthy began destroying everything it encountered, leaving behind a desolate landscape. This rampage continued until the only thing left to destroy was the city of Heaven. However, the wealthy discovered that they were unable to enter the city of Heaven, because their army couldn't scale or destroy its gate and wall. They laid siege to the city and began to wonder how this stalemate would end.

The poor citizens of the city also wondered how the stalemate would end. If the army of the wealthy were to breach the wall, the city's only means of defence, its inhabitants would surely be slain. But they were confident the wall could keep them secure, and because the city was able to provide them with all of their needs, they had the ability to endure the siege forever.

On the eighth day, at twenty-seven minutes past twelve, during the twenty-seventh of the twelfth, an alarm sounded. The alarm woke Cain. She opened her eyes to find herself lying outside the gate of a great city. The wall of the city was like clear glass. Through the wall she could see the city's citizens who, in a state of hopelessness, were all leaning against the wall, looking forlornly at the world outside.

When Cain stood up every other sapien could see her. She looked down at her body, which was naked, and saw that the colour of her skin was brown like the earth. She looked at the gate before her, which was like a mirror, and saw in the reflection a mark on her forehead. The mark was 465042. Cain punched this into a keypad on the gate, which immediately disappeared along with the wall of the city of Heaven. Cain smiled because she could see Mt Eden. Now that the wall was gone the people inside and outside the city faced each other without any barriers. The number on the outside was 3.6 billion and the number on the inside was also 3.6 billion. Cain stepped into the ranks of the poor, and the wealthy could see they were outnumbered. The wealthy, who were awed by Cain's power, discarded their weapons and asked Cain for help to put right all the wrongs that they had inflicted upon the earth. Cain showed them a book she had written which explained what was irresponsible and how to be responsible, then everybody joined together to do what the book said.

On the ninth day there was a hush over the universe, for the ruler had been restored to its rightful place. The name of the one who sat upon the throne was Peace. Then all the creatures heard energy say, "This is my dream."